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Finds of Byzantine Glass and Ceramics on the Territory of Belarus: Well-Known and New Facts

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In 1960s numerous items of Byzantine and Oriental glass were found during F. D. Gurevich's excavations in Novogrudok. F. D. Gurevich affirmed that according to the number of finds and to the diversity of forms of the discovered vessels they were, and still are, the most numerous and representative medieval glass collection not only in Rus', but also in whole Europe. In Novogrudok were found more than 340 fragments of glass vessels of Byzantine and Oriental origin. About 70 of them belong to 8 vessels made in Syrian ateliers (Raqqa, Aleppo). Remaining fragments by shape and ornament belong to more than 40 vessels from Byzantium.¹ This collection was published in 1968 as a separate volume by F. D. Gurevich, M. V. Malyevskaya and R. M. Janpoladyan. Their study is still the main source of our knowledge about the shapes and decor of Byzantine and Oriental glass vessels imported to Rus' in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This book presents the fundamental set of Byzantine and Oriental glass imports.² The authors made a thorough analysis of the artistic and technological characteristics of the vessels. A special value of this edition is its thorough reconstructions, with the profile and decor of individual vessels being restored from fragments. However, from that time onward, on the territory of Belarus, both in Novogrudok and other localities, there have been found new fragments of Byzantine glass and ceramics, not known until now to researchers. The purpose of this paper is to supplement and verify the existing corpus of the glass and ceramic imports, as elaborated by F. D. Gurevich.³

¹ GUREVIČ 1986, 70.

² *Vostočnoe steklo*.

³ *Vostočnoe steklo*; GUREVIČ 1986. I would like to express deep gratitude to the archaeologists T. S. Buben'ko, L. V. Koledinskiy, S. V. Tarasov and G. V. Shtykhov, who kindly presented for publication

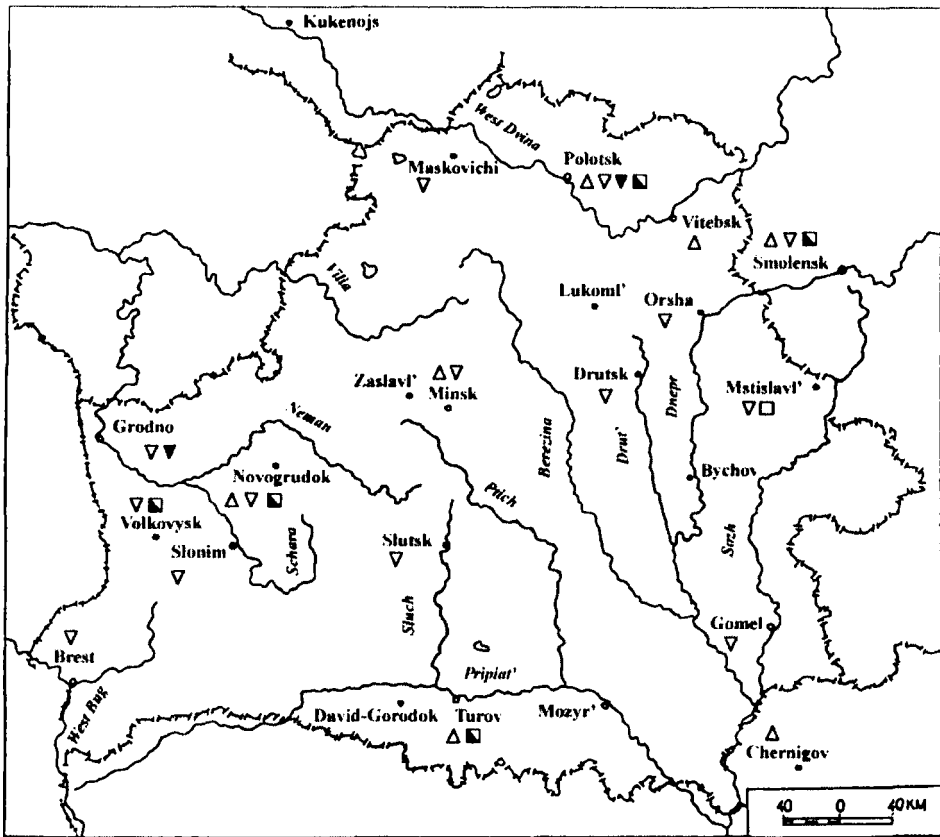


Fig. 1. The map of finds of Byzantine glass and ceramics on the territory of Modern Belarus.
 △ – glass ware, ▽ – glass bracelets, ▾ – stained glass, ◼ – glazed ceramics.

Most of Byzantine glass vessels imported to medieval towns situated on the territory of Modern Belarus⁴ were objects of high quality arts and crafts. These vessels, painted gold and gold combined with enamel, or decorated with carving, engraving and grinding, were high value articles of luxury in the Middle Ages. They were used for drinking at the feasts and as containers for perfumes, medicines, etc. Moreover, they could have serve as decorative elements of interiors of wealthy houses. The finds of Byzantine glazed ceramics on the

the materials of their excavations. Many of those materials are not published before. My special gratitude to V. Y. Koval for prompt of attribution of Byzantine ceramic fragments.

⁴ It is clear that the term “Medieval towns of Belarus” is not historical and refers only to geographical borders of the research – the territory of modern Belarus. Various historical names related to Belarus either do not seize the whole of its territory (such as Black Rus’ – only the region of Novogrudok, the Polotsk Principality or the Turov-Pinsk Principality) or have a broader meaning (Western Rus’, which includes also the Smolensk Principality), or are of more recent origin (White Rus’). That is why I use the term “Medieval towns of Belarus” having in mind Medieval towns on the territory of today’s Belarus.

territory of Belarus are not numerous but they include luxury ceramics with polychromic painting as well as more simple objects.

Import of artistic glass and pottery should be treated first of all as a cultural phenomenon rather than an economic one. It acquired an economic basis only after the emergence of the relevant cultural needs. Economic forces had influence only on import dimensions, but not on reasons for import in the Middle Ages.⁵ In the Medieval communities imported goods were mainly purchased for the reason of prestige and fashion. Objects of Oriental and Byzantine art were extremely popular in Medieval Europe and considered to be articles of luxury. It was very fashionable to possess them. The use of Oriental and Byzantine imported goods reflected the trends of artistic taste of local people.

This paper examines the following categories of Byzantine glass objects found on the territory of Belarus: vessels, bracelets and stained glass.

Byzantine glass vessels were found in Novogrudok, Turov, Vitebsk and Polotsk. Let's dwell briefly on the well-known finds from Novogrudok (excavations by F. D. Gurevich) and from Turov (excavations by M. D. Poluboyarinoва).⁶ Among them there are to be distinguished several groups of artefacts. One of these groups are thin-sided vessels made of transparent colourless, purple, blue and milk-white glass, painted gold, or gold in combination with white, yellow and red enamel. The main painting motifs are birds, medallions, twigs, straight or wavy lines, crosses (simple and with crossed arms), circles and other geometrical elements. In this group of vessels one can distinguish such forms as bottles, beakers, bowls and some others. (figs. 2–4, 6–7).

Another group is composed of fragments of vessels made of very effective three-colour twofold glass, sometimes painted with gold. In such glass the inner coat is marbled-like and consists of white and blue nontransparent areas; the outer coat is colourless and transparent. The combination of solid two-coloured layer with a transparent one adds a beautiful shining texture to the glass. In F. D. Gurevich's opinion, the form of vessels made of this glass is a two-handled beaker on a ring-shaped stem (fig. 5: 1).⁷

A separate group is represented by two beakers from the series of the so-called Hedwig's beakers (*Hedwigsgläser*), found in Novogrudok (fig. 8). One of them is better preserved, the other one has been badly deformed by fire. A technique of carving, engraving and grinding was used in the process of figuration.⁸ There are figures of a lion, a griffin and the Tree of Life carved on the sides of the beaker. In the broadest part of the vessel there is depicted the figure of a lion, standing half face, with its body in side view but its head in full-face, the tail elevated to the head, and the right forepaw raised high. The image was placed into the square with a violation of proportions. Above the lion's head there is

⁵ KOVAL' 1999.

⁶ POLUBOJARINOVA 1963; *Vostočnoe steklo*.

⁷ GUREVIČ 1986, 73; *Vostočnoe steklo*, pl. XII, 23–28.

⁸ *Vostočnoe steklo*, pl. X, XIV, 2.

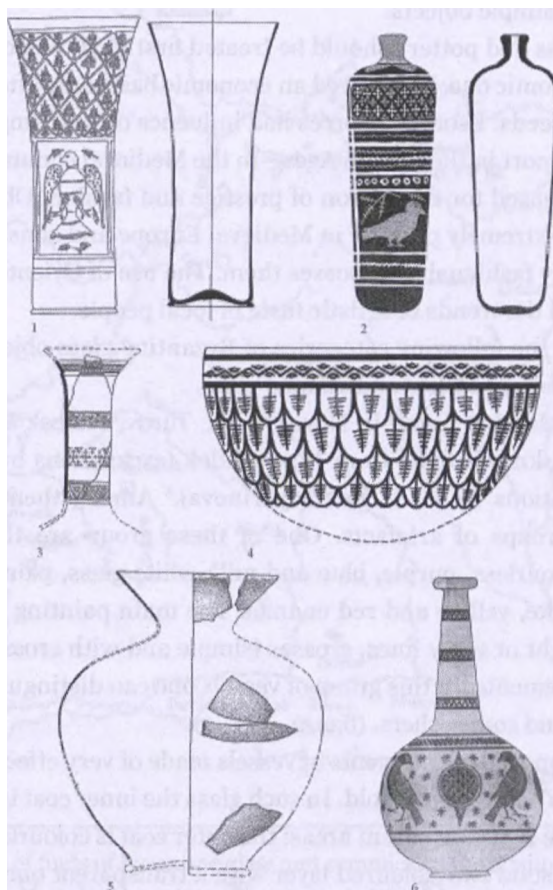


Fig. 2: 1 – Beaker of reddish violet glass decorated by gold painting. Reconstruction. First half of the twelfth century. Found in Novogradok. Excavations by F. D. Gurevich. St. Petersburg, the State Hermitage Museum (after: *Vostočnoe steklo*, pl. I); 2 – Bottle of blue glass painted with white enamel and gold. Reconstruction. Second half of the twelfth century. Found in Novogradok. Excavations by F. D. Gurevich. St. Petersburg, the State Hermitage Museum (after: *Vostočnoe steklo*, pl. II); 3 – Bottle of transparent colorless glass decorated by gold painting. Reconstruction. Second half of the twelfth century. Found in Novogradok. Excavations by F. D. Gurevich. St. Petersburg, the State Hermitage Museum (after: *Vostočnoe steklo*, pl. XI, 1); 4 – Bowl of transparent colourless glass painted with yellow enamel and gold. Reconstruction. Second half of the twelfth century. Found in Novogradok. Excavations by F. D. Gurevich. St. Petersburg, the State Hermitage Museum (after: *Vostočnoe steklo*, pl. VII, 2); 5 – Vase of frosted milk-white glass. Reconstruction. First half of the twelfth century. Found in Novogradok. Excavations by F. D. Gurevich. St. Petersburg, the State Hermitage Museum (after: *Vostočnoe steklo*, pl. XI, 5); 6 – Bottle of frosted milk-white glass painted with red enamel and gold. Reconstruction. Second half of the twelfth century. Found in Novogradok. Excavations by F. D. Gurevich. St. Petersburg, the State Hermitage Museum (after: *Vostočnoe steklo*, pl. IV)

engraved a segment with a triangle inscribed in it. On the other part of the beaker's sides there is a paw, a part of the body and a wing, which belongs to the griffin. Fatimid Egypt was traditionally considered to be the place of manufacture of *Hedwigsgläser*. However, Y. L. Schapova, who researched Hedwig's Polish beakers (those from Kraków and Nysa), came to the conclusion that they, as well as all European beakers of this group, are imitations of the medieval samples and are dated back to the end of the seventeenth or the beginning of the eighteenth centuries. She arrived at this conclusion while studying the technique of drawing the decor. In the European series of beakers it corresponds to the technique of cut glass of the end of the seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries, when many innovations in glass manufacturing and cold-working were mastered and were being put into practice.

The technique of decor on the beaker from Novogradok is different, and some of its characteristics correspond to the wheel cut glass vessels from the Treasury of San Marco in Venice, the so-called wheel cut Islamic glass, the wheel cut glass beakers of the fourth to sixth centuries, which were found in Western and Northern Europe, the *diatrete* vases (a rather shallow carved line of conjugated linear segments, with a lack of decor polishing).⁹ As far as the place of manufacture of the Novogradok beaker is concerned, Y. L. Schapova considers that, according to the chemical composition of the glass and to the manufacturing technique, the beaker is Byzantine, probably from Constantinople. The chemical composition and the prescribed norm of the glass of the Novogradok beaker fit in the area of Byzantine glass, made according to the traditions of Provincial Roman glass manufacturing, and exclude the possibility of intercourse with Syrian and Middle Eastern traditions. Besides, the so-called Islamic wheel cut glass had existed for a relatively small span of time, from the ninth and tenth centuries, and the beaker is archaeologically dated to the second half of the twelfth century. Therefore, the Orient in this case, including Fatimid Egypt, is excluded.¹⁰ Moreover, Y. L. Schapova advanced a hypothesis about the possible Byzantine origin of the so-called Islamic wheel cut glass.¹¹

Yet another group is composed of more simple vessels: glasses made of thin light-blue and blue glass, a bowl made of thin colourless glass, its upper brim decorated with a thin blue glass thread, fused into a colourless mass, a thick-sided bottle made of blue transparent glass of indicative rectangular shape, and a vessel for chemical purposes made of colourless transparent glass (fig. 5: 2–3).¹²

In addition to the well-known finds from Novogradok and Turov, at the excavations of the Medieval towns of Belarus the archaeologists discovered some more interesting

⁹ ŠAPOVA 2004, 203.

¹⁰ ŠAPOVA 1976, 214; ŠAPOVA 2004, 200–03.

¹¹ ŠAPOVA, 205–37.

¹² *Vostočnoe steklo*, 15, Pl. XIII; GUREVIČ 1986, 74.

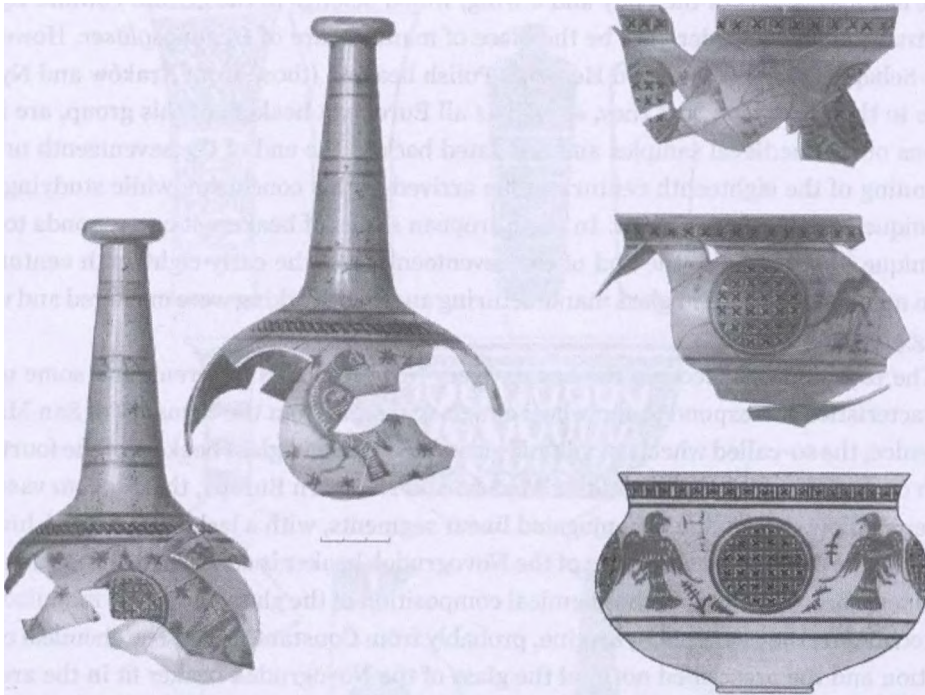


Fig. 3. Bottle of frosted milk-white glass, painted with red enamel and gold. Second half of the twelfth century. Found in Novogradok. Excavations by F. D. Gurevich. St. Petersburg, the State Hermitage Museum (after: *Vostočnoe steklo*, pl. III)

Fig. 4. Bowl of frosted milk-white glass painted with red enamel and gold. Second half of the twelfth century. Found in Novogradok. Excavations by F. D. Gurevich. St. Petersburg, the State Hermitage Museum (after: *Vostočnoe steklo*, pl. V, VI)

fragments of Byzantine glass vessels which have not been introduced into wide scientific circulation yet.

Several fragments of Byzantine glass vessels painted with enamel and gold come from Vitebsk (excavations by L. V. Koledinsky). Three fragments belong, judging by form and their quite large diameter, to the brim of a thin-sided cup made of blue glass, painted with white enamel and gold (fig. 9).¹³ Its surface is covered with vegetative curls, drawn in gold; the brim is additionally decorated with a border of cruciform figures made of white enamel. Two fragments of the glass vessels, apparently of Byzantine origin, were found in Polotsk. One of them was painted with gold, the other one with white and yellow enamel.¹⁴

¹³ TKAČEV/KOLEDINSKIY 1978, 156, 158.

¹⁴ GANETSKAYA 2003, 51.

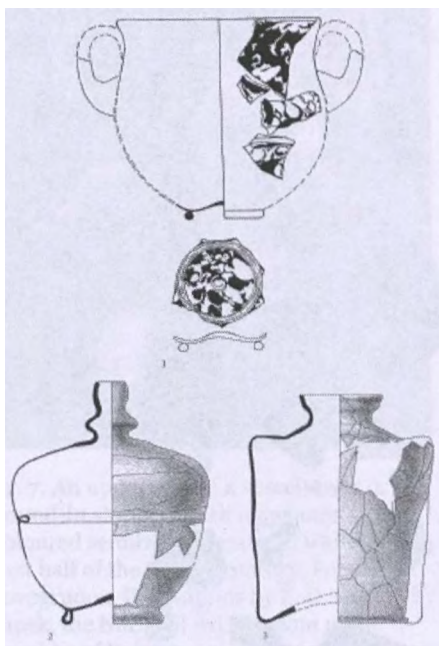


Fig. 5:

1 – Two-handled beaker of three-colour twofold glass. Reconstruction. Twelfth century. Found in Novogrudok. Excavations by F. D. Gurevich. St. Petersburg, the State Hermitage Museum (after: GUREVIĆ 1986, p. 73);

2 – Bottle for chemical purposes of transparent colorless glass. Reconstruction. Second half of the twelfth century. Found in Novogrudok. Excavations by F. D. Gurevich. St. Petersburg, the State Hermitage Museum (after: *Vostočnoe steklo*, pl. XIII, 1);

3 – Bottle of transparent blue glass. Reconstruction. Twelfth century. Found in Novogrudok. Excavations by F. D. Gurevich. St. Petersburg, the State Hermitage Museum. (after: *Vostočnoe steklo*, pl. XIII, 2)

Apart from the vessels fragments, there are fragments of Byzantine glass bracelets found on the territory of Belarus. They have several characteristics which mark them out from the basic mass of bracelets of Kievan origin and local production.¹⁵ First of all they are distinguished by the chemical composition of the glass – they belong to the Na-Ca-Si class (to both its subclasses – sodium and ash). Secondly, they are united by a number of formal features. The probable Byzantine bracelets are notable for a variety of shapes and decoration. Painting with gold and enamels is one of their characteristics, the others is the prevalence of the colour blue (oxide cobalt was used as a dye), and they have inner surface flat, outer surface curved, sometimes with a more complicated profile view, or square as well as triangular form. A combination of two features – the presence of a blue colour and painting with gold and (or) enamels is especially reliable. The ornamental elements of painting are different kinds of lines (straight and wavy, short and long, continuous and dashed), circles, ovals, rhombes, spirals, rosettes, stars, curls, arches, volutes, crosses, triangles, dots, ticks, birds' images. Quite often these elements are united into different compositions.

The lower chronological border of Byzantine bracelets – the ninth century – is set by the finds in Bulgaria, the upper one – the thirteenth century – by the finds in Khersones. A decorative effect of the early painted bracelets was based on the sharp contrast of a dark, almost black background and bright painting. In the bracelets of the eleventh century this contrast

¹⁵ ŠAPOVA 2004, 107.

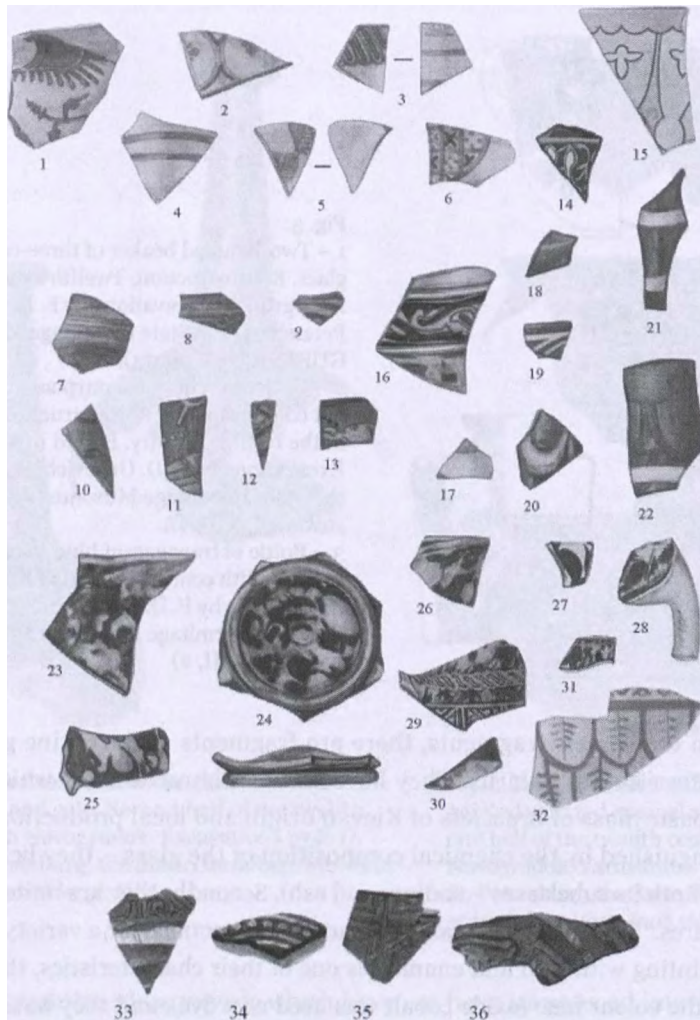


Fig. 6. Fragments of vessels of coloured glass. Byzantium, Syria. Twelfth to thirteenth century.

1 – 32 – found in Novogrudok. Excavations by F. D. Gurevich. St. Petersburg, the State Hermitage Museum, 33 – 36 – found in Turov. Excavations by M. D. Polubojarinova (after: *Vostočnoe steklo*, pl. XII and POLUBOJARINOVA 1963a, p. 235);

1 – 6 – frosted milk-white glass painted with gold and enamel, 7 – 13 – reddish violet glass decorated by gold painting, 14 – blue glass painted with gold and enamel, 15 – transparent colourless glass painted with gold and enamel, 16 – transparent colourless glass painted with enamel, 17, 20 – yellow and blue glass decorated by white glass thread, 18, 19, 21, 22 – blue glass painted with gold and enamel, 23 – 28 – three-colour twofold glass, 29 – 31 – three-colour twofold glass with gold painting, 32 – transparent colourless glass painted with gold and enamel, 33 – 36 – blue glass painted with gold and enamel.



Fig. 7. An upper part of a vessel cover or its ground-in stopper. Dark manganese-coloured semitransparent and white glass. First half of the twelfth century. Found in Novogrudok. Excavations by F. D. Gurevich. Minsk, the National Art Museum of the Republic of Belarus. Inv. КП 20530 (Photo: O. L. Lihtorovich)

was softened, in most cases the background of the painting became blue, the colouring of the painting became more complicated, and there emerged additional yellow, red, blue and also the gold.¹⁶

Amidst the bulk of the glass bracelets found in Rus' towns, Byzantine glass bracelets form a small, but very noticeable part due to their expressive colour, decoration and form. According to Y. L. Schapova's observations, in Kiev they total to 9% of all finds, in Smolensk – 5% and in Novgorod – 1.5%.¹⁷ In Byzantium glass bracelets were rare. They were a part of material culture of inhabitants of outskirts of the Byzantine world. This people were on a lower stage of social and cultural development and had its own system of values, in which glass adornments could have possessed a high status. According to Y. L. Schapova's supposition, Byzantine adornments made of glass were special export goods.¹⁸

On the territory of Belarus, Byzantine glass bracelets were found in Polotsk, Novogrudok, Volkovysk, Slonim, Minsk, Slutsk, Drutsk, Orsha, Mstislavl, Gomel, Grodno and Brest, the site of the medieval settlement of Maskovichi (Braslav District of Vitebsk Region).¹⁹ This is evidenced by the glass composition (the Na-Ca-Si class), their characteristic colour (blue), the shape of the bracelets (inner surface flat, outer surface curved, sometimes with more complicated side view, square and triangular) and their painting with gold and enamel and their plated decor with glass bits.²⁰

The most effective are three fragments of blue colour bracelets with painting in yellow enamel and gold that were found in Polotsk (The Polotsk National Historical and Cultural Museum-Reserve). All three fragments belong to different items. They are still the only finds, known to us, of painted bracelets on the territory of Belarus. These bracelets are typical of Byzantine manufacture of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.²¹

¹⁶ ŠAPOVA 2004, 129, 131.

¹⁷ ŠAPOVA 2004, 106.

¹⁸ ŠAPOVA 2004, 102–03.

¹⁹ GUREVIČ 1986, 76; ŠAPOVA 2004, 117.

²⁰ ŠAPOVA 1969, 169; ŠAPOVA 1972, 109, 168.

²¹ ŠAPOVA 2004, 105.

One of them is painted with gold (fig. 10: 1). The ornament is geometrical with the main motif of a rhombus shape with a dot in the centre, which repeats along the length of the bracelet. A fragment of a bracelet, which was found in Novgorod, is similar in decorative effect. It is also painted with gold, but has more complicated ornamentation, which includes the depiction of a bird in the medallion and geometrical motifs.²² Two other fragments are painted with gold and enamel. The ornament is also geometrical, with limited insertions of simple vegetative elements. On one of them are preserved two different motifs, which apparently interchanged with each other. One of them is a spiral, confined in the circumference, the other one is made with two diagonal lines, which divide the surface in four parts, with vegetative curls (fig. 10: 4). The spiral and curls were drawn in gold, the rest of the painting with yellow enamel. On the second fragment, there are also two motifs interchanging with each other: one of them is a slanting net with circles in each area, the other one is a portrayal resembling a flower, the outer contours of which are outlined with a wavy line, the heart of which is marked with a circle (fig. 10: 1). The circles and the flower were drawn with yellow enamel, the rest of the details of the portrayal – gold. Similar blue glass bracelets with painting with gold and enamel are kept in The National Museum of History of Ukraine in Kiev. They were found in Kerch and are dated back to the eleventh century.

The fragments of bracelets of inner surface flat, outer surface curved with plated decoration were found in Minsk (2 items), Gomel (2 items), Brest (1 item), Volkovysk (1 item), Slutsk (1 item).²³ All of them were blue, except for one copy from Gomel (green) and the decoration was

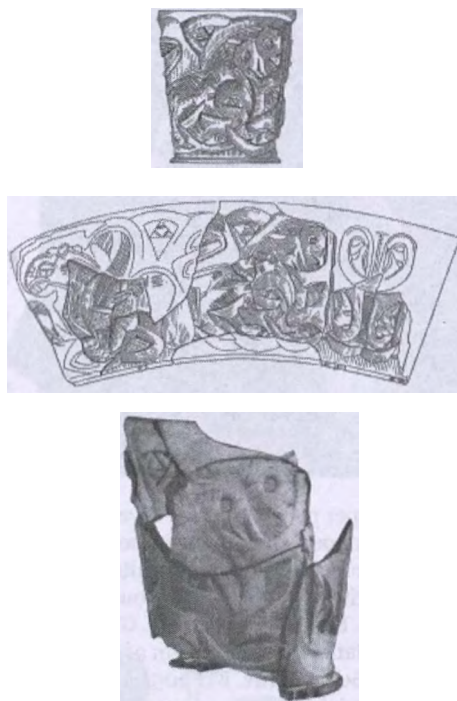


Fig. 8. Hedwigsgläser beaker. Glass, carving, engraving, grinding. Second half of the twelfth century. Found in Novogrudok. Excavations by F. D. Gurevich. St. Petersburg, the State Hermitage Museum (after: *Vostočnoe steklo*, pl. X, XIII, 2)

²² *Drevnij Novgorod*, fig. 248.

²³ Minsk, the National Museum of History and Culture of Belarus, Museum "Gomel Palace-Park Ensemble", Brest Regional Museum of Local Lore, Volkovysk Military-historical Museum, KOLEDINSKIY 1985, 168, fig. 176.

made by the application of glass bits of yellow and white colours, which forms short lines and small elongated spots (fig. 10: 3, 5–9). It is a group of fragments of bracelets of inner surface flat, outer surface curved, blue and without decoration (Minsk, Mstislavl) that stands out. In Gomel two fragments of liver-red colour and inner surface flat, outer surface curved with complicated form (ribbed surface) were found (fig. 10: 2). They are very similar in form to the fragments of blue bracelets found at the excavations in Kerch (The National Museum of History of Ukraine in Kiev). In Drutsk fragments of twisted Byzantine bracelets were found. By form they are very close to ordinary twisted Rus' bracelets, but differ in their bigger diameter and predominant blue colour, obtained with the use of cobalt. Determination of glass articles from Drutsk was made by T. S. Skripchenko.²⁴

It is necessary to note the fragments of stained glass in Grodno and Polotsk – a rare category of finds in Rus' towns. Fragments of flat pane are known from the excavations of the St. John Chrysostom church in Chelm, the Church of the Tithes in Kiev, Dormition church of Elets Monastery in Chernigov, as well as in Galich, Novgorod, Vladimir and Suzdal.²⁵ On the territory of Belarus fragments of stained glass were found in Grodno (excavations by Z. Durczewski) and Polotsk (excavations by M. K. Karger and G. V. Shtykhov). The fragments from Grodno are dark-green, with white enamel painting (fig. 11). The ornament of painting in one case is geometrical, with the main motif of the circle, and in the other – vegetative. A fragment of a similar colour and ornamentation was found in Polotsk. Other fragments from Polotsk are of a blue colour made, apparently, with cobalt and without painting. While researching the fragments from Grodno, Y. L. Schapova made the supposition that they could be made by Greek craftsmen working in Kiev, because – according to the shape and colour – they significantly differ from pre-Mongol glass of Kiev manufacture and only in part resemble those from West Europe.²⁶ But the spectrum analysis made by A. N. Egorkov at the Laboratory of the Archaeological Technology of the Institute for the History of Material Culture of the Russian Academy of Sciences had shown that the fragment from Polotsk is rather of a West European origin. The researchers link some stained glass windows with the



Fig. 9. Fragment of vessel of transparent blue glass painted with enamel and gold. Twelfth to thirteenth century. Found in Vitebsk. Excavations by L. V. Koledinskiy. Vitebsk Regional Museum of Local Lore Inv. H/B 10145/3 (Photo: Author)

²⁴ LEVKO 1999, 12.

²⁵ LIADOVA 2005, 149.

²⁶ ŠAPOVA 1972, 143.

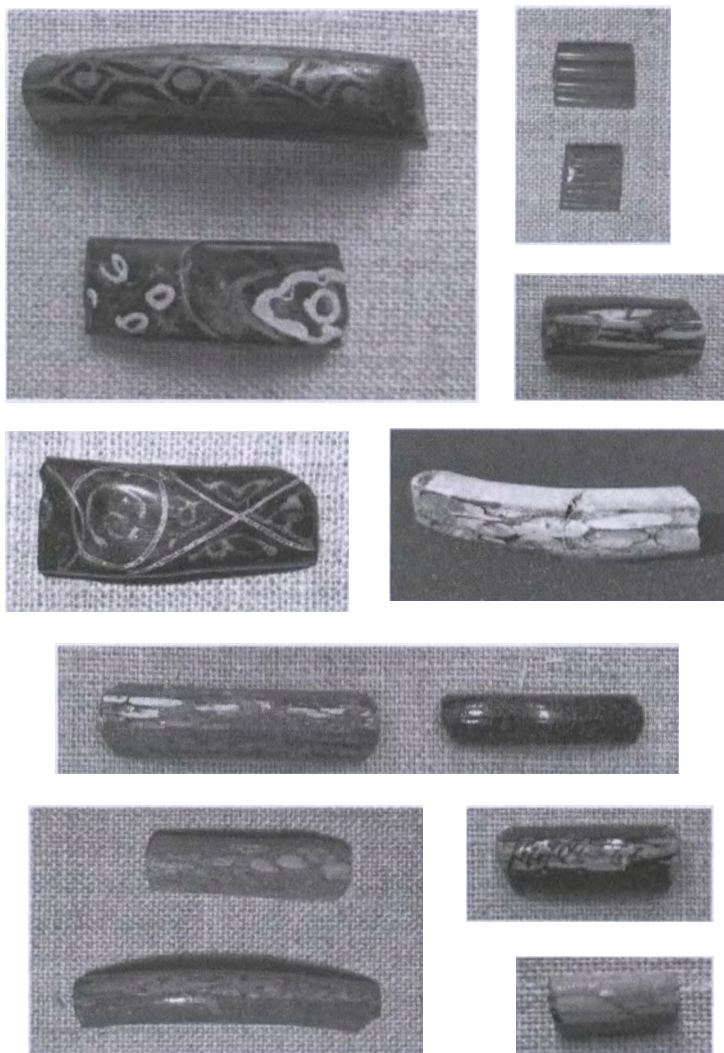


Fig. 10. Fragments of glass bracelets. Eleventh to twelfth century: 1, 4 – Blue glass painted with gold and enamel. Found in Polotsk. Excavations by S. V. Tarasov. Polotsk National Historical and Cultural Museum-Reserve. Inv. КП-8-4384/65, КП-10-6228/76, КП-7-3956/1 (Photo: Author); 2 – Liver-red- glass. Found in Gomel. Excavations by O. A. Makushnikov. Museum “Gomel Palace-Park Ensemble” (Photo: Author); 3 – Blue glass with plated decor. Found in Brest. Excavations by P. F. Lysenko. Brest Regional Museum of Local Lore. Inv. КП 14829/129, А-3300 (Photo: Author); 5 – Blue glass with plated decor. Found in Slutsk. Excavations by L. V. Koledinskiy. Slutsk Museum of Local Lore (Photo: L. V. Koledinskiy); 6, 8 – Blue glass with plated decor. Found in Minsk. Excavations by V. R. Tarasenko. Minsk, the National Museum of History and Culture of Belarus. Inv. КП 10613/5, КП 14704/66 (Photo: Author); 7 – Blue and green glass with plated décor. Found in Gomel. Excavations by O. A. Makushnikov. Museum “Gomel Palace-Park Ensemble” (Photo: Author); 9 – Blue glass with plated decor. Found in Volkovysk. Volkovysk Military-historical Museum. Inv. КП 2964/2854 (Photo: Author)

West European tradition (Vladimir and Suzdal)²⁷, and others - with Byzantine glass-making (Kiev, Grodno and Vladimir). While studying the glass from the workshop on the territory of Kiev-Pecherskaya Lavra, Y. L. Schapova came to the conclusion that Byzantine glass-makers, who were invited for ornamentation of the Dormition cathedral, brought with them all of the necessary raw materials: ashes, frit and dyes.²⁸

The use of stained-glass windows in Byzantium has been positively confirmed after discoveries of A. Megaw in Constantinople in the 1960s when, during the restoration of the complex of the Christ Pantokrator Monastery (1118–1124), a significant quantity of fragments of blue, yellow, green and purple window pane was found. All the glass was well preserved and of supreme quality, and one fourth of all fragments were covered with paintings. Chemical analysis of the glass showed that it was melted according to the Provincial Roman tradition, in ashes of salt plants and dolomite, and that it belongs to the Na-Ca-Si class.²⁹

An unique find on the territory of Belarus is a cube of gilded smalt found in Vitebsk at the excavations of St. Michael Church, and which has been dated to the first quarter of the twelfth century (excavations by L. V. Koledinskiy)³⁰ According to V. Galibin, who made the chemical analysis, the chemical composition of the glass (a high concentration of potassium oxide, a smaller concentration of calcium oxide and a twice as low concentration of sodium oxide) may indicate its Byzantine origin.³¹ It is quite possible that it was made at the joint Byzantine-Russian glass ateliers in Kiev, where the smalt was manufactured for



Fig. 11. Fragments of stained glasses. Twelfth century. Found in Grodno. Excavations by Z. Durczewski. The Grodno State History and Archaeology Museum. Inv. КП 2501, КП 5137, КП 1302 (Photo: Author)

²⁷ It conforms to information by V. Tatišev (Василий П. Татишев, *История российской я с самых древнейших времен*, Москва 1796) that Friedrich I Barbarossa sent Saxon master-builders to the court of Knyaz Andrei Bogolyubskij in the Vladimir land. Besides, Laurentian Chronicle informs that master-builders came to Bogolyubovo from foreign lands; see NICKEL 1997, 88–89.

²⁸ ŠAPOVA 2004, 82–83.

²⁹ LIADOVA 2005, 152–53.

³⁰ KALIADZINSKI 1995, 64.

³¹ KALIADZINSKI, 63.

the decoration of Rus' churches. One of them was set up at the Sofia Cathedral in the 40s of the eleventh century, and the other one in Kiev-Pecherskaya Lavra, at the end of the eleventh century. The analysis of glass samples discovered at these ateliers showed that 53% of them belong to sodium or ash glass of the Na-Ca-Si class. Therefore, they were manufactured by Greek craftsmen. The bulk of smalt manufactured in Kiev workshops was gilded. It was needed most of all because it was used as mosaic background. Coloured smalt was manufactured in small quantities, what is indirectly proved by the fact that only very small amount of waste from coloured smalt has been discovered. Some smalt was brought from Byzantium.³² Apart from Kiev, gilded smalt was found in Pereyaslavl Khmel'nitskiy and Novgorod. On the territory of Belarus the well-known finds of smalt are those in the sepulchral crypt of the funeral church of Savior-Transfiguration (St. Euphrosyne) Monastery in Polotsk, and on the territory of the Upper Castle in Polotsk where – however – the smalt was made of opacified glass.³³

The finds of Byzantine glazed ceramics on the territory of Belarus are not numerous. In Turov, a fragment of semi-majolica red clay plate from the twelfth century, earlier regarded as Middle Asian import, was found.³⁴ The preserved brim fragment of a plate, decorated with a border with an Arabic inscription or its imitation, made using the *sgraffito* technique (fig. 12: 2). A group of ceramics, with their imitations of Arabic inscription, made in this technique,

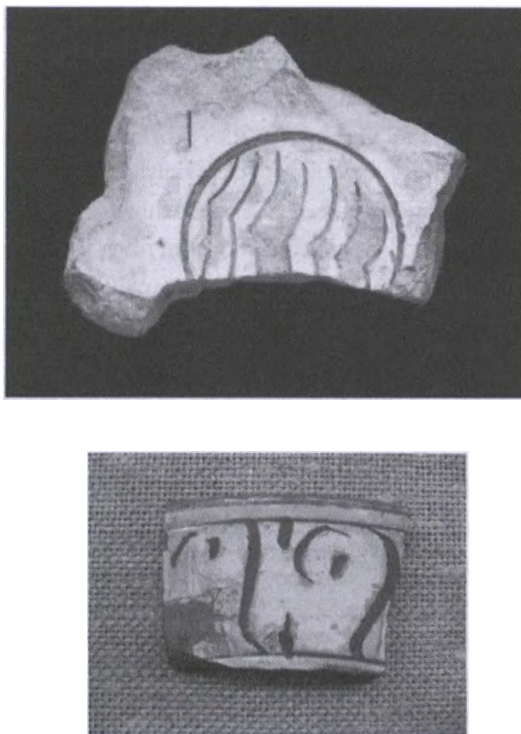


Fig. 12. 1 – Fragment of ceramics «Zeuxippus Ware». Twelfth or early thirteenth century. Found on the territory of Belarus. Minsk, Museum of the History Faculty of the Belarusian State University (Photo: V. J. Koval); 2 – Fragment of semi-majolica red clay plate. Twelfth century. Found in Turov. Excavations by M. D. Poluboyarinova. Minsk, the National Museum of History and Culture of Belarus. Inv. KII 8828/146 (Photo: Author)

³² ŠAPOVA 2004, 73, 83.

³³ KALIADZINSKI 1995, 62.

³⁴ POLUBOJARINOVA 1963a, 45–46, fig. 11, 1.

became known as a result of excavations in Constantinople and Corinth. D. T. Rice dated this group back to the end of the eleventh or the beginning of the twelfth century.³⁵

In the Museum of the Faculty of History of the Belarusian State University, Minsk, there is a fragment of the bottom of a Byzantine cup belonging to the group of the *Zeuxippus* Ware (the twelfth and fourteenth centuries). It was found on the territory of Belarus, however, the place of this find is unknown. The bottom of the cup is decorated with characteristic *sgraffito* ornament in a round medallion and it is covered with pale-green transparent glaze (fig. 12: 1).

In Polotsk three fragments of white clay glazed ceramics with polychromic painting were found (fig. 13).³⁶ They belong to the type of Byzantine ceramics with five colours for underglaze painting. The characteristic colours of the painted fragments (which are: blue, turquoise, red, yellow and brown) speak in favour of this supposition. Ceramics of this type are the highest achievement of Byzantine technology. The only sample of this kind in Rus' was found in Kiev (a plate with the depiction of a bird). T. I. Makarova dated this sample back to the eleventh or twelfth centuries.³⁷

A fragment of a vessel made of light-red clay, covered on the outside with white engobe and light-green glaze was found in Novogrudok (possibly of the Byzantine origin or from the Black Sea region, dated to the fourteenth century). Two fragments of semi-majolica with green glaze from the Black Sea region (thirteenth and fourteenth centuries) come from Volkovysk. Another two fragments, which probably relate to the same region and the same time, were found in the same place. They belong to a red clay vessel, covered with white engobe and a turquoise transparent glaze.

Byzantine glazed ceramics were known to the inhabitants of Novogrudok. This fact is proved by two vessels reproducing forms of Byzantine tableware – an open dish (the first half of the twelfth century) and a footed-bottom cup (the second half of the twelfth

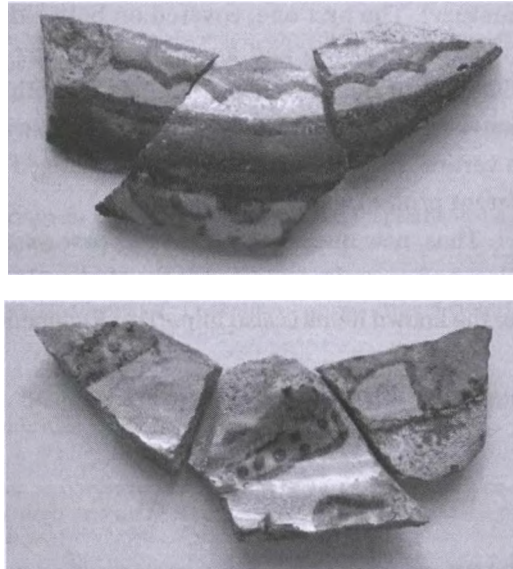


Fig. 13. Fragments of white clay glazed ceramics with polychromic painting. Eleventh to twelfth century. Found in Polotsk. Excavations by D. V. Duk. Polotsk National Historical and Cultural Museum-Reserve (Photo: Author)

³⁵ RICE 1930, 72–73, pl. III, 3; XII.

³⁶ DUK 2002, 31, photo 76.

³⁷ MAKAROVA 1967, 17–20.

century). The first one, covered on both sides with a green opaque glaze, with horizontally deflected rim and low bottom, differs from its Byzantine prototype by its simple flat form of the rim (instead of the rim of the rail type). The cup, with blue-green glazed outer walls, and with cherry-coloured glaze inside, reproduced the forms of the cup with a vertical rim, though in somewhat changed proportions (being a bit higher and of a different profile).³⁸

Thus, new finds supplement our perception of the types, forms and decor of Byzantine glass and ceramics imported to the Medieval towns of Belarus. The verification of attribution of the known items is also important for amending the known corpus of Byzantine imports.

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³⁸ MALEVSKAJA 1969, 196, 198.

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