Studies of late antique glass tend to fall into two groups: those which concentrate on the geochemical component; and typological/chronological works. Although, up till now, no exhaustive study has been undertaken on the relationship between these two areas, a number of works, listed below, provide an overview of information on either the typo-chronological aspect or the geochemical characteristics of ancient glass. *Tout feu, tout sable* (2001) and *Cœur de verre* (2003) are exceptions to this rule. These exhibition catalogues tried, in an exemplary way, to fit the mixed geochemical data into the general (but complicated) chaîne opératoire of antique glass production. While scholars tend to find Henderson (2000) the most appealing guide, Wedepohl's book (2003) is the ideal geochemical starter-kit for the glass student—a clear text, with illustrations and graphs (28 tables with analyses for comparison in an appendix), though it omits the abundant archaeological examples Henderson gives a noteworthy description of glass production in Abbasid and Ayyubid Syria, at al-Raqqa (76–90).

Von Saldern’s *magnum opus* (2004) synthesises the history of glass, from its invention at the end of the 3rd or beginning of the 2nd millennium B.C. somewhere in the Middle East, up to the transformation of the West Roman Empire into the Frankish empire, in around A.D. 400, and the shift from the usage of ‘Late Roman’ to ‘Early Byzantine’ glass in the Near East. *Antikes Glas* describes the evolution of glass technology and typology, giving the reader a clear idea of how mankind learned to handle this vitreous material. The exhaustive chapter on blown glass (218–528), with a discussion of its possible origins, also gives an overview of the different vessel types, as well as late antique glass-working methods (cutting, engraving, diatreta, *fondi d’oro* . . .). When compared with Von Saldern, J. Philippe’s (1970) monograph is less complete. However, although slightly outdated, the volume capably describes the broad trends attested in glass technology during the entire Byzantine
period. The proceedings of the 1993 congress on *Le verre de l’antiquité tardive et du haut moyen âge* contain contributions on material from the West to the East, from Britain and Dorestad to Russia and Jordan, ranging from the 4th–9th centuries A.D.

Roman, Byzantine and Early Medieval glass; 10 B.C.–700 C.E. Ernesto Wolf Collection (2001) is much more than a catalogue. This exceptionally well-researched book offers superb colour photographs, alongside detailed technological descriptions of selected vessels that are explained within their historical and geographical contexts. Also very useful are the extensive glossaries that describe equipment and tools, vessel shapes, characteristics of production and decoration, and a discussion of the vessel shapes attested to date. This catalogue is a key reference to understanding late antique glass morphology and glass working, although the reader must be aware of the current discrepancy between the outstanding quality of the glass described in this catalogue and the reality of the fragmentary plain glass excavated on late antique sites.


**The Nature of the Evidence**

The sources for the study of glass are problematic. High status items are recovered from tombs, and whole chunks of raw glass from ships. But the glass retrieved from archaeological sites probably does not reflect its use. There is a large hiatus in the ordinary glass that is found on sites, especially in the Levant, that has doubtless been affected by the recycling of fragments. This means that only sudden destruction deposits give a real reflection of glass use within a given area. The