

Carol Meyer

Carol Meyer submitted the third and last volume of the Bir Umm Fawakhir final reports to the Oriental Institute's editorial office in August. It has since been accepted for publication and reviewed; revisions are in progress. With twenty-odd years of research in and about the Eastern Desert of Egypt winding down, Meyer started several new projects. With thanks to Don Whitcomb, she resumed a long-postponed study of the Aqaba glass corpus. This is a

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large and well-excavated body of early Islamic glass, and to date there are no other published corpora from this time period. The glass has the potential to document archaeologically the transition from Byzantine culture to the emerging Islamic one. For instance, the Byzantine wine goblets declined in numbers and were in time replaced by a series of distinctive cylindrical cups or bowls. This is also the period when the Mediterranean Sea ceased to be *mare nostrum* and its shores and ports were divided between the Byzantine and rising Umayyad powers. For lands under the rule of the caliphs, the focus of trade shifted from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, and the Indian Ocean. Since glass is widely traded, both for its intrinsic value and as containers for perfume, medicines, and other expensive items, the Aqaba corpus will provide an opportunity to follow some of the new trade patterns. To date, all the 1986 material has been sorted and tabulated on a new database table and diagnostic pieces have been drawn. The 1987 material was tabulated and drawn in the 1990s but needs to be incorporated in the new table. There were four seasons of excavation after 1987, so the project is expected to take several years. Secondly, Bruce Williams is resuming publication of the last sites excavated behind the Aswan High Dam in the 1960s (see the report on the *Oriental Institute Nubian Expedition*). Meyer will write the sections on glass found at Dorginarti and Serra East and will assist in preparing the pottery corpus from all the remaining sites. Finally, a project that Meyer worked with in Syria in 1978 at Tell Nebi Mend (ancient Qadesh) under the direction of Peter Parr, is also at long last being published. Meyer will publish the 1978 corpus of Late Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine-period glass. The early Roman corpus in particular is valuable as being excavated, which is not true of a surprising amount of the glass of this period, and being close very close in time and space to the presumed place of invention of the first mass-produced glass, the distinctive mold-formed bowls, in Lebanon.
