In a previous article published in this journal, I analyzed a unique clay object discovered at the site of Apollonia-Arsuf (Israel), which I claimed had been used as a horizontal (flat) portable sundial (horologium) (figure 1). The object is somewhat pentagonal, depicting a design that was incised (and partially stamped) on it prior to firing. Given its small dimensions, I rejected the idea that it could have served as a game board. Due to its shallowness (some 0.15 m in depth) and design, I also rejected the possibility that it could have served as a mould for a metal object. Even so, I took cognizance of the fact that the object’s design


3. In the case of a single (one-part) mould the object’s shallowness and lack of funneling does not support a use for spilling liquid lead onto it; in the case of two-part mould (in which our object could have served as the upper part which functioned as the design of the frame), the object’s lack of fitting hole/s (for the lower part) refute such a use or make it highly problematic.
bore a resemblance to several lead frames that are known in scientific literature as mirror-frames. Since these lead frames are too small for practical use, it has been suggested that they are either votive in nature or more probably, apotropaic, intended to ward off evil eyes and spirits, as they are found in both domestic and

4. M. AVIAM and E. J. STERN, “Burial caves near H. Sugar”, *Atiqot* 33, 1997, pp. 98-99, fig. 6, 8 (in Hebrew), were first to make the connection between the object they published that preserved no mirror with three examples in the Benaki Museum in Athens (cf. Ch. W. CLAIRMONT, *Benaki Museum: catalogue of ancient and Islamic glass*, Athens, 1977, p. 34, pl. VI, 101a-c), of which one frame still encloses a circular plaque of colorless glass, with four clips at the back serving to hold the mirror in place.

Given these examples it seems that the several slightly concave/convex circular plaques of colorless glass found in Roman-Byzantine sites in Palestine may have also belonged to lead mirror frames (cf. in this respect, F. VITTO, “An early Byzantine-period burial cave at Kabul”, *Atiqot* 66, 2011, p. 124, and see R. E. JACKSON-TAL, “Glass vessels from the burial cave at ‘Ar’ara”, *Atiqot* 59, 2008, p. 49*, fig. 1, 17 [in Hebrew], for such an example, with further references therein).
funerary contexts in the Late Roman–Early Byzantine Palestinian milieu (figure 2). In recent years, a great deal of attention has been given to such lead frames and many examples have been published. Moreover, two have been found in recent excavations at Apollonia-Arsuf in Byzantine contexts (figure 3). However, all the examples published from Palestine thus far lack the cross design within a circle ⨁ in their upper loop that


Although some of the above lead frames were found in tombs whose religious orientation seems Christian (Gezer, Tarshiha, Horbat Sugar), an exclusive Christian use is doubtful. Due to the fact that most of the known examples come from third-fourth centuries CE sites in Palestine, Vito (above, p. 124) (following E. Nowotny, “Gläserne Konvexspiegel”, *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Institutes in Wien. Beiblatt* 13, 1910, col. 107-127, 261-270, who stressed the affinity in style and technique with the Syro-Phoenician lead coffins), suggested an East Mediterranean origin for these mirrors.
appears on our object. Although I am still content with my previous identification of the object, I cannot reject altogether the possibility that the object may have been the product of an initial attempt to create a mould for a lead frame that for some reason was incomplete and unusable (supra, n. 3).7

7. Here one must refer to a mould published from Mount Zion, Jerusalem (figure 4). Although it was published as one of three eight-century CE moulds for jewelry, cf. M. BRosHl, “Excavations in the House of Caiaphas, Mount Zion,” Qadmoniot 19-20, 1972, p. 107 (in Hebrew), its identification as mould of lead frame seems quite certain. It differs however in its ornamental and technical design when compared to the object from Apollonia.