

THE CERAMIC OIL LAMPS FROM HORBAT ROZEZ

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The excavation at Horbat Rozez (see Yannai, this volume) unearthed c. 23 oil lamps. Two lamps date to the Hellenistic period, one dates to the Early Roman period, and the majority, to the Byzantine period; one example seems to bridge into the Early Islamic horizon. The lamps are representative of regional cultural affiliations with the exception of Lamp 14, which is known from workshops in the Jordan Valley–Bet She'an region, and Lamp 15, familiar mainly from the area of Samaria–Shekhem. All the late Byzantine lamps (12–14), as well as the Early Islamic example (Lamp 15), suggest an affinity with the Samaritan culture.

THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD

Both examples (Nos. 1, 2) are of foreign origin. Lamp 1 (Fig. 1), a Rhodian import, occurs at almost all Hellenistic sites; many lamps of this type reached the Levant. Similar lamps were found at Adderet together with imported Rhodian amphoras, whose stamped handles date them to 240–230 BCE (Bailey 1972: Pl. 78:Q380–Q392; Yogevev 1982:1). Lamp 2 (not illustrated) is apparently a local product, fashioned after a Greek prototype (early second century BCE; Howland 1958: Type 43B; Scheibler 1976: Pl. 91:297, 396).

1. Fragment. Wheel-made, levigated clay, brown glaze. Double-angled profile; the join of the nozzle to the body was left unsmoothed. A curved flange tapers the wide, disc-like filling hole. On the left side is a pierced protrusion. Date: Mid-third–early second centuries BCE.

2. Fragment. Mold-made, with flattened shoulders; an incised groove separates the shoulders from the

filling hole. A lump projects out of the left side. Date: First half of the third century BCE.

THE EARLY ROMAN PERIOD

Only one fragment (Lamp 3; Fig. 1) was found of the 'Herodian' type, a popular wheel-made lamp of the Early Roman period. The ubiquitous Herodian lamp is known to be characteristic of lamps made and used by the Jewish population. This type, influenced by Greek and Italian lamps, was almost the only locally produced lamp to continue in use until the end of the Bar Kokhba Revolt. The lamps, which circulated throughout Israel and Transjordan, are found at nearly all sites with mixed populations during



Fig. 1. Lamps from the Hellenistic (1) and Early Roman (3) periods.

this period. Adan-Bayewitz (2008) suggested that the majority of the lamps were produced in Jerusalem. The shape may have been influenced by that of the pomegranate (Sussman 1996: Fig. 2).

In Jerusalem, the lamps were found both in habitation contexts and in burial tombs, with offerings in ossuaries (Mazar and Ben-Dov 1971: Pl. 24:10–14; Geva 2003; Geva and Hershkovitz 2006). At Masada, they were classified as Types CII and CIV (Barag and Hershkovitz 1994: Figs. 8:58, 60; 10:67; 14) and dated to the time of the Zealots (66–74 CE). Complete lamps and hundreds of fragments were unearthed at Gamla (Danny Syon, pers. comm.).

3. Fragment. Wheel-made, crescent-shaped pointed nozzle. Between the nozzle and the wide, circular wick hole is a rouletted double-groove above two stamped concentric circles of unequal size. The pattern of minimal decoration is popular on lamps such as our example, made of pink or light-orange ware, and on lamps of gray ware.

THE BYZANTINE PERIOD

The largest number of oil lamps (19) date to the Byzantine period. Twelve were discovered in L3006 and the others in Loci 3003, 3005, 3007, and 3026. The lamps belong to the late Samaritan group and I suggest they were used by a Samaritan population. These lamp-types are found, from south to north, in Tel Aviv-Yafo and Kefar Sava (Charvit 1994: Figs. 30, 48, 53); Apollonia-Arsuf (Sussman 1983); at Ḥ. Raqit (Sussman 2004: Pls. II–IV) and Geva (Sussman 1988: Nos. 37–40, 63); and inland, in eastern Samaria and the Shekhem region (Magen 2004; 2005).

The lamps from Ḥ. Rozeḡ belong to Samaritan Types C (Sussman 1976: Fig. 2:7; 2002:53, Fig. 2:7) and D/S3 (Sussman 1976: Fig. 3:2), which derive from the elongated earlier Type B (Sussman 1976: Fig. 2:4; 2002: 52–53, Fig. 1:5, 6). These later lamps are wide and ovoid to pear-shaped, with a channel along the nozzle, as in Lamps 4–6 (Fig. 2). However,

the deteriorated semicircles are reminiscent of Types A (Sussman 1976: Fig. 2:4–6; 2002: Fig. 1:5) and B, as are the heavy strokes flanking the shoulders in one or two alternating directions, e.g., on Lamp 5. The ‘opening’ of the semicircles forms a wide branch in Lamp 5 (Fig. 2). In the next stage, the shoulders of the lamp are divided horizontally into two zones, each zone bearing a different decoration (Lamp 7; Fig. 2). A branch that grows toward the wick hole covers the shoulder of the upper part. This style continues into the Early Islamic period. As the earlier ones, these lamps were still produced with a sealed discus, to be breached before use. The later lamps were fashioned with an open filling hole (Lamp 15, see Fig. 3; Type D, Sussman 1976: Fig. 3:5).

In addition to the change in decoration, there is a gradual change in the shape of the channel. In the earliest stage, the lamps have a deep channel (Lamps 4–9; Fig. 2). Over time, the channel becomes wider (Lamps 10, 11; Fig. 2), and later still, the channel is straight-sided and shallow, with a horizontal bar separating the channel from the filling hole (Lamps 12, 13; Fig. 2). All the lamps have very narrow wick holes. The handles of these lamps, including the early, elongated ones, are characteristic of the late Byzantine period. All the handles of the elongated pear-shaped lamps are wing-shaped, some wide and others narrow, positioned at different angles toward the body. All the lamps are unslipped, trapezoidal in section, and decorated with strokes that completely cover the shoulders.

The extensive accumulation or concentration of lamps in L3006 (12 out of 23 lamps) may, perhaps, point toward a special need for light, e.g., for cultic purposes. Alternately, the area may have been a dump. Dumps occur frequently at Samaritan sites, e.g., at Apollonia-Arsuf (Sussman 1983), Ha-Bonim (Barbé, Lehrer and Avissar 2002) and Ḥorbat Raqit (Sussman 2004). Other sites in the region with similar assemblages are nearby Shuni (de Vincenz 1994–5), Kafr ‘Ara (Sussman 1976), Ramat Ha-Nadiv (Silberstein 2000) and Caesarea (Vine and Hartelius 1986).

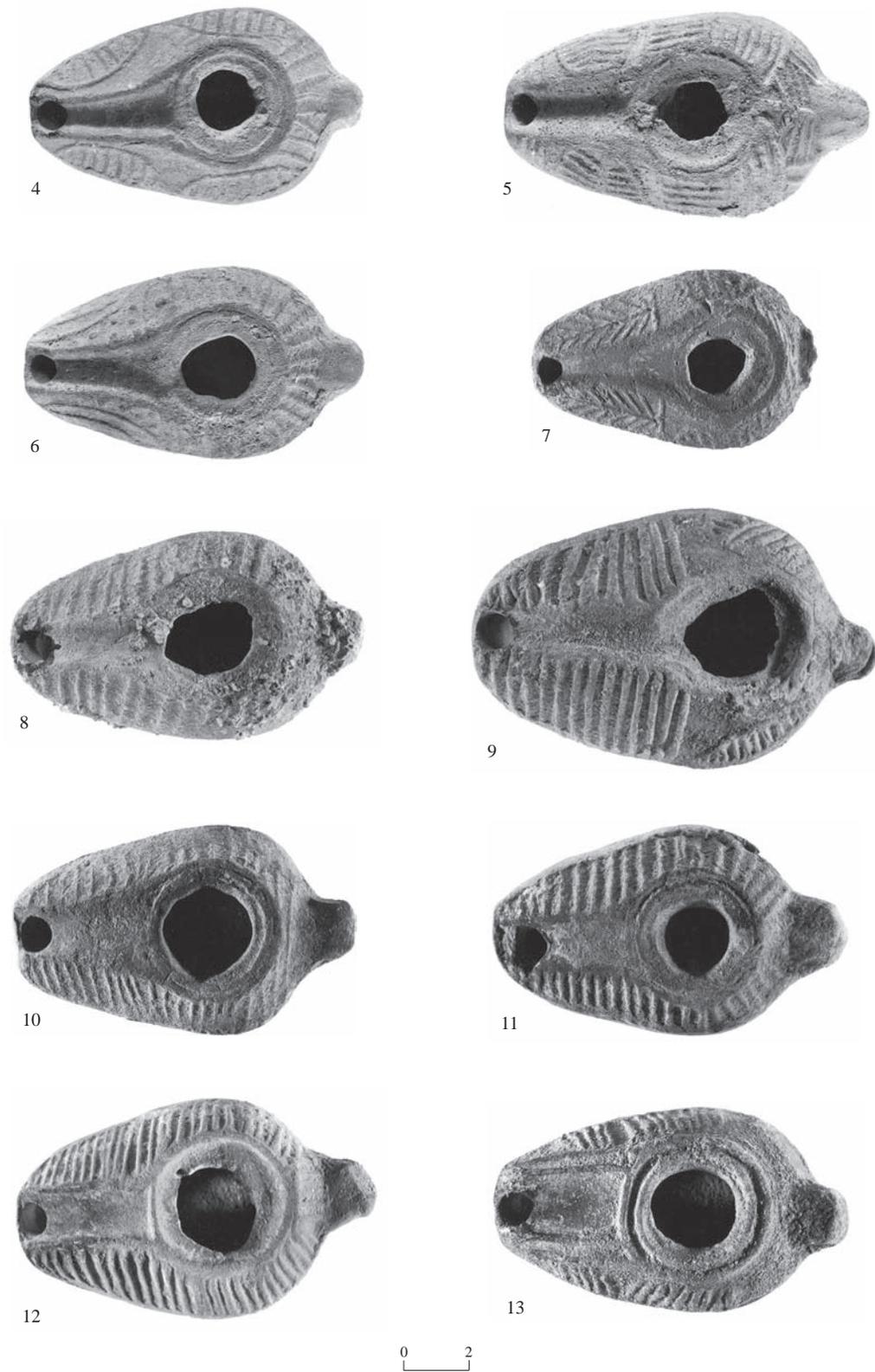


Fig. 2. Byzantine-period lamps.

The assemblage from Ḥorbat Rozeḡ includes the same lamp types used in communities on Mount Carmel, e.g., the settlement at Ḥorbat Raqit (Sussman 2004, Pl. IV:8). Both assemblages reveal typological affinities with the eastern part of Israel (Ḥ. Raqit: Sussman 2002:230, Map 1).

4. Intact lamp. Mold-made, elongated, pear-shaped; decorated with strokes, some within semicircles. Deep, narrow channel. Date: Fifth–sixth centuries CE.

5. Intact lamp. Mold-made, ovoid; decorated with dense strokes within semicircles that alternate in direction near the handle, which is also decorated with strokes. Deep, narrow channel. Date: Fifth–sixth centuries CE.

6. Intact lamp. Mold-made, elongated, pear-shaped. The upper portion is decorated with deteriorated semicircles and raised dots line the channel, which is wide near the disc, tapering close to the wick hole. A radial pattern covers the portion near the handle. Date: Fifth–sixth centuries CE.

7. Intact lamp. Mold-made, elongated, pear-shaped. A horizontal stroke separates the shoulders, which bear branches that extend to the wick hole, from the lower portion, covered by strokes in alternating directions. The channel is wide near the disc, tapering as it approaches the wick hole. Date: Fifth–sixth centuries CE (Ḥ. Raqit; Sussman 2004: Pl. II:11).

8. Intact lamp. Mold-made, ovoid. Thick, nearly horizontal strokes on the shoulders become oblique as they radiate around the sunken disc. The channel is wide. Date: Fifth–sixth centuries CE.

9. Intact lamp. Mold-made, squat and rounded. Horizontal strokes on the shoulders flank the channel until the upper part of the disc; short strokes in alternating directions decorate the lower portion of the lamp. Date: Fifth–sixth centuries CE.

10. Intact lamp. Mold-made, pear-shaped. Horizontal strokes on the shoulders flank the wide, shallow channel; horizontal strokes traverse the entire width of the lamp near the handle, which widens to surround the filling hole. Two sharply defined concentric circles surround part of the filling hole. Date: Fifth–sixth centuries CE.

11. Intact lamp. Mold-made, pear-shaped. Horizontal strokes on the shoulders flank the shallow, wide, nearly rectangular nozzle channel, becoming oblique near the wick hole. Two concentric circles surround the disc. Date: Fifth–sixth centuries CE.

12. Intact lamp. Mold-made, ovoid. Horizontal strokes flank the rectangular-shaped shallow nozzle channel, separated from the filling hole by a horizontal bar. The strokes become oblique on either side of the slightly broken handle. Date: Seventh century CE (Ḥ. Raqit; Sussman 2004: Pl. III:17, 18).

13. Intact lamp. Mold-made, elongated, pear-shaped. Short strokes in alternating directions adorn the outer shoulders; a straight-sided double frame flanks the wide, nearly rectangular, shallow channel along the nozzle. A sunken circle encloses the disc. The lower third near the handle is unadorned. Date: Seventh century CE.

14. Fragment (not illustrated). Gray ware, densely decorated in a net pattern with circles and superimposed arches. Has a short wing-like handle, characteristic of lamps in the Bet She'an Valley. Such lamps often bear Samaritan inscriptions (Naveh 1996). Date: Sixth–seventh centuries CE.

THE EARLY ISLAMIC PERIOD

The single example from this period, Lamp 15 (Fig. 3), was unearthed in L3006 together with the Byzantine-period lamps. Although this lamp is entirely different from them in shape, a connection can be drawn with the above-mentioned late Samaritan lamps, e.g., Lamps 7 and 13, in the shape of the channel along the nozzle and in the choice and organization of the decorated surface. The ornamentation and division into zones are characteristic of this type—one or two horizontal bars separate the wide upper part of the shoulders into two or three zones (or sections), each covered in a different pattern. The lower horizontal dividing bar coincides here with the upper level of the filling hole, which is now wide and open. The channel along the nozzle is shallow, flanked by a straight-sided double frame, such as appears on Lamp 13 of Samaritan Type D. This type



Fig. 3. Early Islamic lamp.

features a narrow and tail-like handle, following Samaritan Types C and D (Vine and Hartelius 1986: Caesarea Fig. 17; Sussman 2004: Pls. II–V), decorated lengthwise with strokes. The wick hole is also very narrow. These lamps are unslipped.

15. Intact lamp. Mold-made, ovoid, and conical in section; ornamented in fine linear relief. The lamp is adorned with dense geometric designs, using elements that appear in the earlier examples. Dense oblique strokes stem from a vertical dividing line between the handle and the filling hole, and cover the rear portion in opposing directions. Ornamenting the fore section are a pair of elongated arches that resemble seven-branched menorahs, notable when the lamp is held with the handle facing the holder. ‘Lamp-fires’, one of them missing, are represented by the short, vertical strokes on the other side of the second horizontal bar. The menorah foot is depicted in the form of a short branch. This lamp appears to be

the first of the type to be recovered in an excavation outside Samaria (Reisner, Fisher and Lyon 1924: Figs. 200: X1a, X3a; 203: X4a, X5a) and Qadum (Magen 1982: Samaritan Clay Lamps [fourth–fifth centuries CE]). Many such lamps were found at Ḥorbat Zuwita, near Shekhem (unpublished). Date: Seventh–eighth centuries CE.

CONCLUSIONS

The multiple-arch, menorah-like decoration on the lamps has a long regional history. It is found on Scythian breast-plates, on armor, and on headdresses, as well as on a figurine from Bet She’an (Rowe 1930: Pl. 54:1), which was identified by Rowe as Scythian, and dated by him to the Iron Age. Petrographic examination of the Bet She’an figurine revealed that it was a forgery “not more than 175 years old,” (Skupinska-Lovest 1978).

I suggest that the figurine may be authentic. The Scythians visited Bet She’an regularly during this period (Avi-Yonah 1962); therefore, use of this pattern on lamps and figurines is plausible. A lamp filler found at Samaria ornamented with arches and ladders, a hallmark Samaritan motif (Crowfoot 1957:377, Fig. 90), was found with post-Hellenistic material. It may also be that the Samaritans invented the combination of multiple arches, which seems to represent a menorah, a symbol used by both Jews and Samaritans, and incorporated the branch as appears in Lamp 7.

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