INSCRIBED AND RADIATED-TYPE BYZANTINE LAMPS

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Certain lamps common in the Byzantine period (more specifically from the 4th to the 6th cent. A.D.) are according to their design on the nozzle usually referred to as "candlestick" lamps. The first of several problems connected with these lamps is their name, which is too restrictive and totally ignores other equally important designs used in the same family. In reviewing the various difficulties connected with the classification and dating of these lamps, which will be discussed in this article, the most reasonable name for such lamps appears to be that of "luchnaria" (singular, luchnarion), a shorter form of "luchnaria kala," meaning "pretty little lamps." This phrase is found as an inscription on actual lamps belonging to one of the groups discussed in this article. The name luchnarion was originally suggested for the entire family of lamps by Charles Clermont-Ganneau, but has never been generally adopted.[1]

These lamps fall into two families. First there are those that carry an inscription around the filling hole (called hereinafter "Inscribed Type"), and second, those which instead of an inscription have lines radiating from the ring that surrounds the filling hole (called hereinafter "Radiated Type").

The following study is the result of two years of work with a few such lamps belonging to the Andrews University Archaeological Museum (AUAM) and one which is in the private collection of Lawrence T. Geraty. First a description of these lamps and of some lamp fragments will be presented. This presentation is followed by a discussion of the seven groups into which all inscribed lamps can be classified, and it will be ascertained into which of the seven groups the lamps in this study fall. Furthermore, an attempt is made to arrive at a proper sequence or dating of the inscribed lamps.

[1]See Charles Clermont-Ganneau, *PEFQS*, 28 (1896), 259.

1. Lamp (AUAM 67.005) – The Inscribed Type (Fig. 1:1).

Provenance: Unknown.

Color: Reddish yellow, 5YR-6/6.[2]

Size: 10 x 6.5 cm.

Description: It is a molded lamp without a handle. Two rings are around the filling hole; the outside ring develops into a seven-branched palm-menorah on the nozzle, but its branches are not connected to the main stem, which forms a loop around the wick hole. Around the filling hole is a (corrupt) Greek inscription patterned after a common formula, ΦΩ ΧΥ ΦΕΝ ΠΑΑΣΙΝ "the light of Christ shines for all." Some of the letters are poorly shaped, unnecessarily doubled, upside down, or out of sequence. The possible explanation for these irregularities and a possible pattern followed will be discussed later.

2. Geraty's lamp – The Inscribed Type (Fig. 1:2).

Provenance: Unknown.

Color: Pink, 7.5YR-7/4.

Size: 10.8 x 6.8 cm.

Description: It is a molded lamp without a handle. There are two rings around the filling hole; the outside ring breaks and extends along the nozzle of the lamp on each side of a seven-branched candlestick. Neither the branches of the candlestick nor the legs of the tripod touch the center stem, but the center stem connects with a single ring around the wick hole. Around the filling hole is a very clear Greek inscription, ΦΩΣ ΧΥ ΦΕΝΙ ΠΑΣΙΝ ΚΑΛΗ, "the light of Christ shines beautifully for all." Extending around the inscription and on to the nozzle, but not to the end of it, is a raised line acting as a border enclosing the inscription and nozzle design.

3. Lamp Fragment (AUAM 68.293) (H68 331) – Inscribed (Fig. 1:3).

Provenance: Excavated at *Tell Ḥesbân,* Jordan, in 1968. It was found in Locus D.2:16, a hard-packed earth layer of Islamic times.

Color: Very pale brown, 10YR-8/4.

[2] The *Munsell Soil Color Charts* (1971 ed., of the Munsell Color Co., Inc., Baltimore, Md. 21218) have been used in order to avoid haphazard guesses in describing the color of pottery.

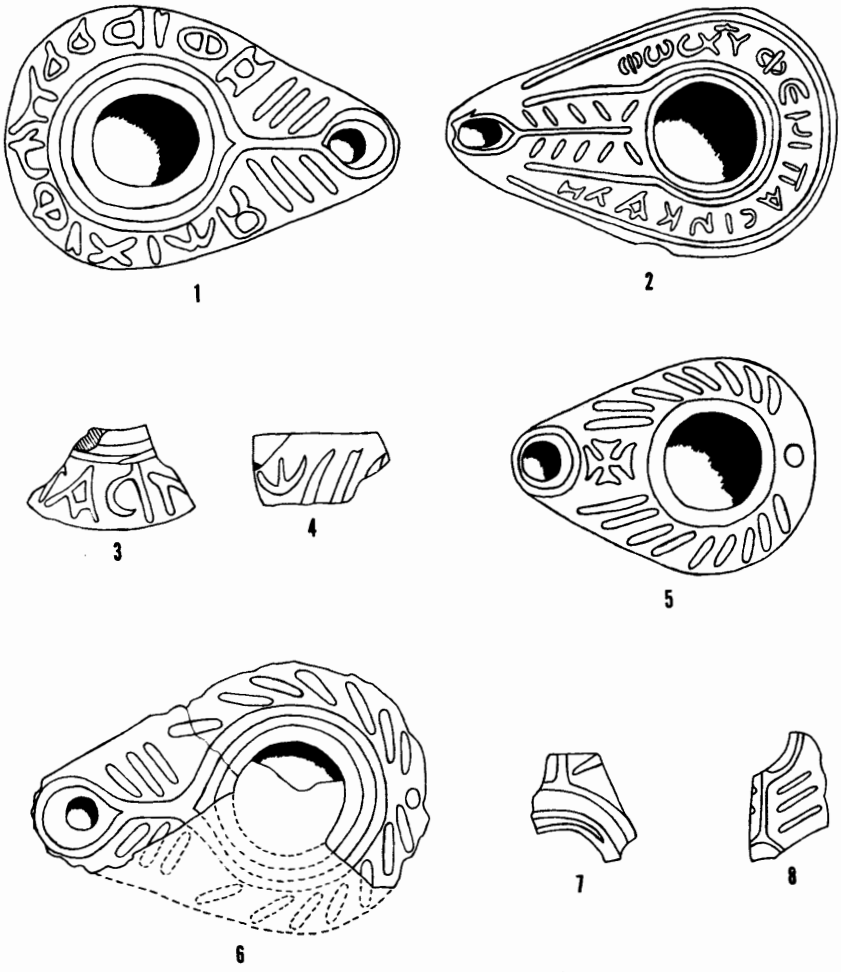

Fig. 1. Nos. 1 and 3-8 are Byzantine lamps and lamp fragments of the inscribed and radiated types in the Andrews University Archaeological Museum. No. 2 is an inscribed Byzantine lamp in the L. T. Geraty collection

Size: 4.5 x 2.8 cm.

Description: A fragment of a molded lamp of the inscribed type, without a handle. A portion of the two rings which surround the filling hole is present. Five letters of the inscription (two of which are only partial) can be clearly read as ΠΑΣΙΝ, "all." As a result of the study which will follow, it may be safely said that this lamp carried a palm-menorah on the nozzle.

4. Lamp Fragment (AUAM 68.292) (H68 330) — Inscribed (Fig. 1:4).

Provenance: Excavated at *Tell Ḥesbân*, Jordan, in 1968. It was found in Locus D.1:20, an Islamic earth layer.

Color: Very pale brown, 10YR-8/3.

Size: 3.8 x 2 cm.

Description: A fragment of a molded lamp of the inscribed type without a handle. It is easily identified as a piece of the lamp's nozzle by the three partial branches of a palm-menorah. The one remaining letter of the inscription appears at first glance to be an Omega or even an Epsilon; however, by comparison with similar lamps of the same group, the letter is in actuality an open Phi. This peculiarity will be discussed later.

5. Lamp (AUAM 67.006) — The Radiated Type (Fig. 1:5).

Provenance: Unknown.

Color: Reddish yellow, 5YR-6/6.

Size: 7.5 x 5.5 cm.

Description: The lamp is of the molded type without a handle. It has a single ring around the filling hole, and one around the wick hole. The two rings are unconnected. A Byzantine cross fills the space between these two rings. Strokes radiate from the filling hole, but do not touch it. The strokes are not uniform, neither in length nor number, nine on one side and eight on the other. There is a single dot at the back.

6. Lamp (AUAM 71.138) (H71 571) — The Radiated Type (Fig. 1:6)

Provenance: Excavated at *Tell Ḥesbân*, Jordan, in 1971. The two fragments were found in Loci C.4:36 and 40, Islamic earth layers.

Color: Pink, 5YR-7/4.

Size: 10 x 7 cm.

Description: The lamp is of the molded type without a handle. It has two rings around the filling hole, of which the outside one develops into a seven-branched palm-menorah on the nozzle, with the branches not touching the stem. The stem forms a loop around the wick hole. Strokes radiate from the outside ring around the filling hole, but do not touch it. There is a dot at the back or rear of the lamp.

7. Lamp Fragment (H68 31046) – Type uncertain (Fig. 1:7).

Provenance: Excavated at *Tell Ḥesbân*, Jordan, in 1968. The fragment came from Locus D.2:16, an Islamic robber pit.

Color: Pink, 7.5YR-7/4.

Size: 3.1 x 2.9 cm.

Description: A fragment of a molded lamp. Of the two rings which encircle the filling hole, the inside ring shows a split, probably due to poor molding, while the outside ring develops a stem which forms a palm-menorah on the nozzle. Only the end of one of the branches still exists and it is not connected to the stem.

8. Lamp Fragment (H68 30176) – Probably Radiated Type (Fig. 1:8).

Provenance: Excavated at *Tell Ḥesbân*, Jordan, in 1968. The fragment came from the surface soil in Area D.

Color: Very pale brown, 10YR-7/3.

Size: 3.5 x 2.1 cm.

Description: A fragment of a molded lamp of the type without a handle. This portion belongs to the lamp's nozzle, clearly evident from the three complete and two incomplete branches of a palm-menorah, on each side of the stem which connects the rings around the wick and filling holes. By comparing the nozzle fragment with inscribed lamps it is safe to assume that it belongs to the radiated type.

Patterns and Variations

Three types of variations can be distinguished with regard to the decorations (including the inscriptions) within this family of lamps: (1) on the nozzle; (2) around the filling hole, and (3) at the back.

1. *Decorations on the Nozzle.* The two most common designs to be found on the nozzle are the candlestick and the Byzantine cross, and this study will limit itself to only these. The candlestick or menorah will change style in several ways. There is the very simple form with seven branches, or the branches may vary in number from five to eleven, some being connected to the center stem while others are not.[3] The candlestick may or may not be connected to the ring around the filling hole, and may also have a tripod base which has either curved or straight legs.[4]

[3] See, for candlesticks (palm-menorahs) depicted on lamps with more or less than seven branches, the following: Y. Aharoni, *IEJ,* 6 (1956), 108, Fig. 4:1, for an eight-branched type, not connected to the wick hole; S. A. S. Husseini, *QDAP,* 6 (1936), Pl. 7:2, 6, for the nine-branched type not connected to the wick or filling holes, and six-branched type not connected to the stem, or wick and filling holes; C. A. Kennedy, *Berytus,* 14 (1963), Pl. 26:658, 659, 702, three lamps each with nine branches; R. A. S. Macalister, *The Excavation of Gezer,* 3 (London, 1912); eight-branched candlestick not connected with the ring surrounding the wick hole, Pl. 77:13; Pl. 104:1, 3 shows two lamps each with five unconnected branches, and Pl. 188:8, 4 and 3 give five, nine, and eleven branched types respectively; C. C. McCown, *Tell en-Naṣbeh,* 1 (New Haven, 1947), Pl. 40:2; Pl. 41:12; Pl. 42:6, all eight-branched; S. J. Saller, *Excavations at Bethany* (Jerusalem, 1957); nine-branched types are seen on p. 53, Fig. 16:1, 4, and p. 54, Fig. 17:4, not connected to the wick hole; O. R. Sellers, *BASOR,* No. 122 (April, 1951), 43, Fig. 5 shows one lamp with nine branches; Sellers and D. C. Baramki, *BASOR,* Supplementary Studies, Nos. 15, 16, 1953; five-branched type on p. 53, and the nine-branched type on pp. 48, 49, 51, 53; J. C. Wampler, *Tell en-Naṣbeh,* 2 (New Haven, 1947), Pl. 73:1666, ten-branched. Another type need only be mentioned here. It is an eight-branched palm-menorah not connected to the wick hole, but there is a circle connected at the top of the center stem. See McCown, *Tell en-Naṣbeh,* 1, Pl. 42:9, 14; and Wampler, *Tell en-Naṣbeh,* 2, Pl. 73:1668.

[4] Aharoni, *IEJ,* 6, p. 108, Fig. 14:1, tripod base with straight legs; Aharoni, *Excavations at Ramat Raḥel: Seasons 1961-1962* (Rome, 1964), Fig. 10:4, tripod with straight legs, and Fig. 25:1, curved legs not connected to the filling hole; J. W. Crowfoot and G. M. Fitzgerald, *PEF Annual,* 5 (1927), Pl. 17:31, 35, both have straight legs; E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period,* 3 (New York, 1953), Fig. 338, straight tripod legs; R. W. Hamilton, *QDAP,* 6 (1937), Pl. 42, straight tripod legs; Husseini, *QDAP,* 6 (1937), Pls. 7:9 and 8:2-4, tripods with straight legs, not connected to the filling hole; Macalister, *Gezer,* 3, Pl. 77:13, straight tripod legs not connected to the filling hole; Pl. 188:1 and 5, two examples of curved tripod legs, one not connected to the filling hole, while the other is connected; McCown, *Tell en-Naṣbeh,* 1, Pl. 40:3, 6, straight legs; B. Mazar, *The Excavations in the Old City of Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, 1969), Pl. 13:B4, straight legs; Sellers, *BASOR,* No. 122, p. 42, Fig. 1, curved legs not connected to the filling hole.

Partly because of its varied style and partly because it is sometimes accompanied by a Christian inscription, this design is said to be a palm branch and not a candlestick or menorah. It is said that Christianity had too long been separated from Judaism to show any of the blending common in the Apostolic church.[5] This problem is still not solved, and it is just as uncertain to call the design a palm branch as it is to call it a menorah. The reasons are: (1) The fact that the design has more or less than seven branches is no proof that it is not Jewish. This has been pointed out by Goodenough.

> The number of branches can by no means be taken as a criterion, for unmistakable menorahs have a varying number of branches. . . . I always feel that we are closer to rabbinic Judaism when the number is not seven, because of the rabbinic prohibition against reproducing articles from the Temple.[6]

(2) Some of these, as has already been noted, have tripod bases. They are distinctive parts of the designs on many menorahs, and cannot be considered parts of palm branches.[7] It may therefore be safe to strike a compromise and use the term which Goodenough applied to such designs, calling them "palm-menorahs." If a design shows merely branches, the term palm-menorah seems most suitable, but if the design contains a tripod base it seems to me that it should be called a menorah. It is not the purpose of this study to ascertain why Christians would use such a design on their lamps (as found on Geraty's lamp, Fig. 1:2), but this peculiarity should be pointed out.

The Byzantine cross likewise shows style changes. It may be the ordinary type which consists of two intersecting bars with arms of equal length flaring at the ends.[8] Another type of cross

[5]See the discussion by Kennedy, *Berytus,* 14, 83-85.

[6]Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols,* 1, 158.

[7]For unmistakable Jewish menorahs see Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols,* 3, Figs. 316, 334-337, 340, 345-347, 349, 923-928, 931, 934, 935; Mazar, *Jerusalem,* Pl. 13:B1.

[8]Aharoni, *Ramat Raḥel 1961-1962,* Fig. 26:9; J. W. Crowfoot, G. W. Crowfoot, and K. M. Kenyon, *The Objects from Samaria* (London, 1957), p. 375, Fig. 89:5; Crowfoot and Fitzgerald, *PEF Annual,* Pl. 17:24; Hamilton, *QDAP,* 6, Pl. 42; Husseini, *QDAP,* 6, Pl. 7:1, 3, 5, 7; Pl. 8:7, 10, No. 7, shows two crosses on each side of a palm-menorah; Kennedy, *Berytus,* 14 (1963), Pl. 25:631, 640; on No. 631 there are two crosses on each side of a nine-branched palm-menorah; Macalister, *Gezer,* 3, Pls. 77:2, 3, 5, 14; 113:5; 118:12; McCown, *Tell en-Naṣbeh,* 1, Pls. 40:8, 9, 11, 15; 41:7, 11, 14, 15-18;

is formed by four nearly equilateral triangles, whose apexes meet at the center without being connected.[9] Somewhat similar to this is a design consisting of a St. Andrew's cross made of double lines.[10] And the final of these four common design types consists of a cross of two intersecting bars of equal length with a single circle attached to the ends of the two bars.[11]

2. *Decorations Around the Filling Hole.* The second variation applies to the space around the filling hole, which is usually taken up by an inscription or by strokes which radiate from the ring surrounding the filling hole. Occasionally, however, a lamp like one found at *Ramat Raḥel* will have neither inscription nor strokes, but rather a design commonly used at the back of the lamp. In this instance a single dot in a half circle is repeated around the filling hole.[12]

Lamps with strokes radiating from the ring surrounding the filling hole will contain either a palm-menorah, a menorah, or a cross on the nozzle.

The lamps which carry an inscription cannot be treated so simply. Distorted inscriptions have not always been recognized as such. For example, among the lamps found at *Ramat Raḥel,* nine of those listed in the publications are inscribed, as the drawings show. However, only four are described as carrying inscriptions, while the remaining five are merely called decorated, just as those which have strokes radiating from the ring around the filling hole.[13]

42:3, 5, 7, 16, 17; Saller, *Bethany,* p. 53, Fig. 16:3, 7-9; p. 54, Fig. 17:4, two palm-menorahs on each side of the cross; Sellers and Baramki, *BASOR SUP,* Nos. 15, 16, p. 50, Fig. 54; Wampler, *Tell en-Naṣbeh,* 2, Pls. 72:1661, 1662; 73:1664, 1671, 1673, 1676.

[9]McCown, *Tell en-Naṣbeh,* 1, Pls. 40:12, 13; 41:6; Saller, *Bethany,* p. 53, Fig. 16:10; Wampler, *Tell en-Naṣbeh,* 2, Pl. 73:1667, 1669.

[10]Hamilton, *QDAP,* 6, Pl. 42; Husseini, *QDAP,* 6, Pl. 8:8; McCown, *Tell en-Naṣbeh,* 1, Pls. 40:14, 20; 41:10.

[11]Saller, *Bethany,* p. 53, Fig. 16:14. The same lamp is also found in P. B. Bagatti, *L'Eglise de la Circoncision* (Jerusalem, 1965), p. 128, Fig. 31:5.

[12]Aharoni, *IEJ,* 6, p. 108, Fig. 4:4.

[13]In Aharoni, *Excavations at Ramat Raḥel: Seasons 1959-1960* (Rome, 1962), Fig. 18:1-3 describes these lamps as being inscribed and also in *Ramat Raḥel 1961-1962,* Fig. 10:2, while in Fig. 26:1-3, 6, 7, these lamps are merely referred to as being decorated.

Seven Groups of Inscribed Lamps

The inscription may be clear or distorted, but even the distorted ones follow definite patterns. Therefore the idea that they were distorted through ignorance cannot be altogether correct. These inscribed lamps may be divided into seven groups according to nozzle design, length of the inscription, the direction in which the inscription is read, and the shape of the letters.

Group I. Lamps belonging to this group carry the inscription: ΦΩΣ ΧΥ ΦΕΝΙ ΠΑΣΙΝ,[14] and have the following characteristics: (1) a palm-menorah is on the nozzle; (2) the inscription reads from right to left like Hebrew (Fig. 2); (3) it contains the abbreviation ΧΥ, frequently without a line over the contraction, although this line stands sometimes vertically between ΦΩΣ and ΧΥ (see Fig. 1:1); (4) it often contains the odd symbol Ꮋ at the beginning and end of the inscription; (5) it uses the cursive Alpha

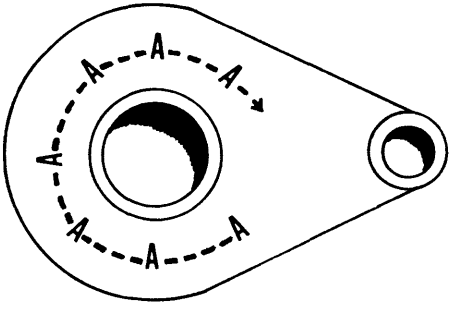

Fig. 2. Sketch of a Byzantine lamp on which the inscription is read clockwise from right to left. The several A's indicate how the Greek letters of the inscription are arranged around the filling hole. (Group I)

[14]AUAM lamp, Fig. 1:1. Aharoni, *IEJ*, 6, p. 108, Fig. 4:5, *Ramat Raḥel 1959-60*, Fig. 18:3; *Ramat Raḥel 1961-62*, Figs. 10:2; 26:7; P. V. Corbo, *Gli Scavi Di Khirbet Siyar El-Ghanam* (Jerusalem, 1955), Tavola 25, Fot. 72:13; V. I. Kerkhof, *Oudheidkundige Mededelingen*, 50 (1969), 68, Fig. 18; Macalister, *Gezer*, 3, Pl. 104:3; for full description of this lamp see *PEFQS*, 36 (1904), 24, 25; Macalister and J. G. Duncan, *PEF Annual*, 4, p. 195, Fig. 209, four examples.

(α) which is sometimes doubled in ΠΑΣΙΝ (Fig. 1:1); (6) ligatures may exist in several words, contracting the Nu and Pi of ΦΕΝ ΠΑΣΙΝ (ΝΠ), and the Sigma and Iota of ΠΑΣΙΝ, ⊐ (Fig. 1:1); (7) the Nu may be shaped like an Eta (H) or be backward; (8) the first word of the inscription ΦΩΣ is often divided by the palm-menorah on the nozzle (Fig. 1:1); and (9) the Phi of ΦΩΣ may be so open that it looks like an Omega.

Group II. Lamps of this group carry one of three short inscriptions, and have the following characteristics in common: (1) a palm-menorah is on the nozzle, and (2) the inscription is read from left to right (Fig. 3).

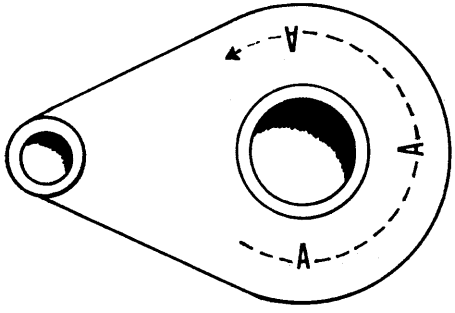

Fig. 3. Sketch of a Byzantine lamp on which the inscription is read counter-clockwise from left to right. The three A's indicate how the Greek letters of the inscription are arranged around the filling hole. (Groups II and III)

A. ΛΥΧΝΑΡΙΑ ΚΑΛΑ[15] (1) Cursive Alphas (α) are always used. (2) The Nu is sometimes backward. (3) The Lambda of ΚΑΛΑ is occasionally upside down.

B. ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΤΩΚΟΥ.[16] (1) An Omega, which is sometimes upside down, always replaces the second Omicron in ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ.

[15]Bagatti, *L'Eglise,* p. 204, Fig. 87:1; F. J. Bliss, *PEFQS,* 28, p. 118; Crowfoot and Fitzgerald, *PEF Annual,* 5, Pl. 17:28; Kennedy, *Berytus,* 14, Pl. 26:679; Macalister and Duncan, *PEF Annual,* 4, p. 195, Fig. 210.

[16]M. Burrows, *BASOR,* No. 47 (October, 1932), 32, Fig. 7; Kennedy, *Berytus,* 14, Pl. 26:680; Macalister and Duncan, *PEF Annual,* 4, p. 195, Fig. 210; Saller, *Bethany,* p. 178, Fig. 35:1.

(2) The final Upsilon is always upside down.

C. ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΗΛΙΑ.[17] (1) The Upsilon of ΤΟΥ and ΑΓΙΟΥ is always an upside-down Omega. (2) The Alpha may be of the cursive α or capital A form.

Group III. Lamps of this group carry the inscription: ΦΩΣ ΧΥ ΦΕΝΙ ΠΑΣΙΝ ΙΣ,[18] and show the following characteristics: (1) the palm-menorah is on the nozzle; (2) the inscription is read from left to right (Fig. 3); (3) the inscription will contain the abbreviations ΧΥ and ΙΣ, but the lines over the contractions are not always present; (4) the Phi of ΦΩΣ is sometimes open and looks like an Omega; (5) the Nu is sometimes reversed or shaped like a small h; (6) the Omega of ΦΩΣ is always upside down; (7) the Alpha may be either cursive α or a capital A; (8) An Eta may be added to the end of ΦΕΝ; (9) the Pi may have the odd shape ⊐; (10) the only ligature seems to be in ΠΑΣΙΝ with Sigma and Iota contracted (C).

Group IV. Lamps of this group carry the inscription: ΦΩΣ ΧΥ ΦΕΝΙ ΠΑΣΙΝ ΚΑΛΗ,[19] and have the following characteristics: (1) the design depicts the menorah with a tripod base on the nozzle–the only type of lamps having this design; (2) the inscription reads from left to right (Fig. 4); (3) the inscription will always contain the abbreviation ΧΥ, with or without the line over the contraction; (4) Alphas are always of the capital form A; (5) the Alpha and Lambda of ΚΑΛΗ are often upside down; (6) there may be a ligature of the Sigma of ΦΩΣ and the Chi of ΧΥ ($\propto$).

Group V. Lamps of this group carry the inscription: ΦΩΣ ΧΥ ΦΕΝΙ ΠΑΣΙΝ ΚΑΛΗ,[20] and have the following characteristics: (1) there is a Byzantine cross on the nozzle; (2) the inscription

[17]Aharoni, *Ramat Raḥel 1961-62,* Fig. 26:2, 3; Saller, *Bethany,* p. 178, Fig. 35:2; the same lamp is also seen in Bagatti, *L'Eglise,* p. 204, Fig. 87:5.

[18]Aharoni, *Ramat Raḥel 1959-60,* Fig. 18:1; *Ramat Raḥel 1961-62,* Fig. 26:6; Kennedy, *Berytus,* 14, Pl. 26:668; Macalister and Duncan *PEF Annual,* 4, p. 195, Fig. 209, two examples; McCown, *Tell en-Naṣbeh,* 1, p. 174, Fig. 39; the author is uncertain of the translation given here; Sellers, *BASOR,* No. 122, p. 43, Fig. 4; H. Qandil, *ADAJ,* 14 (1969), Pl. 26.

[19]Geraty's lamp, Fig. 1:2. Bliss, *PEFQS,* 28, p. 119, No. 20.

[20]Aharoni, *Ramat Raḥel 1961-62,* Fig. 26:1; Bagatti, *L'Eglise,* p. 165, Fig. 61:5; p. 204, Fig. 87:2; Clermont-Ganneau, *RB,* 7 (1898), 485; Kennedy, *Berytus,* 14, Pl. 26:667; Sellers, *BASOR,* No. 122, p. 43, Fig. 3.

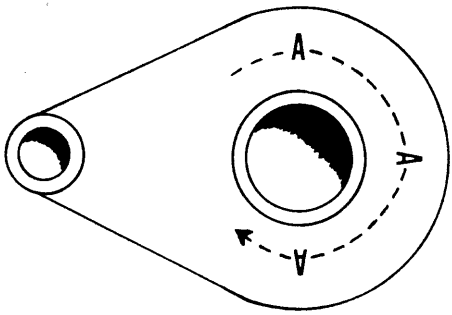

Fig. 4. Sketch of a Byzantine lamp on which the inscription is read clockwise from left to right. The three A's indicate how the Greek letters of the inscription are arranged around the filling hole. (Groups IV-VI)

reads from left to right (Fig. 4); (3) the inscription always contains the abbreviation XY, with or without a line over the contraction; (4) the Alphas are always capital (A); (5) ligatures are occasionally found.

Group VI. Lamps of this group carry the inscription: ΦΩΣ XY KOY ΦENEI ϖ ΔOY,[21] and have the following characteristics: (1) two Byzantine crosses are always on the nozzle, the first being large and centered on the nozzle, while the second being much smaller is placed off to the side at the beginning of the inscription; (2) the inscription reads from left to right (Fig. 4); (3) the inscription always contains the three abbreviations XY, KOY, ΔOY, without lines above the contracted words; (4) the Phi of ΦENEI is of the open form; (5) ligatures of the Sigma of ΦΩΣ and the Chi of XY (ϰ) are sometimes found; (6) the Delta of ΔOY is always of the cursive form, ϶ ; and (7) the Arabic word for God (ϖ) is always present.

Group VII. Lamps belonging to this group contain inscriptions which are presently untranslatable.[22] They are composed

[21]Bagatti, *L'Eglise,* p. 204, Fig. 87:4; Macalister, *Gezer,* 3, Pl. 118:16; Saller and E. Testa, *The Archaeological Setting of the Shrine of Bethphage* (Jerusalem, 1961), p. 20, Fig. 8:6a.

[22]Only a few examples should suffice: Aharoni, *Ramat Raḥel 1959-60,* Fig. 18:2; Sellers, *BASOR,* No. 122, p. 43, Fig. 5.

of groups of letters that may be either meaningless or possibly so abbreviated as to render them untranslatable with our present knowledge.

By keeping the characteristics of these groups in mind it can readily be seen how the two AUAM inscribed lamp fragments 3 and 4 can be classified with some degree of accuracy. Lamp fragment 3 (Fig. 1:3) fits well into Group III, inasmuch as its inscription reads from left to right and follows the pattern of of Fig. 3. It could not be mistaken for a lamp of Group IV or V because their inscriptions follow the pattern of Fig. 4. Lamp fragment 4 (Fig. 1:4) could belong to either Group I or III, since the Phi occurs there in an open form and the word ΦΩΣ is found on that same side in either group.[23]

Translation Problems. Several inscriptions cause problems of translation. ΦΩΣ XY ΦENI ΠAΣIN KAΛH is clear in its first part, "the light of Christ shines for all," but KAΛH has been a source of debate for some time. Many are of the opinion that KAΛH was taken from the inscription ΛYXNAPIA KAΛA, "beautiful little lamps" (Group II:A) and meant to complete the text, "the light of Christ shines for all, fine (lamp)."[24] However, this seems a rather unsatisfactory explanation. It seems more probable that the text was originally intended to say, "the light of Christ shines beautifully for all." Although KAΛH is ordinarily an adjective, it is justified to use it as an adverb, because at times predicate adjectives ending in an Eta were used adverbially.[25] It is possible that this is what was intended by the makers of these lamps.

As for the inscription ΦΩΣ XY KOY ΦENEI ⟨illegible⟩ ΔOY, it has quite satisfactorily been shown by Sylvester Saller that the character ⟨illegible⟩ is the Arabic word for "Allah" or God. He translates the text, "the light of Christ, the Lord, shines for the servant of

[23]See for Group I: Macalister, *Gezer,* 3, Pl. 104:3; and for Group III: McCown, *Tell en-Naṣbeh,* 1, p. 174, Fig. 39; and Sellers, *BASOR,* No. 122, p. 43, Fig. 4.

[24]See Kennedy, *Berytus,* 14, pp. 85, 86; Saller, *Bethany,* p. 176: Sellers and Baramki, *BASOR SUP,* Nos. 15, 16, p. 47.

[25]See F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, 1961), p. 126, §243; A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of His-*

God."[26] This not only makes good sense, but also provides valuable information with regard to the date of this type of lamp and its relationship to other types.

The remaining inscriptions pose no problems: ΛΥΧΝΑΡΙΑ ΚΑΛΑ, "pretty little lamps"; ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΤΩΚΟΥ, "the mother of God"; ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΗΛΙΑ, "St. Elias"; and ΦΩΣ ΧΥ ΦΕΝΙ ΠΑΣΙΝ ΙΣ, "the light of Christ Jesus shines for all."[27]

Decorations at the Back of Radiated Lamps

Usually there is a simple decoration next to the filling hole but opposite the nozzle on the Radiated-Type lamps. These decorations vary greatly and may belong to any one of the following designs, although some lamps have a plain space at that spot:[28]

a single dot, ·,[29]

three dots in a row, ···,[30]

three or four dots in a triangle, ∴ , .:., [31]

torical Research (Nashville, 1934), p. 295; and H. E. Dana and J. R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (New York, 1960), p. 236.

[26]Saller, *Bethphage;* see the discussion on pp. 23-27.

[27]The writer has come upon numerous other publications containing inscribed lamps but has omitted them because either the photographs were so poor that the inscriptions were almost totally illegible, or no photographs or drawings were given in these cases; only the fact that the lamps bear "such and such" an inscription was mentioned. This information is practically useless for this study, since the lamps must be seen clearly enough so that it may be determined to which groups they belong.

[28]Macalister, *Gezer,* 3, Pls. 110:12; 113:5; Sellers and Baramki, *BASOR SUP,* Nos. 15, 16, p. 48; see lamp no. 9, and p. 53.

[29]AUAM lamps, Fig. 1:5, 6. Aharoni, *Ramat Raḥel 1959-60,* Fig. 18:4, 7; *Ramat Raḥel 1961-62,* Figs. 10:5; 25:5, 6; Bagatti, *L'Eglise,* p. 128, Fig. 31:5; Corbo, *Gli scavi di Khirbet Siyar El-Ghanam,* Tavola 25, Fot. 72:19; Crowfoot, Crowfoot and Kenyon, *Samaria,* p. 375, Fig. 89:5; Crowfoot and Fitzgerald, *PEF Annual,* No. 5, Pl. 17:25; Hamilton, *QDAP,* 6, Pl. 42, fifteen lamps; Husseini, *QDAP,* 6, Pls. 7:1-3, 5, 9, 10; 8:2-4, 7; Kennedy, *Berytus,* 14, Pl. 26:658, 702; Macalister, *Gezer,* 3, Pls. 77:3, 13, 14; 104:1; 105:27; 110:6; 119:17; 188:12; Mazar, *Jerusalem,* Pl. 13:B3; L. Y. Rahmani, *IEJ,* 14 (1964), 54. Fig. 3; Saller, *Bethany,* p. 53, Fig. 16:3, 5-8, 14; p. 54, Fig. 17:2; Sellers, *BASOR,* No. 122, p. 42, Fig. 2; Sellers and Baramki, *BASOR SUP,* pp. 48, 53; Wampler, *Tell en-Naṣbeh,* 2, Pls. 72:1660, 1661; 73:1663, 1664, 1666, 1669-1671, 1673, 1676.

[30]Sellers and Baramki, *BASOR SUP,* Nos. 15, 16, p. 49, Fig. 52:60.

[31]Corbo, *Gli scavi di Khirbet Siyar El-Ghanam,* Tavola 25, Fot. 72:3, three dots in a triangle. Macalister, *Gezer,* 3, Pl. 188:b, c, both types; B. Mazar,

a dot in a half circle, ,[32]
a dot with a half circle on each side, ,[33]
a dot in an inverted V, ,[34]
a dot with a V on each side, ,[35]
a verticle stroke, ,[36]
a verticle stroke with a dot on each side, ,[37]
a verticle stroke in a half circle, ,[38]
a verticle stroke in an inverted V, ,[39]
a verticle stroke with a half circle on each side, ,[40]
a triangle, ,[41]
a simple cross, ,[42]
a circle, ,[43]
a circle with a half circle on each side, ,[44]
or a wavy line, .[45]

Besides these most common designs many others exist. It is possible that they had some significance and served as potter's marks.

The Excavations in the Old City of Jerusalem (Jerusalem, 1969), Pl. 13:B4, three dots in a triangle. Sellers and Baramki, *BASOR SUP,* Nos. 15, 16, pp. 49, 53, three dots in a triangle.

[32]Aharoni, *IEJ,* 6, p. 108, Fig. 4:2, 4; Macalister, *Gezer,* 3, Pl. 188:f.

[33]Aharoni, *Ramat Raḥel 1961-62,* Fig. 26:5.

[34]Saller, *Bethany,* p. 175, description of lamp no. 5270.

[35]Macalister, *Gezer,* 3, Pl. 188:d.

[36]Aharoni, *Ramat Raḥel 1961-62,* Fig. 25:1, 2; J. H. Iliffe, "A Tomb at El Bassa of c. A.D. 396," *QDAP,* 3 (1933), 86, Fig. 12; Macalister, *Gezer,* 3, Pls. 110:11; 119:16; 188:g; Saller, *Bethany,* p. 53, Fig. 16:11; Sellers, *BASOR,* No. 122, p. 42, Fig. 2; Sellers and Baramki, *BASOR SUP,* Nos. 15, 16, pp. 48, 49, 53.

[37]Sellers and Baramki, *BASOR SUP,* Nos. 15, 16, pp. 48, 49, Fig. 51.

[38]Saller, *Bethany,* p. 53, Fig. 16:1; Sellers and Baramki, *BASOR SUP,* Nos. 15, 16, p. 49.

[39]Aharoni, *Ramat Raḥel 1961-62,* Fig. 10:4.

[40]Aharoni, *Ramat Raḥel 1961-62,* Fig. 25:4; Macalister, *Gezer,* 3, Pl. 112:11.

[41] Macalister, *Gezer,* 3, Pl. 188:1.

[42] Saller, *Bethany,* p. 53, Fig. 16:9; p. 54, Fig. 17:1.

[43] Aharoni, *Ramat Raḥel 1961-62,* Fig. 25:7; Sellers and Baramki, *BASOR SUP,* Nos. 15, 16, p. 49; Wampler, *Tell en-Naṣbeh,* 2, Pl. 73: 1668.

[44] Macalister, *Gezer,* 3, Pl. 188:e.

[45] Aharoni, *Ramat Raḥel* 1961-62, Fig. 25:3; Macalister, *Gezer,* 3, Pls. 99:12; 104:2.

Classification and Dating

The inscribed lamps can be classified according to: (1) the differences in decorations on the nozzle, (2) the length and varieties of their inscriptions, and by (3) the inclusion of an Arabic word. It has usually been assumed that the clear inscriptions (for example those of Group V) came first, while the more distorted texts are later in date (Group I).[46] However, by considering separately each of the three criteria listed above, it will become clear that just the opposite must be true, i.e., that the distorted inscriptions came first and the clear ones later.

1. *The Change in Nozzle Design.* If we are to believe that the clear inscriptions preceded the distorted ones in time, it would mean that the designs would change from a Byzantine cross (Group V), to a menorah (Group IV), and would end with a palm-menorah (Group III to I). This would seem strange. If these lamps are Christian as everyone believes, why would Christians give up the cross for a menorah or a palm-menorah on their lamps? But if we start with the distorted inscriptions first and work through to the clear, the design would change from the palm-menorah or menorah (Groups I to IV) to the Byzantine cross (Groups V, VI).

2. *The Progression from the Shorter to the Longer Text.* Beginning with the most distorted of the inscriptions (Group I), we read, ΦΩΣ ΧΥ ΦΕΝΙ ΠΑΣΙΝ. The next addition is ΙΣ (Group III) at the end, which was later replaced by the more popular ΚΑΛΗ (Groups IV, V). The longest inscription or that showing the largest number of additions reads ΦΩΣ ΧΥ ΚΟΥ ΦΕΝΕΙ ϹΩ ΔΟΥ (Group VI). Perhaps we may apply one of the axioms of textual criticism, that the shorter of the readings usually is the more original.

3. *The Addition of Arabic.* The occurrence of an Arabic word in the longer text is the most important clue for the proper classification and dating of these lamps. This addition could not have been made earlier than the 7th cent. If the clear inscriptions came first, of which this lamp is a part, then the distorted

[46] Kennedy, *Berytus,* 14, p. 85; Macalister, *Gezer,* 1, p. 357, and 2, p. 228; Sellers, *BASOR,* No. 122, p. 45.

types must be placed later, perhaps in the 8th or 9th cent. This seems impossible.

Only a very few of these lamps can be accurately dated on the basis of their provenience as coming from well stratified excavations. Usually only general dates are given in reports, such as "5th or 6th cent."; this provides little help to determine the sequence of the variations. At *Ramat Raḥel,* inscribed as well as the radiated-type lamps are dated to the 6th and 7th cent.[47] At *Tell Ḥesbân,* two of the radiated-type lamps have been assigned specifically to the Umayyad period, 661-750.[48] The many lamps found in a tomb at el Bassa were dated to ca. 396, from coins that were found with them.[49] However, caution should be used with regard to this find as well as all other tombs, because they were often used for several centuries and the task of determining just what objects were placed in the tomb at the same time is often quite impossible. As to paleographical dating, some help comes from Jerash, by the many datable inscriptions discovered there. But again the closest dates arrived at are generalized to the 5th and 6th cent.[50] Abbreviations, four of which are represented on these lamps, are also datable. The most helpful of the four is IΣ, which has been given the earliest possible date of 524/533.[51] By this evidence, the safest time period which can be set for this family is from the early 5th to the early 8th cent.

It is my conviction that as far as the inscribed lamps go, those of Group I represent the earliest class. They were followed by lamps of Group III, with those of Group II being used contemporaneously with the lamps of Groups I and III. The lamps of Groups IV to VI are later developments. The radiated-type lamps were used throughout this period.

[47] See especially Aharoni, *Ramat Raḥel 1961-62.*

[48] J. A. Sauer, *Heshbon Pottery 1971,* "AUM," 7 (Berrien Springs, Mich., 1973), pp. 41, 42 and Fig. 3:126, 127.

[49] Iliffe, *QDAP,* 3, pp. 81-91.

[50] C. H. Kraeling, *Gerasa* (New Haven, 1938), p. 366, Figs. 14 and 15.

[51] M. Avi-Yonah, *QDAP,* Supplement to Vol. 9 (1940); see pp. 29 and 73.