

The Forcart collection of lamps from Fayum



Abstract: The Forcart collection of Ptolemaic, Roman and Late Roman lamps from Fayum is today the largest single-collector Egyptian lychnological corpus owned by a Swiss public institution, the Geneva Museum of Art and History, which acquired it in 1923. The importance of the 145 lamps in this collection is twofold. Firstly, all the artifacts were offered to Max Kurt Forcart by the different directors of excavations operating legally in the Fayum area during the first two decades of the 20th century, giving us a clear—even if generic—finding area, contrary to collections purchased from the various antiquaries. And secondly, even if incomplete compared to the richness and diversity of the Fayum workshops, the chronological and typological range it covers makes it a perfect companion to the only two published and illustrated lamp catalogs of regular excavations made in the area: the early 1900s work of W.M.F. Petrie at Ehnasya and the later investigations by the University of Michigan team at Karanis.

Also highlighted are the unique Fayum fashions and approaches to the importation, adoption or rejection of common types found in the Nile Delta, as well as the emergence of typically microregional subtypes as discussed by John W. Hayes.

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The 145 Egyptian lamps that the Geneva Museum of Art and History acquired in 1923 originated from excavations carried out in Fayum in the early 1900s, in which

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The Forcart Collection in Geneva

In 1923, the Geneva Museum of Art and History acquired the entire collection of antiquities collected in Cairo by Dr. Max Kurt Forcart (1874–1949), a famous pediatrician, known for his research on bacteria and diseases affecting the newborn (for those interested in Forcart's medical research, see his works: *Ein Beitrag zur Frage Des Antagonismus zwischen Bacterium coli und den Harnstoff zersetzenden Bakterien*, Leipzig 1903; *Die Pflege und Ernährung des Säuglings: Ein Leitfaden für die Mutter*, Basel 1913; and *Ueber Pylorusstenose im Säuglingsalter*, Stuttgart 1915).

Forcart was a man dedicated to science, open to discovering the world and generous, a quality recently highlighted by Sania Sharawi Lanfranchi in her 2012 book on Huda Shaarawi, one of the first to stand up for women's emancipation in Egypt (*Casting off the veil: the life of Huda Shaarawi, Egypt's first feminist*, London: I.B. Tauris, pp. 43–44). Approached by Sharawi, who presided over the executive committee of a charitable association that established in 1909 the Muhammad Ali Dispensary in Cairo, Forcart responded by agreeing, along with several other expat colleagues, to provide volunteer services to the clinic, helping also to organize a successful fundraising campaign that contributed greatly to improving the well-being of some of the poorest of Cairo's inhabitants.

Forcart found time in between his professional activities to participate in the excavations then taking place in the Fayum region. This was the source of the unique collection of Egyptian lamps acquired by the Museum. Passionate about discoveries of all kinds, Forcart quickly became one of the Basel personalities from abroad who agreed to send constant "envoys" to the city's Museum der Kulturen, which thus received a large number of ethnographic artifacts as a legacy (see L. Cladders, *Das Basler Museum für Völkerkunde: Grundzüge einer Sammlungsgeschichte zwischen 1914–1945*, Basel 2015: 5). Back in Switzerland, he was appointed curator of the American section of the Museum der Kulturen (as reported by D. Wyss, *Gesammelte Ansichten aus Südamerika. Fotografien aus dem Besitz von Emil Hassler [1864–1937]*, *Argovia*, 129, 2017, p. 30) as early as 1918 and, at the time of the sale of his collection in 1923, he became a member of the Commission of the Natural History Museum of the city, a position mentioned by Waldemar Deonna (1924).

The lamps in the catalog are scaled to two-thirds of their size. The photographic images are the work of © Chaman Multimédia, published by courtesy of Samuel Crettenand and the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire in Geneva, Switzerland.

Max Kurt Forcart participated as an impassioned amateur. They were given to him by the excavators and include most of the major known types from the Hellenistic period to the end of the Byzantine period (Deonna 1924).

A strong point of the collection, which is one of the most homogeneous in Europe as far as lamps actually produced and used by the inhabitants of Fayum are concerned, is the rather everyday and mediocre quality of execution, making

more than two thirds of it of no interest to the museums and antiquaries of the time. These are lamps with imperfections, often a coarse appearance and aesthetically lacking, as demonstrated by lamps from the Roman period, which are local copies with often very neglected decor, far from that of the originals used by the ancient Fayum potters for the overmolding operation, or the anvil-nozzled frog lamps made of coarse clay and with more than clumsy workmanship.

1. LAMPS FROM THE LATE CLASSICAL AND HELLENISTIC PERIODS

Before Alexander's conquest of Egypt, the history of Greek wheel-lamps produced in local workshops is very fragmentary. As many researchers have pointed out (see Bailey 1975: 240–241; Hayes 1980: 9–12 with bibliography), with the exception of the Greek colony of Naukratis, there are very few pre-Hellenistic attestations of imported Greek lamps of this kind (like Cat. 1) as well as specimens made on the spot, in a huge region used to all kinds of lighting devices, including simple bowls with a floating wick, tallow candles and fuel-greased wicks (a kind of small home torch mounted in a wood and metal holder, see Robins 1939a; 1939b). At Naukratis, Greek lamps are well documented from the 6th century BC, first massively imported (from Rhodes and Ionia) and then gradually produced locally as well. Unfortunately, too little research has been done on this site, which is of fundamental importance for Egypt's opening to the Mediterranean

world, and which has produced artifacts, now in the greatest Western museums, testifying to its extraordinary economic prosperity as well as intense and permanent links with the entire Aegean world (the collection of the British Museum in London, consisting of more than 16,000 artifacts, from excavations carried out in 2013–2018, is now available online at https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/online_research_catalogues/ng/naukratis_greeks_in_egypt.aspx).

Returning to the rest of Egypt, it is only during the 4th century BC that the Land of the Nile witnessed a real boom of indigenous clay lamp production, as evidenced, for example, by the many lamps discovered at Tell Edfu by the French–Polish expedition (Bernhard 1955: 251–253, Nos 22–32 with additional bibliography). Moreover, most Egyptian lamps of this time are distinguished by a red-burnished slip; their popularity peaked in the mid 4th century BC (Hayes 1980: 9–10).

The first Graeco-Egyptian lamps copied the shapes of Greek archetypes, chosen from among the most widespread typologies, but new types (not present in this corpus) gradually appeared with time. A synthesis of wheel-made lamps from Egypt, based on the lamps discovered in the Polish excavations at Tell Atrib, was published by Jolanta Młynarczyk (2012: 29–43, including the most recent and complete bibliography on the subject).

Finally, the attachment to “archaic” forms of the hinterland was in stark contrast with the quest for “novelties” from the Greek world present in coastal Egypt and the Nile Delta. The Forcart corpus represents the Fayum alone, illustrating the “emotional” staticity of a local market using, generation after generation, types that had frequently already disappeared elsewhere. In Fayum, they subsisted down the ages, from the Hellenistic period to the late Roman and Byzantine times.

A. WHEEL-MADE IMPORTS AND IMITATIONS

Cat. 1

Inv. 009470

L. max. 8.12; W. 7.34; H. 4.22 cm

Fine, brown to dark reddish clay; fine black glaze

Imported Greek/Ionian derivative of the Athenian

Howland 25 B Prime type, with side-lug, marked by an incision but not pierced. Intact with exception of the nozzle, which end is lost. High, round foot, slightly concave.

Proposed dating: Last decades of the 4th to mid 3rd century BC



Cat. 2

Inv. 009476

L. 7.47; W. 5.45; H. 3.31 cm

Rough light to dark brown clay with mica inclusions; red to dark brown slip, almost entirely lost.

Fayum-made derivative of the Athenian Howland 25 B Prime type, with side-lug marked by an incision but not pierced. Intact with exception of the nozzle and the lug, slightly broken. High, round foot, flat. Very similar to a red burnished lamp from Egypt kept at the Royal Ontario Museum (Hayes 1980: 10, No. 27, Pl. 4, see No. 26 for parallels and discussion of the Egyptian-made type, with or without lug).

Proposed dating: Last decades of the 4th to early 3rd century BC

**Cat. 3**

Inv. 009465

L. 9.09; W. 6.11; H. 3.33 cm

Quite fine, red clay with mica inclusions; orange to dark red slip, almost entirely lost

Fayum-made imitation of the Eastern Aegean derivatives of the Attic Howland 25 D Prime type, but without side lug. High, round foot, slightly concave. Typical Egyptian red burnished lamp, almost identical with an Eastern Aegean specimen except for the latter's prominent lug, preserved in the Royal Ontario Museum (Hayes 1980: 7–8, No. 17, Pl. 2; with a large list of references and discussion of the type). In Egypt, six almost identical lamps were found at Tell Edfu (Bernhard 1955: 252, Nos 23–28, Pl. VI, with further bibliography); another identical lamp was bought in Cairo (Tabasz 1966: 260, No. 2, Pl. I) and a second in Alexandria (Chrzanovski 2019: No. 9). Closer but not identical are two other lamps from Egypt without a known provenance (Bailey 1975: 246, Q 522, Pl. 104, dated to the last third of the 4th to early 3rd century AD; Michelucci 1975: 18, No. 8, Pl. I).

Proposed dating: Late 4th to early 3rd century BC



Cat. 4

Inv. 009477

L. max. 6.05; W. 5.21; H. 2.28 cm

Dark orange clay; dark orange, very fine slip

Wheel-made rounded body, deep and closed, with small, incompletely pierced side lug, and a deep, narrow, flat-topped nozzle with small wick hole. End of the nozzle broken. High, round, flat base. Except for the slip, it is almost identical to a lamp at the Royal Ontario Museum (Hayes 1980: 10, No. 30, Pl. 4).

Proposed dating: Late 4th to early 3rd century BC

**Cat. 5**

Inv. 009464

L. 8.45; W. 6.60; H. 4.19 cm

Dark orange clay; dark orange to red, very fine slip, almost entirely lost

Wheel-made rounded body, deep and closed (perhaps with small side lug: part of the surface of the left shoulder is lost), and a deep, narrow, flat-topped nozzle with small wick hole. Nozzle chipped at the end. Very high, round, flat base with a raised dot in the center.

Proposed dating: Late 4th to early 3rd century BC

**Cat. 6**

Inv. 009478

L. 7.49; W. 5.77; H. 2.90 cm

Brown to very dark brown clay; dark to very dark brown slip not covering the base

Hybrid wheel-made subtype, close to the first type of moldmade lamps where the large filling-hole takes up almost all of the sloping discus defined by the rim. Semicircular side lug, marked but not pierced. Circular, slightly convex base surrounded by a raised circular rim.

Proposed dating: 3rd century BC



Cat. 7

Inv. 009473

L. max. 7.28; W. 6.32; H. 3.60 cm

Fine orange clay with mica inclusions; fine dark orange slip poorly preserved

Hybrid wheel-made subtype, very close to lamp *Cat. 7*.

The large filling hole is surrounded by a very large flat band defined by a rim. Semicircular side lug, marked but not pierced. The extremity of the nozzle is lost.

High, circular, slightly concave foot

Proposed dating: 3rd century BC

**Cat. 8**

Inv. 009487

L. 6.83; W. 5.59; H. 2.66 cm

Fine orange clay with mica inclusions; fine dark orange slip, poorly preserved

Hybrid wheel-made subtype, very roughly made, with a body in the shape of a bowl flattened top and bottom.

The large filling hole is surrounded by a rim and takes up almost all of the discus area defined by a second rim.

Small, rough side lug applied to the upper left part of the shoulder. High, circular, slightly concave base.

Proposed dating: 3rd century BC

**B. MOLDMADE LAMPS****1. Type Młynarczyk A**

This type, the first of the Egyptian-made molded lamps, is characterized by a circular body and a biconical section. Its other distinctive features are a concave area raised above the shoulder, constituting a kind of discus with the filling hole cut in the center, a pierced or unpierced side lug and, finally, a conical nozzle of medium or long size with a rounded end. In the description of her type A, Młynarczyk considers the possibility of these lamps being produced in Egypt by

craftsmen inspired by wheel-made Rhodian derivatives of the Howland 32 type, the diffusion of which peaked in the 3rd century BC and continued during the 2nd century (Młynarczyk 1997: 17–21). The Egyptian workshops shaped a moulded variant from the Aegean prototypes and introduced it on the local market in the second half or rather the last third of the 3rd century BC (on the shared influences and exchanges between Alexandria and the Delta cities on the one hand, and Cyprus and the Greek world on the other, see Młynarczyk 1983; 1990; 1995a; 1998a).

A precise date is provided by some specimens from the Tell Atrib excavations, coming from contexts dated around 225 BC, which would suggest that their production began shortly before that date. For a summary of the discussion on Hellenistic lamps produced in Egypt, in addition to the atlas of Alexandrian typologies (Młynarczyk 1997), see Fossey and Zoitopoulou 1987 and Młynarczyk 2012: 44–116.

Lamps manufactured and distributed in Egypt seem to be concentrated at sites in the southern Nile Delta, as well as in the Fayum and the Memphis area, while they are very rare in the coastal cities. Type A is divided into several subtypes, the last of which was produced in the 2nd century BC. Here, we are dealing with the very first and simplest form of this type, Młynarczyk's A.a.1/plain (Młynarczyk 1997: 17 with exhaustive list of parallels).

Cat. 9

Inv. 009468

L. 7.54; W. 5.40; H. 2.57 cm

Dark brown clay with many mica inclusions; dark orange slip
Well-made lamp from the Fayum, with forward-pointing side lug marked by an incision but not pierced. Intact. Thin-walled, broad shallow circular body, rounded above and below a sharp carination. A concave sloping band, surrounded by a groove, around the filling hole. Low circular foot, slightly concave

Proposed dating: Late 3rd century BC



Cat. 10

Inv. 009469

L. 8.77; W. 6.56; H. 2.97 cm

Light brown fine clay; dark brown slip

Similar to *Cat. 9*, side lug marked by an incision but not pierced. Low circular base, slightly concave, with a dot at the center. Damaged before firing: the end of the nozzle is bent and a residual lump of clay was not wiped away after piercing the wick hole.

Proposed dating: Late 3rd century BC



Cat. 11

Inv. 009471

L. 7.34; W. 5.72; H. 2.42 cm

Fine orange clay with some mica inclusions; dark orange slip
 Similar to *Cat. 9*, side lug marked by an incision but not
 pierced. Low circular base, slightly concave.

Proposed dating: Late 3rd century BC

**Cat. 12**

Inv. 009472

L. 7.15; W. 4.88; H. 2.73 cm

Fine brown clay with many mica inclusions; brown to dark
 brown slip

Similar to *Cat. 9*, side lug marked by an incision but not
 pierced. Low circular base, slightly concave.

Proposed dating: Late 3rd century BC

**Cat. 13**

Inv. 009479

L. max. 6.39; W. 5.12; H. 2.32 cm

Yellowish clay with mica inclusions; dark brown slip, scarcely
 preserved

Similar to *Cat. 9*, side lug marked by an incision but not
 pierced, damaged at the tip; end of nozzle lost. Medium-
 high circular base, slightly concave.

Proposed dating: Late 3rd century BC



Cat. 14

Inv. 009480

L. 7.00; W. 5.04; H. 2.29 cm

Brown to grey clay; dark red to light brown slip

Similar to *Cat. 9*, side lug marked by an incision but not pierced. Medium-high circular base, slightly concave.

Proposed dating: Late 3rd century BC

**Cat. 15**

Inv. 009481

L. 8.69; W. 6.31; H. 3.25 cm

Light brown clay; dark brown slip, spread unevenly leaving most of the bottom without

Similar to *Cat. 9*, side lug marked by an incision but not pierced. Medium-high circular base, slightly concave.

Proposed dating: Late 3rd century BC

**Cat. 16**

Inv. 009482

L. 7.09; W. 5.50; H. 2.73 cm

Light brown to light orange clay; dark orange to burnt slip, spread unevenly leaving most of the bottom without

Similar to *Cat. 9*, side lug marked by an incision but not pierced. Flat base, defined by a circular raised rim.

Proposed dating: Late 3rd century BC



Cat. 17

Inv. 009484

L. 8.64; W. 6.44; H. 2.67 cm;

Brown clay with mica inclusions; dark red to dark brown slip
 Similar to *Cat. 9*, side lug marked by an incision but not
 pierced. Low circular base, slightly concave with a dot
 at the center.

Proposed dating: Late 3rd century BC

**Cat. 18**

Inv. 009486

L. 8.45; W. 6.22; H. 2.54 cm

Brown clay with mica inclusions; orange to dark brown slip
 Similar to *Cat. 9*, side lug marked by an incision but not
 pierced. Low, flat circular base.

Proposed dating: Late 3rd century BC

**Cat. 19**

Inv. 009488

L. max. 7.05; W. 5.83; H. 2.14 cm

Brown clay with mica inclusions; dark orange very fine slip
 Similar to *Cat. 9*, but with pierced side lug on the opposite
 side than in the previous lamps. Nozzle broken at the tip.

Low circular base, slightly concave.

Proposed dating: Late 3rd century BC



2. Type Młynarczyk A: late derivatives

This group of molded lamps resembles the previous one, having the same circular body with biconical section but distinguished by a very small, slightly concave or flattened area, separated from the shoulder by a circular rim and constituting a kind of discus with the filling hole pierced in the center, itself surrounded by another circular relief rim. The side lug, almost never pierced, is more prominent, while the base is small and circular. It also features a conical nozzle generally of medium or long size and a rounded end.

Młynarczyk considers these lamps to have been produced concurrently in Egypt and in the Levant (Młynarczyk 1997: 21–25). Egyptian workshops produced two main variants, the first without decoration (like the lamps here) and the second, attested mainly in Alexandria, decorated on the nozzle generally with an Eros motif.

As far as the Fayum is concerned, this type is the earliest to have a characteristic red slip and is dated from around the late 3rd to the 2nd century BC (see Hayes 1980: 22, No. 81, Pl. 9).

Cat. 20

Inv. 009474

L. 7.41; W. 5.49; H. 3.10 cm

Orange clay with mica inclusions; no traces of slip

Circular body, fairly deep. Tapering nozzle with slight bulge on the top and raised wick hole. Large pierced side lug.

Rounded sides. High, flat and circular base.

Proposed dating: Late 3rd to 2nd century BC



Cat. 21

Inv. 009483

L. 7.67; W. 5.62; H. 3.12 cm

Light brown clay with mica inclusions; orange to dark red slip on all of the body but the base

Similar to *Cat. 20*, but with a marked but unpierced side lug.

Concave base, defined by a high circular rim.

Proposed dating: Late 3rd to 2nd century BC



Cat. 22

Inv. 009485

L. 6.61; W. 5.05; H. 2.16 cm

Light brown clay with mica inclusions; red to dark red-brown slip (Fayum ware)

Similar to *Cat. 20*, also with marked but unpierced side lug.

Low, flat and circular base.

Proposed dating: Late 3rd to 2nd century BC

**Cat. 23**

Inv. 009475

L. 5.84; W. 4.63; H. 2.47 cm

Dark brown clay; dark orange slip

Very anomalous subtype with a flat large discus and an almost flat upper part of the nozzle, all the other characteristics being similar to *Cat. 20*. Semicircular unpierced side lug.

High circular base, slightly concave. Very rough product, judging by the wick hole which is almost square in shape, as well as by two residual clay lumps not removed from the lower part of the body before firing

Proposed dating: 2nd century BC(?)



3. Type Młynarczyk E, E prime and derivatives

Molded lamps of Type E are characterized by a slightly carinated globular shape, a filling hole pierced in a circular concave area and a narrow nozzle the upper part of which is flattened and often decorated. The termination of the nozzle is round or anvil-shaped, also with a flattened upper part. They have a side lug (sometimes two) and their base is defined by a circular raised ring. The E prime lamps have the same characteristics, with the notable exception of the presence of two half volutes completing the decoration of the nozzle at the level of the shoulder. Młynarczyk considered these lamps to be a link

between the Howland 25B Athenian wheel-made products, their Howland 42A molded counterparts and some contemporary Alexandrian products (Młynarczyk 1997: 40–47).

The Egyptian, but also Cypriot, Asia Minor and Near Eastern workshops created several variants of these two types. In Egypt, these lamps seem to have been produced mainly in Alexandria and the Delta, but were also imported.

Chronologically, lamps belonging to Type E seem to have appeared at the very end of the 3rd century BC and their production extended over a large part of the 2nd century BC. The E prime type seems to be specific to the middle of the 2nd century BC.

Cat. 24

Inv. 009490

L. 8.03; W. 6.07; H. 3.24 cm

Dark orange brown clay with abundant mica; dark orange slip

Typical example of a E prime type of lamp, adorned with volutes at the junction of the nozzle base and the circular rim defining the discus, in the middle of which a second rim defines the filling hole. The shoulder is decorated with concentric relief rays, while a large triangular lug is set in the middle of the left side, marked but not pierced. Small, flat and circular base.

Proposed dating: Mid 2nd century BC



Cat. 25

Inv. 009505

L. 7.47; W. 5.18; H. 2.24 cm

Light brown clay with abundant mica; traces of orange slip
Very degenerate example of a Type E lamp, adorned with volutes at the junction of the nozzle base and the circular rim defining the discus with the filling hole pierced in the center. The shoulder is decorated with a vegetal ornament.

A small triangular lug is set in the middle of the left side and a second, small, round lug is on the bottom of the right side. Small, flat and circular base.

Proposed dating: 2nd century BC



4. Type Młynarczyk F

This type of molded lamp is characterized by a biconical section, two side lugs on axis and an elongated nozzle with a rounded or triangular end. The upper part of the nozzle is its main distinctive feature as in the case of Type E lamps; it is decorated with a flat rectangular area, but above all a wide range of geometric motifs on the nozzle and the periphery of the circular area surrounding the filling hole on most of the lamps of this type. The bases of these lamps are generally in the form of a low foot or a circular ring in relief.

There are several main variants and subvariants of this type. The main difference is the presence (subtype F1) or

absence (subtype F2) of geometric decoration on both sides of the shoulder at the root of the nozzle. While subtype F1 lamps seem to have been produced almost exclusively in Alexandria, subtype F2 lamps were very successful, probably being manufactured both in the Delta and in the Nile Valley and even in some centers in the Near East. Młynarczyk (1997: 48–53) expressed the opinion that these lamps were produced almost exclusively by Egyptian workshops and that they are to be related to Type E lamps.

Chronologically, lamps of Type F started to be produced at the end of the 3rd century and continued through the end of the 2nd century BC.

Cat. 26

Inv. 009489

L. 7.22; W. 5.44; H. 2.39 cm

Brown to light grey clay with mica inclusions; black slip
(Bubastis ware?)

Very simple example of a Type F1 lamp, undecorated with the exception of finely traced volutes surrounding a column-shaped frame adorning the top of the nozzle, and two incised lines around the beginning of the nozzle. Generous rounded band encircling the central filling hole. Slightly concave base defined from inside to outside by a circular groove followed by a raised circle

Proposed dating: 2nd century BC



Cat. 27

Inv. 009504

L. 6.92; W. 4.81; H. 2.42 cm

Orange to brick clay with mica inclusions; no slip

Fayum-made coarse derivative of a Type F2 lamp, richly decorated with raised circles around the large circular rim around the central filling hole. Groove on the nozzle extending from the central rim to the oval end, constituting the central element of a roughly rendered palm branch. Flat base defined by a raised circle.

Proposed dating: 2nd century BC

**Cat. 28**

Inv. 009507

L. 7.25; W. 4.76; H. 2.84 cm

Dark brown clay with mica inclusions; no slip

Fayum-made coarse derivative of a Type F2 lamp, richly decorated with raised petals around the large circular rim around the central filling hole. On the nozzle, two parallel raised lines extending from the central rim to the end tending from oval to triangular. Low, flat and circular base.

Proposed dating: 2nd century BC



5. Type Młynarczyk G

This type of molded lamp is very similar in appearance to Type F, from which it is distinguished mainly by a rim emphasizing the junction between the two molded parts (upper and lower) of the lamp, as well as by a very rich range of decoration not only on the shoulder, but also on the flattened upper part of the nozzle, almost always anvil-shaped.

Młynarczyk (1997: 54–57) considers these lamps to have been produced almost exclusively by Egyptian workshops, especially Alexandrian ones; customer

appreciation would make them a popular export product throughout most of Egypt, at least as far as Luxor, and even outside Egypt, as demonstrated by the discoveries of copies of this type in Palestine, Cyprus and even Carthage.

It should be noted that several workshops located in the Delta appear to have used overmolding to produce copies from Alexandrian originals. Chronologically, Type G seems to have originated during the first two decades of the 2nd century and its production seems to cover the whole century.

Cat. 29

Inv. 009493

L. 8.64; W. 6.72; H. 2.83 cm

Orange to light brown clay with mica inclusions; dark orange to red slip, almost entirely lost

Classic example of a Type G lamp with two triangular side lugs, decorated with an ivy-leaf wreath on the shoulder as well as fine volutes surrounding a column-shaped frame adorning the top of the nozzle with a vase motif in the center. Two concentric rims define a central filling hole. Slightly concave circular base. An almost identical lamp is kept at the Graeco-Roman Museum of Alexandria (Inv. No. 30.615, illustrated in Młynarczyk 1998b: 334, Fig. 4e)

Proposed dating: 2nd century BC



Cat. 30

Inv. 009496

L. 8.04; W. 6.53; H. 2.47 cm

Dark brown clay; light to dark grey slip

Classic example of a Type G lamp with two triangular side lugs, decorated with an ivy-leaf wreath on the shoulder as well as with fine volutes surrounding a column-shaped frame adorning the top of the nozzle with a vase motif in the center, almost identical to *Cat. 29*, but topped by a sort of 'curtain' composed of small raised lines falling from the upper volute line. Two concentric rims define the central filling hole. Flat circular base.

Proposed dating: 2nd century BC

**Cat. 31**

Inv. 009497

L. 10.19; W. 7.69; H. 3.15 cm

Dark brown clay; light to dark grey slip

Classic example of a Type G lamp with two triangular side lugs (the left one damaged), decorated with a vegetal wreath on the shoulder as well as fine volutes surrounding a column-shaped frame adorning the top of the nozzle, ornamented in the center with a long thyrsus bottom up, flanked by fillets. A raised circle defines a small steeply concave area with a large central filling hole pierced in it. Flat circular base, defined by a circular incision.

Proposed dating: 2nd century BC



Cat. 32

Inv. 009503

L. 7.38; W. 5.58; H. 2.27 cm

Light brown, quite coarse clay with mica and lime inclusions; slip lost

Type G lamp with two triangular side lugs, surface eroded.

Two concentric rims define a small very convex area with a large filling hole pierced in the center. Flat circular base.

Proposed dating: 2nd century BC

**Cat. 33**

Inv. 009499

L. 7.52; W. 5.25; H. 2.88 cm

Orange, quite coarse clay with mica and lime inclusions; red slip lost

Fayum-made poor derivative of a Type

G lamp without side lugs. Teardrop-shaped rim defines a large and steeply concave area with a filling hole pierced in the center. Incised palm leaves inside an incised frame, placed axially and opposite to the large, eye-shaped nozzle termination. Flat circular base, defined by a low relief circle. Mark: incised *alpha*.

Proposed dating: 2nd century BC



6. Type Młynarczyk K

This type of molded lamp gathers its constituent elements from different previous types: it is rounded in appearance, no side lugs and a wide nozzle with flattened, circular or almost triangular end, a very marked circular rim emphasising the junction between the lower and upper part of the lamp. A wide range of mainly geometric motifs adorn the nozzle and the shoulder, allowing a division into two main subtypes. The first (K.a.) is distinguished by lateral bands running from the shoulder down each side of the nozzle, which is always decorated with a palmette. The second subtype (K.b.) is characterized by a curved rim separating the nozzle from the rest of the shoulder.

Młynarczyk described these lamps as particularly appreciated in Egypt and

even beyond (Młynarczyk 1997: 65–71). While K.a. subtype lamps seem to be concentrated around Alexandria, the K.b. subtype has been discovered in the Delta, the Nile Valley and in the Fayum. Their clay characteristics witness a particularly significant production of this subtype at Naukratis, but also, to a lesser extent, in the Fayum. Outside Egypt, this type of lamp would have been exported to Palestine and Cyprus, while, in the Nabatean area, it even seems to have been imitated by several workshops located in Petra.

Chronologically, Type K started to be produced at the end of the 2nd century and continued through the 1st century BC, with the latest lamps being manufactured still in the first half of the 1st century AD.

Cat. 34

Inv. 009495

L. max. 14.19; W. 9.76;

H. 6.35 cm

Light brown, with several tiny mica

inclusions; orange to red-brown slip

Classic subtype K.b lamp with a concave-sided square formed by a raised rim resembling a twisted ribbon defining all the decorated registers. Inside the square and on the shoulder, raised dots, interrupted in the center by a large flat circle completed by two concentric incisions defining a small slightly concave area with a small filling hole in the center. Large tubular nozzle, the end of which is lost, decorated with a precisely rendered acanthus leaf. Flat circular base with a relief ring around it.

Proposed dating: 1st century BC



7. Type Młynarczyk L

Type L lamps are almost identical in shape to Type K. However, the main distinguishing feature is the absence of the circular raised rim marking the junction of the two parts of the lamp. Lamps of this type are generally of very small dimensions, and their decorative repertoire is very poor.

Młynarczyk described these lamps as particularly appreciated in Egypt, where they were produced on a massive scale in Alexandria, the Delta and in the Fayum, perhaps for a class of modest customers given their much lower aesthetic quality compared to contemporary types (Młynarczyk

1997: 72–74). First to be studied is a Fayum imitation of one of the most adorned Alexandrian lamps, “betrayed” by its rather coarse clay and slip, and the neglectful rendering of the left side lug, dolphin-shaped, marked but not pierced.

In chronological terms, Type L lamps appeared in Egypt at the end of the 2nd century BC and their production seems to have extended until the 1st century AD. It is interesting to remark on the presence of very similar and almost contemporary products on Delos, the latter being manufactured between the last quarter of the 2nd century BC and the first quarter of the 1st century AD.

Cat. 35

Inv. 009500

L. 8.37; W. 6.58; H. 3.02 cm

Brown with several tiny mica and lime inclusions; deep red slip, lost

Atypical Type L lamp with a short nozzle

looking like lamps of Type J, featuring a raised circle defining the concave discus with a small filling hole pierced in the center. Palm leaves are suspended from the ring, alternating with a raised frame on the shoulder. Large tubular nozzle with a raised, roughly rounded end. Small, flat circular base, with a mark, an incised *alpha*.

Proposed dating: 1st century BC



Cat. 36

Inv. 009491

L. 7.51; W. 5.29; H. 2.50 cm

Light brown with several tiny mica inclusions; orange to red-brown slip, almost entirely lost

Classic Type L lamp featuring only a raised circle defining the concave discus with a small filling hole pierced in the center. Large tubular nozzle with a raised anvil-shaped end, separated from the shoulder by a semicircular raised rim. Small, flat circular base.

Proposed dating: 1st century BC



8. Type Młynarczyk M

This type of molded lamp has a circular body with biconical section, mainly without side lugs, and a medium or long tubular nozzle with almost triangular end. Młynarczyk (1997: 78–83) interpreted the combination of the rounded body and long nozzle as an innovation introduced in Egypt by craftsmen inspired by Knidian wheel-made lamps, the production of which began at the end of the 3rd century BC, but also by long-nozzled lamps from Delos, representing the Bruneau IV:2 type.

Egyptian workshops associated a panoply of decorative shoulder motifs, but also ornamented relief lugs with Knidian and

Delian shapes, inspired by Knidian, Delian and Athenian repertoires, as well as motifs specific to other Egyptian types of the same period. The lamps manufactured and distributed in Egypt seem to be distributed evenly between Alexandria, sites in the Nile Delta, Fayum and Lower Egypt.

Based on the decoration, but also on the length of the nozzles, Młynarczyk proposed to date the first lamps of this type to the middle or second half of the 2nd century BC. Particularly appreciated, Type M would go on to have several subtypes, the last examples being produced until the mid 1st century AD.

Cat. 37

Inv. 009506

L. max. 6,32; W. 5,32; H. 2,38 cm

Light brown with several tiny mica inclusions; orange to red-brown slip, almost entirely lost

Typical Type M lamp with two concentric raised circles surrounding, first, the central concave area and, second, the small central filling hole. Around the exterior circle, a very finely rendered set of alternating double petals and arrows, interrupted towards the nozzle by a nice semicircular volute. Long, tubular nozzle, the end of which is lost, separated from the shoulder by a raised line on each side. Small, flat circular base. Proposed dating: 1st century BC to 1st century AD



Cat. 38

Inv. 009502

L. 8.45; W. 5.34; H. 2.48 cm

Light brown with several tiny mica inclusions; no slip

Local Fayum-made variant of Type M prime lamp with a dolphin-shaped side lug. Raised circle surrounding a large filling hole. Around it, a very rough series of long petals covering the shoulder and interrupted towards the nozzle with impressed dots, adorning also the upper part of the long, tubular nozzle, separated from the shoulder by a sunken line on each side. Slightly concave circular base defined by a raised circle.

Proposed dating: 1st century BC to 1st century AD

**9. Type Młynarczyk N**

This type of molded lamp is characterized by a massive body with biconical section, no side lugs and a small massive nozzle, its top convex and usually undecorated. The shoulder is patterned either with raised petals or impressed grooves, while

a rosette surrounds the filling hole.

Młynarczyk (1997: 84–85) suggested that this type was produced in Alexandria as well as in the Delta and in the Nile Valley. The lamps seem to have been produced between the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD.

Cat. 39

Inv. 009492

L. 8.03; W. 4.65; H. 2.54 cm

Light brown with several tiny mica inclusions; orange to red-brown slip, almost entirely lost

Typical Type N lamp with two concentric raised circles surrounding a small filling hole. Long, tubular nozzle with a termination tending from oval to triangular. The shoulder is decorated with incised rays and a semicircular volute in relief, with a palmette extending from it onto the nozzle top. Small, flat and circular base.

Proposed dating: 1st century BC to 1st century AD



10. Type Młynarczyk O

The type features a massive body of bi-conical section, no side lugs and a medium or long nozzle with a flat top and anvil-shaped end. The nozzle is separated from the shoulder by a raised rim placed transversely, giving the appearance of an Ionian column, while the shoulder is rendered either without decoration or with raised dots or linear patterns covering the entire surface.

Młynarczyk (1997: 86–88) placed the production of this type mainly in Alexandria, but also, to a lesser extent, in the Nile Valley. Interestingly, the type was imitated by an abundant production of similar lamps in Petra and in several workshops of the Nabataean area. Chronologically, the production of this type seems to have begun between the second half of the 2nd century and the beginning of the 1st century BC, while the latest lamps were manufactured in the last decades of the 1st century AD.

Cat. 40

Inv. 009508

L. 7.82; W. 5.41; H. 2.62 cm

Dark orange with several tiny mica inclusions; dark orange to red-brown slip

Typical Type O lamp with raised circles surrounding, first, a central concave area and, second, a small filling hole. Around the exterior circle, a very finely rendered series of relief petals and arrows, interrupted toward the nozzle by a semicircular volute with short parallel incisions dropped from it. Massive, flat-topped nozzle, with semicircular end. Small, circular, slightly concave base. Two similar lamps were unearthed at Karanis (Shier 1978: 62, Nos 40–41, Pl. 13)

Proposed dating: 1st century BC to 1st century AD



11. Other “poor” wheel-made and moldmade Fayum derivatives

Cat. 41

Inv. 009501

L. 7.50; W. 5.01; H. 2.78 cm

Orange clay with numerous lime and mica inclusions; reddish slip

Fayum molded lamp recalling Mlynarczyk

Types A (mainly) and M (for the filling hole area). Circular body. Tapering nozzle with slight bulge on the top and raised wick hole. Small coarse side lug. Rounded sides. Flat circular base, defined by a circular groove and marked with an incised *alpha*.

Proposed dating: 2nd century BC



Cat. 42

Inv. 009498

L. 6.93; W. 4.26; H. 2.41 cm

Orange clay with numerous lime and mica inclusions; no slip
Fayum wheel-made lamp recalling Mlynarczyk Types A

(mainly) and M (for the filling hole area). Circular body.

Tapering nozzle with slight bulge on the top and pierced wick hole. Rounded sides. Flat, drop-shaped base.

Proposed dating: 2nd to 1st century BC(?)



Cat. 43

Inv. 009494

L. 8.63; W. 5.87; H. 2.79 cm

Orange clay with numerous lime and mica inclusions; dark red slip, almost entirely lost

Fayum moldmade lamp recalling Mlynarczyk Types E (mainly)

and the following types. Circular body. Tubular nozzle

flattened on top, decorated with parallel relief lines.

Undecorated shoulder except for a dolphin in very low relief on the left upper side, recalling the larger ones used as lugs.

Large, oval-to-triangular-shaped nozzle termination. Circular rim defining the discus with a second rim around the filling hole. Flat, circular base, defined by a large raised circle.

Proposed dating: 2nd to 1st century BC(?)



C. PTOLEMAIC TO ROMAN TRANSITION

1. Round lamps with small lateral anvil-shaped nozzle (Młynarczyk II.23)

Molded lamps of this type are an exclusively Egyptian production from the Roman period. Only one artifact of this kind, a lamp from Delos, has been identified and published from outside Egypt (Bruneau 1965: 144, No. 4734, Pl. 34).

For their shape craftsmen combined the morphological characteristics of the medallions of classic Roman lamps with the small triangular Greek nozzles, well documented in Corinthian production (Type Broneer XXI). Then, they added a lateral handle and pierced several regularly arranged filling holes, fitting the decoration of the discus, which is itself geometrically organized, by combining vegetal motifs, leaves and flowers or rosettes, impressed or in relief. The single known exception to this rule is a lamp, perhaps of later date, with a somewhat naive representation of a donkey (or rabbit) on its discus (Anson, Hannah, and Hudson 2013: 230–231, No. 414).

The dating of these artifacts is problematic. According to Bailey, this type extends from the second half of the 1st century BC to the first half of the following century (see Bailey 1980: 264–267 with parallels). The most recent study, based on concrete data of two examples from the Polish excavations at Tell Atrib, proposes a range for these two artifacts from the end of the 1st century BC to the beginning or first half of the following century (Młynarczyk 2012: 117, Nos 213–214).

Hayes cites broadly the same chronological range (Hayes 1980: 37, Hybrid

Ptolemaic/Roman types), but extends it to all of the 1st century AD, a proposal taken up by Selesnow (1988: 29–30, Type B12, “Zylindrische Lampen mit eckiger Schnauze”). Szentlélek follows the dating of Greek lamps on which the type is based, preferring a shorter time frame for the production, set in the first half of the 1st century AD (Szentlélek 1969: 46–47, No. 38). Discussing a lamp of this type from Karanis, Shier suggests a much later date extending from the mid 2nd to the beginning of the 3rd century AD (Shier 1978: 113), a proposal which seems highly controversial.

No identical parallel for this example has been found. The list below is of lamps published so far, all featuring an orange clay and, very often, an orange slip, with the exception of the Royal Ontario Museum lamp, the clay of which is grey clay and the slip black, typical according to Hayes of the “Delta Ware or even Bubastis Ware”. Three lamps are known from Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. 56, R10 and R30, and Pl. 57, Q2); one lamp from an Alexandrian collection (Osborne 1924: 14, No. 74, Pl. V); six Egyptian lamps, including one from Naukratis and one from Oxyrhynchus, from the British Museum (Bailey 1975: 264–267, Q 571 to Q 576, Pl. 110), three Egyptian lamps, including one from Antinoë, from the Kaufmann Collection (Selesnow 1988: 29–30, 124, Nos 46–48, Pl. 7); as well as, from Egypt without further specification, two lamps from the Schloessinger Collection (Rosenthal and Sivan 1978: 59–60, Nos 238–239); one lamp from the National Museum in Warsaw (Bernhard 1955: 302–303, No. 230, Pl. XLIX), a lamp from the Royal Museum of Antiqui-

ties in Leiden (Brants 1913: 37, No. 570, Pl. 5) and, finally, a lamp from the Royal Ontario Museum (Hayes 1980: 37, No. 177, Pl. 18).

Cat. 44

Inv. 009521

L. 8.47 (with handle 11.35); W. 10.08 (with nozzle); H. 2.78 (with handle 3.90) cm

Orange clay with numerous lime and mica inclusions; dark orange to dark red slip

Typical moldmade example of the type. Broad flat-topped circular body with a thick moldmade ring handle projecting from the side and a narrow nozzle set at right angle to it. Rounded sides. Flat, circular base. The discus, defined by two concentric rims, is adorned with four inward-pointing palmettes, alternating with as many pierced wick holes, to which a bigger, central one, is added.

Proposed dating: Mid 1st century BC to early 1st century AD



2. Multi-nozzle lamps

The two artifacts shown here are very different and their chronology is the main issue to be considered as Egypt was very fond of lamps with many nozzles, of every type, from the very nice imitations of late Classic–early Hellenistic Knidian lamps to very late clay imitations of hanging bronze lamps.

Lamp *Cat. 45* is most probably a transitional Ptolemaic–Roman product, a modest wheel-made lamp without anything (nozzle shape, general morphology) to help to define a more precise date. The

lost tape handle may be the only discriminatory element, it appearing not earlier than the 1st century BC. The second lamp with its typical (lost) tubular vertical extension culminating in a ring, as well as the broad and specific nozzle ends, is a local variant of a fairly common Roman type produced, eclectically, around the Mediterranean. The ring allowed the lamp both to be carried in processions and to be used at home hanging from the ceiling. There are no direct parallels for either of these two lamps.

Cat. 45

Inv. 009519

L. 12.38 (with nozzles); W. 8.77 (without the nozzles); H. 3.38 cm

Light cream fine clay; traces of red ocher slip
Wheel-made lamp. Vertical tape handle, lost.

Flat circular base defined by a high circular rim, with two concentric incised circles inside it.

Proposed dating: 1st century BC to 1st century AD



Cat. 46

Inv. 009520

L. 11.23 (with nozzles); W. 6.58 (without nozzles); H. 2.89 cm

Light brown clay with fine mica inclusions; red to dark brown slip, almost entirely lost

Moldmade lamp. Vertical tube topped by a ring (lost) to be used as handle and for suspension. Flat base defined by a high square rim. Shoulder adorned with a naïve rendering of snakes in relief.

Proposed dating: 1st to 2nd century AD



2. ROMAN LAMPS

A. TYPE LOESCHCKE III AND EGYPTIAN HANDLE ATTACHMENTS

These large lamps, with one or two nozzles with an ogival end and flanked by volutes, are distinguished by the presence of a “reflector” or decorated handle attachment rising from the upper part of the handle, usually triangular- (*delta* for some authors) or crescent-shaped. This is a “luxury” version in clay of bronze lamps from the Augustan period: potters copied the shape and the reflecting handles of the bronze artifacts. Their quality and their abnormal shape, with the reflector rising vertically above the shoulder, made them very delicate and hence way more subject to damage during packaging and transport compared to all the other standard Roman types.

Production of lamps of this kind was initiated in Italy in the time of Augustus, according to Donald M. Bailey, and ceased already in the reign of Nero for the most refined specimens. The less elaborate versions continued until the last quarter of the 1st century AD. This type seems to have been appreciated—or accessible—only in the great coastal agglomerations of the Mediterranean, while smaller and more simplified copies were to be had almost everywhere, in the Roman world as well as in Egypt, in any case until the end of the 2nd century AD.

The handle ornament, the triangular- or crescent-shaped “reflectors”, seem to have originated in Italy, where they were very successful from the Augustan period until Hadrian’s reign (Bailey 1980: Type D), decorating either *bilychnoi* volute lamps (Loeschcke III type), or single-

nozzled half-volute lamps (Loeschcke V type), and, later and especially in the southern and eastern provinces, circular lamps of the Loeschcke VIII type.

In Egypt, as in North Africa, reflectors would be so popular that they remained in production for many centuries after their Italian and Eastern counterparts had disappeared. Indeed, the first examples produced in Egypt seem to date to the second quarter of the 1st century AD, while for the later ones, several specialists have proposed dates that could extend to the last decades of the 2nd century.

In Italy, as in Africa or the Aegean, the decoration of these lamps presents a very rich iconography, mainly concentrated on representations of divinities. Then, little by little, the ornament was reduced apparently to vegetal motifs, in the first place a palmette rising from a double volute-ended acanthus leaf. In Egypt, on the contrary, simple vegetal patterns do not seem to have been very popular, unlike figurative (mainly divine) representations, the production of which would remain strong until reflectors disappeared altogether.

As far as production workshops are concerned, the clay and slip characteristics, and the iconography of the reflectors, deeply inspired by the Hellenistic pictorial canon of deities from the Graeco-Egyptian pantheon, suggest a concentration mainly in Alexandria and in the Nile Delta. At the same time, the relative frequency of coarser artifacts of this type attest to a location of different workshops in the Fayum area and the Nile Valley.

1. Lamps

Cat. 47

Inv. 009509

L. max. 13,31; W. max. 11,23;

H. 4,30 cm

Brown clay with numerous mica inclusions; dark red slip, almost entirely lost

Very fine lamp with thin walls, plain discus with precisely pierced filling hole in its center; nozzles ornamented by double leaves in relief in their upper part, besides the external volutes. Flat base defined by a circular rim. Handle and ornament lost, nozzles broken off at the tips. Most certainly an Italian import.

Proposed dating: First half of the 1st century AD



Cat. 48

Inv. 009511

L. max. 9,90; W. max. 7,99; H. 3,01 cm

Dark brown fine clay; dark brown to dark grey slip

The rendering of the head of Dionysos, beardless and with a very intricate hairdress, topped and flanked by a wreath made of leaves, grapes and fruits, is specific of the Italian early 1st-century repertoire of themes adorning central Italian- and Campanian-made lamps belonging to Loeschcke I, III and IV types, such as this artifact. It was widely copied in Gaul and Germania (for a list of parallels, see for Italian lamps, Bailey 1980: 15, discussion of Q 812 and Q 840; for Italian and Gallic lamps, Leibundgut 1977: 154, Motif 130)

Proposed dating: Mid 1st to 2nd century AD



Cat. 49

Inv. 009512

L. max. 8.41 cm

Orange clay with coarse and large mica inclusions; no slip

Parallels include an Alexandrian lamp kept at the British Museum, Q 1919 (Bailey 1988: 38, 246, second half of 1st century AD), and a discus fragment, also said to be from Egypt and now in Mainz (Menzel 1969: No. 341) This very bizarre scene created by Alexandrian potters was discussed by Bailey (1988: 38) citing Waldemar Deonna (1949): “Deonna, discussing the Geneva lamp, mentions many occurrences of snakes in trees, and young women. He describes funerary aspects of snakes in trees and emphasizes the snake as a *genius loci*; he also mentions the identification of the snake with the phallus, a cause for alarm to young maidens”. Other specialists suggested “the myth of Opheltēs, son of Laocoön, killed by a snake, the woman presumably being the nurse Hypsipyle, but one would expect the child to be shown. Perhaps we have here Eurydice, killed by a snake. Or the woman may be an Hesperid nymph, surprised at the disappearance of the Golden Apples. A further possibility is Fauna and Faunus: Faunus, conceiving a passion for his daughter(?) Fauna, changed himself into a snake and frightened her into submission” (Bailey 1988: 38).

Proposed dating: Second half of 1st century AD



Fig. 1. Lamp Q 1919 and Bailey’s drawing of the scene (Photo © Trustees of the British Museum; drawing after Bailey 1980: 38, Fig. 44, Q 1919)

Cat. 50

Inv. 009509

L. max. 15.36; W. max. 14.16; H. 4.73 cm



Orange to light red clay with lots of lime and mica inclusions; slip lost, assuming there was one
Very mediocre Fayum lamp, handle and reflector as well as nozzle terminations lost. Discus
ornamented with an illegible motif. Flat base defined by a high circular rim.
Proposed dating: late 1st to 2nd century AD

2. Handle attachments

The corpus collected by Forcart includes many examples of handle attachments decorated with images of Sarapis. The parallels given in this section are not exhaustive, the reader being referred to

the classic work of Vincent Tran Tam Tinh and Marie-Odile Jentel (1993). The subject is also discussed in this volume by Jean-Louis Podvin (2019 with further references).

Cat. 51

Inv. 009522

L. max. 14.31; W. 9.68 cm

Beige fine clay; light to very dark brown slip

Handle attachment. Bust of Sarapis on globe.

Proposed dating: 1st to 2nd century AD



Cat. 52

Inv. 009523

L. max. 12.27; W. 9.21 cm

Light orange clay; dark orange slip

Handle attachment. Bust of Sarapis on an
acanthus leaf.

Proposed dating: 1st to 2nd century AD

**Cat. 53**

Inv. 009524

L. max. 7.84; W. 7.35 cm

Light brown fine clay; orange slip

Handle attachment. Bust of Sarapis without
other ornaments.

Proposed dating: 1st to 2nd century AD



Cat. 54

Inv. 009525

L. max. 13.11; W. max. 9.53 cm

Orange clay with mica inclusions; orange slip

Handle attachment. Bust of Sarapis on an acanthus leaf, set against a background of acanthus leaves.

Proposed dating: 1st to 2nd century AD

**Cat. 55**

Inv. 009526

L. max. 9.79; W. 6.43 cm

Light brown clay; dark brown slip, almost entirely lost

Handle attachment. Bust of Sarapis on a pedestal.

Proposed dating: 1st to 2nd century AD



Cat. 56

Inv. 009527

L. max. 9.03; W. 4.95 cm

Light brown clay with lime and mica inclusions; orange slip, almost entirely lost

Handle attachment. Bust of Sarapis on a small acanthus leaf.

Proposed dating: 1st to 2nd century AD

**Cat. 57**

Inv. 009528

L. max. 7.12; W. 5.21 cm

Dark orange clay with mica inclusions; dark orange slip

Handle attachment. Bust of Sarapis with an eagle with spread wings in front of him, holding a thunderbolt in its claws.

Proposed dating: 1st to 2nd century AD

**Cat. 58**

Inv. 009529

L. max. 5.43; W. 4.50 cm

Orange clay with mica inclusions; dark orange slip

Handle attachment. Bust of Sarapis on an acanthus leaf.

Proposed dating: 1st to 2nd century AD



Cat. 59

Inv. 009530

L. max. 8.70; W. max. 8.12 cm

Light brown clay with mica inclusions; dark brown slip

Handle attachment. Bust of Isis. The goddess, dressed in a chiton and a hymation, is depicted frontally, the head inclined to the right and eyes raised. Her hairdo with braided strands down each side of the neck is covered with a veil and topped by an emblem consisting of a globe between two horns set on a crown of ears-of-corn. A small swan is shown by her left shoulder.

Identical to a reflector found at Ehnasya, the only one with the bust flanked by two small swans (Petrie 1905: Pl. LIV, 12k). A very close specimen from Alexandria but without the swans can be found at Tübingen (Cahn-Klaiber 1977: 197, 347, No. 204, Pl. 19) and at the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria (Tran Tam Tinh and Jentel 1993: 271–272 No. 471, Fig. 333).

Proposed dating: 1st to 2nd century AD

**Cat. 60**

Inv. 009531

L. max. 11.17; W. 7.92 cm

Orange to brick clay with large mica inclusions; orange slip, almost entirely lost

Fayum-made handle attachment decorated with a Medusa head

Well-made reflector handles of the same kind are found in the collections of the Egyptian Museum of Florence (Michelucci 1975: 34, No. 46, Pl. IV), the British Museum in London (Bailey 1988: 237, Q 1932, Pl. 35; see also page 37 for further parallels) and, rendered in a slightly different manner, at Ehnasya (Petrie 195: Pl. LIV, No. 28)

Proposed dating: 1st to 2nd century AD



Cat. 61

Inv. 009533

L. max. 7.89; W. max. 7.15 cm

Light brown clay with mica inclusions; dark orange to dark brown slip

Crescent-shaped handle attachment. Bust of *Sol radiatus* in the center, robed in a tunic with shallow V-shaped opening.

Identical to a handle attachment found at Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LIV, D1); also close to an Egyptian reflector kept at the British Museum and another one, discovered in Alexandria and now in Berlin (Bailey 1988: 17–18, 238, Q 1945, Pl. 36, with many parallels; Heres 1969: 81, No. 504, Pl. 54); see also another handle attachment from Alexandria, with better rendered details, now in Tübingen (Cahn-Klaiber 1977: 196, 346–47, No. 203, Pl. 19).

Proposed dating: 1st to 2nd century AD

**Cat. 62**

Inv. 009532

L. max. 10.70; W. max. 6.24 cm

Brick red to dark red clay with large mica inclusions; white slip

Fayum-made handle attachment(?). Unidentified feminine(?) bust

Proposed dating: 2nd century AD



Cat. 63

Inv. 009542

H. max. 6.05; W. max. 3.95 cm

Light brown clay; dark orange slip

Handle attachment fully in the round. Bust of Sarapis.

Identical to a handle preserved in Alexandria (Tran Tam Tinh and Jentel 1993: 114–115, No. 114, Fig. 108, Pl. 29).

Proposed dating: 1st century AD

**B. STANDARD PLASTIC LAMP TYPES**

The lighting devices belonging to this group are, unlike the late Ptolemaic to early Empire Egyptian plastic lamp-statuettes, part of the lamp category, as they have a base, body and nozzle. They are a group more than a type, as their production centres and their dates are very different from one microregion to another.

Indeed, Ptolemaic Egypt and especially the workshops in Alexandria and the Delta embarked on making ceramic replicas of bronze lamps from the first half of the 2nd century BC, as well as Athens, Delos and several large Asia Minor production centers. Some of the most popular types, such as theater masks or Negroid heads, have a production longevity like no other, extending from the end of the Hellenistic period to the end of the 2nd century AD, while in the rest of the Roman world they are not massively attested, with a few exceptions, after the

1st century AD. In this case, according to several researchers, Alexandrian workshops influenced the Eastern Mediterranean workshops, as in the other way they were influenced by Asia Minor and Roman workshops when adopting “standard Roman” lamp types (Barbera 1993).

The deities and the theater masks generally find precise parallels. Indeed, their representations are well individualized thanks to a specific rendering or details, which make them immediately recognizable and attributable to the indigenous Egyptian repertoire. Still, Negroid heads, like *Cat. 64*, with deliberately exaggerated features, are an integral part of a very large Mediterranean corpus, where this theme is particularly appreciated (Pasquier 2008), both on lamps as well as on mosaic floors and wall paintings, offering the viewer figures, often rendered as pygmies, in Nilotic landscapes. Each workshop developed its own pygmies, and exact parallels are rare.

Cat. 64

Inv. 009536

L. 7.07; W. 4.45; H. 3.40 cm

Orange to brown clay with extremely abundant mica inclusions; dark brown slip, almost entirely lost
Plastic lamp in the form of a Negroid head. Flat, oval base.

Very similar to two Egyptian lamps preserved at Florence and Berlin (see Kunze 1972: 103, No. 45, Pl. 12; Michelucci 1975: 94–95, Nos 307 and 308, Pl. XVII).

Proposed dating: 1st to 2nd century AD

**C. LAMPSTANDS****Cat. 65**

Inv. 009537

W. base 4.42; column 3.23; H. max. 15.94 cm

Pale red clay with mica inclusions; creamy beige slip, almost entirely lost

Lampstand in the form of a column on a pedestal; the lamp is lost. Fayum-made.

A copy of a very popular Campanian product, quickly imitated mainly in the coastal western Mediterranean.

Complete artifacts had small Loeschcke VIII lamps crowning the column. They were used probably in domestic cult observance.

Proposed dating: 1st century AD



Cat. 66

Inv. 009515

L. 5.56 (with handle 6.93); W. 6.07 (with side wall fragment);

H. 2.00; (with handle 2.80) cm

Beige clay; orange brown slip, almost entirely lost

Loeschcke VIII lamp with an unidentified motif, from a ritual

vase (or incense burner), generally flanked by two identical

lamps. Flat base, defined by two concentric circular rims.

A Campanian invention that would become an extremely

popular item throughout the western Mediterranean,

where compositions made of an altar or an incense-burner flanked by lamps are often found,

outside Italy, associated with Isiac cults (see Chrzanovski 2015).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**D. STANDARD ROMAN IMPERIAL TYPES****1. Loeschcke IV****Cat. 67**

Inv. 009513

L. 8.22; W. 6.14; H. 2.38 cm

Light brown clay; dark red slip

Classic late Loeschcke IV lamp with very small volutes.

Undecorated discus. Flat base, defined by a circular

rim

Proposed dating: Mid 1st to mid 2nd century AD



2. Loeschcke VIII

Cat. 68

Inv. 009516

L. 6.89; W. 5.95; H. 2.40 cm

Light brown clay with abundant mica inclusions; dark red slip

Loeschcke VIII lamp. Handle lost. Flat base, defined by a circular rim.

A nice but rather mediocre Loeschcke VIII lamp, ornamented with a double bunch of grapes on a branch. The theme is well-documented, probably originating from Asia Minor, where the rendering of the fruits is generally the most precise, as attested by imports discovered in Cyprus or Tarsus. The motif seems to have seduced lampmakers from Egyptian workshops and this lamp is very similar to two examples with an even coarser rendering, the first one also from Fayum (Selesnow 1988: 153, No. 216, Pl. 30), the second kept at Florence (Michelucci 1975: 55, No. 123, Pl. IX). Finally, a lamp of the same type, but with a more complex iconographic rendering, also from the Fayum, attests to the longevity of the decoration on products from this region (Selesnow 1988: 153, No. 215, Pl. 30; for further references to parallels from the Roman world, see Bailey 1988: 9, Q 2467–Q 2468 with list of parallels).

Proposed dating: 2nd century AD



Cat. 69

Inv. 009518

L. max. 7.41; W. 5.71; H. 2.35 (with handle 3.76) cm

Light brown clay with abundant mica inclusions; dark brown slip, almost entirely lost

Loeschcke VIII lamp, decorated with Isis enthroned holding Harpokrates seated in her lap. Flat base, defined by a circular rim and two circular grooves.

A very common motif on Egyptian Loeschcke VIII lamps, although generally better rendered and with the throne flanked by elephant tusks. Isis is represented frontally, sitting on a broad throne with backrest and high legs, also adorned. Isis, crowned with her emblem composed of a discus between two horns, is dressed in a chiton revealing her left breast to nurse Harpokrates seated in her lap. This is an exclusively Egyptian rendering of the goddess, which enjoyed a floruit between AD 150 and 250. Parallels of much better quality are kept at the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria (Tran Tam Tinh and Jentel 1993: 220–222; Nos 259–262, Figs 240–243), the British Museum (Bailey 1988: 24, 249, Q 2040, Pl. 43), Tübingen (Cahn-Klaiber 1977: 246–247, 383, No. 325, Pl. 34), National Library of France (Hellmann 1987: 87, No. 334, Pl. XLIV), the Otago Museum in Dunedin, New Zealand (Anson, Hannah, and Hudson 2013: 98–99, No. 174, from Memphis) and the Hermitage (Waldhauer 1914: 55, No. 36, Pl. XLI).

Proposed dating: Mid 2nd to mid 3rd century AD

**Cat. 70**

Inv. 009514

L. 8.22; W. 6.14; H. 2.38 cm

Light brown clay; orange slip, almost entirely lost

Loeschcke VIII lamp with small volute-ornamented side lugs. Discus ornamented with a rosette. Flat base, defined by two concentric circular rims; at its the centre, a small relief discus with impressed dot.

One of the many Egyptian imitations of an original Tarsus type. This late category of Loeschcke VIII with side lugs, increasingly discreet in size, seems to have been highly appreciated in Tarsus, where it presumably originated (Goldman and Jones 1950: Group XVI A), then copied in Cyprus (Oziol 1977: 192–193, Nos 566–569, Pl. 32) and Alexandria, where good quality examples are found alongside the definitely more numerous increasingly more mediocre lamps. These lamps belong to the latest category of Roman side-lug lamps produced in Egypt.

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



Cat. 71

Inv. 009517

L. 7.19; W. 5.67; H. 2.22; H. max. (with handle) 2.76 cm

Light brown clay with abundant mica inclusions; traces of dark orange to brown slip

Loescheke VIII lamp. Flat base, defined by a circular rim

Identical with a specimen from Kom el-Dikka (Młynarczyk 1995b: 160–162, IV.1, Fig. 22, mentioning many unpublished identical lamps from Alexandria) and other lamps found at Tell Atrib (Młynarczyk 1974: 178, No. 22, Figs 29–30), Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: 40, Pl. LVI), the Fayum (Hayes 1980: 119–120, No. 471, Pl. 55, suggesting that this subtype, with its specific shoulder ornament made of globules within a circular frame, is an Egyptian copy of Aegean or Asia Minor originals, which started to be produced in Alexandria perhaps already at the end of the 3rd century AD). Still, exactly the same shape and composition is found in Egypt on lamps of much more degenerate workmanship, such as of the two copies kept in Florence (Michelucci 1975: 60, Nos 141–142, Pl. X).

Proposed dating: 4th century AD

**E. CARINATED LAMPS**

This type of exclusive Egyptian-made lamps, sometimes also nicknamed “*shoulder lamps*”, owes its name to the very marked biconvex profile as well as the wide convex shoulder decorated with petals articulated around the discus. These lamps are a characteristic example of the Egyptian potters’ attachment to late Hellenistic forms, which served as models for the creation of new forms during the Imperial age. Indeed, identical lamp profiles and decoration on the shoulder are observed on lamps from the pre-Roman period, while the nozzles are clearly inspired by standard Roman Loescheke V lamps adorned with semi-volutes.

Bailey considers this type to be specific to the Fayum area, where it seems to have been invented, and where it rapidly peaked in popularity in the 2nd century AD. Some late examples were still be-

ing produced in the early decades of the next century (Bailey 1988: 225–226, 254, Q 2087–Q 2089 “carinated lamps”, Pl. 45 with a long list of parallels).

This hypothesis is confirmed by the specimens discovered at Karanis (Shier 1978: 22–23, Nos 64–68, type A 4.7 “shoulder lamps”, Pls 15–16) where the corpus gathered during the excavations allowed variants of less careful workmanship to be observed, considered as a survival of the type and still produced, according to the Shier, in the 4th century AD.

Cahn-Klaiber preferred to consider this lamp form as a direct derivative of late Hellenistic lamps, looking in her analysis essentially at indirect parallels made in Asia Minor, in particular lamps produced in Tarsus (Cahn-Klaiber 1977: 159–160, 322, Nos 120–121, Pl. 7). She proposed a production date between the 1st century BC and the 1st century

AD, a hypothesis strongly contradicted by the contextual dates mentioned by Bailey in his list of parallels and also by Shier.

Most of the lamps of this type bear on their base a mark in Greek letters, incised or more rarely, in relief: a simple *alpha* or *lambda* are the most common;

the abbreviations COY and mainly ΔI, ΔIO and ΔIOC also occur. The last three abbreviations belong to a workshop, the products of which are as different as they are numerous within the Karanis corpus of lamps, with some marked exemplars having been produced already in late Hellenistic times.

Cat. 72

Inv. 009601

L. 7.70; W. 6.14; H. 2.33 cm

Dark orange with fine mica inclusions; no slip

Carinated lamp *par excellence*. Flat

base defined by a raised ring; in the center. Incised mark ΔIO. Small concave discus pierced by a small filling hole, slightly off axis. Wide shoulder decorated with relief petals, an impressed dot at the base of each petal. A short impressed line runs from the discus to the wick hole, parting into two diagonal lines to set off the end. Half-volutes traced with a sure hand, an impressed dot at either end. The shape, decoration and potter's mark of this lamp recalls one from Karanis and another one now at Vancouver (Shier 1978: 67, No. 68, Pl. 16; Russell 1973: 93, No. 5, Pls XXVIIIa, XXXa); it is also identical to an unsigned copy discovered at Ehnasya and another one, bearing the incised mark COY, at the British Museum (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXI, U5, No. 41; Bailey 1988: 254, Q 2088, Pl. 45 with additional bibliography). The ΔIO mark, very common in Karanis where this workshop may have been based, is interpreted by Shier as an abbreviation of Dios and not Dionysios (Shier 1978: 23 and notes 201 and 202, also page 176). Regarding the signature ΔIO, it is interesting to note that another potter, probably established at Miletus (see Menzel 1969: 49, No. 264), used the same mark, but his were late variants, reminiscent of Hellenistic forms, dated from the beginning of the 3rd to the 4th century AD. The two workshops probably have nothing in common and no relationship of any kind, but the rebirth, in a geographically different place, of lamps inspired by pre-Roman prototypes, provides additional support for the proposal for a 2nd to 3rd century dating of our type of Egyptian lamps, at the same time excluding a late Hellenistic chronology.

Proposed dating: 2nd century AD



Cat. 73

Inv. 009595

L. 8.41; W. 6.74; H. 2.97 cm

Dark orange with many mica inclusions; no slip
 Carinated lamp with V-shaped semi-volutes instead
 of full volutes; shoulder ornaments smaller than
 usual. Flat circular base. Very similar to a lamp
 found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 67, No. 65, Pl. 15).

Proposed dating: 2nd century AD

**Cat. 74**

Inv. 009596

L. 8.01; W. 6.01; H. 2.77 cm

Dark orange to red clay; light beige slip
 Carinated lamp, classic shape. Flat circular base
 defined by a relief ring.

Proposed dating: 2nd century AD

**Cat. 75**

Inv. 009597

L. 8.86; W. 6.45; H. 2.87 cm

Light orange clay; brown slip

Carinated lamp, classic shape except for the narrower
 middle section of the nozzle. Flat circular base defined
 by a relief ring.

Proposed dating: 2nd century AD



Cat. 76

Inv. 009598

L. 8.62; W. 6.09; H. 2.84 cm

Light orange clay; dark orange slip

Local version of a carinated lamp with some frog-lamp characteristics such as the nozzle termination and its upper decoration. Flat circular base defined by a relief ring.

Proposed dating: 2nd century AD

**Cat. 77**

Inv. 009599

L. 7.85; W. 5.37; H. 2.17 cm

Light brown with fine mica inclusions; dark brown slip

Local very simplified version of a carinated lamp; flat circular base defined by an incised circle.

Very similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 7, No. 64, Pl. 15).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**Cat. 78**

Inv. 009600

L. 8.65; W. 6.31; H. 2.92 cm

Dark brown with fine mica inclusions; no slip

Derivative of a carinated lamp, keeping the general body shape but with an atypical nozzle and decoration patterns on the shoulder resembling some frog lamps. Slightly convex circular base defined by an incised circle.

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



Cat. 79

Inv. 009602

L. 7.04; W. 5.0; H. 2.57 cm

Light brown clay with fine mica inclusions; dark brown slip
 Derivative of a carinated lamp, keeping the general body
 shape and a volute impression on a very massive, almost
 rectangular nozzle. Flat circular base defined by a relief
 ring.

Proposed dating: 3rd century AD

**F. FROG LAMPS**

Frog lamps, which are a class of lamps produced and used exclusively in Egypt, constitute the main part of the Forcart collection. They are very difficult to date and none of the existing classifications has been proved entirely satisfactory. As Jean Bussière and Birgitta Lindros Wohl pointed out (2017: 377): “For a long time its chronology and production centers remained very uncertain, and most authors would not assign the beginning of the production earlier than the third century A.D. Cahn-Klaiber, for her part, would date an early example from the late first century B.C. to the first century A.D. and the earlier examples of her variants a and b to the second half of the first century A.D. (Cahn-Klaiber 1977, page 162 sq). Since excavations in the 1980s at the Roman fort at Mons Claudianus, in the Eastern Desert of Egypt, we know that the type was in production at the beginning of the second century A.D. It probably continued into the third and fourth centuries (Bailey 1988, pages 226–229;

Bailey 1991; Knowles 2006). The various existing main classifications (Petrie 1905; Bernhard 1955; Michelucci 1975; Cahn-Klaiber 1977; Shier 1978) are worked out more on morphological and decor criteria than on the scarce archaeological data”.

In lychnology, the results of the excavation of a single site alone cannot, in principle, challenge all the typological and chronological classifications of a geographical horizon as vast as that of Roman Egypt. This axiom is valid in principle for all of the ancient world. From this point of view, the results of the Mons Claudianus excavation are doubly troubling. On the one hand, the site is peripheral, since it is located on one of the land routes linking the Nile and the Red Sea. On the other hand, its economic importance is threefold: it is both a military fort with a garrison to secure the main trade route, a civilian settlement and a major site for the exploitation of raw materials. The granodiorite quarried at the site was highly appreciated in

Rome, being used among other materials in the construction of the Pantheon and the Trajan Forum (as well as, much later in Constantinople, the Hagia Sophia basilica). Intensive excavations carried out by David S.F. Peacock and Valerie A. Maxfield between 1987 and 1993 have provided a well-documented stratigraphic record of the finds, giving the opportunity for putting forward a “Mons Claudianus” typo-chronology and recalling it whenever necessary, while retaining the “classic” typological arrangement for the present corpus. This should avoid a confusion between “canonical” dates and types deriving from earlier research on sites in the Nile Valley and Delta—still adopted here for an easy understanding—and the sound chronological findings resulting from the excavation of the Eastern Desert site.

Ceramologically, Mons Claudianus has its interest because according to Kathryn Knowles (2006: 313–314), none of the 815 lamps recorded from the excavation appear to have been produced on site or in the vicinity. Apart from a few rare imports from the Delta, more than 95% of the lighting devices came from workshops in Upper Egypt, which the author proposes to locate in the region of Thebes and Coptos (Knowles 2006: 321).

It is important to note that few of the lamps from Mons Claudianus find exact parallels in the Forcart Collection. Several details of the rendering are different, demonstrating the “regionalism” of the Theban workshops as attested by the lamps from the desert site and reinforcing the conclusion that the lamps from Forcart’s corpus were for the most

part manufactured in Fayum workshops and characteristically find the closest parallels among lamps catalogued from neighboring sites like Ehnasya (Petrie 1905) and Karanis (Shier 1978).

Frog lamps from Egypt constitute a huge category as such (they are an ubiquitous find on sites from the relevant period), but even if the overall form and decoration patterns are generic to Egypt, the range of small differences that can be observed—demonstrated for the Abu Mena corpus published by Selesnow (1988) as well as for lamps from Tell Atrib published by Młynarczyk (2012) showing the preferences in the Delta—is clearly indicative of micro-regional preferences that have not been studied so far.

Frog lamps with a protruding nozzle are a separate group in Donald M. Bailey’s classification of the 80 frog lamps in the collection of the British Museum (Bailey 1988: Q 2178–Q 2197). Selesnow assigned them similarly to a well-defined category, his type D2 (Selesnow 1988: 38–39), with three variants: a) lamps with delimitation bands on the nozzle (D2a); b) lamps without bands and often decorated with embryos (D2b); and c) lamps with a nozzle channel (D2c). However, Shier classified the Karanis lamps with a very protruding nozzle in the same group with “Neo-Hellenistic” lamps with a tubular or rectangular nozzle (Shier 1978: 25–26, A.5.1), while putting the lamps with less protruding nozzle in her successive type (A.5.2, “triangular-shaped body”, Shier 1978: 26–28). With regard to the Tell Atrib material, Młynarczyk prefers to con-

sider them as a single group together with the ovoid frog lamps (Młynarczyk 2012: 129–237, TA III.3).

The category is defined by a narrow, carinated profile and a nozzle, the most striking feature, which projects distinctly from the body contrary to other groups (Bailey 1988: 229). Their distribution seems to cover the whole of Egypt, from Elephantine to Suez and to Alexandria. In the absence of clear data from excavations, they are generally dated to the 3rd through 4th century AD. The corresponding frog lamps from Mons Claudianus (Type B) consist of a large round body, featuring a conical nozzle with rounded tip. The lamps are classified by their decoration motifs: dislocated frogs (B1), palm leaves (B2), “egg-and-dart” (B3), “boss and palm” (B4), and “Boss” (B5). Elsewhere dated to the 3rd and 4th centuries, at Mons Claudianus they have been attested in contexts as early as the end of the 1st century and especially at the beginning of the 2nd century AD and, for the most part, seem not to have survived through the end of the century, generally corresponding to the transition from the Antonine to the Severan dynasty of Roman emperors (Knowles 2006: 337–348).

The following presentation takes the iconographic repertoire as the base for the classification, moving from the most complex to the simplest, avoiding extensive descriptions as all of the lamps from the Forcart Collection correspond to standard types well described in published catalogs.

1. Lamps with embryo iconography

The embryo iconography, unique to Egyptian lamps and unique in the ancient world, continues to intrigue specialists. The rendering of the two figures (head oversized in relation to the rest of the body, knees pulled up to the abdomen) earned them the interpretation of twin embryos, hence their first German name of “Embryonenlampen” (Kaufmann 1913: 301–302). For their iconographic and symbolic interpretation, see Kaufmann 1913; Wrede 1968–1969; Shier 1972; Kulichová 1982; Dasen 2004; Gradwohl 2012). Egyptian lamps identical to *Cat. 80* are kept in Berlin (Kunze 1972: 100, see No. 32, Pl. 12), Leiden (Brants 1913: 60, No. 1088, Pl. VII) and Jerusalem (Rosenthal and Sivan 1978: 63, No. 258). Three such lamps from the British Museum are dated from the 3rd to the 4th century AD (Bailey 1988: 264, Q 2183–Q 2185, with parallels from Mustagidda, Medinet Habu, Suez/Clyasma, Karanis, Cairo, Memphis and Alexandria). More lamps of identical form were found at the nearby sites of Karanis (Shier 1978: 77–78, Nos 120–124, Pl. 20), Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXVI: A90 and A92) and Tebtysis (A. Południkiewicz, personal communication), to which one should add two more artifacts, said to come from the Fayum and preserved in the Coptic Museum of Cairo (Abdou Elfadaly 2017: 64–65, No. 10095, Pl. 15 and 65, No. 10035, Pl. 16). It is interesting to note that no similar lamps have been found yet south of the Fayum and embryos are absent from the iconography recorded at Mons Claudianus.

Cat. 80

Inv. 009579

L. 7.84; W. 7.07; H. 3.33 cm

Beige clay; brown slip

Ovoid lamp. Flat base. Mark:

incised *alpha*.

Proposed dating: 3rd century AD

**2. Dislocated “frogs” and geometric patterns**

Most important references with further bibliography and parallels: Karanis (Shier 1978: 72–73, Nos 91–101, Pls 18–

19), Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXIV, E63–E75), Florence Museum and British Museum (Michelucci 1975: No. 16, Pl. XII; Bailey 1988: 263–264, Q 2178 to Q 2182, Pl. 30)

Cat. 81

Inv. 009576

L. 7.04; W. 5.85; H. 3.07 cm

Light brown clay with mica and

lime inclusions; no slip

Flat base, defined by a circular ring.

Mark: incised cross and four impressed dots in the center.

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**Cat. 82**

Inv. 009571

L. 5.90; W. 4.84; H. 2.83 cm

Dark orange to dark brown clay with mica inclusions;

dark brown slip

Poorly rendered local production, almost drop-shaped.

Flat base.

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



Cat. 83

Inv. 009573

L. 7.79; W. 6.44; H. 3.08 cm

Dark orange clay; dark orange slip

Flat base, defined by a raised ring.

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis

(Shier 1978: 74 o. 100, Pl. 18).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**Cat. 84**

Inv. 009556 bis

L. 7.93; W. 6.98; H. 2.86 cm

Dark orange clay with mica inclusions; brown slip, almost entirely lost

Flat base, defined by an incised circle. Mark: an incised *alpha*, precisely cut.

Close to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 2, No. 92, Pl. 17).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**Cat. 85**

Inv. 009562

L. 8.83; W. 7.84; H. 3.15 cm

Light orange clay with fine mica inclusions; beige slip

Flat base, defined by a circular raised rim. Mark: incised *alpha*(?).

Similar to two more precisely rendered lamps found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 72–73, Nos 95–96, Pl. 18). Identical to Mons Claudianus No. 23 (C143), type B.1.2.a, without contextual dating, but the subgroup as a whole (B.1.2) is, according to Knowles, from the beginning of the 2nd century to the early years of the Antonine period (Knowles 2006: 338 and 340).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



Cat. 86

Inv. 009572

L. 9.07; W. 7.93; H. 2.70 cm

Light beige clay; dark brown slip.

Flat base, defined by a raised ring. Mark: incised *alpha*.

Identical with a lamp found at Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXVI, A2:90; also marked with an *alpha*) and a similar lamp (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXIV, E70); similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 72, No. 95, Pls 3 and 18).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**Cat. 87**

Inv. 009558

L. 8.37; W. 7.09; H. 3.36 cm

Dark red to brown clay with numerous mica inclusions; dark brown slip

Flat base, defined by a deep, large, incised circle.

Closely resembling a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 3, No. 100, Pl. 18).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**Cat. 88**

Inv. 009565

L. max. 6.25; W. 6.53 cm

Brick red to brown clay; completely lost slip
Upper part, partly preserved, nozzle lost.
Flat base.

Closely resembling a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 70, No. 78, Pl. 16).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



3. Double palm leaf and decorated nozzle

Most important references with further bibliography and parallels: Karanis (Shier 1978: 26–27, Nos 127–142, A 5.2c “Palm” and Pls 21–22), Ehnasya (Petrie 1905:

Pl. LXV, P14–19, 22–28, 33, 36, 55–56), Florence Museum and British Museum (Michelucci 1975: No. 163, Pl. XII; Bailey 1988: 264, Q 2187 to Q 2189, Pl. 30)

Cat. 89

Inv. 009540

L. 8.63; W. 7.59; H. 3.20 cm

Beige yellowish clay; beige slip, almost entirely lost



Flat base. Mark: incised *alpha*.

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 79, No. 128, Pl. 20) and another one found at Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXV, P2:27, also marked with an *alpha*).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



Cat. 90

Inv. 009544

L. 8.05; W. 7.27; H. 4.15 cm

Beige clay with fine mica inclusions; beige brown slip



Flat base, defined by two incised concentric circles. Mark: incised *alpha*.

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 79, No. 128, Pl. 20) and another one from Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXV, P2:27, also marked with an *alpha*).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



Cat. 91

Inv. 009545

L. 8.46; W. 7.37; H. 2.95 cm

Light yellow clay; no slip

Flat base, defined by two

incised concentric

circles. Mark: incised *alpha*(?).

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier

1978: 81, No. 143, Pl. 21) and another one

from Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXV, P56);

closely resembling two other specimens,

one in Jerusalem (Rosenthal and Sivan

1978: 62, No. 253) and the other in the

Anawati collection (Djuric 1995: 36, C 90).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**Cat. 92**

Inv. 009541

L. 8.43; W. 7.42; H. 3.52 cm

Beige yellowish clay; dark brown slip, almost entirely lost

Flat base, surrounded by a circular rim.

Identical to a lamp found at Ehnasya (Petrie

1905: Pl. LXV, P2:56). Similar to a lamp

found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 80, No. 136,

Pl. 21) and another one in the Anawati

collection (Djuric 1995: 36, C 91).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



Cat. 93

Inv. 009551

L. 8.02; W. 7.30; H. 3.31 cm

Yellowish beige clay; beige slip

Flat base.

Closely resembling a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 79, No. 128, Pl. 20). Identical to a lamp found at Mons Claudianus (Knowles 2006: No. 34, C1625, type B.2.3b, dated to Hadrian's time, see 343–345).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**Cat. 94**

Inv. 009542

L. 7.76; W. 6.07; H. 3.27 cm

Beige clay with fine mica inclusions; dark brown slip

Flat base, decorated with a star

consisting of impressed rays around a central point.

Identical to a lamp found at Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXVI, J2:4, including the star on the base).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**Cat. 95**

Inv. 009552

L. 8.81; W. 7.51; H. 4.77 cm

Yellowish beige clay with mica inclusions; orange to dark orange slip

Very elegant lamp. Flat base.

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



Cat. 96

Inv. 009555

L. 7.53; W. 5.64; H. 3.05 cm

Beige clay; dark red-brown slip

Uncommon derivate form. Flat base.

Applied handle (lost).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**4. Double palm leaf as an only ornament**

Most important references with further bibliography and parallels: Karanis (Shier 1978: 84–86, Nos 158–168, A 5.2c. “Palm” and Pls 22–23), Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXV, P9–14)

It is interesting to note that in this group the nozzle becomes increasingly smaller and, not infrequently, the wick-hole is surrounded by a raised semicircle. According to Bailey, however, this element is not a useful chronological indicator, but rather a feature useful to distinguish this series from the classic ovoid lamps, which he placed before this group, as well as from lamps with a longer nozzle, which constitute the following group and with which these lamps share a profile much more carinated than in the case of the ovoid lamps. These criteria, however, do not constitute either a typographical or

a chronological succession and should be used therefore for their practicality in grouping lamps by purely morphological criteria and searching for parallels (Bailey 1988: 229).

For Knowles, these globular “frog” lamps, where the spout is almost entirely part of the body, constitute her type C (Knowles 2006: 349–367), and her subtypes classified according to their decoration: plain discus (C1), “boss” (C2), “boss and branch” (C3), “frog” (C4), “palm” (C5), “boss and impressed circle” (C6) and “face lamp” (C7) motifs. Here, too, the Mons Claudianus chronology is much earlier in reality than what has been proposed conventionally so far. These lamps, canonically dated to the 3rd and 4th centuries AD, were already present at the Eastern Desert quarry site in many 1st century AD contexts and flourished during Trajan’s time.

Cat. 97

Inv. 009546

L. 8.09; W. 7.12; H. 4.07 cm

Beige clay; light brown slip

Flat base.

Very similar to Petrie 1905; Pl. LXX, P2:10.

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**Cat. 98**

Inv. 009543

L. 8.52; W. 7.78; H. 3.67 cm

Beige yellowish clay; dark brown slip, almost entirely lost

Flat base.

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 84–85, No. 161, Pl. 22), another one from Ehnasya (Petrie 1905; Pl. LXX, P2:77) and a third now in Jerusalem (Rosenthal and Sivan 1978: 63, No. 255).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**Cat. 99**

Inv. 009549

L. 8.27; W. 7.48; H. 2.96 cm

Brown clay; dark brown slip

Flat base. Mark: incised *alpha*.

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 84, No. 158, Pl. 22) and another one now in Jerusalem (Rosenthal and Sivan 1978: 63, No. 255). Closely resembling a lamp found at Mons Claudianus (Knowles 2006: 362, No. 60, C 1050, itself undated but with close parallels not illustrated from layers dated to Trajan's reign)

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



Cat. 100

Inv. 009553

L. 8.03; W. 7.19; H. 3.10 cm

Beige to dark brown clay with lots of inclusions; greenish beige slip

Flat base. Mark: incised *alpha*.

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 84, No. 158, Pl. 22).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**5. "Disintegrated" frog with head replaced by volutes (Selesnow D3a)**

Most important references with further bibliography and parallels: from Karanis (Shier 1978: 74–75, Nos 107–110, Type A 5.2a, frog lamps, variant "incomplete frog", Pl. 19), from Ehnasya (Petrie 1905:

Pl. LXIII, F 25–29), see also the copies preserved in the museums of Frankfurt, Florence and London (Selesnow 1988: 131, No. 87, Pl. 13; Michelucci 1975: 76, No. 10, Pl. XII; Bailey 1988: 262, Q 2159 to Q 2161, Pl. 49).

Cat. 101

Inv. 009559

L. 8.12; W. 7.35; H. 3.47 cm

Light brown clay with numerous mica inclusions; beige to light orange slip

Flat base. Mark: incised *alpha*.

Identical with a lamp found at Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXIII, F2:28–29) and almost identical with one from Karanis (Shier 1978: 73, No. 100, Pl. 18). Very close to a lamp found at Mons Claudianus (Knowles 2006: 360, No. 56 [C1146], Type C.4.3.a., itself undated but with identical parallels not illustrated from layers dated to the reign of Hadrian).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



Cat. 102

Inv. 009564

L. 8.33; W. 7.52; H. 3.21 cm

Dark brown clay with mica inclusions; very dark brown slip

Flat base. Mark: incised *alpha*.

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 75 No. 109, Pl. 19)

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**Cat. 103**

Inv. 009584

L. 7.17; W. 5.86; H. 3.09 cm

Brown clay with mica inclusions; dark orange slip, almost entirely lost

Quite rough local derivative. Flat base.

Similar to two lamps found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 76, Nos 111–112, Pl. 19) and another one from Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXIII, F34).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



6. Stylized whole frog around filling hole (Selesnow D3a)

Group best defined in the Frankfurt Museum catalogue (Selesnow 1988: 40, 132ff., Pl. 14), dated from the late 3rd to

the early 4th century AD. It is also very close to several examples discovered in Karanis (Shier 1978: 74, see mainly Nos 103–104, Pls 3 and 19).

Cat. 104

Inv. 009581

L. 8.17; W. 6.20; H. 3.84 cm

Light orange clay with mica inclusions; beige slip
Flat base.

Almost identical with a lamp kept at Florence (Michelucci 1975: No. 169) and very close to another one in the Anawati collection (Djuric 1995: 30, C 67).

Proposed dating: 3rd century AD



7. Lamps with three large raised dots ("bosses") (Selesnow D3a)

Bailey suggests that this very stylized form of decoration was popular only in Upper and Middle Egypt, particularly in the Theban area (Bailey 1988: 229).

Most important references with further bibliography and parallels: Karanis

(Shier 1978: 91, Nos 192–193, A 5.2e "Boss", Pl. 26, the first with *alpha* mark), Deir el-Medineh (Bernhard 1955: 372, No. 530, Pl. CXLVIII), Florence Museum (Michelucci 1975: 85, No. 252, Pl. XVI, *alpha* mark) and British Museum (Bailey 1988: 263–264, Q 2168–Q 2174, Pl. 49).

Cat. 105

Inv. 009587

L. 8.02; W. 7.31; H. 3.49 cm

Beige clay, brown slip

Flat base.

Similar to three lamps found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 91, Nos 192, 193 and 194, Pl. 26). Very close to a lamp found at Mons Claudianus (Knowles 2006: 364, No. 64 [C1145], Type C.6.1.a., dated from late Hadrian to the beginning of the Antonine period)

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



Cat. 106

Inv. 009589

L. 7.08; W. 6.20; H. 2.90 cm

Light orange clay with mica inclusions; no slip

Flat base.

Similar to two lamps with less precise rendering, found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 89–90, Nos 185–186, Pl. 25).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD

**Cat. 107**

Inv. 009592

L. 7.77; W. 6.39; H. 3.77 cm

Beige clay with mica inclusions, orange slip

Flat base.

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



8. Oval lamps with disintegrated “frog” and geometric “head” (Selesnow D2a)

Both Selesnow and Bailey date the production of this subtype from the 3rd to the 4th century AD, while Shier offers different horizons depending on the excavation contexts of the three lamps from Karanis (early 2nd to mid 3rd century for lamps Nos 111 and 113; late 3rd century for lamp No. 112). A large number of lamps are identical or extremely close to our two models. They come from Alexandria (Cahn-Klaiber 1977: 163, 166, 326, No. 134, Pl. 10) (with a very clumsy incised *alpha*), Deir el-Medineh (Bernhard 1955: 369, No. 514, Pl. CXXXIX) (with a carefully incised *al-*

pha), Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXII, F34) (with an incised *lambda* or neglected *alpha*) and Karanis (Shier 1978: 76, Nos 111–113, Pl. 19, several lamps marked with a very clumsy *alpha*) as well as several lamps without precise provenance, kept at the British Museum (Bailey 1988: 262, Q 2158, Pl. 49 and list of additional parallels) (with a very clumsy incised *alpha*), the Kraków Archaeological Museum (Tabasz 1966: 264, No. 48, Pl. VI:7) (with a clumsy incised *alpha*) and the Frankfurt Museum (Selesnow 1988: 131, No. 86, Pl. 13) (with a carefully rendered *alpha*).

Cat. 108

Inv. 009560

L. 8.35; W. 7.15; H. 3.59 cm

Beige clay; dark grey slip

Flat base, defined by a circular raised rim. Incised *alpha*.

Two almost identical lamps found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 76, Nos 112–113, Pl. 19) and a lamp from the Anawati collection (Djrc 1995: 36, C 92).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



Cat. 109

Inv. 009561

L. 8.40; W. 7.14; H. 3.17 cm

Yellowish beige clay; brown slip, almost entirely lost

Flat base, defined by a circular raised rim. Mark: incised *alpha*.

Almost identical to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 76, No. 111, Pl. 19).

Proposed dating: 2nd to 3rd century AD



9. Late “Neo-Hellenistic” frog lamps with long tubular nozzle and anvil-shaped end

The subtype is characterized by a narrow, biconical body, wide shoulder and long, flattened nozzle with an anvil-shaped ending. In most cases, the raised margins of the nozzle end in a raised volute at the junction with the round, slightly concave medallion.

According to Robins (1939a: 49), repeated by Bailey, the “disintegrated” frog that characterizes ornamentation of this type should be interpreted as a logical development of frog lamps as a type. Also, despite the morphological characteristics resembling Hellenistic lamps, it should not be considered an early type, as Cahn-Klaiber (1977: 162–164) and Selesnow (1988: 38) would have liked, proposing to date it from the end of the 1st century BC to the beginning of the 1st century AD. Despite the absence of recent and accurate stratigraphic data, it would seem more prudent to follow Bailey’s suggestion (1988: 227–229) and consider a time range for these lamps from the very last years of the 2nd century through the 4th century, with a peak between the 3rd and the beginning of the 4th century.

Iconographically, the bizarre appearance of most of the frogs depicted, in particular the rendering of the “thigh” of each front leg, decorated with zigzag or fish scale incisions, led the researchers to formulate two interpretative hypotheses. The first idea, known as “frog-and-wheat” (Shier 1978: 25), calls for a deliberate iconographic mix between the frog and the ear-of-corn motif, namely the two most popular representations, taken individually, adorning classic ovoid frog lamps. The second, proposed by Lukas Benaki and taken up by Bailey, would see it as a motif created *ex novo*, representing a monkey perching among the leaves of the palm tree, hence the English nick of “monkey-in-a-palm-tree” (letter from Lukas Benaki transcribed in Bailey 1988: 227). This last idea would correspond very well with several of the lamps in the Forcart Collection, on which the rendering of the animal’s limbs clearly indicates that it is a mammal and not a batrachian.

Finally, unlike other types of frog lamps, this type is rarely signed. Letters of the Greek alphabet, *alpha*, *pi*, *rho* and *iota*, appear as marks on the bases, but very seldom compared to the number of unmarked lamps published to date.

10. Lamps with a flattened tubular nozzle and anvil-shaped end, decorated on top (Selesnow D1b=Shier A 5.1a)

A mold producing lamps of the same shape was discovered at Naukratis (Bailey 1988: 255, Q 2101, Pl. 46).

Cat. 110

Inv. 009557

L. 6.80; W. 5.46; H. 2.57 cm

Orange clay with mica inclusions; dark orange slip
Flat base.

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 69, No. 77, Pl. 16) and another one found at Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXIV, E2:16).

Proposed dating: 3rd to beginning of 4th century AD



Cat. 111

Inv. 009575

L. 7.19; W. 5.48; H. 2.49 cm

Dark orange to brown clay with mica and lime inclusions; dark brown slip

Flat base, defined by a circular ring.

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 70, No. 81, P. 17).

Proposed dating: 3rd to beginning of 4th century AD



Cat. 112

Inv. 009578

L. 7.19; W. 5.49; H. 2.61 cm

Light brown to light orange clay with mica inclusions; dark brown slip, almost entirely lost

Flat base, defined by a circular incision.

Proposed dating: 3rd to beginning of 4th century AD



Cat. 113

Inv. 009577

L. 7.35; W. 6.18; H. 3.05 cm

Dark orange clay; no slip

Flat base, defined by a circular ring.

Mark: incised *alpha*(?).

Proposed dating: 3rd to beginning of

4th century AD

**11. Late “Neo-Hellenistic” frog lamps with an almost rectangular flat nozzle**

The type corresponds to the Tell Atrib type Młynarczyk TA III.2, Alexandrian type S and its developments; Selesnow D1c; Shier A 5.1a. It is designated Neo-Hellenistic bowing to the many morphological features that are specific to late Hellenistic lamps, in particular the nozzle shape, the clear differentiation of the “panels” or decorated spaces along the entire length of the shoulder as well as part of the ornamental, geometric and vegetable decoration repertoire, complemented in a novel manner by such elements of the frog-lamp family as the animal’s legs that can be observed on the first of our specimens.

According to Młynarczyk (2012: 122–123 with a complete bibliography on this subject, discussing the dates and interpretations proposed previously), these lamps were produced mainly in Upper Egypt and in the hinterland (“Nile-silt fabrics”) and distributed well beyond, to the Delta in the north—where a small part of them was even produced, as confirmed by a mold discovered in Athribis—and the coastal sites of the Red Sea to the east.

The dating, which has been the subject of extensive discussion (see, among others, Cahn-Klaiber 1977: 160–169; Shier 1978: 25–26; Bailey 1988: 226–227; Selesnow 1988: 38; Fraiegari 2008: 146–148), now seems fixed. It is indeed a late reminiscence of Hellenistic products made in the 3rd century AD, with a possible extension until the mid 4th century AD.

At Mons Claudianus, without detailing the subtypes created for that corpus, the lamps belonging to the first four subtypes (Knowles 2006: 324–336, A.1.1 to A.1.4) come from contexts dated between the end of the 1st century and the beginning of the 2nd century AD, particularly during the Trajan period. It should be noted, however, that only the first lamp in the corpus has an anvil-shaped nozzle end (hence belonging to the previously described type); all the others have an almost rectangular nozzle, thus finding many parallels in the Forcart collection. Examples of the latest form (Knowles 2006: A.1.5, pp. 336–337), characterized by a very large nozzle, come from contexts dated from the transition from the Antonine to the Severian period or even beyond.

Cat. 114

Inv. 009539

L. 8.06; W. 6.59; H. 3.05 cm

Red to dark red clay; red slip

Flat base, defined by a circular groove.

This and the next lamp are similar to a lamp found at Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXIV, E2:32).

Proposed dating: 3rd to mid 4th century AD

**Cat. 115**

Inv. 009563

L. 9.07; W. 7.27; H. 3.08 cm

Brownish dark orange clay with numerous mica inclusions; beige slip, almost entirely lost

Flat base, defined by a circular raised rim.

Proposed dating: 3rd to mid 4th century AD

**Cat. 116**

Inv. 009567

L. 7.51; W. 5.99; H. 2.53 cm

Brown clay with numerous mica inclusions; no slip

Flat base, defined by a circular raised rim.

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 70, No. 84, Pl. 17). Almost identical to a lamp found at Mons Claudianus (Knowles 2006: 336–337, No. 20 [C1377], dated between AD 160 and 211 (most probably from the end of the Antoninian dynasty, i.e., AD 160–192).

Proposed dating: 3rd to mid 4th century AD



Cat. 117

Inv. 009568

L. 7.41; W. 6.06; H. 2.46 cm

Light to dark orange clay; no slip

Flat base, defined by a circular incision.

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 70, No. 83, Pl. 17) and to a lamp found at Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXIV, E2:63).

Proposed dating: 3rd to mid 4th century AD

**Cat. 118**

Inv. 009569

L. 7.37; W. 5.99; H. 3.16 cm

Light orange to light brown clay; completely lost slip

Flat base, defined by a circular incision.

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 70, No. 83, Pl. 17) and to a lamp found at Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXIV, E2:63).

Proposed dating: 3rd to mid 4th century AD

**Cat. 119**

Inv. 009570

L. 7.94; W. 6.22; H. 3.19 cm

Light orange to light brown clay with mica inclusions; dark orange slip, almost completely lost

Flat base, defined by a circular incision.

Proposed dating: 3rd to mid 4th century AD



Cat. 120

Inv. 009574

L. 7.91; W. 6.24; H. 2.90 cm

Light brown clay with mica inclusions; dark orange slip
Flat base, defined by an incised circle.

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978:
70, No. 84, Pl. 17).

Proposed dating: 3rd to mid 4th century AD

**12. Lamps with relief and incised motifs and decoration linking wick hole to discus (Selesnow D3a)**

All of the following lamps belong in the vast and heterogeneous Selesnow D3a group, gathering: "alle Exemplare ..., die

entweder noch ein Leiterband zwischen Brennloch und Diskus besitzen, oder bei denen die Schnauze durch eine Einbuchtung noch nicht ganz mit dem Körper verschmolzen ist" (Selesnow 1988: 40).

Cat. 121

Inv. 009538

L. 8.56; W. 7.50; H. 3.47 cm

Light orange clay with fine mica inclusions; beige slip, almost entirely lost

Flat base. Mark: incised double square (resembling a *beta*).

Similar to a lamp found at Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXVI, J2:80, with incised *beta*).

Proposed dating: 3rd to 4th century AD



Cat. 122

Inv. 009550

L. 8.00; W. 7.10; H. 3.12 cm

Light brown clay with mica inclusions; light grey slip

Flat base. Mark: incised *alpha*(?).

Identical to a lamp found at Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXVI, A2:54, marked with an *alpha*); close to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 92, No. 200, Pl. 26).

Proposed dating: 3rd to 4th century AD

**Cat. 123**

Inv. 009556a

L. 7.81; W. 7.14; H. 3.27 cm

Dark brown clay mica inclusions; blackish slip

Flat base. Mark: incised *alpha*.

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: No. 202, page 93 and Pl. 26); similar to another one found at Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXVI, A2:41, also marked with an *alpha*).

Proposed dating: 3rd to 4th century AD

**Cat. 124**

Inv. 009548

L. 7.91; W. 6.77; H. 3.02 cm

Beige clay; dark brown slip, almost entirely lost

Flat base, defined by an incised circle.

Similar to a lamp found at Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXVI, A2:46).

Proposed dating: 3rd to 4th century AD



Cat. 125

Inv. 009590

L. 8.27; W. 7.18; H. 3.79 cm

Light to dark brown clay;
beige slip

Flat base. Mark: incised cross
with impressed points in the spaces
between the arms.

Proposed dating: 3rd to 4th century AD



Cat. 126

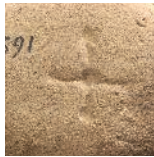
Inv. 009591

L. 7.79; W. 5.90; H. 3.25 cm

Beige clay with mica
inclusions; no slip

Flat base. Mark: incised cross
with impressed points at the end of each arm.

Proposed dating: 3rd to 4th century AD



Cat. 127

Inv. 009593

L. 7.66; W. 6.22; H. 4.17 cm

Beige clay with several mica
inclusions; light orange
slip

Flat base. Mark: incised crescent
facing an impressed dot

Proposed dating: 3rd to 4th century AD



Cat. 128

Inv. 009588

L. 8.13; W. 6.23; H. 3.34 cm

Yellowish beige clay; no slip

Flat base. Mark: four incised crescents facing four impressed dots, arranged in the form of a cross

Proposed dating: 3rd to 4th century AD

**13. Piriform frog lamps with marked rim on shoulder (Selesnow D4a)****Cat. 129**

Inv. 009580

L. 9.30; W. 7.46; H. 4.28 cm

Dark orange clay with mica inclusions; beige slip

Flat base, drop-shaped.

Mark: neatly incised five-arm star in the form of a central pentagon and five linear triangles.

Very similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: No. 245, page 102 and Pl. 29).

Proposed dating: 3rd to 4th century AD



Cat. 130

Inv. 009582

L. 7.97; W. 6.14; H. 3.57 cm

Beige yellowish clay; no slip

Flat base, drop-shaped. Mark:

incised square with impressed dot in its center.

Very close to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978:

No. 240, page 101 and Pl. 29).

Proposed dating: 3rd to 4th century AD

**Cat. 131**

Inv. 009583

L. 8.21; W. 6.38; H. 3.78 cm

Dark beige clay; brown slip, almost entirely lost

Flat base. Mark: eight-point star composed

of incised rays with impressed dots at the end of the rays and in the center.

Very similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: No. 240, page 101 and Pl. 29).

Proposed dating: 3rd to 4th century AD



14. Oval-shaped frog lamps, arched incision on the nozzle (Selesnow D4b)

For these lamps, which present a very broad range of iconographic rendering,

Bailey proposed a date between the 3rd and 4th century AD, and located the bulk of their production in Upper Egypt as well as in Fayum (Bailey 1988: 228).

Cat. 132

Inv. 009585

L. 7.25; W. 5.29; H. 3.17 cm

Beige to light orange clay with mica and lime inclusions; orange slip, almost entirely lost

Flat base. Mark: incised crescent facing an eight-point star formed of incised lines. Closely resembling a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 101, No. 240, Pl. 29)

Proposed dating: 3rd to 4th century AD



3. LATE ROMAN, BYZANTINE AND ISLAMIC LAMPS

A. MISCELLANEA FROM 4TH TO 5TH CENTURY FAYUM WORKSHOPS

The four lamps in this group belong to three eclectic shapes recalling some major types but not being a clear-cut representation of any one of them. Lamp *Cat. 133* by its general shape, its small lug-handle, its raised circle surrounding the discus, basically recalls the 5th-century Egyptian copies of Asia Minor lamps but without the characteristic rosette adorning the upper part of the nozzle (see, for instance, Shier 1978: 132–133, Nos 379–381, Pl. 41; Selesnow 1988: 167–168, Nos 295–299, Pl. 41).

Lamps *Cat. 134* and *Cat. 135* are quite roughly made, piriform, not very far from

the morphology of some frog lamps, but adorned with geometrical motifs and with a clear delimitation of the undecorated discus, in relief or incised. The last lamp *Cat. 136* is reminiscent of some late Roman standard discus lamps but with elongated nozzle; it is close to a specimen kept at the British Museum (Bailey 1988: 268, Q 2218, Pl. 52, from Aswan, with a dedication to Holy Canopios, dated AD 500–650), but its decoration made up of small dots recalls the famous Tripolitanian lamps, well attested in the Egyptian seaside, with patterns imitated in the Nile Valley way after the disappearance of the Libyan prototype.

Cat. 133

Inv. 009594

L. 7.85; W. 5.90; H. 4.53 cm

Brown clay with several mica inclusions;
dark orange slip

Flat base.

Proposed dating: 5th century AD

**Cat. 134**

Inv. 009603

L. 6.35; W. 4.22; H. 2.26 cm

Light brown clay with mica inclusions; no slip

Slightly concave circular base, defined by a raised ring.

Proposed dating: 5th century AD

**Cat. 135**

Inv. 009604

L. 5.58; W. 3.88; H. 2.16 cm

Light to dark orange clay with mica inclusions; dark brown
slip, almost entirely lost

Flat circular base, defined by a raised ring.

Proposed dating: 5th century AD



Cat. 136

Inv. 009605

L. 7.67; W. 5.67; H. 2.49 cm

Light orange clay with lime inclusions; no slip
Flat circular base, defined by a raised ring.

A relief dot in the center.

Proposed dating: 6th century AD

**B. SELESNOW ABU MENA 5 TYPE**

The type is characterized by an ovoid shape, a clearly biconical profile and a small conical handle. A double line in relief surrounds the discus and the nozzle channel, while the shoulder is generally ornamented with simple geometric motifs in relief (rays or circles). Selesnov dated the invention of this type to the end of the 5th century AD and saw its continued production until the 7th century AD.

He described them as a local imitation of the “slipper” lamps of the Near East, where this form is predominant during the transition between the 6th century lamps, the late Syro-Palestinian lamps of the 7th century AD and the first Islamic lamps. This type was very popular in Egypt, at the seaside as well as in the cities along the Nile, both as imports from Palestine and Syria and as local products, such as these, apparently made in the Fayum workshops

Cat. 137

Inv. 009610

L. 9.72; W. 7.17; H. 3.31 (with handle 4.50) cm

Dark brown clay; brown slip

Flat, almost circular base, defined by a raised ring.

Conical lug handle.

Similar to a more rounded lamp, kept at the British Museum (Bailey 1988: 273, Q 2263, Pl. 55, with a list of parallels).

Proposed dating: Late 5th to 7th century AD



Cat. 138

Inv. 009607

L. max. 8.16; W. 6.52; H. 2.78 (with handle 3.52) cm

Light brown clay; brown slip

Degenerate version of *Cat. 137*. Flat, almost circular base, defined by a raised ring. Conical lug handle.

Proposed dating: Late 5th to 7th century AD

**Cat. 139**

Inv. 009606

L. 7.83; W. 5.88; H. 2.68 (with handle 3.54) cm

Brick clay; dark orange slip

Flat, almost circular base, defined by a raised ring.

Conical lug handle.

Proposed dating: 6th to 7th century AD

**Cat. 140**

Inv. 009608

L. 9.20; W. 6.74; H. 2.74 (with handle 4.01) cm

Greyish beige clay; dark orange to brown slip

Degenerate version of *Cat. 137*. Flat, almost circular base, defined by a raised ring. Conical lug handle.

Similar to a lamp kept at Florence (Michelucci 1975: 104, No. 346, Pls XX and XXXIII, dated by the author from the late 4th to the 5th century AD).

Proposed dating: Late 5th to 7th century AD



Cat. 141

Inv. 009609

L. 9.36; W. 7.14; H. 3.16 cm

Dark orange clay; brown slip

Flat circular base, defined by a raised ring and adorned by two raised concentric circles with a raised dot in the center. Molded palmette under the lost handle; bottom part of nozzle adorned with parallel lines in relief, two on each side.

Similar to a lamp found at Karanis (Shier 1978: 158–159, No. 487, Pl. 51) and another one from Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LXII, G79).

Proposed dating: Late 5th to 7th century AD

**C. COPTIC LAMPS OF DIFFERENT TYPES****Cat. 142**

Inv. 009614

L. max. 9.06 (with handle 10.13); W. 5.74; H. max. 3.02 (with handle 3.36) cm

Light orange clay; brown slip

Elongated oval lamp. Flat base; pierced ring handle added at the rear, partly lost. Circular rim around the discus. A pattern of crossing lines on the discus and shoulder with relief dots in the eyes of the net. On the nozzle, the figure of Saint Mercurios slaying a dragon (unique iconographic motif to the author's knowledge).

Three identical lamps are known from Ehnasya, now in the British Museum collection (Bailey 1988: 272, Q 2251 to Q 2253, Pl. 55); five lamps from Abu Mena are also similar (Selesnow 1988: 176–177, Nos 353–357, Pls 46–47, 7th century AD).

Proposed dating: 6th to 7th century AD



Cat. 143

Inv. 009611

L. 9.42; W. 7.39; H. 3.03 (with handle 3.98) cm

Light orange clay; beige slip

Carinated body. Flat base, vertical lug handle. Shoulder decorated with a series of fine relief dots. Larger dots on the nozzle channel and on either side. Discus adorned with a cross, the filling-hole pierced in the center.

Identical with a lamp from Alexandria, but from a more worn mold, now at the British Museum (Bailey 1988: 273, Q 2265, Pl. 55); close to a lamp found at Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LVI, Rq) and another one now in Florence (Michelucci 1975: 121–122, No. 427, Pl. XXV).

Proposed dating: 7th century AD

**Cat. 144**

Inv. 009615

L. 7.20 (with handle 8.12); W. 5.08; H. 2.01 (with handle 3.17) cm

Light brown clay with mica inclusions; dark orange slip
Oval lamp. Flat base; pierced ring handle added at the rear. Discus and shoulder ornamented with vegetal motifs.

Similar to a bigger and better made lamp from Karanis (Shier 1978: 153, No. 463, Pl. 49). The shape (but not the clay or slip) is identical with lamps ascribed to the Aswan I type, such as those from the British Museum (Bailey 1988: 266ff., Q 2211ff., Pl. 52).

Proposed dating: AD 500–650



D. ISLAMIC DROP-SHAPED LAMPS WITH SMALL CURVED HANDLE (KUBIAK A1)

The shape of the handle is what essentially distinguishes this type. It takes on the form of a small ornamented raised lug or, more often, a “tongue-shaped” tape curving forward. The decoration, increasingly subtle and elegant, tends predominantly toward interlacing vegetal, zoomorphic and geometric motifs. In the Near East, this type is attested after the earthquake of 749 in Beth Shean, and the peak of its production, at least at sites in the Decapolis region, but also beyond, extends throughout the second half of the 8th and into the early 9th century AD. Subsequently, they were found, in smaller quantities, in contexts up to the 11th century AD throughout the Near

East (see, among others, Hadad 2002: 104–106; Loffreda 2008: 65–66).

In Egypt, Kubiak classified the lamps from Fustat in Cairo as his Type A₁ (Kubiak 1970: 3–5). Our example presents one of the two fundamental characteristics illustrating both the adaptation of the type by Egyptian potters of the 9th and 10th centuries AD and the cultural influences conveyed by the new Islamic “world”. Indeed, although *Cat. 145* is not, like most lamps from this group, embellished with a fine green glaze, the shoulder is adorned with geometric motifs with a very Near Eastern look to them, a creation that has its roots in the incumbent Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad (750–1258).

Cat. 145

Inv. 009612

L. 9.85; W. 7.63; H. 2.86 (with handle 4.75) cm

Greyish beige clay; brown slip

Flat base defined by a drop-shaped rim; raised handle.

Closely resembling a lamp found in Abu Mena (Selesnow 1988: 183, No. 395, Pl. 51) and very close to a lamp found at Ehnasya (Petrie 1905: Pl. LVI, Rq) and another one now at Florence (Michelucci 1975: 121–122, No. 427, Pl. XXV).

Proposed dating: 9th to 10th century AD



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