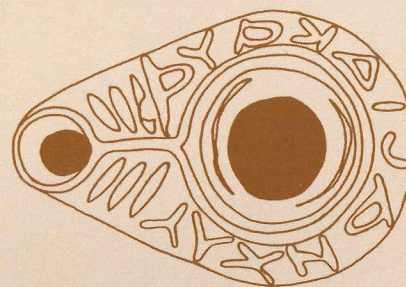


# THE LUCHNARIA

## Inscribed Lamps of the Byzantine Period

by

EUGENIA L. NITOWSKI



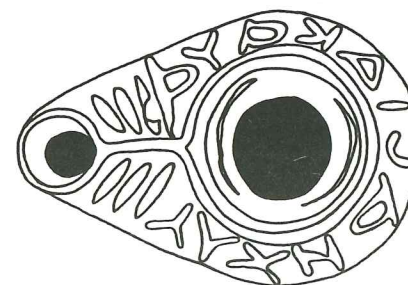
Occasional Papers of the Horn Archaeological Museum  
Andrews University  
Number 4

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To  
C. G.  
and

*Siegfried H. Horn*

God is the Light of the heavens and the earth; His  
Light is like a niche in which is a Lamp, the Lamp in  
glass and the glass like a glittering star, kindled from  
a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the  
West whose oil would almost give Light even though no  
fire did touch it;

Light upon Light.

Quran 24:35

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This little volume is the product of nine years of research. It owes a special debt of gratitude to many scholars who have graciously lent their time and patience. I wish to especially acknowledge the following: Siegfried H. Horn, who originally encouraged my study of the lamps, published my first article on them, and assisted in acquiring more such lamps for the collection at the Andrews University Archaeological Museum of which he was the Curator (now renamed the Siegfried H. Horn Archaeological Museum); Carney E. S. Gavin, Curator of the Harvard Semitic Museum, for his permission to use the lamps from that Collection; Father Sylvester Saller, whom I was privileged to meet in Jerusalem before his death, and who honored me by the acceptance of my work; Dan Barag and Joseph Naveh for their kind discussion of my work and generous offers of direction; Miriam Tadmor, Yael Israeli, L. Y. Rahmani, and Varda Sussman, for opening their lamp collections to my study; Lawrence T. Geraty, Kenneth Knutsen, Kenneth Mull, and Baastian Van Elderen for allowing me to publish lamps from their private collections; Kenneth Vine, who allowed me to study examples from excavations at Caesarea; and Father Leonel Mitchell and William Storey, professors and friends, who opened the area of liturgical history to me, adding the dimension which takes the rather cold typological study of the lamps and sets them in the warmth of the life of the early church. To all these I offer my sincere thanks and the hope that these results will please them.

Eugenia L. Nitowski

## CHAPTER I

# HISTORY OF THE STUDY OF THE LAMPS

"One may remark that to work out the chronology of the candlestick type will be a difficult task, because of the very slight changes in its structure, and the fact that it is perhaps the commonest of all types."<sup>1</sup> Common, yes, but not with the meaning *ordinary*, but rather, *popular*. The term *important* could even be used when one realizes that this form lasted for nearly three centuries, longer than any other Palestinian type. The study of this kind of lamp has been marked by confusion and frequent discussion, but with few breakthroughs and little originality in interpretation.

It is difficult to say exactly who was responsible for attaching the stigma of ignorance and gross distortion to the inscriptions on this form. Such phrases as, "they were written in barbarous Greek, the words being often misspelt, and the letters frequently braced together or turned upside down," occur as early as 1871.<sup>2</sup> But the real credit rests with R. A. S. Macalister in his publication of the excavations he conducted at Gezer during the turn of the century. It would be his descriptions of the lamps, his original assessment, which scholars would continue to repeat for many years. His most unforgettable statement, "the common legend ΦΩΣ ΧΥ ΦΕΝ ΠΑΣΙΝ, blundered into

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<sup>1</sup>Florence E. Day, "Early Islamic and Christian Lamps," *Berytus*, Vol. VII (1942), p. 77.

<sup>2</sup>Captains Wilson and Warren, *The Recovery of Jerusalem* (New York, 1871), p. 378.

unintelligibility by several stages of unintelligent copying, till it has been reduced to a mere symmetrical pattern,"<sup>1</sup> would be responsible for the inability to perceive the typological sequence in any way other than a deteriorating evolution. To him may also be attributed the name "candlestick lamp,"<sup>2</sup> which, like his other comments, has regrettably remained to this day. In 1896, Charles Clermont-Ganneau reasserted a name which he had proposed eight years earlier: "lychnarion" or "lychnaria."<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately his reassertion was no more effective than his original attempt, because it was "candlestick lamp" which took root.

What Macalister saw was so obvious, so simple, that it was beyond question—it could not be challenged. The simplicity was taken for granted to the point that inaccuracies were overlooked. There had always been three points of discussion: that this form's evolution must be from intelligible to unintelligible, that distortion was caused by an ignorance and non-chalance in copying, and that the candlestick decoration on the nozzle must indeed be a Christian palm branch.

Although the lamps had been listed among excavation reports since the mid 1800's, the main writers can be divided into three groups which illustrate the development of the history of the study of the lamps. The earliest dominant writers include: Charles Warren, Charles Clermont-Ganneau, and R. A. S. Macalister. Warren's writings were simply repetitive, beginning with *The Recovery of Jerusalem*, published in 1871, and reused word for word in *The Survey of Western Palestine: Jerusalem* of 1884. He recognized four groups: the luchnaria kala type, two forms of phos christou

<sup>1</sup>R. A. Stewart Macalister, *The Excavation of Gezer*, Vol I (London, 1912), p. 357.

<sup>2</sup>Macalister, *Gezer*, Vol I, p. 318 footnote; Vol. II, p. 227.

<sup>3</sup>Charles Clermont-Ganneau, "Notes on the April 'Quarterly Statement,'" *PEFQS*, 28 (1896), p. 259.

pheni pacin, and one somewhat unknown form. The Greek was called barbarous and for the most part unintelligible. The nozzle designs listed were the cross, the candlestick, and the palm branch, and were accompanied by little description.

Charles Clermont-Ganneau was one of the most unnoticed of the writers on these lamps. He attempted to connect the lamps with liturgical services and his naming them after an inscription on the lamps themselves showed a preliminary classification and a recognition of a non-restrictive name in the choice of Lychnaria for the designation for this particular family.

R. A. S. Macalister has been popular and frequently quoted, but was too quick in his analysis and not careful enough. For example: "In another lamp from one of the tombs—I think from 126, but cannot find the note. . . ."<sup>1</sup> Nothing more needs to be added.

The following group, including Florence Day, Chester McCown, O. R. Sellers and D. C. Baramki, and Charles Kennedy, forms the next stage in development.

In 1942, Florence Day published a well thought out, systematic study of Christian and Early Islamic lamps.<sup>2</sup> She tried to establish "a simple chronological order," and recognized the simultaneous use of Greek and Arabic in inscriptions, but did not connect it with any particular lamp form in this family. But like Macalister, she did not recognize the Luchnaria to contain Arabic: ". . . belongs to what Macalister called the 'candlestick' type. There is evidence for considering that this type also continues into the Islamic period, though to the writer's knowledge, it has not yet been found with Arabic inscriptions."<sup>3</sup>

The excavations at Tell en-Naşbeh produced a considerable corpus of lamps which were seriously

<sup>1</sup>Macalister, *Gezer*, Vol. II, p. 227.

<sup>2</sup>Day, pp. 64-79.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 77.

worked into a typological sequence. Among these appeared several with Greek inscriptions. Chester McCown's description is disappointing: "... the maker of the mold turned some letters upside down or half way over and mistook others. Evidently he had no conception of the meaning of the sentence and no knowledge of the Greek alphabet."<sup>1</sup> It will become evident in a later chapter that it was McCown who misunderstood the Greek.

O. R. Sellers and D. C. Baramki, in their excavations of a major tomb complex at Silet edh-Dhahr, found ninety-eight lamps of this type mixed in with varieties ranging from Herodian to Late Byzantine.<sup>2</sup> Few of these lamps were discussed which does a great disservice to those who especially wish to study this form, since they are inaccessible. They call the nozzle design a candlestick or menorah which they say develops into a palm branch, later traced in an extensive article.<sup>3</sup> The attribution to origin is interesting: "The earliest candlestick lamps, which have a Jewish origin, may have been purchased from Jewish potters; but Christian potters adopted the design and by cross decorations or pious inscriptions made these lamps Christian."<sup>4</sup> This would intimate a degeneracy in imitation by Christian potters in copying the pious inscriptions.

Charles Kennedy, in his sequencing of ceramic lamps, lists this family as Type 19.<sup>5</sup> He expressed a

<sup>1</sup>Chester C. McCown, *Tell en-Nasbeh*, Vol. I (New Haven, 1947), pp. 173-174.

<sup>2</sup>O. R. Sellers and D. C. Baramki, "A Roman-Byzantine Burial Cave in Northern Palestine," *BASOR*, Supplementary Studies Nos. 15-16 (1953).

<sup>3</sup>O. R. Sellers, "The Candlestick Decoration on Byzantine Lamps," *BASOR*, No. 122 (April 1951), pp. 42-45.

<sup>4</sup>Sellers and Baramki, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup>Charles Kennedy, "The Development of the Lamp in Palestine," *Berytus*, Vol. XIV (1963), pp. 67-115.

dissatisfaction with Macalister's term "candlestick" lamp, and denies the possibility that the menorah decoration could be anything other than a palm branch since, he says, the form dates to the 6th century and there were already five centuries between Judaism and Christianity with a break too definitive to allow such borrowing. He attributes the difficulty in translation to the fact that Greek was falling into disuse and could not therefore be properly understood. He agrees with Edgar Smothers<sup>1</sup> on the use of LUCHNARIA KALA as an advertisement used by the street merchants (this will be discussed further in a later chapter). He said that the phi was placed at the end of the inscription, showing that he did not recognize the splitting of this word (see Groups IIIa and IVa below). Like Florence Day he recognized the influence of the later language: "it may be possible that the Greek letters were 'breaking down' under the influence of the Arabic language prior to the Islamic Conquest in the seventh century. No satisfactory letter groupings have been discovered on these lamps using Safaitic forms, and it may well be a coincidence that the Greek and Safaitic forms are so similar."<sup>2</sup>

The last phrase quoted from Kennedy aptly ushers in the last and most recent group of writers: Sylvester Saller, Eugenia Nitowski, and Joseph Naveh.

Sylvester Saller in several short pages probably made the greatest contribution of all. In *The Archaeological Setting of the Shrine of Bethphage*, Saller discussed a form of lamp which was to become the *terminus ad quem* for the entire family. A lamp had been found at Bethphage which was a parallel to one found by Macalister at Gezer,<sup>3</sup> which had a character

<sup>1</sup>Edgar R. Smothers, "Kalos in Acclamation," *Traditio*, Vol. V (1947), pp. 1-57.

<sup>2</sup>Kennedy, p. 86.

<sup>3</sup>Macalister, *Gezer*, Vol. III, Pl. CXVIII:16; Vol. II, Fig. 379; Vol. I, p. 377.

Macalister could not translate and which in fact everyone else had ignored. Saller pointed out that it was in fact the Arabic word for God and made perfect sense in the translation: "The light of Christ the Lord shines for the servant of God." Saller's work remained unnoticed, and, unfortunately, the statements of Day and Kennedy about the use of Greek and Arabic together were never joined with Saller's discovery, not even by himself, which would have lent much greater support to his conclusions.

In 1971, the author began studying the lamps, gathering the published examples and working out a typological sequence. The old chronology of a degenerating evolution did not seem logical, but to reverse it was against the statements of every other scholar who had published to that point. The sequence was set by using the most distorted form first, progressing to the most readable form and ending with the lamp with the Greek-Arabic inscription. The name Luchnaria was also reasserted.<sup>1</sup> Definite connections were sought with the liturgy of the early church. The beginning of the lamp form was found by the author in the publication of a rare form with Syriac inscription by Joseph Naveh.<sup>2</sup>

In the Chapters to follow the complete results of the investigation of the author will be presented. The radiated type will not be discussed. The greatest problem in the study of this lamp form, as with many other ceramic types, is the poor analysis in excavation reports. Macalister never published all the forms he spoke about, nor did Sellers and Baramki, McCown, or others which would compose a long list. Effective study requires effective reporting.

<sup>1</sup>Eugenia L. Nitowski, "Inscribed and Radiated-Type Byzantine Lamps," *AUSS*, Vol. XII, No. 1 (January 1974), p. 18.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Naveh, "Syriac Miscellanea," *Atiqot*, Vol. XI (1976), pp. 102-104.

## CHAPTER II

# LIGHT AND CHRISTIAN INITIATION

### The Discipline of Secrecy

The early Christian Church of Syria-Palestine was in many ways a secret society, largely because it had to compete for adherents with flourishing Eastern mystery cults. Its secretive nature and sometimes exotic rites were meant to give the Christian a lifelong conversion experience.

The *Disciplina Arcani*, or discipline of secrecy, was more than the body of knowledge contained in the writings of the early church, it was the preparation and initiation into a lifestyle which manifested itself in its members. The Luchnaria were part of a mystical silence. The meaning of the inscriptions and symbolism were shrouded to all but the believers, those who had passed through the arduous initiation of the catechumenate.

The catechumenate was divided into three phases, that of the "hearers" (*audiens*); the "applicants" (*competentes*), also called "kneelers," "chosen" (*electi*), or "destined for illumination" (*illuminandi*, *photizomenoi*); and that of the newly baptized, the "illuminated," "enlightened," the "faithful," or the "believers."

Those who wanted to become Christians were brought before the entire assembly of believers by sponsors and examined by teachers as to their reasons for embracing the faith. They then became hearers of the Gospel for a period as long as three years, in which time their sponsors were responsible for their conduct and religious education. At no time were the

hearers allowed to take part in the Eucharist. They would usually stand in galleries and when the service had progressed to the point of the Eucharist they were put out of the church by the deacons and the doors were barred.<sup>1</sup> Besides the Gospel, the hearers were required to memorize the Lord's Prayer and the Jerusalem Creed, which were later recited before the assembly in periods known as the scrutinies. If one wished to prove himself a Christian before a strange community, the proof of his identity was the ability to recite the Lord's Prayer.<sup>2</sup>

Those catechumens who had successfully fulfilled the three years of teaching were to undergo the more rigorous instruction in preparation for baptism as an applicant or kneeler. They were set apart from the other catechumens for the period of forty days before Easter, or Lent. It was during this time that the idea of secrecy and mystery took on a deeper, more realistic meaning. Long days were spent in instruction, prayer, frequent fasting, and intense scrutinies. Excitement was heightened at the prospect that a special, but unknown event was to take place at Easter.

During that week preceeding Easter, discipline among the group was intensified until the fasting began for the Easter Vigil. It was at this point that the catechumen must have been totally confused and quite frightened, he had no idea of what was to happen, it was *the* great mystery which would make him a Christian and one with his Lord. Just before sunrise, the catechumens were taken apart from the assembly who had met to pray with them. Each catechumen was stripped entirely (in order by children, then women,

<sup>1</sup>See the discussion in Thomas F. Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy* (London, 1971), pp. 125-129, 152, 171.

<sup>2</sup>The Lord's prayer was the passport by which the early Christian identified himself around the ancient world, it was so secret that it was to have never been written down, see Appendix for Chapt. II, A (2).

and finally men, for the sake of modesty), they renounced Satan, then taken one by one to be first anointed with oil, exorcised, and immersed three times in the name of the Trinity, again anointed with oil, and finally received the laying on of hands by the bishop. All this in silence and darkness, without explanation or foreknowledge by the catechumen. Edward Yarnold fitly calls this the "awe-inspiring" or even "spine tingling rite of initiation,"<sup>1</sup> which must have practically frightened the catechumen to death, but most certainly made his conversion an experience remembered throughout his life. The newly enlightened were dressed in white robes, then taken from the darkness into the church and greeted with the brightness of a thousand lights: "You simply cannot imagine the number and sheer weight of the candles and the tapers and lamps and everything else they use for the services."<sup>2</sup> It was at this point that they were given a mixture of milk and honey<sup>3</sup> before their first communion which was celebrated with the entire assembly. Later, these newly baptized were given a series of post-baptismal lectures, for those in Jerusalem, this was done around the edicule in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Light had a special meaning for more than just the catechumens in the early church, but nowhere was more reference made to it than in the initiatory rites. In his *Procatechesis*, St. Cyril of Jerusalem makes the statement, "You have walked in procession with the tapers of brides in your hands and the desire of heavenly citizenship in your hearts. . . ." to which Anthony Stephenson adds the note,

<sup>1</sup>Edward Yarnold, *The Awe-inspiring Rites of Initiation: Baptismal Homilies of the Fourth Century* (St. Paul Publications, 1973).

<sup>2</sup>John Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels* (London, 1971).

<sup>3</sup>The milk and honey mixture, as well as being symbolic, provided a protective measure against the immediate effects of the eucharistic wine after long fasting.

Apparently . . . at some ceremony following their registration, perhaps, in a formal entrance procession into the church for the opening lecture, the candidates carried lighted tapers or torches "a significant symbol both of the marriage of the soul with Christ, and of its enlightenment by faith" . . . and also of the heavenly teaching which, as illuminandi, they were about to receive.<sup>1</sup>

Torches are again referred to by Cyril in his *Catechesis*, "Guard unquenched in your hands the torches of faith you have just lighted. . . ."<sup>2</sup> This seems somewhat reminiscent of the earlier warning found in the *Didache*, "Watch over your life: do not let your lamps go out. . . ."<sup>3</sup>

Coming predominately from tombs, there has been little stratigraphic context for the Luchnaria form of lamps. This causes uncertainty in dating and is the main reason for reliance on matching a proposed typology with the character of the early church to establish its proper context. In this respect, it is interesting to note two passages from the funeral orations of St. Gregory of Nazianzen which speak of light. First in speaking of St. Basil, he says, "a brilliant and celebrated light of the church, for he had been enrolled meanwhile in the sacred order of the priesthood to illumine. . . ."<sup>4</sup> The second comes from the oration for his father, "we shall be . . . as little

<sup>1</sup>Leo P. McCauley and Anthony A. Stephenson, *The Works of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem*, Vol. 61 of *The Fathers of the Church* (Washington, D. C.: 1969 and 1970), p. 70.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 91.

<sup>3</sup>Cyril C. Richardson, *Early Christian Fathers* (New York: 1976), p. 178.

<sup>4</sup>McCauley et al, *Funeral Orations by Saint Gregory Nazianzen and Saint Ambrose*, Vol. 32 of *The Fathers of the Church* (New York: 1953), p. 49.

lights which dance about the great light."<sup>1</sup> Finally in Homily 21 of Narsai, we have the statement, "In the door of the tomb of baptism. . . ."<sup>2</sup> Baptism represented death and resurrection,<sup>3</sup> immersion three times symbolized the three days Christ spent in the tomb<sup>4</sup> as well as the three Persons of the Trinity.<sup>5</sup> After a candidate was baptized he was met with a great light from the lamps in the church. Perhaps death itself became a kind of baptism, and the little lamps which supplied not only a light for the burial attendants became a symbolic greeting for their resurrection to eternal life. Just as Christ, the Light will return from the East, the source of light, so the dead will be raised to face the East, the Light, the Christ.

### Luchnicon

"And the lamps and candles are all lit, which make it very bright."<sup>6</sup> By the 4th century the lighting of the lamps was a well established ceremony occurring every evening at about 4:00 p.m. throughout the week. The imagery of light as the representative of the divine presence was not a concept unique to the early church, nor even the New Testament, but is also evident in the Old Testament. A burning lamp was frequently the symbol for a living person, when the flame was snuffed out, the life was also ended (Proverbs 13:9, 20:20).

There are three sources which can be drawn on to reconstruct the lighting of the lamps: the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus, dating to about A.D. 215, the

<sup>1</sup>McCauley et al, p. 155.

<sup>2</sup>E. C. Whitaker, *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy* (London: 1970), p. 55.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 29, 31, 40.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 29, 33.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 41.

<sup>6</sup>Egeria 24:4.

*Apostolic Constitutions* of A.D. 375, and the late 4th century journal which the Spanish nun, Egeria, kept during her pilgrimage in the Holy Land. The account by Hippolytus, like that of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, are the most complete being written as manuals on rites for the church. Egeria, on the other hand, gives a description of the daily service as she actually saw it in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

The service, known as Luchnicon among Greek speaking Christians and Lucernare among the Latin, can be reconstructed in the following manner by combining the three sources (the *Apostolic Tradition* = H, the *Apostolic Constitutions* = A, and Egeria's Journal = E):

BISHOP: stands in the midst of the believers. (H, E)

DEACON: brings in a lamp. (H)

BISHOP: "The Lord be with you all." (H)

PEOPLE: "And with your spirit." (H)

BISHOP: "Let us give thanks to the Lord." (H)

PEOPLE: "It is meet and right: majesty, exaltation, and glory are due to Him." (H)

BISHOP: "We give You thanks, O God, because You have enlightened us by revealing the incorruptible Light. So we, having finished the length of a day, and being come to the beginning of the night, satisfied with the light of the day that You have created for our salvation; and now, since by Your grace we lack not a light for the evening, we sanctify You and we glorify You, through Your only Son our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom be to You with Him glory and might and honor with the Holy Spirit, now and always and world without end." (H)

PEOPLE: "Amen." (H)

Sing Psalms (H, E), especially Psalm 141 (A).<sup>1</sup>

Supper (H).

DEACON (E): "All you faithful, let us pray to the Lord!

Save us, O God, and raise us up by Your Christ.

Let us stand up and beg for the mercies of the Lord and

for His compassion,

for an angel of peace,

for all that is good and profitable for us,

for a Christian departure out of this life,

for a peaceful evening and a night free from sin;

and let us ask that the whole course of our life be without blame.

Let us dedicate ourselves and one another to the living God through His Christ." (A)

BISHOP (E): "O God, You are without beginning and without end, the Maker of the whole world through Christ and its Provider, but above all You are His God and Father, the Giver of the Spirit and the King of the intelligible and sensible beings. You made the day for the works of light and the night for the refreshment of our weakness--for Yours is the day and Yours is the night; it was You who appointed the light and the sun. Lord and Friend of the human race, Fountain of all good, mercifully accept our evening sacrifice of praise. As You have conducted us through the day and brought us to night's beginning, keep us now in Christ, grant us a peaceful evening and a night free from sin and bring us to everlasting life through Christ our Lord. Through Him we offer You glory, honor, and worship in the Holy Spirit for ever." (A)

<sup>1</sup>The Phos Hilaron may also be added here, see the discussion in Chapter III, A under (9) Luchnaria Kala.

PEOPLE: "Amen." (A)

DEACON: "Bow down for the laying on of hands."  
(A, E)

BISHOP: "O God of our fathers and Lord of mercy, of Your wisdom You made us rational creatures and You love us more than anything else on the face of the earth. You gave us authority over all other creatures on earth and ordained kings and priests for us--the former for the security of this present life, the latter for regular worship--look down upon us now, Lord Almighty, and let Your face shine upon your people who bow their hearts before You, and bless them by Christ; through Him You have enlightened us with the Light of knowledge and have revealed Yourself to us; with Christ, worthy adoration is due from every rational and holy nature to You and to the Spirit, the Paraclete, for ever." (A)

PEOPLE: "Amen." (A)

DEACON: "Depart in peace." (A)

It was at this point that the thumb was dipped into the oil of the lamp and the forehead was sealed with the sign of the cross.

### CHAPTER III

## THE LUCHNARIA

### The Inscriptions

Because of the severe lack of stratigraphic contexts for the lamps, the inscriptions themselves become the key to dating and the criteria for forming the typology. The inscriptions have always tantalized scholars, but views which were too simplistic blinded any other interpretation of their meanings and sequencing. No one ever gathered all the available inscriptions and compared them, no one ever tried to reverse the form evolution, the history of the Church was not consulted, generalized statements about the break between Christianity and Judaism were naive, and little was suggested as to a mixture of languages with the Greek.

The most obvious place to begin is with comparative charts of the inscriptions. Such a chart was published only once and in a highly abbreviated form by Macalister:<sup>1</sup>

ΦΩCΧΥ ΦΕΝΠΑCΙΝ  
ΦΩCΧΥ ΙΜΕΝCΙJΠΟΥ  
ΘΙΟΟΝΛ ΘΠ Ο-ΟΛΗ  
ΗΩCΚΟΛΩΝΗCΙCΙCΙC  
ΘΩ ΨΟΨΑ-ΩC  
ΟΟΨ ΘΨΘΨΟΘ

<sup>1</sup>Macalister, *Gezer*, Vol. II, p. 228, Fig. 379.

It presents a number of obvious problems: (1) the sequence was made after Macalister had already formed his opinion that there was a degenerating typology, his conclusion about the form's evolution was not taken from the chart; (2) he omitted parts of the inscriptions; (3) he has ignored the nozzle designs as being important in the determination of the typology; and (4) he has mis-split the texts and misunderstood the direction in which they are to be read.

If one takes all the inscriptions available and copies out the texts and divides them by the formulae, one immediately notices the similarities and patterns in the inscriptions. The random, ignorant, unintelligent copying theory must be dropped at once. There are strong dissimilarities between different formulae, but within each formula the similarities in letter formation among lamps from various locations in Palestine are too great to be dismissed as illiterate copying.

As one scans Charts I to XI, it can be seen that the letters in each group follow definite patterns. If potters, each in different villages, were able to copy "distorted" inscriptions with accuracy, it would follow that they would be just as capable in copying clear inscriptions without error. The misformed letters in each group are always the same. The Charts do not reflect textual evolution or sequencing, but illustrate the similarities of letters within groups of formulae, and have been written out in the direction in which they are properly read. Those characters which deserve special notice are:

Chart I. The v-shaped nu and the ligature of sigma and iota.

Chart II. The v-shaped nu, doubled alpha, and ligature of sigma and iota.

Chart III. The "open" phi (shaped like an omega), the nu formed like a lower case h, the ligature of sigma and iota, and the remaining characters to be discussed later.

Chart IV. The elongated ligature.

Chart V. The reversed nu, the unusual pi, and alpha.

Chart VII. The upside-down omega in place of an upsilon, and the alpha.

Chart VIII. The upside-down omega and upsilon.

Chart IX. The reversed epsilon and elongated pi.

Chart XI. The "open" (omega-shaped) phi.

The abbreviations are:

Chart I. The X for  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$ .

Chart II. The XY for  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$ .

Chart III. The XY for  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$  and currently unknown form at the end of the formula.<sup>1</sup>

Chart IV. The XY for  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$ , with most of the text currently untranslatable.

Chart V. The  $\overline{XY}$  for  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$  and  $\overline{IC}$  for  $\iota\eta\sigma\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ .

Chart IX. The  $\overline{XY}$  for  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$ .

Chart X. The  $\overline{XY}$  for  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$ .

Chart XI. The XY for  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$ , KOY for  $\kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\omicron\upsilon$ , ΔΟΥ for  $\delta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ , and a shortened form for allah.

One of the greatest mistakes made in the study of the inscriptions has been the misunderstanding of how or in what direction the texts are to be read. When incorrectly read, letters seem upside-down and more confusion, than is actually present, appears. There are five ways to read the inscriptions: (1) clockwise, from right to left, without turning the lamp; (2) counter-clockwise, right to left, without turning the lamp; (3) counter-clockwise, left to right, without turning the lamp; (4) counter-clockwise, left to right, turning the lamp; and (5) clockwise, left to right, turning the lamp. (See illustrations 1 to 5.) The direction of the reading becomes very important in setting the typology. McCown, like many others, had no idea of the direction of the readings when he made the statement, ". . . the maker of the mold turned some of the letters upside down or half way over and mistook others."<sup>2</sup> The lamp which he refers to is in Group IIIb, Script

<sup>1</sup>McCown, Vol. I, p. 174.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 173.

Chart III, and falls under those lamps which are read counter-clockwise while the lamp is *not* turned (ill. 2), thus none of the letters are upside down and those "half way over" are merely an attempt to keep them all as upright as possible.

It has been only in the most recent years that words from languages other than Greek have been recognized on the lamps. The first to be found was the Arabic word *Allah* by Father Sylvester Saller.<sup>1</sup> Florence Day<sup>2</sup> and Charles Kennedy<sup>3</sup> had earlier expressed the resemblance of the "unintelligible" Greek with the Safaitic alphabet and the possibility "that the Greek letters were 'breaking down' under the influence of the Arabic language prior to the Islamic Conquest in the seventh century."<sup>4</sup> Day pointed out that the simultaneous use of Greek and Arabic was characteristic of the Umayyad period and that the official language of the State registers was not changed completely to Arabic until 'Abd al-Malik in A.D. 700-701.<sup>5</sup> So the precedent existed. Day, however, did not recognize that any of the Luchnaria had been found with Arabic inscriptions.<sup>6</sup>

In 1976, Joseph Naveh published an article on a new Group in the family that used Syriac exclusively.<sup>7</sup> Syriac was used by the church in Jerusalem until the end of the fourth century, but according to Egeria, it was not the dominant language and seemed to be fading.

<sup>1</sup>Sylvester Saller and E. Testa, *The Archaeological Setting of the Shrine of Bethphage* (Jerusalem, 1961), p. 23.

<sup>2</sup>Day, pp. 64-79.

<sup>3</sup>Kennedy, pp. 67-115.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 86.

<sup>5</sup>Day, p. 70.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>7</sup>Naveh, pp. 102-104.

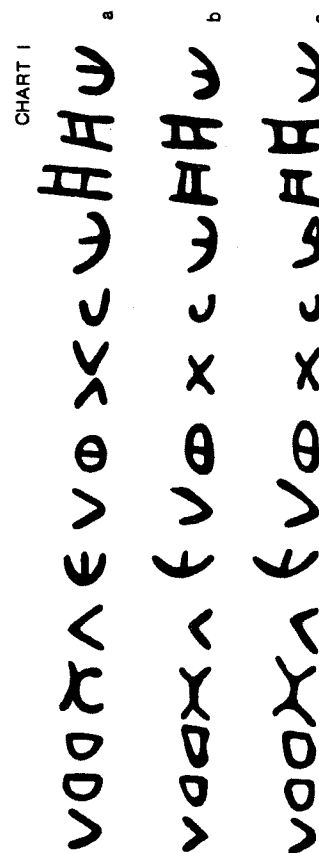


CHART II

ὙΔΔΔΗΛΕΘΙΧ)~ΒΡΘΘ <sup>a</sup>  
 ὙΔΔΔΗΛΕΘΥΧ)~ΗΗΘΘ <sup>b</sup>  
 ὙΔΔΔΗΛΕΘΥΧ)~ΗΗΘΘ <sup>c</sup>  
 ἸΔΔΔΥΤΤΘΥΧΙ~ΒΒΘΘ <sup>d</sup>  
 ςΔΔΠΛΕΘΥΧ)~ΘΘ <sup>e</sup>  
 ὙΔΔΔΤΤΛΕΘΥΧΙ~ΠΘ <sup>f</sup>

CHART III

ΗΒΔΛΓΔΔΥΛΕΘΥΧ)~Ψ <sup>a</sup>  
 ΗΒΔΛΓΔΠΛΕΘΥΧ)~Φ <sup>b</sup>  
 ΝΒΔΛΓΔΠΛΕΘΥΧ)~Φ <sup>c</sup>  
 ΟΙΒΔΛΓΔΠΛΕΘΥΧ)~Ψ <sup>d</sup>  
 ΟΙΒΔΛΓΔΠΛΕΘΥΧ)~Ψ <sup>e</sup>  
 ΗΒΔΛΓΔΠΛΕΘΥΧ)~Ω <sup>f</sup>