
LATE ROMAN LAMPS DISCOVERED IN ISTROS, ON THE ACROPOLIS CENTRE-SOUTH SECTOR (2013-2020 CAMPAIGNS)

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Abstract: In this study, we present a part of the lychnological material discovered during the archaeological excavation carried out between 2013 and 2020 on the Acropolis Centre-South Sector in Istros (Constanța County). The entire lot includes almost 190 pieces that, from a chronological point of view, belong to the Greek (Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic), Early Roman and Late Roman period. We selected for discussion in this paper only the Late Roman material, which is the most numerous (130 lamps, of which 107 typologically determined) and more representative for the archaeological complex under investigation. The lamps belong to many types, some of them newly attested in Istros, and are both imported products and pieces manufactured at a regional, maybe even local, scale.

Rezumat: În acest studiu prezentăm o parte a materialului lichenologic descoperit în timpul săpăturilor arheologice desfășurate între 2013 și 2020 pe Sectorul Acropolă Centru-Sud la Histria (județul Constanța). Întregul lot cuprinde aproape 190 piese care, din punct de vedere cronologic, datează din perioada greacă (arhaică, clasică și elenistică), romană timpurie și romană târzie. Dintre acestea, în articolul de față este discutat doar materialul roman târziu, care este cel mai numeros (130 lămpi, dintre care 107 identificabile din punct de vedere tipologic) și mai reprezentativ pentru complexul arheologic aflat în curs de cercetare. Lămpile aparțin mai multor tipuri, unele atestate pentru prima dată la Histria și sunt atât produse importate, cât și piese realizate la scară regională, poate chiar locală.

Keywords: Late Roman period, lighting objects, local products, imports.

Cuvinte cheie: perioadă romană târzie, obiecte de iluminat, produse locale, importuri.

INTRODUCTION

The current excavations in the *Acropolis Centre-South Sector* in Istros (Histria, Constanța County, Romania), led by a team from the “Dinu Theodorescu” Archaeological Laboratory¹, started in 2013 and are entirely financed by the University of Bucharest. The research project has, as main objectives, to establish the general stratigraphy of the southern part of the acropolis, from **Street C** down to the Late Roman Defensive Wall, and to investigate the evolution of the urban plan in that area by excavating the different superposed *insulae*, from the most recent (Late Roman) to the earliest (Archaic Greek) (Fig. 1-2).

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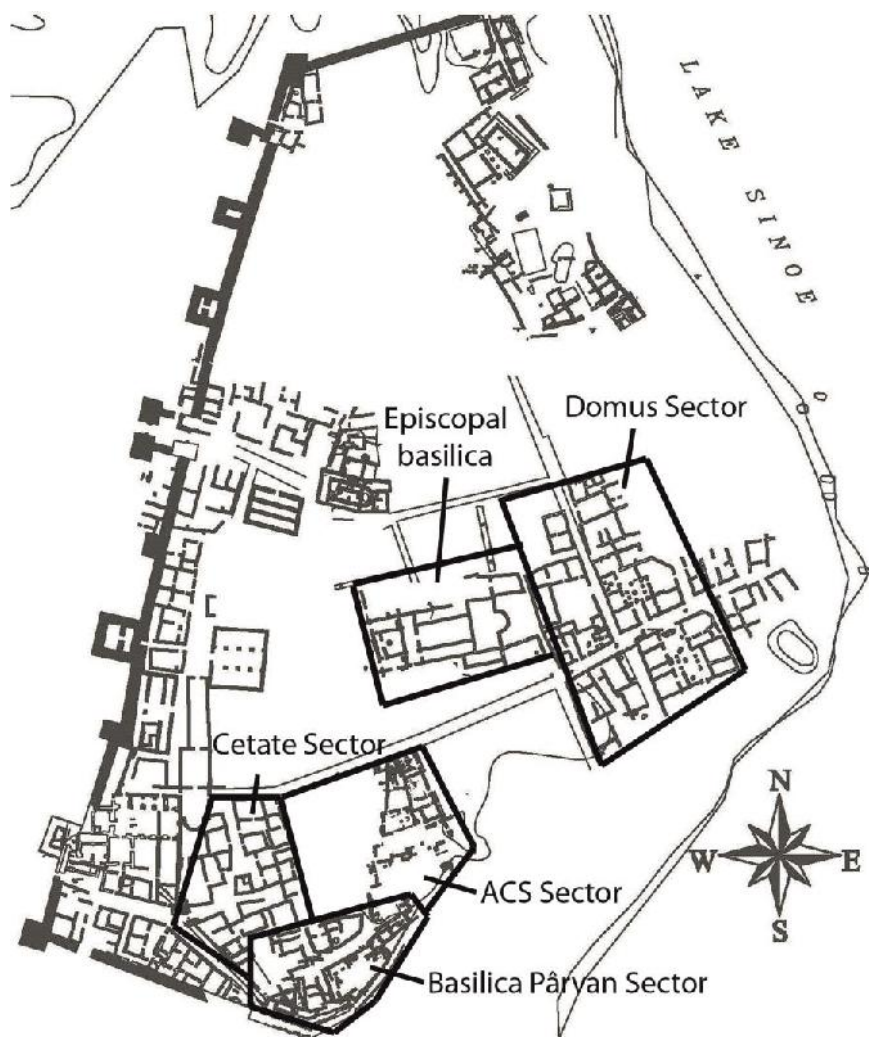


Fig. 1. General plan of Late Roman *Istros* with the location of the Acropolis Centre-South Sector.

The general stratigraphy of the master profile (and, indeed, of most of the profiles in the excavation) up to now is rather simple, with a vegetal layer covering the last, grey debris, layer (caused by the final abandon of the structures – generally marked 001 in our stratigraphic unit sheets), under which we identified a second, yellow debris layer (caused by the destruction – usually involving fire – of the city's last dwelling level; usually marked 002 in our stratigraphic unit sheets), covering the city's last living surfaces.

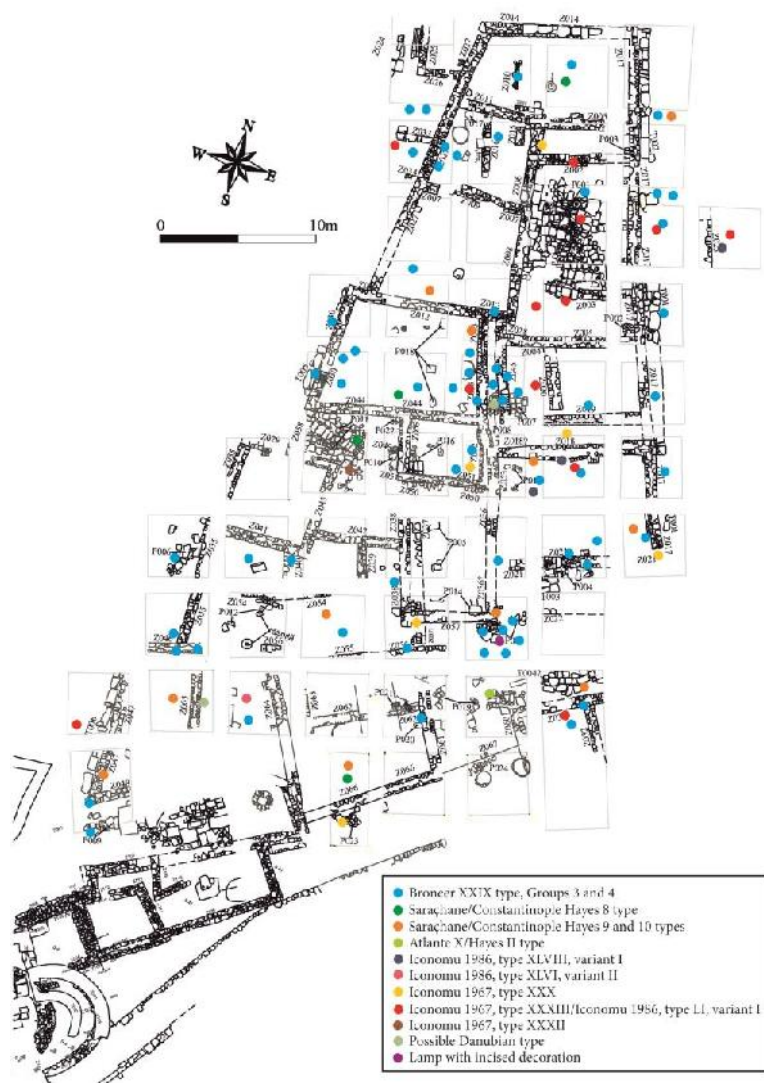


Fig. 2. Plan of the Acropolis Centre-South Sector (2013-2020) with the distribution of the lamp finds.

The latter, when preserved (in most cases the bricks or stones were reused, and only the yellow silt substructures remain, sometimes accompanied by another proof of a former pavement, namely plinths along certain walls) is represented by stone (e.g., P001) or brick (e.g., P007) pavements. The walls' width ranges from 0.6 to 1 m, and they all are made of stone bound with yellowish clay. In some cases, the elevation could have been built in mud bricks, and certainly interior divisions were obtained

using also mud brick walls (e.g., **Z010** in the northern part of the sector). Sometimes ceramic construction material was used in the construction of walls alongside the usual stones, such as bricks or roof tiles (in this case, the Laconian type was used).

Insula α (the conventional name for the most recent residential block) is delimited to the North by **Street C**, running on a WSW-ENE direction, and to the East and West by two newly-discovered streets (conventionally named **ST01** and **02**, until they will be integrated in the Istrian general street system). The two new streets have classic construction characteristics, as they are covered by the usual *batutto*, the compact silt and pebbles typical of smaller Late Roman streets, and are sometimes delimited by sidewalks/borders, again a typical element for Late Roman streets. **ST01** is part of the older street system, made up of secondary streets perpendicular on the main street (in this case **Street C**), while the most recent phase (Phase II) of **ST02** (to the west) has a modified trajectory, cutting a diagonal line across former buildings in order to link the so-called *Pârvan* Basilica to the South with the Episcopal Basilica to the North. This theory (based also on arguments from two other sectors), already published in an article in the proceedings of the 7th International Black Sea Studies Congress², implies the creation of a privileged itinerary, linking the new focal points of Late Roman *Istros*, namely the two already-mentioned churches, plus the so-called Crypt Basilica to the North.

Insula α seems to be divided into two nuclei, partially by an alley on an E-W direction, which indicates we are dealing with at least two residences. All the internal spaces have received numbers (Fig. 3), and some of them have been modified by the introduction of new dividing walls in the *insula*'s second functioning phase.

This brings us to the chronology of the residential complex. For now, there is no indication that the last *insula* could have been built earlier than the 6th century AD. A second construction phase (marked by: 1. blocked old entrances; 2. new entrances obtained by the dismantling of wall segments; 3. the taking out of use of large *pythoi*, followed by the installation of new pavements/living surfaces over the same space; 4. the building of new internal dividing walls) is dated to the second half of the 6th century AD by a coin from Justin II, thus corresponding to the general situation in Late Roman *Istros*. The most recent identified complex is a space obtained by the construction of a new dividing wall (**Z020**) and covered by a brick pavement (**P007**), which we were able to date to the beginning of the 7th century AD by the discovery of type 3C *spatheia*.

² Achim *et alii* 2021.

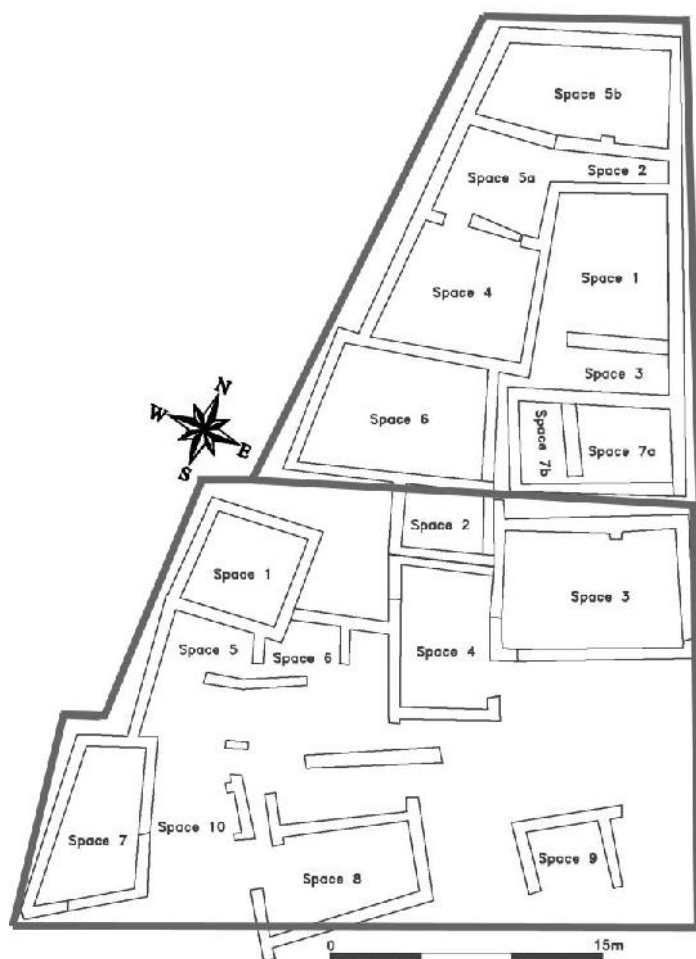


Fig. 3. Plan of the Acropolis Centre-South Sector (2013-2020) with the two nuclei and internal spaces.

The excavation led to the identification of a wide variety of materials (ceramics, zooarchaeological finds, glass and metal objects, coins, epigraphic finds etc), of which by far the most numerous are pottery finds. From a chronological point of view, the material of Late Roman period predominates, but quite frequent there are finds dated to the previous periods – Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic and Early Roman. Based on the functionality criterion, the material can be divided into several categories: *dolia* (oversize vessels used for storing foodstuffs), *amphorae* (large vessels used for transporting mainly liquids, alongside other products), *vasa coquina(to)ria* (kitchen ware, represented by pots, frying pans, trays, casseroles, used in the cooking process), *vasa escaria* (tableware – bowls, shallow bowls, dishes, platters –, used for serving and

eating), *vasa pota(to)ria* (drinking vessels – jugs, pitchers, cups, beakers –, used for serving and drinking), and other ceramic objects – *terracottae*, *lucernae* (lighting objects – lamps), building materials, etc.

The lighting objects made of clay are a well-represented group on the *Acropolis Centre-South* Sector, with 189 lamps discovered during the 2013-2020 archaeological campaigns, the great majority of which are preserved in a fragmentary state. The most numerous are the lamps of Late Roman period, with no less than 130 pieces, followed by 47 lamps dating from the Early Roman period and finally 12 Greek lamps. Out of the 130 Late Roman lamps, 107 items will be discussed in the present article, as they preserve a large enough part to allow their typological attribution; the rest of 23 pieces are in an advanced state of fragmentation, the small dimensions of the preserved parts making their identification impossible. Even though for some pieces it is not possible to make a clear distinction between imports and local products³, depending on the original place of production of the types, the lot is divided into four major categories – Micro-Asian, Saraçhane/Constantinople, North-African and Danubian lamps –, each one with adjacent types and variants; in addition, in a final section are included two other lamp types which could not be typologically determined.

MICRO-ASIAN TYPE LAMPS

This group is represented by the lamps belonging to the type **Broneer XXIX, Groups 3-4/Iconomu 1986, XXXVII, variants I-II/Hayes 1992, Types 1-2**, one of the most popular lamp types of Late Antiquity, due to its intensive and flourishing production during this period. As its name indicates, it was produced in *Asia Minor* starting with the 5th century AD and frequently attested in numerous sites from the Aegean islands, the Pontic basin, and the Danube area during the 6th century and the first quarter of the 7th century AD.⁴ One of the main producing workshops from *Asia Minor* is *Ephesus*, as it has been proven by the numerous discoveries⁵, but also through fabric analyses⁶; moreover, *Miletus*, *Knidos*, or *Sardis* are mentioned among other possible production centres⁷. Being a widespread type, multiple imitations appeared over time in various

³ Over time, Roman period lamps have been the object of interest for many scholars, so that the publications dealing with this subject are very numerous. From the abundant bibliography, in the present study we have focused on the titles that seemed to be the most relevant for highlighting the relationship between imports and provincial/local products in this region.

⁴ The chronology of the main lamps deposits from these areas are discussed in Katsioti 2017, 215-216, and Curta 2016, 71-75.

⁵ Miltner 1937, 100-105, Pls. XII-XIII.

⁶ Hughes 1988, 461-485.

⁷ Katsioti 2017, 218.

regions of the Empire, among which the Aegean basin⁸ and the West-Pontic area. For the latter, a certain proof comes from *Halmyris*, where 30 lamps with firing deficiencies and no use traces (which were discovered in the vicinity of a pottery kiln dated between the end of the 6th century and the beginning of the 7th century AD) determined the researchers to consider them local products⁹. Furthermore, some lamps that have been discovered in *Tomis* were attributed to the local production because of the inferior quality and the coarser fabric they were made of.¹⁰

The original Micro-Asian products are differentiated from the various copies based on the fabric characteristics: the *Asia Minor* lamps are mainly brown or orange and bear a slip similar to the body colour (brown, orange or grayish), in some cases of darker and glossy shades;¹¹ however, quite common are also the unslipped pieces. Another specificity is the micaceous fabric, which was mainly attributed to the Ephesian products, although a high amount of golden and silver mica was frequently observed in the case of the lamps produced in *Sardis*.¹²

As for the pieces manufactured on regional/provincial scale, they are also described as lamps made of good quality fabric, of fine texture, but beside mica particles, limestone grains are frequently added in composition.¹³ The lamps are more often fired in reducing atmosphere, as the fabric colour ranges from dark gray to brownish-gray and the slip is of similar colour (gray or black).¹⁴ In addition, there are also attested provincial lamps with reddish/brownish fabric and covered with reddish slip¹⁵, thus resembling the original products.

Being an extremely frequent type, multiple variants appeared between the late 5th century and the 7th century AD, but it is usually recognised based on the peculiar morphological and ornamental features. From a morphological point of view, the lamps are divided into two variants: the Groups 3 and 4, according to the classification created by Oscar Broneer for the lamps discovered in Corinth¹⁶. The former has an elongated body and an opened ridge that delimits the discus and forms

⁸ An important centre is *Samos*, where the flourishing local production led to the development of a sub-variant of this type, the so-called "Samian type" lamps: Katsioti 2017, 426-428. Numerous lamps of Micro-Asian influence are also attested in *Rhodes*: Katsioti 2017, 166-170.

⁹ Topoleanu 1996, 91-94; Topoleanu 2000, 208-209.

¹⁰ Iconomu 1986, 80-82.

¹¹ Bailey 1985, 98.

¹² Bailey 1988, 371-372, 395.

¹³ Topoleanu 2000, 209-211, cat. nos. 541-548; 213-214, cat. nos. 556-558, 560; Topoleanu, Croitoru 2015, 178-182, cat. no. 50.

¹⁴ Topoleanu 2000, 209-214, cat. nos. 541-546, 548-550, 556-557, 560.

¹⁵ Topoleanu 2000, 211-213, cat. nos. 547, 551-555 and 559.

¹⁶ Broneer 1930, 114-116.

a short channel towards the nozzle; the latter has rounded body and closed ridge, but with no channel. In both cases, they have broad shoulder, usually decorated; circular discus with central filling-hole; unpierced lamellar handle; base-ring, slightly concave.

Albeit numerous motifs and different patterns were used over time in decorating these lamps, by far the commonest decoration is represented by the closely spaced globules, disposed in three to six bands, applied on the shoulder; these pieces are also called "lamps with relief globules on the shoulder"¹⁷ due to the popularity of this motif. Seldom, the globules are replaced by tendrils or bands of concentric circles, ovolos, or other motifs. The handle may present one to three grooves on front and top of it; also, it usually ends in fishtail, which may be of different types, or in a simple ridge, which is connected to the base-ring¹⁸. Lamps of type Broneer XXIX, Group 3, usually have the discus undecorated, but in some instances, it may present incised dots or lines disposed radially around the filling-hole, as well as rosettes, circles, or crosses on the edge. On the other hand, the lamps of type Broneer XXIX, Group 4, are in most cases decorated on the discus, a wide range of representations being used (e.g., deities, crosses, anthropomorphic and zoomorphic representations, or rosettes).¹⁹ The nozzle may be decorated on the upper part with loops that are applied around the wick-hole and on the underside with parallel incisions. Finally, the base-ring may present impressed points or short lines and within the base various stamps are applied (footprint – the *planta pedis* motif –, circles, letters, etc.).²⁰

Regarding the chronology of this type, the variants without channel (Broneer XXIX, Group 4) are earlier than those with channel (Broneer XXIX, Group 3), the former being dated to the late 5th and the 6th century, while the latter between the half of the 6th and the half of the 7th century; in both cases, a possible production which could have started half a century earlier was considered²¹.

The previous excavations in *Istros* have led to the discovery of many Broneer XXIX type lamps. Of these, there were published eleven lamps discovered in the Late Roman contexts (dated between the beginning of the 5th century and the beginning of the 7th) from the *Domus* Sector and the Sacred Area, the pieces having in common the ornamentation of Christian origin²²: they are exclusively complete lamps pertaining to Group 3 that present crosses made either from incisions, or from concentric circles. Subsequently, six other lamps were discovered in the 6th-7th centuries contexts of the

¹⁷ Iconomu 1967, 25, type XXVIII; Iconomu 1986, 80.

¹⁸ Bailey 1988, 371, Fig. 162.

¹⁹ For more details, see Bailey 1988, 372.

²⁰ For an elaborate classification of these marks, see Bailey 1988, Chapter three, 95-147.

²¹ Bailey 1988, 371.

²² Popescu 1994, 352-360, cat. nos. 3-7, Figs. 54-63.

Episcopal Basilica²³: they are complete and fragmentary lamps belonging to the Groups 3 and 4, most likely imports, that preserve the specific decoration of the shoulder (rows of globules) and handle (fishtail motif on the reservoir).

As for the discoveries on the *Acropolis Centre-South Sector*, the Broneer XXIX type lamps are the best represented group, with no less than 65 specimens, covering thus 61% of the entire lychnological lot. A good part of the material discovered during the 2013-2015 archaeological campaigns (16 of the 23 lamps) has been published²⁴; the repertoire is now completed by seven unpublished lamps from the same period, to which we add 42 lamps from 2015-onwards. Of the total number, 13 are lamps with channel, 10 without channel, and 41 cannot be determined because of the fragmentary state of preservation and the common motifs used in decorating the pieces belonging to both groups. Regarding the preservation state, only one piece is complete, the others fragmentary: the largest number consists in fragments of the upper valve (48), of which six also preserve portions of the inferior valve (reservoir and base), and 16 are from the inferior valve (base, nozzle, handle).

Group 3 is represented by one complete lamp, excepting the broken nozzle (Fig. 4/1), three pieces preserving more than half of the profile (Fig. 4/2-4) and nine upper valve fragments representing the front part (Fig. 5/1-9). The lamps preserved in a better state have the lamellar handle ending in fishtail, broad decorated shoulder, broken discus – therefore without filling-hole –, a channel that encircles the wick-hole, and concave base-ring. The discus seems to be undecorated; the shoulder is decorated either with four rows of small globules (Fig. 4/1, 3-4) or with a row of concentric circles (Fig. 4/2); in one case the base is undecorated (Fig. 4/1), and in another one five circles are disposed within ring (Fig. 4/4); the fishtail is shaped as a simple triangle (Eph. B type) (Fig. 4/1) or is in the form of two wide-spaced tongues with a stylised cross between them and ending with concentric circles (Eph. C type) (Fig. 4/2). Two of the four lamps (Fig. 4/2-3) are clear Micro-Asian imports, since they are made of good quality fabric, micaceous, reddish yellow (5YR 7/6) or reddish brown (2.5YR 6/4) and bear a brownish slip (7.5YR 5/4), with grayish hues (5YR 4/1) here and there. Despite its quite coarser fabric, the third lamp (Fig. 4/4) is most likely an import because of the numerous golden mica particles observed in the composition; the fabric is pale brown (2.5YR 7/3) and a light reddish-brown slip (5YR 6/4) is partially preserved on both surfaces. The complete lamp (Fig. 4/1) cannot be certainly attributed to the Micro-Asian workshops, having an inferior quality aspect – it was made in a worn mould,

²³ Mușețeanu, Băltăc 2007, 218-220, cat. nos. 96-98, 107-109, Pl. LXXIX.

²⁴ Bădescu, Bottez 2014, 229-232, cat. nos. 4-11 and 14, Pls. 3-4 (with the mention that cat. nos. 9 and 11 are from the same lamp, its upper part being completed by a third fragment discovered afterwards); Bivolaru, Bottez 2016, 137-138, cat. nos. 4-5, 7, 11-12, Fig. 4.

the decoration is barely noticeable – and a fabric with numerous limestone inclusions; the fabric is light brownish-gray (10YR 6/2) and is covered by a dark grayish-brown slip (10YR 4/2; 2.5Y 4/2).

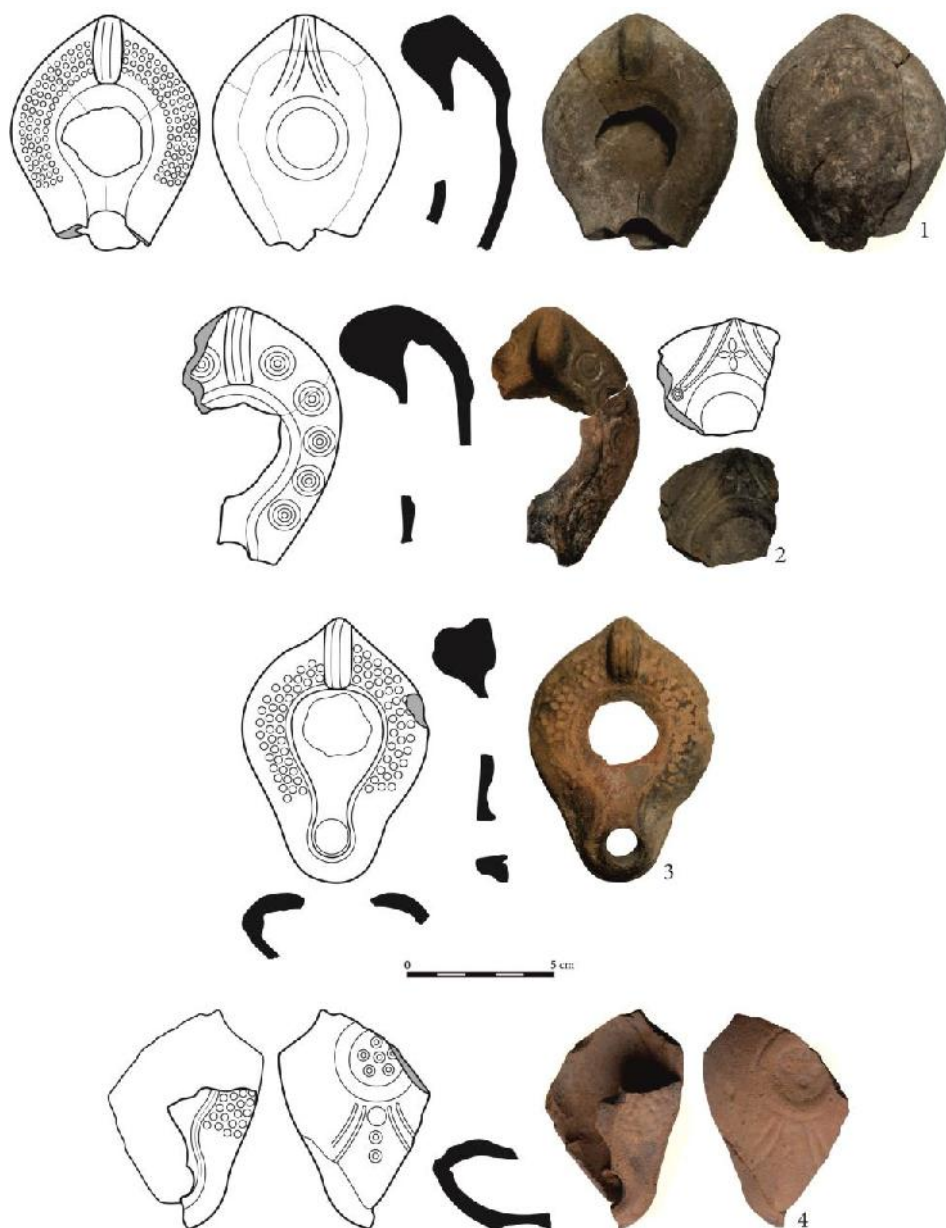


Fig. 4. Micro-Asian lamps, the type Broneer XXIX, Group 3.

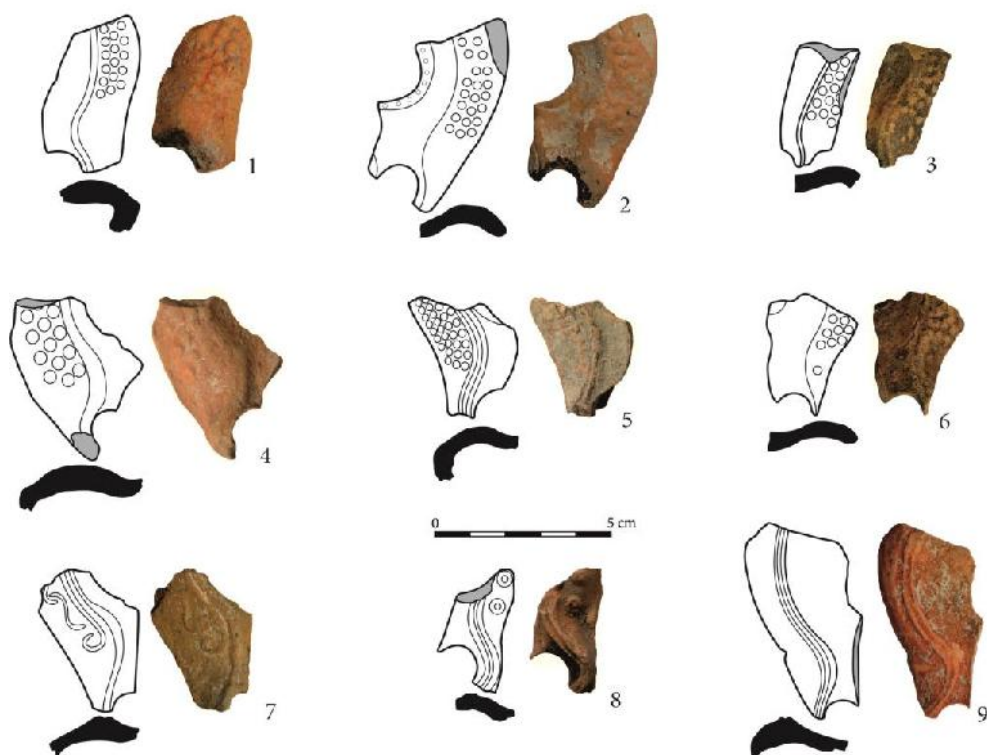


Fig. 5. Micro-Asian lamps, the type Broneer XXIX, Group 3.

The other fragments belonging to this group are front parts, preserving partially the shoulder and nozzle with the wick-hole. Only one piece has also a part of the discus, which is narrow, and the filling-hole, which is delimited by a band of incised points (Fig. 5/2). The shoulder is almost exclusively decorated with three to four rows of globules of various sizes, six of the nine lamps bearing this type of decoration (Fig. 5/1-6); other variants are decorated with volutes (Fig. 5/7) or a row of dotted circles (Fig. 5/8), and only one lamp has the shoulder plain (Fig. 5/9). This group is homogenous in fabric composition and colour; of fine texture, with dense limestone inclusions, alongside iron oxides; their colour ranges from light brown (7.5YR 6/4; 10YR 6/4) (Fig. 5/2-3, 5-6, 8) to red (2.5YR 5/8; 5YR 6/6) (Fig. 5/1, 4, 9), while the slip is brown (7.5YR 4/3) (Fig. 5/3, 6, 8) or red (2.5YR 5/6, 5/8) (Fig. 5/1, 4-5, 9). The exception is represented by the fragment decorated with volutes (Fig. 5/7), in whose composition are observed numerous quartz grains and limestone particles of various dimensions; this lamp is most likely a provincial/local product.

The **Group 4** is represented by more fragmentary lamps, comparing to the previous group, but the pieces are much more varied, both in fabric composition and

ornamentation. In the absence of the specific features (i.e., the prominent ridge that encloses the discus, the wide discus), their attributing to this group was made mainly based on the preserved decoration. First, we mention three lamps that preserve the particular front part – the nozzle with wick-hole, shoulder and part of the discus, delimited by a ridge: one has two rows of globules on the shoulder, rosette on the discus and loops on the nozzle (Fig. 6/1); the second has on the shoulder S-lines combined with circles (Fig. 6/2); and the third presents ovolos on the shoulder and two subsidiary ridges towards the discus, of which the inner one with incised lines (Fig. 6/3). Like one of the Group 3 lamps (Fig. 4/4), the first piece may be considered an import, because of the high amount of golden mica observed in the composition; the fabric is slightly coarse, pale brown (2.5YR 8/2), and a very pale brown slip (10YR 7/4) is partially preserved on both surfaces. The other ones are extremely similar, being most probably produced in the same workshop: both made of fine fabric, in whose composition are added particles of limestone and iron oxides; the fabric is reddish yellow (5YR 6/6; 7.5YR 4/6) and the slip is red (2.5YR 5/6), with darker hues of gray (5YR 3/1) or brown (7.5YR 4/6).

Two other pieces (Fig. 6/4-5) are remarkable due to their fine execution, good quality fabric – of fine texture, light brown (7.5YR 6/4), and presenting small inclusions of mica and iron oxides – and glossy brownish (7.5YR 5/6; 5YR 5/4) slip, clear characteristics of the *Asia Minor* imports. Of the first lamp are preserved several fragments, one representing the discus, almost complete (Fig. 6/4a), the second is from the nozzle, with a very small part of the wick-hole (Fig. 6/4b), and other parts are from the base (Fig. 6/4c). The discus is decorated with a cross with splayed arms, combined with two stars above and two symmetrically filling-holes below; the shoulder preserves one relief dot and around the wick-hole are two loops. As for the base, within ring are seven small circles surrounding one larger concentric circle. The pattern applied on the discus is quite rare, only two identical analogies being attested so far, one from *Ephesus*, the other from *Rhodes*;²⁵ however, these finds present different decoration on the shoulder, the loops are missing, and within the base is impressed the *planta pedis* motif.

The second lamp preserves only the right side of the upper valve, represented by a part of the shoulder and a small part of the discus (Fig. 6/5). The shoulder is decorated with vines and grapes, and on the discus one can see a wing and the lower part of a character's body. The character depicts a young Eros facing left which, in combination with this particular shoulder ornamentation, is either playing double flute²⁶, or is carrying bunches of grapes.²⁷

²⁵ Bailey 1988, 384, Q3123 MLA, Pl. 106; Katsioti 2017, 273, AM 129.

²⁶ Katsioti 2017, 239, AM 32-33.

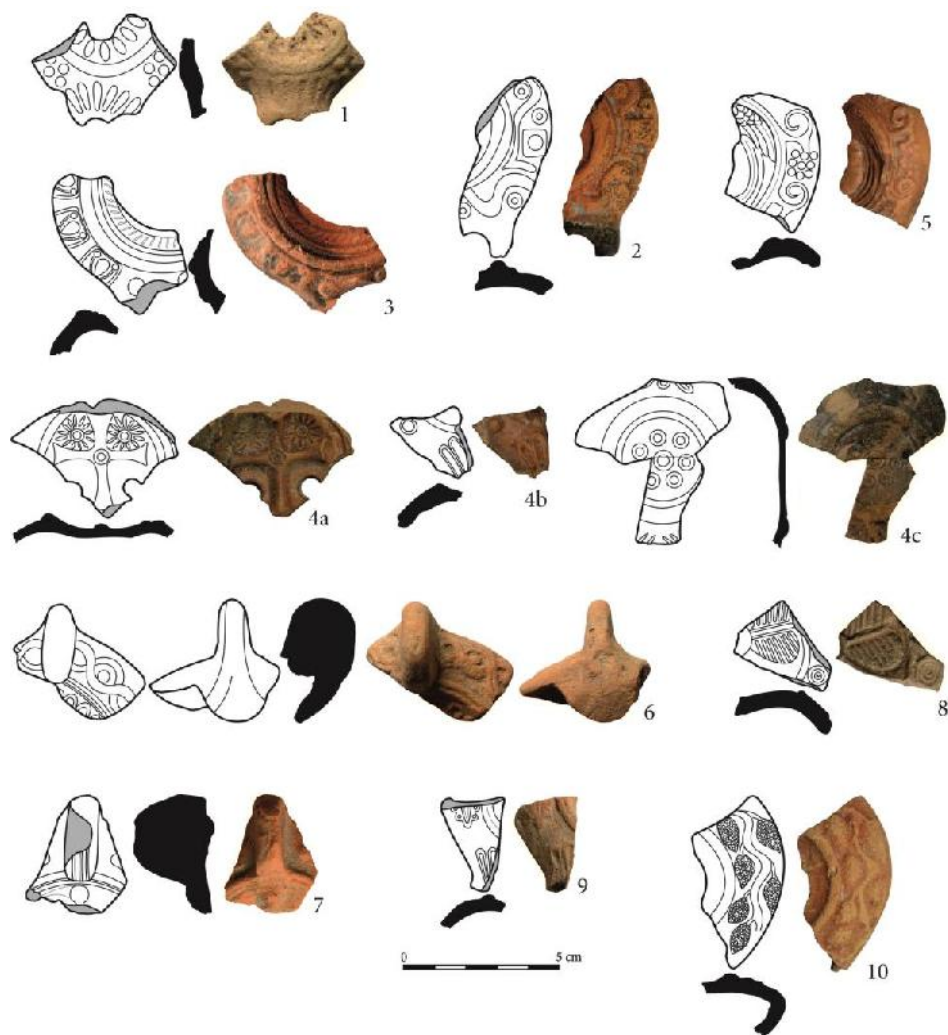


Fig. 6. Micro-Asian lamps, the type Broneer XXIX, Group 4.

Despite being rear fragments – only with the handle and a small part of the discus –, two pieces most likely belong to this group (Fig. 6/6-7): one is decorated with guilloche on the shoulder and possibly a rosette on the discus (two fragmentary petals are observed) (Fig. 6/6), as a close analogy from *Rhodes* indicates.²⁸ The other one was decorated on the shoulder with an indeterminable pattern and the discus preserves the head of an anthropomorphic representation (Fig. 6/7); as it was produced in a

²⁷ Poulou-Papadimitriou 1986, 589, cat. no. 5, Fig. 5; Katsioti 2017, 349, AM 344.

²⁸ Katsioti 2017, 297, AM 198.

worn mould, the facial characteristics are not preserved, so it is difficult to determine which character is illustrated. However, it is not impossible that an Eros was represented, a motif frequently used in decorating the *Asia Minor* lamps²⁹; a clue in this regard may be the curved lines preserved on the left side, close to the head, which may come from the wings. The lamps are made of fine fabric, with golden and silver mica and limestone inclusions; the fabric is reddish yellow (5YR 6/6), respectively light brown (7.5YR 6/4); both pieces are unslipped.

The last pieces (Fig. 6/8-10) are small body shards, especially shoulder parts, in one case also with a quarter of the discus. They all have in common the wide ridge that encloses the discus, but are different in ornamentation, fabric characteristics and firing techniques. A lamp with concentric circles on the shoulder and a rosette made of palmettes on the discus (Fig. 6/8) has an identical entirely preserved analogy in *Tomis*,³⁰ with the mention that our lamp was fired in reducing atmosphere and is unslipped. Another one is decorated with vines and grapes on the shoulder and the discus was probably plain (Fig. 6/10); the fabric is different from the other lamps, composed also of an uncommon amount of iron oxides, of various dimensions, alongside mica particles. The last fragment preserves two loops on the nozzle and one leaf on the shoulder (Fig. 6/9), the leaf motif being used either as single motif or alternating with tendrils;³¹ it is made of reddish yellow (5YR 6/6) fabric, with fine mica particles, and is unslipped.

Group 3/4 lamps. In this group are included the lamps characterised by an advanced state of fragmentation, for which neither the preserved morphology nor the decoration contributes to their attributing to one type or another. Thus, none of the lamps preserves a large enough part to be sufficiently relevant for any of the variants; the preserved body is similar, and the ornamental repertoire is frequently encountered on both groups. The lamps are represented by shards of the superior and inferior valve, except for two pieces that partially preserve both parts.

The superior valve fragments are represented by eleven pieces preserving the handle and larger or smaller segments of the shoulder and discus (Fig. 7/1-2, 5-9), followed by nine shoulder and discus parts (Fig. 7/3-4, 10-11), and finally three extremely small shoulder parts (Fig. 7/12). Some lamps are of larger size and present a prominent ridge that delimits the discus, broad shoulder, and narrow discus with a wide filling-hole, in some cases also delimited by a ridge (Fig. 7/1-6). On the other hand, the rest of the lot is smaller in size, the delimiting ridge does not exist or is

²⁹ For the entire repertoire, see Bailey 1988, 11-16, Figs. 14-18.

³⁰ Iconomu 1967, 133, cat. no. 689, Fig. 157.

³¹ For lamps with leaves as unique motif, see Katsioti 2017, 252, AM 68, and 262, AM 98. For lamps with leaves combined with tendrils, see Bailey 1988, 382, Q3104, Pl. 105, or Katsioti 2017, 288, AM 178.

replaced by a groove, and the filling-hole is narrower (Fig. 7/7-11). One common characteristic is the shoulder ornamentation, 21 of the 23 lamps having the globules decoration: in most cases the globules are very small, closely spaced and disposed in three to six rows (Fig. 7/1-5, 7-11); one piece was decorated with only two rows of globules, which were of larger size and more widely spaced (Fig. 7/6). The two exceptions are represented by one lamp decorated with vines and grapes, the grapes also made of small globules (Fig. 7/5), and an undecorated lamp. As for the discus decoration, it is mostly absent, only a few lamps presenting lines radially disposed around the filling-hole (Fig. 7/2-4) or small circles widely spaced on the edge (Fig. 7/5).

Of the inferior valve, the lot is represented mostly by base parts, with the reservoir and nozzle preserved (Fig. 8/1-8), followed by handle ends (Fig. 8/9-13). The base is delimited by a wide ring, mainly simple (Fig. 8/1, 4-8) and seldom decorated with radially disposed fine incisions (Fig. 8/2-3). Four lamps are stamped within the ring with the *planta pedis* motif, in all cases partially preserved (the front part or half of the motif); more common are the pieces with a single stamp applied in the centre (Fig. 8/2, 4-5), while the double *planta pedis* is represented solely by one specimen (Fig. 8/6). Other motifs were also used in decorating the base, but the too small preserved parts make their identification and interpretation difficult (Fig. 8/3, 7). In front, towards the wick, the nozzle presents double V-shaped grooves and in the space between them are impressed concentric circles in a cross-like pattern (Fig. 8/2, 8).

A lot of five shards represent the handle ends applied on the reservoir towards the base. Four of the five fragments are fishtail ends of the Eph. B type, being attested two typical variants of the Broneer XXIX lamps, Groups 3 and 4: they are mostly simple – two tongues with flared ends – (Fig. 8/9-11), and solely one with a tear-shaped motif within the tongues (Fig. 8/12). Instead, the fifth has a shape which seems to be exceedingly rare, since no close analogy has been identified so far: the handle ends in two tongues closely spaced, rounded in the inferior part, thus creating a heart-like shape (Fig. 8/13).

The great majority of the lamps were made of the specific *Asia Minor* fabric: of fine texture, with fine grains of mica, limestone and iron oxides in composition. The colour ranges from reddish yellow (5YR 6/6; 7.5YR 6/6) (Figs. 7/4, 6, 11-12; 8/1-2, 5, 8, 10-13) to light brown (7.5YR 6/4) (Figs. 7/1-3, 5; 8/3-4, 6-7, 9). The slip has different shades of brown – reddish brown (2.5YR 4/4; 2.5YR 6/4) (Fig. 8/4, 7, 9, 12) or light brown (7.5YR 6/4) (Fig. 8/10-11) – and red (2.5YR 4/8; 5YR 5/6) (Figs. 7/9, 11; 8/5); there are also unslipped pieces (Figs. 7/1-6, 12; 8/2, 8, 13). A few exceptions are represented by some lamps made of fabric characterised by numerous limestone particles, of a different colour – strong brown (7.5YR 5/4; 10YR 5/3) –, mainly unslipped (Figs. 7/7; 8/3) or with a darker slip (7.5YR 4/1; 2.5Y 4/1) (Fig. 7/8, 10).

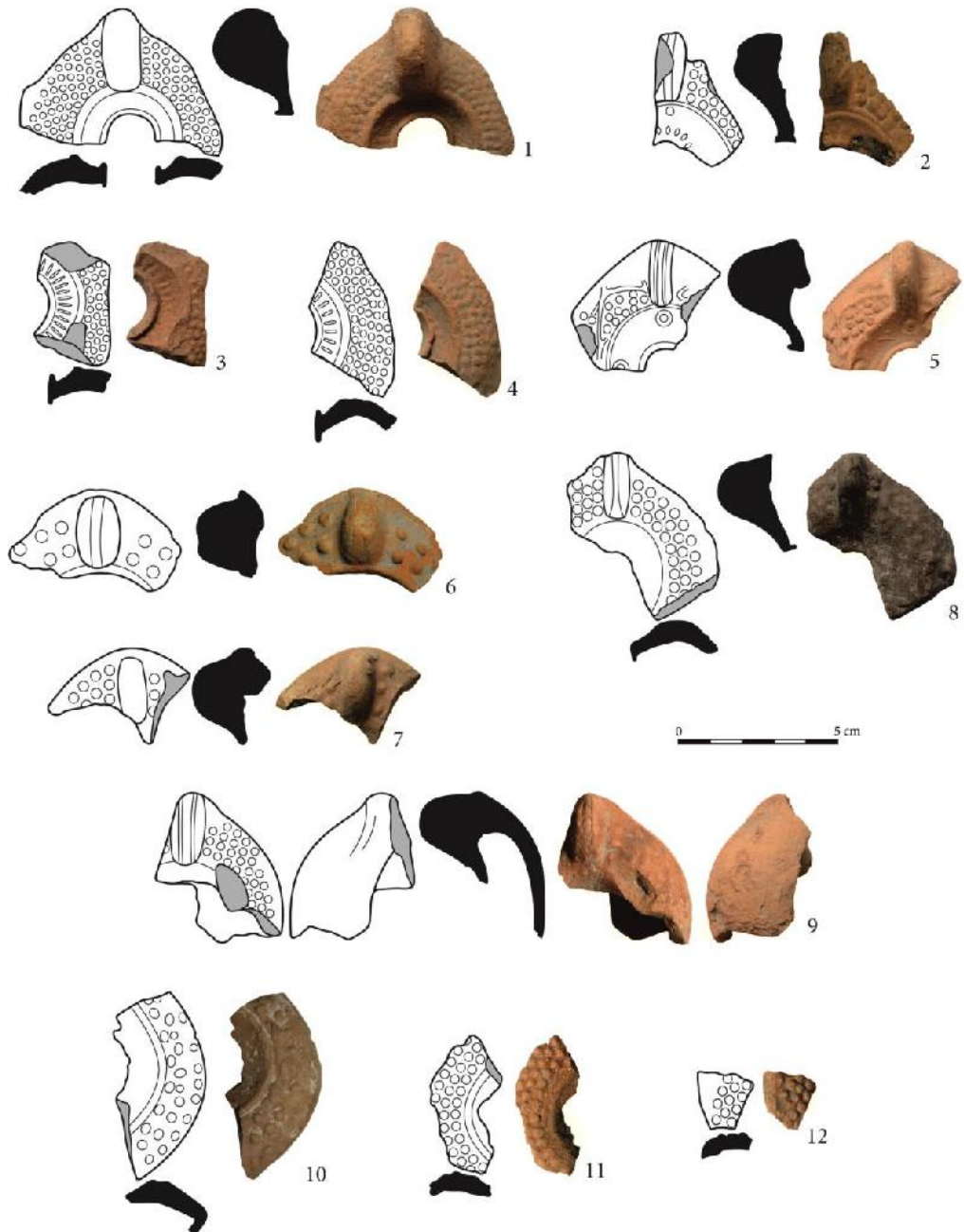


Fig. 7. Micro-Asian lamps, the type Broneer XXIX, Groups 3 and 4.

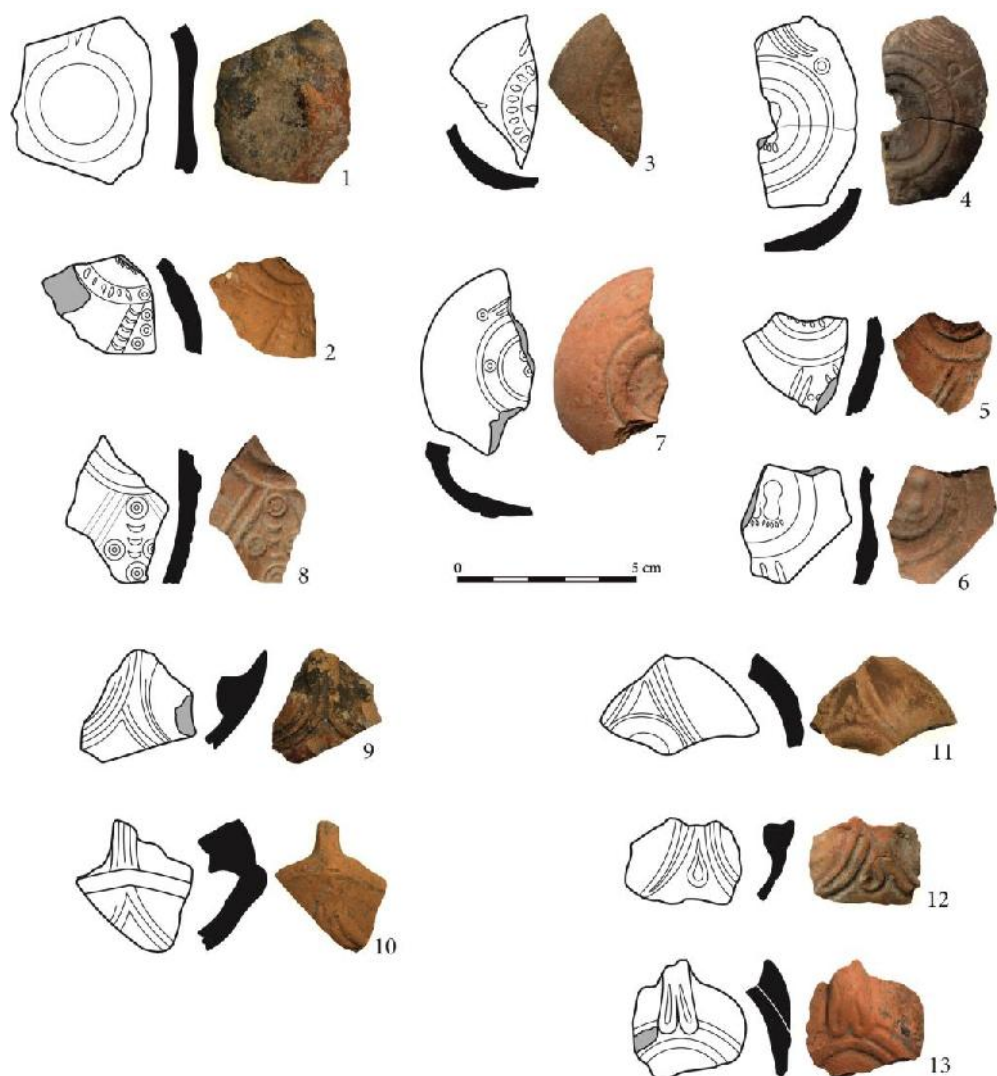


Fig. 8. Micro-Asian lamps, the type Broneer XXIX, Groups 3 and 4.

The Broneer XXIX type lamps were discovered on the entire surface of the Acropolis Centre-South Sector, with the largest number (40 pieces) found in the first two stratigraphical layers, representing the modern, respectively the first debris layer, while the rest come from the second debris layer identified just above the last living surface. Albeit it is hard to determine the lamps' original location in this residential complex, it is observed a higher concentration in the northern and central part, in

what it would represent the northern nucleus of the *insula*. From a contextual perspective, in the northernmost room (Space 5b) were discovered two lamps, one Group 3 lamp (Fig. 4/2) and another Group 3/4 fragment; next to them, a lamp belonging to the Hayes 8 type (see below) was discovered. To the south-west, in Space 5a, no less than four lamps belonging to both groups have been found (two lamps with channel – Figs. 5/6 and 7/1 –, one lamp without channel – Fig. 6/4a-c – and one Group 3/4 lamp – Fig. 7/8). In another room, also located on the western side of the building (Space 6), which was most likely used for storing foodstuffs³², were discovered seven lamps, of which one with channel – Fig. 4/4 –, two without channel – Fig. 6/3 and 6 – and four indetermined shards – Figs. 7/1; 8/13. Among the most relevant finds from the southern nucleus, we mention two fragmentary lamps (Fig. 7/8) grouped in a small room interpreted as a semi-basement (Space 2)³³, alongside a rare lamp of the type Iconomu 1967, XXX. The rest of the group consists in lamps discovered in the area of the streets that delimit the complex to the East and West (10 lamps on ST01, among which Figs. 5/2; 6/2; 7/3-4, respectively 6 lamps on ST02 – Figs. 5/1; 6/5, 10; 7/12; 8/8-9) and other isolate finds from various spots of the Sector.

SARAÇHANE/CONSTANTINOPLÉ TYPES

This group is represented by three lamp types – Hayes 8, 9 and 10 –, most likely variants of the same shape, due to the close similarities of the morphological features and fabric characteristics. Regarding the origin of these types, albeit no moulds or pottery workshops have been identified so far, the numerous finds in and in the vicinity of *Constantinople*, as well as the fabric characteristics – good-quality fabric, with mica and limestone inclusions in composition, and a glossy slip, sometimes with metallic shade – were considered indicators for their production in the area of the imperial capital.³⁴ Also, more recently it has been taken into account that imitations of these types were produced in various workshops from the western, respectively northern Black Sea area: among the producing centres of the Hayes 8 type lamps are mentioned *Halmyris* and *Chersonesos*³⁵, while the Hayes 9 and 10 types were probably produced in *Halmyris*³⁶ and *Tomis*³⁷. These types were contemporary, being dated between the second half of the 5th century and the early/first half of the 7th century AD.³⁸

³² Bottez *et alii* 2019a, 128.

³³ Bottez *et alii* 2019b, 108-109.

³⁴ Hayes 1992, 80.

³⁵ Chrzanovski *et alii* 2019, 130-131.

³⁶ Topoleanu 2019, 342

³⁷ Iconomu 1986, 104.

³⁸ Chrzanovski *et alii* 2019, 133; Topoleanu 2019, 343.

The **Hayes 8** type lamps, also known as lamps with “temple façade”, represent a new type attested in *Istros*, with four fragmentary pieces discovered so far on the Acropolis Centre-South Sector (Fig. 9/1-4). The lamps are described as having round body; wide discus with central filling-hole; projecting nozzle with raised edge to wick-hole; applied vertical band-handle, with the hole marked, but unpierced; and concave base.³⁹ On the discus is applied a decorative pattern, which has been interpreted in different ways, from a schematic depiction of an arch to a symbolic representation of a sacred edifice⁴⁰: two columns supporting an arch, bunches of grapes, two triangular motifs between columns, with inner dots, most likely also representing grapes⁴¹. The shoulder is either simple⁴² or decorated with a wavy band combined with concentric circles⁴³; the nozzle can be decorated with a row of relief concentric circles flanked on each side by two parallel lines.⁴⁴

All the lamps discovered in *Istros* preserve only parts of the superior valve. The first piece preserves the vertical band-handle, a part of the discus and a small part of the reservoir (Fig. 9/1). On the discus can be observed the architectural decoration – the arch, represented by two bands of dots separated by a ridge. Based on the fabric – fine, yellowish red (5YR 5/6), with mica inclusions – and the good-quality reddish-brown slip (2.5YR 4/3), it may be an import. Even though on a smaller portion and poorly preserved, the same decorative pattern seems to be applied on a second lamp, on whose discus are observed several dots (Fig. 9/2). The handle has the same shape as the first lamp (vertical, with the hole marked, but not pierced), but on this fragment the centre is marked by a deep groove. The fabric is also micaceous, of fine texture, yellowish red in colour (5YR 5/6) and covered by a red slip (2.5YR 4/6).

The last two pieces are front parts of lamps, one presenting partially the filling-hole, the discus, and the wick-hole (Fig. 9/3), while the other only the nozzle and the wick-hole (Fig. 9/4). On the first lamp discus, one can observe the grape motif, represented by a triangle with inner dots, surrounded on each side by concentric circles. On both pieces, the nozzle is decorated with three relief concentric circles, flanked on each side by two parallel lines. Also, intense soot traces can be seen on the wick-hole, suggesting the lamps' use. Regarding the fabric characteristics, the former is characterized by a fine, micaceous, light brown (7.5YR 6/4) fabric, while the latter

³⁹ Hayes 1992, 82.

⁴⁰ For an exhaustive discussion, see Opriş 2020, 166-177.

⁴¹ Bailey 1988, 415, cat. no. Q3309 MLA.

⁴² Chrzanovski *et alii* 2019, 137-138, cat. no. 9; 139-140, cat. nos. 15-16.

⁴³ Chrzanovski *et alii* 2019, 137-138, cat. nos. 7-8.

⁴⁴ Chrzanovski *et alii* 2019, 139, 141, cat. nos. 17-18.

presents also numerous limestone inclusions and is yellowish red (5YR 5/6). The former is covered with dark gray (2.5Y 4/1) slip, while the latter is unslipped.

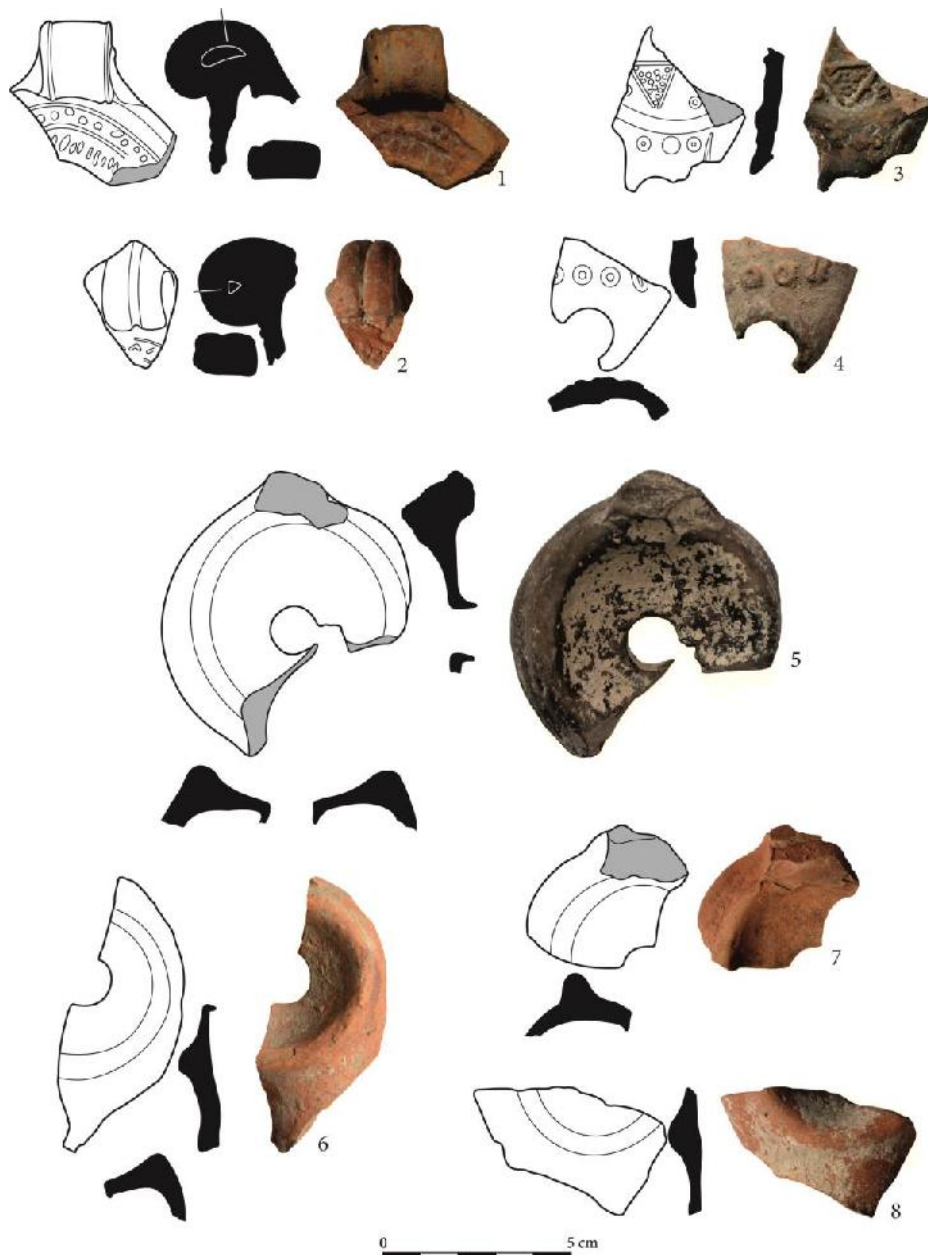


Fig. 9. Saraçhane/Constantinople lamps: 1-4. Hayes 8 type; 5-8. Hayes 9 type.

As it concerns the discovery contexts, excepting the third lamp (Fig. 9/3), which comes from a context interpreted as a paved open space/courtyard localised in the west-central part of the 6th century *insula*, the other ones were found either in the vegetal/modern layer, or in the debris that represent the final destruction phase of the building⁴⁵: the first two pieces come from the northern nucleus (Space 5b – Fig. 9/1, respectively Space 6 – Fig. 9/2), while the last one from the southernmost part.

The types **Hayes 9** and **10** are undecorated variants of the Hayes 8 lamps and share the same morphological characteristics, excepting the nozzle channel that is specific for the latter: rounded body; concave discus delimited by a pronounced ridge, closed, respectively opened towards the nozzle; central filling-hole; vertical band handle with a groove on its centre and the hole marked, but not pierced; concave base, unmarked.⁴⁶

Regarding the discoveries in *Istros*, on the *Acropolis Centre-South Sector* were found 11 pieces pertaining to these types: four of the Hayes 9 type (Fig. 9/5-8), two of the Hayes 10 type (Fig. 10/1-2), and five others that cannot certainly be attributed to one type or another because of their fragmentary state – they are rear parts preserving only the handle and partially the discus and the reservoir (Fig. 10/3-4); thus, it is hard to determine whether they had nozzle channel or not.

The first group consists only of fragmentary lamps of which different parts of the upper valve are preserved – the discus with the filling-hole (Fig. 9/5-7); the nozzle with small parts of the wick-hole (Fig. 9/8). The fabric is the same for all pieces: of good quality, with fine inclusions of mica, limestone, and iron oxide, the colour ranging from yellowish red (5YR 6/6; 5YR 5/6) (Fig. 9/6-8) to brown (7.5YR 5/3) (Fig. 9/5); two lamps have glossy slip (2.5YR 6/6, light red; 5YR 5/4, reddish brown) (Fig. 9/6, 8), while two others have a poorly preserved slip, yellowish red (5YR 5/6) (Fig. 9/7) or very dark gray (7.5YR 3/1) (Fig. 9/5). Although all the pieces were discovered in the debris layers, they can be localised on the plan as it follows: two of them come from the south-western part of the northern nucleus (Spaces 4 (Fig. 9/5) and 6 (Fig. 9/6) on the plan), another one from the north-eastern room of the southern nucleus (Space 3) (Fig. 9/7), and the last one from the eastern street (ST01) that delimits the building (Fig. 9/8).

The Hayes 10 type is firstly represented by one complete lamp⁴⁷, excepting the discus, which is broken in the central part, and does not preserve the filling-hole; also, the front part of the wick-hole is missing (Fig. 10/1). The handle hole is marked only on the right. The fabric is fine, very pale brown (10YR 7/4), with limestone, mica, and iron oxide inclusions; the lamp is covered with a yellowish red slip (5YR 5/6), uneven preserved on the whole surface.

⁴⁵ Bottez *et alii* 2019b, 107.

⁴⁶ Topoleanu 2019, 342.

⁴⁷ Bivolaru, Bottez 2016, 138, cat. no. 10, Fig. 4/10.

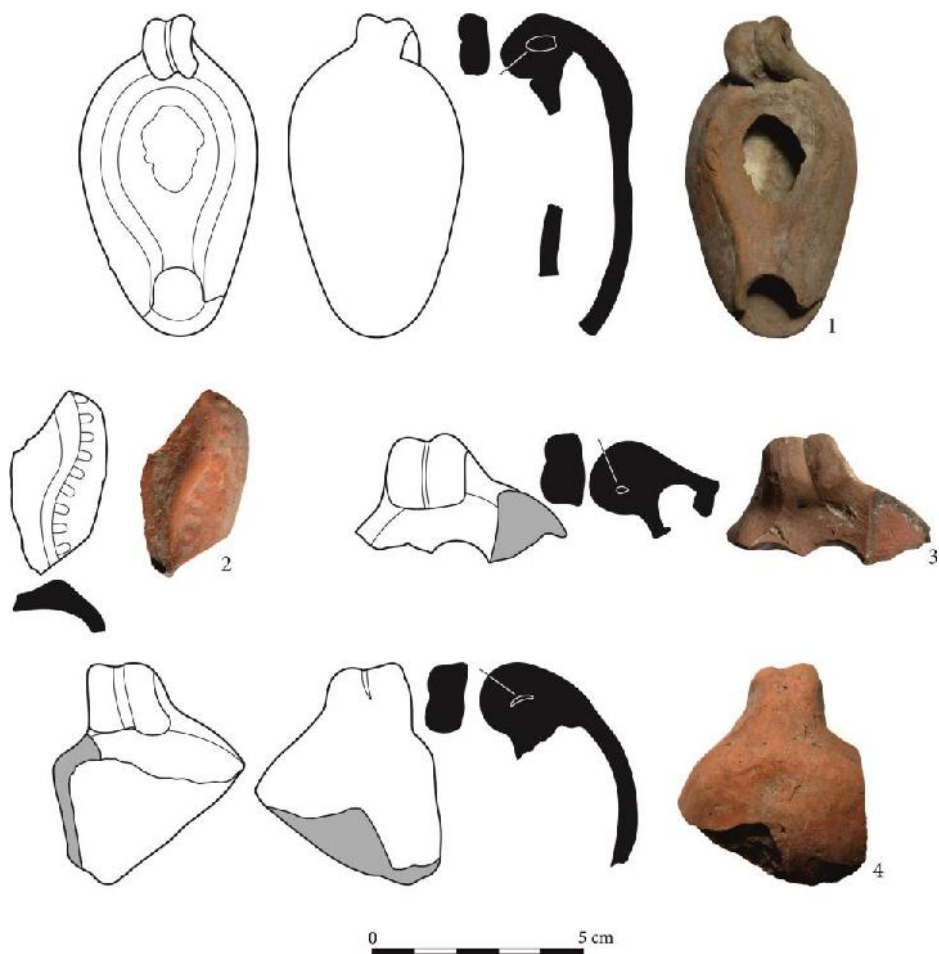


Fig. 10. Saraçhane/Constantinople lamps: 1-2. Hayes 10 type; 3-4. Hayes 9/10 type.

Although fragmentary, the second lamp deserves special attention because it is the only piece attested so far that is decorated on the shoulder (Fig. 10/2). It is preserved the front right half: the shoulder, the discus with a quarter of the filling-hole, the channel, and a small part of the wick-hole. On the shoulder are observed short parallel lines, poorly impressed, probably due to its production in a worn mould. The lamp is made of fine fabric, reddish yellow (5YR 6/6), with fine limestone and mica particles in composition; it is covered by a slip of the same colour and presents soot traces around the wick-hole. Both pieces have been discovered in the southern part of the Sector, in the debris layers.

As for the undetermined pieces (Fig. 10/3-4), their fabric is fine, either reddish brown (5YR 5/4) (Fig. 10/4) or yellowish red (5YR 5/6) (Fig. 10/3), with limestone inclusions in composition; they may be covered with a yellowish red (5YR 5/6) (Fig. 10/3) or red (2.5YR 5/6) slip. One piece was discovered in a clear context – on the 6th century living surface, represented by a silt floor, identified in Space 4 of the southern nucleus (Fig. 10/3). The other ones come from modern and debris layers, in the southern part of the Sector (Fig. 10/4).

NORTH-AFRICAN TYPE LAMPS

The most common type of North-African origin is **Atlante X/Hayes II**, which was produced in Central and North Tunisia, most probably in the same workshops as the African Red Slip Ware (Sidi Marzouk Tounsi in Central Tunisia, respectively Oudhna and El Mahrine region in Northern Tunisia), based on the fabric and slip similarities.⁴⁸ Its widespread throughout the Roman world determined the appearance of identical imitations (through overmoulding) and the development of lamps of North-African influence in various centres from the Mediterranean basin and the Pontic area.⁴⁹

Regarding the morphological features, this type is characterised by an oval elongated body; broad shoulder; concave discus, usually with two filling-holes; discus surrounded by a ridge that opens towards the nozzle to form a channel; vertical handle connected by a ridge to the rounded base-ring.⁵⁰ Furthermore, this type was subdivided into two variants, II A and II B, based on the fabric and slip quality, as well as the decorative patterns applied on the shoulder. Thus, the former variant is recognized by the fine paste, the shiny orange slip, and the carefully made decoration, with small-sized elaborate motifs; on the other hand, the latter is distinguished by the coarser fabric, the less shiny reddish slip, and decoration of inferior quality, with motifs of larger size and widely spaced.⁵¹ Albeit initially it has been suggested that these variants may date from different periods⁵², now they are considered to be contemporary, both of them dating from the 5th century to the first decades of the 7th century, with late variants that continue until the end of the century.⁵³

⁴⁸ Hayes 1972, 310.

⁴⁹ For a detailed discussion, see Curta 2016, 59-63.

⁵⁰ Bonifay 2004, 358.

⁵¹ Bonifay 2004, 371.

⁵² John W. Hayes dated the type IIA between c. 425 and 500, and the IIB type from the second half of the 5th century to the mid-6th century AD: Hayes 1972, 314.

⁵³ Bonifay 2004, 360-361, Fig. 202 a-b.

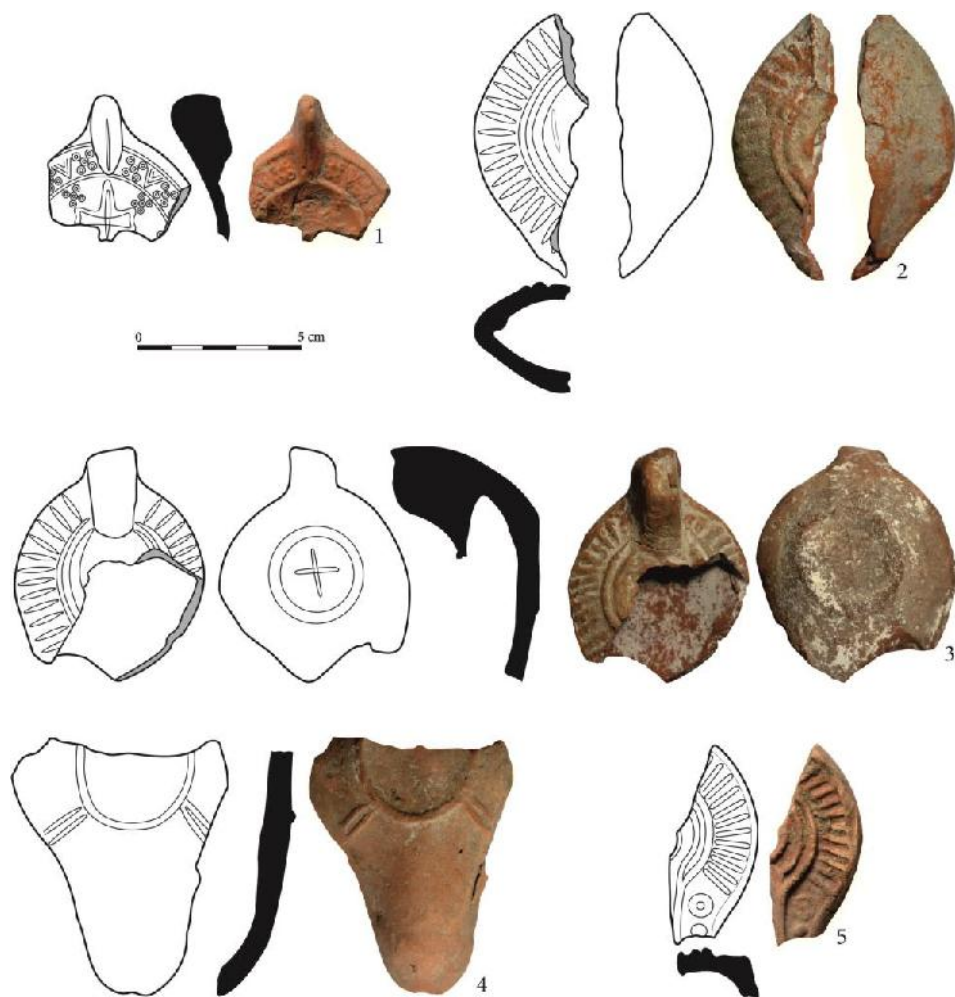


Fig. 11. North-African type lamps: 1. Atlante X/Hayes II type; 3-4. Iconomu 1986, type XLVIII, variant I; 5. Iconomu 1986, type XLVI, variant II.

On the *Acropolis Centre-South* Sector is attested only one fragmentary piece belonging to the Atlante X/Hayes II type, variant A (Fig. 11/1). It is the second piece of this type discovered in *Istros*, as an entirely preserved piece but belonging to the variant B, with a different decoration on the shoulder and discus, was discovered during old excavations.⁵⁴ This fragment preserves the rear part of the upper valve: part of the handle, which has a fine groove in the middle; broad shoulder delimited on each side

⁵⁴ Popescu 1994, 347-348, Fig. 52a.

by a ridge; concave discus with one filling-hole, centrally disposed. The shoulder is decorated with a pattern consisting in alternate triangles and quatre-foils, while on the discus is preserved the upper part of a cross that has splayed ends to its side arms. Furthermore, the cross is surrounded by subsidiary motifs, represented by quatre-foils, applied on the discus' edge.

The lamp is made of good quality fabric, fine in texture, reddish yellow (5YR 6/6) in colour, with limestone and iron oxide inclusions. On the outer surface, especially on the shoulder and handle, is partially preserved the reddish slip (2.5YR 5/6). However, the fabric and slip are different from those specific to the fine wares, suggesting that this piece is most likely a good quality imitation. The piece was discovered in the southern part of the *insula*, on a 6th century pavement that has been interpreted either as part of a paved courtyard, or as a continuation of ST01 to the south, towards the Late Roman defensive wall.⁵⁵

In addition to this lamp, are to be mentioned a series of pieces, all fragmentary, whose fabric characteristics strongly suggest their manufacture on a local/regional scale, but whose shape and decoration are of North-African influence. They are all pertaining to the **Iconomu 1967, type XXX**, subsequently subdivided into several variants. First, we mention two identical lamps previously published, representing the type **Iconomu 1986, XLVIII, variant I**⁵⁶ (Fig. 11/2-3). The main producing centre is considered to be *Tomis*, as is also suggested by the lamp moulds discovered in the Mosaic Edifice,⁵⁷ being most likely assigned to the local pottery workshops. However, it is not excluded the possibility of their production in other workshops of the province.⁵⁸

These lamps are described as having an oval body; tall vertical handle; broad flaring shoulder; flat discus with one filling-hole, disposed centrally; two parallel ridges, of which one opens towards the projecting nozzle; base-ring. The shoulder is decorated with short parallel lines arranged in a radial pattern, while on the discus towards the handle are two lines ending in a spiral and towards the nozzle a cross.⁵⁹ On the pieces discovered on the *Acropolis Centre-South* Sector one can see the radial decoration applied on the shoulder, while the discus decoration cannot be determined due to the fragmentary state of conservation; also, one of the lamps has a Greek cross applied on its base (Fig. 11/3). The fabric they are made of is similar: of fine texture, light red (2.5YR 6/8) (Fig. 11/2) or yellowish red (5YR 5/8) (Fig. 11/3), with numerous

⁵⁵ Bottez *et alii* 2019b, 109.

⁵⁶ Bădescu, Bottez 2014, 226, cat. nos. 1-2, Pls. 3/1-2; 4/1-2.

⁵⁷ Iconomu 1976, 136-137, Figs. 3-5.

⁵⁸ An upper valve mould was discovered at *Sacidava* on a habitation level dated at the beginning of the 7th century AD: Scorpan 1978, 161-162, cat. no. 20, Pls. VI/20; XVI/20.

⁵⁹ Iconomu 1986, 95, Pl. IX/4.

limestone and iron oxide inclusions; both pieces are unslipped. As for the discovery contexts, both pieces come from the eastern part of the Sector: one from a living surface located east of ST01, most likely belonging to another building, and the second one from the destruction layer of Space 3, a possible open space located in the north-eastern part of the southern nucleus.⁶⁰

The repertoire is completed by a new lamp (Fig. 11/4), discovered during the 2020 archaeological campaign in the same area as the previous one. Of it is preserved more than half of the inferior valve: the front part of the reservoir and half of the base-ring. On the reservoir, on each side of the base-ring a double ridge is disposed. Most likely, the piece had double ridges also on the rear part of the reservoir, as one can observe on other entirely preserved lamps.⁶¹ Compared to the above-mentioned lamps, this piece is made of a fine micaceous fabric, light red in colour (2.5YR 6/8), and without slip; also, rare limestone inclusions can be observed.

Iconomu 1986, type XLVI, variant II is a lamp type with a wide variety of finds attested in north-eastern Bulgaria (*Marcianopolis* and *Odessos*), where pottery kilns, lamps wasters and moulds were also discovered, which could indicate the functioning of an important ceramic workshop in the area.⁶² In Dobrudja, seven pieces of this type are mentioned among the discoveries from *Tomis*⁶³, another one at *Halmyris*⁶⁴, and two others were discovered in *Istros* during the old excavations⁶⁵; to these, we add this recent find from *Istros*. These lamps have rounded body; horizontal broad shoulder; a small discus with a central filling-hole, sometimes marked by a ridge; also, the discus is delimited either by a single ridge, or by two ridges which intersect towards the elongated nozzle, forming a channel; vertical handle connected with a ridge to the base-ring.⁶⁶ Usually, the discus is undecorated, but in some cases short parallel lines may appear around the filling-hole; on the shoulder various motifs are applied: the “herringbone” pattern (a motif of North-African origin⁶⁷), parallel lines, dotted circles, etc; also, the channel can be decorated with a cross.

⁶⁰ Bottez *et alii* 2019a, 129.

⁶¹ Barnea 1944, 176-177, cat. no. 7, Fig. 7; Popescu 1994, 366, cat. no. 10, Fig. 75; Topoleanu 2012, 204-205, cat. no. 122, Pl. XV/122.

⁶² Kuzmanov, Minchev 2018, 124-138, cat. nos. 548-673, Pls. XLII-XLV.

⁶³ Iconomu 1967, 142, cat. nos. 736-742, Fig. 56.

⁶⁴ Topoleanu 2000, 204, cat. no. 527, Pl. LXV/527.

⁶⁵ Two entirely preserved lamps, with different decoration, are on display in the Histria Museum collection.

⁶⁶ Kuzmanov, Minchev 2018, 251.

⁶⁷ This pattern was frequently applied on lamps of Atlante VIII and X types: Bonifay 2004, 359, type 44, cat. nos. 1-2, Fig. 203/1-2; 359, type 45, cat. no. 2, Fig. 203/2; 380, type 54, cat. no. 61, Fig. 212/61; 400, type 65, cat. no. 55, Fig. 223/55, etc.

The lamp from *Istros* is fragmentary (Fig. 11/5), as only the right part of the upper valve is preserved: a small portion of the discus with the filling-hole delimited by a ridge and two other ridges forming the channel; part of the broad shoulder, decorated with short parallel lines and delimited towards the nozzle by a dotted circle and a dot. The fabric of this piece closely resembles the Bulgarian lamps, whose clay was specific to the *Marcianopolis* area.⁶⁸ fine texture, very pale brown (10YR 8/3), with limestone and mica particles; reddish brown slip (5YR 6/4) applied on both surfaces. The piece presents soot traces on the inner side towards the nozzle. It was discovered in the south-western corner of the *insula*, in the destruction layer of a partially researched room (Space 10).

Besides these, during the recent excavations on the *Acropolis Centre-South Sector* were discovered a group of lamps most likely belonging to the same type (**Iconomu 1967, type XXX**), but of lower quality, in some cases the specific characteristics of the North-African products being rudimentary reproduced. One of these lamps preserves the rear part of it – a small part of the shoulder and reservoir, and the vertical handle (Fig. 12/1) – and three others preserve partially the shoulder and discus (Fig. 12/2-4), in one case with half of the central filling-hole (Fig. 12/2). The shoulder is decorated either with a band of circles (Fig. 12/3), or the herringbone pattern (Fig. 12/2), which may be delimited towards the handle with dotted circles (Fig. 12/1). One fragment stands out through the numerous flaws observed on the outer surface; therefore, the preserved decoration consists in two partially superposed circles on the shoulder and a dotted circle on the discus (Fig. 12/4). All these are made of quite fine fabric, which may present limestone and iron oxide inclusions, and less often fine quartz grains (Fig. 12/4) and ceramoclasts (Fig. 12/3); as for the firing conditions, excepting one piece produced in reducing atmosphere, which has a dark grayish brown colour (2.5Y 4/2) (Fig. 12/4), the others were fired in oxidizing atmosphere, as is indicated by their reddish (2.5YR 5/8) (Fig. 12/1-2) or brownish (7.5YR 5/6) colour (Fig. 12/3); also, the pieces are unslipped. Stratigraphically, they were found in the vegetal and first debris layers, a higher concentration being observed in the southern part of the complex.

Furthermore, we mention a lamp (Fig. 12/5) that completes a recent discussion regarding a rare variant of the Iconomu 1967, type XXX, represented at that moment solely by one entirely-preserved piece discovered at *Tomis* and attributed to the pottery workshops from *Asia Minor*.⁶⁹ Our lamp and the one from *Tomis* are mould-linked, as they are identical in shape, decoration, and fabric. At first glance, it can be said that this variant borrows the shape and some decorative motifs from the North-African lamps: they are pear-shaped, with broad shoulder; flat discus with central

⁶⁸ Kuzmanov, Minchev 2018, 251.

⁶⁹ Streinu, Pîrvulescu 2020, 189, cat. no. 13, Pl. III/13.

filling-hole, delimited by a grooved ridge which opens towards the nozzle; projecting nozzle; vertical handle; slightly concave base. Based on the fabric characteristics – micaceous, with numerous golden mica particles –, it was attributed to the Micro-Asian workshops, most likely *Ephesus*.⁷⁰

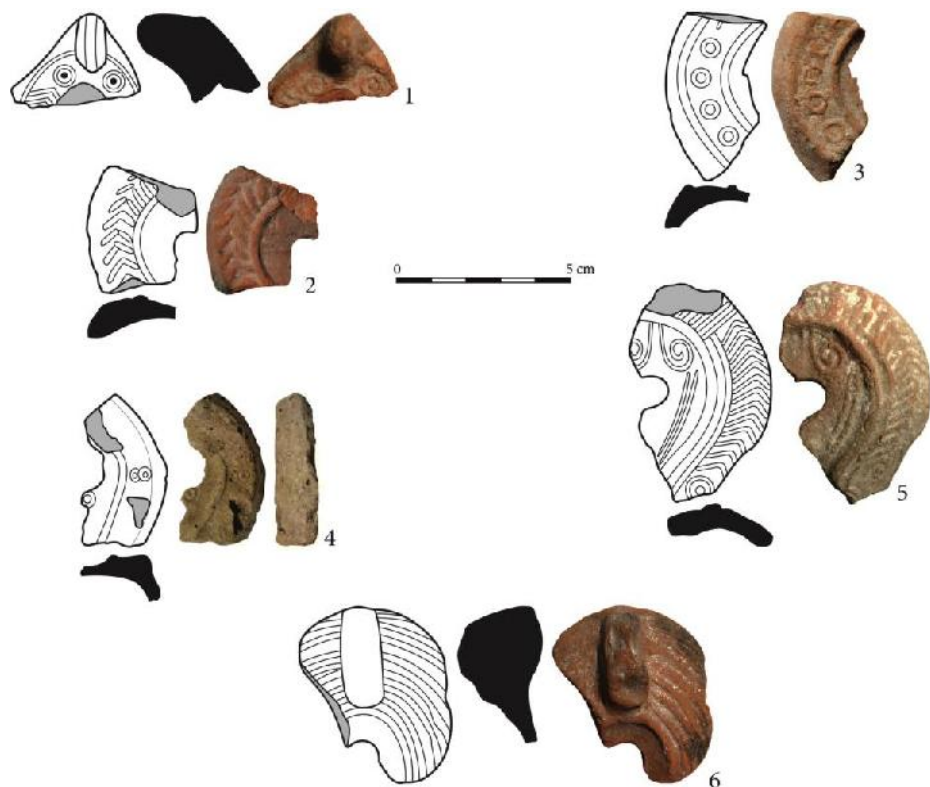


Fig. 12. North-African type lamps, variants of the type Iconomu 1967, XXX.

The lamp from *Istros* is fragmentary, with the right rear part preserved, excepting the handle: part of the discus with the central filling-hole and part of the shoulder. The shoulder is decorated with the so-called “herringbone” pattern, which is delimited by four parallel lines towards the handle and a dotted circle towards the nozzle. On the discus, in front of the handle, are disposed two lines ending in a spiral, and two parallel, slightly curved lines are around the filling-hole. The decorative repertoire was most likely completed by a cross, disposed on the discus towards the nozzle, as it can be seen on the lamp discovered at *Tomis*. This decorative pattern, but with a different decoration

⁷⁰ Streinu, Pîrvulescu 2020, 189, footnote 89.

on the shoulder, can also be observed on other lamps from the province.⁷¹ The fabric is of red colour (2.5YR 5/8) and contains a high amount of golden mica, alongside limestone particles. Its discovery in a clear context representing a semi-basement from the southern nucleus of the building (Space 2)⁷², along with two lamps of type Broneer XXIX, Groups 3 and 4, allows dating this piece in the second half of the 6th century AD.

Last but not least, another lamp (Fig. 12/6) which has been considered a variant of the Iconomu 1967, type XXX⁷³, has the fabric composition and decorative pattern not similar to other pieces belonging to this type, indicating rather a different, particular variant. At first sight, the lamp stands out through the fabric peculiarities, noticing with the naked eye the abundant quantity of mica particles, of various dimensions, aforementioned to be specific to the Micro-Asian products. On the other hand, the lamp has an unkempt appearance and presents manufacturing deficiencies, especially on the handle, indicating either a lower quality import or, more likely, a regional product. Concerning the preservation state, the lamp is fragmentary, being preserved only the rear right part of the upper valve, including the handle. The piece presents an overly broad shoulder, narrow discus, concave and with central filling-hole, as well as the vertical handle. The discus is delimited by a prominent ridge, which probably opened towards the nozzle, as it can be seen on similar lamps discovered at *Noviodunum*⁷⁴ and *Ulmetum*.⁷⁵ The discus is plain and on the shoulder are disposed seven curved ridges, almost hemispherical, that end in the ridge forming the channel. Regarding the fabric characteristics, along with mica inclusions, which are extremely numerous and of various sizes, are observed limestone and quartz particles in composition, including some large-sized ones; the fabric is light red (2.5YR 6/6) and unslipped. The lamp was discovered in a small area from the central-eastern part of the Sector that delimits the northern nucleus from the southern one.

DANUBIAN TYPE LAMPS

By far, the most common Danubian lamps in *Scythia Minor* are those pertaining to the type **Iconomu 1967, XXXIII/Iconomu 1986, LI, variant I**, a type easily recognizable through the handle shape inspired by the bronze lamps. Regarding the production area, the lamps originate in the workshops from *Asia Minor* (e.g., *Miletus*, *Ephesus*, *Constantinople*), from where they would have spread widely in the Pontic basin and

⁷¹ Barnea 1979, 248, Pl. 106/3.

⁷² Bottez *et alii* 2019b, 108-109.

⁷³ Bădescu, Bottez 2014, 227, cat. no. 3, Pls. 3/3; 4/3.

⁷⁴ Baumann 2009, 261, cat. no. 142, Fig. 18/142.

⁷⁵ Pârvan 1913, Pl. XXXI, Fig. 1, no. 9.

the Danube.⁷⁶ Shortly afterwards, the form began to be reproduced in this area, especially in the north-eastern part of the nowadays Bulgaria, where numerous moulds for all the variants have been discovered.⁷⁷ Also, it has been taken into account their production in Dobrudja, based on the discovery of one such lamp in a pottery kiln in Oltina (Constanța County)⁷⁸ and the numerous finds within the province.⁷⁹ As for the fabric characteristics, the lamps are made of fine fabric, with rare limestone inclusions, of colours ranging from orange to brown, usually covered with whitish slip and less often with a reddish one.⁸⁰ Chronologically, they are frequently attested in contexts dated to the 6th century and the first quarter of the 7th century AD.⁸¹

The lamps have tall body, pear-shaped and biconical in section; broad sloping shoulder; slightly concave and oval discus, with central filling-hole and delimited by two parallel ridges, the inner one opening towards the nozzle to form a channel; tear-shaped/oval concave base; tall handle, shaped in various forms – crosses, human head, ram head, palmette or fern.⁸² As it concerns the decoration, multiple variants are attested⁸³: with plain discus and decorated shoulder; plain shoulder and decorated discus; both the discus and shoulder decorated; and undecorated. The decoration motifs are extremely varied: on the shoulder, the most frequent motif is represented by the short parallel lines, much rarer being the ovals or ovolos; on the discus are applied quatrefoils, the heart-shaped motif, the propeller motif, rosettes, or radial lines, all of them disposed around the filling-hole. As for the handle, the repertoire is also very varied: cross with five circles or with only one circle at the intersection of the cross arms; handle in the shape of a woman's, respectively a man's head; simple palmettes or combined with wavy lines, etc.

⁷⁶ Iconomu 1986, 100.

⁷⁷ Curta 2016, 85-86, cat. nos. 48, 60, Figs. 48/48, 49/60, for lamps with cross-shaped handles; 92, footnote 49, for lamps with handles in the shape of a ram head; 92, cat. nos. 15-19, Fig. 57/15-18, 58/19, for lamps with handles in the shape of a human head; 97, cat. no. 33, Fig. 64/33, for lamps with palmette-shaped handle. Other moulds are published and illustrated in Kuzmanov, Minchev 2018, 177-193, cat. nos. 954-993, Pls. LXVI-LXIX.

⁷⁸ Irimia 1968, 400, Fig. 18/3.

⁷⁹ Dozens of pieces are attested in numerous sites among which we mention *Tomis* – Iconomu 1986, 100-102, Pls. IX/12; X/1-2 –, *Halmiris* – Topoleanu 2000, 183-188, cat. nos. 463-484, Pls. LVII-LX –, *Capidava* – Opreș 2003, 170-172, cat. nos. 409-424, Pls. LX/409; LXI/410-418; LXII/419-424 –, or *Sucidava* – Gherghe, Cojoc 2012, 98-103, cat. nos. 172-189, Pls. 36/169, 171-172; 37/173-177; 38/180-183; 48/166-168, 170; 49/179-180.

⁸⁰ Kuzmanov, Minchev 2018, 256.

⁸¹ Hayes 1992, 83.

⁸² Topoleanu 2012, 198-199, cat nos. 115-116.

⁸³ For a wide discussion, see Curta 2016, 85-98.

Multiple lamps of this type were discovered during the old archaeological excavations in *Istros*, in various areas of the Late Roman city (*Domus*, the residential area known as the *Cetate* Sector, or the Late Roman house from the Sacred Area), the most numerous (nine) being the ones with cross-shaped handle, attested in the form of a cross with double outline which has in the middle either a cross with splayed ends or a circle.⁸⁴ Not as many are the specimens with other forms of handle: two pieces have handles in the shape of a ram head⁸⁵, one piece with handle in the shape of a human head⁸⁶, and another one with palmette-shaped handle.⁸⁷

To these we add a new lot unearthed during the research on the *Acropolis Centre-South* Sector, a lot composed by not less than 12 pieces, all in fragmentary state of preservation (Figs. 13/1-8; 14/1-4). Among the best-preserved pieces, we mention a lamp, which has an almost complete profile, despite the broken outer surface and the lack of nozzle (Fig. 13/1). It has a palmette-shaped handle which has in the upper part three wavy lines and in the inferior one two volutes; because of the damaged surface, it is not possible to determine whether the palmette had atop another motif (a circle or an oval), as it can be observed on similar lamps from *Tomis*⁸⁸, *Callatis*⁸⁹ or *Constantinople*.⁹⁰ On the shoulder is preserved part of the decoration consisting in parallel lines; the discus preserves the central filling-hole, but it is difficult to determine whether it has been decorated or not; the base is tear-shaped. The piece is made of fine fabric, brown colour (7.5YR 5/4), with limestone inclusions; it is unslipped and has soot traces on the inner surface.

Another lamp⁹¹ preserves the upper valve, excepting the nozzle and the channel, and a small portion of the reservoir (Fig. 13/2). It is a variant already attested in *Istros*⁹², with the handle in the form of a cross with a circle at the intersection of the arms; the cross has double outline, which continues in the ridges that delimit the discus; the discus is undecorated; parallel lines are applied on the shoulder. Identical pieces in handle shape, decoration and fabric are to be found in *Chersonesos*⁹³ and *Tomis*⁹⁴, and were probably produced in the same mould. The fabric is fine, reddish yellow (7.5YR 6/6), with limestone and iron oxides in composition, and is covered with light grayish slip (10YR 7/2).

⁸⁴ Popescu 1994, 360-363, cat. nos. 8a-f, Figs. 64-71.

⁸⁵ Condurachi *et alii* 1961, 242, Fig. 15/1; Popescu 1994, 363-364, cat. no. 9b, Fig. 73.

⁸⁶ Popescu 1994, 364-365, cat. no. 9d, Fig. 74.

⁸⁷ Condurachi *et alii* 1961, 242, Fig. 15/3.

⁸⁸ Iconomu 1967, 147, cat. no. 765, Fig. 180.

⁸⁹ Topoleanu, Croitoru 2015, 172-173, cat. no. 48.

⁹⁰ Hayes 1992, 87, cat. no. 70, Pl. 22/70.

⁹¹ Previously published in Bivolaru, Bottez 2016, 136, cat. no. 2, Fig. 4/2.

⁹² Popescu 1994, 362, cat. no. 8e, Fig. 68.

⁹³ Chrzanowski, Zhuravlev 1998, 173-174, N. 110.

⁹⁴ Iconomu 1967, 148, cat. no. 771, Fig. 58.



Fig. 13. Danubian type lamps: Iconomu 1967, type XXXIII/Iconomu 1986, type LI, variant I.

The other fragments are mostly parts of the upper valve (handles; discus and shoulder; discus, shoulder, and nozzle with the wick-hole), while only one piece is from the inferior valve (half of the base and reservoir). Three fragments are lamp handles: the first is cross-shaped⁹⁵, like the previous one, but with flaring arms (Fig. 13/3); close analogies are attested in *Constantinople*⁹⁶, *Odessos*⁹⁷ and *Tomis*⁹⁸, but also in *Istros*, in a 5th-6th centuries context from *Cetate Sector*.⁹⁹ The second one is fern-shaped¹⁰⁰, with four leaves symmetrically disposed, each ending in a volute, and a fifth one atop (Fig. 13/4); no identical analogies have been identified so far. Finally, the third lamp has the handle in the form of a human head, illustrating the face of a man with long hair and prominent eyes (Fig. 13/5); identical pieces have been found in *Constantinople*¹⁰¹, *Tomis*¹⁰², but also in *Istros*, where they were discovered in the area of the Hellenistic precinct wall.¹⁰³ The first two pieces are quite similar in fabric, both being made of fine fabric, yellowish red (5YR 5/6) (Fig. 13/3), respectively reddish yellow (5YR 6/6) (Fig. 13/4), with limestone particles and iron oxides in composition, and covered with light gray slip (10YR 7/2), poorly preserved on the first one. The third piece was fired in incomplete oxidizing atmosphere, as it is of brownish colour (7.5YR 4/3), with dark gray core (GLE Y1 4/N); it also presents dense limestone inclusions and is covered with light gray slip (10YR 7/2) (Fig. 13/5).

The rest of six fragments are mostly parts of the discus and shoulder (Figs. 13/7-8; 14/2-3), in two cases also with the channel and nozzle preserved (Figs. 13/6; 14/1). They all have the specific features of this type: broad sloping shoulder and concave discus delimited by a tall double ridge. Most pieces present decoration on the shoulder, the short parallel lines are the most common motif (Figs. 13/6-7; 14/2), while much rarer are the lamps bearing ovolos¹⁰⁴ (Fig. 13/8) or two rows of globules¹⁰⁵ (Fig. 14/1). The discus is

⁹⁵ Previously published in Bădescu, Bottez 2014, 231, cat. no. 13, Pls. 3/13; 4/13.

⁹⁶ Hayes 1992, 87, cat. no. 71, Pl. 22/71.

⁹⁷ Kuzmanov, Minchev 2018, 155, cat. no. 802, Pl. LV/802.

⁹⁸ Barnea 1979, 246-247, Pl. 105/3.

⁹⁹ Popescu 1994, 363, cat. no. 8c, Fig. 66.

¹⁰⁰ Previously published in Bivolaru, Bottez 2016, 136, cat. no. 3, Fig. 4/3.

¹⁰¹ Hayes 1992, 86, cat. no. 65, Pl. 21/65.

¹⁰² Iconomu 1976, 148, cat. no. 771, Fig. 59.

¹⁰³ Popescu 1994, 364-365, cat. no. 9d, Fig. 74.

¹⁰⁴ For similar discoveries, see Bailey 1988, 399, Q3230 MLA, Pl. 115, and Curta 2016, Fig. 50/75.

¹⁰⁵ Two identical pieces, with fern-shaped handle and heart-shaped decoration on the discus, present two rows of globules on the shoulder. One piece is attested among the Bulgarian discoveries – Kuzmanov, Minchev 2018, 147, cat. no. 726, Pl. XLIX/726b –, while the other is part of the Bucharest Municipality Museum collection and its place of discovery is unknown – Popescu, Rațiu 2016, 155, cat. no. 22, Pl. III/22, Fig. IV/22. Furthermore, close analogies are attested at *Halmyris* – Topoleanu 2000, 215, cat. nos. 561-564, Pl. LXX/561-564 –, with the

usually plain, and only one piece partially preserves the heart-shaped motif (Fig. 14/2), while another one has a decoration difficult to identify, as four lines of different sizes can be observed (Fig. 14/3), which could have come either from the radial pattern or a more elaborate decoration. Regarding the fabric characteristics, the pieces can be divided into two groups: on one hand, four lamps made of fine fabric, of colours ranging from red (2.5YR 5/6) (Figs. 13/8; 14/2-3) to grayish brown (10YR 4/2) (Fig. 13/7), with dense limestone inclusions, covered usually with buff slip (10YR 7/2; 5YR 7/2) (Figs. 13/7; 14/3-4) and less often with reddish brown (5YR 4/4) slip (Fig. 13/8); on the other hand, two lamps are of inferior quality (Figs. 13/6; 14/1), made of coarser fabric, reddish yellow (5YR 6/8), in whose composition are numerous limestone particles, but also fine quartz grains, on a smaller scale; moreover, both are unslipped and present intense soot traces around the wick-hole.

Finally, the last piece is part of the inferior valve, and it preserves half of the base and the reservoir up to the junction with the shoulder (Fig. 14/4). The base was most likely tear-shaped and slightly concave. It is made of fine fabric, strong brown (7.5YR 5/6), with numerous limestone and occasionally mica particles; like the previous lamps, it is covered by light gray slip (10YR 7/2). On the inner surface, to the nozzle, soot traces are preserved.

The greatest part of this lot was found in the northern nucleus of the *insula*, in the destruction layer above the last living surface, with a higher concentration in its eastern part. Thus, no less than four lamps (including Fig. 13/2 and 4) were discovered in the area covering an open courtyard (Space 1) and two narrow spaces, whose functionality is unclear, located to the North (Space 2), respectively South (Space 3) of this court.¹⁰⁶ The best-preserved lamp (Fig. 13/1) comes from the western part of the so-called Space 7 (Space 7b), where two intact *spatheion*-type amphorae dated to the end of the 6th century and the beginning of the 7th century AD were discovered.¹⁰⁷ Close to it, towards West, lays Space 6, in whose south-eastern part was found the specimen with globules on the shoulder (Fig. 14/1). The other cross-shaped lamp (Fig. 13/3), respectively the one with anthropomorphic handle (Fig. 13/5), were discovered above the street level that delimits the building to the East (ST01) and West (ST02). As for the other ones, they represent isolate finds from various parts of the Sector, where they were discovered in the vegetal layer.

mention that these pieces have lamellar handle, present three rows of globules on the shoulder, and have a cross applied on the channel.

¹⁰⁶ Bottez *et alii* 2019a, 128.

¹⁰⁷ Bottez *et alii* 2019b, 108.



Fig. 14. 1-5. Danubian type lamps: 1-4. Iconomu 1967, type XXXIII/Iconomu 1986, type LI, variant I; 5. Iconomu 1967, type XXXII; 6-7. Possible Danubian type lamps; 8. Individual type – the lamp with incised decoration.

Also, of Danubian origin is a lamp whose shape and decoration are rather uncommon for this group (Fig. 14/5). Albeit fragmentary, some of its morphological characteristics allow us to attribute it to the **Iconomu 1967, XXXII** type. This lamp preserves only the rear right part: the handle and part of the shoulder, discus, and filling-hole. The handle

is vertical and tall, two specific features for this type; the shoulder is broad; a double ridge delimits the shoulder and discus; the discus is very narrow and has a central filling-hole; the filling-hole is uncommonly wide, comparing to other lamps belonging to this type. Regarding the decoration, on the discus is applied a simple pattern consisting in two dots widely spaced, while on the shoulder are stylised lines that have both ends thickened and rounded; this motif is uncommon, the closest analogies found so far being two lamps discovered at *Halmyris*, respectively *Sucidava*, both of same type and bearing the same decoration on the shoulder – a band of parallel lines which have small dots only at one end.¹⁰⁸ However, these lamps do not resemble in the filling-hole wideness, but a lamp of similar morphology and quite close decoration (short parallel lines on the shoulder and three close dots on the narrow discus) is also attested in *Sucidava*.¹⁰⁹ The fabric is fine, reddish yellow (5YR 6/6), with rare limestone inclusions; the lamp is unslipped. As for the discovery context, it was found in the southern nucleus, in the open space located northeast of Space 1, in the same area where a Hayes 8 type lamp was discovered.

INDIVIDUAL LAMP TYPES

Two pieces (Fig. 14/6-7) which were most likely produced in the Danubian/West-Pontic region are highlighted by the decoration on the shoulder, clearly borrowed from the ornamental repertoire of the lamp types produced in other provinces. For these lamps, no identical analogies have been identified so far. Of the first one is preserved the right half (the discus, shoulder, and reservoir) (Fig. 14/6), and of the second only the left half of the upper valve (the discus with the filling-hole, and shoulder) (Fig. 14/7). Both are lacking the handle, the base, and the nozzle; therefore, they can be described as lamps with tall, rounded body; broad shoulder; concave discus with central filling hole and delimited by a groove and a ridge. In one case the ridge is closed (Fig. 14/6), while on the other it seems to open towards the nozzle (Fig. 14/7). The shoulder is decorated with a pattern composed of zigzag lines combined with dots, delimited by two parallel lines towards the handle; as said before, this decorative pattern seems to be borrowed from other lamps, and is more frequently found on North-African lamps (on Atlante VIII type),¹¹⁰ as well as on Micro-Asian lamps (Broneer XXIX, Group 4)¹¹¹ and Hayes 8 type.¹¹² One lamp is made of fine fabric, yellowish red (5YR 5/6), with limestone inclusions and fine quartz grains in composition, and is covered by dark gray slip (10YR 4/1) (Fig. 14/6); the other one is also

¹⁰⁸ Topoleanu 2000, 184, cat. no. 467, Pl. LVIII/467; Elefterescu 2017, 121, cat. no. 25, Fig. 25.

¹⁰⁹ Elefterescu 2017, 120, cat. no. 24, Fig. 24.

¹¹⁰ Ennabli 1976, 117, cat. no. 483, Pl. XXVI/483.

¹¹¹ Katsioti 2017, 250, cat. no. AM 63.

¹¹² Chrzanowski *et alii* 2019, 137-138, cat. nos. 7-8.

made of fine fabric, reddish brown (2.5YR 5/4), with numerous limestone inclusions, and is covered by a slip of the same colour (Fig. 14/7). Solely one piece (Fig. 14/7) comes from a clearer context, represented by the destruction layer identified between Spaces 6 and 7 from the northern nucleus of the *insula*; the other one (Fig. 14/6) was found in the vegetal layer in the area of Spaces 5 and 9 from the southern nucleus.

Finally, the last type to be mentioned is represented by a lamp with incised decoration on its entire surface (Fig. 14/8), with the ornamental technique and repertoire uncommon for the Late Roman lamps. The lamp is watered and fragmentary, only a small part of the upper valve being preserved. Thus, regarding the preserved morphology, the piece can be described as having broad shoulder, a wide ridge which was most likely closed, and concave discus. The decoration consists exclusively in incisions applied on all preserved surface: on the shoulder are four close-spaced palm branches, one complete and the other ones fragmentary; each palmette is composed by a vertical line and five-six perpendicular short lines and is surrounded by incised dots; furthermore, on the ridge that delimits the discus are incised lines, slightly curved and disposed in radial pattern; finally, on the discus' edge are preserved two continuous zigzag lines that delimits a band of incised dots. The piece was made of fine fabric, red (2.5YR 5/6), with fine limestone and mica particles in composition; a reddish gray slip (5YR 5/2) is partially preserved on the outer surface. It is most likely a regional product, maybe even local, as no identical analogy has been identified so far: the closest analogies are two Late Roman lamps discovered in *Delos*, presenting on the shoulder the same decorative pattern (palm-branches delimited by dots)¹¹³; however, they differ in the decoration technique (are relief-decorated), the discus ornamentation (also relief-decorated, with an inscription, respectively the depiction of *menorah*), the morphological (the prominent ridge is not as wide as the one on this fragment and is undecorated) and fabric characteristics (buff, respectively pinkish). The lamp's discovery context – in the southern nucleus, on the possible ST01 level, in the close vicinity of several lamps of type Broneer XXIX, both Groups 3 and 4, and the Atlante X lamp – enables us to propose the 6th century AD as the chronological framework for this piece.

CONCLUSIONS

The lychnological material discovered on the Acropolis Centre-South Sector is characterised by a very fragmentary state of preservation, only three lamps of the entire lot being complete or preserving more than 90% of the profile. The rest of the lot is composed by lamps preserved in different stages of fragmentation, varying from half-profile pieces to small body parts (handles; border and discus shards; base shards;

¹¹³ Bruneau 1965, 143, cat. nos. 4729-4730, Pl. 34/4729-4730.

nozzle shards, etc). The advanced state of fragmentation is closely connected to the discovery contexts and the stratigraphy determined so far on this Sector: the massive destruction level identified in this area – represented by the two debris layers –, most likely contributed to the breakage of the objects; also, a good part of the materials were scattered during the collapse, parts of the same object being found in different spots of the building or in different stratigraphical layers¹¹⁴ (e.g., Figs. 4/2, 4; 8/4; 14/1).

Despite the fragmentary state, the analysis of this material provides the opportunity to learn more about the lamp discoveries in *Istros*, valuable data being extracted on the typological variety, the chronological framework of the lamps, their area of origin and thus the trade connections of the ancient city, but also on the crafts developed regionally and locally. From a typological point of view, a varied repertoire is observed, with five previously attested types (Broneer XXIX, Groups 3-4/Iconomu 1986, type XXXVII, variant II; Atlante X/Hayes II type; Iconomu 1986, types XLVI, XLVIII and LI) and four others that represent the first discoveries of their kind at *Istros* (Hayes 8-10 types; Iconomu 1967, type XXXII); furthermore, the repertoire is completed by two other types grouping a series of rare pieces – the lamps pertaining to a possible Danubian type and the lamp with incised decoration.

A typological variety can also be observed in the decoration of the pieces, numerous motifs and patterns being used: the repertoire ranges from a single motif, applied once or repeated several times on the same object, to two or more alternating motifs; the motifs can be simple elements (lines, dots, circles, triangles) or more elaborate representations (vegetal and floral – palm branches, grapes and tendrils, rosettes –, anthropomorphic representations or other motifs – crosses, spirals, volutes, etc). As for the patterns, multiple variants are encountered: lamps decorated only on the superior surface, either on all morphological elements or only on certain parts (mainly on the shoulder, but also on the discus, channel – where applicable –, or the nozzle), lamps decorated on both surfaces (on the inferior surface, the decoration can be applied on the base, towards the nozzle or the handle), and completely undecorated specimens.

The material under discussion is composed both by imports and by regional/local products. The main types attested are Broneer XXIX (covering 61% of the entire lot), a type which originally developed in *Asia Minor*, and the types Hayes 8, 9 and 10 (with 15% of the total), attributed to the *Constantinople* region. These percentages are further evidence of the intensification of trade contacts between the eastern part of the Empire and the West-Pontic area during Late Antiquity, as a consequence of the

¹¹⁴ The same situation can be observed in the case of other ceramic categories, such as tableware – see, for example, Iliescu, Bottez 2018, 157, cat. no. 10; 159, cat. no. 37 – or cooking ware – unpublished material.

administrative changes that occurred at the end of the 3rd century, but especially in the second quarter of the 6th century (i.e., the creation of the *quaestura Iustiniana exercitus*). From that moment onwards, the primary products destined mainly for the military troops stationed on the Lower Danube frontier (e.g., wine, olive oil) were accompanied by numerous subsidiary products, including various ceramic categories – tableware¹¹⁵, cooking ware¹¹⁶, lamps –, which were to be privately commercialised throughout the province. Given the importance of the Eastern Mediterranean, all the products brought from this area enjoyed great popularity in the province and strongly influenced the regional crafts: in the case of pottery production, including lamps, these imports were used as prototypes by the local potters, where there is a clear tendency to closely reproduce the imported products and to create identical copies after them.

Even if original imports have not been discovered so far on the Acropolis Centre-South Sector, the lamps of North-African influence are also a well-represented category, with almost 10% of the entire lot. However, original North-African lamps are attested in many settlements within the province (e.g., *Dinogetia*¹¹⁷, *Halmyris*¹¹⁸, *Troesmis*¹¹⁹, *Tomis*¹²⁰, *Tropaeum Traiani*¹²¹), including *Istros*, and they could have been used as models for the imitations¹²² or the new lamp types and variants regionally developed. In the Late Roman period, these lamps (and probably moulds) were brought into the province alongside other products of North-African origin (products carried within amphorae – wine, olive oil¹²³ –, or fine tableware¹²⁴), as a result of the redistribution system developed by the imperial capital.

¹¹⁵ The main tableware category is the *Late Roman C/Phocaeen Red Slip Ware* – for a broad overview, see Bădescu 2010, 372-460 –, followed by the *Late Roman Light-Coloured Ware* – Băjenaru 2014, 242-243, Pls. 1/3 and 3/3; Băjenaru 2018, 504, 509, Figs. 4/73; 7/111-112; Mocanu 2018, 237-238.

¹¹⁶ Opaiț 2004, 45-46, type III.

¹¹⁷ Barnea 1969, 27, Fig. 21.

¹¹⁸ Topoleanu 2000, 190-194, cat. nos. 487-501, Pls. LXI-LXII.

¹¹⁹ Topoleanu 2016, 88, cat. no. 53, Pl. VIII/53.

¹²⁰ Papuc 1976, 201-205; Iconomu 1986, 89-92, type XLV, variant II A-B, Pl. VIII/5-6; Streinu, Pîrvulescu 2020, 187-188, cat. no. 9, Pl. II/9.

¹²¹ Bogdan-Cătănciu, Barnea 1979, 188, Fig. 164/NV 9.2.

¹²² North-African imitations are attested at *Dinogetia* – Barnea 1961, 28, Fig. 18 –, *Tropaeum Traiani* – Bogdan-Cătănciu, Barnea 1979, 188, Fig. 164/NV 9.3 –, *Tomis* – Iconomu 1986, 89-92, Pl. VIII/7; Streinu, Pîrvulescu 2020, 188, cat. no. 10, Pl. II/10. Other provincial imitations are held in the History and Archaeology Museum of Prahova County – Topoleanu 2012, 190-192, cat. nos. 113-114.

¹²³ Opaiț 2004, 33-39; Paraschiv 2006, 123-136; Opaiț *et alii* 2020, 163-164, 169.

Regarding the provincial production of lamps, a flourishing activity in the Late Roman period is supported by the lamp moulds, the lamp finds in or near the pottery kilns, as well as the various mould-linked objects discovered within the province. Two main trends can be observed in the lamps production: on the one hand, there is a preference to closely imitate the imported products, as can be seen in some of the Micro-Asian (e.g., Figs. 4/1; 5/7; 7/8-9) or Constantinople pieces (Figs. 9/3-5; 10); on the other hand, the imports are used as prototypes in creating new types, being borrowed and adapted some of the morphological and decorative characteristics (e.g., Figs. 12; 14/6-7). As for the local production in *Istros* during this period, it cannot be certainly proven, since no structures or tools used in the manufacturing process have been discovered; however, it should be taken into consideration, as there is a possibility that the Early Roman pottery workshops identified in the area will continue their activity in this period as well.¹²⁵ In addition, the characteristics of some of the Late Roman lamps presented above (appearance and fabric) rather indicate their production on local scale (e.g., Figs. 5/7; 12/4).

The lamp types presented throughout this paper are dated between the late 5th century and the 6th century, with some types reaching the first decades of the 7th century AD. The dating of these types confirms the chronological horizon determined for the *insula* under investigation, its last phase being dated in the second half of the 6th century AD. Moreover, based on the pottery finds from this Sector (i.e., the North-African *spatheion* amphorae pertaining to the type 3C; the late African Red Slip Ware forms – Forms 105 and 109; the late variants (types B and C) of the Late Roman C Ware, Form 10), the last living phase of the building has been extended to the first quarter of the 7th century. Thus, being discovered in the same contexts and spaces (e.g., Fig. 13/1 lamp was found in Space 7, alongside two *spatheion* type amphorae; Figs. 9/6 and 14/1 were found in Space 6, where other fragmentary *spatheia* were found; Fig. 11/4 was discovered in Space 4 of the southern nucleus, where an almost entirely preserved ARSW plate of Form 109, type B comes from), these lamps contribute to refining the chronology of the *insula*.

¹²⁴ For *African Red Slip Wares* discovered in *Scythia Minor*, see Bădescu 2010, 462-485, and Mocanu 2012, 319-340.

¹²⁵ A kiln used for firing lamps, dated in the first half of the 1st century AD, was discovered in the Sacred Area: Alexandrescu 2005, 155, Fig. 4/1. Also, a series of Loeschke VIII type lamps were attributed to the local production; for a broad discussion, see Rusu-Bolindeț 2010, 401-420.

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