

# Nouveautés Lychnologiques Lychnological News



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Textes réunis par Laurent Chrzanovski

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## Avant-propos

C'est à l'occasion du 1er congrès archéologique international d'étude sur le luminaire antique et de l'exposition « Lumière ! L'éclairage dans l'antiquité » organisée au Musée romain de Nyon que paraît « Nouveautés lychnologiques », un volume propre à favoriser la diffusion des connaissances et la confrontation des idées, mais offrant aussi aux spécialistes l'opportunité de soumettre à la critique de leurs pairs non seulement les résultats de leurs recherches mais encore de nouvelles manières d'interroger et de comprendre. La variété et la richesse des contributions illustrent l'intérêt et le renouveau des études relatives aux lampes, une discipline à part entière, certes, mais qui ne saurait se suffire à elle-même : il convient plus que jamais de se garder d'une spécialisation outrancière qui se ferait au préjudice d'une vue d'ensemble aussi large que possible. Si les études ponctuelles, mais précises, constituent un préalable nécessaire à toute synthèse, elles ne sauraient demeurer une fin en soi. La science lychnologique, à l'instar de la céramologie, de la numismatique, de l'archéo-botanique ou de la paléo-trichologie, reste indissociable de l'archéologie : à partir de vestiges matériels, aussi modestes soient-ils, il convient essentiellement de saisir l'homme dans sa complexité et sa relation avec l'univers. Dans cette quête, longue et difficile, parfois désespérée, il importe d'améliorer sans cesse les outils de détermination et d'interprétation, de veiller à la multiplicité et à la diversité des approches, qu'il s'agisse d'analyses de laboratoire, d'études typologiques, chrono-quantitatives, technologiques, iconographiques ou économiques, sans oublier les dimensions culturelles et anthropologiques et tout en restant à l'écoute d'autres spécialistes. C'est dans cette perspective que les auteurs du présent volume ont voulu placer leurs travaux et qu'il conviendra de situer les études à venir. La réflexion sur l'homme à partir des objets matériels et de leur contexte ne saurait se limiter à un simple exercice, aussi brillant soit-il : elle resterait totalement vaine si elle ne servait à allumer et à entretenir, goutte à goutte, notre propre lampe...

Genève, le 22 septembre 2003

Prof. Daniel Paunier



## Éditorial

Décidément, l'année 2003 a été placée sous le signe des lampes et de la lumière. L'hiver nous quittait sur deux belles expositions sur ce thème, organisées par les collègues des musées de Veszprem (Hongrie) et de Jena (Allemagne).

Puis, au printemps, le 15 mai précisément, ce fut l'inauguration de l'exposition « LVMIERE ! L'éclairage dans l'Antiquité » au Musée romain de Nyon (Suisse).

Autour de cette exposition, le Musée romain et sa conservatrice Véronique Rey-Vodoz, avec l'aide du Professeur Daniel Paunier, ont accepté de soutenir le 1er Congrès international d'étude sur le luminaire antique, placé sous le haut patronage de M. Charles Kleiber, secrétaire d'Etat à la Science et à la Recherche.

Ce congrès, qui a réuni plus de quatre-vingt spécialistes en la matière de vingt-deux nationalités, a vu la fondation de l'Association Lychnologique Internationale.

En marge du congrès, LychnoServices, créé par Samuel Crettenand et Laurent Chrzanovski, se propose de mettre en valeur le patrimoine luminaire antique sous toutes ses formes, de la préhistoire au Moyen-âge, au moyen de quatre vecteurs d'information (site internet, publications, outils pédagogiques et bases de données scientifiques).

*Nouveautés Lychnologiques / Lychnological News* a donc remis au goût du jour le terme (ou plutôt le néologisme) "lychnologique", déjà proposé par les participants de la table ronde "*Les lampes de terre cuite en Méditerranée des origines à Justinien*", organisée par le C.N.R.S. (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) à Lyon, du 7 au 11 décembre 1981 (et publiée en 1987 à Paris sous la direction T. Oziol).

Ce volume propose au lecteur - spécialiste ou simple amateur - vingt et un articles de tous horizons (Allemagne, Belgique, Canada, Espagne, France, Israël, Italie, Liban, Palestine, Suède), présentant des lampes, presque toutes inédites, issues de fouilles ou de musées.

Par ailleurs, la thématique des premières lampes est traitée avec soin par Sophie A. De Beaune, et un article d'archéologie expérimentale de Christian-Heinrich Wunderlich complète ce recueil.

Nous vous souhaitons la plus agréable des lectures.

LychnoServices, Laurent Chrzanovski - octobre 2003



Lamps and lighting are definitely the prevailing themes of the year 2003. Winter ended with two wonderful exhibitions dedicated to this topic, exhibitions organized by colleagues of the museums of Veszprém in Hungary and of Jena in Germany. Then spring, and more precisely May 15<sup>th</sup>, saw the inauguration of the exhibition "LVMIERE! L'éclairage dans l'Antiquité" at the Roman Museum of Nyon (Switzerland).

Around this exhibition, the Roman Museum and its curator Ms Véronique Rey-Vodoz, in cooperation with Professor Daniel Paunier, have accepted to support the 1<sup>st</sup> International Study Congress on Ancient Lighting Devices, placed under the high patronage of Mr. Charles Kleiber, Secretary of State for Science and Research.

The congress, held from September 29<sup>th</sup> to October 4<sup>th</sup>, gathered experts in this field from twenty-two different countries. During the event, the International Lychnological Association (ILA) was officially founded.

In connection with the congress, LychnoServices, created by Samuel Crettenand and Laurent Chrzanovski, offers to highlight the heritage of ancient lighting devices in all its forms, from Prehistory to the Middle Ages, through four means of information (website, publications, educational tools and scientific databases).

*Nouveautés Lychnologiques / Lychnological News* has brought up to date the term (or rather the neologism) "lychnological", which was already suggested by the participants in the round table entitled "*Les lampes en terre cuite en Méditerranée des origines à Justinien*", organized by the CNRS<sup>1</sup> (National Centre for Scientific Research) in Lyon, from December 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> 1981 (and published in Paris in 1987 under T. Oziol's supervision).

This volume offers readers - specialists or amateurs - twenty-one papers from various countries (Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Palestine, Spain, Sweden), featuring lamps coming from excavations or museums, most of them previously unpublished.

Moreover, some special topics have been included in the book: Ms Sophie A. De Beaune carefully details the theme of the first lamps and Mr. Christian-Heinrich Wunderlich delivers an interesting article of experimental archaeology.

We wish you pleasant reading.

LychnoServices, Laurent Chrzanovski - october 2003



## Articles



# Lamps Decorated with Human Faces from the Excavations at the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem\*

Malka Hershkovitz

*\*I am indebted to the late Professor N. Avigad for allowing me to study these lamps and publish my conclusions.*

The lamp industry in the Mediterranean area underwent a major change in the Hellenistic period; a closed mould-made lamp, originating from Greece and Asia Minor appeared in the Palestinian coastal cities. At that time these cities were mainly populated by foreign inhabitants. This lamp replaced a small local wheel-made oil lamp that was quite common in Judea in the Hasmonean Period (between 167-63 BCE). It had the form of a small bowl with a round base, its rim was turned inward, thus creating the nozzle for the wick. The lamp is currently known as the "folded wheel-made lamp".

During that period Hellenistic mold-made lamps that were quite common on the coastal plain appeared also in Judea. This type of lamp was round with a long nozzle, covered with red-brown or gray slip. Its shoulders were decorated with radial lines along with floral or other geometric designs, as well as masks and figures in relief (type XVIII as defined by BRONEER 1930, pp. 61-66, n<sup>os</sup> 301-304). These lamps were probably in the use of the Palestinian pagan population, who must have created also local imitations of it, whereas the Jews, who refrained from using them, due to the ban on idols, used the local folded wheel made lamp.

Towards the 1<sup>st</sup> Century BCE a new type of lamp was developed in Judea, influenced by that Hellenistic radial lamp. This lamp was mold-made with a matt red-brown slip, a rounded body, a short nozzle and thick walls. It had either a rounded base or a low base ring and was decorated with a radial line pattern and floral or geometric motifs. This type of lamp, named by Smith the "sunburst" lamp (SMITH 1964, pp. 122-124, fig. 21, 22), is otherwise known as the "Jewish radial

lamp". These lamps were in common use during the 1<sup>st</sup> Century BCE (including the reign of King Herod the Great) in and around Jerusalem as well as in Masada, Jericho, Qumran, Macharontes and other Judean sites (see discussion: BARAG-HERSHKOVITZ 1994, pp. 12-14, fig. 20; MAZAR 1971, fig. 17: 26, Pl. XXII: 2; STRANGE 1975, fig. 16: 1, 5).

A special assemblage of eight such Jewish radial molded lamps was found in a building in area E at the excavations of the Upper-City of Jerusalem (see Fig. 1-2) (AVIGAD 1980, p. 88, fig. 58: 2). Two unique specimens of this type of lamp that were found in that assemblage deserve a special discussion. These two lamps were decorated with human faces (A preliminary study of these lamps was first published in *Eretz Israel* Vol. 18, Jerusalem 1985 in Hebrew by the author of the current article).

1. Lamp n<sup>o</sup> 8292/1 from locus 747 (fig. 3): mold-made with a rounded body with short radial grooves on the shoulders, a flat base and a wide filling hole, surrounded by two ridges. A short nozzle with a broken round wick-hole, blackened. The ware is of light brown color with remnants of red-brown slip. Thick walls. L. 7 cm, W. 6 cm, H. 3 cm. On the nozzle, between the wick hole mouth and the filling hole, a human face was formed: both eyes connected and marked by a double spiral line that also marks the edge of the forehead. A vertical notch that transcends from the spiral line marks the nose. The mouth is marked beneath the nose by two short vertical lines.

2. A similar fragment of such a lamp, which could have been made in the same mold, is n<sup>o</sup> 7914/3 from locus 739 (fig. 4). The fragment includes part of the shoulders of the lamp and its nozzle. Aprox. L. 5 cm and W. 5.5 cm. It is covered with red slip and remnants of soot are found on the nozzle and the wick hole

mouth. The human face depicted on the nozzle is much clearer than the one on lamp n° 1. The spiral double line that marks the eyes, the vertical notch that starts in the middle of the face and marks the nose and the horizontal lines which mark the mouth are all well emphasized on the nozzle.

These two lamps complement each other in creating a picture of this special type of lamp in which a human face adorns its nozzle as an integral part of its decoration.

Lamps decorated with human faces, masks and satyrs are quite common in the Hellenistic world, especially in Corinth (BRONEER 1930, p. 68, fig. 30) and in Delos (BRUNEAU 1965, pl. 13: 2423, 2429), though the images there are made in relief and in great detail, whereas those from the Jewish Quarter are schematic and carved into the clay. The formulation of the eyes in the Jewish Quarter lamp reminds us of the spiral double lines that decorate Hellenistic lamps from Corinth and the Egyptian Delta in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century BCE. Decoration with such a spiral double line is unknown in the local repertoire of Jewish radial lamps in Judea, where decorations were usually composed of radial-lined patterns.

The spiral double line on the lamps in discussion, which creates the schematic faces, is not used for lack of technical ability; I assume it was purposely made without a specific border, which would have emphasized the human face, the making of which was considered a felony according to the Jewish Ritual.

The Judean radial lamps are dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> Century BCE. The lamps in discussion can be dated accurately since they were found in a context of pottery and coins from the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century BCE and the building in which they were found was covered by a road during the time of Herod the Great (37-4 BCE).

These two lamps, decorated with the image of a human face, were found in a Jewish home of the Second Temple period.

The Biblical ban "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness ..." (*Exodus* 20:4-5, *Deuteronomy* 5:8-9) was usually strictly upheld in Jewish art during the Second Temple period. Artists, refrained from the use of human or animal descriptions, decorated their works with floral and geometrical patterns (AVI YONAH, pp. 112-136 & AVIGAD 1976, pp. 201-208). Nevertheless there are some exceptions to the rule: coal sketches of human and animal figures found in Jason's Tomb (RACHMANI 1967, fig. 6, pl. 21b, fig. 54); plaster fragments decorated with geometric and floral patterns in which images of animals were enclosed from the excavations of the Western Wall

(BEN DOV 1982, pp. 150-151) and a fresco with bird drawings from excavations on Mt. Zion (BROSHI 1976, pl. 19). Drawings of birds were also found in a tomb in Jericho (HACHLILI & KILLEBREW 1999, fig. 11.72, Pl. V.1) as well as a fish design in the center of the rim of a stone table from the Jewish Quarter (AVIGAD 1980, fig. n° 185:4).

It seems that in some cases artists allowed themselves the freedom to make use of such patterns - not publically, but only privately - thus creating an exception to the rule banning the description of human beings and animals.

Since only two specimens of this mold-made lamp depicting a human face were found so far, one must conclude that they were quite rare (unless there are many more yet to be found). But since they were found in the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem with soot on their nozzles, they must have been in use there and then.

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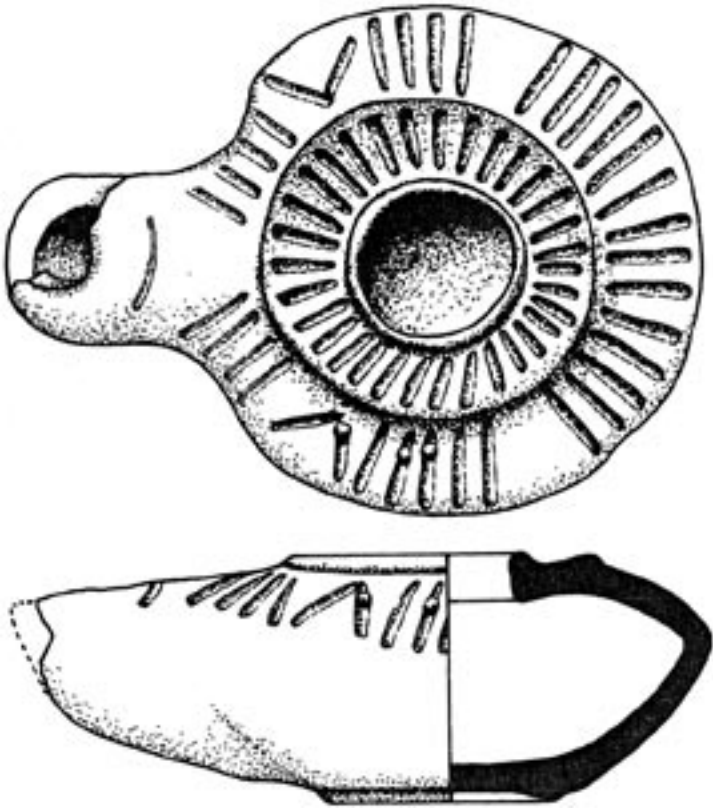


fig. 1

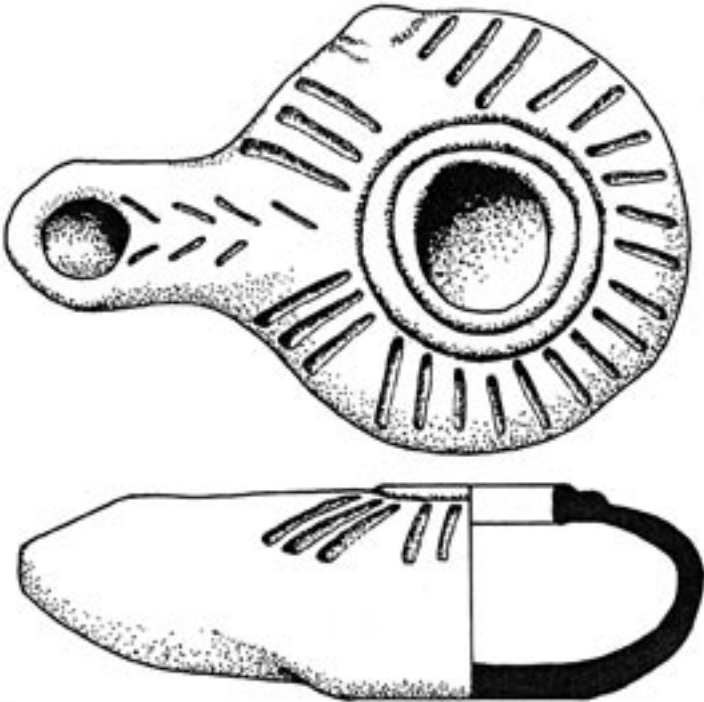


fig. 2

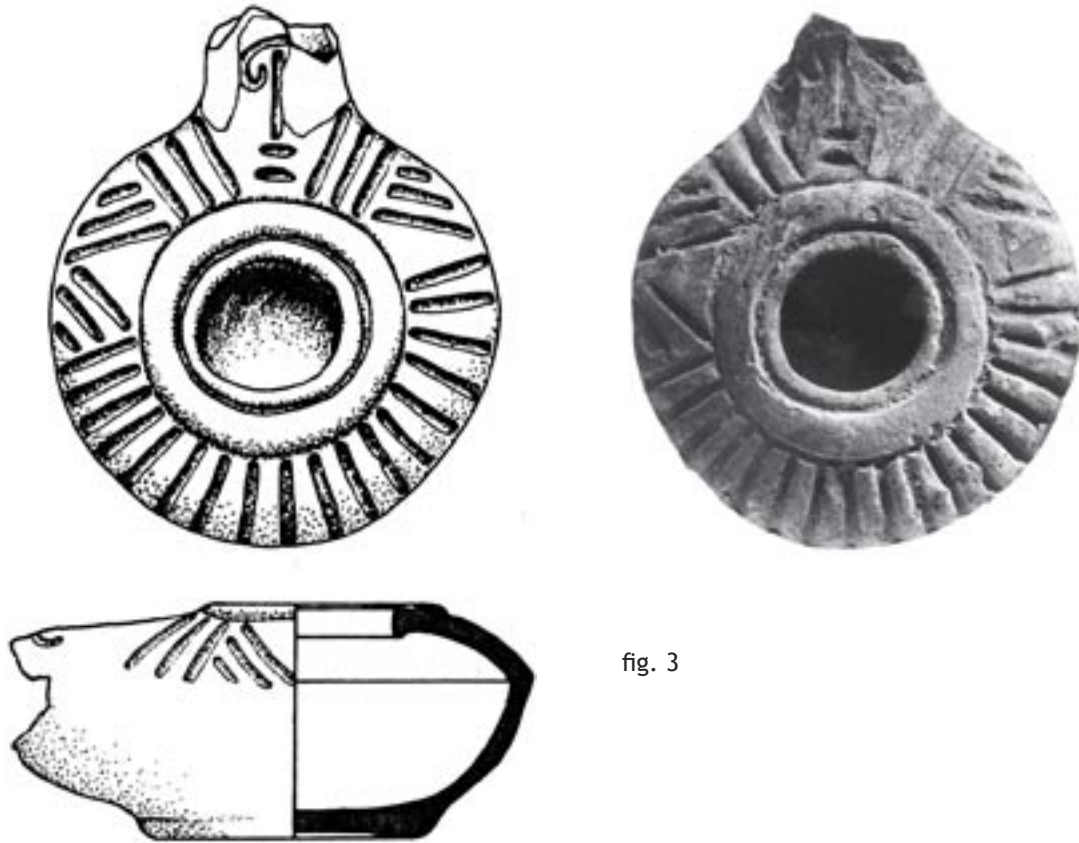


fig. 3

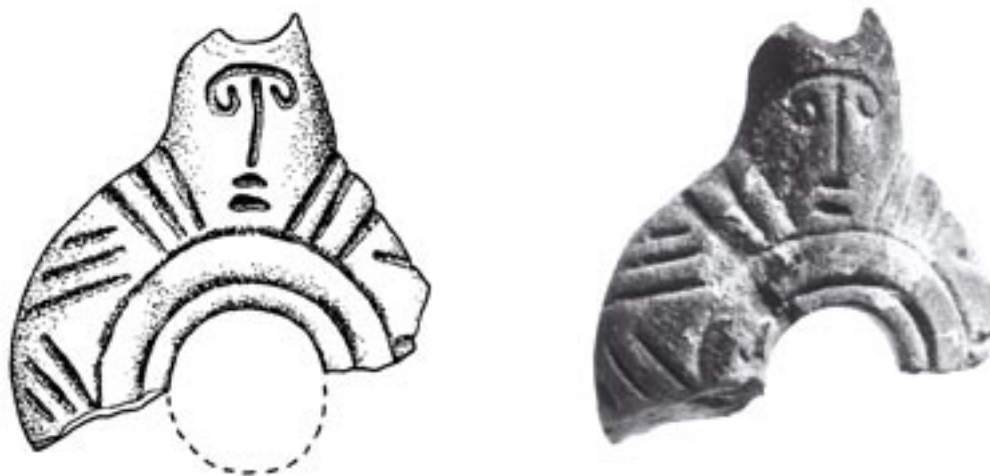
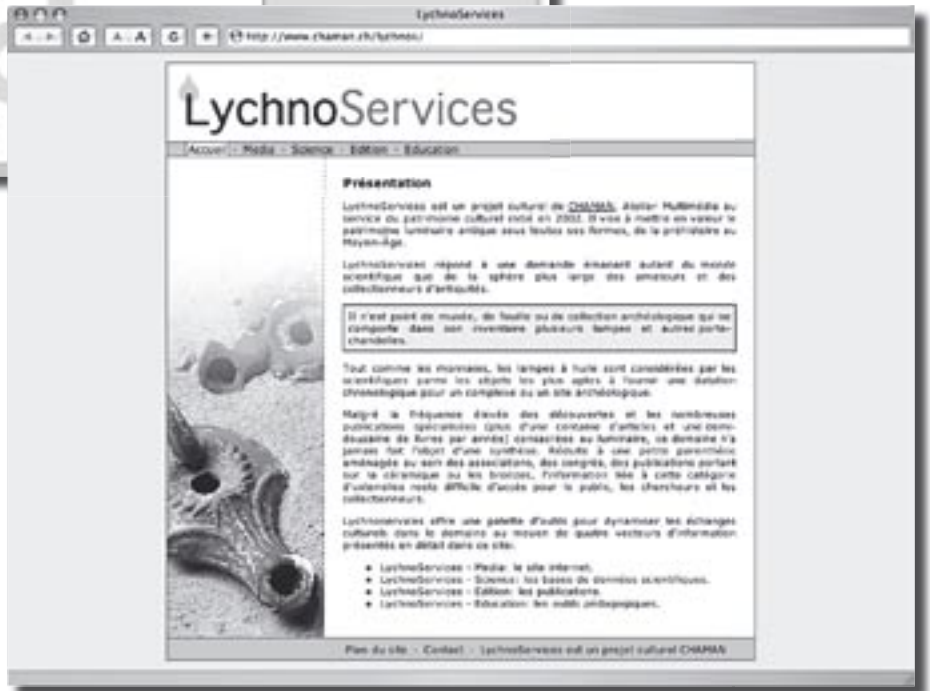


fig. 4

# International Lychnological Association

<http://ila.e-antiquity.org>



## LychnoServices

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