

CHAPTER FIVE: THE FINDS FROM THE ROMAN PERIOD

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The reuse of the crematorium structure during the Roman period, some 700 years after its construction for Phoenician cremations, is attested to by two assemblages: a deposit of lamps (L1630, the lower level; Photo 1.15, figs. 10-11) and inhumation burial (L1625, the upper level; Photo 1.14, fig. 9). During the Roman period, the coastal region of Galilee was inhabited by a Phoenician population which suggests a pagan context, while historical sources document the existence of a Jewish community and a synagogue at Achziv in the Second Temple period. The two assemblages (the lamp deposit and the inhumation burial) along with a small number of homogenous finds enable us to examine and define the scope of information to be gained from the grave goods. After presenting the archaeological evidence, this discussion will focus on listing some parallels for the offerings and will also compare some of the relevant burial contexts with similar finds, particularly those with lamps, glass vessels, spindle whorls and metal rods. The concluding remarks will address the questions of date, gender, cultural identity and ethnicity of the deceased.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

The Deposit of Lamps (L1630)

Seven lamps were found, along with ash remains, on top of a large fragment from the body of a ridged jar, placed only about 10cm above the floor of the crematorium. The placement of the lamps indicates that the crematorium structure was empty down to its floor level. This assemblage was then covered by more than a meter fill of pebbles, many of which were blackened by ash, on top of which a number of bones were discovered. The inhumation burial was laid 30 cm above this.

This sequence is not easy to understand. Are we dealing with one or two phases of activity in the crematorium structure? It appears unlikely that the bones discovered 30 cm below the inhumation burial are related to the deposit of the seven lamps which is about 1.25 m below them. The remains of ash around the lamps together with the blackened pebbles point to a funerary pyre lit outside the crematorium. Subsequently, the pyre was collected and placed on the jar fragment together with the lamps. The excavator suggests interpreting the lamp deposit as an offering expressing reverence for the ancient Phoenician burial cult. More so, in the Roman era, the ritual significance of lamps in funerary practices is attested to not only by archaeological finds but also by funerary inscriptions in Italy and its provinces. We hear of stipulations to perform a funerary ritual with lamps three times a month or even daily (Hensen 2009: 427).

Since the pebble and ash fill and the lamp deposit are contemporaneous, it appears that, at first, the commemorations took place near the pyre spot and after some time the deposits were interred in the Phoenician crematorium structure. The inhumation burial was laid on top of the fill at a later stage though the time span cannot have been too great considering that the two lamp types occur together.

The seven lamps, restored from a number of fragments, with the exception of lamp No. 5, are the predomi-

nant regional and local type found during the Roman period: a relatively small, thin-walled, circular, flat lamp with a small, round nozzle (ca. 8-9 cm long and 2-3 cm high) and a sunken, often relief-decorated discus. The filling-hole is set not to damage the image; the shoulder is either plain or is decorated with double axes in relief and/or geometric or foliated impressed ornaments; close to the nozzle, double volutes in relief are fairly common but not essential; there are no handles; a potter's marks comprising of names, monograms, letters, and signs is usually present. The clay is mostly light-colored, with a red, brown, or black slip of different standards; some lamps remain unslipped. Production began in the last quarter of the first century CE, and good quality lamps continued to be produced until the middle of the second century. A decline followed, ending with debased, plain or blurred lamps of ovoid shape in the third century (Rosenthal-Heginbottom 1995: 244-246, Figs. 5.22:1-10, 5.23:1-3; 1999: 47*48*; Vitto 2011a: 45*-52*).

1. Figs. 10:1, 11:1. L1630, B. 7473/1. Light brown clay; dull reddish brown to grey slip; impressed *planta pedis* on base; on the shoulder is a band of *ovoli*.
2. Figs. 10:2, 11:2. L1630, B. 7473/2. Yellowish green clay; thin, dull grey slip on nozzle and discus. There are volutes on nozzle (only one preserved) and pair of double axes on the shoulder.
3. Figs. 10:3, 11:3. L1630, B. 7473/3. Light brown clay; thin, dull reddish brown slip; impressed *planta pedis* on base; on the shoulder is a band of *ovoli*.
4. Figs. 10:4, 11:4. L1630, B. 7473/4. Light brown to grey clay; thin, dull reddish brown slip; the upper half of the discus and shoulder section close to nozzle is blackened by soot. On the shoulder is a pair of antithetic dolphins.
5. Figs. 10:5, 11:5. L1630, B. 7473/5. Light brown clay; thin, dull brown to grey slip. On the shoulder is a pair of antithetic dolphins and a nine-petalled rosette at the back end.
6. Figs. 10:6, 11:6. L1630, B. 7473/6. Light brown clay; dull grey slip with brown spots.
7. Figs. 10:7, 11:7. L1630, B. 7473/7. Fragment of upper half. Light brown clay; traces of red slip on nozzle. On the shoulder are a dolphin and a six-petalled rosette.

Though remains of soot around the nozzle are visible only on lamp No. 4, this does not indicate that the other lamps were not lit, since lighting a lamp for a short time does not leave visible smoke residues (Hensen 2009: 427). Furthermore, a look at the evidence in the Roman military and civil necropolis at Heidelberg shows that in 39% of the cremation burials, one or several unused lamps were deposited on the remains or nearby (Hensen 2009: 427).

All the lamps have a plain discus with a small central filling-hole; the shoulder and discus are separated by a marked ridge or a double ridge (No. 5 has an additional ridge encircling the filling-hole). On lamp No. 1, the discus around the filling-hole is broken; it appears to be an accidental break and not an intentional one since none of the other lamps has a broken discus to widen the central filling-hole (see the discussion below). The elements of decoration are common: volutes and double axes (No. 2); a band of *ovoli* on the shoulder of Nos. 1 and 3; two dolphins and a rosette (Nos. 4-5, 7, the rear section of No. 4 is missing); a *planta pedis* potter's mark on the base (Nos. 1 and 2). They also occur in variegated combinations.

Only a few references will be provided here, for most of the sites mentioned will be discussed in the section on the grave goods. However, the wide-spread distribution underlines the popularity of this type of lamp in the Levant, irrespective of ethnic origin and religious affiliation. The questions of whether the preference for lamps with a plain or decorated discus are an expression of religious beliefs or an indication for social status or both are open to debate.

- Volutes and double axes: Horvat Zikhrin – Haddad 2007: 50, Fig. 7:1-2; Qiryat Tiv'on – Vitto 2011a: Figs. 25:1-4, 26:1, 3; Kabul – Aviam 2002: 145, Fig. 6:4; 'Ein ezZeituna – Glick 2006: Fig. 12:1; Zippori – Gal, Hana and Aviam 2002: 150, Fig. 4:2; Judean Shephelah – Nahshoni *et al.* 2002: 60-61, Fig. 9:3-4; for double axes on Phoenician lamps from Saïda – Rey-Coquais 1963: 154, No. 22 and from Deb'aal – Hajjar 1965: Pl. XX: F 447.
- Band of *ovoli* on shoulder: I'billin – Feig 1999: 52*, Fig. 6:3-4; Qiryat Tiv'on – Vitto 2011a: Figs. 23:1-2, 24:2-3; Kabul – Aviam 2002: 145, Fig. 6:3-4; 'Ein ezZeituna – Glick 2006: Fig. 12:2,4; Zippori – Gal, Hana and Aviam 2002: 150, Fig. 4:3; Mughar el-Sharaf in the Sharon – Porath and Levy 1993: 33*, Fig. 2:4; the Judean Shephelah – Nahshoni *et al.* 2002: 60-61, Fig. 9:2,5; Horvat Zikhrin – Haddad 2007: 50, Fig. 7:2. The band of *ovoli* can be combined with volutes and double axes.

- Rosette and pair of dolphins (together or separate): Dora – Rosenthal-Heginbottom 1999: 42, Fig. 84; ‘Ein ez-Zeituna – Glick 2006: Fig. 12:3; Judean Shephelah – Nahshoni *et al.* 2002: 60-61, Fig. 9:4; Porath and Levi 1993: 33*-34*, Fig. 2:6; Rosenthal-Heginbottom 1995: 245, Fig. 5.22:41; on Phoenician lamps with double-convex body, dated to ca. 50-150 CE (Rosenthal-Heginbottom 1995: 247, Type 28B.4, Fig. 5.23:9; Sussman 2008: 221, No. 31); for a northern stamped lamp from a tomb in Nahariya, attributed to a Western Galilee (Phoenician) workshop Sussman 1989: 25, No. 2 and note 2 on p. 57.
- Rosettes and dolphins are fairly frequent motifs on mosaics, paintings, coffins and sarcophagi, pottery and metal vessels, jewelry, gems, coins etc. There are several examples on the Levantine lead coffins (Rahmani 1999: 27, Figs. 56, 63; 39-41, Figs. 105-106). For the dolphin, Rahmani suggests to include it among the Dionysiac themes (1999: 68). In the case of coffins, individual subjects are part of a comprehensive scheme and can be interpreted within, while with single figures and motifs it is problematic to decide in favour of decoration or symbolic significance.
The *planta pedis* mark is common on Italian and provincial lamps: Rosenthal-Heginbottom 1981: 123-125; Nahshoni *et al.* 2002: 60, Fig. 9:1-2, 5; Vitto 2011a: Fig. 23:1-2

The Inhumation Burial (L1625)

The deceased was laid to rest with a single fragmentary lamp and variegated grave goods, deposited during the ceremony of interment (fig. 9). The mug (No. 1) was found near the right side of the skeleton's chest and the bronze rod (No. 7) was found near the chest. One of the spindle whorls (No. 3) was placed near the skull, the other (No. 4), together with the lamp (No. 2) and the glass bottle (No. 6), came to light between the skeleton's legs. A simple ring (No. 5) was also found. The fragment of another bronze rod and the base of a glass vessel are not illustrated.

1. Fig. 9:1. L1625, B. 7406. Intact one-handed mug. Light brown clay; string-cut base; slight wheel-ridging on the exterior. Medium fine ware, local manufacture.
2. Fig. 9:2. L1625, B. 7436. Oil lamp. Light brown clay on exterior, grey core; no slip; brittle fabric. Soot on the nozzle. On the shoulder are tendrils with small flowers or berries (or crude vine tendrils) that are filled with eight-petalled rosettes; pierced knob handle. The three preserved rosettes permit the reconstruction of eight rosettes, divided by the handle at the rear and another unclear floral design on the nozzle. The lamp is broken in its central part so it is not entirely clear whether there was a large central filling-hole (as shown on the drawing) or whether the small preserved section of the inner line of the shoulder is part of the narrow discus with a small central filling-hole (as on the lamp from Tyre mentioned below).
3. Fig. 9:3. L1625, B. 7437/1. Spindle whorl. Serpentine.
4. Fig. 9:4. L1625, B. 7437/2. Spindle whorl. Serpentine (For the identification I wish to thank Dr. Naama Yaholom Mack, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem).
5. Fig. 9:5. L1625, B. 7399. Copper alloy ring with a circular section; diameter 18 mm.
6. Fig. 9:6. L1625, B. 7444. Glass bottle of the short candlestick-type, with long cylindrical neck constricted at the base and rounded rim, with triangular body and flat base.
7. Fig. 9:7. L1625, B. 7435. Bronze rod, twisted, with enlargements at both ends, one an olivary tip, the other a tiny scoop. The amount of copper alloy defines the flexibility of the metal and enables its twisted shape. An analysis with a portable XRF machine showed bronze, lead and tin components. (The analysis was carried out by Dr. Naama Yaholom Mack, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. I thank Mimi Lavi, responsible for restoration and conservation at the Institute of Archaeology, for her advice).

DISCUSSION

Pottery Vessels (fig. 9:1-2)

The vessel (No.1) belongs to the class of thin-walled, fine ware pots that can be described as handle-less, one-handed or two-handed mugs, beakers, and cups. They are not a local traditional form but derivatives of Italian-made thin-walled wares, common in the first centuries BCE and CE as well as in the second century, with provincial production continuing into the fourth century. Both the imports and the imitations were introduced into the local repertoire under Herod the Great. Thin-walled vessels were imitated in many parts of the Mediterranean areas and

are common in late first to third century contexts (Hayes 2008: 101-104, Figs. 50-51), many of them being mugs with bulging/bell-shaped mouths and a single handle. At Paphos, the thin-walled beakers and cups begin to appear in the first century BCE along with Italian imports, while those from later contexts are Eastern products (Hayes 1991: 59). Among the Italian prototypes are many single-handled vessels (Ricci 1985: Pls. 134:11, 13-14; 135:3-4; for parallels from Jerusalem: Rosenthal-Heginbottom 2003: Fig. 6.7:25 and Magness 2005: Fig. 16:1; from Caesarea: Oleson 1994: 124, D40; Rosenthal-Heginbottom 2006: Pl. 5.4:19 – all parallels are thin-walled). It is not known what the vessels were used for. The prevailing terms of «mugs» and «cups» – from today's point of view – would suggest a drinking vessel; however, the predominant everted rim shape makes this use unlikely. Like the glass bottle, it was possibly a container for aromatics, oils or medical substances.

The lamp (No.2) can be attributed to the class of mould-made lamps with spatulate, often knife-pared nozzles and shoulder decoration. Three regional groups can be discerned: a southern Phoenician and Galilean variant (Rey-Coquais 1963: 153-154, Nos. 20-21; Rosenthal-Heginbottom 1995: 246-247, Fig. 5.23:6-9 with rounded and triangular nozzle; Barag and Hershkovitz 1994: 69-70; Vitto 2011a: 43*-44*, Fig. 22:1-3 for the variant with plain shoulder, Fig. 22:4 with a band of lilies), variants common in the south, in Judea, the central coastal plain and the Negev (Rosenthal-Heginbottom 1995: 244, Fig. 5.21:9-11; Barag and Hershkovitz 1994: 59-71, Class D and 72-78, Class F; Geva 2010: 129, Pl. 4.7:7 with rosettes) and Gerasa-type and related lamps (Israeli and Avida 1988: 83-97; Rosenthal-Heginbottom 1995: 244).

The main morphological difference is the existence of a narrow undecorated discus and a small central filling-hole in the Phoenician lamps, dated to ca. 50-150 CE. The shoulder pattern of tendrils and rosettes occur on some lamps found at Masada (Barag and Hershkovitz: Figs. 18:105-106; 20:120). The moulded lamps with floral decorations and long spatulate, knife-pared nozzles generally bordered by rudimentary volutes, defined as Masada Class D, are predominant in Judea; probably produced in workshops in the Jerusalem area, they date from the third quarter of the first century CE. The Masada lamp No. 105 is made of different clay from an unidentified source which is related to clays from the coastal area of the northern Sharon and west of Mt. Carmel (Barag and Hershkovitz 1994: 69). Masada Class F was found in the refuge caves in the Judean Desert and in the western hills of Judea and dated 70-c. 115 (135) CE; no longer being produced in destroyed Jerusalem, the lamp No. 132 from Masada along with a lamp from Aroer were made in the Shephelah (Barag and Hershkovitz 1994: 77). The floral shoulder pattern also occurs on the Gerasa-type and related lamps (Israeli and Avida 1988: Nos. 242, 244-245, 247, 277-279) dated to the first half of the second century, and on a lamp from Tyre (Rey-Coquais 1963: No. 21). The latter has a stubby nozzle without volutes like the lamp from Achziv. The short nozzle is found on lamps from the Shephelah; one of them has a shoulder decoration of rosettes separated by crossed lines like an X with dots from the Nesh'er-Ramla Quarry (de Vincenz 2010: 137, Pl. 8.20:3) while the other has two antithetic rosettes in the middle of the shoulder (Nahshoni *et al.* 2002: 57, Fig. 8:4).

Glass Vessel (fig. 9:3)

Candlestick-type bottles are common in household and funerary contexts during the Roman period both in the Land of Israel and elsewhere in the Roman Empire, being used as containers for precious substances of cosmetic and medical nature. The bottles are generally dated from the last quarter of the first century to the early third century CE (Winter 1996: 98, Fig. 5.5:1-3; Gorin-Rosen 1999: 63*-64*, Fig. 7:2-6).

The complex of the peristyle building at 'Ein ez-Zeituna yielded a rich collection of glass vessels; the present type is considered characteristic of the second and early third centuries CE along the Phoenician coast and also in Judea (Winter 2006: 81, Fig. 3:24-28). Bottles from burials in clay coffins, placed at the feet of the deceased, came to light in a cemetery east of Tell er-Ras (Shoukrin 1999: 176*, 152-153, Fig. 21:3-5, 9). The vessels are dated to ca. 150-250 CE. The coffins contained six coins, five of which are of a second century date. The author suggests considering them Charon's obol, taking the custom as evidence for a pagan, probably Phoenician, population (Shoukrin 1999: 176*-177*; see also Syon 2006: 126 for a sporadic occurrence in Jewish burials). At Caesarea, two sarcophagus burials were unearthed, the first containing one skeleton with 29 bottles near the feet of the deceased and two additional near the abdomen, the second containing a young male with six bottles near the feet and an additional one near the chest. A general second-third century date is suggested (Mazar 1992: 106-108, Fig. 5, with references to burials in Samaria, the Jerusalem area and Ben Shemen as well as from the Cave of the Letters in the Judean Desert). Along with the above mentioned burials, we can now add the burials at Mishmarot (Katsnelson 2007: 2-3, 17, Fig. 14), near Kabri (Stern and Getzov 2006: 105-106, Fig. 14:43-44) and at Hurfeish (Gorin-Rosen 2002: 160*-162, Fig. 12:52-53) as additional references.

Personal Objects (fig. 9:3-5, 7)

Plain small rings can have different functions, yet a ring with a diameter of 18 mm deposited in a burial was most likely a finger-ring (fig.9:5). In Roman times, simple plain rings without a bezel-set stone were worn by women as a betrothal ring (Riha 1990: 46-48, 51). Rings found at Kfar 'Othnay are identified as such (Peleg-Barkat and Tepper 2011: 100). The bronze ring from a burial at Qiryat Ata, with a diameter of 16 mm, probably belonged to a child; the burial cave was used between the late third and late fourth century by a pagan community (Vitto 2008: 156, Fig. 17:16). Five rings (diameter 20 mm) came to light in the burial caves at Kisra, which were in use from the beginning of the fourth until the middle of the fifth century (Stern 1997: 124, Nos. 57-58, Fig. 13). The rich collection published by E. Riha contains simple rings with circular or flat sections, some made of silver, with diameters in the size categories of 15.9 mm, 17.5 mm and 19.1 mm, which would fit young girls and female adults (1990: 50, Fig. 17). Five bronze rings found in the burial cave at Kabul have a diameter range of 15-25 mm and can fit children and both female and male adults; they date from the second half of the fourth and the early fifth century (Vitto 2011b: 122, Fig. 14:1-5).

Spindle whorls are quite common grave goods (fig.9:3-4). In the already mentioned cemetery east of Tell er-Ras, two burials in clay coffins each contained a spindle whorl placed at the feet of the deceased (Shoukrin 1999: 176*; 154, Fig. 22:1-2). In two burials within clay coffins near Kabri, dated to the third century CE, two spindle whorls each were found (Stern and Getzov 2006: 98-99, Fig. 7:22-23; 108, Fig. 15:53-54; the authors point out that one of them was discovered below the coffin in Tomb 9, the find-spot supports the observation that the kokh was used for an earlier burial). The grave goods of a woman, over 16 years old, in Tomb 10, Coffin A included beads, bracelets and a ring (diameter 16 mm) in the presumed position of the right hand, a kohl stick near the presumed position of the head, a spindle whorl in the presumed position of the left hand and a coin, apparently in the right hand (Stern and Getzov 2006: 100). Besides bowls, beakers and a goblet, two candlestick-type bottles were retrieved (Stern and Getzov 2006: 105-106, Fig. 14:43-44). No lamps were among the grave goods.

Used fairly frequent as grave goods, bronze rods were probes (*specillum*) for both cosmetic use and medical treatment (fig. 9:7). The form of the particularly fine rod with a single or double enlarged tip (*oricularium specillum*) is classified as a probe for ear treatment or as a double probe used in urological treatment for the removal of small stones through the urethra (Künzl 2002: 4, Pl. 7:A 36 for a specimen from a doctor's burial probably from Ephesos, dated ca. 220-250 CE; Pl. 35:B 92-93 from Asia Minor; Riha 1986: 86-87, Pl. 59:650-656 from civic contexts in Augst). It was also employed for the exploration of fistulas and the cauterization of hair roots after epilation (Rimon 1996: 64*, Fig. 2). A rod with a round or elliptical enlargement at one end (*ligula*) was both a cosmetic and a surgical instrument, such as for removing balsam, ointments, salves and powders from their containers and for ear treatment (Rimon 1996: 66*, Fig. 6; 71*).

Two bronze cosmetic spatulas were found in glass flasks in Tomb 200 at Giv'at Sharet, containing the remains of twenty-five individuals, probably a family tomb used for a generation or two at the most (Seligman, Zias and Stark 1996: 50, 5758, Fig. 17 on p. 53). Dated to the time-span between the last quarter of the fourth and the first quarter of the fifth century CE, no clear ethnic marker was found, though the inclusions of riveted sandals points to a non-Jewish population (Seligman, Zias and Stark 1996: 59-60), provided that the Rabbinic injunction of wearing such sandals was observed. In a cave at Kabul, a glass kohl container with three bronze probes came to light, one with a rounded end and a small scoop or spatula at the other (Vitto 2011b: 115, Fig. 10:1-2). In view of the associated finds of jewellery along with a lead mirror, the author suggests convincingly that the probes were applicators for cosmetic powder and not medical instruments (Vitto 2011b: 118). The cave is dated to the second half of the fourth to the early fifth centuries; historical evidence speaks for Jewish burials (Vitto 2011b: 128-131). At Caesarea in a burial cave with loculi, looted in antiquity, a cosmetic stick, a glass bottle and a bronze ring with a poorly preserved bezel were found; the cave was probably used by the Jewish community in the first century CE (Porath 2007: 47, Fig. 3:1-3, 56).

Burials with similar grave goods

The practice of depositing personal and gender type grave goods is well documented in the Jewish tombs of the Second Temple period; the most common were toiletry accoutrement of metal and bone, jewellery, mirrors, spindle whorls, along with glass, ceramic and wooden containers (Hachlili 2005: 327-335, 375-446 with inventory lists). In the Roman and early Byzantine period, the customs were no different among the other religious and ethnic groups. Only a handful of assemblages will be presented here, selected from the considerable number of excavated tombs. A good reference would be the map of the boundaries of the Phoenician and Jewish settlements and burials in Galilee published by Stern and Getzov (2006: 119, Fig. 25). The map shows a clear geographical division between Phoenician and Jewish burials, yet it is imperative to remember the authors' statement: «Determination of the ethnic

affiliation of a burial should not depend on a single property, however characteristic, but on the total assemblage of finds.» (Stern and Getzov 2006: 119). In the case of the inhumation burial from Achziv, the small number of grave goods makes it difficult to arrive at a clear-cut identification. The excavations chosen will be presented from north to south: Iqrit – Kabri – Tel er-Ras – Kabul – I'billin – Qiryat Tiv'on – Mt. Gilboa – Mughar el-Sharaf in the Sharon – Horvat Zikhrein – Horbat Zefiyya in the Judean Shephelah.

On the basis of the rich finds, a cave with a square burial chamber and ten loculi at Iqrit was attributed to the pagan Phoenician population (Vitto 2010). The large number of coins in good condition, which speaks for a deposition shortly after minting, enabled the excavator to draw up a chronology of interments (Vitto 2010: 89). The earliest burials, from the late second or early third centuries, are from Loculus 10, which contained a coin of Septimius Severus, minted in Rome (197-198 CE), a tall candlestick bottle and two more glass vessels (Vitto 2010: 72-73, Fig. 12:1). In Loculus 3, a 20-30 year old individual was buried with glass vessels, a bronze scoop-probe (Vitto 2010: 75-76, Fig. 14:1), a bone pin and a silver finger-ring and anklet, and Tyrian coins of Caracalla (211-217 CE) and Elagabalus (218-222 CE). A spindle whorl (Vitto 2010: 76, Fig. 14:2) in Loculus 7 was dated by coins from the late 210s-early 220s CE. These grave goods can be attributed to females, since the metal rod as a cosmetic applicator, the bone pin as a hairpin and the spindle whorl are adequate gender markers, even when the gender of the deceased cannot be gained from osteological study (Vitto 2010: 90-91). The jewelry retrieved from the other interments point to fairly wealthy individuals; the coins, on the other hand, are most likely evidence for the pagan custom of paying an obol to the ferryman Charon for crossing the River Styx to the underworld; the absence of pottery lamps is explained as additional evidence for the Phoenician users of the cave who could take back the lamps after the ceremonies in contrast to Jews who by the laws of impurity were not permitted to reuse them (Vitto 2010: 91-92). It is only from the beginning of the fourth century that the placing of oil lamps in Phoenician tombs started (Stern and Getzov 2006: 120).

Even though the burial cave with six clay coffins at I'billin was robbed in antiquity, two lamps with broken discus deserve mention (Feig 1999: 52*, Fig. 6:3-4). Taken as evidence for a Jewish custom, the broken discus by itself is not a sufficient ethnic marker (see below), yet the discovery of a synagogue inscription in Aramaic and a stone lintel decorated with a menorah and their probable attribution to the inhabitants of the Jewish village of 'Evlaim' lend support to the ethnic affiliation (Feig 1999: 52*, 225).

In a burial cave at Qiryat Tiv'on, looted in antiquity, limestone and pottery ossuaries (Vitto 2011a: 38*-39*) attest to an early phase of use, while a single lamp (Vitto 2011a: 51*, fig. 27) and three pottery coffins (Vitto 2011a: 40*-41*) belong to a later phase, used probably only in the second half of the third century CE and in the first half of the fourth century CE. The ossuaries define the early phase as Jewish; pottery coffins were used in both Jewish and pagan tombs. Coins attesting to use as Charon's obol and jewelry like in the Iqrit burial cave were absent (Vitto 2011a: 56*-58*). Fourteen discus lamps, all with broken discus, can be assigned to the first phase; at least five of them had a decorated discus (identified are Helios, Herakles, Leda and the Swan; Vitto 2011a: 48*). Other grave goods include short and tall candlestick-type bottles (Vitto 2011a: 52*-54*, Fig. 28:1-4), a spindle whorl (Vitto 2011a: 54*-55* Fig. 29:1), a bronze mirror and two convex bronze discs, possibly cymbals (Vitto 2011a: 54*-55, Fig. 29:3-4). The mirror and spindle whorl belonged to a deceased female. The cymbals were either personal objects or left in the tomb after having been used during the funeral. It is suggested that during the first phase, members of a Jewish family were buried during last decades of the first century, probably after they had fled Jerusalem in 70 CE, and that interments continued until the mid-second century CE at the latest (Vitto 2011a: 57*).

The burial cave on Mt. Gilboa was used over a long period of time. To the earliest Roman phase, dated to the second and early third centuries CE, belong a round lamp with a broken discus, decorated with a band of *ovoli* and volutes, and a fragment of a second (Syon 1999: 58*-60*, Fig. 5:3), a complete juglet similar in size to the one from the inhumation burial, though of different shape (Syon 1999: 58*-59*, Fig. 4:3) and several fragmentary candlestick-type glass bottles (Syon 1999: 63*, Fig. 7:2-6). The second stage dates from the end of third and fourth centuries with Samaritan lamps being the ethnic marker (Syon 1999: 61*, Fig. 6:12-16). The author attributes the burial cave to members of the Samaritan community probably living in the nearby village of Nuris (Syon 1999: 68*, 226).

Cave 28 at Mughar el-Sharaf in the Sharon was looted in antiquity (Porath and Levy 1993: 153). Besides lamps with spatulate nozzles and discus lamps, there were candlestick-type glass bottles (Porath and Levy 1993: 33*, Fig. 2:9-10) and a juglet (Porath and Levy 1993: 35*, Fig. 3:3). Of the three discus lamps, two were fragmentary, and the other had a broken discus. During the first century CE, and probably in the second, the cave was used by the Jewish inhabitants of the area; following the Jewish Revolts this population was replaced by Samaritans and the inhabitants of Caesarea might have used the cemetery (Porath and Levy 1993: 41*, 154).

Cave T4 was used in the first-second centuries at Ḥorvat Zikhrin (Haddad 2007: 74*). The rich assemblage of grave goods of ceramics, glass vessels, jewellery, and bone pins included three round discus lamps (Haddad 2007: 50, Fig. 7:1-3), juglets and small bottles (Haddad 2007: 50, Fig. 6:5-8), a kohl stick (Haddad 2007: 51, Fig. 8:1), a stone spindle whorl (Haddad 2007: 49, Fig. 5:2), and a bronze ring with a diameter of 20 mm, which was not an earring but a finger-ring (Haddad 2007: 51, Fig. 8:2). The author suggests that the Jewish population used the cave for burials during the first century CE; the top of two lamps, one of them with a decorated discus, were intentionally broken (Haddad 2007: 49, 51, 55).

A burial cave with ossuaries served a Jewish family from the nearby settlement of Ḥorvat Zefiyya, identified with Saphita, in the period between the First and Second Revolts (Nahshoni *et al.* 2002: 69). Not looted in antiquity, the burials were rich in grave goods, including clay vessels and a piriform glass bottle (Nahshoni *et al.* 2002: Figs. 3, 10) along with a fair number of lamps with soot on the nozzle; among the 79 lamps were lamps with spatulate nozzle, Judean mould-made lamps with spatulate nozzle and shoulder decoration, and discus lamps with broken tops (Nahshoni *et al.* 2002: 51-61, Figs. 5-9).

The Broken Discus

The persistent discussion about the significance of the «deliberately broken» discus has recently been summarized in the following explanation: «..., we believe that breaking the discus was essentially a Jewish custom that offered a new technical solution to an old burial custom. Thus, these later lamps, found with a broken discus in second to third century C.E. burial contexts help to identify such contexts as Jewish.» (Aviam and Syon 2002: 159, note 18; see also Vitto 2011a: 51*-52* who agrees with the conclusion). In another publication of the same year, a different assessment is voiced: on lamps with a broken discus, not only were figurative decorations common in the Greco-Roman repertoire damaged or erased but also those with floral and geometric patterns and plain lamp tops, indicating that the custom was practised in non-Jewish contexts as well (Gal, Hana and Aviam 2002: 150, note 7).

Indeed, in the seven funerary assemblages described above in detail, lamps with a deliberately broken discus were placed in six of them; five of these are attributed to Jews (I'billin – Feig 1999: Fig. 6:3-4; Qiryat Tiv'on – Vitto 2011a: Figs. 23-26; Mughar el-Sharaf – Porath and Levy 1993: Fig. 2:4; Ḥorvat Zikhrin – Haddad 2007: Fig. 7:1-2; Ḥorvat Zefiyya – Nahshoni *et al.* 2002: Fig. 9:1-5), while the other is attributed to the Samaritans (Mt. Gilboa – Syon 1999: Fig. 5:3); in the Iqrit burial, lamps were absent (Vitto 2010). At Kabul in a burial cave with stone and clay ossuaries and a clay coffin, different from the already mentioned cave, two discus lamps with a broken top were retrieved; the other grave goods were two more lamps and some glass beads. The burials took place in the second century, probably during the second half, and are attributed to refugees from Judea in the wake of the Bar-Kokhba-Revolt (Aviam 2002: 143-144, Fig. 6:3-4).

However, the broken discus is not an unequivocal ethnic and religious marker. Other factors should also be considered. In the burial cave with wall paintings at Caesarea, robbed in antiquity, five of the six lamps retrieved from the debris had a decorated discus, two depicting Hermes, the others showing Heracles, Leda and the Swan and a goat eating from a bunch of grapes, none with a broken discus (Siegelmann and Ne'eman 1992: 59*-60*, Fig. 5). Dated to the second century, the elaborate paintings underline that the cave belonged to a family with a fairly high social status. At that time in Caesarea, the majority of the inhabitants were pagan, with the minority being composed of Jews along with some Christians and Samaritans. The motifs of the paintings (palm-trees, cocks and wreaths), were common among Jews, while the lamp motifs are Greco-Roman. Taking into consideration the impact and the influence of the pagan culture on the Levantine population, particularly in the coastal cities, the authors do not disregard the fact that the burial cave was owned by a Jewish family (Siegelmann and Ne'eman 1992: 62*). The Jewish affiliation is not accepted by F. Vitto who, also, on the basis on iconography, defines the burials as pagan (2011a: 51*). From 'Ein ez-Zeituna, a site occupied towards the end of the first and the second centuries, four discus lamps with intentionally broken discus are published, two of them with remains of the figurative decoration (Glick 2007: 56-58, Fig. 12:14). The manufacturing styles are connected with the increase of Roman military and administrative activity on the main road leading from Caesarea via Legio to Lower Galilee and the Jordan Valley (Glick 2006: 63). The ethnic affiliation of the burial is not known.

In any case, for lamps from habitation levels, the explanation of «a Jewish custom that offered a new technical solution to an old burial custom» is not valid and we should look in another direction. There is a technical observation: discus lamps are thin-walled, especially the often sunken discus, and thus prone to accidental breakage; this I suggest for the lamp from the inhumation burial of Achziv (fig. 9:2). When deposited in burials, it is possible that damaged lamps were used in the same way worn coins were used as grave offerings, an observation made by D. Syon (2006: 126). Although some of the lamps that had their top broken had a decorated discus, the majority

were lamps with a plain discus, which is the case in the Achziv burial. Here, the reason might be economical, for decorated lamps were probably more expensive. To produce a clear image on the discus clay, stone or plaster moulds have to be prepared; worn moulds as well as a direct copy from actual lamps create a blurred picture (see f. ex. the two lamps with the bust of Pan, Rosenthal-Heginbottom 1981: 88, PL. 3 and p. 55 for a lamp mould of Type Broneer XXIII from Beth Shean). We do not know what the price relation and differences were between figurative quality lamps and their poor copies, or between lamps with a plain discus.

Another factor to be considered is whether olive oil or a cheaper substitute was used for lighting lamps in funerary rites. In the Roman provinces north of the Alps, where olive oil was imported and thus less easily available than in the Levant, lamps were lit with substances prepared locally from animal and vegetal raw materials such as oils from hazelnuts, walnuts, poppy seeds, linseed and suet (Hensen 2009: 433). In the Roman necropolis at Heidelberg, factory lamps with a broken discus were used as grave offerings; in one group, the discus had been cut out before firing, while in the other, it had been broken out after firing (Hensen 2009: 433-434 and Fig. 6). This points to a growing shortage in the oil supply in the course of the second century in Heidelberg, paralleled by evidence in Germania Superior and the neighbouring provinces; it resulted in lamps lit for a short time or not at all, as well as an increase in miniature lamps (Hensen 2009: 435). It is of course not possible to transfer the drafted development to a region of abundant olive oil production. It is always assumed that in these regions, olive oil was burnt, yet it was a basic food commodity and for many families, it could well have been too precious to be used for other purposes than eating. Also, there were times of bad harvest and famine – what happened then?

A look at the other grave goods deposited with the dead hints at social differentiation; the Achziv inhumation burial contained modest objects of daily life, while at Caesarea the deceased was laid to rest in a sarcophagus with 29 glass bottles at his feet (Mazar 1992: 106-108, Fig. 5). Hence, quite a few mourners might have had to resort to cheaper fuels than olive oil, necessitating the small filling-hole of the discus lamps to be enlarged. An answer could be given after analysing traces of fuel.

CONCLUSIONS

Cremation

The Phoenician practice of cremation ceased in the sixth century BCE and from then on inhumation burial was common in the Levant. To my knowledge, the only exception is the Hellenistic burial at Khirbet Buda, 7 km north-east of Akko (Aviam 2004: 259-261). In a rock-cut tomb, the charred bones of a 45 year-old male, a 35-40 year-old female and a 5-7 year-old child were interred in a calcite pot, with a necklace of beads and leaves placed as grave goods.

A change took place in the Roman period when cremation was practised by members of the military and administrative personnel and is particularly representative for the Jerusalem area after 70 CE and in the second and third centuries CE. Thus, there is clear evidence in the Akeldama Tombs of the burial caves starting to be used in the late Second Temple period for ossuary burials and continuing after 70 CE; the former are of the Jewish population, the latter are to be attributed to the Roman newcomers, members of the Roman military and administrative personnel (Avni and Greenhut 1996, 33-36). However, the lamp deposit in the Achziv crematorium structure did not contain charred bones though an indication for a pyre was present. Neither the lamp type nor the undecorated discus can be taken as valid markers for cultural identity, nor do they shed light on the social status of the person(s) making the offering. Still, it is not impossible that the lamp deposit was related to Romans; at Iqrit a gem with the figure of a warrior which probably belonged to a second century Roman officer was reused in a late third/ early fourth century burial (Vitto 2010: 84, 92). So far, only the singularity of the lamp deposit can be emphasized; whether the deposit implies the conscious continuation of the Phoenician custom of cremation or whether the cremation structure was just considered convenient for securely placing the offering cannot be answered. Taking into consideration the long period of time elapsed since cremations were practised, I opt for the latter explanation.

The Date

In Judea, there is unequivocal evidence that the wheel-made lamps with spatulate nozzle were in circulation together with the mould-made class (fig. 9:2) and the discus lamps (figs. 10:1-2, 11:1-2) in Jewish burials, dated to the first and second centuries CE until the Bar Kokhba Revolt (see f. ex. Nahshoni *et al.* 2002: 55-61, 69, Figs. 59 and Sagiv, Zissu and Avni 1998: 10*, Fig. 4:9-10; 17*, Fig. 4; for Galilee Abu-Uqsa 2002: 159-160, Figs. 7:1-3, 5-8; 8:1-2; Vitto 2011a: 45*-52*, Figs. 22-26). Since the mould-made class and the discus lamps occur only from the middle,

respectively, the last quarter of the first century CE onwards, the date of the assemblages can be narrowed to ca. 50-150 CE. At Masada, neither imported nor provincial imitation Broneer XXV were found, which lead Barag and Hershkovitz to the conclusion that in Judea, the type appeared only after 115 CE (1994: 78, 127). A pre-70 CE date is assured by the occurrence of a complete lamp in the Burnt House of the Jewish Quarter excavations (Geva 2012: 130, Pl.4.8:9). From this it follows that the time span between the two actions most likely was relatively short, may be even within a single generation. On the basis of the glass bottle, attributed to the period from the last quarter of the first century to the early third century CE, a date all through the second century is possible (Gorin-Rosen 1999: 63*-64*; Winter 2006:81), while the ceramic mug in the tradition of the thin-walled Italian and Levantine prototypes cannot be dated closely. Hence, the time span within the late first century and the second century cannot be set more precisely.

The Gender

The modest grave goods can be attributed to a female young girl or adult. The clay mug and the glass bottle were container for aromatics, oils and cosmetic and medical substances, though the inclusion of the bronze rod suggests cosmetic substances. Spindle whorls are clear gender markers. The size of the small finger-ring also points to a female owner, though the use as a betrothal ring remains speculative. The closest parallel is the burial of a female over 16 years old in Tomb 10, Coffin A near Kabri, dated to the third century CE (Stern and Getzov 2006; for details see above).

The Ethnicity

The chief grave goods characteristic of Phoenician burials include many glass vessels and coins, some used as 'Charon's obol', bracelets with snake-head ends and sandal rivets, while lamps and other ceramic vessels are rare (Stern and Getzov 2006: 118). No lamps were placed in the burials at Kabri and Iqrit (Vitto 2010: 92); the occurrence of oil lamps begins only in the early fourth century (Stern and Getzov 2006: 120). The grave goods of the female inhumation burial at Achziv are found in Phoenician, Jewish and Samaritan tombs, as the material presented in the discussion has shown (see above). What then was the cultural identity of the female? The placement of the lamp speaks against a Phoenician identity. In view of the historical sources the probability of a Jewish burial should be considered. However, the grave goods are not sufficiently diagnostic for an unequivocal attribution. In the case of the lamp deposit connected with a pyre, a possible attribution to a Roman military cannot be excluded. With a relatively short time span elapsing between the lamp deposit and the inhumation burial (on the evidence of the lamp types) the latter is attributed to a civilian connected with the Roman military or veteran. Admittedly, none of the two assemblages in the Phoenician crematorium structure have well defined ethnic contexts. Individual burials with a restricted number of grave goods are not sufficient markers for defining ethnic and religious identity.

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