Greek and Roman Oil Lamps from the Logan Museum of Anthropology and the Wright Museum of Art

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Museum Studies Special Project
WMA 10.63

Labeled as: 2nd century A.D.

*9th-5th century B.C., Eastern Mediterranean

Complete, unslipped lamp of early date, with no nozzle, wick hole, handle, or filling hole. This very simple lamp can be described using several names, including cocked hat, one-pinched corner, and saucer-shaped. Created on a wheel, this lamp is bowl-shaped with a wide outward facing rim to prevent oil from spilling. The entire lamp is scallop shell-shaped with no signs of wear or fire-blackening.

For similar lamps, see Metropolitan Museum of Art 74.51.1815, 74.51.1816, and 74.15.1819.
Complete, and with some dirt covering the lamp. Smooth, dark orange-red buffed colored slip. This lamp is wheelmade, evident in the slight tilt the lamp has as it rests on a surface. Additionally, the nozzle is not directly opposite the handle. The signs of blackening are faint and hard to distinguish. The lamp has a deep body with no shoulder but sunken discus top and large central filling hole. Central discus is plain and undecorated. There is a small projection on the left side of the lamp, nearer towards the nozzle than to the handle. The nozzle is broad and short, with a wide wick hole and flattened top. The handle is a flat and wide ring. The wide and deep body rests on a relatively small, disc base. Picture above is a signature on the center of the base, consisting of two incised letters, N and K.

For a similar body shape and, see Walters 1914, No. 275-286. For similar shape and date, see Metropolitan Museum of Art 74.51.1881.
Wright Museum of Art Collection

Labeled as: 2-4th centuries A.D., Greek

*1st century B.C. -1st century A.D., Hellenistic or Early Imperial Roman

Mostly complete lamp, with handle missing. Clay is red and barely visible beneath the slip, which is a brown color. The wick hole has obvious signs of smoke-blackening around its edge. Body is circular with a long spout-shaped nozzle that ends in a triangular point. A concave central depression has a central filling hole. The concavity runs from the center along the long, spout-shaped nozzle, creating a channel that terminates in the wick hole. The concavity and connected channeled are ornamented with molded ribbed border, which also terminates at the wick hole. Beneath the ribbed molded rim is a broad, sloping shoulder with a relief on either side of the central depression. The embossed relief is of a semi-circular wreath whose ends curve upward around the central depression and terminate in tied sashes with hanging ends. The shoulder meets the beveled body at a sharp angle, and finishes with a small base.

For a similar body shape and time period, see Metropolitan Museum of Art 74.51.2176, 74.15.1979, 74.52.2976. For similar types and shapes, see Walters 1914, nos. 324, 331-332, 367. For wreath and sash pattern, see Walters 1914, no. 462. Also see Broneer 1930, nos. 310, 316, and 363 for similar body shapes and central channels.
Lamp has a square body with no handle and is covered with a buff-colored slip. The body and nozzle are very worn so that their decoration is scarcely recognizable. There is no indication of smoke blackening, which indicates that this lamp is unused and may have been placed in a tomb or given as an offering. The body of the lamp is square with no shoulder and a flat but slightly depressed top. There is a large, central wick hole which is contained within a ridged, circular depression. The circular depression surrounding the wick hole connects to a short and thin channel which ends where the body connects to the nozzle. The nozzle is long with a steeply curving end and a small wick hole. Where the nozzle begins to curve and taper towards the end, the surface of the nozzle has a slightly depressed and flat surface as compared with the shaft of the nozzle. Overall, the nozzle has a flat surface, like the top of the lamp. The shaft of the rim has a slight imperfection in the form of depressed area and where it attaches to the body of the lamp, there is a molded ridge. The flat top of the lamp joins the body below at a sharp bevel that tapers to a small base.

For similar body shape, central rim and depression, see Walters 1914, nos. 476-479.
Complete of red-orange clay, which has some encrustation. Worn with signs of use, including a smoke-blackened wick hole. The body is ovoid, and tapers towards the wick at one end and towards the handle at the other. Sloping shoulders and broad nozzle with a flat top and rounded end. There is no surface decoration. Two concentric and incised rings on lamp face. Outer ring on top of shoulders, and continues as channels toward the wick hole. Inner incised concentric ring slopes towards a single, central filling hole that is surrounded by a raised, thick circular band. This circular border shows faint signs of a decorative element that has since worn away. The handle is solid with incised groove the inner incised circle around the filling hole up the shoulder of the lamp, over the crest of the handle, and down the oil reservoir to terminate at the concentric groove delineating the base. The part of the groove that runs as a spine down the oil reservoir is bounded on each side by a groove. As these grooves continue down the oil reservoir, they widen and curve to form the concentric groove of the base. The base is small in relation to the body and has a incised signature, which is picture above.

For similar shape, and incised concentric banding on discus face, see, Metropolitan Museum of Art 74.51.2140, 3rd century AD, which has three concentric circles and incision on the nozzle. For similar body shapes, see Fitchman and Goldman 1994, figures 115 to 124, North African. For similar handle and spine, see Slane 1990, no. 56, handle.
Tracy Peck Collection

Labeled as: 4th-2nd century B.C., Rome/Italy/Greek

*110 B.C. – 100 A.D., Imperial Roman

Complete lamp slipped in a thick black-brown with some signs of wear and breaks. The slip has worn away on parts of the body, handle, and nozzles. The tip of one nozzle is broken off. The handle has a fine crack running across the crest, and also has chips and signs of wear. There is a small hole on the underside of the lamp, inside the base disc, caused post-firing. The lamp has a rounded body with a shoulder that is decorated around the entire circumference with intermixed ivy leaves and berries or grapes. The filling hole is off-centered with molded, concentric rings around it. The innermost concentric ring is thin, and the outer is wide. On either side of the body is a single, triangular projection that is grooved and probably represents a leaf. This lamp has two large, broad circular nozzles with flat openings that are extensions of the circular body of the lamp and have broad bases. The handle is a ribbed, banded loop with two incised grooves that run with the handle as it projects from the body and along its crest to terminate near wear it attaches to the oil reservoir. The lamp has a raised ring base with two lugs projecting off towards each nozzle, which stabilizes the lamp and counterbalances the weight of the two nozzles.

For similar body shape, see Broneer Type XXI, Broneer 1930, no. 383. For almost identical lamp, except for differing shoulder reliefs and off-center filling hole, see Walters 1914, no. 463 (Form No. 67) and no. 464. For lamps with similar bodies, and decorations, see Walters 1915, nos. 461, 462, 465, 466.
Tracy Peck Collection

Labeled as: 4th-2nd century B.C., Capuan/Italian/Greek

*1st-2nd century A.D., Roman

Incomplete lamp in buff-colored clay and orange slip, whose central discus is broken away and missing. No signs of use wear on the body, or fire-blackening on the nozzle are present. The shoulder is broad and undecorated. The nozzle is very short and rounded and is barely distinguished from the body of the lamp. The handle is opposite the nozzle and projects from the shoulder to run down the oil reservoir as a spine. It has two grooves which come together as one and run down the spine, where the spine tapers at a point near the base. Discus-shaped, the base is also plain and undecorated.

See Metropolitan Museum of Art 74.51.2241, 74.51.2243, 74.51.2248 for similar lamp shape.
Tracy Peck Collection

Labeled as: 4th-2nd century B.C., Capuan, Italian, Greek

*4th-2nd century B.C., Greek

Wheelmade lamp of reddish-clay and signs of fire blackening around the pinched, spout-shaped nozzle. The body is bowl-shaped, with an open top. The base is flat and disc-shaped with evidence of having been removed from a potter’s wheel. The handle is an attached loop.
WMA 38.23

Tracy Peck Collection

Labeled as: 2\textsuperscript{nd} century A.D., Roman

*3\textsuperscript{rd}-5\textsuperscript{th} century A.D., Middle East along the Mediterranean Sea

The body of the lamp is ovoid, or bulb-shaped and made from orange clay with a darker orange slip. The slip is worn in most places on the lamp and there is no sign of fire-blackening around the wick hole. The nozzle is not emphasized, but constitutes part of body. The filling hole is large relative to the size of the lamp, and surrounded by raised convex ridge that is bordered by outer incised line. The raised convex ridge slopes towards the filling hole as a bevel. The shoulder is decorated with impressed, geometric designs that radiate from the nozzle around to the opposite side. The designs are a herringbone pattern in two rows. There is no handle for this lamp, but where one would project from the body are three incised, parallel lines.

For identical lamp, see Hadad 1997 Type 7, Figure 7.
Purchased by Mr. Bradley Tyrell, while he was on the Logan Museum of Anthropology North Africa expedition in the 1930s. Donated to the Logan Museum in 1964

Labeled as 1st century B.C. – 1st century A.D., North African

*50 A.D.-200 A.D., North African

Complete lamp molded in buff-colored clay. The lamp has no signs of fire-blackening from use, but some mold or pre-firing imperfections where the body meets the shoulder. A wide, beveled shoulder is bounded from the deeply concave discus by a rim of two incised, concentric circles. There is a small air hole located in the concave discus, near the innermost concentric circle on the rim, nearest to the nozzle. Where the beveled shoulder meets the oil reservoir of the lamp, there is a flat strip that runs along what would have been the seam of the lamp connecting the two lamp halves. A very short, rounded nozzle occupies part of the shoulder and projects beyond the body of the lamp only slightly. It is distinguished from the shoulder with an incised line. The handle is unpierced, with a flat face and crest, and is set opposite the nozzle. It projects beyond the body of the lamp and runs down the body to terminate before the base. On the shoulder of the lamp, just before the handle is an incised circle. There are two incised grooves on the handle that run the length of the face, but are interrupted by the crest of the handle. Where the two incised grooves and handle taper towards and terminated, there is a small incised outline of a circle. The part of the handle that runs along the oil reservoir is bordered by an incised line. The body bevels to a wide discus base which is delineated as such by an incised line. In the center of the base is an incised signature with an arrangement of three incised circles beneath it. The signature and circle patterning are depicted above in photograph and in outline.

For similar lamp, see Walters 1914, Form 95. Nozzle is Heres type Eb and Loeschcke type L1. For similar nozzles, see Fitch and Goldman 1994 nos. 780, 782, 804, 806, 815, 860, and 868. For similar lamp, see Metropolitan Museum of Art 74.51.1954.
LMA 3191.02

Purchased by Mr. Bradley Tyrell, while he was on the Logan Museum of Anthropology North Africa expedition in the 1930s. Donated to the Logan Museum in 1964.

Labeled as 2nd century A.D., North African.


Buff-colored, complete lamp with a dark red-orange slip. The entire surface of the lamp shows wear in the form of rubbed slip, and there is a faint indication of blackening around the wick hole. Examples of pre-firing cracks are visible on both sides of the handle. This lamp was probably cast from a worn mold, due to the blurriness of the image on the discus. The discus is shallow and concave with a figure in right profile wearing a Corinthian-style helmet and a spear leaning against the back. This image is probably of the deity Athena, due to the length of the hair. The figure holds a small, round object in her outstretched hand, which is attached to a small female. This smaller female figure looks toward the larger figure and has a circular object in her outstretched arm. The filling hole is off-center, and punched between the two figures. The rim of the discus is bordered by two incised concentric rings which enclosed a ridge. The shoulder is thin and almost horizontal with an embossed, patterned banding that encircles the entire length to the point where the handle is set. The pattern of a chain of compressed ovules or scallops, aligned tightly into a repeating chain. Where the shoulder meets the oil reservoir, is a flat and beveled strip that runs between the nozzle and handle, where the seam of the two lamp halves was smoothed over. The nozzle is very short and rounded with two-lobes at the base creating what is termed heart-shaped. The handle is opposite the nozzle and projects from the shoulder to run down the oil reservoir as a spine. It tapers at a point near the base. Discus-shaped, the base consists of a narrow raised rim surrounding a central depression. The design on the base which is a series of scarcely visible rotating linear elements similar to spokes on a wheel, is pictured above.

For lamps whose disci have images of Athena in profile, see Fitch and Goldman 1994 nos. 754, 765, 771, and 810. For similar shoulder decoration, see Fitch and Goldman 1994 figure 79 and no. 760.
Purchased by Mr. Bradley Tyrell, while he was on the Logan Museum of Anthropology North Africa expedition in the 1930s. Donated to the Logan Museum in 1964.

Labeled as: 1\textsuperscript{st}-2\textsuperscript{nd} century A.D., North African.

*late 1\textsuperscript{st}-2\textsuperscript{nd} century A.D., North African

Complete lamp with a red slip. Steep and shallow beveled body which connects to a narrow, beveled shoulder. A central filling hole is located in a concave discus, which is encircled by two incised, concentric rings where the discus meets the shoulder. There is a small air hole on the innermost incised circle that is near the wick hole and nozzle. The nozzle is round, short, and flat-topped and extends onto the shoulder of the discus. It is separated from the shoulder by an incised line and bounded between two incised dots. The handle is a pierced, molded ring set opposite the nozzle, with two incised grooves that converge terminated before the crest of the handle. The handle projects beyond the body of the lamp and runs as a spine along the oil chamber and tapers towards the base in a point. The base is a raised, flat disc with a maker’s mark stamp, \textit{M. Novi Justi}. This maker’s mark is pictured above.

For similar lamp, see Walters 1914, Form 95. Nozzle is Heres type Eb and Loeschcke type L1. For similar nozzles, see Fitch and Goldman 1934 nos. 780, 782, 804, 806, 815, 860, and 868. For identical maker’s mark, see Walters 1914, no. 477 and 1021. For similar lamp, but with off-centered filling hole, see Walters Fig. 207. For identical maker’s mark, see Bailey 1972, Plate XXXIII g.
LMA 3191.04

Purchased by Mr. Bradley Tyrell, while he was on the Logan Museum of Anthropology North Africa expedition in the 1930s. Donated to the Logan Museum in 1964.

Labeled as: 4\textsuperscript{th}-5\textsuperscript{th} century A.D., North African

Complete lamp with bright red slip, which is obscured by encrustations in most places. The discus and rim are very worn, possibly from using an old and worn mold. The body of the lamp is ovoid, with a flat discus, shoulder, and nozzle. The shoulder consists of a depressed rim with a series of raised patterned designs running on either side of the discus, between the handle and nozzle. These designs are worn, blurred, and unidentifiable. The discus is set apart from the shoulder by a thin, raised rim that runs the length of the nozzle and encircles the wick hole. This raised rim creates a broad, shallow channel that stretches from the discus to the wick hole. The image on the discus is very worn, but identifiable as a Christian cross. The base of the cross runs onto part of the nozzle. Two filling holes are located opposite one another on the discus, on either side of the central cross. The nozzle is broad-based, round, and flat-topped. Opposite the nozzle is a solid, small, knoblike handle. The handle is undecorated and does not project from the body, but extends down the oil reservoir as a ridge until it meets the base, a raised and flattened circular ridge.

Broneer Type XXXI. For similar body shape, see Broneer 1930 nos. 1454, 1463, 1468. For similar lamp, see Metropolitan Museum of Art 74.51.2039.
LMA 3209.01

Donated by Hebert S. Zim and Sonia Bleeker Zim, 1966.

Labeled as: Europe

*3rd-7th century A.D., Middle East

Complete buff-colored lamp with a buff-orange colored slip. There is some indication of use, which appears on fire-blackening around the nozzle and wick hole. The slip is almost unrecognizable, and has worn away from most of the lamp. The body is ovoid, or pear-shaped with a nozzle that is not distinguished from the body. The entire surface of the lamp is decorated, except for the channel which runs along the nozzle. This channel is formed by a raised ridge and a concave depression. The discus is small and concave. The filling hole is located at the center of the discus and surrounded by a raised and off-center concentric ring. There is no handle, but a small, triangular knob that projects slightly from the raised ridge where a handle would be located. The designs are symmetrical on either side of the nozzle and central channel and consist of incised geometric patterns, including diamonds, circles, and lines. The base of the lamp is large and flat, and mimics the shape of the body.

For similar nozzle, body, and shoulder, see Hadad 1997 nos. 31, 32, 34, 43, and 47.
LMA 3209.02

Donated by Hebert S. Zim and Sonia Bleeker Zim, 1966.

*1\textsuperscript{st}-2\textsuperscript{nd} century A.D.

Complete lamp of the type called \textit{firmalampen} or Factory Lamps, of red-colored clay and dark brown slip, with dark slip worn away in many places. No signs of smoke-blackening are observable around the wick hole and nozzle, suggesting that this lamp may have been a votive offering or tomb deposit. The beveled shoulder is plain, except for two knobs opposite each other and equidistant to the handle and nozzle. A depressed center is bordered by a raised rim, and contains a central filling hole. This raised and continuous ridge would have contained any spilled oil, and drained it back into the oil reservoir. The central depressed area is plain and undecorated. Round-ended and flat-topped nozzle, that is long and extends beyond body of lamp. There is a groove on the nozzle that runs towards the filling hole, but does not extend to the center of the lamp, and terminates where it meets the raised rim of the depressed central area. Groove terminates at wick hole end between two raised lines that run perpendicularly to the nozzle. The handle is looped, with a hole that has two molded and incised lines which run its length and end at the base. The base of the lamp is a series of concentric incised circles and flat ridges. The center of the base is embossed with the raised letters of MYRO.

For similar lamp, but with heart-shaped nozzle and base inscribed with FONTEIUS, see Walters 1914, no. 907. For similar lamp with maker’s mark MYRO, but with heart-shaped nozzles and lugs placed nearer to nozzle, see Broneer 1930, nos. 526 and 527. For lamps with same maker’s mark see Bleecker 192, nos. 60A and 60B. See also Walters 1914, nos. 508 and 734, which has MYRO raised mark.
LMA 3210

Miscellaneous Collection

Labeled as Rome, Italy

*1st century B.C. – 1st century A.D., Roman

Nearly complete lamp in dark duff clay and a bright orange slip, with fragmentary nozzle. Half of the nozzle is broken and missing. There is fire-blackening on the intact part of the nozzle. The surface of the lamp shows signs of wear, which the base and oil chamber are more intact. The body and shoulder of the lamp are undecorated, except for two incised, concentric rings that separated the thin, rounded shoulder from the concave discus. The filling hole is relatively small and located at the center of the discus. The nozzle is short, round, and extends from the body of the lamp. A molded, pierced handle projects from the body and has two grooves that converge on the crest and extend down the spine as a single groove. The base is a round, raised discus with no decoration.

Broneer Type XXIV-XXV. For similar body, see Broneer 1930, no. 464 and 467.
Found by Professor J. Forsyth Crawford, a Missionary in Damascus, while excavating the foundation for a church. Donated by his son, John Crawford, in 1973.

Labeled as: Dimashq City, Damascus, Syria

*3rd-7th century A.D., Dimashq City, Damascus, Syria

This complete lamp is made of a brown-colored clay, with a buff-colored slip. Around the wick hole and nozzle, there are distinct signs of fire blackening. The handle shows signs of use, and has been buffed to a sheen due to repeated holding and transport. The body of this lamp is ovoid, with no distinction made for the pointed nozzle. The filling hole is large, and surrounded by ridge, and further enclosed by a ridge that extends past the wick hole, creating a channel. The wick hole is relatively small in comparison to the filling hole. Running along the channel from the filling hole to the wick hole are three raised lines. The entire surface of the lamp is decorated in a pattern that is symmetrical on either side of the central channel and nozzle. The pattern is of raised half-circles and perpendicular lines that are arranged in three rows, and radiate from the central channel. The handle is solid and projects vertically from the body of the lamp, interrupting the patterning banding. The base of the lamp is a pronounced ridge which follows that shape of the body of the lamp and extends upward to meet the tip of the nozzle.

For similar nozzle, body, and shoulder, see Hadad 1997 nos. 31, 32, 34, 43, and 47.