

An aspect of local lamp production in the western Pontic region : the case of lamps of types Hayes/ Saraçhane 9 and 10



Abstract: Lamps of the Hayes 9 type were produced in huge quantities in the state workshops of the Eastern Roman Empire and in the Western Pontic ateliers, where the Hayes 8 lamps were also manufactured, especially in Constantinople and Halmyris. The shape of the lamps and the fabric argue in favor of this assumption, further supported by the dating of contexts recorded during the excavation of Dobrogean sites. Thus, the Halmyris workshop complex appears to stand out among the lamp-producing centers, at least in the Black Sea area, during Justinian's reign.

Keywords: Western Pontic lamps, ceramic workshops, Halmyris, Justinian

An in-depth study, recently brought to an end, on late Roman lamps with a temple façade on the discus (Chrzanowski, Zhuravlev, and Topoleanu 2019, in this volume), has also shed new light on another type of lamps that is similar in shape, geographical distribution, chronology and production centers. In his publication of clay lamps excavated at Saraçhane in Istanbul, it was hardly a coincidence that John W. Hayes (1992) examined his types 9 and 10 directly after type 8, which was the lamp with the temple iconography. The present paper considers these two types, which are distinguished from one another principally by the presence of a nozzle

Florin Topoleanu

Institutului de Cercetări Eco Muzeale
(ICEM), Tulcea

channel (Hayes 1992: Type 9, pp. 82–83, 86, Nos 45–56, Pls 20–21, Type 10, p. 86, Nos 57–63, Pl. 21). The author also examines the production centers like Chersonesos and Halmyris in the Northern Black Sea, as well as Constantinople, the political, military and commercial center of the empire during Justinian's reign, and a primary trendsetter in terms of fashion and artisanal production, lighting devices included.

The discoveries from Saraçhane should now be reevaluated, as it seems obvious that workshops supplying the Eastern Roman imperial capital and its hinterland must have set the fashion trends that could have influenced the type, quantity and quality of every product, down to the humblest utensils like clay lamps. Even the most provincial workshops would have picked up new trends, frequently, however, downgrading them to their own technical and aesthetic capabilities, resulting in poorer execution, simplified ornaments or lower quality clay.

Hayes 9 lamps are quite coarse to look at, molded, the body circular or, in a few cases, oval in shape. The discus is defined by a pronounced rim, which is either closed or opens toward the nozzle, becoming then the beginning of the nozzle channel (as in type Hayes 10). The handles are tape-shaped with a groove down the center, opposite the nozzle although sometimes asymmetric, the hole often just marked but not pierced. The filling-hole as well as wick-hole are round, generally carefully pierced, but bigger than the ones found on other contemporary types.

The morphological description of type 8 lamps, that is, with the temple de-

sign on the discus, is very similar. In both types the clay is generally of good quality with fine particles of mica and lime. It is sometimes very thin, and is covered with a glossy, metallic-looking slip that is witness to the craftsmen's technical proficiency.

The Hayes 9 and 10 lamps come, most often, from the Western Pontic region. Apart from the 19 lamps published from Constantinople (12 lamps of type Hayes 9, seven of type Hayes 10), there are the lamps from Dobrogea: Ulmetum (two lamps of type Hayes 9, Pârvan 1913: Pl. XXX, Fig. 2, No. 6; 1923: Fig. 76), Tropaeum Traiani (one lamp of type Hayes 10, Cătănicu and Barnea 1979: Fig. 170/9.1), Sacidava (one lamp of type Hayes 10, Scorpan 1978: 161, No. 18, Pl. IV), Oltina (one lamp of type Hayes 10, Irimia 1968: Fig. 18/2) and Histria (one lamp of type Hayes 10, Bivolaru and Bottez 2016: 138, No. 10, Fig. 4). Nine lamps were discovered at Tomis alone, in the Roman Building with Mosaic (seven lamps of type Hayes 9 and two of type Hayes 10, unpublished; see Iconomu 1986: 104, Pl. X/4 and notes 1, 3), while another lamp, probably found in Dobrogea, is kept at the Provincial Museum of History and Archaeology, Prahova County, in Ploiești (type Hayes 9, Topoleanu 2012: 206, No. 124, Pl. XV). Another two lamps were unearthed at Sucidava (one lamp each of types Hayes 9 and 10, Tudor 1941: 380, Fig. 12a,b; Gherghe and Cojoc 2011: 105, Nos 197, 198, Figs 191, 192). Hayes 9 and 10 lamps are also found in the Museum of Varna (two lamps of type Hayes 9 and two of type Hayes 10, Kuzmanov and Minčev 2018: 166, Nos 892, 895–897, Pl. LX) and in St Petersburg (one lamp of type Hayes 9, Zalesskaâ 2006: 175–176, No. 363).

Standing out among these production centers is Halmyris (Murighiol commune, Tulcea province) with no less than 14 lamps, most of them fragmentary, found in well stratified contexts. Seven have been published (six lamps of type Hayes 9 and one of Hayes 10, Topoleanu 2000: 205–207, Nos 532–538), while another seven (four of type Hayes 9, three of Hayes 10) await publication. They are part of a remarkably large assemblage of lamps, collected since the beginning of the Halmyris excavations in 1981, covering a broad chronological span and an astonishing diversity of typologies (a complete catalogue is in preparation by the author).

Three more lamps from the Pontic region have been published, among which a lamp from Naxos (of type Hayes 9) deserves special mention, having a candelabrum added after baking (Bournias 2014: 791, No. 24, Pl. 4). Second is a fragmentary lamp probably of the same type from Athens (Perlzweig 1961: 195, No. 2857, Pl. 45), but with a discus diameter much larger than in standard lamps found in Constantinople; it had two, maybe three filling holes pierced in the discus. The third lamp, a local Egyptian variant of type Hayes 10, comes from Florence (Michelucci 1975: 100, No. 334, Pl. XIX).

All in all, 55 lamps of types Hayes 9 and 10 have been identified so far based on overall shape and quality of the fabric. Of these, 36 represent the type Hayes 9, which is visibly similar to type Hayes 8.

Unlike the type Hayes 8 lamps, which appear to have been produced chiefly in Constantinople, Chersonesos and Halmyris considering that more than half of the lamps published to date come from

these major centers of lamp production (Chrzanowski, Zhuravlev, and Topoleanu 2019, in this volume), the lamps of types Hayes 9 and 10 seem to have been manufactured outside the North Pontic area. Therefore, the 12 lamps from Constantinople and ten from Halmyris indicate that at least type Hayes 9 lamps were produced there. They are distinguished from the Hayes 8 lamps solely by the absence of the iconographic motif on the discus, which would suggest that it was executed on the discus after molding and before firing. Another 11 lamps of this type come from the Dobrogean area (assuming the specimens from Ploiești are included) and presumably from Sucidava. Tomis, with seven lamps, may be considered another production center. Finally, the scarcity of such lamps in non-Pontic regions, only one of them having a certain find spot (Bournias 2014: No. 24), is most probably because of the lack of decoration, making them less attractive for the Mediterranean clients.

Last but not least, the assumption that lamps of types Hayes 8 and 9 (and, to a certain extent, Hayes 10 as well) were manufactured in the same workshops (i.e., Constantinople and Halmyris) is further supported by identical dimensions and a high-quality fabric with mica and lime, as well as the same dating. As a matter of fact, all the discoveries from Halmyris came from levels IX–XIII, indisputably dated between the second half of the 5th century and the beginning of the 7th century AD, the same date being attributed to their nearest parallels.

One should not forget that Halmyris is attested as a late Roman lamp-producing center thanks to the discovery of the

remains of a kiln still containing some 30 intact or fragmentary lamps of type Hayes 1 (Asia Minor type) (Hayes 1992: 82–84, Nos 1–7, Pl. 18), as well as at least four different molds (Topoleanu 2000:

208–214, Nos 541–560, Pls LXVIII–LXX). It is evident, therefore, that Halmyris was an important lamp producer, meeting the demand of, at least, the western Pontic population in the 6th century AD.

CATALOG

TYPE HAYES 8

1. Complete lamp

Inv. No. 51551, S I, trench 2, -0.40 m, N 11

L. 9.50; Dia. 6.35; H. 3.09/4.40 cm

Fine clay, 2.5YR5/8, rare lime particles and mica flecks, glossy self-slip

6th century AD

2. Fragment

Inv. No. 51550, S II, trench 2, -1.25 m, N 11

L. preserved 8.02; H. 3.09 cm

Plain clay, 10R5/8, rare lime particles and mica flecks, mat slip 7.5YR7/6

6th century AD

3. Fragment

S II, trench Ao, -0.10 m, N 13

L. preserved 8.51 cm

Fine clay, 2.5YR6/8, rare lime particles and mica flecks, glossy self-slip

7th century AD

TYPE HAYES 9

4. Complete lamp

Inv. No. 42679, S II, trench 41–43, -0.90 m, N 10

L. 10.77; Dia. 6.52; H. 3.14/4.37 cm

Plain hard clay, 7.5YR6/4, coarse-grained with lime and stone particles, rare mica flecks, self-slip

6th century AD

5. Fragment

Inv. No. 42676, S II, trench 20, -0.90 m, N 11

L. preserved 8.64; Dia. 6.10; H. preserved 2.08/3.33 cm

Fine clay, 2.5YR5/6, rare lime particles and mica flecks, self-slip

6th century AD

6. Fragment

Inv. No. 51143, trench T 3, -0.35 m, N 13

L. preserved 9.13; Dia. 5.01; H. 3.20 cm

Fine clay, 7.5YR5/6, rare limestone particles, thick adhering slip 2.5YR5/8

6th century AD

TYPE HAYES 10

7. Fragment

Inv. No. 42678, North Gate, trench C 3, N12

L. preserved 9.90; Dia. 6.16; H. 3.57/4.02 cm

Medium fine clay, 5YR6/6, rare lime particles and mica, slip 2.5YR5/6

6th century AD

8. Complete

Inv. No. 47107, trench J 13/K 13, -0.66 m, N 12

L. 10.29; Dia. 5.81; H. 3.26/4.63 cm

Plain clay, 5YR5/8, stone and lime particles, self-slip

6th century AD

9. Fragment

Inv. No. 45343, trench N 17, -1.50 m, N 9

L. preserved 8.32; Dia. 6.70; H. 3.07/4.00 cm

Fine clay, 2.5YR5/8, few limestone grains, self-slip

5th century AD



Florin Topoleanu

ICEM, Tulcea

topflorin@gmail.com

How to cite this article: Topoleanu, F. (2019). An aspect of local lamp production in the western Pontic region: the case of lamps of types Hayes/Saraçhane 9 and 10. *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean*, 28/1, 341–347. <https://doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0013.7050>

References

- Bivolaru, A. and Bottez, V. (2016). Roman lamps discovered at Histria, in the Acropolis Centre–South Sector (2013 and 2015). *Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice*, serie nouă, 12, 131–140
- Bournias, L.C. (2014). Roman and early Byzantine lamps from the island of Naxos in the Cyclades. In N. Poulou–Papadimitriou, E. Nodarou, and V. Kilikoglou (eds), *LRCW 4: Late Roman coarse wares, cooking wares and amphorae in the Mediterranean. Archaeology and archaeometry. The Mediterranean: A market without frontiers I* (=BAR IS 2616/1) (pp. 787–798). Oxford: Archaeopress
- Cătănciu, I.B. and Barnea, A. (1979). Ceramica și descoperiri mărunte (Ceramics and small finds). In A. Barnea and I. Barnea (eds), *Tropaеum Traiani I. Cetatea* (pp. 177–226). Bucurest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România (in Romanian)
- Chrzanovski, L., Zhuravlev, D., and Topoleanu, F. (2019). Lamps with “temple façade” decoration witnessing urban vitality in the northern and western Black Sea and the ties with Constantinople. In L. Chrzanovski and I. Zych (eds), *Ancient lamps from Spain to India. Trade, influences, local traditions* (pp. 127–161). Warsaw: Warsaw University Press
- Gherghe, P. and Cojoc, M. (2011). *Opaițele romane și romano-bizantine descoperite în teritoriul Sucidavei* (The Roman and Roman-Byzantine oil lamps found in the territory of Sucidava). Craiova: Universitaria (in Romanian)
- Hayes, J.W. (1992). *Excavations at Saraçhane in Istanbul II. The pottery*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press
- Iconomu, C. (1986). *Un capitol al producției și schimbului de mărfuri în zona Dunării de Jos – lucernele, sec. I–VII e.n.* (A chapter on the production and exchange of goods in the area of the Lower Danube – lamps, 1st–7th century AD) (unpubl. Ph.D. diss.). University of Bucharest (in Romanian)
- Irimia, M. (1968). Cuptoarele romano-bizantine de ars ceramica de la Oltina (jud. Constanța) (Roman-Byzantine pottery kilns from Oltina [Constanța county]). *Pontica*, 1, 379–408 (in Romanian)
- Kuzманов, G. and Минчев, A. (Кuzманов, Г. and Минчев, А.) (2018). *Антични лампи: колекция на Регионален исторически музей Варна* (Ancient lamps. Collection of the Varna Regional Museum of History). София: Национален археологически институт с музей, Българска академия на науките (in Bulgarian with English summary)
- Michelucci, M. (ed.). (1975). *La collezione di lucerne del Museo egizio di Firenze*. Florence: Olschki

- Pârvan, V. (1913). *Cetatea Ulmetum II.1. Descoperirile campaniei a doua și a treia de săpături din anii 1912 și 1913* (Cetatea Ulmetum II.1. Discoveries of the second and third excavation campaigns in 1912 and 1913) (=Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice Ser. 2, 36). Bucurest: Socec (in Romanian)
- Pârvan, V. (1923). *Inceputurile vieții romane la gurile Dunării* (The beginnings of Roman life at the mouth of the Danube). Bucurest: Cultura națională (in Romanian)
- Perlzweig, J. (1961). *Lamps of the Roman period: first to seventh century after Christ* (=Athenian Agora 7). Princeton, NJ: American School of Classical Studies at Athens
- Scorpan, C. (1978). Descoperiri arheologice diverse la Sacidava (Various archaeological finds at Sacidava). *Pontica*, 11, 155–180 (in Romanian)
- Topoleanu, F. (2000). *Ceramica romană și romano-bizantină de la Halmyris sec. I–VII d. Ch.* (Roman and Roman-Byzantine pottery from Halmyris, 1st–7th century AD). Tulcea (in Romanian)
- Topoleanu, F. (2012). *Lămpile antice din colecțiile Muzeului Județean de Istorie și Arheologie Prahova, Ploiești* (Ancient lamps from the collection of the Prahova County Museum of History and Archeology in Ploiești). Ploiești: Oscar Print (in Romanian)
- Tudor, D. (1941). Sucidava II. Seconde (1937) et troisième (1940) campagnes de fouilles et recherches archéologiques dans la forteresse de Celei, département de Romanați. *Dacia*, 7–8, 359–400
- Zalesskaâ, V.N. (Залеская, В.Н.) (2006). *Памятники византийского прикладного искусства IV–VII веков каталог коллекции / Monuments of Byzantine applied arts, 4th–7th centuries: catalogue of the Hermitage collection*. Санкт-Петербург: Издательство государственного Эрмитажа

