**Bar-Ilan University**

**The Faculty of Jewish Studies**

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**Research Proposal for Master’s Degree**

**The “Samaritan” Lamps from the archaeological excavations of the next geographical regions: Shephelah, Sharon Plain, and Lower Galilee (Lamps’ Review and Catalogue)**

**(נרות "שומרונים" מהחפירות ארכיאולוגיות של האזורים הגיאוגרפיים הבאים: שפלה, מישור השרון והגליל התחתון (סקירת מנורות וקטלוג) )**

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***1) Gratitude***

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***2) Research goals and importance of the issue***

The study has two purposes. One purpose is: to put together all clay oil lamps, identified as "Samaritan oil lamps" from the Roman period up to the Early Islamic period, which were discovered during archaeological excavations carried out in Israel from 1990 till 2023. Some discovering lamps were published, but we have material from two archaeological excavations: Zemer and Zur Natan (kiln) that have not been published yet. This Corpus or Catalogue could not only help create a picture of what type of lamp was typical for a particular region but also help form a picture of the settlement of the Samaritans, a picture of their trade and cultural connections. In addition, the catalog material can help in a comparative analysis of lamps found in Israel with similar or similar, for example in shape, lamps found in neighboring countries: Jordan, Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey. It is a first purpose. The second one is: to try to answer the following questions: “If we say that all lamps, that are identified as "Samaritan" were used only by Samaritan communities or could we see two groups: the lamps, that were used by Samaritan communities for daily purpose and ritual purpose and the lamps, which were made as "Samaritan type" and were used by non-Samaritan communities as Jews, Pagans, Christians, or Early Muslims?”, “How it is possible to interpret patterns that cover the lamp’s wings as “symbols”?” and “Was there a Halachic practice, at Samaritans, of increasing the burning time like as Jews have?” The answer to these research questions could help to understand cultural and economic contacts between Samaritans and non-Samaritan groups during the next historical period: 1st century CE—7th century CE. At the same time, it could understand which type or variant was characteristic of a particular place, which types what type of these lamps were used by the Samaritans, and in which historical period the Samaritans settled in certain places. Before we make an overview of the research studies history of "Samaritan oil lamps" need to say some words about the lamp groups collected in this catalogue and the catalogue's structure. And here should be noted that this catalogue contains only clay lamps (Samaritan Oil Lamps), although it is known from archaeological excavations that the Samaritans also had bronze lamps, which are not included in this paper.

***3) Introduction and an Overview of the Study's History of Samaritans, their Material Culture, and the Issue of "Samaritan Oil Lamps"***

It has written a huge number of studies and monographs on Samaritans, their history, their contacts and trade with Jews, Hellenes, Romans, and Early Muslims, as well as their religion. From the variety of studies about Samaritans and their history, there are selected monographs and articles that help answer the questions posed in this study, in the the catalogue. All of them are divided into several groups: archaeological reports on excavations carried on in Israel from 1990 till 2023 and which artifacts are identified as “Samaritan artifacts”, in our case tell about lamps; monographs and articles that discuss the Samaritan history, religious aspects and their contacts with surrounding cultures—in addition to works dedicated to the Samaritans, also included studies about the general history of Israel during the Roman and Early Muslim historical periods, and studies concerning cultural issues, such as the interpretation of symbols that decorated lamps. Let us consider the selected studies of each group.

Besides final reports of archaeological excavations that were published in 'Atiqot (official IAA magazine), this research used academic works or more exactly, monographs of the next researchers: Ms. Varda Sussman, Dr. Yitzhak Magen and research articles of: Prof. Shimon Dar, Alfredo Mordechai Rabello Ms. Leah Di Segni and Dr. Roni Reich. Also worth mentioning is the collection of articles: “*Samaritan Cemeteries and Tombs in the Central Coastal Plain (Archaeology and History of the Samaritan Settlement outside Samaria (ca. 300-700 CE))”* edited by Prof. Oren Tal and Dr. Itamar Taxel and published at 2015. All this research in the field of Samaritan history and archaeology can be divided into two groups: research devoted to a specific issue, in our case talks about the "*typology of Samaritan Oil Lamps*," and general research. We will begin our review with a group of studies defined as the "*typology of Samaritan Oil Lamps.*" This is the first and main group of research papers.

The group of research works under the name "*Typology of Samaritan Oil Lamps*," includes the following works: Ms. Varda Sussman, "*Late Roman to Late Byzantine/Early Islamic Period* *Lamps in the Holy Land* *(The Collection of the Israel Antiquities Authority)*”, which was published in 2017. So, it needs to include her article "*Samaritan Oil Lamps*” נרות" "שומרונים from the collection of academic articles: “*The Samaritans*” edited by Ephraim Stern and Hanan in 2002. So, talks about research works of Israel archaeology and historic Dr. Yitzhak Magen.: "*The Samaritans and the Good Samaritan*," which was published in 2008. Let us briefly look at these two groups of research works. We begin to view the academic works of the first group briefly.

The first academic work that we briefly view is “*Late Roman to Late Byzantine/Early Islamic Period Lamps in the Holy Land (The Collection of the Israel Antiquities Authority)*” by Israeli researcher and archaeologist Ms. Varda Sussman. The author collects lamps dating from the 4th century CE—8th century CE. All lamps are described according to the geographical location of an archaeological site in Israel and according to dating. Also, Ms. Sussman presents in this research work various types and forms that were found during archaeological excavations of this or that archaeological site in Israel. These lamps are not only identified as "Samaritan Oil Lamps," they have common identification: "Ceramic Oil Lamps." Samaritans could use them for their religious or everyday purpose and so by non-Samaritans: Christians, possibly Jews, Pagans, or Muslims. Ms. Sussman does not emphasize specific groups of lamps either by ethnic or religious parameters. She gives a general picture that is characterized by a specific settlement, specific cave, or another archaeological site. Sussman examines oil lamps of the specified historical period according to geographical regions (South, Central Israel, or North) and sub-geographical regions such as Judean Shephelah or Negev. Each region is characterized specific type or several types during the specified historical period. So, needs to say that she (Ms. Varda Sussman) views and at the same time examines archaeological sites where were discovered oil lamp, she gives a general typology of lamps or lamps' groups, describes decoration elements that are characterized by specific lamps or specific lamps' group. The research work of Ms. Varda Sussman was taken by us as a model or basis for our catalogue. Except for this catalogue, Ms. Sussman wrote an article about lamp typology. This article was published under the title: "Samaritan Oil Lamps” (נרות "שומרונים") and it is included in the collection of academic articles: “The Samaritans”, edited by Ephraim Stern and Hanan Eshel. In this article, Ms. Sussman collects lamps, that are identified as "Samaritan" from archaeological sites that were discovered or studied till 1990. The importance of her research work (this article) is as follows: the types of lamps are clearly defined, the geographical area for which one or another type is characteristic is determined, the characteristic or specifical decoration elements of the lamps are indicated, and the dating one or another type is given. Ms. Sussman describes decoration elements that characterize each type and describes images, for example, images of objects that were used at liturgical practice in the Temple, and symbols, such as Menorah, Hanukkiah, and Temple. The researcher describes and studies everyday items and images of plants of the Holy Land, for example: pomegranate. We think that it is very important to research because it gives an idea of what decorative elements, subjects, and images were characteristic of a particular lamp's type in a certain historical period from the 4th century CE up to the 8th century CE. However, it is difficult to state unequivocally that these decorative elements, images, or subjects were characteristic only for "Samaritan Oil Lamps." It should be noted that the researcher does not state this, but emphasizes their prevalence among the Samaritans. Some of the images that are decorated "Samaritan Oil Lamps," raise several questions, for example, to what extent the Hanukkiah image was typical for the Samaritans, or talks about a lamp made in the Samaritan style, but it was intended for use by the non-Samaritan communities: Jews, Early Christian Communities? This question and others are discussed and studied in our research work, in our catalogue—some words about two academic works or monographs of archaeologist Dr. Yitzhak Magen. Tells about two of Dr. Magen’s monographs. One of them was published in 2005 under the title: “*Flavia Neapolis (Shechem in* *the Roman Period)*”. The second one was published in 2008 under the next title: “*The Samaritans and the Good Samaritan*.”

The first Dr. Magen’s monograph “*Flavia Neapolis (Shechem in the Roman Period)*” is based on the final reports of all archaeological excavations that were carried out at Shechem (Nablus; Flavia Neapolis) in the 70th, 80th, and at the beginning of the 90th of the past century. Yitzhak Magen carried out part of the excavations, and other Israel and foreign archaeologists carried others out. Dr. Magen describes "lamps" discovered during excavations, dates them, and identifies them as "Samaritan Type." So, the researcher gives context where lamps were discovered and he views specific details that could be characterized by the lamp and could use the term "Samaritan.” That is possible to say about this first monograph. Dr. Magen’s second monograph “*The Samaritans and the Good Samaritan*” is a more detailed research work. In “*The Samaritans and the Good Samaritan*” he collects all information, all archaeological data that are known today, and views. He examines the development of the Samaritans in Israel from the 1st century CE up to the 7th century CE through the focus of material culture. Tells about: mosaics, architecture, and distribution of the Samaritans' settlements. He does not miss the question about oil lamps, he devotes a separate chapter, which he calls that: “Samaritan Oil Lamps”. The importance of this chapter as well as the entire monograph, lies in the conclusions. The first conclusion consists of lamps’ geographical distribution: “*A large group of oil lamps is known as "Samaritan Lamps" discovered in the northern part of Israel (North-West Israel coast* *and North Samaria)*.” It is not exactly right. According to archaeological excavations after the 90th of last century, the distribution of the Samaritan settlements was to the southern part of Israel (the southwest coast) and the southeast: Lod-Ramle area and Bet Shemesh area. But the researcher’s second conclusion is more important for us. Dr. Magen states the following: “ *"Samaritan" lamps were characteristic of the material culture in the northern part of the Land of Israel and were used by the various populations inhabiting the area: Samaritans, Jews, and especially pagans. The presence of "Samaritan" lamps at the site does not necessarily indicate* *the existence of a Samaritan population,…”* “ (Yitzhak, Magen; *The Samaritans and the* *Good Samaritan*;…. p. 247). I took this statement as the basis for this work since it allows me to answer one of the research questions, which are formulated upper. We are talking about the question of whether it can be said that the lamps identified as “Samaritan Oil Lamps” were used by Samaritans themselves and not by Jews, Christians, or Early Muslims. In addition to two of Dr. Magen’s monographs, it is worth mentioning two of his articles devoted to the issues of “Samaritan Oil Lamps”. These two articles are: “*The Samaritans in the Roman-Byzantine Period” (יצחק מגן, השומרונים בתקופה הרומית-ביזנטית)* and “*The Areas of Samaritan Settlement in the Roman-Byzantine Period” (יצחק מגן, תחומי ההתיישבות השומרונית בתקופה הרומית-ביזנטית)*. These articles were published in Hebrew; in ”The Samaritans” (collection of academic articles); ed. by: Ephraim Stern and Hanan Eshel, in 2002. Their importance in the context of my research is that Dr. Magen views the historical context in which Samaritans developed during the 1st century BC and up to the 7th century CE. For example, in his article "The Samaritans in the Roman-Byzantine Period" Dr. Magen views the historical development of the Samaritan population during the Roman-Byzantine Period till to Early Islam. At the same time, he notes that reconstructing the Samaritan history is difficult, *“…due to the paucity of reliable historical sources and the paucity of archaeological excavations.*” (Yitzhak, Magen; “*The Samaritans in the Roman-Byzantine Period*;” The Samaritans” (a collection of academic articles; Hebrew);…. p. 213). This statement is partly true since today there is a lot of archaeological data, but there are still not enough written historical resources that could from one side complement the picture of Samaritan history, and from the other side confirm or refute certain conclusions. This is discussed in more detail in my research. The second article of Dr. Magen, “*The Areas of Samaritan Settlement in the Roman-Byzantine Period*” (was published in “The Samaritans” (a collection of academic articles; Hebrew), in 2002) is devoted to the issue of geographical distribution of the Samaritans in the Roman-Byzantine period based on available archaeological data and a few written historical sources. This study continues to discuss the question, that he raised in the previous article about the possibility of reconstructing the historical processes that occurred with the Samaritans based on available material. The reviewed works of researchers Ms. Varda Sussman and Dr. Yzhak Magen are the bases for my catalogue/research. Let us now consider the research works of Prof. Shimon Dar, Dr. Etan Ayalon, Prof. Oren Tal, and Dr. Itamar Taxel. All of them in one way or another touch on the issue of Samaritan history during the Roman-Byzantine period (3-7 centuries CE), their settlement, and their material culture, including ceramic lamps, as one of the elements of material culture, from different points of view. Let us look at them briefly.

Prof. Shimon Dar has published two, in my opinion, interesting and important articles, that examine the history and relationship of the Samaritans with the surrounding population of Palestine in the period after the Bar Kokhba revolt and the Byzantine period (5-6 centuries CE). The material from both articles is used in the catalogue. Let us examine them.

The first article was published in Hebrew and titled “*Samaritan Rebellions in the Byzantine Period—The Archaeological Evidence.*” The article was published in Hebrew in the collection of articles already mentioned above “The Samaritans” (a collection of academic articles; Hebrew, in 2002). In the article, the author gives an overview based on the archaeological data available at the time of writing, obtained as a result of excavations of Samaritan settlements, which were covered by the anti-Byzantine rebellions of the Samaritans in the 5-6 centuries CE. Prof. Dar examines Samaritan settlements around Flavia Neapolis (Shechem). Talks about Kdumim, Hurbat Borek, Zur Natan, Jat Village, and Tel Ashkaf. All of them are rural settlements, some are located near Flavia Neapolis (Shechem), and some are located far from Flavia Neapolis. According to archaeological finds, these settlements are identified as Samaritan settlements. They settle here till the 6th century, in other words up to destruction as a result of the suppression of rebellions.

The second article of Prof. Shimon Dar was published in 2023, in “*Liber Annuss*”, 73. The article was published under the title: “*Archaeological Evidence for Samaritan Expansion after the Bar-Kokhba Revolt (132-136 CE)*”. The main topic of the article, based on the title, is the reconstruction of the process of Samaritans settling settlements, cities in which the Jewish population lived, which was forced to leave them after the suppression of the Bar-Kokhba Revolt in 132-136 CE. Unlike the article “*Samaritan Rebellions in the Byzantine Period—The Archaeological Evidence*” in which Prof. Shimon Dar examines Samaritan settlements around Flavia Neapolis (Shechem), the second article the researcher deals with the period of the second half of the 2nd century CE and describes a demographic situation of the settlements in the area of the Mount Carmel, Ramat Menashe, and Sharon area. According to Prof. Shimon Dar, almost all settlements during this period are mixed from a demographical view, but there were a few ones that at this period were Samaritan settlements, like Raqit. If we talk about southern from the Carmel Mount, we can see that urban settlements such as Cesaria, Apolonia, and Jaffa have mixed populations (Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles). However, according to archaeological data and the statement of Prof. Dar, rural settlements have Samaritan character. Prof. Shimon Dar states that Samaritan expansion in this area (Sharon and South Shfela) occurred during the 4th and 5th centuries CE. In the area of Mount Carmel, according to the researcher’s statement, the Samaritans settled approximately in the second half of the 2nd century CE, approximately after the Bar-Kohba Revolt (132-136 CE). This conclusion Prof. Dar made is based on available archaeological data. Let us look at other two studies concerning the history of Samaritans and “Samaritan Oil Lamps”. We will talk about the article of Dr. Etan Ayalon, “*Horbat Migdal (Tsur Natan)—An Ancient Samaritan Village*,” which was published in Hebrew, in “The Samaritans” (a collection of academic articles), in 2002.

This article is devoted to the historical view of the Samaritan settlement Horbat Migdal, which is identified as a “Samaritan village." All reconstruction of this village and its development is based on archaeological data, inside it are oil lamps that were discovered during archeological excavations in the 80th century CE. Lamps are not specifically considered by the author of this article.

The last study from this research group about “Samaritan Oil Lamps” and “Samaritan history from the 3rd century to 6th century CE, is a joint monograph of Prof. Oren Tal and Dr. Itamar Taxel. Talks about the monograph “*Samaritan Cemeteries and Tombs in the Central Coastal Plain (Archaeology and History of the Samaritan Settlement outside Samaria (ca. 300-700 CE))*”. This joint monograph was published in English, in 2015.

In their monograph, Prof. Oren Tal and Dr. Itamar Taxel collect all archaeological data and finds that they get from the archaeological excavation of Tel Qasile (Apolonia (Herzliya), Tel Barukh (North Tel-Aviv) and Khirbet al-Hadra (Ramat Ha-Hayal; North Tel-Aviv). All these archaeological sites are identified as “Samaritan Caves” or “Samaritan rural settlements”. They describe each archaeological site in their study and after the description, they give a separate chapter about lamps. In this chapter (Chapter 14) they describe lamps, groups, and dating and give photos of lamps discovered during excavations at Tel Qasile or Tel-Barukh.

All these mentioned and briefly discussed monographs are mainly studies by Israeli archaeologists and historians studying the Samaritans and their material culture. So, this group should include the research article of the Honorary Research Affiliate of the Archaeological Department, at Sydney University, Ms. Kate da Costa.[[1]](#footnote-1) Tells about da Costa’s article “*Economic Cycles in the Byzantine Levant: The Evidence from Lamps at Pella in Jordan*”. The article was published in the historical and archaeological science journal “Levant” in 2010.[[2]](#footnote-2) As implied from the article’s title, the main topic of Ms. Da Costa's research is “*Economic contacts in the Byzantine Levant*”. Da Costa’s research is based on the analysis of the archaeological data, in this case on the analysis of the lamps found as a result of excavations at Pella in Jordan.

The importance of Da Costa’s article lies not only in addition to the use of terminology, which is typical to the scientific world of Europe, Britain, or Australia; but also in the fact that the researcher considers lamps as an important indicator of the trade and economic connections in Byzantine Levant. This important detail coincides with the fact in the Corpus, the collection and description of the lamps (their types, their decorative panels' covered lamps' shoulders) can help researchers to understand, based on various laboratory analyses of the material from which the lamp was made, what trade contacts were at the concrete historical period in Byzantine Levante or Eastern Meditteranean Part of Roman and later Byzantine empire. Now, let us return to the article of Ms. Da Costa.

Da Costa describes in the article oil lamps, discovered at Pella and dated by the 4th century-8th century CE. Among the lamps described in Da Costa’s article, the author also talks about “Samaritan Lamps”. According to the article were discovered eleven lamps which were identified as “Samaritan Lamps” (type: *S4*). They are dated from the 4th century to the 5th century. So, Da Costa writes that in percentage terms, “Samaritan Lamps” make up approximately 4% of the total lamps’ number, that were found (were found 799 lamps). They makeup approximately 1%-6% of the lamps’ number, identified as “Byzantine Lamps” (about 678 of 799, according to text, identified as “Byzantine”).[[3]](#footnote-3) Pella on the one hand was an important trading center (Pella lies on the Hill Road, which connects Bet Sean and Pella with King’s Road. The last was one of the main trade roads between Damascus and Petra, and Arabia). On the other hand, Pella was the neighboring city to Bet Shean, possible that a small Samaritan community arose there. Maybe, some Samaritan families settled at Pella for trading purposes. It is an important detail because it gives us the option to examine economic, and cultural ties between Samaritan communities and migration roads of Samaritan during the Roman-Byzantine periods in Levante. Before concluding the brief overview, we also should mention Ph. Jonathan Bourgel from the Universite Laval, Quebec, Canada, and Ruairidh MacMhanainn Bóid[[4]](#footnote-4)from Ormond Colledge-University of Melbourne, Australia. Begin from researchers of Ph. Jonathan Bourgel.

Ph. Bourgel writes some articles about Samaritan history and connections between Samaritans and the surrounding population. Tells about three articles, that are used in this research: “*The Samaritans during the Hashmonean Period: The Affirmation of a Discrete Identity?*”, “*John 4:4-42—Defining A Modus Vivendi Between Jews and the Samaritans*”, “*The Samaritans in the Eyes of the Romans and the Influence of the Roman Rule on the Relationship between Jews and Romans*”. The last article is written in Hebrew.[[5]](#footnote-5) As the titles of the articles suggest, Ph. Bourgel examines the issue of the relationship between the Samaritans and the Jews from the Hashmonean period, 167 BCE-63 BCE till the direct Roman rule (1st century CE-3rd century CE). Let us briefly overview these articles.

The article of Ph. Bourgel “*The Samaritans during the Hashmonean Period: The Affirmation of a Discrete Identity?*”, was published in 2019[[6]](#footnote-6), considers the issue of forming the Samaritan community as a separate and independent religious, ethnic, and cultural community from the Jewish community during the Hashmonean period, 167 BCE-63 BCE. Ph. Bourgel is based on the analysis of a few written sources, such as Josephus Flavius.

As the part of discussion, the researcher also examines the relationship between the Samaritans and Early Christians according to the analysis of the text “*Gospel of John*” (*4:4-42*). Ph. Bourgel examines a question of the relationship between the Samaritans and the Early Christians in his article “*John 4:4-42—Defining A Modus Vivendi Between Jews and the Samaritans*”, which was published in 2018.[[7]](#footnote-7) The main hypothesis of Ph. Bourgel’s article is that *evangelist John views the Samaritans as a separate group, not as a part of Jews. This group has no contact with Jews and according to John, the Samaritans are an erring group, they try to find the Divine Truth and Divine Salvation.* *At the same time the evangelist John believes that it is quite possible to ignore existing prejudices about the supposed ritual impurity of Samaritans, but only “the New Jew” (Christian) does not belong Old Jewish Community.* The conclusion that the researcher makes is the following: the episode of the meeting between the Samaritan woman and Jesus near the well (Gospel of John, 4:4-42) illustrates an idea about the possibility of overcoming all conflicts between two groups. My research work illustrates that contacts between two groups and two cultures occurred during the 1st century CE and still till the 3rd century CE. And the lamps illustrate this. The last Ph. Bourgel’s article concerns the issue of Roman power, Samaritans, and Samaritan’s juridical status in the 2nd century CE and 3rd century CE, after the Samaritans revolt against Rome. The article was published under the next title: “*The Samaritans in the Eyes of the Romans and the Influence of the Roman Rule on the Relationship between Jews and Romans*” in Hebrew, in 2012.[[8]](#footnote-8) Ph. Bourgel examines the issue of relationships between Samaritans and Romans, as well as changes in the legal situation with Samaritans in the specified historical period. His research is based on an analysis of available archaeological data on one hand, from the other hand, the researcher draws on Roman legal sources, but in their later reductions: “Codex of Justinianus” and “Codex of Theodosius”. Now, some words about an article, that is also used in my research work, on Ruairidh MacMhanainn Bóid.

The main theme of MacMhanainn Boid’s article is an analysis of religious texts of Samaritans and Jews during their “theological discussion” with Early Christians, for example with “Church Fathers”, like Origen. Mr. Boid in his article Concrete Time Borders: analyzes the 2nd century CE. At this time, for example, lives one of the “Church Fathers”, philosopher, early Christian scholar, ascetic, and theologian Origen (185-235 years). The researcher makes his analysis based on the use of religious, theological, and philosophical concepts regarding which there were certain disagreements. For example, the Creator’s name, which in Jewish tradition is not read or is not to be pronounced. It is known as the Tetragrammaton. According to Boid’s assumption, the “Church Fathers” agreed with the Samaritans, that possible to completely write and read the Tetragrammaton, but they changed the original God’s name to an abstract name. So, he assumes that during the 2nd century CE Jews began to form the tradition of not pronouncing, not reading, and not completely writing the Tetragrammaton.

In 2003, the journal “Australian Biblical Review” published an article by a researcher from Ormond College-University of Melbourn, Australia, Mr. Ruairidh MacMhanainn Boid under the title “*A Samaritan Broadside from the Mid Second Century A.D.*”[[9]](#footnote-9)

This was a brief overview of the history of the Samaritans' studies (their history, and their material culture), and about "Samaritan Oil Lamps," their distribution according to settlements and their typology. Except for studies about Samaritans (their culture, their material culture, and about lamps, known as “Samaritan Oil Lamps”, our work includes articles whose main theme is: “Symbol and its interpretation”. It tells about articles from the field of “Cultural Anthropology Studies”. The main article about this subject (the symbol and its interpretation) is “THE SYMBOL: The Origin and Basis of Human Behavior” by American anthropologist Prof. Leslie White, published in 1944. So I use the next article which has a connection with “the cultural anthropology term “symbol” and with archaeology. It tells about the article: “The Archaeology of Symbols”, by Prof. John Robb. Also included in this research work was a collection of articles about next questions: “Diaspora and it’s historical and cultural phenomena” and “Syncretism”. The last is characterized by the Late Roman Period-Early Byzantine period and cultural connections between Samaritans, Jews, Christians, and Pagans characterize it. These articles were published under the title: “*A Hybrid World: Diaspora, Hybridity, and Missio Dei”, in 2020, ed. by: Saridi Joy Tira and Juliet Lee Uytanlet.* Let us briefly consider from the mentioned works the article of Prof. Leslie White and the article of Prof. John Robb.

In 1944, a very important article was published in the field of cultural anthropology entitled: “*THE SYMBOL: The Origin and Basis of Human Behavior*”. In 1959, this article was included in a monograph called: “*The Evolution of Culture*”. The author of this article and the monograph was an American anthropologist, one of the fathers of cultural anthropology, Prof. Leslie A. White. The importance of the mentioned article, as well as a monograph of Prof. Leslie A. White, including this work, lies in the fact that he formulates an essential thesis: “*All human behavior originates in the use of Symbols. It was the Symbol which transformed our anthropoid ancestors into men and made them human.*” (White, Leslie A.; “*THE SYMBOL: The Origin and Basis of Human Behavior*”; p. 229). Not all researchers (anthropologists, archaeologists, and historians) agree with White’s thesis, but it still is fundamental for research. As a rule, disagreement among researchers is associated with the definition of the term “SYMBOL”: *what is the difference between symbol and decoration, and how to interpret it?* In particular, Prof. Jonh Robb from Cambridge University, tries to answer the question “*What is the difference between symbol and decoration and how to interpret it?*” in his article “*The Archaeology of Symbols*”, which was published in “The Annual Review of Anthropology” 1998. The main theme of Robb’s article is an answer to the next and important, according to the author, question: “*Why should archaeologists deal with symbols and how can they do so?*” Robb writes that “*human symbolism is so diverse*”, so he notes that a major problem for an archaeologist with symbol or symbols is “*understanding how varied kinds of symbols relate to each other*”. (Robb, Jonh E.; “*The Archaeology of Symbols*”;…p. 329). In this work I will not give a detailed analysis of Robb’s point of view, because this is not the purpose of the research, only to note a conclusion that makes Prof. Robb.

Prof. Robb formulates the next conclusion and this conclusion is the answer to the next question: “*Can we identify key symbols that structure other symbols and identities? How do* *knowledge, technological practice, rite, cosmology, and gender relate to one other?*” (Robb, Jonh E.; “*The Archaeology of Symbols*”;…..p. 341). The answer Prof. Robb is “Yes, we can identify key symbols”. He gives some directions on how is it possible to identify. According to the text of the article one of the directions is cross-artifact analysis. What is “cross-artifact analysis”? According to Prof. Robb, archaeologists typically and so usually deal with specific artifacts, but symbolism, and crossing boundaries may be key for understanding “*how objects are understood and used*” (Robb, Jonh E.; “*The Archaeology of Symbols*”;…pp. 341-342). In other words, the researcher tries to say that “decoration element”, “color”, and “object’s or artifact’s form” may indicate a certain function of this artifact. If we see the same decoration or color in other artifacts, but it is similar to the first one, we could say that function or possible function was “ritual”, or using for specific situations, using during religious ceremonials, or everyday use. But here the archaeologist must be careful. Perhaps our interpretation could be wrong, and for that, we need other similar artifacts with similar interpretations. The second direction according to Prof. Robb is: “*to incorporate symbols more fully into our understanding of the social relations.*” (Robb, Jonh E.; “*The Archaeology of Symbols*”;….p. 342). In my opinion, his conclusions are quite controversial, but I will not put them outside, I try to incorporate them during my research. In addition to the articles of Prof. Leslie A. White and Prof. John E. Robb, two more works, which are used in the text of the catalogue, were not briefly reviewed. This is a classical research monograph “Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman

Period” by Goodenough, E. R.[[10]](#footnote-10) and the article “Recreating Jewish Sacred Space: An Examination of Jewish Symbols on Ancient Oil Lamps” by Max Huemer[[11]](#footnote-11). In addition to the works mentioned, but not included in this brief review, should also be mentioned two monographs: “The Menorah, the Ancient Seven-armed Candelabrum (Origin, Form, and Significance)”[[12]](#footnote-12) and “The Menorah (Evolving into the Most Important Jewish Symbol)”[[13]](#footnote-13) by Ph Archaeology Hachlili Rachel. These three works are discussed in more detail in the text of the catalog in the chapter devoted to symbols and their possible interpretation. Let us now move on to consider the mention of Samaritans in historical and religious written sources.

***4) A brief overview of historical and archaeological sites that were identified as Samaritan settlements or burial caves***

The catalogue contains oil lamps (Samaritan Oil Lamps) from seventeen historical and archaeological sites identified as Samaritan sites. In addition to seventeen sites, three more: Yavne East, Jericho, and Hirbet Ur’a (Ramat Ha-Sharon) are mentioned in this catalogue. I did not enter lamps from these sites, because at Yavne East and Hirbet Ur’a, archaeological excavations are still ongoing. Jericho is a special case. Only one lamp (Samaritan) was discovered here. Before beginning a brief overview, one must note that all seventeen sites are presented in this catalogue from the northern part of Israel to the southern part.

1) *Ar’ara*

The site was discovered by archaeologists of IAA (Israel Antiquities Authority) in 1994 near the Arabic town Ar’ara, in the region of Wadi Ara. While installing sewage lines in this town, was discovered a burial cave.

According to excavation, this is a “family burial cave” and it was used during the Late Roman Period (3rd-5th century CE) and the Mamluk Period (12th-13th century CE). According to the plan of this burial cave, this burial cave applies to “Arcasolia Type” or “Chamber Tomb with Arcasolia”. The burial cave had been looted in the past, but during the excavation, two lamps were discovered. They were discovered, according to plan, at niche (arcosolia). At plan, this niche has number L.503, the southern niche.

The found lamps are identified as “*Samaritan Oil Lamps*” and apply to two different types: “*Beit Natif Type*” (3rd-4th century CE) and “*Pear Shaped Form Type*” (5th-6th century CE). Based on the dating of the lamps, this burial cave, in our example, this niche (L. 503), was used by several generations of one family, which is a possibility, from the 3rd century CE to the 6th century CE.

2) *Zemer/Yamma (Tel Yaham)*

Zemer is the common name of four Arabic modern villages, which were united and integrated into one village in 1988. Tells about the next villages Ibthan, Marja, Bir al-Sika, and Yama. Two of them lie at the historical and archaeological sites: Tel Ibthan (איבת'אן) and Tel Yama (תל יחם).

Both sites are located on a chalk hill in the eastern Sharon region, in the Samaria foothills, and to the south of Nahal Hadera. Later, in the Roman Period, this region was a part of the Roman system of roads and it was a connection between Samaria and Israel's coastal area.

According to archaeological data, people settled in these places in the Neolithic period (c. 7000-1700 years BCE). The first settlement, in the Neolithic period, was found at the Tel Yama (Kh. Yama). People lived here till the Persian Period (586-333 BCE) and after that there was desolation. The new settlement was found by inhabitants in the Kh. Ibthan (Tel Ibthan). According to archaeological data here, in Ibthan, people lived throw the Hellenic Period, the Roman Period, and Byzantine Period. After the Arabic conquest of Israel, some people came back to Kh. Yama (Tel Yama) and found a village, that stands till today.

The oil lamps, which are identified as “*Samaritan Oil Lamps*”, listed in our cathalogue, were discovered during the salvage excavation at Kh. Yama (Tel Yama). A salvage excavation at this site was in July-August, 2021 on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) and it was directed by an archaeologist from IAA, Dr. Dor Golan.[[14]](#footnote-14) During this excavation, the “*Pit of Middle Bronze Period*” with Byzantine dumps was discovered. The pit was discovered, according to the report, near the remains of the building. The building dates to the Byzantine Period and pit dates from the Middle Bronze Period. The oil lamps found date back to the period: 3rd-5th century CE. All of them are whole lamps with traces of burning. It tells that they were in use. Their shape form is *almond* and they are identified as “Samaritan Oil Lamps”. The base for this identification is: “*broken or cut filling hole*”. This is the sign of Samaritan religious practice: they keep new lamps sealed according to their Halachic rules about purity.

3) *Tel Hefer (Tel Ifshar East)*

The archaeological and historical site lies in the river basin of Naḥal Alexander. According to the report, this site has two names: *Tel Ifshar East* and *Tel Hefer*.[[15]](#footnote-15) This archaeological and historical site was inhabited, according to archaeological data, from the Chalcolithic period (4500-3500 BCE). Here the settlement never interrupted. We can find traces of the Bronze period (especially: the Middle Bronze and the Late Bronze) and the traces of the Iron Age. No traces of the Persian period and Hellenistic period were found. It is possible that this place was abandoned, or perhaps it was destroyed. An archaeologist from IAA, Dr. Eli Yannai, writes that during the Roman and Byzantine periods this site “*was once again densely built*”.[[16]](#footnote-16)

From November 1993—July 1994 the archaeologists from IAA carried out a salvage excavation at this historical and archaeological site. The head of the excavation was the already mentioned archaeologist Dr. Eli Yannai. The excavation’s result is the remains of a rural villa. This villa consists of two buildings: *a southern building* and *a northern building*. So, it was discovered a large winepress. The villa dates from the 3rd century till the 8th century CE. Here were settled different ethnic and religious groups. So, from the 3rd century CE, it was the Samaritan settlement. The base for this statement: oil lamps (fragments) that were discovered during excavation and identified as “Samaritan Oil Lamps”. All these fragments are dated by the 3rd century CE and by the 4th century CE. Samaritans lived here till the beginning of the 5th century CE. The period of the 5th century and 6th century was the “Christian period” and from the 7th century CE till the 8th-9th century, there were settled Muslims.

4) *Miska*

There were no archaeological excavations at Miska until April 2008, however, from the resources, it is known that this was one of the main places to produce glass vessels and ceramics during the Roman, Byzantine, and Islamic periods. Misha is situated between the two biggest ancient cities: Appolonia(coastal site, ancient urban settlement) and Samaria-Sebaste. Misja lies at the trade road between these sites and plays a connection role between them.

According to archaeological data, which is based on archaeological excavation (April 2008, by IAA), were discovered next archaeological layers: Byzantine Stratum, Early Islamic Stratum, and Ottoman Stratum. Byzantine Strstum and Early Islamic Stratum are characterized by the “floor” of these periods and large refuse pit. All architectural remains, and walls, are dated to the Ottoman period. During the Byzantine period and Early Islamic period, Miska was an industrial area and, it looks like, connects Sharon, a coastal area with Shomron.

During the excavation of the refuse pit, dated by the Byzantine period, seven solid lamps dated 3rd -4th century CE and were, of seven lamps, solid lamps dated 6th -7th century CE. According to this archaeological data, we can assume that the refuse pit appeared in the Late Roman period and was used throughout the Byzantine rule and into the early Islamic period.

5) *“French Hospital” (Jaffo-Tel-Aviv)*

According to a report in March 2011, rescue excavations were taking place in the area of the French Hospital in Jaffa. It was a rescue excavation of IAA under the head of the next archaeologists: Dr. Peter Gendelman and Dr. Ayelet Dayan.

During this excavation, burial caves, and construction remains facilities were built inside limestone rocks. The facilities are dated by the Persian Period (c. 539 BCE-c. 332 BCE). The burial caves are dated by archaeological data (oil lamps) 5th-8th century CE. Tells about the Late Roman Period, Byzantine Period, and Early Islamic Period. The burial caves were built inside limestone rocks and were used by some generations and were family caves. Caves type is “Cist grave” and “Chamber Tombs”. The “Chamber Tombs” are characteristic of Christian burials of the Byzantine period. The distinctive feature of such burials is the image of a round stone covering the entrance of the cross. All oil lamps, which date from the 5th-8th century CE, were discovered in the excavation of these burial caves.

6) *Hirbet el-Ni’ana*

Hirbet el-Ni’ana is situated on the hill that lies between two modern settlements: Kibbutz Naan (on the west) and rural settlement Pathiya (on the east). According to a report, which was written by archaeologist Ofer Sion, in 1992 there was a survey excavation. The purpose of this excavation was a building of road. The excavation was organized by the IAA (Israel Antiquities Authority). The archaeological data of this survey excavation is: a cistern with a vault, mosaic floor, and remains of a building (possibly used to keep water, according to the report’s text).

In December 1996, archaeologists from IAA began a rescue excavation in this place before the construction of the road began. The excavation was completed in January 1997. Ofer Sion writes in the report, that during this rescue excavation specialists from IAA discovered: remains from the glass industry, and ceramic lamp molds (which were for the most part unused) and lined up five tombs. Only two of them (of five tombs) were excavated. According to data of the excavation of these two tombs the next information: the tombs were built in the 4th century and were used till the 5th century. During the 8th century, these tombs are reused, but for a short time. As Sion writes the tombs were built as a singular burial or perhaps these were the burials of the same family for several generations. The burials were looted around the 5th century and it looks like they were left at this period.

Between the items that were discovered during excavation were two oil lamps. Researcher Varda Sussman, according to the text identifies as “Samaritan Oil Lamps”. She writes that there are two different types: “*Beit Natif type*” and “*Candle Stick Form Lsmp*” (*Large Slipper Lamp*). The first type is characterized for the 4th-5th centuries and the second type is characterized for the 7th-8th centuries. According to these lamps, archaeologists identify these tombs as “*Samaritan tombs*” and historical sites as “*Samaritan industrial and rural sites*”.

7) *Zur Natan (Samaritan Kiln)*

Zur Natan has another name: *Hurvat Migdal*. Archaeological data tells about a rural settlement which is identified as a Samaritan village, dates from the 3rd century to the 6th century (Roman Period-Late Byzantine Period). During the excavations that were here from 1980 and till now, were discovered the bathhouse, building remains, agricultural and crafts buildings, caves (identified as Samaritan).

During the excavation in 2019 by Hagit Turge, three pottery kilns were found. These kilns are dated to the Late Byzantine Period (5th-6th century). They wereSamaritan pottery kilns discovered as a group of lamps dated 5th-6th century. According to archaeological data, after they were used, they began to be refuse pits.

8) *Ramla South*

Possibly the Samaritans settled in Ramla around 705 years, after Ramle was founded as a new capital of the Caliphate province-Phalestin. It happened after a new governor from the Ummayad dynasty Prince Sulayman ibn Abd al-Malik began to rule here after the Arabic concation of Israel. According to the text of the book “Kitab Al-Budan” (The Book about Territories”) he moved the local populace of Lod (Lydda) to the new capital Ramla. According to the “Kitab Al-Budan” Samaritans were among those displaced.[[17]](#footnote-17)

Archaeological data of the archaeological excavation[[18]](#footnote-18) that was here, indicates that a Samaritan settlement had a rural character. The finds, which were identified as “Samaritan”, inside oil lamps, were discovered at the archaeological excavations of rural facilities, such as water cisterns, remains of rural buildings, kilns, and olive or grape presses. In our case, according to the report of excavation, were discovered some water cisterns, canals for irrigation, ceramic pipes, building remains, and refuse pit.

Most of the lamps found as a result of excavations in Ramla South were discovered in a layer called: “Fill”. According to the report, only three lamps were discovered during the excavation of the pool and subterranean vaulted chambers. The last, subterranean vaulted chambers at the Early Arabic Period (Ummayad dynasty rule) were used as refuse pits. Their original purpose was a collecting water pool, like a cistern for collecting and keeping water.

All oil lamps are identified as “Samaritan Oil Lamps” and date by the 7th century CE—the first part of the 9th century CE.

9) *Arsuff (Appolonia)—Tel Arshaf*

In November 1998 archaeologists of IAA made a salvage excavation in Moshav Rishpon (corner of the streets: Ha-Perahim and Ha-Gan). Mr. Amir Gorczalczany was the head of this excavation. This historical and archaeological site is situated near Arsuff (Appolonia), 34 kilometers to the south of Caesarea.

During the Bronze Period and during the Hellenic Period and Roman Period this area consisted of Arsuff (Appolonia). At these times, it was the land of Arsuff (Appolonia) polis.

According to archaeological reports here were discovered two burial caves. It was chamber tombs with arcosolium. They were cut out on a limestone ridge (Kurkar Ridge).[[19]](#footnote-19) Mr. Gorczalczany dated these caves by the 3rd-4th century CE and base for this were two things of archaeological data: construction of burial caves (arcosolium) and archaeological finds such as oil lamps.[[20]](#footnote-20) He also writes in the report that only one cave (of two discovered caves) was the “Samaritan Burial Cave”. This cave is located southwest of Cave 1. He gave to this cave number 2, according to the text. Inside, archaeologists discovered two skeletons, not whole (teeth, limbs). According to this data, Mr. Gorczalczany says that in this cave were graved two persons. One of them was an adult, aged 30-40 and the second was a child, aged 4-6 years old. It is difficult to identify their gender: man, woman, girl, boy. Maybe, tells about a family grave. During the excavation of this cave, various objects were found nearby, such as sherds of store jars and bowls, fragments of glass vessels, and an oil lamp, which was identified as a “Samaritan Oil Lamp, type 1”. Mr. Amir Gorczalczany dated this cave by the 3rd-4th century CE based on the found objects, especially an oil lamp (Samaritan Oil Lamp).

10) *Horbat Roses*

The remains of the settlement date back to the next historical period: 4th century-7th century CE. According to the archaeological data of archaeological excavation from 1994 this place or region was inhabited by a Samaritan population. All lamps that were discovered according to their typology are "Almond Shaped Form". They are mold-made lamps. They are decorated with geometric images. Some of the images are schematic and symbolic images—for example, Hannukiya, Palm branches, and Semi-Arches with Hannukiya inside them.

11) *Bet Shean*

According to a report that was published in 2014, I ‘Atiqot 77 in 2018 was rescue excavation before building the youth hostel. The excavation area is southern from Bet Shean hill and from Bet Shean town of Roman and Byzantine Periods. This is a burial cave area during the Roman and Byzantine Periods because it is outside of Bet Shean’s town borders.

During excavation of this area, oil lamps from several periods. The Samaritan oil lamps are dated to the Byzantine period (3rd-4th century CE and 5th-7th century CE). As the report notes, most of the lamps were found in layers that were difficult to relate to specific occupation levels.[[21]](#footnote-21)

It needs to be written that Bet Shean was located on the trade route between Kinneret, the Mediterranean coast, and the valley in which Gerasa (modern Jordan) was located. There were trade connections between Gerasa (Jerasa) and Beth Shean, as an intermediary in trade. Evidence of these connections can be found in lamps of the same type found in Beth Shean and Gerasa (Jerasa). These trade connections still function in the Early Muslim Period (lamps of the same type were discovered at Bet Shean and Jawa, near ancient Gerasa (Jerasa). These parallels are reflected in the cathalogue.

12) *Tel Qasile*

Tell Qasile is a small multi-period mound. It is located ca 0.25 kilometers from the Yarkon River. Today this is the Israel Museum area (Ramat-Aviv district, Tel-Aviv). This historical site is identified as a "Samaritan settlement". The first archaeologist who identified this site as a "Samaritan" was an Israel archaeologist Ph.D. Kaplan Jacob. It happened in 1965 when he founded several burial caves. Since then around this site (El-Khirbe; Hirbet el-Hadra) were discovered Samaritan synagogue, description (this description was published by Leah Di Segni, "The Greek Inscriptions in the Samaritan Synagogue at El-Khirbe. ( In F. Manns and E. Alliata eds. Early Christianity in Context, Monuments and Documents. Jerusalem; pp.231-239) and many burial caves. In May 1992 there were construction works and as a part of the Israel Antiquities Authority made a safe archaeological excavation under the chief of archaeologist Etan Ayalon (IAA). During this excavation discovered burial cave, identified as the "Samaritan Burial Cave" dating 3-5 centuries CE. In the burial chamber, inside the cave, a lamp was discovered that dates back to the 3rd-5th centuries CE.

13) *Tel Ishqaf*

The archaeological site known as "Tel Ishqaf" according to the final report of archaeologist Orit Segal (Israel Antiquities Authority) is a small mound "on the hamra hills alongside the alluvial valley of Nahal Alexander". Today this site lies to the North-East from Kefar Yona and the North-West from Burgata. During the salvage excavation during the season of January 2009, the remains of the building. Segal describes this building as a "Roman Building" and dates from the Early Roman Period, 1-2 centuries CE. That may tell about "rural building" or exactly "rural villa of the Early Roman Period". So, were discovered remains of vinepress. This press date by the Byzantine Period (5-7 centuries CE). So, it is possible to say, that here people were settled from the Early Roman Period till the Byzantine Period (1/2 centuries-6/7 centuries). According to lamps, during excavation was discovered "Samaritan Lamp". It dates 1-2/3 centuries CE, Early Roman Period. This lamp is partly preserved. So, according to the report, some fragments of oil lamps, perhaps other lamps of this type. The form lamp is "pear-shaped". This lamp is without a handle and isn't decorated. The color of the material after burning is sad. In the mold-made lamp, the base has an around form. This lamp is an "Oil Lamp from the refuse pit of Miska".

14) *Ramla-Matsliah*

Perhaps the Samaritans settled here in the 7th century CE, after the resettlement of the population of Lod to the new capital of the Caliphate province, Phalestin, Al-Ramla in 705 years, when according to the text of the book “Kitab Al-Budan” (The Book about Territories”), the Prince and at the same time governor of the new province of Ummayad Caliphate, Sulayman ibn Abd al-Malik, concerned Lod, destroying and at the same time founded the new province of Palestine, Al-Ramla.[[22]](#footnote-22)

A salvage archaeological excavation was conducted here before the construction of Highway 431 in July 2005—January 2006. The excavation was carried out by the Institute of Archeology of Bar-Ilan University under the guidance of archaeologists Joe Uziel and Rona Avisher Lewis. Before this excavation, archaeologists from IAA made the inspection and discovered a kiln, and remains of walls of the building with floor and water cisterns. According to archaeological data from Bar-Ilan University excavation, remains of rural villa. It was a rich rural complex, according to the report of excavation, the floor was decorated by mosaic pano with geometric images. It was typical for the wealthy population. Joe Uziel and Rona Avisher Lewis date this villa to the 6th-8th centuries CE. One of the reasons for this dating was the finds, which included oil lamps dating from this historical period. These oil lamps are identified as “Samaritan Oil Lamps”. Based on this data, archaeologists identify this villa as a rural Samaritan villa.

15) *Horbat Glilot (Horbat Gelilot)*

The site (historical and archaeological object) Horbat Glilot/Geliot[[23]](#footnote-23) lies in the southern part of Sea Valley Sharon (Central District), to the southwest of Herzliya, and the east of Tell Michal. The report tells about one of the small settlements that were founded during the Roman-Byzantine periods.[[24]](#footnote-24) Archaeologists Weiss Levi and Itan Ayalon from IAA write in the report that Horbat Glilot according to archaeological data is a rural settlement like Herzliya Bet, Kfar Shmeriyahu. According to this statement, we can guess that during the Roman period and the Byzantine period, there was “an agricultural belt”. This also includes Ramat Hasharon, where a rescue excavation is currently underway under the leadership of archaeologist Dr. Yoav Arbel from IAA. Here was discovered a rural villa or if exactly rural agricultural complex, that functioned and settled during the Byzantine period, and suddenly people left it. Why did they leave? This is not clear. According to archaeological finds, in our case, oil lamps, this settlement was a “Samaritan rural villa”. Possible to date it by around the 5th-6th century, but it does not exist. Horbat Glilot, according to archaeological finds, especially oil lamps, is identified as a “Samaritan settlement”. The oil lamps, which are identified as “Samaritan Oil Lamps”, date from the first or second century till the fourth century. The lamps are divided into two types forms: *pear-shaped form* and *oval form*. Based on the data we can tell that during the Roman Period (perhaps from the first century CE) and till the Byzantine period, the main occupation of Samaritans was agriculture (growing grapes, making wine, growing olive trees, and maybe wheat). The agriculture was a base for their economic life. The last detail that needs to say: the Samaritans settled in Horbat Glilot in the first century.

16) *Herzliyya Bet*

In 1993, salvage archaeological excavation was carried out in Herzliya City, district Bet. Except the report in the online edition of IAA (Israel Antiquities Authority) ‘Atiqot 110, 2023.[[25]](#footnote-25) Previously, the excavation material had not been published. The report was published by Ph. Candidate Itai Elad (archaeologist, IAA).

According to the report’s text, during this excavation was discovered rural villa. It dates from the 5 century CE. It was a luxury rural complex with rich decoration, such as a mosaic floor. Thus mosaic floor covers triclinium. Near the villa are discovered remains of mikveh. Together with the villa, it forms one construction. The mikveh was built according to Samaritan Halachic rules. Based on the fact that an integral part of the villa was the mikveh, identified as Samaritan, the entire villa is identified as Samaritan. In rural areas, the Samaritans tried to build a mikveh either next to their dwellings or as part of a building.

So, during excavation, different types of ceramics were discovered: *storage jars, lids, and cooking pots*. And between them, archaeologists find a small fragment of the oil lamp. It is the nozzle part. It dates from the late 3rd/early 4th-5th century CE.

17) *Caesarea Maritima*

The lamps included in the cathalogue were discovered during the archaeological excavation of burial caves.[[26]](#footnote-26) The local population used these burial caves, i.e. residents of Caesarea Maritima.

During I.Oren’s excavation was discovered line of caves. The archaeologists excavated three areas: A, B, and C. Area B is northern to Caesarea’s walls; areas A and C are southern to Caesarean Hippodrome and Caesarea’s walls. Except this, we could tell that according to archaeological data three areas of burial caves represent three types of burials. They are cist tombs, chamber tombs with arcosolia, and vaulted graves. According to archaeological data, all caves are dated by the 2nd-5th centuries CE.

The lamps that were identified as “Samaritan Oil Lamps”, were discovered during the excavation of the chamber tomb with arcosolia. Were discovered about 40 oil lamps, almost are hole lamps. In the report I. Oren writes that all oil lamps (Samaritan) are dated by the 3rd-5th century CE, and their shape is “*Pear-Shaped Form*” and as written in the report the archaeologist Ms. Varda Sussman identifies several subtypes: “Yavne subtype”; “Beit Natif subtype” and several lamps that are difficult to identify which subtype. The lamps are decorated with geometric patterns, plant/plant patterns, amphoras images, and schematic patterns of the Menorah.

18) *Giv’at Ha-More*

This site, according to archaeological data, was settled from the Bronze Period. The population lived in this area almost continuously until the Mamluk era. During this long historical period, we see the change in ethnic and religious groups. According to archaeological data, the period of the 2nd century CE was this change line. Until the middle of the 1st century CE—mid. 2nd century CE we see mainly traces of the presence of the Jewish population. From the mid. of the 2nd century, according to data, the Jews slowly leave this area. Maybe it consists of the results of the Jewish Revolt against Roman Power in 66-71 years of the 1st century CE. But this is only an assumption. The Samaritans settled here at the end of the 2nd century CE and during the 3rd century CE, they were the dominant ethnic-religious group here. During the next, 4th century, the Christians changed them.[[27]](#footnote-27)

The site of Giva’at Ha-More was excavated several times. The first excavation was in 1976 and the last excavation was in August 2013. The head of the last excavation was archaeology Mr. Eyad Bisharat on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA). During this excavation, three burial caves. These caves were cut out in soft limestone and made as Kokh system caves (Loculus caves). Mr. Bisharat dated these caves by the 3rd century. He based his historical and archaeological dating on archaeological finds: jars, oil lamps, and plates.

During the excavation, 90 oil lamps (their fragments and whole lamps) together in three burial caves. All oil lamps consist of different types, such as: “Herodian Type”, the “Northern Darom Lamp” (“Judean Type”), “Discus Lamps”, and “Pear-Shaped Form Lamps”.Not all of them are identified as “Samaritan Oil Lamps”. We can state that was so discovered the “Samaritan Oil Lamps” only according to four lamps (Pear-Shaped Form) from Cave A and one pear-shaped form lamp from Cave C. But here we must make an important note: Cave A and Cave C according to data were used till the 2nd century CE by the Jews and only from the 3rd century CE did they begin to be used by the Samaritans for burial purposes.

This is a short review of the historical and archaeological sites where were discovered oil lamps, which were identified as “*Samaritan Oil Lamps*” and which were listed in the cathalogue. More detailed these sites are described in the research work, in Chapter I—*Geographical, Historical, and Economic Context of the Archaeological and Historical Sites from which the Lamps, identified as "Samaritan Oil Lamps", are collected in the Catalogue*. This chapter is entirely devoted to the historical and geographical overview of the previously mentioned historical sites.

***5)* *Methodology***

Methods which are used in this study, are next:

--collection and processing of the data (our case talks about “Samaritan Oil Lamps” from archaeological excavations in Israel from 1990 till to 2023)

--interpretation of patterns that cover the lamp’s wings as “symbols” (this interpretation is based on the theory of “Iconography”)

Let us briefly view these methods.

*The collection and processing of data*

--lamps, which are collected in this catalogue, are identified as “*Samaritan Oil Lamps*”

--the historical period that was taken, is 3-8 centuries AD

--all lamps are presented in the context of the historical and archaeological site where they were found during archaeological excavations.

--all archaeological sites are presented according to their geographical area

-- comparisons are made with lamps of a similar type found elsewhere, both within Israel and in neighboring countries

*Interpretation of patterns*

Interpretation of patterns, interpretation of images, or interpretation of a certain object found during archaeological excavations is a fundamental part of archaeology, which is called “*interpretation archaeology*”. “*Interpretation*” is based on the next statement: “*A Symbol is a thing the value or meaning of which is bestowed upon it by those who use it*” of American anthropologist White Leslie A. He formulates his statement in his article that was published under the title: “The Symbol: The Origin and Basis of the Human Behavior” (“ETC: A Review of General Semantics” (Summer, 1994); Vol. 1, N4, 1994; p. 230).

In this work, an auxiliary comparison method is used for interpretation. What does it mean? It is taken from an oil lamp dating from the 5th-6th centuries CE and identified as the "Samaritan Oil Lamp". According to the context where a lamp was found, an assumption is made about the purpose of the lamp. At the same time, the researcher gives a description of the pattern or image, which is covering the lamp. When interpreting this image, this drawing is compared with a drawing of a lamp dating from the same period, but found in a different geographical area and identified as, for example, a “Jewish Oil Lamp”. Talks about the “Menorah image”, “Hannukiya”, “Pomegrand image” and “Schematic pattern of Palm branch”. These patterns are characterized by lamps in “Samaritan style” and oil lamps, which are in “Jewish style”. Based on the interpretation of the symbol, its description, as well as the purpose of the lamp, an answer to the research question is sought: is it possible, based on the decoration of the lamp, to consider it as made and used by the Samaritans, or is it a matter of “Samaritan style”? This is especially true for those lamps that were found in burials or burial caves around which or in which there is no clear identification that the burial or burial cave was Samaritan.

***6) The Catalogue’s Structure***

The catalogue consists of the following:

*Contents*;

*Introduction*—Formulation the main research question with any questions that have a connection with it and describe studying the history of the question about "Samaritan Oil Lamps;"

*Chapter I*— Geographical, Historical, and Economic Context of the Archaeological and Historical Sites from which the Lamps, identified as "Samaritan Oil Lamps", are collected in the Catalogue

 I.1 *Common Review of Geographical, Historical, and Economic Context of Main Parts of Israel: Galilee, Sharon Valley, Hof Ha-Sharon area, and Shfela*

 I.2 *Review of historical and religious written sources about Samaritan settlements during the Roman, Byzantine, and Early Islamic Periods*

*Chapter II*— General overview of "Samaritan oil lamps" dating from the 4th to 8th centuries AD: lamp type, shape, and decoration. An attempt to interpret the "symbols" depicted on the lamp's shoulders and nozzle part

 II.1 *General overview of "Samaritan oil lamps" dating from the 4th to 8th centuries AD: their types, shapes, and decoration that characteristic for each type*

 II.2 *Possible interpretation of the “symbols” that covered the lamps*

*Chapter III*—Detailed description of each archaeological site according to their geographical location from the north part of Israel to the south part, including a description of the lamps' types characteristic of this particular archaeological site and a mention of other sites where this lamp's type was found;

*Addition to Chapter III*—Schematic plans of burial caves;

*Catalogue*—Photos of lamps from each site with their description;

*Appendix*—Common maps of archaeological sites; lamps' types and distribution of lamps' forms according to archaeological finds; list of similar lamps);

*Concordance* with pages and numbers of illustrations and *Bibliography*.

But here, in our Research Suggestion to our work, we concentrate on the general view of researcher works about "Samaritan Lamps" so, two chapters from our work give a general description of archaeological sites and their geographical, historical, and economic contents and a general overview of lamps’ shape forms, which are known as “Samaritan Oil Lamp” and their decoration that were characteristic of the period 4th-8th centuries CE. But before beginning to overview the researcher's works, one needs to line that the main purpose of the catalogue is: "provide illustrative and informative material to form a picture of the distribution of certain lamps' forms that are identified as "Samaritan Lamps”. Tells about the distribution of these lamps in Israel." That is why, the catalogue does not contain any conclusions, interpretations, or theories.

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4. Ph. Jonathan Bourgel is a researcher at Universite Laval (Quebec, Canada), a member of the theological and comparative religious studies department, and author of numerous publications dedicated to Judaism of the Second Temple period and theological ties between Jews, Christians, and Samaritans during this period. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The Hebrew researcher’s cover is:

"*השומרונים בראי הרומאים והשפעת השלטון הרומי על היחסים בין יהודים לשומרונים*", קתדרה 144; תמוז, תשע"ב; עמ' 20-7 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
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14. See: **Dor**, **Golan**; **Durar**, **Masarwa**; *Yamma (Tel Yaham)*; “Hadashot Arkheologiyot: Excavations and Surveys in Israel”; Vol. 136, 2024; English

<https://www.hadashot-esi.org.il/Report_Detail_eng.aspx?print=all&id=26498&mag_id=137> [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. See **Eli**, **Yannai**; *Tel Ifshar (East)*; “Hadashot Arkheologiyot: Excavations and Surveys in Israel”; Vol. 133, 2021; pp. 1-31; English

<https://www.hadashot-esi.org.il/report_detail_eng.aspx?id=26101&mag_id=133> [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. See **Eli**, **Yannai**; *Tel Ifshar (East)*; “Hadashot Arkheologiyot: Excavations and Surveys in Israel”; Vol. 133, 2021; pp. 1-31; English

<https://www.hadashot-esi.org.il/report_detail_eng.aspx?id=26101&mag_id=133> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. **Al Ya’qubi**; *Kitab al-Buldan*; ed, by: M.J.De Goeje; “Brill”, Leiden-Boston; Arabic edition; 2014; p. 328 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. The archaeological site Ramla South was diged several times. In my catalogue oil lamps from this site were discovered during the archaeological excavation in July-August, 2005. This excavation made archaeologists and specialists from the Archaeological Institute of Tek-Aviv University. The head of the expedition was archaeologist A. Gorzalczany. It tells about the first season, the permission is B-298/2005. So I include oil lamps which were discovered during the second archaeological excavation that was made by the Archaeological Institute of Bar-Ilan University. The director of this excavation was Ph. D. S. Riskin. It tells about the second season, the permission is B-306/2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. See: **Amir**, **Gorczalczany**; *Hadashot Arkheologiyot: Excavations and Surveys in Israel*; Vol. 111; 2000; pp. 33-34; English [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. See: **Amir**, **Gorczalczany**; *Hadashot Arkheologiyot: Excavations and Surveys in Israel*; Vol. 111; 2000; pp. 33-34; English [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. **Nagorsky**, **Alla**; *The oil lamps from Bet Shelan (Youth Hostel)*; ‘Atiqot 77, 2014; p. 1

<https://atiqot.org.il/ArticleList.aspx?id=28> [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. **Al** **Ya’qubi**; *Kitab al-Buldan*; ed, by: M.J.De Goeje; “Brill”, Leiden-Boston; Arabic edition; 2014; p. 328 [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. In the researcher’s work the site’s name is: *Horbat Glilot*. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. see: *‘Atiqot 66, 2011; pp. 17-61* (Hebrew); *pp. 156-157* (English Summary)

<https://www.atiqot.org.il/ArticleList.aspx?id=7>, Horbat Gelilot (El-Jalil) [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. see: *‘Atiqot 110, 2023; pp. 337-356* (English)

<https://atiqot.org.il/ArticleList.aspx?id=1060>, Herzliya Bet. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. The excavation was in December 1992. The head of excavation was I. Oren from IAA (Israel Antiquities Authority); see: *‘Atiqot 55, 2007;* *pp. 45-56* (Hebrew); *pp.* *56-57* (English summary

<https://www.atiqot.org.il/ArticleList.aspx?id=14> Burials from the Roman and Byzantine Periods in Caesarea. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. **Eyad**, **Bisharat,** and **Yardenna Alexandre**; “*Bronze Age Winepresses and Roman-Period Burial Caves near Nein, Giv‘at Ha-More*”; ‘Atiqot 114, 2023; p. 217 and p. 252 [↑](#footnote-ref-27)