

Gönderim Tarihi: 08.08.2023

Kabul Tarihi: 10.11.2023

## TWO EARLY BYZANTINE BRONZE LAMPS FROM FETHİYE MUSEUM

Fethiye Müzesi'nden Erken Bizans Dönemi İki Bronz Kandil

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Çalışmanın Türü: Araştırma

### Öz

Bu çalışmada Fethiye Müzesi'nde sergilenen iki bronz kandil incelenmiştir. Her iki kandil de bronz döküm tekniği ile yapılmıştır. Bronzun içeriğinde %90 bakır, %10 kalay bulunur. Yüksek oranda tercih edilmesinin sebebi bakıra nazaran daha sağlam olması ve bakırın aksine eritildiği zaman kabarcık yapmamasıdır. Kullanım özelliğini kaybeden bronz kandiller eritilip tekrar tekrar kullanılmıştır. Bunun sonucunda günümüze az sayıda gelmelerine neden olmuştur. Dolayısıyla bugün müzelerde sergilenen bronz kandiller, müzelerin en nadide örnekleri arasında sayılırlar.

Değerlendirilen kandillerden birisi Muğla - Köyceğiz Cumhuriyet Savcılığ'ından hibe yolu ile (FK1), diğeri Niyazi Yıldırım'dan müsadere yolu ile müzeye kazandırılmıştır (FK2). Her ikisinin de buluntu yeri belli değildir. Buna karşın eldeki verilerle ikinci örneğin Kaunos'tan ele geçmiş olabileceği düşünülmüştür. Kazı konteksi olmadıkları için her iki kandil de yaygın bir çalışma metodu olan analogik benzer örnekleri vasıtasıyla, erken Bizans Dönemi'ne tarihlendirilmiştir (MS 6.-7. Yüzyıl). Bugün Türkiye Müzelerinde sergilenen bronz kandillerin büyük çoğunluğunun da Erken Bizans Döneminden olması dikkati çeker. Bu onların doğrudan dönem için popülerliğini gösterir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Fethiye Müzesi, Bronz Kandil, Kandelabrum, Erken Bizans Dönemi, Kaunos

### Abstract

In this study, two bronze lamps exhibited in Fethiye Museum were examined. Both lamps are made with bronze casting technique. Bronze contains 90% copper and 10% tin. The reason why it is highly preferred is that it is stronger than copper and unlike copper, it does not bubble when melted. Bronze lamps, whose usage qualities have disappeared, were melted and reused. As a result, they have come to the present in small numbers. Therefore, bronze oil lamps exhibited in museums today are considered among the rarest historical artifacts of museums.

One of the lamps was brought to the museum by donation from Muğla - Köyceğiz Public Prosecutor's Office (FK1), and the other from Niyazi Yıldırım by confiscation (FK2). The whereabouts of both are unknown. However, with the available data, it is thought that the second sample may have been recovered from the ancient city of Kaunos. Since they do not have the context of the excavation, both lamps were dated to the early Byzantine Period (6th-7th century AD) by means of analogous examples, which is a common working method. It is noteworthy that most of the bronze lamps exhibited in Turkish Museums are from the Early Byzantine Period. This directly indicates their popularity for the period.

**Keywords:** *Fethiye Museum, Bronze Oil Lamp, Candelabrum, Early Byzantine Period, Kaunos.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Bronze productions are the alloy with the highest ratio among metal lamps of the early Byzantine period. Bronze consists of a copper alloy with 90% copper and 10% tin. Since it is harder than copper and does not bubble when melted, it has been used in different areas for ages. (Parr, 1958; Gürler, 2004: p. 12; Metin, 2017: p. 11). The melting and re-use of bronze lamps, which lost their usefulness, caused them to come to the present day in small numbers. The lamps that are the subject of the article are made with bronze casting technique. In this technique, the mold of the original lamp was formed, the core was placed in this mold, and then the bronze was poured between the core and the mold while it was molten. After the bronze cooled and hardened, the core was removed. The final stage of the bronze lamp, which is formed with a mold, is detailed workmanship. At this stage, its rough surface was sanded and polished. Then, details such as the cover and handle were soldered to the oil lamp for which the model was formed. (Metin & Becks, 2015: p. 274).

FK2 is an example of standing lamps produced due to its practicality in its storage and ease of use. (Rutkowski, 1979: p. 174 etc.). Lamps are especially popular in the Late Antiquity-Early Byzantine Period. Lamps called candelabrum usually had three legs in the shape of a lion's foot at the bottom. There was a jointed section consisting of double or triple different grooves made of metal rods, a bowl formed to prevent oil from flowing on it, and a long nail on which the lamp was placed in the middle of the bowl. The lamp was mounted on this nail. There was a wide gap between the nail and the bowl (Metin, 2012, K812). It should be noted that exactly similar candelabrum-style examples of FK2 were encountered. (Metin & Becks, 2015: p. 319, K38). FK1 does not have this function.

## 2. EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

### 2.1. FK1 (FM. Inv. No. 1976)

Its length 10.4 cm, width 6.6 cm, body height 3 cm, cap diameter 4.5 cm. The handle and hinged cover are broken and missing. It has an oval body form. The oil hole is quite large and annular. The shoulder part is inclined and there is a hinged handle on it (missing). There is an oil hole cover fixing apparatus at the handle joint. Its base is circular. There is a small circle in the middle and a second circle with

clear outer borders around this circle. The most distinctive feature of the FK1 is the vertical tongue motifs on its round, flat-plated nose. Since decoration is used only in these forms, lamps can be easily distinguished from period examples, whether they have a normal lighting function or whether they are part of the candelabrum.



Fig. 1: FK1- Obverse-Reverse

While a similar example of FK1 from Sardinia exhibited in the British Museum is dated as early as the 4th century AD (Walters, 1914: p. 18, Fig. 11, no. 106), another similar lamp from the Munich Museum was dated to the 6th century AD. (Deckers, 1998: p. 88, no. 82). Another lamp exhibited at the Haluk Perk Museum is also dated to the 6th century AD (Atasoy, 2005: 205, Fig. 42). A lamp from Tharros was dated to the 6th and 7th centuries by its researcher (Bailey, 1962: p. 45, no 45), then the same lamp was dated to the 6th century AD. (Bailey, 1996: p. 68, Pl. 79, Q3791-3792). Another similar example from Nineveh has been dated to the 6th century AD (Bailey, 1996: 68, Pl. 79, Q3792). A similar type of lamp was found in the Pergamon excavations, but a precise date has not been suggested (Conze – Berlet – Philippson – Schhuchhardt, 1913: p. 251, No 4). A similar type of FK1 was found in a context during the Sardes excavations. The context is dated to the early 7th century AD (Hanfmann, 1962: p. 44, Fig. 36). A copper lamp from the Burdur Museum has been dated to the 6th century AD (Metin & Becks, 2015: p.

303, K38). As a result, it is understood that lamps of this type were widely produced in the 6th century AD. FK1 is dated to the 6th century AD.

## **2.2. FK2 (FM Inv. No. 4.12.72.856)**

Its is length 12.8 cm, width 6.6 cm, body height 3.8 cm, cap diameter 3.1 cm. The hinged cover is broken and missing. The oil chamber of the lamp, which has an oval body form, is flattened. The shoulder part is inclined and there is a hinged handle on it (missing). The oil hole is quite large. There are two hinge holes made to fix the discus cover between the handle and the oil hole. It has a circular protrusion at its base. In the middle, there is a recess formed for the bowl that prevents the oil from flowing. The extension of this recess is evident in the oil chamber part. The long round-nosed lamp is a very high quality example produced for the candelabrum model.

FK2 is one of the most popular metal lamp forms of the Early Byzantine Period. There are many examples of these lamps, both in normal and candelabrum style, made of bronze, brass and copper. Usually the hinged oil hole covers of the forms are in the shape of an oyster shell. In addition, it was determined that animal figures and human head shaped caps were also used. Nearly all of the forms have later attached motifs on their circular handles. Among these, the use of cross motifs is characteristic, especially in the late dated forms (Simpson, 2005: p. 288, Fig. 4). Leaf-shaped handles and griffins figured handles are the most striking among other motifs. The lamps are generally dated to the Early Byzantine Period (Metin & Becks, 2015). However, the time period in which they are in production covers a period of about three hundred years. For this reason, the dates of those found in the excavations may vary according to the context in which they are found.

While similar examples from Baetica in Spain are given as early as the 4th-5th century AD (Pozo, 1997: 233, Fig. 30); Those in the Vatican Museum belong to the 4th – 6th centuries AD (Spagnolis & Carolis 1986: pp. 67-71, Fig. 29-32); The example from the church excavations in Ancient Ostrakine in Egypt dates back to the 5th century AD and later (Oren, 1993: p. 311); The ones in the Sadberk Hanım Museum belong to the 5th – 6th centuries AD (Bilgi, 2004: p. 164, Fig. 1); Similar lamps found in Sardis excavations date back to the 5th and early 6th centuries AD (Waldbaum, 1983: pp. 98-99, Pl. 37, Nos. 577-580); Those in the Athenian Agora date back to the 5th – 7th centuries AD (Perlzweig, 1961: p.200, Pl. 48, Figs. 2948-2949); Those in the Tire

Museum date back to the 6th century AD (Gürler, 2004: p. 95, Fig. 77); A similar example of FK2 found during the excavations of the Temple of Nabu from Mosul dates back to 6th-7th AD. centuries (Simpson 1996: p. 97, Pl. Ic); A lamp from Nineveh to the 5th-6th centuries AD (Bailey, 1996: p. 72 Pl. 82, Q3809); in the Haluk Perk Collection (Atasoy, 2005b: pp. 206-207, Fig. 49) and in the Istanbul Archeology Museum ( Atasoy, 2005a: p. 41, no. 78) was dated to the 6th – 7th centuries AD by the same researcher; An oil lamp recovered from Halicarnassus dates back to the 6th-7th centuries AD (Bailey, 1996: 74, Pl. 84-Q3814); Oil lamps in the Mainz Museum date back to the 6th – 7th centuries AD (Menzel, 1954, p.112, Abb. 91-2, 92-94); Locally produced similar forms from the Burdur Museum are also dated to the 6th-7th centuries AD. (Metin & Becks, 2005). An exact resemblance of FK2 was found in the southern room during the Cibyra Odeon excavations. It is very important that the finds layer is 6th – 7th AD (Metin, 2012: pp. 242-243, K812). These dates document that the forms were popular in the whole Mediterranean world, especially in the 6th and 7th centuries AD, and spread over a wide geography. As a result, FK2 was dated to the 6th - 7th centuries AD.



Fig. 2: FK2-Observe-Reserve

The find location of both lamps is unknown. For this reason, production sites could not be determined. However, one of the lamps was brought to the museum by a grant from the Köyceğiz Public Prosecutor's Office (FK1) and the other by confiscation from Niyazi Yıldırım (FK2). Many similar bronze oil lamps are exhibited in the museums close to the Fethiye Museum, and some of them were unearthed during scientific excavations in ancient cities (Metin, 2012). Therefore, it can be assumed that FK1 may have been found in the Kaunos ancient city in Koycegiz.

### 3.SUMMARY

Bronze has the highest ratio among metal lamps of the early Byzantine period. The reason why bronze, which consists of a copper alloy containing 90% copper and 10% tin, is highly preferred, is considered to be stronger than copper and, unlike copper, that it does not bubble when melted. Melting and re-use of bronze oil lamps, which lost their usefulness, caused them to be relatively few in number today.

In this study, two bronze lamps from Fethiye Museum were examined. Both lamps are made with bronze casting technique. In this technique, the mold of the original lamp was formed, the core was placed in this mold, and then the bronze was poured between the core and the mold while it was molten. After the bronze cooled and hardened, the core was removed. The final stage of the bronze lamp, which is formed with a mold, is detailed workmanship. At this stage, its rough surface was sanded and polished. Then, details such as the cover and handle were soldered to the lamp for which the model was formed.

FK1 is length 10.4 cm, width 6.6 cm, body height 3 cm, cap diameter 4.5 cm. The handle and hinged cover are broken and missing. It has an oval body form. The oil hole is quite large and annular. The shoulder part is inclined and there is a hinged handle on it (missing). There is an oil hole cover fixing apparatus at the handle joint. Its base is circular. There is a small circle in the middle and a second circle with clear outer borders around this circle. The most distinctive feature of the FK1 is the vertical tongue motifs on its round, flat-plated nose. Decoration is characteristic in these forms.

FK2 is one of the most popular metal oil lamp forms of the Early Byzantine Period. The extension of this recess is evident in the oil chamber part. The long round-nosed lamp is a very high quality example produced for the candelabrum model. There are many examples of these types, both in lamp and candelabrum styles, made of bronze, brass and

copper. Usually the hinged oil hole covers of the forms are in the shape of an oyster shell. In addition, it was determined that animal figures and human head shaped caps were also used. Nearly all of the forms have later attached motifs on their circular handles. The lamps are generally dated to the Early Byzantine Period.

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**Çatışma beyanı:** Bu çalışma ile ilgili taraf olabilecek herhangi bir kişi ya da kurum ile finansal ilişkilerimin bulunmadığını dolayısıyla herhangi bir çıkar çatışmasının olup beyan ederim.

**Destek ve teşekkür:** Çalışmada herhangi bir kurum ya da kuruluştan destek alınmamıştır.