

A RHODIAN STAMPED AMPHORA HANDLE FROM ROSH PINNA (JA‘UNA)

GERALD FINKIELSZTEJN

INTRODUCTION

An isolated find of a stamped amphora handle was found in the 2002–2003 excavations at Rosh Pinna (see Stepansky, this volume: Fig. 18:8). The stamp offers rare evidence—at least to this writer’s knowledge—suggesting a hitherto unpublished association of an eponym with a particular fabricant of amphoras.

THE STAMP

Circular Stamp (Area A, L101, B1010)

Reading

Ἐπὶ Θεαιδῆ[το]ῦ Δαλίου Anchor to right

Rose

[In the year of the eponym] Theaidetos, [in the month of] Dalios + Anchor to right



Rose

Commentary

The rare feature in this stamp is the presence of an anchor on the stamp naming an eponym. Only two examples are known to this writer (see below). Whatever its orientation, a device depicted in line with an inscription conventionally follows the inscription and does not precede it.

Only the fabricant Νικασίων (Nikasion) is known to associate a rose in the center of a circular stamp with an anchor in its periphery; generally, the inscription is not framed by two lines (Ariel 1990:55, S 226–S 229). The anchor commonly appears on stamps bearing the name of the fabricant, and that device is oriented horizontally, in either possible orientation. However, in at least two examples, the anchor is represented perpendicular to the text (Börker and Burow 1998, II: No. 292; Cankardeş Şenol 2015:463, second stamp from top; see below). Rarely, the anchor may be missing on a stamp naming Νικασίων himself.

In any event, there is no doubt that the same fabricant, Νικασίων, headed the workshop where our amphora was made. In our case the anchor may have been added simply to fill a gap; alternatively, it may have been a mistake on the part of the engraver, as there are many such unusual and exceptional occurrences on Rhodian amphoras. It does not seem likely that the anchor was put on the eponym stamp when it is missing on the fabricant's one, on the evidence of the associations of the two stamps on either handle of a preserved amphora from Mazor (see below).

Νικασίων worked during the years of the eponyms Νικασαγόρας 1st (Nikasagoras 1st; J.-Y. Empereur's excavations in Alexandria; Gonça Cankardeş Şenol, pers. comm.), Αρατοφάνης 1st (Aratophanes 1st; on an amphora from Maresha, bearing two stamps that are from the same dies as those in Ariel 1990:43, S 117 [with the title of priest: ἐπ'ἱερέως] and 55, S 226; Finkielsztein, forthcoming), Ἀρίστων 2nd (Ariston 2nd; Cankardeş Şenol 2015:463, second stamp from top, under RE-ΑΡΙΣΤΩΝ 02-ΑΡΤΑΜΙΤΙΟΣ-001 [Ariston 2nd, month Artamitios]; see above), Ξενοφῶν (Xenophon; David Amit's excavations in Mazor; Donald T. Ariel, pers. comm.), and maybe also Ἀγέστρατος 2nd (Agestratos 2nd; Gentili 1958:36, No. 16).¹ I would date all those eponyms between c. 172 and 161 BCE.² Our eponym, Θεαίδητος (Theaidetos), fits perfectly in this eponym group, as I suggest dating him to c. 171 BCE (Finkielsztein 2001:192, Table 19).

¹ There is serious doubt about the restoration of the name of the eponym in another association with the same fabricant on an amphora from the Cesnola collection (Grace 1948:146). Grace reads ἐπ'ἱερέως [...]δάμου Πανάμου (under the priest eponym [...]damos, month of Panamos), with only room for two letters. Therefore, the amphora can only be assigned to the eponym Εὐδάμος (Eudamos), who should probably be dated to c. 150 BCE, which is too late to include him in this eponym group (Finkielsztein 2001:193, Table 20, date to be corrected). On the other hand, the restoration of the longer name of the eponym Ἀριστόδαμος 2nd (Aristodamos 2nd) would fit perfectly in the above sequence, as I have suggested dating him c. 166/164 BCE.

² Αὐτοκράτης (Autokrates), a previously unknown eponym, not appearing on stamps, was recently identified and dated 166 BCE on historical grounds (Badoud 2015:180–183). The resulting refinement requires locating Αὐτοκράτης within the period of the eponyms associated with the fabricant Νικασίων.

REFERENCES

- Ariel D.T. 1990. *Excavations at the City of David 1978–1985 Directed by Yigal Shiloh II: Imported Stamped Amphora Handles, Coins, Worked Bone and Ivory, and Glass* (Qedem 30). Jerusalem.
- Badoud N. 2015. *Le temps de Rhodes: Une chronologie des inscriptions de la cité fondée sur l'étude de ses inscriptions* (Vestigia 63). Munich.
- Börker C. and Burow J. 1998. *Die hellenistischen Amphorenstempel aus Pergamon* (Pergamenische Forschungen 11). Berlin–New York.
- Cankardeş Şenol G. 2015. *Lexicon of Eponym Dies on Rhodian Amphora Stamps 1: Eponyms A* (Études alexandrines 33; AmphorAlex 3; Corpus international des timbres amphoriques 21). Alexandria.
- Finkielsztejn G. 2001. *Chronologie détaillée et révisée des éponymes amphoriques rhodiens de 270 à 108 av. J.-C. environ: Premier bilan* (BAR Int. S. 990). Oxford.
- Finkielsztejn G. Forthcoming. *Maresha. Amphoras and Amphora Stamps from Maresha* (IAA Reports).
- Gentili G.V. 1958. I timbri anforari rodii nel Museo Nazionale di Siracusa. *Archivio Storico Siracusano* 4:18–95.
- Grace V.R. 1948. Rhodian Jars in Florida. *Hesperia* 17:144–147.
- Stepansky Y. This volume. Settlement Remains from the Iron Age, Hellenistic, Roman–Byzantine and Early Islamic Periods on the Ancient Tell of Rosh Pinna (Ja'una).

