

STAMPED AMPHORAE HANDLES FROM 'AKKO

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Thirty stamped handles were found in the course of the excavation at 'Akko (see Smithline, this volume), most of them Rhodian, with one Cypriot, one Phoenician and two unidentified. Such a collection is quite common in the Southern Levant and merits basic presentation only. The dates of the Rhodian stamps are according to the lower chronology established by the author (Finkielsztein 1995; 2001). However, this chronology is in the process of being refined, and therefore, there may be some differences. The reader is invited to check the relevant literature published since 2001, mainly by the author and Nathan Badoud, in particular the latter's suggestion of reconstruction of the Rhodian calendar and the intercalary years (Badoud 2008; forthcoming). Table 1 presents the chronological periods of Rhodian stamps according to Virginia Grace and the author.

It seems preferable to organise the catalogue according to a chronological order that may be divided into fractions of centuries or even spans of years (five years are the minimum here; all dates are BCE), rather than follow periods that

are primarily aimed at facilitating the research of specialized scholars. Two of the Rhodian stamps date to the second third of the third century; eight, to the last quarter of the third century; four, to the end of the third–beginning of the second century; six, to the first third of the second century; and six, to the middle and the third quarter of the second century BCE. The top of the Cypriot amphora (Cy1) seems to bear the earliest stamp in the collection, probably dating to the beginning of the third century. The probably unstamped Phoenician handle (Ph1) dates to the end of the third–mid-second centuries BCE. However, it should be noted that both these stamps, together with two fragments of unidentified origin, come from L336, which dates to the third century BCE.¹

CATALOGUE

Rhodian

Rh 1. 2734/97. Surface.

Circular stamp.

Δαμοκράτης

Button



Table 1. Chronology of the Rhodian Stamps

| Period | Grace (1985:42) | Finkielsztein (2001:196–197) |
|--------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Ia | end of 4th c.–240 | c. 304–271 |
| Ib–Ic | | c. 270–235 |
| II | c. 240–205 | c. 234–199 |
| III | c. 205–175 | c. 198–161 |
| IV | c. 175–146 | c. 160–146 |
| V | c. 146–108 | c. 145–108 |
| VI | c. 108–88/86 | c. 107–88/86 |

Preposition ἐπί missing. Eponym Δαμοκράτης 1st. Fabricant 'Ιεροτέλης (Empereur and Tuna 1989).

Date: c. 245–235 (late in the range).

Rh 2. 2734/97. Surface.

Rectangular stamp.

Ἐπὶ?



The profile of the handle places this amphora in Period I.

Date: probably the second third of the third century.

Rh 3. 2734/97.325.3116A.

Rectangular stamp.

Ἐπὶ Παυ

σανία



Eponym Πausanías 1st.

Date: c. 225–220 (perhaps 225, a probable intercalary year).

Rh 4. 2734/97. Surface.

Circular stamp.

[Ζή]νω[νος]

Rose



Fabricant Ζήνων 1st. The type is associated with the following eponyms: Φιλοκράτης, Καλλικράτης 1st, Πausanías 1st, Ἀγλώκριτος (Grace 1963:326, No. 16; 1974a:197, No. 17; Finkielsztein 2001:67–74).

The alternative readings of the names of the contemporary eponyms Δαήμων and Νίκων are unlikely, because of the way in which the letters are distributed.

Date: c. 230–225.

Rh 5. 2734/97.313.3062.

Circular stamp.

Ἐπὶ Ὀνασάνδρου

Rose



The same die is also known from the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria (courtesy of J.-Y. Empereur). Eponym Ονάσανδρος. Fabricant (according to the style of the rose and the script): either Ἀναξίλας or Νικόλαος.

Date: c. 220–215.

Rh 6. 2734/97.514.5079.

Circular stamp.

]Ο[

Rose



The handle has a rounded profile.

Date: last third of the third century.

Rh 7. 2734/97.513.5138A.

Rectangular stamp.

Ἐπ'ἱερέως Θρασυδ[άμου]

Δαλ[ίου]



Eponym Θρασύδαμος. A stamp from the same die was identified on a handle from the excavations of Broshi and Gibson at the Jerusalem City Wall (to be published by the author). Fabricant: perhaps Λυσανίας—as suggested by Grace for the Broshi and Gibson stamp—or Παισανίας 2nd, whose style is similar.

Date: c. 220–215.

Rh 8. 2734/97.503.5052A.

Circular stamp.

Ἀριστωνίδας

Rose



Retrograde reading. Eponym Ἀριστωνίδας. Fabricant: probably Μηνόδωρος 1st, based on the style of the rose, the absence of the preposition ἐπί and the nominative form. The date can be determined by the eponym Μυτίων that was found with this type in another excavation at 'Akko (to be published by the author).

Date: c. 210–205.

Rh 9. 2734/97.304.3018A.

Rectangular stamp.

Symbol [Ἐπὶ ---]

of Helios [-----]



This stamp attributes the amphora without doubt to the fabricant Θεόδωρος 2nd (Grace 1963:326, No. 17; 1974a:197, with No. 16). Although the preposition may be missing, given the style of the device, it most probably appeared here.

Date: c. last third of the third century.

Rh 10. 2734/97.335.3134A.

Circular stamp.

Ἐπὶ Εὐκρατίδα Δαλίου

Rose



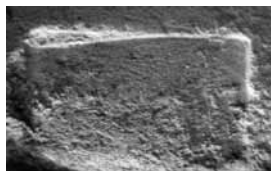
Eponym Εὐκρατίδας. The style of the rose is not specific enough to suggest a fabricant.

Date: c. 205–200.

Rh 11. 2734/97. Surface.

Rectangular stamp.

]εν[---]α[---]



There seems to be only one line of writing, a fact that would point to a fabricant's name on this stamp. Μενεκράτης 1st is a very tentative suggestion, based on the appearance of the stamp and the profile of the handle, which dates the amphora to Period II–early Period III.

Date: last quarter of the third–beginning of the second century.

Rh 12. 2734/97.332.3131A.

Rectangular stamp.

[-----]ov

[-----]ov



One of the two lines should name the fabricant and the other, the month. The profile of the handle dates this amphora to the end of Period II–beginning of Period III.

Date: end of the third–beginning of the second century.

Rh 13. 2734/97.310.3077.

Rectangular stamp.

Illegible.



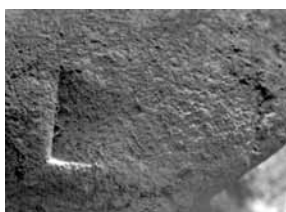
The profile of the handle dates this amphora to the end of Period II–beginning of Period III.

Date: end of the third–beginning of the second century.

Rh 14. 2734/97.313.3083.

Rectangular stamp.

Illegible.



The profile of the handle dates this amphora to the end of Period II–beginning of Period III.

Date: end of the third–beginning of the second century.

Rh 15. 2734/97.506.5036.

Circular stamp.

Faint letters.

Rose



The style of the rose is very rare and the die was probably exceptionally poorly engraved. There seems to be only a name on this stamp. The characteristics of the handle and the stamp point to a date early in Period III.

Date: first quarter of the second century.

Rh 16. 2734/97.522.5152A.

Rectangular stamp.

Ἄρτ[αμπίου]

Ἄγα[θοκλεῦς]



Fabricant Ἄγαθοκλῆς, probably the earliest of two homonyms. Associated with the eponym Ἰασικράτης (from Maresha, to be published by the author).

Date: beginning of the second century.

Rh 17. 2734/97. Surface.

Rectangular stamp.

Ἀριστίωνος



Fabricant Αριστίων. Associated with eponyms from Δορκυλίδας to Κλευκράτης 1st (Maffre 1972:64, No. 104; Grace 1985:9).
Date: first third of the second century.



Rh 18. 2734/97.313.3042A.

Rectangular stamp.

[Φιλα]νίου



Fabricant Φιλαίνιος. Associated with eponyms from Ξενοφάνης to Ἀγέστρατος 2nd, on various types of stamps, of which this one is the latest (Nilsson 1909:164; Badalianz 1980:165; see Nicolaou and Empereur 1986:518–519, No. 4; Finkielsztein 2001:120–121).
Date: c. 185–160 (this type of stamp).

Rh 19. 2734/97. Surface.

Rectangular stamp.

[Ἐπ]ὶ [Θε]αίδῃ

[του]

[month] ζου or νου



Eponym Θεαίδητος.

Date: c. 170–165.

Rh 20. 2734/97.506.5037.

Circular stamp.

[----- Πανά]μου Δ[ευτέρου]

Rose

The profile of the handle and the appearance of the script seem to date this stamp to Periods III–IV. This may be the stamp of an eponym. The reading of the month is certain, but the second word may be abbreviated, depending on the length of the eponym's name.

Date: an intercalary year in the first three quarters of the second century.

Rh 21. 2734/97.303.3032A.

Rectangular stamp.

Ἐ[πὶ -----]

κλ[ε]ῦς

Θεσμοφορίου



The profile of the handle dates this amphora to Periods III–IV. On the basis of the script, which is known for the eponym Ἀρατοφάνης 1st (c. 170–165 BCE; Finkielsztein 1990:II, 111, No. 413, restoration based on parallels from the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria, courtesy of J.-Y. Empereur), the restoration of the name of Δαμοκλῆς 2nd seems more likely than that of Σωσικλῆς (Grace 1985:44). These are the only possible suggestions for this concurrence of handle and stamp.

Date: c. 175–170, rather than c. 160–155.

Rh 22. 2734/97.536.5144A.

Rectangular stamp.

Ἐρ[μ]ία



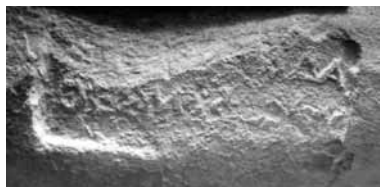
Fabricant Ἐρμίας. Associated with the eponyms Τιμούρροδος and Ἀλεξίμαχος (Grace 1974b:97, Pl. 22, Nos. 1–3, with a star under the name of the fabricant). Here, there may not have been a star under the name (see Finkielsztejn 1989:229, Fig. 9, b).

Date: c. 155–145, at least.

Rh 23. 2734/97.313.3070.

Rectangular stamp.

[Ἐπὶ Ἀλεξι]άδα
Θεσμοφ[ορίο]ν



Tentative restoration of the name of the eponym Ἀλεξιάδας.

Date: c. 145–135.

Rh 24. 2734/97. Surface.

Rectangular stamp.

Βρομίου



Fabricant Βρόμιος. Association of this type (without a wreath on the right side) is known with the eponym Ἀριστόγειτος (from Maresha; Finkielsztejn 2001:121–123, Pl. XIV, 4).

Date: c. 145–135, at least for this type of stamp.

Rh 25. 2734/97.316.3080A.

Rectangular stamp.

Ἐπὶ[----]
.. αφ. [--]
[--]ου



Retrograde reading. There are several options for the understanding of the faint letters visible on this stamp (on three lines?), but none is conclusive. The characteristics of the handle and the stamp point to a date in Period V, but even this is tentative.

Date: second half of the second century?

Rh 26. 2734/97.310.3035A.

Rectangular stamp.

[-----] δε
[Device ?]



The tip of a caduceus or the top of a letter may be seen at the right-hand side of the lower line. This seems to be a stamp of Period V.

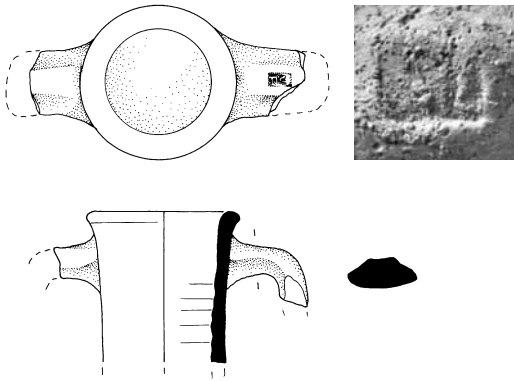
Date: second half of the second century.

Cypriot

Cy 1. 2734/97.336.3183A.

Squarish stamp.

Faint signs.



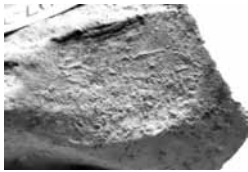
Top of an amphora neck with two handles. The signs may be of Cypriot syllabary script.

Date: perhaps the end of the fourth–beginning of third century (Calvet 1986 and references therein). See Ph 1, Un 1 and Un 2, and the comment on L336 in the introduction.

Phoenician (Tyre ?)

Ph 1. 2734/97.336.3171A.

Finger print(?) in the shape of an oval stamp.



The attached body fragment is ribbed, and therefore, this twisted handle may be dated to the Hellenistic period. None of the thin lines visible in the depression on the top of the handle could be identified as a letter of any sort, least of all Phoenician. Therefore, this appears to be a finger print impressed on a still wet fabric, rather than a stamp. Actual stamps of this shape, originating from Tyre, were found at 'Akko and also in Tyre itself (Naveh 1997; Finkielsztein 1998:107–109, 111–117, *passim*; Kawkabani 2003).

Date: probably second century, although some stamps are dated to 205/4 and perhaps 202/1 BCE (Naveh 1997:115, Nos. 4 and 5). See Cy 1, Un 1 and Un 2, and the comment on L336 in the introduction.

Unidentified Origin

Un 1. 2734/97.336.3184A.

Rectangular stamp.

Μεακλ[



Complete vertical part of a handle (9.8 cm high; section 3.4×2.1 cm); rounded profile of the top. The fabric has a gritty texture and is light yellowish red. The surface is very pale brown, with fine yellow mica. Cypriot amphorae (mainly from Kourion) have a gritty fabric too. A handle found in 'Akko (to be published by the author) seems to be from Cyprus and bears a round stamp with the two first letters of an abbreviated name: ME. This does not mean that the same name and person were referred to. The name does not make sense, as far as can be judged. It may be a name that begins with Με(γ)ακλ[, the most common being Μεγακλῆς.

Date: possibly third century BCE (see Cy 1, Ph 1 and Un 2, and the comment on L336 in the introduction).

Un 2. 2734/97.336.3185.

Incused stamp.

M



This broken handle is flat (section: 4.0×1.5 cm) and its profile is probably rounded. The fabric is reddish yellow, with fine gold mica; the surface is lighter. The rim is thickened and narrow.

Date: possibly third century BCE (see Cy 1, Ph 1 and Un 1, and the comment on L336 in the introduction).

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NOTES

¹ The catalogue was completed in February 2006. The dates were slightly updated at the end of 2012. For more refined updates, especially for chronology,

the reader is invited to check the bibliography that has been published since.

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