Hellenistic Brazier Fragments from Israel

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HELLENISTIC clay braziers have been studied and published for over a century.¹ Until recently, however, those found in Israel have received little attention and only very few fragments have been published. Apart from a short paper in Hebrew² on those found in 1980–1981 at Tel Dor,³ they are mentioned only in the Samaria report of 1957.⁴ There, however, no photographs are given and the published drawing of the reconstructed brazier proves, on reexamination of the actual fragments, to be partly incorrect. The statement made in that publication that these fragments are the only ones found in Palestine, was incorrect as well, even at that time, since the Museum Stores in Jerusalem already held more than half a dozen registered specimens from various sites in the country. Thus it seemed desirable to publish a concise catalogue of all such Hellenistic brazier fragments discovered to date in the country and at present in government possession.⁵ To these must be added ten ornamented fragments lately discovered at Dor, one of which is described at the end of the catalogue.⁶

² Renate Rosenthal-Heginbottom: Notes on Hellenistic Braziers from Tel Dor, *Qadmoniot* 14 (1981), pp. 110-111 (Hebrew), illustrations on back cover.

³. E. Stern: Tel Dor, 1980 (Notes and News), *IEJ* 30 (1980), pp. 209-213; idem, Excavations at Tel Dor, 1981, *ibid.* 32 (1982), p. 113, Pl. 15:C.

J.W. Crowfoot et al.: Samaria-Sebaste, III: The Objects of Samaria, London, 1957, pp. 271-272, Fig.
 60.

⁵ I nanks are due to A. Eitan, Director of the Department of Antiquities and Museums, for his permission to publish these objects here. Numbers following the present catalogue numbers are those of registration with the Department. Some additional fragments, purported to exist in private hands and mostly of unknown provenance, have not been included in the catalogue.

⁶ Thanks are due to E. Stern, director of the Dor excavations, and to Renate Rosenthal-Heginbottom for their kind permission to refer to their finds at this site. These have been quoted in each case by excavation number or by publication (above, n. 2). I also wish to thank these two colleagues for the photograph of a brazier lug (Pl. 33:E) so far unparalleled at any site in the country. Since it does not form part of the series included in our catalogue, it has been entered at the end of the catalogue rather than in accordance with Conze's typology. A full publication of the Dor braziers will appear in the excavator's final report on this site.

¹ The fundamental study to date remains A. Conze: Griechische Kohlenbecken, Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts 5 (1890), pp. 118–141 (hereafter Conze), where some earlier discoveries going back to the mid-nineteenth century are mentioned. Further basic studies may be found in A. Furtwängler: Zu den Köpfen der griechischen Kohlenbecken, *ibid.* 6 (1891), pp. 110–124; F. Winter: Griechische Kohlenbecken, *ibid.* 12 (1897), pp. 160–167; C. Le Roy: Réchauds Déliens, Bulletin de Correspondance Héilénique 85 (1961), pp. 474–500; M. Martens: Sur la décoration des réchauds gréco-romains, Études et Travaux 5 (1971), pp. 134–144. The author's thanks are extended to D. Ariel for drawing his attention to a pertinent note in P.M. Frazer: Ptolemaic Alexandria, Oxford, 1972, pp. 287–288, n. 285.

This paper is followed by an article by J. Gunneweg and I. Perlman on a neutron activation analysis of these fragments and additional examples from Dor (see below, pp. 232–238).

CATALOGUE

All pecimens except No. 25 contain mica. All are lugs except Nos. 9–12. All reliefs on the lugs are mould-formed, except No. 25. The backs (outsides) of all the lugs are connected to a down-curving rim and are free of ornament, unless stated otherwise. The tips of all the beards of the male heads are at right angles to the bowls' rims (Fig. 1). We have refrained from identifying these heads with specific mythological figures.⁷ Type reference is to Conze (see above, n. 1) whenever possible. Provenance, unless stated otherwise, is as chance surface finds on the site quoted.

1. No. P.1517. Red-grey core, grey surface. Height 10.5 cm., width 6.4 cm.⁸ (Pl. 29:B). In raised panel with frame, bearded head in a pointed cap. The beard is formed of six parallel locks, covered above by a short chin-beard and framed by the long, twisted locks of the moustache. Emerging from the cap's edge, the hair falls in short, parallel locks over the forehead. The large, rimmed eyes appear under heavy eyebrows. The nose is broad and flat and the mouth slightly open. The large ears are only lightly indicated.

Provenance: 'Akko.

Type: Conze I A 1.9 Similar example at Dor, No. 40312/3.

2. No. P.1090. Similar in fabric and representation to No. 1. Width 7 cm. (Pl. 29:A). Lower part of face missing.

Provenance: Unknown. Type: Probably as No. 1.

 No. 71.908. Red-grey core, red-brown surface. Height 10.6 cm., width 6.9 cm. (Pl. 29:C). Panel and head very similar to No. 1, but lacking chin-beard. Snub nose. *Provenance:* 'Akko, 1971 excavation.¹⁰ *Type:* Conze I A 3.

4. No. 69.5885. Red-grey core, buff surface. Width 7.5 cm. (Pl. 29:D). Lower part of face missing. Similar to the above, but hair locks fall in three short groups over the forehead: two from the temples and one from the centre. Eyes smaller and ears larger than in the above and sharply raised. *Provenance:* 'Akko. *Type:* Conze I A 111 and 119.

5. No. 69.5783. Red-grey core, brown surface. Width 6.8 cm. (Pl. 29:E). Lower part of face missing. Similar to the above, but for lower cap, which has a central vertical ridge; ears only slightly indicated. *Provenance:* 'Akko. *Type:* Probably as No. 4.

⁷ Such identifications are in fact still under discussion — see the literature quoted above, n. 1.

⁸ Height is measured throughout from rim of lug to tip of beard or base of lug's projection; width is measured at upper part of lug.

⁹ See also H.B. Walters: Catalogue of Terracottas... British Museum, London, 1903, p. 290. The lack of illustrations makes exact comparison difficult.

¹⁰ Excavated by E. Oren, unpublished.

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Fig. 1. Profiles of No. 10 (left) and No. 13 (right).

6. No. 69.5640. Red-grey core, red-brown surface; part of face smoke-blackened. Height 10.6 cm., width 7.8 cm. (Pl. 29:F). Similar to No. 3, but for Θ to right of cap.¹¹
Provenance: 'Akko.
Type: As No. 1.

7. No. 62.717. Fabric as No. 1. Width 8.7 cm. (Pl. 30:A). In raised panel with double frame, upper part only of head with ivy-wreath, from the sides of which bunches of grapes and fillets fall over the pointed ears. Under the furrowed forehead are heavy raised eyebrows over large, rimmed eyes.

Provenance: Caesarea, North.12

Type: Conze II A 217.13 Similar example at Dor (cf. above, n. 2, back cover, upper left).

8. No. I.10599. Fabric similar to No. 6; face slightly smoke-blackened. Height 10.3 cm., width 7.2 cm. (Pl. 30:B). Upper part similar to the above, though lines somewhat indistinct. Snub nose. The moustache rises at the sides of the practically covered mouth in two curves and then falls down in two heavy, twisted long locks, flanking the beard, which is formed of three narrow locks. Above the head, inscription: $A \Theta H$. *Provenance:* Ascalon.

Type: Conze II C 268.14

¹¹ One assumes an A to have existed in the missing left corner, cf. R. Pagenstecher: Die Gefässe in Stein und Ton; Knochenschnitzereien, in Expedition E.v. Sieglin — Ausgrabungen in Alexandrien, II, Leipzig, 1913, pp. 152–153, No. Ic, Fig. 163. For AΘH see below, our No. 8.

¹² For this excavation see M. Avi-Yonah and A. Negev: Caesarea (Notes and News), *IEJ* 13 (1963), pp. 146–147; A. Negev: Caesarea, *EAEHL*, I, Jerusalem, 1971, p. 233, where the latest date quoted for the relevant stratum is the second half of the second century B.C.E.

¹³ See also T. Wiegand and H. Schrader: *Priene*, Berlin, 1904, p. 463, Fig. 569, No. 215; F. Mayence: Les réchauds en terre-cuite (Fouilles de Délos), *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 29 (1905), pp. 375-404.

¹⁴ See also Pagenstecher (above, n. 11), p. 153, No. 2c, Fig. 164, but with *Hekataiou* inscription. For our inscription see Mayence (above, n. 13), p. 390. For similar potters' marks see also E. Pridik: Amphorenstempel aus Athen, *Athenische Mitteilungen* 21 (1896), p. 182; idem, Neue Amphorenstempel aus Athen, *ibid.* 22 (1897), p. 152.

9. No. 32.2362A. Fabric as No. I. Face slightly smoke-blackened. Outer diameter 35 cm., inner diameter 25 cm. (Pl. 30:C). Complete rim. On upper part ovolo impressed on broad, down-curving rim; below this, a row of dentils. All three lugs are uniform in size, height 11.5 cm., width 8.5 cm. (Pl. 30:D). At the back of each lug is a sunken panel in a double frame.¹⁵ On the front is a raised panel, within which is an arched frame. Within the frame is a bearded head with hair locks, arranged symmetrically about a central parting, rising to touch the frame. Two straight furrows across the forehead are probably intended to represent a fillet, with two round knobs above the heavy, raised eyebrows, perhaps indicating *corymbs*¹⁶ or short horns. The cheeks bulge and the nose is snub. The horse's ears turn outwards at the tips, while the lobes curve inwards. Under the ears appear locks of hair, falling to the shoulders. The beard is formed of five locks, flanked by the heavy locks of the long moustache. Small slightly open mouth. Inscription, in upper corners of panel: K \exists .

Provenance: Samaria excavations.¹⁷ Type: Conze III A.¹⁸

10. No. 32.2362B. Grey core, dark-brown clay, grey surface. Estimated outer diameter approximately 40 cm., inner diameter approximately 35 cm. (Pl. 30:E). Part of a heavy brazier rim, on its upper part ovolo incised on broad, down-curving rim, with one broad groove on top; below this, a row of dentils. From this rises a fragment of a double frame, probably belonging to the sunken panel on the back of a lug. *Provenance:* As No. 9.¹⁹

 No. 32.2362C. Fabric as No. 1. Estimated outer diameter 31.2 cm.; inner diameter 27.5 cm. (Pl. 30:F). Probably fragment of a brazier's base, with ovolo impressed on flaring ring base. Provenance: As No. 9.²⁰

12. No. 32.2362D. Fabric as No. 1. Width 11.5 cm. (Pl. 30:G). Twisted handle. Provenance: As No. 9.²¹

13. No. I.4192. Fabric as No. 6. Height 10.2 cm., width 6.7 cm. (Pl. 31:A). On raised panel, within an arched frame, bearded head with hair arranged as in No. 9. Two straight furrows across the forehead, probably intended to represent a fillet, under which appear heavy, raised eyebrows, their inner points upturned to meet under the fillet. Pupils of eyes lightly incised. Bulging cheeks and horses' ears, both points

¹⁷ Crowfoot (above, n. 4).

¹⁸ No exact parallels to these heads seem to have been published. An identical form of inscription is found over a different type of head (Conze I A) reversed; Pagenstecher (above, n. 11), Fig. 162. O. Didelot of the Ecole Française d'Athènes, who is preparing the catalogue of braziers found at Delos, is to be thanked for drawing the author's attention to this inscription.

¹⁹ This fragment, reconstructed by Crowfoot (above, n. 4) as forming part of the brazier's body above the handles, in fact retains enough of the surface of its upper rim to make such an inclusion impossible. Moreover, the neutron activation analysis showed that this fragment is very different in composition from other fragments from the site used in this suggested reconstruction. The very large diameter of this rim equals that of brazier No. 58. A.1 from Delos; see Le Roy (above, n. 1.), p. 480, and is close to another from Delos; Conze, p. 136, upper Fig. For the lower parts of such a large specimen, see Mayence (above, n. 13), pp. 376-377, Figs. 2–3.

²⁰ Crowfoot (above, n. 4). See also Wiegand and Schrader (above, n. 13), p. 460, Fig. 365.

²¹ Crowfoot (above, n. 4).

¹⁵ Similar mouldings are frequent on such braziers; see e.g. Conze, pp. 135-137.

¹⁶ See for this the head on a brazier lug; Conze, p. 130, No. 821.

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and lobes turned outwards; right ear misformed. Slightly open mouth; beard formed of five locks, of which the central is broader than the rest; all framed by the heavy locks of the moustache. *Provenance*: Ascalon. *Type*: Conze III A 328.²²

14. No. 32.2492. Fabric as No. 6. Max. height 7.3 cm. (Pl. 31:B). Hair rising to arch, fillet as before, but pointed ears might here have been intended (or interpreted by artisan) as the looped ends of the fillet. Slightly open mouth and beard, formed of two twisted and two plain locks, flanked by the two twisted, long locks of the moustache.

Provenance: Shore, west of Gaza. Type: Conze III A.²³

No. 81.803. Red-brown clay. Width 7.1 cm. (Pl. 31:C). Similar to the above, but beard formed of only three locks and pointed ears look even more like looped ends of the fillet. *Provenance:* 'Akko excavations.²⁴
 Type: Conze III A.

16. No. 71.907. Fabric as No. 6. Part of face smoke-blackened. Width 7.2 cm. (Pl. 31:D). Lower part of face missing. Raised panel and square frame. Other details similar to the above, pupils of eyes lightly incised.

Provenance: 'Akko, 1971 excavation.25

Type: Conze III A. Similar example at Dor, No. 24106 (and cf. above, n. 2, back cover, upper right).

 No. 72.532. Fabric similar to No. 6. Part of face smoke-blackened. Width approximately 6.9 cm. (Pl. 31:E). Upper part missing and restored in plaster. erroneously showing frame as rope-patterned. Provenance: Jaffa, 1956 excavations, surface find. Type: Conze III A.

18. No. 69.5639. Fabric as No. 6. Width 6.8 cm. (Pl. 31:F). Details similar to No. 15, but lower part of face missing.

Provenance: 'Akko.

Type: Conze III A. Similar examples at Dor, Nos. 40230 and 10270.26

19. No. 47.2074. Fabric as No. 6. Face smoke-blackened. Width 7.6 cm. (Pl. 32:A). On raised panel, arched frame with bearded head, lower part missing. Very similar to the above, but upper furrow of fillet broader than the lower. *Provenance:* 'Akko.

Type: Conze III A.27

²² See also P. Perdrizet: Les terres cuites grecques d'Egypte de la collection Fouquet. Paris, 1921, p. 87. No. 213; Pl. 79, lower left.

²³ Very similar, but with inscription: Pagenstecher (above, n. 11), p. 153, No. 3d, Fig. 166. See also Martens (above, n. 1), p. 143, Fig. 9.

²⁴ 'Akko Stratum IV, No. A-329/21. Thanks are due to M. Dothan for his permission to include this unpublished specimen from his excavations here.

²⁵ See above, n. 10.

²⁶ This seems to show a thunderbolt to the right of the head. The lug's back shows a rectangular stamp, with the inscription EKAT|AIOY| and below it a *stylos* — cf. Pagenstecher (above, n. 11), p. 153, No. 3c.
 ²⁷ See also K. Tuchelt: Didyma, *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 21 (1971), p. 80, Pl. 16, No. 238.

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20. No. 47.2075. Fabric as No. 6. Part of face smoke-blackened. Height 11.6 cm., width 8.5 cm. (Pl. 32:B). Panel and face somewhat like the above, though of coarser execution, and locks of hair fewer. Ears have clearly been replaced by the looped ends of the fillet. Mouth open, beard formed of four locks, framed by the long locks of the moustache. *Provenance:* 'Akko.

Type: Conze III A.

No. 69.5784. Fabric as No. 3. On face, traces of smoke-blackening. Width 8.2 cm. (Pl. 32:D). Similar to the above, but features coarser; snub nose. Lower part of beard missing.
 Provenance: 'Akko.
 Type: Conze III A.²⁸

No. 69.5665. Fabric as No. 6. Width 7.5 cm. (Pl. 32:C). Much worn; rim and lower part missing. On raised panel in arched frame, face with thick, erect locks of hair.
 Provenance: 'Akko.
 Type: Conze III A.

23. No. 69.5638. Buff-grey core; buff surface. Width 7.5 cm. (Pl. 32:E). Back: on raised panel, double square frame, inside which head of panther or lion, ears, eyes and mouth deeply incised. Lower part and front (inside) battered or missing. *Provenance:* 'Akko.

Type: Conze VI D 850.29

No. P.1594*Fabric similar to No. 23. Width 9 cm. (Pl. 33:A). Back similar to former, though animal's hair is parted in centre. At front of lug, traces of a broken-off head, probably of an ox. *Provenance:* Unknown.
 Type: Conze VI D 830.

25. No. 63.2006. Local ware: grey-black core with white grits; red-brown surface. Max. height 8.7 cm. (Pl. 33:C). Lug and rim missing. Head of ox, muzzle at right angle to rim. Head hand-made: eyes and nostrils incised. The horns may have been on the missing lug. *Provenance*: Ashdod excavations.³⁰

Type: Conze VI D, somewhat like 849.31

26. No. 47.1886. Fabric similar to No. 3. Width 7.1 cm. (Pl. 33:B). On raised panel, in double frame, vertical thunderbolt in low relief. Lower part missing. *Provenance:* 'Akko.

Type: Conze VII 853. Similar example at Dor, Nos. 40920/1 and 40885 (of same brazier).32

²⁹ See also Mayence (above, n. 13), p. 393, No. VA, Fig. 62, and his remark that fragments with animal heads of this type are made of a clay different from all others. This observation was borne out by the neutron activation analysis, which showed our Nos. 23 and 24 to be different from all others in the catalogue and from the Dor finds. For possible provenance, see below.

³⁰ M. Dothan: Ashdod II-III — The Second and Third Seasons ('Atiqot, English Series, 9-10) (1971), pp. 177, 211, Fig. 100:10, Pl. 90:6; tentatively dated by the excavator to the second century B.C.E.

³¹ The neutron activation analysis showed this specimen to be of different material from all the others, but similar to other local wares from Ashdod.

³² When complete, the panel is shield-shaped, with pointed base. The Dor lugs have above the thunderbolt the inscription EKATAIOY; see Stern (above, n. 3, *IEJ* 32).

²⁸ Ibid., No. 239.

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 No. 70.881. Red-grey core, buff surface. Width 8.5 cm. (Pl. 33:D). On raised panel, plain relief panel; projection missing.
 Provenance: 'Akko, 1971 excavation.³³

Type: Conze X.

Dor 40980 (see n. 6, above) (Pl. 33:E). Bearded head, with horizontal thunderbolt over high, bald pate or skullcap. Provenance: Tel Dor excavations.

Type: Conze IV A 809-810.³⁴

CONCLUSIONS

Material and Origin. The neutron activation analysis has indicated that all but Nos. 23, 24 and 25 came from abroad, including the specimens from Dor.³⁵ According to these tests, all of the foreign specimens but No. 10 may have originated in a single region. The analysis shows that it is unlikely that any came from such places as Alexandria.³⁶ The place of origin of the main group is still unknown.³⁷

Date. The date generally accepted for these braziers falls in the second half of the second century B.C.E.³⁸ Unfortunately, none of the specimens in our catalogue can at present be dated more accurately than this.

Use, decorations and inscriptions. It is generally agreed that these braziers³⁹ were used in private households for cooking⁴⁰ or for heating and keeping food warm.⁴¹ There is also a consensus as to the apotropaic character of the decorations — the various

³⁷ Suggestions include, to date, Athens as place of manufacture and Delos as marketing place — thus Conze, p. 141, while Perdrizet (above, n. 22), pp. 86–87, preferred to see Delos as the main place of manufacture. Dorothy Burr: The Terracotta Figurines — Athenian Agora, *Hesperia* 2 (1933), p. 189, suggested for this a place in Asia Minor, while H.A. Thompson: Two Centuries of Hellenistic Pottery — Athenian Agora, *Hesperia* 3 (1934), pp. 467–468, denied the Athenian manufacture of these braziers and suggested one of the Aegean islands, perhaps Delos itself. Others again, like Martens (above, n. 1), p. 144, have refrained from any attempt at such an identification, while Frazer (above, n. 1), suggested Rhodes.

³⁸ While Conze, p. 139, suggested this date, Thompson (above, n. 37), indicated the mid-second century as the date of such braziers, and for specimens of superior design and execution, 'possibly fifty years earlier'. A. Bovan in P. Bruneau *et al.*: L'*îlot de la Maison des Comédiens (Expédition Archéologique de Delos*, 27), Paris, 1970, pp. 274-275, 424, dates such finds, with this house, towards the end of the second C.C.E.

pp. 38-46.

^o E.g. Mayence (above, n. 13), pp. 373-374; Thompson (above, n. 37); Martens (above, n. 1), p. 136.

⁴¹ M. Rostovtzeff: The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World, Oxford, 1941, p. 797, Pl. 91:1.

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³³ See above, n. 10.

³⁴ See also Mayence (above, n. 13), p. 393, No. IVF, Fig. 51.

³⁵ See below, pp. 234-238.

³⁶ Cf. Le Roy (above, n. 1), p. 499, Fig. 29.

bearded heads (however they are interpreted), the animal heads and such motives as the thunderbolt.42

The names appearing on some of the braziers, mostly the name Hekataios, but also Nikolaos, as well as abbreviations of others, e.g. Lyk.. and Athe ..., are considered to be those of the potters.43

Occurrence in Israel. Except for the rare examples at Samaria, all specimens so far reported come from sites on the coast.44 Significantly, they have not been found at inland Hellenistic sites which were occupied at the time, e.g. Maresha, Gezer, Tel Dan, Tel Anafa and Jerusalem.⁴⁵ However, they are also lacking at coastal settlements of the period such as Shiqmona and Tell Jemme,⁴⁶ nor have they been reported at Makhmish (Tel Michal) or Apollonia.47 Wherever found, such braziers might have come in as merchandise48 or as part of the personal household goods of military or civilian colonists.49 The absence of such utensils on inland sites may well be explained by their size and weight, coupled with their fragility, which would have been a serious deterrent to their commercial distribution far inland.50

E.g. Conze, pp. 137-138; Martens (above, n. 1), pp. 137-138; Bovan (above, n. 38), questions this, 42 preferring to see most as pleasant ornaments.

E.g. Conze, pp. 139-140; Martens (above, n. 1).

See Table 1, below, p. 235. 44

No mention in F.J. Bliss and R.A.S. Macalister: Excavations in Palestine, London, 1902; R.A.S. 45 Macalister: Excavation of Gezer, London, 1912; W.G. Dever et al.: Gezer I, Jerusalem, 1970 and Gezer II, Jerusalem, 1974. For information on recent excavations, the author's thanks are due to A. Biran, Sharon Herbert, B. Mazar, N. Avigad and D. Ariel respectively.

The author's thanks for this information are extended to A. Zemer and G. van Beek respectively.

Not mentioned in Z. Herzog et al.: Excavations at Tel Michal - 1977, Tel Aviv 5 (1976), pp. 99-130. 47 For information about Apollonia, thanks are due to I. Roll.

For naval transport of such cumbersome kitchen-ware even in our own time, see Thompson's remarks (above, n. 37), p. 468.

See for this e.g., the letter of Antiochus III to his strategos Zeuxis, as cited by Josephus, Ant. XII, 147, to the effect that such colonists should move 'with their personal effects'. Cf. G.M. Cohen: The Seleucid Colonies, Studies in Founding, Administration and Organization, Wiesbaden, 1978, pp. 6-8. The author's thanks are due to D. Mendels for having drawn his attention to this study.

Such braziers are in fact scarce or completely lacking at Hellenistic sites further inland in many 50 countries around the Mediterranean, where they abound on coastal sites; see Le Roy (above, n. 1), p. 478, n. 1 for the latest list of sites where they have been discovered.