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REFLECTIONS OF THE CULT OF APOLLON IN ALABANDA: BILYCHNIS WITH HERACLES DESCRIPTION¹

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Abstract: This study examines a unique double-nosed terracotta oil lamp (bilychnis) unearthed from the Alabanda Agora. The lamp's most striking feature is its handle, decorated with a relief depicting the struggle between Heracles and the Lernaean Hydra – the second of his Twelve Labors. This scene stands in contrast to the undecorated discus on the lamp's body. Heracles is depicted holding the "Laurel Branch," a symbol associated with Apollon, the chief deity of Alabanda. This iconographic detail, along with epigraphic evidence and the ongoing presence of the Temple of Apollon Isotimos, underscores the paramount importance of Apollon in Alabanda. The Alabanda Bilychnis serves as a microcosm, reflecting the veneration for Apollon ingrained even in everyday objects. Furthermore, the lamp's form, mythological theme, and iconography were analyzed comparatively against similar examples from various museum collections worldwide. Based on this stylistic analysis, the lamp is dated to the second half of the 1st century AD.

Keywords: *Alabanda, Apollon, Heracles, Lamp, Bilychnis.*

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INTRODUCTION

Located approximately 7 km west of Çine district in Aydın Province, Turkey, the ancient settlement of Alabanda lies west of the Marsyas Stream (Çine Stream) in Doğanyurt village's Araphisar district² (Fig. 1). Hittite texts mention the earliest settlement under the name Waliwanda³. Alabanda boasts significant ruins, demonstrating continuous habitation since the Classical period⁴. The first excavations at Alabanda occurred in 1904–1905 under the direction of Halil Edhem Bey⁵. Since 2015, a team led by Prof. Ali Yalçın TAVUKÇU has continued this vital work, furthering our understanding of Alabanda's rich history⁶.

¹ The subject of the study was investigated utilizing the resources made available through Atatürk University's Scientific Research Projects, specifically under the Fundamental Research Project numbered 13812.

² HIRSCHFELD 1893, 1270; MARCHESE 1976, 70–71; BEAN 1987, 215; TIRPAN 1990, 171; ATEŞLİER 2012, 78; ATEŞLİER/AKKURNAZ 2013, 482; 2014, 247; AKKAN *et alii* 2017, 305; UZUNOĞLU/AYDIN TAVUKÇU 2024 (in Publication).

³ GARSTANG 1943, 41; GARSTANG/GURNEY 1959, 78–79; MACQUEEN 1968; 169; KÜÇÜKEREN 2007, 124; ATEŞLİER/AKKURNAZ 2013, 483; AYDIN TAVUKÇU 2015, 225; AKKAN *et alii* 2017, 306.

⁴ AYDIN TAVUKÇU 2015, 230; AKKURNAZ 2018, 301; CEYLAN 2022, 76; TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2022, 326.

⁵ EDHEM BEY 1905, 443–459; EDHEM BEY 1906, 407, 422.

⁶ AYDIN TAVUKÇU 2015, 223; AKKAN *et alii* 2017, 305 *et al*; AKKAN *et alii* 2018, 421 sqq.;

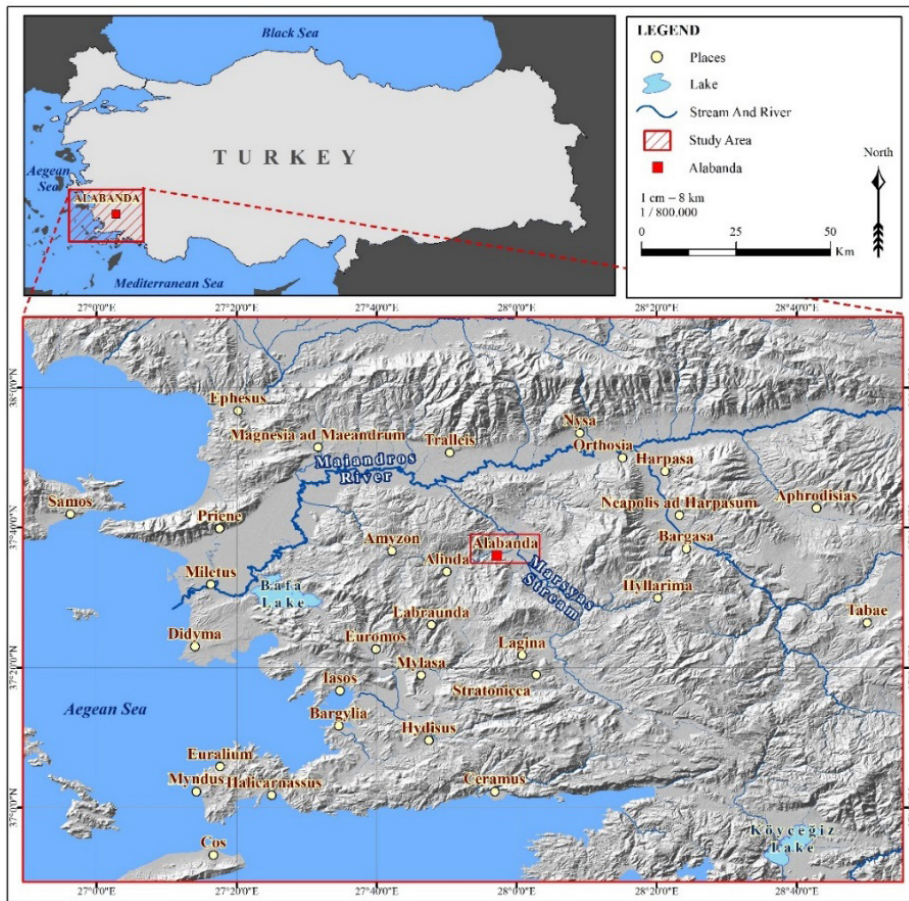


Fig. 1. Localization of Alabanda Ancient City (CEYLAN 2022, 80).

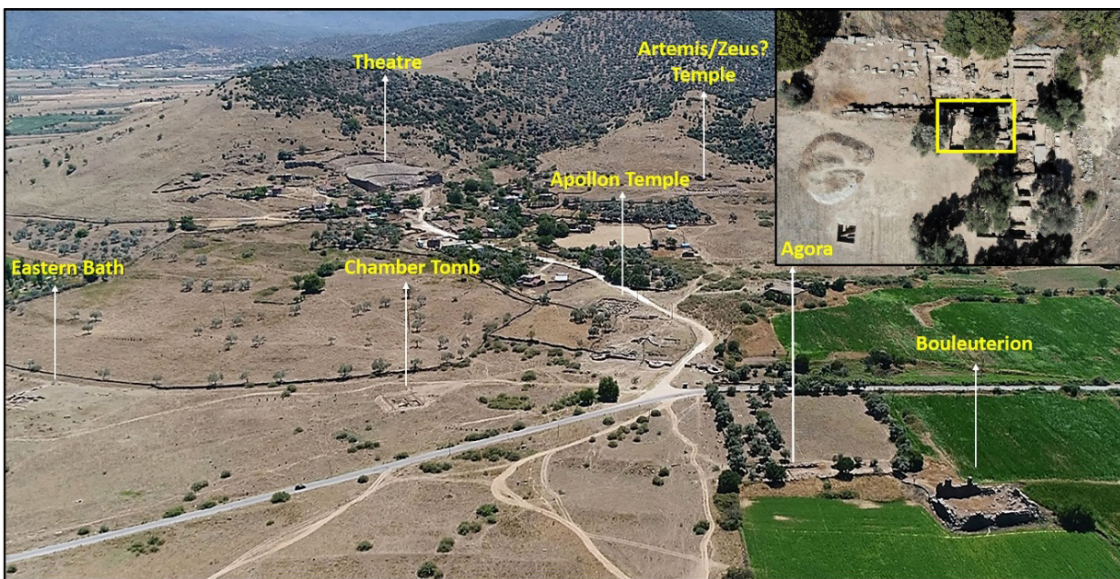


Fig. 2. A View of Alabanda Agora and Other Buildings of the City.

have been identified⁸. The Bilychnis⁹, a double-nosed oil lamp featuring Heracles was unearthed in the Agora, another significant structure within the ancient city (Fig. 2).

The Alabanda Agora, a rectangular structure measuring 73 × 114 meters, lies northwest of the Bouleuterion and approximately 200 meters from the Temple of Apollon. Consistent with the standard design of agoras, public buildings and temples likely surrounded the area. An interesting passage by Vitruvius¹⁰, describing the Tralleis Ekklesiasterion, sheds light on a potential design flaw within the Alabanda Agora. Vitruvius mentions Mathematician Licymnius' criticism of Apaturius of Alabanda's design. Licymnius argues that while Alabanda is known for its political acumen, a "lack of sensitivity to propriety" mars their architectural choices. He criticizes the presence of statues suited for gymnasiums within the forum, where activities like discus throwing and ball games occur. This veiled reference, some scholars believe, points to the Alabanda Agora. Licymnius suggests that "changing the location of the statues suitable for different locations" damages the city's reputation. Archaeological evidence supports the presence of an Ionic stoa surrounding the agora, based on discovered marble architectural pieces. The stoa likely had an entrance on the southwest side of the complex.

Initial excavations at the

Strabo⁷ described Alabanda, one of the most prominent cities of inner Caria, as renowned for its inhabitants' opulent lifestyle. The city boasted numerous temples, theaters, bouleuterions, stadiums, nympheums, aqueducts, churches, baths, city walls, necropolises, and a sarcophagus tomb

AYDIN TAVUKÇU 2018, 9 sqq.; AYDIN TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2019, 531 sqq.; TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2019, 147 sqq.; TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2020, 135 sqq.; TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2022, 95 sqq.; CEYLAN 2022, 76; TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2022, 325; TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2023, 119 sqq.; TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2024.

⁷ STRABON XIV, II, 22, 26.

⁸ EDHEM BEY 1905, 443–459; EDHEM BEY 1906, 407, 422; TIRPAN 1990, 171; YENER 2001, 5 sqq.; YENER 2002, 179 sqq.; YENER 2005, 109 sqq.; YENER 2006, 171 sqq.; ATEŞLİER 2012, 78; ATEŞLİER 2013, 482; ATEŞLİER 2014, 247; AYDIN TAVUKÇU 2015, 223; AKKAN *et alii* 2017, 305; AKKAN *et alii* 2018, 421 sqq.; AYDIN TAVUKÇU 2018, 9 sqq.; AYDIN TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2019, 531 sqq.; TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2019, 147 sqq.; TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2020, 135 sqq.; TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2022, 95 sqq.; CEYLAN 2022, 76; TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2022, 325; TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2023, 119 sqq.; TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2024.

⁹ While double-nosed oil lamps are called *bilychnis*; Oil lamps with multiple noses were called *polymyxus*. See. WALTERS 1914, XIII.

¹⁰ VITRUVIUS, VIII, V, 148.

Alabanda Agora, believed to be of late Hellenistic origin, began in 1904 under the direction of Halil Edhem Bey¹¹. These early works exposed the northeast and northwest corners of the north gallery. To gain further insight into the agora's architecture, Ateşlier's¹² 2012 exploration of the north gallery yielded significant finds. These included 23 architectural blocks (10 elephant foot blocks, 2 column drums, and 1 Doric column head). Since 2015, Prof. Ali Yalçın TAVUKÇU has led ongoing collaborative efforts with the Aydın Archeology Museum in the northern gallery¹³. These excavations have not only provided details about the building's plan and a canal system but also unearthed numerous artifacts. These finds include coins, ceramics, oil lamps, terracotta figurines, sculpture fragments, loom weights, spindle whorls, and various ceramic and glass pieces¹⁴. Among the most notable discoveries are a double-faced corner console depicting Helios and Selene, and an Attic-Ephesian type pedestal¹⁵.

BILYCHNIS OF ALABANDA

During the 2022 Alabanda Agora excavations in trench F3 of Layer LXII, a terracotta bilychnis measuring 65–75 cm was unearthed in the northwest corner alongside six other oil lamps¹⁶. Oil lamps are a common archaeological find, typically consisting of a body (functioning as an oil reservoir) and a nozzle for the wick. These small, portable lighting tools serve as valuable indicators of a society's socio-economic structure. Material choices, construction techniques, form, and decoration all contribute to dating and provide insights into the past.

The bilychnis¹⁷ under study (Fig. 3) exhibits exceptional quality and a unique form, enhancing its significance. Crafted from a micaceous, reddish-yellow clay and covered in a dark reddish-brown metallic slip¹⁸ (reminiscent of a bronze prototype despite some flaking), it exemplifies the meticulous production using thin molds¹⁹. The Alabanda oil lamp likely employed both upper and lower molds (matrix) during its creation. The lower mold would have shaped the oil chamber, the lower portion of the nose, and the supporting stem. Conversely, the upper mold would have formed the discus with its relief decoration on the rim, scrolls on the sides, and the handle²⁰. The concave discus remains undecorated except for a central oil hole. While wreaths or rosettes sometimes adorned this area, the Alabanda example follows the more common practice of leaving it plain. A single ring of relief with a double groove separates the discus (a narrow, flat

band) from the shoulder. Adjacent to the shoulder (another undecorated, flat band) sits the triangular handle, featuring a mythological scene carved in relief. The discus transitions directly to the nose, with volutes flanking the shoulder on either side and converging into a central "C" shaped volute, emphasizing the double, rounded nozzles. Soot stains on the round wick holes at the tips of the noses confirm the lamp's prior use. It is worth noting that the handle likely played a role in stabilizing the lamp's ring base. The addition of decorative handles (crescent, triangular, or leaf-shaped) to volutenosed oil lamps during the 1st century AD aimed to counterbalance the weight of long noses and prevent them from tipping over. The triangular handle of the Alabanda bilychnis depicts a scene portraying the slaying of the Lernaean Hydra, one of the Twelve Labors of Heracles (Dodekathlon).

Heracles (Hercules), son of Zeus and Alcmene (though raised by Amphitryon), is the most celebrated hero of Greek mythology²¹. His fame stems from the Twelve Labors, a series of arduous tasks imposed by his cousin Eurystheus as penance for a murderous rage. These labors, overseen by Athena and Apollon, promised Heracles immortality upon their completion.

Like the Nemean lion, the Lernaean Hydra²² sprang from the monstrous union of Typhon and Echidna. Reared by Hera near the spring Amydone, this serpentine creature became a fearsome terror. Typically depicted with multiple heads (ranging from five or six to a hundred, sometimes these heads are depicted as human), the Hydra's poisonous breath was deadly even at rest. Dwelling in the Lerna swamps, it ravaged the surrounding countryside. Heracles, aided by his nephew Iolaus, devised a strategy. While severing the Hydra's heads (which would regenerate if not cauterized), Iolaus used fire to sear the wounds, preventing regrowth. Despite the belief in the immortality of the middle head, Heracles buried it beneath a massive rock. Additionally, the hero slew a monstrous crab sent by Hera to aid the Hydra (this crab, Karkinos, would later be immortalized as the constellation Cancer). Both the slain Hydra and its crustacean ally were eventually immortalized in the night sky as constellations.

According to Greek mythology, the challenging task successfully undertaken by Heracles has been extensively documented through archaeological findings. Among the earliest discoveries is a bronze fibula unearthed in Boeotia dating back to the 8th century BC²³. Another artifact, a bronze tripod leg²⁴, originating from the Olympia Museum and dated to the last quarter of the 7th century BC, was recovered from Sparta. An ivory relief²⁵, attributed to the late 7th century BC, now housed in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, offers further evidence. Another noteworthy artifact among these early depictions is a limestone pediment²⁶ from the begin-

¹¹ EDHEM BEY 1905, 457–458; LAUTER 1970, 92, 94, 98; CAVALIER 2012, 242–243; SIELHORST 2015, 280; SLOTTMAN 2022, 24, 143, Fig. 102–104.

¹² ATEŞLİER/AKKURNAZ 2013, 490–491.

¹³ AKKAN *et alii* 2017, 311.

¹⁴ TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2019, 148–149.

¹⁵ TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2020, 136.

¹⁶ TAVUKÇU *et alii* 2024.

¹⁷ The dimensions of Alabanda Bilychnisi with excavation inventory number ALA'22.LXII-F3.2 are as follows: Height: 8.1 cm, Width: 8.1 cm, Length: 15.7 cm, Discus Diameter: 5 cm, Pedestal Diameter: 4 cm, Wall: 0.1 cm.

¹⁸ According to Alabanda Bilychnis's Munsell Color Catalog, Dough Color: 5 YR 7/6 Lining Color: 2.5 YR 3/3. See. MUNSELL Color Chart.

¹⁹ FITCH/GOLDMAN 1994, 135.

²⁰ FITCH/GOLDMAN 1994, 135–136, Fig. 70. In the bronze prototype of such lamps, this shield served as a light reflector. Terracotta oil lamps must have been intended for decoration as well as serving as a heat shield to protect the hand.

²¹ GRIMAL 1997, 251 sqq.

²² HESIODES 313 sqq; APOLONIUS RODIUS 4 1393 sqq; DIODORI SICULI IV, 11.5; VIRGIL, AENEID VI 287, VI, 803; OVIDIUS IX, 69 sqq; STRABON VIII, VI. 2; AELIAN 9. 23; APOLLODORUS II, 5.2; PAUSANIAS II, 37.4, III. 18. 10, V. 10. 9, V. 17.11, V. 26.7; SMYRNAEUS VI, 212 sqq; GRIMAL 1997, 259 sqq; GRAVES 2020, C. I, 161; C. II, 578–581.

²³ LIMC V/1–2, 2019–2020.

²⁴ LIMC V/1–2, 2025.

²⁵ LIMC V/1–2, 2054.

²⁶ RICHTER 1970, Fig. 403; LIMC V/1–2, 2021; BOARDMAN 1993, GSAP, Fig. 196; ERGÜRER 2023, 167.

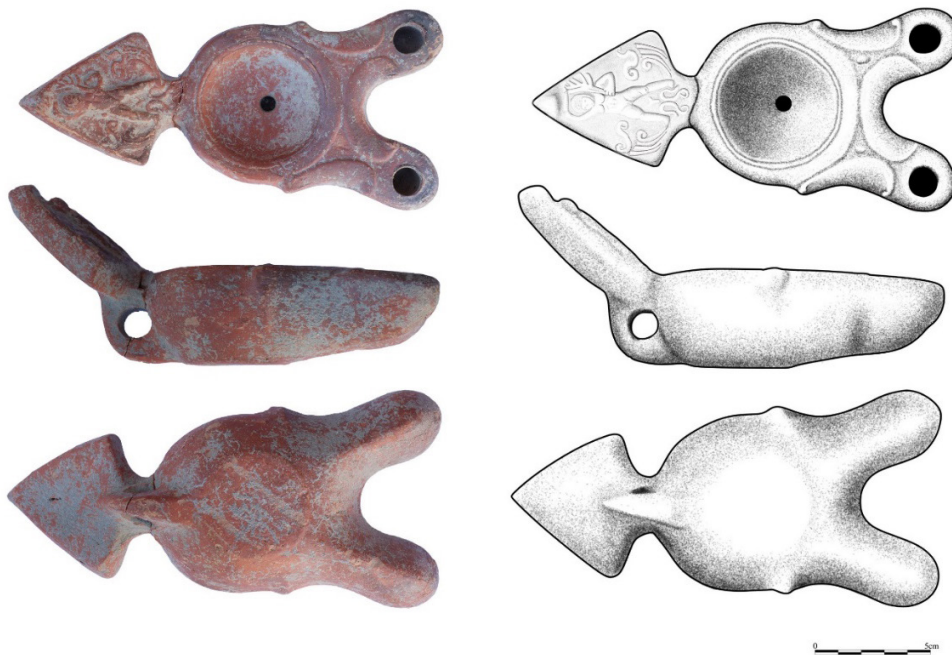


Fig. 3. Bilychnis of Alabanda.

ning of the century, currently displayed in the Acropolis Museum. The hero's confrontation with the Lernaean Hydra, a popular mythological subject, appeared on Corinthian pottery²⁷ as early as the 6th century BC. During the mid-5th century BC, it continued to be depicted on Attic black-and red-figure pottery²⁸ and even adorned the metopes of temples of Olympian Zeus²⁹ and Athenian Hephaisteion³⁰.

The motif continued to be depicted on ceramics throughout the 4th century BC, exemplified by pieces³¹ found in the Fitchburg Museum of Art. In the Hellenistic period, this mythological scene proliferated, particularly on ceramics³², metopes, friezes, votive plaques³³, as well as in jewelry such as golden pectoral necklaces³⁴ and ring stones³⁵, and on coins³⁶. Throughout the Roman period, it remained a prominent subject across various mediums, including mosaics³⁷, sarcophagi³⁸,

²⁷ LIMC V/1-2, 1990-1995; The hero's fight with the Lerna monster is seen on a Corinthian Aryballo made of terracotta, which is now among the Collections of the J. Paul Getty Museum and preserved in the Getty Villa in Malibu. See. [HTTPS://WWW.ARTSY.NET/GENE/GREEK-AND-ROMAN-ART-AND-ARCHITECTURE](https://www.artsy.net/gene/greek-and-roman-art-and-architecture)

²⁸ LIMC V/1-2, 1702, 1996-2006, 2013, 2016; A white-grounded lekythos attributed to the painter Diosphos depicts the hero's fight with the water monster on the stamnos in the Antonio Salinas Regional Archaeological Museum in Palermo, Italy. See. BOARDMAN 1993, ABFV, Fig. 270; 2002, Fig. 198, 1,2.

²⁹ LIMC V/1-2, 1705; BOARDMAN 1992, Fig. 22.

³⁰ LIMC V/1-2, 1706; BOARDMAN 1992, Fig. 111.

³¹ https://fr.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fichier:Fragmentary_jar_with_scene_of_Heracles_slaying_the_Hydra_of_Lerna,_South_Italy,_375-340_BC,_ceramic_-_Fitchburg_Art_Museum_-_DSC08671.JPG.

³² LIMC V/1-2, 2047-2051.

³³ LIMC V/1-2, 2040-2044.

³⁴ LIMC V/1-2, 2053.

³⁵ LIMC V/1-2, 2046.

³⁶ LIMC V/1-2, 2055.

³⁷ LIMC V/1-2, 1713; It can also be seen engraved on a mosaic dating back to the Roman Imperial Period in the National Archaeological Museum in Madrid, the capital of Spain, see. [HTTPS://WWW.THEOI.COM/GALLERY/Z26.1B.HTML](https://www.theoi.com/gallery/Z26.1B.html); ERGÜNER 2023, 166-167.

³⁸ LIMC V/1-2, 1714-1716; For the Heracles Sarcophagus, dating back to the 2nd century AD, which was found in Perge, smuggled to Zürich

oil lamps³⁹, coins⁴⁰, clay or metal reliefs⁴¹, sculptures⁴², and ceramics⁴³. The ubiquitous representation of the Hydra of Lerna's confrontation with Heracles, the second of his Twelve Labors, underlines its significance as one of the oldest mythological motifs in Greek art, likely influenced by even earlier depictions⁴⁴ from the Eastern tradition. This theme, evident in diverse artworks, including the oil lamp in this study, serves as a testament to its enduring resonance across epochs.

Examining the mythological scene depicted on the handle of the Alabanda Bilychnis (Fig. 4), we see a powerful Heracles depicted with his right arm raised and a laurel branch firmly grasped in his left hand. The details of his head are obscured

by wear, but the presence of a Nemean lion pelt can be discerned from the mane. The artist meticulously rendered Heracles' musculature, highlighting his chest muscles, abdominal line, navel, and leg definition. In his right hand, he likely holds his iconic club (clava), a symbol of his strength. However, due to the wear, the possibility of a harp cannot be entirely excluded. The scene is dynamic, but the focus is not on the Hydra itself. Wavy, curved relief lines in the center might suggest the presence of the Hydra, but it is more likely these represent the Lerna swamp being drained by Heracles. Euhemerists, who interpreted myths as historical accounts,

and brought to the Antalya Museum collections after a difficult process, see. [HTTPS://KULTURPORTALI.GOV.TR/TURKIYE/ANTALYA/HABER-DUYURU/HERACLES-LAHDI-VATANINA-GERI-DONDU-](https://kulturportali.gov.tr/turkiye/antalya/haber-duyuru/heracles-lahdi-vatanina-geri-dondu-); The sarcophagus, dated to the 3rd century AD, depicting Heracles and the Hydra of Lerna together, is located today in Palazzo Altemps, Museo Nazionale Romano in Rome. [HTTPS://UPL.OAD.WIKIMEDIA.ORG/WIKIPEDIA/COMMONS/4/48/TWELVE_LABOURS_ALTEMPES_INV8642.JPG](https://upl.oad.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Commons:4/48/TWELVE_LABOURS_ALTEMPES_INV8642.JPG) Likewise, a similar mythological scene is engraved on a sarcophagus located at the Honolulu Academy of Arts in Rome. See. [HTTPS://ANCIENTTIMES.BLOGSPOT.COM/2021/06/HERACLES-HERCULES-AND-LERNAEAN-HYDRA.HTML](https://ancienttimes.blogspot.com/2021/06/heracles-hercules-and-lernaean-hydra.html).

³⁹ LIMC V/1-2, 2081-2083.

⁴⁰ LIMC V/1-2, 2086-2087.

⁴¹ LIMC V/1-2, 2076; Additionally, a relief depicting Heracles slaying the Hydra, dated to the end of the 3rd century AD, is exhibited today in the Chiragan Roman Villa in Toulouse. [HTTPS://ANCIENTTIMES.BLOGSPOT.COM/2021/06/HERACLES-HERCULES-AND-LERNAEAN-HYDRA.HTML](https://ancienttimes.blogspot.com/2021/06/heracles-hercules-and-lernaean-hydra.html); LIMC V/1-2, 2084.

⁴² LIMC V/1-2, 2089-2091; Another statue of Heracles, restored as the murderer of the Hydra of Lerna, is preserved in Rome today. The statue, which is a Roman copy of a Greek original dating back to the 4th century BC, is in the collections of Palazzo Nuovo and the Capitoline Museums. [HTTPS://TR.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/DOSYA:HERAKLES_HYDRA_MUSEI_CAPITOLINI_MC236.JPG](https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dosya:Herakles_hydra_musei_capitolini_mc236.jpg)

⁴³ LIMC V/1-2, 2080; 2nd-3rd AD found in Saint-Colombe and added to the collections of the Gallo-Roman Fourvière Museum in the Ionian City of France. A light vase dating back to the 19th century should also be included in this group. [HTTPS://ANCIENTTIMES.BLOGSPOT.COM/2021/06/HERACLES-HERCULES-AND-LERNAEAN-HYDRA.HTML](https://ancienttimes.blogspot.com/2021/06/heracles-hercules-and-lernaean-hydra.html)

⁴⁴ LIMC V/1-2, 2019-2020.

might argue that these lines symbolize the constant flow of water refilling the swamp, frustrating Heracles' efforts⁴⁵.

The laurel branch held by Heracles in his left hand underscores his association with Apollon, the patron deity of the sun, light, and the fine arts. Despite being acquitted by Rhadamanthys, who cited self-defense as justification for Heracles' actions in slaying the music teacher Linos with lyre strikes, Heracles was later appointed as the bearer of the laurel for Apollon of Ismenia during his tenure at a cattle farm under his stepfather Amphitryon's charge⁴⁶. This symbolism is rooted in the laurel tree's significance as one of the emblems of Apollon, the primary deity of the city of Alabanda⁴⁷.

Apollon stands out as the predominant religious figure depicted on city coins, particularly during the Hellenistic Period coinciding with the onset of coin minting in urban centers⁴⁸. Notably, during the reign of Seleucid King III, Antiochus (223–187 BC), silver and bronze coins prominently feature Apollon and his symbols⁴⁹. While the obverse of coins from this era typically portrays Apollon, the reverse often showcases attributes of Pegasus, the Winged Horse, or Apollon himself⁵⁰. Further evidence of the Apollon cult in the ancient city of Alabanda was uncovered by Edhem Bey and brought to scholarly attention. During his excavations in 1904, Bey unearthed approximately 200 meters of the theater and speculated that a temple dedicated to Apollon stood nearby. This inference was supported by the discovery of 56 coins bearing the head of Apollon on one side and the inscription "ΑΛΑΒΑΝΔΕΩΝ" alongside a depiction of a lyre on the other side, found within the naos of a Doric temple situated on an artificial terrace in the northwest quadrant of the city⁵¹. Additionally, Apollon, venerated as "Isotimos" (Equal in Respect)⁵², commanded a dedicated temenos area within the urban landscape⁵³.

During the Roman Imperial Period, Apollon is commonly depicted on the obverse of coins minted in the city's



Fig. 4. Detail from Bilychnis Handle.

pseudo-autonomous mints, often accompanied by a laurel branch⁵⁴. During this era, the laurel branch, a symbol closely associated with Apollon, frequently appears on the reverse sides of coins, either alongside the deity or encompassing the entirety of the coin's circumference⁵⁵. Coins bearing the legend "KICCIOC" (Kissios/Ivy) provide evidence of an alternative aspect of Apollon's worship in Alabanda⁵⁶. In addition to the numismatic evidence⁵⁷, which underscores Apollon's significance within the city, the presence of a temple and its extant ruins further attest to the profound and sacred role of Apollon in Alabanda. This convergence of epigraphic and material evidence highlights the enduring importance of Apollon as a central religious figure within the city's cultural and religious landscape.

Setting aside the mythological context surrounding the Alabanda Bilychnis, an examination of its formal characteristics reveals significant criteria aiding in the dating of oil lamps within scholarly research. Lamp typologies featuring round volute noses have been subject to scrutiny under various classifications by researchers specializing in oil lamp studies. These typologies, encompassing Dressel/Lamboaglia⁵⁸ Form 12–13, Loeschcke⁵⁹ Type III, Brooner⁶⁰ Type XXI, Deneauve⁶¹ Type V, Walters⁶² Form 88–89, Heres⁶³ Type A, Goethert-Polaschek⁶⁴ Type X A, Iványi⁶⁵ Type III, and Leibundgut⁶⁶

⁴⁵ PAUSANIAS II, 37.4; GRIMAL 1997, 260; GRAVES 2020, Vol. II, 579.

⁴⁶ PAUSANIAS IX, 10.4; In fact, although the hero disagreed with Apollon many times, they were kept apart by Zeus due to their status as brothers. GRIMAL 1997, 80; GRAVES 2020, 560.

⁴⁷ GRIMAL 1997, 80, 83, 139; CAN 1994, 55–57.

⁴⁸ BAĞDATLI 2006, 225–231; CEYLAN 2021, 307; CEYLAN 2021, 189, 193.

⁴⁹ MORKHOLM 2000, 157, 276, No. 476; BMC CARIA, 1, NO. 1–4; BMC CARIA, 3, No. 11,12,15; SNG COP CARIA 4; SNG VON AUL. KARIEN, 2388.

⁵⁰ BMC CARIA, 1–2, No. 1–6, Pl. 1–4; BMC CARIA, 3, No. 11–12, 15, Pl. 8–10; SNG COP CARIA, 15; WAGGONER 1989, 283–299, Pl. LXV ve LXVI; For the different types of bronze and silver coins of the city minted during the Hellenistic Period, see. HISTORIA NUMORUM ONLINE.

⁵¹ EDHEM BEY 1905, 455. There are different opinions about which god the temple was dedicated to, for more information, see. BEAN 1987, 225; 2000, 197, ATEŞLİER 2012, 83; 2013, 488; 2014, 247 et al; AYDIN TAVUKÇU 2015, 230–232, dn. 58; AKKAN *et alii* 2017, 308–309, 322, Pic. 1.

⁵² EDHEM BEY 1906, 419; LAUMONIER 1934, 299; BEAN 1987, 217; COHEN 1996, 248–249.

⁵³ BAĞDATLI 2001, 17–50.

⁵⁴ CEYLAN 2021, Cat. No. 5,6,12,17 (On the obverse of these coins); 2022, 81, Fig. 3–5.

⁵⁵ BMC CARIA, 7 No. 38, 40, Pl. II. 6, 7; SNG COP CARIA, 15; SNG VON AUL. KARIEN, 2397, 2401; [HTTPS://WWW.ACSEARCH.INFO/SEARCH.HTML?ID=9069397](https://www.acsearch.info/search.html?id=9069397).

⁵⁶ CEYLAN 2021, 192, 194–196, Dn. 20.

⁵⁷ EDHEM BEY 1906, 419; ROBERT 1925, 228; LAUMONIER 1934, 299, Fig. 2; CEYLAN 2021, 192–193.

⁵⁸ DRESSEL/LAMBOGLIA 1952.

⁵⁹ LOESCHCKE 1919, 385–387, Abb. 28.

⁶⁰ BROONER 1930, 73–76.

⁶¹ DENEAUVE 1969, 145–149, Pl. LVI-LIX.

⁶² WALTERS 1914, 124 sqq.

⁶³ HERES 1972, 11.

⁶⁴ GOERTHERT/POLASCHEK 1985, 96–97.

⁶⁵ IVÁNYI 1935, 11–12.

⁶⁶ LEIBUNDGUT 1977, 28, Taf. 7.

Form X–XI, were categorized by Shier⁶⁷ within the B. 2. 1. group as “Roman Period Embossed Lamps.” Bailey⁶⁸ classified these lamp types as Type D, suggesting their emulation of bronze lamps from the second quarter of the 1st century BC, with the refinement characteristic of relatively inexpensive terracotta lamps, albeit less durable⁶⁹. The existence of a significant number of high-quality specimens from the Late Republic–Early Augustus Period, alongside those displaying rougher craftsmanship, suggests the longevity of this lamp type. These lamps, analyzed within the “Lamps with Long, Voluminous Nozzles and Heat Shields” group by Fitch-Goldman⁷⁰, are distinguished by decorative embellishments on their handles, reminiscent of those found on Hellenistic and Roman bronze lamps⁷¹. Common handle joint shapes include bilobed leaf⁷², crescent⁷³, or triangle motifs⁷⁴. Relief decorations on triangular heat shields, or delta handles⁷⁵, typically feature intricately embroidered palmettes and acanthus leaves⁷⁶, with some examples displaying animal heads instead of volutes⁷⁷. The oil chamber of such lamps is typically wide and shallow, with a concave discus lacking decoration in many instances, as observed in our example. However, in addition to mythological and everyday scenes, decorations featuring human or animal figures, as well as floral or linear motifs, are also encountered. Only two examples featuring the struggle of Heracles and the Hydra of Lerna have been observed so far⁷⁸. These lamps are generally characterized by their large size and double nose, akin to the Alabanda specimens. Through an extensive review of literature and analogical assessments, similar lamps with round volute noses, featuring multiple wick holes, have been identified in numerous renowned museums worldwide, including the G. M. Kam Museum, British Museum, Warsaw National Museum, Mainz, Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseum, Cyprus Museum, Trier Rheinischen Landesmuseums, Paris Bibliothèque Nationale, and Frankfurt Alter Plastik. Furthermore, numerous examples are present in private collections in Egypt, the Berlin antique collection, the collection of the Institute of Archaeology at Heidelberg University, and catalogues such as Ephesos, Carthage, Egypt, Karanis, Carnuntum, Algeria, and Bouvier.

When we look at the similar lamps with round volute noses and double wick holes, as in the Alabanda bilychnis; on the triangular handle, it is seen that there are busts such as Serapis⁷⁹,

Apollon⁸⁰, Isis⁸¹, Medusa⁸², Victoria⁸³, figures such as Fortuna⁸⁴, Comedy Artist⁸⁵, palmette-shaped floral decorations⁸⁶, animal figures⁸⁷, or both⁸⁸, although rare, mythological subjects⁸⁹. Apart from the frequently seen triangular handle, there are also examples where oil lamps with this form are completed with a crescent⁹⁰, palmette/akanthus/leaf⁹¹ and animal-shaped⁹² handle⁹³.

EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

During the excavations conducted in the Agora of the Ancient City of Alabanda in 2022, a double-nosed oil lamp was unearthed, shedding light on the city’s rich historical

⁸⁰ CHRZANOVSKI L. 2019, 218, Cat. No. 238.

⁸¹ CHRZANOVSKI L. 2019, 215, Cat. No. 229.

⁸² OSBORNE 1924, 16, Pl. VI, Fig. 86; CHRZANOVSKI L. 2019, 218, Cat. No. 239.

⁸³ HERES 1972, 15, Taf. 5, Fig. 19.

⁸⁴ HELLMANN 1987, 52, Taf. XXIII, Fig. 193.

⁸⁵ SKINKEL/TAUPIN 1980, 9, Fig. 16.

⁸⁶ BRANTS 1913, 20, Pl. III, 258, Pl. IX, 262; WALTERS 1914, 125, Cat. No. 830; CARDAILLAC 1922, 59, Fig. 66; OSBORNE 1924, 17, Pl. VI, Fig. 88–89; EVELEIN 1928, Pl. III, Fig. 2–3; BERNHARD 1955, 303, NR. 231, 304, Nr. 234–235, 306, Nr. 243; MERCANDO 1962, 32, Tav. 11; SMITH 1966, 22, Fig. 13; DENEAVUE J. 1969, 146, Pl. LVII, 549–550; BAILEY 1972, 29, Pl. 8 (A); HERES 1972, 16, 96, Taf. 6, 67, Fig. 22, 24, 687; OZIOL 1977, 175, Pl. 30, Fig. 534; HAYES 1980, 136, Pl. 64, 549; BAILEY 1980, 208, Pl. 29, Q 1009, 210, Pl. 30, Q 1017, 211, Pl. 30, Q 1020, 213, Pl. 32, Q 1024; HELLMANN 1987, 49–52, Taf. XX–XXIII, Fig. 182, 183, 185, 191–192, 194; BAILEY 1988, 213, Pl. 31, Q 1873–1874; 432, Pl. 131, Q 3393; SELESNOV 1988, 147, Taf. 25, Kat. Nr. 176, 178; MLASOWSKY 1993, 68, Fig. 53, 112, Fig. 97, 160, Fig. 134, 268, Fig. 283–284; BUSSIÈRE 2000, 255–256, Pl. 24–26, Fig. 130, 132–133, 141, 161–164; THÖNE 2004, 58–59, Taf. 15, Kat. 95; CHRZANOVSKI L. 2019, 206, Cat. No. 204, 207, Cat. No. 208–209, 214, Cat. No. 226.

⁸⁷ CHRZANOVSKI L. 2019, 218, Cat. No. 237.

⁸⁸ CARDAILLAC 1922, 60, Fig. 68.

⁸⁹ WALTERS 1914, 128, Cat. No. 844, Pl. XXVI, 126, Cat. No. 832, Pl. XXVIII; BAILEY 1980, 211, Pl. 31, Q 1021; CHRZANOVSKI L. 2019, 215, Cat. No. 228, 216, Cat. No. 230–231, 217, Cat. No. 233–234.

⁹⁰ WALTERS 1914, 127, Cat. No. 837, Pl. XXVI, 129, Cat. No. 850, Pl. XXVI; OSBORNE 1924, 16, Pl. VI, Fig. 87; EVELEIN 1928, Pl. III, Fig. 1; DENEAVUE J. 1969, 145, Pl. LVI, 544, 146, Pl. LVII, 551; HERES 1972, 15–17, Taf. 5–6, Fig. 18, 21, 25; BAILEY 1980, 208, Pl. 29, Q 1007, 214, Pl. 33, Q 1028, 215, Pl. 33, Q 1031; HELLMANN 1987, 51–53, Taf. XXI–XXIII, Fig. 188–190, 196; BAILEY 1988, 446, Pl. 140, Q 3500; ALRAM/STERN 1989, 31–32, Taf. 19, Fig. 71; BUSSIÈRE 2000, 254, Pl. 23, Fig. 125–126, 256, Pl. 25, Fig. 154, 156, 159; CHRZANOVSKI L. 2019, 207, Cat. No. 207, 208, Cat. No. 210, 215, Cat. No. 227.

⁹¹ WALTERS 1914, 129, Cat. No. 851, Pl. XXVIII; LOESCHCKE 1919, 386, Abb. 28; HERES 1972, 14–15, Taf. 4, Fig. 14–15; SHIER 1978, 33, Pl. 36, No. 315; BAILEY 1988, 336, Pl. 76, Q 2688; FITCH/GOLDMAN 1994, 135.

⁹² BUSSIÈRE 2000, 255, Pl. 23, Fig. 127.

⁹³ There are single and multiple nosed examples of the round volute nose oil lamp type. For handle types with different forms, see. WALTERS 1914, 129–135, Pl. XXVI–XXVIII; OSBORNE 1924, 17, Pl. V, Fig. 91, 96; MILTNER 1937, 179, Taf. XI; BERNHARD 1955, 303–304, Nr. 232, NR. 233, 305, Nr. 238–242; DENEAVUE 1969, Pl. LVIII–LIX; MENZEL 1969, 27–29, Abb. 25, 26; BAILEY 1972, 29, Pl. 8 (B); HERES 1972, 81–82, 96, Taf. 54–56, 67, Fig. 498–519, 689; SHIER 1978, Pl. 37; BAILEY 1988, 235–238, Pl. 34–36, Q 1917, 1923–1947, 336, Pl. 75, 2685; MLASOWSKY 1993, 76, Fig. 64, 166, Fig. 145; 170, Fig. 152, 248, Fig. 247–248, 256, Fig. 263, 266, Fig. 279–280, 332, Fig. 316, 334, Fig. 320, 348, Fig. 325; OZIOL 1977, 171–172, Pl. 28, Fig. 518–520; HAYES 1980, 97–99, Pl. 46–47, 386–393; BAILEY 1980, Pl. 34–36; BAILEY 1981, 13, Fig. 13; HELLMANN 1987, 53–58, Taf. XXIII–XXVI, Fig. 197–220; BAILEY 1988, 338–339, Pl. 78; Q 2702–2713, 373, Pl. 98, Q 3011, 3014, 3017; SELESNOV 1988, 147–148, Taf. 26–27, Kat. Nr. 179–186; ALRAM-STERN 1989, 31–32, Taf. 18, Fig. 72–73; BUSSIÈRE 2000, 256–258, Pl. 27–29, Fig. 168–246; THÖNE 2004, 58, 60–61, Taf. 14–15, Kat. 94, 98–102.

⁶⁷ SHIER 1978, 33–34.

⁶⁸ BAILEY 1980, 199 sqq.

⁶⁹ BROONER 1930, 73; ROSENTHAL/SIVAN 1978, 19.

⁷⁰ FITCH/GOLDMAN 1994, 135 sqq.

⁷¹ MENZEL 1969, 25 vd; AYDIN TAVUKÇU 2019, 171–180.

⁷² FITCH/GOLDMAN 1994, 148, Fig. 77.

⁷³ FITCH/GOLDMAN 1994, 147, Fig. 76.

⁷⁴ FITCH/GOLDMAN 1994, 145–146 Fig. 74–75.

⁷⁵ OSBORNE 1924, 7; SHIER 1978, 33.

⁷⁶ FITCH/GOLDMAN 1994, 135.

⁷⁷ BROONER 1930, 75, Fig. 35; DENEAVUE 1969, 148–149, Pl. LIX; ROSENTHAL/SIVAN 1978, 20, Fig. 44.

⁷⁸ MLASOWSKY 1993, 160, 134; PASTUTMAZ SEVMEN 2005, 286, 288, Res. 10; 2013, 204, 206, Abb. 185D.

⁷⁹ WALTERS 1914, 124–125, Cat. No. 826; BAILEY 1988, 236, Pl. 34, Q 1920; SELESNOV 1988, 146, Taf. 24, Kat. Nr. 171–172; MLASOWSKY 1993, 354, Fig. 336; CHRZANOVSKI L. 2019, 206, Cat. No. 205, 216, Cat. No. 232, 217, Cat. No. 235.

legacy. Alabanda, one of the prominent cities in the Inner Caria Region as documented by Strabo, is renowned for its opulent lifestyle and architectural marvels that endure to this day. The Alabanda bilychnis under investigation features a distinctive double wick hole and a round volute nose, with its triangular handle adorned with a depiction of the hero Heracles engaged in combat with the Lernaean Hydra, an iconic scene from Classical Greek mythology. This imagery likely reflects the influence of the Temple of Apollon Isotimos, whose ruins still persist, and the prevalent worship of Apollon, the city's principal deity, as evidenced by its representation on coins. Believed to emulate bronze lamp forms prevalent in the late Hellenistic period, the Alabanda Bilychnis likely dates to the Roman Imperial Period, a conclusion supported by comparative examples found in various museum collections worldwide. Additionally, contemporaneous oil lamps discovered alongside it further corroborate this dating. The use of double-nosed oil lamps during this period suggests a period of prosperity in Alabanda, as these lamps provide increased illumination compared to their single-nosed counterparts but also consume fuel more rapidly, implying higher costs associated with their production and usage. The precise origin or workshop responsible for producing the oil lamp remains a question awaiting resolution. Despite Alabanda's historical significance, spanning from its mention in Hittite sources to its coin minting activities during the Hellenistic Period, conclusive evidence linking the Alabanda bilychnis to local production within the city has yet to be uncovered. Future excavations hold promise for expanding our understanding of the Ancient City of Alabanda and potentially shedding light on its manufacturing practices.

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