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AMPHORA STAMPS FROM THE AGORA
OF NEA PAPHOS, CYPRUS

Abstract: *32 stamped amphora handles were excavated on the Agora site in Paphos (ancient Nea Paphos), Cyprus, within the framework of the Paphos Agora Project conducted by the Department of Classical Archaeology of the Jagiellonian University Institute of Archaeology under the direction of Professor E. Papuci-Władyka since 2011. Most of them were found in contexts dated from the Hellenistic to the Roman period. There are, however, a few stamped handles that were uncovered in definitively uncontaminated Hellenistic contexts. Most probably all of the stamped handles date to the Hellenistic period. They come from Greek amphora production centres including Rhodes, Knidos, Thasos in the Aegean and from Sinope on the Black Sea coast. Most of these stamps are commonly known, although there are several examples of a special interest.*¹

Keywords: *The Paphos Agora Project; agora; Nea Paphos; amphora; amphora stamps*

Prologue

I met Professor Ewdoksia Papuci-Władyka in 2005 during the excavation work in Ukraine, on the Koshary site, where she collaborated with Ukrainian archaeologists from the Archaeological Museum in Odessa. A year later I became her student and during the following years, I worked with her in the excavations on the Maloutena site in Paphos in Cyprus. Currently,

¹ I thank Jacqueline Westwood-Demetriades and one of the reviewers of this paper for proofreading my English.

I am involved in her own project on the Agora site in Paphos. During all of these years, full of adventures that we have experienced together, Professor Ewdoksia Papuci-Władyka, became to me much closer and more important person than just a tutor. She initiated my love for Cyprus and Greece: two places that now are equal to me with my motherland. Also, she has advised me many times and supported me in my professional, as well as, in my personal life. It is an honour for me to be able to offer her this contribution.

The Paphos Agora Project has been conducted by the Department of Classical Archaeology of the Jagiellonian University Institute of Archaeology under the direction of Professor E. Papuci-Władyka since 2011.² The aim of the project is to explore the Roman Agora of Nea Paphos – the Hellenistic and Roman capital of Cyprus – and to locate the agora of this town during the Hellenistic period. The research that has been undertaken in the area of this ancient town by many archaeological expeditions³ has led to a detailed definition of its topography and the character of its districts (Pl. 1: 1). However, the uncovering of public and private buildings dated mainly to the Roman period such as the Odeon, the Asklepieion, so-called the ‘Villa of Theseus’ – a probable residence of a Roman governor of Cyprus – and many other buildings, have given a more complete picture of the town dated in this epoch. Whereas a picture of the Hellenistic Nea Paphos is understood only from a very few and often fragmentary remains (see e.g. Christou 2008).

The Roman agora of Nea Paphos was discovered and briefly excavated by K. Nicolaou in 1970s.⁴ It is located in the northwestern part of the ancient town, near the Fanari hill (Pl. 1: 1). It has a shape of a *tetrastoon*, i.e. a square of c. 100m long sides, bordered by *stoai*. The Jagiellonian University Expedition undertook further excavations in this area looking for the earlier, Hellenistic, agora. The supposition that the earlier agora was located below the Roman one is supported firstly by the fact that Romans used to reuse already existing squares of a town to build their own complexes on top of them; secondly the location

² Cf. <http://www.paphos-agora.archeo.uj.edu.pl/>

³ E.g. the expeditions of the University of Cyprus, of the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus, of the University of Avignon, of the University of Sydney, of the University of Catania and of the University of Warsaw.

⁴ Amphora stamps found during these excavations are published by I. Nicolaou (2005, 377-381).

of this square in relation to other areas and streets of the Hellenistic town; and finally the fact that there are remains of some public Hellenistic buildings found nearby (cf. Młynarczyk 1990, 208-212, with further bibliography; Papuci-Władyka and Machowski, forthcoming).

The excavations by the Jagiellonian University Expedition have been conducted in three areas of the Roman Agora: in its central part (Trench I), inside and outside of the eastern *stoa* (Trench II) and north of the southern *stoa* (Trench III) (Pl. 1: 2). Apart from the Roman structures uncovered in these trenches, some structures dated to the Hellenistic period were excavated, too. The latter ones were localized in all trenches. They prove that there was human activity in this area during Hellenistic time. At this moment in time, however, it is not possible to define the character of this location and to state definitively whether it was an agora (Papuci-Władyka, forthcoming a; Papuci-Władyka, forthcoming b; Papuci-Władyka, forthcoming c).

Pottery is the most common material excavated on the Paphian Agora. Transport amphorae of Hellenistic and Roman periods constitute a large component of it. They are part of a current study by the present author and will be discussed in detail in a separate volume. Only general observations about the stamped amphora handles will be presented here. During the three seasons (2011-2013) of Polish excavations on the Agora site, 32 stamped amphora handles were found. Most likely all of them date to the Hellenistic period, however only five examples were excavated in uncontaminated contexts definitely dated to the Hellenistic period. One of these, a Rhodian stamped handle bearing the name of eponym Ἀρχίβιος (inv. no. PAP12/II/223/P2) dated by Finkielsztejn (2001, 195, tab. 21) to c. 115 BC (Pl. 2: 1), was found in Trench II in the context dated to the late Hellenistic period. The remaining four were uncovered in Trench III, all in contexts dated to the Hellenistic period. Two of them are Rhodian stamps of the eponyms Αἰνησίδαμος II (inv. no. PAP13/III/326/P166) and Καλλικράτης II (inv. no. PAP13/III/330/P33) dated to the first quarter of the 2nd century BC (cf. Pl. 2: 1), one is a Rhodian stamped handle, which on the basis of its shape could be dated to the first half of the 2nd century BC (its stamp is worn) and the remaining one is a Thasian stamp of eponym Κρίτιας dated to the beginning of the 3rd century BC (cf. below and Pl. 2: 16). The remaining 25 stamped amphora handles were found in contexts broadly dating to the time between the Hellenistic and Roman period. Two stamped handles are accidental finds.

The place of origin of 29 of the stamped amphora handles was possible to define. All of them come from Greek amphora production centres

Eponym	Examples	Inv. no.	Dating and references	Plate
Ἀγέμαχος	1	PAP12/II/140/P1	Finkielsztejn 2001, 192, tab. 19: <i>c.</i> 181/179 BC; Lund 2011, 278, fig. 4: <i>c.</i> 182/181 BC	Pl. 2: 1
Αἰνησίδαμος II	2	PAP11/II/122/P1 PAP13/III/326/ P166	Finkielsztejn 2001, 192, tab. 19: <i>c.</i> 179/177 BC; Lund 2011, 278, fig. 4: <i>c.</i> 178/177 BC	Pl. 2: 2-3
Καλλικράτης II	1	PAP13/III/330/ P33	Finkielsztejn 2001, 192, tab. 19: <i>c.</i> 177/175 BC; Lund 2011, 278, fig. 4: <i>c.</i> 186/185 BC	Pl. 2: 4
Σύμμαχος	3	PAP11/I/12/P72 PAP11/II/110/P2 PAP13/II/243/ P164	Finkielsztejn 2001, 192, tab. 19: <i>c.</i> 173/171 BC; Lund 2011, 278, fig. 4: <i>c.</i> 180/179 BC	Pl. 2: 5-7
Ἀρχίβιος	1	PAP12/II/223/P2	Finkielsztejn 2001, 195, tab. 21: <i>c.</i> 115 BC	Pl. 2: 8

Fig. 1. Eponym stamps found in the Agora site

in the Aegean such as Rhodes, Knidos, Thasos. A stamped amphora handle from Sinope on the Black Sea coast has been identified as well. It is likely, however, that the remaining three examples are also of Aegean origin.

Rhodian stamps constitute the most numerous group with 25 examples. 14 of those are legible. Eight bear the name of an eponym and six contain the name of a fabricant. The remaining 11 stamps are too worn to define their contents in details. Of the eponym stamps seven (Fig. 1) are dated to Period III and one to Period V of Rhodian amphora stamp chronology that was established by V. Grace (1952; 1974; 1970 with Savvatianou-Pétropoulakou; cf. also Empereur 1990) and recently revised by G. Finkielsztejn (1995; 2001) where Period III is dated *c.* 198-161 BC, and Period V *c.* 145-108 BC).⁵ The fabricant stamps (Fig. 2) place between the end of Period II (dated *c.* 234-199 BC) (Finkielsztejn 2001, 196, tab. 22.1) and Period VI (dated *c.* 107-88/86 BC) (Finkielsztejn 2001, 196, tab. 22.1).

⁵ Cf. also: Lawall 2002; Badoud 2003; Finkielsztejn 2004; Lawall 2011; Lund 2011.

Fabricant	Examples	Inv. no.	Dating and references	Plate
Σωκράτης II	1	PAP13/ III/326/P45	Nicolaou 2005 ¹ , 208-211, nos 544-557: associated with eponyms of Periods IIc-IIIId; the end of the 3rd century BC – the beginning of the 2nd century BC	Pl. 2: 9
Δίος	2	PAP11/II/110/ P1 PAP12/I/36/ P40	Nicolaou 2005, 160-161, nos 403-405: associated with eponyms of Periods IIIa-IIIe; the end of the 3rd – the beginning of the 2nd century BC	Pl. 2: 10-11
Ἀριστοκλῆς II	1	PAP11/II/110/ P401	Nicolaou 2005, 139-141, nos 342-345: associated with eponyms of Periods IIIId-V dated by Finkielsztein (2001, 192, tab. 19, 195, tab. 21) to c. 175/173-c. 108 BC	Pl. 2: 12
Βρόμιος	1	?	Nicolaou 2005, 146-147, nos 362-363: associated with eponyms of Periods IVa-Va dated by Finkielsztein (2001, 193, tab. 20 and 195, tab. 21) to c. 160-c. 134/133 BC	-
Φιλοκράτης II	1	PAP11/II/110/ P402	Nicolaou 2005, 219-220, nos 583-587: associated with eponyms of Periods V-VI(?) dated by Finkielsztein (2001, 196, tab. 22.1) to c. 145-c. 88/86 BC	Pl. 2: 13

¹ Cf. further references given by Nicolaou (2005) for all of the fabricant stamps mentioned here.

Fig. 2. Fabricant stamps found in the Agora site

Knidian stamped amphorae are represented in Paphian Agora by only two handles. One of them (Pl. 2: 14) bears a stamp with the name of eponym Λέων⁶ dated to Period III (220-188 BC) of the Knidian amphora stamp chronology established by Grace (1985, 31, 34). Stamps of this eponym are already known from Paphos from the site of Maloutena.⁷ Another Knidian

⁶ Inv. no. PAP11/I/16/P8.

⁷ An unpublished example with the inv. no. AR 38/08. Stamped amphora handles from Maloutena site found until the campaign of 2006 are published by Sztetyło (1976; 1983; 1991; 2010). On a short presentation of stamped amphora handles excavated on this site since 2007 cf. Dobosz, forthcoming a and Dobosz, forthcoming b.

stamp found in the Agora is of more interest. It is a late stamp, consisting of a device (an amphora) and the letters [.]A[N? or M?] (Pl. 2: 15).⁸ There is no other such an example known to me found in Cyprus. Similar stamps are known from Delos (Grace and Savvatianou-Pétropoulakou 1970, 354, no. E 220), from the collection of the National Museum in Athens (Jöhrens 1999, 236, no. 797, 237, no. 799: late 1st century BC), as well as, from the Lux site in Alexandria (Cancardes Senol 2007, 45, fig. 26) where it is classified as a late Knidian stamp of Period VII (c. 78 – late 1st century BC).

One stamped handle of amphora of Thasian origin was excavated in the Agora. It is a so-called ‘recent’ Thasian stamp consisting of the name of eponym Κρίτιας (in Nominative), an ethnicon Θασίων (in a full form) and an 8-ray star as a device (Pl. 2: 16).⁹ Stamps of this eponym were found among the others in workshops in Koukos, Vamvourī Ammoudia, Keramidi and Molos on the island of Thasos (Garlan 1986, 44-45, tab. B, Group C; cf. also Garlan 2004-2005, 278). Debidour (1979, 311) dated an activity of eponym Κρίτιας to c. 300 BC (cf. Tzochéev 2009, 65, tab. 3, Group V dated between the years 308-298 BC; Debidour 2011, 38, Group V dated between the years c. 307-297 BC).¹⁰

There is another interesting stamped handle found in the Agora that should be mentioned here. This stamp contains of an inscription organized in two lines: [Θ?]ΑΣΙΩΝ / ---]ΑΣΩΣ and a very small caduceus placed in between the lines (beneath the letter A of the first line word) as a device (Pl. 2: 17). A reconstruction of the first line of the inscription could be Θασίων and in this case, it would suggest a Thasian origin of the handle. The shape of the handle is similar to that of Thasian amphorae (cf. Bon and Bon 1957, 14-25; Garlan 1999, 59-64). However, the size of the stamp (1.87 x 4.58cm) and the clay containing of many inclusions: small white and small to rather large of gray to dark gray colour, but not containing of mica (core: 2.5YR 5/8 red, surface: 10YR 7/4 very pale brown – 6/4 light yellowish brown), are not typical for Thasian amphorae (cf. Bon and Bon 1957, 14). The shape and the clay of this example are slightly reminiscent of those of Kourioté amphorae from Alexandria presented by Cancardes-Şenol and Şenol (2013, 64, Fabric 1). However, the stamp of our example does not find any analogy to other Cypriot amphora stamps.

⁸ Inv. no. PAP11/I/16/P82.

⁹ Inv. no. PAP13/III/381/P1.

¹⁰ On other stamps of the eponym Κρίτιας, also containing of devices other than a star cf. e.g. Bon and Bon 1957, 277-280, nos 1057-1072.

One stamped handle, originating in Sinope, was excavated in Paphian Agora. Only a part of the stamp is preserved showing a device: a rudder (Pl. 2: 18). This device was used by different *astynomoi*; however, the closest analogies of Paphian example are stamps of *astynomos* Ἀνθεστήριος Νουμηνίου (cf. Garlan 2004, 83-85, Group VI, Subgroup VI C1, cat. nos 403-409). He was placed by N. Conovici (1998, 51) at the beginning of the group Vc of Sinopean *astynomoi* (the whole group V is dated by this scholar to the years 257-190 BC).

The place of origin of the two remaining stamped amphora handles excavated on the Agora site is not defined. One of them¹¹ is made of fine clay, containing of different inclusions: many small gray ones and rarely occurring white ones and of a lot of shiny (gold mica?) ones. The colour of the clay is yellowish brown (10YR 5/4) in the core, light red (2.5YR 6/8) in the outside layer of the core and reddish brown (5YR 5/4) on the surface. This kind of clay is reminiscent of the clay that is characteristic for amphorae originating in the northern Aegean (cf. Lawall 1995, 157: concerning 5th century BC amphorae from the northern Aegean workshops). Its stamp is rectangular and elongated and consists of only the name of Ἀναξαγόρας (Pl. 2: 19).¹² The other stamped handle¹³ is made of fine clay, containing of rarely occurring small gray inclusions. Its colour is reddish yellow (7.5YR 7/6) in the core and very pale brown (10YR 7/4) on the surface. It has a circular stamp with an inscription (Pl. 2: 20). However, it is too worn to be read.

The ratio of the stamped amphora handles originating in above-mentioned production centres found in the Paphian Agora is reminiscent of those already known from other archaeological sites in Paphos e.g. the Maloutena site (cf. Sztetyło 1976; Sztetyło 1983; Sztetyło 1991;

¹¹ Inv. no. PAP11/II/124/P1.

¹² One of the reviewers of the present paper noted that 'the amphora stamp presented here reminds of those of the so-called "Nikandros Group" in terms of letter forms (cf. Cankardeş Şenol 2001; Lawall 2007), although the name is not attested with this group. That absence is not so troubling since there has never been a comprehensive study of the class as there has been for other groups.' I would like to thank the reviewer for this remark. Amphora stamps of the 'Nikandros Group' have been recently defined as of Ephesian origin (Gassner 1997; Lawall 2004). Stamps of this group containing names appear in the third quarter of the 2nd century BC and continue until the first half of the 1st century BC (Lawall 2004, 187, tab. 2).

¹³ Inv. no. PAP13/III/358/P15.

Sztetyło 2010) or the House of Dionysos (cf. Nicolaou 2005).¹⁴ It should be stressed, however, that the picture given by stamped amphora handles does not repeat the picture given by all of the amphora fragments. The amphora fragments excavated on the Agora prove that the Rhodian ones are, in fact, the most numerous but only for a limited period of *c.* mid 3rd century until the second half of the 2nd century BC.¹⁵ In the second half of the 2nd century BC, the number of Koan amphorae coming to Nea Paphos increases and during the late Hellenistic period, it seems to be either equal or even bigger than that of Rhodian amphorae. This ratio cannot be seen from stamped handles because of the different intensity of amphora stamping in these two centres and because of a lack of stamped Koan handles in the Paphian Agora (they occur rarely in other areas of the town cf. Sztetyło 1976; Sztetyło 1983; Sztetyło 1991; Nicolaou 2005; Sztetyło 2010). Knidian stamps, as well as, other diagnostic fragments of Knidian amphorae are not numerous on the Agora site. They are dated mostly from the 2nd century BC onwards. Thasian amphorae occur very sporadically in the Agora site as in other sites in Paphos, however they are most common in the eastern Cyprus (cf. Calvet 1972, 7-10). They are dated mostly to the end of the 4th and the first half of the 3rd century BC. Apart from the stamped handle originating in Sinope presented above, no other fragments of amphorae coming from this centre have been identified in the Agora. Other stamped handles of Sinopean origin are known from the House of Dionysos in Paphos (cf. Nicolau 2005, 258-259, nos 764-766), they do not, however, occur elsewhere on the island.

¹⁴ On the ratio of stamped amphora handles found in Paphos and also on the trade patterns shown by this objects see Dobosz, forthcoming c. On the ratio of stamped amphora handles found on the whole island and on the Cypriot trade patterns see Dobosz 2013b.

¹⁵ On the Rhodian stamped amphora handles found in Cyprus and on the trade patterns between Cyprus and Rhodes shown by these objects see Dobosz 2013a.

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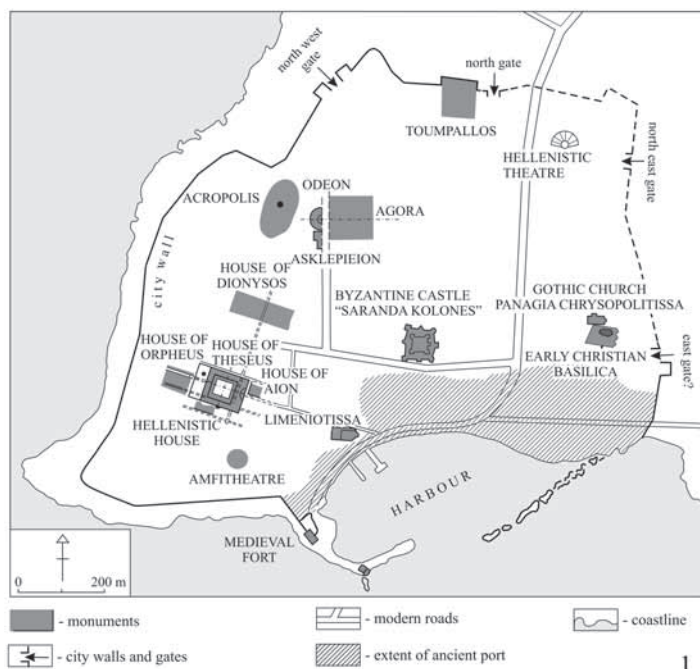
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Pl. 1. 1 – A topographic map of ancient Nea Paphos. Drawing by U. Bąk (based on Medeksza 1992, il. 1)

2 – The area of the excavations conducted within the framework of the Paphos Agora Project (Trenches I-III). Photo by D. Aristotelous



Pl. 2. Amphora stamps

- 1 – Of Rhodian eponym Ἀγέμαχος; 2-3 – Of Rhodian eponym Αἰνησίδαμος II;
 4 – Of Rhodian eponym Καλλικράτης II; 5 – Of Rhodian eponym Σύμμαχος;
 6 – Of Rhodian eponym Σύμμαχος; 7 – Of Rhodian eponym Σύμμαχος;
 8 – Of Rhodian eponym Ἀρχίβιος; 9 – Of Rhodian fabricant Σωκράτης II;
 10 – Of Rhodian fabricant Δίος; 11 – Of Rhodian fabricant Δίος;
 12 – Of Rhodian fabricant Ἀριστοκλῆς II; 13 – Of Rhodian fabricant Ἀριστοκλῆς II;
 14 – Of Knidian eponym Λέων; 15 – Consisting of the letters [.JA[N? or M?]] (Knidian);
 16 – Of Thasian eponym Κρίτιας; 17 – Consisting of the letters [Θ?]ΑΣΙΩΝ / ---]ΑΣΩΣ
 (unknown origin?); 18 – Of Sinopean astynomos Ἀνθεστήριος Νομηνίους;
 19 – Consisting of the name of Ἀναξαγόρας (unknown origin?);
 20 – Of unknown origin (illegible inscription).

Photos by M. Iwan