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Stamped Amphora Handles from Tel Ḥanan

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Six stamped handles were found in the excavations at Tel Ḥanan (see Nagorsky and Israeli, this volume), three of them are Knidian and three, Rhodian; they are dated from the late fourth–early third century to the mid-second century BCE.[1] As is often the case in northern Israel, and particularly along the coast, the Knidian amphoras from Tel Ḥanan are among the earliest examples of that production in the Southern Levant. The stamps are catalogued by origin and are presented in chronological order.

Catalogue

Knidos
1. Area A, L2, B160
Square stamp

ΠΔΟ or ΠΑΟ

The handle is still attached to the neck, close to the rim. It is a Knidian production, as evidenced by the stamp, the profile of the rim and handle, and the fabric. The fabric is reddish yellow, with very few brown inclusions. The surface is lighter, with some very fine brown inclusions and fine mica. The attached rim is thickened (2.7 cm high), the handle has a rounded profile and is rather thick (section: 4.5 × 2.6 cm) and the neck is slightly conical and bulging, typical of Hellenistic-period Knidian amphoras. The die is somewhat small and the identified letters are Π, Δ, O. The *omicron* is reduced to a dot.

[1] My thanks to Alla Nagorsky, for having entrusted me with the study of the amphoras from Tel Ḥanan, as well as to Clara Amit, for the photographs.

The monogram recalls that of stamps commonly found on early Knidian amphoras, with three letters: Π, A, O. In some clear examples, the circle of the *omicron* has a dot in its center, giving the letter the appearance of a Θ (Şenol 1995:59, No. 1; see Calvet 1972:19–20, Nos. 18–23; Tuna, Empereur, Picon and Doğer 1988:48, 50, Fig. 50; Tuna, Empereur, Doğer and Desbat 1990:43, 45, Figs. 7, 8).[2] The suggested readings are: Παο[(accepted by most scholars), Παθ[or Ἀπο[. The first and last readings may be supported by a small, early Knidian stamp bearing a large *pi* and an *alpha*, with a small *omicron* under the *pi* (Şenol 1995:59, No. 2), i.e., Παο[, when reading from left to right or, Ἀπο[, when reading from right to left.[3] It is unclear whether those monograms are abbreviations of the same or different words, most probably names. On our stamp, besides its size, the only difference is that the alpha of the above-mentioned monograms is missing the horizontal bar. In Knidos, several other combinations of the letter pi and another letter (*alpha*, *alpha* and *eta*, *epsilon*, *omicron*) exist, and probably also *pi* alone (interpreted as a three-bar *sigma* by Şenol 1995:67, No. 31), but the ΠΑΟ series is one of the most common types (Şenol 1995: Pl. 40, Table 1). Due to the indecisive interpretations concerning these monograms, our monogram may simply be a new one with a similar appearance. This may be confirmed by its date, which is later than that of the ΠΑΟ series.

One example of a ΠΑΟ stamp was found in Jaffa on a handle of an amphora with a mushroom rim (Finkielsztejn, forthcoming [b]; see also ΠΑΟ and ΠΑΘ stamps in Monakhov 2003:302–303, Pls. 72:1, 2 "mushroom" rim Type I-C; 73:1, 2, thickened rim, Type II-A). *Date*: The ΠΑΟ series is dated from the end of the fourth to the beginning of the third century BCE (ΠΑΘ; Empereur and Tuna 1988:344; Monakhov 2003:302–303, Types I-C and II-A, third quarter of the fourth century BCE). The profile of our example implies an early third century BCE date (Empereur and Tuna 1988:345, Fig. 4:d, e; Şenol 1995:28).

2. Square S, L203, B2045
Square Stamp

ΕΚ or ΠΕΥ or ΠΕΚ

[2] Surveys in the Knidian peninsula have revealed several stamps of this series, and therefore, the stamp is attributed to the production of amphoras from Knidos, and not Rhodes, as previously suggested. The monograms on these amphoras were studied by Şenol (1995).

[3] The readings Ποα[, Πθα[, Οπα[, Θαπ[are unlikely.

Monogram of an early Knidian amphora. The identified letters are E, K, Π and Y. This monogram is not listed by Şenol (1995), but appears on amphoras of Monakhov Type II-B (2003:304, Pl. 74:3, 4), dated to the last third of the fourth–early third centuries BCE.
Date: End of the fourth–early third centuries BCE.

3. Area C, L270, B2200
Rectangular stamp

Ἐπὶ Φ[...]ίνου or Φ[...]ίλου
Trident to right

An almost complete handle with a rim. The letters from the center to the left are 'shadows' and those to the right are unclear. None of the names starting with Φ from the list of eponyms (Grace 1985:34) can be restored ending with either –ίλος or –ίνος. Therefore, the suggested reading may be faulty.
Date: Second century BCE.

Rhodes
The dates of the Rhodian stamps are according to the Lower Chronology established by the author (Finkielsztejn 2001), with some recent updates (Finkielsztejn 2019:128; forthcoming [a]).

4. Area C, L279, B2217
Rectangular stamp

Νικαγίδος

The fabricant Νικαγίς—most probably a woman (Masson 1986:40)—is associated with eponyms Τιμασαγόρας (Nicolaou 2005:114–115, No. *267; 423, No. 90) and Καλλικρατίδας 2nd (Finkielsztejn 2017:44, No. 2). The 22 examples of Νικαγίς' stamps from the Pergamon

deposit place her career in Period III of the Rhodian stamp chronology, probably in the first half of it (Schuchhardt 1895:472, No. 1138; Finkielsztejn 2001:196, Table 22.1).
Date: c. 183–174 BCE (Finkielsztejn 2019:128).

5. Area A, Surface, B2168
Rectangular stamp

Ἑρμί[α]

Fabricant Ἑρμίας. The type is associated with the following eponyms: Τιμούρροδος (Nicolaou 2005:31–32, No. *41; 414, No. 44), Ξενόφαντος 2nd, Εὔδαμος (Nicolaou 2005:167–168, under No. 421) and Ἀλεξίμαχος (Grace 1974:95, Pl.22, 1; Nicolaou 2005:416–417, No. 50).
Date: c.158–157 to 148–147 BCE (Finkielsztejn 2019:128).

6. Area C, L284, B2235
Rectangular stamp

Ἐπὶ Αὐτο
κράτευς
Ἀρταμιτίου

Three homonym eponyms Αὐτοκράτης were identified: two appear on stamps and one on epigraphic evidence.[4] Our stamp names Αὐτοκράτης 1st.
Date: c. 147–146 BCE (Finkielsztejn 2019:128).

[4] The third homonym eponym Αὐτοκράτης was identified and dated in 166 BCE (Badoud 2015:180–183; see Finkielsztejn 2019:128, Αὐτοκράτης III). He was in charge in a year not represented on amphora stamps, due to political unrest. His chronological position places him before the two other homonyms. For the numbering of homonym eponyms not identified by scholars in their actual chronological order, see Finkielsztejn 2018:579, and Thomsen and Finkielsztejn 2020:257.

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