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# A Ptolemaic Stamped Amphora from Patara: Some Notes on Stamp Attribution and its Likely Implications

**Erkan Dündar**
Akdeniz University, Türkiye

## Abstract

Located in ancient Lycia at the southwest corner of Asia Minor, excavations at the important port city of Patara shed new light on the city's relations with Ptolemaic Egypt. The most significant finds concerning Patara's connection with the Ptolemaic Dynasty have emerged from ongoing fieldwork at the Tepecik settlement, located on a natural hill just east of the ancient inner harbour. During excavations conducted there in 2019, an ancient dump of pottery was identified in the İ-20 trench. The focus of this study concerns a unique stamped Egyptian amphora found in this dump. The stamp records the name Ptolemaios alongside a regnal year, thus indicating that the amphora represents royal production during the third century BC. In this study, I suggest that the name on the stamp should be attributed to King Ptolemy III Euergetes (246–222 BC) and explore the likely implications of royal production.

قد ألقت أعمال التنقيب التي أجريناها في مدينة باتارا الساحلية المهمة، والتي تقع في مدينة ليقيا القديمة في الركن الجنوبي الغربي من آسيا الصغرى، الضوء على علاقات المدينة مع مصر البطلمية. أهم الاكتشافات التي عثر عليها خلال أعمال التنقيب الجارية في مستوطنة تيبيكيك ، الواقعة على التل الطبيعي شرق الميناء الداخلي القديم، توضح العلاقة بين باتارا و مصر فى العصر البطلمى. خلال الحفريات التي أجريت هناك في عام 2019، تم تحديد مكب قديم للفخار في مربع الحفر رقم İ-20. تركز هذه الدراسة على أمفورا مصرية مميزة مختومة وجدت في هذا الموقع. يسجل الختم اسم بطليموس Ptolemaios إلى جانب سنة الحكم، مما يشير إلى أن الأمفورا تمثل واحدة من الأواني الملكية التي تم انتاجها خلال القرن الثالث قبل الميلاد. في هذه الدراسة، نقترح أن يُنسب الاسم الموجود على الختم إلى الملك بطليموس الثالث يويرجيتس (246–222 قبل الميلاد)، ونستكشف الآثار المترتبة علي الإنتاج الملكي.

## Keywords

Hellenistic Period, Lycia, Ptolemaic Egypt, amphora stamp, Patara

## Introduction

The stamped amphora, which allowed this study to be carried out, was unearthed during the 2019 excavations in the Tepecik settlement, which is located to the north of the city centre of Patara, adjacent to the ancient harbour (fig. 1).[1] The Tepecik settlement is a natural rock elevation with a height of 30 m and a base width of approximately 280 x 300 m, and the excavations carried out there in recent years have provided new and significant information, especially about the Hellenistic Period of Patara. In Tepecik, which was a Ptolemaic garrison in the third century BC, an amphora stamp now sheds new light on the relationship of the city with the Ptolemies.

## Excavations and Stratigraphy

Before going into the details of the subject of this study, it is necessary to mention in what kind of context it was discovered. To understand the direction of the defence system, excavations were carried out in İ-20 plan square, northwest of the North Fortification Wall, which itself is oriented northwest-southeast and delimits the upper plain of the Tepecik settlement,[2] and a north-south oriented wall with a width of approximately 2.14 m was uncovered (figs 2–3).

[1] For Tepecik's geographical location and more, see E. Dündar, 'An early witness of the urban settlement: Tepecik', in H. İşkan (ed.), *Patara: City, Harbor, Cult* (Istanbul, 2019), 138–52.

[2] For the Tepecik north fortification wall, see E. Dündar and N. Rauh, 'The north bastion on the Tepecik acropolis at Patara: Dating 'Early Hellenistic' fortification walls in Southwestern Anatolia', *Hesperia* 86 (2017), 509–81.

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**Fig. 1.** Aerial view of the Tepecik settlement.

No architectural flooring was found in the interior area to the west of this wall, which is coded as W1, only rubble stone was encountered. The tombs located to the east of W1 (outside the wall surrounding the upper part of the Tepecik settlement) proved that this area was used as a necropolis beginning in the first century BC.[3] During the excavations carried out in the plan square, six different walls which are dated from the end of the fourth century to the end of the first century BC were identified (fig. 3).

The stamped amphora, which is the subject of this study, was found in a dump of pottery and small rubble near the square area between the walls coded W1 (second half of the fourth century BC), W2 (first half of the third century BC) and W6 (first half of the third century BC) (fig. 3).[4] This deposit (called SU-21), which contains such a dense filling that there is almost no soil in it, consists of different ceramic groups (figs 4–5). Among the early finds in this deposit are pieces of mushroom-rimmed amphorae, fragments of Lycian amphorae and black slipped pottery, which are dated to the second half of the fourth century BC.[5] Other groups in large numbers in the deposit include domed-mouthed unguentarium dated to the end of the fourth century BC and the beginning of the third century BC, black slipped ceramics dated to the beginning of the third century BC, and fragments of Rhodian, Knidian, Egyptian (AE 2) and Nikandros group amphorae dated to the third century BC (fig. 6).[6] The 20 stamped amphora handles that were unearthed are significant in terms of giving the approximate *terminus ante*

[3] For the contemporary tomb outside the wall that delimits the Tepecik upper plain from the east, see E. Dündar, 'The maritime trade of Roman Patara: Preliminary remarks on the amphorae', *Skyllis* 18:2 (2018), 168, figs 3–4.

[4] The deposit is 0.70 m in height (+19.58 m / +18.82 m).

[5] For the mushroom-rimmed amphora, see J.-Y. Empereur and M. Picon, 'A la recherche des fours d'amphores', in J.-Y. Empereur and Y. Garlan (eds), *Recherches sur les Amphores Grecques : Actes du Colloque International Organisé par le Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, L'Université de Rennes II et L'École Française D'Athènes, 10-12 Septembre 1984, Athènes* (BCH Suppl. 13; Athens, 1986), 112; M. L. Lawall, *Transport Amphoras and Trademarks: Imports to Athens and Economic Diversity in the Fifth Century B.C.* (PhD Thesis, University of Michigan; Ann Arbor, 1995), 223; E. Dündar, *Patara* IV.3: *Transport Jars and Stamped Amphoras from Patara, 7th to 1st Centuries BC. The Maritime Trade of a Harbor City in Lycia* (Istanbul 2017), 68–72; E. Dündar, 'The mushroom-rimmed amphora as an indicator of Hekatomnid regional hegemony: An analysis of production patterns based on a back-filled deposit at Patara', *JdI* 136 (2021), 111–50; for the Lycian amphora, see Dündar, *Patara* IV.3, 51–60; for the black slipped ceramics, see Dündar and Rauh, *Hesperia* 86, 533–46; E. Dündar, 'Late 4th century B.C. pottery assemblages from Patara: First considerations on the ceramic classes of the Xanthos Valley in Lycia', *IstMitt* 70 (2020), 47–71.

[6] For the domed-mouthed unguentarium, see E. Dündar, *Patara* IV.1: *Patara Unguentariumları* (Istanbul, 2008), 21–3; for Knidian, Rhodian, and Nikandros group amphorae, see Dündar, *Patara* IV.3, 60–7, 73; for Egyptian (AE 2) amphora, see D. Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes : Production, typologie, contenu et diffusion (IIIe siècle avant J.-C.- IXe siècle après J.-C.)* (Études Alexandrines 22; Alexandre, 2011), 59–60; for the band-rimmed amphora, see Dündar, *Patara* IV.3, 67–8; for large West slope plate, see S. I. Rotroff, *Agora* 29: *Hellenistic Pottery: Athenian and Imported Wheelmade Tableware and Related Material* (Princeton, 1997), 326, fig. 56, no. 829; for lopas, see S. I. Rotroff, *Agora* 33: *Hellenistic Pottery: The Plain Wares* (Princeton, 2006), 312, fig. 82, no. 643.

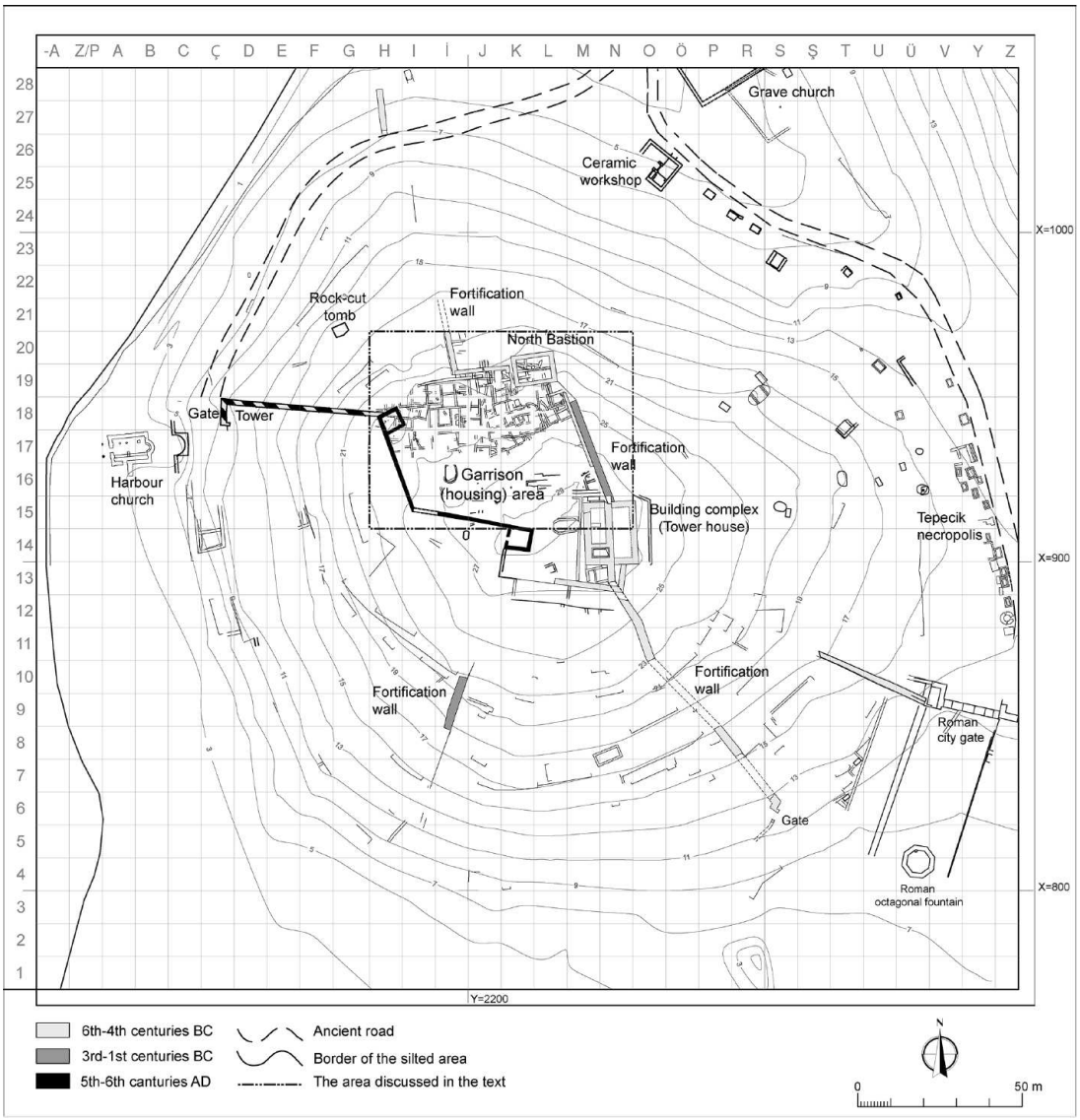


**Fig. 2.** Plan of the Tepecik settlement.

*quem* of the deposit.[7] Among the stamped handles, nineteen of which are of Rhodian, the latest are three stamps belonging to the eponym Παυσανίας III, dated to *c.* 152 BC.[8] The latest finds from SU-21 are dated to about the middle of the second century BC indicating that our ceramics from the deposit spanned about 200 years.[9] Although the ceramics spanned two centuries, no stratification was detected within the SU-21, which has a height of about 0.70 m. It seems that the ceramics in the deposit were removed from other places in Tepecik and discarded as debris into this area at once.

## Description of the Material

The amphora, which has a short, cylindrical neck that opens towards the rim and shoulders in the form of an everted high band, has two vertical *monofid* (single) handles with an oval cross-section that start under the lip and go up slightly, then make a sharp turn and descend to the shoulder (figs 7–8).[10] The rectangular shaped, horizontally pressed stamp, located on the lower part of the neck, is centred on the middle of

[7] 20 stamped amphora handles were found (MK-1416-1435). Nineteen of them are Rhodian while one other is Knidian.

[8] Ex. Inv. MK-1418, 1422, 1427. For the eponym Παυσανίας III, see G. Finkielsztejn, *Chronologie détaillée et révisée des éponymes amphoriques rhodiens, de 270 à 108 av. J.-C. environ* (BAR IS 990; Oxford, 2001), 193, tab. 20.

[9] Stratigraphic data and relative chronological methods were used to date the walls W2 and W6 located to the east of W1. W6 is the earliest of the walls associated with the deposit (SU-21) and was later added to W1, which is dated to the end of the fourth century BC. The latest dated wall between W1, 2, and 6 is W2. In the context of the excavation data, it was determined that the W2 was built in the middle of the third century BC. The pottery fragments found in SU-21 are related to the settlement on the upper plain of Tepecik and seem to have been brought to this area, surrounded by derelict walls, and discarded. The publication of the final results of the Tepecik excavations is being prepared by the author.

[10] Ex. Inv. PTR.19 – SU 21/13. Diam. rim 12.4 cm; H. 23 cm; Th. 1.2 cm

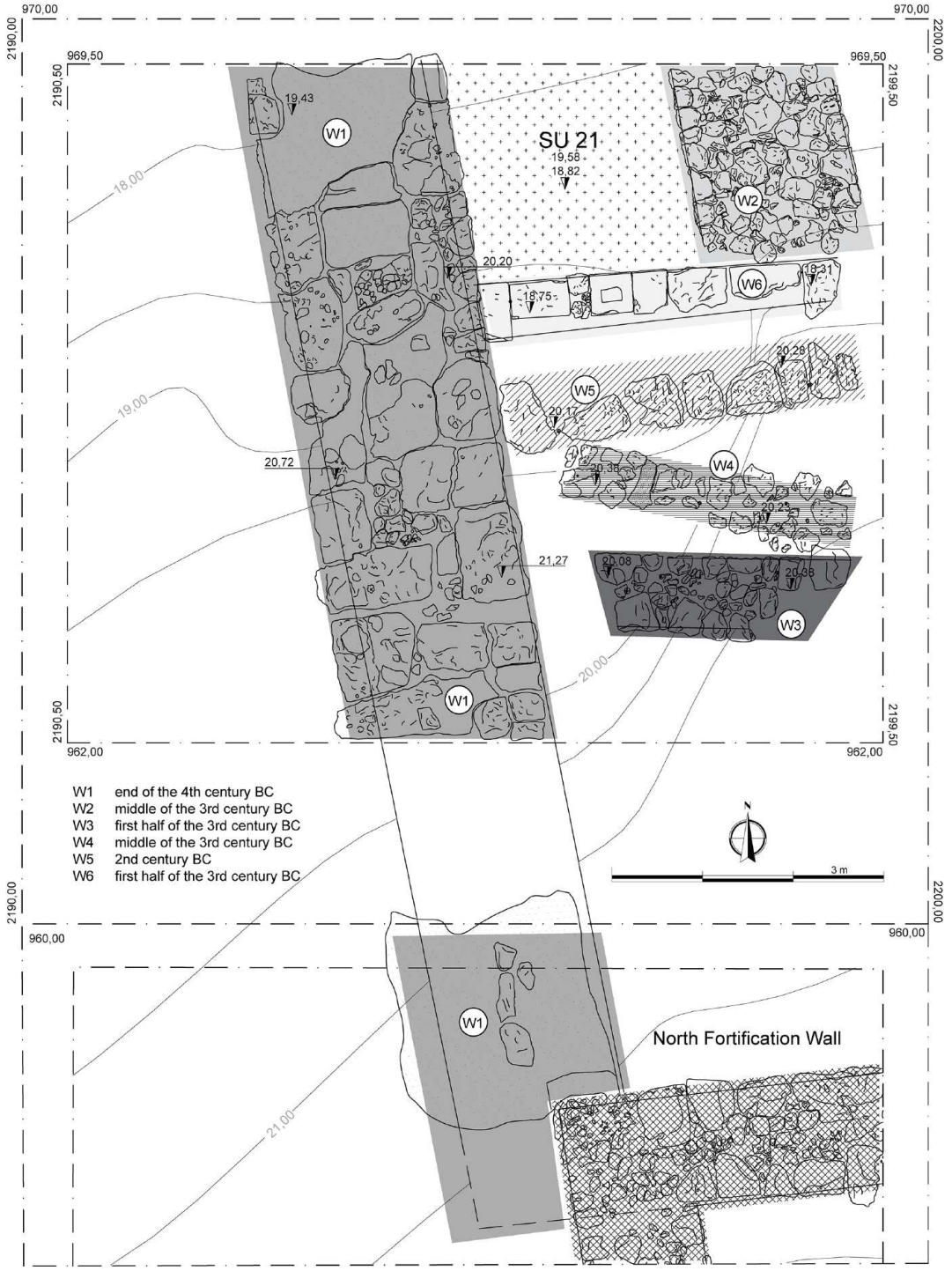


**Fig. 3.** Architectural phases of quadrant İ-20.

the two handles (side A). The grooved profile observed at the neck/shoulder transition is another striking feature. There are two holes on the neck after firing (side B, see fig. 9).[11] Its hard-fired, fine-textured, sand, lime, and quartz tempered clay is yellowish red (5 YR 5/6). A light cream coloured (10 YR 7/3 very pale brown) slip was applied to the surface of the amphora.

[11] Similar holes made on amphorae before or after firing are known in ancient times. There are some different theories for similar holes, which are frequently seen on AE 2 amphorae. The first is that the holes may have been made so that the wine could ferment in the amphorae, see J.-Y. Empereur, 'La production viticole dans l'Egypte ptolémaïque et romaine', in M.-C. Amouretti and J. P. Brun (eds), *La production du vin et de l'huile en Méditerranée* (BCH Suppl. 26; Paris 1993), 42. Another view is that these holes on amphorae, which were opened after firing, may have been drilled by the sellers so that the potential customer could taste the wine before buying it, see D. Dzierzbicka, *OINOΣ: Production and Import of Wine in Graeco-Roman Egypt* (JJP Suppl. 31; Warsaw, 2018), 244. On these holes, also see Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 300, fig. 45, no. 221.33.



**Fig. 4.** Deposit filling of SU-21.

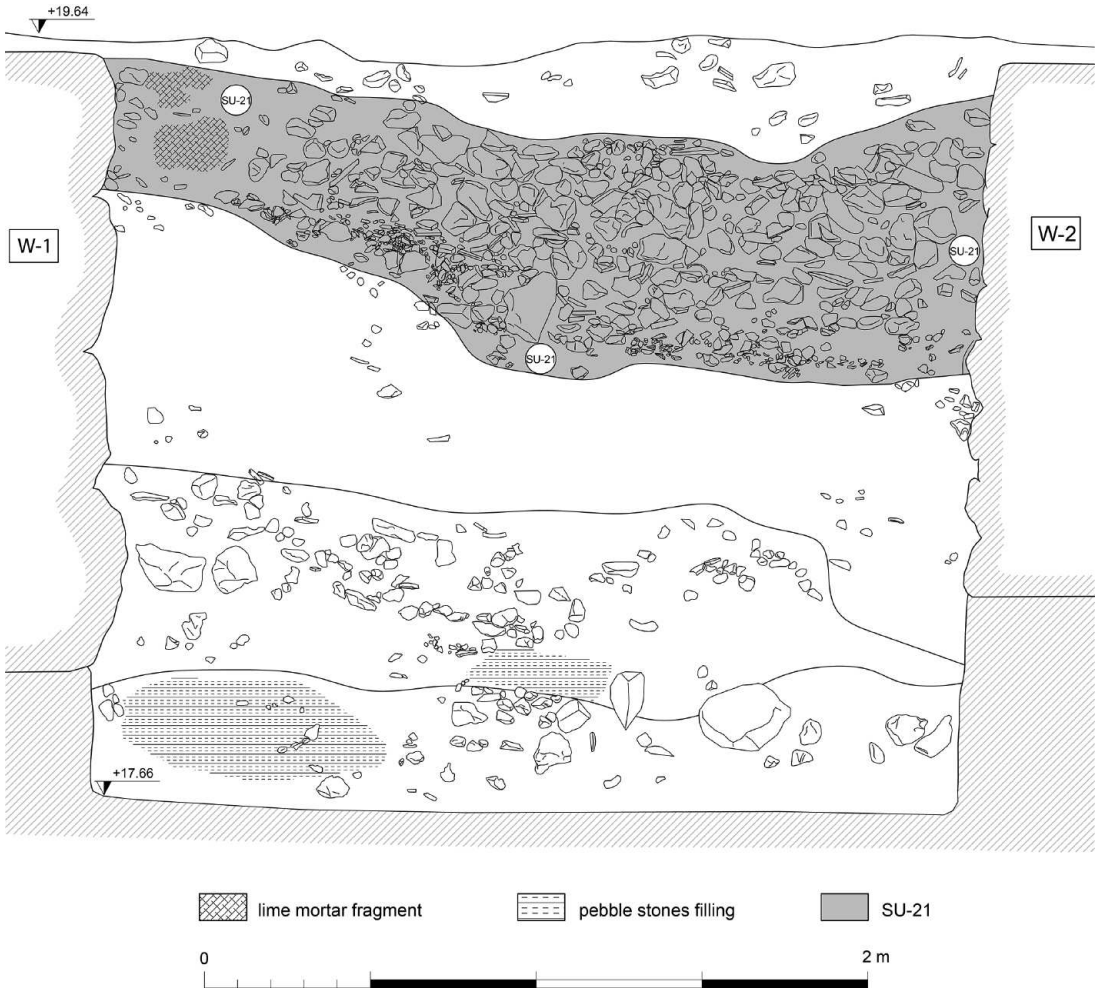


**Fig. 5.** Cross-section of the deposit.

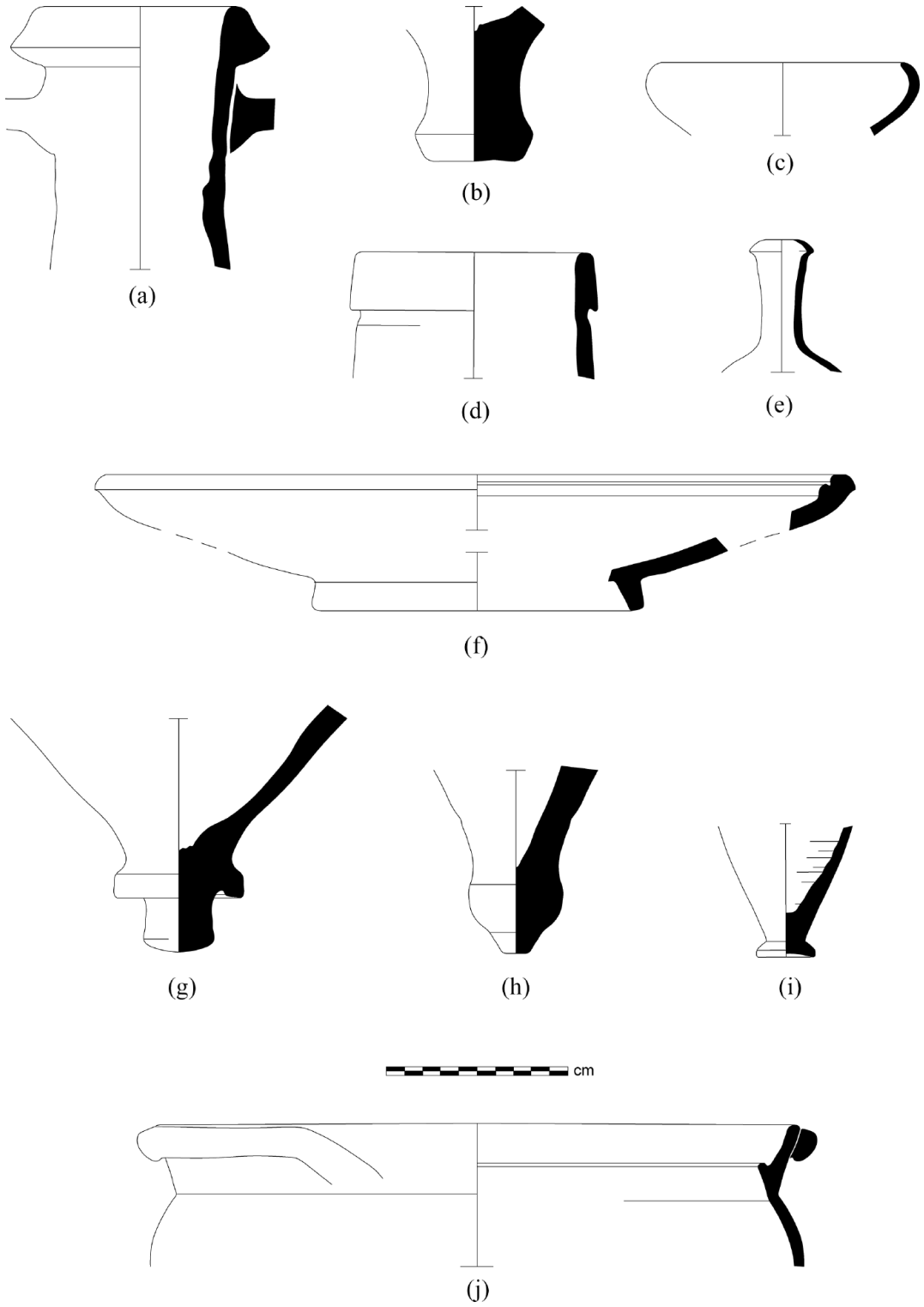


**Fig. 6.** Ceramic finds from SU-21: (a) mushroom-rimmed amphora, (b) base fragment of the Lycian amphora, (c) echinus bowl, (d) band-rimmed amphora, (e) upper part fragment of domed-mouthed unguentarium, (f) large West slope plate, (g) base fragment of band-rimmed amphora, (h) Nikandros group amphora, (i) lower part fragment of domed-mouthed unguentarium, and (j) wide-rimmed chytra.

Essentially, the form and clay properties it exhibits allow us to say that the Pataran sample resembles the Egyptian Amphora 2 (AE 2).[12] As a result of the studies on AE 2 amphorae, three large production areas were identified in Egypt. These are Tell el-Haraby (Mediterranean coasts of northwest Egypt), Kôm Dahab/Naucratis (Western Nile Delta), and the Fayoum.[13] These amphorae were produced

[12] The Pataran sample is different from the AE 1 amphorae. For the examples, see Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 79–87.

[13] Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 87 with references.




**Fig. 7.** The Ptolemaic stamped amphora.

between the third and first centuries BC and have many sub-variations.[14]

Extensive studies have been carried out on the production and typology of the canonical Egyptian amphora named AE 2. A. K. Şenol states in his study that this group of amphora can be examined in four subgroups.[15] On the other hand, D. Dixneuf, in her comprehensive study, stated that this group of amphora can be divided into ten different subgroups, based on the analytical studies on neck fragments found around Buto and Alexandria.[16] Although the Pataran specimen seems to be associated with the AE 2A group according to the classification made by Şenol and AE 2-1.1 according to the classification made by Dixneuf, it differs from them in detail. A short neck and, in connection with this, short handles starting from under the lips and descending perpendicular to the shoulders are the determining factors of this difference.

In existing studies, early examples of AE 2 amphorae are dated to the end of the third century BC.[17] These specimens have a longer neck and handles and straighter lips, compared to the Pataran example.[18] In the second century BC, an observable change is seen in the forms of AE 2

[14] A. Marangou and S. Marchand, 'Conteneurs importés et égyptiens de Tebtynis (Fayoum) de la deuxième moitié du IV^e siècle av. J.-C. au X^e siècle apr. J.-C. (1994-2002)', *CCE* 8, (2007), 264, fig. 122; S. Marquié, 'Les amphores trouvées dans le Wadi Natrun (Beni Salama et Bir Hooker)', *CCE* 8, (2007), 84, 104, fig. 21; S. Marquié and J.-P. Sourisseau, 'Les amphores égyptiennes d'époques hellénistique et romaine, a Kition, Amathonte et Potamia-Agios Aozomenos (Chypre)', *CCE* 8, (2007), 690, fig. 3 (upper left); Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 91–5 with references.

[15] A. K. Şenol, 'Hellenistik Dönem'de Mısır'da Amphora Üretimi', *Olba* 18 (2010), 149.

[16] Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 90–5 with references.

[17] It is possible to see in some studies that amphora AE 2 is confused with AE 1 in regards to the form, see Marquié, *CCE* 8, 85, 104, fig. 21.

[18] S. Marchand, 'Le Survey de Dendara (1996-1997)', *CCE* 6 (2000), 270, fig. 86 (Dendera); W. D. E. Coulson, N. C. Wilkie, and J. W. Rehard, 'Amphoras from Naukratis and environs', in J.-Y. Empereur and Y. Garlan (eds), *Recherches sur les amphores grecques* (BCH Suppl. 13; Paris, 1986), 548, figs 10, 10a, 11b (Naukratis/Kom Dahab); M. Lawall, 'Egyptian and imported transport amphoras', in S. C. Harbert and A. Berlin (eds), *Excavations*

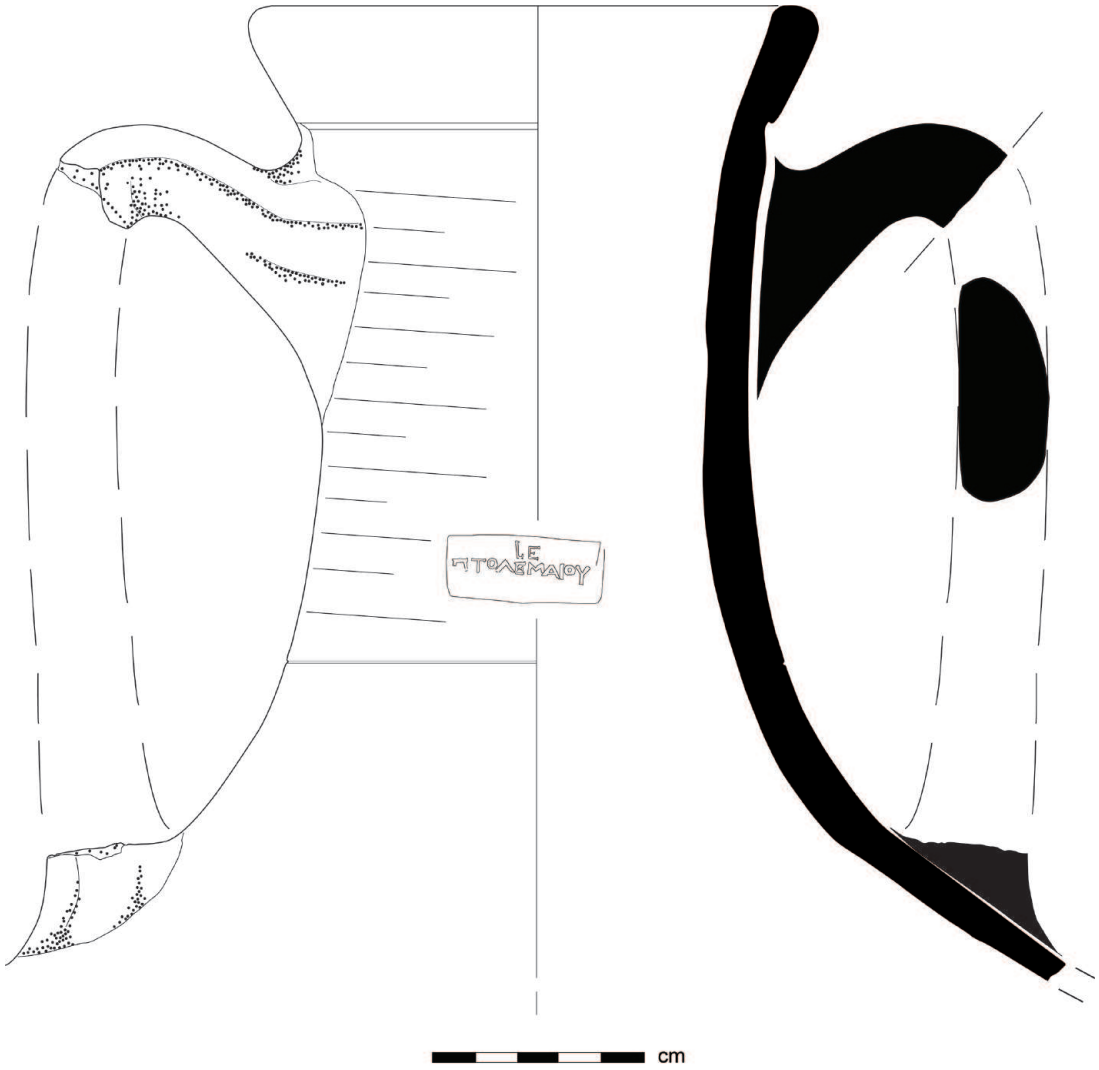


**Fig. 8.** Drawing of the Ptolemaic stamped amphora.



**Fig. 9.** Holes on the neck.

amphorae. It is observed that the rim, which had a folded-out band form in the previous century, became steeper in the second century BC and lost its band form considerably, and reached an almost flat rim profile in the later years of the century.[19] In addition, the short cylindrical neck and the wide body, which opens and descends towards the shoulders, become thinner and longer in this century. Towards the end of the second century BC, the vertical handles starting under the lip merge with the lower part of the long cylindrical neck like a vertical handle without descending to the shoulders.[20]

When the variation of the form of the Pataran sample and the AE 2 amphorae mentioned above is taken into consideration, it is difficult to include our specimen in the sub-groups made by Dixneuf.[21] The closest analogue of the

*at Coptos (Qift) in Upper Egypt, 1987-1992* (JRA Suppl. 53; Portsmouth, RI), 170, 171, fig. 103, no. 23 (Coptos).

[19] A. Poludnikiewicz, 'Tell Atrib near Benha', *BCE* 19 (1996), 14–15, fig. 2 (Tell Atrib); Marquié and Sourisseau, *CCE* 8, 628, 690, fig. 3:2 (Kition); Marquié, *CCE* 8, 104, 110, figs 14–15, 49, 51 (Wadi Natrun); A. K. Şenol, 'The amphoras from the bridge excavations, Gabbari sector 2', in J.-Y. Empereur and M.-D. Nenna (eds), *Nécropolis 2* (Études alexandrines 7; Paris, 2003), 198–9, figs 17–18 (Alexandria); Marangou and Marchand, *CCE* 8, 289, figs 138–9 (Tebtunis/Fayoum).

[20] G. Majcherek and A. Shennawi, 'Tell el-Haraby: A newly discovered kiln-site', *BCE* 15 (1991), 6, fig. 1B.

[21] For the classification, see Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 91–5.

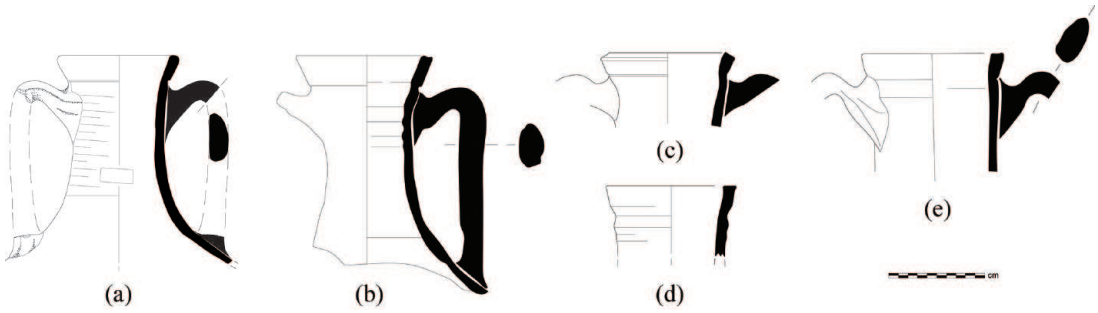


**Fig. 10.** (a) Patara, 243/242 BC, (b) Alexandria (Şenol, *Olba* 18, 149, 167, fig. 3.5), (c) Dendera, third century BC (Marchand, *CCE* 6, 270 fig. 86), (d) Coptos, late third and early second century BC (Lawall, in Harbert and Berlin (eds), *Excavations at Coptos (Qift) in Upper Egypt, 1987-1992*, 171, fig. 103, no. 23), and (e) Mariout/Alexandria, end of the third century until the course of the second century BC (Marangou and Marchand, *CCE* 8, 287, fig. 120).

Pataran amphora in terms of form was found in Alexandria, but it is not securely dated.[22] However, the Pataran amphora also resembles the Tell el-Haraby specimens, which is one of the three production sites of the AE 2 amphora, with its fabric and slip properties.[23] Comparing the AE 2 amphorae whose early examples are dated to the second half or the end of the third century BC[24] with the Pataran amphora, it is observed that the Patara specimen has a short neck, short handle, and a short and wide body in connection with these (fig. 10). It is known that in the second century BC, these amphorae had a straight rim with almost no profile, a thin long neck, long handles (at the end of this century the handles were vertical on the neck), and also a long body. In this context, it is necessary to place the Pataran amphora somewhere between the development/change of form of AE 2 amphorae, the third quarter of the third century BC at the latest, or, more plausibly, the middle of this century, is suitable as an early example of this type due to its form characteristics.[25] However, the most significant feature distinguishing the Pataran amphora from the examples found in other settlements is the stamp it carries on its neck.

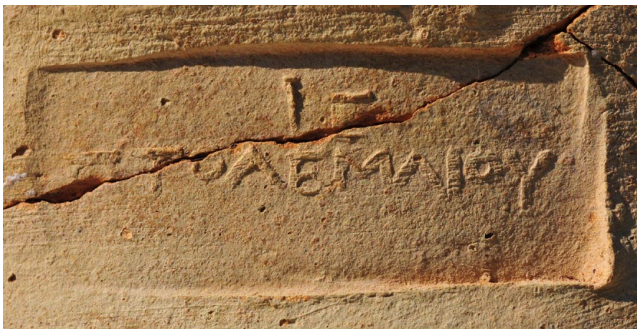

**Fig. 11.** The stamp.

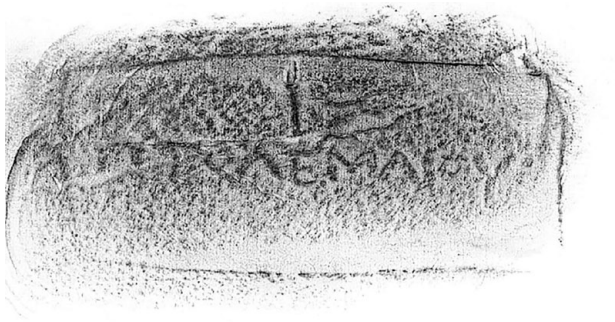

**Fig. 12.** Rubbing of the stamp.

Inv. No.: PTR-MK-1351
Findspot: Tepecik, İ-20 (SU 21)
Origin: Egyptian (AE 2)
Matrix shape and dimension: Rectangular, 4.8 x 1.7 cm
Ins. mode and direction: Normal
Clay: 5 YR 5/6 yellowish red
Slip: 10 YR 7/3 very pale brown
Date: 243/42 BC
Inscription:

$^{L}\varepsilon$
Πτολεμαίου

(ἔτους) ε′ Πτολεμαίου – fifth (regnal) year of Ptolemy

The stamp is rectangular. Unlike most contemporary amphora stamps of Aegean origin, which are stamped on the handle, it is stamped on the neck. There are two lines of inscription on this stamp. On the top line of the stamp is the letter (ἔτους) L (sigle L), used especially in Egypt, denoting the year, and the letter ε denoting the number five. The name Πτολεμαῖος written in the genitive form is written on the second line (figs. 11-12).

Comprehensive studies on AE 2 amphora have proved that, unlike other Hellenistic amphora types, they were rarely stamped.[26] On these stamps either on the neck or

[22] Şenol, *Olba* 18, 149, 167, fig. 3:5.
[23] G. Majcherek and A. Shennawi, 'Research on amphorae production on the northwestern coast of Egypt', *CCE* 3 (1992), 133, fig. 3a; Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 87–8. For now, the idea that Tell el-Haraby was the production site of the Pataran amphora is a hypothesis.
[24] For these examples, see n. 18.
[25] We do not have any evidence for the reuse of this amphora as it was found in an ancient dump of pottery.
[26] There are eight stamps at Tell Atrib (Z. Sztetyłło, *Roman Pottery, 1985-1995, Tel Atrib* I, (Warsaw, 2000), 134–6 nos 183–90), two at Tebtunis (Marangou and Marchand, *CCE* 8, 288, figs 126–7), one at Karnak (S. Marchand, 'Amphores de Karnak : Cfeetk, secteur du « tombeau d'Osiris » er de Dendara', *CCE* 8 (2007), 373, fig. 1), and at the Ramesseum (G. Lecuyot, 'Amphores provenant

the handle, there are names of merchants or workshops such as Δόναξ, Πετῶτος, Ἐριεῦς, Δωσίθεος, Μενέλας/Μενέλαος, Ἀπολλώνιος, and Λουκιανός.[27] None of the aforementioned stamps have a sigle L or a number that indicates the year.

The sigle L usually appears on Egyptian papyri, and its use was primarily to denote the regnal years in Ptolemaic Egypt.[28] The use of sigle L on amphora stamps has been rarely seen. Moreover, there is no evidence on any of them to indicate a regnal year.[29] E. Breccia, in his studies on Alexandria, stated that the sigle L was used together with the name Καρπός on a Koan amphora.[30] Although P. M. Fraser mentions the existence of two or three amphora stamps in the Benaki Collection bearing a sigle L, which he believes to be of Egyptian production, he did not provide any information on the origins and dates of the amphorae.[31] On a stamp unearthed in Jaffa and dated to 130/129 BC, the sigle L was used together with the name *agoranomos*. However, no information was given about the origin of the stamp.[32]

It is easily observed that the Pataran stamp is very different from the examples mentioned above. Considering both the spot where the stamp was imprinted on the amphora, the genitive name it carries, and the sigle L that we often see on papyri, it seems possible to associate the stamp with the Ptolemaic Dynasty in Egypt.

It is clear that the Pataran example bearing a stamp with the inscription 'fifth year of Πτολεμαῖος' is an official production in light of the name and regnal year it bears. However, the fact that this stamp is singular among the many amphora stamps found in Patara[33] indicates that it is not a mass production for commercial purposes, but an exclusive product. However, it is difficult to say anything definite about the production site of the Pataran stamp without an archaeometric study on clay and production waste. On the other hand, what we can be sure of is that this amphora was probably produced and stamped in the north of Egypt and sent to Patara for non-commercial purposes (see below). The more significant question here is which Ptolemaic king is referred to on this stamp and what was inside the amphora.[34] For this, we need to look at the archaeological data attesting to the existence of the Ptolemies in Patara.

Excavations in Tepecik have also provided significant data for the dating of the stamped amphora. This research reveals that the Tepecik upper plain was probably destroyed by the great Rhodes earthquake that occurred in *c.* 227/26 BC and was subsequently sparsely inhabited.[35] The great Rhodes earthquake coincided with the last years of Euergetes' rule.[36] Yet, after this date, there is no military complex settlement in Tepecik.[37] The weakness of the

de Thèbes-Ouest de la Basse Époque à l'époque copte', *CCE* 8 (2007), 386, fig. 4.2). For AE 4 and cylindrical Egyptian amphorae, see J.-Y. Empereur, 'Quelques amphores égyptiennes impériales timbrées', in *Alexandrian Studies in Memoriam Daoud Abdu Daoud, BArchAlex* 45 (1993), 88–9, pls 13–14.

[27] V. Grace and J.-Y. Empereur, 'Un groupe d'amphores ptolémaïques estampillées', *Bifao* 81:1 (1981), 416–17; Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 202.

[28] Bilabel, 'Siglae', *RE* II A.2 (1923), col. 2286–2287. For ἔτους (sigle L) on amphorae, see C. C. Edgar, *Zenon Papyri in the University of Michigan Collection* (Ann Arbor, 1931). Along with papyri, the use of sigle L is known from various weights found in Eastern Mediterranean and dated to the Hellenistic era as well, see Y. H. Landau, 'A stamped jar handle from Jaffa', *'Atiqot* 2 (1959), 186–7 nn. 4–5, with references. The Zenon archive has been an important source for the studies about the regnal years of the Ptolemaic rulers (sigle L was used to write these years). This archive consists of the duties and activities of Apollonios, who served as *dioiketes* between *c.* 262–245 BC and oversaw the financial affairs of Ptolemy II Philadelphos. The Zenon archive, which is one of the 50 belonging to the Ptolemaic Period, is known as the most comprehensive ancient archive. This archive consists of about 3000 papyri, of which 1750 are legible. It came from Philadelphia (modern Kom el-kharaba el-kebir), a settlement founded by Philadelphos on the northeast coast of Fayoum. The archive contains documents from 261–229/8 BC and is today divided into several collections, see G. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire* (New York, 2001), 58 n. 125. For comprehensive studies on regnal years of Ptolemaic kings, see B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt, *The Hibeh Papyri* 1 (London, 1906), 332–67; R. A. Hazzard, 'Regnal years of Ptolemy II Philadelphos', *Phoenix* 41 (1987), 140–58.

[29] For the use of sigle L on amphora stamps, see P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford, 1972), 285–6 n. 283; Grace and Empereur, *Bifao* 81:1, 426. Sigle L was used not only during the Ptolemaic rule in Egypt, but also rarely outside of Egypt after the end of the Ptolemaic hegemony, see Landau, *'Atiqot* 2, 186–7.

[30] E. Breccia only included a drawing, there is no photograph, see E. Breccia, *Municipalité d'Alexandrie : Rapport sur la marche du service du Musée pendant l'exercice 1919-1920* (Alexandria, 1921), 50, n. 244.

[31] P. M. Fraser (*Alexandria*, 285–6, n. 283) did not use any visual, just included drawing of a stamp.

[32] Landau, *'Atiqot* 2, 187.

[33] 1466 amphora stamps have been recorded in studies carried out to date. Stamps originating from Rhodes are the most common with 70%. This is followed by Knidos with 17%, Rhodian Peraia with 5%, Cyprus with 2%, and other sites making up the final 6%. During the excavations carried out in Patara, only two pieces of AE 2 amphorae were found, including the amphora that is the subject of this article. On this subject, also see Dündar, *Patara* IV.3, 367–76. The commercial amphora corpus of Patara is an ongoing study of the present author.

[34] The second question we will not be able to solve, yet it is a worthwhile matter to contemplate.

[35] Dündar, in İşkan (ed.), *Patara: City, Harbor, Cult*, 149.

[36] For the earthquake, see Polybius, *Histories* 5.88–90; J. Kobes, 'Rhodos und das Erdbeben von 227 v.Chr.', *MBAH* 12 (1993), 1–26.

[37] It has been determined that the architectural remains dated to the end of the third century BC and later are quite weak on the upper of Tepecik. The structures dated to this period are more scattered compared to the examples of the fourth and third centuries BC and do not form a complex connection between them. In addition to all of these, the existence of a possible shaft tomb dated to the mid-second century BC which has a depth of approximately 21 meters and is located just south of the Tepecik north bastion, showed that this area served a different purpose in the middle of the second century BC. For the possible shaft tomb, see

settlement in Tepecik in the second century BC can be interpreted in two ways: the establishment of the Lycian League shortly after 167 BC[38] and that the Tepecik Ptolemaic garrison may have already lost its function. In addition to these interpretations, it has been determined that the coins of Ptolemy IV Philopator and later kings were not found during the excavations in Tepecik[39] and that very few ceramics belonging to this period were found. Therefore, Philopator and later Ptolemaic kings are less likely candidates for the named person on the stamped amphora of Patara.

## The Ptolemaic Rule in Lycia: An Overview

Following the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC, struggles took place among the Diadochi to claim to a share of his empire, and the Lycian cities often changed hands between these authorities, as well.[40] After a long turbulent political period, it is known that the Lycian region came under Ptolemaic rule no later than 288/87 BC according to some inscriptions. However, some recent studies have suggested that the Ptolemaic rule in Lycia may have already begun in 309 BC.[41]

Some inscriptions related to the Ptolemaic hegemony in Lycia, which lasted for about a century, were found especially in the west of the region (fig. 13). The earliest epigraphic data regarding the Ptolemaic domination in Lycia came from Limyra. The decree, which is dated by M. Wörrle to 288/87 BC and signed in the 36th regnal year of Ptolemy I Soter,[42] reports that two principals responsible for financial affairs (οἰκονόμοι) were appointed to the city.

Many inscriptions regarding the Ptolemaic rule in Lycia are dated after 288/87 BC. Inscriptions are known from Telmessos,[43] Lissa,[44] Tlos,[45] and Patara[46] in relation to Philadelphos, and from Letoon[47] and Telmessos[48] in relation to Euergetes. The latest document, dated to the very beginning of the second century BC in the Lycian Region, came from Limyra. The inscription on a stele dated to 197 BC contains some decisions taken by the garrison commander Μένυλλος.[49] These epigraphic data show that the region was under Ptolemaic rule for about 100 years. Looking at the epigraphic evidence briefly presented above, it is seen that the inscriptions recovered in the region are mostly associated with Philadelphos instead of Euergetes. This whole argument is not very strong: the fact that Philadelphos is slightly more prominent in our epigraphic evidence than Euergetes might be accidental, and this might change in the future. The most concrete information we know about the Ptolemaic period of Lycia is its end right at the beginning of Antiochos III's Asia Minor campaign in 197 BC, around the month of June.[50]

## Discussion

In the context of the above-mentioned data, three different persons can be considered in regards to the neck-stamped

E. Dündar, 'Tepecik Akropolis', in H. İşkan, 'Patara 2017 Kazı Çalışmaları', *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* 40 (2019), 368–9, 384, figs 8–9.

[38] R. Behrwald, *Der Lykische Bund. Untersuchungen zu Geschichte und Verfassung* (Antiquitates 48; Bonn, 2000), 90–105; M. Wörrle, 'Lykiens „ptolemäisches Jahrhundert": ein Segen für das Land?', in P. Brun, L. Capdetrey, and P. Fröhlich (eds), *L'Asie Mineure occidentale au IIIe siècle a.C.* (Mémoires 60; Bordeaux, 2021), 122 nn. 70–4.

[39] D. S. Lenger and E. Dündar, 'Attestation of a Ptolemaic garrison in the light of coins: Tepecik settlement at Patara, Lycia', *AIIN* 66 (2020), 37–70.

[40] According to Diodoros' account (Sic. 19.64.5–8), Patara was used as a naval base by Antigonus I Monophthalmus in 313 BC. On the other hand, hegemony of Ptolemaios I in Lycia, who captured Antigonus I Monophthalmus' garrison in Xanthos in 309 BC was short dated, see Diod. Sic. 20.27.1–2; Porph. *Fr*. 42. In 304 BC, Demetrios Poliorcetes' ships in Patara harbour were attacked by Menedemos, who was a commander from Rhodes, see Diod. Sic. 20.93.2–5; Plut. *Demetr*. 22.1. For commentary, see R. S. Bagnall, *The Administration of the Ptolemaic Possessions Outside Egypt* (Leiden, 1976), 89–91; Hölbl, *Ptolemaic Empire*, 19.

[41] For detailed comments on the subject, see M. Wörrle, 'Anfang und Ende von Limyras ptolemäischer Zeit', in M. Seyer (ed.), *40 Jahre Grabung Limyra: Akten des Internationalen Symposions, Wien, 3.-5. Dezember 2009* (Wien, 2012), 363 nn. 26–34.

[42] M. Wörrle, 'Epigraphische Forschungen zur Geschichte Lykiens I.', *Chiron* 7 (1977), 44, 47, 57. Later, A. Meadows proposed to date this decree to spring of 249 BC, the 36th regnal year of Philadelphos. For the detailed commentary on the Limyra decree's dating, see A. Meadows, 'The Ptolemaic annexation of Lycia: SEG 27.939', in K. Dörtlük, et al. (eds), *The 3rd Symposium on Lycia 07-10 November 2005 Antalya, Symposium Proceedings* (Istanbul, 2006), 459–70. Later, Wörrle reconsidered the dating of SEG 27.929 and preferred the earlier date of the inscription, see Wörrle, in Seyer (ed.), *40 Jahre Grabung Limyra*, 368.

[43] M. Segre, 'Iscrizioni di Lycia', *ClRh* 9 (1938), 185–6 fig. 1; Bagnall, *The Ptolemaic Possessions*, 106–7; M. Wörrle, 'Epigraphische Forschungen zur Geschichte Lykiens II.', *Chiron* 7 (1978), 201–46.

[44] TAM II, 158, 161–9; for the dating, see Bagnall, *The Ptolemaic Possessions*, 106.

[45] S. Şahin and M. Adak, 'Neue Inschriften aus Tlos', *Gephyra* 1 (2004), 86–7, for the papyri, particularly n. 5; T. Korkut, 'Antik Kent Merkezi', in T. Korkut (ed.), *Arkeoloji, Epigrafi, Jeoloji, Doğal ve Kültürel Peyzaj Yapısıyla Tlos Antik Kenti ve Teritoryumu* (Ankara, 2015), 33–4; B. Ş. Özdemir, *Tlos Tanrıları ve Kültleri* (PhD Thesis, Akdeniz University; Antalya, 2016), 211.

[46] C. Schuler, 'A legal text and other fragments of Hellenistic inscriptions from Patara', in H. İşkan and F. Işık (eds), *From Sand into a City: 25 Years of Patara Excavations. Proceedings of the International Symposium of 11-13 November 2013 Antalya* (Istanbul, 2015), 499–500; for the tomb inscriptions found in Patara, possibly belonging to two mercenaries (Herakleitos of Arsinoe and Myonides of Thera) who were buried in the city in the third century BC, see K. Zimmermann, 'Patara sous domination étrangère : Un très long IIIe siècle', in P. Brun, L. Capdetrey, and P. Fröhlich (eds), *L'Asie Mineure occidentale au IIIe siècle a.C.* (Mémoires 60; Bordeaux, 2021), 134–5 nn. 2–3.

[47] SEG XXXVI, 1218–19, for a detailed commentary, see J. Bousquet, 'Lettre de Ptolémée Evergète III à Xanthos de Lycie', *REG* 99 (1986), 22–32.

[48] TAM II.1; for the dating, see Bagnall, *The Ptolemaic Possessions*, 106–7.

[49] M. Wörrle, 'Epigraphische Forschungen zur Geschichte Lykiens XIII: Die Weinbergstiftung eines ptolemäischen Burgkommandanten von Limyra', *Chiron* 51 (2021), 215–16.

[50] Wörrle, in Seyer (ed.), *40 Jahre Grabung Limyra*, 359.

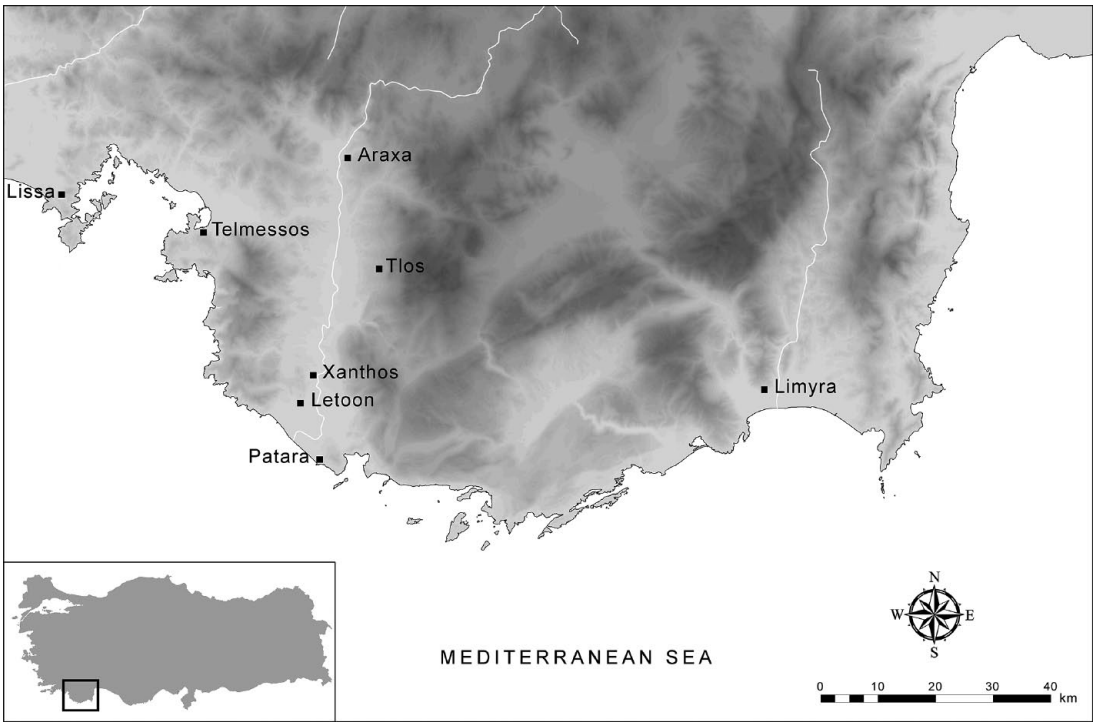


**Fig. 13.** Map of the cities where inscriptions related to Ptolemaic hegemony in Lycia were found.

amphora. The Pataran stamp states 'Fifth year of Ptolemy'; therefore, any of the first three Ptolemies are possible candidates.

It is unlikely that the amphora and the stamp belong to the period of Ptolemy I Soter. Soter used a dating formula recognizing his regnal year as satrap, or the regnal year of Alexander the Great.[51] An inscription recording the death of the poet Menander and dated to the 32nd Macedonian year of Soter (292/91 BC) also points to the first regnal year as the date of Alexander the Great's death in 323 BC.[52] Thus, if the Pataran stamp is associated with Soter, it would be dated to 318 BC, which is highly unlikely. In the early stages of the Wars of the Diadochi, which broke out following the death of Alexander the Great, Patara served as a significant regional port for the naval forces of Antigonus I Monophthalmos and his son Demetrios Poliorcetes.[53] In addition to this evidence, it is known that Lycia and Patara were not officially under Ptolemaic control at this date.[54] It should not be forgotten that this amphora bearing an official stamp must not have arrived in Patara for commercial purposes due to the label on it and its uniqueness.[55]

The Ptolemaic hoard consisting of nineteen golden *pentadrachms* (*trichryson*) found in quadrant I-17 of the Tepecik settlement in 2018[56] allows us to present some ideas regarding to which king Ptolemy the stamped amphora belonged. In light of archaeological and numismatic data from Tepecik, it was understood that there was a garrison belonging to Ptolemaic mercenaries in the Tepecik settlement, where the aforementioned treasure was unearthed.[57] In this context, it is almost certain that the hoard in question, which is thought to be the accumulation of a commander or soldier serving in Patara and dated before *c.* 272/71 BC, was hidden here during the rule of Ptolemy II Philadelphos.[58] This date also corresponds to the beginning of the First Syrian War (274–271 BC). In the context of both the data obtained from Tepecik and the political and military moves of Philadelphos especially in Lycia,[59] it may be plausible to date the Pataran stamp to 281/80 BC, which coincides with

[51] Bagnall, *The Ptolemaic Possessions*, 144.

[52] IG XIV 1184; on this commentary, see Hazzard, *Phoenix* 41, 144.

[53] Diod. Sic. 19.64.5–8.

[54] About relations between Soter and Lycia, see Diod. 19.64.5; 20.27.1–2; Porph. *Fr*. 42. For commentary, see Bagnall, *The Ptolemaic Possessions*, 89–91; Hölbl, *Ptolemaic Empire*, 19, for discussions, see Dündar and Rauh, *Hesperia* 86, 573–7. Wörrle (in Seyer (ed.), *40 Jahre Grabung Limyra*, 366–7) suggested that the Ptolemaic control of Lycia began very probably already in 309 BC. However, excavations at the Tepecik settlement in Patara did not yield any evidence to support this suggestion. The existence of a Macedonian garrison in Patara on the date Wörrle stated has been proven by archaeological and numismatic data. For the destruction layers and dating of the Macedonian garrison in the Tepecik settlement, see Dündar, *IstMitt* 70, 63–5.

[55] During the studies carried out to date, only two pieces of AE 2 amphorae have been found in Patara. For earlier comments on the subject, see Dündar, *Patara* IV.3, 385. See above, n. 33.

[56] E. Dündar, 'Tepecik', in H. İşkan-Işık, 'Patara 2018 Kazı ve Restorasyon Çalışmaları', *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* 41 (2020), 399; E. Dündar and D. S. Lenger, 'A Ptolemaic hoard from Patara', *AJA* 126:2 (2022), 201–17.

[57] Dündar, in İşkan-Işık, *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* 41; Lenger and Dündar, *AIIN* 66, 37–70.

[58] For the commentary which suggests that the Patara Ptolemaic hoard must be dated before *c.* 272/1 BC, see Dündar and Lenger, *AJA* 126:2, 213–14.

[59] See above 'The Ptolemaic Rule in Lycia'.

the fifth regnal year of Ptolemy II Philadelphos.[60] While there is no archaeological evidence or historical data to further support this suggested dating, there is no record to suggest otherwise.

In addition to the two possibilities mentioned above regarding the origin of the stamped amphora, it is also possible to argue that it may be related to Ptolemy III Euergetes as well. We mentioned above that the earliest examples of AE 2 amphorae were produced in the second half of the third century BC (see above 'Description of the Material'). Evidence found indicates that this form began to be produced under the aegis of Euergetes or Philopator.[61] However, studies in Tepecik have shown that the settlement lost its complex structure from the time of Ptolemy IV Philopator.[62] Therefore, it can be said that Euergetes is an important candidate for the name this amphora bears.

Before establishing a connection with the Ptolemies, it is necessary to mention the contents of the stamped Pataran amphora. The vessel was the only amphora with an official (due to the name on it) stamp among the amphora stamps found so far and would have been sent to Patara for an official service like payment. Its most likely content was wine, which was intensively produced in Egypt.[63] Focusing on the third century BC in the context of the Pataran stamp, we encounter the ἀπόμοιρα tax on the crops of vineyards and orchards.[64] This tax, which was called ἔκτη or ἀπόμοιρα during the reign of Philadelphos (263 BC) and was collected from all vineyards and orchards except the temple land, was collected for many different purposes later in the third century and the second century BC.[65] It is probable that the contents of the stamped amphora in Patara were ἀπόμοιρα wine, as it was officially sealed and is rare. In some documents dated to the second century BC, it is observed that the wine, which was taken as ἀπόμοιρα for the cult of Arsinoë, was now being used for non-religious purposes, such as for paying salaries of civil servants.[66] Furthermore, it is known that ἀπόμοιρα wine was distributed to the officers in the place of salary rations.[67]

## Conclusion

It is suggested by formal distinctions, such as the high banded flaring rim, short neck, and short handles which descend from under the mouth perpendicular to the shoulders, that the Pataran amphora might be one of the earliest examples of AE 2 amphora. In this context, it is possible to place the Pataran amphora in the third century BC. It is not possible to associate it with any workshop in terms of form. Nevertheless, the similarity of the fabric and slip to the Tell el-Haraby specimens allows us to define this place as the possible production site of the Pataran amphora.

However, although Ptolemy II Philadelphos appears to be a plausible candidate for the name on the stamp, there is no data regarding the production of AE 2 amphora during his reign. In addition to the fact that the production of AE 2 amphora started during the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes, the data that 37% of the Ptolemaic coins found in the Tepecik settlement belong to Ptolemy III Euergetes[68] allows us to attribute the name on the stamp to Ptolemy III Euergetes.

In light of all this evidence, it can be suggested that the stamped amphora might be a special payment or gift sent to the Ptolemaic garrison in Patara (possibly to the garrison commander, since such an 'official present' would not have been sent to a mercenary) during the fifth regnal year of Ptolemy III Euergetes in *c.* 243/42 BC.

[60] For the regnal years of Ptolemy II Philadelphos, see Hazzard, *Phoenix* 41, 140–58.

[61] Marquié, *CCE* 8, 85, 104, fig. 21; Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 87–8.

[62] See above 'Description of the Material'.

[63] Unfortunately, no insulating material or sediment residues were found inside the Pataran example. The recommendation made here is a reflection of the available data at our disposal. However, for wine production in Egypt, see Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 198–207; Dzierzbicka, *OINOΣ*, 55–8, 64–5, 70–3, 75–80, 106–7, 109–10.

[64] Ἀπόμοιρα, literally meaning 'portion', was a fixed percentage tax levied on land products. Ἀπόμοιρα was the more general name for the tax, whereas 'the tax of one-sixth' (ἡ ἕκτη) and 'the tax of one tenth' (ἡ δεκάτη) were more specific terms, pointing to the rate of the portion, see L. Koenen, 'The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure', in A. Bulloch, E. S. Gruen, A. A. Long, and A. Stewart (eds), *Images and Ideologies: Self-Definition in the Hellenistic World. Papers Presented at a Conference Held April 7–9, 1988, at the University of California at Berkeley, Hellenistic Culture and Society* 12 (Berkeley, 1993), 67; W. Clarysse and K. Vandorpe, 'The Ptolemaic apomoira', in H. Melaerts (ed.), *Le culte du souverain dans L'Égypte Ptolémaïques au III^e siècle avant notre ère : Actes du Colloque international, Bruxelles, 10 mai 1995* (Leuven, 1998), 7–8; Dzierzbicka, *OINOΣ*, 229–33.

[65] This tax was collected for the cult of Arsinoe Philadelphos in 263 BC (the relevant sections of the *P. Rev. Laws* and 36, also see Koenen, in Bulloch, et al. (eds), *Images and Ideologies*, 67; Clarysse and Vandorpe, in Melaerts (ed.), *Le culte du souverain*, 14, especially n. 26). It is known that cash payment was accepted for ἀπόμοιρα tax in the early second century BC. In the second and first centuries BC, after this change, only those who cultivated vineyards within the land of a sanctuary could pay the ἀπόμοιρα with wine, see Clarysse and Vandorpe, in Melaerts (ed.), *Le culte du souverain*, 26; Dzierzbicka, *OINOΣ*, 228. The Memphis judgment of 196 BC and the decree of Ptolemy VIII Physcon of 118 BC showed that this wine was in some cases confiscated by the state for different purposes. However, it is seen from written sources that this practice was restricted at the end of the second century BC and wine was again used as a libation to the gods, see Clarysse and Vandorpe, in Melaerts (ed.), *Le culte du souverain*, 16–17; Dzierzbicka, *OINOΣ*, 232.

[66] K. Vandorpe and W. Clarysse, 'Viticulture and wine consumption in the Arsinoite nome ("P. Köln" V 221)', *AncSoc* 28 (1997), 67–73.

[67] According to *P.Köln* V 221 (190 BC, Arsinoites. For comments, see Vandorpe and Clarysse, *AncSoc* 28, 67–73), ἀπόμοιρα wine was distributed to the officers instead of a salary. In a military camp near Theogonys, ἀπόμοιρα was given to soldiers as wine rations, see Dzierzbicka, *OINOΣ*, 232.

[68] Lenger and Dündar, *AIIN* 66, 42.

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