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**A HELLENISTIC "WEST SLOPE" STYLE
AMPHORA IN WARSAW***

Among the small number of the Hellenistic vessels, the National Museum in Warsaw also has an amphora purchased from the collection of J. Chmielowski in 1955¹ (Fig. 1 a-b).

The amphora is made of brownish-red clay, fairly pure but porous and containing quite a lot of mica. The whole vase, also at the bottom and inside, is covered with a brownish-black mat slip, which in some places becomes red.

SHAPE: The vase is squat. It has a tall, solid, cylindrical neck, slightly narrowing down in the middle, inside ribbed horizontally in the upper part. The mouth is somewhat funnel-shaped and is "two-stage". The shoulders, slightly sloping, make an abrupt transition into the body that narrows towards the bottom. The foot is broad, massive and profiled at its upper surface, and separated from the body by a depression. The vessel is provided with two band handles, ending with rotellae from below. **DECORATION:** The neck is separated from the mouth by an incised red line and adorned with a "necklace" ornament made in the following manner: a white band, an incised red zigzag, red "pendants". The neck is separated from the shoulders by an incised red

* I wish to express my gratitude to Dr. W. Dobrowolski, curator of the Ancient Art Gallery of the National Museum in Warsaw, for his drawing my attention to the amphora published here, and to the Management of this Museum for kind consent to the object's publication and rendering its photos accessible.

¹ Inventory number MNW 148489. Ht 0.198 m, diameter: rim 0.16 m, body 0.17 m, foot 0.155 m. State of preservation good, with only the slip abraded in places, few chips, white deposit here and there.

line. The shoulders are adorned with the representation of a simplified floral runner in the shape of a grapevine branch rendered in white with red leaves separated from the branch. Below, two incised red lines reach the rotellae on both sides of the vase. The rotellae display traces of white. The body is covered with slightly diagonal ribs, which however are absent below the handles. In the latter place, there is a poorly made ornament resembling a palmette (?) upside down and rendered by incised lines filled with white paint. The ribs are delimited from below by an incised line in the colour of the slip.

The decoration of the amphora described above, painted in light colours against the dark slip background, and the incisions, univocally classifies it with one of the most characteristic currents in the pottery of the Hellenistic period, the West Slope style. This style had first evolved in Athens in the end of the 4th century B. C. and subsequently was taken over by other Hellenistic centres².

The amphora is the most widespread shape among the Attic West Slope pottery³. However, the Warsaw amphora under consideration differs in form from the Attic amphorae, which display unlike proportions and most often have twisted handles. Our vase shows the features characteristic of the Pergamon amphorae of the West Slope style: a tall neck dominating the shoulders and body, a sharp transition of the arms into the body and "two-stage" mouth, all traits underlined by Schäfer⁴. Angular shape and band-like — as if forged — handles terminating with the rotellae, were undoubtedly inspired by metal archetypes⁵. A good analogy for the Warsaw amphora is the D 70 amphora from Pergamon, as well as the amphorae in Heidelberg and Corinth, both illustrated and discussed by Schäfer, although the provenance and dating of the both latter objects is not precisely established⁶. All the vases mentioned above have the shape which is characteristic of the Pergamon amphorae and are decorated with the necklace ornament on the neck and floral runner on the shoulders. However, the runner on the Warsaw amphora lacks the flexibility and refinement to be encountered with the amphorae described above, and it is executed in a rough line and is much more "rigid" and "clumsy".

The object under consideration here also has a good analogy in an amphora in the collection of the Museum of the Jagellonian University in

² On the West Slope style generally see: H. Thompson, *Two Centuries of Hellenistic Pottery*, *Hesperia* 3, 1934, pp. 438—447; R. M. Cook, *Greek Painted Pottery*, London 1972², pp. 204—205; R. Smetana-Scherrer, *Spätklassische und hellenistische Keramik*, *Alt Ägina* II, 1, Berlin 1982, pp. 68—76, Pls. 36—43, Nos. 471—578.

³ Thompson, *op. cit.*, B 3, 35, D 25—26, E 59 and p. 444 f.

⁴ J. Schäfer, *Hellenistische Keramik aus Pergamon*, *Pergamenische Forschungen* 2, Berlin 1968, p. 50.

⁵ Schäfer, *op. cit.*; see also J. W. Salomonson, *Der hellenistische Töpfer als Toreut*, *BA Besch* 57, 1982, pp. 464—478.

⁶ Schäfer, *op. cit.*, Taf. 17, 18, Abb. 3: 2.4; according to R. Edwards, *Corinthian Hellenistic Pottery*, *Corinth* 7, 3, Princeton 1975, p. 44, the Corinth amphora comes from an indefinite workshop, it was found in Deposit 94, whose dating is, regrettably, very extensive: 325—146 B. C.



Fig. 1 a-b. Amphora, Warsaw, National Museum, inv. no. MNW 148489, height 0.198 m, ca. 130 B. C. Photo: courtesy of the National Museum, Warsaw

Cracow, which has been recognized as the Pergamon workshops product and dated to the years ca. 130 B. C.⁷ The Warsaw amphora differs from the Cracow object in the decoration of the shoulders and the shape of the foot, which is wider, higher and more strongly profiled. Similar foot are displayed by the amphorae from Phanagoria, dated to the end of the 2nd century B. C.⁸, and from Histria, dated to the mid-2nd century and ascribed to the Asia Minor workshops, probably those of Pergamon⁹.

The Warsaw amphora can be compared with the Pergamon amphorae not only regarding its form. Also the vase's brownish-red clay and mat, brownish-black slip, as well as the manner of decoration made by the laying of a rather thin layer of diluted red and white clay, indicate the connection of the Warsaw amphora with the workshops of Pergamon¹⁰. In Attica, the painting is usually laid by means of a thicker layer, resulting in a relief decoration, whereas instead of the red color almost always orange-red to yellow is employed here¹¹.

Schäfer dates the Pergamon amphorae to the late period ca. 130 B. C. based upon the similarity to the aforementioned amphora from Phanagoria and to the amphorae of Thompson's group E¹². However, their production and export must have begun earlier, which is testified to by the amphora discovered in the Black Sea region, ascribed to the Pergamon workshops by Knipovič and dated not later than the beginning of the 3rd century B. C. (and not ca. 200, erroneously given by Schäfer)¹³. Also earlier, than the examples published by Schäfer, and displaying the features of the Pergamon amphorae, is the amphora from the so-called House of Dionysos at Paphos in Cyprus, which comes from the group dated by J. Hayes to the early 2nd century B. C.¹⁴

⁷ E. Papuci-Władyka, *Some unknown vases from the Jagellonian University Museum*, *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization* 2, Kraków, 1992, p. 55–57, Fig. 7.

⁸ Schäfer, *op. cit.*, Abb. 3.1, p. 50 note 36, p. 56.

⁹ P. Alexandrescu, *Necropola tumulara Săpături 1955–1961*, [in:] *Histria II*, ed. E. Condurachi, București 1966, p. 194, grave XXXVII, No. 7, Pls. 95, 96.

¹⁰ Schäfer, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

¹¹ Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 439; Schäfer, *loc. cit.*

¹² Schäfer, *op. cit.*, p. 54 ff.

¹³ Schäfer, *op. cit.*, p. 50 note 36 where the author quotes further examples of the amphorae of the said type from various regions. T. N. Knipovič, *K voprosu o trgovych snošenijach antičnyh kolonij severnogo Pričernomorja v epochu ellenisma*, *Sovietskaja Archeologija* 11, 1949, p. 273, Fig. 1.1 and p. 275. Similar to the Warsaw amphora are several amphoras of the Pergamon type coming from the Black Sea area: Knipovič, *op. cit.*, Fig. 1.2 from Panticapaion dated to the end of 3rd-beginning of the 2nd cent. B. C.; M. B. Parovič-Pešikan, *Nekropol Olvii ellinističeskogo vremeni*, Kiev 1974, Fig. 100, 1–3, p. 123 ff. dated to the 3rd-2nd cent. B. C.; V. S. Zabelina, *Ellinističeskaja keramika is Pantikapeia*, *Soobščeniya Gosudarstvennogo Muzeja Istorii Iskusstva imeni Puškina* 7, 1984, p. 135, No. 1. The pottery of the West Slope type from Asia Minor, and mainly from Pergamon, used to displace the Attic vases of this category, from the Black Sea markets, imported there earlier, cf. J. Bouzek, *Studies of Greek Pottery in the Black Sea Area*, Prague 1990, p. 54.

¹⁴ J. Hayes, *Merikes isteroellinistikes omades apo tis anaskafes tis „Oikias tou Dionysou” stin Papho*, [in:] *B'Epistimoniki sinantisi gia tin ellinistiki keramiki. Chronologika provlimata tis*

Recurring to the Warsaw amphora, it can be stated that this vase most probably comes from the workshops of Pergamon and dates back to the years ca. 130 B. C. or somewhat later (regarding the likeness of the foot to that of the amphora from Phanagoria).

ellinistikis keramikis. Praktika, Rhodos 22—25 Martiou 1989, Athens 1990, p. 115, 117, Pl. 68 a-b. In Cyprus in the Pierides collection in Larnaca there is a similar amphora with the handles decorated with relief heads, which according to A. J a c q u e m i n and J.-J. M a f f r e (BCH 110, 1986, pp. 201—204, Figs. 30—33) probably comes from the workshops of Asia Minor dates back to the turn of the 3rd century B. C.