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The Journal 'Olba', being published since 1998 by the 'Research Center of Cilician Archaeology' of the Mersin University (Turkey), includes original studies done on prehistory, protohistory, classical archaeology, classical philology (language and culture), ancient history, numismatics and Byzantine History of Art.

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NIKANDROS GROUP: MATRIX STUDIES ON THE AMPHORA STAMPS OF THE GROUP

Gonca CANKARDEŞ-ŞENOL*

ABSTRACT

Amphoras of Nikandros Group, classified among the amphora stamps found in the excavations on Delos by V. Grace and thus called after the frequent attestation of the name, are suggested to have been produced in Western Anatolia, around Ephesos and Metropolis. They were supposedly produced for the transportation of wine intended for local consumption in the 2nd quarter of the 2nd century BC, and 2nd half of the 2nd century BC. Though of limited quantity, their existence in the Eastern Mediterranean centers is significant. The stamps and body shards belonging to this group have been recorded in Alexandria (Egypt), Delos, Tenos, Atina, centers in the Black Sea Region, Pergamon, Nagidos, the Levant Region, Crocodilopolis-Arsinoe, Akoris, Tebtynis and Bouto (Egypt). Matrix studies of the stamps of Nikandros Group have been made possible by the numerous examples found in Alexandria. A database containing the stamps of the group in Alexandria has been prepared. To this, all the stamped handles of Nikandros Groups found in varied consumption centers and published till the present day have been integrated in order to have a complete stamp database of the Group. Through this database, it is possible to get information about the system of stamping amphoras of the group, characteristics of the stamps, organization of stamps, characteristics of the inscriptions on the stamps, and the names inscribed on the stamps. In the article, by examining the findings in Alexandria, the form and clay features of the amphoras of Nikandros Group, the general characteristics of the stamps, a complete list of the names appearing on the stamps, and the methods used for the definition of matrices have been presented.

Key words: Amphora, Nikandros Group, Amphora stamp, Alexandria, Matrix

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ÖZET

Nikandros Grubu: Gruba Ait Amphora Mühürlerinin Kalıp Çalışmaları

1951 yılında, V. Grace tarafından, Delos kazılarında ele geçen amphora mühürleri arasında saptanan ve isme sıkça rastlanmasından hareketle Nikandros Grubu olarak adlandırılan amphoraların üretim yerinin Batı Anadolu, Ephesos-Metropolis çevresi olduğu son yapılan araştırmalarla ortaya çıkmıştır. İ. Ö. 2. yüzyılın 2. çeyreği ve aynı yüzyılın 2. yarısında, daha çok yerel tüketime yönelik şarabı taşımak için kullanıldıkları kabul edilen Nikandros Grubu amphoralarının, sayıca az olmakla birlikte, Doğu Akdeniz'deki varlıkları dikkat çekicidir. Bu grup amphoralara ait mühür ve gövde parçaları Alexandria (Mısır) başta olmak üzere, Delos, Tenos, Atina, Karadeniz'deki merkezler, Pergamon, Nagidos, Levant Bölgesi, Crocodilopolis-Arsinoe, Akoris, Tebtynis ve Bouto'da (Mısır) ele geçmiştir. Diğer merkezlerle oranla Alexandria kentinin Nikandros Grubuna ait çok sayıda amphora mühürü içermesi, mühürlere ilişkin kalıp çalışmalarının yapılmasını olanaklı kılmıştır. Bu mühürleri içeren bir veri bankası oluşturulmuş ve buna, komple bir başvuru kaynağı oluşturmak üzere, günümüze kadar diğer merkezlerde ele geçen ve yayınlanan tüm Nikandros Grubu amphora mühürleri eklenmiştir. Buna göre, grubun amphoralarını mühürleme sistemi, mühürlerin özellikleri, düzenleniş biçimleri, mühürler üzerindeki yazıtların karakteri ve mühürlerde yer alan isimler gibi konulara ışık tutacak bilgileri elde etmek mümkün olmuştur. Makalede, Nikandros Grubu amphoralarının Alexandria buluntuları da değerlendirilerek form ve kil özellikleri, mühürlerin genel karakteri, mühürler üzerinde yer alan isimlerin (bugünkü bilgilerimiz ışığında) tam listesi ve mühürlerin kalıp tespitinde uygulanan yöntemler sunulmaktadır. Bu çalışma, ayrıca, çeşitli tüketim merkezlerinde ele geçen ve kökeni tespit edilemeyen mühür-lerin, Nikandros Grubuna ait olanlarının daha kolaylıkla tanınmasına yardımcı olacaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Amphora, Nikandros Grubu, amphora mühürü, Alexandria, Kalıp

Nikandros Group was first identified by V. Grace after her studies in 1951 on the amphora stamps found in the excavations in Delos. This name was given to the group due to the frequent existence of the name *Nikandros* on the handles of some of the amphoras. In *EAD 27*, she gives detailed information about the characteristics of stamps, the form of the handles, the rim of the amphoras and the clay features belonging to this group¹. A complete amphora from the Agora excavations is important evidence for the whole form of the jar². Another nearly complete amphora of this group

¹ Grace-Savvatianou, Petropoulakou 1970, 365-367.

² Grace-Savvatianou, Petropoulakou 1970, pl. 61, P3980.

has been found in Tell Er-Ras³. Regarding complete and fragmentary amphoras it is noted that amphoras of the group have two kinds of rims: one is high folded down double nearly touching the upper part of the handle and the other is small and rounded⁴. The handles are rather small and oval in profile. The color of the clay varies from light gray⁵ to pale brown⁶ and reddish yellow⁷. Few fabrics have pinkish or reddish colour⁸. Despite the variety in color nearly all the fabrics are micaceous and their gritty clay contains calcer and chamotte⁹. With this feature of the clay, it seems to be close to the West Anatolian fabric. Resembling these characteristics in form and clay, are two fragmentary amphoras with a neck and two unstamped handles that have been recorded among the material from the underwater surveys around the Pharos Island in Alexandria (fig. 1) and in Kuşadası (fig. 2), south west of Ephesus¹⁰. Both of the examples indicate that not all the amphoras of this group have been stamped.

The production center of the group was suggested to be Cos based on the form similarities of Coan amphoras as well as on the existence of same names appearing on both productions although identical stamps impressed by the same die have not been recorded on the handles of both productions. But no further evidence, such as the discovery of workshops or deposits indicating a certain production place, has come to support this suggestion. The latest researches held in Ephesus¹¹ and Metropolis¹² in the Western Anatolian Coast have presented significant clues for the possible production center of this group. Numerous quantities of fragments and stamps related to the group and clay characteristics similar to local productions of

³ Ariel 1999, 28 no. 13.

⁴ Cankardeş-Şenol 2001, 106-109, nos. 9-11, 13-14, 16, 19-20; Cankardeş-Şenol 2006, 165-166, figs. 268-269.

⁵ Munsell Soil Color Charts, 1998, 10 YR 7/2 light gray; 7.5 YR 7/2 pinkish gray (these colours are confirmed by the stamped handles of this group held in the Benaki Collection in the Greco-Roman Museum in Alexandria).

⁶ 10 YR 7/4 very pale brown; 10 YR 8/3 very pale brown.

⁷ 5 YR 7/8 reddish yellow; 7.5 YR 8/6 reddish yellow.

⁸ 7.5 YR 7/4 pink; 7.5 YR 8/4 pink; 2.5 YR 6/8 light red.

⁹ The color characteristics given here are based on the examples studied in the collections in Alexandria.

¹⁰ The former fragment is from the shipwreck named as Qait Bay I (Inv. No. QBI. 98.131) in the north of the Pharos Island.

¹¹ Gassner 1997, 107; Lawall 2004, 177-188; Lawall 2007, 48-53.

¹² Cankardeş-Şenol 2001, 101-102.

these centers have drawn attention to this region as the possible production area of Nikandros Group amphoras. The contexts where these handles have been found in various consumption centers have been assigned to the middle and the second half of the second century BC based on other datable material such as Rhodian amphora stamps¹³. But the earliest stamps are datable to the second quarter of the second century BC, which is also confirmed by the contexts in Alexandria¹⁴.

The amphora shards and the stamps of the group have not been attested in numerous centers, which demonstrates that they are not widely distributed in the markets. This result shows the consumption of wine stored in these amphoras was mostly for regional purposes. But, the evidence related to the Nikandros Group amphoras in the centers like Delos, Tenos, Athens, Black Sea centers, Pergamon, Nagidos in the Asia Minor, the Levant Region, Crocodilopolis-Arsinoe, Akoris, Tebtynis¹⁵ and Bouto¹⁶ in Egypt demonstrates that wine transported in Nikandros Group amphoras was not purely produced for local consumption but also demanded in certain markets to some extent.

In addition to the above mentioned destination centers for wine carried in Nikandros Group amphoras, it is noted that Alexandria (and its environs) was the most significant consumer. This is proven by numerous

¹³ In the Lux site in Alexandria, an amphora stamp bearing the name of the Rhodian fabricant Diokleias who produced amphoras in the second half of the second century BC has been found in the same stratum with a stamp naming Exakes(of Nikandros Group. Other contexts in the same site contain stamps of Nikandros Group together with Rhodian eponym stamps as Kallikrates III (c. 130 BC), Nikasagoras II (c. 131 BC) and fabricant stamps as Sosikles, Linos and Eukleitos. For the amphoras with no stamps datable to the third century BC see, Grace, Savvatiou-Petro-poulakou 1970, 366; Lawall 2004, 177-187. For the monogram stamps appearing on Nikandros Group amphoras datable to the late third century BC in Ephesos, see Lawall 2007, 49-50.

¹⁴ The names of the Rhodian fabricant Damokrates I (Period III of the Rhodian stamp chronology), the eponyms Xenophantos II (c. 151 BC), Eudamos (the middle of the second century BC) and Agemachos (c. 181/179 BC) appear on the stamps found in the same contexts with Nikandros Group stamps in the Lux site in Alexandria.

¹⁵ Grace, Savvatiou-Petro-poulakou 1970, 365-367, E243-E249; Etienne 1986, 253, nos. 236-237; Grace 1934, 285, no. 253; Canarache 1957, 278, fig. 48; Pridik 1917, 110, no. 196 (?), 202; Börker, Burrow 1998, 115-117, nos. 532-556; Şenol, Aşkın 2007, p. 268, fig. 57-58; Ariel 1999, p. 28, no. 13; Finkielsztejn 2000, p. 210; Finkielsztejn 1993, 391, planche L, Ni 1; Empereur 1977- I, 229, no. 858, 230, no. 863, 233, nos. 874-875, 234-236, nos. 879-882, 885 (?), 886(?), p. 238, no. 897; Kawanishi, Suto 2005, p. 156, nos. 282-283, p. 157-160, nos. 285-291, 163, no. 297, 165, no. 304, 167, no. 308, 168, no. 311, 176, no. 333 (?); Marchand, Marangou 2007, 245, 278, fig. 12-23; Criscuolo 1982, 119-120, nos. 158-162.

¹⁶ Communication with A. K. Şenol

stamped handles attributed to this group in the city in addition to amphora fragments¹⁷. Nikandros Group amphoras transporting wine from Western Anatolia into Alexandria point to significant evidence for the existence of commercial activities, although not well established and systematic, between the two regions in the second century BC. It can be supposed to have been an alternative to other wines such as Rhodian, Coan or Cnidian wines, which were highly consumed in the city. The wines of these centers produced and exported to markets were known to have been mostly ordinary wines consumed by inhabitants of the city or the soldiers. But the wine possibly coming from Ephesos or the Metropolis region in Nikandros Group amphoras was suggested to have been better quality as mentioned by Strabo for the Ephesian wine¹⁸. The existence of Nikandros Group amphoras and stamps in considerable quantity in Alexandria can also be the result of the inhabitants originating in Western Anatolia in the second half of the second century BC.

The stamped handles in Alexandria are held in the Benaki Collection in the Greco-Roman Museum¹⁹, come from varied parts of the city and environs, or they have been found during the rescue excavations of CEALex in the city center²⁰. The large quantity of material presents the possibility for studies on the system of stamping Nikandros Group amphoras and defining the matrices of stamps. As Grace mentioned in *EAD 27*, the stamped handles of this group, mostly in rectangular form, have single names inscribed on one line in nominative or genitive case, but the names are sometimes abbreviated. Monograms or ligatured letters are also attested on the stamps. On some stamps, the inscription is in cursive character with a lunate sigma, epsilon and open omega while the direction of the inscriptions can be from right to left or retrograde. Symbols are rather rare although on two examples a club symbol appears and on a single circular stamp, a wreath symbol is placed inside the stamp frame.

¹⁷ Rim fragments, body shards and feet belonging to Nikandros Groups amphoras in the rescue excavations of CEALex in Alexandria from the Billards, Consulate, Diana and Fouad sites have been classified and studied by A. Kaan Senol (communication with A. K. Senol).

¹⁸ Strabo, *Geographika*, XIV, I.15.

¹⁹ The handles were classified by V. Grace (see Grace, Savvatianou-Petropoulakou 1970, 365-366) and then studied and photographed by J.-Y. Empereur and their inventory studies and matrix definitions have been made by the author in 2006.

²⁰ Cankardeş-Şenol 2007, 49.

For the definition of matrices of Nikandros Group, the system which was primarily used in our studies for the matrices of Rhodian stamps has been applied²¹. So, with the aim of bringing unity to the procedure, the same system has been carried out for all groups of stamps. Although some small varieties emerged by the different systems of stamping amphoras in different production centers, the logic of the system remains stable. According to this system, all the impressions are formulated and numbered depending on the inscribed information on the stamp. As it is a kind of “open system” to which every new matrix type found later can be added.

After the inventory studies of each stamp through the preparation of an individual form (fig. 3) in the computer with Filemaker Pro 8.5 that contains all the information obtained from the stamped handle, a matrix number is given to each different impression.

The formulation of the matrix number is “NIK-the name-000”. The abbreviation “NIK-” refers to “Nikandros Group” while the name differs depending on the inscription appearing on the stamp. An abbreviation as “F(Fabricant)” or “E(Eponym)” after “NIK-” related to the function of the name is not added to the matrix number since the function of the names inscribed on the stamps of Nikandros Group is not certain although it is mostly suggested to have belonged to the amphora producers²². If a complete name is recorded on the stamp or stamps, it is written in nominative case. If the name is abbreviated and its complete form is not attested or the possibility to complete the name is not suggested, the abbreviated form of the name is written. In case of monograms and the ligatures which permit restoring the beginning of a possible name, the letter/s is/are written. In ligatures with three or more letters, the letters are not written one by one as the restoration possibilities of in varied ways can be done and it may cause mistakes or complexity. Instead, the word “ligature” is placed in the matrix formula which permits the addition of any new ligatured matrix containing different letters. The last part of the formula demonstrates the number of the matrix with the same name. It appears in three digit numbers but the number “-001” does not indicate the earliest matrix of the series.

²¹ For detailed information on the system of the definition of matrices of amphora stamps in Alexandria, see www.amphoralex.org/timbres/matrices/DefinitionMatrices.php.

²² The abbreviations related to the eponym or fabricant can be added when any matrix with a preposition indicating the function of the person is later found.

Creating a form/card with Filemaker 8,5 for each different name with the photo or the rubbing has been the other step of our studies to see all the matrices of a certain name together. This prevents the possibility of numerating identical impressions under different numbers (fig. 4). In addition to the definition of varied matrices with different characteristics, this form/card makes it possible to see the quantity of impressions of a certain person, which will be useful later in making interpretations about the fabricant's activity period, the duration of his activity, and the stylistic differentiation of letter characteristics over time etc., Published impressions found in varied centers up to the present have been also integrated to these forms/cards for a complete database of the stamps of Nikandros Group.

Finally, a form in word containing all the information about each different matrix (either from the collections in Alexandria or from other centers) with photos, rubbings, profile drawings and published identical examples in bibliographic references has been prepared (fig. 5) for publication on line and in a volume of *Etudes Alexandrine*.

A total of 110 stamps (at the same time this number indicates 110 individual amphoras) belonging to Nikandros Group are held in the Greco-Roman Museum in Alexandria and seven stamps have been found during the rescue excavations of *CEAlex* in different parts of the city, in addition to published stamps found in varied centers. Related to above mentioned files, 58 different cards with different names (complete, abbreviated, monogram, ligature) have been constituted. Following this study, 123 different matrices of Nikandros Group amphoras have been defined. The database composed of the material in Alexandria and the published examples from other sites has permitted the creation of the list of the names appearing on the stamps of Nikandros Group as follows²³:

Ακερα(-Ατε(?	Ἀπολλώνιος (3)
Ἀλκέμων	Ἄρτε(
Ἄνα(Ἄρτεμίδωρος (4)
Ἀπολ[Ἄρτέμων
Ἀπολλ[Βίων (3)
Ἀπολλαδ(Δ

²³ Numbers in parenthesis indicate the quantity of different matrices. Nothing follows the name if there is only one matrix of that name.

Δι(Μάνης
Διόδοτος	Μέλανος (7)
Διοδω((2)	Μενέστρατος (3)
Διοσκουρίδας	Μενιπ(
Ἐκαταῖος (3)	Μενίσκος
Ἐπιγέν(ης) (2)	Μίλων
Ἐρμαῖσκος	Μιννίων
Ἐρμι(Μηνόδωρος (4)
Ἐρμογένης (4)	Μηνόφιλος (6)
Εὐπο(-Εὐ[Νίκανδρος (9)
Ἐξακες((2)	Ξενόκριτος (4)
Ζήνων	Ξεῖνις
Ζώπυρος	Πειθοκράτης
Ἡράκλειτος	Πλάτων (3)
Ἡράκων (2)	Σωσυ.]((?)
Θεόδοτος	Σωτηρι(
Θράσων	Τιμο(
Ἴσοκράτης	Τιμόλαος (3)
Καστορίδος (6)	Φ
Καυστ(Φάνις
Καυστρι((2)	Χάρης (3)
Κλεοβουλ((2)	Χαρῖνος
Κω[(?)	

Some incomplete names figured above like, Ἄπολλ[, Ἄπολλλ[, Καυστ(and Τιμο(can probably be attributed to the names Ἄπολλώνιος, Καυστρι(, and Τιμόλαος. Matrix studies have demonstrated the frequent usage of some names, in addition to Νίκανδρος, like Ἄρτεμίδωρος, Ἐρμογένης, Καστορίδος, Μέλανος, Μενόδωρος, Μενόφιλος and Ξενόκριτος appearing more than three times on the stamps. A stamp bearing the inscription Εὐπο(-Εὐ[seems to be one of the rare two-named stamp but the second line is rubbed out and the restoration of the last two letters is doubtful. Probably it is the case for Ἀκερα(- Ἀτε(as there seems to be a blank between Ἄκερα(and Ἄτε(. The first letter is tentatively suggested since its characteristic is different from the other letters in the inscription. So, there is also the possibility of the names beginning as Κερα(- and the other Ἄτε²⁴. The stamps having a club symbol bear the names Ἐκαταῖος and Μίλων.

²⁴ Cf. Fraser, Matthews 1987, 93. 254.

Existence of a club symbol on the Ἐκαταῖος stamp (NIK-EKATAΙΟΣ-001, Alex. inv. no. ABC N 0758.18) (fig. 6) presents an interesting parallelism with the utilisation of the same symbol on the englyphic Coan Ἐκαταῖος stamp (CO-EKATAΙΟΣ-005, Alex. inv. no. ABC 0743.970) (fig. 7). This can be one of the reasons for the former attestation of Nikandros Group to Coan production. The other reason, as V. Grace mentioned in *EAD* 27, p. 366, is based on the similarities of names. The names appearing on both productions are Ἀπολλαδ(, Ἀπολλώνιος, Διόδοτος, Διοσκουρίδας (as Διοσκυρίδης), Ἐκαταῖος, Ἑρμαῖσκος, Ἑρμογένης, Ζήνων, Ζώπυρος, Ἡράκων, Μάνης, Μενίσκος, Μηνόδωρος and Ξενοκρίτος (as Ξενοκρι(and also probably as Ξενο().

Among the stamps of Nikandros Group, ligatures impressed by seven different dies have been noted. They are supposed to have belonged to either names whose complete or nearly complete forms already exist on other stamps, but are difficult to identify or are completely different names.

By the matrix studies of the stamps of Nikandros Group, it is clarified that the system of stamping amphoras by the potters was not highly complicated and not applied by all the amphora producers in that region since unstamped fragments have been also found, as mentioned. Applying stamps on amphoras was probably the result of the imitation of or inspiration from another reputed center in a certain period. Cos can be supposed to have been the center which inspired the producers of Nikandros Group amphoras. The absence of ethnic on stamps is an important clue for their production mostly for local usage/consumption, not for export. On the other hand, their attestation in varied consumption centers indicates that they got a commercial share in the Mediterranean markets in modest quantity.

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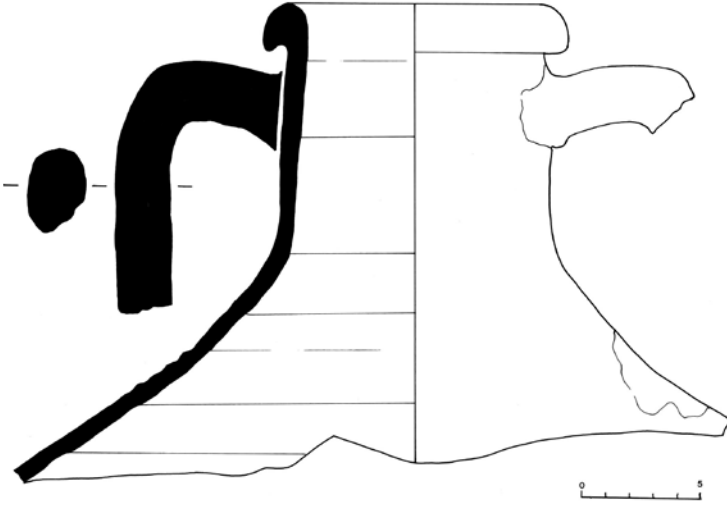


Fig. 1

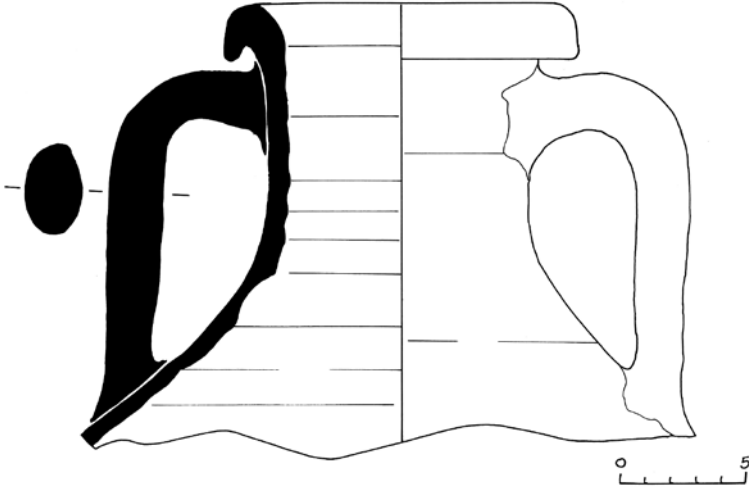


Fig. 2




Numero Corpus:	043	No. d'inv.	ABC N 0758.43	Inv. du MGR:	
Matrice no:	NIK-NIKANΔΡΟΣ-003	Langue	Grec	Etud. par.:	Gonca SENOL-2006
Eponym:		Fabrication:	Groupe de Nikandros		
Fabricant:	Nikandros	Inscription:	Νικάνδρου		
Mois:					
Titre:		Sense d'inscription:	Normale		
Attribute:					
Place d'attribue:		Nombre disposition du ligne:	1 horizontale		
Forme de la matrice:	Rectangulaire				
Dimension Matrice:	3.5 x 0.9 cm.	Commentaire:			
Period:					
	Photo		Frottis		
					
		Dessin			

Fig. 3

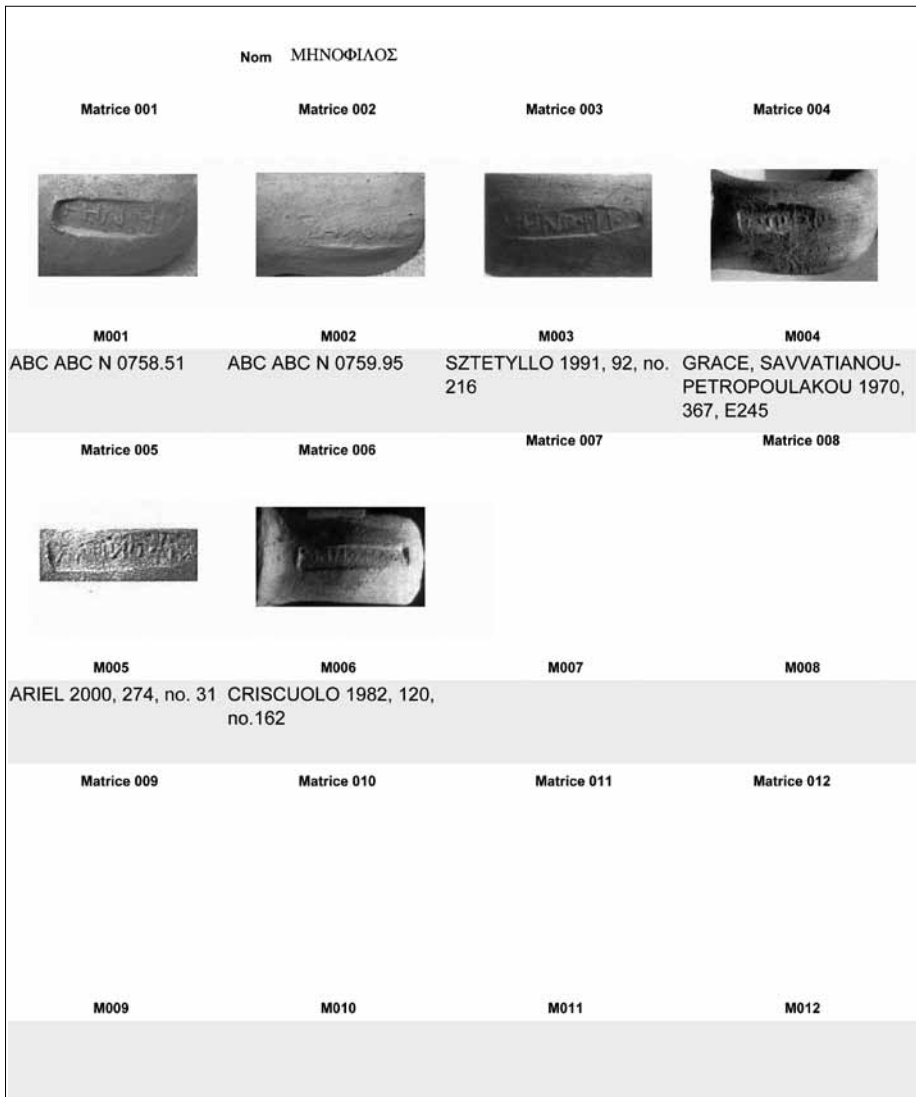


Fig. 4



GROUPE DE NIKANDROS/NIKANDROS GROUP	
<i>Nom/Name:</i> ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΙΟΣ	<i>Inscription:</i> Ἀπολλωνι(
<i>Matrice/Matrix:</i> ΝΙΚ-ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΙΟΣ-001	
<i>Photo:</i> 	<i>Frottis/Rubbing:</i> 
<i>Profil/Drawing:</i>	<i>Nombre et disposition lignes/Lines number and arrangement:</i> 1 horizontale/horizontal
	<i>Sens inscription/Inscription direction:</i> Rétrograde/Retrograde, abréviation /abbreviation, omega cursif/cursive omega
	<i>Forme matrice/Matrix shape:</i> Rectangulaire /Rectangular
	<i>Dimension matrice/Matrix dimension:</i> 4.1 x 0.9 cm.
	<i>Pate/Clay:</i> 10 YR 8/4 Very Pale Brown
	<i>Engobe/Slip:</i> 10 YR 8/2 White
	<i>Ingrédient/Inclusion:</i> Chamotte, calcaire/ limestone, mica, gravier/gritty
	<i>No. Inventaire/Inventory number:</i> ABC N 0759.72
<i>Commentaire/Commentary:</i>	
<i>Chronologie/Chronology:</i> Deuxième moitié du 2e s. avant J.-C./second half of the 2nd c. B.C.	
<i>Bibliographie/Bibliography:</i>	

Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7