

BYZANTINE SMALL FINDS
IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXTS

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Veröffentlichungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Istanbul

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Editors

Beate Böhlendorf-Arslan
Alessandra Ricci

Gedruckt mit Fördermitteln der Gerda Henkel Stiftung

GERDA HENKEL STIFTUNG

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Herausgegeben von

Felix Pirson und Martin Bachmann

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Vorwort

Im Juni 2008 fand in Istanbul mit großzügiger Unterstützung der Gerda Henkel Stiftung der internationale Workshop zu «Byzantinischen Kleinfunden im Kontext» statt, der gemeinsam vom Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations der Koç Universität, dem Archäologischen Museum Istanbul und der Abteilung Istanbul des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts ausgerichtet worden war.

Die so genannten Kleinfunde byzantinischer Zeit sind lange durch das Netz etablierter Fächerkulturen gefallen. In vielen Fällen ist es erst der interdisziplinären Zusammenarbeit von Byzantinischer Archäologie und Frühgeschichte zu verdanken, daß die häufig unscheinbaren und in der Regel kunsthistorisch unbedeutenden Objekte endlich eine erhöhte Aufmerksamkeit erfahren. Wie groß der Bedarf an einem wissenschaftlichen Austausch zu dem Thema ist, zeigte die sehr positive Resonanz auf die Einladung zu dem Istanbuler Workshop, der 46 Kolleginnen und Kollegen aus Deutschland, Österreich, Italien, Griechenland, Polen, der Türkei, Ukraine, USA, den Niederlande und Israel gefolgt sind. Während der Tagung entwickelten sich zahlreiche fruchtbare Diskussionen und es wurden Kontakte geknüpft, auf deren Basis der Diskurs bis heute weitergeführt wird.

Dementsprechend groß war der Wunsch der Teilnehmer, die Beiträge der Tagung zu publizieren. Der vorliegende Band umfasst 38 Beiträge und kann damit als aktuelles Kompendium zu den byzantinischen Kleinfunden und ihrem Auftreten in archäologischen Kontexten gelten.

In diesem Zusammenhang gilt unser besonderer Dank wiederum der Gerda Henkel Stiftung, die den Druck des Tagungsbandes in der Reihe BYZAS mit einer substantiellen Förderung ermöglicht hat. Danken möchten wir auch unseren Istanbulern Partnern, d. h. dem Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations der Koç Universität und dem Archäologischen Museum Istanbul, für die wie immer ausgezeichnete Zusammenarbeit. Hier hat sich mittlerweile eine schlagkräftige Troika etabliert, die 2011 gemeinsam mit weiteren Institutionen die internationale Tagung «Häfen und Hafenstädte im östlichen Mittelmeerraum von der Antike bis in byzantinische Zeit» ausgerichtet hat, die gleichfalls in der Reihe BYZAS publiziert wird. Schließlich danken wir den Organisatorinnen

der Tagung und zugleich Herausgeberinnen dieses Bandes Beate Böhlendorf-Arslan und Alessandra Ricci für ihre Initiative und ihren unermüdlichen Einsatz, ohne die das Projekt «Kleinfunde» nicht hätte realisiert werden können.

Felix Pirson und Martin Bachmann

Istanbul, Mai 2012

Preface

On June 2-4, 2008, the Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations of Koç University was pleased to play co-host, along with the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) in Istanbul to a symposium entitled «Byzantine Small Finds in Archaeological Context», and supported by the Gerda Henkel Stiftung. This symposium was organized by Beate Böhlendorf-Arslan, then of the DAI, and Alessandra Ricci of Koç University. The RCAC is indebted to Drs. Böhlendorf-Arslan and Ricci for organizing and running this highly successful symposium, and, in addition, for editing the papers present in this volume. It is hoped that the contextualization of small finds will shed new light on objects displayed in museum collections that have no such context, and give us clues as to their use in Byzantine societies.

Scott Redford
Director, RCAC
Koç University

Preface / Önsöz

Held 2-4 June 2008, in collaboration with the German Archaeological Institute Istanbul, Koç University's Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, and the Istanbul Archaeological Museums, the «Byzantine Small Finds in Archaeological Contexts» Workshop provided us with an analysis of the Byzantine art and craftsmanship that developed within the economic, social, cultural and religious systems of the Byzantine Empire, which spanned eleven centuries; and also shed light on the daily life and systems of thought of the period through various remains from the quotidian sphere.

Comprised of both fairly simple and artistically significant artefacts, this collection of objects was crafted to serve a variety of purposes, including to impress, display social status, adorn, protect from evil, or plead for god's grace; and all of the objects were a reflection of the skilful craftsmanship of the period that is available to us through items made of ivory, silver (although rare), gold, bronze and other metals, glass, various precious stones, terracotta, wood, and wool and silk.

The ostentatious court life of the Byzantine Empire; the customary gifts of emperors; the rich material culture created by wealthy families; the feasting habits, personal care and adornment practices of individuals, as well as their daily life and religious practices – all of these factors contributed to the rich diversity of production by Byzantine artists and craftsmen.

The importance of the symposium is emphasized by the range of topics discussed by experts in the field: the scarcity of the number of surviving small finds; the re-use of gold and silver artefacts by means of smelting; the long periods of time during which glass and terracotta materials remained unearthened; the conservation of wood and textiles in geographical regions with suitable conditions; and the loss of the majority of rich liturgical resources that we know of from written texts and the scarcity of materials.

Participants to the symposium were presented with an important set of data with regard to cultural relationships and their location through the consideration of specific materials, including bronze, affordable and extensively used in daily life and liturgical contexts to manufacture small objects; gold, popular both during the medieval period and the Byzantine Empire as well as in the West, especially in liturgical contexts; silver, necessary for the production of civil and liturgical artefacts; ivory, an expensive material

used to produce objects for eminent members of society; and glass, to make necklaces and amulets. Also discussed were bronze, silver and gold coins and medallions that are significant sources of our understanding of their respective period; and ampullae that blessed and protected their owners.

Furthermore, reports presented at the symposium allowed us to trace representations of Byzantine culture and art outside Constantinople: burial gifts found in the Iasos Agora; weapons and jewellery in Elaiussa Sebaste; ceramic, glass, metal and other artefacts used in jewellery production found in the harbour city of Kadikalesi; objects found in Bergama, important for our understanding of Byzantine handicrafts; primarily bronze and iron but also silver, gold and bone objects from the rich collection of Ephesus; textiles unearthed in Amorium; the pilgrim flask and other small finds from the Yumuktepe Medieval Mound; and small finds and crosses from Boğazköy and the Zeytin Bahçe Mound.

Similarly, the lifestyles, arts, religious practices and technology of areas outside the Byzantine capital were explored through numerous types of objects, including regional bronze and glass jewellery from the middle Byzantine period excavations carried out in Thessalonica, Greece; Byzantine objects from Terra d'Otranto, Italy; military helmets from Thracia Novae, Bulgaria; traditional glass objects from the Late Antique period of southern Egypt; objects from Crimea that are representations of personal faith; bone tools from Chersoneses, Taurica; objects from Sicilia and liturgical objects found in the Early Christian settlements of Kos; medieval metal objects from Salento; and glass objects from Byzantine Athens.

The collection of papers presented in the «Byzantine Small Finds in Archaeological Contexts» Workshop, will represent a significant resource for those who pursue research in the field. I would cordially like to thank each participating institution and individual for their efforts during the preparation of this book.

Zeynep S. Kızıltan

Director, Istanbul Archaeological Museums

İstanbul Alman Arkeoloji Enstitüsü, Koç Üniversitesi Anadolu Medeniyetleri Araştırma Merkezi ve İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri işbirliğinde, 2-4.06.2008 tarihleri arasında, gerçekleştirilen «Arkeolojik Kazılarda Ele Geçen Bizans Küçük Buluntuları» konulu sempozyum, 11 yüzyıl boyunca varlığını sürdürmüş, Bizans İmparatorluğunun ekonomik, sosyal, kültürel ve dini sistemleri içinde gelişen, sanat ve zanaatı ile birlikte, günlük hayatta kullandıkları çeşitli nesnelere, dönemin yaşam tarzını ve düşünce sistemlerinin incelenmesini sağladı.

Bu nesnelere etki yaratma, sahiplerinin toplumsal statüsünü gösterme, süslenme, kötülüklerden korunma veya tanrıya sığınma, onun inayetini çekme gibi çeşitli amaçlarla yapılan ve sempozyum bildirilerinde yer alan fildişi, gümüş, azda olsa altın, tunç ve diğer metaller, cam, çeşitli değerli taşlar, pişmiş toprak ve ahşap, yün veya ipek kumaştan yapılmış, bir kısmı oldukça sade, kimi sanatsal açıdan değerli eserler dönemlerinin usta işçiliklerini günümüze yansıttı.

Bizans İmparatorluğu'nun gösterişli saray hayatı, imparatorların hediye dağıtma geleneği, varlıklı ailelerin yarattığı zengin maddi kültür, halkın yeme içme, kişisel bakım ve süslenme gibi günlük yaşantıları ile ibadet biçimleri Bizans'daki sanat ve zanaat üretiminde zengin çeşitliliğe yol açmıştır.

Küçük buluntulardan günümüze ulaşan eser sayısının azlığı, gümüş ve altından yapılmış nesnelere daha sonra eritilerek kullanılması, cam ve pişmiş toprağın yüzyıllarca toprağın altında kalması, ahşap ve dokuma ürünlerinin ise iklim koşullarının uygun olduğu coğrafyalarda korunması, yazılı kaynaklarda belirtilen zengin kilise malzemelerinin çoğunun kaybolmuş olması ve az sayıdaki örneğin konunun uzmanlarıncaya tartışılması, bu sempozyumun önemini vurgulamaktadır.

Ucuz maliyetli olması nedeniyle, her dönemde, sivil ve dini alanda küçük nesne yapımında kullanılan tunç, Orta Çağ'da hem Bizans İmparatorluğu hem de Batı'da özellikle liturjik eşyaların yapımında kullanılan altın, sivil ve dini eselerin yapımında kullanılan gümüş, toplumun ileri gelenleri için yapılan nesnelere kullanılan ve pahalı bir malzeme olan fildişi, kolye ve amulet yapımında kullanılan cam, her dönemin tarihsel gelişimini açıklamada önemli bir kaynak olan ve başta tunç olmak üzere gümüş ve altın kullanılarak yapılan sikkeler ile zafer ya da diğer özel nedenlerle kıymetli madenden yapılan kabartmalı madalyonlar, kutsayan, kötülüklerden koruyan, ampullalar buluntu yerleri kültürel ilişkiler açısından sempozyum katılımcılarına önemli bilgiler sundu.

Ayrıca sempozyumda sunulan bildirilerden, İasos Agora'sındaki mezar hediyeleri, Elaiussa Sebaste'deki takılar, silahlar, Kadıkalesi liman kentindeki seramik, cam, maden ve kuyumculuk üretimine ait eserler, Bizans el sanatları açısından özel bir önem taşıyan Bergama buluntuları, genelde bronz ve demirin yanı sıra gümüş, altın ve kemikten yapılmış zengin Efes buluntuları, Amorium'da gün ışığına çıkartılan tekstil parçaları, Yumuktepe Orta Çağ Höyüğü'ndeki hacı matarası ve küçük buluntular, Boğazköy ve Zeytin Bahçe Höyük'teki küçük buluntu ve haçlar Bizans Kültür ve Sanatının Konstantinopolis dışındaki izlerini takip etmemizi sağladı.

Yine Anadolu dışında Selanik'te yürütülen Orta Bizans Dönemi kazılarında bulunan cam ve bronzdan yapılan yerel takılar, İtalya Terra d'Otranto'daki Bizans Dönemi'ne ait eserler, Bulgaristan – Trakya Novae deki askeri miğferler, Güney Mısır'daki Geç Antik Çağ geleneksel camlar, kişisel inancın sembolleri olan Kırım buluntuları, Kersonesos, Taurica kemik aletleri, Sicilya buluntuları ile Kos adasında, Erken Hristiyanlık yerleşmelerinde ele geçen dini amaçlı buluntular, Salento, Orta Çağ Metalleri, Atina Bizans cam buluntuları, bizlere Bizans başkenti dışında, diğer coğrafyalardaki, yaşam tarzı, sanatı, inanç sistemi ve teknolojileri ile ilgili ayrıntılı bilgiler verdi.

«Arkeolojik Kazılarda Ele Geçen Bizans Küçük Buluntuları» konulu sempozyumda sunulan bildiriye ait bu kitap, bu alanda çalışan araştırmacılar için önemli bir kaynak olacaktır. Sempozyum ve kitabın hazırlanmasında emek harcayan ve katkı veren tüm kurum ve kişilere yürekten teşekkür ederim.

Zeynep S. Kızıltan

İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeler Müdürü

Editor's Preface

The concept of the «Byzantine Small Finds in Archaeological Contexts» Workshop (Istanbul 2-4 June, 2008) grew out of the conveners' active engagement in fieldwork centering on the Late Antique and Byzantine periods. Regardless of the geographical location of fieldwork, the nature of specific sites and areas, and the implications of investigations carried out, a recurring archaeological condition seems to emerge: moveable finds, particularly those not fitting within the known categories of typologies, still lack a reliable documentary and comparative base grounded in archaeological contextualization – in spite of the fact that archaeological investigations comprising materials from the Late Antique and Byzantine periods have traditionally yielded and continue to produce conspicuous percentages of small-sized objects. These encompass a highly diversified spectrum of objects and mediums, including jewellery and dress ornaments; portable objects of worship; amulets and items that shaped the world of magic in Byzantine society; lead seals; bread stamps; small containers; luxury goods; and much more. These objects also represent a broad range of contexts and functions, spanning across the borders of consumption and utilitarian goods: from domestic to funerary, from rural to urban, and from institutional and ritual spaces to civic and more intimate ones, to name but a few. Overall, these small-sized objects reveal shared sociological habits, social groupings, rituals and practices while also providing subtle insights into individual inclinations and social status as well as more personal interactions. They also contribute to the identification of various forms of diversity otherwise difficult to detect.

More importantly, small-sized objects can support a clearer retrieval of patterns of movement and exchange. The network of movement associated with commerce, trade, military undertakings and pilgrimage as well as migration and dispossession can, through the study of contextualized small-sized objects, contribute toward the definition of a fuller picture of the worlds that made Late Antiquity and Byzantium. At the same time, accurate analysis of small finds may also represent a welcome addition to the rapidly growing study of social networks broadly conceived in terms of the spaces, times and interpreters with which they intersected. In more general terms, networks are also to be understood as complex systems of dialogue and exchange that Byzantium established with worlds at close or more remote distances. From the re-orientation of Mediterranean societies in Late Antiquity to the expanding crossroad territories of the Byzantine period, the circulation of small-sized objects in spaces beyond its limits offers the opportunity for further reflections on the notions of neighboring cultures and their interactions.

The accurate retrieval and study of small finds from archaeological contexts broadens the spectrum of mediums that may fall under this grouping, which include not only metal, wood and bones but also textiles, glass, shells and lead. At the same time, there appears to be a growing effort on the part of Late Antique and Byzantine archaeologists to enhance on-site retrieval and conservation techniques through projects that include the creation of on-site conservation laboratories employing specialists. This new and very welcome development allows for a larger percentage of small finds to be retrieved and undergo initial on-site conservation and study, a step crucial to their survival. More-accurate analysis and observations will follow in the post-excavation phases, with ever more promising perspectives on the deciphering of technologies and their transformation in Byzantine times.

The workshop was therefore designed to serve as a forum aimed at bringing together colleagues whose work in the field yielded small finds from archaeological contexts and whose study and analysis, combined with archaeology, brought new insights. Papers presented previously unpublished materials ranging from the 5th to the 13th centuries. Whereas similar workshops centering on other contextualized finds – with ceramics being the most notable example – have led to substantial progress in research, small finds seem to have lagged behind. Consequently, as excavations progress, advances are made in the archaeological sciences, and more finds are documented, processed and published – thus comprising a growing range of finds – the «unimpressive» or hard-to-pin-down small-sized object, when retrieved, continues to be at risk of languishing in excavations or museum deposits for longer than deserved. The workshop attempted to begin filling this gap by encouraging contributions on small finds as defined broadly, in addition to wide-ranging discussion of archaeological contexts and methods.

The papers in the volume reflect the contributors' diverse approaches to their fieldwork and research along with the wide variety of finds discussed. One goal of the workshop was to observe whether studies of small finds from archaeological contexts may help to establish accurate chronologies, that is, whether small finds may contribute toward the definition of chronological frameworks, as other finds do. Moreover, the results of the workshop may help to answer the question of how, in the absence of other finds, small finds may guide the archaeologist in the periodization of context and action. The editors and organizers of the workshop hope that the publication of this volume represents a contribution to the growth of studies of small finds in connection with archaeology, and that it will be seen as a comprehensive collection of information not only for those working in the field but also for those at a distance from the sites and archaeology.

The transition from the idea of the workshop to its actual accomplishment was possible thanks to the help and support of a number of individuals, colleagues and institutions. We are pleased that the directors of the German Archaeological Institute in Istanbul (DAI), Koç University's Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (RCAC) and the Istanbul Archaeological Museums offered support.

We would like to extend our special thanks to the director of the DAI, Prof. Dr. Felix Pirson, who, together with the workshop's organizers, put forth a request for financial

support from the Gerda Henkel Foundation. To the Gerda Henkel Foundation goes our unconditional gratitude for having provided the means for the gathering to take place as well for this publication. The DAI and the RCAC kindly made available their facilities both for the preparation of the workshop and for its sessions. In particular, our thanks go to the two assistants, Oya Demirci at the DAI and Esra Erol at the RCAC, who helped to coordinate innumerable practicalities. One of the workshop's sessions was generously hosted by the Istanbul Archaeological Museums, and to its Director, Zeynep S. Kızıltan, we would like to extend sincere thanks on our behalf as well as on behalf of all the participants. We also would like to thank Gülbahar Baran-Çelik for organizing the display of small finds from the Museums' collections, including objects that have rarely been shown. The flyer and poster for the Workshop were designed by Hüseyin Yaman and Oğuz Koçyiğit and generously printed by Ahmet Borotav, Ege Yayınları.

Finally, thanks are due to the directors of the DAI, Prof. Dr. Felix Pirson and Dr. Martin Bachmann, for having encouraged publication of the workshop's papers in the BYZAS series, where we believe they have found an ideal home. We thank the Gerda Henkel Foundation for the generous publication grant. Also, we would like to extend our warm thanks to Hülya Tokmak of Zero publishing house who worked on the volume's layout and to Ahmet Borotav. Mary Cason and Johanna Witte helped with the editing of some of the English papers. The editors were responsible for the editing of the papers and organization of the volume, while each author took responsibility for the scientific content of his or her own research. Preparation of this book benefited from the Turkish translations and editing generously undertaken by Nilden Ergün and Prof. Dr. Nurettin Arslan, whom we thank with gratitude.

Beate Böhlendorf-Arslan

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Holy Bread Stamps from Early Byzantine Delphi

Platon PETRIDIS

Abstract

Eight bread stamps have been unearthed at Delphi during excavations carried out by the French School of Athens. They all date to the 6th and 7th centuries. On their main faces it is possible to note Christian symbols, birds, portraits of saints and a scene from the life of Jesus. Their study raises a series of questions about the choice of the scenes and figures represented, including the use of stamps for the *eucharistic* or the *eulogia* bread and the relation of the stamps example sanctuaries in Delphi. Standing out among this group of stamps, is the only known example in bibliography related to Catechumens.

Keywords: Delphi, Holy Bread Stamps, Local Workshop, Iconography

Özet

Atina Fransız Okulu tarafından yapılan Delphi kazılarında sekiz adet mühür açığa çıkarılmıştır. Hepsi 6.-7. yy.lara tarihlenmiştir. Ana yüzlerinde Hıristiyan sembolleri, kuşlar, azizlerin portreleri, ve İsa'nın yaşamından bir sahne yer almaktadır. Yapılan çalışmalar kullanılması tercih edilen sahneler ve insan motiflerinin mühürlerin kullanım amacının Ayin Ekmeği ya da Övgü Ekmeği olmasına göre herhangi bir değişiklik gösterip göstermediği sorusunu ortaya çıkardı. Bu mühürlere kadar literatürden bildiğimiz tek betim din adamlarının betimleriydi.

Anahtar Sözcükleri: Delphi, Kutsal Ekmek Mühürü, Yerel Üretim, İkonografi

Introduction

«Small and unpretentious, (...) unglamorous (...) Christian minor objects», as George Galavaris wrote¹, holy bread stamps have not always received due consideration from scholars; they are rarely found in Byzantine pottery corpus or in museum exhibitions and are sometimes confused with other clay stamps used for many purposes. Their decoration

¹ Galavaris 1970, 17 and 184. More than forty years after its publication, Galavaris' book remains still fundamental for the study of these items. For other published examples of holy bread stamps from Greece see Varalis 1994; Papanikola-Bakirtzi 2002; Gioles 2003.



Fig. 1 Contemporary wooden holy bread stamp dating to the first half of the 20th century: main face, handle and impression on a Eucharistic bread.

is of great interest for the study of Christian rituals as well as everyday life. Iconography, liturgical texts, paleography and even contemporary uses (fig. 1) represent some of the more appropriate tools to answer issues of chronology and interpretation. Clay bread stamps were certainly used in parallel with their wooden counterparts, which probably were more widespread as they were lighter and their decorative patterns more accurate.

The Delphi material

Eight bread stamps have been unearthed at Delphi during excavations carried out by the French School of Athens. Five of them were discovered by earlier excavators of the site during the Great Excavation (from 1892 to 1903) or sometime afterwards², with the remaining three retrieved during our team's more recent excavations in the 1990s. Between 1990 and 1997 we thoroughly investigated the so-called Roman Agora, which must have been used as the marketplace and/or the forum of the city from the 2nd century AD onwards, along with a large-sized residential complex, the so-called south-eastern Villa. This house constitutes the largest secular building of early Byzantine Delphi thus far excavated. It was used as a residence from the end of the 4th century AD to the late 6th century and, soon afterwards, pottery workshops, metalwork and tannery or dye-works were installed inside its walls. The final abandonment of the building is dated around 620 AD³.

The three holy bread stamps found inside the south-eastern Villa represent chronologies of both the residence and the workshop phases: one was found in a context sealed by the destruction of the house's roof. It belongs, therefore, to the last occupation of the building as a residential space, i.e. a little before 580 AD; the second stamp was found in a deposit used by the potters (590–620 AD); while the third dates to the last contexts of the pottery workshops (ca. 620 AD). Among the other five stamps unearthed before 1990, one very probably comes from the south-eastern Villa's district, two from the eastern part

² Three of these stamps were presented at the exhibition «Delphi. Orakel am Nabel der Welt» held in Karlsruhe February 24 – June 2, 1996. For these stamps see Maaß 1996, 208 f. nos. 187-189.

³ For the reports on the excavations of the Roman Agora and the south-eastern Villa conducted by V. Déroche and the author see: BCH 115, 1991, 700-702; BCH 116, 1992, 709-711; BCH 117, 1993, 641-644; BCH 118, 1994, 423-428; BCH 119, 1995, 649 f.; BCH 120, 1996, 847-851; BCH 121, 1997, 754 f.; BCH 122, 1998, 543-547. For the pottery unearthed during the above excavations see, more recently, Petridis 2007, 47-50.

of town and the other two is of unknown provenance. Their resemblances to the well dated examples from Delphi together with epigraphic details indicate a dating to the 6th and the beginning of the 7th centuries AD. A macroscopic examination showed that all eight stamps discovered at Delphi belong to the production of local potters. Petrographic analysis (X-ray diffraction method)⁴ classified one of the stamps, chosen as a sample, in subgroup B2 of the local pottery, characterized by a strong presence of micas and a medium quantity of feldspars. From a chemical point of view (Atomic Absorption Spectroscopy method), samples of that subgroup are mainly characterized by a very low amount of magnesium silicates, which clearly differentiates them from the two other groups of local pottery (A and B1).

Catalogue⁵



Fig. 2 Stamp no. 01, main face.

01 (fig. 2). Exc. Inv. no.: TS 95 40. Found in the workshop area. Almost complete, the handle is missing. h: 0,020 m.; d: 0,078 m. Middle-grained clay of light red color (2.5YR 6/6), very micaceous. Main face with relief decoration from a mould.

Circular, originally with a horizontal handle. On its main face, inside a narrow raised band, a relief representation of the Adoration of the Magi. All figures are represented in profile with the Virgin's and infant Jesus' haloes represented frontally. The Virgin holds the infant Jesus on her knees; he slightly turning his body to the first Magus, who is holding a triangular object. The Magi are wearing short tunics and a kind

of Phrygian cap. Above Jesus' head is the star of Bethlehem with eight rays; above the Magi are three indistinct signs (stars, rays?). The subject is common on *ampullae* from the Holy Land⁶, yet the arrangement of figures here appears very different. The archaeological context dates this stamp to circa 620 AD.

02 (fig. 3). Mus. Inv. no.: 39047. Discovered in the eastern part of the city during the Great Excavation. Almost complete. h: 0,60 m; d: 0,095 m. Coarse-grained clay of light red color (2.5YR 6/8), micaceous, with white particles. Main face with relief decoration from a mould.

Circular with a high horizontal handle. On the main face, in relief, two saints full length in frontal orantes position, wearing long tunics; they stand on either sides of a smaller building topped by a cross. An oil lamp hangs from the ceiling. Between the two saints

⁴ Petrographic and chemical analyses were undertaken by Dr. K. Kouzeli, Head of the Stone Conservation Center of the Greek Ministry of Culture.

⁵ The abbreviations used are the following: h: height; d: diameter; Mus. Inv. no.: Museum Inventory Number; Exc. Inv. no.: Excavation Inventory Number; ext: external surface.

⁶ Grabar 1958, pl. 2. 4. 8.

⁷ Perdrizet 1908, 196 fig. 867 no. 588.



Fig. 3 Stamp no. 02, main face.

is the bust of Christ. The scene is inscribed within a narrow raised band. Around it, a rather indecipherable inscription, that reads: OCM.. Δ... Δ... ANOY O... M. We could, with some reservations, read the names of the wonder-working physician-saints Cosmas and Damian. The building may represent a reference to a church dedicated to the two saints. Iconographic parallels to this stamp must be searched for on stamps or moulds of different materials destined not only for holy bread but also for *eulogia ampullae* or other items. The building between the two saints, for instance, is very similar to one represented on a bronze stamp of the Museum of Fine Arts at Richmond, Virginia with St Philip⁸. Both of them recall of the representation of the Holy Sepulcher on *ampullae* from the Holy Land⁹. Our stamp no. 02 is also related to a stone mould found in Thessalonica¹⁰ with a bust of Christ represented between the apostles Andrew and Paul standing on either side of a Latin cross, just as Peter and Paul are standing on a clay bread stamp from Asia Minor now in Vienna¹¹. All of these examples, with two figures standing on either side of a cross or a church topped by the bust of Christ, have their origin in the *ampullae* from the Holy Land and more precisely in the scene of the Crucifixion¹². The bread stamp dates to the 6th– first quarter of the 7th century.



Fig. 4 Stamp no. 03, main face.

03 (fig. 4). Mus. Inv. no.: 4215. Discovered during the Great Excavation in the eastern part of the ancient town¹³. Complete. h: 0,040 m; d: 0,080 m. Middle-grained clay of reddish yellow colour (5YR 7/6), very micaceous. Main face with relief decoration from a mould.

Circular with a horizontal handle. On the main part, a bust in relief of a bearded man holding a stick ending in a cross. Surrounded by two raised bands, a relief inscription +ΕΥΛΟΓΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙ(ΟΥ) ΑΝΔΡΑΙΟΥ+. St Andrew is mentioned in the *Typicon* of Constantinople used in Hagia Sophia as the head of the Apostles¹⁴. The bread stamp dates to the 6th– first quarter of the 7th century.

⁸ Galavaris 1970, 149 f. fig. 80.

⁹ Grabar 1958, pl. 9. 37-38.

¹⁰ Galavaris 1970, 139-143 fig. 77; A. Mentzos, A stone mould for a eulogia, *Μουσείο Βυζαντινού Πολιτισμού* 3, 1996, 22-24.

¹¹ Galavaris 1970, 145-147 fig. 79.

¹² Grabar 1958, pl. 5. 7. 11-14. 16. 18. 24. 26. 28. 34-39. 47-54.

¹³ Perdrizet 1908, 196 no. 591; Maaß 1996, 208 no. 188 (catalogue entry: P. Petridis).

¹⁴ Galavaris 1970, 142 f.

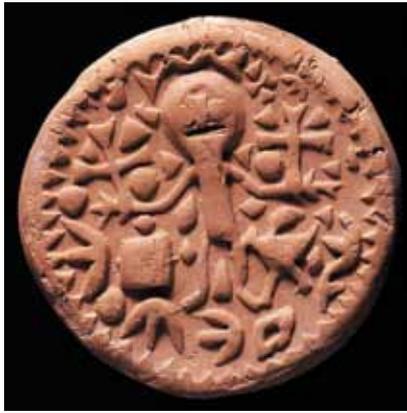


Fig. 5 Stamp no. 04, main face.

04 (fig. 5). Exc. Inv. no.: TS 95 44. Found in one of the deposits of the potter's quarter situated in room C30. Complete. h: 0,040 m; d: 0,082 m. Middle-grained clay of light red color (2.5YR 6/6), micaceous. Main face with relief decoration from a mould.

A vertical handle in the middle of the reverse side. Around the edge, a band of triangles creating a *dents-de-scie* motif. In the center, summarily designed in a high relief, a man in frontal position with two crosses above his arms. An animal at his feet, to the left, and an almost rectangular motif to the right. The rest of the surface, due to a *horror vacui*, is covered with geometric motifs and signs including a reverse *epsilon*

and *omikron* motif. The main figure is St Menas and its archetypes must be searched for in the eulogia *ampullae*, in which the saint is represented between two camels transporting his dead body to the place where his sanctuary was built¹⁵. The context within which the stamp was discovered is that of the period in which the potters' workshops functioned and must, therefore, be dated 590–620 AD.



Fig. 6 Stamp no. 05, main face.

05 (fig. 6). Mus. Inv. no.: 18602. A small fragment without any mention of its place of discovery. h: 0,016 m. Middle-grained clay with some white particles, light red colour (2.5YR 6/8); ext. 2.5 6/6 (light red). Main face with relief decoration from a mould.

Circular, with a vertical perforated handle. Birds are represented in relief with some pearls and probably the letters *Υ* and *Α* (for the word (E)ΥΛ(ΟΓΙΑ)?). The birds are similar to a peacock on the medallion of an African-type lamp from Nea Anchialos¹⁶ and to a dove on a stamp from Egypt now in Geneva¹⁷. Birds are often represented on either part of a cross, as in two stamps, one at the Benaki Museum¹⁸ and a

second at the Byzantine and Christian Museum of Athens¹⁹. The bread stamp dates to the 6th– first quarter of the 7th century.

¹⁵ See for instance a *eulogia ampulla* from Rhodes: Papanikola-Bakirtzi 2002, 174 no. 197 (Catalogue entry: Th. Archontopoulos).

¹⁶ Papanikola-Bakirtzi 2002, 300 no. 322 (catalogue entry: A. Dina).

¹⁷ Galavaris 1970, 32 fig. 13 pl. 33.

¹⁸ Galavaris 1970, 121 fig. 68 pl. 122; Papanikola-Bakirtzi 2002, 195 f. no. 218 (catalogue entry: Y. Varalis).

¹⁹ Galavaris 1970, 121 fig. 69 pl. 122; Papanikola-Bakirtzi 2002, 196 no. 220 (catalogue entry: F. Felten).



Fig. 7 Stamp no. 06, main face.

06 (fig. 7). Exc. Inv. no.: TS 95 48. Found in one of the rooms of the villa. Small fragment. h: 0,016 m. Middle-grained clay, micaceous, of light red color (2.5YR 6/6). Non-homogeneous firing. A spot of red slip on the reverse (2.5YR 5/8). Main face with relief decoration from a mould.

In the middle of the main surface appears a *christogram* in relief with a *rho* turning to the left (to the right on the stamped bread). The head of a bird is seen under the horizontal bar of the cross. Around the edge the inscription HN EYA runs backwards; it must be a part of the usual phrase on stamps or *ampullae*: EYΛOΓIA AΓIOY... AMHN (blessing of Saint ... Amen) or EYΛOΓIA KYPIOY AMHN (blessing of the Lord Amen). Birds are often represented on the stamps and usually are on both sides of a cross²⁰.

Discovered in a context sealed by the collapse of the roof of the villa's room C18, it belonged to the last occupants of the house and must be dated shortly before 580 AD.



Fig. 8 Stamp no. 07, main face.

07 (fig. 8). Mus. Inv. no.: 2898²¹. Found «hors du téménos, en contre-bas des Epigones», an area corresponding to the south-eastern Villa district, earlier than the 1990s. More than half of the piece has survived. h: 0,029 m.; d: 0,074 m. Middle-grained clay of reddish yellow color (7.5YR 6/6), micaceous, with some small white particles; ext. 5YR 5/4 (reddish brown). Main face with relief decoration from a mould.

Circular with a vertical perforated handle. On the main face a number of crosses; some of them are placed under an arcade supported by three columns and three capitals. Along the edge runs the inscription: ...OYMENOIC.... Were the wording on the stamp read as: (KATHX)OYMENOIC (*catechumens*) we would have a holy bread designated only to *catechumens* (that is, those who had not yet been initiated by means of Baptism)²². It should therefore be regarded as *eulogia* instead of a *eucharistic* bread, as the *catechumens* received no *communion*. This bread is also referred to in sources as the «bread of exorcism»²³ and our stamp, as far as I know, appears to be the only one of this type discovered thus far. I cannot establish if the arcade

²⁰ For parallels see supra notes 18 and 19.

²¹ Perdrizet 1908, 196 fig. 869 no. 590; Maaß 1996, 208 no. 187 (catalogue entry: P. Petridis).

²² H. Achelis, Die ältesten Quellen des orientalischen Kirchenrechtes I. Die Kanones Hippolyti, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 6 (Leipzig 1891) 110; P. Trempelas, *Αρχαί και χαρακτηριστήρ της χριστιανικής λατρείας* (Athens 1962) 190 f.

²³ Galavaris 1970, 111.

on the stamp is to provide a decorative motif putting greater emphasis on the crosses²⁴, or if it constitutes a reference to a precise monument. We have the same disposition of crosses on an African lamp from Tunisia²⁵ and on a stamp in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens²⁶. The origin of the motif must be searched once again on the *eulogia ampullae* from the Holy Land²⁷. The discovery of the Delphic stamp in the higher levels of what seems to correspond to the south-eastern Villa district dates to 590–620 AD.

08 (figs. 9 and 10). Mus. Inv. no.: 3975²⁸. Found «en contrebas des Thermes» (probably the eastern Baths) during the Great Excavation. Complete. h: 0,034 m.; d: 0,075 m. Rather coarse-grained clay with red inclusions (brushed bricks), 2.5YR 6/8 (light red). Main face engraved.

Circular with a vertical perforated handle. In the middle of the main face, a deeply engraved cross. Around it, runs the engraved inscription ... ΤΟΥ ΔΟΥΛΟΥ COΥ ΑΝΔΡΕΟΥ (of your servant Andrew). On the reverse side of the stamp, one can hardly read +ΕΙ ΗΘΑΙC P. It would be a charming hypothesis to attribute the stamp to a man called Andrew who stamped breads he offered to the church (maybe a church dedicated to a homonymous saint such as on stamp 03). The bread stamp dates to the 6th– beginning of the 7th century.



Fig. 9 Stamp no. 08, main face.



Fig. 10 Stamp no. 08, reverse.

Conclusions

Undoubtedly products of the local workshops of Delphi, as proved by the contexts of discovery of some, the analysis of a sample and a macroscopic examination of all the others, these objects were probably produced and sold under the control of the local church

²⁴ Galavaris 1970, 119.

²⁵ A. Ennabli, *Lampes chrétiennes de Tunisie* (Paris 1976) 225 pl. 61 no. 1163.

²⁶ Galavaris 1970, 119 fig. 64.

²⁷ Grabar 1958, pl. 10. 23. 25. 61.

²⁸ Perdrizet 1908, 196 fig. 865 no. 586; Maaß 1996, 209 no. 189 (catalogue entry: P. Petridis).

that also chose the motifs to be represented on the stamps. Their dimensions²⁹ as well as their decoration excludes all uses but the holy bread, either the *eucharistic* one offered by the church to the faithful during the *communion*, or the *eulogia* bread distributed at the dismissal of the liturgy to those who did not receive *communion*; the loaf of *eulogia* bread is distributed as an «*antidoron*» – as it is still called at present –, a substitute for the real gift in which is the consecrated bread of the *communion*. The *eulogia* bread was also distributed in places of worship as a blessing to be taken home like clay and metal *ampullae* containing holy water or oil. It is very tempting to attribute some of the stamps from Delphi to the *eulogia* bread rather than to the *eucharistic* one, as the word ΕΥΛΟΓΙΑ on their inscriptions indicates, but texts do not clarify if there was an exclusive use of some motifs for one or the other kind of holy bread. It is relevant, in my opinion, to emphasize that at Delphi we may have the only known bread stamp designated to *catechumens*.

It is possible to hypothesize that stamps bearing the inscription ΕΥΛΟΓΙΑ ΑΓΙΟΥ (benediction of the saint) and the name of the saint such as our no. 03 and probably no. 06, may have been used only for bread distributed on the saint's feast day. Such a use would suppose the existence of dozens of stamps used only for festival days of the more popular saints of the Church. Thus, if we were to hypothesize reasons for the representation of specific saints on holy bread stamps, we should more likely associate them with places of worship in honor of particular saints. This may also provide us with a hypothesis on the dedication of churches in the city where stamps were found. As a consequence, at Delphi, we may have a church dedicated to St Andrew, another to St Menas, and probably a third dedicated to Sts Cosmas and Damian.

But, more than any relation to a patron saint, it is the popularity of some motifs and inscriptions found in many different materials (clay, metal, stone) and the large diffusion of *eulogias*, mainly in the form of *ampullae*, that make me suppose that the Delphic potters were liberally copying motifs and inscriptions from different imported objects such as *eulogias* coming from the big centers of pilgrimage or lamps, without regard to any relation with the patron saints of the churches of the town. The origin of many of the motifs from Holy Land *ampullae* appears obvious. In particular, the case of no. 04 (were we to accept that the stamp was used before it was discarded in the deposit where it was found), the motif of St Menas is so liberally but summarily interpreted that it hardly recalls its archetype. This motif would certainly not be recognized by pilgrims and the presence of such a stamp does not justify itself in a place for the worship of St Menas, where care of the quality of the stamps used for the *eulogia* bread would be manifest.

In the case of holy bread stamps, we have almost the same free interpretation of imported motifs as in the case of the African-type lamps produced locally, in which some generations after the first *surmoulage* the original Tunisian motifs are hardly reminiscent of their prototypes³⁰.

²⁹ Among the complete stamps, the smallest has a diameter of 0,074 m and the largest of 0,095 m.

³⁰ See Petridis 2007, 52 f.

A surprisingly common trait in these stamps is that, very often, figurative scenes and inscriptions are not reversed, which means that when impressed they would have been read backwards. Thus, another parameter to consider is the ability of the people who offered the holy bread to the church to read the inscriptions on the bread. As the majority of pilgrim were illiterate and bought or made the holy bread themselves, they did not care about texts on the breads. They were content to recognize either a holy person bearing some insignia of sanctity (a cross, a halo etc) or just a cross, the usual traditional sign seen in simpler stamps.

The study of the eight holy bread stamps found at Delphi raises more questions than it answers; the lack of textual information together with the very few published examples make the images, signs and inscriptions on them very difficult to interpret. But, at the same time, their presence speaks, along with some other material testimonies, of a vivid Christian community living until the first quarter of the 7th century AD in the place of the most important oracle of the Ancient world. The fact that local potters adopted their stamps motifs and expressions common in many places of the Mediterranean world also show the popularity of these motifs and the uniformity of Byzantine rituals already in the 6th and 7th centuries.

Credits: Fig. 1: Author. Fig. 2-10: Philippe Collet, EFA.

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