

Gnathia Pottery in The National Museum, Prague

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a selection of yet unpublished ‘Gnathia Pottery’ from the collection of the National Museum in Prague. The assemblage is confronted with other similar vases finds, and, if possible, attributed to groups or painters of Gnathia vases.

KEYWORDS

Gnathia pottery; National Museum; Prague; groups and types.

The National Museum possesses several vases of Gnathia pottery in its collection of classical antiquities. Most of the vases came to the Museum through acquisitions without any closer information about their origin, let alone find context. Besides the vases presented in this short article, the whole assemblage from the National Museum will be published in the forthcoming volume *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum, Prague, The National Museum 2*.

1. Skyphos-kotyle (Pl. 4/1a-b)

H10-3863

H. 8.8 cm, diam. (excl. handles) 8.5 cm.

Intact, in perfect condition. Smooth well-worked orange-buff clay. The handles have flat inner and rounded outer face. The foot is curved on the underside. Good black glaze, lower part of the body is reserved. There is no reddening of the reserved area. Side A: at the lip, zone of egg and dot (white) bordered by incision, below red and white band and a line of dot pendants, mutually divided by double incised lines; the dot pendants and lower part of white band are washed yellow. On the body, vine along both sides of straight red bands in π -shaped arrangement surrounding a rosette; the right half of each leaf and white grape bunch is washed over yellow. Side B: at the lip, double incised line with white leaves above and below.

About 330 BC. Rose Painter or his circle.

Superb drawing and π -shaped scheme of vine are typical for works by the Rose Painter. Within the vine he placed various object, often connected with symposium. Skyphoi with rose in the middle c.f. GREEN 1971, pl. V(c); CVA Naples 3, pl. 73:3; CVA Hermitage 6, pl. 4:3–4, in the centre a ball flanked by tendrils and a rosette; cup-skyphos CVA Frankfurt 3, pl. 52:9–10, bird and rosette. Similar scheme with a rosette in the centre is painted on a kotyle in the Joslyn Art Museum (GREEN 1986, fig. 22), but the drawing is less accurate.

2. Cup-skyphos (Pl. 4/2a-b)

H10-8495

H. 7.8 cm, diam. (excl. handles) 11.8 cm.

One sherd on the lip and part of one handle are restored in plaster, the rest is intact and in a good condition. Smooth orange-buff clay. Black lustrous glaze. Handles are ovoid in section. The outer face of the foot is in two steps. The lower wall is reserved, foot itself is painted. Underside reddened, in the middle black circle. Side A: at the lip, wave pattern, red and white

wavy band washed yellow and white dot pendants divided by incised lines. On the body, vine with red stem, leaves alternate with tendrils, below leaves, tendrils, and grape bunches. The left half of each leaf and white grape bunch is washed over yellow. One grape bunch in the middle and one on each side is red. Side B: at the lip, two incised lines between ivy leaves.

325–300 BC. The Sidewinder Group.

The Sidewinder Group makes part of the vine-decorated vases of the Dunedin Group; characteristic is the central red grape bunch in the lower part of the body while the group of three dots on the lower wall below the vine, which is also typical, is missing on our vase. Instead of usual egg and dot pattern that appears under the lip (cf. *kotylai* GREEN 1986, fig. 29; CVA Mainz 2, pl. 22:1 and CVA Philadelphia 1, pl. 42:5–6) the studied vase is decorated with a wave pattern. Closest to it in shape is cup-skyphos CVA Hermitage 6, pl. 12:3–4 (The Laurel Spray Group).

3. Cup-skyphos (Pl. 4/3a–b)

H10-2169

H. 5.6 cm, D. 8.8 cm.

A small fragment of the lip chipped-off, otherwise intact. Pale brown clay. Glazed all over except for reserved band above the foot. Stepped foot. Rounded handles. The foot is curved on the underside. Side A: on the lip, red and yellow wavy band, between two pairs of incised lines; on the body a vine-pattern. Right side of the bunches and leaves is washed yellow. Side B: incised double line with white dots above and below.

Ca 320 BC. The Sidewinder Group (?).

The shape and decorative scheme recall the Getty cup (GREEN 1986, fig. 27a–b) which has impressed palmettes inside as is typical for Campanian pottery. According to J. R. Green, the decoration scheme is borrowed directly from the Apulian Sidewinder Group of the Dunedin Group. The groups of three dots on the lower wall which accompany typical pattern scheme of the Sidewinder Group are missing on our skyphos as is also the impressed decoration. Green (1986, 156) considers the red and yellow band placed right against the lip to be a sign of its provinciality.

4. Cup-skyphos (Pl. 4/4a–b)

H10-3787

H. 8.9 cm, diam. (excl. handles) 13.2 cm.

One handle is restored in plaster, otherwise intact and in good condition. Smooth orange-buff clay, reddened in reserved areas. The handles are ovoid in section. There is a reserved area between body and foot mouldings. Good lustrous black glaze. Side A: at the lip, zone of egg-and-dot bordered by incision, row of yellow chevrons divided by incised double line, row of dots. On the body a female head to the left among floral tendrils. The woman's skin is painted in white, the hair projecting from *kekryphalos* is painted in orange as are the eyebrows and earrings; the *kekryphallos* is red/brown. The head is situated between two sets of large spiralling tendrils, each with a large flower in the middle. The tendrils are washed in golden yellow. Three dots are repeatedly used as filling ornament. Below the head there is a zone of egg and dot divided by incised double line and a row of dots. Side B: ivy leaves above and below an incised line.

About 330 BC.

Woman head between dense floral coils with neat sectional lilies appears in Boston and Stockport Group. Closer parallel in specific details such as the drawing of the eye and nose, and the use of three-dot ornaments can be found on the Urbana-Champaign lekythos (CVA

University of Illinois 1, pl. 59:1-2; Boston Group); for a similar floral ornament see also epichysis in Rheinbach (GREEN 1980, fig. 16; Toledo Painter). For the shape see CVA Mainz 2, pl. 22:7; CVA Frankfurt 3, pl. 52:9-10; for the same pattern below the lip (though not the shape) see BERNARDINI 1961, pl. 18:3.

5. Bottle (Pl. 4/5)

H10-7636

H. 12 cm, diam. 6.9 cm.

Intact with no restorations, surface worn on one side. Hard smooth orange-buff clay. Lustrous black glaze, lower wall and stem reserved, partly reddened. Underside reserved. Pear shaped bottle with a narrow neck, stepped base and collared rim. On the neck, traces of tongues bounded below by lines, yellow and white. On the body, white reticulate pattern with white band below, worn on one side. The shape corresponds to Morel 7131a1.

End of the 4th – beginning of the 3rd century BC.

Reticulate decoration appears on the small vessels for perfumed oils like alabastra and squat lekythoi. According to Green (2001, 60), the origin of the motif is uncertain though it may mimic the raffia binding on glass vessels. Several bottles with reticulate decoration were discovered in Issa on the island of Vis; all were products of the south Italic pottery workshop (ČARGO 2017, 184). For reticulate decoration, see further CVA Copenhagen, National Museum 7, pl. (280) 277:5; CVA Capua, Museo Campano 4, IV D, pl 2:5; CVA London, British Museum 1, IV DC.7, pl. (43) 7:12.

6. Flat lekythos (Pl. 4/6)

H10-3789

H. 8 cm, diam. 8.8 cm.

Intact, only a tiny chip on the rim is missing. The clay is orange-buff with black glaze, the underside is reserved. The lip has a simple out-turn, without a flange, the handle has a concave outer face. A slight step at the neck-shoulder junction, white tongues on the neck; on the shoulder, a horizontal band washed over with orange between two white band. The body is covered with reticulate pattern.

Late 4th century BC.

The shape is rather rare in the Gnathia pottery, though an identical lekythos can be found in CVA Stuttgart, Württembergisches Landesmuseum 1, pl. 60:11-12; for a flat lekythos with reticulated pattern and wave pattern under the tongues, see CVA Philadelphia, The University Museum 1, pl. 37:5.

7. Flat lekythos (Pl. 4/7)

H10-8494

H. 9.5 cm, diam. 9.7 cm.

Intact, in good condition, orange-buff clay, black glaze. Underside completely reserved, none of the reserved surfaces are reddened, but there are two broad red crossing strokes on the underside. The lower wall is reserved, with the foot itself painted. The lip is simply turned out without a flange. There is a slight step at junction of neck with shoulder. The handle has a concave outer face. There are white tongues on the neck, and white tongues washed over with orange on the lower handle root. On the shoulder, white dots washed over with orange alternate with white crosses in a horizontal band, delimited with a double white line from the top and a single line from the bottom. The body is covered with reticulate pattern between white bands. Yellow had been applied over the upper band.

Late 4th century BC.

We can find a similar décor on a bottle published by Bernardini (1961, pl. 50:4): a band consisting of crosses and dots. For a flat lekythos with reticulated pattern and red cross on underside, see CVA Philadelphia, The University Museum 1, pl. 37:5.

8. Squat lekythos (Pl. 4/8a-b)

H10-8350

H. 17 cm, diam. 8.1 cm.

Chips on the lip, otherwise intact. Fine orange-buff clay with black glaze with a reserved area between the body and foot. Black glaze on the foot moulding. The underside is reserved with an inscription *Capua* and a raised dot in the center. Ovoid body, flaring mouth, foot in two steps. There are white, yellow washes tongues on the lower part of the neck and incised eggs with white dots between white bands on the shoulder, the upper band being washed in yellow. On the body, there is a head and shoulders of a winged female seen in profile to the left. Below head there is a row of white dots and two white bands. The head is framed by filling ornament consisting of two or three circles and diminishing lines.

Ca. 330 BC.

Heads of winged females are a common motive in the Gnathia pottery. They appear in works of the Painter of Lecce 1075, in the works of the Painter of the Louvre bottle or in the Dunedin Group. Specific field decoration (circles with diminishing lines) connect our vase with the Painter of Lecce 1075 as well as with the Painter of the Louvre bottle who borrowed from the former numerous motifs including circle pendants; cf. especially lekythos GREEN 1968, pl. V:e and lekythos pl. VI:c. For a similar shape (but not decoration) cf. lekythos with ribbed body BERNARDINI 1961, pl. 51:4.

9. Squat lekythos (Pl. 4/9a-b)

H10-2141

H. 16.6 cm, diam. 6.4 cm.

The handle is restored in plaster, otherwise the vessel is intact. Fine orange-buff clay with black glaze; there is a reserved area between body and foot with a black line in the middle. Black glaze on foot mouldings. Overpaint on the body is faded. Ovoid body, flaring mouth, foot in two steps. Tongues are painted on the neck, the shoulder is decorated with an egg-and-dot band with incised outlines. The egg pattern is bordered above by one incised line and below by two incised lines and a row of dots. The principal subject on the body is a woman's bust with *kekryphalos* (?) facing left. It is propped by two tendrils from below and flanked from both sides with curling tendrils, dots, and flowers. The backside below the handle is not decorated. Yellow/gold is used to highlight the hair, eye, and tendrils below head, white is applied to flesh, tongues, and tendrils white washed in dilute glaze. The main design is framed below with another egg-and-dot band with incised outlines, and incised borders.

About 330 BC. Attribution is complicated by the poor state of preservation of the applied paints. The floral decoration is almost indiscernible. Probably the Dunedin Group.

Similar hair curls above the forehead are depicted on a bottle in Naples, CVA Museo Nazionale 3, IV E. 15, pl. 68:14; lekythos in London, CVA British Museum 1, IVDC.6, pl. 6:16 (Boston Group) or lekythos in St. Petersburg, CVA Hermitage Museum 6, pl. 15:1-2 (classified as the Dunedin Group?).

10. Epichysis (Pl. 4/10)

H10-2335

H. to lip 12 cm, diam. of the upper flange 9.4 cm, diam. of the base 8.8 cm.

Preserved in good state, a small chip on the lower flange is missing. Black glaze, little lustrous, orange-buff clay. Small jug with wide, reel-shaped body with slightly concave sides and flat flanges at top and bottom. The underside is slightly concave, the shoulder wide and domed low. It has a tall tubular neck with concave sides, passing into an oblique troughlike spout with a small flange below the lip. The handle is high-swung, with small mould-made masks flanking its upper part. It is entirely glazed, except for the underside of the upper flange, a narrow band on the transition of the body into the lower flange, and the vase underside. Decoration is painted on glaze: there is a series of elongated yellow tongues on the lower part of the neck and on the shoulder a pair of laurel-sprays with red stems and alternating red and yellow washed white pairs of leaves meeting at a rosette in the centre. The rosette consists of eleven dots with large central part painted around the stem. On the upper flange there are traces of painted decoration, possibly egg pattern. The shape corresponds to Morel 5772a1b.

About 340–330 BC.

The question of origin of the standard epichysis remains unresolved, the rarity of the shape in pottery, together with aspects of the shape itself such as the high-arching handle, suggest a possible prototype in metal (GREEN 1986, 121). The shape is particularly common in the years following ca. 330 BC.

The motif of a laurel wreath meeting at a rosette in the centre was popular as early as in the middle phase of Gnathian pottery. We can find it on the reverse side of the pelike in Bonn (GREEN 1976, pl. 8b, The Painter of Lecce 1075). Similar in shape and decoration on shoulder to our vase see epichysis in Toronto (HAYES 1984, no. 242, Middle Gnathia, about 340–320 BC, classified as ‘possibly The Laurel Spray Group’); for the laurel-sprays on the shoulder compare in particular an epichyseis in New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (GREEN 1986, fig. 6) and Bonn (BAUMEISTER 2001, figs. 10–12). Close parallel with decoration on shoulder is also the epichysis in CVA Cracow 1, pl. 117, which is dated to the end of the 4th century BC.

11. Epichysis (Pl. 4/11)

H10-3783

H. to lip 14.1 cm, diam. of upper flange 9.8 cm, diam. of base 9.3 cm.

The same shape as previous. One fragment of the upper flange is reattached. Orange-buff clay, black-glazed, except for the underside of the upper flange, narrow band on the transition of the body into the lower flange, and the vase underside. Decoration is painted on glaze: there is a row of yellow tongues on the front side of the neck; the neck is separated from the shoulder by a yellow band and a row of yellow tiny dots. On the shoulder there is a pair of dotted laurel-sprays with red stems and alternating red and white yellow pairs of leaves. They meet at a rosette in the centre. The edge of the upper flange is painted with a wave pattern. A double horizontal line is incised in the central part of the body flanked by ivy leaves and missing below the handle.

About 340–330 BC.

For the same motif on the shoulder and wave pattern on top of body flange cf. epichyseis CVA London, British Museum 1, IVDC.7, pl. (42) 6:21; CVA Mainz 2, pl. 21:1; CVA Naples 3, pl. 71:2.

12. Pelike (Pl. 4/12a-b)

H10-8147

H. 22 cm, diam. of body 13.5 cm.

The vessel is reconstructed from fragments, part of the body and one handle are missing and restored in plaster. Smooth orange-buff clay, black lustrous glaze with a reserved band between body and foot. Black glaze on foot mouldings. The underside is hollowed and partly glazed. The broad out-turned lip is underscored with a pronounced ridge above the handle attachments. The body is bulbous, the foot is low and stemmed with stepped splayed base. Two thin round-sectioned handles are attached to neck and shoulder. The painted decoration covers the upper part of the body and the neck. Side A: female head in a *kekryphalos* turned left. The woman's face and neck are marked in white, the hair, eyes, and brows in yellow, some details are additionally marked in dilute glaze. The head is flanked by elaborate spiral tendrils springing from the ground below the head. The motif is framed from above and below with egg-and-dart bands and rows of dots combining incision for horizontal lines and egg outlines and painting for egg insides and dots. Side B: The neck is decorated with two pairs of incised lines enclosing egg-and-dart band with a row of white dots below.

About 340-325 BC.

Pelikai with a ridge on the upper part of the neck between the top of the handle and the lip were introduced about the middle of the 4th century or early in the third quarter of the 4th century (GREEN 1968, 42). Very close parallel to our vase is a pelike in Milano, collection Lagioia-Jatta (classified as the Dunedin Group).¹ Both heads seem as to come from one hand, especially when we compare the line of nose and chin. For another pelike with a similar head facing right, see SCHMIDT 1991, figs. 1-4. Female heads in the same decoration scheme is also present in a pelike in Sèvres (CVA Sèvres, Musée National, pl. 47:23, Stockport Group, classified by WEBSTER 1968, 22) or a pelike published by BERNARDINI 1961, pl. 31:1.

13. Pelike (Pl. 4/13a-b)

H10-4768

H. 20.5 cm, diam. of body 12 cm.

Except for the restored rim, the vessel is intact. Smooth orange-buff clay, black lustrous glaze with a reserved band between body and foot, glazed on its mouldings. The vessel underside is hollowed and reserved with a tiny knob-omphalos at the centre. The broad out-turned lip has a bevelled edge, the neck is slim with slanting shoulder. Two handles attached below the rim and on the shoulders have protuberant roll along their outside axis. The body is bulbous with a low stemmed foot. The whole vessel is glazed including the inside of the mouth down to the depth of 5.5 cm. Decoration on the neck is only painted while on body two bands of vertical ribs are separated by a smooth horizontal strip of painted decoration. The vertical ribs are reserved below the handles. Side A: The top of the neck is framed by a kymation bordered from above and below with double lines with a row of dots below, all are painted in gold/yellow. On the bottom of the neck, there is a panel with figural decoration bordered below by a yellow line and featuring a dove to the left with head bent down flanked with floral motifs. The first pairs of tendrils start from the ground at either side of the main stem. At handle root, there are two horizontal and six vertical lines, all in gold/yellow. Sides A and B: belly-frieze of alternating gold/yellow and red sections of a thick band with wavy edges bordered from above and below by horizontal lines. Side B: The top of the neck bears the same kymation as on the side A with a row of short tongues and a row of dots, all in yellow/gold.

1 <http://www.lombardiabeniculturali.it/reperti-archeologici/schede/Go190-00029/>.

Around 300 BC or early 3rd century BC.

The vessel shows resemblance to the Alexandria Group. Standard motifs of this group are a female head, or a bird with its head in various position standing between floral tendrils or ivy. The most frequent shapes are ring-handled kantharoi, oinochoi, and pelikai. In some cases, ribbing is interrupted by a smooth belly-frieze decorated very often by astragal. The pelike in Berlin, Humboldt-Universität, inv. no. D388 has kymation on the neck painted in the same specific V-shaped manner as our pelike, so according to Schmidt (1991, fig. 13, 110) both vases can indicate one hand. The same pattern can also be found on handle roots. For floral tendrils starting from the ground see a kantharos in Zurich (GREEN 1977, fig. 9b) and another kantharos in Naples (GREEN 1977, fig. 10a) belonging to the Group of Zurich 2692 (GREEN 1977). For an identical belly-frieze see pelike of Alexandria Group (GREEN 2001, fig. 14).

14. Bottle (Pl. 4/14)

H10-3163

H. 14.8 cm, diam. 8.3 cm.

The vessel is complete with a crack on the neck and small damage on the rim and neck. It has smooth orange-buff clay with lustrous black glaze, misfired brown on some parts of the body. The lower wall is reserved, partly reddened. There is additional black glaze on the stepped base. The underside is reserved. Pear shaped bottle with slim neck, stepped base and collared rim. There are two white lines under the collar, vertical tongues on the neck, and on the shoulder a horizontal zigzag with dots between two lines washed over yellow. The body is ribbed.

About 300 BC.

The introduction of surface ribbing as a decorative means of the Gnathia vases towards the end of the 4th century BC brings general change in the decorative scheme: the decorated area was from then on restricted to a zone on the neck. For the zigzag motif without dots, see BERNARDINI 1961, pl. 47, no. 4; for zigzag band with dots, see CVA Frankfurt 3, pl. (2464) 51:6; bottle with zone of egg and dot ornament, see CVA Bologna, Museo Civico 3, IV.D pl. (596) 1:35.

15. Squat lekythos (Pl. 4/15a-b)

H10-2142

H. 17.7 cm, diam. 8.6 cm.

The vessel is intact apart from chips and a crack on the shoulder. The clay is orange-buff with black glaze and colours: gold and white washed in diluted glaze. The body is ovoid, with stepped foot, long slim neck with two faint grooves in the middle and a wide horizontal mouth. Glaze covers the whole surface except for the reddened reserved area between body and foot. Tongues are painted on the lower part of neck and on the lower handle attachment. The shoulder bears a decorative band framed with a row of dots from above and a line from below, depicting a woman's head to the left between florals. The body is articulated with fine vertical ribbing. There is a row of dots on the outer edge of foot.

Around 300 BC. Ribbed with flowing florals (WEBSTER 1968, 26).

The ribbed Gnathia vases with flowing florals were synthesised by T. B. L. Webster. For an analogous shape as well as the motif of a female head framed by flowing florals cf. BERNARDINI 1961, 51:1-3. For a woman's head framed by flowing florals on a krateriskos cf. HAYES 1984, no. 254; WEBSTER 1968, pl. III:c; or CVA Naples 3, pl. 58:4. According to WEBSTER (1968, 27) none of the female heads have the red and white bands characteristic of other late group.

16. Skyphos (Pl. 4/16a-b)

H10-6098

H. 8.4 cm, D. 7.5 cm, D. with handles 13.1 cm.

The skyphos of Corinthian type is intact and in good condition. It is glazed all over except for a reserved band above the foot and the inner face of the bottom. Side A: Under the lip between the handles there is egg pattern painted in white between incised lines, with a broad wavy yellow line, and another double incised line and a row of white dots below. In the main field there is a broad red line from which hang bunches of grapes, leaves and tendrils; right sides of the grapes are washed over yellow. Side B: between the handles there is a double incised line with white dots above and below.

Ca 300 BC. The Knudsen Group.

A large group of vases known as the Knudsen Group correspond almost exactly with this scheme: eggs without dots or incision, wavy yellow line, dots and red stem from which hang the grapes and leaves. The reverse has a simple spray of white dots about a double incised line. This group was made in Canosa according to Green (1976, 9). Close parallels to our vase are the skyphoi CVA Hermitage 6, pl. 28:3-4; GREEN 1976, pl. 16, no. 15; GREEN 2001, no. 18, and LANZA CATTI 2008, fig. 139-140. The same scheme of decoration can also be found on oinochoai (cf. CVA Philadelphia 1, pl. 33:2-3) and mugs.

17. Mug (Pl. 4/17)

H10-3328

H. 10.9 cm, diam. 7.4 cm.

The oinochoe can be classified as shape 8M, with a ring handle. It is intact apart from small chips around the lip and foot edge. The clay is pale, slightly orange and the glaze is uneven, passing from shiny metallic black to brownish. The applied colours include red and white washed in dilute glaze. There is a reserved area above the stepped foot with its outer face painted black again, but the underside is completely reserved. There is a row of large yellowish dots below the rim, followed by an incised line, eggs, a double incised line, with below covering the neck, large yellowish meander between red bands, framed with a row of dots from above and below.

Ca. 300 BC. The Knudsen Group.

Mugs of this type are common in the Knudsen Group (together with skyphoi and oinochoai) often decorated with linear patterns, cf. CVA Hermitage 6, pl. 26:1-2; meander on neck cf. CVA Philadelphia 1, pl. 34:1; CVA Tübingen 7, pl. 25:9; CVA Heidelberg, Universität 2, pl. 86:5; CVA Stuttgart, Württembergisches Landesmuseum 1, pl. 58:10; and CVA Parma, Museo Nazionale di Antichità 2, IV, D pl. 2:1.

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a

Pl. 4/1



b



a

Pl. 4/2



b



a

Pl.4/3



b



a

Pl. 4/4



b

not to scale



Pl. 4/5



a

Pl. 4/8



b



Pl.4/6



a

Pl. 4/9



b



Pl. 4/7

not to scale



Pl. 4/10



Pl. 4/11



Pl 4/12



a



b

Pl. 4/13



Pl. 4/14

not to scale



Pl.4/15

a



b



a



b

Pl. 4/16



Pl. 4/17

not to scale