



Hechekleides?

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HECHEKLEIDES?

Alan Boegehold has given us a corrected reading of the potter's signature on a column-krater by the Princeton painter in Samothrace (AJA 87 (1983) 89-90, pl.13). The name is certainly Echeikleides, but is it longer, Wecheikleides, as Boegehold suggests? He takes the first preserved letter as a digamma and seeks parallels for its neat rectangular shape. I find these parallels unconvincing, though one cannot therefore deny that an Athenian, or naturalised Athenian, could have used such a letter in the years around 540 BC.

There are two particular questions that should be distinguished, when (and where) such a letter-form originated, and whether a digamma, whatever its shape, would ever have been used alphabetically in Athens in the mid-sixth century. With regard to the first point, only one of the parallels cited by Boegehold is both Attic and possibly contemporary with the Samothrace vase, Agora xxi A2; even here the date is not assured and the usage is certainly not alphabetic.¹⁾ Of the parallels cited from my Trademarks on Greek Vases many are Etruscan, the rest are Ionian with the letter used numerically, and all are later than 520 BC.²⁾ Nevertheless, it is clear that letters painted on Attic vases take on 'advanced' forms precociously early, and in this respect such a neat digamma would not be out of keeping; also there is at least a *prima facie* case for reading the traces as a digamma.³⁾ So far the arguments for and against the letter are finely balanced.

However, a second probable signature of this man can be brought into consideration. Akropolis 914 consists of two joining fragments of the main panel of a Panathenaic amphora; it is of the same period as the Samothrace vase though of slighter style.⁴⁾

1) The other abecedarium, Agora xxi A3, is of the early fifth century. The lettering of A2 does suggest a date some way back into the sixth. Non-sense inscriptions on vases include the 'letter'.

2) Pace Boegehold, my Fig. 9q is correct; the graffiti on 12E,8 and 12E, 14 are very similar, differing only in details of individual letter strokes. The abbreviation, FE, normally retrograde, is extremely common in the Etruscan repertoire. The more rectangular digamma on the Noble vase, my p.244, 12E note 1, I take as a numeral on the close analogy with assured Ionic numerals on related vases (also F is half of IB, 6:12). I see no reason to take any of these examples as Attic, even though the numerals may have been inscribed in Athens or the Peiraeus.

3) I have not inspected the Samothrace vase outside its case and so rely mainly on the photograph, *Hesperia* 44 (1975) pl.55a and AJA l.c. I do not wish to minimize the restoration of a full closed heta from the remains of this dipinto; some traces of glaze are normally residually present on worn surfaces.

4) Graef and Langlotz, *Die Antiken Vasen von der Akropolis zu Athen I* pl.60; ABV 666; J.R.Brandt, *Act.Inst.Rom.Norv.* 8 (1978) 3, no.7, dated, of probably correctly, before 545. The style does not seem to me to be that the Princeton painter, even on an off day.



Figure 1. The inscription on Akropolis 914, read horizontally; after Graef-Langlotz, q.v. for the precise remains of the first letter.

Instead of the 'standard' Panathenaic inscription down the left side of the panel there is preserved a sequence of letters from a different kind of message,].EXEKVE[; the oblique strokes of the kappa do not meet at the vertical but are not so exaggeratedly separated as in the Samothrace signature. There remains part of a letter before the initial epsilon; Graef considered it to be the last letter of a preceding word, the sigma of καλός, and Beazley followed him (ABV 666). Yet enough remains to show that it was no sigma; the preserved part is too long, and there is no sign of an oblique stroke towards the epsilon, which must have appeared either at the top or the bottom, according to which direction the letter faced. Only a few letters fit the preserved traces; they are probably too long for mu, pi or rho, and I feel that a squared-off circular letter, theta, omicron or phi, cannot be entertained; there remains heta or iota. This partly preserved letter could have been the initial letter of the inscription, or it could have started at the top of the panel, with up to six letters lost. Of the more acceptable possibilities, iota would suggest the supplement εἰμί, but a bespoke owner's inscription would indeed be surprising on Panathenian amphora, especially one dedicated on the Akropolis. On the other hand, heta would give the initial letter of the name that follows, ἡχκελε[, an aspiration not unexpected in Attic.⁵⁾

It is unfortunate that "ein kurzer senkrechter Rest einer Buchstaben" flaked off the sherd before it was photographed, since it may have indicated to us the letter that followed the final epsilon. To date, a sigma has been read in this position, but if the stroke were truly 'senkrecht' iota would be a far preferable reading and the supplement ἡχκελεῖ[δεσ would be more or less inevitable.

The discovery of the correct reading of the Samothrace inscription makes it very tempting, and certainly economical, to see the same name on the Akropolis sherd. Therefore, either this man wrote his name in two different ways or he used an initial heta in both cases; I would prefer the latter alternative. A potter's name on an early Panathenaic amphora would be nothing new (a phenomenon not without its own interest); I know of three sure examples.⁶⁾ Yet there is no other case where the signature replaces the

5) For surplus aspiration in Attic see L.Threatte, *The Grammar of Attic Inscriptions* I 38.211 and P.A.Hansen, *Carmina Epigraphica Graeca* 27, no.37.

6) Brandt, l.c. nos. 3-4 (= Frel, *Panathenaic Prize Amphoras*, figs. 4-5) and an unpublished amphora in the Metropolitan Museum of c. 540 with the potter's signature of Nikias down the right side of the panel; that may also have been the case with Akropolis 921, Brandt no.22.

normal Panathenaic inscription to the left of Athena; we may assume that it was to the right on this vase.⁷⁾ It may just be possible that this aberration was prompted by the similarity of the name of Echeikleides to that of the archon of 566, Hippokleides, under whom the Panathenaic games had recently been at least reorganised.⁸⁾

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7) Brandt has adequately demonstrated the lack of uniformity among the early prize vases and so this variety need cause no particular surprise.

8) Pherekydes, apud Marcellinus, Vit. Thuc. 3.