


International Round-Table Conference
Batumi-Trabzon, 27th-29th April, 2006

Production and Trade of Amphorae in the Black Sea



LIST OF ABSTRACTS

THE INTERNATIONAL ROUND-TABLE CONFERENCE
PRODUCTION AND TRADE OF AMPHORAE IN THE
BLACK SEA

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TOPICS BY SUBJECT

GUESTS OF HONOR :

Michael Vickers (Great Britain): **Introduction**

David Braund (Great Britain): **Conclusion**

ORAL

PRODUCTION CENTERS

- | | |
|---|----|
| Sergey Vnukov (Russia) Oral B, C | 5 |
| "Problems of "Brown clay" (Colchean) Amphora Studies.
Typology, Chronology, Production Centers, Distribution" | |
| Petar Balabanov (Bulgaria) Oral A | 9 |
| "About origins of englyphic stamps amphorae" | |
| Sergey Monachov (Russia) Oral A, B, C | 11 |
| "Pseudo-Heraklean amphoras of the 4th
- the first quarter of the 3rd centuries B.C from the Polises of
Southern Black Sea Region" | |
| Sergey Ilyashenko and Svetlana Naumenko (Russia) | 15 |
| Oral A, B "Narrow-necked light-clay amphorae:
developments in classification and chronology". | |
| Pierre Dupont (France) Oral A | 16 |
| "Zeest's "Samian" and "Protothasian" containers:
testing the North Ionian Connection" | |
| Vasilika Lungu (Romania) Oral A | 17 |
| "Hellenistic Amphoras from Erythrai (Turkey)" | |
| Victor Baumann (Romania). Oral, A | 18 |
| "A Roman Officina at Telitza." | |
| Larissa Sedikova (Ukraine) Oral A, B, C | 20 |
| "Amphorae production in the 8th -9th cc at Chersonesos" | |

TPOLOGY – CHRONOLOGY

Valentyna Krapivina (Ukraine) Oral B	21
"Amphorae of the 3rd – 4th centuries AD in Olbia Pontica"	
Boris Magomedov (Ukraine) Oral B, C	22
"The Roman amphorae in context of Chernyakhov Culture"	
Vivien Swan (Great Britain) Oral B, C	24
"Dichin (Bulgaria): the destruction deposits and the dating of Black Sea amphorae in the fifth and sixth Centuries AD"	

TRADE ROADS : exportations

David Braund (Great Britain) Oral C	25
"Amphorae in the Eastern Black Sea: contexts of geography and exchange"	
Guram Kvirkvelia (Georgia) Oral C	27
"Colchis – North Black Sea Area – Sinope: The System of Interregional Trade"	
Dominique Kassab Tezgör (France) Oral C	28
"The Trade Roads of the Amphorae Produced in Sinope from the 2nd or 3rd to the 6th c AD"	
Mark Lawall (Canada) Oral C	30
"Pontic, Aegean and Levantine amphorae at Gordion"	

TRADE ROADS : importations

Vakhtang Licheli (Georgia) Oral C	32
"Amphorae in Caucasian Iberia – Attributes of Trade Route"	
Nina Leipunskaya and Sergej Kryzhitski (Ukraine) Oral B	33
"Hellenistic amphorae from Olbia Pontica"	
Natalia Mateevici (Moldova), Evgenia Redina (Ukraine) Oral B	36
"Preliminary Conclusions Concerning Greek Import of Amphorae Site (Odessa Region)"	

Totko Stoyanov (Bulgaria) Oral C	38
"The Getic Capital at Sboryanovo (NE Bulgaria) as a Great Commercial and Redistributive Centre of Early Hellenistic Thrace According to the Amphora Data"	

Livia Buzoianu (Romania) Oral B	39
"Submarine Discoveries in the area of the Romanian Black Sea coast"	

Andrei Opait (Canada) Oral C	40
"Provisioning with Olive Oil the Pontic settlements at the End of the Hellenistic and Beginning of the Roman periods"	

Séverine Lemaître (France) Oral C	41
« Chian Amphorae in the Turkish Museums of the Black Sea »	

Argyroula Doulergi-Intzesiloglu (Greece) Oral A, B, C	42
"Local Amphorae of the Islands Peparethos and Ikos, North Aegean Sea and the Trading Roads of their Wine to the Black Sea"	

POSTERS

PRODUCTION CENTERS, TPOLOGY – CHRONOLOGY

Merab Khalvashi (Georgia) Poster A, B	44
"Roman amphorae from Gonio-Apsarus"	
David Lomitashvili (Georgia) and Ian Colvin (Great Britain) Poster A	46
"The late Roman – Early Byzantine kilns and the Local Amphorae from Archaeopolis – Nokalakevi"	
Dominique Kassab Tezgör (France) Poster A	47
"The Production of the Amphorae in the Workshops of Demirci-Sinope from the 2nd or 3rd to the 6th c. AD"	
Sergey Vnukov (Russia) Poster A	50
"Late Heraklean ("Light Clay") Amphora Studies: Typology Chronology, Fabrics"	

TRADE ROADS : exportations

Dimitri Akhvlediani (Georgia) Poster C	52
"The Ratio of Imported and Local Amphorae in Colchis in the 5th -2nd Centuries BC According to Grave Goods"	

Guram Lordkipanidze (Georgia) Poster C	53
"Sinopean Amphorae and Trapezuntian Coins from Pitunt"	

TRADE ROADS : importations

Numan Tuna and İlham Sakarya (Turkey) Poster A, B, C	53
"The Knidian Amphorae and their Distribution in the Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea Littoral areas".	

Amiran Kakhidze and Merab Khalvashi (Georgia) Poster C	54
"Chian Amphorae from Kobuleti-Pichvnari"	

Revaz Papuashvili (Georgia) Poster B	57
"Amphorae from the Mouth of Khobi (6th-3rd cent. B.C.)".	

Julian Bîrzescu (Romania) Poster C	60
"The earliest imports of East Greek Trade Amphorae from Istros"	

Ivaylo Lozanov (Bulgaria) Poster C	61
"On the import of amphorae in Inland Thrace: Reflections on Some Recent discoveries in the Middle Hebros Valley"	

Chardar Tzotchev (Bulgaria) Poster C	64
" Diffusion of Greek Trade Amphoras in Southern Thrace"	

Anelia Bozkova (Bulgaria) Poster C	65
"Amphora Stamps and the Trade of the Indigenous Sites between Odessos and the Danube in the Advanced Hellenistic Age".	

Nino Inaishvili and Nineli Vashakidze (Georgia) Poster B	66
"Typology and Chronology of Greek, Roman and Early Byzantine Amphoras from Petra-Tsikhisdziri".	

Eliso Baghaturia (Georgia) Poster C	67
"North-West Lazica Mountainous (Kodori Basin) in the context of the World trading Roads (1st -6th cc.)"	

Sergiy Zelenko and Yana Morozova (Ukraine) Poster C	69
"Amphorae Assemblage from the Thirteenth Century Shipwreck in the Black Sea, near Sudak"	

"PSEUDO-HERACLEAN" AMPHORAS OF THE 4TH – THE FIRST
QUARTER OF THE 3RD CENTURIES B.C. FROM THE
POLISES OF SOUTHERN BLACK-SEA REGION

During the last up to 100 years the development of Amphora Studies has brought to life substantial results in the area of studying transport amphoras of the Black-Sea Region. Among the particular results we can mention localization of the transport amphoras from Tauric Chersonesos, Sinopee, Heraclea Pontica, Amastria, and Dioskuriada. The series of the so-called amphores Colchiennes is marked, but still not placed as far as the center of manufacturing is concerned. Several generations of researchers have made their contribution to studying ceramic epigraphy of Pontic centers and amphora morphology as well. Published monographs contain results in various areas.

The main results of these researches can be summarized as follows. Expectedly, the whole amphora production in polises of Southern Black-Sea Region began in the late 5th century B.C. in Heraclea, when, as a result of straits' blocking, a favorable business environment for intensification of inner - Pontic trade was formed. Sinope began transport amphora production a bit later, and Heraclia – at the turn of 4th century. By the middle of the century the manufacturing of amphoras Colchiennes was being founded (Trabzon), in the late 4th century – the similar manufacturing was established in Chersonesos, at the turn of the 3rd century – in Amastria. In each center the full-scale production could take different time-periods, sometimes it lasted 1,5-2 decades (Amastria), and sometimes up to 2,5 centuries (Sinope). Today the main lines of morphological development are worked out for Sinope, Heraclea, Amastria and Chersonesos (types, variants, series of amphoras) together with detailed chronology and typological and chronological classifications of ceramic stamps enabling to identify them within the accuracy of 15-20 years. Nowadays there is not any specialist who has difficulty in identifying transport amphoras of these centers, everybody knows their amphoras' forms, peculiarities of marking, etc.

In spite of all the diversity of vessels morphology, the amphoras of southern-Pontic production (Heraclea, Sinope, Amastria) possess one similarity – very characteristic peculiarities of clay paste. Their clay usually has rough structure, the surface is uneven, the color range of molding composition has mostly red and brown shades. Practically all the time you can find there – to a greater or lesser degree – clinopyroxene and orthopyroxene, sometimes limestone, coal clay and aposandstone. But you never find mica, which is very characteristic of clay from some Mediterranean production centers. By all appearances, these mineral admixtures added to molding composition reflect the peculiarities of production methods (production traditions), which were characteristic to all southern-Pontic region.

Along with the well-known and already studied series of Heraclean, Sinopean and Amastrian amphoras, more than a dozen of vessels became evident, they have typical "southern-Pontic" clay and Englisic stamps on necks, but on the other hand – do not match the common typological schemes of Heraclean amphora production and marking. The purpose of the following report is to introduce into scientific research the series of amphoras which can be called "pseudoheraclean". First of all, we would like to mention that the well-known transport amphoras from Heraclea Pontic of the 4th –beginning of the 3rd centuries B.C. are marked by the stable and in general conservative morphology the changes of which were well studied during the last 150 years. The Heraclean marking is also can be called conservative.

As all the described "pseudo-Heraclean" vessels have Englisic stamps but very different morphology, logically it would be possible to suggest two versions for explaining this phenomena. According to the first one, these amphoras could be produced in Heraclea Pontic, but under unknown circumstances some of them were shaped in unusual form. But Englisic stamps on them do not match the Heraclean tradition, which speaks against this version. According to the second version this specific amphoras were manufactured in another, yet unknown, southern-Pontic center which marked its vessels according to Englisic tradition under the influence of Heraclea. As today there are no serious reasons for subscribing these vessels to any particular center, it is possible to call this series "pseudo-Heraclean" and give each series the name respectively to the place of finding or other criterion.

The first series can be called "group of Ger(a)" on the basis that the two objects are marked with Englisic stamps with abbreviation HRA(-). The first amphora without foot was found in Nikonia and possesses the pithoid forming of the body with gentle connection from neck to shoulder and body which is more characteristic of Sinopean, not Heraclean, tradition. The rim is roller-like with a small down trim, which is also not characteristic of Heraclean amphoras' rims. In the middle of the neck there is a traced quirk (table 1, № 1). The second amphora is represented only by the upper part – only the neck with handles. It is originated from excavation of settlement Novoselskoe in Danube-Dnestr interfluence area. Vessel's morphology is similar to Nikonijskaya amphora and a seal is stamped by the similar mark (table 1, № 2). It is impossible to stress the point that the stamp ____(-) is of a different mark, was also met on a typical Heraclean amphora dated to the beginning of the 3rd century B.C.

It is difficult to evaluate the chronology of our vessels with stamps HRA(-) as the finding's context is unknown. But the practice of marking with help of these stamps with substantial name shortening in Heraclea can be traced within the time period of the end of the 4th century – the first quarter of the 3rd century. The second series of amphoras can be called "Gorgia-Diocl group". It is represented by the three marked and two unmarked vessels with high neck gently connected with flat shoulders. The brightest feature of the amphoras' morphology is

the unusual position of the upper attachment of handle approximately in the middle of the neck. The first vessel with Gogia stamp was found in 1966 in the Nimfaion hole (table 1, № 3), the second one – from Gorgipinian well in 1972 (table 1, № 4). The stamps were made by different dyes. The legend on Nimfaion finding is read as ΓΟΡ/ΓΙΑ, on Gorgipinian finding – as ΓΟΡ/ΓΙΟΥ. The neck with the same morphological characteristics is from Elizavetovskoe settlement and has the stamp ΔΙΟΚ/ΛΕΟС / Y (table 1, № 5). The name Diocl in other prints is not documented, the meaning of the last letter (upsilon) in the legend is still unknown. From Elizavetovskoe came another neck of the similar amphora, which does not have a stamp (table 1, № 7).

The morphological features of all above stated objects from Gorgia-Diocl group make it possible to match the whole not marked amphora from Elizavetovskoe room 52 with this group (table 1, № 6). Some time ago I placed it into the special "isolated" type of Sinop production, but then I worked out the conventional "southern Pontic" group.

The chronology of amphoras' from "Gorgia-Diocl group" is well traced from the context of stated objects which were found in ceramic complexes of Nimfaion, Gorgippia and Elizavetovki. They are all dated back within the first quarter of the 3rd century B.C.

"Melanoppa group" is represented by the only finding of the very huge vessel with pithoid body on low and wide sharp-ribbed toe from Olbia reserve (table 1, № 8). The amphora's rim is slightly detached and flattened. All morphological features and capacity (28,5 liters) are not typical of Heracleian amphoras. On the neck there is a unique two-row Englic stamp in cartush frame KOA ΕΠ. / ΛΑΝΩΠ. The edge of the stamp is seen only on the left, the right, upper and low edges are absent. The first row shows beyond any doubt the name of the fabricant Coas, then comes the preposition with the name of magistrate. The beginning is not printed in the first row but the continuation is in the second row. Probably the only variant of decoding will be the name of Melanopp, who is known by a few stamps. In our case the most demonstrative is the stamp on amphora's neck from Thracian settlement of Medgidia in Dobrudge with the legend ΘΥΟΣΕΠ[Ι ΜΕ/ΛΑΝΩΠΟΥ; Here you find the same composition of legend with the exception of fabricant's name – Tios instead of Coas, and the first syllable of magistrate's name Melanopp is also placed in the second row. In that way, the reconstruction of stamp's legend on our amphora from Olvia would be the following: KOA ΕΠ[Ι/ ΜΕ]ΛΑΝΩΠ[ΟΥ.

The magistrate Melanopp was identified by the finding of 4 stamps, with the preposition EPI in all cases. Besides, two stamps are known from Odessa museum, where near his name you can see the name of Amphistrat. V.I.Kac does not doubt the Heracleian origin of Melanopp stamps and takes into consideration the synchronization of Melanopp name with the above stated fabricants Tios, Coas and Amphistrat plus typological features. He refers this magistrate to the group of

ORAL

Heracleian stamps (the middle of the 50s-30s, the 4th century B.C.). Of course, it is possible to agree with this wide dating, but I think that the amphora from Olbia as it has very peculiar morphology, should be assigned to the production of the unknown southern-Pontic center of amphora production.

"Evksen group" is also fixed by one finding of the whole amphora from the kurgan № 10 near the village N.Kamenka in Cherson region with typically "Heracleian" and readable Englic stamp on the neck KEPKINO/ EYΞENIA (table 1, № 9). If it were not Englic stamps, any archeologist would call that vessel Sinope according to the form of the neck, body and foot. And though in Sinope ceramic epigraphy there is only one Englic stamp rate of the first group, in general this practice of marking is not characteristic of Sinope. This problem of dating is solved as in the previous case. Magistrate Evksen is known by the single stamps from Elizavetinskoe settlement first of all in combination with the names of different producers. On the basis of these findings in complexes I referred it to the beginning of the 40s of the 4th century. In the last work of V.I.Kac Evksen is included into the III magistrate group (370-350 B.C.). The morphology of amphora, from my point of view, shows the middle – the third quarter of the 4th century. Moreover, as in the described cases, this is the production of the unknown southern-Pontic center.

To sum up all the above stated, the main conclusion obviously is that along with the well-known centers of amphora production in the Black-Sea Region, on the southern shore of the Pont during the flourishing period of Pontic trade in the 4th beginning of the 3rd centuries besides Heracleia, Sinop and Amastria, the production of amphoras was regulated in other polises, and in some of them periodically fabricant and magistrate marking was made. It is possible that among presently known unmarked and marked series of amphoras from Heracleia Pontica and Sinope, there can be the examples from these centers. In particular, I cannot exclude the fact that the special 4th type (dzhaferka) of Heracleian amphoras, pointed out by me based on the materials of the complex depository near the settlement Islam Dzhaferka, which has the specific number of morphological features, can be related to some center of production not figured out yet.

ORAL