

LATE-ARCHAIC TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE IN OLBIA PONTICA: AN EVIDENCE OF ROOF TILES AND ARCHITECTURAL TERRACOTTA

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Abstract: A group of late-Archaic terracotta roof tiles with architectural design from Olbia Pontica is being analysed in the following. It is now possible to discuss the six variants of painted façade decorations, which include meander patterns with various alternating filling elements such as quadrats, checkerboards and rosettes. These decorative systems combined three-colour palettes, being successors of the Corinthian system of decorative tiles. The comparison of the Olbian pan tiles and antefix cover tiles with the actual collections from Histria, Borysthenes, Levke island and Apollonia Pontica shows the common direction of sacred architectural design spread widely among the Milesian daughter-colonies in the Western and North-Western parts of the Pontus. The single centre of fabrication of the terracotta details, Miletus, seems to be preferable, but the involvement of Samos in this process must also be taken into account. A stylistic analysis of the late-Archaic architectural terracotta from the Pontic centres demonstrates the variety of forms and details that allows for the discussion about a specially produced cargo of terracotta building materials for every colony in South Ionia.

Rezumat: În cele ce urmează este analizat un grup de țiglă de teracotă arhaică târzie cu decor arhitectural de la Olbia Pontica. Este posibil să discutăm cele șase variante de decorațiuni de fațadă pictate, care includ modele de meandre cu diferite elemente de completare alternante, cum ar fi pătrate, damier și rozete. Aceste sisteme decorative au combinat palete în trei culori, fiind moștenitoare ale sistemului corintian de plăci decorative. Compararea țiglelor și antefixelor olbiene cu exemplare de la Histria, Borysthenes, insula Levke și Apollonia Pontica arată filiera comună a proiectului arhitectural sacru răspândit pe scară largă între fiecele-colonii ale Miletului din părțile vestice și nord-vestice ale Pontul. Pare a fi de preferat centrul unic de fabricare al detaliilor de teracotă, Miletul, dar trebuie luată în considerare și implicarea Samosului în acest proces. O analiză stilistică a teracotei arhitecturale arhaice târzii din centrele pontice demonstrează varietatea de forme și detalii care permit discuția despre serii de materiale de construcție din teracotă produse special pentru fiecare colonie din Ionia de Sud.

Olbia Pontica, owing to more than a hundred years of continuous excavations,¹ has a unique archaeological situation in comparison with the rest of the Greek *poleis* in the entire Pontic region. Until now three *temene* were found and excavated on the territory of the Upper city; they are conventionally named the Eastern, Western and Southern. The Western and the Southern *temene* appeared on the Olbian map in the earliest period of its existence: the Western was organized almost simultaneously with the city foundation (and *polis* as well) in the early 6th century BCE,² the Southern appeared soon after 500 BCE.³ Both *temene* were limited by the streets on the city grid-plan, the Main Longitudinal and some cross-streets; they had the necessary architectural organization including temples, altars, enclosures and different subdivided objects such as *oikoi* and *bothroi*.⁴ In the Western *temenos* three monumental buildings were excavated (Fig. 1), two of them were attributed as *templa-in-antis* of typical grid-plan. One temple (Fig. 1.1) was connected with the cult of Apollo Hietros which was proven by the numerous dedication graffiti on the table pottery and roof-tiles found in *bothroi* and closely surrounding the temple. The second one (Fig. 1.2) was left unattributed because of the lack of necessary epigraphic evidence. The same anonymous situation became evident with the third monumental building (Fig. 1.3), but it was surely connected with cult practice. Its high-level destruction made

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¹ Continuous excavations of the city territory started in 1902, the history of the excavations knows two breaks only: in the periods of 1916-1923 and 1941-1945.

² The author of the excavations dated the starting point of the Western *temenos* in the frames of the second quarter of the 6th century BCE: Rusyaeva 1994, p. 81. The modern dating of the earliest ceramic finds from the *temenos* is at the turn of the 7th and 6th centuries, which coincides with the foundations of the city of Olbia: Bujskikh 2013, p. 223.

³ Bujskikh 2015, pp. 246-248, fig. 3.

⁴ In spite of the later destructions at the Olbian *temene*, the old idea expressed by B. Bergquist about their spatial organization and the number of the necessary and secondary buildings, finds its proof: Bergquist 1967, pp. 100-107.