

# Nessel, Victoria

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## Red slip pottery from the Kilen-balka necropolis (South Crimea)

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## RED SLIP POTTERY FROM THE KILEN-BALKA NECROPOLIS (SOUTH CRIMEA)

Kilen-balka necropolis is situated in eastern part of the Heraclean Peninsula, not far from the ancient Chersonesos (Fig. 1). It was discovered during 1968 field survey campaign conducted by Archaeological and Historical Museum of Chersonesos, Sevastopol (National Preserve of Tauric Chersonesos as for now). The necropolis lies on steep slopes in the middle and upper reaches of deep and sinuous ravine (*balka*). As a result of the first archaeo-

logical season one rock-cut tomb, dated to the Late Roman – Early Byzantine period, was excavated. Next excavation campaigns, led by O.Ja. Savelja,<sup>1</sup> took place in 1991 and 1992. Eight rock-cut tombs were fully examined. Some of them included several burials. Together with skeletal remains various grave goods (weapons, jewellery, pottery, glass vessels) were found. 40 bronze coins fall within the period from Diocletian to Valens.<sup>2</sup>

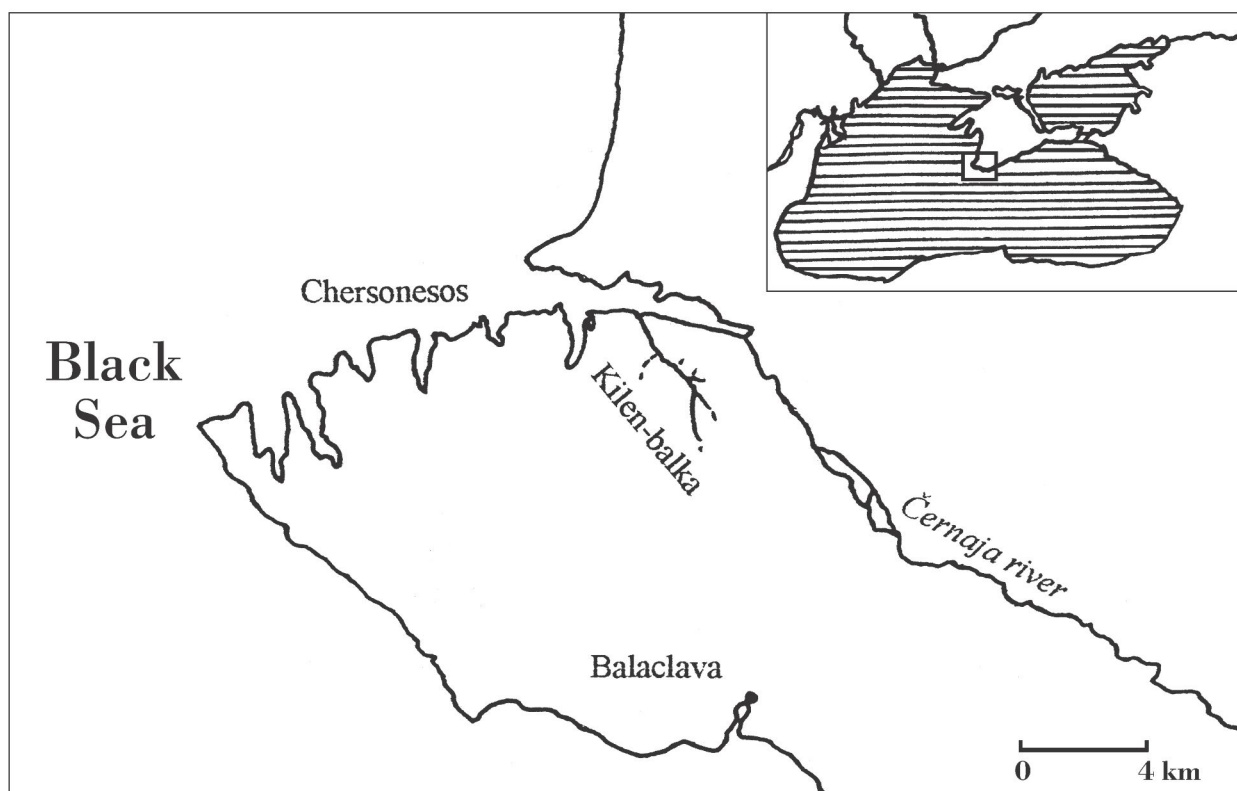


Fig. 1. The Heraclean Peninsula. Location of the Kilen-balka necropolis

<sup>1</sup> O.Ja. SAVELJA, D.Ju. SAVELJA, *Mogil'niki pozdneantichnoj-rannevizantijskoj pory na Geraklejskom poluostrove (po materialam raskopok mogil'nika v Kilen-balke v 1991-1992)*, in: *Vizantija i narody Pričernomor'ja i Sredizemnomor'ja v rannee srednevekov'e (IV-IX v.v.)*. Simferopol 1994, p. 60-61; O.Ja. SAVELJA, D.Ju. SAVELJA, *Pogrebal'nyj obrjad sel'skogo naselenija*

*bližnej okruzi Chersonesa pozdnerimskogo-rannevizantijskogo vremena*, in: *Vizantija i Krym*. Simferopol 1997, p. 72. I would like to thank O.Ja. Savelja for the permission to study and publish finds of red slip pottery from the Kilen-balka necropolis. I am also grateful to K. Domžalski for the consultation.

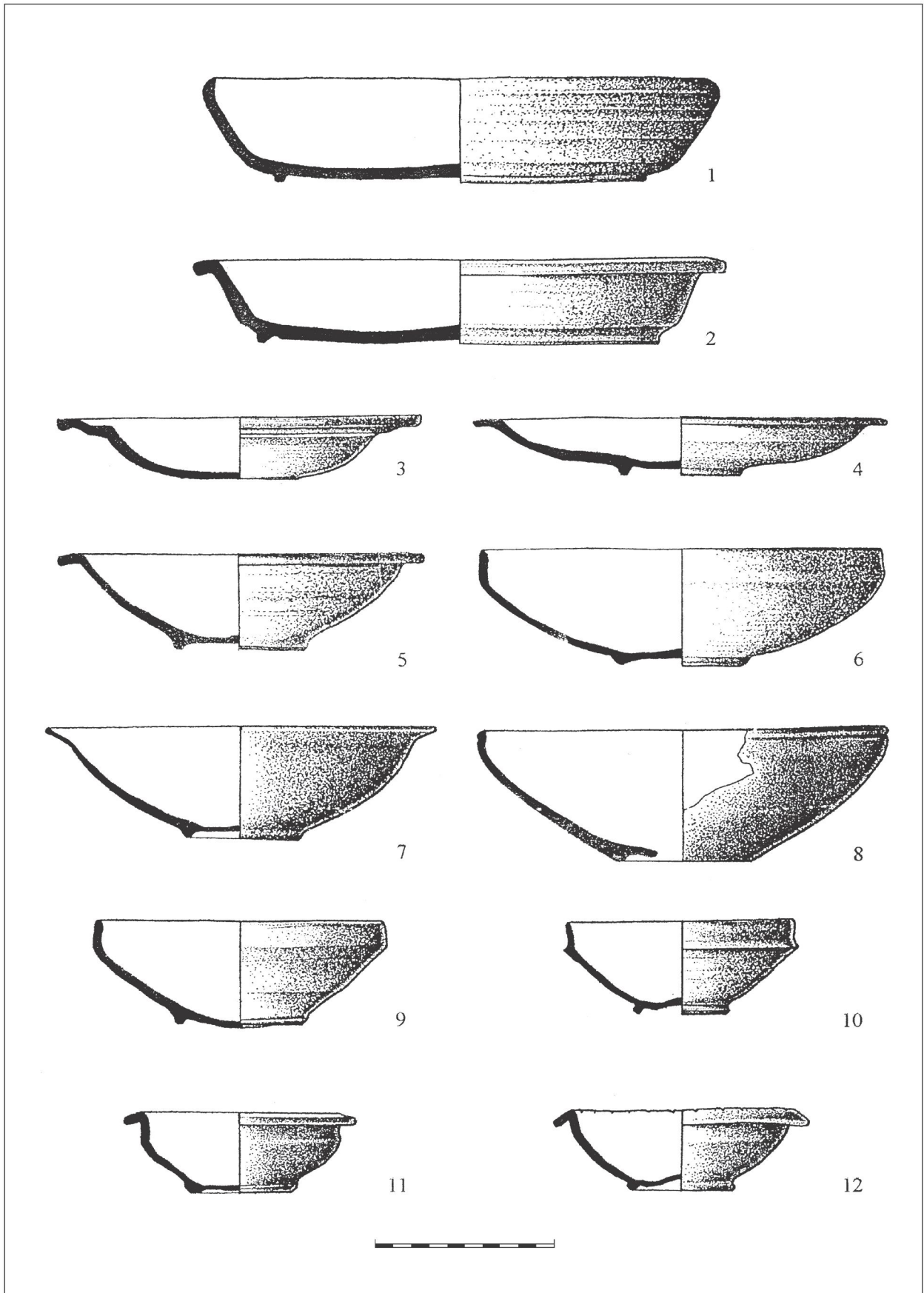


Fig. 2. Dishes, plates, bowls from the Kilen-balka necropolis

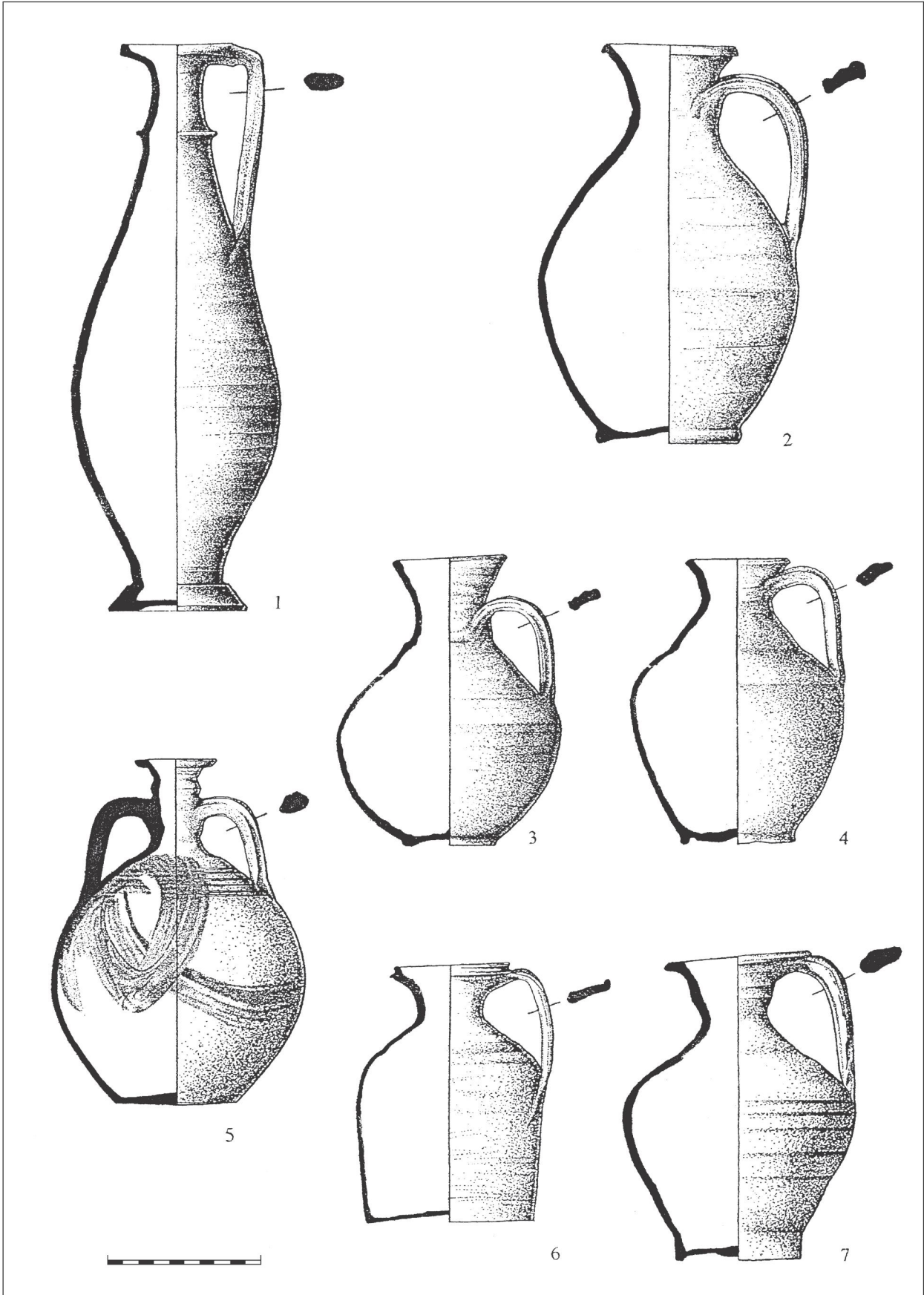


Fig. 3. Jugs from the Kilen-balka necropolis

Every burial contained red slip pottery; this was the most numerous group of all the grave goods. More than 60 vessels were found and most of them were complete examples.<sup>3</sup> Red slip pottery from the Kilen-balka necropolis shows close parallels to that of Chersonesos and from Late Roman – Early Bizantine necropolis of South-Western Crimea. Among vessels from Kilen-balka there were some thin-walled jugs with no slip at all, but their shapes repeat the forms of the slipped ones. Several jugs showed production made defects. According to the context all vessels can be dated to the period from the early 4<sup>th</sup> to the mid 5<sup>th</sup> centuries AD.

The wares consist mainly of dishes and jugs and a small number of small plates and bowls should be mentioned as well. One plate of African red slip ware is identified among the material collected from the necropolis (Cat. No. 4);<sup>4</sup> one bowl can be probably classified as Pontic sigillata (Cat. No. 1);<sup>5</sup> one bowl – as Phocaean Red Slip ware (Cat. No. 5).<sup>6</sup> A large group of dishes from the Kilen-balka represents Pontic Red Slip ware (PRS).<sup>7</sup> The production centre (or centres) of Pontic Red Slip wares is not yet known, but this kind of pottery was widely distributed in the Black Sea region during the period between the 4<sup>th</sup> and the early 6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD.<sup>8</sup>

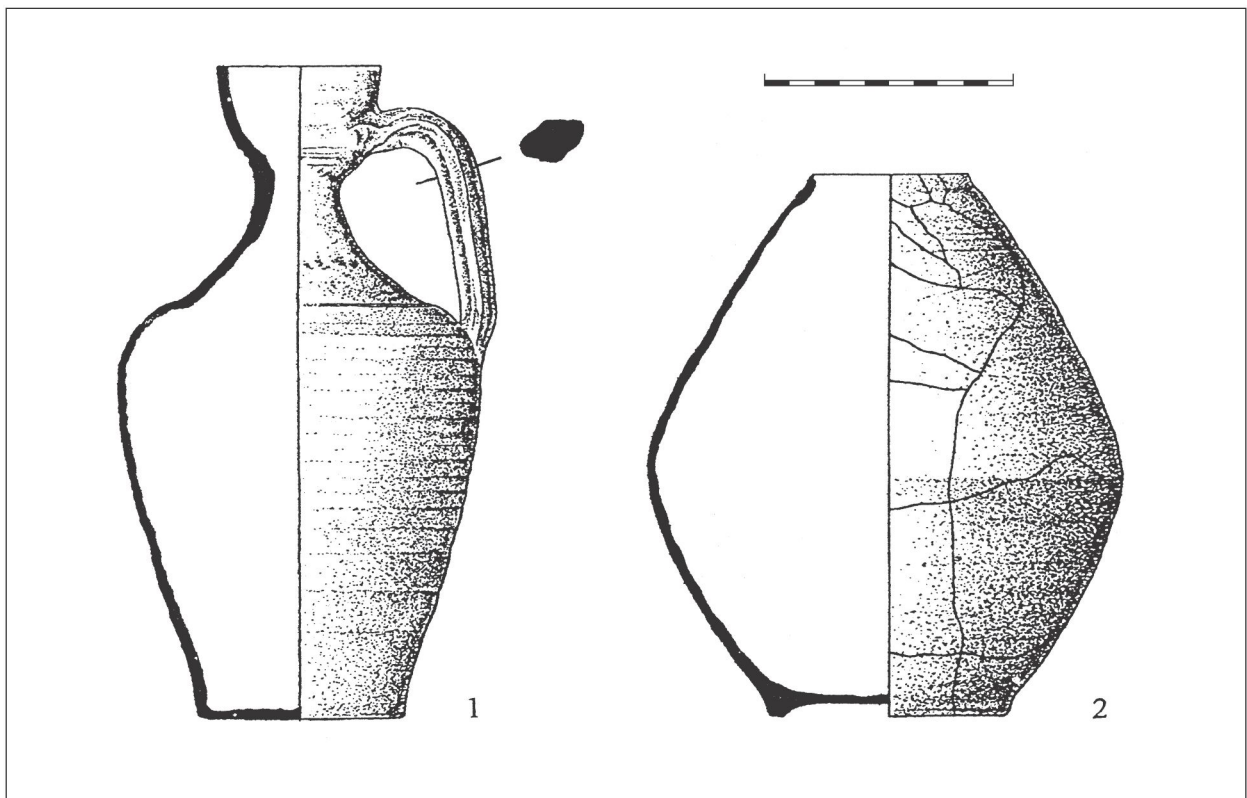


Fig. 4. Jugs from the Kilen-balka necropolis

<sup>3</sup> The information comes from the paper presented by O. Ja. Savelja during the conference “Romans in the Crimea”, held on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March 1999 in Warsaw.

<sup>4</sup> All material is preserved now in the National Preserve of Tauric Chersonesos; collective inventory numbers: 36715 and 37211

<sup>5</sup> J.W. HAYES, *Late Roman pottery*, London 1972, p. 112-117, fig. 19

<sup>6</sup> J.W. HAYES, *Sigillate orientali*, in: EAA Atlante delle forme ceramiche II. Ceramica fine romana nel bacino mediterraneo (tardo ellenismo e primo impero), Roma 1985, p. 93, fig. XXII

<sup>7</sup> HAYES, *Late Roman Pottery...*, 1972, p. 325-327, fig. 65

<sup>8</sup> This term is suggested by K. Domžalski in 1996; see K. DOMŽALSKI, *Terra Sigillata from Nymphaion*, Survey 1994, *Archeologia* 47, 1996, p. 95-109

<sup>9</sup> K. DOMŽALSKI, *Notes on the Late Roman Red Slip wares in the Bosporan Kingdom*, RCRFActa vol. 36, Abingdon 2000, p. 164, fig. 3; A.I. ROMANČUK, A.V. SAZANOV, *Krasnolakovaja keramika rannevizantijskogo Chersona. Srednevekovyj Cherson. Istorija, stratigrafija, nachodki. Čast` 1*, Sverdlovsk 1991, p. 56

## Catalogue

### Introduction

Not all of the red-slip wares found in the excavation were described in detail; only the basic forms were listed in the catalogue with indication of quantity of examples and of their find spots. The colours of the clay and the slip have been described using the *Munsell Soil Color Charts*.<sup>9</sup>

The following abbreviations have been used:

D – maximum diameter of rim

H – height of vessel

All dates are AD.

#### 1. Pontic Sigillata. Form 1<sup>10</sup> Fig. 2.10

*Small bowl* with convex body; vertical rim with flaring flange. Rounded ring-foot concave toward centre.

D. 11,7 cm; H. 5 cm.

Hard reddish-yellow clay (5YR 6/6), red slip (2.5YR 5/8).

1 example. Tomb 3/1991 (burial 7).

*Date:* the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

#### 2. Pontic Red Slip Ware. Form 1<sup>11</sup> Fig. 2.1

*Simple dish* with broad, flat floor, well distinguished thick and low under the edge of the floor, slightly curved walls and a plane slightly incurved rim.

D. 24,5-27 cm; H. 5-5,8 cm.

Fine light reddish-brown clay (2.5YR 6/4), red slip (10R 5/6).

13 examples. 1968 tomb; tombs 1/1991 and 3/1991 (burial 1).

*Date:* the mid of the 4<sup>th</sup> - first half of the 6<sup>th</sup> centuries

#### 3. Pontic Red Slip Ware. Form 4<sup>12</sup> Fig. 2.2

*Dish* with a gently sloping walls, thick outturned horizontal rim and broad flat floor with low foot.

D. 25-30,5 cm; H. 4,2-4,8 cm.

Fine hard light red clay (2.5YR 6/6), red slip (10R 4/6).

Two dishes have a graffito on the bottom.

5 examples. 1968 tomb, tombs 3/1991 (burial 1 and 5) and 6/1992

*Date:* the mid of the 4<sup>th</sup> - late 5<sup>th</sup> centuries

#### 4. African Red Slip Ware. Form 67<sup>13</sup> Fig. 2.3

*Shallow plate* with curving body, broad profiling rim and flat bottom with two grooves, imitated a foot, on exterior.

D. 19,3 cm; H. 3,3 cm.

Fine red clay (10R 5/8), orange-red slip (2.5YR 5/8).

1 example. Tomb 3/1991 (burial 2).

*Date:* 400-450

#### 5. Phocaen Red Slip Ware. Form 1 variant B<sup>14</sup> Fig. 2.9

*Bowl* with slightly curving body, plain vertical rim with sharp flange; very curving floor, projecting under the foot, low ring foot.

D. 15 cm; H. 5,6 cm.

Hard light-red clay (2.5YR 6/6), red slip (10R 5/6).

1 example. Tomb 3/1991 (burial 2).

*Date:* the early - third quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>9</sup> A.N. MUNSELL, *Soil Color Charts*, New York 1990

<sup>10</sup> HAYES, *Sigillate orientali...*, p. 93, fig. XXII

<sup>11</sup> DOMŽALSKI, *op. cit.*, p.164. fig. 2:1

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, fig. 2.4

<sup>13</sup> HAYES, *Late roman pottery...*, p. 112-117, fig. 19

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p.325-327, fig. 65

**Other forms****6. Deep plate** with convex walls and flat horizontal rim and flat floor on the rounded ring-foot **Fig. 2.5**

D. 19,5 cm; H. 5 cm

Plate has fired dark grey surface.

1 example. Tomb 3/1991 (burial 2).

*Analogy and date:* the necropolis of the South-Western Crimea – Černorečenskij, Inkermanskij, Družnoe – the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>15</sup>**7. Shallow plate** with oblique convex walls and flat horizontal rim with two grooves; floor on the rounded ring-foot **Fig. 2.4**

D. 21,5 cm; H. 3 cm.

Fine hard reddish-yellow clay (5YR 7/6), metallic red slip (2.5YR 5/8).

1 example. Tomb 3/1991 (southern niche).

No close parallels at Chersonesos and in necropoleis of the South-Western Crimea.

**8. Deep plate** with sloping walls; vertical rim with sharp flange. Slightly oblique bottom on the low rounded ring-foot **Fig. 2.6**

D. 19,7-21,4 cm; H. 6-6,7 cm.

Flaky clay of light-red colour (2.5YR 6/6), red or yellowish red slip (2.5YR 5/8 – 5YR 5/8).

4 examples. Tombs 3/1991 (southern niche and burial 4) and 5/1991.

*Analogy and date:* the necropolis of the South-Western Crimea – the second quarter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> - early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>16</sup>**9. Deep plate** with curving body and incurving rim with sharp lip; one groove on the outside of the rim under the flange. Concave bottom on the low ring foot **Fig. 3: 8.**

D. 21 cm; H. 7 cm.

Flaky clay of red colour (2.5R 4/6), the poor-quality slip of red colour (2.5YR 5/8) on the inside the vessel.

1 example. 1968 tomb

No close parallels at Chersonesos and in necropolis of the South-Western Crimea.

**10. Deep plate** with curving body and outturned rim; flat floor on the low ring foot. The vessel was made with defects **Fig. 2.7**

D. 20,5 cm; H. 5-5,7 cm.

Flaky red clay (2.5R 5/8), the poor-quality slip of red colour (10R 4/6) only inside the vessel.

1 example. 1968 tomb

No close parallels at Chersonesos and in necropoleis of the South-Western Crimea.

**11. Small bowl** with curving sloping walls and offset rim **Fig. 2.11, 12**– **11.1.** Angular rim, slightly downturning above walls, flat bottom on the low rounded ring-foot.

D. 10,5 cm; H. 4,2 cm.

– **11.2.** Angular downturned rim with range of cuts on the lip; curving bottom with convexity in the centre; low rounded ring-foot.

D. 11,5 cm; H. 4,4 cm.

Flaky reddish-yellow clay (7.5YR 6/6); the colour of slip from yellowish-red to strong brown (5YR 5/8 – 7.5YR 7/6).

2 examples. 1968 tomb

No close parallels.

<sup>15</sup> A.I. AJBABIN. *Choronologija mogil'nikov Kryma pozdnerimskogo i rannesrednevekovogo vremeni*, in: *Materialy po archoeologii, istorii i etnografii Tavrii*, vol. I, Simferopol 1990, p. 15. Priznak 24, fig. 2 (24), 5 (2); I.N. CHRAPUNOV, *Tri podbojnye mogily IV v. iz nekropolja Družnoe*, in: *Materialy po archeologii, istorii i etnografii Tavrii*, vol. VII, Simferopol 2000, p. 52, fig. 4 (11)

<sup>16</sup> AJBABIN, *op. cit.*, p. 115, Priznak 14, fig. 1 (14), 3 (11), 5 (1),

7 (7); E.V. VEJMARN, A.I. AJBABIN, *Skalistinskij mogil'nik*, Kiev 1993, p.190, fig. 74 (8); I.I. LOBODA, *Raskopki mogil'nika Ozernoe-III v 1963/65*, *Sovetskaja Archeologija* 4, 1977, p. 242-245, fig. 5 (1, 7), 6 (9); I.N. CHRAPUNOV. *O naselenii Kryma v pozdnerimskoe vremja (po materialam mogil'nika Družnoe)*, *Rossijskaja Archeologija* 2, 1999, p. 152, fig. 3 (2); CHRAPUNOV, *Tri podbojnye mogily...*, p. 52, fig. 4 (10)

12. *One-handled jug* with very extended body, oblique shoulder, narrow neck with pointed flange and everted profiled rim. Single vertical handle attached to lower shoulder and against underside of rim. Hollowed bottom on the ring foot **Fig. 3.1**

D. 7 cm; H. 37,5 cm.

Hard fine reddish-yellow clay (7.5YR 7/6), red slip (2.5YR 5/8).

1 example. 1968 tomb

*Analogy and date:* the jug from the Historical Museum of Ivanovo.<sup>17</sup> This form seems to imitate a metal prototype. Silver jug of such form was found in Panticapaion. It is dated to the last quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> – early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>18</sup>

13. *One-handled jug* with sloping shoulder, ovoid body, flat or slightly concave bottom on the low ring foot. Conical neck curving out to everted rim with rounded lip. Single ridged vertical handle attached above maximum diameter and against mid-neck **Fig. 3.2, 3, 4**

– 13.1. Large jug with massive body.

D. 6,8 cm; H. 21-25,5 cm – 8 examples

– 13.2. Jug with globular body.

D. 6,5-7 cm; H. 15-19,3 cm – 9 examples

– 13.3. Jug with squate body.

D. 6,2 cm; H. 18,8 cm – 1 example

Some vessels show production defects.

Flaky clay of light yellowish-brown and reddish-yellow colour (10YR 6/4 – 5YR 6/6). Red or light reddish-brown slip (10R 4/8 – 10YR 6/4).

1968 tomb; tombs 2/1991; 3/1991 (burials 1, 2, 3, 4, 5); 4/1991; 6/1992.

*Analogy and date:* typical form at Chersonesos, South-Western Crimea and sites of the Northern Black Sea Coast in the 3<sup>rd</sup> – second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>19</sup>

14. *One-handled jug* with sloping shoulder, squat body, disk-base with canted groove on the underside. Broad conical neck with wide everted rim, flat on the top. Single vertical handle attached above maximum diameter of body and against underside of rim **Fig. 3.7**.

D. 8 cm; H. 28 cm.

Hard clay of yellowish-red colour (5YR 5/6), red slip (10R 4/8).

1 example. 1991 tomb 1

*Analogy and date:* this vessel is a variant of the previous form.

15. *One-handled jug* with nearly flat shoulder, cylindrical body with slightly convex base; short conical neck with everted profiled rim; groove on vertical face of rim. Single vertical ridged handle attached at maximum diameter of body and to top of neck **Fig. 3.6**

D. 6,8-8 cm; H. 17-24 cm.

Light reddish-brown clay (5YR 6/4) with tiny white inclusions; the colour of slip from dark reddish-gray to yellowish-red (5YR 4/2 – 5YR 5/6).

8 examples. 1968 tomb; tombs 1/1991; 2/1991; 3/1991 (burials 1 and 2).

*Analogy and date:* typical form at Chersonesos and the necropoleis of the South-Western Crimea in the second quarter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> A. DODONOVA, *D.G. Burilin*, Ivanovo 1997, p.103

<sup>18</sup> I.P. ZASECKAJA, *Materialy bosporskogo nekropolja vtoroj poloviny IV- pervoj poloviny V v.v.n.e.*, in: *Materialy po archeologii, istorii i etnografii Tavrii*, vol. III, Simferopol 1993, p. 70, fig. 41 (184)

<sup>19</sup> A.I. AJBABIN, *Problemy chronologii mogil'nikov Kryma pozdnerimskogo perioda*, in: *Sovetskaja Archeologija* 1984, 1, p. 115, fig. 7 (9); AJBABIN, *Chronologija mogil'nikov Kryma...*, p. 15, fig. 4 (6); A.V. BURAKOV, *Kozyrskoe gorodishe rubeža i pervykh stoletij nashej ery*, Kiev 1976, p. 100-105, fig. IX, 25-26; E.V. VEJ-MARN, *Archeologični roboti v rajoni Inkermana*, in: *Archeologičeskie pam'jatniki*, vol. XIII, Kiev 1963, p. 39, fig. 14 (4,5);

LOBODA, *op. cit.*, p. 236-252, fig. 6 (2); V.M. ZUBAR', *Nekropol' Chersonesa Tavričeskogo I-IV v.v.*, Kiev 1982, p. 68, fig. 46 (1); S.G. RYŽOV, *Keramičeskij kompleks III-IV v.v.n.e. iz severo-vostočnogo rajona Chersonesa*, in: *Antičnaja kul'tura Severnogo Pričernomor'ja v pervye veka n.e.*, Kiev 1986, p. 132-133, fig. 3; CHRAPUNOV, *Tri podbojnye mogily...*, p.152, fig. 3 (6); V. Ju. JUROČKIN, *O chronologii Suvorovskogo pozdneantičnogo mogil'nika*, in: *Nikonij i antičnyj mir Severnogo Pričernomor'ja*, Odessa 1997, p. 306, fig. 1 (23)

<sup>20</sup> AJBABIN *Problemy chronologii mogil'nikov Kryma...*, p. 115, *Priznak* 17, fig. 6 (6); LOBODA, *op. cit.*, p. 236-252, fig. 6 (2); RYŽOV, *op. cit.*, p. 132-133, fig. 3



**16.** *Two-handled jug* with sloping shoulder, globular body, slightly convex base. Narrow neck with pointed flange and everted rim, flat on the top. Six stacked rings at base of the neck. Two vertical ridged handles attached of low shoulder and against mid-neck. The surface of body decorated by lines of reddish-brown slip (2.5YR 3/3-3/4) **Fig. 3.5**  
D. 5,2 cm; H. 22,8 cm.

Hard yellowish-red clay (5YR 5/6) with tiny white angular inclusions; white engobe on the surface of vessel.

1 example. Tomb 3/1991 (burial 2).

*Analogy and date:* silver vessels are known from the Western Coast of the Black Sea; the form seems to imitate metal vessels dated to the second half of the 5th century.<sup>21</sup>

**17.** *One-handled jug* with nearly flat shoulder, conical body with tapering surface, flat base. Short neck curving to bulbous mouth, two stacked necking rings at mid-neck. One groove on lower shoulder. Single vertical handle with central rib attached above maximum diameter and against mid-neck **Fig. 4.1**

D. 6,7 cm; H. 27 cm.

Flaky red clay (2.5YR 5/8) with abundant angular dark and white inclusions; white engobe on the surface of vessel.

1 example. Tomb 6/1992.

No close parallels.

**18.** *The vessel* with biconical body, flat bottom with low ring-foot. Sharp angular rim. Without handles and neck **Fig. 4.2**

D. 6,9 cm; H. 22,8 cm.

Flaky light red clay (2.5YR 6/8), the poor-quality red slip (10R 5/6).

1 example. Tomb 4/1991.

No close parallels.

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<sup>21</sup> A. OPAIȚ, *Aspecte ale viltii economice provincia Scythia (sec. IV-VI p. Ch.)*, București 1996, p. 241, fig. 50 (7)