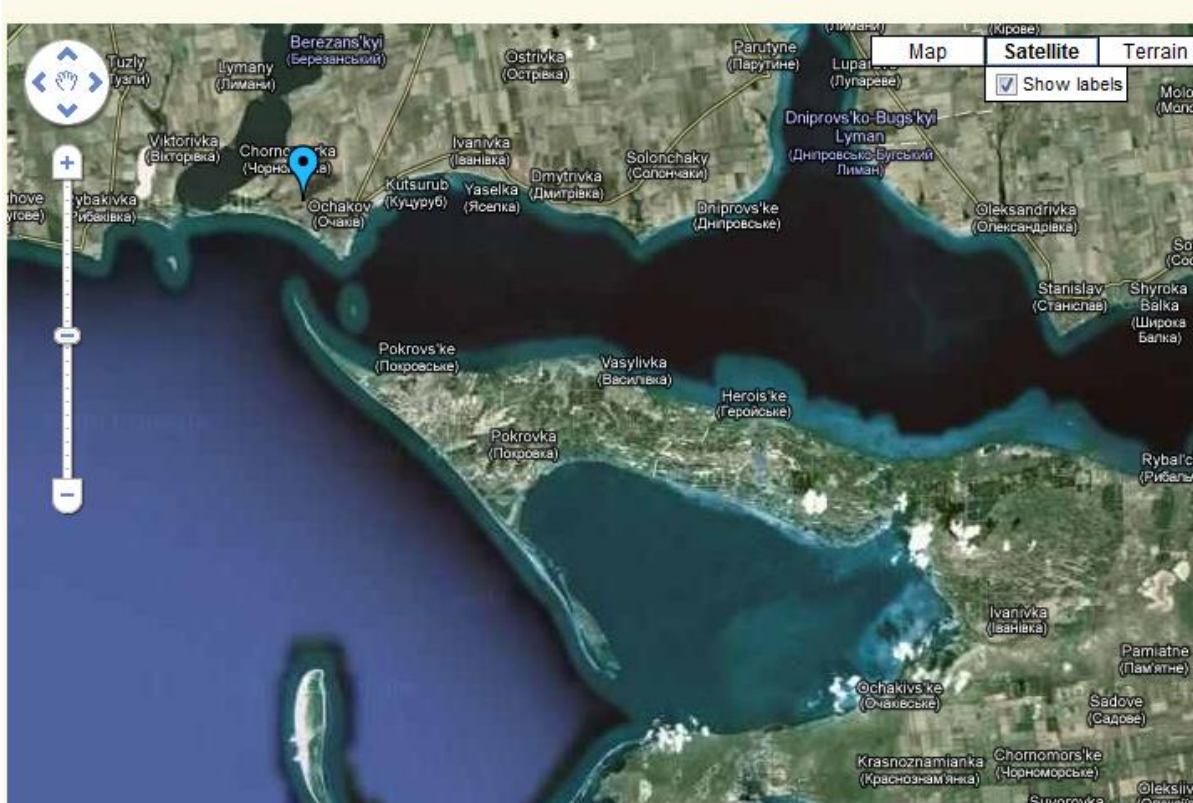


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The Olbian's extra mural sanctuaries on the Northern Black Sea Coast



Abstract

The intent of this essay is to gather all available information concerning the *Extra mural sanctuaries of the Olbian polis*. The Olbia which emerges is a city at the head of a large region, though the nature of its routine dealings with its environs remains to be elucidated. At times Olbia's "mini-empire" in the north – west Black Sea region included except the city itself and many agrarian settlements along the estuary of the river Bug, but probably a range of settlements along the lower Dnieper (Hippolaus' promontory), north – west Crimea (Racecourse of Achilles), the outer estuary of the Dnieper (Hylaea/Woodland), Berezan island and to the west, the island of Leuke, as well as possibly other settlements reaching towards the Dniester (Braund 2007: 37) (Map.1).

However, for all uncertainty about the details, this large region may reasonably be termed "Greater Olbia". All the above areas which have already been mentioned, are the most important and deserve to be mentioned religious lands, which stand sacred sanctuaries, altars, temenoi, though most of these are known only from the ancient scholars.

Moreover, the rural area of Olbia has been studied less than its city. Survey in this area has started in the middle of the 19th c. by Uvarov. Investigation in the Olbian chora is conducted by the Institute of Archaeology and the National Assembly of Sciences of Ukraine. We have information of some hundred settlements in the chora concerning various periods from archaic to the first c. A.D. In addition to permanent settlements, we also have information of temporary camps of herdsmen and fishermen (Kryzhitskiy 2000, No.2) (Map.2).

Key words: Olbia, Olbia chora, sanctuaries, island of Leuke, island of Berezan, Achilles, Dnieper

1. The religious culture of rural chora of Olbia

To begin with, in this chapter we will try to focus on the development of the spiritual culture of the population of the rural chora of Olbia, during the three periods of the antiquity: Archaic, Classical-Hellenistic and the first centuries A.D. It is worth to be mention that, the whole expansion or decline of Olbian chora, follows the history of its own polis.

Firstly, a plenty of finds of subjects of the material culture made during excavations of rural chora of Olbia, allows receiving representation about the most essential features of spiritual life of the population of chora. Letters on leaden plates, a shed of amphora of style Fikellura, graffiti, personal names, monogrammes and the terracotta figurines found mainly at excavations of settlements testify to that (Fig.1-3) (Bylkova 1995: 139-140; Kryzhytsky, Krapivina 2005: 529).

During the Archaic period, inhabitants of rural settlements worshipped Achilles, Aphrodite, Kore, probably, Athena and Apollo. Among found dedications, the greatest amount was addressed to Achilles. Especially, there are a lot of dedications, connected with the cult of Achilles. It was revealed on the left coast of Berezanskiy estuary on settlements Bejkush and Bolshaya Tchernomorka. Also, by finds of terracottas of the goddess sitting in an armchair in ieratic pose - on settlements Bolshaya Tchernomorka, the cult of Demeter was distributed on chora (Rusyaeva 1971: 3; Bujskih 1985; Otrshko 1997).

Furthermore, small altars, credences and sanctuaries mainly of Achilles on Bejkushkoe settlement, ash-pit connected with agricultural cults on settlement Kutsurub, are known in rural area (Marchenko, Domanskiy 1983: 24). Under information of Herodotus in a place of merge of Borysthenes and Hypanis rivers, on Hippolaus Cape, a temple of Demeter was settled down (Herod, Hist, IV, 53-56). Based on a letter on a shed of amphora of Fikellura style, we learn that in Hylaea were the altars devoted to Mother of Gods, Heracles ad Borysthenes (Vinogradov 1981: 15; Rusyaeva, Mazarati 1986: 513-514).

Continuing with the classical- Hellenistic period, the population of rural chora as well as earlier, continued to live in an environment of close and clear to him mythical heroes and gods. Especially in this respect allocated Kinburnskiy peninsula and Tendrovskaya kosa. On Tendra, called Drom of Achilles, games in honor of Achilles were arranged in which not only Olbiopolites but also representatives of other cities participated (Kublanov 1959; Rusyaeva 1979: 137-138). On Kinburn sacred grove of Hecate, was located (Anonym, *Per.Pont*, 53; Ptolemy, *Geog*, III, 5.2) in the same place at its extremely in 1895 the altar of 4th-3rd c. B.C., with dedication to Achilles was found out.

What is more, there are two unique finds of leaden products from ash mound located in a northwest part of the settlement Katelino. One of them is with the image of Heracles, learning on club (Ruban 1985: 37), the second with the unilateral relief image of a chariot, harnessing with two horses, controlled by the river in a short chiton with a wreath on a head. According to Ruban, the whole group is connected with games in honor of Achilles (Fig.1, 33-37-astragaloi) (Ruban 1985: 55-57).

Summing with this period, finds of leaden bucraniums and labrisos which are typical for Lower Bug region, testify to features of reverence here the cult of Dionysus, as god of a dying and reviving of nature as well as the patron of died (Zajtseva 1971: 97-98; Rusyaeva 1979: 87-89). It was found also leaden herma that testifies to some popularity of Hermes esteemed in rural district most likely as the god of fields and gardens, the patron of shepherds.

Closing with the period of the first c. A.D., evidences of spiritual culture are not numerous. From fortified settlements there are individual fragments of lapidary inscriptions. During excavations on Bejkush settlement, a calcareous plate which is dated in 2nd c. A.D., has been found with a dedication of figurine of Nike to Apollo Prostatos by Olbian strategists (Karyshkovskiy, P.O, 1982, pp.126-127; IOSPE, I², 116)¹. Not readable fragments of inscriptions of 3rd c. A.D., were found in other places (Kryzhytskyy et all. 1989: 211-212).

2. Achilles and the island of Leuke (White island)

To start with, the island of Leuke, marks the western extent of Olbian ambitions and responsibilities. The island was the home of a cult of Achilles which evidently had significance beyond Olbia. As far as the geographic data concerns about the island of Leuke is rather inconsistent. Firstly, (Ptolemy, *Geog.* III.10.8) mentioned that the coordinates of Borysthenis and the island of Achilles mark that they are close to each other. The messages of antique geographers about the site of the island on the delta of Istros have a more concrete character, ascertaining that “*Achilles lives in the island lying directly opposite Istros*” (Max. Tyr. XV) or “*opposite the mouths of Istros*” (Pausanias, *Desc of Grec.*III. 19.II).

Moreover, in the middle of the 7th c. B.C., was generated the belief that the “White”, “brightly- shined”, “blessed” island, where Achilles lived, concerns the place on a way of the ships, going to the north of Pontos, that is in Scythia. Alkeos, testifies directly to it “*About Achilles, the lord of the Scythian ground*” (Alkeos. *Fr.* 48B). Such place, as later sources confirm, was the island of Zmeinyj (Snake) in the Black Sea (Map.3). From this statement, mentioning the hero as a lord, probably there are early attempts of the idolization of Achilles “*He reached the gods ... The Milesians have made him the lord of their country ... they have praised him as a god*” (Hommel 1981: 63).

Considering the occurrence of a sanctuary there, Greeks created a set of variants of local myths about Achilles. During many centuries, all these myths bore special popularity among the citizens of Olbia. Olbia’s link with the island seems to be suggested by the Eumelan the poet, mentioned of a nymph- Muse named

¹ [— — — — —][— — — — —]ης Σω[μάχ]ου, Σαβεῖνος Ἀπολλοῦτος, Ἀβρόαγος Σουσοῦλωνος, Φάρναγος Ζήθου, Κάσκηνος Κασάγου ἀνέθηκαν Νείκην χρύσειον σὺν βάσει ἀργυρέῳ ὑπὲρ τῆς πόλεως καὶ τῆς αὐτῶν ὑγείας.

Borysthenes, who is best understood as Achilles's mother, Thetis, who brought her son to Leuke and buried him there (Braund 2007: 54).

Certainly, later inscription show that between the 4th and 2nd c. B.C Olbiopolitans, had the control and the protection of the island (Maslennikov 2000: 47) (IOSPE, I², 326) (Fig.4). Particularly evocative is an honorary inscription dated no later than the early 3rd c. B.C. (IOSPE, I², 325) (Fig.5).

What is more, the most significant and known monument on the island, was the sanctuary of Achilles. The most ancient mention of the island comes from the 7th c. B.C., (Arctin.Aethiop, ap Procl Chrest.II) in which it is stated: "*Thetis having come with muses and sisters, mourns over the son and after that, having stolen the son from fire, transfers to the White island*". The site of the given island is not specified here and for a long time this script was treated only for its mythological value (Okhotnikov, Ostroverkhov 2003: 537).

Furthermore, the writers locating the sanctuary with these lines: Pausanias, *Descr of Grec*, III, 19. II) "*On the island there is a temple of Achilles with his statue*". The same information is given by Arrian, *Per.Pon.Eux*, 32, adding that "*in the temple there are a lot of other gifts – a bowl, rings, jewels, as well as some inscriptions: one in Latin, the others in Greek, in order to praise Achilles*". Unfortunately, from the ancient writers it is impossible to get the concrete information about the time of the construction of the temple and archaeological remains were not kept in situ.

Nevertheless, the first plan of a building by N.D. Kritskiy, located in the center of the island was probably the temple of our hero. According to the plan, the dimensions were 29.87m x 29.87m, and the building was positioned on the sunny sides. The internal space shared a cross- section wall in two unequal parts; the western one was divided in three rooms and the eastern one in two. From the northern side one more room, in which there was a tank, was adjoined to the construction.

Additionally, the most authentic details concerning the temple or the altars are a block of a beacon found out in a courtyard and a part of a relief lifted from the bottom of the Southern bay. Another major source for the reconstruction of the temple is the architectural terracotta and a tile. Its finds were marked in the 19th c: "the roof consisted of a tile, one part was flat quadrangular, bent from one edge and the other part was semicircular (Murzakevich 1844: 549). Based on that, fragments of acroteria, simas with ovuli and artefixes, which were executed in the Ionian style, allow reconstructing most of the general variants of the volumetric – spatial construction of the temple of Achilles (Okhotnikov, Ostroverkhov 2003: 543).

Last but not least, about the Achilles' cult, seems that there was a connection between Achilles and the chthonic world. One of the characteristic features of the chthonic image of Achilles is his connection with the snake. The image of the snake inside the temple is known on a ring on Leuke; also it was found a cult vessel with the image of the head of the god and the retrograde inscription AXIΛΛΕΩ (Okhotnikov, Ostroverkhov 2003: 547). The chthonic - sacred coniferous trees were also devoted to god (IOSPE, I², 327) (Fig.6) (Apoll.Rhod, *Argo*, IV, 309-325; Pliny, *NH*, IV, 79), with the same sacred role of birds (Arrian, *Per.Pon.Eux*, 32; Philostratus, *Lives of Soph*, XIX, 16).

To sum up this chapter, the major idea about Achilles as lord of Leuke and the whole Pontos, was reflected in the epiclesis "Pontarches". He has divine features. It was the god of the underground empire, chthonic representations and numerous ceremonies connected to him. He was the patron of seafarers, the keeper of borders of the state and the oracle-forecasting destiny (Okhotnikov, Ostroverkhov 2003: 550).

3. Cults on the island of Berezan

The ancient settlement on the island of Berezan, located in the estuary of two major southern Ukrainian rivers – the Dnieper and the Lower Bug (Map.4) – is known to be one of the oldest settlements in the northern Black sea region, dated in the 7th c. B.C. The Berezan island, known in the ancient world initially by the name Borysthene, was the first link in chain of Greek city-states (polis), which appeared in the northern littoral of the Pontus. As a contact zone of interaction between the Greeks and indigenous people, located in the middle of Herodotean Scythia, Borysthene became a powerful “magnet” of many tribes and cities, who left numerous traces of their presence in the material and spiritual cultural of the peninsula, mainly from Olbia (Solovyov 1999, introduction).

To start with, the development of the northern coast of Pontos, began at the time when the Greek religion had already formed a relatively stable system; the first Ionians arrived at Berezan with traditional notions of various deities and form a cult practice. Literary evidence of ancient cults has survived relatively small, and for this region their number is even more limited. Only the earliest literary source is the story of Herodotus, which refers to the worship of Dionysus- Bacchus, Cybele and Demeter. Such scant details of the ancient authors only in combination with the epigraphic monuments: the dedicatory graffiti on pottery and inscriptions on marble, terracotta figurines, allows us an idea of the religious life.

Based on the above, in Berezan a dedicatory graffiti found on the Apollo Physician in black- lacquer amphora (Fig.7). The value of physician should not be seen in direct narrow sense, but as a savior, protector. Sculptural images of Apollo as a figure standing as youth- Kuroshio are very rare. Statutory standing is strictly frontal type figure has been borrowed by the Greeks from Egypt. So all- time research on the island found only a fragment of the feet of the statue (Fig.8) (Nazarov 1997: 21).

Moreover, there are some deities patronized agriculture; these are Demeter and Dionysus. Dedicatory graffiti of Demeter is very rare, still in Berezan found only one (Fig.9). In terracotta figurines depicting the two women seated on the throne should see Demeter and Kore (Fig.10); Demeter was particularly closely associated with the world of the immortal gods and mortal men, serving in the role of the ancient Great Mother Earth. She was revered in various areas, as agriculture is the most important component of their welfare. Along with Demeter, it was found graffiti of Dionysus (Fig.11); is often found fragments of Attic black-figure kylix and lekythos with his image. Particularly interesting to note the discovery of graffiti with a dedication to Dionysus Bacchus (Fig.12)².

What is more, on the veneration of divinities in Berezan we know only from the findings of dedicatory graffiti and terracotta statues. No altars or shrines associated with their cults still not found. It is known that in ancient times the sanctuary of a deity or hero could be a cave or cleft in the rock, the grove. Along with public sanctuaries, small private one existed in the homes. Perhaps all these terracotta and figurines were used as private religious purposes (Nazarov 1997:4-21).

Nevertheless, in a territory of necropolis, the oddments of constructions with an apsis and step stone platform were open. In judgment by V.V. Lapin, there are cult buildings of late archaic temenos (Lapin 1966: 109-121). In 1851 count A.S. Uvarov, was published the plan of the island. Based on this plan M.F. Boltenko, mentioned a

² About celebration of Dionysus, see Herodotus, *Hist*, IV, 79.

cult- side of Aphrodite Eupleje (*Εὐπλοία*) (Boltenko 1930: 39); V.V. Lapin, on the territory of the “O” section was investigated the building of a beginning of the 5th c. B.C., interpreted by him as a temple (Plan.1) (Lapin 1966: 146-147).

However, according to V.V.Nazarov, the excavation of the cult complex which has finished, shown that this is Aphrodite’s sanctuary dated to the second half of the 6th c. B.C. (Nazarov 2006: 139-170; Krizhitskiy 2010: 96). The indicated complex included fencing walls of a sacred site, monolithic stone altar of the round form and a temple (Plan.2, Fig.13). The temple is the rectangular building oriented on an axis north-west – a southeast, with 5.72x4.25m sizes. Structurally, it consists from pronaos and naos. The order of the temple was Ionic or Attic (Kryzhytsky et al. 2002: 469).

According to the reconstruction, the temple was one in antis with an open columnless portico. The walls of the temple were approximately 20-60 m height. The lower numbers of masonries of walls of a temple on the part of external facades are built from the well- treated limestone blocks (Kryzhytsky 200: 165-175). On a floor inside the naos of a temple numerous terracotta figurines were found, among which special mention should be a statue of the goddess seated on a throne, a vessel in a form of a female figure with a tunic and cloak holding a dove in her hands, shaped vessel in a form of a dove and a turtle figurine shaped (Fig14-18). Typologically, it is the same set of floor tiles and curved vessels that were found in Aphrodite’s sanctuary in Miletus; the pigeon and turtle were the attributes of Aphrodite (Graeve, 1992). It is possible to assume that both temples in Miletus and Berezan were dedicated to Aphrodite Urania (Kryzhytsky et al. 2002: 469).

Furthermore, during the 19th c, archaeological excavations in Berezan island, revealed seven inscriptions with dedications to Achilles Pontarches³ (IOSPE, I², 87,89,131,135, Hermitage, number: B.88.149, B.89.375, B.89.376) and one with a dedication to Achilles the Hero (No.90), all dated the first c. A.D. To the list of dedications Achilles, can add (IOSPE, I², 154), a fragment of an inscription from V.V. Lapin in 1978, during excavations of the building of the Roman period in the main site (Yaylenko 1987: 50; Solovyov 1999: 116).

Based on the above, many of these inscriptions were addressed to the deeply-revealed hero of the Olbia people in the names of leading citizens: *archontes*, *agoranomoi*, *stratego*i and *pristes*. It is important to note that one-third of these finds were created on Berezan, which made scholars believe that the appearance of a sanctuary on Berezan at the time was a measure compelled by the loss of Olbia’s control over the Greek sanctuary of Achilles on Leuke (Rusyaeva 1992: 79-80).

Another important in a row, an inscription which was published by Shelov-Kovedyaev, in 1990, is a unique example of local poetry glorifying Achilles Pontarches, who had received possession on the island (Fig.19).The latter point is one of the most important pieces of documentary evidence, indicating that event taken place not long before the creation of the inscription. Unlike the previous inscription, two other dedications to Achilles (found in 1989) appear to be traditional, rather terse formulations (Vinogradov, Yu.G. 1994: 20-21). In one case (Fig.20), the dedicator was probably collegiums of *agoranomoi*; in the other case (Fig.21), a priest of the hero cult (Solovyov 1999: 117).

³ ἀγαθῆ τύχῃ. Ἀχιλλεῖ Ποντά[ρ]χη οἱ περὶ Ἰκέσιον Μαϊάκου τὸ / δεύτερον ἄρχο[ν]τες Ἀναξιμένης Ἀναξιμένους, Ῥαόδημος Κόλχου, Διονυσιόδωρος/ Ἐρωτος, Ἀργουάναγος Καράξτου ὑπὲρ τῆς πόλεως εὐσταθίας καὶ τῆς ἑαυτῶν ὑγείας χαριστήριον.

To complete with the religious life of the Berezan island, numerous numismatic material are represented by bronze coins, that, in accordance with its shapes, called “arrow coins” and “dolphin coins”. The formal likeness of an early coins with arrowheads and later – with dolphins, are reflected the change of predominate cult of Apollo Medic [Iatros (his attribute was an arrow)] to cult of Apollo Delphinus (his attribute was a dolphin) (Rusyaeva 1986: 25-64). Sometimes, on island were found a massive foundry Olbian coins with images of Athena, Demeter and Gorgoneion (Karyshkovskij 1960: 85-89; Gilevitch 2000: 112-139).

4. Beykush settlement - The worship of Achilles

Beginning, the most remarkable monuments of the archaic period, in the rural region of Olbia, is the Beykush settlement, known since the early 2nd c. B.C. It is situated in the west- facing promontory between the ports Berezanski and Beikouski near the island Berezan (Map.5). During the excavations (Rusyayeva, in 1967-1969 and Buyskikh in 1985-1986, 1995), in this settlement approximately, has survived an area of 2,000 sq. m, which were revealed more than 100 different building sets.

Based on the above, these sets have been compared with the cult buildings discovered in the ancient temple and the outskirts of Olbia, as well as in Nymphaeum and Myrmekion, certifying their religious character. The aboveground structures appeared as stone or brick shrines, altars, open- hearths and ritual spaces. The dug in the earth buildings belong to the tanks or sites for mass ritual offerings. The structures as well as findings that accompanied the religious groups (primarily the votives in the form of votive clay, stone and bone objects with dedicatory engraved inscriptions of Achilles and magic symbols), mentioned about the originality of the Beykush settlement among the other late archaic monuments of Low Bug region (Buyskikh 2001).

What is more, the peculiar category of ritual objects and bank offerings which have been discovered in these sets are also a number of votive clay, six main types of circular objects (other with graffiti and other without), coins, terracotta cult bread, numerous broken lamps, figurines and bathtubs (all are connected with the intensive celebrations, c. 525-470 B.C, of the cult of Axxhilles). It is important to note that one of the graffiti is carved the word ΑΛΣΟΣ (Κορομηλά 2001: 98).

According to Bujskikh, the results of the excavations of this settlement, allow us to assume that the Beykouski Cape, was one of the earliest and most popular places of Achilles' worship in the north coast of the Black Sea, parallel with island of Leuke, Berezan, Olbia and Tentrovagia/Achilles Road (Buyskikh 2007).

Either the entire monument has a character of a sanctuary or it was used as a place of a permanent residence and intensive worship, by the Ionian colonists, for the chthonic deities with the dominance of the cult of Achilles. As a conclusion, nowadays, archaeologists distinguish two periods of the temple's birthday: 1) second half of 6th c. B.C and 2) the first 3rd of the 5th c. B.C. (Buyskikh 2001).

5. Hylaea/Woodland and Hippolaus' promontory

Having further information about the spiritual cultural of the population of “Greater Olbia”, Herodotus, in (*Hist*, IV, 55), mentioned “ἐκτος δὲ Ὑπάκυρις ποταμός, ὃς ὀρμαῖται μὲν ἐκ λίμνης, διὰ μέσων δὲ τῶν νομάδων Σκυθέων ῥέων ἐκδιδοῖ κατὰ

Καρκινίτιν πόλιν, ἐς δεξιὴν ἀπέργων τὴν τε Ὑλαίην καὶ τὸν Ἀχιλλήιον δρόμον καλεόμενον”.

More generally, the link between Hylaea and the city of Olbia is particularly well attested, thanks to an inscription on a fragment of so-called Fikellura pottery made in Miletus approximately dated between 550-530 c. B.C., recently been found at Olbia (Braund 2007: 46-47). According to this inscription (known as the “priest letter”), Greeks built three shrines on the lower Dnieper, for the Mother of the Gods, for Heracles and for Borysthenes; the altars were destroyed: SEG 42 (1992), no.710, “... [ὁ δέ? ἐκπ]ῆι ἐνθεῦθεν ἐς τὴν Ὑλαί[ην ---] [---] αὐτις οἱ βωμοὶ βεβλαμμένο[ι εἰσί ---] [--Μ]ητρὸς θεῶν καὶ Βορυσθέ(νεω) (ορ (νιος) καὶ Ἡρακλ[ῆος] [--μ]ετὰ τό νανάγιον οἱ δοῦλοι καταδρα[μεῖν]” (Fig.22.).

Based on the above destruction, Rusyaeva provide the hostile attitude of Scythians towards Greek deities in the 6th and 5th c. B.C., parallel with the story of Scythian Anacharsis (Rusyaeva, 2007: 97). But all these are just hypothesis because the destruction of these shrines could be caused by many other reasons (e.g. piracy, earthquakes and bad construction).

Moreover, it remains unclear if ever been the worships of the already mentioned cults in Hylaea; conceivably, as far as it concerns Cybele, they were linked in Hylaea, whose name indicates in many trees, because the whole region was rich in woods than is apparent from the modern landscape (Zhuravlyov 1983: 44). However, a significant confirmation of the link between the cult of Cybele in the Olbia polis and its counterpart in Hylaea, if such is true, comes from a recent discovery of a graffito on a fragment of pottery dated to the first half of the 5th c. B.C. and been found in situ in the centre of Olbia written: SEG 42 (1992), no.709.2, “*To the Mother of the Gods, mistress of Hylaea*”.

Furthermore, the “priest letter” seems to assume the words of Herodotus about Heracles and his meeting with Echidna, because it locates Heracles’ cult in Hylaea (Herod, *Hist*, IV, 9). Also, at least on an Olbian view, Scythians not only were the descendants of Heracles, but perhaps, that descent was memorialized and celebrated in Heracles’ cult in Hylaea. All that may account for the iconography of Olbian coins with a certain Eiminakos (usually taken to be a Scythian ruler) on the obverse and Heracles on the reverse (Braund 2007: 50-51).

What is more, the location of Olbian cult places further, illustrates the extent of Greater Olbia at the time of Herodotus’ visit in the middle decades of the 5th c. B.C. In archaic period, when Olbia was founded, its territory reached no further east than Cape Hippolaus. Possibly, south of Olbia and across the Bug estuary, on the promontory of Hippolaus where the waters of the Bug and Dnieper meet, stood the hieron of Demeter, mentioned by Herodotus (*Hist*, IV, 53.6). She duly appears on Olbian coinage (Braund 2007: 46) (Fig.23). Probably, Demeter’s temple was the work of the Olbiopolitans, who perhaps named the promontory as presumably the Callippidae (Bylkona 1995: 141). It has been observed that sanctuaries defined the boundaries of ancient poleis and protect their chora (Mertens 1990).

6. North – west Crimea and the Racecourse of Achilles

Additionally, important evidence and a couple of sources, indicate that in the North-West Crimea used to located a grove of Hecate (identification with the Mother of the Gods), and the “Racecourse of Achilles”. The geographer Ptolemy (*Geog*, III, 5.7-8), notes that the grove of Hecate, is firmly located on what is now Kinburn spit, the next

promontory after the northern end of Tendra, the “Racecourse of Achilles”. The accurate words are the following: “*Estuary of the Hypanis river, Grove of Hecate: a promontory; the isthmus of the “Racecourse of Achilles”, the southern promontory of Achilles’ Racecourse which is called Sacred Promotory..*”.

Moreover, in the Anonymous (*Per. Pont*, 58-60), gives more topographical issues but requires slight emendation to state. So the *Periplus*, following the coast north-west past Tendra and round into the Dnieper, can only mean that the sacred grove of Hecate stood on the Kinburn spit, which is reached by those who have sailed up past the top of Tendra from the cult site of Achilles at its bottom end (Braund 2007: 48-49).

Very important in a row, is Herodotus’ story for the cult of the Mother of the Gods; the Scythian king Anacharsis, who had established the worship of the Mother of the Gods, he duly punished by his fellow Scythian with death (*Hist*, IV, 76). Meanwhile, an honor decree dated to the 1st c. B.C., been found in Olbia, mentioned the horses games on “Racecourse of Achilles”⁴.

Lastly, the sparse crop of inscriptions from Tendra does enough both to show a cult of Achilles there and to hint at the prominence of Olbia (Braund 2007: 55); it was found a dedication there (possibly by a Bosporan) dated by what seems to be a Olbian formula: IOSPE, I², 332, ἐπὶ [ἱερέως Ἰ]-εροσῶ[ντος Ἀχιλλεῖ?][ε]ὐχαριστήριον [ὁ δεῖνα τοῦ][δεῖνος] ἀπὸ Βοσπ[όρου — —]5 [— — — να]ύτης [— — — —](Fig.24). To sup up, the cults of the Lower Danube, have strongly linked to Olbia, as we can see on the dedications by Olbian magistrates or by private one (navigators). This relation between the two regions seems to indicate the policy of Olbiopolites to set up trade relations with the ingenious; this aim could be achieved through the construction of the sanctuaries.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the religious life of Greater Olbia, was similarly orientated along riverine and marine routes. That in turn gave the micro-region much of its identity and sense of place, while keeping open passage for goods and people in and out of the area, to and from the city, up to hinterland as well as south into the Black Sea world and beyond.

It is worth noting that some deities which are very prominent indeed in Olbia polis, seem to be notably absent from Greater Olbia. A great exemplar is Apollo as the patron deity of Olbian city; he seems to have no strong presence in the rural settlements, parallel to Zeus, Athena and other deities or semi- deities. Although there are some graffiti and other minor indications of their presence outside the city (chiefly in Berezan- Fig.25), the main thrust of the evidence seems to be that their cults were urban, linked not least with the business of colonization itself, sponsored by Milesian Apollo (Braund 2007: 56).

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⁴ [τὸ δὲ τελευταῖον, διαβ]άντων εἰς τὴν Ὑλαίαν τῶν πολειτῶν οὐδ’ ἐν το[ύ]τοις τοῦ προνοεῖν τῆς[πόλεως ἀπελείφθη· οἰόμενος] γὰρ τῆ ἐαυτοῦ παρουσίᾳ τοὺς ὄχλους εὐφυλακτοτέ[ρου]ς ἔσας [θαί, ἄνευ — — — — κ]αὶ τῆς καθηκούσης ἀκολουθίας παραγενόμενος αὐτόθι προεφύλασεν ἄρετῆς ἔ[ν]εκα καὶ εὐεργεσίας[τῆς εἰς αὐτόν· στεφα]νοῦσθαι δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ καθ’ ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτὸν ἐν τῆ ἀρχαιρετικῇ ἐκ[κλη] / [σίαι καὶ ἐν τῶι — — — ἀ]γῶνι τὰχιλλεῖ {Ἀχιλλεῖ} κατὰ τὸ πυθόχρηστον τῆς ἵπποδρομίας, τοῦ κήρυκος ἀν[α][γορευόντος καθὼς ἢ ἐπι]γραφῆ {ι} τοῦ ἀνδριάντος περιέχει

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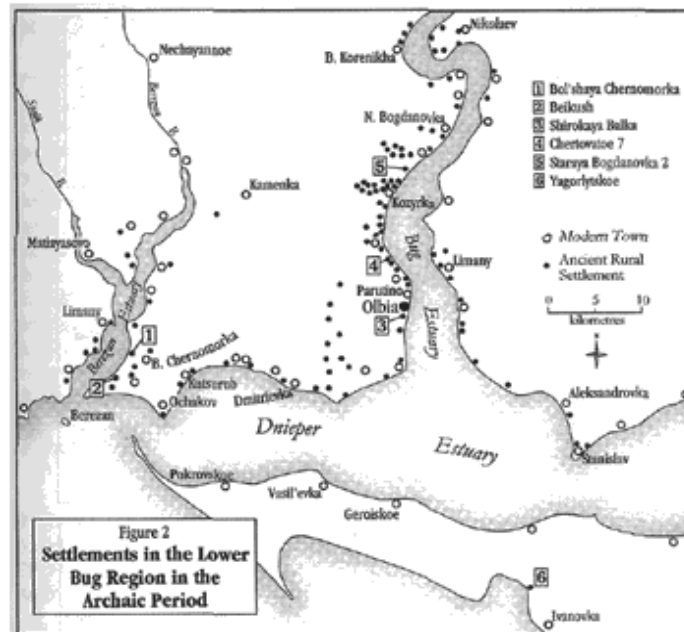
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- Map.1. Settlements in the Lower Bug Region in the Archaic period: *In accordance with Kryzhitskiy, S.A, The chora of Olbia Pontica: The main problems* (http://www/arts.mum.ca/mouseion/2000/kryzhitskii/fig_02.html). 4/04/2020.
- Map.2. Olbia and its environs: in accordance with Kryzhitskiy ,S.D *The main results of the excavations at Olbia in the past three decades*, p.10.
- Map.3. Black Sea Region, in *Archaeological reports for 1971-1972- Archaeological investigations on the Northern shore of the Black Sea in the territory of the Soviet Union, 1965-70* (http://www.jstor.org/pss/581071_) 4/04/2020.
- Map.4. Berezan island (http://mapsof.net/bryn_mawr_) 4/04/2020.
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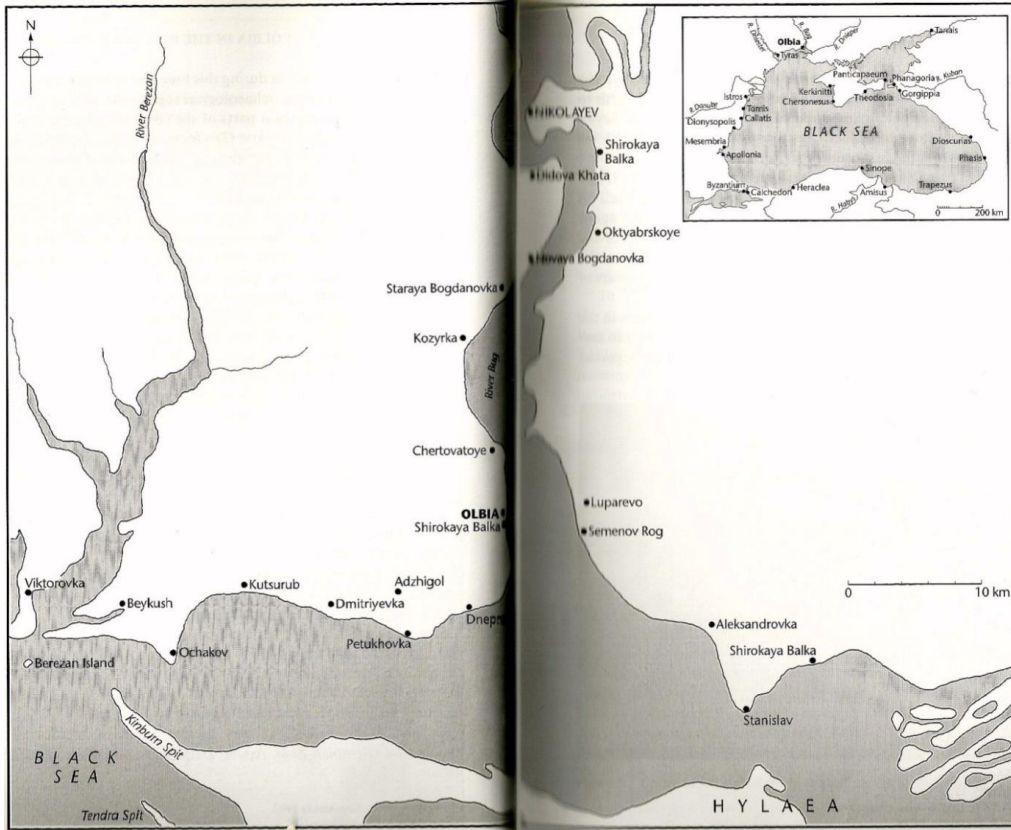
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- Fig.4. Private Dedication, IOSPE, I², 326.
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- Fig.12. The edges of the legs with a black-lacquer Cylix dedicatory graffiti – I am holy [bowl] Bacchus, Clay in about 500 c. B.C. (<http://www.borysthenes.org>) 4/04/2020.
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- Fig.24. Dating formula inscription in Achilleios dromos, IOSPE, I², 332.
- Fig.25. Fragment dedications to deities, graffiti Berezan, SEG, XXX, 1980:
- Gr.890. Black-glazed vessel, end 6th – beginning 5th c. B.C- dedication to Αφροδίτη Απατόρη (hypothetic?)
 - Gr.881. Fragment Black-glazed vessel, 5th c. B.C – dedication to Άρτεμις.
 - Gr.911. Fragment Black-glazed kantharos, 3rd c. B.C – dedication to ‘Ηφαιστος.
 - Gr.913. Fragment Black-glazed kantharos, end 5th – beg.4th c. B.C – dedication to Βορυσθένη.

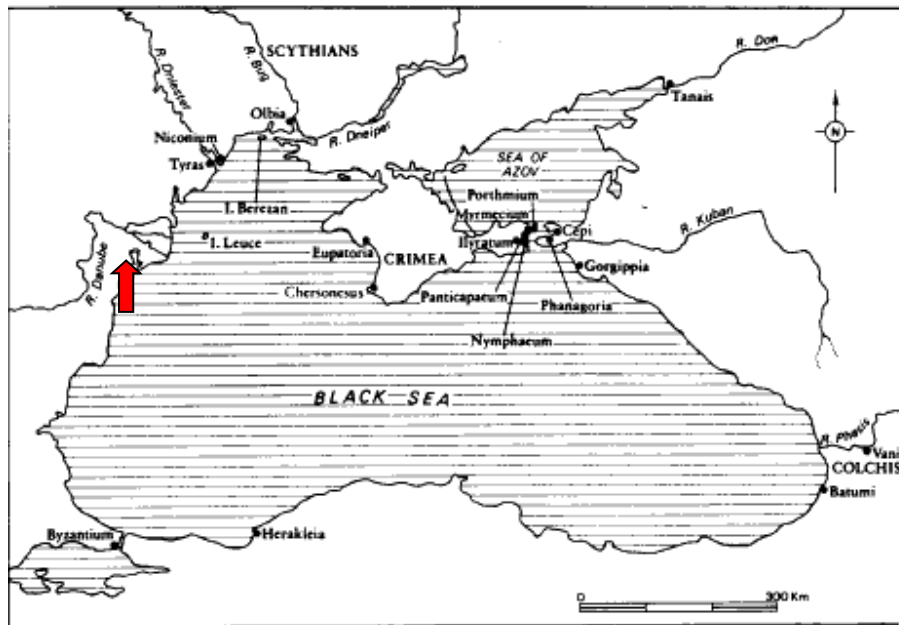
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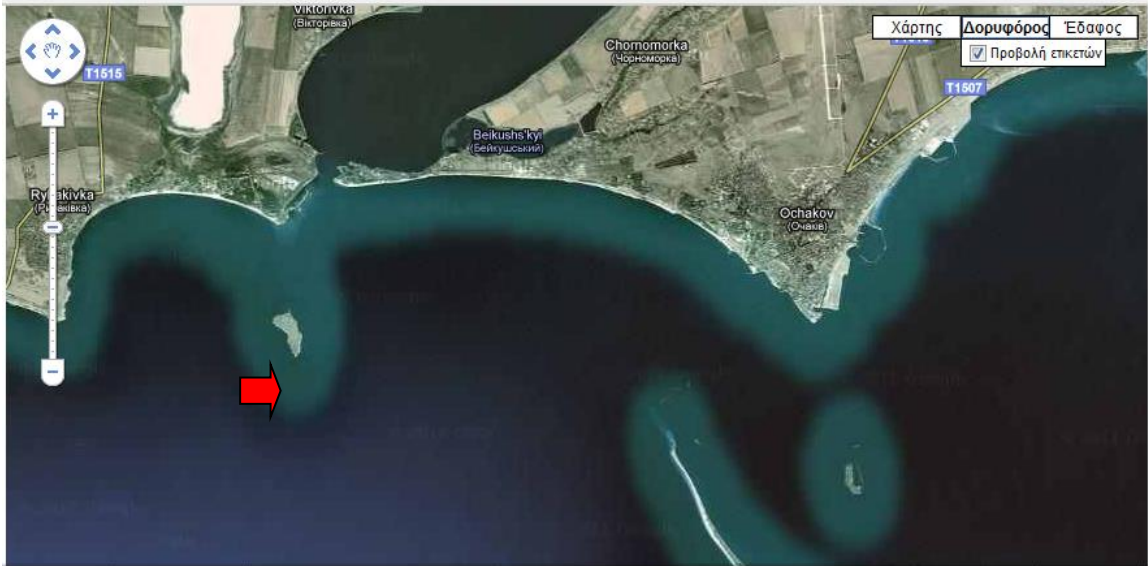
Map.1. Settlements in the Lower Bug Region in the archaic period.



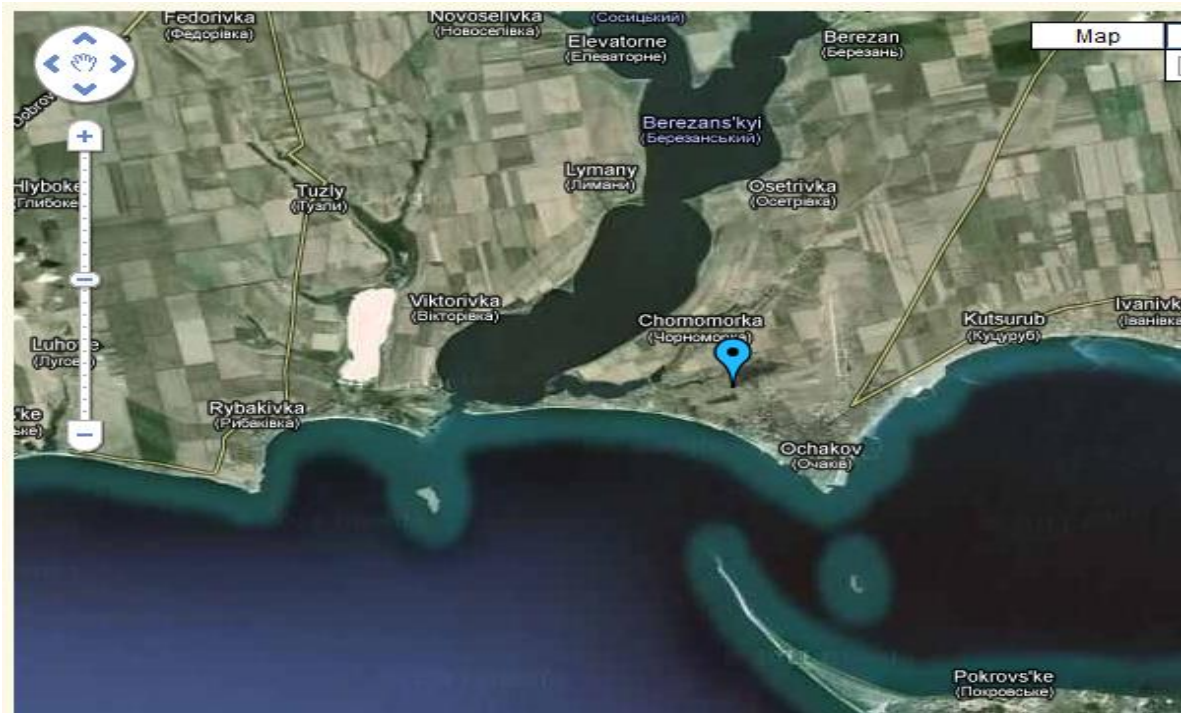
Map.2. Olbia and its environs.



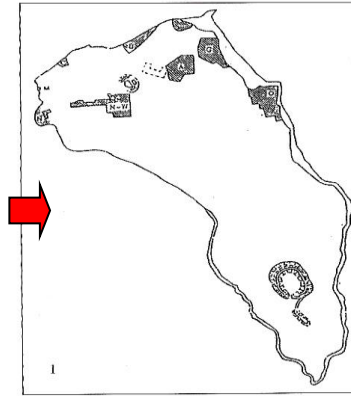
Map.3. Black Sea Region.



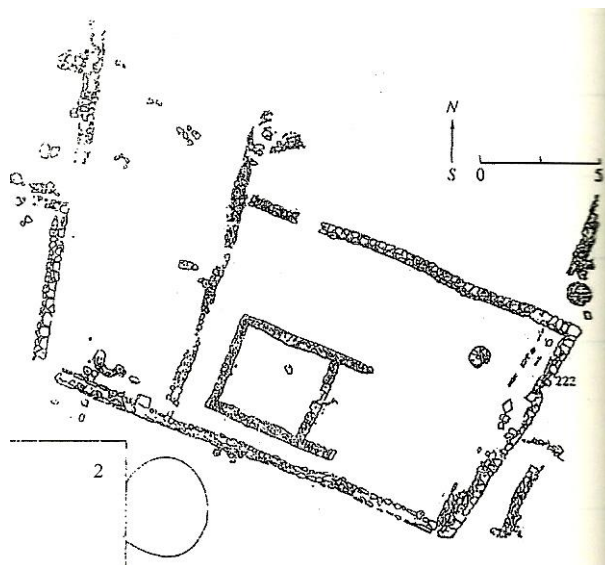
Map.4. Berezan island.



Map.5. Beykush Map.



Plan.1. Schematic plan of the Berezan island with the point of excavation sites.



Plan.2. Plan of Aphrodite's sanctuary (after Nazarov, 2001).

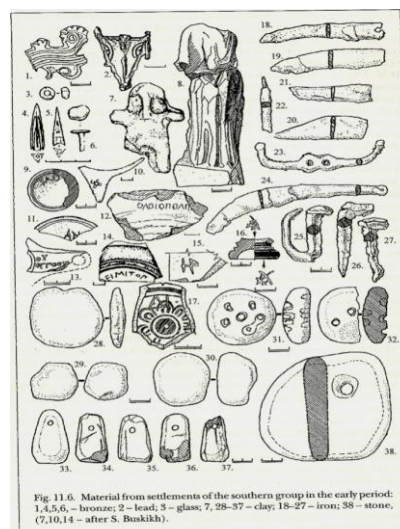
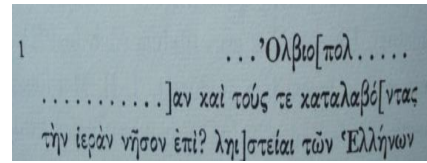
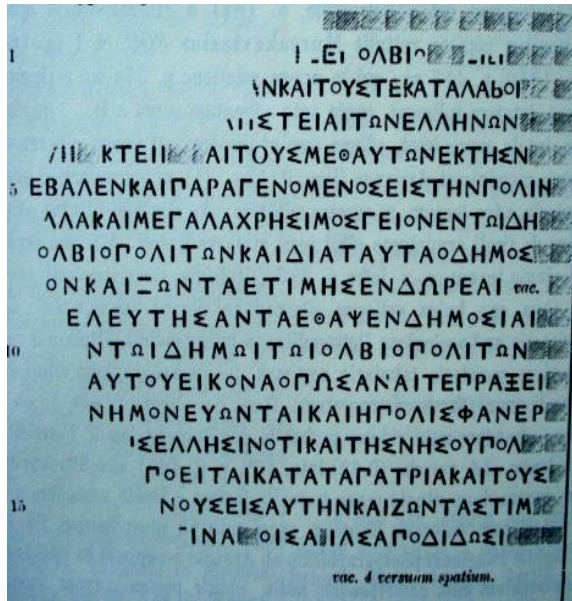


Fig. 11.6. Material from settlements of the southern group in the early period: 1,4,5,6, - bronze; 2 - lead; 3 - glass; 7, 28-37 - clay; 18-27 - iron; 38 - stone, (7,10,14 - after S. Buskikh).

Fig.1. Material from settlements of the southern group in the early period (after Buskikh, S).



Fig. 3. Terracottas figurines from Lower Bug region settlements (in accordance with Kryzhytskyy and others).



[ἀπέ]κτει[νεν κ]αί τοὺς μεθ' αὐτῶν ἐκ τῆς ν[ήσου] 5
 ἐξ]έβαλεν και παραγενόμενος εἰς τὴν πόλιν
 πο]λλά και μεγάλη χρησιμος γέ[γ]ονεν τῶι δή-
 μωι] Ὀλβιοπολιτῶν και διὰ ταῦτα ὁ δῆμος
 [αὐτ]ὸν και [ζ]ῶντα ἐτίμησεν δωρεᾶι
 [και τ]ελευτήσαντα ἔθαψεν δημοσίαι·
 10 [ἔδοξεν οὖ]ν τῶι δήμωι τῶι Ὀλβιοπολιτῶν
 [σταθῆ]ναι αὐτοῦ εἰκόνα, ὅπως ἂν αἱ τε πράξεις
 αὐτοῦ μ]νημονεύωνται και ἡ πόλις φανερ[όν]
 ποιήσῃ τοῖς Ἑλλησιν, ὅτι και τῆς νήσου πολ[λὴν]
 15 πρόνοιαν?] ποεῖται κατὰ τὰ πάτρια και τοὺς φι-
 λοτιμουμέ]νους εἰς αὐτὴν και ζῶντας τιμ[ᾶι]
 και τελευτήσασ]ιν α[ὐτ]οῖς ἀ[ξ]ίας ἀποδίδωσι
 [χάριτας].

Fig.4. Private Dedication, IOSPE, I², 326.

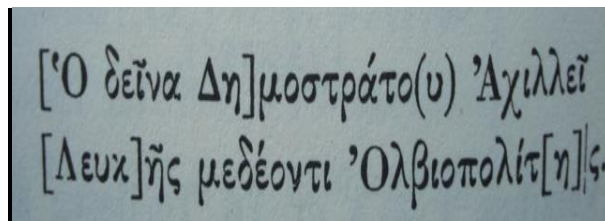
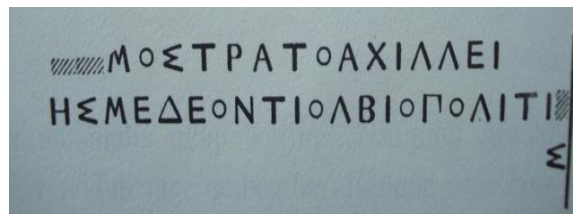


Fig.5.Honorary inscription, IOSPE, I², 325.

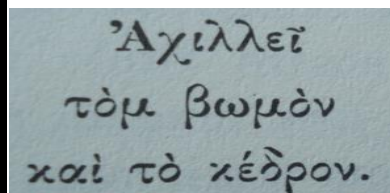


Fig.6. Shrine in Achilleios dromos, IOPSE, I², 327.



Fig.7. Fragment Amphora with black-lacquer dedicatory graffiti – I [property] Apollona Physician, Clay, second quarter of 6th c. B.C.

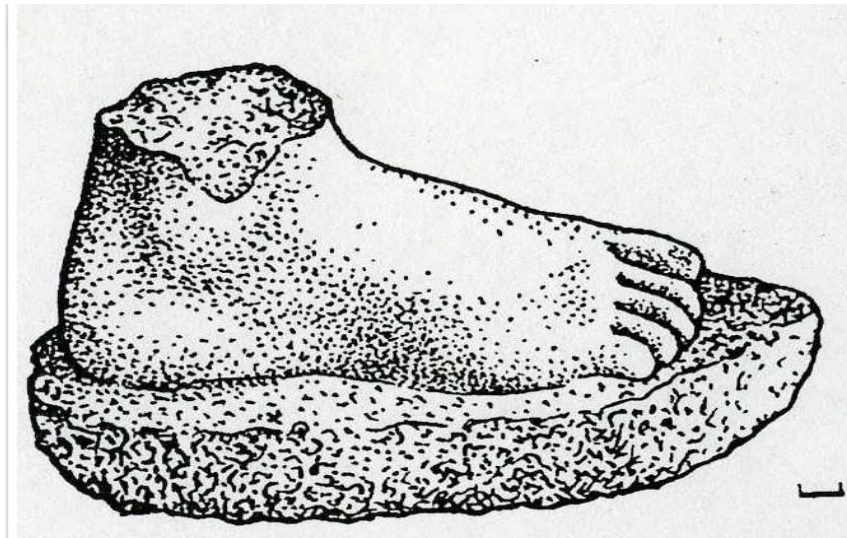


Fig.8. Fragment statue Kuroshio- leg. Marble, end of 6th – beginning 5th c. B.C.

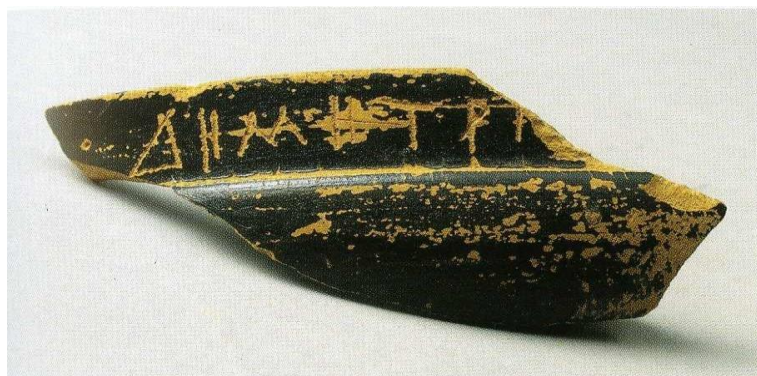


Fig.9. Fragment of black-glazed Cylix from dedicatory graffiti- Demeter, first half of 5th c. B.C.



Fig.10. Terracotta statuette of Demeter and Core. Second half of 6th c. B.C.

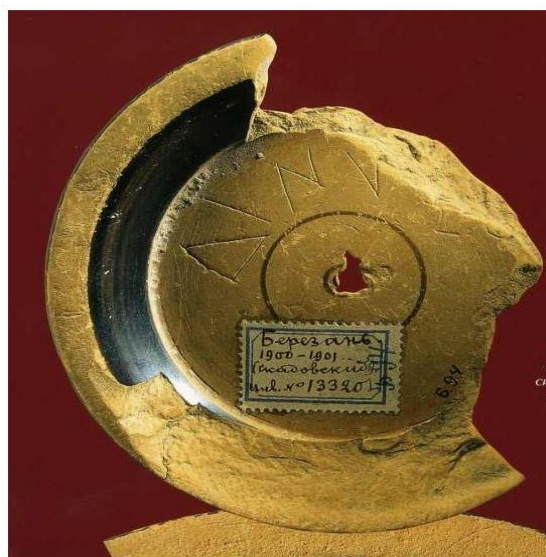


Fig.11. The bottom of the black-lacquer Cylix from dedicatory graffiti [Bow] of Dionysus, Clay. Second quarter of 5th c. B.C.

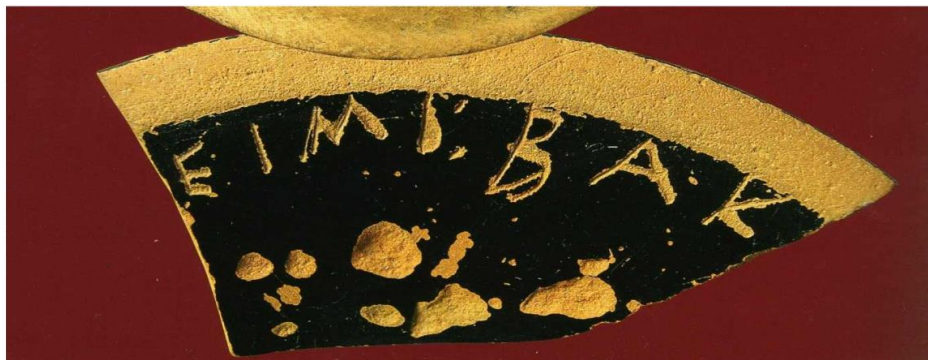


Fig.12. The edges of the legs with a black-lacquer Cylix dedicatory graffiti – I am holy [bowl] Bacchus, Clay in about 500 c. B.C.

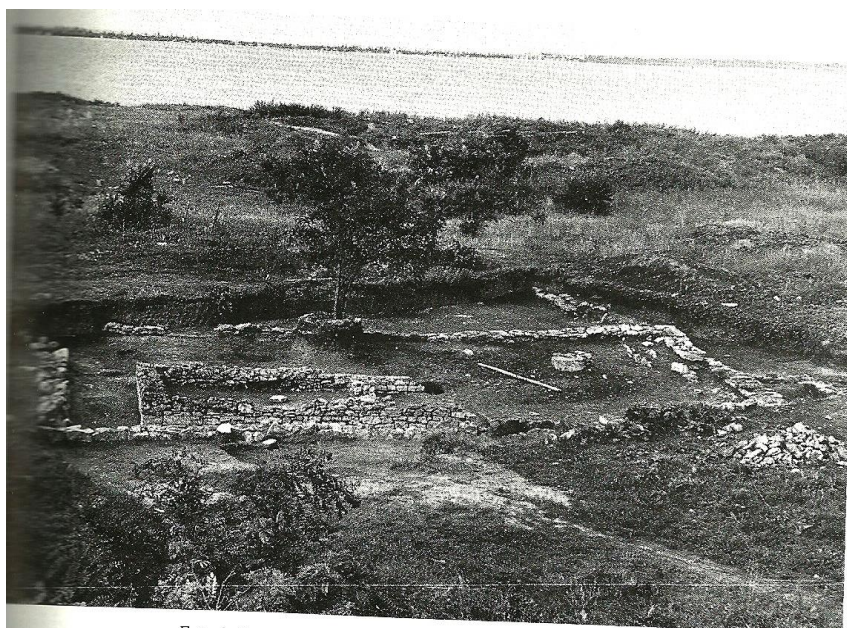


Fig.13. Temenos. Aphrodite's sanctuary (after Nazarov, 2001).



Fig.14. Graphical reconstruction of the Aphrodite's temple.

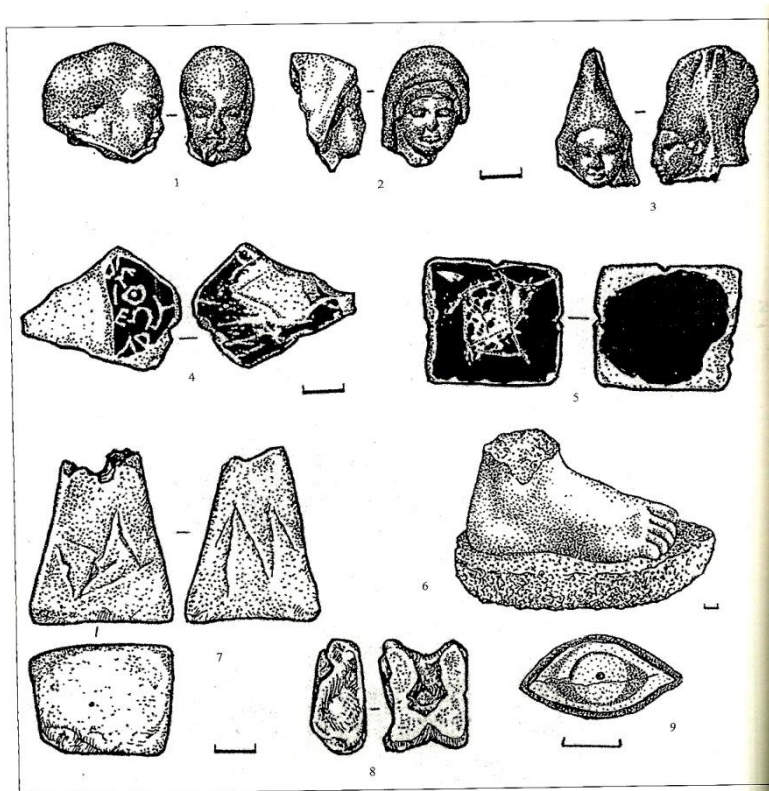


Fig.15. Finds from Berezan. Excavations by Nazarov, 2001.



Fig.16. The terracotta figurines on the floor of the temple of Aphrodite, (after Nazarov, 2001).



Fig.17. Shaped vessel as a goddess with a dove. Second half of 6th c. B.C.



Fig.18. Terraco



Fig.19. Marble slab with hymn to Achilles Pontarches of the second half of 1st c. A.D. Hermitage museum (B.88.149).



Fig.20. Marble slab with dedication to Achilles Pontarches of the early 2nd c. A.D. Hermitage museum (B.89.376).

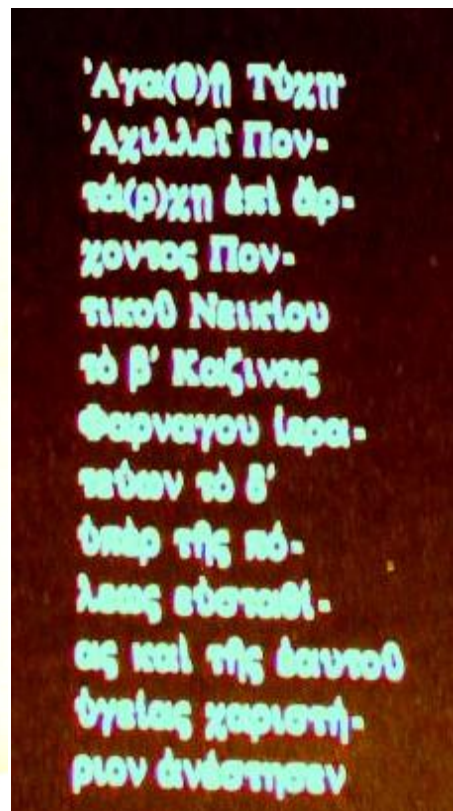
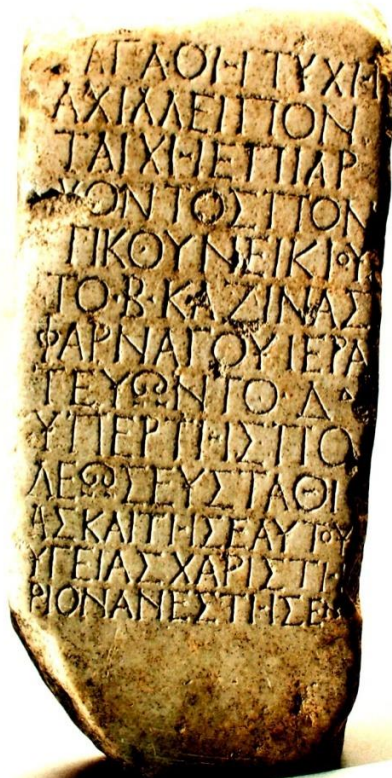
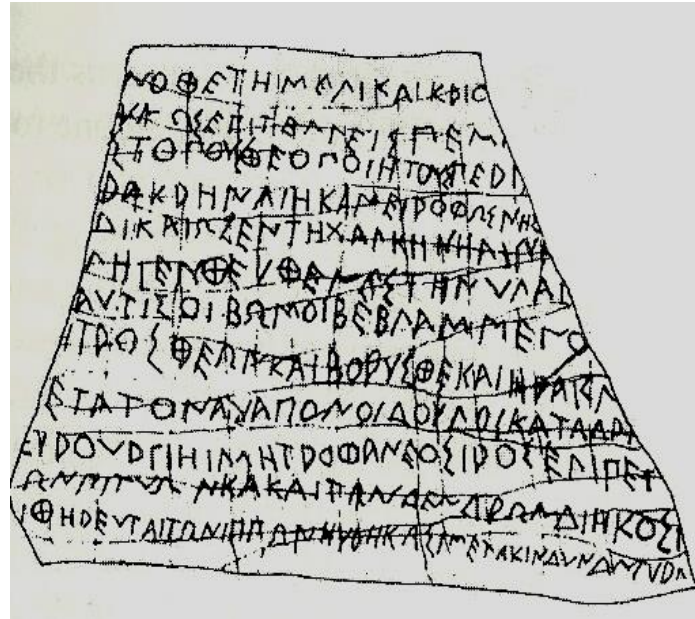


Fig.21. Marble slab with dedication to Achilles Pontarches of the early 2nd c. A.D. Hermitage museum (B.89.375).



- -]νοθέτη μέλι και κρίο[ν - - - - -]
 και να]ν ? ώς επίτέλλεις πέμπ[ειν - -]
 - - ὅπ]ως τόπους θεποιήτους περιδ[ραμηται -]
 και πα]ρ' ἄκρην ἄγη κάμὲ ἰρὸ φῶς νησ[- - και]
 θύωσιν ?] δικαίως ἐν τῇ Χαλκῆνῃ αἱ γυν[αῖκες. -]
 ὁ δὲ ? ἐκπ]λήι ἐνθεύθεν ἐς τὴν Ὑλαί[την - -]
 - -] αὐ]τις οἱ βωμοὶ βεβλαμμένο[ι εἰσί· - -]
 - - Μ]ητρὸς θεῶν και Βορυσθέ[νεω] (ορ (νιος)) και Ἑρακλ[ῆος]

[- - μ]ετὰ τὸ ναυάγιον οἱ δοῦλοι καταδρα[μείν]
 [- - χ]ειρουργίη Μητροφάνεος ἰρὸς ἐλίπετ[ο - -]
 [- - τ]ῶν πιτύων κακαί, τῶν δένδρων διηκόσι[α - -]
 12 [- - ο]ἱ θηρευταὶ τῶν ἵππων ἠύρηκασι μετὰ κινδύνων Τυρα[- -]

Fig.22. The so-called “priest’s letter”, drawing courtesy of Rusyaeva, A.S, ca. 550-525 B.C.



Fig.23. Face of Demeter and Gorgoneion on Olbian coins of the 4th c. B.C.

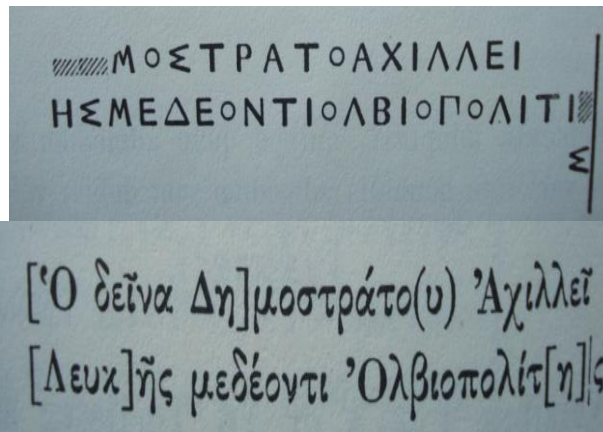


Fig.24. Dating formula inscription in Achilleios dromos, IOSPE, I², 332.

Fig.25. Fragment dedications to deities, graffiti Berezan, SEG, XXX, 1980:

e.g. Ἀπατό]ρη Νικοσθ[ένης
 - - -]ης ἰλαρ[ῶς
 - -μέμ]ψις

- a) Gr.890. Black-glazed vessel, end 6th – beginning 5th c. B.C- dedication to Αφροδίτη Απατόρη (hypothetic?)

Ἀρτέμ[ιδος] or Ἀρτέμ[ιδι]
 or Ἀρτέμ[ιος] or Ἀρτεμ[ι]

- b) Gr.881. Fragment Black-glazed vessel, 5th c. B.C – dedication to Ἀρτεμης.

[? Ἡρογείτ]ων | Ἡφαίστωι | [ἱερ]ησάμενος
 ἀ[ν] | ἐθηκ[ε]

- c) Gr.911. Fragment Black-glazed kantharos, 3rd c. B.C – dedication to Ἡφαιστος.

[- -]πος Ὑπάνι Βορυσθένει

- d) Gr.913. Fragment Black-glazed kantharos, end 5th – beg.4th c. B.C – dedication to Βορυσθένη.