

LATE ROMAN-EARLY BYZANTINE KITCHENWARE
FROM IBIDA-CURTAIN G AND TOWER 8*

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Keywords: kitchenware, Ibida, Curtina G-Tower 8.

Abstract. *The aim of this article is to draw attention to the kitchenware found at Ibida (Slava Rusă), the sector Curtain G-Tower 8. In the same time, I will propose a typology of the artefacts meant to serve as a model of publishing for the entire pottery discovered through the whole territory of the city. This typology can be subjected to future changes, but, for the moment, this represents a starting point in classifying the pottery from this area.*

Rezumat. *Scopul acestui articol este acela de a prezenta materialul ceramic de bucătărie descoperit la Ibida, Slava Rusă, sector Curtina G-Turnul 8. Totodată vom propune o tipologizare a artefactelor care să servească ca model de publicare a întregii ceramici descoperite pe teritoriul întregii cetăți. Această tipologizare poate fi modificată de viitoarele descoperiri însă în stadiul actual al cercetării aceasta constituie un punct de plecare în tipologizarea ceramicii din sectorul în discuție.*

Situated in the centre of the northern part of the region of Scythia (figure 1.1), the ancient city of Ibida is one of the largest in this area, measuring 24 hectares and has an enormous defensive system (figure 1.2). Seven levels of living (three from the early Roman times and four Roman-Byzantine) were identified in 1987, during the rescue diggings².

Among the archaeological areas investigated until now, we can also name Curtain G-Tower 8, which has provided the largest quantity of pottery of common use. The area in discussion is one of the most

* This work was supported by the strategic grant POSDRU/159/1.5/S/140863 "Project Doctoral and Postdoctoral programs support for increased competitiveness in Humanistic sciences and socio-economics" cofinanced by the European Social Found within the Sectorial Operational Program Human Resources Development 2007 – 2013.

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² For more details regarding the history of the discoveries within the city of Ibida, see OPAIȚ, PARASCHIV 2012, 113.

important areas of archaeological research from Slava Rusă, due to the richness and the diversity of the archaeological material collected during the campaign researches of 2001–2010.

The aim of this article is to draw attention to the kitchenware found at Ibida (Slava Rusă), the sector Curtain G–Tower 8. At the same time, I will propose a typology of the artefacts meant to serve as a model of publishing for the entire pottery discovered through the whole territory of the city. This typology can be subjected to future changes, but, for the moment, this represents a starting point in classifying the pottery from this area.

A. Pots

Type I (figure 2/1, 2)

The colour of the clay, specific to this type of pots, is dark brick-red, but it can be found, although in small quantities, as a grey and whitish one. The composition of the clay contains a lot of iron oxide, lime, pebbles and crushed quartz.

This type of pot is characterized by a vertical rim, slightly thickened and bent towards the exterior, with a slight concavity on the inner side, meant to withstand the lid. This type of pot seems to be specific to the 4th century and, occasionally, to the beginning of the 5th, being, probably, the last version of an early Roman form evolution³. At Iatrus, this type has also handles, while in Dobrudja this version is quite rare. The body is globular while the base is flat, seldom concave.

These types of pots are also frequently found in the territory of Ibida, for instance the fortified *horreum* Topraichioi⁴, in some villages such as Babdag city⁵, Slava Cercheză, Slava Rusă, Caucagia, and Mihai Bravu⁶. Similar discoveries come from other parts of the province of Scythia:

³ OPAIȚ 1980, 330, type I, Pl. I.1,2; OPAIȚ 1996, 96, type I; OPAIȚ 2004, 44, type I; POPILIAN 1976, 90, Pl. 37; SUCEVEANU 2000, 119–122, type XXXVII, Pl. 52–53; PARASCHIV 2004, 145, Pl. III/11–13; KLENINA 2006, 78, fig. 40/316.

⁴ OPAIȚ, ZAHARIADE, POENARU-BORDEA, OPAIȚ 1991, 233, type V, Pl. 47.4.

⁵ NUȚU 2009, 134, Pl. 5/27.

⁶ OPAIȚ 2004, 44.

Niculițel⁷, Murighiol⁸, Histria⁹ and Tropaeum Traiani¹⁰. The type was also produced at the Telița-Valea Morilor pottery workshop¹¹, but, due to lack of some laboratory analyses on the pottery found here, we cannot state with certainty if the products of these workshops reached Ibida. To the west of the Lower Danube area these pots have been found at Sadoveč¹², Novae¹³ and Iatrus¹⁴.

Type II (figure 2/3, 4)

The colour of the clay is whitish-beige or grey, according to the type of firing; its composition consists of dark particles, fine quartz, sand, and it is covered by self slip. It is mainly characterized by a rectangular or triangular rim in profile.

The body is globular, sometimes it has handles, and the base is flat. It is mainly specific to the 4th century, and, in small quantities it occurs also in the first half of the 5th century. It has been found at Slava Cercheză, M. Bravu, Topraichioi, Aegyssus¹⁵, Murighiol¹⁶, Tropaeum Traiani¹⁷, Babadag¹⁸, and at Telița-Valea Morii¹⁹. South of the Danube, this type of pot was discovered in Bulgaria, where it is dated between the beginning with the second half of the 4th century and the beginning of the 7th century²⁰. In the

⁷ BAUMANN 1991, Pl. 5.11.

⁸ OPAIȚ 1991a, 152, type I, Pl. 26/38766.

⁹ SUCEVEANU 1982, 87, Fig. 7.12.

¹⁰ BOGDAN-CĂTĂNICIU, BARNEA 1979, Fig. 146/5.1, 5.2, 5.3.

¹¹ BAUMANN 1995, 401–405, type I, Pl. I.1, 2.

¹² KUZMANOV 1985, 215, type 4, variant 3, Pl. 96.2.

¹³ KLENINA 2006, 112, type 16, 114, type 25.

¹⁴ BÖTTGER 1982, 66, type I, Pl. 45.84, 85.

¹⁵ OPAIȚ 2004, 45 type II; OPAIȚ 1996, 96, type II, Pl. 36. 4–7; OPAIȚ 1991a, 152–153, Pl. 26. 154, 155; OPAIȚ, A., ZAHARIADE, POENARU-BORDEA, OPAIȚ, C. 1991, 232, type III, Pl. 40/ 4, 6, 8.

¹⁶ TOPOLEANU 2000, 111 type V variant B, Pl. XXX. 261; 112, type VI, Pl. XXX. 264, 266.

¹⁷ GĂMUREAC 2009, 256, type 1, variant 2, Pl. VI. 46, 47; BOGDAN-CĂTĂNICIU, BARNEA 1979, 188, Fig. 162/5, 11.

¹⁸ NUȚU 2009, 134, Pl. 5/25.

¹⁹ BAUMANN 1995, 405, Pl. I.7, 8.

²⁰ KUZMANOV 1985, 50–51, type II, Pl. 30/ Γ39, Γ40.

territory of Novae²¹, this type of pot was manufactured at Hotnița between the 2nd and the 4th centuries.²²

Type III (figure 2/5, 6)

The colour of the clay is brick-red, rarely orange or pink-whitish, with crushed quartz, iron oxide, chalk, and small pebbles in fabric. The lip is thickened, with a slight leaning towards the exterior, creating a pronounced groove in order to set the lid. The body is globular, with large grooves, and the oval in cross section handles are attached directly to the rim. There are also pots without handles. The base is flat or, especially for the 5th century, concave²³. This type of container was discovered at Murighiol²⁴, Topraichioi²⁵, Tropaeum Traiani²⁶, Aegyssus²⁷, Telița-Valea Morilor²⁸, Histria²⁹, Capidava³⁰, and Dinogeția.³¹ The form was also attested in the Lower Danube area at Iatrus and Sadoveč³².

Type IV (figure 2/7, 8)

The pots are made of grey, hard clay, with a fabric rich in quartz and pebbles. Seldom are other types of pots made of brick-red or dark clay. In contrast with the previous pot types, this one has a neck that separate the mouth from the body and it is always grooved. The rim is narrow, flared towards the exterior, with an internal concavity and presents a groove for

²¹ KLENINA 2006, 109, type 2.

²² SULTOV 1985, 85; KLENINA 2006, 109.

²³ OPAIȚ 1996, 96, type III; OPAIȚ 2004, 45, type III.

²⁴ OPAIȚ 1991a, 153, type III, fig. 26/156–159; TOPOLEANU 2000, 110, type V, variant A și B.

²⁵ OPAIȚ, ZAHARIADE, POENARU-BORDEA, OPAIȚ 1991, 231, type I, Pl. 46/1.

²⁶ BOGDAN-CĂTĂNICIU, BARNEA 1979, 188, fig. 162/5.6; GĂMUREAC 2009, 257, type I, variant 3, Pl. VI/48, 49, 51.

²⁷ OPAIȚ 1996, 96, type III; OPAIȚ 2004, type III, 46.

²⁸ BAUMANN 1995, 405, type II, Pl. I/4.

²⁹ SUCEVEANU 1982, 84, fig. 6/7.

³⁰ OPRIȘ 2003, 96, type I variant A.

³¹ BARNEA 1966, 253, fig. 14/1–3.

³² OPAIȚ 2004, 46, type III.

setting the lid. Similar examples have been found at Tropaeum Traiani³³, Murighiol³⁴, Capidava³⁵, Beroe³⁶, Histria³⁷, Ibida³⁸, Argamum³⁹ and Axiopolis⁴⁰. To the western part of the Lower Danube, this type of pot is well represented at Novae⁴¹, Iatrus, Nicopolis ad Istrum, and in some cities from Thracia⁴², mainly during the 5th and the 6th centuries.

B. Bowls (figure 3/1, 2)

This type of vessel is represented by a series of large bowls, characterized by a flared or inturned rim with a flat base in order to assure stability when it was set on the hearth; also, a lid could be added. Two types of bowls, with or without handles, have been discovered in the Curtain G–Tower 8 sector and can be dated between the 3rd–4th centuries AD.

C. Lids (figure 4/1, 2)

I included, into this typological group, those lids that were used in the kitchen to cover the pots and the pans. The clay used for the production of the kitchen lids is very similar to that of the pots and pans. Usually, their colour is dark brick-red, but other lids have a grey or pink-whitish colour, depending on the producing centre. Their texture is, in general, softer comparing to that of the pots, as there was no need to be directly exposed them to the flame. In contrast with the lids used for the table vessels, which, in general, are flat, the lids for the pots and pans have the calotte more arched, ending with a more or less high knob with a flat top⁴³.

³³ GĂMUREAC 2009, 259, type III variant 1, Pl. VIII/68; BOGDAN-CĂTĂNICIU, BARNEA 1979, 190, NVIA, fig. 168, 5.3.

³⁴ TOPOLEANU 2000, 108, type II, Pl. XXVIII no. 241, 243; OPAIȚ 1991a, 154, type VIII, subvariant B2, no. 174, Pl. 28.

³⁵ OPAIȚ 1996, 99; OPRIȘ 2003, type IV, 97, Pl. XXXV/231–234.

³⁶ VĂLCEANU, BARNEA 1975, 210, fig. 2/1.

³⁷ CONDURACHI 1954, 463, fig. 395.

³⁸ OPAIȚ 1991b, 26–27, type VIII B 1.

³⁹ OPAIȚ 2004, 48, subtype IX-2–variant b and c.

⁴⁰ BARNEA 1960, 73–76, fig. 2.2.

⁴¹ KLENINA 2006, 88, type 22, fig. 46/375, 377.

⁴² KLENINA 2006, 113–114.

⁴³ OPAIȚ 1996, 111; GĂMUREAC 2009, 264.

Conclusions

Taking into consideration the statistics regarding the pottery found in this area, we can say that the second place, after amphorae, belongs to the kitchen pottery, with 24% of all the discoveries. The vessels are divided into the following types: pots with four types, bowls with two types, and for lids a single type.

According to our analyses of the kitchen pottery discovered at Curtain G–Tower 8, there have been identified the existence of three types of fabrics used for the kitchen pottery. Therefore, we can infer that this pottery was coming from three different centres. The first centre can be localized in the north-west region of Dobrudja, the area Beroe–Troesmis–Arrubium, which is close to the Măcin Mountains, having as main characteristic a pink-whitish pottery, rich in kaolin⁴⁴. The relative vicinity to Ibida could provide a possible explanation for bringing these products here by using the valley of the river Slava as the main access road. The origin of the grey, hard fabric is difficult to identify. So far this fabric is well identified at Halmyris⁴⁵, but only a petrographic analysis can say if the Ibida finds were imported or not from that Danubian centre.

With regard to the red-orange pottery, rich in iron oxide, that occupies a major place within the discoveries at Ibida, we can supposedly assign it to a local production. However, again, only the laboratory analyses can offer certainty.

According to a preliminary statistics, the kitchen vessels types are represented as follows: the pots come to the first place, with the four types. The first type represents 29.76%, but it dated only during the 3rd–4th centuries. The pots belonging to the second type, with 22.22%, is typical only for the 4th century, the third type seems to be the most numerous with 38.88% but only during the 5th–6th centuries AD., while the fourth type is the less represented in this sector with 9.12% and it occurs only during the 6th century.

⁴⁴ OPAIȚ 1996, 147; RĂDULESCU 1975, 343; OPRIȘ 2003, 189 see also DASZKIEWICZ, BOBRYK, SCHNEIDER, RĂDAN 2010, 37–38 and for details see the next page.

⁴⁵ OPAIȚ 1996, 147.

The same situation, but only with minor differences, exists in some other cities of the province of Scythia both with regard to the discovery and the evolution of the kitchen pottery. Worth mentioning, for the present stage of our research, is the lack of bowls at Capidava, and Tropaeum Traiani.

We also observe the rare presence of frying pans or even their lack in the 4th century and their disappearance in the 5th–6th centuries; for this reason, we consider their absence is due to the modification of the people's diet in this period.

With the 4th century and especially afterwards, we notice a unification and a rustication regarding the manufacturing technique and the pottery of common use. However, we can distinguish some tendencies of assertion of the zonal identity, which renders an answer to the supply and demand mechanism. From this point of view, we consider that the necessities of the local, provincial market could have been covered by the technical effort of some modest, but numerous workshops. Unfortunately the archaeological discoveries can only signal the existence of the ceramic production made in these workshops but we need to identify and excavate the workshops themselves.

Taking into consideration the presented pottery, we can state that the evolution of the ceramic types from the sector of Curtain G–Tower 8 of Ibida, due to the abundance of discoveries, can be considered as a case study for the whole city of Ibida. The situation identified in this sector is similar to other Roman-Byzantine centres from Scythia, such as Capidava and Tropaeum Traiani. Consequently, we can conclude that the entire region enjoyed the same diet. Following this idea, we think that it is necessary the corroboration of all the information provided by the faunal, floral, and archaeological studies in order to observe the connection between the type of alimentation⁴⁶, of dwelling and the socio-economic background of the population that made and used the pottery found by the archaeological excavations.

⁴⁶ For some comments on paleofauna of the area of Ibida see STANC 2009.

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Figure 1. Geographical map of ancient Scythia Minor



Figure 2. The plan of Ibiida

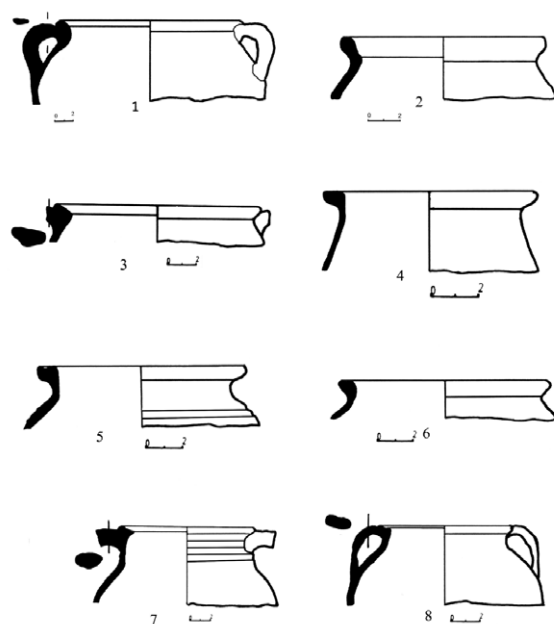


Figure 3. The main types of pots from Ibida

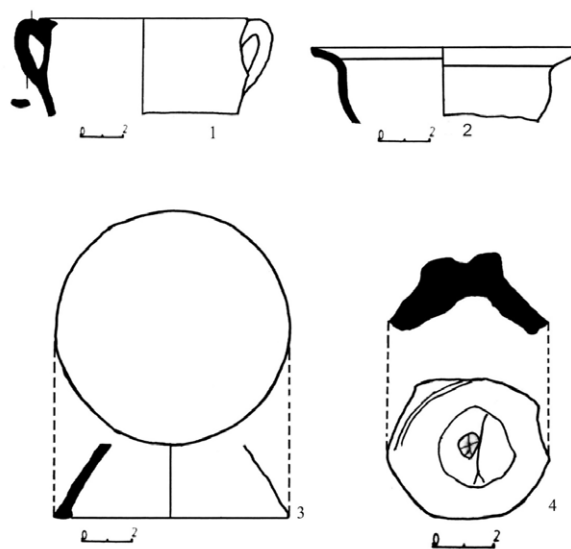


Figure 4. The main types of bowls (1–2), lids (3–4) from Ibida (sector Curtain G – Tower 8)