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# A Greek graffito Discovered in the Sântana de Mureș-Chernyakhov Settlement from Negrilești, Galați County

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Abstract. The paper publishes a Greek graffito on a Zeest 80 amphora, found in Negrileşti, in the settlement of Sântana de Mureş- Chernyakhov culture. The words NAYKAEP(...) EAAHNIKON inscribed on the upper part of the amphora can be associated with primary content the transport process –loading the container on the ship at the place of origin of the content. The characteristics of the amphora and the inscription are connected with the oil supply in the province of Scythia. The information highlights the trade connections of the settlements from the Lower Danube with the eastern provinces of Roman Empire at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. Rezumat. Articolul propune restituirea unui graffito în limba greacă de pe o amforă Zeest 80, descoperită la Negrileşti, în așezarea Sântana de Mureş- Cerneahov. Cele două cuvinte, NAYKAEP(---) EAAHNIKON inscripționate pe două rânduri pe partea superioară a amforei pot fi asociate cu prima etapă a procesului de transportare – încărcarea recipientului pe navă la locul de origine al conținutului. Caracteristicile amforei sunt legate de procesul de aprovizionare cu ulei în provincia Scythia Minor. Se evidențiază legăturile comerciale ale așezărilor de la Dunărea de Jos cu provinciile estice ale Imperiului Roman la sfârșitul secolului al III-lea- începutul secolului al IV-lea p. Chr.

Keywords: amphora, Greek graffitto, Barbaricum, Negrileşti, Sântana de Mureş-Cerneakhov Culture.

The material discussed by us was discovered during the archaeological campaign carried out on the site belonging to the Sântana Mureş-Cerneakhov Culture from Negrileşti in 2007 (PI. 1). During the excavations was investigated the dwelling L1, in the vicinity of which was identified as a waste pit (Gr. 1). Four storage vessels and two Roman amphoras were recovered in its inventory.<sup>3</sup> In the following lines we will briefly present the material discovered in pit G1 and we will turn our attention to a roman amphora belonging to the type Zeest 80. It drew our attention because on its neck was inscribed *post coctum*, a *grafitto* written in Greek.

Storage vessels

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> CIUBOTARU, ILIE 2013, 33.

Together with the Roman *amphorae*, four storage vessels were recovered, <sup>4</sup> of which one is half preserved (PI. 3/12). The clay is coarse red-brown and has crushed ceramics and silver mica in composition. The body of the vessels is truncated conic, the base is a straight cut, the rim is curved (PI. 3/8-9, 10) and it has a triangular rim with a shallow internal (PI. 3/10). The neck can be decorated with an alveolate girdle. (PI. 3/9)<sup>5</sup>.

Amphora of unknown centre type I<sup>6</sup>

The mouth is wide, 15.8/16 cm in diameter, the rim rounded, slightly upturned, the neck high, cylindrical, gradually widening towards the area of the maximum diameter of the amphora (Inv. 1745). The handles are large and oval in section, they grip below the lip and above the shoulders. The body is conical with slight grooves on its surface (PI. 2/5-6). The clay is red (red 2.5YR 5/6-5/8 - PI. 2/7), hard with limestone and iron oxide in the composition. Traces of beige-brown engobe/paint can be seen on the outer surface.

Amphora used to transport olive oil - Type Zeest 807

This type of amphora has two variants and is distinctive for its comparatively oversized handles, which extend in a large curve from the shoulders to below the rim. The body is ovoid and commonly displays ridging; the neck is relatively wide and conical, while the rim is simple. The base consists of a short, solid spike. The early version dates back from the 2<sup>nd</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD.<sup>8</sup> In the Lower Danube area, the amphora has a significant widespread, it being discovered at Callatis<sup>9</sup>, Halmyris, where it is dated to the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD,<sup>10</sup> Histria,<sup>11</sup> Argamum,<sup>12</sup> in the territory of Noviodunum at Telița Amza<sup>13</sup> and Niculițel,<sup>14</sup> and in the territory of Ibida<sup>15</sup> (Kurt Baiir, Slava-Rusă-Coșari<sup>16</sup> and Slava Rusă – Fântâna Seacă).<sup>17</sup> They also appear in the northern Black Sea<sup>18</sup> at Kartal in two variants, early and late<sup>19</sup>, as well as in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> CIUBOTARU, ILIE 2013, 35, pl. 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Dimensions of the storage vessels: Pl. 3/8-9 Inv. 1740 - Hp = 96 cm, Dg = 35,20 cm, Db = 25,60 cm; Pl. 3/10 Inv. 2466 - Hp = 92 cm, Dg = 39,60 cm, Db = 25,60 cm; Pl. 3/11 Inv. 2467 - H = 82,40 cm, Dg = 34,40 cm, Db = 20 cm; Pl. 3/12 Inv. 2468

<sup>–</sup> H = 27,20 cm, Db = 18 cm.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> CIUBOTARU, ILIE 2013, 35, pl. 10 - fig. from the right, down.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Thanks to Stefan Honcu for the identification of the material and the information provided.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> PARASCHIV 2006, 86, type 40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> ICONOMU 1968, 247, fig. 12, 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> OPAIȚ 1991, 136, cat. no. 30, pl. 4/30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> SUCEVEANU 2000, 161, type LII, pl. 78/2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> PARASCHIV 2006a, 305-306, type XV, cat. no. 37, 38, pl. III/37, 38.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> BAUMANN 1995, 105, cat. no. 79, pl. LXX/2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> PARASCHIV 2014, 53, type Zeest 80, pl. 8/48.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> PARASCHIV, MOCANU 2010, 539, pl. 3/8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> OPAIȚ, PARASCHIV 2013, 318.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Unpublished material, researched by St. Honcu and L. Munteanu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> KRAPIVINA 1993, 99, type 32, fig. 30/22-24; BURAKOV 1976, 72, type 10, pl. III/8, 8a-b.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> BRUYAKO, DZIGOVSKIY, DENISYUK 2011, 338, fig. 2 early variant, 337 fig. 1 late variant.

western part of the Empire at Brindisi and Trigeste.<sup>20</sup> In the eastern part of the Empire, such vessels were found at Knossos<sup>21</sup> and Athens.<sup>22</sup> It also appears at Ephesus in a context dated start to the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.<sup>23</sup>

Zeest 80 amphora discovered at Negrileşti<sup>24</sup>(Teodor Cincu History Museum Tecuci, Inv.  $no.^{25} = 1744$ ) in the settlement of Sântana de Mureş-Cerneahov culture<sup>26</sup> was briefly discussed on the publication of the material about the local site. The amphora has the following dimensions and characteristics: Rd = 15,8 cm Hp. = 71,5cm, (Pl. 2/1-2) the clay is red (red 2.5YR 5/6-5/8) with a dark-reddish gray core (dark-reddish gray 2.5YR 4/1 – Pl. 2/4), silver mica and limestone in composition. A Greek *graffito* (Pl. 2/3) was executed *post coctum* on the neck of the amphora and inscribed in two lines. Our amphora could be date back in the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century AD or maybe later.

Recently, A. Opaiţ<sup>27</sup> inclines toward a north Aegean origin of this amphora type.<sup>28</sup> He agrees with the older opinion of V. Swan that suggested its provenance in the area of the Sea of Marmara or the Dardanelles. At least one of the workshops of this type should be located in the area of Kyzikos, and other possible manufacturing centers may be located in Zeytinliada and Thessaly.<sup>29</sup> Their large capacity (between 60-80I and even 100 I) seems to suggest the content of the oil.<sup>30</sup>

The oil was *species annonaria* the most demanded, because olive oil was used as food, as fuel for lighting, as an ingredient for paint, soap, cosmetics, and ointments. During the Severian period, the olive oil became part of the *annona* (ordinary food distribution).<sup>31</sup> Free olive oil distribution was continued under Elagabalus, then resumed under Severus Alexander.<sup>32</sup> Other mentions date from the time of Aurelianus.<sup>33</sup> In the 4<sup>th</sup> century, free oil distribution (*canon urbicarius olei*) continued, the oil being produced by the Hispanic provinces, but especially by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> AURIEMMA, DEGRASSI, QUIRI 2015, 150, fig. 4 – Brindisi, fig. 3 – Trigeste.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> HAYES 1983, 155, type 38, fig. 25/89-90.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> ROBINSON 1959, 69, pl. 40, K115.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> BEZECZKY 2013, 173-174, type 60, pl. 48/625.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> CIUBOTARU, ILIE 2013, 35, pl.10 photo from the top left.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Abbreviations used in the text: Inv. no. = Inventory number, Rd = Rim diameter, Hp = Height preserved.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup>See the context of the discovery in CIUBOTARU, ILIE 2013. In their conclusions, the article's authors mention the existence of imported ceramics (CIUBOTARU, ILIE 2013, 45, pl. 10).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> OPAIȚ 2023, 160-161.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> OPAIŢ, PARASCHIV 2013, 325. See more recently Opaiţ 2023, 161.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> OPAIŢ 2023, 161.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> OPAIȚ 1996, 68.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> HA 18.3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> DE SALVO 1992, 184; HA Hel. 27.7; HA Sev. Al. 22.1-2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> HA Aur. 35, 1-2.

Africa.<sup>34</sup> In the province of Schythia Minor, olive oil continue to be imported predominantly from the Aegean and Peloponnesian areas.<sup>35</sup>

*Graffiti* on amphorae is a separate category of inscriptions on ceramic vessels. Amphorae were functionally different from other types of vessels: they were intended, first, for transportation, as well as for storing goods, mainly wine and olive oil. Therefore, the inscriptions on amphorae had a commercial or economic character: names and characteristics of the transported or stored products, volumes, and masses or their contents; names of people associated with trade, amphorae owners, and buyers.<sup>36</sup> Since most *graffiti* on the amphorae were intended for a narrow circle of people working in the field of trade and who knew this terminology, they were words, usually abbreviated up to one or three letters. The purpose was to have an efficient means of checking in the complex organizational and transportation structure.<sup>37</sup> No less laconic are those inscriptions made for internal use, for example, by the owner of the house or shop owner. These *graffiti* were written in cursive script, and rustic capitals were used.

The *graffito* on the Zeest 80 amphora from Negrilești was written in two rows in Greek capitals, on the amphora neck.

Legend:

1. ΝΑΥΚΛΕΡ

2. ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΝ

Reading this small inscription allows several hypotheses. First, we note that the letters are legible and have been preserved entirely. The first word, *naukler(os)*, is part of the Greek terminology relating to people in the sphere of commercial relations (*emporos, naukleros, nautikoi*).<sup>38</sup> We will try to clarify the term *naukleros*. However, of course, the definition needs to reach a consensus. If we follow P. Chantraine,<sup>39</sup> the word vauk $\lambda \eta \rho o \varsigma$ , which was later latinized into *nauklerus/nauclarius*, when into *navicularius* under the Principate, designates a "shipowner", who can also command the ship and who rents it to transport people and goods". J. Vélissaropoulos<sup>40</sup> insisted on the meaning of *naukleros*, and defines as "ship's masters", as it appears in literary sources from the classical and Hellenistic periods.<sup>41</sup> More precisely, the author gives a more exhaustive definition of this function: *naukleros* can be a shipowner, therefore both owner and operator, a charterer, or even an agent of the owner.<sup>42</sup> From the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> DE SALVO 1992, 185.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> For the import of olive oil in Lower Danube area see: OPAIŢ 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> NAMOJLIK 2010, 397.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> MILLET 2019, 125-126.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> BOUNEGRU 2006, 33-57, BOUNEGRU 2008, 193-196.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> CHANTRAINE 1984, 736-737.

<sup>40</sup> VÉLISSAROPOULOS 1980, 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Aeschyl, *The Suppliants*, 176-177; Herodot, *The Histories*, IV, 152; Xenophon, *Anabasis*, VII, 2, 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Owner, captain, and operator.

point of view of the operation of the ship, *naukleros* appears both as a carrier of goods belonging to different shippers, and as a carrier of his own goods, thus acting both as a transport entrepreneur and as a trader.<sup>43</sup> P. Arnaud shows that the meaning of the word under the Roman Empire meant the person who operated the boat, not the one who owned it.<sup>44</sup> In the later Roman Empire, the *navicularius* is not necessarily a person who sails on board, but rather the shipowner who placed his ships at the service of the *annona*, under the command of a *magister navis*.<sup>45</sup> Ultimately, as O. Bounegru pointed out, the translation of the term *naukleros* "was a combination of ancient and modern concepts which could hardly account for the functions exercised by these characters, these having been modified and adapted to various missions according to the regions and the chronological contexts".<sup>46</sup> Finally, we can conclude that the exact meaning actually varies not only through time but also in the documentary contexts where it is used.<sup>47</sup>

Concerning the meaning of  $E\lambda\lambda\eta\nu\iota\kappa\delta\varsigma$ ,  $\dot{\eta}$ ,  $\delta\nu$ , the dictionary gives us the following explanation: Hellenic, Greek;  $\tau\delta$   $E\lambda\lambda\eta\nu\iota\kappa\delta\nu$  - Greek race, Greek army, Greek character, and Greek manners.<sup>48</sup> In *Politicus* 262 Plato takes issue with a classification that divides humanity into two parts,  $\tau\delta$   $E\lambda\lambda\eta\nu\iota\kappa\delta\nu$ , the Greeks, on the one hand, and on the other all the peoples that designated by a single name: "barbarians". For the name  $E\lambda\lambda\eta\nu$  ("The Greek"), LGPN database attests to fifteen occurrences– a scarce name elsewhere in the Greek world.<sup>49</sup> L. Robert thought that it was a name carried by the Greeks to affirm their Greek identity among the barbarians<sup>50</sup>. Judging from the onomastic context, M. Dana and D. Dana consider, on the contrary, that it would be rather a name chosen by a native, who became "The Greek".<sup>51</sup> In other words, "The Greek" could very well designate the Hellenized natives, a new category of "Greeks", recalling, in another register (namely, onomastic) the legal and tax status of the "Hellenes" in Egypt.<sup>52</sup>  $E\lambda\lambda\eta\nu\iota\kappa\delta\varsigma$  as a proper name is attested twice, in a *graffito* from Dura-Europos<sup>53</sup>, and on a mosaic from Cyprus<sup>54</sup> (PI. 4/13).

Starting from these explanations, we propose the following options for reading and restoring the inscription. NAYKAEP[...] in the first line can be completed in four ways. The first

<sup>53</sup> SEG 7, 710.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> VÉLISSAROPOULOS 1980, 50.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> ARNAUD 2020, 379-382.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> ARNAUD 2020, 385.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> BOUNEGRU 2006, 33-57.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> ARNAUD 2020, 382.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> BAILLY 1935, 648.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup><u>http://clas-lgpn2.classics.ox.ac.uk/name/%E1%BF%9E%CE%95%CE%BB%CE%BB%CE%B7%CE%BD</u>, accesed 09.02.2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> "Le nom semble presque particulier à la Thrace" (ROBERT 1959, 165-236).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> DANA, DANA 2013, 291.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> DANA, DANA 2013, 291, footnote 38.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> MICHAELIDES 1987, 23 mosaic 21.

hypothesis would be recognizing the non-ending accusative case of NAYKAEPOS (in ancient Greek, we usually have NAYKAHPOS, but sometimes in Greek inscriptions H/eta is rendered by E/epsilon), namely  $\nu \alpha \nu \kappa \lambda \eta \rho(o\nu)$ . The second word could be the adjective ELLHNIKOS in the accusative case. We could translate "from naukleros Ellenikos", or "for naukleros Ellenikos". There is no verb in the text of which the name is a direct object, but it is easy to understand such a verb; that is the reason for the choice of accusative case. The second version of reading the inscription could be the plural *naukleroi*, and the second term would be the genitive plural ELLHNIKON (with O instead of  $\Omega$ ; n.b. they knew that it was  $\Omega$ , noted usually as O) of the adjective ELLHNIKOS. If so, the *graffito* we will have  $\nu \alpha \nu \kappa \lambda \eta \rho \omega \nu \epsilon \lambda \lambda \eta \nu \kappa \omega \nu$ , and the translation would be "of Greek naukleroi".<sup>55</sup>

We can exemplify this with some inscriptions where the *naukleroi* identified themselves by an ethnicon: ναύκληρος Αίγεαΐος (from Aigea; it is generally a mistake to have two *iotas* with accents in the same word), Κωρυκιώτης ναύκληρος (Cilicia Trachea),<sup>56</sup> θεόκτιστος ναόκληρος (sic with o, instead of v), Λύκιος (probably the ethnic Lycian).<sup>57</sup> At Puteoli two funerary inscriptions in honour of two naukleroi from Corycus use the two forms Κωρυκιώτης ναύκληρος αυάκληρος and ναύκληρον Κωρυκιώτην,<sup>58</sup> while an inscription from Nicomedia mention ναύκληρος Νεικομηδεύς<sup>59</sup>.

The third proposed option would provide for the restoration of the word ναυκλήριον (sing. Neut.),<sup>60</sup> which means a ship of a ναύκληρος. In this case, we will have ναυκλήριον Έλληνϊκόν (Greek nave) like πλοΐον ἑλληνικόν.<sup>61</sup>

We can also propose the mention of a ναυκληρία (f. sing.), which could refer to "shipowning".<sup>62</sup> The restoration of the inscription would require the use of plural genitive: ναυκληριών Έλληνĭκῶν (in the *graffito* with O instead of Ω). *Naukleria* are therefore, associations of shipowners and navigators put in the service of the State but which also carried out transport for personal purposes.<sup>63</sup>

As far as we know, the specialized literature does not cite any identical *graffito* to our inscription<sup>64</sup>. *Graffiti* attesting *naukleroi* and *nautai* were discovered in the North Pontic region,

<sup>61</sup> ARNAUD, 2015 128.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Like Koinon of Beirutian Poseidoniasts, Merchants, Shippers and Warehousemen (τὸ κοινὸν Βηρυτίων Ποσειδωνιαστῶν ἐμπόρων καὶ ναυκλήρων καὶ ἐγδοχέων). Tyrians established the 'Koinon of Tyrian Heraklesiasts, Merchants and Shippers' (Το κοινον τῶν Τυρίων Ἡρακλειστῶν ἐμπόρων καὶ ναυκλήρων (VERBOVEN 2020, 338).

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> ROBERT, ROBERT 1958, 353.
 <sup>57</sup> ROBERT, ROBERT 1958, 362.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> IG XIV, 841.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> ARNAUD 2020, 412.

<sup>60</sup> POxy. 87.7 (IV century AD).

<sup>62</sup> REED 2003, 123.

<sup>63</sup> BOUNEGRU 2004, 66.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> Graffiti with numbers on Zeest 80 amphorae were thoroughly analyzed and described by ILYASENKO 2014; see also BELÂEV 1961, 127-143; TOLSTOJ 1953.

in the Chersonese *chora* and Donuzlav Bay. First of them is a dedicatory *graffito* on three shards from an *amphora* or jug, which was found in the Chaika settlement and dates in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC.<sup>65</sup> It recorded a gift offering to God [...] by the *naucleroi* and sailors (*nautai*) for a safe voyage and arrival in the harbor. The author of the *graffito* wrote in *Koine*, and not in the Dorian dialect, which was spoken in Tauric Chersonese and its rural periphery, including the northwestern Crimeea. Therefore, the sailors who made this consecration were not natives of Chersonese.<sup>66</sup> The second is a *graffito* on the body of an *amphora* dated in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD and discovered during the excavations in the South-Donuzlav settlement in the northwestern Crimeea: Kóvov(oç) ναυτικῶν – "Conon's amphora from/of sailors".<sup>67</sup> We would also mention the *graffito* of Frumuşiţa (middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC). The Greek inscription NAY was scratched on the Attic *kylix*, which can be an abbreviation of a proper name, for example, of the owner of the vessel, but also of some qualifications found directly related to commercial activity at sea such as vαυκληρία, ναύκληρος.<sup>68</sup>

In order to restore the most important elements of trade relations in the western Pontic Basin, the treatment of the epigraphic sources is meaningful. Among the western Pontic cities, Tomis has the richest list of epigraphic evidence of the activities of *naukleroi*. The first category of inscriptions contains evidence of local *naukleroi*. Should be mentioned two Tomitan *naukleroi*, one unknown<sup>69</sup> and Theokritos, son of Theokritos.<sup>70</sup> Another interesting case is that Hermogenes, a major shipowner, who, thanks to the vast commercial activity in the western Pontic area and Asia Minor, gained dual citizenship of Tomis and Fabia Ankyra.<sup>71</sup> The *naukleroi* were organized in *oikos*-type associations.<sup>72</sup> This system of a large union of *naukleroi* in Tomis<sup>73</sup> has been attested only in a few towns on the Bithynian coast,<sup>74</sup> and it indicates the existence of a typical trading area in the region mentioned.<sup>75</sup>

Most of the *naukleroi* appear in inscriptions in various associative forms. In Greece and adjacent islands, they are attested in the Aegean islands, Cyprus, Ephesus, Iaos, Samothrace, Cyzicus; in the province of Macedonia, Thracia, Moesia Inferior etc.<sup>76</sup> PHI inscriptions

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> Εὐχαρ[ιστήρια] / [ναυκλ]ήροι Θεὸν [......] / οἱ περὶ [......]υχον / κατὰ ε[ὐτυχῆ? πλό]ον ναῦ/ται ε[ὐχῆι? κατ' εἴ σπλο]υν (SAPRYKIN 2015, 128-129).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> SAPRYKIN 2015, 129.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> DAŠEVSKAÂ 197, 51–53.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚĂ 1953, 497-511.

<sup>69</sup> BĂRBULESCU, BUZOIANU 2009, 398-407; ISM II, 291.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> ISM II, 186.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> ISM II, 375.

<sup>72</sup> DANA 2013, 62.

<sup>73</sup> DANA 2013, 62; ISM II, 60; ISM II, 132.

<sup>74</sup> BOUNEGRU 2000, 130.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> BOUNEGRU 2000, 126.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> DE SALVO 1992, 450-452.

Attica (IG I-III)	15
Peloponnesos (IG IV-VI)	1
Central Greece (IG VII-IX)	4
Northern Greece (IG X)	3
Thrace and the Lower Danube (IG X)	9
North Shore of the Black Sea	4
Aegean Islands, incl. Crete (IG XI-XIII)	62

database<sup>77</sup> gives us the following classification of inscriptions attesting *naukleroi* or *corpora* in our area of interest:

We, therefore, observe an abundance of them in the Aegean islands, the area of provenance of the Zeest 80 amphora and probably its content.

Based on the reading and the restoration of our *graffito*, a significant conclusion can be drawn about the commercial activity and provincial society at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. In this period, some Greek traditions are preserved, not only in material culture - the use of old transport containers, but also spiritual - the Greek language is preserved. ELL HNIKON is most likely associated with the first stages of the trading process - loading onto the ship at the place of origin of the content (maybe in the north Aegean zones).

The amphora could have reached Barbaricum as part of the illicit trade that was taking place in the border area of the province of Scythia, possibly via the center of Noviodunum, by waterway, and further to the site of Negrileşti. This hypothesis is supported by ancient written sources that mention the illicit trade practiced by commanders and soldiers in garrisons on the Danubian *limes* of the province of Scythia Minor with the Barbarians.<sup>78</sup> An additional reason is also the presence of another type of amphora made, most probably, for Barbarian trade in the Noviodunum workshops.<sup>79</sup>

Finally yet importantly, the *graffito* is a proof of the functioning of the port of Tomis in this period. The geographical distribution of the inscriptions that mention *corpora* of naukleroi and individual naukleroi determined P. Arnaud to conclude about the activity of ports and port hierarchies.<sup>80</sup> He observes what some ports emerge only from the lists of recorded *corpora* and *collegia*. In contrast, African and Levantine ports were totally or almost

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> https://inscriptions.packhum.org/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> BARNEA 1967, 567, HONCU, MAMALAUCĂ 2021, 119.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> HONCU, MAMALAUCĂ 2021.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> ARNAUD 2020, 419-420.

absent from the lists until the later Roman Empire. On the other hand, Nicomedia, with sixteen *naukleroi* and one mention of the house of the *naukleroi* stands above all other ports, followed only, far behind, by Narbo and Arelate. Salona, Tomis, and Sinope have provided evidence for the existence of known *corpora, collegia*, or houses of shippers.<sup>81</sup>

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#### Caption

Pl. 1. Location of the Negrilești site

PI. 2. Roman amphorae discovered at Negrilești. 1-2 photo, drawing, 3 - detail with graffito, 4-

Zeest 80 - close up, 5-6 photo, drawing - unknow amphora type, 7 - close up

PI. 3. Storage vessels discovered at Negrilești site

PI. 4. Mosaic from Cyprus which attested the name Ἑλληνικός

#### Abbreviation

ABSA - Annual of the British School at Athens.

Acta Musei Tutovensis. Istorie veche și arheologie, Bârlad.

Bosporskie čtenia, Kerch.

Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique Supplément, Athens, École Francaise d'Athenes.

CIRB- Corpus Inscriptionum Regni Bosporani. Leningrad.

Drevnosti Bospora - Antiquities of the Bosporus.

Kratkie Soobśenia Instituta arheologii, Moskow.

**IG-Inscriptiones Graecae** 

ISM I - Inscripțiile din Scythia Minor grecești și latine = Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris graecae et latinae.

ISM II - Inscripțiile din Scythia Minor grecești și latine = Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris graecae et latinae.

LGPN – Lexicon of Greek Personal Name

LRCW, 6, Archaeopress - LRCW 6: Late Roman Coarse Wares, Cooking Wares and Amphorae in the Mediterranean: Archaeology and Archaeometry Land and Sea: Pottery Routes, Eds. V. Caminneci, E. Giannitrapani, M. C. Parello, M. S. Rizzo.

Materialy po arkheologii severnogo prichernomor'ya, Odessa.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> BOUNEGRU 2006b, 419.

Numizmatika I Epigrafika, Moskow.

Peuce - Peuce, Studii și comunicări de istorie veche, arheologie și numismatică,

Muzeul "Deltei Dunării" (din 1994 - ICEM) Tulcea.

Pontica, Muzeul de Istorie Națională și Arheologie, Constanța.

RCRF Acta - Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautorum Acta, Archaeopress Journal.

REG - Revue des Études Grecques, Les Belles Lettres, Paris.

RPLHA - Revue de Philologie de Littérature et d'Histoire Anciennes, Paris.

SAA – Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica, Iași.

SCIV(A) – Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche (și Arheologie), București.

Scripta Antiqua, Bordeaux.

SCŞt. - Studii şi cercetări ştiințifice, Iaşi.

SEG - Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum

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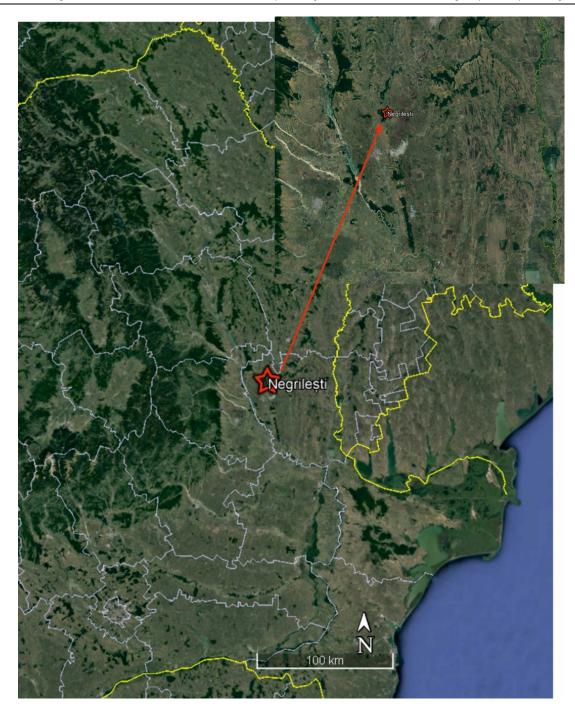
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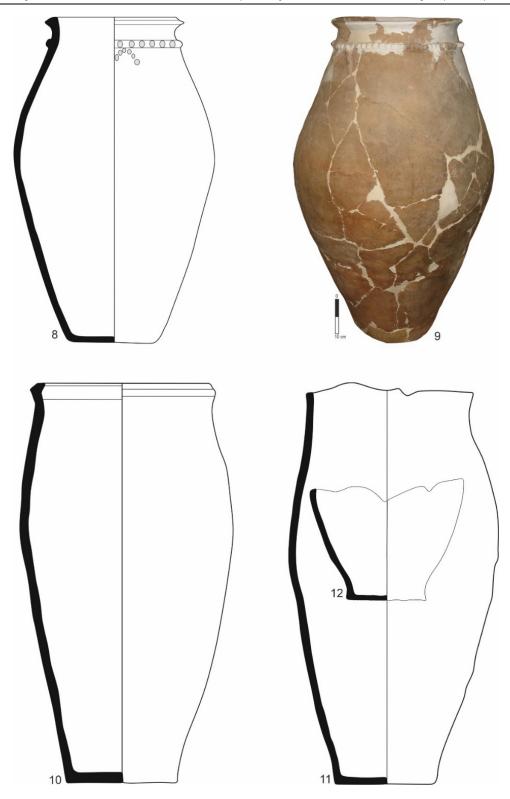
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Pl. 1. Location of the Negrilesti site



Pl. 2. Roman amphorae discovered at Negrilești. 1-2 photo, drawing, 3 - detail with graffiti, 4-Zeest 80 – close up, 5-6 photo, drawing - unknow amphora type, 7 – close up



Pl. 3. Storage vessels discovered at Negrilești site

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PI. 4. Mosaic from Cyprus who attested the name Έλληνικός