

Editorial

We are presenting to readers a volume of *Archaeologia Polona* containing a collection of articles resulting from excavations conducted by a Ukrainian-Polish team in the years 2018–2021 in the ancient centre of Olbia Pontica on the north coast of the Black Sea. The excavations were a joint initiative of both the Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology Polish Academy of Sciences. The aim of this volume is to present the results of the recent archaeological campaign led by Prof. Dr Alla Buiskykh and Dr Alfred Twardecki in the broader context of our knowledge about the areas neighbouring Olbia.

These Polish-Ukrainian excavations began in 2016. Initially, on the Polish side, they were held under the aegis of the National Museum in Warsaw, and since 2019, under the same management on the Polish side, under the aegis of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Due to the disruptions caused by the Covid epidemic and then the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, only four full-scale excavation campaigns were held in 2016–2018 and 2021. There were also two documentation campaigns in 2019 and 2020, when no excavations were carried out due to external restrictions. Since 2022, no personal access to the Olbia Reserve and storage resources is possible due to the ongoing military conflict. Nevertheless, the results of the first three excavation campaigns, confirmed and extended by the results of work carried out in 2021, prompted the Polish and Ukrainian excavation leaders to unanimously state that it is time for the first summaries. These results not only resolved several decades of discussion about the nature of the settlement in Olbia after the Romans left this place, but also contributed to the formulation of a completely new thesis about the moment when the inhabitants finally left the site of the former Olbia. Based on the results of excavations carried out in Trench R-23 and confirmed during the excavations of the Ukrainian expedition in the trench R-25, it was established that ancient Olbia was populated by inhabitants of the Cherniakhiv culture in the first decades of the 5th century.

As a result, the participants of the excavations, as well as recognized specialists in the Cherniakhiv culture and the Hunnic culture, were invited to participate in preparing papers for the current issue of *Archaeologia Polona*. Many of the papers gathered for the volume are devoted to discussing artefacts and other material obtained during the excavations and their analysis. To obtain a broader context, researchers dealing with Olbia from the Greco-Roman period and neighbouring archaeological sites, such as Tyras or fortified points in the broad area of Greco-Roman Olbia, were also invited to submit contributions.

To the sincere regret of the organizers, not all the authors, who initially agreed, were able to prepare their papers for printing in this publication. Due to personal reasons (but mainly due to the outbreak of the War and direct involvement in military operations), some of our Ukrainian colleagues were not able to prepare their texts. The editors fully understand these reasons and sincerely sympathize with our colleagues who are actively defending their homeland as we write this. Ultimately, we managed to collect twelve texts. They can be divided into three types. The first group consists of papers discussing individual categories of finds obtained during excavations. The second series of texts discusses various aspects of sites outside Olbia, thus providing valuable comparative material. The third category includes synthetic texts.

Serhii Didenko in his paper *Ceramic Complex of the Post-Antiquity Horizon of Trench R-23 of Olbia (based on material from excavations from 2016–2018, 2021)* presents an analysis of Late Roman pottery. He confirms the functioning of a settlement of the Cherniakhiv culture in former Olbia. Within the citadel itself, this presence is documented by ceramic finds from the beginning of the 4th century to the first decades of the 5th century. This conclusion is crucial for all further arguments related to the functioning of Olbia in the Gothic and Hunnic periods. Olga Puklina in her paper *Glassware from the Excavations in Sector R-23 of Pontic Olbia* presents glass artefacts, some of which date back to the 4th and 5th centuries and were found in layers related to the Cherniakhiv culture settlement in Olbia. Alisa Semenova in her paper *Composite Antler Combs from Olbia Pontica* analyses composite combs found in Olbia. They are an important and unambiguous marker confirming that the inhabitants of Olbia at that time (3rd–5th centuries) belonged to the Cherniakhiv culture. Irina Sheiko in the paper *Recent Finds of the Latest Lamps from Olbia* presents a collection of lamps found in layers in Trenches R-23 and R-25. For most of these items, their dating is the mid-3rd – early 5th century. The origin of the lamps indicates contacts with the Mediterranean basin during this period. The author also discusses the only artefact with Christian symbolism found so far in Olbia.

Marcin Matera and Nadiya Gavrylyuk present in their paper *The Fortifications of the Late Scythian Settlement at Konsulivske* details of the construction of a late Hellenistic fort on the outskirts of Olbia. Kyrlo Myzgin in his paper *Roman Coins in the Northern Black Sea Littoral Region: The Cherniakhiv Culture Perspective* presents chosen Roman coins and their imitations found outside Olbia. The author concludes by pointing out, based on the distribution of Roman coin finds, that a clear concentration of coins from the 4th and 5th centuries occurs between the Dnister and the Danube. Oleh Petrauskas and Ruslan Shyshkin in their paper *Glass-production Workshop of the Hunnic Times near Komariv on the Dnister River* presents the results of excavations at the Komariv site on the Middle Dnister. They mention that it was the only centre for the manufacture of glass products known outside the Roman Empire. The decline of the centre, clearly related to the Cherniakhiv culture, dates to the mid-5th century. Such a long operation of such a unique craft centre proves the long-term cooperation between the Hunnic invaders and the Gothic settlers. Oleh Saveliev in his paper *Tyras in Late Antiquity* states that from the 3rd to the 5th century, Tyras existed as a settlement of the Cherniakhiv culture. There are two periods here – from the mid-3rd to the end of the 4th century and from the end of the 4th century to the beginning of the 5th century. In the first period, Tyras maintained quite extensive contacts reaching all the way to the Mediterranean Sea, judging by the imports found at this site. The second phase still shows, however, the presence of imports, and they still come from the Mediterranean basin. No building structures from this period have been found and it can be assumed that the number of inhabitants gradually decreased. There were also found lamps with Christian symbols. Tyras finally fell into disrepair at the beginning of the 5th century.

Alla Buiskykh presents a text on *Building Activity in Olbia in the Late-Roman Time*. The author clearly states, based on her many years of experience from excavations in Olbia, the lack of urban continuity between the period of the presence of the Romans and the Goths. At the same time, she is critical of Boris Magomedov's thesis about the existence of a system of fortifications both around Olbia itself and in the vicinity, after the site was settled by representatives of the Cherniakhiv culture, she emphasizes the existence of a large, unfortified settlement at that time. Borys Magomedov in the paper *The Last Period of the History of Olbia: the First Gothic Town* presents his synthetic approach to both the Gothic settlement in former Olbia and the surrounding settlements of the Cherniakhiv culture. He believes that in the initial period, the Goths were only interested in the port (Lower Town), and only in the 4th century did they settle the area of the so-called citadel. He also believes that both the Gothic settlement in Olbia and the surrounding Gothic settlements were fortified at that time and were the focus of an important administrative centre

under the Goths – also in the Hunnic period. The last traces of settlement in ancient Olbia disappeared around the 430s. Roman Reida, Anatolii V. Heiko and Serhii Sapehin present in their work *The Dnipro Left Bank Forest-Steppe Region in the Hunnic Period* an overview of archaeological sites where the presence of Hunnic artifacts was identified. They conclude that the arrival of the Huns did not cause the collapse of the earlier settlements of the Cherniakhiv culture. Alfred Twardecki's essay *Olbia in the Hunnic Time. A Historical Perspective* discusses the historical background of the period of functioning of the former Olbia in the Gothic and Hunnic periods. He presents the most important studies on the Goths and Huns in recent decades, reconstructs the course of the Gothic wars (3rd–6th centuries) and analyzes selected sagas of Germanic mythology. On this basis, he formulates the thesis that Gothic Olbia, functioning from the 3rd/4th century to the beginning of the 5th century, was an administrative centre of pagan Goths who actively fought against their Christianized brethren. He also hypothesizes that this region can be identified with the land of *Oium* (derived from Olbium) and with the *Árheimar á Danparstœðum*, the capital of *Reiðgotaland*, mentioned in the oldest Germanic sagas.

The papers collected in this volume present a body of material and ideas that have not been published in such a form before. We are convinced that the unique set of top-class specialists who took part in preparing this volume and presented their studies of the new materials brought by our excavations in Olbia will contribute to a significant expansion of our knowledge about the role of this settlement in the Gothic and Hunnic periods, and they constitute a valuable contribution to the ongoing discussion of the transition from the Classical period to the post-Antique world that is taking place in different areas of Europe.

This block of texts is complemented by an extremely interesting article *Lviv Classical Archaeology Before World War II* by Natalia Bulyk, Roman Berest and Olena Tomeniuk on the history of research on classical archaeology in Lviv from the beginning of the 20th century to 1945. For much of that time (1918–1939) Lviv was in Poland and was in fact the leading centre of the nascent Polish classical archaeology from which emerged such eminent scholars in the field as Professors Kazimierz Michałowski and Kazimierz Majewski.

In the context of the ongoing War, the question of defence and opposition to external force are never far from everybody's mind, and a topical article by Oleksandra Ivanova and Ivan Zotsenko reminds us that these are issues that have been faced many times in Ukraine's past. Their subject is the defense system of Kyiv over the centuries from the Middle Ages to the present day (*Under the Shadow of Conflict: Understanding the Belligerent Landscapes of the Kyiv Triangle*). This is a thought-provoking study of the ways in which, over the centuries, the topography of Kyiv and its surroundings has been used to create a system of defensive lines. The article is also an appeal for

the protection of the remains of these structures due to their unique archaeological and historical value.

This is joined by another important and topical text, a contribution to the broader discussion on the antiquities market and the role of modern technologies in its development. Paul Barford's paper *Archaeology and Commerce: Olbia "Dolphins" on the Global Antiquities Market* is an extremely interesting voice in a rather stormy discussion on the trade in antiquities in general, focusing on the online trade of cast "dolphin" coins produced in Olbia in the times of the functioning of the Greek colony there. This subject has taken on increased relevance in the context of the ongoing War, when the problem of "unofficial" finds and even robbing public museum collections in order to supply the market with antiquities is intensifying.

The texts in the volume are also complemented by the report from the conference *The 4th European Conference Europa Postmediaevalis 2024: Patterns and Inspirations, Warsaw, Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology Polish Academy of Sciences, Faculty of Archaeology Warsaw University, 23–25.04.2024* by Magdalena Bis, Michał Starski and Maciej Trzeciecki. An additional feature are two book reviews: *Olena Fialko, Amazons: Myths and Reality* (2023. Kyiv: Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine), reviewed by Evelina Kravchenko, and a review by Piotr Włodarczak of *Matthew J. Walsh, Sean O'Neill and Lasse Sørensen (eds), In the Darkest of Days. Exploring Human Sacrifice and Value in Southern Scandinavian Prehistory* (2024, Oxford and Philadelphia: Oxbow Books).

Alfred Twardecki
Alla Buiskykh

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