

# Tyras in Late Antiquity

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# Tyras in Late Antiquity

Oleh Saveliev<sup>a</sup>

The article presents materials related to the existence of Tyras in the late Roman period. Based on the available data, it is assumed that there were two phases in the existence of the city in Late Antiquity. In the first phase (second half of the 3rd to the third quarter of the 4th century AD), life in the city was restored after the barbarian raids. The Goths became the main military and political force in the steppe area of the Northwestern Black Sea region. Tyras was still receiving imported goods. However, its life was completely included in the orbit of barbarian interests. Cherniakhiv-tradition artefacts appeared in their material culture. Tyras was also receiving imported goods from Asia Minor, the Bosphorus, Greece, and the Danube region. Amphoras of the Gaza type were imported in small quantities. In the second phase (last quarter of the 4th to the beginning of the 5th century AD), Tyras was still inhabited by the people who had not left the city during the Hun invasion. A few dishes of the Late Roman C / Phocaean Red Slip Ware group were delivered there, and glass dishes of Middle Eastern production and lamps with Christian symbols were used. Eastern imperial coins were in circulation. It is not known how the relations of the inhabitants of Tyras with the Huns developed. Obviously, the population was small and soon left the city forever.

KEY-WORDS: Tyras, The Roman Empire, barbarians, import, trade, cultural and economic contacts

The study of the late Roman period within the history of the ancient centres in the Northern Black Sea region is difficult, primarily because there are almost no epigraphic documents. Our ideas are based on a few written sources and the archaeological data.

During the Scythian Wars, which began in AD 230 [SHA, Maxim. et Balb. XVI, 3], barbarians attacked some cities on the Black Sea coast, and they did not bypass Tyras.

Based on the study of archaeological materials from Olbia, Valentina Krapivina identified two layers of destruction. In her opinion, they could be associated with two “Gothic” destructions of the city in 230 and 260 AD (Krapivina 1991: 47–49). Having also analysed the materials from Tyras, the researcher stated that the latest

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of the destruction layers are dated by the presence of Alexander Severus coins (222–235; Krapivina 2009b: 198–200). It should be noted that coins of all emperors up to and including AD 275 are present in Tyras. From her point of view, Tyras and Olbia had a largely similar fate in Late Roman times, so it can be assumed that the first destruction of Tyras could also have occurred in AD 230 (Krapivina 2009b: 201–204).<sup>1</sup> The city quickly recovered from these raids. Tyras and Olbia were most likely destroyed for the second time during the mass campaign of the Black Sea tribes against the Balkan provinces of the Roman Empire in AD 269. At that time, most of the cities and settlements in the Northern Black Sea region were destroyed.

A different vision of the problem was presented by Vitalii Zubar and Nataliia Son. They believe that the city blocks were destroyed during the attack of the Carpi in AD 214, and Tyras was captured by the barbarians not in AD 230–240 but in the period of the late 250 to the mid 260 AD (Zubar and Son 2007: 202). New materials to clarify or refute these assumptions have not yet been found.

The fact that life in the city was restored is evidenced, among other things, by the materials of the so-called “post-gothic<sup>2</sup> house”, which existed until the end of the 4th century AD (Kravchenko and Korpusova 1975: 20–42). Isaac Kleyman has classified this and several other structures as the remains of the fourth layer of the settlement according to his stratigraphic scheme (Kleyman 1979: 70–71). He previously dated this layer to the mid-3rd–4th centuries AD (Kleyman 1976: 118). At the same time, these data demonstrate the deterioration of construction techniques and a more intense barbarisation of Tyras compared to the previous period.

Greyware pottery of the Cherniakhiv type, three-layer combs with bronze rivets, bronze axe-shaped pendants, Cherniakhiv fibulae and possibly some Almgren VII fibulae probably came to the city with the direct participation of the barbarians. It should not be completely ruled out that some of the objects of the Cherniakhiv culture could also have been used by the inhabitants of the city. However, the vast majority, obviously, belonged to the bearers of the tradition themselves.

After the mid-3rd century AD, the ceramic tradition changed completely. In percentage terms, the quantity of Cherniakhiv-type vessels in the ceramic assemblage of the Roman period is not large. However, if we talk about the period of the second half of the 3rd–4th / early 5th centuries AD, we can observe the almost

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- 1 Perhaps, traces of fires in some rooms of the Roman period date back to this time. In one of them, on the floor under collapsed debris, a skeleton was buried, probably the defender of the house, next to which lay an iron spearhead (Furmanskaya 1958: 22–23, 29). Nataliia Son suggested her own argument regarding the dating of room No.24. She connects the man’s death with the invasion of the Carpi in AD 214 (Son 1986: 144–146, 151).
  - 2 It seems to us that the use of such a term to the entire Late Antique stage (Gudkova 1979: 100) is not entirely justified. Given the current historical situation around Tyras after the “Scythian” wars, the term “Gothic” period should rather be used.

complete disappearance of Red Slip Ware and greyware pottery associated with the previous ancient tradition. The presence of products associated with the tradition of the Cherniakhiv culture and changes in construction indicate an influx of new population and a transformation of material culture.

Yurii Pavlenko and Nataliia Son believe that Tyras acquired the status of a military-economic centre of the barbarian association after the barbarian domination had been established in the Lower Dnister area. They also suggested that the city became political, primarily a political-redistributive place for the unification of the Visigoths-Tervingians (Pavlenko and Son 1991: 11; Son 1993: 57). This conclusion does not seem unreasonable, however, in our opinion, it can be applied to the realities of the 4th century. The Cherniakhiv culture objects, which would be dated to the middle – the end of the 3rd century AD, practically do not stand out. It can be assumed that having ruined the cities and settlements in the Northwestern Black Sea area during the Scythian Wars, the barbarians mostly were not settling in this territory. It is possible that some small number of them remained in the city. Boris Magomedov expressed a similar point of view regarding Olbia. According to him, the military-administrative centre of royal power was located in the city (Magomedov 2007: 51; 2009: 278). This idea requires further development, however, the presence of a Cherniakhiv culture settlement on the site of Olbia in the 4th – early 5th centuries AD has already been reliably established (Twardecki *et al.*, 2017: 45–52).

A different point of view on the historical development of the city-states in the Northwestern Black Sea region during Late Antiquity has also been presented (Samoylova 2008: 140–143; Krapivina 2011: 48–51; 2013b: 89–90, 92). However, archaeological materials did not prove the hypothesis about the city's generally ancient material culture and population until the end of its existence.

Later, in the 4th century AD, when sites of the Cherniakhiv culture spread in the Budzhak steppe and densely surrounded Tyras (Gudkova 1999: 366, fig. 33), the remaining residents were unable to resist the external threat and completely fell into the cultural orbit of the new population. According to Serhii Didenko, one of the reasons for the appearance of the Cherniakhiv tribes in the southern lands could be their desire to be in the zone of constant contact with ancient civilisation, where they could obtain Roman products, as well as control the transit of those goods to the forest-steppe tribes (Didenko 2018: 179).

The influence of Tyras on the bearers of the Cherniakhiv culture is not traced. The city's role in the political and administrative association of that time is largely unclear. It could have been a traditional centre of transit trade, through which the Cherniakhiv tribes from the south received goods in amphorae.

The review of old materials and the study of new data has made it possible to identify items belonging to the ceramic tradition and other elements of the barbarian

material culture. These findings clarify the picture of the city's development and confirm the researchers' conclusions that Tyras was fully included in the economic and political orbit of the Gothic Union of tribes while retaining some ancient traditions. The barbarian influence on Late Antique Tyras was certainly stronger than previously thought.

After the departure of the Roman garrison, the city's military potential was not sufficient to protect its inhabitants. It is difficult to determine the status of Tyras's inhabitants during the second half of the 3rd–4th centuries AD; however, their subordinate position in relation to the Goths is quite clear.

In AD 332, Emperor Constantine once again defeated the Goths and made an agreement with them, according to which the barbarians were obliged to supply the Empire with a certain number of soldiers for an annual monetary reward, and they were also allowed to trade on the Danube (Budanova 2001: 146). It can be assumed that the barbarians also took upon themselves the protection of the cities they had conquered from new raids, since they were interested, among other things, in the established trade relations and obtaining various goods. Later, when Emperor Valens defeated the Goths in AD 369, an agreement was concluded with them, according to which barbarians were forbidden to cross the river and go to the right bank; restrictions were also imposed on trade with the Romans (Amm. Marc., XXVII, 5). Tyras was not mentioned in the reports of ancient authors about those events, however, given that having crossed the Danube, the emperor found himself "in enemy land", it is likely that the city could remain in the field of interests of the Goths.

The question of relations with the Huns remains open. Hunnic items in Tyras are unknown. Single Hunnic burial complexes and finds have only been recorded far from Tyras. Recently, a few individual items have begun to be identified, the dating of which covers the range from the fourth to the first half of the fifth centuries, and wider (fourth to sixth centuries AD).<sup>3</sup> It is also worth remembering that individual forms of Cherniakhiv greyware pottery date back to the period at the beginning of the 5th century AD, which corresponds to the upper phase of the existence of the culture.

So, let us briefly consider the archaeological sources related to the time of interest to us.

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<sup>3</sup> A bronze lamp and a fragment of a Phocaeian bowl (about them below) are kept in the Bilhorod-Dnistrovskyi Museum of Local Lore. These are unidentified finds. In the card index they are listed as "Old Find" and found in the fortress. Nevertheless, we have no reason to believe that they were found not in Tyras, but in some other place. This is all the more likely since they were found in the uppermost, Late Antique layers.

## HOUSEBUILDING

We do not know whether the barbarians built their houses next to the houses of the local population, occupied the existing houses or built their houses on top of those of the local people. The so-called “post-gothic house” (Kravchenko and Korpusova 1975: 20–42) was covering the corner of the Roman vexillation room. To the southeast of this house, several buildings were explored, some of which overlapped the vexillation building. Isaac Kleyman noted that the Late Antique layer and buildings lie above the layer of the 2nd – mid-3rd century AD (Kleyman 1976: 115, 118–119, pl. 2). In the southern part of Tyras, two Late Antique houses have also been discovered, built into the space of a peristyle courtyard from the 2nd – first half of the 3rd century AD (Samoylova 2013: 464, pl. 111).

## AMPHORAE

In Late Roman times, Tyras received goods in amphorae from Asia Minor, the Bosphorus, the Eastern Mediterranean, and the Danube region.

*Amphorae of types Zeest 90 / Dressel 24 / Scorpan VII (Fig. 1:1–2)*

In Tyras, they are found more often in the context of the 2nd–3rd centuries AD, like most finds of all variants of this type in the Northern Black Sea region (Scorpan 1977: 274–277). In Upper Moesia, such amphorae date from the 2nd to the beginning of the 4th century AD (Bjelajac 1996: 55).

*Type Zeest 72 / Krapivina 19 / Dyczek 31 (Fig. 1:3–9)*

Production is associated with Panticapaeum or its district. Amphorae of this type appeared around the turn of the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD and were produced in the next chronological period, until the middle – end of the 4th century AD.

*Type Shelov D / Vnukov C IVD (Fig. 1:10–14)*

In addition to the ancient sites, they are well known from barbarian contexts in southwestern Taurica and the Cherniakhiv culture. The amphorae are dated to: the first half of the 3rd century AD (Shelov 1978: 19); at the end of the 2nd – the first half of the 3 AD (Abramov 1993: 47); the last quarter of the 2nd century AD (?) – the second half of the 3rd century AD (Vnukov 2006: 167); 3rd century AD (Ivanova 2011: 296); 3rd – the beginning of the 4 century AD (Krapivina 2009a: 71). Amphorae continued to be introduced at the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 4th centuries AD, transforming into morphologically simplified late variants (Didenko 2014: 45).



Fig. 1. Amphorae. 1–18, 22 – photo: O. Saveliev; 19–21 after Samoylova 1978.

*Type Zeest 79 / Kapitän II (Fig. 1:15–21; Robinson 1959: pl. 15, K 113; pl. 16, L 33; Hayes 1983: fig. 25, 86)*

They were probably produced in the Aegean Sea or in the Eastern Mediterranean. They appear in the second half of the 2nd century AD and became most widespread in the 3rd and 4th centuries AD. Several variants of this type are distinguished for the territory of Dacia (Bădescu 2013: 189–198).

*Type Forlimpopoli (Fig. 1:22)*

They were made in the Northern Italian region from the end of the 1st to the beginning of the 4th century AD. Amphorae in Tyras were found in contexts of the 2nd–3rd centuries AD. The largest concentration in the Northern Black Sea region is observed in Tanais (complexes that perished in the middle of the 3rd century AD) and Komariv, a barbaric site associated with the bearers of the Cherniakhiv culture (3rd – beginning of the 4th century AD; Paczyńska and Naumenko 2004: 309–312; Didenko 2016: 243).

*Type Shelov F (Fig. 2:1–2)*

They were widespread in the cities of the Northern Black Sea region, such as Olbia, Chersonesos, on the Bosphorus, the barbaric sites of South-Western Taurica, and, of course, among the tribes of the Cherniakhiv culture (Krapivina 1993: 94–95; Magomedov 2006: 52, figs 1, 7–11; Ivanova 2011: 296–303). They date from the beginning of the 4th – the third quarter of the 4th century AD.

*Type Samoylova 6 (II) / Paraschiv 9A (Fig. 2:3–5)*

Similar amphorae are known in Dinogetia, Beroe, Odessos, where they date to the 4th century AD. They were also used by the carriers of the Cherniakhiv culture (Ștefan 1941: 412, fig. 17, 2; Rikman 1972: 91, fig. 1, 11–13; Gudkova *et al.*, 1997: fig. 1, 15; Magomedov 2001: 63; Paraschiv 2002: 177–178, pl. 7, 45–46; Șovan 2009: pl. 136, 8).

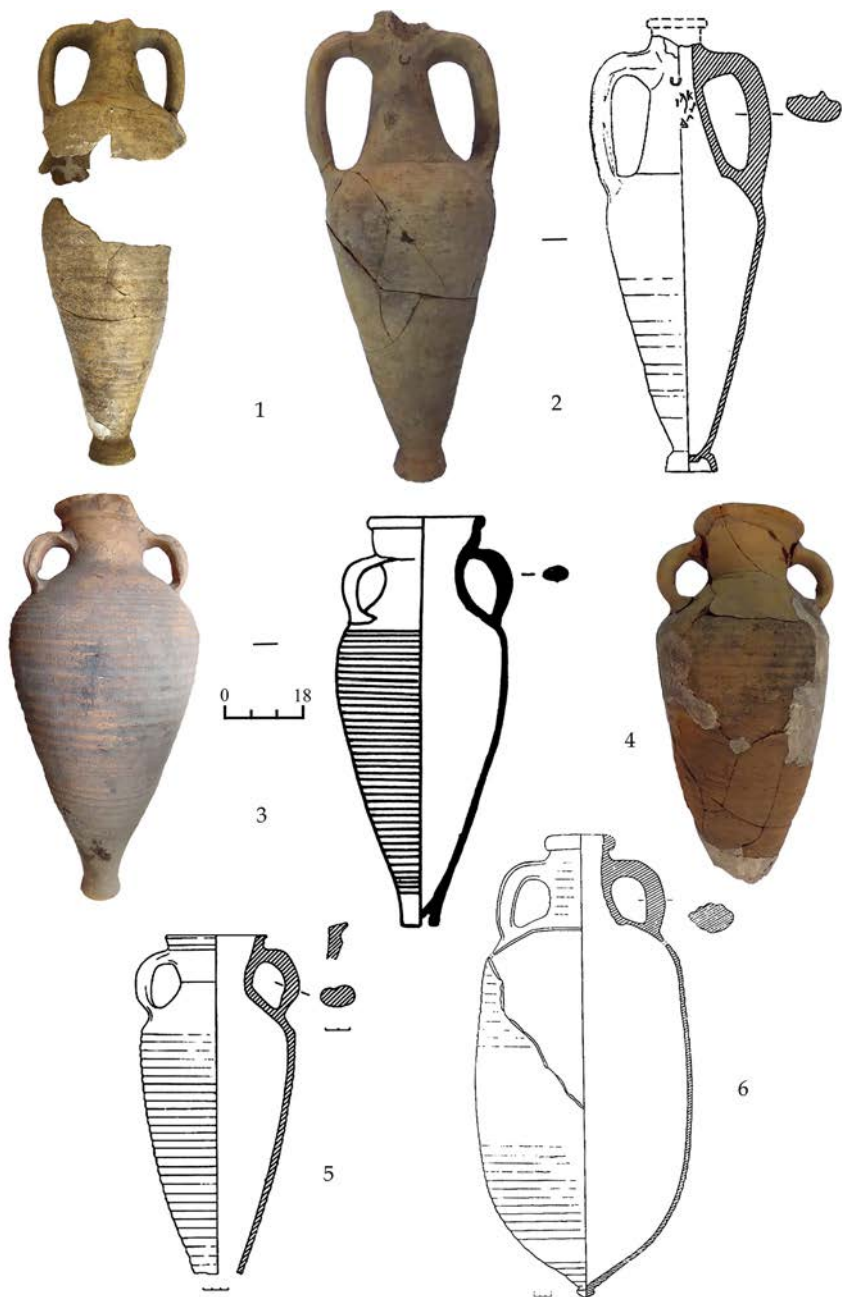
*Type Charax 33 (Fig. 2:6)*

The ceramic assemblage of the “post-gothic house” from Tyras, which included an amphora of this type, according to A. Sazanov should be dated to approximately the middle of the 4th century AD (Sazanov 2012: 346). Based on the chronology of all the materials of this assemblage, we can talk about its dating even later – the second half of the 4th century AD. A. Abramov dated amphorae of this type to the end of the 4th century AD (Abramov 1993: 52).

*Type Delakeu / Zeest 100 / C Snp I (Fig. 3:1–3)*

The beginning of their appearance dates back to the second half of the 3rd or the beginning of the 4th century AD. The upper date is determined within the limits





**Fig. 2.** Amphorae. 1–4 – photo by O. Saveliev; 2, 5–6 after Kravchenko and Korpusova 1975; 3 after Samoylova 1978.

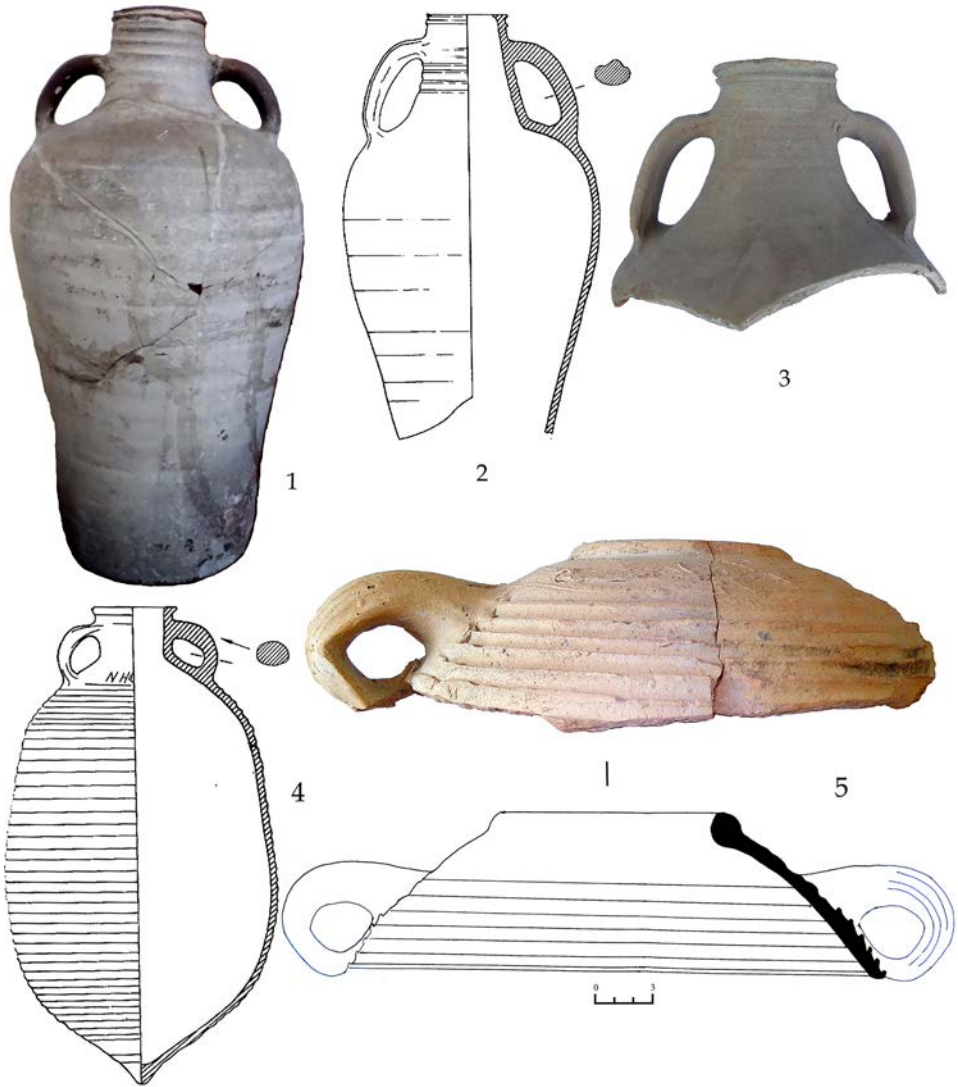


Fig. 3. Amphorae. 1, 3 – photo by O. Saveliev; 5 – photo and drawing by O. Saveliev; 2, 4 after Kravchenko and Korpusova 1975.

of the end of the 5th – the beginning of the 6th century AD, which is indicated by the context of finds in the workshops of Demirci in the area of Sinope and on the Bosphorus (for the dating of amphorae see: Sharov 2007: 170; Kassab Tezgör 2010: 132; Smokotina 2011: 355–360; Yashnaya 2015: 120–139). Morphologically, this group of amphorae is not homogeneous, and subtypes are distinguished in it (Opaıt 2010: 371–389). The main consumers of Sinope wine in the Northern Black Sea region were the Goths, and the appearance of amphora containers in Tyras and Olbia is probably connected precisely with their requirements (Magomedov 2011: 370–371).

The latest types are *Robinson M 273 amphorae* (Fig. 3:4) and *Gaza/Ashkelon type Palestinian amphorae / Keay LIVB* (Fig. 3:5). A complete amphora of the first type was found in the Cherniakhiv complex “post-gothic house”. Amphoras in the territory of the Western Black Sea Coast of the Robinson M 273 type come from assemblages of the 4th–5th centuries. Their production is associated with the workshops of the Aegean basin (e.g., Opaıt 2004: 16–18, pl. 9–12). They are well known in the sites of Cherniakhiv culture (Magomedov 2006: 53, pl. 2, 5–8).

Palestinian amphorae date widely, from AD 300 to 450. According to Grzegorz Majcherek, in one of the deposits in Alexandria, almost 30% of the identified fragments of a form similar to those from Tyras date back to AD 375–400 (Majcherek 1995: 167). We know of at least five fragments of Palestinian amphorae. It is possible that we are dealing with one batch of vessels. And in this case, there is no need to talk about permanent ties with the Middle East.

It is interesting to note that not a single fragment has been recorded at Tyras of the Shelov E type amphorae<sup>4</sup> (peak production occurred in the late 4th and first decades of the 5th century AD), well known at that time in Olbia (Krapivina 2009a: 73, pl. 38, 1–5; 2013a: 643). At the same time, according to Serhii Didenko, there are no amphorae of the Gaza type, which are known in Tyras. This may indicate that Tyras and Olbia were controlled by different groupings of the Goths, who had different vectors of their external trade relations.

## LAMPS

The most numerous groups of lamps in Tyras are represented by “ribbed” lamps (Fig. 4:1–3). Made in the 3rd–4th century AD, those lamps were widespread

4 Let us note that in all the reporting documentation on the excavations of Tyras, not a single find of amphorae of this type was noted. Either we are dealing with the difficulty of identification due to the fragmentary nature of the finds, or they really do not exist. In the latter case, this requires a separate explanation.

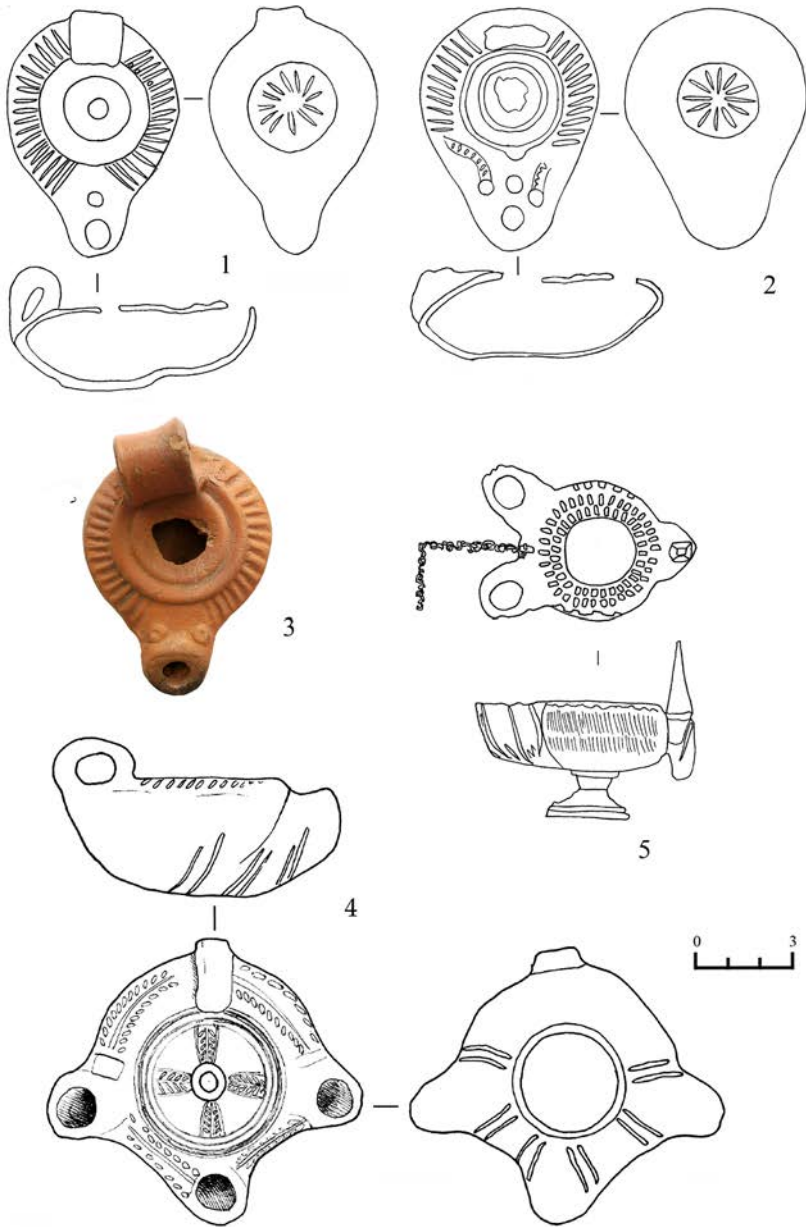


Fig. 4. Lamps. 1-2, 5 – drawing by O. Saveliev; 3 – photo by O. Saveliev; 4 after Fedoseeva 2010.

in the Northern (e.g., Nicorescu 1933: figs 109–113; Soročan 1982) and Western Black Sea areas (e.g., Kuzmanov 1992: 277–279; Topoleanu 2012: 166–167; Kuzmanov and Minchev 2018: 99–110, 397–484).

The latest group consists of lamps with marks in the form of a rider, a rhombus and several letters, analogies to which are unknown (Son and Soročan 1988: 130). We can single out a three-horned grey-clay lamp of a rare type with Christian symbols, for which a date has been proposed of the end of the 4th–5th centuries AD (Fedoseyeva 2010: 145–146; Fig. 4:4). Although in our opinion it may be earlier.

Among the metal lamps, a miniature bronze two-horned specimen is known (Fig. 4:5). A bronze Christian monogram continued the thin handle. A similar lamp is kept in the collection of the Museum of the Diocesan Cathedral in Lugo (Quiroga and Tejera 2017: 191–192). Florin Topoleanu suggests dating this type to the 4th–6th centuries AD (Topoleanu 2012: 224, pl. XVII, 133).

## FIBULAE

There are several types of fibulae.

- A. Fibulae of the Almgren group VII type (Almgren 1923: taf. IX; Fig. 5:1–2). According to various criteria, they are divided into series and generally dated to the end of the 2nd–3rd / beginning of the 4th century AD. The specimens from Tyras are close to the fibulae of the Dnipro series, which is identified as belonging to the Cherniakhiv culture (Gorokhovskiy and Gopkalo 2004: 119, fig. 6).
- B. Two-component bow-shaped fibulae (Gorokhovskiy and Son 1989: 75–76, fig. 3). The main period of their use falls in the second third and second half of the 3rd century AD, although they continued to be used at the beginning of the 4th century AD. Such fibulae from sites on the Lower Danube are dated by most researchers to the C2 phase (AD 260/275–310/320) of the European chronology (e.g., Spânu *et al.*, 2016: 246, fig. 1–2, 4, 5).
- C. Fibulae of the Zwiebelknopffibel type (Fig. 5:3–4). This type of brooch was common in the territory from North Africa to Spain and Asia Minor and dates generally to the second half of the 4th century AD (e.g., Keller 1971: 35; Pröttel 1991; Petcović 2010: typ 34; Quast 2015).
- D. Two-component bent tie fibulae of the Cherniakhiv series. Several brooches belong to this group (Fig. 5:5–7). They cover variants 2, 3, and possibly 4 (generally late 3rd–4th century AD; Ambroz 1966: 62–63).
- E. Two-component “military” fibulae. One of them belongs to a large group of the Late Roman period fasteners – the beginning of the era of the Migration period (Fig. 5:8). At first such fibulae appeared in Northern and Central Europe

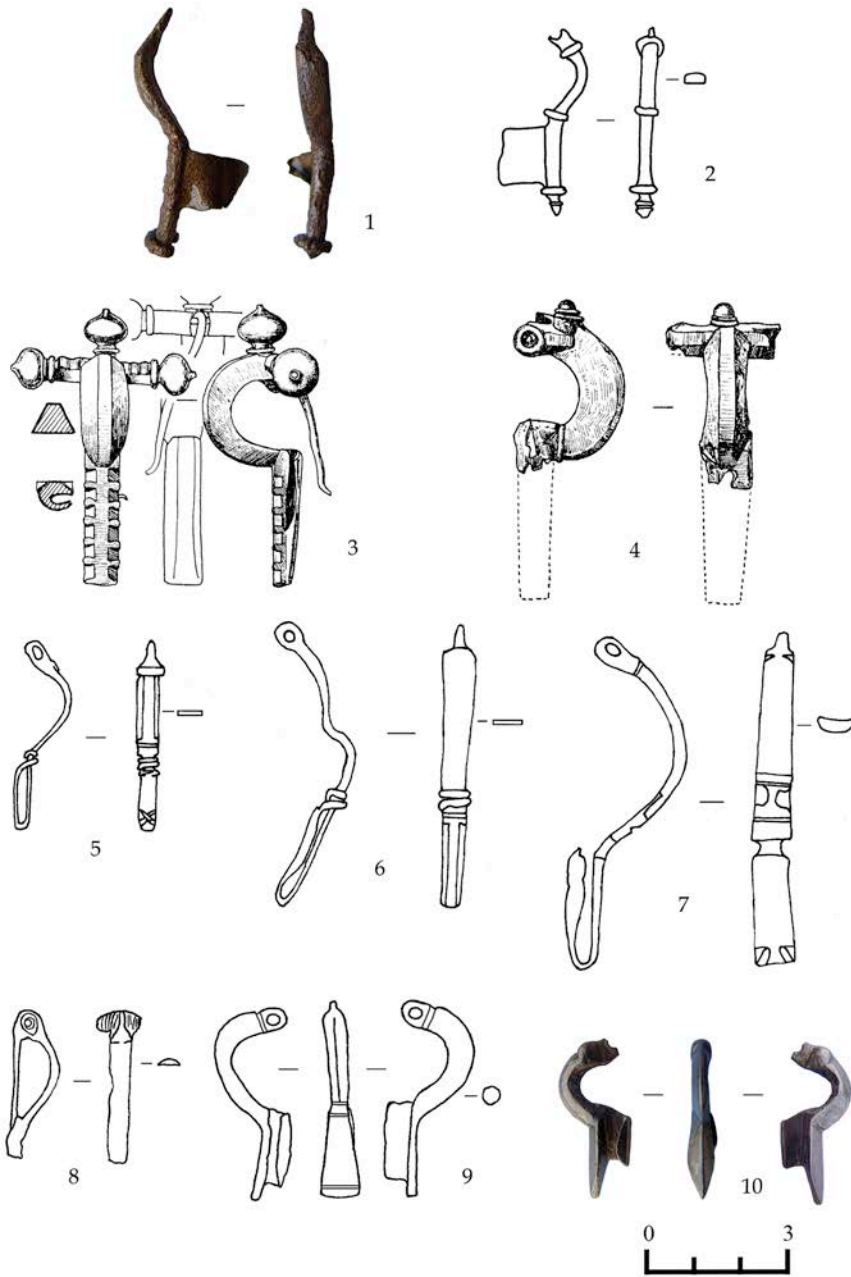
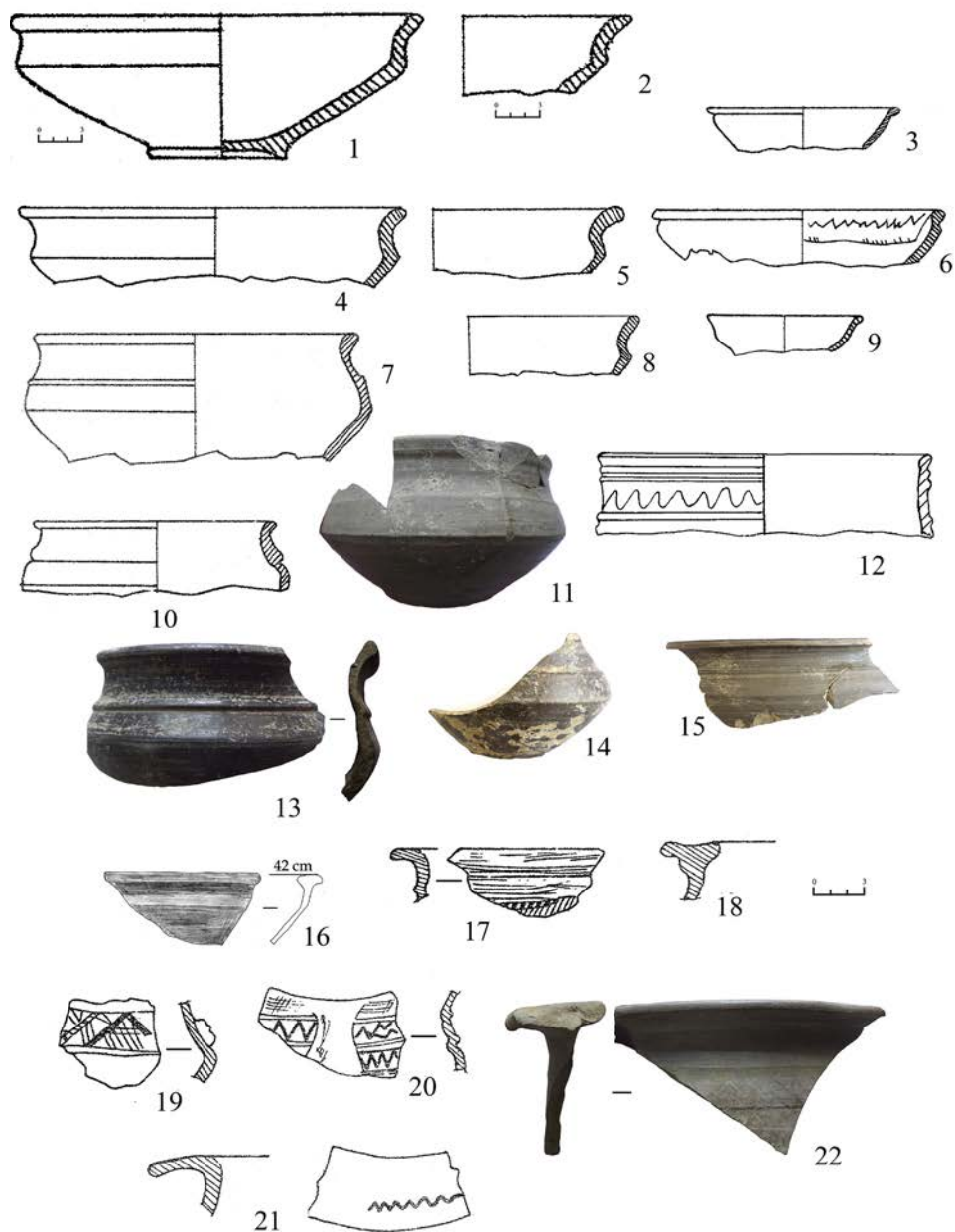


Fig. 5. Fibulae. 1, 10 – photo by O. Saveliev; 2, 5–9 after Saveliev 2013; 3–4 after Gorokhovskiy and Son 1989.



**Fig. 6.** Greyware tableware. 1–10, 17–21 after Gudkova and Krapivina 1988; 11, 13–15, 22 – photo by O. Saveliev; 12 after Rosokhatskiy *et al.*, 1996; 16 – drawing by O. Saveliev.

and then spread in the area of the Cherniakhiv culture, where they coexisted with bent Almgren VII fibulae. Those are dated to the 4th century AD. Another fibula (Fig. 5:9) belongs to group 138, according to Mechthild Schulze, and dates to the 4th century AD (Schulze 1977: taf. X). The third fibula has a “rhombic” stem and a short solid catchplate (Fig. 5:10). According to its morphological features, it can be dated to the second half of the 3rd – the beginning of the 4th century AD (Gavritukhin 2007: 20–22, fig. 11; Petrauskas 2010: 195–196, fig. 8).

## GREYWARE POTTERY<sup>5</sup>

The most numerous items in this group are bowls. Those are bowls with a ribbed S-shaped profile of an open type, ribbed closed type, biconical, round-sided closed type (Fig. 6:1–16). They are decorated with an ornament in the form of a polished net, zigzag, waves. Jars are also known (Fig. 6:17–22). They are always polished and richly decorated with a polished ornament. Goblets are few. For example, a small biconical goblet was found in the “post-gothic house” (Fig. 7:1). The jugs have a biconical or rounded body shape (Fig. 7:2–8). The surface is mainly ornamented with waves, parallel lines, and zigzags.

In general, this group’s greyware pottery is similar to the ceramic assemblages at the Cherniakhiv sites of the 4th – early 5th centuries AD (e.g., Nekrasova 2006: 87–200; Shul’tse and Lyubichev 2009: 218–236, figs 8–10, 12:1–7).

Greyware pots with a rough surface stand out separately (Fig. 7:9–14). Based on the proposed typology, they should probably be attributed to the second (first half of the 4th century AD) and third (middle of the 4th – beginning of the 5th century AD) periods of development (Petrauskas and Petrauskas 2008: 56).

Large vessels made of coarse grey clay-grain storage vessels (Fig. 7:15) – are also known. Sometimes they are ornamented with a cordon, a traced wave or a zigzag. The Cherniakhiv population brought these to Tyras and widely used this type of ceramic (Gudkova 1999: 346–347, fig. 57:1–15; 2002: 369).

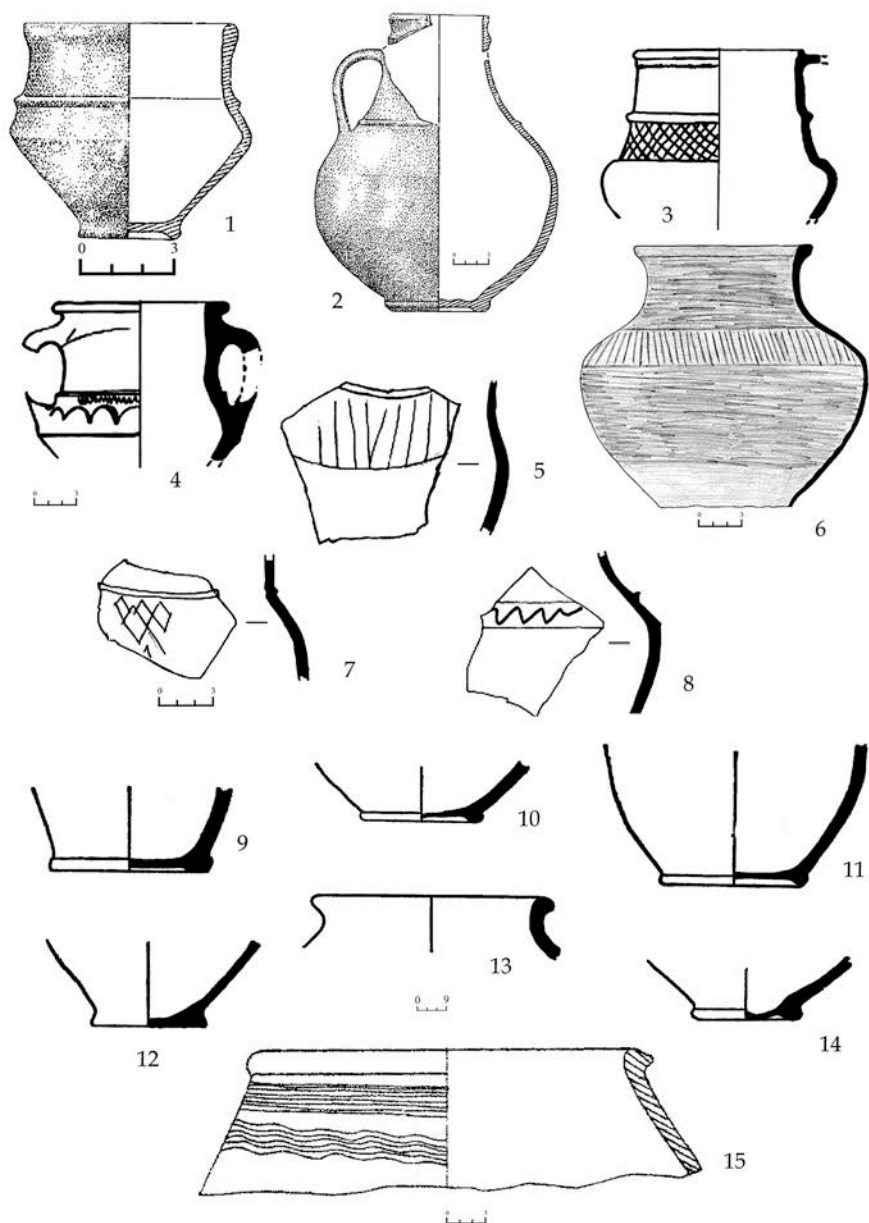
If we compare the greyware pottery of the Cherniakhiv culture with the Dacian dishes and the Red Slip Ware imported ones, then it occupies more than 80% of the dishes of Late Antique Tyras.

## GLASSWARE

Drinking glasses fragments with drops of blue glass in them are a reliable chronological indicator of the infrequent glassware items (Fig. 8:1). The study of similar vessels

<sup>5</sup> The images of some vessels (Fig. 6:11–16, 22; Fig. 7:6) are published for the first time.





**Fig. 7.** Greyware tableware and household ceramics. 1–2 after Kravchenko and Korpusova 1975; 3–5, 7–8 after Samoylova and Ostapenko 2009; 6 – drawing by O. Saveliev; 9–14 after Gudkova 1979; 15 after Gudkova and Krapivina 1990.

from the Bosphorus necropolis showed that the earliest of them date from the second half of the 4th – the beginning of the 5th century AD (Zasetskaya 2008: 24). The glassware was probably made in the workshops of the Middle East (Sazanov 1995: 333). I. Gavritukhin believes that Eastern European vessels with drops of blue glass cannot be dated earlier than the last decades of the 4th century AD (Gavritukhin 2007: 12).

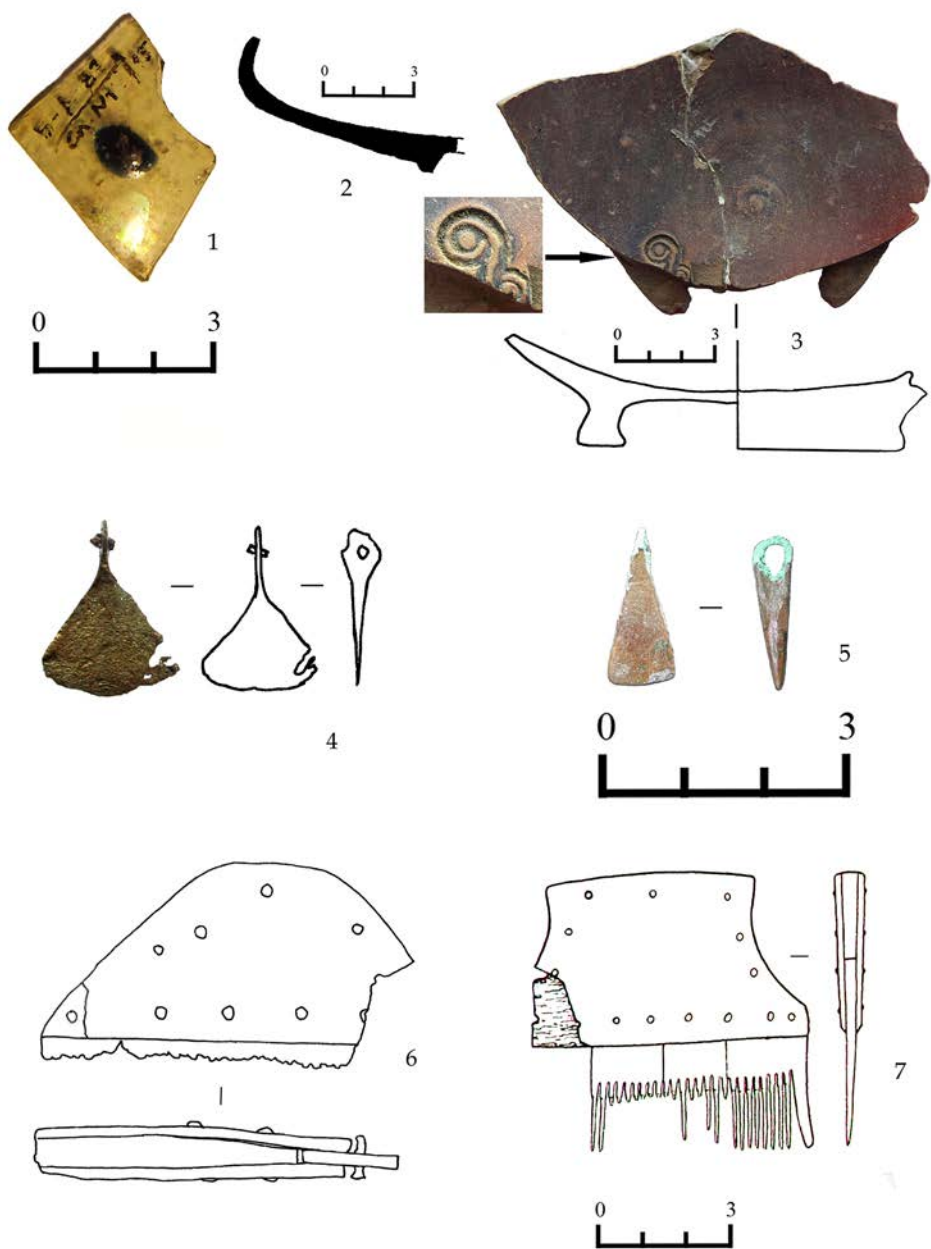
#### RED SLIP WARE (LATE ROMAN C / PHOCAEAN RED SLIP WARE)

This includes plates that are close to some forms of the late Chandarli group (Fig. 8:2; late 4th–5th centuries AD; Hayes 1972: fig. 65:2). Phocaean Red Slip Ware ceramics are represented by one fragment of the bottom of a bowl (Fig. 8:3). According to John Hayes, the double-volute mark on the bottom of the bowl can probably be attributed to motif 19, AD 440–490 (Hayes 1972: 353–355, fig. 73:y–z, aa). As can be seen, dishes from this group are extremely rare. At the same time, in the same Olbia, in addition to the Phocaean sigillata, Pontic Red Slip Ware and African Red Slip Ware are well represented (Krapivina and Domžalski 2008). The only unpublished fragment of a large PRS dish is mentioned by K. Domžalski. He classified it as Form 1 of his classification. The researcher identified options 1A, 1B and transitional 1A/1B. Option 1A is typical for the barbarian burial grounds of Southwestern Crimea, is known in the Cherniakhiv burial ground Bilen`ke near Tyras, and also dominates among the finds of Olbia at the turn of the 4th and 5th centuries AD (Domžalski 2021: 58, 62). It must be assumed that the copy from Tyras refers specifically to this variant.

#### HATCHET PENDANTS

Bronze axe-shaped pendants belong to the barbarian items (Fig. 8:4). Sometimes, in the literature, they are called “Thor’s hammers”. Those mostly were found in Central Europe. The appearance of such amulets in the Northern Black Sea region is sometimes associated with the advance of the Goths. Among the Germanic tribes of Central Europe, axe-shaped pendants of this type spread in the period C2 (AD 230/250 to the beginning of the 4th century AD). A significant part of the dated assemblages comprising similar pendants in the territories where the German cultures were spread date back to that time.

Another pendant (Fig. 8:5) belongs to a variation of the same type (type 5 according to Andrzej Kokowski 1998: 100–102, fig. 5). It is probably related to the same cultural tradition.



**Fig. 8.** Glass, ceramic, metal and bone objects. 1–6 – photos and drawings by O. Saveliev; 7 after Son 2011.

## BONE COMBS

Three-layered Cherniakhiv combs are an introduced element associated with the advance of barbarian tribes into this territory. Several three-part combs originate from Tyras. One has a semicircular back (Fig. 8:6). This Type 1, according to the classification of Sigrid Thomas (Thomas 1960: 77–94), appears in the Cherniakhiv culture in its early stages and continues to exist until the final stage. Based on the proportions, this specimen can be dated to the second half of the 3rd century – to the beginning of the 4th century AD (Shyshkin 2002: 244). The second comb is one-sided, three-part, has a trapezoidal back (Fig. 8:7; Son 2011: 300, fig. 4:4). Most of these combs come from the assemblages of the Cherniakhiv culture of the 4th century AD (e.g., Nikitina 1969: 155).

## COINS

Despite the severe economic crisis in the Roman Empire in the 3rd century AD, the flow of Roman coins to Tyras did not stop. This period is represented by the coins of Gordian III, Philip the Arab, and Gallienus. The beginning of the way out of the crisis is associated with the name of Aurelian. The discovery of the second coin of this emperor in the settlement once again confirms the assumption that after the city was destroyed by barbarians in the late 260s, life in Tyras was restored already in the 270 – early 280. Various coin finds can also be associated with the Gothic campaigns, for example, the pierced antoninians of the Emperor Philip the Elder (AD 244–249). It was previously believed that the coin of the Emperor Valentinian (AD 364–375) was the latest among those found in Tyras (Karyshkovskiy and Kleyman 1985: 139).<sup>6</sup> In 2020, a coin of Emperor Theodosius I (AD 379–395) was found.<sup>7</sup> And even earlier, a coin of Emperor Arcadius (AD 395–408) was also discovered (Bulatovich and Nosova 2010: 153).

There is a lack from the site of obvious examples of belt buckles, spindle whorls, and some types of jewellery that can be considered as characteristic of the Cherniakhiv culture. Considering the lack of discreteness in dating things from the second half of the 3rd – early 5th century AD, it can be assumed that the barbarians lived here permanently.

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<sup>6</sup> We are not sure that absolutely all coin finds of the second half of the 3rd – early 5th centuries are associated with barbarians.

<sup>7</sup> Being prepared for publication.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the available archaeological data, two phases can be tentatively distinguished in the history of the city in Late Antiquity.

### *The second half of 3rd – the third quarter of 4th century AD*

This period can be called “Gothic”. This time is characterized by the decline of the economy, reduction of the urban area, decrease in imports and naturalization of the economy. In the 4th century AD, tribes of the Cherniakhiv culture densely populate the Northwestern Black Sea region. Apparently, some of the barbarians settled in the city. The barbarians who lived in Tyras and its environs received goods in amphorae and imported ceramics. Barbarian traits noticeably appear in the material culture of Tyras. In addition to amphoras from Asia Minor, the Bosporus, the Danube and the Middle East,<sup>8</sup> Tyras received lamps (particularly ribbed), a few Red Slip Ware vessels, some types of late Roman coins, ceramic dishes, bone and metal products associated with the Cherniakhiv culture and fibulae of the Late Roman types.

After the Hunnic invasion, the surviving population of Tîre was the same. Thus, we can limit its history to the former stage, only extending its date to the beginning of the 5th century AD. However, if we consider the Hunnic invasion as an epoch-making historical event for the entire Northern Black Sea region, then we will have to admit that it became a new historical frontier for it, including for Tyras. Here, such boundaries were military-political events: the end of the 1st century BC – invasion of the Getae Burebista and the beginning of Roman influence; the middle 3rd century AD – barbarian invasions. Therefore, we are inclined to believe that in the last quarter of the 4th century, a short-term “post-gothic” or “Hunnic” period began for Tyras.<sup>9</sup>

### *The last quarter of 4th – beginning of 5th AD*

It is not known how the relations developed between the population that remained in the city and the Huns. Taking into account the finds of coins, amphorae and other materials, it can be argued that life in Tyras continued even at the beginning of the 5th century AD. There are very few finds from this time and this is objective. First of all, these are coins of the late Roman emperors. If we start from broad dating and take a late date, then some of them (Arcadius) go back to the 5th century AD. Starting from the upper chronological boundary of the Cherniakhiv-Sântana de Mureş culture (beginning of the 5th century AD), the existence of ceramic vessels from this culture

8 Considering the chronology of amphoras of the Gaza type, they could have been used in the next period.

9 Considering the traces of fire in the “post-gothic house”, it is possible that these are the consequences of a military conflict.

should be extended to this period. A fragment of a glass vessel with a drop of blue glass and some lamps also date back to this time.

The population was small. The period of its residence was short-lived. No constructions of that time are known.<sup>10</sup> It is difficult to make judgement on the craft and economy. The population that lived there was not numerous and soon dissolved in the beginning of the turbulent epoch of the Migration period.

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<sup>10</sup> At least for now. We should also not forget that the topmost Late Antique layer was destroyed in many places during the construction of the medieval Akkerman fortress.

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