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## A TABLEWARE GROUP FROM THE HINTERLAND OF IBIDA–SLAVA RUȘĂ (NORTHEASTERN MOESIA INFERIOR)

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**Abstract:** In the summer of 2010, an archaeological survey took place in the village of Slava Rușă on the Harasimov property, located about 1.2 km southeast of the late Roman fortress. As a result of this archaeological excavation, a deposit was explored from which numerous artifacts from the Early Roman Period were recovered. Among the discovered objects there are also 54 ceramic fragments, which can be typologically classified as tableware. The ceramic group was divided into two categories: closed forms (for drinking) and open forms (for food consumption). Geographically, all the studied pottery fragments come from workshops in the area of the Pontic basin or the Lower Danube. Their presence alongside handmade pottery fragments specific to the local population proves the existence in the Slava Rușă microregion, of rural communities that underwent a process of Romanization.

**Rezumat:** În vara anului 2010 în satul Slava Rușă a avut loc o cercetare arheologică preventivă pe proprietatea Harasimov, situată la aproximativ 1,2 km sud-est față de fortificația romană târzie. În urma acestei săpături arheologice a fost identificat un complex din a cărui umplutura au fost recuperate numeroase artefacte datate în epoca romană timpurie. Printre obiectele descoperite se numără și 54 de fragmente ceramice care pot fi încadrate tipologic drept „ceramică de masă”. Eșantionul a fost împărțit în două categorii principale: forme închise (pentru servirea băuturilor) și forme deschise (pentru servirea preparatelor culinare). Din punct de vedere geografic, toate fragmentele ceramice studiate sunt produse în ateliere din aria bazinului pontic sau a Dunării de Jos. Prezența acestora alături de fragmente ceramice modelate cu mâna, specifice populației locale, demonstrează existența unor comunități rurale în curs de romanizare în microzona Slava Rușă.

**Keywords:** Ibida, Tableware, Pontic workshops, Lower Danube, Slava Rușă, Romanization.

**Cuvinte cheie:** Ibida, ceramică de masă, ateliere pontice, Dunărea de Jos, Slava Rușă, romanizare.

### INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 2010, an archeological survey took place in the village of Slava Rușă. This investigation was conducted by Dorel Paraschiv and was located on the Harasimov property, 1.2 km southeast of the late Roman fortress (Fig. 1). Following the archeological survey, an important ceramic group was discovered. In this article, we chose to present only the tableware, the other Roman pottery categories will be published in the near future by the author of the archeological excavation. The entire tableware group was discovered in a single deposit, described by Dorel Paraschiv as a waste pit. This deposit was fully investigated, yielding a large amount of Roman pottery. In addition to tableware, fragments of amphorae, coarse ware, and handmade

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pottery were found, as well as three glass vessels and a bone needle. The entire deposit was dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD by Dorel Paraschiv.<sup>1</sup>

The group of tableware consists of 54 fragmentary vessels, which can be divided into two main categories: the closed and the open forms. The closed forms are cups, jugs, or pitchers (essentially drinking vessels) and the open forms are bowls or various types of plates (which were used for serving food). Further analysis of the tableware group will take into account the origin of the pottery sherds (imported or locally made) and the typo-chronologies known so far. Finally, we will attempt to integrate the obtained information into the microregional picture of the Slava Rusă area, and further into the broader regional Western Pontic area.



Fig. 1. *Ibida*–Slava Rusă and its hinterland (Google Earth).

## THE FINDS

At first glance, it seems that almost all the tableware excavated from the Harasimov deposit was made in workshops from the Pontic region or the Lower Danube.<sup>2</sup> This situation is unusual because the tableware group discussed in this article is one of the few that consists entirely of Pontic produced pottery. When discussing about tableware

<sup>1</sup> Paraschiv 2011, 132.

<sup>2</sup> In a brief report on the archeological survey at the Harasimov site, dr. Dorel Paraschiv notes concerning the pottery that not only the tableware was made entirely in the Pontic area or the Lower Danube. The same applies to the amphorae and the coarse ware (Paraschiv 2011, 132).

groups from the western Pontic area (especially open forms) in the Early Roman period, the ratio between imported and Pontic tableware is almost equal in some cases, or the Pontic tableware exceeds the imported one in a ratio of two to one.<sup>3</sup> Considering the small scale of the archeological investigation, the presence of Pontic tableware can only be related to this particular deposit, not to the entire settlement (based on analogies with rural settlements from the western Pontic area that have been researched so far, it can be assumed that the waste pit excavated in 2010 is not the only deposit in the area, there are probably other waste pits and dwellings in the immediate vicinity).

The tableware with closed forms identified in the ceramic group of the Harasimov property is represented by eight fragments. They can be divided evenly into two categories: small or medium-sized cups with a spherical shape and medium-sized or large jugs with a single, flat handle, a cylindrical neck, a tronconic body shape, and a low ring-shaped or flat foot.

**Spherical cups.** Four fragmentary cups of this shape were identified in the ceramic group. Two of the fragments are the rim and the upper wall of the same cup (Fig. 2/1-2) and the other two fragments belong to the short, annular foot, specific to this category (Fig. 2/3-4). All four fragments have similar fabric characteristics. The color is reddish-brown (5 YR 4/6, 4/8), with medium limestone particles and silver mica in the composition. The slip covers the entire interior and almost the entire exterior, except for the foot. The brown (7.5 YR 4/3, 4/4, 4/6) slip has a rough consistency on the outer surface. These cups with a spherical body are widespread at the Lower Danube and the Western Pontic region. A large number of such cups were discovered in cremation burials investigated in the early Roman cemetery of *Noviodunum*. All the cups identified so far have a small handle, flat or round in cross-section. A good analogy for the cups from the Harasimov property can be found in a cremation grave, in the cemetery of *Noviodunum*. This grave was dated to the first two decades of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.<sup>4</sup> Another funerary deposit, in which a cup similar to the one presented in this article was researched in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the necropolis of Enisala and is dated to the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> and the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.<sup>5</sup> Further south, on the western Black Sea shore, similar cups were found at *Tomis*, from a deposit dated by Constantin Băjenaru at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> – beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>6</sup> Another settlement on the

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<sup>3</sup> In recent studies, the ratio between local and imported tableware was stated for settlements such as: *Troesmis* (Mocanu 2021, 237, fig. 78); Jijila (Stănescu *et alii* 2021, 170); Sarichioi–Sărătura (Mocanu 2018, 71, graph 1); Topolog (Nuțu, Mihăilescu-Bîrliba 2018, 87, graph 1); *Noviodunum* (Topoleanu, Gamureac 2021, 132; Baumann 2008, 214, table 7).

<sup>4</sup> Mocanu, Stănică, Stănescu 2021, 226, Fig. 3/8.

<sup>5</sup> Mănucu-Adameșteanu 1984, 33, Pl. 5/25768.

<sup>6</sup> Băjenaru 2013, 60-61, Pl. 7/51-59.

Black Sea coast where cups with a spherical body were discovered is Histria. After a century of archeological excavations, a considerable number of such vessels were unearthed, part of which were published by Alexandru Suceveanu at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The type 32 cups from Histria were dated mainly to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.<sup>7</sup> On the Danubian frontier, such cups are attested in the civil settlement of *Troesmis*, which according to Andrei Opaïț fall into the same chronological interval as those from Histria.<sup>8</sup> In addition to the regions of the Lower Danube and western Pontus, cups with a spherical body have also been found in Crimea. A large number of such cups were discovered in the cemeteries of the peninsula. In his work, Denis Zhuravlev presented a significant number of cups with a spherical body discovered in the necropolis "Belbek IV". According to him, the cups are mainly dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD.<sup>9</sup> As it is known so far, the cups with spherical body were produced in the workshops of *Nicopolis ad Istrum* in both variants: either with or without barbotine decoration. As Bogdan Sultov states, the production began immediately after the Dacian Wars, in the first two decades of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD and continued in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>10</sup> Considering the large number of spherical cups in the Lower Danube region, it is very likely that these vessels were made in several workshops along the Danube Limes of *Moesia Inferior*, such as *Novae*, *Durostorum*, and perhaps *Troesmis* or *Noviodinum*.

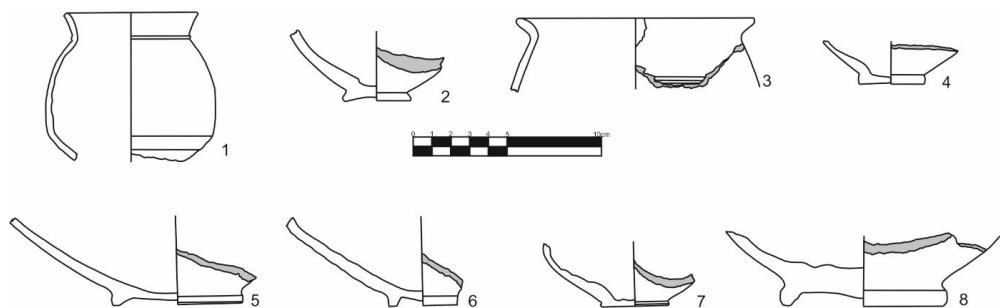


Fig. 2. Closed forms.

**Jugs with a single, flat handle.** Four base fragments from jugs with a single, flat handle were discovered in the deposit excavated at the Harasimov property (Fig. 2/5-8). The fabric color is brown or reddish-brown (7.5 YR 4/6, 4/8, 5/6, and 5 YR 4/6, 4/8, 5/6, 5/8), with inclusions such as small limestone particles and silver mica. The slip is unevenly

<sup>7</sup> Suceveanu 2000, 99-107, Pl. 42-44.

<sup>8</sup> Opaïț 1980, 336, Pl. 8/ 4, 6-7.

<sup>9</sup> Журавлев 2010, 91-92 (Form 1 to Form 3), Tab. 60-65.

<sup>10</sup> Sultov 1985, 69-71, Tb. 32/4, 6-9.

distributed over the outer surface (especially the lower foot), has a rough consistency and its color is reddish-brown (5 YR 5/6, 5/8). Often this type of jug appears in the same deposits where the globular cups are found, whether it is a burial site (like cremation graves), waste pits, or even dwellings. In reality, these two types of vessels complement each other and are used together on the table. Jugs with a single, flat handle were used to bring wine or water from larger containers to the table, and the cups were used for serving such liquids. In the Western Pontic area, jugs with a single, flat handle have been discovered in both domestic and funerary deposits. The latter are most useful for dating this type of container. In a recent article presenting two cremation graves from the *Noviodunum* area, four fragmentary jugs were discussed. Both tombs were dated by George Nuțu to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century and the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>11</sup> The closest analogy to the jugs presented in this article comes from an inhumation grave discovered in 2004 two km west of the late Roman fortress of *Ibida*. According to Dorel Paraschiv, the jug was placed as an offering in a tomb from the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, we can find jugs with a single, flat handle in similar contexts in rural settlements of the western Pontic region. Again, the closest analogies come from rural settlements in the *Ibida* territory. Following the research conducted by Andrei Opaîţ at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the vicinity of the village of Slava Rusă, several fragmentary jugs with a single, flat handle were discovered in places such as Kurt Baiîr or Caugagia. They are considered to be of local production and there is no information on their chronological framing.<sup>13</sup> Another rural settlement where jugs similar to those described in this article were found is Teliţa-Amza. After the excavations during the 2000s by Victor H. Baumann, a fragmentary jug (foot and lower part of the body) from the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century was published.<sup>14</sup> In 1989, during the excavation of a waste pit in the rural settlement of Sarichioi-Sărătura, V. H. Baumann discovered two fragmentary jugs with a single, flat handle. This deposit was dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.<sup>15</sup> Last but not least, two similar jugs were discovered by V. H. Baumann in the rural settlement of Horia (in *Troesmis* territory) in a deposit from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. The interesting thing about this deposit is the presence of handmade pottery together with the Roman pottery sherds, similar to the deposit found on the Harasimov property.<sup>16</sup> Generally, jugs with a single, flat handle are called "amphora-like pitchers" in Romanian literature. According

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<sup>11</sup> Nuțu, Constantinescu, Ailincăi 2021, 237-242, Fig. 4/2; Fig. 5/2-4. This article presents almost all the funerary deposits with single-handled jugs from the Western Pontic area.

<sup>12</sup> Paraschiv, Doboş, Popescu 2006, 404, Pl. 2/5.

<sup>13</sup> Opaîţ, Paraschiv 2013, 320, Fig. 11.

<sup>14</sup> Baumann 2003, 186, no. 19; 187/19.

<sup>15</sup> Baumann 1995, Pl. 11/2 and 12.

<sup>16</sup> Baumann 1973-1975, 67 and 71, Pl. 6/1-2.

to what has been published so far, the single-handed jugs and the amphora-like-pitchers were used either as transport containers for wine and water or as storage vessels for the same goods.<sup>17</sup> The role of transport containers is disputed due to the small size and capacity of these jugs. It is more likely that these jugs were used as storage containers, albeit only for a very short period of time (e.g., during a banquet or feast) due to their small capacity. As mentioned above, the single-handed jugs were used as burial urns or as funerary offerings in both cremation and inhumation burials under certain circumstances. Considering the characteristics of fabric and slip, it is almost certain that this type of jug was made in the same workshops as the spherical cups.

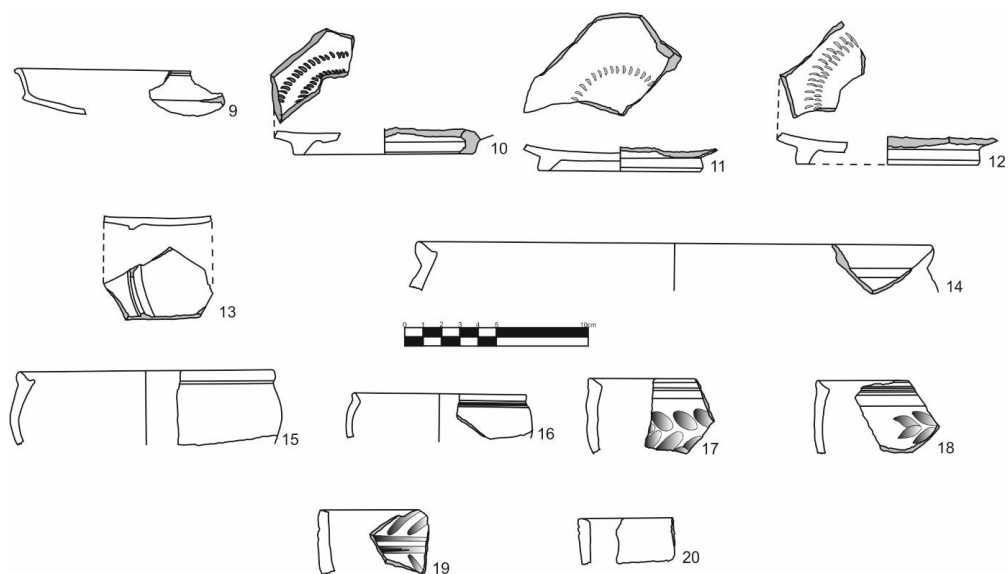


Fig. 3. Pontic Sigillata.

The remaining 46 tableware fragments belong to the open form group. These fragments were divided into two categories, already well known in literature: "Pontic Sigillata" and "Early Pontic Red Slip". They will be further presented following a typology published by the author of this article in 2021.<sup>18</sup>

Of these 46 pottery sherds, 12 can be considered Pontic Sigillata. Pontic sigillata is a well-known category of tableware that was widely spread in the Black Sea area starting with the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. The exact location of the workshops that produced this type of wares is still uncertain, but research from the last half-century indicates large-scale production of Pontic Sigillata in *Moesia Inferior* beginning as early as the 2<sup>nd</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Nuțu, Constantinescu, Ailincăi 2021, 239.

<sup>18</sup> Mocanu 2021.

century AD.<sup>19</sup> In the Harasimov tableware group, two forms have been identified, plates with vertical rims (Form 2 according to the classification mentioned above) and small or medium-sized bowls with curved walls and sloping rims (Form 13).

**Plate with vertical rim (Form 2).** Five fragments were classified as plates with vertical rim. Four of them belong to the foot of such a vessel, decorated on the inside with one or two rouletting rows (Fig. 3/9-12). The last fragment belongs to the rim and the upper part of such a plate. In this case, the rim is slightly turned outward, and no decoration was applied (Fig. 3/9-13). The fabric has specific characteristics for Pontic sigillata. It is evenly fired and contains small particles of silver mica in its composition. The color is orange or light brown (7.5 YR 5/6, 8/6). A common characteristic of Pontic Sigillata is that there is no slip applied to the outer foot. Instead, the slip on the interior is reddish-brown or orange (5 YR 4/6, 48, 6/6, 6/8) and has a smooth consistency. Plates with vertical rim are one of the most common Pontic sigillata forms found in all early Roman settlements from the Pontic area and the Lower Danube region. We will also present some analogies from the countryside of the western Black Sea region. In Slava Rusă, in the same inhumation grave in which was discovered the above-mentioned one-handled jug, a plate with a vertical rim was also excavated, which was later dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.<sup>20</sup> In addition to funerary deposits, plates with vertical rim were also found in a village in the countryside of *Histria* on the Black Sea coast. All these types of vessels discovered at Fântânele have been dated to the late 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD.<sup>21</sup> Also on the Black Sea coast, this time in the *Argamum* countryside, in the rural settlement of Sarichioi-Sărătura were attested similar plates to those from the Harasimov property. The Pontic plates with vertical rim from Sarichioi-Sărătura were found in a deposit (waste pit No. 20 - G20) from the second century AD.<sup>22</sup> Another example of a plate with a vertical rim comes from an investigation made by George Nuțu near the present village of Topolog, which in ancient times was most likely in the *Troesmis* area. The plate fragment was found in a pit located about 100 meters from a kiln used for firing tiles. The archaeological findings of Topolog were dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.<sup>23</sup> In a *villa rustica* from the countryside of *Noviodunum* a few fragmentary plates with a vertical rim were discovered. Since the settlement on the northern side of the village of Niculițel was heavily disturbed by modern exploitation, these pottery sherds are quite difficult to date. They were placed in a broad chronological interval: 2<sup>nd</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Mocanu 2021, 231-232.

<sup>20</sup> Paraschiv, Doboș, Popescu 2006, 402, Pl. 2/1.

<sup>21</sup> Angelescu 1998, 229-230, Pl. 14/129-131.

<sup>22</sup> Baumann 1995, 183. The plates with vertical rim from the waste pit no. 20 were reconsidered in a recent article (Mocanu 2018, 79, Pl. 4/13-14).

<sup>23</sup> Nuțu, Mihăilescu-Bîrliba 2018, 92, Fig. 8/7.

to 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD.<sup>24</sup> As for the origin, it is known with certainty that such vessels were made in the workshops near *Nicopolis ad Istrum* in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.<sup>25</sup> Considering the abundant quantity and the spread of the plates with vertical rim in the Black Sea and Lower Danube regions, it is very likely that more workshops from the Black Sea area (besides those from *Moesia Inferior*) produced this type of vessel.

**Bowl with arched floor (Form 13).** Seven fragments can be attributed to bowls with arched floor, which, according to the previous classification, they are specific to Form 13. Of these seven fragments, three are decorated and the other four have no decoration, but given the small size of these fragments, it cannot be ruled out that all seven vessels belonging to this category are decorated (Fig. 3/14-20). Form 13 was classified as Pontic sigillata with barbotine decoration.<sup>26</sup> The fabric has a fine texture (the wall is thinner than on plates with vertical rims) with very small particles of silver mica and a reddish-brown or orange color (2.5 YR 4/6, 4/8; 5 YR 6/6, 6/8). The slip covers the entire interior and exterior except for the lower wall and foot. The color of the slip is light brown or yellow-orange (2.5 YR 5/6, 5/8; 7.5 YR 7/7, 8/8). Simple, vegetal motifs are used for decoration. Pontic sigillata with barbotine-style decorations are a common occurrence in the landscape of the Western Pontic area. Some analogies can be found in the rural settlement of Telița–Amza in the *Noviodunum* area. The bowls with arched wall from the aforementioned site were discovered in deposits from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD.<sup>27</sup> Not far from Telița–Amza, in the *villa rustica* mentioned earlier in Niculițel, other such vessels were discovered, in which pontic plates with vertical rims are present. These fragmentary bowls were first unearthed during the archeological excavation in the late 1970s and dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD by V.H. Baumann.<sup>28</sup> Later, in 2009-2011, more ceramic fragments were discovered at the same site and dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD.<sup>29</sup> The barbotine decorated pontic sigillata were produced almost exclusively in *Moesia Inferior*, in workshops in the area of *Nicopolis ad Istrum* between the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the late 3<sup>rd</sup>, even early 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Mocanu 2014, 78-79, Pl. 23/173-174.

<sup>25</sup> Sultov 1985, 62, Fig. 26/3.

<sup>26</sup> Mocanu 2021, 105-106, Fig. 29/39-44.

<sup>27</sup> Baumann 1995, Pl. 58/6 and 8-9.

<sup>28</sup> Baumann 1980, 376, Pl. 23/5.

<sup>29</sup> Mocanu 2014, 75, Pl. 21/153-159.

<sup>30</sup> Sultov 1985, 66, Pl. 29/1.



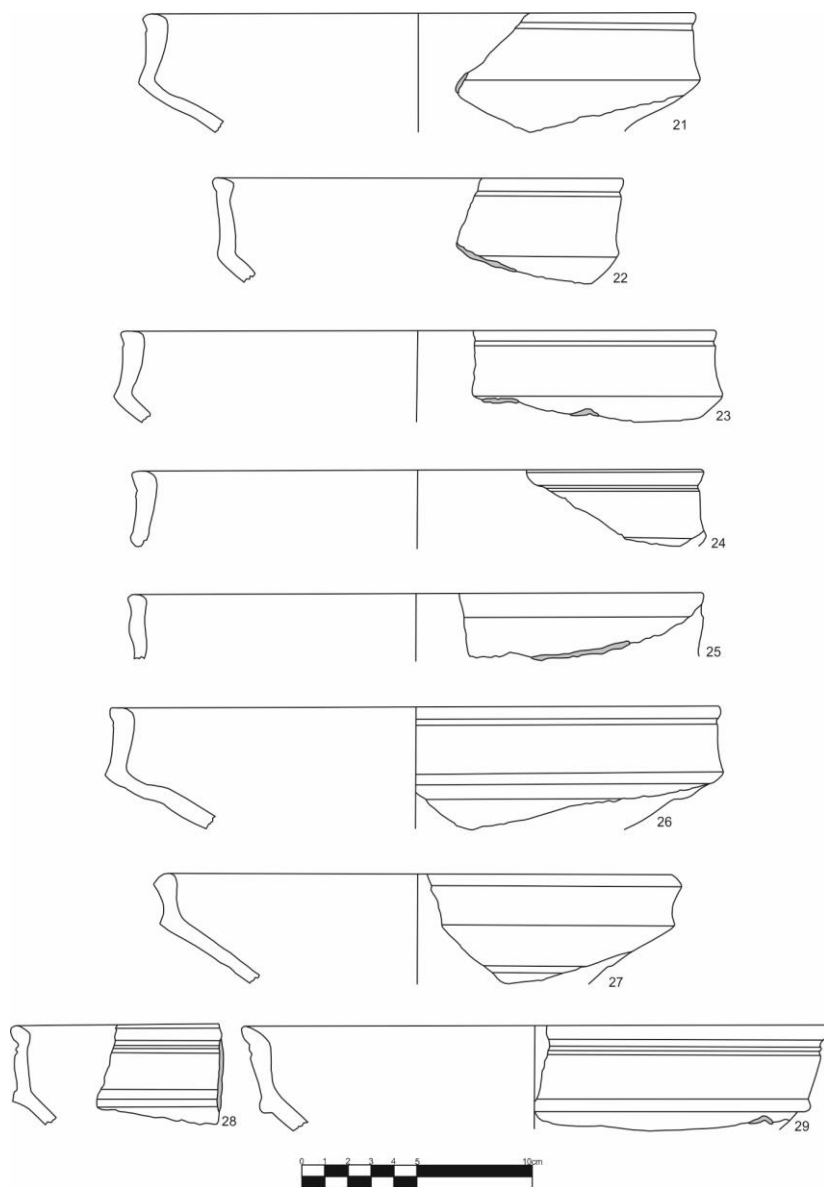


Fig. 4. Early Pontic Red Slip.

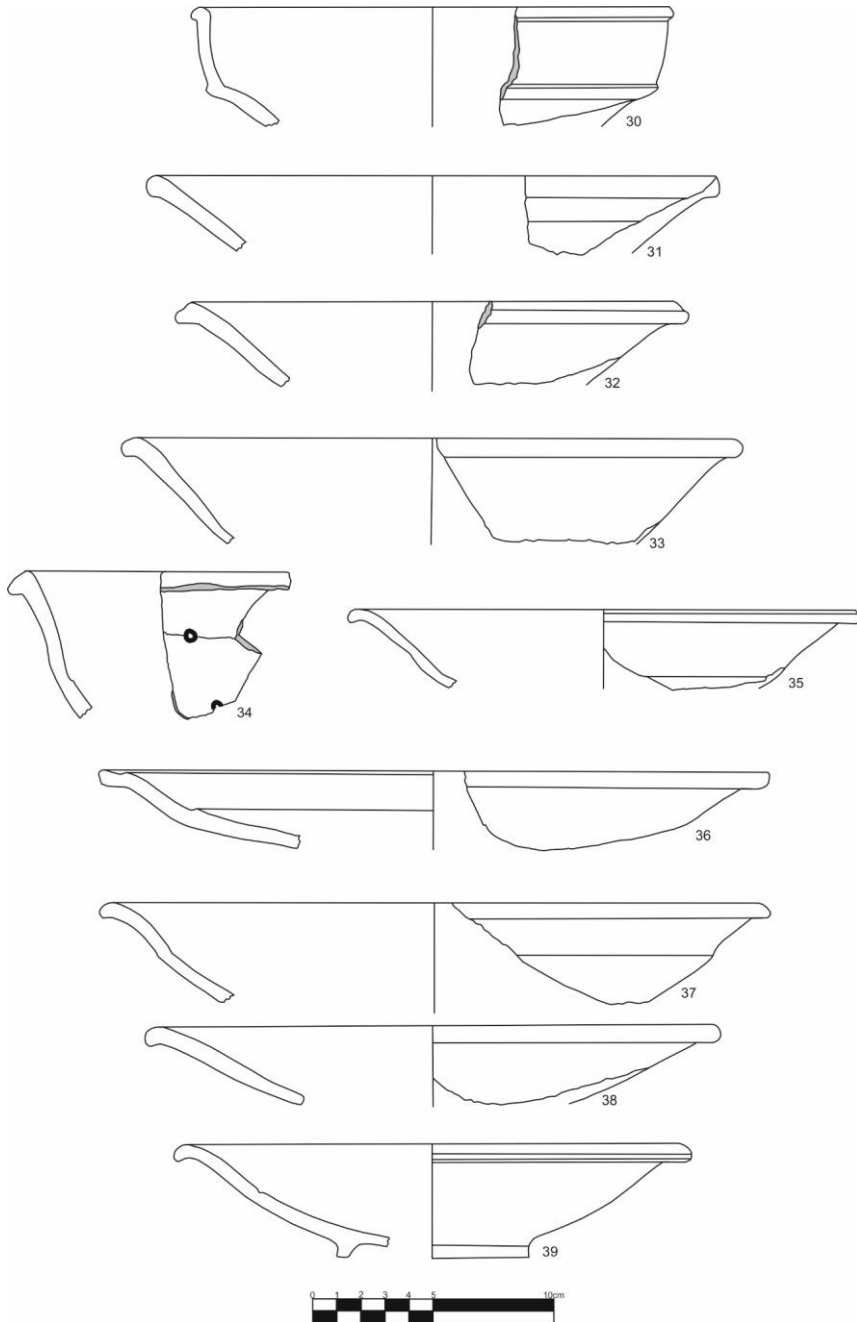


Fig. 5. Early Pontic Red Slip.

The main part of this group of tableware consists of what is known as "Early Pontic Red Slip Ware", and includes 34 fragmentary vessels. This type of wares is found in large quantities in most settlements of the Lower Danubian and Western Pontic areas. The Early Pontic Red Slip Ware from the Harasimov property was divided into eight forms following the same classification from 2021.<sup>31</sup> During the study of this assemblage, two new forms were identified. It can be said that the study of the Early Pontic Red Slip is at its beginning, and the publication of additional groups will significantly improve the typo-chronology.

**Plate with vertical rim (Form 1).** Seven fragments of rim and upper wall were discovered in Harasimov deposit (Fig. 4/21-27). The main features of these plates are thick walls, rough, unevenly fired fabric, low-quality, poorly preserved slip and its irregular application, especially on the outer surface. A peculiarity of the Early Pontic Red Slip is that these vessels have no decorations. The fabric has a color range from reddish-brown to orange (5 YR 4/6, 4/8, 5/6, 5/8, 6/6, 6/8), impurities such as limestone and silver mica in the composition and is sometimes unevenly fired. The color of the slip is the same as the fabric, but the quality of the slip is low and has a rough consistency. Since this type of ware has been largely neglected until recently, the number of analogies in the western Pontic area is quite small. From the rural settlements, one analogy can be provided from the *villa rustica* of Niculițel, in the *Noviodunum* area.<sup>32</sup> Other analogies were found in the following places: *Histria* on the Black Sea coast, *Halmyris*<sup>33</sup> and *Troesmis*<sup>34</sup> on the Danube. All of these analogies have been dated within a broader chronological interval, between the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> and early 4<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, a closer chronological analogy to the Harasimov finds exists in the rural settlement of Sarichioi-*Sărătura*. Here, an upper rim of a Form 1 plate was dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD.<sup>35</sup>

**Plate with vertical rim and triangular threshold (Form 2).** Only three fragments of rim and upper wall belong to this type of plate (Fig. 4/28-29; Fig. 5/30). The main difference between forms 1 and 2 is the triangular threshold of the second form. The characteristics of the fabric and the slip are the same as in the previous form. As for analogies, such vessels have been discovered in the rural settlement of Niculițel<sup>36</sup> and in the city of *Histria*, dating the latter to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.<sup>37</sup> In a recently published ceramic group from the *Noviodunum* area, two similar plates with those from the

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<sup>31</sup> Mocanu 2021, 121-137.

<sup>32</sup> Baumann 1980, 376-379, Pl. 13-16; Mocanu 2014, 72-73, Pl. 19/141-145.

<sup>33</sup> Opaîţ 1991, 138/47, Pl. 74/7.

<sup>34</sup> Opaîţ 1980, 357/45, Fig. 9/2.

<sup>35</sup> Mocanu 2018, 73, Pl. 6/28.

<sup>36</sup> Mocanu 2014, 73, Pl. 19/146.

<sup>37</sup> Suceveanu 2000, 62/12, Pl. 22/12.

Harasimov property were presented. These were dated between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.<sup>38</sup>

**Bowl with sloping wall (Form 4).** Four rim and upper wall fragments belong to this form (Fig. 5/31-34). As mentioned earlier, this form is a pontic imitation of similar vessels made in the Çandarlı workshops (the Atlante H1 and Atlante H2 forms).<sup>39</sup> Generally, the fabric has an orange or yellow-orange color (5 YR 6/6, 6/8; 7.5 YR 7/8, 8/8). Large limestone fragments and many particles of silver mica are present. The slip is of low quality and coarse consistency, and the shades are darker than those of the fabric (5 YR 5/6, 5/8; 7.5 YR 5/6, 5/8, 6/6, 6/8). Analogies for these plates can be provided from the rural settlement of Niculițel<sup>40</sup> and a similar encampment located on the Jijila Valley.<sup>41</sup> In both cases, they are dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.

**Bowl with arched wall and sloping rim (Form 5).** Five almost-complete vessels, specific to this form, were identified (Fig. 5/35-39). One of them has a complete profile, allowing the observation of the main features of these bowls. In addition to the curved floor and the sloping downward rim, these bowls have a massive ring-shaped base. The color of the fabric can be light reddish brown or yellow-orange (5 YR 5/6, 5/8; 7.5 YR 7/8, 8/6, 8/8), and in its composition, large particles of limestone and silver mica can be seen. A darker slip was applied to both the inner and outer surfaces, with the exception of the outer lower half. There is little to no dating information for this form from the West Pontic area. An analogy is found in the *villa rustica* from Niculițel, where such a bowl was dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.<sup>42</sup>

**Bowl with arched wall and horizontal rim with a vertical edge (Form 6).** Three ceramic fragments belong to this type. Two of them have a slightly curved vertical edge, while the last one is perfectly straight (Fig. 6/40-42). In addition, one of these three bowls has a small flat handle attached to the outer vertical rim. The fabric characteristics are similar to those of the previous sherds. The color palette is light reddish-brown and yellow-orange (5 YR 5/6, 5/8; 7.5 YR 8/4, 8/6, 8/8), instead, the slip has a darker hue (5 YR 5/3, 5/4). These bowls are thought to be a local imitation of similar vessels from different parts of the Roman Empire and can be placed in a chronological range between the late 2<sup>nd</sup> and late 3<sup>rd</sup>, even early 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Topoleanu, Gamureac 2021, 96, 99/19-20.

<sup>39</sup> Mocanu 2021, 128-130.

<sup>40</sup> Mocanu 2014, 73, Pl. 20/148.

<sup>41</sup> Stănescu *et alii* 2021, 171, Fig. 16/65-69.

<sup>42</sup> Mocanu 2014, 73-74, Pl. 20/149.

<sup>43</sup> Mocanu 2021, 131, Fig. 39/25-26.

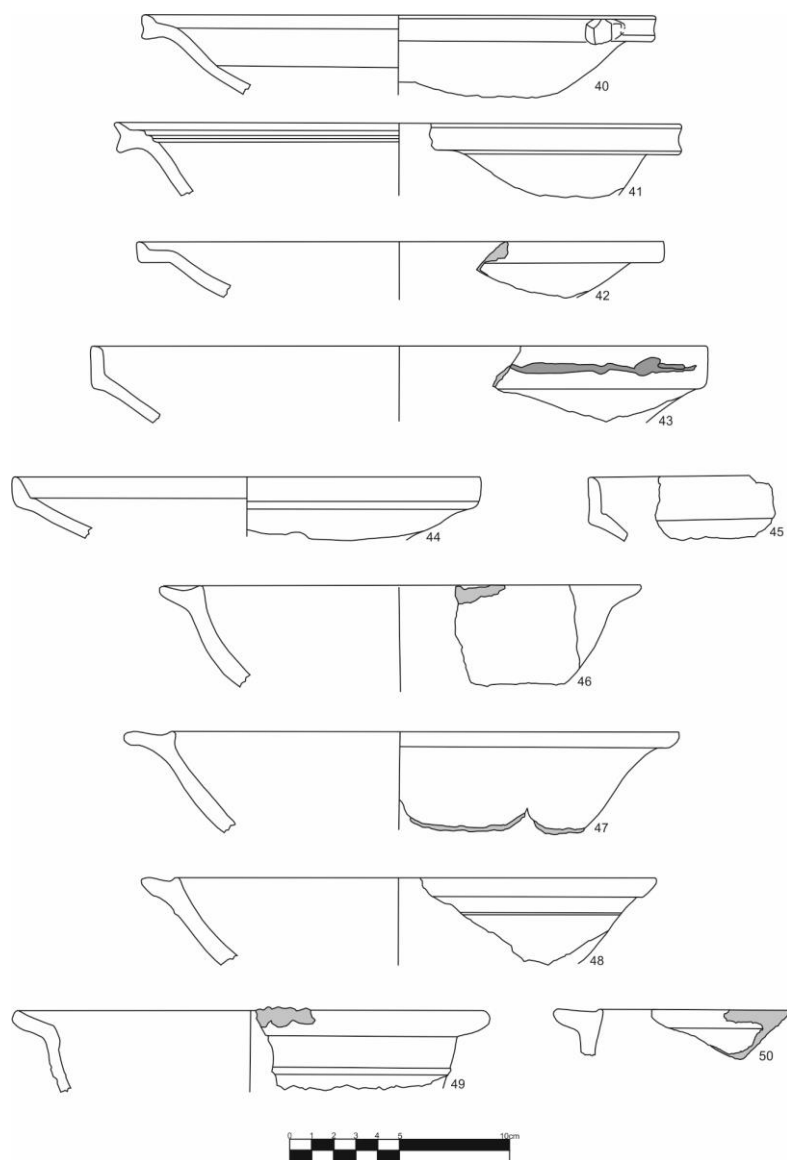


Fig. 6. Early Pontic Red Slip.

**Plate with outward sloping rim (Form 11).** Three rims and upper wall fragments belong to this form (Fig. 6/43-45). All of them have no decorations and were made from a coarse fabric with impurities such as limestone and silver mica. The colors of the fabric range from light red-brown to yellow-orange (5 YR 5/6, 5/8; 7.5 YR 7/8, 8/8). The slip is of coarse consistency, and was applied to the inner and outer surfaces,

having an orange color (5 YR 6/6, 6/8). So far, a single similar plate was published after the excavation of 1977 in the civil settlement of *Troesmis*. This type of plate is dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.<sup>44</sup>

**Bowl with arched wall and horizontal rim (unclassified form).** Five fragmentary vessels were assigned to this type (Fig. 6/46-50). This form was not included in the typo-chronology published in 2021 because the fragments from the Harasimov deposit were initially considered not to be Early Pontic Red Slip. Because of their fragmentary condition, it is impossible to say whether the base was flat or annular; the wall is arched until it becomes sloped. The rim is small, almost flat (sometimes slightly upturned). These bowls are identical to those framed as Pontic Sigillata, Form 9,<sup>45</sup> in fact, they represent a rough imitation of the latter. The fabric color palette ranges from brown or reddish-brown to orange (5 YR 4/4, 4/6, 4/8, 6/6, 6/8) with similar shading for the coating. Analogies emerge according to recent research from the *Troesmis* area, where discovered sherds have been dated between the early 2<sup>nd</sup> and early 4<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>46</sup> Considering the beginning of the production of Pontic sigillata Form 9 starting with early 2<sup>nd</sup> century, we propose the dating for the sherds from the Harasimov deposit to be the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> to early 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.

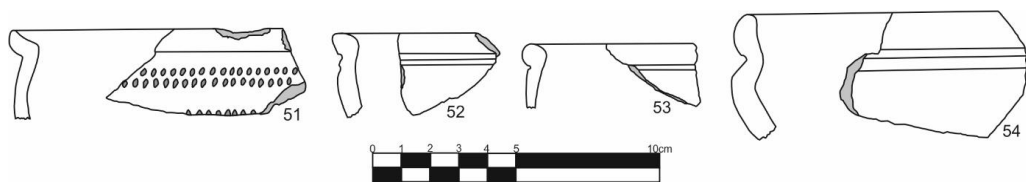


Fig. 7. Early Pontic Red Slip.

**Hemispherical bowl (unclassified form).** Only four fragments of bowls were classified as this form (Fig. 7/51-54). All four sherds are rims and upper walls, so it is impossible to say whether the base was flat or annular. The wall is curved in order to form a hemispherical shape, while the rim is small, orientated outwards. Just like the previous form, this one was not included in the typo-chronology of the Early Pontic Red Slip of 2021. In fact, this type of bowl may be an imitation of the Pontic Sigillata Form 13.

<sup>44</sup> Mocanu 2020, 214, Pl. 5/51.

<sup>45</sup> Mocanu 2021, 101, Fig. 27/27.

<sup>46</sup> Waldner 2016, 218, Taf. 14/K341-K343.



## SOME FINAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE HARASIMOV TABLEWARE GROUP AND THE HINTERLAND OF *IBIDA*-SLAVA RUȘĂ

It is very important to note that, in the investigated deposit found on the Harasimov property, in addition to the sherds presented in this article, handmade pottery, typical to the autochthonous population, was present. It can be concluded that in the Slava Rusă microregion during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD, there was at least one autochthonous community undergoing a Romanization process, and using handmade pottery, but at the same time pottery and other artifacts specific to the Roman civilization.

Moreover, the settlement core discovered on the Harasimov property is not an isolated case. The existence of an early Roman settlement is also evident on the northern side of the late Roman fortification, in the area of Tower No. 8. Recently, two military diplomas from the last decade of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD were discovered here,

<sup>47</sup> Mocanu 2021, 231-237.

attesting the presence of veterans of *Asia Minor* origin.<sup>48</sup> In addition, numerous unpublished early Roman pottery fragments were found here in previous excavation campaigns. A recent article presented an inventory of rural settlements in the Slava Rusă microregion and a pattern for their spread in the area. However, it should be noted that this pattern is rather specific for late 4<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> century AD because it refers to the existence of the late Roman fortress.<sup>49</sup> The Romanian archaeological literature has located a number of Roman toponyms in the Slava Rusă microregion since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In some cases, localizations of these toponyms have been proposed based on the similarity between the names of some contemporary villages and the ancient toponyms (*Camena* = *Vicus Petra* is the most striking example). Further research on the early Roman rural settlements and confirmation with the new epigraphic discoveries will allow the resumption of the discussion on the location of toponyms such as: *Vicus Petra*, *Vicus Novus* etc.

Returning to tableware, in the last couple of years, several new studies on Pontic and Lower Danube pottery have been published.<sup>50</sup> Thus, new considerations can be made about the production and consumption of tableware in this particular region. As can be seen from this article, the study of the production and distribution of pottery in the Pontic region and on the Lower Danube is only in its early stage. In the group of tableware discovered on the Harasimov property I have identified two forms of "Early Pontic Red Slip" that have not been typologically classified until present. Thus, the publication of as many groups of tableware as possible, together with the archaeological context of the finds, will help in the future to establish more accurate typo-chronologies for this type of pottery produced in the workshops of the Pontic region and the Lower Danube, either referring to the Early Roman era or Late Antiquity.

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<sup>48</sup> Information provided by L. Mihăilescu-Bîrliba.

<sup>49</sup> Honcu, Munteanu 2021, 135-137. Among the researchers of Slava Rusă there is no unanimous opinion about the exact chronological time of the construction of the fortress. Most opt for the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, but there is also a hypothesis that the fortress was built at the end of the same century, more precisely after the year 378. For the latest discussion on this topic see: Rubel 2022, 188-189.

<sup>50</sup> Domžalski 2021; Ivanov 2022.



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