

S Graffiti

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Olbia is one of the few ancient cities of the Black Sea coast where excavations have produced quite a large number of graffiti. Explorations in Sector NGS testify to the fact that this peripheral part of the city was also inhabited by literate citizens. For various reasons, they incised, primarily on vessels, full and abbreviated personal names, monograms, dedications to deities, symposiastic inscriptions, magic drawings, letters of the alphabet and symbolic marks, etc. All in all, according to the inventory lists from 1985-2005 during the whole period of its excavation, this area has produced more than 370 graffiti.¹²⁰⁵ The majority of them, however, are very fragmented preserving parts of letters or drawings, one or two letters from incomplete personal names or single letters, marks and strokes scratched unclearly. These will not be considered here. None of the graffiti were found on completely preserved vessels. Fully inscribed names of deities and names of owners are also few in numbers. Some of the latter could be reliably restored, thanks to similar names occurring in inscriptions, the rest only hypothetically.

The majority of the sherds with graffiti come from mixed cultural layers and fills of basements, where they were accompanied by material of the 5th to the 2nd century BC, sometimes with material dating from the last quarter of the 6th century BC through to the first centuries AD. In order to establish the absolute chronology of a particular graffiti the lettering of the inscription and the date of the vessel type were taken as points of departure, allowing for them to have been in use for some time. The majority of the inscribed pottery fragments have chips, scratches and signs of wear, i.e. they derive from vessels which have been long and probably intensively used. In certain cases, such damage complicates the reading considerably and makes it impossible to define precisely whether the inscription was applied on a new or already used vessel. In particular, this concerns sacral inscriptions and drawings on *ostraka*, made on purpose from fragments of black-glossed ware and amphoras, on which the character of the lettering is not consistent with the date of the pottery.

Basically, the graffiti are executed in capital letters. A few examples show, however, cursive letters (lunate *sigma*, *omega*, *epsilon*), which, in Olbian inscriptions, appeared from the middle or second half of the 4th century BC, originally as graffiti on pottery and lead.¹²⁰⁶ Ligatures occur in some names and words, while monograms are less common. Numerical marks are quite rare. A distinctive feature of considerable numbers of the graffiti is their careless execution.

The inscriptions and drawings are incised mainly on Attic vessels from the second half of the 5th to the first half of the 3rd century BC. The earliest examples belong to the end of the 6th to the first half of the 5th century BC, whilst the latest ones date to the second half of the 3rd and the 2nd century BC. The majority of the vessels with graffiti are drinking cups, more rarely plates, fish-plates, salt-basements and other types of tableware. Graffiti on fragments of greyware and red-clay plates and jugs of Olbian manufacture during the Hellenistic period are also present in the collection. As a rule, the inscriptions are placed on the bases of the vessels. Very seldom, mainly inexpressive marks and drawings were incised with a thin, sharp tool on the neck and body of amphoras, of which small fragments have been found. Some net sinkers made from amphora sherds and marked with single letters have been found as well.

It is striking that this remote area of the ancient city has produced quite a considerable quantity of various sacral inscriptions. The subgroup of graffiti executed on specially worked *ostraka*, made from body and base fragments of Attic black-glossed ware, deserves special attention.

According to their content, the graffiti can be divided into the following groups and subgroups.

¹²⁰⁵ The drawings and photos of the graffiti were made by T.A. Zinov'eva under the supervision of N.A. Lejpuskaja, with some adjustments to the drawings by A.S. Rusjaeva.

¹²⁰⁶ See, for example, Tochtas'ev 2000, 296-311.

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The examples included in these groups represent the best preserved graffiti. Except for three of them (S-14, S-15, S-44), they are published here for the first time. Quite often letters in the same graffito vary in size. In such cases, when two or three letters are preserved, their height is given according to their arrangement; in longer inscriptions their height is given from the minimum to the maximum height. The peculiarities of the lettering are also recorded. Names of deities in dedications and personal names are considered in alphabetic order.

I. SACRAL GRAFFITI

1. *Dedications*

Of the dedicatory inscriptions none are completely preserved. However, some data are available which suggest that inhabitants of this part of Olbia devoted inexpensive vessels to the deities they worshipped, which could be placed in domestic sanctuaries.¹²⁰⁷ Some may have been intended as gifts to the public sanctuaries, but, for whatever reason, were not presented. In accordance with Greek religious practice, libations were made on the domestic altar and the hearth during family events.

The main criteria for assigning graffiti to the group of dedicatory inscriptions are the fragments of specific words, which may be interpreted as the name or epiclesis of a deity, as well as their positioning on the rims or bodies of the vessels, which is most characteristic of such inscriptions in Greek public and domestic sanctuaries, including the Olbian ones.¹²⁰⁸ Much less often, dedications were placed on the base of a vessel, which is usually explained by the chthonic nature of the deities invoked. Since none of the dedicatory inscriptions are preserved completely, the restoration of the name or epiclesis is often hypothetical, as the preserved letters may also belong to other words or to theophoric names of dedicants or participants of symposia, who might also scratch their names on the visible parts of vessels. Caution is also required when defining particular dedicatory formulas, which are typically short, consisting only of the deity's name (formulas not only in the dative, but also in the nominative and genitive are typical for Olbia) or of the names of deities

¹²⁰⁷ For sanctuaries with altars, found in the houses of Sector NGS, see Leipunskaya 1995, 39-40; Rusjaeva 2001, 46; Lejpunskaja & Rusjaeva 2006, 108-126.

¹²⁰⁸ Lazzarini 1976, 58-60; Jajlenko 1980a, 76-81; Rusjaeva 1987, 140-145.

and dedicants. In rare cases, longer formulas have apparently also been employed, of which, however, only insignificant remains are preserved that cannot be restored reliably. Unlike in the Olbian Western Temenos, where sacral graffiti were found mainly on fragments of new vessels, in Sector NGS the vessels are mostly worn, which can testify either to their long-term use in rituals or to the placement of inscriptions on old vessels.

S-1 96-430, VI-3 B 474/289. Pl. 376

Two body frs. of Attic black-glossed vessel (Da-665). The graffito is on the outer surface. Letter H a) 0.3-0.5; b) 1-1.1. First half of the 5th century BC.

- a) Ἀπόλλωνι
b) Ἀπ(in ligature)

Remains of the first inscription can be restored as a dedication: Ἀπόλλωνι. Below and to the right, the ligature ΑΠ is scratched in larger letters – perhaps an abbreviation of the name of the same deity or of a theophoric name.¹²⁰⁹ The second *lambda* with a shortened right hasta, an *omega* in the shape of a narrow oval with slightly lowered ends, the right vertical of *nu* raised up, an *alpha* with a straight cross-bar, wide *pi* with a shortened right vertical.

S-2 89-400. Pl. 376

Rim fr. of Attic black-glossed bowl. The graffito, the beginning of which is missing, is on the outer surface. Letter H 0.2-0.6. Second half of the 4th century BC.

]ωνος

Probably, Ἀπόλλ]ωνος or Ποσειδ]ῶνος – “(the vessel) of Apollon or Poseidon”. The end of a dedicant’s name in the genitive is not excluded, for example: Agron, Polymedon (cf. S-15), or Tychon known in Olbia and other cities.¹²¹⁰ Letters vary in size, *omicron* in the shape of a miniature ring, the ends of the *sigma* slightly elongated. An identical ending of a name is also preserved on the base of a contemporary Attic black-glossed kantharos (86-385) found in this area, but the *omega* has a cursive form.

S-3 02-858, R 672. Pl. 376

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed kylix. The graffito is scratched in capital letters on the outer surface along the ring foot. The beginning and the end of the inscription are missing. Letter H 0.5-0.7. First half of the 4th century BC.

]ης Ἀφρ[

Given the clear execution of the inscription and examples of completely-preserved dedications to Aphrodite (Ἀφροδίτη) on the bases of other vessels,¹²¹¹ this graffito can also be assigned to the group of dedications to this goddess in which only the ending of the dedicant’s name is preserved.

S-4 89-463. Pl. 376

Fr. of lamp (O-57). The graffito is clearly scratched on the nozzle. Letter H 0.8-0.9. 3rd century BC.

Βα()

Graffiti on lamps are very rarely found in Olbia. Most likely a shortening of the epiclesis Βάκχος or Βασιλεύς. The cults of Dionysos Bakchos

and Zeus Basileus are well-known in Olbia. Whether the lamp was used in the Bakchos ceremonies, or the graffito represents a name beginning with Βα-, for example Bakchios, Batakos, Basilinos, all recorded in Olbia, cannot be determined.¹²¹² The *beta* with slightly elongated semicircles is larger than the adjoining *alpha*.

S-5 89-855, IV-1 B 253/146. Pl. 376

Rim frs. of Attic black-glossed kantharos (Db-142). The graffito is on the neck, under the wide ornamental strip; the end is missing. Letter H 0.3-0.6. Second half of the 4th century BC.

Διοσκ[(cursive *sigma*)

Should most likely be restored as Διοσκ[ούροις] – “to the Dioskouroi”. However, a theophoric name, for example Dioskourides, cannot be ruled out either, by analogy with a contemporary dedication to the Dioskouroi from Olbia, in which the theophoric name of the dedicant is placed at the beginning of the inscription.¹²¹³ In the 6th through to the 1st century BC the Dioskouroi were worshipped in a separate sanctuary at the Western Temenos, where a large quantity of graffiti was found.¹²¹⁴

S-6 02-324, R 678. Pl. 376

Rim fr. of Attic black-glossed kylix with traces of wear and scratches. The graffito is on the outside, scratched carelessly. The beginning and the end of the inscription are missing. Letter H 0.5-0.6. Second half of the 4th century BC.

]ανης Ε[

Presumably a theophoric name, such as Apollophanes, Dionysophanes, or Theophanes, all recorded in Olbia.¹²¹⁵ E represents perhaps the beginning of the name of a deity in the dative: Ἐ[ρμη]ι – “to Hermes”¹²¹⁶ or Ἐ[κάτη]ι – “to Hekate”. Since a private sanctuary of the Muses might have existed in Sector NGS, a dedication to Erato or Euterpe cannot be ruled out either. To be noted are the wide *nu*, as compared to the narrow *eta*, and an *epsilon* with a long upper horizontal.

S-7 94-205, II-5 B 390/29. Pl. 376

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed kylix. The graffito is clearly scratched along the ring foot; broken on both sides. Letter H 0.7-1. 4th century BC.

]Μ(?)ΕΙ ΙΕΡ[

Perhaps, Ἐρ]μει ἱερ[ά] – “to Hermes as a gift”. If so, the name of the deity is given in the Ionic dialect. Conjectured *mu* is wide, *epsilons* are of unequal shape: the first features almost equally long horizontals, while in the second the middle horizontal bar is shorter, and the vertical projects downwards.

¹²⁰⁹ Cf. Tolstoj 1953, 2.

¹²¹⁰ Knipovič 1956, 152; Levi 1964c, 145.

¹²¹¹ Cf. Tolstoj 1953, nos. 25 (Olbia), 114 (Nymphaion); Jajlenko 1980b, no. 66.

¹²¹² Knipovič 1956, 152.

¹²¹³ Tolstoj 1953, no. 30.

¹²¹⁴ Rusjaeva 1992, 116-117.

¹²¹⁵ See the lists of names in Knipovič 1956, 152; NO 127.

¹²¹⁶ Cf. Tolstoj 1953, 24, 36, 44; Jajlenko 1980b, nos. 68-69; Rusjaeva 1992, 88.

S-8 85-131

Rim fr. of Attic black-glossed bowl. The graffito is on the outer surface, below the rim; the end is missing. Letter H 0.7-0.8. 4th century BC according to letter shape.

Κλε[

Possibly a dedicant's name beginning with Κλε-, for example Kleombrotos, well-known in Olbia or similar.¹²¹⁷ Since other graffiti from Sector NGS mention the Muses, which will be discussed below, the preserved letters may also belong to a dedication or to the marking of the bowl: Κλε[ιὼ – “of Klio”, the Muse of epos and history.

S-9 88-58. Pl. 377

Lower body fr. of slipped red-clay vessel of Olbian manufacture. The graffito is on the lower body. Letter H 0.5; 1.1. 3rd century BC.

Κου[

Apparently a dedication to Kore in the Ionic dialect – Κούρη – or the beginning of a dedicant's name. In Olbia, dedications to this chthonic goddess as well as to her mother, Demeter, were usually scratched on the lower parts of vessels.¹²¹⁸

S-10 02-531, R 672. Pl. 377

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed kylix. The graffito is executed in capital letters on the outer surface. Letter H 0.5-1. First half of the 4th century BC.

Μοιρα()

Presumably a dedication to the Moirai, goddesses of fate. However, as the inscription is placed on the base, it could as well represent a theophoric male name, for example the contemporary Moiragores or Moiradoros, glorified in an Olbian epitaph of the 2nd century BC as a gift of fate.¹²¹⁹

S-11 01-493, VI-3 B 641/297. Pl. 377

Rim fr. of Attic black-glossed bowl decorated with applied white ivy leaves. The graffito is scratched carelessly at the edge on the outer surface; the end is missing. Letter H 0.3-0.7. Second half of the 4th century BC.

Πολυ[

Presumably, Πολυ[μνίη – “to Poly(hy)mnia”, the Muse of hymns, given the presence of graffiti of the worshippers of the Muses in Sector NGS. However, it could also be one of many names beginning Πολυ- known in Olbia,¹²²⁰ including ones found in this area (Polymedon, S-15). Besides, given that dedications to Aphrodite are present in this area too, this graffito could also be conjectured as her cult name Πολυ[ολβίη – “Giving a lot of happiness”, the more so since this also alludes to the city name. Other variants for the restoration are not excluded either.

S-12 89-778, II-6 B 186b. Pl. 377

Rim fr. of Attic black-glossed kylix having small chips and scratches (Da-27). The graffito is carelessly incised at the rim's edge; broken on both sides. Letter H 0.3-0.5. Second half of the 5th century BC.

]MHAN[

Probably, the two last letters stand for ἀν[έθηκεν] – “has devoted”, while the first two represent the ending of a female name or, for example, of the word χραίσμη, in case the dedication was made in response to gratitude for help.

S-13 02-617. Pl. 377

Rim fr. of Attic black-glossed. The graffito is clearly scratched with a thin point in capital letters in two lines on the outside; the beginning and the end of the inscription are missing. Letter H 0.4-0.6. First half of the 5th century BC.

]IMIK[

]ETA[

Judging by the first line, where ε]ιμί can be restored, this may indicate the ownership of the vessel by the deity, for example Kore. The second *iota* in the first line is at some distance from the following *kappa*, the *epsilon* and *tau* in the second line are at a greater distance from one another than the other letters; whether this is due to carelessness in the execution or done on purpose remains unclear.

2. Ostraka with names of deities

One of the features of the religious and ritual activities of the Olbians, related to mysticism and magic, was the special manufacturing of votives and amulets. These are represented by *ostraka* made from fragments of pottery, mainly Attic tableware.¹²²¹ They have been found in large numbers in various residential areas of the city and its sanctuaries, as well as in the settlements and sanctuaries of the Olbian chora. Usually, they bear the names of deities, personal names, single letters, symbolical marks and drawings, the reliable interpretation of which is hardly possible at the moment. They combine the most ancient fetish beliefs with cults and oracles, magic spells and appeals to the deities and demons, and represent diverse, probably coded, requests, wishes, vows and hopes for health, welfare and general success in life.

The *ostraka* from Sector NGS complement the group of sacral graffiti with new, original types and furnish information about the previously unrecorded private cult of the Muses in Olbia. This group thus requires a more detailed consideration than any of the other groups of graffiti.

¹²¹⁷ See, for instance, *LGPN* II, 263-268.

¹²¹⁸ Cf. Rusjaeva 1979, 49-50; Jajlenko 1980b, no. 63.

¹²¹⁹ Knipovič 1956, 153; *IOSPE* I², 226.

¹²²⁰ Knipovič 1956, 153; *NO* 71.

¹²²¹ See in detail, Rusjaeva 1979, 131-137; Rusjaeva 1992, 168-169. The interrelation of religion and magic is reflected in the spiritual life of the Greeks in many regions of the ancient world. See, for example, Dornseiff 1935; Budge 1968; Luck 1987; Faraone & Obbink 1991.

S-14 93-1066, VI-2 B 395/260. Pl. 377

Roughly-cut *ostrakon* of irregular rectangular shape, made from the central part of a thick-walled base of Attic black-glossed vessel; the lower left corner is broken off. Size 2.7 x 3. The graffiti is extremely carelessly executed. Letter H 0.1-0.3; one letter 0.7. Publication: Lejpunskaja & Rusjaeva 2006, 108-112. Presumably 350-250 BC.

Ἀπόλλων (cursive *omega*)

Μοῦσαι (cursive *sigma*)

Νίκη

Θεός (lunate *sigma*)

Ἥλιος (lunate *sigma*)

Ποσειδῶν (cursive *sigma* and *omega*)

Πλ[ούτων](?)

“Apollon, the Muses, Nike, God, Helios, Poseidon, Pl(ouτων?)”. It is worth mentioning that the inscription was made not in the traditional manner, with lines placed one under another. In the main field of the *ostrakon*, to the left and below the name of Apollon, one under another are listed the Muses, Nike and God. The remaining space to the right of them, under the last letters of the name of Apollon, is filled by two further names written vertically: at the edge – “Ἥλιος; under it and further along the lower edge of the *ostrakon* – Ποσειδῶν. After the latter, along the edge of the sherd, there was probably one more name, judging by the two remaining letters and their position at the lower edge of the *ostrakon*, presumably Πλ[ούτων]. Between the name of Nike and the beginning of the name of Poseidon, a large *alpha* is carelessly scratched, from the right hasta of which continues a thin, slanting line with a deflection, or, alternatively, the right hasta has been casually extended. From the lower end of the *sigma* in the word Μοῦσαι, a wider line runs downwards to the lower end of the *sigma* in the word Θεός.

Most of the letters are incised rather clearly, but carelessly, especially in the endings of last names. The paleographic features of the inscription (cursive *omega* and *sigma*, wide *pi* with verticals of almost the same height, sweeping *mu*, wide *eta*, *epsilon* with a shortened middle bar, *theta* with a vertical stroke, which joins with the circle) suggest a date within the 3rd century BC, probably its first half, as some letters preserve earlier forms. The ends of the lunate *sigma* in the name Ποσειδῶν are just slightly incurved, thus resembling an *iota*. The name of Poseidon is given in the Ionic dialect. From other inscriptions it is known that the Olbians, as well as other Greeks, sometimes called him Ποσειδῶν, sometimes Ποσειδῶν, from both forms of which corresponding theophoric names were equally popular.¹²²²

This is the first instance in Olbia in which a list of names of so many different deities is preserved in one inscription and in such an extraordinary form.¹²²³ Of these, Apollon, who during the 6th through to the 1st century BC occupied the main place in the city's pantheon and was the supreme patron of the polis,¹²²⁴ is placed first in this graffiti. All the other deities were worshipped here to a much lesser extent.¹²²⁵ Until the find of this inscription, the Muses were not mentioned in any of the inscriptions from Olbia. As they are listed directly under Apollon's name, he must be represented here in the hypostasis of Mousagetes, their leader and patron of the arts. Apparently, the Muses, together with

Apollon and the other deities listed in the inscription were worshipped in one of the private sanctuaries in this quarter.

Θεός also attracts great interest. The analysis of the lettering of *sigma* and *iota* in the graffiti confirms that it is not Θεοί, but Θεός. Since this word sits among the names of other deities, it is possible to assume that it conceals an anonymous god. In the Hellenistic period and in the first centuries AD, Θεός Μέγας was worshipped in the western Pontic cities. Many different opinions have been expressed regarding the identification of this deity with specific Greek and Thracian deities.¹²²⁶ In the absence of an epithet, it is not possible to connect Θεός with the western Pontic Great God, although it may be that, thanks to the close economic and cultural-political contacts, the latter was known to the author of the graffiti. Furthermore, it should be noted that incompletely preserved graffiti ΘΕΟ, scratched on the rims of black-glossed vessels of the first half of the 5th century BC, have been found previously in Olbia and been interpreted as dedications to the Great God.¹²²⁷ However, the question of which particular deity is concealed under Θεός remains open, the more so as this name is preceded by the Muses and Nike.

On the reverse of the *ostrakon* the gloss is worn off in many places. Among numerous scratches, some obliterated letters seem to be discernible: *upsilon* or *iota*, *iota*, *delta* or *alpha*, below *upsilon*. Apparently, these marks, as well as the large *alpha* set among the names of the deities, had a veiled magical value known to the author of the inscription. The concrete purpose of this *ostrakon*, with its list of deities and isolated letters, is not clear. Its meaning can be interpreted in various ways. Taking into account the functions of Apollon and the Muses, and the fact that they are mentioned first, it is possible to assume that the author practised poetry and was soon to set sail to partake in a festival with a contest of music, in which he hoped to be victorious with the help of all the deities presented in the graffiti. In a veiled form, the isolated letters may have concealed his name and some requests and promises to these deities, which he would fulfil on his safe return. The votive may have been stored in a house sanctuary, where the inhabitants worshipped the Muses together with all the other deities named in the list. By the same token, the *ostrakon* could have served as a kind of amulet, the owner of which hoped for help from all the deities listed on it.

S-15 No number. Pl. 378

Ostrakon of trapezoid shape, from the lid of an Attic red-figured lekanis of the 2nd to the 3rd quarter of the 4th century BC. Otchet Group.¹²²⁸ Size 3.2 x 4.3. The graffiti is scratched in rather small letters on the black gloss on the interior of the lid at its upper and lower edge. Letter H 0.1-0.3. Publication: Lejpunskaja & Rusjaeva 2006, 112-114. Presumably the second half of the 4th to the first half of the 3rd century BC.

a) Μνήμη

Ἔρως (cursive *sigma*)

b) Μοῦσαις (cursive *sigmas*)

Πολυμέδων (cursive *omega*)

Unlike the previous graffiti, the graffiti is executed in the traditional manner, in lines with breaks between the words: the last *eta* in the first

¹²²² Cf. Knipovič 1956, 153.

¹²²³ The names of Apollon, Poseidon, Athena, Aphrodite, Zeus, Dioskouroi, Eroses and Herakles are scratched one under another on a body fragment of a brown-clay plate of the 3rd century BC. The inscription is believed to be a dedication, although three completely preserved names are in genitive. See Gorskaja 2002, 119.

¹²²⁴ Rusjaeva 1992, 29-50 with literature.

¹²²⁵ Rusjaeva 1992, 108-116, 122-123, 134 with literature.

¹²²⁶ Blavatskaja 1952, 218-221, 228; Bordenache & Pippidi 1959, 455-465; Gočeva 1998, 91-100 with literature.

¹²²⁷ Jajlenko 1979, 5. The beginning of a dedicant's name cannot be excluded either.

¹²²⁸ Boardman 1989, fig. 397.

word is transferred to the second line, after which is scratched a not entirely clear colon; the inscription ends with a single *nu* which stands below. Judging by the free space at the left and at the right sides of the *ostrakon*, a more attentive attitude to the creation of the inscription, would have allowed the graffito to be placed without breaks. It should also be noted that the text is placed close to the upper edge of the *ostrakon*, but that there is a large rupture between the inscriptions, which is probably evidence of their incompleteness. The lettering of the graffito is close to that of S-14 and can be dated to the same period.

As the words are set at a considerable distance from one another, and the two upper ones are not monosemantic, the meaning can be variously interpreted. Thus, Μνήμη (= Μνημοσύνη), on the one hand, can be interpreted as the name of the mother of the nine Muses and the embodiment of memory, and, on the other hand, as just the word μνήμη – “memory, recollection”. Next to it, the two first letters of another word are clearly visible, the two last letters being less clear. Most likely this is Ἔρωϛ, with a wide cursive *omega*, which took the place of an original *omikron*, and a miniature *sigma* at the end. Here it is possible to read the name of the god of love, Eros, or simply the word “love”.

At the lower edge of the sherd, and more clearly incised, are Μούσαι, i.e. to the Muses, and the personal name Polymedon, in which the *omega* is even wider and much smaller than the other letters. In the case that the upper and the lower inscriptions are interrelated, the graffito is likely to be a dedication: “Polymedon (dedicated) memory (and) love to the Muses”.

Considering the previously mentioned list of names of deities (S-14), as well as the small letters and the empty space between the upper and lower lines, it cannot be excluded that Polymedon also intended to mention some other names of the Muses or other deities. Since the name of the Muses is given in the dative plural, Polymedon has probably, simultaneously with this votive, presented a gift to the Muses on which it was impossible to make an inscription, although it cannot be excluded that the *ostrakon* itself was considered a gift in itself. As a true worshipper of the Muses, he placed the name of their mother and that of Eros, the most ancient god of love, first. In the Orphic hymn devoted to Mnemosyne, the mother of the Muses is glorified especially for giving people memory and mental abilities.¹²²⁹

As can be seen from the graffiti on S-14 and S-15, a common trait is the reference to the Muses in the plural. This is not in the sense of the poetic convention typical for many literary works, however, but in connection with their cult. To appreciate this fully, it is possibly necessary to understand all nine Muses praised by Hesiod in the famous prologue to his *Theogony*, which mentions their names for the first time.¹²³⁰

In addition to these *ostraka*, a body fragment of an Attic black-glossed vessel, with a likely dedicatory inscription, was found by chance in Sector NGS. According to the find- and inventory lists for 2004 (no. 45, inv. no. 371a), some letters were partially preserved: Y(?)ΣΕΙΟΝ. In this case, it is possible to assume that they belong to the word ΜΟΥΣΕΙΟΝ, i.e. “Mouseion”. Here, as in the previous graffiti, a cursive *sigma* occurs, which may indicate a relatively similar date. The meaning of the word “Mouseion” was not limited only to the sanctuary of the Muses.

As the Muses represented the concept of the divine origin of singing and story-telling, the art of music was an essential element of general education. As a result, “Mouseia” meant both the sacrifices within the cult of the Muses and festivals in their honour (Paus. 9.31.3), including

special school festivals (Aeschin. 1.10), and, in the later Greek language, schools themselves were called “Mouseia” (Liban. *Or.* 58.14; 64.112). Platon even calls educational books “Mouseia”, specifically works on rhetoric by the sophist *Polos* of Akragas (Plat. *Phaedr.* 267b).¹²³¹

The fragmentary state of this third graffito does not allow us to conclude in what sense the Olbian author has used the word. However, whatever the case may be, the two other *ostraka* give good grounds to believe that the Muses were worshipped in the territory of Sector NGS.

The origin of Polymedon, the admirer of the Muses whose name occurs in graffito S-15, also requires a comment. This extremely rare name in Olbian prosopography is characteristic of one specific period, i.e. the last third of the 4th to the first half of the 2nd century BC. Without going into detail about the chronology of the corresponding lapidary inscriptions, on which there is generally no significant disagreement, let us touch upon only those which mention the name in question.

The earliest of these is a small fragment of a white marble base for a bronze statue which bears a dedication by priests and members of the religious union of the Heuresibiadaï and Leokratidaï to Zeus Soter (NO 71), which, according to one point of view, is dated from the late 4th to the beginning of the 3rd century BC or, according to another, to within the third quarter of the 4th century or simply to the early Hellenistic period.¹²³² Although in this inscription only the two last letters of the name are preserved, no one has raised doubts about the restoration of Polymedon. It is also important to note that this fragmentary inscription was found in 1938 in Sector NG, south of Sector NGS.

That the name of Polymedon, son of Leokrates, is restored correctly finds corroboration in the diachronic catalogue of names of the Olbian eponymous priests of the temple of Apollon Delphinios (*IOSPE* I², 201), which was carved on a marble slab during the last quarter of the 2nd century BC, and which, among many other preserved names, includes the names of Polymedon, son of Leokrates, and Leokrates, son of Polymedon. V.P. Jajlenko is of the opinion that the Polymedon of this catalogue could be the grandson of the Leokrates who set up the bronze statue of Apollon Ietros in Olbia, which was the work of the Athenian sculptor Stratonides.¹²³³ In the last third of the 4th century BC, it must have been placed in the sanctuary of this god in the Western Temenos, as the base of the statue was found just opposite it, in the Zajač'ja ravine.¹²³⁴

The above-mentioned dedication to Zeus Soter contains the names of eight sons of Leokrates, six of which begin with Poly-. According to their arrangement, the youngest of them must be Polymedon. The Heuresibiadaï and Leokratidaï belonged to the same large, noble and wealthy family, who, at their own cost, commissioned expensive bronze and marble statues in Athens devoted to the deities Apollo and Zeus and served as priests in their sanctuaries. Taking into account the rarity of the name Polymedon in Olbia and its connection with the above-mentioned families, as evidenced by the epigraphic sources, it is possible to assume that Polymedon, admirer of the Muses, also belonged to this noble clan.

The absence of clear palaeographic criteria for the absolute dating of NO 71, *IOSPE* I², 201 and graffito S-15 does not allow confirmation that he was actually the son of Leokrates from the aforementioned list of priests. The Hellenistic period gave rise to small patrimonial unions which were established under the *aegis* of worshipped deities or heroes in many Greek cities, as well as to various religious associations of people

¹²²⁹ *Hymn. Orph.* 77.4-5.

¹²³⁰ Hes. *Theog.* 1-116.

¹²³¹ Frolov 2004, 315.

¹²³² Cf. NO 71; Jajlenko 1987, 100; Vinogradov 1989, 147.

¹²³³ Jajlenko 1987, 100, n. 1.

¹²³⁴ Rusjaeva 1992, 36.

of different origins, social status or professions. At various times, many religious associations also existed in Olbia.¹²³⁵ However, the duration of their existence remains unknown.

Thus the graffito of Polymedon alludes to the existence of a private cult of the Muses in Olbia in the Hellenistic period.¹²³⁶ Moreover, the discussed graffiti and the fragmented marble statue interpreted as a Muse (Q-1)¹²³⁷ found in Sector NGS give grounds to assume that House II-5, with its uncommon layout with a large courtyard and an altar, might be some kind of private Mouseion.¹²³⁸ N.A. Lejpunskaja has drawn attention to this building, arguing for the possible association of cultic activities (the house of a priest?) in the northern part of

the Lower City.¹²³⁹ If this is a Mouseion, compared with the famous Mouseia in Athens, Alexandria, Pergamon and other cities,¹²⁴⁰ the Olbian Mouseion was, naturally, much more modest, but, also it was similarly located far from the central districts of the city.

Considering the evidence scrutinized here, it cannot be excluded that Polymedon could have been the owner of the large and unusually designed house in Sector NGS, which possibly accommodated a sanctuary of the Muses with an altar in the courtyard and the marble statue of the sitting Muse produced in Athens. At the same time, together with the Muses, other deities, primarily Apollon Mousagetes, might have been worshipped in this sanctuary as well.

3. Ostraka with magical signs and drawings

In addition to the *ostraka* discussed above, Sector NGS has produced further *ostraka*, of which mostly fragments are preserved. They bear isolated letters, parts of words, possibly names, drawings, and various intersecting lines and symbols, which most likely were scratched for a magic purpose. On many of these *ostraka* the gloss has been carefully removed along the edges. The graffiti are usually placed on the black gloss. Revealing the meaning of each graffito is hardly possible. Therefore, presented here are general descriptions of individual examples and, in some cases, hypothetical interpretations of the words and drawings. It is impossible to date the *ostraka* with drawings precisely, whereas those with graffiti are dated on the basis of palaeography.

S-16 92-388, III-3 R 359/113. Pl. 378

Almost round *ostrakon* made from body of Attic black-glossed vessel. Ø 3.5. The graffito is scratched relatively clearly at the edge on both sides. Letter H 0.4. 4th century BC.

Σκυ()

Perhaps, a personal name beginning with Σκυ- or some coded wish or curse. On the reverse, *omikron* or a miniature magic ring.

S-17 92-304. Pl. 378

Fr. of *ostrakon* of irregular oval shape made from the base of Attic red-glossed vessel. The gloss has been partially removed along the edge. Size 4.2 x 2.9. The graffito is rather carelessly scratched by a thin tool in small letters. Letter H 0.3-0.5. Second half of the 4th century BC.

T(?)/H(?)ροδω()

The first letter at the edge of the sherd is unclear and covered by scratches. Possibly the name Ἡρόδω[ρος] or the more uncommon Ῥόδω[ν] or the word Ῥόδω[νιά] – “a garden of roses”, which would be consistent with a votive purpose of the *ostrakon* in the supposed sanctuary of the Muses. Other interpretations are also possible.

S-18 91-246, IV-2 B 301/175. Pl. 378

Fr. of *ostrakon* of irregular rectangular shape made from body of Attic black-glossed bowl; at two edges, accurate cuttings of an oval and a triangular shape, from which the gloss has been removed on one side. Size 2.1 x 2.5. The graffito is extremely carelessly scratched; the beginning is missing. Letter H 0.4-0.9. 5th-4th century BC.

Presumably, ATONI can be discerned in the upper line. In the lower,

ΥΨΙ, or other marks in ligature, underlined with a straight horizontal line, under which is a row of vertical and densely scratched lines. Probably, the first word is ἀτονί(α) – “languor, exhaustion”. The second should probably be read ὕψι – “upwards”. If so, the *ostrakon* may have been related to curative magic. On the reverse the gloss has been carelessly removed in many places.

S-19 94-312, VI-2 R 410/246. Pl. 378

Fr. of *ostrakon* made from body of Attic black-glossed bowl. Size 1.5 x 2.8. The gloss has been carefully removed along the edges. The graffito is hastily scratched around the centre of the sherd. Letter H 0.5-0.7. 5th-4th century BC.

ὄδου

Perhaps, “(on) the road/journey”. The upper parts of the first two letters are missing. The first *omicron* has an irregular shape and is larger than the second. Another, coded, magic word is also possible.

S-20 96-71, II-5 B 390/37. Pl. 378

Carefully cut off base of Attic black-glossed kantharos. Ø 3.7. The graffito is in the centre of the sherd on the outside. Letter H 0.5-1. Second half of the 4th century BC.

MH() or HM() (in ligature)

The *eta* is to the left of the *mu*, so there is no certainty that the ligature is actually rendering MH, which might stand for the name of the Mother of Gods or a theophoric name. Such abbreviations are found in the sanctuary of the Mother Goddess in Olbia.¹²⁴¹ Possibly the graffito was originally scratched on the base of the kantharos.

¹²³⁵ Rusjaeva 1992, 193-203 with literature.

¹²³⁶ Unfortunately the sherd is lost, and only illustrations of the graffito are available. This makes it impossible to judge its date on the basis of the lettering.

¹²³⁷ Lejpun'ska & Samojlova 1997, 147-150. [See comment in note 1144 concerning the interpretation of this statue, the editors].

¹²³⁸ See in detail, Lejpunskaja & Rusjaeva 2006, 108-126.

¹²³⁹ Lejpunskaja 2005, 177-179.

¹²⁴⁰ On *mouseia* in general, see RE 16, 1933, 797-821; Čistjakov 1992, 298-315; Frolov 2004, 314-334.

¹²⁴¹ Rusjaeva 1992, 144. On a specially worked *ostrakon* from the sanctuary of the Mother of the Gods the name of goddess is written in a circle. On another sherd it is accompanied by letters.

S-21 85-82. Pl. 378

Body fr. of a red-clay vessel of irregular oval shape, which was possibly used as a votive *ostrakon*; eroded. Size 2.7 x 5.6. Graffiti are carefully scratched on both sides. Letter H 0.7-1. On one side, two *chis*, on the other, *chi* and *eta*. 4th-3rd century BC.

S-22 91-599, IV-1 B 315/140. Pl. 378

Ostrakon of irregular oval shape from Attic black-glossed vessel. Size 2.2 x 4.2. The gloss along the edges has been removed. In the centre, on the black gloss, a cross-like mark, H 1.8, is carelessly scratched. 5th-2nd century BC.

S-23 95-205, VI-3 B 434/281. Pl. 378

Ostrakon of irregular triangular shape made from body fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel. Size 2.9 x 4.5. There are graffiti on both sides. H of signs 2.4-3.1. Externally perhaps drawing of boat with sail, or a carelessly written *chi* with long hastas, which is ligated with A, Δ, Π or P. Internally: ligated X, A, Δ and scratches of different sizes. Perhaps these are primitive line drawings with a magic connotation. Presumably 5th-3rd century BC.

S-24 92-454. Pl. 379

Ostrakon roughly made from body fr. of a light-clay amphora. Size 3 x 3.5. Scratched marks and lines, which might be understood as two individual *iotas* and three *chis* with joining lower ends. H of signs 0.7; 1.3; 2.5; 3. 4th-2nd century BC.

S-25 85-61. Pl. 379

Ostrakon of irregular round shape, made from body of Attic black-glossed vessel. Ø 2. Drawings on both sides. Recto: carelessly scratched,

joining, multi-directional lines; the gloss has been removed along the edge of the sherd. Verso: in the middle of the sherd, the gloss has been carelessly removed in the shape of a "blot", from which long and short lines run in different directions. 5th-2nd century BC.

S-26 95-261. Pl. 379

Carefully cut off and smoothed base of Attic black-glossed vessel. Ø 3.5. The gloss has been carelessly removed along the edges on both sides of the sherd. On one side, among a great number of chips and small scratches, one may distinguish carelessly and chaotically scratched *chi*, *mu* or *lambda* and *delta* in ligature, *eta*(?); under them, a long slanting line, probably, *iota* followed by *xi* with cursive *sigma* in ligature. On the other side, in the centre of the *ostrakon*, the gloss has been removed in such a way that the unglossed spots seem to resemble a small fish and a dolphin(?). Letter H 0.5-1. 4th-3rd century BC.

S-27 04-405, II-7 B 20. Pl. 379

Fragmented *ostrakon* of irregular trapezoid shape with rounded corners and two triangular cuttings, carefully made from body fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel (Da-713). Size 2.6 x 3.5. The gloss has been carefully removed along the edges to form a continuous unglossed strip. Along it, a schematic circle formed from wide and narrower strips is scratched. The whole black-glossed surface is covered by numerous crossing, vertical, horizontal and slanting lines. At the right edge, the schematic image of a fish with a long fin seems to be discernible. 5th century BC.

4. Magical signs and drawings on vessels

In addition to *ostraka*, pottery fragments on which marks and drawings occur are also found in Sector NGS. Like the *ostraka*, they come from different layers and fillings of basements, which make their exact purpose difficult to establish. However, there is no reason to link them merely to the domestic sphere. Some similarities between the graffiti on *ostraka* and on other pottery fragments make it possible to attribute the latter to the group of sacred graffiti too.

S-28 93-1020, III-3 R 359/123. Pl. 379

Fr. of a brown-glossed fish-plate. The graffito is inside the ring foot. Letter H 0.7; 0.4; sign H 1.6. First half of the 3rd century BC.

ΑΠ()

A solar symbol, resembling a modified swastika, and the abbreviation ΑΠ may point to a dedication: ΑΠ(όλλωνι) – "to Apollon".¹²⁴² However, as the graffito is placed on the base of the plate, an abbreviation of a theophoric name cannot be excluded either. The solar symbol might be placed here with a magic purpose.¹²⁴³ The horizontal bar of *alpha* has a light deflection, the verticals of *nu* are equal in height.

S-29 01-722, R 615. Pl. 379

Base fr. of Attic, probably black-figured, vessel. On the outside, at the edge, is a carefully scratched swastika, the lower part of which is missing. It is thought to be a symbol of health, human force and movement.¹²⁴⁴ Sign H 1.8. Second half of the 6th century BC.

S-30 96-10. Pl. 379

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel; very worn. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 0.7; H of pentagram 1.1. First half of the 3rd century BC.

- a) Σκ() (cursive *sigma*)
- b) pentagram

¹²⁴² Such abbreviations on the bases of vessels are often considered dedications to Apollon. Cf., for example, Tolstoj 1953, no. 29. Similarly, abbreviated dedications to Apollon made on body fragments were found in the Olbian sanctuary of Apollon Ietros. See Vinogradov & Rusjaeva 2001, fig. 1.13.

¹²⁴³ Various theophoric names deriving from the name of Apollon were popular in Olbia. See Knipovič 1956, 152; NO 126.

¹²⁴⁴ Tresidder 1999, 322.

The representation of a pentagram on a vessel is thought to be connected with astral magic and may be regarded as a solar symbol of healing and health.¹²⁴⁵ The letters belong to a personal name or, for example, to the word σκιά in its various meanings – “a shadow, a ghost, a dream, a trespasser, nothing” – which, to some extent, might be considered to be associated with magic acts.

S-31 89-461. Pl. 380

Fragmented Attic black-glossed fish-plate. The graffiti is scratched by a very thin tool inside and outside the ring-foot. Letter H 2.1; 0.4; H of the partially preserved signs 0.4; 1.5-2.5. Second half of the 4th century BC.

ΗΩΟ (monogram)

Straight and slanting lines are carelessly scratched inside and outside the ring-foot; the lower one resembles an *iota* ligated with *lambda*. To be noted is the original structure of the monogram. Above the cross-bar of a very wide *eta*, in the centre, is scratched a rather small *omega* with a quite contracted semicircle and short horizontals; an even smaller *omicron* is added from the outside to the upper part of its right hasta.

Apparently the inscription is associated with the goddess of the dawn Ἡώς (= Ἐως). Such an interpretation would imply the preservation of the epic-Ionian form of this name, which could be borrowed from the *Iliad*, which was popular among the citizens of Olbia. Neither the name of this goddess nor the corresponding theophoric name has been recorded previously in Olbian epigraphy.

S-32 02-32. Pl. 380

Lid fr. of Attic red-figured lekane with a purposely cut-off upper part. Ø 3.1. The gloss has been removed along the perimeter. A large cross is scratched in the centre of the sherd on the black-glossed surface. One of its lines is crossed by two vertical parallel strokes, and from the centre towards the periphery runs a slanting line. H of the signs 0.7; 2.1. 4th century BC.

S-33 01-579. Pl. 380

Rim fr. of Attic black-glossed skyphos. Graffiti on both sides. Letter H 0.5. 5th century BC.

On the outside, at the upper left edge, part of a geometric figure is discernible, probably a trapeze; below it is a partially preserved rectangle drawn in wider lines. The gloss has been removed from the lower part. In the centre of the sherd, there is a carelessly scratched rectangle with *lambda* in the right lower corner. On the inside is a geometric figure resembling a square; at the break, traces of two lines.

S-34 01-910. Pl. 380

Base fr. of a light-clay jug of Olbian manufacture. Underneath, possibly traces of letters (*delta* inside with which a cursive *epsilon* is in ligature; to the right, a miniature stroke); the lower line of *delta* projects right to a sign resembling *chi* with one longer hasta and possible *delta* in ligature; between these signs, in the centre, are long vertical lines, one of which resembles *upsilon*. Letter H 1.5; 0.9; 2.6; 3.3. Hellenistic period.

S-35 87-229, I-2 R 119. Pl. 380

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel. The graffiti is carelessly scratched on the outer surface; the beginning and the end are missing. H of the preserved signs 0.6; 1. 5th-4th century BC.

At the beginning, perhaps, the remains of a *sigma* and an *epsilon*, to the lower slightly oblique stroke of which is adjoined an *iota*; nearby, at the upper break, part of an *omicron* seems to be discernible; below

it, an *eta* or an *alpha*, from the end of the right vertical of which a long straight line is scratched; on it, a rectangle with four strokes inside; at the right edge, a sign resembling an *upsilon*. Individual letters are given in ligature.

S-36 89-986 + 89-986a, II-4 B 243/19. Pl. 381

Three toe frs. of Attic black-glossed bowl with a stemmed toe of the first half of the 5th century BC. The graffiti is carelessly scratched on the upper and lower surfaces; broken at both sides. H of marks varies from 0.6-2.1. On the upper surface, at the stem, three marks resemble randomly placed *alpha* and *delta*; on the left, at the break, two uneven verticals with four horizontal lines; underneath a rectangle of irregular shape with a cross inside; next to it, a partially preserved design consisting of two vertical lines crossed by slanting and straight lines. The other fr. shows ligated letters, among which can be discerned X, Λ and H, as well as X at a distance. These marks have been scratched on the bowl when it was still complete and must have served some magic purpose.

S-37 89-601, IV-1 B 253/143. Pl. 381

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed bowl (Da-677). Graffiti on both sides; broken. Letter H 0.5-1.1. 5th century BC.

On the upper surface, at the break, two horizontal strokes, possibly from an *epsilon*, are partially preserved; next to it, two parallel verticals with five cross-beams in the form of a schematic ladder followed by a small and clear *delta*; at the right break, probably two more verticals with cross-beams; underneath the marks are less clear. The position of the inscriptions on both sides of the bowl's toe makes this graffiti similar to the previous one. In general, this kind of graffiti is rarely found on vessels.

S-38 04-360, II-7 B 20. Pl. 381

Scatched and chipped body fr. of a greyware vessel. On the outer surface, ABII, rather carelessly scratched. Letter H 0.9. 4th century BC.

The vertical of the *beta* has casually slipped off, above *nu*, a long slanting line, which makes it possible to see here *chi* in ligature with *nu*.

S-39 04-383, III-1 B 734. Pl. 381

Neck fr. of a thick-walled, Attic black-glossed vessel (Da-712). The graffiti is on the outside, carelessly and sweepingly scratched. Letter H 0.4; 1.1; 1.5. 5th century BC.

A narrow *eta* or an *alpha* with hastas not joining at the top, an *upsilon* in the form of Latin *V* with a *delta* adjoined below, as well as a tall *iota*, from the middle of which runs a slanting line, seem to be discernible. It is not clear whether the miniature *pi* at the end of the inscription is connected with it. The careless and atypical lettering does not exclude other readings, as all letters seem interlaced: *upsilon* with a long vertical, *delta* or large *theta*, below, *lambda* and *eta*.

S-40 04-141. Pl. 381

Body fr. of Attic red-figured vessel. The graffiti is on the outer surface; the beginning and the end of the inscription are missing. Letter H 0.3-0.5. 4th century BC.

A(?)ΓΔΕ

The *gamma* with a long horizontal bar is much larger than other letters, the *delta*'s right hasta has slipped down, the middle horizontal bar of *epsilon* is shorter than the others. Samples of alphabetic exercises with omitted letters, as well as individual letters, scratched for a magic purpose are known both in Olbia and Berezan'.¹²⁴⁶

¹²⁴⁵ Hopfner 1926, 761; Tresidder 1999, 270. For ancient sherds with a pentagram found on Berezan', in Istros and Bosporos, see Jajlenko 1980a, no. 24; 2005, 466-467.

¹²⁴⁶ Cf. Tolstoj 1953, 59; Jajlenko 1980b, 102-105; Jajlenko 1982, 181.

S-41 01-990

Base of Attic black-glossed bowl with a perforation in the middle. On the outside the perforation is carelessly outlined by a wide line. By a slanting stroke this scratched ring is connected with an oval of irregular shape. H 3.5. Presumably 4th century BC. The bowl could have been used for libations on a domestic altar.

S-42 92-112. Pl. 382

Worn and scratched rim fr. of a figured krater. Dull gloss. The graffito is carelessly scratched on the outside on an ornament of extended, white

palmettes. To the left of the palmette, a symbol resembling a *nu*, to the right an *alpha* with a long cross-bar. Letter H 0.7; 0.9. 3rd century BC.

S-43 97-97. Pl. 382

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed bowl of the 4th century BC. On the outside, a sign in the shape of an anchor. H of sign 2.2. 4th century BC.

II. RITUAL AND SYMPOSIASTIC INSCRIPTIONS

The excavations in the residential zones of Olbia have produced numerous graffiti inscribed on the visible parts of drinking vessels which are connected with symposia and various other junkets, as well as with collective sacral meals.¹²⁴⁷ Noteworthy amongst these are humorous metric texts, dedicatory inscriptions and short expressions composed *ad hoc*. The formulas of these inscriptions are not repetitive, as in most of the cases they are original compositions.

Only three graffiti assigned to this group have been found in Sector NGS. Of particular interest is one completely preserved inscription, the interpretation of which has caused controversy in previous publications. Compared to the many other symposiastic graffiti of the Classical and early Hellenistic periods, this seems to be one of the latest Olbian graffiti within the group. Besides, it is remarkable that the inscription is scratched not on a drinking vessel, but on a plainware lagynos.

S-44 89-644, IV-1 B 253/144

Two neck-to-shoulder frs. of a light-clay Rhodian lagynos with coat and traces of a stamp (ΣΥΝ) on the broken handle. The graffito is on the shoulder. Letter H 0.2-1.2; the smallest are *omicrons*; the largest are *psi* and *epsilon*. Publications: Beleckij & Lejpunskaja 1994, 16-17; Vinogradov 1998, 149-152. Second half of the 3rd to the first half of the 2nd century BC, according to the vessel's shape and the lettering.

ΘΙΓΓΟΨΥΧΟΣΕΡΩΜΕΝΟΚΑΤΑΜΑΚΤΡΙΑ (cursive)

The inscription is completely preserved, except for partial damage to some of the individual letters. Thus, the upper part of a *rho*, the right part of an *omega* and the ends of the last three letters are missing. The shapes of the letters vary. The horizontal of the first *gamma* is much longer compared to that of the following letter, its vertical being shorter. The first cursive *epsilon* is much longer than the preceding lunate *sigma* and the second *epsilon*. Miniature *omicrons* have the shape of a circle and oval. To be noted is the different manner of lettering: the end of the inscription, after the word ΨΥΧΟΣ, is scratched more clearly. Perhaps it was made by two different hands.

Different readings and interpretations of this graffito have been suggested. The first of them was made by A.A. Beleckij: θίγγω ψύχος ἐρωμένου κατὰ μακτρία(ν) – “I touch (with my wine) the cold (i.e. the cold body) of the beloved (i.e. of the dead) in the sarcophagus”.¹²⁴⁸ Another interpretation has been proposed by Ju.G. Vinogradov: θιγγόψυχος ἐγὼ μὲν ὁ κατὰ μάκτρια – “Ich bin denn seelenrührend bei den *maktria*”.¹²⁴⁹ In his publication, Vinogradov also gave a third

variant of the translation by R. Merkelbach: “Ich, der Wein, der in dem Krug ist, rühre die Seele an”.¹²⁵⁰ A fourth variant has been proposed by A.I. Zajcev: “I shall touch a desired cool in the bath!”¹²⁵¹

Such substantial divergences in the interpretation can be explained by the ambivalent meaning of the individual words and the difficulty of reading the not very clearly scratched and partially damaged letters, in particular the first *rho*, which Vinogradov thought to be a *gamma*, despite the visible trace of a semicircle. Likewise, Beleckij, for a “better” reading, has emended θίγγο to θίγγω (an unrecorded variant of θιγγάνω). He also supplies an *upsilon* to the word ἐρωμένο – ἐρωμένου, as well as a *nu* to μακτρία – μακτρία(ν), as above the last *alpha* a horizontal line, a kind of ligature, was discernible.

Vinogradov rejected Beleckij's reading, drawing attention to the word μακτρία. Adducing various examples of the use of words with the stem μακτ(ρ) in the ancient narrative tradition, he came to the conclusion that in this inscription it means “a carousal” (κῶμος), where vessels were used in dances with obscene movements, as in representations of *komastai* in early vase-painting.¹²⁵² Moreover, Vinogradov is of the opinion that the verb θίγγω suggested by Beleckij could not derive from θιγγάνω, and, in any case, the graffito reads θίγγο, which could only be the first part of the composite adjective θιγγόψυχος.

However, the explanation of the text provided by Vinogradov, which he considers metric, is also problematic. As mentioned above, Merkelbach and Zajcev interpret the text quite differently. Indeed, the words θίγγο, ἐρωμένο and especially μακτρία remain the most prob-

¹²⁴⁷ Tolstoj 1953, 12-13; Levi 1964c, 143; Rusjaeva 1987, 148-150.

¹²⁴⁸ Beleckij & Lejpunskaja 1994, 16-17.

¹²⁴⁹ Vinogradov 1998, 150, 152.

¹²⁵⁰ Vinogradov 1998, 152, 150.

¹²⁵¹ Personal communication to A.S. Rusjaeva (November 1994).

¹²⁵² Vinogradov 1998, 151-152.

lematic. It is well-known that in Olbian graffiti one can find multiple examples of errors and abbreviations in the lettering of individual words, even in the period of cultural acme in the early Hellenistic period. In the late Hellenistic period, when the city underwent a severe economic crisis, the level of education was, obviously, in decline as well, which is reflected in a considerable reduction in the number of graffiti. One should also bear in mind the effects of the particularities of pronunciation in peripheral areas of the ancient world and, in the case of symposiastic or comic inscriptions, of changes in the spoken and written word caused by drunkenness. Therefore, taking the Olbian dialect into account, it does not seem impossible to consider $\theta\iota\gamma\gamma\omega$ a local Olbian derivative of the verb $\theta\iota\gamma\gamma\acute{\alpha}\nu\omega$. Moreover, $\mu\alpha\kappa\tau\rho\iota\alpha$ does not occur in such a form in any of the examples listed by Vinogradov. This word has various meanings: quite often as a wash-tub, a bath, a tub for dough, mortar and other materials, which in metaphorical and comic senses could also mean “larynx”, and a female nickname Maktria. In this case, taking into account possible errors or the use of words taken from the local dialect, one more variant of the interpretation of this graffiti can be suggested: “I touch with a desired coolness the larynx (or Maktria)”. If this reading is to some extent correct, the graffiti better reflects the purpose of the vessel, which could be used to pour or to drink cooled wine in cheerful company during the symposium.

III. NAMES OF OWNERS

1. Full names

Some inhabitants of the northeastern area of Olbia, just like other citizens, “signed” their property by scratching their names on the bases of vessels, most often drinking cups and fish-plates. The group of fully-written names is small compared to that of abbreviated names and initials. In addition, the majority of them are very fragmented, and it is often impossible to restore the names reliably. Some of them are carefully scratched in small letters, while others are carelessly made and with haste. For some of them, an alternative interpretation is given. Among the completely preserved names mentioned are rather rare ones, such as Alkimachos, Hippos, Ion and Phanion. The last three occur here in graffiti for the first time. Other names are restored according to known Greek personal names.

S-47 93-324, VI-2 B 395. Pl. 383

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed dish. The graffiti is carelessly scratched on the outside along the ring foot. The beginning and the end of the name is preserved. Letter H 0.5-1.6. Second half of the 4th century BC.

Ἀλκ[ιμά]χου
“(the dish) of Alkimachos”. Perhaps, the letters AKI preserved on the base fr. of the black-glossed vessel 89-421 represent the same name. The name is recorded on a possibly contemporary graffiti from Sector I located west of NGS in the Upper City.¹²⁵⁴ It probably derives from the epiclesis of Athena Ἀλκιμάχη , which may indicate worship of this goddess in Olbia. The letters at the beginning are placed closer to each other than those at the end.

S-48 93-161. Pl. 383

Fr. of figured lekane ornamented with an ivy branch. The graffiti is

S-45 93-1095, III-3 B 368/107. Pl. 382

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed kantharos. The graffiti is on the outside at the edge. Letter H 0.4-0.5. Second half of the 4th century BC.

Ἡδύ

“Sweet, pleasant”. Such inscriptions on the base of kantharoi can possibly refer to the wine served during a banquet.

S-46 86-687. Pl. 382

Fragmented brown-glossed fish-plate. The graffiti is very carelessly scratched with a thin tool on the outside near the rim. Letter H 0.7-2.5. 3rd century BC.

Ἡδύη ἰρά Ζηνί(?) (ligatures)

Presumably, “Sweet offerings to Zeus(?)”. The two first letters in ligature: a small *delta* is obliquely placed within a sweeping *eta*. The conjectured name of Zeus in the dative is “coded” in compound ligature: a miniature *zeta* is placed at the upper left hasta of a wide and tall *eta*, inside which is perhaps a carelessly executed *nu*. ἰρά (= ἰερά) indicates Ionic dialect, which also occurs in an Olbian dedication of the last quarter of the 6th to the 5th century BC found in the Eastern Temenos in the sanctuary of Zeus and Athena.¹²⁵³ Of all the mentioned graffiti from Sector NGS this is the only example of an extremely carelessly made inscription. If the name Zeus is conjectured correctly, the graffiti may, however, also be assigned to the group of dedications.

carefully scratched on the outside of the rim. Letter H 0.3-0.5. Last quarter of the 4th century BC.

Ἄρτιος (lunate *sigma*)

Presumably a rare name beginning with Ἄρτι- ,¹²⁵⁵ perhaps female in the genitive, or the epithet ἄρτιος in one of its meanings – “pair”, “even”, “suitable” – which could characterize a vessel consisting of two parts, i.e. a lekane with a lid.

S-49 04-362, II-7 B 20. Pl. 383

Miniature base fr. of a black-glossed vessel. The graffiti is carefully scratched in very small letters on the outside; the end is missing. Letter H 0.2. 5th century BC.

Ἐκατω()

Probably a theophoric name. Various personal names deriving from the theonym Ἐκάτη are recorded in Olbian inscriptions.¹²⁵⁶

¹²⁵³ Levi 1964c, 138, 141.

¹²⁵⁴ Jajlenko 1980b, no. 124.

¹²⁵⁵ Cf. Lang 1976, F 148; *LGPV* IIIB, 68.

¹²⁵⁶ Knipovič 1956, 152.

S-50 99-403. Pl. 383

Fr. of a greyware fish-plate coated with slip. Two inscriptions are on the outside: one on the base, the second inside the ring foot. Letter H a) 0.4-0.6; b) 0.4-0.9. 4th century BC.

a) Ἴππου

b) δοῦς

The name in the genitive is preserved completely: “(the plate) of Hippos”. The related name Ἴππιτας is recorded in Olbia, although it is rather rare among Greek names.¹²⁵⁷ The first letter of the second word is incomplete below. The word may be read as δοῦς – “a father-in-law”. The lettering varies between the two inscriptions. The name is rather carefully scratched in the capital letters; only the second *pi* differing from the first one by a shortened right hasta. The word on the base is sweepingly scratched by a thinner tool. The *upsilon* is unfinished or preserves an early shape resembling the Latin V and the *sigma* has a very long slanting lower hasta. In both words, the *omicron* is smaller than the other letters. It cannot be ruled out that the inscriptions were executed by two different people.

S-51 87-711, II-3 B 89/12. Pl. 383

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel with many chips and scratches. The graffito is carelessly scratched in small letters on the outside; partially damaged by scratches. Letter H 0.3-0.4. First half of the 3rd century BC.

Ἴων (cursive *omega*)

Most likely the rather rare male name Ion or an ethnonym. Not recorded previously in Olbian epigraphy.¹²⁵⁸

S-52 92-760. Pl. 383

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed kylix. The graffito is on the outside; the end is missing. Letter H 0.5-0.8. Second half of the 4th century BC.

Παρμ()

The beginning of a name starting with Παρμ-, for example the name

Parmis, known from Olbia, or Parmenos.¹²⁵⁹ The hastas of the first three letters are adjoined below and of the sweeping and long *mu* only the left part is preserved.

S-53 90-501, IV-2 B 287/172. Pl. 384

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed fish-plate. The graffito is on the outside; the end is missing and below it there is a large cross. Letter H 0.5-0.6; 2.1. First half of the 5th century BC.

Πυθ()

Most likely a theophoric name deriving from the epiclesis of Apollon Pythios.¹²⁶⁰ The meaning of the large sign resembling a *chi* with long slanting hastas, which is carelessly scratched below the name, is unclear. The shape of the *upsilon* (resembling the Latin V) is characteristic of the late Archaic period and occurs in inscriptions from Olbia until the first half of the 5th century BC.

S-54 02-173. Pl. 384

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed kylix. The graffito is on the outside; both the beginning and the end are missing. Letter H 0.8; 0.5. 5th century BC.

]σιο[

Perhaps a name beginning with Ασ-, Αστ- for example Asios (compare S-63 and S-65) or Dionysios, popular in Olbia.¹²⁶¹

S-55 05-589. Pl. 384

Fr. of a small Attic black-glossed bowl (or salt-cellar). The graffito is on the outside of the lower body. Letter H 0.5-1.1. 5th century BC.

Φανίωv

The rare name Phanion;¹²⁶² recorded in Olbian inscriptions for the first time. Since it is given in the nominative, it cannot be ruled out that this is the name of a dedicant.

2. Abbreviated names and initials

The largest number of graffiti falls into this subgroup. The majority of them consist of one, two and, more rarely, three letters, sometimes in ligature, and are usually regarded as abbreviated names of the owners of the vessels.¹²⁶³ In Sector NGS, it is mainly Attic tableware of the 5th to the 3rd century BC, which we find marked this way. Relatively rarely, such marks occur on vessels of local manufacture. In most cases they are placed on the base of the vessels. Apparently, members of the same family preferred to use their own vessels for eating and drinking. For the sake of convenience, bearing in mind the large number of such graffiti, the best preserved of them are presented below in alphabetic order. In cases where the letters allow various restorations, preference is given to those names already recorded in Olbian inscriptions. This, however, does not rule out other restorations. In addition, abbreviations of new and relatively rare personal names are included. Unfortunately, it is impossible to differentiate between male and female names.

S-56 02-832, B 672. Pl. 385

Base of Attic black-glossed kylix. Two graffiti are rather clearly scratched at the ring foot opposite one another. Letter H 1.1. 4th century BC.

a) Α()

b) ΙΠ or ΚΠ (ligature)

Deep dots are scratched at the junction of the assumed *iota* and *pi* as well as at the end of the latter's right vertical. Nothing similar is

¹²⁵⁷ Jajlenko 1980b, no. 105a; cf. *LGNP* II, 238.

¹²⁵⁸ Cf. *CIRB* 244; *LGNP* II, 243.

¹²⁵⁹ *IOSPE* I², 201; Jajlenko 1980b, no. 187.

¹²⁶⁰ *LGNP* II, 385-388.

¹²⁶¹ Knipovič 1956, 152; *NO* 127.

¹²⁶² See, for instance, the lists of names in Loukopoulou 1989, 294, 340.

¹²⁶³ Cf., for example, Jajlenko 1980a, 118-139, nos. 29-46; Stolba 2002, H 3-31.

found among the other graffiti. A single *alpha* also occurs on some other bases.

S-57 94-419, VI-2 R 410/247. Pl. 385

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed dish. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 1.7. 4th century BC.

Αβ() (ligature)

Traces of the upper parts of individual letters, perhaps of a word, are discernible at the break below. Greek names beginning with Αβ- are relatively rare; none have been found previously in Olbia.¹²⁶⁴ The right hasta of the *alpha* is longer than the left one and the adjoining *beta* has elongated semicircles.

S-58 02-790b, R 676. Pl. 385

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed kylix; chipped and very worn. The graffito is carelessly scratched on the outside, almost in the centre. Letter H 0.9-1. 4th century BC.

Αλ()

Small strokes inside the broad *lambda* are most likely accidental scratches. Personal names beginning with Αλ- are recorded in Olbian inscriptions, for example Alexandros, Alphinos.¹²⁶⁵

S-59 98-274. Pl. 386

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel. The graffito is on the outside at the edge. Letter H 0.9-1. 4th century BC.

Αμ() (monogram)

A male name beginning with Αμ- (Amyntor) is recorded only in the list of Olbian citizens of the 2nd century BC, but is well-known in other cities.¹²⁶⁶

S-60 94-420, VI-2 R 410/247. Pl. 386

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed kylix. The graffito is clearly scratched on the outside. Letter H 0.7; 0.5. 5th century BC.

ΑΠ()

Names beginning with Α-, Απ-, Αρ- are among the commonest in the Olbian onomastics.¹²⁶⁷ Base frs. of imported and local tableware of the 5th to the 3rd century BC bearing such abbreviations are among those most often found in Sector NGS (see below). They are also recorded in other inhabited areas of Olbia and at the settlement of Panskoe I as well.¹²⁶⁸

S-61 93-518, VI-2 B 395/259. Pl. 386

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed plate (Da-399). The graffito is carelessly scratched on the outside along the wide strip of the black gloss. It consists of two abbreviations sitting at a distance of 1.5 cm from each other. Letter H 1.9; 1.2. 3rd century BC.

a) Α()

b) Αρ()

S-62 04-434, III-1 B 734. Pl. 386

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel with traces of wear, small chips and scratches (Da-714). The graffito is scratched in rather large capital letters. Letter H 1.7. Second half of the 5th century BC.

Αρ()

S-63 01-1033. Pl. 387

Base of Attic black-glossed bowl(?). The graffito is on the outside in the centre. Letter H 2.4; 1.8. 4th century BC.

Αρ()

The first letter is considerably larger than the second.

S-64 00-87. Pl. 387

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed salt-cellar. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 0.6. 4th century BC.

Αρ() (ligature)

S-65 94-584, VI-2 B 395a/261. Pl. 387

Foot fr. of Attic black-glossed kantharos. The graffito is carelessly scratched on the outside near the resting surface. Letter H 0.8; 0.5. Second half of the 4th century BC.

ΑΣ() (lunate *sigma*)

S-66 96-284, VI-3 R 477/287 + 96-340, VI-3 B 474/288. Pl. 387

Body frs. of Attic black-glossed vessel. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 0.7; 0.9. Second half of the 4th century BC.

ΑΣ() (lunate *sigma*)

Names beginning with Αστ- have not previously been recorded in Olbia.¹²⁶⁹

S-67 87-668, I-2 R 119. Pl. 387

Carefully polished bone facing of a knife handle. Size 9.6 x 1.9. The graffito is clearly made in capital letters on the outside below. Letter H 0.9. 5th-4th century BC.

Δ()

Names beginning with Δ were popular in Olbia. However, this sign could also have another meaning.

S-68 93-1019, III-3 R 359/123. Pl. 387

Base of Attic black-glossed kylix. The graffito is on the outside almost in the centre. Letter H 0.6. 4th century BC.

Δε()

Names beginning with Δε- are quite rare in Olbia, two examples are Deinomenes and Delphos.¹²⁷⁰

S-69 87-922, II-6 P 127/60. Pl. 388

Very worn rim fr. of Attic black-glossed dish. The graffito is rather clearly and deeply scratched in large letters on the outside. Letter H 1.2; 1.5; 1.9. 5th century BC.

Δει()

The *epsilon* differs from that of S-68 by its elongated upper horizontal. At the right edge, near the *delta*, traces of a slanting stroke, probably from an *alpha*, are preserved. If so, the name should begin with Αδει-. Cf. Adeimantos recorded in Olbia.¹²⁷¹ In the case of this being a casual scratch, leaving Δει-, the name may be, for example, Deinomenes, which is also recorded in Olbia.¹²⁷² However, given that the graffito is placed on the rim, other interpretations are also possible.

¹²⁶⁴ LGPN IIIB, 114.

¹²⁶⁵ Knipovič 1956, 152; NO 80, 90, 170.

¹²⁶⁶ IOSPE I², 201; LGPN IIIB, 27-32.

¹²⁶⁷ Knipovič 1956, 152.

¹²⁶⁸ Tolstoj 1953, nos. 13, 19, 20, 32; Jajlenko 1980b, nos. 132-134; Stolba 2002, H 3-11.

¹²⁶⁹ See, for instance, LGPN IIIB, 73, 74.

¹²⁷⁰ Knipovič 1956, 195; NO 80.

¹²⁷¹ IOSPE I², 76; cf. Jajlenko 1980b, no. 118.

¹²⁷² Knipovič 1956, 195.

S-70 04-409, II-7 B 20. Pl. 388

Base of Attic red-figured skyphos. The graffito is on the outside in the centre. Letter H 1. First half of the 4th century BC.

ΔΙ()

In the first hasta of *delta* the hand of the scribe has slipped down. Most likely, one of the theophoric names common in Olbia, for example Dionysios, Diodoros.¹²⁷³

S-71 87-765, R 138. Pl. 388

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel. The graffito is clearly scratched on the outside in capital letters. Letter H 0.5; 0.7. 4th century BC.

ΔΙ()

Below, at the break, traces of another graffito seem to be discernible.

S-72 02-306, R 672. Pl. 388

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed bowl. The graffito is rather clearly scratched in capital letters on the outside along the wide black-glossed strip. Letter H 0.5-0.6. First half of the 4th century BC.

ΔΙε()

Possibly a personal name beginning with ΔΙε-.¹²⁷⁴ The *epsilon* features an elongated slanting middle stroke, which is characteristic of an earlier period.

S-73 00-1446, R 615. Pl. 388

Neck fr. of Thasian amphora. The graffito is clearly scratched on the outside. Letter H 1.4; 1.2. 5th century BC.

ΔΚΡ or ΔΙΚΡ (monogram)

Delta and *kappa* in ligature, *rho* is attached to the horizontal bar of the *delta* and at its left corner a small slanting stroke is discernible, probably an *iota*, which gives another combination of letters. *Rho* with long vertical and angular arc. This unusual monogram possibly conceals the initials of the owner's name and his patronymic.

S-74 87-255, II-3 B 89. Pl. 389

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 1.1. 5th century BC.

Ε()

Epsilon with long slanting horizontals, the middle bar is slightly shortened. Similar abbreviations are also recorded on other base frs. from this area.

S-75 96-36. Pl. 389

Base fr. of a red-clay vessel of Olbian manufacture. The graffito is on the outside, at the centre of the base. Letter H 2.8. 4th century BC.

Ε()

S-76 99-119. Pl. 389

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed fish-plate. The graffito is carefully scratched on the outside in capital letters. Letter H 0.6; 0.8. 4th century BC.

Ευ()

Many different male names beginning with Ευ- are recorded in Olbian inscriptions.¹²⁷⁵ The upper horizontal of the *epsilon* is longer than the others.

S-77 87-538, II-3 B 89/10. Pl. 389

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed plate with stamped palmette decoration. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 0.5-0.6. 4th century BC.

Ευα()

Since this is not a drinking vessel, εὐ<ν> can hardly be an exclamation in honour of Dionysos Bakchos. Rather, this is apparently a male or female name beginning with Ευα- that has not been attested previously in Olbian inscriptions.¹²⁷⁶

S-78 98-494, R 554. Pl. 390

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel. The graffito is carelessly scratched on the outside with double strokes. Letter H 1.4; 2.1; 1.9. 4th century BC.

Ευκ()

Male names beginning with Ευκ- are recorded in Olbia.¹²⁷⁷ The lower horizontal of the *epsilon* is shorter than the others.

S-79 93-384, IV-3 R 383/197. Pl. 390

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed kylix. The graffito is scratched in capital letters on the outside, at the edge along a strip of black gloss. Letter H 0.3; 0.5. Second half of the 5th century BC.

Ζη()

Possibly a theophoric name beginning with Ζη-. Cf. Zenodotos and Zenon recorded in Olbia.¹²⁷⁸

S-80 97-503, VI-2. Pl. 390

Fragmented base of a red-clay jug of Olbian manufacture. The graffito is on the outside in the centre. Letter H 1.5. 4th to the 3rd century BC.

Η()

Similar abbreviations are also recorded on other frs. of vessels from this area.

S-81 87-223. Pl. 390

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed dish with stamped decoration. The graffito is clearly and carefully scratched on the outside. Letter H 1. Second half of the 4th century BC.

Ἡρ()

Many different names beginning with Ἡρ- are recorded in Olbian inscriptions.¹²⁷⁹ On the preserved part of the fragment, among numerous scratches, two marks, of which one resembles a *chi* and the other an *iota* or a *tau*, seem to be discernible.

S-82 96-397, R 477. Pl. 391

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed bowl. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 0.4. Second half of the 5th century BC.

Θε()

Male names beginning with Θε- are quite common in Olbia.¹²⁸⁰ The *theta* with a central dot has a slightly elongated shape owing to the adjoining *epsilon*.

S-83 93-795, R 351. Pl. 391

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed kylix. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 1. First half of the 4th century BC.

Ἰε()

¹²⁷³ Knipovič 1956, 152; *NO* 127. The abbreviation ΔΙ on the bases of vessels is sometimes also interpreted as a dedication to Zeus. See, for example, Tolstoj 1953, 29 (Olbia); Alexandrescu 1978, cat. 526, 527, 533 (Istros).

¹²⁷⁴ See, for example, *LGNP* II, 115.

¹²⁷⁵ See Knipovič 1956, 152; *NO* 127.

¹²⁷⁶ See, for instance, *LGNP* II, 161-163.

¹²⁷⁷ *NO* 85. It also occurs comparatively rarely in Greek onomastics.

¹²⁷⁸ *NO* 80. A graffito in the Ionic dialect (IPH ΖΗΝΟΣ) was found in the sanctuary of Zeus in the Eastern Temenos of Olbia. See Levi 1964c, 138.

¹²⁷⁹ Knipovič 1956, 152.

¹²⁸⁰ Knipovič 1956, 153; *NO* 127.

Cf. Hieroson recorded in Olbia,¹²⁸¹ although a name beginning with $\Upsilon\epsilon$ - (as S-98) cannot be ruled out either. Unlike the other graffiti, the *epsilon* features equally long horizontals.

S-84 85-220

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed bowl. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 1. Second half of the 5th century BC.

K()

Many different names beginning with K are recorded in Olbia.¹²⁸²

S-85 93-587. Pl. 391

Base fr. of fish-plate. The graffito is clearly scratched on the outside. Letter H 2.1. 4th century BC.

K()

A vertical of the *kappa* is unusually extended upwards.

S-86 01-721, R 615. Pl. 391

Fragmented base of Attic black-glossed fish-plate. The graffito is executed in capital letters on the outside at the edge. Letter H 1; 0.9. 4th century BC.

$\Lambda\epsilon$ ()

Many different male names beginning with $\Lambda\epsilon$ - are attested in Olbian inscriptions.¹²⁸³ A broad *lambda* and the upper horizontal of the *epsilon* is longer than the others.

S-87 02-919, R 672. Pl. 391

Base of a black-glossed bowl with palmette decoration. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 0.5. First half of the 4th century BC.

$\Lambda\epsilon\omega$ () (ligature)

Obviously, a name beginning with $\Lambda\epsilon\omega$ -. Cf. Leodamas, Leokrates, and Leosthenides recorded in Olbia.¹²⁸⁴

S-88 89-599. IV-1 B 253/143

Rim fr., floor and foot of a fish-plate (Da-448). The graffito is clearly scratched on the outside of the bottom along a reserved band. Letter H 1.1. Mid-3rd century BC.

M η ()

For male and female theophoric names recorded in Olbia, cf. Metrodoros, Metrophanes, Metrobia, Metro.¹²⁸⁵

S-89 87-532, II-3 B 89/10. Pl. 391

Fr. of a brown-glossed bowl with stamped decoration and dull gloss. The graffito is clearly scratched on the outside at the edge of the base. Letter H 0.9. First half of the 3rd century BC.

M η () (ligature)

S-90 87-301, I-2 R 150. Pl. 392

Fr. of Attic black-glossed plate. There are two separate inscriptions on the outside of the base. Letter H a) 1; b) 0.9. 4th century BC.

a) M η () (ligature)

b) E π () (ligature)

The letters are clearly scratched in capital letters. Most likely, these are

abbreviations of two names beginning with M η - and E π -.¹²⁸⁶ The *epsilon* with a shortened middle horizontal and a broad *mu* and *eta*.

S-91 99-118. Pl. 392

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel. The graffito is on the outside, almost in the centre. Letter H 1.1; 0.5. 4th century BC.

N η ()

S-92 01-881, R 615. Pl. 392

Base fr. of a brown-glossed plate. The graffito is on the outside; scratched more accurately than S-91. Letter H 0.9; 0.8. 3rd century BC.

N η ()

S-93 05-511. Pl. 393

Base fr. of a grey-clay fish-plate. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 1.1; 1. 5th century BC.

$\Pi\alpha\rho$ ()

For a name beginning with $\Pi\alpha\rho$ -, cf. S-52. *Nu* (with shortened and slightly slanting right hasta) and *rho* (in the shape of a triangle in the upper part) preserve early forms.

S-94 00-442. Pl. 393

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed bowl with a stamped ornament. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 1.7; 1. 4th century BC.

$\Pi\Lambda\rho$ () or A $\Pi\rho$ () (monogram)

Other interpretations cannot be excluded.

S-95 94-55, IV-2 B 302/180. Pl. 393

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed plate. The graffito is carelessly scratched on the outside. Letter H 2.3; 1.3. Second half of the 4th century BC.

$\Pi\alpha\sigma$ () (ligature; lunate *sigma*)

Names beginning with $\Pi\alpha\sigma$ - are widespread in Greek.¹²⁸⁷ The male name Pasikles occurs in a dedication from the Western Temenos of Olbia. An unusual lettering of ligature: *alpha* is placed inside a very broad *pi*, the second vertical of which is curved in the shape of lunate *sigma*.

S-96 95-547, II-5 R 451/42. Pl. 394

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel (Da-655). The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 0.4. Second half of the 5th century BC.

$\Pi\upsilon$ ()

Personal names beginning with $\Pi\upsilon$ - are recorded in Olbia only in the proxeny inscription to the Chersonesean citizen Pyrralion.¹²⁸⁸ Cf. also S-53.

S-97 88-130. Pl. 394

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed bowl. The graffito is on the outside, almost at the centre. Letter H 1.8. Second half of the 4th century BC.

Σ () or M()

Names beginning with these letters are well known in Olbia.¹²⁸⁹ Similar signs are also attested in other Olbian pottery inscriptions from Sector NGS.

¹²⁸¹ NO 87.

¹²⁸² Knipovič 1956, 153; NO 128.

¹²⁸³ See Knipovič 1956, 153; NO 128; Stolba 2005b, 91-92.

¹²⁸⁴ Knipovič 1956, 153; NO 65, 71; Stolba 2005b, 91-92.

¹²⁸⁵ Knipovič 1956, 153.

¹²⁸⁶ Male names beginning with E π are recorded in Olbian inscriptions (for example, Epikouros, Epikrates, Epichares). See Knipovič 1956, 152; NO, 127.

¹²⁸⁷ See lists of names in CIRB 892; LGPN II, 361-362; LGPN IIIB, 337-338.

¹²⁸⁸ NO 3.

¹²⁸⁹ See Knipovič 1956, 153; NO 128-129.

S-98 88-284. Pl. 394

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed bowl with a stamped decoration; very worn. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H a) 0.6; b) 1.2; 1.7. Second half of the 4th century BC.

a) Σ() or M()

b) Eι()

Names beginning with Eι- are not recorded in Olbia, but are known in other Greek cities.¹²⁹⁰ The middle horizontal bar of the *epsilon* is longer than the others and the curve of the *iota* seems to be casual.

S-99 97-58, VI-3 B 489/293. Pl. 394

Base of Attic black-glossed bowl. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 0.8; 1.3; 5.4. 4th century BC.

Σι()

Names beginning with Σι- are attested in Olbia.¹²⁹¹ A large cross or *chi* is carelessly scratched in the centre of the base. *Sigma* is similar to S-98.

S-100 89-814, IV-1 B 257/157. Pl. 394

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel (Da-645). The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 0.9. 4th century BC.

Φ()

Personal names beginning with Φ are quite common in Olbia.¹²⁹² This letter occurs on other bases as well as on one loom-weight from Sector NGS.

S-101 93-190, II-5 B 390/26. Pl. 395

Fragmented base of Attic black-glossed dish. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 4.6. 4th century BC.

X()

In Olbian inscriptions, names starting with X are quite rare.¹²⁹³ It cannot be ruled out that the sign might have served as a sort of mark (compare S-103).

S-102 96-399. Pl. 395

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel. The graffito is carelessly scratched on the outside. Letter H 1.4; 2.8. 4th century BC.

Xα()

The right hasta of the *alpha* is much longer than the left one. Perhaps a personal name beginning with Xα-; e.g. Charaxenos recorded in Olbian inscriptions.¹²⁹⁴

S-103 91-640, IV-1 B 315/141. Pl. 395

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel. The graffito is on the outside. Two almost similar combinations of letters are scratched one under another at a distance of 1.5 cm. At the break, there are traces of two strokes. Letter H 1.3; 1.7. 4th century BC.

a) Xλ() (ligature)

b) Xλ() (ligature)

Presumably, the beginning of a female or male name deriving from the epiclesis of Demeter Chloe.¹²⁹⁵ Other readings, especially in the second inscription, are also possible.

S-104 00-1699. Pl. 395

Fr. of Attic black-glossed plate with a stamped decoration. The graffito is on the outside of the base. Letter H 0.6; 0.3. 4th century BC.

ΥΣΕ or ΕΥΣ (ligature)

Other combinations of letters are also possible. The *epsilon* and *upsilon* are much larger than the *sigma*. One male name beginning with Ευσ- is recorded in an Olbian curse inscription on a lead platelet datable to the same period.¹²⁹⁶

IV. HOUSEHOLD AND NUMERICAL NOTATIONS

Into this subgroup, which is distinguished tentatively as there are no clear and well-preserved examples which can reliably be identified as household or numerical notations, fall a rather limited number of graffiti. Acrophonic numerical notations are unclear and very rare in Olbia, as compared, for example, to Chersonesos and its *chora*.¹²⁹⁷ They have been interpreted in various ways. Thus, a most interesting and completely preserved graffito found long ago has been considered both as a magic invocation and as an elaborate numerical record of a wine trader, containing abbreviated names of buyers and even types of wine.¹²⁹⁸ As with many of the above-mentioned graffiti, the interpretation of numeral notations, especially of those that are fragmented, can only be hypothetical.

S-105 97-498. Pl. 395

Rim fr. of a brown-glossed bowl of Olbian manufacture with traces of repair. The graffito is very carelessly scratched on the outside. Letter H 0.5-0.6. 3rd century BC.

χοι(?)

The last letter is unclear. Possibly, χοῖ[νίξ, choinix (1.1 l). If so, the inscription may be considered a numerical notation, and this bowl might have been used as a measuring vessel for dry goods. This could

¹²⁹⁰ Loukopoulou 1989, 254, 314, 354.

¹²⁹¹ *LGPN* II, 397-399; *LGPN* IIIB, 378-380.

¹²⁹² See Knipovič 1956, 153; *NO* 129.

¹²⁹³ Cf. Knipovič 1956, 153; *NO* 129.

¹²⁹⁴ *NO* 83.

¹²⁹⁵ Cf., for example, *LGPN* II, 479.

¹²⁹⁶ Knipovič 1956, no. 216.

¹²⁹⁷ Solomonik et al. 1978, 12, 13; Solomonik 1984, index.

¹²⁹⁸ Cf. Tolstoj 1953, no. 61; Jajlenko 1980b, no. 106.

explain its continuous use after repair. The individual *chi*, which can be understood as a capacity mark, an initial of a personal name, a magic sign or an abbreviation of the word $\chi\alpha\iota\rho\epsilon$, occurs on seven bases of brown-glossed vessels of the same period.¹²⁹⁹

S-106 93-588. Pl. 396

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed lamp (O-37). The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 0.5. 5th century BC.

A clearly scratched *epsilon* with a slanting stroke at the end of the upper horizontal; possibly, the numeral 5. As the stroke is not at the right end, one cannot rule out a name beginning with *Eu-* (monogram), where *upsilon* still preserves an early form in the shape of Latin V.¹³⁰⁰ Chronologically, this corresponds well with the *epsilon* with the equally long horizontal bars.

S-107 88-122. Pl. 396

Handle fr. of a Sinopean amphora. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 1.2. 3rd-2nd century BC.

IA or IA

An unclear stroke above, between the letters; possibly the numeral 11. In the case of $\text{ἱ}\alpha$ = Attic $\mu\iota\alpha$, it could stand for 1 or have some other meaning. The unclear cross-bar of the *alpha* also allows the interpretation of a *lambda*; in which case it could stand for 10 $\lambda\iota\rho\alpha$.¹³⁰¹

S-108 87-535, II-3 B 89/10. Pl. 396

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed plate. The graffito is on the outside. Clearly scratched *nu* with a lunate *sigma* or a semicircle to its right. Possibly, 50 staters or hemiobols. 4th century BC.

S-109 89-170, II-2 R 211. Pl. 397

Neck fr. of a large light-clay amphora. Signs scratched twice by a thin tool, one under another: *nu* with a slightly shortened right hasta and a horizontal stroke over it and *chi* with very short upper and long lower bars (or a broad *lambda*?). Letter H 1; 2.2. Possibly, a numerical notation: 80 $\chi\acute{o}\epsilon\varsigma$ or $\lambda\iota\rho\alpha$ ¹³⁰² or an abbreviation from $\pi\acute{\epsilon}\nu\tau\epsilon$.¹³⁰³ 3rd-2nd century BC.

S-110 95-548, II-5 R 451/42. Pl. 397

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel. An unclear graffito is on the outside. Letter H 0.5-0.6. Second half of the 5th century BC.

$\chi\lambda\iota()$

Perhaps an abbreviation of $\chi\lambda\iota[\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ – 1,000 – or $\chi\lambda\iota[\omicron]$. Such a large number could represent some magic numerical wishes of the vessel's owner.

S-111 04-378, III-1 B 734. Pl. 397

Body fr. of Attic black-glossed lekanis (Da-711). The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 0.6; 1.6. 4th century BC.

IX or XI

Can be read in different ways; perhaps 10 choinikes.

S-112 00-972. Pl. 397

Body fr. of a red-clay amphora. The graffito is on the outside; broken on all sides. H 6.2. 5th-3rd century BC.

Three long vertical lines scratched rather clearly. Between the first and the second, 14 horizontal strokes are carelessly scratched with a thinner tool; 13 similar strokes are incised between the second and the

third vertical lines. Above and to the right are several slanting strokes resembling a large *chi*. This unusual graffito can tentatively be interpreted as a numerical notation related to capacity or price (for example, respectively, 14 and 13 choinikes or chalkoi. Other interpretations are also possible.

S-113 92-1061. Pl. 397

Body fr. of a Chian amphora of the last quarter of the 6th century BC. The graffito is carelessly scratched on the outside. H of signs 2.5-2.7. Possibly, 10 $\chi[\acute{o}\epsilon\varsigma$.

S-114 99-281, B 571. Pl. 397

Sinker of a rectangular shape with a perforation made from body fr. of an amphora. Size 4 x 6.3. Letter H 1.4. Approximately 4th-3rd century BC. Below, in the left corner, N; possibly, numerical notation for 50. A similar letter is also recorded on another sinker (00-1659).

S-115 99-332. Pl. 397

Sinker of irregular hexagonal shape with a round perforation made from body fr. of a red-clay amphora. The graffito is below the perforation: a vertical stroke, above which, a less clear, not adjoining, horizontal line (which makes it impossible to decide whether this is a *tau* or an *iota*). Letter H 2; 2.7. Approximately the 4th-3rd century BC. Both numerical notation and abbreviation of a name or any word beginning with *Tu-* are possible.

S-116 99-148. Pl. 398

Sinker in the shape of an irregular semicircle with a round perforation made from body fr. of an amphora. The graffito is clearly scratched in capital letters below the perforation. Letter H 1.1; 1.5. 4th-3rd century BC.

XI or IX

Similarly to the previous examples, this graffito can be read in various ways. As it is executed on a sinker, this is likely to be a notation made by a manufacturer or trader to mark the thousandth item ($\chi\iota$).

S-117 89-422. Pl. 398

Fragmented sinker from body fr. of an amphora. The graffito is at the break; clearly scratched: Φ . H 2.5. Approximately 4th-3rd century BC. Possibly, numerical notation for 500, which, as on S-116, must have been made by a manufacturer or trader. In Sector NGS, far more fishing sinkers were found than in the other inhabited areas of Olbia.¹³⁰⁴ It cannot be ruled out that the initials of manufacturers or owners could be scratched on them as well.

S-118 92-9. Pl. 398

Body fr. of a red-clay jug. Letter H 1.8. 4th century BC. At the right edge of the sherd, an *epsilon* is preserved, the lower horizontal of which is missing. Possibly, this is an indication of the vessel's content, which was often made on amphoras, most likely olive oil ($\epsilon\lambda\alpha\iota\omicron\nu$).

S-119 95-386, Stove 440

Body fr. of a red-clay amphora. The graffito is carelessly scratched on the outside; broken at both sides. H of signs 1; 3.3-3.5. Approximately 4th century BC. A *mu* or a *lambda* ligated with an *epsilon* and a small stroke above. Probably an indication of the amphora's content (olive oil).

¹²⁹⁹ Cf., for instance, Jajlenko 1982, 154.

¹³⁰⁰ Cf. Tolstoj 1953, no. 56; Jajlenko 1980b, no. 116.

¹³⁰¹ Cf. Lang 1976, index verb.

¹³⁰² Cf. Lang 1976, index verb.

¹³⁰³ Cf. Tolstoj 1953, no. 13.

¹³⁰⁴ Lejpunskaja 2005, 177.

S-120 95-506, V Earth-dwelling 445/240. Pl. 398

Fr. of Attic black-glossed dish of the 5th century BC. The graffito is unclearly incised by a very thin tool on the outside. H of signs 2.8; 4.9.

Approximately 5th century BC. At the left edge, a tall *iota* and short *upsilon* and, at the right edge, a large *chi* with a small stroke beside it.

V. VARIA

This subgroup comprises the remains of words, letters and drawings as well as some individual letters and unclear signs. Only the best-preserved graffiti are included in the catalogue below in order to illustrate the material. As a rule, it is impossible to make interpretations or there are many different possibilities. For this reason, most of them are presented here without comment.

S-121 87-473. Pl. 398

Body fr. of Attic black-glossed skyphos. The graffito is on the outside; the end is missing. Letter H 0.7-0.8. 4th century BC. A word beginning with Σ. The upper part of the *sigma* is worn off and that of an assumed *omicron* or *theta* is missing; a slanting stroke from the following letter is discernible.

S-122 89-299. Pl. 399

Base fr. of a greyware vessel. The graffito is on the outside at the edge. Letter H 2.5; 2.1. 4th-3rd century BC.

KM

S-123 92-1. Pl. 399

Fragmented neck of a Rhodian light-clay lagynos. The graffito is on the shoulders; slightly damaged below. It consists of two individual letters at a distance of 2.1 cm from one another: possibly *rho* and round *theta* with a vertical stroke inside. H of the preserved letter: 1. Second half of the 3rd century BC.

S-124 94-509, IV-2 B 302/186. Pl. 399

Body fr. of a red-clay amphora. The graffito is on the outside at the left edge of the sherd. A drawing or a large *chi* with a large *iota* or accidental stroke adjoining it below. H 6.5. Approximately 4th-3rd century BC.

S-125 94-585, VI-2 B 395a/261. Pl. 399

Rim fr. of a brown-glossed plate (Da-410). The graffito is in large letters on the outside; the beginning is missing. Letter H 2; 1. Late 2nd-early 1st century BC.

]Λ(M)ΥΞ

Perhaps from μύζων (presumably, mullet or eel) or an abbreviation of the name Polyxenos.

S-126 99-189. Pl. 400

Body fr. of a greyware vessel. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 1.7; 2.7. 5th to second third of the 4th century BC.

MΠ

A broad *mu* and *pi* with shortened right hasta are characteristic of the inscriptions of the Classical period.

S-127 99-365. Pl. 400

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed krater. On the outside, randomly placed individual letters broken on both sides. Among them, three clear *iotas*, two *xies*, an *eta*, an *epsilon* and probably an *upsilon* are discernible. Letter H 0.3; 0.6; 0.9. The shape of *xi* with a vertical bar, *epsilon* with four long, slanting horizontals and a narrow *eta* are characteristic of late Archaic inscriptions. Only the shape of *upsilon*, with an elongated vertical, does not conform to this period. The graffito was scratched while the vessel was still complete. Presumably 5th century BC.

S-128 99-613, VI R 591/241. Pl. 400

Body fr. of Attic black-glossed vessel with a repair hole. The inscription was executed by a thin tool, in two lines, above and below the hole; the beginning and the end are missing. Letter H 0.9; 0.7. First half of the 5th century BC.

Σ(?)PA

ΠΕ

At the left edge, in the first line, are possibly remains of a carelessly scratched *sigma*. The *rho*, with a wide and angular semicircle almost touching with its lower end the base of the vertical, is characteristic of late Archaic inscriptions. Taking into account the position of the graffito on the vessel, it could have been sacral or sympoasiastic.

S-129 00-156. Pl. 400

Rim fr. of greyware jug. The graffito is on the outside. Letter H 1.2. Second half of the 3rd century BC (according to letter shape). One rather clearly scratched letter may be an *alpha*.

S-130 00-1138 + 00-1167. Pl. 400

Two body frs. of Attic black-glossed vessel. The graffito is carelessly scratched on the outside; damaged at both sides and in the middle of the mended sherd. Letter H 0.5; 0.7; 0.4. First half of the 5th century BC.

]ΗΙΙΙ[...]ΩΤ[

Two letters of the second word belong probably to the epiclesis Σ]ωτ[ήρ or Σ]ώτ[ερα. In the letter *pi*, as a result of a correction, the horizontal bar and the right vertical bar appear as double lines.

S-131 01-344. Pl. 400

Base of Attic black-glossed kylix with a stemmed toe. The graffito is underneath. H 1.2. Approximately 5th century BC. Letters (perhaps an *upsilon* and an *iota*) in ligature; clearly scratched.

S-132 01-723, R 615. Pl. 400

Base fr. of Attic black-glossed kylix. The graffito is on the outside; broken on both sides. Letter H 1.5; 1.7. 5th century BC. A *gamma* with an elongated vertical and a *nu* are preserved.

S-133 01-389. Pl. 401

Base fr. of a brown-clay dish. The graffito is on the outside. H 2.1. 3rd century BC. Large sign resembling a *psi* or an *upsilon* and an *iota* in ligature.

S-134 02-252. Pl. 401

Rim fr. of Attic black-glossed bowl of the second half of the 4th century BC. The graffito is carelessly scratched on the outside. Letter H 1.9. Approximately 4th century BC. Probably hastily executed ΦΙ. Taking into account that the graffito is placed on the rim, one may assume a dedication to Apollo Delphinios – Δελ]φι[νίωι – or the remains of a theophoric name. The elongated circle in the first letter is, however,

not closed, being adjoined above with an *iota*, which also allows for a ligature, for example IIIA.

S-135 02-955. Pl. 401

Base fr. of a brown-glossed dish. The graffito is on the outside. H of signs 2.8; 3.4. 3rd century BC. Preserved signs resemble carelessly executed *alphas* connected with one long horizontal bar or adjoining *lambdas*.

