

The Dating of the Monumental Building U6 at Panskoe I

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This case study presents our attempts to date a building complex at the site of Panskoe I in north-western Crimea (Fig. 1).¹

The building was excavated by a team headed by Alexander Ščeglov, as part of the impressive research programme *Archaeological Investigations in North-Western Crimea*, which at the time of its initiation in 1959 set a whole new standard in landscape archaeology.

U6 (Fig. 2) is a building on a square plan (c. 34.5 × 34.5 m), covering c. 1190 m². The central part consists of a large open courtyard with a well hewn out of the rock in the centre. The only entrance to the building is a gate in the middle of its south-western side, leading directly into the courtyard. The courtyard is surrounded by rooms on all four sides: originally one row of rooms, later a second row of rooms was added on the south-western and south-eastern sides. There was a second storey on all four sides. The layout of the rooms suggests that the building housed a number of families or groups of people, and the fact that the skeletons of a young woman and a child were found in the well seems to confirm that women and children also lived here. Apart from rooms used for habitation, there were storerooms for grain and oil, for instance room 3 and the rooms above rooms 3 and 13. A common dining hall seems to have been situated above room 5. The building was destroyed by a fire that resulted in the collapse of the whole upper floor, but otherwise the building and its contents were almost completely intact at the time of excavation. Thus, for instance in room 12, which functioned as a house sanctuary, the contents were mainly found *in situ*.

The fire was undoubtedly provoked by an attack by Scythian nomads, the evidence for this – apart from the destruction itself – being that most of the arrowheads were found outside the building on the north-eastern side near the wall, or in the wall itself, or in the courtyard, and all with their points directed towards the west, south-west or south, suggesting that the arrows were shot from the north-east.² Bones from horses were found in the well in the middle of the courtyard, seemingly debris from a meal probably celebrated by the attackers after the destruction (since the debris would have ruined the water of the well), and this also suggests that the enemy were Scythians, horseflesh being a favourite diet of these nomads.³

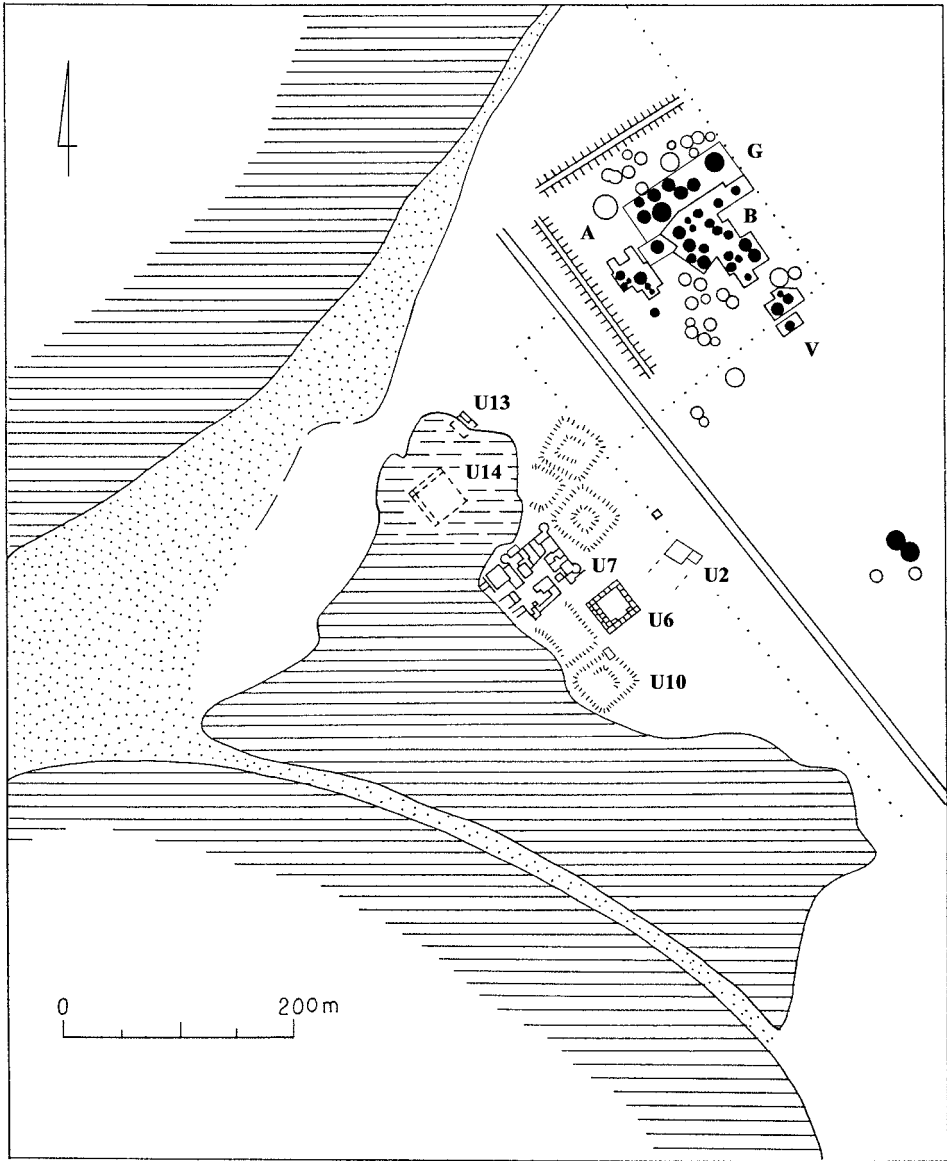


Fig. 1. The settlement and necropolis of Panskoe I (plan of excavations 1969-1992).

The stratigraphy clearly shows that U6 was erected on virgin soil, with no traces of earlier building activities.⁴

When did the destruction take place and when was the building erected? These are, of course, questions of primary importance. In our publication we have reached the conclusion that it was built sometime during the decade c. 320-310, and destroyed around 270 BC.⁵

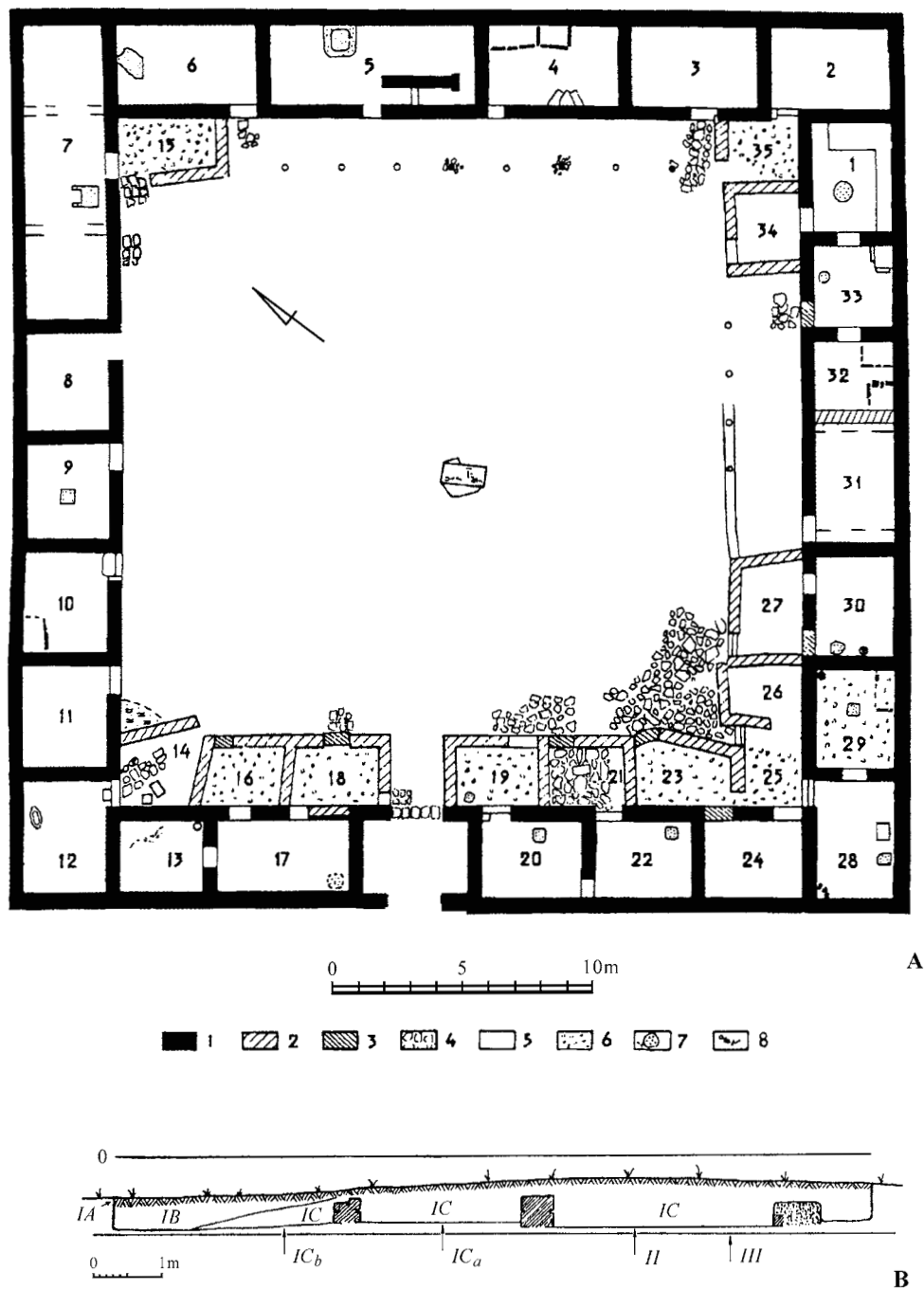


Fig. 2. Plan of U6.

Among the many groups of material found in the building the following are obviously the most important in determining chronology:⁶

- 1) Amphora stamps (Sinope, Chersonesos, Herakleia, Amastris⁷ and Thasos)
- 2) Chersonesean bronze coins
- 3) Attic fine ware pottery

If we look first at the date suggested for the destruction, this is based on the evidence of the amphora stamps and fixed at c. 270 BC. 142 amphora stamps were recorded from U6. They are distributed as follows:

Chesonesos	100
Sinope	15
Amastris	2
Herakleia	16
Thasos	1
Unidentified centres	8

They include 12 stamps made with dies not previously known. Among the stamps the most important for absolute dating are the 15 Sinopean (See Fig. 3) and the single Thasian (Fig. 4), simply because at present it seems that the chronologies of these two production centres are the most reliable of those represented in the building. The absolute chronology of Grakov's classification of the amphora stamps of Sinope has been much disputed. The publication of the stamps from U6 is the work of Vladimir Kac, according to whom there is now a growing consensus that the practice of stamping began in Sinope in the 370s-360s and he considers this first phase (with c. 20 known magistrates) to have lasted into the 340s.⁸ The number of recorded magistrates sets the limits for the next two groups. At present about 30 *astynomoi* have been recorded in each group, which suggests that Group II starts in the 340s and continues into the beginning of the last decade of the 4th century, whereas Group III should cover the end of the 4th century and the first two decades of the 3rd century BC. This indicates that the late 280s or the early 270's is the period when the *astynomoi* of Group IV begin. Three quarters of the Sinope stamps from U6 belong to Group III, i.e. the first two decades of the third century; the *astynomoi* mentioned on these stamps seem to belong late in Group III, which suggests that the amphoras in U6 are mainly concentrated in the second half of the 280s.

The names are: Theudorides (Ae 102), Theupeithes (Ae 103), Mikrios (Ae 105), Mnesikles (Ae 106-111= 6 pieces) and Pythokles (Ae 112).⁹ One stamp with the *astynomos* Histiaios (Ae 104) (son of Demetrios – the stamp is very poorly preserved) is from the beginning of Group IV, which, as I have already mentioned, is supposed to start in the late 280s or early 270s. A single stamp



Ae 103



Ae 105



Ae 106



Ae 107



Ae 108



Ae 110



Ae 111



Ae 112



Ae 114

Fig. 3. Sinopean amphora stamps.



Fig. 4. Thasian amphora stamp with the name of Bion (I).

with the name of Hephaistios belongs to Grakov's Group I, and Kac has dated it to the middle of the 4th century – clearly from a piece reused in U6, as is also the case with some fine ware pottery (see below).

The single stamp of a Thasian amphora carries the name of Bion (Ae 133) (Fig. 4). According to Debidour's classification, Bion I was in office in the first quarter of the 3rd century BC.

Fig. 5 shows a table of the Chersonesean amphora stamps. For this early period in the stamping of the amphoras of this city, Kac's dates rely on a typological development of the stamps combined with fixed points consisting of a number of closed complexes in Chersonesos itself and at various sites in its *chora*. The beginning of the practice of stamping amphoras in Chersonesos has been established by Kac through a combination with the chronology of Thasian stamps.¹⁰

The date of the erection of the building is based on (1) Chersonesean stamps of Kac's Group IA, (2) coins, and (3) the date of a significant amount of the imported black-glazed pottery.

Nine copper coins were found in U6, and have been published by Anna Gilevič.¹¹ All nine were minted in Chersonesos. This modest number of coins is not uncommon on rural sites in the *chorai* of the Greek cities of the northern Black Sea coast. Thus, Chersonesean silver coins are extremely rare in the *chora*; Gilevič mentions a single example from South-Donuzlav in the north-western Crimea, and at least one (possibly 5-6) from the Novo-Fedorovka hoard (south of the town of Saki). To these can be added a single specimen from Čhaika.¹²

In contrast to the other buildings at Panskoe I – and other rural settlements in the *chora* of Chersonesos – U6 revealed no coins of Kerkinitis or Pantikapaion. In this respect the coins from U6 correspond to the finds from the "home" *chora* on the Herakleian Peninsula during the last third of the 4th – the first third of the 3rd century BC.¹³

Three coins were found under the floors of rooms 22 and 24, the others directly on the floor (room 12) or lying together and mixed with accumulations of broken pottery on the surface of the courtyard (see Fig. 6). Thus – apart from

Chroological Groups	Chronological Limits	Magistrates	Number of Stamps
1A	325-315 BC	<i>Bathyllos</i>	14
		<i>Eua()</i>	15
		<i>Eukleidas</i>	2
		<i>Kraton</i>	3
		<i>Sopolis</i>	1
		Total	35
1B	315-300 BC	<i>Alexandros</i>	1
		<i>Apollonios</i>	17
		<i>Herakleios</i>	1
		<i>Xanthos</i>	7
		<i>Sokritos</i>	4
		Total	21
1B	300-285 BC	<i>Dioskouridas</i>	20
		<i>Herodotos</i>	1
		Total	21
2A	285-272 BC	<i>Apollas Choreiou</i>	1
		<i>Kotytion</i>	1
		<i>Aristonos</i>	
		<i>Prytanis</i>	1
		<i>Aristonos</i>	
		Total	3
		Total	89

Fig. 5. Magistrate stamps of Chersonesos.

the three coins under the floors of rooms 22 and 24 (nos. 5, 7-8) – they must all have been in circulation at the time of the destruction. No. 7, found under the floor of room 22 is not worn (thus if we had a precise dating of this type, it would be valuable for the dating of the erection of the building), whereas no. 1, found on the floor of the sanctuary (room 12), and showing a quadriga on the obverse and on the reverse a kneeling warrior, is very worn.

The nine coins are poorly preserved, but it has been possible to identify the type of all of them. They belong to issues from different periods, covering, according to Gilevič, the time from about the middle of the 4th century to the beginning of the 3rd century.

Nos. 6-9 are of the type with Parthenos striking down a hind, with a spear in her left hand and in her right a bow, and on the reverse a butting bull. The magistrate's name on no. 6 is ΕΥΔΡΟΜΟΣ, and on 7-9 it is ΚΛΕΜΥΤΑΔΑΣ. The dating of this series has changed over the years. Gilevič has suggested the first half of the third century; later researchers have suggested c. 300-280 BC, whereas most recently, V.F. Stolba has pushed this type (nos. 6-9) back into the late 4th century BC.¹⁴

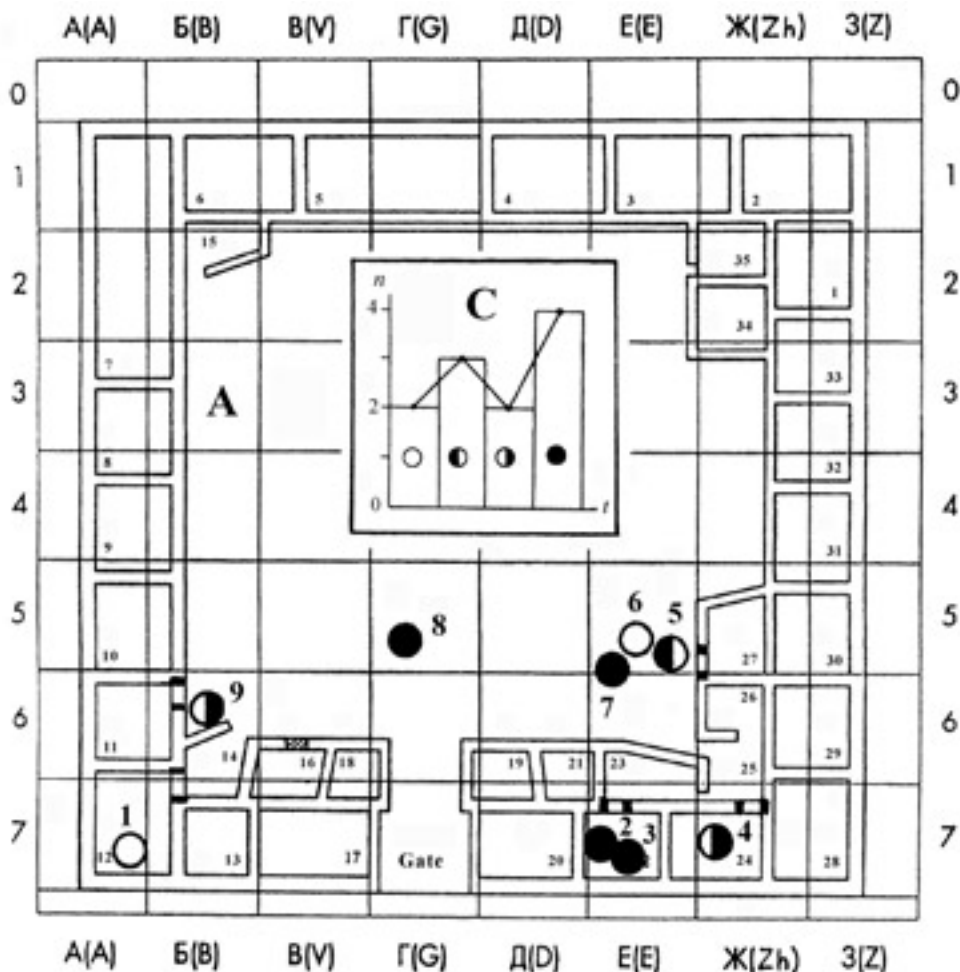


Fig. 6. Coin finds in U6.

The fine ware pottery, i.e. mainly black-glazed ware, has provided yet another dating criteria. Here, an issue of central importance is where the individual pieces were produced, in Athens or in other centres. In our catalogue¹⁵ we have classified as Attic only pieces in which the clay conforms to Rotroff's description of the clay used for Attic fine pottery during the Hellenistic period, including the varieties of Munsell colours enumerated by her.¹⁶ As to the origins of a substantial number of the catalogued items, we have refrained from suggesting production centres, since such suggestions could only be hypothetical and would probably only cause further confusion.

The three main shapes are:

Drinking vessels (the kantharos being the most common)

Bowls (mainly bowls with out-turned rim and echinus bowls)

Plates (plates with rolled rim and fish-plates)

Other shapes are comparatively rare. All the kantharoi (see Figs. 7-8 for examples) belong to Rotroff's type "classical kantharos",¹⁷ and all have a plain rim. There are two versions: with plain bowl and with ribbed bowl. Some of those with ribbed bowl are decorated on the neck with garlands of ivy or olive.

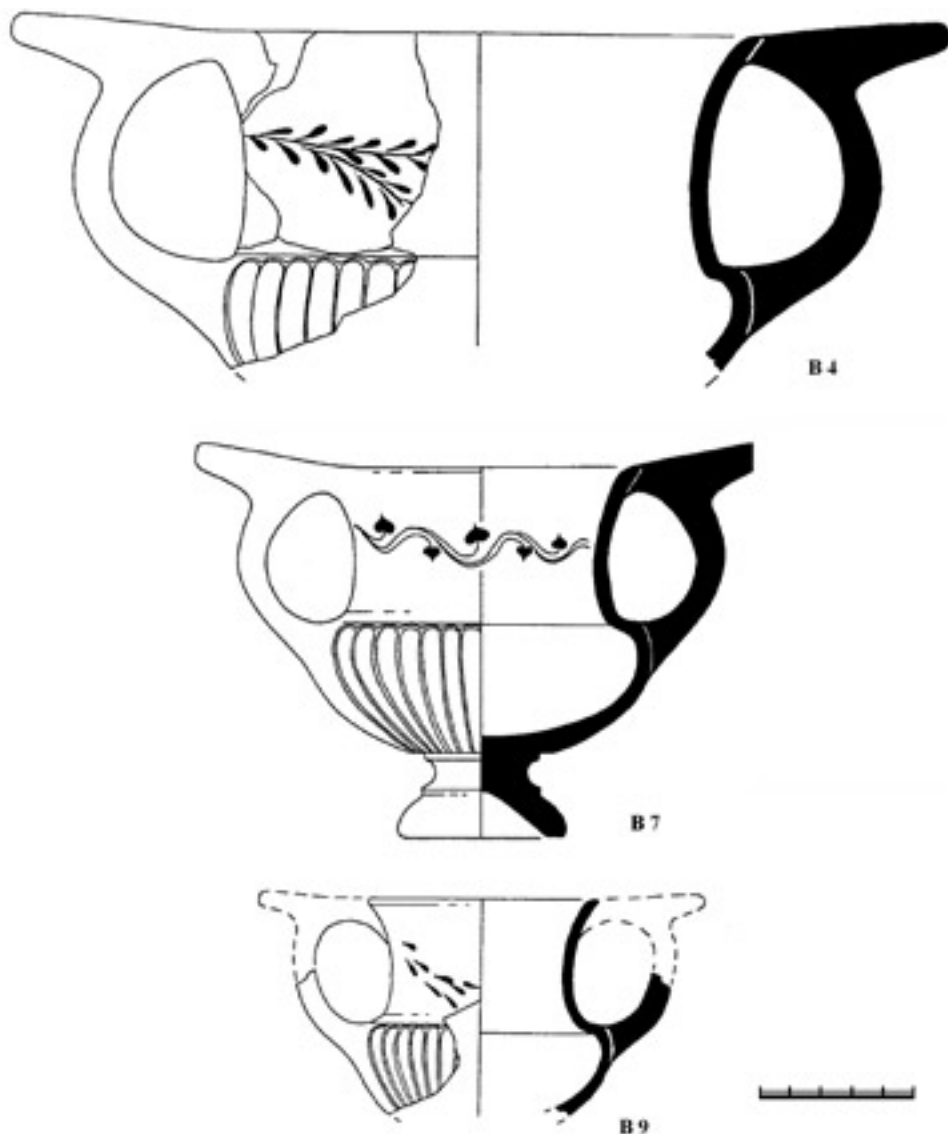


Fig. 7. Black-glazed kantharoi with ribbed bowls from U6.

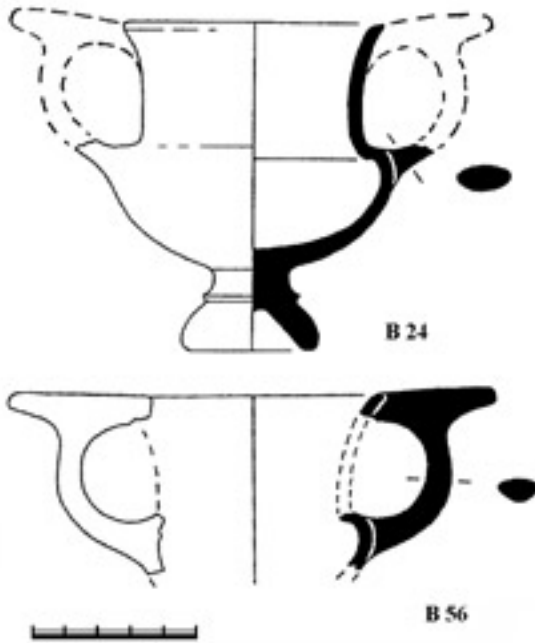


Fig. 8. Black-glazed kantharoi with plain bowls from U6.

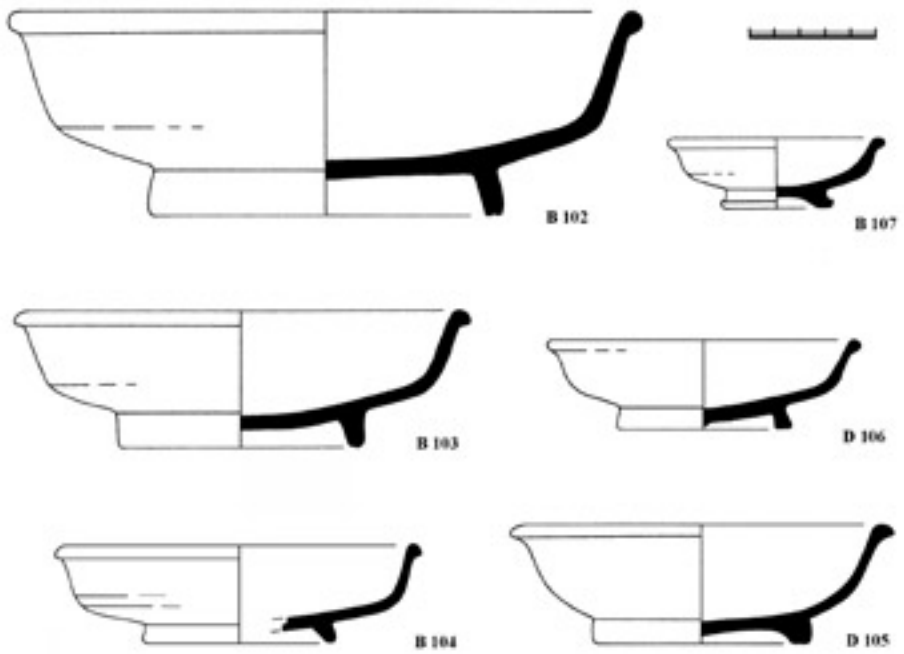


Fig. 9. Black-glazed bowls with out-turned rims from U6.

As to the dating of these kantharoi, we have relied on the chronology put forward by Rotroff for the Athenian Agora. This suggests that they cover the last quarter of the 4th century and possibly continue into the early third century with a cluster in the period 320-310.

The bowls follow the pattern seen in Athens, the bowl with out-turned rim being far more common than the echinus bowl – an indication, perhaps, that the import of black-glazed is mainly Attic. The bowls with out-turned rims (see Fig. 9) date in the period 325-290, possibly with the main cluster in 300-290 when compared with the material from the Athenian agora. Only one specimen has a stamped decoration inside the bowl, and its shape also suggests that it is probably the earliest of this type of bowl from the building.¹⁸

The plates include plates with rolled rim and fish-plates (see Fig. 10), of which the fish-plate seems to have been the most popular – in contrast to the Athenian agora. The plate with rolled rim very rarely has a stamped decoration inside, the normal being only a circle of rouletting. When compared

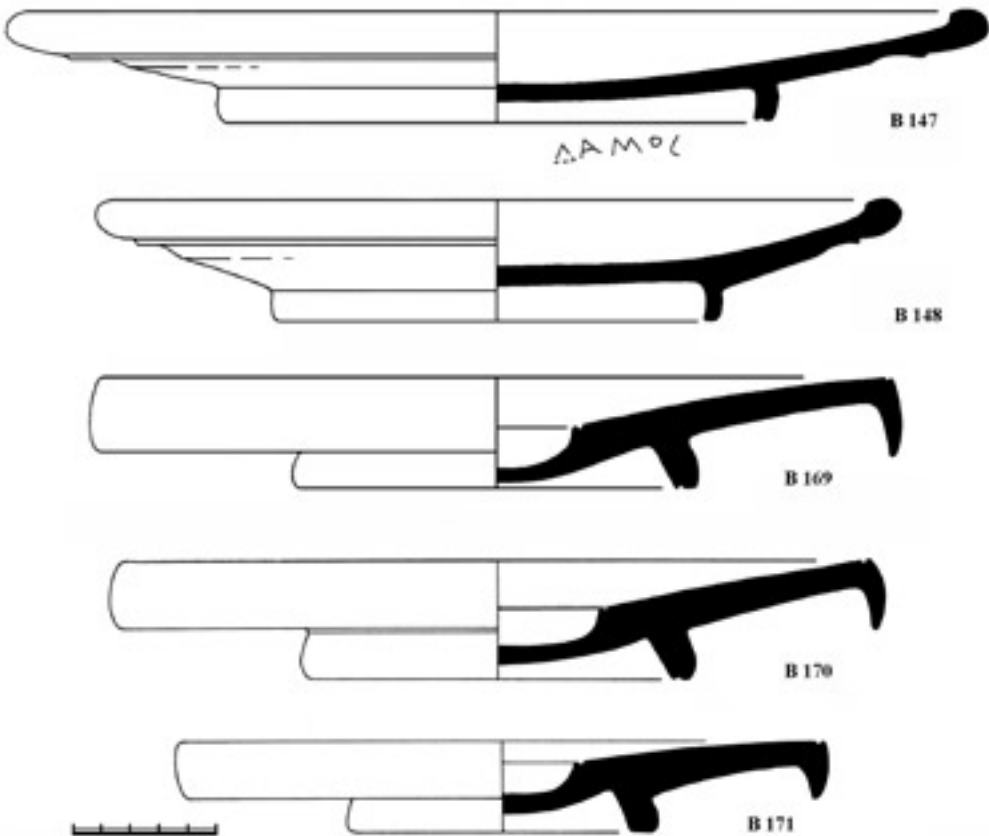


Fig. 10. Plates with rolled rim and fish-plates from U6.



Fig. 11. Upper part of Attic red-figure askos close to the Group of the Cambridge Askos.



Fig. 12. Cup-skyphos with a dedication to Sabazios.

with material from the Athenian agora, the rolled rim plates belong mainly in the last quarter of the 4th century, whereas the fish-plates seem instead to belong to the decade 300-290 BC.

None of the pieces of the fine ware – apart from a fragment of a Megarian bowl (see below) – necessarily supports a destruction date as late as 270 BC. Possibly the fact that a very large amount of the pottery has been repaired may indicate that it had actually been in use for some time before the destruction. Apparently no substantial new supplies of such pottery arrived at the building in the period immediately before the destruction.¹⁹

On the other hand, there are pieces, which are definitely earlier than 320 BC. First and foremost a couple of sherds of red-figure pottery. A small fragment, probably of a stemless cup showing the head and shoulder of a satyr, is probably by the Q-painter and to be dated in the early 4th century. The upper part of an askos (Fig. 11) decorated with two pairs of female heads (one pair with sakkoi, one with Amazon headdress) is very close to the Group of the Cambridge Askos and may perhaps date as late as 320 BC.²⁰ However, the fact that only this fragment was found in U6 suggests that the piece was already broken by the time the building was erected and that it was used here for secondary purposes – as a lid or simply as a kind of decoration.

Another important piece is the Sabazios cup (Fig. 12), a type, which on the Athenian agora has been dated by Sparkes and Talcott to around 380 BC.²¹ However, in a Milesian context it has been dated by Pfrommer²² as definitely



Fig. 13. Fragments of a Megarian bowl from U6.

later than 380; he proposes a date around 375-350, and in Corinth the type has been found in a grave in the North Cemetery together with an obol possibly to be dated 338-315. The type is not represented among the Hellenistic tableware from the agora published by Rotroff, which strongly suggests that the type had gone out of use in Athens by the beginning of the Hellenistic period. If the piece from U6 is of Attic origin, the fact that it was still in use at the time of the destruction of the building can perhaps be explained by its being a ritual vessel.

One piece of pottery seems to contradict a destruction date around 270, i.e. fragments of a single Megarian bowl²³ of the Ionian type (Fig. 13) dating from the 2nd century BC. This, however, was found in the turf layer (horizon IA), and should in all probability rather be connected with similar finds in the building complex U2, where sherds of Megarian bowls have been recorded in at least two rooms (18 and 11, the uppermost layer). Together, these sherds suggest that, in contrast to what has often been stated, Panskoe I was not left completely uninhabited after the destruction, but habitation seems to have been on a very small scale, possibly only a couple of families. Further excavations may be able to illuminate this late phase.

Notes

- 1 See Hannestad, Stolba & Ščeglov 2002.
- 2 Rogov 2002, 258.
- 3 Kasparov 2002, 332.
- 4 See Ščeglov 2002b, 36.
- 5 See Hannestad, Stolba & Ščeglov 2002a.
- 6 See Lawall this volume for the problems of the interdependency of chronologies.
- 7 For the so-called Amastrian amphoras and their dating, see now Stolba 2003.

- 8 See Kac, Monachov, Stolba & Ščeglov 2002. Cf. Fedoseev 1994, 189; 1999, 29-30. Conovici 1989 and this volume argues for a lower dating of the beginning of the stamping practice.
 - 9 The numbers in brackets refer to the numbers in the catalogue Kac, Monachov, Stolba & Ščeglov 2002.
 - 10 See the contribution by V.F. Stolba in this volume.
 - 11 See Gilevič 2002.
 - 12 Stolba & Golencov 2000, 276.
 - 13 See Ščeglov 1994, 42-43; Turovskij 1998, 225-227.
 - 14 Stolba 1989, 63, 67.
 - 15 Hannestad, Stolba & Hastrup 2002.
 - 16 In some cases we have suggested an Attic origin, even if the colour of the clay deviates somewhat from those specified by Rotroff. The reason for this is that, due to the destruction of the building by fire, quite a lot of the pottery underwent a kind of second firing, changing the original colour of the clay.
 - 17 Rotroff 1997b, 83 ff.
 - 18 Hannestad, Stolba & Hastrup 2002, no. B 102.
 - 19 This conclusion depends, of course, on the destruction date suggested by the amphora stamps (and in the end on the reliability of the stamp chronologies).
 - 20 The opinion of A.V. Bujskich and V.M. Zubar (2003, 142) that this type of Attic red-figure cannot be dated later than the middle of the 4th century BC strongly disagrees with the opinion of for instance J. Boardman (1989, 190).
 - 21 Sparkes & Talcott 1970, no. 608.
 - 22 Pfrommer 1985, 55, no. 24.
 - 23 Hannestad, Stolba & Hastrup 2002, no. B 144.
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