**Introduction**

Since 2005 the University of Macerata and the Archaeological Institute of Tirana have cooperated in the first archaeological excavations of the Roman settlement of Hadrianopolis (fig. 1), near the modern village of Sofratikë. The town, in northern Epirus, lies in the broadest section of the valley of the river Drin, in Chaonia.

Recent investigations have shown that the Roman town developed over a previous settlement. The earliest occupation of the site, according to the available data – a fragment of painted architectural cornice and sherds of black slip pottery are considered the main index of human presence – dates to the 4th century BC.

Some tiles with the stamp ΔH (fig. 2), dating from the last phase of Hellenistic period, moreover, prove the monumental development of the settlement (fig. 3), shown both by the construction of public buildings and by the find of abundant pottery and materials from the excavation. This development is certainly linked with the geographic location of the site, which lies along a secondary byway of the Via Egnatia, going from Apollonia to Nikopolis.

The main phase of development of Hadrianopolis dates to Hadrianic time, as the toponym, sign of a (re)foundation, suggests. (R. P.)

**The Black Slip Pottery**

As for the more ancient phase of the site, starting from the 4th century BC, the black slip pottery, attested in a very small quantity in Sofratikë, seems to show a link with Attica: among the evidence found, a small group of scant fragments, with reddish-pink clay, and glossy and thick black slip, might be considered as an Attic production.  

In particular, a very small bowl with incurved rim, ascribed to the type of the deep Echinus Bowl of the Athenian Agora, belongs to this cluster of evidence. This instance (fig. 4,1), is not a miniature but seems to be very small (diam. 5.5 cm) to have had an effective use and reflects the shape of larger vases. It was perhaps a votive object.  

A second group of evidence belongs to a more advanced phase, dating between the end of the 4th and the 3rd century BC. The features of the grey/brown clay, the black-brown slip and the decorations show close similarity to some regional productions, especially in Apollonia: a fragmentary kantharos with vegetal decorations is a clear example. The kantharos is of grey-brown clay and brown glossy slip; a groove, under the rim, outlines the decorative field with incised branches and occasional traces of painted white leaves, the wall is decorated with thin vertical ribs (fig. 4,2, 5). The type of decoration recalls the features of the so-called “West Slope” technique and in the area we are investigating is attested on different vase

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1. **PERNA/ÇONDI 2012.**
2. Only petrographic analyses of clay will determine the origin of the black slip ware of characteristic Attic features, such as the reddish-pink clay without impurities and very fine, glossy, thick quality slip, and, having in several instances a metallic texture. However, it should be pointed out that from the first half of the 4th century BC imitations of Attic black-glazed ware were attested in the north-eastern Mediterranean. Research progress and archaeometric analysis, e.g. on Macedonian regional pottery, help in recognizing black-glazed ware, previously considered as genuinely Attic, as local imitations of Attic pottery. As for the Attic imitations in Macedonia as early as the end of the 4th century BC, see KALLINI 2012, 163–167.

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[3] Rotroff 1997, 161–162 fig. 64; 1026. The reserved band marking the junction of the ring foot and the body in this item is a typical feature of the more ancient version of the shallow Echinus bowl of the Athenian Agora, very common in the 4th century BC (Rotroff 1997, 161).

[4] It imitates closely the canonical shape of the deep echinus bowl (Rotroff 1997 figs. 63–64; 993–1033).

[5] As S. I. Rotroff underlines, “The distinction between these two categories (that is between the canonical and the miniaturistic shape, A/N.) is somewhat abitrary [...]” (Rotroff 1997, 203).


[7] The technique appears in Attica at the end of the 4th–first quarter of the 3rd century BC: it is a new way of decorating the black slip vases, probably due to foreign models, as the Italian Gnathia ware (S. I. Rotroff, Attic West Slope Vase Painting, Hesperia 60, 1991, 59–102 pls. 14–46; in 1997, 15). Its main features are the application of added diluted clay and white colour and incision on the black slip surface of the pots to render decorative themes. The latter usually includes ivy, olive and myrtle garlands, floral designs and geometric patterns, although they differ from region to region and between workshops, which imitate Attic prototypes (see KALLINI 2012, 165).
shapes in northern Epirus, in Macedonia and in Illyria. A fragment with lattice over-painted in black (fig. 6)\(^\text{12}\), very frequent namely on lekythoi and aryballoi, a neck of a lekythos (fig. 4,3) and, finally, some fragments with a reserved band\(^\text{13}\) (fig. 7) and over-painted details\(^\text{14}\) are also close to regional productions of Apollonia (fig. 8). From the second half of the 4th century BC Apollonia and Durrës became the main centres of production and redistribution of local goods: their abundant productions invaded regional markets, reaching the smaller urban and rural centres of the territory through the main roads of communications, i.e. the valley of the Vjosa and Drinos rivers.\(^\text{15}\) The distribution map of these goods encompasses the village in Sofratikë too.

The largest amount of black slip pottery belongs to a third group, which consists of fragments of grey-beige clay and very thin and diluted slip. They seem to be of lower quality, having close comparisons with other regional productions, such as that from Phoinike. This group includes skyphoi of Attic type with horizontal handles\(^\text{16}\) (fig. 4,4), kantharoi\(^\text{17}\) (fig. 4,5) and saltcellars\(^\text{18}\) (fig. 4,6–8), which represent important markers for their large diffusion in regional contexts.

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\(^{9}\) I. Άνδρευ, Κεραμική από το νεκροταφείο Δουρο της Ιωαννίνων. Ελληνιστική κεραμική 2009, 135 figs. 25–26; Α. Αγγελη, Ελληνιστική κεραμική από το θυσιαστήριο της Αμφικόριας (Ελληνιστική κεραμική 2009) 168 fig. 11; Γ. Πλιακίου, Δύο ελληνιστικοί τάφοι στο λεκανοπέδιο των Ιωαννίνων. Ελληνιστική κεραμική 2009, 147 fig. 2.

\(^{10}\) Κ. Τζανακάκη, Ποτηρική παραγωγή στην Μακεδονία κατά τα τελευταία 3ο και 2ο αιώνες π.Χ. Από την επίδραση της Αθηναϊκής Κεραμεικής στην αισθητική των τοπικών δημιουργιών. Στην παραγωγή κεραμικών στην Μακεδονία του 3ου και 2ου αιώνα π.Χ., από την επίδραση της Αθηναϊκής Κεραμεικής στα τοπικά δημιουργικά. Αθήνα 2012, 133–136.

\(^{11}\) For comparisons in Apollonia: Bereti et al. 2007 fig. 65–4, 133–136.

\(^{12}\) For comparisons in Apollonia: Bereti et al. 2007, 135 fig. 58,45–46.

\(^{13}\) For comparisons in Apollonia: Bereti et al. 2007 fig. 65,2.

\(^{14}\) For comparisons in Apollonia: Bereti et al. 2007, 133–135 fig. 37,35–36.

\(^{15}\) For comparisons in Apollonia: Bereti et al. 2007 fig. 65,4–5.

\(^{16}\) rotroff 1997, 94 fig. 12 nn. 150–154.

\(^{17}\) ibid. 102–103, 110 fig. 219–229.

\(^{18}\) ibid. 167, fig. 65,1075–1089. See also: Hayes 2003, 110 fig. 69; 71 for a Corinthian instance (3rd century BC) from the necropolis of Durrës, and Hayes 2003, 110–112 for later series of local products (mid-end of the 3rd century BC).
Worthy of mention are the plates characterized by a flaring rim with a groove in the upper part\(^\text{19}\) (fig. 4,9), those with upturned rim, on which the Italian inspiration is more evident\(^\text{20}\) (fig. 4,10), and a fragment of rim belonging to the type of the handleless *lekane* of the Agori\(^\text{21}\) (fig. 4,11).

It is likely that, between 3rd and 2nd century BC, a local production from the nearest sites in the Drinos valley reached the village of Sofratikë; although at the moment it is not possible to be more precise in the localization of this centre it is reasonable to look at Phoinike and Antigonea, the two hegemonic centres of the Bistrița and of the Drinos valley respectively. In Phoinike a local production is assumed\(^\text{22}\), however the role of Antigonea should not be discounted: due to its political and economical relevance it is highly plausible that the city and the territory around it were self-sufficient productively. The location and proximity of Sofratikë might suggest that the village was easily reached by products and goods from Antigonea.

A survey of the available evidence confirms the existence of different groups of materials, which leads to the conclusion that different ways and means of contact existed, both with the eastern Mediterranean area and Attica – either via Apollonia or directly – and with the territory of northern Epirus and the Greek colonies in the 4th–beginning of 3rd century BC and, perhaps, with the nearest territory nearby the modern village of Sofratikë in the 3rd–2nd centuries BC. Only future investigations and archaeometric analysis of a selected sample of materials – in part already in progress –, will define better the productive and economic system of northern Epirus and its commercial connections with external areas. (S.C.)

The Thin Walled Pottery

In the early imperial period the presence of Thin Walled Pottery and Italian Red Slip Ware documents the arrival in Sofratikë and in the surrounding territory of imports from Italy and, in particular, the existence of a commercial link with the north and the centre of the Peninsula\(^\text{23}\).

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\(^{19}\) This shape is similar to the late-Hellenistic type of the rilled-rim plate of the Athenian Agora (Rotroff 1997, 152 fig. 55 and fig. 56, 820 in part.). Plates with similar features were locally produced in Phoinike (Gamberini 2008, 50 fig. 7,26).

\(^{20}\) Morel 1981, 2252 a1.

\(^{21}\) Rotroff 1997, 192 fig. 78,1258.

\(^{22}\) Gamberini 2008, 45–53.

\(^{23}\) Perna 2012b, 242.
The Italian Red Slip Ware

From the mid 1st century BC onwards the Italian red-slipped ware is attested in a relative small quantity with a few imports from northern and central Italy. The technical features of the materials are homogeneous: beige-pinkish clay, hard and very fine-grained. (Munsell 2.5YR 5/8) with thick and brilliant red slip (Munsell 10R 6/8–4/8).

So far, the most ancient shape attested is the plate Conspectus 23, dating between the Augustan and Neronian period (fig. 9,6).

The presence of the later types as the fragment of the foot Conspectus B1.12, plates Conspectus 20 and 21 and bowls Conspectus 23 is preponderant: the plate Conspectus 20.4, very common in the Mediterranean basin and in the northern-eastern provinces, is widely attested in modern Albania30 and in Sofratikë, where several variants of big dimensions are attested, both plain and appliqué-decorated with a ram head (fig. 9.8) or with a lily (fig. 9.9)31.

The shapes Conspectus 21 12 (fig. 9.10), 23 13 (fig. 9.11) and B.4.1344 are also attested.

Some of the fragments have stamps in planta pedis, as A.AVG.38 (fig. 13).

(C. C.)

Conclusions

The analysis of fine-ware pottery from Hadrianopolis allows one to outline the growth of the settlement and, more generally, the development of the Drinos valley from the Hellenistic to the early Roman period and to the foundation of the urban centre. The latest investigations show that during the 4th century BC Hellenistic settlements, often fortified (fig. 1), concentrate on the top of hills and the highest areas with an economy based on sheep breeding and other activities related to the communication network of the valley, such as agriculture and trade35.

The extension of the archaeological excavation – still limited for the Hellenistic period – and the scant evidence from the pottery create difficulties in speculating on the existence of a settlement as early as the Hellenistic phase. The presence of few Attic products and a fragment of painted architectural

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32 In Albania the plate was found in Phoinike (SHISH 2007, 160–163) and Shkodra (LAHI 2006, 183–184 pl. 5,43).
34 The tronco-conic bowl is widely distributed in the Mediterranean basin and is attested in Durrës (HOTI/METALLA/SHEHI 2004, 488 n. 2).
36 It is attested in Rome, Solunto, Aquileia, Arezzo, Suasa and Perugia, on plain plates with stamp on the inner surface. It is also common on the shape Ritterling I; see Atlante II, 200.
37 Prato 2012b, 235–238.
Fig. 4. Black Slip Pottery.
cornice (fig. 15), dating to the 4th century.37, along with a few coins of Corcyra38, however, permits some conclusions. It is likely that before its development as an urban centre of service in the Drinos valley between the Roman and Byzantine period the settlement of the future Hadrianopolis had a role in the local urban system already from this time.

Between the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 3rd century BC, the increasing presence of regional productions coincides with the integration of the Chaones into the symmachia of Epirotes and the rising leadership of the Aeacides. A different form of controlling the territory was then possible39: the fertile plains and the roads crossing them could be systematically exploited. The road bisecting the Drinos valley, along which some of the black slip pottery productions of the second group came, perhaps from Apollonia, is an evident example. The re-organization of the territory gave rise to an economic prosperity as the new arrangement in villages and small rural settlements, such as at Saraquinishte, proves40. Farms were also located at Derviçan (Sopoti) and Dholani, centres which were linked to necropolises such as those at

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37 Id. 2012a, 101–102.
39 Melfi/Piccinini 2012, n. 9.
40 Perna 2012b, 238.
Fig. 9. Thin Walled Pottery (1–5); Italian Red Slip Ware (6–11).
These represent traces of a widely spread settlement organization with villages gathered on the basis of federal centres too, within Chaonia. 

The settlement of Sofratikë developed according to this pattern and became progressively part of a local production and commercial network controlled by Antigonea, the hege-

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Fig. 14. Plan of the fortified site of Frashtan.
monic centre and a reference point for the entire future. At the moment, it is not possible to know what role the future Hadrianopolis had in this territorial organization; its strategic position in the road system, the type and quantity of the material productions attested since the 4th century, the future development of the settlement in the Roman and Byzantine period suggest that the village played an hegemonic role in the territory, perhaps with specific social and economical function. The analysis of the sources and the study of the material evidence confirm, for the next phases, the progressive material productions attested since the 4th century, the future commercial position in the road system, the type and quantity of the products like villages or extended family groups, which based their subsistence on an agricultural economy. Very likely, the settlement nearby the modern village of Sofratikë got a monumental form, which became evident from the early imperial period, with the construction of a small temple, a structure which is now underneath the theatre and a waterway in the area occupied later by the thermal buildings (fig. 16). In the light of the Roman trend of applying administrative models borrowed from the Italian world, it is plausible to consider the village of Sofratikë at this stage as a vicus connected to a wider pagan/vician system organized by Rome during the conquest in order to control the territory.

42 Perna 2012a, 235–240.
43 In Sofratikë a large presence of coarse ware was also found (C. Capponi, La ceramica comune acroma e sovradipinta. In: Perna/Condì 2012, 171–173).
44 This trade is also documented by volute lamps: S. Severini/D. Sporzini, Le lucerne. In: Perna/Condì 2012, 190–192, while the total absence of Eastern Sigillata A should be pointed out (E. Cecarelli, La terra sigillata orientale. In: Perna/Condì 2012, 158–160).
50 Melzi/Piccinini 2012, n. 24.
53 Melzi/Piccinini 2012, 46–50.
54 On the production systems and economy in the Epirote region, ancient sources are quite clear: Varro, R.R. II.2.9, 2.18–20; 5.7; Caes., De bello civile III.47; Verri, Geor. 1.59; Plen., N.H. VIII.48.7.
56 Perna 2012b, 243.
57 For the territory, vitrana assignations are attested already at the time of Caesar (see: Melzi/Piccinini 2012, n. 29).
The later birth of Hadrianopolis, following the creation of the new province of Epirus in the Trajanim period, will result in a different model of urban organization of the agricultural territory.

(R. P.)

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