

## STUDY OF THE COLCHIAN AMPHORA OF EARLY BYZANTINE PERIOD

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Among the amphorae found on the Late Roman and Early Byzantine sites of the Eastern Black Sea littoral, brown clay amphorae with concave body prevail. They are considered as Colchian products. In the 4<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> c. AD such amphorae were excavated in large numbers on the Northern and Western Black Sea sites. They are also to be found in the Southern Black Sea area.

In spite of the long history of the artifact excavations and study, up to now there are different opinions on the appellations, origins, production centres, distribution areas, chronological and typological variants of the amphorae and their contents.

The purpose of the paper is the statistical, topological and typological study of such amphorae found on the Eastern Black Sea sites, as well as the analysis of their contexts; it will be the base for developing joint approaches on the genesis of the type, the typological and chronological evolution of the variants, the production centres, and additionally, the topo-archaeological distribution areas and their contents.

## BYZANTINE PATTERNS OF COMMUNICATION AT THE LOWER DANUBE (THE AMPHORA EVIDENCE FROM SILISTRA)

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As a result of the excavations in 2007 in Silistra (NE Bulgaria) a large quantity of late antique and medieval amphorae came up to light. On the basis of these amphorae and similar ones coming from sites at the Lower Danube, it is possible to track out the main trends and changes in the Byzantine patterns of communication in this region. With the foundation of Constantinople, the Balkan area became the immediate hinterland of the new capital. To prevent the barbarian attacks, a system of military strongholds has been built along the Danubian border. A well organized economic structure was supplying these military establishments with food. In the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 7<sup>th</sup> centuries as containers for the transport of the *annona militaris* of olive oil and wine from the Levant and the Aegean area, LR1 and LR2 amphorae were used, which explains their prevalent presence in Silistra and on other sites on the limes.

The lack of amphora material in the considered region from the third quarter of the 7<sup>th</sup> century onward should be explained with the establishment of the