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THE INFLUENCE OF THE *DYRRACHIUM* POTTERY WORKSHOPS IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH DALMATIA

In recent years the archaeological excavations of the Hellenistic sites in Dalmatia have revealed a huge amount of Hellenistic pottery. Excavations of the sanctuaries of Diomedes at Palagruža and Cape Ploča, and the sanctuary in Cave Nakovana yielded various types of Hellenistic pottery and an opportunity to study it in a more thorough way. But the problems of origin, production and chronology still remain.

Systematic archaeological excavations at the Hellenistic port in Resnik, and in the Greek settlements of *Issa*, *Pharos* and *Tragurium* could give some answers.

The discovery at Resnik of two red mould-made relief bowls, one with a stamp with a Greek name of ARISTEN and another which could belong to this workshop, made me try to find their place of production (figs. 2–3). The available material showed that a parallel could be found amongst the archaeological material in modern Albania, i.e. in *Dyrrachium*.

Hava Hidri in her articles defined the pottery workshop of Aristen in *Dyrrachium* and gave examples of the potter's characteristic stamps and decoration (fig. 1).¹ These show quite a resemblance with some forms and decoration of relief bowls already known from Dalmatia.

These are related to the so-called Delian or 'Ionian' type of the mould-made relief bowls. They are wider and shallower, with a vertical or concave lip and they have a ring foot. Dimensions are 5–10 cm in height, and 8–14,5 cm in diameter. The clay is reddish brown, buff or grey. The slip is red, brown, grey or black but it can vary in different shades of colours according to firing.

The potter's name is written in whole: APISTHN, or in a short form APICT, API, AP, AN or A. There is also a rosette as a mark of his workshop, sometimes with the letter A or surrounded with the arrowheads etc.

The bowl from Resnik is about 6 cm in height, of pale red clay, with a red and brownish slip. It is decorated with vertical rows of four stylised rosettes, separated by wavy lines, and below the lip there is also a horizontal wavy line (as fig. 4,1). On the bottom there is a ring foot with a stamp APISTHN (fig. 2).

Beside this bowl there is another one with a ring-foot decorated with a rosette, surrounded by arrowheads, which are the main decoration on the body. At the upper edge there is a band of astragali (figs. 3; 4,2). There are a few more which could belong to Aristen's workshop (fig. 4,3).

Other known bowls from east Adriatic sites cannot be directly related to this workshop. They have been found at

the Hellenistic port at Resnik,² in the shipwreck near the island of Čiovo,³ in the Hellenistic town of Salona,⁴ and some fragments at the sanctuaries at Cape Ploča and Palagruža (fig. 5). They all have similar shape, fabric and decoration. Z. Brusić ascribes them to Delian import but they were more likely made in Adriatic workshops.⁵ In *Dyrrachium* they are dated approximately to the end of the 3rd and in the 2nd century BC,⁶ but the archaeological context in Resnik indicates the 2nd and 1st centuries BC.⁷

Besides Aristen's pottery workshop in *Dyrrachium*, there is also one ascribed to the potter Sopatros (fig. 6). This is represented by a grey mould-made relief bowl of Ionian type with a stamp name of Sopatros, written CΩΠΙΑ retrograde. This stamp is also confirmed on amphorae in *Apollonia* as C(Ω) and they are dated to the 2nd and 1st centuries BC.⁸

The bowl from Resnik is made of light grey clay with a dark grey slip. The lower part of the bowl is decorated with three rows of arrowheads. On the base the potter's name CΩΠΙΑΤΡΟΥ in the genitive is impressed within two concentric circles. There is only the lower part of this bowl, which makes it hard to identify the type that it belongs to. But the name of the potter is a strong indication that it could belong to *Dyrrachium* production, together with Aristen's vessels.

Articulated *kantharoi*

Less attractive but very a common form in Dalmatia is an articulated *kantharos*. Its very distinctive form of body with two vertical handles and a ring-foot appears with minor variations in the southern part of the eastern Adriatic.

It probably originates from Corinth where it is dated to the late 4th and the beginning of the 3rd century BC.⁹ The form in Corinth has an application on the upper part of the

¹ HIDRI 1988, 75–76.

² BRUSIĆ 1999, 15, 94–95 fig. 38–39.

³ VRSALOVIĆ 1979, 215–217, Pl. 20,5–6. – BRUSIĆ 1999, 15; 95 fig. 39, A235, A236.

⁴ CLAIRMONT 1975, 185, 196 fig. B, 22.

⁵ BRUSIĆ 1999, 15.

⁶ HIDRI 1988, 76.

⁷ BABIN 2004, 18–20.

⁸ HIDRI 1976, 250 T. III, 7.

⁹ EDWARDS 1975, 83–84.

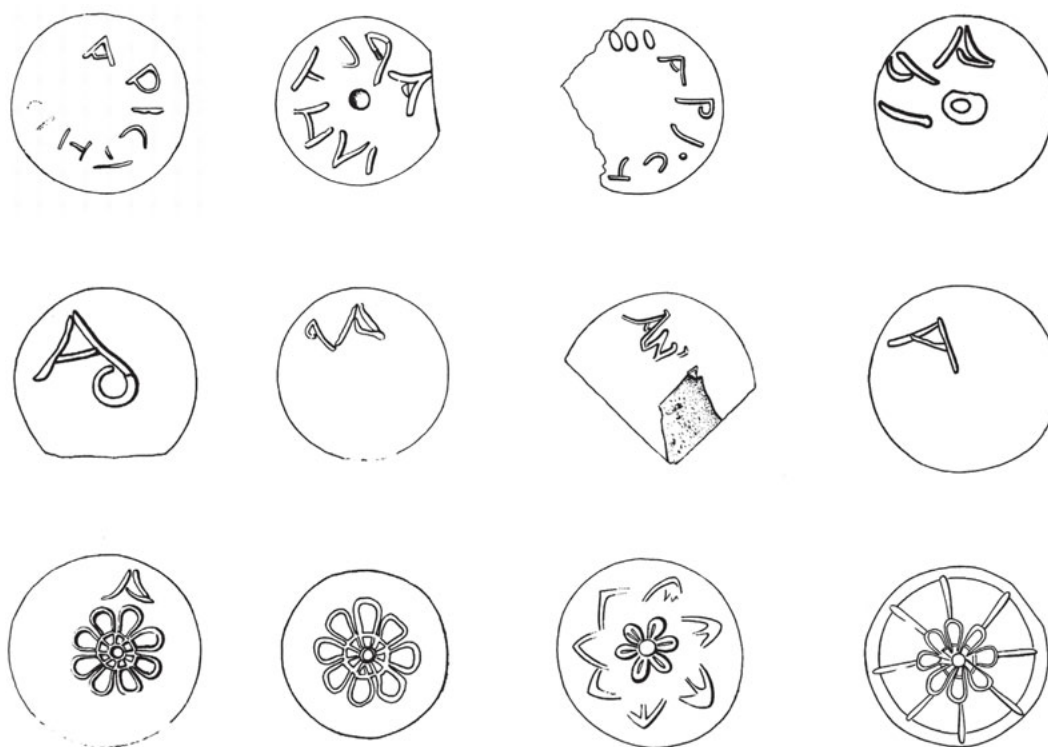


Fig. 1. The stamps of Aristen's workshop in *Dyrrachium*.



Fig. 2. The stamp of Aristen from Resnik.



Fig. 3. The bowl from Aristen's workshop from Resnik.

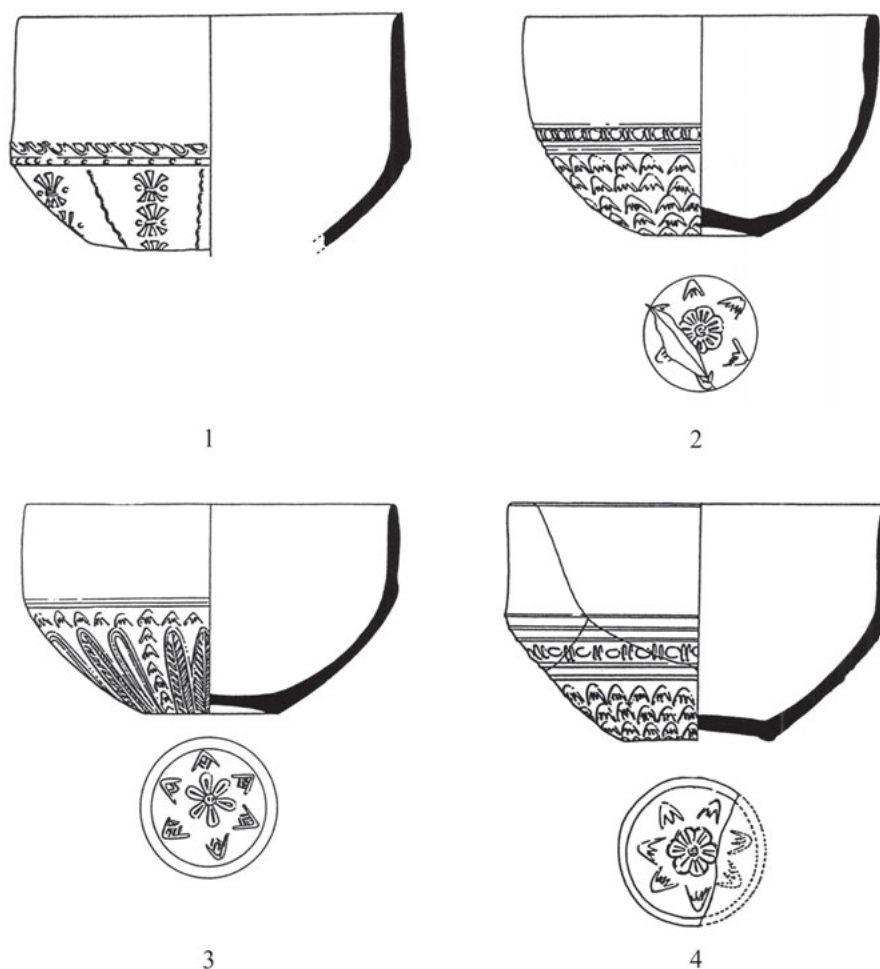


Fig. 4. The bowls from Aristen's workshop (drawings from BRUŠIĆ 1999).



Fig. 5. Distribution map of "Ionian" bowls.

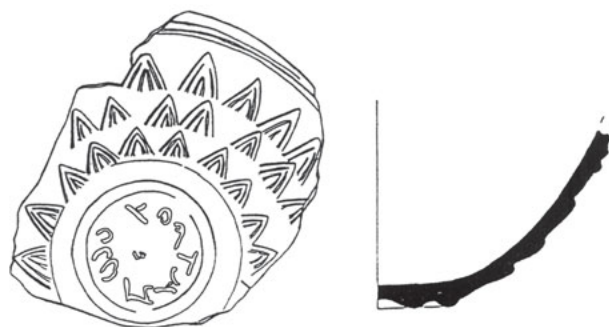


Fig. 6. The bowl with the stamp of Sopatros from Resnik.

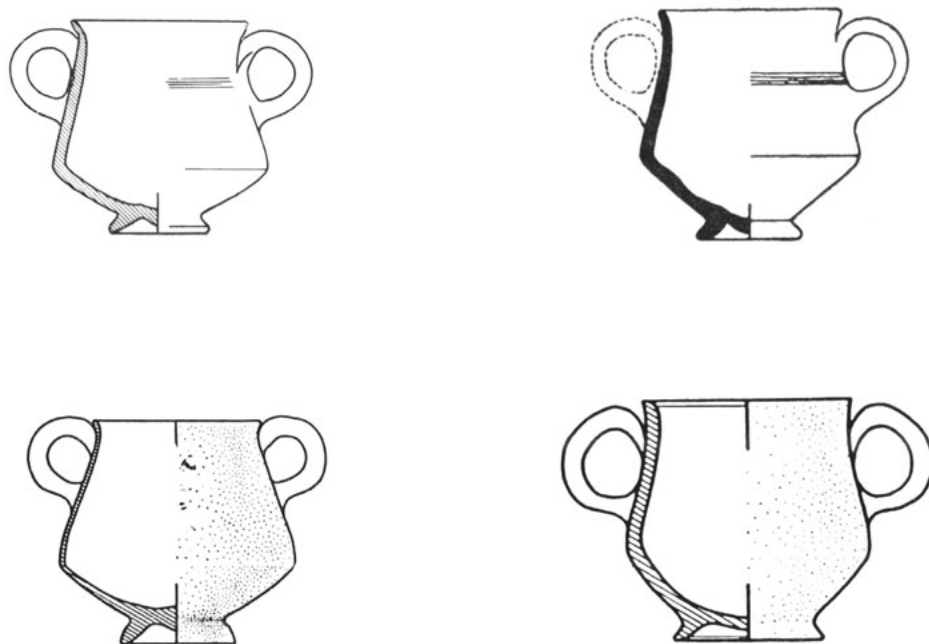


Fig. 7. Articulated *kantharoi* from *Dyrrachium* and *Lushnje*.

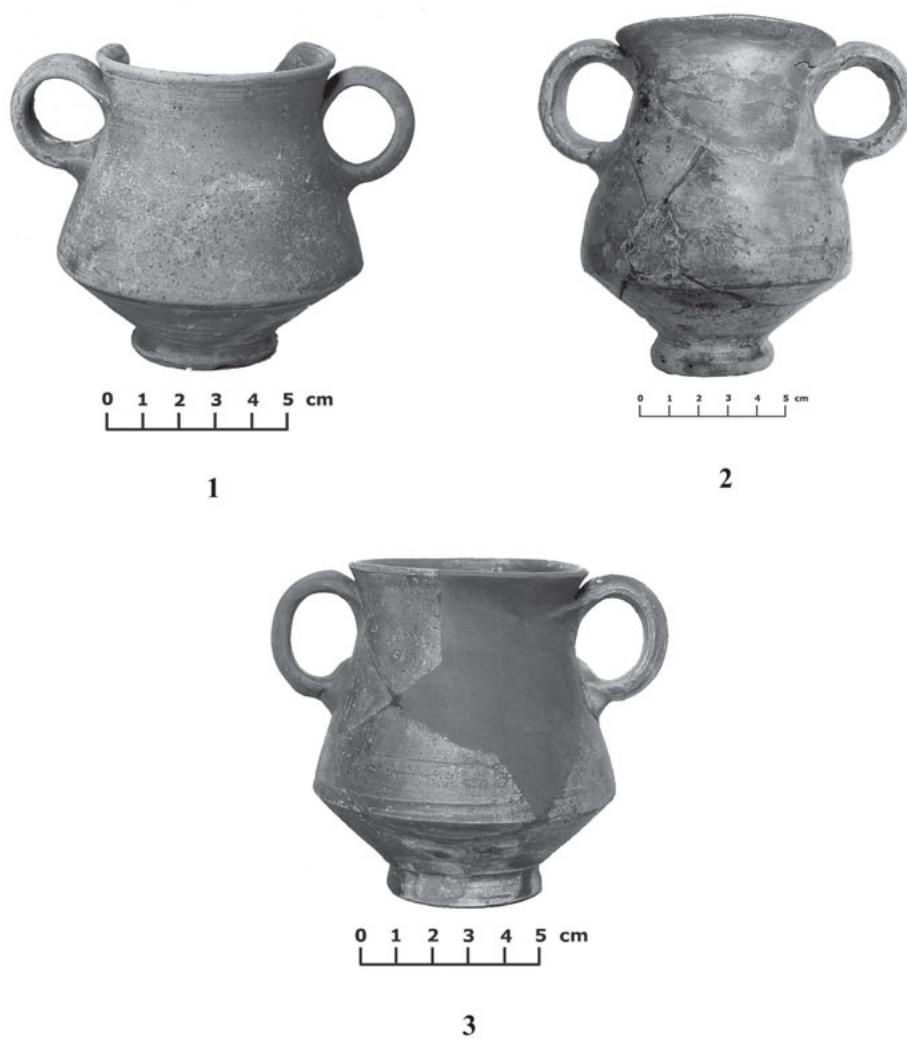


Fig. 8. Articulated *kantharoi* from *Resnik*.

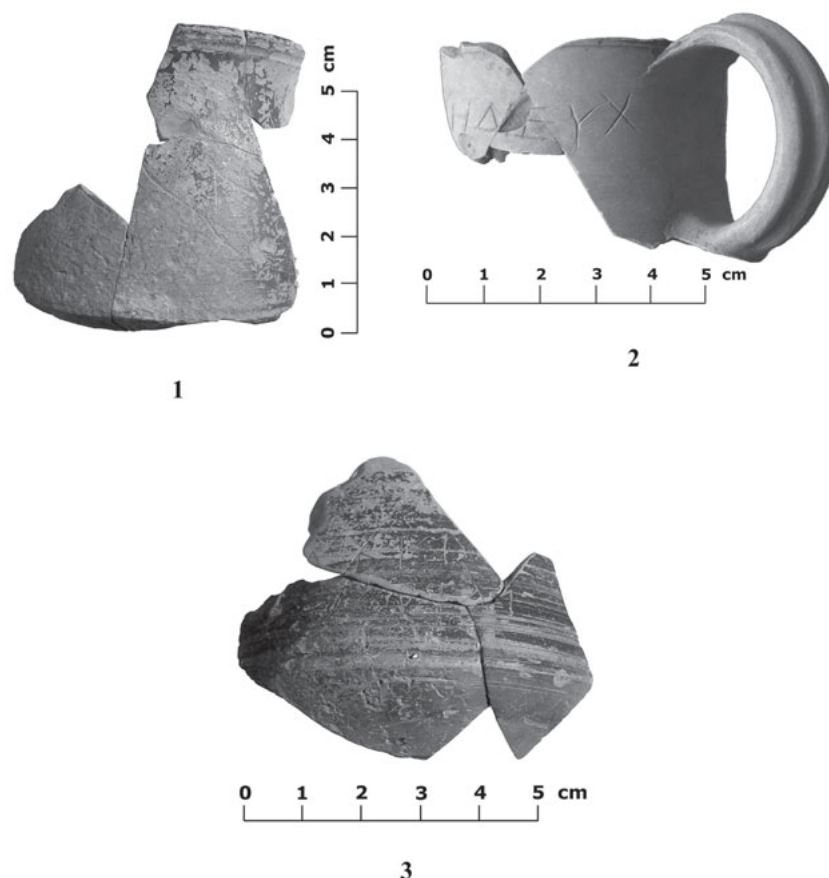


Fig. 9. Articulated *kantharoi* from Cape Ploča.

handle, a strap thumb-rest, which is unknown on these Adriatic types. During excavations of cemeteries in *Dyrrachium* and *Apollonia* many vessels were found (fig. 7); some are ascribed to local *Dyrrachium* workshops and are dated to the 2nd century BC. In *Apollonia* they are dated somewhat earlier, to the 3rd century BC.¹⁰ This shape is also found in local Illyrian settlements and graves in the hinterland of *Dyrrachium*. Several were found at Gërmenj, near Lushnje.¹¹

One example has been found in the present-day Republic of Macedonia, at Crvjenca near Lake Ohrid in a grave and it is ascribed to the local production.¹²

In middle and south Dalmatia during recent archaeological excavations at cape Ploča,¹³ Resnik,¹⁴ Cave Nakovana,¹⁵ ancient *Narona*¹⁶ and *Issa*,¹⁷ huge amounts of this type of pottery have been found (fig. 12). Although only preliminary analyses have been done, some conclusions can be drawn.

All these pots have a biconical profile, vertical handles and a ring-foot. The height is 10–11 cm. The clay is in different shades of grey and brown, and the colour of the slip varies from grey to black, and from light brown to dark brown and reddish. Unequal firing on some pots gives different variations of colour. Sometimes the colour of the slip on the inside and outside of the *kantharos* is different.

At the Hellenistic port at Resnik many whole examples have been found (fig. 8). These types resemble in fabric, colour and quality the other types of pottery found there. Most of the pottery is made of grey clay with a grey slip.

Pieces of moulds for making relief bowls and matrices found here indicate local production at workshops in Resnik.

Recent excavations in Vis (ancient *Issa*) have revealed numerous fragments of this type. It is found in settlement layers and in the position where a possible Hellenistic workshop was situated.

The fine ware found at Cape Ploča consists entirely of votive pots dedicated to the divine Diomedes (fig. 9). Most of these are drinking vessels, and the articulated *kantharoi* occur in a great numbers here. Numerous recognizable fragments are made of brownish or grey clay, with grey, brown, black or red slip.

A similar situation is found in the cave sanctuary in Nakovana, where this type of pottery is present in numerous very well preserved samples.

The review of published Hellenistic material from Salona shows some fragments in grey colour that belong to this type.

¹⁰ HIDRI 1976, 248 T. I,9. – ID. 1986, 191 T. II,19.

¹¹ ANDREA 1988, 172, 180–181 T. II,4.

¹² BITRAKOVA GROZANOVA 1987, 41 T. II,4.

¹³ BILIĆ-DUJMUŠIĆ 2002, 485–497. – BILIĆ-DUJMUŠIĆ 2004, 123–140. – KIRIGIN 2004, 141–150.

¹⁴ BABIN 2004, 5–21.

¹⁵ FORENBAHER/KAISER 2003, 63–93.

¹⁶ Exhibited in the Archaeological Museum in Vid.

¹⁷ Information from excavations in ancient *Issa* given by colleague Boris Čargo.



Fig. 10. Articulated *kantharoi* from Mutogras.

In the Archaeological museum in Split there are three articulated *kantharoi* which were found in 1907 in Mutogras (**fig. 10**), near Split, among other Hellenistic pottery. According to Frane Bulić they were found in old vineyards where some Hellenistic graves are situated which could belong to the ancient native settlement of *Pituntium*.¹⁸

The examination of old photographs from Budva taken at the beginning of the 20th century shows a great wealth found in Hellenistic graves.¹⁹ In some pictures this type of vessel can be seen (**fig. 11** marked with a white arrow) and this represents the link on the map of distribution of this type in Dalmatia and Albania.

Recent studies and interpretations of archaeological finds from *Dyrrachium* and *Apollonia* have been exclusively numismatic.²⁰ These preliminary pottery studies of impor-

tations or influence from *Dyrrachium* pottery workshops correspond to numismatic finds in middle and south of Dalmatia and Monte Negro. This pottery is dated from the 3rd to the 1st centuries BC, which matches the monetary circulation. All this can be related to Roman influence on the east side of the Adriatic and the political situation created after the Illyrian wars that made the economic prosperity of the region possible.

¹⁸ BULIĆ 1908, 142–145.

¹⁹ The photographs are in the archive of the Archaeological Museum in Split.

²⁰ POPOVIĆ 1987, 96 fig. 29.



Fig. 11. The articulated *kantharos* from Budva, Monte Negro.



Fig. 12. Distribution map of articulated *kantharoi* on the east Adriatic.

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