

Ceramics from Sinope in Olbia Pontica

Connections between Olbia Pontica and Sinope are fixed from the beginning of the fifth century BC. There are two inscriptions and some archaeological materials that confirm this. Architectural terracottas have been found in Olbia, and *Sinopida* – red paint from Sinope – is mentioned by a *graffito* on a *calyx* from Olbia. In the first three quarters of the fourth century BC, amphorae from Heraclea Pontica prevailed in Olbia as well as in other centers on the Black Sea coast. Amphorae production in Sinope began later than in Heraclea, not earlier than the first quarter of the fourth century BC. The earliest examples of Sinopean amphorae found in Nikonion have been dated around 385-370 BC. The earliest Sinopean amphorae found in Olbia have been dated to the end of 70s - the beginning of the 60s of the fourth century BC. In the middle of the fourth century and the third quarter of the century tiles from Sinope were more numerous in Olbia than local ones.

The quantity of goods in Olbia from Sinope started increasing in the last quarter of the fourth century and the third century, while the imports from Heraclea were decreasing and had finally stopped by approximately the first third of the third century BC. Tiles, *louteria*, amphorae, and architectural terracottas were sent from Sinope. Amphorae from Sinope were especially numerous in Olbia during the third century BC, forming about 50,5 % of amphorae imports. Sinope became one of the main supplier for Olbia, as it did for the north Black Sea littoral as a whole. Sinope's strong presence in the north shore market was likely due to its ease of access across the Black Sea from the south shore.

In the second half of the third century BC, imports of goods from Sinope decreased to some extent, as in other centers of the Classical world, due to crises in the Olbian state. Later, in the second half of the second century BC, connections with Sinope again intensified, as especially evident from Sinopean amphorae stamps. These connections continued until the middle of the first century BC, when Olbia was sacked by the Getae.

Olbia Pontica was restored at the end of the first century BC and its trading connections had been gradually reestablished. At the very beginning of the first century AD, evidence exists regarding Olbian connections with centers in Asia Minor and the South Black Sea littoral: Heraclea Pontica, Sinope, Pergamon, Samos, Kos, Byzantium.

These connections prevailed in the first century AD and the first half of the second century and bloomed significantly in the second half of the second century AD and the first half of the third century, as it is testified by the archaeological material and the epigraphy. A list of trading contractors for the city contains a decree in honour of Theokles, the son of Satyros, and Sinope is also mentioned there; a gravestone of an inhabitant of Sinope was found; some amphorae types are from Sinope, but materials from Heraclea Pontica prevailed.

Olbia's trading connections were broken again in 269-270, when the city was destroyed by the Goths. Olbia was not restored until approximately 280 AD, and although it was somewhat off the trading routes, by the fourth century AD, traditional contacts with Asia Minor had been reestablished and even prevailed over contacts with other Classical centers. On finds of amphorae, imports of them from Sinope and Heraclea Pontica prevailed.