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Palazzolo Acreide, Sicily, Italy : excavations in 2011

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Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

ROKSANA CHOWANIEC, LORENZO GUZZARDI

PALAZZOLO ACREIDE, SICILY, ITALY. EXCAVATIONS IN 2011

The ancient town of *Akrai* (Greek *Ἀκραί*, Latin *Acrae*, *Agris*, *Acrenses*) is located to the west of the modern town of Palazzolo Acreide, in south-eastern Sicily, the province of Syracuse. On an agreement between the University of Warsaw and Parco Archeologico di Eoro e della Villa del Tellaro e delle Aree Archeologiche di Noto e dei Comuni Limitrofi, after non-invasive investigations in 2009 and 2010 (CHOWANIEC, MISIEWICZ 2010; CHOWANIEC, MAŁKOWSKI, MISIEWICZ 2010), the first season of excavations began.

In this fieldwork, which lasted from 3 to 28 October, the following persons took part: Dr. Monika Rekowska-Ruszkowska, Marta Fituła M.A., Marcin Matera M.A., Tomasz Więcek M.A., Piotr Zakrzewski M.A., Dr. Wiesław Więckowski, Agata Ulanowska M.A., Prof. Aleksander Bursche and eleven students of the Institute of Archaeology of the University of Warsaw.¹ The excavations in 2011 were possible thanks to the grant of the National Science Centre (N N109 104940), as well as private sponsors.

First of all, the area of the site was covered by an archaeological grid (divided into kilometres, hectares, ares and 5×5 m squares). Next, based on earlier geophysical survey (CHOWANIEC, MISIEWICZ 2010), two trenches were marked out and opened: Trench No. I (20×5 m) and Trench No. II (10×5 m). 0077

Trench No. I (Fig. 1) was situated in the central part of the town, to the south of the main road (*plateia*), partly discovered in the excavation in the 1970s, which went from the west to the east (VOZA 1973). This place was chosen on the basis of careful studying of geomagnetic maps, which suggest the existence of ancient structures and some anomalies correspond to the remains of *stenopoi* and *insulae*. In this area a series of parallel linear anomalies aligned SE-NW was also noticed (CHOWANIEC, MISIEWICZ 2010: 178–183).



Trench No. II is located as well in the central part of the town (Fig. 1), however at the end of the *plateia*. The location of the trench in this place is connected with irregularity in the urban plan and streets grids in this part of the town. Here the main road sharply changed its course. It diverges from the E-W axis and turns to NW. Some additional modifications in the urban plan were also visible in the layout of partly discovered building structures, which are different in that area than in the eastern part of the town. Therefore we would like to investigate how and why it changed and in which functioning phase (Greek or Roman) of *Akrai*. Because *Akrai* as the town is known just only from public buildings (a theatre, a bouleuterion, fragments of an agora and a temple, part of the *plateia*) till now, the excavations, started in both units in 2011, have to help to reconstruct the grid of town streets and buildings, as well as the organisation of the town in the living area in particular phases of the town's evolution.

The first season of regular excavations yielded many artefacts and some important information about

¹ I would like to thank all the mentioned members of the team for their excellent collaboration.



Fig. 1. The work in Trench No. I (Photo R. Chowaniec).

Ryc. 1. Prace na wykopie nr I.

archaeological structures in the Late Roman Period in *Akraï*. The superficial stratum in Trench No. I was strongly mixed, therefore found relics have been dated to different chronological periods. A high concentration of clay finds could be observed: pottery, bricks, roof tiles (both *tegulae* and *imbrices*), and lamps. The pottery was represented by amphorae, tableware and kitchenware, e.g., from Greek black glaze pots, a Thasian amphora from the Hellenistic Period, an amphora of Type Dressel 20 dated to the first half of the 1st c. AD, to the terra sigillata ARSW f. 59 dated to AD 320–420.² First of all, however, the following artefacts were found: red and orange wares with the light slip (the percentage of all pottery finds: 30.9%), brown kitchenware (17.1%), terra sigillata (7.2%), amphora of Type Dressel 1B (0.6%), light amphorae (3.3%), black glaze pots (9.2%) and red glaze pots (1.3%). Besides that, numerous fragments of glass, mostly dated to the Late Roman Period, metal artefacts (41 coins, belt buckles, pins, lumps of lead used in construction) and other artefacts (spindles of bone, a fragment of a marble vessel, etc.), were found. The stra-

tum was filled with stones (also with broken stones and fragments of architectural decorations), especially in the area of Are 65/Sq. 1–2, where under that debris the remains of the top part of Wall No. 2 were discovered. Stratigraphically and structurally, this upper uncovered part of the wall could be dated to the Late Roman Period, but surely with at least Middle Roman foundations. This construction went from NE to SW.

The next layer was more homogeneous with regard to clay finds (red and orange wares with the light slip – 25%; brown kitchenware – 25%; terra sigillata – 20.8%; and pink tableware – 12.5%, and accumulations of amphorae), although also dissimilar fragments of pottery were found (black glaze pots – 4.2%), and many fragments of bricks, roof tiles, and lamps. During the removal of the cluttered stones, the next stone wall (No. 3) was uncovered. This construction is perpendicular to Wall No. 2 and probably formed the corner of a house building (?). Among the most interesting finds in this layer two items could be mentioned: an incensory (inv. No. AKI/3-189), coloured

² The whole pottery identification was carried out by Marcin Matera M.A., the Institute of Archaeology of the University of Warsaw.

Fig. 2. Clay incenso-ry with decoration, inv. No. AKI/3-189 (Photo M. Rekowski-Ruszkowska).

Ryc. 2. Kadzielnica gliniana z dekoracją, nr inw. AKI/3-189.



in white with red and yellow painted decoration (Fig. 2), and a fragment of terracotta with elements of triglyph, tenia and regula, which could be identified as a part of the cylindrical altar, very popular find in south-eastern Sicily.

The layers in Trench No. II were completely different from the layers in Unit I. Irregular accumulations of stones were mainly discovered. A few fragments of clay finds were recorded there, mostly pottery and some pieces of lamps. In Layer No. 2 the pottery was represented by red and orange wares with the light slip (16.6%), orange tableware (50%) and light tableware (33.3%). Among remarkable finds in this trench are fragments of terracotta with stamped decoration in the form of circles and short slashes, as well as a terracotta female figurine dressed in gown (dress?) and remains of veil, probably a chthonic deity.

This stratum could be interpreted as a secondary usage of previous constructions (probably Greek and Roman) in the period dated to 4th–5th c. AD. This chronology could be also confirmed by 10 coins (out of 12 in Layer No. 2).

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PALAZZOLO ACREIDE, SYCILIA, WŁOCHY. WYKOPALISKA SEZONU 2011

W 2011 roku przeprowadzono pierwsze badania wykopaliskowe na stanowisku archeologicznym *Akrai* (obecnie Palazzolo Acreide, prov. Siracusa) na Sycylii, które poprzedzone zostały kompleksowymi badaniami nieinwazyjnymi. To właśnie na podstawie analiz wyników badań geomagnetycznych wytyczono wykopy archeologiczne i rozpoczęto prace badawcze, których zadaniem, w ciągu bieżącego i następnych sezonów, będzie rozpoznanie siatki ulic i domów na terenie antycznego miasta oraz ich rozwarstwienie chronologiczne. W sezonie 2011 badania prowadzono w obrębie dwóch sondży: I oraz II. Wykop I (Ryc. 1) został wytyczony pomiędzy dwoma ulicami po-

przecznymi w obrębie insuli. Podczas prac odkryto zwarte zawałiska kamieni oraz dwa mury (nr 2 i 3), które najprawdopodobniej tworzą narożnik pomieszczenia. Materiał zabytkowy wskazuje na przemieszanie górnej warstwy kulturowej oraz coraz większą jednolitość w obrębie niższych warstw (naczynia w kolorze czerwonym i pomarańczowym z jasną angobą – 25%, naczynia kuchenne w kolorze brązowym – 25%, terra sigillata – 20,8%, naczynia stołowe w kolorze różowym – 12,5%). Do wyjątkowych znalezisk należą: kadzielnica gliniana z dekoracją malowaną (nr inw. AKI/3-189, Ryc. 2) czy ułamek terakoty z tryglifem, który jest być może fragmentem małego ołtarzyka.