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Palazzolo Acreide, Sicily, Italy : excavations in 2013

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Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach
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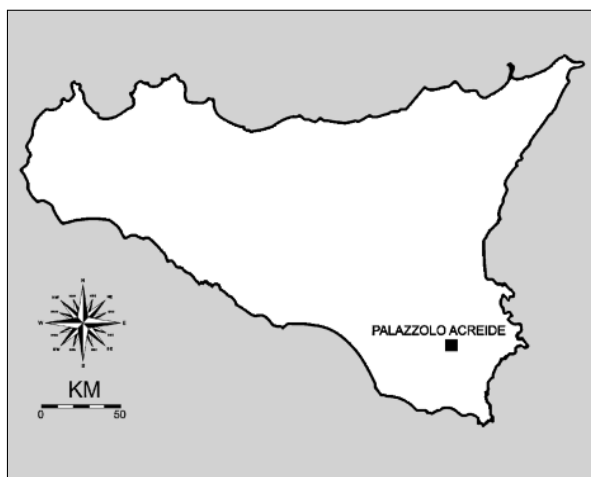
ROKSANA CHOWANIEC

PALAZZOLO ACREIDE, SICILY, ITALY. EXCAVATIONS IN 2013

The archaeological site of *Akrai* is situated close to the modern town of Palazzolo Acreide, in the province of Syracuse, in the south-eastern part of Sicily. As a Greek colony the town developed in the shadow of the *metropolis*, Syracuse, one of the most important cities of the ancient Greek world. Thanks to the strategic location of *Akrai*, and also the fact that few rivers surrounded the territory, Syracuse had full control of this part of the island. *Akrai* flourished at the time of Hiero II, the ruler of Syracuse in the period of 270/269–215 BC. Its development is affirmed by the theatre and bouleuterion construction (BERNABÒ BREA 1956). It is not clear how the town functioned in the period after the fall of Syracuse. Our ignorance of the nature of the town and that part of history, and also absence of evidence concerning residential buildings, has stimulated new archaeological excavations and ‘conceived’ *Akrai* again.

A new archaeological investigation was inaugurated in 2009, thanks to a cooperation agreement between the University of Warsaw, the Parco Archeologico di Eloro e della Villa del Tellaro e delle Aree Archeologiche di Noto e dei Comuni Limitrofi and the Soprintendenza dei Beni Culturali e Ambientali di Siracusa (CHOWANIEC 2013; CHOWANIEC, GUZZARDI 2012; 2013). The fieldwork in 2013 was a continuation of previous fieldworks (CHOWANIEC, GUZZARDI 2013).

In the present excavation season, lasting from 2 September to 30 October, the following persons took part: Urszula Wicenciak PhD, Anna Gręzak PhD, Krzysztof Domżański PhD, Monika Rekowski PhD, Marcin Wągner MA, Tomasz Więcek MA, Marta Fituła MA, Mariusz Kwaśny MA, Dawid Woźniak from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, fifteen students from the Institute of Archaeology of the University of Warsaw, and seven members of the Association “SiciliAntica”¹ (Figs. 1, 2). The excavations in 2013 were possible thanks to the grant of the National Science Centre (No. 2011/03/B/HS3/00567),



the grant of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (SPUB 4815/E-343/SPU/2012/3), as well as private sponsors.

In *Akrai*, as in many other Sicilian towns, the newly introduced Roman culture interacted with the Hellenistic culture, merging slowly over the course of two hundred years (LA TORRE 2004: 111–146; WILSON 2013). These multidimensional Greco-Roman relationships, a peculiar linguistic fusion, combination of legal systems, culture, architecture and religion, were particularly clear here, in south-eastern Sicily. The gradual decline of the Hellenistic components and their substitution by the Roman ones was a natural, but long-lasting cultural process. For these reasons the excavations in *Akrai* are very important, because the ancient town has not been destroyed by modern layers.

The fieldworks in two trenches (I and II) were continued and, for scientific reasons, their scope was extended. A huge quantity of archaeological artefacts, confirming further functioning and development of the town, was discovered in the course of systematic, stratigraphic excavation.

¹ I would like to thank all the members of the archaeological team for the excellent collaboration. Special thanks go to Rosa Lanteri PhD – Director of the Archaeological Department of Soprintendenza dei Beni Culturali e Ambientali di Siracusa,

Marta Fituła MA, Lorenzo Guzzardi PhD, Tomasz Więcek MA, Piotr Zakrzewski MA, Urszula Wicenciak PhD, Krzysztof Domżański PhD, Marcin Wągner MA and Anna Gręzak PhD.



Fig. 1. Fieldwork in Trench I in 2013, general view (Photo Archaeological Mission of Akrai).
Ryc. 1. Prace na wykopie nr I w 2013 roku, widok ogólny.



Fig. 2. Fieldwork in Trench I in 2013, a close-up (Photo Archaeological Mission of Akrai).
Ryc. 2. Prace na wykopie nr I w 2013 roku, zbliżenie.

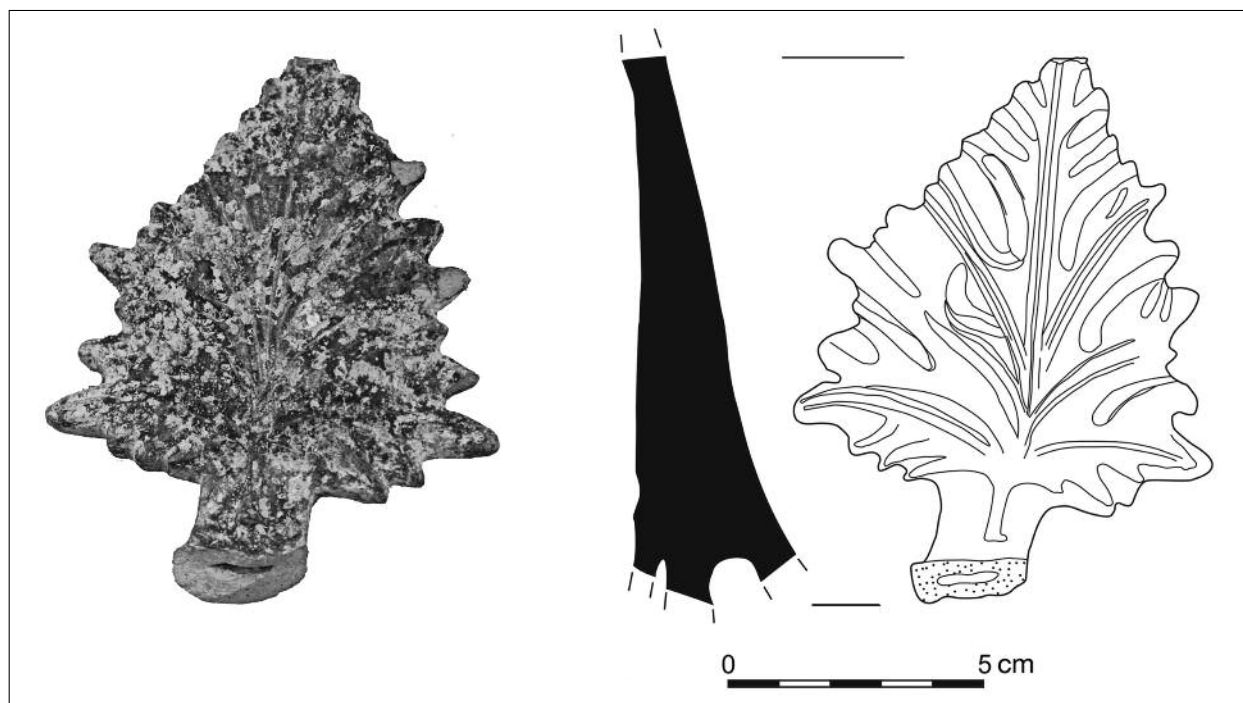


Fig. 3. The handle of a ceramic oil lamp in the form of an acanthus leaf (Photo Archaeological Mission of Akrai, drawing R. Chowaniec).
Ryc. 3. Uchwyt ceramicznej lampki oliwnej w kształcie liścia akantu.

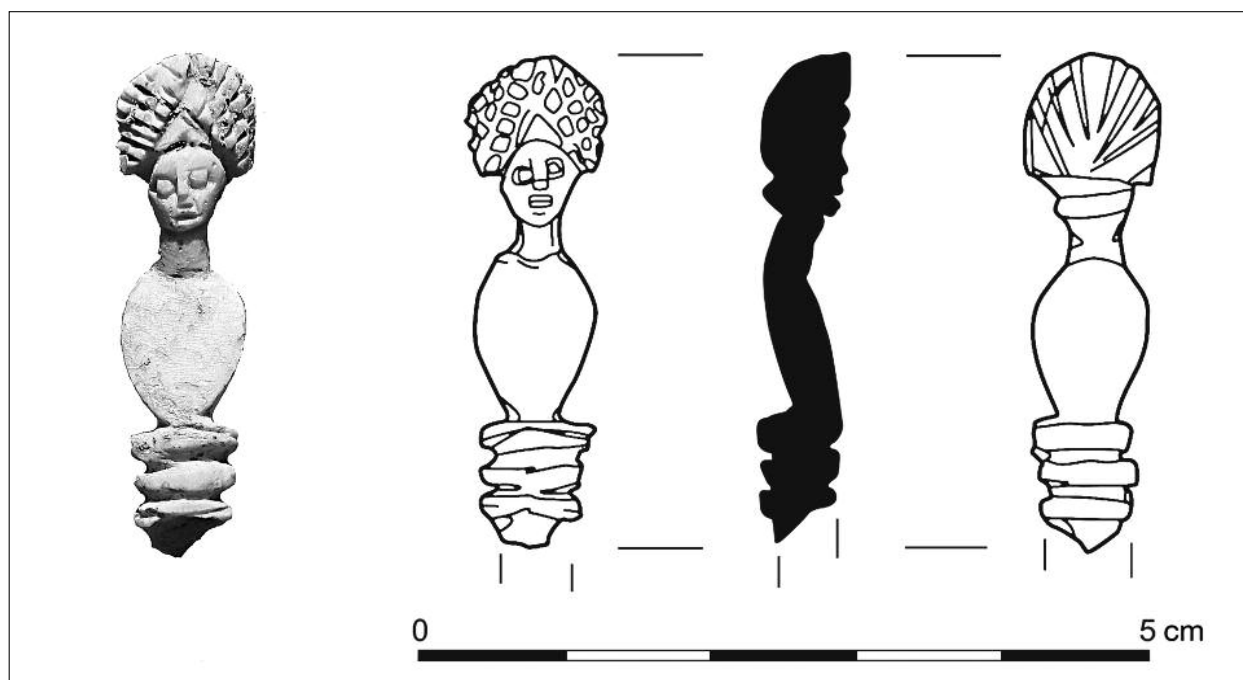


Fig. 4. The hairpin, made of bone, decorated with a small female bust (Photo Archaeological Mission of Akrai, drawing R. Chowaniec).
Ryc. 4. Szpila kościana w kształcie kobiecego biustu.

The new research discovered 3rd–5th c. AD stratigraphic levels, generating material of North African origin, including a diverse range of amphorae types, African Red Slip Ware and oil lamps, as well as glass artefacts (e.g., conical beakers or lamps), dated to the 4th–6th c. AD.

However, the excavations also delivered splendid material dated to earlier periods. There is a homogeneous stratum of earlier date – 1st–2nd c. AD, as suggested by finds of coins, pottery (most of all *terra sigillata*), oil lamps, glass vases and single bone and metal artefacts.

Extraordinarily items which show that the town boomed under the Roman administration, in the Late Republic and during the *Pax Romana*, were found. An excellent example might be a handle of ceramic oil lamp (most probably close to Type Loeschcke III), in the form of an acanthus leaf (sometimes also described as ‘plane tree leaf’), with lead-glaze (Fig. 3). This type of oil lamps was produced in the region of Campania-Lazio, in the second to third quarter of the 1st c. AD (DI GIOIA 2006: 65–105). The manufacture was characterised by the production of ceramics with transparent glaze in olive-green or yellow-brown colours. A splendid number of such oil lamps was found in the area of Mount Vesuvius, for example in Pompeii (current bibliography in: DI GIOIA 2006).

Other discoveries included a Flavian Period bone hairpin decorated with a small female bust, with hair style arranged in increasingly higher layers of ringlets and waves

(Fig. 4), fragments of finely ribbed glass bowls (of Type *zarte Rippenschale*, Isings Form 3a) dated to the 1st c. AD, fragments of a cast hemispherical bowl of amber glass, dated to the late 1st c. BC – mid-1st c. AD (Jenning Group 6), and numerous fragments of *terra sigillata*, including examples of *sigillata italica*.

The presence of these various artefacts, as well as the stratigraphic context, with wall plasters and, i.a. the remains of faux marble fresco painting (*a finto marmo*) (FALZONE 2010), indicate the continuity of life in *Akraï* after the decline of Syracuse.

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ROKSANA CHOWANIEC

PALAZZOLO ACREIDE, SYCYLIA, WŁOCHY. WYKOPALISKA W 2013 R.

Badania wykopaliskowe w sezonie 2013 na stanowisku archeologicznym w *Akraï* (obecnie Palazzolo Acreide, prow. Syrakuzy) w południowo-wschodniej części Sycylii są kontynuacją badań prowadzonych w latach 2011–2012 (wykop I i II, **Ryc. 1, 2**). Wykopaliska prowadzone są na podstawie umowy o współpracy między Uniwersytetem Warszawskim a Parco Archeologico di Eoro e della Villa del Tellaro e delle Aree Archeologiche di Noto e dei Comuni Limitrofi oraz Soprintendenza dei Beni Culturali e Ambientali di Siracusa.

Odkryty zespół zabytków w przeważającej części może być datowany na III–V w. n.e. i wykazuje typowe dla tego okresu na Sycylii wpływy północnoafrykańskie.

Odkryto jednak również interesujący materiał zabytkowy, który może być datowany na okres wczesnego cesarstwa (I–II w. n.e.). Na szczególną uwagę zasługuje uchwyt lampki w kształcie liścia akantu (niekiedy określa-

nego jako liść platanu), dekorowany oliwkowozieloną glazurą (**Ryc. 3**). Analogii należy szukać w rejonie Kampanii – Lacjum, gdzie produkcja tego typu przedmiotów rozwinęła się w drugiej i trzeciej ćwierci I w. n.e., a nagromadzenie takich znalezisk obserwujemy w regionie miast wezuwiałskich, np. w Pompejach.

Ponadto odkryto: szpilę kościaną do włosów w kształcie biustu kobiecego z wysoko ułożonymi włosami z loków i fal (przypominającymi fryzurę „gniazdo os”) z okresu panowania dynastii flawijskiej (**Ryc. 4**), fragmenty miszki szklanych z żebrowaniem pionowym, m.in. typu *zarte Rippenschale* – forma Isings 3a – z I wieku n.e., fragmenty miszki z bursztynowego szkła (Jenning grupa 6) z okresu od końca I w. p.n.e. do połowy I wieku n.e., a także liczne ułamki italskiej *terra sigillata*. Niezwykle interesujące są również liczne fragmenty malowideł, między innymi tzw. imitujących marmur (*a finto marmo*).