Greeks and Locals in the Bosporan Kingdom. Cultural Interactions

Supervisor: Dr. M. Manoledakis

Student’s name: Grougiou Christina
Student ID: 2201100001

INTERNATIONAL HELLENIC UNIVERSITY
School of Humanities
MA in Black Sea Cultural Studies
# Contents

Abstract ............................................................................................................................................................................. 3

Introduction ........................................................................................................................................................................ 4

Greek Colonization of the Black Sea Area .................................................................................................................. 5

Greek Colonization of the Northern Black Sea Littoral-The Kimmerian Bosporus .................................. 7

Early Settlements ............................................................................................................................................................. 7

Foundation of the Greek Bosporan Cities and Archaeological Data ................................................................. 10

Foundation of the Greek Bosporan Cities and Written Sources ........................................................................... 12

Early Graeco-Native Relations in the Northern Black Sea Region ................................................................. 16

Greek Archaic Pottery from the Barbarian Sites of the Forest-steppe Zone-Evidence of Contacts among the Greeks and the Natives ........................................................................................................... 22

The Bosporan Kingdom .................................................................................................................................................. 25

  The Archaeanaktids’ Rule (480/79-438/7 B.C.) ................................................................................................. 28

  The Spartokids’ Rule .................................................................................................................................................. 29

  The Arrival of Sarmatians in the Northern Black Sea Region ........................................................................... 34

  The Second Wave of Nomadic Migration in the Northern Black Sea Littoral ............................................. 38

  Bosporus under Pontic Rule (late 2nd century- 63 B.C.) ................................................................................. 43

Bosporan Chora .............................................................................................................................................................. 46

Bosporan Trade and Natives ......................................................................................................................................... 50

Bosporan Trade and Athens ........................................................................................................................................... 52

The Barrows in the Kingdom of Bosporus .................................................................................................................. 56

  European – Asiatic Part ............................................................................................................................................. 57

Bosporan Art ................................................................................................................................................................... 74

Conclusions ....................................................................................................................................................................... 80

Appendix ............................................................................................................................................................................. 81

  Illustrations ............................................................................................................................................................... 81

  Bibliography ............................................................................................................................................................ 82
Abstract

The present thesis focuses on the Kingdom of Bosporus, emerged in 480 B.C., with a special interest on the developed cultural interactions among the Greek settlers and the local peoples.

After an introductive study regarding the Greek colonization in the Black Sea area, and, more particular, the Kimmerian Bosporus region along with the foundation of the Greek Bosporan cities, the early relationships between the Greek settlers and the native populations till the formation of the local kingdoms, are examined. Regarding the region of the Kimmerian Bosporus, the Bosporan Kingdom emerged.

In the course of this thesis, the reader shall be informed upon the circumstances, which led to the creation of the Kingdom of Bosporus as well as of its successive dynasties. Moreover, the historical frame of the Bosporan Kingdom till its submission to the Pontic rule ended by the death of Mithridates VI Eupator, in parallel with the deployed local interactions is viewed.

Furthermore, the organization of the Bosporan chora till the Roman times is examined, with a special interest in the role of the native population regarding the development of the near and distant rural chora. Moreover, the Bosporan trade is being viewed in relation not only with the local peoples, but as well, with the Mediterranean, and more particular, Athens, followed by the attested cultural affiliations, mainly in art.

In addition, the barrows located in the Kingdom of Bosporus, both on its European and Asiatic part are examined, while the extracted suggestions, often contradictory, based on their construction and, notably, on the finds from those burial mounds are of great interest. Finally, the Bosporan Art in the history of the Kingdom of Bosporus till the Roman Era, as attested through the influences of various artistic currents, is developed.

Ultimately, the reader of this thesis, apart from being informed of the various cultural sways in the Bosporan Kingdom, will have the opportunity to form his own conclusions regarding the cultural identity of the Bosporan Dynasty, upon which, though the cultural syncretism is generally accepted, dispute among scholars still exists.
Introduction

The present thesis focuses on the examination of the Kingdom of Bosporus along with the cultural interactions that occurred within its territories from the moment of its formation till the Roman Times. At first, the Greek colonization of the Black Sea area is being examined with a special interest in the northern Black Sea littoral, and, in particular, the region of the Kimmerian Bosporus. Moreover, regarding Crimea and Taman Peninsula, the earliest established settlements are being viewed, along with the foundation of the Greek Bosporan cities in line with the archaeological data and the written sources. Furthermore, the early Graeco-native relations in the northern Black Sea region are being examined, supported by the finds of Greek archaic pottery from the barbarian sites of the forest-steppe zone.

Moreover, in the course of this thesis, the emergence of the Bosporan Kingdom is being viewed, starting by the Archaeanaktids’ Rule in 480/79 B.C., to be followed by the Spartokids’ Rule in 438/37 B.C. In addition, the arrival of the Sarmatians in the northern Black Sea littoral is being developed, ensued by the second wave of nomadic migration in the region. Finally, Bosporus under the Pontic Rule, dated to the late 2nd century-63 B.C., is being examined.

Accordingly, the Bosporan Chora along with the Bosporan trade with the native population, as well as Athens, is being deployed. Additionally, the barrows in the Kingdom of Bosporus, regarding both its European and Asiatic part, are being viewed along with the extracted suggestions regarding the cultural background within which they were created, ensued, furthermore, by the study upon the Art in the Bosporan Kingdom as a whole. Finally, at the end of this thesis, the reader shall find an appendix with the relevant illustrations, followed by the bibliography used for the writing of this treatise.
Greek Colonization of the Black Sea Area

“The Black Sea was opened up by the Greeks step by step.” (Tsetskhladze 1998, p. 67). During the 7th century B.C., the number of the established settlements-apoikiai on the northern, western and southern littoral was small with the majority of the Black Sea colonies to be founded between the 6th century B.C. and the late archaic period (Tsetskhladze 1998, p. 67). Thus, the progress of colonization in the Black Sea Region was very slow, while, until the beginning of the 6th century, most probably only six or seven permanent settlements existed in the entire area (Hojte 2008, p. 151).

The reasons that urged the Greeks to go and settle in the Black Sea, were the search for metals, grain, slaves, timber, cattle, fish, etc., their need for land or due to political factors (Hojte 2008, p. 154). Nevertheless, though, at first, Greek colonization was triggered by trade, the abovementioned massive colonization resulted, to a large degree, by internal upheavals in Miletus, the main Ionian founder city in the Black Sea region (Koshelenko - Kuznetsov 1998, p. 253). Thus, trade as a primary motivation for colonization, should, as well, be viewed in the wider socio-economic context, that existed in the founder city and its chora, and not alone from agriculture, mainly in an agrarian basis society, as that of ancient Greece. Regarding Miletus, it was ‘stenochoria’, the lack of land, resulted by the Lydian and then Persian incursions, which actuated the colonization process (Greaves 2007, p. 19).

Furthermore, among the factors that determined the choice for the establishment of settlements were the easily defendable sites, such as peninsulas, the sites of trade importance, located, often, at the mouths of navigable rivers, the points with convenient harborage, along with the existence of arable land (Hojte 2008, p. 159).

According to Liddell and Scott (Wilson 1997, p. 250), an ‘apoikia’ is a settlement located in a foreign soil, literally a “home away from home”, a community created in the image of the creator community (Tsetskhladze 1998, p. 15). Regarding apoikia’s political status, some scholars suggest the image of a polis, while in view of its foundation, the consultation of an Oracle, the mentioning of an oikist, the transmission of holly fire to the newly established community along with the maintaining relations with the mother city are well tied in (Tsetskhladze 1998, p. 15).
Hence, apoikia is the earliest colony, which from the middle/last quarter of the 6th century B.C., bore the features of a polis (cult places, dwellings made of stone, buildings for public use, etc.), along with the development of its own craft production. Moreover, the term apoikia is used to describe a period of ‘transition’ between the establishment of the earliest colonies and the middle of the 6th century B.C., a crucial point regarding the relations among the locals and the newcomers (Tsetskhladze 1998, pp. 16-17).

In view of the definition of the term ‘emporion’ (trading station or, more precisely, a port-of-trade) (Hansen 2006, p. 1) for the Pontic region is a trading post located either within a polis, a local coastal settlement situated on the coast, or inland, on the territory of the local inhabitants, while, it could, as well, be a production centre (Tsetskhladze 1998, p. 18).

Moreover, an emporion, being a settlement of Greek and native population, usually acted as a dependent polis in the service of the Greek-barbarian interrelations. Its main action was the long distance commercial activities, operated by merchants from various communities. As regards its administration, it retained a certain degree of self-government; however, it was ruled either by a greater in the region Greek polis or by a local prince. In addition, whereas the emporia were mainly located on ports, the existence of inland emporia, acting as posts for the long distance on land trading operations, seems to have been respectively frequent (Hansen 2006, p. 31).

Finally, in view of the written sources and the definition of the term ‘emporion’, the latter was not a settlement; however, it formed part of it. Usually, was of polis organization, in the form of a dependent polis as regards the Black Sea region. The case of Theodosia, located on the northern Black Sea littoral, which, after Panticapaeum, became the second emporion of the Bosporan Kingdom, provides direct evidence for the aforementioned attestation (Hansen 2006, pp. 13, 34).

As emporia by ancient authors are mentioned, among others, Panticapaeum and Theodosia, poleis located on the northern Black Sea littoral, whose important trading role is also underlined by Demosthenes (Tsetskhladze 1998, p. 18). Furthermore, for Panticapaeum the transition from an emporion into a city took place in the first half of the 6th century B.C., for Nymphaeum in the middle of the 6th century, while for Myrmekion, at the end of the abovementioned century (Koshelenko/Kuznetsov 1998, p. 253).
Early Settlements

Main characteristic of the early Greek colonial expansion in the northern Black Sea littoral was the deep Greek penetration into the forested steppe zone. On the contrary, the earliest established settlements on the eastern and western parts of the Black Sea were mainly attested on its shores, or, at least, their presence in the hinterland was of minor importance. Finally, on its southern littoral, the formation of the ground impeded the expansion of the Greek settlements inland (Petropoulos 2003, p. 29).

The earliest penetration in the northern Black Sea region by Greek settlers dates back to the last third of the 7th century B.C. Berezan, a settlement located on the northern shores of the Black Sea region, is considered the first to be established. The date of its foundation, based on the unearthed archaeological material, is located in the middle of the third quarter of the 7th century B.C., while the given, according to Eusebius, date is the 646/5 B.C.
Greek pottery finds dated before the middle of the 7th century B.C., are very limited (Hojte 2008, p. 151).

On Crimea and Taman Peninsular, the first colonies date from the end of the 7th century B.C. One of the earliest settlements in the area is the Taganrog settlement, established by Miletians or, perhaps, by Clazomenians at the end of the 7th or the beginning of the 6th century B.C., though not a long lasting one, while, nowadays, is totally destroyed by the Sea of Azov. The reasons that resulted to the disappearance of this emporion in ca. the beginning of the 5th c. B.C. remain vague. However, its displacement by other, more conveniently located trading posts is possible, while the pressure from the local population could equally be considered (Hojte 2008, p. 159), suggested to have been destroyed by the Scythians, who had a keen interest for the north-eastern littoral of the Sea of Azov. Furthermore, based on the archaeological data from the Taganrog settlement, the location of the Kremnoi harbor, attested in ancient narratives can, most probably, be suggested (Kopylov 2007, pp. 66, 69). Additionally, to the eastern Bosporan area, on the Kuban River’s delta region, the settlement of ‘Seven Brothers’ was established, which, by the end of the 6th century B.C., evolved into a city (Jacobson 1995, p. 47).

The Taganrog settlement for a long time consisted the mere Greek center situated in the north-eastern extremes of Herodotian Scythia, a fact that manifests the great role of the settlement in the process of Bosporan colonization. Moreover, at its early foundation, the Taganrog settlement represented the solely consumer of commodities, reaching the region from the metropolis and other Greek colonies of the northern Black Sea littoral, such as Histria and Borysthenes. On the other hand, the population of the region along with that of Bosporus was very limited in order to make feasible the safe trade with other Greek communities overseas.

Additionally, as the Taganrog settlement was situated on one of the Scythian paths, leading from Hither Caucasus and the Lower Don territories to the Dnieper and Crimean region, the formed nexus of relations among the Greek settlers and the barbarians was unavoidable. This is, furthermore, attested in the unearthed Greek pottery finds from the Scythian burials located in the northeastern areas of the Azov Sea and Bosporus.

Thus, among the found pottery fragments from the northernmost Greek settlement in the Black Sea area, are attested amphora shreds of Lesbian, Chian, etc., origin along with fragmented Archaic plain and East Greek pottery. Additionally, a small number of ceramic
shreds of the bird-vessel type were unearthed, as well as pottery finds of bowls decorated with triple lines and five rays, most probably rosettes, along with cups of Ionian origin (Treister/Vinogradov, 1993, p. 551).

The earliest pottery find from the abovementioned settlement is the neck of a fragmented amphora. Based on its features, the amphora can be referred to the SOS type, which, according to M.A. Rizzo’s suggestion (Rizzo 1990, p. 23), reached the region from Attica, while its date is estimated at 650 B.C. Moreover, as the main characteristic for the SOS type amphorae, dated to the second-third quarters of the 7th century B.C., is considered the not occurring in later amphorae, small ridge found under its rim (Kopylov 2007, pp. 67-69).

In addition, another early settlement is Sindikos Limen, the later Gorgippia, while recently a fragment of a Rhodo-Ionian cup bearing bird figures and dated back to the end of the 7th century B.C., was discovered near this territory, at Akekseevskoe settlement, in the vicinity of the town of Anapa. Other Greek colonies in the region such as Panticapaeum, Nymphaeum, Theodosia, Hermonassa, Phanagoria, Kepoi, Patraeus, et al. were founded at a later stage (Tsetskhladze 1998, p. 22; Kosheleko/Kuznetsov 1998, pp. 255, 257). Regarding Panticapaeum and Phanagoria, they emerged in the 540s B.C., the former due to the social struggle that occurred in Miletus, the founder city, while the latter, due to the Persian overlordship of the Ionian coast, which urged the rulers of Teos to abandon their mother city in quest of a new one (Kosheleko/Kuznetsov 1998, p. 252).

It is believed that during the early stage of the establishment (590/80-560 B.C.) of the aforementioned Greek settlements (Panticapaeum, Nymphaion, Tyritake, Myrmekion, Theodosia, Kepoi, Hermonassa, possibly along with Patraeus, Torikos, Korokondami, as well as Porthmeus) on the region of Bosporus, they were all equal to the others regardless of their future development into local metropolis, as evidenced in the cases of Panticapaeum and the later founded Phanagoria. This viewpoint is, additionally, supported by the dated to this period unearthed archeological finds from these territories. Thus, most probably, all the early established settlements in the region of Bosporus were poleis, a suggestion further supported by Hekataios of Miletus’ reference to them all as being of polis status (Petropoulos 2003, p. 54).

On the European Bosporus, noteworthy is that the majority of the early settlements were quite large, developing into towns in later times; however, not a common feature for other areas of Greek colonization. Moreover, the density of the established apoikiai, a great
number situated in a relatively small area, along with their size are explicable by the nearby presence of the Cizcaucasian Scythia. Additionally, their location, according to Herodotus accounts [4. 28], on one of the Scythian nomadic paths, explains the need of the Greeks to dwell in large cities, built in close proximity and on easily defendable sites, such as capes, plateaus, etc.

At the end of the 6th-beginning of the 5th centuries B.C., the most significant Bosporan settlements grew into large cities, entering into a prosperous period for all domains of life, which endured till the end of the first quarter of the 5th century B.C. (Vinogradov 2007, pp. 145-146).

**Foundation of the Greek Bosporan Cities and Archaeological Data**

On the Greek Bosporan cities the most common types of Ionian/East Greek painted pottery, the predominant variety, which provides solid ground for the date of their foundation, are the following: oinochoai, amphorae, kraters of the late stage of the ‘Wilid Goat Style’, kylikes, cups, plates, Chian cups along with other types of tableware, while Attic and Corinthian pottery are also encountered. Thus, based on the finds and contrary to literature, the first Greek settlers reached the region of the Kimmerian Bosporus in ca. 580-560 B.C. From this period at least five settlements located in the European Bosporus are dated (Panticapaeum, Nymphaeum, Theodosia, Myrmekion and Tyritake), while on the Asian part four (Hermonassa, Kepoi, Patraeus along with a totally destroyed settlement of which only the so-called Tuzlinskii cemetery has been left) (Koshelenko/Kuznetsov 1998, p. 255).

Thus, unlike other colonized areas in the northern Black Sea littoral, in the relatively small region of the Kimmerian Bosporus, a great part of the colonization’s process started at a later date with the foundation of apoikiai or city-states, such as Panticapaeum, Nymphaion, Phanagoria, Hermonassa, Kepoi, Sindian Harbour-Gorgippia, and of settlements, such as Myrmekion, Tyritake, Porthmion, etc., which resulted, most probably, by internal colonization (Vinogradov 2008, p. 14). Regarding the agricultural settlements of the Bosporans, the vicinity of pre-Caucasian Scythia along with the movements of Scythian peoples are factors which impeded the creation of a system similar to that found in Olbia. Finally, in view of the settlements located around the Strait of Kerch, the majority of them were founded between the first and second quarters of the 6th century B.C. (Vinogradov 2008, p. 14).
Based on the already found archaeological data, the earliest Greek pottery was found at the aforementioned Taganrog and Alekseevskoe settlements, established during the first wave of colonization and dated to the end of the 7th or beginning of the 6th c. B.C., while on the second wave, dated to the mid-6th c. B.C., the city of Phanagoria along with a large number of settlements were founded in the Taman Peninsula. The archaeological material from this region provides evidence that approximately 25 settlements were established in ca. the third quarter of the 6th c. B.C. Nevertheless, it is not known whether these settlements were founded as independent apoikiai by the newcomers or they formed part of the chorai of the already established colonies. The latter, if this was the case, still demonstrates the arrival of a new wave of settlers. Finally, the third wave of colonization was the outcome of the defeat that the Ionian Greeks faced at the beginning of the 5th c. B.C., during their revolt against Darius. At that time, between 520 and 480 B.C., approximately 30 new settlements appeared in the Taman Peninsula (Koshelenko/Kuznetsov 1998, pp. 255, 257).

On the other hand, according to the so far found archaeological data, the number of the settlements located on the European part of the Bosporus and dated to the second half of the 6th – beginning of the 5th c. B.C., was small. However, worth mentioning are the observed differences in the evolution of the two sides of the future Bosporan Kingdom.

The number of rural settlements on the Asian part was greater than that of the European, most probably due to its fertile soil, a fact that played an important part both in the character and the layout of those settlements. Additionally, this greater number was owned to the good and peaceful trade interactions among the Greek settlers and the indigenous Sindian and Maiotian tribes. A fact, furthermore, attested in the foundation of a town named Sindian Harbour on the location of later Gorgippia. Moreover, though the majority of the rural settlements on the Taman' Peninsula has not been archaeologically surveyed, many times, more recently-established centers of population are met on the Asian side, which enable us to believe that in this part of the Bosporus the development of the rural sites started a bit earlier compared to its Crimean part. Regarding, now, the European side of the Bosporus, the founded settlements were located primarily on the coast. On the other hand, in the Asian shore, apart from the coastal region, settlements are found inland, though not far from those located on the coast and near Kuban’ River’s mouth. The earliest archaeological data from this region, dated back to the middle and the second half of the 6th century B.C., come from Patrasys and Tyrambe (Koshelenko/Kuznetsov 1998, p. 258; Saprykin 2006, p. 275).
However, according to A.M. Novichikhin’s publication (Novichikhin 1993, pp. 28-29; 2000) of a fragmented cup, unearthed among other finds in the vicinity of present Anapa and dated back to the last quarter of the 7th century B.C., the publisher is of the view that trade interactions among the Greeks and the peoples of the Asiatic Bosporus existed since the end of the 7th – beginning of the 6th centuries B.C. (Nikonov 2007, p. 96).

Map 2. Black Sea - Greek Colonies

**Foundation of the Greek Bosporan Cities and Written Sources**

Regarding the information provided by the written sources in relation with the foundation of the Greek colonies in the region of the Kimmerian Bosporus, we are informed by Arrian’s “Bithynian History” that Phanagoria was established by Phanagorus from Teos: “Phanagoria was established by Phanagorus of Teos, who had escaped the violence of the Persians” (Podosinov 2007, p. 103), while based on the given information this should be dated at ca. 545 and 540 B.C. Moreover, Stephanus of Byzantium informs us that Panticapaeum’s founder was the son of King Aeetes of Colchis, an information related to the myths about the Argonauts, and, thus, with no historical value. In his narratives the historian reports on the foundation of the city: “Founded by the son of Aietes, to whom this site was granted by the Scythian king Agaietes and who called it after the name of the local river
Panticapos” (or -es; s.v. Παντικάπαιον). In addition, Eustathius of the 12th century attests in his accounts that the founder of Panticapaeum was the son of Aeetes (Podosinov 2007, p. 102), while, according to Strabo (7. 4. 4) and Pliny the Elder (NH 4. 87) the city was founded by Milesians.

Kepoi, based on the narratives of Pseudo-Scymnos (5. 896) and Pliny the Elder (NH 6. 18) was founded by Milesians, while similar information is given in the Periplus of Arrian (30) for the city of Theodosia. Regarding the city of Hermonassa, according to the accounts of Arrian (Byth. fr. 55 Roos) was named after Hermonassa, the wife of a certain Mytilenian, named Semander: “Hermonassa [was named after] Hermonassa, the wife of Semander, the citizen of Mytilene. Together with a few Aeolians, he founded a colony, but died in the process of foundation, and after his death the city was ruled by his wife, whose name became that of the city” (Podosinov 2007, p. 103). Thus, according to the aforementioned accounts, the city was not founded by Milesians; however, Eustathius informs us (549) that Ionians founded the city, which was named after its oikistes, a certain Hermon: “Phanagoria and Hermonassa were colonized by the Ionians under the leadership of some Phanagorus and Hermonus, after whom these two sites were named” (Podosinov 2007, p. 103). The Ionians are, additionally, pointed by Stephanus of Byzantium as the colonizers of the city of Hermonassa with references to Dionysius and Pseudo-Scymnos. Moreover, Pseudo-Scymnos (889) provides us with information regarding the process of the establishment of Sindian Harbor and Kimmericum, while Strabo informs us that the city of Tanais “was founded by Greeks who held the Bosporus” (11. 2. 3) in the beginning of the 3rd century B.C. (Koshelenko/Kuznetsov 1998, pp. 259-260). The city was given this name after the Greek version for Don River’s appellation, while by the 4th century B.C., it was incorporated into Kingdom of Bosporus. Additionally, according to Strabo’s accounts (II.5, 31), for the ancient world the city of Tanais along with the Lake Maiotia were regarded as the entrance to the mountainous partition among Europe and Asia (Jacobson 1995, p. 47).

According to D.B. Shelov (see Shelov in Heinen 387-89; PECS 877, s.v. Tanais), the Hellenistic Tanais, though established by the Bosporan Greeks, did not form part of the Kingdom of Bosporus, but rather acted as an independent city, bearing a sui genesis dualism resulted by the cohabitation of the two different ethnic peoples, the Greeks and the Scythians. Finally, at the turn of the 1st century B.C., the city was ruined by the Bosporan ruler Polemon, however, it managed to revive and, further, to prosper till its next devastation in the middle of the 3rd century A.C., most probably by the Goths (Treister/Vinogradov 1993, pp. 551-552).
Strabo (11. 2. 10), also, informs us that Panticapaeum was considered the “metropolis of the European Bosporans”, while Phanagoria, the “metropolis of the Asiatic Bosporans” (Koshelenko/Kuznetsov 1998, p. 260). In Zhebelev’s view (Zhebelev 1953a, pp. 62-63), the term ‘metropolis’ should not merely be understood as ‘capital’ but, also, as ‘metropolis’ for those Greek colonies grown up on the European and Asian shore of the Bosporus respectively. However, the expression cannot be fully justified, due to the limited known cities founded directly by the Ionians (Koshelenko/Kuznetsov 1998, p. 260).

Notwithstanding, the role of Phanagoria as a significant city located on the Asiatic shores of Bosporus, is, further, manifested by modern means of airsurvey photography. The city of Phanagoria represented in antiquity a station for traffic and communication of major importance, since, based on those inquiries, a great number of roads seem to have connected the city with the largest settlements in the Taman Peninsula (Kuznetsov 2003, p. 902).

Finally, the Stephanus’ of Byzantium narratives, regarding Panticapaeum’s foundation due to the handed over land by the native Scythian King are only legendary, with no historical basis. Additionally, in Strabo’s accounts (11. 2. 5), the foundation of Panticapaeum and other cities in the region of Bosporus was the result of a clash between the Greeks and the Scythians, with the latter abandoning the area of the Bosporus to be colonized by the newcomers. However, this version of events regarding Panticapaeum’s founding is also unlikely, since, by modern scholars, those areas at that period are considered to have been uninhabited, though to a certain point under Scythian influence (Koshelenko/Kuznetsov 1998, p. 260).

On the contrary, S.Ju. Saprykin does not share the same view, as he claims that the accounts of the ancient writers (Steph. Byz. s.v. Pantikapaion; cf. Strab. 7.4.4-5) are confirmed by archaeological surveys, on the grounds that only a few Archaic settlements have been evidenced in the coastal zone close to the Kerch Straits (Saprykin 2006, p. 274).

In view of the written sources and the archaeological material of the earliest pottery unearthed in the cities located on the Kimmerian Bosporus, it is essential to mention the borne out contradiction based on the place of their manufacture and the leading role of Miletus in the colonizing process of the Bosporan region. Thus, though most of the earliest pottery unearthed in the Bosporan cities was manufactured in North Ionian workshops, according to the written sources, Miletus is considered the primary colonizer city in this activity (Koshelenko/Kuznetsov 1998, p. 261).
In addition to this, although Miletus down to ca. 560 B.C. was the main Black Sea colonizer, regarding the relationship between the cities of the northern littoral and Ephesus the revealed archaeological data demonstrate ties, evidenced by the presence in the Classical period of temples dedicated to Ephesian Artemis (Tsetskhladze 1998, p. 36).

Finally, in the colonization process, during the second quarter/middle of the 6th century B.C. the rural settlements (chorai) of the poleis along with the local craft production were established. In the 4th and 3rd centuries B.C. the enlargement of the territories of the Greek cities located on the northern shores and of their chorai is noticeable, while in the hinterland emporia were established. In addition, archaic workshops and evidences of metalworking, carpentry, wood and bone carving along with clothing production from Berezan, Panticapaeum, Phanagoria, Nympaeum, etc., demonstrate that the northern Black Sea Greek colonies attained their own craft production (Tsetskhladze 1998, pp. 36, 40, 43).
Early Graeco-Native Relations in the Northern Black Sea Region

In the study of Graeco-native relations many things are vague. Regarding the northern Black Sea region, the question whether it was heavily or not populated at the time the first Greek settlers arrived, is still at pose. Archaeological data, such as dugout or semi-dugout dwellings, hand-made pottery, burial rites and prosopography, cast some light on Graeco-native cohabitation (Tsetskhadze 1998, p. 44). Moreover, in view of the architectural appearance of the first Greek settlements in the region of the Kimmerian Bosporus, semi-dugout dwellings along with house-hold buildings are met, while the barbarian element is apparent in their construction (Vinogradov 2008, p. 15).

Not sufficient amount of evidence for the Scythians during the Archaic period impedes any clear suggestions, while, even the 6th century B.C., is characterized a ‘Dark Age’ as regards the Scythian history. In the Steppe Scythia region 3,000 Scythian sites are attested, while, regarding the 7th-6th centuries B.C., sixty Scythian graves are known, 150 dating back to the 5th century, with the rest to the 4th century B.C. (Tsetskhadze 2011, p. 122).

However, the dating of Scythian graves belonging to the Archaic period is a matter of dispute. According to A.M. Butyagin, at the time of the establishment of the first Greek colonies on the northern shores of the Black Sea, the presence of the Scythians was evidenced for the Kuban territories in the opulent Kelermessky -whose date is disputed- and Kostromskaya kurgans, while, for the forest steppe zone in the construction of earthen ramparts around sizeable settlements (Butyagin, 2007, p. 10).

Some scholars believe that no Scythian presence is attested on the steppes of the northern Black Sea hinterland during the 7th and the first half of the 6th century B.C., but, rather, the Scythians dwelled in the region of the northern Caucasus. Thus, after their campaign in the Near East, evidenced in both Greek and Near Eastern accounts, the latter returned to the northern Caucasus territories, and not to the northern Black Sea littoral, greatly, though, influenced by the Near Eastern culture. Nevertheless, other scholars support the view of the immediate links among the Scythians and the Greek settlers of the newly established colonies situated on the northern Black Sea area (Tsetskhadze 2011, p. 122).
At that point, we should stress that the time of Greek penetration in the region of Bosporus coincides with the appearance of the Scythians as an ethnic community to the northern areas of the Black Sea littoral. Most probably the Scythians did not hinder Greeks’ settlement, since they were busy with their own installation in those vast areas in order to be able to control all the remote territories of the region (Koshelenko/Kuznetsov 1998, pp. 261-262).

From the end of the 6th century B.C., the number of the located in the North Pontic littoral Scythian barrows steadily increased, while the dated to the 4th century B.C. Scythian burial-mounds were of thousands. Since then, the greatest in number as well as of opulence in the grave-goods burial places were attested in the Kuban region, in the well-known Kelermes, Ul’skiy, Bolshoy Stavropol’ barrows, etc., contrary to the ones located in northern Pontic area, whose number was small with very modest burial assemblages. Accordingly, the Scythian sites in the North Caucasus’ territories outnumbered those situated in the North Pontic region (Murzin 2005, p. 34).

This evidence provides ground for Scythian peoples’ migration from the North Caucasus’ territories of plains and foothills to the area of the Sea of Azov, the lower Dnieper’s ranges along with the valley of Bug. By that time, the westward shift of the main Scythian population, which reached its peak during the end of the 4th century B.C., towards the lower Danube territories as well as in the Dobrudja, during King Ateas’ reign, began (Murzin 2005, p. 34).

The formation of the first Scythian state took place at the end of the 6th century B.C., coinciding with the establishment of a series of Greek colonies on the northern Black Sea littoral. The state of Scythia encompassed different peoples not only regarding their origin, but, as well, their mode of living, being either farmers, dwelling on the wooded steppe or nomads. Finally, the great potency of this Scythian state is evidenced in Darius’ I army defeat (Murzin 2005, pp. 34-35).

Thus, whereas in the Archaic period the Greek and Scythian interrelations were quite limited, from the beginning of the 5th century B.C., a shift in the political situation is attested in the establishment of two political centers on the northern Black Sea littoral. The one within the Bosporan Kingdom, while the other in the vicinity of the Greek city of Olbia, on the mouth of the Dnieper-Bug River and, further, in control of the trade routes to the Black Sea hinterland (Tsetskhladze 2011, p. 127).
Furthermore, the finds from the burials at Temir-Gora, located in the Kerch Peninsula and from those at the proximity of Tsukurskii Liman River in the Taman Peninsula, bear evidence of some kind of Scythians’ presence on both sides of the Kimmerian Bosphorus. Moreover, regarding the burial mound at Temir-Gora, the find of a painted Greek oinochoe provides further ground for the earliest Greek-barbarian contacts in the region (Maslennikov 2005, p. 155).

Thus, the Greeks that settled on both shores of the future Bosporan Kingdom were placed in an ethno-political environment which was basically the same. Later their destinies would follow different patterns. Moreover, the different roles that Scythians played in the Asian and European sides respectively, might explain the greater number of Greek settlements established before the first quarter of the 6th c. B.C., in the Asian than in the European part. In addition, the reason for the lesser development of the European part of the Kimmerian Bosphorus could be attributed to the proximity of Scythians’ presence, who, in the 6th c. B.C. started to pass to a more settled way of living (Koshelenko/Kuznetsov 1998, p. 262).

During the second and the third quarters of the 6th century B.C., the relations among the Greeks and the Scythians in the region of the Bosporan strait were characterized by rare trading and political interactions. The presence of the Scythians at the extreme southern ‘Kimmerian sea-crossing’, mentioned in Herodotus accounts, located on the Kerch Peninsula, is not attested, whereas in the northern sea-crossing the intensified military conflicts resulted to the construction of defensive walls in Porthmion and Myrmekion during the second half of the 6th century B.C. (Zin’ko 2006, pp. 290-291). Finally, Porthmion, situated on the northwestern shores of the Strait of Kerch, was a site of great strategic importance, since its dwellers could control the passage of the straits (Treister/Vinogradov 1993, p. 547).

Regarding the main area of Scythians’ settlement at the early times of Greek colonization, there exist two main suggestions. According to the first one, the Scythians came to the north of the Black Sea and then started their campaigns towards the Near East, while their main base was the foot-hills of Caucasus. However, according to the second view, the settlement in the foot-hills of Caucasus preceded the Scythians’ arrival in the northern Black Sea region (Melyukova 1989, p. 49; Chernenko/Bessonova/Boltrik et al. 1986). What, nevertheless, is evidenced by the archaeological material is the already attested greater number of Scythian sites, dated to the 7th c. B.C., in the foot-hills of the Caucasus, compared to the ones located in the northern Black Sea areas. Only when the turbulent events in the
Near East ended, at ca. 585 B.C., the steppes of the Black Sea region became the main area of Scythians’ settlement (Koshelenko/Kuznetsov 1998, pp. 261-262).

During the first nascent and crucial stages, the respect on behalf of the Greek settlers towards their local neighbors was indispensable for the foundation of a successful colony in terms of security, diplomacy and trade. Since the earliest contacts, intermarriage was a central practice among Greeks colonists and Scythians, while constructive engagement was attainable through conversation and relationship with the local rulers, leading to conditions of symbiosis and cultural osmosis with mutual benefits (Braund 2008, p. 363).

Herodotos (4. 108-109) informs us that in the interior of the northern Black Sea littoral, the population of the site of Gelonos, the Gelonoi, had Greek roots, while its distinction from the neighboring Scythian tribe of Boudinoi was evident. According to his accounts, they had moved in Antiquity from the emporia, located most probably on the coast, to settle among the Boudini: “For the Gelonoi are by their origin Greeks, who left their emporia to settle among the Boudini.” (Herod. IV, 108) (Petropoulos 2003, p. 45). Furthermore, their language was a mixture of Scythian and Greek. More obvious reason for this movement was their quest for better economic opportunities than the outcome of violence.

Though doubts emerge regarding the existence of Gelonos, the archaeological data evidence the presence of grand settlements located on the wooded steppe of the hinterland with an emphasis on the use of timber. In addition, regardless of the treatment of those peoples as Scythians by modern scholarship, the differentiation of their lifestyles from the pastoralist communities to their south is evident. These Greeks might be the former dwellers of large communities such as Olbia along with small communities, such as Kremnoi, located on the Sea of Azov (Braund 2008, pp. 359-360).

Additionally, in Herodotos’ narrative, Gelonoi are presented as agriculturalists, city-dwellers and worshipers of Greek gods by building wooden temples, altars and statues, while they were Bacchants themselves celebrating a ‘trieteris’ festival dedicated to god Dionysos (Hinge 2008, p. 388).

According to E.K. Petropoulos, the site of Gelonos may be identified with the modern village of Belsk, while from the archaeological excavations conducted in the region, the earliest Greek pottery finds are dated back either to the last quarter of the 7th century B.C., or to the turn of the 7th – onset of the 6th century B.C. (Petropoulos 2003, p. 45).
The Taman peninsula’s, according to Herodotus’ accounts, inhabitants were the Sindians, who reached the region by crossing the frozen Kerch Straits (the Kimmerian Bosporus), after repeated acts of warfare on ice with the Scythians, their counterparts in the region of eastern Crimea. Thus, for the historian, the Taman peninsula is more or less the land dwelled by the Sindians, the Sindike (Braund 2007b, p. 17).

However, regarding the Maiotians, though they were said to have dwelled in the lower Kuban along with the southern and southeast coasts of the Sea of Azov, their presence in the region is evidenced only by chronicles and inscriptions and not testified by any certain archaeological detection. In addition, according to Herodotus’ narratives, to the northeast of the Maiotian peoples, inhabited the Sauromatians, a tribe clearly correlated with the Scythians, as evidenced by the available archaeological material. Furthermore, based on Herodotus’ accounts (IV.110-117), the Sauromatians emerged through the marriages among the Scythians and the Amazons. Moreover, the Sarmatians, which, in turn, evolved from the Sauromatians, in their westward arrival into the territories of the Russian steppes, became the responsible tribe for the destabilization of both the Scythians’ and Greeks’ domination in the region (Jacobson 1995, pp. 48-49).

In view of the colonies located on the Kimmerian Bosporus and in relation to found archaeological material and locals, the proportion of hand-made pottery is larger in the region, with pottery finds in every Greek city. For those situated in the European part of the Bosporus the type is Scythian, while for those in the Asiatic part, Maeotian, a fact that demonstrates the ethnic character of the adjacent native populations. However, in Myrmekion, located on the European part, the found hand-made pottery resembles more with that of the Asiatic part. Furthermore, the native features in the burials of the Greek cities of Bosporus attest the presence of locals. This is also evidenced by the inscribed names on grave-stones, though names cannot always be a certain proof of ethnic identification (Tsetskhladze 1998, p. 45).

In addition, regarding the evidences that demonstrate Greek visits in barbarian settlements located deep inland, Belskoe city-site offers the best proofs, with the discovery of Greek Archaic Rhodian-Ionian and local pottery, of a bronze arrowhead, along with a spindle bearing Greek graffiti. Moreover, two gems were unearthed, one with the representation of two seated men, who face each other and hold a vessel, while the other bearing a seated young male along with an inscription in Greek, of which only three letters are discernible.
Both finds are dated back to the end of the 5th-4th centuries B.C. (Tsetskhladze 1998, p. 50; Murzin 2005, p. 36).

The city-site of Belskoe was a trading post, with the Classical imports representing the 20 per cent of the total unearthed pottery. As regards its population, it was especially thinly dwelled and only in certain areas of the site. Additionally, the evidenced building of a strong fortification system, witnesses apart from the existence of the necessary for its construction material, the presence of a great labor-force, which in turn indicates the existence of a potent political configuration. The only attested political formation during this period was the Scythian State (Murzin 2005, p. 36).

Thus, the Belskoe site was not founded for the protection of the native peoples from the hostile activities of the Scythian nomads, but, most possibly, functioned as a centre for the spread of the Scythian military and political might in the region. Accordingly, for a time the Scythian Kings might have sojourned there. Finally, worth mentioning is that in the proximity of the city-site one of the greatest necropolis, regarding the whole Scythian presence in the region, with approximately 2,000 barrows, is located (Murzin 2005, pp. 36-37).

Though, based on Herodotus’ narratives (4. 108), the local population were the above mentioned Gelonoi, speaking Greek along with Scythian, this archaeological material, according to Tsetskhladze (Tsetskhladze 1998, p. 50), is rather the evidence of Greek presence among the local inhabitants. The additionally found traces of metalworking, craftsmanship of gold and silver jewellery, bronzesmithing, bone carving, along with pottery kilns, manifest the existence of a crafts’ production center, located, mainly, in the eastern and western fortresses of the site. Most probably, the Greek dwellers in the site were craftsmen, who migrated from the emporia located on the coast, as Herodotus narrates (4. 108) (Tsetskhladze 1998, p. 50; Murzin 2005, p. 36).
Greek Archaic Pottery from the Barbarian Sites of the Forest-steppe Zone-Evidence of Contacts among the Greeks and the Natives

Greek pottery, dated back to the second half of the 7th-the early 6th centuries B.C., unearthed in the barbarian settlements and barrows situated in the forest-steppe zone of the northern Black Sea littoral, provide solid ground for the intensive contacts among the Greeks and these local peoples (Vachtina 2007, p. 23).

The earliest economic relations between the natives and the Ionian Greeks are dated back to the foundation of the already mentioned Greek settlement of Berezan (Borysthenes), located in the lower South Bug area. Since that time, the territory of the northern Black Sea littoral became an area of contacts, as attested by the finds of East-Greek pottery in the whole region. The earliest Archaic pottery finds are dated to the last third of the 7th century B.C., found in fortified, as well as unfortified settlements, among them Scythians, in barbarian villages and burial territories (Vachtina 2007, pp. 23-25).
The Greeks, in the initial stage of their contacts with the region of the northern Black Sea littoral, they had to establish peaceful relations with the existing local inhabitants of the forested steppe zone as a prerequisite for the next coming of the new settlers. In order to succeed in that, they offered to the aristocracy of the autochthonous population rich gifts, as evidenced by the luxurious decorated pottery finds from the region. This is, most probably, the reason that no signs of destruction are attested in the Greek settlements of the northern Black Sea region during the early years of their establishment (Petropoulos 2003, pp. 61-62).

Regarding the unearthed Ionian pottery from the Scythian burial complexes of the Lower Don territories during the time of Taganrog settlement, according to V.P. Kopylov’s opinion (Kopylov 2007, p. 69), they originated in the Taganrog colony, revising, thus, the previously established view that they were all imported from Borysthenes. Additionally, Taganrog, like Borysthenes and Histria, situated in the central and western territories of Herodotian Scythia respectively, played a decisive role in the trade activities with the local population of the wooded-steppe region of the northern Black Sea littoral. Thus, the interactions among the Greek settlers and the native peoples, mainly the Scythian nomads, in the third quarter of the 7th – third quarter of the 6th centuries B.C., influenced greatly not only the historical and cultural evolution of the region, but, affected as well, its ethnic and political destiny (Kopylov 2007, p. 69).

However, the greatest finds stem from large, well defended sites located on the forest-steppe zone, in places, such as the abovementioned Belskoe city-site, being the largest of all, the Trachtemirov, located on the middle Dnieper, the Pastyrskoe, the Chotovskoe, the most distant Scythian settlement in the North and the Nemirovo, situated in the middle Bug (Vachtina 2007, pp. 25-26).

On Nemirovo, a remote native site located far from the Greek centers, the numerous Greek finds are dated to the third and the fourth quarters of the 7th century B.C., while they bear evidence of the close contacts between the locals and the Greeks. Moreover, the finds are mainly East-Greek pottery fragments of the Orientalising Style, representing wild goats, deer, dogs and lions, while their painting technique evidences South Ionia as the place of production for the majority of them (Vachtina 2007, pp. 27, 29).

Finally, the pottery finds from this city-site dated after the middle of the 6th century B.C., are rare and of less quality, compared to those from the 7th century. Most probably, the relations among the Greek World and the local inhabitants became less profound or altered
in nature. Nevertheless, by the end of the Archaic period, late 6th–early 5th century B.C., Greek pottery penetrated the region in large amounts (Vachtina 2007, p. 34).

According to Tsetskhladze (Tsetskhladze 1998, p. 12), the earliest Archaic Greek pottery found in the barbarian sites and tumuli belonged to the Scythian nobility. Regarding the presence of these vessels in these city-sites, apart from the already attested offering as gifts by the Greeks to the local elite, in order to reassure their friendship (cf. Strabo 7. 4. 6), some of them, might, as well, have been brought by the Scythians, in their return from Asia Minor, dated at the end of the 7th century B.C. Furthermore, noteworthy is that this early Greek animal decorated pottery, bearing dogs, goats, birds, etc., must have been greatly valued by the barbarians, not solely for its Greek origin, but for being a reminiscence of their Scythian Animal Style (Tsetskhladze 1998, pp. 12-13).

Judging by the unearthed Archaic Greek objects from the numerous Scythian burial barrows located on the forest-steppe zone, the number of Greek amphorae, plain pottery, jewellery, beads, etc., is great, being a further testimony of the intensive Greek-barbarian relations (Vachtina 2007, p. 35).

In view of the import of highest quality pottery to the northern Black Sea region, during the late Classical and early Hellenistic period, Attic black gloss pottery along with Pergamene vessels, replaced, though, in later Hellenistic times by the Pergamene Sigillata, prevail, while the Hellenistic Color-Coated Ware A vessels, originated, most likely, from Rhodes and dated back to the late 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C., are found in lesser quantities (Domzalski 2007, p. 176).

The relationship between the Greeks and the native populations in the Black Sea from the end of the 6th/beginning of the 5th century B.C., changed due to the emergence of local kingdoms. In the region of the Kimmerian Bosporus, located on the passage of eastern barbarian movements, the Bosporan Kingdom emerged (Tsetskhladze 1998, p. 48; Vinogradov 2008, p. 14).
The Bosporan Kingdom

Regarding the geographical situation of the Kimmerian Bosporus, the latter was situated on the ford between the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, being, additionally, the bridgehead for the land unification of the two continents. Thus, from the very start, the Greek cities, established on these, of great importance, paths between the Crimean and the Caucasus, were joined in a federation consisting of city-states, which, in the course of time, expanded its territories to the locals of the Kuban River and beyond.

Thus, on the Northern Black Sea littoral, the Greek cities located on the Kerch and Taman peninsulas were bound together forming the Kingdom of Bosporus as an outcome of the Scythian threat (Tsetskhladze 1998, p. 48) of which, the most important was the westward arrival of a new Scythian wave, reaching the region from the areas east of the Don River. The fact that the Scythians reached the Bosporan state’s borders in the 5th century B.C., is evidenced by the dated to this period Scythian barrows. The Greek colonies suffered greatly, as witnessed in the traces of destruction and fires, found in many Bosporan settlements and cities, while the construction of fortification walls in Panticapaeum, Myrmekion, Tyritake, Porthmeion, Nymphaion and Phanagoria is, furthermore, associated with this event (Vinogradov 2007, p. 146; Kulikov 2007, p. 1031).

However, according to other views, the formation of the Bosporan Kingdom under the reign of Archaianaktids’ dynasty in 480 B.C., was the result of the same tyrants’ attempt to expand the chora of their city by subduing neighboring territories. Furthermore, this strife for power expansion corresponds with Panticapaeum’s attested growth in the erection of public and state buildings, in the enlargement of its acropolis as well as in the construction of Myrmekion’s defensive wall, at that time forming part of Panticapaeum’s polis (Saprykin 2006, p. 276).

According to another viewpoint, the Persians’ interests upon the northern Black Sea region and, notably, over the wealthy Bosporus, were great, while, by some scholars is suggested that in the 6th century B.C., the Bosporan region was under the power, though not direct, of the Persian satraps. In addition, the existence of a short of a Persian ‘administration’ in Panticapaeum has been assumed as the reason for the city’s attested political and economical growth in the beginning of the 5th century B.C. Therefore, the ‘tyranny’ of the
Archaianaktids might have been correlated with the political influence of the Persian control in the city.

However, either the accession of the Greek ‘tyranny’ to the throne was the aftermath of ‘pro-Persian’ or ‘counter-Persian’ political factors (Diod., XII, 31, 1), Panticapaeum’s domination over the Kimerrian Bosporus was a fact. Moreover, the thoroughly accepted by scholars theory about the association of silver Bosporan coins, bearing the legend ‘A-Π-Ο-Α’ on their reverse side, with the attested in the 5th century B.C. political integration of the Bosporan cities into a symmachia, raises the question whether this unity was created against the Scythian threat or was forced by the Persian will to subjugate the Bosporan cities (Kulikov 2007, p. 1030).

For the steppe lands of the northern Black Sea area, this was a period of instability connected to Scythian hostility as evidenced by the archaeological material. This is related to a number of factors, though the most important is considered the arrival, at the turn of the 6th to the 5th century B.C., of a new Scythian tribe from the Eurasian steppe. These nomads, based on the archaeological data, were carriers of a different culture; however, their dissimilarities with the local Scythians seemed insignificant to the Greeks, who considered them Scythians as well. During the first quarter of the 5th century B.C., most of the Bosporan cities suffered from these barbarian forays. As a consequence of these events, the Greek colonies were put in jeopardy, evidenced by the erection of defense systems in Panticapaeum, Myrmeion, Tyritake, Porthmion and Phanagoria, along with the traces of fire that were unearthed in a great number of Bosporan sites (Vinogradov 2008, p. 15; Zin’ko 2006, p. 292).

Thus, it can be suggested that the Bosporan Kingdom was established in the 5th century B.C., in an attempt to prevent Greek cities from seceding, forming a defense union (symmachia), which was during the early years, under the rule of the Archaianaktids’ dynasty (480/79-438/7 B.C.). Its completion came in the 4th century, under the Spartokids’ regime, with the forced annexation of Nymphaeum, Theodosia, Phanagoria and Sindoi. During the first half of the 4th century B.C., the Kingdom of Bosporus managed to expand its territories through the peaceful incorporation of the local inhabitants in the Taman and Kuban regions (Tsetskhladze 1998, pp. 48-49; Vinogradov 2007, p. 146).

The abovementioned territorial expansion of Bosporus, forced the Ixamatai, a nomadic tribe of Iranian origin, bearing a Scythian or a Scythoid character in its early culture, to abandon the western Trans-Kuban territories and to settle to the north-eastern coast of
the Sea of Azov. Their presence in the region is, furthermore, attested by the unearthed burial mounds from the lower Don territories as well as the north-eastern shore of the Azov Sea, bearing common features with the Trans-Kuban graves. However, in the beginning of the 4th century B.C., the Ixamatai made an effort to reestablish their power in Sindike and the surrounding territories, ensued by their interference in the warfare among the Bosporans and the Sindians, an event examined in the course of this thesis (Novichikhin 2007, p. 101).

Regarding, now, the term ‘Bosporus’ in correlation with the Bosporan Kingdom, modern historiography views ‘Bosporus’ as the Strait’s name, or the name given to the Spartokids and their successors’ state and finally, as the Bosporan Kingdom itself. In Herodotus’ accounts [Hdt. 4. 28], the use of the term ‘Kimmerian Bosporus’ for the Strait of Kerch, is ascribed to ancient, even for the historian, times, when the area was inhabited by the Kimmerian peoples. Moreover, the name ‘Kimmerian Bosporus’ is met in later authors, such as Strabo, Pliny, Arrian, who, additionally, used the terms ‘the mouth of the Maeotis’, ‘the gorge between Achillion and Myrmekion’, and ‘the strait’, meaning the strait which separated Bosporus from Sindike (Zavoikin 2007, p. 150; Nikonov 2007, p. 95).

However, the term ‘Bosporus’ bears many meanings. Since the period of the Great Greek colonization, the Greeks used the term in order to define the Strait of Kimmerian Bosporus (a counterpoint to the Thracian Bosporus) and in replacement of the oldest Iranian term panti-kap-, after which, Panticapaeum, the earliest founded by Milesians colony in this area, was named. Additionally, according to another theory, ‘Bosporus’ was the unofficial name of Panticapaeum. Moreover, the term is believed to have been used for the definition of a part of the Spartokid’s kingdom, evidenced, since the reign of Leukon I and onwards, in their titles as archons of ‘Bosporus and Theodosia’, or for the definition of the entire Spartokid state. Nevertheless, since Bosporus under the Spartokids’ regime was a region that covered great territories, both on the European and Asiatic coast, the locations of Scythians and Sindoi respectively, the term defined not merely a geographical area, but first and foremost a political unit, forming into a territorial state (Zavoikin 2007, pp. 150-152).

The development of the Kimmerian Bosporus from the 7th to the 1st century B.C. -the onset of the Roman era- and, more precisely, this of the Bosporan Kingdom, is closely connected with the military and political conditions, as these, at times, were formed in the steppe lands of the northern Black Sea region (Vinogradov 2008, p. 20). The evolutionary stages of Bosporan Kingdom’s history, with all its peaks and declines, are the following:
The Archaianaktids’ Rule (480/79-438/7 B.C.)

In solely one ancient narrative (Diod. 12.31.1) the rule of the Archaianaktids’ dynasty is being described, headed for forty-two years by a family of non clear origins (Jacobson 1995, p. 47). Moreover, this rule should barely be viewed as one state or power. Taking into account the dated to a later period coinage of the cities of Phanagoria and Nymphaion, along with the barrows of the nomad’s elite in the vicinity of Nymphaion, Panticapaeum, Phanagoria, Kepoi, and most likely Hermonassa, bearing their traditional constructions and coinciding with the formation of the Archaianaktids’ dynasty, the possibility that within this federation, the Bosporan cities retained to a certain extent a form of independence should be considered (Vinogradov 2008, p. 15; Vinogradov 2007, p. 146).

According to S.Ju. Saprykin (Saprykin 2006, p. 276), the Archaianaktids must have ruled only over Panticapaeum and Myrmekion along with some other small settlements in their proximity, being in charge of Panticapaeum’s political and economical development in the Kerch Peninsula alone, and not in the entire region of the later Bosporan Kingdom. This is, furthermore, evidenced in the independent way that Panticapaeum and Phanagoria functioned. Thus, whereas the former expanded its chora through military activity, to the latter such kind of policy could hardly be ascribed. Consequently, Archaianaktids’ expansion policy is not attested in the establishment of the rural settlements of cities such as Phanagoria, Hermonassa, Kepoi and Sindos or Sindian Harbour, situated in the Asian part of Bosporus (Saprykin 2006, pp. 276-277).

Nevertheless, regardless of which of the above mentioned views is the correct one, the fact that the “Archaeanactids laid the first brick in the foundation of the unified Bosporan state, that of the Spartokids” (Vinogradov 2007, p. 146), should be stressed out.

Finally, the latter’s accession to the Bosporan throne was related with a ‘coup d’ etat’ in the Bosporan dominant classes. Thus, the regarded by modern historians as Thracian mercenaries, gained under the Spartokids’ control, the military authority as well as the absolute power in the Bosporan territories. Moreover, the connection of this plot with the political aims of Athens for the region cannot be ruled out (Kulikov 2007, p. 1032).
The Spartokids’ Rule

In 438/437 B.C., Spartokos I came in to power and reign of the Bosporan Kingdom (Diod. 12.31.1) (Vinogradov 2008, p. 16), while the emergence of the Spartokid’s dynasty in the Kingdom of Bosporus at the 430’s, might have been, in a way, connected to Athens (Braund 2007a, p. 53). Worth mentioning is that in the 5th century B.C., an Athenian fleet led by Pericles reached the coasts of the Bosporan Kingdom, most probably, near the location of modern Kerch (Sokolov 1974, p. 16).

Regarding the ethnic origin of the first Spartokid rulers, many assumptions have been made whether they had Greek, Thracian, Scythian, Scytho-Thracian, Sindian, etc., roots. Nevertheless, the most persuasive suggestion seems to be that Spartokos I was a Thracian. Moreover, according to Zhebelev (Zhebelev 1953b, p. 168), the view that Spartokos I was an Odrysian prince, who arrived at the Bosporus invited by the Archaeanactids, should, additionally, be taken under consideration, while, according to Machinskiy (Machinskiy 1993. On Sparadocus and Spartacus as the same name, see Anokhin 1998, pp. 41-42; cf. contra Vasiliev 1999), the Bosporan ruler Spartokos I, was the Odrysian Sparadocus, Sitalces’ brother and Octamasades’ uncle. Finally, the latter’s accession to the throne in Scythia coincides with the appearance of the Spartokid dynasty in the Kingdom of Bosporus in 438/7 B.C. (Alekseyev 2005, pp. 43-44). The Spartokid’s rule lasted for more than three hundred years, until the end of the 2nd century B.C., while the united Bosporan State continued to exist under this name until the 4th century A.D.

Spartokid’s power, which by the beginning of the 3rd century B.C., encompassed political, economical along with priestly control, based on a Bosporan epigraphy represented each Spartokid ruler, starting from Leukon and onwards, as bearing both the powers of an archon, regarding his Greek subjects, and of a basileus, regarding his barbarians. Thus, during Leukon’s rule, the title of basileus was initiated, while the Bosporan state started its alteration into a kingdom (Moreno 2007, pp. 70-71; Jacobson 1995, p. 48).

The regime of the Spartokids was a tyranny, with Panticapaeum forming its political core, while, it bore features of polis’ traditions along with rulers’ power over the subdued territories. Furthermore, according to many scholars’ suggestion, only under a despotic and not democratic regime, the concentration of great wealth in the hands of the Spartokid rulers, as will be attested in the course of this thesis, would have been feasible (Vinogradov 2007, p. 147; Zavoikin 2007, pp. 151-152).
Moreover, the emergence of the Spartokid dynasty in the Bosporan Kingdom entailed changes regarding Panticapaeum’s, capital of the European Bosporus, attitude towards the local Scythian tribes. As a consequence, Nymphaion started losing its barbarian allies in its strife against the Bosporan State and, most probably, due to this fact, in the 430s B.C., it became a member of the Delian League as well as a center for Athenian sway in the Kimmerian Bosporus. Additionally, the Athenian presence in the region is, most likely, correlated with the establishment of the Athenian *klerouchia*, the bestowal of land to the new settlers (Zin’ko 2006, p. 295).

Nevertheless, Nymphaion lost its independence in 405/404 B.C., as it was subdued by the Bosporan tyrants, an event related to Gylon of Cerameis’ (Demosthenes’ uncle and an Athenian governor appointed for the surrender of Nymphaion to Satyros) treason (Aisch. 3.171-172). However, according to another viewpoint, the connected by scholars archaeological material of fire remains in the city of Nymphaion, dated to 390-360 B.C., with the aforementioned event is rather unconvincing, since, based on their accounts, the Delian League was dissolved in 404/403, whereas Gylon’s betrayal and Nymphaion’s annexation in the Kingdom of Bosporus took place in ca. 410-405 B.C. (Petersen 2010, p. 203).

Nymphaion’s inclusion in the Bosporan State’s orbit, however, did not affect the expansion of its polis and chora, whereas in the majority of its rural settlements, the dwelling barbarian population consisted of Scythians, Kizil-Koba settlers along with barbarian groups, which reached the region from the Asian shore of the Bosporus in the beginning of the 4th century B.C. (Zin’ko 2006, p. 295; Saprykin 2003).

Regarding the annexation of Theodosia into the Bosporan Kingdom, according to the written sources of Ulpianus, in his commentary on Demosthenes’ *Against Leptines*, and of Harpokration (Ulp. *ad Demosth. c. Lept.* 20.33, *s.v.* Θεοδοσία; Harp., *s.v.* Θεοδοσία), the Bosporan tyrant Satyros I died in his attempt to siege the city. Additionally, the war between Theodosia and the Bosporan Kingdom is attested in Polyainos’ *Strategemata* (5.23.6, 9.3-4) and Aristoteles’ *Oikonomika* (1347b). Thus, according to these accounts, Herakleia assisted Theodosia with food supplies in its war with Bosporus, while the military actions against Leukon I in Theodosia and the Bosporan region are also attested. Finally, the city’s position on the boundary between Bosporus and the Taurians, its control over fertile lands as well as its well-appointed sea port, evidenced by Strabo (7.4.4), made Theodosia a city of significant value for the Bosporan rulers (Gavrilo 2006, pp. 249-250).
In the northern Black Sea area, the era starting with Spartokos’ rule is characterized by stability, which in turn led to the triumph of the Great Scythia. Thus, regarding the steppe lands, the period down to third quarter of the 5th century B.C., is defined by a decrease in conflicts, a prerequisite for an evolution in the economic and cultural fields in the whole region. Moreover, from 430 B.C. onwards, the gradual re-colonization of the northwestern Black Sea littoral started taking place (Vinogradov 2008, p. 16).

The period from the last third of the 5th c. B.C. till the beginning of the 3rd c. B.C., based on all sources, is characterized as the Golden Age of the Kimmerian Bosporus. Bosporan Kingdom’s wealth and power, as well as its great financial, human and other resources for the state’s territorial extension are, furthermore, attested in the construction of effective defensive systems. Moreover, as a consequence of this military-political stability in the region, the Bosporan Chora developed, reaching its peak within this historical frame (Vinogradov 2008, p. 16; Chistov 2007, p. 30).

The primary aim of the first Spartokids was to strengthen their state and expand its borders. In addition to this, Satyros I, son of Spartokos I, occupied Nymphaion, while he tried to conquer Theodosia, an action which brought him to war with Herakleia Pontike. Moreover, during the last decade of the 5th or the beginning of the 4th century B.C., Kepoi, whose dwellers paid tribute to the rulers of the Bosporan Kingdom, was the first city located on the Asian side to be subdued to Satyros I rule. Additionally, the Bosporan king initiated diplomatic activities in Sindike on the grounds of obtaining control over this vast and prolific in grain production area (Vinogradov 2008, p. 16; Saprykin 2006, p. 277; Treister/Vinogradov, 1993, p. 555).

Leukon I, on the other hand, as already mentioned, seized Theodosia, accomplished a difficult victory over Herakleia, and obtained Sindike. Regarding his successful battle against Theodosia, Leukon I was assisted by the Scythian cavalry and, most probably, by the Scythian infantry. Moreover, in all likelihood, these units consisted of allied to the Bosporan rulers Scythians, dwelling principally in the eastern Crimea. Their incorporation during the 4th century B.C., into the Bosporan army was based on an alliance with the Bosporan dynasts, whereas, it is possible that similar military agreements existed till the end of the 2nd century B.C., during the rule of Paerisades V (Mielczarek 1999, p. 41).

According to some scholars, by the 5th century B.C., with the additional incorporation of Sindike, the territories of the Bosporan Kingdom reached as far as the current Tsemesskaya
Bay and the Caucasus’ foothills (Nikonov 2007, p. 96). Moreover, Leukon subjugated Phanagoria along with territories that belonged to local tribes, such as Sindoi, Toretoi, Kerketai, etc., who were settled on the Asian shore of Bosporus. Additionally, he put an end to a war with the Maiotians, headed by the local princess, Tyrgatao. The conflicts with the natives were inevitable since the local barbarians, who retained good and peaceful relations with the Greek settlers from the moment of their arrival in Sindike, did not wish to be subdued by the Panticapaeum’s rulers. Finally, it is believed that the Kingdom annexed, furthermore, to his domain the eastern shore of the Sea of Azov, becoming, thus, the largest in the territory during antiquity (Butyagin 2007a, p. 12).

Bosporan expansion into the Sindian lands is, further, attested through the, limited though, archaeological material from the region, as is the traces of destruction, dated back to 400 B.C. from the area of later to be named Gorgippia. Moreover, the dated to the end of the 5th century B.C. minting of coins, bearing Greek features in their iconography are evidences, along with the import of fine pottery and containers, of the Greek influence in the region. However, the local, as well as short-lived use of Sindian coins does not point towards their minting for trade demands, while Sindian minting could as well be connected with the Sindians’ warfare needs for troops’ payment. The attributed to Gorgippus, restoration of peace among the Bosporans and the Sindians, furthermore, marked the end of Sindian coins’ minting, while, the naming of Gorgippia provides direct evidence for the incorporation of the latter into the Bosporan Kingdom. For Gorgippus was the founder of the city of Gorgippia, named after him and situated on the southern coast of the Taman peninsula, while, according to the modern majority-view, on the former settlement of the Harbor of the Sindians. Additionally, it is believed that during the reign of Leucon I, Gorgippus dwelled in the city that bore his name, while, a tile-works producing tiles bearing the stamp ‘Of Gorgippus’ is considered being of his ownership.

Noteworthy is that the subjugated cities, among them mainly Panticapaeum, Theodosia, Nymphaion and Phanagoria, were allowed to obtain their former territories. In addition, the Sindians retained a kind of independence for a short period. Furthermore, regarding Bosporus’ defensive forces, they were supported not only by the Maiotian, but, as well, by the Scythian nomads (Butyagin 2007a, p. 12).

Under Leukon’s rule, the Greek-barbarian character of the Kingdom of Bosporus evolved, bearing a mixed culture and having strong political, economic and cultural ties with the Scythians, strongly attested in the famous burial mounds of the Bosporan elite. Thus, the
latter provide solid ground for the alliance between the Bosporans and the Scythian Steppe, however feasible, as long as the conditions in the region remained peaceful and the royal Scythians, who overmastered in Steppe Scythia, treated the peoples of the same nationality as theirs, as slaves [Herod. 4. 20] (Vinogradov 2007, p. 147; Vinogradov 2008, p. 16; Saprykin 2006, pp. 277-278; Braund 2007b, pp. 19-20).

The unearthed material culture from the territories of the European Bosporus, including Theodosia’s region, which date back to the second half of the 4th century B.C., demonstrates uniformity owned to the political stability that occurred after the annexation of the latter city to the Bosporan Kingdom. Towards this standardization of the material culture, the wide inter-ethnic relations as well as a based on farming economy correlated primarily with the production of grain along with cattle-breeding can be attributed (Gavrilov 2006, p. 257).

To this period, the second half of the 4th to the first third of the 3rd centuries B.C., are dated the bronze Panticapaeum’s coins struck for the local market use. Moreover, their find even in the westernmost as well as interior regions of the Crimean Peninsula, evidences the Bosporan Kingdom’s economical and political activity in these areas. Finally, finds, such as a measuring oinochoe and a stone weight from the countryside, demonstrate the existence of retail commercial activities (Gavrilov 2006, pp. 260-261).

However, things began to change both for Greater Scythia and for the Kingdom of Bosporus. The war of the Bosporan King Pairisades I against the Scythians, as attested in Demosthenes’ speech (Dem. 34.8), resulted in a weakening in trade. Furthermore, for Greater Scythia, the crisis was apparent in the political and military field (Vinogradov 2008, p. 16).

The conflict among Pairisades’ sons in 310/309 B.C. (Diod. 20.22-24) over the throne of the Bosporan Kingdom coincided, not accidentally, with the struggle in the area between the two ethnic and political groups of the Scythians and the Sarmatians. Most probably in this war, Satyros II and Prytanis were backed up by the Scythians, traditionally allies of the Kingdom of Bosporus, while, on the other hand, Eumelos was supported by the Sarmatians (Syракoi). This war ended up in a battle, which took place on the That River, one of the Kuban River’s tributaries.

According to Diodorus’ accounts (Diod. 20.22), Satyrs’ strong army consisted of mercenaries and Thracian peltasts along with Scythian infantry and cavalry, in total reaching the figure of 34.000 warriors. On the other hand, Eumelos was supported by the king of the
Syrakoi, Aripharnes, along with some Sarmatians, while the total number of his army reached the 42,000 men (Mielczarek, 1999, pp. 60, 62). Ultimately, the winner was Eumelos, whose loyalty to this political alignment remained still in the following years and, furthermore, whose victory inaugurated a new era in Bosporan history (Vinogradov 2007, p. 147; Vinogradov 2008, pp. 16-18).

Eumelos, during his brief reign (310-304 B.C.), tried to conquer and subjugate the ‘savage’ peoples, who lived next to the already attached Maeotai. His ultimate ambition must have been a Hellenistic Kingdom that would possess the whole Black Sea area. However, his reign was too short lived, in order to achieve such an emulous plan.

Furthermore, he succeeded in gaining control over the barbarian trade in Tanais, while his wars against peoples who were engaged in piracy were greatly emphasized by Greek authors, and not surprisingly. This is clearly manifested in a paraphrased decree in honor of Eumelos, inserted to the accounts of Diodorus (Diod. 20. 25. 2-3). Thus, Greek trade, much of it accomplished by Milesians and Athenians, great supporters of the Spartokid Dynasty, along the shores of the Black Sea was protected. Additionally, the struggle of Eumelos against the Tauri in the Crimea, and against the Achaeans and the Heniochi in the Caucasian coast, was, most probably, praised under the pretext of Hellenic civilization’s fight against savagery. Finally, among his taken measures was to bestow upon the merchants within the Bosporan territories with tax prerogatives (Asheri 1998, pp. 274-5; Kulikov 2007, p. 1035).

Ultimately, the already unearthed archaeological data evidence that for the Bosporan history, the second half of the 4th century B.C., was a period that bore no signs of crisis. On the contrary, based on the finds, it could be considered flourishing and, furthermore, characterized as a ‘Golden Age’ (Vinogradov 2008, p. 17).

**The Arrival of Sarmatians in the Northern Black Sea Region**

A period of instability, however, came in the first half of the 3rd century B.C., demonstrated by the downfall of Greater Scythia. Crucial point in this major crisis, greater than that of the 5th century B.C., must have been a new wave of nomads, the Sarmatians, reaching the region at ca. 300 B.C. Most probably the first wave of Sarmatians, which migrated from the eastern Eurasian steppes, was connected with the Syrakoi, Aorsoi along with the ‘Royal’ Sarmatians. Those tribes, though not succeeded in securing for themselves land in the region of the northern Black Sea Littoral, managed, nevertheless, to achieve fatal blows against the Scythians (Vinogradov 2008, p. 17).
However, according to Mordvintseva, the Sarmatians, equated with the Sauromatians in the scholar literature, were a tribe located to the east of the Scythians by the ancient sources. Moreover, based on the accounts of Diodorus, there is no evidence that the Sauromatians invaded Scythia, coming from the East. On the contrary, interpreting Diodorus’ accounts, they arrived from their own territories, which stretched across Tanais and Maiotis, an area described by the ancient testimonies as the “age-old land of the Sauromatians.” (Mordvintseva 2008, p. 53), while in this area, also, dwelled people bearing the name Syrmate. Additionally, in the ancient documents the ethnonyms Sauromatae, Syrmatae and Sarmatae are always referring to the same territory, most probably, being variations of the same ethnic name (Mordvintseva 2008, pp. 53-54).

According to the same author, the ancient documents provide us with no direct evidence of a great Sarmatian migration wave, reaching the northern Pontic region from the East and dating back to the Hellenistic period. Additionally, the epigraphic sources are silent, while the name ‘Sarmatai’ is almost absent in the epigraphic testimonies from this period. On the contrary, other ethnic names are repeatedly mentioned, such as the Scythians, the Maiotai, the Thracians, etc., leading to the conclusion that the name ‘Sarmatians’ might have been a Greek literature’s invention, in order to demonstrate the changes that occurred after Herodotus’ time (Mordvintseva 2008, p. 55).

In addition, according to A.A. Maslennikov (Maslennikov 2005, p. 165), in ca. 270 B.C., it was not the Sarmatians, but peoples from the steppe and, probably, the wooded-steppe territories of Scythia that reached the Kerch Peninsula along with other areas, a fact, further, attested by the unearthed archaeological material. These newcomers, who were in a way connected with the regional barbarians, bore cultural elements, which included among others, the adopted by their contacts with western and north-western peoples, such as the Celts, the Geto-Thracians, etc., traditions, while they played a determined role in the formation of the ‘Late Scythian culture’. Finally, certain aspects of this culture can be detected in the handmade pottery, in the building constructions, in the burial rites, etc. However, this cultural alteration did not always occur within peaceful conditions, neither for the Bosporan Greeks nor their neighbor populations, resulting to the desolation of a significant part of the Kerch Peninsula (Maslennikov 2005, p. 165).

Regarding the region in which, according to J.A. Vinogradov, the warlike actions of Sarmatians took place, was the trans-Don and Kuban’ areas, leaving, until the 2nd century B.C., the steppes of the northern Black Sea littoral practically empty. This phenomenon could be
attributed to the Celtic migration to this region from the West, with, most probably, the trans-Dnieper territories being the area of the Celtic and Sarmatian collision. Finally, since neither of them succeeded in achieving a victory, the northern Black Sea steppes became for a long time a ‘no man’s land’ (Vinogradov 2008, p. 17).

The impact upon the Greek cities located along the Black Sea littoral and, more precisely, in the region of Bosporus was heavy. The instability that characterized the end of the first third of the 3rd century B.C., led to the disappearance of the rural settlements in the Bosporan chora. Furthermore, at this time, the construction of fortification systems in many sites of eastern Crimea, such as Panticapaeum, Myrmekion, Tyritake, etc., is dated (Vinogradov 2007, p. 147; Vinogradov 2008, p. 17). Thus, concerning this region the most fatal blows occurred, while, as perpetrators of the catastrophe, most probably, are suggested the Scythians, who reached Crimea from the northern areas of the Black Sea region in order to settle themselves (Vinogradov 2008, pp. 17-18). Finally, regarding not only the Bosporan Kingdom but the region of Bosporus as a whole, the unavoidable crisis in the grain trade resulted, in turn, to a crisis in the monetary system (Vinogradov 2008, p. 18).

However, among the scholars exists also the view that in the middle of the 3rd century B.C., the Sarmatians, who had already overwhelmed Greater Scythia, sifted their attitude from the hostile activities towards the peaceful exploitation of the forayed lands. Thus, in the northern Black Sea region, the second half of the 3rd century B.C., is characterized by an additional economical and cultural revival, attested, furthermore, in the well-organized reconstruction of active fortification systems in the Bosporan State (Chistov 2007, pp. 30-31).

Regarding the Asian coast, an area of greater proximity to the Sarmatians, the situation must have been worse than that on the European shore, though this is not based on adequate archaeological material. The found destruction level on the Semibratne site, which is dated back to this period of time, evidences the tense relations with the new arrivals. However, these, seem to have been soon stabilized (Vinogradov 2008, p. 18).

Worth mentioning is the Elizavetinskoe site, located on the Kuban’ River, which, regarding the area, at the end of the 4th century B.C., became a significant point of Bosporan impact (Vinogradov 2008, p. 18). In addition, in the Don River delta, at the Elizavetovskoe site, and during the second half of the 4th century B.C., a small Bosporan colony, most probably, acted as an autonomous Greek quarter within this local settlement, which, from initially, played an intermediary role in the contacts among the Greeks and the Scythians-nomads of
the Steppe region. Thus, this Graeco-nomadic trade center, situated 17 km to the southeast of the city of Tanais, during the 5th and the first half of the 3rd century B.C., became one of the biggest fortified settlements in the North Pontic littoral’s Steppe zone (Vinogradov 2008, p. 16; Gavrilyuk 2007, p. 656; Treister/Vinogradov 1993, p. 553).

The Elizavetovskoe city-site on the Don was a Scythian founded settlement, in existence, according to recent finds, from the end of the 6th century B.C., at the interchange of three cultural spheres, the Scythian, the Sarmatian and the Maeotian. During its early period of habitation, it functioned as a winter camp to become in the 5th century B.C. a resident settlement. However, it was in the first half of the 4th century B.C., that this unfortified as well as not big Scythian site transformed into the largest ‘barbarian’ trade place along the northeastern Pontic territories, a fact that resulted in the middle of the 4th and the beginning of the 3rd centuries B.C., to the Scythian economic and cultural prosperity in the Don River area. Furthermore, during this period, the Elizavetovskoe site was safe from any military activities, whereas the beginning of its final period is attested in ca. 290-280 B.C., with the establishment of a Bosporan Greek colony within this Scythian settlement (Treister/Vinogradov 1993, pp. 553-554).

It was, further, a settlement of great extent with a widespread burial ground. Along with the established, in the end of the 4th century and the 70s/60s of the 3rd century B.C., quarter of Greeks from the Kingdom of Bosporus, situated in the western section of the settlement, an emporion was, additionally, created in later times, at the early 3rd century B.C. However, the finds of large amounts of Greek pottery, mainly amphorae, dated back to the 5th-4th centuries B.C., could be an indication that the settlement was under Bosporan Kingdom’s influence before the Greek Bosporan quarter’s establishment there, while of special importance is the find of a golden pendant, bearing the stamped image of the Goddess Aphrodite Urania (Tsetskhadze 1998, pp. 49-50; Treister/Vinogradov 1993, p. 554). Finally, archaeological data from this settlement provide direct evidence for the existence of a flourishing slave-market in relevance to the ‘Maiotian’ slave (Avram 2007, p. 244).

Unearthed archaeological data from the territory demonstrate the totally destruction of this Bosporan colony in the 280-270s B.C., probably by the Sarmatians, whose area of hostilities was at the vicinity of the Don estuary. However, the colony of Tanais, which appeared almost in parallel with the destruction of Elizavetovskoe site, became the next important point of Bosporan influence in the area (Strab. 7.4.5.) (Vinogradov 2008, p. 18).
The second half of the 3rd to the first half of the 2nd century B.C., could be characterized as a period of stability in the steppe lands, mainly manifested in the eastern part of the northern Black Sea region. This revival in the history of the Bosporan Kingdom was evidenced not only in the rebirth of the rural chora, though in a great degree bearing signs of fortification systems, but, as well, in the financial field, the latter connected with Leukon’s II rule. Additionally, it was attested in the rich burial complexes of the barbarian elite, located on the Asiatic Bosporan coast, such as the Vasyurinskaya Gora, Buerova Mogila and the Merdzhany, witnessing, furthermore, the strong relations with the barbarian tribes of the Don and the Kuban territories (Vinogradov 2007, p. 148; Vinogradov 2008, p. 18).

**The Second Wave of Nomadic Migration in the Northern Black Sea Littoral**

This relatively trouble-free period, at ca. the middle of the 2nd century B.C., came to an end. The ensued instability was connected with the westwards arrival of new waves of nomadic tribes, reaching the region from beyond the Don River basin. Thus, in the northern Black Sea area, the newly born conditions were not prosperous for the stabilization of geographical and political structures or federations (Vinogradov 2008, p. 19).

According to the accounts of Strabo (Strab. 7.3.17), this second Sarmatian wave can be connected with nomadic tribes, such as the Roxolanoi, the Iazyges, possibly the Ourgoi along with the abovementioned ‘Royal’ Sarmatians. The latter, most likely, were living in the steppes of the Don area, while, in Strabo’s narratives, they are mentioned as dwellers of the right shore of the Dnieper River. Furthermore, Strabo (Strab. 11.2.4; Strab. 11.2.11) informs us, apart from the presence of warlike barbarians in the vicinity of the Asiatic Bosporus, of revolts raised by the subdued tribes (Vinogradov 2007, p. 148). In addition, the Satarchoi, must have been connected with this new wave of nomadic migration. According to Pliny (Plin. NH 6.22), the Satarchoi traversed the Don River, while in one inscription are mentioned living in the Crimea region, in the second half of the 2nd century B.C. (IOSPE 1, 672) (Vinogradov 2008, p. 19).

Thus, regarding the Asian part of the Kimmerian Bosporus (Taman’ Tholos and others), the abovementioned new wave of nomadic migration, dated to the middle of the 2nd century B.C., resulted in the destruction of many rural settlements. Additionally, the structure of a complex defensive system, located on the Fontalovskii Peninsula, is dated to that time. Consequently, the production of grain was not adequate and hence, it had to be imported.
into the region from the Mediterranean (Polyb. 4.4-5) (Vinogradov 2007, p. 148; Vinogradov 2008, p. 19).

To this onslaught coming from the East, Bosporan Kingdom’s rulers sought backing from the kings of Crimean Scythia. This is, furthermore, attested from an epigraphic inscription found in Panticapaeum. However, and contrary to the close relations with the Scythians, Crimean Scythia could not offer to the Bosporan Kingdom the support which was provided to him in the 4th century B.C., by Greater Scythia. Moreover, Bosporus was obliged with the payment of even greater tributes to the barbarians (Strab. 7.4.4), the Scythians or the Sarmatians, or, even better, to everyone being a potential threat, whereas, worse, it had to collaborate with the piratical tribes located in the north-western Caucasus, the Achaioi, the Zygoi, and the Heniochoi (Strab. 11.2.12) (Vinogradov 2007, p. 148; Vinogradov 2008, p. 19).

Based on Strabo’s accounts (Strab. 7.4.4), during the late Hellenistic Times, the Kingdom of Bosporus was in a great economic crisis, strained, furthermore, due to the Sarmatians’, according to S.Ju Saprykin, continuous tribute demands. However, in the same period, a certain development in the Bosporan economy did occur, evidenced in the minting of coins under Amisos’ and the Pontic kings’ support. Thus, we may assume that the entrance of Pontic money to the Kingdom of Bosporus was, mainly, for the expenses of the Spartokids, on the grounds of their grand tribute to the barbarians. Moreover, the Kingdom of Pontos provided the Bosporan Kingdom with Amisian coins as well as with metals for the local minting (Saprykin 2007, pp. 198-199).

According to the Russian epigrapher V.P. Jajlenko, the Bosporan Kingdom was on the edge of totally destruction, connected to its de-Hellenisation. Thus, under the formed conditions, the last Pairisades were forced to be subdued to Mithradates VI Eupator, the king of Pontos (Strab. 7.24.3-4; IOSPE I^2, 352) (Vinogradov 2008, p. 19).

Nevertheless, regarding the westwards arrival of new waves of nomadic tribes, the role of the Aspurgians, the offsprings of the nomadic Sarmatians, who, based on the accounts of Strabo (Strab. 11.2.11), made their presence in the Asian part of the Kimmerian Bosporus between Phanagoria and Gorgippia, at ca. the last quarter of the 2nd century B.C., was of great importance in the Bosporan history (Goroncharovskii 2007, p. 61). In all likelihood, the Aspurgians settled down in the Asiatic Bosporus during the reign of Asander (47-17 B.C.), who, in accordance with the practice of the Hellenistic governors, must have provided war settlers with lands, relieving them, in parallel, from any obligations
regarding tax payments and other duties. Thus, most probably, the Aspurgians were bestowed upon the same prerogatives, as they represented for the Bosporan Dynasty a reliable military force against both internal and external foes. Furthermore, and in line with the example of Mithridates Eupator, the bond among these new settlers and the Kingdom of Bosporus must have been additionally strengthened by intermarriages. Finally, the Asiatic Bosporus, backed up by the Aspurgians, became the most violent opponent to the Roman intervention in the region, which, since 22 B.C., had fallen under Roman influence (Vinogradov, 2008, p. 19; Goroncharovskii 2007, p. 61).

In short time, the Aspurgians, who formed the greatest part of the Bosporan cavalry, were incorporated in the ancient culture of the Dynasty, not only by their entrance in the ruling nobility and their wish to bear Greek names, but, as well as by their affiliation with the language and, partly, the religion of the Bosporans. On the other hand, they brought in the Kingdom of Bosporus many military novelties in the offensive arms, as attested in the unearthed archaeological material of Bosporan frescoes and reliefs, with the majority of them dating back to the 1st and 3rd centuries A.D., and located on the banks of the Strait of Kerch, notably, on Mount Mithridates’ northern slope. The latter, represent the Bosporans bearing their armor in the same way of that of Central Asian peoples, meaning the late Parthians, or, the belonging to the Sassanid period, Persians (Goroncharovskii 2007, pp. 62-63).
Taking into account the formation of the Sarmatian society as an additional, though not of great validity method, in order to reconstruct the organization of the Bosporan army regarding this period, it is believed that the rich were forced either to serve in the army or, according to their economic situation, to provide with a certain amount of horsemen, while their armor was in line with their wealth. Since the costs for the equipment of a warrior of this kind must have been great, only the wealthier echelons of the Sarmatian society could, most probably, afford them. Thus, it can be suggested that the heavily armored horsemen formed part of the aristocracy.

Moreover, while the king headed the Bosporan military forces, during the 1st and 4th centuries A.D., the power of the hierarchy in the army developed considerably. In all likelihood, a ‘strategos’ or a council of ‘strategoi’ were positioned right beneath him. However, regarding this era, it is probable the aforementioned title to have been given to the governors of the ‘military districts’. Finally, the possibility in the Kingdom of Bosporus the ‘strategos’ to have additional prerogatives of civil character cannot be ruled out. This suggestion complies with the territorial division into ‘ge basilike’ and ‘ge politike’, a practice traced back to the Spartokid times (Mielczarek 1999, pp. 82-83).

In addition, whereas during the Spartokids’ dynasty, the Bosporan military force consisted primarily of Greek mercenaries, notably of hoplites who fought in phalanx configurations, as well as of lightly armed units of Thracians and Scythians, with the latter serving only as Bosporans’ allies, in the first centuries A.D., the Sarmatian presence, if we accept the Aspurgians of Strabo as Sarmatians, became more evident.

According to the unearthed archaeological material, mainly from Bosporan tombs’ wall-paintings, between the 1st and 4th centuries A.D., the Bosporan army bore many Sarmatian elements, a fact greatly manifested in its heavily armored cavalry and infantry. The Sarmatian influence was, furthermore, attested in the horse controlling, in the military equipment as well as in the manner of handling it, while, due to the Sarmatians, the use of the heavy-armed cavalry in the Bosporan army became more intense. Finally, regarding this era, the Roman military borrowings are, likewise, noticeable (Mielczarek 1999, pp. 80, 102).

Among the unearthed grave stelae in the territory of the Bosporan Kingdom, dated to the late 1st century B.C. – first half of the 2nd century A.D., a great part depicts the images of warriors and horsemen bearing their arms and weapons, often executed in a quite realistic and detailed way. As already attested, the represented on the Bosporan stelae arms of
daggers, long swords along with quivers, most probably, were adopted in the Kingdom of Bosporus via the service of the Aspurgians, the fighters of Sarmatian and Maiotian -according to Treister- descent, who formed the guardians of the Asian Bosporus’ boundaries. The latter suggestion is backed up by their find in the Bosporan Kingdom, primarily, in the Sarmatian burials, while their features and mode of carry are typical for the Eurasian nomads, bearing, in addition, South-Siberian elements. Finally, in the Kingdom of Bosporus, the use of weaponry with eastern roots is witnessed among the graves of the Bosporan elite, whereas its adoption is, furthermore, connected with the monarchies of the Late Hellenistic period, which were also influenced by their contacts with the Eurasian nomads (Treister 2009, pp. 1-3, 7, 9-13).

At that point, it should be stressed the great role of the Aspurgians in the taking of the Bosporan throne by Aspurgus (A.D. 14-38), under whose reign the Sarmatian military operations in the region are highly attested. Aspurgus, Asander’s son, was, most probably, of Sarmatian origin, as evidenced by his, of Iranian root, name ‘aspa’, meaning horse as well as ‘asparaba’, meaning horseman (Treister 2009, p. 12).

The period starting with the reign of Aspurgus and lasted till the end of the classical times was characterized by the shift of the power balance towards the Tiberian-Julian dynasty, so called by its citizens in order to express their loyalty to the Roman Empire. Additionally, the dynasty bore the name Sarmatian, due to the frequency among its members of names such as Sauromates and Rhescuporis. Regarding its barbarian element, this was attested in the use of the tagma, of a nomads’ tribal emblem, used initially for banding the cattle, while in later times as a regal coat for the arms. Finally, symbols of that type are often met on stone plates, pottery segments, while, even on bronze trappings (Butyagin 2007a, p. 15).

Thus, by the end of the first quarter of the 1st century A.D., the Bosporan Kingdom, aided by the great support of the Sarmatians, became a military force, which overmastered in the political affairs of the North-Eastern Black Sea region, strengthening, in addition, its relations with the Roman Empire till the years of Mithridates VIII. The latter brought Bosporus in war terms with Rome, while in his strife for independence from the Roman Empire, sought help from a number of the northern Black Sea’s tribes. The Sarmatian growth of power, related to the events of the middle of the 1st century A.D., influenced not only the ethnic situation of the northern Black Sea region, but, had, additionally, an impact on the war activities of Bosporus (Goroncharovskii 2007, pp. 62-65).
Bosporus under Pontic Rule (late 2nd century - 63 B.C.)

Mithridates VI Eupator’s -king of Pontos- ultimate aim was the creation of a Pan-Pontic state in the Black Sea region in order to intercept the Romans’ as well as the Hellenistic Kingdoms’ power. Thus, during the last decades of the 2nd century B.C., he began the enlargement of his kingdom by incorporating to it the northern and eastern Black Sea coasts. Regarding these areas as his ancestral territories, Mithridates wished to include them as administrative units into his realm. Thus, he began with the possession of Tauric Chersonesos and Olbia, followed by the Bosporan Kingdom’s, which came under his rule at ca. 111/110 and 108/107 B.C., and finally of Kolchis (Saprykin 2007, p. 195).

By the time the abovementioned regions were part of his sovereignty, Mithridates aimed in their close relations with each other as well as in their linkage with Pontos. The new emerged economic and political conditions in the Euxine, were, mainly, attested through the vast currency of Pontic coins. Furthermore, the policy of Mithridates VI Eupator for an economically unified Pontos, which began at 111-90 B.C., and was reflected in the new coinage, primarily, in the form of coins from Amisos and Sinope, used the former city as a link for the connection of the northern and the eastern Black Sea shores with the Kingdom of Pontos. However, not until the late 2nd-early 1st century B.C., when the Scythians’ submission and the Sarmatians’ alliance was achieved, and, mainly, after Kolchis’ possession, Mithridates’ dream for a political and economic linkage between Pontos and Bosporus was possible. Finally, during the same period, the late 2nd century B.C., Mithridates Eupator might have given financial grants to the Kingdom of Bosporus in order to establish the Pontic impact in the region (Saprykin 2007, pp. 195, 198-9, 202, 206).

Regarding the submission of the Bosporan Kingdom to the Pontic rule, the local tribes, mainly the Scythians, the Achaioi, etc., were reluctant in losing their influence in the Kingdom. Consequently, in 107 B.C., the Scythians backing Saumakos, revolted, a fact which manifested the great crisis in the Bosporan-Scythian relations. The latter was a member of the Scythian aristocracy with close connections to the Spartokid rulers. However, this uprising was put down by Diophantos (IOSPE 1, 352). Moreover, Neoptolemos, another leader of the Mithradatic army, succeeded in defeating the barbarians in the region of the Kimmerian Bosporus, in the two battles that occurred, one taking place in the sea and the other on the icy Strait of Kerch, in a winter cavalry combat (Strab. 2.1.16; 7.3.18). These barbarians, most probably were the Achaioi along with other tribes located in the northwestern area of Caucasus (Vinogradov 2008, pp. 19-20; Mielczarek 1999, p. 69).
At this point, it is worthy to note that Mithridates VI Eupator almost realized Eumelos’ dream for a unified Hellenistic Kingdom, though not long lived. With Crimea, the northwestern coast, and the eastern region of Pontus (Colchis) under his influence, the Euxine was not far from becoming a Mithridatic Lake. Only the Bithynian coasts and western Paphlagonia, along with the Caucasian coast, situated among the Maeotai and the Colchians, were not incorporated to his rule. In 80 B.C., Mithridates decided to attack the Achaeans, who lived beyond the Colchians, using, most probably, Dioscuria as his base. Along with his aim to attack Colchis and the Bosporan Kingdom by land, his ultimate goal should have been to provide the Greek cities with sufficient evidence regarding their civilization’s sovereignty over the barbarians. However, in this endeavor he failed to succeed, losing the two-thirds of his troops due to cold and ambush, and, thus, being forced to withdraw (App. Mithr. 282). In the years that followed, most probably by using diplomatic skills, he managed to embody the Achaeans and the Heniochi to his allies, though not known for how long (App. Mithr. 292) (Asheri 1998, pp. 275-6).

Regarding the payment of tribute from the subjected under his domain territories, except for the general commercial activities of goods among the northern Black Sea shores, Bosporus and the Kingdom of Pontos, the former lands provided the latter with grain (Strab. 7.4.6; FGrH 434: Memnon F 19, 54). The sent grain along with the talents of silver from the abovementioned areas to the Kingdom of Pontos were considered a short of phoros that had to be paid to the suzerain. However, in these territories, this became possible only when the flourishing economic and commercial conditions were achieved, on the grounds of Inter-Pontic profitable relations. The economic stability that occurred in the Greek cities and the Bosporan Kingdom was, furthermore, reflected in the rise of local minting, following, though, the Pontic patterns, as well as in the parallel reduction in Pontic coins’ circulation (Saprykin 2007, pp. 204-205).

Under the Pontic rule of Mithridates VI Eupator, the Bosporan Kingdom held an important place, as it was the main supplier for the local Pontic army with munitions, food, etc., mostly after Mithridates’ loss of his possessions in Asia Minor (Vinogradov 2008, p. 20; Saprykin 2007, p. 205). Consequently, the acquiring resources from the trading activities among the Bosporan Kingdom and the barbarian inhabitants were fundamental aid in Mithridates’ strife against Rome. However, the Pontic King, though he supported the commerce with the barbarian and semi-barbarian regions in the hinterland, viewed these tribes as his allies and not as his subjects, a policy reflected in his support for the economic
capabilities of the Greek cities, but not for those of the barbarian Kingdoms, as the Scythian for example (Saprykin 2007, pp. 204-206).

Contrary to the allied western Euxine coasts, Mithridates ruled over the northern and eastern shores of the Black Sea region through the positioning of satraps and governors as well as with royal officials in control of monetary issues. His philhellenic attitude towards the Greek poleis of the northern Black Sea littoral was, furthermore, reflected in their independence in the commercial and agricultural activities (Saprykin 2007, p. 206). Finally, in Bosporus, common practice during the Mithradates’ wars was the hiring of locals as well as of inhabitants, originating from other European territories, such as the Celts, or the Thracians (Lantsov/Yurochkin, 2007, p. 85).

However, Mithradates’ wars against Rome had subsequently a negative effect over Bosporus, who, after the first Mithradatic War, drew out from its support to the king (App. Mithr. 64). To this event most probably led the local predilections, rather than the Greek preferences. These local tribes, according to the available sources, were the same peoples (Scythians and Achaioi), who had fought against Mithradates in order to maintain their influence in the region. Furthermore, the notion that the Scythians were the main supporters of Mithradates’ army is overestimated, since his most loyal allies were the Maiotian-Sarmatian tribes located in the Kuban’ area, the Sarmatians and the Bastarnae (Vinogradov 2008, p. 20).

In his last war against Rome, Mithradates was defeated. Bosporus became, thus, the territory for his military preparation towards a future Roman attack (App. Mithr. 101). However, his previous, infelicitous wars, the heavy burden connected with his preparations for a new one, along with Romans’ well planned actions, led to the uprising not only of the Greek towns but, as well, of the Pontic army against his king (App. Mithr. 110-111). Interesting, though, is that to this rebellion, the local detached force of troops did not take part. Finally, Mithradates’ death, dated to 63 B.C., signified the end of an important era of evolution in Bosporan history, while it marked the beginning of another (Vinogradov 2008, p. 20).

Under Rome’s incontestable power, the Bosporan Kingdom, in contrary to the western and southern littorals of the Black Sea region was never annexed into the provincial system, continuing its existence as a ‘client kingdom’ located outside the Roman Empire’s boundaries.
The Bosporan Kingdom possessed vast agrarian territories both on the European and Asian shores of the Kerch Straits, whose role in the entire history of the State was decisive (Saprykin 2006, p. 273).

The earliest Greek poleis on the Crimean side, Panticapaeum, Theodosia and Nymphaion, dating back to the 6th century B.C., started the enlargement of their chorai only 50 to 60 years since their own founding. Furthermore, regarding the Asian side, the greatest cities were Phanagoria, Hermonassa and Kepoi. However, apart from these large apoikiai, many other smaller in size polis or polislike settlements, among them Myrmekion, Parthenion, Tyritake, Zenon’s Chersonesos, Porthmion, Patrasys, Hermision, Herakleion, Tyrambe, Sindian Harbour, Stratokleia, Achilleion, Kytiaia, Akra, Kimmerikos, Zephyrion, Korokondame, et al. were also established. Additionally, the city of Gorgippia was founded in the beginning of the 4th century B.C., most probably on the location of the former Sindian Harbour or on its immediate vicinity. Finally, this establishing procedure lasted from the 6th to the 4th centuries B.C. (Saprykin 2006, pp. 274-275).

Bosporan rulers had under their kingship not only the fertile, though dry lands of the eastern Crimea, but, as well, the authority over a number of sub-regions, such as the Taman peninsula along with the lower territories of the Kuban (Hipanis), areas of major importance for the production of grain (Braund 2007a, p. 63).

Land-division, based on an orthogonal system and dated to the 4th century B.C., according to the dating of the unearthed, most probably, farmhouses, under the suggestion of their spatial connection with the *kleroi* (land-lots), took place in the chora of the Bosporan Kingdom. In addition, the large extended land-division manifested the royal actions of the Bosporan rulers, whereas, the uniformity of the land-demarcation according to a common plan, evidences the organization of a unified Kingdom (Smekalova/Smekalov 2006, pp. 211, 234-235).

The aforementioned land-division was carried out on the immediate rural territories of the poleis to which they belonged, while the direction of the land-demarcation axes was executed in accordance with the existed slopes as well as with answering to the necessity of providing the most convenient route to the polis or to the nearest centre of administration,
regarding crops’ transportation or other economical deals. Finally, the position of these polis agrarian lands was determined not only by the natural features of the landscape, such as the humidity and stoniness of the soil, but, also, by climate factors, such as the wind and insolation conditions of the territory (Smekalova/Smekalov 2006, p. 211).

In most likelihood, the land division took place in the years of Leukon I, known for his territorial expansions and his extended grid of grain trade, which brought the Kingdom of Bosporus to its highest prosperity. Additionally, this land demarcation was carried out synchronously on the chora of Panticapaenm, Nymphaion, and Theodosia along with some other territories of the Bosporan State, while, its well-studied technique based on extreme preciseness, reveals a serious public strife as well as a clearly Greek character.

Moreover, the land division into totally equal orthogonal plots, without taking into account the relief or other features of the terrain, was carried out, most likely, according to the length module of the Egyptian foot, which equals to 0.35 m, whereas, the measurement of the territories was done in plethra. Furthermore, it should be noted that the abovementioned land uniformity might be an indication of equal rights in landownership of the citizens in the Bosporan poleis during the time this land demarcation was implemented. Finally, without this remarkable endeavor in farming, the Bosporan Kingdom would not have been in a position to reach the potentials of the grain production to its maximum extent (Smekalova/Smekalov 2006, pp. 211, 234-5, 228, 240).

At this point is worthy to note, that these land plots served, additionally, as a nexus of roads, nowadays, still, actively exploited, whereas, regarding the region of the Crimean Peninsula, the need for protection from military activities, as well as from the neighboring nomadic tribes dealing with animal husbandry, such as the Taurians, necessitated the extra construction of banks and ditches (Smekalova/Smekalov 2006, pp. 228-229).

Regarding the territories inhabited by the local agrarian peoples in the European part of Bosporus, they were mainly consisted of Scythian villages or komai, whereas, in the Asian part of Sindo-Maiotians tribes. As for the great number of sites in the chora of the European Bosporus the differentiation among the Bosporan Greek and the Scythian ones is primarily manifested in their number and location. Thus, the Bosporan Greek settlements were fewer in number, situated in the near or distant Bosporan chora, consisting of watch towers, wells, shrines, earthwork constructions along with burial places. By contrast, the Scythian sites consisted of settlements and burial places, both burial mounds and flat graves, while they
were located into the hinterland, the coastal zones as well as further to the west (Masiennikov 2005, pp. 160-161).

In relation to their administrative status, the view that these locals were dependent or semi-dependent inhabitants of the royal Spartokids’ lands is shared by some scholars, though, according to Saprykin, their dwelling territories were rather of polis origin and, thus, the distant chora of Panticapaeum, with their population depended on the latter. Since Spartokids were archons of Bosporus and Theodosia, and kings only over the peoples that inhabited the distant territories of Sindica and Maiotica, their possessions on the Kerch and Taman Peninsulas should not be considered as royal (ge basilike), but rather as polis lands (Saprykin 2003).

However, according to T.N. Smekalova and S.L. Smekalov, apart from the lands which belonged to the cities, there existed, in parallel, a chora which belonged to the Bosporan Kings. This greatly extended ‘royal chora’, is characterized by the so called ‘long’ fields, while the absence of land-lots is clearly evidenced (Smekalova/Smekalov 2006, p. 235). Finally, according to J. Bouzek, on this royal land and beyond the Greek urban chora, were situated the royal monuments that belonged to the Bosporan rulers, as evidenced by the fragmented finds of an architectural construction, most probably of a Bosporan palace and a burial monument, at Yubileynoe on the Taman Peninsula (Bouzek 2007, pp. 14, 16).

On the Bosporan chora, settlements such as country estates belonging to Panticapaeum’s chora and being of Greek origin are met. They made their appearance in the beginning of the 4th century B.C., due to chora’s devastation caused either by Scythians or by a war with Theodosia and Heracleia Pontica, while they were enlarged in the late 4th-early 3rd centuries B.C., due to a war of Paerisades I against the Scythians, in 328 B.C. Moreover, Greek settlements are met, mostly located in the coastal area, as country estates or farms, great fortified settlements functioning as administrative centers, along with large fortified sites with towers and rooms, protected from the steppes by defensive walls and forts. In all likelihood, the latter served as commercial settlements with the hinterland for the storage of grain, which was obtained as phoros from the indigenous population and, subsequently, brought to the cities. These rural sites were in existence until the second quarter-middle of the 3rd century B.C., being, eventually, destroyed either by the Scythian or the Sarmatian forays (Saprykin 2003).
In the second half of the 3rd- to the 2nd/1st centuries B.C., a considerable reduction of the Bosporan chora, mainly on the Kerch Peninsula, is attested, which altered radically the basis of chora’s economy. Large fortified settlements situated on the Azov coastal zone made their appearance, built with defensive walls and towers, following a linear planning with single-roomed dwellings formed into blocks and separated by longitude streets. Regarding, now, the inhabitants of those sites, they lived like semi dependent farmers of the katoikoi type. However, these large forts did not belong to the chora basilike, but, rather, formed part of Panticapaeum’s, Nymphaion’s and Theodosia’s distant chora. Finally, the based on polis lands, Spartokids’ economic policy was maintained until the late 2nd-beginnings of the 1st century B.C., when the Kingdom of Bosporus came under the Pontic rule (Saprykin 2003).

Mithridates the Great used Bosporan polis-agricultural territories for providing with supplies his army, however, when the former became incapable of supplying him further, he started creating a real ge basilike in the patterns of the classical Hellenistic states along with great forts, as a central point of this land tenure system. The latter, though, adopted in the 80-60s B.C., when Bosporus was under Mithridates’ sons’ sway, was eventually created in the second half of the 1st c. B.C.-first half of the 1st c. A.D., characterized by big rural settlements being, mostly, katoikiai, and functioning as centers of administration on these royal territories. Polis territories were greatly reduced, being protected from the barbarian forays by royal forts and sites, whereas, now, the main supplier for the Pontic and the later Bosporan royal armies was this ge basilike, with grand sites and small fortifications. The creation of this agrarian economic system was, furthermore, owned to the kings’ policy in using the barbarian peoples as soldiers, mercenaries, or military dwellers on territories of the katoikoi type, in order to turn them off from any hostile activity against them. Finally, the implementation of this system was continued until the late antiquity, being, alongside, supported by the Roman Empire, as it was, as well, in the service of the latter’s interests in the region (Saprykin 2003).

Regarding, now, the role of the chora in the development of the Greek polis, the great impact of the deployed socioeconomic and ethno-cultural situation in the former upon the latter should be stressed. Additionally, the formed cultural features in both the areas of the poleis and their hinterland were in close correlation with the existing demographic and ethnic conditions.

The role of the aboriginal population, which displayed ethnic along with economic heterogeneity, as manifested among the farmers of the wooded-steppe area and foothills in the lower Bug region and the nomads of the Scythian steppe land in eastern Crimea, was vital
in the development of the Greek-barbarian relations. However, the ethnic differentiations among the Greek colonists were of the same gravity, evidenced in the unlike Greek-barbarian relations of the Ionian poleis of the Bosporan Kingdom and the Dorian Chersonesus.

In the European Bosporus and during the early Greek colonization, the use of the Strait of Kerch as a path by the Scythian hordes with the ensuing unstable situation hindered the Greek poleis from obtaining a large chora. However, in time, the situation altered with the gradual sedentarisation of the nomads, which, eventually, led to their greater involvement in the social and economic life of the Greek poleis.

Finally, while, primarily, the synthesis of the surrounding to the Greek poleis local population, regarding its economic, cultural and demographic characteristics, determined to a large extent the development of the rural environment of the poleis, in later years, the military and political relations among the Greeks and the native ethnic groups, as well as among the ancient centers themselves became responsible (Solovyov 2007, pp. 117, 119-121).

Bosporan Trade and Natives

The first settlements on the northern Pontic shores, most probably, were established with the aim of trading interactions with the local tribes along with the safe access to metal sources. The aforementioned suggestion has been supported by the finds of bronze processing, unearthed from the Berezan settlement and dated to the early years of Greek colonization (Butyagin 2007a, p. 10).

Regarding, now, the Bosporan Kingdom, it was located at an area of great significance for trade activities, on the north-south trade path, stretching from the north of Maiotis to the beyond of the Black Sea Mediterranean and Danube territories, while the city of Tanais, at the mouth of the Don River, dominated the trade passage towards the northeast steppe and forest-steppe regions. Thus, Bosporus, privileged by its great location, its strategic importance ports along with its access to the river routes connecting with the hinterland, was destined to become a great center for trading interactions (Jacobson 1995, p. 46).

By the end of the 4th century B.C., the Bosporan State was considered a supreme power in the region, basing its wealth and strength on an agricultural economy of grain production supported by trade. Furthermore, the minting of coins from the locality of Nymphaion, dated to the late 5th century B.C., evidences the deriving wealth from wine
production by the cultivated Crimean vineyards. In addition, fishing was among Bosporus’ main trading activities, facilitated by the Azov Sea’s adequate supply of salt, a prerequisite for the preservation and exportation of the fish.

Scythians’ participation in the growth of Bosporan’s wealth during the 5th and 4th centuries B.C., is evidenced in the burial mounds of Ak-Mechet, Il’ichevo and Kul-Oba along with the kurgans of Bolshaya Bliznitsa and Karagodeuashkh, witnessing, thus, the ability of the Scythians to provide themselves with luxurious materials (Jacobson 1995, pp. 47-48).

On the onset of the Classical period, the Scythians’ desires in regard with the Bosporan Kingdom were not to gain control over the Bosporan government, but to acquire the luxurious Greek goods, among them wine. Additionally, the interests among the Bosporans and the Scythians were reciprocal. From the part of the latter, their relative control over the Bosporan economy was expressed in the form of annual and extra tributes, even, of sumptuous gifts.

The Scythians realizing the keen interest of the Greek colonists for goods, such as grain, cattle as well as slaves, became active in the trading interactions with them. Thus, the gains for the Scythian nobility were greater through the trade exchanges with the Greeks, than from the usual plundering. With time the relationships among the Greeks and the Scythians became intimate, evidenced in the highest echelons of society by the intermarriages, the personal arrangements, such as the exchange of hostages, along with the garish displays of the Greek style of living. In turn, the Scythians were to the Greeks their most credible allies in their military activities, and, additionally, in their ruling altercations (Kulikov 2007, pp. 1031-1032).

Thus, both Bosporan Greeks and Scythians, or local non-Greeks, were interested in stable economic activities, which led, further, to cultural and demographic interrelations within all the social strata. The aforementioned peaceful situation is, additionally, archaeologically evidenced by the finds of widespread advanced viniculture in the near and distant European Bosporan chora during the period under examination (Maslennikov 2005, p. 163).

Accordingly, Herodotus (4. 17) informs us of Scythian ploughmen who sow corn; however, this corn production was not for eating, but destined to be sold. The abovementioned written testament provides with more ground for the economic-trade relations between the Scythians and the Greeks, whose interactions from the beginning of
the 5th century B.C. altered in accordance with the general change in the political situation, evidenced, furthermore, by the Scythian presence in the Greek Bosporan Kingdom.

The great number in Scythian settlements of unearthed Greek pottery-outnumbering the handmade local production- consisting, mainly, of transport amphorae from Sinope, Heracleia Pontica, Thassos, etc., and reaching the Scythian sites via the Greek Black Sea colonies, attests the close economic relations among the Scythians and the Greeks. Finally, it is believed that these interactions were performed not by the use of money, but by barter (Tsetskhladze 2011, pp. 127-128).

Bosporan cities as well as Olbia, acted as intermediaries in the commerce of Attic black-glazed pottery in the northern Black Sea region. Black-glazed pottery finds from Scythian burials located in the steppe and forest-steppe zones and consisted of kylikes and skyphoi, heavy and light walled cup-skyphoi, cup-kantharoi, kantharoi, and saltcellars, provide direct evidence for the close and constant trade and exchange activities between the Greeks and the Scythians, in which the role of priests, based on their use, could as well be suggested. From ca. the middle of the 5th century B.C., Scythians got acquainted with the new market of trade commodities via the dwellers of the coastal centers, who were their first consumers. Finally, based on the finds from the burials, the dominant recipients of these black-glazed vessels belonged to the Scythian aristocracy, however, not to the highest Scythian nobility, using them for drinking as well as for needlework purposes and in rituals (Gavriljuk 2008, pp. 252-255).

Regarding the Asiatic part of Bosporus, apart from the keen interest of the Greek world for the local women taken as wives in the course of colonization, or as dangerously seductive Amazons, the existing trade relations referred to a series of goods, among which were the female slaves (Braund 2007b, pp. 17-19).

Bosporan Trade and Athens

Through the later 5th and 4th centuries B.C., the Bosporan rulers, within the context of well-structured relationships with Greek centers, supplied with grain not only Athens, but, as well, other states, such as Mytilene. Thus, in the Aegean region, a possible failure in crop production would act in favor of Bosporan kingdom’s over-production, and vice-versa. Furthermore, the 4th century B.C. grain supply of Athens was based not only on Athenians’
demand and desire, but, also, on the born advantages in the political and economical field for the Bosporan rulers. Finally, in the 5th century, the Athenian imports of grain from the Black Sea were not regular and in substantial amounts, while, during the 4th century, the quantity of annual imported grain might as well varied (Braund 2007a, pp. 63-64). Altogether, trade connections among the Bosporan rulers and Athens were constant and close throughout the first and second Athenian empire, and not ceased even in the aftermath of Athens’ defeat in the Peloponnesian war (Bouzek 2007, p. 11).

From Demosthenes’ speech Against Leptines (Dem. 20.29-35) we are informed of ca. 400,000 medimnoi, which equate to more than 13,000 metric tons, of grain production (sitos) being imported to Athens from the region of Bosporus. Moreover, the information that regular quantities of grain were imported per annum to the city of Athens is clear, while, when grain shortage occurred in Athens, Leukon, the Bosporan ruler and kurios of Bosporan grain (Dem. 20.31), augmented the exported amounts of supply for the city (20.33). The reported numbers of imported grain, according to Demosthenes, could be verified by public testimonies (20.32). However, in his speech Against Leptines, the mentioned ateleia or tax-exemption of Leukon is at stake (Moreno 2007, pp. 69-70).

During Leukon’s I, son of Satyros I, (389/8-349/8 B.C.), reign, the Bosporan Kingdom became great incorporating into it many cities located on both shores of the Kimmerian Bosporos. Additionally, the Spartokids were not only the possessors of the Bosporan land but, as well, its most protrusive landowners. Thus, the export of Bosporan grain to Attica, as Demosthenes informs us, was done in the name of its rulers. The given by the historian quantities of exported grain enable the estimation of the Bosporan land at ca. 5,000 km², an area equivalent to the territory of the Bosporan Kingdom during Leukon’s I rule.

Moreover, based on Strabo (7.4.6) narratives, under the latter’s reign, a single export of 2,100,000 medimnoi, which equal to 88,200 tons of grain was sent to Athens from Theodosia. Most probably, Leukon I purchased part of this large grain production from the native agricultural peoples who dwelled to the north-west region of Theodosia and not formed part of the Bosporan State. Thus, not before the incorporation of Theodosia into the Kingdom of Bosporus the acquisition of such quantities of grain may have been plausible (Smekalova/Smekalov 2006, p. 234). Finally, once the city was annexed by the Bosporan ruler, Leukon I, its seaport was reorganized from which, as attested by Strabo (7.4.4.), a great amount of grain was exported (Gavrilov 2006, p. 250).
Demosthenes informs us (Dem. 20.35-36) that the Athenians expressed their gratitude towards the Bosporans by bestowing upon them honors in status along with privileges, while statues, crowns and inscriptions were in view not only at Athens and Piraeus, but, as well, in the Bosporan kingdom and at Hieron. Furthermore, apart from the apparent financial benefits for the Bosporans, the links with the metropolis of Greek culture, Athens, should have been considered valuable. Finally, except for the privilege of tax-exemption, a reciprocal, though, according to Demosthenes, the Bosporans were mostly eager in acquiring Athenian goods and services, as evidenced in the statement of Isocrates' *Trapeziticus*. Thus, Bosporan rulers’ generosity towards Athens might be explained not by the mutual tax-exemption privileges, but, primarily, by their desire to have access in the Athenian market (Braund 2007a, pp. 61-62).

The relations between the Athenians and the dynasty of Spartokids, dated back to the last third of the 5th-end of the 4th century B.C., are clearly attested via the archaeological data, the textual testimonies and the trade connections regarding Athens’ grain supply. Thus, we are informed of the reciprocal commercial relations, which occurred, in the middle of the 4th century B.C., among Athens and the Kingdom of Bosporus, the *ateleia* and the priority in loading that was bestowed through Spartokid decrees (*kerugmata*) upon those merchants who carried grain to Athens, and, finally, of the absolute control that the house of the Spartokids had upon foreign matters, as was the trade of grain. Additionally, the dated to the 4th–mid 3rd centuries B.C., excavated farmsteads on the territory of the European Bosporus, are strongly suggested as the royal possessions of the Bosporans (Moreno 2007, p. 70).

Important Atheno-Bosporan nobility’s nexus was impelled during the reigns of Satyros and Leukon. Movements of the Athenian elite in Bosporus went in parallel with those of the Bosporans in Athens (Moreno 2007, pp. 73-74).

Starting from the early 4th century B.C., members of the Bosporan elite sojourned in the city of Athens, with the purpose of their presence, most probably being their education in Greek culture, however, payable. The school of Isocrates became the centre of education for many aristocratic Bosporians, who were educated next to Athenians, as the politician Androtion, the historian Ephoros and the general Timotheos. Thus, the relations that were established among these Athenians and the house of Spartokids were close, in the basis of an elite network. Furthermore, as Lysias informs us (Lysias 16.4), members of the Athenian elite, aiming the avoidance of the Peloponnesian War and its subsequent political disorganization
in Athens, found safe harbors in the Black Sea Region, even at places as the Bosporan
kingdom’s court (Braund 1998, pp. 293-294; Moreno 2007, pp. 73-74).

Consequently, the Athenian cultural influence in the Bosporan area was great. In
ceramics, it was manifested in the Attic production of the so-called ‘Kerch vases’, named after
the region in which they were unearthed and dated back to the 4th century B.C. Furthermore,
the famous of the same period Scythian toreutic masterpieces were manufactured by
technicians who belonged to the Athenian artistic tradition, and who often used Attic moulds,
as evidenced by the depicting reliefs on the Scythian goryta, known also from the Kerameikos
and Agora finds at Athens. Additionally, of Attic tradition can be considered the dated to the
later 5th century B.C. silver vases, either produced in Athens or manufactured locally, as close
imitations of them. One of the known examples bearing features of the early Classical art, is
the Adygeian rhyton made with the use of a matrix depicting the Gigantomachy, however,
reused on vessels dated to later times. Finally, two schools of toreutic art can be discerned, a
‘Scythian’ one, executed by Greek craftsmen and represented by the Solokha comb
masterpiece, along with the Kul-Oba and Gajmanova Mogila vases, bearing, thus, strong Attic
artistic features, as well as a more ‘archaic’ one, manifested in the finds of the Perederieva
Mogila, whose Oriental and archaizing elements clearly evidence the ties with the Anatolian-
Persian artistic tradition (Bouzek 2007, pp. 11, 13).

The Athenian impact was, also, apparent in monumental architecture. The 4th century
B.C. temples of Demeter in Nymphaion and Phanagoria, along with the acroterium located in
the vicinity of the latter, are clear manifestations of the Attic style. Finally, Athens’ influence
in sculpture is, furthermore, evidenced by the unearthed in Panticapaeum statue of Dionysos,
executed in the Lysippean style, whereas, the found in the same city dedication relief is
comparable with the Athenian ones. Thus, Athens’ impact, as attested through the finds of
Atticising monuments and marble examples, such as the sarcophagus found in the vicinity of
Hermonassa, dominated in the 4th century B.C. artistic production of the North Pontic littoral,
manifesting in turn, the close ties between the regions of Athens and Bosporus (Bouzek 2007,
pp. 11-12, 16).

It can be suggested that the occurred change in Panticapaeum at the beginning of the
4th century B.C., of a local tyranny into a potent Graeco-Scythian oligarchic regime, became
the basis for the establishment of strong commercial relations between the Bosporan
Kingdom and Athens. Thus, within the context of an intellectual and social liaison among the
Bosporan and the Athenian elite, a royal economy developed in the direction of an annually
grain supply to Athens. The maintenance of this system was, furthermore, depended upon, on the one hand, the wishes of the Bosporan rulers, while, on the other, the Athenian master of the naval route among Panticapaeum and Peiraeus (Moreno 2007, p. 82).

Nevertheless, according to G.R. Tsetskhladze (Tsetskhladze 2008, pp. 5, 8), the Bosporan Kingdom’s grain trade with Athens, which existed since Satyrus I’ times and flourished during the years of Leukon’s I reign, was not a continual one, occurring only in cases of Athenian shortage, e.g. in the famine that took place in ca. 360 B.C. Finally, after the end of the joint rule among Spartokos II and Pairisades in 344/343 B.C., there is no evidence for the further continuation of the grain supply to Athens. Thus, the trade and the ensued close relationships between the Kingdom of Bosporus and the city of Athens endured for almost a century, whereas Demosthenes’ origin ties with the Bosporan Kingdom as well as his intimate relations with the ruling family must have played a decisive role in this (Tsetskhladze 2008, pp. 5, 8).

The Barrows in the Kingdom of Bosporus

The evolved Greek-barbarian structure of the Bosporan Kingdom was, furthermore, reflected in the topography of the local elite’s barrows. Most probably, the region of Bosporus abounds the greatest number of barrows from those located on the northern Black Sea littoral (Fedoseev 2007, p. 979).

These burial mounds were mainly located around the two Bosporan capitals, Panticapaeum and Phanagoria, situated on the two shores of the Kimmerian Bosporus respectively, while the area of Panticapaeum bore greater in number and in importance barrows, such as the Kul-Oba, the Patinioti Barrow, the Mirza Kekuvatskii Barrow, etc. (Vinogradov 2007, p. 147). In regard with the flat-ground burials, the deposits of grave goods in the kurgans are notably more varied than in the former burial constructions (Petersen 2010, p. 218). Finally, the barrows of the Bosporan Kingdom in relation to those situated in the Dnieper River territories bear differences regarding their stepped crypts’ construction and burial content (Butyagin 2010, p. 14; Fedoseev 2007, p. 979).
The tumuli attest the close political and cultural ties among the Bosporan Kingdom and the barbarian population of the steppes, settled in the northern Black Sea Littoral, which, however, were feasible as long as stability prevailed in their relations (Vinogradov 2008, p. 16). Thus, the opulent, elaborate and diverse material from the kurgans, consisting of weapons, strigils, horse armament, ceramics, such as amphorae and pelikai, metal vessels for drinking and banqueting purposes, along with luxurious jewellery, alabastra and mirrors, clearly demonstrates the composite cultural background in which these burials should be viewed (Petersen 2008, pp. 220-221; Petersen 2010, p. 253).

The deeply related with the Barbarian world culture, is, furthermore, attested in the burial artifacts with subject matters representing the Barbarians and their life, in the unearthed objects with Greek subjects, such as the Greek myths, belonging to the nomads, as well as in the horse graves and the numeral found non-Greek articles (Butyagin 2010, p. 11). Thus, among the grave objects are met ‘akinakes’ (Scythian small swords), ‘gorytoi’ (bow cases) made of electrum or silver ones, covered in gold, as well as tableware made of...
electrum and silver, bearing Greek typological features along with Scythian iconography (Trofimova 2007, pp. 27, 29).

However, according to A. Butyagin (Butyagin 2010, pp. 11-12, 15), the suggestion that the vast barrows situated in the proximity of the Bosporan sites, belonged to the Barbarian nobility, is rather doubtful. Barbarian aristocracy, indeed, had close ties with the Bosporan Kingdom. Moreover, their barrows were located not only near the sites, but, as well, in strategic posts, such as the Cape Ak-Burun, of great significance for the region’s control. However, the fact that it is not possible the burials of the Bosporan Kings not to have been discovered by archaeologists in the necropolis of Panticapaeum, allows for the assumption that the burials near the Bosporan settlements are related with the Bosporan Kings and the Bosporan aristocracy of the Spartokid’s dynasty (Butyagin 2010, pp. 11-12, 15).

Regarding the Kul-Oba barrow, situated in the vicinity of Panticapaeum, though in literature the viewpoint that it consists of a burial place belonging to a Scythian ruler prevails, in comparison with the Scythian barrows, located in the Central Crimea region there are noticeable differences. Thus, in the Kul-Oba barrow the burial rituals bear many elements indicative of Greek cultural sway, such as the monumentality in the construction of the burial crypt, whereas, the unique horse burial find consisting of only parts of horse hulks has nothing in common with the unearthed whole hulks of buried horses from the Central Crimea’s barrows. The burial of horses, on which the Scythian economy was based, is an underlying feature of the Scythian burials, while, often, many of them were positioned at a single place, a practice further described by Herodotus in his fourth book (Herod. IV, 71-72).

On the other hand, the found objects of Scythic use, such as weapons (gorytos, whip, swords-acinaces, Scythian knives, etc.), work instruments, clothing details, ornaments, along with toiletry objects and vessels for cult purposes, demonstrate the belonging of the burial place to a member of the higher Scythian nobility, as well as of his wife and his servant (Fedoseev 2007, pp. 990-991; Piotrovsky 1973-1974, p. 27). Thus, worthy to be mentioned is the magnificent golden torque with endings representing Scythian horsemen, an iron sword placed in a golden sheath, along with an elaborately made in relief bowl, used for libation purposes. Additionally, the chieftain, as well as his wife, were dressed in sumptuous clothing ornamented with golden plaques, while of great beauty was the placed near the woman’s feet vessel, bearing figures of Scythians. Finally, to a hidden place, situated under the crypt’s floor was found a golden plaque in the form of a stag, which, probably, functioned as a shield’s ornamentation (Piotrovsky 1973-1974, p. 27).
Fig. 3. Panticapaeum - Kul Oba tumulus, 4th c. B.C., Relieved Vessel

Nevertheless, the additional existence of a number of artifacts not coinciding with the view of a Scythian burial, leave space for the assumption of a Bosporan king’s burial place (Fedoseev 2007, pp. 990-991). Among the unearthed objects of strong Greek influence were the belonging to the chieftain’s wife golden pendants with the depiction of Athena, found near her head, and bearing strong resemblances with the made by Phidias statue of the deity, placed in the Parthenon (Piotrovsky 1973-1974, p. 27).
Furthermore, according to J.H. Petersen (Petersen 2010, p. 253), it is safe to suggest that the burial mounds situated in the locality of the capital of the Bosporan Kingdom, Panticapaeum and dated back to the 4th century B.C., certainly belonged to the elite; however, the latter’s ethnic definition is a matter of dispute among the scholars. This nobility was, furthermore, aware of the kurgan’s meaning as dominant and powerful displays in the landscape and, thus, in the cityscape. Finally, the similarity in the burial assemblages of high status displaying goods, such as weaponry, horse armament, jewellery and lavish articles along with vessels related to drinking and banqueting, between the 5th century B.C. burial mounds from Nymphaion, thus, before its incorporation into the Bosporan Kingdom, and the 4th century B.C. kurgan burials from Panticapaeum, manifest the preferences of a non related to an ethnicity elite (Petersen 2010, p. 253).

Worthy of mentioning is that chains of kurgans are found lengthwise of ancient roads, while, intriguing is the fact that among the barrow groups, located in a close distance from
Panticapaeum, some were constructed following a chess-board model, each being possible to be viewed between the others. Most probably, these barrows served as a well-functioned directing line for travelers, or, as well as a boundary line. Finally, the range of kurgans that stretches from the central Crimea to the Strait of Kerch and the Taman’ Peninsula, might have been correlated with the migration paths of nomadic peoples taking place in those areas (Smekalova/Smekalov 2006, pp. 232-233).

Nevertheless, a small number of barrows were built before the colonization of the Bosporan Kingdom, such as the Temir-gora barrow and the burial complex in the vicinity of the Cukur estuary. The grave groups of the Nymphaion along with the Semibratnie (‘Seven Brothers’) barrows, located near the Kuban River area represent the first agglomeration of burials in the Kingdom of Bosporus, dated back to the middle or the third quarter of the 5th century B.C., and, probably, in use until the incorporation of Sindike and Nymphaion into the Bosporan Kingdom (Butyagin 2010, p. 12).

According to A. Butyagin, the first burial mounds related with the Bosporan Kings and the Bosporan aristocracy appeared in the middle of the 4th century B.C., thus, one century after the construction of the Barbarian barrow groups, while their number was limited (Butyagin 2010, p. 12). Most probably, the series of kurgans were deliberately erected in strategic places around the city of Panticapaeum, as on high grounds and ridges, for the improvement of their ‘visual effect’ (Petersen 2010, p. 252). The well known Kul-Oba barrow represents one of the first burial structures dated back to this period. Additionally, the Kekuvatsky barrow, situated on the westernmost part of the Yuz-Oba chain, might as well belong to the same period (Butyagin 2010, p. 12). Thus, one series of kurgans stretched west from Mithridates’ Mount, another expanded to the north of the city of Panticapaeum, while, to the south, ran the dominant to the landscape Yuz-Oba chain of barrows (Petersen 2010, p. 252).

However, according to J.A. Vinogradov, the second half of the 4th century B.C., is characterized by the construction of the most Scythian ‘royal’ burial mounds, evidenced by their contents full of silver and gold, while it can be considered the ‘Golden Autumn’ of Scythia (Vinogradov 2008, p. 16).

The use in burial rites of luxurious objects, among them jewels, demonstrated the noble status of the deceased. This need of the higher echelons of the Scythian nobility for differentiation from the others was expressed in the use of rich funerary articles, such as
bedecked armor for men, of lavish jewellery for women, while for both sexes, in the use of sumptuous garments (Ondrejova 2011, p. 372).

In ca. 350 B.C. and on, in the burial complexes of the higher nobility appeared ceremonial weapons, such as scabbard plates and gorytoi, in all likelihood, manufactured notably for the nomadic ‘barbarian’ leaders as emblems of their sublime power. Additionally, these weapons were created by Greek craftsmen, bearing typological features of the weapons of the Steppe Scythians, while their use was not restricted in the nomadic world, but expanded further to the local tribal aristocracy of the northern Black Sea region. Thus, most probably, the production of these weapons was related with their use as diplomatic gifts for the ‘emperors’ of the native aristocracy, whose support was essential for the Greeks, especially in political situations of crisis. The latter had either to win them or to bribe them.

Fig. 5. Certomlyk tumulus, 5th c. B.C., Golden Scabbard

It is believed that Pairisades’ I (344/3-311/10) politics was highly connected with the aforementioned practice, evidenced by the spread of costly ceremonial weapons in the barbarian belt, within an arc to which core was located the European part of the Kimmerian Bosporus. The Kul-Oba kurgan, near Kerch, the most important barrow of the Scythian burial mounds, situated in the eastern Crimea region, contained among its funerary articles a ceremonial sword placed in a golden scabbard. However, there is no evidence that the location of burials with finds of gorytoi and swords belonging to the highest ranks of the aristocracy coincides with the regions to which these weapons were primarily granted (Shcheglov/Katz/Salmond 1991, pp. 103, 115-116).
Finally, regarding the found weapon deposits in the Bosporan kurgans, noteworthy is that the Kekuvatskij Kurgan as well as the central grave in the Kul-Oba and the western end of the Yuz-Oba line of kurgans contained among their burial assemblages weaponry of both Greek and Scythian typology, such as arrowheads of the Scythian-type and daggers along with a helmet of the Chalkidian-type and Greek-type greaves (Petersen 2010, p. 253).

![Fig. 6. Chertomlyk tumulus, Relief Cuirass](image)

Scythian tombs, both male and female, contained dress’s ornaments, thousands of golden plaques sewed onto the garment, such as golden leaves and knobs, whereas of special importance was a kind of net-veil, having a gold and silver core and found in male tombs, decorating the breast and shoulder of the deceased. Moreover, noteworthy is that barrows which belonged to Scythian rulers in Nymphaeum, Kul Oba and ‘Seven Brothers’ revealed numerous artifacts, such as pectorals, rings and torques along with female jewels, as necklaces, bracelets and earrings, while the deceased’s adornment with female objects of art was, most probably, owned to the gifts given by their wives and other female family members (Ondrejova 2011, pp. 372, 374, 379).

Respectively, in female burials, both male and female elements are found, a common practice for the steppe peoples. Thus, in a great number of the female graves located on the Kuban along with the east and west of the Don territories, dated to the 6th-4th centuries B.C.,
male characteristics, such as weapons, mainly bows, have been unearthed. Additionally, the use of bow by women is seen on the dated back to the 4th century B.C., Athenian red-figured ‘Kerch vases’, in line with Herodotus’ accounts for the existence in some tribes of warrior women (Tillisch 2008, p. 31).

To the dated back to the 5th and the beginning of the 4th century B.C. aforementioned kurgans known as ‘Seven Brothers’, situated in the vicinity of the Kuban River, of great importance are the finds coming from the fourth kurgan of a silver rhyton along with a number of triangular golden plaques, both bearing great Iranian influence in their ornamentation, decorated in the Achaemenid style (Piotrovsky 1973-1974, p. 28).

Nevertheless, the identity of the burial complex of the abovementioned kurgans is at doubt, being either Scythian or Sindian, whereas, the majority of the scholars are of the opinion that they belonged to the Sindian royal house, most possibly, to seven Sindian kings. In addition, it is believed that the Sindian rulers were linked to the Scythian royal aristocracy through intermarriages, evidenced, further, by the son of the Sindian ruler Hekataios, who bore the Scythian name Oktamasad. Thus, the Scythian cultural impact upon the Sindian dynasty was significant, while the fact that no analogous Scythian kurgans of that structure and opulence are attested to the period of the 5th century B.C., but only in later times, widens the ‘Seven Brothers’ kurgans a monument of great significance, situated in the cultural crossroads of the Sindian, Scythian and Greek worlds (Trofimova 2007, pp. 211-212).

As regards the unearthed ‘Scythian gold’ in ‘Royal tombs’, found, even, in the burials of barbarian kings located in the hinterland, they cannot be interpreted as a production of trade activity among the Scythians and the Greeks. Most probably, these gold artifacts were given as a form of tax payment, as a gift of diplomacy for the attainment of the Bosporan rulers’ purposes, or as a return to an obligation. Finally, regarding the tribute payment by the Greeks, a found lead letter from Kerkinitis, dated back to the late 5th century B.C., provides direct evidence for its existence in the relations between the Greeks and the Scythians (Tsetskhadze 2011, p. 129; Vinogradov 2007, p. 147).

Nevertheless, according to A.A. Maslennikov (Maslennikov 2005, p. 163), the ‘gravitation’ of the rich Scythian barrows located in the vicinity of the Bosporan capital, Panticapaeum, and dated to the 4th century B.C., could be attributed to the role played by the local Scythian nobility as an intermediary in the grain trade. The Scythian farmers, most probably, produced a great amount of the exported, during the period under examination,
grain, notably wheat, which reached the Bosporan Kingdom not in the form of tributary payment by the former, but through the Scythian elite (Maslennikov 2005, p. 163).

These golden artifacts were manufactured by skillful Greek craftsmen in accordance with the demands and needs of the Scythian nobility, as the latter wished to differ itself from the others via the acquirement of lavish articles, such as bedecked armor along with luxurious jewellery and garments. Thus, these masterpieces paired ancient design and aesthetic feelings with the specific tastes of their local patrons, casting, furthermore, light on their living conditions and spiritual beliefs.

Additionally, these works of art, either imported, or produced by Greek craftsmen in local workshops reflect a Hellenic influence, in which infusion from Greek monumental art is apparent. Best known are the Kul Oba’s unearthed pendants along with the earrings from Bolshaya Bliznitsa depicting the head of Athena Parthenos, the comb from the Solokha kurgan, reflecting the Parthenon frieze as well as the stele of Dexileos, while, the depicted Nike on a ring found in Panticapaeum, as killing a stag, is reminiscent of the frieze of Athena’s Nike temple located on the Acropolis of Athens (Ondrejova 2011, pp. 372, 384).

Finally, a correlation among the 42 orthogonal golden appliqués, unearthed in the so-called Demeter’s priestess’ grave at Velka Bliznitsa, located on the Taman Peninsula, and the Eleusinian mysteries is suggested (Ondrejova 2011, p. 383).

This burial crypt is believed to have belonged to a priestess of Demeter (Aphrodite or of a divinity connected to the Great Goddess) due to the find on its ceiling of a drawn picture depicting the aforementioned deity. Moreover, the depiction on those plaques of Demeter’s, Persephone’s and Heracles’ head, clearly related to the Eleusinian mysteries, demonstrates, once again, the Greek imprint in the art of the northern Black Sea region. Additionally, the presence of a gold kalathos, headdress in the shape of a basket, correlated with the Goddess of the prolific forces of nature, Demeter, provides, also, ground for the connection of the burial rituals with the abovementioned mysteries (Tsetskhladze 2011, p. 129; Ondrejova 2011, p. 383; Bouzek 2007, p. 11; Trofimova 2007, pp. 269-270).
However, in this, most probably, aristocratic family burial place, dated back to the second half of the 4th century B.C., containing four crypts, amidst the grave artifacts of a stelengis, pendants, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, etc., were found an Iranian seal depicting a wrestling scene among a king and a lion along with an Egyptian amulet with the representation of the god Bes. In all likelihood, the amulet was brought in these territories via Iran, for a great number of Egyptian amulets showing the god Bes were unearthed during the archaeological excavations at the capital of the Achaemenid Empire, Susa (Piotrovsky 1973-1974, p. 28; Trofimova 2007, pp. 269-270).
The majority of the burial objects was produced in the Greek colonies, evidenced by the unearthed moulds and punches, however, based on the aforementioned existence of Greek quarters in Scythian settlements located deep in the steppe land - additionally, Kamenskoe city-site - a certain production of these objects in those settlements cannot be ruled out. Finally, in regard with the ethnicity of these artisans, they were mainly from the Hellespont and western Asia Minor, while southern Italy and Macedonia can also be considered as their place of origin (Tsetskhladze 2011, pp. 128-129).

In view of the construction of the aristocratic burials, after the first quarter of the 4th century B.C., types of local burials, such as the Sindo-Maeotian barrows, made out of brick and wood, came to an end. Furthermore, this shift towards the construction of stone-chambered kurgans and of corridors ‘dromoi’ leading to them, typical for the barrows of Panticapaeum during that period, was abrupt. The challenge for the construction of these barrows was certainly greater, not only economically, but, as well, in technical skills compared to the cist grave kurgans, made out of mud-bricks and dated to the same period from the locality of Nymphaion. Additionally, the abovementioned architectural technique that was adopted not only in the vicinity of Gorgippia, but, as well, along the Azov Sea in the
Lower Don territories, most certainly originated from Panticapaeum. The architects working there, created, thus, an amalgamated form of grave, a Scythian burial mound meeting Greek monumentality. This fact alone imposes us to take a closer look upon Spartokid kingship, most probably a hybridization of Scythian and Greek royal ideology (Moreno 2007, pp. 72-73; Petersen 2010, p. 253).

Among these new stepped roof grave structures, built until the 1st century B.C., the most important are considered those of the Kul Oba, Zolotoi’ Melek-Chesmenski’ and the Tsarski’ kurgan complexes, all dated to the 4th century B.C. Noteworthy is that similar tomb constructions are found in Thracian burials, Mycenaean tholoi, Etruscan graves, as well as in the under-ground types of kurgans, located in the Kuban region. Finally, though the Greek character of those structures is apparent in their concept and construction, the interpretations regarding the archetype of this burial architectural technique are many (Trofimova 2007, p. 30).

Additionally, in the burial rites of the Scythian Elite, apart from the visible change from the end of the 5th century B.C. in the design and construction of the Scythian barrows, bearing, now, elements of Ionian architecture, the bodies maintained their west, as evidenced in the Archaic period, orientation. Moreover, though the burial of horses still accompanied the deceased, now they were placed in separate graves. Finally, noteworthy is the burial of slaves or bodyguards along with their masters, the former being fully equipped with their arms and armor (Tsetskhladze 2011, p. 130).

As already attested, the finds from the 4th century B.C. kurgans of Bosporus and Scythia, are objects of opulence, made of gold, electrum, and silver, manufactured, most probably, by Greek craftsmen, who dwelled, or worked, in the poleis of the northern Black Sea littoral, mainly Panticapaeum. Additionally, they reflect the Scytho-Siberian aesthetics in art, materialized by Greek craftsmanship. However, as these masterpieces were made in the tastes of their owners and, furthermore, principally manufactured at Panticapaeum, the most influential clients could not be considered the Scythians, that dwelled far in the steppe zone, but the traveled and urbanized members of the Bosporan elite. Thus, these objects mainly reflect the ideology of the Bosporan aristocracy, based, among others, on the Athenian paideia (Moreno 2007, p. 74).

Regarding the 4th century B.C. lavish metalwork finds from Bosporus to the Dnieper, the Scythian iconography of “the justest and wisest, drinkers of mare’s milk, frugal, nomadic,
wagon-dwelling, strangers to money-making, communists, invincible warriors, lords of wheat and livestock” is apparent (Moreno 2007, p. 76). However, in these objects, it is more of Homer’s poetry rather than Herodotus’ ethnography that is reflected, the imaginative of the 4th century Athenian orators, instead of the steppe-life given in Herodotus’ view. This evidence provides solid ground for the intellectual impact that Athenian aristocracy and, mainly, a small group of men, related to the city’s grain supply, had upon Bosporan nobility’s identity and self-representation (Moreno 2007, p. 76).

In view of the interior of the barrows from Greek cities as Panticapaeum and Taman, and, particularly, of the sarcophagi placed in them, the latter are considered luxurious wooden objects produced from the 5th century B.C. to the 2nd century A.D., with the finest samples coming from the first 100 years. In addition, the ones dated to the 4th-3rd centuries B.C., were made mostly of cypress, yew and cedar. Regarding their decoration, pale inlaid of, mainly, boxwood is met, contrasting well with the dark colors of cypress and yew (Hannestad 2007, p. 96).

The wooden sarcophagi were manufactured either by native craftsmen according to the Greek terms, or by Greek craftsmen living in those areas, whereas, those of the best quality were, most likely, produced in Greece, particularly in Athens. Finally, regarding the material used for their construction, when they were not readymade imported to the Black Sea, not only the Mediterranean, but, based on Strabo accounts (12.3.10-11), as well as the territory of Amastris can be considered a wood supplier (Hannestad 2007, p. 96).

In many Bosporan cities and mainly in Nymphaion, wooden sarcophagi ornamented with plaster and bone appliqués are met. Nymphaion’s, in particular, are dated back from the 5th century B.C. to the 2nd century A.D. Noteworthy is that similar finds of fragmented decorated sarcophagi have also been unearthed in Olbia and dated back to the Archaic times (Petersen 2008, p. 218). Wooden sarcophagi from Panticapaeum, manufactured, though, in a later period, were further elaborated with inlays of gold, glass and semi-precious stones, while, often the sarcophagi were wrapped with colored fabrics, as is the case in the ‘Seven Brothers’ kurgans, whose place of production is believed to have been the Bosporus (Petersen 2010, pp. 217-253; Trofimova 2007, p. 211). Finally, of great importance are the sarcophagi from the Great Bliznitsa kurgan, especially the one from the burial chamber of the woman, a wood sarcophagus ornamented with ivory intaglios and inlay (Trofimova 2007, p. 269).
Only the high nobility was buried in those sarcophagi. The latter, regarded as monuments of architecture, were, likewise, constructed by large limestone blocks. However, those made of marble are additionally met, as is the sarcophagus from the Taman Peninsula characterized by its simple as well as monumental form. Its lid bears resemblance of an ancient temple’s pediment, while its decoration represents a band of rosettes carved in low relief and escorted with architectural decorative elements. The austerity and restraint that characterizes the abovementioned sarcophagus’ construction are features of an exquisite aesthetic taste. Additionally, further, decorative figures in the marble sarcophagi from the region are the sculptured representations on their lids as well as the carved reliefs on their sides.

Finally, the interior of a stone made sarcophagus was often painted as a reminiscent of a miniature tomb. This is, notably, seen in the painted decoration of a sarcophagus from the locality of modern Kerch, representing on its walls and the inside part of its lid, among other figures, the image of a painter standing in front of his easel and painting, most probably, in the encaustic technique, as the used for the drawing instrument is depicted being heated by a fire. However, this rare find of art, though not regarded as first class work, clearly manifests that in the region of Bosporus easel painting along with portraiture did occur (Sokolov 1974, pp. 10, 13).

Fig. 9. Panticapaeum, Limestone Sarcophagus, 1st c. A.D., Representation of Portrait Artist Workshop
The Black Sea region and, especially, its northern littoral was linked to Egypt and the Levant through the trade of commodities, such as glass artefacts and spices. Based on historical narratives (Hdt. 3. 20.1; Plin, *HN* 9.13), the Bosporan Kingdom’s elite burial mounds often contained alabaster jars, most probably, for the storage of myrrh and other spices. In addition, among the discovered glass vessels from the region, the unearthed glass alabastra are considered the earliest samples of core-formed glass manufacturing. Taking into account their miniature form, it can be suggested that, probably, they were used as perfumed oil containers. Finally, the parallel existence of alabaster vessels along with glass ones in the wealthiest tombs, provides sufficient ground for the correlation of their contents in the burial rituals (Archibald 2007, p. 264).

Noteworthy are the numerous Egyptian and Egyptianizing glass artefacts unearthed in the Crimean Peninsula and the steppe territories, particularly those discovered in the 4th and 3rd centuries B.C., Bosporan graves of Panticapaeum. Among the finds, of special interest are the faience objects bearing Egyptian designs changed into the Bosporan terms, such as the kneeling figures of sculpted Scythians. In addition, they were either manufactured in Bosporan workshops, located, mainly, in the territories of Panticapaeum, or were imported from Egypt. However, the former ones are easily recognized on the grounds of their design, workmanship, and color of the faience. Finally, it can be suggested that the glassmakers from the local workshops were immigrant craftsmen, most probably, correlated with the existence of Egyptian cults in the Bosporan Kingdom (Archibald 2007, pp. 266-267).

The close political contacts amid the Egyptian royal court and the Kingdom of Bosporus are, furthermore, attested in the dated to the second half of the 4th century B.C. unearthed Temple of Aphrodite/Isis in the city of Nymphaion. Among the thousand pieces of painted stucco with various maritime representations found in the building, a depicted ship bearing the name ‘Isis’, most probably related to an event dated back to the late 4th and 2nd-1st centuries A.D., provides ground for the ties between the two dynasties (Petersen 2010, p. 204).

Finally, regarding the 5th century burial mounds in Nymphaion, according to J.H. Petersen (Petersen 2010, pp. 241-242, 250-251), they can be interpreted as a response of the local nobility -which was not confined to the Scythian elite- towards the growing pressure of the nearby Bosporan Kingdom. Taking into account the proximity of Nymphaion to the Kingdom of Bosporus, located about 17km south of its capital city, Panticapaeum, its strife for
independence must have been hard. The local elite, being a powerful ruling class, wished to bury and be buried in kurgan structures, which displayed high social and political status.

This view is, furthermore, supported by the radical shift in the 4th century B.C. grave assemblages resulted by the final annexation of Nymphaion to the new dominant factor of the region, the Bosporan Kingdom. Thus, whereas the prevailing in the 5th century B.C. grave goods were the weapons, the horse armament, the jewellery articles along with the objects destined for drinking and banqueting purposes, in the 4th century B.C., the oil-related pottery and strigils suddenly gained ground, manifesting, thus, the society’s adaptation to the new sovereignty’s elite preferences (Petersen 2010, pp. 241-242, 250-251).

Regarding the area of eastern Crimea, the latest burial in correlation with the local nobility is the Ak-Burun Barrow, excavated in 1875 and dated back to the end of the 4th century B.C., while the finds from the kurgan bear Maiotian and Sarmatian features (Vinogradov 2008, p. 18).

In view, now, of the Sarmatians, they brought in the Bosporan art the polychrome style, while, in their metal techniques, pseudo-granulation and filigree were additionally used. In their burials, a great number of objects of Greek and Roman craftsmanship were unearthed, among them, primarily, golden articles along with vessels made of clay, glass and metals. Furthermore, as illustrative articles of the Sarmato-Bosporan type are considered the decorated with gold-casing and large glass sets, plaques, a technique which, further, developed during the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D., in the use of the inlay style, ornamented with precious stones and colored enamel. This is, notably, seen in their embellished wares with mosaics of precious and semiprecious stones along with enamel of red, blue and white colors (Trofimova 2007, p. 32).

Additionally, artifacts of the Sarmatian art are considered the burial objects made out of gold leaves with the most famous among them being the golden mask unearthed in the grave of Rescuporides, bearing a quite ambiguous meaning. Moreover, ornaments, such as plaques, finger-rings, and bracelets, found in burials located in the Kuban and Don territories, with greatly geometricized floral motifs are regarded as representative artifacts of the Sarmatian art.

Male burials contained a series of objects, such as swords, kanjars, bows and arrows, while the unearthed feminine articles as well as the ornamentation of the Sarmatian clothing are, likewise, notable. Finally, the kurgans located at the Nogaychin in the Crimea, the
Svatova Lutchka at the Severskiy Donets area, the Porogi at the Vinnytsya territories along with the Sokolova Moghila in the Nikolayev region revealed the most representative articles of the Sarmatian art (Trofimova 2007, p. 32; Riedina 2006, pp. 45-46).

Worth mentioning is that from the end of the 4th century B.C., the burial mounds related to the local elite of the Bosporan Kingdom are evidenced solely in the Asian side of the Bosporus. To this period is dated the Zelenskoy barrow, situated in the vicinity of Hermonassa, while of great importance is the aforementioned barrow of Bolshaya Bliznica near Phanagoria, whose burial chamber, called ‘the priestess of Demetra’, bears similarities to the tomb in the barrow Trehbratny (Three Brothers) (Butyagin 2010, pp. 13-14).

Furthermore, on the Asian side, to the second half of the 3rd - the first half of the 2nd century B.C., are dated the local elite’s barrows of the Mount Vasjurinskaja, Buerova Mogila, Merdzany, Artiukhovsky kurgan, etc., whose burial finds, additionally, manifest the close ties between the local populations of the trans-Don along with the Kuban’ territories and the Greek worlds (Vinogradov 2008, p. 18; Trofimova 2007, pp. 283, 287).

The majority of the great Bosporan barrows located in the Asiatic part are dated back to the second half of the 4th century B.C., while, the attested in the same century increase in luxurious grave articles went in parallel with the growth in the wealthy burial assemblages of the European Bosporus (Petersen 2010, p. 258). Moreover, they were situated in the proximity of the Greek settlements and not in the hinterland. Regarding the funeral rites, both inhumations as well as cremations are attested, while in the cremation burials, large Greek vessels were used as urns. Additionally, both in men’s and women’s cremations, well-manufactured gold wreaths were unearthed. Lastly, as already attested, often, among the burial objects from barrows dated to this period are met articles of ‘Scythian origin made by antique workers as well as antique objects with Barbarian features’, manifesting a cross-cultural society (Butyagin 2010, p. 14; Petersen 2010, p. 258).
On the northern Black Sea littoral the meetings of cultures among the Greek poleis and the local tribes had a significant impact on both sides. The contrast between the two worlds, the Greeks and the nomads, in their view of the world, life, social value system along with their expressed traditions in art was very great. To the Greek Art, dated to the Archaic and Classical times, the Scythian Animal Style, bearing ‘formal features and semantic content’ may be regarded as the straight opposite. Nevertheless, Greeks’ flexible thought made feasible the adaptation of their art features to the aforementioned semantic forms, an evident greatly manifested in the Attic production of the so-called Kerch vases, modified in line with the tastes of the Bosporans (Trofimova 2007, p. 22).

Fig. 10. Bosporan Kingdom, Panticapaeum, 4th c. B.C., Relieved Lekythos, Xenophantus Painter
Accordingly, the Greek craftsmanship, when introduced into the northern Pontic shores accompanied, during the first half of the 4th century B.C. -either in its second quarter or in the beginnings of the century- by the immigrant Greek artisans, was, additionally, transformed under the local predilections, as greatly evidenced in the case of about 400 to 330 objects of precious jewellery and toreutic metalworks. Moreover, regarding those craftsmen’s places of origin, apart from Hellespont’s and Western Asia Minor’s centers, Southern Italy along with Macedonia may, also, be considered (Trofimova 2007, p. 22; Treister 2005, p. 61).

The wealth of the local aristocracy and of the Bosporan ruling classes, most probably, was a good reason for the appearance in the northern Black Sea littoral of itinerant craftsmen, both jewelers and stonecutters. Finally, the imported from the metropolis works of art, enabled the Greek artisans, settled on the northern Pontic area, to remain aware of the artistic innovations, which, thus, they implemented to their own productions (Butyagin 2007b, p. 65).

In the melting pot of the Bosporan Art, where objects of Scythian type were produced along with genuine Greek articles and artifacts bearing features both of the two artistic traditions, it becomes, at times, rather difficult to distinguish whether an object belongs to this or that artistic school. It is believed, regarding the toreutics, that the production center was located in the Kingdom of Bosphorus, directed by Greek artisans, who combined the Greek artistry and tradition with the local typology and iconography. Furthermore, the influence of the Thrace-Macedonian toreutics of the late 5th to early 4th centuries B.C., in the Bosporan workshops cannot be ruled out. Finally, only jewellery, compared to the other forms of art, remained closer to the Greek artistic school for a longer period (Trofimova 2007, pp. 27, 29).

Additionally, in the workshops located on the Bosporan cities, pottery made of gray and red clay along with thick wall vessels were produced, while their presence is witnessed in small numbers in the Scythian burial places. Moreover, the Bosporan craftsmen during the 5th and 4th centuries B.C., as already attested, provided with artifacts of art and weaponry their Scythian nomadic and semi-nomadic neighbors. Thus, works of art, such as gold plaques used for ornamenting the ceremonial and funeral clothing of the Scythian nobility, as well as a great number of Scythian weapons were produced (Gavrilyuk 2007, p. 627).

Finally, it has been suggested that the world-known golden pectoral of magnificent workmanship from the Tolstaia Mogila kurgan ('Thick Tomb'), with detailed representations
of Scythians and animals, each separately casted, was manufactured in one of the workshops located on the capital of the Bosporan Kingdom, Panticapaeum. Moreover, it is believed that in the same Bosporan workshop, a simpler gold pectoral unearthed from the Great Bliznitsa kurgan was also produced (Gavrilyuk 2007, p. 627; Piotrovsky 1973-1974, p. 31).

However, the Bosporan Kingdom should not be merely viewed as a Greco-Scythian dynasty, but rather as a Greco-Barbarian, since in its territories, throughout its history, dwelled not only the Scythians, but as well, among other tribes, the Maiotians and Sindians. Thus, the Bosporan State was a ‘multiethnic’ and ‘multicultural’ community, evidenced in all social stratification. Regarding those meetings of cultures in the region, some scholars are still supporters of a Hellenocentric view, tending to consider the Greek Bosporan cities ‘as isles in a sea of mostly hostile Barbarians’.

In view, now, of this Barbarian influence upon the cultural life of the Bosporan Kingdom’s citizens, the available archaeological material from the Greek colonies, located on both shores, does not evidence any, at least till the years of Mithridates VI Eupator. In reality, the mere Barbarian impact can be witnessed in the hand-made pottery, however manufactured in an earlier period, in the arrow heads and Scythian swords, likewise, unearthed from early necropoleis, and rarely from the settlements. In addition, to the local population can be attributed the found bronze and bone remains of horse bridles, whereas, these Barbarian objects reached the Bosporan sites through the direct communion and not in the form of a cultural loan. Finally, noteworthy is that the depicted features on the horse bridles, found in both rich as well as lesser wealthy burials, bear only minimal Greek sways, thus, with their typology and iconography, most probably, being evolved within the Scythian artistic tradition (Butyagin 2007b, pp. 66-67).

Likewise, the found pottery and metal objects in and around the Greek cities bore no barbarian features. Additionally, the ground burials represented no local characteristics apart from the mentioning of the deceased’s ethnus along with its non Greek name carved on the Greek stele. Therefore, according to A.M. Butyagin, the ‘Greek foundation’ of the Bosporan Kingdom, exempt from native sways, can be suggested (Butyagin 2010, p. 11).

Taking into account the entire volume of the archaeological material in the Bosporan area, ‘Bosporan Art’ can be viewed as an independent stream, however, not as an independent art due to the imitative features of its monuments, but as an undivided part of Pontic artistic tradition. Probably, the Bosporan aristocracy, acting as the cultural mediator of
the Barbarians, aided towards the better understanding of the Greek world by the latter in the northern Black Sea littoral (Butyagin 2010, p. 15).

Thus, ‘Bosporan Style’ arose, mainly, from the amalgamation of two artistic currents, a Greek and a barbarian one, or, to be more precise, a non-Greek. The ambivalence and syncretism of ‘Bosporan Art’ resulted from the mixing of variant ethnical peoples, while the Greek-barbarian dualism in the art of Bosporus can be divided in two stages, the first one connected with the ‘hellenisation’, or, according to A.M. Butyagin, with the ‘partial barbarisation’ (Butyagin 2010, p. 15) of the Bosporan culture, whereas the second, with its ‘barbarisation’ (Davydova 2007, pp. 32-33). The latter is related with the shift in the Bosporan Kingdom’s power towards a Sarmatian dynasty. The impact of the local tribes, as evidenced in the case of the Aspurgians, was great in all the domains of the social-cultural Bosporan life (Butyagin 2010, p. 15).

In this regard, as already attested, the Bosporan funerary sculpture provides with more ground for the existence of the abovementioned sway. The dated to the Roman Era Bosporan funerary reliefs, are characterized by the ‘schematism’ and ‘coarseness’ of their rendering, notably manifested in those dated to the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. (Butyagin 2007b, p. 69). However, according to another suggestion, the schematic images on the Bosporan funerary sculptures are not especially linked with the appearance of the barbarians. Their resemblance with Chersonesos’ funerary sculpture, where no barbarian presence is attested, is significant. Thus, the Bosporan funerary reliefs should, rather, be related with the evolution in the northern Pontic funerary sculpture as a whole, and not with the ‘barbarized’ Bosporus (Butyagin 2007b, p. 69).

The found in Bosporan cities and rural settlements, as well as in the necropoleis of the Kingdom of Bosporus terracotta articles, bearing an iconography highly related to the nomadic way of living, witness the exerted influence of the local peoples upon the state. The most representative of this group of objects is considered the unearthed in the necropolis of Panticapaeum terracotta, depicting a bull and a wagon. The totally schematic features of the animal, which bear no dynamics, along with the depicted wheels, witness of a fundamentally stranger to antiquity artistic tradition. Finally, some of the represented terracotta’s features are extremely accurate, such as the discernible wagon’s structure and the visible ‘tagma’ symbol on the bull’s shoulder.
The abovementioned schematic rendering of the animal terracotta figures is also met in the fragments of a terracotta lamp, unearthed from Ilouraton, while, other animals are, likewise, rendered in this way, such as the recent find of a terracotta deer from the location of Myrmekion, which can be identified as a deer only by its antlers.

Furthermore, the great number of found depictions of goddesses with highly hypertrophied features can, additionally, be incorporated in this tradition. Accordingly, the faces of the deities are rendered in a schematic way, while, their too long hands are extended forward. Finally, regardless of what divinities these terracottas represent, they bear no resemblance to the images met on the toreutic articles from the Scythian burials.

Regarding that period, the Bosporan marionettes are of particular interest, usually depicting a female figurine, represented with a bell-shaped skirt and two legs. However, though the manufacture of marionettes made of clay, bones and metal materials was familiar to Greeks since the earliest times, the Bosporan figurines can be considered unique specimens, due to their unparallel shape of jointless legs, in contrast to the Greek ones. Accordingly, their faces are rendered schematically, while they are depicted having sausagelike hands. Among their additional features, though some of them are not clearly recognized, objects, such as flutes, cornucopia and timbrels, usually related with deities and religious rituals are often included. Finally, in spite of their schematic rendering, the custom in manufacturing such marionette figurines may be traced back in ancient Greece (Butyagin 2007b, pp. 67-68).

Of great importance for the Bosporan art, are the wood sarcophagi dated to the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D. In comparison to the Bosporan sarcophagi of the 4th century B.C., whose form and decoration bear features of the Greek tradition, the wall decorations in the first centuries A.D. Bosporan sarcophagi, made with wood intaglios and appliqué works of terracotta or plaster materials, can be regarded as the local expression of the relief themes used in Attic, Asia Minor and Roman sarcophagi. Therefore, they were the local adaptation of a tradition deriving from the High Classical art of antiquity. Moreover, the Bosporan wood sarcophagi’s decorations from Kerch are characterized by their coarsening style, notably seen in the relief with the depiction of Niobids’ death as well as in the depicted in another sarcophagus, battle among a hunter and a lion (Jijina 2007, pp. 70-71, 74; Butyagin 2007b, pp. 68-69). Finally, of great importance is the wooden sarcophagus found in one of the dated to the 1st century A.C. graves from the necropolis of the city of Phanagoria, with finds such as
twelve Gorgons’ plaster masks, a pitcher, along with a dish made of glass (Treister/Vinogradov 1993, p. 558).

Consequently, one of Bosporan art’s traits is considered the aforementioned simplification and schematization treatment of forms, additionally, attested in a great number of ancient oikoumene’s peripheral regions. Furthermore, it can be regarded as the local adaptation of a general artistic tradition implanted into a foreign soil. Thus, we are dealing with “a loss of the barbarian culture’s initial originality and its transformation into provincial barbarized versions of Greek or Roman culture”, evidenced in the unusual local representations of art (Trofimova 2007, p. 22).

Conclusively, ‘Bosporan Art’ should not be merely approached as a historical and cultural artistic trend, but, as well, as a specific phenomenon in ancient art. Bosporan Kingdom, possessing great territories both in the European and Asiatic part of Bosporus, was a domain of high intensity’s fusion in ideology and art between the Greeks and the natives, which resulted to the great social and cultural evolution of the involved partners. Thus, based on the archaeological record, the Greeks did not remain immune to the sways from other cultures, but were greatly involved in the formation of hybrid identities in a multi-cultural environment (Petersen 2010, pp. 306-307). The artistic influence of separate ethnical peoples, though strong, did not affect the probity of ‘Bosporan Art’, whose original Greek-barbarian style is evident throughout its history (Davydova 2007, pp. 32-33).
Conclusions

The Kingdom of Bosporus, established in the 5th century B.C., in the form of a defense union (symmachia), reached its completion in the 4th century B.C., under the Spartokids’ rule with the forced incorporation of Nymphaion, Theodosia, Phanagoria and Sindoi. Additionally, during the first half of the 4th century B.C., the Bosporan Dynasty managed to expand its territories through the peaceful annexation of the local inhabitants in the Taman and Kuban territories. The Spartokids’ rule lasted for more than three hundred years, until the end of the 2nd century B.C., whereas the Bosporan State continued to exist under this name until the 4th century A.D.

Furthermore, the Bosporan Kingdom should not be merely viewed as a Graeco-Scythian dynasty, but rather as a Graeco-Barbarian, since in its territories, throughout its history, inhabited not only the Scythians, but as well, among other tribes, the Maiotians and Sindians. The meetings of cultures among the Greek poleis and the local tribes had a significant impact on both sides. The contrast between the two worlds, the Greeks and the nomads, was great; however, Greeks’ flexible thought made feasible the adaptation of their art features to the native semantic forms. Thus, the Bosporan State became a ‘multiethnic’ and ‘multicultural’ community, evidenced in all social stratification.

Accordingly, regarding the cultural interactions within the Kingdom of Bosporus, the evidenced ambivalence and syncretism in the Bosporan ideology, resulted by the mixing of variant ethnical peoples, can be divided in two stages, the first one connected with the ‘hellenisation’ of the Bosporan culture, whereas the second, with its ‘barbarisation’, related with the shift in the Bosporan Kingdom’s power towards a Sarmatian dynasty.

Finally, the attested in later times, evolution in the Bosporan Art towards a simplification and schematization in the rendering of forms, can be understood as a local adaptation of a general artistic tradition implanted into a foreign soil, and further, as “a loss of the barbarian culture’s initial originality” transformed “into provincial barbarized versions of Greek or Roman culture” (Trofimova, 2007, p. 22).
Appendix

Illustrations


Fig. 1. - Available from: File: School of Humanities, Monuments Archive, [Accessed 4th October 2012].

Fig. 2. - Available from: [http://black.sealevel.ca/2007i.htm](http://black.sealevel.ca/2007i.htm), [Accessed 3rd October 2012].

Fig. 3. - Available from: File: School of Humanities, Monuments Archive, [Accessed 4th October 2012].

Fig. 4. - Available from: File: School of Humanities, Monuments Archive, [Accessed 4th October 2012].

Fig. 5. - Available from: File: School of Humanities, Monuments Archive, [Accessed 4th October 2012].

Fig. 6. - Available from: File: School of Humanities, Monuments Archive, [Accessed 4th October 2012].

Fig. 7. - Available from: File: School of Humanities, Monuments Archive, [Accessed 4th October 2012].

Fig. 8. - Available from: File: School of Humanities, Monuments Archive, [Accessed 4th October 2012].

Fig. 9. - Available from: File: School of Humanities, Monuments Archive, [Accessed 4th October 2012].

Fig. 10. - Available from: File: School of Humanities, Monuments Archive, [Accessed 4th October 2012].
Bibliography


Saprykin, S.Ju. (2003) Polis and chora in the Kingdom of Bosporos. Paper delivered at the University of Aarhus, Available from:


