

SPECIMENS OF CLASSICAL BRONZE TOREUTICS
FROM PICHVNARI

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The present paper is devoted to items of Classical bronze toreutics: oinochoai, ladles, strainers, skyphoi, strigils, mirrors, and local situlae. Except for Kobuleti-Pichvnari, no other Greek necropolis is known on the territory of Colchis, on the eastern Black Sea littoral, hence the special academic interest that attaches to Pichvnari¹. Even in mainland Greece the number of specimens of the Classical jeweller's art and toreutics brought to light is relatively small. They are found more frequently in the peripheries: the western Mediterranean, Egypt, Macedonia, Asia Minor, and the northern and western Black Sea littorals. Thanks to discoveries in Pichvnari, the Georgian seaboard is gradually being added to the regions cited.

The items of Pichvnari toreutics fall into four groups. Represented in the first is almost the entire complex of vessels and devices connected with wine-drinking: a bronze oinochoe, ladle, strainer, and skyphos. The second comprises bronze and iron strigils connected with the palaestra; the third unites discoid bronze mirrors belonging to the toilet; the fourth comprises a large number of local situlae, and ritual and ceremonial vessels. I shall discuss these groups in this order.

The bronze jug (K-P 67/15), found in burial No. 1 in 1967, has a rather broad, flat base, thin-walled roundish body, and evenly sloping shoulders (Fig. 1, 1). Its low neck ends with a mouth everted abruptly outward, the outer slope being adorned with three horizontal rows of dotted ornament enclosed within relief bands. The lower end of the ear, attached in the area of the belly, is of foliate outline, depicting a 9-branch palmette of magnificent proportions and a lotus flower — the symbol of a solar deity. The upper end of the hooked handle is fastened to a small plate with three pivots, below the rim of the

¹ On Pichvnari, see Kakhidze 1971; 1975; 1981; Tsetskhladze 1994; 1998, 26-38; 1999, 17-72. On the silver phialai from Pichvnari, see Kakhidze forthcoming. Note should be taken of the fact that of the 180 burials studied at the necropolis only one had been rifled in ancient times. This creates ideal conditions for determining burial customs, types of burials, regularities of the placement of the inventory, chronological, and typological classification.

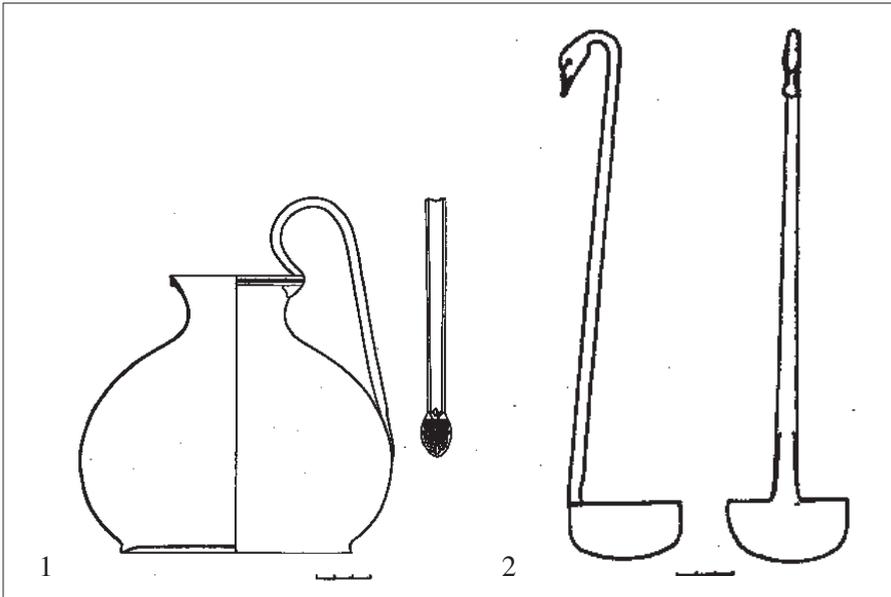


Fig. 1. *Burial 1*. (1) Oinochoe-like jug. (2) Bronze ladle. Scale 1:4.

mouth. The mouth and the ear are cast, and the body forged (*cf.* Kakhidze 1987, 47-50, pl. XXXVI).

The Pichvnari oinochoe-like jug ranks among rare finds. Such vessels were known to be used during feasts and ceremonial repasts. To date the Pichvnari find has no parallel. Even in the northern Black Sea littoral, with its long record of archaeological excavations, only one specimen has been discovered — the vessel found in 1876 in Semibratnoe barrow No. 4, Taman Peninsula, and preserved in the State Hermitage. It is considered to be of Etruscan manufacture (Bilimovich 1982, 84-5). More often than not jugs of this type are found in Etruscan burials (20 cases). Different varieties are identified according to the decor on the lower end of the ear: examples with a Silenus mask, Gorgoneion, a lion skin, and palmette image similar to that of Pichvnari. Lotus-flower palmettes are found on the bronze jugs from Semibratnoe, Tarquinium, Genoa, the Vatican, Cassel, and Locri (Bilimovich 1982, 84-5). According to its form, grooved ear, and mouth ornament, the Pichvnari find also resembles the specimens of the other above-noted varieties. All of them obviously come from a single centre. Most scholars believe Etruria to have been that centre. If this is the case, the eastern Black Sea littoral provides the first discovery of ancient Etruscan ware in this area. It should be added here that an analogy of

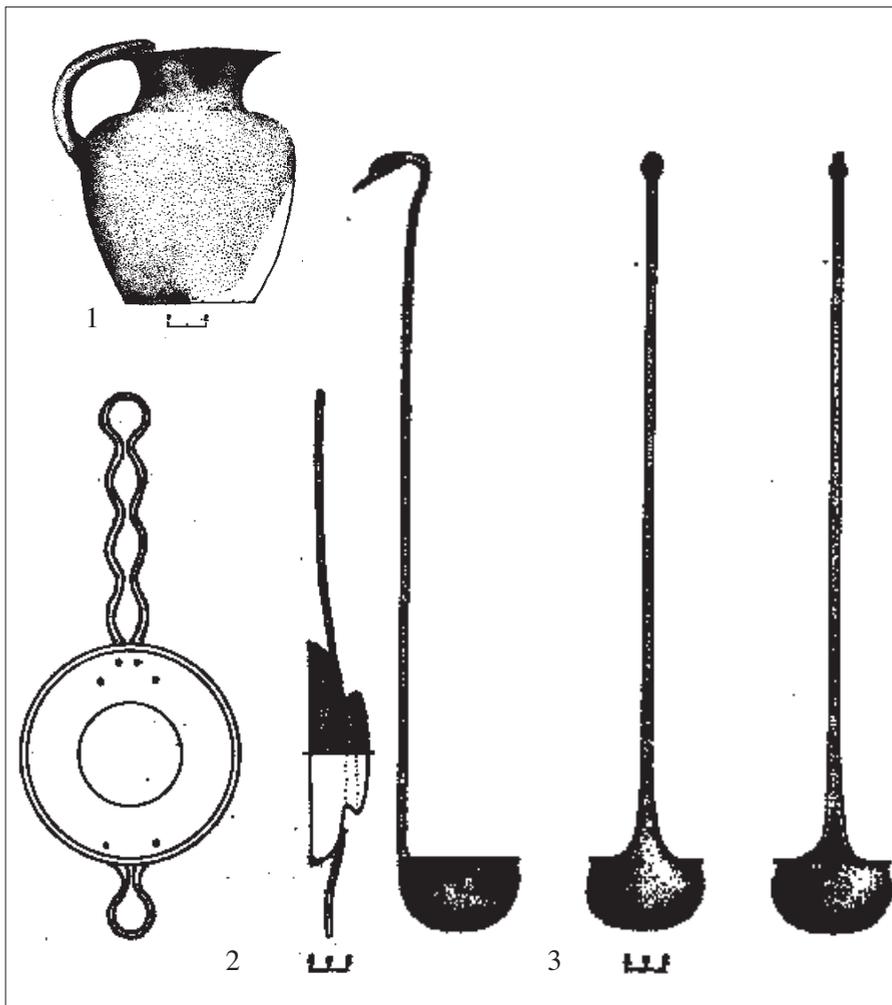


Fig. 2. *Burial 15*. (1) Oinochoe. Scale 1:4. (2) Bronze strainer. Scale 1:8. (3) Bronze ladle. Scale 1:8.

the Pichvnari vessel is found among Attic red-figure vases too². Naturally, the question of the manufacturing centre of these interesting items of toreutics cannot be considered to have been solved definitively. According to the bur-

² CVA, Deutschland, 29, Gotha 2, pls. 145-6. The vase features an ithyphallic scene. It is not ruled out that this Athenian vase was an imitation of Etruscan metal ware.

ial complex (see below), the Pichvnari bronze vessel is datable to the third quarter of the 5th century BC.

Another bronze oinochoe was discovered in burial No. 15 (K-P 68/197). It is plain, patined and rather damaged, with a flat base, slightly rounded, tallish body, narrow shoulders, wide, low neck, and trefoil mouth (Fig. 2, 1). The base was forged separately and attached to the body with pivots passed through upturned plates (in all there are nine circular holes spaced 3 cm apart). The body and the many-faceted solid ear are cast. The lower end of the ear is soldered to the upper half of the body, while the upper end — resembling a snake's head — is attached in the arc of the mouth. The diameter of the base is 6.5 cm; of the body, 11.5 cm; of the neck, 5.5 cm. The height is 14 cm. A three-lipped bronze oinochoe was found in the second rich burial of the Vani city-site. However, its ear is different: the lower end is adorned with a palmette characteristic of the Early Classical period, while the upper end is bent like a hook. It is considered to be of Attic manufacture and dated to the second quarter of the 5th century BC (*cf. Vani VII, 90, pl. 39/403*).

A three-lipped vessel, discovered by chance at a construction site in the Bolnisi district of south-eastern Georgia, resembles the Pichvnari oinochoe in shape. It is damaged and the ear is lost. An engraved double belt, formed of grape bunches, vine leaves and a thick plait in the area of the neck and shoulders. The area of the body is covered with a mythological composition hemmed with narrow cord-like belts (representations of an athlete, an altar, a dancing nude male and another, damaged figure are engraved in succession). It is believed to convey Dionysiac mysteries or scenes from the labours of Heracles (Sinauridze 1985, 31-3, fig. 6, pls. XXI-XXIII). This find shows that Classical import reached eastern Georgia as well. Routes leading to western Asia run through the same region.

The bronze oinochoe of Pichvnari has direct analogies among materials of the northern Black Sea littoral, one having been discovered in grave 24 of the necropolis of Nymphaeum and dated, by the accompanying material, to the second quarter or middle of the 5th century BC (Silanteva 1959, 67, fig. 2). A similar gilt bronze vessel was found in the barrows of the forest steppe zone of the middle Dnieper — at the village of Ostnyazhki in the Tyasmin basin. The vessel is generally believed to come from the Mediterranean, and is dated to the mid-5th century BC (Onaiko 1966, 30, 63, pls. XVII/4, XXV/80). An Attic black-glazed oinochoe, resembling the Pichvnari specimen, and discovered on the Athenian Agora, is dated to the same period (Agora XII, 243, pl. 5/2, fig. 102). The Pichvnari oinochoe must have been made in the mid-5th century BC, with Athens as its manufacturing centre. (The dating of burial complex No. 15 is discussed in Kakhidze forthcoming.) Judging by the numerous Attic black-glazed oinochoai, the best examples of pottery were often inspired by metal vessels.

Formerly, the manufacture of bronze oinochoai was linked to Chalcidice. Later on some scholars considered them to be the production of Tarentum in

southern Italy. The role of the major industrial centres of the Peloponnese (Aegina, Corinth, etc.) was outstanding in Greek bronzeworking — Corinth was known for the manufacture of bronze mirrors³. The Pichvnari example differs from the Italian black-glazed and Aeginetan palmetted oinochoai. It evinces a close parallel with Attic black-glazed specimens. I am inclined to believe that the Pichvnari oinochoe was made in the mid-5th century BC in Athens.

Along with oinochoai, burials Nos. 1 and 15 yielded nearly identical bronze ladles. Both have a small hemispherical bowl, the flat mouth of which is turned inward to prevent spillage. The tall, vertical, quadrilateral handle ends with a sculptural representation of a long-necked swan's head. All along the sides of the handle there are ribs, reaching the mouth of the bowl. The handle is wider at the mouth (a 3 cm-long groove runs along the handle on the inner side). The swan's head has exquisitely notched eyes and beak. The ladle from burial No. 1 measures: length, 32.5 cm; bowl diameter, 6.3 cm; inner depth, 3 cm (Fig. 1, 2). The comparable measurements of that from burial No. 15 are 37 cm, 6.2 cm, and 3 cm (*cf.* Kakhidze 1975, 26, pl. IX/3) (Fig. 2, 3).

The ladle (*kyatos*) was used regularly for pouring wine and for libation in the temple. It served also as a measure of liquids, being equal to 1/72 in Attic metrology. The form is characterised by conservativeness. Varieties exist: towards the Roman period the bowl was made deeper, occasionally with a flat bottom, and the handle was shortened (Crosby 1943).

This branch of toreutics appears to have been widespread in the Classical world. A different variety of silver ladle was found in a rich burial (No. 6) of the 5th century BC at Vani (*Vani* I, 116, fig. 57). An attempt has been made to date the burial to a later period (first half of the 4th century BC) from the gold bracelets with lion, ibex, and calf heads found there. Similar bracelets made of silver occur in Pichvnari in complexes of the second half of the 5th century BC, and it seems more justified so to date this burial. A bronze ladle was found in a rich burial complex, discovered by accident while digging foundations at the village of Bogvi, eastern Georgia (Margishvili 1992, 33, 77, pl. XXII/6).

In the northern Black Sea littoral several such ladles are known. Ladles similar to those of Pichvnari have been discovered at the necropolis of Olbia (Kozub 1974: bronze ladles were found in 13 burials of the 5th-4th centuries BC). The ladle from Nymphaeum is of earlier date and somewhat different (Silanteva 1959, 64, fig. 34). Specimens discovered in rich Scythian barrows in the northern Black Sea area also resemble the Pichvnari finds (Onaiko 1966, 101, no. 411). The bronze ladles found at the Maritsyn necropolis near Olbia are contemporaneous with their Pichvnari counterparts. They are often suspended from the mouth of an amphora (Korovina 1962, 304). Similar wares

³ For discussion and literature, see Bilimovich 1982.

have appeared also in the burials of the common people. Bronze and iron ladles (five examples of each) were found at the Nikolaevka necropolis (Melyukova 1975, 168-9, figs. 43/11-2, 50/1-4). In general iron ladles belong to rare finds. No other Greek metal object has been found at the Nikolaevka necropolis.

Pichvnari burials Nos. 1 and 15 also yielded bronze wine-strainers – a smaller example was found in burial No. 70 as well. All are of different types.

The Type 1 strainer was found in burial No. 15 (K-P 68/194). It was much damaged (the area of small perforations is not preserved). The body is of a peculiar shape; the surface of the mouth is adorned with 3 rows of concentric circles. The handle is made of thick wire wrought in figures of eight, whose snake ends are flattened in a peculiar way and fastened to the strainer with two pivots each. On the opposite side a loop-like ring for hanging up the strainer is fastened with a single pivot. The diameter of the straining area is 6 cm, of the body 12 cm; the height of the ear is 15 cm, and of the ring 4 cm (Fig. 2, 2).

A similar strainer was discovered at Zhurovka in the Cherkassk region of the Dnieper area. Preserved in the State Hermitage, it is believed to be a product of the Mediterranean and, from the accompanying black-glazed cup, it is dated to the first half of the 5th century BC (Onaiko 1966, 63, pl. XVII/3; Bilimovich 1979, 29, fig. 6). An analogous strainer was also found at the necropolis of Olbia, in a complex of the first half of the 5th century BC (Bilimovich 1979, 30, fig. 7)⁴.

The Type 2 strainer was found in burial No. 1 (K-P 67/16). It is cast, with a cup-like, small-capacity body, whose ends are especially rounded in order to fit a separately forged, small-holed strainer (which has not survived). The strainer has a solid, band-like handle, slightly thinned in the middle (Fig. 3, 1). It ends with a sculptural representation of a swan, facing left (i.e. the head of the swan and the cup are on the same plane). A triangular hanger is soldered on the opposite side of the handle. An elongated drop-like figure follows the entire length of the handle. All features of the swan's head (beak with nostrils, eyes, feathers, etc.) are rendered with great precision and in high artistic taste. The diameter of the strainer is 12.5 cm; length with handle, 26.5 cm (*cf.* Kakhidze 1975, 27-9, fig. 1, pl. IX/3).

The Pichvnari finds have direct analogies among the materials of the northern Black Sea littoral, especially the specimen discovered in Solokha barrow. The Pichvnari and Solokha items must have been manufactured at the same workshop, if not by the same master. On the basis of the material available to me, I cannot share the dating suggested by scholars — the first half of the 4th century BC (Silanteva 1959, 65-6; Onaiko 1966, 22). The strainer found in Semibratnoe barrow No. 6, whose date has been determined correctly as the

⁴ Similar strainers have come from Etruscan burials (preserved at museums in Karlsruhe, Lyons, Saint Germain-en-Laye, and Milan). The specialist literature is given in Bilimovich 1979, 30, 38.

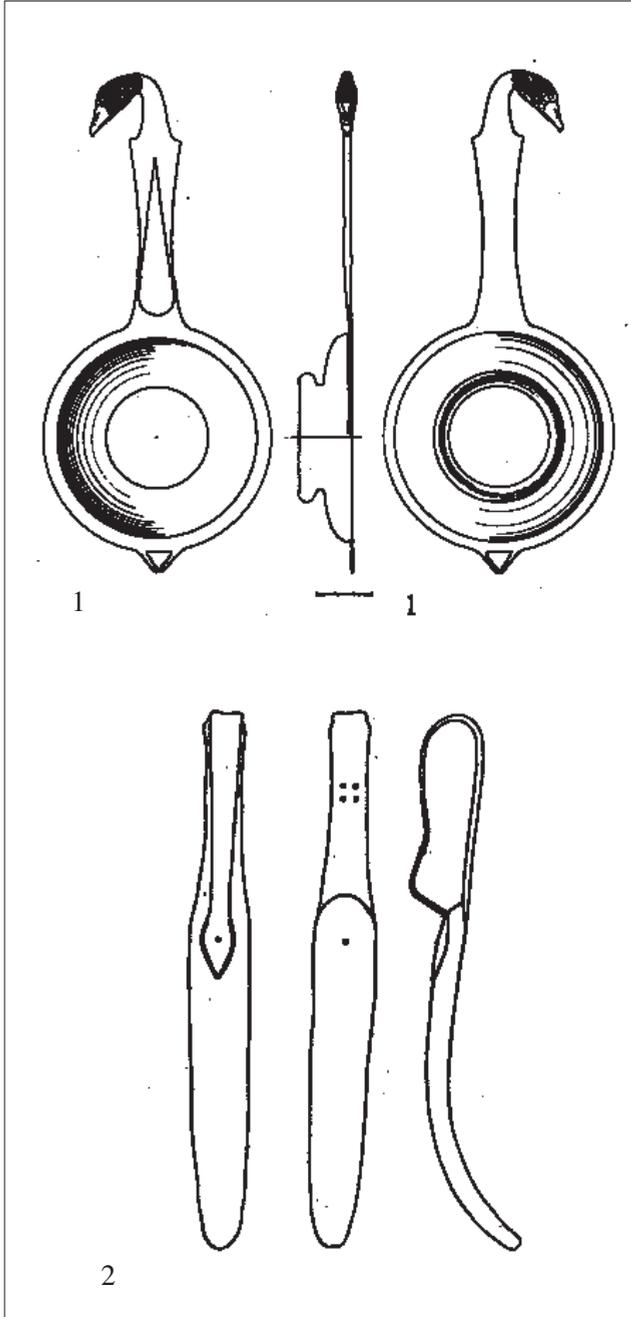


Fig. 3. *Burial 1*. (1) Bronze strainer.
 (2) Bronze strigil. Scale 1:4.

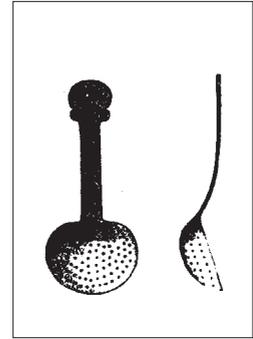


Fig. 4.
Burial 70.
 Bronze strainer.
 Scale 1:4.

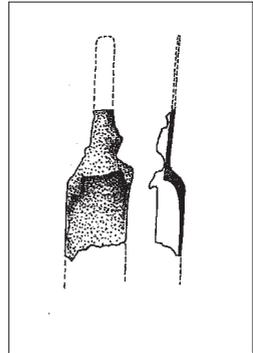


Fig. 5.
Burial 109. Iron strigil.
 Scale 1:4.

third quarter of the 5th century BC, is similar to its Pichvnari counterpart (Bilimovich 1979, 30, fig. 9). The strainer from Semibratnoe barrow No. 2 is a close analogy, apart from the slightly smaller size of the sculptural representation of its swan's head. Its date, too, appears to have been determined correctly as the third quarter of the 5th century BC (Bilimovich 1979, 30, fig. 8). There is also a tendency to date the bronze strainers of the Solokha and Semibratnoe barrows generally to the first half of the 5th century BC (Bilimovich 1979, 31). As will be shown, their manufacture can be reliably dated to 450-425 BC on the basis of the extensively attendant material at Pichvnari. The specimens found in Nymphaeum, Zhurovka, Olbia, Maritsyn, Corsica, Tod, Certosa, Dodona, and Olympia evince some affinity with Type 2 strainers of Pichvnari, with the exception that on these the swan's head is *en face* (Bilimovich 1979, with reference to the literature on the finds). In general, this variety of Classical toreutics is considered by many scholars to be of Etruscan manufacture (Bilimovich 1979, 28).

The Type 3 strainer is represented by a single specimen, found in 1980 in burial No. 70 of the 5th century BC Greek necropolis (Fig. 4). It is a small-sized cast strainer (K-P 80/9), with circular perforations of a rather shallow body, slightly bent, bow-like handle ending with a perforated, disk-like, bossed hanger. Its width is 7.4 cm; the height, with handle, is 14.5 cm. No similar specimen is known to the author. It appears to belong to rare finds.

Of vessels designed for drinking wine, mention should be made of a bronze skyphos, discovered in 1985 in burial No. 110. The bronze skyphos was found in the south-western part of the grave (in the area of the left leg), next to a Thasian amphora. The skyphos has a cast body of a single outline, characteristic of black-glazed skyphoi. Separately made, loop-like ears are soldered below the straight mouth, while a Corinthian skyphos-like heel is fastened to the beginning of the body. The height is 7.5 cm; diameter of mouth, 8 cm. Bronze skyphoi were unknown at an earlier date along the Georgian coast. So far the above-mentioned skyphos has no direct parallel among material available to me. The Pichvnari skyphos would seem to show clearly the genetic closeness of Attic metal wares and Corinthian pottery. According to the burial complex (black-glazed kylix, lekythos, etc.), the Pichvnari vessel is datable to the 440s-430s BC.

Further varieties of Classical toreutics are connected with the palaestra: bronze and iron strigils. Two bronze and two iron strigils were found at a 5th century necropolis and the same number at a 4th century necropolis. So far, no other varieties of artistic metalware have been found in 4th century BC burial complexes. The bronze strigil from burial No. 1 (K-P 67/18) is in a better state of preservation (Fig. 3, 2). It has a lancet-like, elongated, curved body with curved walls. The leaf-like end of the doubly bent handle is attached to the beginning of the body from the reverse with a gold pivot. Four holes exist for pivots midway along the upper part of the handle. The length of the strigil and handle is 24.5 cm (handle 9 cm); the diameter, 2.8 cm (of handle, 2 cm).

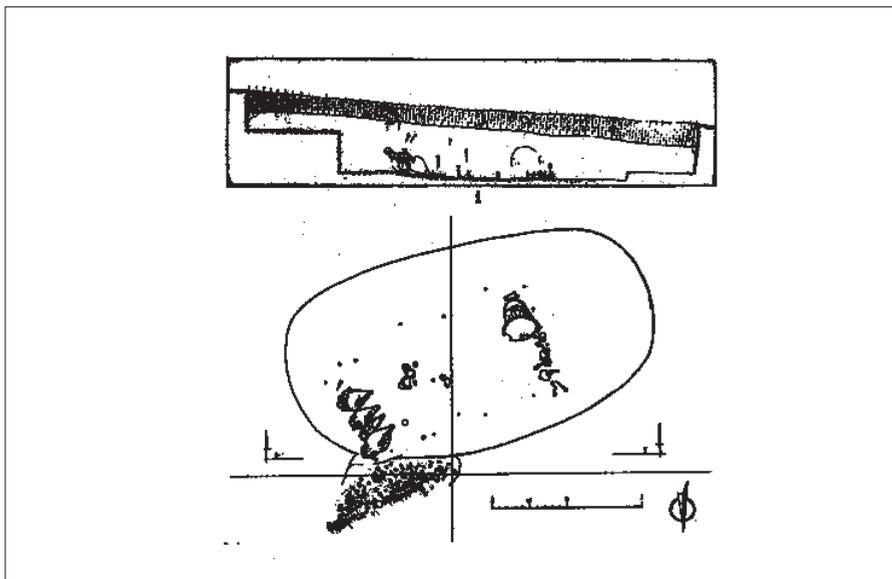


Fig. 6. General plan of *Burial 1*. Scale 1:100.

The bronze strigil discovered in burial No. 16 is essentially the same. The other examples, especially those of iron (Fig. 5), are represented by fragments. These too must be analogous to the above examples.

Earlier objects from the eastern Black Sea littoral connected with the palaestra are unknown. They first appear in the Greek necropolis at Pichvnari. In 1996 two iron strigils were also discovered in Kartli (burial No. 8), together with a rich burial inventory of the beginning of the 3rd century BC (Gagoshidze 1997). As seen from the Pichvnari example, sporting events and various festivals were held in the 5th-4th century Greek quarters. The Corinthian strigil, dated to 460-450 BC, is a direct analogy of the Pichvnari finds (*Corinth XIII*, 91-5, 236, nos. 322-3). Athenian strigils are also similar, their date being 440-430 BC, more precisely 433-432 BC (*Athenische Abteilung* 81, 1966, 33, pl. 26/4). Contemporaneous strigils also occur among material of the western (Apollonia) and northern (several specimens preserved in the Odessa Archaeological Museum) Black Sea littorals (*Apollonia* 316-7, 362, pl. 170). Many more parallels can be made for both bronze and iron strigils.

Thus, most of the objects designed for drinking wine and connected with the palaestra were found in Pichvnari burial No. 1 (Fig. 6). The bronze ware is accompanied by various dating materials (Kakhidze 1975, 11-59; Tsetskhladze 1999, 46-7). In the first place mention should be made of a two-frieze red-figured crater by the painter of the Niobids, dated to 460-450 BC



Fig. 7. Red-figure crater (*Burial 1*). Scale 1:4.

(Kakhidze 1975, 34-58; Sikharulidze 1987, 60-5; Prange 1989, 188, no. 33; Tsetskhladze 1999, 68, no. 11, figs. 31-2, 75-82; Fig. 7). Based on the numerous accompanying material, the Chian amphorae from the Athenian Agora resembling that of Pichvnari, are dated to the third quarter of the 5th century BC (*Hesperia* IV, 1934, 303, fig. 1/2) — as are the wares found in the burial: large or small Attic black-glazed earless basins, a single-eared cup, an amphoriskos, a salt-cellar, bolsals, kylikes, etc. (*Agora* XII, 107, 124, 128, 135, 155,

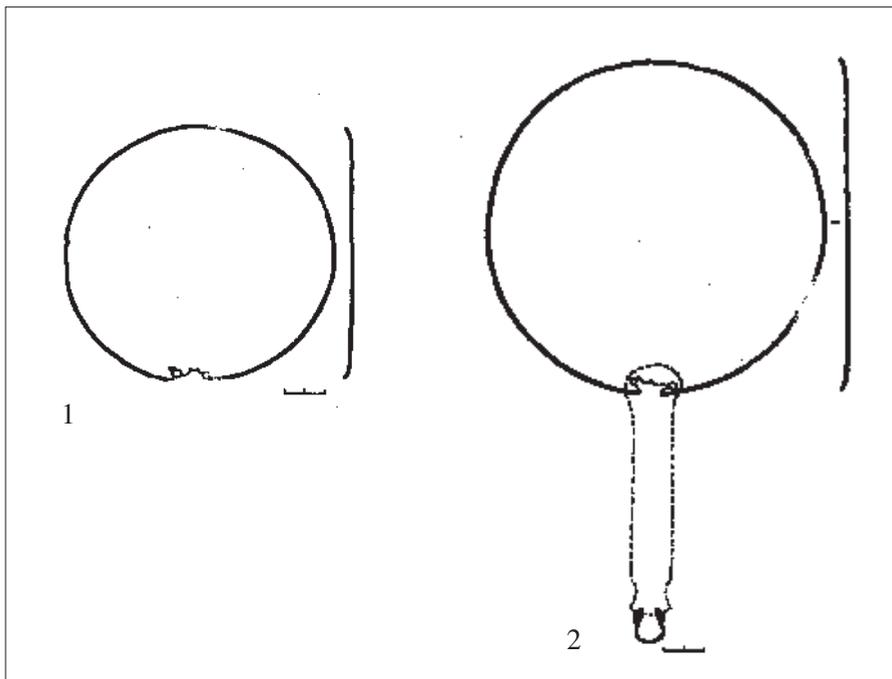


Fig. 8. (1) Bronze mirror (*Burial 19*). (2) Bronze mirror (*Burial 20*).
Scale 1:4.

etc.). All these have numerous analogies in mainland Greece and the Aegean islands, and contemporaneous material from the peripheries of the ancient world (CVA, Geneva, 1962, 30, pl. 251; *Olynthus* XIII, 331, nos. 665, 667; Gaidukevich 1959, 159-64; Silanteva 1959, 76-7, etc.). The same is the case with lekythoi, amphoriskoi, the so-called Delicate Class kylikes, salt-cellars, cups and local ceramic ware found on the funeral-feast platform connected with burial No. 1⁵.

The third group to be considered is represented by bronze mirrors. At Pichvnari bronze mirrors were found in five burials. They belong to the so-called handled type. Specimens differing from, but contemporary with, the bronze mirrors found at the Pichvnari Greek necropolis are represented in the Akhalgori treasure (Smirnov 1934, 63) and in the rich burial of a Colchian noblewoman unearthed in Vani in 1961 (Khoshtaria 1962, 65), while a 4th

⁵ The dates of burials Nos. 15 and 110, where examples of bronze toreutics occur, have been discussed in Kakhidze forthcoming; see also Tsetskhladze 1999, 47.

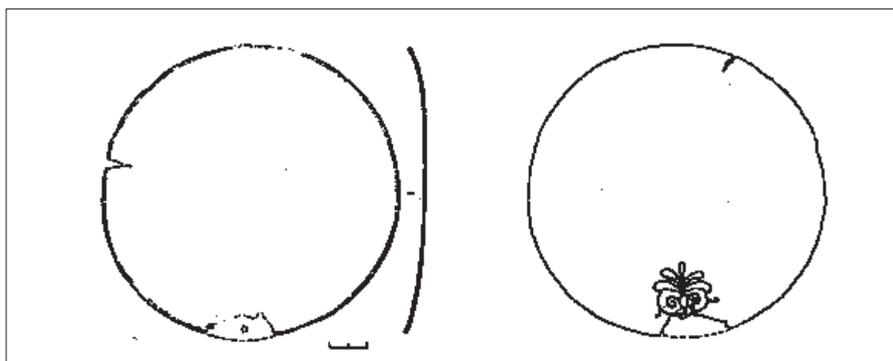


Fig. 9. *Burial 23*. Bronze mirror. Scale 1:4.

century BC mirror was found in Dablagomi in 1972 (*Vani* II, 74, fig. 116)⁶. The latter is a bronze disk, with one side polished and adorned with fine relief circles, and the rear bearing traces of a wooden frame.

Bronze mirrors first appeared at the 5th century Greek necropolis at Pichvnari in burials Nos. 19 and 20. The mirror (K-P 68/261) is of discoid shape, flat, with slightly everted edges (Fig. 8, 1). It had a pair of holes for fastening the wooden handle with bronze or stone pivots. The diameter of the mirror is 13.8 cm. Black-glazed cups, discovered in this burial and resembling those from the Athenian Agora, are dated to 450-425 BC (*Agora* XII, 297, fig. 9, pl. 33). The mirror K-P 68/268 from grave No. 20 is intact, with traces of its wooden case (Fig. 8, 2). The discoid outer surface is slightly convex, and the edges slightly everted. Asymmetrically arranged dots and scratched lines are preserved on the outer surface. The mirror has a wooden handle, as evidenced by a pair of holes on the edge for pivots. The mirror's diameter is 17 cm. On the basis of other grave goods (Ionian bowls, amphorae, oinochoai, Attic black-glazed amphoriskoi, bolsals, lekythoi, basins, salt-cellars, etc.) the mirror can be dated to the third quarter of the 5th century BC.

The third specimen of a bronze mirror (K-P 72/316) came to light in 1972 in burial No. 23. It is discoid in shape, the outer surface slightly convex and the edges everted (Fig. 9). A small part of the body is missing as well as part of the edge where the wooden handle must have been attached with pivots. On the outer surface, near the handle, a sizeable five-branch palmette is delicately depicted with thin dots. The diameter of the mirror is 16 cm. Mirrors decorated with voluted palmettes near the handle were widespread from the end of the 6th to the end of the 5th century BC (Cyprus, Rhodes, Samos, Attica,

⁶ There is an indication of the discovery of a bronze mirror in a rich 5th century BC burial (No. 10) at Saikhe (left bank of the Kvirila). See Nadiradze 1990, 86-7. The author discusses other finds, without special emphasis on the bronze mirror.

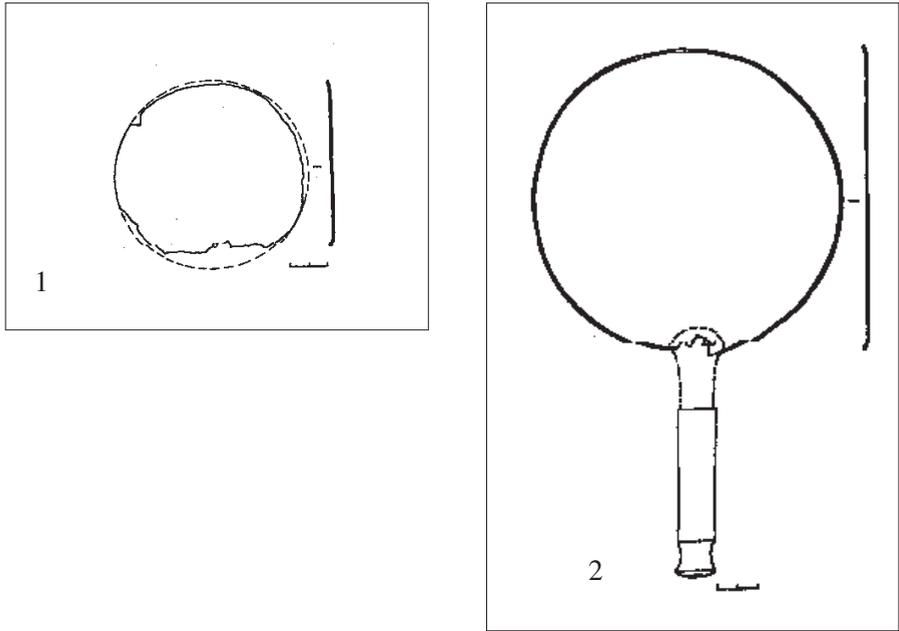


Fig. 10. (1) Bronze mirror (*Burial 96*). (2) Bronze mirror (*Burial 100*).
Scale 1:4.

Olbia, Nymphaeum, Kerch, Semibratnoe barrow No. 6, etc.: Bilimovich 1976, 56-7 with bibliography). From the accompanying grave goods, an amphoriskos is dated to 430-420 BC and aryballos-like lekythoi to 425 BC (*Agora XII*, 315-6, nos. 1123-4, 1151).

The other two mirrors were found during the 1983 excavations. The fourth (K-P 83/19), from burial No. 96, is flat and discoid in shape (Fig. 10, 1). It is slightly damaged — the part of the edge where the wooden handle must have been attached has been broken off. Traces of a fine fabric of thin thread are in evidence. The mirror must have been placed in a cloth case⁷.

The diameter of the mirror is 10 cm. The red-figure lekythos found in the burial is dated to the last quarter of the 5th century BC (Sikharulidze 1987, 82, pl. XI/VII).

The fifth mirror (K-P 83/19) was found in burial No. 100. It has been reconstructed from large fragments (Fig. 10, 2). It is flat, discoid, with straight

⁷ Remains of cloth were attached to one of the mirrors of Panagia as well (Korovina 1962, 306). Imprints of cloth were found on the 4th century bronze mirrors discovered at excavations in the Crimea (Yakovenko 1970, 125, figs. 12, 18-20; Yakovenko *et al.* 1970, 138-40, figs. 2/5, 5/13, 8/21, etc.).

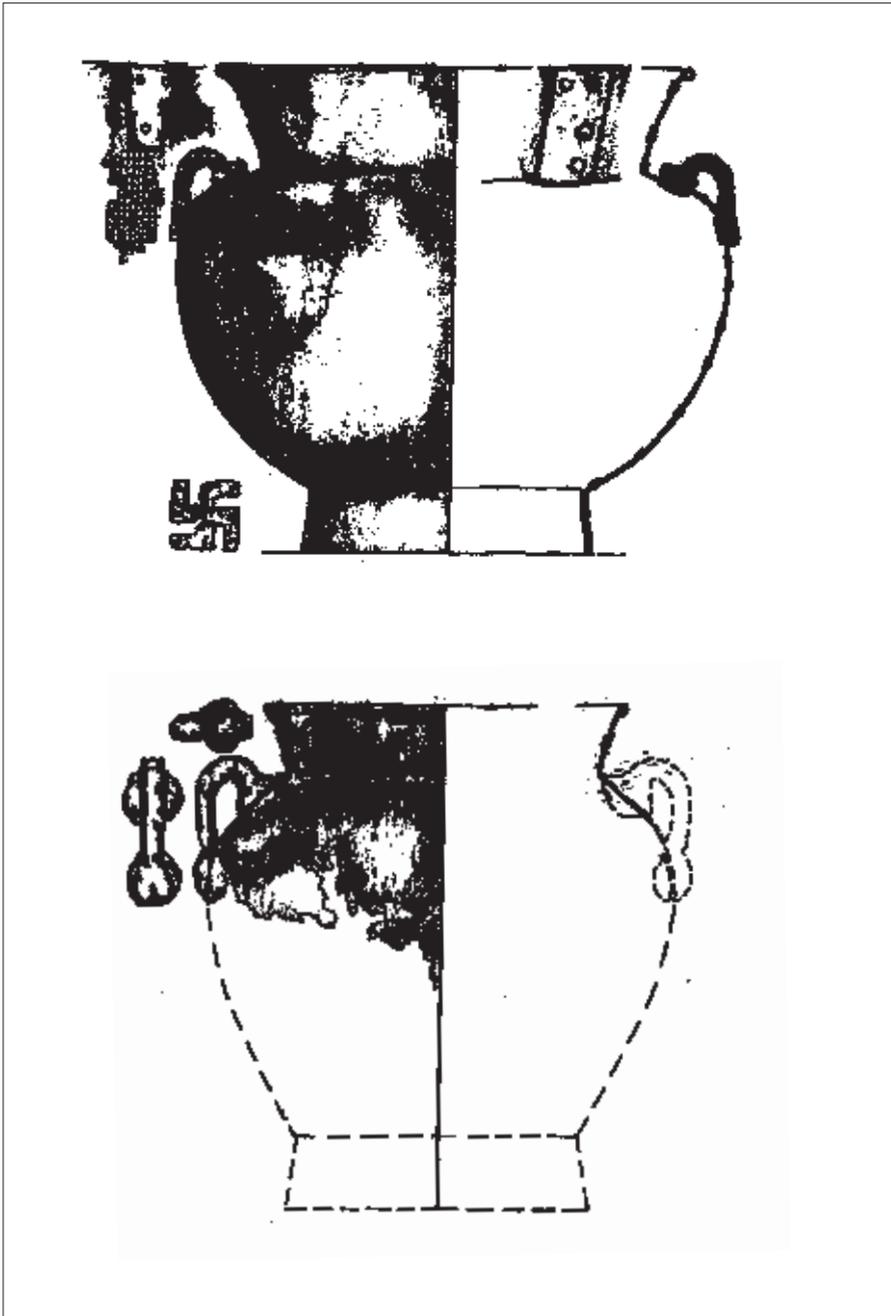


Fig. 11. Bronze situlae - chance finds from Pichvnari. Scale 1:4.

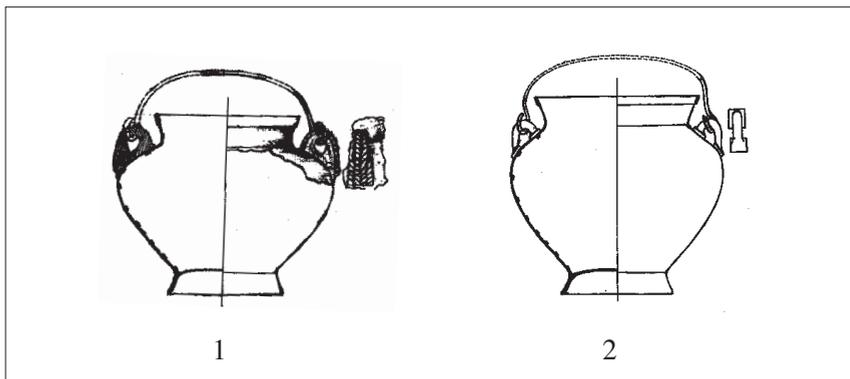


Fig. 12. (1) Bronze situla (*Burial 21*), (2) Bronze situla (*Burial 52*).
Scale 1:4.

edges. The outer surface is slightly convex. The edges of the outer surface are fringed with a circle of dotted ornament. The place of attachment of the wooden handle is broken off, a small segment of the hole for the pivot being preserved. The diameter of the mirror is 15 cm. The cartridge-like cast-bronze end of the wooden handle belongs to the same mirror. The extension of the wooden handle, fitted into the bronze cartridge, seems to have been fixed with a pair of pivots. Remains of wood are preserved in the handle. The end of the bronze handle is adorned with a wide groove. The length of the bronze handle is 8 cm, its diameter is 1.7 cm. The lekythos discovered in the same burial is dated to the last quarter of the 5th century BC (Sikharulidze 1987, 87, pl. XI/IX).

The Pichvnari mirrors are cast in tin bronze. They seem to have been made at Athens. All are discoid. The outer surface of some is convex, and the edges everted. The handles are wooden: in one instance a cast bronze cylindrical extension forms part of it. The mirror was placed to the right or left of the head of the deceased, in a cloth-lined wooden case. Like other items of toreutics, bronze mirrors appear to have been expensive. They have been found in burials of the rich (stone-faced burial No. 20) or the graves of those of average wealth, dated to the second half of the 5th century BC.

The final type of toreutics in the Greek necropolis at Pichvnari comprises so-called situlae of local manufacture — known not only from burials but from chance finds as well (Fig. 11). Situla is a general name for an eared vessel made of bronze plates, first appearing in the Late Bronze Age, and existing from at least the end of the 2nd millennium BC. They seem to have been in use mainly in the area of Colchian culture but occur in remoter regions as well (Podgortsy in the Ukraine, Malaklu at the foot of Mount Ararat). Their manufacture involved complex processes: mining and flotation of the ore, casting separate details, hammering the thin plates for the walls, fitting to the pattern,

making copper pivots, final treatment of the vessel, etc., etc. Like pottery, the metal utensils occurring in the Caucasus were characterised by decoration with zoomorphic images (animals with pricked ears) and plait ornament. Early situlae were made in the 10th-6th centuries BC (Gobejishvili 1959, 220; Krupnov 1952, 16; Sakharova 1976, 33-4; etc.). The finds presented here belong to the Classical period. The zoomorphic motifs for decorating the ears disappear, and some innovations are noticeable in the technological processes — the techniques of welding and soldering are widely used. Situlae in a relatively better state of preservation had earlier been discovered in Bichvinta. One even contained a swastika cut out of a bronze plaque (Fig. 11). At Pichvnari this type of vessel is represented by fragments in two burials. Drawings made on the spot and direct parallels enable us to form an idea of their shape.

The first situla (K-P 68/295) was found in burial no. 21. Its base is not preserved (Fig. 12, 1). The body was hammered out of a thin sheet of copper. Both ears, adorned with a plait ornament, are cast from a solid rod, the lower end of which is a quadrangular plate for fastening. The ears are soldered in the area of the shoulder. A hooked moveable handle, made of arc-like wire of circular section, was passed under the ear. It had a low neck, broadening outward; the mouth was created by turning the plate outward. According to separate details, it appears that the situla was made of two lamellar halves fashioned on a copper pattern, both halves being joined, riveted and, apparently, soldered. The seams of the situla run vertically along the ears. The holes for the pivots are set rather close to one another. The cylindrical black-glazed lekythoi with simple ornament, which were found together with the situla, are considered to have been made in the workshop of the artist L. M., and have been dated to the third quarter of the 5th century BC (Sikharulidze 1987, 75-8).

Fragments of the second situla (K-P 79/61) were found in burial No. 52. Its cast base is intact (Fig. 12, 2). The rather tall heel tends outward. The inner surface of the base is slightly convex. The body seems to have been set in the base. It appears from separate fragments that the body was made of two halves of a plate fitted to a pattern. Here, too, the pivots are set vertically, rather close to one another along the length of the ear. The cast ears are plain, with quadrangular fastening plates made at both ends. This example also appears to have had a hook-ended moveable handle made of round wire. The diameter of the heel is 8 cm; its height, 1.5 cm. The aryballos-like lekythos with a red-figure ornament, found in the burial, is dated to the fourth quarter of the 5th century BC (Sikharulidze 1987, 86, pl. XI/IX).

Both Pichvnari situlae can be described as having a cast, slightly convex base, a rather high heel tending outward; a rather tall body with extended and rounded shoulders is set in the base. The body is made of two halves of plate hammered on a pattern: the plates are attached to one another with pivots and soldered along the length of the ears. The ears are cast, one being adorned

with a plait ornament, and the other plain. The neck is low, broadening outward. The mouth is everted outward. Both situlae appear to have had an arched, movable handle with hooked ends, made of round wire and passed under the ears. Situlae resembling the foregoing have been discovered in Upper Racha, in burials of the 6th-5th centuries BC, and in the village of Itkhvisi (Chiatura district: Gagoshidze 1968, 38, pl. II/8), in burial complexes of the first half of the 5th century BC (Gobejishvili 1959, 191, 220). Similar situlae, two relatively well preserved and two in fragments, were found in the rich burial of a Colchian noblewoman at Vani (burial No. 11). Swastikas are depicted on the bottoms of the two situlae. One had a lid decorated with representations of animals (*Vani* I, 238, figs. 224-5). Fragments of bronze situlae and ears decorated with plait ornament have been repeatedly discovered in rich 5th century burials in Sairkhe (Nadiradze 1990, 24, 44, 46). A bronze situla with a swastika has been found in the 5th century BC level of Namarnu as well. The latest (first half of the 3rd century BC) example of this type of ritual vessel was present in the rich female burial No. 2 at Vani (*Vani* III, 102, fig. 93). In complexes of later periods, such metal ware is absent.

We have presented here the main specimens of bronze toreutics of the Classical period found at the Greek necropolis at Pichvnari. Their significance is great as these finds add the eastern Black Sea littoral to the area of diffusion of such wares in the Classical world. The value of the Pichvnari specimens is further enhanced by their occurrence in well-dated closed complexes. Bronze toreutic items, even those made locally, are generally absent from Pichvnari burials of the second quarter of the 5th century BC; they appear mid century and their numbers grow in burials of the third quarter of the century and decrease relatively in complexes of the last quarter. Burials of the 4th century BC have yet to yield metal items apart from bronze and iron strigils.

The materials of this period seem to corroborate the author's view that the Greek settlement which appeared at Pichvnari in the early Classical period must have been connected with mainland Greece, *viz.* Athens. The early phase of Attic expansion in the eastern Black Sea littoral (the second quarter of the 5th century BC) seems to have consisted largely of poorer people to whom expensive objects appear unavailable: their burial inventories often consist of a small quantity of local pottery or adornments, and many burials with no inventory are found in this period. In the wake of Athens, the economic potential of Pichvnari Greeks grew from the mid-5th century BC, especially by the period of the rule of Pericles⁸. By this time luxurious burials are in evidence: rich graves yielding fine examples of the jeweller's art, glyptics, and monumental vase painting. From the end of the 5th century BC, apparently through the defeat of Athens in the Peloponnesian War and the consequent weakening

⁸ On the relationship between Colchis and Athens, see Inadze 1982, 134-180; Tsetskhladze 1998, 71-90; 1999, 103-9.

of her international standing, the economic possibilities of the Pichvnari Greeks gradually shrunk. So far, no rich burials have come to light at the 4th century Greek necropolis at Pichvnari, which seems to have ceased to function from the 330s BC, following the Macedonian occupation of Greece.

The Pichvnari Greeks clearly played an important role during the 5th-4th centuries BC in the trade and economic contacts between the local population and various centres of the Classical world. Like the numerous ceramic wares, the bulk of bronze toreutic items excavated so far must have been manufactured in Athens or nearby production centres. This primarily concerns bronze oinochoai, skyphoi, mirrors, and strigils. The scholars' view that Etruria must have been the centre of manufacture of the bronze oinochoe-like jugs discovered in burial No. 1 at Pichvnari seems valid. It seems difficult to consider the Pichvnari ladles and strainers as Etruscan products. The place of manufacture of items related to the funeral feast should be sought in the universally known industrial centres of Greece proper. It was thence that they flowed to the Mediterranean countries on the one hand, and to the Euxine seaboard on the other.

As shown above, bronze wares contemporaneous with Pichvnari appear to have been diffused in the hinterland areas of Colchis (Dablagomi, Vani, Sairkhe) as well as eastern Georgia — the territory of ancient Iberia (Inner and Lower Kartli, Akhlagori, Bolnisi, Bogvi). All of these items were found in rich burials. Appropriate conditions were created in the Classical period for the emergence of the state of Caucasian Iberia and for the operation of an international Transcaucasian route (Melikishvili and Lordkipanidze 1989, 245-60). According to Graeco-Roman authors, this led from India to the Caspian Sea (along the navigable River Oxus: Amu Darya), then passing through the Transcaucasus (along the Kuri and across the Surami pass), it continued along the River Phasis (the Rioni-Kvirila road) to reach the urban centres of the Black Sea littoral, primarily the city of Phasis (Lordkipanidze 1966, 118-20).

ABBREVIATIONS

- AJA* *American Journal of Archaeology*
DHA *Dialogues d'histoire ancienne*
MIA *Materialy i Issledovaniya po Arkheologii SSSR* (Materials and Studies on the Archaeology of the USSR), Moscow

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