

PLAIN AND GLAZED WARE FROM THE 6TH – EARLY 7TH C. POTTERY WORKSHOP AT LOZENETS RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT, SOFIA (PRELIMINARY REPORT)¹

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ABSTRACT

The current paper aims at presenting the main pottery groups produced in the Early Byzantine pottery workshop found during rescue excavations at Lozenets residential district, Sofia, Bulgaria in 2000 – 2001. Three kilns, several pits related to them and a great amount of discarded wasted ceramics were found. The attempt to establish relative chronology of these structures and features showed that all of them functioned more or less simultaneously in a limited time span – the second half of the 6th – early 7th c.

The same range of storage jars, plain and glazed table and kitchen wares were fired together in each one of the kilns. A wide variety of rim profiles was documented within every ceramic category, hinting to the magnitude of the production scale. All pottery groups fit perfectly within the Late Roman ceramic production tradition since they find close analogies with pottery discovered at other sites in the area from this period. Glazed pottery is very similar to vessels from the 4th – early 5th c., whose prototypes were produced in the Pannonian workshops.

At the present moment the pottery workshop appears to be one of a kind for its period, evidencing how glazing pottery persisted since the Roman times and was passed down to the Early Middle Ages.

Keywords: Early Byzantine period, plane ware, glazed ware, local production, pottery kilns, wasters

Introduction

During rescue excavations in 2000 – 2001 at Lozenets residential district, Sofia was uncovered a church complex consisting of two superimposed basilicas enclosed by a wall with two towers (fig. 1). The complex is located some 3.5 km south of the Roman province capital of Serdica and is generally dated to the 4th – early 7th c. In the second half of the 6th c., in the immediate vicinity outside of the southern wall of the upper church, a pottery workshop emerged. Three two-chamber pottery kilns and several pits related to them were documented, but it is possible that more of them

¹ I would like to thank the dig directors Assoc. Prof. Dr. Metodi Daskalov and Snezhana Goryanova from NAIM – BAS for allowing me to work with the material and publish it. I participated in the 2000 – 2001 excavations as a student and had a hands-on experience with the pottery washing and sorting. I would like also to thank Dr. Alexander Harizanov (NAIM – BAS) and the reviewers of the article for helping me improve the initial version of the text.

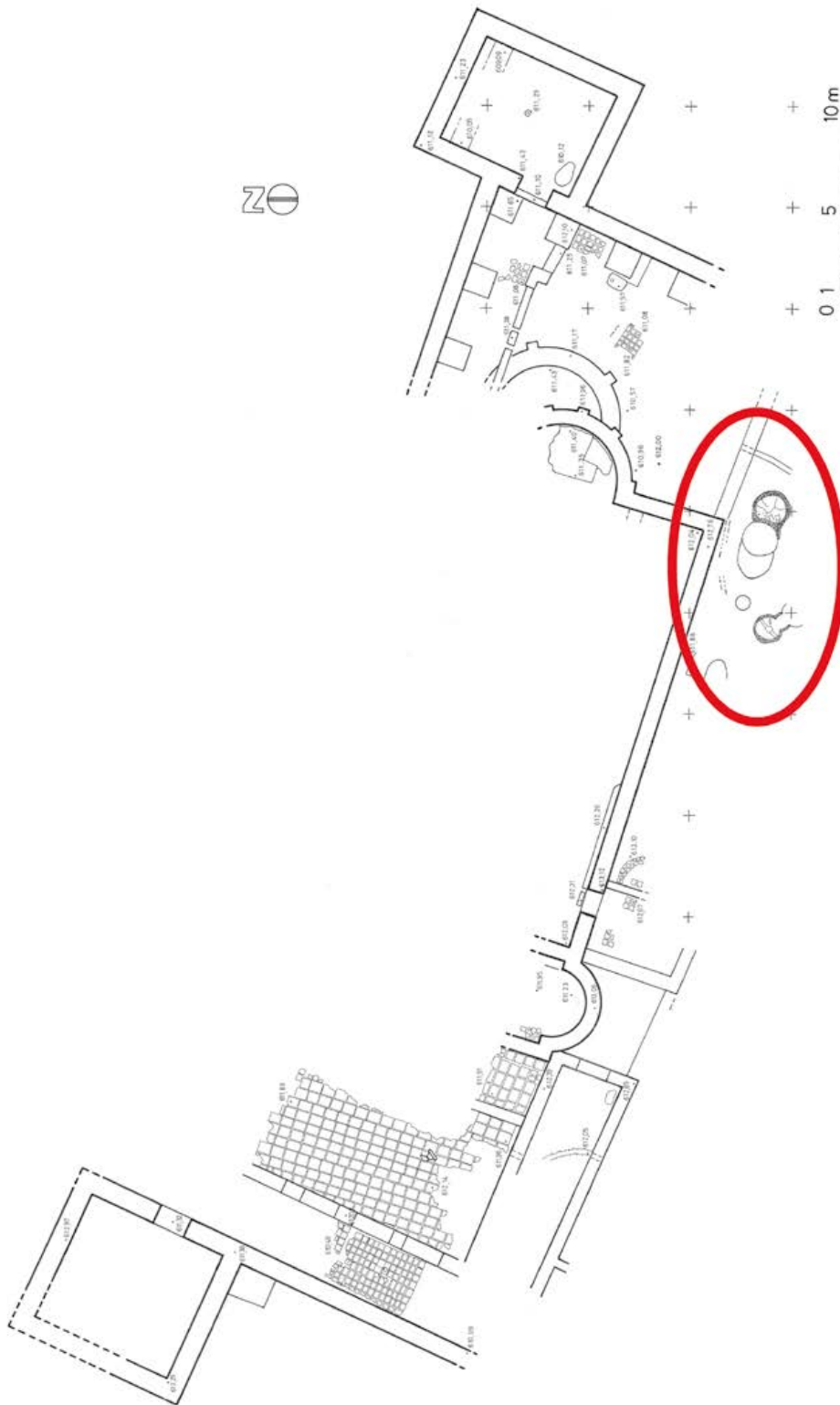


Fig. 1. Plan of the site and the church complex. The area of the pottery workshop is marked in red (after Daskalov 2024, fig. 7)

Обр. 1. План на обекта и църковния комплекс. Мястото на керамичната работилница е оцветено в червено (по Daskalov 2024, fig. 7)

existed beyond the boundaries of the excavation plot. Both plain and glazed kitchen and table wares were produced. Based on a coin hoard found in one of the rooms attached to the southern wall of the basilica that were associated with the kilns' operation, the upper chronological limit of the production center's use can be set in the very beginning of the 7th c.²

Glazing pottery has a long-lasting tradition. It was popular in Roman times and during the 4th and the 5th c. many centers producing glazed pottery were found across the Roman province of Pannonia (Barkóczy 1992; Buócz 1992; Magrini, Sbarra 2010). Through them, the glazed pottery spread out on the Balkans, where it is assumed that local pottery workshops emerged (Kuzmanov 2000, 233; Cvjetičanin 2006, 159 – 172).³ Long after the Pannonian workshops stopped existing, glazed pottery is documented in Saraçhane in Istanbul in contexts from the 6th and the 7th c. Still, it is very scarce, and the centers of production are undetermined. It is noted that this pottery has nothing in common with the Constantinopolitan Glazed White Ware from the 7th – 13th c. (Hayes 1992, 9 – 10, 41). It is interesting to know more about the production center(s) of these ceramics and how the tradition was passed through from Antiquity to medieval times. The Serdica workshop, being one of a kind for the moment, appears to be such “missing link” along this chain; hence its pottery production needs special attention to be paid to.

The pottery collected during the excavations and on which the current study is based is associated entirely with the production of the three kilns. These are predominantly discarded items and wasters as a result of production malfunction. More than 20 000 ceramic pieces have been processed until now and the work is still ongoing. This allowed for the outlining of the main typological diversity of the workshop and will be presented here as a preliminary publication. The most complete and detailed version will be forthcoming.⁴

Stratigraphy and relative chronology of the contexts

The pottery that is going to be discussed below originates from the following structures and contexts: kiln No. 3 and its related pit No. 6,⁵ kiln No. 2, pit No. 5,⁶ pit No. 7,⁷ pit No. 3,⁸ pit No. 4,⁹ a layer of piled ceramics in Grid sq. 5Δ/6Δ,¹⁰ ceramics from Grid sq. 7Δ¹¹ (fig. 2).

An attempt was made to establish a relative chronology of the functioning of the three kilns and the related pits, and to discern the synchronously existing contexts.

The stratigraphic position clearly showed that kiln No. 4 and its related pit No. 7 pre-dated kiln No. 2. The later was built on top of kiln No. 4, using its combustion chamber. Pit No. 5 was

² More about the research history, stratigraphy and chronology of the complex: see Daskalov 2024's article in this volume and the respective bibliography.

³ In fact, the only evidence for the on-site production of glazed pottery (kilns, wasters) that we have is from Diana, Viminacium (Cvjetičanin 2006, 160), and Ratiaria (Kuzmanov 2000, 233). The rest of the sites, most of which date to the 4th – first half of the 5th c., were assumed to be production centers based on the presence of unglazed ware with spots, drippings or run-downs of glaze (Cvjetičanin 2006, 160 – 171, fig. 19).

⁴ The processing of the pottery and the selection of sherds for archaeometric analysis (see Waksman et al. 2024 in this volume) were partially supported by the Bulgarian National Science Fund, Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science (contract No. КИТ-06-РИЛА-6/15.12.2021) within the frames of a French-Bulgarian “PHC RILA” program.

⁵ Pit No. 6 is in front of kiln No. 3, to the southeast and served as its stoking pit.

⁶ To the west of kiln No. 2 and pit No. 2.

⁷ Pit No. 7 is to the east of kiln No. 2. It is associated with kiln No. 4 and probably served as its stoking pit.

⁸ Based on the archaeological records kept during the excavations in 2000, pit No. 3 was located between kiln No. 2 and the wall made of stones and mud bisecting diagonally Grid sq. 5Δ.

⁹ Pit No. 4 is located in Grid sq. 6Δ, northeast of kiln No. 3.

¹⁰ This layer is more than 0.50 m thick. It was piled in the space around kiln No. 2 and the stone-and-mud wall that bisects Grid sq. 5Δ. The wall runs diagonally from northwest to southeast, starting from the southeastern corner of the basilica.

¹¹ More precisely the space around kiln No. 3 and south of it.

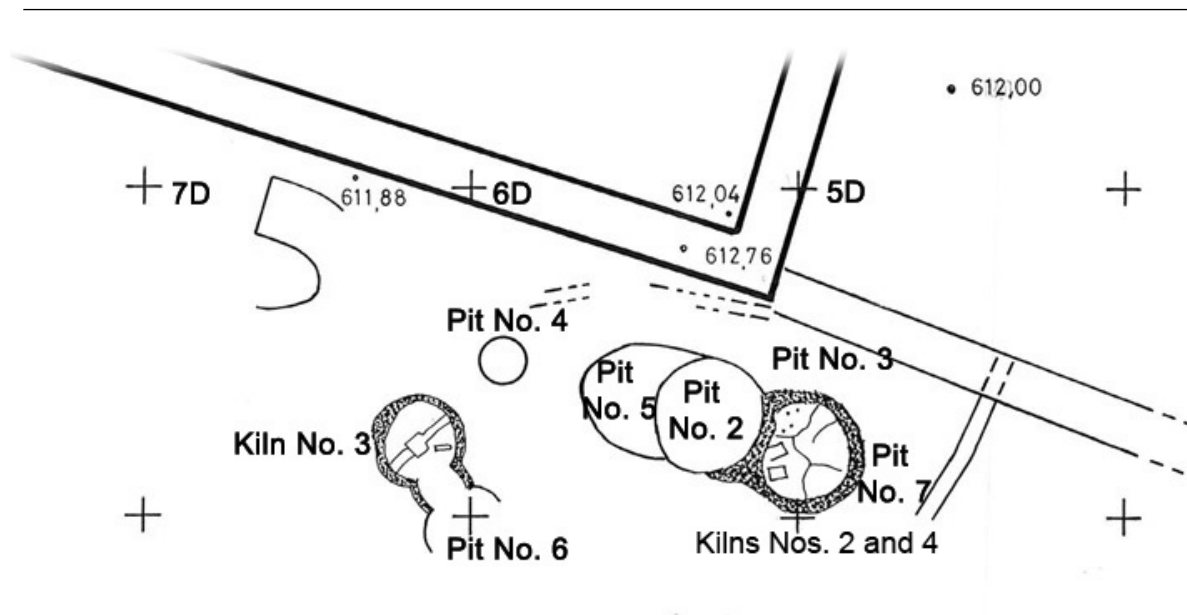


Fig. 2. Detail of the kilns and the related pits in the southeastern corner of the site (after Daskalov 2024, fig. 7, additions by E. Todorova)

Обр. 2. Детайл на пещите и свързаните с тях ями в югоизточния ъгъл на обекта (по Daskalov 2024, fig. 7, добавки Е. Тодорова)

earlier than kiln No. 2. It was cut by pit No. 2, which served as a stoking pit for kiln No. 2. It is unclear if pit No. 5 was contemporaneous of kiln No. 4 and pit No. 7 or not. It is also difficult to say if kiln No. 3 and its related pit No. 6 were earlier than kiln No. 4, contemporaneous, or later e.g. contemporaneous to kiln No. 2. It is highly possible that it was contemporaneous to both kilns Nos. 2 and 4 and functioned with them in more or less the same time period. Pits Nos. 3 and 7 were documented under the thick layer of ceramics in Grid sq. 5Δ/6Δ, consequently they preceded it.¹²

Matching pottery sherds found in different context add to stratigraphic data in establishing the relative chronology of the workshop. It should be noted that after a closer look at all processed ceramic sherds, no typological and morphological differences were recorded that would be used as chronological markers. The pottery within each group represented similar features and characteristics, e.g. it was produced simultaneously or in a very short time span. It was possible to piece up several vessels from fragments that were found in different contexts. For example, fragments found in pit No. 4 bound with such from pits Nos. 3 and 7, kiln. No. 2, the layer of ceramic fragments in Grid sq. 5Δ/6Δ, and the pottery around kiln No. 3. Sherds from pit No. 3 fit together with fragments from pits Nos. 4 and 6, and the layer of ceramics in Grid sq. 5Δ/6Δ. Sherds from the same vessels were found in different depths of the more than 0.50 m thick layer of ceramics in Grid sq. 5Δ/6Δ as well as in pits Nos. 3 and 4, and at the area close to kiln No. 3. Fitting ceramic fragments were assembled from kiln No. 3 and pit No. 6. Only the materials found in pit No. 5 don't match with pottery from other contexts. Consequently, we should consider it as being one of the earliest features at this particular spot.

¹² Based on matching ceramic pieces between the thick layer of sherds in Grid sq. 5Δ/6Δ and pits Nos. 3 and 7, it is possible to assume that the pottery used to pile up the layer partially leveled the upper layers of the fills of both pits Nos. 3 and 7. For the moment this layer is one of the latest features on the site of the workshop. It was contemporaneous and/or later to kiln No. 2. We do not know how many discarded items from previous pottery firings it contained, but it is sure that a major part of it was created by discarding the very last load of pottery of kiln No. 2.

As can be seen, pit No. 4 shares the most common “links” with other contexts meaning that more or less most of them were used throughout the entire time of functioning of the pottery workshop.¹³ One of the possible reconstructions of the events is that potters used equally the existing pits and the space around them to dump discarded and defective vessels for some time. Another possible explanation is that kiln No. 2 became unusable, due to malfunction in the firing process leading to overfiring of the entire load and fatally damaging the firing facility itself. Consequently, the kiln’s dome was dismantled. The load was discarded and piled in the space formed between the stone wall, crossing diagonally Grid sq. 5Δ from northwest to southeast, and kiln No. 2, thus creating the thick layer of broken ceramics. It is possible that at the same time or not long after this event the entire area around the kilns in Grid sq. 5Δ, 6Δ and 7Δ was leveled and this is how fragments from the same vessels fell into different contexts around the place. Both scenarios do not contradict our opinion that all three kilns and their related pits functioned more or less simultaneously for a relatively short time period and after that fell into disuse.

Unfortunately, due to the fact that the excavated pottery workshop is located closely to the southern limit of the excavation’s plot, part of the structures (such as pit No. 6) could not be explored in their entirety. Probably other parts of the workshop were developing further south. This is one of the main reasons why so far, we could not piece together an entirely preserved vessel. Most of the items that could be reconstructed have large missing parts that could not be traced among the other sherds. Traces of freshly broken and missing fragments have been documented multiple times. It is highly possible that they were broken and lost at the time when the excavations took part, stayed in the unexcavated part of the site or got lost later.¹⁴

The pottery

The entire pottery collected during the discovery of the kilns and the related structures represents the local production. The workshop produced both glazed and unglazed ceramics. There is a very distinctive and indisputable evidence of the pottery production on the site. On the first place, there are a couple of well-recognizable wasters – overfired vessels with distorted body parts (fig. 3: 1, 2) or pieces of different items soldered together when they melted down (fig. 3: 3). Most of the sherds bear clear signs of overfiring that resulted in a change of the fabric’s color – mostly different shades of brownish-gray, grayish or grayish-black (fig. 3: 4). Sometimes the surface of the same sherd is covered by spots of different color (fig. 3: 5). As a result of the wrong firing conditions in the kiln, deep cracks in the fabric (fig. 3: 6) or flaking fabrics, similar in look to puff pastry, are also very common (fig. 3: 7). In the case of glazed ware, most wasters have overfired flaking and peeling glaze. Not so rare are the documented cases in which the glaze ran down through the cracks of the fabric, covering the entire cross-section of the walls, and leaked on the inner surface of the vessel. Very often glazed ceramics got stuck one to another or to unglazed ones, the glaze serving as glue that kept them together. Apparently, after the kiln cooled down and the load was taken out, the potters tried to separate the glued together pieces. These attempts were not very successful as

¹³ Pit No. 4 relates to the earliest and latest stratigraphic contexts. This means that it was used during the entire period of activity of the workshop.

¹⁴ It has to be specified, that more than 20 years have passed since the excavations took part. During this time the ceramics were transported a couple of times to different storage places. Even when they were housed at the Regional Museum of History – Sofia, the plastic bags containing the pottery were relocated at least twice to different rooms. It was only in 2021 when we were able to study the material. This led to a new transfer of the pottery to another place, where it had to be re-washed, because it was very dirty, before we were able to process it. It is not unlikely that during all those transfers some of the sherds and even bags with ceramics may have been lost. This may be one reason why it is so difficult to assemble an entirely preserved profile or piece.



Fig. 3. Pottery wasters
Обр. 3. Производствен брак

one (or both) of the vessels would break and part of the fabric would stay soldered on the outer surface in the form of a coarse gray mark (fig. 3: 8). Sherds covered with “defective” glaze are yet another sign of wasted pottery production. In this case, instead of forming a nice, glossy vitrified surface, the glazed surface appears to be covered by “goose bumps” – a very coarse and rash layer of grayish-whitish color, like sprinkled with hundreds miniature round particles.¹⁵ Some bricks and pipes used in the construction of the kilns bear large, glazed spots and in few cases – pottery sherds soldered to them with glaze.

Glazed¹⁶ and unglazed ware was fired together in the same kiln and all three kilns fired the same range of products.¹⁷ There is no distinction between the kilns for glazed and unglazed pottery. There is also no distinction between kilns firing smaller vessels and those firing larger vessels. A single load of each kiln consisted of different type of ceramics – large storage jars, cooking pots, glazed and unglazed table ware. As a support for this statement should be brought the fact that quite often large storage jars and cooking pots that were not initially supposed to be glazed, bear traces of occasional glazing – small drops or run-downs on top of the rims, shoulders and body, on the inner side of the bottom, or even on the outer side, in the case when vessels were stacked one on top of the other (fig. 3: 9). The explanation behind this is very simple and pragmatic. It is valid for all pottery production workshops since the Neolithic times. For a maximum output, the space in the firing chamber of a kiln had to be used at its best – that is why smaller vessels filled the space created by larger forms, while the most fragile and valuable pieces, such as glazed ceramics, were most probably placed in the top section. Like this, the liquid glaze that covered these vessels dripped down and splashed on the lower ranks of pottery. Later the glaze vitrified during the firing.

It should be noted that, contrary to later glazed ceramics, such as medieval sgraffito, the pottery of Serdica’s workshop did not require a biscuit firing. The glaze was applied directly on the leather-hard fabric – there was no slip underneath, than it was fired. The glaze was green in color with shades depending on the quality – very glossy, dark green and dense, with some black speckles; dark green, less dense and less glossy; lighter green, diluted and runny, with some brown “nerves” showing the direction of the liquid glaze flow, with no gloss at all, rather hoarse and transparent; and finally, very low quality, very diluted and thin, almost transparent and with no color – the color of the fabric shines through.

The following pottery categories have been produced by the workshop: ceramics for storing food, cooking and table ware, candlesticks and others. No amphora and transport vessels have been recorded.

Storage jars

This group consists of dolium-like containers with massive broad rims, large ovoid bodies and relatively small, flat bases, shaped as short compact foot (fig. 4). The rim diameter is approx. 25 – 30 cm. There is a great variety of how the rim was shaped. At the present moment of research at least 15 distinct rim profiles were recorded (fig. 5). There is not entirely or even partially preserved specimen. It is very difficult to judge about the average height of these jars which may have been up to 1 m or more. A great number of walls were documented, most of which relatively thin (some 7 – 8 mm), considering the general size of the jars. The entire body was covered on the outside,

¹⁵ For more information about this phenomenon and the process of glazing: see Waksman et al. 2024 in this volume.

¹⁶ I would like to thank Georgia Giannaki, a PhD student at the Lyon 2 University, France and the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece for her help in processing the pottery. She will include and extensively study some of the glazed sherds from the Serdica workshop in her PhD thesis.

¹⁷ It was impossible to distinguish if any of the kilns would “specialize” in firing certain type of pottery.

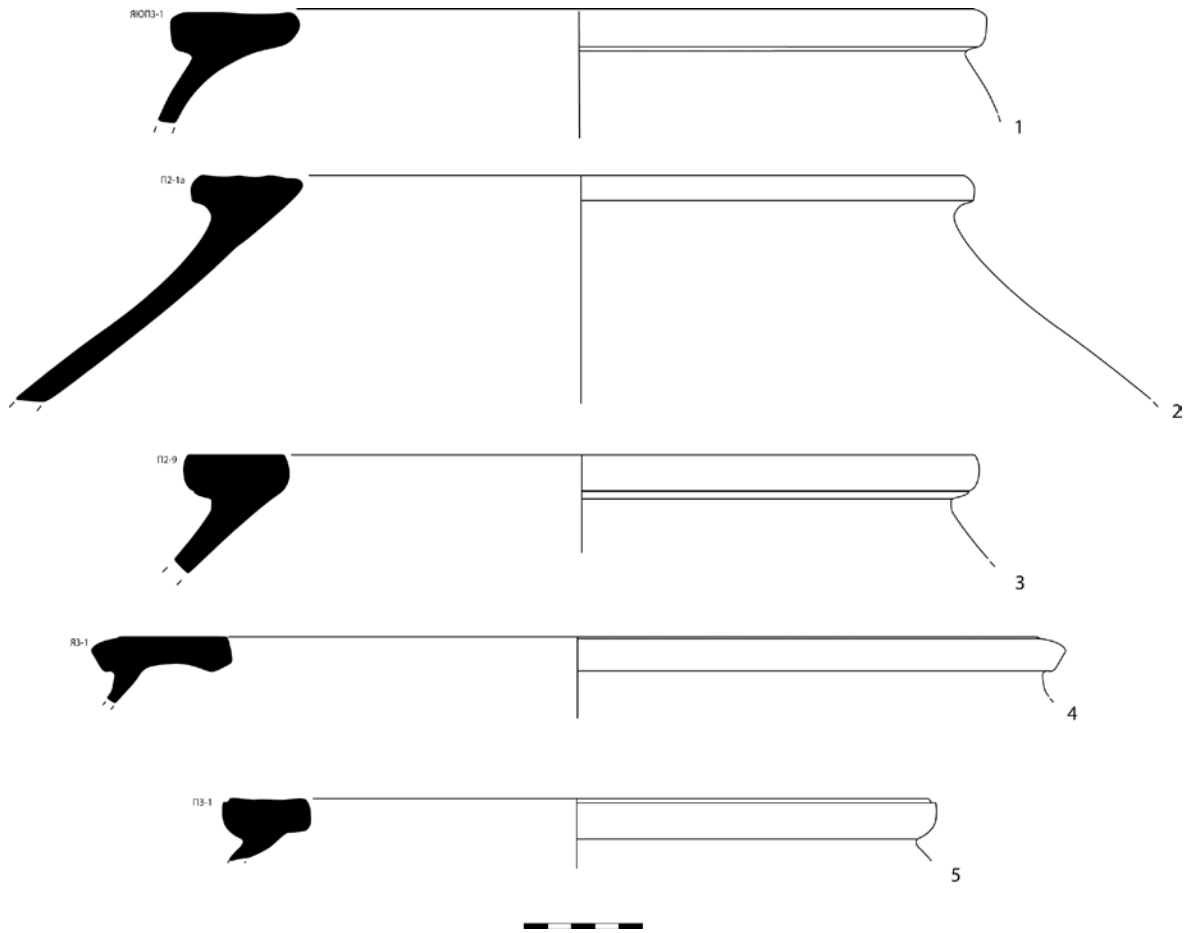


Fig. 4. Storage jars: unglazed (1, 2, 4, 5) and with spots of glaze (3)
Обр. 4. Съдове за съхранение: неглазирани (1, 2, 4, 5) и с петна глазура (3)



Fig. 5. Profiles of storage jars
Обр. 5. Профили на съдове за съхранение



Fig. 6. 1. Wall sherd from a storage jar showing the "joint" between the two parts of the body; 2. Glazed sherd from a storage jar

Обр. 6. 1. Фрагмент от стена на съд за съхранение, показващ мястото на слепване на двете части, от които е изработен съдът; 2. Глазирана стена от съд за съхранение

from under the rim to the base, by very dense, shallow and closely set horizontal relief lines. A few thick-walled sherds with plain surface were decorated only with a single wavy line. Most likely, if not belonging to dolia, they were part of another type of storage jars.¹⁸ The fabric is usually hard, compact, mixed with considerable amount of not so coarse sand, although some of the quartz particles are of 2 – 3 mm. The color after firing is reddish-brown. Due to the overfiring most sherds have turned to dark brown or gray color. Bright orange color is the exception. There are cases in which the upper surface and the core of the fabric are flaking and disintegrating. Many sherds have deep cracks due to overfiring.

An interesting observation has been made about how these jars were produced. While pots, lids, and bowls were all thrown on a potter's kick wheel from a single piece of clay, storage jars, due to their large size, were made of separate parts. These parts were thrown each on a potter's wheel and were later assembled. Two of the recorded sherds clearly show how the parts were mended (fig. 6: 1) – the potter "tucked" the lower edge of one of the parts into the upper edge of the other by making a vertical movement with his fingers. He covered up the "seam" with diluted clay. Finally, he smoothed the surface by using his hands and moving them again in vertical direction.¹⁹

A negative relief stamp was placed before firing on top of the flat surface in one case. The majority of the jars were unglazed, only occasional drops or running downs of glaze were documented. There are only two rims that were entirely covered by dense green glaze. One of them was also decorated

¹⁸ Less than 10 rim sherds of very small size and with profiles, differing from the dolia, suggest that other type of storage jars was present at the site.

¹⁹ Similar observations are made for a jar found in Caričin grad, Serbia (Bjelajac 1990, 176 – 177).

with incised wavy line on the upper broad part of the rim.²⁰ Two body sherds were also entirely glazed²¹ on the outside (fig. 6: 2), thus pointing out that glazed storage jars (entirely or partially – the upper part at least) did exist, as confirmed by finds from present-day Serbia from the 6th c. (Cvjetičanin 2006, 94 – 95, LRG 172 – 174). The jars and pithoi from contexts from the second half of the 6th – early 7th c., found during the excavations of the Upper City of Caričin grad, are very close to the ones from Serdica in terms of profiles, decoration and coating. A local origin for them has been suggested (Bjelajac 1990, types I/12 – 13, types VI/1 – 6, 168 – 169, 177 – 178, pl. XIV: 14 – 16, 20, pl. XVIII: 1 – 7, pl. XIX: 1, pl. XX: 1).

Kitchen ware

This category comprises mortaria, large bowls for preparing food, pots, vessels with spouts, lids, and strainers.

Mortaria are large deep bowls with heavy, sturdy flanges, spherical bodies and flat bases. They were used for preparing liquid food through grinding and pounding. There is often a wide channel in the rim that allowed the food to be poured (fig. 7). The rim diameter measured approx. 30 cm. The height was approx. 20 – 25 cm. The walls are relatively thick – sometimes up to 1.5 cm considering their function and the pressure they were subjected to during food grinding. The fabric is hard, compact, with sand inclusions measuring up to 2 – 3 mm. Color after firing ranges from reddish-brown to dark brown and sometimes grayish-brown. Cracks from overfiring are noticeable in some cases. Until now some 20 types could be defined, according to the rim profile and the intricately shaped flanges (fig. 8). Few mortaria were decorated on their flanges with incised parallel lines or small notches. Others bear decoration on the outer surface of the body, below the heavy rim board. It consisted of a band of four closely set incised parallel lines and a single incised wavy line above them. Most of the mortaria were glazed on the inside,²² only few were unglazed (fig. 7: 1). The glaze was thick and consistent. In some cases, it covered also the rim of the pouring channel or even the entire flaring flange. No glaze was detected on the outside. Due to the firing conditions and later to the soil conditions in which the sherds were deposited, most of the sherds have decayed glaze, peeling and flaking. In some cases, it has a matt, opaque, rather yellowish-milky color than glossy green one.

Mortaria were a common type of kitchen ware on the Balkans during the Late Roman period. The closest to the here-presented examples come mostly from sites in present-day western Bulgaria and Serbia. They have been dated within the 4th – first half of the 5th c. and are closely related to the production of the Pannonian workshops from this period (Любенова 1981, 129, обр. 43; Kuzmanov 1998, Тип I – IV, 89 – 91, Abb. 15: 66 – 69, Abb. 16: 71 – 73, Abb. 18: 77 – 79; Kuzmanov 2000, types I – IV, 230, fig. 5: 27 – 30; Кузманов 2005, тип I, 134 – 135, табл. X: 65 – 68; Cvjetičanin 2006, 21 – 32, LRG 1 – 3, 5 – 7, 9, 14, 16, 18, 19; Кленина 2006, 72, рис. 38: 292; Кузманов, Грудев 2013, 343 – 344, табл. IV: 30 – 32; Василева 2020, 131, табл. 4: 3, 4). Obviously, the production of this type of vessels continued well into the late 6th c.

Similarly to mortaria *large bowls* with thick walls were used for preparing or storing food (fig. 9: 1, 2). Four rim pieces of thick-walled unglazed bowls, decorated with 3 to 4 well-pronounced horizontal ribs on the outer side, just below the rim, were documented. The fabric is hard, compact, mixed with sand. The color after firing is beige to gray.

²⁰ An unglazed dolium with wavy decoration on the upper flat surface of the rim was published from Ratiaria (Кузманов, Грудев 2013, 396, табл. XVIII: 212).

²¹ The glaze is not of good quality – light green, very thin and transparent, not at all glossy.

²² They were used for preparing liquid food and the glaze served as an insulation, not allowing the porous ceramic walls to absorb the water.

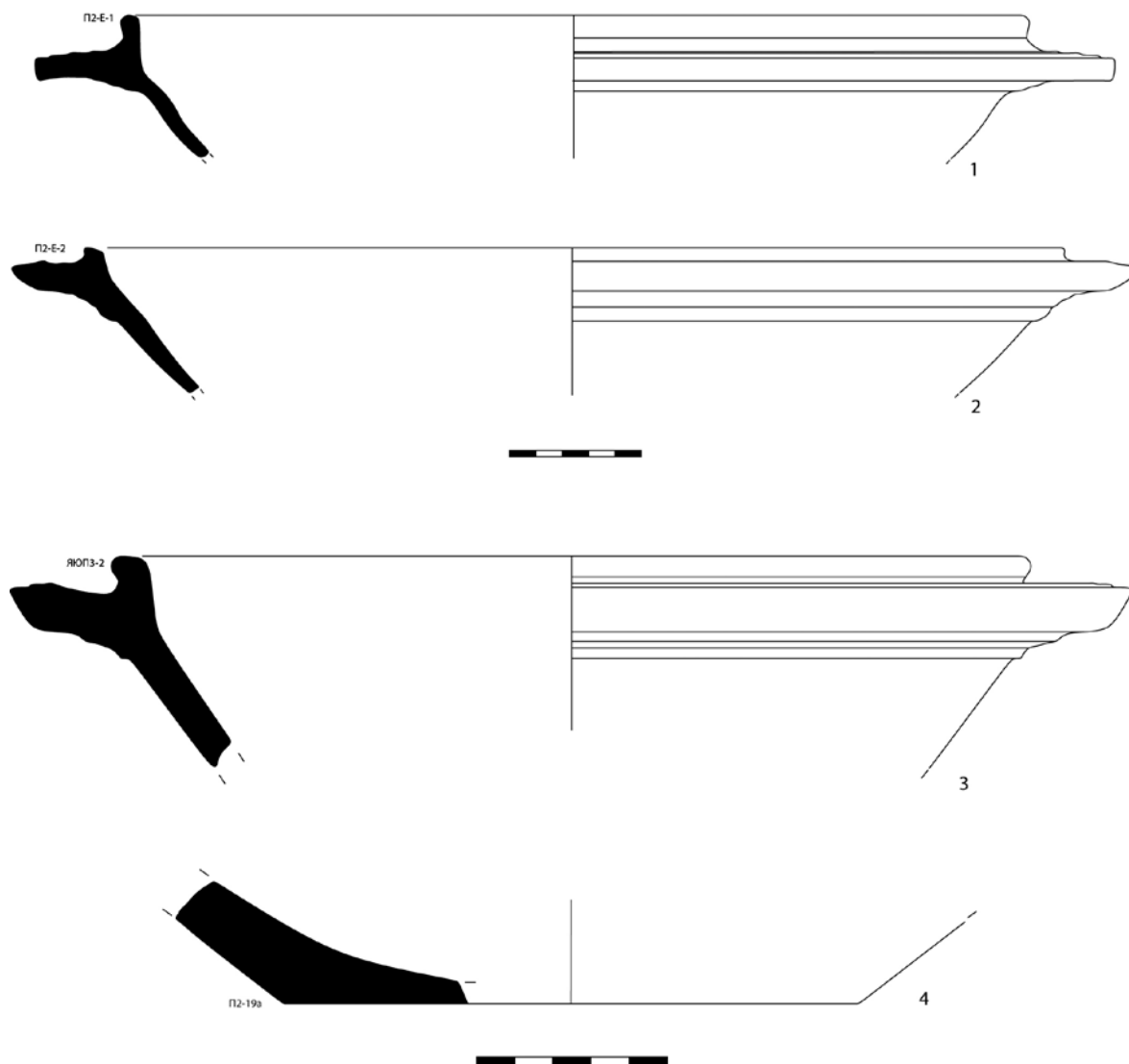


Fig. 7. Mortaria: unglazed (1) and glazed (2 – 4)
 Обр. 7. Мортарии: неглазирани (1) и глазирани (2 – 4)

Pots were the main production of the pottery workshop with ca. 50 % of the entire ceramic complex. According to their rim profile and body shape they can be divided in three larger groups (pots with thick, horizontally cut rims, cooking pots with lids and large pots without lids).

The pots from the first group (fig. 10) are like mini versions of the storage jars, having similar rim and body outlines. The rims are solid, thick, and folded. They are mostly horizontally and rarely obliquely cut to the inside, with intricate profiling. According to the rim profile, more than 20 types can be set. Sometimes the broad upper part of the rim is decorated with 1 to 3 parallel incised lines or small notches. Despite the thick rim, the walls are relatively thin. The body shape is rather conical in the upper part. Relief ridges or grooves mark the sharp transitions between the shoulders and the body. In some cases, small, flattened, band-like arched handles connect the rim to the shoulders (fig. 10: 11). The fabric is hard, well-purified, mixed with fine sand. The color after firing ranges from reddish-brown to beige, beige-brown, and dark brown. Many pieces have been



Fig. 8. Profiles of mortaria
Обр. 8. Профили на мортарии

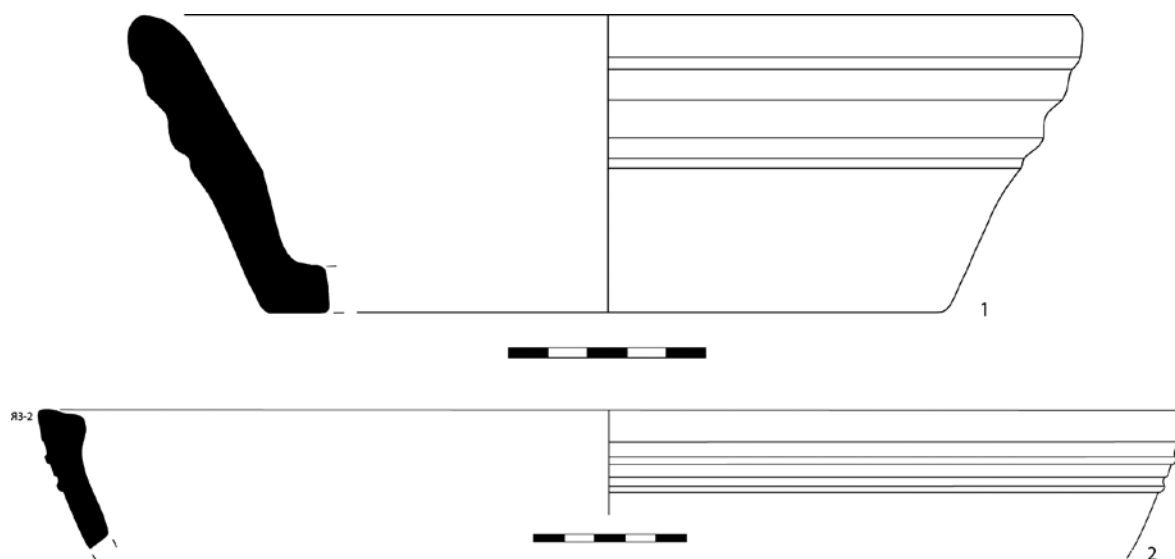


Fig. 9. Large bowls: unglazed (1) and glazed (2)
Обр. 9. Големи купи: неглазирани (1) и глазирани (2)

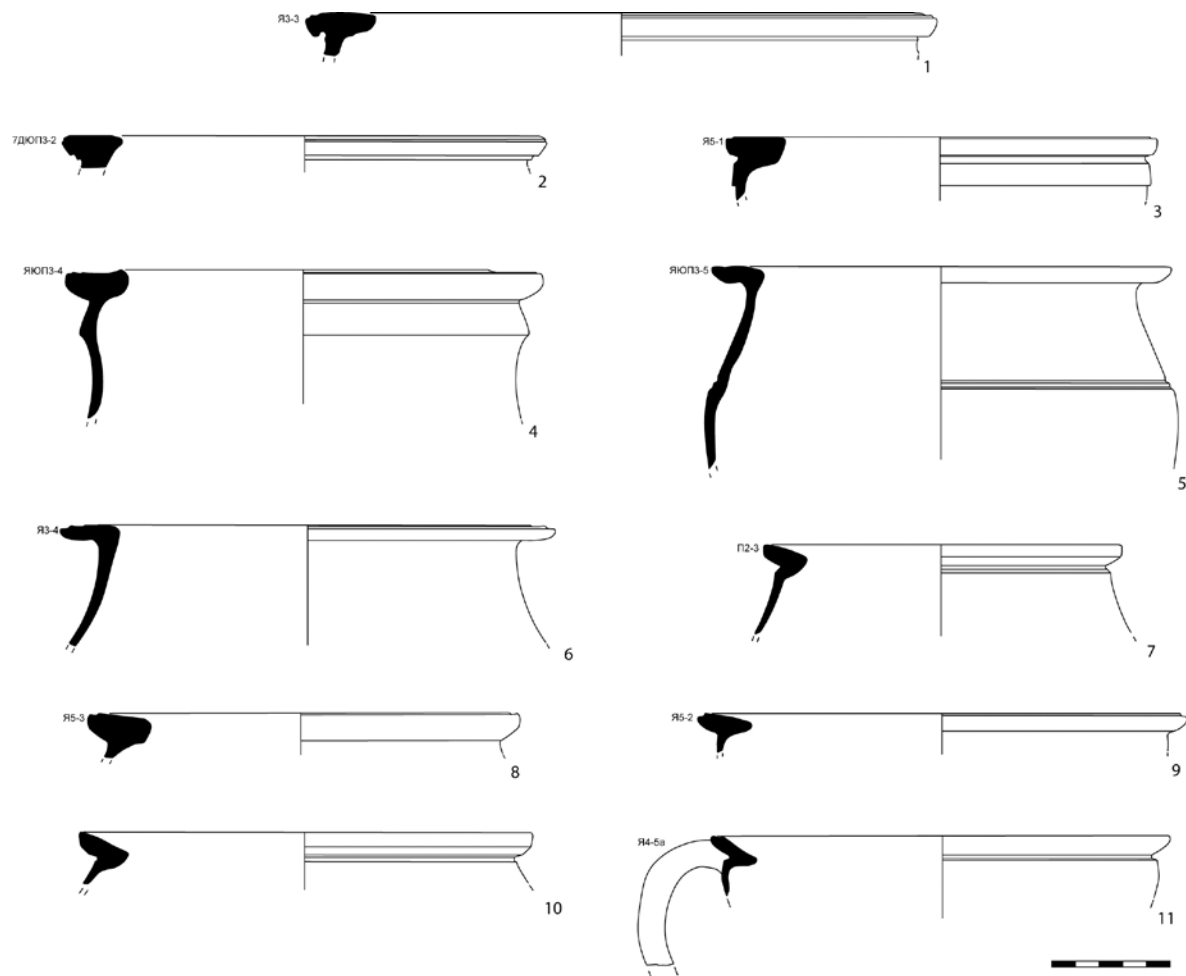


Fig. 10. Cooking pots from the first group: unglazed (1 – 7, 9 – 11) and with spots of glaze (8)
Обр. 10. Гърнета от първа група: неглазирани (1 – 7, 9 – 11) и с капки глазура (8)

overfired and the fabric is flaking. There are only 5 cases of such pots that are entirely or partly glazed (fig. 10: 8).

Pots with similar profiles were found at sites along the Danube river and the present-day Bulgarian and Serbian lands in contexts with quite large chronology – ranging from the second half of the 3rd until the early 7th c. (Бьотгер 1978, 28 – 29, обр. 4; Любенова 1981, обр. 25, обр. 29: 2, обр. 35: 2; Böttger 1982, Taf. 48: 505, Taf. 50: 515; Кузманов 1985, тип VIII, 54, табл. 32: Г65, Г66; Vjelajac 1990, type I/10, 168, pl. XIV: 9 – 11; Kuzmanov 2000, 230, fig. 6: 33, 34; Кузманов 2005, тип VIII, 140 – 141, табл. XIX: 131, 132, табл. XX: 135, 136; Кленава 2006, 41, 48, 54, 60, 69, рис. 12: 57, рис. 19: 121, 122, рис. 23: 139 – 142, рис. 30: 217, рис. 33: 237; Cvjetičanin 2006, 87 – 89, LRG 147, 150, 151, 153 – 155; Борисов 2013, тип 7, 290, табл. V: 1 – 6; Кузманов, Грудев 2013, тип IX – XI, 356 – 357, табл. XVI: 186 – 189, 192, 193; Василева 2020, 133, табл. 5: 3, 4).

Pots with lids are the largest group among this category. They can be divided into 5 main types with internal division of sub-types and variants according to the shaping of the rim (fig. 11, fig. 12: 1 – 13). Common for all types is the short neck, turned outwards. There is a more or less pronounced

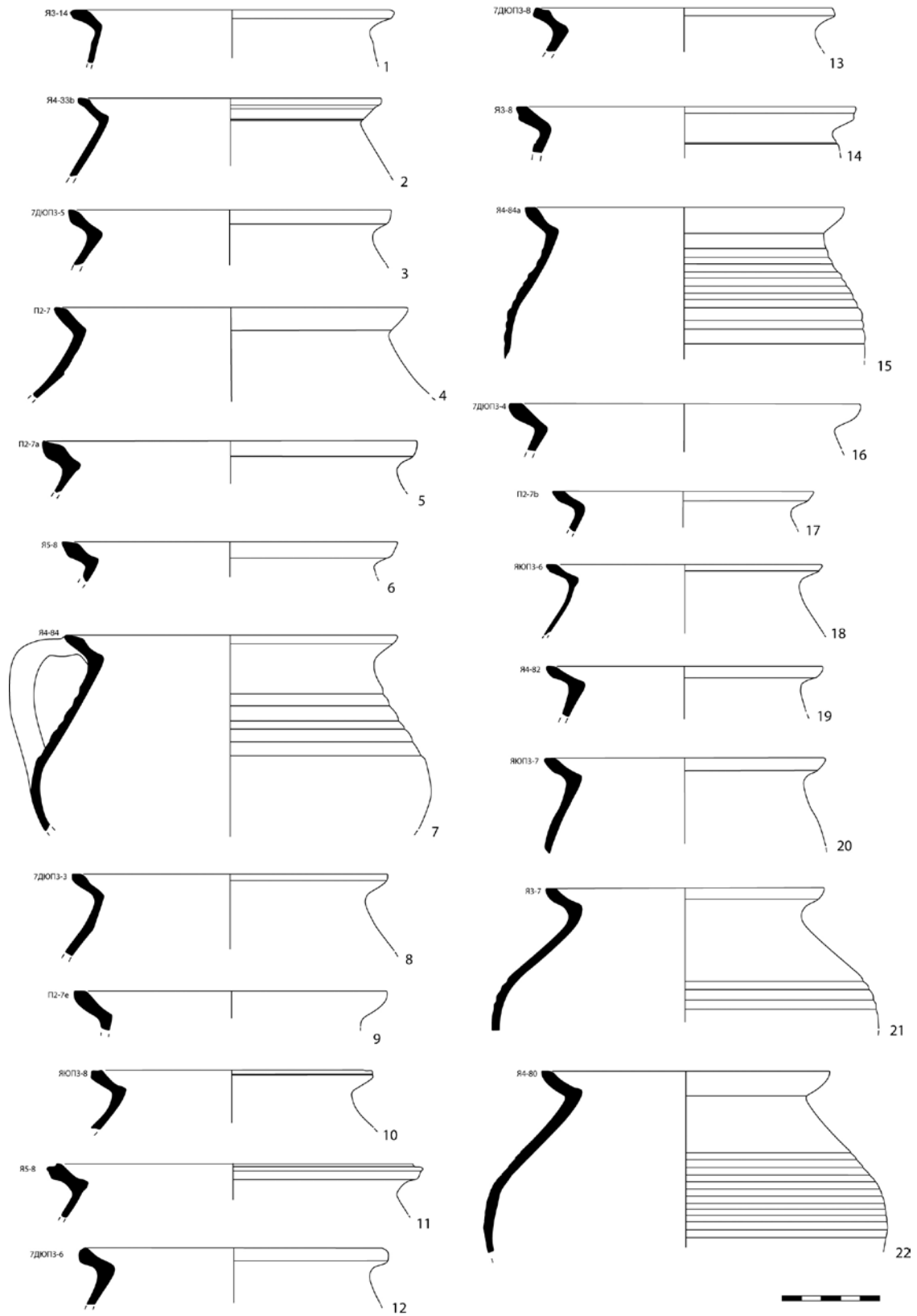


Fig. 11. Cooking pots from the second group: unglazed (1 – 7, 9 – 16, 18 – 22) and with spots of glaze (8, 17)
 Обр. 11. Гърнета от втора група: неглазирани (1 – 7, 9 – 16, 18 – 22) и с капки глазура (8, 17)

concave shaping on the inner side, where the lid was supposed to sit. The body is bulging, ovoid, the maximum diameter is in the upper part of the body, almost just below the neck. The base is flat. The pots are thin-walled. The rim diameter is between 8 and 17 cm. The base diameter is between 8 and 15 cm. Considering the fact that the pots with the smallest rim diameter are extremely thin-walled – 2 mm, it is possible that they were used as small cups (fig. 12: 1, 2, 8, 11). Some of the pots have one or two small handles, curved like fishing hooks (fig. 11: 7, fig. 12: 12, 13). They have flattened oval cross-section and three deep grooves running all along their length. The handles connect the rim to the shoulders. In only one case there is a relief button on top of the handle, close to the rim. Some of the pots have bodies covered with broad, shallow, horizontal ribs. The fabric is hard, well-purified, mixed with fine sand. The predominant color after firing is reddish-brown to beige-brown, dark brown or brownish-gray to grayish-black. Only the specimens of light yellow, yellowish-gray, light orange, and orange-pink color have very hard, coarse, and grittier fabric. Examples of misshaped pots deformed during firing, as well as multiple cracks on the bodies and handles from overfiring, and flaking fabrics are often documented. Some of the pots bear single or multiple drops of glaze and glaze spills and run-downs (fig. 3: 9). In some cases, it is possible to suppose that only the upper edge of the rim was intentionally glazed. There are five cases in which we are inclined to admit that the entire pot was initially covered with relatively glossy green glaze.

These pots appear to be the most common cooking ware during the Late Antiquity at various sites (Бьотгер 1978, 27 – 28, обр. 1в, к; Любенова 1981, 120 – 123, обр. 31 – 34; Böttger 1982, Taf. 45: 84, 85, 88, Taf. 46: 94, 472, 479; Кузманов 1985, тип I, 48 – 50, табл. 28 – 29; Vjelajac 1990, types I/1, 2, 166 – 167, pl. XIII: 1 – 9; Kuzmanov 1998, 92, Abb. 21: 90; Kuzmanov 2000, 233, fig. 6: 37; Кузманов 2005, тип I – III, 135 – 138, табл. XII: 80, табл. XIII – XVI; Кленаина 2006, 38, 41, 53 – 55, 86 – 87, рис. 9: 15 – 18, рис. 12: 53 – 55, рис. 23: 144 – 147, рис. 46: 371 – 386; Cvjetičanin 2006, 90 – 91, LRG 160 – 162; Борисов 2013, тип 1, тип 3, 284 – 288, табл. I – II, табл. IV: 1, 7; Кузманов, Грудев 2013, тип I – VII, 352 – 356, табл. IX – XV; Василева 2020, 133, табл. 5: 2; Harizanov 2022, fig. 13; Harizanov 2023, fig. 16).

The last group consists of thick-walled pots, with rim diameters ca. 20 cm or more. They have conical necks, some 4 – 5 cm tall, ending with rounded or straight cut rectangular rims that can be set in several varieties of the same type. Sometimes relief ribs or ridging are documented on the rim edge or outer surface of the neck (fig. 12: 14 – 20). It should be noted that the fabric of these pots is coarser and grittier, of light yellow, yellowish-gray, light orange or orange-pink color.²³ Considering the fact that the vessels were having thicker walls compared to other pots, maybe it is connected to their function – as directly exposed to fire and for cooking and preparing larger quantities of food. These pots were never glazed. The closest parallels are dated to the 3rd – first half of the 5th c. (Кленаина 2006, 38, 41, 47 – 48, 53 – 55, 60 – 61, 71, рис. 9: 14, рис. 12: 56, рис. 19: 112 – 114, рис. 23: 148, 149, рис. 30: 218, рис. 36: 270 – 272; Борисов 2013, тип 2, 286 – 287, табл. III: 1 – 6; Harizanov 2022, fig. 13, fig. 17).

Vessels with spouts. There were only three small, fragmented spouts and a very damaged wall, that had a round opening made before the firing just below the thick, folded rim that looks very much like the pots from the first group.

Vessels with spouts were rare, but not uncommon for the period. Most of them are indeed pots, similar to the here presented first group (Любенова 1981, обр. 30: 1, 2; Böttger 1982, Taf. 32: 395, 396; Кузманов 2005, 142, табл. XIX: 129, табл. XXI: 142 – 144; Cvjetičanin 2006, 88 – 89, LRG 151; Борисов 2013, 290; Кузманов, Грудев 2013, 359, табл. XVIII: 210, 211), but spouted bowls

²³For all other ceramic categories two types of fabric were used. The first one is smooth, mainly reddish-brown, beige, brown or brownish-gray after firing. The second fabric is the one described above – coarse and gritty.

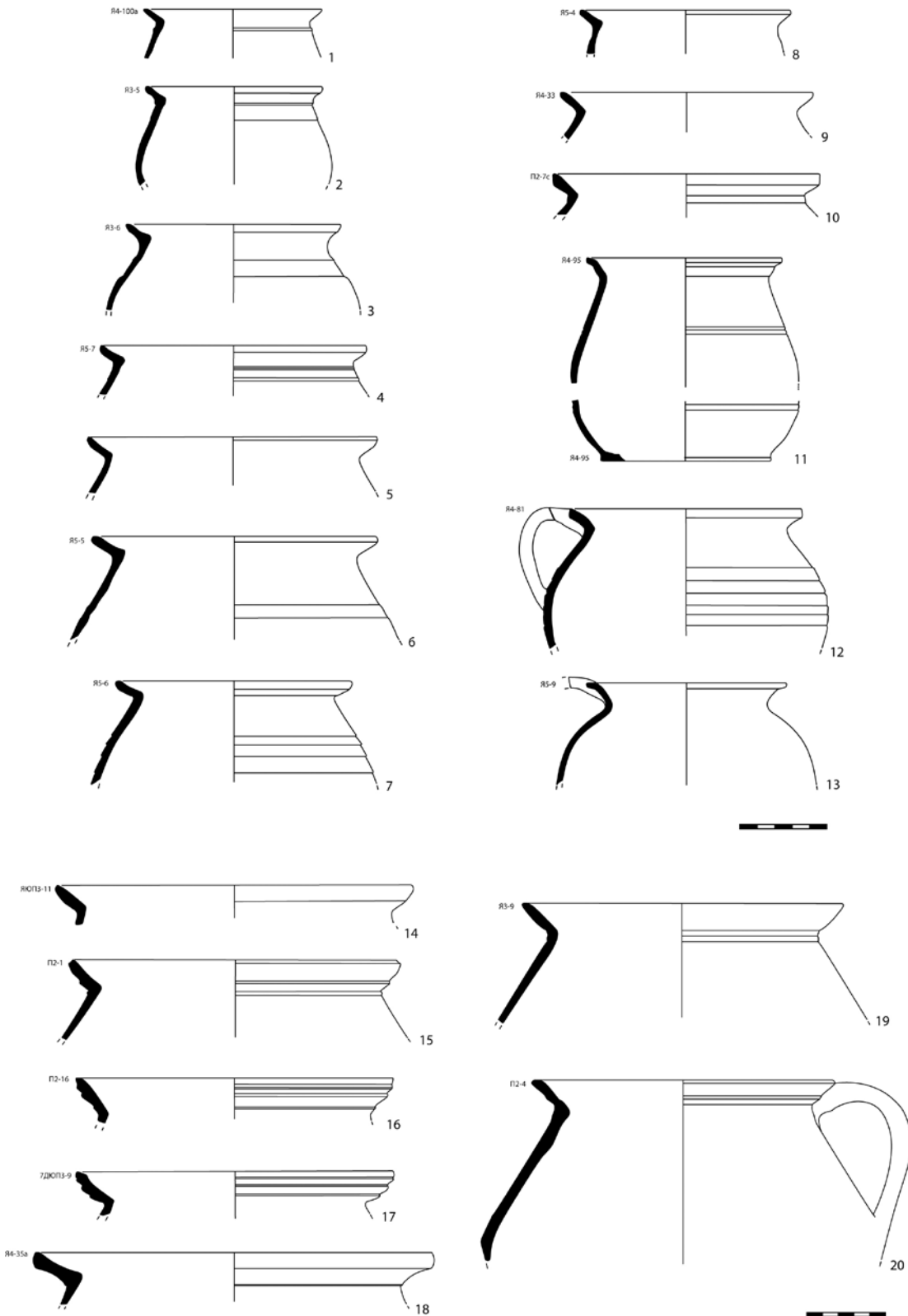


Fig. 12. Cooking pots from the second (1 – 13) and the third (14 – 20) groups: unglazed (1 – 5, 7 – 9, 11, 13 – 20) and with spots of glaze (6, 10, 12)

Обр. 12. Гърнета от втора (1 – 13) и трета (14 – 20) група: неглазирани (1 – 5, 7 – 9, 11, 13 – 20) и с петна глазура (6, 10, 12)

also existed (Kuzmanov 1998, 91 – 92, Abb. 20: 83; Kuzmanov 2000, 230, fig. 6: 32; Кузманов 2005, 141, табл. XX: 139, табл. XXI: 140). According to Ljiljana Bjelajac when commenting the finds from contexts from the second half of the 6th – early 7th c. from the Upper City of Caričin grad, Serbia, spouts were not characteristic for the previous periods and are a novelty introduced only in the 6th c. (Bjelajac 1990, type I/6, 167 – 168, pl. XIV: 1 – 5).

Lids. There are basically two types of lids. The first one has the “classical” conical shape, a button-like handle and a hook-like lower edge, where a plethora of profiles were documented (fig. 13 – 14).²⁴ These lids are tightly connected to kitchen ware, since they served covering the pots while cooking. Their diameter varies accordingly to the diameters of the pots starting from 9 up to 17 cm. Like pots, they could be found at different sites over the Balkan peninsula in the Late Antiquity (Böttger 1982, Taf. 49: 217, 510 – 514; Bjelajac 1990, types VIII/1 – 3, 181, pl. XV: 10 – 18; Kuzmanov 1998, 91 – 92, Abb. 20: 86; Кузманов 2005, тип I, 146 – 147, табл. XIII: 169, 170, табл. XIV: 172 – 177; Кленина 2006, 38, 42, 48, 53, 55, 60, 68, 70, рис. 9: 19, рис. 12: 62, рис. 19: 126 – 128, рис. 21: 132 – 133, рис. 24: 150 – 152, рис. 29: 214, рис. 30: 222 – 225, рис. 32: 233, рис. 35: 259 – 261; Свјетићанин 2006, 92, LRG 164; Борисов 2013, тип 2, вариант А, В, 305 – 306, табл. X: 1 – 15; Кузманов, Грудев 2013, 357 – 358, табл. XVII: 195 – 208; Василева 2020, 133, табл. 6: 1; Harizanov 2022, fig. 13).

The second type of lids is represented by several sherds of small size that probably belonged to two different items. The pieces are thick-walled, with slightly thickened and rounded edge. The walls are gently sloping towards the center, forming not a sharp cone, but rather an almost flat surface. The thickness of the walls and the great diameter of their circumference (more than 30 cm) allow us to consider them as lids for storage jars and dolia.

Strainers (?). There are only three small sherds – two from a rim and one from a base from a bowl-like vessels with flat bottom. Holes, piercing the walls at several places, were made before the firing of the item (fig. 15: 1, 2). The fabric is brownish-red and there are splashes of green glaze on the outer surface of two of the fragments (probably from the same vessel; fig. 15: 3). This allowed us to deduce that they were most likely used as strainers (Любенова 1981, обр. 61: 1; Böttger 1982, 134, Taf. 14: 469; Кленина 2006, 59, 71, рис. 28: 202, рис. 34: 252, рис. 37: 283; Свјетићанин 2006, 57, LRG 79).

Table ware

Bowls. The bowls can be set generally in two big groups. The first one (represented by only few specimens) has a rounded body ending with a rim, slightly curved and rounded inwards (fig. 15: 4, 5). This is a very common shape of bowl since prehistoric times. Similar in the way of shaping the rim come from Ratiaria (Кузманов, Грудев 2013, тип VII, табл. VI: 61), Serdica (Василева 2020, 129, табл. 4: 1), and the Serbian lands (Свјетићанин 2006, 46, 48 – 49, LRG 54, 60).

The second group consists of vessels with wide horizontal board with variety of rim profiles starting from plain flat ones and ending with more intricate, lower dropping rims (fig. 15: 6 – 21). Rim diameters measure between 15 and 23 cm. Their bodies are either conical, semi-spherical or with a conical-spherical lower part and cylindrical or conical upper part with a well-defined transition by a sharp ridge. Most of them are plain, but few bowls with semi spherical bodies have walls covered by shallow, not very well-defined, relief grooves – just like some pots. The bases are

²⁴ On one hand, the profile of the lower edge of the lids depended on the individual potters producing them, since some of the profiles are slight variations of one and the same type. On the other hand, the shaping of the lower edge had to fit the curvature of the inner part of the pots’ rims so that both pot and lid fit perfectly to allow the best food preparation and cooking conditions.

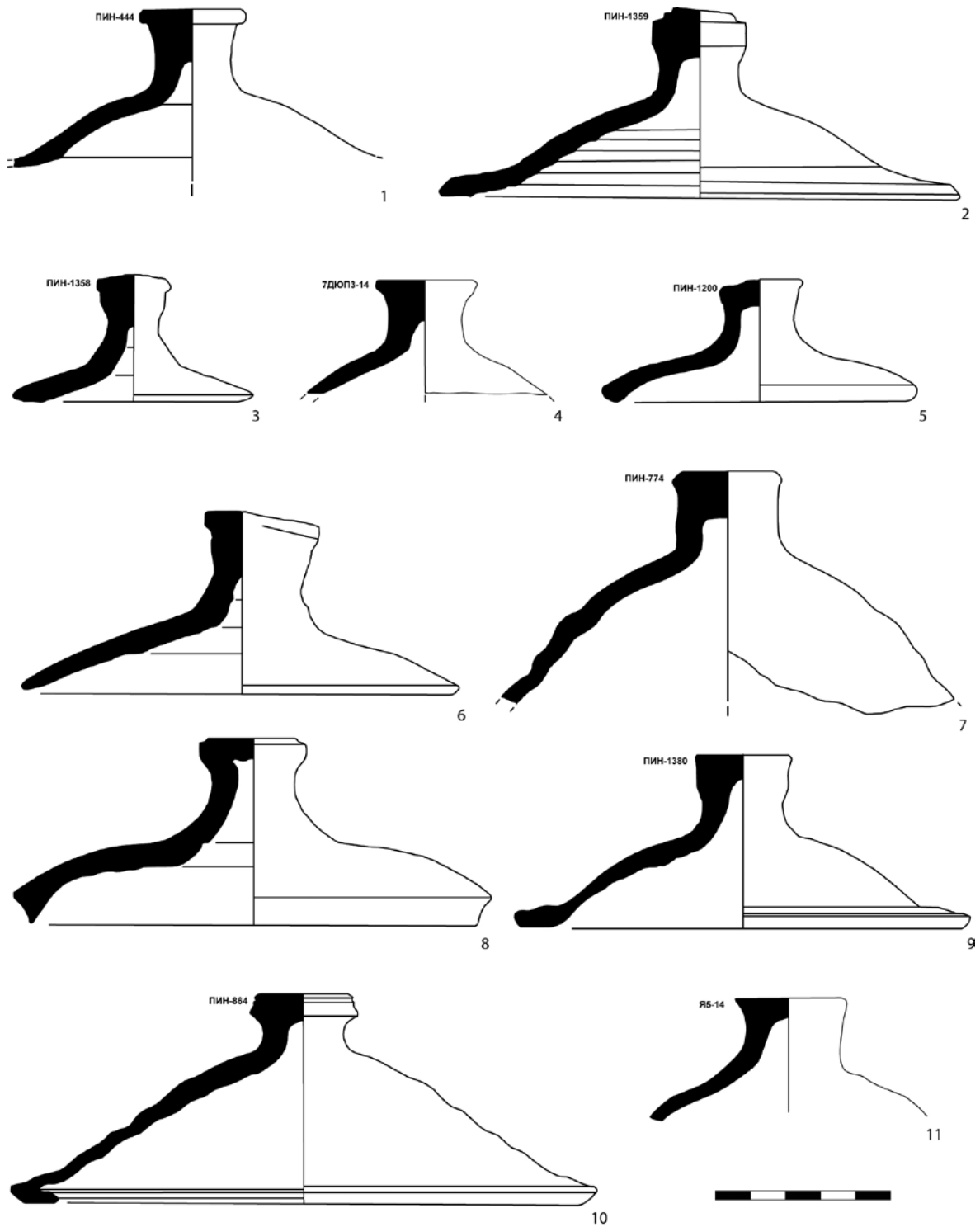


Fig. 13. Lids: unglazed (1 – 4, 6 – 11) and with spots of glaze (5)
Обр. 13. Капаци: неглазирани (1 – 4, 6 – 11) и с капки глазура (5)

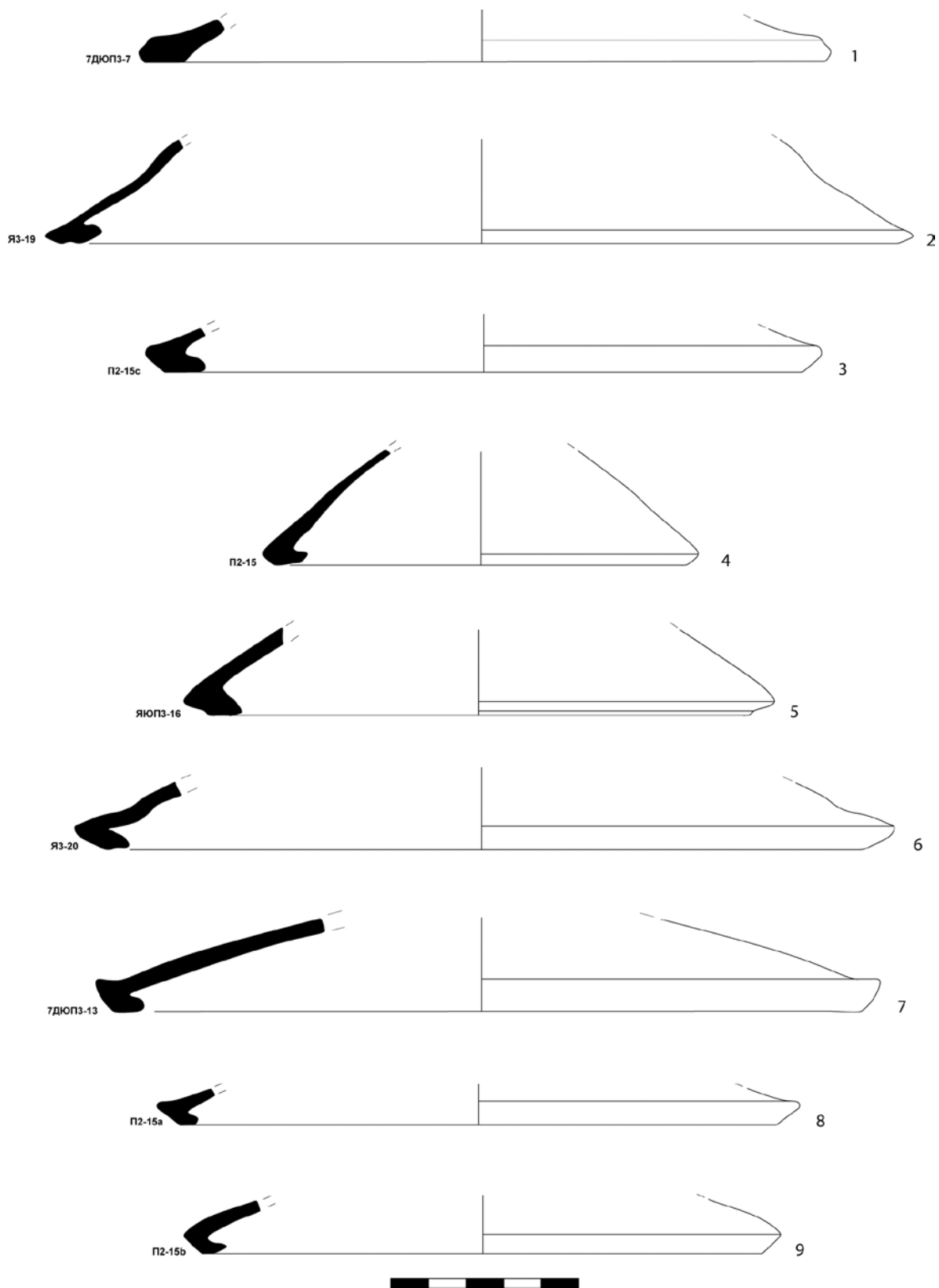


Fig. 14. Lids: unglazed (1 – 3, 5 – 9) and with spots of glaze (4)
 Обр. 14. Капаци: неглазирани (1 – 3, 5 – 9) и с капки глазура (4)

flat. Although not very common, some of the bowls had a single small, fish-hook shaped handle, attached to the rim and joining the body around its mid-section (fig. 15: 16). Most of the bowls are unglazed and do not have any slip or other coating. At the present moment of the research, there are at least 10 different bowls with distinct and characteristic rim shaping that were entirely or partially glazed (only on the inside and the upper part of the board; fig. 15: 19, 21). The horizontal board of two of them was respectively decorated with diagonal hatches and circles with dots.

Similar examples were found at different sites in Bulgaria and Serbia, where they were mostly dated to the 4th and early 5th c. Nevertheless some 6th c. pieces also exist (Böttger 1982, Taf. 43: 467; Кузманов 1985, тип I – II, 39 – 41, табл. 23: П1 – П12, табл. 24: П14, П24, П26; Kuzmanov 1998, Тип I – VI, 83 – 85, Abb. 3: 10 – 12, Abb. 4: 15, 17, Abb. 5: 18 – 21, Abb. 7: 26, 28, 29; Kuzmanov 2000, type I, 225, fig. 1: 7; Кузманов 2005, тип 1, тип 4, тип 5, 129 – 133, табл. I: 6, табл. II – IV: 23, 25, табл. VII: 46 – 48, табл. VIII: 49 – 53; Кленина 2006, 57 – 58, 70, рис. 26: 168 – 173, 177, рис. 36: 264; Cvjetićanin 2006, 34 – 39, 41, 43, 53 – 55, LRG 27a, c, d, 28, 29, 37, 42, 70, 71b, c, d; Борисов 2013, тип 6, вариант B, табл. VI: 10; Кузманов, Грудев 2013, тип I – V, 340, 345 – 347, табл. II: 14, табл. V: 40 – 42, 44, 45, 47 – 49, 52, табл. VI: 54, 55, 57, 58).

It is interesting to note that one of the glazed bowls had a solid, round, horizontal hollow handle attached to it – like a patera (Bjelajac 1990, type II/10, 172 – 173, pl. XVI: 18; Cvjetićanin 2006, 33, LRG 22; Борисов 2013, табл. VIII: 13).²⁵ It resembles a modern casserole or frying pan, but was probably not used as such in the late 6th c. The walls are too thin, and the glaze would be damaged if exposed on an open fire. Most probably it served for pouring liquids. Since the item was very fragmented and large parts of it were missing, it is difficult to say if there was a spout opposite of the handle or not (fig. 16).

Flat-bottomed table amphorae are very consistent in their body shape. They have short wide cylindrical necks decorated with a band of 3 – 4 incised horizontal lines. The collar-like rim is solid, and variety of rim profiles has been documented (fig. 17). Rim diameter varies between 13 and 16 cm. Two broad, very thin, band-like handles, start from the neck at mid-height and join the bulging shoulders. Although there is no entirely preserved specimen, we can judge by the preserved large parts of walls that the body was big, rounded and ended with a large flat base. Considering their general size and volume, it is worth noticing that these vessels have unusually thin walls – 3 – 4 mm thick. We find them mostly broken at the spot where the handles were attached to the neck, and it is difficult to assemble and restore them. None of the flat-bottomed amphorae was entirely glazed. There are only spots, splashes and drippings of glaze on the rim, handles or the body (fig. 17: 6, 11). Only in two cases partially glazed rims were documented.²⁶ We are not sure, but can only assume, that the bodies of the flat-bottomed amphorae were decorated with different patterns, mostly combining bands of incised horizontal and wavy lines.

Exactly the same have been found at Golemo Buchino near Sofia (4th c.; Harizanov 2022, fig. 13) and at Castra Martis (4th – early 5th c.), where they were classified as amphorae type VII, variants I and II, and were considered to be production of a local, yet non-identified workshop, reproducing earlier ceramic forms from Thrace (Кузманов 2005, 148 – 149, табл. XXV: 184 – 190, табл. XXVI: 191 – 194). Very similar are also some vessels from Novae, dated to the 6th c.

²⁵ A patera was reported among the finds from an early 7th c. ceramic context in Ephesos by Horacio Gonzalez-Cesteros and Sabine Ladstätter in their communication “Eating and drinking to the bitter end – the ceramic inventory of a taberna of the early 7th century in Ephesos” during the LRCW7 international conference that took place in October 15 – 19, 2019 in Valencia, Spain.

²⁶ These are only sherds with a small size and the glaze does not entirely cover the surface – there are large spots of unglazed fabric. Thus, it is problematic to say if the entire rim and neck were intentionally glazed or glaze has dripped in large quantities from a glazed vessel placed on a higher position in the kiln.

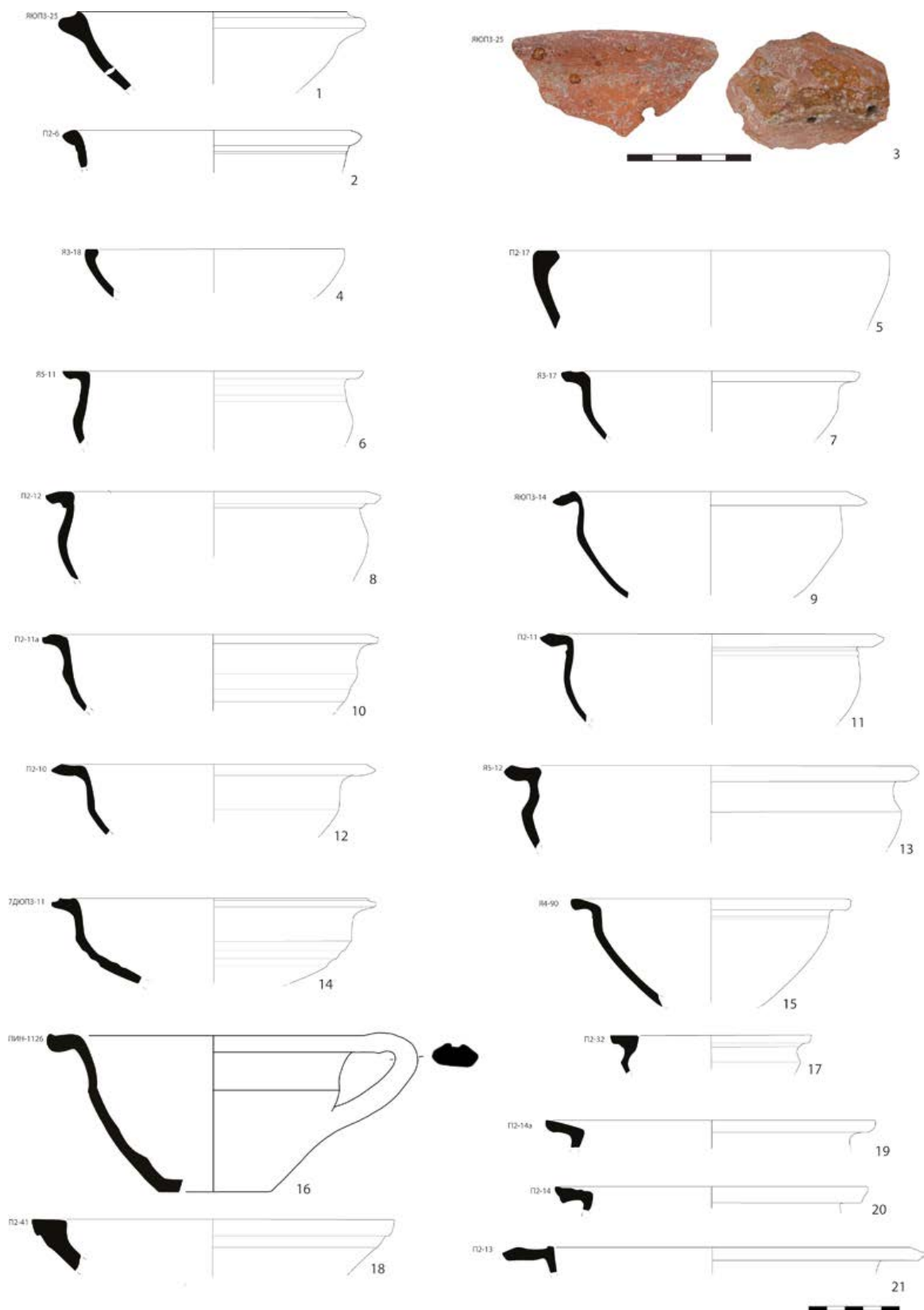
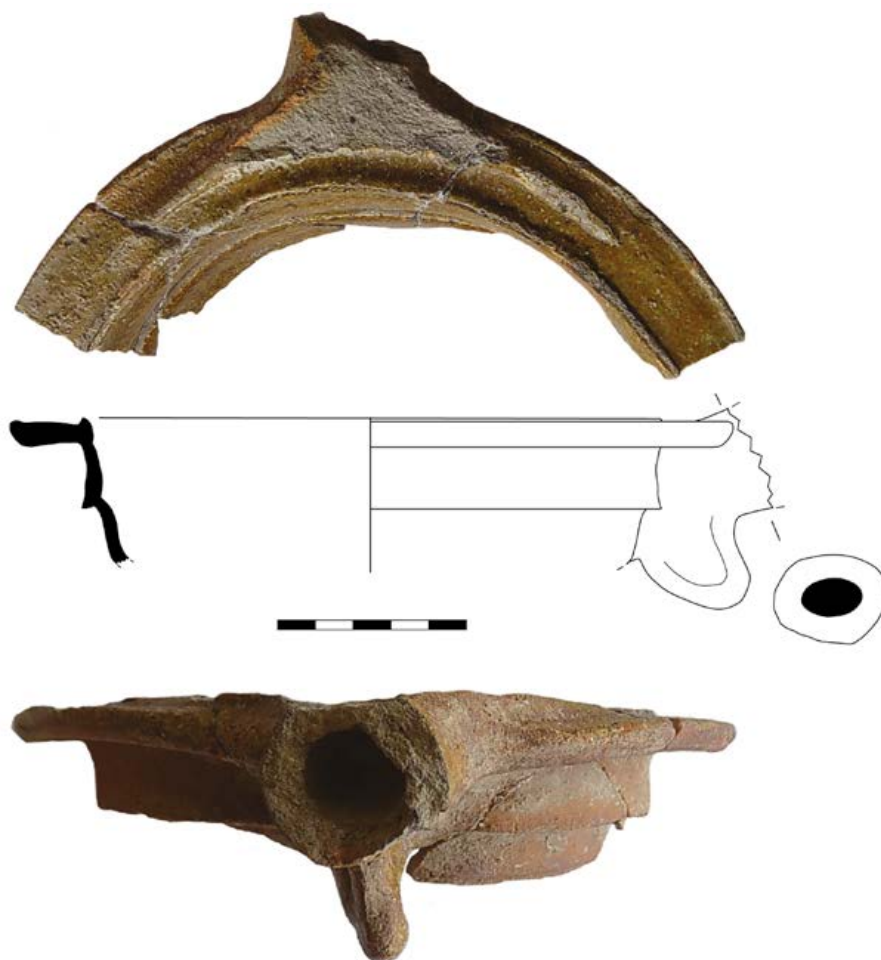


Fig. 15. Strainers (1 – 3) and bowls (4 – 21): unglazed (2, 4 – 11, 13 – 18, 20), glazed (19, 21) and with spots of glaze (1, 3, 12)
 Обр. 15. Цедилки (1 – 3) и купи (4 – 21): неглазирани (2, 4 – 11, 13 – 18, 20), глазирани (19, 21) и с капки глазура (1, 3, 12)

Fig. 16. *Patera* (glazed)

Обр. 16. Патера (глазуриана)

(Кленина 2006, 86 – 87, рис. 45: 363, 364, рис. 46: 389, 390; Harizanov 2023, fig. 18: 12, 16 – 18). Examples that look more or less similar, but are not a perfect match, can be listed from Ratiaria (Кузманов, Грудев 2013, стомни тип III, вариант 2, тип IV, вариант 2, амфори тип IX, 345 – 347, 349 – 350, 363, табл. VII: 72, 75, табл. XXII: 244 – 247), Iatrus (early 5th c.; Böttger 1982, type II4, 119, Taf. 24: 293, 294) and the Early Byzantine fortress near Voyvoda, Shumen district (Кузманов 1985, амфори тип XIX, 25, табл. 14: A138, A140).

Jugs. There are two general types of jugs. The first one has a medium-high wide cylindrical neck. A large variety of rim profiles has been documented for the rolled-up rim collar (diameter ca. 12 – 13 cm). One strap-like handle is attached to the neck, at mid-height, where there is a band of incised horizontal lines, and joins the shoulders of the body (fig. 18: 1 – 6). Exactly the same rim profile have some sherds from Golemo Buchino near Sofia (4th c.; Harizanov 2022, fig. 13). Very similar in terms of neck profile are some examples from Pernik (Любенова 1981, обр. 49: 1) and Novae from a context dated to the mid-5th – 6th c. (Кленина 2006, 79, рис. 42: 327).

The second type has a trefoil rim, narrower and slender neck. The strap-like handle is attached to the rim and also joins the shoulders (fig. 18: 7). Trefoil jugs are also very popular shape since Antiquity. During the Late Roman and Early Byzantine periods they were part of the ceramic



Fig. 17. Flat-bottomed table amphorae: unglazed (1 – 5, 7 – 10, 12) and with spots of glaze (6, 11)
 Обр. 17. Плоскодънни трапезни амфори: неглазирани (1 – 5, 7 – 10, 12) и с капки глазура (6, 11)

repertoire of most of the sites, including the cited here, but are not so slender and the necks are shorter and broader. The only ones with more elongated profile are Кузманов's type VI (Кузманов 1985, 34, табл. 20: K55) and an example from Ratiaria (Кузманов, Грудев 2013, тип I, 345 – 347, 349, табл. VII: 78).

So far, we can only assume how the body of both types looked like. Most probably it was quite large, spherical or ovoid. The base was either flat or on a small foot, like the pitchers. The body was decorated with bands of 2 – 4 horizontal incised lines. None of the jugs recorded was entirely glazed. Only occasional spots, splashes and leaks of glaze were observed on the outer or inner surface of the vessels as result of being fired together with glazed pottery (fig. 18: 6).

Pitchers are probably the most worth to be noted production of the workshop. They come in several different types that showed little variations in size among each other, thus evidencing for the existence of standardization.²⁷ We have to emphasize that the same shapes were produced as glazed and unglazed and were fired together in the kilns. Glazed pitchers represent 80 % or even more of all glazed pottery produced by the workshop. Most of the glazed pitchers are wasters – they are either deformed or have stuck to another vessel. There are cases in which the entire surface of the vessel looks like if sprinkled with salt or sugar – like a sandpaper.

The prevailing type of pitcher was at an average some 40 cm high (fig. 19 – 20). It had a funnel-like rim, decorated on the outside with three relief ribs, set closely or apart from each other. Rarely, the relief ribs were two or four. Rim diameter was either 8 or 9 cm. The rim transitioned to a conical neck. A single handle, attached to the neck, just below the funnel-like rim, joined the shoulders or the body of the vessel. The handle is strap-like, with ellipsoidal cross-section and three grooves running down its spine, the central being less broad and more pronounced. The body was quite large, bulging, rather pear-shaped, the maximum diameter being towards the lower third. There was a slight pinch of the body, forming a small foot, before transitioning to the flat base (ca. 10 – 13 cm in diameter). Three bands of 4 to 5 horizontal incised lines each run across the shoulder and the body of the pitcher. A broad shallow ribbing is merely noticeable towards the bottom part (fig. 19: 11, fig. 20: 4). It is not excluded that some of these pitchers had less voluminous and more cylindrical bodies, as suggested by some sherds (fig. 19: 9, 10, fig. 20: 1).

Not exactly identical, but very similar to this group of pitchers, were published from present-day Bulgaria and Serbia. Most of them are dated to the 4th – first half of the 5th c., very rarely to the 5th – 6th c. and it is assumed that their prototypes originated in the Pannonian workshops (Любенова 1981, обр. 49: 2; Böttger 1982, Taf. 31: 388; Кузманов 1985, тип II – IV, 32 – 34, 38, табл. 18: K39, K41, табл. 19: K46, K49, табл. 22: K81; Кузманов 1998, Тип I – III, 86 – 89, Abb. 9: 36, 38, 40, Abb. 10: 42, 43, Abb. 11: 44, 45, Abb. 12: 47, Abb. 14: 62 – 64; Кузманов 2000, type I – III, 230, fig. 3: 21, 22, fig. 4: 23, 24, 26; Кузманов 2005, тип I, вариант I, тип II, 142 – 145, табл. XXI: 146, табл. XXII: 150, 151, табл. XXIII: 162, 163; Кленина 2006, 60, рис. 30: 219; Свјетићанин 2006, 57 – 60, 67, 69, 75 – 77, 79, 81 – 82, LRG 80, 97, 104, 115: 6, 116: 2, 122, 128; Кузманов, Грудев 2013, тип I, 341, табл. III: 20; Василева 2020, 131, табл. 5: 1).

The two-handled pitchers have high, narrow, cylindrical necks, ca. 3 – 4 cm in diameter. Both handles were attached at mid-height. All four items found differ one from another in the way the rim was shaped (fig. 21: 1 – 4). None of them has a preserved lower part. In one case (fig. 21: 4) the preserved part of the shoulders points out to more slender and elongated forms. So far, we have documented several gently sloping shoulders that connect to cylindrical bodies with flat bottoms, like a bottle (fig. 21: 5, 6). The shoulders are mostly decorated with incised lines that vary

²⁷ Unfortunately, until present we were unable to piece together an entirely preserved glazed or unglazed pitcher.

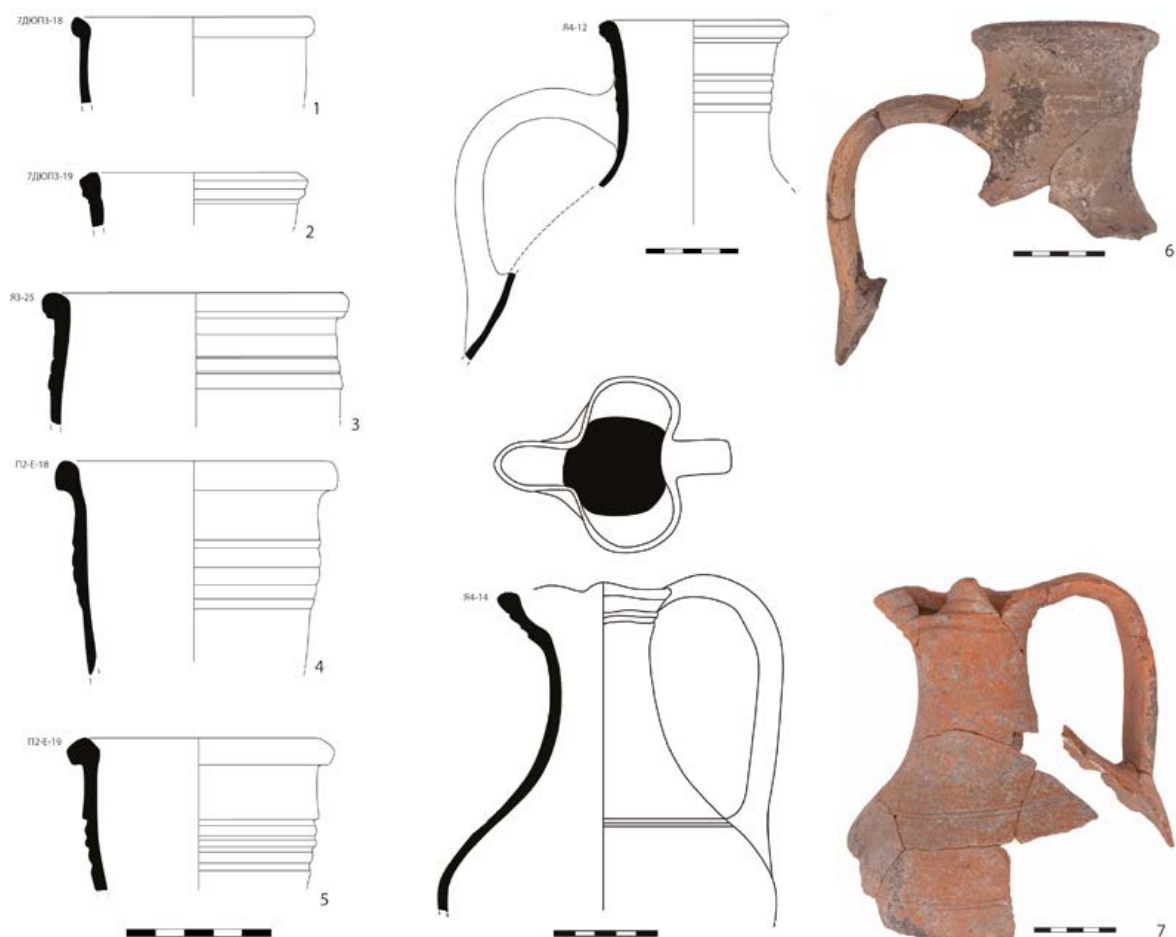


Fig. 18. Jugs: unglazed (1 – 5, 7) and with spots of glaze (6)
 Обр. 18. Кани: неглазирани (1 – 5, 7) и с капки глазура (6)

from simple (“fish-bone”) to more intricate patterns, where horizontal, vertical or diagonal lines are combined with wavy ones (fig. 21: 7, 8). The upper and the lower part of the cylindrical body may be covered with relief ribs, while in between them several bands of single wavy lines may be present. We are inclined to think that some of the handles belonging to these bottle-shaped pitchers were having relief knobs on their highest point and incised lines at their base (fig. 21: 9).

As with the previous group, they find analogies among the multitude of glazed pitchers from the Middle and Lower Danube. It is believed that their prototypes were produced in Aquincum in the 2nd c. before appearing in the 4th – first half of the 5th c. at sites all across Lower Pannonia, Dacia Ripensis, Dacia Mediterranea and even Lower Moesia (Любенова 1981, обр. 46, обр. 50: 1, 2; Böttger 1982, Typ II/2, Taf. 30: 382; Кузманов 1985, тип III, 33, табл. 18: К43; Kuzmanov 1998, Typ II, 88, Abb. 12: 47, 48, 50, 51, Abb. 13: 52 – 60; Kuzmanov 2000, type II, 230, fig. 4: 24, 25; Кузманов 2005, тип I, вариант 2, тип II, 143 – 144, табл. XXII: 151 – 158; Кленина 2006, 76, рис. 39: 293, 294; Свјетићанин 2006, 75 – 76, LRG 115: 4; Кузманов, Грудев 2013, тип I, вариант 2, 342 – 343, табл. III: 23 – 26).

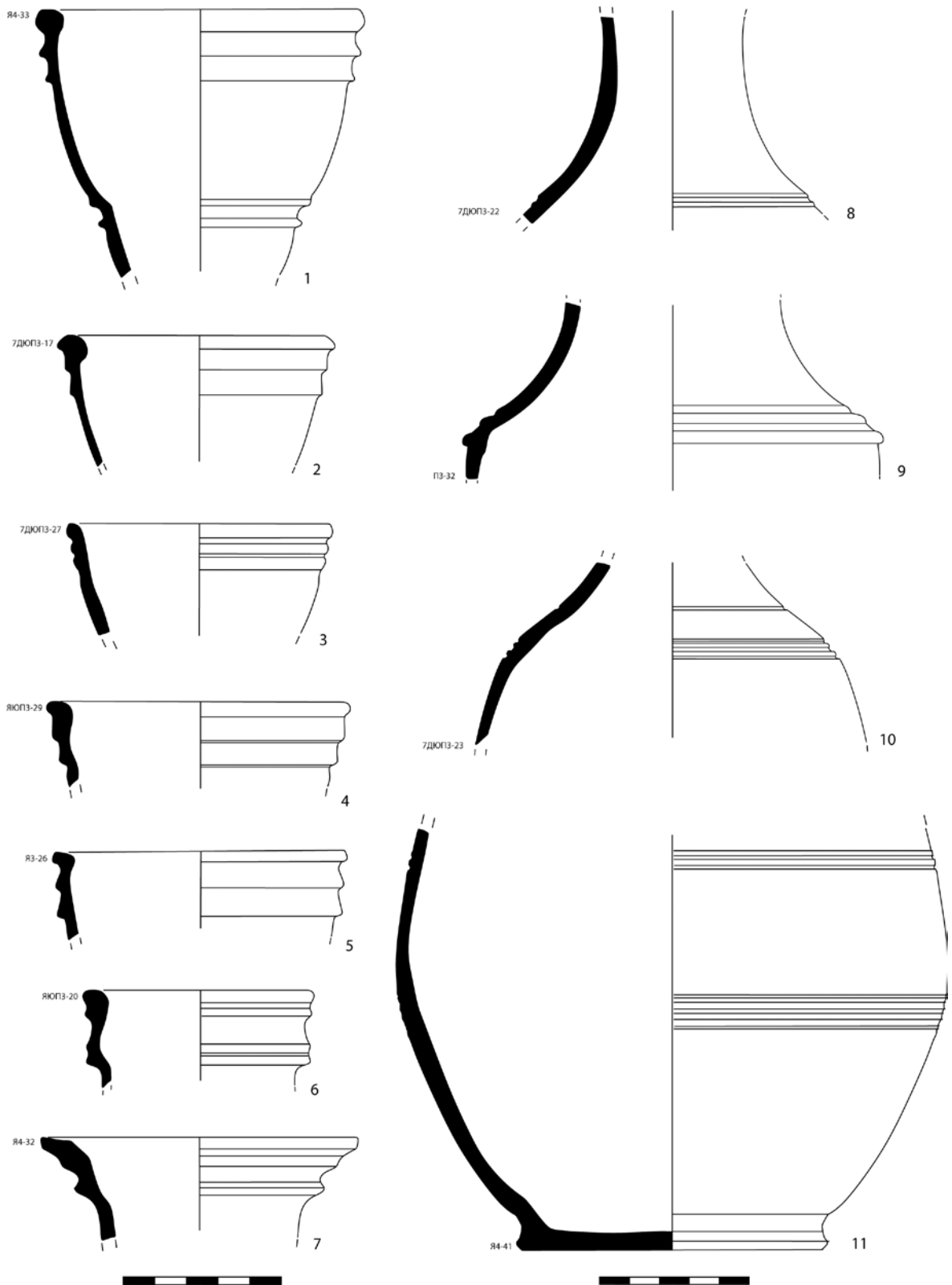


Fig. 19. Pitchers: unglazed (2, 5, 8, 9), glazed (1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 11) and with spots of glaze (10)
 Обр. 19. Стомни: неглазирани (2, 5, 8, 9), глазирани (1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 11) и с капки глазура (10)



Fig. 20. Pitchers: unglazed (1), glazed (3, 4) and with spots of glaze (2)
Обр. 20. Стомни: неглазирани (1), глазирани (3, 4) и с капки глазура (2)



Varia

Kernoi. Three almost identical tube-like items and another small piece (fig. 22) were part of a single object – a hollow ring with an U-shaped cross-section and outer diameter of ca. 20 cm. Its outer walls opened and formed spouts for pouring liquids at at least four different places on its circumference. Two of the items had button-like protrusions on the inner side of the tube. Most likely these parts were standing opposite one another on the ring and were connected with a handle or a bar. The upper flat surface of the object was covered with a glaze of low quality – coarse, transparent, pale green in color, without gloss. The hollow ring was identified as a *kernos* – a ritual vessel for pouring libations during ceremonies related to the gods and the cult of agricultural abundance. As can be seen on a similar object from the village of Gabare, Stara Zagora district (Герасимова-Томова 1981, обр. 13), usually this type of artifacts had several small cup-like vessels (now missing) attached to the hollow ring that held the liquids used for the offerings. The cups were usually connected to the hollow ring through openings at the bottoms of each of them. *Kernoi* were most popular in the Ancient Greek world, but obviously found their way through Roman culture as well.

Candlesticks. Three partially preserved, but well-distinguishable, candlesticks of different types were found during the excavations. They have long, hollow cylindrical stems of ca. 4 cm in diameter. The stems are covered by ribbing that would secure a tighter grasp of the object. Like this it would not allow to slip away if holding it with sweaty or wet hand. The upper end of the stem forms the candle holder. It is surrounded by a shallow cup, few centimeters bellow its edge. At this state of research, it is difficult to say how the lower end of the candlesticks looked like. Two of the items

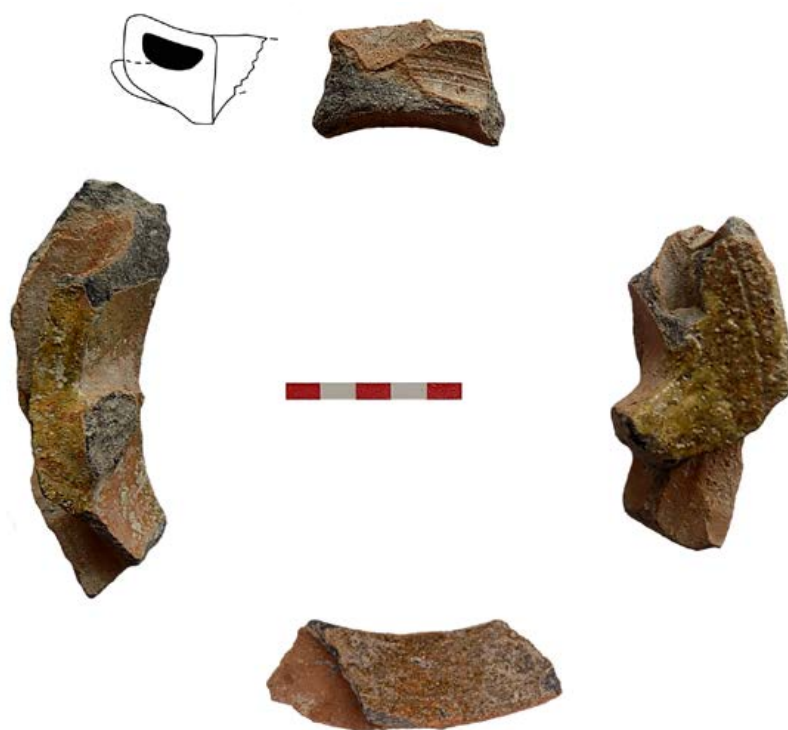


Fig. 22. *Kernos* (glazed)

Обр. 22. Кернос (глазиран)



Fig. 23. Candlesticks: unglazed (2) and glazed (1, 3)
Обр. 23. Светилници: неглазирани (2) и глазирани (1, 3)

were entirely covered with glaze (fig. 23: 1, 3), while one was unglazed (fig. 23: 2). Candlesticks were documented among the plain and glazed pottery from present-day western Bulgaria (Любенова 1981, 154 – 157, обр. 83 – 84; Кузманов 2005, тип V, 184, табл. IV: 33, 34) and Serbia (Свјетићанин 2006, 95 – 96, LRGapp 1, LRGapp 3). In Saraçhane vessels with similar shape come from much later contexts (Hayes 1992, 43, fig. 15: 14 – 16).

During the excavations we found many rim sherds that due to their small size were considered as belonging to pitchers. It is highly probable that they may actually be rims of the candle holder or the cup beneath it. The same is valid for the cylindrical segments of small diameter with ribbing on the outer surface that have been considered as pitcher necks. Due to similarities in the shape, they may also have been candlestick stems. A more thorough study of the material, connected to its future detailed publication will allow making more decisive conclusions.

Conclusion

The pottery workshop discovered in the vicinity of ancient Serdica is one of a kind, because at the present moment of research it is the only one archaeologically explored production center for glazed pottery on the Balkan peninsula and Southeastern Europe dated in the second half of the 6th – early 7th c. It is also significant, because obviously there was no clear distinction between plain and glazed pottery and their production was not separated. Potters produced the same forms of vessels with or without coating, especially the pitchers. This is also a perfect showcase of how both wares were fired together in the same kilns. Obviously, the potters were skilled enough and had mastered the glazing technology that required higher firing temperatures.

Although the ceramic repertoire of the workshop looks quite uniform and limited at first glance, the variety of the rim profiles among each of the described categories suggests a larger in size and a more diverse production than expected. All pottery shapes find similar among examples from other sites from the 4th – 6th c. in the central part of the Balkan peninsula, thus fitting perfectly within the late antique ceramic tradition. It is interesting to note that the closest parallels for the glazed pottery are found among ceramics dated to the 4th – early 5th c., whose prototypes were produced in the Pannonian workshops and found on sites in areas currently located in the present-day western Bulgarian and eastern Serbian lands. This is a good example of how a tradition persists and gets transferred through time regardless of the apparent gap of about 150 years. It is up to future scholars to fill this gap.

It is difficult to judge about the organization of the workshop and the production process, because a very small part of it was explored. The rest of it, lying in the neighboring plots will stay forever hidden or was already destroyed by modern building activity, so probably we won't be able to know much more about it. Still, it will be interesting to know through future and more thorough research how its production was distributed geographically and if it was part of a long-distance exchange or stayed on a more regional level. Little is known for the moment, except that the workshop, quite logically, supplied with pottery Serdica, the closest and largest town in its proximity (Станев 2020, 179 – 181, обр. 6: 1 – 6, обр. 7: 1 – 10). Another direction to follow up will be to see if the same shapes of vessels continue existing during the Middle Ages on a local ground and how they change over time.

Despite the brief overview and the preliminary results, the pottery from this workshop can be used as a cornerstone for further studies on late antique and early medieval glazed pottery and how the transfer of the glazing techniques was effectuated.

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НЕГЛАЗИРАНА И ГЛАЗИРАНА КЕРАМИКА ОТ VI – НАЧАЛОТО НА VII В. ОТ КЕРАМИЧНОТО АТЕЛИЕ В КВ. „ЛОЗЕНЕЦ“, СОФИЯ (ПРЕДВАРИТЕЛНО СЪОБЩЕНИЕ)

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РЕЗЮМЕ

През 2000 – 2001 г. по време на спасителни разкопки в кв. „Лозенец“, София е разкрит комплекс, състоящ се от две разположени една върху друга базилики, които са били оградени със зид с кули в ъглите (обр. 1). Датиран е в границите на IV – началото на VII в. и е разположен на 3,5 км южно от крепостните стени на древна Сердика. През втората половина на VI в., в непосредствена близост до външната страна на южната стена на горната църква, възниква керамично ателие. Разкрити са три двукамерни пещи и няколко свързани с тях ями, но е възможно да са съществували и други извън границите на разкопаната площ. В ателието е произвеждана както неглазирана, така и глазирана керамика. Производството е продължило до началото на VII в.

През Късната античност множество керамични ателиета за производство на глазирана керамика са известни от римската провинция Панония. Те функционират в рамките на IV – V в. Под тяхно влияние глазирана керамика се появява и на Балканите, но до момента все още нямаше сигурно докумен-

тирано производство, особено през VI в. Глазирана керамика от VI – VII в. е известна от разкопките на Сарачхане, Истанбул, но произходът ѝ е неустановен. Въпросът за приемствеността между късно-античната и средновековната глазирана керамика е все още неразрешен. С оглед на това, продукцията на керамичната работилница от Сердика е от изключителна важност, тъй като представлява значима брънка от веригата, по която преминава тази приемственост.

Голяма част от керамиката, която е обект на настоящото изследване, е бракувана продукция, резултат от дефекти в производствения процес на трите керамични пещи. До момента са обработени над 20 хиляди фрагмента, което позволи да се очертаят основните групи и форми съдове, произведени в ателието. Фрагментите произхождат от следните структури и контексти: пещ № 3 и свързаната с нея яма № 6, пещ № 2, яма № 5, яма № 7, яма № 3, яма № 4, от пласт от натрошена керамика с дебелина около 50 см, южно от зида на кал в кв. 5Д/6Д, както и керамика около пещ № 3 в кв. 7Д (обр. 2).

Направеният опит да се установи относителната хронология на пещите и ямите и да се разграничат синхронните контексти показва, че пещ № 4 и свързаната с нея яма № 7 са по-ранни от пещ № 2 и яма № 2. Яма № 5 също е по-ранна от пещ № 2 и яма № 2, но не е ясно дали е синхронна на пещ № 4 и яма № 7. Трудно е да се каже дали пещ № 3 и свързаната с нея яма № 6 са синхронни на пещ № 4 или на пещ № 2. Много е вероятно да са функционирали едновременно и с двете пещи. Ями № 3 и № 7 се намират под дебелия пласт с керамика в кв. 5Д/6Д, т.е. те са по-ранни от него. За момента пластът с керамика се явява най-късният от разглежданите контексти и се предполага, че голяма част от него е била натрупана при изхвърляне на дефектната продукция от последното зареждане на пещ № 2.

Керамичните фрагменти, принадлежащи към едни и същи съдове, но намерени в няколко различни контекста, както и еднотипността на фрагментите от отделните керамични групи, потвърдиха предположението, че производствените съоръжения са функционирали едновременно в кратък хронологически период. Единствено материалите от яма № 5 не се слепват с парчета от другите контексти, поради което смятаме, че тя е най-ранна от всички. Фрагменти от яма № 4 се слепват с фрагменти от най-ранните и най-късните контексти, поради което смятаме, че тя е била използвана през целия период на съществуване на работилницата. Попадането на фрагменти от едни и същи съдове на различни места обясняваме с това, че грънчарите са използвали едновременно всички ями и пространството около пещите, за да изхвърлят дефектната продукция. Друго възможно обяснение е, че след като пещ № 2 е престанала да бъде използвана и е била разрушена, дефектната керамика от нея е била натрупана на дебел пласт между пещта и зида на кал в кв. 5Д/6Д. Малко по-късно, при заравняване на терена в тази част на комплекса, пластът е бил разнесен и така фрагменти от него са попаднали в други контексти.

Освен пещите, доказателство за производството на място на неглазирана и глазирана керамика са деформирани и бракувани съдове (обр. 3: 1 – 8). При глазираната керамика често се забелязва отлюспване на глазурата в резултат от препичане или стичането ѝ във вътрешността на съдовете при пропукването на стените. Често глазирани съдове са залепвали един за друг или за неглазирани такива, което е видно от останалите от разделянето им следи от допира (обр. 3: 8). Резултат от дефект в производствения процес е и глазурата, която не е успяла да се превърне в гладка стъкловидна повърхност и е останала под формата на грубо, поръсено с миниатюрни частици, сивкаво покритие. Документирани са и няколко случая на тухли и тръби от конструкцията на пещите, по които има глазурата или са залепнали керамични фрагменти.

Във всяка една от трите пещи едновременно е опалвана глазирана и неглазирана керамика. Освен това са опалвани едновременно съдове с големи и малки размери, така че максимално да бъде използвано вътрешното пространство на камерата. Следите от капки и стечки глазурата по повърхността на неглазираната кухненска керамика и съдове за съхранение (обр. 3: 9) показват, че при подреждане на съдовете във вътрешността на пещта последните са заемали долната част на камерата, а глазираната керамика е поставяна върху тях в най-горната част на пространството.

Глазурата е полагана директно върху добре изсъхналата повърхност на глинени съдове, преди те да бъдат опалени. Цветът ѝ е зелен, с различни оттенъци в зависимост от качеството и дебелината на покритието – много лъскава, тъмнозелена и пълтна, на места с черни точки; тъмнозелена, с

по-малка плътност и не толкова лъскава; светлозелена, разредена и течна, с кафяви жилки, следващи посоката, по която се е стичала глазурата, без блясък, по-скоро груба и прозрачна; много нискокачествена глазура, доста рядка, без плътност, почти прозрачна и безцветна, под която прозира цветът на опечената глина.

В работилницата са произвеждани следните категории керамика: съдове за складиране на продукти, кухненска и трапезна керамика, светилници и др. Не са документирани амфори или друг вид съдове за транспортиране на продукти.

Съдове за съхранение

В групата попадат съдове, подобни на долиумите. Те имат масивни широки устия, големи яйцевидни тела и относително малки дъна, оформени като ниски плътни столчета (обр. 4). Документирано е значително разнообразие от профили на устието, чийто диаметър варира между 25 – 30 см (обр. 5). Вероятно съдовете са били високи около 1 м. Въпреки големите си размери те са били относително тънкостенни (7 – 8 мм). Външната повърхност на тялото е покрита с гъсти, плитко врязани хоризонтални линии. Глината е твърда, компактна, примесена със значително количество пясък. Цветът след изпичането е червеникаво-кафяв, рядко светлооранжев. Прегорелите фрагменти са тъмнокафяви или сиви на цвят. Като цяло тези съдове са неглазирани. Единствено два фрагмента от тяло на съд са покрити отвън с глазура (обр. 6: 2), поради което можем да заключим, че са съществували ако не изцяло, то поне частично глазирани съдове за съхранение.

Кухненска керамика

Мортариите са използвани за приготвянето на течни храни чрез стриване и счукване. Имат формата на дълбоки дебелостенни полусферични купи с равни дъна и с масивни широки периферии, върху които има улей за изливане на храната (обр. 7). Диаметърът на устието е около 20 см, а височината им около 20 – 25 см. До момента са регистрирани около 20 различни профила на устието (обр. 8). При някои перифериите са украсени с врязани линии или насечки, при други украсата от врязани хоризонтални и вълнисти линии е по външната страна на тялото, под периферията. Глината е твърда, компактна, с примеси от пясък. Цветът след изпичане е червеникаво-кафяв до тъмнокафяв и сиво-кафяв. Повечето мортарии са глазирани от вътрешната страна, като понякога глазурата покрива ръба на канала за изливане или цялата горна повърхност на периферията, но има и някои неглазирани съдове (обр. 7: 1).

Големи дебелостенни *купи* също са използвани за приготвяне или съхраняване на храна (обр. 9: 2).

Гърнетата представляват основната част от производството на работилницата – почти 50 % от целия керамичен комплекс. Според профила на устието и формата на тялото могат да бъдат разделени на три големи групи (гърнета с плътни, хоризонтално отрязани устиета, гърнета с капаци и големи гърнета без капаци).

Гърнетата от първата група по профил на устието и формата на тялото приличат много на съдовете за съхранение и изглеждат като техни умалени версии (обр. 10). Устията са със сложна профилировка, масивни, удебелени и прегънати, предимно хоризонтално разположени, по-рядко косо отрязани навътре. Регистрирани са над 20 различни профила на устието. Понякога горната му повърхност е украсена с 1 – 3 врязани линии или малки насечки. Горната част на тялото е конична, а релефни пръстени или бразди маркират резкия преход между плещите и тялото. Понякога две малки плоски извити дръжки свързват устието с плещите (обр. 10: 11). Глината е твърда, добре пречистена, примесена с пясък. Цветът след изпичане е червеникаво-кафяв, бежово-кафяв и тъмнокафяв. Засвидетелствани са едва 5 случая на изцяло или частично глазирани гърнета.

Гърнетата с капаци са най-широко застъпената група в тази категория. Според профила на устието могат да се разделят на 5 основни типа с подтипове и варианти (обр. 11, обр. 12: 1 – 13). Обща за всички типове е ниската, извита навън шия с повече или по-малко ясно изразено вдлъбване от вътрешната страна там, където е трябвало да легне капакът. Тялото е широко, издуто, с максимален

диаметър в горната част на съда почти под шията. Дъното е равно. Гърнетата са тънкостенни. Диаметърът на устието е между 8 и 17 см, а този на дъното – между 8 и 15 см. Възможно е някои от гърнетата с много малки размери да са използвани за чашки (обр. 12: 1, 2, 8, 11). Някои от съдовете имат една или две малки извити дръжки (обр. 11: 7, обр. 12: 12, 13). Телата на някои от гърнетата са покрити с широки плитски хоризонтални бразди. Глината е твърда, добре пречистена, примесена с фин пясък. Цветът след изпичане е основно червеникаво-кафяв, бежово-кафяв, тъмнокафяв или кафеникаво-сив до сиво-черен. Единствено гърнетата със светложълт, жълтеникаво-сив, светлооранжев или оранжево-розов цвят на глината са изработени от твърда, груба и зърниста глина. Обикновено по някои от съдовете има случайни петна и стечки от глазура. Предполагаме, че е имало гърнета, при които е глазиран само устийният ръб. В пет случая са документирани изцяло глазирани отвън гърнета.

Последната група се състои от дебелостенни гърнета с диаметър около и над 20 см. Шиите им са конични, високи 4 – 5 см и завършват със заоблен или право отрязан устийен тип. Понякога върху външната повърхност на шията или ръба на устието има оребряване (обр. 12: 14 – 20). Трябва да се отбележи, че за разлика от другите категории, при които едни и същи форми са изработени от два вида глина, тези гърнета са изработени изцяло и единствено от груба зърниста глина със светложълт, жълтеникаво-сив, светлооранжев или оранжево-розов цвят. Тези съдове никога не са били глазирани.

Съдове с чучури. Документирани са едва три малки фрагмента от чучури и една стена с отвор, направен преди изпичането на съда, непосредствено под сложно профилираното и прегънато устие на съд, който много прилича на гърнетата от първата група, разглеждана тук.

Капаци. Има два основни типа капаци. Първият тип е с конична форма и цилиндрична дръжка на върха на конуса. Долният ръб на капака, който е трябвало да легне в оформената за целта бразда върху вътрешната страна на шията на гърнетата, е оформен като кука, като се забелязва голямо разнообразие от профили (обр. 13 – 14). Диаметърът на капациите варира в границите на диаметрите на гърнетата, с които е неразривно свързан – 9 – 17 см.

Вторият тип капаци е дебелостенен, с леко удебелен и заоблен ръб. Стените им съвсем леко се издигат към центъра на капака, оформяйки не конус, а почти плоска повърхност. Дебелината на стените и големият диаметър на капациите ни карат да предположим, че са използвани за покриване на долиуми или големи делви за съхранение на продукти.

Цедилки (?). Документирани са три малки фрагмента от плоскодънни съдове, подобни на купите, в чиито стени преди изпичането на съда са пробити дупки (обр. 15: 1 – 3). Глината е кафеникаво-червена и по външната повърхност има пръски от зелена глазура.

Трапезна керамика

Купите са разделени най-общо на две големи групи. В първата попадат малко на брой представители, които имат полусферично тяло и завит навътре и леко заоблен устийен ръб (обр. 15: 4, 5). Втората група се състои от съдове с широк хоризонтален борд и голямо разнообразие от профили – от по-опростени и изчистени до по-сложни и профилирани (обр. 15: 6 – 21). Диаметърът на устието варира от 15 до 23 см. Тялото е конично, полусферично или със сферо-конична долна част и цилиндрична или конична горна част, като преходът между тях е ясно маркиран. Стените на повечето от тях са гладки, при други има добре изразени плитски релефни ребра – подобно на тези при гърнетата. Дъната са равни. Някои купи имат една малка извита дръжка (обр. 15: 16). Основната част от съдовете са без покритие. Има съдове, изцяло глазирани от вътрешната страна и по горната част на периферията (обр. 15: 19, 21), а при някои има и украса от диагонални насечки или орнамент „птиче око“.

Трябва да се отбележи, че една от глазираните купи има масивна хоризонтална куха дръжка с кръгло сечение, която е закрепена за устието – подобно на патерите (обр. 16).

Плоскодънните трапезни амфори са доста еднотипни по отношение на формата си. Имат къса цилиндрична шия, украсена с ивица от 3 – 4 врязани хоризонтални линии. Устието е масивно, удебелено като якичка, с разнообразна профилировка (обр. 17). Диаметърът на устието е 13 – 16 см. Шията и плещите са свързани чрез две широки, плоски лентести дръжки. Тялото е издуто, закръглено, предполагаме, че е украсено с комбинации от врязани хоризонтални и вълнисти линии, дъното – плоско, а

стените – много тънки. До момента не е регистриран нито един изцяло глазиран съд, налице са единствено петна и стичания от глазура по различни части на съдовете, основно по горната им външна повърхност (обр. 17: 6, 11).

Каните са два основни типа. Първият е със средновисока широка цилиндрична шия и пръстеновидно удебелено устие с различна профилировка, с диаметър около 12 – 13 см. Шията е украсена с ивица от врязани хоризонтални линии и за нея е закрепена една лентеста дръжка (обр. 18: 1 – 6). Вторият тип кани са с ойнохоевидно устие и тясна, издължена шия (обр. 18: 7). Предполага се, че и двата типа са имали издути, сферични или яйцевидни тела, украсени с ивици от врязани хоризонтални линии, а дъната са равни или върху ниско столче, подобно на това при стомните. Нито една кана не е изцяло глазирана, единствено при някои съдове са регистрирани петна и стечки от глазура (обр. 18: 6).

Стомните заслужават специално внимание. Могат да се разделят в няколко типа, които са приблизително с еднакви размери. Едни и същи форми съдове са произвеждани със и без глазурно покритие. Глазираните стомни представляват над 80 % от всички глазирани съдове, произвеждани в ателието. Голяма част от обработените материали е бракувана продукция с различни дефекти. Преобладаващият тип съдове е с височина около 40 см (обр. 19 – 20). Имат фуниевидно устие с диаметър 8 – 9 см, украсено отвън с 2 – 4 релефни хоризонтални ребра. Шията е конична и за нея се захваща една оребрена дръжка с елипсовидно сечение, която завършва върху плещите. Крушовидното тяло е силно издуто, с диаметър в долната третина на съда. Украсено е с няколко ивици от хоризонтално врязани линии. Дъното е равно, върху ниско столче, с диаметър 10 – 13 см (обр. 19: 11, обр. 20: 4). Възможно е някои кани да са имали по-издължени и по-цилиндрични тела (обр. 19: 9, 10, обр. 20: 1).

Стомните с две дръжки са с висока, тясна, цилиндрична шия с диаметър 3 – 4 см. Дръжките са закрепени по средата на шията. Налице са няколко различни типа според оформянето на устийния ръб (обр. 21: 1 – 4). Няма изцяло запазени съдове, вероятно телата са по-издължени и цилиндрични, подобни на бутилка (обр. 21: 5, 6). Плещите са украсени с различни врязани линии, които се комбинират помежду си и оформят по-сложни мотиви (обр. 21: 7, 8). Горната и долната част на тялото са покрити с релефни ребра, а пространството между тях е украсено с единични врязани вълнисти линии. Смятаме, че върху горната повърхност на дръжките на част от тези съдове е имало релефни пъпки, а в основата на дръжките, където се прикрепват за тялото – украса от врязани линии (обр. 21: 9).

Разни

Керноси. Три съвсем идентични извити тръбовидни фрагмента и едно малко парче (обр. 22) са оформяли кух пръстен с U-образно сечение. Поне на четири места по външната страна на стените е имало улеи за изливане на течности. От вътрешната страна на два от фрагментите има пъпковидни израстъци. Вероятно са стояли един срещу друг и са част от свързваща дръжка или пръчка. Горната плоска повърхност на предмета е покрита с нискокачествена глазура. Предметът е идентифициран като кернос.

Светилници. От разкопките на работилницата произлизат три различни по тип, но ясно различни светилника. Те имат дълго, оребрено цилиндрично тяло, върху което е разположено резервоарче, оградено с полусферична чашка. Два от светилниците са изцяло глазирани (обр. 23: 1, 3), а третият е неглазиран (обр. 23: 2).

Керамичната работилница, открита в околностите на антична Сердика, е единствена по рода си, тъй като до момента на територията на Балканския п-в и Югоизточна Европа не са документирани по археологически път други ателиета за производство на глазирана керамика от периода на втората половина на VI – началото на VII в. Значима е и поради факта, че в нея са произвеждани едновременно глазирани и неглазирани съдове, които после са били изпичани заедно в пещите. Един и същ тип съдове е произвеждан със и без глазурно покритие.

Произвеждани са съдове от различни категории, а сред тези от един и същи вид е имало значително разнообразие по отношение на оформянето на устията, което подсказва за едно по-голямо по мащаб производство. Всички групи съдове намират близки паралели сред такива, датирани в рамките

на IV – VI в. от знакови археологически обекти, разположени в централната част на Балканския п-в. Трябва да се отбележи, че по отношение на глазираната керамика паралелите са датирани основно в IV – началото на V в. и техните прототипи се намират в продукцията на панонските керамични ателиета. Тези паралели произлизат от обекти, разположени на териториите на днешните Западна България и Източна Сърбия. Разглежданата тук работилница се явява приемник на късноантичните традиции в производството на керамика и е пример за това как се осъществява преминаването на тази традиция в Ранното средновековие.

Ключови думи: ранновизантийски период, неглазирана керамика, глазирана керамика, местно производство, керамични пещи, бракувана продукция