

*K. Melamed, E. Evtimova*

## CHARACTERISTICS OF POTTERY FROM THE EASTERN RHODOPES, BULGARIA (6<sup>th</sup>—12<sup>th</sup> c.)

*Clay is shaped into a bowl  
But it is the empty space that makes it useful*

LAO TZU

*The paper presents the pottery from the 6<sup>th</sup>—12<sup>th</sup> c. obtained in the course of the archaeological excavations of the authors near the Sedlari village, about 4 km to the west from Momchilgrad, in the Eastern Rhodopes, on the broad terrace of the left west bank of Varbitsa River, the old Syutliyka, the right confluent of the Arda River.*

**Keywords:** *Eastern Rhodopes, pottery, talc, Slavs, Byzantium.*

The geographical location of the Rhodope Mountains determines to a great extent their importance as an isolated ethnocultural area. As early as the beginnings of the Prehistoric days, during the Middle Ages and also in the modern era people have used this area as a crossroad through which roads pass from Western Thrace to Asia Minor and from Moesia to the Aegean Sea. Their strategic position provokes a continuous striving to complete control over the intersecting roads and the fortresses that protect them. Along all the rest, this constant control prevents significant demographic changes for a very long period of time.

There is hardly a peak or significant height that has not been fortified. There are also numerous the open settlements located along the roads. The studies show that often the Prehistoric layers are covered by Thracian ones, later by Early Byzantine ones and finally by Bulgarian Medieval sites nearly to the mid—late of the 14<sup>th</sup> c.

The village of Sedlari is located about 4 km to the west from Momchilgrad, in the Eastern Rhodopes. Its fields with very sandy soil are lying over a broad terrace inclined to the left west bank of Varbitsa River, the old Syutliyka, the right confluent of the Arda River (fig. 1). The archaeological research on the terrace has nearly 35 years

history with some interruptions. The research began in 1982 by A. Raduncheva on the Prehistoric Tell and I. Shtereva on the Medieval horizon (Меламед 1996, с. 252, прим. 1; Щерева 1996). A Prehistoric horizon from the Neolithic and Copper Age has been revealed (Радунчева 1997) as well as cultural layers dating from the Bronze and Iron Ages (Нехризов, Иванов 2011), the Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages (discussed in the text). At certain sectors the cultural layer reaches about 3 m in depth registered by all the researchers cited above. The site is situated in the area of an important trade route from the interior territories, through the Makaza Pass reaching the Aegean Sea to the South, and to the North connected with the road along the Arda valley. Today the Dzhebel—Makaza road to Greece is running over the ancient path (fig. 2).

Here we present the pottery from the 6<sup>th</sup>—12<sup>th</sup> c. obtained in the course of the archaeological excavations of the authors. We have mainly fragments as whole shapes are almost missing. Even so, we will analyze the pottery from Sedlari and try to reconstruct the cultural and demographic processes running there grounded mostly on the pottery. Furthermore, it is one of the most reliable dating elements in the archaeological survey and can provide information on the culture, practices, and connections of the community producing and using it. The amount and types of pottery may also suggest the functions of the structures, the duration of habitation, interactions between separate communities etc.

### HANDMADE POTTERY (fig. 3)

Irina Shtereva was the first to publish fragments of pots made by hand or on a primitive pot-



Fig. 1. General view from the West over the fields of Sedlari

ter's wheel (Щерева 1996, с. 313, рис. 6; 7). They are small in number, found in a trench and not associated with a structure. According to her description, the fragments come from thick-walled pots made of clay containing a significant impurity of large quartz grains. Their roughly smoothed surface is decorated with incised uneven shallow wavy lines. Grounded on parallels, I. Shtereva is dating them «not later than the 8<sup>th</sup> c.». In her days the Early Medieval pottery in the Eastern Rhodopes was not well known and there was no basis for comparison or for conclusions.

The subsequent investigations in the fields of Sedlari allowed us to complete the collection of this group of pots, to make detailed observations on the composition of the clay and the technology of making them, to specify their date as well as the context of their appearance there.

The fig. 3 contains 17 fragments chosen to illustrate different parts of the pots. The number of pieces found so far is significantly higher. Whole shapes are missing. They appear in depth up to 1.40—1.50 m below the contemporary surface and in most of the cases together with a much greater number of fragments of Early Byzantine pottery made on a fast potter's wheel and covered with red slip.

The pots have been made of unpurified clay with a lot of inclusions of sand, large quartz grains, occasionally some mica and often talcum.

The inclusions of talc are first tested in the ceramic complex of Sedlari. The analyses belong to Dr. Zhivka Yanakieva-Nacheva from Earth and



Fig. 2. Probable bed of the road via Makaza Pass down to the Aegean seashore

Man National Museum in Sofia (the project is still in process). The employment of talc in the potter's soil enjoys a history much older than the

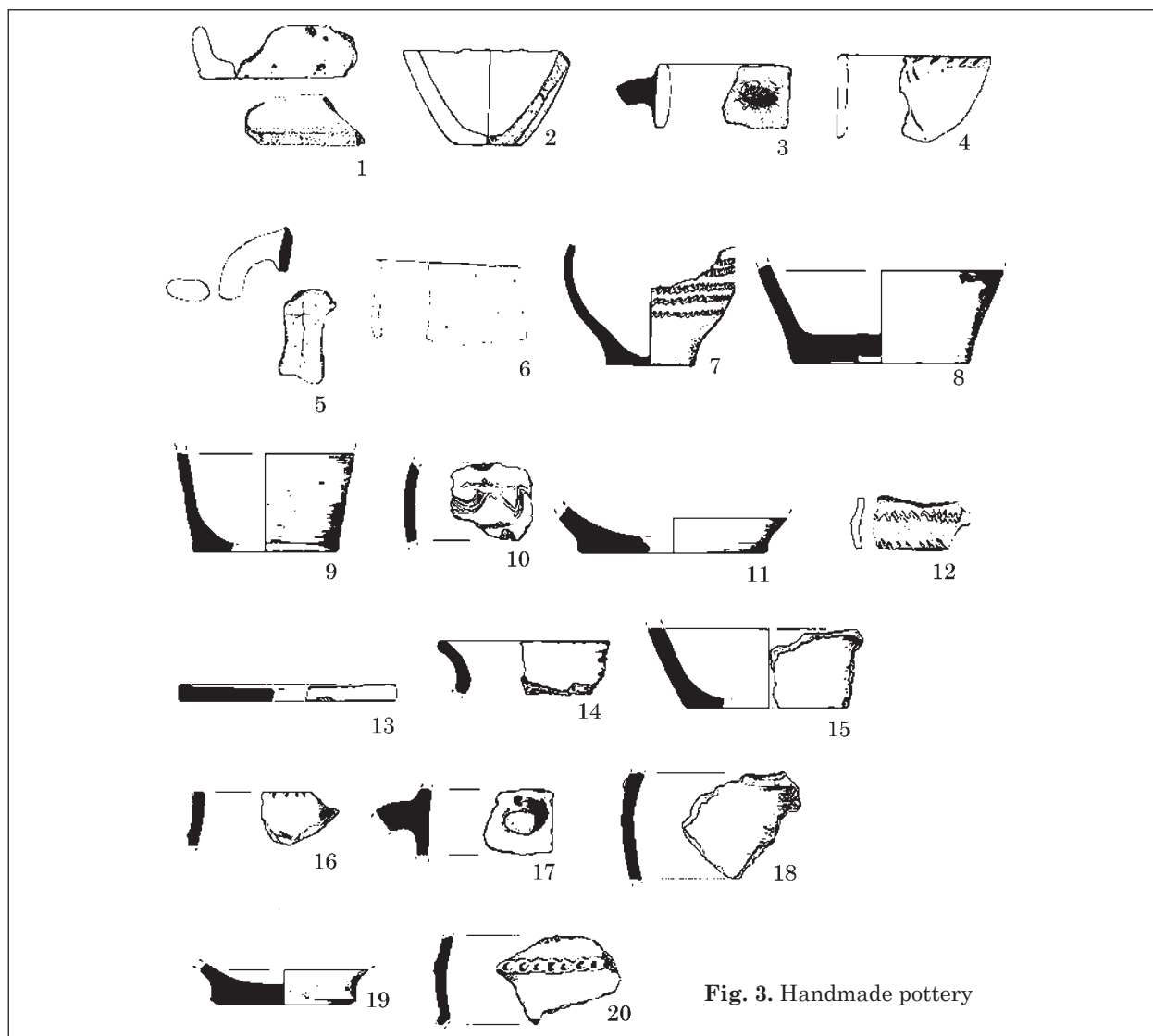


Fig. 3. Handmade pottery

Early Middle Ages and is a local practice. Except for Sedlari, the analyses include also fragments from Nova Mahala, Batak region in the Rhodopes and Shipotzko site in Bansko at the foot of the Pirin Mountains. For sure in Shipotzko, single vessels from the Rhodopes have been transported for used in a sanctuary (Меламед 2010, с. 588—589). The talc-containing clay for the vessels from Nova Mahala is different and most probably they were produced locally including thin-walled pots made on a fast potter's wheel in Late Antiquity shapes.

So far this practice has been ascertained in the Iron Age in Sedlari as well as in the Copper Age in the settlement in Varhari north of Sedlari, on the same river terrace (Бояджиєв, Бояджиєв 2012; the information we owe to Zh. Yanakieva). The pots containing talc have a greasy smooth surface and their relative weight is significantly greater. They are visibly different from the pottery without talc.

The raw material was most likely mined nearby. Five kilometers from Sedlari, to the left of the

road to Kardzhali there is a deposit of talco-magnesite, containing individual kernels of almost pure talc (very close to steatite). An abundant amount of talcum is to be found also in the region of Dzhebel station. It industrially mined there until 1989. In certain cases, the amount of talc in the potter's clay is so great that it gives reasons to consider steatite ceramics.

The employment of talc for making pots has a number of advantages. Talc is a very good homogenizer. Talco-magnesite improves the refractoriness of clay and increases its viscosity. The surface of the vessels remains smooth and does not require some additional work. The temperature for firing the pots is lower, less than 800 °C.

So far, the practice of adding talc to clay for making pots has been established only in the Rhodopes, in the area of Sedlari and Nova Mahala. Nor kilns neither workshops have been revealed. Concerning Sedlari, we have reasons to suggest a production to meet domestic needs. Nevertheless, the pottery on fast wheel from Nova Mahala implies also production for the market. The



fragments containing talc from Nova Mahala are smaller in number compared to the rest of the groups there. They are significantly thinner (walls up to 0.5 cm thick) and belong to pots with handles well known in the Late Antiquity. Nova Mahala pottery is dating from the late 4<sup>th</sup>—5<sup>th</sup> c. (Меламед 1993). The ceramic complex does not contain handmade vessels.

The question of the kind of the wooden base which some of the pots in Sedlari have been made on is also challenging. Usually, they are defined as handmade ware from the traces left by human fingers on the walls, the straight un-profiled rim of the mouth, the almost vertical silhouette of the vessel, and the unevenly thick walls from the bottom to the mouth as well as the bottom containing more than a single layer of clay. Sometimes suggestions have been made about a movable board that served as a base for coiling the pot. A very interesting and helpful work examines the technology for handmade pottery from the Late Iron Age (Ханджийска 2010, с. 236—238). The observations of the initial shaping the pot we can consider for a later period as well. Along all the rest, a movable board that allows rotation during work is also involved.

The bottom of pot 8 (fig. 3: 8; 4) provides still another detail of these boards which we can imagine as a primitive potter's wheel. Obviously there was a wooden knob of a cylindrical shape on the board and initially the clay was pressed tightly over it to form the pot. The knob left a round mark 3.5 cm in diameter and 2—3 mm deep. We can assume that this wooden base allowed rotation. The bottom itself is even although rather massive. We do not know yet a similar case from the territory of Bulgaria. The bottom in question displays the features of the Early Slavic pottery tradition and is dating from the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> c. The pot 7 in Table I (fig. 3: 7; 5) found next to it corresponds to the same time and tradition.

The clay composition of the pot with the round mark on the bottom includes talc (fig. 3: 8, 13; 4). This circumstance suggests that the pot is a local production and its master had time enough to acquire the talc technology. The Sedlari collection contains a number of 6<sup>th</sup> c. Slavic pottery fragments containing talc as well as fragments of flat earthen baking dishes (pods) (fig. 3—5).

However, still another group of fragments containing talc cannot be associated with the Early Slavic tradition. According to the technology of production we can date them from the 4<sup>th</sup>—6<sup>th</sup> c. We consciously define broad chronological limits as we have not yet enough database for comparison. These fragments often appear next to the Early Slavic pots. According to their shapes and decoration, they come very close to the pottery from the Late Iron Age. The fragments in question also come from pots of vertical silhouette, almost without shoulders, the un-profiled rim of the mouth, sometimes flattened mechanically



Fig. 4. Bottom of the Slavic pot with the mark of the knob on the supporting board



Fig. 5. Slavic pot, second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> c.

and often with handles of an oval section coming below the mouth. A Christian cross has been incised on one of these handles, also containing a plenty of talc (fig 3: 5). Some of the fragments have been decorated with relief bands attached to the body and pressed with fingers to shape small pits (fig 3: 20).

This group of handmade pots produced during the Late Antiquity Age but displaying features strongly reminding of the Late Iron Age manners is still poorly studied. In his work on the Early Byzantine pottery in Thrace and Dacia G. Kuzmanov pays attention to these conservative traditions (Кузманов 1985, с. 57). For their bearers, he points out to the local Thracian communities isolated mainly in the Rhodopian area and partly in the Balkan Mountains strongholds. The parallels we can refer to now also come from Bansko,

from the 4<sup>th</sup>—5<sup>th</sup> c. necropolis in Karagonsko site (Меламед 2014, рис. 2; 3). However, we need some more data for certain conclusions.

The group of pottery made by hand or on a primitive potter's wheel from Sedlari provokes some questions, as the answers require further studies.

1. How does a local tradition of including talc into the potter's soil survive from the Copper Age until the AD 6<sup>th</sup> c.? This circumstance suggests weak demographic changes over a very long period of time.

2. When the Slavs came to Sedlari? Their appearance does not allow many doubts about their movement from the territory of today's Greece via Makaza Pass known as early as the Neolithic (proven by Neolithic pottery imported from Greece). In any case, in the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> c. the Slavic potters already mastered the talc technology.

3. What are the features of the Late Antiquity pots displaying shapes and decorations close to the pottery from the Late Iron Age? We definitely need a lot more data to draw a complete picture.

#### LATE ANTIQUITY POTTERY (fig. 6)

The whole profiles and fragments of Late Antiquity vessels are the most numerous in the Sedlari collection. They appear over the entire ter-

rain although their concentration in the area of the houses is obvious. The fragments come from pots with or without handles, bowls, jars and amphorae. In the final stage of the study, when the bed of the road was already carved, a whole pithos was found in the embankment (fig. 7; 8).

All the vessels are produced on a fast potter's wheel out of well-purified light cream-coloured clay, rarely containing inclusions of fine sand and mica. They are well fired; the fracture is usually single layered.

The rims are profiled to varying degrees or represent a broad flat edge in most of the cases turned outwards.

The bottoms of the bowls and some of the pots are on pedestals, often shaped as rings.

Many of the fragments of pots have handles of an oval or round section, often ribbed. The handles come out of the mouth or slightly below it to terminate about the middle of the pot. The whole profile of a pot has an ear-like handle of an oval section, arranged at the upper part of the shoulders (fig. 6: 16; 9).

The walls of the vessels are smooth; there are not any incised patterns on the surviving fragments. In certain cases there is a relief band fixed at the upper part of the shoulders or below the mouth, occasionally pressed with fingers to shape small pits (fig. 6: 6).

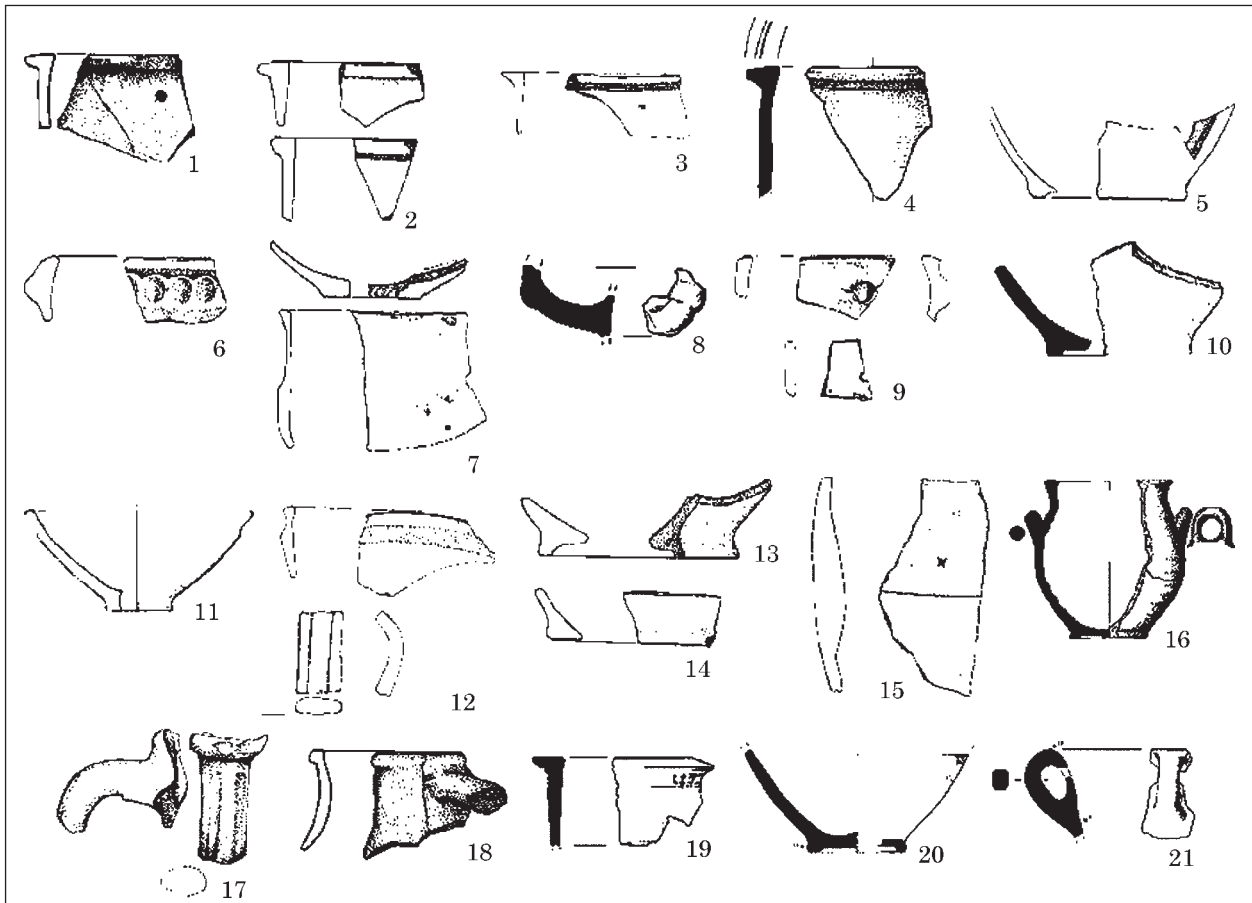


Fig. 6. Late Antiquity pottery





Fig. 7. Pithos, Early Byzantine Age



Fig. 8. Detail of the pithos: incised decoration on the mouth

The bowls are decorated mostly with red slip covering them entirely on both sides — now with different density due to the time and the fire destroying the village. The observations on numerous fragments coming from different parts of the vessel suggest that probably the bowls were dunked in the slip rather than brushed; the slip seems regularly covering the vessel including the outer side of the bottom and all the edges of the pedestal.

Beyond doubt the Late Antiquity pottery came as a result of mass production in workshops intended for the market.

A large number of the bowls belong to types VI and VII after G. Kuzmanov. The shapes are well known from the 3<sup>rd</sup>—4<sup>th</sup> c. preserved with some changes until the 6<sup>th</sup> c. (Кузманов 1985, с. 42).

#### POTTERY FROM THE 11<sup>th</sup> — 12<sup>th</sup> c. (fig. 10)

Fragments of vessels dating from the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup>—12<sup>th</sup> c. appear mainly in Sector South and in the pits. To the south they are connected with the scarce remains of stone construc-



Fig. 9. Early Byzantine pot, a fragment

tions as well as with a fireplace closeby. The field studies have found that the stone structures belong only to one or two small buildings, almost entirely destroyed today. As there are not any traces of a settlement around, most probably they served the large Christian necropolis lying north of them.

The fragments belong to vessels of various shapes and function — most of them to pots with or without handles, amphora-like pitchers, bowls, cups and a sieve. Some of the mouths have grooves to hold lids (fig. 10: 5; 11; 12).

The 11<sup>th</sup>—12<sup>th</sup> c. vessels are made mostly of purified clay occasionally containing inclusions of sand and usually mica in a different percentage. In some cases the mica is so much making the surface shining. Probably this effect has been deliberately sought to resemble the golden slip quite popular at that time. None of the surviving fragments contain talc.

The vessels are produced on a fast potter's wheel; their walls are fairly thin and evenly fired. Most probably they are also a production intended for the market, coming from one or two workshops in the area. Two of the bottoms bear relief signs (fig. 10: 19) — a surviving part of a circle and a cross. These signs are well known from the early medieval pottery mainly from the North-

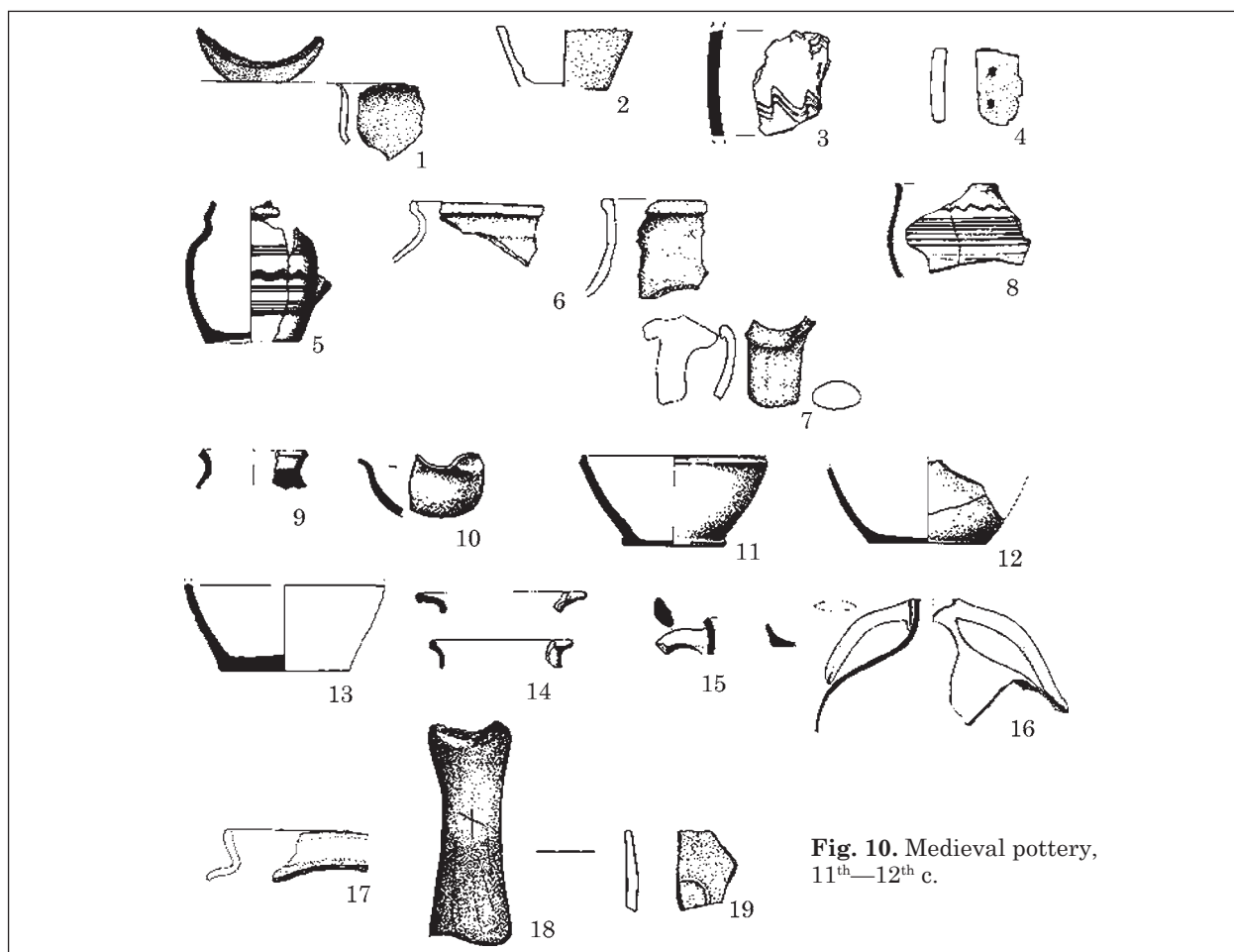


Fig. 10. Medieval pottery, 11<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> c.



Fig. 11. Pot, 12<sup>th</sup> c.

eastern Bulgaria (Аладжов 1991) associated with the Proto-Bulgarian tradition. Nevertheless, in Sedlari they appear for the first time so far south and so late in date.

The decoration represents bands of horizontal and wavy lines incised by means of a comb as well



Fig. 12. Pot, 12<sup>th</sup> c.



as golden slip. A cross has been incised on a massive handle (fig. 10: 18).

The ceramic collection from the 11<sup>th</sup>—12<sup>th</sup> c. from Sedlari known so far does not contain glazed or sgraffito-ware or fragments covered with raspberry — red lacquer known in the interior of Bulgaria and peculiar of the time. Only a small broken sgraffito — bowl makes an exception found in grave 7 in the necropolis. It seems possible to accept that the vessels have appeared there only in connection with the practices of the burials and the pits. On the territory of the site and on the river terrace in general there has never been a settlement of the same time.

In general, the types of the 11<sup>th</sup>—12<sup>th</sup> c. vessels from Sedlari do not differ much from the pottery well published and discussed from the same time to the South of the Balkan (Борисов 1997; Гатев 1985; Borisov 1989 etc.). The differences are mainly due to the personal skills of the potters rather than creation of radically new types.

**Conclusions.** Grounded on the pottery collection we can try to reconstruct the history of life in the fields of Sedlari along the left bank of Varbitsa River during the Antiquity and the Middle Ages.

From the strongly burnt fragments, the village of the Late Iron Age disappeared in fire. Nevertheless, its inhabitants had not left the region entirely having in mind that the tradition of making pots of clay mixed with talc and the preservation of some shapes and decoration patterns that would appear with the later local pottery. We have not enough data available for suggesting the development in the coming couple of centuries. The terrace requires further research; some sectors on it remained intact.

About the opening of the 5<sup>th</sup> c. AD the life was revived. Houses were built of wooden poles and wattle thickened with clay. The ovens were constructed of stones fixed with clay. They are rectangular in plan and covered with a vault. The pottery in use was various in shape and function, produced in workshops and intended for the market. The trading through the Makaza Pass was not fallen. The proof comes with numerous fragments of amphorae; unfortunately they are not large enough to reconstruct their shapes, to date them precisely and to associate them with production or trading centers. Possibly some of the bowls came also from the Aegean seashore.

At the same time they made also pots on a primitive potter's wheel, most likely in a local rural workshop. The clay contains talcum as in the past, and the shapes and decorations often resemble strongly the practices of the Late Iron Age.

About the mid 6<sup>th</sup> c. a community of Slavs came along the same road connecting the valley of Arda with the Aegean. We cannot even assume their relationship with the local people. In any case, they settled down in the village. Their presence there is clearly illustrated by their own pots — made by hand or on a movable board with

a knob for a better support while coiling them, in the well-known shapes and decoration other than the local pottery background. A certain proof of the circumstances running in a similar way is the presence of talc in the clay composition employed for the Slavic pots.

The village perished in a fire at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> — or the very beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> c. We do not know the reasons.

One of the versions on which we worked was the possibility that the Slavs had burned down the Late Antiquity village. However, we did not accept it for the numerous fragments of Slavic pots containing talc. Obviously they are a home production at the spot, dating from the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> c. Furthermore, they appear altogether with Late Antiquity fragments of vessels. After that time there is no evidence of life there over the centuries. There is no evidence the road was functioning either.

It seems possible to have some presence of population about the late 9<sup>th</sup>—10<sup>th</sup> c. associated with the road or a temporary settling down for a short time. This suggestion is grounded on a couple of fragments of pots of poor qualities made perhaps on a slow potter's wheel. We can add to them also the fragments dated by I. Shtereva to the same time. However, there are not any traces of houses on the investigated terrain or in its vicinity. The number of these fragments is very small to let us make a better picture.

The next sure traces of life in the fields of Sedlari are from about the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> c. A small stone stronghold and a church were constructed over the Prehistoric Tell (Шерева 1996, с. 309—312). The stronghold covers an area of 325 sq. m. No buildings were found inside it. On the grounds of ceramic fragments I. Shtereva supposed it was abandoned in the late of the 12<sup>th</sup> — early 13<sup>th</sup> c. This date coincides with both small houses we revealed below the Tell as well as with the large Christian necropolis and pit field to the North of the Tell. They were organized about the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> c. and abandoned in the early 13<sup>th</sup> c. (Melamed 1993, с. 24—25). Thus most probably both small houses and the fireplace nearby served the burial and commemorative practices. The stronghold served likely only in days of danger or as shelter for the cattle. The village has not been located yet.

So far the pit field remains the only one in the Medieval bibliography in Bulgaria. There are about 100 ritual pits within the limits of the necropolis. They contain pottery fragments the latest of which are dated being from the 12<sup>th</sup> c., stones (sometimes burnt), iron objects, animal bones and plenty of coal. The condition of the artifacts suggests home waste rather than still fit for use (Меламед 2013, с. 80—93).

After the 13<sup>th</sup> c. the terrace on the left bank of Varbitsa River was finally left. Only the road remains to now.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Аладжов, Ж. 1991. Проучвания върху старобългарските знаци. *Разкопки и проучвания*, XXII, с. 71-154.

Борисов, Б. 1997. Керамиката от средновековното селище край с. Гледачево. *Марица — Изток. Археологически проучвания*, 4, с. 129-183.

Бояджиев, Я., Бояджиев, К. 2012. Спасителни археологически разкопки на халколитно селище Върхари, община Момчилград. *Археологически открития и разкопки през 2011 г.*, с. 88-90.

Гатев, П. 1985. *Средновековно селище и некропол от XII в. край с. Ковачево, Пазарджишки окръг*. София: НИАМ БАН. Разкопки и проучвания, XII.

Кузманов, Г. 1985. *Ранновизантийска керамика от Тракия и Дакия (IV — началото на VII в.)*. София: НИАМ БАН. Разкопки и проучвания, XIII.

Меламед, К. 2014. Раннохристиянски некропол в Карагонско, Банско. *Археологически открития и разкопки през 2013 г.*, с. 562-564.

Меламед, К. 2013. Средновековни обредни ями от Седлари, Момчилградско. *Археология*, 2, с. 80-93.

Меламед, К. 2010. Раннохристиянска базилика, средновековно село и църква в Банско, м. Шипоцко. *Археологически открития и разкопки през 2009 г.*, с. 587-589.

Меламед, К. 1996. Ямите край село Седлари, Кърджалийско. *Годишник на Департамент Археология — НБУ*, II—III, с. 252-269.

Меламед, К. 1993. Свегилище и некропол до раннохристиянския манастир край с. Нова махала, Баташко. *Археология*, 2, с. 36-46.

Нехризов, Г., Иванов, Г. 2011. Селище от ранната бронзова епоха при с. Седлари, махала Градинка, община Момчилград. *Археологически открития и разкопки през 2010 г.*, с. 110-113.

Радунчева, А. 1997. Енеолитен занаятчийски производствен център до с. Седлари, Кърджалийско. *Годишник на Националния археологически музей*, 10, с. 162-177.

Ханджийска, В. 2010. Технологични характеристики на керамиката на ръка от Тракия през късножелязната епоха. Производствени етапи. *Studia Archaeologica Universitatis Serdicensis*, V: Stephanos Archaeologos, с. 229-250.

Щерева, И. 1996. Средновековни паметници от района на Момчилград. *Годишник на Департамент Археология — НБУ*, II—III, с. 307-322.

Borisov, B. 1989. *Djadovo*. Tokyo: Tokai University Press, 1: Medieval Settlement and Necropolis.

Melamed, K. 1993. *Mittelalterliche Bestattungssitten in den Rhodopen. Beiträge zur Mittelalterarchäologie in Österreich*, 9, 1993, p. 32-39.

## REFERENCES

Aladzov, Zh. 1991. Prouchvaniya v'ruhu starob'lgarskite znatsi. *Razkopki i prouchvaniya*, XXII, с. 71-154.

Borisov, B. 1997. Keramikata ot srednekovnoto selische kray s. Gledachevo. *Mariitsa — Iztok. Archeologicheski prouchvaniya*, 4, с. 129-183.

Boyadzhiev, Ya., Boyadzhiev, K. 2012. Spasitelni archeologicheski razkopki na halkolitno selische V'rhari, obschina Momchilgrad. *Archeologicheski otkritiya i razkopki prez 2011 g.*, с. 88-90.

Gatev, P. 1985. *Srednekovno selische i nekropol ot XII v. kray s. Kovachevo, Pazardzhishki okr'g*. Sofia: NIAM BAN. Razkopki i prouchvaniya, XII.

Kuzmanov, G. 1985. *Rannovizantiyska keramika ot Trakiya i Dakiya (IV — nachaloto na VII v.)*. Sofia: NIAM BAN. Razkopki i prouchvaniya, XIII.

Melamed, K. 2014. Rannohristiyanski nekropol v Kara-gonsko, Bansko. *Archeologicheski otkritiya i razkopki prez 2013 g.*, с. 562-564.

Melamed, K. 2013. Srednekovni obredni yami ot Sedlari, Momchilgradsko. *Arheologiya*, 2, с. 80-93.

Melamed, K. 2010. Rannohristiyanska bazilika, srednekovno selo i ts'rkva v Bansko, m. Shipotsko. *Archeologicheski otkritiya i razkopki prez 2009 g.*, с. 587-589.

Melamed, K. 1993. Svetilische i nekropol do rannohristiyanskiya manastir kray s. Nova mahala, Batashko. *Arheologiya*, 2, с. 36-46.

Nehrizov, G., Ivanov, G. 2012. Selysche ot ranniata bronzova epoha pry s. Sedlari, mahala Gradinka, obschyna Momchilgrad. *Archeologicheski otkritiya i razkopki prez 2010 g.*, с. 110-113.

Raduncheva, A. 1997. Eneoliten zanaiatchyiski proizvodstven tsestr do s. Sedlari, Krdzhaliysko. *Godishnik na Natsionalniya archeologicheski muzey*, 10, с. 162-177.

Handzhyska, V. 2010. Tehnologichni karakteristiki na keramikata na r'ka ot Trakiya prez k'snozhelezaznata epoha. Proizvodstveni etapi. *Studia Archaeologica Universitatis Serdicensis*, V: Stephanos Archaeologos, с. 229-250.

Schereva, I. 1996. Srednekovni pametnitsi ot rayona na Momchilgrad. *Godishnik na Departament Arheologiya — NBU*, II—III, с. 307-322.

Borisov, B. 1989. *Djadovo*. Tokyo: Tokai University Press, 1: Medieval Settlement and Necropolis.

Melamed, K. 1993. *Mittelalterliche Bestattungssitten in den Rhodopen. Beiträge zur Mittelalterarchäologie in Österreich*, 9, 1993, p. 32-39.

К. Меламед, Е. Евтімова

## ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКА КЕРАМІКИ ЗІ СХІДНИХ РОДОПІВ, БОЛГАРІЯ (VI—XII ст.)

У роботі представлені керамічні вироби VI—XII ст., отримані в ході археологічних розкопок авторів біля села Седлари, що знаходиться на відстані близько 4 км на захід від м. Момчилград, в Східних Родопях. Пам'ятка розташована на широкій терасі лівого берега р. Варбіца (Сютлінка), правої притоки р. Арда. Серед кераміки — ліпні вироби ранньовізантійського часу зі значною домішкою жорстви тальку в глиняному тісті, який покращував вогнетривкість глини і підвищував її в'язкість. Також досить масова та різноманітна пізньоантична гончарна кераміка місцевого та імпортованого походження. Уламки виробів XI—XII ст. зустрічаються значно рідше. Їх знахідки пов'язані, ймовірно, з функціонуванням тут синхронного некрополю.

**Ключові слова:** Східні Родопи, кераміка, тальк, слов'яни, Візантія.

Одержано 11.05.2018

**ЕВТИМОВА Емілія**, археолог, відділ середньовіччя, Національний інститут археології та музеїв, Академія наук Болгарії, ул. Саборна 2, Софія, 1000, Болгарія, [ema\\_ev@abv.bg](mailto:ema_ev@abv.bg).

**ЕВТИМОВА Emilia**, archaeologist, Medieval Department, National Institute of Archaeology with Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, ul. Saborna 2, Sofia, 1000, Bulgaria, [ema\\_ev@abv.bg](mailto:ema_ev@abv.bg).

**МЕЛАМЕД Катя**, PhD, незалежний дослідник, [katjamelamed@yahoo.com](mailto:katjamelamed@yahoo.com).

**MELAMED Katya**, PhD, independent scholar, [katjamelamed@yahoo.com](mailto:katjamelamed@yahoo.com).