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## LEAD-GLAZED POTTERY IN THE LOWER MOESIA AND THRACE PROVINCES IN THE PERIOD 1<sup>ST</sup>–5<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AD

*The study of lead-glazed pottery from Moesia and Thrace permits to define three groups: The first is from the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, the second is the pottery from the 2<sup>nd</sup> – first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD and the third group is from the last quarter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> – beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD. With the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century the local, provincial production of the lead-glazed pottery in the region started. The variety of the shapes of this pottery is limited as compared to the Red Slip Ware from the same period. During the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD the technology of the lead-glazed pottery changed. The production of the Roman lead-glazed pottery in the eastern part of the Balkan peninsula came to a halt at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD.*

Glazed pottery is one of the groups of fine pottery from the Roman period. The technology of lead-glazed earthenware developed intensive in Asia Minor during the Hellenistic period and was spread both in the Eastern and Western Roman provinces<sup>1</sup>. Glazed pottery is a part of the repertoire of pottery in the provinces of Lower Moesia and Thrace from the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD to the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD. The assemblages used to study this pottery come from the territory of today's Bulgaria. This means that the most Eastern part of the Upper Moesia province is also included. For glazed pottery from the most recently mentioned province there was a published monograph<sup>2</sup>, which is the only one related to the Roman Balkan provinces.

The general systematization of glazed pottery from the said Roman provinces comprises three groups: the first group – glazed pottery from the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD and until the end of the ruling of Emperor Trajan (97–117); the second group – glazed pottery from the 2<sup>nd</sup>–mid of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD and the third group – the Late Roman glazed pottery from the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century–the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD. The pottery complexes from which the groups of glazed ceramics from the Roman period in the studied region have been obtained from are few. Subject to such studies are the earthenware from the ancient city *Ulpia Oescus* (near Gigen village, District of Pleven) as well as those from the *Castra Martis* castle (Kula, District of Vidin)<sup>3</sup>.

### First group

The published finds of pottery from this group are from the region of the Lower Danube *limes*, the Western Black Sea region as well as the most Southern part of Ancient Thrace. These are mainly bowls, cups and small jugs. The clay from which they are made is fine, very light, and almost white. The glazing is green to yellow-green. Their decoration consists of engraved lines or strips, raised ornaments as well as ornaments made by the barbotine method. Finds of glazed pottery are found in the camp of the *V Macedonian* Legion in *Oescus*, as well as in *Novae* – the camp of the *I Italic* legion<sup>4</sup>. The studied glazed pottery was imported and was made in pottery centres for fine pottery in Northern Italy in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD<sup>5</sup>. Glazed pottery from the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD was distributed in Gaul, *Vindonissa* in Switzerland, *Novaesium*, Haltern, Cologne as well as in Britain<sup>6</sup>. These finds from Western Roman regions, as well as the glazed Gaulish pottery raise the question about the production and distribution of this group of fine pottery in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD in the Roman provinces<sup>7</sup>. The large-size glazed pottery from the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD is less common. It includes some jugs, fragments of which were found in *Oescus*<sup>8</sup>. These glazed pottery pieces have funnel-shaped mouths and one or two handles. Their walls are thin. They are made of fine, almost white clay. The pottery is glazed only on the outside. It has a grass-green colour (**fig. 1**). As to the properties of the clay and the glazing, the jugs do not differ much from the thin-walled small bowls, fragments of which are found in *Oescus* and it is probable that they were imported from the Italian pottery workshops<sup>9</sup>. Some

<sup>1</sup> GABELMANN 1974, 260–307; HOCHULI-GYSEL 1977, 13–16, with lit.; HAYES 1997, 64–66; DE LUCA 2000, 129–146; CVJETIČANIN 2001, 83 with lit.

<sup>2</sup> CVJETIČANIN 2001, 83–137.

<sup>3</sup> KABAKCHIEVA 1994, 273–279; KABAKCHIEVA 2000, 60; 71 Pl. 14,52; KUZMANOV 2005, 128–180.

<sup>4</sup> KABAKCHIEVA 2000, 60 Pl. 14,52; GENCHEVA 2002, 27 tabl. 2,5–7.

<sup>5</sup> HOCHULI-GYSEL 1977, 137–142; GABELMANN 1974, 260–307; MACCABRUNI 1985, 16–30.

<sup>6</sup> DESBAT 1995, 39–48; VON SCHNURBEIN 1974, 85–88; ETTLINGER/SIMONETT 1952, 31; GREENE 1979, 101–105; SWAN 1988, 17 pl. 3–4.

<sup>7</sup> HOCHULI-GYSEL 1977, 143–144.

<sup>8</sup> KABAKCHIEVA 1995, 274 Abb. 1,1.

<sup>9</sup> MACCABRUNI 1986, 16–30; MACCABRUNI 1995 49–61; MARTIN 1995, 64



**Fig. 1.** Lead-glazed pottery from *Oescus* ( Lower Moesia), 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.



**Fig. 2.** Bowl from *Odessos*, 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.



**Fig. 3.** Fragment of bowl with appliqué of Dionysus mask from *Odessos* (Varna).

crater-like pots belong to the larger forms of glazed pottery from *Oescus*<sup>10</sup>. Their walls are thick, and the profiled edge of the mouth is decorated with S-shaped ornament. The crater-like pots look like some of the Eastern Roman fine pottery, and were probably produced in some of the pottery centres in *Asia Minor*<sup>11</sup> from where they were supplied to meet the needs of officers and soldiers from the Roman army accommodated in the region of the Lower Danube.

Another example of exhibits with a larger size among the early Roman glazed pottery are the finds from the ancient town of *Odessos* (today's Varna) on the western coast of the Black Sea<sup>12</sup>. Unlike the glazed pottery from the military camps of the Lower Danube limes, the pots from *Odessos* and the western Black Sea coast were imported only from *Smyrna* in *Asia Minor*<sup>13</sup>. They include bowls and cups/skyphoi – shapes known from the fine pottery with relief decoration, which originated from the Pergamon region. The bowls are on high, shaped feet (**fig. 2**) and belong to Loeschcke type 10 for the eastern terra sigillata of Çandarlı<sup>14</sup>. Bowls and skyphoi were made in moulds. The decoration of both bowls and skyphoi ends on their top with poorly made ovolos (**figs. 3–4**). The raised decoration depicts figures, plants, etc. These are mythological characters and symbols connected with the God Dionysus. Figures and masks of Dionysus are shown, as well as satyrs, Sileni, Eros, magic boxes, palm sticks, etc. This raises the question about the function of the vessels, which were probably used for different religious rituals. The basic lead glazing is brown or olive green and the raised images are covered with yellow lead glazing. Thus the raised images are better outlined against the darker background. Through morphological and technological indicators, the pots from *Odessos* may be identified as *Smyrna* products from the period 50 BC–50 AD<sup>15</sup>. The finds from *Odessos* were found in a grave<sup>16</sup>. One recently found piece from the latest explorations of the necropolis of *Apolonia Pontica* (Sozopol)<sup>17</sup> looks like the one found in *Odessos*. It was a bowl and also made in a mould and has raised decoration of Dionysus masks and two crossed thyrsus (**fig. 5**). The masks of Dionysus on the two bowls from *Odessos* and *Apolonia* are so close by style and shape that it may be presumed that they were made in one workshop. In the region of the Black Sea were found more similar vessels. They are from Tomi (*Constanza*, Rumania) and *Olbia* in the north part of the Black Sea region<sup>18</sup>. All of these examples show that the ceramic workshops of *Smyrna* and the region of Pergamon developed trading connections between *Asia Minor* and Black Sea region<sup>19</sup>.

Another lead-glazed item with raised decoration was found by chance at the mouth of *Hebros* river (today's *Maritsa*) near the ancient town *Enos*. It is in the shape of 'mo-

fig. 6,1.

<sup>10</sup> KABAKCHIEVA 1995, 273–274 Abb. 1,4)

<sup>11</sup> HOCHULI-GYSEL 1977, 82–90; SCHÄFER 1968, 116–118.

<sup>12</sup> TONCHEVA 1961, 33–341 pl. 4,24; 5,25.

<sup>13</sup> HOCHULI-GYSEL 1977, 143–144.

<sup>14</sup> LOESCHCKE 1912, 366 Taf. 28 Typ 10.

<sup>15</sup> HOCHULI-GZSEL 1977, 23.

<sup>16</sup> TONCHEVA 1961, 33–34 pl. 4,24.

<sup>17</sup> I express my gratitude to Dr. Teodora Bogdanova and the team who provided to me information about the recently found glazed vessel (year 2016) from the necropolis of *Apolonia Pontica*.

<sup>18</sup> BUCOVALA 1968, 285–289 fig. 14–15; MARČENKO 1971, 21–32.

<sup>19</sup> HOCHULI-GYSEL 1977, p.123, Abb. 33.

*diolus*’ or *calathos* and was made by the techniques of terra sigillata. The vessel is decorated with raised skeletons<sup>20</sup>. It is thin-walled and made of fine, almost white clay. The walls are covered with grass green glazing. The shape is a *calathos* and is dated from 1<sup>st</sup> century BC–1<sup>st</sup> century AD. This vessel was made in a pottery workshop in *Smyrna*, near Pergamon or the western part of *Asia Minor* and was imported into the lands near the mouth of *Hebros* river. The shape and decoration repeat almost in full some of the silver items from the famous Boscoreale treasure in Italy, which contributes to the dating of the tall cup from southern Thrace<sup>21</sup>. The imitation of shapes from the ancient toreutics in lead-glazed pottery is typical for the whole group from *Asia Minor*<sup>22</sup>.

## Second group

This is the glazed pottery from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century to the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. During this period lead-glazed pottery was produced in different regions of the provinces of Lower Moesia and Thrace. In Lower Moesia this production was proven by finds from *Ulpia Oescus*, *Novae*, *Durostorum*<sup>23</sup>. The variety of shapes of the pots increases. They include dishes, bowls, cups, jugs, jars, and less commonly lamps. The clay of the glazed ware from the Lower Danube settlements is very fine, almost very light. The colour of the glazing ranges from light yellow to olive green and brown (figs. 6–7). Many of the glazed wares from this group are decorated with plants and motifs made by the barbotine method. Some of the vessels have appliqué decoration. In recent years, the number of finds of glazed pots from the archaeological explorations in *Ulpia Oescus* has continuously increased<sup>24</sup>. Their decoration is varied but the raised motifs prevail, and these are made by the barbotine method as geometrical motifs. The latest archaeological explorations in the ancient production centre near Pavlikeni (Northern Bulgaria) found fragments of glazed cups, with yellow and brown glazing<sup>25</sup>. They do not differ as to shape and decoration from the cups from *Oescus* where it is likely they were produced<sup>26</sup>. In grave 43 from the ancient necropolis of *Dionysopolis* (Balchik) from the Roman period a whole jug was found – an *oenochoe* –, which is glazed in dark green colour<sup>27</sup>. The jug is decorated with repeated leaf-shaped and pearl ornaments made by the barbotine method. It is probable that this jug was made in a pottery workshop in the province of Lower Moesia because its decoration is very similar to the vessels from *Oescus* and *Durostorum*<sup>28</sup>.



Fig. 4. Skyphos found in *Odessos* (Varna), 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.



Fig. 5. Bowl with Dionysus mask from *Apolonia Pontica*, 1<sup>st</sup> century AD

From the eastern part of the province of Thrace only a few examples of glazed pottery from the second group. are known. One find of a glazed jug (fig. 8) from the region of the ancient town *Augusta Trajana* (Stara Zagora)<sup>29</sup> shows how the local pottery workshops produced glazed pots from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> century, as well. Naturally, such production was limited and therefore pots often had special functions – for religious rituals. The jug from the territory of *Augusta Trajana* is kept in the National Museum of Archaeology in Sofia. It is tall and repeats the shape of bronze jugs from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD<sup>30</sup>. The clay from which the pot is made is fine, beige brown, and the glazing is yellow-brown. This pot is decorated with images of Dionysus and Heracles as well as with satyrs, Sileni, maenads. It is a proof of the parallel production of the same shapes in bronze, glass and clay during the Roman

<sup>20</sup> ZAHN 1923, 1–22 fig. 2 Pl. 1–2; HOCHULI-GYSEL 1977, 130.

<sup>21</sup> STEFANI 2006, 186–187 cat. 287–288.

<sup>22</sup> DE LUCA 2000, 142 note 85.

<sup>23</sup> KABAKCHIEVA 1995, 273–276; about *Novae*: information of the researcher assoc. Prof. Pavlina Vladkova; about *Durostorum*: MUȘTEANU 1993, 231–244.

<sup>24</sup> Inventar No. 24; 37; 56; 86; 113; 139 a-b; 251; 331; 332; 385; 386; 405; 430; 523 from year 2000; 87; 97; 104; 113; 130 a-b; 137; 162; 163; 175; 206 from year 2002; Inv.No.153/2003.

<sup>25</sup> For this unpublished information I thank the researcher assoc. Prof. P.Vladkova.

<sup>26</sup> KABAKCHIEVA 1995, 273–276.

<sup>27</sup> Unpublished information from the researcher M. Dimitrov.

<sup>28</sup> KABAKCHIEVA 1995, 274–275; MUȘTEANU 1993, 231–244 and unpublished information from the museum in Silistra.

<sup>29</sup> KABAKCHIEVA 1994, 79–86.

<sup>30</sup> KABAKCHIEVA 1994, 82–83; NENOVA-MERDJANOVA 2008, 28–37.



**Fig. 6.** Fragments of glazed vessels produced in the province Lower Moesia (*Oescus*), 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.



**Fig. 7.** Fragments of vessels with lead-glaze and without glaze, Lower Moesia.



**Fig. 8.** Glazed jug from the region of *Augusta Trajana* (Stara Zagora), province Thrace, 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

period<sup>31</sup> In the western part of the Thrace, i.e. in the settlements along the valley of Struma river, a higher number of glazed pots from the second group were registered. They are from *Pautalia* (Kyustendil) and the territory of the ancient

town<sup>32</sup>. During the rescue excavations in Kyustendil a part of a jug with green-yellow glazing was found. At the base of the handle an appliqué head of Dionysus is preserved, which shows again that most of the glazed pots in that period were reproductions of the metal vessels from the Roman period. The size of the handle, as well as the wall thickness (0.3–0.4 cm), give cause to identify this jug as a small one. It can be supposed that this jug was made in a potter's workshop in the ancient town of *Pautalia*.

Such comment is also possible for a glazed *kernos* found in an ancient grave in the region of the town of Rila (within the territory of ancient *Pautalia*) (fig. 9). This pot is kept in the National Museum of History in Sofia<sup>33</sup>. In shape it resembles a square tray, which has small cups without handles on each corner. The inner side of the pot is covered with different ornaments and motifs. A raised medallion in the middle of the bottom has a central position in the decoration, with an image of the goddess of fate from the Greek-Roman pantheon, Fortuna/Tyche. The clay from which the pot is made is fine, red-brown and the glazing is yellow-green to dark green. The pot is dated from the period of the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.

Finds of glazed pottery are also available in the region of the upper and middle course of the Struma River, in the western part of Thrace<sup>34</sup>. The latest archaeological explorations of the ancient town *Heraclea Sintica* (near the town of Petrich, Bulgaria) in recent years found new vessel fragments with raised figural decorations, as well as terracotta, masks, medallions and votive plates<sup>35</sup> (fig. 10a–c). During these excavations not only whole and fragmented terracotta objects – statuettes, busts, masks, plates – were found, but also the remains of the pottery workshop. Moulds were also found. This points to a development of a specialized pottery production in *Heraclea Sintica* during the period of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century–first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD<sup>36</sup>. *Heraclea Sintica*

<sup>31</sup> VICKERS, IMPEY, ALLAN 1986, 4; KABAKCHIEVA 1994, 79–86; MARTIN 1995, 64–68.

<sup>32</sup> Unpublished finds from the Regional Museum of History in Kyustendil.

<sup>33</sup> LAZOV 2002, 40–45.

<sup>34</sup> МИЛЧЕВ 1959, 67–73.

<sup>35</sup> VAGALINSKI/CHOLAKOV 2008, 384–386; VAGALINSKI 2015, 89–97.

<sup>36</sup> CHOLAKOV 2008, 55–76; CHOLAKOV 2015, 126–130; NEYKOVA 2015,

is the first such production centre in the province of Thrace for the special pottery (votive objects) from the Roman period, which has been published. The images on this pottery are of the circle of Dionysus, as Gods Heracles, Artemis and Thracian horseman. In many cases the appliquéés of the decoration are of light lead-glaze above brown or dark green. These can be connected to the glazed wares from *Smyrna* and the Pergamon region in *Asia Minor*<sup>37</sup>. But there is still the question of how the techniques of the early Roman pottery production from the *Asia Minor* ceramic centres were preserved until the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.

The workshops of *Heraclea Sintica* produced also glazed wares and lamps<sup>38</sup>. The production of that pottery centre was distributed not only in the town and its vicinity but also in other parts of the valley of the River Struma. Some finds of glazed pottery from the explorations of the ancient town underneath today's Sandanski (South-western Bulgaria) prove this<sup>39</sup>. The shapes are bowls, jugs and pitchers. The clay from which they are made, as well as the glazing, do not differ from those known from *Heraclea Sintica*.

Some finds of glazed theatrical masks of Dionysus from the Museum in Blagoevgrad (South-Western Bulgaria) were also produced in the workshops of the ancient town of *Heraclea Sintica* in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. As to style these masks are similar to those from the appliquéés of glazed pottery from *Asia Minor*<sup>40</sup>. In the central part of the diocese of Thrace and the province of Thrace, the finds of glazed pottery are still few. This provides important information about its production and distribution in the eastern parts of the Balkans during the late Roman period as well as for the masters of this pottery technology.

As to shape, decoration and technological signs, the glazed pottery from the second group is very similar to finds from the region of *Viminatum-Margum* in Upper Moesia<sup>41</sup>. In this region a more expanded zone of production and distribution can be identified, which encompasses the lands to the south of the Danube River, from the province of *Pannonia* to the eastern part of Lower Moesia. Of course, glazed pottery was also produced to the north of the Lower Danube in *Dacia* during the period of the 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century<sup>42</sup>. Concerning the colour of the clay and the colour range of glazes, the wares from *Dacia* differ from the finds of glazed pottery from the 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century in the provinces of Lower Moesia and Thrace.

### Third group

Glazed pottery from this group dates from the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century to the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD. It is identified as autonomous because it differs from the second group as to shape, qualities of clay and glazing. Glazed pots from the late Roman period are the most numerous and most widely distributed within the explored provinces. The



Fig. 9. Cult vessel (*kernos*) from western part of the province Thrace, first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.

clay is very well purified, with a brick red or grey colour. It is rougher than the clay of the glazed pots from the second group. The glazes are also different and their colour is orange-yellow, brown-red or dark green (fig. 11). As to shape the pots are comparable to those from the group of varnished pottery from the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century; however, the variety of shapes in the glazed variant is more limited. G. Kuzmanov<sup>43</sup> has published a few works about that group, one of which summarizes the finds from the provinces of the dioceses of Thrace and *Dacia*. From all specified sites and regions of the dioceses of *Dacia* and Thrace, the glazed pottery of the third group from the military fort and *quadriburgium* of *Castra Martis* (the town of Kula, District of Vidin) is the best explored. In this pottery complex, there is a great variety of shapes<sup>44</sup>. The quantity of glazed pottery (kitchenware and tableware) from *Castra Martis* is about 33% of the total number of the earthenware that was found there. In *Castra Martis* numerous pots with spouts were found<sup>45</sup>. These pots are specific to the production of glazed pottery in late Roman *Pannonia* and are widely distributed there<sup>46</sup> in contrast to the finds in the provinces of the diocese of Thrace, where few pots with this shape were found.

The repertoire of the late Roman glazed pottery includes the following pots: dishes, bowls, cups, small and larger *mortaria*, jugs, pitchers, votive plates, clay lamps. Of all these shapes, cups are the least distributed from this group. The production of glazed pottery from this group is concentrated mainly in the potter's workshops of the military camps and settlements along the Lower Danube. Based on the finds from *Ratiaria*, *Castra Martis*, *Oescus*, *Dimum*, *Iatrus*, *Storgosia* (Pleven), *Sadovec*, the Fortress of Lovech, *Montana*<sup>47</sup>

156–167.

<sup>37</sup> HOCHULI-GYSEL 1977, 123.

<sup>38</sup> MILCHEV 1960, 387–393 Abb. 20 Taf. 23.

<sup>39</sup> IVANOV/SERAFIMOVA/NIKOLOV 1969, 176–177 Abb. 58–59.

<sup>40</sup> HOCHULI-GYSEL 1977, 130–131.

<sup>41</sup> IVANIŠEVIĆ/NIKOLIĆ-DORĐEVIĆ 1997, 112–113 fig. 42; CVJETIČANIĆ 2001, 124–125.

<sup>42</sup> GUDEA 1990, 155–169; GUDEA 1995, 115–120; BOLINDET 1995, 147–154.

<sup>43</sup> KUZMANOV 1987, 112–113 pl. 24,5–7; 25,9–10; KUZMANOV 1998, 81–95; KUZMANOV 2005, 128–130; 152–153.

<sup>44</sup> KUZMANOV 2000, 225–234.

<sup>45</sup> KUZMANOV 2005, 142 tabl. 21, 141–143.

<sup>46</sup> BONIS 1991, 87–150; BRUKNER 1981, 154–156; GASSNER 1991, 157–172; BJELAJAC 1995, 33–38.

<sup>47</sup> KUZMANOV 1987, 111–118; KUZMANOV 2005, 128–181; KABAKCHIEVA



**Fig. 10. a–c** Lead-glazed terracottas from the workshop in *Heraclea Sintica*, Province Thrace, 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. – **a.** Mask of Dionysus, height 13 cm; mask of Silen, height 14.7 cm; theater mask, height 24.5 cm (after NEYKOVA 2015).



**Fig. 11.** Fragments of glazed vessels from the late Roman period from the province *Moesia*, 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> century AD.

it may be concluded that the late Roman glazed pottery was produced mainly on the lands of the late Roman provinces of *Dacia Ripensis*, *Dacia Mediterranea* and more rarely in the province of *Moesia Secunda* or *Scythia Minor*. The potters' workshops were probably numerous but smaller, as to size and capabilities for the production of glazed pottery. Its volume in the common register of ancient pottery increases significantly on account of its quality. The finds of late Roman glazed pottery from the territory of North-eastern Bulgaria

prove that the technology of glazed pottery was applied in the pottery production in these lands in the late Roman period.

In this phase of the study of ancient glazed pottery, we only have data about potters' workshops and kilns from the late Roman period. One potter's workshop and kilns for late Roman glazed pottery is registered in the territory of the ancient town of *Montana* (Montana, North-western Bulgaria)<sup>48</sup>. In the workshop bowls, jugs and pitchers were made as well as lamps. As to their characteristics, the pottery from this potter's workshop is very similar to the glazed pots found in *Castra Martis*. In the region of *Odessos* (Varna) traces were found of another potter's workshop, where glazed lamps from the late Roman period were made<sup>49</sup>. Attempts for such production were also established in the ancient town of *Marcianopolis* (the capital city of the province of *Moesia Secunda*), but they were probably unsuccessful. During rescue excavations near a potter's kilns rejected pots with glazing were found<sup>50</sup>.

The products of the smaller workshops from the late Roman period covered the needs of smaller regions. Glazed pottery from the late Roman period in the explored region is similar to the 'Pannonian glazed pottery' as it is known in the archaeological literature<sup>51</sup>, as well as the pottery that was made in the lands to the north of the Lower Danube (the former province of *Dacia*)<sup>52</sup>. According to T. Cvjetićanin the users of the late Roman glazed pottery were mainly soldiers and officers from Roman troops dislocated in the regions to the south of the Lower Danube<sup>53</sup>. This conclusion is confirmed by the late Roman glazed pottery from the provinces *Dacia Ripensis*, *Dacia Mediterranea* and the provinces of the diocese of Thrace, but only at the beginning of the third

<sup>48</sup> ALEXANDROV 1983, 54–61.

<sup>49</sup> MINCHEV 2008, 496–501.

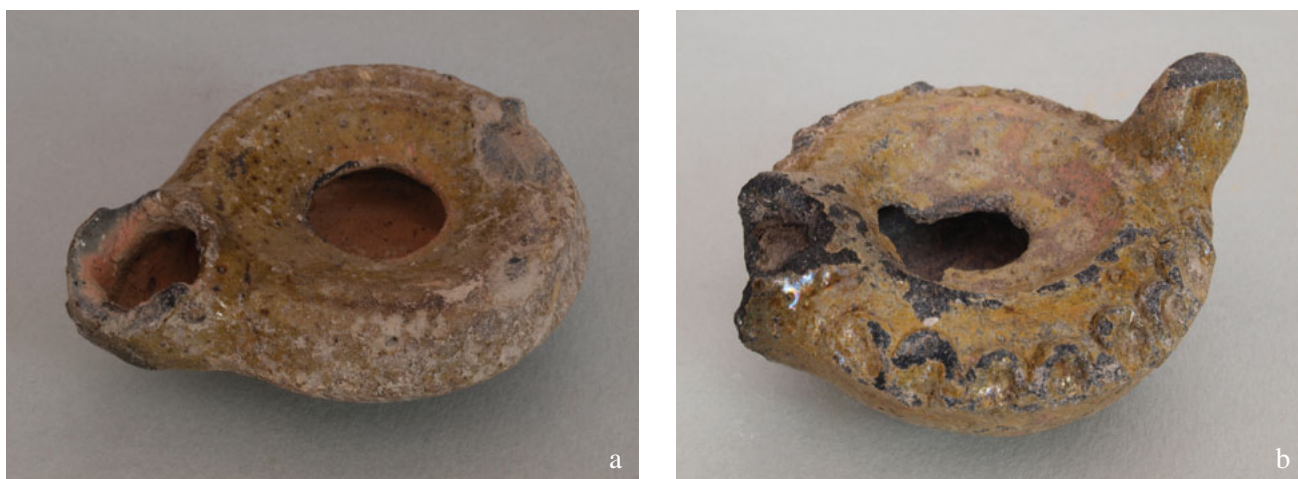
<sup>50</sup> MINCHEV/GEORGIEV 1991, 225–226.

<sup>51</sup> BONIS 1992, 52–57; BRUKNER 1981, 176–180;

<sup>52</sup> GUDEA 1987, 115–120.

<sup>53</sup> CVJETIĆANIN 1997, 17–18).

1995, 275–276; CVJETIĆANIN 1995, 27–32; BÖTTGER 1982, 54–56; BÖTTGER 1991, 157–166; TABAKOVA-CANOVA 1981, 125–126; KUZMANOV 1992, 201–221; CHANGOVA 1966, 32–41.



**Fig. 12.** Glazed lamps from the military fort *Dimum* (Belene), province *Moesia*, 4<sup>th</sup> century AD.

period – second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century–4<sup>th</sup> century. The finds of glazed pottery from the period of the 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> century show that the production of this kind of earthenware was found in the military fortresses as well as in the civilian settlements. Glazed clay lamps (fig. 12a–b) were produced almost everywhere in the Lower Danube region – *Ratiaria*, *Oescus*, *Novae*, *Dimum*, *Iatrus*, Sadovec from the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century until the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD<sup>54</sup>. They were shaped on a potter's wheel and their glazing is orange-brown or olive-green.

In the late Roman period glazed pottery was produced in ancient *Serdica* (Sofia), when it was the capital city of the Roman province of Inner *Dacia* and the vicinity of the city<sup>55</sup>. The shapes are those known from the other settlements and sites in the explored region – bowls, jugs, pitchers, small amphorae, mortaria, lamps. The clay has a brick-red or grey colour and the glazing is from orange-brown to oily green and dark green. Data about glazed production and pottery have also been published from the archaeological explorations of the Krakra Fortress near the town of Pernik and the sanctuary found to the east of this town, which are located in the territory of *Serdica*<sup>56</sup>. The finds from *Serdica* and from Krakra Fortress near Pernik give archaeological proof of the wide distribution of glazed pottery in the region of the upper course of River Struma (ancient *Strimon*) during the late Roman period.

The latest explorations of the large ancient town of *Deultum* (today's village of Debelt, District of Burgas), as well as the settlements near this town show that glazed pottery was produced in the region of the southern part of the western Black sea region in the late Roman period. According to data from the *forum* of Debelt this pottery is located in stratigraphic layers from the 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> century AD<sup>57</sup>. Fragments of glazed

small and large pitchers were found during the excavations near Panitsovo, Municipality of Nessebar, where the late Roman and Late Antique settlement was explored<sup>58</sup>. The pots are made of very pure grey clay and have olive green glazing.

The production of glazed pottery from the third group in the provinces of Coastal and Inner *Dacia* and *Moesia Secunda*, as well as in the provinces of the diocese of Thrace was gradually suspended between the Second Gothic War (376 – 378) and the invasions of the Huns during the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD. Its production continued only in the South-Eastern part of the diocese Thrace because after this period these regions remained within the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire.

## Conclusion

This survey of the glazed pottery of the Moesia and Thrace provinces show that it was used over the whole period from the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD to the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD. From the 1<sup>st</sup> century to the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century its distribution was more limited compared to Red Slip pottery. Therefore, a substantial part of the pottery from the first two groups may be identified as pottery with special functions, i.e. used for religious rituals. It was more widely produced only in the late Roman period, however in this period its distribution was limited to the provinces of the diocese of *Dacia* (Coastal and Inner *Dacia*, as well as along the valley of Struma River) and was much more limited in the diocese of Thrace. The shapes of the glazed pottery from the first and second group are a part of the repertoire of fine pottery from the Roman period (terra sigillata, varnished and thin-walled). In the 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century jugs and other pots which replicate similar bronze and glass items were often produced. During the late Roman period glazed pottery lost its properties of fine pottery and became one of the mass produced groups of pottery. The production of the late Roman glazed pottery and its distribution provide data about the dislocation of the

<sup>54</sup> KUZMANOV 1992, 44–45 kat. № 326–338; about *Oescus*: Inv. no. of the museum in Pleven: 1425; 1451; 2131; 3212; 2059; 3848; 3742; 1178; 1555; GOMOLKA 1982, 192–193 Taf. 67.

<sup>55</sup> STANCHEVA 1981, 52–71 fig. 17–19a–c; DINTCHEV 2003, 101 fig. 114–115.

<sup>56</sup> LJUBENOVA 1981, 122–124, oбp. 27–29; 54; LJUBENOVA 1980, 38–39 fig. 27–28.

<sup>57</sup> Unpublished data from the excavation of Assoc. Prof. H. Preshlenov, whom I thank for this information.

<sup>58</sup> Unpublished finds from the excavations of H. Preshlenov near Panitsovo, Burgas region, whom I thank for the information.

troops from *Pannonia* to the Lower Danube provinces. It can be supposed that in the examined region together with these troops came master-potters who knew well the technology of glazed pottery production and established workshops near the military bases for the needs of the soldiers and then for the local markets. The second factor, which plays a role for the development of glazed pottery production during the late Roman period, was the migration of the Roma population from the former Roman province *Dacia*. These people settled on the lands to the south of the Lower Danube in the second half of 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, when the border of the Roman Empire moved again at the Lower Danube and the Roman legions from the abandoned province of *Dacia* and the Carpathian Roman *limes* settled there.

The survey of the glazed pottery from the Lower Moesia and Thrace shows that these lands developed active trade relations with the Western Roman provinces and also with those from the eastern part of the Empire. Being at the crossroads between the West and the East of the Romans world, the Eastern Balkan Roman provinces experienced technological and cultural influences both from Italy and from the western Roman provinces and also from the big Eastern Roman Centres for pottery production.

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