

Pozlaćene keramičke posude iz razvijenog bakarnog doba na području srednjeg i istočnog Balkana (druga polovina 5. milenija BC)

Gilded ceramic vessels from the developed Copper Age in the Balkans (second half of the 5th millennium BC)

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Abstrakt

U tekstu su prezentirani keramički nalazi ukrašeni zlatom iz nekropole Varna I i iz naselja Krivodol, Bujanj i Velika Humska Čuka. Ukrašavanje keramike zlatom predstavlja krajnje neobičnu pojavu u praistorijskom razdoblju. Ta tehnika je zastupljena samo u bakarnom dobu Balkana (grobovi kulture Varna i naselja kulturnog kompleksa Bujanj-Salcuța-Krivodol). Takođe se diskutuje socijalni značaj ove pojave u kontekstu nastanka rane metalurgije. Posebno detaljno je data interpretacija ornamentalne kompozicije velike zdjele iz groba 4 u nekropoli Varna I.

Ključne riječi: Pozlaćena keramika, Bakarno doba Balkana, Kultura Varna, Kulturni kompleks Bujanj-Salcuța-Krivodol I

Abstract

This paper presents ceramic finds decorated with gold from the Varna I necropolis and the settlements of Krivodol, Bujanj and Velika Humska Čuka. The decoration of ceramic with gold represents an extremely unusual phenomenon in the prehistoric period. This technique is exclusively associated with the Blakan Copper Age (graves of the Varna culture and settlements of the Bujanj-Salcuța-Krivodol I complex). The social significance of this phenomenon is also discussed in the context of the emergence of early metallurgy. A particularly detailed interpretation is provided for the ornamental composition of the large bowl from Grave 4 in the Varna I necropolis.

Key words: Gilded ceramic, Copper Age of the Balkans, Varna culture, Bujanj-Salcuța-Krivodol I cultural complex.

I. Uvod

Peti milenijum prije nove ere predstavlja prvo „zlatno doba“ u historiji čovječanstva i to ne samo figurativno već dobrim dijelom i faktički. U prvoj polovini ovog milenijuma čovjek je savladao tehnologiju proizvodnje metala. Pri tome je glavni fokus bio na obradi bakra, ali uz to ubrzo nastaju i prvi predmeti od zlata. Od tada pa sve do danas zlato čvrsto održava visoku vrijednosnu poziciju, kao najznačajniji plemeniti metal u historiji ljudske civilizacije. Međutim, nalazišta zlata su veoma rijetka, pa je radi toga, kao i zbog svojih specifičnih karakteristika, zlato uvijek bilo veoma cijenjeno i traženo. Iz istih razloga, ali i zbog izrazite mekoće, zlato nije moglo biti korišteno za izradu upotrebnih alati i oružja, nego je uglavnom služilo za proizvodnju luksuznih predmeta i nakita. Osnovna nova sirovina koja je u to vrijeme imala široku upotrebu bio je čisti, nelegirani bakar. To je jedini, ali ujedno i sasvim opravdani razlog, zbog koga ovaj period u arheološkoj nomenklaturi nije označen kao zlatno, nego kao bakarno doba.¹

Akumulacija proizvoda od plemenitih metala, među koje u doba rane metalurgije, osim zlata i srebra svakako treba ubrojiti i bakar, pored rastućeg ekonomskog potencijala ukazuje i na početak socijalnog raslojavanja. Naime, kompleksni proces proizvodnje i distribucije metalnih produkata neminovno je uslovalo privrednu diversifikaciju koja je rezultirala raslojavanjem i hijerarhizacijom socijalnog sistema. Arheološki odraz ovih epohalnih promjena posebno je uočljiv u pojavi bogatih grobova na prostoru istočnog Balkana, među kojima se naročito ističu grobovi iz nekropole Varna I.²

Ova nekropole je otkrivena 1972. godine u zapadnoj industrijskoj zoni velikog lučkog grada Varne u Bugarskoj. Tokom dugogodišnjeg iskopavanja ovdje je otkriveno je 310 grobova.³ Mada su rezultati tih istraživanja samo djelimično objavljeni, do sada publikovani materijal u dovoljnoj mjeri pokazuje da se ovdje radi o jednom od najznačajnijih arheoloških otkrića u Evropi u zadnjih stotinu godina. O neizmjernom bogatstvu grobova iz Varne svjedoči i činjenica da je u ovoj nekropoli

I. Introduction

The fifth millennium BC represents the first “golden age in human history, and not just figuratively, but also quite literally. In the first half of this millennium, humans mastered the technology of metal production. The main focus was on copper extraction and processing, but shortly afterwards the first objects made of gold appeared. Since then and to this day, gold has maintained its high value as the most important precious metal in the history of human civilisation. However, gold deposits are exceedingly rare, making gold highly valued and sought after for its unique characteristics. Due to its rarity and exceptional softness, gold could not be used for crafting tools or weapons; instead, it was primarily used for creating luxury items and jewelry. The primary new raw material widely used at the time was pure, unalloyed copper. This is the sole but entirely justified reason why this period in archaeological nomenclature is referred to as the Copper Age rather than the Golden Age.¹

Accumulation of products made of precious metals, among which, apart from gold and silver, in the era of early metallurgy copper should certainly be counted, reflects both an increasing economic potential and the beginnings of social stratification. The complex processes of metal production and distribution inevitably led to economic diversification, resulting in the stratification and hierarchization of the social system. The archaeological reflection of these epochal changes is particularly evident in the emergence of richly equipped graves in the Eastern Balkans, most notably the graves of the Varna I necropolis.²

This necropolis was discovered in 1972 in the western industrial zone of the major port city of Varna in Bulgaria. Over years of excavation, 310 graves were uncovered.³ Although the results of those excavations have only been partially published, the material published so far sufficiently shows that this is one of the most significant archaeological discoveries in Europe in the last hundred years. The unparalleled wealth of the Varna graves is evidenced by the approximately 3,000 gold objects weighing a

1 O nastanku Bakarnog doba vidi Lichardus 1991; Govedarica 2009, 60 ff.; 2016, 11 ff.

2 Nedaleko od ove nekropole otkrivena je i grupa od tri groba koja je obilježena kao Varna II i datirana u rani eneolit po bugarskoj hronologiji. Up. Иванов 1978a, 81 ff.; Govedarica 2004, 297 ff.

3 Ivanov 1978, 13-26; 1991, 125; Slavchev 2010, 198.

1 On the emergence of the Copper Age, see Lichardus 1991; Govedarica 2009, 60 ff.

2 Not far from this necropolis, a group of three graves was discovered, marked as Varna II and dated to the early Eneolithic according to Bulgarian chronology. Cf. Ivanov 1978a, 81 ff.; Govedarica 2004, 297 ff.

3 Ivanov 1978, 13-26; 1991, 125; Slavchev 2010, 198.

nađeno oko 3100 zlatnih predmeta ukupne težine 5.600 grama.⁴ U svakom slučaju, bez nalaza iz Varne danas se ne može zamisliti bilo kakva ozbiljnija diskusija o evropskom bakarnom dobu.⁵

Nije nam namjera da detaljnije prezentiramo stanje istraženosti ove nekropole, jer bi to daleko prevazilazilo obim ovoga članka. O do sada objavljenim grobovima iz Varne čitalac se može obuhvatno informisati u postojećoj literaturi.⁶ Ovdje bismo htjeli da skrenemo pažnju na jednu krajnje neobičnu i rijetku pojavu u evropskoj praistoriji, a to je pozlata keramičkih posuda. Dvije posude koje su ukrašene na taj način nađene su u grobu 4 iz Varne I, a kako ćemo vidjeti, keramički fragmenti sa tragovima pozlate otkriveni su i u bakarnodobnim naseljima Krivodol, Bubanj i Velika Humska Čuka.

II. Pozlaćene posude iz groba 4 u Varni I

Nalaz iz Varne I koji je obilježen kao Grob 4 bio je smješten u jezgru nekropole, gdje se inače nalaze najbogatiji grobovi. U njemu nije bilo nikakvih antropoloških tragova, a duž dna duboke jame, u širini od 0,5 do 0,8 m i dužini od oko 1,8 m, pružala se tamna fleka koja predstavlja tragove prostirke/pokrivača od organskog materijala i ostatke zasipanja okerom. U tom okviru bilo je 36 vrsta priloga, u ukupnom broju od preko 2000 pojedinačnih predmeta.⁷ Cjelokupni ritual pokazuje da je ovdje u pitanju kenotaf, odnosno simbolični grob nekog visokog dostojanstvenika koji je iz određenih razloga mogao biti samo simbolično sahranjen. Ovaj kenotaf je na osnovu bakarne sjekire tipa „Pickelaxt“ koja predstavlja tipološki najmlađi grobni prilog, datiran u treću fazu kulture Varna, odnosno u vrijeme oko 4200 BC (Sl. 1, 12).⁸

total of 5,600 grams found in the necropolis.⁴ In any case, without the Varna finds, it would be impossible to have any serious discussion of the European Copper Age today.⁵

It is not our intention to provide a detailed overview of the state of research on this necropolis, as doing so would far exceed the scope of this article. Readers can find comprehensive information on the published graves of Varna in the existing literature.⁶ Here, we aim to draw attention to an extremely unusual and rare phenomenon in European prehistory: the gilding of ceramic vessels. Two vessels decorated in this manner were found in Grave 4 at Varna I. Additionally, ceramic fragments with traces of gilding have been discovered in Copper Age settlements such as Krivodol, Bubanj, and Velika Humska Čuka.

II. Gilded vessels from Grave 4 in Varna I

The find from Varna I, designated as Grave 4, was located in the core of the necropolis, where the richest graves are concentrated. The grave contained no anthropological remains; instead, a dark spot ran along the bottom of the deep pit, measuring 0.5 to 0.8 meters in width and about 1.8 meters in length. This spot represents traces of a mat or covering made of organic material, along with residues of ochre. Within this context were 36 types of grave goods, totaling over 2,000 individual items.⁷ The entire ritual shows that this is a cenotaph, that is, a symbolic grave of a high nob who, from certain reasons, could only be buried symbolically. Based on the copper axe of the „Pickelaxt“ type, which is typologically the most recent grave item, this cenotaph has been dated to the third phase of the Varna culture, around 4200 BC (Fig. 1, 12).⁸

⁴ Leusch et al. 2015, 353.

⁵ Govedarica 2023, 14.

⁶ Ivanov 1988, 49 ff.; Ivanov 1988a, 183 ff.; Lichardus 1991a, 167 ff.; Ivanov 1991, 125 ff.; Nikolov, 1991, 157 ff.; Petrova 2016, 123 ff.; Higham et al. 2018, 1 ff.; Krauß et al. 2018, 282 ff.

⁷ Ivanov 1978, 13-26; 1991, 125.

⁸ Todorova 1981, 51.

⁴ Leusch et al. 2015, 353.

⁵ Govedarica 2023, 14.

⁶ Ivanov 1988, 49 ff.; Ivanov 1988a, 183 ff.; Lichardus 1991, 167 ff.; Ivanov 1991, 125 ff.; Nikolov, 1991, 157 ff.; Petrova 2016, 123 ff.; Higham et al. 2018, 1 ff.; Krauß et al. 2018, 282 ff.

⁷ Ivanov 1978, 13-26; 1991, 125.

⁸ Todorova 1981, 51.



Sl. 1. Nekropola Varna I, dio groba 4 (Kenotaf) sa koncentracijom grobnih priloga oko velike zdjele: 1-velika pozlaćena zdjela; 2-4 tri kremenja bodeža; 5 1400 neobrađenih dentalium-školjki; 6 antropomorfní idol od kosti; 7 zlatne kalotaste aplikacije oko idola; 8 dva bakrena dlijeta; 9 malo bakreno dlijeto; 10 trapezasta kamena sjekira-tesla; 11 mala zdjela postavljena sa otvorom na dolje; 12 bakrena sjekira tipa Pickelaxt; 13 zlatne tubice; 14 zlatna oplata

Fig. 1. Necropolis Varna I, part of grave 4 (cenotaph) with a concentration of grave goods around a large bowl: 1- the big gilded bowl; 2-4 three flint daggers; 5 1400 raw dentalium shells; 6 anthropomorphic bone idol; 7 a large number of gold spherical applications lay around the idol; 8 two copper chisels; 9 small copper chisel; 10 trapezoidal stone axe-adze; 11 small bowl with the opening facing downwards; 12 copper Pickelaxt-type axe; 13 small gold tube; 14 gold plating.

II. 1 Velika zdjela

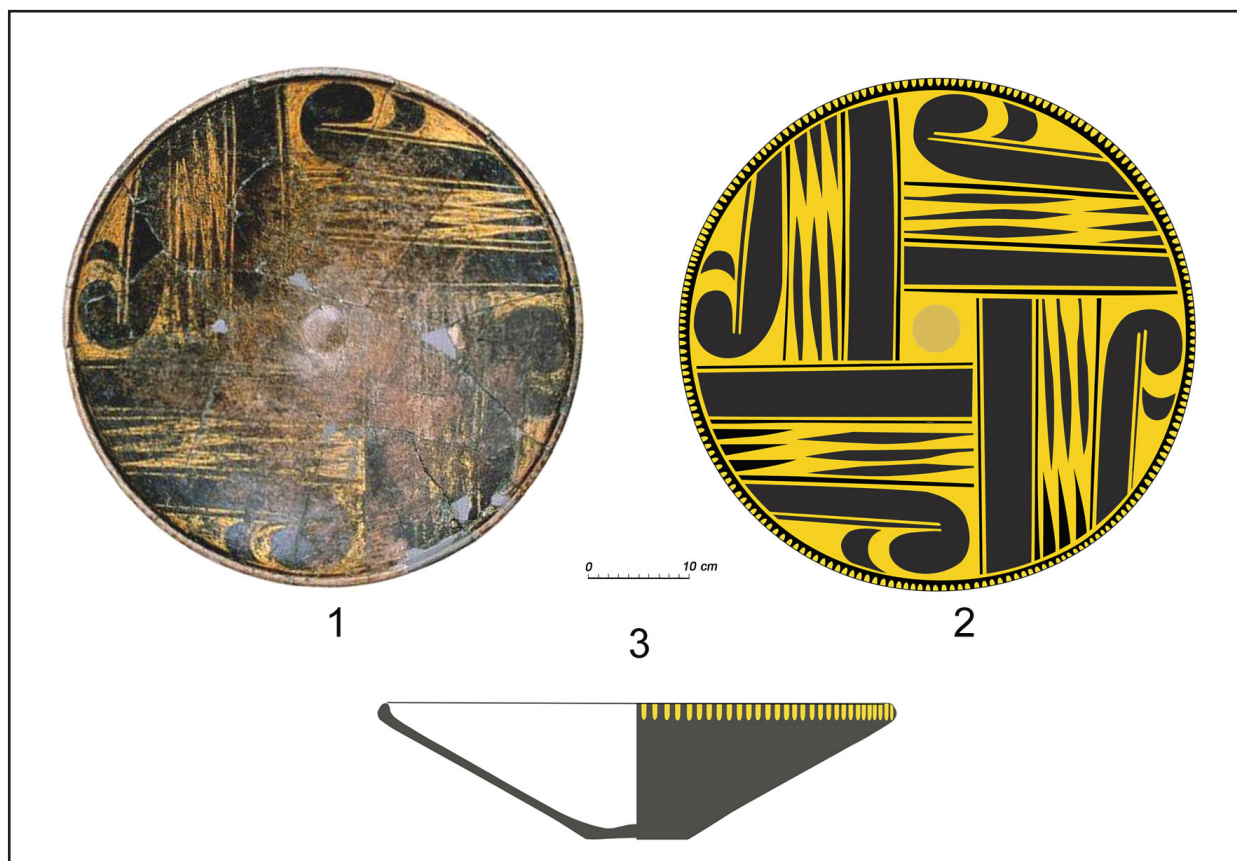
Među brojnim priložima iz ovog simboličnog groba posebno se ističe velika zdjela (R 52 cm; h 13 cm; Sl. 1, 1; 2, 1-3) koja dominira u gornjem dijelu jame, u predjelu koji bi u realnoj sahrani trebalo da bude pored glave pokojnika. Osim dimenzija, ova zdjela se ističe visokim kvalitetom izrade i specifičnim načinom ukrašavanja. Rađena je od dobro pečene i crno glačane keramike sa ukrasnim motivima postignutim preciznim i finim kontrastiranjem zlatnih i crnih partija na čitavoj unutrašnjoj površini posude, kao i na obodu (Sl.2, 1.2).⁹ Pri tome površina prekrivena zlatom uglavnom predstavlja negativ, a za sam ukras koji sadrži i figuralne predstave, korištene su crno uglačane partije

⁹ Prema Henrieti Todorovoj i Ivanu Vajsovu površina posude je bila presvučena crnom Pyrolusit farbom. Todorova, Vajsov 2001, 97.

II. 1 Large bowl

Among the numerous artefacts from this symbolic grave, a large bowl (R 52 cm; h 13 cm) stands out in particular, dominating the upper part of the pit in the area where, in a real burial, it would be placed near the head of the deceased (Fig. 1, 1; 2, 1-3). Apart from its dimensions, this bowl is remarkable for its high-quality craftsmanship and its specific decorative technique. It is made of well-fired and black-polished pottery, with decorative motifs achieved through precise and fine contrasts between gold and black areas across the entire inner surface of the vessel and on its rim (Fig. 2, 1.2).⁹ The gold-covered surface primarily serves as a neg-

⁹ According to Henrietta Todorova and Ivan Vajsov, the surface of the vessel was coated with black Pyrolusite paint. Todorova, Vajsov 2001, 97.



Sl. 2. Nekropola Varna I, velika zdjela iz groba 4: 1- fotos unutrašnje površine zdjele; 2- grafička rekonstrukcija ukrasne kompozicije na unutrašnjoj površini zdjele; 3- profil zdjele

Fig. 2. Necropolis of Varna I, large bowl from grave 4: 1- photo of the inner surface of the bowl; 2- graphic reconstruction of the decorative composition on the inner surface of the bowl; 3- bowl profile.

ove unutrašnje površine posude. Ukrašena površina je ravnomjerno podijeljena sa četiri masivne trake koje su postavljene tako da stvaraju iluziju o dvije, odnosno četiri rotirajuće forme u obliku slova „T“ (Sl. 2, 1.2). Tako su ujedno formirane i četiri kriške koje lučno završavaju na obodu zdjele, dok je u sredini posude ostao neukrašeni zlatni kvadratić, u čijem centru se nalazi malo konkavno dno (Sl. 2, 1.2).

Svakako najzanimljiviji dio ove ornamentalne kompozicije su navedene kriške na kojima se četiri puta ponavlja ista vrsta predstave: iznad masivne trake koja čini podnožje te predstave dolaze tri vodoravna jako izdužena romba i tri isto tako izdužena trougla koji u kombinaciji sa zlatnom podlogom stvaraju utisak perspektivne cik-cak trake obrubljene crnim linijama (Sl. 2, 1.2). Iznad toga je široka tamna traka koja se na lijevoj strani, prije kraja kriške, završava unazad savijenim i zaobljenim zadebljanjem čineći tako formu koja potsjeća na slovo „J“ koje leži na zlatnoj podlozi. Iznad svake od tako formiranih traka, u njenom središnj-

ativne space, while the actual ornamentation, which includes figurative representations, utilizes the polished black surface of the bowl. The decorated surface is evenly divided by four massive bands positioned to create the illusion of two or four rotating “T”-shaped forms (Fig. 2, 1.2). This arrangement also creates four segments that curve towards the bowl’s rim, while in the middle of the bowl remains a unadorned golden square, with a small concave bottom at its centre (Fig. 2, 1.2).

Certainly, the most intriguing part of this ornamental composition are the aforementioned segments, which repeat the same type of design four times. Above the massive band forming the base of this design, there are three horizontal, highly elongated rhombuses and three similarly elongated triangles. Combined with the golden background, these shapes give the impression of a perspective zigzag band bordered by black lines (Fig. 2, 1.2). Above this is a wide dark band that, on the left side, near the end of the segment, curves backward and

jem dijelu, nalazi se po jedan jedrasti ukras (Sl. 2, 1.2). Karakteristično je da ova ornamentika nema završetke, nego prestaje neposredno ispod perlasto ukrašenog oboda, ostavljajući sve motive nedovršenim. Tako ni obod posude ne označava kraj ukrasne kompozicije, nego je nakon malog, ali efektnog razmaka, samo uokviruje (Sl. 2, 1-3).

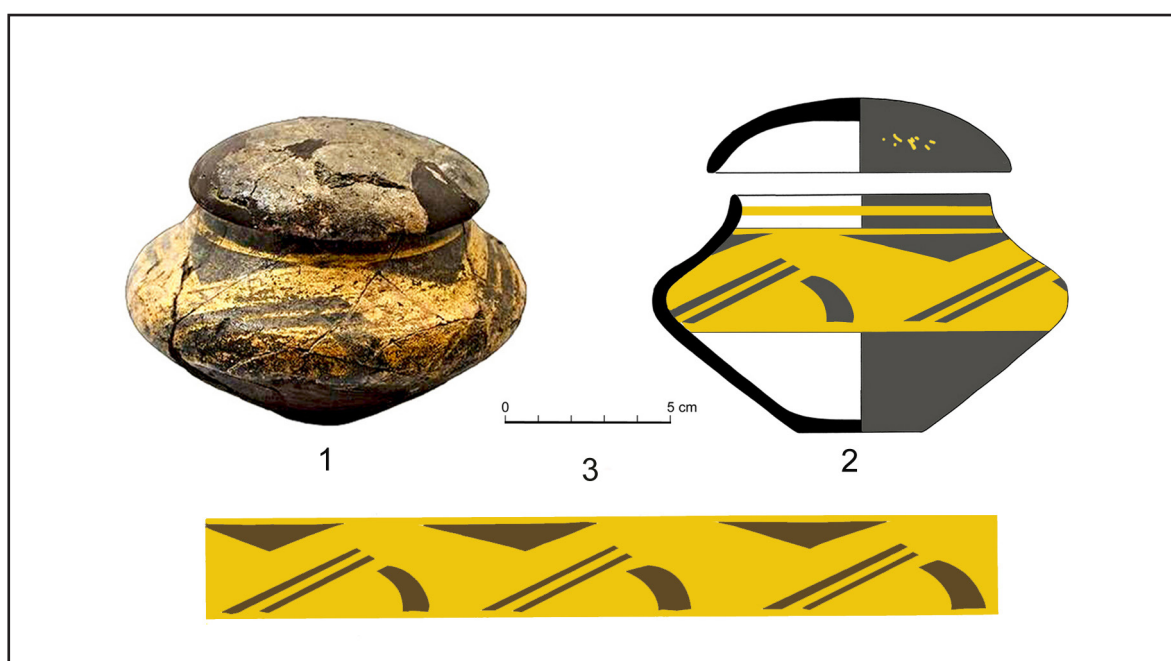
II. 2 Bikonična posuda sa poklopcem

Na površini prethodno opisane velike zdjele, odnosno u popuni kenotafa koja odgovara nivou njenog oboda, nađena je još jedna fino uglačana posuda sa zlatnom dekoracijom. Ova posuda ima formu bikonične šolje sa poklopcem, ukupne visine 9,8 cm i širine 12,5 cm (Sl. 3, 1.2). U nivou ramena i gornjeg dijela trbuha posuda je ukrašena zlatnim frizom, sa izdvojenom zlatnom bordurom na vratu. U kombinaciji sa tamnim visećim trouglovima i drugim geometrijskim ornamentima ovaj friz daje utisak tekuće zlatne valovnice (Sl. 3, 2.3). Poklopac posude je lošije sačuvan, a sudeći po preostalim tragovima ornamentike i on je imao zlatne ukrase (Sl. 3, 1.2).

thickens into a rounded shape reminiscent of the letter “J” lying on a golden background. Above each of these bands, in their central part, is a sail-like ornament (Fig. 2, 1.2). A distinctive feature of this ornamentation is that it has no defined endpoints but stops just below the pearl-like decorated rim, leaving all motifs unfinished. Thus, the rim of the vessel does not mark the end of the decorative composition but instead frames it after a small but striking gap (Fig. 2, 1-3).

II. 2 Biconical Vessel with lid

On the surface of the previously described large bowl, specifically in the fill of the cenotaph corresponding to the level of its rim, another fine polished vessel with gold decoration was discovered. This vessel takes the form of a biconical cup with a lid, with a total height of 9.8 cm and a width of 12.5 cm (Fig. 3, 1.2). At the shoulder level and the upper part of the belly, the vessel is adorned with a gold frieze, accompanied by a distinct golden border on the neck. Combined with dark hanging triangles and other geometric ornaments, this frieze creates the impression of flowing golden waves (Fig. 3, 2.3). The lid of the vessel is less well-preserved, but based on the remaining traces of ornamentation, it



Sl. 3. Nekropola Varna I, bikonična posuda iz groba 4: 1- foto posude sa poklopcem; 2- grafička rekonstrukcija posude sa poklopcem; 3- razvijeni zlatni friz

Fig. 3. Necropolis Varna I, gilded biconical vessel from grave 4: 1- photo of vessel with lid; 2- graphic reconstruction of a vessel with a lid; 3- “unrolled” gold ornamental frieze.

III. Pozlaćene posude iz naselja

III. 1 Krivodol

Gradinsko naselje Krivodol nalazi se u blizini grada Vraca, na sjeverozapadu današnje Bugarske. Ono predstavlja eponimno nalazište Krivodolske kulture koja čini jugoistočnu komponentu kompleksa Bubanj-Salčuța-Krivodol. Istraživanja na ovom lokalitetu obavio je Veselin Mikov četrdesetih godina prošlog vijeka.¹⁰ Tom prilikom je u sloju koji odgovara ranoj fazi ovog kulturnog kompleksa nađen veći fragment bikonične posude sa trakastom drškom i dijelom oboda.¹¹ Slabo profilisani vrat i rame posude bili su ukrašeni urezima u formi voluta u okviru kojih su vidljivi tragovi zlatne prevlake (Sl. 4, 1).

III. 2 Bubanj

Lokalitet Bubanj u Novom Selu kod Niša je poznato praistorijsko naselje koje je bilo intenzivno naseljeno od doba ranog neolita do ranog bronzanog doba. Manja probna istraživanja ovog naselja izveli su Adam Oršić-Slaverić i Miodrag Grbić 1933. i 1934. godine, da bi Oršić-Slaverić sledeće, 1935. godine ovdje obavio prva obimnija iskopavanja. Istraživanja na Bubnju nastavio je Milutin Garašanin u vremenu od 1954. do 1958. godine.¹² Nažalost, lokalitet je najvećim dijelom razrušen osamdesetih godina prošlog vijeka, prilikom gradnje auto-puta Beograd-Niš. Preostao je samo mali kontrolni dio platoa naselja na kome su u vremenu od 2014.-2027. godine obavljena kontrolna iskopavanja koja su dala bogate nalaze iz Bakarnog doba.¹³ Među brojnim keramičkim nalazima iz sloja Bubanj I koji odgovara prvoj fazi kulturnog kompleksa Bubanj-Salčuța-Krivodol, posebno se izdvajaju sljedeća dva fragmenta sa zlatnim ukrasima:¹⁴

-Fragment trbuha posude od smeđe pečene keramike na kome je ornamentalna kompozicija koju čini kombinacija urezanih ukrasa i zlatne prevlake. Urezi su predstavljeni vertikalnim snopo-

also featured gold decorations (Fig. 3, 1.2).

III. Gilded vessels from the settlements

III. 1 Krivodol

The fortified settlement of Krivodol is located near the city of Vraca, in the northwest of present-day Bulgaria. It represents the eponymous site of the Krivodol culture, which constitutes the south-eastern component of the Bubanj-Sălčuța-Krivodol complex. Excavations at this site were carried out by Veselin Mikov in the 1940s.¹⁰ During these investigations, a large fragment of a biconical vessel with a strap handle and part of its rim was found in a layer corresponding to the early phase of this cultural complex.¹¹ The poorly profiled neck of the vessel was decorated with incised volutes, within which traces of gilding were visible (Fig. 4, 1).

III. 2 Bubanj

The Bubanj site in Novi Selo, near Niš, is a well-known prehistoric settlement that was continuously inhabited from the early Neolithic to the early Bronze Age. Initial test excavations were conducted by Adam Oršić-Slaverić and Miodrag Grbić in 1933 and 1934, followed by the first extensive excavations led by Oršić-Slaverić in 1935. Excavations at Bubanj continued under Milutin Garašanin from 1954 to 1958.¹² Unfortunately, the site was mostly destroyed in the eighties of the last century during the construction of the Belgrade- Niš highway. Only a small part of the settlement plateau remains, where control excavations were conducted between 2014 and 2017, yielding rich finds from the Copper Age.¹³ Among the numerous ceramics finds from the Bubanj I layer, corresponding to the first phase of the Bubanj-Sălčuța-Krivodol cultural complex, two fragments with gold decorations stand out in particular:¹⁴

-A fragment of the body of a vessel made

¹⁰ Mikov 1948, 27 ff.

¹¹ Eleure, Raub 1991, 20.

¹² Милановић, Трајковић-Филиповић 2015, 15 ff.

¹³ Usmena informacija istraživača M. Stojića za koju mu je pisac teksta veoma zahvalan.

¹⁴ Ovi nalazi potiču iz iskopavanja koja su obavljena 1935. godine. Publikovano prema: Stojić, Jocić 2006, 255, Fig. 41a-b. up. Eleure, Raub 1991, 20.

¹⁰ Mikov 1948, 27 ff.

¹¹ Eleure, Raub 1991, 20.

¹² Милановић, Трајковић-Филиповић 2015, 15 ff.

¹³ Verbal information from researcher M. Stojić, for which the writer of the text is very grateful.

¹⁴ These findings come from excavations that were carried out in 1935. Published by: Stojić, Jocić 2006, 255, Fig. 41a-b. cf. Eleure, Raub 1991, 20.

vima kratikih linija i vertikalnim cik-cak linijama. Zlatni premaz pokriva traku između dva snopa linija, a tragovi pozlate djelimično su očuvani i na drugim dijelovima fragmenta (Sl. 4,2).

-Fragment gornjeg dijela trbuha bikonične posude od tamno smeđe keramike tankih zidova u uglačane površine. Ukrašen je snopovima tankih kosih kanelura između kojih su viseći trougli. Dio kanelura, kao i viseći trouglovi dodatno su ornamentisani utrljavanjem zlatnog praha (Sl. 4,4).

III. 3 Velika Humska Čuka

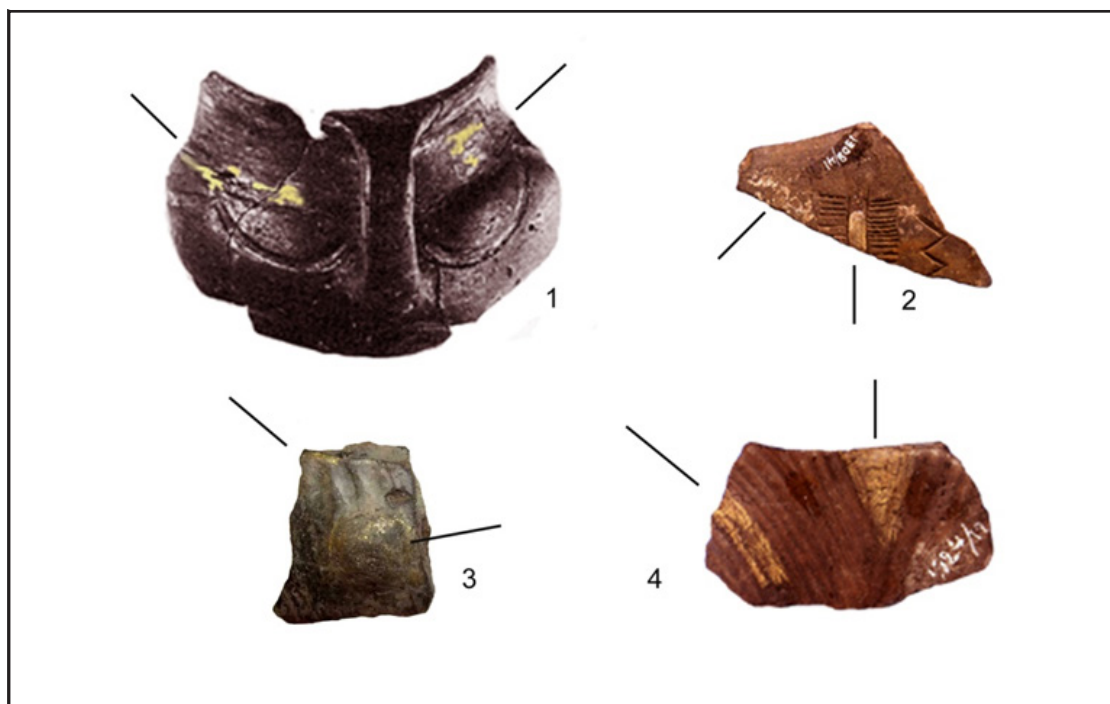
Praistorijsko naselje Velika Humska Čuka nalazi se u selu Hum, na platou dominantnog uzvišenja na severoistočnom rubu Niškog polja¹⁵. Ovaj lokalitet je, slično obližnjem naselju Bujanj, istraživao u više navrata od 30. do 50. godina 20. vijeka.¹⁶ Nakon kontrolnih iskopavanja 2009. godine, 2014. godine su otpočeta sistematska iskopavanja koja još traju. Prema izvještaju istraživača tokom sistematskih iskopavanja 2019. godine su u okviru bogatog inventara jedne kuće iz sloja Bujanj-Hum I, nađena dva fragmenta različitih posuda na kojima su bili vidljivi tragovi zlatne prevlake.

of brown fired ceramic on which there is an ornamental composition made up of a combination of incised decorations and gold coating. Notches are represented by vertical bundles of short lines and vertical zigzag lines. The gold coating covers the band between the two bundles of lines, and traces of gilding are partially preserved on other parts of the fragment as well (Fig. 4,2).

-A fragment of the upper part of the body of a biconical vessel made of dark brown ceramic with thin walls and polished surfaces. It is decorated with bundles of thin oblique fluting between which are hanging triangles. Part of the fluting, as well as the hanging triangles, are additionally decorated by rubbing gold powder (Fig. 4, 4).

III. 3 Velika Humska Čuka

The prehistoric settlement of Velika Humska Čuka is located in the village of Hum, on a prominent plateau at the northeastern edge of Niško Polje.¹⁵ Similar to the nearby Bujanj settlement, this site was explored intermittently from the 1930s to the 1950s.¹⁶ After control excavations in 2009, systematic excavations began in 2014 and are still



Sl. 4. 1- Krivodol; 2,4- Bujanj; 3- Velika Humska Čuka
Fig. 4. 1- Krivodol; 2,4- Bujanj; 3- Velika Humska Čuka

¹⁵ Булатовић, Милановић 2015, 163 ff.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵ Булатовић, Милановић 2015, 163 ff.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Od njih je publikovan samo fragment tamnoglacane posude na kome je bila masivna aplikacija (držka?), u čijem donjem dijelu su vidljivi tragovi pozlate (Sl. 4, 3). Ovaj nalaz pripada najmlađim horizontima navedene kuće, a time i mlađoj fazi kulture Bubanj-Hum I.¹⁷

IV. Zaključak

Ukrašavanje keramičkog posuđa zlatom je luksuz bez presedana, pa ne čudi da taj manir predstavlja potpuni izuzetak u keramičkom inventaru praistorijskih kultura. Prema nalazima iz Varne, koji su najbolje sačuvani, ovdje se radi o utrljavanju zlatnog praha na prethodno pripremljeni dio površine posude. Tehnika glačanja i utrljavanja grafita, ili pastoznih boja, poznata je u različitim kulturama, ali ne i utrljavanje zlatnog praha. Ta rijetka i luksuzna tehnika vezana je isključivo za kulture iz bakarnog doba istočnog i centralnog Balkana, odnosno za vrijeme druge polovine petog milenija BC, kada ovaj arheološki period doživljava puni procvat na tom prostoru. Na centralnom Balkanu je to prvo postvinčansko razdoblje, u kome egzistira rana faza kulturnog kompleksa Bubanj-Salcuța-Krivodol. Istovremeno se na prostoru istočnog Balkana, sve do obale Crnog Mora, razvijaju kultura Varna i Kulturni kompleks Kodžaderman-Gumelnița-Karanovo VI (KGK VI-Kompleks).¹⁸ To je ujedno i završna faza bakarnog doba „*proprie dicti*“, odnosno završetak onog arheološkog razdoblja koje karakteriše proizvodnja predmeta od nelegiranog bakra.¹⁹

U ovom periodu su ostvarena izuzetno visoka kuturna dostignuća u svim kulturnim cjelinama sa navedenog područja. To potvrđuju i najnovija istraživanja u naseljima Bubanj i Velika Humska Čuka, u kojima su otkriveni veoma bogati slojevi kulture Bubanj-Hum I koja predstavlja zapadnu komponentu kompleksa Bubanj-Salcuța-Krivodol I. Naravno, najbolji pokazatelj kulturnog prosperiteta ovog doba su upravo ovdje prezentirane pozlaćene posude, kojih nema u ranijim, a ni u kasnijim praistorijskim razdobljima, nego su zastupljene samo u navedenim kulturama balkanskog bakarnog doba. Prema aktuelnim hronološkim pokazateljima

ongoing. According to reports from the systematic excavations in 2019, two fragments of vessels bearing traces of gold coating were discovered in the rich inventory of a house from the Bubanj-Hum I layer. Of these, only one fragment has been published to date. This fragment belongs to a dark-polished vessel with a massive application (possibly a handle), on the lower part of which traces of gilding are visible (Fig. 4, 3). The find is associated with the earliest horizons of the house, corresponding to the earliest phase of the Bubanj-Hum I culture.¹⁷

IV. Conclusion

The decoration of ceramic vessels with gold is an unprecedented luxury, making it no surprise that this practice represents a complete exception in the ceramic inventories of prehistoric cultures. Based on findings from Varna, which are the best preserved, this technique involved rubbing gold powder onto a previously prepared part of the vessel's surface. Techniques such as burnishing and rubbing graphite or paste-like paints are known across various cultures, but the application of gold powder is unique. This rare and luxurious technique is exclusively tied to the Copper Age cultures of the eastern and central Balkans during the second half of the 5th millennium BC, a period when this archaeological epoch flourished in this region. It marks the first post-Vinča phase in the central Balkans, where the early stage of the Bubanj-Sălcuța-Krivodol cultural complex existed. Simultaneously, in the eastern Balkans, extending to the shores of the Black Sea, the Varna culture and the Kodžaderman-Gumelnița-Karanovo VI cultural complex (KGK VI-Complex) were developing.¹⁸ This period represents the final phase of the Chalcolithic “*proprie dicti*,” characterized by the production of objects made from unalloyed copper.¹⁹

During this time, exceptionally high cultural achievements were realized across all cultural units in the aforementioned region. Recent excavations at the settlements of Bubanj and Velika Humska Čuka, revealing rich layers of the Bubanj-Hum I

¹⁷ Bulatović 2020, 42 ; Bulatović et al. 2021, 54 i sl. 4,4.

¹⁸ Georgieva et al. 2018, 107 ff.

¹⁹ O kontroverzama u periodizaciji bakarnog doba i eneolita, kao i o karakteru perioda Bakarno doba „*proprie dicti*“ vidi Todorova 1995, 85 ff.; Lichardus 1991; Govedarica 2009, 60 ff.; 2016, 13 ff.

¹⁷ Bulatović 2020, 42 ; Bulatović et al. 2021, 54 i sl. 4,4.

¹⁸ Georgieva et al. 2018, 107 ff.

¹⁹ On the controversies in the periodization of the Copper Age and the Eneolithic, as well as on the “*proprie dicti*” character of the Copper Age period, see Todorova 1995, 85 ff.; Lichardus 1991; Govedarica 2009, 60 ff.; 2016, 13 ff.

ma iz Varne i iz Velike Humske Čuke primjena ove izuzetne ukrasne tehnike pripada završetku ova cvjetne faze balkanskog bakarnog doba, odnosno vremenu oko 4300-4200 BC.

Svakako najznačajnija od navedenih pozlaćenih posuda je velika zdjela iz groba 4 u Varni, čiji zlatni ukrasi imaju i posebnu simboliku. Prema dosta ubjedljivoj interpretaciji bugarskog istraživača Todora Uzunova, naizmjenične „T“ trake označavaju princip cikličnosti, dok na kriškama prikazane forme oblika ležećeg slova „J“ i njihovi jedrasti ukrasi, predstavljaju četiri broda-jedrenjaka koji plove u krug. Tako čitava kompozicija zaista upućuje na ustrojeno kružno kretanje.²⁰ U stvari, stiće se utisak dinamične fluidnosti i isprepletanosti čitavog ukrašenog prostora u kome ni jedan ornament nema kraja, niti je potpuno definisan (Sl. 2).

Svi motivi i predstave na ovoj zdjeli kao da dolaze spolja po nekom strogo određenom redoslijedu, tako da oblikuju kružni isječak neke veće cjeline, u čijem centru su zlatni kvadrat i malo konkavno dno posude. Ta dva elementa, iako bez posebnog ukrasa, ili upravo zbog toga, posebno se nameću kao neka mirna oaza u središtu ove inače veoma razučene i dinamične kompozicije. Zajedno sa perlato ukrašenim obodom, oni predstavljaju jedini u potpunosti definisani prostor u čitavoj ornamentalnoj kompoziciji ove posude. Međutim, dok ukras na obodu svojom prozirnom perlato strukturom više naglašava dinamičnu otvorenost ornamentalne kompozicije, nego što je uokviruje, zlatni kvadrat i malo dno posude čine svojevrsni omfalos, odnosno centar zbivanja, oko koga se vrti i odvija čitava predstava.

Oblik ove zdjele, kao i motivi četiri trake, ili dva naspramna slova „T“ koji proizvode specifičnu četvorostruku podjelu prostora sa slobodnim kvadratom u sredini, dosta su česti, naročito u okviru kultura iz rane faze Bujanj-Salcuța-Krivodol-Kompleksa. Međutim, motivi nisu kao u Varni izvedeni u tehnici pozlate nego utljavanjem grafitira, ili nanošenjem pastoznih boja.²¹ Kvadrat sa središnjim kružićem ili malim dnom koji postoje na svakoj od ovakvih posuda, mogao bi predstavljati lokalno centralno mjesto, odnosno autocentrični „pupak svijeta“. Uz to su na trakama analognih posuda iz Devetaške i Krivodola, naznačene valovnice i

culture, the western component of the Bujanj-Salcuța-Krivodol I complex, confirm this. Naturally, the best indicators of the cultural prosperity of this era are the gilded vessels presented here, which are absent in earlier or later prehistoric periods and appear only in the Chalcolithic cultures of the Balkans. Current chronological indicators from Varna and Velika Humska Čuka place the use of this exceptional decorative technique at the end of this flourishing phase of the Balkan Chalcolithic, around 4300–4200 BC.

The most significant among the gilded vessels is undoubtedly the large bowl from Grave 4 in Varna, whose golden decorations carry special symbolism. According to the compelling interpretation by Bulgarian researcher Todor Uzunov, alternating “T” bands symbolize the principle of cyclicity, while the forms of reclining “J” shapes with sail-like decorations on the segments represent four sailing ships moving in a circle. The entire composition thus conveys a sense of organized circular motion.²⁰ It gives an impression of dynamic fluidity and interweaving, with no ornament having a clear end or being completely defined (Fig. 2).

All the motifs and depictions on this bowl seem to come from the outside in a strictly determined order, shaping a circular segment of a larger whole, at the center of which are the golden square and the slightly concave bottom of the vessel. These two elements, though undecorated - or perhaps because of it - stand out as a tranquil oasis in the otherwise elaborate and dynamic composition. Alongside the pearl-like decorated rim, they represent the only fully defined space in the ornamental composition of this vessel. However, (the rim's translucent pearl-like structure emphasizes the dynamic openness of the ornamental composition rather than framing it, the golden square and the small bottom of the bowl serve as a kind of omphalos or focal point around which the entire depiction revolves.

The shape of this bowl and the motifs of four bands or two opposing “T” shapes creating a specific fourfold spatial division with an open square in the center are relatively common, especially in the early phase of the Bujanj-Salcuța-Krivodol complex. However, unlike Varna, the motifs in these examples are not executed in gilding but by rubbing

²⁰ Uzunov 2019, 1 ff.

²¹ Георгиева 2012, 38, Фиг. 4; 103, Фиг. 9; Ганецовски 2007, 118, Обр. 33, 34, 36.

²⁰ Uzunov 2019, 1 ff.

cik-cak linije koje predstavljaju određene vodotoke, vjerovatno rijeke.²²

Sa druge strane, ako ležeća slova „J“ sa je-drastim ukrasom iz zdjele iz Varne predstavljaju ve-like jedrenjake, onda bi konsenkvetno tome, zlatne cik-cik trake koje se nalaze ispod njih i koje vrlo efektno daju utisak perspektive, morale predstav-ljati veliku vodenu površinu - u ovom slučaju more (motiv tekuće valovnice na drugoj pozlaćenoj po-sudi iz ovog groba takođe bi mogao biti predstava mora). A kad je u pitanju centralni kvadrat sa omfa-losom, nije potrebno puno mašte da bi se ovdje taj omfalos, odnosno “pupak svijeta”, identifikovao sa naseljem u Varni, ili sa nekim obližnjim naseljem u kome je živio, a možda i stolovao pokojnik kome je posvećen ovaj simbolični grob. U cjelini velika zd-jela i njena crno-zlatna ornamentika simbolišu opšte blagostanje i moć vladanja morskim i zemaljskim prostranstvom, u čijem centru leži Varna.

graphite or applying paste-like paints.²¹ A square with a central circle or a small bottom that exists on each of these vessels could represent a local central place, i.e. an autocentric “navel of the world”. The square with a central circle or small base, present in all such vessels, might represent a local central place or an auto-centric “navel of the world.” Ad-ditionally, the wavy and zigzag lines on analogous vessels from Devetaška and Krivodol likely repre-sent specific waterways, probably rivers.²²

On the other hand, if the reclining “J” shapes with sail-like decorations on the Varna bowl rep-resent large sailing ships, then the golden zigzag bands beneath them, which effectively create a sense of perspective, must depict a vast water sur-face - in this case, the sea (flowing wave motif on another gilded vessel from this grave also suggests the idea of the sea). As for the central square with the omphalos, not a lot of imagination is needed to identify this omphalos, or “navel of the world,” with the settlement at Varna or a nearby settlement where the deceased, to whom this symbolic grave is ded-icated, may have lived or ruled. Overall, the large bowl and its black-and-gold ornamentation sym-bolize general prosperity and the power to govern marine and terrestrial expanses, with Varna at their center.

Izvori ilustracija

Sl. 1 Varna I, Grob 2: fotografija prema Ivanov 1988, dopunio B. Govedarica

Sl. 2 Varna I, Grob 4: 1 -fotografija prema Uzunov 2019; 2-3 prema Hansen 2020, dopunio B. Govedarica

Sl. 3 Varna I, grob 4: 1 -fotografija prema Ivanov 1988; 2-3 prema Hansen 2020, dopunio B. Govedarica

Sl. 4, 1 – fotografija prema Eleure, Raub 1991; 4, 2.4 – fotografija prema Stojić, Jocić 2006; 4, 3 - prema Bulatović 2020

Sources for illustrations

Fig. 1 Varna I, Grave 2, photo according Ivanov 1988, supplemented by B. Govedarica

Fig. 2 Varna I, Grave 4: 1 -photo according Uzunov 2019; 2-3 according Hansen 2020, supplemented by B. Govedarica

Fig. 3. Varna I, Grave 4: 1 -photo according Ivanov 1988; 2-3 according Hansen 2020, supplemented by B. Govedarica

Fig. 4, 1 – photo according Eleure, Raub 1991; 4, 2.4 – photo according Stojić, Jocić 2006; 4, 3 - ac-cording Bulatović 2020

²² Up. Георгиева 2012, Таб. 6,1; 30,2.

²¹ Георгиева 2012, 38, Fig. 4; 103, Fig. 9; Ганецовски 2007, 118, fig. 33, 34, 36.

²² Cf. Георгиева 2012, Tab. 6,1; 30,2.

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