

Social and Economic Stratification of the Scythians from the Steppe Region Based on Black-glazed Pottery from Burials

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The reconstruction of the social structures of Archaic societies on the basis of burial data is not a new phenomenon in modern archaeology. Studies using this method primarily developed during the 1980s¹ when C. Renfrew introduced the term “social archaeology”, a sub-discipline of archaeology directed at reconstructing social stratification based on the studies of material remains. Features of social structures in nomadic societies were considered in A.M. Chazanov’s works and after these in the works of N.N. Kradin.² In recent years several international conferences have been devoted to the problems of the social reconstruction of ancient societies and to the study of hierarchical societies in general.³ In particular, the social structures of the early nomads have attracted the attention of many scholars.⁴ With regards to determining the social positions and/or status of individuals some theories suggest that funeral ceremonies could depend on a variety of factors – sex, the age of the deceased, the season in which the burial took place, conditions of death, ethno-cultural imitation, etc.⁵ At the same time, a given society’s level of economic development as reflected in the funeral evidence is considered a major factor in the determination of a group’s social stratification.

The present article considers Steppe Scythian burials of the 5th-4th centuries BC belonging to the so-called third social model, the cattle breeding economy of the nomads and semi-nomads.⁶ The objects of study will be burials from ordinary *necropoleis*. These include three groups studied by E.P. Bunjatjan as well as burials belonging to the highest nobility studied by B.M. Mozolevskij and A.I. Terenožkin. While black-glazed pottery was found in the burials of both of these social groups,⁷ the sets of black-glazed vessels in the burials of the Scythian nobility and in the Royal Scythian tombs have not been taken into account by other researchers. Studies of the social stratification of Scythian societies have instead focused on the absence or presence of specific objects in the burials. Combining the study of the position of certain types of finds and their relationship with the burial ceremonies as well as the sex and age of the deceased allows us to trace not only tendencies in the positions of the grave goods, but also to make suggestions of social and economic character. In the present article only one category of burial inven-

tory – the black-glazed pottery – is used in the analyses of the burials of the Scythian steppe region.

The period of the second half of the 5th and the 4th centuries BC is characterized by a substantial number of Greek objects in Scythian burials in general. Amongst these categories of ancient Greek imports, the pride of place belongs to the transport amphorae, which are included in a wide range of modern archaeological studies. Less attention has been given to the examination of table wares although their value for the study of palaeo-sociological and palaeo-economic phenomena in the life of the population on the northern Black Sea coast is obvious.

The object of this study is one of the table wares groups – the black-glazed pottery. The percentages of this type of pottery (about 12 % of the materials of the Sector NGS in Olbia and 36.17 % in the Western Temenos of Olbia) in the layers of the ancient city centres on the northern Black Sea coast, allow us to speak of a considerable reception of such vessels in this area.⁸ Some of these goods were distributed to the Greeks' nomadic and semi-nomadic neighbours – the Scythians of the steppe region – through coastal centres.

The purpose of this article is to study the reception and distribution of drinking vessels in this region from the end of the 5th-early 4th century BC into the Roman period. This includes the number of vessels, their identification – single finds as well as groups, and the function of specific vessels in the Scythian environment. Through the inventory of the burials, it is possible to draw conclusions not only on the function of the black-glazed vessels in the Scythian environment, but also on the social status of their users.

The table wares from Scythian burials of the steppe region have been studied before.⁹ The appearance, however, of significant, new material in recent years demands additional research. Of the approximately 3,000 excavated Scythian burials in the steppe region known by the end of the 1990s, 1,710 burials contained finds related to this category of utensils. Black-glazed pottery was found in 221 burials which equal about 13 % of the Scythian burials of the steppe region including utensils, taking into account both complete vessels and fragments from published and unpublished burials.¹⁰

This article does not attempt to reconsider the existing classifications of black-glazed pottery, which have been included in the publications of the material of the Mediterranean centers such as Kerameikos, Didyma and Olympia.¹¹ Typologies of black-glazed pottery have also been established in the ancient centers of the northern Black Sea coast,¹² and it was recently suggested that the classification of black-glazed pottery in Scythia did not correlate with the Mediterranean typology.¹³ This hypothesis which was neither confirmed by a catalogue nor by high quality illustrations of the finds is not convincing.

Finds from Scythian burials with detailed descriptions, mapping, and a catalogue have already been published by the author,¹⁴ and in this article only vessels from burials, which have not been looted and with skeletons that have been determined anthropologically are included. The collection has been

made from material kept in the storage rooms of the IA NAN, the historical museums of Ukraine. Visual examinations of the material from the burials in the Scythian steppe region allowed for a specification of the dating, the functional purpose as well as an increased attention to a number of other formal features of pottery. A list of the burials included is found in a table given at the end of this article. Information included in the table reflects the primary purpose of this article comprising only burials in which the functions of the black-glazed vessels could be determined and where data on the property status of the deceased was accessible. In the present article I do not consider the question of the dating of the vessels nor their reception in the Scythian steppe region – all this I presented at an earlier date.¹⁵ Thus, the purpose of this article is to specify and determine the function of black-glazed vessels in the life of the Scythians of the steppe region based on their position in the burials. Furthermore, I also try to use black-glazed pottery as an indicator of the social status of the deceased.

Kylikes and skyphoi

Kylikes of various types are represented by 22 vessels from the published burials (Fig. 1.1).¹⁶ The earliest black-glazed vessels of Attic manufacture in the burials of the Scythian steppe region are three stemmed *kylikes* on low, thin stems (one comes from burial 1 in barrow 9 near the village of Vasil'evka, another from Čmyreva Mogila near the village of Bol'shaja Belozërka, and one from the ditch of barrow 158 at the Mamaj-Gora necropolis near the village of Velikaja Znamenka).

The vessel from Vasil'evka was found in the northern niche of a male grave, identified as the burial of a soldier together with an amphora foot, a black-glazed *skyphos* and a hand-made lamp.¹⁷ At Čmyreva Mogila a *kylix* was found in a hollow in the western wall of a lateral tomb together with five silver vessels.¹⁸ A.Ju. Alekseev dates this burial to the transition between the first and second quarter of the 5th century BC.¹⁹ Similar *kylikes* found at the Athenian Agora are dated to 525-450 BC.²⁰

Instead of stemless *kylikes* the term *bolsal* is now more common in Russian literature although sometimes bowl, *kotyle* or low *skyphos* is used. *Bolsals* are represented by two or three vessels from burials near the village of Zelenoe (barrow 2, burial 3 at Brilevka exhibited at the Cherson State Museum) and from barrow 14, burial 1 at the Rogačik burial ground as well as from the Melitopol' Barrow).²¹ The form of the *kylix* from Brilevka is similar to a *kylix* from a collection of imported pottery from Kyrenaika dated to the first half of the 4th century BC.²²

The varieties of this type of vessel which occur among the material from the Athenian Agora suggest multiple manufacturers working in the late 5th century.²³ Similarities in form and ornament occur in the vessels from burials 3/1992 and 8/1992 in the necropolis of Olbia where the burials are dated to

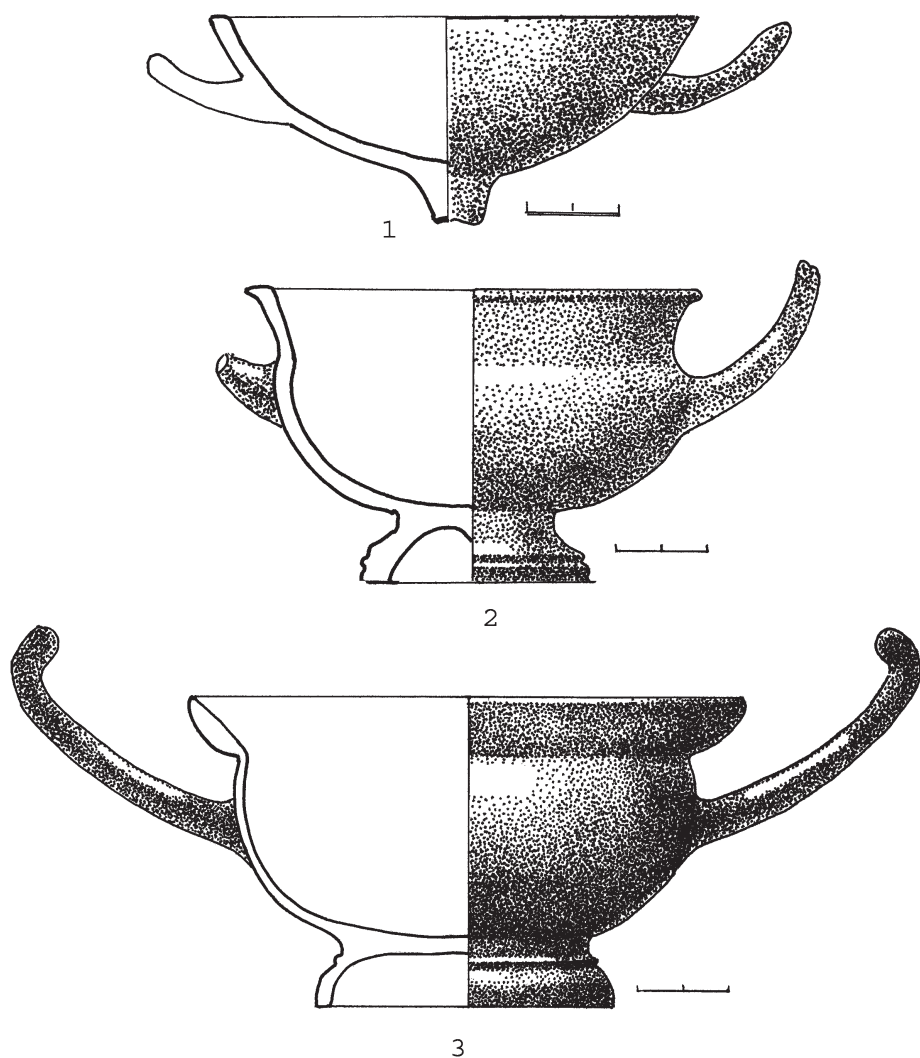


Fig. 1. Kylikes:

1: *Vasil'evka* 9/1

2: *L'ovo* 18/1 (*cup-kantharos*)

3: *Kut* 7/9 (*cup-skyphos*)

the last quarter of the 5th century BC.²⁴ In the necropolis of Panskoe I such vessels occur in tombs 13, 40 and tomb 1 of barrow 12 which are dated to the first quarter of the 5th century BC.²⁵ They are thought to have arrived on the northern Black Sea coast in the last quarter of the 5th century BC and to have stopped sometime in the second quarter of the 4th century BC.²⁶

Burial 3 near the village Zelenoe consisted of two chambers in which were buried a man with weapons and defensive equipment (chamber 1) and

a woman with silver adornments and rich accompanying artifacts (chamber 2). In the male burial the *kylix* (*bolsal*) was positioned near his right hand together with red-clay *lekythoi*. In the female burial the *kylix* (*bolsal*) stood at the entrance to the burial chamber together with a wooden dish for sacrificial food, a knife and a hand-mill with a wooden quern. This is a unique case of a black-glazed vessel found in a female burial which has not lost its function as a drinking vessel. Probably this can be explained on the basis of the richness of the burial which also included a wooden casket with a set of spindles, a mirror, an *oinochoe*, a spindle whorl, red-figured *lekythoi*, a wooden *pyxis* and an aw near the deceased's shoulder l.²⁷

In the Melitopol' Barrow the *kylikes* (*bolsals*) were found near the south-eastern wall of the chamber together with fragments of a cover from a *lekanis*. This tomb is dated to the transition between the third and fourth quarters of the 4th century BC.²⁸

Heavy walled cup-skyphoi

Heavy walled cup-*skyphoi* are represented by 12 vessels, the majority of which have stamped ornaments of palmette crosses on the internal surface of the bottom (these come respectively from the Solocha Barrow; the Solocha group near the village Velikaja Znamenka, Zaporozh'e region; barrow 75, burial 3 from the Trechbratnyj Barrow in Eastern Crimea; barrow 14, burial 1 from the Rogačik burial ground; barrow 7, burial 9 near the village Kut in the Dnepropetrovsk region; barrow 5, the main burial near the village Čkalovka in the Dnepropetrovsk region, and barrow 4, burial 1 near the village Pervomaevka in the Cherson region).²⁹ The palmette ornaments of the last vessel are framed by two concentric circles the space between them filled by ovules. The four palmettes in the ornamentation of the vessels from the Solocha Barrow are located around a ring filled with ovules.³⁰ The same ornament is found on the bottom of a heavy walled cup-*skyphos* from barrow 6, burial 2 near Dneprodnyj in the Zaporozh'e region.³¹

Only the vessel from barrow 4, burial 3 in the Nosaki group near the village Balki in the Zaporozh'e region was undecorated.³² A heavy walled cup-*skyphos* from barrow 1, burial 4 near the village Ol'gino in the Chersonese region was also undecorated; however, on the pallet was the graffito ΔΔΙΙΙ.³³ S.S. Bessonova counts this graffito as a digital record.³⁴

On the bottom of the vessel from barrow 4, burial 1 near the village of Plavni in the Odessa region a stamped ornament with six palmettes connected by arches was found.³⁵ The internal surface of the bottom of a cup-*skyphos* from barrow 3, burial 1 near the village Bogdanovka in the Chersonese region was decorated with two concentric circles the interval between them filled with ovules and surrounded by seven palmettes.³⁶

Cup-*skyphoi* with heavy rims have analogies in the material from the Athenian Agora. They came into circulation after 420 BC and were used until 380

BC.³⁷ They have been found in the *necropoleis* of Istros and Olynthos.³⁸ In the material from Apollonia, the vessels belong to type 7 dated to the middle of the 4th century BC.³⁹ The cup-*skyphos* with heavy rim is a common find among the material of the northern Black Sea coast. The heavy walled *skyphos* with "a cast rim" has been found in material from the family – patrimonial site in the Olbian necropolis where it is dated to about 380 BC.⁴⁰ In the necropolis of Panskoe I such vessels constitute the most numerous type of *skyphos*.⁴¹ Five vessels have been found in the material from the burial ground Nikolaevka, in the lower Dniestr region.⁴² Fragments of two heavy walled cup-*skyphoi* occur among the material from the Kozyrka II settlement.⁴³ In the material of the Panskoe I necropolis earlier and later heavy walled cup-*skyphoi* are allocated as the platen.⁴⁴ The majority of the heavy walled cup-*skyphoi* from Scythian steppe region burials, however, are dated to within the limits of the first half of the 4th century BC.

Light walled cup-skyphoi

Light walled cup-*skyphoi* (Nos. 19-22) occur in four burials. In barrow 18, burial 1 near the village L'vovo (Fig. 1.2), the vessel stood separately from the other vessels near the right shoulder of the buried woman. At her feet a grey-ware jug with a spindle whorl and a hand-made pot were found.⁴⁵ In a male burial from barrow 6 near the settlement of Lenino (Crimea), a cup-*skyphos* stood in the northeastern corner of the chamber near an amphora.⁴⁶ The vessel from L'vovo had stamped ornaments of a wide circle of rouletting and four palmettes in a cross at the center.

At the Athenian Agora the earliest finds of light walled cup-*skyphoi* with stamped ornaments are found in layers of the third quarter of the 5th century BC. At this stage, however, they cannot be dated on the basis of their ornamentation which type only appeared in the second quarter of the 4th century BC. A small number of light walled cup-*skyphoi* were produced after 375 BC.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, they are frequently found at ancient sites on the northern Black Sea coast. Ju.I. Kozub ascribes such vessels to type 5 of the material from the Olbian necropolis and dates them to the first half of the 4th-early 3rd century BC.⁴⁸ V.A. Papanova dates these vessels to the first third of the 4th century BC.⁴⁹ In the necropolis of Panskoe I, the nearest analogy to the vessels described above is *skyphos* no. 68 which is dated to the second quarter of the 4th century BC. Some researchers believe that they occurred in the northern Black Sea coastal areas until the end of the 4th century BC. Apparently, however, E.Ja. Rogov and I.V. Tunkina were correct in suggesting that the reception of such vessels into the markets of the Black Sea coast stopped no later than the middle of the 4th century BC.⁵⁰

It was possible to determine the positions of the cup-*skyphoi* in 17 barrows. Only one vessel from barrow 15 appears to have come from the remains of a funerary feast, having been found in the western sector of the ditch around the

barrow.⁵¹ The others were found inside the barrows: two in the filling of the entrances, in a male burial near the village Bogdanovka and in a female burial near the village Ol'govka.⁵² 13 were found inside the burial chambers.

In the six male burials, the vessels are found in groups of artifacts connected with drinking, for example with an amphora, cup-*skyphos* and bronze *kyathos* in the Trechbratnij Barrow.⁵³ In the female burials, they are found together with needlework, perfumery or with a guessing. For example, in the female burial 1 from barrow 4 near the village Plavni, a cup-*skyphos* was found in the southwestern corner of the burial chamber together with a mirror, a hand-made vessel and a spindle whorl. In barrow 75 of the Solocha group a cup-*skyphos* stood near the feet of the deceased together with a spindle whorl, pieces of sulfur and the remains of a wooden object (a *pyxis*?).⁵⁴ In barrow 7, burial 9 near the village of Kut, a *skyphos* was found south of the skull of the deceased together with two spindle whorls, wooden *pyxides* and a fragment of a bone type-setting spindle.⁵⁵ In barrow 5, burial 1 near the village of Čkalovka, a *skyphos* stood behind the head of the buried woman on a patch of lime stained ground together with two spindle whorls.⁵⁶ Sometimes, often in children's burials, *skyphoi* stood separately e.g. in a headboard (barrow 4, burial 1 near the village of Pervomaevka), or at the left shoulder (barrow 20 at the Ak-Taš burial ground; barrow 6, burial 2 (soldier from Dneprorudnyj)).

Black-glazed cup-*skyphoi* are also found in the burials of the Scythian elite, as a rule together with silver vessels. For example, in the Solocha Barrow a black-glazed cup-*skyphos* was found at the right hand of skeleton B among silver vessels. In the Čmyreva tomb a cup-*skyphos* was found in a hollow in the western wall of the tomb together with five silver vessels. A *skyphos* from a rich man's burial (barrow 1, burial 1 near Vasil'evka) was found in a hollow together with an amphora, a *skyphos* and a hand-made lamp, all of silver.

Cup-kantharoi

Cup-*kantharoi* from the published burials of the Scythian steppe region are represented by twenty-one vessels.⁵⁷ These are vessels with the body of a *kantharos*, but with horizontal handles similar to a *skyphos*, for example vessels from barrow 13, group 1, burial 1 near the village of Kapulovka, together with others from barrow 11, burial 4 and burial 2, the Višnevaja tombs of the Rogačik burial ground near the village of Gjunovka in the Zaporož'e region and from barrow 45 of the Ak-Taš burial ground near the village of Semenovka in Crimea.⁵⁸

Some of the cup-*kantharoi* had stamped ornamentation. As a rule this takes the form of four palmettes connected by arches surrounded by two or three circles of rouletting (eight vessels from barrow 4, burial 2 Il'inka in the Zaporož'e region (Fig. 2.4), from barrow 1, group 5, burial 4 at Pervomaevka in the Cherson region from barrow 1, group 1, burial 1 at Kapulovka, from barrow 7, burial 3 at Kut, from barrow 4, burial 2 at Vladimirovka in Dnepro-

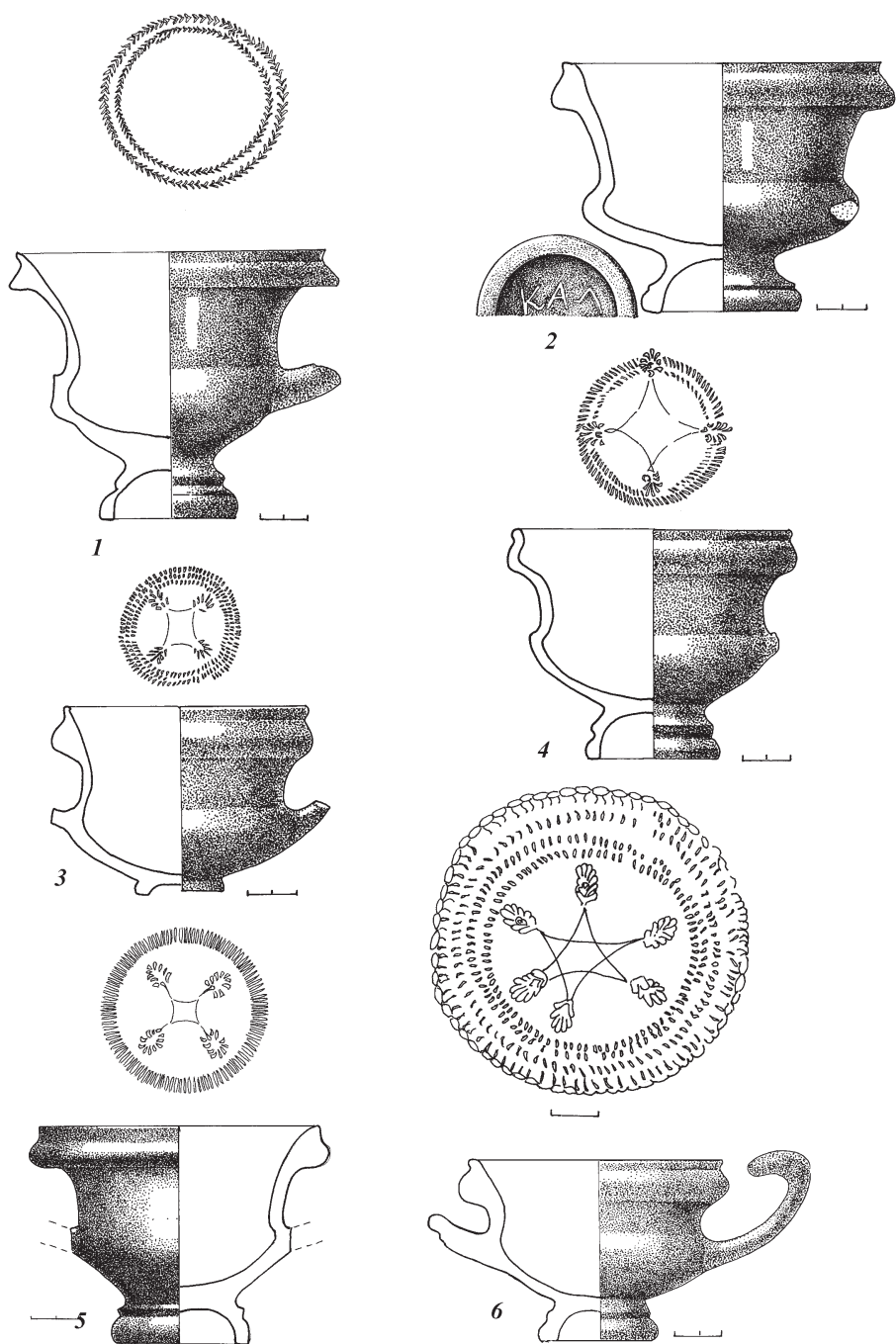


Fig. 2. Kantharoi – kylikes (*cup-kantharoi*):

1: Mamaj-Gora, 143/2

2: Kapulovka 1, 13/1

3: Vladimirovka (Crimea) 1

4: Il'inka 4/2

5: Vinogradovo 13/2

6: Il'inka 4/6

petrovsk the region, from barrow 13, burial 2 at Vinogradovo and from burials 1 and 4 at Vladimirovka in the Crimea (Figs. 2.3, 2.5)).

The ornamentation of the cup-*kantharos* from barrow 4, burial 6 near the village Il'inka consisted of six palmettes connected by arches (Fig. 2.6). One vessel had been decorated on the bottom with an ornament consisting of two circles of rouletting (barrow 143, burial 2 at the Mamaj-Gora necropolis (Fig. 2.1)).⁵⁹ The ornamentation of the other cup-*kantharoi* was simpler: concentric circles of rouletting (for example items from barrow 4, group 5, burial 3 from Pervomaevka). On the cup-*kantharos* from Ak-Taš burial ground (barrow 40, burial 1 and barrow 52, burial 1) a double circle of rouletting is found.

Decoration in the form of vertical ribbing on the body of the vessel is not characteristic for the cup-*kantharoi*. Only two vessels were decorated like this: the vessel from barrow 21, burial 4 near the village of Kut and the one from barrow 4, burial 1 of the Ostraja Mogila.⁶⁰ Cup-*kantharoi* with this type of decoration occur in burials dated to the third quarter of the 4th century BC. Similar vessels were found in the ancient settlements of the northern Black Sea coast. They are similar to the type 10 *kylix* of Ivanov's classification dated from the middle to the second half of the 4th century BC. The form of the cup-*kantharos* from burial 4 at the Nikolaevka burial ground was similar to the form of a vessel from barrow 4, burial 2 near the village of Il'inka.⁶¹ These are *kylikes* of type 9 according to Ivanov's classification dated to the middle or the third quarter of the 4th century BC.⁶² The cup-*kantharos* from the material of the family necropolis of Olbia dates to the third quarter of the 4th century BC.⁶³ The cup-*kantharos* with moulded rim from barrow 43 in the necropolis of Panskoe I is dated to the third quarter of the 4th century BC.⁶⁴

The production of vessels in this series began in Attica at the beginning of the 4th century BC and continued for three quarters of a century. The nearest Athenian analogies to the described vessels in terms of shape are vessels nos. 652-653 dated to around 380-350 BC.⁶⁵ Vessels decorated with four to six palmettes connected by arches within rouletting appeared in Attica at the end of the 5th century BC and continued to be produced throughout the entire 4th century.

The cup-*kantharos* from barrow 1, burial 9 at Kamenka-Dneprovskaja costs the private residence in this group of ceramic.⁶⁷ In Antiquity a ball was placed within the rather massive moulded rim of this vessel creating a sound similar to a child's rattle when shaken. This unique rattling vessel from the Scythian burials of the steppe region was found by the author in the storage of the Institute of archaeology (NAS) of Ukraine. On the basis of its shape the vessel is dated to the third quarter of the 4th century BC. This date is not contradicted by the dating of the ornamentation on the bottom of the vessel.⁶⁸

The earliest rattling cups were made in Attic workshops. In the hollow stems of such vessels pre-fired ceramic balls were placed.⁶⁹ In the northern Black Sea coastal areas rattling vessels are known from Nymphaion.⁷⁰ Ceramic balls were placed inside the rims of cup-*kantharoi* and *kantharoi* during the 4th

century BC. There are some assumptions as to the function of such vessels, perhaps they were used for games during a festival or for ritual purposes. In our Scythian burial the rattling vessel was found on the right side of the deceased, next to the funeral stretcher, apart from other groups of vessels connected with the consumption of food or drink. In the right hand of the dead woman there was a mirror. The burial rituals of rich Scythians are known to have involved rattling in order to scare away malicious spirits.⁷¹ The cup-*kantharos* from barrow 1, burial 9 at Kamenka-Dneprovskaja may have served this function.

It was possible to determine the position of sixteen cup-*kantharoi* in the barrows. Four came from male burials: the vessel from barrow 13, group 1, burial 1 of the Kapulovka burial ground was found together with an amphora and a tray. The vessel from barrow 4, burial 2 at Il'inka stood together with a silver *kylix* and an amphora. The cup-*kantharos* from barrow 4, burial 6, that of a child, at Il'inka was found together with a quiver and arrows. The vessel from barrow 13, burial 1 at Vinogradovo was found at the entrance to the funeral chamber. The majority of the cup-*kantharoi* from male burials comes from sets of vessels connected with drinking. These are burials of warriors. The warrior in barrow 4 at Il'inka, who was buried with a silver vessel and other rich artefacts, possibly belonged to the military elite.

There are only two female burials with cup-*kantharoi*: in barrow 2, group 2, burial 1 near Kapulovka the vessel stood near the head of the deceased. Close to it was found an iron needle as well as a clay spindle whorl. In barrow 4, burial 1 of the Ostraja Mogila group a ribbed cup-*kantharos* was found at the left hand of the dead woman together with a mirror. Thus, cup-*kantharoi* as well as *kylikes* (*skyphoi*) are grouped with spindle whorls and mirrors in female burials.

Two cup-*kantharoi* were found in children's burials. One vessel from a burial in a barrow at Vladimirovka in Crimea was found together with a bead, a suspension bracket of Egyptian faience, a fragment of an iron bracelet, and a hand-made pot. The second one was found together with two hand-made pots.

Three cup-*kantharoi* come from double burials. In burial 143 of the Mamaj-Gora burial ground, one of them stood near the heads of the skeletons together with a grey-clay jug and a hand-made pot. In the double child burial in barrow 7, burial 3 near the village of Kut a second vessel stood near to the remains of a wooden *pyxis*, a flat stone for grinding, and a bronze pin. In barrow 21, burial 4 at the same site a cup-*kantharos* from the looted double burial were found in the filling of the chamber.

Thus, cup-*kantharoi* as well as *kylikes* (*skyphoi*) are grouped with objects connected to drinking in male burials. In female burials they are grouped with objects connected to personal toilette or to ritual actions. On the basis of these observations, it is possible to define the sex of the deceased in children's burials as well as in looted burials.

Kantharoi

Kantharoi from burials of the Scythian steppe region are represented by a collection of 35 vessels.⁷² The majority of these vessels have stocky bodies, moulded rims, and a short foot. The vertically set handles are rectangular in section, and their horizontal edges form a uniform line with the rim. A third of the *kantharos* from barrow 13, burial 4 from the burial ground Butor 1 (Fig. 3.2) was unslipped.⁷³ The slip of the *kantharos* from barrow 4, burial 1 in the Solocha group was bright red as a result of misfiring.⁷⁴ Such defects are formed when firing a large numbers of vessels at the same time.

The majority of the *kantharoi* are undecorated, for example vessels from barrow 3, burial 2 near the village of Otradnoe (Fig. 3.4), from barrow 2, burial 8 near the village of Nečajanoe, from a barrow near the village of Voznesenovka, and from barrow 2, burial 1 near the village of Pljuščevka in the Nikolaev region.⁷⁵ *Kantharoi* came from barrow 1, burial 3 in the Lis'ja Mogila group, from the looted burial in chamber 5 in the Čertomlyk Barrow, from barrow 31, burial 1, barrow 33, burial 1, and barrow 85, burial 2 at the Vysšetarasovka burial ground, from barrow 5 and barrow 12, burial 2 at the burial ground near the village of Vladimirovka, barrow 4, group 2, burials 1 and 2 in the Nikopol' barrow field and from Scythian burials in the steppe zone on the right bank of the Dnieper River.⁷⁶

Only six burials in the steppe zone on the left bank of the Dnieper River contained *kantharoi*: barrow 19, burial 1 of the at the Rogačik barrow field, barrow 26, burial 1 near the village of Širokoe, barrow 2, burial 2 at the village of Vil'na Ukraina, burials 1 and 2 at the village of Novomichajlovka, and barrow 8, burials 1 and 2 near the village of Černjanka in the Cherson region.⁷⁷ Some *kantharoi* were located in Crimea: barrow 13, burial 1 at a settlement of Lenino, barrow 18, burial 1 at the village of Astanino, and barrow 3, burial 1 at the village of Oktjabr'.⁷⁸ One *kantharos* was found on altar no. 2 at the burial ground of Kanfarka on the island of Chortica.⁷⁹ Like the *kylikes* (*skyphoi*), *kantharoi* were decorated with stamps located on the internal floor of the base. The groups of stamped ornamentation, often circles executed by rouletting, are generally repetitious. The *kantharos* from barrow 20, double burial 4 at the Mamaj-Gora necropolis was decorated with three circles executed by short slanting notches [=rouletting?] on the internal surface similar to the ornamentation in the bottom of the *kantharos* from burial 10/1992 from the Olbian necropolis. It dates to 340-325 BC.⁸⁰ Three circles decorate the internal surface of the bottom of a *kantharos* from burial 3, from a barrow at the village of Vladimirovka, Crimea. A decoration of two circles is found on the *kantharos* from barrow 2, group 5, burial 2 at the village of Kovalevka in the Nikolaev region (Fig. 3.1).⁸¹ Three concentric circles made up from notches decorated a *kantharos* with ribbed body from barrow 1, burial 2 near the village of Pervomaevka (Fig. 3.3).

The following *kantharoi* were stamped with four palmettes on the bottom: the vessel from barrow 69, group 2, burial 1 at the village of Širokoe, another



Fig. 3. Kantharoi:

1: Kovalevka 5, 2/2

2: Butor 1, 13/4

3: Gajmanovo Pole, 27/4

4: Otradnoe 3/2

5: Širokoe, Ostraja Mogila, 4/1

6: Pervomaevka 6, 1/2

from barrow 4, burial 1 at the village of Branoe Pole, and two from barrow 8, burials 1 and 2 at the necropolis near the village of Černjanka respectively.

The *kantharoi* with ribbed exterior are considered to be of most recent date. The ribbed decoration on the vessel from barrow 1, group 6, burial 2 at Per-vomaevka had short strokes located under the corner of each other under the handles (Fig. 3.6). The foot of a *kantharos* with ribbed exterior from barrow 27, female burial 4 at the Gajmanovo Pole necropolis (Fig. 3.3) has been broken off. The vessel from barrow 22, burial 9 at the Kut necropolis was covered by a delicate olive color and showed traces of repairs.

In the material from the Athenian Agora, *kantharoi* with ribbed bodies have been found in layers of the second quarter of the 4th century BC; however, they continued in use until the end of the same century and even into the 3rd century BC.⁸² S. Rotroff dates the "stocky ribbed classical *kantharoi*" to the last quarter of the 4th century BC.⁸³ During the same period and slightly later, at the beginning of the 3rd century BC, they appear in the Scythian burials of the steppe region.

Kantharoi with West Slope decoration are represented by vessels from two Scythian burials, both vessels related to the "garland group of ornaments." The *kantharos* from barrow 24, burial 1 at Ak-Taš necropolis was decorated with a garland on the lip and the base executed with a diluted, white paint. The same paint was used to execute the inscription EKATHΣ located on the neck. The closest parallels to the decoration on the vessel from the Ak-Taš necropolis are the garlands on the *kantharoi* from the Vatican G 116 group produced in the first quarter of the 3rd century BC.⁸⁴

The *kantharos* with ribbed exterior and garland decoration from barrow 2, burial 1 at the village of Pljuščevka in the Nikolaev region has parallels in the material from the Athenian Agora dated to the second quarter of the 4th century BC.⁸⁵ The decoration on the vessel from Pljuščevka is close to the flattened garlands which were popular in the 4th century BC. On the basis of both form and decoration, such vessels are dated to the last quarter of the 4th century BC.⁸⁶

Scythian burials in which *kantharoi* are found are either female or children's burials. None of the intact burials with *kantharoi* are male. In two cases, Lenino and Branoe Pole, *kantharoi* in the female burials were not accompanied by other finds. In all other burials, *kantharoi* were deposited with objects connected with spinning, sewing or magic: e.g. two leaden spindle whorls and iron needles from Otradnoe, spindle whorls and needles from barrow 20 at Mamaj-Gora, spindle whorls and needles from Vysšetarasovka, spindle whorls from barrow 22 at the village of Kut, spindle whorls and an awl from a barrow at the village of Vladimirovka in Crimea, a stone spindle whorl from barrow 24 at the Ak-Taš necropolis, and a spindle whorl from barrow 2 at the village of Vil'na Ukraina. Finds are also connected to women's toilettes: e.g. a mirror with a bronze handle from barrow 20 at the Mamaj-Gora necropolis, a mirror and a piece of ochre from barrow 31 at Vysšetarasovka, a mirror from bar-

row 2 near Vil'na Ukraina, and an amphora-shaped bead from barrow 27 at Gajmanovo Pole.

Five *kantharoi* occur in children's burials at barrow 1, burial 2, group Lis'ja Mogila at Ordžonikidze; barrow 26, group 2, burial 1 at Širokoe; barrow 4, burial 1 at the Solocha group; barrow 85, burial 2 at Vysšetarasovka; and barrow 3, burial 1 at Oktjabr'. All of them were found in the vicinity of the heads of the buried except in barrow 12, burial 2 at the village of Vladimirovka, where the *kantharos* stood by the deceased's hip. As in the female burials, *kantharoi* from children's burials occur with artifacts connected with spinning and sewing – e.g. a spindle whorl from barrow 85, burial 2 at the village of Vysšetarasovka – or with groups of jewelry – e.g. a golden earring, a bead and a bracelet from a barrow of the Solocha group and a bronze earring from barrow 85 at the village of Vysšetarasovka.

Unlike cup-*kantharoi* and *kylikes* (*skyphoi*), *kantharoi* are rarely found at Scythian sites near the Dnieper River. There were only 53 black-glazed fragments, mainly *kantharoi* and bowls, out of the total 174 fragments of table wares from the entire period of occupation of the fortified Kamenskoe settlement.⁸⁷ Of these, only 28 fragments could possibly belong to *kantharoi*. Only one fragment of a black-glazed *kantharos* was found at the settlement of Lysaja Gora.

Saltcellars

Saltcellars are represented by finds from 19 Scythian burials of the steppe region (Fig. 4). They are small, open vessels with inward-turned rims (Fig. 4.5). S. Rotroff names both shallow and deep cellars.⁸⁸ Three saltcellars were decorated: four palmettes were seen on the saltcellar from barrow 4, burial 2, three palmettes were seen on the vessel from barrow 40, burial 2 at Vysšetarasovka.

Deep vessels of a small size with inverted rims were found in six rich burials. All of these have a stamped decoration: five palmettes on the vessels from barrow 4, burial 2 and barrow 1, group 22, the burial 1 at village of Kapulovka (Fig. 4.7, six palmettes on the vessel from barrow 2, group 2, burial 2 at Pervomaevka (Fig. 4.1. Vessels of this type occur in female burials with gold jewelry. Black-glazed plates occur in burials of the same social layer at Vyvodovo 49/2 (Fig. 4.4), Butor 1 4/2 (Fig. 4.3) and Mamaj-Gora 16/1.

Saltcellars (Bowls) with out-turned rims, S. Rotroff's classical type, and with complex stamped decoration occur in burials of the highest nobility and in the royal barrows.⁸⁹ Fine examples are the saltcellars (bowls) from the female burial at Tovsta Mogyla, from chamber 5 at Čertomlyk and from a barrow, group 4, burial 3 at Nosaki (Figs. 6.2, 6.6, and 6.8). The nearest parallels are bowls of type 1 from the settlement of Čajka.⁹⁰

All finds of saltcellars and plates from female or children's burials are related to objects connected with magic or needlework.

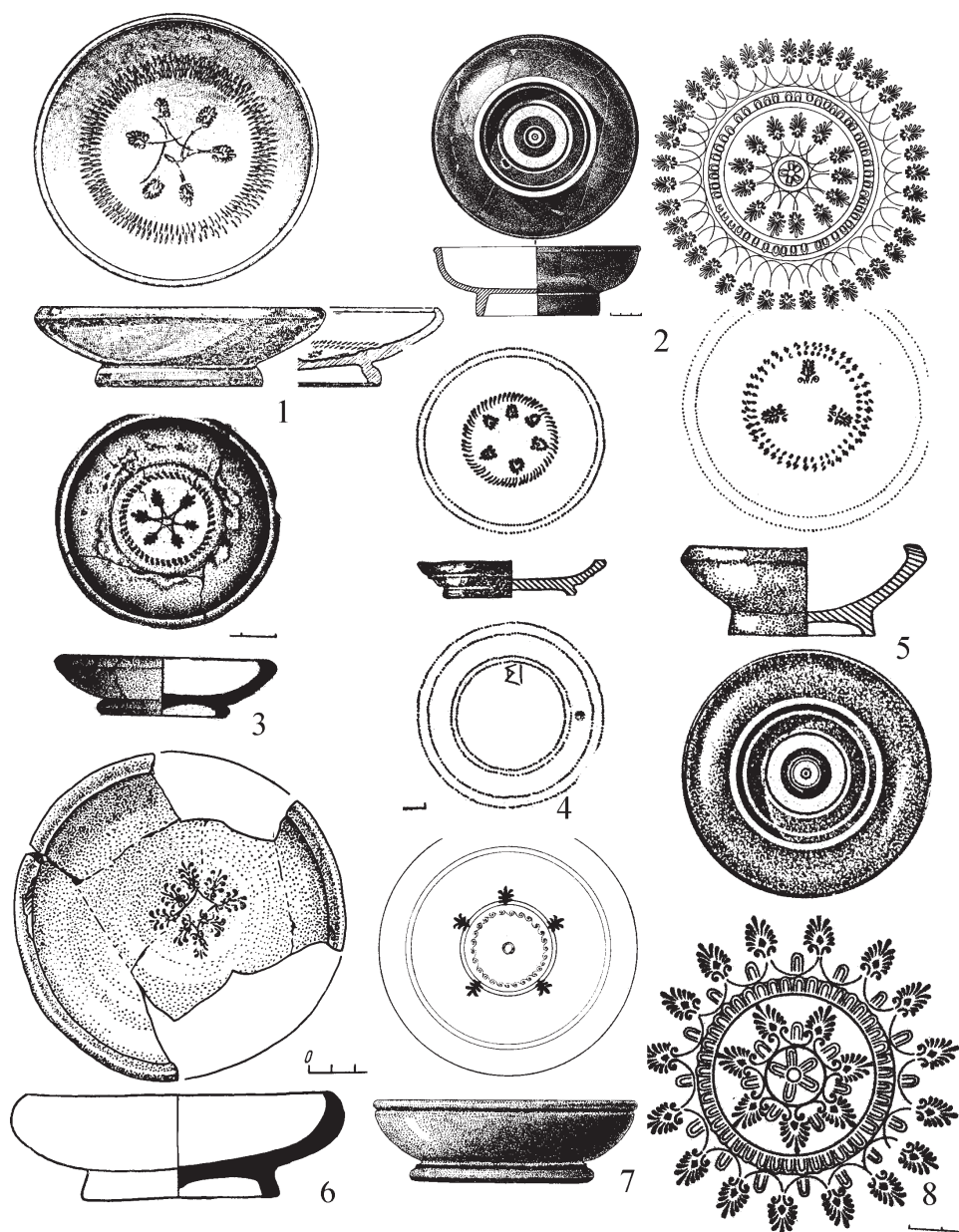


Fig. 4. Saltcellars, bowls and plates:

- 1: Pervomaeovka 2, 2/2 (echinus bowl)
 2: Tolstaja Mogila
 3: Butor 1, 4/2 (not a plate)
 4: Vyvodoovo 49/2

- 5: Vysšetaravovka 40/2
 6: Čertomlyk, chamber 5 (not out-turned rim)
 7: Kapulovka, 22, 1/1 (bowl)
 8: Nosaki 4/3

Summary

The black-glazed *kylikes* (*skyphoi*) and *kantharoi* presented above represent the entire inventory of these types of vessels from the Scythian burials of the steppe region. The first black-glazed vessels, the stemmed *kylikes*, appear in the Scythian steppe around the middle of the 5th century BC. However, they appear as isolated instances in the steppe and forest-steppe zones of the northern Black Sea coast as the Scythians were presumably introduced to the new world of trade goods.

From the last quarter of the 5th century BC *bolsals* appear in the Scythian regions of the northern Black Sea coast. These finds in the Scythian burials of the steppe region, however, are still isolated.

Only heavy walled cup-*skyphoi* come into the Scythian steppe region on a regular basis. They appeared in Scythia in the last quarter of the 5th century BC, and from the first half of the 4th century BC they became more common. Most likely the intermediaries in the distribution of this Attic production were inhabitants of the northern Black Sea coastal centers.

Even though they are quite common at other centers, light walled *skyphoi* appeared in the Scythian steppe region in isolated instances during a short period of time in the first half of the 4th century BC. According to the evidence from the settlement and necropolis of Panskoe I, the reception of these vessels into the markets of the Black Sea coast stopped no later than the middle of the 4th century BC.⁹¹

Black-glazed cup-*kantharoi* appear in the Athenian Agora from the middle of the 4th century BC. In the Scythian burials of the steppe region they first turn up around the middle or third quarter of the 4th century BC. Cup-*kantharoi* with ribbed bodies seem to have first appeared later. On the basis of the material from the Athenian Agora, their manufacture is estimated to begin in the third quarter of the 4th century BC. Hence, in Scythian burials they most likely began to be included at the end of the 4th century BC. The quantity and localization of burials with cup-*kantharoi* suggest that such vessels came into the region in batches.

Kantharoi with moulded rims appeared in the 5th century BC judging from the material of the Athenian Agora, but the main period of their distribution was the 4th century BC. In the steppe zone of the northern Black Sea coast, these vessels appear from the middle of the 4th century BC and occur during the whole of the second half of the century. Later, *kantharoi* with ribbed bodies appear. In the Athenian Agora they have been found in layers of the second quarter of the 4th century BC and the beginning of the 3rd century BC, but they continue to be found in layers from the end of the century and even later.⁹² S. Rotroff dates them to the last quarter of the 4th century BC. Two *kantharoi* from the Scythian burials of the steppe region were decorated in West Slope style. S. Rotroff ascribes this style to the group of ornaments with garlands. The decoration on the vessel from the Ak-Taš necropolis is the closest to the

garlands on the *kantharoi* of the Vatican G 116 group made in the first quarter of the 3rd century BC.⁹³ The decoration on a vessel from Pljuščevka finds its closest parallel in garlands which were popular in the last quarter of the 4th century BC. Thus, the latest black-glazed Attic pottery to enter into Scythia belongs to the last quarter of the 4th or the beginning of the 3rd century BC. This large collection of *kantharoi* from the Scythian burials of the steppe region allows us to speak of a massive import of black-glazed vessels of this type. By the end of the 4th century BC, however, the number of *kantharoi* arriving in Scythia was reduced. The last type was, most likely, the group of *kantharoi* with ribbed bodies.

On the role of the ancient centers of the northern Black Sea coast

Olbia and the Bosporan cities played an intermediary role in the trade of Attic black-glazed pottery. A plenty testifies to it black-glazed vessels with graffiti not only a condition of vessels in burials (many of them it is strong abrasion) but also rather. There is, however, no widespread distribution of Greek writing in the Scythian environment. Black-glazed vessels seem to have appeared in the ancient city-centers of the northern Black Sea coast in massive quantities in the early period. S.S. Bessonova mentions a concentration of black-glazed vessels with graffiti in a southern sub zone of the steppe and in Crimea where there were close trade and exchange connections between Scythians and Greeks. Bessonova suggests that vessels with inscriptions were highly valued because of the magic properties of the Greek letters.⁹⁴ The reception of black-glazed vessels into Scythia can be viewed as a result of constant trade and exchange and priests could have been engaged in these activities.

Mapping the basic types of black-glazed pottery allows for a discussion of their distribution.⁹⁵ In general, the majority of the black-glazed vessels went to the inhabitants of the geographical and economic region of Kamenskoe. The black-glazed *kylikes* (*skyphoi*) are found all over the Scythian steppe region. The area of the greatest distribution of heavy walled cup-*skyphoi*, however, is the steppe area of the left bank of the Dnieper River (the region of Kamenskoe). Probably, heavy walled cup-*skyphoi* decorated with four palmettes were introduced to the Scythians of the steppe area on the left bank of the Dnieper River in the first half of the 4th century BC. Six such vessels were found in geographical proximity at Solocha, Rogačik, Pervomaevka, Dneprorudnyj and Ol'gino. The distribution of the cup-*kantharoi* testifies to the restriction of these vessels to the Kamenka area, the Kapulovka settlements as well as to Crimea.

Burials with *kantharoi* are distributed equally all over the Scythian steppe region. The largest bulk of *kantharoi*, however, went to the inhabitants on the right bank of the Dnieper River in the geographical and economic region of Kapulovskoe.

Function of black-glazed vessels in the life of the Scythians of the steppe region

The examination of the position of the *kylikes* (*skyphoi*) in male, female and children's burials allows for an evaluation of a change in their functions. Originally, black-glazed vessels were used by men for drinking. Thus, in all male burials *kylikes* (*skyphoi*) and cup-*kantharoi* are found in burial inventories connected with food or drink. Furthermore, it is important to note that the majority of vessels from male burials have a high quality slip and are found in good condition, without repairs or fractures.

In female burials *kylikes* (*skyphoi*), cup-*kantharoi* and *kantharoi* are found in burials together with spindles, spindle whorls and mirrors which suggests that they were not associated with drinking. All the vessels from female burials are repaired or have their handles or feet broken off. It would appear that broken vessels for drinking were used by women for the storage of spindle whorls, needles, spindles, and occasionally beads. This characteristic is repeated in children's burials. Sometimes it is possible to define a ritual or magic use of the black-glazed vessels, e.g. scaring away malicious spirits such as the rattling vessel from Kamenka-Dneprovskaja. Finds of black-glazed vessels together with magic objects such as mirrors or spindles can testify to their ritual use.

Through the example of the black-glazed vessels from Scythian burials, it is possible to track functional changes based on their occurrence in different environments. In the beginning, black-glazed pottery was used by the inhabitants of the coastal centers. Then it spread to the Scythian men who used it for drinking. Only later was the pottery used by women for needlework and in rituals. Most likely, these changes occurred within the limits of one generation.

Social and economic stratification of Scythian burials with black-glazed pottery

Apparently, the main recipients of these vessels were the "middle class", the representatives of the Scythian aristocracy who were carrying out administrative functions (model 3 below) and made up 15-20 % of the population of the Scythian steppe region.⁹⁶ It is possible to further divide the social stratification of the recipients of the black-glazed vessels into three social layers.

1. Vessels for drinking were found in the burials of Scythians, often soldiers. Thirteen *kylikes* (*skyphoi*) and cup-*kantharoi* occur in male burials of the Scythian steppe region. Apart from vessels for drinking, weapons are also found in these burials. In female burials of this social layer, the occurrence of broken and/or repaired *kantharoi* and *kylikes* (*skyphoi*) reflect a secondary use.
2. Some vessels for drinking are found in burials with defensive equipment. Here, as a rule, black-glazed vessels appear with silver vessels for drinking. Herodotus mentioned soldiers who "have killed many husbands" and

have two *kylikes*. Notably, in burials of women with a rich inventory and a small amount of gold jewelry, salt cellars often occur.

3. Black-glazed vessels for drinking are not characteristic for the burials of the highest Scythian elite. The only black-glazed *kylikes* (*skyphoi*) in this type of burial appeared with a set of silver vessels in Solocho. Another *kylix* (*skyphos*) was found in a niche of Čmyreva Mogila. In female burials of this rank, salt cellars with elaborate stamped decoration occur e.g. in a barrow of the Nosaki group at Tovsta Mogyla.

Conclusion

The first black-glazed vessels, stemmed *kylikes*, appear in the Scythian steppe region in the middle of the 5th century BC. From the last quarter of the 5th century BC, *bolsals* appear in the Scythian region of the northern Black Sea coast. In the last quarter of the 5th or first half of the 4th centuries BC, *kylikes* (*skyphoi*) of various types began to be used in the steppe region. From the middle of the 4th century BC, various types of *kantharoi* appeared in the steppe zone all through the second half of the century. *Kantharoi* and cup-*kantharoi* with ribbed bodies appeared in the second quarter of the 4th century BC and the beginning of the 3rd century BC. They continue to be found in layers of the end of that century and even later. From the last quarter of the 4th century BC up to the first quarter of the 3rd century BC, *kantharoi* decorated in the West-Slope style are found in the steppe region.

In the 5th century BC the reception of black-glazed vessels in the Scythian steppe region had an individual character. From the first half of the 4th century BC on, small batches of *kylikes* (*skyphoi*) are produced, not in Attica, but most likely in the centers of the northern Black Sea coast. Priests may have played a role in the establishment of such production by their engagement in the “transferring” of the magic of these objects. The quantity and distribution of burials with cup-*kantharoi* also allow us to speak of small batches of these vessels.

As a rule, vessels from female burials have obvious damage (handles are broken off, the slip is shabby). This fact testifies to an essential prolongation of the use of black-glazed vessels in the form of a secondary use within the female sphere. As has been correctly noticed by B.N. Mozolevskij, it is necessary to take into account the probably prolonged “life-span” when using black-glazed pottery to date Scythian burials.⁹⁷

The main recipients of the black-glazed vessels were the representatives of the Scythian aristocracy making up 15-20 % of the population of the Scythian steppe region,⁹⁸ but finds of this nature are not characteristic for the burials of the highest Scythian elite. Furthermore, this analysis of burials with black-glazed vessels has resulted in the definition of three social layers of recipients. Consequently, I suggest that it is possible to use black-glazed vessels as social indicators.

Notes

- 1 For example, Masson 1976; Gening 1984; Gibson 1984; Renfrew 1984.
- 2 Chazanov 1975; 2000; Kradin 2002b.
- 3 Kradin 2000; Kradin 2002a.
- 4 Kradin, 2005, 237-250.
- 5 For example, Binford 1971.
- 6 Gavriljuk 2000, 44-45.
- 7 Bunjatjan 1978; Terenožkin & Mozolevskij 1988.
- 8 Gavriljuk 2006, 195, pl. 1.
- 9 Gavriljuk 1989.
- 10 Gavriljuk 1999, 60-61, 414.
- 11 Sparkes & Talcott 1970; for the later periods see see Rotroff 1997.
- 12 Papanova 2000; Rogov & Tunkina 1998; Monachov & Rogov 1990.
- 13 Fialko 2005; 2006.
- 14 Gavriljuk 2006.
- 15 Gavriljuk 2006, 151-181.
- 16 Gavriljuk 2006, nos. 1-22.
- 17 Grebennikov & Rebedailo 1991, 120, 121, fig. 1.11.
- 18 OAK for 1909, 1913, 128.
- 19 Alekseev 1991, 47.
- 20 Sparkes & Talcott 1970, nos. 398-413.
- 21 Evdokimov et al. 1983, 27; Fialko 2004, 89, fig. 1.5; Terenožkin & Mozolevskij 1988, 30.
- 22 Elrashedy 2002, pl. 99.
- 23 Sparkes & Talcott 1970, 107, nos. 541, 557.
- 24 Papanova 2000, 200, fig. 1ú, 3, a.
- 25 Monachov & Rogov 1990, 140, 141, pls. 3.57, 4.53, 4.56.
- 26 Rogov & Tunkina 1998, 163.
- 27 Evdokimov et al. 1983, 270.
- 28 Terenožkin & Mozolevskij 1988, 157.
- 29 Mancevič 1987, 23, 94, 96, fig. 3.1; Meljukova 1999, 69; Bessonova 1973, 247; Fialko 2004, 88; Berezovec 1960, 54; Kovaleva 1999, 131, fig. 2.3; Evdokimov & Fridman 1987, 102-103.
- 30 Mancevič 1987, 23, 95, ДН 19131/22.
- 31 Kuznecova & Kuznecov 2005, 320-321.
- 32 Bidzilja, Boltrik, Mozolovskij & Savovskij 1977, 117.
- 33 Bessonova, Kovalev & Kubyšev 2005, 39-40.
- 34 Bessonova 2005, 12.
- 35 Suničuk & Fokeev 1984, 108.
- 36 Bitkovskij & Polin 1987, 76, 79.
- 37 Sparkes & Talcott 1970, 112, nos. 612-623.
- 38 Robinson 1933, pl. 151.534.
- 39 Ivanov 1963, 184.
- 40 Papanova 2000, 196, 207, fig. 8.
- 41 Rogov & Tunkina 1998, 163, nos. 58-67, fig. 5.
- 42 Meljukova 1975, 161-162, figs. 43.8-10, 44.1, 44.3, 44.6.
- 43 Danil'čenko 2000, 218, pl. 1.5-6.
- 44 Monachov & Rogov 1990, 141-143.

- 45 Kubyšev, Nikolova & Polin 1982, 140.
- 46 Jakovenko, Černenko & Korpusova 1970, 157.
- 47 Sparkes & Talcott 1970, 111, nos. 605, 608.
- 48 Kozub 1974, 46, figs. 6-7.
- 49 Papanova 2000, 196, 202, fig. 4.
- 50 Rogov & Tunkina 1998, 165, 168, fig. 5.1.
- 51 Andruch & Toščev 2004, 61.
- 52 Bitkovskij & Polin 1987, 76; Bessonova, Koval'ev & Kubyšev 2005, 40.
- 53 Bessonova 1973, 247.
- 54 Meljukova 1999, 69.
- 55 Berezovec 1960, 54.
- 56 Kovaleva 1999, 131.
- 57 Gavriljuk, Rassamakin & Otroščenko 2005.
- 58 Bessonova, Bunjatan & Gavriljuk 1978, 42, fig. 2.4.
- 59 Plešivenko 1991, 63; Evdokimov & Fridman 1991, 90, Terenožkin, Il'inskaja, Černenko & Mozolevskij 1973, 128, fig. 15.16, Berezovec 1960, 52, Čeredničenko & Boldin 1977, 129-136, Kolotuchin 2000, 14, Kolotuchin 2000, 11, 49, fig. 28.6.
- 60 Andruch & Toščev 2004, 29-46.
- 61 Ol'govskij & Polin 1977, 37.
- 62 Meljukova 1975, 68, 242, figs. 44.2, 44.4.
- 63 Ivanov 1963, 186.
- 64 Papanova 2000, 210.
- 65 Monachov & Rogov 1990, 149, pl. 12.69.
- 66 Sparkes & Talcott 1970, 118-119, nos. 652-653, 659.
- 67 Gavriljuk, Rassamakin & Otroščenko 2005, 165.
- 68 Schilbach 1995, 93, typ 2 (K1342).
- 69 Vickers 1973, 196-197, pl. 40; 1980, 183-184, pl. 29.
- 70 Kruglov 2004, 104.
- 71 Bessonova 1982, 105.
- 72 Gavriljuk 2006, nos. 44-78.
- 73 Serova & Jarovoj 1987, 109.
- 74 Meljukova 1999, 61, 72.
- 75 Grebennikov 1980, 152, 155, Šapošnikova 1976.
- 76 Mozolevskij 1980, 123; Alekseev, Murzin & Rolle 1991, 61, 216; Bunjatjan, Čeredničenko & Murzin 1977, 76, 84-85; Čeredničenko & Boldin 1977, 137-139; Čeredničenko, 1976, 271-272; Grakov 1962, 61.
- 77 Leskov 1971, 55-56; Kubyšev 1979; 1985.
- 78 Jakovenko, Černenko & Korpusova 1970, 161; 173; Kolotuchin 2000, 32.
- 79 Ostapenko 2001, 63, 65.
- 80 Papanova 2000, 212, fig. 11.
- 81 Kovpanenko, Bunjatjan & Gavriljuk 1978, 118-119.
- 82 Sparkes & Talcott 1970, 122, no. 711.
- 83 Rotroff 1997, 85, no. 38.
- 84 Rotroff 1997, 98, no. 178.
- 85 Sparkes & Talcott 1970, 122, no. 721.
- 86 Rotroff 1997, 85, nos. 28 and 31.
- 87 Gavriljuk 1999, 250, pl. 5.11.
- 88 Rotroff 1997, 161-162.
- 89 Rotroff 1997, 157, nos. 868-870, 879.
- 90 Egorova 2005, 219.

- 91 Rogov & Tunkina 1998, 165.
- 92 Sparkes & Talcott 1970, 122.
- 93 Rotroff 1997, 85, 98, no. 178.
- 94 Bessonova 2005, 18.
- 95 Gavriljuk 2006, 170.
- 96 Bunjatjan 1985, 96-100.
- 97 Terenozhkin & Mozolevskij 1988, 146-149.
- 98 Buniatian 1985, 96-100.

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