

BYZANTINE MODELS OF SERBIAN MEDIEVAL POTTERY¹

Vesna BIKIĆ

RÉSUMÉ : *La production de la céramique serbe du XIV^e-XV^e siècles a subi une influence provenant de différents centres de production, grâce à laquelle c'est développée une diversité de formes. Dans cet article a été démontré la classification de la typologie en partant d'un groupe de vases ayant pour origine la céramique byzantine. L'auteur décrit, en suivant les sources écrites, la prospérité économique des centres de Serbie, qui a, de son côté, influencé le développement de la production de la céramique.*

In diverse pottery production in the Balkan states in the 14th and 15th century Serbian ceramics takes a prominent place. Although it is proportionally small in numbers in comparison with pottery in other areas, Serbian production stands out with a profusion of shapes as well as with its own harmonious colouring and decorative design on the vessels. The significance of the pottery production can be perceived, to a certain extent, through a sequence of specialized articles and studies in which besides detailed descriptions of vessels, the greatest attention has been directed toward analyses of the decorative designs. In the detailed analyses of the decoration of Serbian glazed ceramics, of designs used and of possible origin of models, the forms of vessels have been partially neglected. On the basis of published material a review of vessels' shape can be reconstructed, to a certain degree. However the systematization inside the typology is still missing, and because of complexity of this production, that presents necessity². Therefore, it will be presented, herein, one of the possible ways of classifying of vessels' shapes inside a framework of the typology, singling out one of specific parts of production as a model, confirming mainly on whole vessels. Besides observations about shapes of tableware and regional characteristics connected with craft centers, circumstances in which the pottery production have been originated and developed will be also pointed out. It is thought that this and the detailed analysis of decorative designs in a M. Bajalović - Hadži-Pešić communication, that is also a part of the collection, makes possible a creation of a more complete picture about the character of pottery production in Medieval Serbia.

In the typology of luxurious pottery the following forms of vessels are singled out: bowl, jug, goblet, pot and flask. The bowls are found in most different shapes, while

the jugs show the largest diversification of shapes, and of applied decorative techniques. The rest of the forms of vessels have been found infrequently and sporadically.

The discovered specimens of bowls can be classified in two major classes: bowl on low foot (class B1) and bowl with flat bottom (class B2). The spherical bowl on low foot (type B1.1-Fig. 1) appears in a few variants in profile and recipient's depth. The fundamental difference between them is reflected in the shaping of a rim, which is expanded (types B1.1a, B1.1b, B1.1e - Fig. 1.1, 2, 3, 5), slightly bent (type B1.1c - Fig. 1.4) and flatly ended (type B1.1d - Fig. 1.6, 7), so that a recipient look creates more or less an impression of open form. Similarly to the spherical, the conical bowls on small foot (type B1.2) show diversity in profile, and recipient's size and depth. Nevertheless, the variants of basic shapes among them are less frequent, and also numerically less represented in whole production. Types inside this class are singled out according to the shape of the lower part of the recipient, namely, the bottom which is either wide (types B1.2a, B1.2c - Fig. 1.10-12, 8) or narrow (type B1.2b - Fig. 1.9). In both mentioned classes are noticed two forms of ring-like foot, which is located bellow the vessel's middle: flat and profile. However, one of the variants, the conical bowl, has extremely low and of great diameter foot that presents an extraordinary appearance (type B1.2c - Fig. 1.8). In the class of bowls with flat bottom (class B2 - Fig. 2) the spherical are most numerous. Besides the simple (type B2.1a - Fig. 2.1, 2), there exist the specimens with a characteristic horizontal handle (type B2.1 - Fig. 2.3). The bowls of this variant were found most frequently in a very fragmented state so that about their representation in the production testify only handles, or rather parts of handles which are differently profiled and decorated with designs in Sgraffito technique.

1. The paper presents revised and amended text of the communication read under the title: Serbian Medieval Ceramic Production as a Byzantine Luxurious Pottery Model.

2. As works of a specialized type we would single out: Bajalović - Hadži-Pešić 1979; 1981; Ćorović-Ljubinković 1962; Jurišić 1983; Minić 1980; Tomić 1979; as well as the M. Bajalović - Hadži-Pešić synthesis in this collection.

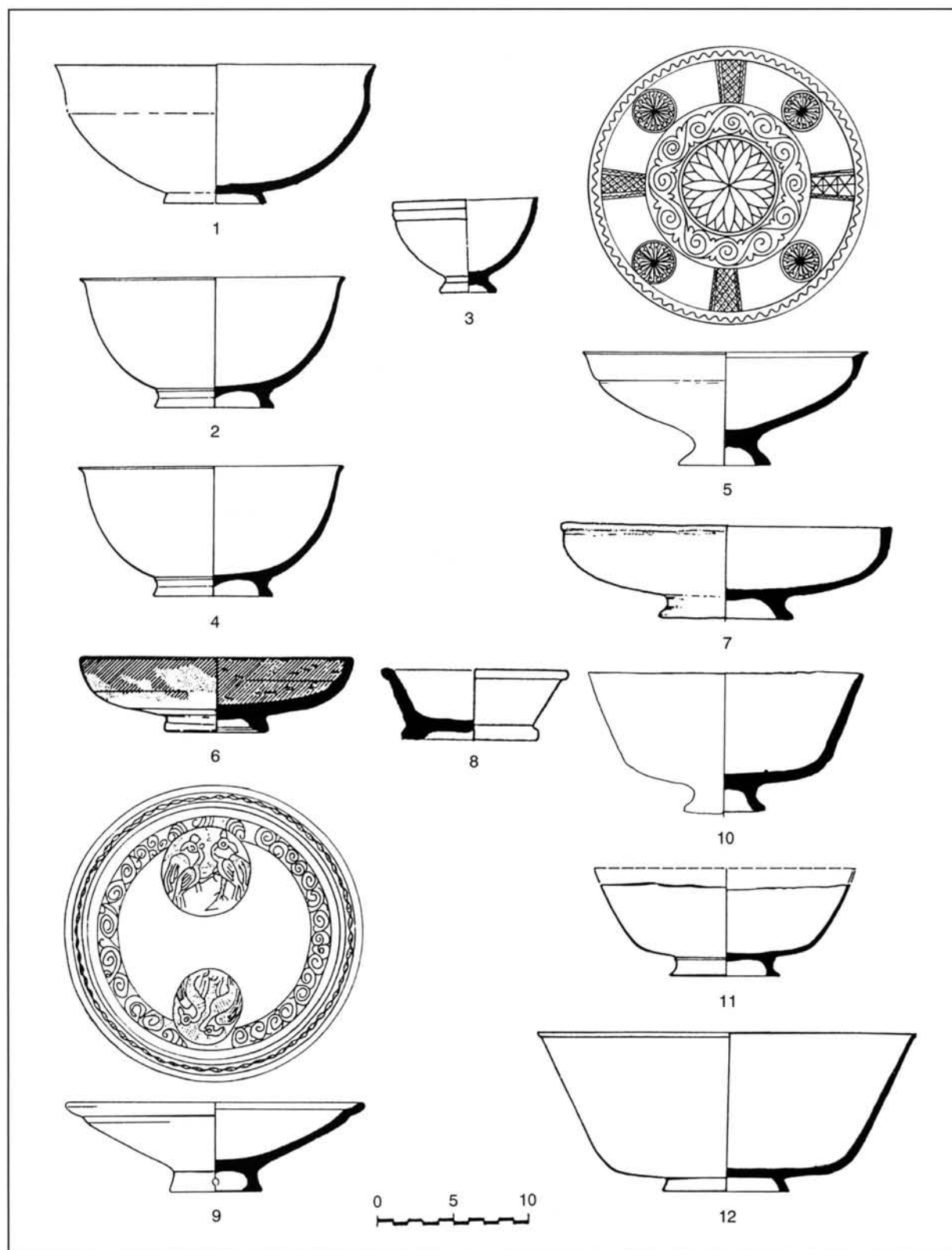


Fig. 1. Bowls of class I. Types and variants. Sites: No. 1 - Settlement Milentija; Nos. 2, 12 - Belgrade fortress; No. 3 - Monastery Ravanica; Nos. 4, 8 - Town Kruševac; Nos. 5, 9 - Town Stalać; No. 6 - Monastery Studenica; No. 7 - Monastery Manasija.

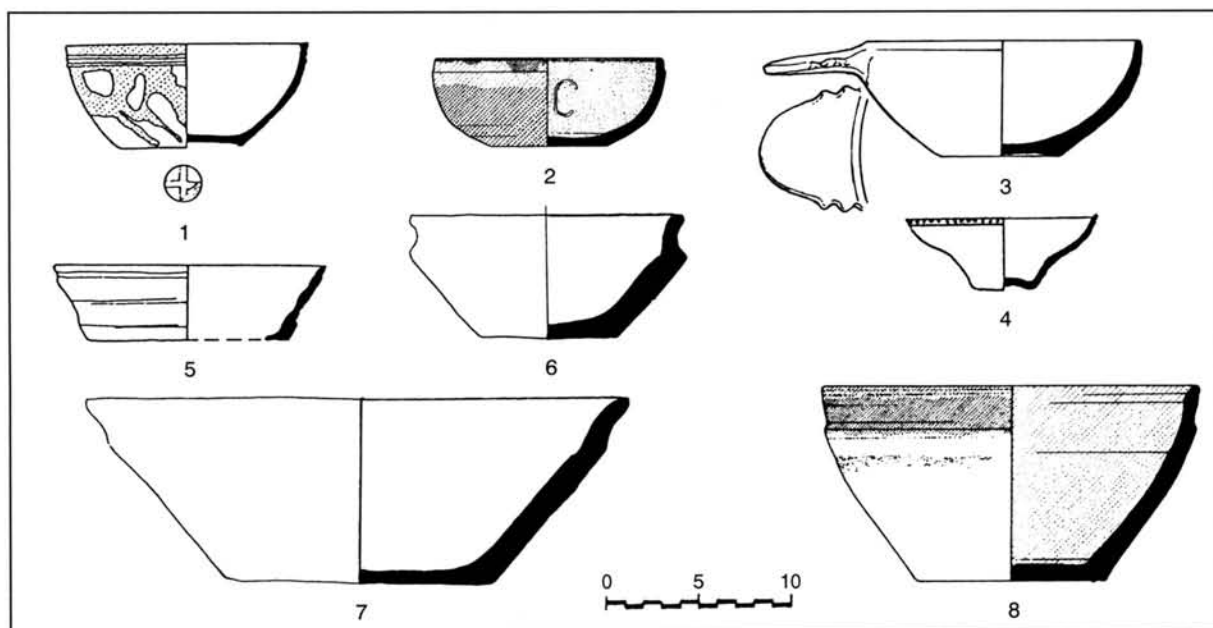


Fig. 2. Bowls of class 2. Types and variants. Sites: Nos. 1, 5 - Monastery of Holy Archangels; Nos. 2, 8 - Monastery Studenica; No. 3 - Belgrade fortress; No. 4 - Monastery Djurdjevi stupovi; Nos. 6, 7 - Monastery Gradac.

The second type of bowl singled out, is a conical vessel with flat bottom (type B2.2). Usual variants of this type have either oblique, flat sides (type B2.2a - Fig. 2.5) or profiled upper part of recipient (type B2.2b - Fig. 2.6, 7), while the small bowls with the concave bottom (type B2.2d - Fig. 2.4) were found quite sporadically. On the border line between conical and spherical bowls is the vessel with a thinner rim and with flat bottom (type B2.2c - Fig. 2.8).

The previously mentioned types of bowls most frequently have monochrome glaze in green tones – pale green, green and olive –, while yellow specimens are exceptionally rare. However, it is not rare that bowls are richly decorated with the designs in Sgraffito technique. All discovered specimens of bowls were found throughout Serbia, i.e. it has not been noticed that certain classes of bowls are regionally specific (Bajalović - Hadži-Pešić 1981: pl. XVIII.1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 10; pl. XLIII, XLIV; Bikić 1994: fig. 25.1, 2, 6; 1996: fig. 3.1, 2; Ćorović-Ljubinković 1962: pl. III; Jurišić 1983: pls. I.1, II.1, III.1, V.4; 1989: fig. 36, 37; *Studenica* 1988: figs. 31.1, 33.2.)

Serbian ceramics is recognizable and characteristic because of its jugs. The skillfulness and the imagination in selecting and matching colours, and also in decorative design are particularly expressed through various shapes of this class of vessels. The typology of jugs is very diverse, what consequently, to great extent, makes a selection of criteria for the jug's classification difficult. This proposed

systematization is based upon the rim's shape since it seems that is the clearest one. The three major classes have been singled out and inside each of them exists smaller or bigger number of types and variants, which differ in a recipient's shape. The jugs with a spout are not singled out as a separate variant inside their types. The reason for that is very well known: the greatest number of these vessels is found in a fragmented state, and therefore it is very difficult, and sometimes impossible, on the basis of discovered fragments to reach a conclusion with certainty whether a jug had a spout or not.

The jugs in the first class (class J1 - Fig. 3, 4) have a round rim, and among them five types have been singled out. The jug with the narrow rim, short neck and round recipient (type J1.1) appears in two variants. The first one has a characteristic neck which width is equal to the rim's width, and the body is wide (type J1.1a - Fig. 3.2); the second variant has a narrow neck, a narrow-rounded body and also a specially made spout (type J1.1b - Fig. 3.1). The second type is distinctive for its rounded rim (type J1.2), while in a recipient's look two variants are singled out: the first one is the vessel with wide and short neck (type J1.2a - Fig. 3.3); and in the second the transitional part between the rim and the body presents angled shoulder (J1.2b - Fig. 3.4). The body is mainly rounded and the bottom is either stable or shaped as bottom base. For the third type of jugs is characteristic a wider rim and a conical neck (type J1.3 - Fig. 4). Although the jugs have differ-

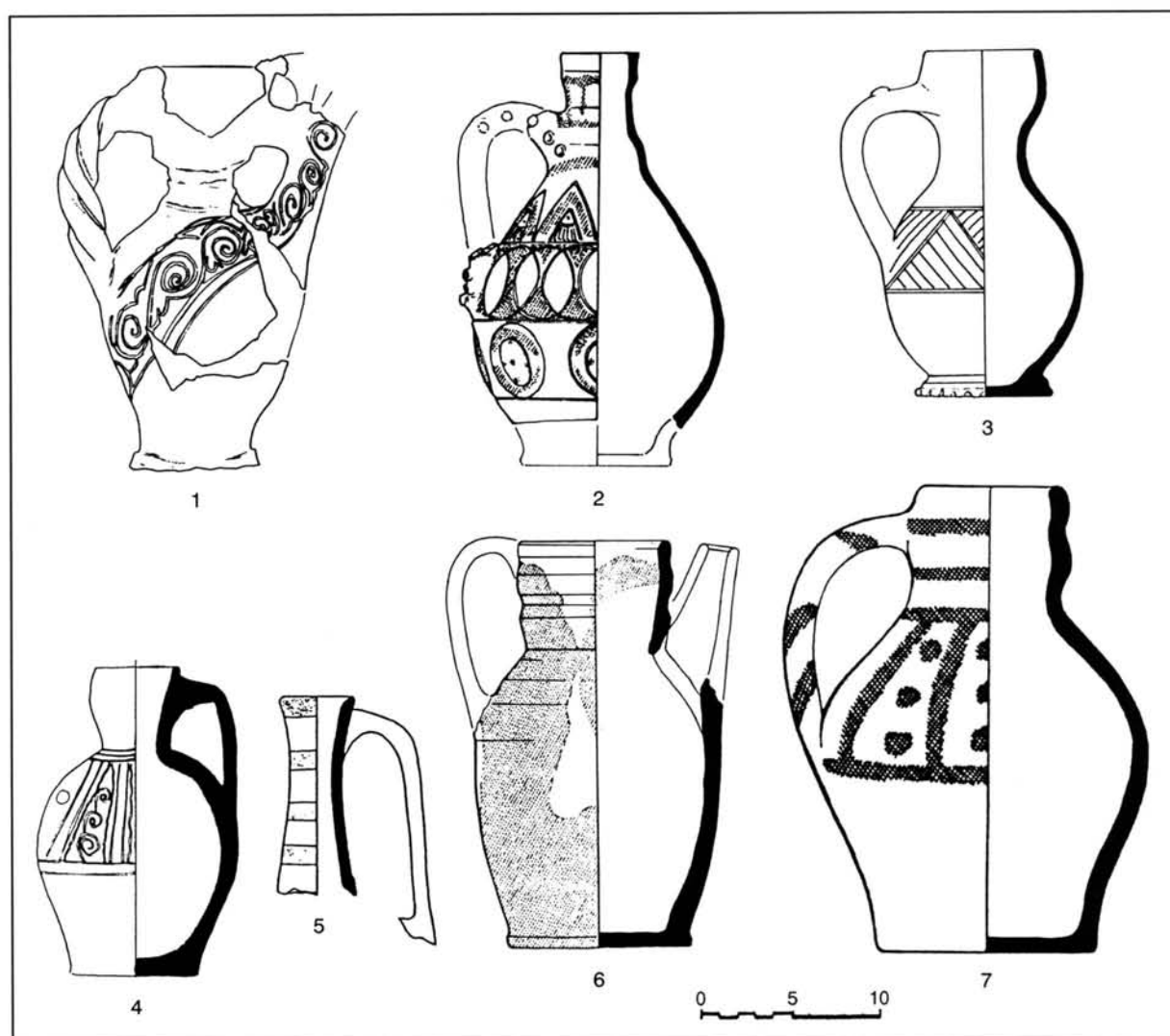


Fig. 3. Jugs of class 1. Types and variants. Sites: Nos. 1, 3 - Town Stalać; No. 2 - Belgrade fortress; No. 4 - Monastery Gradac; No. 5 - Monastery of Holy Archangels; No. 6 - Monastery on Reljina gradina; No. 7 - Settlement Trgovište.

ent sizes, all jugs have very similarly shaped recipients. However, they are different from smaller vessels which have short and wide body (type J1.3a - Fig. 4.1); the body of the larger jugs is quite long, and almost all specimens have spouts (type J1.3b - Fig. 4.3, 4). One of the variants is partly different because of a neck which is curvier and because of a rounded lip (type J1.3c - Fig. 4.2). The jugs with cylindrical neck (type J1.4 - Fig. 3.6, 7) are very similar among them with a small difference in recipient's width. The jugs of the fifth type have a very long, narrow neck and, unfortunately, they have been preserved only partially (type J1.5 - Fig. 3.5). However, on the basis of a preserved part can be presumed that this is a vessel in which was carried fresh water. These characteristic vessels,

named earthen water jugs, are very similar to each other because of a long narrow neck and a very wide body; they appeared in larger numbers only in the Post Medieval period, as a distinctive part of Turkish heritage.

The specimens of the jugs in the first class were discovered in the greatest number in the fortified towns and monasteries in the central and west of Serbia, or more precisely in Kruševac, Stalać and at finds in Raska's cultural district. It seems that among them only the jugs of the fifth type have been found in greater numbers in the south of Serbia (*Arheološko Blago Srbije* 1983: cat. nos. 112.4, 112.6, 112.7; Bikić 1994: fig. 25.4, 5, 8-10; 1996: fig. 3.5; Jurišić 1989: fig. 39; Popović 1978: ill. 4; 1991: fig. 2; *Studenica* 1988: fig. 31.3, 53).

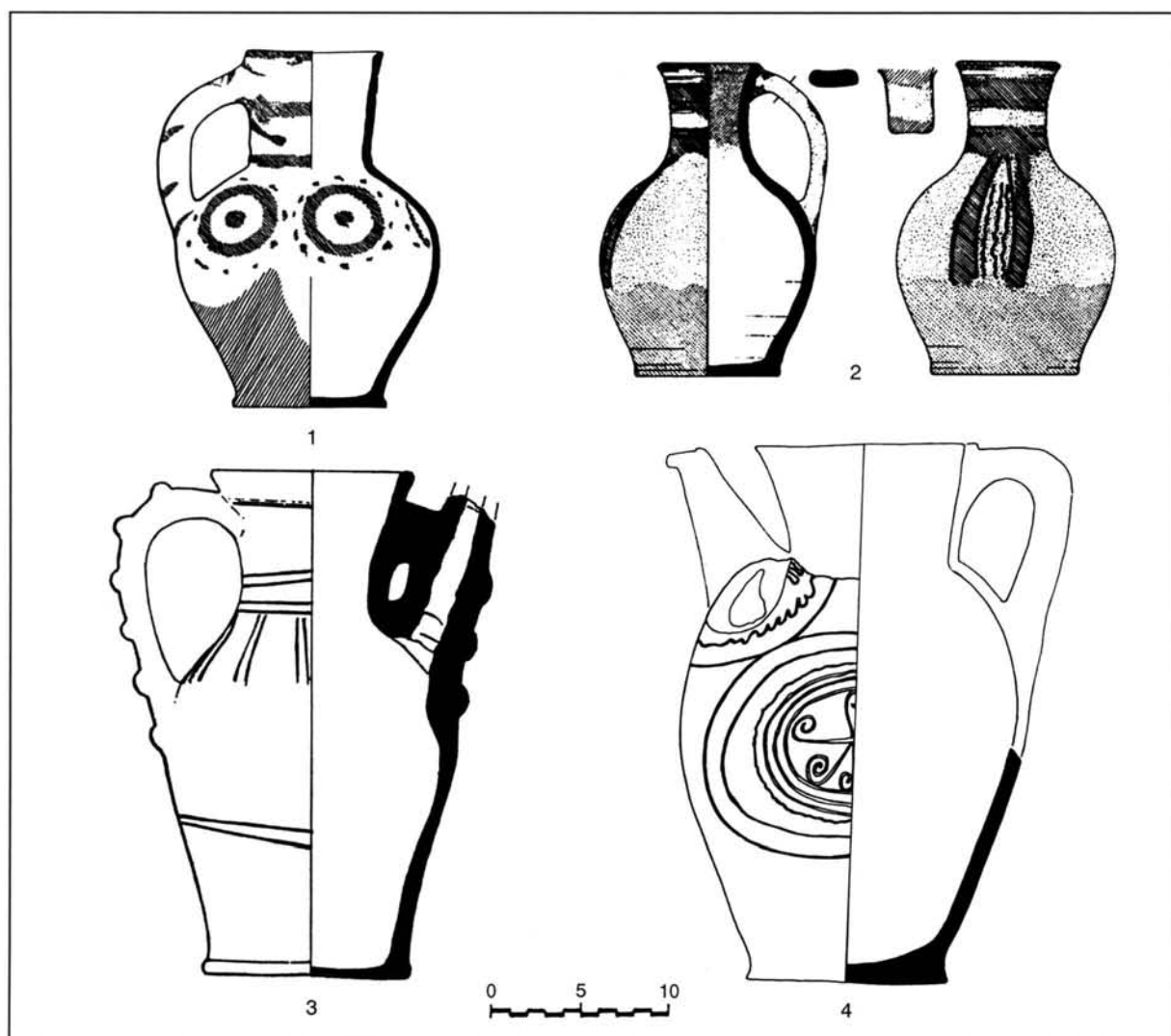


Fig. 4. Jugs of class 1, type J1.3 and variants. Sites: Nos. 1, 2 - Monastery Studenica; No. 3 - Smederevo fortress; No. 4 - Monastery Gradac.

The jugs with the wide rim, adjusted for pouring liquid, are classified in the second class (class J2 - Fig. 5). Except wide, open recipients, all jugs in this class have bigger dimensions; their height is around 30 cm. Because of mentioned characteristics the term "pitcher" perhaps would better underline their main features. There is not a big difference between them in profile, and consequently, only two types have been singled out. The jugs classified in the first type have conical rim, while their body is shaped in three ways: round (type J2.1a - Fig. 5.4), long-egg shaped (J2.1b - Fig. 5.1), or the crossing between rim and the body is sharp so that it might be called shoulder (J2.1c - Fig. 5.2). The second type has a wide neck, long body and it is the most similar to the known pitcher types (type J2.2 - Fig. 5.3).

All mentioned types in the second class are linked to Serbia's midlands. However, decorative designs made on them point out to two regions: the handcrafts center Kruševac-Stalać and local workshops in Raška's district (*Arheološko Blago Srbije* 1983: cat. no. 112.1; Bajalović - Hadži-Pešić 1981: fig. XXII.1-3; Jurišić 1989: fig. 39; *Studenica* 1988: fig. 19).

The jugs in the third class have a more pronounced part adjusted for pouring liquid which looks like a beak (class J3 - Fig. 6). As the first type is singled out a small jug with short narrow neck from which starts a handle that ends in the middle of a rounded body (type J3.1a - Fig. 6.7). The variant of this shape might be represented with the slightly bigger jug that has the similarly shaped rim,

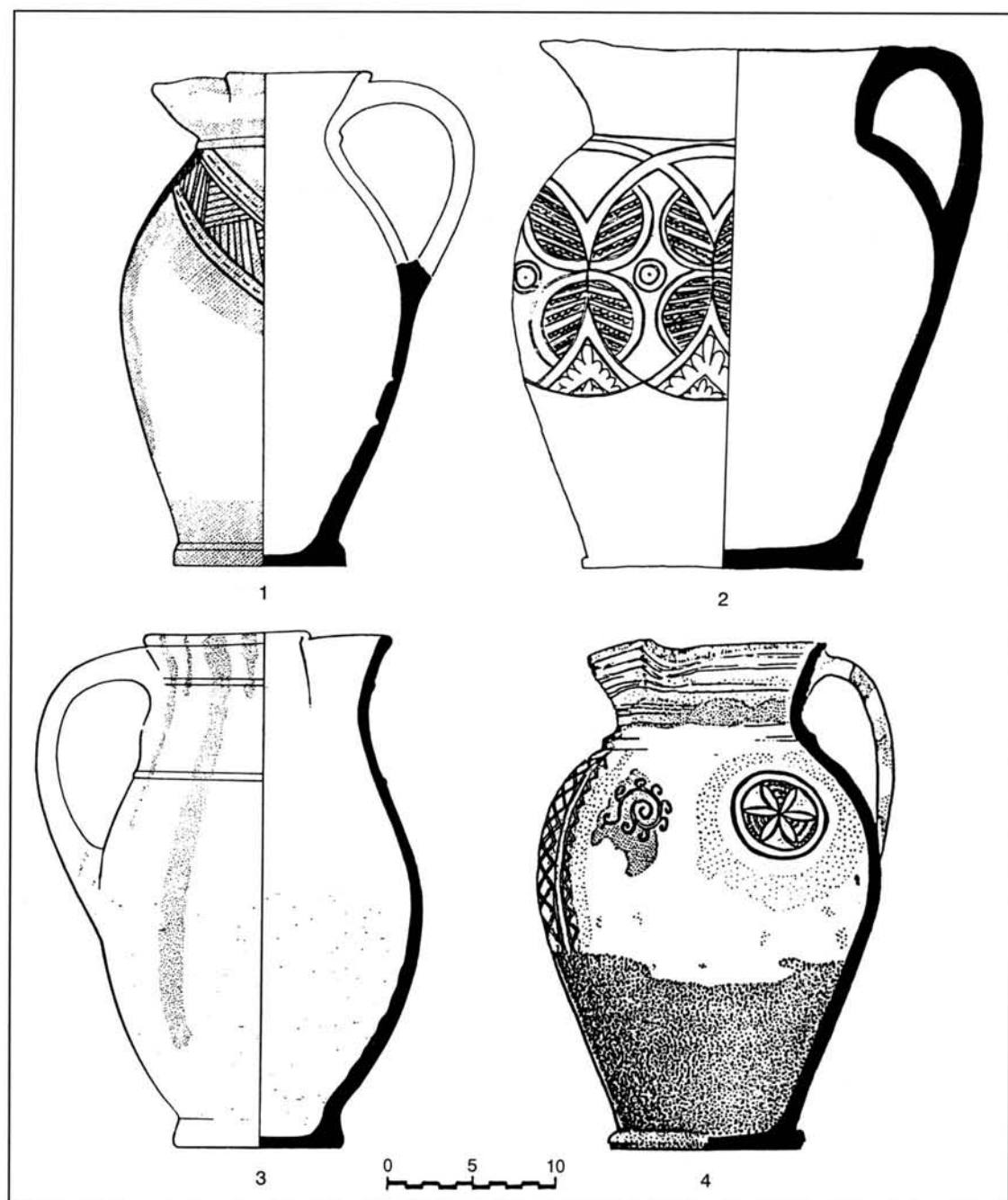


Fig. 5. Jugs of class 2. Types and variants. Sites: Nos. 1, 3 - Town Stalać; No. 2 - Monastery Gradac; No. 4 - Monastery Studenica.

from which was discovered only a small part (type J3.1b - Fig. 6.8). These jugs with profile reminiscent of the Antics' were found in smaller numbers mainly at sites in the south of Serbia. However, the only completely preserved specimen was found in Kruševac (Bajalović - Hadži-Pešić 1981: fig. XXII.6; Bikić 1996: fig. 3.8).

For the second type of the third class it might be said

that it stands out with its harmonious proportions. Unfortunately, from the majority of these vessels only small parts were discovered, because of a limited scope of archaeological works at the Smederevo's fortress. This type also has the very pronounced spout, shaped as beak, short neck - with plastic strip - which in the base passes in the oval body, less or more widen above the recipient's middle

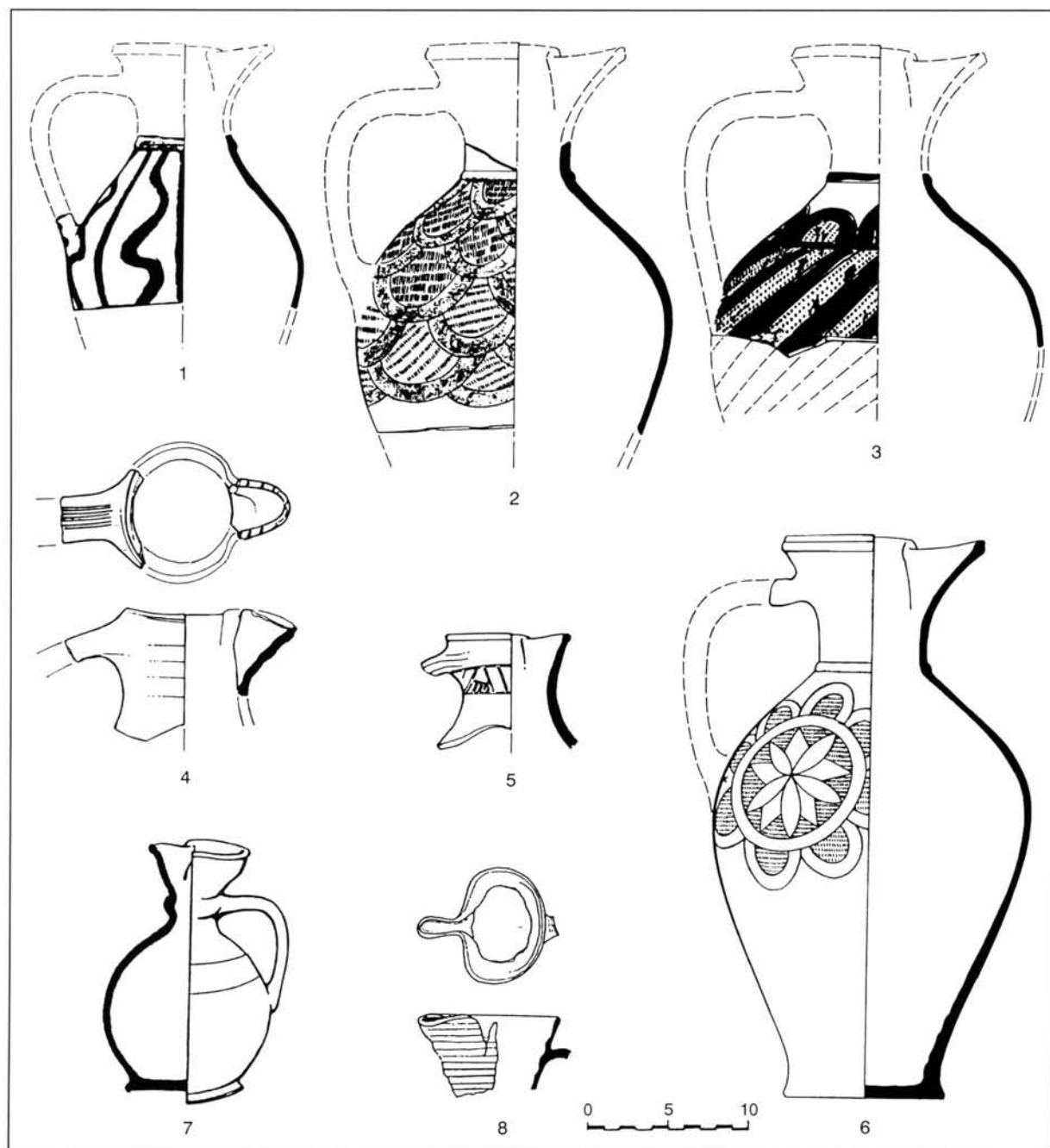


Fig. 6. Jugs of class 3. Types and variants. Sites: Nos. 1, 2, 3, 6 - Smederevo fortress; Nos. 4, 5 - Belgrade fortress; No. 7 - Town Kruševac; No. 8 - Monastery of Holy Archangels.

(type J3.2 - Fig. 6.1-6). The small numbers of specimens have either slightly pronounced beak or wider neck. The body of these vessels is decorated either with Sgraffito design or with painted glaze, and a combination of these two techniques is not rare. The appearance of these jugs is linked to Northern Serbia, areas around Danube where was the home region for their production – that is the sur-

roundings of the Smederevo fortress (Popović 1978: 101-112; Bikić 1994: fig. 25.4, 5, 8, 9).

The jug's decoration is not only reflected through selection and arrangement but also through colouring. Monochrome vessels are in tones of green or yellow glaze. With the multicoloured vessels for the base, as basic colours were taken most frequently olive and pale green glaze.

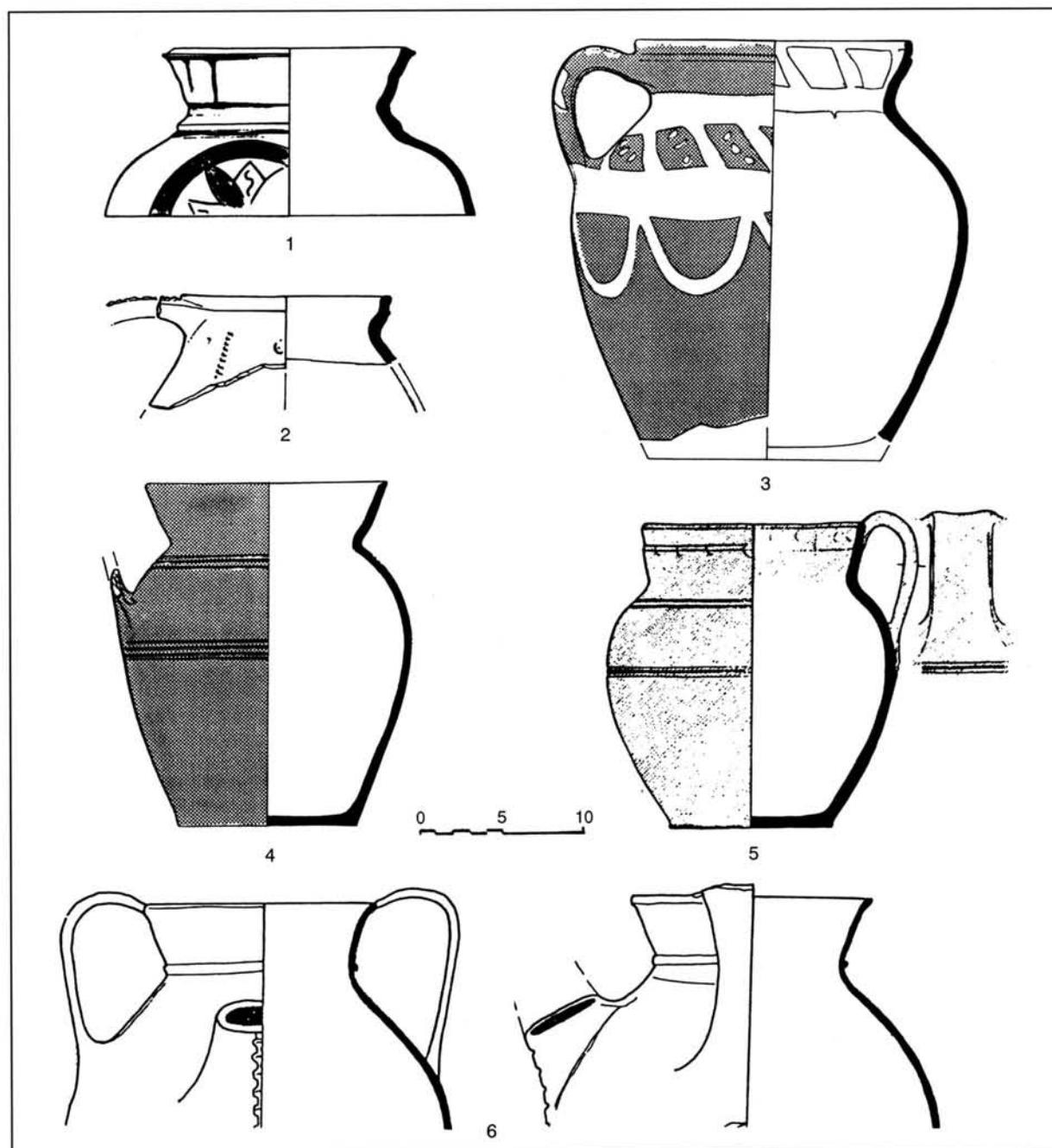


Fig. 7. Types of pots. Sites: No. 1 - Smederevo fortress; No. 2 - Belgrade fortress; Nos. 3, 4, 5 - Monastery Studenica; No. 6 - Monastery of Holy Archangels.

Brown-dark and yellowish-brown colours are significantly less frequent, but they are used to emphasize fields around Sgraffito ornaments. Reddish-yellow is also used for that purpose. On the painted jugs the most frequent combination is pale green for the base and dark green or olive for design. The frequent ornament on the jug's handle presents the rows of applied beans.

The pots as a ceramic class in the group of tableware are neither numerous nor diverse, but on the other hand they appeared at almost all finds in Serbia (Fig. 7) (Bikić 1994: fig. 25.3; 1996: fig. 3.10; Ćorović-Ljubinković 1962: pl. III.1, VI.1; Popović 1991: fig. 2; *Studenica* 1988: fig. 32.3). Typological differences inside this class are mainly pronounced in a rim's shaping, while a body is more or

less spherical. Five variants have been singled out from which three are common: with a vertical rounded lip (type P1.1a - Fig. 7.2, 3), with a long conical rim (type P1.1b - Fig. 7.4) and one with almost vertical rim (type P1.1c - Fig. 7.5). Pots which have neck pronounced with a rib, have either a conical rim with sharply profiled lip (type P1.1d - Fig. 7.1) or a rim turned on the exterior side with a rounded lip (type P1.1e - Fig. 7.6); they appeared scarcely. As it can be seen on the illustrating material, the pots with a handle are proportionally frequent, but the specimens with a spout are exceptional. The pots are most frequently covered with dark or olive glaze, but colourless glaze appeared as well. Sgraffito designs are very rare, in contrast to the geometrical that are mainly painted with white slip. Painting of designs with white slip is characteristic for the south of Serbia, and the majority of these pots has been discovered until the present day in Novo Brdo. It is interesting that the handles of some pots are decorated with tiny applied beans, although they are not as much frequent as they are on the jugs.

In contrast to the pots, the goblets are exceptionally rare in our material (Fig. 8). Besides the vessels shaped as small pots, which are originated from a Slav pottery, Byzantine models could be recognized on several vessels only. Therefore, only two classes can be singled out: a goblet on the stem (class G1) and the goblet with flat bottom (class G2). The only known goblet on the stem (type G1.1 - Fig. 8.2) has the surface covered with yellowish-green glaze. The greenish glazed goblet discovered in Novo Brdo is unique and very interesting. The vessel has a conical rim, the body is short and its shape is oval, and the bottom is wide, stable (type G2.1a - Fig. 8.1). Besides mentioned specimens, characteristic for their glaze technique, in Serbian production two goblets-glasses take a prominent place because a completely different technique was used for their decoration. Both of them were discovered during excavations of the Monastery Studenica (*Studenica* 1988: fig. 31.2, 31.4, cat. nos. 38, 40). The first goblet is double profiled, the upper part is conical while the lower part of the body is belly rounded, the bottom is wide, and the goblet is made of yellowish-brown clay decorated with green coloured strips (type G2.2a - Fig. 8.3). For the second goblet is characteristic a rib, which separates the upper spherical and the lower conical part of recipient; it was made of red/pinkish clay and has red coat over the whole exterior side of a vessel (type G2.2b - Fig. 8.4).

The last ceramic class in this typology is presented with the flasks (class F1 - Fig. 8.5). Although the shape is adjusted for carrying small quantities of liquid, rich decoration of the flasks does not exclude the possibility of serving on a dining table. Proportionally smaller number of finds probably does not reflect the right presentation of this class in Serbian pottery. The reason for that is, above all, that some small fragments could not be easily recog-

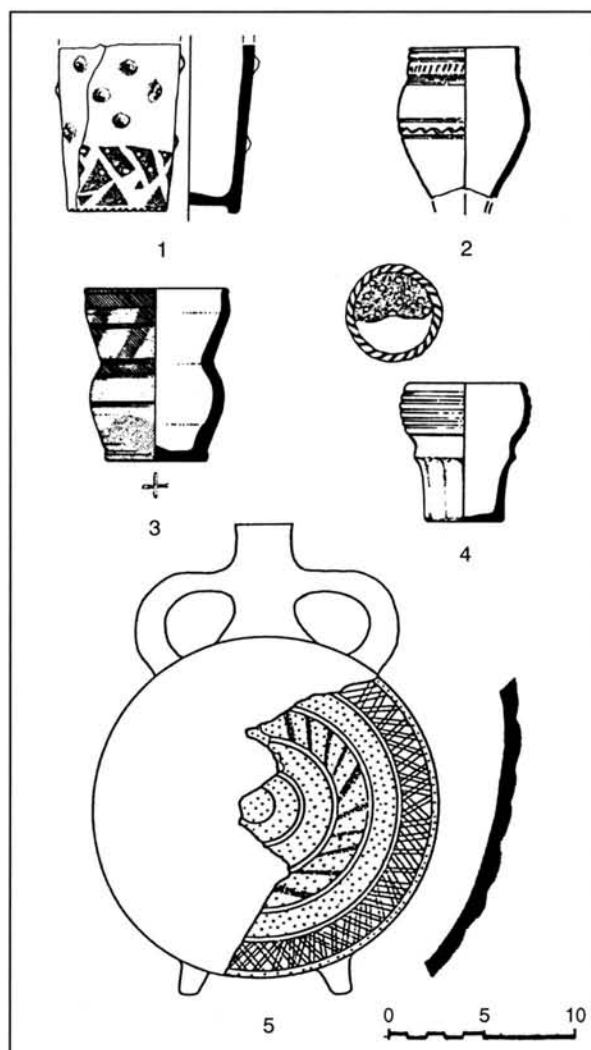


Fig. 8. Types of goblets, and flask. Sites: No. 1 - Town Novo Brdo; No. 2 - Belgrade fortress; Nos. 3, 4 - Monastery Studenica; No. 5 - Monastery of Holy Archangels.

nized as parts of these vessels. So the flask's parts were noticed only at three sites: the fortified town Novo Brdo, and the monasteries Studenica and Holy Archangels near Prizren (*Arheološko Blago Srbije* 1983: cat. no. 119; *Studenica* 1988: fig. 54; Bikić 1996: fig. 3.9). It is interesting that the selection of colours, glaze used for decoration on the flasks is the same as the one, which is noticed on the jugs – dominant tones are green and yellow.

Presented pottery was made during one century, approximately, from the middle of the 14th century until the middle of the 15th century in areas around the Morava River, i.e. in the State of the Serbian Despots (Fig. 9). Archaeological explorations have offered evidence for the existence of two workshops used for the production of

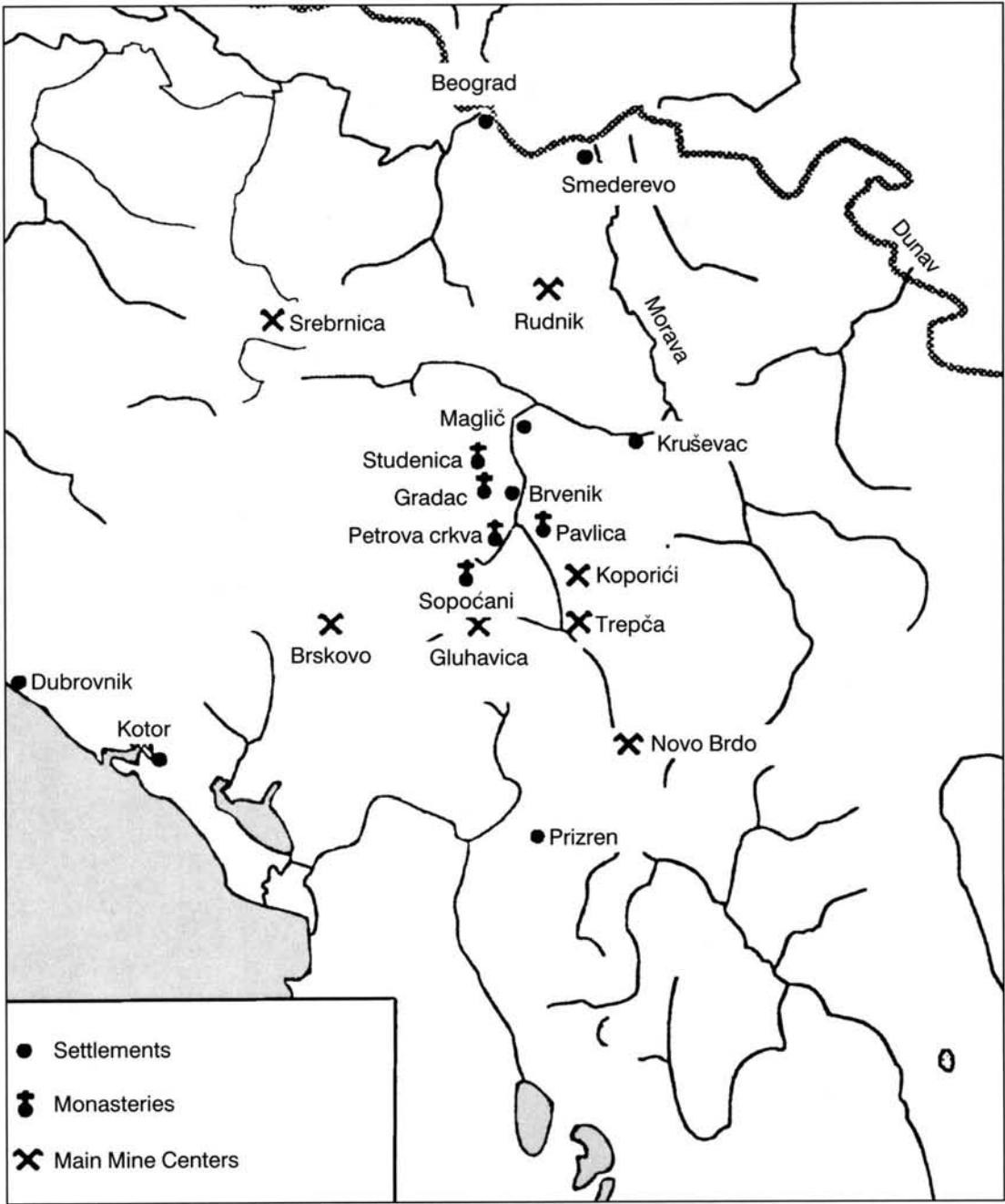


Fig. 9. Relevant locations in Medieval Serbia (14th-15th centuries).

glazed vessels near civic centers: Kruševac-Stalać³ and Novo Brdo. Both excavations in Kruševac and Stalać were done in the fortified part of the town, while the settlements in suburbs have been left to a great extent unexplored. As a result pottery workshops have not been discovered, what is quite a logical consequence, since it is known that because of a danger of fire they were either located in the farthest parts of the settlements or outside a city's wall. In spite of this circumstance, among the discovered pottery, unfinished tableware has been found, for example, jugs and pitchers prepared for glazing and second firing as well as some deformed specimens (Minić 1980: 46-47). Decorated glazed pottery is of exceptional quality, what is equally connected with skillfulness in shaping and decorating, as well as in making glaze. For the production of this workshop are characteristic, first of all, jugs and pitchers with exceptional glaze of light yellow, pale green, brown or olive colour over Sgraffito ornaments, and frequently over designs painted with dark green or brown, what created on vessels special colourful effects (Minić 1975: 187-191; 1980: 45-46.) Unfortunately, the most beautiful specimens decorated with Sgraffito designs have been found in a very fragmented state, and since the material neither has been published in the entirety, nor is it accessible for the public, the more detailed analysis of the style and shape are not included for this opportunity⁴. What particularly emphasizes significance of the discovered pottery is the archaeological context of findings from Stalać. Namely, during the excavations at this site there were no established traces which would point to possible existence of older settlements, which had preceded the building of the fortress, and to continuation of life after its destruction, so that all ceramics originate from one cultural layer, which according to historical sources can be precisely confined within a period of about fifty years, from 1375/6 to 1413 (Minić 1980: 44-45). Since quite reliable historical facts exist about the time of the city construction as well as about the time of sufferings in a Turkish campaign, the material from Stalać is considered quite incontestable, and is used for the separation of contemporary ceramics from Kruševac, with which shows a great stylistic similarity.

Similarly to Kruševac and Stalać, archaeological works in Novo Brdo were concentrated on areas around the fortress and the cathedral located next to the east wall of the

suburb (Ćorović-Ljubinković 1962: 170-171.) The remains of pottery furnaces in Novo Brdo have not been discovered, but about the existence of a workshop testify findings of fragmented vessels deformed during stoving as well as traces of glaze spilled on stone (Ćorović-Ljubinković 1962: 174.) The ceramics from Novo Brdo is mainly glazed, whereas unglazed vessels are scarce; that are big pots with thick walls (pithoi). The most frequent are vessels with glaze of the same colour: green, significantly less frequent yellow and brown without ornaments. The engraving in fine Sgraffito technique is rare, but on the other hand deeper engraved ornaments appear with which the interplay between light and shadow is more pronounced. The painting with white slip is, however, characteristic for products from this workshop. Slip is used in three ways: in a form of irregular spots below coloured glaze, then for drafting designs below transparent glaze with silvery glow, and for engraving designs in a classical Sgraffito technique (Ćorović-Ljubinković 1962: 175). The painting of designs with glaze is not rare: on the brown base, yellow or green were used. The most represented form are pots (with a handle) and jugs, while bowls and plates on low foot are significantly less frequent. For more profound analyses of products from this specific workshop, the unfortunate circumstance is that besides the great significance of the location neither the results of exploration nor findings have been published in the entirety until the present day⁵. Nevertheless, the chronological time of Medieval town can be accurately established by using numerous facts from the historical sources, since Novo Brdo was before anything else an important mining and trade center. All archaeological facts such as remains of architecture, findings of jewelry and money point to a relatively limited time, already indicated by historical facts: the 14th and the first half of the 15th century (Ćorović-Ljubinković 1962: 171-172). Thus glazed ceramics belongs to this age; its beginnings ought not to be looked before the beginning of the 14th century, while the upper chronological border line presents 1455, when the Turks occupied Novo Brdo.

Beside mentioned workshops, the pottery was made in small, local workshops, which might be singled out because of own specific styles on ornaments and colouring. It can be supposed with great certainty that such workshops existed in Raska's region. Unfortunately, until now the towns in this district have not been systematically ex-

3. The fortified towns Kruševac and Stalać are located closely to each other, and since they are from the same period it is logical to presume the existence of one large craft center, marked as Kruševac-Stalać, which supplied both towns with luxurious vessels, particularly because the discovered pottery shows great similarity.

4. Monograph in preparation, author Dr D. Minić. Documentation and findings are kept in the National Museum in Kruševac.

5. Besides short yearly reports regarding excavations the only detailed article about stratigraphy of cultural layers and ceramic material still presents: Ćorović-Ljubinković 1962. Documentation and findings are kept in the National Museum in Belgrade.

plored. With a certain degree of certainty can be presumed that in Smederevo, the last center of the State of the Serbian Despots, existed pottery workshops. The numerous findings of jugs belonging to the same type and ornaments with style not found at other sites are a confirmation. Historical facts, also, give information about a short but intensive life of the Despot Djuradj Branković town from 1430 to 1459, consequently, it is possible that the production of these specific jugs dates back in the same period (Popović 1978: 103-104, ill. 4; Bikić 1994: 96, fig. 38.3, 4).

The beginning of luxurious pottery production, and locations of workshops and of finds on which they were discovered, are a direct consequence of economic conditions in Serbia in the 14th and 15th centuries. It was a period of development and of rise of Serbian towns. Before this age, in the early period of the State of the Nemanjić, there was no urban agglomerations in the inner parts of Serbia. Towns were located in a coastal region, so that they can be regarded as a confirmation of the survival of Antic heritage which was incorporated in the Byzantine organizational structure. The phenomenon of urbanization was more strongly pronounced in the 14th century when economic preconditions were created (Novaković 1966: 144-161). The economic prosperity at that time was connected with the opening of many mines and with trade development. Although exploitation of mines in Serbia began in the second half of the 13th century (the opening of the mine Brskovo on the Tara river, 1254 and Rudnik, 1293), a period of the largest mine production was in the second half of the 14th century (Čirković 1981: 42). The standpoint of the contemporary Serbian historiography is that a town as an economical category more frequently and more successfully developed in the neighborhood of mines (Mihaljević 1992: 120-122). These towns exerted a strong economical influence on the closer and farther neighborhood regardless of the fact that they neither had the same structure (political organization) nor the same social relations (Blagojević 1992: 70-72). Also, there are opinions that in comparison with other civic settlements mining settlements had more developed crafts (Kovačević Kojić 1992: 39-43).

When the production of ceramic vessels is considered in this context, the existence of workshops for the production of glaze pottery near mines, i.e. mining centers, is understandable. All these circumstances – urbanization, the increase in property status, the diverse network of roads, – were favorable for the development of crafts and art expansion. First of all it was the time of revival of Byzantine art, but it was also the time of migrations, i.e. the time when the educated emigrants fleeing from the Turks found a refuge in Serbia. Luxurious pottery production was in the same interval and its appearance was directly linked with mining activities because of closeness of sources

for glaze production. For example, Novo Brdo was rich with manganese ore, silver mixed with gold, copper, iron, lead, what are all essential raw materials for the production of coloured glaze (Čirković 1981: 42). The style of production was inspired and relied upon Byzantine models, and upon pottery from the time of Comnenus dynasty (Morgan 1942: fig. 91, 95, 103, 111, 121; Hayes 1992: fig. 4, 7, 17; *The Art of Sgraffito* 1999: cat. nos. 4-6, 57, 82, 135, 189, 200). The differences between products made in various workshop centers were contained in the selection of shapes and most frequently used decorative designs, and basically are differences in taking over Byzantine models which were adjusted to the new time and to the new taste of the users.

The bowls on low foot appeared in almost unchanged shape. On these vessels traditional Byzantine organization of Sgraffito ornaments, spirals and vegetable bands, around central medallion are frequently kept. On the jugs-pitchers can be noticed free composing of the same Byzantine designs: vegetable bands, spirals, circles, palmettes, rosettes, hatched bands. Except for radial arrangement quite frequent and diverse are combinations of designs in vertical strips. The goblets from Novo Brdo and Studenica present interesting and quite an exceptional appearance which with their shapes as well as with their ornaments remind very much of glasses, which are also a part of Byzantine cultural heritage (Davidson 1952: fig. 14, cat. nos. 742, 743, 744, 746; Baumgartner, Krüger 1988: cat. nos. 16, 17).

Undoubtedly, similarity with Byzantine pottery presents only one small part of the problem in studying Serbian Medieval ceramic models. The solution is much more complex, namely, it is necessary to establish a direction of influence that Byzantine pottery production had. Was that influence direct or indirect? Serbian archaeology is still not able to give the answer to this question. The reason for that is insufficient exploration of finds from the 13th and 14th centuries, i.e. from the period which follows after the import of tableware and comes before the time in which luxurious pottery was produced. Nevertheless, on the basis of discovered material some observations and conclusions can be presented. The bowls and jugs-pitchers as the forms of vessels, which reflect best character of production, have great similarities with the designs and shapes of ceramic vessels produced in the Second Bulgarian State (Antonova 1995: 91-102, fig. 89, 90, 94-101; Čangova 1962: fig. 1-4; Georgieva 1974: 58-104, fig. 96-97; 1980: fig. 3, 14, 15, 17, 18; 1985: 140-164). It would point out to opinion about direct influence of Byzantine pottery from the 11th and 12th centuries on Serbian ceramic production. On the other hand, a very high craftsmanship level in shaping vessels and making glaze as well as the inventiveness and confidence on decoration leave a space for other suppositions. One of them

is that the import of Byzantine goods in the 13th century was bigger than it has been supposed on the basis of known finds. The second thought is that the craftsmen who made luxurious vessels were from countries of Byzantine Commonwealth and that they own knowledge and skills built in creation of Serbian pottery, which after that was developing according to user's taste and needs of internal market. Also the fact should not be neglected that mining production in Serbia started from the middle of the 13th century. From that time until the middle of the 14th century Serbian ceramics was appearing with its characteristic style which to great extent can be perceived on the products made in the following century.

In the end it should be remarked that the presented review of the vessels' shapes does not present entire Serbian ceramic production, but only the part made on a model of Byzantine pottery. In material from our territory exist the vessels made under influence of Central European workshops, as well as the specimens with distinctions of oriental style.

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