

NEW DATA ABOUT THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE TEI-CULTURE (I-III) SOUTH OF THE DANUBE

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The topics of the present article are seven unpublished vessels found in the present day Lovech district (Central North Bulgaria) nowadays kept in the funds of the local museum. All the vessels fall into the fine pottery group. Their clay is well purified with some ingredients of sand. The surface is burnished or polished. None of the vessels is decorated.

1. *Jug* (inv. No. 1683). Unknown place of founding (fig. 1, a). The body is spherical slightly entering the short neck. The rim is inverted to the outside and rounded. The handle, with an ellipsoidal cross-section, connects the base of the neck to the rim rising slightly above it. The bottom is rounded. The surface is light brown - black in color, burnished with some spots. Dimensions: height - 8 cm, diameter of the rim - 5 cm. The jug has its parallels in the materials from Novgrad¹ as well as in the Tei culture pottery complex, phase I². A similar jug has been found at Căscioarele (Călărași), dated by the investigators to the Bungetu-phase of the same culture³, or Tei I using Valeriu Leahu's terminology⁴.

2. *Jug* (inv. No. 17y). Unknown place of founding (fig. 1, b). The body is oval and clearly distinguished from the short neck. The rim is inverted to the outside and rounded. The handle, with a half-circled cross-section, connects the base of the neck to the rim rising slightly above it. The bottom is distinguished from the body. The rim diameter is twice as big as the bottom one. The surface is burnished, brown - red in color. Dimensions: height - 8.8 cm, diameter of the rim - 6 cm, diameter of the bottom - 3 cm. The jug has its parallels in the materials from Novgrad⁵ as well as in the Tei culture pottery complex, phase I⁶.

3. *Jug* (inv. No. 237). Devetaki (fig. 1, c). The body is oval slightly entering the short neck. The rim is inverted to the outside and rounded. Parts of the rim and handle are broken. The handle itself has been graphically restored following the shape of that from vessel No.1. The

jug has two buds on the surface of the body. The bottom is rounded. The surface is gray in color, polished. Dimensions: height - 6.2 cm, diameter of the rim - 4 cm. The jug, as the previous two, has its parallels in the materials from Novgrad⁷ as well as in the Tei culture pottery complex, phase I⁸.

4. *Jug* (inv. No. 1682). Unknown place of founding (fig. 1, d). With a spherical body and a short cylindrical neck. The rim is evenly cut. The handle is broken. Probably it connected the upper part of the body to the rim. The bottom is flat. The rim diameter is 3.5 times as big as the bottom one. The surface is brown - black in color, burnished with some spots. Dimensions: height - 7,5 cm, diameter of the rim - 5.5 cm, diameter of the bottom - 1,5 cm. The jug has its parallels in the materials from Novgrad⁹ as well as in the Tei culture pottery complex, phase I¹⁰.

5. *Cup* (inv. No. 163). Devetaki (fig. 1, e). With a spherical body and a cylindrical neck. The rim is rounded from the inside. The bottom is rounded. The handle is broken. Probably it connected the lower part of the body to the rim rising slightly above it. The surface is gray - black in color, polished. Dimensions: height - 6,4 cm, diameter of the rim - 6.5 cm. One can find parallels of the shape in the already published materials from the Devetaki cave and the vessel from Kadakkioi¹¹. The shape is to be dated to the Tei culture pottery complex, phase I¹².

6. *Cup* (inv. No. 696). Drenov village (fig. 2, a). The body is cylindrical slightly rising its diameter towards the base. The rim is rounded and has a "cut-away" shape. The handle connects the base of the cup to the rim rising slightly above it. The bottom is rounded. The paste besides sand shows mica as ingredient. The surface is brown - red in color, burnished with some traces of polishing. Dimensions: height - 7 cm, diameter of the rim - 5.5 cm, diameter of the bottom - 6.5 cm. The cup has its parallels in the already published materials from Devetaki

cave¹³. The shape is characteristic for the Tei culture pottery complex, phase II and most of all - phase III¹⁴.

7. *Fragment of a cup* (without inv. No.). Devetaki (fig. 2, b). With a cone-like body slightly entering the cylindrical neck. The rim is rounded and inverted to the outside in a "cut-away" shape. The handle is broken. Probably it connected the lower part of the body to the mouth. The bottom is rounded. The surface is gray - black in color, polished. Dimensions: height - 13.5 cm, diameter of the rim - 8.5 cm, diameter of the bottom - 9.5 cm. One can find parallels of the cup in the materials from the Devetaki cave¹⁵, Russe¹⁶ as well as in Tei culture pottery complex, phase III¹⁷.

The analysis of the vessels as well as the listed parallels show that they are characteristic for the time of Tei culture, phases I-III. The discussed vessels clarify the problem of the Tei culture south of the Danube although they are incidental finds or come from layers with an uncertain stratigraphy. Valeriu Leahu noticed the existence of Tei materials in Bulgarian lands in the 1960s. Both Romanian archaeologists saw Tei materials in the Devetaki cave dated to its 1st and 3rd phases¹⁸. In 1973 Alexandrina D. Alexandrescu wrote about Southdanubian variant of the Tei culture during its 3rd phase¹⁹, while Valeriu Leahu and Sebastian Morintz thought of a Tei presence south of the river since its very beginning²⁰. Cristian Schuster is another Romanian scholar investigating the Tei presence south of the Danube²¹. Arguing about the Tei I materials from Devetaki and Kadakkioi, he points out that they could mean Tei groups' presence as well as Tei imports south of the Danube²². According to the same author Tei culture presence south of the fluvial starts with its 3rd phase, not excluding totally the 2nd one for the beginning²³. As concerns Bulgarian investigators, I would like to mention Ilka Zmeikova's contributions to the study of the Tei culture south of the Danube²⁴.

Here I would like to summarize the Tei I-III materials from Bulgarian lands. Three vessels from the Devetaki cave²⁵, three from Novgrad²⁶, some fragments and the vessel from Kadakkioi²⁷ and Tutrakan²⁸ as well as the five newly published vessels (Pl. 1/a-e) date to Tei I. The materials from the Tabashka cave date to Tei II²⁹. Two of the vessels from Devetaki published by Ilka Zmeikova date to Tei II-III³⁰. According to the materials published south of the Danube most numerous are those from the 3rd phase of the culture: Russe³¹, Novgrad³², Devetaki³³, Emen³⁴, Ezerovo³⁵ as well as the vessels on

Pl. 2/a-b. The vessel from Altimir (Northwestern Bulgaria)³⁶ is contemporaneous to that phase³⁷.

South of the Balkan range materials similar to Tei ones come from Aitos³⁸, Azmashka tell³⁹ and Gurguliat - Pekliuk⁴⁰. I would like to add here the grave from Drama - Kayriaka dated to the Bronze Age thanks to the little jug discovered in it. The investigators related the jug to Monteoru and Tei II-III cultures⁴¹. Comparing the jug to the askoi-like vessels from Monteoru the authors accept that the jug under discussion represents, in general, the idea of that type of vessel⁴². The type itself is characteristic for Monteoru IC4 and, most of all, for Monteoru IC3. There is a great diversity in Monteoru culture funeral practices⁴³, while the Tei one shows inhumation in flexed position on one side only - Chirmogi, Căscioarele, Ploiești-*Brazi*. As a funeral offering a jug placed in front of the chest was found⁴⁴. The Drama - Kayriaka grave is close, if we follow the funeral practices, to those of the Tei culture phase III. The Drama jug is close to that from Căscioarele, grave 2 with some differences at the handle⁴⁵. Considering the Tei culture area south of the Danube, as well as the distance between, the Monteoru area and Thrace, I would accept the association of the Drama find with Tei materials south of the river, without ignoring some Monteoru influences.

It is quite clear that most investigators have already accepted the thesis for the existence of the Tei culture south of the Danube. The argument is the beginning of its presence in the discussed regions. V. Leahu noted, in one of his latest works that the process of the formation of Tei culture began north of the fluvial⁴⁶. However, in an earlier article the same author argues that the space in which the formation of Tei culture took place includes regions south of the Danube as well⁴⁷. According to Cristian Schuster, during the 3rd (2nd) phase of the Tei culture, there took place some migrations to the south of the Danube⁴⁸. All these opinions treat differently the problem of the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age in North Bulgaria as well.

Considering the topography of the sites (probably settlements) with Tei I materials from North Bulgaria one can say that the plateau (Tutrakan), river terraces (Novgrad), high natural fortified hills (Kadakkioi) as well as caves (Devetaki) were inhabited. The Tei I settlement topography is the same north of the river. That fact comes to confirm the idea of a cultural similarity on both sides of the Danube from the very beginning of Tei I. In my opinion, the vessels on Pl. 1, dated to Tei I, as well as the

materials from Devetaki, Novgrad, Kadakkioi and Tutrakan confirm the idea of the existence of the Tei culture south of the Danube beginning with its 1st phase. The presence of Tei I materials in Central North and Northeastern Bulgaria allows the thesis that the

southdanubian lands participate in the genesis of the culture. It develops on both sides of the river during phases II-III as well, the differences being a result of the cultural interrelations with the south (for Bulgarian lands) and north-eastern (for Romanian lands).

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NOTE

1. Stefanov 1974, p. 261, Pl. 12: a-b.
2. Leahu 1992, Pl. II: 4, 7.
3. Sîrbu, Damian 1992, p. 335, Pl. III: 1.
4. Leahu 1992, p. 69.
5. Stefanov 1974, p. 261, Pl. 12: a-b.
6. Leahu 1992, Pl. 8, 7; Sîrbu, Damian 1992, p. 335, Pl. III: 1.
7. Stefanov 1974, p. 261, Pl. 12: a-b, e.
8. Leahu 1992, Pl. II: 8; Sîrbu, Damian 1992, p. 335, Pl. III: 1.
9. Stefanov 1974, p. 261, Pl. 12: a-b, e.
10. Leahu 1992, Pl. II: 8; Sîrbu, Damian 1992, p. 335, Pl. III: 1.
11. Mikov, Djambazov 1960, p. 121, Pl. 91; Georgieva 1952, p. 264, fig. 243.
12. Leahu 1966 b, p. 196, fig. 2; 1992, Pl. II: 13, 15.
13. Zmejkova 1990, pp. 101f., fig. 1, 2.
14. Leahu 1966 a, p. 106, fig. 26: 1, 2; 1992, Pl. VII: 15, 17; Şerbănescu, Bălţeanu 1996, p. 491, Pl. III: 2, p. 493, Pl. V.
15. Mikov, Djambazov 1960, p. 121, Pl. 91, p. 122, Pl. 92.
16. Georgiev, Angelov 1952, p. 139, fig. 114; Morintz 1978, pp. 52f., fig. 30: 4.
17. Leahu 1966 a, p. 106, fig. 26: 7, 8; 1992, Pl. VII: 23, 24.
18. Leahu 1978, pp. 61-65.
19. Alexandrescu 1973, p. 83.
20. Leahu 1978, pp. 43-71; Morintz 1978, pp. 47-70.
21. Schuster 2000, p. 281.
22. *Ibidem*, p. 282.
23. *Ibidem*, pp. 283f.
24. Zmejkova 1990, pp. 96-104; Zmejkova 2002, pp.159f.
25. Mikov, Djambazov 1960, p. 121, Pl. 91.
26. Stefanov 1974, p. 261, Pl. 12: a, b, c.
27. Georgieva 1952, p. 264, fig. 237; 243.
28. Alexandrov et al. 1998, p. 13, Pl. 2: 9-10, p. 30.
29. Zmejkova 1990, p. 102, Pl. 2, 3.
30. Leahu 1978, p. 61.
31. Georgiev, Angelov 1952, p. 137, fig. 114.
32. Stefanov 1974, p. 262, Pl. 14: c.
33. Mikov, Djambazov 1960, p. 121, Pl. 91; Zmejkova 1990, pp. 101-103, fig. 1-5.
34. Nikolova, Angelov 1961, p. 311, Pl. 18.
35. Toncheva 1980, p. 263, Pl. 2; Zmejkova 2002, p. 165, fig. 2, p. 166, fig. 3.
36. Nikolov 1964, p. 69, Pl. I: d.
37. Morintz 1978, p. 52.
38. Kazarov 1928, p. 305, fig. 1.
39. Leahu 1978, pp. 51-53, fig. 5: 2.
40. Petkov 1963, p. 189, fig. 12-14.
41. Lichardus et al. 2001, pp. 171f., fig. 58.
42. *Ibidem*.
43. Zaharia 1995, p. 200.
44. Leahu 1987, pp. 49-52; Şerbănescu, Bălţeanu 1996, pp. 482f.
45. Şerbănescu, Bălţeanu 1996, p. 491, Pl. III: 2.
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47. Leahu 1978, p. 70.
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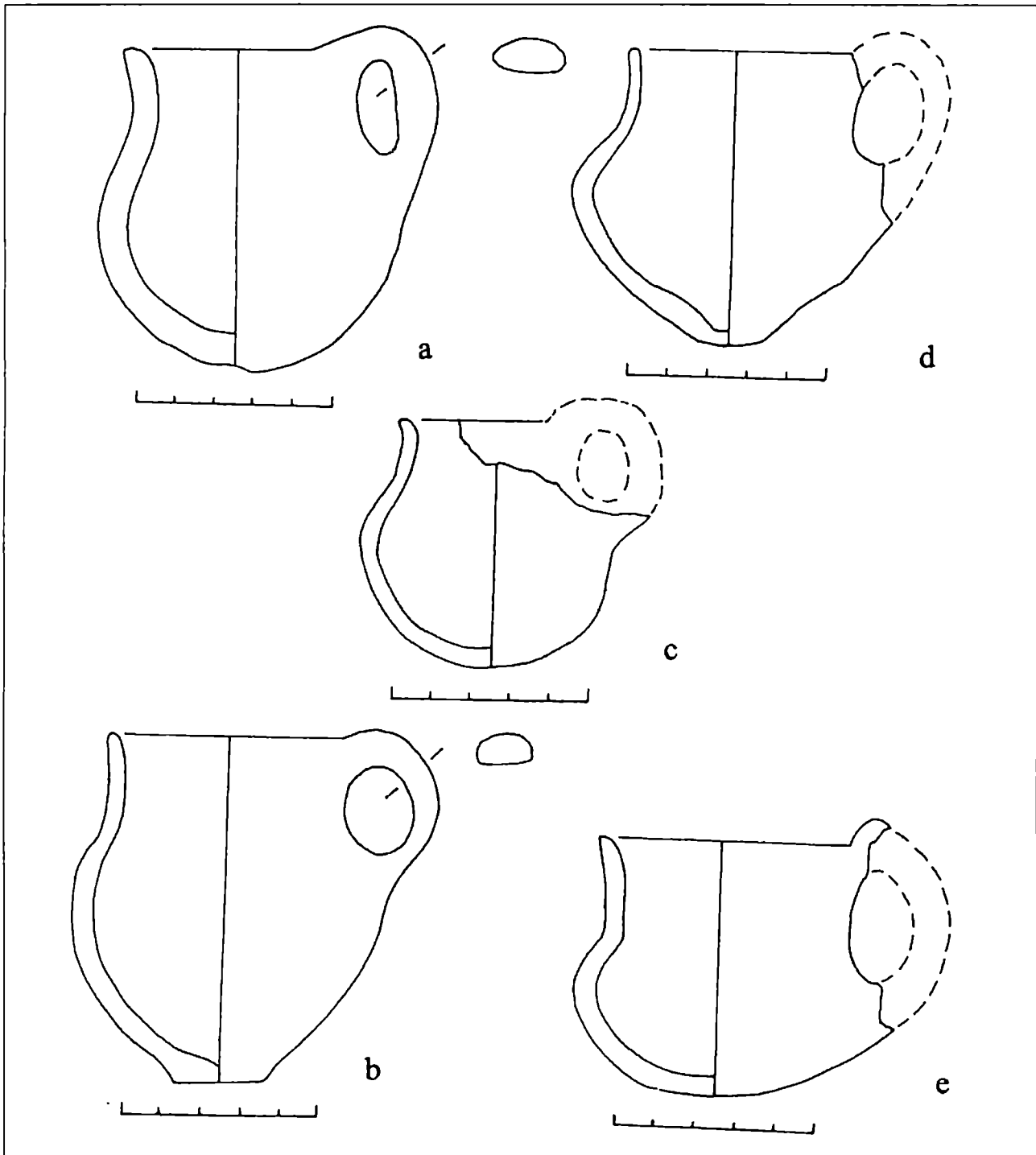


Fig. 1. a. Unknown place of founding; b. unknown place of founding; c. Devetaki; d. unknown place of founding; e. Devetaki.

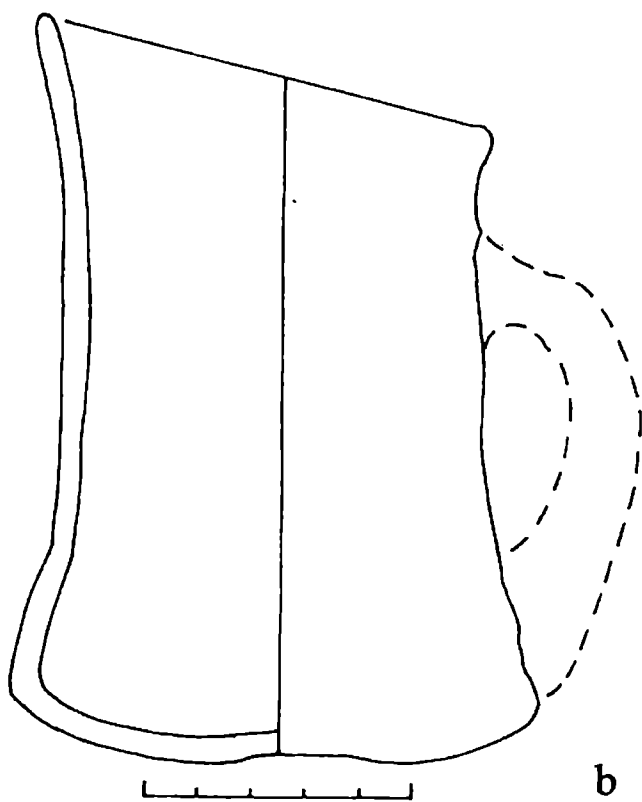
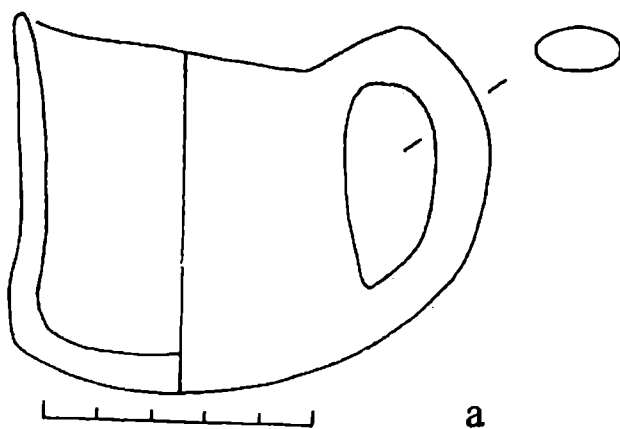


Fig. 2. a. Drenov; b. Devetaki.