

Chinese Porcelain from Varna (end of XVII-XVIII century)

Valentin Pletniov

The paper presents five hemi-spherical porcelain cups found during archaeological excavations in the old part of the city of Varna (fig. 1-5). They have even rim and comparatively small low cylindrical base. The rim diameter varies from 8.5 to 9.5 cm and the height - from 4.5 to 4.8 cm. They are decorated in the typical for the Chinese porcelain blue-and-white style. The ornaments are relatively roughly painted, with a smeared cobalt glaze. They are completely covered by transparent shiny glaze, slightly bluish in colour. Four of the cups do not bear producer's mark and

one (fig. 5) is marked with the symbol of the emperor Chen Lun (1736 - 1795). According to the known parallels, the decoration and the workmanship, the cups are dated to the late 17th - the mid 18th century and belong to the production of the Chin dynasty (1644 - 1916). These are the only porcelain cups found in Bulgaria, which are published so far. The fact that they were discovered in Varna together with faience from Iznik and Italian majolica, is another example of the prosperity of the city Christian population during the Ottoman period.