

The Early Neolithic settlement Slatina in Sofia: second building horizon (preliminary report, part II)

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The ceramic complex of the second building horizon in the Early Neolithic settlement Slatina reveals the main features of the Kremikovtsi cultural group. Clay vessels may be divided into three technological groups. The author accentuates on the third technological group: vessels with slipped surface, and especially on the vessels with painted decoration. This group comprises thin-walled vessels made of well-purified clay with admixture of fine sand, and very rarely, of organic stuff. The slip is orange-red, red, wine-red, light-brown, pink-white or white. Two subgroups are distinguished in the discussed technological group.

The first subgroup includes not ornamented vessels from the three main shape types. Most numerous are the dishes, and least attested are the pots.

The second subgroup comprises vessels decorated with compositions painted in wine-red, dark-brown, cream (yellow-brown) and white. Polychrome painted decoration, composed of dark-brown and white, is rarely attested.

The group of vessels decorated with wine-red paint is most numerous. Two variants of ornamental scheme are attested. The first one contains a basic composition, which begins either from the mouth rim or from a not ornamented band beneath the mouth. The patterns used include hanging or standing equilateral triangles with different filling of the inner space, isosceles triangles, vertical hemi-elliptical motifs, a composition of the "fertility wreath" type etc. The second variant of orna-

mental scheme consists of decoration beneath the mouth and a basic composition. The decoration beneath the mouth is of identical motifs (retiform ornament, triangles, angular and arched motifs). The basic compositions are similar to those used in the already-described (single-parted) ornamental scheme.

The compositions painted in dark-brown present an undivided scheme, which includes one-type combinations of hanging triangles in different variants, as well as a bipartite scheme of decoration beneath the mouth, and a basic pattern.

Cream-colored paint is met more rarely. It is usually used in bipartite ornamental schemes consisting of similar to the above-described motifs. Undivided ornamental schemes are extremely rarely painted in cream. The variety of motifs is the same as in the case with the other colors.

White paint is rarely used for decorating slipped vessels. The ornamentation is undivided or bipartite. "Fertility wreath" compositions are most typical in the case of bipartite ornamental schemes. The undivided schemes usually consist of triangular motifs.

The polychrome compositions combine motifs painted in brown, which are flanked by white bands. A bipartite composition painted in dark-brown and red is attested on a sherd. The depicted spiral and angular ornamental motifs are not typical for the west-central Bulgaria. The vessel seems to be a direct import from the area of the Gradeshnitsa-Cîrcea cultural group.