

## **Once again about the pottery with painted geometric decoration from Southwestern Bulgaria (Abstract)**

**Anelia Bozkova, Peter Delev**

The article offers a review of the current knowledge on the pottery with painted geometric decoration from the Late Geometric and the Archaic periods in Southwestern Bulgaria. This pottery belongs to a well-defined and increasingly well-studied ceramic style from the Northern Aegean area that in recent years has been given various names – ‘silvered pottery’, ‘local sub-geometric pottery’, ‘Olynthian pottery’, etc. The authors studied the pottery from three contexts in Southwest Bulgaria, under consideration here, within a project supported by the Ministry of Education and with the participation of other scholars. In the relevant literature, similar fragments are mentioned from two more contexts in the valley of Maritsa; most probably, they have arrived here by the trading routes from the Middle Mesta Valley (Koprivlen), via the Rhodopes, toward the Thracian Plain.

The article lists the archaeological contexts in which the painted fragments are found and pays special attention to the fact that they were always associated with hand-made shards with decoration that is typical of the Early Iron Age. In all

contexts, the wheel-made fragments greatly outnumber the hand-made ones. Thousands of painted fragments and several complete vases were discovered at Koprivlen alone; a substantial number of fragments were also found at the site near Mikrevo, Sandanski region.

The study summarizes the technological specifics of the pottery and underlines that they are identical for all specimens of the style in Bulgaria, despite the documented variety of clay types, the specifics of the paste and the firing. The formal typological characteristics of the vessels are of particular interest, as shapes were identified that are absent in the assemblages from Sindos and other sites around the bay of Thessaloniki. This fact suggests the presence of specific shapes that are typical for the middle courses of the Mesta and Struma rivers and is another argument in support of the hypothesis about the local production of pottery with painted geometric decoration in present-day Southwest Bulgaria. The chronological data for the Bulgarian groups indicate that they belong mostly to the Late Geometric and the Early Archaic periods – the second half of the 8th and the 7th c. BC.