Earthenware in private worship. Examples from *Serdica*

Mario Ivanov [a]

[a] *Department of Classical Archaeology, National Institute of Archaeology with Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 2 Saborna Str., 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria; slotarm74@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

The paper presents 10 clay censers and *thymiateria* found in *Serdica*, present-day Sofia, Bulgaria, during archaeological excavations 2010-2012. All items were found in private houses which presumes their use in domestic cult rituals. According to their formal features the incense burners belong to two main types: burners with pierced walls on a flat base and ribbed conical bowls on a hollow pedestal. The clay *thymiateria* have different forms: with cylindrical shaft, with prismatic shaft and in the shape of a pine-cone. From chronological point of view the finds cover the entire period from the late 1st c. AD to the middle of the 3rd c. AD. Together with other items of religious practices (terracotta figurines, votive plates etc.) found in the excavated buildings they provide an opportunity to cast some light on the private cult activities and to suggest a probable location of the domestic worship places. In addition, the finds in question are good examples for the continuity of the tradition to use specific pottery items in private cult practices.

KEYWORDS

Censer, *thymiaterion*, cult practices, private worship, domestic altars

Introduction

The clay cult vessels from present-day Bulgaria still await a comprehensive study. Usually they are discussed in the context of the ceramic production of a Roman city or pottery workshop (Генчева 2002, 37; Кабакчиева 1986, 15-16; Султов 1972; Bospatchieva 2004, 91–92; Sultov 1985). Several other items are published separately or as a part of the archaeological context of different sites (Балканска 1964, 140-141; Дремсизова-Нелчинова, Балкански 1973, 59; Любенова 1980, 40; Минчев 1993; Станчева 1967, 6-8; Султов 1964, 55; Kalcev 1991, 247).

In 2010–2012, a vast area of ca. 6000 m^2 of the Roman city of Serdica was excavated in the centre of Sofia (fig. 1). There were discovered 7 large houses, 2 early Christian basilicas, part of a Late Antique thermal complex and 6 streets (Иванов 2016, 204). Among the rich ceramic inventory of the houses several cult vessels were found which will be discussed here.

Typology and chronology

The conical bowls on a high hollow pedestal are usually defined as *turibulum* - censers for burning resin or other aromatic substances (Gose 1975, 38; Sultov 1985, 80-81).The vessels have little variations of the main form and rich diversity in the shape and decoration of the walls. According to the different authors the studied censers from Bulgaria and the Balkans could be divided into two to eight types.

The items from *Serdica* are of two main types with variations (figs. 2-3). The censers with conical shape, flat base and radial arrangement of the holes on the walls belong to type I. The

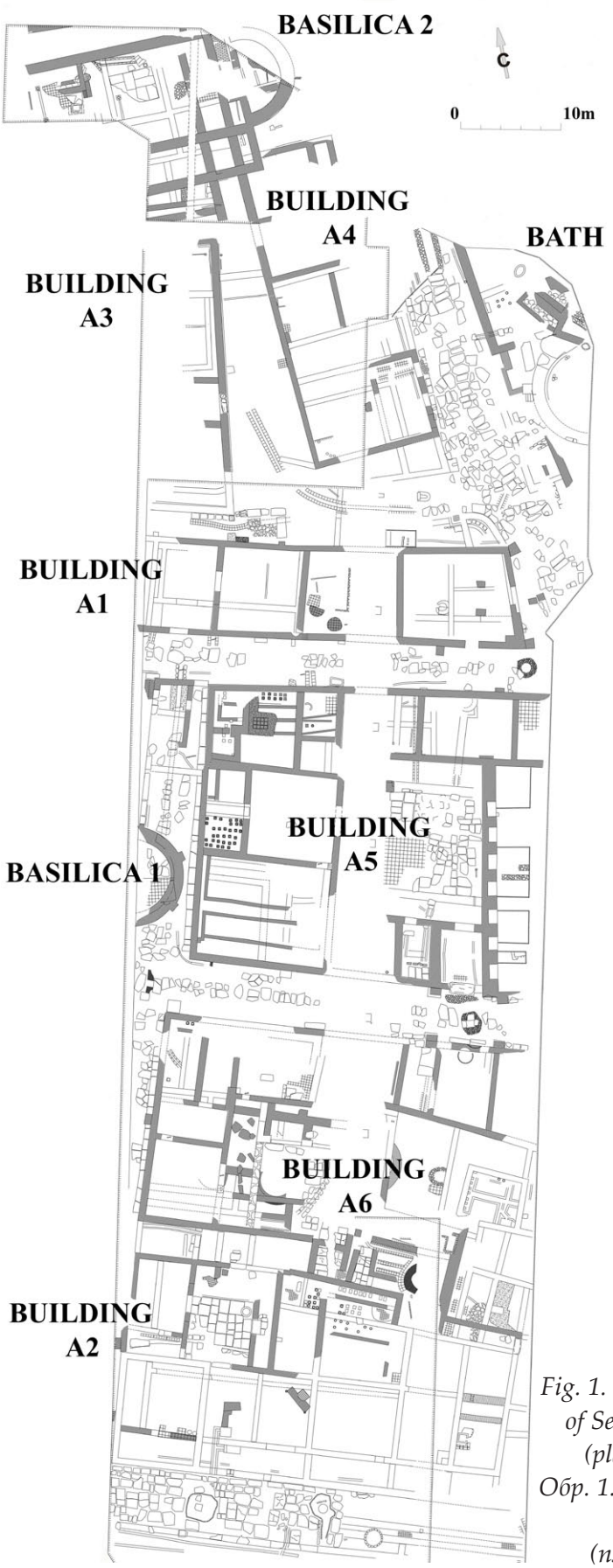


Fig. 1. The excavated area in the central part of Serdica with the discovered buildings (plan A. Kamenarov, D. Ognyanov)
Обр. 1. Проученият участък от Сердика с разкритите сгради (план А. Каменаров, Д. Огнянов)

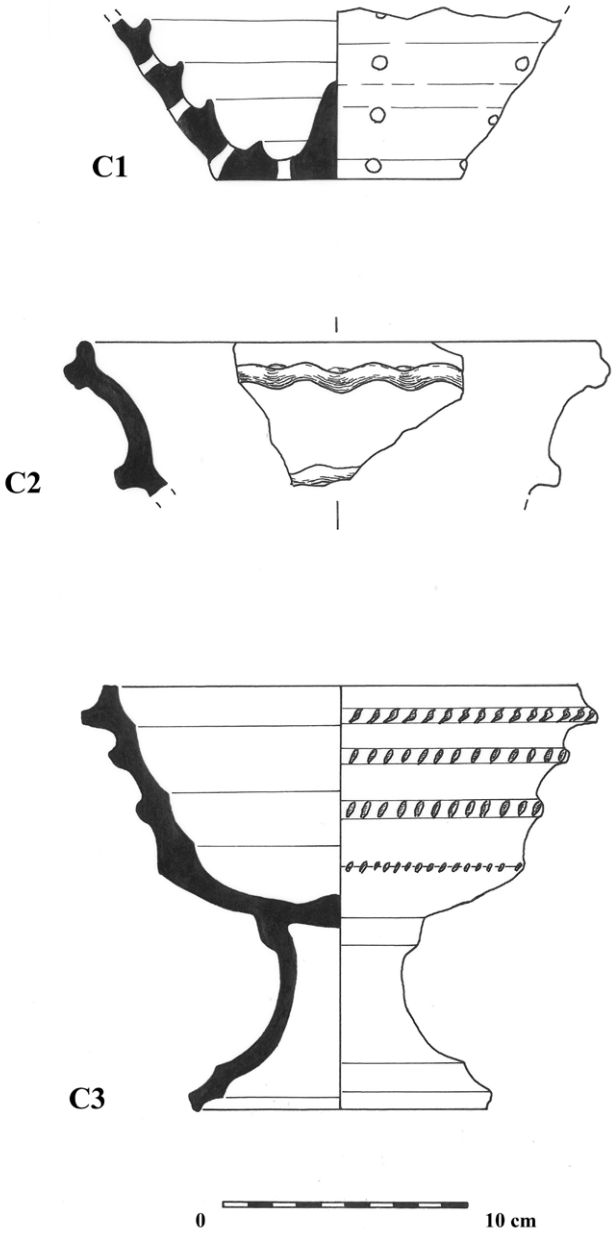


Fig. 2. Drawings of censers C1–C3 (author M. Ivanov)
Обр. 2. Графични изображения на кадилници C1–C3 (автор М. Иванов)

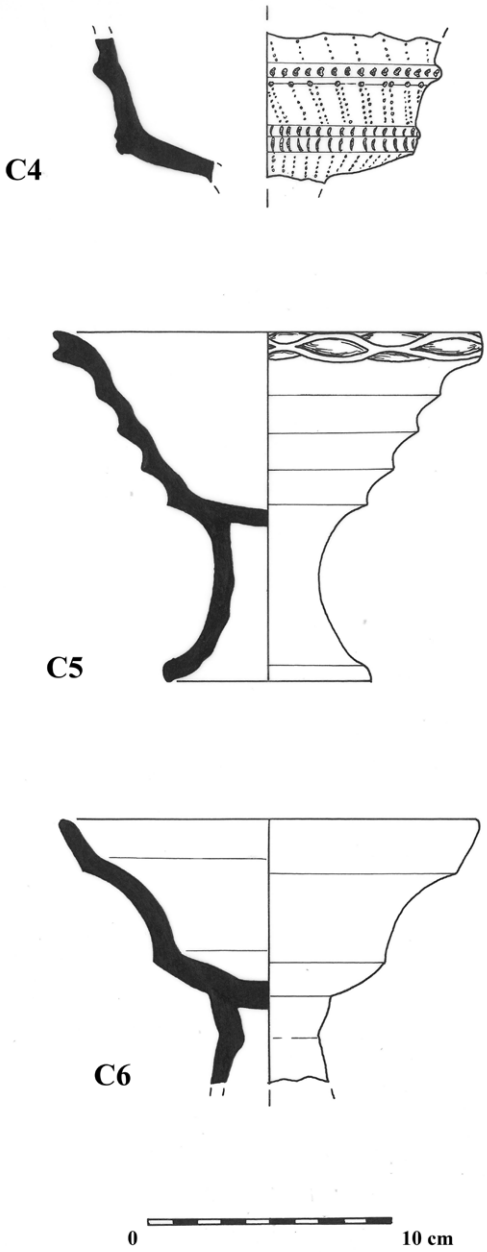


Fig. 3. Drawings of censers C4–C6 (author M. Ivanov)
Обр. 3. Графични изображения на кадилници C4–C6 (автор М. Иванов)

inner surface of the vessels is modeled with deep grooves and the base has a conical attachment. Type II includes censers with conical bowl over a high hollow base. According to the wall profile and decoration the items of type II could be divided into three variants: variant 1 – censers with richly decorated walls; variant 2 – censers with relief rim made of double strap pressed in equal spaces; variant 3 – censers without any additional decoration.

Only one censer belongs to type I (figs. 2, C1; 4) and it has parallels with vessels of group A according to B. Sultov from Pavlikeni, Butovo, Hotnitsa, as well as from the Roman villa near Prisovo (Veliko Tarnovo district) and the sanctuary in Pernik (Любенова 1980, 40; Султов 1968, 55, Обр. 9г; Sultov 1985, 80–81, Table XL, 4). The censers of this type



Fig. 4. Fragmentary censer C1 (photo M. Ivanov)
Обр. 4. Фрагментарно запазената кадилница C1 (снимка М. Иванов)



Fig. 5. A sherd of censer C2 (photo M. Ivanov)
Обр. 5. Фрагмент от кадилница C2 (снимка М. Иванов)



Fig. 6. Restored censer C3 (photo M. Ivanov)
Обр. 6. Реставрираната кадилница C3 (снимка М. Иванов)



Fig. 7. Sherds of censer C4 (photo M. Ivanov)
Обр. 7. Фрагменти от кадилница С4 (снимка М. Иванов)

are not known from the territory of neighbouring provinces. According to the stratigraphic context with associated coins the censer from *Serdica* dates to the last quarter of the 1st c. AD, which makes it the earliest item of this type in Bulgaria so far.

The censers of type II, variant 1 (figs. 2, C2-C3; 3, C4) are the most widespread form. They correspond to group B, type 1 according to B. Sultov (Sultov 1985, 81, Table XL, 5), to type 1 according to E. Gencheva (Генчева 2002, 37, табл. XXIX, 1-4), to type 1 according to G. Popillian of 2nd c. AD date (Popilian 1976, 116), to type I according to O. Brukner dated to the end of the 1st – 2nd c. AD (Brukner 1981, 38-39),to type X, 1 and X, 8 according to Sn. Nikolić-Đorđević dating from the first half of the 2nd to the middle of the 4th c. AD (Nikolić-Đorđević, 2000, 178, 181) and to type Ka 2 according to T. Cvjetićanin dated to the 2nd–first half of the 3rd c. AD (Cvjetićanin 2013, 89). The earliest item from *Serdica* is the censer's sherd C2 of Hadrianic date (fig. 5). Slightly later is the entirely preserved censer C3 which should be dated to the reign of Antoninus Pius (fig. 6). The vessel C4 is the latest one and could be dated to the end of 2nd – first quarter of the 3rd c. AD (fig. 7).

The censer C5, which belongs to type II, variant 2 (fig. 3, C5; fig. 8), corresponds to type 2 according to G. Popillian of 3rd c. AD date (Popilian 1976, 116), to type X, 2 according to Sn. Nikolić-Đorđević (Nikolić-Đorđević 2000, 178, 181) and to type Ka 3 according to T. Cvjetićanin of 2nd c. AD date (Cvjetićanin 2013, 90). The *Serdica* item should be dated to the first half of the 3rd c. AD.

The last censer C6 (figs. 3, C6; 9) belongs to type II, variant 3. A similar vessel is found in *Aquincum* dated to the 2nd – 3rd c. AD (Sándor 2009, 175, № 1189). According to the stratigraphic position and the coins found in corresponding synchronous layers the example from *Serdica* could be dated to the second half of the 3rd–beginning of the 4th c. AD.

Another specific vessels used in private worship are the small clay altars defined as *arulae* (Yavis 1949, 171) or *thymiateria*. Usually they were made in moulds and often together with two clay lamps on the same base (Минчев 1993, 39; Bailey 1975, 71; Ladstätter 2013, 317). A similar *thymiaterion* found in *Serdica* several decades ago has a relief image of an



Fig. 8. Restored censer C5 (photo M. Ivanov)
Обр. 8. Реставрираната кадилница С5 (снимка М. Иванов)



Fig. 9. Fragmentary censer C6 (photo M. Ivanov)
Обр. 9. Частично запазена кадилница С6 (снимка М. Иванов)

eagle on a crater (Станчева 1967, 6-8). Several other *thymiateria* are part of the production from the workshops discovered in *Philippopolis* and *Augusta Traiana,* which proves their local manufacture (Bospatchieva 2004, 91-92; Kalcev 1991, 247, 267, Abb. 19-20). Another fragmentary preserved vessel of this kind is found in *Odessos*. It is in the shape of pine-cone flanked by two columns with lamps on their top. Probably the item is imported from *Knidos* (Минчев 1993). One pine-cone *thymiaterion* was found in a ritual hearth in the periphery of a burial mound near the village of Gledka, Kardzhali district (Дремсизова-Нелчинова, Балкански 1973, 58-59, обр. 4, 3).

The production of *thymiateria* is usually a part of the pottery made in workshops specializing in lamps and terracotta. Among the largest production centres are *Knidos*, *Ephesos*

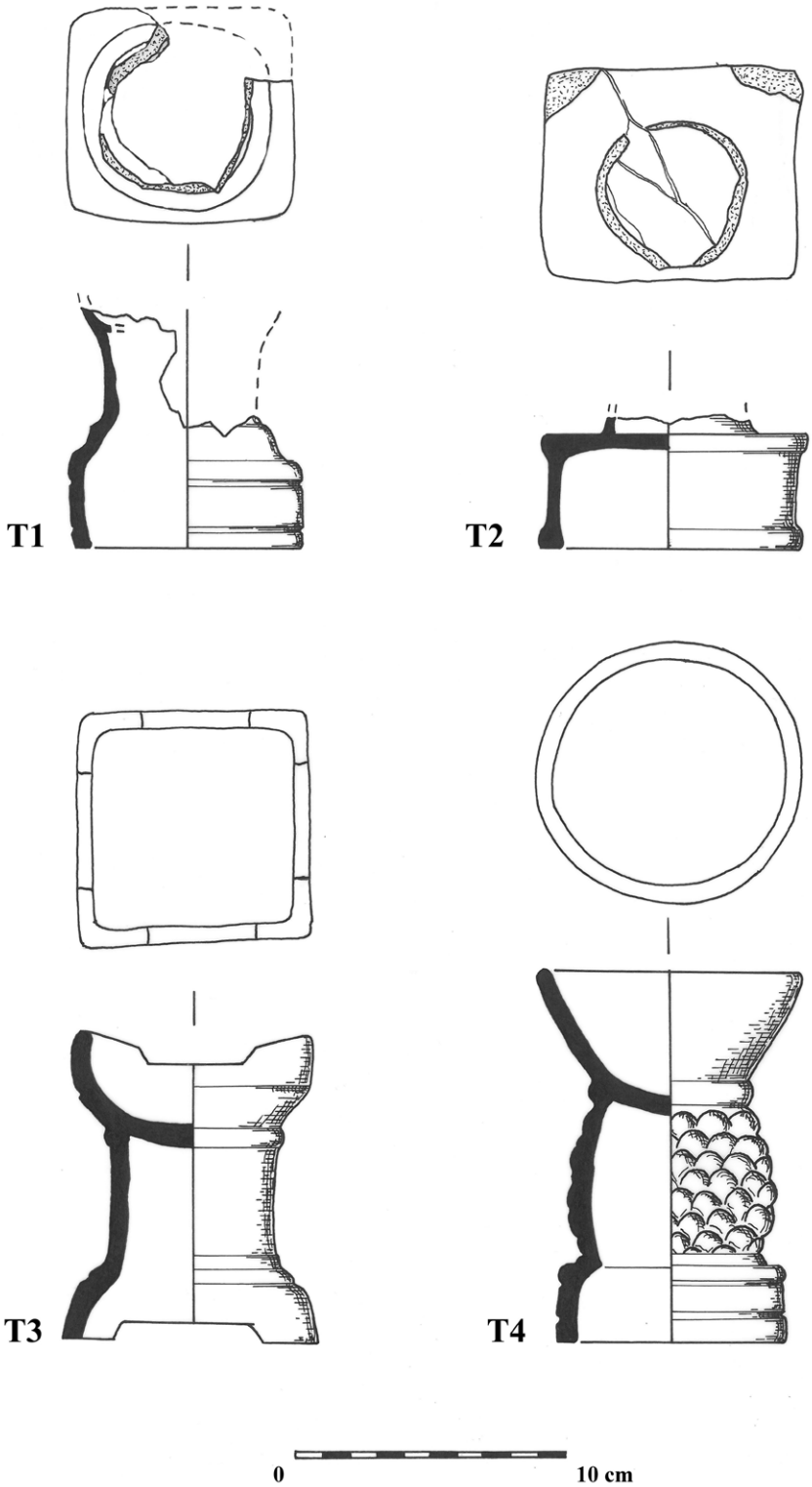


Fig. 10. Drawings of thymiateria T1–T4 (author M. Ivanov)
Обр. 10. Графични изображения на тимиатериони T1–T4 (автор М. Иванов)

and *Pergamum* but there are workshops also in Italy and North Africa (Bailey 1975; Bailey 1980, 252; Ladstätter 2013, 319).

The four *thymiateria* found in *Serdica* (fig. 10) could be classified in three types according to the shape of the body, which is the basic element used in the typological scheme of



Fig. 11. Lower part of thymiaterion T1 (photo M. Ivanov)
Обр. 11. Долната част на тимиатерион Т1 (снимка М. Иванов)



Fig. 12. The preserved base of thymiaterion T2 (photo M. Ivanov)
Обр. 12. Запазената основа на тимиатерион Т2 (снимка М. Иванов)

thymiateria and monolithic altars (Wiegand 1912, 88–91; Yavis 1949, 141):

type 1 – *thymiateria* with cylindrical shaft on square base.

type 2 – *thymiateria* with prismatic shaft on square base; the upper end is in the form of shallow square bowl with *acrotheria* at the corners.

type 3 – *thymiateria* with pine-cone shaped shaft on square base; the upper end is in the form of round shallow bowl.

The two items T1 and T2 from *Serdica* belong to type 1 (figs. 10, T1-2; 11-12). Both are fragmentary but the shape of the body is obvious. Probably each *thymiaterion* presents a different variation of the type but the lack of the upper part makes it impossible to be more precise as to what that variation may be. The date of T1 is in the end of the 1st–beginning of the 2nd c. AD, T2 is of Hadrianic date.

The two other *thymiateria* T3 and T4 of type 2 and 3 respectively (figs. 10, T3-4; 13-14) are found together with the censer C5 and could be dated to the first half of the 3rd c. AD. The pine-cone shaped item T4 is similar to the *thymiaterion* from Gledka, as well as the production of *Philippopolis* workshop (Дремсизова-Нелчинова, Балкански 1973, 59, обр. 4,3; Bospatchieva 2004, 94, № 21). Such forms of *thymiateria* but with two clay lamps on both sides are common in the pottery production of *Knidos* and *Ephesos* (Bailey 1975; Ladstätter 2013, 319–320, Abb. 3). The *thymiaterion* with prismatic shaft (T3) has less parallels – a similar 1st c. AD item is known from Italy (Bailey 1980, 252).

Functional features

The studies of clay censers usually underline their specific function as ritual vessels for burning aromatic substances in funeral rites and divine worship (Минчев 1993, 39; Sultov 1985, 82). The strong argument for this are burnt and smoked remains on the inner



Fig. 13. Restored thymiaterion T3 (photo M. Ivanov)
Обр. 13. Реставрираният тимиатерион Т3 (снимка М. Иванов)



Fig. 14. Restored pine-cone shaped thymiaterion T4 (photo M. Ivanov)
Обр. 14. Реставрираният тимиатерион с шишарковидно тяло Т4 (снимка М. Иванов)

surface of the vessels. Four of the *Serdica* items show such traces which supports their ritual function. The censer C5 is found in burned stratigraphic layer and actually it is not possible to determine the reasons for the burning on it. The censer with holes C1 (fig. 4) shows no burnt traces but its ritual function is acceptable because of the similar examples from Prisovo in which burnt traces along with small parts of resin and charcoal were found (Sultov 1985, 81). Another evidence for the presumed ritual use of these items is the censer from the sanctuary in Pernik (*Любенова* 1980, 40).

The technical features and rich decoration of the censers from *Serdica* give additional argument in favour of a cult purpose for the vessels. All items are made of clay with uneven firing and have more or less rough surface. Nevertheless from technical and formal point of view the censers are complex vessels with rich relief and incised decoration. Four of them (C2-C5) have additional white lime coating on the outer surface, which is a characteristic feature for the censers (figs. 5-8). The described combination of crude texture with complex form and rich decoration is another argument in favour of the specific function of the vessels, which is obviously different from the fine and cooking ware.

The four *thymiateria* have similar function although there are no explicit evidence of it. The two almost entirely preserved items (T3 and T4) are found in burned stratigraphic layer which makes it impossible to identify any burnt traces of potential ritual use. The upper functional part of the other two vessels (T1 and T2) is not preserved, which does not

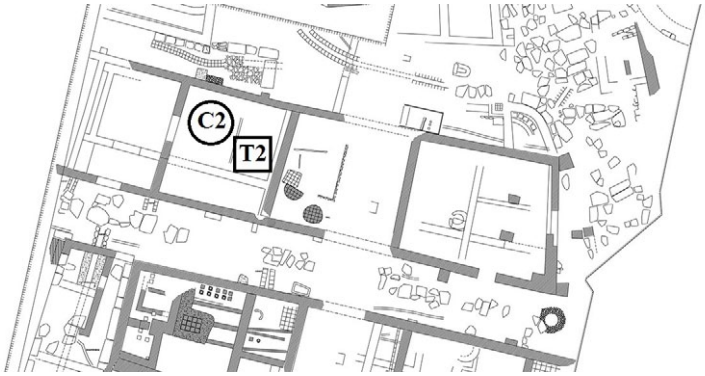


Fig. 15. Location of the cult vessels in room 2 of building A1 (author M. Ivanov)
Обр. 15. Местонамиране на култовите съдове в помещение 2 на сграда А1 (автор М. Иванов)

allow a comprehensive observation. The *thymiaterion* from Gledka is important because of its find-spot in a ritual hearth related to the graves. The context of the find supports its presumed ritual use, and of the *thymiateria* as a whole.

Archaeological context and relation with private worship

The archaeological context of the discussed cult vessels from *Serdica* is of a prime importance. All censers and *thymiateria* are found in private houses, which indicates their relation with domestic cult rituals. One censer (C2) and one *thymiaterion* (T2) are from the same layer in room 2 of the building A1; in building A2 there are two censers (C4 and C5) in different chronological position and the later one is found together with two *thymiateria* (T3 and T4); the censer with holes (C1) and the *thymiaterion* T1 belong to earlier deposits before the construction of buildings A3 and A4; the item C3 is found in room 2 of the building A4 and the latest one (C6) is from the building A5.

Besides the cult vessels, other cult items related to the domestic worship were also found in the excavated buildings. In room 1 of building A1, a marble votive plate of the Thracian horseman and a fragment of votive plate of uncertain deity were excavated. Both are dated to the first half of the 3rd c. AD. In room 2 of the same building a fragment of terracotta figurine of Mercury/ Hermes (second-third quarter of the 2nd c. AD) was also found. A piece of 3rd c. AD clay votive plate of Cybele was discovered in room 6a of building A5. In the north area of the site a clay ritual hearth – *eschara* with simple decoration on the surface was excavated that dates to the last quarter of the 1st – beginning of the 2nd c. AD (*Иванов* 2012б). All these finds along with the censers and *thymiateria* allow to identify the probable areas within the houses where domestic cult practices took place.

Building A1. The earliest finds related to the private worship are the sherds of censer and *thymiaterion* (C2, T2) of Hadrianic date found in room 2. It is possible that in this room there was a special place or some kind of private altar designed for domestic ritual purposes (fig. 15). The later fragment of Mercury terracotta figurine from the same room probably indicates continuity in using the same cult place during the second-third quarters of the 2nd c. AD. From the end of the 2nd – beginning of the 3rd c. AD onward a change in the location of the worship place could be observed. The two mentioned marble votive plates indicate that ritual practices probably were moved to the west-in room 1.

Buiding A2. The finds from the building show similar process in time (fig. 16): the

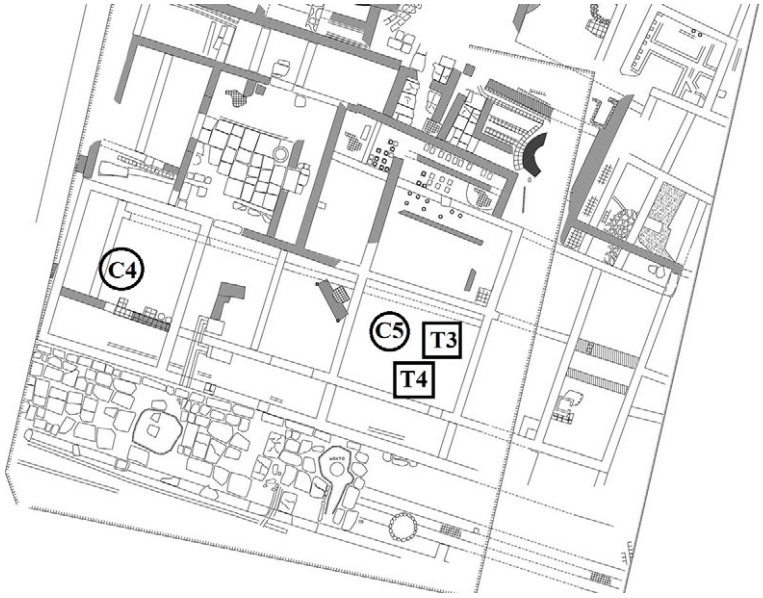


Fig. 16. Location of the cult vessels in rooms 2 and 7 of building A2 (author M. Ivanov)
Обр. 16. Местонамиране на култовите съдове в помещения 2 и 7 на сграда А2 (автор М. Иванов)

earlier censer (C4) from the end of the 2nd – first quarter of the 3rd c. AD probably marks the western part of room 7 as a place of domestic cult while the other ritual vessels (censer C5 and the two *thymiateria* T3 and T4) from the first half–middle of 3rd century indicate change of the sacred area to the east - in room 2.

Building A3 and A4 (fig. 17). Here we have a different situation. The earliest finds (censer C1 and *thymiaterion* T1 from the end of the 1st – beginning of the 2nd c. AD) belong to the deposits of the earth-and-timber period of *Serdica* (see Иванов 2012a, 319). The two finds only indicate the use of cult vessels before the urban planning of the town and have no relation with the construction of the later Roman buildings A3 and A4. The next vessel (censer C3) found in room 2 of building A4 indicates the probable place of the domestic sanctuary in the time of Antoninus Pius.

Building A5. The only one censer (C6) found here is a possible indication for the place of private worship in the south-west area of the building during the second half of the 3rd– beginning of the 4th c. AD (fig. 18). The clay votive plate of Cybele of probably little earlier date is found to the north of this area. Unfortunately only limited parts of the earlier building phases of building A5 were excavated, which prevents the identification of the private cult places from which these finds have derived. So far it is not possible to claim with certainty whether the discovered synchronous walls are of different rooms or of different buildings.

The mapping of the finds and the discussion above show a clear picture of possible locations of domestic worship in most of the excavated buildings. Of course, such approach based exclusively on finds, is uncertain to some degree but it has its arguments. The above mentioned ritual hearth (*eschara*) from the end of the 1st – beginning of the 2nd c. AD is an illustration for the possible appearance of a domestic ritual place. Apart from this feature, there were no other structures of religious purpose. Most probably they were demolished during the later reconstructions of the buildings.

From functional point of view the combination of censer and *thymiaterion* found to-

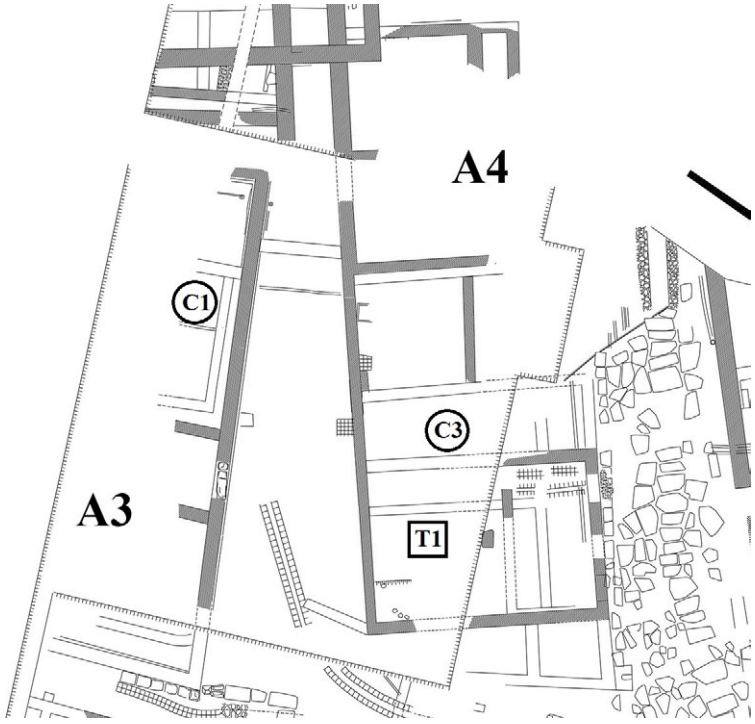


Fig. 17. Location of the cult vessels in buildings A3 and A4 (author M. Ivanov)
Обр. 17. Местонамиране на култовите съдове в сгради А3 и А4 (автор М. Иванов)

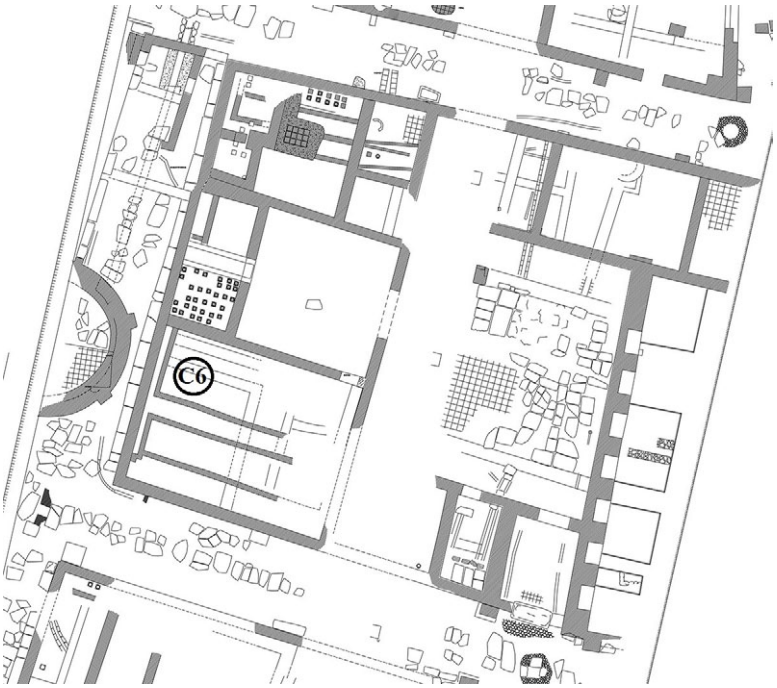


Fig. 18. Location of the censer C6 in the south-west area of building A5 (author M. Ivanov)
Обр. 18. Местонамиране на кадилницата С6 в югозападната част на сграда А5 (автор М. Иванов)

gether (testified two times) is of particular importance. Such doubling of cult vessels could be understood if we presume a different function of both items: the censers for burning resin and aroma substances and the *thymiateria* for placing small votive objects and gifts

for gods. The little clay altars could also have had a votive purpose although the lack of inscriptions is in favour of their practical use as altars rather than votive offerings. On the other hand, the different types of *thymiateria* probably suggests their designation for different deities.

In conclusion, the discussed ritual vessels give a good idea about the possible locations of private worship places in several houses in *Serdica*. The archaeological context and typological features of the finds are also important, since they provide some specific details for the function of censers and *thymiateria* in domestic ritual practices.

Catalogue

Censers.

C1. Several sherds of clay censer of type I (figs. 2, C1; 4). The vessel has conical form and a flat base, the rim is missing. The multiple holes pierced in the walls of the censer are arranged in six radial columns starting from the base. The inner surface of the vessel is modeled with deep grooves and the base has a conical attachment. The censer is made of roughly refined clay with orange-brownish colour and it is unevenly fired. Size: height – 7 cm, base diameter – 10 cm. Date: last quarter of the 1st c. AD.

C2. A single sherd of clay censer of type II, variation 1 (figs. 2, C2; 5). The upper part of the vessel is a conical bowl decorated with two relief stripes in wave pattern. The rim is slightly rounded. The censer is made of not very well refined clay with brown colour and it is unevenly fired. Size: preserved height – 6 cm, diameter – 21 cm. Date: the reign of Hadrian.

C3. Clay censer (restored) of type II, variation 1 (figs. 2, C3; 6). The vessel is conical bowl on a high hollow pedestal. Vertical rim, profiled walls and pedestal. The outer surface is decorated with relief straps with small depressions. There are preserved traces of white lime coating on the inner and outer surface. The censer is made of not very well refined clay with gray-brownish colour and it is unevenly fired. There are burnt traces on the inner surface. Size: height – 17.5 cm, rim diameter – 19.4 cm, base diameter – 12 cm. Date: the reign of Antoninus Pius.

C4. Several sherds of clay censer of type II, variation 1 (figs. 3, C4; 7). The vessel has conical upper part in the form of a bowl; the rim and pedestal are missing. The walls are richly decorated with relief straps with depressions and incisions. In-between there are rows of pierced holes. The censer is made of refined clay with brown-reddish colour and it is unevenly fired. The surface is rough. Some traces of white lime coating on the walls. On the inside – traces of burning. Size: preserved height – 6 cm, diameter of the middle part of the vessel – 12 cm. Date: end of 2nd – first quarter of the 3rd c. AD.

C5. Clay censer (restored) of type II, variation 2 (figs. 3, C5; 8). The vessel has conical upper part on a high hollow pedestal. The rim is slightly everted. The rim is made of two relief straps pinched in equal distances. The censer is made of not very well refined clay with beige-brownish to gray-brownish colour and it is unevenly fired. There are traces of burning on the inner surface of the vessel as well remains of white lime coating. Size: height – 14,4 cm, rim diameter 17.5 cm, base diameter – 8.4 cm. Date: first half of the 3rd c. AD.

C6. Clay censer of type II, variation 3 (figs. 3, C6; 9). The vessel has conical upper part on a high hollow pedestal, part of which is missing. Straight and slightly rounded rim. The walls bear no decoration. The censer is made of not very well refined clay of that is evenly fired to beige-brownish colour. Size: preserved height – 11 cm, rim diameter – 17 cm. Date: second half of the 3rd – beginning of the 4th c. AD.

Thymiateria

T1. A part of small clay *thymiaterion* of type I (figs. 10, T1; 11). Small cylindrical altar on a square base which is decorated with two parallel grooves on the outer surface. Only part of the cylindrical shaft is preserved with mouldings at the transition to the base and the upper part (now missing). The vessel is mould-made of refined clay with beige-brownish colour and it is evenly fired. Size: preserved height – 9 cm, base – 8 × 7.5 cm. Date: end of the 1st – beginning of the 2nd c. AD.

T2. A base part of small clay *thymiaterion* of type I (figs. 10, T2; 12). Only the square base is preserved on which there are small remains of the round shaft. The vessel is mould-made of refined clay with beige colour and it is unevenly fired. The surface is slightly roughened. Size: preserved height – 4.6 cm, base – 9 × 7.5 cm. Date: reign of Hadrian.

T3. Small clay *thymiaterion* of type II (restored) (figs. 10, T3; 13).Prismatic altar on a square base with four legs in the corners. The hollow shaft is square in cross-section with mouldings at the transition to the base and the

upper part. The upper part is in the form of a shallow square bowl with simplified *akrotheria* in the corners. The vessel is mould-made of well fired refined clay with brown-grayish colour and smooth surface. Size: height – 11.2 cm, base – 9.4 × 9.5 cm, square bowl – 8.4 × 8.6 cm. Date: first half of the 3rd c. AD.

T4. Small clay *thymiaterion* of type III (restored) (figs. 10, T4; 14). Altar on a square base. The hollow shaft is pine-cone shaped with mouldings at the transition to the base and the bowl. The upper part is made as a round shallow bowl. The vessel is mould-made of well fired refined clay with brown-grayish colour and smooth surface. Size: preserved height –13.7 cm, base – 8.7 × 8.7 cm, diameter of bowl – 9.8 cm. Date: first half of the 3rd c. AD.

References

Балканска, А. 1964. Керамика от разкопките в Сердика. *Сердика. Археологически материали и проучвания*, т. 1. София: Издателство на Българската академия на науките, 135-145.

Генчева, Е. 2002. *Първият военен лагер в Novae, провинция Мизия (Северна България).*София-Варшава: Zakład Graficzny UW.

Дремсизова-Нелчинова, Цв., Ив. Балкански. 1973. Надгробна могила край с. Гледка, Кърджалийски окръг. *Археология* XV.3, 58-69, 58-69.

Иванов, М. 2012а. Археологическо проучване на обект „Подлез под бул. Княгиня Мария Луиза, гр. София". *Археологически открития и разкопки през 2011 г.*, 318–320.

Иванов, М. 2012б. Ранноримска есхара от Сердика. *Археология* 1, 76-81.

Иванов, М. 2016. Късноантични *latrinae* от *Serdica*. *Bulgarian e-Journal of Archaeology* 6.2, 203-231.

Кабакчиева, Г. 1986. *Керамика от вилата при Ивайловград, II–IV в.* (Разкопки и проучвания XV). София: Издателство на БАН.

Любенова, В. 1980. Светилището при Перник. В: Велков, Ив. Венедиков, К. Влахов, Ал. Фол (ред.) *Тракийски светилища. Тракийски паметници*, 2. София: Наука и изкуство, 15-140.

Минчев, Ал. 1993. Римска лампа-тимиатерион от Одесос. *Известия на народния музей - Варна* 29.44, 37-44.

Станчева, М. 1967. Към изучаването на езическите култове в Сердика. *Музеи и паметници на културата* 2, 6–10.

Султов, Б. 1964. Една *villa rustica* край с. Присово, В. Търновски окръг. *Известия на окръжния музей - Велико Търново* 2, 49-64.

Султов, Б. 1972. Глинени кадилници от Бутово и Хотница. *Известия на археологическия институт* 33, 177–182.

Bailey, D. M. 1975. A Roman Lampstand of Cnidian Manufacture. *Antike Kunst* 18.2, 67-71.

Bailey, D. M. 1980. *A Catalogue of the Lamps in the British Museum, 2. Roman Lamps made in Italy*. London: British Museum.

Bospatchieva, M. 2004. A Late Antiquity Pottery Workshop in *Philippopolis* (Plovdiv, Southern Bulgaria). *Archaeologia Bulgarica* VIII.2, 89-104.

Brukner, O. 1981. *Rimska keramika u Jugoslovenskom delu provincije Donje Panonije*. Beograd: Pokrajinski Zavod za Zaštitu Spomenika Kulture SAP Vojvodine Savez Arheoloških Društava Jugoslavije.

Cvjetićanin, T. 2013. Keramičke posude. In Cvjetićanin,T., Glumac, M., Krunić, S., Ratković, D. Šljivar, D. *Pokloni Sofije i Milojka Dunjića.* Beograd: Alta Nova, 27-92.

Gose, E. 1975. *Gefästypen der römischen Keramik im Rheinland*. Köln: Rudolf Habelt.

Kalcev, K. 1991. Zur Herstellung der antiken Keramik in Augusta Trajana/Stara Zagora. *Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautorum, Acta XXIX/ XXX*. Congressus sextus decimus Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautorum in Moesia Inferiore (Pleven). In agro Ravracense, 245-273.

Ladstätter, S. 2013. Thymiaterien der jüngeren römischen Kaiserzeit aus Ephesos. In Kökdemir, G. (ed.). Orhan Bingöl'e 67 Yaş Armaganı. A Festschrift for Orhan Bingöl on the occasion of his 67th Birthday. Ankara: Ege Yayinlari, 317-337.

Nikolić-Đorđević, Sn. 2000. Antička keramika Singidunuma. Oblici posuda. In Popovič, M. (ed.) *Singidunum* 2. Beograd: Grafomarket, 11-244.

Popilian, G. 1976. *Ceramica romana din Oltenia*. Craiova: Scrisul Românesc.

Sándor, B. 2009. *Aquincumi látványraktár (Visual Store at Aquincum)*. Budapest: Demax Művek Kft.

Sultov, B. 1985. *Ceramic Production on the Territory of Nicopolis ad Istrum* (Terra Antiqua Balcanica I). Sofia–V. Tarnovo.

Wiegand, K. 1912. Thymiateria. *Bonner Jahrbücher* 122, 1-97.

Yavis, C. 1949. *Greek Altars. Origin and Typology*. Saint-Louis: Saint-Louis University Press.

Керамични съдове в частната култова практика: примери от Сердика

Марио Иванов

(резюме)

Керамичните съдове от римския период, използвани в култовите практики, имат ограничено присъствие в научната литература. Част от тях са разгледани в контекста на керамичната продукция на различни обекти в България, други са публикувани като отделни находки. При археологическите проучвания в центъра на София през 2010-2012 г. (обр. 1) бяха открити общо 10 цели и фрагментирани съда с култово предназначение, които са представени в тази статия. Те принадлежат към две основни групи: кадилници – 6 бр. (обр. 2-3) и глинени олтари или *thymiateria* – 4 бр.(обр. 10). В зависимост от формалните им особености и декорацията кадилниците попадат в два основни типа с варианти. Към тип 1 принадлежи един съд (С1, обр. 4) с паралели основно от България, датиран в последната четвърт на I в. Останалите кадилници попадат в тип 2 и са с многобройни аналогии в съседните провинции. Въз основа на декорацията съдовете от втория тип са разделени в три варианта: вариант 1 е представен с най-много примери (С2-С4, обр. 5-7), датирани от Хадриан до началото на III в. Варианти 2 и 3 са застъпени с по един представител (С5 и С6, обр. 8-9), с датировка съответно в първата половина на III в. и в края на III в.– началото на IV в.

Глинените тимиатериони (Т1–Т4, обр. 10) попадат в три типа: тип 1 – с цилин-

дрично тяло (Т1-Т2, обр. 11-12); тип 2 – с призматично тяло (Т3, обр. 13); тип 3 – с тяло, оформено във вид на шишарка (Т4, обр. 14). Тимиатерионите от тип 1 са по-ранни – от края на I и началните десетилетия на II в., докато екземплярите от тип 2 и 3 са открити заедно и се датират в първата половина на III в.

Археологическият контекст на разглежданите култови съдове също предоставя важна информация. Всички находки са открити в жилища (обр. 15-18), което свидетелства за употребата им в частните култови ритуали. За всяка от проучените сгради е предложена възможна локализация на домашния олтар или най-малко на пространството в определено помещение, където е практикувана култова дейност. В зависимост от датировката на находките е проследена и промяната във времето на мястото, определено за домашните религиозни практики в границите на едно жилище.