

FACES FROM THE PAST. SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT
ANTHROPOMORPHIC AND ZOOMORPHIC FIGURINES
AND IMAGES IN THE NEOLITHIC PERIOD

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BELJAK PAŽINOVÁ, Noémi. Tváre minulosti. Niekoľko úvah o antropomorfnnej a zoomorfnnej plastike a vyobrazeniach v neolite. Cieľom príspevku je predstaviť a interpretovať špecifický druh archeologického prameňa v rámci rôznorodého súboru umenia znázorňovania človeka a zvierat v neolite (mladšej dobe kamenej). V období vzniku prvých roľníckych kultúr dosahujú tieto artefakty z hľadiska umeleckého stvárnenia vrchol. Popri zohľadnení ich odlišného kultúrneho i chronologického charakteru je zámerom práce predostrieť na ne pohľad vo svetle najnovších objavov a informácií. Článok si pritom nekladie za cieľ komplexnú analýzu spracovaného prameňa, ale predostrieť niekoľko úvah a návrhov k ich pochopeniu a interpretácii.

Kľúčové slová: neolit; antropomorfná plastika; zoomorfná plastika; ornamentika; interpretácia;

Keywords: Neolithic; Anthropomorphic Figurines; Zoomorphic Figurines; Motifs; Interpretation;

The aim of this article¹ is to present some thoughts about a specific type of archaeological sources within a diverse collection of art depicting humans and animals in the Neolithic (New Stone Age). From the aspect of artistic representation, these artifacts reach their climax in the time when first agricultural cultures appear. Besides taking their different cultural and chronological character into consideration, the goal of this work is to present them in the light of the latest discoveries and information.

As for geographical boundaries, the presented sources come from the territory of the western part of the Pannonian Basin (the old name of the Carpathian

¹ This article has been written within the project VEGA No. 1/0208/17: „From Pontic Steppe to the west – to the Carpathians and the Danube (Z pontských stepi na západ – ku Karpatom a Dunaju)“.

basin). In terms of chronology, we are talking about the Neolithic period (6th – 5th millennium BC), which brought a new system of productive economy connected with animal breeding and growing cereals. Mentioned will be mainly finds from the Early and Middle Neolithic (Linear pottery culture – LPC, Želiezovce Group) and the Late Neolithic (Lengyel culture complex).

We do not have much information about religious concepts, cultic practices and ideology of communities from the Neolithic in general. Great variability of types and heterogeneity of artistic representation is typical for the studied source. Among others, finds of special and untraditionally designed vessels and torsos of human figurines (sculptures) document variety of ritual concepts. The sources analyzed in the contribution are divided and presented in the following categories:

- *free-standing and applied human figurines and anthropomorphic motifs on pottery,*
- *free-standing and applied animal figurines, vessels and zoomorphic motifs on pottery,*
- *anthropomorphic vessels with figural motifs and representations of faces.*

1 Human (anthropomorphic) figurines

Finds of free-standing figurines (figural sculptures) have always belonged to the attractive archaeological finds and called the attention of professional and amateur public ever since they first occurred. Statistically, such artifacts are discovered only sporadically and are not a frequent find source. Nevertheless, they are subject to studies from multiple aspects (artistic-historical, cultural-historical, sociological, religious, typological, etc.).² Several terms are used to name them –

² See for example: BELJAK PAŽINOVÁ, Noémi. The spiritual world of Lengyel communities. In KOVÁRNIK, Jarolím. Centenary of Jaroslav Palliardí's Neolithic and Aeneolithic Relative Chronology (1914-2014). Hradec Králové: Filozofická fakulta, 2014, pp. 295-308; BERG, Friedrich – MAURER, Hermann. IDOLE, Kunst und Kult im Waldviertel vor 7000 Jahren. Horn: Museumsverein, 1998, 160 p.; KALICZ, Nándor. Figurliche Darstellung und bemalte Keramik aus dem Neolithikum Westungarns. Budapest: Archaeolingua Alapítvány, 1998, 154 p.; KOVÁRNIK, Jaromír. Idole der Lengyel-Kultur in Mähren. In SCHMOTZ, Karl. Vorträge des 28. Niederbayerischen Archäologentages. Deggendorf: Verlag Marie Leidorf GmbH, 2010, pp. 91-136; KUZMA, Ivan. Plastika želiezovskej skupiny z Mužle-Čenkova. In Slovenská Archeológia, 1990, no. 37, pp. 429-450; LENNEIS, Eva – NEUGEBAUER-MARESCH, Christine – RUTTKAY, Elizabeth. Jungsteinzeit im Osten Österreichs. St. Pölten, Wien: Niederösterreichisches Pressehaus, 1995, pp. 22, 99-104; MAKKAY, János. Újkőkori teogónia. Agyagból mintázni Istent és embert. In BENDE, Livia – LŐRINCZY, Tibor. Hétköznapi Vénuszai. Hódmezővásárhely: Tornyai János Múzeum, 2005, pp. 85-121; MAURER, Hermann. Neolithische Kultobjekte aus dem niederösterreichischen Manhartsbergbereich. Ein Beitrag zur jungsteinzeitlichen Geistesgeschichte. Bonn, Hückeswagen: Mannus-Bibliothek, 1982, 142 p.; PAVÚK, Juraj. Menschliche Tonfiguren der Lengyel-Kultur aus der Slowakei. In JEREM, Erzsébet – RACZKY, Pál. Morgenrot der Kulturen. Festschrift für Nándor Kalicz zum 75. Geburtstag. Budapest: Archaeolingua Alapítvány, 2003, pp. 311-325; POKORNÁ, Zuzana. K interpretaci ženské neolitické plastiky. In Sborník prací FF BU, 1983, vol. E28, pp. 104-111; PODBORSKÝ, Vladimír. Těšetice-Kyjovice 2. Figurální plastika lidu s moravskou malovanou keramikou – Těšetice-Kyjovice 2. Brno: FF MU 1985; VLADÁR, Jozef. Praveká plastika. Bratislava: Tatran, 1979, 165 p.; VLADÁR, Jozef – WIEDERMANN, Egon. Z pontských stepí na západ – ku karpatským autochtónom. In *Studia Historica Nitriensia*, Supplementum – mimoriadne číslo časopisu venované životnému jubileu prof. Petra Romsauera: Sedem decénií Petra Romsauera, 2017, vol. 21, p. 247.

sculpture, statuette, clay figurine. The frequent name of “idol”, unlike the previous names, suggests cultic function of these objects (i. e. an image identified with a deity or a similar entity).

Individual figurines can be classified from several points of view – usually as sitting, standing (or in some other posture), according to the position of their arms, according to known (supposed)/unknown sex (predominant female or sexless statuettes), according to decoration or type of ornamentation (decorated/undecorated), etc.

The state of their preservation is a serious obstacle for our studies, since most of them are found only in fragments (Figure 1). Thus, it is highly probable that they were broken on purpose (possibly as part of rituals/cultic acts), for different reasons – to help people acquire their magic powers or to kill evil (!). On the other hand, the fact that if they represented a deity, respect or fear would probably have prevented people from breaking them, is an argument against ritual breaking. However, this would not be true if the reason for intentional breaking was loss of strength or fear of their power. Such behaviour is suggested mainly by ethnographic researches of African tribes³ whose individual members for example believe that if they damage a cultic artifact, the whole community will be punished.

Artifacts could have been broken also to spread fertility over the settlement and its farming background (burying sculptures in fields, etc.). Statuettes could have been parts of sanctuaries used by the whole community or just parts of domestic (familiar) sacred places. Besides cultic purposes, it is possible that they were used as e. g. toys or symbols of formation of male identity⁴.

Applied human figures are another type of source; they were probably easily broken or separated from bodies of vessels parts of which they used to be. Thus, many of them are found as fragments and now we cannot clearly confirm whether they were independent figures or were originally attached to bodies of vessels (for more details, see the third part of the article).

³ See, for example: ELIADE, Mircea. *Posvátné a profánní*. Praha: Oikoymenh, 2006, 148 p.; FRAZER, James George. *Zlatá ratolest. Magie, mýty, náboženství*. Praha: Mladá Fronta, 1977, 632 p.; LÉVI-STRAUSS, Claude. *Myšlení přírodních národů*. Liberec: Dauphin, 1996, 365 p.

⁴ PETRASCH, Jörg. *Idol, Fetisch oder Kultbild? Zu Terminologie und Interpretation anthropomorpher und theriomorpher neolithischer Statuetten*. In ASLAN, Rüstem (et al.). *Mauerschau. Festschrift für Manfred Korfmann. Band 2. Remshalden-Grunbach: Greiner, 2002, pp. 861-883*; REMIŠOVÁ VĚŠÍNOVÁ, Kamila. *Interpretace neolitických kulturních jevů*. In CHEBEN, Ivan – KUZMA, Ivan. *Otázky neolitu a eneolitu našich krajín - 2007. Zborník referátov z 26. pracovného stretnutia bádateľov pre výskum neolitu a eneolitu Čiech, Moravy a Slovenska. Michalovce, 24. – 27. 9. 2007. Nitra: Veda, 2008, pp. 205-221*; BECKER, Valeska. *Figürliche Darstellungen der Linienscheramik*. In SCHMOTZ, Karl. *Vorträge des 28. Niederbayerischen Archäologentages*. Deggendorf: Verlag Marie Leidorf GmbH, 2010, pp. 27-45.



Figure 1. Anthropomorphic figurines of the Lengyel culture from Slovakia. 1 – Kiarov, site Veľké ortovisko; 2, 4 – Bánovce nad Bebravou-Biskupice, site Keblor; 3 – Bánovce nad Bebravou, site Za rezervoárom; 5 – Bučany, site Kopanice (1 – after BELJAK PAŽINOVÁ – BELJAK, 2014, s. 56, obr. 53; 2-4 – after BELJAK PAŽINOVÁ, ref. 1, s. 302, 303; obr. 1, 2, 4; 5 – after BUJNA – FURMÁNEK – WIEDERMANN, 2013, s. 181, obr. 106).

2 Animal (zoomorphic) figures, vessels and motifs on pottery

Zoomorphic figures occur at numerous neolithic settlements⁵ (rarely in burial complexes e. g. Dvory nad Žitavou⁶, Bicske-Galagonyás⁷). They have many forms. They are individually standing figures, less frequently applied as protrusions or handles on vessels (Figure 2: 1-4, 6) and lids. In the LPC intact plastic animal vessel applications are very rare. We know them e. g. from Hungary (site Letkés and Budapest-Békásmegyer)⁸ and Slovakia (Tupá and Dvory nad Žitavou)⁹.

As for the animal species, domestic farm animals (mainly piglet, dog, goat and sheep) can be distinguished within the scale of shapes. However, game or wild animals also appear (e. g. fox, bear, fish, tortoise). Most of these figures are roughly shaped so it is not possible to identify the depicted animal. Some specimens have double applications (Figure 2: 8), i. e. animals with two heads e. g. on the opposing ends of lid handles or bowls¹⁰ double heads on the same side of a figure or on one side of a vessel/altar¹¹.

Solving the problem of animal symbolism gives us an idea of artistic feelings and thus, brings information related to the community's everyday life. Simultaneously, we can observe how people are dependent on animals and study the scope of species they were in touch with. On the basis of frequency of individual species' representations, we can deduce the importance of the species for man. The oldest neolithic finds in the monitored territory include a realistically

- ⁵ PODBORSKÝ, Vladimír. Těšetice-Kyjovice II. Figurální plastika lidu s moravskou malovanou keramikou. Brno: Universita J. E. Purkyně, 1985, pp. 123-145; BECKER, Valeska. Rinder, Schweine, Mischwesen. Zoomorphe Funde der westlichen Linearbandkeramik. In SASTUMA - Saarbrücker Studien und Materialien zur Alttertumskunde, 2007, no. 11, pp. 9-95; KAUFMANN, Dieter. Einige Bemerkungen zu linienbandkeramischen Tierdarstellungen. In CZIESLA, Erwin - KERSTIN, Thomas. Den Bogen spannen... Festschrift für Bernhard Gramsch zum 65. Geburtstag. Teil 2. Weißbach: Beier+Beran, 1999, pp. 333-345; KUZMA, Ivan. Plastika železovskej skupiny z Mužle - Čenkova. In Slovenská Archeológia, 1990, vol. 38, no. 2, pp. 447-449, fig. 11-17; BÁNFFY, Eszter. Cult objects of the Neolithic Lengyel culture. Connections and interpretations. Budapest: Archaeolingu, 1997, 131 p.; PAVÚK, Juraj. Štúrovo. Ein Siedlungsplatz der Kultur mit Linearkeramik und der Želiezovce-Gruppe. Nitra: Archeologický ústav SAV, 1994, pp. 171, 172.
- ⁶ PAVÚK, Juraj. Grab des Želiezovce-Typus in Dvory nad Žitavou. In Slovenská Archeológia, 1964, vol. 12, pp. 5-68.
- ⁷ MAKKAY, János - STARNINI, Elisabetta - TULOK, Magdolna. Excavations at Bicske-Galagonyás (Part III). The Notenkopf and So-pot-Bicske Cultural Phases. Trieste: Svevo, 1996, fig. 7: 4.
- ⁸ PAPP, László. Eine jungsteinzeitliche Siedlung und Gräber in Letkés. In Mitteilungen Arch. Inst. Ungarischer Akademie der Wissenschaften 1972, no. 3, pp. 13-58, Tab. 14: 1; KALICZ, Nándor. Figürliche Kunst und bemalte Keramik aus dem Neolithikum Westungarns. Budapest: Archaeolingu Alapítvány, 1998, 50, fig. 14: 2;
- ⁹ JANSÁK, Štefan. Staré osídlenie Slovenska. Dolný Hron a Ipeľ v praveku. Turčiansky Sv. Martin: Matica Slovenská, 1938, Tab. 31: 4; PAVÚK, Juraj. Chronologie der Želiezovce-Gruppe. In Slovenská Archeológia, 1969, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 308, 335, fig. 33; 47: 10.
- ¹⁰ For example: PODBORSKÝ, ref. 5, p. 134; KALICZ, ref. 8, fig. 60: 1; TOKAI, Zita Mária. A lengyeli kultúra egy újabb állatábrázolása Nagybakonákról. In Zalai Múzeum, 2008, no. 17, pp. 21-32.
- ¹¹ For example: PAVÚK, Juraj. Kockovitě a zoomorfné dózičky lengyelskej kultúry zo Santovky. In Sborník prací FF BU, 1997, vol. M 2, pp. 65-78; ZALAI-GAÁL, István. Die applizierte Tierplastik der Lengyel-Kultur. In Acta Archaeologica Hungarica, 1998, no. 50, pp. 43-90.



Figure 2. Neolithic zoomorphic figurines and motifs. 1 – Mužla-Čenkov; 2, 4 – Štúrovo; 3 – Žikava; 5 – Szentgyörgyvölgy-Pityerdomb; 6 – Kiarov, site Veľké ortovisko; 7 – Dvory nad Žitavou; 8 – Györe. No scale. (1 – after KUZMA, ref. 2, s. 442, obr. 14; 2, 8 – after PAVÚK, ref. 5, tab. 67: 14; 3 – after KUZMA – ILLÁŠOVÁ, 1996, obr. 84: 26; 4, 7 – after PAVÚK, ref. 34, s. 53, obr. 46; s. 51, 68, obr. 43, 63; 5 – after BÁNFFY, ref. 12, s. 77, fig. 6; 6 – after BELJAK PAŽINOVÁ – BELJAK, 2014, s. 57, obr. 55).

designed figurine from Szentgyörgyvölgy – Pityerdomb¹² (Figure 2: 5) in Hungary representing a cow. Also important is the find context. The almost completely intact clay animal figurine stood with head facing north in a large oval pit No. 11 alongside a house of the early LPC. Beside the clay animal figurine lay a long river pebble (used as a whetstone) with its tip pointing north and another flat oval pebble. The assemblage appears to have been consciously arranged in this manner! In the pit filling were also various vessels fragments, burnt clay plaque, thick clay plaque (baking platter), chipped stone implements, fragments from a globular vessel decorated with deeply incised, spiral meander patterns (the vessel originally contained some kind of black organic substance or paint), and finally a body fragment of a biconical vessel with belly decorated with finger impressed rib combined with a hand shaped lug and a deeply incised spiral meander pattern above the hand.

Symbolic meaning of these finds cannot be excluded either, i. e. they could have been used as objects of totemic worship. We have several examples of animal motifs/symbols directly connected with burial customs. In case of the find from Dvory nad Žitavou (Želiezovce Group), where a bowl (Figure 2: 7) with a snake figure decoration¹³ on the inside was found in a disturbed burial, we can consider a symbolic function of the plastic figure connecting recent and distant past. The snake's role was to assure afterlife for the dead person in the grave where it was found. However, this is a unique application that has no similarity in the researched region yet.

As far as applied animal sculptures are concerned, protrusions are often shaped as stylized animal heads. We know about protrusions modelled as bull's heads or animals with horns¹⁴. The origin of worship of bull as a symbol of begetting power has its roots in cultures of southwestern Asia¹⁵. Representations of cattle in the Neolithic could have been symbols of work and fertility.

A special category comprises still rather unclear applications on vessels which do not represent animals but people in animal masks or show human faces with horns; such representations could have symbolized e. g. shamans. However, such findings are relatively rare in the LPC. From Austrian Pulkau we know three pieces and one was found in Poigen¹⁶. Another find comes from

¹² BÁNFFY, Eszter. The 6th millennium BC boundary in western Transdanubia and its role in the Central European Neolithic transition, the Szentgyörgyvölgy-Pityerdomb settlement. Budapest: Archaeological Institute of the HAS, 2004, pp. 97-113, 276; BÁNFFY, Eszter. Mesolithic-Neolithic contacts as reflected in ritual finds. In *Documenta Praehistorica*, 2005, no. 37, pp. 73-86.

¹³ PAVÚK, ref. 6, p. 12, fig. 5, 6.

¹⁴ See, for example: LENNEIS, Eva. Anthropomorphe und zoomorphe Motive auß Gefäßen der Linearbandkeramik im Raume Niederösterreich und Burgenland. In MITSCHA-MÄRHEIM, Herbert. *Festschrift für Richard Pittioni zum siebzigsten Geburtstag*. Wien: b.v., 1976, pp. 235-248.

¹⁵ See, for example: RICE, Michael. *The Power of the Bull*. New York: Routledge, 1998; SHARPES, Donald K. *Sacred Bull, Holy Cow: A Cultural Study of Civilization's Most Important Animal*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2006.

¹⁶ BERG, Friedrich – MAURER, Hermann. *IDOLE, Kunst und Kult im Waldviertel vor 7000 Jahren*. Horn: Museumsverein, 1998, pp. 99-100, fig. 41, 44, 45.

Mohelnice¹⁷ in Moravia and two fragments were discovered in Spišský Hrhov¹⁸ in Slovakia.

Zoomorphic vessels which are interpreted mostly as ritual objects are another active archaeological source. Some of them can be typologically identified (Abrahám, Lužianky group of the Lengyel culture, Hungary – a bear¹⁹ (Figure 3: 1), first identified as a wild boar; Tiszacsege, LPC, Hungary – a realistically shaped vessel in form of a pig²⁰). An interesting example comes from the Lengyel culture site of Aszód²¹ in Hungary. It is a vessel with a human leg and a bird's head (Figure 3: 2) which was found in a burial of a little girl. Such representation does not have any parallels in the studied territory. Also unique is the zoomorphic vessel with a tank (vessel) on the back from Želiezovce Group site in Bajč²², Slovakia. In this case, it's about showing the animal's traction function.

Another unusual type of objects with their main role at rituals rather than in a common household contains zoomorphic figures with small oval containers on their backs (e. g. from Lengyel culture site Santovka²³ in Slovakia). If the container is in the middle, we can consider various uses – for dyes, fat, aromatic substances, etc²⁴.

3 Anthropomorphic vessels with figural motifs and representations of faces

Studies of human representations have always been in the centre of scientific (archaeological) interests and the best examples include anthropomorphic (A) and face (B) vessels. Thus, it is a source with

A, vessels shaped as a human figure (arms, legs, body, costume, decoration, head, face), or B, vessels primarily containing only a human face (eyes, ears, mouth, chin, tongue, eyebrows, hair).

Anthropomorphic vessels are an important source for observation of spiritual concepts and ritual practices of communities. In the Late Neolithic, a considerable number of such vessels is concentrated in the eastern part of the Lengyel complex (Transdanubia, southwestern Slovakia) where most of these artifacts

¹⁷ TICHÝ, Rudolf. XIII. Grabungssaison in Mohelnice (Bez. Šumperk). In *Přehled výzkumů 1971, 1972*, p. 21, 163, Tab. 15: 4.

¹⁸ SOJÁK, Marián. Neolitické osídlenie Spiša. In *Slovenská Archeológia*, 2000, vol. 48, no. 2, p. 285, fig. 12: 4; tab. 32: 1, 3.

¹⁹ NOVOTNÝ, Bohuslav. Lužianska skupina a počiatky maľovanej keramiky na Slovensku. Nitra: Slovenská akadémia vied, 1962, p. 75, Príloha 1-2, Tab. XLII: 1, XLIII.

²⁰ KALICZ, Nándor – MAKKAY, János. Die Linienbandkeramik in der Großen Ungarischen Tiefebene. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1977, p. 240.

²¹ KALICZ, Nándor. Kőkori falu Aszódon. Aszód: Petőfi Múzeum, 1985, pp. 61-62, fig. 75.

²² CHEBEN, Ivan. Anthropomorphe und zoomorphe Gefäße aus der Siedlung in Bajč, Südwestslowakei. In *In Preistoria Alpina*, 2001, vol. 37, no. 1, p. 163, 166, fig. 3: dole.

²³ PAVÚK, ref. 101, p. 75.

²⁴ NOVOTNÝ, Bohuslav. Sídliisko ľudu s maľovanou keramikou moravskoslovenskou vo Veľkých Kostolnoch. In *Študijné Zvesti AÚ SAV*, 1957, no. 2, p. 37; TOČÍK, Anton – LICHARDUS, Ján. Staršia fáza slovensko-moravskej maľovanej keramiky na juhozápadnom Slovensku. In *Památky Archeologické*, 1966, no. 57, p. 64; FARKAŠ, Zdeněk. Neolitické osídlenie v Bratislave na Devínskej Kobyle. In *Zborník Slovenského Národného Múzea – História*, vol. 78, no. 24, 1984, p. 16; PAVÚK, ref. 11, p. 65.



Figure 3. Zoomorphic (1, 2) and anthropomorphic vessels (3, 5) of the Lengyel culture. 1 - Abrahám; 2 - Aszód; 3 - Svodín; 4 - Sé; 5 - Alsónyék-Bataszék. No scale. (1, 3 - after PAVÚK, ref. 34, s. 39, obr. 24; s. 41, obr. 27; 2 - after KALICZ, ref. 21; 4 - after BARNA, ref. 26, s. 314, obr. 2; 5 - after SOMOGYI - GALLINA, ref. 27, s. 441, obr. 4, 5).

occur as grave goods. We distinguish two types: A – anthropomorphic (gynaecomorphic) vessels of the *Svodín* type²⁵ (there are standing and sitting figures) – storeyed vessels modelled as female figures with secondary sexual features and arms raised up, shaped as small vessels/goblets or human fingers (Figure 3: 3). B – anthropomorphic vessels of the *Sé* type²⁶ which are also storeyed but arms are plastically modelled along the body and evoke a passive posture (Figure 3: 4).

A Lengyel culture face vessel discovered in the burial of a 23-30-year-old woman in Alsónyék-Bátaszék²⁷ (Figure 3: 5) in Transdanubia belongs to an unclassified (possibly new) type of vessels. On its opposing sides, it has plastically modelled eyebrows, eyes, nose, ears and gynaecomorphic features on the body – breast-shaped protrusions on one side and four beak-shaped handles probably representing legs and arms on the other. This vessel might represent both sexes and the authors of the investigation associate it with the cult of fertility, considering it a symbol of merged female and male elements. The presented vessel has close parallels with popular face vessels used in the old and middle Neolithic (LPC; Želiezovce Group).

Face vessels (Figure 4: 1-3) from the Danubian region²⁸ are characterized by the greatest heterogeneity and variability of decorative elements; this follows

²⁵ RUTTKAY, Elisabeth. Über anthropomorphe Gefäße der Lengyel-Kultur. Der Typ Svodin. In *Preistoria Alpina*, 2001, no. 37, pp. 255-272; ZALAI-GAÁL, István. Die Stellung des Typs Svodin der anthropomorphen Gefäße im Donaubeckens. In *Acta Archaeologica Hungarica* 2009, no. 60, pp. 1-49.

²⁶ BARNA, P. Judit. Antropomorf edények töredékei Sormás-Török-földekről, a korai lengyeli kultúrából. In *Tisicum*, 2009, no. 9, pp. 39-53; BARNA, P. Judit. A miniature anthropomorphic vessel from the Early Lengyel Culture Site at Sormás-Török-földek in Southwestern Hungary. In ANDERS, Andrea – KULCSÁR, Gabriela. Moments in Time. Papers presented to Pál Raczky on his 60th Birthday. Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2013, pp. 311-321.

²⁷ GALLINA, Zsolt et al. Előzetes jelentés az M6 AP TO 10/B és 11. számú lelőhelyrészen végzett megelőző feltárásról. Alsónyék-Bátaszék (Tolna megye) 2006–2009. In *Wosinszky Mór Múzeum Évkönyve*, 2010, no. 32, pp. 7-100, Tab. 39: 3; 40, 41, 42; SOMOGYI, Krisztina – GALLINA, Zsolt. Besonderes anthropomorphes Gefäß der Lengyel-Kultur mit doppelter Gesichts- und Menschendarstellung in Alsónyék (SW-Ungarn). In ANDERS, Andrea – KULCSÁR, Gabriela: Moments in Time. Papers presented to Pál Raczky on his 60th Birthday. Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2013, pp. 437-456.

²⁸ See, for example: CSALLÁNY, Gábor. Gesichtsdarstellungen auf Gefäßen der Theißkultur. In *Germania* 1939, vol. 29, pp. 145-146; KALICZ, Nándor – KOÓS, Judit. Neolitische Gesichtsgefäße im Nordosten des Karpatenbeckens. In *Herman Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve* 2000, vol. 39, pp. 15-44; KALICZ, Nándor – MAKKAY, János. Gefäße mit Gesichtsdarstellungen in der Linienbandkeramik aus Ungarn. In BACHMAYER, Friedrich et al. *Idole: prähistorische Keramiken aus Ungarn*. Wien: Naturhistorisches Museum, 1972, pp. 9-15; RACZKY, Pál. An unique face pot from the Öcsöd-Kováshalom settlement of the Tisza culture. In *Acta Archaeologica Hungarica*, 1999-2000, vol. 51, pp. 9-22; SZENÁSKY, Júlia. Arcos edényfedő Battonyáról. In *Archaeológiai Értesítő*, 1990, vol. 117, pp. 151-160; VIRÁG, M. Zsuzsanna. Neuere anthropomorphe Darstellungen der Linienbandkeramik aus der Umgebung von Budapest. In DRAŠOVEAN, Florian. *The Late Neolithic of the Middle Danube Region. International Symposium on the problems of the transition from Middle to Late Neolithic in the Danube Region*. Timișoara: Editurta Eurobit, 1998, pp. 68-89; TOMAŠOVIČOVÁ, Terézia. Vývoj antropomorfného dekoru na neolitickej keramike v prostredí karpatskej kotliny (vybrané aspekty problematiky). In *Acta musealia*, 2015, vol. 13, no. 1-2, pp. 6-31; PAVLŮ, Ivan. Obličejové amfory středoevropského neolitu v evropském kontextu. In KALÁBKOVÁ, Pavlína – KOVÁR, Branislav – PAVŮK, Peter – ŠUTEKOVÁ,

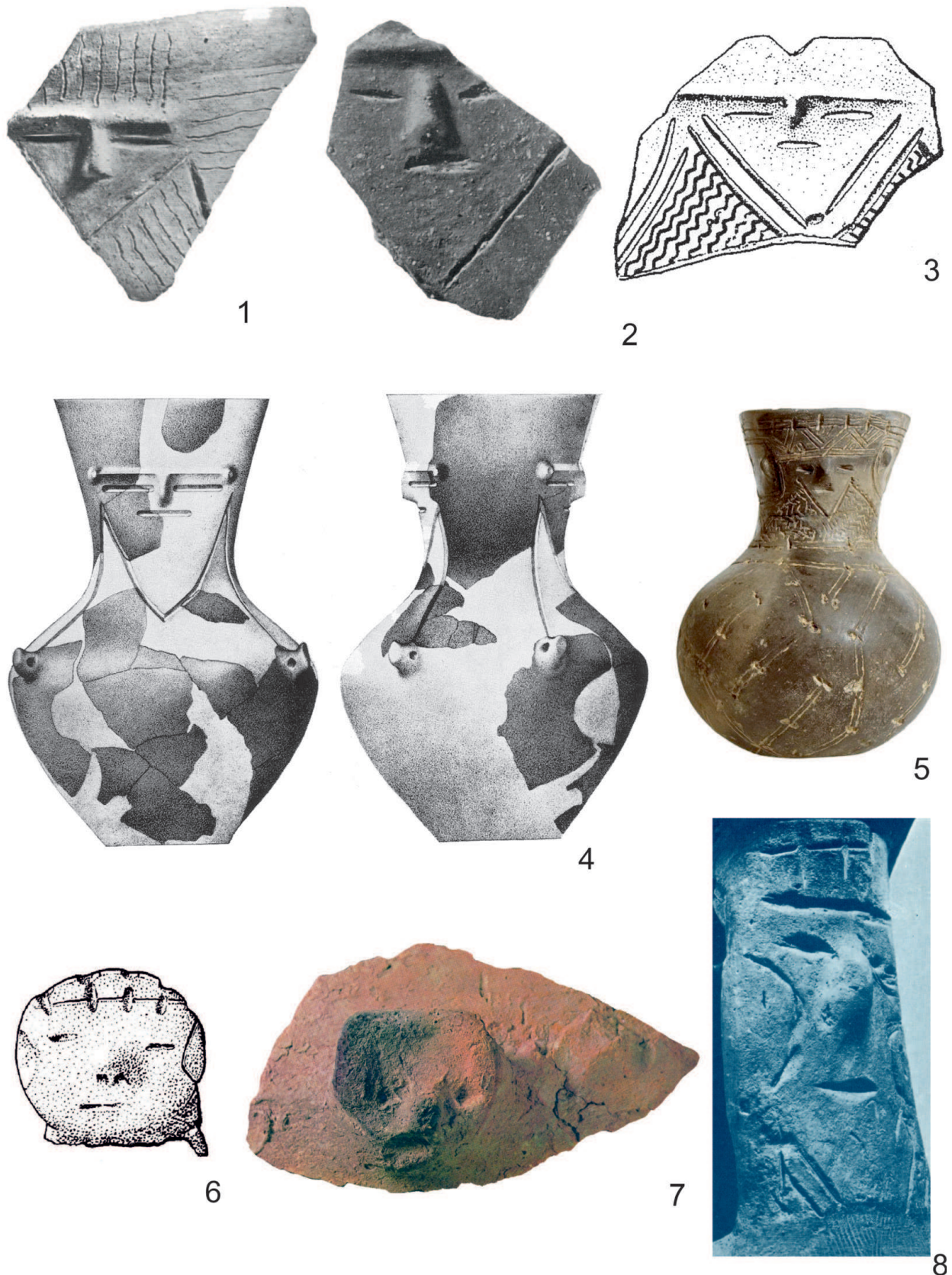


Figure 4. Face vessels (1-5) and anthropomorphic face knobs and handles (6-7) of the Linnear pottery culture and Želiezovce Group. 1 – Blatné; 2 – Cífer-Pác; 3 – Bajč; 4 – Békásmegyer; 5 – Budapest-Budai Skála; 6 – Mužľa-Čenkov; 7 – Štúrovo; 8 – Blatné. No scale. (1, 2, 7, 8 – after PAVÚK, ref. 34, s. 46, 48, 50, obr. 35, 38, 39, 42; 3 – after CHEBEN, ref. 22; 4 – after VIRÁG, ref. 29, obr. 8; 5 – after BESZÉDES – HORVÁTH, ref. 30, obr. 3; 6 – after KUZMA, ref. 2, s. 436, obr. 7).

from different geographical (regional) location of individual territorial groups of the studied period. Face itself is shaped in different ways and using different methods (it is plastically modelled, engraved, painted, created by a combination of techniques, etc.). Occasionally, we come across two-face vessels – two opposing faces appear on one vessel (usually in its upper part/on the neck, e. g. Békásmegyer – Figure 4: 4; and Biatorbágy-Tyúkberek, both Želiezovce Group, Hungary)²⁹. From the aspect of find context, majority of these finds were discovered at settlements; as grave goods, face vessels are absolutely rare and in this context, they can be understood as an attempt to emphasise the individual and exceptional status of an individual in the neolithic society. In Budapest, Budai Skála site (Figure 4: 5), a small amphora of the Želiezovce Group was found in a burial of a woman and a man lying crouched, face to face³⁰. The vessel was placed near their legs and is interpreted as a ritual burial (?). The find context in Szelevény-Felsőföldek³¹ in Hungary was very unique. Two pits with face-decorated vessels placed in the middle, surrounded by graves dug in an extremely regular manner, were excavated. The cultic (sacral) context of the conscious placement of this face-decorated vessels is obvious.

Anthropomorphic face protrusions or knobs and handles (Figure 4: 6-8) in the LPC also belong to unique sources. However, they are a small and rather heterogeneous group of finds which is usually preserved in form of tiny fragments. Representation is created by a combination of plastic and engraved elements. Some of them resemble decoration elements on antropomorphic vessels (e. g. Sajószentpéter-Kövecses³², Eastern LPC, Hungary; Mužľa-Čenkov³³, Želiezovce Group, Slovakia). It is interesting that these finds make an impression as if individual figures or their faces have just emerged from the vessel bodies. Some have

J. (eds). PANTA RHEI. Studies in Chronology and Cultural Development of South-Eastern and Central Europe in Earlier Prehistory Presented to Juraj Pavúk on the Occasion of his 75. Birthday. Bratislava, pp. 601-606; CSENGERI, Piroška. Középső neolitikus arcok edények Garadnáról (Hernád-völgy). In A Hermann Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve, 2011, vol. 50, pp. 67-104; CSENGERI, Piroška. Újabb középső neolitikus arcok edények Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén megyéből. In A Hermann Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve, 2014, vol. 53, pp. 41-66; HANSEN, Svend. Die Plastik der Jungstein- und Kupferzeit in Ostungarn. In *Das Altertum*, 2000, no. 46, pp. 97-132.

²⁹ VIRÁG, Zsuzsanna. Anthropomorphic vessels of Transdanubian Linear Pottery culture. In HILLER, Stefan – NIKOLOV, Vassil. Karanovo III. Beiträge zum Neolithikum in Südosteuropa. Wien: Phoibos-Vlg, 2000, p. 397, fig. 3a, b; KALICZ, Nándor – MAKKAY, János. Gefäße mit Gesichtsdarstellungen in der Linienbandkeramik aus Ungarn. In BACHMAYER, Friedrich et al. *Idole: prähistorische Keramiken aus Ungarn*. Wien: Naturhistorisches Museum, 1972, fig. 6.

³⁰ BESZÉDES, József – HORVÁTH, László András. Prehistoric and Roman period sites uncovered during the demolition of the Budai Skála department store. In *Aquincumi Füzetek*, 2008, no. 14, p. 144, 145, fig. 2, 3.

³¹ RACZKY, Pál – ANDERS, Alexandra. The internal relations of the Alföld Linear Pottery culture in Hungary and the characteristics of human representation. In JEREM, Erzsébet – RACZKY, Pál. *Morgenrot der Kulturen. Frühe Etappen der Menschheitsgeschichte in Mittel- und Südosteuropa*. Festschrift für Nándor Kalicz zum 75. Geburtstag. Budapest: Archeolingua, 2003, p. 166, fig. 5.

³² CSENGERI, Piroška. Arcábrázolások a bükki kultúra sajószentpéteri településéről. In *Ősrégészeti Levelek* 2002, no. 4, pp. 11-15.

³³ KUZMA, Ivan. Plastika želiezovskej skupiny z Mužle-Čenkova. In *Slovenská Archeológia*, 1990, no. 37, pp. 429-450, fig. 7.

their eyes wide open and open mouths (e. g. Štúrovo³⁴, Slovakia; Sajószentpéter-Kövecses, Hungary) as if they have just taken a deep breath and woken up in a new form.

Another attractive source of finds comprises pottery with applied figural motifs³⁵. The depicted motif has been long discussed (toads/frogs or human figures)³⁶ in the past. Interpretation of these artifacts is also complicated by a smaller number of finds, the fact that they have been preserved as fragments and the lack of information on find circumstances. The variability of representations is also remarkable. The anthropomorphic motif itself is usually engraved, plastic or painted. Examples with plastic figures (Figure 5: 1, 2) can have facial features, more detailed human characteristics or a personal jewel (e. g. two applied plastic figurines from Hurbanovo-Bohatá, site Veľký Šárad³⁷; LPC, Slovakia). Engraved representations (Figure 5: 3, 4) are usually simple and more schematical (e. g. Mórágy-Túzkódomb³⁸, Želiezovce Group, Hungary; Milanovce³⁹, LPC, Slovakia); on some of them, the head is just simply modelled, most often it is totally absent. Both kinds of representations, unlike most face vessels, can sometimes suggest sex of individual figures.

Like face vessels, applied figures sometimes represent several individuals on one vessel. Unlike two-face examples, however, the number of motifs is not limited to two. A larger restorable thick-walled vessel (more than 1 m tall) with interesting plastic ornamentation comes from the Slovak site of Košice, Červený rak⁴⁰ (early eastern LPC). Three human figures with strongly bent legs and arms raised in a gesture of adoration (so-called orants) are situated in the upper part of the vessel's shoulders. A bull's head with distinct horns is placed among them and there is also an unidentified motif. On the bulge of the vessel, there are four various zoomorphic figures identified as bulls. Another example of multiple figures on a globular vessel comes from Vedrovice⁴¹ (Figure 5: 5), LPC, Moravia. Stylised

³⁴ PAVÚK, Juraj. *Umenie a život doby kamennej*. Bratislava: Tatran, 1981, p. 46, fig. 35.

³⁵ TOMAŠOVIČOVÁ, Terézia. Antropomorfná aplikovaná plastika centrálnej Európy ako odraz neolitizačného procesu. In DUDÁKOVÁ, Monika - POČÁTKO, Martin. *Migračné procesy v dejinách Európy. Kríza alebo úsvit civilizácie? Stretnutie mladých historikov VI*. Košice - Praha: Univerzita Pavla Jozefa Šafárika v Košiciach - Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, v.v.i., 2017, pp. 9-13, 15.

³⁶ For example: QUITTA, Hans. Zur Deutung und Herkunft der bandkeramischen „Krötendarstellungen“. In *Obzor Praehistorický* 1936, vol. 1930-1935, no. 9, pp. 51-81; HÖCKMANN, Olaf. Bandkeramische Menschenbilder: Göttinnen - oder?. In *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, 2000-2001, no. 130/131, pp. 77-92.

³⁷ BŘEZINOVÁ, Gertrúda - PAŽINOVÁ, Noémi. Neolitická osada Hurbanovo - Bohatá. Nitra: SAV Bratislava, 2011, pp. 93-94, Tab. II: 1, 2;

³⁸ ZALAI-GAÁL, István. Die eingeritzten Menschendarstellungen der Mitteleuropäischen Linienbandkeramik. In *Acta Archaeologica Hungarica*, 1999-2000, vol. 51, pp. 1-7, fig. 1-2.

³⁹ PAVÚK, ref. 34, p. 42, fig. 28.

⁴⁰ KAMINSKÁ, Ludmila - KACZANOWSKA, Małgorzata - KOZŁOWSKI, Janusz. Košice - Červený Rak and the Körös/Eastern Linear Transition in the Hornád Basin. In *Přehled výzkumů*, 2008, no. 49, pp. 85-86, fig. 7, 8.

⁴¹ PODBORSKÝ, Vladimír - ČIŽMÁŘ, Zdeněk. Pokladnice moravského neolitu aneb krása pravěké plastiky. In ČIŽMÁŘ, Zdeněk. *Život a smrt v mladší době kamenné. Katalóg výstavy*. Brno: Ústav archeologické památkové péče, 2008, p. 165.

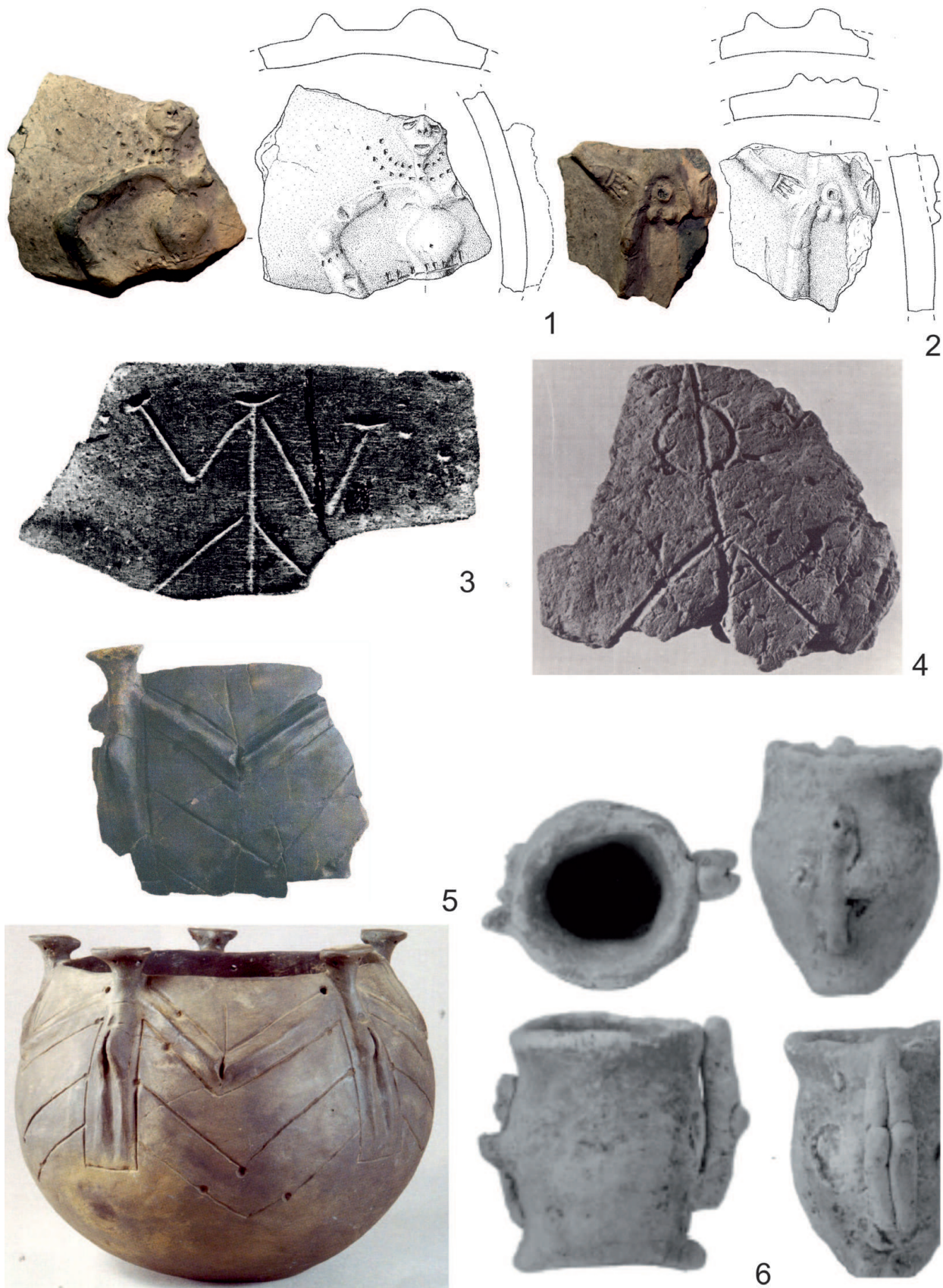


Figure 5. Anthropomorphic depictions on Neolithic pottery. 1, 2 – Hurbanovo-Bohatá, Velký Šárád; 3 – Mórógy-Tüzkodomb; 4 – Milanovce; 5 – Vedrovice; 6 – Mašovice. No scale. 1-5 – Linear pottery culture; 6 – Lengyel culture (1, 2 – after BŘEZINOVÁ – PAŽINOVÁ, ref. 37; 3 – after ZALAI-GAÁL, ref. 38, obr. 2; 4 – after PAVŮK, ref. 34, s. 42, obr. 28; 5, 6 – after PODBORSKÝ – ČIŽMÁŘ, s. 165, 197).

human figures (only one preserved) are attached to the vessel body with their front side. They were possible holding hands around the whole vessel and turned towards the inside of the vessel as if they were watching what is happening there. They are so-called dorsal figures which occur at several other sites as well (e. g. Čataj and Bíňa, LPC, Slovakia, etc.)⁴². The scene can be interpreted as adoration of the vessel's content. The motif of a circle created by the figures probably representing members of the community is also an important symbol. It might be a representation of a dancing scene or some sort of a ritual. Circle was a powerful magic symbol in the neolithic communities (life circle, circle of seasons)⁴³ expressing also equality of all their members and their common participation in religious activities. Vessels with such decoration could have been used at such activities. As we can see, several orants or adorants are actually dancers, which is documented by various postures, bent limbs and leaning bodies. Thus, this is not a static, meditative form of adoration. On the contrary, it is a dynamic movement showing a dancing scene related to a certain ritual or cult. Such interpretation seems believable especially in case of "crowd scenes".⁴⁴

Unique plastic anthropomorphic applications on a small vessel comes from Mašovice⁴⁵, Lengyel culture, Moravia. On one side of the vessels belly is a figure in front view with the arms in adoration gesture; on the opposite side is a stylised figure as seen from behind (Figure 5: 6). Thus, the entry of the character into the vessel, as well as its reproduction, the rebirth, is shown here.

It is important to know that from the end of Neolithic and later, dynamic postures applied on vessel bodies do not occur in Central Europe any more. It is connected with continuous disappearance of anthropomorphic applications on pottery and the increasing number of anthropomorphic vessels and figures with considerably limited dynamics.

4 Function and significance of the monitored source

Efforts to explain the function of the presented types of source occur as early as the first decades of the 20th century. This question, however, has not been completely answered, despite many attempts. We come across several, often opposing opinions. The most traditional theory says that human figures and representations of anthropomorphic elements on pottery in prehistoric societies is often related to religious concepts. It is also important to point to the importance of the new system of productive economy and the related fertility cult. In the oldest agrarian cultures, this cult could have been reflected in the representations of humans/women or just faces. E. g. the M symbol which occurs under the necks of face vessels is considered a schematical representation of a female lap or a female body

⁴² PAVÚK, ref. 34, 52, fig. 31, 32.

⁴³ MAHLSTEDT, Ina. Die religiöse Welt der Jungsteinzeit. Darmstadt: Theiss, 2004, 159 p.; PODBORSKÝ, Vladimír. Náboženství pravěkých Evropanů. Brno: FF MU, pp. 168-169; GARFINKEL, Yosef. Dancing and the Beginning of Art Scenes in the Early Village Communities of the Near East and Southeast Europe. In Cambridge Archaeological Journal, 1998, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 227-228.

⁴⁴ For more details see: GARFINKEL, Yosef. Dance in prehistoric Europe. In Documenta Praehistorica, 2010, no. 38, pp. 205-214.

⁴⁵ PODBORSKÝ - ČIZMÁŘ, ref. 41, p. 197.

in a position of giving birth⁴⁶. Another opinion says that the M motif is a symbol of a water cult⁴⁷. We can state without any doubt that face and gynaecomorphic vessels had a certain, still unknown, function in the religious life of prehistoric communities. During rituals, they could have been used as “containers” for “sacral fluids”. Most of such vessels are rather big and protect their contents very well (the fluid cannot be easily spilled or be turned over unless on purpose, etc.) so we can consider their use as containers for storing clean drinking water⁴⁸, since majority of the vessels comes from settlements and water is a basic need for each household. Different sizes could have been used for different purposes while using water (face could have identified quality of drinking water!). Another opinion of their use says that they were used in households for storing, but instead of water, grain was stored in them⁴⁹ and their anthropomorphic shapes played a protective role.

To explain the purpose and social significance of the presented sources, attention needed to be paid to the context which is the most precious source of information and is also a starting point for any further interpretations. We do not refer to the find context only, the religious context is of the same importance. First of all, we must ask two basic questions:

- 1 - whether we can positively identify ritual/cultic places and traces of such activities at the studied sites,
- 2 - whether the specific representation represents a particular universal Goddess (here, we must bear in mind that existence of anthropomorphic representation is not conditioned by existence of a Goddess and vice versa).

It is also possible, that e. g. the objects were related to rituals providing magic protection for pregnant women or treatment of barrenness. It is questionable, how much the find context supports individual explanations, since most of the sites do not bring any direct evidence of cultic activity.

In relation to the factors influencing the final representation of these finds, first of all the local background formed by a long cultural tradition need to be mentioned. On the basis of different sizes and shapes of figurines and vessels as well as face representations and decorative motifs, we can say that no single interpretation of this heterogeneous group of finds is possible. The smallest finds probably have symbolic meaning (symbol of deity, ancestors, family members), which is suggested by several examples deposited in burials. As for the frequent representations of animals, it is clear that animals were part of people's lives and lived in direct interaction with them or in a relation (hunting, everyday life, protection of man). If we come across some animal species more frequently, they might be the evidence of the neolithic communities' system of values and of their undoubted (multiple) importance for people. Cattle is a good example as it was

⁴⁶ PAVLŮ, Ivan. Early „Myths“ relating to the Neolithic Society. In *Archeologické Rozhledy* 1966, no. 18, p. 710; LENNEIS, ref. 14, pp. 243-244; PAVŮK, ref. 34, p. 54; KUZMA, ref. 2, p. 447.

⁴⁷ GIMBUTAS, Marija. *The language of the Goddess*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989, p. 21.

⁴⁸ PAVLŮ, Ivan. Kultureller Kontext der Neolithischen Gesichtsgefäße im Donaubecken. In *SASTUMA - Saarbrücker Studien und Materialien zur Altertumskunde*, 1997/98, no. 6-7, p. 121.

⁴⁹ SZENÁSKY, Júlia. Arcos edényfedő Battonyáról. In *Archeológiai Értesítő*, 1990, no. 117, p. 160.

source of food and was also used as pulling power (and the everyday contacts between the animals and people). Thus, bull symbolizes power as well as fertility. Representations of animals and people did not play purely artistic (visual) role. The votive character of the studied artifacts is documented by their find context, e. g. on the LPC site of Mohelnice⁵⁰ (Moravia), where figurines were found in fire pits or ovens together with burned animal bones. In the Lengyel culture site Těšetice-Kyjovice⁵¹, poloha Sutny female figurines were found in a settlement feature together with pottery, chipped stone, osteological (including skulls of a wild goat and a boar) and archaeobotanical finds and red dye. Taphonomical analysis helped to objectify the archaeological situation and the result reveals the relationships between individual components (figurines, red dye, animal skulls) and permits a description of the numerous processes involved in the backfill of the feature. The finding may be interpreted in the context of a ritual (cultic activity) of the Lengyel culture.

The cult of fertility and the fertile power of land, which is connected with the Neolithic economy, must have influenced the representation of human and animal figures or in general, creation of symbolical ornaments in the given period. Each single source of the presented symbolical ornamentation also expresses certain ideas of its author or the whole community, either of the mythological or real world, which surrounded people of that time and part of which they all were. They were used not only within common rituals but also in households (in family circles).

We must also take that adoption to the domestic style of a specific culture into consideration as it could have caused changes of the original function and meaning of the whole artifact and its concept.

From the aspect of find context, most finds come from settlement material (waste), exceptionally, the sources were discovered in burials. The presented type of source is very suitable to monitor evidence which cannot be studied from any other sources, e. g. decoration of body (tattoo, body painting), kinds and types of clothes (garments/folk costumes), headwear and various decorative accessories on the body.

An attempt to restore the ritual garment of the adorants on the basis of pictured decorative elements primarily on figurines from the Lengyel culture site of Sormás-Török-földek⁵² is known from Hungary. They are mainly figures of the Sé

⁵⁰ TICHÝ, Radomír. Neolitické sídliště v Mohelnici u Zábřeha. Příspěvek k problematice intruzí a variability sídlištní keramiky. In PAVLŮ, Ivan. In memoriam Jan Rulf. Památky archeologické – Supplementum, 2000, no. 13, pp. 412-418.

⁵¹ ŠABATOVÁ, Klára et al. Ein Befund mit neolithischen Plastiken aus Těšetice-Kyjovice, Mähren. Fundverteilungsanalyse. In LINK, Thomas – SCHIMMELPFENNIG, Dirk. Taphonomische Forschungen (nicht nur) zum Neolithikum. Fokus Jungsteinzeit 3. Kerpen-Loogh: Welt und Erde Verlag, 2012, pp. 201-219; KAZDOVÁ, Eliška – ŠABATOVÁ, Klára. Výjimečná nálezová situace s plastikami střelického typu z Těšetic-Kyjovic „Suten“. In Pravěk Nová Řada, 2007, no. 17, pp. 28-40.

⁵² BARNA, P. Judit – TÓTH, Zoltán. Keső neolitikus viseletrekonstrukciók a lengyeli kultúra leletei alapján. In Ősrégészeti levelek, 2005, no. 7, pp. 50-59.

type, typically with a garment representing a hip belt, skirt reaching down to the feet or a coat (Figure 6). Here, we might be talking of a folk costume.

Discussion/conclusion

Although we admit that many phenomena from the past remain unknown or not comprehended, using suitable methods and approaches, we have a unique opportunity to take a look into the world of prehistoric communities. Interdisciplinary cooperation seems to be a suitable method because with this source, we abandon the limits of purely archaeological methodology – it is necessary to realize that we do not know primary forms of the past (prehistoric) religion.

Cooperation with a zoologist⁵³ proved very useful at identification of the represented animal species. Then, these representations/figures were compared with the animals living on the site which were determined by means of osteological analysis and this could bring relevant results which are proved culturally and chronologically (e. g. presence of small ruminants). Thorough terrain research and careful monitoring of find situations are equally important because this is the only basis for verification of claimed cultic importance of the studied sources and their use.

In conclusion, the obtained knowledge can be summed up in the following points:

1. Various representations of people and animals in the Neolithic reflect different geographical and chronological environment as well as different function and significance of this source type.
2. We do not have much information on religious concepts, cultic practices and ideology of the neolithic communities. The analyzed type of finds is thus an important source for studying spiritual concepts and heterogeneity of ritual practices in the society.
3. Undoubtedly, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures and partial vessels' shapes were inspired by real figures. This is often suggested by realistically shaped and modelled figures, parts of human and animal bodies and, last but not least, plastically protruding or sketched faces capturing not only individual parts (nose, ears, eyes, mouth, chin, etc.) but also emotions and moods.
4. Animal figures are generally less frequently present as individually standing examples. More probably, they were originally placed as protrusions or handles on vessels and lids. Similar tendency can be observed in human figures in the early and middle Neolithic. Late Neolithic figures are, on the contrary, often individually standing specimens; nevertheless, we they are almost exclusively found as fragments.
5. Most anthropomorphic vessels and figures represent women or parts of female bodies. Thus, it is obvious that women played an important role in neolithic communities which was related to rituals and rites. This, however, does not make men at rituals less important (on the contrary!).

⁵³ PODBORSKÝ, Vladimír. Těšetice-Kyjovice 2. Figurální plastika lidu s moravskou malovanou keramikou – Těšetice-Kyjovice 2. Brno: FF MU, 1985, pp. 143-145.

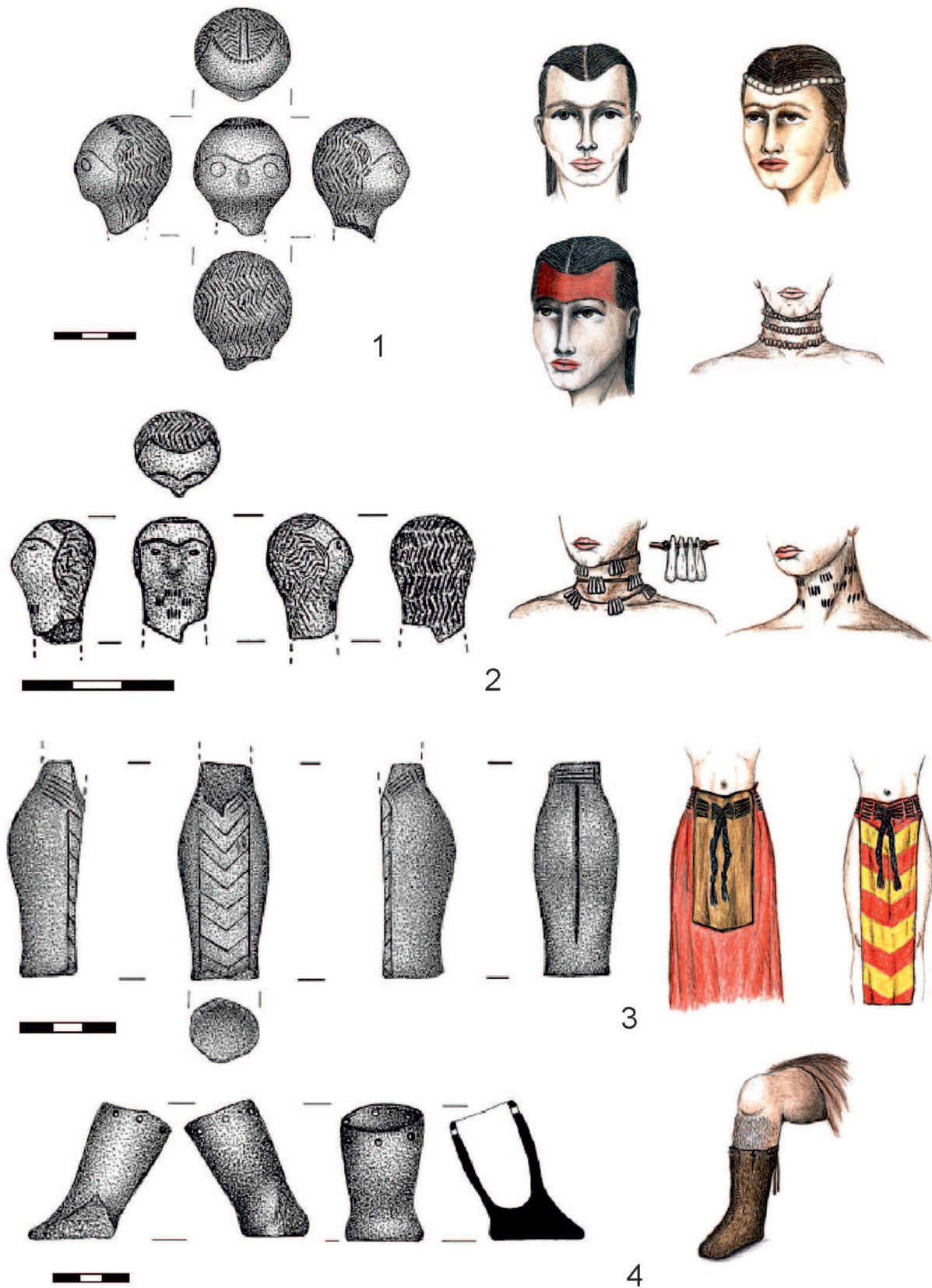


Figure 6. Reconstruction of Lengyel culture ritual garment: 1, 2 – head covers, jewellery and other head and neck decorations; 3 – skirt, apron; 4 – boots, footwear (edited after BARNA – TÓTH, ref. 52, obr. 1-4).

6. Uniformity of representations of zoomorphic and anthropomorphic features in individual cultures/groups proves active relationships among the communities of the given region. Intense exchange of information made preservation of the representation in unchanged form possible. Variability, on the other hand, is caused by less intense exchange of information. Remarkable local differences and potential cultural influences from other regions lead to creation of specific traditions. We need to take into consideration that authors of such pottery had different skills. The most often ignored cause of the variability is intentional representation of a different "idea".
7. Individual representations were not an everyday and common thing. They were related, in a bad or good way, to something supernatural – either a deity itself or they were references to the cult of ancestors. Some of them might have represented living members of the community.

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