

Goddesses and the Moon: Images and Symbols of Cucuteni–Trypillia

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Abstract. Maria Gimbutas devoted three fundamental monographs to the study of the religion of prehistoric Europe and the Goddess who, in her opinion, reigned in the sacred space of the population of Neolithic Europe. She believed that modern European civilization has its origins in the early agricultural societies of the Neolithic period from the 7th to the 3rd millennia BC, which corresponds to the term “Old Europe”. According to the researcher, the Great Triune Goddess, associated with the cycle of “birth, nurturing, growth, death, and regeneration”, played a dominant and all-encompassing role in the religion of Old Europe, the “goddess religion”. The analysis of the pictorial tradition of the Cucuteni–Trypillia cultural complex allows us to assert that, in addition to female characters, probably goddesses, the symbolism of the Moon, lunar cycles and sacred images related to the semantic field of the Moon were of particular importance during near 2000 years.

Keywords: Maria Gimbutas, Old Europe, “goddess religion”, symbolism of the Moon, semantic field of the Moon

Didžioji Deivė ir mėnulis: Kukutenio-Tripolės kultūros vaizdiniai ir simboliai

Anotacija. Marija Gimbutienė paskelbė tris fundamentalias monografijas, kuriose nagrinėjo neolito laikotarpio Europos religiją ir Didžiąją Deivę, kuri, jos nuomone, karaliavo neolito Europos gyventojų sakralinėje erdvėje. Archeologė manė, kad šiuolaikinės Europos civilizacijos ištakos yra ankstyvosiose neolitinėse žemdirbių visuomenėse, kurios egzistavo nuo VII iki III tūkstm. pr. Kr., ir tai ji pavadino terminu „Senoji Europa“. M. Gimbutienės manymu, Didžioji Triasmenė deivė yra sietina su „gimimo, auklėjimo, augimo, mirties ir atgimimo“ ciklu ir ji atliko dominuojantį ir visa apimančią vaidmenį Senosios Europos religijoje – „deivės religijoje“. Kukutenio-Tripolės kultūros tapybinės tradicijos analizė leidžia teigti, kad, be moteriškų personažų, tikriausiai deivių, ypač svarbi buvo Mėnulio simbolika, mėnulio ciklai ir sakraliniai vaizdiniai, susiję su Mėnulio semantiniu lauku.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: Marija Gimbutienė, Senoji Europa, „deivės religija“, mėnulio simbolika, semantinis Mėnulio laukas.

Introduction

Maria Gimbutas devoted three fundamental monographs to the study of the religion of prehistoric Europe and the Goddess who, in her opinion, reigned in the sacred space of the population of Neolithic Europe: “The Gods and Goddesses of Old Europe”, 1974 (reissued as “The Goddesses and Gods of Old Europe”, 1982); “The Language of the Goddess”, 1989; and “The Civilization of the Goddess”, 1991. M. Gimbutas’ book on the Goddesses, “The Living Goddesses”, remained unfinished at the time of her death in 1994 and was being prepared for publication by Miriam Robbins Dexter (Gimbutas, Dexter, 1999).

One of the most important areas of research by M. Gimbutas was the concept of the prehistoric civilization of Old Europe, consistently presented in the mentioned monographs. The main narratives of this concept were:

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1. The European population in the period from the Paleolithic to the Chalcolithic (Old Europe) was Pre-Indo-European.
2. Paleolithic traditions were the basis for the formation of the original agricultural civilization of Old Europe in the Neolithic period at the territories of South-Eastern and Central Europe. Old European mythical imagery has reconstituted a link between the religion of the Upper Palaeolithic and that of the pre-Indo-European substratum of European cultures.
The innovation was the use of the term “civilization” to characterize the society of the Neolithic–Eneolithic era. *“During the 7th, 6th and 5th millennia BC the farmers of southeast Europe evolved a unique cultural pattern, contemporary with similar developments in Anatolia, Mesopotamia, Syro-Palestine and Egypt. It reached a climax in the fifth millennium BC. A new designation, Civilization of Old Europe, is introduced here in recognition of the collective identity and achievement of the different cultural groups of Neolithic-Chalcolithic southeast Europe”* (Gimbutas, 1982, p. 17).
3. According to Maria Gimbutas, the formation of civilization begins with the transition of society to agriculture, therefore neolithic societies of Old Europe cannot be considered, according to the words of K. Renfrew, *“before civilization”* (Renfrew, 1973), because civilization is defined not only by a hierarchical political and religious structure and class stratification, inherent of Indo-Europeans, but also impressive economic and cultural achievements, including developed religious ideas, of the agricultural population of Old Europe, presented in archaeological sources (Gimbutas, 1991, p. VIII).
4. M. Gimbutas contrasted “gynocentric” (mother/woman-centered) neolithic societies of Old Europe with “androcratic” (male-dominated) societies of Indo-Europeans. The term “Old Europe” is applied to a Pre-Indo-European cuisine of Europe, a cuisine matrifoca and probably matrilinear, agricultural and sedentary, egalitarian and peaceful. It contrasted sharply with the succeeding proto-Indo-European cuisine which was patriarchal, stratified, pastoral, mobile, and war-oriented, superimposed on other Europe” (Gimbutas, 1982, p. 9).
5. Indo-Europeans destroyed the civilization of Old Europe. The culture of Europe, beginning with Early Bronze Age, arose as a symbiosis of the cultural traditions of the agrarian population of Old Europe and Indo-Europeans. 2500 BC was an amalgamation of the two mythic systems, Old European and Indo-European.
6. The culture of Old Europe was characterized by a dominance of women in society and worship of a Goddess incarnating the Creative principle as Source and Giver of All.

An important achievement of M. Gimbutas was the creation of a chronological system of agricultural cultures of Central and South-Eastern Europe. And the years given in the chronological table of the cultural complexes of Old Europe represent true age, i.e. radiocarbon dates converted into true age on Suess’ calibration curve.

For the first time in historiography, Maria Gimbutas examined the archaeological sources of the Neolithic and Eneolithic eras on a pan-European scale. The subject of M. Gimbutas’ research is early agricultural societies, their social structure, way of life and religion. Archaeological cultures attributed to Old Europe demonstrated stable development in the middle of the 7th millennia BC in the Aegean area, the Balkans, East-Central Europe, Central Mediterranean, in the early 5th millennia BC. The wheat-growing population of Old Europe grew steadily thanks to the success of the agrarian economy. The religious ideas of the agricultural population were reflected in the developed symbolic system associated with the cult of the Goddess (Gimbutas, 1991, p. VII).

The Cucuteni–Trypillia cultural complex was included by M. Gimbutas in the territory of Old Europe during its highest development. *“The Cucuteni civilization is clearly affiliated with its Southern neighbors of the East Balkan tradition, and forms the northern outpost of Old European culture, extending as far as the middle Vili Dnieper in the northeast”* (Gimbutas, 1982, p. 34).

Archaeological investigations of the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st century in Romania, Moldova, and Ukraine demonstrate impressive achievements on the civilizational path of the society that left this culture.

The real level of economic and social development of the communities that existed on the territory from the Carpathians to the Dnipro in the 5th–4th millennia BC turned out to be even higher than M. Gimbutas imagined at the time. There were dozens of mega-settlements here – a proto-cities, craft centers, grandiose sacred practice with magnificent sanctuaries. On the other hand, the matrilineal, egalitarian and peace-loving nature of Cucuteni–Trypillia society declared by Maria Gimbutas is not confirmed by new research.

According to the researcher, the Great Triune Goddess, associated with the cycle of “birth, nurturing, growth, death, and regeneration”, played a dominant and all-encompassing role in the religion of Old Europe, the “goddess religion”. But such a statement now seems to be an exaggeration, although the many artifacts of Cucuteni–Trypillia testify to the important place of the goddesses in the sacred world of this civilization. The analysis of the pictorial tradition of the Cucuteni–Trypillia cultural complex allows us to assert that, in addition to female characters, probably goddesses, the symbolism of the Moon, lunar cycles and sacred images related to the semantic field of the Moon were of particular importance.

Lunar symbolism in the pictorial tradition of Cucuteni–Trypillia

Short historiography

It is widely believed that agricultural peoples were mainly sun worshippers. The themes of solar symbolism in the Trypillian materials were considered by Borys Rybakov in his research. The researcher identified a circle and a circle with a cross inside as solar signs, and interpreted the dynamic spiral ornamental compositions of such signs as the course of the sun across the sky. However, in his opinion, the sun was not the main deity among the Trypillians, in the spiral ornament, where the sun was often combined with the symbols of snakes, it was only a sign of the sky, and next to it, the moon was in the center of the spirals. (Rybakov, p. 1965, 13–33; Rybakov, 1981, p. 173, p. 193–203).

Valentin Danylenko considered the solar symbolism of Trypillia as a designation of the sky (sky-sun). In the spiral ornament, including the Trypillian one, the researcher saw “*a symbol of a fantastic winged ... dragon snake*”, which acted as “*an attribute of the sky*”. The different colors of the snakes-dragons in the Trypillian painting allow us to talk about their belonging to both solar and lunar symbolism, and the latter reflects the phases of the Moon (Danylenko, 1997, p. 10–23).

The theme of lunar symbolism and lunar coding of the ornamental compositions of the painted ornamentation of the Cucuteni–Trypillia cultural complex was put forward by Taras Tkachuk (Tkachuk, 2005, p. 113–114). He, researching the sign systems of Trypillian painted decoration, convincingly showed that signs in the form of a circle, which are most often interpreted as solar ones, are symbols of the full moon, and semicircles and segments of a circle are images of different phases of the night light. With this approach, the lunar coding turns out to be very important for the painted decoration of Trypillia, it is the lunar symbolism that subordinates most of the ornamental subjects.

The analysis of various categories of materials of the Trypillian culture showed that the lunar symbolism established by Taras Tkachuk for the painted Trypillian ornamentation is characteristic of many categories of Trypillian artifacts and is dominant in the sacred tradition of Trypillia throughout almost all periods of the culture’s existence. He also singled out certain lunar signs in the painted decor of ceramics from stage B II to the beginning of stage C II (Tkachuk, 2014).

Identifying lunar symbolism

Further developing the theme of identifying lunar symbolism, we turned to the ornamentation of the Cucuteni–Trypillia cultural complex from the initial stages, in particular, the selection of lunar symbols of the drawn ceramics of Cucuteni A–Trypillia BI–BII and the deep decoration of these periods.

We consider lunar signs – ideograms – to be symbolic images of the moon in different phases (fig. 1: I), which reflect the lunar cycle. In the ornamentation, some images of the symbols of the moon in different phases are very close to the real appearance in the sky, others are schematic, but still, in our opinion, also recognizable and related to the lunar symbolism.

Correspondence of ornamentation signs to the phases of the Moon:

- circle – full moon symbol;
- circle is a lunar ideogram that can correspond to both the new moon symbol and the full moon symbol; the full moon ideogram in certain states can also be considered as concentric circles and the circle with a cross sign, since in ornamentation these signs are in the same context as the full moon sign;
- half-circle – symbol of moon in first and last quarter – semicircle-crescent;
- oval is the symbol of waxing gibbous and waning gibbous (waxing gibbous and waning gibbous visually look the same in the form of an oval);
- segment (crescent moon) – symbol of waxing crescent (right or horizontal, with horns to the left) and waning crescent (left, with horns to the right);
- arcs are schematic symbols of waxing (right or horizontal) crescent, and waning (left) crescent.

Lunar symbolism in the system of incised decoration of ceramics of the Precucuteni–Cucuteni–Trypillia cultural complex

The incised decoration of Precucuteni–Trypillia vessels is characterized by the unity of ornamental schemes and plots for the ceramic complex as a whole, the constancy of ornament elements, the prevalence of the 4-time division of symmetrical rotating compositions, the connection between the variants of ornamental compositions and the shapes of vessels, the distribution of decoration by zones, the independence of plots, motifs and signs from the methods of applying the pattern.

Precucuteni–Trypillia A

The oldest lunar signs-ideograms are present in the deep decoration of ceramics from the first phases of Precucuteni–Trypillia A. The execution technique is diverse (fig. 1: II,11). It should be noted that the recessed elements of the decor were necessarily supplemented with paints. The analysis of the technological features of ceramics with sunken decoration of different stages of Cucuteni–Trypillia (Burdo, 2018, 21) gives reason to believe that the sunken elements of ornamentation did not act as an independent decoration, but as a basis for applying white paint, which filled them.

Some elements were painted red, others kept the color of the vessel. Thus, the decoration of the Precucuteni–Trypillia A ceramics was polychrome, but the colors were not fixed by firing, so they were poorly preserved. However, individual fragments of ceramics preserved their original appearance (fig. 1: II, 6–7). The color scheme of the Precucuteni–Trypillia A ceramics also depended on the nature of firing. Restorative firing gave the surface of the dishes shades of black and gray colors. Oxidative firing produced terracotta, yellow-hot, sometimes red colors. Since all objects from the Trypillian settlements were exposed to ritual fire during the burning of buildings, they mostly underwent additional oxidative firing, losing their original color.

In addition to the sunken decoration, the ideogram of the full moon in the form of white-painted dots is present on the inside of the Tirpești ladle (Marinescu-Bîlcu, 1974, fig. 66, 4; fig. 87). The most widespread sign of the ornamental compositions of Precucuteni–Trypillia A stage is the disc – the symbol of the full moon. Round-disc is present in the ornamentation of ceramics with archaic incised decor (fig. 4: 12) from the settlement of Bernashivka (Burdo, 2001–2002, fig. 7: 8–9; fig. 8; fig. 13), dated by Precucuteni II–Trypillia A stage. Sometimes the circle is dominant in the recessed ornamentation on the body of the pots (Bodean, 2001, fig. 12: 1), sometimes in the tangent scheme (Patokova et al., 1989, fig. 4: 3), on pear-shaped vessels from different settlements.



Fig. 1. I – Moon phases; II – Moon symbols on Cucuteni Trypillia pottery with incised decoration: 1–3 – Bernachivka; 4, 6–7, 9, 12 – Oleksandrivka; 5, 11 – Tymkove; 8 – Slobidka-Zakhidna; 10, 14 – Poduri-Dialul Gindaru; 13 – Berezivska GES; 15–16 – Cucuteni – Cetățuia; 17–19 – Culture A after V. Khvoika; 20 – Kolomyitsiv Yar; 21 – Vesely Kut; 22 – Volodymyrivka group. (After: 1–2 – Burdo 2001–2002; 3–3, 4, 9, 12, 21 – Burdo 2011; 10, 14 – Dumitroaia at all 2005; 16 – Petrescu-Dîmbovița at all 2004; 17–20 – Burdo 2010; 21 – Burdo 2011).

1 pav. I – mėnulio fazės; II – mėnulio simboliai, įrėžti Kukutenio-Tripolės keramikoje: 1–3 – Bernachivka; 4, 6–7, 9, 12 – Oleksandrivka; 5, 11 – Tymkove; 8 – Slobidka-Zakhidna; 10, 14 – Poduri-Dialul Gindaru; 13 – Berezivska GES; 15–16 – Cucuteni – Cetățuia; 17–19 – A kultūra pagal V. Khvoika; 20 – Kolomyitsiv Yar; 21 – Vesely Kut; 22 – Volodymyrivka grupė. (Pagal: 1–2 – Burdo 2001–2002; 3–3, 4, 9, 12, 21 – Burdo 2011; 10, 14 – Dumitroaia at all 2005; 16 – Petrescu-Dîmbovița at all 2004; 17–20 – Burdo 2010; 21 – Burdo 2011)

The circle sign is depicted as element in combination with ovals (Patokova et al., 1989, fig. 4: 4) and in complex ornamental compositions in combination with ovals on a shaded background in the ornamentation of pear-shaped anthropomorphic vessels (fig. 1: II, 4–5), tires and fruit bowls, as well as in the decoration of a zoomorphic vessel (fig. 1: II, 8).

In the upper projection of ornamental schemes on pear-shaped anthropomorphic vessels, their covers and spherical vessels, lunar symbols most often form 4-hour compositions, sometimes 2-hour, rarely 3-hour (Burdo, Videyko, 1984, p. 101–102).

A unique image of a snake's head, whose mouth and eyes are depicted by circles or circles and ovals (fig. 1: II, 3–5) is associated with the disc sign – the symbol of the full moon. Thus, in one image, the signs of the snake and the moon are combined, so they can be conventionally considered as a reflection of the mythological character – the Moon Snake. The earliest depictions of the City Serpent come from the settlement of Bernashivka (Burdo, 2001–2002, fig. 8: 2, 12; fig. 9: 21, 22). Spiral images of the Moon Serpent occupy a central position in the ornamentation of a bowl from Oleksandrivka (Patokova et al., 1989, fig. 4: 9) dated by Precucuteni III–Trypillia A stage. Among the pottery from Precucuteni stage in Carpathian Moldova, such a plot has not been found.

The most expressive lunar coding of the decor is manifested in the ornamentation of pear-shaped anthropomorphic vessels, characteristic of the ceramic complexes of the Dniester–Bug sites of Trypillia A stage (Burdo, 2011). The ornamental system of these vessels includes circle signs, inscribed in shaded medallion figures, and occurs only in combination with other symbols, in particular in images of snake heads. Some ornamental schemes are connected with the serpent motif (Burdo, 1999, p. 24–28). Spiral snake ribbons are complemented by the symbolic image of the Moon Serpent.

On the body of an anthropomorphic pear-shaped vessel from the Oleksandrivka, the ornamental composition consists of three Moon Serpents coiled in a spiral, which dominate the composition (fig. 1:II, 4). The symbols of the full moon are also present in the form of three round medallions with three circles inscribed in them, placed between serpentine spirals. Above the medallions is a figure with two circles in the middle of the shaded area. For the main elements of the ornamental composition of this vessel, the numerical combinations of the elements are multiples of 3.

Another snake motif with paired snakes is presented on a pear-shaped anthropomorphic vessel from Tymkove (fig. 1: II, 5) dated by Precucuteni III–Trypillia A stage. The ornamental composition consists of four pairs with Moon Serpents moving towards each other. The four upper snakes seem to hang from the corners of the rhombic figure that surrounds the neck of the vessel, forming a dynamic swastika-like figure around it (Burdo, Videyko, 1984, fig. 3: 20). One oval is placed in each corner of the rhombus in the shaded area. In the same way, a composition of four snakes surrounds the bottom part of the vessel.

From below, the snake composition is emphasized by an angular shaded ribbon, which forms a rhombus when viewed from the bottom. The heads of “horned” snakes are large, on the shaded field there are large eyes, represented by two circles. The number of all the main elements of the ornamental composition on this pear-shaped vessel is a multiple of 4. Four segments-ovals are placed around the crown, a total of 8 snake heads (each of the eight snakes has a pair of eyes – circles, a total up to 16 circles).

The analysis of the decor of anthropomorphic pear-shaped vessels allows us to trace the ornamental context and symbolic accompaniment of a female figure (Markevich, 1989, p. 26–36), which presumably reflects the image of the Goddess. It can be assumed that the plot of the decoration of Trypillia A with lunar snakes could symbolically reflect the endless movement in the space of the universe. At the same time, the center of this pictorial “text” is a female figure wrapped in moon snakes. In general, anthropomorphic pear-shaped vessels, which symbolically reproduce the figure of the Goddess, combine the symbolism of the Moon, a woman, and a snake.

This demonstrates a concrete manifestation in the worldview of the Trypillia people of complex sacred ideas in the system of cosmobiological views of man of the archaic society, which “attempts to fully integrate the cosmos and man into a single divine rhythm, the meaning of which is magical and soteriological: possessing

hidden powers, man enters the centers of cosmic energy and so comes to absolute harmony with the universe” (Eliade, 1999, p. 331).

In the recessed decoration of the Full Moon sign, there are dimples – impressions of a round stamp. In the ornamentation of Precucuteni–Trypillia A, pits always appear as an accompanying element, they are arranged in groups, rows, or inside large ovals (Garvăn, 2013, fig. 73: 3). On a fragment of pottery from Bernashivka, the hole is located in the center of the eye of the Moon Snake (fig. 1: II, 1).

Circles, concentric circles made with traced lines are also characteristic of fluted decor on pots (Burdo, 2001–2002, fig. 8: 5), pear-shaped (fig. 1, II, 11) and spherical vessels. Signs are less popular than the disc sign. 2 or 4 concentric circles of drawn lines are depicted on the tires (Burdo, 2011, fig. 5: 3, 6).

Ovals are very common in the ornamentation of Precucuteni–Trypillia A pottery. Often ovals of an elongated irregular shape, visually not similar to the image of the gibbous moon. However, the location of such ovals in combination with other lunar signs, in particular, between lunar crescents, allows us to consider ovals as lunar symbols. The arrangement of 4 ovals in a cross-shaped figure surrounded by a circle (“medallion”) is characteristic of the decoration of Trypillia A ceramics of the Dniester–Bug region.

Segments – crescent moon symbols – are always combined with other lunar symbols.

Arces (arcs) – schematic symbols of the crescent moon – in the ornamentation of Precucuteni–Trypillia A stage pottery are more often used as elements complementing circles, circles, ovals (Burdo, 2001–2002, fig. 7: 12; fig. 8: 5, 13).

Lunar symbolism in the incised ornamentation system of Cucuteni A–Trypillia B I, Cucuteni AB–Trypillia BI–BII, Cucuteni B–Trypillia BII–C I

At the stage of Cucuteni A–Trypillia B I, in decoration with sunken decor, the lunar symbolism both follows the tradition of Precucuteni–Trypillia A stage and demonstrates new interpretations of the signs of the Moon and new combinations of symbolic signs-ideograms. Diversity is preserved in the decoration technique. Circles, concentric circles, arcs, ovals, crescent moons are made using the technique of drawn lines, grooves, stamp impressions. Lunar symbolism occurs on vessels of various shapes. The new graphic image of the waxing moon in the form of a comma is characteristic of the ornamentation of the settlement of Berezivska GES (fig. 3: 16). In one ornamental composition, signs of circles, ovals, and concentric circles are combined. There is a plot in the form of oppositely located crescents with horns to the left and right (fig. 3: 25), as well as with a circle – a full moon interspersed with crescents (fig. 3: 9).

In the stage of Cucuteni AB–Trypillia BI–BII, the sunken decor is characteristic only of the local-chronological groups of Trypillia BI–BII area. Only the signs of the full moon, made with drawn lines (a circle) or in the form of a hole, are recorded. Such ornamentation is most characteristic of pear-shaped vessels (fig. 1: II, 17, 21) and covers (fig. 1: II, 18–19), but also occurs on amphorae and binocular-shaped vessels (fig. 1: II, 20). Pits are single, form groups, center concentric circles (fig. 1: II, 17–21). A new plot of snake compositions appears with a hole in the center of the head of the opposing snakes, which resembles the yin-yang symbol (fig. 1: II, 17, 22).

At the stage of Cucuteni B – Trypillia BII, pottery with crossed-out decor with lunar symbols is present only in the local-chronological groups of Trypillia B II at Southern Bug area, the Southern Bug–Dnieper interfluvium and the Dnieper region. On the pear-shaped vessels of the Volodymyryvka group, ornamental compositions reproduce the yin-yang plot (fig. 1: II, 22), which is also present on the model of the temple from the settlement of the Nebelivka group Pischana (fig. 9: 3). On the craters from the Grebeni (Kolomyishchyna group), the lunar symbols are made with traced lines. These are concentric circles and arcs, in the center of which the full moon is marked with a dot (fig. 3: 6).

In the Cucuteni B–Trypillia C I stage, lunar symbols on dishes were preserved only in the Kolomyishchyna group on Dnieper (fig. 3: 25). On the pot from Kolomyishchyna I, double arcs are depicted under the crowns,

corresponding to the sign of the horizontal moon. Under the crowns of a pear-shaped vessel from this region, and above the double arcs, a dimple depicts the sign of the full moon (fig. 3: 7).

Such symbols, as circles – full moon, ovals – waxing gibbous and waning gibbous and circles – dominate in compositions on ceramics with deep decoration. Often, all lunar symbols appear as elements of some ornamental composition. Opposite moon crescents – waxing crescent and waning crescent – flank the full moon (fig. 3: 10–11). There are also combinations of the Full Moon symbol and horizontal crescents (fig. 3: 5–7). There are combinations of the symbols of the snake and the Full Moon, which probably reproduces the fantastic sacred character of the Moon Snake. These Moon Snakes are often depicted in pairs.

Lunar symbols on Trypillia pottery with incised ornamentation are mostly located in the central or upper part of the vessels. The most used were the signs of the full moon, they are preserved in the serpentine motif of the pottery ornamentation of the Trypillia B II stages on pear-shaped anthropomorphic vessels, continuing the tradition from the Trypillia A period. The tradition of blocking the full moon sign in the form of a dimple and the horizontal moon crescent sign is preserved until the Trypillia C I stage. The plot of the combination of the signs of the moon and the snake is also present in the painted ornamentation, and mainly in the ceramic complexes of the local-chronological groups of Trypillia B II–C I in the area west of the Prut River.

Lunar symbolism in the system of drawn ornamentation of Cucuteni A–Trypillia B I, Cucuteni AB–Trypillia BI–BII, Cucuteni B–Trypillia BII–C I, Trypillia C II

The tradition of painted pottery, when the colors were fixed by firing, appears in the Cucuteni A–Trypillia B I stage. From this stage in the Cucuteni–Trypillia cultural complex, several local-chronological groups are distinguished based on the styles of painted and recessed ornamentation (Burdo, 2018). During the Cucuteni A–Trypillia B I stage, painted ceramics are widespread mostly in ceramic ensembles of settlements in the Western part of the region. Painted ceramics are distinguished by various morphological types. A feature of the painted decor of Cucuteni A–Trypillia B I is the application of ornamental compositions on the entire surface of the vessel, symmetry is often absent, the horizontal division into ornamental zones in accordance with morphological features, the use of spiral positive-negative patterns, the predominance of red and white colors, black often complements white and red, is rarely the main one.

Cucuteni A–Trypillia B I stage

Lunar coding is not very characteristic for the painted pottery of the Cucuteni A–Trypillia B I stage, but different lunar ideograms are present on vessels of different shapes and in different ornamental contexts. The full moon sign in the form of a disc is the most common of the moon ideograms at this stage. More often, the moon disc is dark red or light white (fig. 1, II, 15; 11, 15). Black moon discs are very rare on pottery from Poduri–Dealul Gindaru (Lazarovici et al. 2009, fig. 46: 57–58) and Ariuşd (fig. 2: 7–8).

The moon disc sign in compositions is blocked with other symbols: in the center of a circle (fig. 2, 6) or concentric circles (fig. 2, 8; 11, 2, 5–6), with the head of a snake (fig. 2: 2), the moon disc surrounded by moon crescents (fig. 3: 10–11), in compositions with spiral ribbons (fig. 2: 9). An element in the form of a moon disc appears in the center of the leaf-shaped oval (fig. 2: 4), which will be characteristic of the ornamentation of the next stage of Cucuteni–Trypillia. There are vessels with a row of red moon discs along the edge of the crown (fig. 2: 55).

In rare cases, the white moon disc (fig. 1: II, 15) dominates the ornamental composition. On the anthropomorphic stand (fig. 11: 4) and anthropomorphic vessels, the red moon disc is placed in the region of the womb (fig. 11: 2, 5–6), and on the two female shaped vessels also in the center on the chest (fig. 11: 2, 5–6).

The half-circle – semicircle-crescent – sign in the horizontal red version is usually surrounded by a light semicircle or arcs and concentric arcs (fig. 2, 6) located on the crowns.



Fig. 2. Moon symbols on Cucuteni–Trypillia painted pottery: 1 – Moon phases; 2, 8 – Ariuşd; 3 – Verteba I; 4 – Dumeşti; 5 – Cucuteni A–Trypillia B I; 6 – Mărgineni-Cetăţuia; 7, 13 – Poduri-Dialul Gindaru; 9 – Bodeşti; 10 – Cucuteni AB–Trypillia BI-BII; 11–12 – Culture A after V. Khvoika; 14–15 – Trypillia B II; 16 – Trypillia C I; 17 – Cucuteni-Cetăţuia; 18 – Poduri-Dialul Gindaru; 18, 30 – Hancauti; 19 – Ghelăeşti; 20 – Glavan I; 21 – Piaţra Şoimului; 22–23, 27 – Valea Lupului; 24 – decoration of Tomashivka group pottery from top; 25 – Tomashivka group; 26 – Maidanetske; 28 – Brinzeni III; 29 – Vărvăreuca XV; 31 – Ghelăeşti; 32–33 – Verteba II. (After: 2, 8, 19–20, 29–31 – Lazarovici at all 2009; 3, 11–12 – Burdo, 2010; 4, 6–9, 13 – Lazarovici at all 2009; 17 – Petrescu-Dîmboviţa at all 2004; 18 – Dumitroaia at all 2005; 24 – Tkachuk, Melnyk 2005; 32–33 – Tkachuk 2013).

2 pav. Mėnulio simboliai, išpiešti Kukutenio-Tripolės keramikoje: 1 – mėnulio fazės; 2, 8 – Ariuşd; 3 – Verteba I; 4 – Dumeşti; 5 – Cucuteni A–Trypillia B I; 6 – Mărgineni-Cetăţuia; 7, 13 – Poduri-Dialul Gindaru; 9 – Bodeşti; 10 – Cucuteni AB–Trypillia BI-BII; 11–12 – A kultūra pagal V. Khvoika; 14–15 – Trypillia B II; 16 – Trypillia C I; 17 – Cucuteni-Cetăţuia; 18 – Poduri-Dialul Gindaru; 18, 30 – Hancauti; 19 – Ghelăeşti; 20 – Glavan I; 21 – Piaţra Şoimului; 22–23, 27 – Valea Lupului; 24 – Tomashivka grupės keramikos puošyba iš viršaus; 25 – Tomashivka grupė; 26 – Maidanetske; 28 – Brinzeni III; 29 – Vărvăreuca XV; 31 – Ghelăeşti; 32–33 – Verteba II. (Pagal: 2, 8, 19–20, 29–31 – Lazarovici at all 2009; 3, 11–12 – Burdo, 2010; 4, 6–9, 13 – Lazarovici at all 2009; 17 – Petrescu-Dîmboviţa at all 2004; 18 – Dumitroaia at all 2005; 24 – Tkachuk, Melnyk 2005; 32–33 – Tkachuk 2013)

The gibbous ideogram in the form of light leaf-like vertical ovals is present in ornamental compositions among spirals (fig. 4: 66) or on the throat, surrounded by arcs – moon crescents (fig. 4: 19).

The crescent moon symbol in the horizontal version in the form of arcs occurs in ornamental compositions together with other lunar signs (fig. 2: 6; fig. 11: 5–6).

Cucuteni AB–Trypillia B I-B II stage

At the stage of Cucuteni AB–Trypillia B I-B II, certain character changes occur in the morphological and stylistic characteristics of ceramics. Lunar symbolism was used for ceramics of various forms. Black (dark brown) color begins to play an important role in the painted décor. At this stage dishes with monochrome painting in black (dark brown) paint on the orange or beige background of the vessel were spread (fig. 2: 7–8; fig. 11: 1). Spiral ribbon patterns were not popular and the lower parts of the vessels are often devoid of decoration, the ornamental compositions are symmetrical, 2-fold, 4-fold, sometimes 3-fold.

The use of lunar symbols in ornamental compositions increases somewhat compared to the previous stage. Red moon disc symbols were included in the general complicated composition (fig. 3: 30; fig. 11: 1). The full moon symbol in the form of a disc as a separate sign was used much more often than in the Cucuteni A–Trypillia BI stage, and not only red (fig. 2: 12) or light – white (fig. 2, 11), but also black (fig. 3: 31), which will be typical for images of the following stages of Cucuteni–Trypillia.

Ideogram in the form of moon disc above the horizontal moon crescents in the form of a semiring (fig. 3: 3) arcs (fig. 3: 1) located on the crowns of the vessels. The most common decorative element is the oval – the gibbous ideogram in various forms. Characteristic compositions of leaf-like elongated ovals (fig. 2: 10), in particular with a moon disc in the center (fig. 2: 11–12). Oval signs are especially often used in ornamental compositions on pear-shaped anthropomorphic vessels and their lids (fig. 4: 17–18). Vertical light or dark ovals flanked by arcs – moon crescents (fig. 4: 15, 22). On the necks of pear-shaped anthropomorphic vessels, light ovals surrounded by arcs flank a light moon disc (fig. 4: 25–26).

In the ornamentation of pear-shaped anthropomorphic vessels, an ideogram appears in the form of opposite vertical semicircle-crescents (fig. 4: 11), which will become popular in the following stages of Cucuteni–Trypillia. Semicircle-crescent signs in the horizontal version are depicted on the crowns of the vessels (fig. 4, 6).

At the beginning of the Cucuteni B–Trypillia B II stage, a tradition of lunar coding of ornamental compositions appeared, characteristic of the iconic system of painted ornamentation of various local-chronological groups of subsequent periods up to and including stage C I. In the Prut–Dniester region, such a tradition is associated with the Rakovets local-chronological group (Tkachuk, 2005).

Cucuteni B–Trypillia BII–Trypillia CI stages

The lunar symbolism of Cucuteni B–Trypillia B II–Trypillia C I of all regions is represented by a whole set of fairly standardized signs-ideograms and their position in ornamental compositions. The lower part of the vessels, as a rule, is devoid of decoration, with the exception of individual vessels (fig. 2: 18; 8, 1), for example, from Poduri–Dealul Gindaru (Lazarovici at all 2009, N 315; 318). Ornamental compositions of 4-, 2-, sometimes 3-parts, vertically consist mostly of 1, sometimes 2 tiers. Different lunar symbols can be used in both tiers of the ornament. Lunar ideograms can be clearly distinguished from the ornamental scheme.

Full moon ideograms. The most popular lunar symbol is the full moon ideogram in the form of a black moon disc. In the Cucuteni painting in the Carpathian Moldova, the moon disc was often light-colored, white, or the background of the pattern (fig. 2: 13, 19; 8, 1), or red (fig. 2: 23). Moon disc was depicted as a separate sign, single (fig. 2: 26), but mostly paired, flanking various signs (fig. 2: 15; fig. 6: 2); in the center of the bowls in groups of 3–4 moon discs (fig. 2: 25), surrounded by a ring or concentric circles (fig. 2: 21, 23); inscribed in the motif of horizontal S-shaped spirals (fig. 1: 14; fig. 5: 4–6); inscribed in the shape of a cross in a circle (fig. 2: 16).

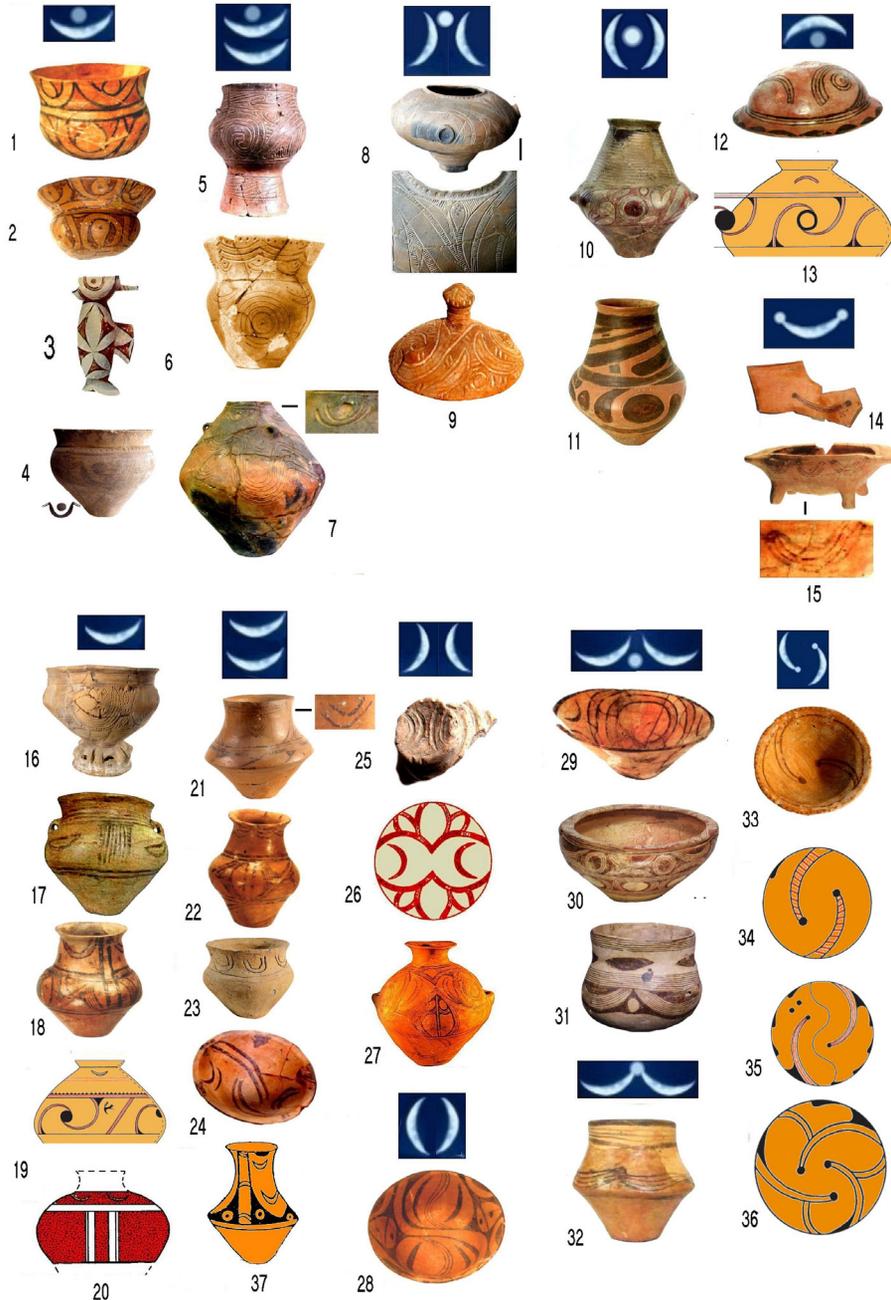


Fig. 3. Combinations of symbols: full moon and moon crescents: 1 – Rădultnii Vechi II; 2 – Vesely Kut; 3 – Culture A after V. Khvoika; 4, 6 – Grebeni; 5 – Trypillia B I; 7, 23 – Kolomyischyna I; 8 – Oleksandrivka; 9, 16 – Berezivska GES; 10 – Târgu Frumos; 11 – Truşeşti-Tugueta; 12 – Valea Lupului; 13, 19, 34–36 – Werteba I; 14 – Cucuteni-Cetăţuia; 15 – Glavan I; 20 – Werteba II; 21 – Cherkasiv Sad II; 18, 22 – Ştefaneşti; 24 – Petreny goup; 25 – Nezvysko II; 26 – Koshylivtsi; 27 – Brinzeni III; 28 – Floreşti V; 29 – Feteşti; 30 – Botoşani; 31 – Zalischyky group; 32 – Cucuteni – Cetăţuia; 33 – Tomashivka group; 37 – Kosenivka. (After: 1, 10–12, 15, 22, 29–30 – Lazarovici at all 2009; 2–4, 6, 8–9, 16, 21 – Burdo 2010; 7, 23 – Kolomyischyna I; 13, 19, 34–36 – Tkachuk 2013; 14, 32 – Petrescu-Dîmboviţa at all 2004; 20, 26 – Tkachuk 2000; 27 – Markevich 1985; 37 – Passek 1935).

3 pav. Mėnulio simbolių deriniai: pilnatis ir pumėnuliai: 1 – Rădultnii Vechi II; 2 – Vesely Kut; 3 – A kultūra pagal V. Khvoika; 4, 6 – Grebeni; 5 – Trypillia B I; 7, 23 – Kolomyischyna I; 8 – Oleksandrivka; 9, 16 – Berezivska GES; 10 – Târgu Frumos; 11 – Truşeşti-Tugueta; 12 – Valea Lupului; 13, 19, 34–36 – Werteba I; 14 – Cucuteni-Cetăţuia; 15 – Glavan I; 20 – Werteba II; 21 – Cherkasiv Sad II; 18, 22 – Ştefaneşti; 24 – Petreny grupė; 25 – Nezvysko II; 26 – Koshylivtsi; 27 – Brinzeni III; 28 – Floreşti V; 29 – Feteşti; 30 – Botoşani; 31 – Zalischyky grupė; 32 – Cucuteni – Cetăţuia; 33 – Tomashivka grupė; 37 – Kosenivka. (Pagal: 1, 10–12, 15, 22, 29–30 – Lazarovici at all 2009; 2–4, 6, 8–9, 16, 21 – Burdo 2010; 7, 23 – Kolomyischyna I; 13, 19, 34–36 – Tkachuk 2013; 14, 32 – Petrescu-Dîmboviţa at all 2004; 20, 26 – Tkachuk 2000; 27 – Markevich 1985; 37 – Passek 1935)



Fig. 4. Combinations of moon symbols: semicircle-crescent and gibbous: 1 – Verteba I; 2 – Bilche Zolote Park III; 3 – Shypyntsi group; 4 – Roma; 5 – Truşeşti – Ţuguieţa; 6 – Iablona I; 7 – Chechelnyk group; 8 – Valea Lupului; 9, 13 – Scherbanivka group; 10 – Ghelăeşti; 11 – Zalischyky; 12 – Bernashivka; 14 – Bilche Zolote Park I; 15, 20–22, 24 – Vorniceni; 16 – Fulgeriş; 17–18, 25–26 – Zalischyky group; 19 – Dumeşti; 23 – Kobrynove; 27 – Thaian-Dialul Fântânilor. (After: 1–2 – Tkachuk 2013; 4–6, 8, 10, 16, 19–22, 24, 27 – Lazarovici at all 2009; 23 – Burdo 2010).

4 pav. Mėnulio simbolių deriniai: delčios ir priešpilniai: 1 – Verteba I; 2 – Bilche Zolote Park III; 3 – Shypyntsi grupė; 4 – Roma; 5 – Truşeşti – Ţuguieţa; 6 – Iablona I; 7 – Chechelnyk grupė; 8 – Valea Lupului; 9, 13 – Scherbanivka grupė; 10 – Ghelăeşti; 11 – Zalischyky; 12 – Bernashivka; 14 – Bilche Zolote Park I; 15, 20–22, 24 – Vorniceni; 16 – Fulgeriş; 17–18, 25–26 – Zalischyky grupė; 19 – Dumeşti; 23 – Kobrynove; 27 – Thaian-Dialul Fântânilor. (Pagal: 1–2 – Tkachuk 2013; 4–6, 8, 10, 16, 19–22, 24, 27 – Lazarovici at all 2009; 23 – Burdo 2010)

On the bowls and bowls of binoculars (fig. 2: 31), a large-diameter moon disc shines from the inside against a black background to form cross-shaped compositions, and various lunar signs can be inscribed in the circles (fig. 1: 17; fig. 6: 13).

The full moon symbols also included disc signs with a cross (fig. 2: 27) in the ornamental scheme of a running spiral.

The moon disc sign is often combined with various symbols forming ideogram stands. The most of such ideograms with the combination of moon disc and crescent moon are as follows:

- moon disc above a horizontal crescent moon (fig. 3: 1–4);
- moon disc surrounded by vertical crescent moons (fig. 3: 10–11);
- moon disc connects horizontal crescent moons (fig. 3: 12);
- moon disc at the ends of the crescent moon arc (fig. 3: 14–15);
- moon disc under a horizontal inverted crescent moon (fig. 3: 12–13);
- moon disc flanked by horizontal crescent moon arcs (fig. 3: 29–31).

Ideograms in the form of a moon disc included above double horizontal crescent moons (fig. 3: 5–7), a moon disc flanked by vertical opposite crescent moons (fig. 3: 8, 9), a moon disc surrounded by vertical crescent moons that are revealed (fig. 3: 10–11) for deep ornamentation, not found in the painting.

Few variants of combining the moon disc with water symbols are also presented – from one (fig. 5: 7) or both ends of the wavy ribbon on cups (Tkachuk, 2013, tabl. 85: 4, 10; tabl. 87: 8), in the upper ornamental tiers of vessels (Tkachuk, 2013, tabl. 4: 88; tabl. 20: 1; tabl. 26: 3). This combination of symbols indicates the convergence of the semantic fields of moon and water.

Crescent moon ideograms. Various variants of the crescent moon sign are gaining considerable popularity: in the form of a horizontal crescent moon or horizontal single (fig. 3: 17–20) or double (fig. 3: 21–24, 37) arcs; inverted horizontal crescent moon (fig. 3: 13); a combination of vertical waning and waxing crescent (fig. 3: 28), or slightly shifted vertically waning and waxing crescent (fig. 5: 19); combination of waxing and waning crescent (fig. 7: 11).

Typical for many compositions at this period was combination in one image of crescent several moon ideograms, lunar signs, and other symbolic signs. Placement of crescent moon symbols in ornamental compositions is very diverse. The signs of various variants of the crescent moon image appear singly or in groups in symmetrical compositions with 2 (fig. 7: 12), 4 (fig. 7: 11), rarely 3 (fig. 7: 15) partial divisions.

Semicircle-crescent ideograms. Semicircle-crescent signs in the form of a half circle are presented in different versions:

- horizontal half-circles, sometimes emphasized by arcs, located on the edge of the crown of vessels of various shapes (fig. 4: 1–4; fig. 6, 4, 7; fig. 7: 7, 10) – the most common variant;
- an ideogram with vertical opposite semicircle-crescents inscribed in a circle (fig. 8: 31);
- horizontal semicircle-crescent (fig. 4: 10), located at the bottom of the picture; an ideogram in a circle of opposite horizontal semicircle-crescents, connected by a vertical ribbon – a “ladder” and flanked by double waxing and waning crescent arcs (fig. 4: 7);
- a unique composition on a bowl with 4 horizontal semicircle-crescents, united by ribbons (fig. 7: 7).

The gibbous ideogram in the form of an oval rarely occurs in the painted compositions of Cucuteni B–Tripillia BII–CI (fig. 4: 23).

At C II stage

At the beginning of the C II stage on the painted ceramics from the different local groups the lunar symbolism noticeably reduced. Compositions which were traditional for previous stages were preserved mainly in the Koshylivtsy group.

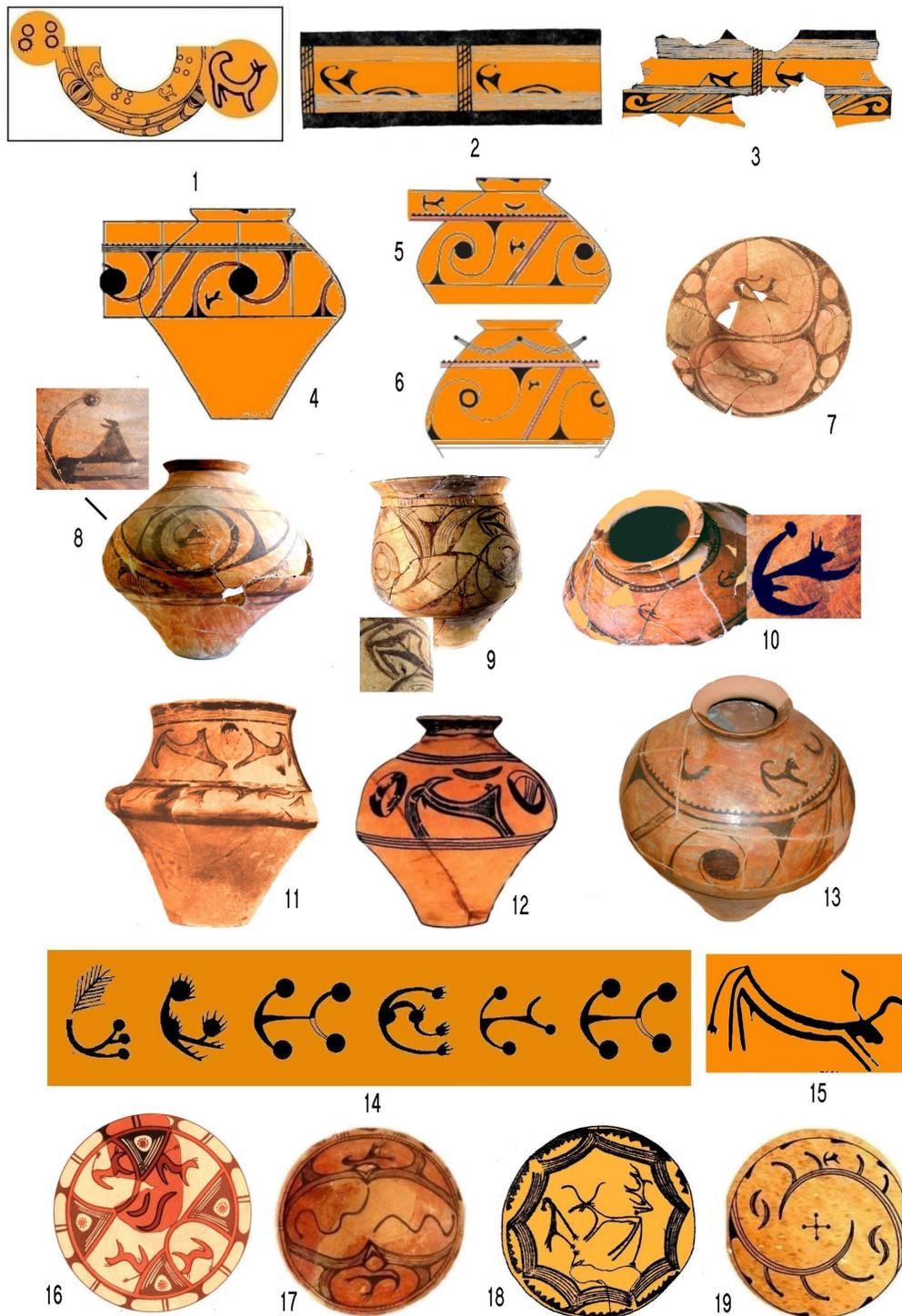


Fig. 5. Combinations of lunar and zoomorphic symbols: 1, 17 – Vărvăreuca VIII; 2–3 – Ghelăești; 4–6, 13, 19 – Vertebea I; 7 – Petreni; 8 – Nebelivka; 9 – Cherkasiv Sad II; 10 – Talianky; 11 – Valea Lupului; 12 – Trușești; 14 – Maidanetske; 15 – Vărvăreuca XV; 16 – Cucuteni – Cetățuia; 18 – Zhury. (After: 1 – Markevich 1981; 2–3, 11–12 – Dumitrescu 1979; 4–6, 19 – Tkachuk 2013; 7 – Hansen, Uhl 2016; 9–10, 13 – Burdo 2010; 14 – Shmaglij, Videiko 2001–2002; 15, 17 – Markevich 1981; 18 – Bikbaev 1989).

5 pav. Mėnulio ir zoomorfinių simbolių deriniai: 17 – Vărvăreuca VIII; 2–3 – Ghelăești; 4–6, 13, 19 – Vertebea I; 7 – Petreni; 8 – Nebelivka; 9 – Cherkasiv Sad II; 10 – Talianky; 11 – Valea Lupului; 12 – Trușești; 14 – Maidanetske; 15 – Vărvăreuca XV; 16 – Cucuteni – Cetățuia; 18 – Zhury. (Pagal: 1 – Markevich 1981; 2–3, 11–12 – Dumitrescu 1979; 4–6, 19 – Tkachuk 2013; 7 – Hansen, Uhl 2016; 9–10, 13 – Burdo 2010; 14 – Shmaglij, Videiko 2001–2002; 15, 17 – Markevich 1981; 18 – Bikbaev 1989)



Fig. 6. Combinations of lunar and zoomorphic symbols: 1 – Nebelivka group; 2 – Vărvăreuca XV; 3 – Kolomyischyna group; 4, 7, 10, 12 – Petreny group; 5 – Kosenivka group; 6 – Frumușica; 8 – Ștefanești; 9 – Frumușica; 11 – Brynzeni VIII; 13 – Vărvăreuca VIII; 14 – Buznea. (After: 2, 11, 13 – Markevich 1981; 3 – Burdo 2010; 6, 14 – Lazarovici at all 2009; 8–9 – Dumitrescu 1979).

6 pav. Mėnulio ir zoomorfinių simbolių deriniai: 1 – Nebelivka grupė; 2 – Vărvăreuca XV; 3 – Kolomyischyna grupė; 4, 7, 10, 12 – Petreny grupė; 5 – Kosenivka grupė; 6 – Frumușica; 8 – Ștefanești; 9 – Frumușica; 11 – Brynzeni VIII; 13 – Vărvăreuca VIII; 14 – Buznea. (Pagal: 2, 11, 13 – Markevich 1981; 3 – Burdo 2010; 6, 14 – Lazarovici at all 2009; 8–9 – Dumitrescu 1979)

On the bowls from Koshylivtsi there are compositions of lunar serpents of the comet scheme (Tkachuk, 2005: 362), 3-hour (fig. 7: 15) and 4-hour (fig. 7: 10) compositions with horizontal crescent moon. The decoration of the bowl with crescent moon symbols is of a pictographic character (Hadaczek, 1913: tabl. IV: 9). The full moon symbol in the form of a black circle was rarely used in painted ceramics from Koshylivtsy (Tkachuk 2005: pp. 362, 364).

In the paintings of the Koshylivtsy layer of the Vertebe Cave, images of the moon disc in the form of a black circle, a circle with a cross, a circle and concentric circles in the center of the scheme of a running spiral are preserved, inherited from the Shipintsy group traditions (Tkachuk, 2013: tabl. 88: 1, 4; tabl. 91: 1, 2). On one vessel in the tier above the running spiral is an image of an S-shaped figure with black circles at the ends (Tkachuk, 2013: tabl. 88: 4). In Vertebe Cave there are bright signs of the full moon in the form of white (Tkachuk, 2013, tabl. 9: 1; tabl. 38: 2; Tabl. 92: 2, 4), and in the painting on vessel from Blyshchanka, belonged to Koshylivtsy layer, with a red circle (fig. 8, 11), where circles are used in compositions that are not typical for the previous stages of Cucuteni–Trypillia.

In the paintings from Vertebe Cave there are ideograms of the horizontal crescent moon (Tkachuk, 2013: tabl. 92: 2, 4). The combined image of the moon disc, located above the horizontal crescent moon (fig. 2: 32–33), differs from similar ideograms in the painting, traditional for the previous stages of Cucuteni–Trypillia, which are characterized by the image of the moon disc above the crescent moon (fig. 3: 1–4).

Lunar symbols were rarely used in the painted pottery of the Kosenivka, Brinzeni and Vykhatintsy groups. The ideograms of the horizontal crescent moon (fig. 3: 37; 6, 5), which are depicted in combination with the signs of the fool moon, as well as symbols of vegetation (fig. 8: 9–10), are characteristic for the compositions on pottery of the Kosenivka group. On one of the vessels, zoomorphic and plant symbols are present in the ornamental composition together with the crescent moon (fig. 6: 5).

Individual compositions with light circles are known from Zhvanets and Vykhatyntsy (Tkachuk, 2005: pp. 269, 388). The ovals (fig. 2: 30) typical for the ornamentation of the vessels of these groups are unlikely to be related to lunar symbols.

In the painting of Brinzeni III vessels, there are crescent moon signs (fig. 3: 27), as well as large light circles in the lower part of the vessel (fig. 2: 28). Separate compositions with light circles are known from Zhvanets and Vykhatyntsi. (Tkachuk, 2005: pp. 269, 388).

A combination of lunar ideograms and other symbolic signs in the ornamentation of Cucuteni–Trypillia

Ideograms with lunar symbols are in most cases parts of sophisticated ornamental systems, among which different plots can be tentatively identified. The combination of lunar signs and zoomorphic symbolic signs in one image creates images of fantastic creatures, probably characters of the sacred world.

Zoomorphic incarnations and full moon connections

The image of the Moon Serpent, known from the period of Precucuteni–Trypillia A, is presented in a painting of the stages of Trypillia B II-SI in a different interpretation. The moon disc sign is present as a symbolic image of a snake's head in various versions:

- from both ends of the stylized S-similar to snake symbols (Tkachuk, 2013, tabl. 13: 1, 3, 9), in particular, in the painting of bowls (fig. 7: 7);
- in comet schemes in the ornamentation of bowls, in which 2 (fig. 3: 33–35) or 3 (fig. 5: 36) moon snakes move towards each other.

The moon disc symbol in the form of a black disc on the tip of a dog's tail (fig. 5: 7–10, 48) appears in the paintings of Trypillia BII and occurs in sites at Cucuteni B 1 stage Gelaești (fig. 5: 2–3), also at the Petreni,

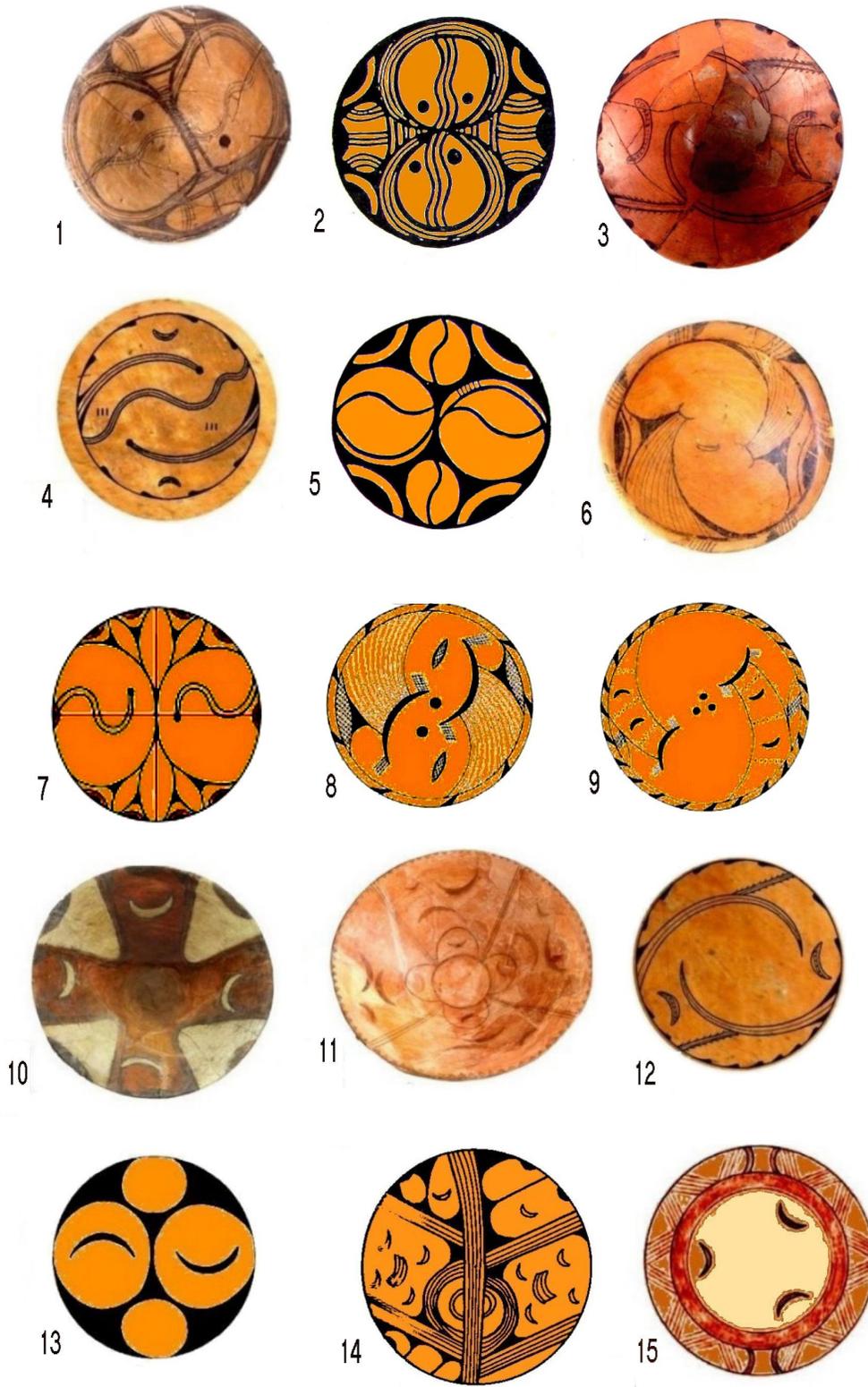


Fig. 7. Moon symbols on painted bowls: 1–2 – Petreni; 3–4, 7, 12 – Vertebe I; 6 – Nebelivka group, 8–9 – Tomashivka; 5 – Petreny group; 10, 14–15 – Koshylivtsi; 13 – Nezvysko III. (After: 1, 6, 10 – Burdo 2010; 2, 5, 11 – Passek 1935; 3–5, 7, 12 – Tkachuk 2013; 13, 8–9 – Tkachuk 2014; 14 – Hadaczek 1914).

7 pav. Mėnulio simboliai ant dažytų dubenėlių: 1–2 – Petreni; 3–4, 7, 12 – Vertebe I; 6 – Nebelivka grupė, 8–9 – Tomashivka; 5 – Petreny grupė; 10, 14–15 – Koshylivtsi; 13 – Nezvysko III. (Pagal: 1, 6, 10 – Burdo 2010; 2, 5, 11 – Passek 1935; 3–5, 7, 12 – Tkachuk 2013; 13, 8–9 – Tkachuk 2014; 14 – Hadaczek 1914)

Chechelnyk, Nebelivka, and sites of Tomashivka groups (Trypillia B II-CI stages). Such images allow us to imagine the sacred character of the Moon Dog. Local dogs can be placed both in the middle part of the ornamental frieze (fig. 5: 8) and in the upper part of the ornament (fig. 5: 9–10).

On a bowl from the Shuri (Bikbaev, 1989), the Moon Dog is depicted together with two bulls, whose tails also end with a black disk – the symbol of the full moon (fig. 5: 18). The same image of a bull is present in the upper frieze of a vessel painting from Varvarivka XV (fig. 5: 15; 6, 2).

Symbols in the form of a combination of several black disks, characteristic of the painting of the Maidanetske settlement (Shmaglii, Videyko, 2001–2002: fig. 36), can be considered images of fantastic lunar creatures (fig. 5: 14).

The images of dogs in combination with lunar symbols have several options:

- a dog under a horizontal crescent moon in the central frieze (fig. 5, 12);
- 2 dogs under zoomorphic symbol of crescent moon in the top part of the vessel (fig. 5: 11);
- a dog next to a crescent moon in the upper frieze, under which in the lower frieze there is also an image of a dog and moon discs (fig. 5: 5);
- a dog in the lower frieze between the symbols of the full moon symbols – circles; in the upper frieze a lunar symbol in the form of horizontal arcs of the crescent moon, combined with the moon disc (fig. 5: 6);
- on a bowl from Varvarivka 8, a combined image of 2 dogs, 2 snakes, and 2 moon discs in one plot (fig. 5: 17);
- dogs between images from a group of 4 moon discs are present in the upper frieze above the tier in the center of which is a lunar symbol in the form of a pair of vertical semicircle-crescents in a circle (fig. 5: 1);
- on a bowl from Werteba I, dog is present at complicated composition with cross-like figure; this figure includes five moon discs at center and two opposite crescent moon signs (fig. 5: 19);
- on a bowl from Cucuteni–Cetățuia the full moon symbol located between two dogs (fig. 5: 16).

Other zoomorphic symbols, probably bulls, are also associated with lunar symbolism. The decor on the bowl with a cross-shaped image of 4 bull heads with a crescent moon between the horns clearly demonstrates the image of the horns as a metaphor for the crescent moon (fig. 6: 4). In such a composition, double arcs of a horizontal crescent moon are located on the pediment at the entrance and on the back side of the temple model (fig. 9: 3).

A spherical vessel from Slobidka-Zakhidna with a plastic design of bovine horns is decorated with moon disc ideograms and gibbous ovals (fig. 1: II, 8).

On a vessel from the settlement of Brinrzeni III, bulls with black disc – a symbol of the full moon on the tails moving in a circle in the upper ornamental tier, and moon disc symbols are located in the tier below them (fig. 6: 2). The same two bulls placed with a dog on a bowl from Shuri (fig. 5: 18). Fragment of pot from Kolomyischyna group decorated by bull head, flanked by two full moon symbols (fig. 6: 3).

Zoomorphic images and the incarnations of the crescent moon.

The combination of the crescent moon with the snake ribbon in compositions on bowls in comet schemes forms the image of the Moon Serpent, similar to the Moon Serpent with a moon disc head (fig. 3: 33–36; fig. 7: 4, 7). The head of the snake is formed by crescent moons (fig. 7: 6, 8–9).

The image of the crescent moon, thanks to the addition of paws and a head with a beak, acquires the characteristics of a bird (fig. 5: 6–14; fig. 8: 4 b) and represents the sacred image of the Lunar Bird. The crescent bird is placed in the center of large bright discs associated with the full moon ideogram (fig. 5: 7, 13–14), or in the center of the comet scheme, surrounded by two lunar snakes on the bowl painting. On this bowl, we observe a plot from a combination of sacred characters: the Moon Bird, two Moon Snakes. The scene is flanked by two leaf-shaped ovals (fig. 6: 12). On another bowl, the image of 2 lunar birds placed in light circles is combined with the opposite symbols of the moon disc and the gibbous oval (fig. 6: 13). On the bowl from the settlement of Buznea, 4 lunar birds in light circles form a rectangular figure (fig. 6: 14).

The painted ornamentation presents an unusual image of the crescent moon in the form of an arc with legs (fig. 8: 13), appendages (fig. 8: 6; fig. 9: 1–2), a fringe, as if hairy (fig. 8: 3, 4 a, 5, 7), in the form arcs with stripes (fig. 8: 1–2, 13). In a painting on a vessel from the settlement of Valea Lupului, the ideogram of a hairy crescent moon is located between two dogs (fig. 5: 11). Probably, such ideograms reflect the fantastic, which combines zoomorphic and lunar signs of the moon.

Plot scenes with lunar symbols

Special attention is drawn to compositions that include lunar ideograms. In the upper tier of the painting on a sphero-conical vessel, a scene with lunar birds and a lunar dog is depicted (fig. 6: 1). A similar, but painfully simple plot involving a lunar bird and a dog can be seen on a cup from the settlement of Bodești–Cetățuia Frumușica, where the image is repeated twice, separated by a vertical metope. A bird and a dog are depicted above an inverted semicircle-crescent symbol (fig. 6: 6). On a bowl the pictographic image consists of two schematic hairy snakes moving towards each other, between the snakes are a hairy crescent moon and a lunar bird (fig. 8: 4).

Lunar symbols and plants

In the paintings on vessels of the Kosenivka group, there are images of plants growing under a horizontal crescent moon in the upper frieze of the painting. Under the crowns above the crescent moon is semicircle-crescent. On one vessel, wavy ribbons descend from above, in the lower tier is the full moon symbol in the form of a light circle (fig. 8: 9). On another vessel, the symbols of the full moon are in the tier between the plants, and the arcs of the horizontal crescent moon are in the lower frieze under the plants (fig. 8: 10)

On a vessel from the Koshylovtsy layer of the Blyshchanka, a complex plot of plants is depicted, one of which grows under a horizontal crescent moon, the other under an inverted crescent moon. A horizontal crescent moon is located below one of the plants. Between the plants is a circle with a pair of vertical semicircle-crescents in the center of the spiral scheme, above it an S-shaped sign with red ends is. Thus, in this composition, together with two plants, there are 5 lunar ideograms (fig. 8: 11).

Anthropomorphic images and lunar symbolism

Anthropomorphic images are widely represented in the pictorial tradition of Cucuteni–Trypillia by anthropomorphic figurines, anthropomorphic vessels and anthropomorphic images on pottery. Most from this images are associated with the image of the Goddess. From the early Precucuteni–Cucuteni–Trypillia period, anthropomorphic vessels appear, which are rightly considered to be the embodiment of sacred female images (Markevich 1989). It can be assumed that the female image of anthropomorphic vessels corresponds to the image of goddesses. For the topic of our research, anthropomorphic vessels with lunar symbols are of particular interest, as they connect the image of the goddess with the moon.

An anthropomorphic vessel from the Răduleii Vechi II (Lazarovici et al., 2009, No. 300) together with the lid reproduces the monumental figure of the goddess. The complex system of ornamentation is the only one for a vessel with a lid and is divided into three ornamental tiers. The upper tier is the lid, the head of the goddess, the middle tier is the upper part of the figure up to the thighs, the lower tier is the thigh part (fig. 11: 1). Different lunar symbols are present on all tiers. The cover is dominated by two large light discs – full moon ideograms. Below them is a much smaller oval – the gibbous sign. The image on the cover corresponds to the drawing of the upper body of the goddess. Large bright moon discs and gibbous ovals also dominate here. The composition of the lower frieze consists of opposite S-like moon snakes. Horizontal semicircle-crescents are depicted between the snake spirals above and below the ornamental tier.

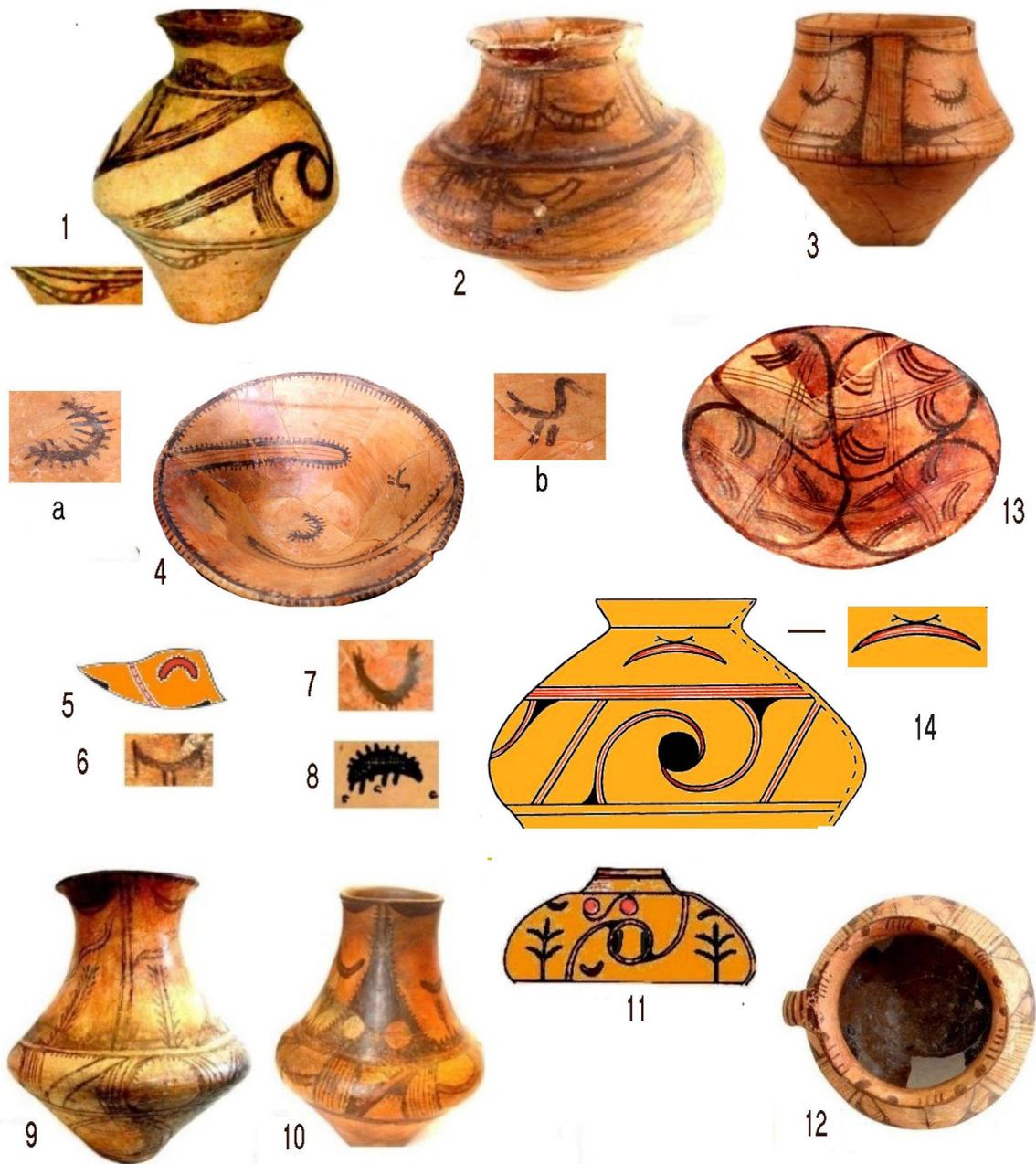


Fig. 8. Moon symbols. Moon crescents: 1 – Poduri-Dialul Gindaru; 2 – Черкасів Сад II; 3 – Vărvăreuca VIII; 4 – Petreny group; 5–7 – Verteba I; 8, 13 – Valea Lupului. Lunar and plant symbols: 9–10 – Kosenivka group; 11 – Blyshanka; 12 – Kaniv group. (1, 3 – Lazarovici at all 2009; 2 – Burdo 2010; 11 – Tkachuk 2014).

8 pav. Mėnulio simbolių. Pusmėnuliai: 1 – Poduri-Dialul Gindaru; 2 – Черкасів Сад II; 3 – Vărvăreuca VIII; 4 – Petreny grupė; 5–7 – Verteba I; 8, 13 – Valea Lupului. Mėnulis ir augalai: 9–10 – Kosenivka grupė; 11 – Blyshanka; 12 – Kaniv grupė. (1, 3 – Lazarovici at all 2009; 2 – Burdo 2010; 11 – Tkachuk 2014)



Fig. 9. Lunar symbolism on ceramic models of buildings (temples): “PLATAR” collection. (After: 1–3 – Videiko 2004).
9 pav. Mėnulio simbolika ant keraminių pastatų (šventyklų) maketų: „PLATAR“ kolekcija. (Pagal: 1–3 – Videiko 2004)



Fig. 10. Figures of the Moon Goddess: 1 – Maidanetske; 2, 4 – Volodymyrivka; 3, 5 – Sushkivka; 6 – Petreni; 7 – Kostești IV; 8 – Brinzeni III; 9 – Lomachyntsi-Vyshneva; 10 – Krynychky. (After: 1–6, 9–10 – Burdo 2014; 7 – Markevich 1985; 8 – Markevich 1981).

10 pav. Mėnulio deivės figūrėlės: 1 – Maidanetske; 2, 4 – Volodymyrivka; 3, 5 – Sushkivka; 6 – Petreni; 7 – Kostești IV; 8 – Brinzeni III; 9 – Lomachyntsi-Vyshneva; 10 – Krynychky. (Pagal: 1–6, 9–10 – Burdo 2014; 7 – Markevich 1985; 8 – Markevich 1981)



Fig. 11. Anthropomorphic vessels with lunar symbols: 1 – Rădulenii Vechi; 2 – Drăgușeni; 3 – Bodești-Frumușica; 4 – Cucuteni – Cetățuia; 5–6 – Cucuteni A – Trypillia B I; 7 – Cărnicești; 8 – Petreny group; 9 – Poduri-Dialul Gindaru; 10 – Sofia VIII. (After: 1 – Markevich 1985; 2 – Crișmaru 1977; 3 – Dumitrescu 1979; 4, 7, 9–10 – Lazarovici et al 2009).

11 pav. Antropomorfiniai indai su mėnulio simboliiais: 1 – Rădulenii Vechi; 2 – Drăgușeni; 3 – Bodești-Frumușica; 4 – Cucuteni – Cetățuia; 5–6 – Cucuteni A – Trypillia B I; 7 – Cărnicești; 8 – Petreny grupė; 9 – Poduri-Dialul Gindaru; 10 – Sofia VIII. (Pagal: 1 – Markevich 1985; 2 – Crișmaru 1977; 3 – Dumitrescu 1979; 4, 7, 9–10 – Lazarovici et al 2009)

In the polychrome painting from the Cucuteni A stage anthropomorphic vessels, lunar symbols are represented by red and white moon discs, moon crescent arcs, and semicircle-crescent ideograms (fig. 11: 2, 4–6). Two anthropomorphic vessels quite realistically reproduce slim female figures. One of them is holding a cup on her head (fig. 11: 5), the other is in the oranta pose (fig. 11: 6). There are differences in the details of the painting of the figures, but the system of decoration and lunar symbols are similar. New variations of the full moon sign are located on the heads, chests and bosoms of the figures. On the ladle from Bodești–Frumușica symbols of the fool moon are presented as two bright discs (fig. 11: 3).

An anthropomorphic vessel of the Cucuteni B–Trypillia B II period reproduces a female image schematically. In addition to anthropomorphic features, it also has zoomorphic features in the form of conical horns on the lid (fig. 11: 8). Probably, this vessel reproduces the image of the cow goddess, the wife of the god in the form of a bull. The full moon symbol in the form of a black circle is located in the center of concentric circles in a running spiral scheme, which also gives the image of the goddess lunar properties.

The saturation of anthropomorphic vessels in the form of female figures with lunar symbols indicates that they can reproduce the image of the Moon Goddess.

Anthropomorphic, probably female, figures together with lunar symbols are present in the painted decor. On a vessel from Sofia VIII (Lazarovici at all 2009, No. 398), a female fantasy character is depicted surrounded by 4 dark moon discs, circles with a cross in the center of concentric circles (fig. 11: 10). Such a lunar context of the plot suggests a connection between the goddess and the moon.

An anthropomorphic figure from a vessel from Cârniceni (Lazarovici at all 2009, No. 428) is located in the lower tier of the three-tiered composition. The semicircle-crescent symbol is depicted in the upper tier under the crowns of the vessel and connects the images of the goddess and the moon (fig. 11: 7).

Anthropomorphic figures from a vessel from the Poduri–Dealul Gindaru (Monah at all, 2003, No. 278) are marked with lunar symbols in the form of moon discs on the limbs. On the neck of the vessel there are large circles, possibly symbols of the full moon (fig. 11: 9).

The most expressive image of the goddess associated with the moon is represented by female figurines of the Volodymyrivka, Nebelivka and Tomashivka groups, which reproduce the female image with a special hairstyle of a tuft of hair on the back in the form of a disc. Images of this hairstyle are available in painted (fig. 10: 4) and plastic (fig. 10: 1–2, 3, 5, 10) techniques. The specific hairstyle reproduced on these figurines is associated with the moon disc, so they can probably be considered as a reproduction of the image of the Moon Goddess. The goddess is represented in various poses. A female figurine of the Moon Goddess with a child in her arms was found in the Krynychky (fig. 10: 10).

In our opinion, the images of the Moon Goddess include a painted figure (fig. 10: 8) and a fragment of a figurine (fig. 10: 7) with a disk on the head.

On two figurines from Petreni (fig. 10: 6) and Lomachyntsi–Vyshneva (fig. 10: 9), the symbolism of the full moon is present in the depiction of clothing and jewelry decoration. This gives reason to connect these figurines with the image of the Moon Goddess.

Conclusions

The symbolism of the Goddess and the Moon is characteristic of the pictorial tradition of Cucuteni–Trypillia from the early stages. At the stage of Precucuteni–Trypillia A, the most common images of the moon disc are in the sunken ornamentation. In particular, the moon disc combined with snake symbolism creates a sacred fantastic character, the Moon Snake. Moon crescent signs are used together with the moon disc in ornamental compositions, they form the ideogram full moon between crescents. Ornamental compositions with lunar symbols were especially often used to decorate pear-shaped anthropomorphic vessels, which probably represent the image of the Goddess.

The tradition of combining the anthropomorphic image with the symbolism of the moon and the snake in deep and painted ornamentation is preserved in the subsequent stages of Cucuteni–Trypillia. Ancient lunar symbolism is preserved up to the Trypillia BI stage, although sometimes in a transformed form. In the painted decor, which appears on the stage of Cucuteni A–Trypillia BI, lunar symbols are present, but not very popular. More lunar symbols in the next stage Cucuteni AB–Trypillia BI–BII, the moon disc appears for the first time in the form of a dark (black) circle, which will become one of the most common lunar ideograms in Cucuteni B–Trypillia CI.

In general, the ornamentation of Cucuteni–Trypillia is characterized by a lot of options for combining moon symbols into ideograms from the signs moon disc, moon crescent, semicircle-crescent, gibbous (fig. 2; fig. 3). In the painted ornamentation from stages Cucuteni B–Trypillia B II, up to the beginning of C II, lunar symbolism is represented by a large number of different moon signs in different phases and their combination with each other and other signs. Due to such a combination, various fantastic sacred images were reproduced.

The connection of the lunar symbolism with the image of the Goddess through anthropomorphic vessels and female figurines is preserved until the beginning of Trypillia C II.

Moon signs, although they look close to the real appearance of the moon disc and moon crescent, but form various ideograms detached from reality, for example, in the time account and calendar. The location of various lunar ideograms in different tiers of ornamentation indicates that these ideograms do not mark the “top” in the tripartite picture of the world, where the upper tier symbolizes the sky, the middle one the earth, and the lower one the underworld. The presence of lunar ideograms in all tiers, in our opinion, indicates that compositions with lunar symbols reflect a fantastic afterlife. Complex plot scenes of painted ornamentation with lunar symbols testify to a rich and complex system of ideas about the sacred world of Cucuteni–Trypillia.

The nature of the lunar symbolism of the Cucuteni–Trypillia cultural unity allows to suggest the existence of a cycle of lunar myths and a whole series of lunar fantastic characters of these myths. One of these characters was the Moon Goddess, who was especially honored by the population of the Bugo–Dnieper river basin. Moon and Goddesses reigned in the sacred world of Cucuteni–Trypillia.

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