

Bilikum – zagonetni vrč Prolegomena problemu trodijelne posude za nazdravljanje dobrodošlice

U radu se nastoje sistematizirati pitanja koja proističu iz oblika i simbolike trodijelne posude – bilikuma, iz koje se u sjeverozapadnoj Hrvatskoj i sjeveroistočnoj Sloveniji uz zdravicu ispijalo vino u čast gostu koji je prvi puta u posjeti. Mada se može koristiti bilo koja posuda pogodna za ispijanje vina, jedino trodijelni bilikum služi isključivo za tu namjenu. Ta mu činjenica daje obilježja obredne posude, što čini logičnim pitanja o njegovoj eventualnoj vezi sa sličnim posudama iz brončanog i željeznog doba. Osim simbolike broja tri, koja proizlazi iz oblika, zagonetnosti ove posude pridonosi i legenda o trojici braće – Čehu, Lehu i Mehu, koja se uz nju veže.

Ključne riječi: bilikum, vrčevi, nazdravljanje, simbolika posuda, obredne posude

*B*ilikum pripada oblicima bogatom inventaru višedijelnih posuda čije početke, čini se, trebamo tražiti u raznim fazama brončanog i željeznog doba. Dok su one koje čini više međusobno spojenih posuda u arheologiji dobro poznate po bogatstvu oblika, u inventaru tzv. *tradicijske kulture* nalazimo ih znatno manje. Štoviše, dok su one samo dvodijelne i trodijelne, arheološke mogu biti sastavljene od desetak i više posuda (Sl. 1).

Pod stručnim nazivom *kernos*, arheolozi razumijevaju više međusobno spojenih posuda, često dodanih na jednu središnju. One nisu spojene samo vanjskim stijenkama, već su, baš kao i *bilikum*, međusobno povezane i otvorima na stijenkama. Njihove nalaze arheologija bilježi na Bliskom istoku i prednjoj Aziji, ali i u jugoistočnoj Europi, dok su u srednjoj Europi relativno rijetki. Karakterističan je primjer takvog na-

laza onaj iz muzeja Metropolitan u New Yorku što pripada Kikladskoj kulturi (2300.-2200. pr. Kr.) koju čini 25 međusobno spojenih posuda (Sl. 2). Gotovo se svi arheolozi slažu da su takve posude služile ispijanju u ritualne svrhe. Kod nalaza iz iranskog nalazišta Yarim Tepe, međutim, cjevasti izljev na trbuhu jedne od tri posude, upućuju da nije bio namijenjen ispijanju, već izlijevanju (žrtve?) (Sl. 3).

Za one koje su spojene samo stijenkama bez otvora u njima, arheolozi koriste naziv *pseudokernos*,¹ a njihov su etnografski pandan dvodijelne posude za nošenje hrane težacima u polje u kojima se moglo nositi dvije vrste jela, a da se ne pomiješaju (Sl. 4).

Kod *bilikuma* je već pri površnom pogledu moguće uočiti da za ispijanje nije pogodan.

Rasprostranjen je samo u enklavi koju čini sjeverozapadna Hrvatska, tj. Hrvatsko zagorje, Prigorje, Koprivničko-križevačko područje i sjeveroistočna Slovenija. Marijana Gušić smatra da ovamo idu i posude s tri lica, i one sastavljene od tri antropomorfna lika, kao što je nalaz sa Gosposvetskog polja koji se čuva u klagenfurtskom muzeju (Gušić: 58).

Opisani oblik, kao i ritualna namjena, upućuju na opravdanost razmatranja moguće veze između ovog etnografskog predmeta i njegova arheološkog pandana. Tako, primjerice, posude iz arheoloških nalazišta sjevernog Irana izložene u Beču 2000./2001. godine na izložbi "7000 Jahre persische Kunst" i kasnije, 2004./2005. godine, u Zagrebu ("7000 godina perzijske umjetnosti"), pokazuju frapantnu sličnost s našim *bilikumom*. Ta činjenica, kao i nalazi iz brončanog/željeznog doba s grčkih i drugih balkanskih nalazišta postavljaju niz pitanja koja nas vode i do najvažnijeg: je li naš *bilikum* u kakvoj vezi s tim i drugim sličnim prapovijesnim trodijelnim posudama?

Cilj je ovim radom formulirati pitanja koja proizlaze iz karakteristika posude te naznačiti moguće pravce budućih istraživanja. U toj ću se namjeri poslužiti arheološkim i etnografskim podacima. U razmatranju problematike legende o Čehu, Lehu i Mehu povezane s tim vrčem koristit ću djelo Marijana Tenšeka *Krapina i priče o Čehu, Lehu i Mehu* koje sistematizira njezine različite inačice.

Bilikum

Običaj ispijanja zdravice, posebno gostu koji je prvi puta došao pod krov, markantna je točka vinske kulture sjeverozapadne Hrvatske. Naziv *bilikum* (od njem. riječi *willkommen* = dobrodošli) uobičajen je kako za običaj, tako i za sam vrč. U tu se svrhu mogu koristiti različite posude – od trodijelnih, vrčeva drugih oblika, često posebno lijepo oblikovanih i ukrašenih, do onih sasvim običnih grube izrade tzv. *srabljivaca* (Sl. 5).

¹ Zahvaljujem kolegi Sanjini Miheliću, višem kustosu zagrebačkog Arheološkog muzeja, na pomoći u vezi s arheološkim nazivljem.

No, trodijelni *bilikum* posebnim čini činjenica da je namijenjen ispijanju vina isključivo pri obredu iskazivanja dobrodošlice *prihodniku* – novom gostu.

Uz *bilikum*, javlja se i izraz *trilikum*. Nastao je u pučkoj etimologiji koja mu je podrijetlo pogrešno tražila u latinskom, a ne u već spomenutoj njemačkoj riječi.

U sjeveroistočnoj Sloveniji poznati su još i izrazi *trojka* te *Čeh, Leh i Meh*. S obzirom na oblik, opravdanost izraza *trojka* nije potrebno posebno objašnjavati. Izraz *Čeh, Leh i Meh* koristi se i u Hrvatskoj, gdje se za nj veže legenda o tri brata i njihovoj sestri Vilini. Ona danas u Sloveniji nije poznata, mada Valvasor u svom najpoznatijem djelu *Die Ehre des Herzogthums Crain* (Tenšek: 26) Čeha i Leha spominje kao osnivače Češke i Poljske.

Veliki poklonik ideja ilirizma, Slovenac Janez Trdina, u idealiziranim opisima Hrvata i njihovih običaja u doba njegovog službovanja u Hrvatskoj polovicom 19. st., opisuje i običaj ispijanja *bilikuma*. Koliko god njegove simpatije za običaje koje je zatekao bile velike, čini se da mu ovaj baš i nije bio drag. Opisujući ga, kaže da se *bilikum* pije naiskap iz ovećeg krčaga (katkada i od pola litre), i to pred kraj gozbe tijekom koje su svi već popili obilne količine vina. Trdina kaže da je neizbježna posljedica ispijanja *bilikuma* bilo pijanstvo, pa je nakon iskustva stečena kao *prihodnik*, potkraj ručka običavao, na *francuski način*, dohvatiti šešir i neprimjetno nestati.

Njegovo objašnjenje samog izraza i podrijetla običaja, sasvim je u skladu s društvenom atmosferom u kojoj je prevladavao otpor njemačkoj dominaciji i u kojoj su sve poteškoće tadašnjeg društva pripisivane Nijemcima. U tom duhu, njegovo tumačenje, koje je, vjerojatno, dobio od svojih hrvatskih prijatelja, kaže da običaj datira u vrijeme kada su njemačke trupe u Hrvatsku dolazile kao pomoć u obrani od Osmanlija. Plaćenici su se, međutim, često ponašali razulareno, pljačkali i zlostavljali domaće stanovništvo. Da bi ih smirili i udobrovoljili, Hrvati su ih nastojali obilno nahraniti i napiti.

Razumljivo je da na običaj čiji se nastanak ovako tumačio ilirci nisu gledali sa simpatijama, no kako je u narodu bio omiljen, nastojali su mu, kao i posudi, pohrvatiti barem naziv, pa Trdina navodi da se “... sada (za *bilikum*) obično kaže dobrodošlica” (Trdina: 32).

Kako zbog specifična oblika iz njega piti nije jednostavno, danas ćemo vrlo rijetko vidjeti da ga netko koristi u tu svrhu. Ipak, sjećanje na njegovu nekadašnju funkciju veoma je živo, mada mu je ona u novije vrijeme promijenjena u suvenirsku s izraženom simbolikom regionalnog identiteta te ima obilježje pojave u etnologiji poznate kao *survival*.² *Bilikumi* kakve danas možemo vidjeti na sajmovima, u prodavaonicama suvenira ili na regalima mnogih domova, uglavnom su relativno male zapremnine. Na nekima je na svakom od tri vrčića ispisano po jedno ime – Čeh, Leh, Meh ili samo njihovi inicijali.

Katkada su grla tih posuda relativno visoka i blago prema van ukošena, pa pokazuju veliku sličnost s nalazom iz sjeveroiranskog nalazišta Marlik Tepe. Za taj oblik iran-

² Kulturna pojava iz prošlosti koja se promjenom funkcije zadržala u suvremenosti.

ski arheolozi smatraju da je inspiriran oblikom cvjetova vrste tulipana što početkom proljeća raste u okolici arheološkog lokaliteta. (Sl. 6). Nažalost, niti iz kataloga bečke niti zagrebačke izložbe o posudi ništa više ne možemo saznati.

Drugi put je pak grlo posude nisko i ljevasto, rubova otvora povijenih prema van, i asocira na nalaz iz drugoga sjevernoiranskog nalazišta Yarim Tepe.

U gornjem dijelu, ručke *bilikuma* su često isprepletene što, prema mišljenju slovenskog etnologa Janeza Bogataja, simbolizira zajedništvo.³ U Hrvatskoj su izrađivani u lončarskim radionicama većih obrtničkih središta i u seoskim keramičkim središtima (npr., Jerovec i Globočec), pa i industrijski kao u poznatoj krapinskoj tvornici kamenine koja je djelovala od 1800. do 1886. godine.

Spoznaje o problemu *bilikuma*, kojima u ovom trenutku raspoložem, upućuju da okvir u kojima bi područje i ciljeve istraživanja trebalo odrediti formuliram na slijedeći način:

1. analogija trodijelne forme u prostoru (rasprostranjenost)
2. analiza namjena posude
3. analiza simbolike
 - oblika posude (tj. broja tri)
 - legende o Čehu, Lehu i Mehu (elementi: vol/bik, zlatni rogovi, zlatna jabuka, tunel ispod planine i dr.)

Rasprostranjenost

Kako mi je postojanje trodijelnog vrča za ispijanje vina poznato samo u sjeveroistočnoj Sloveniji i sjeverozapadnoj Hrvatskoj, čini se logičnim da bi na etnografskoj razini daljnje traganje trebalo usmjeriti prema, s jedne strane, srednjoj, a s druge strane, jugoistočnoj Europi te kulturama drugih slavenskih naroda.

Da bi trebalo najprije istražiti postojanje posuda ovog oblika kod drugih Slavena, ukazuje sličnost već spomenutih iranskih trodjelnih posuda (Marlik Tepe 1200 – 1100 pr. Kr. i Yarim Tepe 1200 – 1000 god. pr. Kr.) što upućuje da bi, istražujući uzroke toj analogiji u obzir trebalo uzeti mogućnost prenošenja kulturnim kontaktima koje su Slaveni još u pradomovini sa iranskim i kulturnim prostorom cijele prednje Azije svakako imali. Toj tezi, međutim, ne ide u prilog činjenica što ga Lubor Niederle, koji u svojim radovima nastoji rekonstruirati materijalnu kulturu starih Slavena, uopće ne spominje.⁴ S druge strane, ne treba zanemariti slične arheološke nalaze s područja Crne Gore i Grčke te šireg prostora jugoistočne Europe koji pripadaju istom razdoblju željeznog doba. To bi pak moglo ukazivati i na druge izvore i putove preuzimanja oblika našeg *bilikuma*, pa ne treba sasvim odbaciti ni tezu Marijane Gušić o keltskom

³ Prof. dr. Janezu Bogataju s *Oddelka za etnologiju u kulturno antropologiju Filozofske fakultete* u Ljubljani, zahvaljujem na informaciji koju mi je na moju molbu uputio elektroničkom poštom.

⁴ Naravno da se činjenicu da Niederle ne spominje trodijelni vrč ne može uzeti kao siguran dokaz da ga Slaveni prije doseljenja nisu poznavali. Za konačan bi zaključak svakako trebalo konzultirati specijaliziranu literaturu i drugih autora.

nasljeđu. Tu tezu podupiru brojni arheološki nalazi trodijelnih posuda datiranih u željezno doba za koje se smatra da u Europi počinje s Keltima (Gušić: 58).

Dotičući se *bilikuma* u razmatranju problematike etničke grupe Bejzaci te služeći se interpretacijama stručnjaka prve polovice dvadesetog stoljeća, Marijana Gušić ukazuje na elemente koji bi ovaj fenomen mogli povezati s keltskom kulturom od brončanog doba raširenom od Crnog mora do Atlantskog oceana. Uočava da su ritualno izražavanje gostoprimstva, sklonost gozbama i kolektivnom pijančevanju karakteristike keltskog društva, ali i starinski običaji Prigorja i Hrvatskog zagorja obnovljeni u razdoblju kasnog feudalizma. Za sam *bilikum* smatra da je ... *sačuvao daleku magičnu predodžbu onih različitih triplika koji svoj izvor imaju u keltskom religioznom naziranjju ... Očito je trostruko ime Čeh – Leh – Meh, kako danas služi za bilikum slavenska jezična zamjena za onu ritualnu asonancu koja je nekada sadržavala formulu keltske triade* (Gušić: 58).

U prilog ovakvog objašnjenja mogli bismo navesti nekoliko analogija: keltske trijade – trodijelni vrč, tri brata, tri grada; kod Kelta razvijena predodžba o podzemnom svijetu – podzemni put ispod Strahinjčice, značenje jabuke, opijanje, a naročito obredno opijanje ... Dakako, kada je riječ o opijanju, treba primijetiti da je taj običaj bio raširen kod svih starih naroda i da ga, zavisno o ekonomskoj situaciji (i statusu pojedinca ili grupe) vjerojatno nije trebalo obnavljati, pa niti u kasnom feudalizmu.

Namjena

Piti vino iz posude koja nije praktična, piti ga u posebnoj prigodi, uza svečani govor kojim se izražava dobrodošlica, dobre želje i prijateljske namjere, otkriva simboličke elemente obreda. Objašnjenje koje se, međutim, može čuti u narodu, sasvim je prozaično. Riječ je o triku kojim se gosta želi uvjeriti da vino treba ispiti samo iz jednog od tri vrča, a da zapravo ispije trostruku količinu vina (Tenšek: 193). Otprilike takvo značenje proizlazi i iz opisa koji odlazak trojice braće Čeha, Leha i Meha na sjever tumači svađom koja je nastala upravo zbog vina ispijenog iz takvog vrča. On je, navodno, izrađen s namjerom da svaki u znak sloge i bratske ljubavi ispije vino iz jednog od njegova tri dijela. Prvi je, kao najstariji, bio Čeh. Kako su vrčevi međusobno bili spojeni, on je posudu ispraznio. To je izazvalo svađu zbog koje su se braća rastala i krenula na sjever (Tenšek: 198).

Uz to, s obzirom da jedno od pravila ispijanja zdravice nalaže da se vino iz punog vrča ispije odjednom (naiskap), ovakva njegova konstrukcija gostu predstavlja i poteškoću zbog koje, da ga ne bi prolio, vino mora ispijati polako i pažljivo, što uveseljava okupljeno društvo. Protumačimo li svrhu trodijelne posude i kao posude oblikovane za zabavu, mogli bismo je usporediti s tzv. *mudrijašem*, vrčem s ukrasnom perforacijom grla, što od onoga koji ispija zahtijeva da pogodi koje otvore na rubu prstima treba zatvoriti, da bi kroz jedan od njih mogao popiti vino (Sl. 7). Ipak, ova dva vrča razlikuje činjenica da je svrha pijenja iz *mudrijaša* isključivo šaljiva provokacija neupućena gosta bez elemenata obreda i da nikada nije imala notu svečanog čina.

Simbolika

Broj tri

U potrazi za objašnjenjem simboličkih značenja čini se najlogičnijim najprije razmotriti značenje simbolike broja tri koji se može izravno povezati s oblikom posude.

U različitim je kulturama taj broj obavijen kompleksnom simbolikom. Smatra se temeljnim brojem, brojem intelektualnog i duhovnog reda, a ima još i mnoga druga simbolička značenja. Mada je višeznačna simbolika ovog broja bila poznata još u pretkršćanskim vjerovanjima, religijskim i filozofskim sustavima, svoje je mjesto našao kako u kršćanstvu (npr., Sveto Trojstvo, Sveta tri kralja), tako i u drugim velikim religijama. Podsjetimo se kako i danas taj broj vrlo često koristimo, makar i bez svijesti o njegovom značenju, u uzrečicama, pomalo šaljivo. Tako nam uzrečica “*treća sreća*” nakon dva neuspjela pokušaja omogućuje da bez podsmijeha okoline pokušamo još jednom, do tri se broji kako bi se označio početak istovremene akcije više osoba, u određenoj vrsti šala (viceva) poanta je jasna tek nakon treće opisane situacije, a postoji i cijeli niz šala u kojima se dva lika javljaju samo da bi istaknula ulogu trećeg (npr., “... bili Amerikanac, Francuz i ...”).

Ipak, treba imati na umu da mnoštvo trojnih cjelina, trijada, (Chevalier; Gheerbrant: 715) ima podrijetlo duboko u razdobljima prapovijesti. I u ovom trebamo biti svjesni mnogih elemenata koji nas mogu navesti na zaključak da je riječ o analogijama pa ipak o njihovoj međusobnoj povezanosti treba prosuđivati vrlo oprezno.

Legenda o Čehu, Lehu i Mehu

Osnovu priče o Čehu, Lehu i Mehu prepoznajemo u mnogim njezinim inačicama. Pojednosti, međutim, koje mogu biti vrlo važne za njezino tumačenje, nisu uvijek iste – u jednom zapisu nalazimo nešto čega u drugome nema, određene pojedinosti nisu sasvim jednake u svim zapisima i sl.

Sadržaj priče koji nam je danas poznat najčešće vežemo uza zapis Ljudevita Gaja objavljen u tekstu *Vjekopisni moj nacrtak*, a koji je 1875. izdao njegov sin Velimir. Tamo se kaže da je priča zabilježena prema kazivanju starog sluge u roditeljskoj kući, no Maja Bošković-Stulli utvrdila je da ju je još 1826. godine, kao prijevod s latinskog teksta jednoga krapinskog franjevca, Gaj objavio u knjižici *Die Schlosser bei Krapina*. Ta se predaja o “slavenskim praocima”, Čehu, Lehu i Mehu, stoljećima pismeno prenosi la djelima ljetopisaca i povjesničara (Bošković-Stulli: 87). U ovom je, međutim, kontekstu važno uzeti u obzir i njezinu konstataciju da je “*učena tradicija*”, prenošena pismenom predajom, i prepričavana uz ... *folklorne dopune*, a čini se da ju je naknadno dopunio i sam Gaj.

Ukratko, priča kaže da su u Krapini i okolici živjela tri brata – Čeh, Leh i Meh (u nekim se inačicama umjesto Meh, treći brat zove Mosk ili Rus), sa sestrom Vilinom. Radnja legende smještena je u razdoblje rimske vlasti. Braća spremaju pobunu protiv Rimljana, ali im je omete zaljubljena sestra koja svom ljubavniku, rimskom namjesniku,

odaje njihove planove. Urotnici ga ipak uspiju ubiti, a Rimljani podignu snažnu silu da osvete smrt svog velikodostojnika. Vilinu i njezinog sina rođenog u vezi s Rimljaninom, od osvete braće, zaštite vile. Prema jednoj inačici, braća iskoriste njihovu odsutnost i otmu sestru iz pećine, a prema drugoj je otkupe od vila i zazidaju u zidine grada. Nakon toga bježe na sjever gdje Čeh osnuje Češku, Leh Poljsku a Meh Rusiju. Vilinino pak dijete, dok se jednom samo u špilji igralo zlatnom jabukom, iznenadi divlji vol i na rogovima ga podzemnim putem ispod vrhova Hajdinskog zrna i Velikog žleba prenese na drugu stranu planine Strahinjčice, gdje ga neki pustinjak pokopa na mjestu koje se danas po djetetovoj lijepoj glavi zove Lepoglava.

U ovakvom sadržaju koji ponavlja većina inačica treba uočiti nelogičnosti za koje nije jasno jesu li rezultat površnosti u zapisivanju (i prepisivanju) ili ju je kazivač tako ispričao. Na taj je način zagonetan jedan od markantnih simboličkih likova, "divlji vol". S obzirom na to da vol postoji samo kao domaća životinja, postavlja se pitanje je li izvorni lik bika ("divlji bik"?) dugogodišnjim prenošenjem legende nenamjerno zamijenjen volom ili se on u legendi spominje stoga što za poantu više odgovaraju simboličke značajke vola a ne bika, pa je zbog toga suprotnost s prirodnim morala biti zanemarena.

Razlike u simbolici ovih dviju vrsta goveda nije uvijek moguće sasvim jasno odrediti, pa se tako i smisao legende ili vjerovanja u kojima se pojavljuju mijenja zavisno od značenja koje uzimamo u obzir pri razmatranju. Govedo (bik, vol, krava, bivol, bizon) simboličke su pojave u mnogim vjerovanjima, religijskim i filozofskim sustavima. Po teškoća je u tome što u različitom kontekstu ista životinja može imati različito simboličko značenje. Tako su i vol i bik katkada lunarni, a katkada solarni simboli (Chevalier; Gheerbrant: 42-45; 716-718).

Priči o Čehu, Lehu i Mehu Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski pristupa oprezom znanstvenika. U knjižici *Vile*, tiskanoj 1851. godine, navodi dvije, za u ovom kontekstu, zanimljive pojedinosti. Kaže da je od Gaja čuo da su Vilinu braća otkupila od vila volom s pozlaćenim rogovima, među kojima je sjedilo dijete sa zlatnom jabukom (Tenšek: 81). U Gajevom se zapisu pozlaćeni rogovi ne spominju, pa se možemo zapitati je li to Gaj propustio zapisati, je li za tu pojedinost naknadno doznao od drugog kazivača, ili je kao obrazovan čovjek koji je vjerojatno poznao antičku mitologiju,⁵ tu pojedinost namjerno dodao kako bi iz nekog razloga sadržaj legende svjesno obogatio. Uzmemo li u obzir potonje, možemo pomisliti na simbolizam jabuke koji asocira vlast, besmrtnost, obnovu; zlato kao simbol Sunca, tj. plodnosti, te robove kao simbol moći (Chevalier; Gheerbrant: 211, 762, 793). Kao jedan od takvih primjera, spomenimo grčku predodžbu iz mita o Odiseju, o Suncu koje ima bijele volove zlatnih rogova.

Također nije jasna uloga djeteta. U jednom se slučaju pojavljuje kao Vilinino dijete koje se u pećini igra jabukom, u drugom su dijete i jabuka između rogova vola kojeg braća nude vilama za otkup sestre. S obzirom na dva različita konteksta u kojima se pojavljuje, moguće je i simboliku njegova lika različito tumačiti (Chevalier; Gheerbrant: 120).

⁵ U ovom kontekstu značajni mogu biti i egipatski, a poglavito keltski mitovi.

Legendu Sakcinski drži narodnom predajom za koju kaže da ju je Pavao Ritter Vitezović smatrao ... *svetom istinom* i da je upravo on u priču o tri brata unio dio koji govori o nesretnoj ljubavi Viline i Rimljanina, kako bi priča dobila romantičnu notu (Tenšek: 79).

U svojoj analizi, Natko Nodilo razaznaje narodnu predodžbu o borbi svjetla i tame. Trojica braće predstavljaju tri sunca, a lik Viline djevojku Zoru Sunčevu sestru koja je u dodiru s tamom i koju Sunce zbog toga ubija (Tenšek: 91). Ovi su elementi česti u mnogim vjerovanjima različitih kultura, pa ovakvom tumačenju, mada ga je doista moguće prihvatiti, nedostaje pokušaj da mu se preciznije odredi okvir u kojem je priča nastala, pod kojim utjecajima, odakle i kojim je putovima stigla u ove naše krajeve.

Čini se da je legenda o Čehu, Lehu i Mehu naknadno pridodana predmetu i običaju - *bilikumu*. Njezin najstariji element, predodžbu o doseljavanju Slavena s juga na sjever, zapisao je još monah Nestor Ljetopisac (1056.-1114.). U njegovom je zapisu temelj legende o trojici braće s kojima su Slaveni iz Podunavlja doselili na sjever i od tada je ona stoljećima obogaćivana prije nego što je povezana s trodijelnim vrčem, vjerojatno po analogiji i simbolici broja tri.

Zaključak

Bilikum, koji je donedavno služio za ispijanje vina, još uvijek možemo zapaziti na štandovima sajmova, u suvenirnicama ili pak kako prašnjav i nepotreban stoji na nečijoj polici, podsjećajući vlasnika na darovatelja ili mjesto u kojem ga je kupio. I kada stjecajem okolnosti odlučimo postaviti pitanje o njegovom obliku, nazivu i legendi vezanoj uz nj, zaključimo da smo suočeni s kompleksnom kulturnom pojavom za čije nam je proučavanje potreban interdisciplinarni pristup. Svaki takav kompleksan problem treba nastojati sagledati u svim njegovim pojedinostima, a bavljenje pojedinostima zahtijeva specijalizirano proučavanje. No, to je samo polovica zadatka. Nakon svladavanja svih aspekata i pojedinosti, neophodno ih je razmotriti u zajedničkom kontekstu i u međusobnom odnosu. U ovom slučaju, problematiku *bilikuma* treba ponajprije sagledati unutar etnologije i arheologije, a daljnje će istraživanje sasvim sigurno pokazati potrebu uključivanja i drugih znanstvenih disciplina.⁶ Ako se pokaže ispravnom teza o prapovijesnom podrijetlu ove forme, dio će pitanja vjerojatno ostati bez odgovora. Poglavitno se to odnosi na pitanja o tome kako to da je do današnjih dana ova posuda sačuvana samo na ovom ograničenom prostoru te o odnosu njezine prapovijesne simbolike i kasnije s njom povezane legende o Čehu, Lehu i Mehu.

O *bilikumu* kao fenomenu kulturne baštine zaključno možemo reći da u ovom stadiju njegove istraženosti imamo više pitanja nego odgovora. Uza sva ta, za sada, neodgovorena pitanja, on bez sumnje pripada u predmete koji govore o neopravdanosti na-

⁶ "To smo naučili od Dekarta ... podeliti teškoću na toliko delića koliko je potrebno da bi se lakše savladala. ... Objasnjeno je vredno samo ako je celovito. Kada tražimo rešenje nekog posebnog problema, obračunamo se ovoj ili onoj naučnoj grani, ili pak pravu, moralu, veri, umetnosti ..." (Levi Stros; Eribon: 124).

stojanja da se kulturna baština dijeli na materijalnu i nematerijalnu, na čemu UNESCO posljednjih godina ustrajno i nepotrebno inzistira. Za *bilikum* su podjednako važni njegovi materijalni kao i nematerijalni aspekti i u tom smislu on dokazuje da za takvu podjelu nema opravdanja. Svakom “čvrstom predmetu” prethodi ideja – njegov nematerijalni aspekt koji je neodvojiv od materijalnog. Kada bi tako slijedili preporuku UNESCO-a o zaštiti “nematerijalne baštine” kod *bilikuma* kao “kulturne pojave”, odvojili bismo ideju o tehnologiji izrade od sredstva kojim je realizirana – recepturu za obradu i postupak obrade gline, uvjete pod kojima se izvodi pečenje, dizajn trodijelne posude, njezinu namjenu, legendu o Čehu, Lehu i Mehu od gline, lončarskog kola i peći, vina ... Koliko je takvo odvajanje nepotrebno toliko je i štetno, jer je jasno da vrč takvog oblika bez svog nematerijalnog aspekta nema nikakva smisla. Vjerujem da je Claude Lévi-Strauss mislio upravo na ovakve primjere kada je rekao da na njih treba gledati kao na misao pretvorenu u čvrst predmet.⁷

Literatura:

Bošković – Stulli, Maja. 1997. *Priče i pričanje: stoljeća usmene hrvatske proze*. Mala knjižnica Matice hrvatske. Novi niz; kolo 6, knj. 34. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska.

Chevalier, Jean; Gheerbrant, Alain. 1989. *Rječnik simbola*. Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske.

Gušić, Marijana. 1967. Etnička grupa Bezjaci, u: *Zbornik za narodni život i običaje – knjiga 43*, Zagreb: JAZU.

Levi Stros, Klod – Eribon, Didie. 1989. *Izbliza i izdaleka*. Sarajevo: “Svjetlost” Sarajevo.

Tenšek, Marijan. 2005. *Krapina i priče o Čehu, Lehu i Mehu*. Zagreb: Elektronika-Nakladnik.

Trdina, Janez. 1980. *Bachovi husari i Ilirci*. Zagreb: Grafički zavod Hrvatske 2001. “7000 Jahre persische Kunst”. Katalog izložbe. Wien: Kunsthistorischen Museum.

2004. “7000 godina perzijske umjetnosti”. Katalog izložbe. Zagreb: Muzej Mimara

⁷ “Ali od trenutka kad počnete gledati na ove predmete kao na misao koja je na neki način pretvorena u čvrst predmet, misao koju ste naveli (... da je etnologija pre svega “psihologija”), dobija smisao.” (Levi Stros; Eribon: 121).



4.01



4.02



4.03



4.04



4.05



4.07



4.06

Bilikum – Mysterious Jug Prolegomenon to the Problem of Three-Part Pots for Giving Toasts of Welcome

The article provides a systematic overview of the questions on the shape and symbolism of a three-part pot - bilikum, which was used in Northwestern Croatia and Northeastern Slovenia as a pot from which wine was drunk in honor of the guests who were visiting a house for the first time. Even though any pot suitable for wine drinking could be used, only three-part bilikum was used only for that purpose. That fact gives bilikum the character of a ritual pot, and logically raises questions on its possible link with the similar Bronze and Iron Age pots. Besides the symbolism of number three, which comes from its shape, the mystery surrounding the pot is enhanced by the legend of three brothers – Čeh, Leh and Meh, which is connected to it.

Key words: bilikum, pots, giving toasts, symbolism of pot, ritual pot

*B*ilikum belongs to the rich inventory of multi-part pots whose beginnings should apparently be sought for in different periods of the Bronze and Iron Age. Pots made up of several smaller pots which are connected were well known in archeology for their various shapes, however, only a small number of them existed in the inventory of the so-called *traditional culture*. Moreover, the ones coming from *traditional culture* were usually made up of only two or three parts, while archeological pots could be composed out of ten or more parts (Picture 1).

The archeologists used the technical term *kernos* to refer to several mutually connected pots, usually added around one central pot. They were not connected only at their outer surface, but just as *bilikum*, by the openings in their respective bodies. They were found in archeological sites in the Middle East, Central Asia, in Southeastern Europe and only occasionally in Central Europe. Characteristic example of one such finding was the one from the Metropolitan Museum in New York which originated from the Cycladic culture (2300-2200 BC) and which was made up of 25 interconnected pots (Picture 2). Almost all archeologists agree that those pots were used for ritual drinking. However, data from an Iranian archeological site Yarim Tepe, suggested that the cylindrical funnel on the belly of one of the three pots pointed to the conclusion that it was not used for drinking, but for pouring (maybe sacrifice?) (Picture 3).

The pots which were connected only with their bodies and not the openings, the archeologists referred to as *pseudo-kernos*¹ and their ethnographic pair would be the two-part pots used for carrying food to peasants working in the fields, suitable for carrying two types of food without getting mixed (Picture 4).

A superficial look at *bilikum* would lead us to the conclusion that it was not suitable for drinking. It could be found only in the enclave which included the Northwestern Croatia, i.e. the region of Hrvatsko Zagorje, Prigorje, area around the towns of Koprivnica and Križevci and Northeastern Slovenia. Marijana Gušić claimed that the pots with three faces should also be included into this group, as well as the ones with three anthropomorphic characters, one of which was found in Gosposvetsko polje and kept in the Museum of the Town of Klagenfurt, Austria (Gušić 1967:58).

The described shape as well as the ritual function of the pots, justify the idea on the link between this ethnographic object and its archeological pair. Hence, for example, the pots from the archeological sites from the Northern Iran exhibited in 2000/2001 in Vienna at the exhibition titled *7000 Jahre persische Kunst* and later at the same exhibition held in 2004/2005 in Zagreb, displayed a remarkable similarity to 'our' *bilikum*. This fact, as well as the Bronze and Iron Age archeological findings from numerous Greek and other Balkan sites, raised a number of questions, the most important of which was: was there any link between our *bilikum* and similar pre-historical three-part pots?

The aim of this article is to formulate the questions arising from the features of this pot and to point to the possible directions of the future research. With that goal in mind, I will use archeological and ethnographic data. In analyzing the role of the legend on Čeh, Leh and Meh linked to the jug, I will use the book by Marijan Tenšek titled *Krapina i priče o Čehu, Lehu i Mehu*, which systematized different variants of the legend.

¹ I would like to thank my colleague Sanjin Mihelić, the senior curator of the Archeological Museum in Zagreb for his help with archeological terminology.

Bilikum

The custom of giving toasts, especially to the guest who arrived to a house for this first time, was a crucial segment of the wine drinking culture in the region of North-western Croatia. The name *bilikum* (from the German word *willkommen* = welcome) referred to the custom and also to the jug itself. Different pots could be used for that purpose – from three-part jugs, jugs of different shapes, elaborately decorated or shaped pots, to the common, roughly designed pots called *srabljivci* (Picture 5). However, what was specific for *bilikum* was that it was used for drinking wine especially during the ritual of extending welcome to a new guest – *prihodnik*.

Next to *bilikum*, commonly used name was also *trilikum*. It was the result of popular etymology which interpreted it as being of Latin and not German origin.

In Northeastern Slovenia the names *trojka* (triple) and *Čeh, Leh i Meh* were also used. Taking into account the shape of the jug, the name *trojka* does not require additional explanation. The name *Čeh, Leh i Meh* was used in Croatia also and it was linked to the legend on three brothers and their sister Vilina. The legend is unknown in Slovenia today, even though Valvasor in his most famous book *Die Ehre des Herzogthums Crain* (Tenšek 2005:26) mentioned *Čeh* and *Leh* as the founders of Czech Republic and Poland.

A zealous follower of the Illyrian movement, Slovene writer Janez Trdina, in his idealized descriptions of Croats and their customs which he encountered during his service in Croatia at the middle of the 19th century, also included the description of the custom of drinking from *bilikum*. Even though his sympathies for the customs he documented were generally significant, he did not seem to like this custom very much. According to him, *bilikum* was drunk in one gulp from a large pot (sometimes a half liter pot) close to the end of the party at which people had already drunk substantial amounts of wine. Trdina claimed that drunkenness was the inevitable consequence of drinking *bilikum*, and hence, after his experiences as *prihodnik*, after lunch he would, *in a French manner*, grab his hat and disappear unnoticed.

His explanation on the name and the origin of this custom was completely in accordance with the social atmosphere characterized by the resistance to German dominance and in which all the societal difficulties of the time were ascribed to the Germans. In that respect, his interpretation, which he probably heard from his Croatian friends, linked the custom to the time when German troops were arriving to Croatia in order to help fight off the Turks. Mercenaries were, however, quite often wild, they were pillaging and mistreating native inhabitants. In order to calm them down and appease them, the Croats would give them plenty of food and drink.

The custom whose origin was interpreted this way was, quite logically, not looked upon favorably by the Illyrians, but since it was quite popular among people, they at least tried to give a Croatian name both to the custom and to the jug, and so Trdina claimed that ‘...now (*bilikum*) is usually called ‘*dobrodošlica*’ (welcome)’ (Trdina 1980:32).

Due to its specific shape, drinking from a *bilikum* was not easy, and today we could rarely find it in everyday use. However, the memory on its usage in the past is still vivid, even though in recent times its function has been changed and today it is a souvenir which emphatically symbolizes regional identity and has all the characteristics of a phenomenon known in ethnology under the term *survival*.² *Bilikums* which today can be seen on fairs, souvenir shops or on the shelves of many homes, are usually small. On some of them we can find one of three names, Čeh, Ler or Meh, or just the initials, written on the bodies of the three respective jugs.

Sometimes the necks of those jugs were rather high positioned and slightly tilted towards the outer side, displaying a great similarity with the archeological findings from North Iranian site Marlik Tepe. Iranian archeologists assumed that the specific shape was inspired by the shape of the flowers, one type of tulips, which grew at the beginning of spring near that archeological site (Picture 6). Unfortunately, neither the Viennese nor Zagreb exhibition catalogue provides more information on the pot.

On another type of the pot, the neck was low and funnel-like, with the edges bend outwards and reminiscent of the findings from the second large North Iranian archeological site, Yarim Tepe.

In the upper part, the handles of the *bilikum* were often intertwined which, according to Slovene ethnologists Janez Bogataj, symbolized unity.³ In Croatia they were usually made in the potteries of larger manufacturing centers and in major rural centers of pottery (for example Jerovec and Globočec) or even in factories, like for example in the famous stoneware factory from the town of Krapina which was working from 1800 until 1886.

My current findings on the phenomenon on *bilikum* point to the framework under which the research topics and aims could be outlined in the following way:

1. the analogy of the three-part pots in geographic areas (distribution)
2. the analysis of the function of the pot
3. the analysis of symbolism
 - the shape of the pot (i.e. number three)
 - legends on Čeh, Leh and Meh (elements: ox/bull, golden horns, golden apple, mountain tunnel, etc.)

Distribution

Since, according to my knowledge, the existence of three-part jug for drinking wine was known only in Northeastern Slovenia and Northwestern Croatia, it seemed logi-

² Cultural phenomenon from the past which has been preserved until present day with a different function.

³ I would like to thank Prof. Janez Bogataj from the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Ljubljana, for this information which I have received from him as an answer to my e-mail.

cal for me to direct my search, on the ethnographic level, towards, on one hand, central Europe and on the other hand, Southeastern Europe as well as other Slavic cultures.

The similarities with the above mentioned Iranian three-part pots (Marlik Tepe 1200-1100 BC and Yarim Tepe 1200-1000 BC) pointed to the conclusion that further research should be directed at confirming the existence of those pots among other Slavic peoples, since, while establishing the analogy, we should take into account the possibility of transfer of this phenomenon through cultural contacts which the Slavs undoubtedly had with the cultures of Iran and Central Asia. This thesis was, however, contradicted with the fact that Lubor Niederle, who was, in his works, trying to reconstruct the material culture of the old Slavs, did not mention this type of jug at all.⁴ On the other hand, we should not neglect the similar archeological findings from the region of Montenegro and Greece as well as the wider region of Southeastern Europe belonging to the same period of the Iron Age. That could, however, point to other origins and ways of transfer of the shape of our *bilikum*, and hence we should not completely reject the thesis by Marijana Gušić on the Celtic origin of the jug. That thesis has been confirmed by numerous archeological findings of three-part pots dating back to the Iron Age which in Europe started with the Celts (Gušić 1967:58).

In her analysis of the ethnic group *Bezjaci*, Marijana Gušić mentioned the problem of *bilikum* and used the interpretations of the early 20th century experts in the field, to point to the elements which could link this phenomenon with the Bronze Age Celtic culture spread over the area from the Black Sea to the Atlantic Ocean. Gušić noticed that the ritual expressions of hospitality, inclination to feasting and collective drinking were characteristics of the Celtic culture, but also ancient customs of the region of Prigorje and Hrvatsko zagorje which were renewed in the period of late feudalism. For the *bilikum* itself, she wrote that it had (...) *preserved the ancient magical image of the various three-face objects which had their origin in Celtic religion... Obviously, the triple name Čeh-Leh-Meh used for bilikum, was a Slavic linguistic supplement for the ritual assonance which used to contain the formula of the Celtic triad...* (Gušić 1957:58).

The confirmation of this thesis we could find in the following analogies: Celtic triads – three-part jug, three brothers, three cities; Celtic ideas on the underworld – underground path under the mountain of Strahinjčica, the symbolism of the apple, drinking, especially ritual drinking... Of course, when it comes to drinking, it has to be mentioned that the custom was common with all ancient peoples, depending on the economic situation (and the status of an individual or the group) and that it did not have to be specially renewed, not even during late feudalism.

⁴ Surely, the fact that Niederle did not mention the three-part jug could not be taken as an evidence that the Slavs did not know it before the great migration. For the final conclusion on this matter, one should consult the specialized literature by other prominent authors.

Function

Drinking wine from an unpractical vessel, on a special occasion, accompanied by a formal speech expressing welcome, good wishes and friendly intentions, all reveal symbolic elements of a ritual. The popular explanation which could be commonly heard was, however, rather prosaic. That was supposedly only a trick played on the guest who was supposed to drink up the wine from only one of the three jugs, but ended up drinking the triple amount of wine (Tenšek 2005:198). A very similar explanation came from the description which interpreted the departure of the three brothers Čeh, Leh and Meh up north as the consequence of a quarrel which was initiated by drinking wine from one such jug. It was, allegedly, made with the intention that each brother should drink wine out of one of its three joint parts, as a sign of unity and brotherly love. The first one, as the eldest, was Čeh. Since the jugs were conjoint, he emptied the pot. That caused the quarrel because of which the brothers separated and went up north.

Moreover, since one of the rules required that the wine should be drunk in one gulp (bottoms-up), this type of construction presented an additional problem to the guest who had to, in order not to spill the wine, drink it very slowly, which amused the present company. If we interpret the function of the three-part pot as an entertaining one, we could compare it to the so-called *mudrijaš* (*wise-guy*), a jug with the decorative perforation in the neck, which required from the person drinking from it, to guess which openings on the edge of the jug he/she has to close with the fingers, in order to be able to drink wine through one of them (Picture 7). However, those two jugs should be distinguished due to the fact that the purpose of drinking from *mudrijaš* was exclusively the amusing provocation of the unsuspecting guest which was without any ritual elements and which never had the characteristics of a ceremonial act.

Symbolism

Number three

In the search for the possible explanations of the symbolic meanings, it seemed the most logical to analyze firstly the symbolism of the number of three, which could be directly linked to the shape of the jug.

In different cultures that number was attributed complex symbolism. It was considered the basic number, the number of intellectual and spiritual order and it frequently carried many other symbolic meanings. Even though the multilayered symbolism of this number had been familiar already in the pre-Christian beliefs, religious and philosophical systems, it acquired its central position in Christianity (for example the Holy Trinity, the Magi) and in other big religious systems. We should remind ourselves that we frequently use that number, even without the awareness of its symbolism, in popular sayings, sometimes humorous. Thus the saying '*third time lucky*', allows us to give it a third try after the two previously failed attempts without being ridiculed, we count from three backwards to mark the beginning of a simultaneous

action of more people, in a certain type of jokes the punch line becomes clear only after the third situation and there is also a whole series of jokes where two characters exist only to emphasize the role of the third one (for example... 'an American, Frenchman and...').

However, we should bare in mind that many triads (Chevalier, Gheerbrant 1989:715) have their origin in prehistorical periods. In that we should be aware of numerous elements which could lead us to the conclusion that we are talking about analogies, however, their possible links have to be discussed very carefully.

Legend on Čeh, Leh and Meh

The basic elements of the legend on Čeh, Leh and Meh could be recognized in many of its numerous variants. However, the details which could be very important for its interpretation were not always the same – in one variant we find something that's missing from the other, certain details were not the same, etc.

The story as known today is mostly linked to the version written by Ljudevit Gaj in the text *Vjekopisni moj nacrtak*, published in 1875 by his son Velimir. The text outlined that the story was documented from the oral account of the old servant working in the house of Gaj's parents, but Maja Bošković-Stulli discovered that Gaj had published that story as a translation of the Latin text written by a Franciscan Friar from the town of Krapina in 1826, in the book titled *Die Schlosser bei Krapina*. The story on 'Slavic forefathers', Čeh, Leh and Meh was transferred for centuries through the works of chroniclers and historians (Bošković-Stulli 1997:87). In this context it was important to take into account her claim that this was the case of a 'learned tradition', transferred through written tradition and retold with ... *folkloric supplements*, and it seemed that Gaj himself also included certain amendments.

In short, the story went that in the town of Krapina and its immediate surrounding lived three brothers – Čeh, Leh and Meh (in some variants the third brother is not called Meh, but Mosk or Rus) with their sister Vilina. The legend was situated at the time of the Roman conquest. The brothers were organizing a rebellion against the Romans, but their intentions were thwarted by their sister who was in love with a Roman Commissary and who told her lover of their plans. The rebels had, however, managed to kill the Commissary, and the Romans gathered a strong army to revenge the death of their nobleman. Vilina and her son born out of her relationship with the Roman, were protected from her brothers' vengeance by the fairies. According to one version, the brothers have taken advantage of the fairies' absence and they abducted their sister from the cave, and according to another one they bought her off from the fairies and bricked her up in the city walls. After that, they fled north, where Čeh founded Czech, Leh Poland and Meh founded Russia. Vilina's child, while playing with the golden apple in a cave, was attacked by a wild ox which carried him on its horns under the mountain peaks Hajdinsko zrno and Veliki Žleb across to the other side of the mountain of Strahinjčica, where a hermit buried it on the spot which is today called Lepoglava, after the baby's pretty head.

This plot was repeated in most of the versions, however, there were several inconsistencies for which it remained unclear whether they were the result of reckless writing down or whether the story was told that way. The most questionable in that respect was the one regarding the central symbolic characters, 'wild ox'. Since ox exists only as a domestic animal, the question arises whether the original character of the bull ('wild bull') has been accidentally supplemented by the ox through the long years of legend transfer, or whether the ox was used because its symbolic imagery was more suitable to the main point of the story, and hence the opposition to the natural had to be neglected.

The differences in the symbolism of those two types of cattle were not always easy to discern, and hence the point of the legend or a belief in which they appeared was changed depending on the meaning which we chose in the analysis. Cattle (bull, ox, cow, buffalo, wiscent) was often part of many beliefs, religious and philosophical systems. The difficulty is that in different contexts the same animal can have different symbolic meanings. Hence both ox and bull are sometimes lunar and sometimes solar symbols (Chevalier, Gheerbrant 1989:42-45; 716-718).

Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski approached the story of Čeh, Leh and Meh with scientific caution. In his book *Vile*, published in 1851, he outlined two, in this context, very interesting details. He said that he had heard from Gaj that the brothers bought off Vilina from the fairies with an ox with golden horns between which a baby was sitting carrying a golden apple (Tenšek 2005:81). Gaj's description did not mention golden horns and hence the question remained whether he simply failed to write this detail down, whether he learned about it latter from another informant, or whether he was, as an educated man, familiar with Greek and Roman mythology⁵ and added this detail to deliberately expand the content of the legend for one reason or another. If we take the latter into the account, we can think of the symbolism of the apple which denotes authority, immortality, renovation; gold as the symbol of the Sun, i.e. fertility and the horns as the symbols of power Chevalier, Gheerbrant 1989:211, 762, 793). One such example was the Greek image from the myth on Odysseus, about the Sun which possessed white oxen with golden horns.

The role of the baby also remained unclear. In one version it appeared as Vilina's child playing in the cave with the golden apple and in another both the baby and the apple were situated between the ox's horns which the brothers offered to the fairies as the ransom for their sister. Considering the two different contexts in which the baby appeared, the symbolism of its character could also be differently interpreted (Chevalier, Gheerbrant 1989:120).

Sakcinski considered the legend a folk tale, while Pavao Ritter Vitezović thought of it as ... *the holly truth* and it was him who introduced into the story of three brothers the part on the tragic love between Vilina and the Roman Commissary, so the story would obtain a romantic note (Tenšek 2005:79).

⁵ In this context, Egyptian as well as Celtic myths could have been used.

In his analysis of the legend, Natko Nodilo recognized the elements of the folk tale on the battle between light and darkness. Three brothers represented the three suns, and Vilina was Dawn, Sun's sister, who betrayed them to the darkness and who was therefore killed by the Sun (Tenšek 2005:91). However, those elements are rather frequent in beliefs of various cultures and hence this interpretation, although it could be easily accepted, lacks a more precise framework of the origin of the story, the conditions under which it has been created and the patterns of distribution.

It seems that the legend on Čeh, Leh and Meh has been added to the object and the custom of *bilikum* at a later period. Its oldest element, the idea on the great movement of the Slavs from south to the north was documented by the Monk Nestor Chronicler (1056-1114). His writings contained the basis of the legend on three brothers through whose help the Slavs migrated from the Danube valley up north, amended and expanded in the following centuries before it was linked to the three-part jug, probably on the analogy and symbolism of the number of three.

Conclusion

Bilikum, which has recently been used for drinking wine, can still be found on fairs, in souvenir shops or as a dusty and surplus object on somebody's shelf reminding the owner on the person who has presented it as a gift or maybe on the place where the person has bought it him/herself. And when we decide to raise the question on its shape, name or legend linked to it, we have to conclude that we are faced with a complex cultural phenomenon the research of which requires an inter-disciplinary approach. Every such complex problem has to be analyzed in all its details, which demands a specialist expertise. However, this is just half of the task. After outlining all the aspects and related details, they have to be analyzed in a common context and in relation to each other. In this case, the problem of *bilikum* has to be approached primarily inside the disciplines of ethnology and archeology, while further research will undoubtedly point to the need of including other scientific disciplines.⁶ If the thesis on the pre-historical origin of this phenomenon proves to be valid, some questions will probably remain unanswered. This especially refers to the questions of such limited distribution of this pot and on the relationship between its pre-historical symbolism and later legend on Čeh, Leh and Meh.

By regarding *bilikum* as a phenomenon of cultural heritage we can conclude that at this stage of research we have more questions than answers. However, notwithstanding all the unanswered questions, it undoubtedly belongs to the objects which confirm the unjustifiableness of the attempt to divide cultural heritage on tangible and

⁶ 'We have learned this from Descartes...to divide a problem on so many smaller parts which take for this problem to be conquered... An explanation is valid only if it is holistic. When searching for a solution of a problem, we seek advice from this or that scientific discipline, or from law, moral, religion, art...' (Levi Strauss; Eribon:124).

non-tangible, which has been UNESCO's persistent and unnecessary agenda in the last few years. Both tangible and non-tangible aspects of the phenomenon of *bilikum* are equally important and it itself justifies the unjustifiableness of such division. Every 'firm object' starts from an idea – from its non-tangible aspect which is inseparable from tangible. If we would thus follow the recommendations of UNESCO on the protection of non-tangible heritage, with *bilikum* we would thus separate the idea on the technology of its production from the material from which it was made – the process of mixing clay, conditions under which the pots were baked, the design of the three-part pot, its function, legend on Čeh, Leh and Meh from clay, pottery wheel and oven, wine... This division is not only unnecessary, but it also harmful, because it is clear that the pot of this type without its non-tangible aspects makes little sense. I believe that Claude Lévi-Strauss had such objects in mind when he said that they should be looked upon as thoughts transformed into firm objects.⁷

Translated by Tanja Bukovčan

⁷ 'From the moment you start looking at these objects as thoughts which were transformed into firm objects, the thought you have outlined (...that ethnology is primarily 'psychology') starts making sense' (Levi Stros; Eribon 1989:121).