



Yevhen Prychepii*

Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, Professor, Leading Researcher
Institute for Cultural Research, National Academy of Arts of Ukraine
02000, 20 Bulvarno-Kudriavska Str., Kyiv, Ukraine
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5363-1004>

Seven-membered structure of the moon cycle and the “running spiral” ornament on Trypillian ceramics

Abstract. The examination of the semantics of ornaments of the Trypillian culture, in particular, the most common ornament, “running spiral”, is necessary for penetration into the spiritual world of the bearers of this culture. The purpose of the study is to show that the symbols of the “running spiral” ornament hide the seven-membered cycle of the moon. The following methodological approaches are used: a) deities are seen behind the symbols of the ornament, not things; b) the division of deities by gender is considered c) the structural method is used in the analysis of symbols. Eight- and seven-membered ornament structures that were identified as moon phases were reviewed. It was determined that the female and male deities are hidden behind the phases. It is shown that the ornament “running spiral” is a seven-membered structure, and the order of symbols (deities) coincides with structures in which there are no symbols of the “running spiral”. Individual symbols of the “running spiral” are considered, and it is determined that they denote certain phases (deities) of the moon’s cycle. It is concluded that the eight- and seven-membered structures of ornaments hide the Goddess who represented the moon. The conclusion and the methods by which it is obtained may be the key to further research of Trypillian ceramics ornaments. It opens the horizon for investigating the kinship of the Trypillian culture with other Eneolithic cultures and examining modern folk ornaments

Keywords: Trypillian ornaments; ornament structures; semantics of the “running spiral” ornament; S-symbol in ornaments

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INTRODUCTION

Ornaments are one of the sources of knowledge of the spiritual world of cultures that did not have writing, to which the Trypillian culture belongs. On the ceramics of trypillians, which is sometimes called hand-drawn ceramics, a vast variety of ornaments has been preserved. Among them, the “running spiral” occupies one of the leading places. The identification of its semantics may shed light on the mythology of the bearers of this culture. Despite a number of works devoted to examining symbols and ornaments of trypillians, the semantics of these phenomena

are still far from generally accepted interpretation. Determining their essence will help to understand the spiritual world of trypillians, their kinship with other cultures, and their historical fate. It is also important because it will help to understand a number of ornaments that have been preserved almost unchanged in later cultures, in particular, in Ukrainian folk culture.

The papers that are the source base of the study can be divided into two groups. The first group includes exploring the symbolism of the moon in archaic cultures since this

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*Corresponding author



luminary, according to some researchers, was the central figure of the “running spiral” ornament. The second group includes the studies of researchers who directly examined ornaments, including the “running spiral” ornament. The famous American archaeologist of Lithuanian origin, M. Gimbutas (2006), who made a substantial contribution to the study of the civilisations of Old Europe, notes the leading role of the female goddess in the mythology of Neolithic and Eneolithic cultures, to which the Trypillian-Cucutene culture also belonged. The author also connects the symbolism of the moon with the Goddess. The researcher emphasises the associative connection of the moon with such symbols as bull horns, snakes, and spirals and notes that these associations arose in the Paleolithic and are present in the Trypillian-Cucutene culture. “In Karanovo and Cucuteni vase painting, spiral with crescents or with the phases of the moon are a constant theme” (Gimbutas, 2001). The researcher emphasises the femininity of the moon deity and rejects any signs that testify to his masculine nature.

Soviet-Israeli researcher of primitive symbolism A. Golan (1994) took the opposite position. The author claimed that the moon represents a male deity. In his concept, the Neolithic Goddess represented the sky and the God – the dungeon, the bottom in general. The typical embodiment of male fertility was a bull. “In the Neolithic period, the Earth was represented by a mail god. The land is characterised by fertility. The bull is suitable for embodying male productive power”. It, along with the snake, symbolised the dungeon, the bottom. The bottom also symbolised the moon. Hence the close (connection of the bull, snake, and Moon as incarnations of the god of the bottom. The researcher underestimated the facts that testified to the “femininity” of the moon deity. Interestingly, the authors Gimbutas and Golan emphasised the close connection of the moon with the snake, bull, and spiral.

The moon, or rather the Goddess of this luminary, was considered the main person of the mythology of Western Europeans by the famous English writer and expert on mythology R. Graves (2007). In the work “The White Goddess”, he held the opinion that behind the triplets of goddesses, which can be traced in primitive mythology, three phases of the Moon are hidden – the young, full, and old moons. “The Triple Goddess personified an ancient woman – a woman-creator and destroyer. Like a new moon or spring, she was a girl, like a full moon or summer, she was a woman, like an old moon or winter, she was old”.

The thoughts of these researchers can be considered as a general context, in line with the ideas of which the symbolism and ornaments associated with the moon should be considered. Directly, Trypillian ornaments and the ornament “running spiral” were studied mainly by Ukrainian archaeologists. The results of their research can be considered in the papers “Spiritual Culture of Ancient Societies on the Territory of Ukraine” (1991) and Encyclopedia of Tripoli Civilisation (2004a). A detailed description of their contribution goes beyond the scope of this study. Its analysis is given in the paper of T. Tkachuk (2004a). Notably, they emphasise the dominance of the spiral motif in this symbolism. Famous researcher V. Danylenko (1997) saw dragons rising up (to the sky) and descending down behind the symbols of this ornament. Many researchers believe that the serpentine spiral refers to the lunar theme.

Thus, N. Burdo (2010) notes that the spiral symbolises the moon and, since the Paleolithic period, reproduces “the endless formation inherent in the night luminary”. A study by M. Videiko (2016), analysing the astronomical symbols of the Nebelivsky Temple, writes that “the orientation of the building is probably related to the sun, and the symbolism is related to the Moon”.

The moon is given a prominent place by the well-known researcher of Trypillian symbolism, T. Tkachuk (2004b). On this occasion, he notes: “The most striking thing in the cultural and historical community of Trypillia-Cucuteni... is the lunar “coding”. Many painting schemes of this time contain lunar sickles...”. The researcher identifies three phases of the lunar cycle in trypillians: the moon in the first quarter, the full moon, and the moon in the last quarter. This is one of the attempts to consider the moon in terms of dividing it into phases. However, the researcher did not notice the division of the moon's cycle into more phases, did not connect them with male or female deities. Ukrainian researchers' achievement can be considered that they identified the snake-spiral motif, which also includes the “running spiral”, as the main motif of Trypillian symbolism and connected it with the lunar theme. The disadvantage of these studies is that these statements are based on the level of intuitive vision. They are not based on a specific analysis of the semantics of the symbols that form the “running spiral”.

Art historians and ethnographers made a certain contribution to the study of Trypillian ornaments. Here, a meaningful analysis of the aesthetic aspect of these ornaments conducted by O.P. Godenko-Nakonechna (2017) is notable. The typologisation of ornaments should also be considered to be the author's achievement. An interesting excursion into the problem of the origin of ornaments was made by Yu. Nikishenko & S. Pustovalov (2012). In the study on the semantics of Trypillian ornaments, the author also relied on a thorough analysis of the essence of the ornament in the paper of T. Romanets (1995) and studies on Ukrainian folk ornaments in the paper of M. Selivachov (2005).

The purpose of the study was to analyse the symbols that form the “running spiral” and, on the basis of this, identify the semantics of this ornament to prove that it hides a seven-membered structure of symbols that conveys the phases of the moon's cycle. Since the deity of the male or female sex is hidden behind each phase, the ornament analysis is based on the mythology of the trypillians. From a broader perspective, the goal of the study is to show that one of the most common ornaments of Trypillian ceramics hides the image of the moon goddess, who obviously occupied a leading place in the worldview of the first farmers on Earth.

In the study, the author proceeded from the following methodological principles: 1. The symbols and images of Trypillian ornaments hide not real things but mythological images. Archaic symbolism conveys primarily mythology and can only indirectly relate to the real world. 2. In the worldview of primitive farmers, the opposite of the female and male sex played an important role. This opposition is also evident in the constitution of ornaments, the symbols of which denoted deities. 3. When examining ornaments, a structural method was used, according to which the structure is stable and unchangeable in comparison with the elements.

EIGHT- AND SEVEN-MEMBERED STRUCTURES IN THE LUNAR CYCLE ON TRYPILLIAN CERAMICS

Investigating archaic symbolism and ornaments using the structural method, the author came to the hypothetical conclusion that early farmers, including trypillians, professed the cult of the goddess, who was closely associated with the moon. Moon symbols dominate their ornaments. They put the cycles of this luminary into two structures – eight-membered and seven-membered. With an eight-membered structure, the moon's cycle was divided into eight phases, each of which embodied the deity of the male (M) or female (F) sex. This is discussed in more detail in the paper (Prychepii, 2023). They were: the first phase – new moon (M); the second phase – half of the new moon (F), the third phase (M) – growing moon from half to full; the fourth phase (F) – full moon, the fifth phase (M) – waning moon from full to half; the sixth phase (F) – half of the waning moon, the seventh phase (M) – moon from half to disappearance; the eighth phase (F) – new moon. Even phases (2, 4, 6, 8) were represented by goddesses, and odd phases were represented by gods. These eight deities, which represented the phases of the moon, can be seen on the bowls of the trypillians.

Thus, on the bowl from the settlement of Bilche-Zolote (Fig. 1), two large and two smaller circles are shown. Large ones show S-symbols or zigzags. This sign, as will be shown later, denoted phases 4 and 8, in which there was a change in the direction of growth of the moon from increase to decrease and vice versa. The smaller circles clearly marked the halves of the Moon – phases 2 and 6. Between the circles near the corollas, there are four white signs, similar to crescent moons-symbols of male gods.

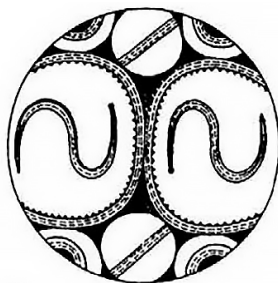


Figure 1. Bowl from the settlement Bilche-Zolote – (according to E. Trela)

Source: O.P. Godenko-Nakonechna (2017)

This ornament can be identified as an eight-membered structure, in which circles represent goddesses and figures like crescent moons represent gods. In this identification, it was considered that the larger figures reflect the leading status of female deities in primitive mythology. Apparently, the image of the symbols of the gods on the periphery also conveyed their status. When defining the crescent moon as a male deity, it was also considered that the crescent moon often appears in symbolism as bull horns, which meant a male deity.

Ornament on a bowl from the Platar collection (Fig. 2) is interesting because it clearly demonstrates that the eight deities are hidden behind the eight phases of the moon.

Here, four conventional heads with mouths in the form of crescent moons probably convey gods (the crescent moon is a symbol of god) and three conventional figures (two of which contain wavy lines) together with an elongated rhombus (or “lens”) – goddesses.



Figure 2. Painted conical bowl, diameter 17 cm. Collection “Platar”

Source: Encyclopedia of Tripoli civilisation (2004)

When identifying deities here, the criterion of gods was taken as a mouth in the form of a crescent moon, and goddesses were determined by opposition (or exclusion). As for the symbol that has been defined as an elongated rhombus, it is recognised by many researchers as a symbol of women (goddesses). If this symbol is taken as a “lens”, then, as will be shown later, it is directly related to the moon's cycle.

Along with the eight-membered structure, the seven-membered structure of the moon cycle is also common in Trypillian ornaments. This is a symmetrical structure, the symbols of which had the form MFMFMM. In this structure, as in the eight-membered one, the female phases (deities) were the halves of the rising and falling moon and the full moon. There is no symbol indicating the new moon (phase 8 – transition from the old moon to the new one). Male symbols in both structures are unchanged. The transformation of an eight-membered structure into a seven-membered one can be seen in Fig. 3.



Figure 3. A bowl from the settlement of Varvarivka XY, according to V. Markevich

Source: O.P. Godenko-Nakonechna (2017)

Here, according to the author's hypothesis, two phases, 4 and 8, merged into one. In this ornament, the symbols of the gods of men are similar to the symbols of the gods from Fig. 2. The other two symbols look like “lenses”. What was the reason for the reduction of the luminary cycle to seven phases is not fully clear. It is possible that the Goddess of the moon, in this way, agreed with the goddess who embodied the cosmos. (The cosmos was divided

into seven spheres, which was consistent with the seven phases of the moon. This will be discussed in more detail later. In any case, Trypillian ornaments often feature seven-membered structures that are identified as the moon cycle (28 days). In the seven-membered structure, the number of phases that represented goddesses was reduced to three. Hence, there was dominance among the three goddesses who represented the Moon – the tripling of Ancient Greek Hecate, the three incarnations of the White Goddess of R. Graves, etc.

The seven-membered structure of symbols with the identification of phases as male and female can be observed in the image of a woman from the former Yugoslavia (Fig. 4, Iron Age). Here, both hands, which have the appearance of crescent moons marked with teeth, appear as 1 and 7 male phases (in archaic symbolism, hands usually symbolise male gods), two breasts (circles with teeth) denote female deities of 2 and 6 phases, two volutes around the mouth connected to arrows – symbols of the thunder god – 3 and 5 (male phases) and a circle with teeth denoting the mouth – 4 (female) phase.



Figure 4. Artefact from Yugoslavia

Source: A. Golan (1994)

The place of symbols in the structure enhances their definition as female and male. The fact that this structure belongs to another era may raise doubts about the correctness of such identification of these symbols. However, it should be considered that such structures have been unchanged for thousands of years. The specificity of the seven-membered structure is that it, being a seven, conveys the eight phases (deities). This is an eight that is “compressed” into seven (Examples of such inclusion of the eight in the seven will be discussed later). It is believed that this structure conveys the entire cycle of the moon and symbolises the entire eight deities. To this end, the eighth phase (the goddess of this phase) is combined with the fourth phase. It is believed that the central figure (phase 4) symbolises two goddesses – the full moon and the moon of the 8th phase. This “reduction” of eight to seven evidently found its manifestation in the word “eight” in Slavic languages, which, in particular in Ukrainian, means – be present “vi sim”. Eight is the number that is present in seven. This is actually the identification of seven and eight. There are several variants of ornaments based on seven-membered structures in Trypillian ceramics. Two of them will be discussed later. In one, there is a spiral; in the other, it is absent.

SEVEN-MEMBERED STRUCTURE OF MOON CYCLE SYMBOLS WITHOUT SPIRAL

Seven-membered structures without a spiral are present mainly on ceramics from the Maidanetske village. Ornaments on pots from this area (Fig. 5, 6) are interesting because they clearly depict the seven-membered Cosmos. According to the proposed hypothesis, the Paleolithic and Neolithic people divided the cosmos and the body of the Goddess into seven spheres (further – sph): 1 sph (M) – underground waters and legs of the Goddess; 2 sph (F) – dungeons and buttocks and reproductive organ of the Goddess; 3 sph (M) – the surface of the Earth, mountains, and belt of the Goddess; 4 sph (F) – the sphere of life and belly of the Goddess (M); 5 sph (M) – the sky, clouds, and neck of the Goddess (M); 6 sph – sphere of planets and head of the goddess (F); 7 sph – starry sky i skull of the goddess's head (M). The spheres of Gods (M) are marked with narrow stripes, goddesses (W) – wide. This problem is not the subject of this study, more information about it can be found in the following paper (Prychepii, 2018). This is referenced to explain the placement of the moon symbols (seven characters with crescent moons on the sides) on the 2nd sph – lower wide stripe of Fig. 5. Their placement is due to the fact that the lower stripe probably indicated a dungeon that coincided (correlated) with the buttock (the reproductive organ of the Goddess). Since the physiological cycle of the Goddess coincided with the cycle of the moon, its symbols were placed in the dungeon (buttocks of the Goddess).

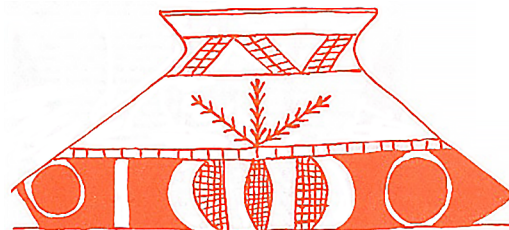


Figure 5. Pot from Maidanetske

Source: V. Mytsyk (2006)

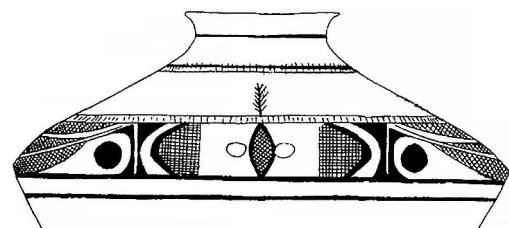


Figure 6. Pot from Maidanetske

Source: V. Mytsyk (2006)

On ceramics from Maidanetske, symbols that can be identified as male are represented by white figures, while women's symbols – by figures marked with a grid. Crescent moons, extreme symbols on both sides of the structure marked in white, clearly convey the male phases 1 and 7 of the moon. The halves of the moons indicated by the bars are the female 2nd and 6th phases of the sun. The “lens” in the centre of the group symbolises the

4th phase (full moon), and two irregular white rectangles along the “lens” – are the male 3rd and 5th phases of the sun.

On another ornament, a pot from the same area (Fig. 6), the same group of symbols is reproduced, with the difference that the 3rd and 5th male phases are indicated by circles placed in white rectangles. Circles in archaic symbolism usually denote the deity. It can be assumed that they symbolise the deities of phases 3 and 5. Here, the white colour symbolises the gods, and the lattice figures – goddesses. Naturally, the question arises why, instead of a circle that should symbolise the full moon, phase 4 in Fig. 5 and 6 were transmitted with a “lens”. The answer to this question is likely hidden in the fact that the circle traditionally appeared as a symbol of the sun. It was necessary to distinguish the symbol of the full moon from the symbol of the sun. Archaic symbolism traces various ways to convey the difference between the full moon and the sun. The moon was marked with a circle with teeth (Fig. 4). This designation comes from the fact that the new moon was often compared to a sickle. In this case, a “lens” that seems to connect the two halves of the moon was used. Her “femininity” was marked with a grid, as were the other two female symbols.

On ornaments from the Maidanetske village, the image of the “lens” in the structure of the moon symbols was often accompanied by the image of a conventional tree (or spikelet) in the strip above it (Fig. 5, 6). On this basis, M. Videiko (2016) concluded that “lenticular” means grain, and the upper figure means ear. This position is shared by T. Tkachuk (2004a), who noted: “With regard to lenticular ovals, there is already a reasoned view that these are grain signs. The syntagmatic series of such a sign confirms this interpretation”. This definition of the semantics of the “lens” contradicts its inclusion in groups of symbols interpreted as the phases of the moon. Thus, the “lens” can be seen in the ornament of Fig. 3, which is sufficient reason to interpret it as the moon cycle. It is also important to note details such as the teeth on the “lenses”, which obviously distinguished the moon from the sun. Further, other examples that give reason to consider the “lens” as the phase of the moon are considered.



Figure 7. Ornament on a pot from Maidanetske
Source: V. Mytsyk (2006)

This ornament on a pot from Maidanetske (Fig. 7) is interesting because here, in the seven symbols of the moon cycle depicted on the wide outer stripe, male phases 3 and 5 are indicated by two animals, assumably dogs,

which often appear as male hypostases of the moon. Notably, instead of lenses, it shows a rectangle with oblique lines. There are seven of these lines on one of the rectangles. It can be assumed that the other rectangle had the same number of lines. It clearly refers to a seven-membered structure that conveys the moon’s cycle. Comparison of ornaments (Fig. 5, 6, 7) from Maidanetske demonstrates that even within the same settlement, there was a certain freedom in choosing the symbols that denoted the moon cycle. When the shape of the symbols changed, the seven-membered structure that transmitted the cycle of the luminary remained unchanged.

The same type of seven-membered structures of the moon cycle includes an ornament on a vessel from Varvarivka, Moldova (Fig. 8). This structure is identified as a designation of the moon’s phases on the grounds that, like the previous ornaments, it is depicted on the lower wide stripe (2 sph). The division of the symbols of this bar into sevens is also considered.

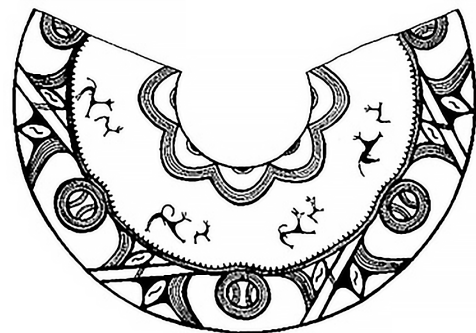


Figure 8. Vessel from Varvarivka UIII, Moldova
Source: V. Mytsyk (2006)

The symbols of the moon phases in this structure differ from the symbols of the structures (Fig. 5, 6, 7) from Maidanetske. On the lower ornamental stripe Fig. 8, seven-membered structures are separated from each other by oblique stripes. Four stripes delineate the four structures. Each of the structures is formed from small extreme ovals, in which snakes are placed – creatures that symbolise the moon. According to their location and the white colour of the oval in which they are placed, they can be identified as the 1st and 7th phases of the moon.

Concentric arcs are placed closer to the centre of these symbols. Notably, the concentric formations of Trypillian ornaments – arcs, ovals, circles were identified by the author as symbols of goddesses. It is evident that by repeating these figures, ancient people sought to express the ability of the moon goddess to divide into eight or seven phases. In this case, they symbolise the female 2 and 6 phases of the moon. A concentric circle is placed in the centre of the structure. It clearly symbolises the goddess of the 4th phase (full moon). The white space on both sides of the circle probably symbolises phases 3 and 5. Two concentric arcs of the opposite direction, placed in a circular one, are notable. In this way, the eighth phase is marked, symbolising the disappearing and emerging luminary. This combination of a circle (full moon – phase 4) and two arcs of the opposite direction (disappearing and emerging

moon – phase 8) is clear evidence that the seven phases of the Trypillians hid the eight and was a potential eight. This circle with two arcs is important because it is one of the criteria for defining a “running spiral” as a cycle of phases of the moon. On a grain harvester with sand (Fig. 9) the seven-membered character structure that conveys the moon’s cycle is also located on the 2nd sph – wide lower stripe.



Figure 9. A grain pot from Pischanaya.
Excavations by M. Shmagliy

Source: V. Mytsyk (2006)

As in the previous artefact, this structure is separated by oblique stripes. A circle with a cross is placed in the centre of the structure. Symbols resembling the heads of kites are placed extreme on both sides of the structure. Based on their location and colour, these symbols can be identified as male phases 1 and 7. Groups of concentric arcs are shown next to the heads, which are identified as symbols of phases 2 and 6. The 3 and 5 male phases are probably a white space between the arcs and the circle, which has the appearance of sickle moons. The central circle (phase 4) deserves special attention. It consists of a large white circle with a smaller dark circle with a cross in the middle. Accepting the idea of convergence in a circular (phase 4) full and disappeared moon (phase 8), the combination of light and dark circles can be considered as an embodiment of this idea. Next, it will be shown that the cross symbol in a circular pattern is also identified in the “running spiral” ornament. The Trypillian cross could have appeared in the meaning of the number 4 (Prychepii, 2018), and its rays are marked with concentric lines. Therefore, we can assume that in this case, it symbolises the four Goddesses of the moon cycle. The author is aware of the hypothetical nature of the proposed interpretations. In the field of Trypillian symbolism, the hypothesis is the only way to move towards the truth. The criterion for the plausibility of hypotheses can be their consistency with each other.

“RUNNING SPIRAL” AS A SEVEN-MEMBERED STRUCTURE OF SYMBOLS OF THE MOON CYCLE

Among the Trypillian ornaments, an ornament containing a spiral – an S-shaped symbol in a horizontal position is quite common (perhaps the most common). A number of terms are used to refer to it. As noted by O.P. Godenko-Nakonechna (2017): “In modern publications, the term “running spiral” is sometimes applied to all variants of a continuous spiral ornament”. “Running spiral” means a symmetrical structure consisting of seven characters. A circle, zigzag, or other shapes can be placed in the centre of the structure. On the right and left sides of

the central figure, there are two spirals that fit the central figure at the top and bottom. They touch the circle, so this combination of symbols is often called a tangent motif. Since the component of this ornament is a spiral, or rather a bispiral, researchers associate this symbolism with snakes and, accordingly, give an interpretation of this ornament. However, researchers do not go further than such a general definition; none of them tried to approach this ornament as a certain structure of symbols that conveys the phases of the moon’s cycle and, accordingly, to specify the semantics of each individual symbol of this structure.

Analysis of the “running spiral” ornaments shows that they, like the already considered ornaments that convey the seven phases of the moon’s cycle, are also a seven-membered structure. This structure is symmetrical, and its middle member (phase 4 – full moon) is sometimes marked with the same symbol (a circle with a cross, a circle with two arcs of the opposite direction in the middle) as the middle members of the ornaments considered earlier. The difference between them is that on the previous ornaments, the symbols of the seven phases of the moon are depicted separately and on the same level, and on the ornaments of the “running spiral”, the symbols are connected, demonstrate “dynamism”, the transition of one phase of the moon to another. First, ornaments that occupy an intermediate place between the previous ones and the “running spiral” are considered. This is the ornament on a jar from the Platar collection (Fig. 10). It is placed on the middle (widest) part of the vessel.

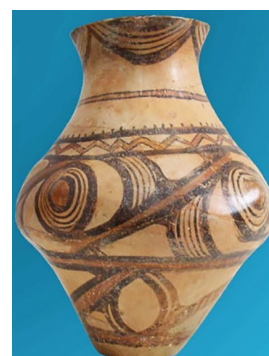


Figure 10. Jar, height 27 cm.

Late Tripillia, Platar collection

Source: Encyclopedia of Tripoli civilisation (2004)

The ornament is formed from a group of symbols, in the centre of which is a figure of concentric circles. Symbols are arranged symmetrically (along an oblique bar) on both sides of the shape. Directly next to the circles on both sides, light crescent moons are placed at the ends of the spirals. Groups of concentric arcs are placed further to the periphery of them, and light triangles are placed even further from the centre. This composition of symbols is a seven-membered structure. Its central figure of concentric circles can be identified as the female 4 phase (full moon), the two moons that end in spirals – 3 and 5 male phases, concentric arcs on both sides – 2 and 6 female phases of the moon, and triangles on the periphery – 1 and 7 male phases. Identification of the latter as symbols of gods (the triangle usually appears as a symbol of goddesses) is determined

by their place in the structure and the light colour that indicates the symbols of male gods. In this ornament, it is substantial that two spirals (symbols of phases 3 and 5) end in moons. This is direct evidence that these spirals represent the phases of the moon, more specifically – phases 3 and 5.



Figure 11. Spheroconical vessel. Platar collection
Source: Encyclopedia of Tripoli civilisation (2004)

The ornament of a spherical vessel from the Platar collection (Fig. 11) is similar in many ways to the previous one. It is worth attention because of the fact that phase 4 (full moon) is depicted as a circle with a cross in the middle. This designation of this phase has already been found on a grain harvester with sand (Fig. 9). This confirms that this version of the “running spiral” symbolises the cycle of the moon.

In these two ornaments under consideration, the symbols denoting female 2, 4, and 6 phases (concentric arcs and central figures in the form of circles) are not connected to each other. In most variants of the “running spiral”, the symbols denoting female phases have a different appearance and are connected to each other. Thus, on this artefact with spikes (Fig. 12), the “running spiral” is shown at the bottom of the artefact. Its components are the upper and lower black triangles and a black circle in the centre, with which volutes connect them. Researchers call these triangles “funnels”. About the semantics of these characters, O.P. Godenko-Nakonechna (2017) notes: “Funnels ... are associated with the image of a dragon snake. According to B. Danilenko, one of them descends from the sky (in the ornament – from the upper edge of the frieze), the other rises from the bottom up (from the lower edge), so the triangular figure-funnel is the tail of the snake. In turn, B. Zbenovich saw the heads of dragon snakes (sometimes with an eye inside) instead of tails in triangular snouts. In any case, the specified funnel shape, presumably, embodied the image of a snake that connected the upper and lower spheres, therefore, the frieze itself should be perceived as a space between sky and earth”.

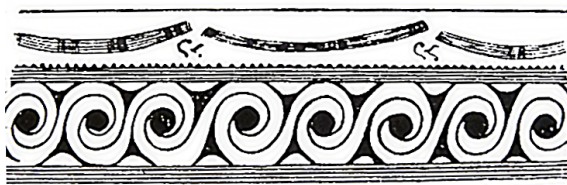


Figure 12. Ornament on ceramics from Shipenets
Source: O.P. Godenko-Nakonechna (2017)

In fact, this version of the “running spiral” has reason to be identified as a seven-membered structure, in which black triangles – “funnels” and a circle denote the 2nd, 4th, and 6th phases of the moon. Two horizontal white S-shaped spirals, wedged on both sides into volutes connecting triangles – “funnels” with a circle, symbolise the 3rd and 5th male phases of the sun. As for phases 1 and 7, they are probably white figures, similar to crescent moons, placed between the “funnels” and the border (top and bottom). In many versions of the “running spiral”, in particular, on this ornament, which also comes from the Shipenets (Fig. 13), some white figures symbolising phases 1 and 7 are neglected.

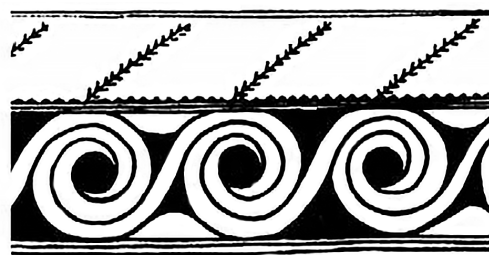


Figure 13. Ornament on ceramics from Shipenets
Source: O.P. Godenko-Nakonechna (2017)

This assumably happens within the framework of the rule according to which symbols of male gods could be issued. The main ones were the symbols of the goddesses. In the ornament on the pot from Cherkasy Garden II (Fig. 14.) at the top, a black “funnel” (phase 6) and a white space between it and the border (phase 7) are clearly identified. The femininity of the “funnel” is emphasised by concentric arcs that fit it on both sides. There is no “funnel” at the bottom, but there are concentric arcs, which in theory symbolise phase 2. The white triangle between the arcs probably represents phase 1. Concentric arcs (symbols of phases 2 and 6) are connected by volutes to the middle figure – a concentric circle in which two arcs of the opposite direction are placed, which, according to the logic of a seven-membered structure, symbolises phase 4. The third phase is symbolised by a light spiral that rises obliquely to the left of the circle, bypasses the circle, and ends with a curl at the bottom to the right of the circle. A dog is depicted at the top. The fifth phase is symbolised by a spiral, which, in the form of a curl, begins at the bottom left of the circle and goes up.



Figure 14. Painted grain pot, height 45 cm.
 Settlement Cherkasy Garden II. Tripillia SI
Source: O.P. Godenko-Nakonechna (2017)

In this ornament, attention is drawn to a circle with two arcs of the opposite direction – a symbol that has already been found in the ornamental structure of the moon (Fig. 8). There it was identified as a symbol of the full moon (phase 4), which at the same time contains symbols of the eighth phase of the sun. The presence of such a symbol in this ornament in place of the central figure is a strong argument in favour of the fact that this type of ornament also conveys the phases of the moon's cycle. It also follows from the ornament that the dog in the symbolism of the Trypillians could appear as a symbol of the moon in the male phase. This, by the way, enhances the identification of animals from Fig. 7, symbolising the 3rd and 5th phases of the moon as dogs.

The question may arise as to why the 2nd and 6th phases were given the shape of “funnels” in these ornaments. The answer probably lies in the fact that the ancient art-



Figure 15. Crater from Gordashivka. Excavations of M. Shmagliy

Source: V. Mytsyk (2006)

The middle figure is connected to the “funnels” by narrow “isthmuses”. Between the upper and lower triangles and the border lines to which they are adjacent, light figures that look like crescent moons are placed. They can be identified as the 1st and 7th phases of the moon. The two “funnels” and “lenses” between them symbolise the three female (2, 4, 6) phases. Two S-shaped figures are supposed to symbolise phases 3 and 5. The end of the white figure on the left side, wedged between the upper triangle and the “funnel”, symbolises phase 3, and the figure on the right side – phase 5. Thus, this ornament can be interpreted as the cycle of the moon, consisting of seven phases – three female and four males. The ancient artist tried to give the three dark (feminine) phases an anthropomorphic appearance. As already noted, in the mythological worldview of ancient people, the Goddess who embodied the cosmos was divided into seven spheres. In a similar manner, the moon Goddess was also divided. Hence, the upper “funnel” is the head, “lens” – the torso of a woman, the lower “funnel” – the buttocks, and the “isthmus” – the neck and Belt and two moons-sickles – male spheres. It is evident that this idea of the artist hid a certain purpose. If a dark figure formed from two “funnels” and a “lens” is considered a Goddess, then the white S-shaped symbol (front or back) appears as a symbol of god, and the ornament will take the form of repeating the circle of goddesses and gods.

ZIGZAG

In phase 4, the moon rotated from increase to decrease, and in phase 8, on the contrary – from decrease to increase. Ancient artists used a zigzag to display these transitions,

ist primarily tried to convey the movement of the moon. This is done with the help of a middle circle (phase 4) and two spiral snakes (phases 3 and 5), which seem to twist it. In addition, the phase change (transition from the lower phase 1 to the upper phase 7) was attempted to be demonstrated. Attempts to combine the trajectories of movement and phase changes in the drawing led to the fact that phases 2 and 6 took the form of black triangles – “funnels”. They are often accompanied by concentric arcs to emphasise the femininity of these symbols.

An interesting version of the “running spiral” is depicted on the crater from Gordashivka, (Fig. 15, excavations of M. Shmagliy). The ornament is placed on the middle part of the vessel. It consists of two figures: light S-shaped figures alternate with dark figures, which are formed from three parts – from the upper and lower triangles (“funnels”) and the middle lenticular figure.

which had the appearance of an S-shaped symbol. In the seven-membered structure, the zigzag appeared as the fourth female phase (full moon), which in potency also contained the eighth phase. This zigzag was formed by volutes connecting the “funnels” due to the wedging of the ends of spirals symbolising the 3rd and 5th phases (gods) into them. It can be seen on an artefact from the Kolomyia region (according to V. Khvoika) (Fig. 16).

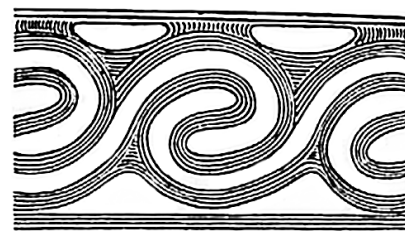


Figure 16. Zigzag ornament on an artefact from the Kolomyia region (according to V. Khvoika)

Source: O.P. Godenko-Nakonechna (2017)

Here, the upper and lower triangles (phases 2 and 6) are surrounded by wavy concentric lines that form an S-shaped zigzag in the centre. Phases 1 and 7 of the gods are represented by a light figure between borders and triangles (this phase is not highlighted at the bottom). Light spirals on both sides of the zigzag symbolise phases 3 and 5. In this ornament, the S-shaped zigzag is formed by concentric lines, which indicate the female sex of the fourth phase and the deity it symbolises.

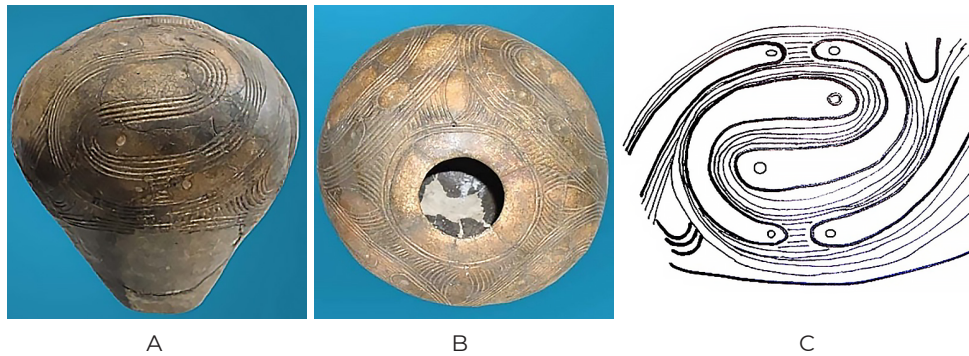


Figure 17. Pear-shaped vessel. Tripillia VI-VII, height 46 cm. Platar collection

Note: A: side view; B: top view. C: Sketch of ornament

Source: O.P. Godenko-Nakonechna (2017)

The original ornament of the “running spiral” with a zigzag is present on this vessel from the Platar collection (Fig. 17). The symbols of the lower and upper female phases 2 and 6 are ovals. The upper ovals are clearly shown in Fig. 17-B (top view) near the neck of the vessel. Concentric lines are placed around the ovals on both sides, emphasising the feminine essence of the ovals. Concentric lines run down from the upper oval, and up from the lower oval. When they meet, they form a zigzag shape, an S-shaped symbol formed as a result of a double change in the direction of movement of concentric lines. A double change in direction probably transmits two phases (4 and 8). This ornament is interesting because it contains a different arrangement of the male phases of the moon from other ornaments. The symbols of the four male gods in it are spiral stripes placed between concentric lines. (17-C – Sketch of ornament). They are given the appearance of “snakes” with “eyes”, which are present on the conditional heads and tails of creatures. The first phase is probably symbolised by the “snake”, which accompanies concentric lines from bottom to top on the left side of the S-zigzag. This phase ends at the top with a conditional “eye”.

Behind the “eye”, the spiral is blocked by a series of small segments, which obviously symbolise the border between the first and third phases – a snake placed outside the border. (In archaic symbolism, male symbols are usually interspersed with female symbols). Evidently, these two “snakes” symbolise the male first and third phases of the moon’s growth. The rising and falling phases are distinguished by an S-shaped symbol indicating 4 and probably 8 phases. The fifth phase begins in an empty stripe that is located above the third “snake” on the other side of the concentric lines. Its beginning is marked with an “eye”. It arcs around the concentric lines on the left side and ends with the “eye” at the bottom. After the “eye”, there is a border symbol (a series of segments), followed by a new “eye”, symbolising the seventh phase. This ornament clearly demonstrates the presence of four male phases in the cycle of the luminary. If earlier there could be doubts that the white figures between the “funnel” and the border symbolise the 1st and 7th phases of the moon, then the four “snakes” in this ornament overcome this doubt.

From this image, it can be concluded about the entire ornament that is placed on the vessel. Four ovals near the neck indicate that the vessel shows four cycles of the

moon. This four in the mythology of the Trypillians appeared as the female half of their pantheon. The ornament also demonstrates that S-symbols denoted not only male phases, but also female ones. The goddess of phase 4 had an S-shaped appearance.

Comparison of ornaments (Fig. 16 and 17) suggests this. If they distinguish ideological (content, mythological) and aesthetic aspects, then, in the ornament depicted in Figure 16, the aesthetic aspect dominates. It even ignored the proper registration of the presence of phase 1. Whereas in the ornament Figure 17, the ideological content was clearly in the foreground, as evidenced by the clear designation of the phases of the male gods. In general, it would be interesting to trace how aesthetic and ideological (content) aspects were already correlated in the Trypillian culture at different stages in ornaments. However, this will only be possible when their meaning becomes more or less clear.

On the ornament of a pot from Hlybochka (Fig. 18. Excavations of S. Ryzhov), the 1st and 7th phases are represented by white sickles placed between the “funnels” and the borders of the “funnels” (upper and lower – 2nd and 6th phases) framed by concentric lines, which emphasises their “femininity”. They are connected by lines (volutes), which, together with white spirals (symbols of the gods of phases 3 and 5), form a zigzag.



Figure 18. Pot from Hlybochka. Excavations of S. Ryzhov

Source: V. Mytsyk (2006)

The femininity of the zigzag (phase 4) is emphasised by a bundle of concentric lines that intersect it. Naturally, the question arises: Why is the bundle of concentric lines

absent on similar ornaments in Fig. 16 and 17 and does not cross the zigzag? This is due to the fact that in those cases, the S-shaped figure is formed from concentric lines, symbolising her “femininity”. However, the S-shaped figure is formed from a single line and, to emphasise its “femininity”, a bundle of lines (a concentric figure) was used in this case. Notably, the thickening of each of the two arcs of the S-shaped figure in Fig. 18 gave them the likeness of moons. The two moons probably symbolise two (4 and 8) phases.

CONTINUOUS SPIRAL

In the ornaments discussed above, two spirals denoting phases 3 and 5 are not connected to each other, and symbols denoting phase 4 (full moon) are located between them. However, there are variants in which the spirals denoting phases 3 and 5 are not mediated by the female symbol (phase 4) but are directly connected to each other, resulting in a continuous spiral encircling the entire ornament around the circumference of the vessel. Such a continuous spiral can be seen in the Shipenets ornament (Fig. 19).



Figure 19. Ornament on ceramics from Shipenets
Source: Eneolithic of the USSR (1982)

Here, phases 1, 7, 2, and 6 are represented by symbols that have already been reviewed, and the middle figure (phase 4) is expressed by two separated arcs (lower and upper) extending from phases 2 and 6. The fact that the arcs are similar to the crescent moon and that they are located in place of the middle figure (4 phases) gives reason to assume that these arcs transmit the 4th and 8th phases of the moon, which in a number of other variants are “compressed” into one 4th phase. The disunity of the arcs opened up the possibility that the S-symbols, which denoted phases 3 and 5, were connected in a continuous spiral. Here, the structure that was seven-membered turned into an eight-membered one. However, unlike eight-membered structures, where the phases are arranged in a circle (Fig. 1, 2), here, in fact, a seven-membered structure is preserved, in which the eighth phase was separated from the fourth phase, which was potentially present in it. The separation of these two female phases allowed connecting the two male phases. In this case, the connection of the male phases is given the appearance of a zigzag.

This method of combining male 3 and 5 phases can be observed on this ornament from Konivka (Fig. 20). Here, the outer and inner ribbons formed from spirals transmit the four cycles of the moon. Each cycle is formed from the lower and upper black “funnels”, symbolising phases 2 and 6. It should be assumed that the conditional heads of the “funnels” transmit phases 4 and 8. As in the previous ornament, the disunity of the symbols indicating the last phases creates conditions for the continuity of spirals.



Figure 20. Ornament on a tire from Konivka
(according to L. Chikalenko)
Source: O.P. Godenko-Nakonechna (2017)

CONNECTION BETWEEN THE MOON AND SNAKES. S-SHAPED SYMBOL AND MEANDER

The considered examples of ornaments of the “running spiral” suggest thoughts about the connection between the moon and snakes. The reason why the bull and its horns became a symbol of the luminary is clear: horns are associated with the sickle moon. As for the connection between the serpent and the moon, there is a problem. Many researchers write about their connection, but their arguments are not entirely convincing. A. Golan (1994) rightly notes that the serpent clearly embodied the god of the bottom, but he does not explain why the moon was involved in the bottom. The author does not see that in mythology, along with the old gods, embodied by the elements and animals, there are new planet gods. The god-planet of the bottom was the Moon, whose cycle coincided with the buttock and vulva of the Goddess who embodied the cosmos. The old snake gods became a symbol of the Moon. This connection was reinforced by the fact that the bispiral snake clearly transmitted the moon’s cycle. Bispiral (S-spiral) combines the image of the visible movement of the moon and the process of changing its phases: in the first half of the cycle, the moon grew, became full (the first part of the bispiral), then changed the direction of movement (zigzag), and in the second half – descended (the second part of the bispiral). The S-spiral is actually a simplified symbol of the moon. This probably explains the popularity of this symbol in archaic and folk ornaments.

Based on this interpretation of bispiral, the meaning of a fairly common ornament called a meander becomes clear. A meander is essentially a continuous spiral formed by a combination of S-symbols. In the bispiral, a zigzag is present between the inner spirals that transmit the moon’s cycle. It conveys the transition from the ascending to the descending moon. However, the phase change process continues. In the eighth phase, there is a transition (zigzag) from descending to ascending. This creates a continuous running spiral or meander. A meander is a geometrised way of transmitting a “running spiral” ornament in which S-spirals are connected in a zigzag pattern. In other words, it conveys the continuous process of changing the phases of the moon: ascending, zigzag, descending, zigzag, ascending, etc.

Accepting the proposed concept, the popularity of the S-symbol and meander in ornamentation becomes clear, and ultimately, the popularity of snakes in symbolism and

fairy tales. This is most likely an echo of the moon's popularity in mythology. Fairy tales often feature a snake family consisting of eight members – three flying snakes, their mother, three daughters-in-law (these appear occasionally), and their father (he appears very rarely). This corresponds to the eight phases of the moon's cycle. Accepting this identity of the moon and snakes, then a new perspective of the interpretation of the snake fighter opens up. If the snakes embodied the domination of the cult of the moon Goddess, then the phenomenon of snake fighting obviously hides a masculine revolution that was conducted by the gods of a new generation, removing the pantheon of Moon deities from power.

CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of a number of Trypillian ornaments showed that their symbolism fits into eight – and seven-membered structures. The examination of these structures led to the idea that their symbols hide eight or seven phases of the moon, which embody female or male deities. This idea was tested by analysing a number of seven-membered ornaments that do not belong to the “running spiral” type. A special feature of the seven-membered structure was highlighted – the joint fourth phase (the full moon phase) of the symbols of two goddesses. An examination of the “running spiral” ornament from this standpoint established that it is also a seven-membered structure, which is characterised by the joint symbols of the two goddesses in the fourth phase. This was the basis for the conclusion

that the ornament “running spiral” conveys the cycle of phases of the moon.

Based on the fact that the “running spiral” ornament occupies a leading place in Trypillian symbolism, there is reason to believe that the Moon Goddess was the main deity of Trypillian mythology. This conclusion may be the key to understanding the semantics of other Trypillian ornaments. From a broader perspective, the ideas and methods of studying Trypillian ornaments that were used in the study can be applied to penetrate the semantics of ornaments related to Trypillian cultures of Old Europe. They can also be crucial for understanding the semantics of folk ornaments, in particular, Ukrainian folk ornaments. Investigating ornaments will help reveal the spiritual connections between archaeological cultures. It can also help trace the historical heritage of ornaments from archaeological cultures to the present.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

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Євген Миколайович Причепій

Доктор філософський наук, професор, провідний науковий співробітник
Інститут культурології Національної академії мистецтв України
02000, вул. Бульварно-Кудрявська, 20, м. Київ, Україна
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5363-1004>

Семичленна структура циклу Місяця та орнамент «біжуча спіраль» на трипільській кераміці

Анотація. Дослідження семантики орнаментів трипільської культури, зокрема найбільш поширеного орнаменту «біжуча спіраль», необхідне для проникнення в духовний світ носіїв цієї культури. Мета роботи полягала в тому, щоб показати, що за символами орнаменту «біжуча спіраль» приховується семичленний цикл місяця. Використано такі методологічні підходи: а) за символами орнаменту вбачаються божества, а не речі; в) враховується поділ божеств за статтю; с) при аналізі символів застосовано структурний метод. Досліджено восьми- і семичленні структури орнаментів, які було ідентифіковано як фази місяця. Було встановлено, що за фазами приховуються божества жіночої і чоловічої статті. Показано, що орнамент «біжуча спіраль» є семичленною структурою, порядок розташування символів (божеств) у якій збігається зі структурами, в яких відсутні символи «біжучої спіралі». Розглянуто окремі символи «біжучої спіралі», визначено, що вони позначають певні фази (божества) циклу місяця. Зроблено висновок, що за восьми- і семичленною структурами орнаментів приховується Богиня, що втілювала місяць. Висновок, а також методи, за допомогою яких він здобутий, може бути ключем для дальшого дослідження орнаментів трипільської кераміки. Він відкриває горизонт для вивчення спорідненості трипільської культури з іншими енеолітичними культурами, а також для вивчення сучасних народних орнаментів

Ключові слова: трипільські орнаменти; структури орнаментів; семантика орнаменту «біжуча спіраль»; S-символ в орнаментах