

**Ornaments Containing *Monetaria (Cypraea)* Shells from the Fund
of the Regional Museum of History – Kardzhali**

Lidia Kirilova, Sonya Kostadinova

(Summary)

The subject of this study are two adornments from the fund of the Regional Museum of History – Kardzhali: the first one being from the ninth century and the second one being from the end of the nineteenth century. They include shells of the genus *Monetaria* sea snails (babki, cowrie) which are typical inhabitants of the Indo-Pacific tropical waters. The purpose of the study is to establish the species to which the shells belong and the symbolism with which they are loaded as parts of these ornaments. The cultural phenomenon of cowrie originates from the epipalleolite in the Middle East. Gradually spreading from there throughout Asia, Africa and Oceania, and through the Mediterranean, it reaches all parts of Europe, including Bulgaria, and the Eastern Rhodopes in particular.

Keywords: Regional Museum of History – Kardzhali; ornaments, *Monetaria moneta* (Linnaeus, 1758); *Monetaria annulus* (Linnaeus, 1758)

Lidia Kirilova
Regional Museum of History – Kardzhali
4 Republikanska Str.
6600 Kardzhali, BULGARIA
lidiak@gbg.bg

Sonya Kostadinova
Regional Museum of History – Kardzhali
4 Republikanska Str.
6600 Kardzhali, BULGARIA
spk@abv.bg