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Contents

Ion Pâslaru, Vitaly Pozhidaev Percentages in the Study of neolithic Pottery.....	7
Székely Zsolt Contributions to the history of archaeological research in Macea, the settlement in Topila (Arad County)..	21
Călin Ghemis, Tudor Rus, Robert Kovacs Between <i>sacred and profane</i> – a discovery belonging to the Coțofeni Culture inside “Stanu Cerbului” cave (Bihor County).....	31
Victor Sava, Luminița Andreica, Xenia Pop, Florin Gogâltan Out of ordinary or common burial practice? A Funerary Discovery from the Baden Settlement at Sântana “Cetatea Veche”.....	39
Luminița Andreica Musculoskeletal Markers as Evidence of Physical Activity and Social Differentiation in the Lower Mureș Valley during the Late Bronze Age.....	77
Alexandru Berzovan Preliminary Considerations on the Dacian Habitation in Vărădia de Mureș “Dealul Cetate”, Arad County (2 nd century BC – 1 st century A.D.).....	87
Ștefana Cristea “I am Horus the Savior”. Representations of Horus-Harpokrates in Roman Dacia.....	115
Csaba Szabó Notes on the Mithraic small finds from Sarmizegetusa.....	135
Csaba Szabó, George Valentin Bounegru, Victor Sava Mithras rediscovered. Notes on CIMRM 1938.....	149
Norbert Kapcsos The Sarmatian Graves of the 4R Archaeological Site Dated to the Third-Fourth century A.D. Additional Data on the Sarmatian Burial Rite in the Lower Mureș Region.....	157
Dan Băcuet-Crișan On the Two-Room Dwelling from Precinct IV of the Early Medieval Fortification in Dăbâca (Cluj County) and the Chronology of the First Stage of Fortification.....	173
Aurel Dragotă Eggs as Offerings in Tenth-Eleventh Century Necropolises.....	183
Imre Szatmári, György Kerekes Medieval Villages in the Fields Surrounding Mezőhegyes.....	193
Erwin Gáll The Significance of the Sites “Așezare” and “Necropolă” on “Dealul Viilor” in the Development of Habitat in the Micro-area of Sighișoara during the Middle Ages (Twelfth-Thirteenth Century). Human Landscape of the Sighisoara Region from the 12 th –13 th Centuries.....	209

Anca Nițoi, Claudia Urduzia

Elements of Fortification of the Medieval and Early Modern City of Sibiu. The Tower Gate and the Gate's Bastion. Historical and Archaeological Considerations.....243

Zsuzsanna Kopeczny, Florin Mărginean

Medieval Stove Tiles in the Collection of the Museum of Banat Discovered in the Fortification of Șoimoș (Arad County).....259

Abbreviations.....273

Preliminary Considerations on the Dacian Habitation in Vărădia de Mureș “Dealul Cetate”, Arad County (2nd century BC – 1st century A.D.)*

Alexandru Berzovan

Abstract: Regarding the archaeology of Arad County, the 1965–1985 period was characterized by a special energy invested in the archaeological research of the traces of Dacian civilization traces. These researches have led to the discovery of a significant quantity of archaeological materials that have enriched the museum collections of Arad, Oradea, and Cluj-Napoca. For various reasons, the majority of these discoveries have remained, until today, unstudied. The present article aims at providing a general picture of Dacian habitation on the site in Vărădia de Mureș “Cetate;” the discoveries will be exhaustively presented in a future monograph work. From the perspective of the chronology of the discoveries, the oldest traces of habitation on the “Cetate” Plateau can be dated to the First Iron Age. Habitation traces from the Second Iron Age, namely during the period of the Dacian Kingdom, are much more significant. It seems that the plateau was fortified during this period with a defensive ditch. From a stratigraphic perspective, the existence of two distinct levels of habitation has been observed (dated to the 2nd – 1st century B.C. and to the 1st century B.C.–1st century A.D.); furthermore, Dacian habitation was not limited to the plateau but extended beyond it, westwards, under the center of the present-day settlement. The archaeological material mainly consists of pottery; objects made of metal are rarities. The fortification in Săvârșin “Dealul Cetățuia” is located seven kilometers east of the one in Vărădia. The two fortifications, partially contemporaneous, controlled this sector of River Mureș and the entrance way to the Transylvanian nucleus of the Dacian Kingdom. The publication of the monographs of the two sites will certainly provide more numerous possibilities of analysis of these fortified settlements, located so close to each other, that certainly shared a common historical destiny.

Keywords: fortification, Dacian pottery, period of the Dacian Kingdom, Lower Mureș, Vărădia de Mureș.

I. Introduction

Regarding the archaeology of Arad County, the 1965–1985 period was characterized by a special energy invested in the archaeological research of the traces of Dacian civilization's traces¹. Thus, during this interval, excavation campaigns and test trenches were performed in sites such as those in Pecica “Șanțul Mare”², Săvârșin “Dealul Cetății”³, Vărădia de Mureș “Dealul Cetate”⁴, Cladova “Dealul Cetății”⁵, Berindia “Dealul Șindrioara”⁶, Clit “Gurețul Negrilor”⁷, Groșeni “Jidovina”⁸ and others.

These researches – no matter if consisting of simple test trenches (Clit, Groșeni), during several short campaigns (Berindia, Pecica, Vărădia de Mureș) or, on the contrary, of ample researches that continued, with short interruptions, until the middle of the 2000s (Cladova, Săvârșin) – have led to the discovery of significant quantities of archaeological materials that have enriched the collections of museums in Arad, Oradea, and Cluj-Napoca. For various reasons, most of these discoveries, with the exception of those in Pecica⁹, have remained, until today, unpublished.

* English translation: Ana M. Gruia.

¹ Berzovan 2013, 75–76.

² Crișan 1978.

³ Barbu, Hurezan 1982.

⁴ Barbu, Zdroba 1977.

⁵ Boroneanț 1978.

⁶ Dumitrașcu, Ordentlich 1973.

⁷ Dumitrașcu 1970.

⁸ RAJ Arad 1999, 73.

⁹ Crișan 1978.

From my perspective, I have decided to research as many of these materials as possible. Some might argue that publishing items discovered during old excavations, most lacking all context (in the lucky cases, only the name of the surface of discovery and the depth are mentioned), does not provide enough data for the construction of a coherent interpretative discourse based on them. I nevertheless believe that these lots, just like all the others, deserve and must be published as such; the items are mainly valuable in themselves. Even from the analysis of lots lacking a clear context one can extract very precious information on a large number of aspects, such as the general chronology of a habitation, pottery-making technologies, and the issue of circulation of ceramic forms among different cultural areas, to mention just a few examples.

The first and unique study on the Dacian discoveries in Vărădia de Mureș “Dealul Cetății” was published almost four decades ago by the authors of the excavation¹⁰, but it mostly had an introductory character¹¹. The present study¹² aims at providing a general overview of Dacian habitation on this site, while the discoveries will be subsequently presented, in their entirety, in a future monograph work¹³. At the same time, I will bring certain more than necessary clarifications on the issue of the so-called hoard of silver items that the specialized literature states to have been discovered there during the second half of the nineteenth century.

II. The archaeological site in Vărădia de Mureș “Dealul Cetate”

From a geographical perspective, the site is located in the south-eastern area of Zărand Mountains, more precisely in the point where they meet Culoarul Mureșului (Vărădia Depression), in the western area of pre-Roman Dacia (Fig. 1). The spot is located on a hill with steep slopes, Dealul Cetății (180 m in altitude), that dominates with its extra ca. 40 m the lower surrounding areas, providing at the same time very good visibility over a wide sector of the Mureș Valley.

The natural conditions there are favorable to human habitation. In this sector of Culoarul Mureșului, the ample depression of Vărădia could have provided very good conditions to agricultural endeavors. Even the mild and low ridges of Zarand allow for the cultivation, on natural or artificial terraces, of some, more resistant species of wheat. River Mureș, with its ample meadow and pertaining hooks, provided sufficient access to fish, mollusk, and game. The resources of the underground are equally rich and varied. Thus, in the area of the settlements of Julița, Baia, Săvârșin, Toc, Cuiăș one finds iron ores¹⁴. Especially in the area of Baia, iron minerals are close to the surface and could be easily exploited, even with more primitive means. Nonferrous minerals are also present: thus, lead is found in Săvârșin and copper in Roșia Nouă, Vărădia de Mureș, and Bârzava¹⁵. Things that could not be obtained locally were procured through commerce with other communities – the Mureș valley was, back then, an important commercial route that connected the Transylvanian area and the Pannonian Plain. Mountain trails, used almost until the present day, ensured easy access over the ridge of Zarand between the Mureș Valley and Crișul Alb Valley.

The oldest mention of the “Cetate” Hill as a point of archaeological interest can be found in the repertory compiled by Márton Roska¹⁶, where the site is mentioned as a possible spot of interest. Subsequently, during works for the construction of the national Arad – Deva road in 1930–1940, a part of Dealul Cetate was affected¹⁷. Later on, probably during the 1960s, several local inhabitants, D.

¹⁰ Barbu, Zdroba 1977.

¹¹ A number of Dacian pottery materials discovered there were previously presented in the doctoral dissertation of Corina Toma, researcher from Oradea, focusing on western and north-western Dacia between the second century B.C. and the first century A.D. (Toma 2007).

¹² I thank Prof. Univ. Dr. Nicolae Ursulescu, my doctoral supervisor, for taking the time to read this material and for providing extremely useful advice and suggestions.

¹³ I thank the CMA team (Prof. Dr. Peter Hügel, George Pascu Hurezan, Dr. Florin Mărginean, and Dr. Victor Sava) for allowing me to research and publish the Dacian materials discovered on this spot. The future monograph, that will extensively discuss both the discoveries from the Dacian period and those from the Middle Ages, will be written together with Dr. Florin Mărginean.

¹⁴ Giușcă, Bleahu, 1966.

¹⁵ Giușcă, Bleahu, 1966.

¹⁶ Roska 1942, 293/85.

¹⁷ Barbu, Zdroba 1977, 22; Barbu 1996, 48.

Mariș, S. Deac, A. Baci, and I. Roșu rescued from the hill and the surrounding areas several pottery fragments that raised the interest of archaeologists Mircea Barbu and Mircea Zdroba from the Museum in Arad.



Fig. 1. Map of ancient Dacia with the location of the site in Vărădia de Mureș.

Thus, the first archaeological excavations started in 1971 and continued during 1972, 1973, and 1974. Both the promontory and the area in its close proximity, westwards, were envisaged.

From the perspective of the chronology of the discoveries, the oldest traces of habitation on the “Cetate” Plateau can be dated to the First Iron Age. There are nevertheless few traces from this period, less than a dozen pottery fragments, while on the preserved excavation plans I was unable to find, as yet, any marking or mentioning of a habitation layer that could be dated during this period. From a cultural perspective, the few materials that I have analyzed can be attributed largely to the Gava and Basarabi Cultures.

Habitation traces from the Second Iron Age, namely from the period of the Dacian Kingdom, are much more significant. It seems that the plateau was fortified during this period through a massive defense ditch that probably had an adjacent rampart. From a stratigraphic perspective, the existence of two distinct habitation layers has been observed; furthermore, Dacian habitation was not limited to the plateau but extended beyond it, westwards, under the center of the present-day settlement (Fig. 2).

Scattered pottery fragments indicate that the area was also inhabited throughout the Roman period (second-third centuries A.D.), though no clear layer attributed to this period has been mentioned in existing documentation. One must state that, at this point, it is uncertain if the materials under discussion were found on the plateau or elsewhere. During the Middle Ages, the promontory was again occupied and a church with stone walls was built there. Subsequently, once the Ottoman Empire conquered the Hungarian Kingdom and the Banat, a fortified place (“palank”) was built there, meant both to supervise the Mureș Valley in this sector and to protect the otherwise rather volatile border area between the Vilayet of Timișoara and the Principality of Transylvania. The conclusion of the Austrian-Turkish wars put an end to habitation in this spot, leaving just a place name to remind us of the past existence of a fortification there.

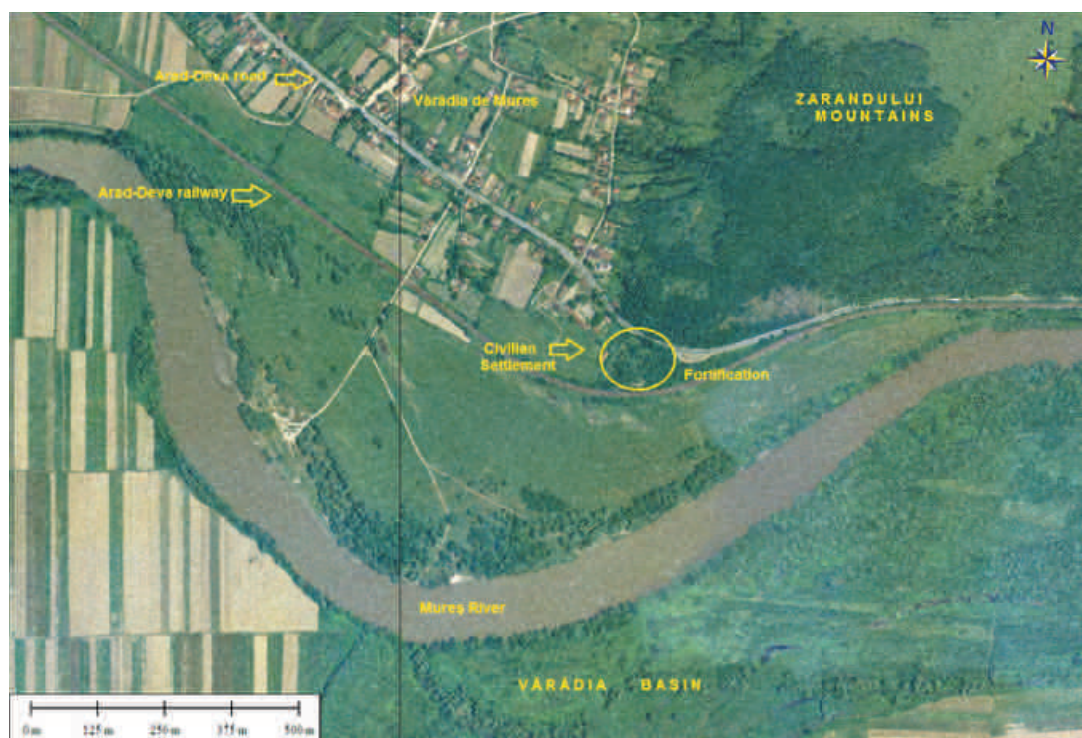


Fig. 2. Vărădia de Mureș “Dealul Cetate”, orthophoto plan.

III. The hoard with silver item(s): the result of historiographical confusions

The so-called hoard – or isolated discovery, consisting of one or, according to other authors, several silver knot brooches, holds a special place among the issues concerning the Dacian vestiges in Vărădia de Mureș. In Romanian-language historiography, the first mention of it can be found in a work signed by the regretted researcher Liviu Mărghitan dedicated to Dacian discoveries in the area of the Middle Mureș¹⁸, where the author mentions the “silver brooches typical to the Dacians” that were presumably found there. The piece of information was taken up again in 1971 in an article signed by the same author together with Sever Dumitrașcu, where they state that “silver knot brooches were found here”¹⁹. From the last work that L. Mărghitan dedicated to the issue of silver hoards in pre-Roman Dacia one finds out about a single knot brooch that was presumably discovered on the spot during the sixth or seventh decade of the nineteenth century²⁰. Data in L. Mărghitan’s works were taken over at face value by the authors of the excavations, M. Barbu and M. Zdroba²¹, and in the Archaeological Repertory of the County of Arad²².

In all these cases the source of information is one study-repertory written by Téglás Gábor²³; in the subchapter dedicated to the discoveries in the Mureș Valley between Zam and Alba Iulia, at no. 36, one finds a lacunal mention of a *single silver knot brooch* that the author saw in the Imperial Collection of Antiquities (Vienna) and that was presumably discovered in Vărădia²⁴, Lower Alba County (present-day village of Oarda, city of Alba Iulia, Alba County)²⁵.

¹⁸ Mărghitan 1970, 17.

¹⁹ Dumitrașcu, Mărghitan 1971, 52.

²⁰ Mărghitan 2008, 166. The author also states that the information according to which one silver brooch was found during the archaeological excavations of 1971–1974 is obviously erroneous.

²¹ Barbu, Zdroba 1977, 21; Barbu 1996, 48.

²² RAJ Arad 1999, 129.

²³ In almost all of the cases quoted (and read) wrongly (see *infra*).

²⁴ Téglás 1887, 65.

²⁵ Téglás’ story clearly indicates another settlement called Vărădia, not Vărădia de Mureș. Though called Vărădia in some medieval documents (Márki 1892, 185), during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries all of the old maps and name registries that I checked contain the Hungarian name of Tothvárad and the German name of Waradia and it is less probable that the item was recorded from a settlement under a name that cease to be used for more than four centuries. On the contrary, the settlement of Oarda was created through the junction of two other settlements, Oarda de Jos

Unfortunately, the confusions on this discovery continue also in Daniel Spânu’s last – and otherwise successful – work dedicated to Dacian silverworks. Thus, from the entry dedicated to the so-called discoveries from Vărădia de Mureș one learns that four brooches were presumably discovered there and then “deposited at the MNIT in Cluj, where they are mentioned in 1887”²⁶. The only bibliographic sources are two of L. Mărghitan and S. Dumitrașcu’s studies discussed above²⁷, as well as Téglás G.’s work, that the author, nevertheless, almost certainly did not consult²⁸. One is left wondering what was the real source of the statements related to the four brooches and their presence in the collection of the MNIT Cluj in 1887, since none of the mentioned sources reminded of such facts and there is nothing to suggest that the author had access to unpublished documents²⁹. Taking into consideration all these observations, one can conclude that no Dacian silver brooch was found so far in Vărădia de Mureș.

In the same category of confusions I must mention a series of monetary discoveries that are still shrouded in numerous uncertainties as to their real place of discovery – Vărădia de Caraș or Vărădia de Mureș. Thus, the Archaeological Repertory of Arad County mentions republican and imperial Roman *denarii* (Nero, Titus, Vespasian), one *aureus* issued by Nero, and a bronze coin issued by Octavian as having found in Vărădia de Mureș³⁰. But, as Florin Medeleț has indicated³¹, the data from I. Glodariu’s volume on the commercial relations of pre-Roman Dacia³² that mentions “Vărădia” as place of discovery, accompanied by a question mark, it is not correct. The source employed (though incompletely quoted) is Bucur Mitrea’s 1945 study that makes this clear – the settlement in question was Vărădia in Caraș-Severin County³³. Adding all these elements up, one can therefore conclude that, until now, there is no data attesting the discovery of any sort of ancient coins in Vărădia de Mureș.

IV. Dacian habitation

IV.1. Character of the habitation

Though insufficient to allow for the creation of a complex and coherent picture, the results of the four excavation campaigns support certain preliminary observations on the character and length of Dacian habitation on this site. One can thus observe that, from the perspective of spatial organization, it was a *fortified settlement*, plus the nearby civilian settlement the extent of which remains unknown. Furthermore, Dacian traces have been found just several kilometers away, to the north-west, in Julița³⁴.

The relatively small promontory (130 × 60 m) was separated by the rest of the hill through a ditch, measuring ca. two meters in depth and ca. six meters in width (see Fig. 3). It was filled up, probably during the Middle Ages, and this makes it hardly visible today. Though, as far as I am aware of, the excavation did not manage to find it, one should suspect the existence of a rampart with palisade or at least of a wooden fence that could provide the defenders with some minimal protection against projectiles launched by possible attackers.

(*Alsóvárada= Alsómarosvárada*) and Oarda de Sus (*Felsővárada=Felsőmarosvárada*); furthermore, the latter feature on the first Josephine map (see *Sectio186*) just as Vărădia. It is thus almost certain that the item was discovered in the center of this later settlement, as Téglás stated, probably sometime during the second half of the nineteenth century. The editors of the archaeological repertory of the county of Alba placed there the discovery of “silver brooches” (the type or dating is not mentioned), making reference to the same work of Téglás (RAJ Alba 1995, 132). The authors suggest that the item were preserved in the collection of the Museum in Alba Iulia (less likely).

²⁶ Spânu 2012, 249.

²⁷ Mărghitan 1970; Dumitrașcu, Mărghitan 1971.

²⁸ Proof, among other things, of the fact that it is quoted with the error referring to pages (56–57; correctly, page 65) as in L. Mărghitan’s work published in 1970.

²⁹ The author suggests, as a hypothesis, the identification of the so-called four brooches from Vărădia with four items from the MNIT, but as the author itself states, their place of discovery is unknown (Spânu 2012, 249, 251).

³⁰ RAJ Arad 1999, 129.

³¹ Medeleț 1994, 291. Discussing the monetary discoveries attributed to Vărădia de Caraș, Fl. Medeleț mentioned a coin issued in Olbia, that C. Preda first wrote about on the basis of a piece of information received from O. Iliescu (Preda 1980, 39) as originating in “Vărădia”. The archaeologist from Timișoara believed that in this case, the settlement was rather Vărădia de Mureș.

³² Glodariu 1974, 296/342.

³³ Mitrea 1945, 104/23.

³⁴ Unpublished materials (the CMA collection).

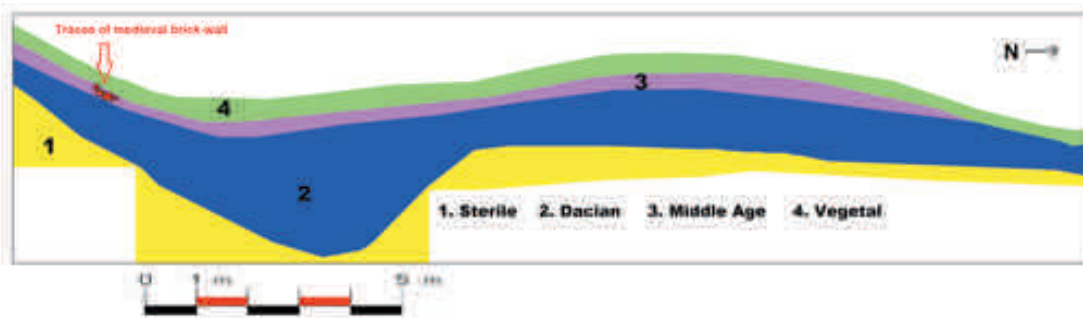


Fig. 3. The defense ditch (image on the basis of ground plans preserved in the CMA archives).

According to the authors of the excavation, two houses were uncovered inside the fortified area, while just one such dwelling was found in the “civilian” settlement. It is difficult to express considerations on the way they were built, but according to some preserved fragments, it seems that here, like in numerous other places in Ancient Dacia³⁵, the walls were constructed from adobe (a network of twigs covered in clay). One illustrated fragment (Pl. 10/2), carefully rendered on one side, seems to have been plastered on the outside.

IV.2. Materials of local tradition

Very large quantities of pottery have been found. A significant number of fragments were once part of jar-vessels, modeled exclusively by hand. From the perspective of their morphology, at first glance one notes that the predominant forms are vessels with the median diameter equal or slightly larger than the diameter of the mouth, with rims most often flared, having rounded ends. The quality of the fabric varies rather much, in quantity and nature of the inclusions, as well as in the treatment of the outer surface: there are items with accented coarseness³⁶ (e.g. no. 11), but also smoothed items in which liquids were probably stored or boiled (no. 10). The ornaments placed on the body of these vessels are varied, including both decorative elements in relief (knobs, girdles, “pills”) and incised elements (simple lines, waves, striations etc.) As it is well known, such types of vessels were used during household activities, mostly in the preparation of food, judging after the traces of secondary firing and smoke, but also in the storage of those categories of foodstuffs that, due to the quantity in which they were produced or due to their quality, could not be properly stored in large vessels³⁷. The common character of this category of vessels, in all Dacian settlements, renders the presentation of analogies useless.

There are also rather numerous fruit-bowls preserved. They have been modeled both by hand and on the potters’ wheel. From a morphological perspective, one notes the predominance of those with shallower cups, more or less profiled shoulder, and wide rim, but there are also items with deep cup, no shoulder, and narrow rim. A very special case consists of a fragment that seems to have belonged to a curiously shaped fruit bowl (rectangular or star-shaped cup, according to the preserved angle), with a projection on the rim (Pl. 7/1); I am yet unaware of similar items in the inner Carpathian area – a somehow similar item was found in Pietroasele “Gruiul Dării”³⁸.

The fruit bowls discovered in Vărădia de Mureș generally display good quality fabric; the clay employed was generally pure – the inclusions are present in lower quantity, and in some cases they are even absent. The treatment of the surfaces consisted in numerous cases in a layer of slip, usually dark brown or blackish, that was subsequently polished; other times, the surface of the vessel itself

³⁵ See Glodariu 1983, 9–11; Antonescu 1984, 16 sq.

³⁶ Some authors explain the coarse character through the perspective of their functionality; see the very interesting discussion of the point in Matei 2011, 48 sqq.

³⁷ Similar opinions in Crișan 1969, 162; Costea 2006, 226.

³⁸ The curious shape of the item has caused certain problems. The determination was made on the basis of information kindly provided by Dr. Sebastian Matei (County Museum Buzău) and Dr. Magdalena Ștefan (the Institute of Archaeology in Cluj-Napoca), to whom I hereby express my gratitude. Compare with Matei 2011, 60 and fig. 39, 6.M.35. Similar projections on the rim of fruit-bowls I had seen in the Dacian materials from Iedera- “DealulCetățuia” (Târgoviște History Museum).

was polished. This is typical for the finds dated in the centuries 2nd – 1st BC. It is interesting to note that on the grey items made on the potters’ wheel, more specific to 1st century BC – 1st century AD timeframe, polishing and polished decoration are less often encountered. The polish was obtained with tools such as bone spatulas, rags, rounded stones, or, in some cases, even pieces of graphite – for example, the foot of one fruit-bowl seems to have been polished thus, and it is possible that the slip contained the same matter (see Pl. 7/7)³⁹ The existence of graphite polishers has been discussed in the specialized literature⁴⁰ and a few such finds have been mentioned from Biharea, Sucidava / Celei, and Sighișoara “Wietenberg”⁴¹. To the already known examples I can add the discoveries in Vărădia de Mureș: one fragment of pure graphite (Pl. 8/7) and several pottery fragments with a very high content of graphite that probably belong to small vessels and show obvious traces of abrasion, proof of having likely been used to this end (Pl. 8/6). As for the role of the fruit-bowls, I believe that it was ceremonial, used during banquets or various other occasions⁴², but anyway with functions deeply connected to the traditional social structures of pre-Roman Dacia⁴³.

Vessels for food consumption *per se*, i.e. tureens and bowls, were also found in significant numbers. Some of them betray older local pottery traditions (no. 21), other show possible Celtic influences (no. 26), possibly even Roman ones (no. 23). The forms vary greatly, on a case-to-case basis, just like the quality and treatment of the fabric.

Vessels for the consumption of liquids, cups and jugs, are somewhat more poorly represented among the discoveries made until now. One torsaded handle (no. 19 and Pl. 3/3), typical to the so-called “luxury” wares, draws one’s attention. The Dacian cups (Ro: “cățui”), not very numerous, are morphologically unitary, generally simple and lacking all ornament; one item stands out – an entirely preserved cup, of the handleless category (no. 47 and Pl. 6/2).

As for the storage vessels, wheel-thrown *pythoi* hold a special place through the quantity and quality of the discoveries. From a morphological perspective, the stepped rims, usually two or three, are typical to this category of vessels from Vărădia⁴⁴. Both oxidizing and reducing fired items are known in this group; as general outlook the surfaces are well smoothed, with wooden spatulas, the fabric is generally of good quality, with inclusions of mica, sometimes in significant quantity. The decoration consists of artistic elements, in rare cases more simple ones such as furrows or steps, pulled from the fabric while the vessel was turning (no. 29; 30); incised ornaments consisted of simple and wavy lines. In some cases, the flute between the two “steps” of the rim was incised with a wavy line (no. 27). As for the two items that belong to *dolia*-type vessels (no. 31, 33), it is not clear if they were found in the Roman or pre-Roman period habitations, as their chronology covers both intervals⁴⁵.

There are also rarer forms, such as the vessel with perforations, tronconic in shape, interpreted either as a “smoker” or a strainer⁴⁶; the rather large orifice on the bottom of it nevertheless supports the first interpretation.

There are numerous objects that speak of the various activities of the inhabitants of the fortification on “Cetate” Hill. There are spindle weights⁴⁷, attesting the domestic craft of wool spinning

³⁹ The case presented here is not singular; a fruit-bowl rim polished with graphite was discovered in Lancrăm- “Glod” (Popa, Simina 2004, 73).

⁴⁰ Popa, Rustoiu, 257–258; Popa, Simina 2004, 73–74.

⁴¹ Popa, Rustoiu, 257–258.

⁴² See also I. Andrișoiu and A. Rustoiu’s observations (1997, 86–87).

⁴³ This could explain the sudden and definitive disappearance, at the time of the Roman conquest, of this type of vessel from the repertory of forms employed by the Dacians in the area of Transylvania and Walachia (Glodariu 1981a, 75; Bichir 1984, 23) and its preservation in the area of Moldavia and of the Lipița Culture, thus precisely in the areas less affected by the consequences of the conflict, where traditional society was able to continue, to a certain extent, its development (see also the suggestions provided by Matei 2011, 58).

⁴⁴ This type of vessel is characteristic to the period of the Dacian kingdom (Glodariu 1995, 49); it was also present, in significant numbers, in the Lower Mureș Valley: Pecica (Crișan 1978, 132, 191–192), Păuliș- DealulBătrân (Pădurean 1990, pl. 31/6–7), possibly Cladova (Boroneanț 1978, 142), Zăbrani (previously unpublished, the CMA collection), Săvârșin (Barbu, Hurezan 1982, 55).

⁴⁵ See the discussion and the bibliographic indications in Glodariu 1995, 49.

⁴⁶ Glodariu, Moga 1989, 68–69.

⁴⁷ Even if today, in the rural areas of Romania and the Balkans this type of objects is no longer used in traditional weaving for hundreds of years, items morphologically identical to the objects archaeologically found on the site under discussion continue to be used as such until the present day in various areas of the Middle East and in Maghreb (Watson 1979, 174).

(Pl. 10/4, 5, 6); in case of need, these items could be used as loom weights as well. The function of the pyramidal, larger items (Pl. 10/11) is more difficult to establish; perforated adobe items (Pl. 10/3) or small stones with perforations (Pl. 10/1, 9) could have been used as fishing weights. It is interesting to note among the discoveries the presence of what seems to be a stone axe fragment, probably Neolithic (Pl. 10/10); as I am unaware of Neolithic traces on “Cetate” Hill, it seems more likely that in ancient times some inhabitant of the settlement found the item elsewhere and later kept it as a curiosity. There are also “game pieces”⁴⁸, made of the walls or bottoms of vessels, some perforated (Pl. 10/7). From the rather poor osteologic material, I have illustrated one shell (Pl. 10/12).

The almost complete absence of metal objects is strange⁴⁹; the authors of the excavation mention two fragments of bent knives and two iron fishing hooks, but I was yet unable to identify them in the CMA collections.

IV.3. Imitations and imports

The location of this community near one of the large commercial routes of Dacia is partially reflected in the archaeological discoveries. Its relations to other “barbarian” peoples, such as the Celts and the Bastarni, played an important role during the second-first centuries B.C.

One thus encounters fragments of *pseudokantharos*-type vessels⁵⁰, wheel-thrown, made of black, polished fabric. Unfortunately, none of the items has been preserved entirely. Due to their size, slim form, and proportion between the diameter of the mouth and the median diameter, the fragments illustrated here (no. 18, see also pl. 8/2, 5), could be included in type 3 according to the typology of A. Rustoiu and M. Egri, thus having analogies in the Celtic environment in Pannonia and the neighboring areas⁵¹. It is difficult to say if the items are imports or creations of traveling Celtic masters; it is nevertheless certain that the presence of these vessels attests to connections with the neighboring Celtic environment, probably during the second half of the second century B.C. The fragments from vessels with graphite in their fabric and the graphite fragment discussed above must be analyzed from the same perspective, i.e. that of the relations with the Celtic tribes.

Among the pottery fragments, one attracts attention: it certainly belonged to a tureen, with strongly flared lip and a small, X-shaped handle (no. 17 and Pl. 3/1). These details, just like its form and presence in a Dacian settlement, seem to make reference, at first glance, to the environment of the Poienești Lukașevka Culture⁵². The presence of such an item would not be surprising – items originating as well in the far area of northern Moldavia have been discovered before on the Lower Mureș and in Pecica “Șanțul Mare”⁵³. Nevertheless, elements such as the absence of faceting on the inside of the rim and the structure of the fabric (see no. 17), less typical to “Bastarnae” pottery, ask for caution⁵⁴.

Local imitations of *situla*-type vessels are present in relatively large numbers. One must state that none of the analyzed fragments shows graphite in the fabric. They have been modeled either on the potters’ wheel (Pl. 8/1) or by hand (no. 20). This type of vessels is encountered in numerous Dacian settlements, throughout the period between the first century B.C. and the first century A.D.

There is only one item that is an imitation of a Hellenistic vessel, namely of a *krater* (Fig. 4). Such vessels are also distributed rather widely, both geographically and chronologically⁵⁵, but the most numerous seem to belong to the second-first centuries B.C.⁵⁶ A bead made of colored glass (not illustrated), completes the otherwise rather restricted series of imports.

⁴⁸ On the possible functions of these items, see Pop 1995–1996.

⁴⁹ The presence of sharpening stones among the discoveries (Pl. 10/8), some with traces of intense usage, suggests that such items must have nevertheless existed.

⁵⁰ See Rustoiu, Egri 2011, 17.

⁵¹ Rustoiu, Egri 2011, 20, fig. 5.

⁵² Babeș 1993, Taf. 38, 588/b, etc.

⁵³ Crișan 1978, 140, Pl. 33/2.

⁵⁴ The vessel, on the finding context of which no data is available, might also be connected to a later habitation horizon, subsequent to the period of the Dacian Kingdom; handles of this type are generally typical to the Germanic environment from the Second Iron Age (Vulpe 1953, 429, n. 47).

⁵⁵ Popa, Simina 2004, 62.

⁵⁶ Matei 2011, 39.

IV.4. Chronology

The absence of coins, jewelry items, dress accessories, and imports hinders significantly the identification of precise chronological limits, while the collection of the material, which was not done according to complexes, makes an already complicated situation even more complicated⁵⁷.

Pre-Roman Dacian habitation on “Cetate” Hill has two distinct layers. According to the analyzed materials, *the earliest* of them could be attributed to the general interval of the second-first centuries B.C. There are a few indications supporting this dating. Thus, the type of tureen no. 21 (see also Pl. 3/5) in the appended catalogue displays morphological traits that support its attribution to an early horizon, having good analogies in Berea (item found in the third-second century B.C. layer)⁵⁸, Florești “Șapca Verde” (second century B.C.)⁵⁹, and Panic (the second half of the second century B.C.)⁶⁰; anyway, it is considered that the tureen form with straight rim as compared to the central axis of the vessel (like the item under discussion) is rather typical to the second century B.C.⁶¹ The vessels with strongly thickened rim, reminding of certain Celtic forms (no. 22), suggest, in their turn, the same early horizon: one analogy can be identified in Zalău “Dealul Lupului” (third-second centuries B.C.), in the local environment⁶². Vessel bottoms “with umbo,” present in Vărădia (see also no. 24 and Pl. 3/8), have analogies on numerous sites, such as those in Ciolăneștii din Deal⁶³ or Florești “Șapca Verde”⁶⁴, mainly dated to the second century B.C. and the beginning of the subsequent century. Adding up all these facts, one can conclude that Dacian habitation here probably started no earlier than in the second half of the second century B.C.

Nevertheless, the most consistent lot of materials displays an aspect as specific as possible to Dacian pottery from the first century B.C. – first century A.D., with the characteristic forms; I therefore it could be possible that just like at Săvârșin, the *upper Dacian layer* dates to this interval. If the beginning of habitation could be established, even in general terms, the dating of its end is somewhat more complicated; the main question that raises is whether this fortification was still in use during the great Dacian-Roman confrontations. M. Barbu and M. Zdroba, in their article mentioned above, stated that the settlement ended destroyed in a violent fire in the beginning of the second century A.D., along with the fortification in Pecica “Șanțul Mare”⁶⁵, in the context of the Dacian-Roman wars. More recently though, starting from the very few materials illustrated by the two archaeologists from Arad (20 vessels and fragments all together), H. Pop restricted the chronology to just until the beginning of the first century A.D.⁶⁶.

Despite the fact that I have examined the entire material, I choose to be more cautious towards the two opinions mentioned above, so different from each other (and not very well supported); in the subsequent lines I will limit myself to making a few observations on the material that might have chronological relevance. The *pythoi* fragments, such as the one displaying a wavy line on the rim, were considered specific to the first century A.D., more precisely to the second half of it⁶⁷, but subsequent researches have noted their presence also in earlier horizons, dated to the first century B.C., on spots such as those in Sighișoara “Wietenberg”⁶⁸, Lančrām “Glod”⁶⁹, and Covasna “Cetatea

⁵⁷ The absence of an adequate and up to date catalogue of the chronology of pottery according to different areas and micro-regions, starting from discoveries made in clearly dated contexts, is strongly felt in the historiography of the Dacian period, especially for the inner Carpathian area; the employed catalogues and studies (Crișan 1966; Glodariu 1981a; Glodariu 1981b), published more than 50 and, respectively, 30 years ago, require numerous completions. There are already two such approaches for the area of Walachia (Trohani 1999; Matei 2011).

⁵⁸ Pupeză 2012, 31, Pl. 7/8.

⁵⁹ Pupeză 2012, 51, Pl. 22/12.

⁶⁰ Pupeză 2012, 80, Pl. 46/3.

⁶¹ Pupeză 2012, 299.

⁶² Pupeză 2012, 114, Pl. 70/5.

⁶³ Pupeză 2012, 135, Pl. 84/2, 4.

⁶⁴ Pupeză 2012, 51, Pl. 22/9.

⁶⁵ Barbu, Zdroba 1977, 25.

⁶⁶ Pop 2006, 44.

⁶⁷ Glodariu 1981b, 157.

⁶⁸ Andrițoiu, Rustoiu 1997, 84–85.

⁶⁹ Popa, Simina 2004, 76.

Zânelor”⁷⁰, and therefore can no longer be used as “markers” in the documentation of a first century A.D. habitation. The two *dolia* fragments, of certain Roman influence, might indicate with more precision a late horizon, but, as I stated previously, their attribution to the pre-Roman Dacian habitation is uncertain.

Fruit-bowls with late morphological characteristics⁷¹, so frequently encountered on sites such as the one in Pecica “Șanțul Mare”, are slightly rarer here, a fact that might (or might not) constitute in itself an indicator of an earlier end⁷². On the other hand, nevertheless, I. Glodariu dated the analogies for the handleless Dacian cups from the sites in Slimnic and Arpașu de Jos only in the second half of the first century A.D.⁷³, but development exceptions from the modern patterns impose caution. Bowls, such as the one illustrated here at no. 23 (Pl. 3/7), are more frequent in north-eastern Walachia during the first century A.D., especially in the second half of the century⁷⁴.

Unfortunately, a possible correlation with the situation in the immediate vicinity, on the better researched site in Săvârșin “Cetățuia” is not possible due to the (illegal) works for the construction of a mobile phone tower in 2004 that has affected the entire upper plateau of the hill, disturbing the habitation layer; the excavation has only identified the sunken complexes; thus, the end of Dacian habitation in Săvârșin cannot be documented precisely either⁷⁵.

In the light of the above said, it could be possible that the habitation on “Cetate” Hill might have continued throughout the entire duration of the first century A.D., until the Dacian-Roman wars, and even for a while afterwards, naturally under different auspices. But it cannot be excluded a slightly earlier ending, maybe due to a tribal conflict or due to other causes. Anyway, it is to be desired that future excavations should complete these observations with more facts.

V. Final considerations

On “Dealul Cetate” there was certainly a fortified settlement, no doubt of some importance, but, at first glance, lacking the ambitions that would characterize a regional power center as the extreme rarity of the metal items and the small number of imports suggests.

The existence of the fortified hill and of a civilian settlement nearby might represent a topographic expression of certain social realities. According to some traces, it is possible that other, smaller settlements existed in the area, westwards, such as the one in Julița, probably in a subordinate relation. The fortification system of the settlement does not represent a serious obstacle in itself, as an organized military force could overcome it easily, but it ensured, no doubt, a feeling of comfort to the inhabitants that it could protect against bands of brigands and occasional raids mounted by rival factions; furthermore, this construction, that certainly required the work of the entire community, implies the presence of a noble clan at the leadership of the settlement.

The analysis of the visibility area (Fig. 4) indicates that the fortification controlled almost the entire depression of Vărădia, but did not grant direct visibility towards the fortification in Săvârșin. It supervised both the course of the Mureș and the pertaining commercial road, and the surrounding agricultural areas. It seems very probable that the settlement in Vărădia was “subordinated” to the one in Săvârșin, defending the area from the west.

Located seven kilometers apart in a straight line, the two settlements, partially contemporary⁷⁶, controlled this sector of the Lower Mureș and, implicitly, the access way to the core of the Dacian Kingdom. The future publication of monograph works detailing the two sites will certainly provide more analysis possibilities of the Dacians’ life in this area and of the two fortifications located so close to each other and that, no doubt, shared a common historical destiny.

⁷⁰ Previously unpublished, information kindly provided Dr. Viorica Crișan (MNIT Cluj-Napoca), to whom I hereby thank.

⁷¹ For the definition of their characteristics, see Crișan 1966, 168–169.

⁷² One must also take into account the specifically regional nuances, starting from the truism that it is not mandatory for a certain type of vessel to have everywhere the same chronology; outside the large settlements and regional centers, in the smaller settlements, it is to be expected that the “innovations” reached later.

⁷³ Glodariu 1981b, 156.

⁷⁴ Matei 2011, 65 (the author calls them bowls).

⁷⁵ Kind information provided by Dr. Valeriu Sirbu (Museum of Brăila), to whom I hereby thank.

⁷⁶ In the sense that habitation in Săvârșin started much earlier.

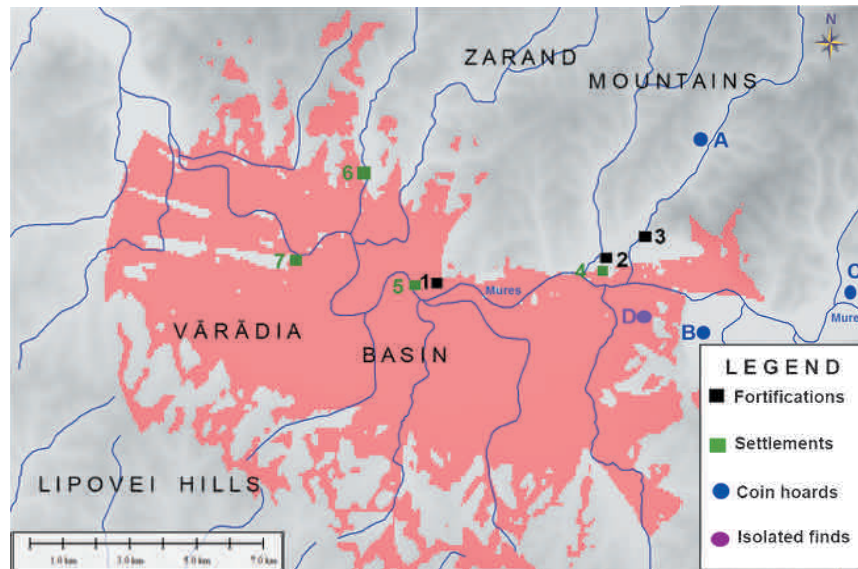


Fig. 4. Vărădia de Mureș Depression. Calculation of the visibility area (10 km) of the Dacian fortification in Vărădia – “Dealul Cetate.” Legend: 1. Vărădia de Mureș – “Dealul Cetate;” 2. Săvârșin – “Dealul Cetățuie;” 3. Săvârșin – “Dealul Cruntava” (uncertain)⁷⁷; 4. Săvârșin – civilian settlement; 5. Vărădia de Mureș – civilian settlement; 6. Julița – Madosza Solomon’s garden⁷⁸; 7. Bulci – “La Cetate”⁷⁹; A. Hoard in Temeșești⁸⁰; B. Hoard in Căprioara⁸¹; C. Hoard in Toc⁸²; D. Stray find in Valea Mare⁸³.

Appendix: Catalog

I will present, in order to illustrate, *a small part* of the Dacian pottery material discovered on the spot of “Cetate.” In order to avoid possible unclarities, I need to make certain brief mentions on the system employed in the description and cataloguing of the pottery. The first field, labeled *indicative*, includes the inventory number of the object (e.g. VM 181_1974) and a current number that I provided while processing it, that can be followed by letters in case there are several graphically reconstructed fragments (e.g. 1a,b). Thus, each processed fragment benefits from a unique code of identification, useful both in transforming the catalogue into databases and in case of future completions. The subsequent field, labeled *type*, signals the type of vessel and the characteristics of its rim, bottom, cup, handle, on a case-to-case basis. In the field *technique* I mention the modeling method (by hand or on the potters’ wheel), the type of firing, treatment of the surfaces (when such applies), the presence of secondary firing and traces of smoking⁸⁴, and if one can identify traces of special tools (combs and brushes used in the decoration of pottery etc.)⁸⁵ The field dedicated to the *dimensions* contains the specific measurements and is followed by the field referring to the aspect of the *fabric*. The latter includes discussions of several factors such as color⁸⁶, coarseness⁸⁷, hardness⁸⁸, nature of the

⁷⁷ Pădurean, Berzovan 2011, 34, footnote 15.

⁷⁸ See supra, footnote 33.

⁷⁹ RAJ Arad 1999, 47.

⁸⁰ RAJ Arad 1999, 127.

⁸¹ RAJ Arad 1999, 49.

⁸² RAJ Arad 1999, 127.

⁸³ Unpublished, republican Roman denarius in the collection of a local inhabitant; kind information provided by E. Pădurean, to whom I hereby thank.

⁸⁴ Important in determining the functionality of the vessel (and not only).

⁸⁵ An extremely useful thing when, on the basis of more ample writings, the issue of household production will be approached and that of workshop production, respectively.

⁸⁶ As, by its very nature, this field involves a high degree of subjectivity, I chose, as much as possible, to employ ample determinations, without too many variants and nuances. I find the use of the Münsellchart irrelevant.

⁸⁷ The tactile aspect of the fabric. In the description of this factor I use five degrees of coarseness: *very accented* (“coarse”); *accented* (“rough”); *average* (“straightened”), *low* (“smoothed”), *very low* (polished pottery, with “soap-like” outlook). The estimation was made on the best preserved surface of the vessel or fragment under analysis. See Teodor 2001, 46.

⁸⁸ Also described according to five degrees, see Teodor 2001, 46.

inclusions⁸⁹ and their proportion. The sixth field is dedicated to the *ornaments*, while in the final field I mention – when able to find out – the *origin* of the vessel, i.e. the place where it was found.

Jar-like vessels

1. (Pl. 1/1).

Indicative: VM 181_1974_1; **Type:** jar; slightly flared rim, flattened end; **Technique:** modeled by hand; mixed firing; wooden spatula and comb; **Dimensions:** $\varnothing_{\text{mouth}}$: 14 cm; $\varnothing_{\text{neck}}$: 13 cm; $\varnothing_{\text{median}}$: 15 cm; H_{upper} : 12,5 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.3–0.4 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown in color, with brick-red nuances on the inside; accented coarseness; accented hardness; sand in small quantity, occasional pebbles; **Ornaments:** the fragment displays two „pills”, applied on the neck on the best preserved of the two one can note four alveoli, impressed by finger; the body of the vessel was decorated with several rows of slightly arched striations, placed vertically, made with a comb in the soft fabric that already started to harden. In the area of maximum diameter it preserves an oval-shaped knob, not very prominent, with three alveoli. **Origin:** square H, -0.90 m.

2. (Pl. 1/2).

Indicative: VM 181/1974_5; **Type:** jar; slightly flared rim, flattened end; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; spatula and blunt-ended instrument; secondary firing and smoked traces on both sides; **Dimensions:** $\varnothing_{\text{mouth}}$: 14 cm; $\varnothing_{\text{neck}}$: 12,5 cm; $\varnothing_{\text{median}}$: 15 cm; H_{upper} : 9.3 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.5 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown-blackish in color; accented coarseness; accented hardness; sand in average quantity; **Ornaments:** the fragment displays a complex ornament consisting of a series of parallel arches and sharp angles, made with a blunt instrument in the still soft fabric of the vessel; **Origin:** *passim*.

3. (Pl. 1/3).

Indicative: VM 270/1973_20; **Type:** jar; slightly flared rim, rounded end; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; smoked on the inside; **Dimensions:** $\varnothing_{\text{mouth}}$: 17 cm; $\varnothing_{\text{neck}}$: 12.3 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.8 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown-blackish in color; accented coarseness; accented hardness; sand in low quantity, occasional pebbles; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** S4, square 13.

4. (Pl. 1/4).

Indicative: VM 265/1973_1a,b,c; **Type:** jar; slightly flared rim, rounded end; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; secondary firing and smoked, especially on the inside; spatula, brush; smoothed on the inside; **Dimensions:** $\varnothing_{\text{mouth}}$: 20.5 cm; $\varnothing_{\text{neck}}$: 19.5 cm; $\varnothing_{\text{median}}$: 23.5 cm; H_{upper} : 11 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.7 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown-blackish in color; average coarseness; without visible inclusions; **Ornaments:** the fragment displays a series of striations, at various angles, made with a brush, and a vertical girdle of alveoli, carefully rendered; **Origin:** square E, -0.60 m.

5. (Pl. 1/5).

Indicative: VM 273/1972_3; **Type:** jar; slightly flared rim, flattened end; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; blunt-ended instrument; **Dimensions:** $\varnothing_{\text{mouth}}$: 18 cm; $\varnothing_{\text{neck}}$: 17 cm; $\varnothing_{\text{median}}$: 20.5 cm; H_{upper} : 11.5 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.5 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown in color; average coarseness; accented hardness; occasional pebbles; **Ornaments:** the fragment displays a circular „pill” on which the potter attempted to create an alveolus by digital imprint; circle segments, carelessly rendered with a blunt instrument, framing the mentioned „pill”; **Origin:** square B, -0.85 m.

6. (Pl. 1/6).

Indicative: VM 195/1973_10; **Type:** jar; flat bottom, weakly profiled sole; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; smoked on both sides; comb; **Dimensions:** $\varnothing_{\text{bottom}}$: 13 cm; Gr_{wall} : 1 cm; **Aspect:** blackish fabric; accented coarseness; accented hardness; sand in small quantity, occasional traces of chamotte; **Ornaments:** the fragment displays a series of rows of parallel incisions, almost vertical, made with a comb, in the fabric while it started to harden; **Origin:** square H.

7. (Pl. 1/7).

Indicative: VM 16095/1972; **Type:** jar; flared rim, flattened end; flat bottom, no sole; **Technique:** modeled by hand; mixed firing; slightly smoked; blunt-ended instrument; **Dimensions:** $\varnothing_{\text{mouth}}$: 16 cm; $\varnothing_{\text{neck}}$: 14 cm; $\varnothing_{\text{median}}$: 17 cm; $\varnothing_{\text{bottom}}$: 11 cm; H_{total} : 16 cm; H_{upper} : 7 cm; H_{lower} : 9 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.7 cm; **Aspect:** yellowish in color; accented coarseness; accented hardness; sand in average quantity; **Ornaments:** the vessel displays four ovoid knobs, flattened, placed at approximately equal distance from each other, placed on the maximum diameter. In the areas delimited by the four knobs one finds two wide incisions, vaguely parallel, with an almost semicircular contour, made rather carelessly; **Origin:** square B, - 0.35 m.

8. (Pl. 2/1).

⁸⁹ I avoid using the term “temper material” since the distinction between the impurities of the clay and the actual “temper materials” cannot be made in the absence of certain analyses (Teodor 2001, 46–47).

Indicative: VM 143/1973_1a,b,c; **Type:** jar; slightly flared rim, rounded end; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; traces of secondary firing and smoked on both sides; blunt-ended instrument; **Dimensions:** \emptyset_{mouth} : 19 cm; \emptyset_{neck} : 18 cm; $\emptyset_{\text{median}}$: 23 cm; H_{upper} : 13 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.7 cm; **Aspect:** blackish in color; average coarseness; accented hardness; large-grain sand in average quantity and occasional pebbles; **Ornaments:** the fragment displays a round, flattened knob and a strap consisting of three wavy lines, carelessly rendered with a blunt instrument in the soft fabric of the vessel. **Origin:** square D, -0.60 m.

9. (Pl. 2/2).

Indicative: VM 143/1973_2a,b; **Type:** jar; slightly flared rim, rounded end; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; intense secondary firing and strongly smoked, especially on the inside; **Dimensions:** \emptyset_{mouth} : 19.5 cm; \emptyset_{neck} : 18 cm; $\emptyset_{\text{median}}$: 23 cm; H_{upper} : 13 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.7 cm; **Aspect:** dark-brown – blackish in color; average coarseness; accented hardness; large-grain sand in average quantity and occasional pebbles; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** *passim*.

10. (Pl. 2/3).

Indicative: VM 129/1973_7a,b,c; **Type:** jar; slightly flared rim, rounded end; **Technique:** modeled by hand; oxidizing firing; smoked on the inside; wooden spatula; **Dimensions:** \emptyset_{mouth} : 20.5 cm; \emptyset_{neck} : 20 cm; $\emptyset_{\text{median}}$: 25 cm; H_{upper} : 12 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.8 cm; **Aspect:** brick-red in color; low coarseness; accented hardness; no visible inclusions; on the outside it shows traces of a hot liquid having trickled; **Ornaments:** the fragment displays an arched girdle of alveoli and a „pill”, probably part of a more complex ornament; **Origin:** square G, -0.75 m.

11. (Pl. 2/4).

Indicative: VM 270/1973_18; **Type:** jar; slightly flared rim, rounded end; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; traces of secondary firing and smoked on both sides; **Dimensions:** \emptyset_{mouth} : 14 cm; \emptyset_{neck} : 12.5 cm; $\emptyset_{\text{median}}$: 16.7 cm; H_{upper} : 10 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.8 cm; **Aspect:** dark-brown – blackish in color; very accented coarseness; accented hardness; large-grain sand and pebbles in large quantity, traces of chaff; **Ornaments:** the fragment displays a horizontal row of alveoli made through digital imprint; **Origin:** S4, square 15, -2.40 m.

12. (Pl. 2/5).

Indicative: VM 265/1973_8; **Type:** jar; flared rim, rounded end; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; blunt-ended instrument, spatula; **Dimensions:** Gr_{wall} : 0.7 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown in color; average coarseness; accented hardness; mica in average quantity; **Ornaments:** the fragment displays oblique lines, almost parallel, made with a blunt-ended instrument; **Origin:** S4, square 2, -1.80 m.

13. (Pl. 2/6).

Indicative: VM 265/1973_9; **Type:** jar; flared rim, rounded end; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; well smoked on both sides; **Dimensions:** Gr_{wall} : 0.8 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown – blackish in color; average coarseness; accented hardness; mica in average quantity; **Ornaments:** the fragment displays a round, flattened knob; **Origin:** *passim*.

14. (Pl. 2/7).

Indicative: VM 265/1973_10; **Type:** jar (?); straight rim, notched; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; smoked on the inside; **Dimensions:** Gr_{wall} : 0.6 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown in color; average coarseness; accented hardness; mica in small quantity, organic inclusions (probably a flour-like matter judging according to the small holes left in the fabric); **Ornaments:** the rim was ornamented with notches, made with one’s nail; **Origin:** *passim*.

15. (Pl. 2/9).

Indicative: VM 273/1973_4; **Type:** jar; flared rim, flattened end; **Technique:** modeled by hand; mixed firing; **Dimensions:** \emptyset_{mouth} : 18 cm; \emptyset_{neck} : 16.5 cm; $\emptyset_{\text{median}}$: 18 cm; H_{upper} : 10 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.8 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown in color; average coarseness; accented hardness; lacking visible inclusions; **Ornaments:** the fragment displays an ovoid knob with two alveoli; **Origin:** square B, -0.85 m.

Various categories of vessels

16. (Pl. 2/8).

Indicative: VM 16093/1974; **Type:** smoker, strainer (?); **Technique:** modeled by hand; oxidizing firing; the orifices were made in the damp fabric with a blunt-ended instrument, from the inside out, a fact that triggered in numerous cases the formation of small clay „rings” around the perforations, on the outside. The orifices are not placed symmetrically; **Dimensions:** \emptyset_{mouth} : 14 cm; $\emptyset_{\text{bottom}}$: 8 cm; H_{total} : 12 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.8 cm; **Aspect:** brick-red color; accented coarseness; accented hardness; lacking visible inclusions; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** S I, square 11, -0.60m.

17. (Pl. 3/1).

Indicative: VM 245/1972_12; **Type:** tureen; flared rim, pointy end; miniature, lowered handle, prolonged profile; **Technique:** modeled by hand; oxidizing firing; **Dimensions:** \emptyset_{mouth} : 14 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.4 cm; **Aspect:**

brick-red color; average coarseness; accented hardness; sand in small quantity; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** *passim*.

18. (Pl. 3/2; Pl. 8/2).

Indicative: VM 177/1974_9a,b; **Type:** *pseudokantharos*; straight rim, flattened end; **Technique:** wheel-thrown; reducing firing; polished on both sides; blunt-ended instrument; **Dimensions:** \emptyset_{mouth} : 24 cm; \emptyset_{neck} : 22.5 cm; $\emptyset_{\text{median}}$: 24 cm; H_{upper} : 7 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.6 cm; **Aspect:** blackish in color; very low coarseness; accented hardness; sand in very small quantity; **Ornaments:** the fragments display a poorly profiled horizontal furrow, pulled from the fabric of the vessel during turning; as for the incised ornaments, there are two horizontal, parallel lines placed under the rim, made with a sharp instrument, and a horizontal line made with a blunt instrument, placed on the body of the vessel, that frames an area reserved for ornaments that cannot be easily reconstructed (circles? wavy line?) due to the fragmentary state; **Origin:** square H, -0.50 m.

19. (Pl. 3/3; Pl. 8/3).

Indicative: VM 131/1973_6; **Type:** cup, fragment; torsaded handle; **Technique:** hand modeled; reducing firing; **Dimensions:** Gr_{maximum} : 2 cm; **Aspect:** dark grey – blackish in color; average coarseness; accented hardness; sporadic fragments of chamotte; **Ornaments:** through the fabrication manner, it displays not only functional, but also ornamental values; **Origin:** square H, -0.40 m.

20. (Pl. 3/4).

Indicative: VM 270/1973_6a,b; **Type:** situla, imitation; in-turned rim, rounded end, thickened; **Technique:** hand modeled; reducing firing; wooden spatula, brush; smoked on both sides; **Dimensions:** \emptyset_{mouth} : 30 cm; \emptyset_{neck} : 33.5 cm; Gr_{wall} : 1 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown in color; accented coarseness; accented hardness; large-grain sand and pebbles in significant quantity; **Ornaments:** a horizontal furrow, similar to a step, was pulled from the fabric under the neck; a horizontal strap was delineated with a blunt instrument underneath, followed by a new furrow, more poorly profiled, that frames an area decorated with horizontal striations incised in the fabric as it hardened, with an instrument looking like a comb with blunt tips; **Origin:** square F, -0.55 m.

21. (Pl. 3/5).

Indicative: VM 1973/cm_18; **Type:** tureen; slightly flared rim, rounded end; **Technique:** hand modeled; oxidizing firing; **Dimensions:** \emptyset_{mouth} : 30 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.6 cm; **Aspect:** yellowish in color; average coarseness; average hardness; without visible inclusions; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** *passim*.

22. (Pl. 3/6).

Indicative: VM 153/1973_4; **Type:** pot; slightly flared rim, rounded end, thickened; **Technique:** hand modeled; reducing firing; wooden spatula; secondary firing and smoking on the rim; **Dimensions:** \emptyset_{mouth} : 27 cm; Gr_{wall} : 2 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown – blackish in color; average coarseness; accented hardness; sand in average quantity, pebbles in small quantity; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square F, -0.35 m.

23. (Pl. 3/7).

Indicative: VM 218/1973_1; **Type:** bowl; in-turned rim, flattened end; **Technique:** wheel-thrown; reducing firing; wooden spatula; **Dimensions:** \emptyset_{mouth} : 24.2 cm; Gr_{wall} : 2 cm; **Aspect:** grey in color; low coarseness; accented hardness; mica in small quantity; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** S4, square 4, -1.70 m.

24. (Pl. 3/8).

Indicative: VM 180/1973_6; **Type:** fragment; bottom with umbo; **Technique:** hand modeled; mixed firing; dark brown – blackish slip, strongly corroded; **Dimensions:** $\emptyset_{\text{bottom}}$: 10.2 cm; Gr_{wall} : 1 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown in color; low coarseness; accented hardness; without visible inclusions; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square E, -0.20 m.

25. (Pl. 3/9).

Indicative: VM 177/1974_5a,b; **Type:** cup, wall; **Technique:** wheel-thrown; reducing firing; wooden spatula; polished on the outside; **Dimensions:** Gr_{wall} : 1 cm; **Aspect:** reddish brown fabric (on the inside), blackish (outside); low coarseness; accented hardness; mica in small quantity; **Ornaments:** the fragment displays two vertical, parallel profiles, rather carelessly pulled from the fabric while turning. Between these two furrows there is a horizontal strap, 1.5 cm in width, not polished inside with polished wavy line inside; **Origin:** square H, -0.40 m.

26. (Pl. 3/10).

Indicative: VM 181/1974_3; **Type:** bowl; flared rim, rounded end; cup with profiled shoulder; **Technique:** hand modeled; mixed firing; **Dimensions:** \emptyset_{mouth} : 21 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.7 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown in color (inside), reddish brown (outside); very accented coarseness; accented hardness; large-grain sand and pebbles in large quantity; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square H, -0.90 m.

Storage vessels

27. (Pl. 4/1; Pl. 9/6).

Indicative: VM 194_1974_17; **Type:** *pythos*; strongly flared rim, „in two steps”; **Technique:** wheel-thrown; oxidizing firing; wooden spatula; **Dimensions:** \emptyset_{mouth} : 25 cm; Gr_{wall} : 1–1.2 cm; **Aspect:** orange in color; average

coarseness; accented hardness; mica in average quantity; **Ornaments:** on the groove between the two „steps” of the rim it displays a wavy line, incised in the soft fabric with a blunt-ended instrument, while the vessel was turning; **Origin:** square H, -0.30 m.

28. (Pl. 4/2; Pl. 9/2).

Indicative: VM 194_1974_18; **Type:** *pythos*; ring bottom; **Technique:** wheel-thrown; oxidizing firing; wooden spatula; **Dimensions:** Ø_{bottom} : 25 cm; Gr_{wall} : 1–1.2 cm; **Aspect:** orange in color; average coarseness; accented hardness; mica in large quantity, sand in small quantity; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square H, -0.30 m.

29. (Pl. 4/3; Pl. 9/1).

Indicative: VM 194_1974_20; **Type:** *pythos*, wall; **Technique:** wheel-thrown; oxidizing firing; secondary firing on both sides; wooden spatula; **Dimensions:** Gr_{wall} : 1.3 cm; **Aspect:** brick-red in color; low coarseness; accented hardness; mica in average quantity, pebbles in small quantity; **Ornaments:** it displays two horizontal „steps,” pulled from the fabric while the vessel was turning; **Origin:** square H, -0.50 m.

30. (Pl. 4/4; Pl. 9/7).

Indicative: VM 260_1973_21; **Type:** *pythos*, wall; **Technique:** wheel-thrown; oxidizing firing; wooden spatula; **Dimensions:** Gr_{wall} : 1–1.5 cm; **Aspect:** brick-red in color; average coarseness; accented hardness; mica and pebbles in small quantity; **Ornaments:** it displays one furrow, pulled from the fabric probably while the vessel was being smoothed, careless aspect; **Origin:** square H, -0.30 m.

31. (Pl. 4/5; Pl. 9/4).

Indicative: VM 268_1973_2; **Type:** *dolium*; in-turned rim, flattened end; **Technique:** wheel-thrown; reducing firing; wooden spatula; **Dimensions:** Ø_{mouth} : 30 cm; Gr_{wall} : 1–1.5 cm; **Aspect:** dark grey in color; average coarseness; accented hardness; sand, pebbles, ferrous concretions in average quantity; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** *passim*.

32. (Pl. 4/6; Pl. 9/3).

Indicative: VM 271_1971_6; **Type:** *pythos*, fragment; **Technique:** wheel-thrown; oxidizing firing; wooden spatula; **Dimensions:** Gr_{wall} : 1–1.5 cm; **Aspect:** brick-red in color (grey core); low coarseness; accented hardness; mica and pebbles in small quantity; **Ornaments:** it displays two horizontal line performed while the vessel was turning with a blunt instrument, that frames a wavy lines created in the same way; **Origin:** *passim*.

33. (Pl. 4/7; Pl. 9/5).

Indicative: VM 268_1973_1; **Type:** *dolium*; in-turned rim, T-shaped; **Technique:** wheel-thrown; reducing firing; wooden spatula; **Dimensions:** Ø_{mouth} : 50 cm; Gr_{wall} : 1.8–2.3 cm; **Aspect:** grey in color; average coarseness; accented hardness; sand in average quantity; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** *passim*.

Fruit-bowls

34. (Pl. 5/1).

Indicative: VM 260/1973_1; **Type:** fruit-bowl; strongly flared rim, rounded end; cup with poorly profiled shoulder; **Technique:** modeled by hand; oxidizing firing; polished on both sides; **Dimensions:** Ø_{mouth} : 38.5 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.8 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown – brick-red in color; very low coarseness; accented hardness; sand in small quantity; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square H, – 0.30 m.

35. (Pl. 5/2).

Indicative: VM 260/1973_2; **Type:** fruit-bowl; slightly down-turned rim, with flattened end; cup with poorly profiled shoulder; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; black slip, polished on both sides; **Dimensions:** Ø_{mouth} : 35 cm; Gr_{wall} : 1 cm; **Aspect:** black in color; very low coarseness; very accented hardness; lacking visible inclusions; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** S4, square 5, –2.10 m.

36. (Pl. 5/3).

Indicative: VM 260/1973_3; **Type:** fruit-bowl; flared rim, rounded end; cup with very well profiled shoulder; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; polished on both sides, better on the inside; **Dimensions:** Ø_{mouth} : 30.5 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.5 cm; **Aspect:** reddish-brown in color (inside), blackish (outside); very low coarseness; accented hardness; lacking visible inclusions; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square H.

37. (Pl. 5/4).

Indicative: VM 260/1973_4; **Type:** fruit-bowl; down-turned rim, rounded end; **Technique:** wheel-thrown; reducing firing; black slip, polished on both sides; **Dimensions:** Ø_{mouth} : 44 cm; Gr_{wall} : 1 cm; **Aspect:** black in color; very low coarseness; very accented hardness; sporadic pebbles; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square H, -0.30 m.

38. (Pl. 5/5).

Indicative: VM 260/1973_5; **Type:** fruit-bowl; strongly flared rim, rounded end; cup with well-profiled shoulder; **Technique:** wheel-thrown; reducing firing; traces from a spatula; **Dimensions:** Ø_{mouth} : 38 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.8 cm; **Aspect:** grey in color; average coarseness; accented hardness; without visible inclusions; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square E, – 1.25 m.

39. (Pl. 5/6).

Indicative: VM 194/1974_1; **Type:** fruit-bowl; strongly flared rim, rounded end; cup with well-profiled shoulder; **Technique:** modeled by hand; mixed firing; slight secondary fire traces on the outside; **Dimensions:** Ø_{mouth} : 42 cm; Gr_{wall} : 1 cm; **Aspect:** yellowish brown in color; average coarseness; accented hardness; sporadic pebbles and ferrous concretions; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square H, -0.30 m.

40. (Pl. 5/7).

Indicative: VM 194/1974_2; **Type:** fruit-bowl; flared rim, rounded end; cup with poorly-profiled shoulder; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; well polished on both sides; **Dimensions:** Ø_{mouth} : 22.5 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.8 cm; **Aspect:** black in color; very low coarseness; very accented hardness; without visible inclusions; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square H, -0.90 m.

41. (Pl. 5/8).

Indicative: VM 194/1974_3; **Type:** fruit-bowl; slightly down-turned rim, rounded end; **Technique:** wheel-thrown; reducing firing; dark brown – blackish slip on both sides; **Dimensions:** Ø_{mouth} : 37 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.8 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown – blackish in color; low coarseness; accented hardness; sand in small quantity, sporadic pebbles; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square H, -0.50 m.

42. (Pl. 6/4).

Indicative: VM 129/1973_16; **Type:** fruit-bowl; tronconic foot; **Technique:** wheel-thrown; reducing firing; black slip, well polished on the outside; **Dimensions:** Ø_{bottom} : 16.5 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.7 cm; **Aspect:** black in color (outside), dark yellowish brown (inside); very low coarseness; accented hardness; sand in average quantity, sporadic pebbles; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square H, -0.30 m.

43. (Pl. 6/5)

Indicative: VM 129/1973_17; **Type:** fruit-bowl; tronconic foot; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; polished on the outside; **Dimensions:** Ø_{bottom} : 14.5 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.6 cm; **Aspect:** dark-yellowish brown in color; very low coarseness; accented hardness; lacking visible inclusions; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square H, -0.30 m.

44. (Pl. 6/6; Pl. 7/4).

Indicative: VM 276/1972_2; **Type:** fruit-bowl; spindle-shaped foot; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; polished on the outside; displays a perforation on the bottom of the cup; **Dimensions:** $\text{Ø}_{\text{cupbottom}}$: 8 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.9 cm; $\text{Ø}_{\text{perforation}}$: 0.9 cm – 1.3 cm; **Aspect:** blackish in color; very low coarseness; accented hardness; sand in average quantity and sporadic pebbles; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square B, -0.60 m.

45. (Pl. 6/7; Pl. 7/7).

Indicative: VM 153/1973_8,a,b; **Type:** fruit-bowl; spindle-shaped foot; **Technique:** wheel-thrown; reducing firing; black slip, polished on both sides; **Dimensions:** Ø_{bottom} : 10.5 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.5 cm; **Aspect:** black in color; very low coarseness; accented hardness; graphite in low quantity; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square F, -0.35 m.

Dacian cups (“cățui”)

46. (Pl. 6/1).

Indicative: VM 142/1973_4; **Type:** Dacian cup; flat bottom; low handle, ovoid profile; **Technique:** modeled by hand; oxidizing firing; **Dimensions:** Ø_{bottom} : 5 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.5 cm; **Aspect:** brick-red in color; accented coarseness; accented hardness; sand in average quantity; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square D, -0.40 m.

47. (Pl. 6/2).

Indicative: VM 16094/1974; **Type:** handleless Dacian cup; flared rim, rounded end; flat bottom; **Technique:** modeled by hand; reducing firing; secondary fired and smoked on the inside; **Dimensions:** Ø_{mouth} : 12 cm; Ø_{bottom} : 7 cm; H_{total} : 4.5 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.6 cm; **Aspect:** dark brown in color; accented coarseness; accented hardness; sand and pebbles in average quantity; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square B, – 1.26 m.

48. (Pl. 6/3).

Indicative: VM 212/1972_8; **Type:** Dacian cup; flared rim, flattened end; **Technique:** modeled by hand; oxidizing firing; slightly smoothed; wooden spatula; **Dimensions:** Ø_{bottom} : 25.5 cm; Gr_{wall} : 0.8 cm; **Aspect:** orange in color (inside), reddish (outside); average coarseness; accented hardness; without visible inclusions; **Ornaments:** undecorated; **Origin:** square B, -1.10 m.

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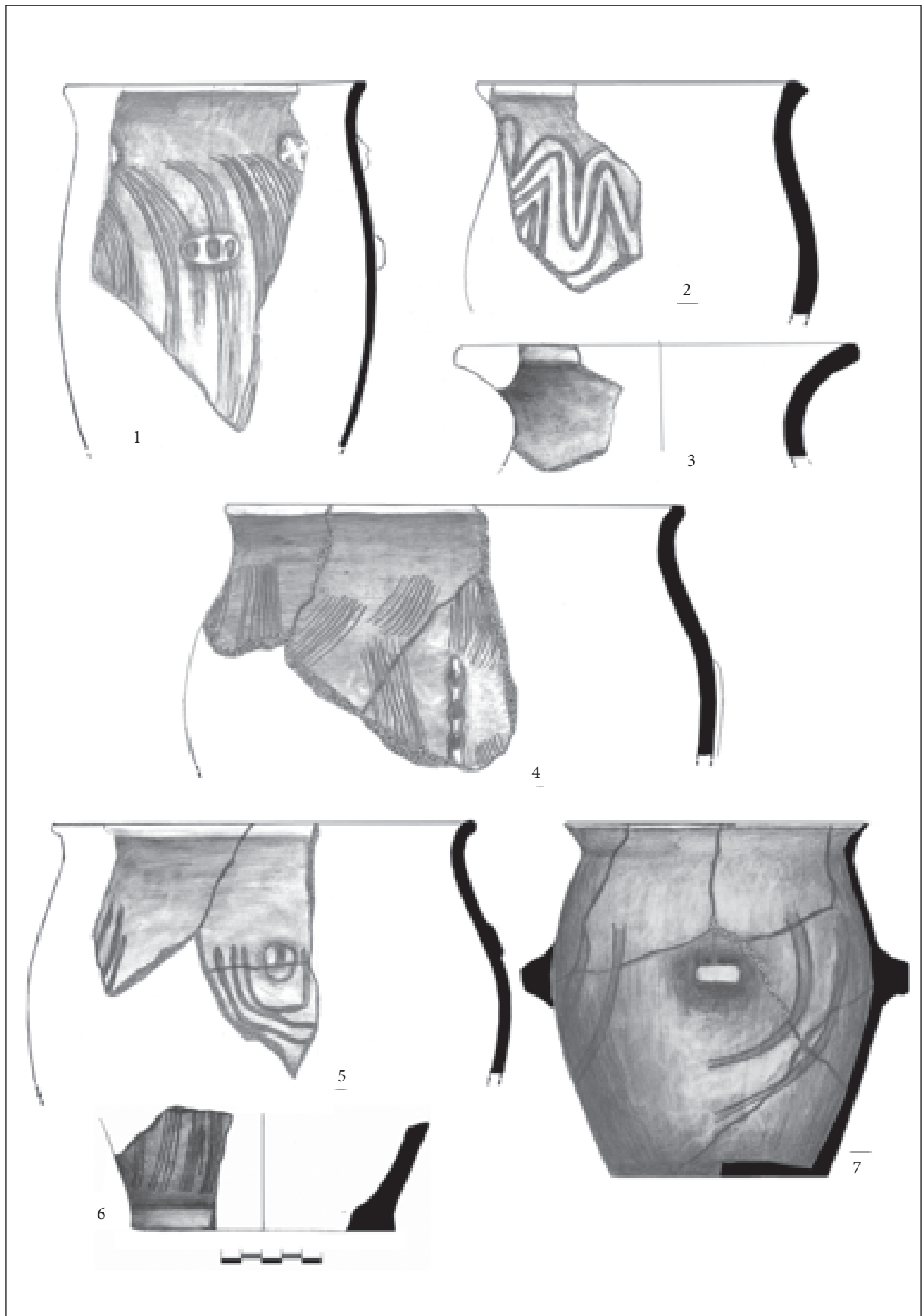


Plate 1. Jars (drawings).

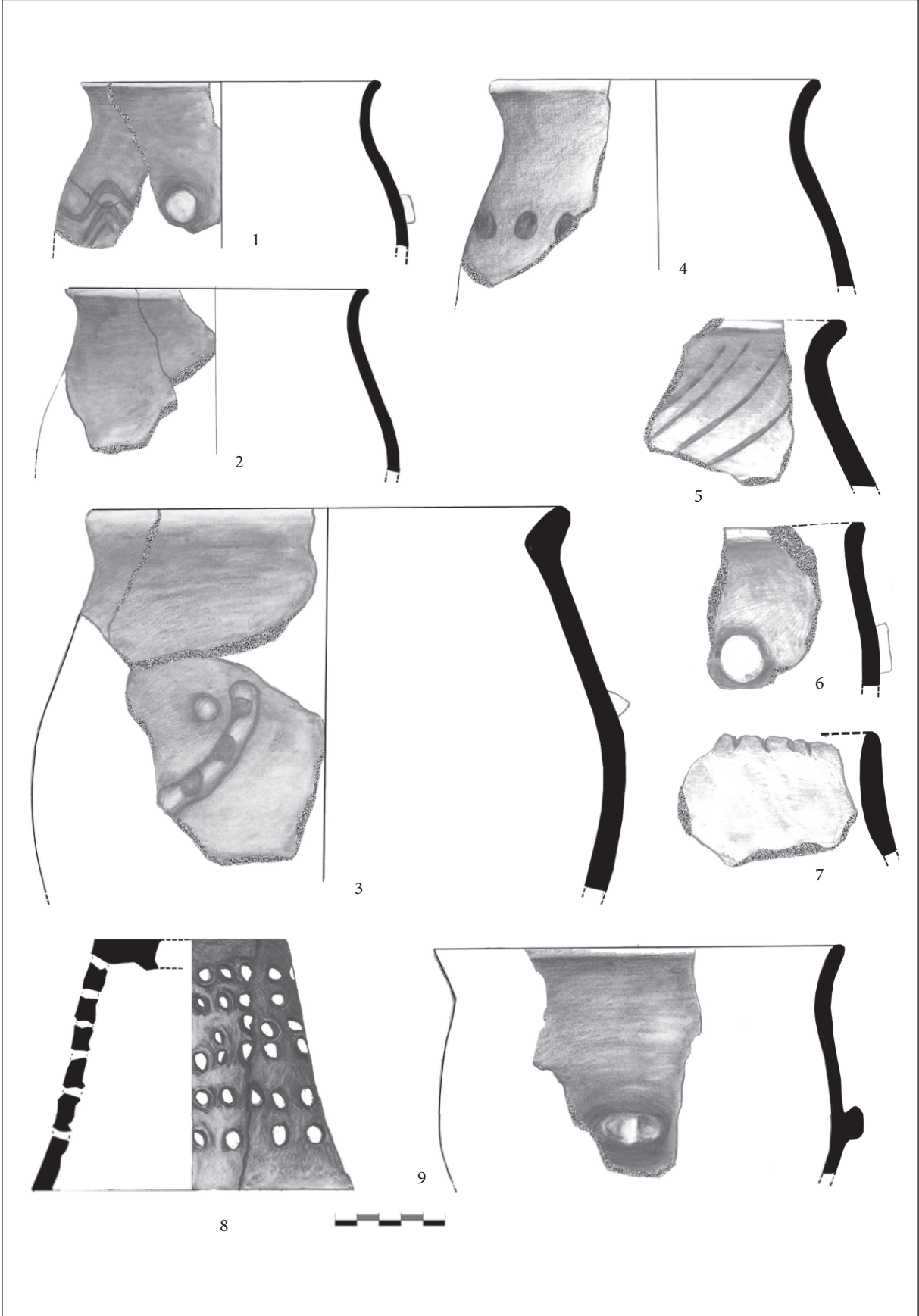


Plate 2. Jars and smoker vessel (drawings).

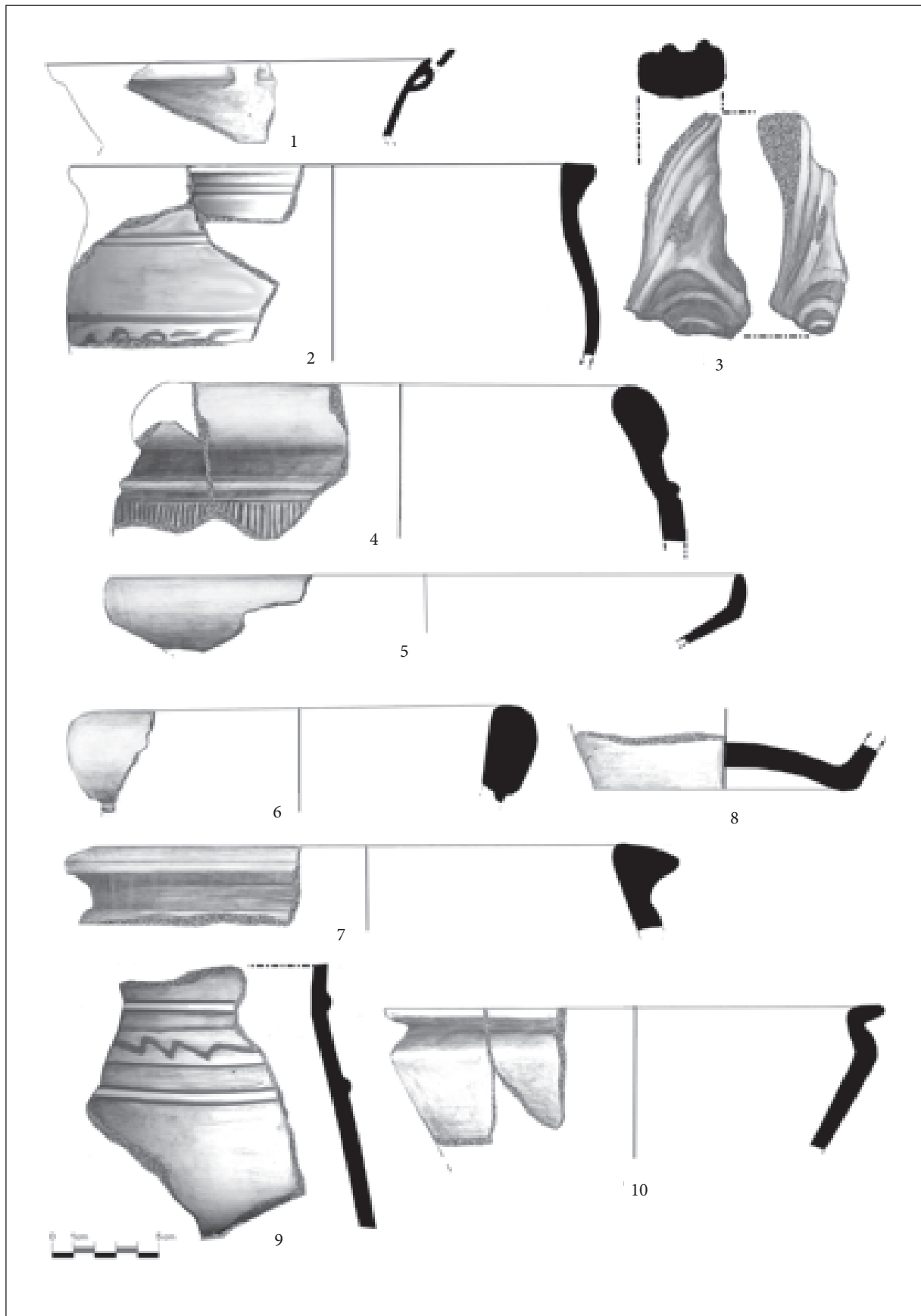


Plate 3. Various categories of vessels (drawings).

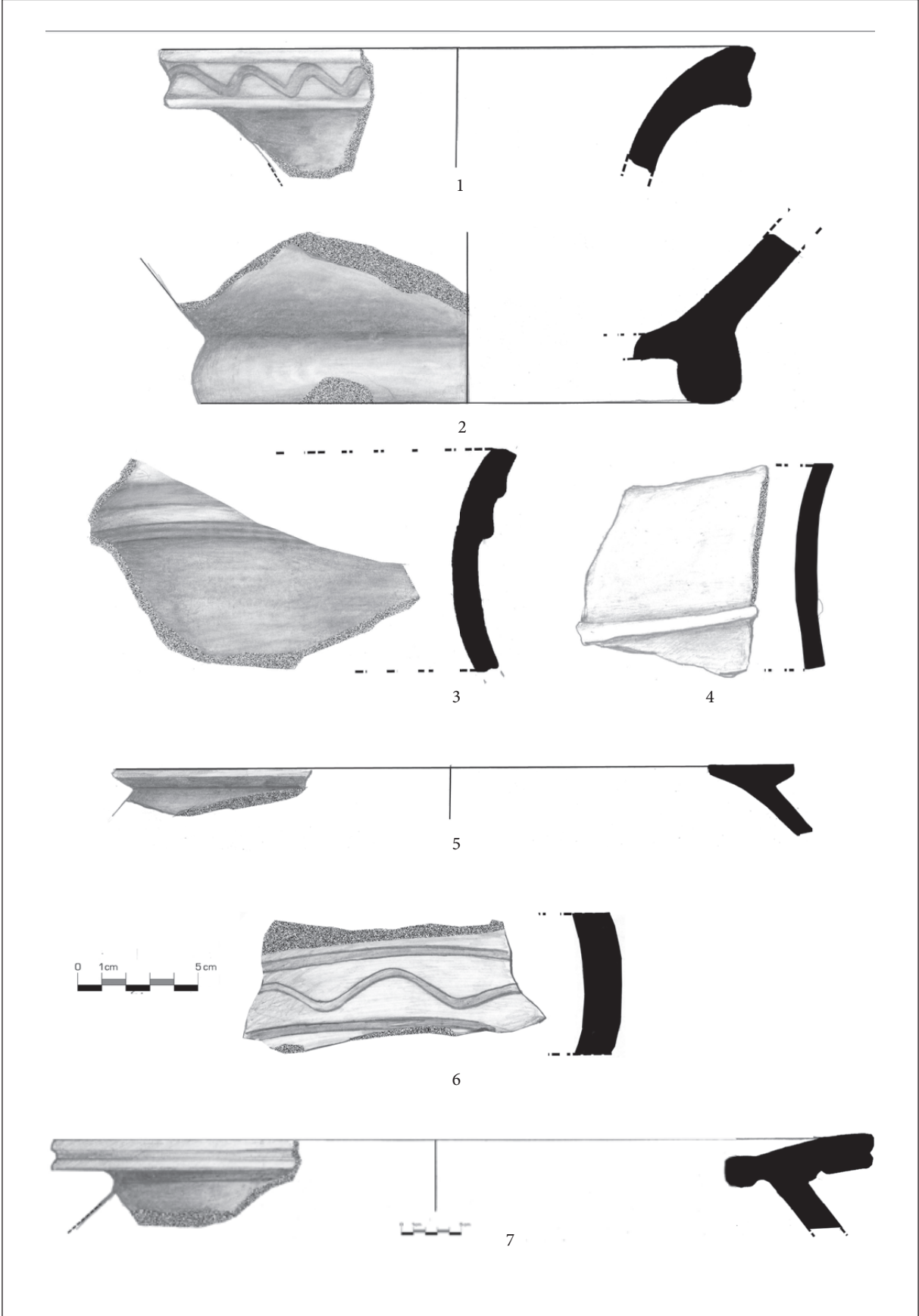


Plate 4. Storage vessels (drawings).

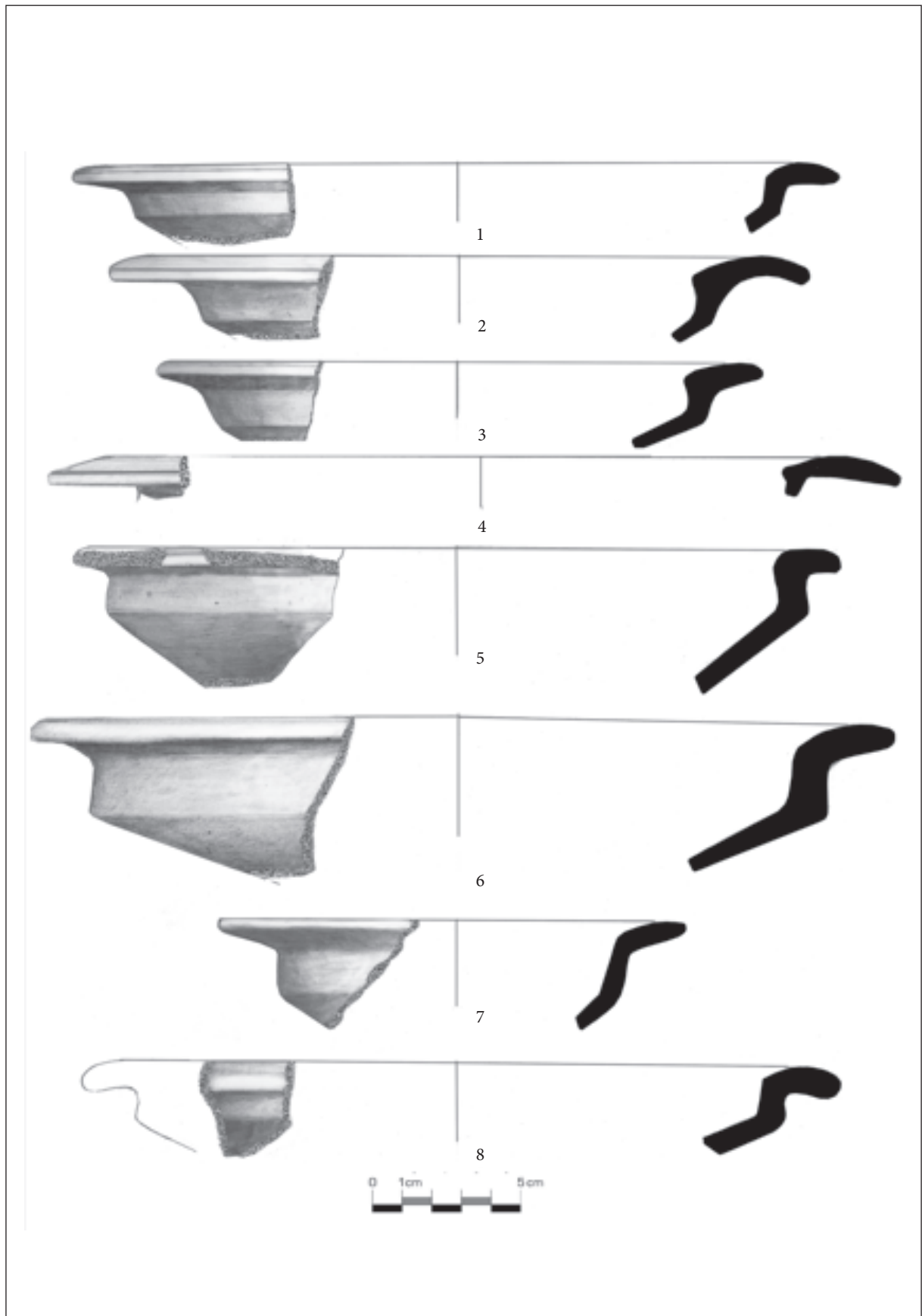


Plate 5. Fruit bowls (drawings).



Plate 6. Dacian cups and fruit bowls (drawings).



Plate 7. Fruit bowls (photographs).



Plate 8. Various categories of vessels and fragments (photographs).



Plate 9. Storage vessels (photographs).



Plate 10. Various objects (photographs).

Abbreviations

ActaArchHung	Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae. Budapest.
ActaHist	Acta Historica. Szeged.
Acta Siculica	Acta Siculica. Sfântu Gheorghe.
Aluta	Aluta. Revista Muzeului Național Secuiesc Sfântu Gheorghe.
Alba Regia	Alba Regia. Annales Musei Stephani Regis. Székesfehérvár.
AMN	Acta Musei Napocensis. Cluj-Napoca.
AMP	Acta Musei Porolissensis. Muzeul Județean de Istorie și Artă Zalău. Zalău.
ATS	Acta Terrae Septemcastrensis. Sibiu.
AISC	Anuarul Institutului de studii clasice Cluj Napoca. Cluj-Napoca.
AnB S.N.	Analele Banatului – serie nouă. Timișoara.
Apulum	Apulum. Alba-Iulia.
AÉ	Archaeologiai Értesítő. Budapest.
Areopolisz	Areopolisz. Történelmi- és társadalomtudományi tanulmányok Odorheiu Secuiesc / Székelyudvarhely.
ArhMed	Arheologia Medievală. Iași.
ArchRozhl	Archeologické Rozhledy. Praga.
ArhVest	Arheološki Vestnik. Ljubljana.
Banatica	Banatica. Muzeul Banatului Montan. Reșița.
BHAUT	Bibliotheca Historica et Archaeologica Universitatis Timisiensis.
BAR International Series	British Archaeological Reports, International Series. Oxford.
BAM	Brukenthal Acta Musei. Sibiu.
BMMK	A Békés Megyei múzeumok közleményei, Békéscsába.
CAH	Communicationes Archaeologicae Hungariae. Budapest.
Cerc. Arh.	Cercetări Arheologice. București.
CIL	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.
CIMRM	Corpus Inscriptionum et Monumentorum Religionis Mithriacae.
CCA	Cronica Cercetărilor arheologice din România. București.
Crisia	Crisia, Muzeul Țării Crișurilor. Oradea.
Dacia N.S.	Dacia. Recherches et Découvertes Archéologiques en Roumanie, București; seria nouă (N.S.): Dacia. Revue d'Archéologie et d'Histoire Ancienne. București.
DissArch	Dissertationis Archaeologicae (Budapest).
Dolġ	Dolgozatok. Szeged.
EphNap	Ephemeris Napocensis. Cluj-Napoca.
EL	Erdővidéki Lapok. Barót/Baraolt.
EM	Erdélyi Múzeum. Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca.
Isis	Isis. Erdélyi Magyar Restaurátor Füzetek. Cluj-Napoca / Kolozsvár.
JbRGZM	Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums Mainz. Mainz.
Marisia	Marisia. Studii și materiale. Arheologie – Istorie – Etnografie. Târgu-Mureș.
MCA	Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice. București.

MFMÉ StudArch	A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve. <i>Studia Archaeologica</i> . Szeged.
MFMÉ MonArch	A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve. <i>Monumenta Archeologica</i> . Szeged.
OpArch	<i>Opvscvla Archaeologica</i> . Zagreb.
OpHung	<i>Opuscula Hungarica</i> . Budapest.
Pontica	<i>Pontica</i> , Constanța.
PZ	<i>Prähistorische Zeitschrift</i> . Berlin.
RMM-MIA	<i>Revista Muzeelor și Monumentelor – seria Monumente Istorice și de Artă</i> . București.
Sargeția NS	<i>Sargeția NS. Deva</i> .
SlovArch	<i>Slovenská Archeológia. Nitra</i> .
Soproni Szemle	Soproni Szemle kulturtörténeti folyóirat. Sopron.
StudCom	<i>Studia Comitatus</i> . Tanulmányok Pest megye múzeumaiból. Szentendre.
ŠtudZvesti	<i>Študijne Zvesti Arheologického Ústavu Slovenskej Akademie Vied</i> . Nitra.
Stud. și Cerc. Num.	<i>Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche și Arheologie</i> . București.
SCIVA	<i>Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche (și Arheologie)</i> . București.
StComSatuMare	<i>Studii și Comunicări. Satu Mare</i> .
Thraco-Dacica	<i>Thraco-Dacica</i> . București.
VMMK	<i>A Veszprém megyei Múzeumok Közleményei</i> . Veszprém.
VTT	<i>Veszprémi Történelmi Tár</i> . Veszprém.
Ziridava	<i>Ziridava, Complexul Muzeal Arad</i> . Arad.