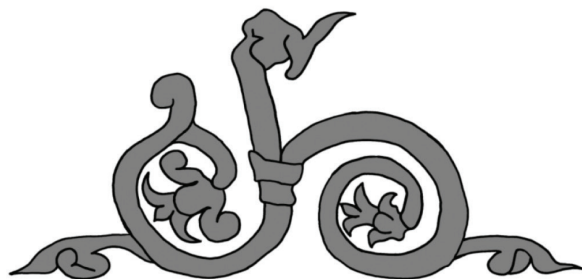


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Any correspondence will be sent to the editor:

Museum Arad

Piata George Enescu 1, 310131 Arad, RO

e-mail: ziridava2012@gmail.com

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Several Observations on the Medieval Battle Knives Found on the Territory of Romania (The MNIR Collection)*

Silviu Oța, Andra Samson

Abstract: The present study discusses several battle knives and fragments thereof from the collections of the National History Museum of Romania (MNIR). The archaeological context of some of the items is known (Basarabi, Podul Dâmboviței, Carașova-Grad, Șibot, Cetățeni-Poiana Târgului), while others have been donated to the museum (Potigrafu, Fălciu, Buriaș). The items in the MNIR collections have been analyzed in correlation with other knives from the territory of Romania to which we have added a previously unpublished item discovered between Arad and Zădăreni (Arad County).

The article suggests identification criteria for such items and mainly analyzes the manner of production of the handles and the scales and their characteristics.

The knives part of this collection (presented in the repertory annexed to the study) identified in archaeological contexts have been dated to the 14th – 16th centuries.

Keywords: battle knives, handle, hilt, blade, fortifications, settlements, dwellings

A relatively significant number of battle knives entered, among other objects, the collection of the National History Museum of Romania since the institution was founded in the early 1970s. In the case of some of them the archaeological context is known (Basarabi¹, Podul Dâmboviței², Carașova-Grad³, Șibot-Cânepiște⁴, Cetățeni-Poiana Târgului⁵), while others have been donated (Potigrafu⁶, Fălciu⁷, Buriaș⁸). They were recovered from seven settlements.

The issue of these weapons has been analyzed by A. A. Rusu in 2003⁹. Four items have been published since (Pl. 1), one discovered in Banat (Carașova-Grad¹⁰; Pl. 5/2) and three others in Crișana (Agrișu Mare¹¹; Pl. 3/2, Batăr¹², Pl. 13/1; Oradea, Pl. 13/2). Other such knives and fragments were overlooked by Rusu, such as those from Enisala (one knife scale¹³, Pl. 4/4, one unfinished knife hilt¹⁴, Pl. 12/2 and one knife fragment¹⁵; Pl. 12/1), Lita¹⁶ (Pl. 4/1), Dăbâca¹⁷, Cluj County (Pl. 3/3) and

* English translation: Ana M. Gruia. Presentation delivered by Silviu Oța and Andra Samson during the international conference "Interethnic Relations in Transylvania. Militaria Mediaevalia in Central and South-Eastern Europe", Sibiu, October 15th–18th, 2015.

¹ We thank Mr. Dumitru Vilceanu for the information. MNIR, inv. no. 122810.

² Item from the MNIR collection, inventory no. 123806.

³ Oța *et al.* 2010, 86, 92, 100, Pl. III/2; Oța, Oța 2011, 180, Pl. 15/9. Item not inventoried.

⁴ Research by Andra Samson (MNIR). Items not restored and not inventoried.

⁵ Chițescu 1976, 175, 178, Fig. 15/3.

⁶ MNIR, inv. no. 340144.

⁷ MNIR, inv. no. 106138.

⁸ MNIR, inv. no. 339289.

⁹ Rusu 2003, 79–84. The author analyzes all items susceptible of being used in a fight, though for some it rather obviously hard to believe they could match an efficient weapon. Some of the knives could have been used for hunting, at most, as their blades are much too thin in section.

¹⁰ See footnote 3.

¹¹ Mărginean 2011, 165, 169, 174, Pl. II/1. L = 12.6 cm, l = 3.1/2.6 cm, thickness = 0.8 cm.

¹² Marta, Ghemiș 2011, 127–129.

¹³ Dragomir 1972–1973 (1974), 40, fig. 14/3, fig. 18/17.

¹⁴ Dragomir 1972–1973 (1974), 37, fig. 14/2.

¹⁵ Dragomir 1972–1973 (1974), 37, fig. 14/1.

¹⁶ Rusu, Mărginean 2005, 136, Pl. III/36. The item measures L = 110 mm, l = 29 mm, thickness = 5 mm and has been dated to the 14th–15th centuries.

¹⁷ Rusu, Mărginean 2005, 136, Pl. V/49. The item measures L = 114 mm; dating: the 13th–14th centuries.

Dumbrava-Obreja-Jgheaburi¹⁸, Dâmbovița County (Pl. 5/3). One can also add one stray find discovered between Zădăreni and Arad¹⁹, Arad County (Pl. 8).

Due to the situation of the latest researches, we believe that the issue of large-size battle knives should be taken up again, even if only partially, with special emphasis on the items in the collection of the National History Museum of Romania.

Item selection criteria

The main criterion in the selection of the studied items has resided in the large size of the blade, ca. 280–300 mm minimum. The second criterion was that of handle characteristics, namely the presence of rivets or rivet perforations in large numbers (Buriaș, Șibot-Cânepiște, Carașova-Grad, Podul Dâmboviței). Some of them were preserved, but others have been lost. Some of the items had a relatively small number of rivets, around three or four (Dumbrava-Obreja-Jgheaburi, Fălciu, Potigrafu, Basarabi). Another element of selection is the aspect of the tang, namely a longitudinal groove that can be observed on the largest part of the available items (Buriaș, Carașova-Grad, Dumbrava-Obreja-Jgheaburi, Potigrafu, Podul Dâmboviței, Șibot-Cânepiște, one item).

Besides knives and knife parts (blades or handles), we have also envisaged bone scales discovered, usually large in size (min. 90 mm in length, up to 126 mm). These can be mainly identified on the basis of the large number of rivet perforations and in some cases of the shoulders made through cutting out the bone. Until now, all of the discovered knife hilts are made of bone or antler, the majority of those identified being made of deer antler.

Context of the discoveries

As for the contexts of the discoveries, such data is only available for few of the items²⁰. In the case of the knives from Potigrafu, Fălciu and Buriaș, acquired and not found by the museum's archaeologists, nothing can be said on the context of discovery. No fortifications of custom points are known in the respective areas.

The items from Șibot-Cânepiște were recovered from a medieval settlement destroyed during the 15th century on the occasion of the battle of Câmpia Pâinii (October 13th 1479).

The handle fragment from Basarabi comes from a rural-type settlement on the border between Walachia and the Ottoman Empire, along the Danube. The settlement had been burned and the inventory of the dwellings left in place. The dating of the context was made on the basis of coins issued during the reign of Mircea cel Bătrân (1386–1418).

The handle from Carașova-Grad was found in the first defensive ditch of the fortification, in a destruction layer dated to the end of the 16th century. The item from Podul Dâmboviței was also discovered in the proximity of a fortification, in the area of a custom point between Transylvania and Walachia. One bone hilt from another battle knife handle was found in the settlement from Cetățeni-Poiana Târgului (Argeș County), dated during the 13th–14th centuries and also located close to a fortification.

The items from Dăbâca, Agrișu Mare, Lita, Batăr and Enisala were also found inside or in the close proximity of fortifications. The one discovered between Arad and Zădăreni, south of River Mureș, was not very far from the fortification of Arad and the item from Oradea is in the same situation, though found on the territory of a medieval settlement dated to the 13th–14th centuries²¹.

¹⁸ Diaconescu, Mihăescu 1986, 257, fig. 6/16, 259.

¹⁹ We thank our colleague Florin Mărginean and the author of the discovery Daniel Mladin for the information. The item measures in total length 590 mm, l blade = 17–40 mm, L handle = 125 mm, l handle = 29–40 mm, handle thickness = 10 mm. The blade is similar to that of the other items, but the tang is V-shaped, lacking rivets or orifices for rivets. The scales are also missing.

²⁰ We shall mainly refer to the novel items and to the previously unpublished ones from the MNIR collection.

²¹ Marta, Ghemiș 2011, 127.

Technical characteristics

The primary materials employed are in all cases iron for the blade, handle and rivets (at least those preserved) and processed deer antler pieces for the scales (Cetățeni “Poiana Târgului”, Șibot “Cânepiște”, Enisala). No detailed investigations are available for now on the other items (Agrișu Mare, Dăbâca, Lita).

The hilts were cut out of larger pieces of bone or antler, polished, perforated and then attached to the tang. One piece of deer antler in the course of processing was found in Carașova “Grad”, tower no. 1, possibly for a knife handle²².

The production techniques are also very simple, namely the iron was forged and then the handle was perforated for the insertion of rivets (made of thin iron bar, circular in section) and then the scales were attached.

The knife blades are usually prolong, with sharp tip, no extra decoration, master marks or drain blood. The blades do not require special discussion as they only differ in length (min. 260 mm) and thickness (min. 6 mm measured near the handle). In all cases the blade is made of the same metal piece as the handle (the metal part).

In the case of handles one can note a number of rivets or perforations for rivets, placed in most cases very close together. The items from Enisala, Fălcui, Potigrafu, Dumbrava-Obreja-Jgheaburi and Basarabi are exceptions to this rule. One item, i.e. the one discovered between Arad and Zădăreni displays a split, V-shaped handle.

Starting from the blade, some items had a small guard for handle, made of metal. The guard for handle was made of two elements, one of each side of the hilt (Podul Dâmboviței). The two iron parts forming the guard were fastened with a rivet.

One of the items, namely the one discovered in Buriaș, preserves an iron rivet in the first perforation near the blade. The rivet's head is flattened, rectangular, with two perforations near the hilt. Its role was probably that of fastening some leather or textile dangle. In the case of the knife from Dumbrava-Obreja-Jgheaburi, the complex from which it was recovered has also revealed an iron item similar to the one on the knife discovered in Buriaș, but was interpreted as a key fragment. One cannot exclude the possibility that this iron element was also used in the same manner.

Beneath the hilts, the handle was in some cases concave on one side and flat on the other (Carașova-Grad, Fălcui, Potigrafu, Buriaș, Șibot). The same characteristics can be noted on the items discovered in Dumbrava – the spot of Obreja-Jgheaburi²³ (municipality of Ulmi, Dâmbovița County)²⁴, but also on the items from Oradea and probably Batăr in Bihor County. The handle was only flat on both sides in a couple of cases (Șibot). A single item, namely the one from Basarabi, had the handle slightly concave in the center and one side bent at a 90° angle.

Taking into consideration the production characteristics of the handles, one can distinguish three large types:

I. The main formal characteristic is the rectangular aspect of the handle.

I.1. Flat handle with rivets placed according to an L-shaped pattern (Șibot-Cânepiște, Pl. 5/1).

I.2. Handles with one longitudinal groove (Carașova-Grad, Pl. 5/2; Dumbrava-Obreja-Jgheaburi, Pl. 5/3). They differ through the number of rivets.

I.2.a. Handle with seven rivets (Carașova-Grad, Pl. 5/2).

I.2.b. Handle with three rivets (Dumbrava-Obreja-Jgheaburi, Pl. 5/3).

I.3. Handles with one longitudinal groove. The position of the rivet perforations is different.

²² Oța *et al.* 2010, 96, 111, Pl. XIV/5.

²³ Diaconescu, Mihăescu 1986, 457, fig. 6/16, 259. The item had three rivets on one side of the concave hilt. The total length of the item measures 34 cm, of which the handle was 9 cm long. The blade and the handle had the same width. It is interesting to note that among the ceramic materials archaeologists have also recovered a so-called “key” from dwelling no. 1. The element displays the same characteristics as the one discovered on the battle knife recovered from the settlement of Buriaș. This makes us wonder if the “key” was maybe part of the knife. According to the settlement's stratigraphy, both items are dated to the 14th century.

²⁴ Silișteea has been attributed to the medieval village of Lucieni, near Târgoviște, mentioned in medieval documents dated 1451 (Diaconescu, Mihăescu 1986, 53). The settlement's chronology is limited to the 14th and the 15th centuries.

- I.3.a. Has two perforations at both ends (Fălciu, Pl. 6/1).
- I.3.b. Has two perforations at the end of the handle and one by the blade (Potigrafu, Pl. 6/2).
- I.4. Handle with longitudinal concavity and rivets placed according to a Y-shaped pattern (Buriaș, Pl. 6.3).

II. The long sides of the handle are oblique and the end is relatively rounded. Four handle models were identified in these cases.

- II.1. Simple handle, but with a large number of rivets placed in a row (Șibot-Cânepiște, Pl. 7/1).
- II.2. Handle S-shaped in section, with a small number of rivets (Basarabi, Pl. 7/2).
- II.3. Handle with one longitudinal concavity on one side and the rivets placed in row. The rivet orifices differ in size (Podul Dâmboviței, Pl. 7/4). At the end, the handle displays an oval, concave, iron appliqué. The iron hilt is set towards the blade.
- II.4. Handle with rivets placed in the shape of a Latin cross (Șibot "Cânepiște", Pl. 7/3).

III. The tang is split, V-shaped (the item discovered between Arad and Zădăreni, Pl. 8/1a).

One can also add to these types the battle knife fragments (handle fragment and blade fragment), such as, for example, the item from Enisala (Pl. 12/1–2). Other items, like those from Oradea and Batăr have the handle end broken and thus can only be included in certain groups according to their shape and not the position of the rivet perforations (Oradea, Pl. 13.2, and the item from Batăr probably Pl. 13/1). One can at most suspect that the handles ends were straight and at least in the case of one item (Oradea) the tang was concave.

Hilts. All the available items were made of bone or deer antler (Șibot, Cetățeni "Poiana Târgului", Enisala). Another knife, from the collection of the National Szekler Museum in Sf. Gheorghe also displays hilts made of the same material. It is possible that some hilts were made of wood, but were not preserved.

According to their aspect, the hilts are with or without a guard. All available items display a large number of perforations.

I. Hilts without guard.

I.1. The items lacking a hilt have the rivet perforations placed in a row, like for example in Șibot-Cânepiște (Pl. 3/1.a-b).

I.2. Hilt with three perforations, placed some distance apart, in a row. This is the only decorated items, ornamented with concentric circles (Agrișu Mare, Pl. 3/2).

I.3. Hilt with perforations placed in a Y-shaped pattern (Dăbâca, Pl. 3/3).

II. Hilts with guard.

II.1. Hilt with guard and perforations placed in a row (Lita, Pl. 4/1).

II.2. Hilts with guard and perforations placed according to a Y-shaped pattern (Enisala, Pl. 4/4; Cetățeni "Poiana Târgului", Pl. 4/2; Șibot "Cânepiște", Pl. 4/3).

Two issues emerge in the analysis of these battle knives.

The first is their origin. In this regard, the first question one asks is where they were produced. Considering that fragments of iron slag or melted iron were discovered inside or near many fortifications, we believe that this could be a good indication that simpler weapons such as battle knives could have been produced in such places, besides the items usually needed in the maintenance of a fortifications and not only for this. Another way in which battle knives could have ended in such spots is commercial activity. They might have been products of rural or urban workshops and their owners engaged in military activities in fortifications or fortified cities. One can naturally suspect that such knives were often lost during conflicts. At the current state of research, we can neither refute nor support any of these hypotheses.

The second issue that can be addressed is whether the hilts in the course of processing (or their primary material) discovered in various fortifications also indicates the possible local production of knives or only maintenance works performed, i.e. the replacement of damaged hilts (Enisala and

probably Carașova-Grad). To the current state of research, the situation is different in every spot where such weapons were found. Taking into consideration that no workshop specialized in the production of battle knives has been yet found, one cannot yet reach conclusions on any of the spots where they were recovered from. We can at most enumerate hypothetical situations, of theoretical value and devoid of actual results.

From a technical perspective one can note that the same positioning models are to be found on both hilts and handles. This is visible through the alignment of perforations and rivets (according to how they have been preserved). One can thus prove that both components of battle knives (the hilts and the handle) complete each other and their matching is beyond doubt, especially in cases when the blade is missing.

A special situation is that of each knife's handle end. This element could be simple, without an appliqué (Șibot-Cânepiște, Carașova-Grad, Basarabi, Potigrafu etc.), but also with an iron appliqué, such as in the case of the item from Podul Dâmboviței. Still, to the current state of research, the latter item is an exception.

Conclusions

Many of the items are destroyed. One notes that their weak spot seems to have been the handle and blade meeting area or even the handle. Among the available items four had the handle broken and the blade intact (Fălciu, Batăr and two of the items from Șibot "Cânepiște"), some had the handles broken in the area of the rivets (Basarabi, Carașova "Grad", Șibot "Cânepiște", three items to which one can add a hilt from the same settlement), and nine were broken at the meeting of handle and blade (Șibot-Cânepiște, 11 items, Podul Dâmboviței). There is only one exception, an item discovered in Enisala, that displays both a broken handle and a broken blade. The large number of rivets, thus of the perforations of the handle, and the heavy blade created problems during stronger blows that practically broke the knife in two.

The discovery of the items in fortifications or near them clearly demonstrates that these were weapons rather often used in the military environment. Their discovery in rural areas as well connects such blades to smaller or larger conflicts, but one cannot attribute them to individuals of a certain social standing. In fact, both suppositions are plausible to the current state of research.

As for the geographic distribution of battle knives, one can note that they were common weapons in Transylvania, Banat and Crișana, and also in Moldavia or Walachia or even in Dobrudja. Though popular enough and relatively easy to produce, the fashion of using them probably faded the latest during the beginning of the 16th century when they were replaced with more efficient weapons. It is interesting that functionally similar weapons, close in size and of much better quality, came mainly from the Middle East, adopted during the subsequent centuries in the north-Danubian area as well. The latter remained in fashion until the beginning of the 19th century.

Medieval iconography in Transylvania attests the use of large battle knives. The best known example is the portrait of *jupan* Balea and his son in the church from Crișior²⁵ (Hunedoara County; Pl. 2/1). The depiction of such battle knives together with a relatively high-ranking man of the rural environment might be an indicator of their use among the elites.

²⁵ I shall not dwell further on the iconographic depictions, as A. A. Rusu has discussed the issue sufficiently in his 2003 study, p. 75–76.

Catalogue of the items in the MNIR collection

1. Basarabi (village belonging to the city of Calafat, Dolj County)

Context of discovery: Systematic research of a medieval settlement destroyed by fire.

Item description: Fragment from the handle of a battle knife preserving one rivet and one fragment from another rivet. On one side the tang is concave. The long sides are different, one pointed and the other curved at a 90° angle. L = 73.6 mm, l = 34.3 mm, thickness of tang and rivets = 30.2 mm, MNIR Inv. no. 122810 (Pl. 7/2).

Bibliography: previously unpublished item from the MNIR collection. Researches by Dumitru Vâlceanu between 1968 and 1969.

2. Buriaș (municipality of Periș, Ilfov County)

Context of discovery: Unknown. Item acquired by the MNIR in 2013.

Item description: Battle knife blade with handle, missing the scales and the rivets (not restored). On the handle one can note nine perforations placed in a Y-shaped pattern, eight of which are for rivets. At one end it is flattened and perforated in two points (the item is in the shape of a small key). The handle is concave on one side and has been bent. L total = 473 mm, L blade = 365 mm, L handle = 108 mm, l handle = 24–32 mm, handle thickness = 2.7–6.4 mm, blade thickness = 8.3 mm, L tang = 43.5 mm, l tang = 23 mm, MNIR Inv. no. 339289 (Pl. 9/3)

Bibliography: previously unpublished item from the MNIR collection.

3. Carașova (municipality of Carașova, Caraș-Severin County)

Context of discovery: Systematic research of a medieval fortification made of stone that can be dated to the fourteenth-sixteenth centuries. The item was recovered from the first defensive ditch of the fortification (Pl. 2/2).

Item description: Fragment from the handle of a battle knife (not restored). It is concave on one side and still preserves six rivet perforations. The item is deformed and misses two pieces of iron between two perforations and one on one side. L = 90 mm, l = 23.8 mm (Pl. 5/2).

Bibliography: Oța, Oța, Georgescu, Popa 2010, p. 86, 92, 100, Pl. III/2; Oța, Oța 2011, 180, Pl. 15/9.

4. Cetățeni (municipality of Cetățeni, Argeș County)

Context of discovery: Medieval settlement systematically researched in 1976 on the spot called “Poiana Târgului” dated to the thirteenth-fourteenth century.

Item description: Bone hilt. There are eight rivet perforations placed in a Y-shaped pattern. L = 117 mm, l = 43 mm, thickness = 10 mm, weight = 24 grams, MNIR Inv. no. 64141 (Pl. 4/2).

Bibliography: Chițescu 1976, 175, 178, Fig. 15/3.

5. Fălciu (municipality of Fălciu, Vaslui County)

Context of discovery: Unknown. The item was acquired by the MNIR in 1973 and has been restored.

Item description: Battle knife missing one fragment from the handle, the hilts and the rivets (restored). On the tang, concave on one side, one notes five perforations placed according to a Y-shaped pattern, for the setting of hilts with rivets. L total = 490 mm, L blade = 423 mm, L handle = 78 mm, l handle = 26.3 mm, thickness = 7.7 mm, MNIR Inv. no. 106139 (Pl. 9/1).

Bibliography: previously unpublished item from the MNIR collection.

6. Podul Dâmboviței (municipality of Dâmbovicioara, Argeș County)

Context of discovery: Medieval fortification and settlement, systematically researched in 1968–1969.

Item description: Battle knife handle with hilt, made of wrought iron (restored). The hilts and rivets have not been preserved. One perforation is located by the hilt consisting of two iron pieces, identical in size (T-shaped) and fastened with a rivet (currently missing) on both sides of the handle. The latter is concave on one side, has seven rivet orifices for hilts fixing. The one at the base is larger than the first six. An oval iron appliqué is set at the end with a rivet. L = 135 mm, l at the hilt = 54 mm, l at the end of the handle, by the appliqué = 35.6 × 28.8 mm. The knife's blade was broken from under the hilt, MNIR Inv. no. 123806 (Pl. 7/4).

Bibliography: previously unpublished item from the MNIR collection.

7. Potirafu (municipality of Gorgota, Prahova County)

Context of discovery: Unknown. Item acquired by the MNIR in 2013.

Item description: Battle knife missing the rivets and the hilts (not restored). On the handle one can note two rivets, while the rest of the perforations are filled with iron oxides (the item has not been restored). On one of the sides the item is concave. L = 447 mm, L blade = 335 mm, L handle = 112 mm, l handle = 24–29 mm, l = 40 mm, blade thickness = 9 mm, handle thickness = 5.3 mm, MNIR Inv. no. 340144 (Pl. 9/2).

Bibliography: previously unpublished item from the MNIR collection.

8. Şibot (municipality of Şibot, Alba County)

Context of discovery: The medieval site in Şibot (spot *Cânepişte*) was signaled and researched during works of archaeological diagnostic and preventive research performed in 2011–2012 part of the *Autostrada* National Research Program. The preliminary data on the micro-region of the site have been correlated for the theoretical evaluation during the same period.

The preventive archaeological researches performed in the spring and summer of 2012 have confirmed the existence of the medieval settlement of which 300 archaeological complexes were investigated between kilometers 8+650 and 8+950 of the A1 – Orăştie – Sibiu highway, in the Orăştie – Sebeş sector (the surface envisages the route of the highway and the deviation, through the construction of a bridge, of road DN7; both road infrastructure works have affected the medieval site).

In order to obtain an image of the settlement as complete as possible we have initiated the excavations by marking out a series of sections of stratigraphic testing (S1–S16) along the entire width of the highway and in the area where the national road DN7 was to be relocated. The archaeological complexes were only identified in S1–S9. Seven large stratigraphic layers were identified in all. The medieval complexes, dated to the fifteenth century, and the burnt layer associated to the battle of 1479 were identified right under the plowing level. The stratigraphy was relatively even over the entire surface of the site. The majority of the complexes from the fifteenth century were identified in stratigraphic layer 3 and they were also the most numerous. The mentioned habitation level consists of pit-houses, dwellings erected on stone base, household ovens, numerous water wells and household refuse pits, as the road of the settlement that crosses the entire medieval village lengthwise. The artifacts associated to this context are extremely numerous, from a great variety of pottery remains to many agricultural tools (sickles, plow coulter, axes), knives of domestic use, nails and spikes, spindle weights, processed animal bones. In this context archaeologists discovered numerous spurs, arrowheads, battle knives, one sword fragment (remains of the above mentioned battle that has led to the destruction of the medieval settlement). The same context/archaeological level also revealed numerous human bones that were not in anatomical connection.

Items description:

1. Fragment from a handle with bone hilts (not restored). Both bone plates are broken, one recently, the other of old. Towards the end of the handle they are oblique and slightly widened. Five rivets have been preserved, of which the one nearest the hilts almost destroyed. L = 88 mm, l = 30 mm, thickness = 22 mm, scales thickness = 7 mm (Pl. 3/1a). The item was found in Cpl. 219²⁶.
2. Handle with bone hilts (not restored). The bone plates are partially broken and cracked, some recently, others of old. Seven rivets have been preserved. Towards the end, the handle is slightly widened and has oblique sides. L = 110.8 mm, l = 22.6 mm, thickness = 23 mm, scales thickness = 7.3 mm (Pl. 3/1b). The item was found in Cpl. 219.
3. Battle knife blade (not restored). L total = 290 mm, l = 30.5 mm, thickness = 7.2 mm (Pl. 10/5). The item was found in SA3, in the uncovered vegetal layer located south of the gravel road, -0.40 m.
4. Battle knife blade with handle fragment and one rivet (not restored). The handle that still preserves one rivet, has a step near the blade. L total = 395 mm, L blade = 350 mm, l blade = 33 mm, blade thickness = 11.4 mm, L handle = 45 mm, handle thickness = 9.7 mm (Pl. 10/2); The item was found in SA2, -0.40 m – 0.60 m, in the gray archaeological layer.
5. Battle knife blade (not restored). L = 382 mm, l = 36.5 mm, thickness = 7.2 mm (Pl. 10/3). The item was found in SA3, -0.40 m, under the removed vegetal layer.
6. Battle knife blade (not restored). One notes a small step at the base of the blade, towards the handle. L = 308 mm, l = 26.4 mm, thickness = 6 mm (Pl. 10/1).
7. Battle knife blade with handle fragments (not restored). L total = 530 mm, L blade = 470 mm, l = 38.5 mm, thickness = 8.8 mm (Pl. 10/4). The item was found in Cpl. 195, SA3, -0.40 m²⁷.
8. Battle knife blade and eight, possibly nine rivets, of which the last one is broken (item not restored). There is a step between blade and handle. The handle is concave on one side and slightly curved towards the end. The rivets are placed according to an L-shaped pattern. L total = 458 mm, L blade = 342 mm, l blade = 26.5 mm, blade thickness = 10.6 mm, L handle = 116 mm, handle thickness = 7 mm, L rivets = 21.2 mm (Pl. 10/6). The item was discovered in SA2, -0.60 m, Cpl. 236²⁸.

²⁶ Large household refuse pit measuring 2.50 m × 2.20 m. Identified at the depth of 0.50 m. The lower part of the complex was identified at -1.35 m. The fill consisted of compact gray soil with pigments of coal and burnt adobe. The inventory consisted of pottery and animal bones.

²⁷ Dwelling identified on the western side of section 4 (S4). The dwelling's oven was discovered and researched. The complex was identified at -0.50 m from the current ground level. Its preserved dimensions measured 1.8 m × 1.6 m. The oven had a clay base, vitrified in large, compact pieces after the fire. In the center of the hearth archaeologists found several pottery fragments with secondary firing and numerous fragments of carbonized wood.

²⁸ The complex was identified at the depth of 0.60 m; the welling measured 5 m × 3 m. It is rectangular in shape, with

9. Bone hilt with guard. There are nine rivet perforations placed according to a Y-shaped pattern (Pl. 4/3). One of the iron rivets has been preserved. L = 113 mm, l = 27 mm, thickness = 9 mm. L rivet = 20 mm, rivet thickness = 5 mm. The item was discovered in SA4, -0.77/-1.03 m, Cpl. 67²⁹.

10. Battle knife handle (not restored). Made of forged iron. The hilts have not been preserved. The handle, concave on one side, has eight rivets for the fixing of hilts, placed according to a Y-shaped pattern. In the end the handle is rounded (Pl. 7/3). L = 120 mm, l = 30 mm, handle thickness = 5 mm, total thickness = 16 mm. The item was found in SA4, -1.56 m, in the archaeological layer west of Cpl. 102.

11. Battle knife blade (not restored). L = 260 mm, l = 34 mm, thickness = 6 mm (Pl. 10/7, 11/7). The item was found in SA4, -0.60 m, layer south of S6.

Bibliography: previously unpublished items from the MNIR collection. Researches by Andra Samson.

Silviu Oța

The National History Museum of Romania Bucharest

București, ROU

silviuota@yahoo.com

Andra Samson

The National History Museum of Romania Bucharest

București, ROU

andrasamson@gmail.com

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irregular sides. The northern side is destroyed. The fill consisted of a layer of brunt adobe mixed with stones, bricks and many burnt wood fragments. In the NE corner archaeologists have identified an area with a lot of burnt materials, remains of a heating installation. There were several stones of various sizes, in the SW part, possibly from an intentional pulling apart of the walls.

²⁹ Annex of a large dwelling, 7.5 × 2 m. Depth of identification -0.83 m, inner depth -0.85 m. The fill consists of gray soil. Inside the annex contained a large oval oven (1.85 × 0.54 m).

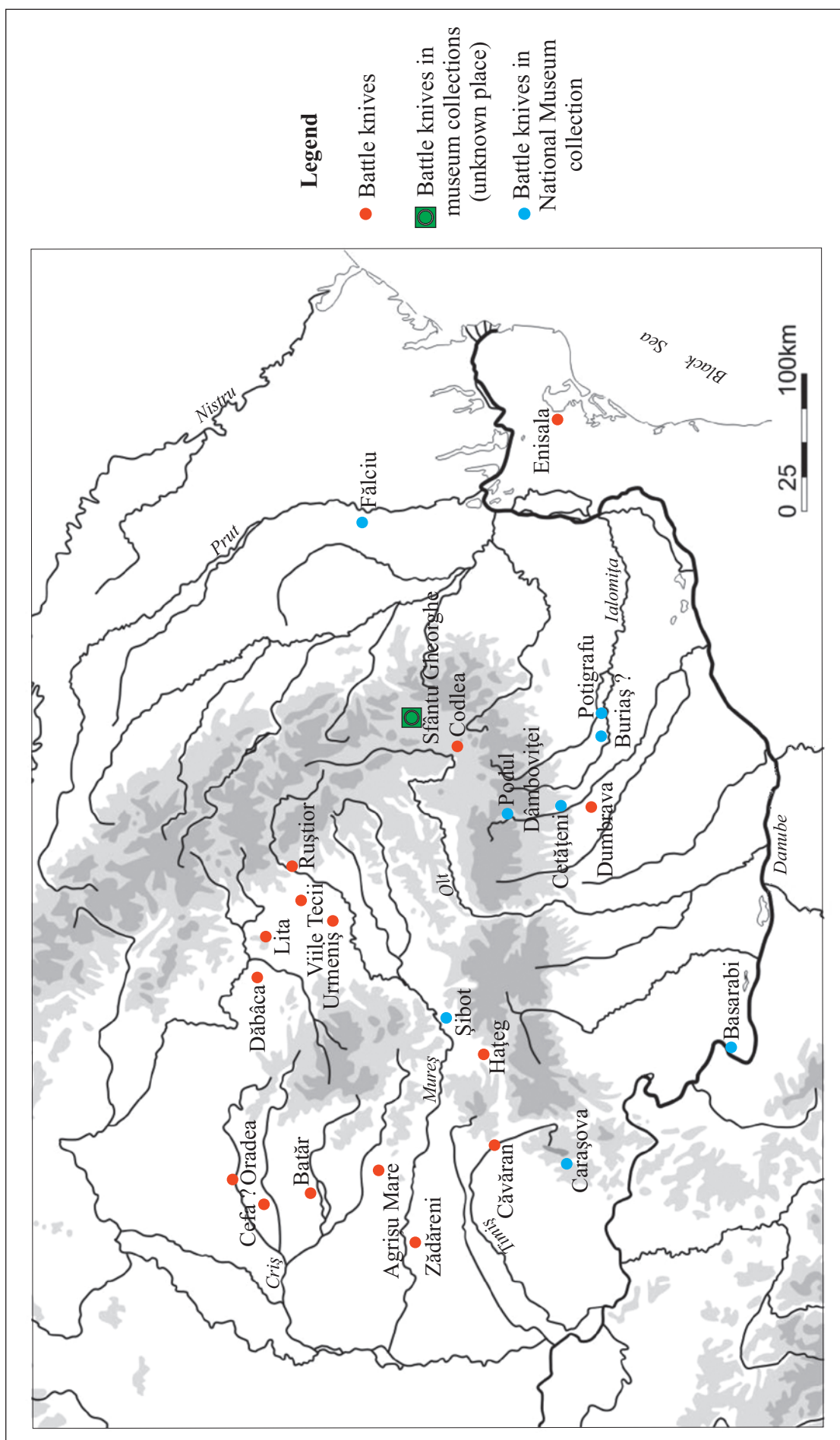


Plate 1. Distribution map of battle knives on the territory of Romania.



1



2

Plate 2. 1. Depiction of *Jupan Balea*, Crișcior (Hunedoara County);
2. Carașova (Caraș-Severin County), 2001 (photo Silviu Oța).

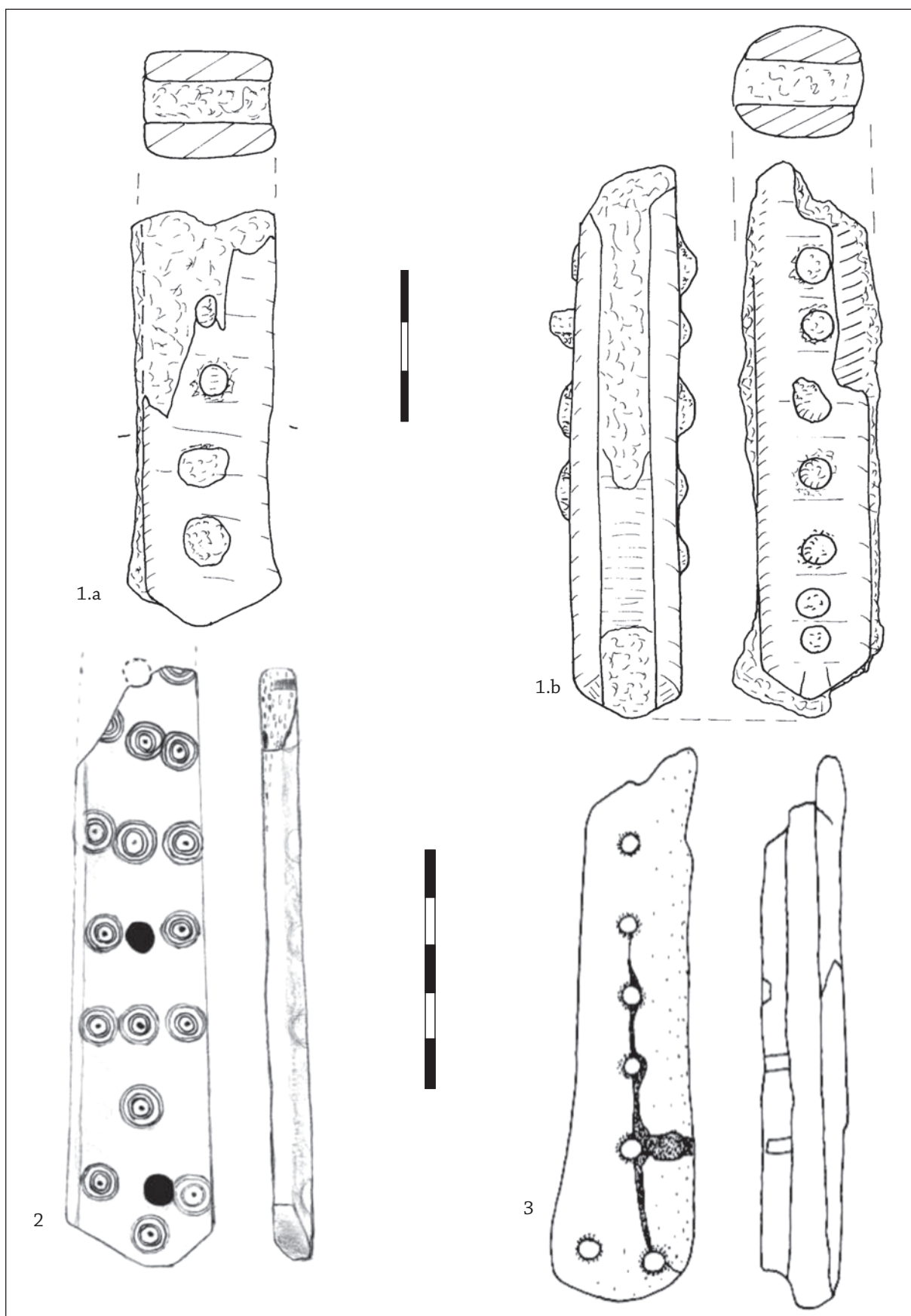


Plate 3. Typology of handles with bone scale. 1. a-b) Șibot; a) cat. no. 8.1; b) cat. no. 8.2 (drawings by Georgiana Ducman, MNIR); 2. Agrișu Mare (according to Mărginean 2011); 3. Dăbâca (according to Rusu, Mărginean 2005).

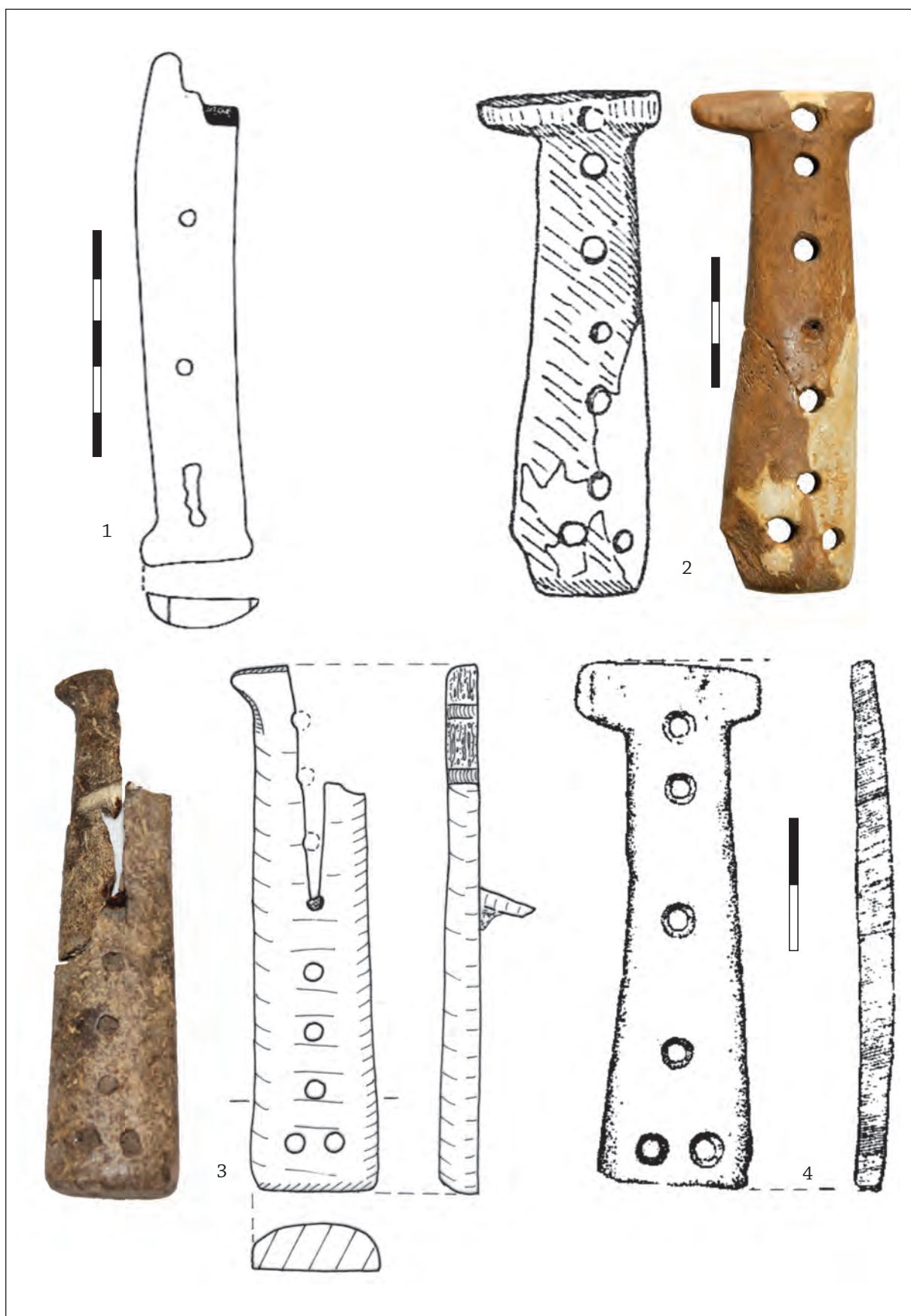


Plate 4. Typology of handles with bone scales. 1. Lita (according to Rusu, Mărginean 2005); 2. Cetățeni, cat. no. 4 (drawing after Chițescu 1976; photo Valentin Radu, MNIR); 3. Șibot, cat. no. 8.9 (drawing by Georgiana Ducman, MNIR; photo Andra Samson); 4. Enisala (according to Dragomir 1972–1973 (1974).

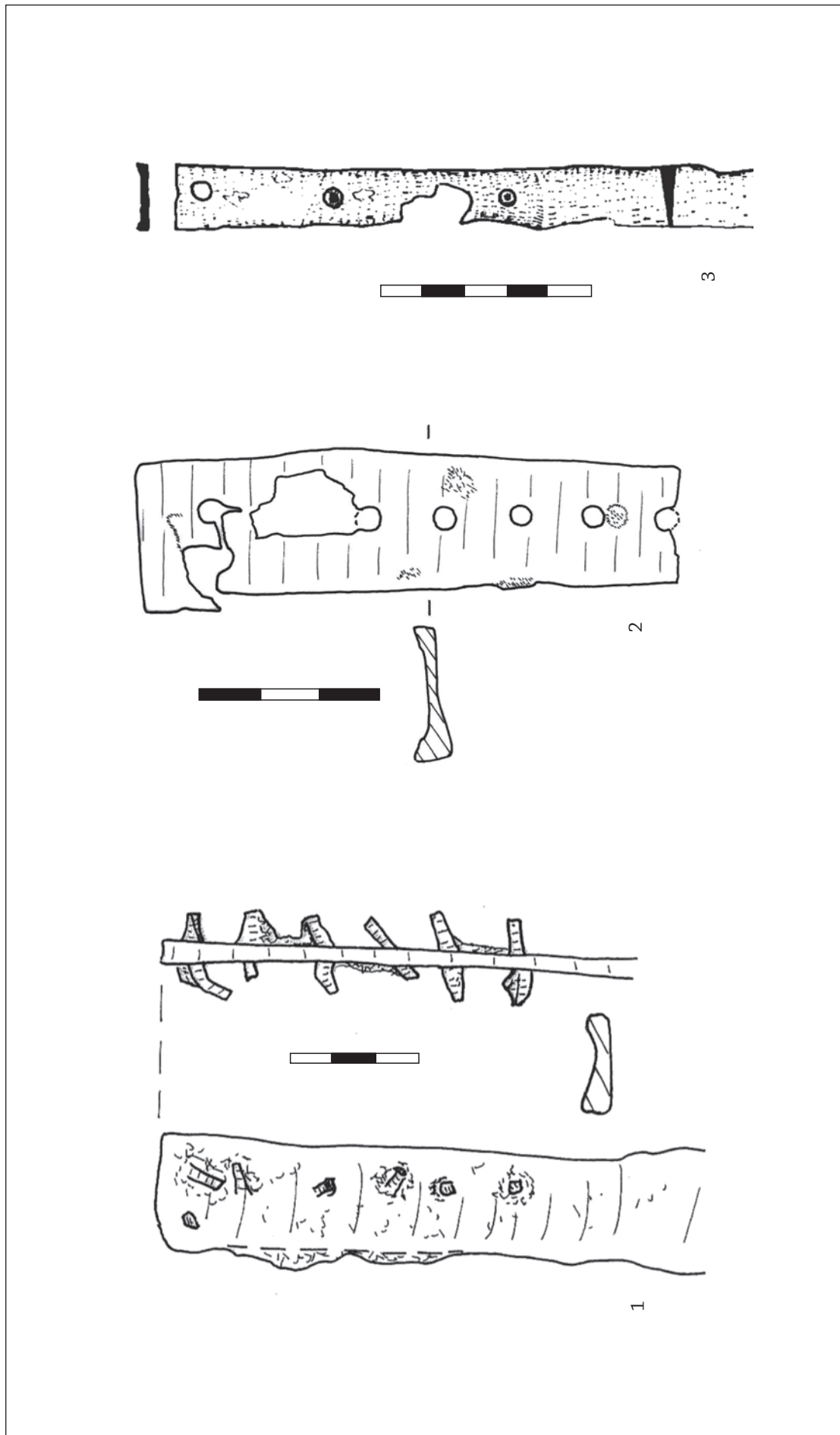


Plate 5. Handle typology (drawings by Georgiana Ducman, MNIR). 1. Șibot, cat. no. 8.8; 2. Carașova, cat. no. 3 (according to Oța, Oța, Georgescu, Popa 2010); 3. Dumbrava (according to Diaconescu, Mihaescu 1986).

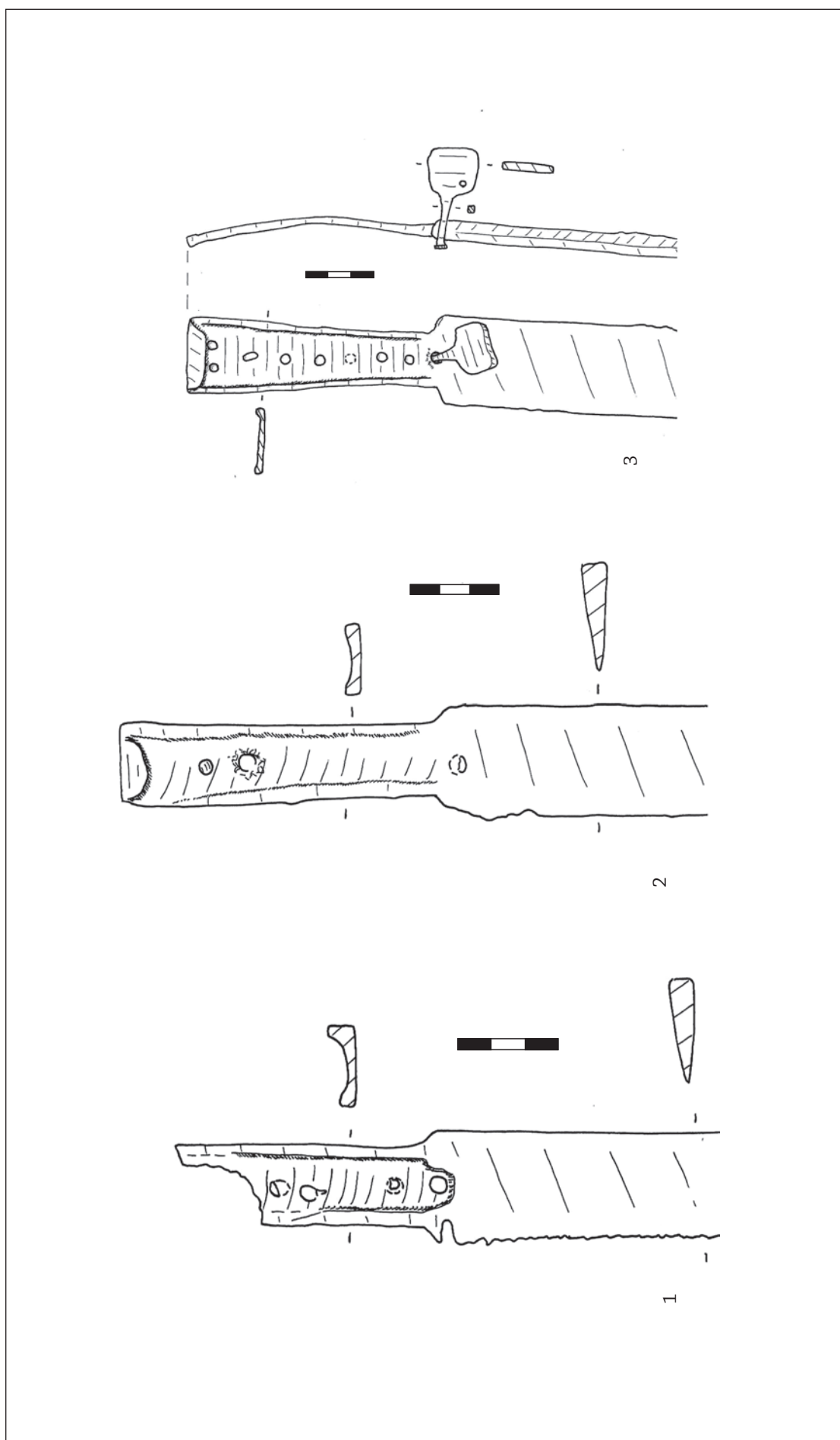


Plate 6. Handle typology (drawings by Georgiana Ducman, MNIR). 1. Fălciu, cat. no. 5; 2. Potigrafu, cat. no. 7; 3. Buriaș, cat. no. 2.

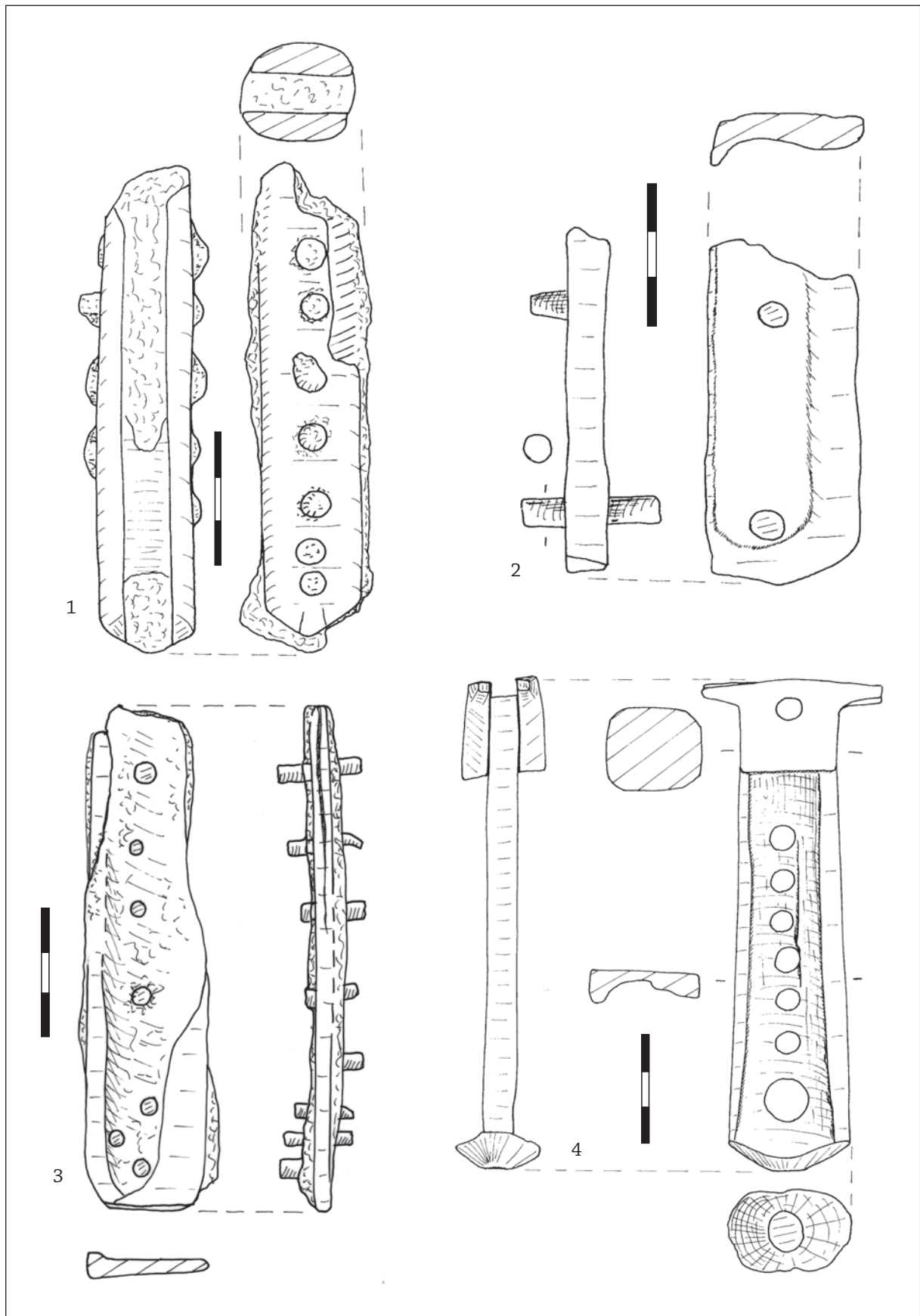


Plate 7. Handle typology (drawings by Georgiana Ducman, MNIR). 1. Șibot, cat. no. 8.2;
2. Basarabi, cat.no. 1; 3. Șibot, cat. no. 8.10; 4. Podul Dâmboviței, cat. no. 6.



Plate 8. Handle typology (photo Florin Mărginean). 1. Zădăreni; a) handle detail; b) the entire item.

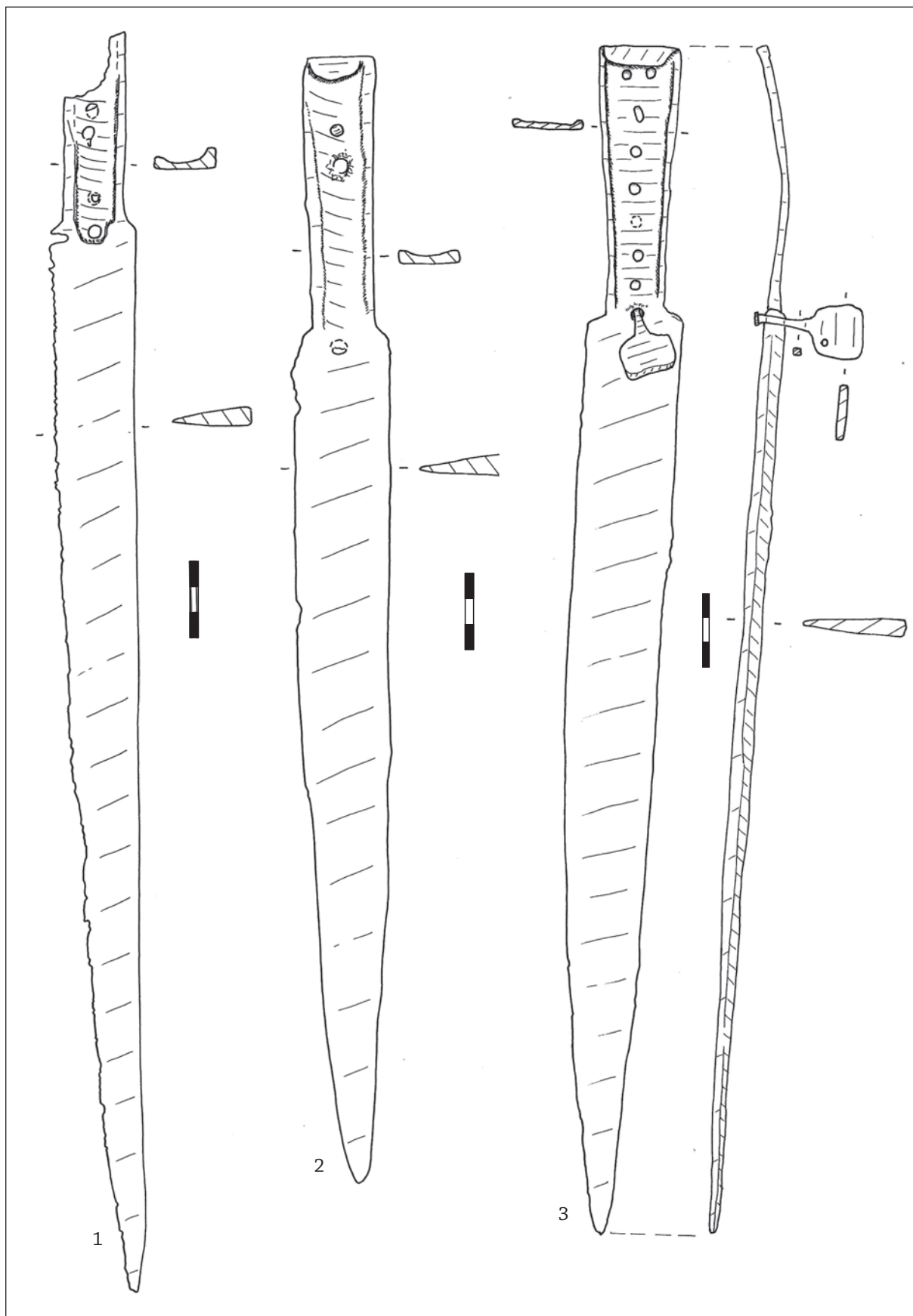


Plate 9. Battle knives (drawings by Georgiana Ducman, MNIR). 1. Fălcu; 2. Potigrafu; 3. Buriăș.

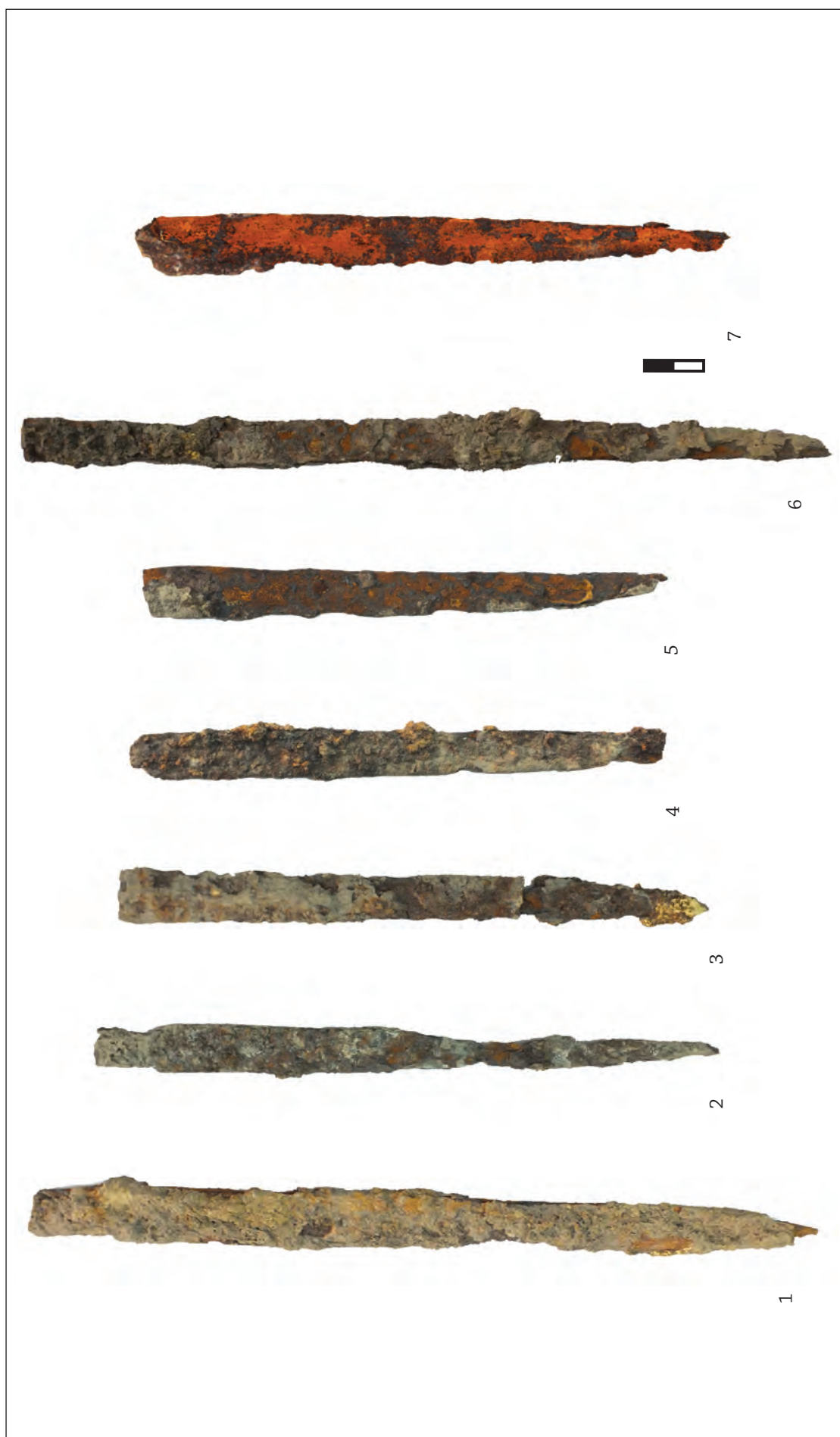


Plate 10. Șibot, battle knives (photos by Silviu Oța, Andra Samson). 1. cat. no. 8.6; 2. cat. no. 8.4; 3. cat. no. 8.5; 4. cat. no. 8.7; 5. cat. no. 8.3; 6. cat. no. 8.8; 7. cat. no. 8.11.

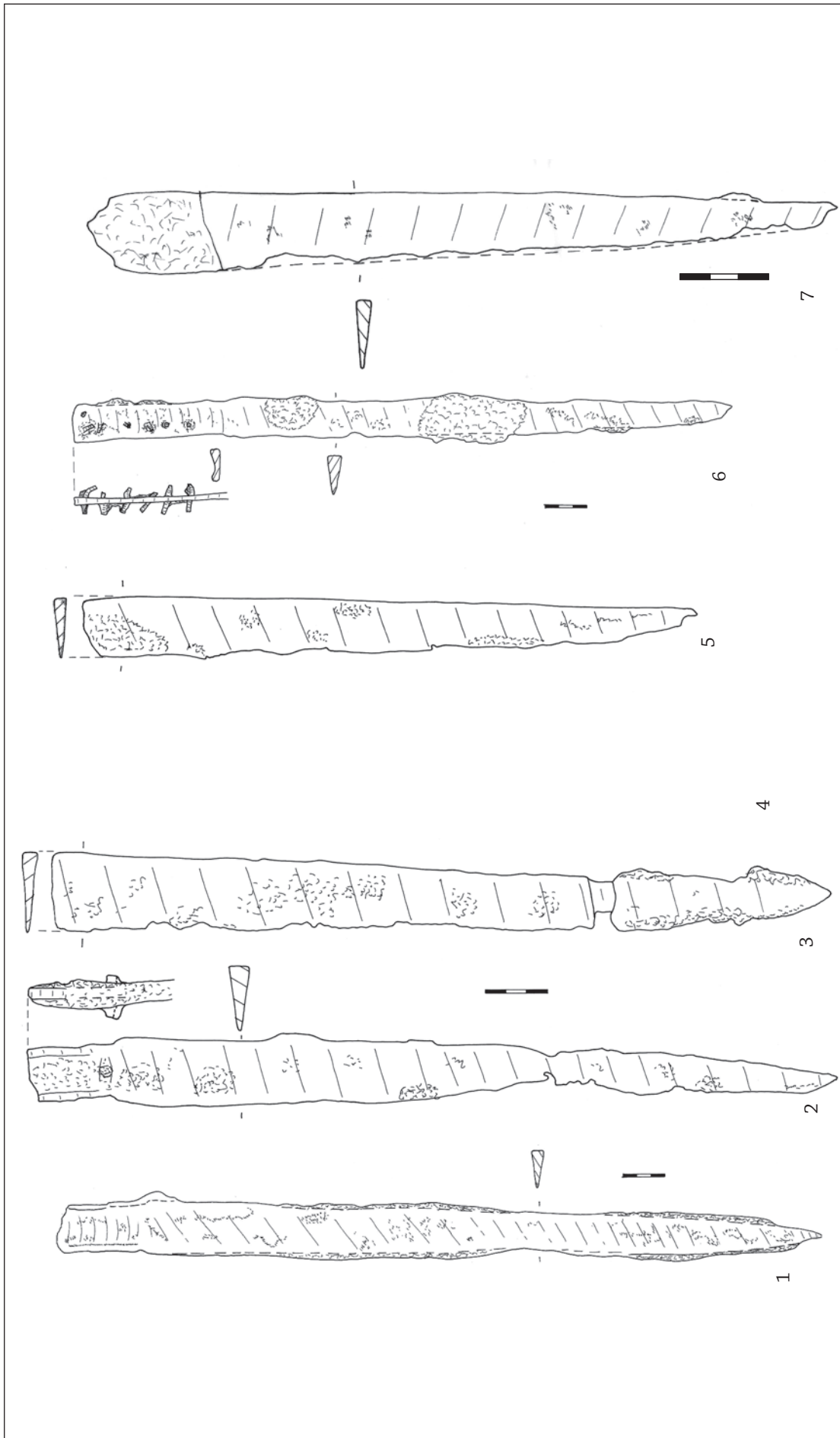


Plate 11. Șibot, battle knives (drawings by Georgiana Ducman, MNIR). 1. cat. no. 8.6; 2. cat. no. 8.4; 3. cat. no. 8.5; 4. cat. no. 8.7; 5. cat. no. 8.3; 6. cat. no. 8.8; 7. cat. no. 8.11.

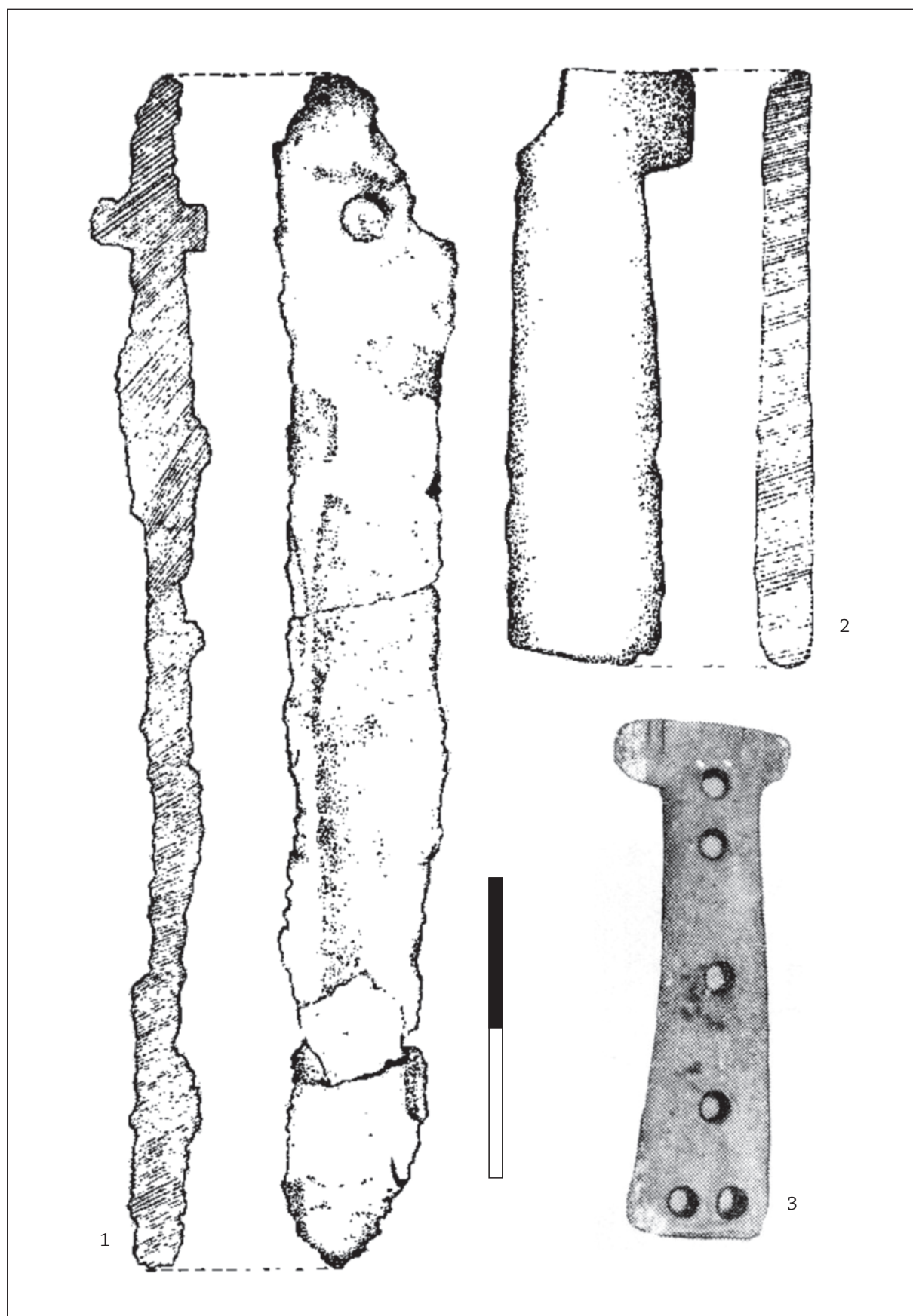


Plate 12. Enisala, battle knives (according to Dragomir 1972–1973 (1974)).
1. Knife blade; 2. Unfinished bone hilt; 3. Bone hilt.

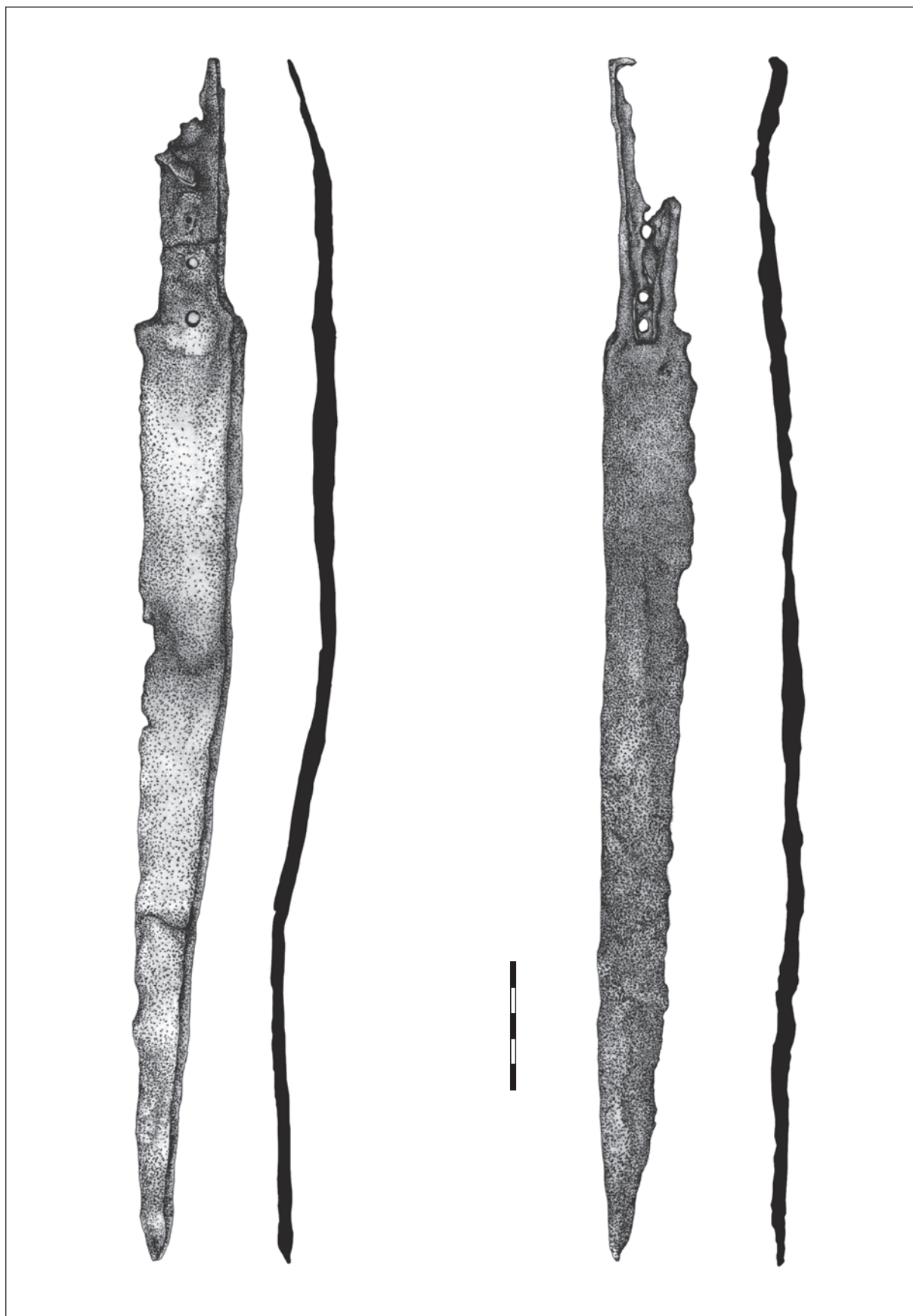


Plate 13. Battle knives (according to Marta, Ghemiş 2011). 1. Batâr; 2. Oradea.

Abbreviations

Acta Ant et Arch Suppl	Acta Antiqua et Archaeologica Supplementum. Szeged.
AAC	Acta Archaeologica Carpathica. Krakow.
ACMIT	Anuarul Comisiunii monumentelor istorice. Secția pentru Transilvania. Cluj.
ActaArchHung	Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae. Budapest.
AEM	Archäologische Epigraphische Mitteilungen aus Österreich-Ungarn.
AIIA Cluj	Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie. Cluj.
AMP	Acta Musei Porolissensis. Zaláu.
ATF	Acta Terrae Fogarasiensis. Făgăraș.
ATS	Acta Terrae Septemcastrenses. Sibiu.
Agria	Agria. Annales Musei Agriensis. Az egri Dobó István Vármúzeum évkönyve. Eger.
AnB S.N.	Analele Banatului. Timișoara.
ArchÉrt	Archaeologiai Értesítő. A Magyar Régészeti és Művészettörténeti Társulat tudományos folyóirata. Budapest.
ArchJug	Archaeologia Iugoslavica
Arh. Pregled	Arheološki Pregled. Arheološko Društvo Jugoslavije. Beograd.
AM	Arheologia Moldovei. Iași.
AMN	Acta Musei Napocensis. Cluj-Napoca.
ArchRozhl	Archeologické Rozhledy. Praga.
ASMB	Arheologia Satului Medieval din Banat. Reșița 1996.
BAM	Brvkenthal Acta Mvsei. Sibiu.
BAR Int. Ser.	British Archaeological Reports. International Series. Oxford.
BCMI	Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice.
BerRGK	Bericht der RömischGermanischen Kommission, Frankfurt a. Main.
BHAB	Bibliotheca Historica et Archaeologica Banatica. Timișoara.
BMB. SH	Biblioteca Muzeului Bistrița. Seria Historica. Bistrița Năsăud.
BMÉ	Bihari Múzeum Évkönyve
BMI	Buletinul Monumentelor Istorice, București.
BMN	Bibliotheca Musei Napocensis. Cluj-Napoca.
BMMK	A Békés Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei. Békéscsaba.
BMMN	Buletinul Muzeului Militar Național, București.
BThr	Bibliotheca Thracologica. Institutul Român de Tracologie, București.
CAH	Communicationes Archaeologicae Hungariae. Budapest.
Carpica	Carpica. Muzeul Județean de Istorie și Arheologie Bacău. Bacău.
CAMNI	Cercetări Arheologice. Muzeul de Istorie al R. S. România/Muzeul Național de Istorie. București.
CCA	<i>Cronica cercetărilor arheologice (din România)</i> , 1983–1992 <i>sqq.</i> (și în variantă electronică pe http://www.cimec.ro/scripts/arh/cronica/cercetariarh.asp).
CRSCRCR	Coins from Roman sites and collections of Roman coins from Romania. Cluj-Napoca.
Dacia N.S.	Dacia. Revue d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne. Nouvelle serie. București.
Danubius	Danubius – Revista Muzeului de Istorie Galați. Galați.
DDME	A Debreceni Déri Múzeum Évkönyve. Debrecen.
DolgCluj	Dolgozatok az Erdélyi Nemzeti Érem- és Régiségtárából, Klotzsvár (Cluj).
DolgSzeg	Dolgozatok. Arbeiten des Archäologischen Instituts der Universität. Szeged.
EphNap	Ephemeris Napocensis. Cluj-Napoca.
FADDP/GMADP	Führer zu archäologischen Denkmälern in Dacia Porolissensis/Ghid al monumentelor arheologice din Dacia Porolissensis.

FolArch	Folia Archaeologica. Budapest.
Forsch. u. Ber. z. Vor- u. Frühgesch. BW	Forschungen und Berichte zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte in Baden-Württemberg.
GPSKV	Gradja za proučavanje spomenika kulture Vojvodine. Novi Sad.
GSAD	Glasnik Srpskog Arheološkog Društva. Beograd.
HOMÉ	A Herman Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve. Miskolc.
HTRTÉ	Hunyadvármegye Történelmi és Régészeti Társulat Évkönyve
JAMÉ	A nyíregyházi Jósza András Múzeum Évkönyve. Nyíregyháza.
JahrbuchRGZM	Jahrbuch des RömischGermanischen Zentralmuseums Mainz.
Lohanul	Lohanul. Revistă cultural științifică. Huși.
MCA	Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice. București.
MCA-S.N.	Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice-Serie Nouă. București.
MA	Memoria Antiquitatis. Complexul Muzeal Județean Neamț. Piatra Neamț.
MFME	A Móra Ferenc Múz. Évkönyve. Szeged.
MFME StudArch	A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve, Studia Archaeologica. Szeged.
MN	Muzeul Național. București.
Opuscula Hungarica	Opuscula Hungarica. Budapest.
OTÉ	Orvos- Természettudományi Értesítő, a Kolozsvári Orvos-Természettudományi Társulat és az Erdélyi Múzeum-Egylet Természettudományi Szakosztálya.
Palaeohistorica	Acta et Communicationes Instituti Archaeologici Universitatis Groninganae.
PamArch	Památky Archeologické. Praha.
Past and Present	Past and Present. Oxford.
PIKS/PISC	Die Publikationen des Institutes für klassische Studien/ Publicațiile Institutului de studii clasice. Cluj-Napoca.
PBF	Praehistorische Bronzefunde. Berlin.
PMÉ	Acta Musei Papensis – Pápai Múzeumi Értesítő.
PZ	Prähistorische Zeitschrift. Berlin.
Rev. Muz.	Revista Muzeelor, București.
RIR	Revista Istorică Română.
RMM-MIA	Revista Muzeelor și Monumentelor. seria Monumente istorice și de artă. București.
RMMN	Revista Muzeului Militar Național. București.
Ruralia	Ruralia. Památky Archeologické – Supplementum. Praha.
RVM	Rad Vojvodjanskih Muzeja, Novi Sad.
SCIV(A)	Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche. București.
SCN	Studii și Cercetări Numismatice. București.
SlovArch	Slovenská Archeológia. Nitra.
SIA	Studii de Istoria Artei. Cluj Napoca.
SIB	Studii de istorie a Banatului. Timișoara.
SKMÉ	A Szántó Kovács János Múzeum Évkönyve, Orosháza.
SMIM	Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie. București.
SMMA	Szolnok Megyei Múzeumi Adattár. Szolnok.
SMMIM	Studii și Materiale de Muzeografie și Istorie Militară. București.
Starinar	Starinar. Arheološki Institut. Beograd.
StCl	Studii Clasice, București.
StComBrukenthal	Studii și comunicări. Sibiu.
StudArch	Studia Archaeologica. Budapest.
StudCom	Studia Comitatus. Szentendre.
StudUnivCib	Studia Universitatis Cibiniensis. Sibiu.
StudCom – Vrancea	Studii și Comunicări. Muzeul Județean de Istorie și Etnografie Vrancea. Focșani.
StudŽvest	Študijne Zvesti Arheologického Ústavu Slovenskej Akadémie Vied. Nitra.
Symp. Thrac.	Symposia Thracologica. București.
Tempora Obscura	Tempora Obscura. Békéscsaba 2012.
Tibiscus	Tibiscus. Timișoara.
VAH	Varia Archaeologica Hungarica. Budapest.

VMÉ
Ziridava
ZM
ZSA

A Vas megyei Múzeumok Értesítője
Ziridava. Arad.
A Vas megyei Múzeumok Értesítője
Ziridava Studia Archaeologica. Arad.