

LAMPS IN TABERNA FROM THE MILITARY VICUS OF POROLISSUM

DUMITRU GHEORGHE TAMBA*

tambadan@hotmail.com

OPAÎTE ÎN TABERNA VICUS-ULUI MILITAR DE LA POROLISSUM

REZUMAT: *Opaîte în taberna vicus-ului militar de la Porolissum* Cercetarea arheologică sistematică a obiectivului convențional denumit LM1, din vicusul militar al castrului mare de la Porolissum, a dus la descoperirea unui bogat și divers material arheologic. Clădirea a fost cercetată pe parcursul a patru campanii de cercetări (1993 – 1997), ea se găsește în vecinătate a colțului de nord a castrului de pe dealul Pomēt, la 50 m de acesta, în dreapta drumului roman

ce urca dinspre vama romană spre castru. În urma cercetării realizate au fost descoperite un număr de 8 fragmente aparținând unor opaîte, care reprezintă subiectul materialului de față.

Cuvinte cheie: Porolissum; Obiectiv LM1; taberna; vicus militar; iluminat, opaîte.

THE CONTEXT OF DISCOVERY

The Dacian-Roman Center from *Porolissum* is placed in the north-west corner of roman *Dacia Porolissensis* province (Pl. 1 – 2) and is made up of several military and civil units (Gudea 1989). The military units are the forts (*Pomet* and *Citera* Hill), boroughs (Brebi 1 and Brebi 2), defens towers witch add to an enclousure made of waves and trenches, respectively of stone wall in the north, north-west (toward the lines) witch stretched on many kilometers. This defensive system of settlement proved its efficiency.

The civil elements of the archeological complex are as folows: the civil settlement placed on the superior terraces on *Pomet* Hill, containing: the bathroom, civilians houses, an amphitheater, the customs building, handicraft workshops specialized in pothery, glass, metal, stone production, as well as pubs and respectively the *municipium* spaces situated on the inferior terraces at south, south-west to the *forum* and other buildings that will be reserched subsequently.

I personally involved in investigating the civilian settlement on *Pomet* Hill, placed on one of the first terraces at east, north-east, north and north-west to the fort. (Pl. 3).

Among the many building in the *vicus*, that had different functions, the most significant were undoubtably the temples. On them, the temple of *Jupiter Optimus Maximus Dolichenus*, was explored and partially published (Gudea – Tamba 2001). We considered that the complex of buildings LM 1 – LM1S etc. is the temple of *IOMD*, alongside its annexbuildings. LM1S is the properly temple and LM 1 is the *taberna* (dining hall, the kitchen and two bedrooms, plus other parts that were not discovered up to now). (pl. 4 – 5).

* Muzeul Județean de Istorie și Artă Zalău

The sanctuary was built in two phases. Originally it had only a large hall, 12,85 m. long, 9,70 m. wide; consisted in three naves separated by rows of wooden pilars, whose remains have been identified. In phase two, there were two rooms and the hall was split in two by a sectional stone wall, which shaped the rooms **A** (8,40 × 9,40 × 5,30 × 7,40 m.) and **B** (0,70 × 7,50 × 11,80 × 6,70 m.). The hall was perhaps used as a food warehouse. The hall B was the space where the sacrifices and the god's adoration took place (Gudea – Tamba 2001).

The sanctuary (LM1S) was built over that old trench of the *vicus*. As the filling was not well settled, the ground fell down in certain moment, altering the resistance structure of the wall, inflicting the distortion of the initial plan. The sanctuary was built after 240 A.D., the second phase, after a few years. The building was systematically destroyed by arson and demolishing in 255 after A.D., as the stratigraphy and specially the two treasure monetary.

The *taberna* was built north-west to the sanctuary, in one piece, and was conventionally called building LM1. The building is situated in the north-east of the roman road, that climbed from the customs building, on the terrace in front of the north tower of the roman fort.

On this spot there was initially a wooden structure, whose purpose was not established yet. In phase I the *taberna* was 11,00 × 14,00 × 17,00 × 9,70 m.. In the second phase, the rooms **B**, **C** and **D** were added and the final outline of *taberna* was of 16,00 × 22,00 m.

Room **A** had a *tegulae* pavement, an area of this pavement was preserved in the north corner, it is 3,00 × 2,60 m. It had in the middle an open heart. A column footing and column stem fragment came out. The two belonged to a column line of a *porticus*, which used to be in the inner side of the room. Therefore, on sides, in a size of 2,60 m., the room was covered, while the centre was open. Room **B** was towards the road and it was of 8,20 × 4,60 m., representing a kitchen. Room **C** was 9,00 × 8,00 × 4,00 × 4,50 m. and is likely to be a living room (with a heating device). In room **D** the sanctuaries were not fully researched its function could not be determined, as the area is in disorder, most of the walls and the foundation came to the light, but at the moment, we have no means to establish the date the annexes were built.

Unlike the sanctuary, the building that accommodated the *taberna* survived the damaging actions on the sanctuary, which took place somewhere about 255 A.D. and it is present up until a date which can not be stated for sure, afterwards the sanctuary closes up. A reason to support the existence and the operation of the *taberna* and the pottery glasses produced in the center of *Augusta Treverorum* (Trier), made of black paste, with a metal polish, having inscriptions and a decor depicting vegetal motifs (Gudea – Tamba 2001). This pottery type is dated back to 270 – 290 A.D. confirming that the building existed as construction in the second half of the 3-rd century A.D., and presumably even the *taberna* was already functional at that time.

As a result of the archaeological research in the four rooms of the object, there were discovered fragments which pertained to eight pottery lamps. In the *atrium* (room **A**) there were not identified any lamps or lamp fragment up to now, due to the diggings made over the time here, and which generated considerable disorder. Fragments pertaining to three lamps were found in the kitchen (room **B**) and others pertaining to 5 lamps this time were discovered in the bed room (room **C**). In room **D**, due to the same problem as for room **A**, there were not discovered full pieces or lamp fragments.

I willfully chose to study the lamps in the *taberna*, firstly because their use in this space was rather limited to the age between 240+280 A.D., and secondly for the lighting power of the lamps in such an environment as *taberna*.

DISCUSSION

The set of lamps discovered in object LM1 of *Porolissum* archaeological area allow us to devise several remarks.

1. All the discovered lamps are dated, at least as a time of use, in the 3-rd century, mainly in the second half, even though, from the point of view of their typology, as shape, they are dated back to the 2-rd

century A.D., but for two of them which are late provincial products. We do not rule out that they could be made in the pottery center of *Porolissum*, as they are dated in the second half of the 3-nd century A.D., or in the first half of the 4-th century A.D.

2. If, against all reason, other lamps have not been removed from the building (perhaps only from room A and D), due to repeated rummage or to the treasure hunters, we have 8 pieces for object LM1, which go in the lighting tools class from *taberna*.

3. Regarding the preservation status of the lamps discovered, we can say that all of them are in a more or less fragmentary condition, owing to their frailty and the extended usage. We intended, as much as possible – due to their condition, to establish the type as a lighting tool, according to the current typology, available for the Dacian provinces (Alicu 1994, Alicu 2006, Roman 2006).

4. From the point of view of the lamps allotment on the 4 rooms, the state is as follows: Enclosure A – 0; Room B – 2 lamps; Room C – 6 lamps; room D – 0.

5. From the point of view of typology there are two main lamp groups, each having subgroup:

- A. Monilichnes –
 - a. Firmalampen
 - b. Late provincial lamps
 - c. Lamps with adorned plate

B. Polilichnes lamps

6. according to the number of pieces discovered in the two rooms of the *taberna*, the kitchen and the bedroom, we can try to emphasize the lighting power of these tools for a certain area, taking into account the function of the rooms.

Room B, which represents a kitchen, was $8,20 \times 4,60$ m., hence a total amount of 37,72 square meters, where we found 3 lamps.

Room C, that functioned as bedroom, was the full size of 36 square meters, and here were discovered 5 lamps. Therefore the kitchen, even though was larger, provided a smaller amount of lamps, due to the different function of the two rooms, as the bedroom had to be lit during the night. In the bedroom there were discovered fragments pertaining to parallelipedal lamps – polilichnes, thus with many burners, and so a more powerful light in the room, which was perfectly justified.

In conclusion, the rooms which were archaeologically researched in the object LM1 – the *taberna* from the military vicus of the fort on Pomet Hill in Porolissum, provide a total number of 8 lamps. Of these, 5 were discovered in **room C** – the bedroom. As for the age, from the typological point of view. They belong entirely to the 2-nd century A.D.; however concerning their use they can be dated back to the 3-rd century A.D. In room B we found 3 lamps fragments of type VII D – monilichnes (Alicu 1994, Alicu, Nemeş 1977, Alicu 2006, Roman 2006). The two are provincial products – presumably manufactured at Porolissum, dated in the second half of the 3-rd century A.D., and the time of use is likely to have been somewhere around the 4-th century A.D., most probably in the first half of this highlighting that the *taberna* was inhabited at the time.

We have an analysis in prospect for the lamps discovered in the *taberna* in comparison to the ones in the *IOMD* sanctuary to enable us establish their function as elements in the same architectonic complex.

CATALOGUE

Lampe (Pl. 6) MJIA-Zalău Inv. 79/1992.

Place of discovery: P 92; LM1; cas. 8; m: 1,25 / 0,25; a: – 0,98 m; **room C**.

Description: polilichnes fragment; leaf shape handle; middle and side beveled ribs. At the bottom of the central rib, there's a prominence, from where two spindles spring, one to the left side and the other to the right. Light tile-colored fine paste with dark brown engobe marks.

The Dacian provinces provide lamps of type VI (Alicu 1994, 2006; Roman 2006), dated in the 2-nd century A.D.

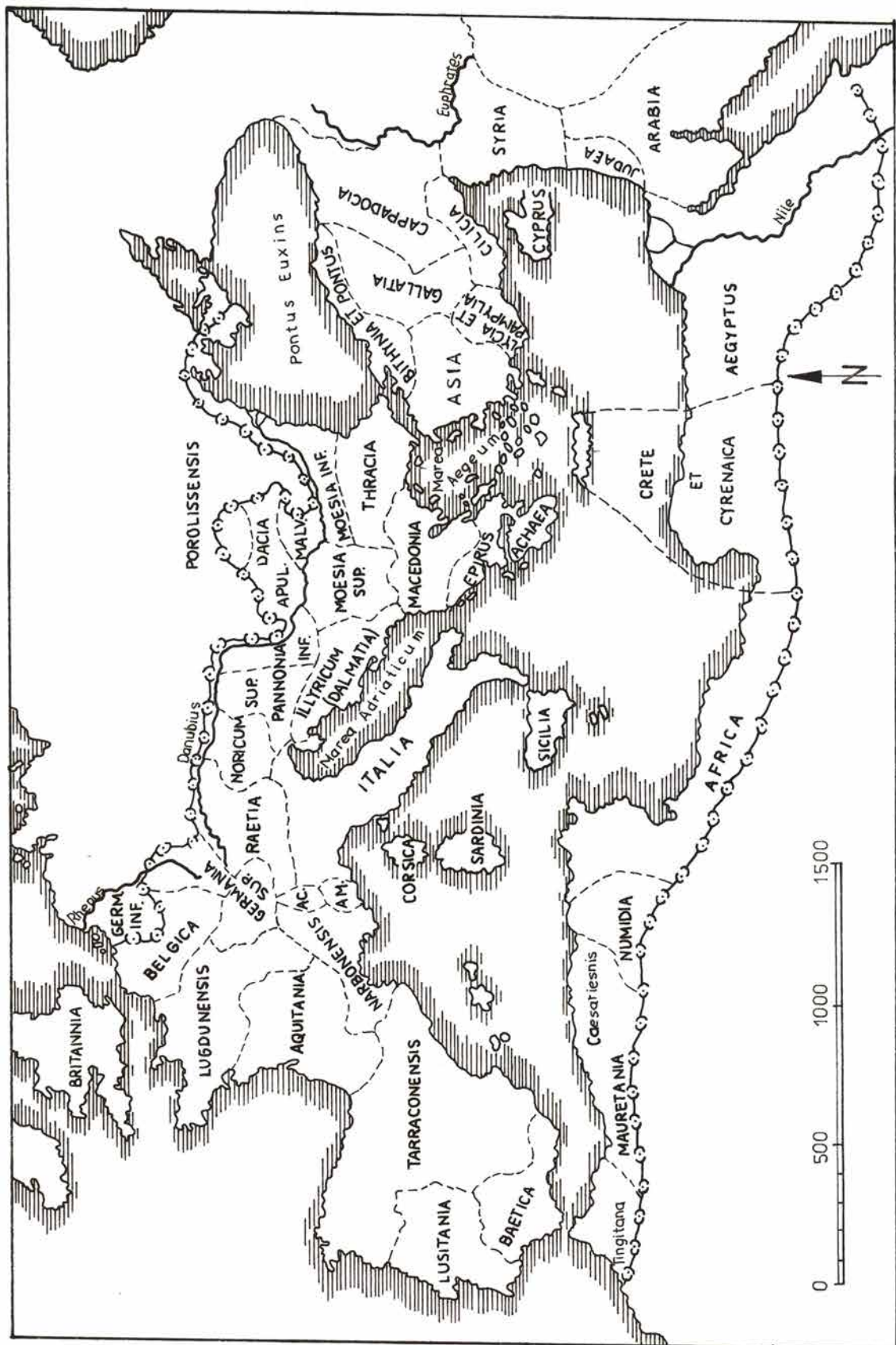
2. Lampe (Pl. 6) MJIA-Zalău; Inv. CC 105/1992.**Place of discovery:** P 92; LM1; cas 8; m: 1,25 / 0,75; a: – 0,90 m.; **room C.****Description:** Polilichnes fragment with quadrangular – rectangular bottom and disc, and slightly titled sidings. It still preserved a bottom fragment, with sectional border. The paste is fine, light tile-colored and blacked. The object is type for a Dacian provinces (Alicu 1994, 2006; Roman 2006, and is dated in the 2/nd century A.D. Object similar to this pottery type were discovered at Cristești (Alex. Oancea, in *Cumidava III*, 1969, p.601).**3. Lampe (Pl. 6) MJIA-Zalău; Inv CC 29/1092****Place of discovery:** P 92; cas: 17; m: 5/0,70; a: – 0,70 m.; **room B.****Description:** There are two fragments pertaining to the same object – lamp with a small nose, lamellar handle. The paste is grayish and fine. It belongs to type VII – for a Dacian provinces, and is dated at the end of the 3/rd century and the beginning of the IV century A.D.**4. Lampe (Pl. 6) MJIA-Zalău; Inv. CC 759/1992****Place of discovery:** P 92; LM1; cas. : 16; m: 0,50 / 2,50; a: – 0,75; **room B.****Description:** fragmentary restored lamp; size: 9,50 × 10,50 cm. It is the type with small nose and lamellar handle; plane border, fine grayish paste with impurities. There are marks of secondary burning in the region of the nose.**5. Lampe (Pl. 8) MJIA – Zalău; Inv. CC 218 /1992.****Place of discovery:** P92; cas. 15; m: 1,60/0,50; a: – 0,55 m.; **room C.****Description:** firmalampen restored lamp. It has a plane disc with two holes for refueling. Between the holes there is a human mask (satyr). Due to extensive use, the face details are not so distinguishable. Despite the preservation condition, there can still be noticed that the human face was bearded. The anatomical aspects show the portraits of satyr. The bottom has two concentric circles, and inside, there is a seal with SEXTI. The paste is light tile-colored and fine. There are secondary burning marks present in the area of the burner. The object is 8 cm. long, 5,20 cm. wide, 2,60 cm. tall, and is dated in the 2/nd century A.D. Pieces pertaining to the same type (×) were discovered in Dacia province, at *Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa* (Alicu 1994, pp171; 466 / 469).**6. Lampe (Pl. 8) MJIA – Zalău; Inv. CC 71 /1992****Place of discovery:** P/92; LM1; cas 12; m: 3,00/1,10; a: – 1,26m. ; **room C.****Description:** Fragment of Firmalampen lamp type. The border of the lid is adorned with two concentric circles. There could have been a seal, but the fragmentary condition does not allow us to determine this aspect. The paste was fine and tile/colored. There are engobe dark tile/colored marks. Dated in the 2/nd century A.D. The lamp is in type VIII for Dacia province (Alicu 1994, 2006; Roman 2006).**7. Lampe (Pl. 8) MJIA – Zalău; Inv. CC 761/1992.****Place of discovery:** P92; LM1; cas: 16; m: 0,50/ 2,50; a: – 0,85 m.; **room B.****Description:** Punched disc lid fragment, pearl like décor. The paste is fine, light tile-colored, extremely burnt. In Dacia province there were discovered pieces of this type X.**8. Lampe (Pl. 78; Inv. CC 8 / 1992.****Place of discovery:** P92; LM1; cas:8; m: 1,50 / 0,90; a: – 1,00 m. **room C.****Description:** Polilichnes fragment with disc and a quadrangular bottom, slightly tilted siding. A bottom fragment is still preserved. The paste is fine and light tile/colored, well baked. The object belongs to type VI for Dacia province

BIBLIOGRAPHIE

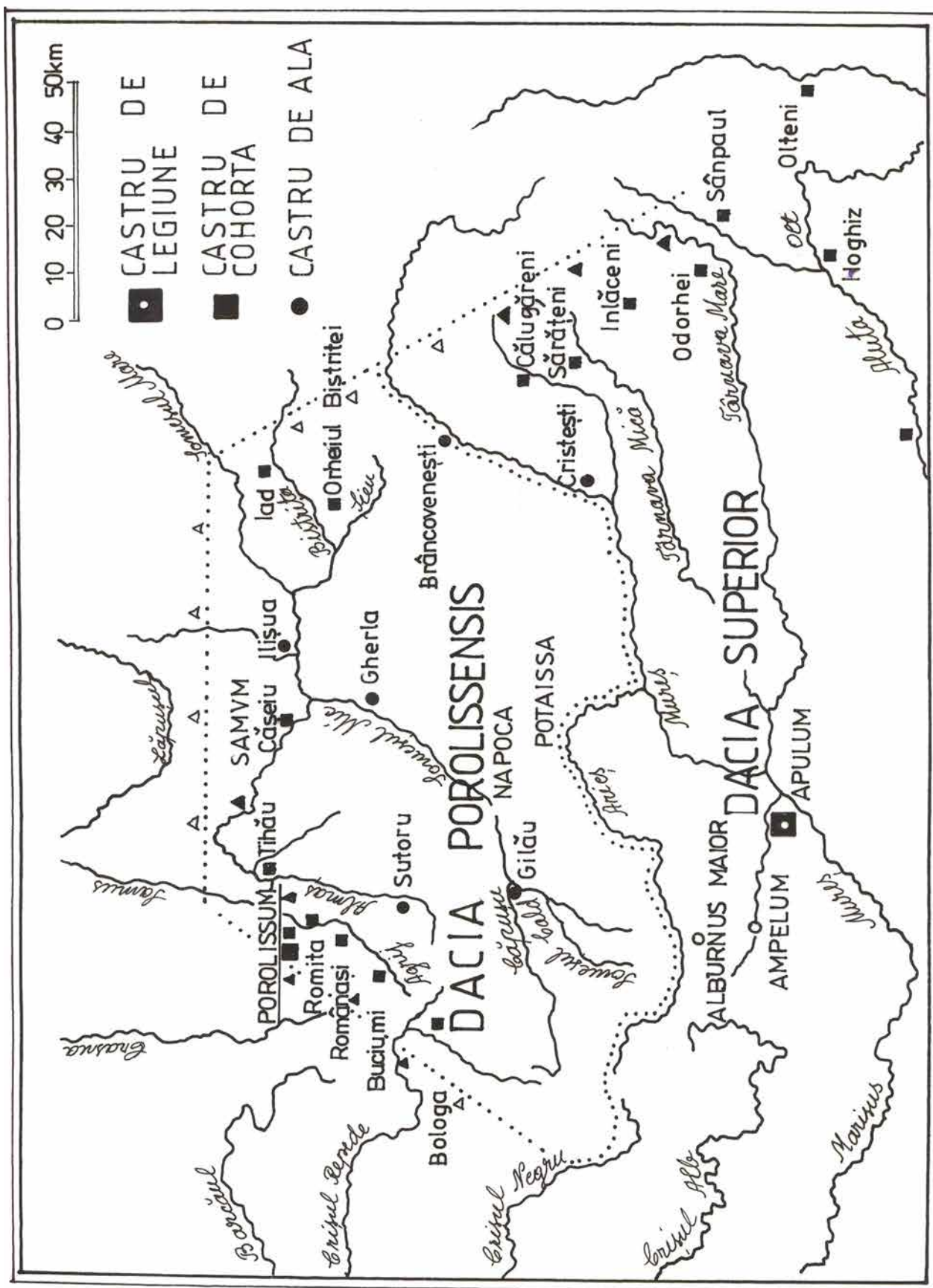
- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Alicu 1994 | D. Alicu, <i>Opaițe romane. Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa</i> , București 1994. |
| Alicu 2006 | D. Alicu, <i>Die romischen Lampen von Sarmizegetusa</i> , Zalău 2006. |
| Alicu-Nemeș 1977 | D. Alicu, E. Nemeș, <i>Romans lamps from Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa</i> , BAR Supplementary series 18, Oxford, 1977. |
| Bailey 1980 | D. M. Bailey, <i>A catalogue of the lamps in the British Museum II. Roman lamps made in Italy</i> , London 1980. |
| Bailey 1988 | D. M. Bailey <i>A catalogue of the lamps in the British Museum III, Roman provincial lamps</i> , London 1988 |
| Băluță 1961 | C. L. Băluță, <i>Opaițele romane de la Apulum (I)</i> , <i>Apulum</i> 4, 189-220). |
| Băluță 1965 | C. L. Băluță, <i>Opaițele romane de la Apulum (II)</i> , <i>Apulum</i> 5, 277–295. |
| Băluță 1983 | C. L. Băluță, <i>Lucernele romane din Dacia Intracarpatică</i> (unpublished PhD thesis), Cluj Napoca 1983. |
| Roman 2000 | C. Roman, <i>Wheelmade lamps of roman Dacia</i> , in <i>Acta MN</i> , 37/1, p.99–140. |
| Roman 2006 | C. Roman, <i>Lamps from Dacia Porolissensis</i> , Zalău 2006. |

LIST OF ILLUSTRATION

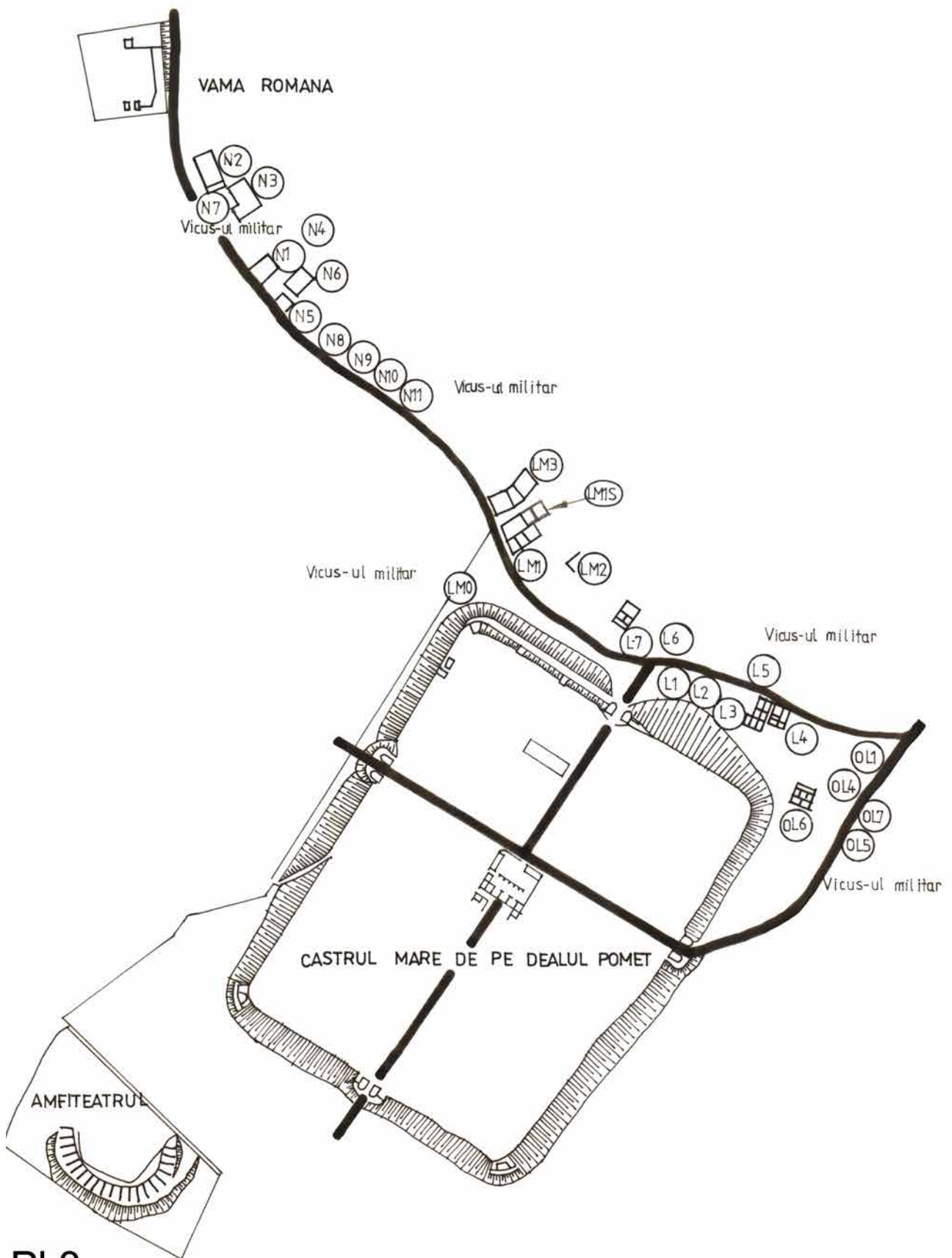
1. Map of *Dacia* province in the Roman Empire
2. Map of *Dacia Porolissensis* province. (by N. Gudea)
3. Map of *Porolissun* archaeological area.
4. Plan of LM1 building at the *Porolissum* military roman vicus.
5. Plan of the research of LM1 building.
6. Lamps no. 1 to 4.
7. Lamps no 5 to 8.

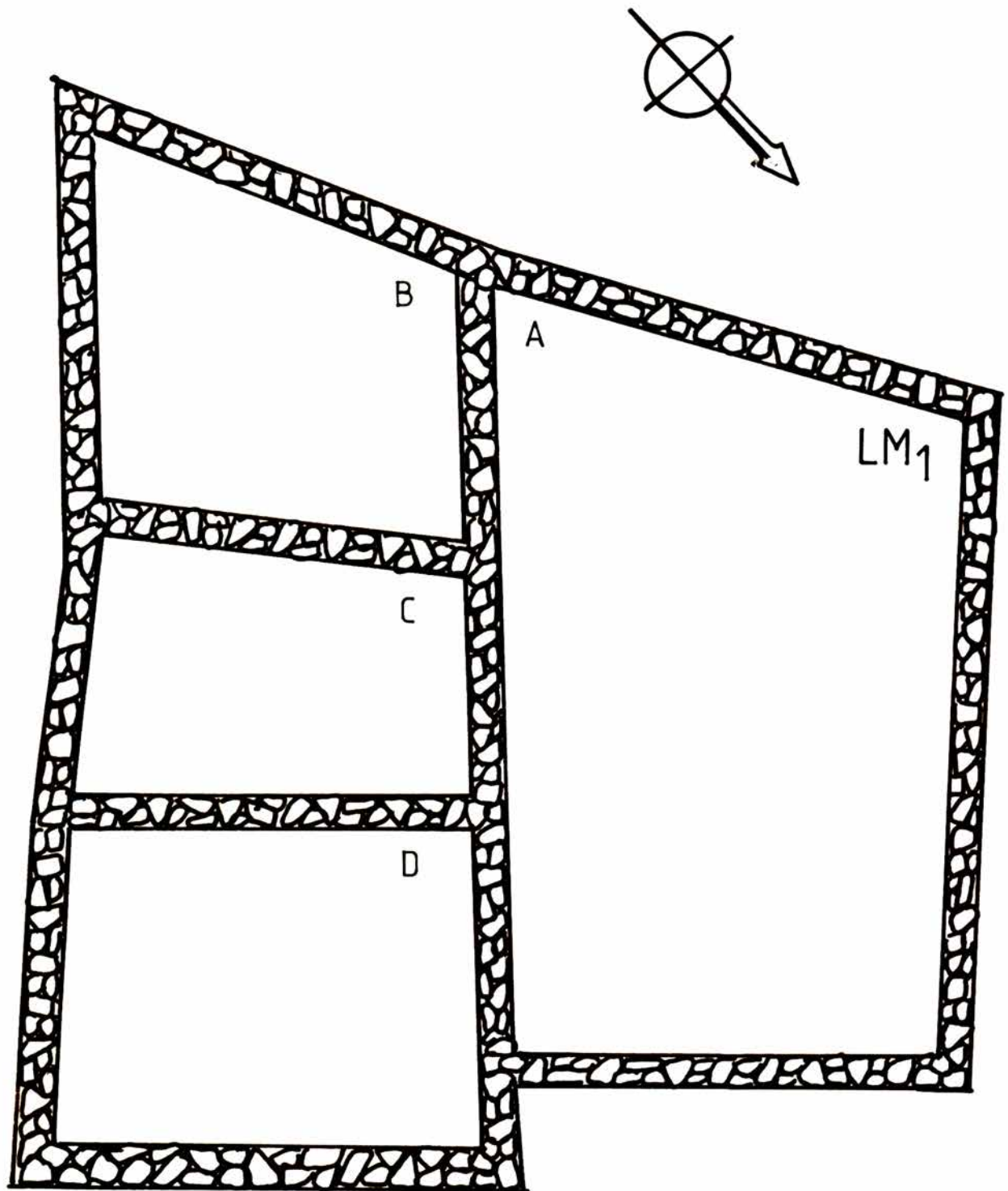


PI.1

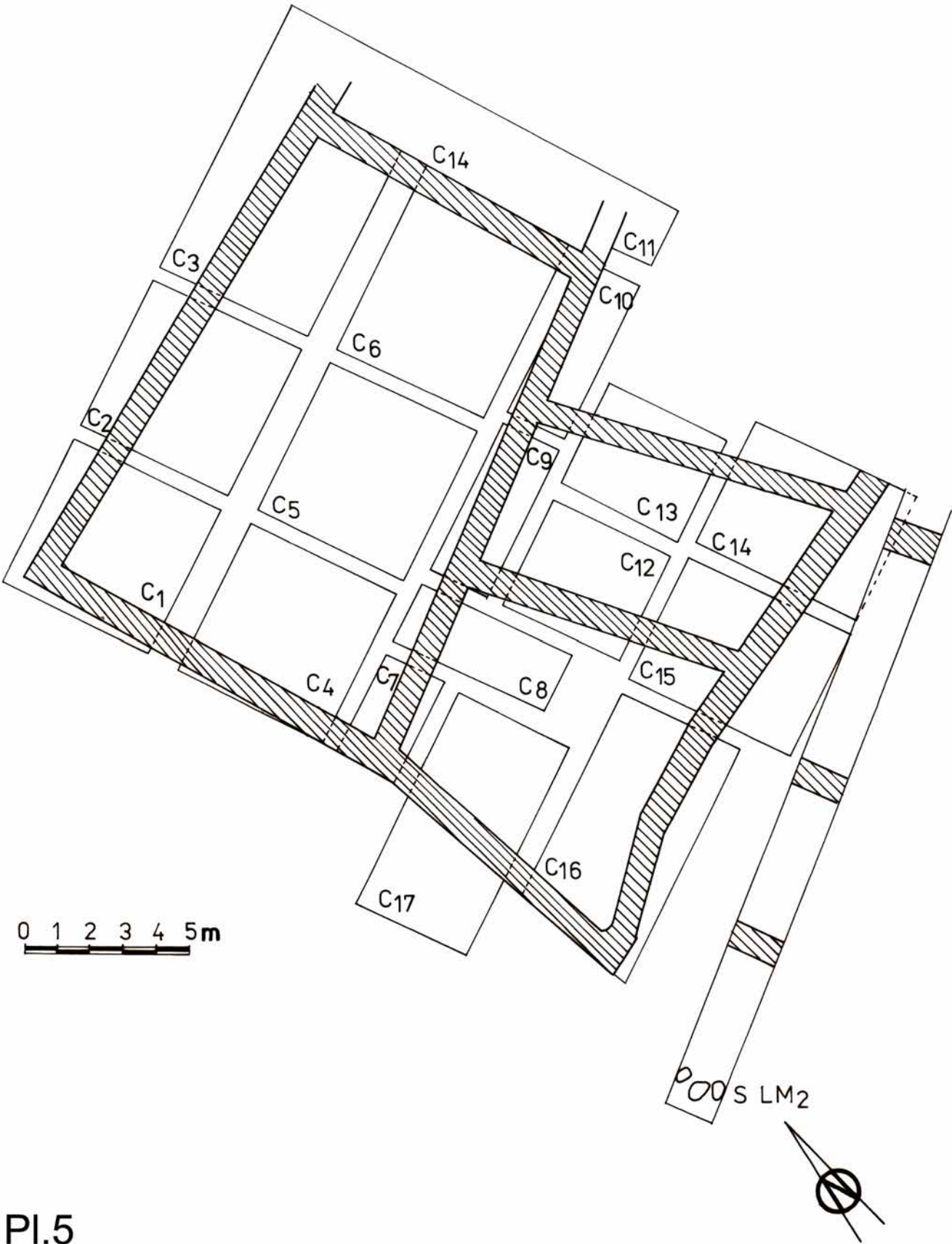


PI.2

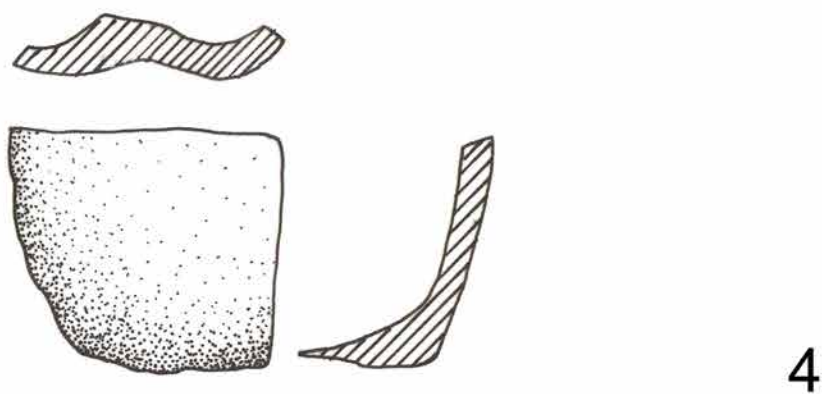
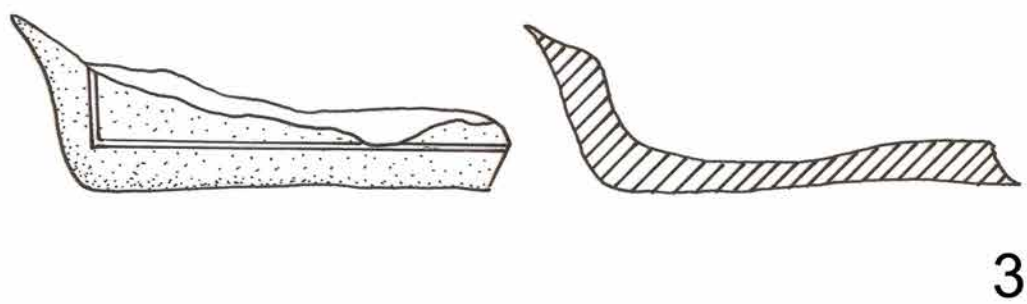
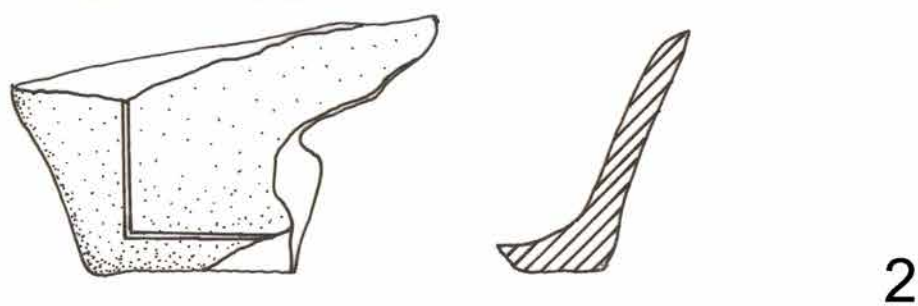
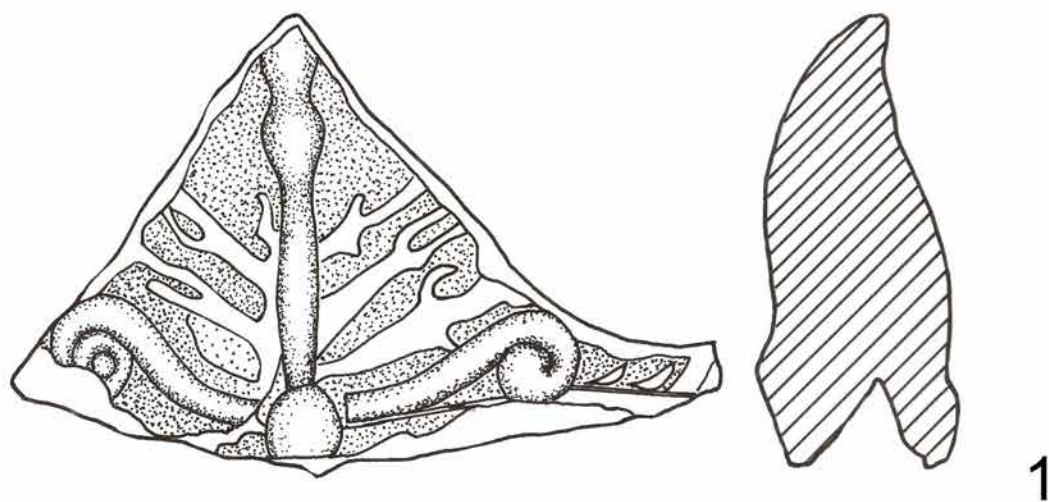




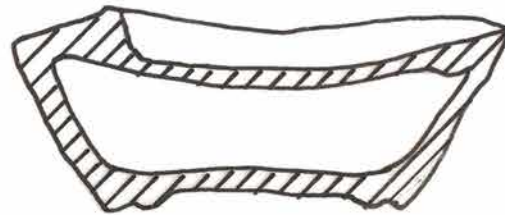
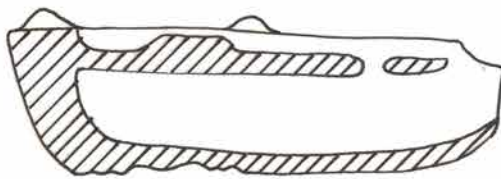
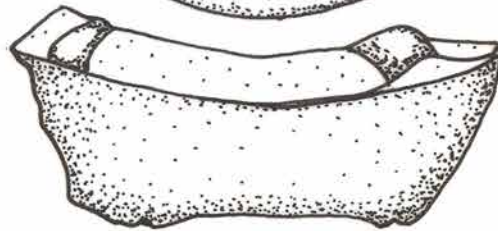
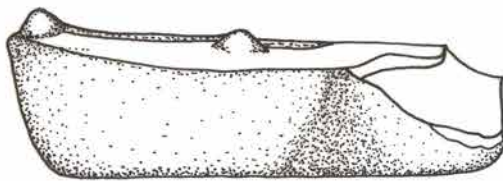
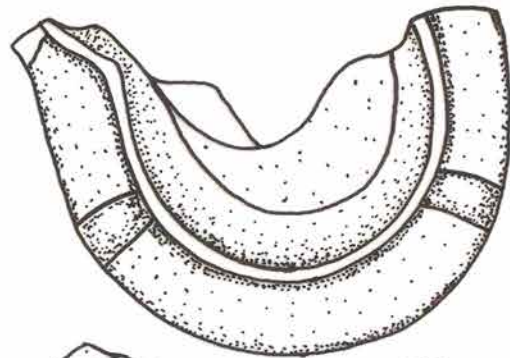
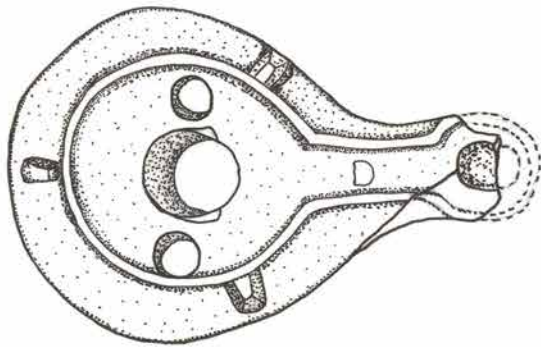
Pl.4



Pl.5

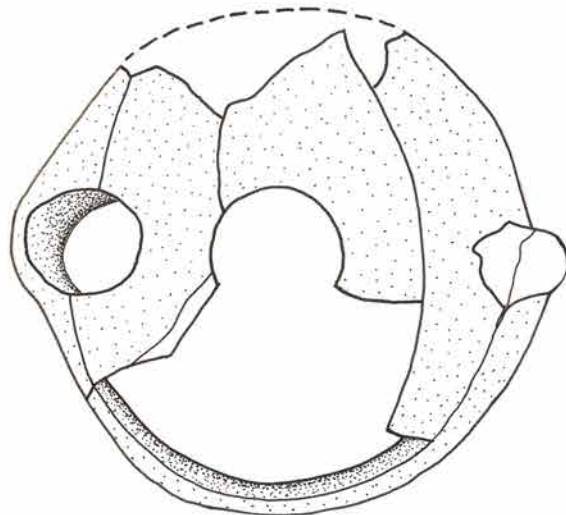


Pl.6

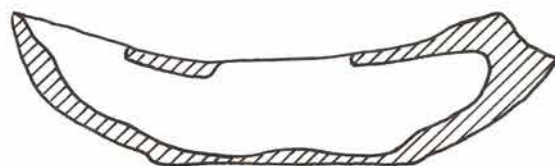


5

6



7



8

Pl.7