

ONLY BY CHANCE? SARMATIANS, ROMANS, DACIANS IN WALLACHIA AND MOLDAVIA

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Abstract. The authors aimed to outline a general framework of Wallachia and Moldavia in the 1st – 3rd centuries AD, based both on information from written sources and the results of archeological discoveries. The main historical events with consequences on Wallachia and Moldavia are the expansion of the borders of the Roman Empire towards the Danube, the movement of the Transdanubians in Moesia, the series of three Sarmatian attacks on Moesia, the Dacian attack in the winter of AD 85/86, Trajan's war with Dacians, the rebellion of the Sarmatians in the first years of Hadrian's reign, the Marcomannic wars, the attack of Carps and Goths in AD 238 and the Gothic raids from the second half of the third century. The archeological information, sometimes corroborated with the epigraphic one, always tried to connect the Roman activities on the Danubian limes or in Wallachia with the information given by archaeological discoveries about the arriving of Sarmatians in Wallachia and Moldavia. The main features of inhumation graves attested in Wallachia or Moldavia between the end of the first century AD and the end of the third century are highlighted. A detailed discussion is dedicated to the use of the term “Sarmatian”. The relations of Sarmatians with the Roman Empire and Dacians are analyzed, based on the archaeological information, corroborated with the historical sources. The Sarmatian communities from Wallachia are controlled by the Romans, while the Sarmatians arrived in Moldavia seem to play a secondary, perhaps even subordinate role in relation with the Dacians.

This study is under no circumstances an exhaustive one, as this vast topic should cover the history of these two territories in the 1st – 3rd centuries AD. We have previously attempted, on different occasions (Oța, Sîrbu 2013, p. 289-309; Oța, Sîrbu 2016a, p. 205-255; Oța 2016, 129-150), to review certain aspects of the historical evolution of Wallachia and Moldavia, which, at a first glance, might raise questions with regard to the usefulness of this undertaking. It is not one of our aims to repeat here – unless it is necessary – observations and assumptions made in previous works. The main aim of this contribution is that of outlining a general framework, based both on information from written sources and the results of archeological discoveries, as much has been written and it is still written at this time on the history of Wallachia and Moldavia in the 1st – 3rd centuries AD.

Although not only did we make reference to the Sarmatians in Wallachia or Moldavia but also attempted at investigating their relationships with the Roman Empire or with the Dacians in our previous studies, such a synthesis, meant to correlate the main aspects of the history of Wallachia (in the meaning of the area between the Carpathians, the Danube and the Olt River) and Moldavia (in the meaning of the area between the River Prut and the Carpathians) has never been attempted by us before. Along the lines of the study published in 2013, in which we outlined the main aspects of the history of The Bărăgan Plain in the 1st – 3rd centuries AD (Oța, Sîrbu 2013, p. 289-309), we will further investigate the way in which we have analyzed the evolution of the Sarmatian communities in the previously mentioned areas can be correlated with what is currently known of

the organization of the Danubian limes and the presence of the Roman army in Wallachia, or with the information on Dacians, based mainly on archaeological findings.

The beginning of the first century AD is characterized by the expansion of the borders of the Roman Empire towards the Danube, at the same time with the organization of Moesia as a province, within the broader frame of the reorganization of the entire Balkan area (Petolescu 1995, p. 16-17; Petolescu 2000, p. 29-30; Petolescu 2010, p. 74-75). It is not consensus as to where did Sextus Aelius Catus relocate the 50,000 Dacians south of the Danube (Strabo VII, 3, 10) in the first years of the 1st century AD, opinions varying from Wallachia (Bichir 1972, p. 170; Bichir 1977, p. 195; Bichir 1984, 95-96; Bichir 1996, p. 303; Condurachi 1958, p. 125; Petolescu 1989, p. 180-181; 2010, p. 76; Pippidi 1967, 303-309) to the plain between the Danube and Tisa River (Benea 1989, p. 154-157). Governor of Moesia from c. 57 to 67 AD, Tiberius Plautius Silvanus Aelianus moved more than 100,000 Transdanubians to Moesia (about *transdanuviani* see also Petolescu 1983, p. 142), attempted to put an end to a Sarmatian incursion, and may have even concluded treaties with the Bastarnae and Roxolani kings (who bow before the Roman standards) or with the Dacian king (to whom he sent back one or more brothers) (Bârcă 2013, p. 110-112; Petolescu 1995, p. 23-24; Petolescu 2000, p. 36-38; Petolescu 2010, p. 79-80; Pippidi 1967, 287-328). What is certain is that the actions of the governor of Moesia have an influence on the territory of Wallachia, if not also on the south of Moldavia. Despite the number mentioned by the inscription from Tibur, Wallachia is not emptied of population, clear evidence being the existence of the centers (Fig. 1) from Barboși, Pietroasa Mică-*Gruuiu Dării*, Cetățeni and Tinosu (up to the end of the first century AD) and perhaps also the settlement from Bordușani-*Popină* (which continues to be inhabited at least until mid-first century AD or even after this date) (Sîrbu *et alii* 2014, p. 10), corroborated with the finding in Oltenița of the silver denarius issued by emperor Titus in the year 79 AD (provided that it is not an ulterior loss, during the second century AD – Sîrbu *et alii* 2014, p. 142 and 148). The existence of the fortified settlements from Moldavia (Fig. 1) – Brad (Ursachi 1995, p. 276-279), Căndești (Bobi 1999, p. 53), Răcățău (Babeș 2001, p. 761), Poiana (Vulpe, Teodor 2003, p. 20), Bâta Doamnei (Glodariu 1983, p. 77) – also continues up the early years of the second century AD, if not even until the end of this century, as assumed in the case of Poiana (Vulpe, Teodor 2003, p. 21).

The end of the seventh decade of the first century AD is marked by the series of three Sarmatian attacks, with serious consequences, on Moesia: a) in the winter of 67/68 AD, the Roxolani cross the Danube and destroy two auxiliary cohorts; b) 9000 Sarmatian riders pillage northern Dobrudja in the winter of 68/69 AD, being defeated by *legio III Gallica*, c) the attack of the winter 69/70 AD, when countless Roman soldiers, and even the governor of the province, Fonteius Agrippa, lose their lives, the restoration of order and the defeat of the Sarmatians being the merit of Rubrius Gallus (Tacitus, *Hist.*, I, 79; Flavius Josephus, *Războiul iudaic*, VII, 4, 3; Coulston 2003, p. 416, note 10; Petolescu 1989, p. 181-182; Petolescu 1995, p. 24-25; Petolescu 2000, p. 38-39; Petolescu 2010, p. 81). Much attention is paid to the Empire border (Fig. 1), defended by four legions (I Italica, headquartered in Novae, V Alaudae, unknown headquarters, VII Claudia, stationed in Viminacium, and V Macedonica, stationed in Oescus – Petolescu 1995, p. 25; Petolescu 2000, p. 39; Petolescu 2010, p. 81), by stable auxiliary military troops, stationed east of Novae and in Dobrudja (in Appiaria, Durostorum, Carsium, Arrubium, Troesmis, Sacidava or Altinum, Salsovia – Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, p. 28-29; Suceveanu 1979, p. 50-51), and by the Roman fleet from Sexaginta Prista (Petolescu 1995, p. 25-26; Petolescu 2000, p. 39-40; Petolescu 2010, p. 82). Although Jordanes (*Get.*, XIII, 76) only mentions the conclusion of some agreements with the Dacians beyond the Danube, the assumption of potential agreements with the Sarmatians cannot be

completely ruled out; indirect evidence in this respect is the fact that the latter do not seem to participate, according to literary sources, in the raid undertaken by Dacians on the Roman possessions south of the Danube during the winter of 85/86 AD, in which the governor of Moesia, Oppius Sabinus, was killed (Bârcă 2006, p. 17; Bârcă 2013, p. 116; Petolescu 1989, p. 182; Petolescu 1995, p. 26-27; Petolescu 2000, p. 71-76; Petolescu 2010, p. 102).

For a more effective defense of the Danubian limes, the province of Moesia is split, during the following year (86 AD), into Moesia Superior and Moesia Inferior, with the River Ciabrus (Tsibritsa) as their border. Another legion, IV Flavia Felix, is also displaced in the area. The Roman retaliatory expeditions north of the Danube (87 AD led by Cornelius Fuscus, and 88 AD, led by Tettius Iulianus) are followed by the conclusion of a peace treaty with king Decebalus in 89 AD (Petolescu 1989, p. 183; Petolescu 1995, p. 26-28; Petolescu 2000, p. 77-87; Petolescu 2010, p. 102-110; Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, p. 29), giving emperor Domitian time to organize the limes of Moesia Inferior, in the true sense of the term (Bogdan-Cătănciu 1997, 30; Matei-Popescu 2001-2002, p. 232-234; Matei-Popescu 2006-2007, p. 44; Țentea, Matei-Popescu 2016, p. 54; Whately 2015, p. 141).

The archaeological outline of Wallachia in the last decade of the first century AD and the first decades of the next century is characterized by the emergence of inhumation graves (Fig. 1), isolated or grouped, comprising relatively small numbers of interments (from two to maximum 16). Burials are customarily performed in elevated terrain, the dead being, as a rule, oriented in various directions (mostly west-east or north-south). Nonetheless, one orientation or another prevails within a burial group. The appearance of a great diversity of the positions of the dead (which, at a rash judgment, may suggest heterogeneity of the burial ritual, owing to the absence of a fixed rule) is, at a closer look, nuanced by the predominance of the dorsal decubitus with stretched arms and legs.

The funerary inventory of these inhumation graves is scarce, both in what concerns the number of items deposited (from one to three, although there are also exceptions), and with regard to the categories of items: a) preponderantly ceramic vessels (especially handmade jars or wheel-made pottery, imported from the Dacian world – Fig. 5/11 or from the Roman Empire – Fig. 5/8), b) jewelry (especially bead necklaces), c) dress accessories (especially appliqués and brooches), d) weapons (most often daggers – Fig. 5/12), e) household tools (knives or spindles), f) rarely shells, chalk or animal bones (Oța, Sîrbu 2016b, p. 262-279). These inhumation graves have been attributed to the Sarmatians, an opinion almost unanimously accepted in the literature, although there are also opinions that contest the connection between Sarmatians, as attested population, and the “Sarmatian culture” (Popa 2015, p. 44).

In our opinion, singularizing these inhumation graves in reference to other archeological discoveries from Wallachia or Moldavia is correct. They are, without exception, inhumation graves (a rite rarely attested in the area inhabited by the Dacians in the previous period – Babeș 1988, p. 13-17; Sîrbu 1993, p. 82-83), while the funerary ritual reveals unquestionable common traits. Another argument for singularizing these graves is their relatively small number (a total of 53/54 graves, until now), corroborated with a specific territorial distribution – most of these burials have been recorded in north-eastern Wallachia (41-43 graves, most of them, more precisely 40, being concentrated in five groups – Fig. 5), and much less in southern Wallachia (eight to 10 burials, most of them isolated – in six cases – Fig. 4) (Oța, Sîrbu 2016b, p. 262-265).

Western and central areas of Wallachia are characterized, starting with Hadrian’s reign, and especially in the second half of the second century (Bichir 1984, p. 86-94 and 104), by the emergence of settlements and cremation necropolises or isolated graves. The two areas of Wallachia seem to display different characteristics: a) the western one, where both settlements and

necropolises have been found, with a variable number of graves – from two to 95, in Chilia (Bichir 1984, p. 14-15), and b) the eastern and the southern areas, where inhumation graves have been almost exclusively found (one should, nevertheless, mention that not all the discoveries in these areas are from a funerary context – Sîrbu *et alii* 2014, p. 84) and where settlements could not be archeologically identified yet with certainty (which is not to say that they are missing, but only that it could be a thin habitation level, with items made mostly of perishable materials, which suggests their seasonal nature – Hauser 2006, p. 12).

The map of these two different types of findings overlaps only partly, especially in central and central-northern Wallachia and, much later, towards the end of the second century and during the third century AD (Oța, Sîrbu 2013, p. 293), which seems to indicate that the two areas are complementary (Diaconu 1963, p. 338; Niculescu 2003, 182).

The archeological findings from western- and central-Wallachia are known in the archaeological literature as “Militari – Chilia culture” (although mention should be made that the settlement from Chilia, but also others, are situated in an area that belonging to the Roman Empire, starting with the end of the second century AD at the latest – Petolescu 1995, p. 152; Petolescu 2000, p. 323; Petolescu 2010, p. 306), having been attributed to the Dacians (Diaconu 1963, p. 338; Bichir 1984, *passim*). The findings from east and south of Wallachia, despite the proposal of being named “the Târgșor – Oltenița – Călmățui horizon” (Diaconu 1963, p. 340, 342), are almost exclusively known by the name of “Sarmatian culture” (Bichir 1971a, p. 135-145; Bichir 1971b, p. 275-285; Bichir 1972, p. 137-176; Bichir 1977, p. 167-197; Niculescu 2003, p. 182). Owing to the recent controversies on the use of the term “culture” (for a general review see Niculescu 2000, p. 206-216), we have avoided, in all our studies and monographs, to characterize the inhumation graves from Wallachia as evidence of a culture, always choosing to refer to “Sarmatians” or the “Sarmatian communities”, although, at a first glance, this might seem an undoubtable ethnic attribution, which would indeed justify criticism of the fact that an archeological culture is taken for a historically attested people. Notwithstanding, the sense in which we employ the term “Sarmatian” is completely different, i.e. a conventional denomination having a similar meaning to that used in the ancient literary sources – a general name that covers a variety of tribes, most probably, each having their own name, more or less known outside these tribes, a variety in which common traits can nevertheless be discerned (Oța 2018, p. 41). We have also used the term “Dacian” with this meaning – a term that best expresses, in our opinion, the analytical perspective and not the significance, i.e., a general denomination given by someone (ancient author or contemporary scholar) to a population (regardless of the name of each tribe or tribe union) whose diversity does not exclude the shared traits (Oța, Sîrbu 2012, p. 125-128). Using toponyms to define the archeological horizons does not change in any way the perspective, except for the fact that it avoids using names of peoples attested by the ancient literary sources in certain territories, which, by extrapolation, received names, even if conventional, derived from these populations (as, for instance, Sarmatia – Mordvinceva 2015, p. 111-112 and 130). Except for the name, the terms of the discussion remain unchanged – the analysis is based on archeological discoveries spread in a certain territory and findings are *grouped together*, regardless of their detail differences. For example, the discoveries from Militari and Chilia are analyzed as a whole, despite the fundamental difference in territorial belonging; the findings from Târgșor and Oltenița have nothing in common, except for the presence of several inhumation graves dated during the third century, with an inventory similar to those from southern Wallachia; the findings from Poienești and Vârteșcoi are put together in order to define an archeological horizon, although the findings have not been completely published yet.

Taking into consideration the fact that the Romans used ethnic denominations to order and structure the world around them (Roymans 2004, p. 3-4), we believe that these names can also be used in the present, as an analytical perspective, and not in the narrow sense, as a mechanically applied ethnonym. We have thus preserved the name “Sarmatian” in reference to the discoveries from eastern- and southern-Wallachia because of the general traits shared with the Eastern European areas: a) concentration of findings in the plain areas, b) settlements difficult to identify, c) inhumation, d) deposition in graves of items with analogies in Eastern European areas such as handmade pottery, a certain type of weapons (Fig. 5/12) and jewelry, e) the presence of female elite graves – Fig. 4 (Oța, Sîrbu 2016b, p. 280).

On the other hand, the discoveries from western-Wallachia have different features: settlements that could be archeologically identified cremation graves only, and a different repertoire of items. In addition, the archeological findings seem to record a slight time lag (they are of a later date) when compared to those in the north-eastern and southern-Wallachia, which suggests two different types of cultural identities.

Of course, there are common items in the two horizons, and of course the items manufactured in the Roman Empire are present both in the west and the north-east/south of Wallachia. Relevant in outlining the cultural identities are, nonetheless, the type and amount of findings.

To return to the archeological discoveries dated at the end of the first and the beginning of the second century AD in north-eastern and southern Wallachia, it can be observed the deposition in graves of wheel-made ceramic vessels (Fig. 5/11), with analogies in the repertoire of Dacian pottery (Oța, Sîrbu 2012, p. 125-163), and of items originating in the Roman Empire (ceramic vessels – Fig. 5/8, glass beads Fig. 5/1-6, 8/2-18), dress accessories, a glass *unguentarium*, a bronze casserole – Oța, Sîrbu 2016b, p. 276-278). Their relatively small number – there are only six burials in which pottery with analogies in Dacian pottery repertoire and 8-9 or 21-22 (it depends on whether the graves in which glass beads were found are taken into consideration or not) with Roman imported goods and the way in which they were used (the Roman imports have, at this first stage, the role of emphasizing a higher status, which does not seem to be the case for Dacian pottery – Oța, Sîrbu 2016b, p. 277) are arguments supporting the assumption that the items were brought (most probably by trade), and not manufactured in that cultural environment.

We dealt on other occasions (Oța, Sîrbu 2009, p. 183-190; Oța, Sîrbu 2010, p. 191-194; Oța, Sîrbu 2016b, p. 279; Sîrbu *et alii* 2014, p. 121-133) with the chronology of the Sarmatian discoveries in Wallachia, dated at the end of the first century and during the first decades of the second century AD, as much as it can be outlined at the present state of research. While they are both female elite burials, “the Buzău treasure” and the grave from Vitănești (Fig. 4) display a certain time lag – the former is the earliest Sarmatian burial in Wallachia, while the latter grave is of a later date (end of the first or the beginning of the second century AD – Sîrbu *et alii* 2014, p. 131). Also dated during the early decades of the second century AD are the funerary structures from Lehliu, Oltenița-*Fundeneanu* and G. 7 from Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* (Fig. 5/10-12). For the large groups of graves, such are the ones from Râmnicelu-*Popină* (Fig. 5/1-9) and Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului*, it is assumed that the burials were performed during a longer period of time (Oța, Sîrbu 2009, p. 186 and 189; Sîrbu *et alii* 2014, p. 131-132).

The territorial distribution, that is to say, the concentration in the north-eastern part of Wallachia and the occurrence of the Sarmatian burials in Wallachia at the same time with the measures taken for the reorganization of the Danubian limes are evidence of the road used for the arrival in Wallachia by the communities archeologically acknowledged through the inhumation

graves analyzed here from north-Pontic steppes. The fact that these graves are concentrated in areas that can be easily surveyed by the Roman troops is one of the arguments supporting the assumption that these communities settled in Wallachia under Roman control (Oța 2016, p. 131-135; Oța, Sîrbu 2013, p. 291). The Sarmatian discoveries are, at this time, situated inside Wallachia, far from the limes, but the few exceptions (Vlădeni, Oltenița-*Fundeneanu* and Ulmeni) testify that, from the beginning, the possible existence of a military territory, emptied of population (Bogdan-Cătănicu 1997, p. 131-133; Opreanu, Lăzărescu 2016, p. 47-48), was not always taken into account.

Inhumation graves dated in the second half and especially at the end of the first century AD, with similar ritual and funerary inventory features, have also been found in the area west of River Prut (Figs. 6-8). The same arguments as in the case of the inhumation graves from Wallachia support the attribution of these graves from Moldavia to the Sarmatian communities: a) their small number (about 25-30 graves), b) predominance of isolated graves or of small groups of graves (between two and four burial sites, with one exception known until now, that from Vlăsinești, with eight funerary structures), c) the territorial concentration in the north-eastern extremity of Moldavia, on the banks of the Prut, and in the south, on the middle course of the rivers Siret and Bârlad, a territorial distribution which, corroborated with similar inhumation graves east of the Prut River, clearly shows the existence of communities that settle here coming from the East (Oța, Sîrbu 2016a, p. 213-214 and 229-230, 216-217 and 232-233), d) the funerary rite and ritual, e) items with analogies in the Eastern European area. The small number of findings, not only discoveries dated at the end of the first century AD, but also of the ones dated up to the third century and the number, also small, of the grouped graves and of the tumuli can also be noticed. The number of the graves containing weapons is also small and their territorial distribution is reduced to certain areas between the River Prut and the Carpathian Mountains. These observations, corroborated with the existence of Dacian fortifications and settlements in the area throughout the entire second century AD, may suggest that the Sarmatians arrived into Moldavia played, from the beginning, a secondary role (perhaps subordinated, as suggested by two written sources – Oța, Sîrbu 2016a, p. 218-219 and 233-234) in relation to the Dacians, who do not seem to allow the Sarmatians to move in large numbers west of the River Prut, and put limits to the territories in which they are allowed to settle.

During Trajan's war with the Dacians (Opreanu 2006, p. 115-116; Petolescu 2010, p. 123, note 223), the Sarmatians are allies with the Dacian king, as proven by their incursion in Moesia Inferior in the winter of 101/102 AD (Petolescu 2000, p. 129-131; Petolescu 2010, p. 140-141; Zahariade, Dvorski 1997, p. 61), by the information from Pliny the Younger on Susagus (*Epist.* 74, 1; Carbó García 2006, p. 699-701; Petolescu 2010, p. 119-120 și 141, perhaps a Sarmatian leader, ally of king Decebalus, and by the way in which Constantin C. Petolescu interpreted a paragraph from Sextus Aurelius Victor (*Caes.*, XIII, 3; Petolescu 2006, p. 124-126). We do not know where the two Sarmatian rulers had their headquarters, but they were probably not in Wallachia, where the Sarmatian communities were under Roman control (Oța 2007, p. 51-53; Oța 2016, p. 131-135; Oța, Sîrbu 2013, p. 291; Oța, Sîrbu 2016a, p. 215 and 231). Sardonius might have been the leader of one of the Sarmatian communities west of the River Prut (Petolescu 2006, p. 124; Petolescu 2010, p. 157), however, for the time being, at least, this is just an assumption.

Between Trajan's two expeditions or soon after the end of the war, the activity of the Roman troops in Wallachia and, partially, in Moldavia, intensifies. The fortifications from Mălăiești and Drajna (Fig. 1) are built in the years between the two Dacian wars (Țentea, Matei-Popescu 2016, p. 20-23; Zahariade, Dvorski 1997, p. 62; Zahariade, Lichiardopol 2006, p. 127-128), and a Roman fortification on the top of *Troian Hill*, c. 2 km north of Bâta Doamnei, it seems to exist at the same time (Gostar 1965, p. 144; Gostar 1980, p. 3). The Hunt Papyrus attests the existence of a Roman

garrison in Piroboridava, in the year 105 AD (Matei-Popescu, Țentea 2006, p. 78; Petolescu 2010, p. 162-163; Petolescu, Matei-Popescu 2008, p. 358). After the war, new forts were built in Târgșor and Voinești (Zahariade, Dvorski 1997, p. 65. About the two forts see also Țentea, Matei-Popescu 2016, p. 28 and 38-43). The Roman fortification system in Wallachia is completed with Pietroasele, Rucăr, maybe also with Filipești (Petolescu, Matei-Popescu 2008, p. 359-360; Țentea, Matei-Popescu 2016, p. 30-35, 46-49), probably built during the same time interval, when the formation of the *limes alutanus* also begins (Petolescu 1982, p. 69; 2010, p. 181-182; Țentea, Matei-Popescu 2016, p. 5), and when the road that marks the route of the future *limes transalutanus* is already functional (Țentea, Matei-Popescu 2016, p. 57). The Romans' measures to ensure security are complemented with the subsidies granted to the Roxolani for their ensuring peace (Opreanu 1998, p. 51; Petolescu 1989, p. 185; Țentea, Matei-Popescu 2016, p. 55-56), with the building of the stone fortifications from Carsium (AD 103), Rasova (AD 105-108?) (Țentea, Matei-Popescu 2016, p. 52) and Barboși (AD 112) (Opriș 2006, p. 240), with the construction of a part of the Roman road along the limes, according to the Sacidava milestone (AD 103-105). Three legions are garrisoned in Moesia Inferior – I Italica, in Novae, XI Claudia, in Durostorum, and V Macedonica, in Troesmis (Matei-Popescu 2010, p. 35-165).

The beginning of Hadrian's reign is disturbed by the revolt of the Sarmatians and Roxolani, who were complaining of the diminishing of their stipends, while the Iazyges were devastating Dacia and Pannonia (SHA, *Hadr.*, 6, 8). Hadrian concludes a peace treaty with the Roxolani king, but abandons the forts from Wallachia (Țentea, Matei-Popescu 2016, p. 64-66), although it is still a debated issue that he did this as a result of the Sarmatians' violent actions or as result of an agreement (Bârcă 2006, p. 19; 2013, p. 118; Opreanu 1998, p. 53; Petolescu 1989, p. 185; Ștefan 1945-1947, p. 115-144; Țentea, Matei-Popescu 2016, p. 7), setting the border of the province on the River Olt (Petolescu 1982, p. 69; Petolescu 1989, p. 185). It is also Hadrian who seems to have inaugurated the policy of stipends paid to the Dacians from Moldavia, a fact evidenced by two monetary treasures ending with coins issued by the above-mentioned emperor (Ioniță 1982, p. 74-75 and fig. 20; Opreanu 1994, p. 209 and 214).

The disturbance produced by the Dacians at the eastern border of Dacia Inferior during Antoninus Pius's reign (the years 138-139 AD, to be precise) occasioned the special mission of T. Flavius Priscus Gallonius Fronto Q. Marcius Turbo, who undertakes a military campaign outside the province on which he exerts his authority (Petolescu 1982, p. 72; Petolescu 1995, p. 52; Petolescu 2000, p. 166-167; Petolescu 2010, p. 168 and 294-295; Țentea, Matei-Popescu 2016, p. 9). The subsidy policy initiated by Hadrian for the Dacians from Moldavia continues during the reign of the next emperor, as suggested by three monetary treasures from the area, which end with coins issued during the time of Antoninus Pius (Ioniță 1982, 75 and fig. 20).

The consequences of the Marcomannic Wars, which started in AD 168 (Petolescu 2000, p. 167; Petolescu 2010, p. 168), affect large areas of the *barbaricum* (Opreanu 1998, p. 70-75). Following the pressure exerted, the Iazyges are granted the right of trading with the Roxolani through the province of Dacia, but are forbidden to have ships on the Danube or to come near the islands on the river (Cassius Dio LXXI, 19), and various barbarian populations require subsidies or the right to settle in the Roman Empire (Cassius Dio LXX, 11-12). The Costoboci, allied with the Sarmatians, attack the Roman possessions, reaching Central Greece in the year 170 AD (Petolescu 1995, p. 144-145; Petolescu 2000, p. 310-312; Petolescu 2010, p. 297-299; Popa 2007, p. 476-477). The stipends granted to the Dacians from Moldavia seem to peak (Ioniță 1982, p. 75 and 78-79; Mitrea 1956, p. 161-172); we speak of Dacians because a simple glance at the map shows that the treasures ending with coins issued by emperors Marcus Aurelius, Commodus and Septimius

Severus do not overlap the Sarmatian discoveries, at least at this research stage (Ioniță 1982, figs. 21-23) and the Muncelu de Sus silver vessels (Ioniță 1982, p. 83; Mihăilescu-Bîrliba, Mitrea 1978a, p. 176-177; Mihăilescu-Bîrliba, Mitrea 1978b, p. 212; Opreanu 1994, p. 214) were also found outside the area inhabited by Sarmatians.

When we mentioned the consequences of the Marcomannic Wars affecting large areas of the *barbaricum*, we also considered Wallachia and the area west of the River Prut, areas far from the military operations, but in which the archeological discoveries seem to indicate the arrival of new groups of Sarmatian populations.

In Southern Wallachia, a genuine boom of Sarmatian discoveries is recorded, as 90 funerary structures are known, out of which 13 isolated graves and 13 groups which can be dated in the timeframe between the end of the second century and mid-third century (Sîrbu *et alii* 2014, p. 121-133). Significantly fewer are the graves from Brăila Plain (Fig. 9/4-7; Fig. 10) – only 19, out of which four isolated burials and two groups (Oța, Sîrbu 2009, p. 191-196). From this area, the Sarmatian communities expanded towards the present-day area of Buzău, as attested by the 26 graves, to which an almost equal number of destroyed burials can be added (Oța 2016, p. 139; Oța, Sîrbu 2016a, p. 213 and 229). Another area in which Sarmatian discoveries are registered is the central and northern areas of Wallachia, where, until now, are known 41 Sarmatian burials – three isolated graves, and 39 graves concentrated in two groups (Oța, Sîrbu 2016a, p. 213 and 229).

A glance at the map of the Sarmatian findings that can be dated at the end of the second century and in the first half of the next century (Fig. 2) shows significant differences in comparison with the map of the Sarmatian discoveries dated at the end of the first century and the beginning of the second century AD. This difference consists in the significant concentrations of graves near the Danubian limes, which may be, together with the great increase in the number of Sarmatian graves, indicative of the coming of new communities in Wallachia, communities that disregards a potential interdiction to settle in front of the Roman border, as it seems to have been the case during the previous period. A similar phenomenon, which does not involve the Sarmatian groups but the Dacian communities, takes place in the area east of the River Olt, where archeological discoveries indicate for the end of the second century the settlement of civilian population in a territory which might have previously been a military one (Bogdan-Cătănicu 1997, p. 129-131 and 139). The archeological map of Wallachia at the end of the second century and especially in the first half of the third century is completed with the occurrence of Dacian settlements in the present-day Bucharest area (Străulești, Tei, Bragadiru, Militari – Bichir 1984, p. 89-91; Oța, Sîrbu 2013, p. 293, with previous literature).

As far as the area between the River Prut and the Carpathians is concerned (Fig. 2), although the number of Sarmatian burials that can be dated within this time interval increases (Fig. 11), the general number is still low (less than 200 findings, out of which 22 isolated graves and 24 groups). The areas where Sarmatian discoveries are recorded are Jijia Plain, with an expansion towards the south, to Bahlui Plain, Bârlad Plateau, Tutova Hills, and Siret Plain (Oța, Sîrbu 2016a, p. 214 and 230). Although the number of Sarmatian findings is higher, their territorial distribution remains marginal, covering a relatively narrow area along the banks of the rivers Prut and Bârlad, the remainder of the area being dominated by Dacian settlements and necropolises, dated in the second half of the second century and throughout the third century (Bichir 1973, p. 147-154).

The evolution of Wallachia and Moldavia during the third century AD is inconstant. The *beneficiarius* insignia (Bichir 1984, p. 58, pl. LII/8; Bogdan-Cătănicu 1997, p. 141 and note 42; Opreanu 1998, p. 78; Petculescu 1993, p. 196, no. 7; Petculescu 1999, p. 895-896, no. 8) and the Roman weaponry from Mătăsaru (Bichir 1984, p. 56-58 and 60; Petculescu 1999, p. 897-898, nos.

23-25), the existence of a possible Roman military outpost in Giulești (Petculescu 1999, p. 900), the presence of a *vexillatio* of legio XI Claudia in Pietroasele (Petolescu 1989, p. 186-187; Petolescu 2010, p. 187) and the construction of *limes transalutanus* (Petolescu 2000, p. 196-208; Petolescu 2010, p.182-188; Țentea, Matei-Popescu 2016, p. 11 și 55-59) can be interpreted as an amplification of the Roman control in Wallachia in the first half of the third century (Bogdan-Cătănciu 1984, p. 141, note 114; Opreanu 1994, p. 211; Oța 2016, p. 145). As previously mentioned, the number of monetary treasures reaches its peak in Moldavia during the first decades of the third century, and then gradually diminishes, up to their complete disappearance in the second half of that century. The archeological map of Wallachia in the first half of the third century (Fig. 3) displays an expansion of Dacian findings not only in central Wallachia but also closer to the Danube (Bichir 1984, Pl. I/2; Bogdan-Cătănciu 1997, p. 140). It also seems that there are now two regions of interaction, of overlapping of various types of findings, one in the area surrounding Bucharest and the other in the north-eastern Wallachia, where Roman fortification, Sarmatian graves and settlements and graves similar to Dacian discoveries from Moldavia were found (Tzony 1977, p. 345-348; Tzony 1978a, p. 147-161; Tzony 1978b, p. 289-298). The peaceful relationship between the Roman Empire and the neighboring populations deteriorates starting with AD 238 (when the attack of the Carps allied with the Goths is attested – Petolescu 1989, p. 187; Petolescu 1995, p. 117 and 147-148; Petolescu 2000, p. 283 and 315-316; Petolescu 2010, p. 301-303), the second half of the third century witnessing the repeated attacks of the Goths on the Roman possessions (Opreanu 1998, p. 91; Petolescu 1995, p. 118-119; Petolescu 2000, p. 283-285; Petolescu 2010, p. 279-280). In this historical context, the Roman control over Wallachia is lost (Petculescu 1999, p. 900), and the policy of granting stipends to the Dacian population from Moldavia comes to an end.

Sarmatian graves and Dacian settlements and necropolises have been found in a territory previously controlled by the Romans, more precisely, between the *limes alutanus* and *limes transalutanus* (Oța, Sîrbu, Grosu 2012, p. 201-216), while the first burials of Sântana de Mureș – Cerneahov culture occur in the last quarter of the third century AD (Niculescu 2003, p. 195), a context in which the Sarmatian findings disappear from Wallachia. Exceptions are the seven graves from Spiru Haret (Fig. 12/1-6) and Tichilești (Fig. 12/7-13), which can be dated at the end of the third century (Oța, Sîrbu 2009, p. 196) and which still preserve features that ascribe them to the horizon of inhumation graves archeologically attested, with chronological gaps, from the end of the first century AD until the second half of the third century.

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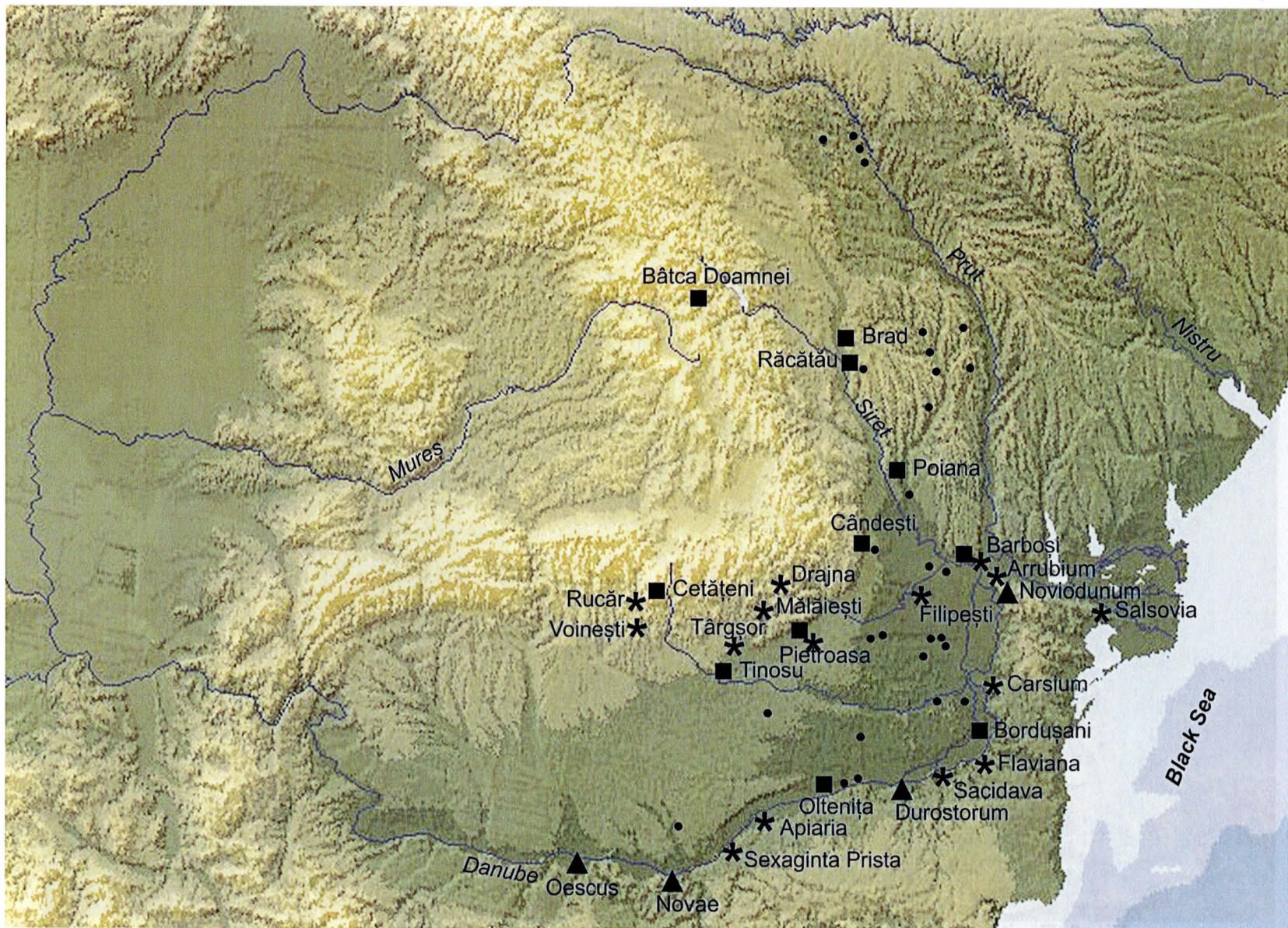


Fig. 1. Territorial distribution of Sarmatian graves (late first - early second centuries AD).

● - Sarmatian graves; * - Roman fortifications; ▲ - legionary forts; ■ - Dacian fortified settlements and settlements.

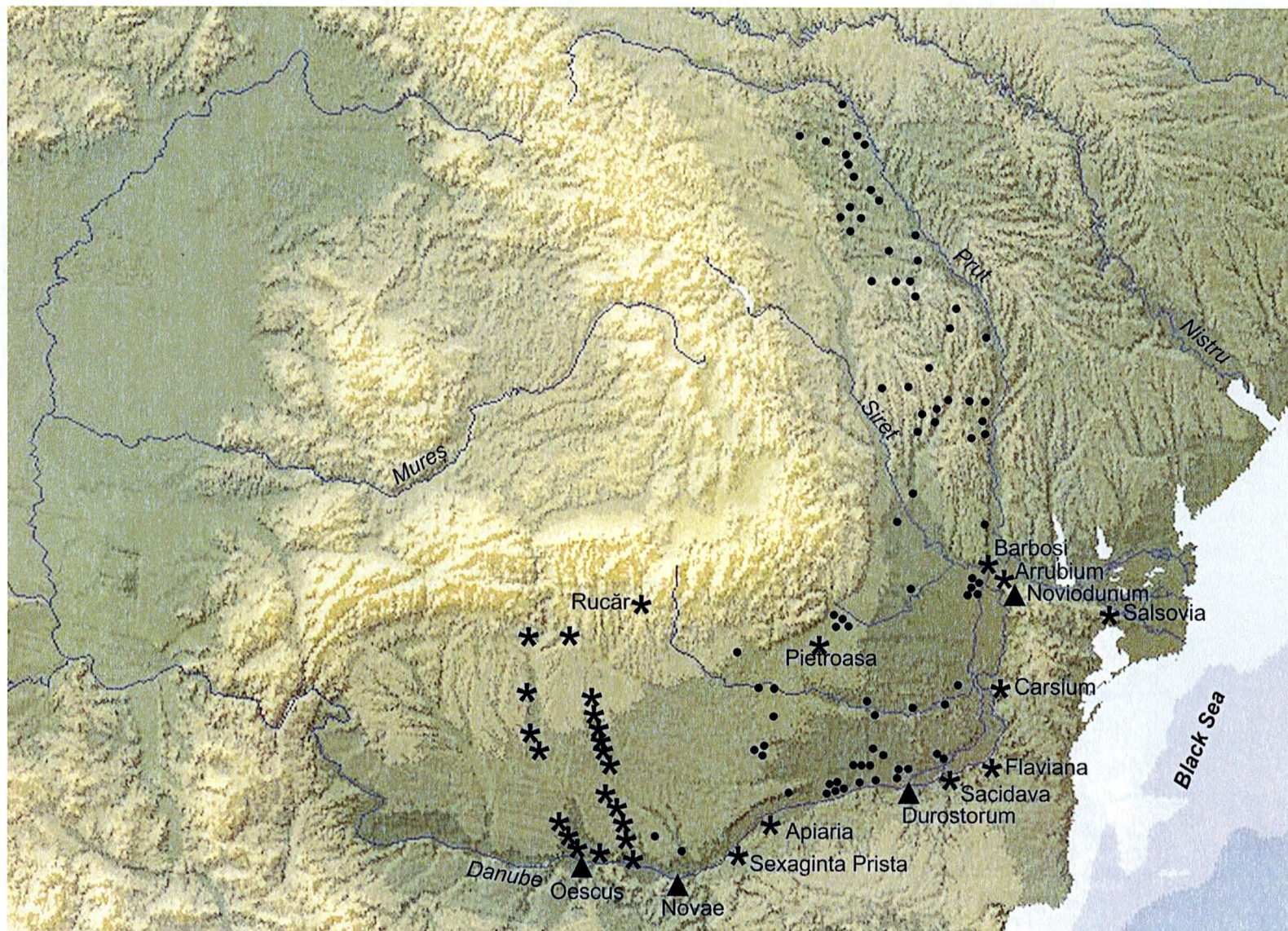


Fig. 2. Territorial distribution of Sarmatian graves (late second - third centuries AD).

● - Sarmatian graves; * - Roman fortifications; ▲ - legionary forts.

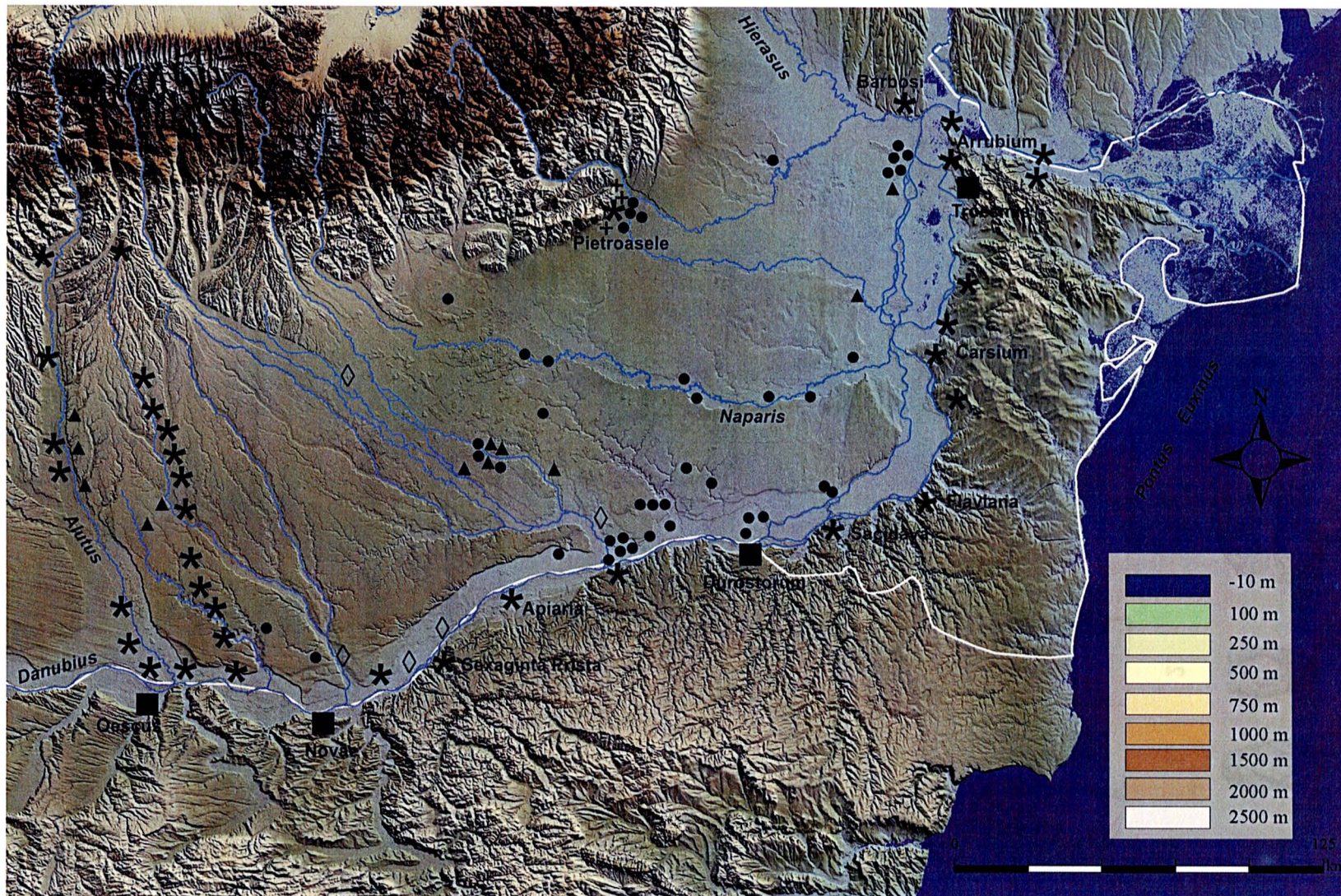


Fig. 3. Wallachia in the third century AD (map made by Mihai Florea and Silviu Oța).

- - Sarmatian graves (2nd stage); ▲ - Sarmatian graves (3rd stage); * - Roman fortifications; ■ - legionary forts;
- ◇ - Dacian discoveries; + - discoveries attributed to the Carps.

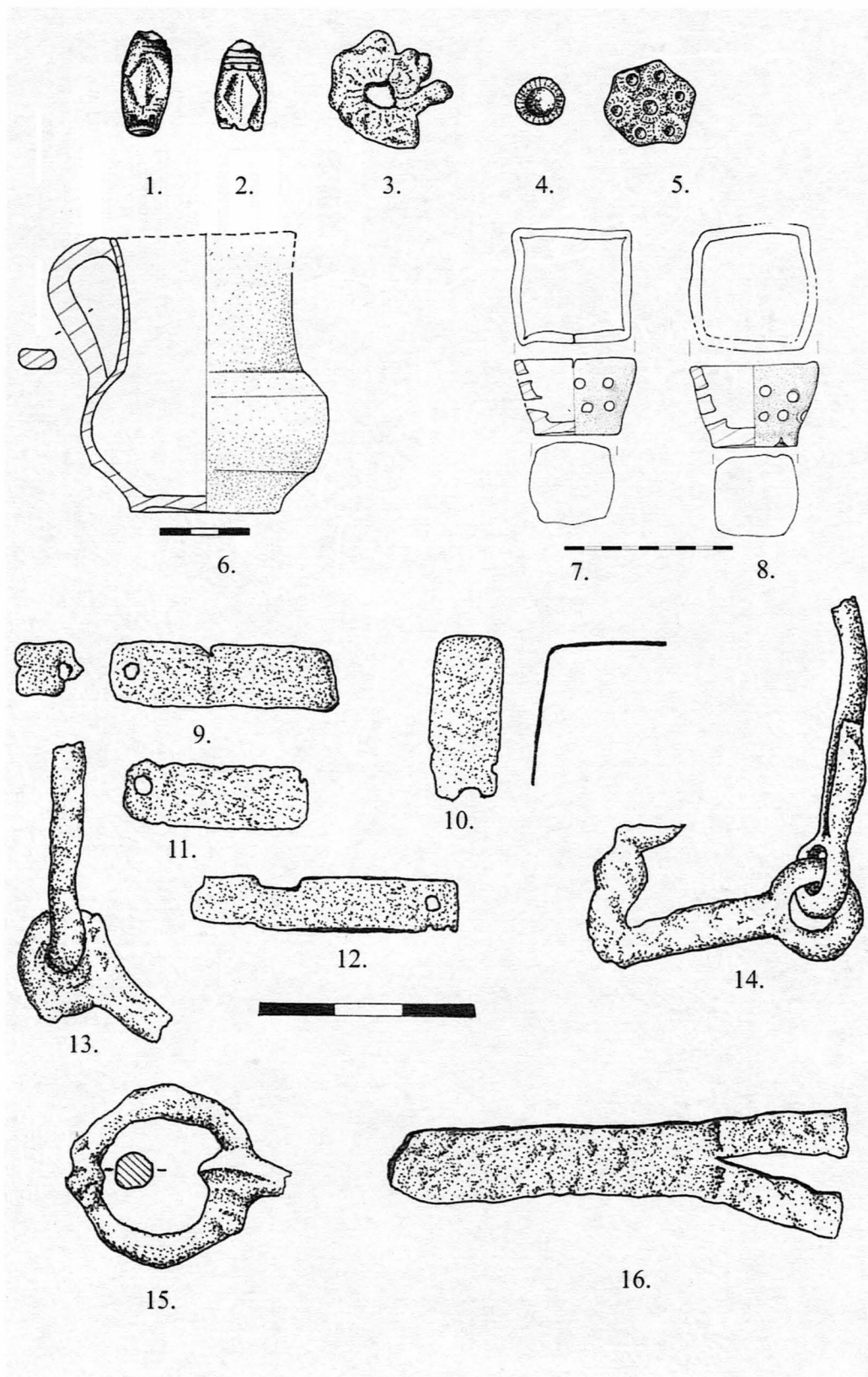


Fig. 4. Vitănești G2, 1-16 (after Sîrbu *et alii* 2014).

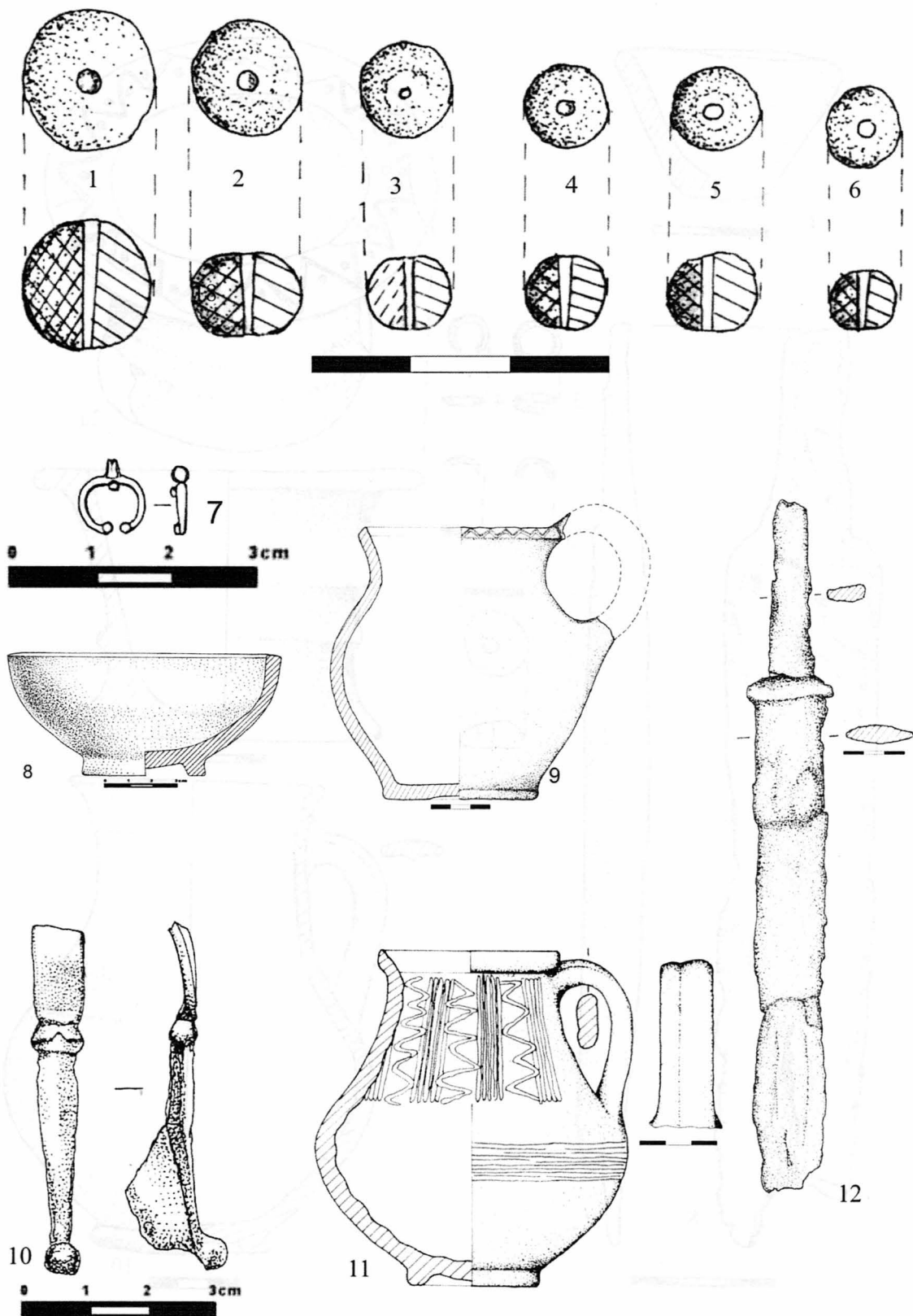


Fig. 5. Râmnicelu G. 14 (1-8); Râmnicelu G. 19 (9); Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon : G. 7 (10-12) (after Oța, Sirbu 2008).

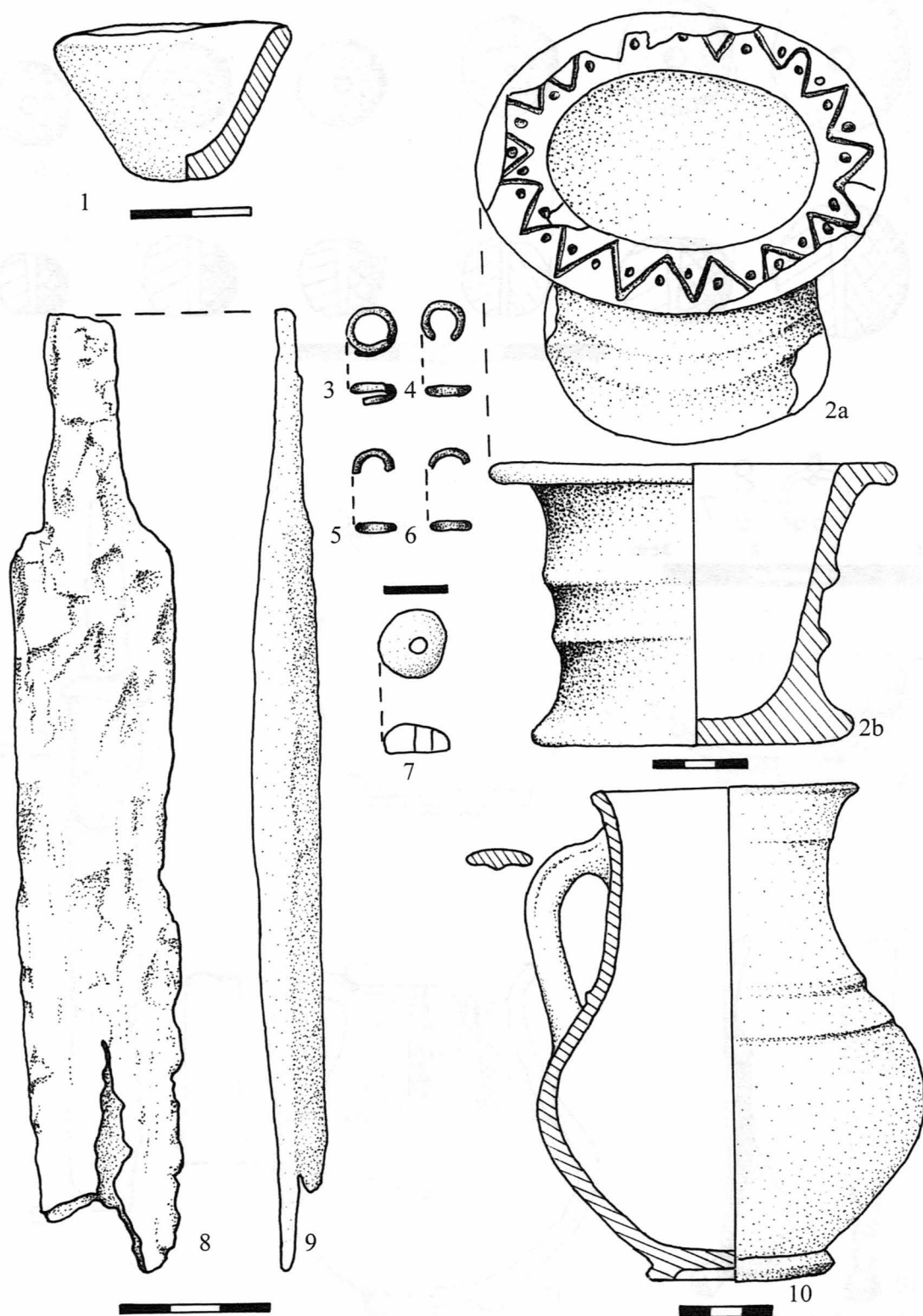


Fig. 6. Vaslui G.1 (after Andronic 1963 and Bichir 1993).

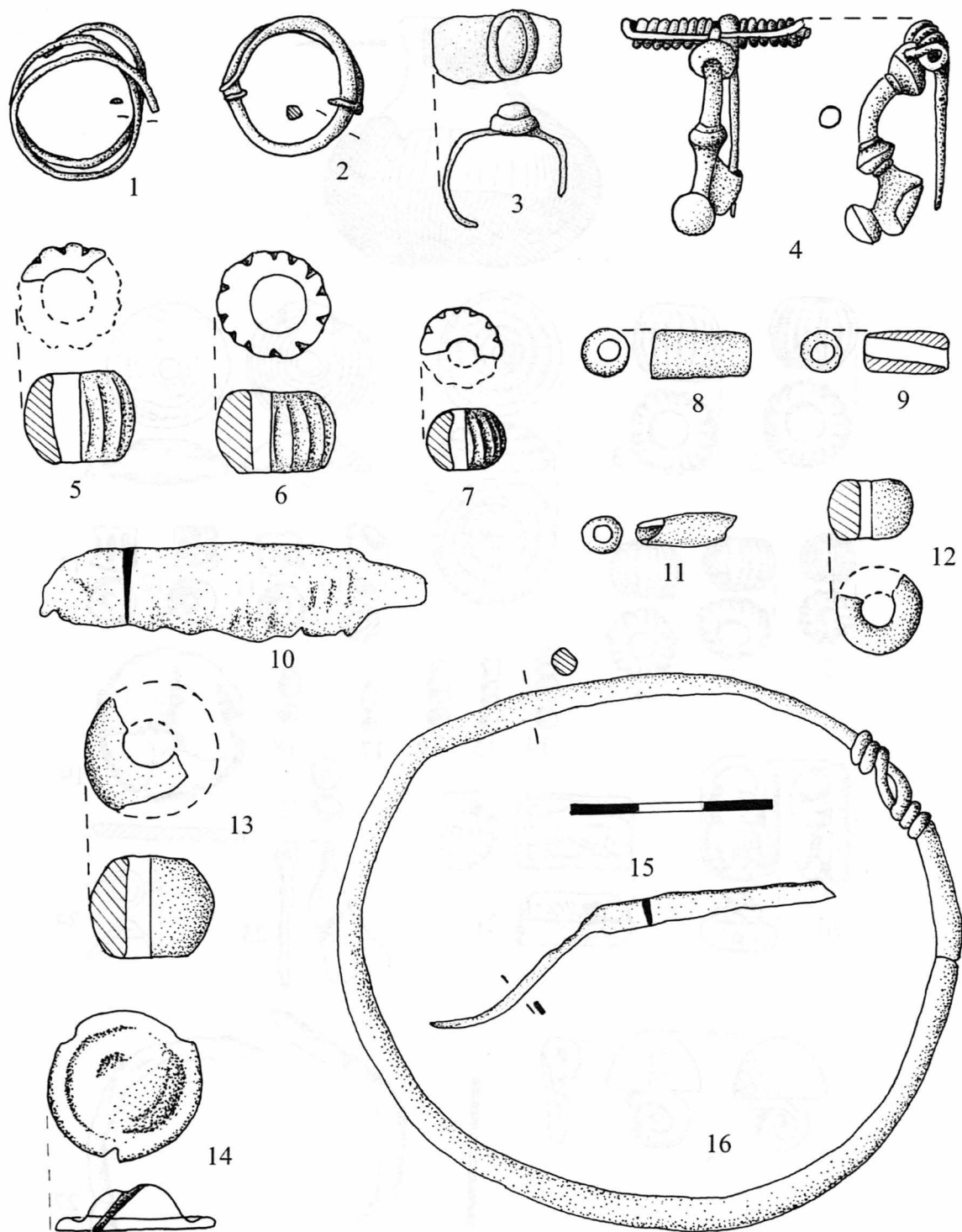


Fig. 7. Tutova G.1 (after Bichir 1993).

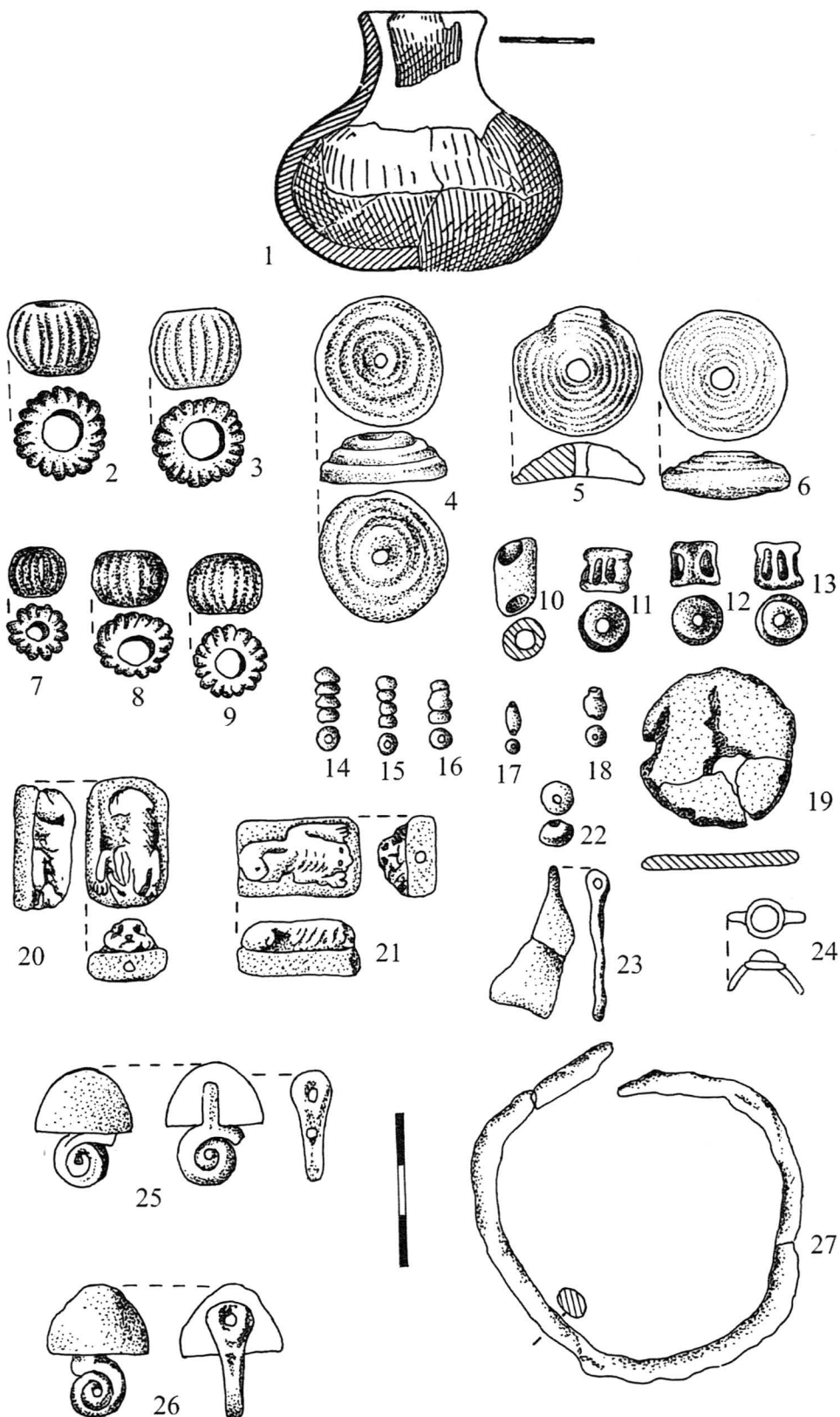


Fig. 8. Giurcani G.8 (after Buzdugan 1981).

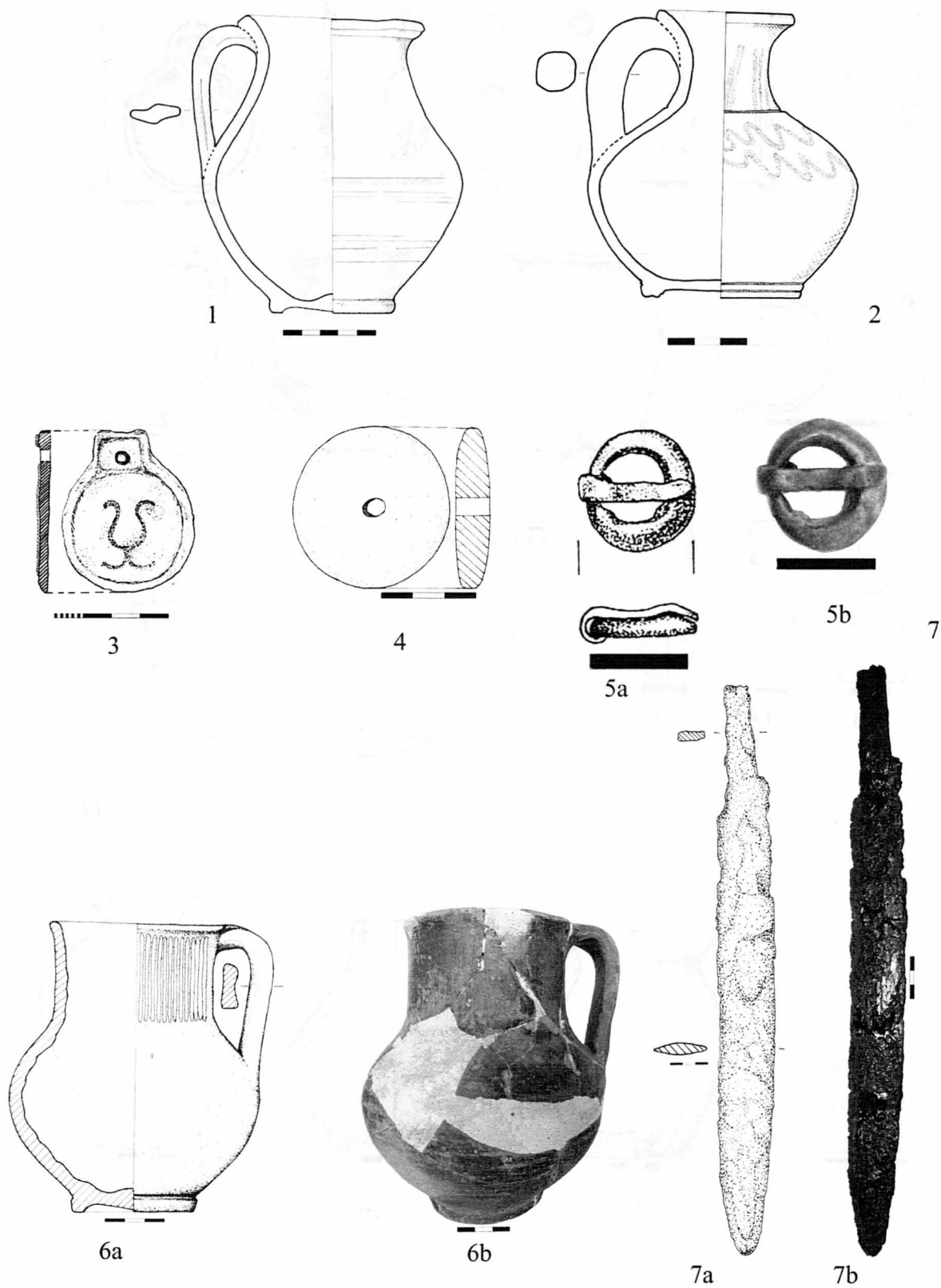


Fig. 9. Călărași G. 1 (1-3) (after Sîrbu *et alii* 2014);
Brăila-Hipodrom G. 2 (4-7) (after Oța, Sîrbu 2009).

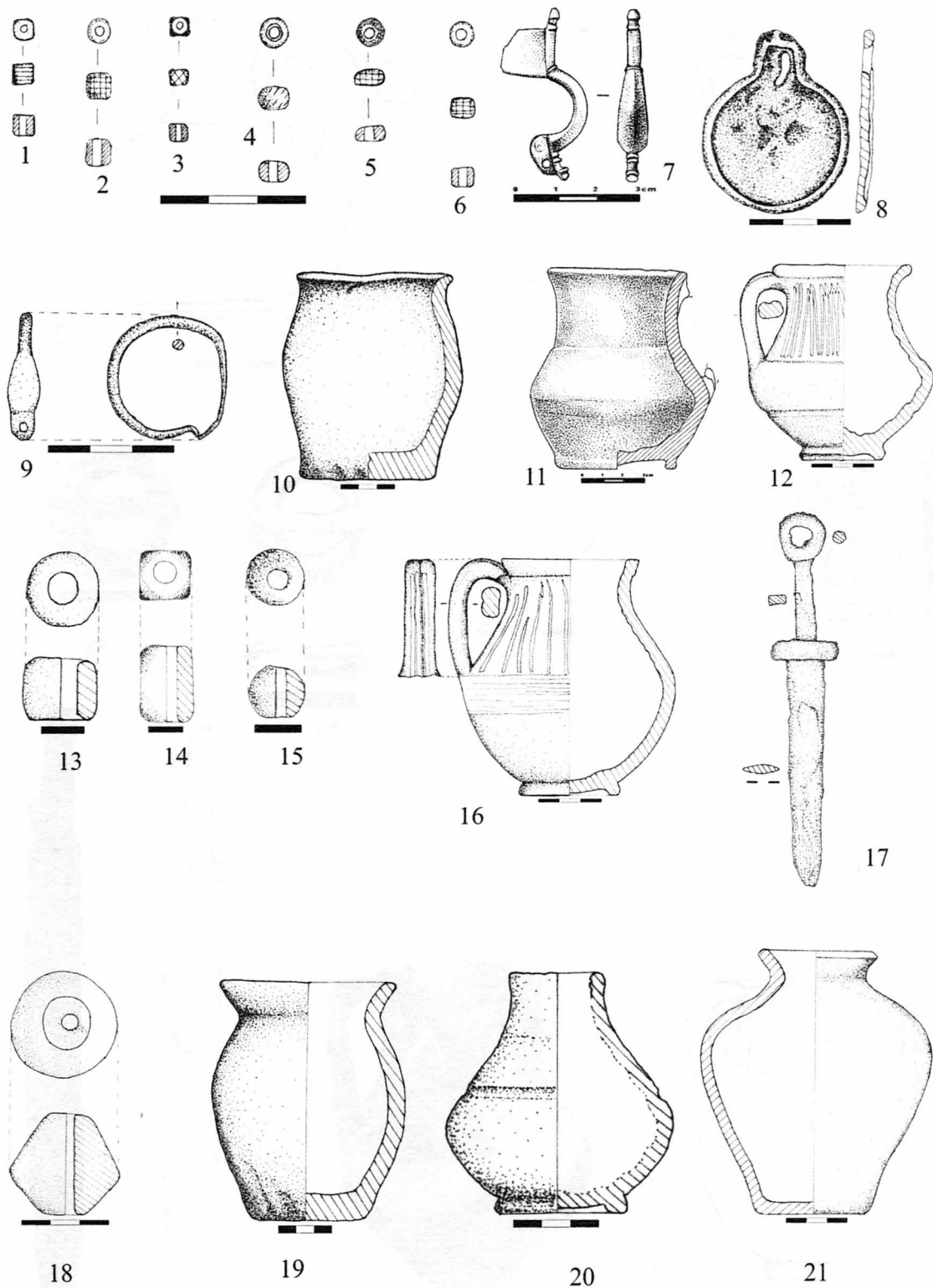


Fig. 10. Chiscani-sat (1-12); Grădiștea G. 4 (13-17); Grădiștea G. 9 (18-21)
(after Oța, Sîrbu 2009).

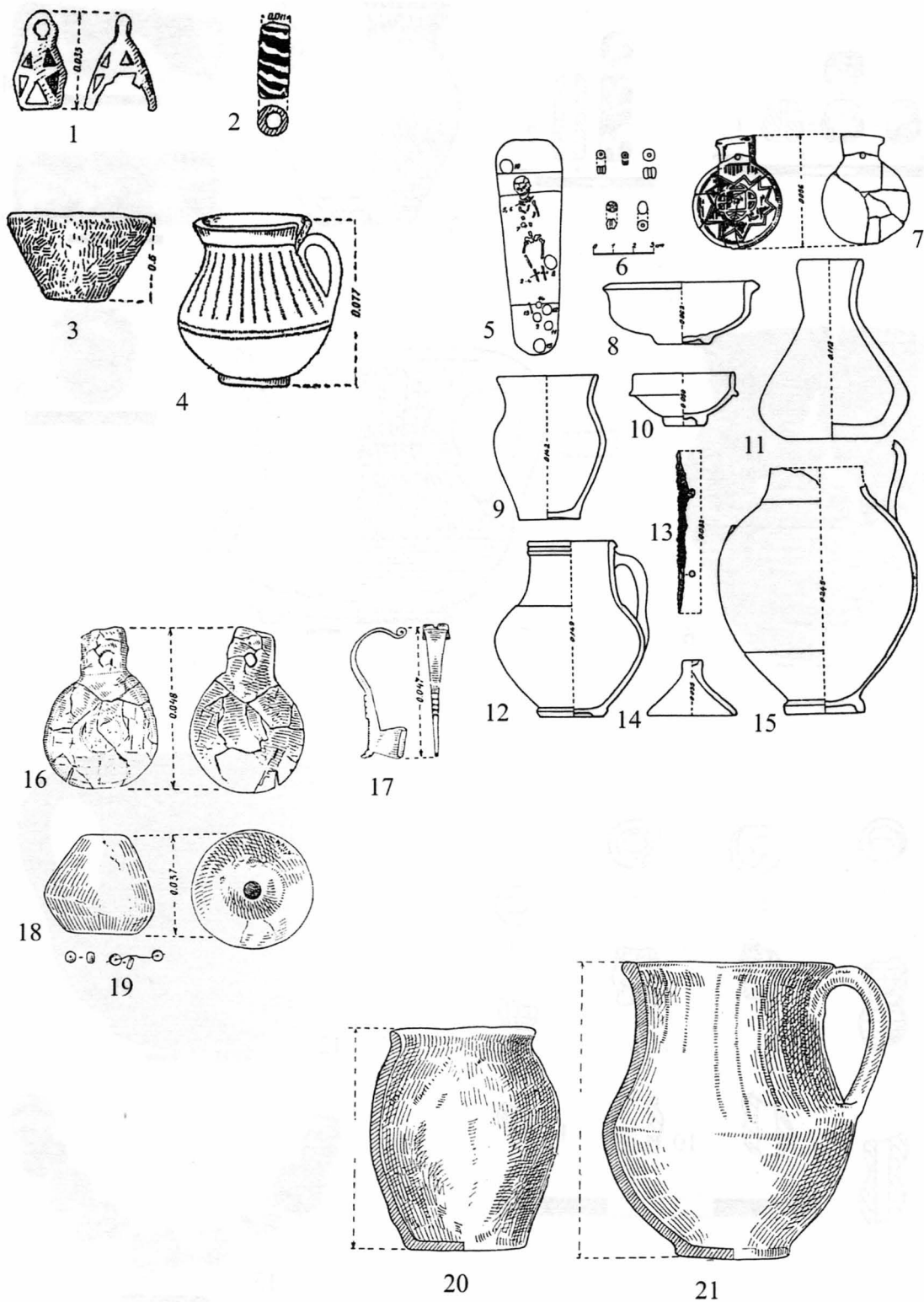


Fig. 11. 1-4 Valea Lupului G3 (after Dinu 1955); 5-15 Ciocani (after Palade 1978-1979); 16-21 Epureni (after N. Zaharia, Petrescu Dâmbovița, E. Zaharia 1970).

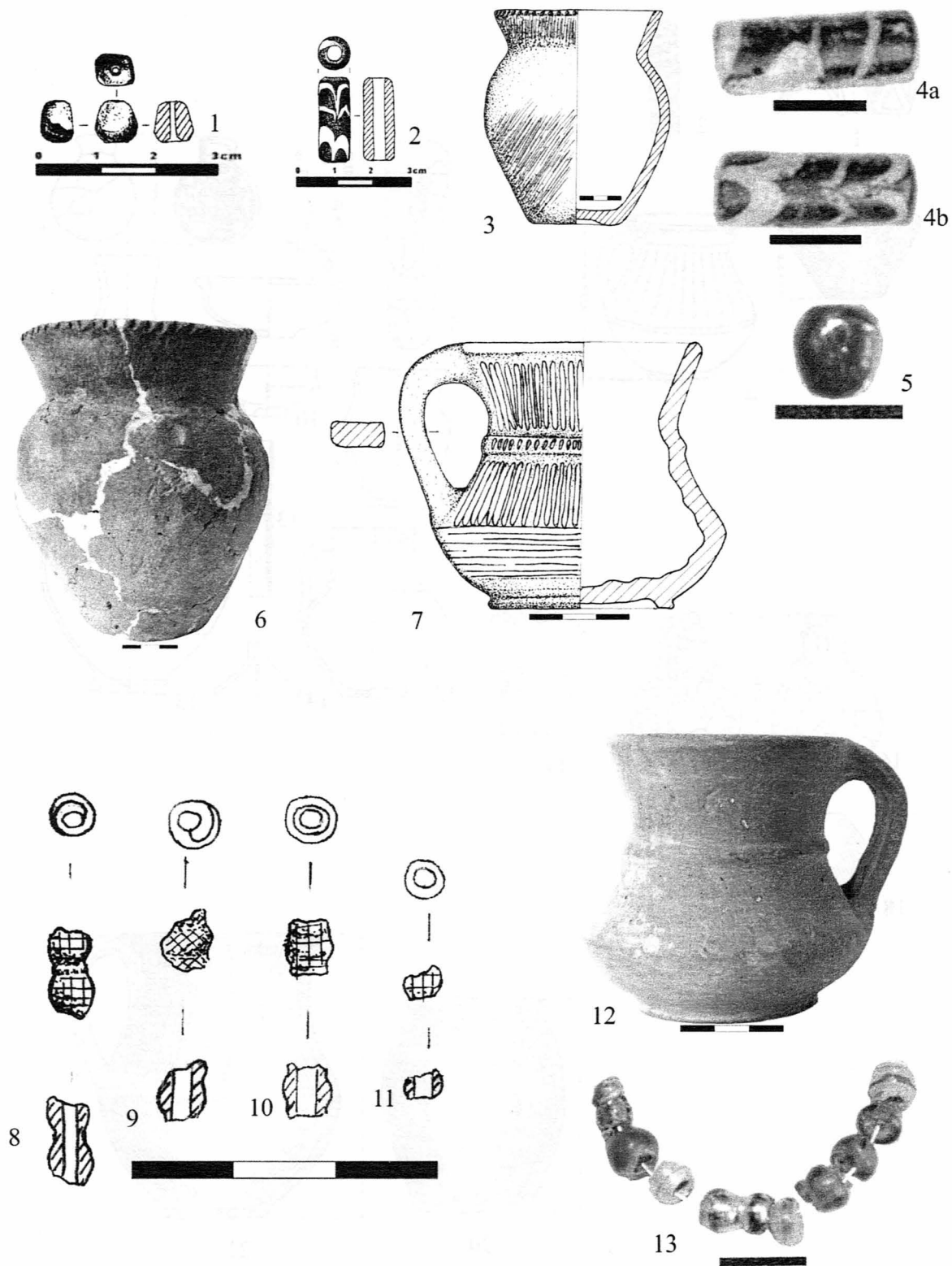


Fig. 12. Spiru Haret G1 (1-6); Tichilești G. 2 (7-13) (after Oța, Sîrbu 2009).