

## NEW FINDS FROM THE ROMAN NECROPOLIS AT NOVIODUNUM



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**Abstract:** This paper presents the results of a recent archaeological rescue excavation in the necropolis of the ancient city of Noviodunum. The archaeological layers have been greatly disturbed, yet three stratigraphic contexts were identified. The recovered ceramic materials are very fragmented, but can be dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD. From a statistical and typological point of view, out of a total of 543 fragments, 55.43% (the highest percentage of finds) is transport amphorae, 24.30% is plain tableware, 3.49% is kitchenware and 2.94% is fine ceramics. About 13.81% of the fragments could not be identified. The materials cover almost all functional categories and include local, as well as Pontic and imported pottery, especially from the Black Sea and Asia Minor.

**Rezumat:** Articolul prezintă rezultatele unei recente cercetări arheologice de salvare din necropola orașului antic Noviodunum, punct *Livadă*. Straturile arheologice au fost puternic deranjate, fiind identificate trei contexte stratigrafice, dar materialele ceramice recuperate se află într-o stare extrem de fragmentară. Ceramica recuperată acoperă cronologic perioada sec. II-III p.Chr. Din punct de vedere statistic și tipologic, dintr-un total de 543 fragmente, cel mai mare procent aparține amforelor de transport – 55,43%, urmate de ceramică comună de servit – 24,30%, ceramică de bucătărie – 3,49%, ceramică fină – 2,94% și 13,81% fragmente incerte. Materialele acoperă aproape toate categoriile funcționale, iar din punct de vedere al provenienței, se remarcă potențiale produse locale, regionale (pontice) și importuri, în special din zona Asiei Mici.

**Keywords:** Isaccea, Noviodunum, necropolis, pottery, local production, imports.

**Cuvinte cheie:** Isaccea, Noviodunum, necropolă, ceramică, producție locală, importuri.

### RECENT RESEARCH IN THE NECROPOLIS–THE ORCHARD<sup>1</sup>

The necropolis of Noviodunum offers by far one of the most important sequences of funeral complexes in the province of Moesia Inferior and later Scythia Minor.<sup>2</sup> The archaeological ensemble *Isaccea–Noviodunum* consists of the remains of the Roman-Byzantine, Middle-Byzantine and medieval fortress, a large civil settlement bordered by three defensive *valla* with their respective ditches, to which are added, to the south and southeast, the necropolises of the fortress and the rural settlements.

<sup>1</sup> The English translation for the point *Livada* (in order to facilitate further bibliographical inquiries in Romanian published articles).

<sup>2</sup> Бужор 1960, 525-539; Bujor, Simion 1961, 391-397; Simion 1984, 75-88; Simion 1994-1995, 121-149; Simion 2007a, 307-338.

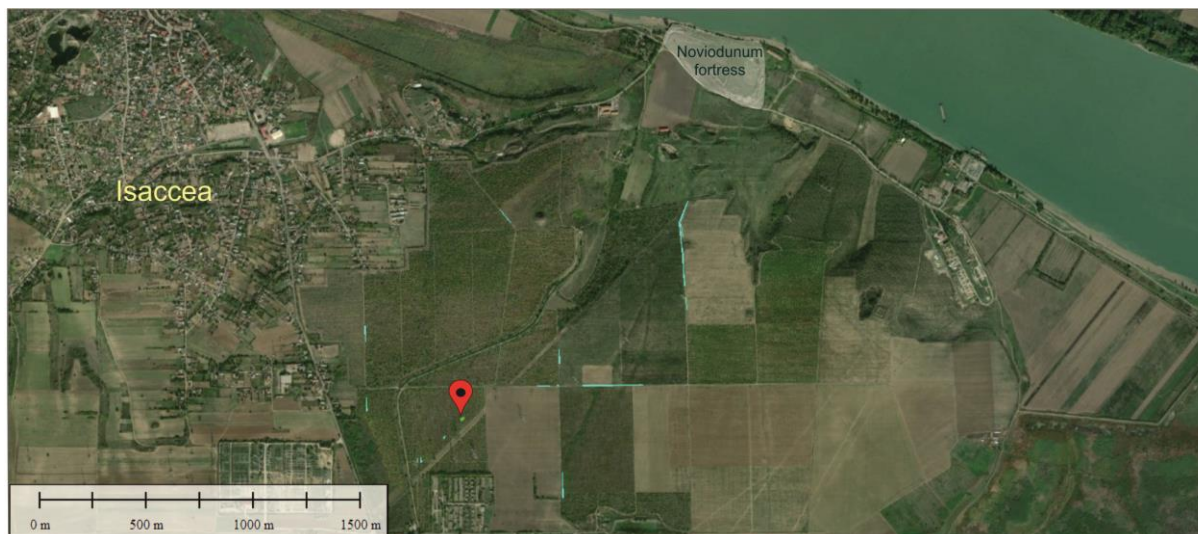


Plate I. Noviodunum. *Orchard* Necropolis – Location CS / Cx4-Cx5.

The tumular necropolis from Noviodunum was investigated between 1958-1992 by Gavrilă Simion, and a number of 27 burial mounds were uncovered.<sup>3</sup> Essential to any study of the funerary landscape of the ancient city is the fact that most of the researched tombs have been published. Thus, the information derived from the research of the necropolis marks the period between the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century and the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.<sup>4</sup>

Since 2010, the research team of the Noviodunum archaeological site extended the excavations in the area of the former necropolis.<sup>5</sup> Sixty burial mounds, road routes, and rural settlements were mapped in the territory, generating a protective perimeter of the necropolis related to the ancient city.<sup>6</sup>

In 2020, the Fruvinis Water Users for Irrigation Organization (hereinafter O.U.A.I. Fruvinis) Isaccea, carried out works in order to realize the investment “Modernization of the SPP1 irrigation plot from the Isaccea irrigation, Tulcea county”. O.U.A.I. Fruvinis owns the infrastructure of the interior arrangements for irrigations on a net surface of 838 ha from the Isaccea hydro-amelioration arrangement, located in the Danube River’s basin. The surface of the irrigation plot belonging to the O.U.A.I. Fruvinis was first established in 1977 and includes the land located outside the town of Isaccea, owned by members of the Fruvinis Organization of Water Users for Irrigation. The modernization works aimed at installing new pipes in parallel with the existing ones, at a distance of approx. 1 m from each other. Much of the land owned by S.C. Fruvinis S.A. Isaccea integrates the arrangements for irrigation, but also much of the necropolis of the ancient Noviodunum, called by us *Necropolis-Orchard*. The preventive archaeological researches had as objective a number of 17 points, to which 11 complexes identified during the supervision of the works are added.

<sup>3</sup> Simion 2008; Baumann 2010, 11.

<sup>4</sup> Bujor 1963, 167-169; Simion 1994, 91-105; Simion 2007b, 176-194; Simion 1995, 215-228; Simion 1996, 113-136; Simion 2000-2001, 387-395; Simion 2005-2006, 173-182; Baumann 2009, 217-230; Baumann 2010, 120, no. 24; Oța 2010, 395-405; Oța 2017, 49-78.

<sup>5</sup> The area called *Necropolis-Orchard*, is known in the literature for its crypt complexes, tumular necropolis, flat or cremation necropolises, ancient roads and rural housing.

<sup>6</sup> Archaeological Report, “Modernization of the SPP1 irrigation plot from the Isaccea irrigation, Tulcea county”, O.U.A.I. Fruvinis, ICEM Tulcea Archive, Mss.

In this article, we aim to analyse the discoveries made on the route of the main pipeline (CS), consisting of the archaeological complexes Cx 3, Cx 4 and Cx 5.

On the CS route, 320 m NE of the pumping station, a complex named by us Cx 3 was identified. At this point, possible fragments of sarcophagus or funerary monument, pieces of lead and a small number of ceramic fragments were discovered. A 6 x 2 m excavation unit was made to investigate this complex. A limestone slab was identified, placed on the edge, which shows traces of processing. The recorded stratigraphy is as follows: - SU 1 vegetal, gray soil (0-0.23 m); - SU 2 gray / brown layer, compact (0.23-0.30 m); - SU 3 gravel layer (compact layer of sand and reddish gravel, mixed with ceramic fragments), a possible pavement or road arrangement, captured on a length of 4.40 m; - SU 4 light gray layer with a yellowish tinge and small limestone granules.

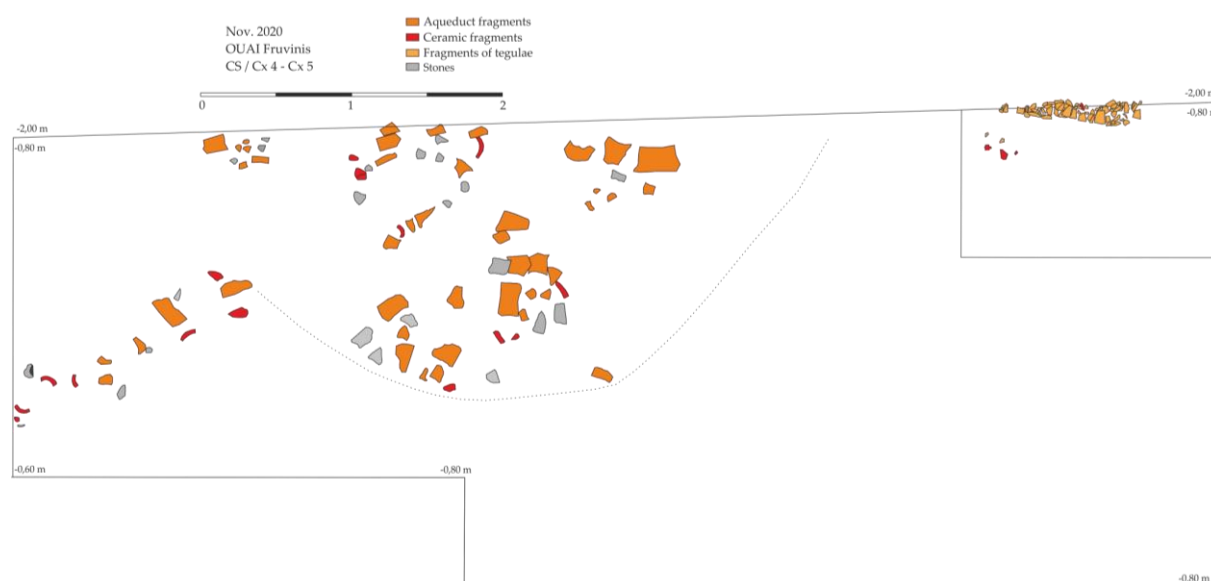


Plate II. CS / Cx4-Cx5 complex plan.

Also on the CS route, 100 m NE of Cx 3, another complex was identified – Cx 4 / Cx 5. When digging the ditch, fragments of broken amphorae and aqueducts – *tubuli* appeared. A 6 x 3 m excavation section was drawn to further reveal the features. In the northern part of the section, an arrangement of ceramic fragments and *tegulae* (Cx 4) was identified, which suggests a sort of "wall", which was 0.25 m high and 0.30 m wide. The pipe ditch cut this archaeological complex and we believe it belongs to a funerary context, enclosure. South of this complex, the distribution of ceramic material suggested the existence of an oval-shaped dwelling. Surface research did not lead to the identification of the walls, whether there were poles, beams or a fire installation. The possible arrangements made at the end of the '70s of the last century, when the orchard was made, but also previous interventions, affected the archaeological contexts in an irreversible manner.

## THE POTTERY

The pottery recovered from the rescue excavations covers the period of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD. From this part of the necropolis, thus far there is only one other piece of pottery published, a very special kind of vessel – a *oinophora* type, shaped as a ram,

imported from Asia Minor.<sup>7</sup> Most of the discoveries featured in this paper represent body fragments, atypical, but still indicative of possible production centres depending on the quality and consistency of the fabric. The fragments belong to several categories of ceramics, transport amphorae, tableware and kitchenware. From a statistical point of view, out of a total of 543 sherds, the highest percentage belongs to transport amphorae, 55.43%, followed by table wares – 24.30%, kitchen – 3.49%, fine ceramics – 2.94%, with a percentage of 13.81% of uncertain fragments. Most of the amphorae fragments come from Pontic centres, of which most originate from Heraclea and Sinope, followed by Aegean vessels (e.g. Dressel 24 and Dressel 2-4, mainly body sherds and handles).

Also part of the larger coarse ware category, the kitchen ware is much less consistent, and from a typological point of view it includes pots, casseroles – both red and kaolin fabric, most with strong traces of secondary exposure to fire, both wheel and hand made. What stands out in the case of this lot is the fragmentary state of the sherds, as well as the variety of types identifiable in each category.

### 1.1. Transport vessels

Covering 55,43 % of finds, sherds from various amphorae are the most numerous, given their larger sizes by comparison to other categories, although there are few recognisable fragments to determine a type. According to the discernible fabrics, over half of the sherds originate from amphorae manufactured in the Black Sea area, on the western shore as well as in southern centres such as Sinope and Heraclea, while for the rest is difficult to determine. The first fragments originate from an Aegean amphorae, types Dressel 24 *similis* (Pl. III/1), transporting oil, and Troesmis X<sup>8</sup> (Pl. III/2), both previously discovered at Noviodunum and its territory. Among the sherds recovered there are also two-barreled fragmentary handles from other Aegean Dressel 2-4 amphorae. From the southern Black Sea there is only one identifiable fragmentary base recovered, belonging to a wine amphora made at Heraclea, probably type Shelov B (Pl. III/3). The following three rim fragments belong to other Pontic transport vessels, likely from a southern centre.

#### 1.1. Aegean amphorae

1.1.1. Aegean Dressel 24 *similis* (Chian?) oil amphora. Round rim with a fine interior groove, made out of fine fabric light red 2.5YR6/6; covered with white coating. Previously attested at Noviodunum and well spread in the entire province.<sup>9</sup>

CS/Cx5 0,60-0,80. D. rim 12 cm; Hp. 7.2 cm (Pl. III/1).

1.1.2. Aegean Troesmis X amphora with rolled rim, made out of coarse fabric strong brown 7.5YR5/6; secondary exposure to fire. Other fragments nearby were discovered at Capaclia.<sup>10</sup> Cx 4 (in the area of wall debris). D. rim 12 cm; Hp. 4.4 cm (Pl. III/2).

<sup>7</sup> Honcu, Stănică 2020.

<sup>8</sup> Arguments for an Aegean production are offered by A. Opaîţ 2015, 327-335.

<sup>9</sup> Simion 1984, pl. XII/1 seems to be a Dressel 24 amphora; Opaîţ, Ionescu 2016, no. 81 at Callatis with fabric; Honcu, Stănică 2019, 219, fig.3/6 and see also the extensive references for finds in Moesia; Opaîţ, Tsaravopoulos 2011, 288. fig. 14/a-b.

<sup>10</sup> Honcu, Stănică 2017, 314-315, no. 8, similar shape, but made out of olive brown fabric. For an elaborate discussion on this type see Opaîţ 2015.

## 1.2. Pontic amphorae

1.2.1. Pontic Heraclea – Shelov B (?) wine amphora. Fragmentary ring base. Coarse fabric light red 2.5YR7/6. Amphorae from this Pontic centre were discovered Noviodunum, in the necropolis.<sup>11</sup>

Cx5. D. base 3.5 cm; Hp. 4.7 cm (Pl.III/3).

1.2.2. Pontic *Straja*<sup>12</sup> type amphora. Rolled rim, neck with trace of handle, made out of fine fabric reddish yellow 7.5 YR6/6, exposed to secondary fire.

CS/CX5 0.80-1 m. D. rim 10 cm; Hp. 3.9 cm (Pl. III/4).

1.2.3. Unclassified amphora (Pontic, Aegyssus II?). Rolled rim, neck with traces of a handle, made out of coarse fabric yellowish red 5YR5/8. Similar to Paraschiv 2002, no. 23, considered type Zeest 84-85, previously discovered at Noviodunum<sup>13</sup> and to another fragment from Tomis.<sup>14</sup>

Cx5, 0.80-1 m. D. rim 9 cm; Hp. 4.7 cm (Pl. III/5).

1.2.4. Uncertain amphora (Pontic). Skewed rim, with interior ridge, made out of coarse fabric 2.5YR4/8; with traces of secondary exposure to fire. Similar to a fragment from Callatis<sup>15</sup> and type Zeest 69 – small sized amphora<sup>16</sup> and to another fragment from Tomis.<sup>17</sup>

A7 Cx3. D. rim 7 cm; Hp. 3.8 cm (Pl. III/6).

1.2.5. Unclassified amphora (Pontic). Conical base made out of coarse fabric red 2.5 YR6/8.

CX5. D base 2 cm; Hp. 7cm (Pl. III/7).

1.2.6. Unclassified amphora (Pontic?). Conical, ridged base, made out of coarse fabric yellowish red 5YR5/8.

Cx5 (la 20 m bottom). D. base 4.2 cm; Hp. 7 cm (Pl. III/8)

1.2.7. South Pontic (Sinope IVB?<sup>18</sup>) low ring base, made out of coarse fabric pink 7.5 YR8/3. The fragment also resembles a pitcher, similar to other finds at the site, without any further information on the fabric.<sup>19</sup>

Cx5, 0.80-1 m. D. base 8 cm; Hp.3.5 cm (Pl. III/09)

<sup>11</sup> See Honcu, Stănică 2019, 219 and Opaîţ 2010, 110-11, Figs.1a-c, amphorae from the necropolis dated with a coin from emperor Hadrian.

<sup>12</sup> Opaîţ, Paraschiv 2013, 322, Fig. 13; with another possible analogy at Tropaeum Traiani – Bogdan Cătănciu, Barnea 1979, Fig.144/3.2 – the analogy is suggested solely based on shape, as we did not see the fabric of that fragment. We would like to express our gratitude to Andrei Opaîţ for his input and insight.

<sup>13</sup> Paraschiv 2002, 173, Pl. 4/23.

<sup>14</sup> Opaîţ 2012, 461, Figs. 24-26, see also 466, Figs. 31-32 for the similar shape of an amphora from Răcătău, considered a predecessor of Zeest 73; Băjenaru, Dobrinescu 2008, Pl.7/1; Băjenaru 2014, Fig.4/48 at Histria, with Aegean fabric (?).

<sup>15</sup> Opaîţ, Ionescu 2016, Pl.VII/40.

<sup>16</sup> Opaîţ 2012, 467, Fig. 33.

<sup>17</sup> Băjenaru 2014, 110, Fig.4/47, offering a further analogy at Histria and Fig. 9/133 (Zeest 77) with a similar interior ridge.

<sup>18</sup> Vnukov 2002, 411, Fig.6.

<sup>19</sup> Simion 1984, Pl. IV.

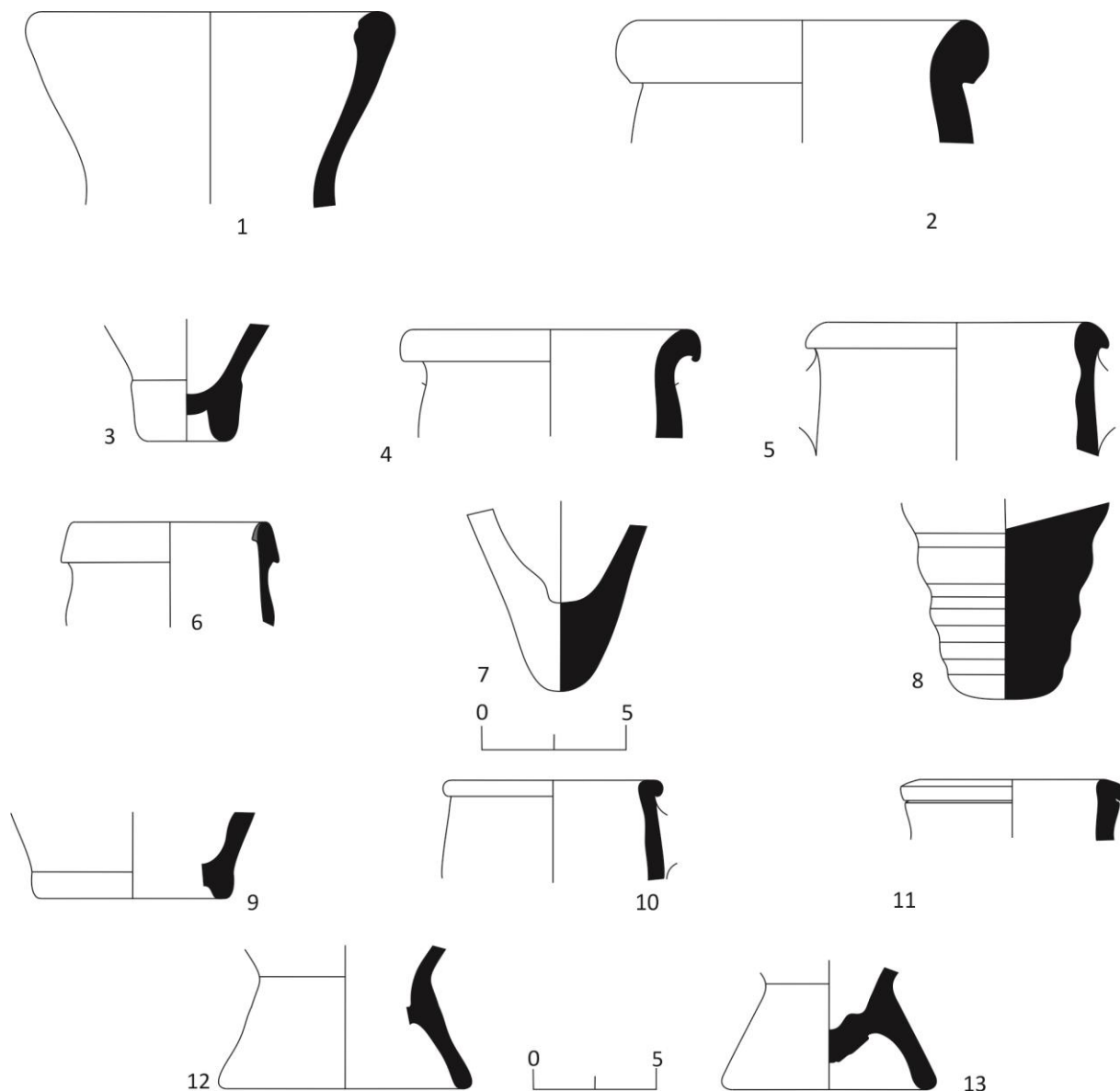


Plate III. Transport vessels 1-9; Table pitchers 10-13.

## 2. *Vasa potatoria*

In this category, we included the table pitchers (Pl. III/9-13, Pl. IV/13-14), common pitchers and flasks (Pl. IV/14-17), two flat bases from pitchers or flasks (Pl. IV/18-19), two bases from cups/mugs (Pl. IV/ 20-21) and two fragments from two large jugs Pl. IV/ 22-23). One other pitcher handle, fragmentary, is worth mentioning whose fabric indicated a south Pontic origin, perhaps Sinope.<sup>20</sup> Other types of pitchers were previously discovered at Noviodunum, similar to some of the finds from these new contexts.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> For details about the Sinopean fabric see Opaît 2012, 552-556; Erten *et alii* 2004.

<sup>21</sup> Simion 1984, Pl. IV features a variety, of which nos. 5 and 9 are most similar to our nos. 36 and 38.

## 2.1. Table pitchers

Table pitchers with tall bases were previously discovered at Noviodunum,<sup>22</sup> Sarichioi,<sup>23</sup> Babadag (necropolis),<sup>24</sup> Tomis.<sup>25</sup> At Histria we find numerous analogies for the ring bases featured here (Pl. IV/13-15), made in pontic centers.<sup>26</sup>

2.1.1. Rolled rim, fragmentary handle on the neck, made out of coarse fabric red 2.5YR5/8, with inclusions Analogies at Măcin,<sup>27</sup> Tomis,<sup>28</sup> Histria<sup>29</sup> and Callatis,<sup>30</sup> as well as at the rural settlement at Sarichioi.<sup>31</sup>

A1 Cx 3. D. rim 7.5 cm; Hp. 4.1 cm (Pl. III/10)

2.1.2. Rolled rim, with an exterior groove, made out of coarse fabric red 2.5YR 5/8; trace of secondary exposure to fire. Analogies at Tomis,<sup>32</sup> Callatis,<sup>33</sup> Tropaeum Traiani,<sup>34</sup> and the rural settlements at Sarichioi<sup>35</sup> and Telița-Amza.<sup>36</sup>

Cx 5 (la 20 m bottom). D. rim 7 cm; Hp. 2.4 cm (Pl. III/11).

2.1.3. Tall, ring bases from pitchers. Analogies at Callatis.<sup>37</sup>

Cx 5, 0,80-1 m. D. base 10 cm; Hp. 5.8 cm, made out of coarse fabric red 2.5YR4/8 (Pl. III/12)

Cx 5 (la 20 m bottom). D. base 8.5 cm; Hp. 4.9 cm, coarse fabric yellowish red 5YR5/8 (Pl. III/13)

## 2.2. Pitchers/flasks

Containers with flat bases, pitchers and flasks, especially *oenochoe*-type pitchers include a wide variety at Noviodunum.<sup>38</sup>

2.2.1. Slightly flaring rim and straight neck, made out of coarse fabric reddish yellow 7.5YR7/6. (red inclusions, Pontic?). Analogies at Sarichioi.<sup>39</sup>

Cx 5 (la 20 m bottom). D. rim 11 cm; Hp. 2.6 cm (Pl. IV/14)

2.2.2. Rolled rim made out of coarse fabric yellowish red 5YR4/6. The rim is similar to that of a table amphora produced at *Valea Morilor*.<sup>40</sup>

A7 Cx 3. D. rim 8 cm; Hp. 2.2 cm (Pl. IV/15).

<sup>22</sup> Simion 1984, Pl. XII/6, together with what appear to be Heracleian amphorae and a Dressel 24.

<sup>23</sup> Baumann 2009, Pl. IV/5, 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD.

<sup>24</sup> Similar to Vasiliu, Paraschiv 1999, 260, 263, Pl. IV/9, type Dressel 28 (?).

<sup>25</sup> Băjenaru 2013, Pl. 13/106-108.

<sup>26</sup> Suceveanu 1982, Pl. 1/32, Pl. 13/26; Suceveanu 2000, Pl. 75/1, Pl. 76/4-10.

<sup>27</sup> Paraschiv 2004, 145. Pl. III/9, 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD.

<sup>28</sup> Băjenaru 2013, 71, Pl. 13/106.

<sup>29</sup> Suceveanu 1982, Pl. 13/26.

<sup>30</sup> Opaît, Ionescu 2016, nos. 50, 61-62.

<sup>31</sup> Baumann 1995, Pl. XI/2.

<sup>32</sup> Băjenaru 2013, 71, Pl. 13/107.

<sup>33</sup> Opaît, Ionescu 2016, nos. 51, 53.

<sup>34</sup> Bogdan Cătănicu, Barnea 1979, Fig. 146/3.7.

<sup>35</sup> Baumann 1995, Pl. XXIV/6.

<sup>36</sup> Baumann 1995, 415, Pl. VI/A, locally produced.

<sup>37</sup> Opaît, Ionescu 2016, nos. 55, 57-58.

<sup>38</sup> Simion 1984, Pl. XII.

<sup>39</sup> Baumann 1995, Pl. XI/12.

<sup>40</sup> Baumann 1995, Pl. X/ 1.



2.2.3. Container with a straight, slightly flaring rim, with an interior groove. Analogy at Tropaeum Traiani<sup>41</sup> and Callatis.<sup>42</sup>

Cx 5, 0,80-1 m. D. rim 7/8 cm; Hp. 2.3 cm; made out of fine fabric reddish yellow 7.5YR6/6 (Pl. IV/16).

2.2.4. Container with a flaring rim.

Cx5. D. rim 10/11 cm; Hp. 3.3 cm; Hand made out of coarse fabric dusky red 2.5YR3/2; secondary exposure to fire (Pl. IV/17).

2.2.5. Containers with a flat base.

Gr. 0,35-0,80 m. D. base 6 cm; Hp. 1.5 cm; made out of coarse white fabric – kaolin (Pl. IV/18).

A1 Cx 3. D. base 6 cm; Hp. 1.4 cm; made out of kaolin; secondary exposure to fire (Pl. IV/19).

### 2.3. Mugs

Fragmentary slightly raised bases from mugs. The two bases featured originate from small mugs with one handle, with analogies at Noviodunum,<sup>43</sup> but also in other settlements.<sup>44</sup>

Cx 5. D. base 3 cm; Hp. 2.6 cm; made out of fine fabric red 2.5YR6/8 (Pl. IV/20).

A1 Cx 3. D. base 4 cm; Hp. 1.7 cm. Slightly raised base made out of fine fabric strong brown 7.5YR4/6; secondary exposure to fire (Pl. IV/21).

### 2.4. Large jugs

The fragmentary rim with traces of red slip (Pl. IV/22) could belong to the same type as the base (Pl. IV/23), with analogies at Histria, where several types of large containers are attested.<sup>45</sup> Both are Pontic, from a yet unidentified centre.

2.4.1. Large jug with a flaring rim, a groove underneath on the exterior.

Cx 5 (20 m from bottom). D. rim 18 cm; Hp. 6.2 cm; made out of coarse fabric reddish yellow 5YR6/6. Traces of red slip (Pl. IV/22).

2.4.3. Large jug with a flat base.

Gr. 0,35-0,80 m. D. base 14 cm; Hp. 8.3 cm; made out of fine fabric reddish yellow 7.5YR7/6 (Pl. IV/23).

## 3. Storage ware

3.1. Small sized *dolium* with a flaring rim. It has an analogy at Troesmis<sup>46</sup> and it is most likely a local product.

Cx 5 (20 m from bottom). D. rim 16 cm; Hp. 1.7 cm; made out of fine fabric red 2.5YR5/8; traces of secondary exposure to fire (Pl. IV/24).

## 4. Kitchen ware

This category represents only 3,49% of all sherds recovered. It consists of pots, casseroles and a frying pan. Most of the fragments show traces of secondary exposure to fire, and includes both wheel and handmade vessels. The rim fragments from the first group, pots, reveal three main wheel made types, from the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD - 3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD and two varieties of hand

<sup>41</sup> Bogdan Cătănciu, Barnea 1979, Fig. 146/4.5.

<sup>42</sup> Opaît, Ionescu 2016, no. 48.

<sup>43</sup> Simion 1984, Pl. IV.

<sup>44</sup> Tomis – Băjenaru 2014, Fig.6/ 85-88; Babadag necropolis – Vasiliu, Paraschiv 1999, Pl. 6/3-4.

<sup>45</sup> Suceveanu 2000, Pl. 65/7,13.

<sup>46</sup> Opaît 1980, Pl. III/4.



made pots. The second group, casseroles, consist of two types, followed by a single piece from a frying pan.

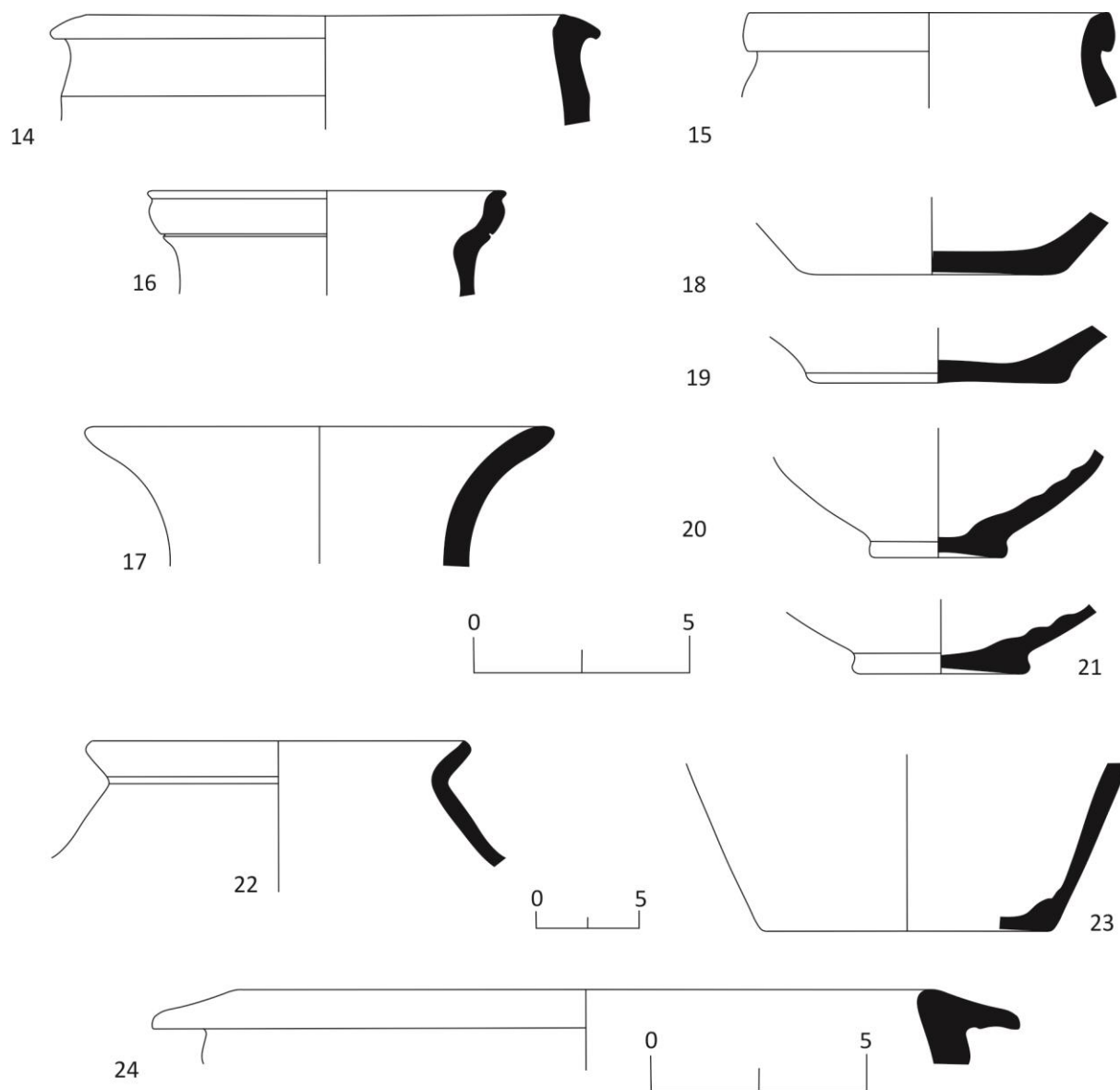


Plate IV. Pitchers/flasks 14-19 ; mugs 20-21; Jugs 22-23; *Dolium* 24.

The hand made pots comprise only two identifiable varieties, exposed to fire and made out of coarse fabric, modelled from a fabric with numerous inclusions. In Dobrudja also, analogies for these are to be found at various sites and the patterns are similar in all settlements from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD,<sup>47</sup> but also a continuity of production up to the

<sup>47</sup> Baumann 2009 for the settlements near Noviodunum: Pl. II pots with flaring rims from Horia, Pl. II pots with flaring rims from Telița–Valea Amzei, Troesmis, Enisala, Sarichioi–Sărățura, Revărsarea–Cotul Tichilești, Pl. V pots with flaring rims from Telița–Amza; Crișan 1969, 160-63; Honcu 2016, pl. I, nos. 12-14 at Argamum; Honcu 2017, Pl. XXXIII for Enisala; Bogdan Cătănicu, Barnea 1979, figs. 141, 149-150 for Tropaeum Traiani; Simion 1971, 64 for Enisala, and bibliography; Opaț, Ionescu 2016, Pl. XXV, no. 145 for Callatis; Chiriac, Ionomu 2005 for Floriile; Irimia 2007 and bibliography; Independența (Murighiol) – Opaț 1991, 171, nos. 33-34; Troesmis – Opaț 1980, 329, nos. 4-5.

5<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>48</sup> Although few, the hand made fragments deserve attention. Three of the rims originate from pots and one from a pitcher, the latter with another functionality and featured above (Pl. IV/17). Hand made pots have been previously discovered during excavations at Noviodunum, variants of the types featured in this paper.<sup>49</sup> The first pot fragments are exposed to fire, which could have happened after their discard. Given the find context, their particular fabric,<sup>50</sup> it is uncertain whether these vessels were actually used for cooking, storage, exchange or all of the above.

#### 4.1. Pots

##### 4.1.1. Hand made pots with a slightly flaring rim.

Cx 5. D. rim. 13, Hp. 4 cm; coarse fabric 5YR4/4 reddish brown and 6/1 gray (Pl. V/25).

Cx 5, 0,80-1m. D. rim 10 cm, Hp. 4.9 cm; black coarse fabric, exposed to heavy fire (Pl. V/26)

Cx 5, 0,80-1m. D. rim 10 cm, Hp. 4.4 cm; coarse fabric 7.5YR5/4 brown and 4/1 dark gray, exposed to heavy fire (Pl. V/27).

##### 4.1.2. Hand made pot with a flaring, rolled rim.

Cx 5, 20 m bottom. D. rim cca.14 cm; Hp. 2.7 cm; coarse fabric 5YR3/3 dark reddish brown, with exposure to fire (Pl. V/28).

##### 4.1.3. Wheel made pot with a rolled, flaring rim. Analogies are found at (L)Ibida.<sup>51</sup>

Cx 5, 0,80- 1 m. D. rim 9 cm, Hp. 2.4 cm; coarse fabric 7.5YR7/6 reddish yellow (Pl. V/29).

4.1.4. Wheel made pot with a rolled rim and interior groove. This type of pot has analogies in other settlements<sup>52</sup> and is among the most common found at Noviodunum and in its territory, with an interior groove for positioning the lid.<sup>53</sup>

Cx. 3, A7. D. rim 12; Hp. 2.3 cm; kaolin fabric 2.5YR8/3 pink and 7.5YR5/2 pinkish white (Pl. V/30).

4.1.4. Wheel made pot with a skewed rim and grooved neck. Analogies are at Niculițel and Noviodunum, considered to be storage vessels,<sup>54</sup> but also at the rural settlement at Acic Suat,<sup>55</sup> in the territory of Histria where there are also many variants of the shape.<sup>56</sup>

Cx 4, 0.60-0.80 m. D. rim c. 12/14 cm, Hp. 4.5 cm; coarse fabric 5YR5/6 yellowish red, secondary exposure to fire (Pl. V/31).

<sup>48</sup> Scorpan 1970 discusses hand made vessels found in both rural and urban settlements, including Histria, even during Late Antique, but the archaeological contexts are unclear.

<sup>49</sup> Honcu 2017, Pl. XI/111, also referencing finds at Troesmis, (L)Ibida and Niculițel.

<sup>50</sup> By this we mean that the fabric makes these vessels less resistant to fire, while their porosity also makes them less likely to be used as containers for liquids and likely to hold residues which would affect the quality of the liquids or food stuff upon reuse; further more, the porosity also increases the level of humidity, making them unsuitable for long the storage of food stuff.

<sup>51</sup> Honcu 2017, Pl. VIII/79-80, Pl. IX/81, 82.

<sup>52</sup> Honcu 2017, Pl. II-III/ 13-29, at Noviodunum, Niculițel, Argamum and Tomis.

<sup>53</sup> Honcu 2017, Pl. II/11-19.

<sup>54</sup> Honcu 2017, Pl. XIII/124-125. The vessels featured here have a much larger rim diameter of 19-22 cm.

<sup>55</sup> Streinu 2019, 219, Pl. IV/17a-b.

<sup>56</sup> Suceveanu 2000, p.117-119, type XXXVI, Pl. 51-52, most finds are considered local productions. Similar vessels with triangular section of the rim are attested at Niculițel and Noviodunum – Honcu 2017, type III pots, Pl. XIII, nos. 125-125.

## 4.2. Casseroles

There are only two types of casseroles, with a straight rim, carinated body and with a grooved rim and no clear indication of the body shape, most likely also carinated. As pointed out in each case, both have analogies in Dobroudja, the first type is also quite common in the Aegean, dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD.<sup>57</sup>

4.2.1. Casseroles with a flaring rim and carinated body, with handles. Analogies at Noviodunum,<sup>58</sup> Niculițel, Telița, Halmyris,<sup>59</sup> Troesmis,<sup>60</sup> Tomis,<sup>61</sup> Callatis,<sup>62</sup> Histria.<sup>63</sup>

CS/Cx 5 0,70-0,80 m. D. rim 12 cm; Hp. 4.6 cm; made out of coarse fabric, brown 7.5YR4/3; secondary exposure to fire (Pl. V/32).

Cx 5, 0,80-1 m. D. rim 14/16 cm; Hp. 0.8 cm; made out of coarse fabric dark reddish brown 5YR3/2; secondary exposure to fire (Pl. V/33).

Cx 5, 0,80-1 m. D. rim 10 cm; Hp. 1 cm; made out of coarse fabric reddish yellow 7.5YR2/6; secondary exposure to fire (Pl. V/34).

4.2.2. Casserole with horizontal, ridged rim, made out of coarse fabric yellowish red 5YR5/8; secondary exposure to fire.

Cx 5 (la 20 m bottom). D. rim 14 cm; Hp. 1.1 cm (Pl. V/35).

## 4.3. Frying pan

4.3.1. The only fragment of this type is from a pan<sup>64</sup> with horizontal rim, made out of coarse fabric reddish brown 2.5YR4/4 and reddish gray 6/1; secondary exposure to fire. Analogies at Tomis,<sup>65</sup> Callatis,<sup>66</sup> Histria,<sup>67</sup> Troesmis.<sup>68</sup>

A7 Cx 3. D. rim 22 cm; Hp. 2.4 cm (Pl. V/36).

## 5. *Vasa escaria*

Least represented, the fine ware fragments sum up to only 2,94% of all finds. Among the sherds recovered are imports from Micro Asian centres, as well as Pontic and potentially local products. In the first case, the Micro-Asian products identified are only of two types, Candarli Hayes 1 (bases Pl. VI/39-41) and Hayes 3 (rims Pl. VI/37-38), with a wide distribution in Dobrogea.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Hayes 1983, Fig. 7, Type 2, featuring a variety of casseroles from villa Dionysos at Knossos; Sackett 1992, Fig. 4/4-5 – late 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD and Pl. 176/22-23, Pl.144/16, Pl. 188/14.

<sup>58</sup> Honcu 2017, Pl. XV/146-150, also featuring finds from Argamum, (L)Ibida and Tomis.

<sup>59</sup> Baumann 2009, Pl. VIII/5, 6, 6a, 8.

<sup>60</sup> Opaît 1980, 332, Pl. III/2.

<sup>61</sup> Băjenaru 2013, 62-63, Pl.8-9/64-65, 68.

<sup>62</sup> Opaît, Ionescu 2016, Pl. XXVI- XXVII/151-160.

<sup>63</sup> Suceveanu 2000, type XXIV and its territory – Streinu 2019, Pl. IV/ 19-21.

<sup>64</sup> For a variety of pans discovered at Noviodunum see Topoleanu *et alii* 2014, Pl. V.

<sup>65</sup> Băjenaru 2014, Fig.7/97 local casserole.

<sup>66</sup> Opaît, Ionescu 2016, no. 163.

<sup>67</sup> Suceveanu 1982, Pl. 11/21-22.

<sup>68</sup> Opaît 1980, 351, no. 21, Pl. IV/3, second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD.

<sup>69</sup> Suceveanu 2000, type XVI, Pl.22/1-12 at Histria; Băjenaru 2013, nos. 5-6 la Tomis; Bogdan Cătăniciu, Barnea 1979, Fig. 143/ 2.1 at Tropaeum Traiani; Troesmis - Opaît 1980, Pl. X/4-5, also Pontic variants.

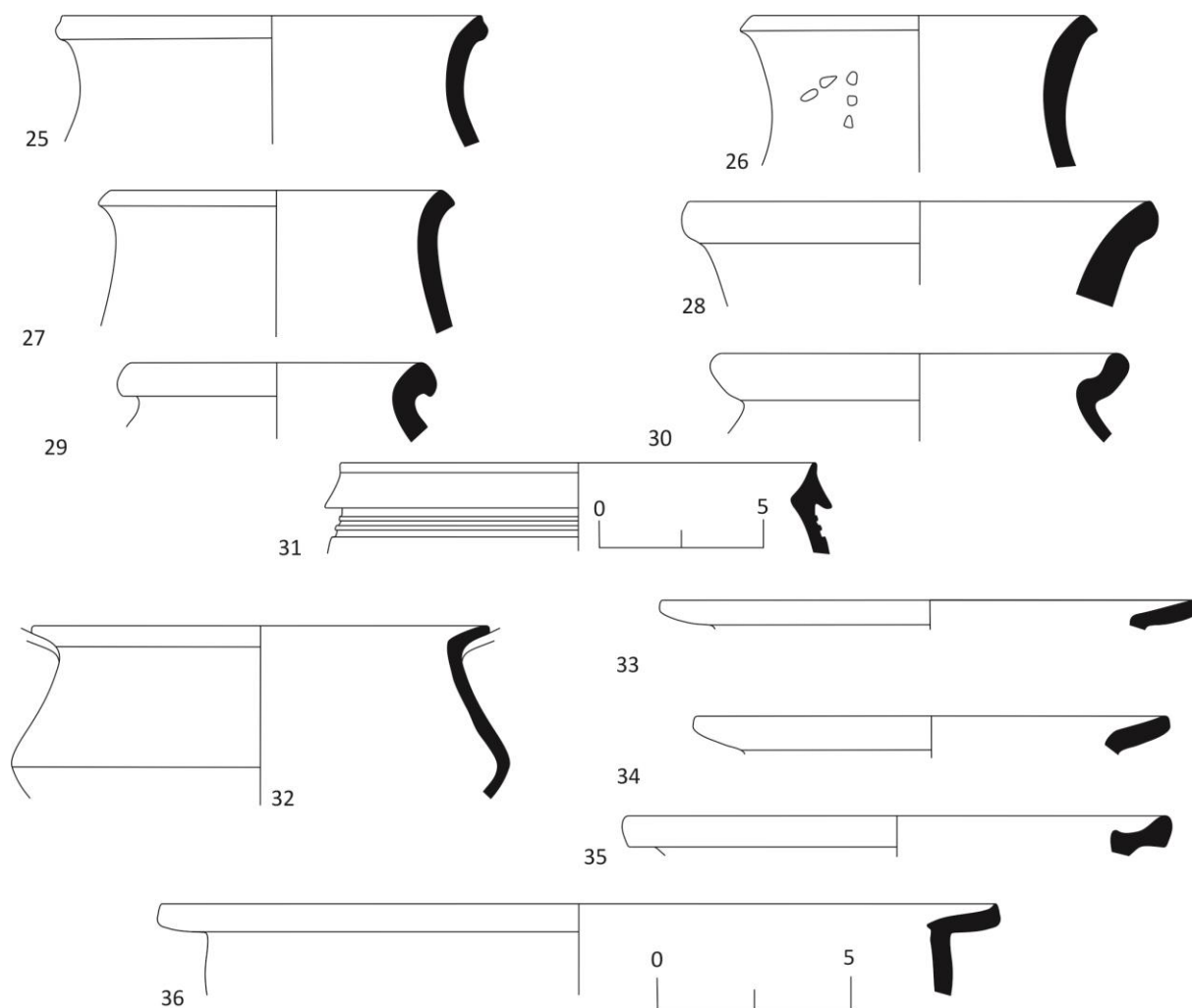


Plate V. Wheel made pots 25-28; Hand made pots 29-31; Casseroles 32-35; Pan 37.

In the second case, Pontic fine ware has been previously discovered at Noviodunum, both in the city<sup>70</sup> and in the necropolis.<sup>71</sup> The types identified in this instance consist of carinated bowls (Pl. VI/43-44) and bowls with inwards rim (Pl. VI/46-49), both from yet unclear centres. The same type of carinated bowls, decorated with wavy lines, were discovered at Topraichioi<sup>72</sup> and Histria,<sup>73</sup> a common shape among Pontic sigillata.<sup>74</sup>

In the last case, that of potentially local products, we included fragment 5.5.2. (Pl. VI/45), also with a straight rim and carinated body. Although there are several analogies for the shape, the fabric and overall appearance of the fragments could point towards a local origin.

<sup>70</sup> Simion 1984, Pl. XVII/7; Baumann 2008, Pl. 12 north Pontic, Pl. 13 west Pontic, Pl. 14 local.

<sup>71</sup> Simion 1984, Pl. XIII-XVII, from 1979-1980.

<sup>72</sup> Opaît 1991, Pl. 39/4-6.

<sup>73</sup> Suceveanu 2000, Pl. 27/type XVIII with a wavy decoration, while the decoration with half-circles is also found at Histria on a different type of bowls – Pl. 29/12;

<sup>74</sup> Zhuravlev 2009, Fig. 20/45, AD. 150-200.

### 5.1. Micro-Asian ware

5.1.1. Asia Minor flanged bowls (ESC Hayes 3) with straight, skewed rim, covered with red slip. Fragments from this type of vessel are common among finds in all sites.<sup>75</sup> A particular mention needs to be made in the case of Troesmis, where variants of this type were discovered in context from the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD and the following.<sup>76</sup> The second fragment feature here, (Pl. VI/39) follows the morphology of the type, but the fabric and quality of the slip suggest a Pontic workshop, unclear yet whether it is Troesmis, Noviodunum, or another centres.<sup>77</sup>

Cx 5, 0,80-1 m. D. rim 10 cm; Hp. 3.3 cm; made out of fine fabric reddish brown 5YR5/3; covered with dull red slip (Pl. VI/37).

Cx 5, 0,80-1 m. D. rim 10/12 cm; Hp. 2.8 cm; made out of fine fabric light red 10R 6/8; covered with dull red slip; secondary exposure to fire (Pl. VI/38).

5.1.2. Asia Minor bowls (ESC Hayes 1) with low ring base, carinated body, from unclassified types. Although only the lower parts were preserved, dishes belonging to this type have been previously discovered in Dobroudja, within a longer time span: at Troesmis, dated from the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD,<sup>78</sup> Tuzla–Far from the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD - beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup>,<sup>79</sup> at Halmyris from the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD.<sup>80</sup> Such imports also reached rural settlements.<sup>81</sup>

Cx 4 0.60-0.80 m. D base 14 cm; Hp. 3.1 cm. Ring base and carinated body, made out of fine fabric light red 2.5YR 6/6; covered with red slip (Pl. VI/39).

A7 Cx 3. D base 10 cm; Hp. 2.3 cm. Ring base and carinated body, made out of fine fabric light red 2.5YR 6/6; covered with red slip (Pl. VI/40).

Gr. 0.35-0.80 m. D. base 9 cm; Hp. 1.8 cm. Ring base and carinated body, made out of fine fabric light red 2.5YR 6/8; covered with red slip (Pl. VI/41).

### 5.2. Pontic ware

5.2.1 Pontic bowls with straight rim, carinated body. The three bowl included in this group share a similar morphology, although the first is deeper and the last has a more elongated rim. However, they are all Pontic products; the latter (Pl. VI/45) may be even local.

Cx 4 0.60-0.80 m. D. rim 16 cm; Hp. 5.2 cm; made out of fine fabric reddish yellow 5YR7/6; covered with red slip and decorated with half circles on the upper part. Type Atlante V, among the earliest Pontic products, has a close analogy at Aegyssus<sup>82</sup> (Pl. VI/42).

<sup>75</sup> Tomis – Băjenaru 2013, 45, Pl. 2/ 4-6; Nuțu, Costea 2010, 154, Pl.4/17, lists finds at Aegyssus, Odessos, Histria, Troesmis, Noviodunum, Halmyris, Olbia; at the rural settlements at Telița – Baumann 1995, Pl. LVII/3, Sarichioi – Baumann 1995, Pl. XV/35.

<sup>76</sup> Opaît 1980, 336, 357, nos. 51-52, Pl. X/4-5; a possible local production might have developed here.

<sup>77</sup> Nuțu *et alii* 2014, 135, Fig. 1/16-17, reference the possibility that this type was imitated at Noviodunum, see also footnote 35; Băjenaru, Dobrinescu 2008, Pl.4/8; Baumann 2003, 191, no. 45, Pontic product.

<sup>78</sup> Opaît 1980, 357, no. 52, Fig. X/2.

<sup>79</sup> Chiriac, Honcu 2014, 235, Pl. 3/2.

<sup>80</sup> Topoleanu 2000, 43.

<sup>81</sup> At the rural settlement at Telița – Baumann 1995, Pl. LIX/11,13-14; Sarichioi – Baumann 1995, Pl. XI/4, XIV/6.

<sup>82</sup> Nuțu, Costea 2010, Pl.2/8; Nuțu *et alii* 2014, 135, Fig. 1/ 7, dated during the 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD, the authors provide references form further finds at Histria, Tomis, Tyras, Mirmekion and Olbia.

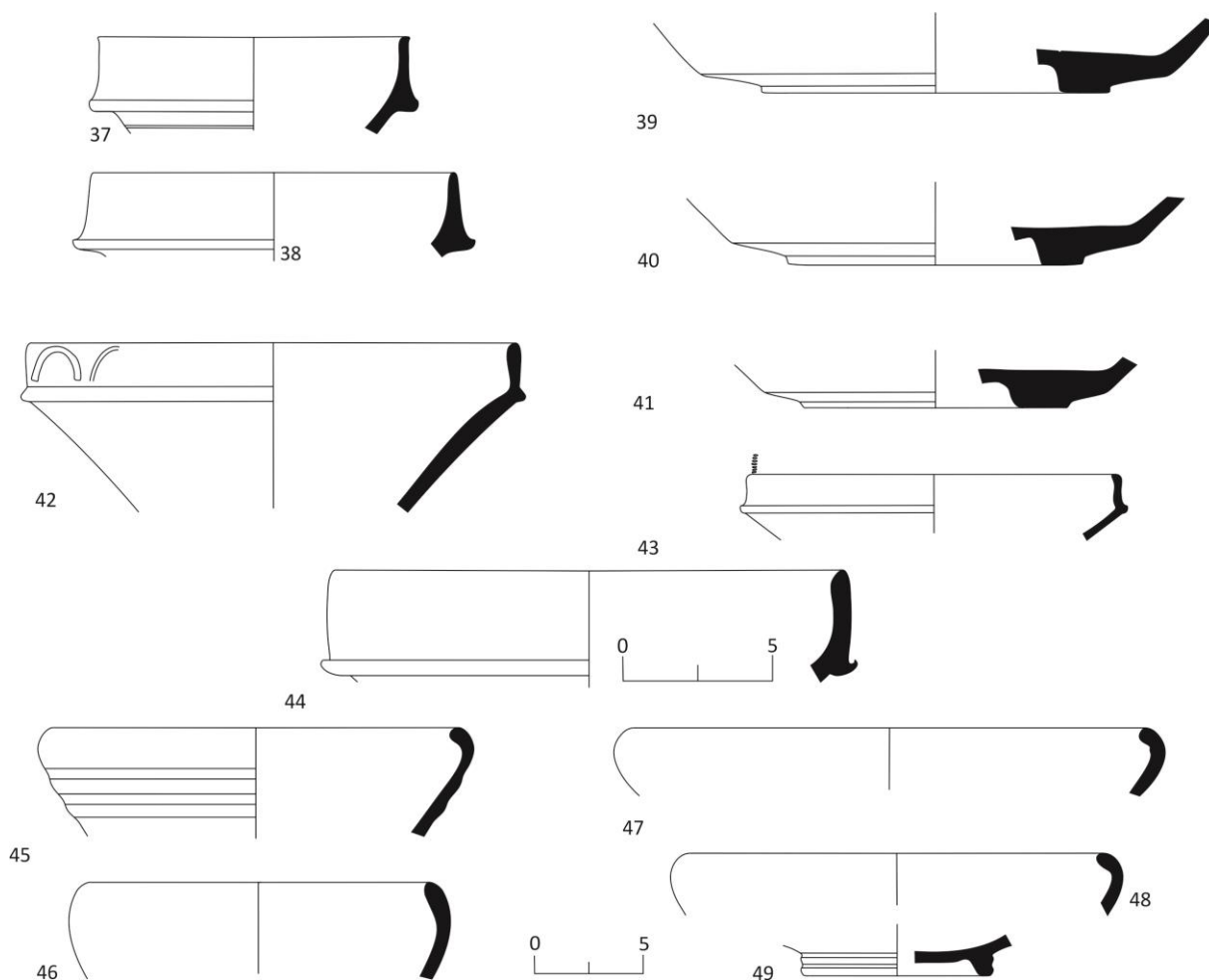


Plate VI. ESC table ware 37-41; Pontic fine ware: carenated bowls 42-44; inwards bowls 45-48; unclassified base 49.

Cx 5, 0.60-0.80 m. D. rim 12 cm; Hp. 2.3 cm; made out of fine fabric yellowish red 5YR5/6; the rim is pointing inwards. Covered with red slip and a roulette decoration on the top of rim; secondary exposure to fire. Pontic variant of ESC Atl. A6b. Similar vessels were discovered during previous researches in the necropolis at Noviodunum<sup>83</sup> (Pl. VI/43).

5.2.2. Local (?) bowl, with straight, skewed rim, carinated body; made out of fine fabric reddish yellow 5YR6/6 and light gray; traces of red slip. Analogies for the shape at Tomis,<sup>84</sup> Histria<sup>85</sup> and the rural settlement at Telița.<sup>86</sup>

CS/Cx 5 0,80-1 m. D. rim 17 cm; Hp. 3.7 cm (Pl. VI/44).

5.3. Bowls with conical body and inwards rim. This type of bowl is very common in all early Roman settlements,<sup>87</sup> including at Noviodunum, in the necropolis.<sup>88</sup>

Gr. 0,35-0,80 m. D. rim 18 cm; Hp. 5.1 cm. Inwards rim, conical and slightly grooved body, made out of fine fabric reddish yellow 7.5YR6/8; covered with red slip. Pontic (Pl. VI/45).

<sup>83</sup> Simion 1984, Pl. XVII/inv. 12996.

<sup>84</sup> Băjenaru 2013, 50, Pl. 3/16.

<sup>85</sup> Suceveanu 2000, type XVIIIa/ Pl. 28/48, 50.

<sup>86</sup> Baumann 1995, Pl. LXI/13.

<sup>87</sup> Independența (Murighiol) – Opaiț 1991, 173, no. 46 (38636); Histria – Suceveanu 2000, type VIA; Tomis – Băjenaru 2013, 52-53, Pl. 4/ 23, 29 and Băjenaru 2014, 124, Fig. 3/ 27-29.

<sup>88</sup> Simion 1984, Pl. XVII/inv. 12998.

Cx 5, 0.80-1 m. D. rim 16/18 cm; Hp. 4.6 cm. Inwards rim, conical body, made out of fine fabric strong brown 7.5YR 5/6; secondary exposure to fire. Pontic (Pl. VI /46).

Cx 5 0,60-0,80 m. D. rim 24 cm; Hp. 3.2 cm. Inwards rim, conical body, made out of fine fabric reddish yellow 5YR6/6; traces of red slip on the interior surface (Local?) (Pl. VI /47).

Cx 4, 0,60-0,80 m. D. rim 24 cm; Hp. 3.2 cm. Inwards rim, conical body, made out of fine fabric reddish yellow 5YR6/6; traces of red slip and secondary exposure to fire Local (?) (Pl. VI/48).

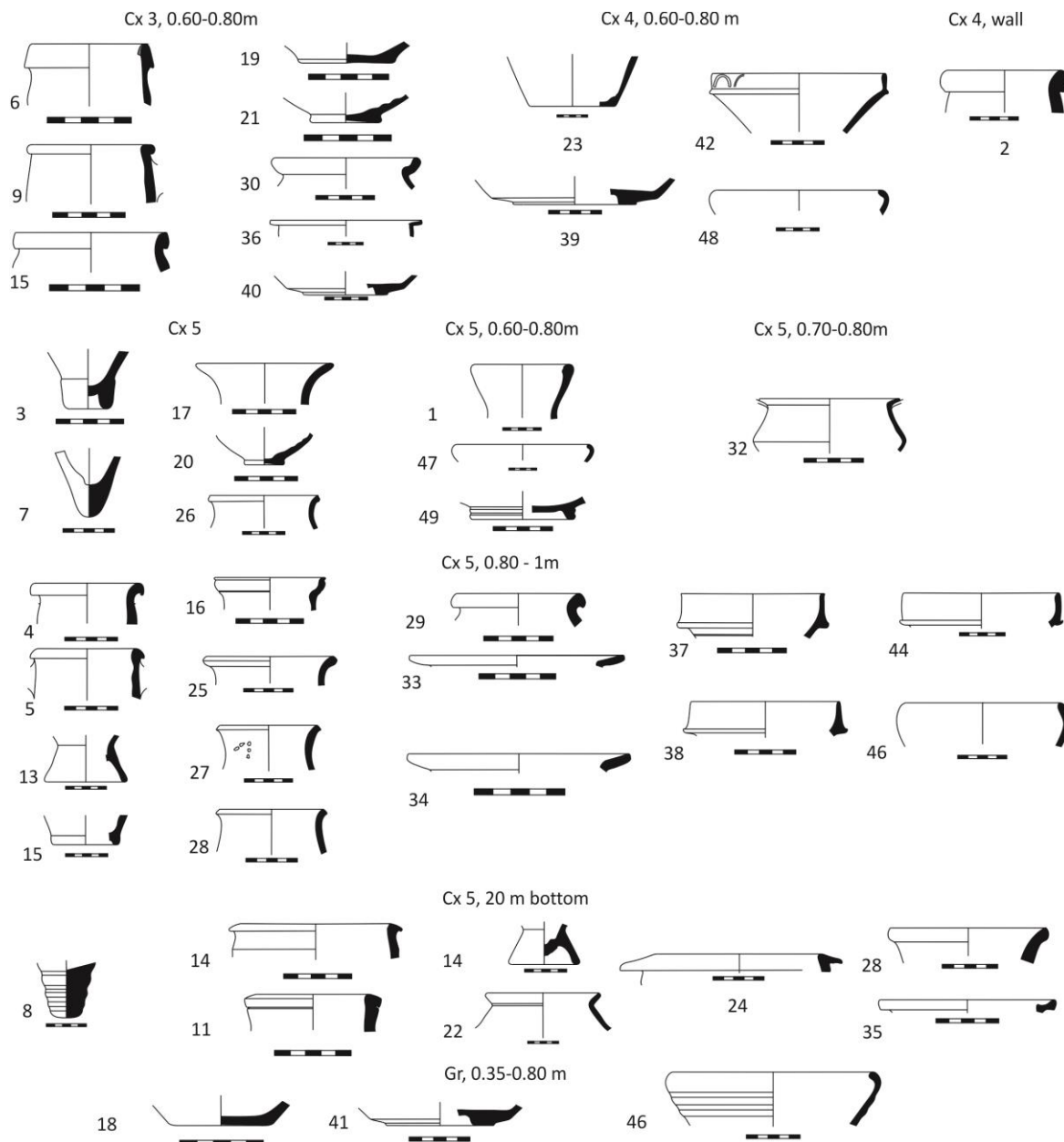


Plate VII. Distribution of finds according to contexts.

#### 5.4. Unclassified table ware

##### 5.4.1. Ring base, with two fine grooves.

CS/Cx 5 0,60-0,80 m. D. base 9 cm; Hp. 1.9 cm. made out of fine fabric light brown 2.5YR6/2 (Pl. VI/49).

Although not part of funerary inventories, the very fragmentary and diverse pottery assemblage from this rescue excavation does provide a few insights. From an archaeological



point of view, the contexts are mixed and could represent filling layers. During the excavation, traces of a construction (probable wall, see at the beginning of the paper) were revealed, albeit in an extremely poor state of conservation. Given the location, the necropolis, it could represent a sort of enclosure for a particular lot, familial or otherwise. All the fragmentary pottery finds could be the remains of funerary offerings, mixed together and damaged due to extensive agricultural labor. However, the lack of funerary contexts is a big question mark in support of this assumption. The other hypothesis is that the area was used for domestic purposes at one time, hence the levelling and the fragmentary sherds and *tubuli*.

As for the assemblage itself, the larger number of amphorae sherds can be credited to the considerable sizes of the transport vessels, by comparison to the other categories, especially when considering that the minimum number of individuals based on rims and bases is not very different from the number of fragments from the other categories featured in the catalogue. Although not from clear contexts, the origin of the amphorae, be it Pontic or Aegean, attest to the existence of trading routes and commerce. The same can be said for the imported Asia Minor ware, common in most Roman sites. Given the location of the site on the Danube and the port activities, the imported pottery from further regions is less present than the Pontic amphorae and table ware. We have made assumptions about the potential local origin of some of the finds and there are still many questions left to be answered about the local workshops and production. Overall, presenting this lot is meant to add new information about the pottery that was once made, brought to and used at Noviodunum, while also contributing to further the studies on the economic relations of the ancient city, both near and far and the use of its immediate surroundings.

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