

## Aspects of the Late Bronze Age Cultural Evolution in Northwestern Romania (the Upper Barcău and Crasna Rivers)

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Late Bronze Age, covering roughly the second half of II<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC represents in the eastern area of the Carpathian Basin, a time of accumulation and slow transformation, which began at the time of Tisa Plain Tell Civilisation disintegration and is finished at the time of channelled pottery spreading on large spaces in Hallstatt period.

*Few words about geography, history of research and Late Bronze Age chronology of northwestern Romania.*

In the physical-geographical landscape of north-western Romania, the upper courses of Barcău and Crasna rivers has a distinctive position. On the east and south sides the area is enclosed by Meseş and Şes Mountains, the upper basin of these two rivers makes up Şimleu Basin a contact zone between two major geographical units: the Transylvanian Plateau and the Upper Tisa region. Meseş Mountain can be exceeded to the east from Crasna valley through some secondary passes near of Buciumi and Meseşenii de Sus villages, but mainly “Poarta Meseşeană” (= Meseş Gate), which is a gorge carved by Ortelec river în the area of Moigrad (ancient *Porolissum*).

For a long time, the image of Late Bronze Age in northwestern Romania was based on interpretation of Otomani culture evolution in Crişana and the Sătmar Plain. I. Ordentlich interpretation was that Otomani culture has evolved until the emergence of Gáva culture<sup>1</sup> Opinions expressed by Ordentlich influenced to a certain extent other Romanian specialists<sup>2</sup>. This theory came into conflict with the results of research from northeastern Hungary, where Otomani culture settlements ends the habitation in Middle Bronze Age, and in the early Late Bronze Age, the area between Crasna and Barcău rivers is documented the Hajdúbajos group discoveries<sup>3</sup> In Romania, the first who question these long continuity of Otomani culture is I Némethi. Publishing some of his archaeological discoveries from around Carei, the author talks about “*new local events ... (which) ... seems to exceed the chronological horizon of third fase of Otomani culture, being ... a link with great cultural group called Gáva-Holihradly ...*”<sup>4</sup> The same author underline correctly that “Otomani IV”, like it was defined<sup>5</sup> by T. Bader<sup>6</sup> doesn’t reflect the synthesis process which led to the Gáva culture genesis. Némethi noticed that elements of continuity from the Middle Bronze Age, although visible, are still less numerous than those new ones<sup>7</sup>. C. Kacsó is using the term of Cehăluţ or Cehăluţ - Hajdúbajos group (Pişcolt-Cehăluţ at Némethi) for most of the discoveries previous attributed to „Otomani IV” phase, documented archaeologically during a certain period in the early Late Bronze Age, between Crasna and Barcău rivers<sup>8</sup>. Also are maintained some more nuanced views, as expressed by N. Boroffka, which is based on the analysis of decorative elements support the idea of ceramics development during a later phase of Otomani culture, and its designation as a phase IV of Otomani culture or under another name, is ultimately a matter of terminology<sup>9</sup>. A synthetic view, of actuality, over the Cehăluţ - Hajdúbajos findings we owe to J. Némethi).

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<sup>1</sup> Ordentlich 1970, 83-67

<sup>2</sup> Horedt 1967, 145-147; Chidioşan 1974, 166; Bader 1978, 62; Morintz 1978, 169,

<sup>3</sup> Kovács 1970, 27-44

<sup>4</sup> Némethi 1978, 120-121

<sup>5</sup> About „A Possible Otomani Iv Phase” Talks Since 1971 Al. Vulpe, Who Has Doubts About The Extension Of Otomani Iii After The Year 1200 Bc. Vulpe 1971, 307-308, Nt. 10-11.

<sup>6</sup> Bader 1978, 56-57, 62

<sup>7</sup> Némethi 1978, 120-121; Némethi 1981-1982, 46

<sup>8</sup> Kacsó 1987, 72; Kacsó 1990, 43-44; Kacsó 1995, 111-113; Kacsó 1997 85-110

<sup>9</sup> Boroffka 1999, 124; Idem 2000

South of the area which is archaeological documented with Cehăluț type materials, were identified materials which three decades ago were attributed to Igrîța cultural group<sup>10</sup>, evolving in this area after the Otomani culture. As results from a repertory of monuments attributed to Igrîța group realized more than ten years ago, the definition of this cultural group is based on relatively few finds from excavations and especially on the basis of deposits, assumed religious (?) from caves, while data from the settlements are few and often uncertain<sup>11</sup>

A series of discoveries (pottery and metal artifacts) from northwestern Romania (Carei area) are published in 1990 by I. Némethi characterized among other things, by „... the presence of Cehăluț cultural group traditional elements, and on the other side prominent apparition of shapes and ornamental motifs on vessels specific to channeled pottery horizon, found in culture Gáva–Holyhradi”. Based on similar materials reported in northeastern Hungary, these findings are considered organic related to formation of Gáva culture period (Gáva I) and dated in „the second part of Br.D - beginning Ha A1”<sup>12</sup>

From the lower Someș valley area, recently has been published the results of investigations from Petea (Satu Mare County, RO), respectively Csengersima (com. Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, HU) „Vamă” (= „Customs”) point. It is large-scale excavations in a site with two horizons of habitation at end of Late Bronze<sup>13</sup>. Turning to the specific area that we defined at the beginning of this study, in 1980, C. Kacsó, considered that the end of Wietenberg culture in the Crasna valley is due to “... penetration from the west of a mixture culture consisting in elements of late Otomani culture and Tumulus culture.”<sup>14</sup>

Immediately after the occurrence of this study are investigated the Late Bronze Age settlements from Crasna<sup>15</sup>, Cehei<sup>16</sup> and Doh<sup>17</sup>. On the basis of published material from Doh, we approach briefly the problem of Late Bronze Age ending, Late Bronze III stage<sup>18</sup>

Late Bronze Age period in Șimleu Basin fall, approximately, between the end of Wietenberg settlement development from Derșida „Dealul lui Balota”<sup>19</sup> and the emergence of Early Iron Age fortified settlement from Șimleu Silvaniei „Observator”<sup>20</sup>. This period was divided into three stages: Late Bronze I–III<sup>21</sup>

#### *The Șimleu Basin Case*

In Șimleu Basin, Late Bronze Age finds, Cehăluț-Hajdúbagos type are documented to date in more than 60 sites. Some aspects are still insufficiently clarified, like the time span of this group and especially the moment when the cultural evolution of this group is ended. Previously, in few studies that were addressed directly or tangential to the problems of Cehăluț group, C. Kacsó make the assumption that the end of Cehăluț and subsequently of Igrîța groups was determined by the advance of Gáva culture from Upper Tisa region to south-southeast<sup>22</sup>. The same author placed the evolution of Cehăluț group in the first's two stages of Late Bronze Age from Transylvania<sup>23</sup>. It results indirectly that in the next stage (Late Bronze III) in Șimleu Basin area to have already documented discoveries of Gáva culture.

<sup>10</sup> Emödi 1980, 229-273; Emödi 1997, 485-504; Chidioșan–Emödi 1982, 61-86; Chidioșan–Emödi 1983, 17-32; Kacsó 1990, 43; Kacsó 1995, 109-111

<sup>11</sup> Kacsó 1999, 101-106

<sup>12</sup> Némethi 1990, 46-47

<sup>13</sup> Marta 2005, 78-84, Marta 2009

<sup>14</sup> Kacsó 1980, 41

<sup>15</sup> Lakó 1987, 77-81; Bejinariu–Lakó 2000, 163-219

<sup>16</sup> Lakó–Rad 1988, 85-89; Bejinariu–Lakó 1996, 11-33

<sup>17</sup> Bejinariu et. al 2004, 111-131

<sup>18</sup> Bejinariu et. al 2004, 117-118.

<sup>19</sup> Chidioșan 1980

<sup>20</sup> Sana 2006, 61-63

<sup>21</sup> Gogâltan 1999-2000, 44; Gogâltan 2001, 196-199; Gogâltan 2005, 376

<sup>22</sup> Kacsó 1995, 113; Kacsó 1997, 89; Kacsó 1999, 104; Kacsó 2007, 53

<sup>23</sup> Kacsó 1997, 88; Kacsó 1999, 101

In the following we want to present two discoveries, one from the Barcău river valley, and the other from the Crasna river valley, which in our opinion, bring some important new data over the meaning and nature of cultural evolution during the third stage of the Late Bronze Age in the area between these two rivers.

Archaeological site from Zăuan „Bánffy-tag” (Ip commune, Sălaj county, Pl. 1), was discovered in 1976, when from a complex (C 1 / 1976) visible in the side face of a trench, some pottery sherds and one fragment from a needle were collected (Pl.2/1-4). In this lateral section, the cultural level could be traced over a length of approx. 400 m. But we can not tell whether it is just about the Late Bronze Age level. Later in 1981 a survey was carried out in this place. Have been uncovered two areas, with a surface about 50 m<sup>2</sup>. Archaeological site is placed in Barcău meadow, in floating area, on the right side of the river<sup>24</sup>. Perhaps, in prehistory, there was a top of a bank ridge, but after water-course regulation and after intensive agricultural operations, land feature has changed. Archaeological material that we illustrate it comes from complexes found in the areas studied in 1981. It is a building (?) which has not been fully uncovered. Construction has appreciable size (if we talk about a single building) and measured only in the areas studied, over 42 m<sup>2</sup>.

A line of three post holes, which has an alignment approximately south-north appears to bound a possible subdivision. A fire hearth diameter of about 1,50 m was unearthed inside it. In the perimeter of the building were partially founded three other pits (G 2, G 4-5) of which just two had a relatively significant inventory.

The pottery<sup>25</sup> from that building (L1/1981) and from those pits is uniform in all respects. Most vessels were well polished, outer surface with metallic appearance. In composition were used crushed sherds and fine sand. Most are dark colors and among the fragments found appear a few with double color, black-brown outside, brick-red and yellow respectively, from the inside.

We observe at the pottery from Zăuan „Bánffytag” that from Cehăluț type decoration in just in one case it was found the knob surrounded by semicircular channels (Pl.9/2). On a cup fragment appear an similar ornament, made it of three narrow channels grooves at the lower part of cup handle (Pl. 9/1).

In comparison, at the Suplacu de Barcău „Lapiș” settlement, regarded as one of the latest site of Cehăluț group<sup>26</sup> semicircular channels around knobs are well represented<sup>27</sup>, and arcade incisions appear on one of vessel from a cremation grave<sup>28</sup>

At Suplacu de Barcău appears also one piece of short foot jug<sup>29</sup>, very common form throughout the Cehăluț - Hajdúbágyos group pottery in north-vest Romania.

Among the ceramic material saved in 1976 but also among the material researched and discovered in the fall 1981 was found some double colored pottery fragments. Note in this regard a fragment of a bowl decorated with wide oblique channels (Pl.2/4) but also one fragment of a biconical shape urn, with flattened rim, decorated on neck with winding fine channels (Pl.3/6). The same double color aspect has the hemispherical bowl with flaring and wide rim, decorated with wide oblique channels (rather facets) with the edges in relief, and in interior decorated with a "star" ornament made of three fine grooves (Pl.5/5). Finally it is also the pot fragment, probably of a biconical shape vessel, decorated on the the lower half with vertical grooves, rarely arranged (Pl.5/3).

Some fragments are from vessels of probably biconical shape body and widened rim (Pl.4/4; 6/5). Similar forms have appeared in the Late Bronze Age complexes from

<sup>24</sup> Lakó 1983, 91-92, Nr. 91 B

<sup>25</sup> Just A Small Part Of Ceramic Inventory From The Zăuan Bánffytag Appeared In A Study Published In 2001. Unfortunately, For Reasons Beyond Our Control, Reproduction Of The Material Was Not Consistent With Plates Given By Us (Bejinariu 2001, 170-172, Pl. IV-VI).

<sup>26</sup> Kacsó 1990, 43

<sup>27</sup> Ignat 1984, Pl. I/1, V/4, VII/2

<sup>28</sup> Ignat 1984, Pl. XI/1<sup>28</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Ignat 1984, Pl. IX/1

Crasna<sup>30</sup>, Suplacu de Barcău<sup>31</sup> both from western Romania and Nyírlugos from eastern Hungary<sup>32</sup> etc. Also, among other materials from Zăuan we note the ceramic fragments belonging to storage vessel, with large body, often with two handles under the rim (Pl. 2/3; 7/4). Note also some fragments from an portable oven-vessel (Pl. 7/3). Both are common forms, appearing in different Bronze Age cultural environments of the eastern half of the Carpathian Basin, as common as are occurrences of medium-sized vessels, with relatively straight or slightly sloping walls with four conical buttons or notched edges arranged under the rim (Pl. 4/2).

Along of coarse and semi-fine pottery, where these more voluminous vessels fits, must mention the presence of a large number of fragments of vessels made of fine quality paste, well homogenized, often polished surface with metallic appearance. To the second category belongs not only bicolor ceramics species presented above, but fragments coming from bowls and cups. Depending on the shape of the vessel mouth, we can talk about three types of bowls. A number of fragments belong to bowls having the rim shaped in four elongated lobes (Pl.7/2; 8/3; 9/5-6 ), under which occurs in some cases small handles or conical buttons. In the ceramic repertoire of Cehăluț-Hajdúbajos group, bowls / dishes with lobed rim are not unusual, but the variant with elongated lobes appear in Banat area, like at Susani<sup>33</sup> and Timișoara "*Pădurea verde*"<sup>34</sup>. An fragment of this kind, decorated as for the ornaments from Susani with a "*star*" on the inside, comes from the settlement of Suplacu de Barcău „*Lapiș*”<sup>35</sup>. North of Sălaj area, bowls having the rim shaped in elongated lobes are rare occurrences (Carei –*Ferma I.A.S*, Petea / Csengersima - *Vamă* ) and are attributed to early Gáva phase<sup>36</sup>. Their presence is made on behalf of the influences received from more southerly areas, Crișana and Banat.

Calotiforme bowls with curved edge inwards are represented by four fragments (Pl.4/1; 5/7; 6/2; 8/4). One of these has small conical buttons under the rim. Bowls/dishes with curved edge inwards becoming basic forms of Gáva pottery repertoire, appear in the Late Bronze Age in different cultural manifestations, but in different proportions<sup>37</sup>.

The last category groups the bowls with the calotiforme or truncated cone shape, but with elongated rim a more or less widened (Pl.5/4-6; 6/4). The same shape we found also in the Suci de Sus-Lăpuș ceramic repertoire<sup>38</sup>. Pottery analysis from Late Bronze Age settlement from Petea-Csengersima show that this type, in an identical or similar form is perpetuate during housing of Lăpuș II-Gáva I phase<sup>39</sup>. From Susani tumulus<sup>40</sup> comes a piece with a body profile like one of Zăuan bowls (Pl.5/5) having in common also, the "star-like" ornament in interior.

The cups appear in two main variants. Most of these have lower half well rounded and the neck highlighted (Pl.3/1; 5/2; 9/1, 3-4) are decorated with conical protuberances arranged at the maximum of circumference, and in one case with fine semicircular channels. This variant is especially characteristic to the Cehăluț-Hajdúbajos group findings<sup>41</sup>. One fragment comes from a low pot, with a very oblique shape of the lower side, and upper half bounded by a „careen” well outlined (Pl. 3/5). The origin of this variant must be found in the Upper Tisa area, in the late Suci de Sus culture, to become, as suggested by the situation from

<sup>30</sup> Bejinariu-Lakó 2000, 161-162, Fig. 20/1-3

<sup>31</sup> Ignat 1984, Pl. III/4-5

<sup>32</sup> Nagy 2005, Pl. II-III/1-2

<sup>33</sup> Stratan-Vulpe 1976, 48, Pl. 5/218, 15/128-130

<sup>34</sup> Miclea-Florescu 1980, Nr. 478

<sup>35</sup> Ignat 1984, Pl. VI/7

<sup>36</sup> Némethi 1990, 28-29 Fig. 13/3; Marta 2009, 71, Pl. 5/2

<sup>37</sup> Kacsó 1997, Pl. II/1/4; Bejinariu-Lakó 2000, 165, Pl. 26/1, 29/1; Chidioșan-Emödi 1983, Fig. 4/5, 5/1-3; Gumă 1995, Pl. III/9-10, VII/5/7; Nagy 2005, Pl. VI/4/7

<sup>38</sup> Bader 1978, Pl. LII/1; Kacsó 1981, Pl. 22-25

<sup>39</sup> Marta 2009, Pl. 7/7, 8/5, 7, 9/2, Etc.

<sup>40</sup> Stratan-Vulpe 1997 Pl. 5/217

<sup>41</sup> Bejinariu-Lakó 2000, 166, Fig. 24b/4, 27/1; Nagy 2005, Pl. V/2, 7, 8; Bejinariu et. al 2008, Pl. IX/3, 5

Petea-Csengersima<sup>42</sup>, more common in the corresponding period of Lăpuș II–Gáva I habitation<sup>43</sup>. We note in this context, few cups of this type among the vessels coming from the upper layer of Cehăluț settlement from Crasna “Csereoldál”<sup>44</sup>.

In association with the ceramic material described above, in the investigated area from Zăuan were discovered fragments of clay pyramid weights (Pl.3/2; 7/1, etc.). Metal inventory is composed by two ordinary pieces of bronze: an needle pin from the complex investigated in 1976, and one bronze pin "with ear" (Pl.4/3) coming from excavations of 1981.

Archaeological site from Pericei “Keller-tag” (com. Pericei, j. Sălaj, Pl. 1) was discovered on 1984<sup>45</sup>. Some archaeological complexes belonging to Late Bronze Age were founded in the excavations from 1999–2001, but unfortunately, with few significant ceramic materials in it. Subsequently metal objects founded in some of the investigated pits were published<sup>46</sup>. Representative archaeological material presented in this paper came from preventive archaeological excavations carried out in 2004.

The trench (S1/2004 = 521 x 2 m) that cross the site from east to west has allowed to find a continuous layer of archaeological deposits from the Late Bronze Age, on about 200 m length. The thickness of this layer is difficult to establish, because the top of the deposits has been affected by agricultural work. The fact is that under plough level it is a layer of sediment from the Late Bronze Age with a maximum thickness of 0,25 - 0,30 m. In this layer could not be seized evidence of the existence of successive sequences of habitation. Thickness and consistency of Late Bronze Age deposits suggests a long-term habitation, fact underlined by the observation that not all complexes of this period start at the same level of delineation. In this stratum were uncovered 35 archaeological complexes of Late Bronze Age: buildings remains, pits, hearths<sup>47</sup>. Due to preventive character of the archaeological research carried out in 2004 are few complexes fully uncovered. Inventory consists of pottery and other clay objects (pyramidal weights), bronze fragments, sandstones fragments (including a fragment of a mould) and river stones, bones, etc.

Like the pottery from Zăuan, clear Cehăluț type ceramic is poorly represented. We mention a fragment of a bowl with protuberances surrounded by semicircular channels (pl. 12/2-4) from C 16 complex, occurred in association with a cup and a fragment of a bowl decorated on the inside rim with groups of three incisions arranged in zigzag. Another ceramic with Cehăluț ornament was found in C 14 complex (Pl.12/1).

Channeled pottery category, often double colored is well represented. Vessels were polished on outer surface, with metallic appearance. In the composition of this category were used broken sherds.

Unbroken vessel or restorable pottery is very few. From C 107 pit, partially uncovered in the area studied, was found a footed vessel, but without upper part. The body of vessel is decorated with oblique, wide channels, with the appearance of facets with raised edges. On the maxim diameter are placed four (?) conical knobs (Pl.19/2). Close analogies in form and equally in the decor, we find, in this case, in Banat at Susani in ceramic forms (three exemplars) recovered from the excavated mound<sup>48</sup>. From the same area, is another exemplar from Bobda cemetery<sup>49</sup>. At Lăpuș tumulus necropolis are two vessels of this kind, one from a

<sup>42</sup> In The Settlement from Petea-Csengersima, this type of Cups (Type 4) appears only in the complexes Grouped in the Eastern Part of the Settlement Suci De Sus II. Instead are very common occurrences in the habitation that directly succeeds, The Lăpuș II - Gáva I Settlement. This suggests that in the eastern area it would be the latest phase of Suci De Sus II habitation from Petea-Csengersima (Marta 2009, 206).

<sup>43</sup> Marta 2009, 33, Pl. 28/10, 12; A similar succession of habitation at Nyírmada-Vályogvető; Tóth–Marta 2005, Pl. 11

<sup>44</sup> Bejinariu–Lakó 2000, Fig. 15a/1-3

<sup>45</sup> Lakó 1986, 50, Nr. 12

<sup>46</sup> Bejinariu 2005, 54

<sup>47</sup> Matei et. al 2005, 261-262

<sup>48</sup> Stratan–Vulpe 1977, 49, Pl. 16/131/133; Gumă 1995, Pl. III/38

<sup>49</sup> Stratan–Vulpe 1977, 49

mound dated in the first phase of necropolis, and the other from a mound assigned to the second phase<sup>50</sup>

In C 7 complex (Pl.10/2) were founded fragments of one large vessel and a fully preserved bowl. The first vessel belongs to the category of so-called "storied vessel". It is preserved the lower part, the body ornamented with wide channels or rather oblique facets and from upper part of vessel are preserved few sherds mostly from the rim and shoulder area of the vessel. Mouth funnel-shaped vessel was strongly flared, two small handles appear on shoulder to be interposed between a strip of horizontal channels (Pl.20). Generally these vessels are large containers. Our exemplar has a base diameter of 15 cm and 50 cm diameter of mouth. The bottom part, fully preserved, measure 22 cm. By analogy with other vessels of this kind, where lower "floor" is about 40% from the height of the vessel, our vessel measure about 50-55 cm in height. Similar vessels were found in the repertory of Gáva culture<sup>51</sup>, and close analogies are at Gyoma, in south-east Hungary<sup>52</sup> Biharkeresztes<sup>53</sup> or at Bodrogkeresztúr, in north-west part of Hungary<sup>54</sup>. The bowl (Pl.19/1) had the rim slightly thickened and curved inwards. Similar examples occur also in Gáva area<sup>55</sup>. Another bowl with inward rim and faceted with horizontal facets (Pl.16 / 7) comes from C 70 complex (pl. 10/1) which is associated with a vessel fragment with handles and fine and horizontal channels on neck (pl. 16/4). From that pit were also recovered bone remains from two calves, one of them integral deposited.

Fragments of large vessels, some with double colors, decorated with wide channels or facets, arranged horizontally, oblique or in "garland" was recovered from the complexes C 45 (Pl.15/3) and C 47 (Pl.14/1-2). One fragment of a vessel ornamented with wide oblique facets on the body associated with horizontal channels on the conical neck is also noted (Pl.15/1). In this respect we find analogies in numerous sites from eastern Hungary, assigned to the early stage of Gáva culture, such as the Kaba-*Bitózug* or Polgar M3 motorway - site no. 1<sup>56</sup>

Very interesting is a vessel from the pit C 45. It is a vessel with slightly curved profile and a straight rim, but above all it has a distinct ornament made of fine channels, arranged horizontally and in "garland" in the lower register (Pl.13/2). Similar vessels in form, but more importantly, in the combination of horizontal channels and in "garland", are among the materials assigned more recently to Teleac Ia phase or in the settlement from Alba Iulia "*Monolit*"<sup>57</sup> or in Hungary in early Gáva site from Polgar M3 motorway - site no. 1<sup>58</sup>. Another vessel with the identical ornament combination of that from Pericei, comes from an unknown location in the former county Szabolcs<sup>59</sup>. The combination of the two ornamental motifs are found quite frequently in the previous period<sup>60</sup> on various shapes of vessels from Susani<sup>61</sup>, in Crişana on pottery assigned to Igriţa group<sup>62</sup> or among of some so-called proto- Gáva discoveries from Hungary<sup>63</sup>

Also, we note one ceramic fragment of a cone-shaped lid, decorated in exterior with channels arranged in "garland" (Pl.16/3).

<sup>50</sup> Kacsó 1980, 37, Pl. 24, 33/6

<sup>51</sup> Szabó 2002, Pl. 24/33, 36-37

<sup>52</sup> Genito-Kemenczei 1990, 119, Fig. 4/1, 5/1; Szabó 2004, 93, Pl. 9/20, 23

<sup>53</sup> Szabó 2002, Pl.135/1-2; Idem 2004 A, Fig. 6/10

<sup>54</sup> Kemenczei 1984, Pl. 133/14

<sup>55</sup> Kemenczei 1984 Pl.Cxl/18; Vicze 1996, 32, Fig. 15 / 2

<sup>56</sup> Szabó 2002, Pl. 174/1, 194/2

<sup>57</sup> Ciugudean 2009, Pl. I/2, VIII/5

<sup>58</sup> Szabó 2004a, Pl. 8/9

<sup>59</sup> Kemenczei 1984, Pl. CXXXII/20

<sup>60</sup> Vasiliev et. al 1991, 81

<sup>61</sup> Stratan-Vulpe 1977, Pl. 5/214; 9/57-58, 63-65, Etc

<sup>62</sup> Chidioşan-Emödi 1983, Fig.1/2, 3/2

<sup>63</sup> Szabó 2002, Pl. 17/4

Some vessels have been restored, the cups represent a numerically well represented category. Most common variant is the cup with the broad rounded base, and narrower mouth (Pl. 16/2; 18/10-11). The form is among the findings (unfortunately, without stratigraphic context) from Doh "La izvoare"<sup>64</sup> or from Nyírlugos (northeast Hungary), recently published<sup>65</sup>

Metallic inventory of Late Bronze Age complexes consist in 11 pieces. Most are small pieces, needles (Pl.18/7) or spindle of bronze pins (Pl.18/5-6), a loop ring made of bronze sheet (Pl.18/2), probably one nit (Pl.18/4) and other undeterminable fragments (Pl.18/1,3). A fragment of one mould made of sandstone, with traces of use found in pit C 79 and a cast residue constitute direct evidence of bronze processing in this settlement. From C 47 complex comes one bronze needle with pyramidal head and "collar" on neck (Pl. 18/8). Dimensions are: 13 cm. long, head diameter-1,1 cm. This needle type, generic called "bohemian" profile needles type (*Nadeln mit „böhmischer” Profilierung*) are well represented numerically, especially in the Lausitz culture area (north Moravia, north-eastern Bohemia, Silesia). The needle from Pericei can be classified in Mostkovice variant of the type, which occurs in archaeological contexts assigned to Late Tumulus Period respectively Early and Old Urnfield Period<sup>66</sup> In eastern part of Carpathian Basin, this type of needles appears rarely. We note here the piece found at Dubravica, in eastern Serbia<sup>67</sup> or that from Gușterița II deposit<sup>68</sup>

Comparing pottery coming from these two excavations presented above, we may notice the presence of some common elements. I refer especially to bicolor pottery species, decorated with wide channels or facets. This category is poorly represented at Zăuan, in comparison to Pericei site. Unfortunately neither of the two settlements do not provide reliable evidence for a precise chronology during the third phase of Late Bronze.

Archaeological inventory resulting from the excavation of Zăuan "*Bánffytag*" is not very numerous and unfortunately the uncovered pottery is associated to metal artifacts without chronological value. Comparing the findings from Zăuan with those of Suplacu de Barcău "*Lapiș*" provide support to make chronological analysis of Zăuan materials. As noted, some shapes and decorations are common to both settlements, located in the Barcău valley, to 10 km away from one another. Chronological context in which the settlement from Suplacu de Barcău "*Lapiș*" had evolved could be "traced" through metal artifacts, but also thanks to an considerable quantities of "imports" Lăpuș type pottery, unfortunately unpublished yet<sup>69</sup> Among them the needles discovered at Suplacu de Barcău in House 1 and House 2<sup>70</sup>. We note those two specimens with thickened head (an identical artifact was found in Cehăluț settlement from Crasna "*Csereoldal*"), those two Velenszentvid type needles respectively<sup>71</sup>. As it is said, the first needles cannot be earlier than Reinecke D<sup>72</sup> whereas the last ones may be even later<sup>73</sup>. This raises the obvious possibility that the settlement of Suplacu de Barcău to extend its development in the early period of Urnfield culture<sup>74</sup>. Due to the similarities between the potteries of these two sites cannot exclude a broadly similar chronology to that of Zăuan "*Bánffytag*". Considering that Cehăluț "component" at Zăuan is even more "diluted" compared with Suplacu de Barcău, are likely that Zăuan to be even slightly late. In my view there is a certain chronological sequence of period final Bz D - early stage Hallstatt A.

In the repertory of Late Bronze Age pottery from Pericei "*Kellertag*" like in the Zăuan case it is visible that Cehăluț "component" is reduced. But the materials listed as

<sup>64</sup> Bejinariu et. Al. 2004, Pl. V/2, VI/5

<sup>65</sup> Nagy 2005, Pl. V/5,7,8

<sup>66</sup> Říhový 1979, 153-158; Novotná 1980, 135-137; Essen 1985, 54-59

<sup>67</sup> Vasič 2003, 78, No. 505

<sup>68</sup> Petrescu-Dîmbovița 1977, 95-97, Pl. 160/10

<sup>69</sup> Kacsó 1995, 111

<sup>70</sup> Ignat 1984, Pl. XII/3-6

<sup>71</sup> Říhový 1983, 20-21

<sup>72</sup> Vasiliev et al. 1991, 64-65, Boroffka 1999, 124, Nt. 66; Idem 2000, Nt. 67

<sup>73</sup> Boroffka 1999, 124, Nt. 66; Idem. 2000, Nt. 67

<sup>74</sup> Kacsó 1997, 88; Idem. 1999, 101

Cehăluț type, are not associated with the double color pottery and decorated characterized with channels, except the cup fragment of C 45 complex, which has a conical knob, bounded on two sides by three wider incisions (Pl.15/5), vaguely reminiscent of an of Cehăluț motif element. But do not exclude the existence of a chronological gap between complexes, such as C 14 and C 16 where were founded materials decorated with Cehăluț ornament and those where bicolor pottery with channels or wide facets (C 7, 45, 47, 70 etc). In other words not exclude the possibility that at Pericei to have a distinct Cehăluț settlement followed by a new one, little more recent. Based on ceramic analogies the later complexes can be chronologically placed in early phase of Gáva culture. Chronologically they may be placed in a broader context, during Hallstatt A phase, perhaps in the second half period. Even if in the Lausitz culture area, needles, such as found in C 47 complex appear also in earlier stages than archaeological contexts mentioned, based on association with pottery, the needle from Pericei belong to Hallstatt A also, all the more that Gușterița II deposit where a needle of this kind belongs to Cincu–Suseni series<sup>75</sup>

### *Conclusions*

The evolution of Cehăluț–Hajdúbagos sites was placed, as I said during the first two stages of Late Bronze Age in northwestern Romania. In this area, cultural background of Cehăluț–Hajdúbagos type is that on which are "grafted" different influences, which changes the appearance of pottery (most clearly detectable element) and creates the premises of new forms emergence and new decorative elements, new ignition technology which all slowly lead to channeled pottery, of Gáva type from the beginning of Hallstatt period. Among these influences are well noticed within the pottery from Zăuan and even from Pericei, those coming from the southwest of Banat–Vojvodina, from Belegiš culture area, and those from Susani group especially. Influences from this area (as so-called "ceramic imports") can be detected also in other discoveries from northwestern Romania<sup>76</sup> or south-western Transylvania<sup>77</sup> and far to north of the Carpathians<sup>78</sup>. Also Suciul de Sus–Lăpuș influences are not missing.

It is difficult to establish the moment when these influences begin to be felt in the area where Cehăluț - Hajdúbagos materials are documented, which ultimately determines the decisive change in the appearance of pottery. In other words how long is the "independent" evolution of this group? Chronological marks offered by metal artifacts founded in settlements, such as Crasna or Suplacu de Barcău, alongside with the discovery of some Cehăluț - Hajdúbagos vessels uncovered in settlements attributed to other cultural backgrounds<sup>79</sup> converge to accept the extension of Cehăluț–Hajdúbagos group until the end of Bz D stage. Discoveries such as that of the Suplacu de Barcău seem to justify this assumption. Instead, at Zăuan we deal with a more recent settlement<sup>80</sup>, where the pottery, despite some similarities with the first site, just few elements is preserved of clear Cehăluț tradition. The findings from Pericei "*Kellertag*" illustrate a new stage of evolution at the end of Late Bronze Age, with a ceramic material that can be attributed to Gáva I phase. If the site from Zăuan is chronologically placed somewhere at the end of Late Bronze II–early Late Bronze III stage, channeled and bicolor pottery complexes from Pericei can be placed during the Late Bronze III stage.

In the area to which we refer, this stage (Late Bronze Age III) is still insufficiently known. The number of archaeological sites assigned to this stage is incomparably lower than the sites belonging to previous stages of the Late Bronze Age. Besides those we can add the findings from Doh<sup>81</sup>, Marca "*Primăria nouă*"<sup>82</sup> the materials from Zalău "*Valea Mișii*",

<sup>75</sup> Petrescu–Dîmbovița 1977, 96, Pl. 160/10

<sup>76</sup> Marta 2009, 208

<sup>77</sup> Ursuțiu et al. 2009, 195

<sup>78</sup> Przybyła 2005, 162, Idem 2005a, 232

<sup>79</sup> Marta 2009, 206, Pl. 49/6

<sup>80</sup> Does not exclude the possibility that integral publishing of Suplacu De Barcău "Lapiș" material bring clearer benchmarks of site chronology.

<sup>81</sup> Bejinariu et. al. 2004, 114-116, Pl. II/3-4, Iv/4

Nuşfalău " *Nagyutca*, nr. 527" (all unpublished), also maybe Şimleu Silvaniei " *Brijigă*"<sup>83</sup> In same cases (Pericei, Doh) these settlements of Late Bronze III period, evolve on the place of some earlier Cehăluţ–Hajdúbajos settlements. Although we have no clear evidence, whether it is continuity in habitation or between the two settlements there is a hiatus, that situation is a sign that evolution is happening on the local background, which assimilate new elements. In other words, there is no evidence that their imposition involves an influx of people coming from other areas<sup>84</sup>, but uptake by local communities of new combustion techniques, shapes and decorative elements in ceramic production<sup>85</sup>.

The aspect of Gáva culture pottery in the earlier stage is owing to the background, on which that progress is achieved. Thus in the Someş area "local aspect" is given by the late Suciul de Sus background as is demonstrated by the excavations results from Petea-Csengersima<sup>86</sup> while the in space between Crasna and Barcău, Cehăluţ tradition is detectable. Subsequently, the cultural uniformity process, visible within "classic" Gáva (Gáva II) pottery continues. For example, only now are documented bowls with inward rim in the area previously occupied by Lăpuş II–Gáva I. But these settlements belong to Gáva II phase.

Based on current data, the beginning of the large fortified settlement from Şimleul Silvaniei " *Observator*" can not be establish earlier than contemporary period from the end of Gáva I phase–early Gáva II phase. A close similar chronology is postulated for similar monuments in the area located to the north<sup>87</sup>.

The presented findings from Zăuan, respectively Pericei get some useful data to outline cultural evolution in north-western area of Romania in the late Bronze Age. In essence, this development is part of the general trend of the area, generalization of shapes and decorations of pottery and new firing techniques. Currently these issues are most easily discernible. Others are required to be resolved in future through a multidisciplinary approach. Further more extensive research is needed, especially in vicinity of Şimleu Bassin (the middle basin of Barcău river, Carei Plain) where we have only limited information and uncertain archaeological contexts<sup>88</sup> Apparent differences<sup>89</sup> can be determined by the geographical position of each micro-region, closer or more distant from the ways of propagation of influences, able to promote dynamism and, contrary more autarchic character of communities. Not at last, the research state can also be invoked.

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<sup>82</sup> Bejinariu–Băcuet 2007, 224

<sup>83</sup> Sana 2006, Pl.9/7

<sup>84</sup> Kacsó 2007, 53

<sup>85</sup> Przybyła 2005, 162

<sup>86</sup> Marta 2009, 220

<sup>86</sup> Ibidem

<sup>86</sup> Kacsó 2007, 53

<sup>86</sup> Némethi 2009, 213-214

<sup>87</sup> Marta 2009, p. 220

<sup>88</sup> Kacsó 2007, 53

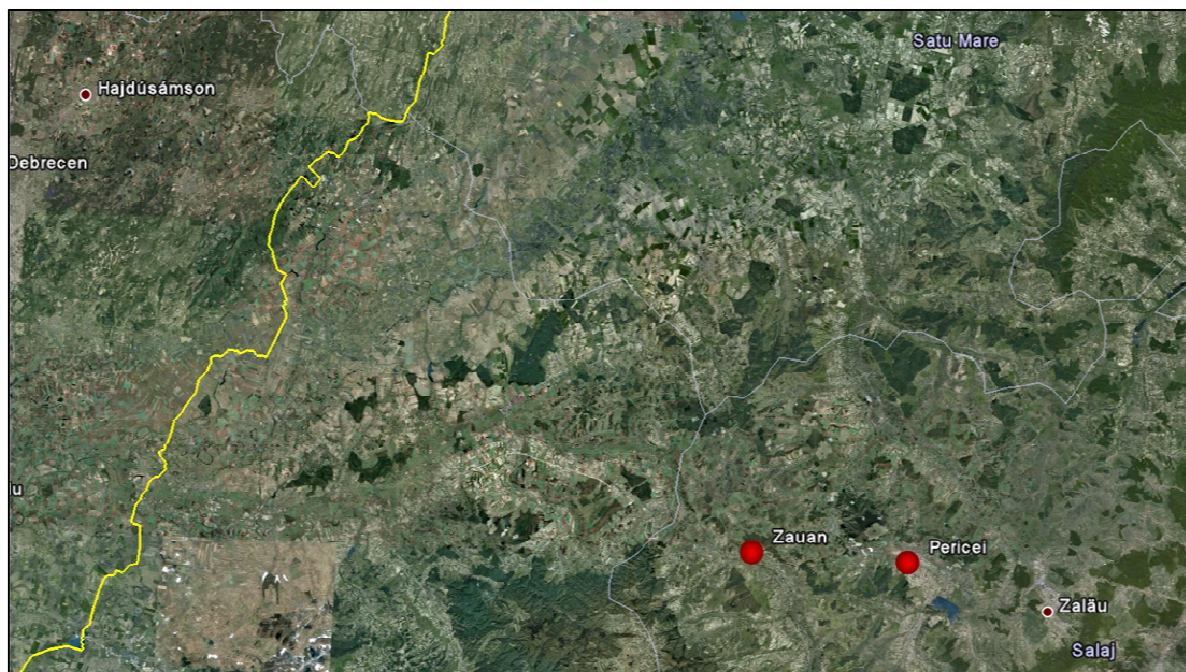
<sup>89</sup> Némethi 2009, 213-214

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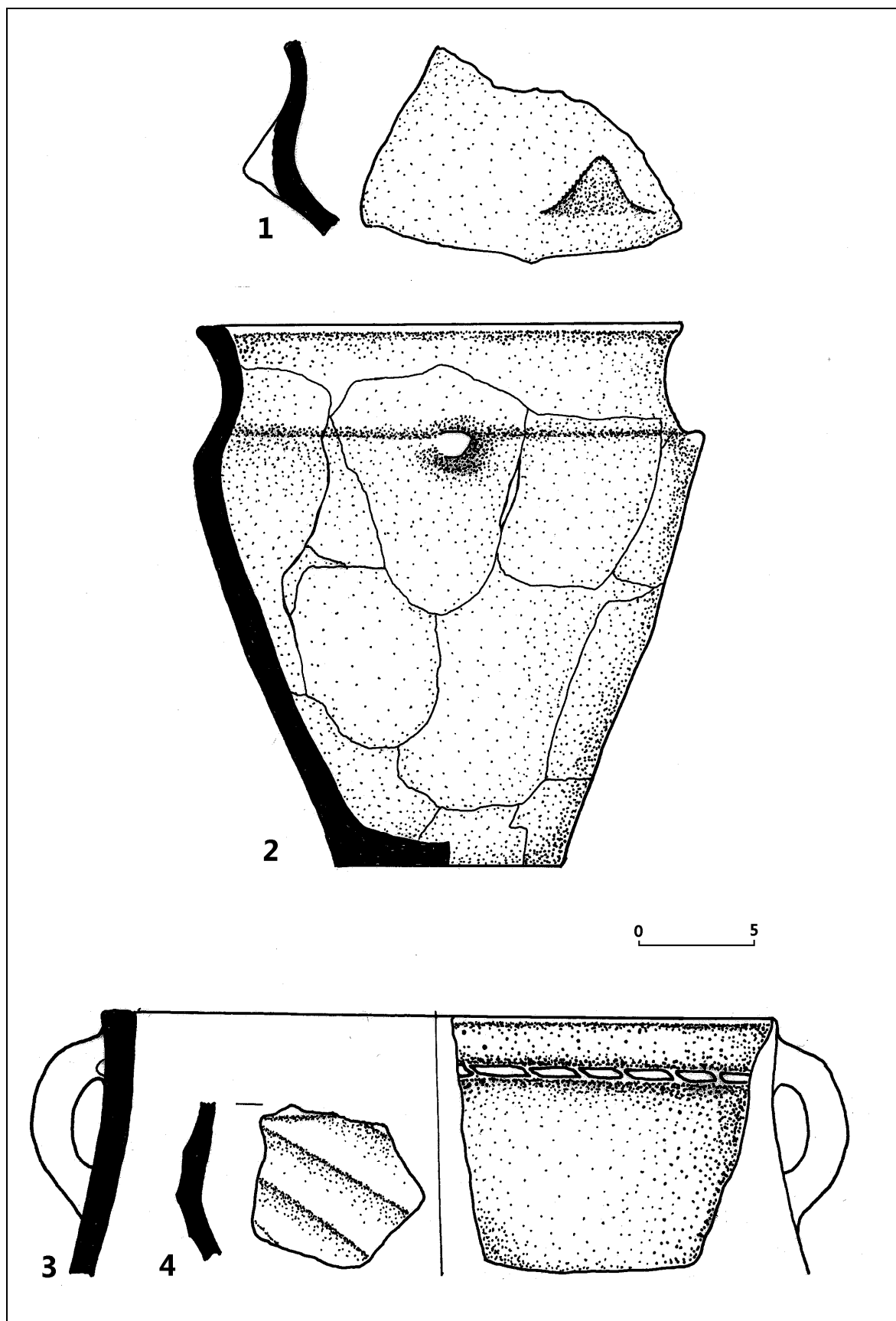
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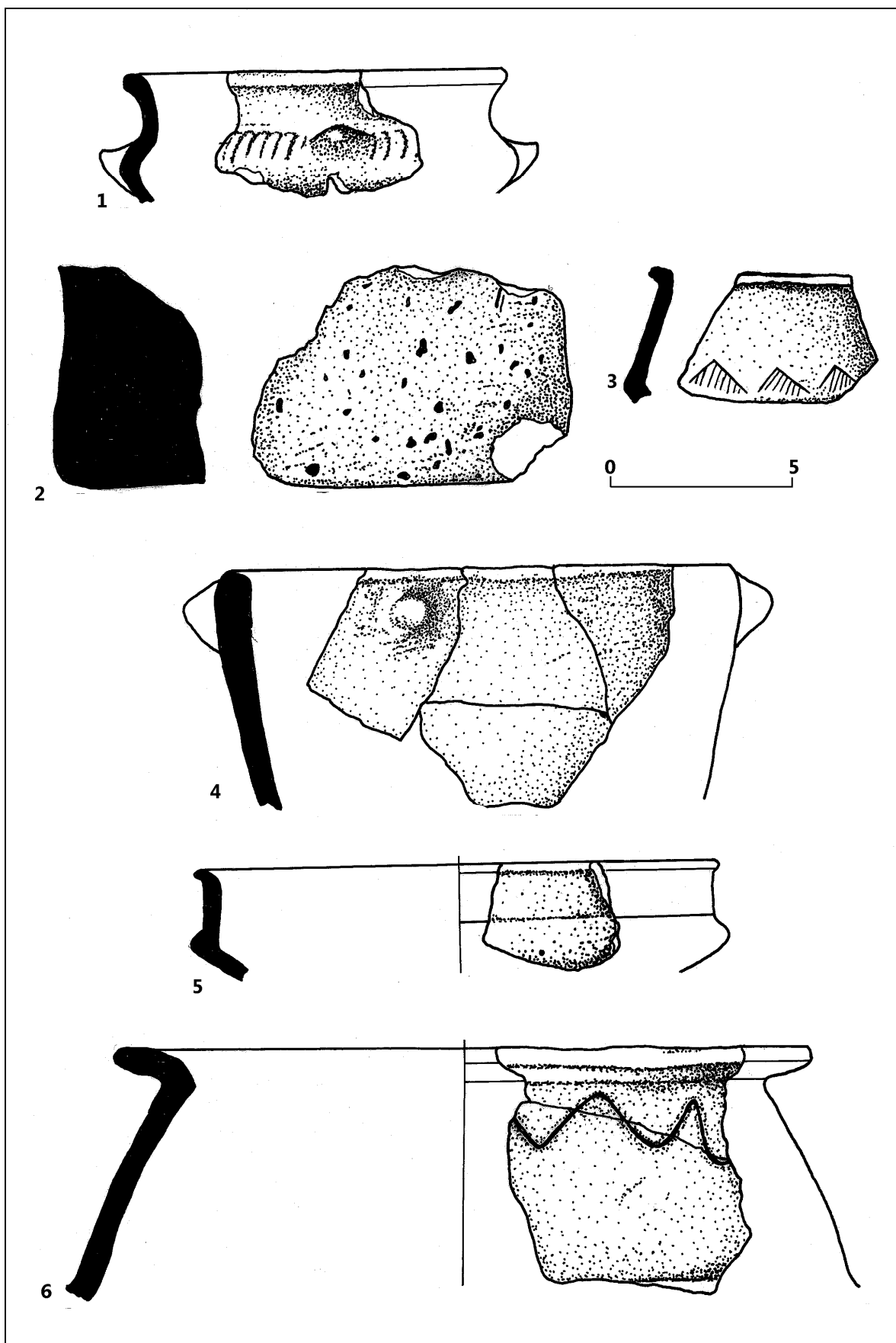
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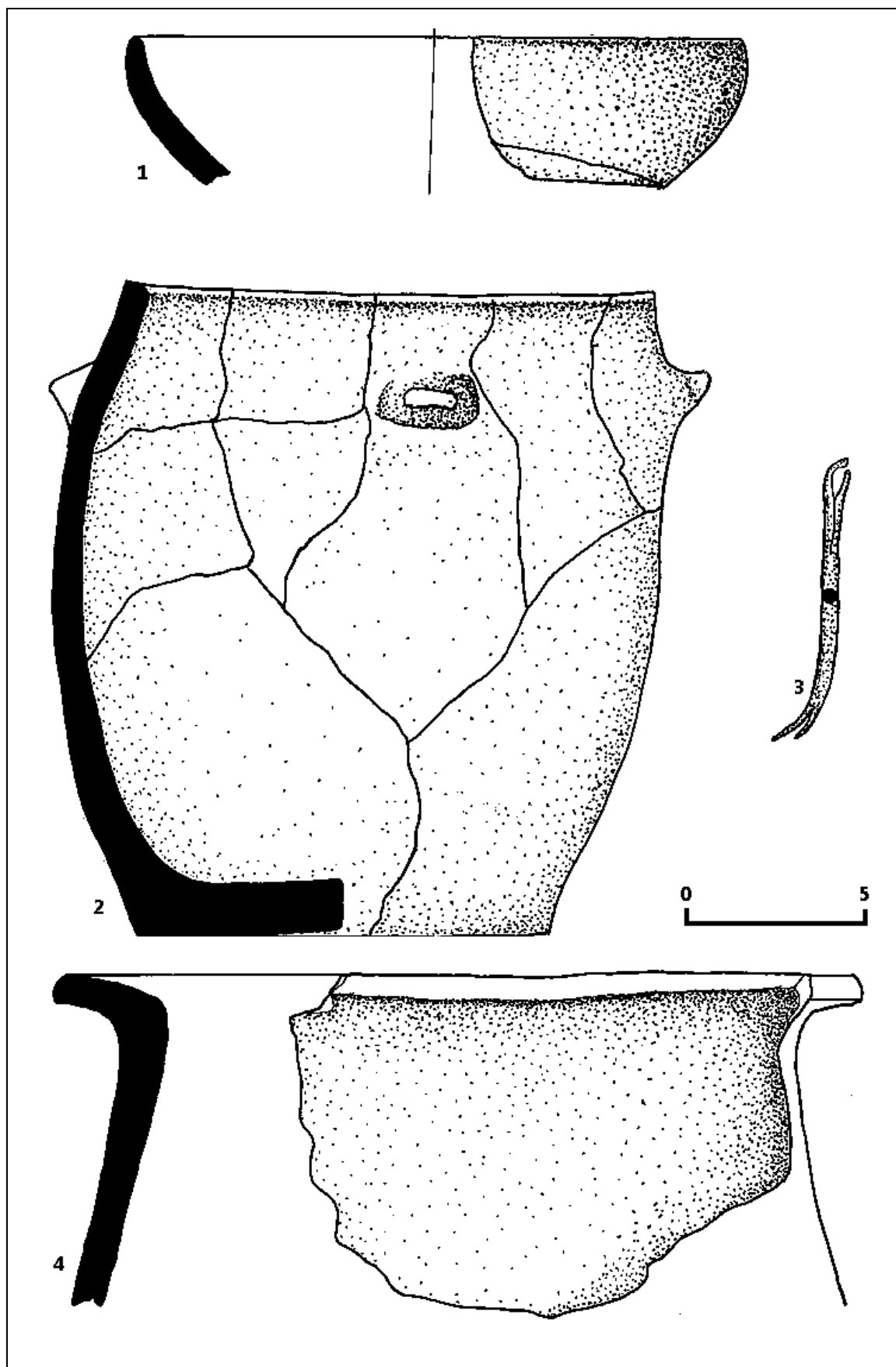
**Pl. 1.** Zăuan and Pericei villages location on the Norh-Western Romania map.



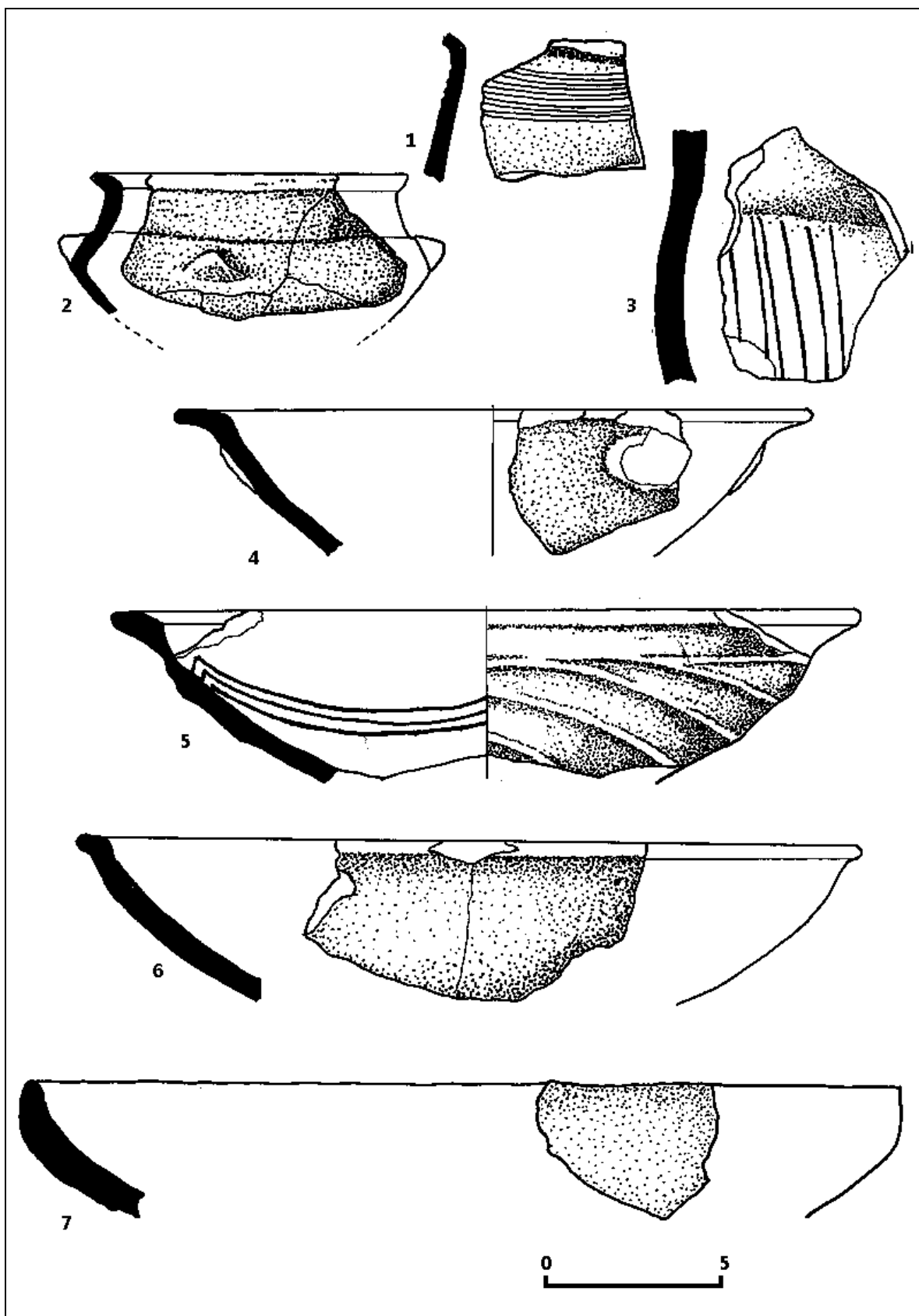
Pl. 2. 1-4: Zăuan *Banffy-tag*, pottery sherds from C1/1976.



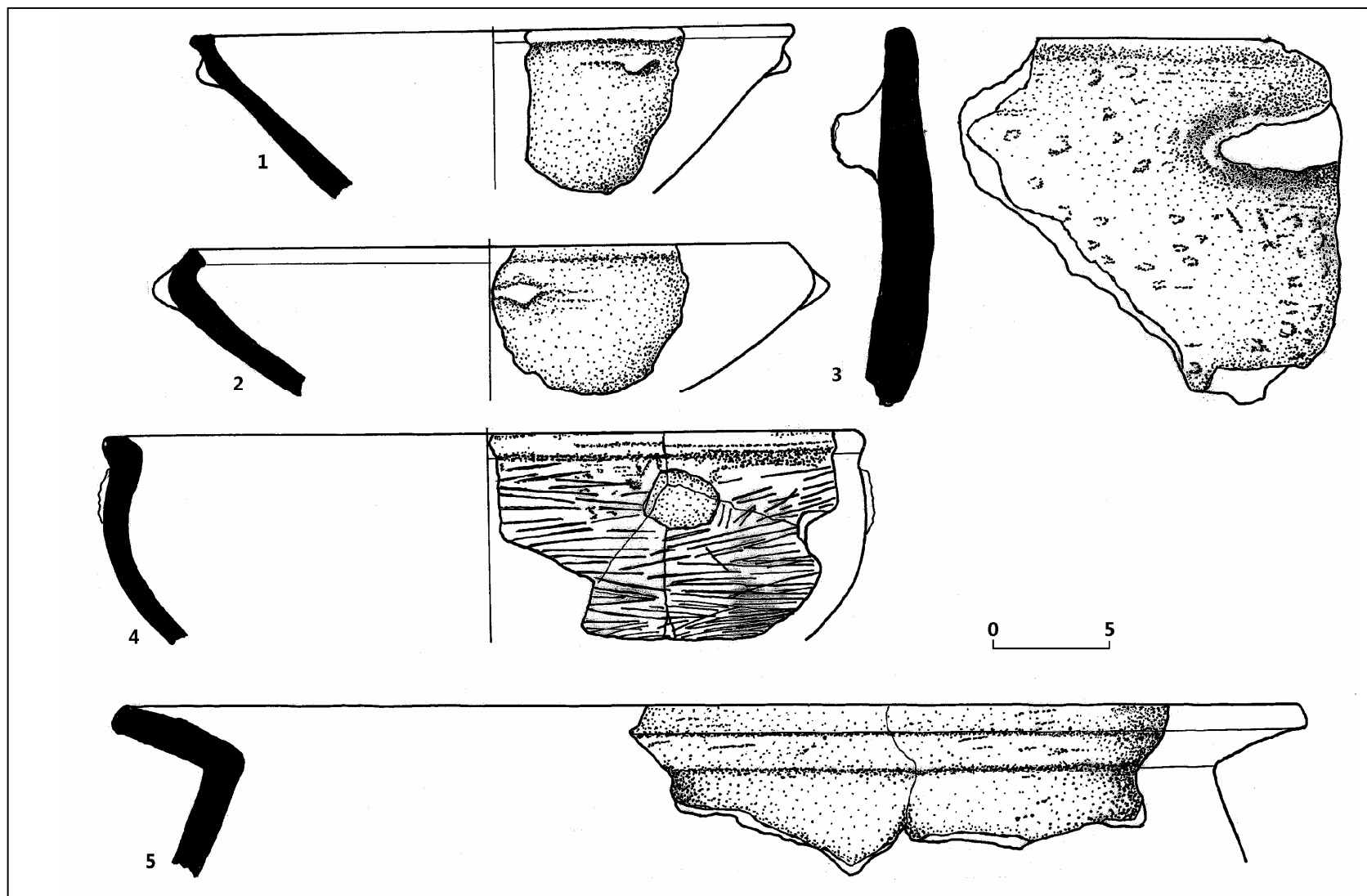
Pl. 3. Zăuan *Banffy-tag*. 1,4: pottery sherds from pit G1; 2-3, 5-6: pottery sherds from dwelling L1/1981.



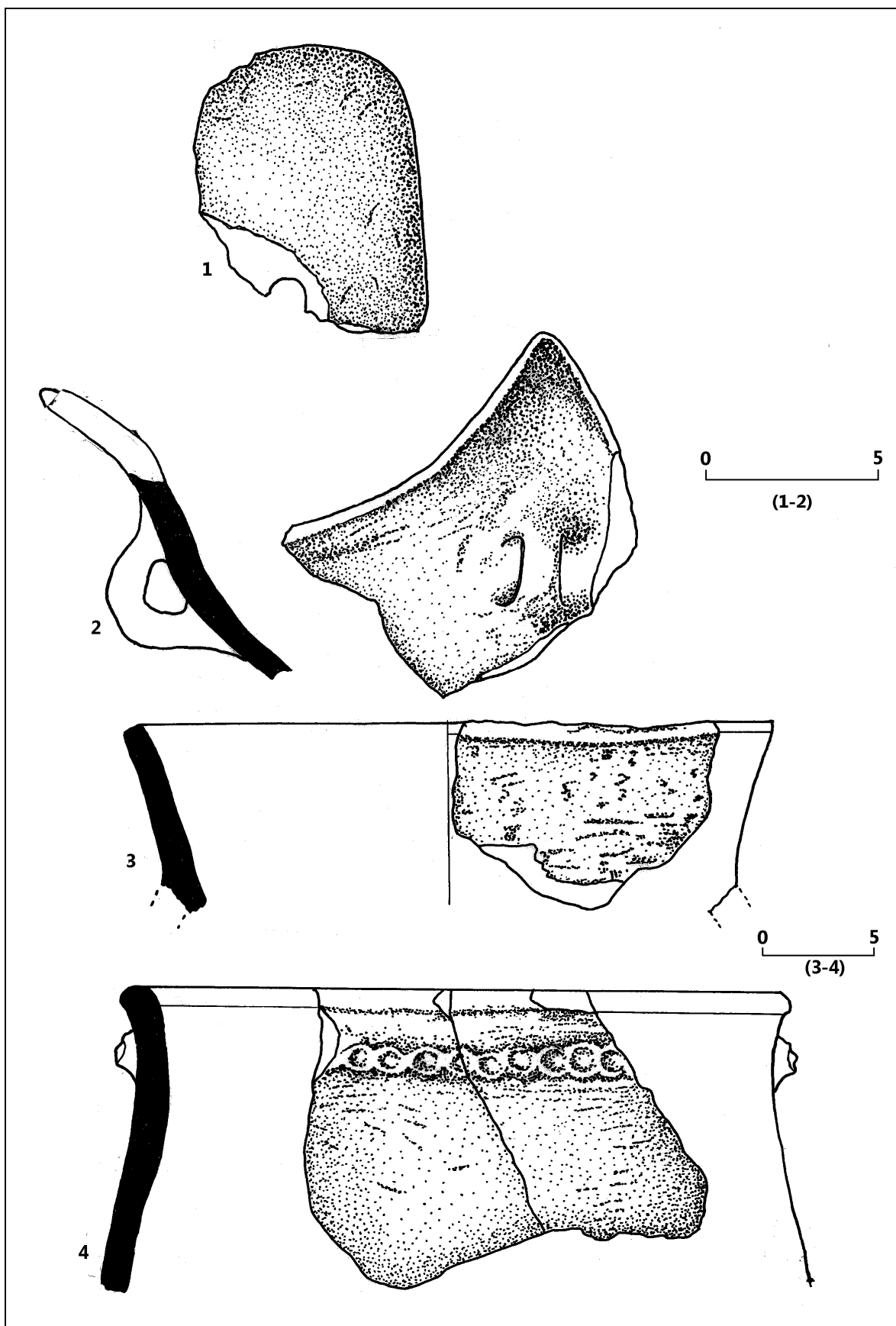
**Pl.4.** Zăuan *Banffy-tag*. 1: pottery fragment from pit G2; 2-4: archaeological materials from dwelling L1/1981 (3-bronze needle).



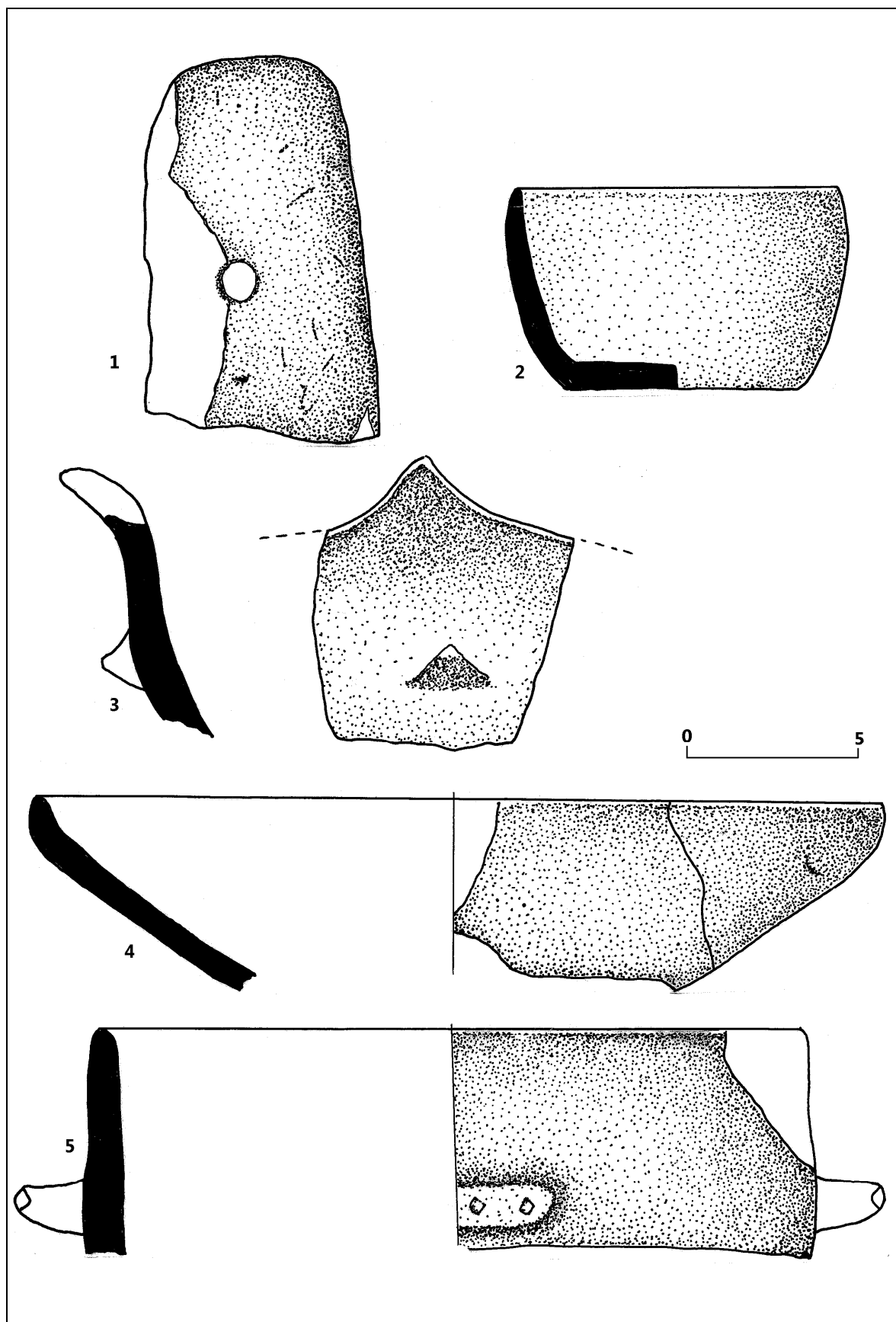
Pl. 5. Zăuan *Banffy-tag*. 1-7: pottery sherds from dwelling L1/1981.



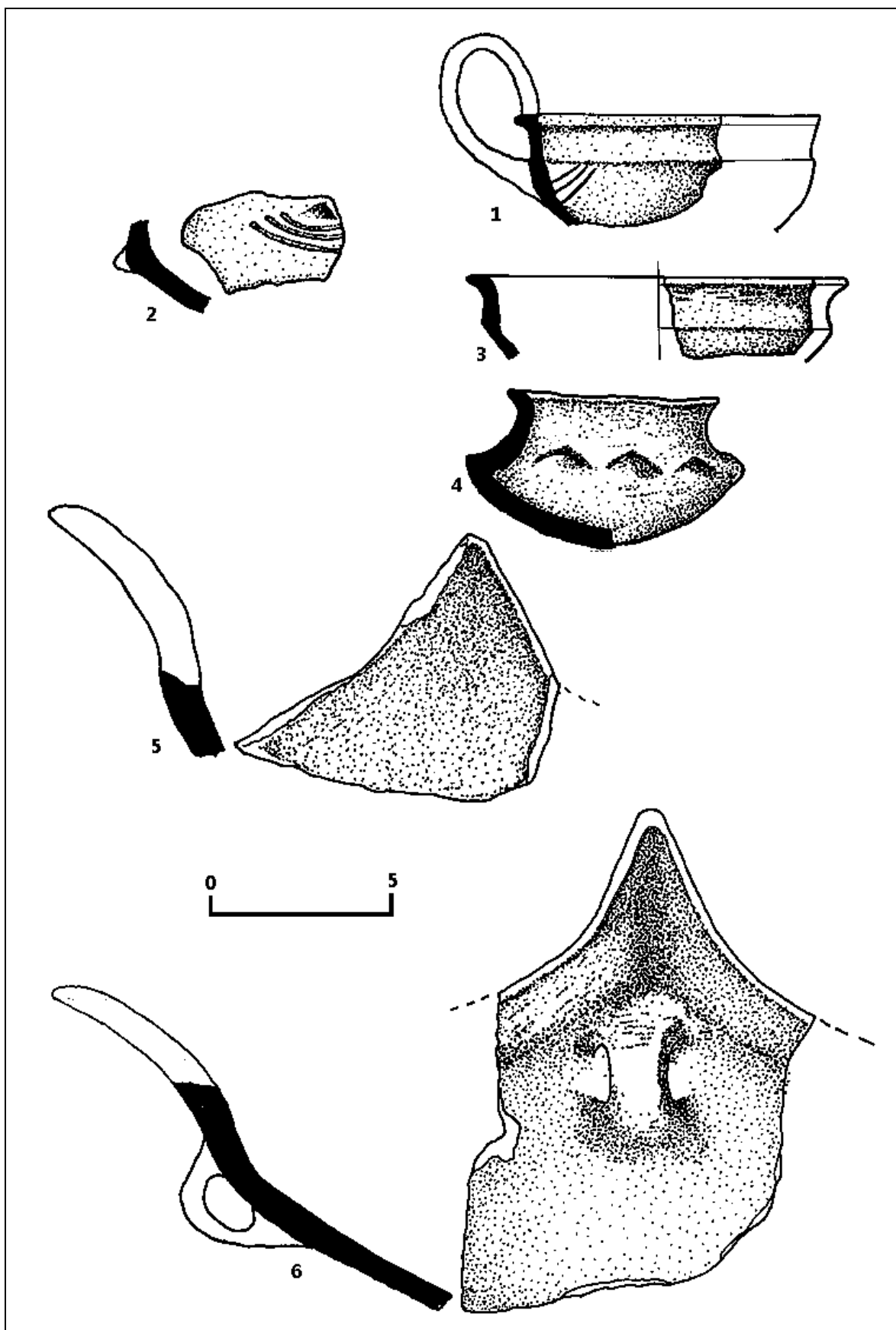
**Pl. 6.** Zăuan *Banffy-tag*. 1-4: pottery sherds from dwelling L1/1981; 5: pottery fragment from pit G2.



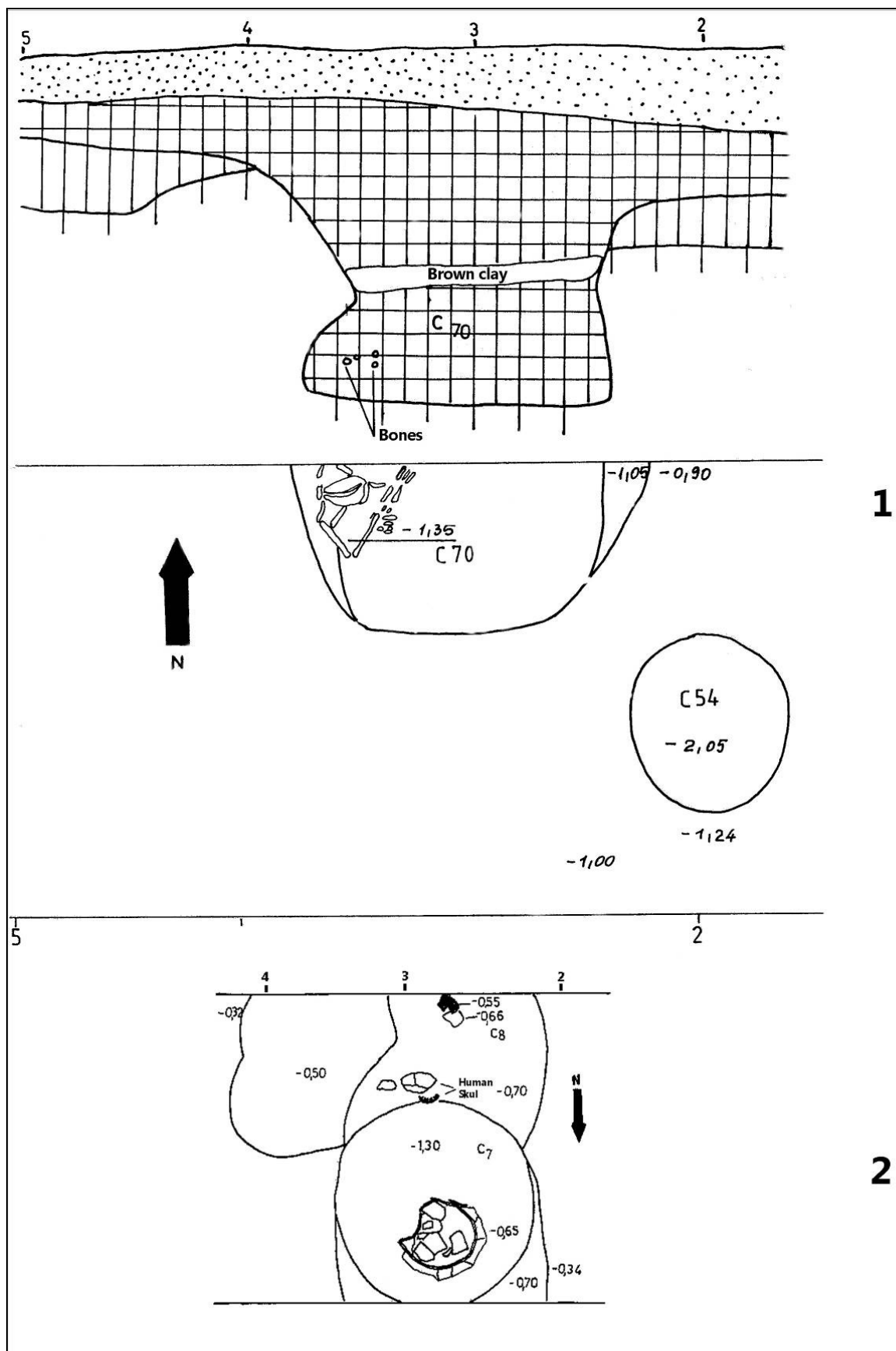
**Pl. 7.** Zăuan *Banffy-tag*. 1: clay weight from pit G1; 2-4: pottery sherds from dwelling L1/1981.



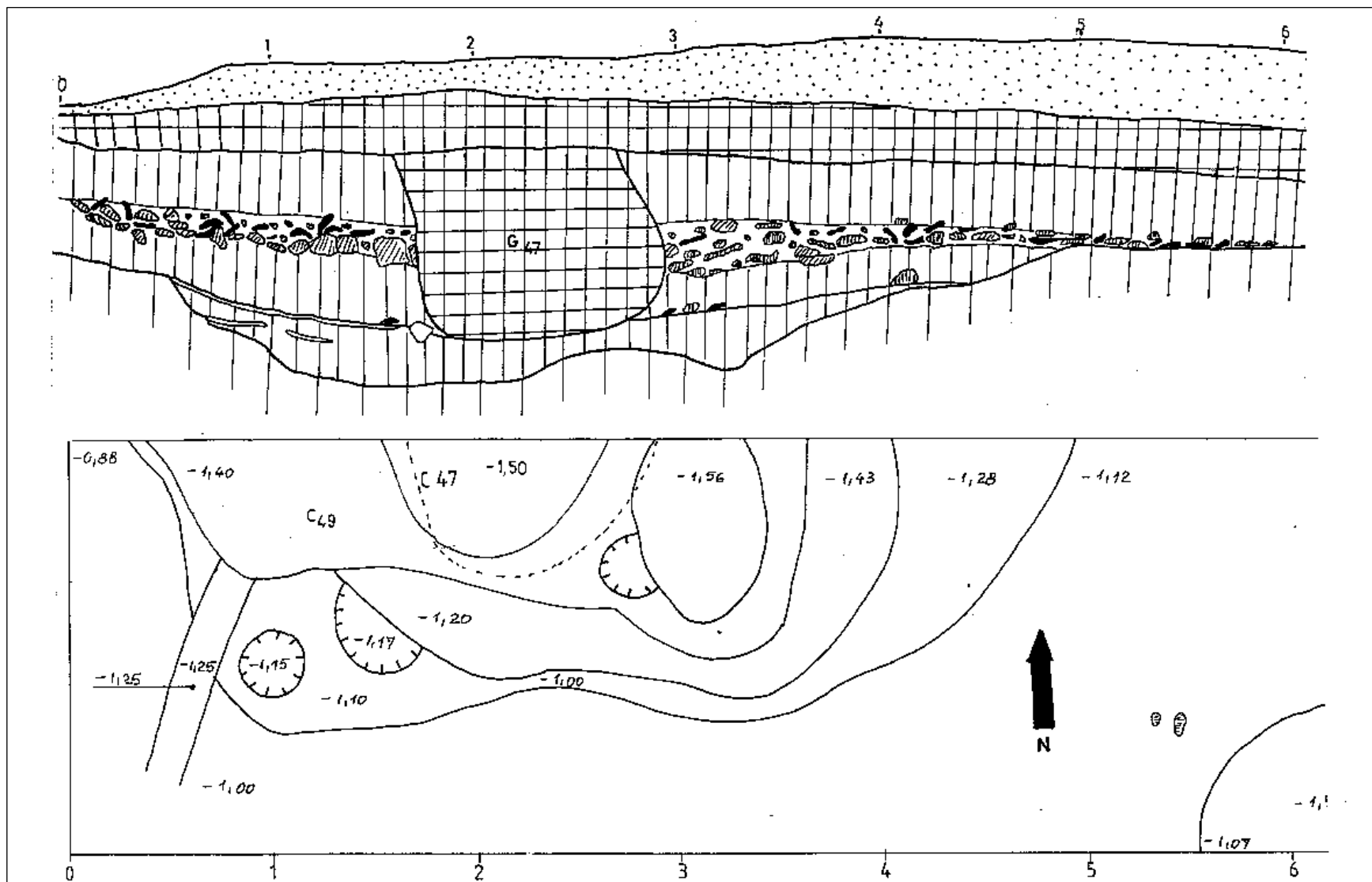
**Pl. 8.** Zăuan *Banffy-tag*. 1-3,5: pottery sherds from pit G4; 4: pottery fragment from pit G1.



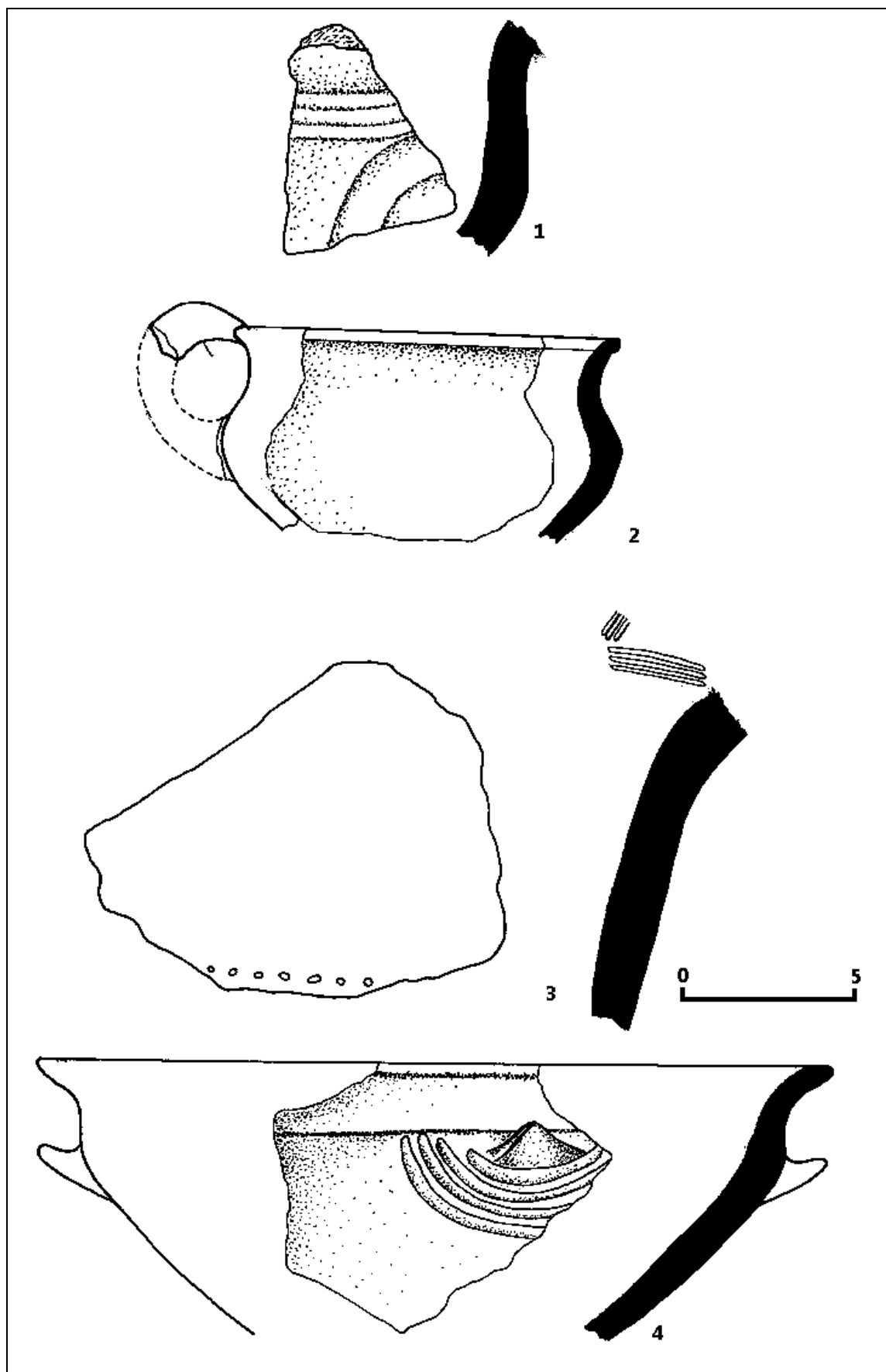
**Pl. 9.** Zăuan *Banffy-tag*. 1-6: pottery sherds from dwelling L1/1981.



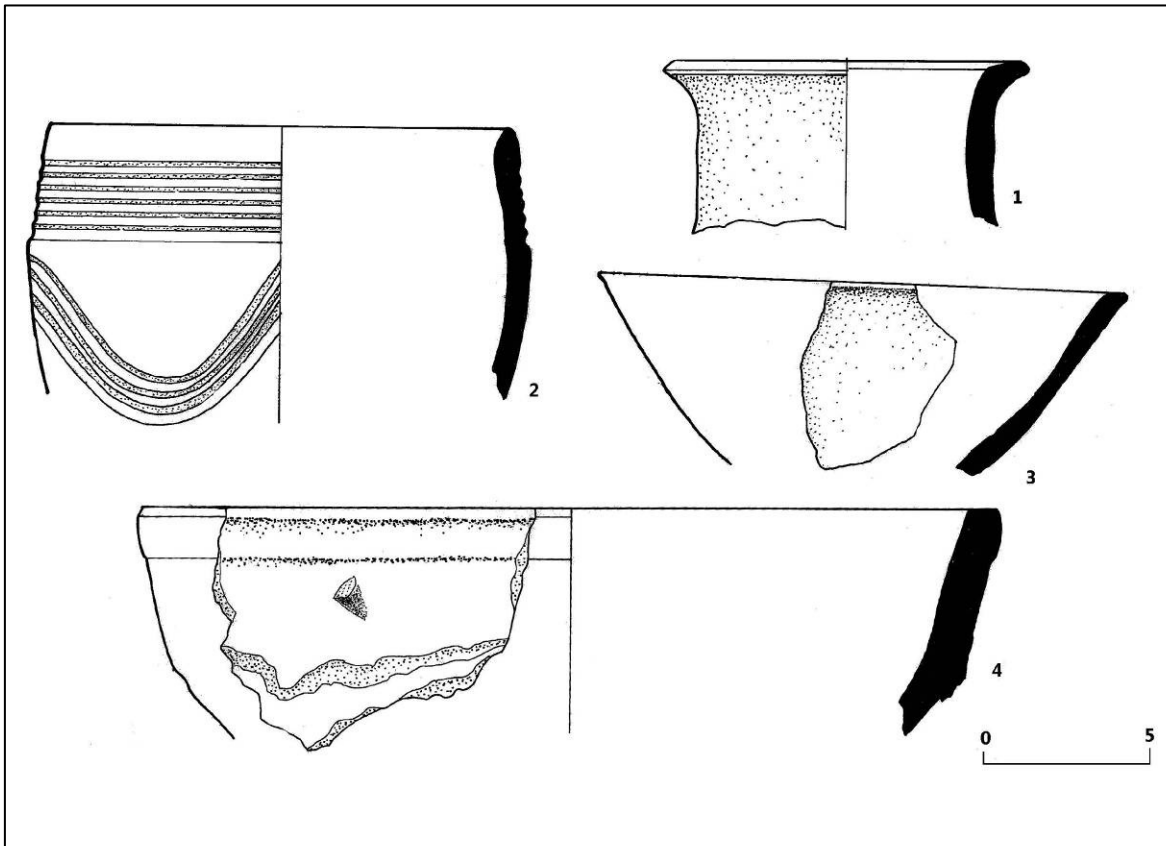
**Pl.10.** Pericei Keller-tag. 1: pit C 70 (profile and plan); 2: pit C 7 (plan).



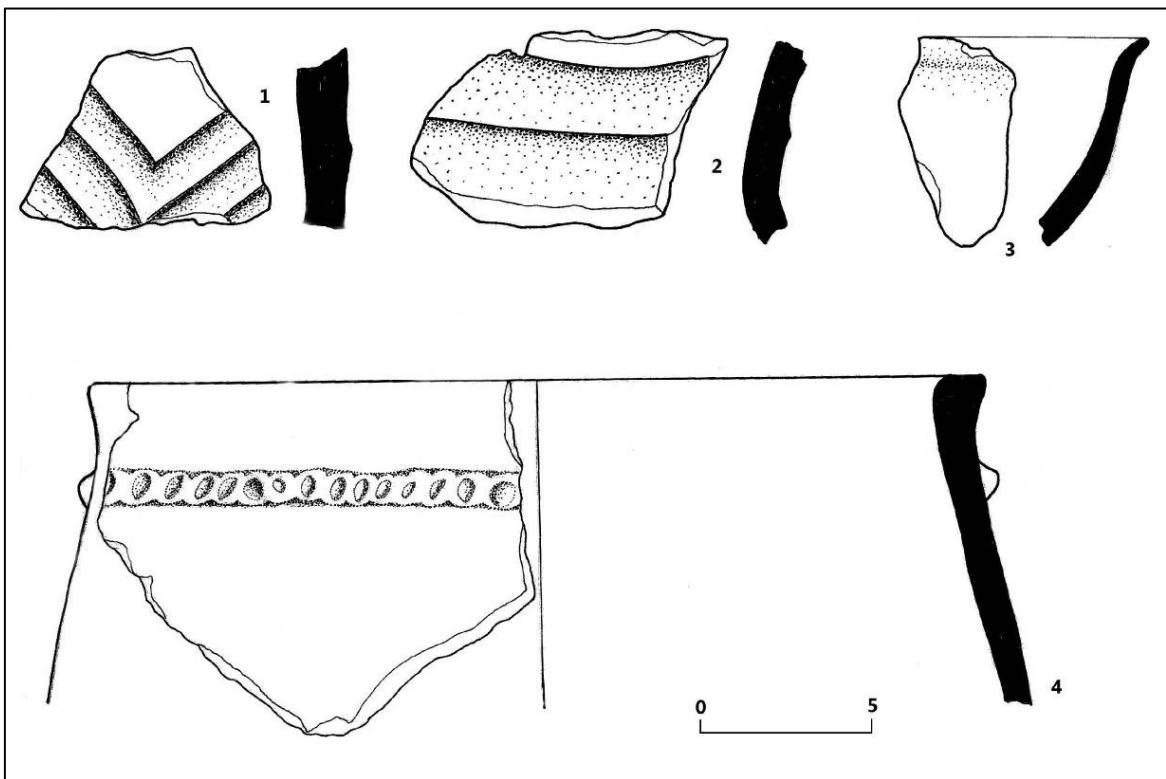
**Pl. 11.** Pericei Keller-tag. 1: pit C 47 (profile and plan).



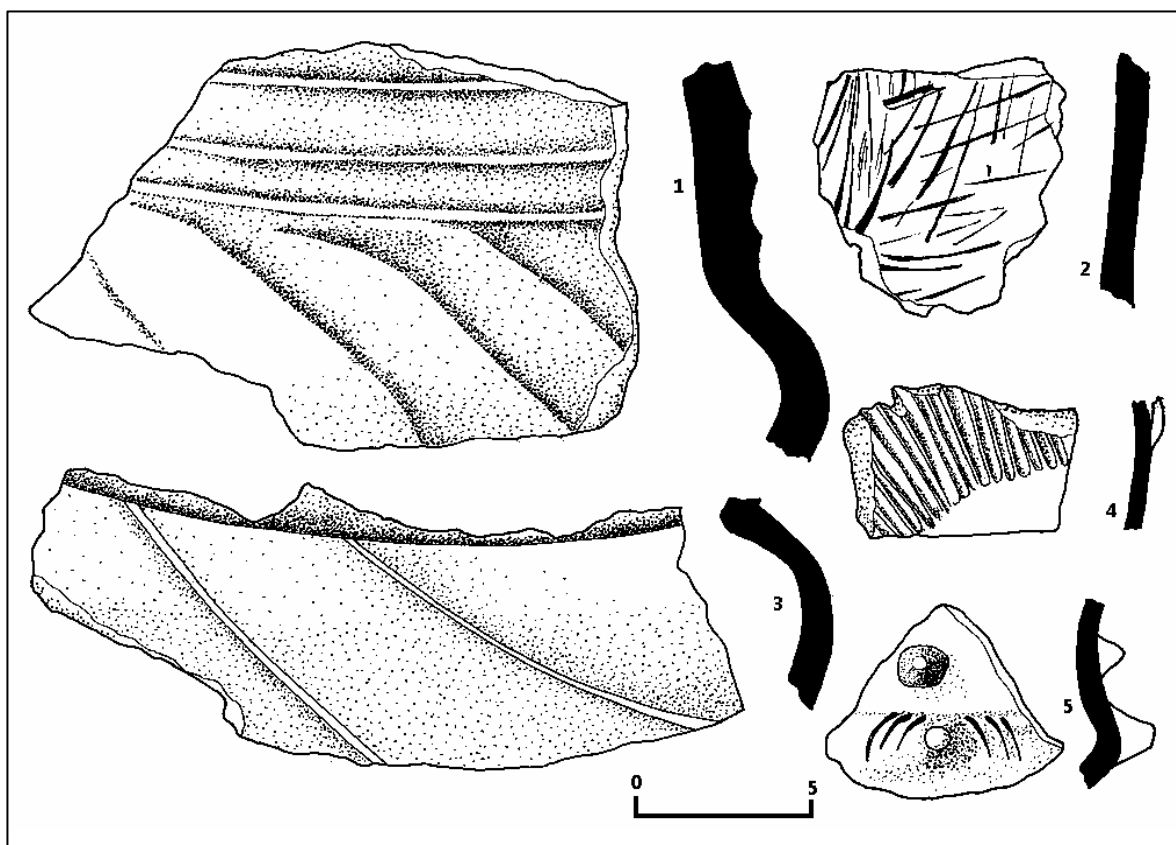
**Pl. 12.** Pericei *Keller-tag*. 1: pottery fragment from pit C 14; 2-4: pottery sherds from pit C 16.



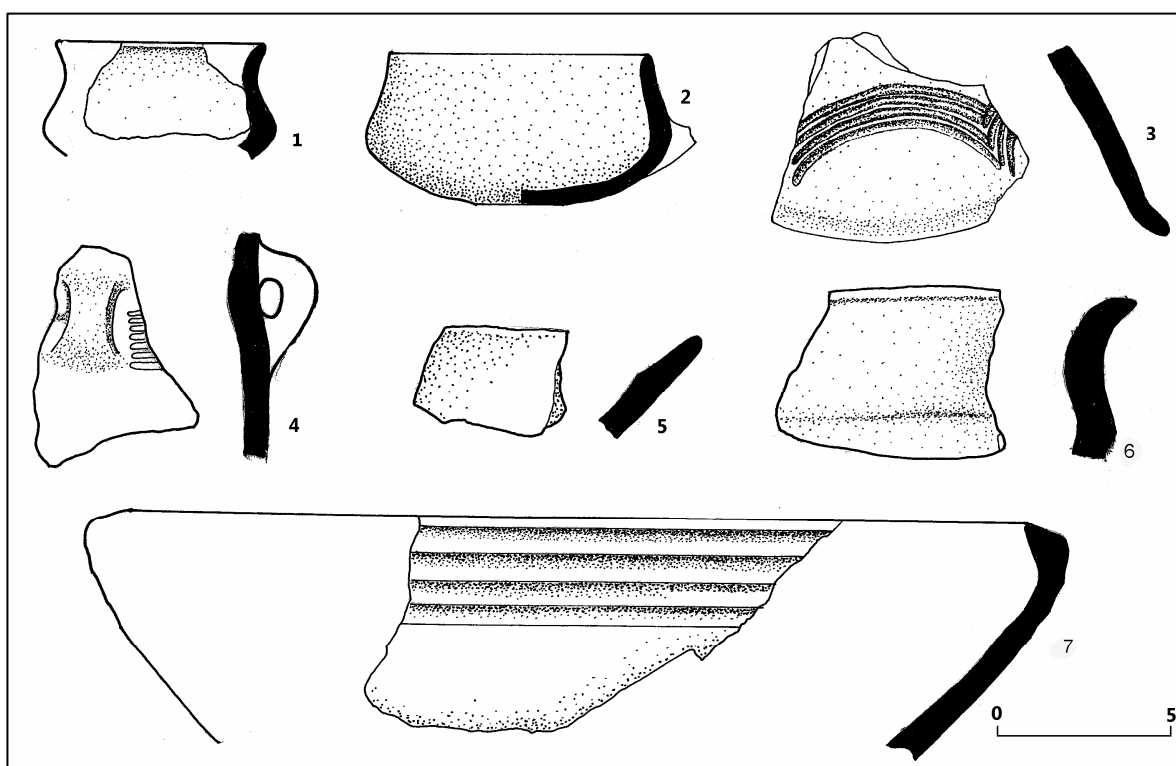
Pl. 13. Pericei *Keller-tag*. 1-4: pottery sherds from pit C 45.



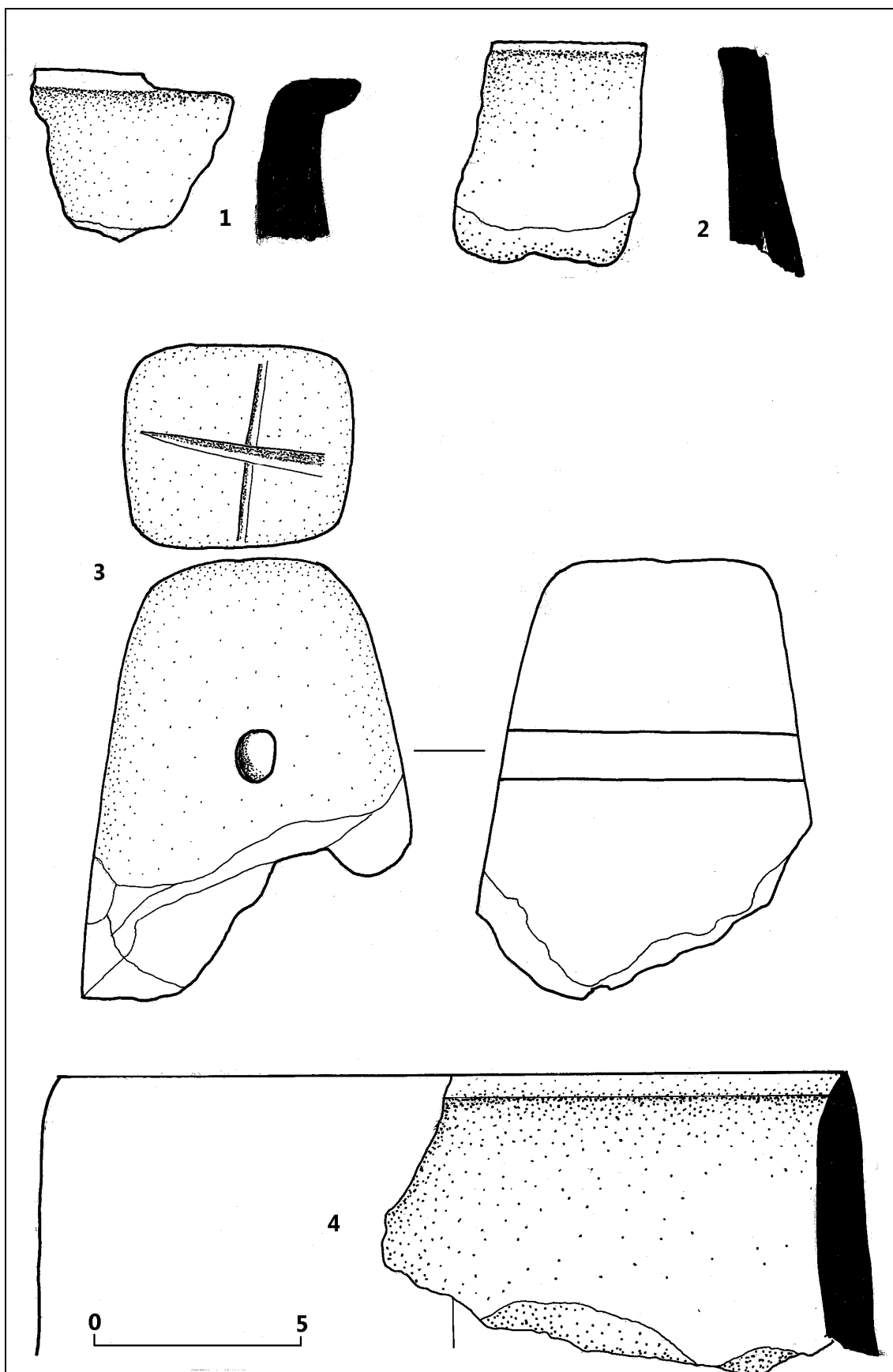
Pl. 14. Pericei *Keller-tag*. Potery sherds from pit C 47.



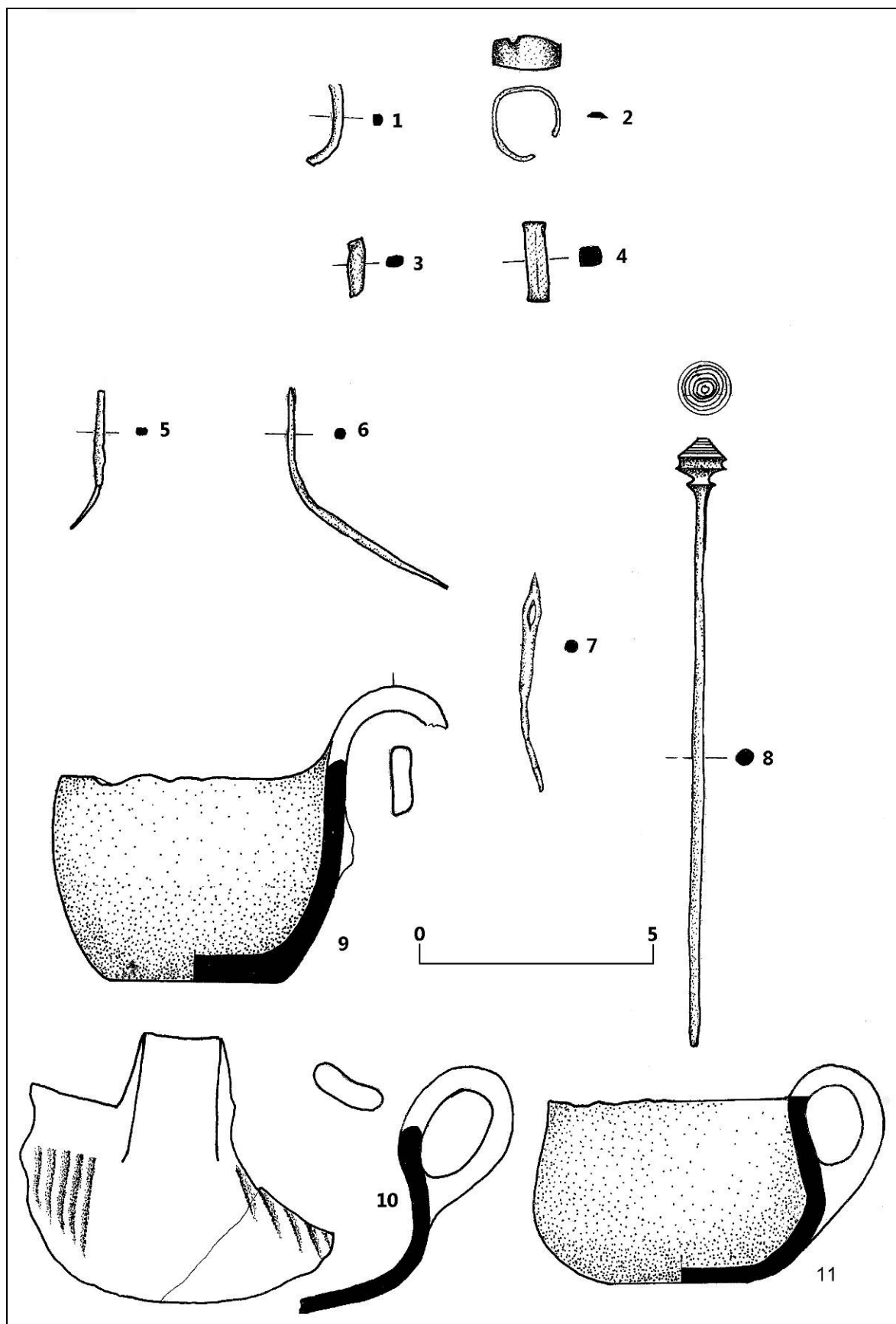
**Pl. 15.** Pericei *Keller-tag*. 1-4: pottery sherds from pit C 45.



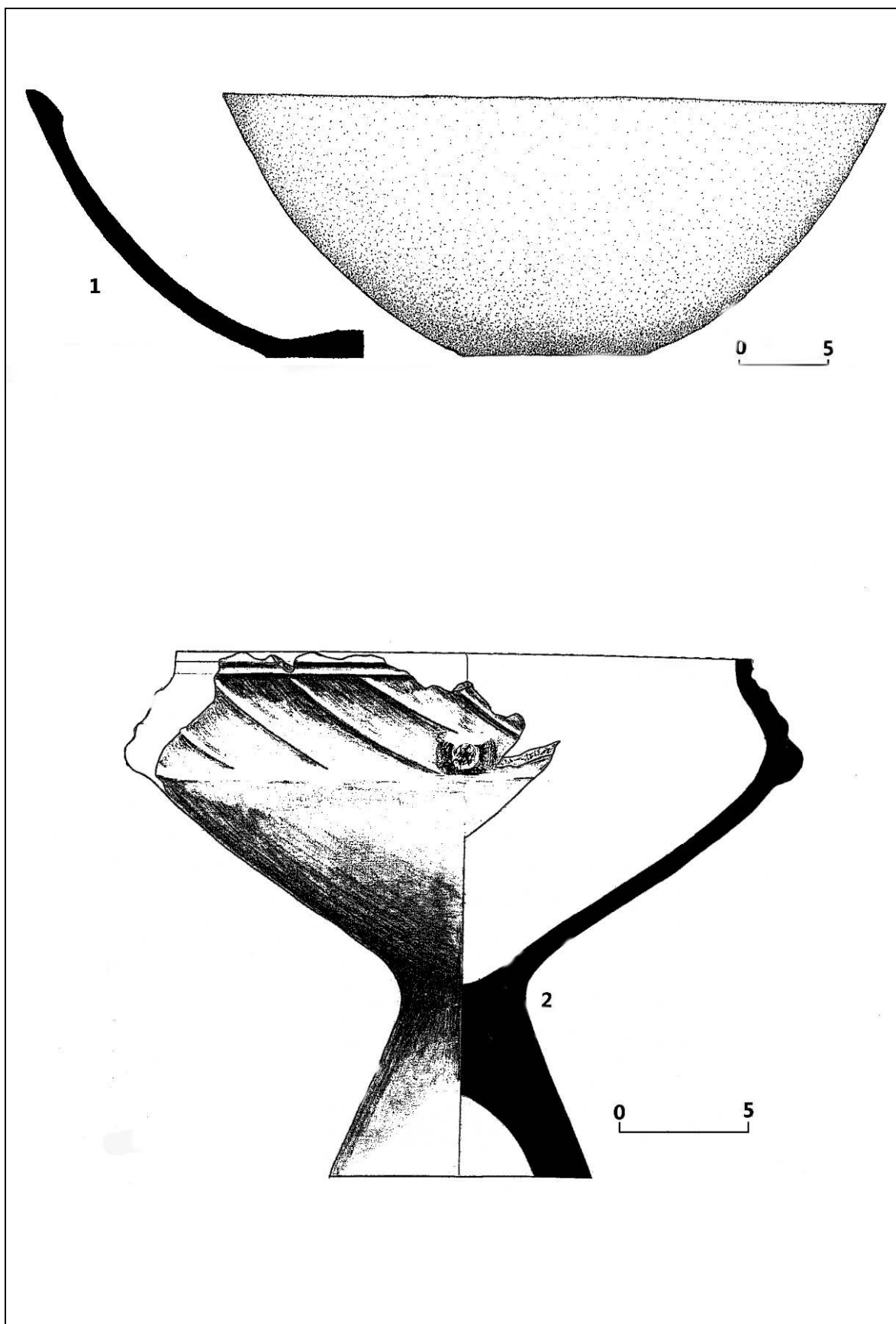
**Pl. 16.** Pericei *Keller-tag*. 1,6: pottery from pit C 41; 2: from pit G 105; 4-5,7: from pit C 70; 3: from culture layer.



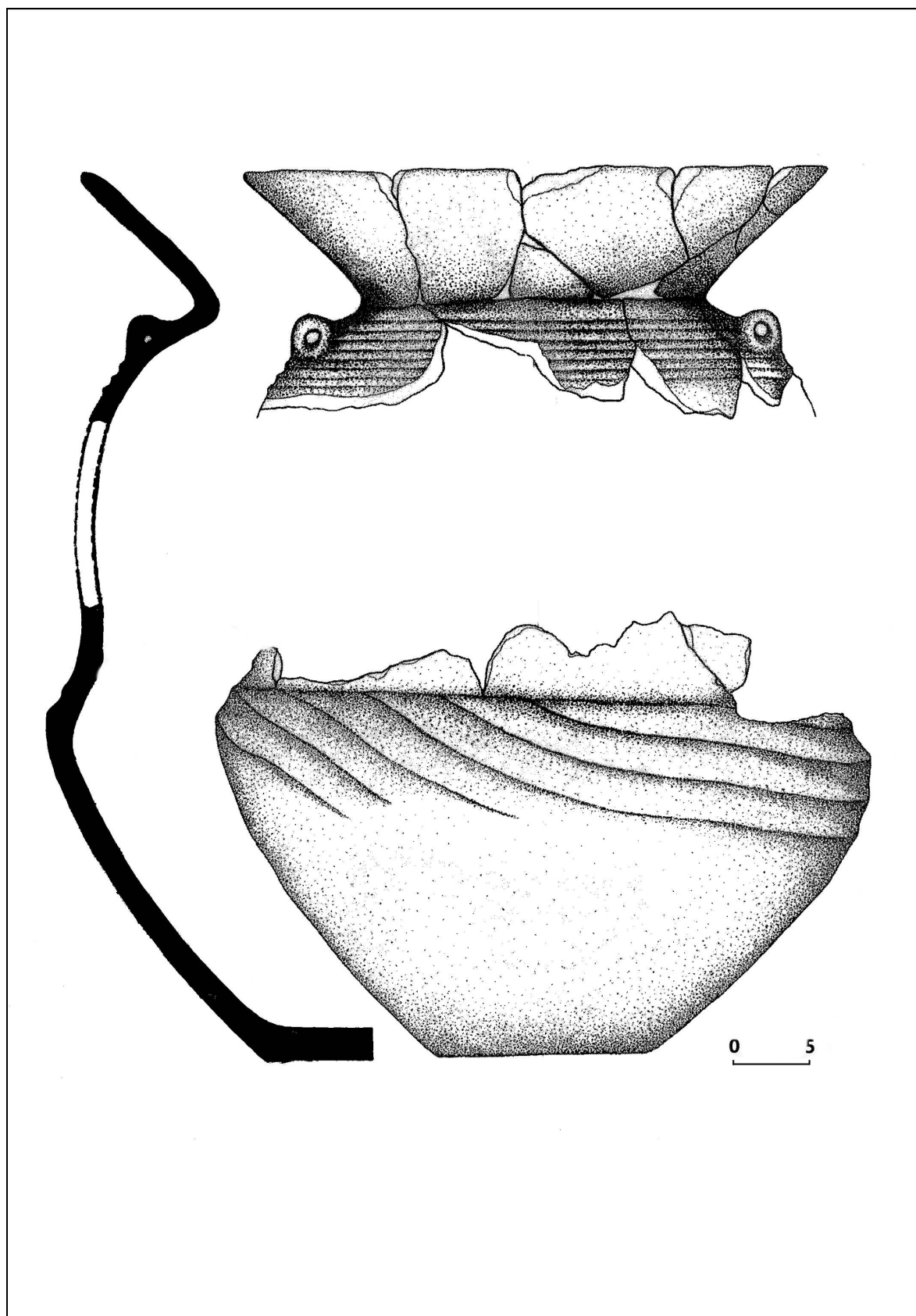
**Pl. 17.** Pericei *Keller-tag*. 1,3: archaeological materials from pit C 47; 2,4: pottery sherds from pit C 45.



**Pl. 18.** Pericei *Keller-tag*. 1, 5-6: bronze artefacts from culture layer; 2: from pit C 63; 3: from pit C 14; 4: from pit C 23; 7: from pit C 86; 8: from pit C 47; 9: cup from pit C 89; 10: cup fragment from culture layer; 11: cup from pit C 29.



**Pl. 19.** Pericei *Keller-tag*. 1: bowl from pit C 7; 2: vessel from pit C 107.



**Pl. 20.** Pericei *Keller-tag*. 1. vessel from pit C 7.