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AUREL RUSTOIU LA A 60-A ANIVERSARE

Cu ocazia împlinirii a 60 de ani de către reputatul arheolog dr. habil. **Aurel Rustoiu**, aducem un omagiu sincer unei personalități care a marcat decisiv cercetarea arheologică din România și din spațiul central și est-european.

Format încă dinaintea studenției sub îndrumarea regretatului arheolog Florin Medeț, el și-a desăvârșit pregătirea la Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai” din Cluj-Napoca, în cadrul Facultății de Istorie și Filosofie. Lucrarea sa de doctorat, publicată în 1996 și dedicată metalurgiei bronzului la daci, rămâne un reper internațional, completată exemplar de analiza fibulelor din Dacia preromană, apărută în 1997 și considerată și astăzi un model de analiză tipologică și contextuală.



Cariera sa științifică este legată de Institutul de Arheologie și Istoria Artei din Cluj-Napoca, unde din 2017 este doctor habilitat și conducător de doctorate, dezvoltând direcții metodologice inovatoare și colective de cercetare performante. Este, de asemenea, profesor asociat la Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara, implicându-se activ în formarea noilor generații de cercetători.

Aurel Rustoiu s-a remarcat și printr-o susținută activitate arheologică de teren. A coordonat cercetări arheologice importante în țară, dintre care cele mai semnificative au fost cele de la Sighișoara - *Wietenberg* și Divici - *Grad*, dar și în străinătate, la Solotvino și Bila Ţerkova, în Ucraina Transcarpatică. În prezent coordonează proiecte de cercetare arheologică sistematică în colaborare cu Muzeul Național al Unirii din Alba Iulia, de la cimitirele din epoca fierului de la Sâncraia - *Darvas* și la cetățile dacice de la Cugir și Căpâlna. A fost membru, coordonator și mentor în numeroase proiecte de cercetare și granturi naționale și internaționale, construind punți durabile între instituții, generații, echipe și școli arheologice.

Este autor a 12 cărți, editor al mai multor volume de studii și semntar a peste 150 de articole, studii și note științifice, multe dintre ele publicate în reviste de prestigiu internațional. Studiile sale despre comunitățile dacice, celtice și nord-tracice rămân repere indispensabile pentru oricine abordează problematica interacțiunilor etno-culturale din prima epocă a fierului și până la Roma imperială. Prin publicațiile sale, Aurel Rustoiu a contribuit decisiv la reînnoirea metodologică a disciplinei și la afirmarea arheologiei românești în dialogul științific european. De-a lungul carierei editoriale și științifice a colaborat cu numeroși cercetători din țară și străinătate, între care Mariana E. Egri, Iosif Vasile Ferencz, Sándor Berecki, Andreea M. Drăgan, Andrei V. Georgescu, Adrian C. Căsălean, Gabriel T. Rustoiu, Valeriu Sîrbu, J. Vincent S. Megaw, Matthew M. McCarty, Călin Cosma, Gelu Florea, Horea D. Pop, Adrian Ursuțiu, Gabriela Gheorghiu, Valentin Vasiliev, Eduard A. Balaguri, Ioan Andrițoiu, Ion Horațiu Crișan, Marian Gumă, Vasile Moga, Corneliu Gaiu, Caius Săcărîn, Alexandru Szentmiklósi, Eduard M. Nemeth, Alexandru Gudea, Dumitru Gh. Tamba, Emilian Teleagă, Cristian I. Popa, Cristinel Plantos, Gabriel D. Balteș, Alexandra Comșa, Mathilda Takács, Florin Gogâltan, Sorin Cociș, Constantin Inel, Valentin Cetean, Gabriel Crăciunescu, Corina Turc și Claudiu Lisovski-Cheleşanu.

Aurel Rustoiu a participat la numeroase conferințe și simpozioane internaționale, printre care cele mai importante ar fi cele de la Roma, Italia (2008); Heidelberg, Germania (2009); Cambridge, UK (2011, 2015); Carnuntum, Austria (2012); Rzeszów, Polonia (2012); Pilsen, Cehia (2013); Sofia, Bulgaria (2013); Manching, Germania (2014); Istanbul, Turcia (2014); Barcelona, Spania (2018); Praga, Cehia (2018); Chișinău, Republica Moldova (2018); Stará Lesná, Slovacia (2019); King's College London, UK (2019), Mikulov, Cehia (2022); Budapesta, Ungaria (2022); Jičín, Cehia (2023); Žilina, Slovacia (2024); Zlín, Cehia (2025).

Este membru în consiliul științific al Muzeului Național Brukenthal din Sibiu, Muzeului Banatului din Timișoara și Muzeului Satului Bănățean Timișoara, și a fost, de asemenea, implicat activ în consilii și comisii naționale precum CNATDCU sau Comisia Națională de Arheologie, contribuind prin experiență, echilibru și autoritate profesională la definirea standardelor în cercetare și patrimoniu. Din 2019 este membru de onoare al Institutului Național de Arheologie cu Muzeu al Academiei Bulgare de Științe, în semn de recunoaștere a contribuției sale la dezvoltarea arheologiei în Bulgaria, iar în același an a fost distins și cu Premiul George Barițiu al Academiei Române.

Prin deschidere interdisciplinară, cultură vastă și eleganță intelectuală, Aurel Rustoiu a creat o școală de gândire recunoscută pentru acuratețe, creativitate și spirit critic. În același timp, a avut curajul intelectual de a ieși din tiparele metodologice convenționale, promovând o arheologie autentică, atentă

la identități, mobilități, cauzalitatea mișcărilor de populații și dinamica interacțiunilor culturale. Această deschidere conceptuală a stimulat reflecția critică și a oferit disciplinei repere moderne de interpretare.

Aurel Rustoiu a organizat conferințe și workshop-uri la Cluj-Napoca, Alba Iulia și, mai recent, la Timișoara, contribuind la dinamizarea dialogului științific internațional. De asemenea, este activ în promovarea patrimoniului arheologic prin prezentări de popularizare și contribuții la volume destinate publicului cultivat mai larg, aducând rezultatele cercetării arheologice mai aproape de comunitate.

Un capitol aparte al activității sale îl reprezintă mentoratul. Generații întregi de arheologi – de la cercetători tineri aflați la început de drum până la specialiști astăzi deplin afirmați – îi datorează nu doar îndrumare științifică, ci și încredere, generozitate intelectuală și sprijin uman. Aurel Rustoiu nu a cultivat niciodată cunoașterea ca pe un bun rezervat, ci a împărtășit constant idei, metode și resurse, încurajând dialogul, creativitatea și autonomia profesională.

Mai puțin cunoscut în afara cercului apropiat, dar revelator pentru latura sa reflexivă și ludică, este volumul de poezii *Dadaism versus blablaism. Poezii de carantină (2020)*, care îi dezvăluie umorul subtil, sensibilitatea și apetitul pentru jocul conceptual, adăugând o notă surprinzătoare și fermecătoare profilului său intelectual.

La aniversarea celor șase decenii de viață, îi adresăm cele mai calde felicitări, cu recunoștință pentru contribuțiile sale excepționale și cu admirație pentru energia cercetătoare pe care o întruchipează. Îi dorim sănătate, putere de creație și ani mulți de cercetare rodnică, convinși că munca sa va continua să inspire generații viitoare de arheologi.

La mulți ani, cu prețuire și respect!

BERECKI Sándor

AUREL RUSTOIU ON THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY

On the occasion of the 60th birthday of distinguished archaeologist Dr. Aurel Rustoiu, we pay sincere tribute to a personality who has had decisive impact on archaeological research in Romania and Central and Eastern Europe.

Mentored even before his university years by the late archaeologist Florin Medeleț, he completed his graduate studies at Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, in the Faculty of History and Philosophy. His doctoral thesis, published in 1996 and dedicated to Dacian bronze metallurgy, remains an international milestone, complemented by his exemplary analysis of fibulae from pre-Roman Dacia, published in 1997 and still considered a model today of typological and contextual analysis.

His scientific career is closely linked to the Institute of Archaeology and Art History in Cluj-Napoca, where he has been a habilitated doctor and PhD supervisor since 2017, developing innovative methodological approaches and high-performing research teams. He is also an associate professor at the West University of Timișoara, where he is actively involved in training new generations of researchers.

Aurel Rustoiu also has a distinguished record of archaeological fieldwork. He has coordinated important archaeological research in Romania, most notably the excavations at Sighișoara - *Wietenberg* and Divici - *Grad*, as well as abroad, at Solotvino and Bila Tserkva in Transcarpathian Ukraine. He currently leads systematic archaeological research projects in collaboration with the National Museum of the Union in Alba Iulia, at the Iron Age cemeteries in Sâncrai - *Darvas* and the Dacian fortresses in Cugir and Căpâlna. He has been a member, coordinator, and mentor in numerous research projects and national



and international grants, building lasting bridges between institutions, generations, teams, and archaeological schools.

He is the author of 12 books, editor of several volumes, and author of over 150 articles, studies, and scholarly notes, many of which have been published in prestigious international journals. His studies on the Dacian, Celtic, and North Thracian communities remain indispensable references for anyone addressing the issue of ethno-cultural interactions from the Early Iron Age to the Roman Empire. Through his publications, Aurel Rustoiu has made a decisive contribution to the methodological renewal of the discipline and to the affirmation of Romanian archaeology in European academic debate. Throughout his editorial and scientific career, he has collaborated with numerous researchers from Romania and abroad, including Mariana E. Egri, Iosif Vasile Ferencz, and Sándor Berecki, Andreea M. Drăgan, Andrei V. Georgescu, Adrian C. Căsălean, Gabriel T. Rustoiu, Valeriu Sîrbu, J. Vincent S. Megaw, Matthew M. McCarty, Călin Cosma, Gelu Florea, Horea D. Pop, Adrian Ursuțiu, Gabriela Gheorghiu, Valentin Vasiliev, Eduard A. Balaguri, Ioan Andrițoiu, Ion Horațiu Crișan, Marian Gumă, Vasile Moga, Corneliu Gaiu, Caius Săcărin, Alexandru Szentmiklósi, Eduard M. Nemeth, Alexandru Gudea, Dumitru Gh. Tamba, Emilian Teleagă, Cristian I. Popa, Cristinel Plantos, Gabriel D. Balteș, Alexandra Comșa, Mathilda Takács, Florin Gogâltan, Sorin Cociș, Constantin Inel, Valentin Cetean, Gabriel Crăciunescu, Corina Turc, Roxana Grindean, Ioan Tanțău and Claudiu Lisovski-Cheleşanu.

Aurel Rustoiu has attended numerous international conferences and symposia, among the most important being those in Rome, Italy (2008); Heidelberg, Germany (2009); Cambridge, UK (2011, 2015); Carnuntum, Austria (2012); Rzeszów, Poland (2012); Pilsen, Czech Republic (2013); Sofia, Bulgaria (2013); Manching, Germany (2014); Istanbul, Turkey (2014); Barcelona, Spain (2018); Prague, Czech Republic (2018); Chișinău, Republic of Moldova (2018); Stará Lesná, Slovakia (2019); King's College London, UK (2019); Mikulov, Czech Republic (2022); Budapest, Hungary (2022); Jičín, Czech Republic (2023); Žilina, Slovakia (2024); Zlín, Czech Republic (2025).

He is a member of the scientific councils of the Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu, the Banat Museum in Timișoara, and the Banat Village Museum in Timișoara, and has also been actively involved in national councils and commissions such as CNATDCU and the National Commission for Archaeology, contributing his experience, balance, and professional authority to defining standards in research and heritage. Since 2019, he has been an honorary member of the National Archaeological Institute with Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, in recognition of his contribution to the development of archaeology in Bulgaria; that same year, he was awarded the George Barițiu Prize by the Romanian Academy.

Through his interdisciplinary approach, wide-ranging culture, and intellectual elegance, Aurel Rustoiu has forged a scholarly profile recognized for its accuracy, creativity, and critical spirit. At the same time, he has shown the intellectual courage to move beyond conventional methodological patterns, promoting an authentic archaeology attentive to identity, mobility, the causes of population movements, and the dynamics of cultural interaction. This conceptual openness has stimulated critical reflection and provided the discipline with modern interpretative landmarks.

Aurel Rustoiu has organized conferences and workshops in Cluj-Napoca, Alba Iulia, and, more recently, in Timișoara, contributing to the international scientific dialogue. He is also active in promoting archaeological heritage through public lectures and written contributions to volumes aimed at a wider educated audience, bringing the results of archaeological research closer to the community.

A particular aspect of his professional activity is mentoring. Generations of archaeologists, from young researchers at the beginning of their careers to fully established specialists, owe him not only scientific guidance, but also his confidence, intellectual generosity, and human support. Aurel Rustoiu has never treated knowledge as a guarded asset; he has consistently shared ideas, methods, and resources, encouraging dialogue, creativity, and professional autonomy.

Less well known beyond his immediate circle, but illustrative of his reflective and ludic side, is the poetry volume *Dadaism versus blablaism. Poezii de carantină* (2020), which reveals his subtle humour, sensitivity and an appetite for conceptual play, adding a surprising and charming note to his intellectual profile.

On the occasion of his sixtieth birthday, we salute him with warmest congratulations, with gratitude for his exceptional contributions and with admiration for the research energy he embodies. We wish him good health, creative strength, and many years of productive research, confident that his work will continue to inspire future generations of archaeologists. Happy birthday, with esteem and respect!

BERECKI Sándor

RESCUE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS IN ALBA IULIA: NEW ROMAN GRAVES DISCOVERED AT “PROFI” AND “REPUBLICII BOULEVARD” SITES (2023)

Marina MUSTEAȚĂ,
Institute of Archaeology and Art History Cluj-Napoca
Gabriel Dan BALTEȘ,
Ovidiu-Maxim OARGĂ,
Cristinel FÂNTÂNEANU
National Museum of the Union Alba Iulia

Cuvinte cheie: Dacia romană, Apulum, contexte funerare, identitate socială, rituri și ritualuri funerare, morminte

Key words: Roman Dacia, Apulum, funerary contexts, social identity, funerary rites and rituals, graves

1. Introduction. Research context and stratigraphy

The project „Rehabilitation of the Major Urban Public Transport Infrastructure Network in the Municipality of Alba Iulia – Lot II – Section 1 – Republicii Boulevard” required an archaeological investigation in the sector located in Lot I – Republicii Boulevard, between the Profi supermarket and the OMV gas station (Fig. 1-2).

The research team was composed of Dr. Cristinel Fântâneau (scientific coordinator – MNUAI), Dr. Gabriel Balteș, and Dr. Ovidiu Oargă (team members – MNUAI).

The excavation took place between July and October 2023 and January 2024, and the surveyed area extended from km 0+000 to km 0+250, near the entrance to the Olympic Swimming Pool.

The archaeological investigation was prompted by the discovery of several funerary archaeological contexts of the Roman cemetery located north of Apulum, including inhumation and cremation burials, dating to the Roman period (105/106 AD – abandonment of the province). These contexts were identified at a depth of 1.02 m, after the asphalt layer and the foundation fill layers of the road were removed.

In general terms, the stratigraphy observed within the investigated perimeter is consistent with that characteristic of the area. With minor variations of no archaeological significance, the recorded stratigraphy follows these levels: 0 – 0.20 m: Asphalt layer – road surface; 0.20 – 0.60/0.65 m: Layer of ballast

mixed with medium-sized stones and gravel – road foundation; 0.60/0.65 – 0.80/0.90 m: Black-grey clayey soil – fill material; 0.80/0.90 – 1.00 m: Brown-grey soil – sterile layer.

2. Methodological aspects

Initially, the graves and the other contexts were numbered according to the order in which they were found in each section. In this article, they were renumbered in the order of the sections, and the non-funerary contexts were described at the end. In addition, some possible cenotaphs were considered pits because they lack any inventory.

The graves were classified according to the rite and the characteristics of the pit and the osteological remains. The inventory of the graves was classified according to functionality and analysed based on the context of discovery and their analogies. In addition, the social identities of one of the deceased individuals were discussed in relation to the funerary inventory.

3. Discoveries. Funerary rites and rituals

Classification of the graves

According to the funerary rite, there are two types of graves: cremation (20 graves) and inhumation graves (eight graves). No rite can be attributed to two pits (P1 and P2, initially M9/S3 and M12/S3) because they had no inventory or skeletal remains. Another non-funerary context is a ditch found in sector 1.

The inhumation graves are rectangular with rounded corners (M3, M5, M6, M10, M24, M27, M28) and oval pits (M26).

According to the setting, there are three types of graves: simple (M5, M6 and M28), in a brick box (M10 and M24) and containing steps (M3, M26 and M27). The graves are oriented in NW-SE (M3 and M24), NE-SW (M5, M6 and M10), E-W (M26 and M28), and SE-NW (M27) directions.

Regarding the skeletal remains, most of the inhumation graves were disturbed, and the osteological fragments were discovered in the fill of the grave (M3, M5, M6, M10, and M24). Three of the graves had undisturbed skeletons. The first one, M26, probably contained an infant child, with the skeleton poorly conserved. The second and third burials, M27 and M28, probably contained two adults with the skeletons in a supine position, with the arms on the basin and straight legs.

Inhumation graves are less common in the northern cemetery, and most of them have an undetermined position of the arms and legs. Those oriented E-W are most frequently encountered. Supine-positioned skeletons with the arms

resting on the pelvis and extended legs are mostly found in graves oriented in the NE-SW direction¹.

The cremation graves have rectangular with rounded corners (M1-M4, M7-M9, M11-M13, M18, M21, M23), oval (M14, M17, M20, M22 and M25), circular (M16 and M20) and irregular shapes (M15 and M19). The setting of the graves is simple. The treatment of the graves walls is of two types: simple (M2, M4, M9, M11-M13, M14-M16, M18-M22, M25) and burnt (M1, M7, M8, M17, M23). The simple graves have NE-SW (M4, M12, M13, M14, M18, and M25), NW-SE (M2, M9, M15), E-W (M11 and M16), and N-S (M22) orientations. The graves with burnt walls have NE-SW (M7), NW-SE (M1, M8, M17 and M23) orientations.

The osteological remains of the graves discovered in area S1 were found grouped in different parts of the pit, as follows: south-eastern corner (M1 and M7), the south-western corner (M4), north-western corner (M9), eastern corner (M11 and M12); in the southern half of the pit (M2, M8), and the northern half (M13).

Cremation graves with simple circular pits having the skeletal remains grouped in a certain area of the pit, probably in an organic container, were found at Apulum – Dealul Furcilor cemetery², Daneți and at Locusteni³. Graves with burnt circular and rectangular pits with the same treatment of the bones, in the flat cemetery at Romula⁴. To this list, the cemeteries of Dioști⁵ and Leu⁶ can be added, although the shape of the grave is not mentioned. The distribution of these graves and their small number in the cemeteries of Roman Dacia could express a certain group identity of the deceased individuals or just a preference of the mourners.

In the northern cemetery of Apulum, the *ustrinum* type of cremation, with unburnt/simple walls, is the most encountered type of funerary rite, and the graves, regardless of their shape, are oriented in all possible directions. This is also valid for burnt graves⁷. Therefore, these characteristics could express different social and cultural aspects of the mourners and the deceased individuals.

Due to the association of some of the unburnt graves with coins issued between the reigns of Nero and Severus Alexander, it is possible that this rite

¹ According to a personal database that contains all published graves.

² Bolog 2017, p. 21-72, graves M7, M200, M255, M384, M393, and M403.

³ Popilian 1980, p. 57-58.

⁴ Babeș *et alii* 2020, p. 28.

⁵ Popilian 1982, p. 60.

⁶ Popilian, Niță 1982, p. 89-91, graves 2 and 3.

⁷ According to a personal database, which contains all published graves of this cemetery.

was used during the entire period of the Roman administration in Dacia⁸. The same can be proposed for the burnt graves found in Apulum⁹.

The characteristics of the cremation-burnt graves correspond to the so-called Mala Kopašnica-Sase graves¹⁰, which are the subject of many archaeological debates regarding their exact funerary rite¹¹ and the origin of the people buried inside them¹². The graves of this type are dated „between the end of the 1st century and the 3rd century AD, but some are also present in the 4th century”¹³. In Roman Dacia, the rectangular and circular burnt graves are associated with a mining population from the Dalmatian area¹⁴, but no clear association with an ethnic/cultural group can be made for the researched graves in this study without any in-context written evidence.

Funerary inventory. Characteristics and functionality

The investigated graves contain seven types of artefacts: pottery, lamps, *unguentaria*, *guttus* vessels/baby bottles, coins and adornments. Another category of artefacts, which has an unclear functionality, contains miniature vessels.

Pottery

Most of the pottery is preserved in a fragmentary state. Six ceramic vessels are preserved in a single fragment; two vessels are preserved in two fragments, and three in three fragments. These vessels probably come from the walking level of the cemetery, disturbed graves or ceremonial rituals.

⁸ Grave M109 contains a coin issued by Nero, M367 one by Hadrian, M105 one by Antoninus Pius, M466 one by Marcus Aurelius, and M130 one by Severus Alexander. The burnt grave is M160. See Inel 2017, p. 57-152.

⁹ In Apulum - Dealul Furcilor cemetery, the graves contain coins issued between the reigns of Trajan and Severus Alexander. See Musteață, Gál 2022, p. 12, note 32. Regarding the northern cemetery of Apulum, coins appear in six graves, but only one was determined as issued by Hadrian. See Inel 2017, p. 73.

¹⁰ Garašanin 1968, p. 6.

¹¹ M. Babeș contested the rite of the second type of grave in Garašanin's classification based on his discoveries in the cemeteries of Romula. See Babeș 1970, p. 728-729; Western scientists standardised the classification of cremation graves. See Damian, Simion 2008, p. 25, with bibliography, notes 50-54. An experiment was made to see how much debris a *bustum* cremation can produce, and it was concluded that it will almost fill up a grave (dimensions: 1.60 × 1.10 × 0.80 m) with pyre debris. For the experiments, see Gaitzch, Werner 1993, p. 55-67; Golubovič, Korać 2008, p. 110-111. While some Romanian scientists accept M. Babeș's hypothesis, others stress that the subject is not yet clarified and needs further attention. See Oța 2013, p. 14-16, with bibliography, notes 38-42.

¹² Golubovič 1998, p. 251-252 and her bibliography in notes 18-34.

¹³ Jovanovič 2000, p. 209, Golubovič, Korać 2008, p. 110; Musteață, Gál 2022, p. 12.

¹⁴ Nemeti, Nemeti 2010, p. 128.

The intact pottery can be grouped into two categories: drinking (beakers and cups) and serving vessels (pitchers). All of them are used for liquid offerings, in different quantities and possible types, according to many factors, such as social identity, tradition, funerary beliefs of the mourners, etc.¹⁵

In the drinking category is found one truncated biconical cup of fine fabric, with analogies at Alburnus Maior, Țarina cemetery (in a grave)¹⁶, Singidunum and Viminacium (type IX/50)¹⁷, and one elongated flat-base beaker of course fabric. Their capacities slightly differ; the cup has 0.22 L and the beaker has 0.43 L. Regarding the rite of the graves, the cup was found in an inhumation grave and the beaker in a cremation one.

Three pitchers are included in the serving category: two of different types in an inhumation grave, and one in a cremation grave. They have different capacities: one has 0.20 L, the second has 0.59 L, and the third has 0.90 L. The last two were found in the same grave, which means approximately 1.50 L of liquid offerings. One of the pitchers has an orifice on its base and was found upside down, fallen, or offered like this in the first place. Other pitchers or cups with a perforated base are found at: Alburnus Maior (Tăul Corna cemetery)¹⁸, Apulum¹⁹, Potaissa and Napoca. These vessels could have been used for libations²⁰.

Cremation graves of the *ustrinum* type with burnt edges, containing pitchers, are found all over Roman Dacia in the so-called Mala Kopašnica-Sase graves²¹.

Inhumation graves containing pitchers, compared to the cremation graves, are less commonly encountered in the province. There are two graves at Apulum, Dealul Furcilor cemetery, one of them disturbed and dated starting with 163/164 AD (coin issued by Faustina II)²² and three other graves in the cemetery located north of Apulum, in the area of the modern stadium, one of which could be dated starting with 164 AD (coin minted by Lucilla)²³. Pitchers in inhumation

¹⁵ Pottery offerings were interpreted as an indicator of the funerary belief that souls need to be fed, but more research in the field suggests that giving food to the dead had social and ritual meanings, depending on the studied community. See Parker Pearson 1999, p. 10-11 and Biddulph 2005, p. 23-45.

¹⁶ Rusu-Bolindeț, Botiș 2018, p. 61.

¹⁷ Nikolić *et alii* 2023, p. 340.

¹⁸ ALBURNUS MAIOR III 2008, p. 106-187, graves M87, M91, M93, M121, M123, M142, M146, M151, M164, M170, M180, M198, M209, and M213.

¹⁹ Musteață, Gál 2022, p. 24.

²⁰ For the perforated cup found in Apulum, it was also suggested that it could have functioned as a flower pot. See Musteață, Gál 2022, p. 15. For the analogies at Potaissa and Napoca, see Bărbulescu 2003, p. 87-91.

²¹ See the discussion above.

²² Bolog 2017, p. 30-59, graves M96 and M332.

²³ Inel 2017, p. 66-146, graves 132, 161 and 440.

graves are also found at Romula, one of them containing a coin minted by Claudius and a Palmyrene pendant or bracelet²⁴. Without any written evidence, an association of the last grave with a certain origin of the individual is impossible. Still, it can be said that the rite of inhumation was preferred in ancient Syria, and pitchers and other funerary gifts related to rituals and beliefs, like glass vessels, coins, *unguentaria*, etc., were commonly offered to the dead²⁵. Because pitchers are rarely encountered in inhumation graves, it can be supposed that certain people had beliefs similar to those who practised cremation.

The presence of multiple ceramic vessels of the same type found in a grave, like in the case of M26 (inhumation grave), can raise questions about their content and the way they were used during the funerary ceremony. In a recent study, S. Glubović, A. Reičković Savić and N. Mrđić said that the matter of the multiple pitchers in cremation Mala Kopašnica-Sase graves of Viminacium was put by several scientists on different types of beverages, but no content analyses have yet been made. In addition, contrary to earlier hypotheses, the authors considered that this grave offering expresses a funerary ritual related to beliefs rather than a matter of social identity²⁶. However, the role of pottery in this cemetery can be better understood only after a larger number of graves are analysed²⁷.

Miniature vessels

During this archaeological excavation, a single intact miniature cup (under 10 cm in height), a smaller version of Popilian's type 4²⁸, was discovered in the grave of a child. As Popilian said, this type appears in the Danube provinces, especially near the Danube sites of Moesia Superior and Inferior, as the analogies show: Singidunum (dated in the 2nd century AD)²⁹, Viminacium (a cup in a grave of a child and one in the fill of a well-shaped grave; this type of

²⁴ Babeș *et alii* 2020, p. 60-102, graves A46, A78, A174, and A203, the last two disturbed.

²⁵ De Jong 2017, p. 77-111.

²⁶ Glubović *et alii* 2020, p. 161-180.

²⁷ A personal, unpublished study of the pottery discovered at Dealul Furcilor - *Podeti* cemetery in Apulum indicates that cups are commonly associated with the graves of the children, while pitchers tend to appear more frequently in adult inhumation burials. Unfortunately, these artefacts were predominantly found in cremation graves, which have not been anthropologically analysed; therefore, the situation could be different in their case. The study was presented in 2024 at „The Archaeology of Iron Age and Roman Foodways: Interdisciplinary Perspectives” held in Alba Iulia, Romania.

²⁸ Popilian 1976, p. 107.

²⁹ Bojović 1977, p. 36; Nikolić-Đorđević 2000, p. 171, type IX/35.

cup was dated from the middle of the 2nd to the middle of the 3rd century AD)³⁰, Isaceea, Beroe, and Hârşova (graves?)³¹, Troesmis (dated in the first quarter of the 3rd century AD)³², Callatis (no context mentioned), and Cernavodă (stray finds)³³. This distribution indicates that this type of vessel is probably a Moesian product, mostly used during funerals.

This cup also has relative analogies in Roman Dacia, at Apulum - *Dealul Furcilor (Podei)* cemetery, inside another child's grave³⁴, Gârla Mare (no context mentioned)³⁵, Micia (a beaker with secondary burn marks on the outside found in *thermae*, 2nd century AD)³⁶ and Sucidava, inside two graves, at the feet of the deceased individuals (the second grave also contains a coin issued by Julia Mamaea)³⁷.

When talking about the functionality of this miniature vessel, its analogies and their context of discovery can be useful.

Inside the small cups found in the Sucidava graves, at the feet of the skeletons, charcoal and sulphur fragments were identified³⁸. Some of the larger and smaller grooved cups, made of orange clay and found in the flat cemetery of Romula, also contained sulphur or charcoal and showed secondary burn marks. These cups were likely used as burners rather than as containers for liquid offerings³⁹.

In addition, an unusual experiment is mentioned by Pliny the Elder, who writes that the physician Anaxilaus put fragments of sulphur in a cup of wine and hot coals beneath it to create a death-like yellowish visual effect⁴⁰.

Another analogy comes from the *thermae* of Micia, where a similar cup was probably used as a container for cleansing or medicinal substances. This interpretation is also supported by a Late Iron Age discovery at Grădiştea de

³⁰ For the well-shaped grave, see Golubović 1999, p. 12, fig. 3/18; For the rest of the contexts, see Golubović *et alii* 2022, p. 184, G-344, ob. 5. In the same study, see the type description on p. 55-56.

³¹ Rusu-Bolindeţ, Botiş 2018, p. 237-269.

³² Opaît 1980, p. 336.

³³ Rădulescu 1975, p. 336, notes 12-13.

³⁴ The shape of the cup is slightly different. See Bolog 2017, p. 43, grave 193.

³⁵ The cup is probably considered a pot with one handle made of yellowish clay. It appears in pl. XVIII, and has a small height, only 5 cm. See Stîngă 2005, p. 50, 135.

³⁶ Rusu-Bolindeţ, Botiş 2018, p. 157.

³⁷ Popilian, Bondoc 2012, p. 26, graves 73/1970 and 80/1970.

³⁸ Popilian, Bondoc 2012, p. 26, graves 73/1970 and 80/1970.

³⁹ M. Babeş, D. Bondoic and C. Nicolae suggest that the sulphur fragments had cleansing properties and could indicate a magical ritual. Although no supporting evidence is provided by the authors, this interpretation could be correct because ancient Greek and Roman writers, such as Homer and Pliny the Elder, attest to this functionality. See Homer, *Od.* 22, 481-501; Plinius, *NH*, XXXV, 50.177, Babeş *et alii* 2020, p. 29.

⁴⁰ *Plin. NH*, 35.50.177.

Munte, where miniature vessels were found associated in a Roman chest with medical instruments, and were interpreted as containers for medicinal ointments, which probably belonged to a Greek or Roman physician⁴¹. Miniature vessels found in temples were similarly interpreted as containers for different substances used in religious rituals⁴².

The cup found in Apulum shows no signs of burning or any remains inside and is too small to have contained a liquid offering. Due to these reasons and in light of the analogies listed above, the cup could be interpreted as a symbolic gift, reflecting a liquid offering or the ritual attested at Sucidava and Romula. A third possibility is that it served as a container for certain medical or perfumed substances, used during the funerary ceremony or just offered to the deceased child.

Lamps

Four lamps of the Loeschke X type were discovered during this archaeological excavation. All except one are fragmentarily preserved, which could indicate an intentional breaking ritual. None present secondary burn marks, so they were not used during the funerary ceremony but were just symbolically offered to the deceased. Two lamps have a broken discus, indicating that they were intended to be used with fuel other than oil, such as animal fat⁴³.

Two lamps have craftsman's stamps, FELIX and an unreadable one. The lamps bearing a Felix stamp are generally dated in the 2nd century, but one discovery attests them in the 3rd century as well. The lamp has analogies at Apulum, Partoș and Colonia Dacica Sarmizegetusa⁴⁴.

Unguentaria

Two *unguentaria* were found in a grave, both in a fragmentary state. One of them has a candlestick form and a conical flat body⁴⁵. From the second vessel, only a part of the neck is preserved. Other melted parts are present. These artefacts were probably offered before the cremation of the body, on the pyre, because a part of them is melted. These types of vessels could have been offered

⁴¹ Daicovicu *et alii* 1957, p. 260-263; Crișan 1957, p. 45-56; Rustoiu 2016, p. 49-52; Lăpușan 2024, p. 138.

⁴² Kiernan 2009, p. 165-168.

⁴³ Poștoș 2022, p. 113-128.

⁴⁴ Băluță 2003, p. 65-67, notes 5 and 6.

⁴⁵ Type B2B2 in Isings's typology, dated between the end of the 1st century and the beginning of the 3rd century AD. See Isings 1957, p. 97-98.

empty or full, probably with oils⁴⁶ that could have been poured on the body, or just offered to the deceased individual⁴⁷.

Baby bottles (*guttus* vessels)

During this archaeological excavation, a single glass baby bottle was discovered in a child's inhumation grave. This artefact was used to feed infants human or animal milk until the child was old enough to rely on solid foods entirely. According to ancient medical writers, such as Rufus of Ephesus, Soranus and Oribasius, a child should suckle until two or three years old, but exceptions are also recorded⁴⁸. This artefact can thus be a personal object, reflecting one of the first stages of childhood.

Not all children from Roman Dacia were offered such funerary gifts. Although the state of research of the cemeteries varies from case to case, this practice has been recorded in just a few graves, so far at Apulum – the cemetery located north of Apulum, in graves discovered during different archaeological campaigns, such as between 1981-1985 (two cremation graves)⁴⁹ and between 2002-2003 (one inhumation and one cremation burial)⁵⁰, at Locusteni (one inhumation grave)⁵¹, and at Potaissa (one grave)⁵². These graves express multiple funerary beliefs by containing either just this artefact and costume elements or toys, or other funerary gifts, such as coins, lamps and pottery.

This distribution of baby bottles can also be influenced by the fact that glass objects break easily, and their fragments were not recovered from the pyre remains, in the case of a cremation burial, or they cannot be identified as being part of a baby bottle.

Adornments

A single, simple bronze-wire bracelet was found in the M4/S3 grave. Unfortunately, this bracelet is in a fragmentary state, so its exact type, open or closed, is unknown. At Augusta Raurica, closed bracelets are found in both the graves of women and children, but they could have also been worn by men. Both types are not chronologically relevant, being worn throughout the entire Roman

⁴⁶ A glass vessel found in a grave at Callatis contained vegetable oil, according to the analysis of its content. See Preda 1968, p. 36.

⁴⁷ Anderson-Stojanović 1987, p. 121-122.

⁴⁸ Orib., Lib.inc. 14.1; 20.23 = Jackson 1976, p. 128-160, Sor. Gyn 2.47, Porph. Vita Plot. 3 = Armstrong 1989, p. 9. Osteological analyses confirm the literary sources and reveal that weaning typically began between the ages of two and four years old. See Centlivres Challet 2017, p. 895-901.

⁴⁹ Bounegru 2017, p. 108-110, graves 71 and 86.

⁵⁰ Inel 2017, p. 76-77, M169 and M172.

⁵¹ Popilian 1980, p. 23.

⁵² Bologna 1960, p. 55-56.

period⁵³. In Roman Dacia, simple open bronze bracelets are found at Porolissum⁵⁴, Apulum⁵⁵ and Colonia Dacica Sarmizegetusa⁵⁶.

Coins

During this archaeological excavation, five coins were discovered, two in inhumation graves (both issued by Antoninus Pius), and three in cremation graves (one issued probably by Trajan, one by Antoninus Pius, and one probably issued during the Julio-Claudian dynasty).

Coin offerings indicate religious beliefs related to the myth of Charon⁵⁷. A coin could be offered to the dead in different stages of the funerary ceremony⁵⁸. In this case, two coins were probably offered during the funerary ceremony, one being found on the bottom of an inhumation grave, and the other one discovered in a cremation grave, having no fire marks. Another one, which was found in the mouth of the skeleton, was offered after the death of the individual. The other two coins, which appear to have a melted reverse, were offered before the cremation of the individual, were present on the funerary pyre, and then recovered and deposited inside the grave.

As more studies started to examine the choice of coin types reverses according to different contexts of discovery⁵⁹, A. Alföldy-Găzdac proposed a classification system based on the imagery found on the reverses, grouping coins discovered in Dacia and Pannonia cemeteries into three spheres: civilian, military, and religious. The researcher discovered that in cemeteries, many of the offered coins express religious messages related to sacrifice and the afterlife⁶⁰.

Regarding the coins discovered in 2023, and following A. Alföldy-Găzdac's classification and interpretation, only three of the reverses can be identified. According to the depictions, the coins have religious and civic messages. One coin depicts Aeternitas, symbolising consecration. Another one depicts Hilaritas, representing blessing and celebration. The third coin shows Annona, which expresses the emperor's civic virtues.

Conclusions

Some conclusions about the identity aspects of the burials can be made about a single grave, which is M26.

⁵³ Riha 1990, p. 54-56.

⁵⁴ Gudea 1989, p. 718-719.

⁵⁵ Bounegru *et alii* 2011, p. 96-97; Bolog 2017: p. 56.

⁵⁶ Alicu, Cociș 1988, p. 229.

⁵⁷ Stevens 1991, p. 215; Pîslaru 2003, p. 44-47.

⁵⁸ Alföldy-Găzdac 2018, p. 60-64.

⁵⁹ Alföldy-Găzdac 2018, p. 68-69, note 423.

⁶⁰ Alföldy-Găzdac 2018, p. 70-71.

This grave contains an inhumation of a child, and has as inventory personal artefacts, a baby bottle, and funerary gifts, some of them expressing the social identities of the deceased individual.

As a personal artefact, the glass baby bottle was probably used by the child during his or her lifetime⁶¹ and reflects the age identity of the owner. In opposition stands the coin, which, if it was intentionally selected, bearing a depiction of Aeternitas on the reverse, could express the new status of the deceased child⁶², who became a spirit of the afterlife, and a new relationship between him or her and the surviving family.

The grave also stands out because it contains a light-yellowish miniature cup, which is probably a Moesian product⁶³, and could have been a container for medicinal and perfumed substances, or just a symbolic gift, expressing a liquid offering or a less common funerary ritual in Roman Dacia, involving the use of cups as burners⁶⁴. If it contained medicinal ointments, this could reflect the child's poor health before death.

4. Catalogue

Abbreviations

AX – axis

D – diameter

RD – rim diameter

BD – base diameter

MD - maximum diameter

Lvl. Obs. – level of observation

S1 – sector 1

S3 – sector 3

TH – thickness

V – volume

W – weight

Sector 1 (Left side of Republicii Street, in the direction towards the intersection with T. Vladimirescu Boulevard)

M1 – *ustrinum*-type cremation; burnt walls; rectangular shape with rounded corners; NW-SE orientation; osteological remains and ash grouped in the southeast corner; mudbrick and charcoal pigments in the fill; dimensions: 1.12 m x 0.56 m, Lvl. Obs. = -1.02, depth = 0.22; **Fig. 3/M1**.

⁶¹ Centlivres Challet 2017, p. 895-901.

⁶² For the Roman beliefs about the afterlife, see Toynbee 1971, p. 33-39; For an introduction to the anthropological perspective of death, see Robben 2004, p. 1-16.

⁶³ According to the analogies listed above.

⁶⁴ See above the discussion regarding miniature vessels.

Grave goods:

1. Ceramic vessel (?)
2. Coin – As of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, bronze, worn out or melted; obverse AUG IMP; reverse: Mars holding a shield?, D = 26.20 x 27.22 mm, W = 8.50 g, AX = 12 h; **Fig. 6/M1**.

M2 – *ustrinum*-type cremation; simple rectangular/irregular pit with rounded corners; NW-SE orientation; osteological remains and ash grouped in the south half of the pit; dimensions: 0.75 x 0.42m; Lvl. Obs. = -1.02 m, depth = 0.10 m; **Fig. 3/M2**.

M3 – inhumation grave; simple rectangular pit with rounded corners; NW-SE orientation; few human bones and fragmentary pottery in the fill; disturbed in antiquity; dimensions: 2.20 x 0.60 m; Lvl. Obs. = -1.02 m, depth = 0.93 m; **Fig. 3/M3**.

M4 – *ustrinum*-type cremation; simple rectangular pit with rounded corners; NE-SW orientation; osteological remains and ash grouped in the southwestern corner; mudbrick and charcoal pigments in the fill; dimensions: 1.55 x 0.57 m, Lvl. Obs. = -1.02m, depth = 0.20 m; **Fig. 3/M4**.

M5 – inhumation grave; simple rectangular pit with rounded corners; NE-SW orientation; few human bones in the fill; disturbed in antiquity; Dimensions: 1.55m x 0.60 m, Lvl. Obs. = -1.02 m, depth = 0.70 m; **Fig. 3/M5**.

Grave goods:

1. Coin – As, bronze, worn out; found in the middle of the bottom of the pit, issued by Antoninus Pius; RIC 956; 155-156, Rome; obverse: ANTONINVS AVG; head of Antoninus Pius, laureate, right; reverse: TR POT XIX COS IIII; Annona, draped, seated right, holding cornucopiae with both hands; modius with grain stalks at her feet, D= 26.3 x 25.3 mm; W= 8.87 g; AX: 6 h; Inv. Number: 9170; **Fig. 6, M7**.

M6 – inhumation grave; simple rectangular pit with rounded corners, NE-SW orientation; few pottery fragments in the fill; disturbed in antiquity; identified between 1.02 - 1.76 m (from the contour level); dimensions: 1.60 x 0.60 m, Lvl. Obs. = -1.02 m, depth = 0.74 m; **Fig. 3/M6**.

Grave goods:

1. Ceramic vessel - one rim fragment is preserved; oxidation firing; wheel made of coarse orange (5yr 6/10, n5, 5yr 6/10) fabric, with frequent pores and inclusions of maximum 1 mm; the rim is slightly curved outwards and as decoration has a groove and a rhombic pattern; dimensions: L = 2.7 cm, l = 1.8 cm; TH = 0.5-0.7 cm; **Figs. 7, 8/3**.
2. Ceramic vessel - one rim fragment is preserved; reduction firing; wheel made of coarse light grey fabric (n5, 7.5 yr 6/4, n5), with frequent pores and inclusions of maximum 1 mm; the rim is curved outwards; dimensions: L = 1.7 cm; l = 1.3 cm; TH = 0.5-0.7 cm; **Figs. 7/3, 8/4**.

3. Ceramic vessel – two fragments, one body and one rim, are preserved; oxidation firing; wheel made of fine light orange fabric (10 yr 6/6) with a small number of pores and inclusions under 1mm; the rim is straight and rounded; dimensions: L = 1.9 cm; l = 1.94 cm; TH = 0.55 cm; **Figs. 7, 8/2.**

4. Cup – two handle fragments, and a body fragment are preserved; oxidation firing; wheel made of fine light yellowish fabric (2.5 y 7/2, 2.5 y 7/4-7/6, 2.5 y 7/2) with small number of pores and inclusions under 1mm; has a groove on the handles; dimensions handle 1: L = 6 cm; l = 3 cm; TH = 0.8 cm; **Figs. 7, 8/5.**

5. Lamp – Loeschcke X; fragmentary preserved; made in a mould, of a light-yellowish (2.5y 5/2, 7.5y 6/2, 2.5y 5/2) semi-fine fabric, with a small number of pores and inclusions under 1mm; dimensions: L = 3 cm; l = 2.2 cm; TH = 0.4 cm; **Figs. 7, 8/1.**

M7 – *ustrinum*-type cremation; burnt edges; rectangular shape with rounded corners; NE-SW orientation; osteological remains and grouped at the southeastern corner; mudbrick pigments and charcoal in the fill; dimensions: 1.80 x 0.56 m, Lvl. Obs. = -1.02 m, depth = 0.60 m; **Fig. 3/ M7.**

Grave goods:

1. Pitcher – fragmentary, the neck and the rim are missing; reduction firing, wheel made of a fine light greyish (N5) fabric, with a small number of pores and inclusions under 1mm; has a globular body decorated with an incised line and a grooved flat base; dimensions: DR = 3.6 cm; MD = 8.9 cm; L/h = 11.07 cm; TH = 0.3-0.6 cm; V = 0.20 L; **Figs. 9, 10/1.**
2. Lamp – Loeschcke X, complete; made in a mould, of a fine light-yellowish (2.5Y6/2) fabric with a small number of pores and inclusions under 1mm; has a surface treatment of a brown colour (7.5 YR 4/4), two lugs on edge and a broken discus; dimensions: L = 6.54 cm; l = 4.58 cm; TH = 0.3 cm; **Figs. 9/2, 10/3.**
3. Lamp - Loeschcke X, fragmentary; made in a mould, of a fine light-yellowish (2.5Y7/4) fabric with a small number of pores and inclusions under 1 mm; has three lugs on the edge; has a FELIX stamp; dimensions: L = 7 cm; l = 5.14 cm; TH = 0.2-0.4 cm; **Figs. 9/3, 10/4.**
4. *Unguentarium* – fragmentary, the rim, neck, and a part of the body is preserved; made by glassblowing from light green see-through glass with frequent elongated air bubbles and irisations; on the interior surface of the wall, it has white residues; dimensions: DR = 3 cm; L = 15 cm; l = 5.2 cm; TH = 0.1-0.2 cm; **Figs. 9/4, 10/5.**
5. *Unguentarium?* – fragmentary, a part of the neck and probably the base is preserved; made by glassblowing from light green see-through glass with frequent elongated and round air bubbles and irisations; on the interior surface of the wall, it has white residues; high temperatures deformed some

fragments; dimensions: L = 5.65 cm, l = 3.62 cm; TH = 0.25 cm; **Figs. 9/5, 10/6.**

6. Coin – As, bronze, worn out, issued by Antoninus Pius; RIC 1260; 145; obverse: head of Marcus Aurelius, bare, right; reverse: standing *Hilaritas* holding palm and cornucopia; D = 24 x 23.7 mm, W = 8.46 g; AX = 11 h; Inv. Number 9169; **Figs. 9/6, 10/2.**

M8 – *Ustrinum*-type cremation; burnt edges; rectangular shape with rounded corners; NW-SE orientation; osteological remains and ash in the south half of the pit; mudbrick pigments and charcoal in the fill; dimensions: 0.85 x 0.50m; Lvl. Obs. = -1.02 m, depth = 0.20 m; **Fig. 3/M8.**

M9 – *Ustrinum*-type cremation; simple, rectangular pit with rounded corners; NW-SE orientation; osteological remains and ash grouped in the northwest corner; mudbrick and charcoal pigments in the fill; dimensions: 0.72 x 0.42 m; Lvl. Obs. = -1.02 m, depth = 0.15 m; **Fig. 3/M9.**

M10 – inhumation grave; brick box, made of six courses of bricks (50 x 20 x 5 cm) on the long sides and at each end; with one brick (50 x 30 x 5 cm) set on edge; NE-SW orientation; few human bones inside the box; disturbed in antiquity; dimensions: 1.35 x 0.46 m, Lvl. Obs.= -1.02 m, depth = 0.40 m; **Fig. 3/M10.**

M11 - *Ustrinum*-type cremation; simple, rectangular pit with rounded corners; E-W orientation; osteological remains and ash grouped on the east corner of the pit; mudbrick pigments and charcoal in the fill; dimensions: 1.12 x 0.52 m, Lvl. Obs. = -1.02 m, depth = 0.15 m; **Fig. 3/M11.**

1. Coin – As, bronze; unidentified according to the catalogue; 113-117; obverse: head of Trajan, laureate, right; reverse: melted; D = 27.5 x 26 mm, W = 9.01 g; AX = 5 h; Inv. Number 9168; **Fig. 6/M11.**

M12 - *Ustrinum*-type cremation; simple, rectangular pit with rounded corners; NE-SW orientation; osteological remains and ash grouped on the east corner of the pit; mudbrick pigments and charcoal in the fill; dimensions: 2.10 x 0.59 m, Lvl. Obs. = -1.02 m, depth = 0.15 m; **Fig. 3/M12.**

M13 - *Ustrinum*-type cremation; simple, rectangular pit with rounded corners; NE-SW orientation; osteological remains and ash grouped in the northern half of the pit; mudbrick pigments and charcoal in the fill; dimensions: 0.90 x 0.40 m, Lvl. Obs. = -1.02 m, depth = 0.10 m; **Fig. 3/M13.**

Sector 2 (Western part of Republicii Street)

M14 – cremation grave; oval shape; NE-SW orientation; traces of mudbrick and charcoal in the fill; dimensions: 0.80 (extending into the western profile) x 0.60 m, Lvl. Obs. = -0.80 m, depth = 0.20 m; **Fig. 4/M14.**

M15 – cremation grave; irregular shape, NW-SE orientation; traces of mudbrick and charcoal in the fill; dimensions 1.40 x 0.70 m, Lvl. Obs. = -0.80 m; depth = 0.30 m; **Fig. 4/M15**.

M16 – cremation grave; circular shape; E-W orientation; had traces of mudbrick and charcoal in the fill; dimensions: 0.40 x 0.35 m, Lvl. Obs. = -0.80 m; depth = 0.20 m; **Fig. 4/M16**.

M17 – cremation grave; oval shape; burnt walls; rectangular shape with rounded corners; NW-SE orientation; traces of mudbrick and charcoal in the fill; dimensions: 1.20 x 0.60 m, Lvl. Obs. = -0.80 m, depth = 0.25 m; **Fig. 4/M17**.

Sector 3 (Eastern part of Republicii Street)

M18 - cremation grave; rectangular shape with rounded corners; orientation NE-SW; traces of mudbrick and charcoal in the fill; dimensions: 2.10 x 1.50 m, Lvl. Obs. = -0.90 m, depth = 0.30 m; **Fig. 5/M18**.

M19 – cremation grave; irregular shape; delimited by two limestone pieces; NW-SE orientation; traces of mudbrick and charcoal in the fill; dimensions 1,90 m x 1,40 m, Lvl. Obs. = -0.90 m, depth = 0.35 m; **Fig. 5/M19**.

M20 – cremation grave; oval shape; NW-SE orientation; traces of mudbrick and charcoal in the fill; dimensions: 1.00 x 0.60 m; LO = -0.80 m, depth = 0.25 m; **Fig. 5/M20**.

M21 – cremation grave; rectangular shape with rounded corners; NW-SE orientation; traces of mudbrick and charcoal in the fill; dimensions: 1.80 x 0.90 m, Lvl. Obs. = -0.90 m, depth = 0.70 m; **Fig. 5/M21**.

Grave goods:

1. Beaker – fragmentary preserved; oxidation firing; wheel-made of coarse dark orange fabric (7.5 yr 4/4; 7.5 yr 6/10) with frequent pores and inclusions of approx. 2.5 mm; has an oblique rim, an ovoid body, and a flat base; possible secondary burn marks on the body; dimensions: RD = 6 cm; BD = 4 cm; MD = 4.15 cm; TH = 0.38-0.67 cm, V = 0.43 L; **Fig. 11/1**.
2. Ceramic vessel – a part of the rounded rim is preserved; reduction firing; wheel-made; oxidising firing; coarse fabric with frequent pores and inclusions of approx. 1mm, light grey colour (7.5y 6/2); dimensions: DR = 18 cm; L = 4.7 cm; l = 2.66 cm; TH = 0.7 cm; **Fig. 11/2**.
3. Ceramic vessel – a part of the vertical straight rim is preserved; oxidation firing; wheel-made; oxidising firing; coarse fabric with frequent pores and inclusions of approx. 1 mm; mid orange colour (7.5 yr 6/6, 2.5 yr 5/6, n6, 2.5 yr 5/6, 7.5 yr 6/6); dimensions: DR = 22 cm; L = 3.5 cm; l = 2.5 cm; TH = 0.6 cm; **Fig. 11/3**.
4. Ceramic vessel – a part of the rim is preserved; reduction firing; wheel-made; coarse fabric with frequent pores and inclusions of approx. 1mm; orange/greyish colour (5.yr 5/6, 5y6/4, n4,5y6/4, 5.yr 5/6); with possible

secondary burn marks on both faces of the fragment; dimensions: L = 2.25 cm; l = 1.8 cm; TH = 0.6 cm; **Fig. 11/6.**

5. Ceramic vessel – three body fragments preserved; oxidation firing; wheel-made; coarse fabric with frequent pores and inclusions of approx. 2 mm; yellowish colour (2.5 y 7/6, n2, 7.5y6/6); dimensions: L = 3.8 cm; l = 3.3 cm; TH = 0.7 cm; **Fig. 11/5.**
6. Ceramic vessel – two body fragments preserved; reduction firing; wheel-made; coarse fabric with frequent pores and inclusions of approx. 1mm; dark greyish colour (2.5 y 5/4, n3, 2.5 y 5/4); dimensions: L = 4.2 cm; l = 2.3 cm; TH = 0.3 cm; **Fig. 11/8.**
7. Ceramic vessel - one body fragment preserved; reduction firing; wheel-made of semi-fine fabric with a moderate number of pores and inclusions of maximum 1 mm; light greyish colour (N5); dimensions: L = 3.3 cm; l = 2.27 cm; TH = 0.55 cm; **Fig. 11/7.**
8. Ceramic vessel – three body fragments preserved; oxidation firing; wheel-made of fine fabric with a few pores and inclusions of maximum 1 mm; colour: 10 yr 6/6; n4; 2.5y 5/2; dimensions: L = 5.3 cm; l = 4.53 cm; TH = 0.66 cm; **Fig. 11/4.**
9. Bracelet – bronze; fragmentary preserved; made of a thin wire with a circular section; dimensions: MD = 5.51 cm; L = 9.5 cm; TH = 0.22 cm; **Fig. 11/9.**

M22 – cremation grave; oval shape; N-S orientation; traces of mudbrick and charcoal in the fill; dimensions: 1.50 x 0.90 m, Lvl. Obs. = -0,80 m, depth = 0.30 m; **Fig. 5/M22.**

M23 – cremation grave; burnt walls; rectangular shape with rounded corners, NW-SE orientation; traces of mudbrick and charcoal in the fill; dimensions: 1.40 x 0.60 m, Lvl. Obs. = -0,90 m, depth = 0.14 m; **Fig. 5/M23.**

M24 – inhumation grave; rectangular shape; brick setting made of three courses of brick; NW-SE orientation; few human bones were identified; traces of mudbrick and charcoal in the fill; dimensions 1.80 x 0.90 m, Lvl. Obs. = -0,90 m; depth = 1.10 m; **Fig. 5/M24.**

M25 – cremation grave; oval shape; NE-SW orientation; traces of mudbrick and charcoal in the fill; dimensions: 0,50 x 0.40 m, Lvl. Obs. = -0.80 m; depth = 0.10 m; **Fig. 5/M25.**

M26 – inhumation grave; child; oval shape; E-W orientation; traces of mudbrick and charcoal; dimensions: 1.35 x 1.25 m, Lvl. Obs. = - 0.80 m; depth = 0.90 m; **Fig. 5/M26.**

Grave goods:

1. Pitcher – complete; wheel made of a semi-fine light orange fabric (7.5 yr 6/6); with frequent pores and inclusions under 1 mm; has a horizontal rim with two grooves on and under it, a narrow neck, a globular body and a flat

- grooved base; has surface treatment of a reddish-brown colour (2.5 yr 4/10); dimensions: DR = 5 cm, DB = 4.55 cm, MD = 12 cm; L/H = 14 cm; V = 0.59 L; **Fig. 12/2**.
2. Pitcher – fragmentary, has a missing rim fragment; wheel made of a semi-fine light greyish fabric (n5, 10 yr 6/4, n5), with frequent pores and inclusions under 1mm; has a triangular rim, a narrow neck, a spherical body, and a flat grooved base with a hole made before firing; dimensions; DR = 2.5 cm; DB = 5 cm; MD = 13.5 cm; L/h = 16.8 cm; TH = 0.1-0.7 cm; V = 0.90 L; **Fig. 12/1**.
 3. Miniature cup – complete; wheel made of a semi-fine light yellowish fabric (10 yr 8/6), with frequent pores and inclusions under 1 mm; has a grooved vertical rim, a spherical body with nine grooves, and a flat base; dimensions: DR = 4 cm; DB = 2.27 cm; MD = 5.5 cm; L/h = 5.66 cm; TH = 0.2 cm; V = 0.05 L; **Fig. 12/3**.
 4. Lamp – Loeschcke X type; fragmentary, a part of the discus and the wall is missing; made in a mould, of a fine light orange (10 yr 6/6) fabric, with a small number of pores and inclusions under 1 mm; has three lugs each segmented by a groove, a hole on the discus and one on the nozzle, and surface treatment of a brown-reddish colour (2.5 yr 3/8); has a part of the stamp preserved FA or FO; dimensions: L = 9.74 cm; l = 4.74 cm; h = 2.28 cm; **Fig. 12/4**.
 5. *Guttus* – complete; has a flat rim; made by glassblowing a light green see-through glass with frequent round air bubbles; on the interior surface of the wall, it has white residues on the inside walls; dimensions: DR = 4 cm; L = 9.04 cm; l = 7.2 cm, TH = 0.1-0.2 cm; V = 0.08 L; **Fig. 12/5**.
 6. Coin – *Dupondius*, bronze, worn out, issued by Antoninus Pius; RIC 1164; after 141; in the mouth of the skeleton; obverse: legend DIVA FAUSTINA; type: bust of Faustina the Elder, draped, right, hair elaborately waved and coiled in bands across the head and drawn up at the back and piled in a round coil on top; reverse: legend – AETERNITAS SC; Aeternitas, draped, standing left, holding phoenix or globe in right hand and with left hand holding out the fold of skirt; D = 25.1 x 25.1 mm, W = 8.98 g, AX = 11 h; Inv. Number 9167; **Fig. 12/6**.

M27 – inhumation grave; rectangular shape with rounded corners and one step; skeleton in supine position, with arms on the basin and straight legs; SE-NW orientation; traces of mudbrick and charcoal in the fill; 2.27 x 1.72 m; Lvl. Obs. = -0.80 m, depth = 0.60 m; **Fig. 5/M27**.

Grave goods:

1. Cup – fragmentary, the handle is missing; wheel made of a semi-fine light orange fabric (7.5 yr 6/8, 10 yr 6/6, 7.5 yr 6/8) with occasional pores and

inclusions of 6 mm; has a short oblique rim, a biconical body with three grooves, and a grooved flat base; has a surface treatment of a dark brownish orange colour (5YR 4/6); dimensions: DR = 6.8 cm; DB = 3.6 cm; MD = 8.2 cm; L/h = 8.4 cm; TH = 0.2 cm; V = 0.22 L; **Fig. 6/M27**.

M28 – inhumation grave; rectangular shape with rounded corners; skeleton in supine position, with arms on the basin and straight legs; E-W orientation; traces of mudbrick and charcoal in the fill; dimensions: 1.64 x 1.11 m, Lvl. Obs. = -0.90 m; depth = 1.70 m; **Fig. 5/M28**.

Other contexts

P1 – pit?, in S3, rectangular shape with rounded corners; NE-SW orientation; traces of mudbrick and charcoal; dimensions: 1,90 x 0,80 m, Lvl. Obs. = -0,90 m; depth = 0.50 m; **Fig. 5/P1**.

P2 – pit?, in S3, rectangular shape with rounded corners, E-W orientation, Lvl. Obs. = -0,90 m; depth = 1.00 m in the sterile soil; **Fig. 5/P2**.

D1 – ditch, in S1, trapezoidal shape in the profile; NNE-SSW orientation; dimensions: 2.70 x 0.50 m, Lvl. Obs. = 1.01 m, depth = 0.30 m; **Fig. 3/D1**.

CERCETĂRI ARHEOLOGICE PREVENTIVE LA ALBA IULIA: NOI MORMINTE ROMANE DESCOPERITE ÎN SITURILE DE LA “PROFI” ȘI “BULEVARDUL REPUBLICII” (2023)

REZUMAT

Săpăturile arheologice de salvare au fost efectuate între lunile iulie și octombrie 2023 și ianuarie 2024, pe Bulevardul Republicii din Alba Iulia, în zona Profi-OMV. Echipa de cercetare a fost formată din Dr. Cristinel Fântâneau (coordonator științific - MNUAI), Dr. Gabriel Balteș, și Dr. Ovidiu Oargă (membri ai echipei - MNUAI). Săpăturile au scos la iveală mai multe contexte romane, inclusiv morminte de înmușare și incinerare asociate cu cimitirul nordic al așezării de la Apulum. Acest cimitir a fost investigat arheologic pentru prima dată în 1957 și de atunci a fost subiectul unor cercetări continue, datorită dezvoltării urbanistice a zonei menționate. Descoperirile făcute în 2023 prezintă caracteristicile obișnuite ale mormintelor romane documentate anterior în Apulum. Unele dintre ele conțin inventar funerar, precum vase ceramice, oiațe, vase de tip *unguentaria*, biberoane, monede, podoabe și vase ceramice miniaturale. O parte dintre artefacte pot sugera identitatea socială a persoanelor decedate, în timp ce altele exprimă diferite ritualuri și credințe funerare. Un mormânt de înmușare se remarcă prin artefactele descoperite, care sugerează vârsta defunctului și noul său statut dobândit după moarte.

ABSTRACT

The rescue archaeological excavations were carried out between July and October 2023 and January 2024, on Republicii Boulevard in Alba Iulia, in the Profi-OMV area. The research team consisted of Dr. Cristinel Fântâneau (scientific coordinator – MNUAI), Dr. Gabriel Balteş, and Dr. Ovidiu Oargă (team members – MNUAI). The excavation revealed several Roman contexts, including inhumation and cremation graves associated with the northern cemetery of Apulum. This cemetery was first archaeologically investigated in 1957 and has since been the subject of ongoing research due to the urbanistic development of the mentioned area. The discoveries made in 2023 have the usual characteristics of the graves previously documented in Apulum. Some of them contain grave goods, such as pottery, lamps, *unguentaria*, baby bottles, coins, adornments and miniature vessels. A part of the artefacts can suggest the social identities of the deceased individuals, while others express different funerary rituals and beliefs. One inhumation grave stands out through the discovered artefacts, which suggest the age of the deceased and his or her new status after death.

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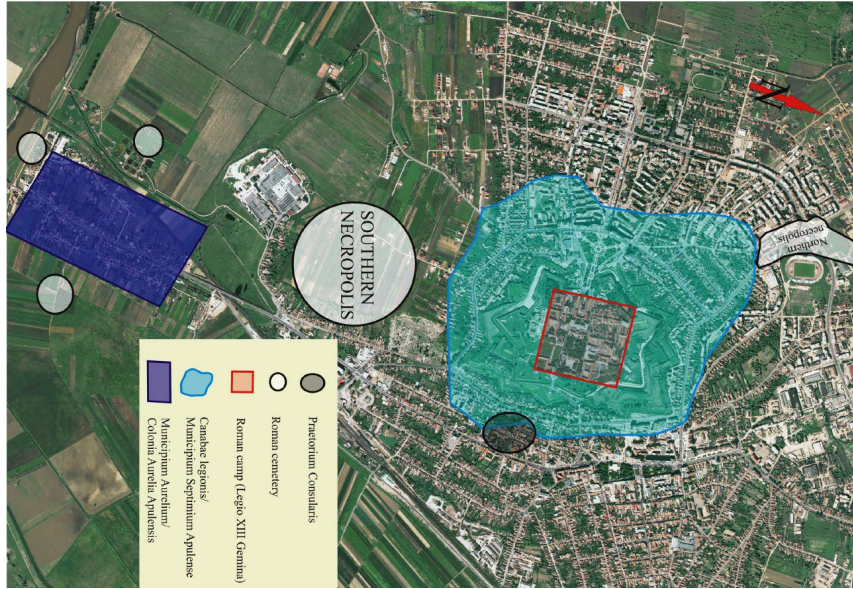


Fig. 1

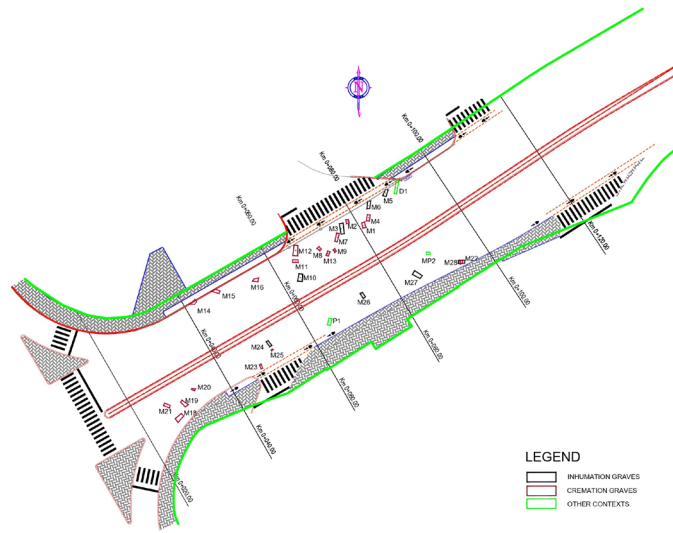


Fig. 2

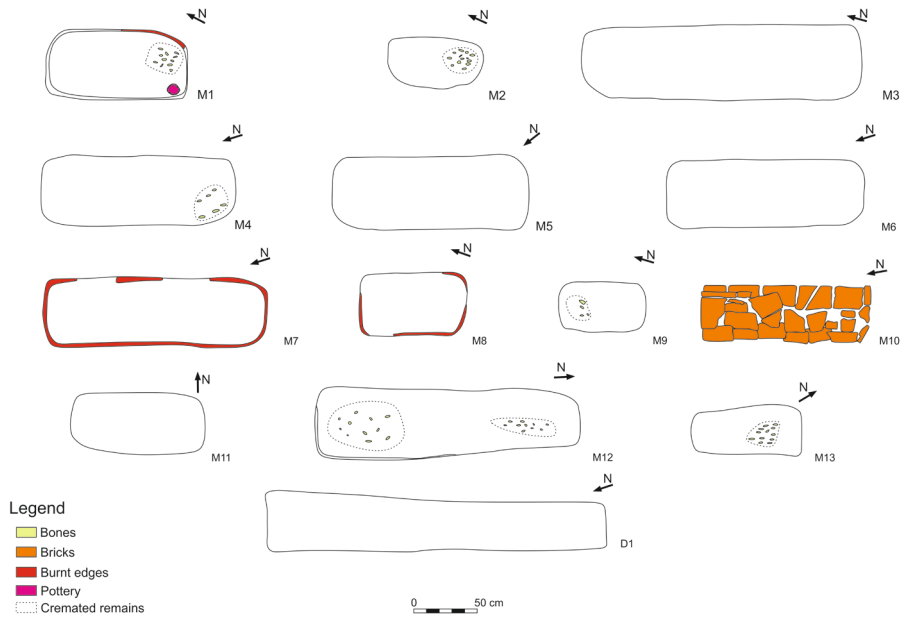


Fig. 3

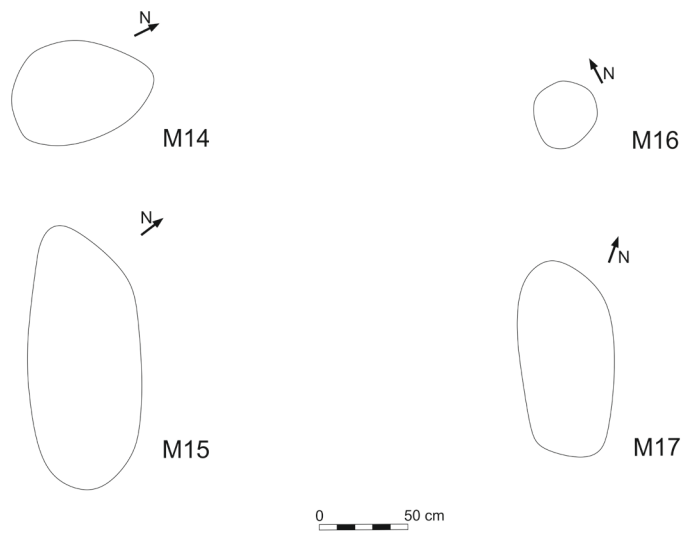


Fig. 4

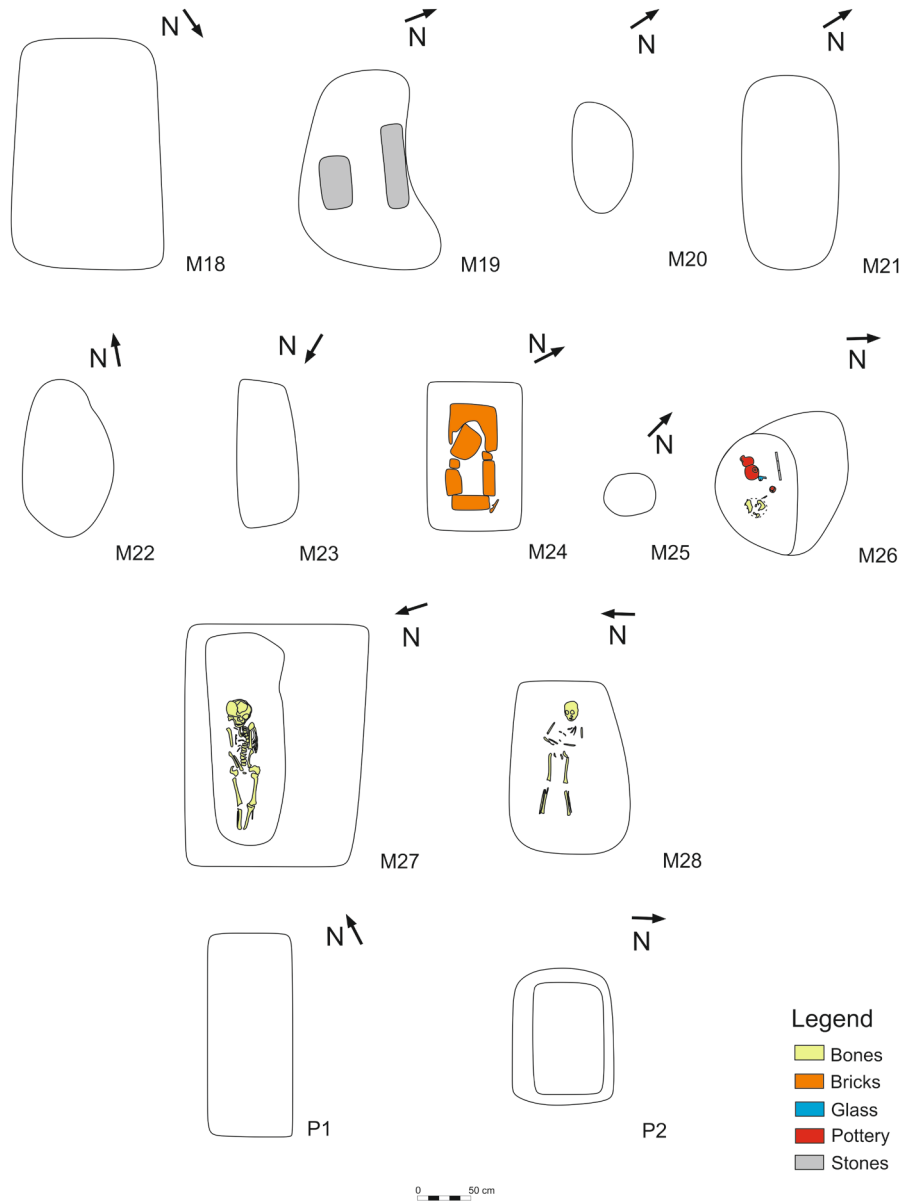


Fig. 5



Fig. 6

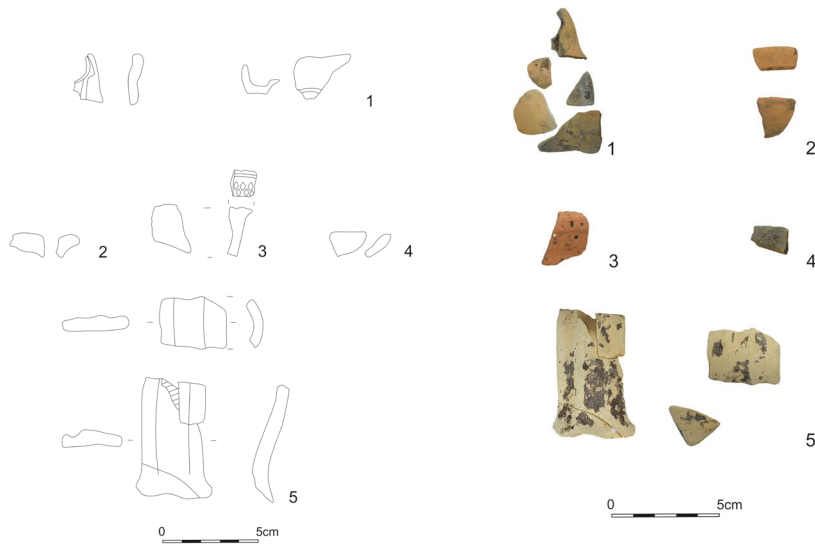


Fig. 7

Fig. 8

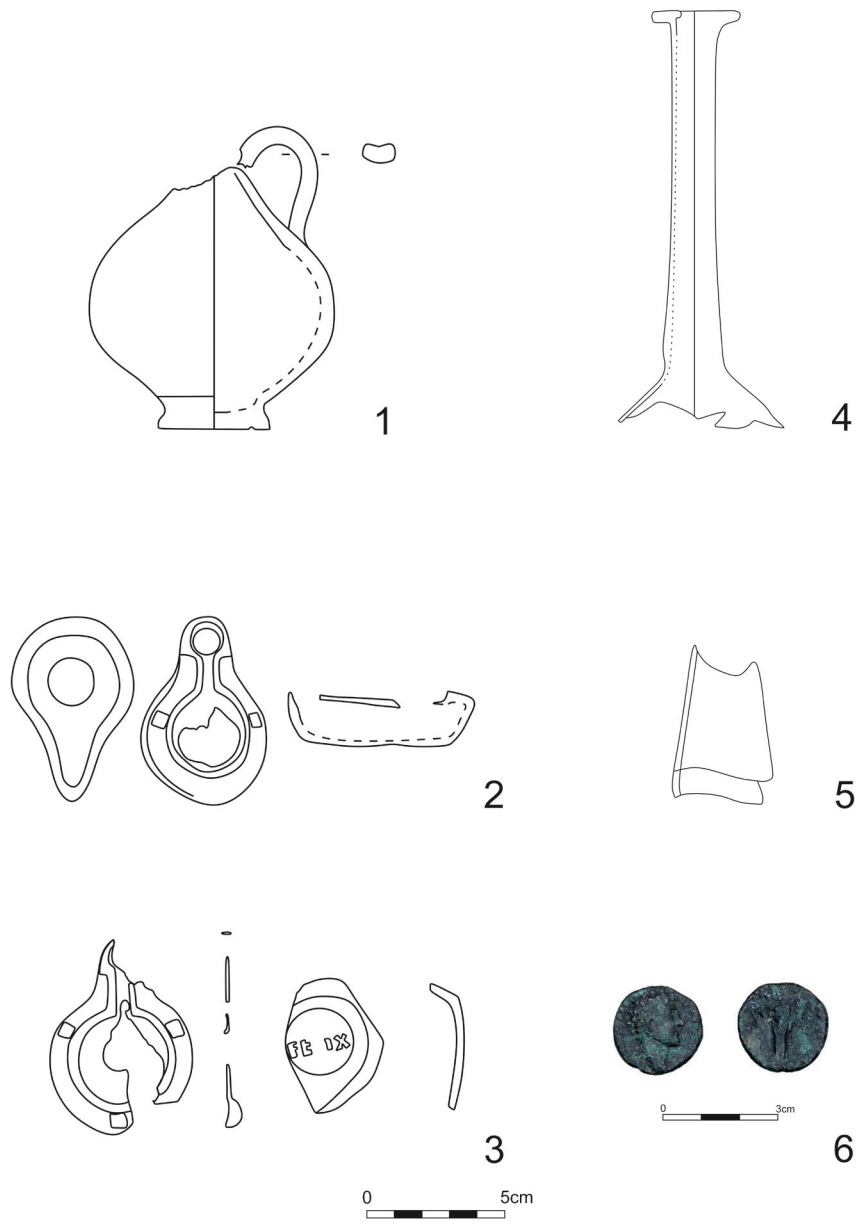


Fig. 9



Fig. 10

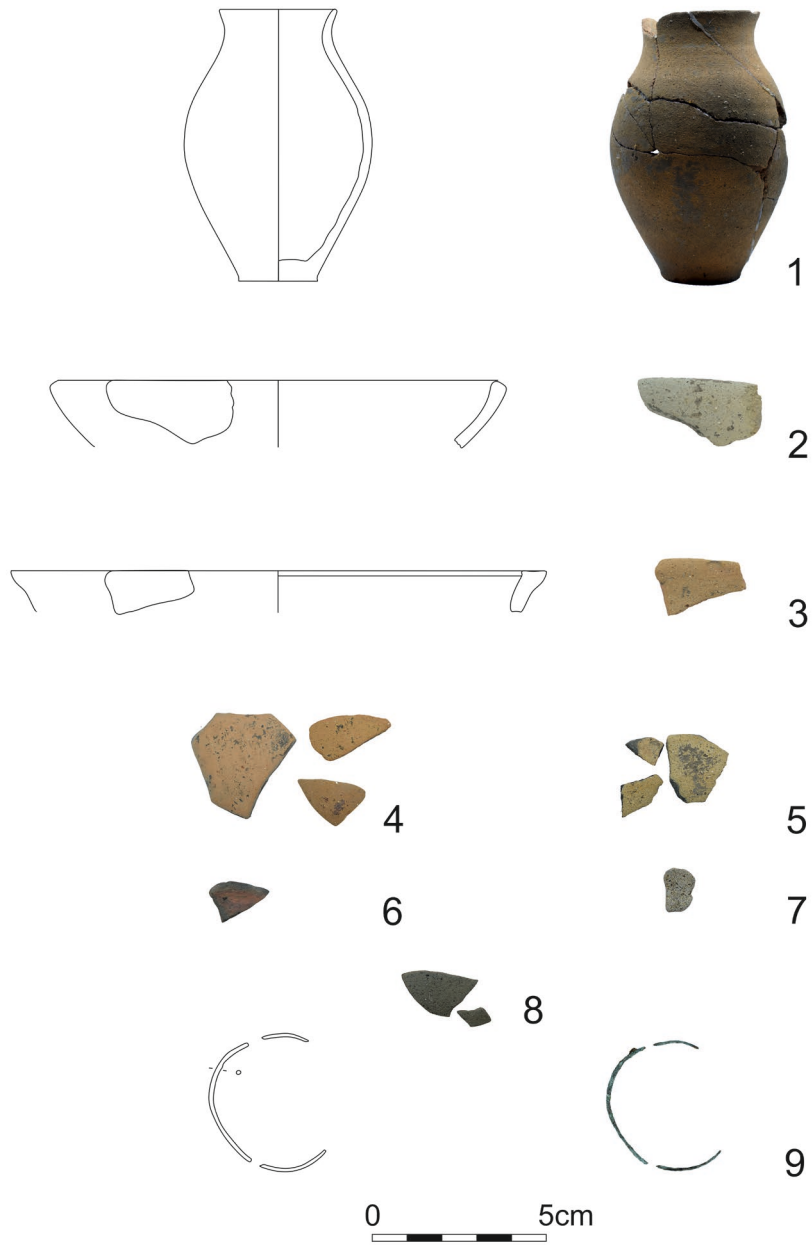


Fig. 11



Fig. 12

