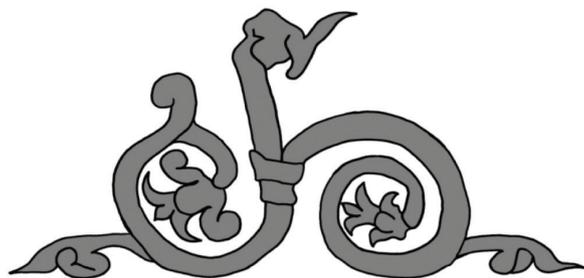


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The Grave (?) in Şeitin from Another Perspective. A Necropolis and Many Questions^{*}

Norbert Kapcsos

Abstract: The present article discusses the main issues concerning the necropolis from Şimand–İmaş/Nimaş. According to the archaeological material, it belongs to a later period than the one defined by Egon Dörner and Mihai Blăjan, namely to the end of the 4th – beginning of the 5th century. Another aim of the study is to clarify the problems related to the site and the connections of its material in the context of the Hun Period.

Keywords: burial, Straume IA beaker, Sarmatians, Sântana de Mureş – Černiachov, Lower Mureş Valley

“The distribution of Sarmatian finds in North-West Romania can be traced as far as Carei-Pir in the Ier Valley. The northern boundary can be drawn at Pişcolt until the second half of the 4th century. Dörner assigned the grave assemblages uncovered at Dorobanţi, Şeitin, and Oradea-Szálkadomb to this horizon, based on the brooches from the first site, the brooch and the glass beaker from the second (in fact, the beaker represented the Kowalk type and should thus be dated later), and the glass beaker from the third.”¹

In their new volume, Eszter Istvánovits and Valéria Kulcsár have drawn attention to the necessity of reinterpreting the graves in Şeitin. They believe that the grave with glass beaker should mainly be reevaluated from the perspective of dating, as based on this Kowlak-type beaker the grave can be delegated to a later period than the one established by Egon Dörner. At the same time, the most recent discoveries with similar inventories from the Carpathian Basin can place the graves in Şeitin in a new interpretative context. Since it was first published, the grave featured in different focused or synthesis works, but in numerous cases with an inventory different than the one initially published, thus supporting different historical narratives / theoretical constructions. This is another reason for which the feature must be reinterpreted. I shall now focus on the grave with the above mentioned beaker, analyzing, naturally, the rest of the archaeological material from the necropolis in question as well.

Circumstances and stages of discovery. Reconstruction of the site

The graves in Şeitin (Sajtény Hu.) and their funerary inventories known from different publications have been discovered by chance in subsequent stages during the 1960s following construction and sewage works performed north of the settlement. The fact that different archaeologists published the graves has generated a toponymic confusion in the specialized literature from Romania, i.e. the graves have been connected to different archaeological sites. Thus, the same archaeological site became known under different, yet very similar names: Şeitin-İmaş and Şeitin-Nimaş. One can no longer decide if the mistake was initially made in the Repertory of the Lower Mureş, during an uncritical processing of the data or earlier on. What is certain is that the graves discovered in 1960 were published by Egon Dörner in 1970 as being found on a site called Şeitin-İmaş². Five years later, Mihai Blăjan published another grave from Şeitin, this time an incineration grave discovered in 1964, with the same topographic description as Egon Dörner³. Blăjan also mentioned three more clay pots discovered in 1962 in an unknown number of inhumation graves and made reference to the graves published by Egon Dörner⁴. Thus Mihai Blăjan mentioned the site as being called “Şeitin-Nimaş”. On the basis of these

^{*} English translation: Ana M. Gruia.

¹ Istvánovits, Kulcsár 2017, 323.

² Dörner 1970, 458.

³ Blăjan 1975, 72.

⁴ Blăjan 1975, 73.

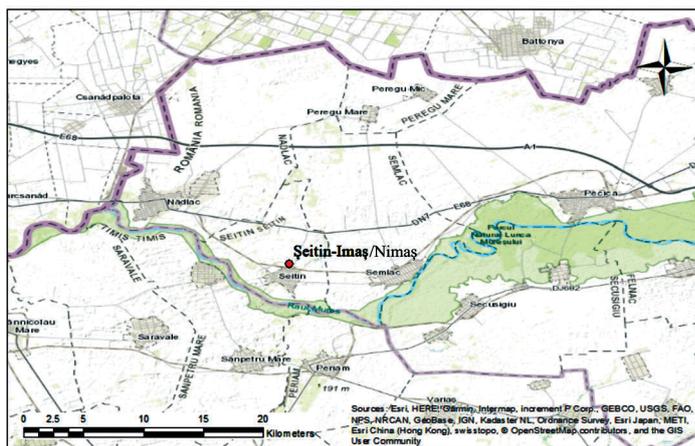


Fig. 1. The site of Şeitin-İmaş/Nimaş located N of the settlement.

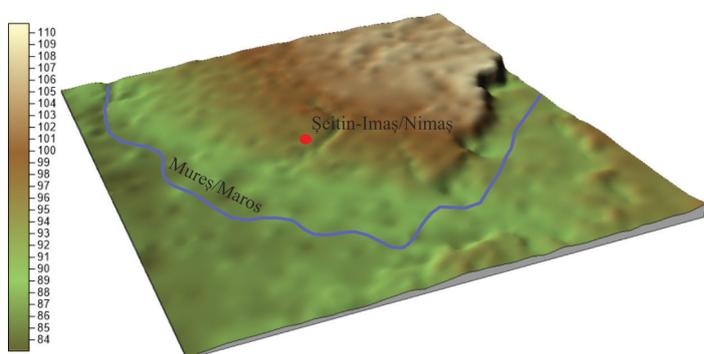


Fig. 2. The necropolis in Şeitin-İmaş/Nimaş, N of River Mureş.

to adopt the name variant Şeitin – “İmaş/”Nimaş”, in order to avoid future confusions. Regarding the number of graves, one can speak of at least four inhumation graves (possibly even six considering the total number of pots) and one incineration grave, on the basis of the data provided by the authors. The chronological relation between them remains, for now, unclear.

Thus, the archaeological site of Şeitin– “İmaş/Nimaş” is located approximately 500 meters north of the settlement of Şeitin, Arad County (Fig. 1). From a hydro-geographical perspective, it is located north of the lower course of the Mureş, in Nădlacului Plain, on the bank of dry creeks that once flowed into the Mureş (Fig. 2).

The graves published by Egon Dörner and Mihai Blăjan were discovered during three distinct stages:

1960. The items (glass beaker, silver brooch, bitronconic pot, semiglobular bowl, jug) discovered by workers excavating pits for silos, found in three destroyed graves, ended up in the possession of the CMA (Museum of Arad) in 1960 thanks to a local primary school teacher.

1962. Other inhumation graves were also affected by construction works, but their exact number is uncertain. Three grey pots, fast wheel-turned, were found in them. The exact number of graves being unknown, no description has been made either.

1964. Workers discovered an incineration grave while excavating a channel. It consisted of a funerary urn with lid¹⁰.

⁵ The three graves published by Egon Dörner and the grave or graves mentioned by Mihai Blăjan. But, associating each pot with one grave, there could have been up to 7 graves – though this remains a supposition.

⁶ Hügel, Barbu 1997, 587. 58c from the table.

⁷ RepAr. 1999, 120.

⁸ Gindele 2008, 172; Gindele 2008, 177.

⁹ In fact, both toponyms, “İmaş” and “Nimaş” are in use in Şeitin, to designate the same spot. Etymologically speaking, the term “İmaş” designates an uncultivated plot covered with grass, used as pasture. It comes from the Hungarian *nyomás*, thus the local variant “nimaş” (see DEX 2009).

¹⁰ I have attempted to perform a detailed reconstruction of the description of the graves using data from Egon Dörner’s

pieces of information one can talk of at least four inhumation graves in total and one incineration grave on the same site⁵. In 1997 the situation became even more complicated once Peter Hügel and Mircea Barbu connected the inhumation and incineration graves published by Egon Dörner and Mihai Blăjan to the same archaeological site called “Şeitin-Nimaş”, but only mentioned three inhumation graves – those published by Dörner⁶.

It seemed that Peter Hügel and Mircea Barbu’s publication had clarified the situation of the site and of the graves, but two separate sites were again mentioned in the Repertory of the County of Arad published in 1999⁷. Still, comparing the two “original sources”, i.e. Egon Dörner and Mihai Blăjan, one can undoubtedly state that this was one and the same site. More recently, referring only to the inhumation grave, Róbert Gindele has analyzed the typology of the pottery found on this site that he presented as one and the same, but called it both “İmaş” and “Nimaş” randomly⁸. Thus, until now, the issue has had no clear answer⁹. An acceptable solution is

“The grave from Şeitin” in the literature focusing on the early period of the Migrations Era

Despite the fact that several graves are known from the site in question, most of the works mention just one of the features:

“During the 70s of the fourth century the Gepids crossed the Sarmatians’ ditch and entered the quadrilateral formed by rivers Criş-Tisa-Mureş. The inventory of the grave from Şeitin, located north of the Mureş is, among other things, proof of this event, with the jug with specific burnished decoration, the bronze brooch with reverted foot and a polished glass beaker, a pair of which is known from Hódmezővásárhely”¹¹.

Among the repertoires and the more complex historical interpretations István Bóna’s lines are most the interesting ones in which the grave from Şeitin reappears. István Bóna contradicted Egon Dörner’s interpretation and included the grave in another historical conception, than the one with the eastern connections of the grave¹².

	Year	Orientation	Circumstances	Material	Dating	Ethnic interpretation
Egon Dörner	1970	W-E	Stray find	Pot, silver brooch with reverted foot, glass beaker	3 rd –4 th c	Sarmatian
István Bóna	1980	N.a.	N.a.	Jug, bronze brooch with reverted foot, glass beaker	370s	Gepidic
Sever Dumitraşcu	1993	N.a.	Stray find	Pot, silver brooch, fragments from a glass beaker	4 th c.	Sarmatian
RepAr	1999	E-W	Stray find	Pot, silver brooch with reverted foot, glass beaker	3 rd –4 th c.	Sarmatian
Szilamér Pánczél, Alpár Dobos	2007	N.a.	N.a.	Cup, silver brooch with reverted foot, glass beaker	C3-D1	N.a.
Róbert Gindele	2008	E-W/W-E face towards east	Stray find	Silver brooch, fragments from a glass beaker, a bowl, a pot and a jug	4 th c.	N.a.

Table no. 1. Grave 1 from Şeitin and its inventory mentioned in different studies.

Other authors only mentioned the grave. But, as indicated in the table above, since it was first published, the grave was published as having different orientations, different datings, and received different ethnical interpretations, possibly due to the lack of consistency regarding the archaeological material that was associated to the beaker in the funerary inventory. The bitronconic pot was sometimes mentioned as a jug or a cup, the silver brooch with side-turned foot as a brooch with inverted foot made of silver or bronze wire; only the beaker – every time in the center of attention – featured in the original form. In such conditions, the grave from Şeitin has every chance of becoming an archaeological proof that can support any of the historical discourses. For István Bóna for example it supported the hypothetical south-western migration of the Gepids, as the author, like in other cases, has subordinated this grave to certain events known from the written sources¹³.

Chronological aspects and connections of Grave 1 from Şeitin based on the glass beaker

Code	Site	Context	Number of beakers	Bibl.
The Carpathian Basin				
SI	Şeitin-İmaş/Nimaş	Grave	1	Dörner 1970.

original publication and to describe each individual item providing the exact dimensions provided by Egon Dörner and Mihai Blăjan. In case of the items published by Egon Dörner, I had access to the material from the Museum of Arad.

¹¹ Bóna 1988, 132–133.

¹² Dörner 1970, 458–459.

¹³ Körösfői 2018, 334–335. Specialists have proved that the great majority of graves connected to the early Gepids belong to the archaeological landscape of the Hun Period. See: Kiss 2015, 38–39, 49.

Code	Site	Context	Number of beakers	Bibl.
SE	Sándorfalva-Eperjes	Grave	2	Vörös 1985.
OU	Óföldrak-Ürmös	Grave	1	Gulyás 2014.
HF	Hódmezővásárhely-Franciszi	Stray find	1	Banner 1937.
BVC	Balástya-Vilmaszállásicsatorna	Settlement	1	Sóskuti 2010.
TT	Tiszaföldvár-Téglagyár	Settlement	1	Vaday 1994.
T	Tarnaméra-Urakdülője	Grave	1	Bóna, Szabó 2002.
OO	Orosháza	Settlement	1	Rózsa 2000.
KC	Kengyel-Csorcásnyér	Settlement	1	Cseh 1998.
East, South-East of the Carpathians				
BV	Bârlad-ValeaSeacă	Grave	6	Palade 2004.
BG	Barcea-Grădina de zarzavat	Grave	1	Gomolka-Fuchs 1999.
AO	AlexandruOdobescu	Grave	1	Pánczél, Dobos 2007.
IN	Iași-Nicolina	Settlement	2	Pánczél, Dobos 2007
LR	Lunca-Râpa cu oale	Grave	3	Pánczél, Dobos 2007
ML	Mogoșani-La Frășinei	Grave	1	Pánczél, Dobos 2007
PC	Pietroasele-Clondiru de sus	Grave	1	Pánczél, Dobos 2007
SM	Spanțov-Malul Bulicoaia	Grave	2	Pánczél, Dobos 2007
CD	Copuzu-Delut	Grave	1	Pánczél, Dobos 2007
CI	Ciocîlteni	Stray find	1	Ioniță <i>et al.</i> 2009
PI	Polocin-Izlaz	Grave	2	Croitoru 2009
BO	Bogdănești	Stray find	1	Croitoru 2009

Table no. 2. Archaeological sites with Straumes IA type glass beakers

All those who have analyzed or mentioned grave 1 have paid the glass beaker special attention¹⁴. The artifact is included in type Kowalk (Straume I /Eggers 230) – a denomination known in the Carpathian Basin for this type of beakers (Fig. 3) – envisaging the manner in which the decoration consisting of polished oval facets was created, the artifact can be delegated with more precision to variant Straume IA¹⁵. For the area of the Carpathian basin, Andrea Vaday¹⁶ has analyzed the Kowalk-type beakers and, more recently, Kata Dévai published a synthesis work of existing knowledge on this type of beaker by analyzing the items from Pannonia (Pécs)¹⁷. For Transylvania and the area east of the Carpathians, in the Sântana de Mureș – Černiachov environment, authors Alpár Doboș-Szilámér Pánczél and, in another article, Costin Croitoru, have analyzed these artifacts – among others – through their distribution and have distinguished between two beaker variants, i.e. Straume IA and IB. According to them, besides morphological differences there is also a chronological difference between the two variants, in that the first is earlier than the second. Thus, their widely accepted dating is to the end of phase C2 and predominantly during phase C3, that according to Costin Croitoru is to be placed in 310/320–375¹⁸. Straume IA-type beakers are almost equally present in necropolises and settlements in the Sarmatian *Barbaricum*. In the territories east-south-east of the Carpathians, part of the Sântana de Mureș – Černiachov Culture, they are typical to necropolises (Table no. 2). In the Sarmatian *Barbaricum* five items are known from graves with relatively clear contexts (Table no. 3). But, based on items with very precise chronological value, all of these graves are dated later than those found east and south-east of the Carpathians, i.e. mainly in the end of the fourth century – first part of the fifth century, a period when most of the graves containing glass beakers, not only Straume IA-type ones, are dated¹⁹.

¹⁴ Dörner 1970, 459. Fig. 14/3.

¹⁵ Variant Straume IA groups glass beakers that are the most widely spread in the territories east-south-east of the Carpathian. See: Pánczél, Dobos 2007, 68.

¹⁶ Vaday 1994, 118.

¹⁷ Dévai 2012, 172.

¹⁸ Pánczél, Dobos 2007, 69; Croitoru 2009, 217; Țau, Nicu 2013, 63–64. See Radu Harhoiu's dating of the glass beaker: Harhoiu 1998, Taf. CXXXIX/42.

¹⁹ Gulyás 2014, 60.

The predominant orientation of the graves containing such beakers is approximately S-N, characteristic to the Sarmatian funerary ritual during that period²⁰. As only five cases are known, this naturally does not reflect a general rule, but stresses a tendency attested for the time being and the grave in Şeitin deviates from it. Such beakers are found both in male and female graves, in the area of the lower limbs (in the cases when exact data are available).

Three of the five graves have been disturbed by intervention pits²¹ and data regarding this aspect are unavailable in two cases. Two of the graves were surrounded by circular ditches. Even though in certain cases specialists have presumed that the presence of circular ditches was to be connected to the high social status of the deceased²², the presence of weapons and gold and silver items is a more eloquent indication of a higher social status. Thus, the correlation between the presence of intervention pits, circular ditches, and weapons/gold items/silver items does indeed suggest that the individuals buried in the five graves that contained such beakers were considered important members of their communities, even if they did not belong to the social elite, so one probably does not err much by presuming that these glass beakers were prestige goods²³.



Fig. 3. Glass beaker from Şeitin Grave 1.

Code	Site/Grave	Orientation	Gender	Position	Looted	Circular ditch	Weapon/gold/silver finds	Dating	Bibl.
SI	Şeitin-İmaş/ Nimaş 1	W-E	NA	NA	NA	NA	0/0/1	3 rd -4 th c.	Dörner 1970, 458.
SE1	Sándorfalva- Eperjes 1	SSE- WNW	male	NA	1	1	1/0/0	end of 4 th – first quarter of 5 th c.	Vörös 82-83, 133.
SE5	Sándorfalva- Eperjes 5	SSE- WNW	male	between the feet	1	1	1/0/0	end of 4 th – first quarter of 5 th c.	Vörös 82-83, 142-144.
OU	Óföldaék- Ürmös 168	SE-NW	female	between the lower limbs	1	0	0/2/0	second half of 4 th – first half of 5 th c.	Gulyás 2014, 100.
T	Tarnaméra – Urakdülője 2	NA	female	NA	NA	0	0/0/1	The mid- dle third of 5 th c.	Bóna, Szabó 2002, 240-241.

Table no. 3. Graves with Straume IA-type glass beakers from the Sarmatian *Barbaricum*.

Previous researches have stressed the fact that such beakers were spread from north of the Black Sea to Scandinavia and the Pannonian Plain²⁴. In the eastern and south-eastern area of the territory of interest, they display a significant density (Fig. 4) as compared to the Sarmatian *Barbaricum*. The *hotspot* analysis²⁵ performed on the basis of the sites envisaged in the present study (Table no. 2)

²⁰ Kulcsár 1998, 109.

²¹ The relevance of the intervention pits consists of the fact that the great majority of graves in the Sarmatian *Barbaricum* was systematically looted, because, as Eszter Istvánovits and Valéria Kulcsár have stressed, of their “riches” (Istvánovits, Kulcsár 2018, 254 b).

²² Bărcă, Cociş 2013, 44; Grumeza, Ursuţiu 2016, 201.

²³ An indication supporting this supposition is the presence of the glass beaker (type Straume IB according to Pánczél, Dobos 2007, 81) in the funerary inventory of grave 2 in Apahida (See: Harhoiu 1998, Taf. LXVIII/1). It is true nevertheless that a glass beaker was also found in the funerary inventory of the grave in Jászalsószentgyörgy (Párducz 1950, Taf. XCVI) that has been interpreted as a possible elite grave (Istvánovits, Kulcsár 2018b, 254). One should also mention the fact that the majority of glass beakers in the necropolis from Madaras were found in tumular graves. Based on the case of this necropolis Garbiella Vörös and Mihály Kőhegyi formulated the idea that glass beakers formed a very appreciated category of artifacts (Kőhegyi, Vörös 2011, 339).

²⁴ Pánczél, Dobos 2007, 69; Croitoru 2009, 216.

²⁵ Very briefly, “*Hotspot analysis*” focuses on the probability that the spots are structured accidentally. Each spot on the basis of a criterion (no. of items) is analyzed together with the surrounding spots: “neighbors”. If a spot and its “neighbors” in a

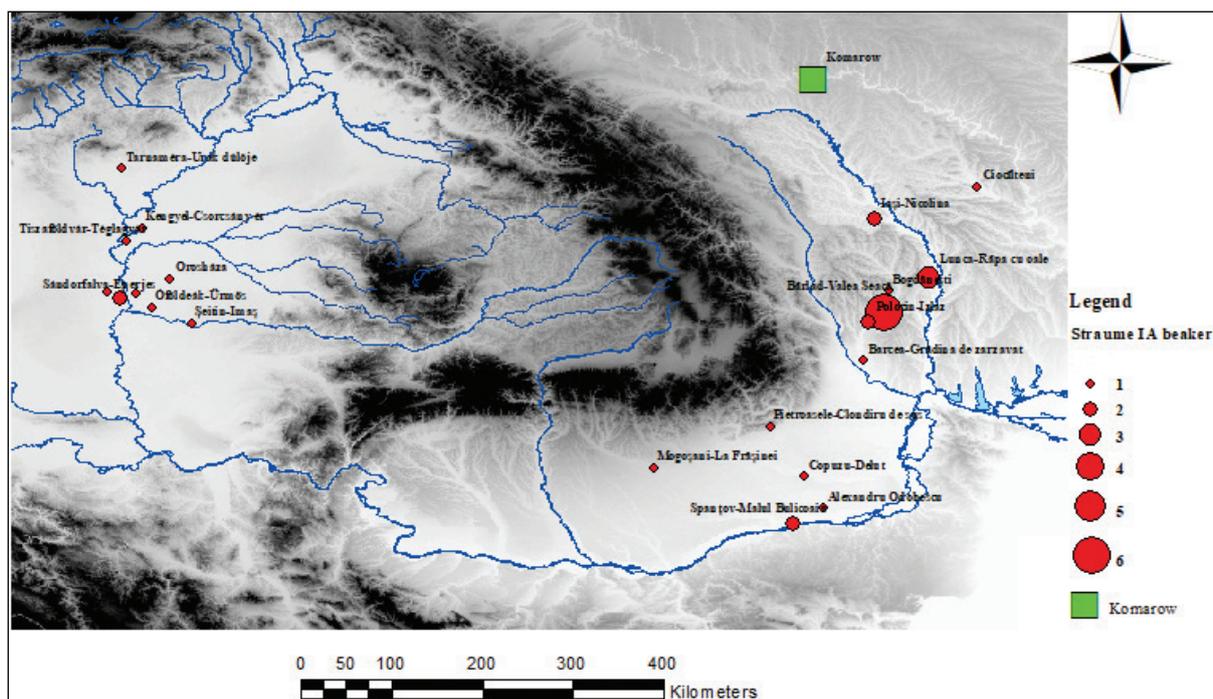


Fig. 4. Dispersion map and number of Straume IA glass beakers.

shows a concentration in the Bârlad – “Valea Seacă” – Luncani – “Râpa cu Oale” area (fig. 5), listing 22 glass beakers besides the 42 from the workshop in Komarow²⁶. The 10 items – only known from the existing literature – from the Sarmatian *Barbaricum* are considered to be rarities. A possible center of production, besides the one near Komarow, might have existed in the proximity of the site in Bârlad. This hypothesis coincides with the supposition of previous researches that there were several centers of production, explaining such an ample dispersion of this type of glass beakers²⁷.

The presumed existence of multiple centers of production seems to be also supported by the results of the *cluster analysis*²⁸ performed on the items from the Sarmatian *Barbaricum* where two large cluster can be identified inside the same type of glass beaker, but one must also note the considerable difference between the beakers in Óföldaék (OU) and Sándorfalva (SE5). In fact, the results of the analysis confirm the easily apparent observations that a great variety of glass beakers²⁹ existed in the Sarmatian *Barbaricum* and that the item in Şeitín is surprisingly similar to the one in Hódmezővásárhely – as István Bóna has very intuitively stressed³⁰ – suggesting that they both could be the products of the same workshop.

certain, predefined area, differ from the rest of the spots – each has a high value according to the analysis criterion – then they form a hotspot. Vlad-Andrei Lăzărescu has also employed a similar approach in the case of coins dated to the Late Roman Era and the Early Migrations Period (see: Lăzărescu 2014, 209). The analysis was performed based on the number of beakers on a site within a radius of 80 kilometers (corresponding to ca. 2 days of walking/marching) with the aid of ArcGis Spatial Statistics Tools software.

²⁶ Rumyantseva, Belikov 2017, 262.

²⁷ Pánczél, Dobos 2007, 69; Croitoru 2009, 218; Dévai 2012, 172.

²⁸ The grouping of beakers through *cluster analysis* has been performed on the basis of decoration and morphological traits transformed into a nominal expression (numbers, see the table). In this case, through *cluster analysis* one understands a hierarchical, agglomeration group of beakers based on the similarities between them (Shawn, Jameson 1999, 169; Renfrew, Bahn 2012, 577; Ilonczai 2014, 5; Baxter 2015, 152). This means that in a first instance each beaker represents a cluster and only two clusters are grouped on the basis of the similarities between them on each level of grouping (Ilonczai 2014, 14.), according to the Ward Method (the most widely applied method in archaeology: Shawn, Jameson 1999, 169. On binary data: 0/1 see: Opreanu, Lăzărescu 2016, 101–103) that follows the principle of minimal difference inside the groups and is less sensitive to deviant values. Another methodological description see at: Hullám, Hullám 2013, 95–96. On the horizontal axis one notes the level of grouping and the distance between the clusters, and on the vertical axis the number of beakers.

²⁹ The great variety of Kowalk/Straume I-type beakers has also been mentioned by Igor Gavritukhin on the basis of his analysis performed over a considerably more significant territory of interest. Gavritukhin 2011, 42.

³⁰ Bóna 1988, 133.

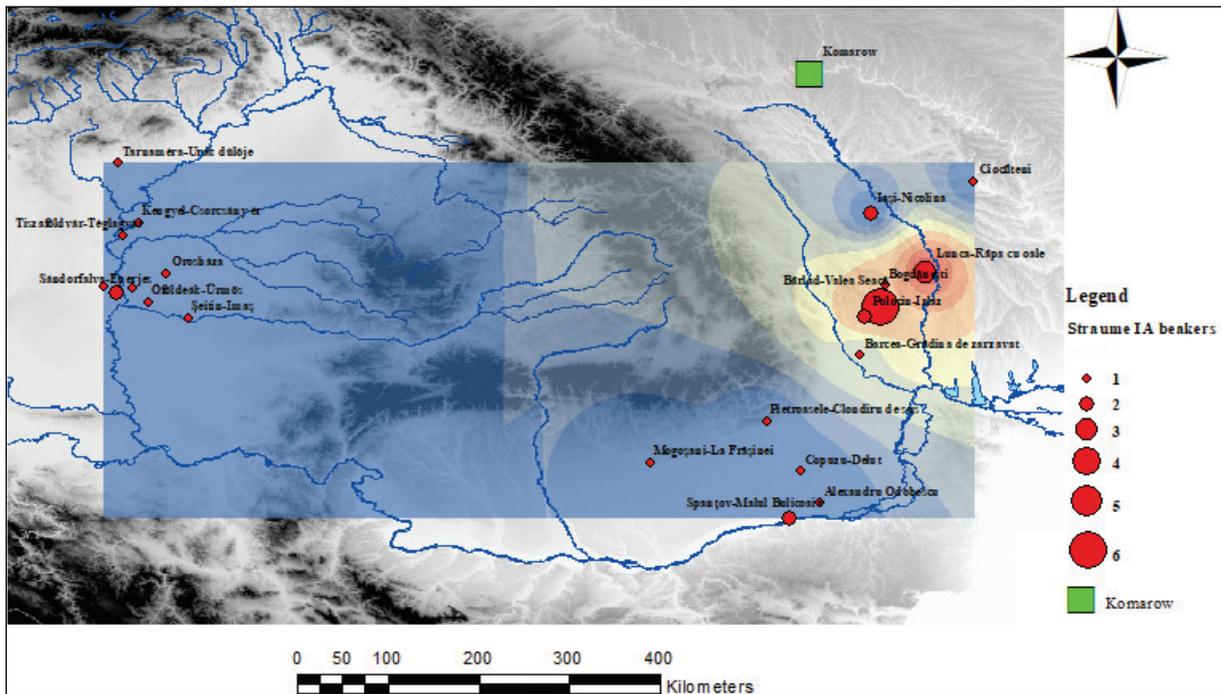


Fig. 5. Hotspot analysis of Straume IA-type glass beakers.

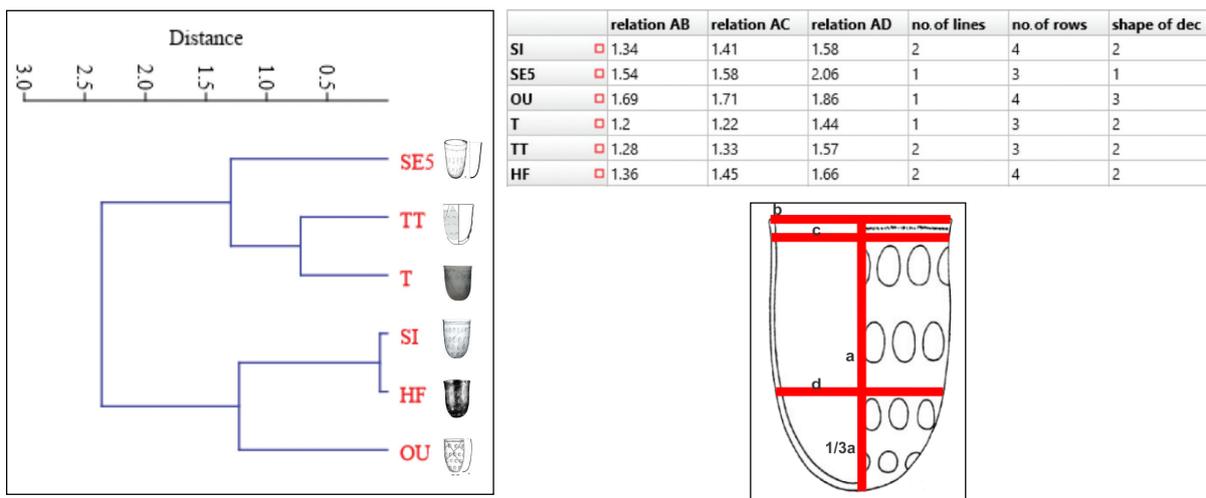


Fig. 6. Cluster Analysis made in Past software using Ward's algorithm and the Euclidian distance of the Straume IA-type glass beakers. Legend: Relation a-b – height/diameter of the rim; Relation a-c – height/diameter of the neck; Relation a-d – height/diameter of the beaker at 1/3 of its height; no. of lines – number of incised lines on the neck; no. of rows – number of rows of the faceted decoration; shape of dec. – shape of the faceted decoration: 1 – prolonged oval, 2 – dominant oval, 3 – dominant circle. Codes in table no. 2.

The two beakers are similar in the identical decoration of the oval-shaped polished facets and in shape – the a-b-c relations³¹ show they have almost the same shape according to their proportions, slightly flared rim, cylindrical body, and oval base. Naturally, in this case the cluster analysis can suggest the production of beakers in different centers of production/workshops as far as one accepts the presumption that the morphological and decorative characteristics represent “artisan markers”, but one cannot be sure of this as in the absence of identification of these workshops in the field.

³¹ The a-b-c reports of the beakers derive from their dimensions that reflect the proportions of the beakers better than their size. I found this approach viable considering the fact that the height of the beakers varies between approximately 11 and 13 cm and the diameter of the rim between approximately 8 and 10 cm; the difference in size is irrelevant in the production of the beakers, that considered a more important criterion, i.e. the fact that the item had to fit into one's palm. Thus, according to the working hypothesis, the comparison of their proportions was a more important analysis criterion. See a similar method in: Lăzărescu 2015, 135.

As previously mentioned, there is a chronological delay between the beakers in the area east and south-east of the Carpathians and those from the Sarmatian *Barbaricum*, though the reasons behind this delay remain unclear. The items in the first region date approximately from the turn between the 3rd and the 4th centuries and until the end of the 4th century, while those in the “Sarmatian environment” date between the end of the 4th century and until the beginning of the subsequent century. In other words, in the second region such beakers seem to have been in use further than in the eastern areas.

Chronological aspects of the graves from Şeitin

Róbert Gindele was the only one to pay special attention to the pottery items in the necropolis from Şeitin, dating them on the basis of analogies to the Late Sarmatian Period³², correcting Egon Dörner’s dating. Besides the analogies identified by Gindele on the basis of the slightly bitronconic shape of the pot in grave 1 in Şeitin³³ (Pl. 1/3), it shows similarities with the bitronconic pots in Szeged³⁴ and Nagyfalu³⁵, belonging indeed to the Late Sarmatian Period/Hun Period. Though one can note a certain similarity between the bitronconic pot in grave 1 and the two small pots discovered subsequently and published by Mihai Blăjan (Pl. 2/4–5), described as bitronconic³⁶, one has a difficult time deciding on the bases of existing illustration if the latter are indeed bitronconic in shape or rather represent a typical joining of the upper part of the pot and the rounded belly (the “interruption of the pot’s belly” is more rounded)³⁷. Such pottery items are known, among others, in Tószeg-Laposhalom³⁸, Tápé-Malajdok A³⁹, and Csongrád-Kenderföldek,⁴⁰ necropolises dated to the Late Sarmatian Period. The chronological relevance of the semiglobular bowl from grave 2 (Pl. 1/4) is neglectable considering the fact that the shape was used over a longer period, from the end of the second century until the beginning of the fifth century. Only the traces of surface finishing sections made on the potters-wheel with a handtool suggests a later dating of the bowl to the Late Sarmatian Period⁴¹. The bitronconic shape of the jug in grave 3 on the other hand (Pl. 1/5) is characteristic to the late period of the Late Sarmatian Era and a closer analogy for it is known from Bela Crkva (Fehértemplom Hu)⁴². The silver brooch with side-turned foot also points to the necropolis in Csongrád where such types of brooches – in their later variants – are frequent⁴³, though its perfect analogy, in bronze, is known from Törökszentmiklós⁴⁴.

The observation that inhumation graves belong to a necropolis dated to the Late Sarmatian/Hun Period is more significant to the dating of the items. The brooch, the pot/pots and, beyond doubt, the glass beaker date the inhumation necropolis in Şeitin to the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the fifth century, that coincides approximately to period C3/D1-D1. Thus, it is contemporary to the necropolises in Sándorfalva-Eperjes, Óföldséák-Ürmös, Apátfalva M43–43. Tápé-Malajdok A, Csongrád-Laktanya/Kenderföldek from a closer area and the Tiszadob-Tiszakarád-Tiszavalk Group, with the Ártánd Group, and a bit earlier than the necropolis in Timișoara-Freidorf, also taking into consideration the peripheral areas of the Sarmatian *Barbaricum*.

³² Gindele 2008, 172. Analogies enumerated in Tiszafölvár-Téglagyár and Mezőszemere-Kismari fenék.

³³ Besides the glass beaker and on the basis of the bitronconic pot Egon Dörner has stressed the contacts of the latter with the necropolises of the Sântana de Mureș – Cerniachov Culture (Dörner 1970, 458). The maximum diameter of the belly is closer to the base than those of the pots from Sântana de Mureș, where it is in the median area of the pot. Similar shapes are also known from the necropolises in Bârlad-Valea Seacă. See Palade 2004, 499.

³⁴ Párducz 1950, CXXXVI/37.

³⁵ Párducz 1950, CXXXIX/14.

³⁶ Blăjan 1975, 73.

³⁷ See the illustrations: Blăjan 1975, 82, fig 7, 4–5; 84, fig 9, 1, 3. In the case of these pots the dimensions are insecure. The height of the pots are 3,9 cm and 5,3 cm after Mihai Blăjan (See at: Blăjan 1975, 73.). Miniature pots are known for this period, but pots with these dimensions are impossible to be produced on the potters-wheel.

³⁸ Párducz 1950, CXXXVI, 21.

³⁹ Párducz, Korek 1946–48, Taf. LIII, 24; Párducz, Korek 1946–48, Taf. LXVII, 12.

⁴⁰ Párducz 1959, Taf. XVI, 13.

⁴¹ As well as in the case of the bitronconic pot. See further literature: Masek, Véninger 2017, 71.

⁴² Párducz 1950, CVI, 3.

⁴³ Párducz 1959, Taf. X, 15; Párducz 1963, Taf. VII, 17–18, Taf. X, 6–7; Istvánovits, Kulcsár 1994, 1. kép.

⁴⁴ Párducz 1950, taf. LXXII, 19.

This can only be accepted as long as Egon Dörner's description is correct. If he had based it on his own observations in the field, one would have no reason to doubt it, but as the description is due to non-specialists, caution is recommended. In the virtue of the same circumstances, one does not even know the position of the pottery items in the grave that could have supported a more nuanced interpretation. At the same time, one cannot be convinced of the integrity of the funerary inventories either, considering the fact that even Egon Dörner mentioned some beads that had been lost⁴⁸. The presence of the incineration grave is an indication that would allow for a parallel between the necropolis in Şeitin and the one in Tiszadob. But, in the case of the necropolis in Tiszadob the biritual character is uncertain due to the fact that the dating of the incineration graves is uncertain⁴⁹. An identical problem can be noted in the case of the incineration grave in Şeitin, where the wide dating between the 2nd and the 4th century has led Mihai Blăjan to attribute it to the Free Dacians. On the other hand, the majority of 4th century incineration graves in Transylvania have been attributed to the Dacians/Carpi/Free Dacians, despite the fact that in the territories east of the Carpathians the necropolises in Sântana de Mureş-Černiachov environment are biritual⁵⁰. But, at the current stage, the biritual character of the necropolis in Şeitin remains uncertain until it is analyzed in the context of the incineration graves in Aradului Plain that can be dated to the Sarmatian Period. The silver brooch with side-turned foot from grave 1 in Şeitin is of a common type, typical to the Late Sarmatian/Hun Period and dated to a rather long period⁵¹. Analogies of this brooch point to the necropolis in Csongrád, where such items are rather frequent finds, and even if the orientation of the graves is S-N, the Germanic influence on the material inside the graves – and on the funerary ritual – is significant⁵².

The “emblematic” artifact of the necropolis in Şeitin – the glass beaker – is also the one with the most complex connections, not only in the Sarmatian *Barbaricum* but also in the territories inhabited by the carriers of the Sântana de Mureş-Černiachov Culture. It seems that the glass beakers from the Sarmatian *Barbaricum* are the products of several workshops, so that several hypothetical explanations that could be true at the same time can be expressed regarding their manner of distribution.

1. The glass beakers from the Sarmatian *Barbaricum* are the products of several workshops – from the areas east of the Carpathians – and their introduction in the Pannonian Plain can be directly or indirectly connected to the phenomenon of migration – dislocations of populations – from the mentioned area.

2. But considering the fact that the glass beakers can be considered objects of prestige, they were an accessible good, sought after by certain social groups who had the complex relations to obtain them⁵³. Through migration, the connections between the area of origin and the target area did not cease. Many of the similar objects seem to indicate the existence of exchange relations subsequent to the phenomenon of migration – being its consequences⁵⁴.

3. The possibility of local production following a technological transfer through migration remains an open issue⁵⁵. Starting with the 380s it seems that the Sarmatian *Barbaricum* already came under the political domination of the Huns and their allies⁵⁶ and this suggests the presence of groups – mainly social groups – in the Sarmatian *Barbaricum* that served the interests of the Hun elite. Such a social group has created the conditions for the demand for such a prestige item – the glass beaker – and this favored the creation of a production center⁵⁷. As one can note, there is a chronological delay among

⁴⁸ Dörner 1970, 458.

⁴⁹ Istvánovits, Kulcsár 1999, 69.

⁵⁰ Körösfői 2015, 136.

⁵¹ Istvánovits, Kulcsár 2018a, 373.

⁵² Istvánovits, Kulcsár 1999, 88; Istvánovits, Kulcsár 2018a, 397; regarding dress habits see the location of the brooches in grave 127 in Csongrád-Laktanya (Párducz 1963, 49; Párducz 1963, Taf. VII. 17–18; Párducz 1963, Taf. X. 6–7) where they were found in the area of the clavicles, characteristic to the “Peplos”-type Germanic dress during the Hun Period (Rác 2014, 205).

⁵³ Even if specialists have presumed that the items from north-western Europe spread through commercial relations (Dévai 2012, 217), in this case one can think of other possibilities as well.

⁵⁴ Brather 2005, 55–56.

⁵⁵ I cannot reject the possibility that itinerant artisans existed during a period when the mobility of population groups was otherwise intensive.

⁵⁶ Istvánovits, Kulcsár 2018a, 388; Istvánovits, Kulcsár 2018b, 253.

⁵⁷ Maybe the distribution pattern of Straume IA-type glass beakers in the Sarmatian *Barbaricum*, where they are focused in

Straume IA-type beakers from the Černiachovien territories and the Sarmatian ones in the Pannonian Plain, where they are dated later, to period C3/D1–D2 (end of the 4th – first half of the 5th centuries) that coincides with the period of Hun domination in the Pannonian Plain. The activity of local workshops – that naturally produced several types of beakers at the same time – might explain this chronological delay, in that the type under discussion and at least part of the items in this group were also produced later than those from the Černiachovien territories. Naturally, as long as no center of production has been identified, this supposition is only supported by indirect indications and remains on the level of a hypothesis.

Despite the fact that in the peripheral areas of the Sarmatian *Barbaricum* it is easier to follow the movement of populations from an archaeological perspective⁵⁸ and taking into consideration that the valley of River Mureş played an important role during that period from the perspective of changes in the archaeological landscape⁵⁹, such traces have been less studied in the area of Aradului Plain.

In the case of the site in Grădişte – “La sere”, Egon Dörner mentioned the Černiachovian character of the material and in the case of grave 1 from Œeitin he stressed the Sântana de Mureş – Černiachov influence when enumerating the analogies, but did not go into details.

Almost 40 years after the discovery, Peter Hügel has confirmed the Germanic character of the material in Grădişte and its connections to the Sântana de Mureş–Černiachov Culture on the basis of the hair comb. After the graves with artificial cranial deformations from Arad-Gai I. have been included in the historical discourse regarding Aradului Plain, one starts envisaging the picture of culturally and ethnically heterogeneous populations⁶⁰. Research on the topic must also be continued due to the observations expressed in relation of grave 1 and the necropolis Œeitin that is dated around the end of the 4th century and the beginning of the 5th century.

Description of the graves

Grave 1

Inhumation grave oriented W-E (?). The body had been placed in dorsal decubitus (?).

Inventory:

Kowalk/Straume IA-type glass beaker (height: 11 cm; diameter: 8.2 cm; thickness: 0.28 cm); yellow-green in color, slightly conical in shape, with rounded lip. The glass fabric contains numerous air bubbles. Two parallel lines can be seen under the beaker’s rim, performed subsequently through polishing; under them the belly of the beaker is decorated with rows of oval alveoli also created through polishing. A polished circle is to be found at the base of the beaker. (Pl. 1/1)

Pot: (height: 11.5 cm; diameter: 19 cm), bitronconic in shape, with rounded, slightly flared rim and ring base. Fast wheel-turned out of fine fabric; grey in color, with burnished surface. Between neck and shoulder the pot is decorated with a grooved wavy line. (Pl. 1/3)

Dress accessories:

Silver brooch with side-turned foot (length: 4.5 cm; thickness: 0.6 cm). (Pl. 1/2)

Grave 2

Inhumation grave oriented W-E (?). The body had been deposited in dorsal decubitus (?).

Inventory:

Bowl (height: 7 cm, diameter: 12.7 cm), semiglobular in shape with thickened rim and ring base. Fast wheel-turned out of fine but impure fabric; light grey in color, partly burnished, with traces of surface finishing sections made on the potters-wheel with a handtool, but mostly matte surface because of weariness. (Pl. 1/4.)

Grave 3

Inhumation grave oriented W-E (?). The body had been deposited in dorsal decubitus (?).

Inventory:

Jug (height: 19.8 cm, diameter: 12.2 cm) with rounded and slightly flared rim; bitronconic in shape; ring base. Fast wheel-turned, out of fine fabric; greyish pale-brown in color with a matte surface. (Pl. 1/5)

the proximity of the future centers of Hun power from the confluence of Mureş and Tisa, is not accidental. Four of the five graves analyzed in Table 3 are grouped in this very area and this coincides with Sebastian Brather’s observations that the graves at the same time reflect possible areas of domination where an itinerant artisan was active (Brather 2005, 36).

⁵⁸ Körösfői 2018, 339.

⁵⁹ Istvánovits, Kulcsár 2018a, 331.

⁶⁰ Hügel 1999, 30–33; Körösfői 2018, 344; Istvánovits, Kulcsár 2018a, 398.

Grave 4

Incineration in urn grave. Half of the funerary urn had been filled with calcined human bones.

Urn: (height: 27.5 cm, diameter: 14.5 cm) fast wheel-turned, made of fine fabric, grey in color; strait cut flared rim; the neck is tronconic and the belly of the urn becomes narrower towards the base that has a circular ring. The lower part of the neck and the shoulder of the pot are decorated with burnished horizontal lines. (Pl. 2/3)

Lid: (height: 9.5 cm, base diameter: 9.8 cm) the base of a fast wheel-turned pot made of fine fabric; grey in color. (Pl. 2/1)

Bracelet: bent; made of bronze wire; deteriorated through firing. (Pl. 2/2)

Further pots⁶¹

Pot 1.: (height: n.a, diameter: n.a) fast wheel-turned, made of fine fabric, grey in color, with rounded, slightly flared rim, rounded belly and ring base, with slip on the surface, decorated with two horizontal burnished lines on the belly. (Pl. 2/4)

Pot 2.: (height: n.a, diameter: n.a) fast wheel-turned, made of fine fabric, grey in color, with rounded, slightly flared rim, the interruption of the belly is slightly sharp, and ring base, with slip on the surface. (Pl. 2/5)

Jug: (height: 19 cm, diameter: 7,5 cm) fast wheel-turned, made of fine fabric, grey in color, with rounded, slightly flared, thickening rim, rounded belly and ring base, with slip on the surface, decorated with five rows of burnished wavy lines on the neck and tree horizontal incised lines on the belly. The handle is oval in section. (Pl. 2/6)

Egon Dörner also mentioned other beads on the basis of the data provided by the authors of the discovery, but they cannot be connected with certainty to any of the graves.

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⁶¹ Based on the descriptions and illustrations of Mihai Blăjan (Blăjan 1975, 73, 82.)

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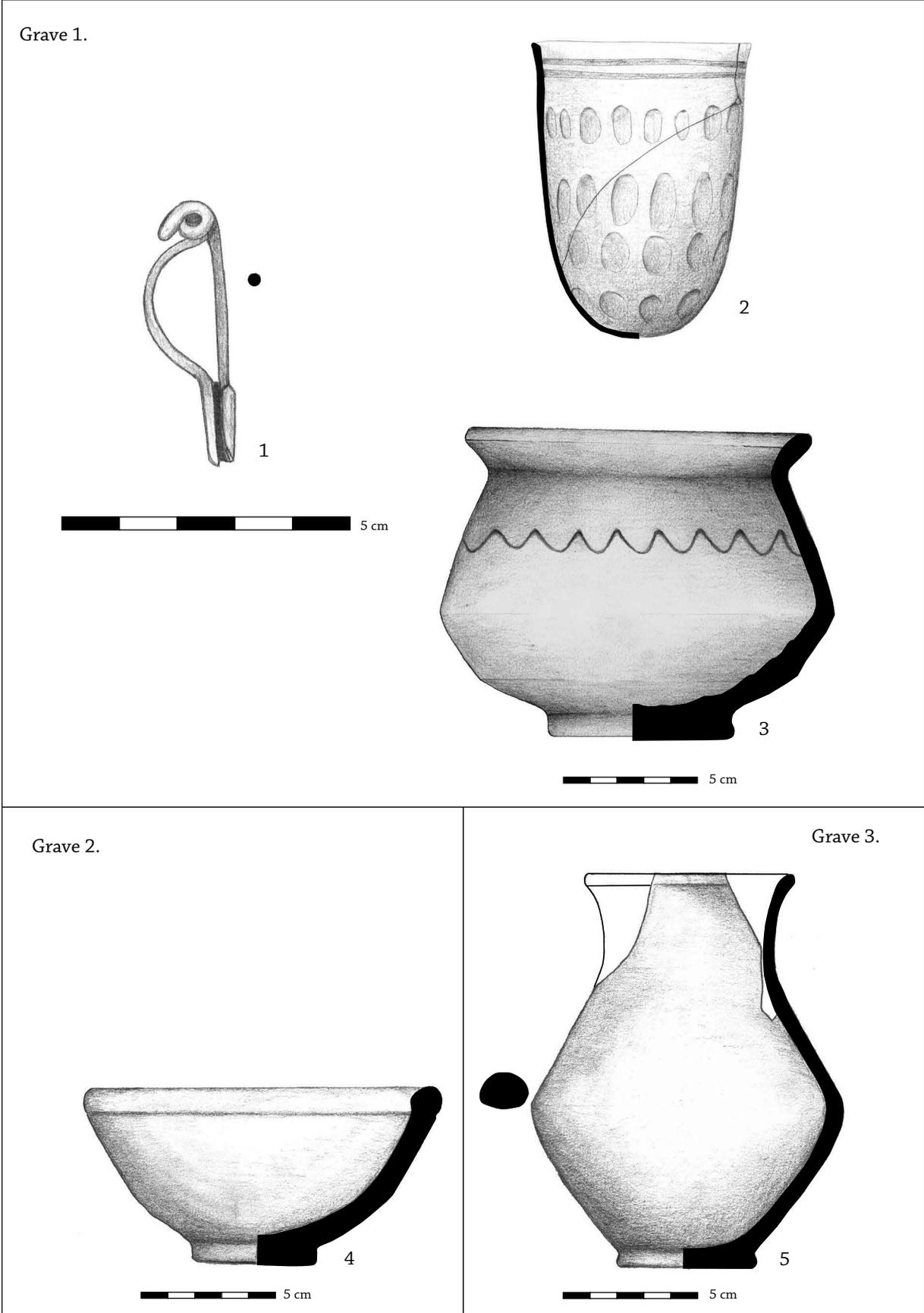


Plate 1. Grave 1: 1-3; Grave 2: 4; Grave 3: 5.



Plate 2. Grave 4: 1-3; Pot 1: 4 (without scale); Pot 2: 5 (without scale); Jug: 6 (After: Blăjan 1975, 82, Fig. 7).

