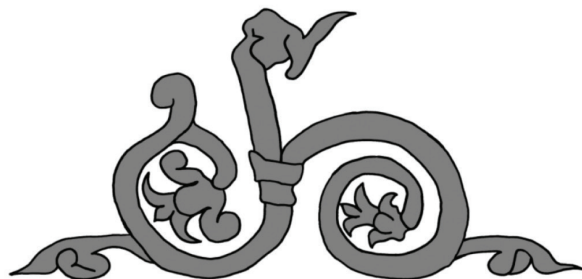


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This volume is dedicated to the memory of George Pascu Hurezan (1949–2016)

A Sălcuța Settlement Discovered in the Boundary of Ștefan Odobleja Village (Mehedinți County)

Adrian Cîntar, Octavian-Cristian Rogozea, Florentina Mărcuți

Abstract: This paper aims to include in the scientific circuit the Aeneolithic settlement from the administrative boundary of Ștefan Odobleja village (previously called Valea Izvorului), site *Dealul Pătrășcoana*. The settlement was discovered in 2008 when the commune's Mairie extracted gravel for road pavement. Pottery fragments, some painted with white paint, clay weights and chipped lithic tools were recovered from the affected area. The Archaeological materials belong to the Early Aeneolithic Age, more precisely to the Second Phase of Sălcuța culture.

Keywords: Aeneolithic, inhabitation, Sălcuța culture, pottery, chipped lithic tool.

The settlement was discovered in 2008 by Vasile Cîntar, who observed in the profile of *Pătrășcoana Hill* traces of a human settlement, anthropic layers more precisely, burn traces and salvages the first archaeological materials from the profile ground. After the discovery, Vasile Cîntar informs the archaeologist Gabriel Crăciunescu¹ about the discovery.

The topographical measurement and observations regarding location, stratigraphy and archaeological materials were done only in 2018 (14.04) by the authors of this study and Alexandru Hegyi.

Also, in 2018 a team from the Iron Gates Region Museum (Muzeul Regiunii Porților de Fier) conducted a field walk on the occasion of an archaeological diagnostic determined by the introduction of an optical fiber network².

The hill and therefore the site were heavily affected by the unauthorized gravel excavation conducted by the Livezile commune's Mairie. Gravel was extracted from this location to pave a road, thus destroying an important part of the site.

The site's location is at around 11 kilometers South-East from Drobeta Turnu-Severin, in the administrative boundary of Ștefan Odobleja village, Livezile commune (*Hoțu* or *Valea Hoților* until 1962, *Valea Izvorului* until 2005). The objective is found on the West side of communal road DC22, at 8,6 kilometers North-North-West from Livezile Orthodox church, at 6,5 kilometers North-East from Hinova Orthodox church, at 12,3 kilometers South-West from Cervența Orthodox church and at 600 meters North from Bistrița – Ștefan Odobleja road (DN606B). The GPS coordinates are: 44°35'5.87"N, 22°49'24.91"E and the Stereo70 coordinates are: 327342.20987, 345125.217176 and the altitude is of 327 meters (Fig. 1).

The site is found at the descent of two valleys (Gârnița towards North-East and Blahnița towards North-West). From a geomorphological point of view, the site speculates a higher ground created from terrace deposits of clay layers towards the surface and light marl deposits at the base. Due to the clay substrate on top of light deposits, superficial landslides can occur as the ones that are visible on the slope towards Gârnița Valley.

The distribution of the values that suggest the declivity emphasize the relatively plane areas (towards South-East) that were favorable to the evolution of the settlement, but also the slope differences that are likely to cause landslides. The very high values (55–58 degrees) are generated in this particular case by the resolution of the elevation model obtained through photogrammetry and it displays a series of errors in the arboreal areas. The digital elevation model reveals the highly affected area as a result of clay extraction, but also the elevated area of the terrace (towards East) where the

¹ Gabriel Crăciunescu forwards the information to the archaeologist who was specialized in the research of Sălcuța culture. Cătălin Nicolae Pătroi. See Pătroi 2018a, 11; Pătroi 2018, 57.

² <http://ran.cimec.ro/sel.asp?descript=stefan-odobleja-livezile-mehedinti-situl-arheologic-de-la-stefan-odobleja-patrascoana-cod-sit-ran-112655.01> (consulted 11.06.2019).

inhabitation developed³. From the estimated 9 hectares surface occupied by the site, about 0,1 hectares is destroyed by the gravel extraction (Pl. I/1a-d).

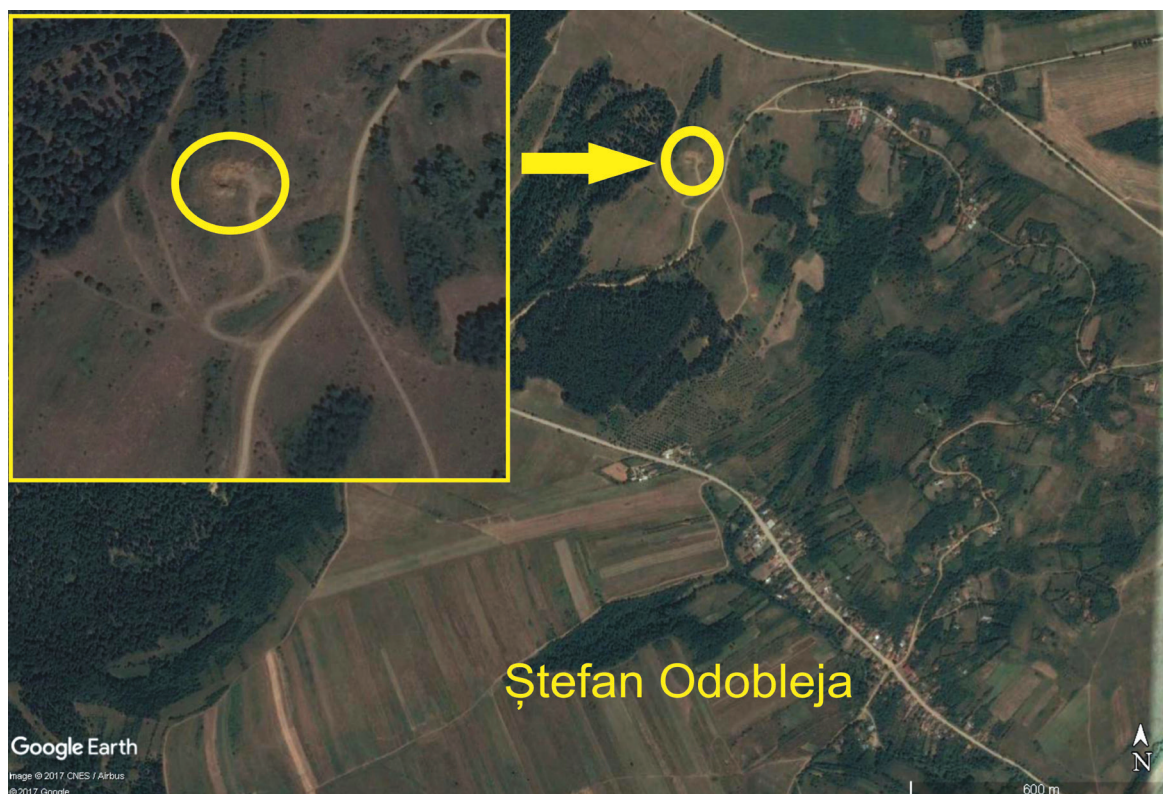


Fig. 1. The site's location on a *Google Earth* image (consulted 11.03.2019).

Archaeological materials were recovered from the destroyed area: chipped lithic tools (Pl. III/1–13) and pottery coming from the collapsed profile.

A stratigraphy of about 1,6 meters composed of many anthropic layers in which a series of pits and three burned clay platforms (homes?) is visible in the profile resulted after the gravel excavation⁴ (Pl. I/1a-c).

Pottery

The pottery fragments can be divided into three distinctive notes, according to the morphological features of the clay, attention to how they were fired and surface treatment methods.

The specific of the coarse pottery is the mix of large grain sand as temper (even small stones in some cases). The surfaces are carefully polished. The firing took place in both reducing and oxidation atmospheres. The decorations are diverse and they are composed by:

1. Alveoli created by pinching the clay: pointed oval, type E1f (Pl. IV/3), alveoli with pyramidal surface between them, type C4b (Pl. IV/4), large, oval alveoli, type C2c⁵ (Pl. IV/6).
2. Oblique, very close parallel lines (incisions), type B1a (Pl. IV /5).
3. Barbotine organized in parallel lines (Pl. IV /7) or barbotine in oblique lines (Pl. V /3).

Semicircular handles were found, they were applied perpendicular to the rim of the pot, both perforated (Pl. IV/8) or not (Pl. IV/9). The common shapes are pots with slightly arched and splay cylindrical or tronconic necks, type B1 (Pl. V/9) and most probably amphora (Pl. V/8).

The pottery that we consider to be semi-fine presents large grain sand as temper. The surfaces are treated both through polishing and burnishing. The firing is of good quality. The colors found are: orange, brown, black or diverse shades of these colors. Only one fragment attributed to this kind is

³ Values offered by Al. Hegyi.

⁴ The profile of the extraction point is not cardinal points oriented due to its semicircular shape (see Plate I/1a).

⁵ The decorations and shapes were identified in Adriana Radu's typology for Sălcuța Culture (Radu 2002).

decorated. The decor is composed of parallel curve incisions associated with short oblique incisions (Pl. IV /1). The types of pots found are: tronconic neck pot, with a pointed prominence, perforated, which connects the neck to the body, type B4a (Pl. VI/7); bowl with pronounced shoulder and with rim margin arched in the upper side, strongly arched, type B2e2 (Pl. VI/1); bowl with slightly arched rim exterior, type A2b1 (Pl. V/2); pot with arched body, slightly arched short neck, type D7 (Plate V/4).

The fine pottery has fine sand as temper and carefully polished surfaces. The most often found colors are: black, orange, red, burgundy, whitish red, etc. The specific decorations are distanced oblique nervures, type A1c (Pl. IV/2); arched nervures, type A5a (Pl. VI/6); slightly pronounced grooves, type A3 (Pl. V/5); semicircular incisions (Pl. V/6). The identifiable shapes are bowls with arched exterior rim, rounded interior shoulder area, type A2g (Plate V/5); bitronconic body beaker (Pl. V/6) or amphoreta (Pl. V/7).

A pottery fragment with a distinguished decoration was found, formed from a semi-fine clay which is dusty, with large grain sand as temper, with oxidising firing and both surfaces polished and with brick-red color. The decoration was made with small pyramidal prominences that cover the entire surface of the fragment (Pl. VI/5). A similar decoration was found on a vessel discovered at Valea Aninilor⁶ and also on a vessel discovered at Deveataska Pestera (attributed to Krivodol group)⁷.

A special surface decoration was done by painting using the *crusted* technique with a creamy white pigment. Thus, decors composed of narrow stripes and spiral stripes (Pl. VI/2) were created (Pl. VI/1, 3–4).

Clay loom weights

Alongside pottery fragments coming from different pots, also four clay loom weights were found. From a morphological point of view, these can be divided in two categories: conical and oval shaped in section, flat.

1. Weight, fragmentary, secondary firing, clay with large grain sand as temper. The perforation, with 1,4 cm in diameter, is found throughout the entire fragment on the long side. The base of the weight had an oval shape and has the following dimensions: length max. 8 cm, width max. 5 cm (Fig.2/1).

2. Conical weight preserved in fragmentary condition, shaped from clay with large grain sand as temper, secondary firing. The perforation has a 1,2 cm diameter. The base has a 6,2 cm diameter. (Fig. 2/2).

3. Conical weight reserved in fragmentary condition, shaped from clay with small stones as temper, oxidising firing. The perforation has a 1,2 cm diameter. The base has a 6 cm diameter. (Fig. 2/3).

4. Conical weight shaped from clay with large grain sand as temper, oxidising firing. The weight is unbroken



Fig. 2. Clay loom weights (Photo by O.C. Rogozea)

⁶ Pătroi 2015, p. 309, fig. 287/1a-b.

⁷ Georgieva 2012, p. 199, fig. 7/9; Pătroi 2015, p. 309, fig. 287/2.

and has the following dimensions: height 9 cm, base diameter 5,4 cm, weight 22,9 grams. The perforation is oval and has 1,2 cm in length and 0,9 cm in width (Fig. 2/4).

Conclusions

From a cultural and chronological point of view, the archaeological materials discovered at Ștefan Odobleja –1/*Dealul Pătrășcoanea* can be attributed to Late Aeneolithic / Early Chalcolithic. The pot shapes along decorations and clay technological characteristics indicate they belong to Sălcuța culture, more precisely phases IIb-IIc (4468–4504 și 4354–4245 BC⁸).

In support to this dating comes the *crusted* type painting through which spiral or angular stripes were created⁹. The painted pottery within Sălcuța culture is rare (unfortunately, no statistical data exist) and more decors types are known, among which narrow stripes and spiral stripes¹⁰, decors also found in this particular site.

Similar archaeological materials were found in Banat region in the settlements at Cuptoare-Sfoge¹¹ and Peștera Rolului¹². In Oltenia region analogies can be found at: Almăjel-Valea Seacă/Fântânile Mari¹³, Brebeni-Ogașul/Ogorul lui Ioniță Țiganul¹⁴; Cerăt¹⁵, Cârcea-Viaduct¹⁶; Ocnele Mari-Coasta Ungurească/Ungurenilor¹⁷; Ostrovul Șimian¹⁸; Valea Anilor-La Glâmie/Malul Înalt¹⁹, Vădastra-Măgura Cetate²⁰; Drobeta Turnu-Severin²¹, Fărcașu de Jos-La Școală²².

The Ștefan Odobleja – *Dealul Pătrășcoanea* settlement attributed to the IInd phase of Sălcuța culture adds to the 12 contemporary settlements known to date in Banat and Oltenia regions (Pl. 1/2).

An urgent preventive excavation is necessary for this new reported site. The exposure of the excavated area is already the subject of a constant erosion and it determines the movement of archaeological layers and materials, wasting valuable data regarding the archaeological context.

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- ⁸ Lazarovici-Lazarovici 2007, 63.
- ⁹ Radu 2002, 367; Pătroi 2015, 313, fig. 292.
- ¹⁰ Pătroi 2015, 310.
- ¹¹ Radu 2002, 182–184.
- ¹² Radu 2002, 29.
- ¹³ Galbenu 1983, 144, 154; Pătroi 2007, 66; Pătroi 2015, 445; Pătroi 2018a, 15–16.
- ¹⁴ Pătroi 2007, 11; Pătroi 2013, 28; Pătroi 2015, 446–447; Pătroi 2018a, 20–21.
- ¹⁵ Popescu 1969, 473; Galbenu 1975, 10; Pătroi 2007, 79; Pătroi 2015, 447.
- ¹⁶ Pătroi 2015, 447.
- ¹⁷ Gheorghe-Govora 1995, 14; Pătroi 2007, 148; Iosifaru 2011, 87; Pătroi 2015, 451.
- ¹⁸ Pătroi 2015, 452.
- ¹⁹ Pătroi 2007, 28; Pătroi 2015, 455.
- ²⁰ Berciu 1961, 58; Mareș 2002, 331; Pătroi 2011, 143; Pătroi 2013, 140–141; Pătroi 2015, 455–456.
- ²¹ Pătroi 2007, 14–13; Pătroi 2015, 461.
- ²² Pătroi 2015, 461.

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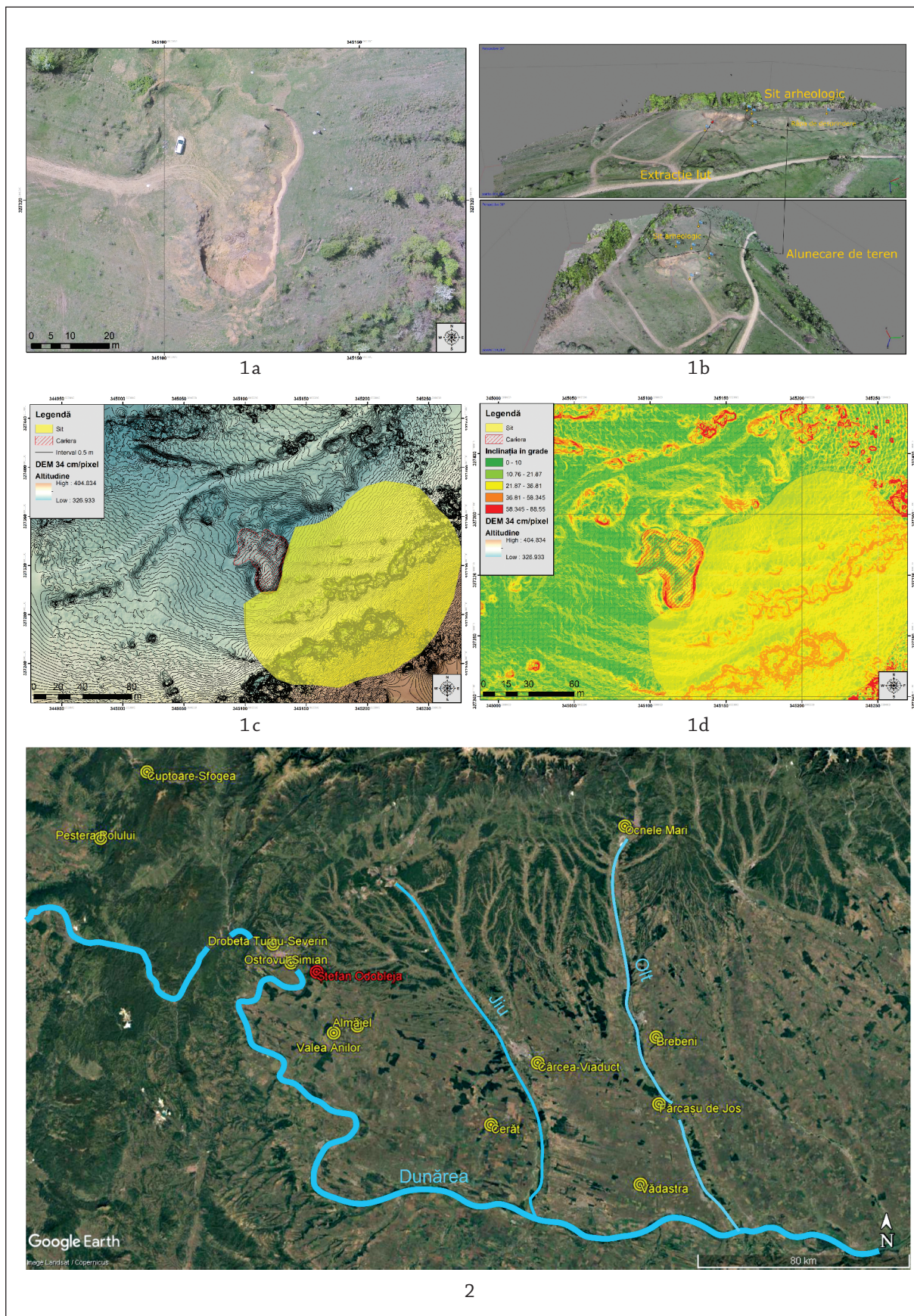


Plate I. 1-2. The distribution of sites attributed to the IInd phase of Sălcuța culture in Banat and Oltenia regions

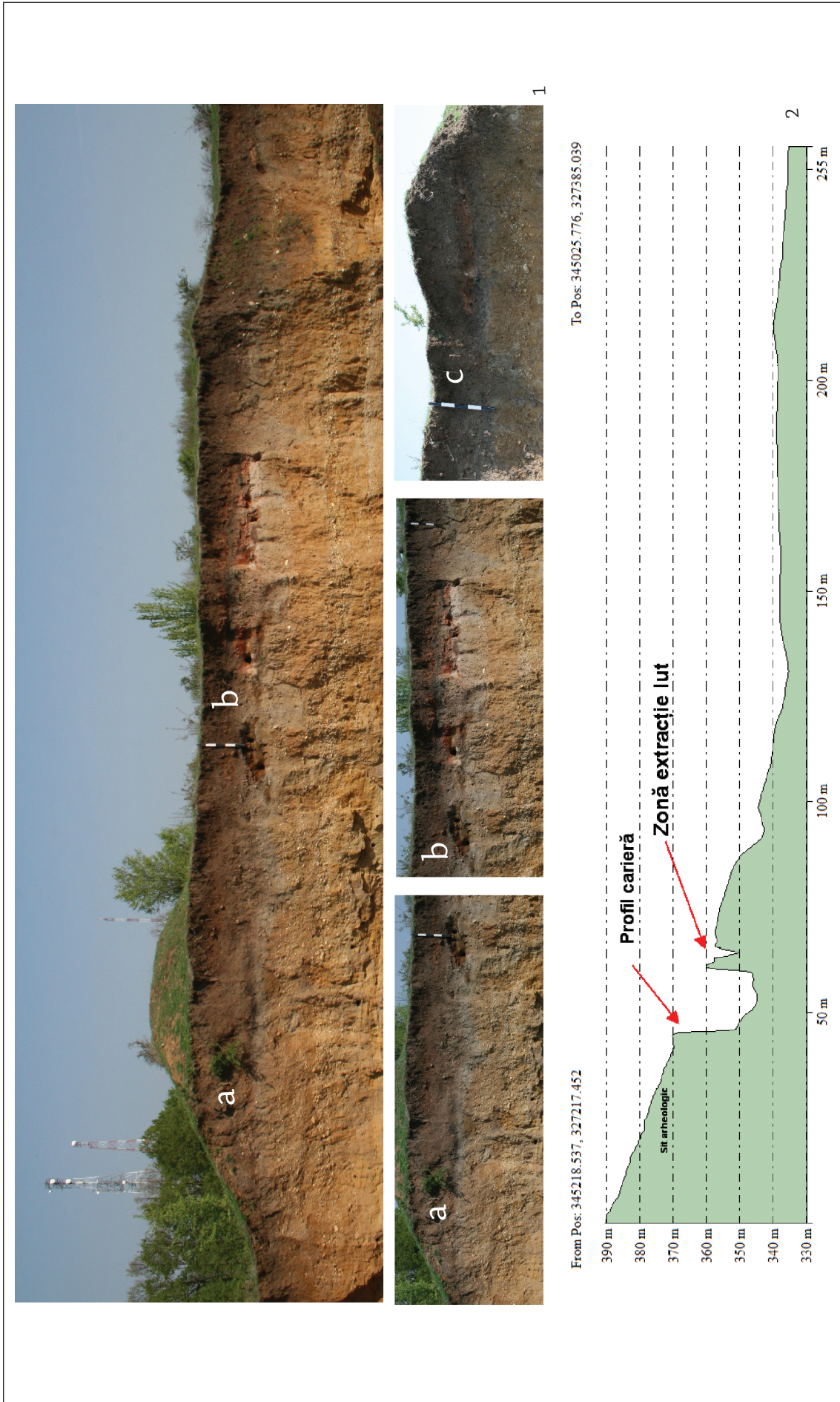


Plate II. 1. Profile through the affected area. 2. North-South oriented profile.

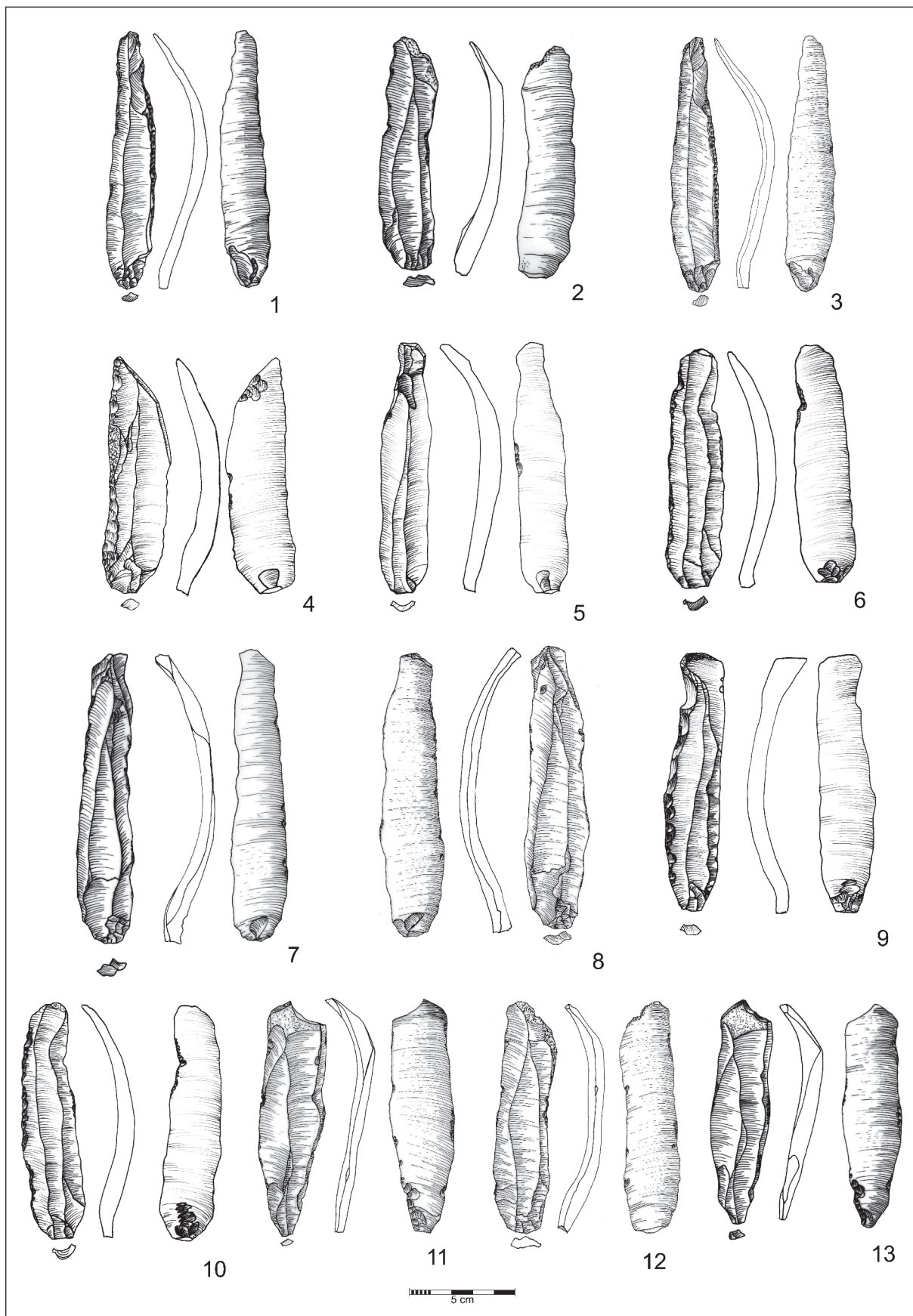


Plate III. 1-13. Chipped lithic tools from the Ștefan Odobleja - 1/
Dealul Pătrășcoanea site (Drawings by F. Mărcuți)

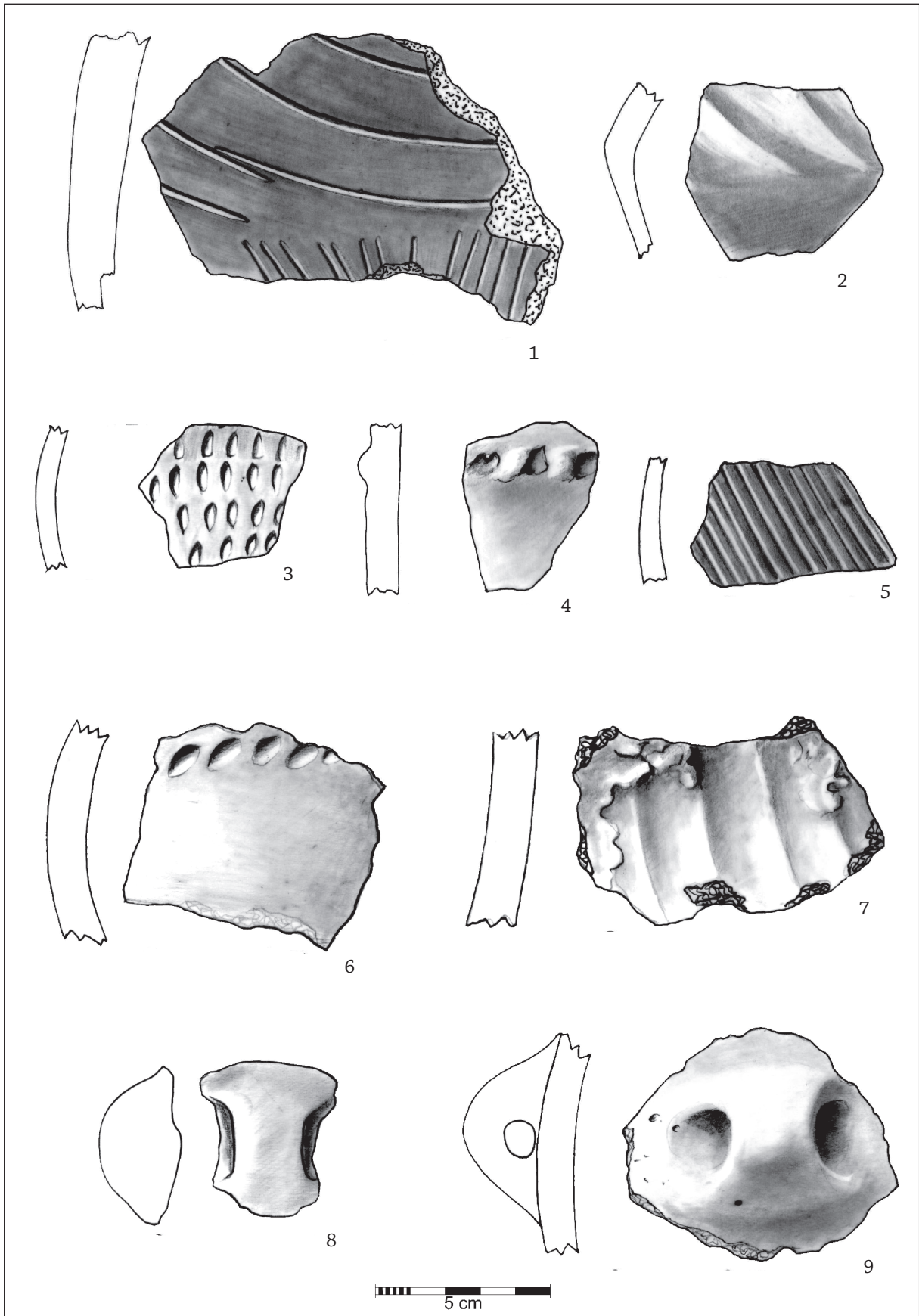


Plate IV. 1-9. Pottery fragments from the Ștefan Odobleja - 1/Dealul Pătrășcoanea site (Drawings by F. Mărcuți)

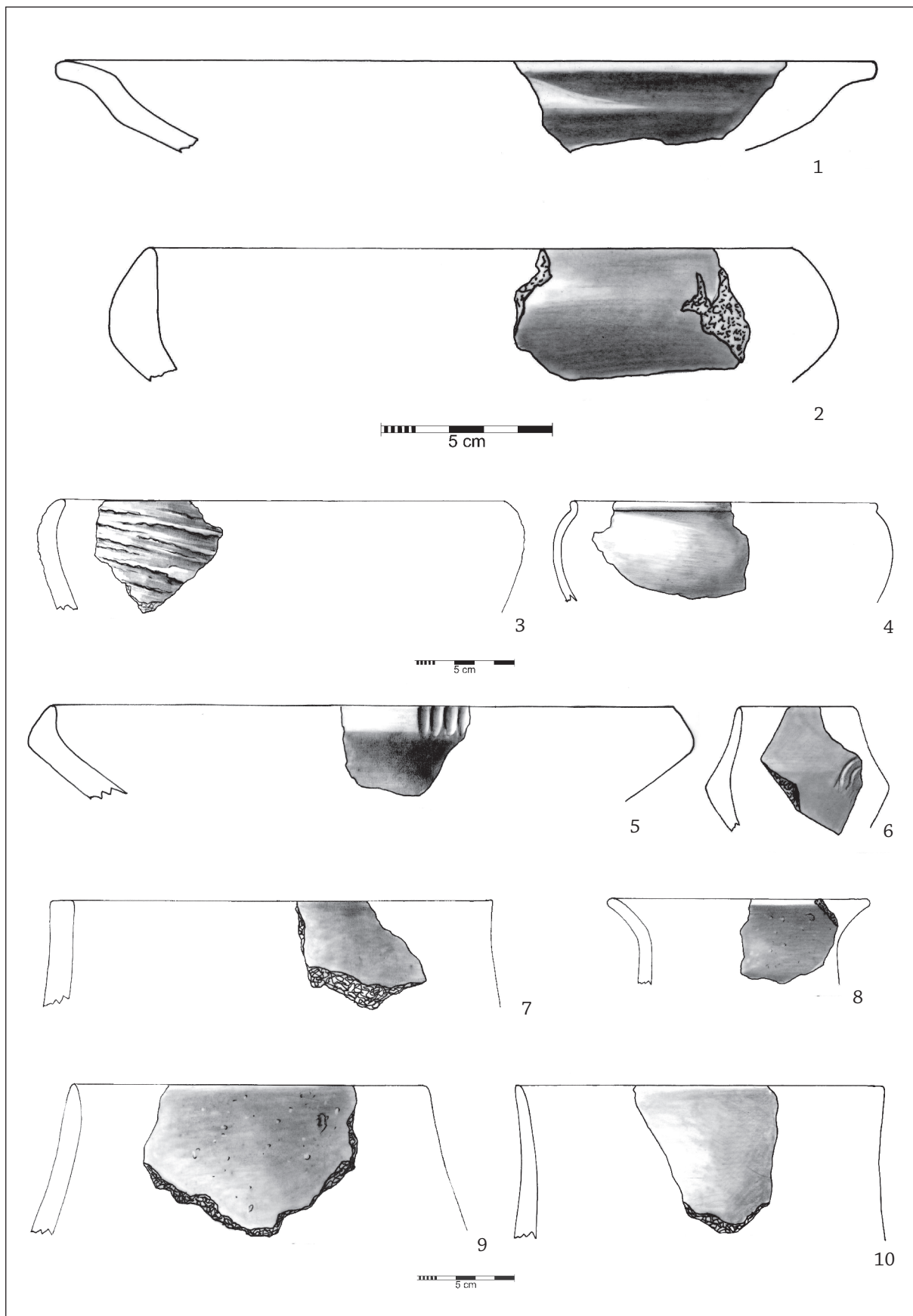


Plate V. 1-10. Pottery fragments from the Ștefan Odobleja - 1/Dealul Pătrășcoanea site (Drawings by F. Mărcuți)

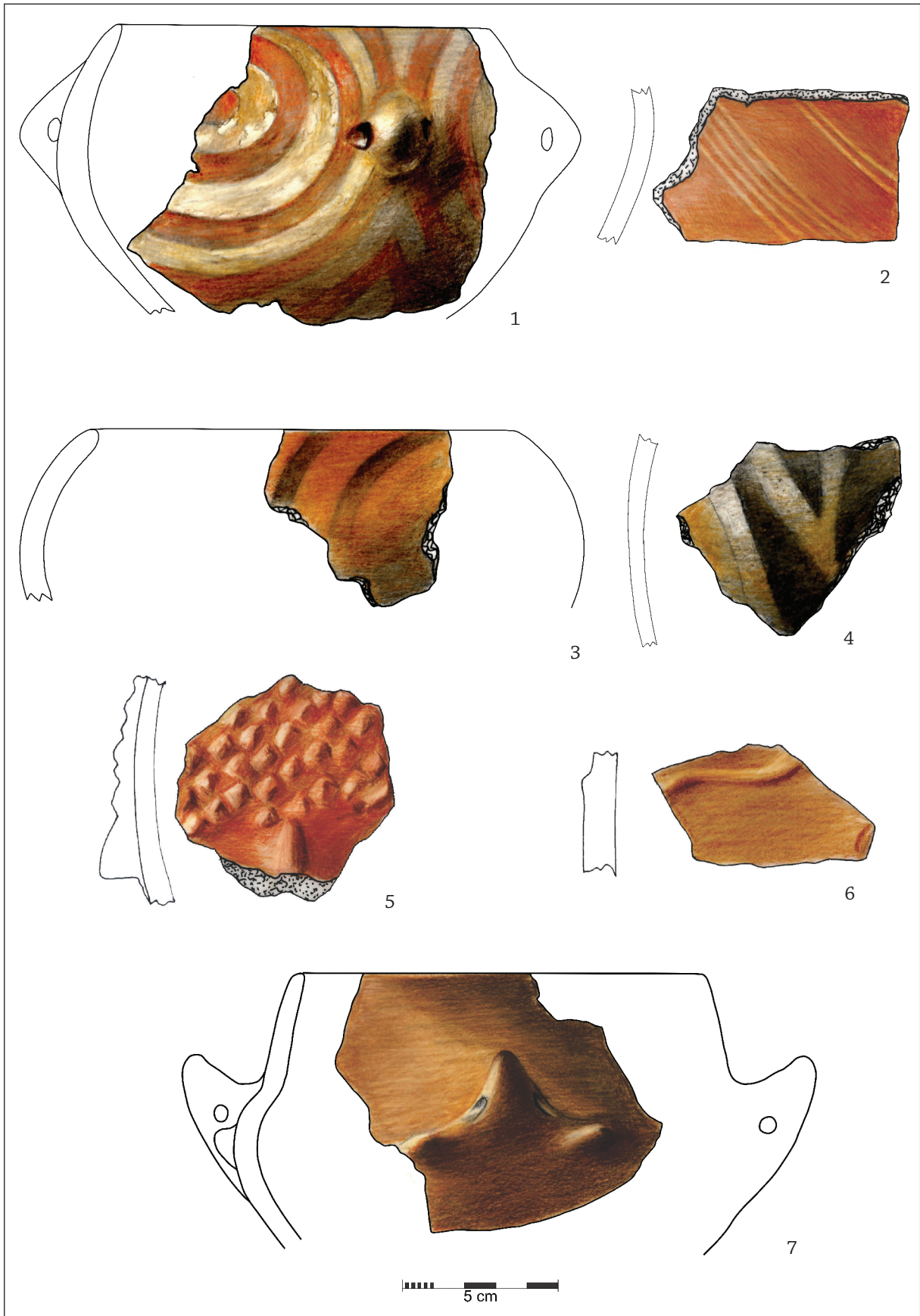


Plate VI. 1-7. Pottery fragments from the Ștefan Odobleja - 1/Dealul Pătrășcoana site (Drawings by F. Mărcuți)

Abbreviations

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| AAASH | Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, Budapesta. |
| AAC | Acta Archaeologica Carpathica, Cracovia. |
| Alba Regia | Alba Regia. Annales Musei Stephani regis, Székesfehérvár. |
| Angvstia | Angvstia. Sfântu Gheorghe. |
| Arabona | Győri Xántus János Múzeum, Győr. |
| ArchÉrt | Archaeologiai Értesítő, Budapesta. |
| ArchHung | Archaeologia Hungarica, Series Nova, Budapest. |
| ArhMold | ArheologiaMoldovei. Iași. |
| Arheologija/Archeologiya | Arheologija/ Archeologiya. Sofia. |
| Apulum | Acta MuseiApulensis – Apulum. Alba-Iulia. |
| AMN | Acta Musei Napocensis, Cluj-Napoca. |
| AMP | Acta Musei Porolissensis, Zalău. |
| BAM | Brvkenthal Acta Mvsei. Sibiu. |
| BHAB | (Museum Banaticum Temesiense) Bibliotheca Historica et Archaeologica Banatica. |
| BMMK | A Békés Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei. Békéscsaba. |
| BMA | Bibliotheca Memoriae Antiquitatis, Piatra Neamț. |
| BMN | Bibliotheca Musei Napocensis. |
| BudRég | Budapest Régiségei. Budapest. |
| CCA | Cronica Cercetărilor Arheologice din România, București. |
| CRSCRCR | Coins from Roman sites and collections of Roman coins from Romania. |
| Dacia N.S. | Dacia. Revue d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne. Nouvelle serie. București. |
| EphNap | Ephemeris Napocensis. Cluj-Napoca. |
| Ethnographia | Ethnographia. A Magyar Néprajzi Társaság Folyóirata. Budapest. |
| FADDP/GMADP | Führer zu archäologischen Denkmälern in Dacia Porolissensis/Ghid al monumentelor arheologice din Dacia Porolissensis |
| FolArch | Folia Archaeologica. Budapest. |
| Hesperia | Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. Athens. |
| MCA | Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice. Bucharest. |
| MFME | A Móra Ferenc Múz. Évkönyve. Szeged. |
| MFME SE | Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve: Studia Ethnographica. Szeged. |
| MFME-StudArch | A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve, Studia Archaeologica. Szeged. |
| MGTSZ | Magyar Gazdaságtörténeti Szemle. Budapest. |
| MMA | Monumenta Avarorum Archaeologica, Budapest. |
| Mousaios | Mousaios. Buletin Științific al Muzeului Județean Buzău, Buzău. |
| NyJAMÉ | Jósa András Múzeum Évkönyve. Nyiregyháza. |
| OM | Orbis Mediaevalis, Arad. |
| PAT | Patrimonium Archaeologicum Transylvanicum. Cluj Napoca. |
| PBF | Praehistorische Bronzefunde. Berlin. |
| PeuceS.N | PEUCE. Studii și cercetări de istorie și arheologie. Serie nouă. Tulcea. |
| RI, SN | Revista Istorică, Serie Nouă. București. |
| RMM-MIA | Revista Muzeelor și Monumentelor. seria Monumente istorice și de artă. București. |
| SA | Sovietskaia Arheologija. Moscova. |
| SCIV(A) | Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche. București. |
| SlovArch | Slovenská Archeológia. Nitra. |
| SPMA | Studies in Post-Medieval Archaeology. Prague. |

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