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Studii și materiale

XXXIV–XXXV

Arheologie



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XXXIV–XXXV

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NEW PREHISTORIC DISCOVERIES FROM ALBIȘ/KÉZDIALBIS (COVASNA COUNTY, ROMANIA)

JÓZSEF PUSKÁS

Keywords: south-eastern Transylvania, Wietenberg culture, Gáva culture, en-violon typ figurine, casting mould
Cuvinte cheie: sud-estul Transilvaniei, cultura Wietenberg, cultura Gáva, figurină sub formă de vioară, tipar

The main goal of this paper is to present a few artefacts discovered in Albiș, Covasna County, dated back to the Middle and Late Bronze Age. The Middle Bronze Age ceramics belong to the Wietenberg culture, to its 3rd phase of evolution. The Late Bronze Age is represented by the ceramics of the Gáva culture, very likely the 2nd phase of development. To this culture belongs a fragmentary en-violon type clay figurine and a casting mould, a unique piece of this type until present.

Albiș (Kézdialbis) is a small village lying 14 km south-west from Târgu Secuiesc (Kézdivásárhely), at the eastern foots of the Bodoc-mountains, in the valley of the Albis stream. In administrative terms it belongs to Cernat (Csernát) commune.

Until the end of the 20th century only a few, randomly discovered artefacts were known from the territory of the village.¹ In 1998 parallel with the rescue excavations in the local church, an archaeological field survey was carried out, which led to the identification of new sites. The first one was discovered in the garden of Ödön Csiszér, where in 2001 archaeological excavations were made, revealing several cultural layers, starting from the Neolithic to the Middle Ages.² The second site was discovered in the garden of Ferenc Bajka. During the excavations in 2003 ceramic fragments from the Copper age to Modern Age were unearthed.³ On both sites Middle and Late Bronze Age pottery was discovered. In 2010 during communal work the upper part of a large storage vessel was found, which belongs to the 4th century AD.⁴

In the vicinity of Bajka Ferenc's land lies the parcel of the Márton family.⁵ At the beginning of the 2000 years Tóth Árpád collected a significant amount of material, which can be enrolled to the prehistoric age and the 4th century AD.⁶ In this study I would like to present the prehistoric findings, which belongs to the Coțofeni-, Wietenberg- and Gáva-cultures.

Description of the findings⁷

Coțofeni culture

1. A fragment from the body of a vessel, tempered with sand, burnt on light-brown, polished surfaces. The outer surface is decorated with incised "fishbone" motif (*Pl. 2/1*).

Wietenberg culture

2. A fragment from a vessel, made of fine paste, burnt on black, glazed surface, decorated with incised parallel lines, filled with simultaneous

¹ Roska 1942, 12, no. 14; Crișan 1969, 251, no. 3; RepCovasna 1998, 69, no. 161–165; Székely 2007a, 89, 100, 110.

² Székely et al. 1999, 161–170; Székely – Bordi 2000a, 131–144; Székely – Bordi 2000b, no. 11; Székely 2001, 175–189; Székely 2002, no. 14; Bordi 2003, 31–34; Székely 2003, 469–482; Székely 2007a, 94–100; Székely 2007b, 225–230.

³ Székely 2004, no. 20; Székely 2007a, 89–93.

⁴ Puskás 2012, 115–116.

⁵ The parcel is located approximately 300 m west from the local church. House nr. 146.

⁶ I would like to thank to Tóth Árpád for giving free run of the material for publication. The 4th century findings will be published in a different study.

⁷ Abbreviations used in the text: rd: rim diameter; md: maximum diameter; bd: bottom diameter; l: length; w: width; h: height; t: thickness.

impressions (*Zahnstempelung*). Probably part of a meandric motif (*Pl. 2/2*).

3. A fragment from a shoulder of a large vessel, made of fine paste, burnt on black. The outer surface is decorated with impressed circles and triangles, followed by a “fishbone” motif (*Pl. 2/3*).

4. A fragment from the body of a vessel, tempered with sand, light-brown burnt, polished outer surface. The outer side is decorated with two horizontally incised, parallel lines, filled with oblique incisions (*Pl. 2/4*).

5. A fragment of a four-lobes bowl, the upper part of the rounded rim mildly splayed-out, tempered with sand and gravel, having a light-brown-reddish colour and polished surface. The decoration consists of incised parallel lines on the neck and the shoulder, filled with crosshatched lines (*Pl. 2/5*).

6. A fragment from a mildly splayed-out rim, tempered with sand and gravel. The coarse surfaces have grey and brown colour with black patches. Under the rim it is decorated with a horizontal, impressed rib (*Pl. 2/6*).

7. A fragment from the body of a vessel, tempered with sand, dark grey burnt, polished outer surface. The decoration consists of incised double-line spiral motif, filled with crosshatched lines. Noticeable is the white material, used for filling the incisions (*Pl. 2/7*).

Gáva culture

8. A fragment of a cup with overriding handle, rounded rim, made of fine paste, dark grey colour, with a light brown patch on the handle. It is undecorated. Dimensions: rd: 14.2 cm; md: 15.2 cm (*Pl. 2/8*).

9. A fragment of a large vessel, tempered with sand and gravel, cylindrical neck, prominent shoulder. The inner surface burnt on light-brown, coarse, the outer on black, smoothed. The prominent belly is decorated with oblique, wide channelling (*Pl. 3/1*).

10. A fragment from a large vessel, made of fine paste, light-brown and black coloured, with a coarse inner and a smoothed outer surface, decorated with garland channelling (*Pl. 3/2*).

11. Bag-shaped vessel fragment, tempered with sand and crushed potsherds, brick-red colour inside and light-brown outside, coarse surface, with a knob and impressed cord (*Pl. 3/3*).

12. A fragment from a large vessel, with outcurved rim, well smoothed and polished surface, with brick-red inner and brown-greyish outer colour (*Pl. 3/4*).

13. A fragment of a vessel made of fine paste, burnt on black with greyish patches, smoothed surface. The inner surface decorated with narrow channelling (*Pl. 3/5*).

14. Half part of a casting mould, a small piece of the upper part missing, made of sandstone. It was used to make socketed axes with a small loop, decorated with parabolic motif and two parallel ribs on the upper part. Approximate dimension of the axe-form: l: cca.12 cm; w (with ear): 6.1 cm. Dimensions of the casting mould: l: 14 cm; w: 10 cm; h: 5.3 cm. The sides of the object are coarse, probably it is unfinished (*Pl. 4/1*).

15. A fragment of a vessel made of fine paste, with sand temper, brick-red colour, on the outer surface “decoration” made with a comb (*Pl. 4/2*).

16. A fragment of a small bowl, with rounded, mildly outcurved rim, made of fine paste, burnt on black, polished surface. It is undecorated. Dimensions: rd: 10.7 cm; md: 12 cm (*Pl. 4/3*).

17. A fragmentary anthropomorphic clay figurine made of fine paste, light-brown colour, the surface being covered by a thin layer of slip. There are two knobs on both edges. One side is decorated with double-incised “V”-shape line, flanked by impressed dots. On the upper part, near the broken surface, two rows of impressed points can be observed. Dimensions: h: 5.3 cm; w: 4.2 cm (*Pl. 4/4*).

The following objects may belong to both at the above mentioned cultures, so I described them separately.

18. A fragment of a clay wheel, with perforated, thickened part of the axle, made of fine paste, greyish colour. It is undecorated. Dimension: md: 5.3 cm (*Pl. 4/5*).

19. Fragment of a flat bronze object. It is undecorated. Dimensions: l: 2.4 cm; w: 2 cm; t: 0.2 cm (*Pl. 4/6*).

20. Sharpened bone tool. It is undecorated. Dimension: l: 6.7 cm (*Pl. 4/7*).

Analysis of the findings

The “fishbone”-like decoration of the Coțofeni sherd is common for all the periods of development, so it has no chronological value. Similar findings are known from Cluj-Napoca, Nandru, Bocșa Montană,⁸ Filiaș,⁹ etc. The pottery belonging to the Middle Bronze Age Wietenberg culture is poor, but the few characteristic decorations

⁸ Roman 1976, 141, pl. 41/5–7.

⁹ Sztáncsuj – Körösfői 2009, 36,

can help to a more precise dating of the material. Simultaneous impression (*Zahnstempelung*) was widely used in the 3rd period of the culture, mostly to fill the spiral and meandric hooks and other complex motifs.¹⁰ Another specific decorating technique of this period was the incrustation with white material,¹¹ also present at the Albiş-*Márton kert* (*Márton garden*) site. In Rotbav pottery decorated with this technique was found mostly in the 3rd (upper) level,¹² which was dated in the 15th century BC.¹³ Similar material is known from Baraolt, Cicău, Sibişeni, etc.¹⁴ The pottery belonging to the Gáva culture has analogies from the Mediaş, Poian, Reci and Teleac sites.¹⁵ The ceramic material is insufficient for a precise dating, instead the casting mould and the clay figurine can give us a clearer picture.

In the present state of research we don't know any analogy for the casting mould,¹⁶ although many socketed axes, with similar form and decoration were discovered at Blandiana,¹⁷ Nou Săsesc, Sâmbăta Nouă I, Fizeşu Gherlii II,¹⁸ Bancu¹⁹ or in the vicinity of Sângeorgiu de Pădure.²⁰ These kinds of weapons/tools were ranked by M. Rusu in the C₁₀ type.²¹ The distribution area of this type of socketed axe is Eastern-Europe.²² The first socketed axes with parabolic decoration appear in bronze hoards at the end of the Bronze Age (BzD-HaA), being used on different scales till the end of the HaB period.²³ Axes decorated with parabolic motif, combined with parallel, double ribs under the rim were found in the hoards of Moigrad-Tăuteu and Sângeorgiu de Pădure-Fizeşu Gherlii horizons, belonging to the HaB1 respectively HaB2 periods.²⁴

The anthropomorphic figurine has good analogies from the settlements at Teleac,²⁵ Racoş, Krivče, Lissičniki or Țăhnauți,²⁶ all of them belonging to the Early Iron Age. On the basis of the above mentioned parallels and after N. Boroffka's reconstruction,²⁷ I consider that the piece had a triangular upper part, lowered hands and discoid formed bottom. Thus it can be listed within the so called "en-violon" type figurine. The incised lines may represent the décolletage of clothing,²⁸ or most likely necklace or some kind of jewellery, but one cannot exclude other clothing accessories as well. The figurine may be also reversed (the discoidal part would be the head), but the analogies suggest the correctness of the previous idea. N. Boroffka dated the figurine from Teleac in the HaB,²⁹ while A. László suggests a wider time span.³⁰ Two other pieces belong to the HaC period.³¹ The meaning and significance of these objects can't be determined without question. Some researchers link them to fecundity rituals,³² others claim that "they were used in the field of magic and witchcraft"³³ or as amulets.³⁴ Contrary to different opinions most of the authors agree with the cultic significance of these objects. Recently the distribution and the possible interpretations of these anthropomorphic figurines of the Early Iron Age was resumed by S. Berecki.³⁵

Based on the archaeological finds the Late Bronze Age³⁶ settlement from Albiş-*Márton kert* can be linked to the 2nd phase of evolution (maybe the first half of the 3rd stage?) of the Gáva culture, which is dated to HaB1-B2. In absolute terms of chronology this means the period between 1050-880 BC.³⁷

¹⁰ Andrişoiu 1992, 52.

¹¹ Andrişoiu 1992, 52.

¹² Dietrich 2014a, 180.

¹³ Dietrich 2014b, 61.

¹⁴ Boroffka 1994a, Taf. 8/3; 45/12; 47/3; 123/8.

¹⁵ Pankau 2004, Taf. 5/2-4; Méder 2006, Taf. 8/1; 9/1-2; Székely 1966, pl. III/1-3; IV/1-3; Ciugudean 2011, pl. IX/2.

¹⁶ Boroffka - Ridiche 2005, 185.

¹⁷ Aldea - Ciugudean 1988, 76, pl. II/3.

¹⁸ Petrescu-Dîmbovița 1977, pl. 298/7; 313/13; 341/7; 345/13.

¹⁹ Roska 1937, 144, 85. Kép/3.

²⁰ Roska 1942, 76, fig. 90/5.

²¹ Rusu 1966, 27.

²² Boroffka-Ridiche 2005, 153.

²³ Rezi 2009, 51-52; Boroffka - Ridiche 2005, 154-155, 203, fig. 9.

²⁴ Aldea - Ciugudean 1988, 73; Petrescu-Dîmbovița 1977, 125-135. In the autumn of 2009 in the nearby commune Cernat, at the place called *Hegyes* (fortified Early Iron Age settlement) a bronze hoard was discovered by archaeologists. Between the objects was a socketed axe with parabolic and triple rib decoration. The hoard was

dated to the HaB1-B2 period (V. Szabó 2011, 339). Kindly information from Gábor V. Szabó, whom I would like to thank on this behalf.

²⁵ Vasiliev 1985-1986, 82, fig. 2/14.

²⁶ Sirbu 1999, 67, fig. 2/4; 3/1, 5; 4/1-2.

²⁷ Boroffka 1994b, 76.

²⁸ Boroffka 1994b, 76.

²⁹ Boroffka 1994b, 75.

³⁰ László 1995, 95.

³¹ Vasiliev 1985-1986, 84.

³² Vasiliev 1985-1986, 84; László 1995, 92.

³³ Sirbu 1999, 57.

³⁴ Boroffka 1994b, 78.

³⁵ Berecki 2013, 313-319.

³⁶ The placement of the Gáva culture in the Late Bronze Age or in the Early Iron Age is disputed, for further information see Ciugudean 2010, 172-173.

³⁷ Ciugudean 2011, 81, fig. 3.

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Rezumat

Scopul lucrării este prezentarea câtorva artefacte descoperite la Albiş, județul Covasna, datate în Epoca Bronzului Mijlociu și Târziu. Ceramica din Bronzul Mijlociu aparține purtătorilor culturii Wietenberg, mai precis fazei al 3-lea de evoluție. Bronzul Târziu este reprezentat de câteva fragmente ceramice din a doua fază a culturii Gáva. Acestor comunități îi aparține și o figurină din lut sub formă de vioară, fragmentar și un tipar de turnat, o piesă unicat până la această dată.

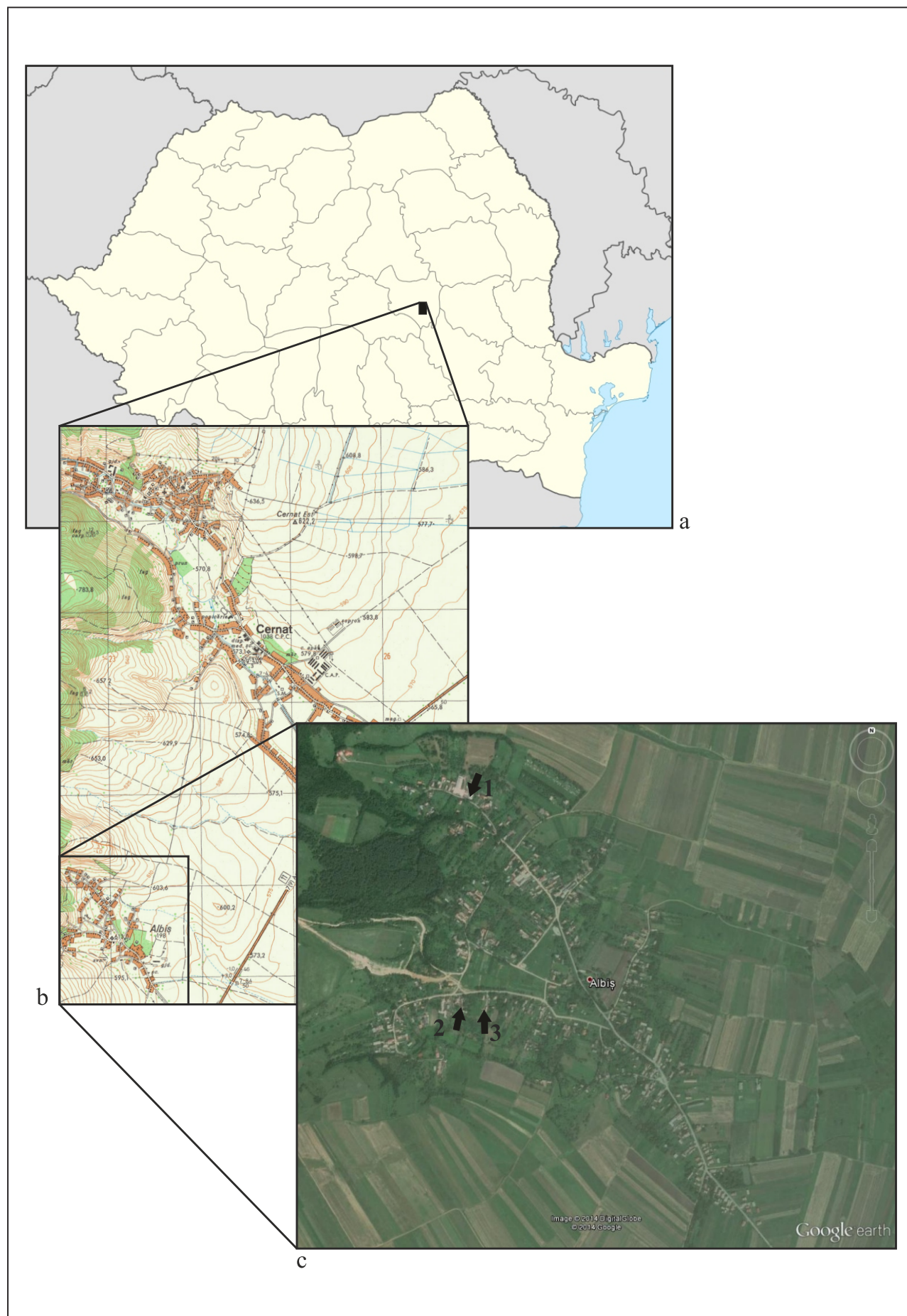


Plate 1. Geographical location of the finding places within Romania (a.) and Albiș (b-c): 1: *Csiszér-kert*; 2: *Bajka-kert*; 3: *Márton-kert*.

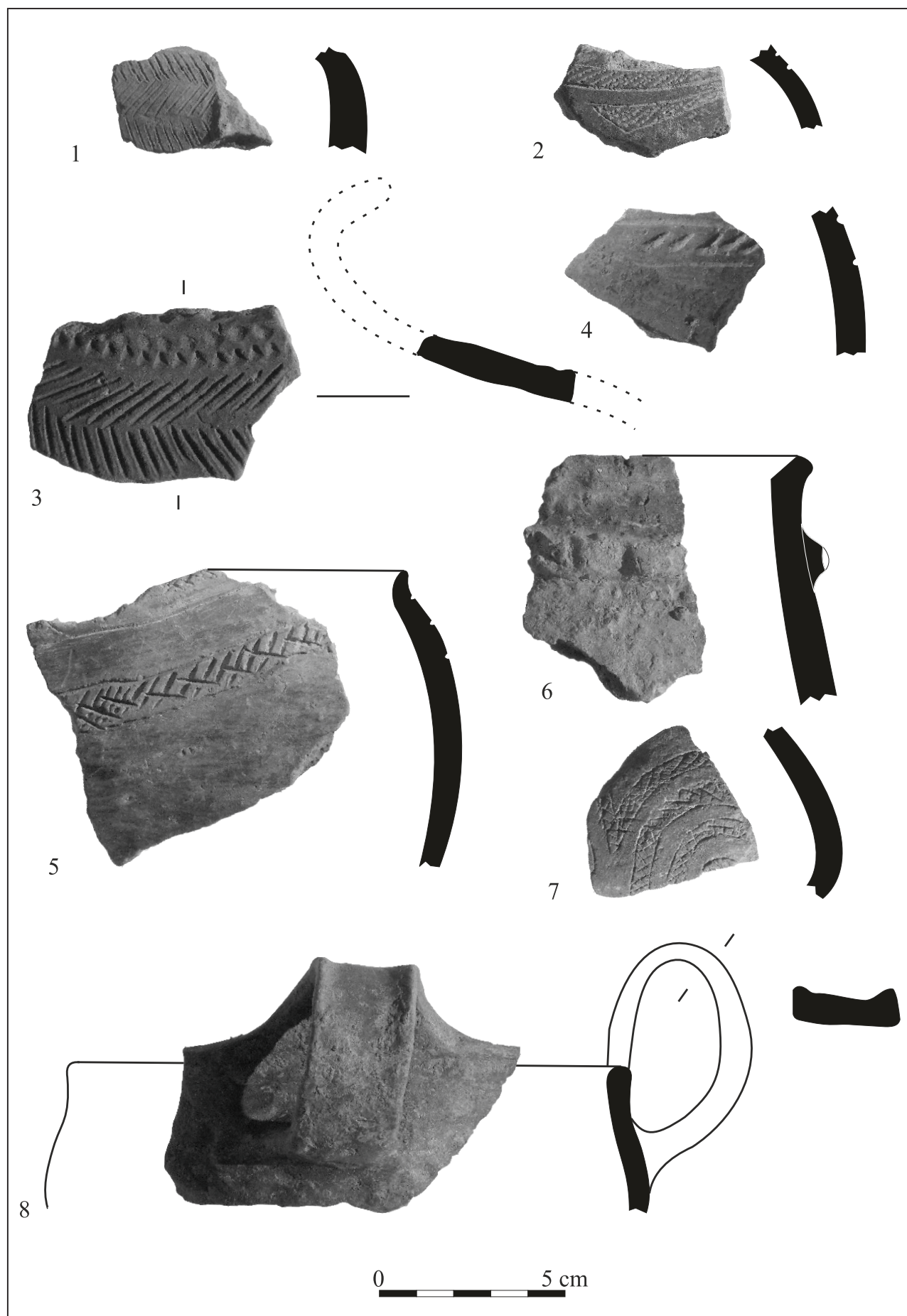


Plate 2. Wietenberg- (1-7.) and Gáva (8.) pottery from Albiş – *Márton-kert*.

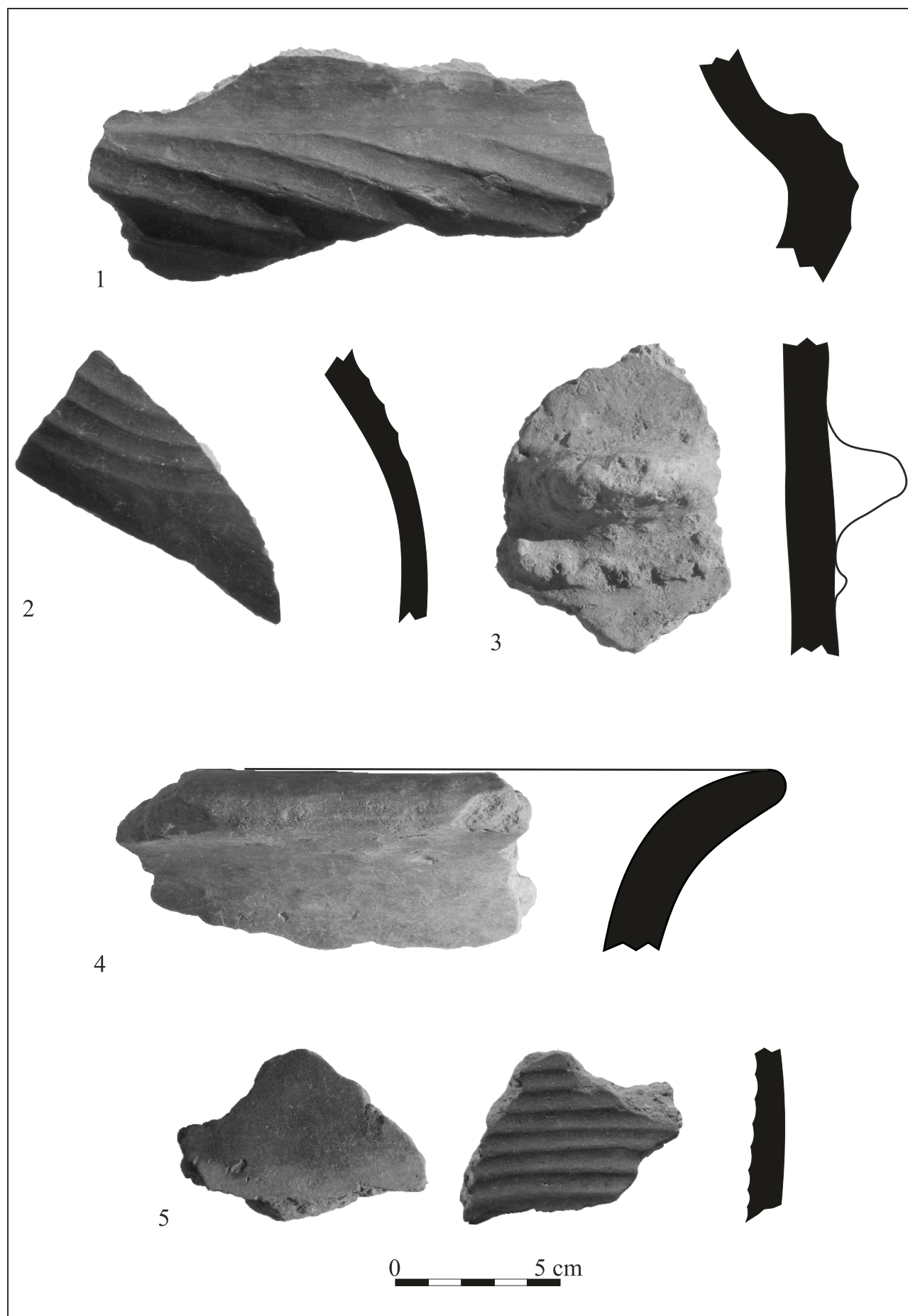


Plate 3. Gáva culture pottery from Albiş – Márton-kert.

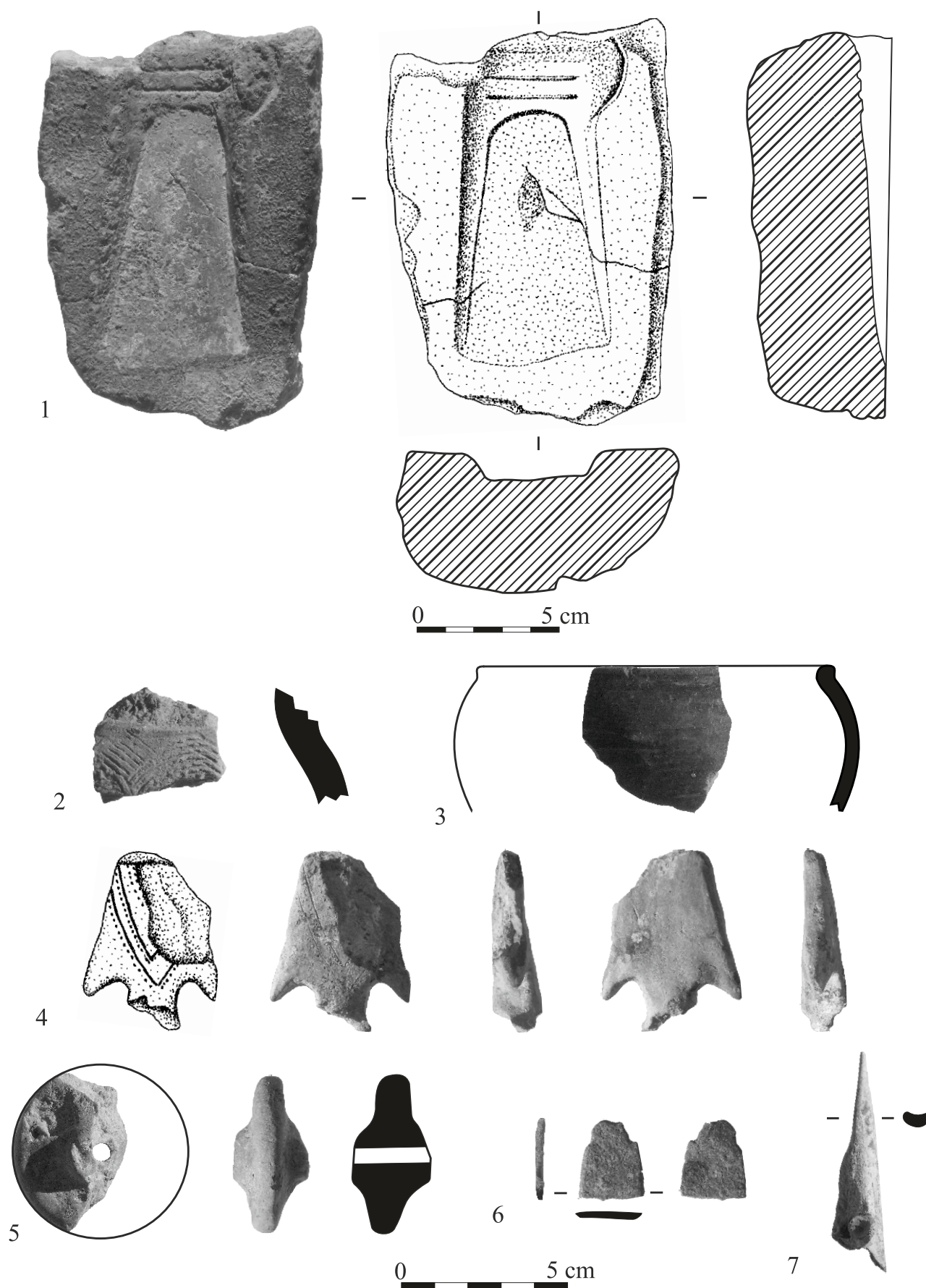


Plate 4. culture discoveries from Albiş – Márton-kert (1-4), undetermined period (5-7).

ABBREVIATIONS

Acta	Acta. Anuarul Muzeului Național Secuiesc și al Muzeului Secuiesc al Ciucului, Sf. Gheorghe
ActaAntPhilippo	Acta Antiqua Philippopolitana, Sophia
ActaArchHung	Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, Budapest
ActaHistSzeged	Acta Historica. Acta Universitatis Scientiarum Szegediensis, Szeged
ActaMM	Acta Moldaviae Meridionalis, Vaslui
ActaMilMed	Acta Militaria Mediaevalia, Sanok
ActaMN	Acta Musei Napocensis, Cluj-Napoca
ActaMP	Acta Musei Porolissensis, Zalău
ActaSic	Acta Siculica, Sf. Gheorghe/Sepsiszentgyörgy
Aluta	Aluta, Sf. Gheorghe
AnB	Analele Banatului, Timișoara
Apulum	Apulum. Acta Musei Apulensis, Alba Iulia
ArbFberSächs	Arbeits- und Forschungsberichte zur sächsischen Bodendenkmalpflege, Dresden
ArchÉrt	Archaeologiai Értesítő, Budapest
ArchKözl	Archaeologiai Közlemények, Budapest
Aregia	Alba Regia. Annales Musei Stephani Regis, Székesfehérvár
Areopolisz	Areopolisz. Történelmi és társadalomtudományi tanulmányok, Székelyudvarhely
ArhMed	Arheologia Medievală, Cluj-Napoca
ArhMold	Arheologia Moldovei, București
Banatica	Banatica. Muzeul Banatului Montan, Reșița
BrukenthalAM	Brukenthal. Acta Musei, Sibiu
Carnuntum Jb	Carnuntum-Jahrbuch. Zeitschrift für Archäologie und Kulturgeschichte des Donaupraumes, Wien
Carpica	Carpica, Bacău
Castrum	Castrum. A Castrum Bene Egyesület Hírlevele, Budapest
CCA	Cronica Cercetărilor Arheologice din România, București
CCDJ	Cultură și Civilizație la Dunărea de Jos, Călărași
CercArh	Cercetări arheologice, București
Colloquia	Colloquia: Journal of Central European History, Cluj-Napoca
CommArchHung	Communicationes Archaeologicae Hungaricae, Budapest
Corviniana	Corviniana, Hunedoara
Crisia	Crisia, Oradea
CsSzMÉ	A Csíki Székely Múzeum Évkönyve, Csíkszereda
Cumidava	Cumidava, Brașov
Dacia	Dacia. Revue d'Archéologie et d'Histoire Ancienne, Bucarest
Danubius	Danubius, Galați
DissArch	Dissertationes Archaeologicae ex Instituto Archaeologico Universitatis de Rolando Eötvös Nominatae, Budapest
Dolg	Dolgozatok az Erdélyi Nemzeti Múzeum Érem- és Régiségtárából, Kolozsvár
Drobeta	Drobeta, Drobeta-Turnu Severin
EL	Erdővidéki Lapok, Barót
EphNap	Ephemeris Napocensis, Cluj-Napoca
Emúz	Erdélyi Múzeum, Kolozsvár
FVL	Forschungen zur Volks- und Landeskunde, Sibiu/Hermannstadt
HOMÉ	A Hermann Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve, Miskolc
Istros	Istros. Muzeul Brăilei, Brăila

ABBREVIATIONS

JAMÉ	A Nyíregyházi Jósza András Múzeum Évkönyve, Nyíregyháza
JbRGZM	Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, Mainz
JromMilSt	Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies
KHKM	Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej, Warszawa
Marisia	Marisia (V-). Studii și Materiale, Târgu Mureș
Marmatia	Marmatia, Muzeul Județean de Istorie și Arheologie Maramureș, Baia Mare
MatCercArh	Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice, București
MedArch	Medieval Archaeology, London
MemAnt	Memoria Antiquitatis. Acta Musei Petrodavensis, Piatra Neamț
MFMÉ	A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve, Szeged
MIMK	A Molnár István Múzeum Közleményei, Székelykeresztúr
MNMAK	Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum Adattárának Közleményei, Budapest
OH	Opuscula Hungarica, Budapest
PRS	Proceedings of the Royal Society A: Mathematical, Physical & Engineering Sciences, London
PZ	Praehistorische Zeitschrift, Berlin
REA	Revue des études anciennes, Bordeaux
RMM-MIA	Revista Muzeelor și Monumentelor. Monumente istorice și de artă, București
RevBist	Revista Bistriței, Bistrița
Sargetia	Sargetia. Acta Musei Devensis, Deva
SCIV(A)	Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche (și Arheologie 1974–), București
SCN	Studii și Cercetări de Numismatică, București
SlovArch	Slovenská Archeológia, Bratislava
SMMIM	Studii și materiale de muzeografie și istorie militară, București
SSz	Soproni Szemle, Sopron
StCercIstorCluj	Studii și Cercetări de Istorie, Cluj
StComSM	Studii și Comunicări, Seria Arheologie, Satu Mare
StComSibiu	Studii și comunicări. Muzeul Brukenthal, Sibiu
StudUCH	Studia Universitatis Cibiniensis, Series Historica, Sibiu
StudUClujH	Studia Universitatis “Babeș-Bolyai” – Historia, Cluj-Napoca
Terra Sebus	Terra Sebus. Acta Musei Sabesiensis, Sebeș
Thraco-Dacica	Thraco-Dacica, București
UPA	Universitätsforschungen zur Prähistorischen Archäologie, Bonn
VAH	Varia Archaeologica Hungarica, Budapest
VjesAMuzZagreb	Vjesnik Arheološkog muzeja u Zagrebu, Zagreb
VMMK	A Veszprém Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei, Veszprém
VTT	Veszprémi Történelmi Társaság, Veszprém
WA	Wratislavia antiqua, Wrocław
WiadA	Wiadomości Archeologiczne. Bulletin archéologique polonais, Warszawa