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REVIEWS

CERAMIC PRODUCTION IN PRE-ROMAN DACIA (2ND CENTURY BC – 1ST CENTURY AD): TRADITION, IMITATION AND TRANSFORMATION*

Mariana Egri[1]

Abstract. *The article is discussing the presence of the so-called "imitated" and "hybrid" forms in the Late Iron Age ceramic repertoire from Dacia on the basis of a few relevant case-studies. A series of aspects are addressed, including the demand for such goods in different indigenous communities and their perception in relation to the genuine ware. The ways in which "hybrid" ceramic forms were "constructed" both visually and functionally are also discussed, taking into consideration the role of local practices and concepts in the selection of different features. Another field of inquiry takes into consideration the role of regional networks of exchange and communication in the circulation of specific technological knowledge and the creation of new types of ceramic vessels. Lastly, the paper is also discussing the technological challenges faced by the indigenous potters and their innovations related to the manufacturing of new ceramic forms.*

Keywords: *Dacia, ceramic production, imitation, hybrid forms, technological transfer*

Introduction

In spite of large numbers of ceramic artefacts recovered from various sites dated to the last three centuries of pre-Roman Dacia, there is only a rather small number of studies that have discussed systematically the characteristics of local ceramic production. The last synthesis about the so-called Geto-Dacian[2] pottery, based on a supposedly linear evolution of the indigenous range of ceramic forms throughout the Late Iron Age, is five decades old[3]. A few recent studies[4] have attempted to update the still widely used typology on the basis of a regional approach. Some other studies have focused on particular categories of locally produced ceramic finds, for example the painted pottery[5] or the imitations of Mediterranean and Pontic tableware[6]. Also recent are some attempts to discuss the impact of foreign ceramic techniques on the indigenous production[7].

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[2] For these ethnic identifications and their impact on Romanian archaeological research, see STROBEL 1998; LOCKYEAR 2004, 35; DANA/MATEI-POPESCU 2006, 203–204; POPA 2014). The ethnic labelling of archaeological evidence is widespread, thus also hampering the debate concerning the material culture of Roman Dacia.

[3] CRIȘAN 1969.

[4] TROHANI 1999, 63–148; PUPEZĂ 2010; CRISTESCU 2012.

[5] FLOREA 1998; LUNGU/TROHANI 2000; DRĂGAN 2014.

[6] VULPE/GHEORGHIȚĂ 1976; POPESCU 2000; IRIMIA 2006; EGRI 2014a.

[7] FLOREA 1998, 80–86; GHEORGHIU 2000; LUNGU/TROHANI 2000; SÎRBU/FLOREA 2011; CRISTESCU 2014a; EGRI 2014b, 238–239, pl. 2–3; DRĂGAN 2014.

Aside from these studies, all other monographs, articles and excavation reports dealing with sites which belong to the period in question include a more-or-less comprehensive chapter dealing with ceramic finds[8]. The "local" vessels are usually identified on the basis of certain characteristics that are considered "traditional" due to their resemblance to Early Iron Age ceramic repertoire. These include, for example, the so-called Dacian mug, the jar or the fruit-bowl. Within the same rather stereotypical interpretative model, the handmade wares are regularly considered to be locally produced. However, the meaning of "local" oscillates quite loosely between "in Dacia" and "on site" mostly because there are too few ceramic fabric analyses[9] and no one can easily pinpoint the technological characteristics of a particular production centre. Some workshops were identified through the discovery of kilns and other installations[10] or of specific implements, for example moulds for relief-decorated hemispherical cups[11], but no systematic fabric analyses were carried out in these cases so far.

In terms of origin, most of the previous studies classified the local ceramic production in two main categories. One category includes the so-called "traditional" forms, mostly deriving from the Early Iron Age repertoire[12], which were initially handmade before being also manufactured on the wheel. The second category includes vessels which were broadly defined as "imitations" because their morphological features resemble, more-or-less closely, ceramic forms produced either in the surrounding regions or in more distant centres from the Balkans or the Mediterranean. A third rather loosely defined category, which includes the so-called "hybrid" forms combining local and foreign features, is a more recent addition[13].

Several of the aforementioned studies have acknowledged the more-or-less strong influence exerted by the ceramic production of the eastern Mediterranean, the Pontic or the middle Danube region on that from various areas of pre-Roman Dacia during the period in question[14], although the suggested means and mechanisms of transfer and appropriation are sometimes disputable. Furthermore, it has been suggested that this influence mostly involved the technological aspects and only partially the stylistic ones. Some regional variations in the range of preferred foreign forms, decorative motifs and manufacturing techniques were also identified, although the social, cultural or economic factors which could have determined these choices were hardly discussed beyond the variable degree of access to external manufacturing centres or supply networks. The appearance of "imitated" or "hybrid" ceramic forms was frequently associated with the supposedly emulative trends that had driven the interest of local consumers seeking to replicate the Mediterranean convivial practices[15]. Consequently, even if it was acknowledged that such vessels were locally produced, they were still interpreted as "foreign" in what concerns their functions and meanings. This interpretative model systematically overlooked the particularities of the indigenous contexts of consumption and their impact on the consumers' choices and means of appropriation, which in turn influenced the local ceramic production. Other important but largely ignored aspects concern the role played by regional and pan-regional networks of interactions in the circulation of specific models and technologies[16], and the ways in which both the indigenous and the foreign potters reacted to the local demand for such goods.

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[8] E.g. CĂPITANU 1986–1987a; URSACHI 1995; RUSTOIU 1997; TROHANI 2006 etc.

[9] E.g. MURARIU ET AL. 1978; SECLĂMAN 1997; HOECK ET AL. 2014.

[10] See the recent synthesis in MATEI 2007.

[11] A summary in EGRI 2014a, 52–54.

[12] See MOSCALU 1983; CRIŞAN 1969.

[13] FLOREA 1993; 1998; CRISTESCU 2014a; EGRI 2014a; 2014b.

[14] E.g. CRIŞAN 1969, 213–215; FLOREA 1998, 80–86; LUNGU/TROHANI 2000, 148–149; SÎRBU/FLOREA 2011.

[15] A critique of this approach in EGRI 2014a; EGRI/RUSTOIU 2014; see also CRISTESCU 2014b.

[16] Notable exceptions are DRĂGAN 2014; EGRI 2014a; 2014c; CRISTESCU 2014a.

Thus the article is discussing the presence of the so-called "imitated" and "hybrid" forms in the Late Iron Age ceramic repertoire from Dacia on the basis of a few relevant case-studies. A series of aspects are addressed, including the demand for such goods in different indigenous communities and their perception in relation to the genuine ware. The ways in which different "hybrid" forms were "constructed" both visually and functionally are also discussed, taking into consideration the role of local practices and concepts in the selection of different features. Another field of inquiry takes into consideration the role of regional networks of exchange and communication in the circulation of specific technological knowledge and the creation of new types of ceramic vessels. Lastly, the paper is also discussing the technological challenges faced by the indigenous potters and their innovations related to the manufacturing of new ceramic forms.

The mould-made ware

One important aspect related to the presence of foreign ceramic vessels and their imitations in the indigenous environment is the degree of interest in such goods. A recent analysis has shown that in pre-Roman Dacia the great majority of ceramic vessels imitating foreign forms belong to the tableware category, amongst which the drinking-related ones predominate. Furthermore, the regional distribution of these imitations largely matched that of the imported originals and also the distribution of imported wine amphorae throughout the entire period in question. During the 2nd and 1st centuries BC, the most important supply sources were Rhodes, south-eastern Aegean and the Black Sea region, whereas about a century later wine and ceramic drinking ware came mostly from the Black Sea region, as well as from Kos, Rhodes and Asia Minor; the finds from Italy or the Roman Danubian provinces only appeared after the middle of the 1st century AD and remained scarce until the Roman conquest[17]. Moreover, there are significant regional variations in the frequency and range of imported and imitated tableware categories throughout the entire period in question, pointing to different consumption patterns that reflect the particularities of the local social-political and economic structures and dynamics, the differences in convivial practices and also the variable degree of access to the main supply networks.

For example, only a small number of relief-decorated hemispherical cups produced by various workshops from Greece, Asia Minor and the Pontic region were imported between the second half of the 2nd century and the late 1st century BC, being exclusively found in large settlements located along the main routes of communication outside the Carpathians[18] (Fig. 1/1–4). On the contrary, indigenous imitations were found on almost every site from the same region[19] and some vessels even reached a series of settlements in southern and eastern Transylvania. However, the relief-decorated hemispherical cups never really replaced the traditional drinking vessels (one-handled beakers) which continued to be used in various contexts, sometimes together with the new form. It might be therefore presumed that these cups never lost completely their foreign character, not even when they were locally made. Their use continued to be perhaps related to the perceived proper consumption of imported wine, even if the indigenous convivial or ritual practices into which the new form was incorporated were different from the Mediterranean ones. Furthermore, the locally made relief-decorated cups were sometimes used together with painted pitchers imitating the Hadra ware as wine sets in some fortified settlements from the south-east of the Carpathians[20].

[17] EGRI 2014a; see also POPESCU 2013.

[18] EGRI 2014a, 52, fig. 6.2; POPESCU 2011; 2013, 42–48, map 4.

[19] For the finds from the south of the Danube, see VARBANOV 2012.

[20] LUNGU/DUPONT 2014, 247.

So far only a few production centres were identified outside the Carpathians mainly through the presence of moulds and wasters[21], while the existence of some others has been presumed on the account of certain decorative patterns[22] (Fig. 1/2–5). It has been considered that the specific mould-casting technique was introduced by foreign potters, more likely coming from the Greek Pontic environment, since the first locally made cups and some moulds display typical Mediterranean motifs and decorative styles. However, the potters quickly integrated features which were specific to the local environment, including typical geometric, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic details, sometimes combined with vegetal elements of Mediterranean inspiration[23].

In certain cases, entire narrative scenes are depicted, often resembling those decorating the silver and bronze ware from the lower Danube region and the northern Balkans[24]. Some outstanding examples come from Popeşti, Zimnicea[25] and Sexaginta Prista[26]; they depict female characters, sometimes holding a rhyton and probably a patera, and fully armed male riders (Fig. 2/1–2). Although very little is known about Late Iron Age religion or mythology in Dacia, it has been presumed that these characters, as well as the similar ones appearing on metal vessels and costume accessories, could illustrate different local mythological episodes. However, the female characters could also be identified as priestesses performing various rituals, including libations, in which foreign-looking vessels were sometimes used, for example an amphora at Lupu and a kantharos at Jakimovo[27], aside from the rhyton and patera depicted on the cups from Zimnicea and Sexaginta Prista. It might be therefore presumed that the Mediterranean motifs were deliberately replaced by this imagery, to make these cups more suitable for the indigenous ritual or convivial events in which the depicted scenes were symbolically relevant.

The image of the armed rider accompanied by a female character (unfortunately incompletely preserved) also appears on a locally made ceramic skyphos discovered in the settlement at Răcătău[28] (Fig. 2/3). Its shape and manufacturing technique resemble the skyphoi with applied decoration produced at Pergamon from around the middle of the 2nd century BC until the 1st century AD[29]. Such vessels were very popular in the Black Sea region, not only in the Greek colonies but also in the indigenous environment[30], and similar finds are known from a few major Dacian settlements located outside the Carpathians[31]. However, in this case the potter only took over the late Hellenistic shape and manufacturing technique, while all of the motifs and the narrative into which these were integrated came from the aforementioned indigenous repertoire.

Accordingly, one has to question the assumption that the craftsmen who made the relief-decorated cups from pre-Roman Dacia were always foreigners, since the local potters could have

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[21] CASAN-FRANGA 1967, fig. 5/1–5; TURCU 1976, pl. 12/1–2; VULPE/GHEORGHIŢĂ 1976, 177, pl. 11/1–6; VULPE/TEODOR 2003, 83, note 256; VARBANOV 2012, 64, no. 3, fig. 3/1.

[22] IRIMIA 2006, 74; POPESCU 2000, 243–245; VARBANOV 2012, 61.

[23] VULPE/GHEORGHIŢĂ 1976, 177–179; CONOVICI 1978, 175; POPESCU 2000, 238–243; IRIMIA 2006, 73.

[24] SPÂNU 2006; SÎRBU 2009, 21–24; further comments about their symbolic meanings in SÎRBU/FLOREA 1997, 86–87, 97–98; SPÂNU 2013.

[25] SPÂNU 2006, pl. 3, 8; 2013.

[26] VARBANOV 2012, 71, no. 28, fig. 1/1–2, 4/4.

[27] EGRI/RUSTOIU 2014, 166–168.

[28] CĂPITANU 1986–1987b, 72–74, fig. 1/a-d. In the initial publication, the fragmentary vessel was identified as a mould-made kantharos and this error persisted in subsequent publications (e.g. recently in SÎRBU/FLOREA 2011, 316). A closer examination of the vessel clearly shows that the decorative motifs were mould-cast separately before being applied on the wheel-made skyphos ahead of firing.

[29] HÜBNER 1993, 39–49; see also BRUNEAU 1991.

[30] ZHURAVLEV 2014, 145–149.

[31] POPESCU 2013, 51–54, map 5.

also learned the mould-casting technique in workshops from the Greek colonies on the north-western Black Sea coast, where this kind of production is also attested[32]. Various transformations observed in the general morphology and finishing of the local variants and in several decorative motifs taken over from the Mediterranean repertoire, often departing significantly from their prototypes[33], further support this hypothesis. The deformation or stylization of some decorative elements, for example leafs, flower buds, rosettes or birds, may suggest that sometimes the potters could have made new moulds by copying original cups, so the finer details were gradually lost. Some of the locally made cups depart significantly from the structured decorative style of the originals, instead displaying a baroque agglomeration of various elements covering the entire available space[34].

These patterns, also encountered on indigenous ceramic vessels and costume accessories, belonged to a complex and carefully coded visual language which conveyed specific concepts and meanings within the local contexts of consumption. Thus the visual transformation of this kind of foreign ceramic form was very probably part of the process of adaptation that made the resulting vessels more suitable for the indigenous practices. At the same time, the ability to produce locally these formerly scarce wares had made them widely accessible, at least outside the Carpathians, and their presence in many non-elite related contexts provides the archaeological confirmation of this hypothesis.

The painted ware

Another complex process of technological transfer and transformation was observed in the case of locally made painted pottery, which was largely inspired by the so-called Hadra and West Slope wares, which involved painting on white or clay ground on various types of tableware. All of the imported vessels of this kind come from settlements located on the main routes of communication outside the Carpathians (in south-eastern Romania) and almost all of them are drinking-related forms, including skyphoi, kantharoi, pitchers and craters. Some of the vessels recovered from indigenous settlements were classified as pseudo-Hadra, being produced in workshops from the Greek colonies on the Black Sea coast[35]. It has to be also noted that painted vessels produced in the so-called "Celtic" style in the middle Danube region and the Scordiscian area have also been discovered in Transylvania, south-western Romania and the upper Tisza basin; their impact can be sometimes noted in the ceramic production from these regions[36].

The earliest local production of painted ware can be dated to the end of the 2nd century BC outside the Carpathians, but the flourishing period encompasses the 1st century BC – early 2nd century AD period[37]. The majority of the locally produced imitations of Hadra ware, as well as several hybrid forms combining local and foreign features, come from the same sites located outside the Carpathians, while across the mountains the number of similar vessels is reduced. Archaeological evidence indicates that some workshops were active in the large commercial and manufacturing centres on the lower Siret valley and it seems that their products circulated across wider areas, sometimes reaching settlements in southern and south-eastern Transylvania[38]. A series of regional variants of painted pottery appeared during this period, each based on a dis-

[32] For example at Histria: DOMĂNEANȚU 2000.

[33] POPESCU 2000, 236–243.

[34] POPESCU 2000, 246.

[35] LUNGU/TROHANI 2000; LUNGU/DUPONT 2014, 246–247; see also POPESCU 2013, 32–41.

[36] FLOREA 1998, 88–90; DRĂGAN 2014, 304–307.

[37] FLOREA 1998, 80–82; DRĂGAN 2014, 302, fig. 1.

[38] FLOREA 1998, 80–145; finds from Transylvania: CRIȘAN/FERENCZI 1994, 386; RUSTOIU 1997, 87; CRIȘAN 2000, 131; DRĂGAN 2014, 302–304, fig. 1.

tinct range of preferred grounds and top colours, decorative motifs and styles, and specific painting and finishing techniques[39].

For example, one important centre functioned at Brad, producing kantharoi and skyphoi painted with stripes and geometric patterns usually covering the entire body (Fig. 3/1), which were frequently combined with pitchers or tall beakers bearing the same decoration in drinking sets[40]. Their functional structure, as well as the associated consumption practices, resembles those of the earlier-dated drinking sets consisting of painted pitchers and relief-decorated cups recovered from the same sites. In this context, it is worth noting that, in this region, late Hellenistic skyphoi and kantharoi originating from Asia Minor or the Pontic region and their local imitations replaced these cups towards the end of the 1st century BC mostly due to several changes in the regional supply networks[41].

On the other hand, the painted ware recovered from the fortress at Divici-Grad, in the lower Danube's Iron Gates region, hints at the influences exerted by the Central-Eastern European ceramic forms and decorative styles (Fig. 3/2). The potters from the latter region favoured red and white horizontal stripes usually painted on clay grounds, sometimes combined with black, brown or olive geometric patterns or stylised zoomorphic motifs, or with burnished details that are commonly encountered on the local tableware[42].

There are two important aspects regarding the technological and stylistic impact of the Mediterranean painted ware on the indigenous craftsmanship. One aspect concerns the degree of interest in imitating these forms and the ways in which the resulting vessels were integrated into the local practices. The number of finds closely copying Hadra and West Slope vessels is rather reduced even in the largest settlements from the Siret valley. At the same time, various types of hybrid forms are commonly encountered, indicating that the local potters selected and combined foreign and local morphological details, decorative motifs and finishing techniques according to the local needs[43].

Another aspect concerns the impact of certain techniques specific to the manufacturing of late Hellenistic painted wares on the development of local craftsmanship in the 1st century BC – early 2nd century AD. For example, red, brown or black stripes, zigzags or other geometric motifs painted on white or clay grounds are commonly encountered on a typical indigenous dining form, the so-called fruit bowl (Fig. 3/3). This is actually a shallow bowl having a wide rim and a tall hollow foot, sometimes with cutouts. The painted motifs usually cover the inside of the bowl, the rim and the entire foot. Both handmade and wheel-made fruit-bowls are commonly encountered in various types of settlements and also in some burials. The regular ones have a diameter of 25–30 cm and were probably used by one person, but some others having a diameter of up to 60–90 cm[44] must have been destined for communal food consumption. A series of workshops which produced painted fruit-bowls have been identified at Brad, Răcătău, Poiana and Ocniţa mostly on the basis of certain decorative styles; some of their products even reached larger settlements in Transylvania[45].

The widespread presence of painted fruit-bowls in a period when drinking-related painted vessels of late Hellenistic inspiration also gained popularity may suggest that the tableware decorated in this manner was increasingly considered the norm for proper dining in the indigenous environment. In this context, it has to be noted that bowls and dishes of foreign

[39] FLOREA 1998, 86–98; 152–155; DRĂGAN 2013; 2014, 304–307.
[40] URSACHI 1995, 202–204; FLOREA 1998, 106.
[41] EGRI 2014A, 54–56.
[42] DRĂGAN 2013; 2014, 304–305.
[43] FLOREA 1998, 84–85, 235–236; POPESCU 2011, 12–13.
[44] The largest vessel discovered so far comes from tumulus 2 at Cugir: CRIŞAN 1980, 82.
[45] FLOREA 1998, 121–131; LUNGU/TROHANI 2000, 148.

origin, imported or imitated, remained scarce throughout the entire period in question, failing to replace the fruit-bowl, though one hybrid form combining local and Italic features appeared in the area of Sarmizegetusa Regia during the 1st century AD (see below). The lengthy persistence of the fruit-bowl could be related to a particular function, which the foreign tableware was unable to properly fulfil. It has been previously suggested that the tall foot was meant to facilitate food serving and eating when proper tables were lacking[46]. According to another less cited hypothesis, first suggested by the late Florin Medeleţ, the foot was filled with hot charcoal for cooking or maintaining the food warm, similarly to a brazier, hence the cutouts. The problem could be sorted out only through a systematic analysis of burnt and wear traces, which are often overlooked in archaeological reports.

The fine pottery of Sarmizegetusa Regia

One particular development of the indigenous painted pottery has been identified in the area of Sarmizegetusa Regia, in southern Transylvania, during the 1st century – early 2nd century AD. Here the local potters also used the late Hellenistic technique of painting on white or light yellow ground in the manufacturing of tableware, but they developed a quite unusual and very specific repertoire of figurative motifs[47] (Fig. 4/1). The range of preferred forms includes not only pitchers, cups, bowls and dishes often resembling the Eastern Sigillata B, Pontic or Italic forms, but also other ceramic categories, for example flagons and storage vessels of various dimensions. A detailed analysis of these finds has shown that the potters were familiar with the specific manufacturing techniques which also implied the use of various specialized tools and very efficient kilns capable of reaching a firing temperature of up to 900 °C. Their workshops were not yet identified on site, though it has been suggested that the find-spot known as "Terasa cu oale pictate" (Terrace with painted pots) could have served as the warehouse of one such workshop[48].

Furthermore, these potters combined and frequently reinterpreted elements having various origins to create ceramic forms that are unique to this area and are sometimes difficult to label "hybrid", instead calling questions regarding the impact of local practice and visual perception. One interesting example is provided by a couple of pitchers[49] whose morphological features (Fig. 4/1–2) resemble those of the small bronze vessels having a pear-shaped body, a slender neck and a thick reverted rim, produced in the Mediterranean world[50]. In both cases the pitchers were painted with red or light brown on white ground, a technique taken over from the late Hellenistic craftsmanship, but the decorative motifs – geometric, vegetal and zoomorphic – mostly belong to the repertoire specific to the Sarmizegetusa Regia area, even if some hint at some influences coming from Hadra ware[51] perhaps through the visual and conceptual filter of the workshops and consumers from the outside of the Carpathians.

Another fragmentary pitcher recently recovered from Sarmizegetusa Regia (Fig. 4/3) also displays elements apparently taken over from different sources. These include vegetal motifs – ivy leafs – again painted with red on an off-white ground and an incised and painted handle attachment which resembles those encountered on several types of bronze vessels from the Mediterranean area[52]. Several manufacturing details indicate that the pitcher was more likely

[46] CRIŞAN 1969, 129; RUSTOIU 1997, 86–87.
[47] FLOREA 1998, 145–205.
[48] See FLOREA 1998, 151, with previous bibliography.
[49] FLOREA 1998, 165, pl. 47; BODÓ 2011, 40.
[50] TASSINARI 1993, 49, type F 2310.
[51] FLOREA 1998, 180–205.
[52] CRISTESCU 2014a, 17; FLOREA 2015, 20, fig. 20, note 24.

a reject, though none of them could have prevented its practical use, perhaps as a second-class product. This vessel may also imitate a Mediterranean metal form, but the absence of its neck and rim hampers further typological identifications.

Aside from these pitchers, other types of hybrid tableware were also created by the potters from Sarmizegetusa Regia. One category, dated to the second half of the 1st century – early 2nd century AD, consists of vessels that largely imitate certain variants of northern Italic sigillata or Eastern Sigillata B bowls and plates, but their usual ring base was replaced by a more-or-less tall hollow foot that resembles those of the indigenous fruit-bowls mentioned above[53]. The resulting vessels (Fig. 5) also display other local features, like the fine grey fabric covered with a dark grey or brownish-black matte slip, which is a characteristic of the tableware from this region. These bowls became quite popular after the middle of the 1st century AD, very probably because they have met particular functional demands in a better or different way than the original vessels from which various elements were borrowed and combined.

Their characteristics also reveal the persistence of some technological and morphological stereotypes related to the way in which the function of the object – the tableware in this case – was perceived by the local producers and consumers. Fabric analyses indicate that these new types of bowls were locally made, very probably by indigenous potters for whom the proper dining forms had to have a tall base. On the other hand, at least some of the users were foreigners who scratched their names or initials on them, using the Latin or Greek alphabet, to signal ownership[54]. The presence of foreign merchants and craftsmen at Sarmizegetusa Regia during this period is also attested by other types of archaeological evidence[55]. They could have brought over the prototypes that inspired the local potters, perhaps as personal belongings, though the number of imported ceramic vessels recovered from Sarmizegetusa Regia is still quite reduced[56], more likely due to the disproportionate archaeological focus on the religious and manufacturing quarters during the last decades and the scarcity of systematic ceramic studies[57].

Another ceramic category produced in the area of Sarmizegetusa Regia which combined elements having various origins includes storage vessels bearing different stamped ornaments, for example rosettes or scales[58]. It is quite difficult to identify the exact origin of these patterns since they are encountered on different types of ceramic vessels from the Mediterranean, while rosettes are also encountered on "Celtic" pottery from Central Europe. One storage vessel recently discovered at Sarmizegetusa Regia, whose shape was taken over from the late Hellenistic repertoire[59], displays a wide decorative register on the neck and shoulder, consisting of seven rows of stamped scales closely resembling the egg-and-dart pattern (also known as Ionic kyma), bordered by two rows of small rosettes (Fig. 6/1). This kind of scales motif is unusual in the indigenous environment, being perhaps taken over from the decorative repertoire of the tableware made of metal, glass or ceramic in the Mediterranean region. For example, many relief-decorated hemispherical cups display a similar pattern on their rim or body[60] and the same can be said about some types of Arretine sigillata[61]. On the storage vessel from the Dacian capital, the scales are apparently represented upside down, unlike the original egg-and-dart motif, though

[53] FLOREA 1993, 99, 108, fig. 1–3; CRISTESCU 2014b, 117–121, fig. 2–3; EGRI 2014B, 238–239, pl. 2–3.
[54] FLOREA 1993, 104, fig. 6/3–5; 2000; 2001.
[55] EGRI 2014b, 237; 2014c, 184–185.
[56] CRISTESCU 2014b, 118, note 23.
[57] The doctoral thesis of Cătălin Cristescu, entitled *Ceramica dacică descoperită în complexe închise la Sarmizegetusa Regia (Grădiştea de Munte, jud. Hunedoara)*, Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca 2012, is still unpublished.
[58] CRISTESCU 2014a, 22, pl. 11.
[59] CRISTESCU 2014b, pl. 11/1a-b.
[60] E.g. ROTROFF 1982, pl. 10/58, 12/68, 14/78; FENN 2014, fig. 2; ROGL 2014, fig. 1a, 3, 13/2, 17a.
[61] E.g. PORTEN PALANGE 2009, pl. 14/1–7, 17/1–9.

there are some relief-decorated hemispherical cups coming from the Athenian Agora which also display this motif with the "wrong" orientation[62].

At the same time, a series of cups and carinated bowls found in the same area in different contexts have the body decorated with another type of scales-like motif, this time painted with red or brownish-red on an off-white or yellowish ground, sometimes combined with other geometric details[63] (Fig. 6/2). In these cases the superposed rows of scales resemble the imbricate relief decoration encountered on several late Hellenistic[64] and early Roman imperial cups and beakers[65] though they are represented upside down. It has to be also noted that the same pattern also appears on some relief-decorated hemispherical cups produced outside the Carpathians and these vessels could have also inspired the potters from Sarmizegetusa Regia.

Concluding remarks

As already shown, there are significant regional variations in the frequency and range of imported and imitated tableware categories identified in pre-Roman Dacia, pointing to different consumption patterns that reflect the particularities of the local social-political and economic structures and dynamics, the differences in convivial practices and also the variable degree of access to the main supply networks. Several types of ceramic ware, as well as some associated concepts, practices and technological knowledge, came from the eastern Mediterranean and the Pontic region mostly through the Greek colonies from the northern and north-western Black Sea coast. However, the number of imports is reduced and these finds come almost exclusively from settlements located on the major routes of communication and exchange located to the south-east of the Carpathians. The limited interest in such goods, perhaps restricted to certain social groups within the local society, may explain this pattern, albeit the imported wine amphorae, which were apparently accompanied by these vessels, are widely distributed outside the mountains.

At the same time, particular types of imported vessels were imitated locally and these products display a much wider distribution outside and even inside the Carpathians range, though there are significant regional differences in what concerns the categories of consumers. The ability to produce locally objects which previously were scarce contributed to their widespread adoption in non-elite contexts, at least outside the mountains, perhaps due to a "trickle-down effect". One consequence was the appearance of several regional variants of hybrid vessels which combined elements having various origins according to the needs of local communities. Some of the variants created further inland, for example in Transylvania, often incorporated elements resembling the Mediterranean or Pontic ones, albeit coming through the visual and conceptual filtering of the potters and consumers from the outside of the Carpathians alongside the regional networks of exchange and communication.

There is an ongoing debate concerning the ethnic identity of the potters who manufactured these imitated and hybrid forms in pre-Roman Dacia. Although the presence of foreign craftsmen cannot be excluded, the archaeological evidence discussed above indicates that the indigenous ones could have also mastered various manufacturing techniques originating from the Mediterranean world. The wide variety of hybrid forms provides one significant argument for this hypothesis. The indigenous potters selected and combined elements having various sources to comply with the demands of the local consumers who may have had different interests and preferences, shaped by the local social and cultural norms and beliefs. On the other

[62] ROTROFF 1982, pl. 10/57, 13/73bis.

[63] FLOREA 1998, 172, pl. 45/1–5; FERENCZ 2011, 39.

[64] E.g. ROTROFF 1982, pl. 6, 7/43, 16/93; ROGL 2014, fig. 15a, 17a.

[65] E.g. RICCI 1985, pl. 107/13–17, 108/5/8.

hand, these new ceramic forms also influenced the local practices into which they were integrated. For example, both the relief-decorated hemispherical cups and the painted skyphoi and kantharoi led to the gradual appearance of new drinking sets. At Sarmizegetusa Regia, the new types of bowls with a tall foot could potentially signal some changes in the local dining style.

The potters, either locals or foreigners, responded to these demands by learning and adapting, and sometimes innovating techniques, although the persistence of certain technological stereotypes can also be noted, resulting from the manner in which specific knowledge was learn and transmitted from one generation of craftsmen to another.

This interplay between different forms and decorative motifs having various origins may help understanding the variations and transformations identified in the Late Iron Age local ceramic repertoire through time, and ultimately the ways in which foreign trends, practices and ideas were examined, adapted or rejected in the local environment. These new ceramic forms can be seen not as imitations, nor as hybrids, but as responses – part of the continuous cultural dialogue resulting from the interactions of the indigenous communities from pre-Roman Dacia with those from the surrounding regions or from the more distant ones in the Balkans or the Mediterranean.

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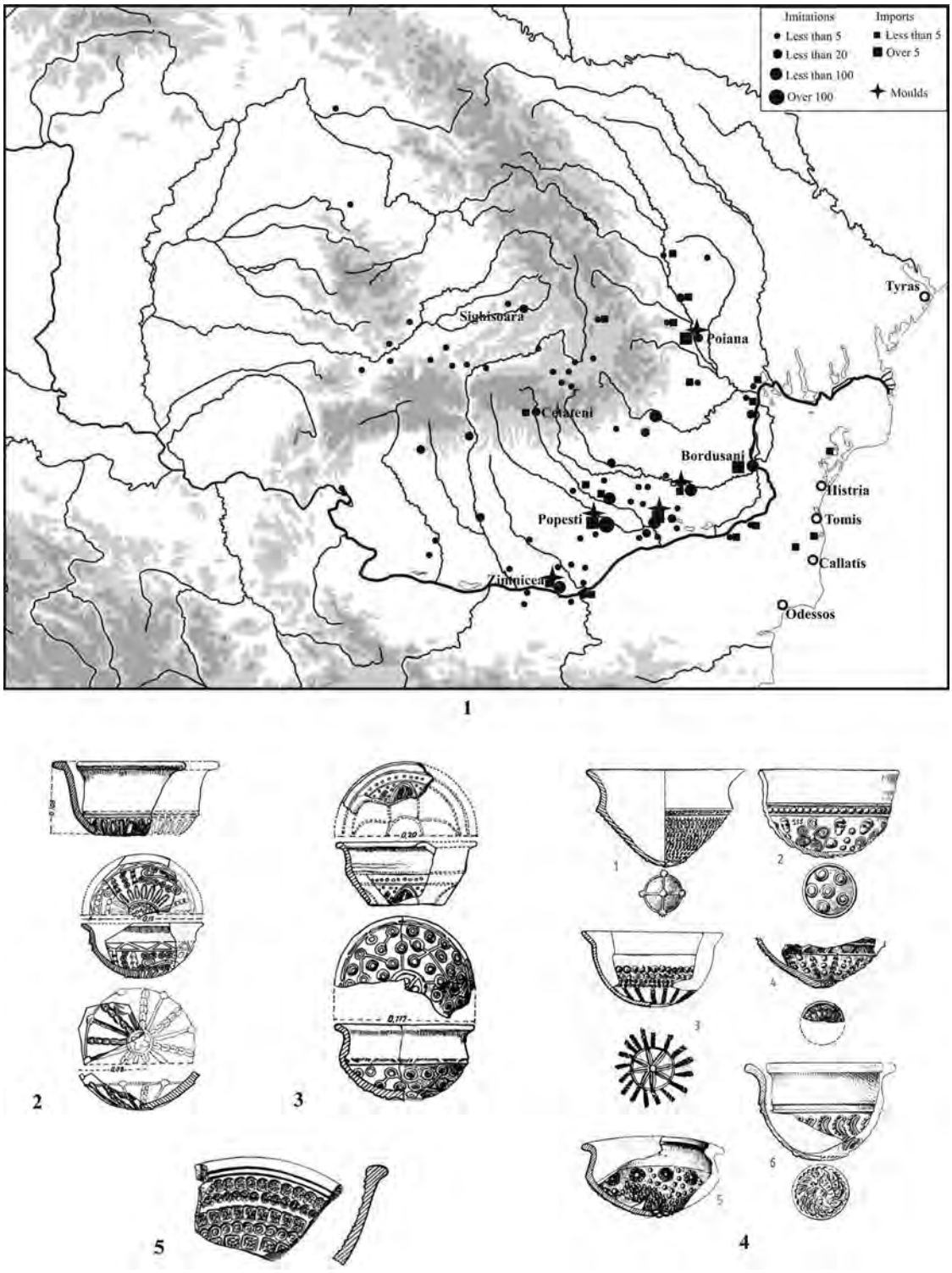

Figure 1. 1. Distribution map of the relief-decorated hemispherical cups; 2–4. Locally produced relief-decorated hemispherical cups (after TURCU 1976 and PREDA 1986); 5. Ceramic mould for relief-decorated hemispherical cups from Popeşti (after TURCU 1976).

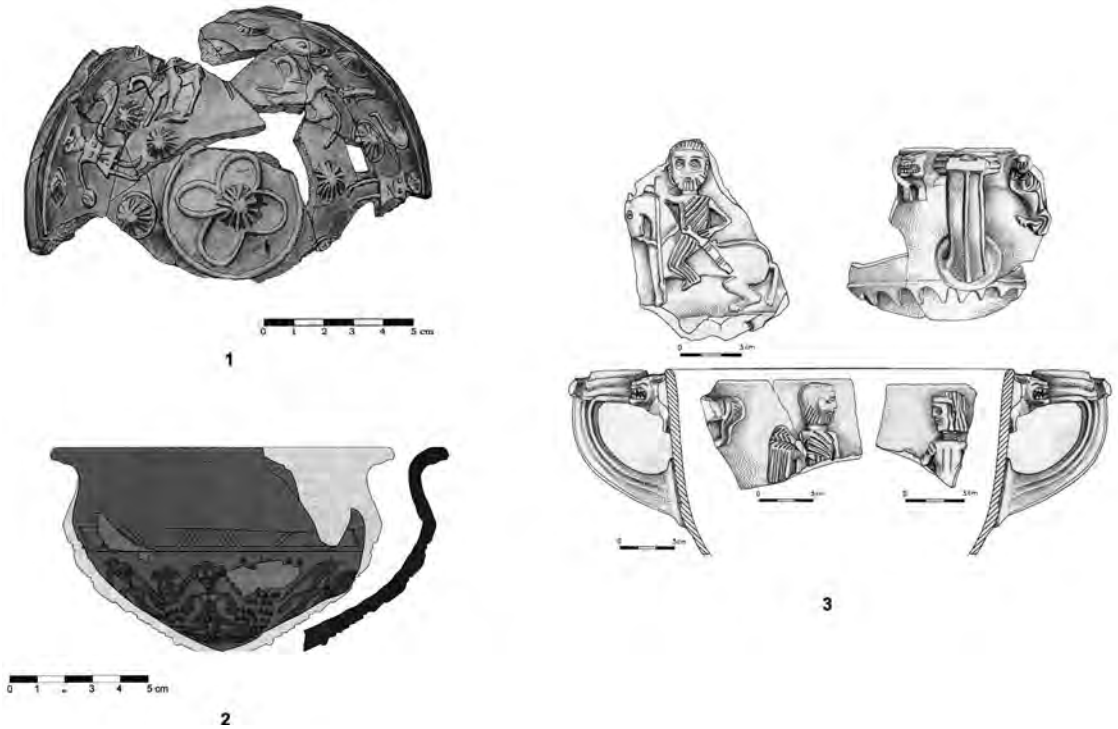

Figure 2. 1–2. Locally produced relief-decorated hemispherical cups from Zimnicea and Popeşti (after SPÂNU 2006); 3. Locally produced skyphos with applied decoration from Răcătău (after SÎRBU 2006).

Figure 3. 1. Painted skyphoi from Brad (after URSACHI 1995); 2. Painted bowl from Divici-Grad (after DRĂGAN 2013); 3. Painted fruit-bowl from Bâtca Doamnei (photo Neamţ County Museum).

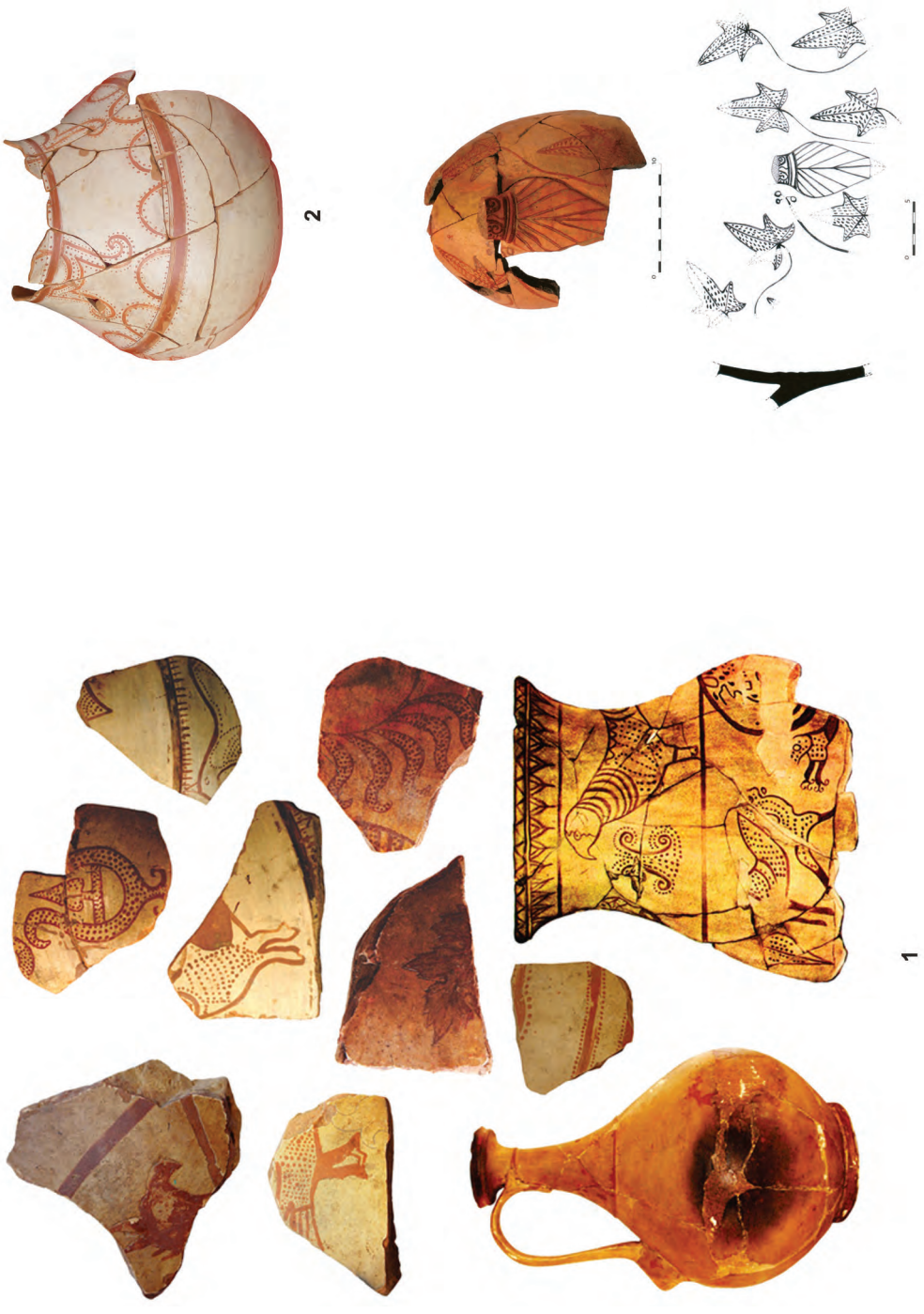

Figure 4. Painted pottery from the Sarmizegetusa Regia area (1. photo National Museum of Transylvanian History Cluj-Napoca; 2. photo I. V. Ferencz; 3. after FLOREA 2015).

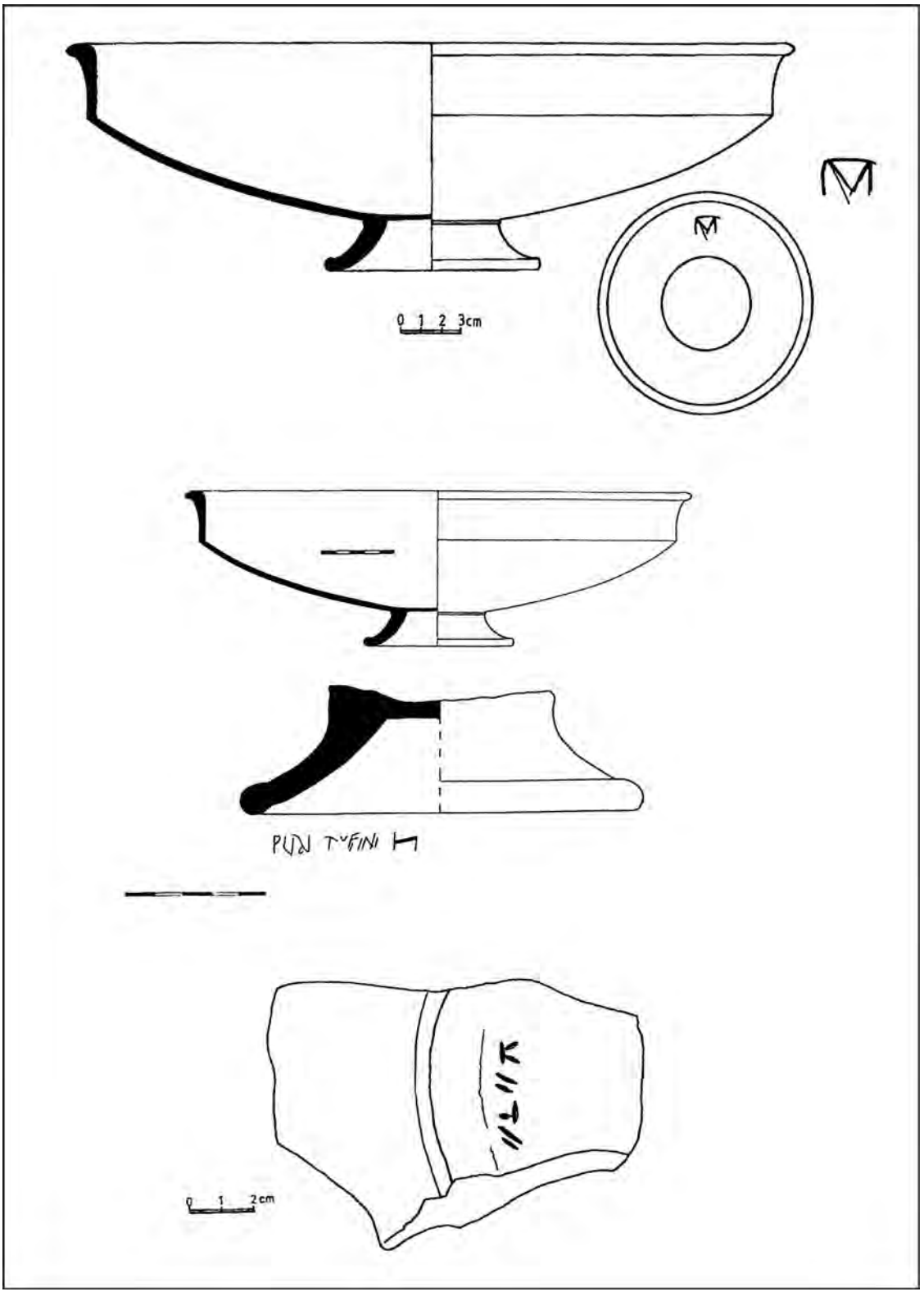

Figure 5. Hybrid bowls with graffiti from Sarmizegetusa Regia (after FLOREA 2000 and 2001).

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Figure 6. 1. Fragmentary storage vessel with stamped decoration from Sarmizegetusa Regia (photo C. Bodó); 2. Fragmentary cup with painted decoration from Sarmizegetusa Regia (photo I. V. Ferencz).

ABBREVIATIONS THAT CAN NOT BE FOUND IN BERICHT DER RÖMISCH-GERMANISCHE KOMMISSION

Abhandlungen der Königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin	= AKAWB
Acta Classica Universitatis Scientiarum Debrecensis, Debrecen	= ACD
Acta Ethnographica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae (Budapesta)	= Acta Ethnogr Acad Scien Hungaricae
Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile secţiunii istorice	= An. Acad. Române. Mem. Sec. Istor.
Analele Banatului (Timişoara)	= An. Banatului
Analele Dobrogei (Constanţa)	= An. Dobrogei
Analele Universităţii Bucureşti	= An. Univ. Bucureşti
Analele Universităţii Iaşi	= An. Univ. Iaşi
Analele Universităţii „Dimitrie Cantemir" (Constanţa)	= An. Univ. Constanţa
Annales: économies, sociétés, civilisations (Paris)	= Ann. Écon. Soc. Civil.
Annales Universitatis Apulensis (Alba Iulia)	= AUA
Annali di scienze religiose, Milano	= Annali di scienze religiose
Anuarul Institutului pentru Studii Politice, de Apărare şi Istorie Militară	= Anu. Instit. Stud. Pol. Apăr. şi Istor. Milit.
Archaeologisch-epigraphische Mitteilungen aus Österreich (-Ungarn), Wien	= AEM
Archiv des Vereines für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde, Hermannstadt – Kronstadt (Sibiu – Braşov)	= AVSL
Archaeologia Baltica Polonia = Peregrinatio Gotica (Łódz)	= Arh Baltica
Arheologia Medievală (Iaşi)	= Arh. Medievală
Antigüedad, religiones y sociedades, Huelva	= ARYS
Az alsófehérmegyei történelmi régészeti és természettudomány évkönyve (Alba Iulia)	= AlsóTermÉvkönyve
Balcanica Posnanensia. Acta et Studia. Czasopismo wydawane przez UAM w Poznaniu	= Balcanica Posnaniensia
Buletinul cercurilor ştiinţifice studenţeşti (Alba Iulia)	= BCŞS Alba Iulia
Buletinul Monumentelor Istorice (Bucureşti)	= BMI
Instrumentum Bulletin du Groupe de travail européen sur l´artisanat et les productions manufacturées dans l´Antiquité (Montagnac)	= Bull Instrumentum
Bulletin antieke beschaving Annual Papers on Classical Archaeology	= BABesch
Bulletin de l´Institut historique belge de Rome (Rome)	= BullInst Hist Belge (Rome)
Cahiers du Centre Gustave Glotz, Sorbonne (Paris)	= Cahiers Centre Gustave Glotz
Classical Philology (Chicago)	= Class. Philol.
Cronica Cercetărilor Arheologice din România (Bucureşti)	= CCA

Cronica Numismatică şi Arheologică (Bucureşti)	= Cron. Numis. Arh.
Dialogues d´Histoire Ancienne, París-Besançon	= DHA
Dicţionarul limbii romîne moderne (Bucureşti 1958)	= DRLM
Documenta Romaniae Historica (Bucureşti)	= DRH
Les Dossiers d'archeologie, París	= DossPar
Ethnic and Racial Studies (London)	= Ethnic and Racial Studies
File de Istorie = Revista Bistriţei (Bistriţa)	= FI (Rev. Bistriţei)
Greek-English Lexicon (Oxford 1966)	= Greek-English 1966
Harvard Studies in Classical Philology	= Harvard Stud. Class. Studia Philol.
Historica. Historia Antigua (Salamanca)	= Stud. Hist. Hist. Antigua
Il Mar Nero Annali di archeologia e storia (Roma)	= Il Mar Nero
Izvestija Russkogo Arheologičeskogo Instituta v Konstantinopole	= Izv. Ross. Arch. Inst. Konstantinopole
Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts in Wien	= ÖJh
Journal of Indo-European Studies (Washington DC)	= JIES
Journal of the Society for Ancient Numismatists	= Journal Soc. Ancient Numism.
Könyv és könyvtár, Budapest	= Könyv és könyvtár
Labeo Rassegna di Diritto Romano (Napoli)	= Labeo
Lateinisch-Deutsch Schulwörterbuch (Leipzig 1891)	= Lateinisch-Deutsch 1891
Lateinisch-Deutsch Handwörterbuch (Hannover-Leipzig 1918)	= Lateinisch-Deutsch 1918
Litua. Studii şi comunicări. Muzeul Judeţean Gorj, Târgu Jiu	= Litua
M. M. Roxan, P. Holder, Roman Military Diplomas, London	= RMD
Mélanges de l´École roumaine en France (Paris)	= Mél École roumaine en France
Mélanges de l´Univ St Ioseph (Beiruth)	= Mél Univ St Ioseph (Beiruth)
Mémoires de la Société Historique et Archéologique de Langres (Langres)	= Mém Soc Hist et Arch Langres
Memoria antiquitatis Acta Musei Petrodavensis Revista Muzeului arheologic (Piatra Neamţ)	= Memoria Antiquitatis
Monumenta Germaniae Historica (München)	= MGH
Mousaios Anuarul muzeului judeţean Buzău	= Mousaios
A Nyíregyházi Jósa András Múzeum Évkönyve (Nyíregyháza)	= Josa Andras Múz Évk
Norba Revista de arte, geografía e historia (Cáceres)	= Norba
Numismatische Zeitschrift	= NZ
O Arqueólogo Portugués, Lisboa	= Arque. Portugués
Opţiuni istoriografice, Iaşi	= Opţiuni istoriografice
Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica, Lovaina (Leuven)	= OLP
Ostraka Rivista di antichità (Napoli)	= Ostraka
Patrimonium Apulense, Alba Iulia	= Patrim. Apulense
RepArAb Repertoriul arheologic al judeţului Alba, Alba Iulia, 1995 [= Bibliotheca Musei Apulensis, II]	= RepArAb
Res Antiquae (Bruxelles)	= Res Antiquae
Revista de etnografie şi folclor (Bucureşti)	= Rev Etnogr şi Folclor
Revista Bistriţei	= Rev. Bistriţei

Revista de Istorie (Bucureşti)	= Rev. de Istor.
Revista Facultăţilor de teologie din Patriarhia Română (Bucureşti)	= Stud Teologice
Revista Muzeelor, Bucureşti	= Rev. Muzeelor
Revue archéologique de l'Est et du Centre-Est (Paris)	= RAEst
Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes (Bucharest)	= Rev. Études SE Européennes
Revue Historique (Paris)	= Rev. Historique
Revue Historique du Sud-Est Européen (Bucharest)	= RHSEE
Revista Storica dell'Antichita (Roma)	= Riv. Stor. Antichita
Strabon (Iaşi)	= Strabon
Studia Archaeologica, Roma	= StArch
Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica (Iaşi)	= SAA
Studia Universitatis „Babeş-Bolyai", seria Historia, Cluj-Napoca	= Stud. Historia UBB
Studia historica. Historia Antigua (Salamanca)	= Stud.Hist. Histor. Antig.
Studia Thracologica (Bucureşti)	= Stud. Thracologica
Studii şi Comunicări Câmpulung	= Stud. Com. Câmpulung
Studium, Debrecen	= Studium
Symposia Thracologica (Bucureşti)	= Symp. Thracologica
Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association, Atlanta	= TAPA
Transsilvania. Ein Beiblatt zum Siebenbürger Boten, Hermannstadt (Sibiu)	= TranssilvBB
Uniwersytet Im Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, Seria Historia (Poznań)	= Uniw Adama Mickiewicza Poznan
Vestigia. Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte (München)	= Vestigia
Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins	= ZDPV
Zeitschrift für Geschichte	= Zeitschr. Gesch.