

## ROMAN COARSE WARES FROM THE RURAL SETTLEMENT AT ACIC SUAT

Alina Streinu\*

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**Cuvinte cheie** *ceramică grosieră, ceramică lucrată la mână, epocă romană, geți.*

**Abstract:** *The paper presents and discusses within a preliminary typology, the most frequent coarse ware types discovered during the excavations of a Roman edifice from the settlement at Acic Suat, Tulcea County. The fragments originate from both wheel and hand-made pots, as well as casseroles, pans and lids. Although not the most spectacular ceramic category, the coarse ware can offer information about the local economy in terms of trade and local productions, the dietary preferences of the people using it, and last but not least, in particular cases, the presence of certain ethnic groups within a community, in our case, the Getae.*

**Rezumat:** *Articolul prezintă și discută în cadrul unei tipologii preliminare cele mai frecvente tipuri de ceramică grosieră descoperită în timpul cercetărilor arheologice la un edificiu roman din așezarea de la Acic Suhat, jud. Tulcea,. Fragmentele provin de la oale, lucrute atât la roată, cât și de mână, caserole, tigăi și capace. Chiar dacă nu este cea mai spectaculoasă categorie, ceramica grosieră oferă informații despre economia locală din punctul de vedere al comerțului și producției locale, despre preferințele culinare ale celor care le-au folosit, dar atestă și prezența unor anumite grupuri etnice în cadrul unei comunități, în cazul de față, a geților.*

The site at Acic Suat is located between two major ancient cities, Histria and Argamum, on the shore of Golovița Lake, Baia, Tulcea County. From an administrative point of view, the site was located in *regio Histriae*<sup>1</sup>. There are 43 rural settlements mentioned in Moesia Inferior<sup>2</sup>, of which 12 fall within the administrative territory of Histria.<sup>3</sup> The investigations at Acic Suat began in 2011 with surveys aimed at identifying potential traces of the settlement, followed by the excavation of a few diagnostic trenches, and since 2015 a systematic research

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\* Bucharest Municipality Museum.

<sup>1</sup> For *regio Histriae* see CIL III 12489 = ISM I 373; ISM I 329; ISM I 343; ISM V 123; ISM V 124; Avram 1981-1982, p.113-120; Avram 1990, 26-28; Bărbulescu 2001, p.34-35. For the duality *regio-territorium* and the relation to *strategia* see Matei-Popescu 2018. The identification of the site was made during the French-Romanian Project *Programme ANR Pont-Euxin*, Baralis, Lungu 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Băltăc 2011, p. 143–149.

<sup>3</sup> ISM I, 324-328, 330- 332, 343- 347, 349-352, 358, 360, 363, 368-370, 372, 378; CIL III, 14442.

project began, continued to the present year (2019) (Pl. I, 1)<sup>4</sup>. The excavation unearthed a building from the early Roman period, with five rooms, a corridor and a paved courtyard (Pl. III). Thus far, the edifice appears to have had two phases of construction, and its collapse was triggered by abandonment as no traces of violent destruction were observed. It must be underlined that the ceramic finds are in a very fragmentary state and given the building's proximity to the present day surface, the upper layers contain mixed materials, a consequence of the agricultural works. During this paper I will reference finds from another Roman building partially uncovered during the 2011 diagnostic excavations.

The coarse pottery discovered and processed thus far includes eight main types of wheel-made pots, casseroles and pans, three types of hand-made vessels, as well as lids, both wheel and hand-made. We separated the finds into types based on morphological features in order to have a better understanding of their presence on the site, and made the appropriate attributions when dealing with already existing types. We included fabric samples and for the final publication there will be a detailed table for each type including all the finds. Although not the most spectacular ceramic category, the cooking wares can offer information about the local economy in terms of trade and local productions, the dietary preferences of the people using it, and last but not least, in particular cases, the presence of certain ethnic groups within a community, in our case, the *Getae*.

### **Wheel-made pottery**

The wheel-made coarse ware includes five types of pots, *ollae*, one type of casserole and two types of pans – with their variations, and lids. Apart from their respective features within the typology, all pots have small, constricted necks leading directly to the body of the vessels. The reason is related to the interior ridge present on the rims, meant to allow the positioning of the lid. These features, together with the traces of burning found on most of the coarse wares, leads to the assumption that these vessels' prime use was cooking rather than storage. All the pots are made from coarse fabric, ranging from yellowish-red to strong brown, with numerous inclusions, and most of them with traces of exposure to fire.

Pots included in Type 1 are the most numerous and have beaded and flaring rims, and an interior ridge, some variants showing a much rounder rim or a deeper interior ridge. The shape seems to have been popular both during the early and the later Roman times with discoveries all over the province, both in urban and rural settlements<sup>5</sup>,

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<sup>4</sup> Baralis, Dupont *et alii* 2011; Baralis, Lungu 2015; Lungu, Baralis *et alii* 2012, Baralis, Lungu *et alii* 2017. Vasile Canarache made the first excavations, Canarache 1953, p. 136-142; in the 80s several surveys were conducted in the area at Caraburun and Sinoe by A. Avram, O. Bounegru and C. Chiriac referring probably to this site (Avram, Bounegru, Chiriac 1985, p.119-122.

<sup>5</sup> Honcu 2017, p. 43-44, nos. 2 and 4 dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD; close to our site are finds at the rural settlement at Fântânele - Suceveanu 1998, Pl. VII.10, Pl.IX. 41, Pl. XII. 101; at Histria -Suceveanu 2000, p. 113-117, type XXXV dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup>- 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD; Bădescu, Cliante 2015, p. 219, nos. 43-44/Fig.4. 3-4, dated to the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century-beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD; at Argamum – Honcu 2017, no.2, Pl. 1.2; at Callatis - Opaïț, Ionescu 2016, Pl. XXII-XXIII, nos. 129-131; at Tropaeum Traiani – Cătănicui, Barnea 1979, Fig. 146, nos. 4.1 and 5.2, together with early Roman materials from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries

revealing the conservative nature of both potters and consumers. The rim fragments from Acic Suat show slight variations and a wide range of fabrics (Pl. III).

1. US42 (36-41). Diam. 14 cm. Hp. 4.9 cm.  
Beaded rim, with a fine groove on the interior and on the body. Coarse fabric 7.5YR5/8 strong brown, with white inclusions and traces of exposure to fire.
2. US1, c.6, -0.22 m. Diam. 16/18 cm. Hp. 2.3 cm.  
Beaded rim, with a fine groove on the interior. Coarse fabric 5YR5/6 yellowish red and Gley 1 4/N gray, with inclusions. Traces of exposure to fire.
3. US37, c.13, - 0.30 m. Diam. 14 cm. Hp. 1.7 cm.  
Beaded rim, with a fine groove on the interior. Coarse fabric 10R4/6 red; mica and inclusions.  
Traces of exposure to fire.
4. US34, c. 12. Diam. 16 cm. Hp. 2.6 cm.  
Slightly beaded, flaring rim, with a fine interior groove. Coarse fabric 5YR4/4 brown, with inclusions.
5. US34, c.14, 0.25/27 m. Diam. 15 cm. Hp. 2.8 cm.  
Beaded rim, with a fine groove on the interior. Coarse fabric 10YR4/2 dark grayish brown, with fine white inclusions, mica and traces of light exposure to fire. Another fragment in US36.
6. US34, c.13. Diam. 14 cm. Hp. 3.1 cm.  
Beaded rim, with a fine groove on the interior. Coarse fabric 2.5YR4/6 red, with inclusions.  
Traces of exposure to fire. One more fragment in US 44.
7. US57, c.16. Diam. 18 cm. Hp. 3.4 cm.  
Beaded rim, with a fine groove on the interior. Coarse fabric 2.5YR4/8 red; with inclusions.  
Another fragment in US44.
8. US18, c.5, CDE, -0.41 m. Diam. 14 cm. Hp. 3.3 cm.  
Beaded rim, with a fine groove on the interior. Coarse fabric 2.5YR3/2 dusky red, with inclusions. Traces of exposure to fire.
9. US37, c.13, -0.50 m. Diam. 12 cm. Hp. 2.7 cm.  
Beaded rim, with a fine groove on the interior. Coarse fabric 2.5YR6/8 light red and Gley 6/N gray, with fine white inclusions. Reddish on both surfaces. Five more fragments with same diameter.
10. US34. Diam. 12 cm. Hp. 1.4 cm.  
Beaded rim, flaring, with a groove on the interior. Coarse fabric 2.5YR5/6 strong brown, with mica, white inclusions even in surface. Another fragment in US5.

Type 2 includes pots very similar to the previous type, with rather skewed and slightly flaring rims, and a deep interior ridge for positioning the lid (Pl. IV, 11-12). Analogies for these pots are found in major sites in the province, such as

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AD; at Măcin, at close proximity to Arrubium - Paraschiv 2004, Pl. III, no. 13. A similar find comes from the rural settlement at Sarichioi-Sărătura – Baumann 1995, Pl. XVI, no. 7 with a grooved body.

Histria<sup>6</sup>, Fântânele<sup>7</sup> Ibida, Noviodunum and Troesmis<sup>8</sup>, Callatis<sup>9</sup>, Tropaeum Traiani<sup>10</sup>, and also at Acic Suat from the brief excavation of the first Roman house in 2011<sup>11</sup>.

11. US55-59, c. 18, -0.20/22 m. Diam. 8 cm. Hp. 4.1 cm.  
Skewed rim, with a fine groove on the interior and globular, grooved body. Coarse fabric 7.5YR4/3 brown, with numerous inclusions. Another fragment in US 24, with coarse fabric 2.5YR5/8 red.

12. US1 end, c. 5 BC3, 0.32. Diam. 8-10 cm. Hp. 1.5 cm.  
Flaring rim, with a groove on the interior and a fine one on the body. Coarse fabric 2.5YR5/8 red, with white inclusions and mica. Slight traces of exposure to fire.

Type 3 pots have vertical rims with a flat top, one variant showing a very fine groove that allows the positioning of the lid (Pl. IV). Similar pots were discovered in the province<sup>12</sup> and considered local imitations of the Aegean types<sup>13</sup>. Similar vessels were discovered at Acic Suat during the excavations of first Roman house in 2011<sup>14</sup>.

13. US54, c.15, 1/2E. Diam. 13, Hp. 5.6 cm.  
Flaring, rectangular rim, biconical and grooved body. Coarse fabric Gley1 5/N gray; numerous inclusions, visible in surface. Traces of exposure to fire.

14. c. 13, debris. Diam. 10 cm. Hp. 6.7 cm.  
Vertical rim, constricted neck and globular body. Coarse fabric 2.5YR5/8 red, with numerous inclusions.

Type 4 consists of pots with beaded and flaring rims (Pl. IV, 15-16). The first fragment finds analogies at Histria.<sup>15</sup> Further analogies can be found at Fântânele<sup>16</sup>,

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<sup>6</sup> Suceveanu 2000, type XXXVII, nos. 10 and 15, both considered local products dated by the author, spanning between 100-250 AD and 250-378 AD.

<sup>7</sup> Suceveanu 1998, Pl. XII.99.

<sup>8</sup> Honcu 2017, p.45-47, type I, nos. 8, 17, 25.

<sup>9</sup> Opaïț, Ionescu 2016, Pl. XXIII, no. 132.

<sup>10</sup> Cătănciu, Barnea 1979, Fig. 168, 5.1.

<sup>11</sup> Honcu 2016, p. 81, type III, not featured.

<sup>12</sup> Honcu 2017, p. 53 – for discoveries made at Argamum, Ibida; Noviodunum, Tomis, Halmyris and Durostorum, all dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD. At the rural settlement from Fântânele – Suceveanu 1998, Pl. Pl. VII.11, Pl. XII.100,106, Pl. XIV.136, 141. At Histria there are two close analogies – Suceveanu 2000, type XL, Pl. 61, nos. 12 and 14, both considered local productions by the author. Also found at Callatis - Opaïț, Ionescu 2016, Pl. XIV, nos. 138-140 and Telița-Amza, Baumann 1995, Pl. LXIII.1.

<sup>13</sup> Opaïț, Ionescu 2016, type III, p. 75; Taras 2014, Fig. 9.

<sup>14</sup> Honcu 2016, Type IV. For details on the excavation see Iacob 2012, p.229; the house was partially uncovered.

<sup>15</sup> Suceveanu 2000, p. 123, type XXXVIII, especially no. 4 with the grooved body and considered an *undoubtedly* local product by the author, and dated at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, although most of the other finds are also considered local. The second fragment, with its pointy tip is reminiscent of the African casserole type Hayes 197, dated from the late second to the mid third century. However, the morphology and fabric does not allow our vessel to be considered as such, but it may suggest that the potter was influenced by the African merchandise – Hayes 1972, p. 209, fig. 36.

<sup>16</sup> Suceveanu 1998, Pl. IX.46, Pl. XIV.137.

Argamum<sup>17</sup>, Tropaeum Traiani<sup>18</sup> and Troesmis<sup>19</sup> while another similar pot was discovered at the rural settlement at Telița Amza<sup>20</sup>.

15. US27, c. 7, HI 5-4. Diam. 20 cm. Hp. 3.2 cm.

Flaring and beaded rim, grooved body. Coarse fabric 5YR4/4 reddish brown, black on surface with mica and inclusions. Traces of exposure to fire.

16. c. 7, East profile. Diam. 18 cm. Hp. 4.9 cm.

Beaded, flaring and slightly skewer rim. Coarse fabric 5Y4/1 dark gray and 10YR4/3 brown, with numerous inclusions. Traces of exposure to heavy fire.

Type 5 pots have flaring rims, skewed and profiled on the exterior, with an interior groove (Pl. IV, 17a-b-18). There are two variants, of which the first is the most common among our finds. Closest analogies are found at Fântânele<sup>21</sup> and Histria for the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries where there are many variants of the shape<sup>22</sup>, while further variants are to be found at Niculițel and Noviodunum, and were considered to be storage vessels<sup>23</sup>. Although fragment 17b shows exposure to heavy fire, both fragments have the same type of fabric. Fragment 18 is very similar with Aegean pots.<sup>24</sup>

17. (a) US1, c.5, - 0.20 m. Diam. 16 cm. Hp. 3.3 cm.

Vertical, skewed rim, grooved body. Coarse fabric 5YR6/8 reddish yellow and trace of gray at core, with mica and inclusions. Traces of exposure to fire. (b)

Another fragments is form US 26, coarse fabric 5YR6/8 reddish yellow, with mica and numerous inclusions and traces of exposure to heavy fire.

18. US27, c. 7, 0.20-0.25 m. Diam. 16 cm. Hp. 2.9 cm.

Flaring and flat rim, grooved on the exterior. Coarse fabric 2.5YR5/8 red, with mica and inclusions, some large. Traces of exposure to fire.

The following two types are casseroles and pans (Pl. IV-V). The casseroles have a horizontal, everted rim, slightly leaning inward. Analogies are to be found at numerous sites in the province<sup>25</sup> and are considered to be of an Aegean origin<sup>26</sup>. Item no. 19 is the most complete and we can see the concave wall of the body; the following fragments are less well preserved and could have also continued with a carinated body. The pans can also be divided into two sub - types: pan with everted, beaded rim (no. 22) and pan

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<sup>17</sup> Honcu 2017, type VI, Pl. VI, no.53.

<sup>18</sup> Cătănciu, Barnea 1979, p. 185, Fig. 152, no. 5(7) for the first item 19 and p. 188, Fig. 162, no. 5(7) for item no. 20.

<sup>19</sup> Baumann 1980, p. 191, Pl. 22, no. 7 as analogy for our item 20, while mentioning that the find from Troesmis is gray ware.

<sup>20</sup> Baumann 1995, p. 164, Pl. LXIII, no. 5.

<sup>21</sup> Suceveanu 1998, Pl. IX.44 (for our no. 18).

<sup>22</sup> Suceveanu 2000, p.117-119, type XXXVI, Pl. 51-52, most finds are considered local productions. Similar vessels with triangular section of the rim are attested at Niculițel and Noviodunum - Honcu 2017, type III pots, Pl. XIII, nos. 125-125.

<sup>23</sup> Honcu 2017, nos. 124-125, Pl. XIII. The vessels featured here have a much larger rim diameter of 19-22 cm.

<sup>24</sup> Istenic, Schneider 2000, Fig.4, no. 5

<sup>25</sup> Honcu 2017, p. 83-90 features several variants of which nos. 143, 148 from Ibida are the most similar to our items. The author also stated that these vessels have an Aegean origin and list an almost complete bibliography for those discoveries. Because we are within the administrative territory of Histria it must be mentioned that several variants of such casseroles are also attested here, Suceveanu 2000, type XXIV.

<sup>26</sup> Hayes 1983, p. 105, type Knossos II; Taras 2014 discusses vessels similar to our items, Figs. 10, 16.

with flaring, beaded rim (no. 23). Analogies are to be found at Histria<sup>27</sup>, Argamum, Ibida, Noviodunum<sup>28</sup> and Callatis.<sup>29</sup>

Type 6 - casseroles

19. US25, c.7, 0.30 m. Diam. 22 cm, Hp. 4.8 cm.  
Flaring, horizontal rim. Coarse fabric 7.5YR4/4 brown, with numerous inclusion. Traces of exposure to fire. Another fragment in US 26.
20. US2 end, c.7, -0.20/25 m. Diam. 20, Hp. 1.4 cm.  
Flaring, horizontal rim. Coarse fabric, 5YR5/6 yellowish red and 5YR5/1 gray, with mica and inclusions. Traces of exposure to fire.
21. US18, c.5, CE4, -0.40/42 m. Diam. 26, Hp. 1.7 cm.  
Flaring, horizontal rim, oriented inwards. Coarse fabric, 2.5Y4/3 olive brown, with mica and inclusions. Traces of exposure to fire.

Type 7- pan.

22. US27, c.7, -0.30/32 m. Diam. 26 cm, Hp. 1.7 cm.  
Everted, beaded rim, conical body and flat base. Coarse fabric, 7.5Y4/4 brown and black, with mica and inclusions. Traces of exposure to heavy fire.

Type 8 – pan

23. US21, c.4, AB3, -0.50 m. Diam. 25, Hp. 2.7 cm.  
Flaring, beaded rim, with a groove. Coarse fabric, 10YR5/4 yellowish brown, with fine inclusions. Light brown coating.

The last items in the wheel-made category are the lids, represented by a knob and four rims. Although there are not many such discoveries published, analogies can be found at Argamum, Niculițel, Ibida, Noviodunum<sup>30</sup> and Halmyris.<sup>31</sup> There is also a hand-made lid, featured in its respective category (Pl. V no.35). Item no. 24 seems to belong to the same typology as a find from Histria.<sup>32</sup>

24. US54, c. 15. Diam. 2 cm. Hp. 4.9 cm.  
Fragmentary lid with a round knob, grooved and conical body. Coarse fabric 5YR5/6 yellowish red, with mica, inclusions and traces of exposure to fire. Another fragment in US 18.
25. US44, c. 14, -0.50 m. Diam. 17 cm. Hp. 1.2 cm.  
Rim, slightly beaded. Coarse fabric 7.5YR4/2 brown, with few inclusions and traces of exposure to fire. Another similar fragment in US18.
26. US1, c. 14, SE. Diam. 22-24 cm. Hp. 1.9 cm.  
Rim with a fine groove on the interior. Coarse fabric 7.5YR5/6 strong brown, with inclusions and traces of exposure to fire.

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<sup>27</sup> Suceveanu 2000, Type XXIX for no. 20 and types XXVII-XXVIII for nos. 22-23.

<sup>28</sup> Honcu 2017, types II-III, Pl. XVIII-XX;

<sup>29</sup> Opaî, Ionescu 2016, Pl. XXVI-XXVII, nos 151-152 *shallow casseroles*, no. 163.

<sup>30</sup> Honcu 2017, Pl. XXX, features finds from all four sites.

<sup>31</sup> Topoleanu 2000, Pl. XXXVII.

<sup>32</sup> Bădescu, Cliante 2015, p. 220, Fig. 4/9, dated from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century to the 7<sup>th</sup>.

## Hand-made pottery

Among the coarse wares discovered during the excavations there is a significant number of hand-made fragments. Although most of them are in very fragmentary state, there are profiles that can be attributed to a particular type of vessel and allow for analogies to be made, both for cooking and table wares. During the first excavation seasons of the site, a different sector also revealed traces of habitation, with constructions made both from stone and perishable materials. It must be mentioned that the author of the first excavation makes no mention of any handmade fragment discovered during excavation.<sup>33</sup> Many of the analogies for the jar-shaped pots come from southern Romania, where these coarse decorated vessels, with both alveolar bands and knobs, are attested at various sites<sup>34</sup>. In Dobruđja also, analogies for these are to be found at various sites and the patterns are similar in all settlements from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD,<sup>35</sup> but also a continuity of production up to the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>36</sup> It is worth mentioning that hand-made fragments with both flaring and straight rims, typical decorations, considered pots-jars were discovered during the excavations of another early Roman settlement - Fântânele, also in the territory of Histria<sup>37</sup>. Fragments from such hand-made coarse vessels continue to exist at the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>-century settlements, although to a lesser extent.<sup>38</sup> Apart from the pots and the jars, one hand-made bowl was discovered in a context with Roman materials<sup>39</sup> and the traces of exposure to fire may suggest a different use than serving. In the case of the last discussed item, the base could come from a similar vessel previously discovered at Ibida.<sup>40</sup> Almost all of the fragments show traces of exposure to fire and one may assume they had been used for cooking. However, one cannot be sure that cooking was their last manner of use or if they were re-used for storage following multiple uses as cooking ware and subsequently lost their resistance to fire. Two particular fragments drew our attention, both sherds with decoration, wheel-made, which would indicate an evolution of the local tradition pots towards technology, but also a trait of conservatism and the desire to keep producing specific ceramic items (Plate VI, 35-36). Furthermore, the fabric of item no. 36 is similar to that of some of the Type 1 wheel-made pots.

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<sup>33</sup> Iacob 2012, p. 229; <http://cronica.cimec.ro/detalii.asp?k=4842&d=Jurilovca-Tulcea-Capul-Dolojman--Argamum-2011>

<sup>34</sup> Popilian 1976; Bichir 1984, pl. 133; Ignat, Vintilă, Gavrilă 2015, pl. X.160-161 at Bucharest-Străulești, with variations on decorating patterns.

<sup>35</sup> Baumann 2009 for the settlements near Noviodunum: Pl. II pots with flaring rims from Horia, Pl. II pots with flaring rims from Telița-Valea Amzei, Troesmis, Enisala, Sarichioi Sărătura, Revărsarea –Cotul Tichilești, Pl. V pots with flaring rims from Telița-Amza; Crișan 1969, 160-63; Honcu 2016, pl. I, nos. 12-14 at Argamum; Honcu 2017, Pl. XXXIII for Enisala; Bogdan-Cătănicu, Barnea 1979, figs. 141, 149-150 for Tropaeum Traiani; Simion 1971, 64 for Enisala, and bibliography; Opaț, Ionescu 2016, Pl. XXV, no. 145 for Callatis; Chiriac, Ionomu 2005 for Floriile; Irimia 2007 and bibliography.

<sup>36</sup> Scorpan 1970 discusses hand made vessels found in both rural and urban settlements, including Histria, even during Late Antique, but the archaeological contexts are unclear.

<sup>37</sup> Suceveanu 1998, Pl. XV. 160-161, Pl. XVII. 178.

<sup>38</sup> Nuțu 2009, for a *vicus* near Babadag, and Nuțu, Costea 2010. At Aegyssus it seems that the fine table ware consists only of Pontic and Eastern wares; only some of the coarse wares follow the local tradition.

<sup>39</sup> There are other hand-made vessels found in mixed contexts, alongside Hellenistic and Archaic materials.

<sup>40</sup> Honcu 2017, p. 178, Pl. XXIII, no. 298.

Type 1 pots have flaring, slightly rounded rims, with or without decoration (Pl. V). The fabric is porous with numerous inclusions, with the colour ranging from reddish to dark brown and black.

27. Us1 end, c.6, -0.28 m. Diam. 16 cm. Hp. 3.5 cm.  
Hand-made rim, flaring, decorated with a band made out of circular impressions. Coarse fabric,

7.5YR7/8 reddish yellow, black at core, with numerous inclusions and dense mica.

28. Us2, c. 1, south profile. Diam. 18 cm. Hp. 4.1 cm.

Hand-made rim, rounded and slightly flaring. Coarse fabric 5YR4/6 yellowish red, with numerous inclusions. Other similar fragments in US 48.

29. US 18, c.3, -0.31-0.41 m. Diam. 18 cm. Hp. 5.2 cm.

Hand-made rim, flaring. Coarse fabric, 10YR4/2 dark grayish brown with mica and numerous inclusions. Similar finds in US 55-59.

Type 2 pots have rather vertical and slightly incurved rims, with or without decoration. The fabric is porous and dark colored, with or without decoration.

30. Us10, c.2, EF1. Diam. 20 cm. Hp. 4 cm.

Hand-made rim, straight, decorated with a girdle made out of circular impressions. Coarse fabric, 2.5YR4/1 dark gray, with mica, numerous inclusions. Traces of exposure to fire.

31. Us49, c. 11. Diam. 12 cm. Hp. 3.8 cm.

Hand-made rim, vertical, slightly inwards. Coarse fabric 2.5YR4/4 reddish brown, with numerous inclusions. Traces of exposure to fire.

Type 3 includes a hand-made bowl, with inverted rim and a hand made ring base.

32. Us44, c. 14 NE, -0.50 m. Diam. 14 cm. Hp. 2.7 cm.

Hand-made rim, skewed, slightly inwards. Coarse fabric 2.5YR4/4 reddish brown, with numerous inclusions. Light gray on the exterior, smoothed.

33. Us57, c. 16. Diam. 4 cm. Hp. 3.8 cm.

Hand-made ring base. Coarse fabric, black, with numerous inclusions, exposed to heavy fire.

Lid

34. US1 end, c. 5, Bc3, -0,32 m. Diam. 14 cm. Hp. 1.8 cm.

Hand-made rim with a fine groove on the interior. Coarse fabric 7.5YR4/6 strong brown, with inclusions. Gray on surface. Several other fragments of hand-made lids in US 16, 26 and 35.

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The wheel-made coarse ware consists of various types and it must be said that they were discovered in a very fragmentary state and in all areas of the excavation, but mainly to the exterior of the edifice (Pl. II). Two small hearths have been discovered so far, but without consistent ceramic finds in their perimeter (one sherd included in Type D). All of the types identified have analogies in the province, especially in the nearby Histria metropolis, which is not surprising considering the standards of Roman



production and the proximity to our site. The wheel-made coarse-ware comes from a yet unknown production centre, as no kiln was discovered on site and there are no archaeometric analyses available in order to confirm if at least some of the vessels originated from Histria. The standardization of shapes is obvious at all sites in the province, both urban and rural. However, from a morphological point of view, there is a clear Aegean influence in case of some of the finds, especially the casseroles, although we cannot presume an actual Aegean origin, but rather a tendency of local potters to imitate those shapes. This can be the result of the amphorae trade, as certain coarse wares could have arrived in the Black Sea cities together with the main cargo<sup>41</sup>. At this stage of the ceramic research and the ongoing excavation of the site, we do not have a clear statistic for the amphorae recovered from the excavation in order to determine the percentage of the Aegean amphorae by comparison with other centres. Thus far, most of the identified amphorae fragments originate from the Pontic area and are considered to have contained fish products<sup>42</sup>, while from the Aegean space only the fragments from Kăpitan II amphorae are thus far counted. The trade of cooking wares must have been widely developed if we consider that a vessel made for this purpose had a relatively short use of more or less than a year. Other than physical damage, vessels could have become useless after frequent uses, as the pores would have absorbed residues from cooking<sup>43</sup>. During the excavation no waste pits of discarded domestic refuse were identified, with the main area used for this purpose being the courtyard. Following earlier research, it is plausible that the sherds were discarded along with other types of refuse within the perimeter of the house such as the yard or even re-used in certain instances.<sup>44</sup> Most of the cooking ware fragments were recovered from the perimeter of the house, only the Type 1 pots and the hand-made sherds were found inside the building, corresponding to its last period of use (Plate II).

Although there is not a large amount of local hand-made pottery discovered, there is a percentage that cannot be disregarded and begs further questions and discussions. Does the presence of these finds imply that locals inhabited the site or is it a sign of trade with one or more local settlements? Did the Roman settlers occupy a previous Getae settlement? If we are talking of trade, what was the main merchandise - the vessels, their content (when speaking of jars) or both? All three questions are very hard to answer. However, we can only presume that the pottery was local, as no kilns or traces of pottery firing were identified; another presumption is that the pottery, either wheel- or handmade, was brought from the nearby urban centres or other rural settlements. The pots or jars are believed to have been also used as small size storage vessels, with capacities between 5-10 litres, and 22-37 litres for the bigger ones, respectively. Because these vessels show no traces of insulation, it is unlikely that they were used for liquids, but rather for cereals, while their small dimensions would have

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<sup>41</sup> Aegean amphorae were estimated as the largest imports during early Roman time and contained mainly wine, Paraschiv 2006, p. 145-146.

<sup>42</sup> Muşat-Streinu 2017.

<sup>43</sup> Pena 2007, p. 57. Absorbing residue would have altered taste, thus some vessels could have received another function after prolonged use. This also raises the question of how disposable were the cooking wares (p. 58).

<sup>44</sup> Pena 2007, p. 316. For a discussion on recycling see p. 320-322.

made them very useful in a household on a daily basis.<sup>45</sup> The featured hand-made pots have diameters spanning from 16 to 20 cm, and the larger ones were very well suited for storage. Vessels with high porosity are not suitable for long storage of liquids, but are advantageous for short term storage of water, while the minerals cover the pores over time making the vessels suitable for other purposes, such as cooking.<sup>46</sup> Cooking wares with high porosity can reduce the thermal stress, while the absence of corners and angles prevents moisture from collecting.<sup>47</sup> However, the most efficient cooking wares should have thinner walls<sup>48</sup>, such as the wheel-made pots.

In trying to bring further information about the agricultural labours in the settlement, the analysis performed revealed the presence of wheat, millet and barley, but also of lentils, peas and elderberry, leading also to a better understanding of the dietary habits of the inhabitants<sup>49</sup>. More information about the diet of the settlers is offered by further analysis of the bone remains, revealing that villagers raised cattle, pigs and goats. At Acic Suat, the ratios are as follows: goats 45.5%, (small sized) cattle 33.6%, pigs 9.6%, horses 8.4% and dogs 3.2%.<sup>50</sup> Fish was also consumed at the site, and thus far pike, perch, and also sturgeon are attested<sup>51</sup>.

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Research in the inland of the Black Sea shows a rich and extensive landscape during the first centuries following the Roman conquest, not only from the point of view of the various types of settlements, but also from the point of view of the people inhabiting them. The settlement at Acic Suat must have had close links with the nearby metropolis, as ceramic evidence suggests, and not only a similar preference for certain vessels, but also the direct use of the pottery produced at Histria.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, in support of this assumption, aerial photographs offered insights regarding the secondary roads connecting the metropolis with its territory, and such a road was identified in the proximity of the settlement at Acic Suat (Pl. I, 2). The entire area shows a network of roads connecting not only the major centers, but, most importantly, also the rural settlements.<sup>53</sup> One particular road seems to connect the city with the mines at Altin Tepe where it is presumed that *Lai* and *Bessi* were brought to perform the mining<sup>54</sup>, thus attesting the presence of other populations alongside the *Getae* in the *regio Histriae*.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Grigoraş 2018, p. 8, 12.

<sup>46</sup> Rice 1987, p. 231.

<sup>47</sup> Rice 1987, p. 231.

<sup>48</sup> Rice 1987, p. 237

<sup>49</sup> Baralis, Lungu *et alii* 2017, p. 477. For further analyses and discussions on the diet of people see Honcu 2017, p. 163-171.

<sup>50</sup> Baralis, Lungu *et alii* 2017, p. 477.

<sup>51</sup> Baralis, Lungu *et alii* 2017, 478. Analyses were performed by Myriam Sternberg, Centre Camille Julien, Aix-Marseille Université-CNRS.

<sup>52</sup> If we are to follow Suceveanu's hypotheses regarding local products.

<sup>53</sup> Baralis, Lungu *et alii* 2017, p. 466-468.

<sup>54</sup> It could very well lead directly to the settlement, but so far we are not sure of its exact extent; Doruțiu-Boilă 1971, 42; Panaite 2014, p. 51-52; Baralis, Lungu *et alii* 2017, p. 466-467 and Matei-Popescu 2018, p. 114 for the settlers.

<sup>55</sup> ISM I, 324, 326-332; Avram 2007.

Further evidence of a Getae settlement is the vicus Buteridava that existed up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD in *region Histrae*.<sup>56</sup>

Within the territory of Histria, the earlier excavations at Fântânele yielded evidence of occupation from the early Roman period as well as dwellings belonging to the local population<sup>57</sup>. At Ibida, excavations in various areas of the city revealed the presence of local pottery in the early Roman layers.<sup>58</sup> Also located in the *regio* is another small settlement called Histria β, similar to ours, indicating an occupation span between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. Similar to Acic Suat, the archaeological layer was close to the surface and damaged by agricultural labour. The finds include local hand-made pottery and numerous bone fragments, leading the authors of the excavation to suggest that the settlers were mainly shepherds.<sup>59</sup> We have already mentioned other sites from the province where local pottery was discovered when discussing the analogies for the pottery from Acic Suat.<sup>60</sup> Local hand-made pottery is attested at numerous sites in the province as late as the 5<sup>th</sup> century in certain cases<sup>61</sup>, for example at Dinogetia where the most numerous finds were discovered<sup>62</sup>. However, this type of finds disappear from the archaeological layers by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. It is worth mentioning that the gray fine wares present in most Getae sites disappear even earlier, being slowly replaced by Pontic red-fabric products and Roman imports, leading to the presumption that the hand-made ones had only a household use.<sup>63</sup> Beyond the obvious advantage of the wheel-made pottery - its increased quality and resistance -, there can be a secondary reason for renouncing traditional pottery. This can be related to the long term Romanization process that the local population was submitted to and leading eventually to the adoption of the Roman way of life and with it, its pottery.<sup>64</sup> The process might have been accelerated by the Edict of 212 granting Roman citizenship to all inhabitants of the Empire, and also acting like a psychological motivator for renouncing traditions and fully committing to the Roman way. This can also be illustrated by means of epigraphy, and one example is *Daizus Comozoi interfectus Castabocis* who had named his two sons *Iustus* și *Valens* <sup>65</sup>, obvious Roman names, probably in an attempt to help them easily blend into the Roman society.

Although only one building was fully excavated in the settlement at identified at Acic Suat, the surveys and the materials recovered come together in offering insights

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<sup>56</sup> CIL III, 14447.

<sup>57</sup> Suceveanu 1998.

<sup>58</sup> Honcu 2017, p. 150-152.

<sup>59</sup> Lungu, Bounegru, Avram 1984, p.93. Several other areas of potential habitation were noted by means of surveys and short term excavations, see. Avram, Bounegru, Chiriac 1985.

<sup>60</sup> Lungu, Bounegru, Avram 1984, 85–100. The dating to the 4<sup>th</sup> century is based on the coins discovered.

<sup>61</sup> Ștefan *et alii* 1955, 14, fig. 2.2; Scorpan 1970 - Histria–Sector ER, Valul lui Traian, Histria, Sacidava, Valea Seacă, Runcu; Limanu, Ovidiu also in later dated contexts, but that can be due to a compromised archaeological layer. However, they do attest the presence of local Getae either before or together with the Romans in earlier times.

<sup>62</sup> Barnea 1955, 105; Ștefan *et alii* 1960, 587; Ștefan, Barnea, Mitrea 1962, p.676.

<sup>63</sup> Ther, Manger, Gregor 2015, 143.

<sup>64</sup> Honcu 2017, p. 144-157.

<sup>65</sup> CIL III, 14, 214, Barnea 1998, 223.

on the lives of the people inhabiting it, the use and re-use of daily objects, their potential origin and last but not least, the economic ties that bound them to other centers.

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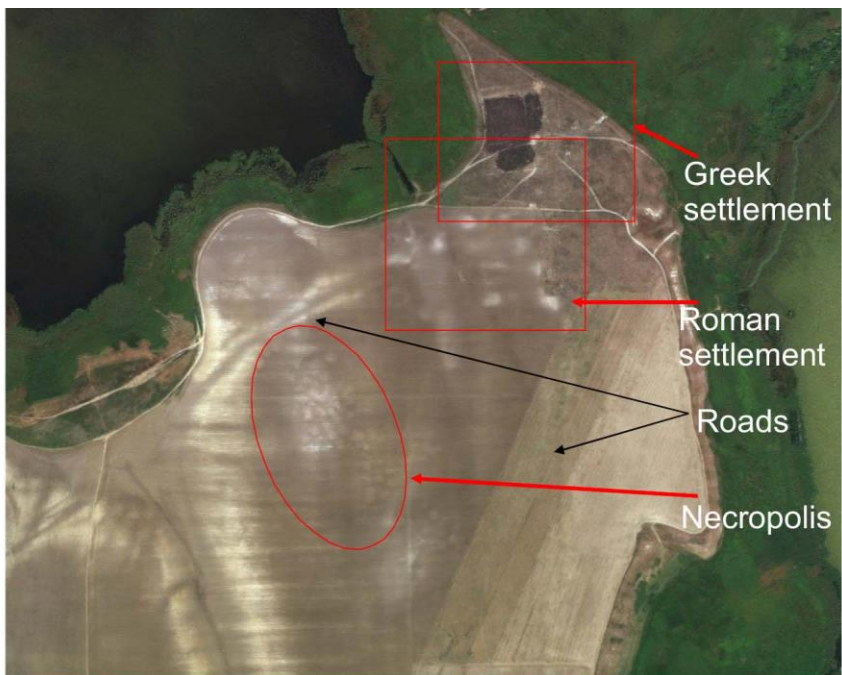
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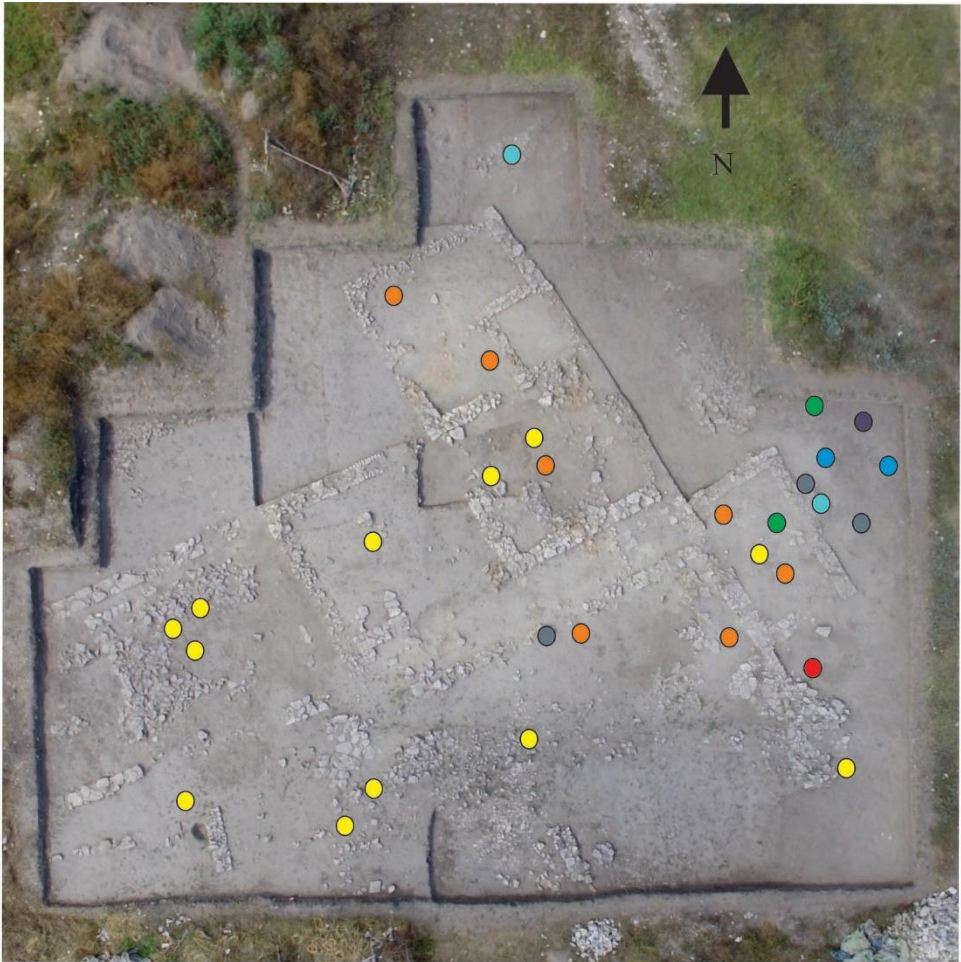
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2.

Plate I.1. View of the site (Lungu, Baralis *et alii* 2019); 2. Routes of circulation identified by photo-interpretation by A. Comfort (Baralis, Lungu *et alii* 2017, Fig.4).





Wheel made pots

- Type I
- Type II
- Type III
- Type IV
- Type V
- Type VI
- Type VII

- Lids
- Hand made vessels

Plate II. The rural Roman building and distribution of coarse wares.

Type 1

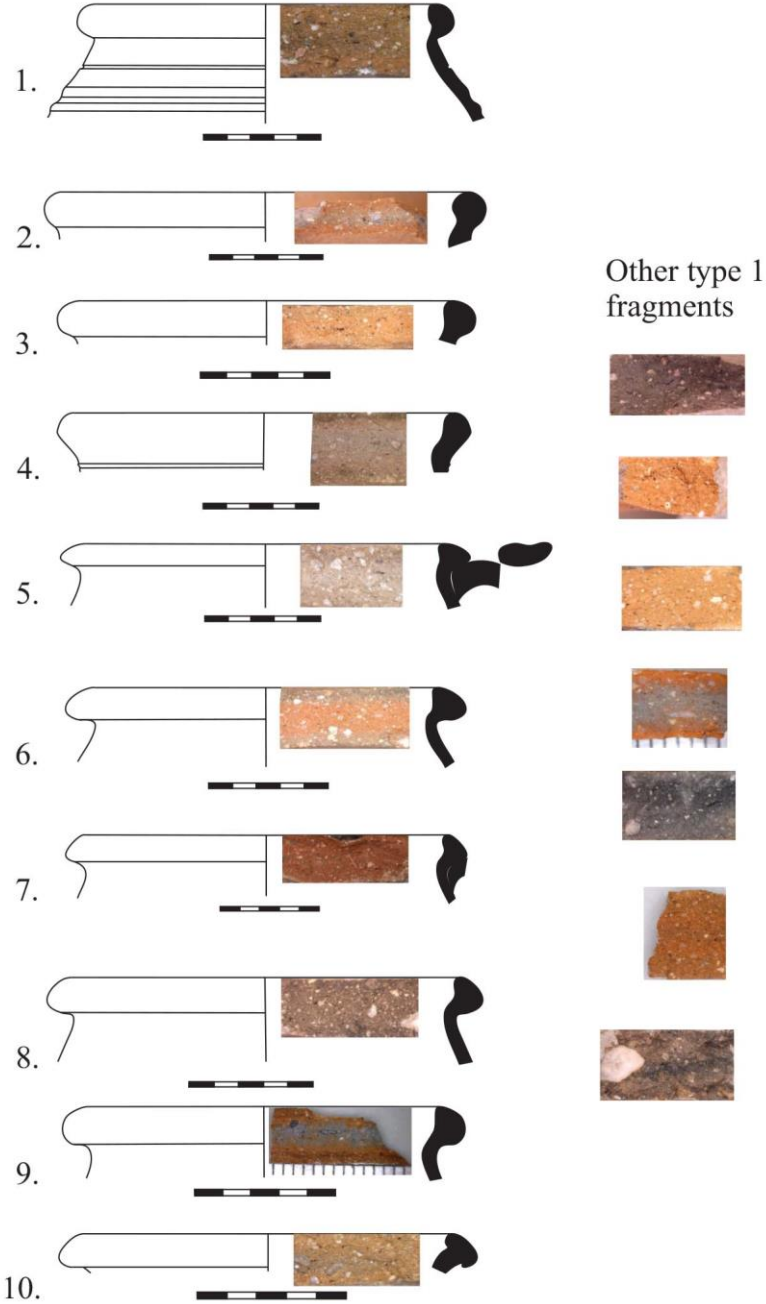
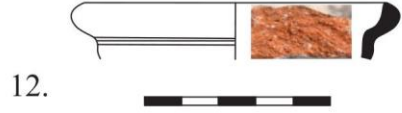
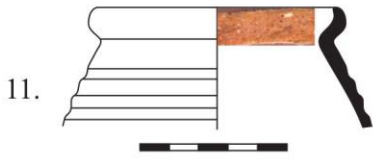
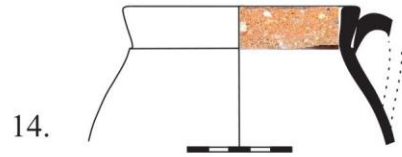
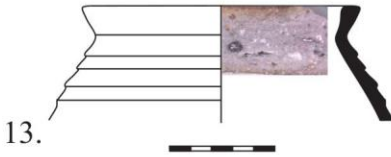


Plate III. Wheel made pots.

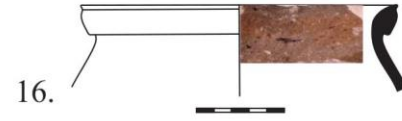
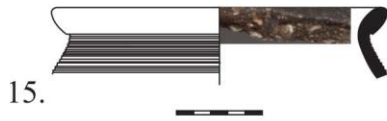
Type 2



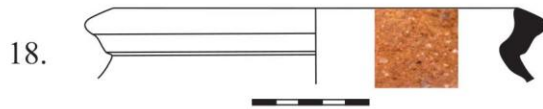
Type 3



Type 4



Type 5



Type 6

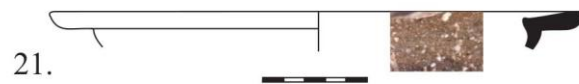
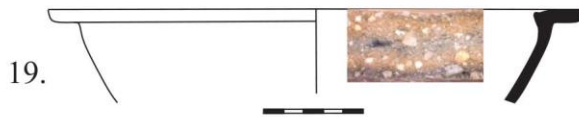


Plate IV: Wheel made pots (11-18); Casseroles (19-21).

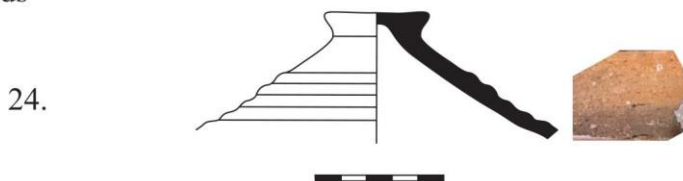
Type 7



Type 8



Lids



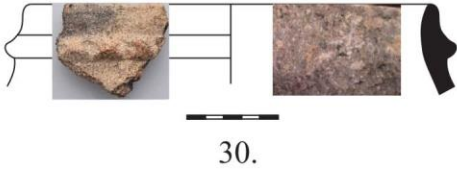
Hand made vessels

Type 1



Plate V. Wheel made pans (22-23); lids (24-26); Hand made vessels (27-29).

Type 2



Type 3

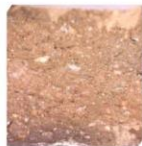
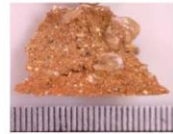
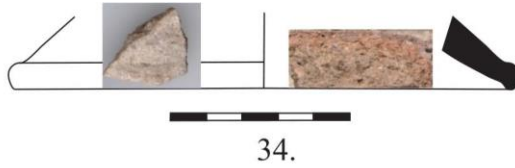
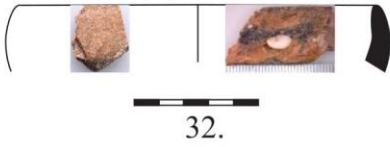


Plate VI. Hand made vessels: pots (30-31), bowls (32-33), lid (34); body sherds (35-38).