



COMMUNICATIONES
ARCHÆOLOGICÆ
HUNGARIÆ

2025

COMMUNICATIONES
ARCHÆOLOGICÆ
HUNGARICÆ

2025

Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum
Budapest, 2025

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MNMKK Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum Régészeti Tár
H-1088, Budapest, Múzeum körút 14–16.

A folyóirat cikkei elérhetők / journal access: <http://ojs.elte.hu/comarchhung>
Kéziratbeküldés és szerzői útmutató / submission and guidelines: <http://ojs.elte.hu/comarchhung/about/submissions>

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ISSN 0231-133X (Print)
ISSN 2786-295X (Online)

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POTTERY IN THE CASTLE OF BOLOGA (SEBESVÁR, ROMANIA) FROM THE FIRST HALF OF THE 18TH CENTURY

Máté FÜLÖP¹  – Zsolt Csók² 

The restoration and conservation of Castle of Bologa (Sebesvár) in north-western Transylvania in 2018–2020 was preceded by preventive archaeological research. During the 2018 campaign, a total of 4,093 sherds were unearthed. Being at the boundary of archaeology and ethnography, study of 18th-century pottery in our region has long been neglected. Accordingly, the present paper attempts to establish a typology and chronology of 18th-century pottery in Sebesvár. Analysis of the archaeological material has revealed that the castle was likely abandoned in the first half of the 18th century.

Az Északnyugat-Erdélyben található Sebesváron (Románia) 2018–2020 között helyreállítási munkálatokat megelőző régészeti feltárást végeztünk. A 2018. évi feltárás során 4093 kerámiatöredék látott napvilágot. Mivel régióinkban a 18. századi fazekasság igen kevésbé ismert, egy teljességre törő anyagközlés időszerű volt. Jelen tanulmány a sebesvári fazekasság 18. századhoz köthető kerámiaanyagát mutatja be. Emellett a feldolgozás eredményeként fény derült arra is, hogy Sebesvár felhagyása valamikor a 18. század első felében mehetett végbe.

Keywords: Transylvania, Sebesvár, Bologa, 18th century, white pottery, glazed pottery, Haban faience (Hutterite pottery)

Kulcsszavak: Erdély, Sebesvár, Bologa, 18. század, fehér kerámia, mázas kerámia, habán kerámia

Introduction

Situated near today's Bologa (Sebesváralja) in the foreground of the Transylvanian side of the Királyhágó (Pasul Craiului) pass, approximately 1.5 km south of the Sebes-Körös (Crișul Repede) River, Sebesvár remained relatively intact through history, successfully surviving the past 500 years (Fig. 1–2). It lay deserted for the last two centuries, and the commune of Bologa decided to partially reconstruct the damaged walls for tourism purposes. The necessary preventive archaeological excavations, led by Zsolt Csók and Cosmin Onofrei from the National Museum of Transylvanian History, were carried out in three campaigns between 2018 and 2020. Working occasionally as a field technician there, I had the opportunity to delve into the study of the pottery of Sebesvár, which culminated in a master's dissertation

evaluating the pottery collected in 2018, defended at Eötvös Loránd University in 2022. This paper presents the revised conclusions included in that work.

From an archaeological point of view, Sebesvár had been virtually unknown before the preventive excavations. Accordingly, this paper offers the very first glimpse into the medieval and postmedieval pottery of the castle and the region, in line with the ideas of Imre Holl, published in the 1960s, who believed that systematic local research is the first step in characterising regional pottery styles (Holl 1963, 81). In this light, this paper is not only an attempt to create a typochronological framework for the pottery of Sebesvár, but also a presentation of the results of basic research on pottery from the broader north-western Transylvanian region.

The period directly preceding the age of pottery in ethnographic collections was chosen for two

► Received 5.2.2025 | Accepted 22.8.2025 | Published online 29.12.2025

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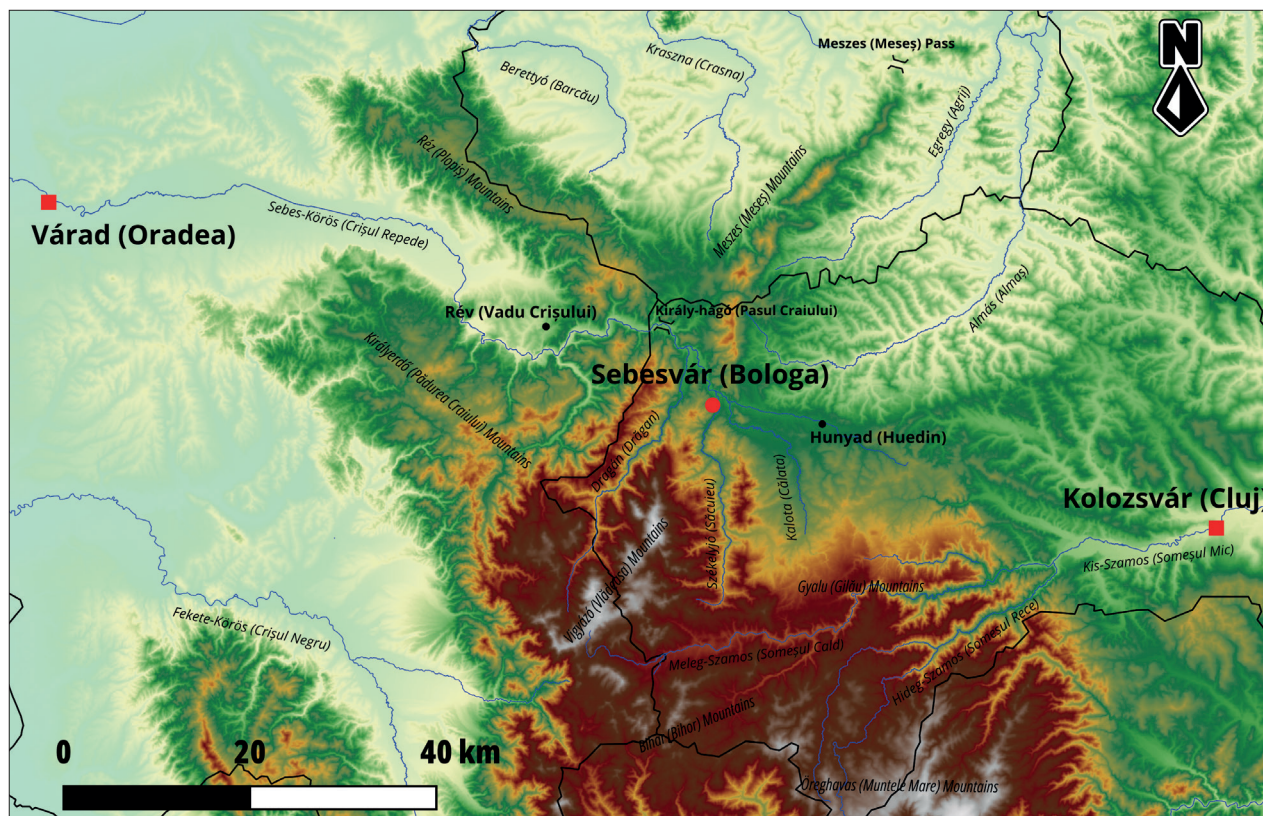


Fig 1. The geographical position of Sebesvár (DEM: SRTM 30m)

1. kép. Sebesvár földrajzi elhelyezkedése (DEM: SRTM 30m)

characteristics of the pottery of the site: the lack of analogous complete material publications and a more practical one, the simple fact that the decline of Sebesvár at the end of the early modern period was a slow and lasting process, resulting in an abundance of archaeological finds and phenomena.

A concise overview of the 17th–18th-century history of Sebesvár

The first fort at Sebesvár was erected in the 13th century. From 1439 to its abandonment in the 18th century, the castle was possessed by the prestigious Bánffy family of Losonc (Fülöp 2024, 91; Györffy 1987, 660; KmJkv I. 157–158). An examination of Transylvanian written sources reveals a conspicuous scarcity of documents related to the castle between the second half of the 16th and the first half of the 17th century. Apart from a charter issued by Prince Gabriel Bethlen in Sebesvár in 1625 (SzOkl VIII. 189), there seems to be no other reference from the first century of the principality. The reasons for the lack of mentions are unknown; perhaps in this respect, Sebesvár was less important in this period.

The situation changed immediately after the dis-



Fig 2. The condition of Sebesvár in 2015, preceding restoration (photo by Robert Filip)

2. kép. Sebesvár 2015. évi, beruházás előtti állapota (Fotó: Robert Filip)

astrous Polish military expedition of Prince George Rákóczi II, when the town of Várad (Oradea) fell during the subsequent Ottoman punitive campaign, and thus Sebesvár became a border fortress. In this new situation, Sebesvár found itself in the forefront of harsh diplomatic quarrels that produced a series of written documents shedding light on the diplomatic strategy of the weakened Transylvanian state of Prince Michael Apafi I. A detailed description of the chain of events and evaluation of the complex topic goes beyond the focus of this paper.

In the years following the occupation of Várad, both sides repeatedly disrupted life along the frontier, exposing the vulnerability of Transylvanian border forts. The problem of their condition became crucial for the central government in May 1665 at the latest, when the Diet of Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia) authorised the prince to deploy troops wherever he saw necessary (EOE 14. 11, 119; Trócsányi 1980, 71). Regarding Sebesvár, the Diet of Gyulafehérvár in September 1666 mandated that the Captain of Kolozsvár (Cluj), Dénes Bánffy, arrange the construction of a wooden rampart (EOE 17. 479). However, first envoys of the Sublime Porte and a few days later, some 300 riders of the Ottoman Pasha of Nagyvárad were sent out in May 1668 to investigate the nature of the fortifying works (Trócsányi 1980, 89; TML IV. 220–221). The envoys of the Sublime Porte seem to have been bribed to reconcile the case in Istanbul (Bethlen 1992, 338), and the planned rampart and some stables were likely finished by January 1669. It is certain that for the Diet of Janu-

ary 1669, envoys of the Sublime Porte were sent out to call upon the prince to destroy the newly built fortifications of Sebesvár or suffer the consequences in the form of a punitive campaign (EOE 14. 53; Bethlen 1992, 340–341). According to the interpretation of the sources mentioned, the Transylvanians obeyed the order and decided to destroy the newly built fortifications (EOE 14. 421–422; Bethlen 1992, 341). However, as some later sources attest, the destruction was not carried out, or was only partially carried out; in the 1670s, the still-standing wooden fortification was again the subject of a diplomatic conflict (Balogh 1982, 223; Bethlen 1992, 456–457). The issue likely ended due to the Ottoman Empire's ongoing decline.

Consequently, this wooden fortification likely survived even Rákóczi's War of Independence (1703–1711), as an intact single-row palisade is marked on the military survey of the castle made right after the Austrian army recaptured it in 1709. The survey image was made in an idealistic manner, depicting not only the ground plan of the castle but also its environment and a panoramic view (*Fig. 3*). A comparison of this source with the results of the archaeological research and two invaluable written sources, fine details may be revealed of the condition of the castle at diverse points of its history. The documents from 1680 and 1715 are two inventories of the assets found in the castle. The second one turned out to be relevant directly to our excavations (B. Nagy 1973, 177–179): according to it, every building at the western wall, including the western tower, were the

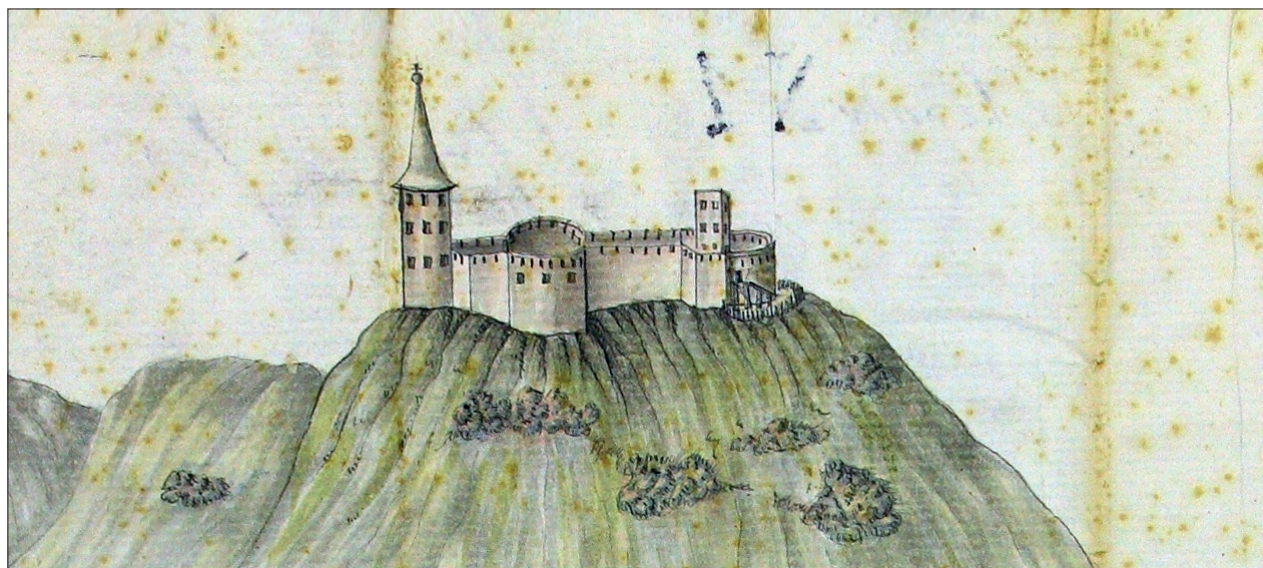


Fig 3. Sebesvár on an Austrian military survey map from 1709 (HIM-Térképtár-G-I-h-4038)
3. kép. Sebesvár 1709. évi osztrák katonai felmérése (HIM-Térképtár-G-I-h-4038)

domain of Farkas Bánffy; a deserted house stood in front of this wall at its upper end, and the house of the commandant stood at the lower end. The shingle-roofed great southern tower and the eastern cannon tower were divided evenly between György and Farkas Bánffy. Two two-storeyed houses that stood in front of the eastern tower were also divided: the upper one entered the possession of György, while the lower one became the property of Farkas. The eastern wall section was already in ruins at the time (B. Nagy 1973, 178).

Both inventories mention some parts of the castle as desolate and ruined at the time, indicating a gradual decay of the castle, which, in the lack of any source telling otherwise, may be attributed to the fact that it has become obsolete and both its owners and the Austrian military have forsaken it (Oross 2011, 1047). Available sources do not mention the exact date of abandonment, which thus can only be estimated using archaeological methods.

Results of the 2018 archaeological campaign

During the preventive excavation campaign in 2018, Zsolt Csók and Cosmin Onofrei opened several trenches that covered a significant part of the castle. The trenches were set out in light of the results of simultaneous restoration works (Fig. 4). These works, however, did not follow a strict plan, and priorities often changed over time; archaeological work had to adapt to that, as reflected in the order of excavation

and numbering of the trenches. While a detailed presentation of all excavated phenomena exceeds the frames of this paper, the analysis of the context of the find material is key for chronological evaluation.

Trench S3, covering the north-eastern rectangular tower next to the main gate, was amongst those most abundant in finds in the entire Bologa project (Fig. 5). After removing the vegetation, an approximately 3.5-metre-thick rubble layer (S3/1) was also extracted, mostly without documentation. Unfortunately, no information could be retrieved on the trial trench opened in the northern quarter of S3 either. The tower was more or less intact, making it obvious that the rubble, poor in find material, originated from the collapsed great rectangular north-central tower. The next layer was a massive, quite porous fill rich in charcoal and full of 18th-century find material (S3/2). Taking into consideration that S3/2 was preceded by another very distinct porous layer, also rich in charcoal and 16th-century finds (S3/3), the fill likely accumulated after the castle had been abandoned and, finally, has become covered with the debris of the collapsing tower. No intact ground floor could be discerned between the two layers, suggesting that the tower filled up in at least two fairly long periods.

Trench S8 (Fig. 6) near the south-eastern castle wall was covered with vegetation (S8/1), under which a very thick debris layer consisting mainly of the rubble of the collapsed south-eastern perimeter wall and a building leaning on it (S8/2) was discovered.

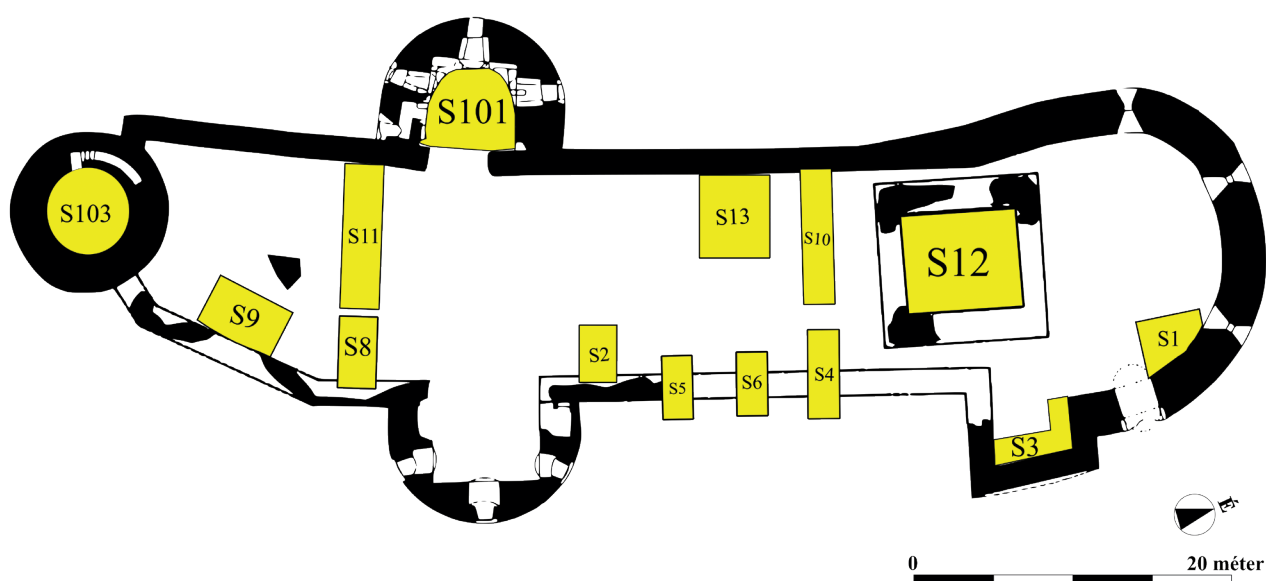


Fig 4. Ground plan of the castle and the trenches of the 2018 archaeological campaign (ground plan by Atelier FKM)
4. kép. A vár alaprajza és a 2018. évi régészeti feltárás szelvénykiosztása (Alaprajz: Atelier FKM)

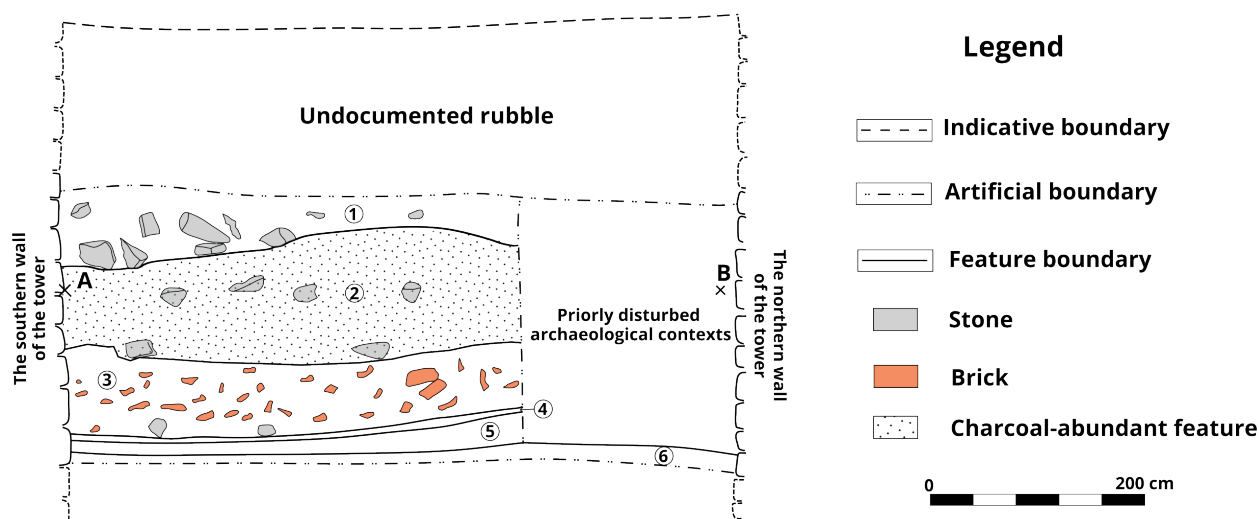


Fig 5. Eastern profile of Trench S3 (drawing by Emanuel Malinescu)

5. kép. Az S3 szelvény keleti metszetsfala (rajz: Emanuel Malinescu)

The composition of the sparse pottery found in the rubble is closely similar to the finds in the older, brown, humus-rich layer S8/6, which was rich in objects; the black, charred, homogeneous destruction layer S8/7; and S8/3, the charred, clayey filling of the oven. Stratigraphy suggests that the oven operated only briefly after the destruction event, when S8/5, the latest compact clayey floor level, was in use. The oven with charred seeds and colander sherds in its fill indicates a domestic function for the built structure (S8/4) with a clayey floor (S8/8) in Trench S8.

Fortunately, the 1715 inventory list provides a broad description of the baker's house's position in the vicinity of the eastern tower, which archaeological results seem to corroborate (B Nagy 1973, 178). Just like in Trench S3, the stylistic similarity of the finds suggests a short span for the involved features.

Findings in the adjacent Trench 11 support these results. The deep, pit-like feature, partially unearthed at the eastern edge of the trench, matches the description of a well right in the foreground of the baker's house in the source mentioned above.

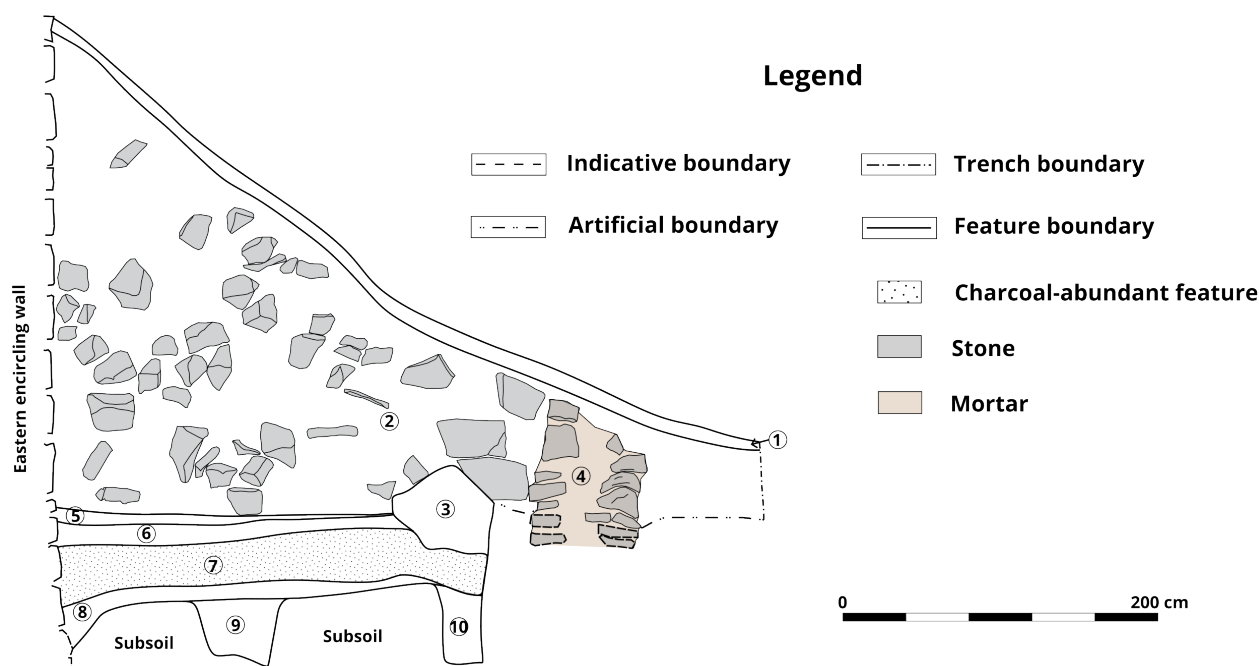


Fig 6. Southern profile of Trench S8 (drawing by Máté Fülöp)

6. kép. Az S8 szelvény déli metszetsfala (rajz: Fülöp Máté)

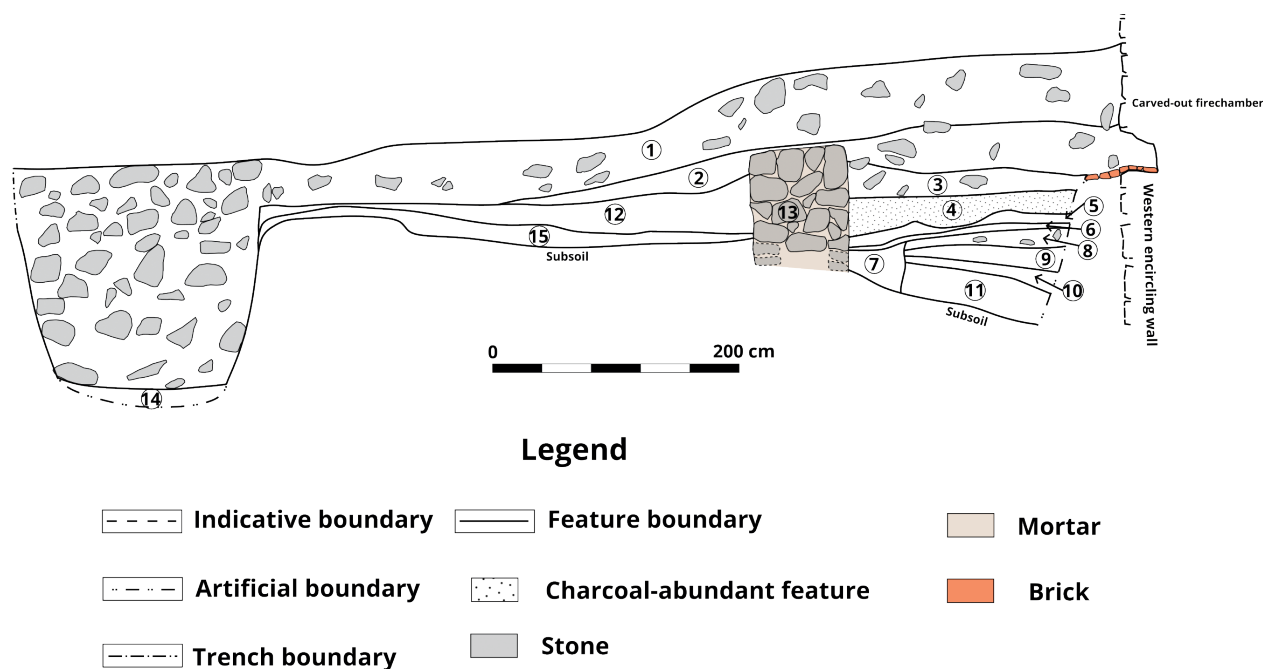


Fig 7. Southern profile of Trench S11 (drawing by Tímea Keresztes)

7. kép. Az S11 szelvény déli metszETFala (rajz: Keresztes Tímea)

However, according to the legend on the 1709 Austrian military survey map, the castle had no well, and the inhabitants had no choice but to use a cistern instead. Trench S11 held the remains of another building in the inner courtyard (Fig. 7). Its back leaned against the south-western perimeter wall, and its quite massive façade was parallel to the curtain wall. Its ground plan could not be reconstructed because no sidewalls were found in the trench. The building had a complex stratigraphy: the thick topmost debris layer, comprising mostly material from the partial collapse of the south-western encircling wall (S11/1), covered another layer of architectural debris with a lot of mortar and plaster fragments (S11/2), suggesting two separate collapse events. The next layer downwards was brown, porous, humous, and rich in finds (S11/3); it covered a distinct charred, black destruction layer with charred remains of wooden beams (S11/4), above a thin, uneven sandy fill layer (S11/5), and a brown clay rammed floor level (S11/6). Under the floor, a pit (S11/7) was cut into a series of presumably late medieval layers poor in objects; these layers are difficult to distinguish in the field documentation (S11/8–11).

Based on stratigraphic observations, the building was destroyed, its roof collapsed, and its interior began to fill with domestic waste. In this phase, an oven was built into the perimeter wall; this spontaneous feature is a fine argument for the gradual abandon-

ment of the castle. The two separate debris accumulations closing the layer sequence might mark two distinct collapse events.

Trench S101, the last trench to yield abundant find material, covered the fill of the two-storey, horseshoe-shaped western tower, which was excavated only partially to the depth of the construction floor level. Unfortunately, the surveys of the excavation trenches do not match the descriptions in the excavation report and are difficult to interpret because they seem unfinished; that is why we chose to rely here only on stratigraphy.

Like other trenches, the thick topmost layer in Trench S101 was an accumulation of building debris with stones and mortar fragments over a thin, porous layer rich in plaster fragments, probably from the time of the castle's abandonment – even more so, as it covered a brownish debris layer with the charred remains of two pairs of plinth beams and a round patch of mortar, perhaps the foundation of the plinth beam of the second floor. This fill layer was dated to the reign of King Leopold I (1657–1705) by a bronze coin (Onofrei 2018, 48). To complete the stratigraphy of the tower, the northern side of this fill was further explored with a trial trench. It contained another thick layer of building debris, with sporadic medieval pottery, covering a layer with mainly slow-wheeled Árpád Age pottery, atop a distinct circular foundation wall – evidence of a medieval round tower that was rebuilt

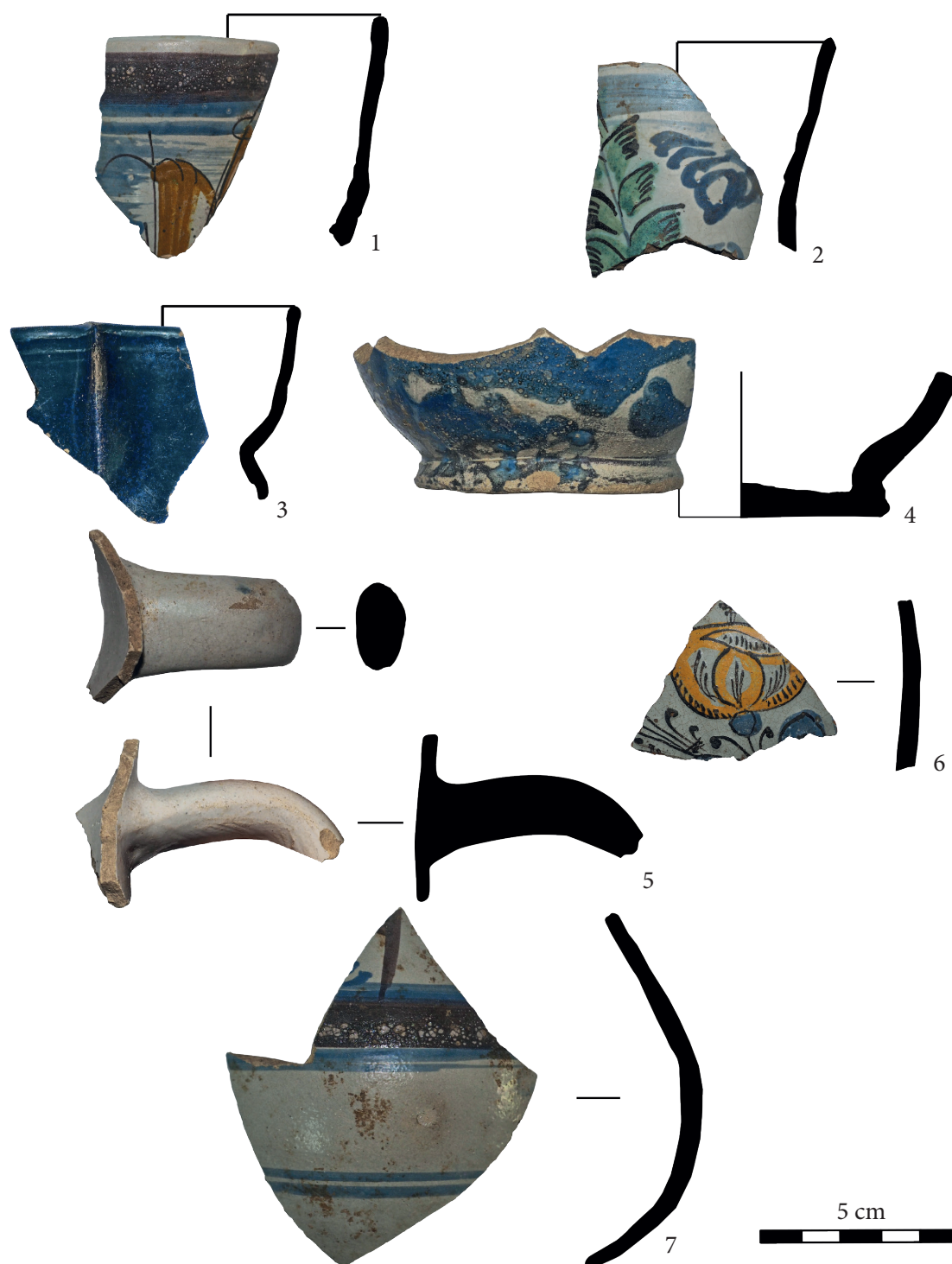


Fig 8. Tin-glazed ware. 1, 6–7: S11/4; 2, 4–5: S11/3; 3: stray find
8. kép. Ónmázás kerámia. 1, 6–7: S11/4; 2, 4–5: S11/3; 3: szórvány

into the slightly horseshoe-shaped structure that is still visible today in the early modern period.

Methodology and terminology

Pottery evaluation relies on the principles and typochronological framework developed for medieval

pottery in Hungary by Imre Holl (Holl 2009), particularly his methodology of typological classification. First, pottery remains were classified according to technical attributes, followed by a distinction between wares and types based on form and style, which then served as a frame for the typological analysis.

Original descriptions in Máté Fülöp's master's thesis followed the method employed by Márta Vizi (Vizi 2006, 84–90; Vizi 2010), while terms were borrowed from Hungarian ethnographic literature as adapted for archaeological use by Orsolya F. Lajkó (F. Lajkó 2010, 799–816; F. Lajkó 2015, 34–35, 43). However, translating that terminology into English would only yield incomprehensible descriptions; therefore, we sought another reliable source, and found it in the English publication of Ágnes Kolláth's PhD dissertation, which provides a complete, elaborate English terminology for Hungarian postmedieval pottery (Kolláth 2023, 46–49). The terminology below is an adaptation of her work for the pottery in focus.

Pottery typology

The 2018 campaign yielded 4,093 sherds in total, of which 2,447 were retrieved from features associated with the last habitation phases of Sebesvár. After matching sherds had been refitted and atypical finds had been sorted out, this number decreased to 703, all from fast-wheeled vessels; these pieces represent the basis of typology. To indicate the original composition of the pottery record, the total number of fragments and its ratio to the number of characteristic vessels are given at the start of the description of each ware. However, only vessel numbers are used in the descriptions and evaluation.

Tin-glazed ware

Altogether, twenty unmatching sherds (0.8% of all fragments) could be identified as *Haban pottery*; all were included in the evaluation. All were too small and too few for type identification, but they certainly originated exclusively from liquid containers.

The most typical form of Haban liquid containers is '*bokály*' (an ethnographic term), a small pear-shaped pitcher with a funnel-shaped neck, ethnographic analogues of which were used for serving wine (Igaz, Kresz 1965, 90). Two straight, overhanging, rounded rims (Fig. 8. 1–2), a bottom fragment of a quite low, pear-shaped body (Fig. 8. 4), and presumably a small strap handle with a part of a funnel neck (Fig. 8. 5) could be associated with this type.

Only one sherd comes from a vessel other than a pitcher, namely the fragment of a lobed mouth of a jug once coated in blue glaze (Fig. 8. 3). Full blue glaze coating was believed for a long time to consist of lead-based glaze mixed with cobalt and not con-

sidered faience (Bunta 1973, 39; Katona 1976, 24). However, recent research involving scientific analyses proved that the glaze was tin-based and, thus, these blue vessels have to be considered faience, too (Radványi, Réti 2011, 25; Ridovics et al. 2017, 198). Another unique triangular sherd may originate from a pear-shaped pitcher (Fig. 8. 6).

The decoration of *bokály* fragments consists of only a few distinct recurring motifs. The most elaborate ones are two rims with finely painted vegetal motifs, such as a green compound leaf and an ochre-coloured petal. The only sherd with a homogeneous red fracture surface features a tulip motif (Fig. 8. 6). Simpler, but in this assemblage more common motifs are the wide, concentric, violet, blistered manganese stripes, the concentric double cobalt blue line (Fig. 8. 7), and the so-called marbled surface created by mixing white and blue glazes (Fig. 8. 4). While the first two motifs were used primarily to divide fields with more complex, mainly vegetal and figurative motifs, marbling may have been applied to the whole surface (Radványi, Réti 2011, 338–344. kép 349–354. kép 360–363. kép; Bikić 2012, 215, Fig. 7).

Some distinct characteristics help broadly determine the period when the Haban faience pieces were made. Some scholars earlier derived the evolution of the orientalising floral pattern from 16th-century western sources (Ridovics 2008, 95); this style reached the peak of its popularity at the mid-17th century (Katona 1976, 34), followed, at the end of the century, by oriental imitation pieces made in 'the Delft style' and dominated by blue colour (Ridovics 2008, 95; Radványi, Réti 2011, 30). However, the oriental-style fragments from Sebesvár are likely younger than the Delft ware, as the *bokály* form only gained popularity from the early 18th century (Bunta 1973, 50; Ridovics 2008, 94). Accordingly, in the analysed assemblage, the strongly orientalising dark yellow floral and compound leaf motifs (the latter once likely part of a wreath) represent a lower chronological boundary. The more elaborate piece with the yellow flower seems older; it was probably made in the second half of the 17th century.

There could be an upswing in the production of vessels coated in blue glaze in the second half of the 17th century; the type is associated mainly (but not exclusively) with Haban potters in Transylvania, a principal source of cobalt-oxide ore (Bunta 1973, 39–40; Radványi, Réti 2011, 30). Marbled vessels in the pottery record of the site also highlight the start of accumulation: based on a large-scale style analysis,



Fig 9. Unglazed white tableware. 1, 5: S11/4; 2–3: S11/2; 3: S3/2; 4: S10/2; 6: S101/3
 9. kép. Máztatlan fehér asztali kerámia. 1, 5: S11/4; 2–3: S11/2; 3: S3/2; 4: S10/2; 6: S101/3

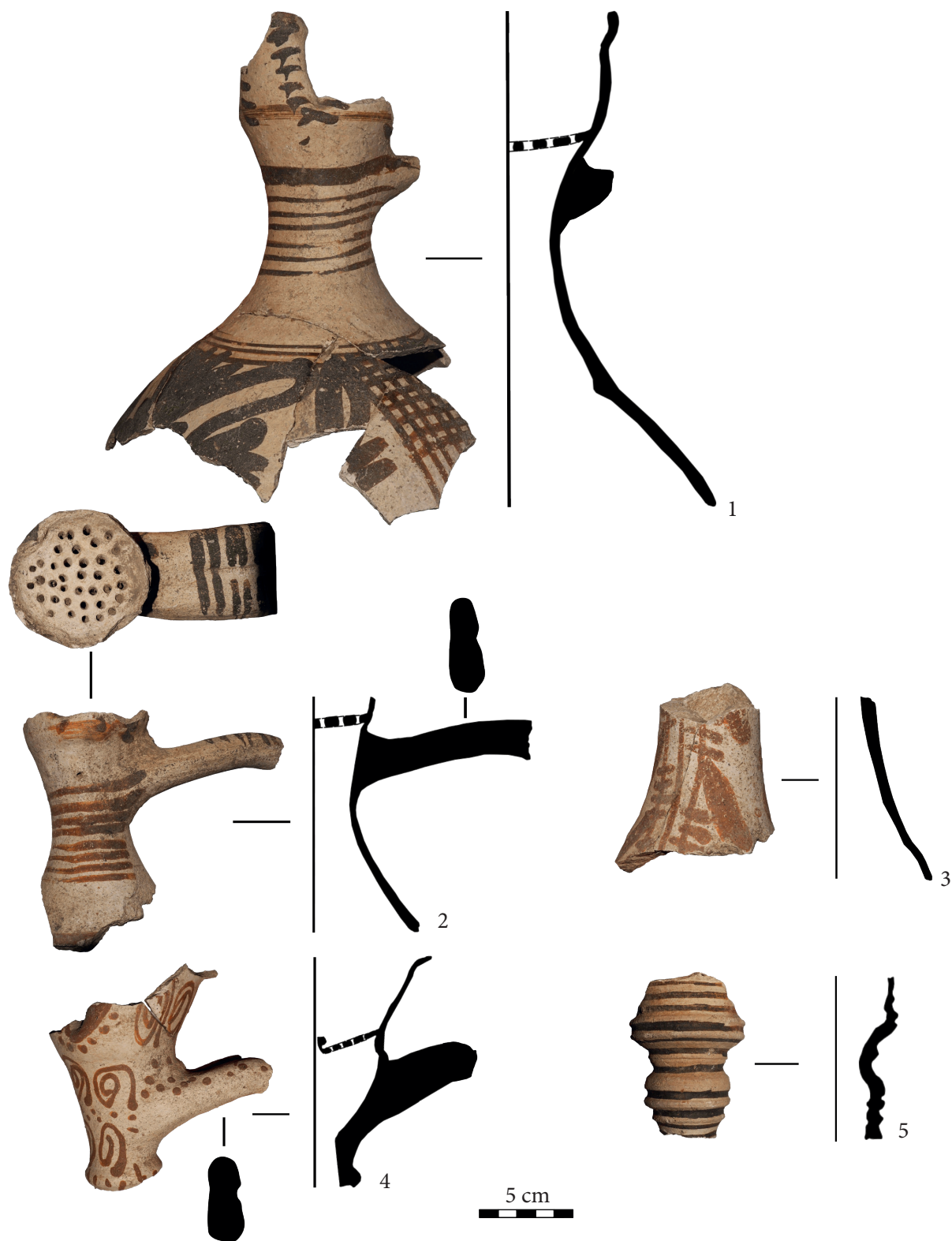


Fig 10. Unglazed white liquid containers. 1, 3: S11/2; 2: S11/3; 4: S11/4; 5: S101/3
 10. kép. Mázatlan fehér folyadéktárolók. 1, 3: S11/2; 2: S11/3; 4: S11/4; 5: S101/3

their production started in the last decades of the 17th century (Radványi, Réti 2011, 30). The end date of the Haban finds is more difficult to determine because most pieces exhibit common patterns that re-

mained in fashion for a long period, all of which can only be assigned to the broader later Haban period between the end of the 17th and the mid-18th century (Radványi, Réti 2011, 20, 29; Ridovics 2008, 95).

A piece with a red fracture surface seems even younger: according to Magda Bunta, the production of red vessels in Transylvania started around 1730 (Bunta 1973, 37), although the type appeared earlier elsewhere (Tomka 2018, 63, 199, t. 53. 2). A similar conclusion can be drawn in the case of some sherds decorated with wide manganese (violet) strips. This pattern is more frequent on younger parallels, including one featuring the date 1736 (Bikić 2012, 220. Fig. 14; Ferencz 2015, 347. 16. ábra; NM 66.140.2); however, the pattern was common, so it seems realistic to expect further, older examples.

Glazed white ware

White pottery vessels in the record of the site were classified into two subgroups based on surface treatment. *Glazed white pottery* includes only seven sherds (0.3% of all pottery), all from green-glazed liquid containers made of carefully levigated clay tempered with fine, micaceous sand. Four sherds belonged to a single liquid container with a stamped row of diamond motifs on its shoulder and another dense zigzag pattern under it (Fig. 18. 3). Type could be determined from only one piece, a narrow neck fragment typical of a jug (Fig. 18. 1). Based on its surface, it likely came from the same vessel as another sherd with a tendril motif (Fig. 18. 2).

Unglazed white ware

Unglazed white ware is exceptionally easy to identify from fabric, form, and decoration. Altogether, 355 fragments (14.5% of all pottery finds) could be classified into this group. Of that, the type of 193 could be identified; characteristics of all main types appear amongst them. The material of tableware and liquid containers was tempered with moderately coarse gravel, making them relatively coarse. Another common (and quite archaic) feature appearing on some is stylised and geometric decoration painted with a brownish slip.

Altogether, 21 came from *white unglazed tableware*, normal-sized and large bowls with a slightly conical upper part, a bulging, flat, horizontal rim, and two to three circular ribs or grooves under the rim on the external side (Fig. 9. 1–4). The non-carinated, simple wall and the base could be reconstructed from two fragments. The wall of shallow bowls was slightly flared; some also had a pierced lug for suspension (Fig. 9. 5–6). All exhibit painted linear and geometric lines, thin circular line bundles, zigzags, and spirals in brown. The rims of some are

also adorned the same way, with hatching or a wave line (Fig. 9. 1–3). The pattern is arranged in circular bands, usually wave bundles separated by line bundles (Fig. 9. 1–2, 5–6). Sometimes the wave is dense (Fig. 9. 3), the lines are spotted with dots (Fig. 9. 4) or separated by radial line bundles (Fig. 9. 6). The well (interior centre) of the only bottom fragment features a dense spiral within a wave circle flanked by a pair of concentric circles on each side (Fig. 9. 5).

In addition, 112 fragments were identified as *unglazed white liquid containers*, several of them coming from jugs. The four neck fragments are quite similar: three feature a distinct lobed mouth, attaching to the neck through a densely perforated colander and a highly curved band handle (Fig. 10. 1–2, 4); the fourth is likely similar (Fig. 10. 3). The last neck fragment, with a densely ribbed wall and no strainer, band handle, or mouth, may belong to a candleholder (Fig. 10. 5). It cannot even be decided which is its top and bottom, which is rarely a problem with jug fragments and corroborates its identification as the middle part of a candleholder.

Almost all identified liquid containers have spherical bodies (Fig. 11. 4–5) and conical or slightly curved, flat bases (Fig. 11. 1–2). The only exception – a vessel with a ring base – has conspicuously finer fabric (Fig. 11. 3). The top of the shoulder of most liquid containers is decorated with simple, repeating motifs, including stripes on the strainer plate's level, horizontal lines on the lobed rim and the neck, spiral lines, dots, and stylised leaves. Below that, the round bodies feature spirals, gridded squares, diverse vegetal motifs, and circular waves flanked by line bundles.

The fabric of the 58 *unglazed white cooking pot* fragments is less uniform than seen in the previous groups. Not only is their tempering more varied – ranging from small proportions of finely crushed gravel to high quantities of coarse gravel – but the appearing variety of hues also indicates differences in clay type and firing method. However, one must keep in mind that they are cooking vessels, and many were altered secondarily due to exposure to excessive heat during use.

Vessel types could only partially be identified due to the highly fragmentary state of this part of the pottery record. Based on small rim diameters and the presence of strap handles, these fragments include pieces from smaller, mug-like vessels as well as from larger cooking pots. All rims are simple; the most common type is funnel-shaped, with mild

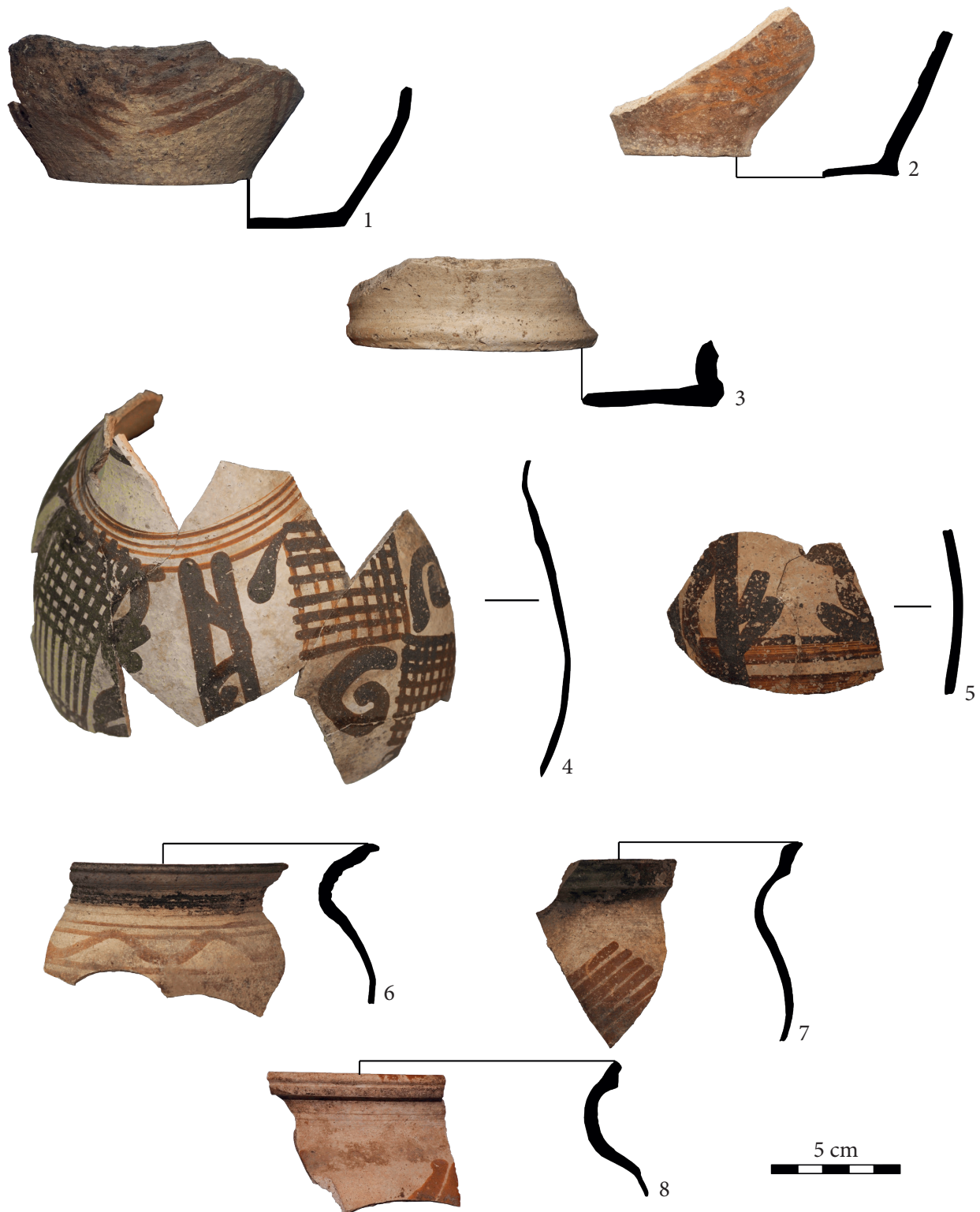


Fig 11. Unglazed white liquid containers (1–5) and cooking pots (6–8). 1, 7: S11/2; 2–3: S3/2; 6: S3/3; 4–5: S11/4; 8: S101/3
 11 kép. Mázatlan fehér folyadéktárolók (1–5) és fazekak (6–8). 1, 7: S11/2; 2–3: S3/2; 6: S3/3; 4–5: S11/4; 8: S101/3

ribbing and a single or double shallow groove on its exterior (Fig. 11. 7–8). Another, a bit less common variant, is characterised by a strongly conical lip with a curve, perhaps a kind of lid groove, at the

middle (Fig 11. 6) (the pottery record also includes two conical lid fragments). Body forms are even more difficult to determine; judging from the shoulder fragments, most vessels had a slender, slightly

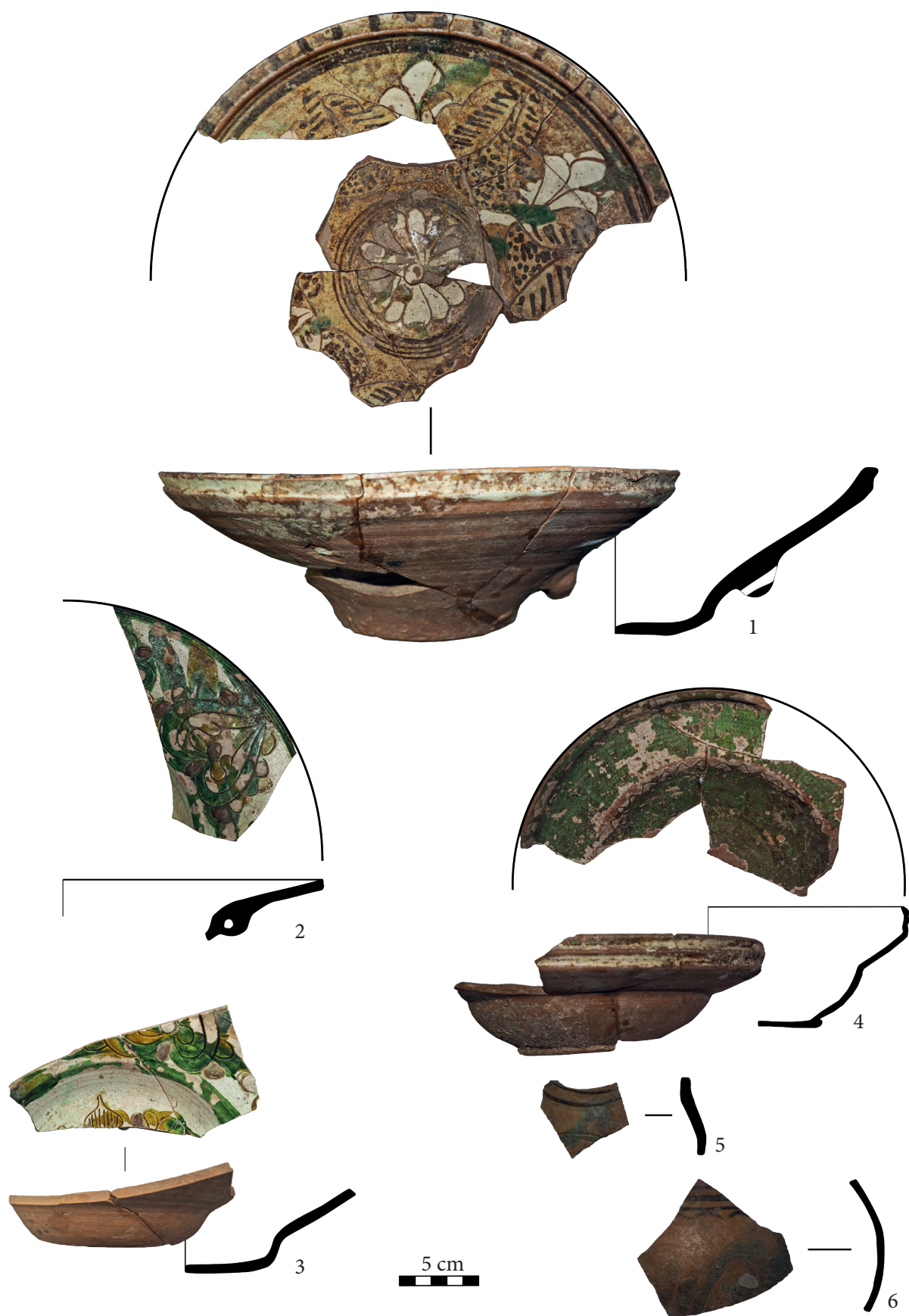


Fig 12. Lead-glazed, slip-trailed red sgraffito ware. 1, 4: S11/4; 2, 5: S11/2; 3: S3/2
 12. kép. Ólommázás, írókázott vörös sgraffito edények. 1, 4: S11/4; 2, 5: S11/2; 3: S3/2

conical body and bottom and a flat base. Decoration, akin to the previous groups, is built by repeating only a few simple motifs; it is moderate, in line with the primarily domestic function of the vessels. The most typical motif is straight or wavy hatching (flame motif) on the body, often accompanied by short parallel strokes on the rim. Fewer vessels feature circular, straight, and wavy lines, closely similar to the painting of red ware.

The typo-chronological evaluation of this ware from the site in focus and its analogues has yet to be done, but analogues from several publications (mainly excavation reports) outline its distribution. However, most of these usually short reports do not include information on stratigraphic context or an assessment, leaving the chronological position of the presented pieces unknown.

To bowls, only a few analogues are known from publications. Two pieces have been found at Várád during the digging of a mill race next to Bethlen Bastion and the Princely Palace (Emődi 1998, 29, 69, 30. ábra, plate right of no. 20; Marta et al. 2024, 172, 175, Pl. 11. 13, Pl. 14. 2), and two more were collected in a surface find collecting survey at Körösnagyharsány and Körösladány, respectively (MRT 6, 300, 58. t. 2–3). Most sherds in the analysed record feature parallel circular lines, except for one with grate-like motifs similar to those typical of jugs. More distant analogues occur mainly in areas under Ottoman occupation, such as Kolláth's Type 6.2.3a – non-carinated, often glazed, white bowls with similar walls and concentric patterns on the inner side – this variant first appeared in the second half of the 17th century (for analogies, see Kolláth 2023, 167–168, 317. Fig. 51. 1–5; Tomka 2018, 81, 234, 88. t.). The occurrence of identical, although quite plain decorations in so distant sites is a result of the general stylistic preferences of the period rather than any kind of direct connection between the two.

Liquid containers are highly uniform in both formal details (lobed mouth, narrow neck, strongly spherical body, and wide base) and decoration (grate-like motifs, waves between line bundles, highly stylised leaves, parallel stripes on the neck and handle, spirals). However, slip-painted pottery is known from many sites and diverse periods. The oldest, 16th-century pieces appear in the records of Békés (Gerelyes 1980, 110; MRT 10, 137. t. 5, 138. t. 1–2), Monostorossáp (Rácz, Laszlovszky 2005, VII. t. 1–3, XVIII. t. 1–3, XXI. t. 7–8) and Szeged (Molnár 2024, 107, 131, 3. t. 2–3, 137, 9. t. 1–3). Variants from the 16th–17th

centuries have been found in Gyula (Szalai 2018, 7, 61. t. 6–9) and Sarkad (Szatmári 1999, 179, 6. kép 1, 184, 9. kép 10–12), while the youngest, 17th–18th-century pieces are known from Békés (Gerelyes 1980, 109, 9. kép 1), Hódmezővásárhely (F. Lajkó 2015, 13. t. 2, 6–7, 16. t. 3–8), Szolnok (Kertész, Ádám 2023, 224, 31–32. kép), Debrecen (D. Szabó, Csippán 2007, 45, 7. kép), Oradea/Nagyvárad (Emődi 1998, 29, 69, 28. ábra 1, 7, t. XXVI. 1; Marta 2013, 288, Pl. XV. 6–7; Marta et al. 2022, 171. Pl. 10. 11, 173. Pl. 12. 7, 10–11; Rusu 2002, Tab. 15.d, Pl. CII.a, Pl. CV.a), and Cefa/Cséffa (Crişan, Goman 2010, 21, Pl. 2). The surface find material collected during surveys within the frame of the Archaeological Topography of Hungary project includes numerous white, slip-painted sherds from several rural settlements in Békés County; while the dating of these is problematic, their scatter greatly improves our understanding of the distribution of this ware (MRT 6. 299, 57. t. 16–18, 300, 58. t. 4–25; MRT 8. 86. t. 6, 10, 17, 21–24). As for the chronological position of the white ware in Sebesvár, some clues emerge from a comparative analysis with similar liquid containers, dated to the 16th–17th centuries, in the record of Gyula, characterised by the exclusive use of brush for painting (instead of slip trailer), the presence of spouts, spindle-shaped and non-lobed mouths – all missing from Sebesvár (and other 18th-century assemblages). In contrast, the decorations of wide-mouthed pitchers from the two sites are similar (Szalai 2018, 60. t. 1–5). This result may imply a higher typo-chronological diversity than previously thought within white ware in the Körös region; a similar possibility should also be considered in the context of 17th-century slip-painted white jugs with glaze run patterns, whose decoration is strikingly similar. Recent investigations revealed that, based on the methods and procedures of the applied technology, the group in question, discovered in Belgrade (Bikić 2003, 113, Fig. 12), Gyula (Szalai 2018, 54–55. tábla), Ónod (Tomka 2018, 259, 113. t. 1–5), Szendrő (Tomka 2018, 259, 113. t. 6–8, 260–261, 114–115. tábla), Várád (Emődi 1998, t. XXVI. 4, centre-left and bottom-right), and Szolnok originated from the Gömör (Gemer) region of historical Upper Hungary, and potters in the Körös region copied it (Kertész, Ádám 2023, 223–226). While this conclusion is convincing at this point, it must be stressed that – apart from the material of Gyula and a few concise excavation reports – little is known about the typology of 17th–18th-century white ware in the Körös region; therefore, the question of origin cannot be regarded as resolved.



Fig 13. Lead-glazed, slip-trailed red tableware. 1, 5–6: S11/4; 2, 5: S11/2; 3: S8/5–6; 4: S11/3
 13. kép. Ólomházas, írókázott vörös asztali kerámia. 1, 5–6: S11/4; 2, 5: S11/2; 3: S8/5–6; 4: S11/3

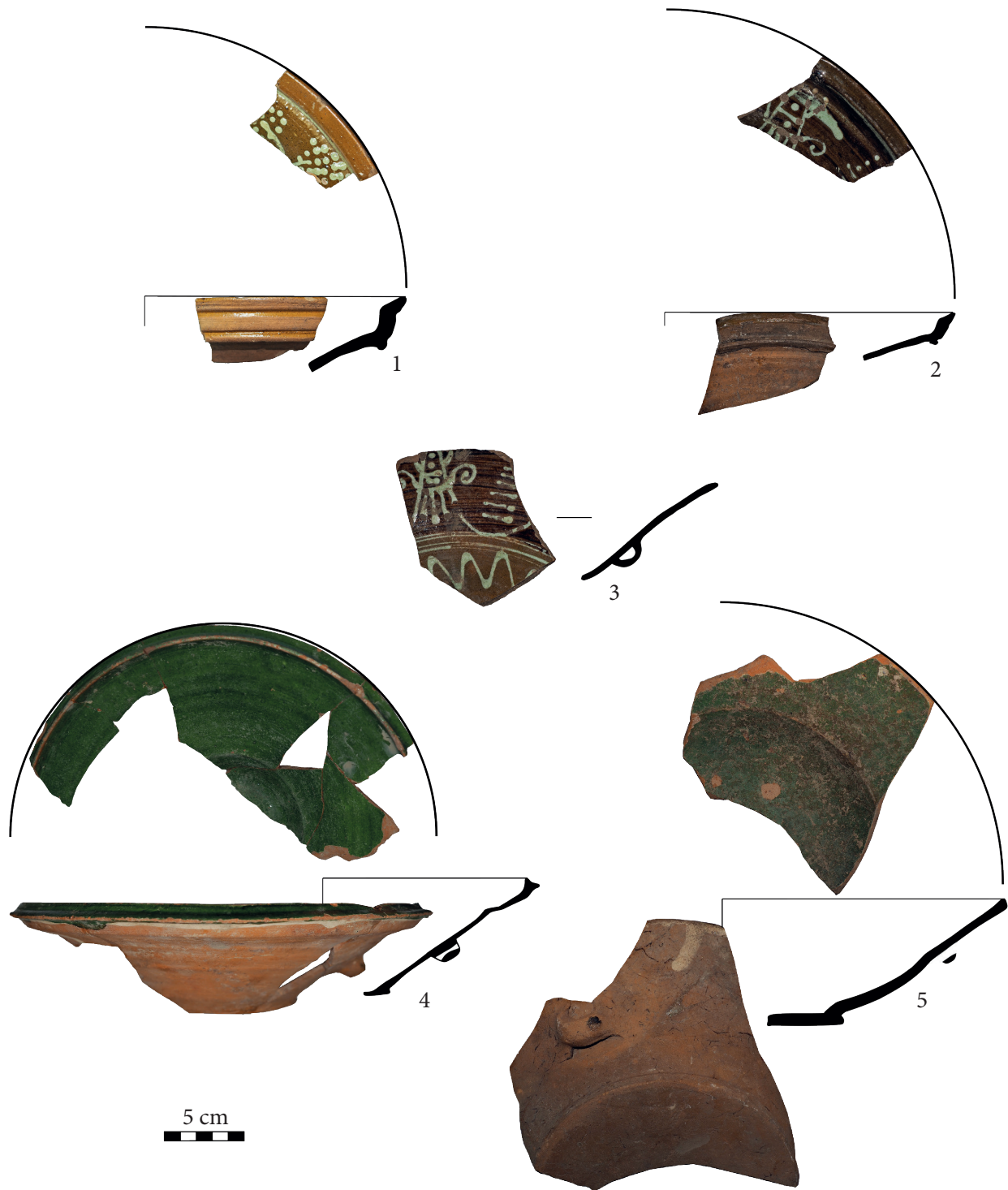


Fig 14. Lead-glazed, slip-trailed red tableware (1–3) and lead-glazed red tableware (4–5). 1, 5: S3/2; 2–3: S11/2; 4: S11/4
 14. kép. Ólommázás, írókázott vörös asztali kerámia (1–3) és egyszínmázás vörös tálasanyag (4–5). 1, 5: S3/2;
 2–3: S11/2; 4: S11/4

Most analogues of white cooking vessels appear in the same assemblages as liquid containers.¹ However, in their case, decorative function was less important, and their simple, modest decoration is an unsuitable basis for developing a fine typochronological framework. Accordingly, 17th and 18th-

century cooking pots cannot be separated on a typological basis, even though there are some precise chronological references, such as a 17th-century pot dated by a coin hoard (with coins minted between 1521 and 1632) from Doboz (Kovalovszki 1989, 145, 21. kép 147, footnote 35).

Unglazed white ware in the pottery record of Sebesvár is characterised by uniformity in both form and decoration, thus it is easy to distinguish from any other pottery type. This uniformity, particularly in the case of bowls and liquid containers, extends to their raw materials, suggesting a common origin. Fortunately, the white clay resources and the distribution of white ware are well known from written and ethnographic evidence and material analysis (Matyasovszky, Petrik 1885; Kalecsinszky 1896; Kalecsinszky 1905; Kreiter et al. 2024). According to the actual consensus, from as early as the turn of the 17th–18th century, the production of white pottery concentrated mostly in two areas in the periphery of the Great Hungarian Plain: Gömör (Gemer) region in historical Upper Hungary (today in Slovakia; F. Lajkó 2015, 145; Kresz 1960, 304–305) and along the middle reaches of the Sebes-Körös (Crișul Repede) River, around Rév (Vadu Crișului) in the eastern part of the historical Bihar County (today in Romania; Kresz 1960, 315–316; P. Szalay 2003, 48).

Based solely on proximity, the origins of this pottery may be sought after in the Sebes-Körös valley on the opposite, western side of Királyhágó (Pasul Craiului). The forms and decorations of jugs from Sebesvár show a striking similarity to vessels in ethnographic collections from Rév (Mózes 1976, 99; Mózes 2004, 51, 55, 58–60; P. Szalay 2003, 49, 149–151). While a comprehensive analysis of this resemblance exceeds the scope of this paper, it must be noted that, in contrast to our 18th-century material, the highly diverse set of forms and decorations in ethnographic collections may serve as chronological reference, as potters in Rév adopted several new forms and patterns during the 19th century. Therefore, the 18th-century white ware of Sebesvár and modern (19th-century and later) variants from Rév may have a common origin.

This conclusion is vague by necessity, reflecting, as Ágnes Kolláth also pointed out (Kolláth 2023, 98–99), a contradiction between written sources and the archaeological record. The earliest known mention of potters from Rév – unfortunately without a precise reference to the source, which renders it unreliable – dates to 1712, when (allegedly) only two families produced pottery. This number seems to have increased to six already by 1717 (Juhász 1998, 194; P. Szalay 2003, 48). Even if accepting the authenticity of these early mentions, it seems unlikely in the light of the large distribution and abundance of white ware from the 16th century that only a single rural pot-

tery centre was producing it. Two other explanations seem more plausible: either, like in Gömör, several white pottery centres existed along the middle reaches of the Sebes-Körös (Crișul Repede) River in the early modern period (of which for yet unknown reasons only Rév remained in operation until the period covered by ethnographic collections) or the clay used for white ware, found mainly in the valley of the Sebes-Körös/Crișul Repede (Kreiter et al. 2024, 225, 6. ábra), was mined there and traded to the lowlands, where local potters processed it. In either case, Nagyvárad (Oradea), the region's main urban centre, must have been an important hub. Ethnographic literature mentions both possibilities in written sources, but unfortunately without precise references (Juhász 1998, 194; P. Szalay 2003, 48). In contrast, archaeological studies provide evidence of the trade in clay: a pottery workshop destroyed at the end of the 17th century was excavated at Hódmezővásárhely-Bocskai Street, and a block of bluish-greyish clay was found within (Pölös 1994, 549–550). In lack of material analysis, the provenance of this block cannot be determined, but bluish or bluish-greyish raw clay samples in late-19th-century material collections originate exclusively from sites in the mountainous parts of the Carpathian Basin, including Rév (Kalecsinszky 1905, 47, 53, 64, 67, 76, 95, 98, 111, 157, 163, 193), corroborating the hypothesis that the clay block was brought to Hódmezővásárhely from a distant deposit. However, even if one accepts this vague evidence, the scale of the clay trade remains to be determined. This work requires future research, including identifying all related written sources, large-scale collecting and processing of archaeological evidence, and provenance analyses.

Lead-glazed and slip-painted red sgraffito ware

Compared to white ware, reddish-brown potsherds are considerably more abundant and varied, reflecting the greater availability of inferior-quality clay (which was fired to red pottery in an oxidising environment). Their material is quite uniform, tempered with fine-grained, micaceous sand; therefore, classification of this ware relies exclusively on form and decoration.

The most peculiar group is the *sgraffito tableware*, represented by 24 fragments (1%), including seven characteristic fragments from three vessels. The simplest of the three (Fig. 12. 4) is a relatively small carinated bowl with a vertical, ribbed rim. Its inner and outer rims were covered with white slip, into which

the sgraffito pattern was incised, and then coated with green glaze. The sgraffito patterns include a quite noticeable wavy line under the lip and a dense but faint dot cloud extending to the whole internal surface of the vessel.

The other two vessels feature much more complex sgraffito decorations. The first one (Fig. 12. 1) is a deep non-carinated bowl with a low, upright rim and a vertical suspension lug. The sgraffito pattern covers the entire internal surface of the vessel; it is coated in a translucent yellowish lead glaze. The incised pattern comprises vegetal compositions, six three-petalled, tulip-like motifs between concentric line bundles on the mantle; the top of the rim is hatched with short, radial strokes painted in black. At first glance, the tulips and the central rosette appear to have remained unglazed deliberately, but the reconstructed *chaîne opératoire* tells otherwise. The motifs were incised only after coating the inner and outer sides of the vessel with white slip and painting the geometric motifs with black slip; next, the inner side of the vessel was glazed in yellow, while the flowers were painted over with green glaze in the final stage. Therefore, the lack of glaze can only mean that the glaze fell off these parts, as the unglazed spots – sometimes with the black patterns also missing – appear next to the white petals; the irregular border of the non-glazed parts corroborates that. The glaze may have fallen off these parts because the two glaze layers together were too thick and more fragile.

The remaining two fragments belong to the same vessel (Fig. 12. 2–3). Their sgraffito decoration is completely different from the previous bowl. The shallow bowl with a flared lip and a simple, rounded rim is a typical plate. Its outer surface lacks any decoration, bearing only a horizontal lug. In contrast, the inner side is quite lavishly decorated with a floral composition, a detail of which has survived on one of the fragments. The wide lip was covered in a uniform white slip and adorned with a reversed heart-like tulip motif surrounded by small, semi-circular petals or leaves. The tulip is a bud with its petals rolled up inside. The well (interior centre) features a vertically hatched fig-like motif beside three oval leaves or petals. The potter seemingly did not try (or poorly) to apply the green and yellow glazes to colour the incised pattern, but instead applied them randomly to the lip and the interior centre of the plate.

The find material includes a single liquid container with a yellow belly and sgraffito-contoured green stylised leaves beneath black straight and wavy

lines. Unfortunately, the form of this vessel could not be identified (Fig. 12. 5).

Sgraffito decoration in the whole territory of Ottoman Hungary seems to have a strong connection with pedestalled bowls, a well-researched vessel group that appeared and disappeared with the Ottoman administration during the era (for the most recent summary on the research history and typology of pedestalled bowls, see Kolláth 2021, 285–292; Kolláth 2023, 187–213). Consequently, this ware type cannot be considered the forerunner of the sgraffito-decorated vessels in the discussed find material. However, ethnographic literature reveals that the sgraffito technique was extensively used to contour glazed patterns on tableware and liquid containers from the 18th century in the eastern part of the Upper Tisza Region, Eastern Transylvania, and the area of Várada (Oradea).²

The origins of the green-and-yellow-glazed plate can be traced back to the pottery of the northern Saxon districts, specifically the town of Beszterce (Bistrița), as identified by ethnographic research (see Csupor 2022, 168–169, Cat. 327–332). The heart-shaped flower on the lip and the use of identical colour palettes are convincing evidence. The published ethnographic assemblage appears to have been dated by a single plate inscribed with the year 1731 on its lip (Csupor 2022, 168, Cat. 328). Based on this distant analogy and the general scarcity of sgraffito finds in Sebesvár, one can argue – even without further research – that, unlike in the eastern regions, this technique was foreign to 18th-century potters in north-western Transylvania.

Lead-glazed and slip-painted red ware

A quite impressive group of red and brown glazed, slip-painted tableware, of which 263 sherds (10.8%), including 111 characteristic pieces, were found. Typological analysis revealed notable differences within this record. While the shallower, carinated vessels seem to have strongly bevelled lips with a simple or bulging, rounded rim, deeper bowls were mainly non-carinated, with a straight, sharply protruding, often ribbed rim. Based on this difference and the previous typology (Tomka 2018, 41), tableware was divided into plates (shallow, carinated) and bowls (deep, non-carinated); carination alone is not a decisive aspect.

The interior of most sherds (98 pieces) features remarkably similar patterns, comprising black, claret, and dark green motifs painted with brush and



Fig 15. Lead-glazed red liquid containers (1–7) and lead-glazed red pots (8–11). 1–2, 9–11: S3/2; 5–6: S8/3; 4, 7: S8/5–6; 3, 8: S11/4

15. kép. Ólommázás vörös folyadéktárolók (1–7) és ólommázás vörös fazékfélék (8–11). 1–2, 9–11: S3/2; 5–6: S8/3; 4, 7: S8/5–6; 3, 8: S11/4

slip-trailer against diverse shade light green backgrounds. Most compositions were arranged between bundles of concentric black lines at the rim and carination and around the well of the vessels. The bands

on the lip and the well were, in most cases, filled with highly stylised, marbled floral motifs featuring green, black, and claret petals (Fig. 13. 2–4). All plates but one were adorned with this pattern; one

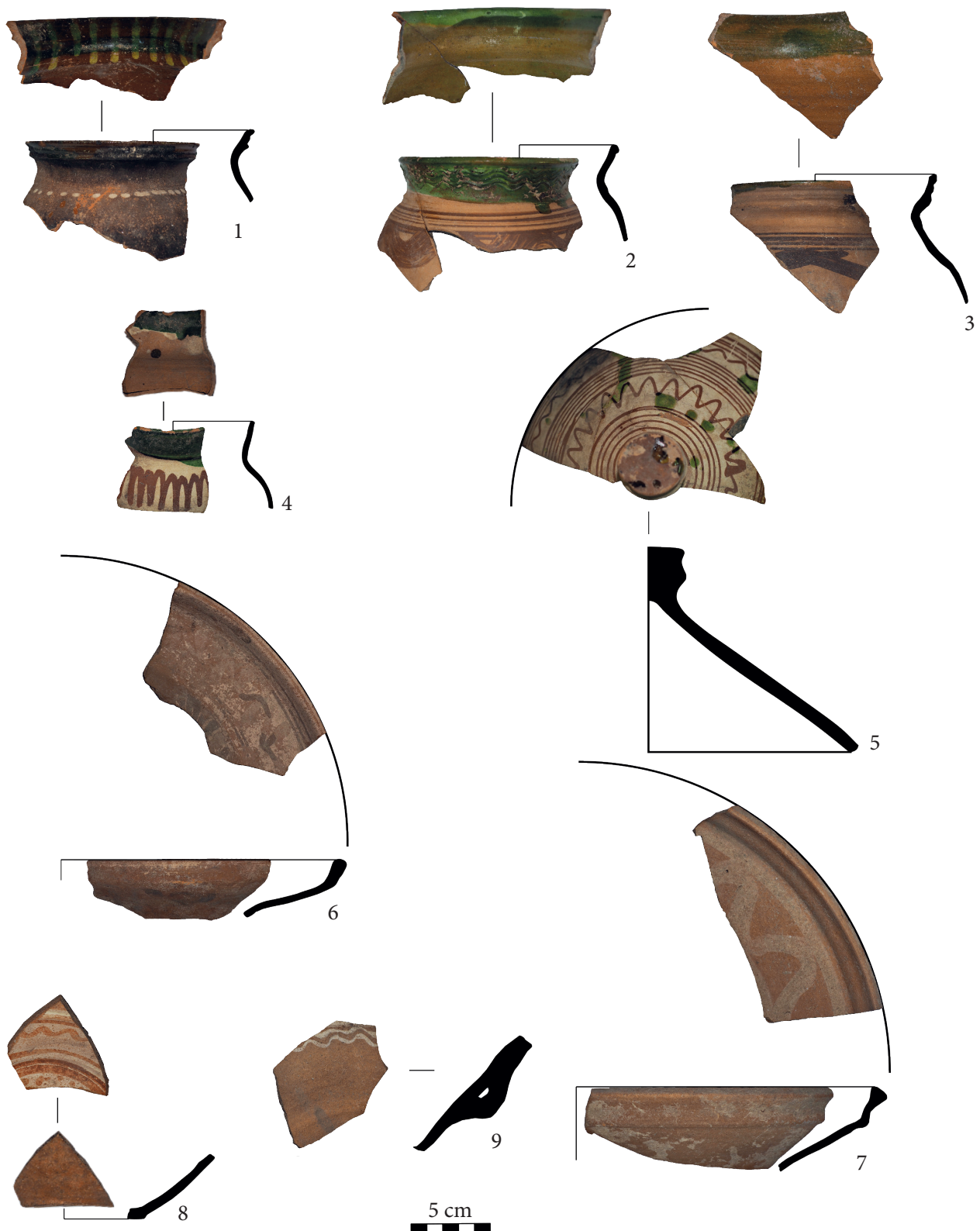


Fig 16. Lead-glazed and slip-painted red cooking pots (1–5) and unglazed, slip-painted red tableware (6–9). 1, 5: S11/4; 2–4, 7: S11/2; 6: S9/1; 8: S11/5–6; 9: S11/3

16. kép. Ólomházas, sávos festésű vörös fazékfélék (1–5) és mázatlan, sávos festésű vörös asztali kerámia (6–9).

1, 5: S11/4; 2–4, 7: S11/2; 6: S9/1; 8: S11/5–6; 9: S11/3

of the exceptions features a stylised clamshell motif consisting of parallel black lines below the carination (Fig. 13. 6). A wave decorates the top of the rim usually, but not always. One piece has three large flowers, their stems growing out from a rosette at the well (Fig. 13. 1), and another distinct bowl has a similar composition: a rosette consisting of densely emplaced vertical, small-leaved vegetal motifs, which extend radially to the whole surface of the lower part (Fig. 13. 5).

Thirteen sherds with light, painted motifs against a dark brown background represent a distinct group of bowls, classified into two types. The background of the first type (five sherds) is somewhat lighter, decorated with light green dots and stripes (Fig. 14. 1). The second type (eight fragments) has a brown-glazed background and a somewhat more complex pattern comprising dots, waves, tendrils, and other highly stylised, interconnected vegetal motifs (Fig. 14. 2–3).

Only twelve small sherds come from *glazed, slip-painted liquid containers*, and only two of these had any typological value: a fragment of a jug with a lobed mouth, its neck decorated with red triangles and its shoulder with stylised, barely discernible leaves, all with black contours (Fig. 15. 4) and a band handle fragment with symmetric finger impressions on both sides and horizontal black slip-trailed strokes between them (Fig. 15. 7).

In summary, the abundant slip-painted tableware record of Sebesvár bears distinct characteristics that can be compared with well-researched early modern pottery assemblages from eastern Hungary. Slip-painted tableware with a light background is completely unlike the distinct and uniform slipware found in Hódmezővásárhely (Lajkó 2002, 316, 5. ábra; F. Lajkó 2015, 3–4. t.), Nagyvárad (Oradea; Marta 1994, 411. Pl. III. 7–8, 412, Pl. IV. 9–11, 414, Pl. VI. 19, 415, Pl. VII. 20; Marta 2013, 290, Pl. XVII. 6), Szendrő, Ónod (Tomka 2018, 55–56, 114), Miskolc (Vida 1999, 17, 4–5. kép), and Diósgyőr (Vida 1999, 16, 3. kép, 17. kép 6–7, 19, 8. kép 20, 9. kép 21, 10–11. kép 23, 15. kép 30, 25. kép). This ware seems to reflect an unknown, entirely different, presumably Transylvanian pottery tradition, which scarcely occurs outside Transylvania, appearing in the find material of Nagyvárad (Oradea: Emődi 1998, Pl. XXXVI. 1, sherds at the centre and in the upper corner; Marta 1994, 412, Pl. IV. 12, 416, Pl. VIII. 21, 14–15; Rusu 2002, Tab. 15. e, Pl. XCIII. a–c; Marta 2013, 290, Pl. XVII. 7; Marta et al. 2022, 175, Pl. 14. 11) and Szendrő (Tomka 2018, 199, 53. t. 9–11).

However, pottery assemblages in Hungary and Sebesvár share some general characteristics, including a low proportion of vessels with dark backgrounds and the predominance of upright rims on bowls (in contrast to the western part of the Carpathian Basin; see Tomka 2018, 114).

Unlike tableware, the presented liquid containers can be directly connected with the slip-painted style of eastern Hungary, as identical analogues to the lobed jugs were found in 17th-century contexts in Debrecen (Csupor 2011, 41, Cat. 14), Szendrő (Tomka 2018, 163, 17. t. 1, 185, 39. t. 5), and Ónod (Tomka 2018, 162, 16. t. 1). The two analysed fragments were retrieved from the same stratigraphic unit; thus, the band handle and the neck fragment may belong to the same vessel, akin to fragments of a jug from Debrecen. The two liquid container handles from Szendrő and Ónod are similar but bear no finger impressions (Tomka 2018, 166, 20. t. 5–6). In conclusion, the low occurrence and the distant analogues of slip-painted, glazed liquid containers suggest that they were brought to Sebesvár from Hungary.

Lead-glazed red ware

Altogether, 435 fragments (17.8%) were identified as lead-glazed ware, a highly diverse typological group; of these, 186 had any typological value, and only ten simple lead-glazed fragments belonged to *lead-glazed tableware*. Typological observations of slip-painted tableware apply to all but one, a bowl-like vessel with barely visible carination (Fig. 14. 4) and dark green glaze coating, in contrast to the rest, which were coated in lighter green glaze (Fig. 14. 5). Given the uniform style of tableware, only formal analogues of slip-painted bowls may outline connections.

Lead-glazed liquid containers were present in the pottery record with 27 sherds, including three jug neck fragments. Two come from vessels with a strainer in the very narrow, long neck and probably a spherical body (Fig. 15. 1–2); one could be spouted. The third narrow-necked jug without a strainer plate and likely with a slenderer body features traces of brown glaze (Fig. 15. 3). The group also includes three pitchers, two small ones with a funnel-shaped neck and brown glaze coating on the outer surface (Fig. 15. 10) and a green one with a lobed mouth and indented body (Fig. 15. 5–6). An identical analogue to the small pitcher with a funnel neck is known from a 17th-century context in Szendrő Castle (Tomka 2018, 65, 201, 55. t. 2).

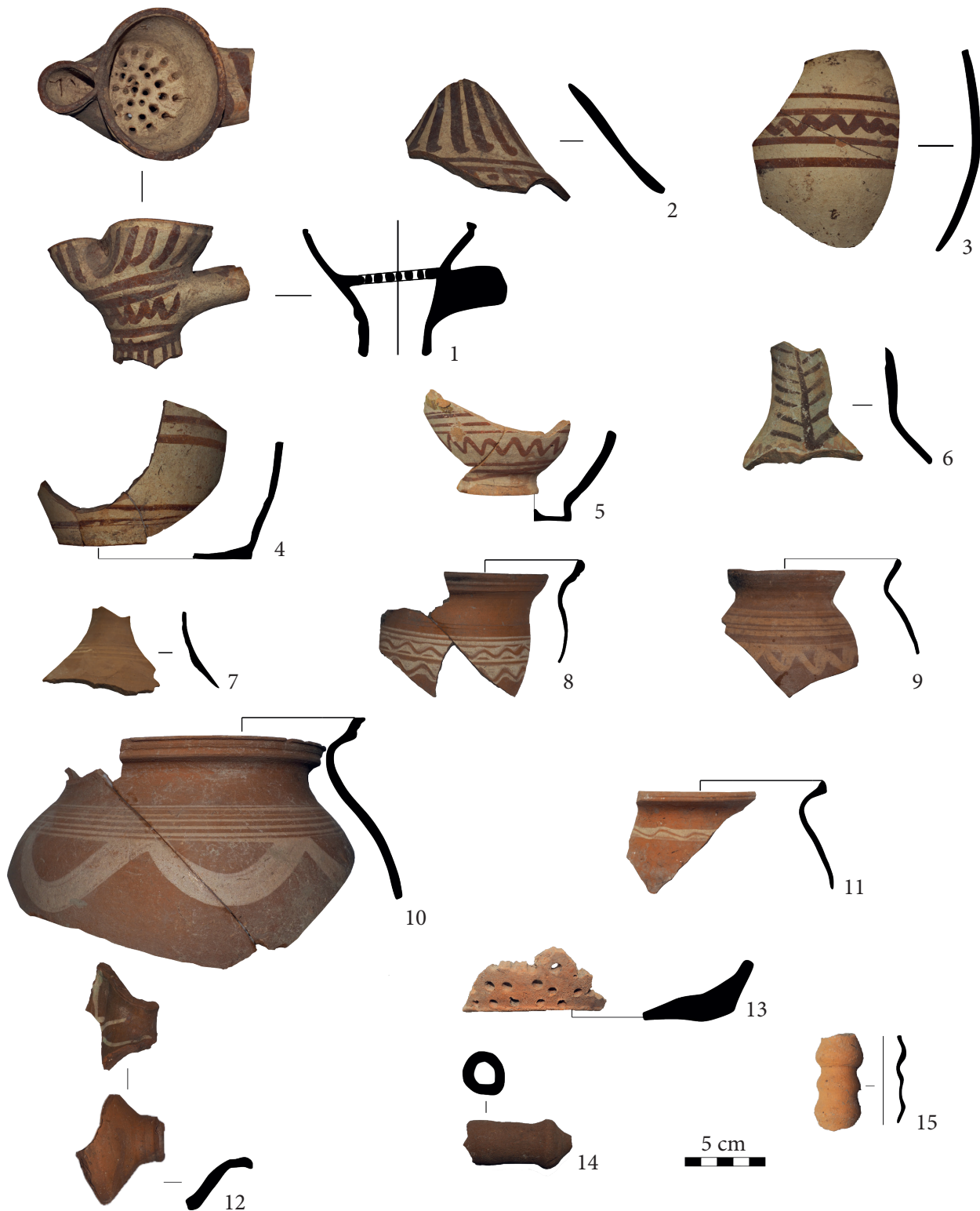


Fig 17. Unglazed slip-coated red liquid containers (1–6), unglazed slip-painted red liquid containers (7), unglazed slip-painted cooking pots (8–11) and miscellaneous ceramic finds (12–15). 1–6, 8, 10, 12: S11/2; 5, 11, 13–15: S3/2; 7: S3/1; 9: S11/4

17. kép. Engóbos alapfestésű, mázatlan vörös kerámia folyadéktárolók (1–6); sávos festésű mázatlan vörös kerámia folyadéktárolók (7); sávos festésű mázatlan vörös kerámia fazékfélék (8–11) és egyéb edénytípusok (12–15).

1–6, 8, 10, 12: S11/2; 5, 11, 13–15: S3/2; 7: S3/1; 9: S11/4

Glazed cooking pots were divided into two subgroups: glazed and slip-painted pots and simply glazed cooking vessels. Their forms are similar and, based on the few relatively big fragments, not all were slipped.

Eighty sherds belong to the first subgroup, *glazed cooking vessels with a slip pattern*, typically glazed in yellow and green inside and on the upper part of the rim, over red, occasionally white, slip-painted geometric pattern (bands, wavy lines, bundle of lines, dots) on the shoulder. The lower parts remained undecorated and cannot be identified; in the absence of a complete profile, the entire form cannot be reconstructed, leaving typology to rely on the upper third of the vessels. Narrow shoulder seems to be a general characteristic, while rims – occasionally completed with a band handle for suspension – are more varied. The most common variant has a conical rim with three ribs (Fig. 16. 1, 3), some of which feature a vertical hatching on the inner side of the lip (Fig. 16. 1). Vessels with a simple, slightly conical, rounded rim seem more varied; a rare variant features a circular bundle of incised waves under the rim on the outer side (Fig. 16. 2). A rim fragment of a small pot (Fig. 16. 4) represents another type: its whole outer surface was coated in white slip, over which a dense circular wave was painted on the shoulder; besides, only the rim and neck were glazed. Based on its decoration, it was highly likely a storage vessel.

Only three lids belong to this subgroup. All were coated in white slip, adorned with concentric reddish waves and line bundles, and sprinkled with green lead glaze (Fig. 16. 5).

The second subgroup, *simple glazed pots*, includes 67 pieces. The rims of most are similar to the most common type in the previous group, i.e. have three circular ribs on the exterior. An unusually large percentage of the fragments classified here belong to relatively small pots or mugs; the record includes a complete profile fragment of a mug with a band handle (Fig. 15. 8). Four small, mug-like vessels with funnel necks and multicolour glazing outside form a distinct cluster within the group (Fig. 15. 9). The proportion of relatively small pots with a band handle seems higher than in the previous group (Fig. 15. 11).

There is also a special variant with a lead-glazed interior; these vessels include a spouted pan (Fig. 17. 12), a type known in the ethnographic literature as 'half pan' (Igaz, Kresz 1965, 98). Another special vessel type was a three-legged pipkin with a glazed interior, to which only three fragments – two unglazed,

bent legs and a hollow handle – could be assigned (Fig. 17. 14).

The highly fragmentary state of the finds prevents, in many cases, distinguishing them from simple glazed pots; therefore, their parallels are discussed jointly. The basic characteristics of these cooking vessels reflect a mainstream style and are difficult to distinguish from other, even distant, early modern assemblages. The closest parallels were found in a 17th-century latrine in Mikó Castle in Csíkszereda (Miercurea Ciuc) in eastern Transylvania (Darvas 2023, 84, 2. kép, fifth pot from the left on the first platform and first vessel from the left in the second row) and likewise from the fill of a latrine, dated to the second half of the 18th century, in the Pricske quarantine institution (Demjén 2016, 166, 168, 33. ábra). A comparison with glazed cooking vessels found in 17th-century features in Szendrő and Ónod reveals the close similarity of the applied glazing and decorating techniques (Tomka 2018, 96), as well as some conspicuous differences. Dense ribbing of the neck and shoulders of the pots is widespread in Szendrő and Ónod but is almost absent in Sebesvár (save for a single exception). In contrast, a three-rib pattern on the rim was the most common variant in Szendrő in the second half of the 17th century (Tomka 2018, 95, 100). Based on the quite well-known typology of cooking pots in Buda, completely different forms were used in the territory of the former *medium regni* (Kolláth 2023, 90–95), suggesting that the three-rib variant was characteristic of the eastern part of the Carpathian Basin for a long time.

Slip-painted red ware

The pottery record included 203 unglazed and slip-painted sherds (8.3%), of which 108 fragments with a typological value were classified into two subgroups based on differences in surface treatment (slip-coated and uncoated); however, all feature patterns painted with coloured slip.

Twelve fragments could be identified as *slip-painted tableware*, all with simple, upright, slightly ribbed rims. Only two of them are white slipped, and all feature concentric lines, bands, and waves (Fig. 16. 7), five painted in red and five in white slip. Of the two slipped sherds, one bears a black concentric wave painted with a slip-trailer, characteristic of glazed slipware (Fig. 16. 6). Another unique piece is a well fragment with white slip coating and red painted dots (Fig. 16. 8). This is the first known vessel to feature a decoration technique typical of this

group and a concentric white wave, which was partially wiped off afresh, leaving only a circular double wave on the surface (Fig. 16. 9).

Sixteen of the nineteen slip-coated sherds belong to *slip-painted liquid containers*. Many similar ones (Fig. 17. 1–4) found in the same stratigraphic unit likely belong to the same vessel, a jug with a lobed mouth, a strainer plate, a band handle, and a relatively wide belly. Its red slip pattern – vertical strokes, concentric lines and waves – recurs on all other fragments but one, which features distinct, highly stylised vegetal ornamentation (Fig. 17. 6). Another fragment comes from a vessel representing a unique variant with a rounded bottom and a short cylindrical base (Fig. 17. 5). One of the three uncoated liquid container fragments is a jug's neck (Fig. 17. 7).

Most fragments, 77 in total, come from *slip-painted cooking pots*, most of which have simple, slightly conical, rounded rims. Besides, complex variants sport the characteristic three ribs on the exterior below the rim. White linear patterns adorn their shoulders; the most common motifs are the 'classical' concentric lines and waves painted with a brush (Fig. 17. 9–10) or made using the 'wipe-off' technique described above (Fig. 17. 8, 11).

Based on literature, there seems to be a difference between the analogues of the slip-coated and unslipped variants; those of the latter appear in the record of numerous sites, although the red patterns are usually more complex and the vessels' interiors are glazed (Buda: Kolláth 2023, 81–90; Hódmezővásárhely: F. Lajkó 2015, 11. t. 1–5, 12. t. 5; Kékkő/Modrý Kameň: Belják et al. 2016a, 283, Obr. 4. 2–3, 11–15, 285. Obr. 5. 6, 9, 11; Ónod and Szendrő: Tomka 2018, 74–82). Only a single fragment uncovered in Ónod is unglazed, with lines painted in white slip substituting the three ribs typical to Sebesvár (Tomka 2018, 95–96, 284, 138. t. 2). More analogues were found in early modern features dated with high certainty to the early 17th century in Csekefalva (Cechești) in Székelyföld (Ținutul Secuiesc) (Benkő 1992, 71, 64. t. 1–9, 11, 65. t. 2–6, 8, 10). This ware also appears in 17th-century contexts in the territory of historical Hungary, in the castles of Gyula (Szalai 2018, 59, 83. t. 5–8) and, interestingly, Csábrág (Hrad Čabrad) in Upper Hungary (Belják et al. 2016b, 123, Obr. 23. II). Even though it cannot be decided based on the publication if the pottery of Gyula (with three ribs under the rims) is the closest parallel to the pieces found in Sebesvár,

the geographically and chronologically distant occurrence of highly similar decorations attests to the widespread and long-lasting popularity of these simple motifs (limited, in the case of glazed cookware, primarily to the eastern part of the Carpathian Basin) and several rim variations.

A jug found in Harasztkerék (Roteni), Maros County, is a fine analogy to slip-coated liquid containers. The hoard was dated by the coins it contained: the youngest one was minted in 1696, placing the hoard to the turn of the century (Chirilă et al. 1980, 108, XXVI; László 2024, 116). Unfortunately, the upper part of the vessel was missing; however, the red line and wave bundles on the surviving slip-coated fragment show clear resemblance to our specimens. It also features patches of green glaze, which is a difference (in Sebesvár, pots were only partially glazed).

Unglazed red ware

This group held the most fragments, 1,060 in total (43.3%); this large number, along with the modest design of these vessels, attests to their everyday household role. Of these, only 121 had any typological value, highlighting the unavoidable but sometimes significant distortion every pottery record suffers during processing. Of these, nineteen small fragments came from tableware, three of which represent the typical bowl variant with an upright rim and three ribs. No sherd could be assigned to liquid containers. Accordingly, most informative fragments (101) belonged to pots. The most common rim variant is concave, with two ribs, but the three-rib variant is also frequent. Finger-impressed hoops on the shoulder are a decoration exclusive to this group. This assemblage also includes 41 band handle fragments (some most likely from glazed pots), indicating that most pots had handles.

In contrast to the high number of pot fragments (neither of which features a lid groove), only five belong to lids. Twelve other, perforated, base fragments certainly come from colanders (Fig. 17. 13), while a hollow, ribbed shed could be identified as the middle part of an unglazed candleholder (Fig. 17. 15).

Grey ware

Only 30 sherds (1.2%) in the 18th-century pottery record of Sebesvár belong to *grey ware*. This low proportion is in sharp contrast to 17th-century assemblages in Hungary, where grey ware accounted for about 10% of the material from Buda (Kolláth



Fig 18. Glazed white ware (1–3) and grey ware (4). 1–2, 4: S3/2; 3: S3/1
 18. kép. Mázas fehér kerámia (1–3) és szürke kerámia (4). 1–2, 4: S3/2; 3: S3/1

2023, 7, 216) and 8% from Ónod, Szendrő, and Mohi (Tomka 2018, 68). The actual number may be even lower, as many of these fragments exhibit characteristics of grey ware recovered from late medieval features (which were usually abundant in such ware). Based on that, grey ware seems to have lost its popularity completely in north-western Transylvania by the second part of the early modern period.

The recovered fragments represent a single type, a jug with a long, burnished neck, a lobed mouth, and a strainer plate (Fig. 18. 4), bearing the general

characteristics of the presumed grey ware tradition of the Great Hungarian Plain (Kolláth 2017, 311; Tomka 2018, 70–72, 115, 210, 64. t. 1; Kolláth 2023, 215). Based on that and its rarity on the site, these vessels were likely imported.

Chronology and general conclusions

Based on stratigraphic evidence, the presented pottery belongs to the final habitations of Sebesvár. Most finds (59.7%) were likely interred in relation

to the decline of the fort, as emerging from written sources (the inventories of 1680 and 1715). Using archaeological methods, the main phases of this process could be reconstructed.

A thick burnt layer associated with a destruction event was detected in the uncovered buildings in the courtyard (Trenches S8, S9, and S11) and the north-eastern tower (S3). It was covered by a thick humus layer rich in finds, attesting to the new function of the building remains as waste-disposal sites. The walls of these buildings and the perimeter wall fell atop this layer when the structures collapsed. While there are traces of habitation directly following the destruction event (an oven carved into the perimeter wall in S11), this, as attested by the typological homogeneity of the material unearthed in the related layers, must have been short-lived.

Unfortunately, no known source mentions the destruction event. Sebesvár is known to have survived Rákóczi's War of Independence (1703–1711), and, according to the 1715 inventory, the (decaying) buildings were still used for storing provisions back then. The archaeological traces of destruction cannot be linked directly to a military action, as most of the castle's strategically significant parts – the great southern tower, the two cannon towers, the southern roundel, the encircling walls, etc. – survive to this day. Therefore, its decay was likely natural, as in the case of many smaller fortifications (Oross 2011, 1047), and the ruins were ultimately abandoned. But when did this happen?

The answer lies in the dating of the pottery presented. However, before unfolding it, some chrono-

logical aspects of the assemblage should be considered.

A structured typochronological framework cannot be developed from this record alone; some types in the apparently homogeneous find horizon could be dated only by distant analogies, many of which place the collected pottery in the second half of the 17th century. However, some chronological factors should be considered before accepting their relevance. First, archaeological research on the 18th century is still in its infancy and lacks precise typochronological boundaries; thus, one cannot exclude the possibility that many late 17th-century local forms and decorations persisted into the 18th century. Second, the analysed pottery record also includes pieces – the sgraffito ware and Hutterite faience – which were reliably dated to the first half of the 18th century; their evidence significantly narrows down the time when Sebesvár was abandoned.

Taken all the above together, available evidence indicates that the presented pottery, originating from the broader period between the end of the 17th century and the first half of the 18th century, was interred between 1715 and the middle of the century.

Acknowledgements

We thank Cosmin Onofrei for the possibility to process the materials he and Zsolt Csók excavated. Máté Fülöp is also grateful to Maxim Mordovin and Gábor Tomka for revising his dissertation. We are also indebted to László Keve for his invaluable suggestions on literature.

Notes

- 1 Belgrade: Bikić 2003, 113, Fig. 11, sherds at the centre and on the right; Békés: Gerelyes 1980, 109, 8. kép 6, 9. kép 2–5; Békés County: MRT 6. 300, 58. t. 1; Buda: Kolláth 2023, 99–100, 304, Fig. 38. 1–6; Debrecen: Lükő 1941, 159, 1. kép; Győja: Horváth, H. Simon 1996, 525, 55. kép 2, 526, 56. kép 1–3, 527, 57. kép 1, 533, 63. kép 1, 534, 64. kép 2, 535, 65. kép 1; Gyula: Szalai 2018, 56. t. 1–11, 57. t. 1–5, 58. t. 6–13, 59. t. 14–22; Hódmezővásárhely: F. Lajkó 2015, 10. t. 1–5; Lajkó 2002, 313, 2. ábra; Monostorossáp: Rácz, Laszlovszky 2005, VI. t. 2–3, XIII. t. 17–20; Nagyvárad/Oradea: Emődi 1998, 29, 68, 28. ábra 8, 33. ábra 1, 5, 34. ábra 5, XXVI. t. II. 1, 3; Marta et al. 2022, 173, Pl. 12. 2–6, 12, 14, 174, Pl. 13.1–5, 7–9, 13–16, 175, Pl. 14. 4; Rusu 2002, Pl. CV. b–c; Sarkad: Szatmári 1999, 177, 4. kép

- 2–5, 178, 5. kép 4, 180, 7. kép 2, 4–9; Túrkeve: Méri 1954, XXXV. t. 7, 10).
- 2 Upper Tisza Region: Nagybánya/Baia Mare (Csupor 2013, 272, Cat. 444, 273, Cat. 448); Felsőbánya/Baia Sprie (Csupor 2013, 274–275, Cat. 450–455, 277, Cat. 460; Csupor 2022, 372, Cat. 978–980); Vámfalu/Vama (Csupor 2013, 278–279, Cat. 464–468, 281, Cat. 473–476, 283, Cat. 480–481; NM 47353–54; NM 51.31.615, NM 51.31.617–618; NM 51.31.623–624; NM 51.31.626–627; NM 51.31.629; NM 51.31.631–638; NM 2007.48.35–37; Tóth 1995, 503); Valley of the Iza River/Valea Izei (Csupor 2022, 384, Cat. 1016–1017, 385, Cat. 1020); Northern Great Plain: Nagyvárad/Oradea (Csupor 2011, 247, Cat. 442, 248, Cat. 443–444, 249, Cat. 447); Eastern Transylvania:

Beszterce/Bistrița (Csupor 2022, 166–172, Cat. 319–340, Cat. 342, 237, Cat. 542–543), Kézdivásárhely/Târgu Secuiesc (Csupor 2022, 225–236, Cat. 504–541), Udvarhelyszék/Scaunul Odorhei (Csupor 2022, 238, Cat. 545–546, 241, Cat. 554–555, 246, Cat. 572, Cat.

574, 247, Cat. 575–576). Unique and late 19th-century types – including potters' masterpieces, guild ware, toby jugs, flasks, bottles – were deliberately omitted from the collection because these illustrate more the skills of their makers than local pottery traditions.

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EGY 18. SZÁZAD ELSŐ FELEBŐL SZÁRMAZÓ KERÁMIA LELETEGYÜTTES SEBESVÁRRÓL

Összefoglalás

A Királyhágó erdélyi előterében, a Sebes-Körös mentén fekvő Sebesváron 2018–2020 között, a felújítási munkálatokat megelőző feltárást végeztek az Erdélyi Történeti Múzeum munkatársai (1–2. kép). Az ásatások során igen jelentős számú leletanyag látott napvilágot, mely a régészeti szempontból korábban teljesen ismeretlen Sebesvár tekintetében új kutatási lehetőségeket nyitott meg. Jelen tanulmányban a 2018. évi feltárás kerámiaanyagának tipológiáját és a vár utolsó fázisának stratigráfiai és kronológiai aspektusait kívánjuk bemutatni.

A 13. század végén épült Sebesvár történetét legkésőbb 1439-től a Bánffy család birtoklása határozta meg. Úgy tűnik, hogy a kora újkori, 17. század közepéig terjedő (általunk ismert) írott források igen ritkán említik Sebesvárt. A helyzet Apafi Mihály azon törekvéssel változott, mely az észak-nyugati végvárrendszer megerősítését tűzte ki célul. Ez különösképpen zavarta a váradi pasát, így Sebesvár a diplomáciai összetűzések tárgyává vált az Oszmán Birodalom meggyengüléséig. A forrásokból kitűnt az is, hogy a vár a Rákóczi-féle szabadságharcban is megőrizte hadi szerepét. Ennek eredménye egy 1709. évi osztrák katonai felmérés (3. kép), mely összevetve két urbáriummal (1680, 1715) igen fontos képet szolgáltatott Sebesvár állapotáról. Bizonyos, hogy ekkor a váron az enyészet lett úrrá azt sugallva, hogy Sebesvár végleges felhagyása elavultságának és teljes funkcióvesztésének tudható be.

A régészeti feltárások során a vár egy jelentős részét sikerült megkutatnunk. Ekkor a belső udvaron lévő, a körítőfalhoz létesített épületek mellett két toronybelső is feltártunk (4–7. kép). Az épületek belsejében a vastag omladék alatt szinte minden esetben leletanyagban rendkívül gazdag humuszos feltöltéssel találkoztunk, melyet ugyancsak vastag és leletgazdag pusztulási réteg előzött meg. E két stratigráfiai horizontnak közös tulajdonsága volt, hogy a belőlük előkerült kerámia leletanyag

legna-gyobb része stilisztikailag és kronológiailag elkülöníthetetlen volt – azt sugallva, hogy e rétegek létrejötte egy viszonylag szűk időintervallumban történhetett.

A 2018. évi feltárás során összesen 4093 kerámia látott napvilágot, melynek jelentős része, 2447 töredék az említett két horizontból került elő. A tipológiát elsősorban a stilisztikai és a formai jegyek alapján létrehozott csoportok szerint strukturáltuk.

Mindössze 20 töredék tartozott az ónmázás kerámiák csoportjába, melyek mind a habán edényművesség termékei voltak (8. kép). Kiderült, hogy ezek egy pár kivételtől eltekintve mind bokályhoz tartoztak, a rajtuk megtalálható díszítések pedig keleties hatásúak voltak. Mindössze egyetlen töredék kapcsolódott bizonyosan karéjos szájú korsóhoz, mely egyediségét kék alpmáza is kiemelte. Az analógiák alapján a töredékek mindenképp a kései habán és a poszthabán korszakok határára volt helyezhető, a 18. század közepét övező évtizedekre.

Sebesváron jelentősnek tekinthető a mázatlan fehérkerámia csoport (355 töredék), mely mind asztali edényeket, folyadéktárolókat, főzőedényeket is tartalmazott (7–11. kép). Ennek a csoportnak az anyaga stilisztikailag igen egységes, letisztult és archaikus engóbos motívumkincset mutatott, mely alapján azt feltételeztük, hogy azonos műhelykörzet készítményei lehettek. Áttekintve a néprajzi anyagot kiderült, hogy anyag és díszítés szempontjából a révi népi kerámiával rokonítható e csoport. Mindazonáltal, az a tény, hogy a bemutatott, nagyrészt 17. századi analógiáink hatalmas területről, (szinte a teljes délkelet Tiszántúl) kerültek elő igen nagy számban, kérdésessé teszi kizárólagos révi származásukat. A kérdés eldöntéséhez további kutatás szükséges.

A sebesvári kerámiaanyagnak a legnagyobb hányadát a vörös és barna árnyalataira égő fazekas-

anyag szolgáltatta. Ennek legszembetűnőbb csoportja a mindössze 24 töredéket számláló sgraffito-díszítéssel ellátott három tálasedény és egy folyadéktároló volt (12. kép). Mivel ezeknek leginkább távolabbi analógiái vannak (pl. Besztercén), vélhetően nem a helyi fazekasság termékei voltak. Egy évszázamos tányér alapján meggyőzően a 18. század első felére keltezhető az egyik típus.

Összesen 263 töredék alkotta a mázas, írókázott edények csoportját (13. kép, 14. kép 1–3, 15. kép 4).

Rendkívül nagyszámú tál tartozott ide, melyek nagyrésze világoszöld alapon írókázott. Egy jól elkülöníthető típus is előkerült, mely analógiái eddig mindössze Nagyváradról ismertek. Jóval kisebb számú volt a sötét alapon díszített asztali edények, valamint a folyadéktárolók alcsoportja. Ezek között olyan típusokat fordultak elő leletgyűttesünkben, melyeknek rendkívül jó alföldi párhuzamai vannak.

Igen jelenős, 435 darabszámú volt a mázas edények csoportja, mely ugyanakkor rendkívül magas tipológiai sokszínűséget mutatott (14. kép 4–5., 15. kép 1–3., 5–6., 8–11., 16. kép 1–5). A viszonylag kisszámú tálasedény és folyadéktároló anyaggal ellentétben, ebben a csoportban a fazékfélék voltak túlsúlyban. Ezek ugyan rendelkeztek messziről származó párhuzamokkal, de ez elsősorban igen általános díszítőmotívumaiknak volt köszönhető és szinte bizonyos, hogy töredékeink helyi hagyományú edényművesség termékei voltak.

Valamivel kevesebb, 203 töredék tartozott a sávos festésű kerámiák csoportjába (16. kép 6–9., 17. kép 1–11). Ezen belül két alcsoportot lehetett elkülöníteni, mégpedig az engőbos alapfelületűeket és az egyszerű, fehér sávos festésűeket. Míg az előbbiek esetében inkább az asztali kerámia és a folyadéktárolók voltak túlsúlyban, addig az utóbbiak között inkább a fazékféle volt a jellemző. Az egyszerűbb, fehér sávos festésű darabok párhuzamai jól keltezhető erdélyi feltárásokból ismertek.

A mázatlan vörös anyag tette ki a feldolgozott leletanyag legnagyobb részét, az 1060 töredéket azonban igen töredékes és általános jellemzőket mutató csoportot alkotott. Sebesváron elenyésző mennyiségű szürke kerámia került elő (30 töredék), amelynek mindössze egy kis része volt bizonyosan kora újkori. Ezek is alföldi kapcsolatot mutattak, így feltételezhető, hogy a 18. századi északnyugat-erdélyi fazekasságnak a redukált égetésű kerámia nem volt a része.

A kerámiaanyag, a stratigrafia és az írott források összevetéséből rekonstruálható volt Sebesvár fennállásának utolsó periódusa. A feltárt pusztulási rétegeket az írott forrásokban megjelenő enyészet és természetes pusztulási esemény hozhatta létre. Úgy tűnik, hogy ezt követően a leégett épületeket első-sorban a szemét felhalmozására használták, mely a feltáráson leletanyagban gazdag humuszként tárult elénk. Ez a folyamat a kerámialeletek tanúsága szerint valamikor 1715 után, a 18. század első felében mehetett végbe.