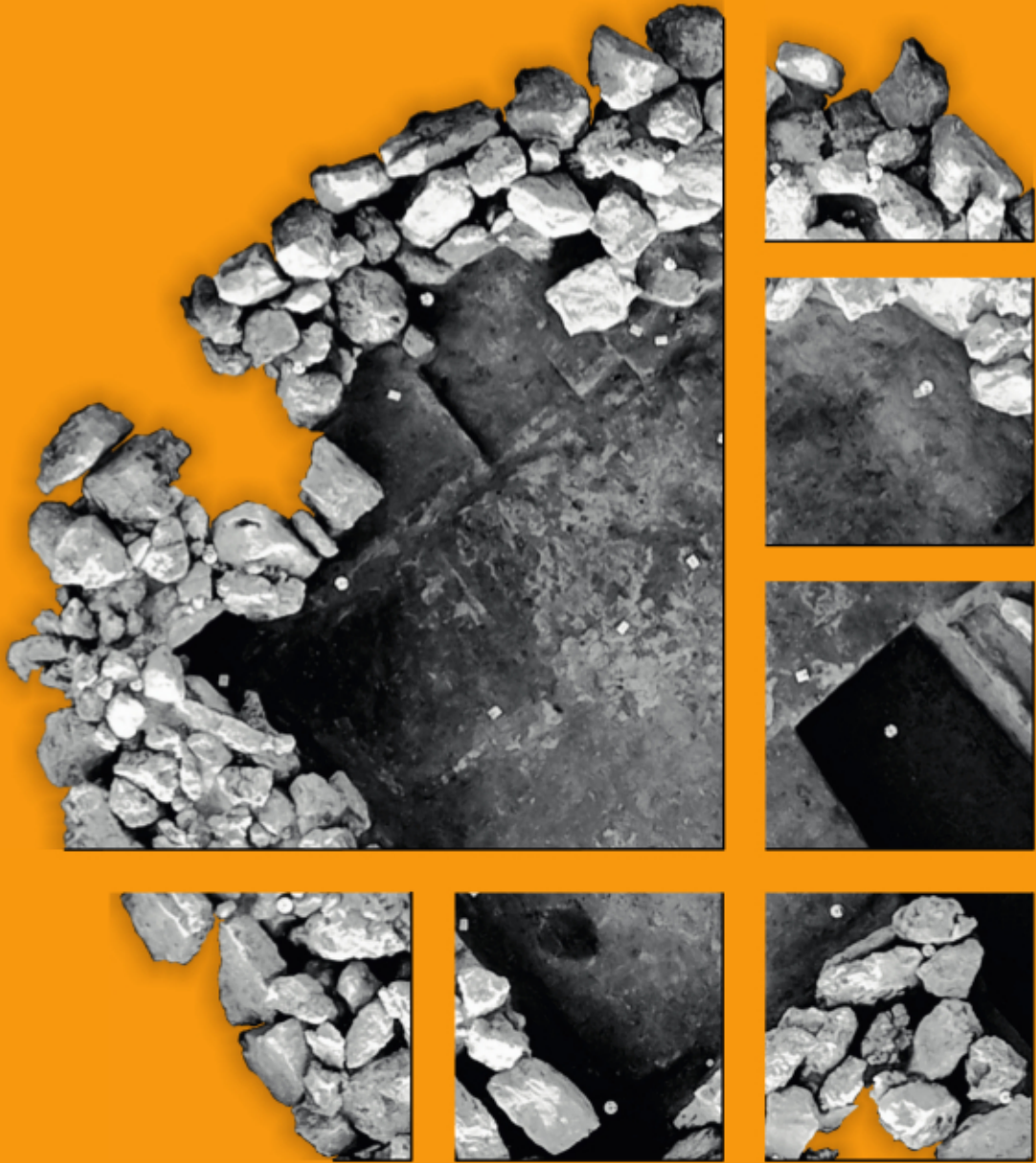


# DISSERTATIONES ARCHAEOLOGICAE

ex Instituto Archaeologico Universitatis de Rolando Eötvös nominatae



Ser. 3. No. 4. | 2016

# DISSERTATIONES ARCHAEOLOGICAE

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*Ser. 3. No. 4.*



Budapest 2016

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# The first season of the excavation of Grd-i Tle.

## The Fortifications of Grd-i Tle (Field 1)

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### **Abstract**

*During the first excavation season of the Hungarian Archaeological Expedition of the Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, three fields were open on the tell of Grd-I Tle. The largest of the fields was Field 01, where, in its NW Trench on the northern slope of the site remains of at least eight consecutive walls were discovered (extant stretches and debris of different walls). These walls are dated from the Iron Age to the 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> century. Several metal objects retrieved from the trench help us to date the walls. The aim of the trench is to reach the bottom of the tell and establish a chronology of the site and the nearby region.*

---

## **Introduction**

During the season of 2016, in the NW corner of Field 01 a square trench was opened from the edge of the tell down on the slope in a northward direction. According to our plans this trench is going to reach the bottom of the tell within four further excavation seasons. The aim of the project is to try to establish the stratigraphy of the site and to build a pottery typology of the region. The technique is the step trench, in which a step would be cut at every archaeological phenomenon (Fig. 9).

The first autopsy of the site made it clear that there is a stone wall running along the perimeter of the top of the tell just below the surface – sometimes the upper row of stones is stretching out from below. It was consequently also clear that the shape of the tell and the steep side (acclivity) of the tell is in a great part due to the wall(s) running around the (contemporary) edge(s) of the top of the tell.

After four weeks of work in the NW trench at least eight phases of fortifications built on each other or behind each other including the remains of stone walls have been identified. The size of the 5 m wide trench eventually reached a 5 m depth and 9 m in length (Fig. 6, 8).

## **The strata**

### **SNR 018** (Fig. 5–8)

This uppermost layer is a 40–60 cm thick stratum, the actual coating (topsoil) of the tell. It consists of a loose, greyish brown loamy soil, rich in finds (predominantly diverse pottery of different periods and zooarchaeological material). This stratum contains no pieces of burnt mudbrick or mortar. It starts on the northern (outer) surface of the **Wall 1 (SNR 022)** and runs down on the

outer surface of the tell. It is contemporary with **SNR 017** on the inner (southern) face of the **Wall 1 (SNR 022)**. **SNR 018** overlaps **SNR 024**, which is rich in debris of mortar (grout) from the **Wall 1 (SNR 022)**.

#### **Wall 1 (SNR 022)** (Fig. 1–9)

**Wall 1** is the uppermost and latest stone structure of the site. It is made of large unhewn rocks of limestone bedded in mortar. The mortar is fine, white, rich in sand. The outer and inner surfaces of the wall were originally plastered. The wall continues in the NE trench (**SNR 002**). In the eastern part of the NW trench the wall intensely leans outward, while in the western end of the trench the inclination is not so strong. The foundation of the wall was dug into the layer **SNR 025**, which contained among others a relatively large number of terracotta pipe bowls datable to the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>1</sup>

This dangerous outward inclination (the statics of the wall) made necessary to reduce the original 4 m width of the trench to a 2 m width and continue the work in the western half of the trench (Fig. 1–4, 9).<sup>2</sup> Stone debris (**SNR 028**) at the eastern edge of the trench seems to be originated from the tower (**SNR 006**) in the NE trench or its outer curtain wall (**SNR 007**). A smaller section of the **Wall 1** on its eastern end in this trench was dismantled to make room for steps, which most probably led into the inner staircase of the tower (**SNR 006**).

The average width of the wall is 86–90 cm at the eastern and 65–70 cm at the western end of the trench. The wall was built on two antecedent stone walls (**Wall 2 (SNR 041)** and **Wall 3 (SNR 042)**), but the angle of the line of the two previous walls slightly differs from the line of **Wall 1** (Fig. 3–4). In a later phase, **Wall 1** was coated on its inner (southern) side. This might have been needed due to its increasing instability after it was cut through for the steps to the tower. It is very interesting that the wall **SNR 002**, which seems to be the continuation of **Wall 1** in the NE trench has got a different line, which should change its course somewhere under the 1 m wide wall separating the two (NE and NW) trenches.

According to the present stage of the pottery-research and the stratigraphy, the construction of the **Wall 1** can be preliminary dated prior to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and it remained in use until the mid- or late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **SNR 024** (Fig. 5–8)

This layer starts from **Wall 1 (SNR 022)** and follows the bend of the contemporary surface of the site. The stratum is tapering downward (northward) and diminishes at a distance of 2.5 m from **Wall 1 (SNR 022)**. Without sharp contours it consists of a kind of solidification of mortar and plaster. This layer – starting from the base of **Wall 1 (SNR 022)** – divides two other (upper and lower) strata, the **SNR 018** and **SNR 025**. The composition of the layer implies to its formation during a building or demolishing process. In this particular case it seems that the construction works of the **Wall 1 (SNR 022)** created it.

#### **SNR 025** (Fig. 5–8)

Loose, darker, greyish brown filling with granules of mortar and charcoal. The layer starts

1 SIMPSON 2013, 263, 268.

2 According to our plans the eastern half of the trench is going to be opened in the next season (2017).

beside the **Wall 1** – seemingly being cut by the latter – and above the existing height of **Wall 2 (SNR 041)**, and slopes along the contemporary surface of the tell in a width of 40 cm and disappears in a distance of 5.2 m. The stratum is undoubtedly later than the **Wall 2 (SNR 041)** covering the stone structure. The layer can be dated most of all by the terracotta tobacco pipes. The most widespread is the so-called “poppy-head” type made of well tempered, grey clay. According to the very similar finds from the Shanidar Cave, Baradost and Khirbet Deir Situn they were used from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onward, throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**SNR 028** (*Fig. 5–6, 10*)

This layer is rubble of a stone structure bed in mortar along the northern face of **Wall 1 (SNR 022)**. It seems that this debris does not belong to Wall 1 being simply leaning against it and having no direct connection with it. This is actually a destruction layer of the coating wall (**SNR 007**) of the tower (**SNR 006**) unearthed in the neighbouring NE trench. The extension of this debris is 120 cm northward and 180 cm eastward. The debris was removed during the excavations after the documentation. The destruction of the wall covered layers (for example **SNR 025**) with tobacco pipe bowls and glazed ceramic fragments, and thus cannot be dated prior late 19<sup>th</sup> centuries when – as it seems now – the site was finally abandoned.

**SNR 032** (*Fig. 5–8*)

The layer is rich in organic material, ashes, charcoal and pieces of burnt mudbrick. The stratum starts at the NW corner of the tower and contains a lot of mixed finds including clay-pipes. The thickest part (12 cm) of the stratum was at the SE corner of the trench and the layer tapers towards the western and northern (sloping) sides of the trench. It seems that the stratum originates from the late Islamic Period, when the inhabitants of the settlement desposed the refuse (organic garbage and ash from the ovens) outside the wall through the presumed postern gate in the tower. The dating of the layer is based upon the pottery and tobacco pipes very similar to those found in the layer **SNR 025**.

**SNR 124** (*Fig. 5–6*)

A relatively loose light greyish brown layer in the Eastern half of the NW trench between **SNR 032** and **SNR 125**. The stratum is a relatively long, tapering layer, which disappears at a distance of 6.8 m from the walls. Its bow follows the contemporary surface of the tell. This embankment layer contained high quantity of ashes and charcoal, a few lumps of burnt wattle-and-daub. The thickness of the stratum varies between 20 and 34 cm. The layer produced a relatively large number of finds, predominantly not yet diagnostic pottery sherds and zooarchaeological material. Noteworthy that no terracotta tobacco pipes have been found so far in this stratum. The strikingly large amount of finds and the composition of the layer implies to that this part of the site was most probably a refuse dump outside the walls during the last phase of the settlement. The stratigraphic situation suggests a late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century date.

**SNR 125** (*Fig. 5–6*)

A long stretching layer of ash and charcoal in the eastern half of the NW trench between **SNR 124** and **SNR 043 (Wall 4)**. The stratum is observable under **SNR 124** and **SNR 018** all along the excavated part and continues downward on the slope. The thickness of the layer varies between 5 and 20 cm. The ashy stratum contained significant amount of zooarchaeological

material, which clearly implies to its refuse or disposal character. The composition and finds from the layer undoubtedly refer to its very close connection to the fillings observed just above it, confirming their similar dating and way of deposition. Unfortunately the preliminary evaluation of the ceramic fragments does not allow us to narrow the dating of this level within the later post medieval period. Stratigraphically and presumably chronologically the level of layers **SNR 124** and **SNR 125** can be attached to the **SNR 032**, obviously being superimposed by the latter. However, the characteristics of all three layers, the large quantity of disposal material, organics, ashes, and charcoal confirm their common origin. The layer **SNR 032** seems to be the very top and thus the latest deposit of the rubbish pile formed in the corner of the tower and the **Wall 1**, which thickness decreased moving further westward from the central point. Future work in the neighbouring areas of the present trench will produce a clearer picture of the occupation of Field 01 during the Late Islamic period.

**Wall 2 (SNR 041)** (*Fig. 1–9*)

This wall is made of large unhewn rocks of limestone bedded in and pointed with a very fine white mortar rich in sand. The visible part of the wall is some 50 cm high and consists of two rows of large stones with joints of 0.5–1 cm wide. It seems that this was the outer shell of the wall and consequently the inner structure between the two (50 cm wide) revetment stone faces was filled with rubble or other material bedded in mortar. The outer surface of the wall is not plastered. It would be assumed that this wall was the foundation of **Wall 1 (SNR 022)** on which the latter was built, but the different lines of the two walls (*Fig. 3–4*) do not confirm this assumption. However, the line of **Wall 2 (SNR 041)** is identical with the line of **Wall 3 (SNR 042)** so their connection is more likely than that of **Wall 1** and **Wall 2**. If this wall does not belong to **Wall 1**, its upper stone structure was most probably demolished and – since there is no destruction layer connectable to this wall – was most probably reused in **Wall 1**. **Wall 2** leans in a small extent outwards (northward). There are no characteristic finds from the layers connected directly to this wall.

**SNR 040** (*Fig. 5–8*)

This stratum is composed of greyish brown soil, rich in debris of mortar. It starts on the (outer) surface of these walls and runs down following the contemporary outer surface of the tell. The tapering layer diminishes abruptly and disappears at a distance of 4.8 m from the wall. Since the layer overlaps the top of **Wall 2 (SNR 041)**, it was most likely formed during or after the destruction of the wall. The absence of stones or burnt pieces of mudbrick implies to deliberate dismantle of the wall and reuse of its material for another purpose, possibly for the construction of the new line of fortification (**Wall 1**). Notable is the absence of the layer in the eastern part of the trench where it was most probably destroyed during the formation of the layers **SNR 124** and **SNR 125**. Due to the lack of clearly stratified and higher quantities of diagnostic pottery sherds or pipe fragments from this part, the dating of this layer is yet uncertain within the post medieval period.

**Wall 3 (SNR 042)** (*Fig. 1–9*)

Stone wall under **Wall 1 (SNR 022)** and **Wall 2 (SNR 041)**. It is made of unhewn stones of medium size bed in mortar containing larger granules than the mortar of the upper walls. It seems that the foundation trench was packed with stones and filled with the mortar fluid.



For that reason it is still a question, whether Wall 3 was an independent wall or simply the foundation of **Wall 2 (SNR 041)**. Stratum **SNR 040** is an indicative of the destruction of these two walls, since the top of the Wall 2 was covered by this layer (*see below and Fig. 7–8*). **Wall 3** was most probably cut into **SNR 043**, which seems not to belong to a later building period. **Wall 3** starts at a 120 cm depth but only ca. 30 cm height was excavated of it. The visible two or three rows of stones were bedded in a thick white mortar fluid made of lime and a negligible quantity of sand. Due to the limited size of the excavated area around this walls the bottom of their foundation has not been reached yet. Neither have been identified any of the settlement layers undoubtedly connectable with them. According to the present stage of research the foundation ditch for the **Wall 3** was dug into the layer SNR 043 and the **Wall 3** was buried by the demolition layer **SNR 040**.

**SNR 043** (*Fig. 5–8*)

The layer **SNR 043** consists of homogeneous dark brown loamy soil with no mortar debris and with only sporadic fragments of burnt wattle-and-daub. The very compact character and its situation refers to its non-anthropogenic origin, that is to its possible formation by erosion. It seems that this area in a period preceding the construction of the **Walls 2–3 (SNR 041 and SNR 042)** must have lain open for a certain period of time, as sedimentation (e.g. the layer **SNR 043**) bears no signs of architecture. How long the area was not in use cannot be determined, as it might have been intentionally filled with sediments as part of the preparations for the building activities seen in the upper layers. At the same time this non-anthropogenic sedimentation might have been redeposited intentionally creating thus a proper surface for the building of the **Walls 2–3 (SNR 041–042)**, which were undoubtedly cut into it. The dating of the layer is yet uncertain due to the lack of clearly stratified diagnostic material. Particularly noteworthy, however, is the lack of terracotta pipe finds from this layer.

**Wall 4 (SNR 043-W)** (*Fig. 1–9*)

Extensive stone debris covered by the layer **SNR 043**. The same filling can be observed between the upper ‘row’ of the stones. This ‘tightly packed’ debris is indicative of a dry stone wall – presumably bed in clay. The density of stones (*Fig. 4–5, 11*) raise the question, whether this structure is really a debris of a dry stone wall, or this accumulation of stones is the wall (made of stones bed in clay) itself. Anyhow, the outer (northern) face of the structure show the signs as if it was really the outer surface of a wall (*Fig. 1–2, 12*). The similar structure and stratigraphic situation implies to close relation with two walls (**SNR 037–038**) of the NE trench (790-530) and consequently to their architectural and chronological connection.

**Wall 5 (SNR 126)** (*Fig. 5–6, 13*)

This stratum appears as a rockslide with stone debris and muddy soil. This stone debris can hardly be identified in the eastern section of the NW trench. The stratum is relatively rich in pottery sherds and archaeozoological material. The layer runs along the contemporary surface of the site, tapering downwards (Northward) and disappears at a distance of 6.8 m. The thickest part of the stratum is 22 cm. The layer contains some charcoal grains and smaller granules of burnt mudbrick or wattle-and-daub. This layer runs directly above the thick burnt layer **SNR 127**. It seems in the cross section that at some points the two layers alternate or mixed with each other – so they are most likely contemporary. After the destruction of the wall, the debris



of the destroyed houses was levelled above the remains of the wall to form a horizontal surface reaching the edge of the tell (see below). The connection of these two levels is shown in the section of the western wall of the trench, where the levelling of **SNR 127** destroyed the earlier strata and reached above **SNR 126** as well.

Two important metal finds were found in this layer: one iron arrowhead and a Hellenistic Greek silver coin (*hemiobolos*).

- **Iron arrowhead:** Rhomboid-shaped iron arrowhead with a stop and long tang (GDT-M-790.540.03; L: 87 mm; W: 6.4 gr.) (Fig. 16.5). The piece was found in the stratum *in situ* with metal detector. In spite of the characteristic shape of the arrowhead, the date of the piece has not been satisfactory identified. The catalogue of A. Hellmuth Kramberger lists only a single similar piece,<sup>3</sup> but the two types are not the same. The catalogue of Late Assyrian metalwork by J. Curtis does not provide any similar pieces. Consequently it can be assumed that this arrowhead is not an Assyrian and probably not a Babylonian manufacture and can be dated to the post-6<sup>th</sup> century BC period.
- **Silver hemiobolos:** Obverse: head of Heracles wearing leonte right, Reverse: symbol resembling an *O* (omicron) on the top  $\Lambda$  (lambda). (GDT-C-790.540.04; Diam: 9 mm; W: 0.38 gr.) (Fig. 16.6). The fact that the reverse struck is 3/5 off flan makes the identification of the reverse sign (control) and consequently of the coin itself very difficult. Anyway, the identification of this small denomination is much more complicated than the larger denominations, since the smaller pieces does not turn up so frequently as the larger coins. Scanning the most important publications on Greek coinage the coin has not been identified. It can, however, be stated that the coin is a Hellenistic Greek mint dated to the period of the 4<sup>th</sup>–2<sup>nd</sup> centuries BC.

### **SNR 127** (Fig. 1–2, 5–8, 14)

This stratum is composed of a thick layer of quite homogeneous reddish brown, burnt wattle-and-daub and mudbrick debris rich in pieces of charcoal. Some larger lumps and pieces of burnt mudbrick also appear in the layer of debris. The thickness of the layer varies between 10 and 40 cm implying not to a natural process of deposition but rather to a deliberate levelling of the surface following a major destruction. A further important characteristic of the stratum is that – as can be seen in the section of the western wall (Fig. 7–8) – this layer is horizontal, cutting through a number of earlier layers and does not follow the line of the slope of the contemporary surface of the tell. This situation can be explained as formation of a new horizontal surface on the top of the plateau, levelling the burnt debris of the former, seemingly burnt down settlement. It is not clear yet if the destruction and levelling affected the whole plateau or only this part of it. It is unquestionable that **SNR 043** was deposited on the top of this burnt layer.

The horizontal position of the stratum makes an assumption quite plausible or at least raises a question: was there any wall belonging to this stratum or not, since it makes no sense to level an area horizontally outside a wall. The surface on the outer side of a wall should be sloping as much as possible for statical reasons (to prevent the rainwater to be collected at the base of the

3 HELLMUTH KRAMBERGER 2015, 45.

wall) and for military reasons as well (to prevent the enemy to gain a foothold at the base of the wall).

**Wall 6 (SNR 131)** (Fig. 1–8, 15)

Extensive stone debris under the burnt layer of **SNR 127** – partly mixed with it. There is a homogeneous dark brown loamy soil with burnt pieces of wattle-and-daub, charcoal and white plaster (?). The sloping stratum runs along the contemporary surface of the site. Above the stone debris the filling is 10 cm thick, together with the stone debris it can reach even 40–50 cm.

This extensive stone debris refers again to a possible existence of a dry stone wall, the original line of which has not been excavated yet, lying most probably under or not far from the existing walls (**Walls 1–4**). It is possible that a small stretch of the outer surface of this wall can be seen in the vertical section of the South wall (Fig. 1–2) and in the horizontal section as well (Fig. 3–4, especially on Fig. 4, 3<sup>rd</sup> step). The question, whether this is the outer face or only a part of the debris is going to be answered in the next season, during the continuing excavation of this section.

**Wall 7 (SNR 136)** (Figs. 1–9)

This stratum consists of a large stone rubble surface, the debris of a dry stone wall. The actual line of the wall is still unknown, but hopefully will be clarified in 2017. The stones are mainly medium size unhewn limestone rocks. Notable that all of the stone walls were made of limestone rocks. Some diagnostical metal finds enable to date the destruction of the wall to the course of the 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

**SNR 133** (Figs. 6–9)

Thick layer embedded between the stone rubble of **Wall 5 (SNR 131)** and the stone rubble layer of dry stone **Wall 6 (SNR 136)**. This stratum appears between the two walls in the western section of the trench. It starts at 140 cm from the vertical line of **Walls 1–3** descending parallel with the surface of the site, following the contemporary surface. The stratum is tapering and disappears at 5.2 m. The layer is homogeneous, dark brown. It was deposited onto the stone rubble layer of **Wall 6 (SNR 136)** and filled the space between the stones. Consequently, the archaeological finds found in this stratum belong to the destruction layer of **Wall 6 (SNR 136)** and its aftermath, the period which immediately followed the demolition of **Wall 6 (SNR 136)**, namely **SNR 133**.

Some archaeological finds found in the layer enable to narrow its dating. These archaeological finds included four arrowheads and a fragment of a bronze bowl/mirror.

- **Bronze arrowhead:** ‘Scythian type’ socketed and three winged (trilobate) bronze arrowhead (GDT-M-790.540.77; L: 30 mm; W: 4.5 gr.) (Fig. 16.1). This bronze arrowhead was found with metal detector *in situ* on the stone debris of **Wall 7 (SNR 136)** covered by **SNR 133** (Fig. 7–8). According to the chronological framework of J. Curtis<sup>4</sup> and A. Hellmuth Kramberger<sup>5</sup> this type of socketed trilobate Scythian bronze arrowhead belongs to the early Scythian horizon dated between the last quarter of the 8<sup>th</sup> century

4 CURTIS 2013, nos. 234–248.

5 HELLMUTH KRAMBERGER 2015, 27–32: 2.5 Dreiflügelige Pfeilspitzen (*Typ Ib-reiternomadisch Variante a, b*), with two basic types: the almond shaped blade (with Abb. 33: map of distribution) and a triangular shaped blade (with Abb. 35: map of distribution). See furthermore Abb. 53: chronological chart.

and the late 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Such bronze arrowheads are known from Assyrian sites, as for example Nimrud,<sup>6</sup> Kouyunjik,<sup>7</sup> Khorsabad,<sup>8</sup> Ashur,<sup>9</sup> and Tell Ibrahim Bayis as well.<sup>10</sup>

- **Bronze arrowhead:** ‘Scythian type’ socketed and three winged (trilobate) bronze arrowhead (GDT-M-790.540.01; L: 34 mm; W: 3.6 gr.) (Fig. 16.2). This bronze arrowhead was found with metal detector in the hump-yard of stratum **SNR 133**. This arrowhead is the same type as our previous Scythian socketed trilobate arrowhead and can also be dated to a timespan between the last quarter of the 8<sup>th</sup> century and the late 6<sup>th</sup> century BC.
- **Iron arrowhead:** iron arrowhead with a classical rhomboid head with a long tang and a midrib in the angle of the tang running along the blade of the arrowhead (GDT-M-790.540.02; L: 67 mm; W: 5.2 gr.) (Fig. 16.3). The piece was found with metal detector in the hump-yard of stratum **SNR 133**. J. Curtis in his recent study on late Assyrian metalwork identified 7 different types of tanged iron and 3 different types of socketed bronze arrowheads from Assyrian sites.<sup>11</sup> There are altogether around 630 pieces he examined. From our point of view his 3<sup>rd</sup> type is the most interesting, since shows definite similarities to our iron arrowhead No. 3. The shape of these pieces is similar to the Grd-i Tle iron arrowhead. The most important features are the tang, the rhomboid shape and the midrib running along the angle of the arrowhead. The stop could be prominent, but on some pieces the stop so slight as to be almost non-existent.<sup>12</sup> There are altogether 28 pieces are known: 18 from Nimrud, 9 from Sharif Khan and 1 from Kouyunjik. The arrowheads of this group can be dated to the Late Assyrian period, mainly to the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC.

The other comprehensive study on Assyrian arrowheads was published most recently by A. Hellmuth Kramberger.<sup>13</sup> She studied the arrowheads of Tall Šēh Ḥamad (Dūr-Katlimmu). Her typology of the two winged iron arrowheads<sup>14</sup> separated 6 different types. The basic shape and the blade (with the mid-rib) of the iron arrowhead from Grd-i Tle fits into her *b1* and *b2* group: (*Typ Ila-neuassyrisch Variante b1*). This type is characterized by a somewhat different, rhomboid form and a mid-rib running along the center of the blade. The tang of the arrowhead, however, is short. There are 6 pieces belonging to this group.<sup>15</sup> (*Typ Ila-neuassyrisch Variante b2*) This type differs from the previous type mainly in its longer tang. There are three exemplares known.<sup>16</sup> Her chronological framework seems to corroborate our dating of our iron arrowhead (GDT-M-790.540.02) to the Late Assyrian period (7<sup>th</sup> century B.C.). It can not be ruled out, however, that this type was still in use during the Neo-Babylonian period (612–539 BC) as well.<sup>17</sup>

6 CURTIS 2013, nos. 231–233 (with side-catch/barb), nos. 234–244 (without side-catch/barb).

7 CURTIS 2013, no. 245.

8 CURTIS 2013, no. 246.

9 CURTIS 2013, no. 247.

10 CURTIS 2013, no. 248 (two examples).

11 CURTIS 2013, 39–43, pls. XI–XIV.

12 CURTIS 2013, 40, pl. XIII.

13 HELLMUTH KRAMBERGER 2015.

14 HELLMUTH KRAMBERGER 2015, 37–42: 3.2 *Zweiflügelige Pfeilspitzen aus neuassyrischer Zeit (Typ Ila-neuassyrisch Variante a1, a2, b1, b2, c, d)*.

15 HELLMUTH KRAMBERGER 2015., Cat. nos. 27, 29, 33, 36, 37, 42.

16 HELLMUTH KRAMBERGER 2015., Cat. nos. 28, 30, 38.

17 See HELLMUTH KRAMBERGER 2015, Abb. 53: chronological chart.

- **Iron arrowhead:** Triangular-shaped iron arrowhead with a characteristic stop and long tang (GDT-M-790.540.78; L: 62 mm; W: 6.9 gr.) (*Fig. 16.4*). The piece was also found with metal detector in the hump-yard of stratum **SNR 133**. Unfortunately this type can not be identified and dated so easily as the previous three pieces. Only similar shapes are known. However, the archaeological context connects it to the previous arrowheads.
- **Fragment of the bronze bowl or mirror:** A bronze fragment is from the middle of a bronze object, probably a bowl (GDT-M-790.540.129; L: 36 mm; W: 21 mm.) (*Fig. 16.7*). The decoration is characteristic: shows a probably 23 petalled incised rosette. The craftsman did not use repousse at all (at least not on this fragment). It seems furthermore, that the bottom of the bowl was flat, and was not decorated (and reinforced) with an omphalos. This fragment represents a very fine work, high quality craftsmanship. The thickness of the bronze plate is less than half a millimeter.

Such bronze bowls are known in relatively large numbers from the Neo-Assyrian period, but only a few pieces have not got an omphalos or repousse decoration in the middle of the bottom of the bowl.<sup>18</sup> It seems obvious that the fragment is from a bronze bowl of Assyrian craftsmanship, but it should be admitted, that this type of bowl was used in later periods as well. The quality of the piece, and the context dated by the arrowheads, however, hints to the direction that the fragment is from an Assyrian bronze bowl of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC.

#### **Wall 8 (SNR 137) (*Fig. 1–4, 7–9*)**

Beside the western side of the trench, under the stone rubble remains of **Wall 6 (SNR 136)** a very hard, dark brown homogeneous layer was documented. This stratum presumably represent the remains of a rammed earth structure, most probably an earthen ramp. The soil was extremely solid and dense. One of the most interesting questions, which should be answered in the next season is the identification of the nature of this structure.

### **Preliminary conclusions**

Following this brief overview of the strata identified during the first season of excavations some preliminary conclusions may be drawn.

#### ***The walls***

At least eight different phases of fortifications or their remains were identified in the NW Trench (790.540) of Field 01. The three latest phases (**Walls 1–3**) were built with the extensive use of mortar, the following four walls (**Walls 4–7**) were dry stone walls, but only the consecutive stone rubble debris layers of these destroyed walls were identified. The earliest identified phase (**Wall 8**) seems to be a rammed earth wall. At the present stage of research it is clear that the site was seriously fortified during several periods of its history until the Late Islamic period.

<sup>18</sup> See for example CURTIS 2013, pl. XXXVIII, 500, 505, 507.

*The chronology*

The main problem concerning the evaluation of the remains of the NW Trench is that this part of the site contains mainly or only debris layers accumulated outside the fortification walls, on the slope of the settlement. Consequently no homogeneous settlement layers were presented that would produce a coherent picture and clear pottery assemblages. The pottery of the NW Trench came from the refuse discarded outside the walls and consequently was very mixed. The excavations on the inner side of the ramparts have not produced yet a sufficient amount of ceramic finds to establish an acceptable chronology for the whole sequence of investigated strata. However, other finds (clay pipes, arrowheads, a fragment of a bronze bowl, and a Hellenistic Greek coin) enable us to lay the foundations of a rough preliminary chronological framework for this part of the site.<sup>19</sup>

It seems clear that the strata above the layers **SNR 126** and **127** (**SNR 018, 022, 024, 025, 028, 032, 124, 125**) most probable belong to the Islamic Period of the site. The combined layers of **SNR 126** and **127** (and the other layers beneath them) do not contain Islamic pottery or other remains dated to the Medieval or Early Modern Periods. There is, however, a question still to be answered concerning the chronology of the **Walls 2–3** whether they belong to an earlier or to a later phase of the site.

The next chronological horizon is signalled by the Hellenistic Greek coin from the debris of **SNR 126**. Since another Hellenistic Greek coin (a silver drachm from the Lampsacos drachm mint)<sup>20</sup> was found in Field 02, and a further surface find from the western slope of the tell: a large (rim and side) fragment of a Hellenistic vase (lutrophoros?) decorated with a black coating and wide splendid silver(!) bands are also indicative, it can be assumed that there was a Hellenistic settlement on and around the tell.

The earliest chronological horizon identified in NW Trench is dated to the 7<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. This horizon is represented by strata **SNR 133** and **136** and below (**SNR 137**). Obviously not the architectural remains help us to date these levels. The small (metal) finds found in these levels (arrowheads, fragment of a bronze bowl) hint to the direction that in the NW Trench in a depth of 5 m we reached the 7<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. layers. The appearance of more than one arrowhead (4 pieces in a 2 m wide stretch) in the outside face of the wall (**Wall 7**) refers to an attack or a siege of the settlement somewhen in the 7<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. (at the time of the fall of Assyria?). It is not sure yet if these layers represent the (Neo-)Assyrian Period or a Post-Assyrian (Neo-Babylonian?) culture, but it seems quite clear that in this depth (at around 25 m height in the tell), we reached the ancient Near Eastern strata. Hopefully, in the next season these questions will be answered and the chronological framework of the upper strata of the site will be clarified.

19 It is striking that this part of the site has not yielded conclusive evidence (pottery or other finds) dated to the Parthian and Sassanian Periods, the existence of which is otherwise can extensively be detected by surface finds on the slopes and at the foot of the tell.

20 Silver drachm (GDT-C-850.480.01), Diam: 18 mm. W: 3.8 gr, Price 1412, Lampsacus, 310–301 B.C.

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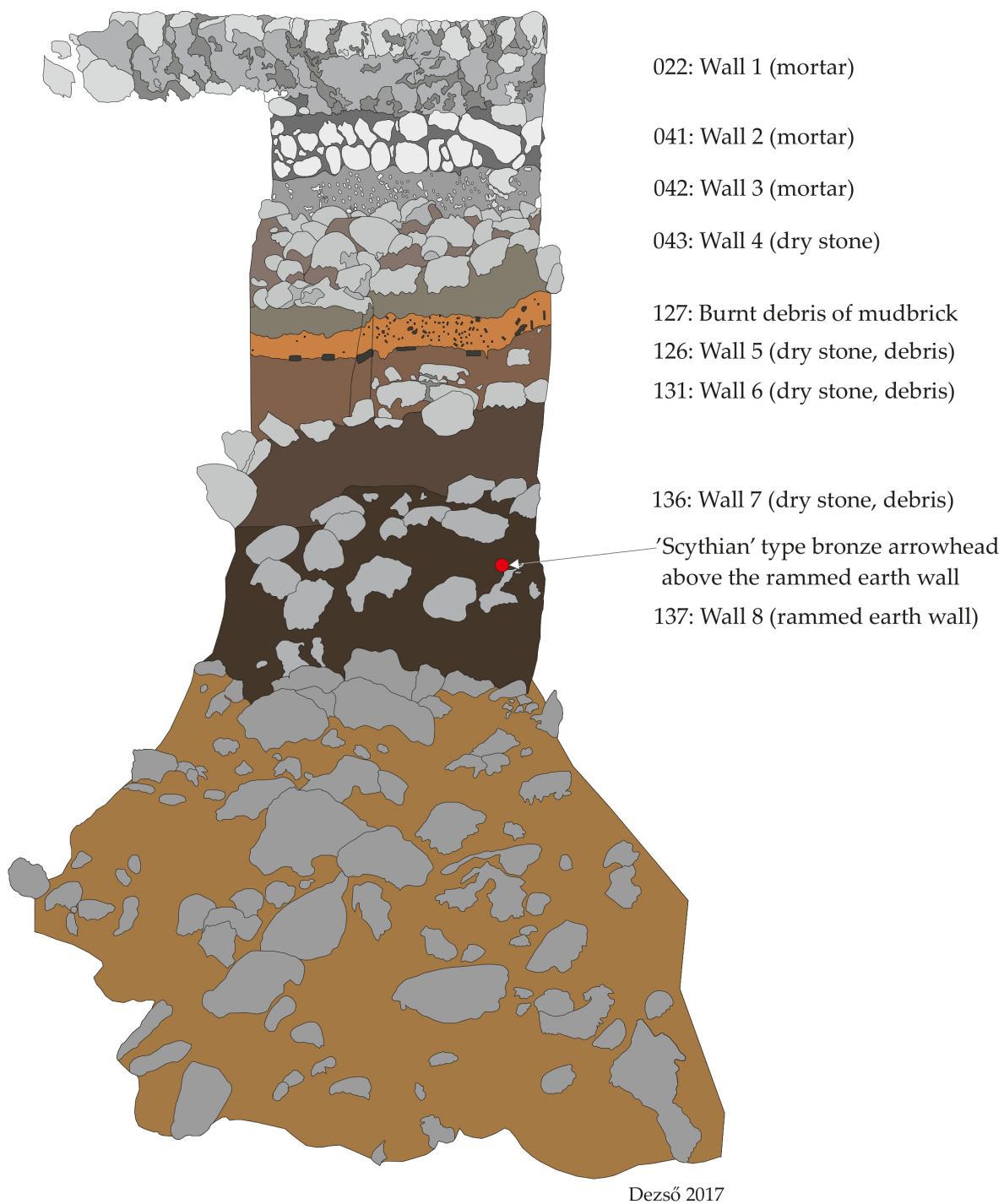


Fig. 1. Grd-i Tle. Field 01, NW trench, vertical section, south wall.



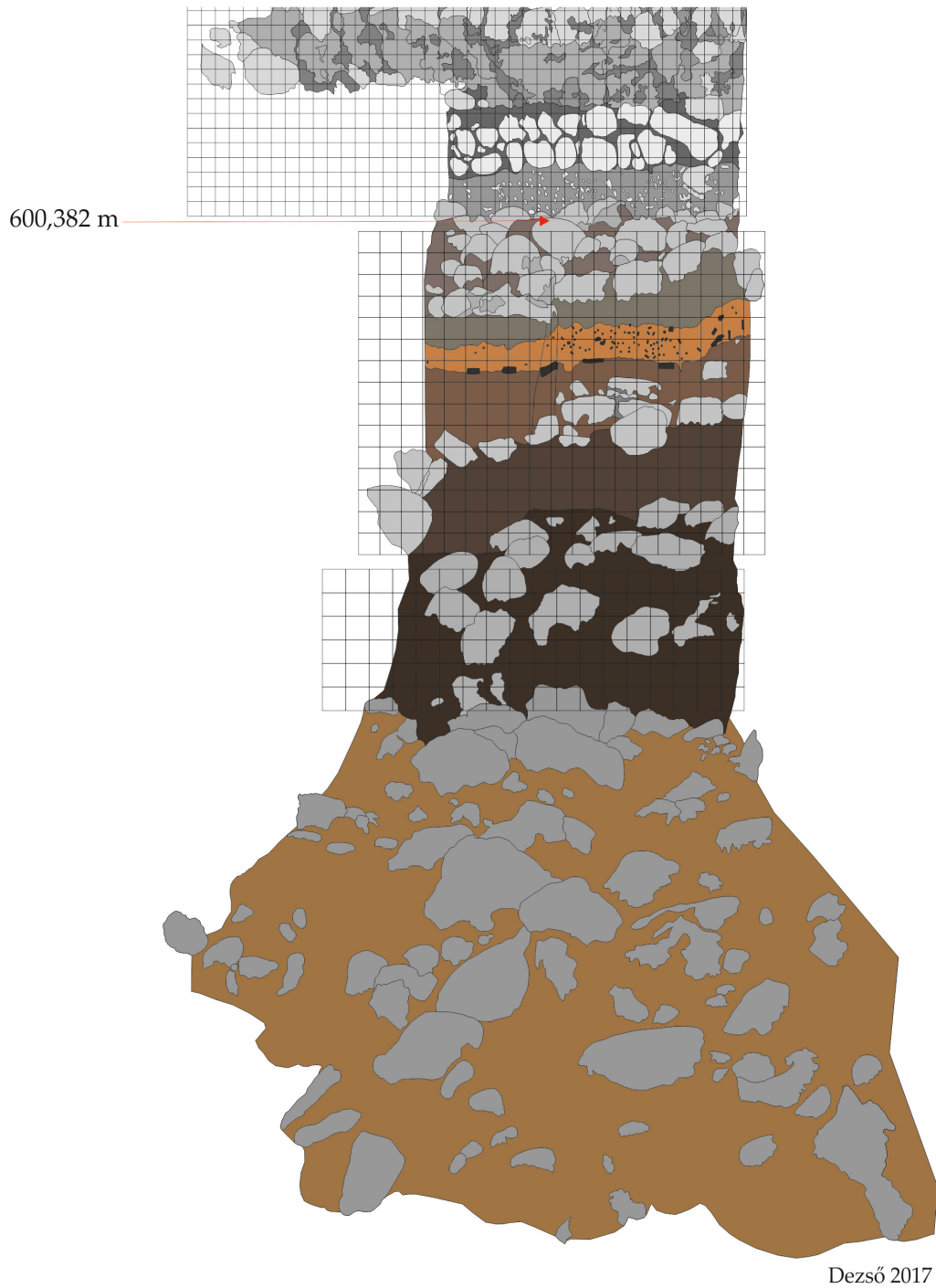


Fig. 2. Grd-i Tle. Field 01, NW trench, vertical section, south wall (all quadrants are 10 cm × 10 cm).

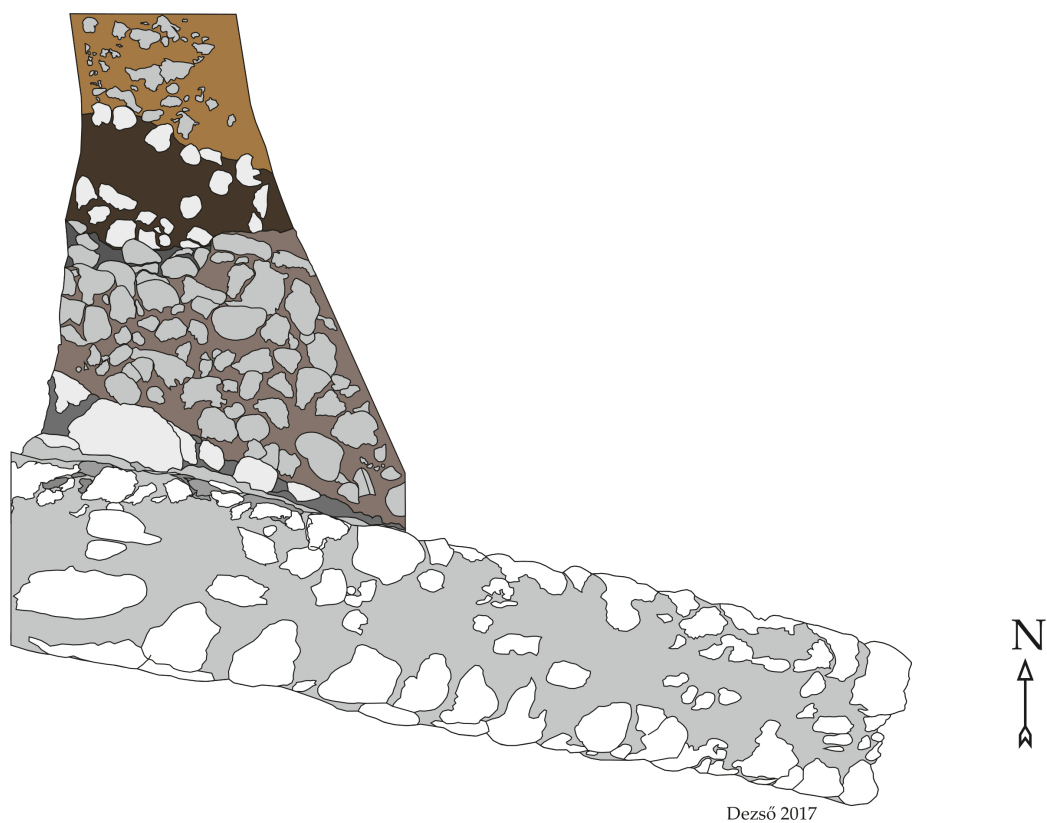


Fig. 3. Grd-i Tle. Field 01, NW trench, horizontal section.

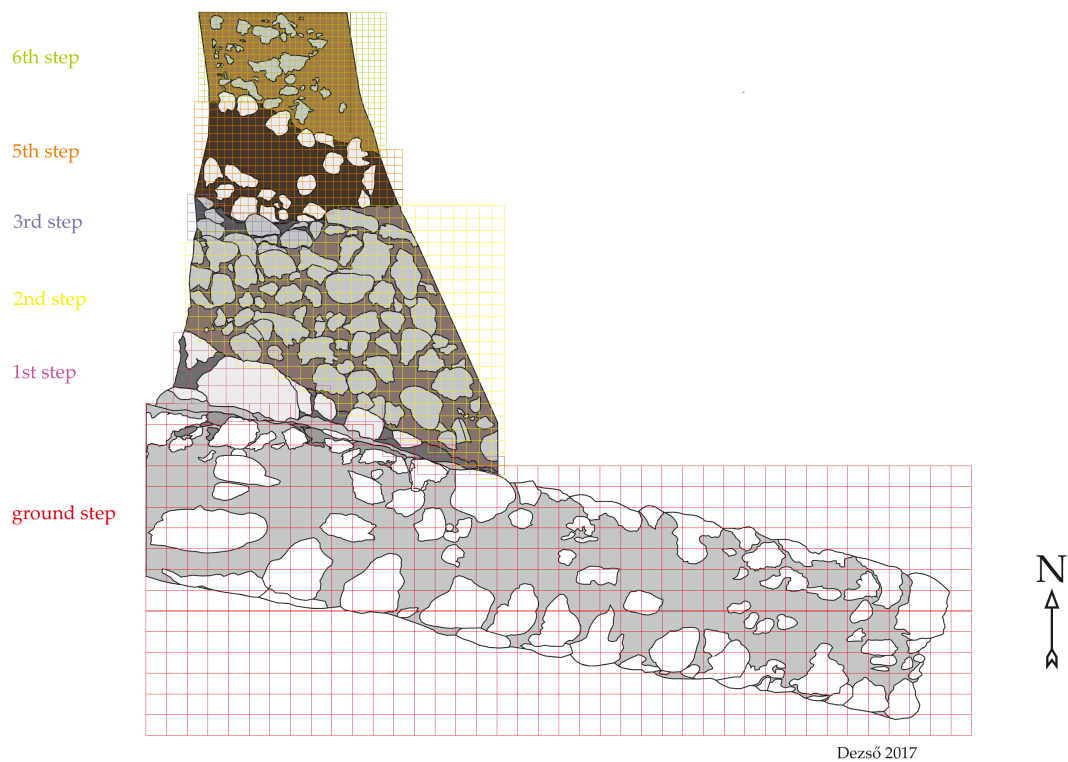


Fig. 4. Grd-i Tle. Field 01, NW trench, horizontal section (all quadrants are 10 cm × 10 cm).

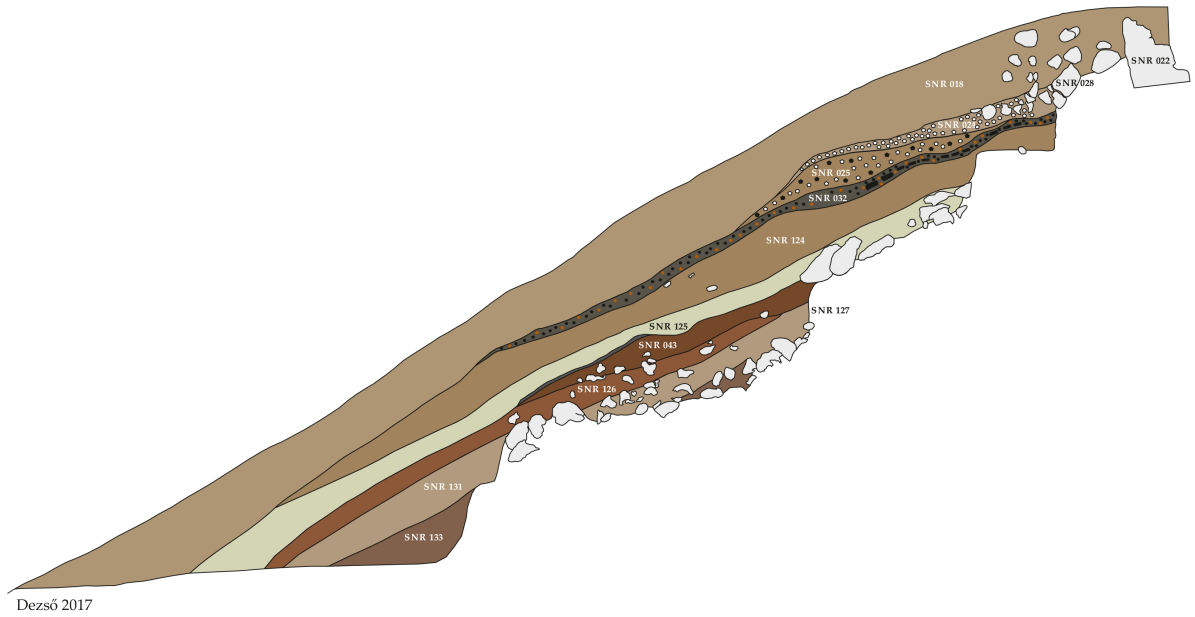


Fig. 5. Grd-i Tle. Field 01, NW trench, section of eastern wall.

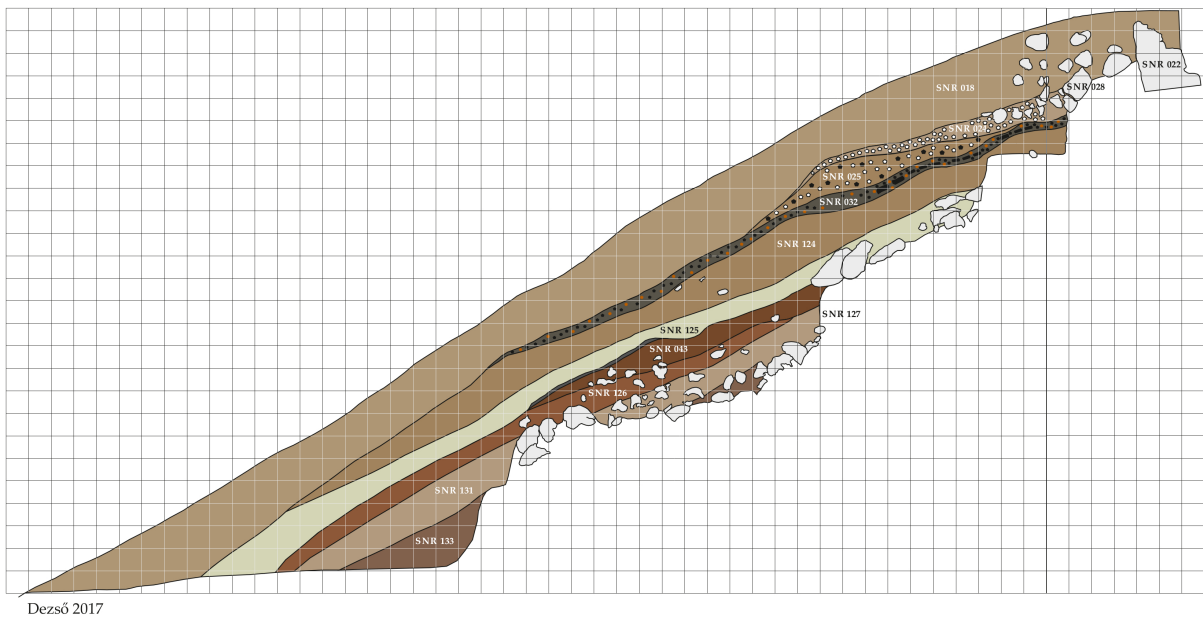


Fig. 6. Grd-i Tle. Field 01, NW trench, section of eastern wall (quadrants are 20 cm × 20 cm).

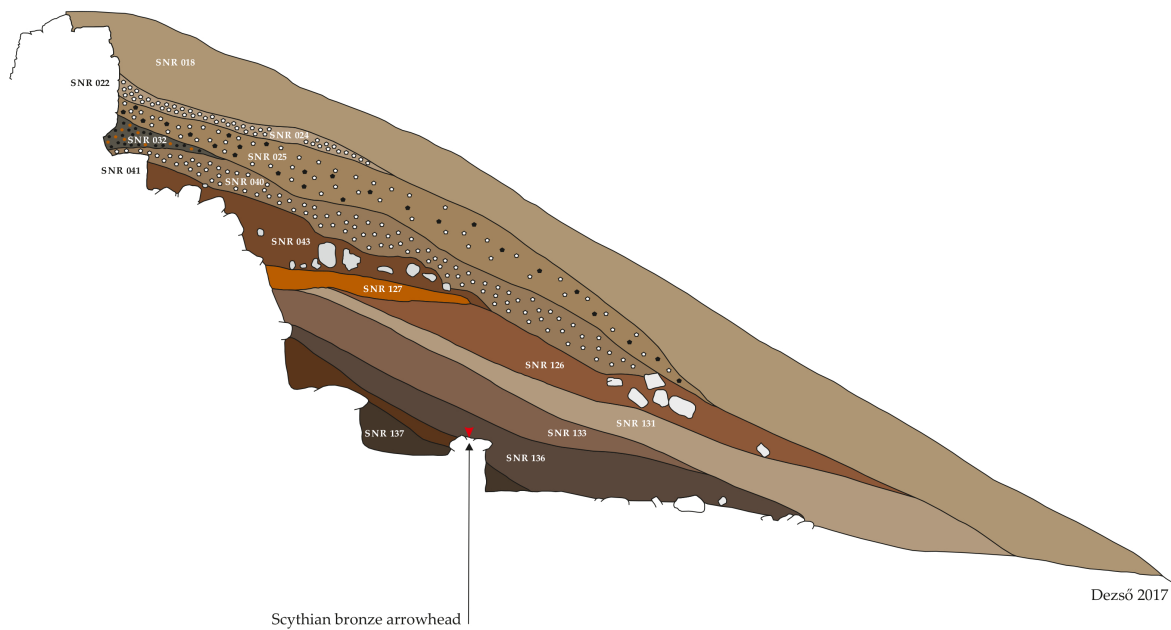


Fig. 7. Grd-i Tle. Field 01, NW trench, section of western wall.



Fig. 8. Grd-i Tle. Field 01, NW trench, section of western wall (quadrants are 20 cm × 20 cm).





*Fig. 9.* Overview of NW trench.





*Fig. 10.* Photo of SNR 022, 028.





*Fig. 11.* Vertical view of Wall 4 (SNR 043).



*Fig. 12.* Horizontal view of Wall 4 (SNR 043).





*Fig. 13. Photo of SNR 126.*





*Fig. 14.* Photo of SNR 127.



*Fig. 15.* Photo of SNR 131.



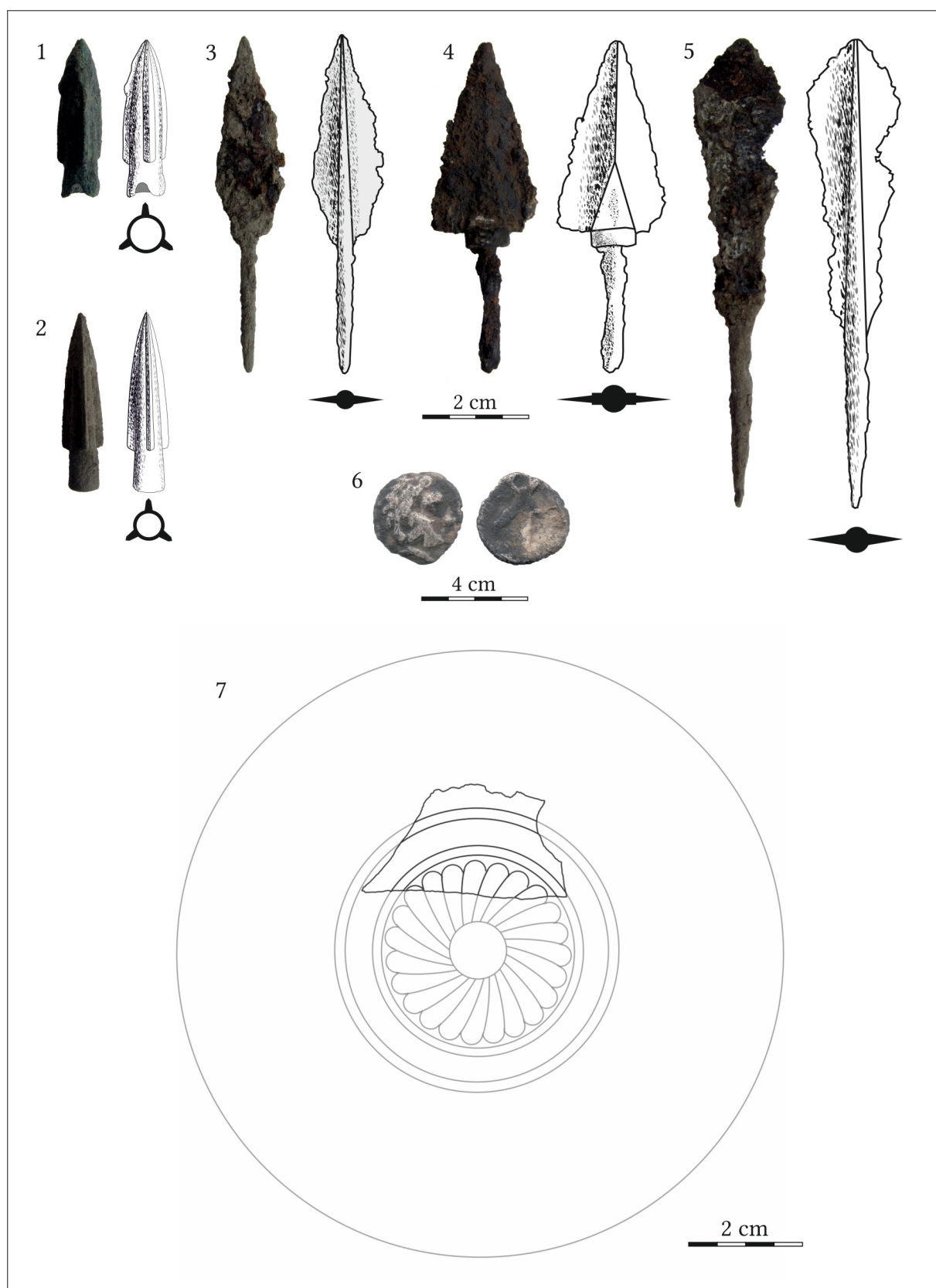


Fig. 16. 1. Scythian bronze arrowhead (GDT-M-790.540.77); 2. Scythian bronze arrowhead (GDT-M-790.540.01); 3. Iron arrowhead (GDT-M-790.540.02); 4. Iron arrowhead (GDT-M-790.540.78); 5. Arrowhead (GDT-M-790.540.03); 6. Hemiobol (GDT-C-790.540.4); 7. Fragment of a bronze bowl or mirror (GDT-M-790.540.129).