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FORGOTTEN RITUALS CONNECTED TO AGRICULTURE IN THE EARLY MIGRATION PERIOD – FEATURE G27 FROM ERNEI "CARIERĂ" (MUREŞ COUNTY)[1]

Coralia Crişan, Vlad-Andrei Lăzărescu

Keywords: *Ernei (Mureş county), early migration period, ritual deposition, agriculture*

1. Introduction and general information regarding the site and the complex

The rescue excavation from 2004 undertaken in the place called "Carieră", from the Ernei village (Mureş county), was intended to recuperate the information provided by an archaeological site with features belonging to the Wiettenberg, Noua, Gáva Bronze age cultures and also to the early migration period. Certain data referring to the archaeological discoveries from this campaign have already been presented in previous publications, like the animal bone material[2] and the vegetal macro-remains retrieved from pit number 27 (G27)[3], which is precisely the subject of the present study.

The site is situated on the first terrace of the Mureş River, on the right side of the national road nr. 15 (DN 15), between Târgu-Mureş and Reghin, at a distance of approximately 9 km from Târgu-Mureş, 320–340 m above the Black Sea level. The nowadays flow of the Mureş River is 3 km far from the site. To be able to obtain as much information as possible, 6 trenches and 4 surfaces were opened; inside the last ones, several individual contexts were investigated, identified in a moment when they were already partially affected by the excavations from the stone exploitation quarry. We came across a similar situation in the case of G27, as we managed to identify the pit deeper than the level of the yellow-light brownish clay level (–0,80 / 1,00 m, from the topsoil) and consequently much deeper than the level corresponding to the early medieval period.

It is very likely that the research cut across the peripheral area of a settlement (with reference to the level corresponding to the early migration period), which evolved towards south-east, hypothesis sustained by the position of the discoveries and also by their characteristics: they

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[2] BERECKI/DARÓCZI-SZABÓ/DARÓCZI-SZABÓ 2005.

[3] CIUTĂ/CRIŞAN 2006.

were undoubtedly used as clay exploitation pits, more than 1 m deepened into the yellowish clay, some of them later on turned into waste pits. Furthermore, in trenches S1, S2, S5 and surfaces C1, C2, C3 and C4, situated in the south-western and central part of the investigated area, the materials are sporadic, while in S3, from the eastern edge of the archaeological excavation, the quantity of the artefacts from the layer between –0,0 / –0,40 m is considerable[4]. From this point on, the slope faintly accelerates towards south and east, suggesting a possible outstretching direction for the settlement. Unfortunately, due to the relatively limited character of the archaeological research, we weren't able to clarify problems concerning the total surface or the internal structure of the settlement (Fig. 1).

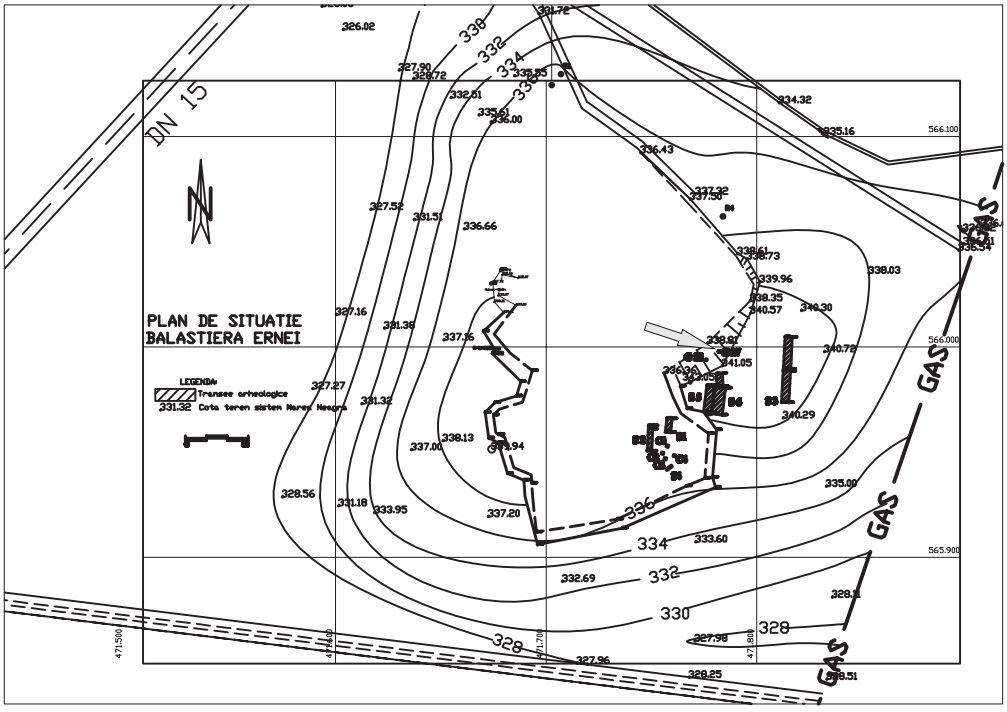

Fig. 1. Overall plan of the archaeological excavations conducted at Ernei.

We can assess that the character of this settlement involved, apart from agriculture (which surely was one of the main occupations), animal husbandry (especially bovine), which seems to have played a very important part in the economy of the community[5].

From the 8 pits investigated, out of which only two had a clear stratigraphical context, only G27 differed substantially because of its content. Apart from this, all of them appear to have similar shapes and dimensions: diameter of the mouth between 1,30 – 1,35 m, reaching depths of up to 1,70 m from the antique ground level and respectively 2,20 m from the present-day surface. It is nevertheless hard accurately to compare these features, since most of them (6) were disturbed by the present day excavations for the quarry. The stratigraphy of the site can be described as it follows: 0 / –0,40 m plough disturbed soil, with many pigments; –0,40 / –0,60–0,70 m light gray soil, with fewer pigments and scarce ceramic fragments; –0,60–0,70 / –0,80–0,90 m light brown soil, containing very few pigments; –0,80–0,90 / –1–1,10 m brown soil, sterile from the archaeological point of view; 1–1,10 m the yellowish clay layer appears.

[4] This is where the crossbow brooch was found, though without an intact context.

[5] BERECKI/DARÓCZI-SZABÓ/DARÓCZI-SZABÓ 2005, 124.

Whenever the depth of the archaeological complexes of the early migration period could be established, it was at approximately –0,60 / –0,70 m.

G27 was identified at an inferior level to where the yellowish clay began. At this depth, the pit had a dark colour circular shape, with a 1,15 m diameter surrounded by the yellowish clay representing the geological soil.

From the inner stratigraphy perspective (Fig. 2), the fill of G27 was separated into two levels, by a dense layer of adobe, up to 11 cm thick. The adobe was set like a lid over the layer it superposed with the aid of wooden rods, the later ones having an approximate diameter of 1,5 cm. It was heavily burned, especially in the south-eastern part of the pit, where the intense fire marked a dark grey 1–1,5 cm thick strip in the adobe layer. The fact that not the entire surface of the adobe was subject to an equally intensive burning is proved by several sickle handles, with wood still preserved, whose bodies continued in the layer underneath the adobe.

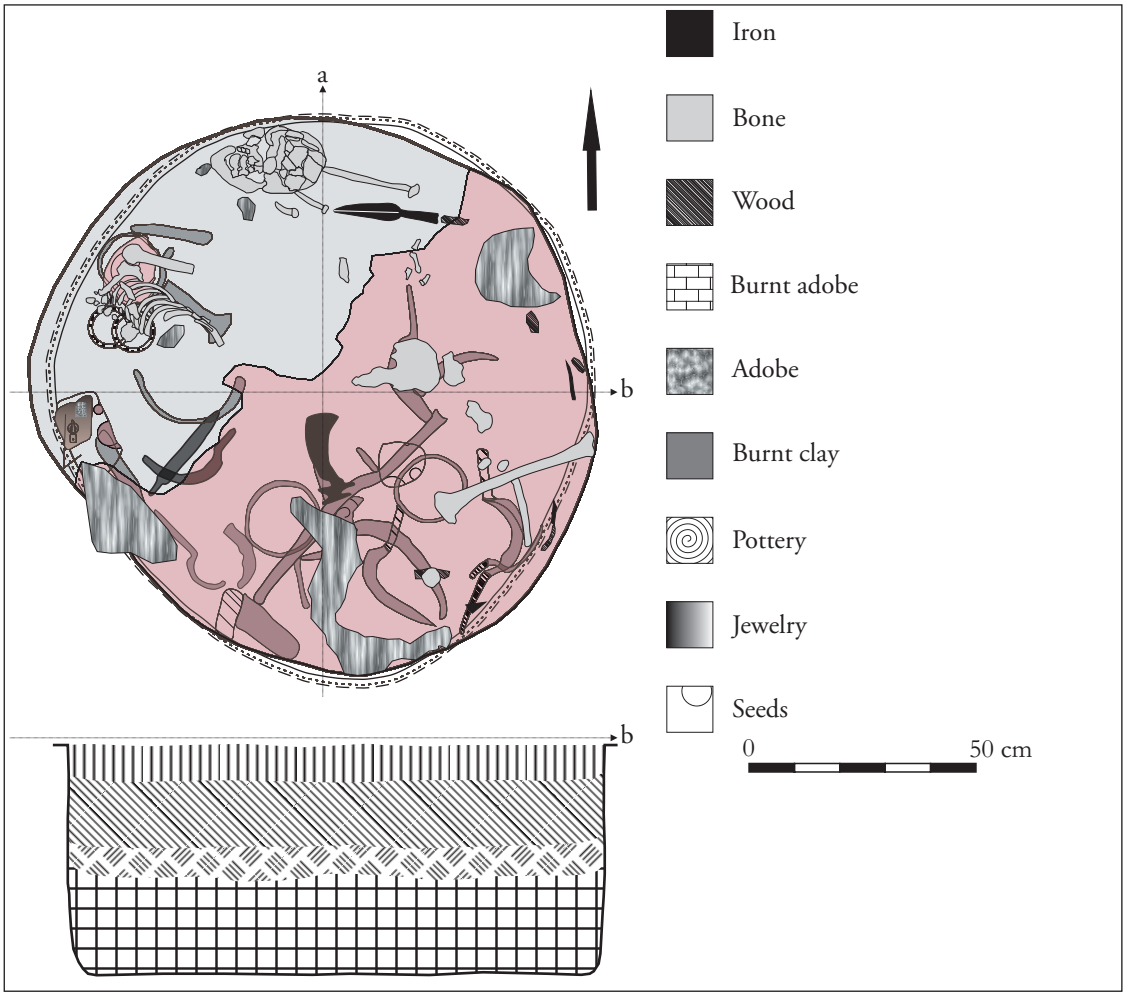

Fig. 2. Ground plan and section of feature G27.

The materials deposited over the adobe were never in contact with the fire. We relate to the human bone fragments, animal bones and also a lance head, which kept pieces of the wooden tail inside and near it. The fragments of the human skeleton were scattered on the entire surface of the adobe layer, without any anatomical connexion between them. The exception consists in several bones (ribs) belonging to the right side of the chest (Plate 1). None of the

bones bore traces of a possible ritual cutting. Moreover, the fact that the pit was not entirely recovered cannot provide enough evidence in this direction. The morphological – taxonomical analysis of the human remains showed it was a 20–30 years old man[6].

Underneath the adobe and burning layer, most of the material was deposited in a 30 cm thick stratum (between –0,10 and 0,40 cm, measured from the point of identification). The artefact disposition inside the pit does not prove the existence of a certain pattern, the majority of them being concentrated in the south-western part, namely the 10 sickles and fragments of sickles, 2 of the 3 iron circles, a plough iron and a coulter, an iron bar with central orifice and a large sized iron nail. In the north-western area the third iron circle, a horse bit, an adze (wood carving tool), a small sized axe, a sickle and a bucket handle together with one of its attachment rings were crowded. Near them, on a 10 × 10 cm area, the jewellery and the clothing accessories were laid (a bead necklace, a small bronze circle, the chape of a bronze buckle, two different size silver buckles, a bronze pendant or lock-ring with two beads and some very small iron chain loops, very poorly preserved), under which, on a 25 × 12 cm area spread to the plough iron, carbonized archaeobotanical macro remains were found[7] (Plate 2). Another place where such remains were deposited (on a more reduced area) was beneath the middle part of the iron bar. Straight under these materials, in the south-western part of the complex, there were other two objects, namely a sickle and a dagger, the first on top of the second one (Plate 3). From that point down to the bottom of the pit there was a heavily burned layer of sand and carbonized seeds. The last object, found on the bottom of the pit, in the burned layer, was the winged axe, at the depth of –0,48 m, with the pit measuring a total depth of 0,54 m (Plate 4).

2. The artefacts

G27 appears to have been filled in four different phases, with respect to the materials found inside. Relying on the facts observed during the investigation the feature, we will present the archaeological material based on the context it belonged to[8].

Corresponding to the layer of heavily burned sand and seeds from the bottom of the pit, at –0,48 m, the iron winged axe (Plate 5/2) was put, more or less in the centre of the cavity. Dimensions: L.: 20,3 cm; Wdt. of the blade: 6,7 cm; Wgt.: 733 g.

The following objects were laid in a level consisting of brown-reddish soil, pigmented with charcoal and adobe. In the south-western side of the complex, at –0,30 m, a sickle and a dagger were found (Plate 3).

Dagger (Plate 5/1): made of iron, with two sharp edges. Unfortunately, because of its preservation state, the initial shape of the piece is impossible to reconstitute. However, the rectangular shaped section of the handle could be perceived, though only a small part of it was still noticeable. Dimensions: L.: 31,7 cm; L. of the handle (preserved): 3 cm; Wdt. of the blade: 4,8 cm; Wdt. of the handle: 1,9 cm; Wgt.: 201,6 g.

The most artefact-consistent level is the third one, containing no less than 29 pieces, grouped in the south-western area of the pit, at depths ranging from –0,10 m to –0,29 m (Plate 2).

Axe (Plate 5/3): made of iron, small sized, with rectangular section in the tail joining part. Dimensions: L.: 14,8 cm; Wdt.: 5,2cm; Wgt.: 499 g.

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[6] The study was made by our colleague Gál Szillárd, but yet still unpublished.

[7] The seeds were collected and studied, see CIUTĂ/CRIŞAN 2006. Therefore we would briefly mention the main information that the research achieved. The sample was made of 235 seeds belonging to the *Cerealia* family. From these, the majority (205) are of *Triticum dicoccum* type, while the rest represent the *Avena* species. Consequently, we have a seed offering or deposit, consisting of wheat and oat, most probably species cultivated by the community, as it was also suggested by their positioning in the proximity of the agricultural tools.

[8] The artefacts will be described in the natural order of the human actions that lead to their presence in the pit.

Coulter (Plate 6/1): iron made, with joining device consisting of two lateral wings (twisted around the wooden support it was fixed on) and reinforcement on the exterior side[9]. Dimensions: L.: 19,5cm; Wdt.: 8,7 cm; Wgt.: 670 g.

Plough iron (Plate 6/2): iron made, with a slight curvature of the active part. Dimensions: L.: 25,5 cm; Wdt.: 3,8 cm; Wgt.: 778 g.

Wheel sleeve (Plate 10/3): iron made, with rectangular section. Dimensions: ø: 17,5 cm; T.: 0,7 cm; Wgt.: 449 g.

Wheel sleeve (Plate 13/1): iron made, with rectangular section. Dimensions: ø: 17 cm; T.: 0,7 cm; Wgt.: 312 g.

Sleeve (Plate 10/2): iron made, with rectangular section. Dimensions: ø: 15,5 cm; T.: 0,5 cm; Wgt.: 393 g.

Bar (Plate 10/1): iron made, rectangular shape, relatively ellipsoidal section, slightly bent in the middle, where it has a rectangular orifice (1 × 0,5 cm). Dimensions: L.: 60,5 cm; Wdt.: 3,5 cm; Wgt.: 1 kg.

Spike (Plate 7/3): iron made, with circular shaped superior end and rectangular section. Dimensions: L.: 16,5 cm; ø of the head: 4,6 cm; Wdt. of the body: 1,2 cm; Wgt.: 260g.

Horse bit (Plate 7/5): with mouthpiece made of two iron segments, 8,2 cm long each and ø of the section measuring 0,7 cm and two bronze bit rings with ø of 7,6 cm each and circular section of 0,7 cm diameter. Unfortunately, the iron mouthpiece was badly preserved and thus impossible to recover.

Bucket handle (Plate 6/3): iron made, with only one of the two attachment rings, made of bronze. The dimensions of the handle: L = 31,5 cm; ø = 1 cm; Wgt = 138,1 g. The attachment rings were made of bronze to confer resistance to the tension point between the handle and the bucket itself. The single ring found has the following measures: L.: 4,1 cm; Wdt.: 2,3 cm; Wgt.: 12,8 g.

Adze(?) (Plate 7/1): iron made, with two lateral prominences on the rectangular section body, with ellipsoidal section in the front part and provided with two eroded teeth in the back part. Dimensions: L.: 24,4 cm; Maximum Wdt.: 7,5 cm; T. (in the middle): 0,6 cm; Wgt.: 375 g.

Sickle (Plate 7/2): iron made, well preserved, with rectangular section extended handle. Dimensions: L.: 30,5 cm; L. of the handle: 9,75 cm; Wdt. of the active part kept: 2,75 cm; Wdt. of the handle: 1,25 cm; Wgt.: 139,8 g.

Sickle (Plate 8/1): iron made, with a part of the wooden handle quite well preserved, attached to the piece with a rectangular shaped rivet. Dimensions: L.: 27 cm; L. of the handle: 6 cm; Wdt. of the active part kept: 1,6 cm; Wdt. of the handle: 2,37 cm; Wgt.: 65,2 g.

Sickle (Plate 8/2): iron made, well preserved, with rectangular section extended handle. Dimensions: L.: 38 cm; L. of the handle: 12,6 cm; Wdt. of the active part kept: 3,4 cm; Wdt. of the handle: 1,2 cm; Wgt.: 164,4 g.

Sickle (Plate 8/3): iron made, well preserved, with rectangular section extended handle. Dimensions: L.: 41,5 cm; L. of the handle: 11 cm; Wdt. of the active part kept: 3,7 cm; Wdt. of the handle: 1 cm; Wgt.: 227,1 g.

Sickle fragment (Plate 8/4): iron made, a part of the wooden handle was still preserved, having a rectangular section, fixed with three iron rivets, out of which only one was kept; from the other two marks of the rivets are visible. Dimensions: L. preserved: 19,1 cm; L. of the handle preserved: 6 cm; Wdt. of the active part: 3 cm; Wdt. of the handle: 1,8 cm; Wgt.: 58,5 g.

Sickle fragment (Plate 8/5): iron made, out of which only a fragment of the active part was recovered. Dimensions: L. preserved: 20,5 cm; Wdt. of the active part: 3,6 cm; Wgt.: 110,2 g.

Sickle fragment (Plate 9/1): iron made, with only a portion of the active part preserved. Dimensions: L. preserved: 24,5 cm; Wdt. of the active part: 2 cm; Wgt.: 51,8 g.

[9] Similar reinforcements are not applied only to ensure the resistance of the piece, but also to protect the wooden sole it was fixed on see MORARIU-POPA 1967, 218–219.

Sickle fragment (Plate 9/2): iron made, only a segment of the active part preserved, with rectangular section. Dimensions: L. preserved: 28 cm; L. of the handle preserved: 3,2 cm; Wdt. of the active part: 4,7 cm; Wdt. of the handle: 1,7 cm; Wgt.: 134 g.

Sickle fragment (Plate 9/3): iron made; a piece of the active part and of the handle kept, with rectangular section. Dimensions: L. preserved: 31,4 cm; L. of the handle preserved: 6,5 cm; Wdt. of the active part: 2,1 cm; Wdt. of the handle: 1,5 cm; Wgt.: 70,7 g.

Sickle fragment (Plate 9/4): iron made; segment of the active part. Dimensions: L.: 24,1 cm; Wdt. of the active part: 2 cm; Wgt.: 57,1 g.

Sickle fragment (Plate 9/5): iron made; segment of the active part. Dimensions: L. preserved: 21,5 cm; Wdt. of the active part: 1,5 cm; Wgt.: 48,7 g.

Sickle fragment (Plate 9/6): iron made; fragment of the active part. Dimensions: L. preserved: 13,6 cm; Wdt. of the active part: 2,5 cm; Wgt.: 43,3 g.

Bead necklace (Plate 12/1): deposited in the south-western part of the pit, above a layer containing carbonized seeds. It was made of 186 pieces of different shapes, dimensions and materials as it follows[10]:

a) 122 pink-colour coral beads (Plate 11/10) out of which only a number of 118 could be collected in a good state of conservation, the rest of them being broken into small pieces. They have cylindrical shape and various dimensions according to the constitution of the coral, having therefore Ls. between 0,02 cm – 0,08 cm, diameters between 0,02 cm – 0,05 cm and Wgts. from 0,01 g to 0,13g.

b) 40 blue, small sized glass beads (Plate 11/11), of which only 27 could be recovered unbroken. They have polyhedral shape, with Ls. ranging from 0,04 cm to 0,47 cm, Wdts. between 0,04 cm and 0,45 cm and Wgts. between 0,05 g and 0,16 g.

c) 2 red coloured small sized amber beads (Plate 11/9) with circular shape, of which only one was retrieved unbroken. Dimensions: ø: 0,75 cm; T.: 0,35 cm; Wgt.: 0,2 g.

d) 2 sea shell beads (Plate 11/6–7), with more or less rectangular shape and white-yellowish colour. They were most probably made of mollusk shell from the *Cypraeidae* family. Dimensions: the first one (Plate 11/6) has L.: 0,75 cm; Wdt.: 0,75 cm; Wgt.: 0,7 g. The second one (Plate 11/7) has L.: 1 cm; Wdt.: 0,9 cm and Wgt.: 0,8 cm.

e) 2 medium size carnelian (microcrystalline variant of the chalcedony) beads (Plate 11/12–13), of polyhedral shape obtained through faceting. They have similar proportions. The first one (Plate 11/12) has: L.: 1 cm; Wdt.: 0,7 cm; T.: 0,58 cm and Wgt.: 0,8 g. The second one (Plate 11/13) has: L.: 1 cm; Wdt.: 0,8 cm; T.: 0,52 cm and Wgt.: 0,8g.

f) 1 glass bead (Plate 11/1): blue-indigo colour, with white, yellow and light blue insertions in the paste. It has a relatively bitronconic shape with the dimensions: L.: 1,5 cm; ø: 2 cm; Wgt.: 5,8 g.

g) 1 black glass bead (Plate 11/2), with spherical flattened form. It was decorated with two white parallel lines, superposed by two zigzag lines of yellow and respectively red colours. Dimensions: ø: 1,7 cm; T.: 1,2 cm; Wgt.: 5,4 g.

h) 2 green glass beads (Plate 11/3), with spherical flattened form. A single piece of the two could be collected undamaged. They have a painted decoration, consisting of a yellow zigzag line enclosed by two red colour spiral lines. Dimensions: ø: 1,7 cm; T.: 1,1 cm; Wgt.: 4,2 g.

i) 1 blue-indigo bead (Plate 11/4), with spherical flattened shape. It has no decoration and the following dimensions: ø: 2 cm; T.: 1,6 cm; Wgt.: 9,4 g.

j) 1 opal bead, semi-opaque having a yellowish colour (Plate 11/5). It has an approximately bitronconic shape and flattened edges. It has no decoration. Dimensions: L.: 1,8 cm; ø: 2,2 cm; Wgt.: 10,7 g.

[10] We would like to thank Prof. Dr. Corina Ionescu, head of the Mineralogy Department from the Biology and Geology Faculty, "Babeş-Bolyai" University from Cluj-Napoca, for the support in the accurate identification of the raw materials the beads were made of.

k) 1 white glass bead, transparent (Plate 11/14). It has circular flattened shape, no decoration and the following dimensions: ø: 1,8 cm; T.: 0,7 cm; Wgt.: 2,5 cm.

l) 1 red amber bead (Plate 11/8), disc-like shape. Dimensions: ø: 3,7 cm; T.: 0,9 cm; Wgt.: 8,9 cm.

Pendant or lock-ring (Plate 12/5): made of a bronze wire having 0,13 cm diameter; it had a simple closing system through twirling the two ends of the wire one around the other. It had two beads strung on it, the first one was made of pink-colour coral (L.: 2 cm; ø: 0,73 cm) and the second one of green glass paste, with hexagonal section (L.: 0,77 cm; ø: 0,7 cm). The entire piece weighs 1,6 g.

Bronze circle (Plate 12/6), made by casting, with flattened disc – like shape, having the following dimensions: ø: 1,5 cm; Wgt.: 2,89 g.

In the same pile of objects, a few iron made small rings were found, tied to one another in a non-uniform mass of rust. Only 6 such pieces could be distinguished. Unfortunately due to an advanced state of corrosion, it was impossible to save any of them.

Silver buckle (Plate 12/2) having mobile rectangular frame with a single rivet. It has 875 ‰ metal purity. The chape has a circular shape, with a thinner fragment where it attaches to the frame; it is thicker in the opposite side. The diameter of the prong grows sensibly from the tip to the frame; approximately in the middle it has a very subtle prominence and it bends over the chape. Dimensions: L.: 5,2 cm; Wgt.: 30,6 cm.

Silver buckle (Plate 12/3) with similar shape to the previous one, having different dimensions and no frame. The prong had the same characteristics like the previously described piece. Originally, at the moment of discovery, the prong still kept a very small textile fragment in the thicker part and also iron oxides around the mid area. The fabric fragment was studied before the cleaning of the object, which resulted in the loss of the textile[11]. Dimensions: ø of the chape: 0,13 cm; L. of the prong: 1,9 cm. Wgt.: 3,31 g.

Bronze chape (Plate 12/4) from a buckle, similar to the already described ones. This too is thickened in the frame part, which was not deposited in the context. Dimensions: ø of the chape: 1,46 cm; Wgt.: 2,47 g.

In the level above the burned adobe, identified between –0,4 cm / –0,10 cm, that seems to seal the artefacts underneath it and which is practically the last human intervention in G27 (Plate 1), together with human and animal bones, a lance head was deposited (Plate 5/4). Inside the shaft mounting hole of the artefact and near it fragments of wood belonging to the shaft were discovered. The original rather triangular form of the blade, with rhombic section was greatly affected by the corrosion caused by the humic acids. The lance head was made of iron; its tubular part (the attachment orifice) was manufactured from an iron sheet, enfolded around the shaft and fixed with iron rivets. One of the rivets has been preserved, while at least another one must have been used not only for fixing the shaft, but also for keeping together the two edges of the iron sheet. Dimensions: L.: 25,2 cm; L. of the blade: 15,8 cm; Wdt. of the blade: 3,2 cm; L. of the tubular part: 9,4 cm; ø of the tubular part: 2,2 cm; Wgt.: 151,1 g.

3. Typology and analogies/functional categories of the artefacts

The diverse range of functionalities of these artefacts renders difficult their interpretation as a whole. Although, we believe that a detailed approach on each of them, both typologically and functionally could be decisive for understanding the reasons leading to their association in the same context.

[11] It is a textile fragment made of natural fibres of Liberian type flax, 0,3mm thick, in cloth contexture. We would like to thank Mrs. Doina Boroş, Chemist-Preserver at the National History Museum of Transylvania Cluj-Napoca, Preservation Laboratory, see also BOROŞ/VAJDA 2008, 321.

As far as the weaponry is concerned, its presence in this kind of circumstance and even the objects themselves has analogies in the Germanic milieu, where they are quite frequent. In the Przeworsk area for instance, the lance heads represent 83% of the types of weapons found in the warrior graves, while in the rest of the cases the axes have a significant place[12]. The lance head (Plate 5/4) fits into X type shape classification belonging to the Polish researcher P. Kaczanowski, with numerous analogies in the Przeworsk culture[13], where it was dated in the B_2-C_{1b} phases in the chronology of the European *barbaricum*[14]. The early dating provided by Kaczanowski for this lance type is basically a Przeworsk culture internal regional framing. However, similar pieces can sometimes be found in the Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov milieu, where they have been assigned to the Kokowski 1 type[15] or even for the D1 chronological segment[16], like for instance in the Mezőszemere, Kismari-Fenék necropolis[17]. All of these situations have been explained as influences coming especially from the northern Germanic world, respectively the Przeworsk culture.

Belonging to the same functional category there is the dagger (Plate 5/1) found in the pit in association with a sickle. Even though, this very combination, could suggest other possible interpretations, the option of considering this artefact a weapon relies on the typological features of the object, which easily classifies it as such. More or less identical models were documented in the Mezőszemere, Kismari-Fenék necropolis, where the researchers suggest an infiltration of Germanic origin, also shown by the fact that this particular dagger type becomes wide spread beginning with the 4th century[18].

From the functional perspective, a particular question arisen regarding the interpretation of the two axes: were they used simply as tools or did they accomplish also the role of weapons? As far as the shape is concerned, the smaller axe (Plate 5/3) could fit into the Kieferling 2.02/A.b.01 type[19], corresponding to the C_3-D_1 interval, but with known prototypes from the C_2 phase. It has analogies in the Germanic background from the central and northern Europe, like for example at Leśnica or Dobrodzień[20]. In the typological scheme proposed by M. Kazanski, this shape belongs to the Kompanijcy/Böhme IIA[21] type, with origins in the western area of the continent, while in the Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov culture it is mainly spread in the surroundings of the Black Sea[22]. As mentioned earlier, the opinions differ on the main utility of these objects, probably because they were found both in settlements, where they were seen as tools and in warrior tombs. Consequently, their function was established according

12 KACZANOWSKI 1995, 47.

13 DROBEJAR/PEŠKA 1994.

14 KACZANOWSKI 1995, 49; 52, Tabela 1; 55–56, Tabl. I-II; 64, Tabl. X/4–5. For general guide marks of the chronology used in the European *barbaricum* see for instance GODŁOWSKI 1970; TEJRAL 1988; TEJRAL 1992; TEJRAL 1997, and for the synchronisation of the discoveries from Romania to the above mentioned system see HARHOIU 1990; HARHOIU 1998; HARHOIU/BALTAG 2006.

15 KOKOWSKI 1993, 337. Close analogies for lance presence in the graves we find in a series of Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov sites like the ones from Lețcani see BLOŞIU 1975, 236; 260, Fig. 23/5; 276, Fig. 39/1; Bârlad – Valea Seacă see PALADE 2004, 88; 207; 404, Fig. 75/7; Chilieni see GÁLL 2005; Târgu Mureş see KOVÁCS 1915, 230, Fig. 2; 288, Fig. 46; 293, Fig. 52 or Reci see SZEKELY 1969, 53, Fig. 3/4.

16 ŠČUKIN/KAZANSKI/SHAROV 2006, 142; Fig. 122.

17 ÁCS/VADAY 2003, 132, kép. 8/1. In this case, with respect to the inner chronology of the site, such objects have been ascribed to the II/B group see VADAY/DOMBORÓCZKI 2001, 99; 199, Abb. 77; 200, Abb. 78. A good analogy for this piece comes from M37 see VADAY/DOMBORÓCZKI 2001, 18; 152, Abb. 26/3.

18 VADAY/DOMBORÓCZKI 2001, 93–94.

19 KIEFERLING 1994, 337, Abb. 2.

20 KIEFERLING 1994, 339.

21 KAZANSKI 1994, 457, Fig. 8.

22 KAZANSKI 1994, 456–458; 464.

to the context of the discovery[23]. Although the majority of the finds coming from Transylvania and in the nearby territories belong to the Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov cultural context, their presence is considered to have influences from the northern Germanic milieu. In the debate regarding the association of elements characteristic to this Germanic world, we find grave number 86 from Kompanijcy illustrative with its inventory consisting of an axe, similar to the one from Ernei, a lance head, a wooden bucket and a brooch with semicircular headplate and rhombic footplate. This particular combination has determined the researchers to date the tomb at the end of the 4th century and the beginning of the 5th. This proves that, during the Hunnic epoch, in the Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov milieu the type of weaponry used was more or less the same one known for the previous period[24].

The second axe (Plate 5/2) could fit into the Kieferling 4.08 – 10/A.a.05 class[25]; the pieces from group number 4 are believed to come from the Elbe area, representing common features of the early migration epoch in that region[26]. In the classification developed by M. Kazanski, this artefact would be a variant of the Voronov/Šenkao[27] type, with a large dating from the Roman epoch to the early medieval period[28], baring a hypothetical Roman origin[29]. Once more, when discussing its functionality, the opinions are contradictory. If initially (as implied by some authors) these objects were manufactured to be used especially in wood processing[30], it results that after reaching the barbarian milieu, their destination radically changed as they become part of the military offensive equipment, as indicated by discoveries from graves, where they are associated with other military accessories[31]. Comparable artefacts were also retrieved from the warrior graves as early as the D_1 horizon in north-western Russia, where their presence is explained through influences if not even an effective Germanic movement in the region[32], explanation likely of being inferred at least as study hypothesis over the Transylvanian area.

The best represented category of objects is undoubtedly the agricultural one: the coulter, the plough iron, the adze (?) and the sickles.

The coulter (Plate 6/1) could fit into the Roman type symmetrical coulter category, with attachment wings[33], corresponding to Henning A2[34] or Nikitina 7[35] types. Suitable analogies come

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[23] Similar axes were found in settlements like Budeşti (Rep. Moldova) see VORNIC 2006, 187; 347, Fig. 39/10; Pietroasele see DIACONU ET ALII 1977, Fig. 17/1; Iaşi – "Nicolina" see IONIȚĂ 1985, 70; Bârlad – Valea Seacă see PALADE 2004, 205, while from the graves we have examples like Târgşorul Vechi see DIACONU 1965, 31; Fântânele – "Rât" see MARINESCU/GAIU 1989, 131, 134; GAIU 1999a, 191, Pl. LV/6; HARHOIU 1998, Taf. LXXXVI/8–8; Ciumbrud see DANKANITS/FERENCZI 1959, 612, Fig. 7; 613, Fig. 8; Hăneşti see ZAHARIA/ZAHARIA/ŞOVAN 1993, 152; 159, Fig. 6/8. For a list of the discovery points for similar artefacts; see also KAZANSKI 1994, 482–485, Annexe 5.

[24] KAZANSKI 1991, 68–70; KAZANSKI 1992, 196; 221, Fig. 4/25–34; KOKOWSKI 1993, 337–339; 348, Fig. 4/f1; ŠČUKIN/KAZANSKI/SHAROV 2006, 142.

[25] KIEFERLING 1994, 377, Abb. 2.

[26] KIEFERLING 1994, 339.

[27] KAZANSKI 1994, 459, Fig. 9.

[28] Typologically alike pieces, respectively with the two-winged sleeve and prominently curved blade are known in a quite broad time frame, starting form the Roman epoch. See, for instance, PIETSCH 1983, 14 or PROTASE/GAIU/MARINESCU 1997, Pl. LXIV/1–3 and until the early medieval epoch and even later; see for this HOREDT 1958, 82, Fig. 17/5; 102; DUMITROAIA 1985, 528–529; 531–532, Fig. 1–2; POLUS 2008, 46, nr. 189.

[29] KAZANSKI 1994, 458–459; 464; GOMOLKA-FUCHS 2007, 293.

[30] PIETSCH 1983; KAZANSKI 1991, 52; GOMOLKA-FUCHS 2007, 293; Tafel 20, nr. 1728.

[31] KAZANSKI 1994, 429; 482–485, Annexe 5; KIEFERLING 1994.

[32] KORGOPOLTSEV/SCHUKIN 2006, 290–292; close analogies come from the barrow nr. 6 from Taurapilas see 293, nr. 6 or from the grave from Cigel'nya see 293, nr. 14.

[33] EDROIU/GYULAI 1965, 312–314, note 3; BUTURĂ 1978, 145; IONIȚĂ 1994, 110.

[34] HENNING 1987, 49; 43, Abb. 13/A2.

[35] NIKITINA 2006, 44, Fig. 3/7.

for instance from a tool deposit from Ghidici (Dolj county) dated in the 4th century[36]. Starting from the analysis of the morphologic characteristics of these artefacts, it has been concluded that the objects belonging to this class, with dimensions that exceed 20 cm and with symmetrical shape would be common to the 3rd–4th centuries. For a more accurate dating, it is essential to associate them with clearly datable artefacts[37]. Based on the dissemination of these coulters in Europe, it was sustained that because of their greater number in the western area of the Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov culture, they must have arrived there through Roman influences[38].

The plough iron (Plate 6/2) could belong to the Henning E1 variant[39] finding many analogies mainly in the 3rd – 4th centuries, but in the early medieval period as well[40].

We find it important to draw attention to the combination between the type of coulter and the type of plough iron identified in this complex, a situation previously met, in which cases a dating in the transition period from the Late Antiquity to the early Middle Ages was agreed upon[41]. It upholds an even greater importance since we can put up the hypothesis according to which the main parts of the plough were deposited in this context. The way the objects that actually belong to the agricultural tools category look as if arranged, together with the cereals, lead us to the conclusion that the two sleeves laid here together with the iron spike as well as the long bar could have belonged to the same device, deposited in the complex as symbolic elements which could be interpreted as *pars pro toto* of a plough. This could help understanding the function of the other elements. The two similar circular pieces could be the sleeves of two wheels, while the metal bar, the spike and the third smaller sleeve could be seen as components of the wooden frame of the plough, maybe of the plough shaft[42].

From this perspective, we would like to enlarge upon agriculture in general and the tools in use in the early medieval epoch in particular. We need to stop first at the premises that lead to the appearance and evolution of the plough[43]. As reported to the definition and structure of the plough, we notice that it is mainly characterized by the operations involved and not necessarily by its shape, much less important than its structure[44]. Though in this case we have a complex tool, that has both the coulter and the plough iron[45], we lack the very element that defines a plough, the mouldboard that turns the furrow, operation that differentiates the plough from the *aratrum*[46]. In this case, given the archaeological data presented above, we consider that our tool is actually a symmetrical *aratrum* with socket rod, a device to which wheels could be attached, in order to improve its results; these, according to the dimensions of the iron, were only average[47], such tools being already familiar in the Roman times[48]. Nonetheless, we cannot completely

[36] HENNING 1987, 125, Tafel 18/12. For a discovery list in the Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov area see IONIȚĂ 1994, 114–116 and 114, Abb. 1.

[37] HENNING 1987, 49–57.

[38] IONIȚĂ 1994, 110–113.

[39] HENNING 1987, 61; 43, Abb. 13/E1.

[40] HENNING 1987, 62; Tafel 30–31.

[41] HENNING 1987, 65.

[42] In connection to the plough components see LONDON 1825; SMITH 1843, 79–80; AITKEN 1956; EDROIU/GYULAI 1965; MORARU-POPA 1967; DUNĂRE 1972, 124–126; DUNĂRE 1973, 609–613; TUDOR 1976, 188–189; BUTURĂ 1978, 148–150; WACHER 2002, 490–491.

[43] EDROIU/GYULAI 1965, 308; DUNĂRE 1963, 180–181.

[44] EDROIU/GYULAI 1965, 309; BUTURĂ 1978, 145.

[45] EDROIU/GYULAI 1965, 312.

[46] KUDRANÁČ 1961, 226; MANNING 1964, 64; EDROIU/GYULAI 1965, 309; GLODARIU/CÂMPEANU 1966, 28; NEAMȚU 1966, 303; MORARIU-POPA 1967, 215; DUNĂRE 1972, 120; BUTURĂ 1978, 146.

[47] EDROIU/GYULAI 1965, 312; NEAMȚU 1966, 299–300; 300, Fig. 5/1–2.

[48] MANNING 1964, 63–64 such pieces are fairly frequent in the tool deposits documented for the middle of the 4th century in Britannia; DUNĂRE 1973, 610, note 34.

leave out the possible existence of a wooden detachable mouldboard, having examples of this kind in the Roman world. This being the case, we could talk about a symmetrical plough with detachable mouldboard[49]. There is though a critical point of view regarding these typological models, coming from anthropologists and ethnographers, who assert that the coulter and its shape are not the main classifying element of the ploughs[50]. There are known cases in which the same type of coulter can be assembled to different types of ploughs. The same critical attitude concerns some poor attempts at reconstructing a plough made by archaeologists, lacking the basic knowledge of ethnography[51].

The problem of the existence of the *aratrum* and of the wheeled plough in the early medieval times is as much significant as controversial. Even if such tools were already known in the Roman period[52], some scholars think that an innovation of this kind could not have appeared earlier than the early medieval and medieval era, when the actual plough would come into use. This is sustained firstly by the emergence of the asymmetrical coulter and secondly by literary sources or representations[53], argumentation obviously based on the idea of a cultural regress due to the absence of Roman civilization in certain areas following the end of the 3rd century. In these circumstances, we sustain that the introduction of the wheel plough cannot be necessarily linked to a barbarian innovation, but rather to a Roman intervention, especially since these devices are already familiar in the late Roman Empire[54]. Apart from improving the work process, the wheels had a functional role directly linked to an increase in the stability of the plough iron. The wheels only appear when the tools have both a coulter and a knife[55], this latter one being already in use in the Roman era, when it is also mentioned in the written sources[56] and is used on a large scale in Late Antiquity[57].

The sickles can be classified into three categories: Henning H1 type[58] (Pl. 8/1–3; 11/2–3), Henning H2 type[59] (Pl. 7/2) and Henning H6 type[60] (Pl. 8/4). The pieces left outside the classification were not fit for an exact description, because of their poor preservation state.

[49] EDROIU/GYULAI 1965, 342–343. True asymmetrical ploughs are known in the Roman province Britannia in the late antiquity see MANNING 1964, 65.

[50] We know from written sources that in the Roman epoch the classification of ploughs was based on different criteria than the typological ones, used by the archaeologists and even from those times tools like this were in use see LONDON 1825, 23; CANARACHE 1950, 107; AITKEN 1956; MANNING 1964, 54–55; GLODARIU/CÂMPEANU 1966, 26; IONIȚĂ 1966, 217–218; DUNĂRE 1972, 119; WACHER 2002, 489–491.

[51] GLODARIU/CÂMPEANU 1966, 26; MORARU-POPA 1967, 213–214.

[52] We refer especially to the descriptions offered by ancient authors who mention a sort of mouldboard that they call *aureas*, *tabellae* or *tabullae* but their presence does not lead to the automatic interpretation of these objects as true ploughs, see MANNING 1964, 56; GLODARIU/CÂMPEANU 1966, 28; MORARIU-POPA 1967, 219; BUTURĂ 1978, 145; BOWMAN/GARNSEY/RATHBONE 2000, 763; they seem to have been detachable see AITKEN 1956, 101–102, and the existence of the wheeled *aratrum* (*caruca*), considered as an invention from "*Raetia Galliae*" see LONDON 1825, 24; SMITH 1843, 80; KUDRÁČ 1961, 227; MANNING 1964, 56–57; GLODARIU/CÂMPEANU 1966, 28; MORARIU-POPA 1967, 219; PETIT 1976, 219; 345, note 221; BUTURĂ 1978, 145; BOWMAN/GARNSEY/RATHBONE 2000, 763.

[53] EDROIU/GYULAI 1965, 320; MORARIU-POPA 1967, 219; POSTAN 1973, 17–18; TUDOR 1976, 189; BUTURĂ 1978, 146; CAMERON/GARNSEY 1998, 285; BOWDEN/LAVAN/MACHADO 2004, 16.

[54] From this perspective, an interesting comment is that of a certain Servius, who mistakenly commented and interpreted Vergilius and therefore provides us indirectly with information about the wheeled *aratrum* for the last part of the 4th century: "[…] *dixit propter morem provinciae suae, in qua aratra habet rotas, quibus iuvantur* […]" see MANNING 1964, 65.

[55] SMITH 1843, 80; NEAMȚU 1966, 303; MORARIU-POPA 1967, 220.

[56] MANNING 1964, 62–63; MORARIU-POPA 1967, 216.

[57] BOWDEN/LAVAN/MACHADO 2004, 15.

[58] HENNING 1987, 43, Abb. 13/H1; Taf. 38–39.

[59] HENNING 1987, 43, Abb. 13/H2; Taf. 40–41.

[60] HENNING 1987, 43, Abb. 13/H6; Taf. 42.

The chronology of these three types cannot be a precise one, similar shapes and sizes being in use along the entire 1st millennium and their dating could thus be established with the aid of the objects they were found together with[61]. Agricultural occupations are very well attested in this time sequence, as indicated by the discoveries of typical artefacts like the ones from Bârlad – Valea Seacă[62] or Brateiu[63] for instance.

From the wood carving tool category, an adze (wood carving tool) was also identified in G27 (Pl. 7/1), for which, up to this moment, we could not find analogies in the sites belonging to the early migration period. In any case, we notice the presence of other types of tools, associated to the wood processing occupation in the site from Brateiu[64].

The bucket to the elements discovered in the pit belonged could be also categorized as a tool (Pl. 7/3). It typologically fits the Przeworsk[65] specific discoveries, and particularly the Dobrodzień[66] group, which is believed to be a local variant of the Przeworsk aspect[67]. Analogies are quite rare, coming from sites like Mezőszemere, Kismari-Fenék[68], Kompanijcy[69] or Ciumbrud[70], Archiud, Fântânele and Ocnița "Pe dric"[71], in the Transylvanian region. Chronologically, the occurrence of features with similar objects was placed in the D_1 segment, and explained through a series of ethnical structure changes, the entire chronological sequence being marked by an extensive process of acculturation[72].

Near the bucket handle, a horse bit was found, with two bit rings and an iron made mouthpiece (Pl. 7/4–5). Out of the few analogies found, we would like to only mention the one object found in dwelling number 1, from the Černjachov settlement in Lepesovka[73].

The third functional category from G27 is represented by the jewellery and clothing accessories, from the level beneath the adobe, grouped in the western side of the complex, close to the agricultural tools and to the carbonized seeds.

The rectangular frame silver buckle (Pl. 12/2) is one of the most important artefacts from the ritual pit, from the chronological standpoint. Analogies are represented by the Kazanski/Legoux 87[74], Tejral 2[75] or Ajbabin/Chajredinova 3[76] types, generally dated at the end of the 4th – beginning of the 5th centuries, discovered on a large area in Europe, from the Crimea region to the Middle Danube area[77]. In Transylvania, the buckle can be compared to the one found in the famous hoard from Valea Strâmbă, interpreted by some scholars in connection to the

61 HENNING 1987, 86–91.

62 PALADE 2004, 46; 163; 205; 250, Fig. 3/6.

63 BÂRZU 1973, 224.

64 Pieces like this appeared in complexes 9, 34, 84, 87, 95, 117 of the site see BÂRZU 1973.

65 DROBEJAR/PEŠKA 1994, 280, Abb. 6/10.

66 For analogies see SZYDŁOWSKI 1977, 105, Abb. 4; 106, Abb. 5.

67 SZYDŁOWSKI 1977, 128.

68 VADAY/DOMBORÓCZKI 2001, 203, Abb. 81.

69 KAZANSKI 1991, 68–70; KAZANSKI 1992, 196; 221, Fig. 4/25–34.

70 DANKANITS/FERENCZI 1959, 612, Fig. 7; 613, Fig. 8.

71 HOREDT 1982, 106.

72 HOREDT 1982; TEJRAN 1986; HARHOIU 1990, 11; HARHOIU 1999, 63; TEJRAL 2000; OPREANU 2002.

73 TIKHANOVA ET ALII 1999, 98; 97, Fig. 5/5.

74 KAZANSKI/LEGOUX 1988, 35; 44–47, Tableau 1–2; 52, Pl. V/86.

75 TEJRAL 1997, 338.

76 AJBABIN/CHAJREDINOVA 2009, 36; 39, Abb. 21/1; 43–48, Abb. 25.

77 KUBITSCHEK 1911; KOVÁCS 1912, 361; 326, Fig. 107/2; SZÉKELY 1945; BARAN ET ALII 1985, 102, Fig. 18/37; KAZANSKI 1996, 116, Fig. 7/18; AJBABIN/KHAIRÉDINOVA 1997, 77–78, nr. cat. 120; TEJRAL 1997, Abb. 17/13–15; HARHOIU 1998, Taf. XXXVIII/8; ISTVÁNOVITS/KULCSÁR 1999, 77, Fig. 8/5; AJBABIN/KHAIREDINOVA 2001, 256, Fig. 6/8, 12, 17; 264; KAZAN0SKI 2001, 400, Fig. 9/15; AJBABIN/CHAJREDINOVA 2009, 36; 39, Abb. 21/1; 43–48, Abb. 25.

arrival of the Huns which presumably would have lead to the dissolution of the Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov culture[78]. However, there are some researchers who state that the hoard should be dated later, more precisely in the D_1 phase, a more convincing hypothesis from our perspective. The critical argument is that the coins are only able to provide a *terminus post quem* for a more accurate dating of the discovery, conclusion supported by the rest of the artefacts and the analogies they have[79]. The other two buckles (or fragments of buckles) (Pl. 12/3–4) have a dating largely involving the last part of the 4th century and the beginning of the subsequent one. At the distribution level, they are to be found all over the European continent[80].

The necklace (Pl. 12/1) is an exceptional artefact, not only because of its presence in itself in this kind of complex, but also because of the combination of different beads. For a more efficient presentation and systematization of the information referring to this discovery, we choose the typological criteria as the best way of describing the pieces.

The blue-indigo bead with coloured insertions in the fabric (Pl. 11/1) fits into the XX group, nr. 198e in M. Tempelmann-Mączyńska's[81] classification or nr. 34 Kazanski/Mastykova type, elaborated for the Viminacium necropolis[82], with a later dating beginning with the C_{1b}-C_2 phases, when they reach their uttermost dissemination and utilization goes on until the middle of the 5th century[83]. At the same time, this artefact is extremely interesting due to its production technique, which makes it similar to the *mille fiori* beads. Analogies for them are known from sites like the ones in Budeşti[84], Izvoare[85] or Viminacium, where they were linked to elements pertaining to the late Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov manifestations.

The black coloured glass bead (Plate 11/2), with spherical flattened form, decorated with two white parallel lines, superposed by two zigzag lines of yellow and respectively red colours and the 2 green coloured glass beads (Plate 13/3), with spherical flattened form, with painted decoration, consisting of a yellow zigzag line enclosed by two red coloured spiral lines can be introduced in the Tempelmann-Mączyńska XXII type, the first one belonging to the 300–301 group, and the second one finding parallels in the 294c[86] group, or Bloşiu A2[87] or Vornic 1c[88] types. Some of the variants are widely spread and though they emerge in the C_{1b}-C_2 phases, the majority are documented in the early migration period[89]. There are two hypotheses regarding their origin: one of them sustains that they appeared in the Western Roman Empire, and later on penetrated the Germanic milieu of central Europe and the second one places them originally in Middle Danube area *barbaricum*[90]. It is relevant enough in this context that these artefacts reach the present-day region of Romania through Germanic mediation. The zigzag painted beads are relatively common in the Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov culture[91], but also

[78] HARHOIU 1990, 169; HARHOIU 1999, 61; BÓNA 2002, 82.

[79] KAZANSKI 1992, 195; TEJRAL 1997, 331; GÁLL 2005a.

[80] AJBABIN 1984, 105, Fig. 1; 127, Fig. 5; BARAN ET ALII 1985, 102, Fig. 18/36; KAZANSKI 1992, 196; AJBABIN/KHAIREDINOVA 2001, 255–259; 256, Fig. 6/20–21; 263–264; AJBABIN/CHAJREDINOVA 2009, 43–48, Abb. 25.

[81] TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, 47–48.

[82] IVANIŠEVIĆ/KAZANSKI/MASTYKOVA 2006, 73; Fig. 67/53–54.

[83] TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, 94–95, Tabelle 8; IVANIŠEVIĆ/KAZANSKI/MASTYKOVA 2006, 73–76.

[84] The artefacts identified here come from grave M206, see VORNIC 2006, 114; 402, Fig. 94/1–2 and the corresponding necropolis level from the stratigraphy see VORNIC 2006, 148; 423, Fig. 39/10.

[85] It comes from a damaged grave, see VULPE 1957, 301; 302, Fig. 321/1.

[86] TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, 52–58.

[87] BLOŞIU 1975, 216.

[88] VORNIC 2006, 208.

[89] TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, 55–56; 94–95, Tabelle 8; KAZANSKI/MASTYKOVA 2003, 156.

[90] SCHULZE 1978; TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, 55–56; KAZANSKI/MASTYKOVA 2003, 158.

[91] MITREA/PREDA 1966, 30; 239, Fig. 58/3; DIACONU 1970, Fig. 17; BARAN ET ALII 1985, 55, Fig. 10/28.

in late Roman contexts[92], where the general dating involves the second half of the 4th century and the first part of the successive one[93].

The blue-indigo glass bead (Pl. 11/4) corresponds to the Tempelmann-Mączyńska I group, variant 14[94], with numerous analogies mainly in the Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov[95] area. We can make no observation on the subject of the dating, because it is generously represented both geographically and chronologically[96].

Similar arguments can be brought up for the opal bead (Pl. 11/5), classifiable into the type Tempelmann-Mączyńska VI, variant 79. Concerning the chronology, we can notice a longer period of functioning in the B2 segment, until the early migration period[97].

Remarkable appears to be the presence of the coral beads (Pl. 11/10) and the sea shell ones (Pl. 11/6–7). Their spreading area is focused around the Black Sea and their dating is based upon the context of discovery. Usually, they are a familiar presence in the Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov culture in the thoroughly investigated sites[98], while their presence in our context can pinpoint some influences and possible connections with that area.

Another extraordinary piece is the large size amber bead (Pl. 11/8) which probably occupied a central place in the necklace. Analogous beads were assigned to the M. Tempelmann-Mączyńska XXX group, variant 389[99]. Strict observation concerning the dating and the territorial spread lack any strong argumentation. Nevertheless, it is supposed that the commencement of the Hunnic epoch coincides more or less with a relatively large scale distribution of the necklaces in which large dimensions amber beads can be admired[100].

Amber was used for another two smaller beads (Pl. 11/9), placed in the Tempelmann-Mączyńska III group, variant 54[101]. There are no significant notes concerning neither the chronological nor the cultural aspects, given that such amber objects were the result of mass production most probably in the Baltic Sea area and then dispersed in the entire Europe[102].

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92 Such analogies come from the late roman necropolis in Ságvár see BURGER 1966, 214, Fig. 107/184.

93 Analogies for the Pl. 13/2 exemplar come from sites like the ones from Pietroasele in M1/1981 dated at the beginning of the 5th century with the help of the brooch with semicircular headplate and rhombic footplate discovered there see DIACONU 1994, 131, Fig. 2/5, Budeşti where a comparable artefact comes from the necropolis' level without a particular context of discovery see VORNIC 2006, 148; 423, Fig. 115/30 or Leţcani in M36, where it is associated with a similar brooch see BLOŞIU 1975, 237; 267, Fig. 30/8. For the Pl. 13/3 piece we find parallels at Târgşoru Vechi in M181 see DIACONU 1965, 262, Pl. CXII/5 or Mihălăşeni see ŞOVAN 2005, 148; Pl. 278/32.

94 TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, 27–29.

95 For example the necropolis from Târgşoru Vechi see DIACONU 1965, Pl. CXXXVIII/3.

96 TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, 94–95, Tabelle 8.

97 TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, 32; 94–95, Tabelle 8.

98 Sea shell beads were found for instance in the Budeşti cemetery in M293 see VORNIC 2006, 129; 409, Fig. 101/23–33, Lermontovskaja Skala see KAZANSKI 2001, 401, Fig. 10/7; Mihălăşeni in M114 and M297 see ŞOVAN 2005, 159; 44; 94; Pl. 61A/43–45; Pl. 164/145; Bârlad – Valea Seacă in graves 390 and 409 for example see PALADE 2004, 133–134; 601, Fig. 238/4; 608, Fig. 243/8. For coral beads we find analogies at Kosanovo in M29–1961see PETRAUSKAS 2003, 320–321; Abb. 50/3–5; Djurso in M479 see KAZANSKI 2001, 395, Fig. 5/32; Spanţov in M63 see MITREA/PREDA 1966, 40; 263, Fig. 87, Independenţa in M17 and M9 see MITREA/PREDA 1966, 72; 74; 333, Fig. 193/6; Alexandru Odobescu in M17 and M18 see MITREA/PREDA 1966, 100–101; Târgşoru Vechi see DIACONU 1965, 109; Pl. CXVI/19; Lunca in M13 see DRAGOMIR 2001, 48–49; 109; 170, Fig. 27/17; Mihălăşeni where they were placed in the 16th type, see ŞOVAN 2005, 159; Bârlad – Valea Seacă in M114 or M295 for example see PALADE 2004, 117; 125; 533, Fig. 179/12; 556, Fig. 206/19; Gherăseni in M66 see CONSTANTINESCU 1994, 109; 114, Fig. 3/14–16; Callatis see PREDA 1980, 60; 180/Pl. L/M2.2; 190, Pl. LX/8; 190, Pl. LXVIII/M170; Histria in M23 see NUBAR 1971, 211; 212, Fig. 9/1 or in the cemetery from Viminacium, where they were assigned to the 26th type, see IVANIŠEVIĆ/KAZANSKI/MASTYKOVA 2006, 71, Fig. 66/40–41.

99 TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, 65–67.

100 KAZANSKI/MASTYKOVA 2003, 164; ŠČUKIN/KAZANSKI/SHAROV 2006, 114.

101 TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, 31.

102 MASTYKOVA 2001, 345; KAZANSKI/MASTYKOVA 2003, 167.

We find analogies in the context of the same Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov culture for this chronological sequence, from sites on the nowadays territory of Romania, like for example Lunca[103], Mihălăşeni[104] or Izvoare[105].

The polyhedral carnelian beads (Pl. 11/12–13) and the tiny blue glass beads (Pl. 11/11) are both frequently met in the Germanic area, particularly in the Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov contexts[106].

Last, but not least, there is the translucent white glass bead found in the M. Tempelmann-Mączyńska II group, variant 29, deprived of chronological relevance, since it has a very large dating[107].

Together with the collar and the clothing accessories, another artefact (Pl. 12/5) was found. It was considered a lock-ring[108] or a pendant[109]; this particular context of discovery being unable to provide more certain data in this direction.

A very important artefact which was found outside a closed archaeological context, in the layer corresponding to the early migration period from trench S3 is a crossbow brooch (Zwiebelknopffibel) (Pl. 13/2)[110]. It is highly significant for the correction of the chronological classification of the discoveries. It is made of bronze and corresponds to the Pröttel 3/4B type[111], a variant that practically comprises the previous Keller 3B and 4A types; this brooch belongs to the latter of the two types, dated in the 350–380 period[112]. It is worth mentioning the fact that Ph. M. Pröttel basically constructs his typology in the case of this category of artefacts on the corrections brought by H. J. H. van Buchem (who initially placed these pieces into the V Group – Vösendorf type, dated between 340–400 A.D.)[113]. He was the first to notice that types Keller 3B and 4A should be grouped together, thus resulting the so-called "mit feistenförmigen Querstab" group, with the b variant dated now between 340–400 A.D.[114]. Ph. M. Pröttel considered that the previous dating attempts of this brooch were too tight for the real chronological value of an archaeological artefact and therefore proposed the 360–420 time frame[115]. As to the area on which these brooches were spread, it seems there was a notable concentration in Hungary and Serbia[116], but also in the Lower Danube area[117]. From the Transylvanian region, the only resembling brooch we know of so far is the one from Moigrad[118]. For the actual dating

[103] DRAGOMIR 2001, 49–50; 109; 160, Fig. 17/13.

[104] ŞOVAN 2005, 159.

[105] VULPE 1957, 304.

[106] MITREA/PREDA 1966, 144–145; PREDA 1980, 59–60; KAZANSKI/MASTIKOVA 2003, 153–156; IVANIŠEVIĆ/KAZANSKI/MASTYKOVA 2006, 68. For a relatively up to date list see KOKOWSKI 1993a and KAZANSKI/MASTIKOVA 2003. Polyhedral beads from carnelian were identified in recently investigated sites at Archiud see GAIU 1999, Fig. XVIII/6–15; Bârlad – Valea Seacă see PALADE 2004, 211; Mihălăşeni see ŞOVAN 2005, 158 or Alba-Iulia see DRAGOTĂ ET ALII 2009, 14; 219, Pl. 13/21.

[107] TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, 29–31; 94–95, Tabelle 8.

[108] MARINESCU/GAIU 1989, 127, Abb. 2/14.

[109] MASTYKOVA 2001, 345.

[110] For a correct use of the terminology referring to this type of artefacts see HARHOIU 1973.

[111] PRÖTTEL 1988, 359; 358, Abb. 4a.

[112] KELLER 1971, 34, Abb. 11/9; 35, Abb. 12; 38–41.

[113] VAN BUCHEM 1973, 154.

[114] VAN BUCHEM 1973, 154.

[115] PRÖTTEL 1988, 362–364; 372, Abb. 11.

[116] KELLER 1971, 213–216. Pieces from Hungary were found in sites like Ságvár see BURGER 1966, 206, Fig. 100/108–1; Pécs in MR/207 see FÜLEP 1977, 39; Pl. 29/6; Somogyszil in M48 see BURGER 1971, 34; 95, Taf. 11/48–1 or Tokod in M19 see TEJRAL 1997, Abb. 2/7, and in Serbia at Singidunum see BJELAJAC/IVANIŠEVIĆ 1993, 127, Fig. 2/7 for instance.

[117] See for example PREDA 1980, 35; 148, Pl. XIV/pas. 2 still fit into the 3rd variant of the internal typology of the site.

[118] HOREDT 1982, 128, Abb. 52/2.

of the piece, the fact that it was found in *Barbaricum* has to be taken into account. Thus is it vital to highlight the fact that a direct chronology transfer for this brooch type from the Roman world into the Transylvanian area would represent a methodological error. For this reason, we would rather date this artefact in the last period of use of this type and maybe somewhat after it, meaning the D_1-D_2 chronological horizons.

4. Conclusions

Adding up all the above, we consider that from the perspective of the manifestation type this complex is the result of specific deposition of meaningful artefacts, with ritual significance, most probably involving beliefs regarding agricultural activities[119]. If the artefacts discovered hold enough analogies to help further analysis, the combination of these objects and human remains reveal a unique situation, undocumented before and, therefore, difficult to explain with strong arguments. As shown by the different categories of objects, G27 would fit into the D_1 horizon, without leaving aside the possibility of taking the sequence further, in the D_2 phase[120].

The relevance of this complex and of the entire site from Ernei, besides this spectacular feature, sits in the opportunity of investigating a settlement belonging to a time yet so little known. As far as the state of research is concerned, the best and closest analogy for the complex is the site from Archiud – "Hânsuri"[121], where such circular pits with human skeletons in the upper part of the fill have been discovered. We discuss about the same culturally mixed milieu, with features characteristic to the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 5th century, in which new elements, linked with the late phase of the Przeworsk culture and especially to the Dobrodzień – Guttentager horizon, are added to the ones from Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov culture[122]. For the time being it is unfit to argue whether, we witness the last phase of the Sântana de Mureş – Černjachov culture[123] or simply a mixed cultural milieu, corresponding to the so called "post Černjachov horizon" defined by J. Tejral[124]. In any case, it is certain that the archaeological site from Ernei is a very important one, useful for a better understanding of the issues regarding such a controversial and interesting period.

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[119] For some general terminological aspects and possible explanations regarding such activities see CANACHE/CURTA 1994 and especially CURTA 1997.

[120] KAZANSKI/LEGOUX 1988; KAZANSKI 1992; ŠČUKIN/KAZANSKI/SHAROV 2006, 128–142; CIUPERCĂ/MĂGUREANU 2008.

[121] GAIU 1999.

[122] HOREDT 1982, 119; TEJRAL 1986; HARHOIU 1990; TEJRAL 1997; TEJRAL 2000; OPREANU 2002; OPREANU 2004–2005; CIUPERCĂ/MĂGUREANU 2008; STANCIU 2008, 157.

[123] KAZANSKI 1992; SCHUKIN/CHAROV 1999; ŠČUKIN/KAZANSKI/SHAROV 2006, 128–142.

[124] OPREANU 2002.

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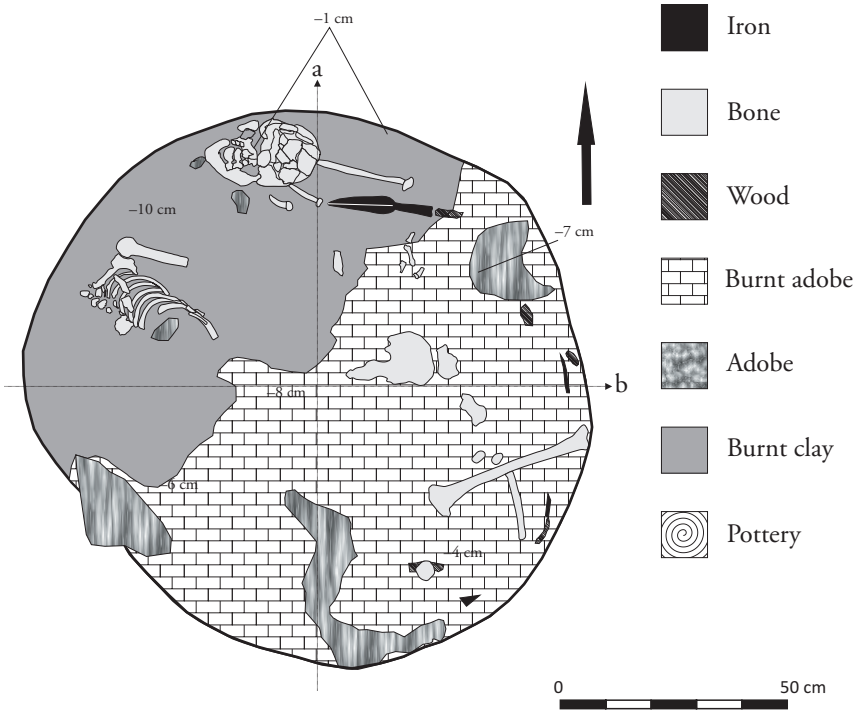

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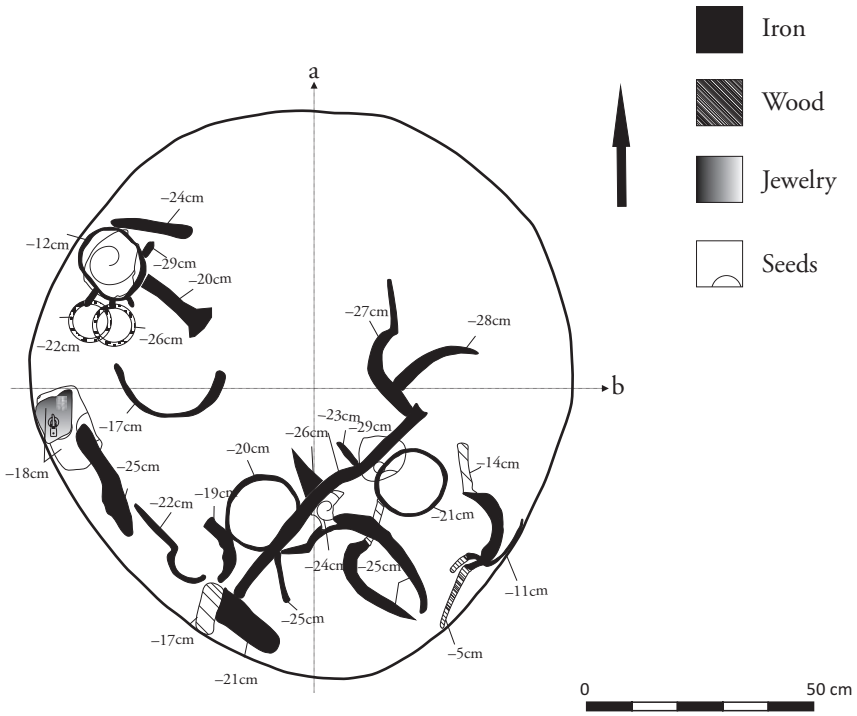
Pl. 1. Ground plan of the fourth deposition layer documented for feature G27.



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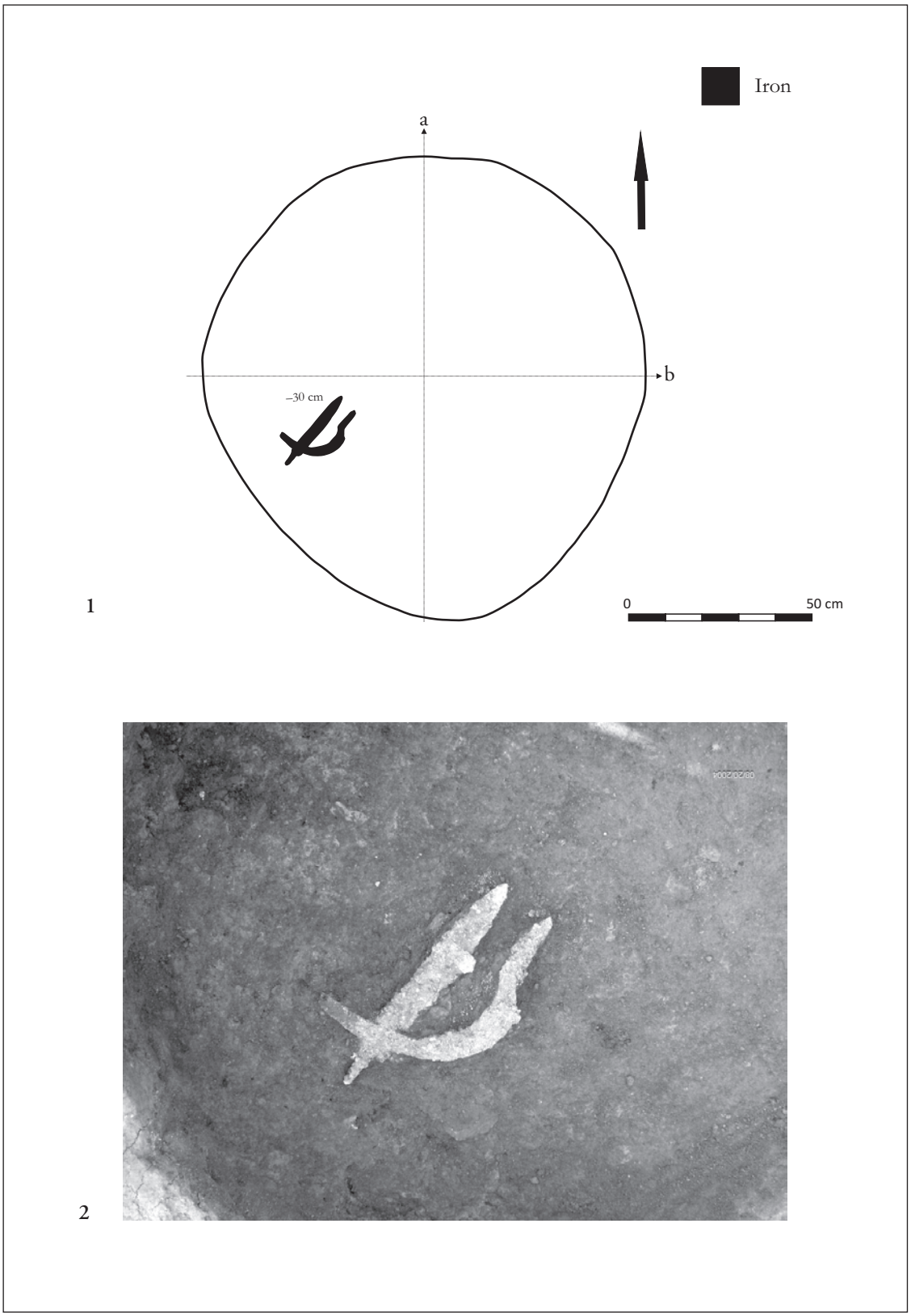
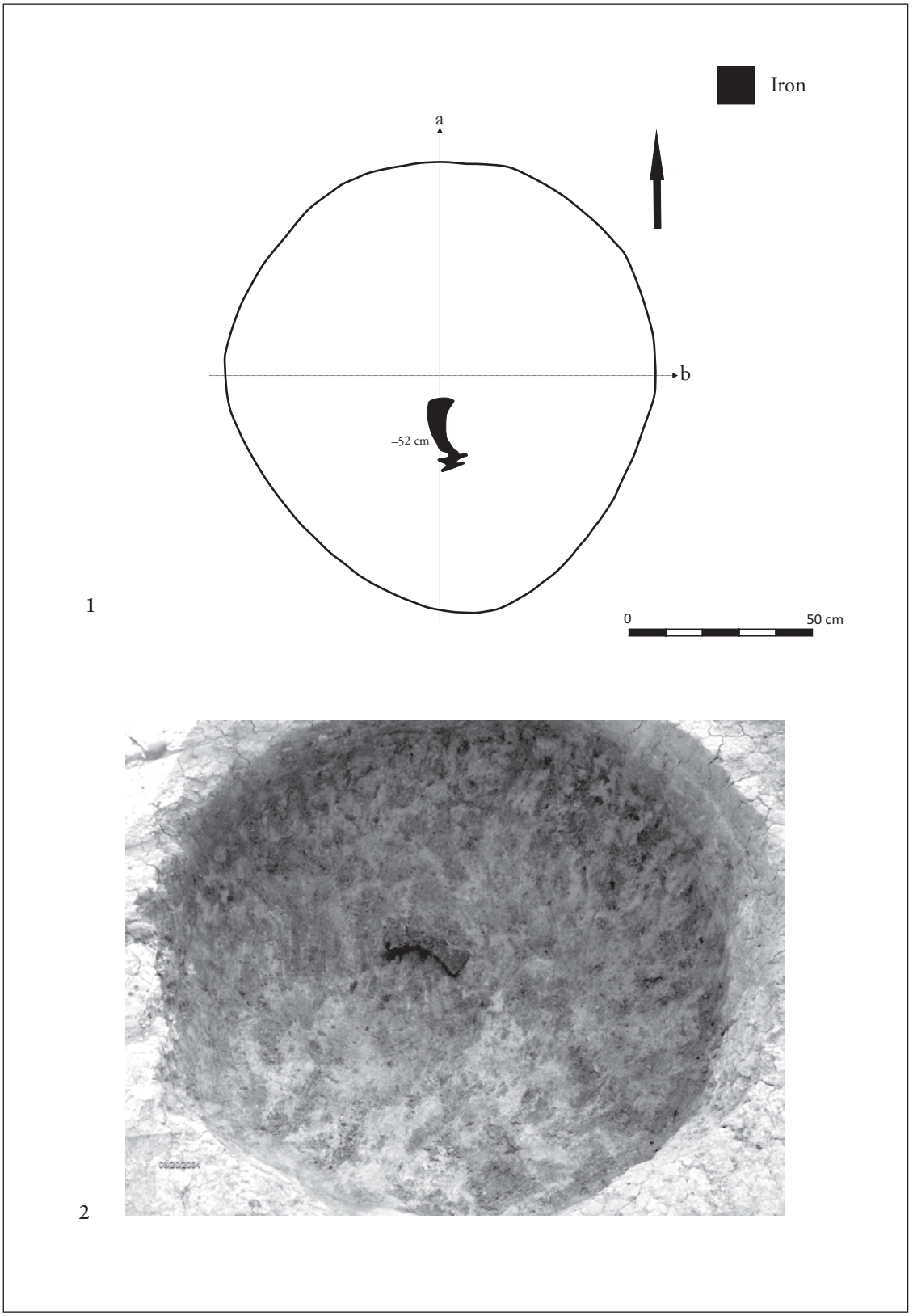
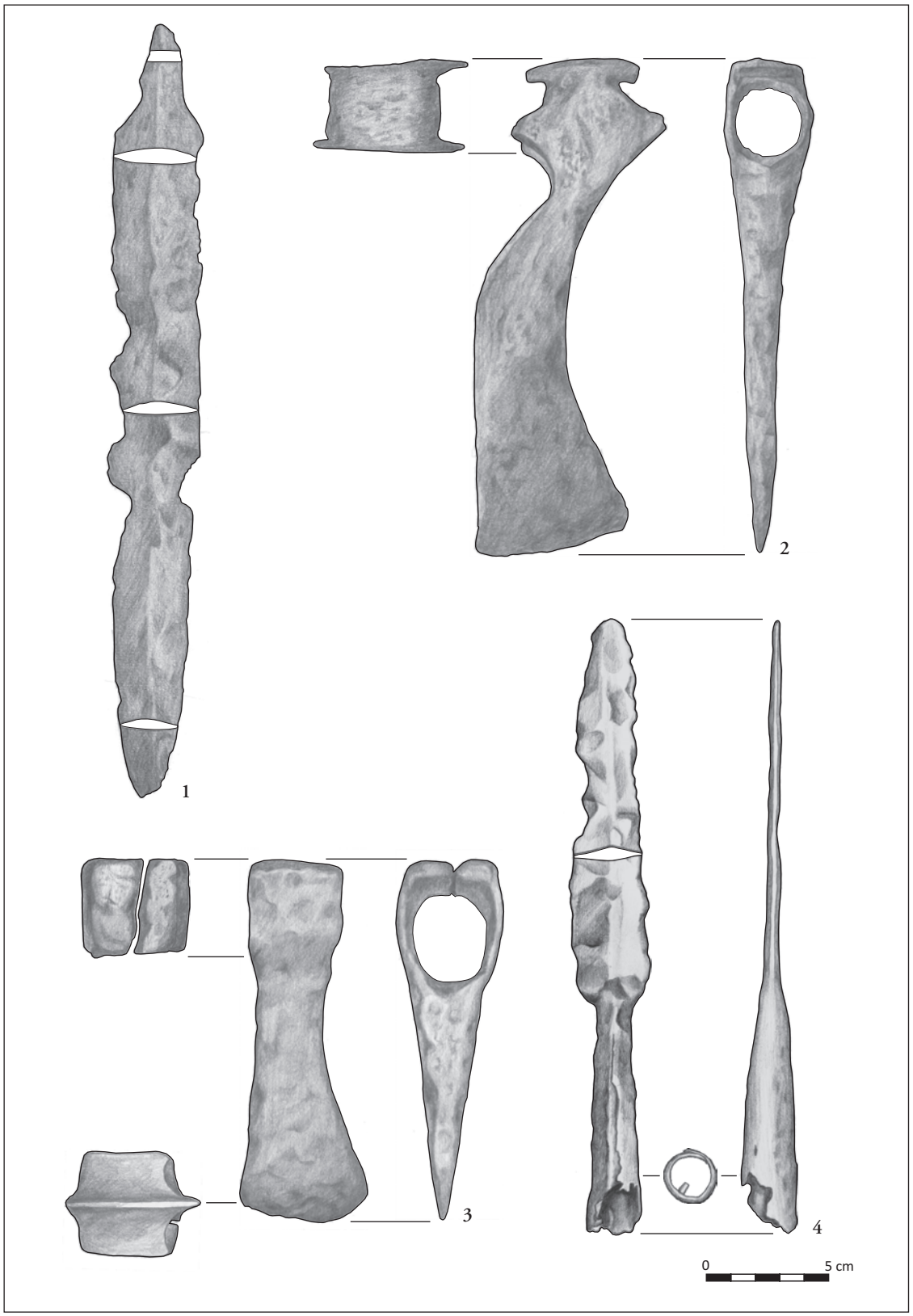
Pl. 2. Ground plan of the third deposition layer documented for feature G27.



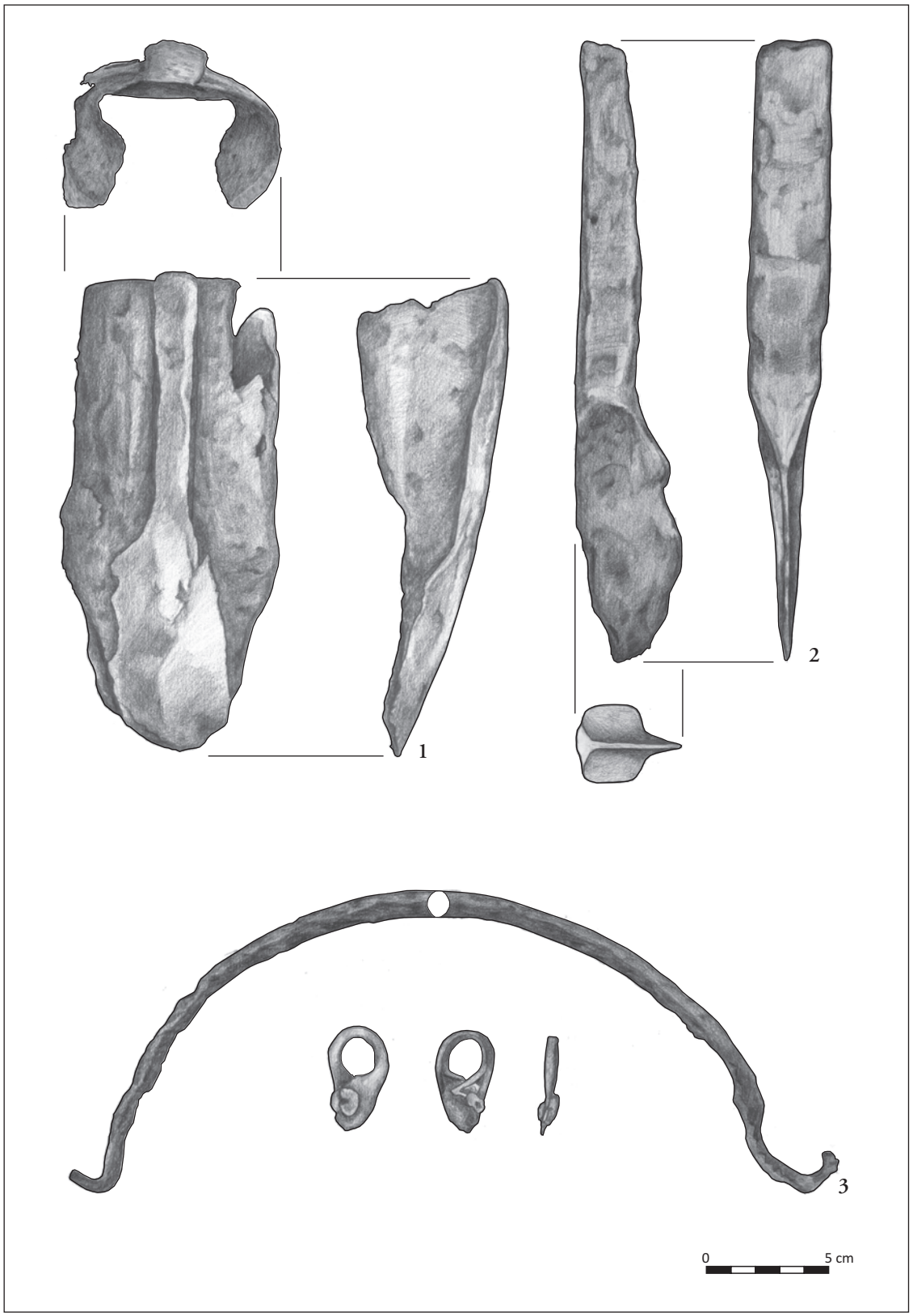
Pl. 3. Ground plan of the second deposition layer documented for feature G27.



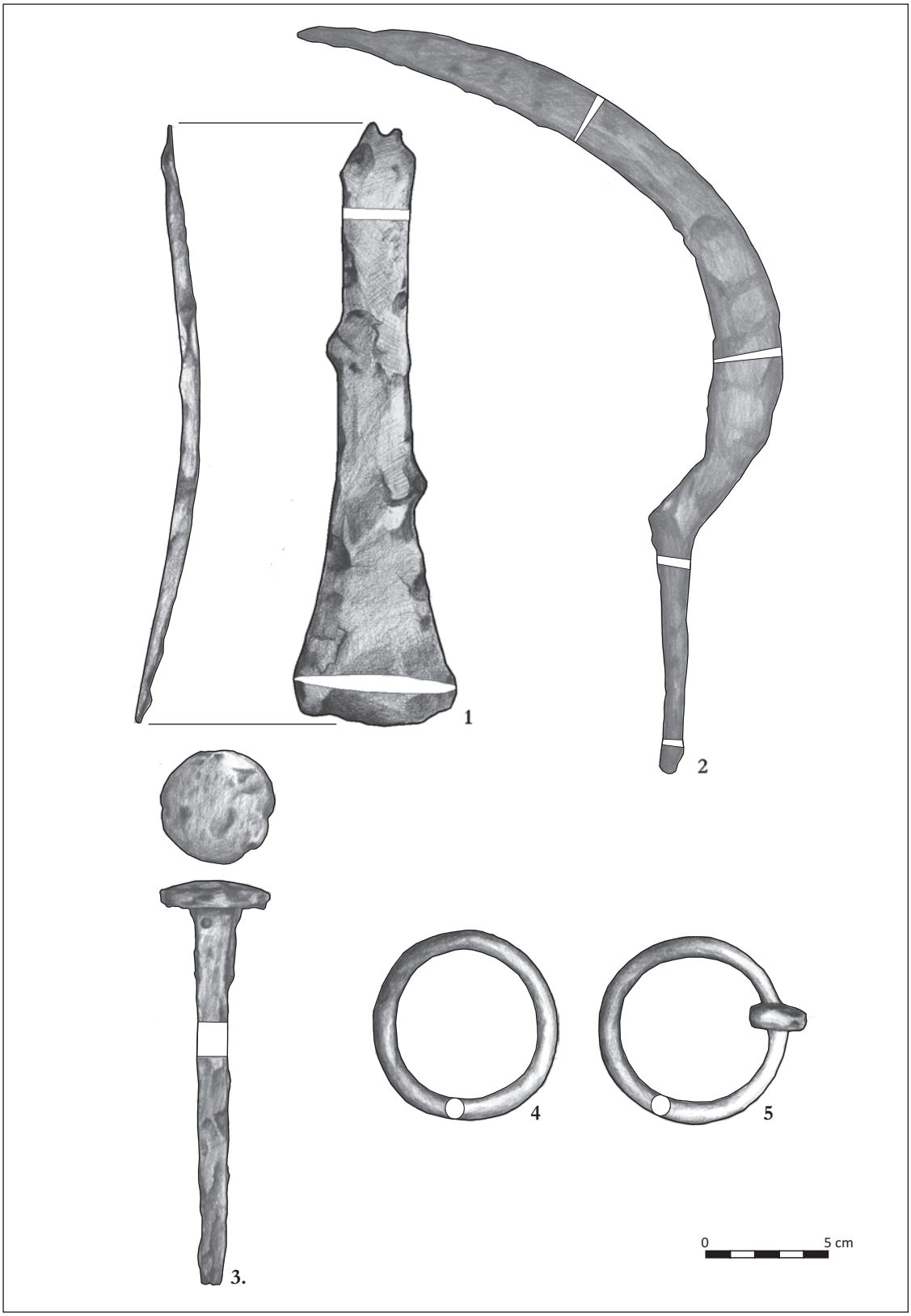
Pl. 4. Ground plan of the first deposition layer documented for feature G27.



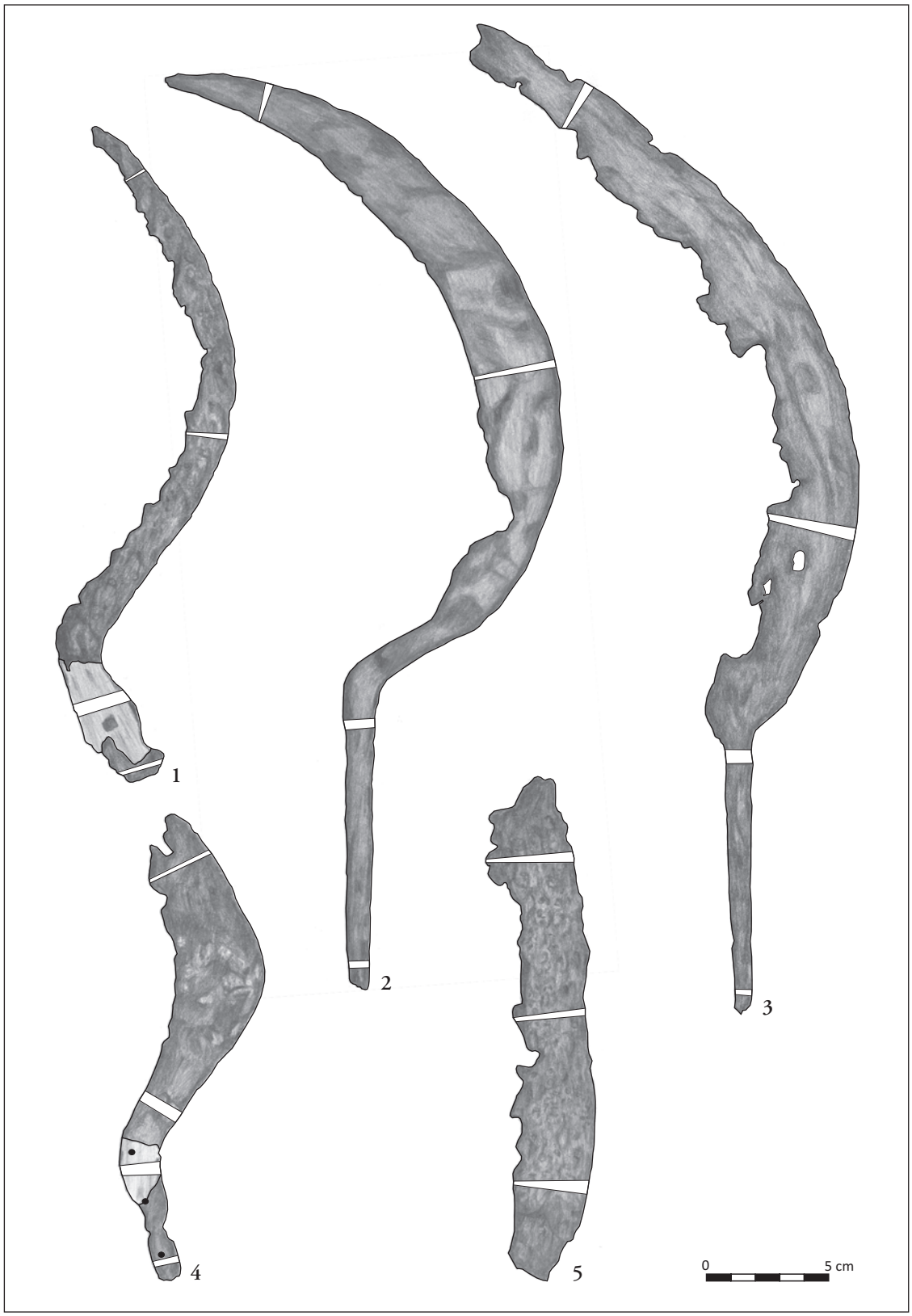
Pl. 5. 1. Iron dagger; 2–3. Iron axe; 4. Iron lance head.



Pl. 6. 1. Iron coulter; 2. Plough iron; 3. Iron bucket handle.

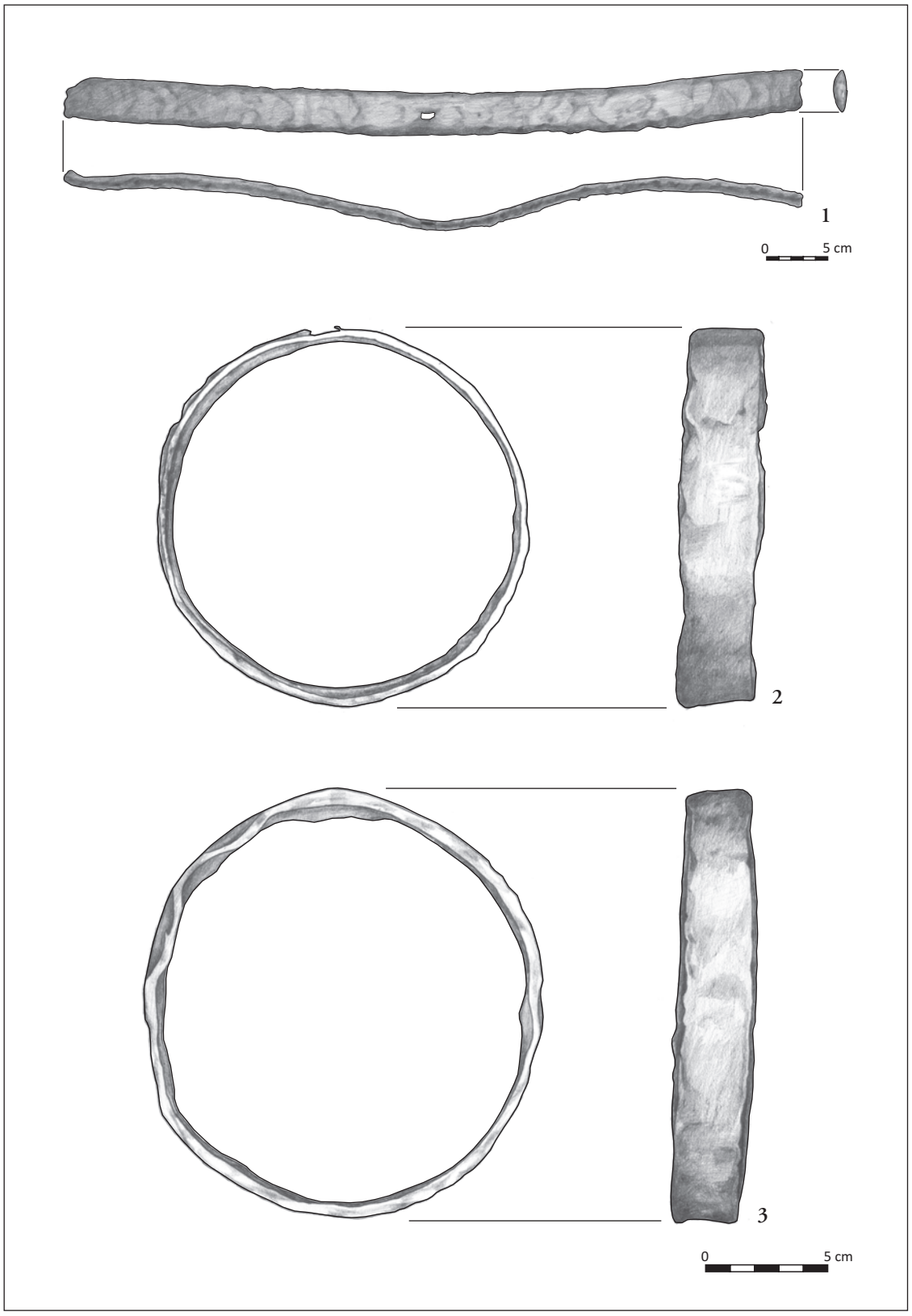


Pl. 7. 1. Iron adze (?); 2. Iron sickle; 3. Iron nail; 4–5. Iron mouthpieces.



Pl. 8. 1–5. Iron sickles.

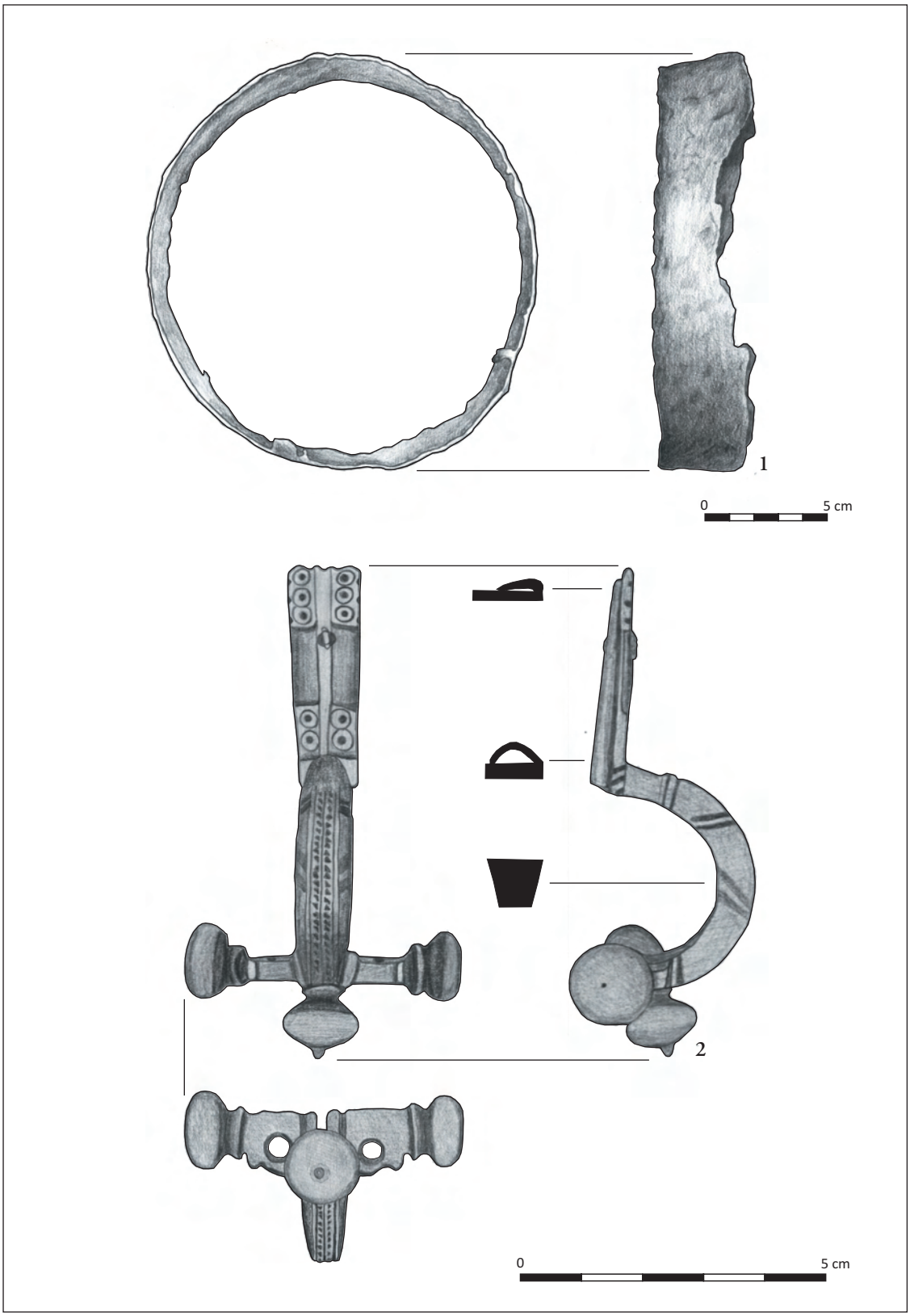
Pl. 9. 1–6. Iron sickles.



Pl. 10. 1. Iron bar; 2–3. Iron sleeves.

Pl. 11. 1–14. Necklace beads.

Pl. 12. 1. Possible reconstruction of the necklace; 2–3. Silver buckles;
4. Bronze buckle; 5. Lock-ring; 6. Bronze loop.



Pl. 13. 1. Iron sleeve; 2. Crossbow brooch.