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PROJECT TILURIUM - ROMAN POTTERY FROM TILURIUM*

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Archaeological excavations of Roman legionary fortress Tilurium, which were conducted in the period between 1997 and 2006, revealed that a total of 31,918 movable findings were classified as ceramics, or 81.48% of the total number of findings. Among the findings which were represented to a lesser degree, 6.59% were made of metal and 6.92% of glass; a clear demonstration of numerical proportions between different types of movable findings.

Pottery is the main source of information regarding everyday life in the Roman legionary fortress Tilurium. The vast array of shapes and types of ceramics, as well as its manufacturing techniques, through which we can trace back table manners, preparation, cooking and food storage, shows us that Roman pottery from Tilurium is represented by the standard ceramic material which was also used in other military camps, settlements and cities of Roman provinces.

Ceramic material was assorted chronologically and typologically, and then also subjected to statistical analysis due to its largely fragmentary nature. Chronological and typological classification was based on two types of analysis: stylistic and that of the clay structure; both based on method of comparison.

Prehistoric and Roman phases of Tilurium were the two dominant chronological phases, estimated after extensive typological and chronological analyses. The focus of research was placed on Roman ceramics and the analyses it was subjected to have revealed numerous new and previously unrecorded facts.

There were three chronologically-typological stages which were recognized as relevant in dating Tilurium pottery:

* The results presented derived from a scientific project (Roman Military Camps in Croatia), conducted with the support of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia.



Fig. 1 Italian Sigillata (potter's stamp) (Photo: Z. Alajbeg).



Fig. 2 Thin walled pottery (various forms and fabrics)



Fig. 3 Italian Sigillata (potter's stamp)

I.

The oldest among Roman phases, dated between the end of the 1st century B.C. and 1st century A.D., produced pottery with black glaze, *terra sigillata* tableware (Figs. 1, 3, 8, 17), thin-walled pottery, Pompeian plates, oil lamps with relief decorations, stamped lamps, jugs, cups, orlo bifido bowls, amphorae of Lamboglia 2, Dressel 6A, 6B, Dressel 2-4 types, amphorae lids (Fig. 9), mortars, coarse and fine cooking ware.

The dominant type of tableware in this early phase was Italian fine and relief sigillata, Northern Italian sigillata (*Sarius* cups, *Aco* beakers) and also jugs.

II.

The import of sigillata tableware from northern Italy (Figs. 4, 7, 13) was greatly reduced during the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. The focus of import is placed on East-African sigillata-mainly tableware such as bowls and plates, as well as cooking ware from the Aegean.

III.

In the 3rd and 4th centuries imports from African workshops continued- mainly lamps, kitchenware and amphorae.

This analysis has enabled us to date ceramic artifacts from Tilurium within the timeframe ranging from the end of the 1st century B.C. until the 5th century A.D. The greatest number of pottery findings has been dated into the middle of 1st century; the time which overlaps with the presence of *legio VII*, i.e. *legio VII Claudia pia fidelis*. Conducted analyses confirm imports, but also the local production of ceramics.

With regards to the chronologically-typological stages, it was determined that ceramics dated at the end of the 1st century B.C. were of Italic origin. That stage is followed by the import of merchandise from Mediterranean workshops, which was already present in the 1st century A.D. After the 2nd century, Italian production becomes neglected to an extent, as was the case in the period between the 3rd and 5th centuries A.D.

Fine tableware is dominantly featured throughout the 1st century stratum. Italian sigillata, the whole span of North-Italic production of *Sarius* cups (Fig. 11), thin-walled wares (Figs. 2, 12, 16, 15), jugs, mortars and bowls are all equally represented in this layer. The jugs were imported from Italian and Aegean workshops; any local form of fine ware production has not yet been confirmed. All rough cookware - pots and a certain portion of bowls - were produced locally. Tilurium records a huge decline in the use of fine ceramics of Italian origin during the course of the 2nd and 3rd centuries. The presence of Mediterranean - African Red Slip and Aegean pottery - has been recorded, though in smaller amounts; mainly the even-bottomed cookware with channeled walls.

The presence of pottery which was imported from Eastern workshops is the reflection of economic circumstances within the Empire; it matches with the time of Gaulish exports to Britain - one of the possible reasons for the decline of Italic imports into the area of Adriatic. It is also worth noting the fact that the army numbers in Dalmatia were significantly decreased during this time.

For now we can only assume the existence of locally produced household pottery, while fine ware was imported; save for the stamped lamps. According to their appearance, the lamp fragments represented in the cat-

alogue lead to the assumption that stamped oil lamps were produced in a locally-based workshop, which has not yet been located. As for the table ware, it shows a significant decrease in the number of plates, but an equally significant increase in the number of jugs.

Six fragments of bowls found in Tilurium originate from Lyon workshops. Croatian scientific literature does not mention this kind of finding, so the afore-

mentioned fragments from Tilurium is the first presentation of Lyon produced thin-walled ceramics dated to the period between the middle and the end of the 1st century and to be published in this area. The same can be said about a single fragment of a bowl imported from Spain, dated between 40 and 80 A.D.

During the course of analysis, 20 fragments of vessels for everyday use were separated from the lot. Their bottoms tend to grow thinner towards the center, and their curiously shaped walls have not yet been recorded in international literature. These vessels have fine surfaces, with thick, sharp-angled walls. Based on their appearance and the mode of production, it was suggested that this type of pottery for everyday use might have been manufactured in a different way which would cause the bottoms to be thinner in their central part, which further suggests that the manufacturer might have used a stencil. Usage of tool such as a stencil might have expedited the production and made the walls more precisely shaped. According to the stratigraphic units they were found in, these fragments can be dated to the period between the end of the 1st and 3rd centuries A.D.



Fig. 4 Italian Sigillata (various stamps)

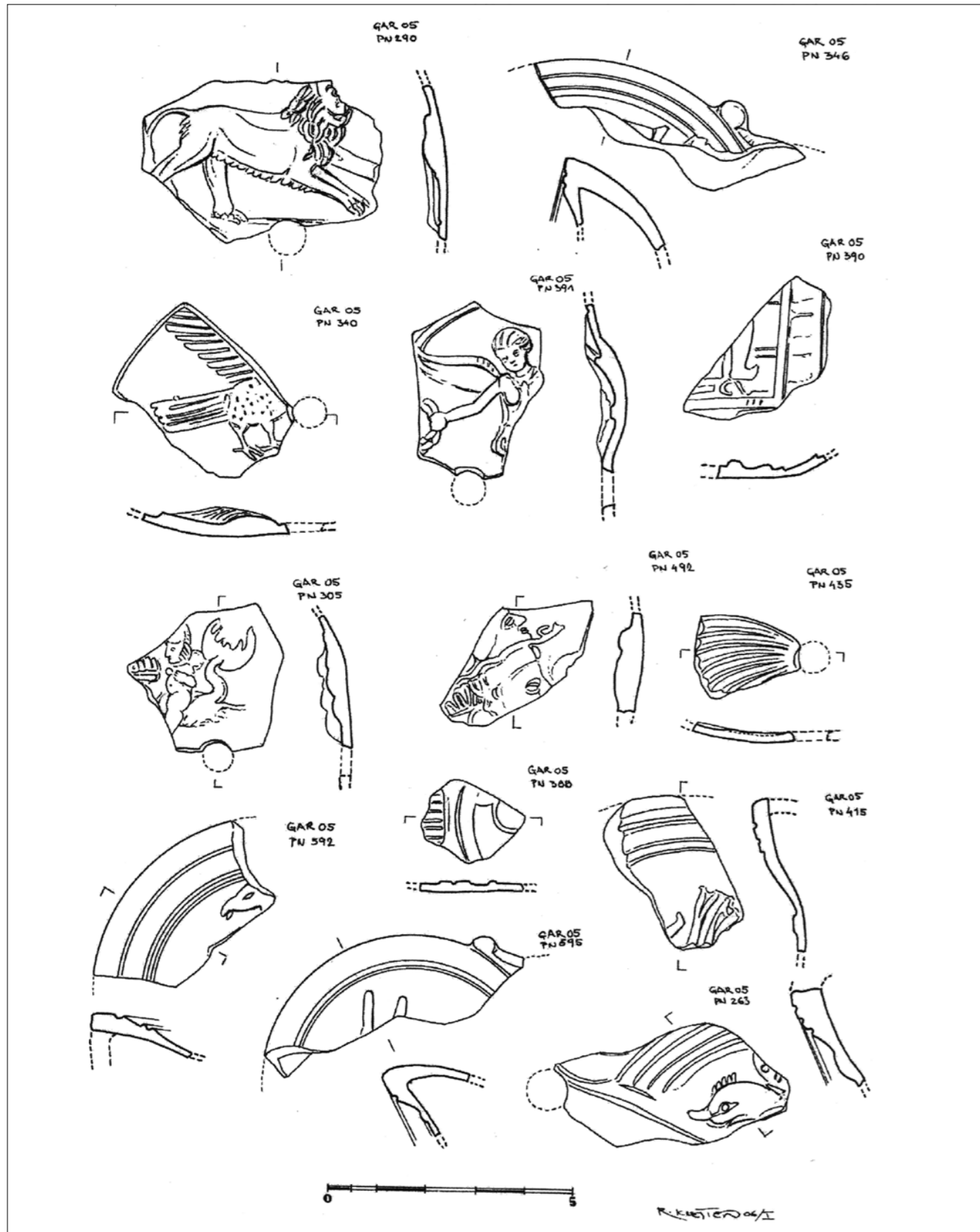


Fig. 5 Imported Roman lamps (Illustration: K.Rončević).



Fig. 6 Potters' stamps (Illustration: K.Rončević).

This research stage of Tilurium pottery documents the lamps, or lamp fragments, as being imported from Italian (Fig. 5), North African and Corinthian workshops, but also the existence of local production. Lamp findings have been mostly concentrated within probe A where a total of 87 fragments were found, all of which can be dated to the period between the end of the 1st century B.C. and the 6th century A.D.

Conducted analysis has set in place the foundations for posing a theory of ceramic manufacturing in Tilurium. If such production indeed did exist, what type of pottery was produced there? The quantity of ceramics used within the fortress site largely depended on the number of soldiers placed there, thus inevitably the quantity of production must have been adapted to their needs. Artifacts found in Ditch 55 (Figs. 10, 14) - locally produced pots alongside two jugs of Italian origin - are irrefutable evidence of the synchronous use

of Roman and locally produced household pottery. We are of the opinion that, in the first stage of conquest, Roman soldiers brought some of their utensils with them, but were also purchasing utensils from local potters. Pottery production depended on demand, and potters worked individually and sold their products to interested parties, both civilian and military.

The analysis of ceramic material from the Tilurium excavation site largely reflects economic and political circumstances within the Roman Empire, i.e. in the Province of Dalmatia. The vast dispersion of ceramics of Italian origin across the Mediterranean and the Empire's hinterland overlaps with the period of Roman expansion and Roman presence in the provinces. Ceramic products of Italic origin are evidence of Roman monopolization, particularly between the end of the 1st century B.C and almost to the end of the 1st century A.D., and that fact has been confirmed in Tilurium.

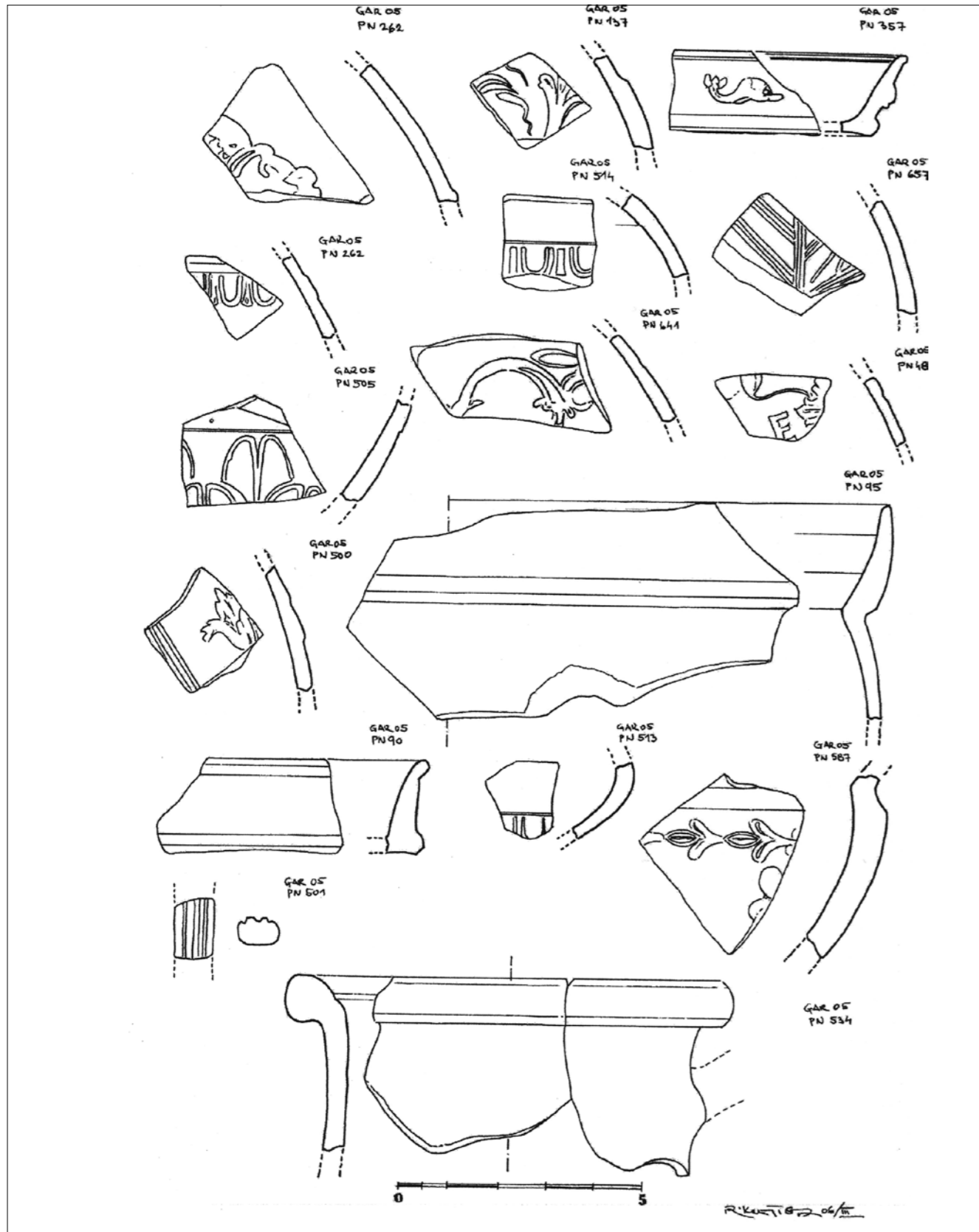


Fig. 7 Fragments of Italian Sigillata (Illustration: K. Rončević).

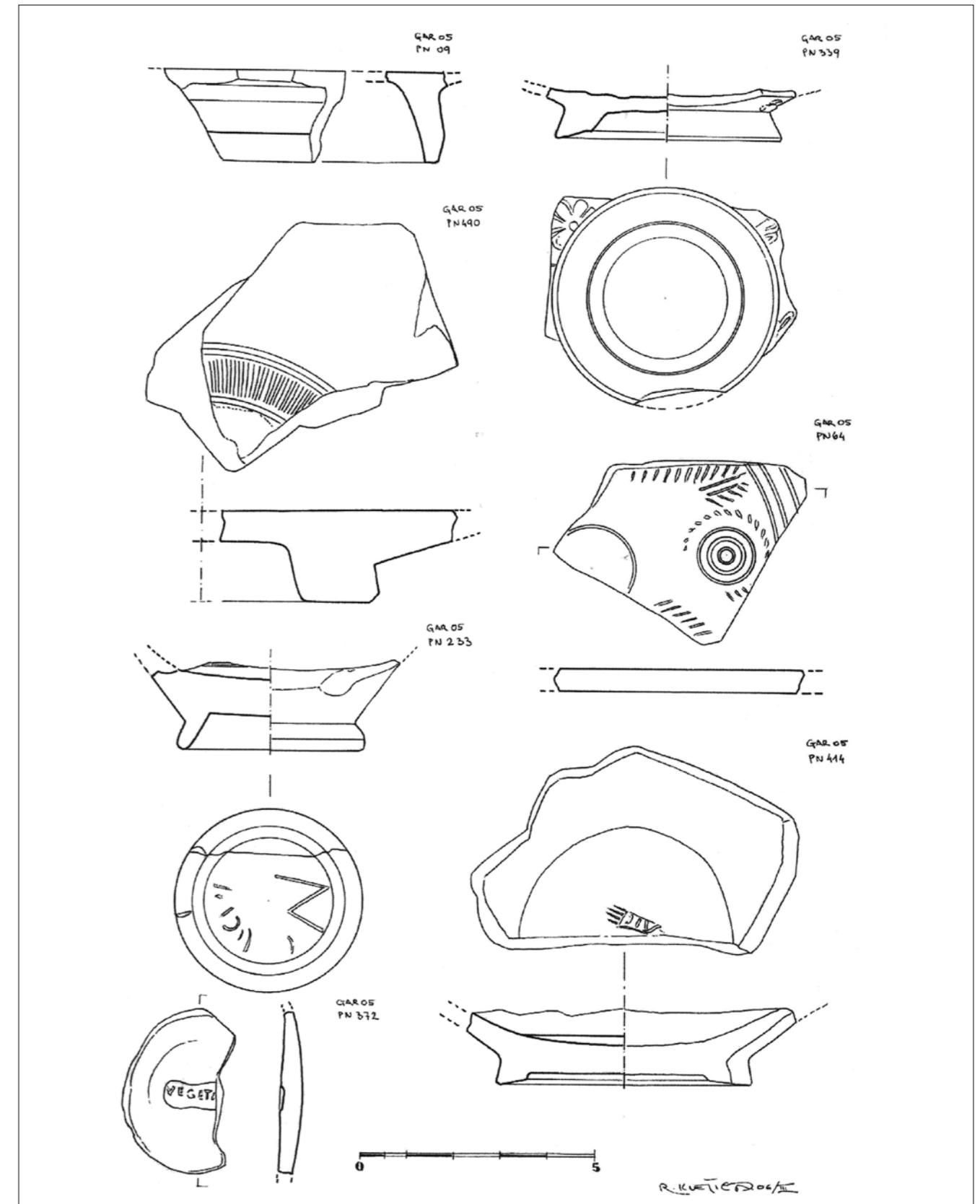


Fig. 8 Miscellaneous Sigillata wares (Illustration: K. Rončević).

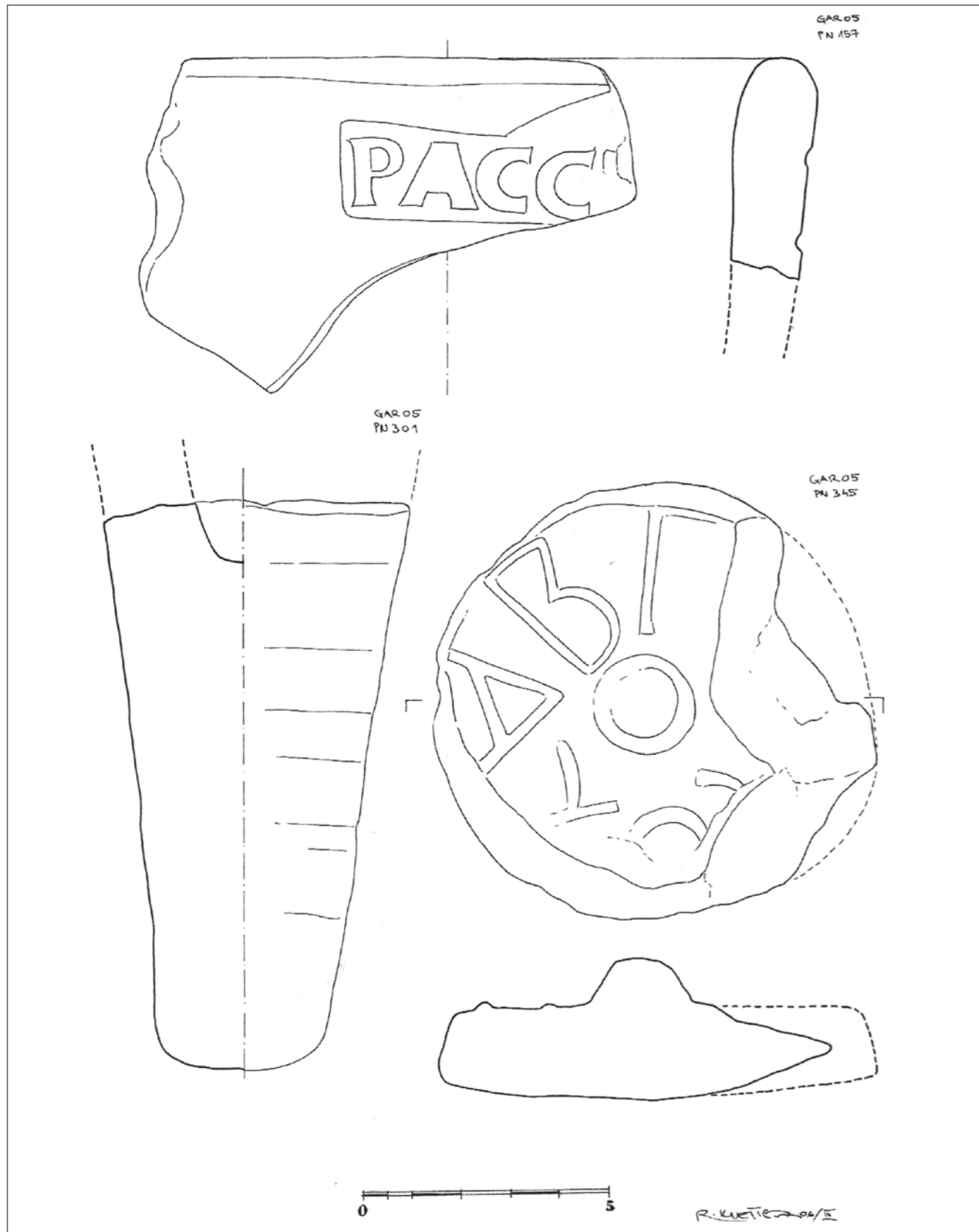


Fig. 9 Fragments of Amforae and lid (Illustration: K.Rončević).

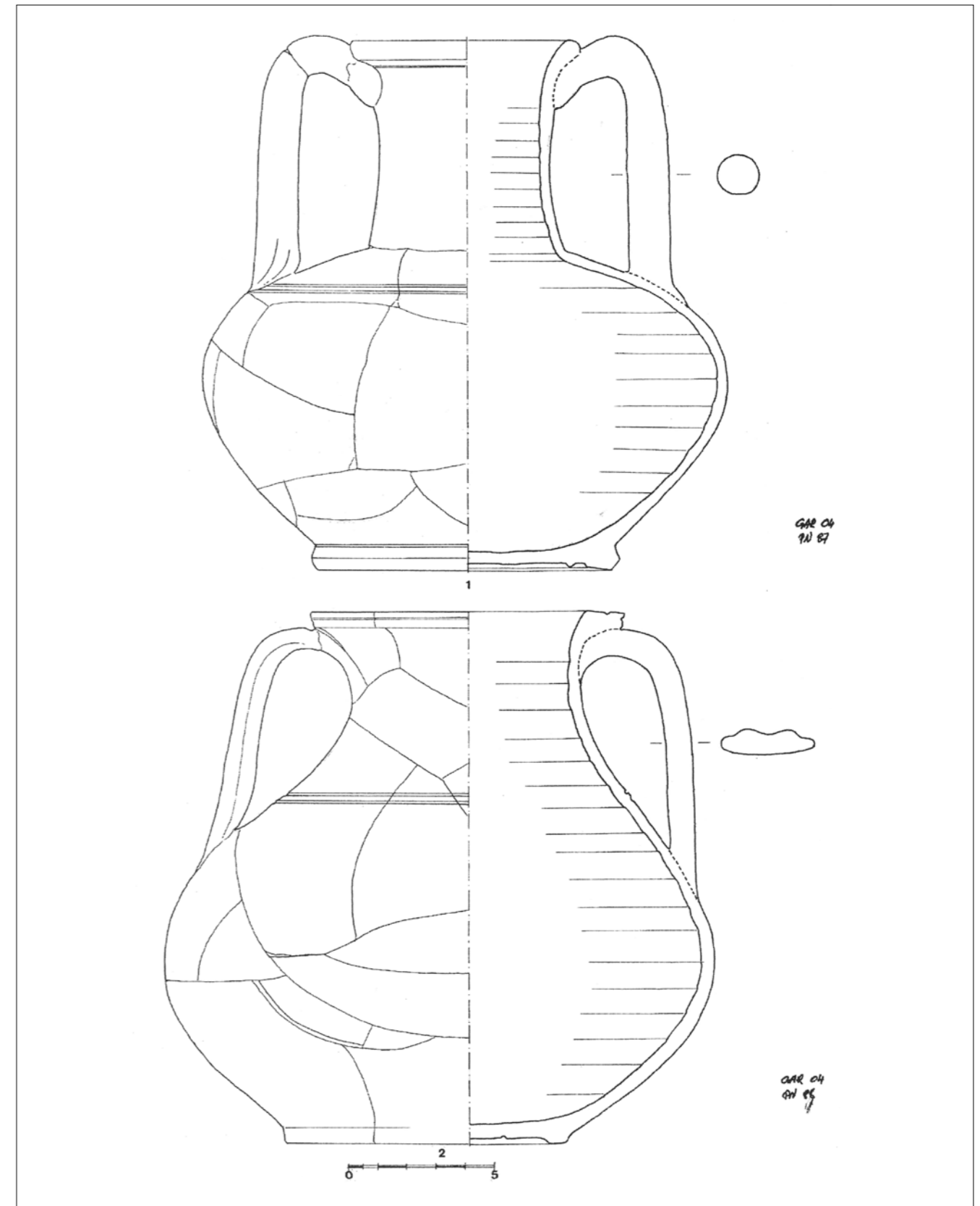


Fig. 10 Two jugs found in Ditch 55 (Illustration: K.Rončević).

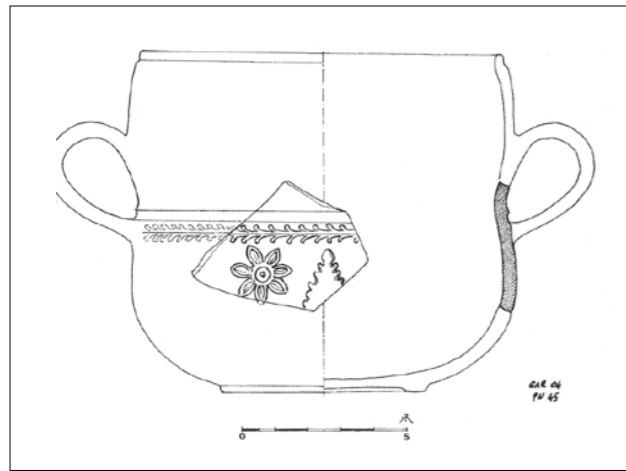


Fig. 11 Sarius cups (Illustration: K.Rončević).



Fig. 12 Thin walled pottery (various forms and fabrics)



Fig. 13 Italian Sigillata (various forms) (Photo: Z. Alajbeg).



Fig. 14 Pottery found in Ditch 55 (Photo: Z. Alajbeg).

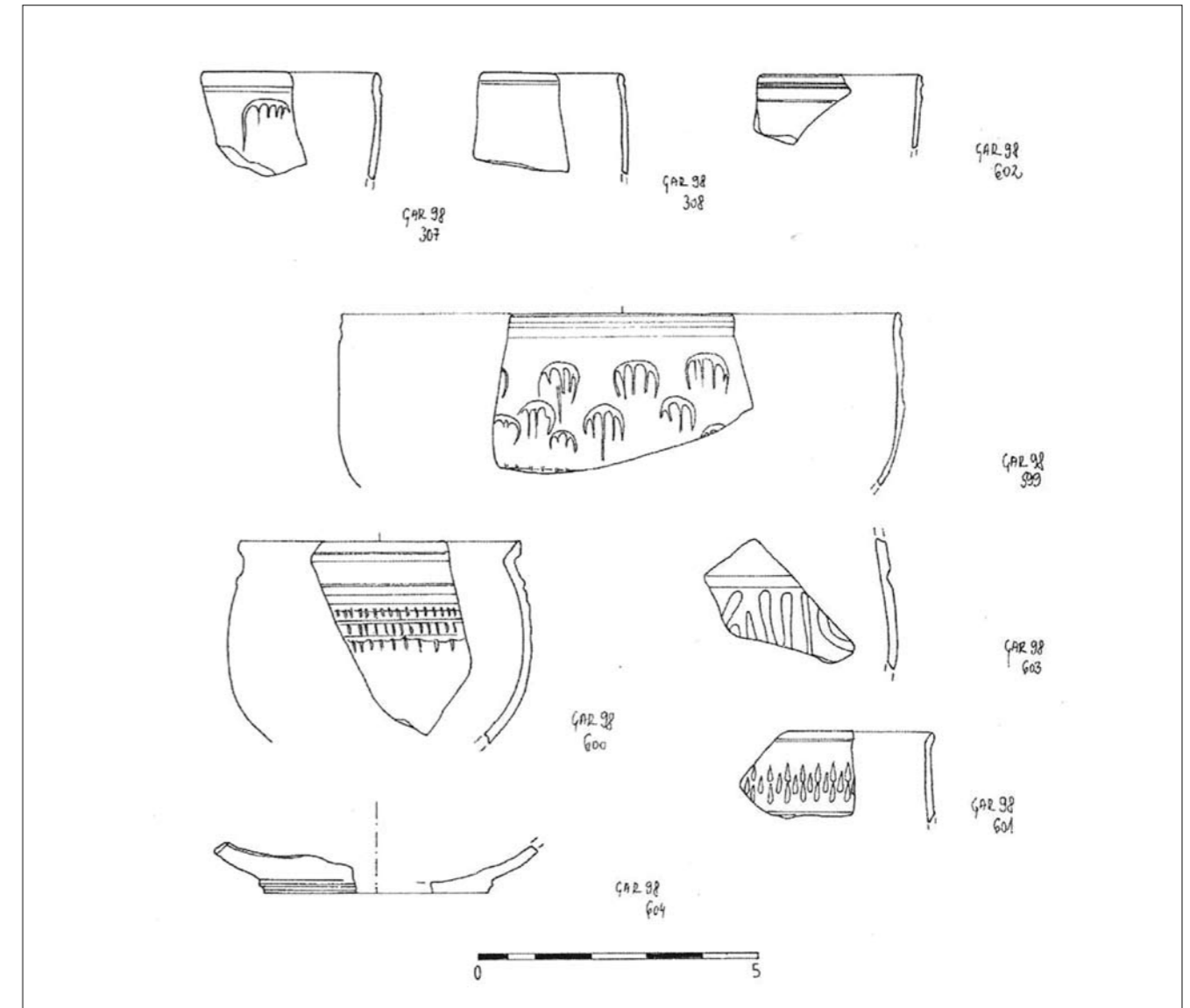


Fig. 15 Thin walled pottery (various forms)



Fig. 16 Thin walled pottery (Illustration: K.Rončević).



Fig. 17 Italian Sigillata (potter's stamp) (Photo: Z. Alajbeg).

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PROJECT TILURIUM - A “POET” IN THE MILITARY CAMP AT TILURIUM¹

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INTRODUCTION

The most famous military unit residing in Tilurium was the 7th Legion (*legio VII*). This legion probably came to Illyricum during the Delmatian-Pannonian uprising (6-9 CE.).²

In the year 42, along with the 11th Legion, this legion acquired the honorary title *C(laudia) p(ia) f(idelis)* because they had refused to participate in the rebellion against the emperor Claudius. After the departure of the *Legio VII C.p.f.* (probably around 60 CE.), smaller military units resided in Tilurium until the 3rd cen-

tury, among which the 8th Cohort (cohors VIII *voluntariorum civium Romanorum*) spent the longest time there.³

This site is rich with inscriptions (around 100) and many of them are the tombstones of the serving soldiers. There are 23 inscriptions of the deceased soldiers of the 7th Legion.⁴ Almost all of them can be dated before the 42 because there's no mention of the honorary title *C(laudia) p(ia) f(idelis)*.

The number and quality of the said tombstones brought us to the conclusion that there must have been a stonemaking workshop in Tilurium. This is also

¹ The results presented derived from the scientific project (Roman Military Camps in Croatia and Roman military camps in Croatia and *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum quae in Croatia repertae sunt*), conducted with the support of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia.

² On the theories when the Seventh legion could come in Illyricum see TONČINIĆ 2011, 11-15.

³ ZANINOVIĆ 1996, 216.

⁴ TONČINIĆ 2011, 170.