

## ORIENTAL INFLUENCE IN CERAMIC FRAGMENTS DISCOVERED IN UNIRII PLAZA, ORADEA

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**Abstract.** *In the course of an archaeological survey at Unirii Plaza in the centre of Oradea, in the area known as the “Saturday townlet”, several ceramic fragments were found, among which a number of pots and pipes bore signs of oriental influence. This type of ceramic, which often appears in Ottoman occupation zones such as the Pashalikes of Timișoara and Oradea in the former Hungarian Kingdom, is rarely studied in Romanian historiography. This article aims to address this by adding to the repertoire of oriental or oriental-influenced discoveries in Romania.*

**Keywords:** *Oradea, Pashalike, oriental influence ceramic, pipes, former Hungarian kingdom.*

During the course of rescue excavation prior to the renovation of Unirii Plaza on Oradea, Romania, some fragments of ceramics bearing signs of oriental influence were found.

In 1660, Oradea was designated the centre of a Pashalike, triggering a period of great transformation as the city became included in the economic circuit of the Ottoman Empire, a fact reflected in the archaeological material found during the excavations, both in the fortress of Oradea and the adjacent townlet.<sup>1</sup>

In one excavation, under a pedestrian crossing located 8.5 m in front of the church of Saint Ladislaus, 1.6 x 1.6 m in cross-section and at a depth of 1.1 m, the remains of an old brick pavement were discovered. The pavement was about 0.25-0.30 m thickness, and was connected with the first construction phase of the church, which began in 1720. Under this, in the alluvial soil at a depth of up to about 2.60 m, a large amount of ceramic material mixed with osteological fragments, mortar and stones, was discovered, probably a flattening. From the recovered material, a number of ceramics bearing oriental influences were found, including pipes, a patterned tile, a crucible and a bone tool.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Borcea 2005, p. 284-295.

<sup>2</sup> Material related with the economic activities carried out in the Unirii Plaza (the former “Saturday townlet,” Zombathely vicus) and with the three ceramic kilns discovered in the immediate vicinity in 1991 (see also Ignat, Marta 2004, p. 87-102).

This article deals with these oriental-influenced ceramics discovered in the fortress of Oradea and their analogies;<sup>3</sup> the rest of the equally particular material from this archaeological survey will be explored in another article.

After being conquered by the Turks, Oradea was integrated in to the Ottoman Empire. Three years after the fortress was occupied, Evlia Celebi, a local eyewitness to the destruction of the settlement during the siege, was pleasantly surprised by the prosperity and the flowering of the city. He describes the annual bazaar, which was held 40 days before Easter on the plateau in front of the fortress, where for 20 days merchants gathered “out of the seven climates,” including India, Yemen, Arabia and Persia.<sup>4</sup>

Although the period of Turkish rule was short-lived, evidence of the Ottoman culture is illustrated through a series of artefacts that were found during archaeological research.

1. Ceramic fragment, belonging to a bowl, is made from fine red ceramic paste, well-fired. It features a yellow enamel interior and dark red stylized vegetal decoration, and a brown outline. At the top of the rim it bears three thin brown bands. The bowl’s diameter was 280 mm. There are obvious signs of secondary burning (**fig. 1**).

2. Ceramic fragment, belongs to a bowl made from a similar fine red paste, with yellow enamel on the inside, dark red and green stylized vegetal decoration, and a brown outline. On the external side the fragment has a grip/hang button (**fig. 2**).

3. Ceramic fragment, smaller in size and harder to fit typologically, has identical enamel, this time on the outside. The ornamentation, which can be classified as vegetal, has shades of dark red and green, with the same brown outline<sup>5</sup> (**fig. 3/3** and **fig. 4/3**).

The three fragments described above, all from different pots, are most likely from the same workshop, given that the ceramic paste, enamel, decoration and firing-process are so similar.

Another four fragments, also produced from fine red, well-fired ceramic paste, had a light green enamel, brownish-green stylized vegetal decoration, and a brown outline. These four smaller pieces, which are difficult to fit typologically, may have originated from one or more bowls or platters (**fig. 3/1-2, 4-5** and **fig. 4/1-2, 4-5**).

Considering that, from a typologically point of view, the material discovered is inferior to ceramics produced in the traditional Turkish

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<sup>3</sup> Marta 1994, p. 405-416; Rusu 2002, p. 139-140; Marta 2013, p. 148-149.

<sup>4</sup> *Călători străini* 1976, p. 665.

<sup>5</sup> See also Marta 2013, p. 290, pl. XVII/6-7.

centres of Anatolia (Iznik and Kutahya)<sup>6</sup> and similar to items found in Hungarian territory (Buda, Eger, Pécs, Szeged, Szolnok, Tata),<sup>7</sup> we conclude that they came from workshops located within former Hungarian kingdom areas that were incorporated to the Ottoman Empire. Thus, although catalogued as oriental ceramics, typologically they fit with those developed under the Turkish occupation, but from a relatively local area.

Along with the aforementioned potsherds, six clay pipes fragments were found (**fig. 5** and **fig. 6**).

1. Pipe fragment made from fine clay with sand inclusion, red brick colour from oxidation firing with engobe. The junction between the bowl and the leg is V-shaped and decorated with three rows of interrupted lines executed with a cogwheel. The ring is hemispherical and decorated with three rows of interrupted lines, executed with the same cogwheel (dimensions: length = 58 mm; leg diameter = 16 mm; ring diameter = 23 mm; bowl diameter = 22 mm) (**fig. 5/6** and **fig. 6/4**).

2. Pipe fragment similar to the previous one in terms of the composition of the material from which it was produced and its appearance, but grey in colour due to the firing process (length = 58 mm; diameter = 17 mm; ring diameter = 23 mm) (**fig. 5/5** and **fig. 6/6**).

3. Pipe fragment similar to the above, of a brick colour, the only difference being that the junction between the bowl and the leg, as well as the ring, are decorated with only two rows of interrupted lines (length = 58 mm; diameter = 17 mm; ring diameter = 23 mm) (**fig. 5/4** and **fig. 6/5**).

4. Pipe fragment produced from fine clay with sand inclusions, red brick colour, with engobe. Only a part of the leg has been preserved with a hemispherical ring decorated with three incised rings made with the cogwheel (diameter = 16 mm; ring diameter = 22 mm) (**fig. 5/1** and **fig. 6/1**).

5. Pipe fragment produced from fine sandy clay, oxidation-fired with engobe. Only a small part of the bowl with the leg and a hemispherical ring has been preserved. The bowl has two spherical impressions, probably a five or six petal rosette, and the ring is decorated with a circular incisions made with a sharp object (ring diameter = 21 mm) (**fig. 5/3** and **fig. 6/3**).

6. Pipe fragment produced from a fine clay, reddish in colour, oxidation-fired with engobe. The leg with a ring and a small part of the bowl have been preserved. The bowl bears a pattern of parallel lines and incised points; the hemispherical ring, which is separated from the leg with a nervure, is decorated over its entire surface with oblique parallel lines

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<sup>6</sup> Nicolescu 1967, p. 290-295.

<sup>7</sup> Soproni 1956, p. 102-106; Pusztai 1999, p. 471-483; Bertalan 2004, p. 51-52; Yenisehirlioglu 2004, p. 373-382; Hancz 2006, p. 31-46; Kertész, Bana 2010, p. 60-86.

suggesting a turban (length = 31 mm; leg diameter = 11 mm; ring diameter = 22 mm) (**fig. 5/2** and **fig. 6/2**).

The first four fragments (number 1-4) can be classified under the same typology, since they were produced according to the same pattern, the differences primarily consisting in the appearance they received during the firing process and the decoration that was applied after removal from the mold. Based on the Hungarian classification system, the authors classify these pieces under the type I “Hungarian” pipe, which appeared in the last two decades of the seventeenth century.<sup>8</sup> We acknowledge that this type first appeared in the territory of the former Hungarian kingdom, but the context of the discovery, along with the oriental influence of ceramics from the same zone, lead us to believe that the genesis and diffusion of this type took place during the Turkish occupation of the area.<sup>9</sup>

The fifth fragment has a more rudimentary form. Ornate, with a rosette and an incised ring, it is harder to fit typologically. It is probably from the second half of the seventeenth century, and bears close analogy with a similar piece, still unpublished, found in the fortress of Oradea in unclear stratigraphic conditions. A similar impression - a floral motif with five petals - appears on a glazed Turkish pipe discovered in Timișoara.<sup>10</sup> The last pipe fragment, with an analogy known and published in Reghin, dates back to the seventeenth century.<sup>11</sup>

It is hoped that these items will add to the currently limited number of publications regarding oriental or oriental-influenced ceramics which originated beyond the traditional centres of Asia Minor.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Tomka 2005, p. 610; Kondorosy 2007, p. 259; Kopeczny, Dincă 2012, p. 170-171; see also Rădulescu et al. 2007, p. 146.

<sup>9</sup> See Rădulescu et al. 2007, p. 146 and pl. V/6.

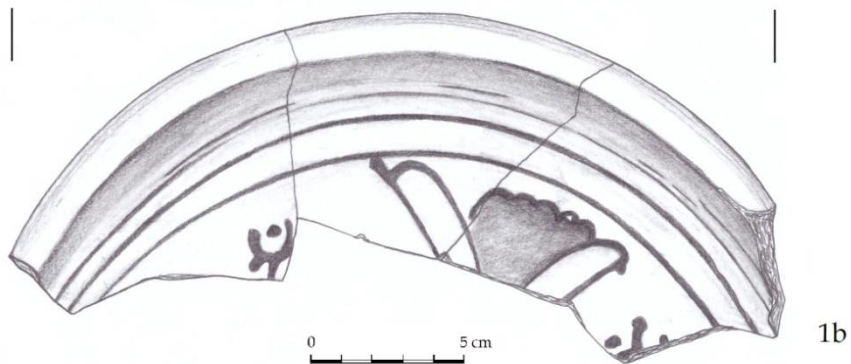
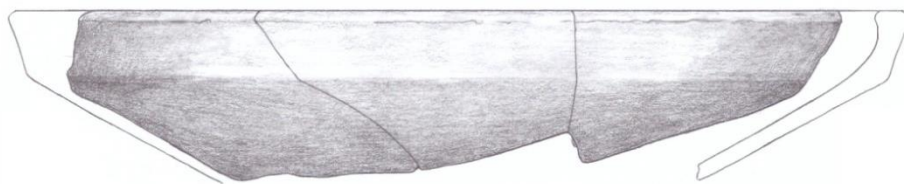
<sup>10</sup> Kopeczny, Dincă 2012, p. 174, 186, 190.

<sup>11</sup> Gruia 2012, p. 263-164.

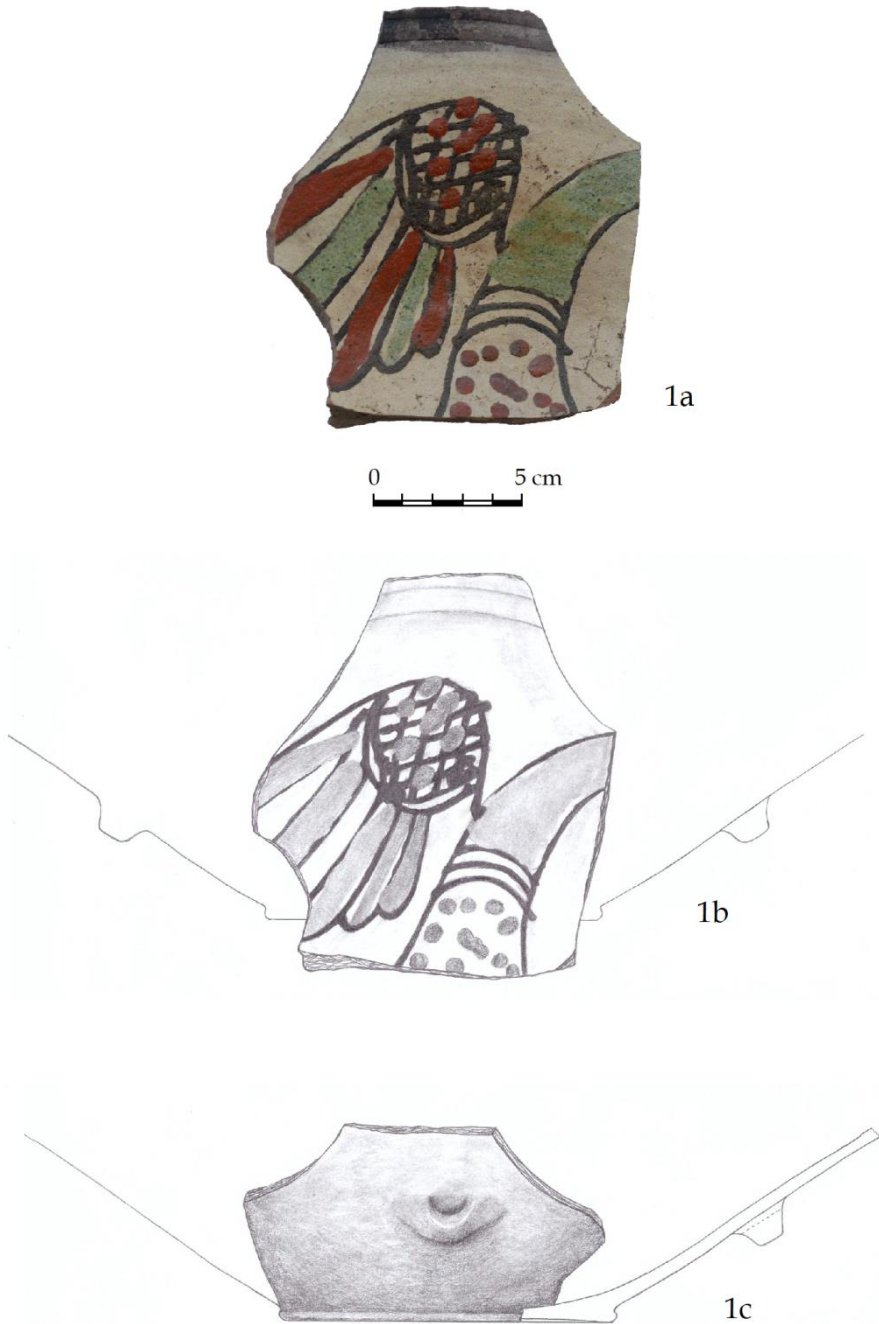
<sup>12</sup> For a bibliography on Ottoman pipes, see also Gașpar 2016.

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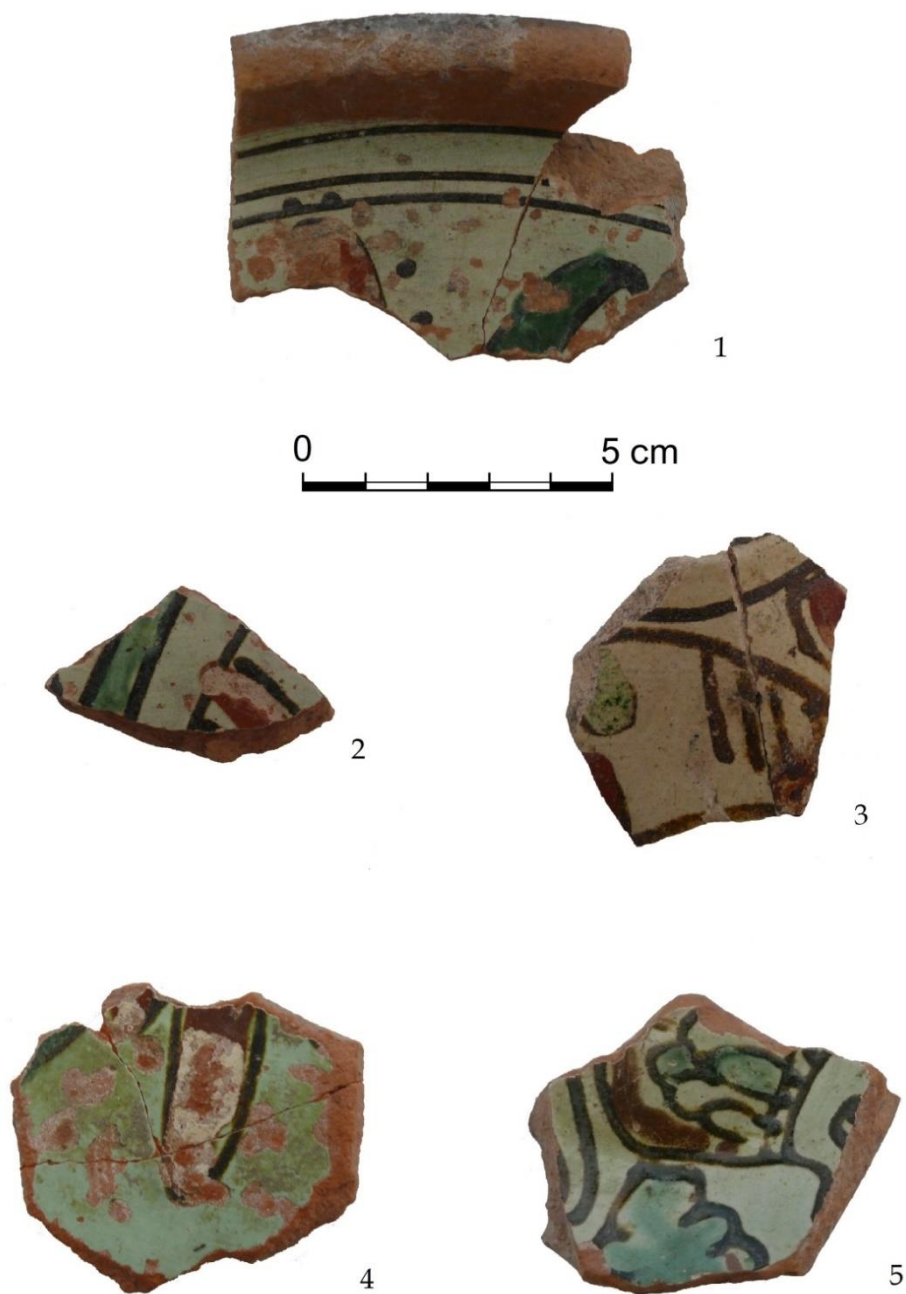
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**Fig. 1.** Oriental-influenced ceramic fragment discovered at Oradea-*Unirii* Plaza

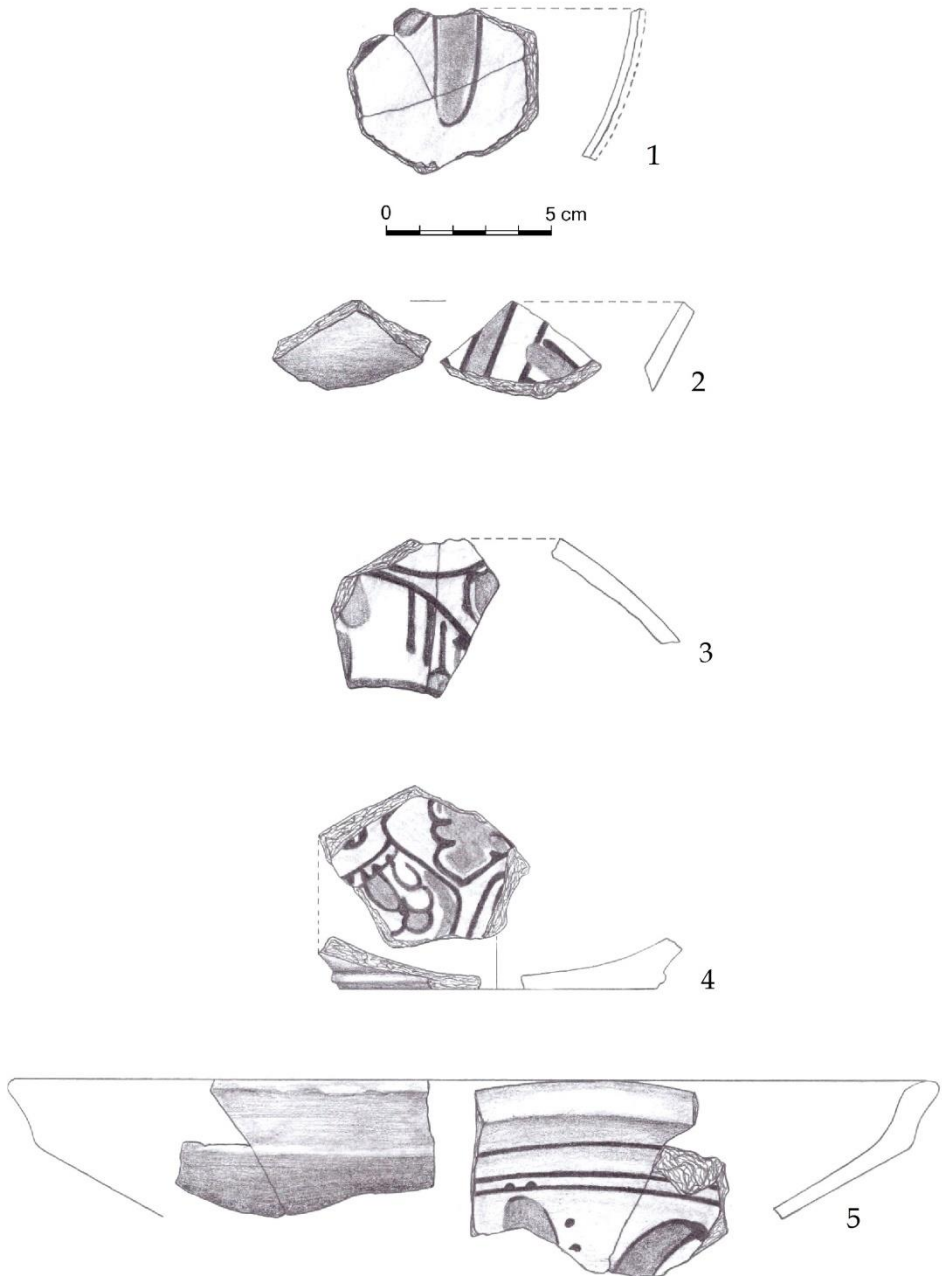


**Fig. 2.** Oriental-influenced ceramic discovered at Oradea-*Unirii Plaza*

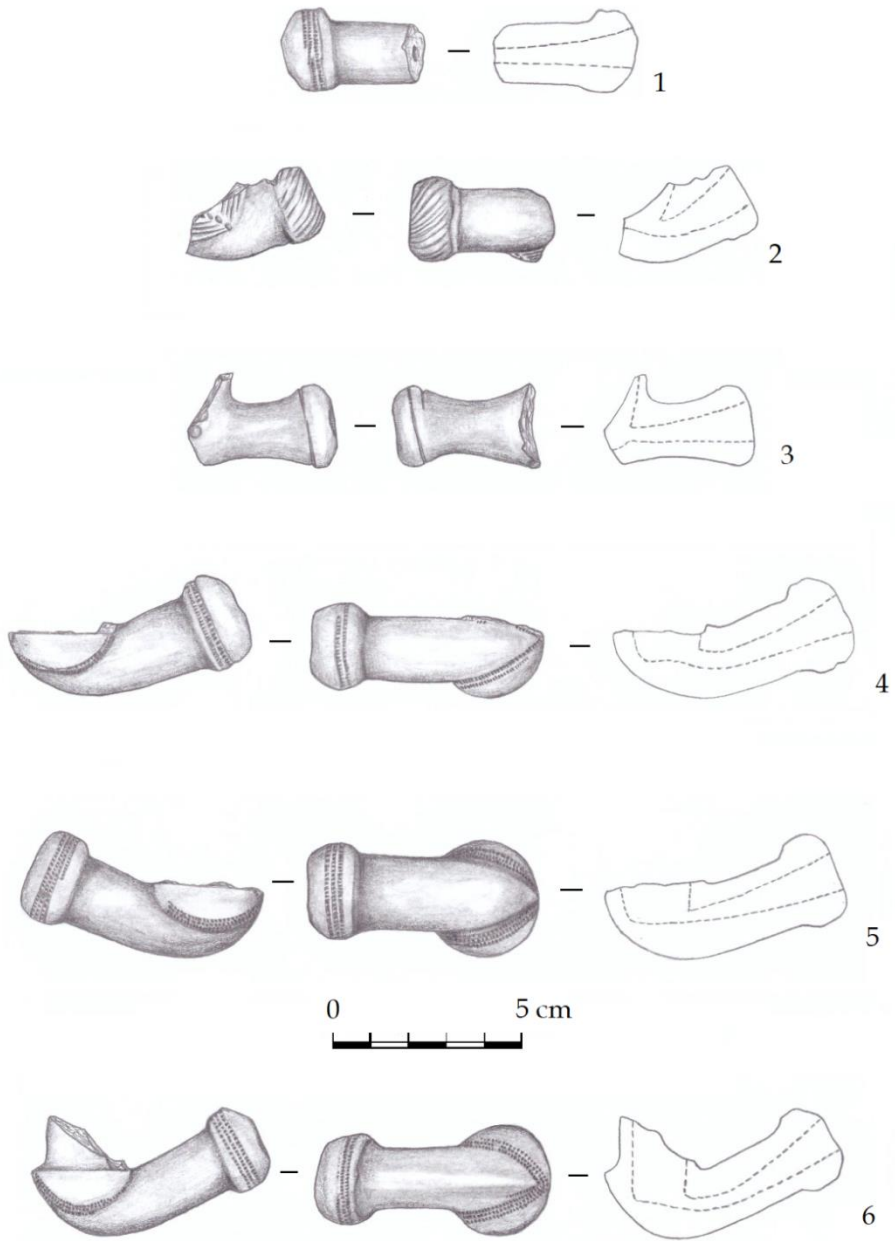


**Fig. 3.** Oriental-influenced ceramic discovered at Oradea-*Unirii Plaza*

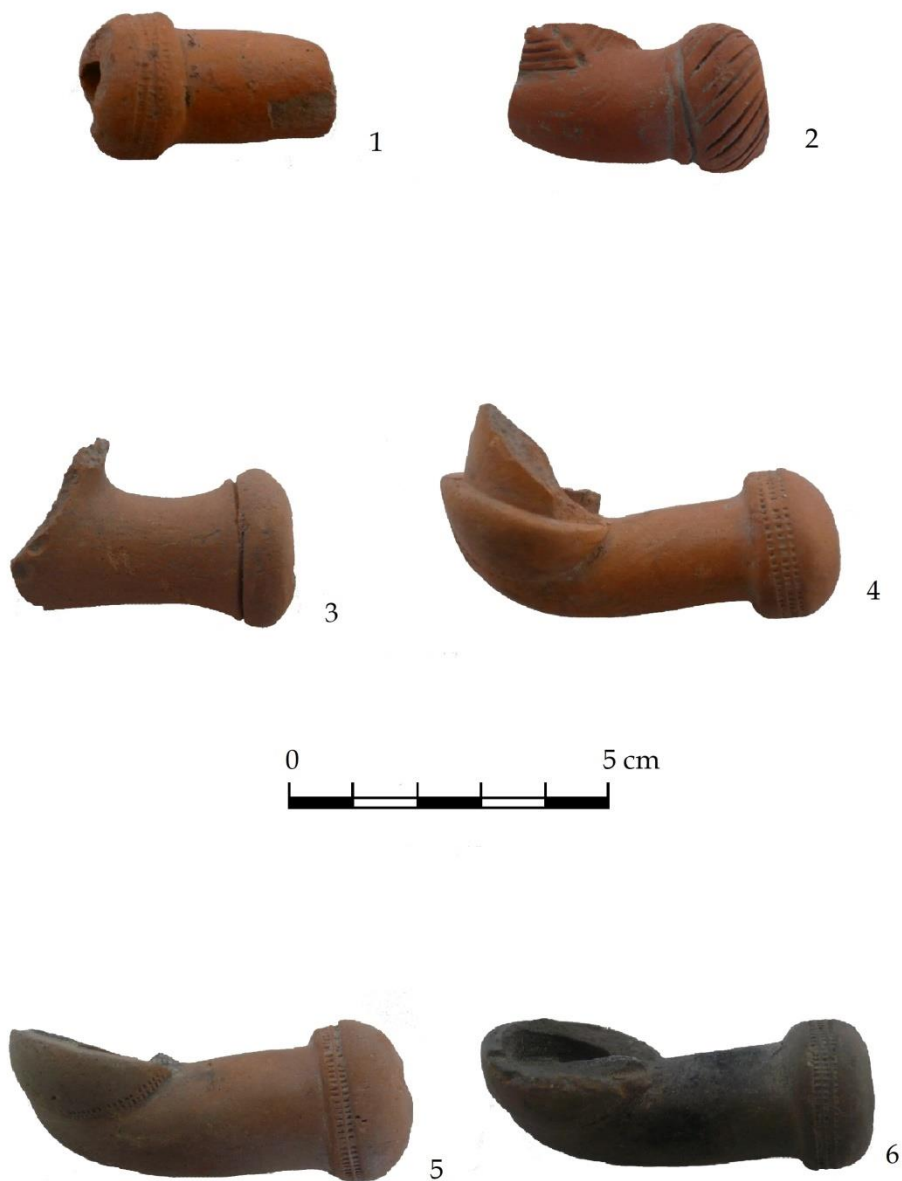




**Fig. 4.** Oriental-influenced ceramic discovered at Oradea-*Unirii Plaza*



**Fig. 5.** Clay pipes discovered at Oradea-Unirii Plaza



**Fig. 6.** Clay pipes discovered at Oradea-*Unirii Plaza*

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<b>ActaMN</b>	- Acta Musei Napocensis. Muzeul de Istorie a Transilvaniei. Cluj-Napoca.
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<b>Jászkunság</b>	- Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok Megyei Tudományos Egyesület. Szolnok.
<b>JHE</b>	- Journal of Human Evolution. Elsevier.
<b>JRGZM</b>	- Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums zu Mainz.
<b>Közlemények</b>	- Közlemények az Erdélyi Nemzeti Múzeum Érem - és Régiségtárából. Cluj.
<b>KST</b>	- Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı. Ankara.
<b>Kubaba</b>	- Kubaba. Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade Nova de Lisboa.
<b>Lumea nouă</b>	- Lumea nouă. București.
<b>Lupta</b>	- Lupta. Iași.
<b>Mannus</b>	- Mannus. Gesellschaft für Deutsche Vorgeschichte. Leipzig.
<b>Maqarnas</b>	- Muqarnas Online. An Annual on the Visual Cultures of the Islamic World. Cambridge.
<b>Marisia</b>	- Marisia. Muzeul Județean Târgu Mureș.
<b>MCA</b>	- Materiale și cercetări arheologice. București.
<b>ME</b>	- Memoria Ethnologica. Centrul Județean pentru Conservarea și Promovarea Culturii Tradiționale Maramureș. Baia Mare.
<b>MEFRA</b>	- Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Antiquité. Roma.
<b>MEJSR</b>	- Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research. International Digital Organization for Scientific Information. Deira, Dubai.
<b>MFME</b>	- A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve. Studia Archaeologica. Szeged.
<b>Mir nauki</b>	- Mir nauki, kulturni, obrazovania. Gorno-Altaysk.
<b>MN</b>	- Muzeul Național. Muzeul Național de Istorie a României. București
<b>Mots</b>	- Mots. Les langages du politique. ENS Editions. Paris.
<b>Muzeológia</b>	- Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo. Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave.
<b>Múzeum</b>	- Slovenské národné múzeum. Bratislava.

<b>Natura</b>	- Natura. Revistă pentru răspândirea științei. București.
<b>NK</b>	- Národní knihovna: knihovnická revue. Národní knihovna České republiky. Praga.
<b>Numizmatika</b>	- Numizmatika. Slovenská numizmatická spoločnosť. Bratislava.
<b>PA</b>	- Patrimonium Apulense. Direcția Județeană pentru Cultură Alba. Alba Iulia.
<b>PBF</b>	- Prähistorische Bronzefunde. München.
<b>PolSci</b>	- Romanian Journal of Political Science. Societatea Academică din România. București.
<b>Pontica</b>	- Pontica. Muzeul de Istorie Națională și Arheologie. Constanța.
<b>PQCS</b>	- Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society. University of San Carlos. Cebu.
<b>PZ</b>	- Prähistorische Zeitschrift. Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte, Institut für Prähistorische Archäologie. Berlin.
<b>Rațiunea</b>	- Rațiunea. Revistă bilunară de liberă cugetare. București.
<b>RB</b>	- Revista Bistriței. Complexul Muzeal Bistrița-Năsăud. Bistrița (continuă File de Istorie).
<b>RES</b>	- Review of European Studies. Canadian Center of Science and Education. Toronto.
<b>RevHisto</b>	- Revista de Historiografia. Instituto de Historiografía Julio Caro Baroja. Universidad Carlos III de Madrid.
<b>RHA</b>	- Revue historique des armées. Ministère de la Défense. Paris.
<b>RHSEE/RESEE</b>	- Revue historique du sud-est européen. Academia Română. București, Paris (din 1963 Revue des études sud-est européennes).
<b>RI</b>	- Revista de Istorie (din 1990 Revista istorică). Academia Română. București.
<b>RIR</b>	- Revista istorică română. Institutul de Istorie Națională din București.
<b>RMM-MIA</b>	- Revista muzeelor și monumentelor. Monumente Istorice și de Artă. București.
<b>Romantisme</b>	- Romantisme. Revue du dix-neuvième siècle. Editeur Armand Colin. Paris.
<b>România liberă</b>	- România liberă. București.
<b>Rossiyskaya istoriya</b>	- Rossiyskaya istoriya. Akademicheskii nauchno-izdatel'skiy, proizvodstvenno-poligraficheskiy i knigorasprostranitel'skiy tsentr Nauka. Moscova.
<b>RRH</b>	- Revue Roumaine d'Histoire. Academia Română. București.
<b>RRSE</b>	- Revista română de studii eurasiatice. Centrul de Studii Eurasiatice, Universitatea „Ovidius” Constanța.
<b>SA</b>	- Sociological Analysis. Oxford University Press. Oxford.
<b>SAA</b>	- Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica. Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași.
<b>SAI</b>	- Studii și articole de istorie. Societatea de Științe Istorice și Filologice a RPR. București.
<b>SArcheologiczne</b>	- Sprawozdania Archeologiczne. Instytut Archeologii i Etnologii PAN. Cracovia.



## Lista abrevierilor

<b>Sargetia</b>	- Sargetia. Acta Musei Devensis. Muzeul Civilizației Dacice și Romane Deva.
<b>SC</b>	- Studii și comunicări. Asociația Folcloriștilor și Etnografilor din județul Sibiu (din 1992 devine Studii și Comunicări de Etnologie).
<b>SCB</b>	- Studii și cercetări de bibliologie. Academia RPR. București.
<b>SCIV(A)</b>	- Studii și cercetări de istoria veche. București (din 1974, Studii și cercetări de istorie veche și arheologie).
<b>SCN</b>	- Studii și Cercetări de Numismatică. Institutul de Arheologie „Vasile Pârvan” București.
<b>SJ</b>	- Saalburg Jahrbuch. Bericht des Saalburg Museum. Mainz am Rhein.
<b>SJAHSS</b>	- Scholars Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Scholars Academic and Scientific Publishers (SAS).
<b>SlovArch</b>	- Slovenská Archeológia. Nitra.
<b>SlovNum</b>	- Slovenská numizmatika. Národný numizmatický komitet Slovenskej republiky a Archeologický ústav SAV. Nitra.
<b>SM</b>	- Svobodnaya mysl. Obshchestvo s ogranichennoy otvetstvennost'yu Politizdat. Moscova.
<b>SMIM</b>	- Studii și materiale de istorie modernă. Institutul de Istorie „Nicolae Iorga” al Academiei Române. București.
<b>SMIMed</b>	- Studii și materiale de istorie medie. Institutul de Istorie „Nicolae Iorga” al Academiei Române. București.
<b>Socialismul</b>	- Socialismul. București.
<b>SP</b>	- Studii de Preistorie. Asociația Română de Arheologie. București.
<b>SS</b>	- The Social Sciences. Western Social Association. Dubai.
<b>Stâna</b>	- Stâna. Revistă profesională și de cultură. Organ al oierilor din întreaga țară. Poiana Sibiului.
<b>Steaua</b>	- Steaua: literară, artistică și culturală. Uniunea Scriitorilor din România. Cluj-Napoca.
<b>StudiaTC</b>	- Studia Theologia Catholica. Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca.
<b>StudiaUBBH</b>	- Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Series Historia. Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca.
<b>Studii</b>	- Studii. Revistă de istorie. (din 1974 Revista de istorie și din 1990 Revista istorică). Academia Română. București.
<b>Suceava</b>	- Anuarul Muzeului Județean Suceava.
<b>SUCH</b>	- Studia Universitatis Cibiniensis, Serie Historica. Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” Sibiu.
<b>Syria</b>	- Syria. Archéologie, art et histoire. Revue d'art oriental et d'archéologie. Institut français du Proche-Orient.
<b>Századok</b>	- Századok. A Magyar Történelmi Társulat folyóirata. Budapest.
<b>TAD</b>	- Türk Arkeoloji Dergisi. Ankara.
<b>Telegraphul</b>	- Telegraphul. București.
<b>Terra Sebus</b>	- Terra Sebus. Acta Musei Sabesiensis. Muzeul Municipal „Ioan Raica” Sebeș.
<b>Thraco-Dacica</b>	- Thraco-Dacica. Institutul Român de Tracologie. București.
<b>Transilvania</b>	- Transilvania. Centrul Cultural Interetnic Transilvania. Sibiu.

<b>Tyragetia</b>	- Tyragetia. Muzeul Național de Arheologie și Istorie a Moldovei. Chișinău.
<b>UPA</b>	- Universitätsforschungen zur Prähistorischen Archäologie. Berlin.
<b>Vestnik Moskovskaya</b>	- Vestnik Moskovskaya gosudarstvennaya khudozhestvenno-promyshlennaya akademiya imeni S. G. Stroganova. Moscova.
<b>Vestnik Omskogo</b>	- Vestnik Omskogo universiteta. Seriya Istoricheskiye nauki. Omskij Gosudarstvennyj Universitet. Omsk.
<b>Vestnik Tatarskogo</b>	- Vestnik Tatarskogo gosudarstvennogo gumanitarno-pedagogicheskogo universiteta. Filologija i kul'tura. Kazan.
<b>VI</b>	- Voprosy istorii. Institut russkoy istorii Rossiyskoy akademii nauk. Moscova.
<b>VF</b>	- Voprosy filosofii. Izdatel'stvo «Nauka». Moscova.
<b>VTT</b>	- Veszprémi Történelmi Társaság és Veszprém Megyei Múzeumi Igazgatóság kiadványa. Veszprém.
<b>WASJ</b>	- World Applied Sciences Journal. International Digital Organization for Scientific Information. Deira, Dubai.
<b>Xenopoliana</b>	- Xenopoliana. Buletin al Fundației Academice „A. D. Xenopol” Iași.
<b>Ziridava</b>	- Ziridava. Muzeul Județean Arad.