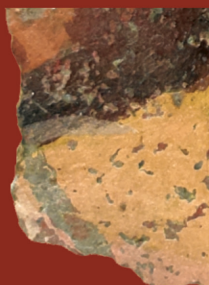


DISSERTATIONES ARCHAEOLOGICAE

ex Instituto Archaeologico Universitatis de Rolando Eötvös nominatae



Ser. 3. No. 8. | 2020

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Dissertationes Archaeologicae ex Instituto Archaeologico
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Layout and cover design: Gábor Váczi

Budapest 2020

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Pottery production of the settlement complex of Brigetio

Gabriella G. DELBÓ

Komáromi Klapka György Museum
Komárom

delbogabi.kgym@gmail.com

Abstract

Abstract of PhD thesis submitted in 2020 to the Archaeology Doctoral Programme, Doctoral School of History, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest under the supervision of László Borhy.

The aim of the dissertation

The dissertation discusses the pottery production of the settlement complex of Brigetio. The full typological and chronological overview of provincial pottery types comprises the core of the study, through the evaluation of pottery material from the civil town, partially from the legionary fortress and the military town, as well as ceramic vessels found as grave goods in the cemeteries. The role of the pottery workshops established on military territory at Gerhát and Kurucdomb in the pottery supply of various settlement units is also thoroughly examined.

The survey covers the full duration of the existence of the settlement, therefore it includes the evaluation of pottery types of both the early and the late Roman periods.

Pottery types discussed in the dissertation are as follows: 1. Grey coarse pottery, 2. Self-coloured pottery, 3. Red colour-coated ware, 4. Marbled ware, 5. Pottery with colour-coated horizontal bands, 6. Imitations of so-called ‘pompeian red ware’, 7. Pannonian grey slip ware, 8. Imitations of relief terra sigillata vessels, 9. ‘Firnware’: a. Thin walled beakers (rough cast and folded beakers), b. Other rough beakers, cups and jugs, c. Imitations of black slipped ware, d. Other black slipped beakers, jugs and bowls, 10. Pottery with figural decoration: face pots, head pots, 11. Glazed pottery, 12. Burnished ware, 13. Mortar, 14. Incenser bowl, 15. Handmade pottery.

The research of pottery production in Brigetio has a long history, however the only study summarizing the topic was written by K. Póczy more than 70 years ago.¹ Unfortunately her doctoral thesis from 1947 entitled *Brigetio kerámiája* (The pottery of Brigetio) has never been published, also its plates were lost during the following decades, thus the interpretation of the text of the manuscript became impossible. In the 1970s É. Bónis conducted the survey of various ceramic assemblages,² the ceramic material of the pottery workshops among them, however a full publication of the Gerhát pottery workshop has never been completed. Research of local pottery received almost no attention in the 1980s; the topic came somewhat to the fore again with the evaluation of archaeological material unearthed at the Brigetio-Szőny-Vásártér excavations from 1992 onwards.³ Although a few pieces belonging to one of the above-mentioned

1 PÓCZY 1947.

2 B. BÓNIS 1970; B. BÓNIS 1975; B. BÓNIS 1976; B. BÓNIS 1977; B. BÓNIS 1979.

3 BARTUS et al. 2012; BARTUS et al. 2013; BARTUS et al. 2014; BARTUS et al. 2015; BARTUS et al. 2016; BARTUS et al. 2017.

pottery types were published individually, such as local imitations of imported pottery or vessels resembling metal or glass prototypes, these were not examined in their original context.⁴

The structure and methodology of the dissertation

In the first chapter of the dissertation entitled “Introduction”, I describe the aims of the study as well as the methods used. In the “Methodology” section I explain the principles of material collection and the steps of processing pottery material.

In the framework of the dissertation, the ceramic find material of the following settlement and cemetery units was processed: the civil town, the military town, the legionary fortress, cemeteries I, II and III belonging to the municipium, cemeteries of canabae – so-called Járóka, Sörházkert, Gerhát, Caecilia cemetery –, the late Roman Mercator and Cellás cemeteries (graveyard I-IV excavated by I. Paulovics I., the late Roman grave groups of L. Barkóczy from 1957/1959), and the so-called Gerhát and Kurucdomb pottery workshops (*Fig. 1*). The catalogue mainly includes the pottery material recovered from the cemeteries, the pottery workshops and the 1942 excavation campaign in the legionary fortress, as well as stray finds and the ceramic finds from the collections of the Hungarian National Museum and the Kuny Domokos Museum in Tata. The catalogue altogether contains 1252 entities, the related illustrations are presented on Plates. The already processed find material from the 1992–1996 excavation campaigns of the civil town is depicted in Type Plates, the detailed typological evaluation of the individual pottery fragments was added to the dissertation as Appendix. This latter comprises 913 entities. The terminology used in the descriptions is presented in the ‘Methodology’ chapter.

The second chapter includes the summary of research history, the first part focusing on the site itself, while the second part features the pottery research of Brigetio from the 1930s up to the present day.

The third chapter introduces the ceramic find material processed in the framework of the dissertation.

The fourth chapter is the most important section of the study, as it includes the typology itself. Here, the processed ceramic finds are presented categorized according to individual pottery material types and formal sub-types. I surveyed the ceramic find material in detail both in a local context and the context of Pannonia and the Roman Empire.

The fifth chapter includes the evaluation of the ceramic find material divided into three main chronological units, which however do not correlate with the classic division of early, middle and late Roman periods. The basis of my chronological division was the duration of existence of the military pottery workshops, especially the Gerhát pottery workshop producing kitchenware (the Kurucdomb pottery workshop: from Trajan’s rule until the Marcomannic Wars, the heydays of production during the rule of the Antonine dynasty; the Gerhát pottery workshop: from Hadrian’s rule until 230). According to this division, the first chronological unit embraces the period from the Roman settlement in the area to the establishment of the pottery workshops (under the Flavian dynasty and the early Antonine dynasty). The second chronological unit includes the period during which the pottery workshops functioned (under

⁴ FÉNYES 2003a; FÉNYES 2003b; FÉNYES 2003c; FÉNYES 2003d; FÉNYES 2004.

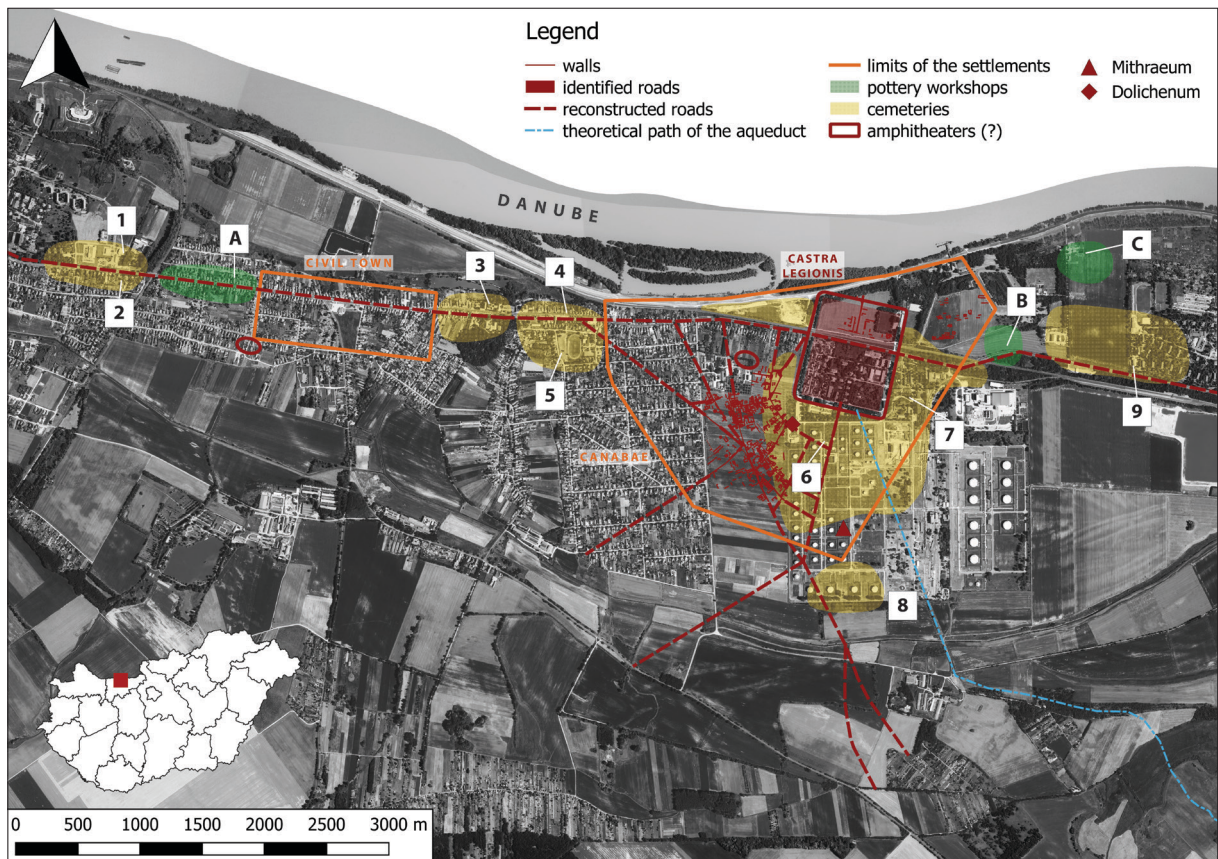


Fig. 1. Map of Brigetio (by László Rupnik). 1 – Cemetery III of municipium, 2 – cemetery II of municipium, 3 – cemetery I of municipium, 4 – Sörházkert cemetery, 5 – Járóka cemetery, 6 – Mercator cemetery, 7 – Cellás cemetery, 8 – Caecilia cemetery, 9 – Gerhát cemetery, A – Pottery workshop of municipium, B – Gerhát pottery workshop, C – pottery workshop at Kurucdomb.

the Antonine and Severan dynasties), and the third chronological unit, already belonging to the late Roman age, is the period following the abandonment of the pottery workshops (from the 2nd half of the 3rd century to the end of the 4th century AD).

In my dissertation I surveyed the origins and spread of certain ceramic forms as well as the use of various decoration techniques. I also examined the available data on pottery trade within the province of Pannonia. The production programme of the Gerhát pottery workshop and the problematics of the civil town's pottery workshop are also discussed in this chapter.

The sixth chapter includes a summary on the pottery use of the settlement and cemetery units and the relation between these.

The last part of the dissertation comprises the bibliography, the Appendix including the pottery typology of the 1992–1999 excavation campaigns at the Szöny-Vásártér site, the catalogue, and finally figures and plates with the drawings of ceramic finds described in the catalogue.

The results of the dissertation

Below I summarize the results achieved through the evaluation, typological classification, as well as the spatial and chronological spread analysis of the almost two thousand items processed in the framework of the dissertation.

From the era of the Flavian dynasty and the early Antonine dynasty, that is, the period between the Roman conquest and the establishment of the military pottery workshops, the data available on pottery use is so scarce that it only allows us to draw the most general conclusions. The 1st century AD ditch system crossing cemetery III of the civil town as well as the early burials of the cemeteries which are dated by the coins of Domitian and Nerva, yielded common types of grey coarse pottery and self-coloured pottery otherwise frequent in graves. No closed layer from the end of the 1st century AD could be documented at the Szőny-Vásártér site located in the territory of the civil town, which belonged to my research area. The earliest layer dated between 80–120 yielded grey pots, self-coloured jugs, marbled pots as well as semispherical bowls.

Pottery types and forms show a rich and diversified picture during the Antonine and Severan dynasties. This period correlates with the existence of the Kurucdomb and Gerhát pottery workshops and the graveyards established along the limes road which were mainly used up to the 3rd century AD. The era saw the evolving of the civil and military towns which thrived in the Severan booming years after the devastation of the Marcomannic Wars, and were abandoned by the end of the century following the Barbaric offensives in the middle of the 3rd century AD.

The dominance of grey coarse ware and self-coloured ware in the pottery material is not surprising as these were commonly used for cooking, baking and storing as well as tableware. In the 2nd century AD both pottery types were characterised by a variety of forms produced and used parallelly. Later, in the first half of the 3rd century the number of different ceramic types dropped and pottery use shows a considerably more uniform picture in both the settlements and the cemeteries. Among the grey coarse ware pots, bowls, plates and lids are characteristic, beakers occur almost only in graves. The majority of these types were produced at the Gerhát pottery workshop. Three-legged vessels are exceptionally rare and can be dated to the second half of the 2nd century. Although examples of the combed decoration of Celtic origin can still be observed on pottery in the second half of the 2nd century, the majority of the vessels were decorated with incised vertical, wavy grooves on the rim, neck or shoulder, more characteristic to Roman pottery tradition (*Fig. 2*).

In this period, beside the characteristic types of self-coloured pottery including jugs, plates, beakers and mugs, rare forms such as situlae, coin-boxes, phiolae, jars, beakers with oblique canelure on the belly, the so-called Germanic beaker type of imported Raetian ware as well as the wash-bowls with wide, vertical handles also occur (*Fig. 3*).

The proportion of painted or red colour-coated pottery is much lower in the ceramic material. Characteristic forms of red colour-coated pottery were jugs, bowls and beakers the form of which show strong influences of imported ceramics (thin-walled cups from northern Italy, terra sigillata, thin-walled 'Firnissware' beakers, Raetian pottery). Cups and lids are rare. Red colour-coated ware is more characteristic in the 2nd century AD but was suppressed by the beginning of the 3rd century, after the Marcomannic Wars, and only appears again in small numbers in late Roman cemeteries (*Fig. 4.1*).

Marbled ware, also produced at the Gerhát and Kurucdomb pottery workshops, was commonly used in the 2nd century AD. Beside jugs and bowls which often resemble terra sigillata, metal or glass vessels, a few pots, cups and lids also occur. In most cases the marbled decora-

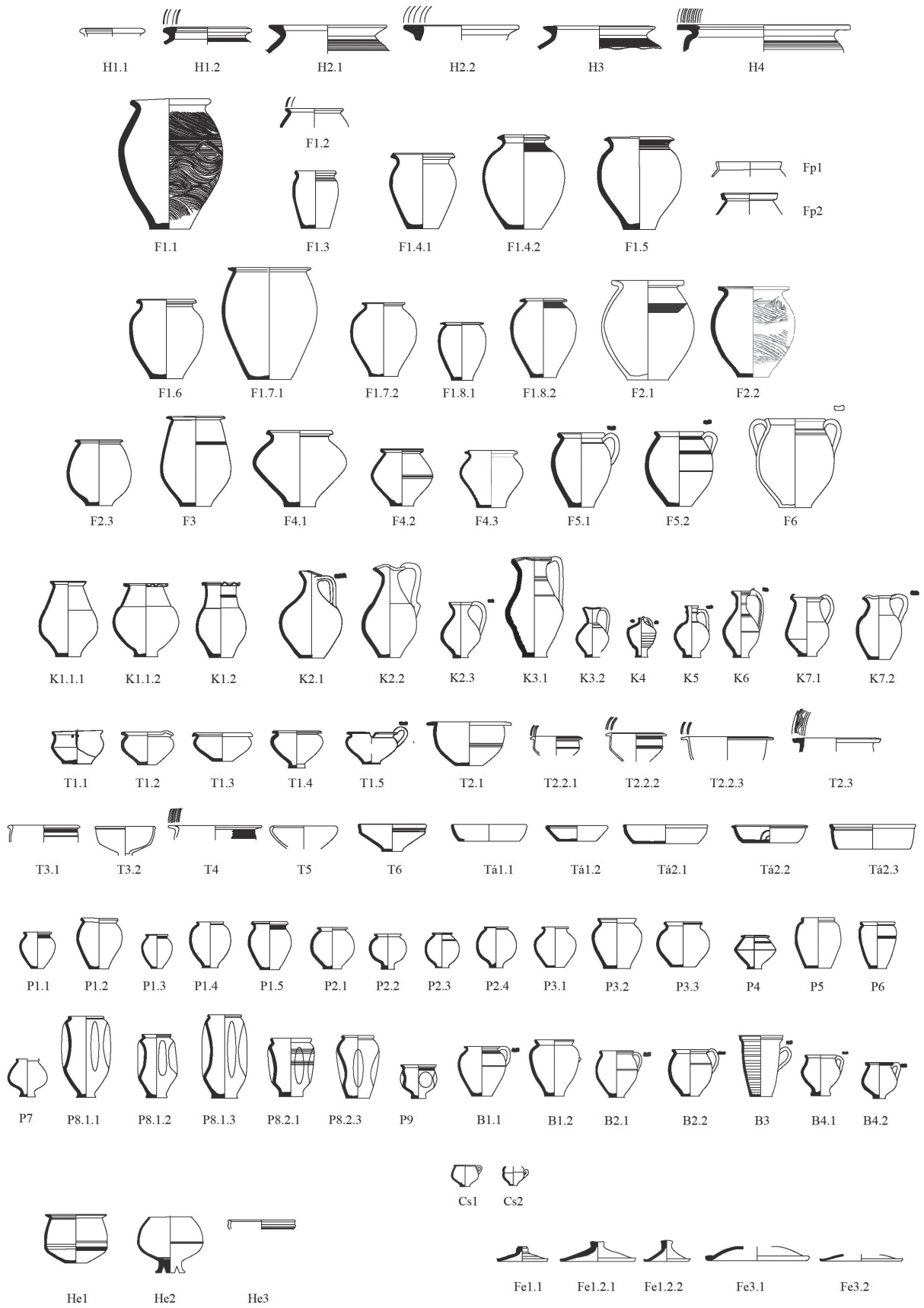


Fig. 2. Typology of grey coarse pottery.

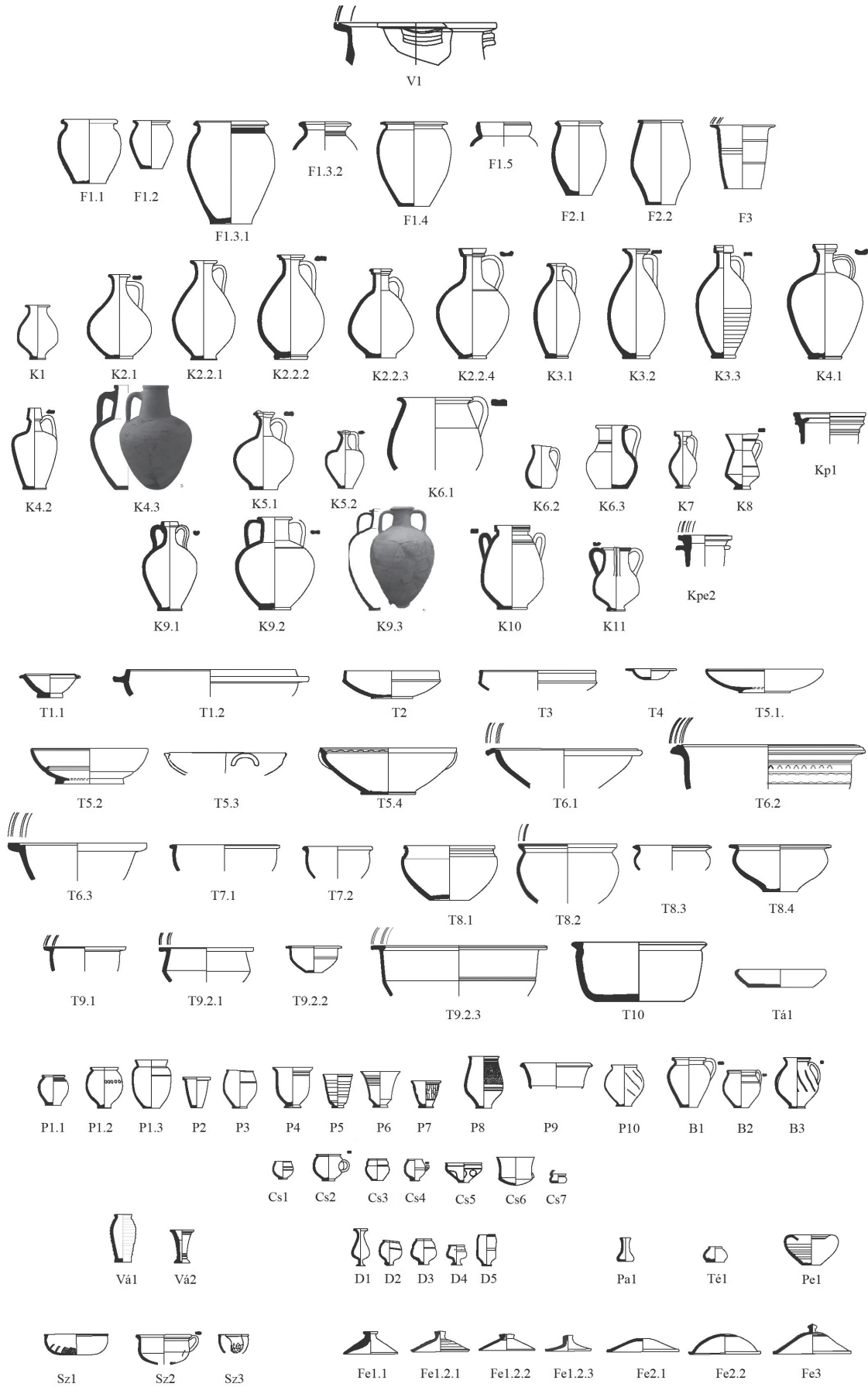


Fig. 3. Typology of self-coloured pottery.

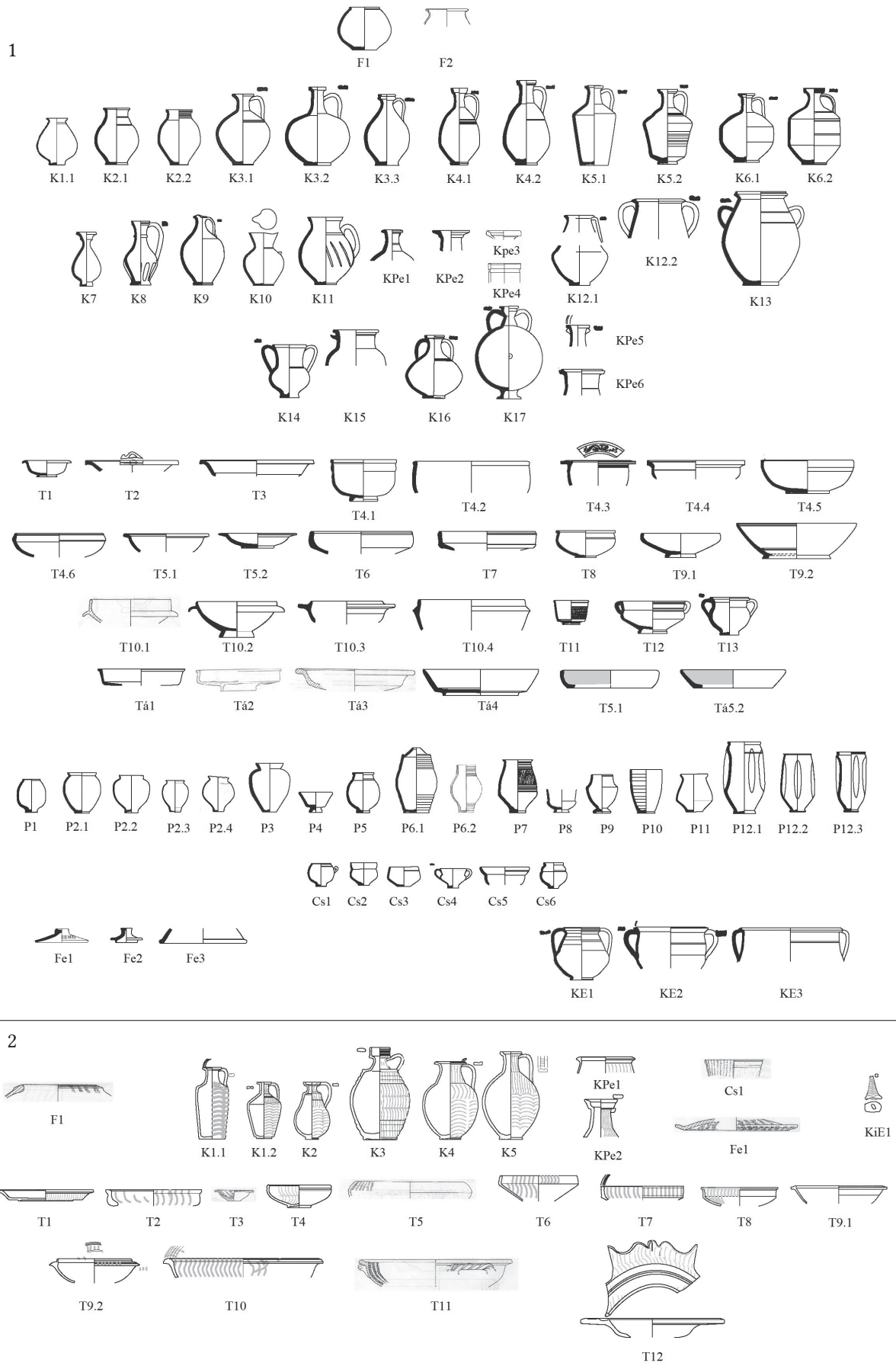


Fig. 4. 1 – Typology of red colour-coated pottery, 2 – Typology of marbled ware.

tion was applied directly onto the surface of the vessel, while in some rare instances a clear coating was added between the surface and the painted layer (*Fig. 4.2*).

In the second half of the 2nd century AD the Gerhát pottery workshop was one of the most important production hubs of pottery with colour-coated horizontal bands. Pots, jugs, three-handled vessels as well as vessels with roundish belly and cylindrical neck occur in the cemeteries and the civil town until the second half/third quarter of the 3rd century AD. Depending on the form, the painted decoration was done in the same fashion: in case of jugs and three-handled vessels, the red / brownish red coating was applied on the middle of the belly, while in case of the other vessel forms the upper two-third of the body was painted. There are some decorative tendencies to be observed on the vessels, therefore it is possible to identify items belonging to the same production series (*Fig. 5.1*).

The painted imitations of so-called pompeian red ware only occur in this period. They were common mainly in the archaeological material of the civil town and evidence shows that the type was produced at the Gerhát pottery workshop also (*Fig. 5.2*).

Grey and red colour versions of Pannonian grey slip ware, either with stamped patterns or without decoration, were characteristic from the middle of the 2nd century AD and are among the types produced at the Gerhát pottery workshop. Beakers should be highlighted as they are not only rare in Pannonian context but were totally unknown from Brigetio up to this day. Special attention should be paid to the steep-walled beakers decorated with barbotine, as they seem to cluster in the area. The forms of Pannonian grey slip ware as well as certain stamped motifs follow Italian and Gaulish terra sigillata prototypes. Vessels produced at the Gerhát pottery workshop were also found at Tokod and several fragments suggest regional trade with Aquincum and western Pannonian workshops (*Fig. 5.3*).

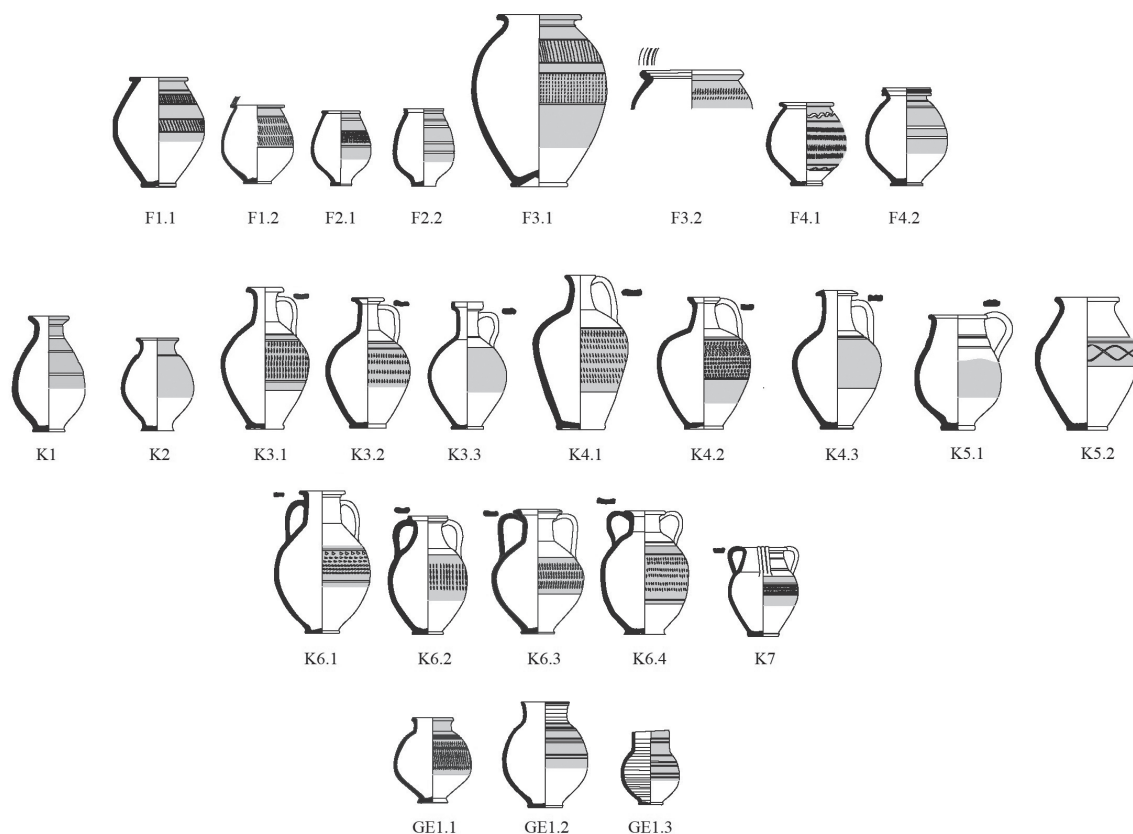
Imitations of relief terra sigillata follow southern and middle Gaulish as well as Rheinzabern patterns. These vessels were produced during the reign of Hadrian up to the beginning of the Antonine dynasty. The fragments found at Brigetio show strong connections partly with the so-called Kiscelli pottery workshop of Aquincum as well as the so-called Gázgyár pottery workshop but partly also with relief terra sigillata imitations from Tokod, Esztergom and Bény.

Part of the thin-walled beakers (rough cast and folded beakers) are imitations of the so-called 'Firnware'. These pieces are eggshaped or Faltenbecher-type beakers with smooth or grainy surface, characteristic of the 2nd and beginning of the 3rd century AD. A considerable amount of beakers, mugs and one-handled jugs from the 2nd century AD with the same surface treatment are present in the examined pottery material, several of them are decorated with cannelures (*Fig. 6.1.2*).

Imitations of black slip ware belonging to the Niederbieber 33a and 33c types appear in the archaeological material of both the civil town and the cemeteries in the first half of the 3rd century AD. Based on the materials testing carried out by E. Harsányi, these pieces were produced in the pottery workshops of Intercisa and Aquincum. Further beakers and a small aryballos-type vessel also belongs to the same period, however the black slip of these artefacts represents a different quality (*Fig. 6.1.1*).

The pottery workshops at Brigetio also produced grey and self-coloured versions of figural pottery (face pots and head pots). Based on their western analogues the red slip beakers can be dated to the end of the 2nd century – beginning of the 3rd century AD.

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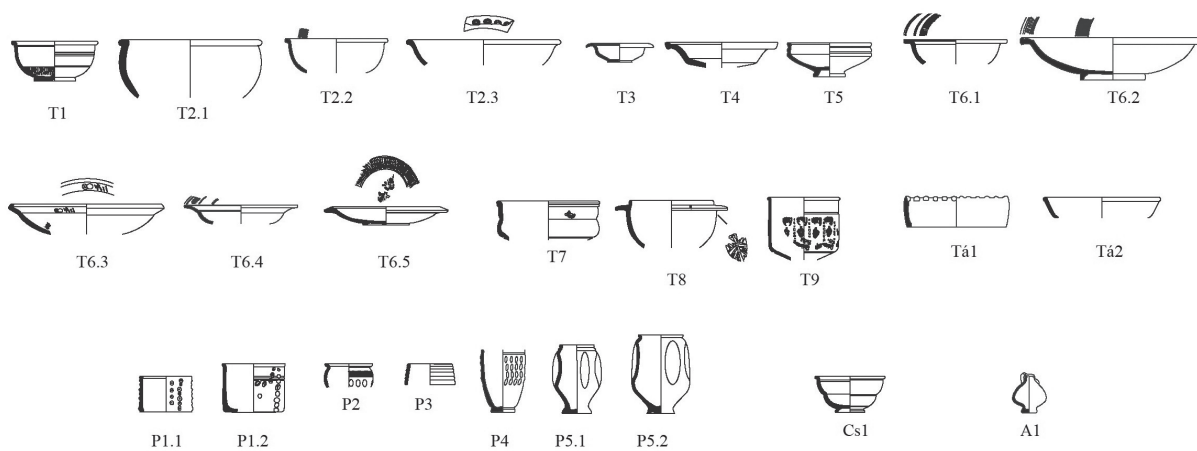


Fig. 5. 1 –Typology of potteries with colour-coated horizontal bands, 2 – Typology of imitations of so-called „pompeian red ware”, 3 – Typology of pannonian grey slip ware (PGW).

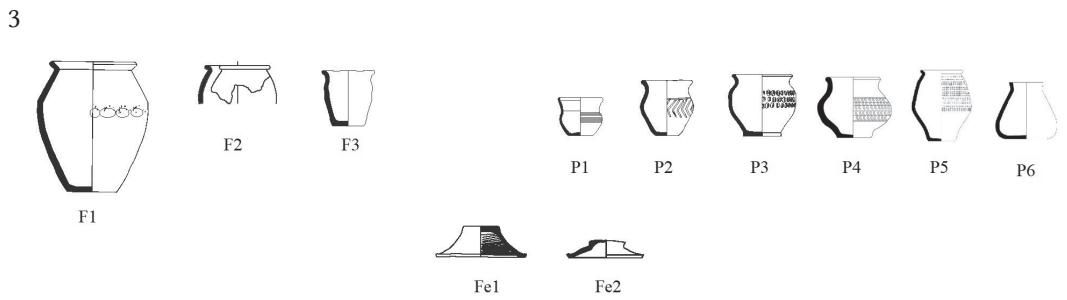
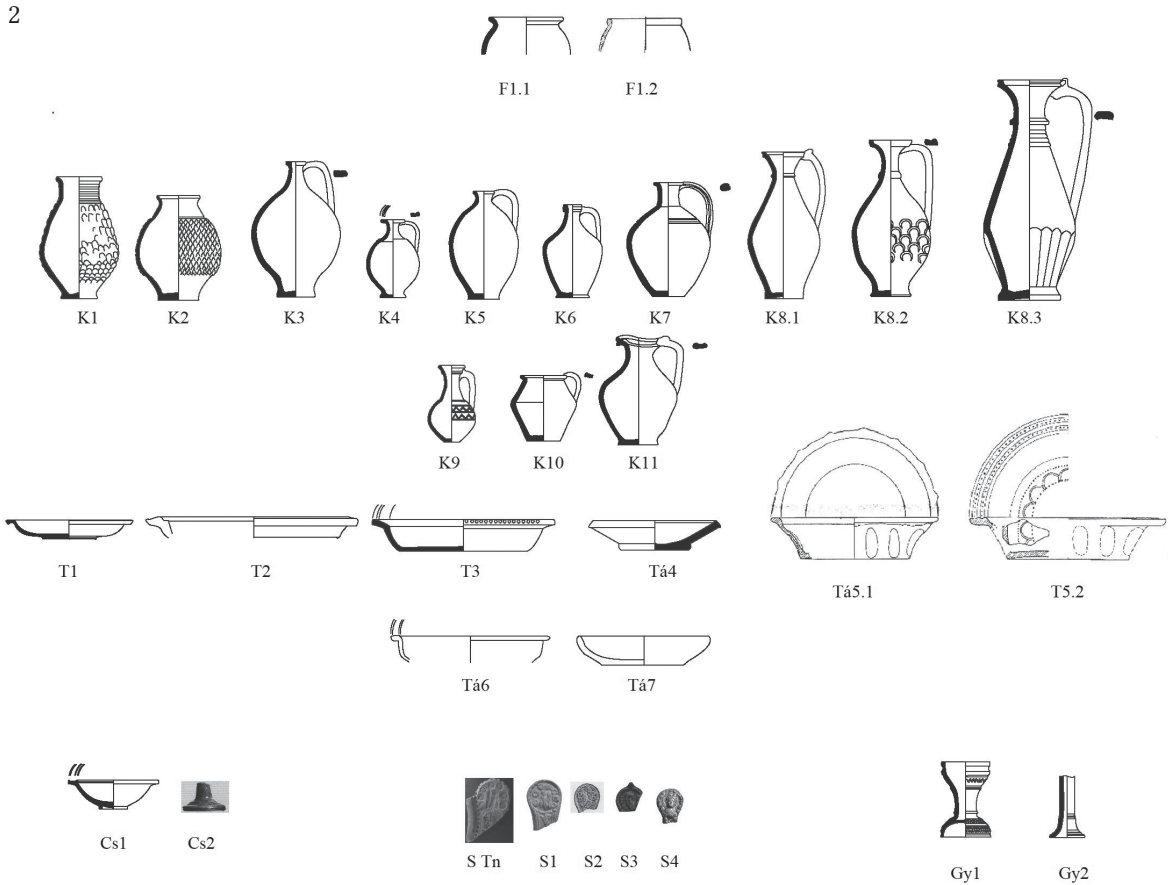
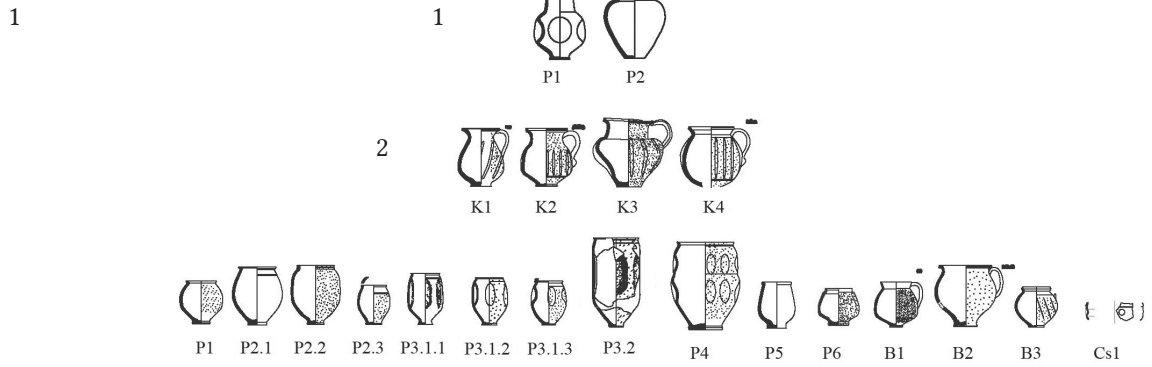


Fig. 6. 1 – Typology of „Firnware” – 1.1 – imitations of black slipped ware, 1.2 – Thin walled pottery with or without rough cast, 2 – Typology of glazed pottery, 3 – Typology of handmade pottery.

A flat bowl belonging to the early types of glazed ware was found among the workshop waste of the Gerhát pottery workshop. A handle of a casserole with the depiction of Bacchus came to light in cemetery III of the civil town, while its clay negative was found in the civil town itself. Both these items can be dated to the second half of the 2nd century AD (*Fig. 6.2*).

As for mortaria, the self-coloured, red colour-coated and striped rim versions were characteristic during the reign of the Antonine and Severan dynasties. All three versions were produced at the Gerhát pottery workshop. The stamp of Fortis can be observed on two rim fragments known as stray finds, while another fragment with a floral pattern (tendrils?) came to light from the Antonine-Severan age layer of the filling of the so-called Cellar no. 1 in the civil town.⁵ An analogue of this latter piece is known from Raetia (*Fig. 7.2*).

Self-coloured as well as grey incenser bowls were both produced at the Gerhát pottery workshop, and appear frequently in the Antonine-Severan period archaeological material of the civil town and cemeteries (*Fig. 7.1*).

Beside wheel-thrown ceramics, handmade pottery is also present among the finds, although in very low numbers. Typical forms are the pots, mugs, lids and cups, usually with combed decoration as well as a finger-impressed patterns, incised linear decoration and sculptural knobs. These vessels were mainly used in the 2nd century AD, but in the archaeological material of the civil town they can be traced up to the first third of the 3rd century (*Fig. 6.3*).

In summary, it can be stated that the pottery material of Brigetio shows the largest variety of types and forms during the Antonine and Severan era. Celtic influence can barely be documented, beside the tradition of combed decoration and stamped patterns it is only the pottery with colour-coated horizontal bands, a type originating from southern Pannonia, which shows La Tène traits. Strong influences of imported pottery types as well as metal and glass vessels

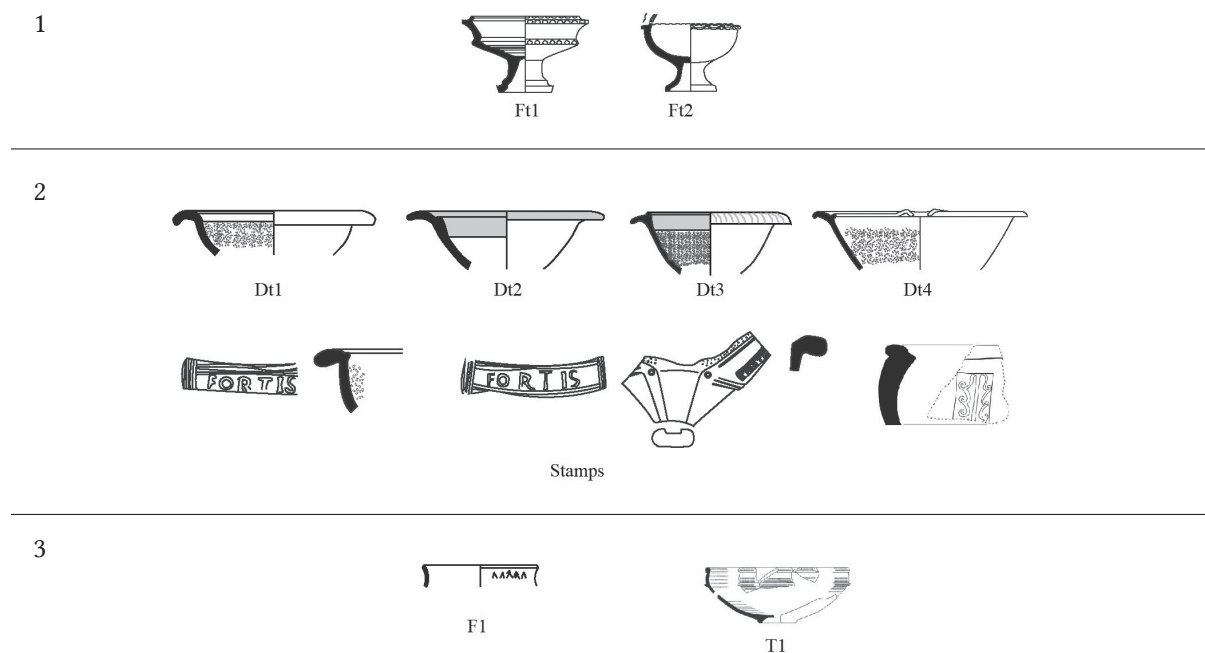


Fig. 7. 1 – Tipology of incenser bowls, 2 – Tipology of mortaria, 3 – Tipology of burnished ware.

5 HAJDU 2013, 21, Kat. 576, VII. t./108.

can however be observed in the forms of locally produced pottery. Numerous types were among those produced at the Gerhát pottery workshop. The find assemblage related to a pottery storage of the Kurucdomb pottery workshop, which can be dated to the second half of the 2nd century AD, mainly included flawed self-coloured vessels such as a jug, bowls and plates.

The above-mentioned period, as already stated in my summary on typology, is strongly interconnected with the existence of the Gerhát pottery workshop. Already É. Bónis suggested that the Kurucdomb pottery workshop mainly producing ornamental vessels and the Gerhát pottery workshop specialised in kitchenware may be interpreted as different branches of the same workshop which broadened its offer continuously.⁶

Most of the archaeological material from the Gerhát pottery workshop, more important from my dissertation's point of view, consists of workshop waste which came to light rather from the levelling layer instead of the filling of the actual pottery kilns. Therefore, in itself it does not provide much information regarding the inner chronology of the workshop. The catalogue of the dissertation includes 293 fragments, representing the full variety of the pottery material (Fig. 8). Based on the typological evaluation, red colour-coated ware, Pannonian grey slip ware as well as marbled ware belonged to the earlier, Antonine period of the workshop. Many overlaps can be documented between the forms and rim types of self-coloured and painted pottery, therefore it is certain that the same vessel forms were produced both without any painting or decorated with horizontal bands as well as in red painted or marbled versions. Large sized jugs and ribbed bowls with bevelled walls represent peculiar types in the pottery material, which have not yet been found in either the civil town or the cemeteries. Products of the local workshops are not only known from Britetio itself but also in the neighbouring vicus of Almásfüzitő and at Ács-Vaspuszta.

Late Roman pottery is to be found in the legionary fortress as well as the late Roman cemeteries and grave groups of Brigetio. Not only the number of pottery types but also the variety of forms fell back considerably by this period, although the era saw the rise of glazed ware.

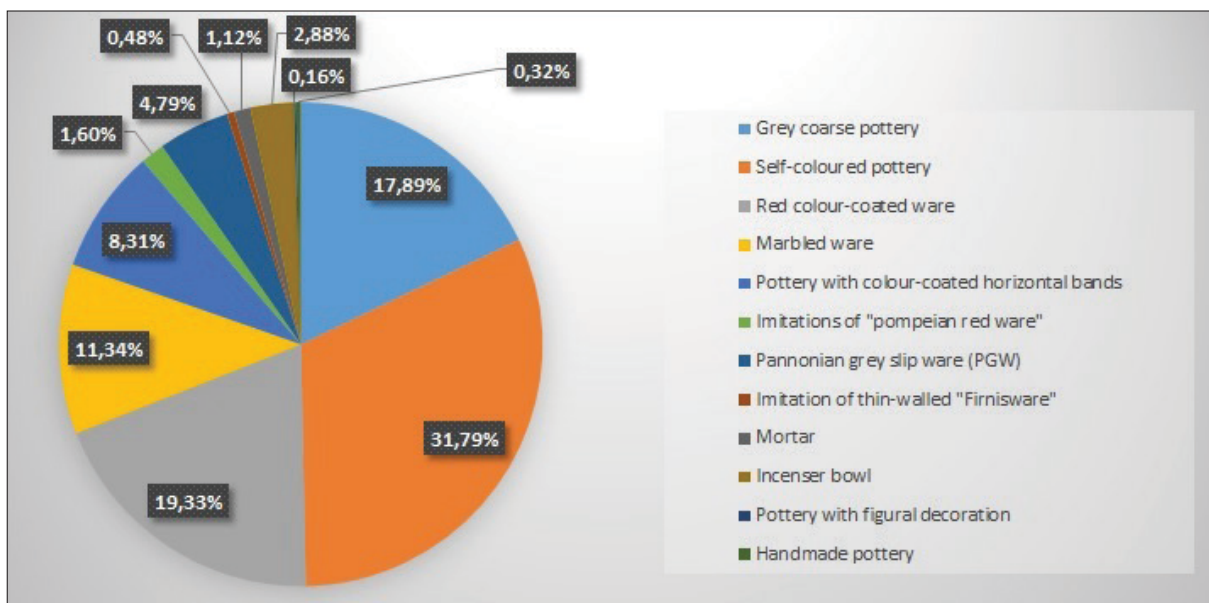


Fig. 8. The types of pottery of the Gerhát pottery workshop (percentage, 626 p.).

6 BÓNIS 1979, 149.

As for pottery types, a standardisation can be documented: the same forms of jugs, bowls, plates and cups appear among the grey coarse pottery, the red colour-coated ware as well as the glazed ware. Lead pottery forms of the late Roman period, often resembling glass and metal prototypes, were the jugs with a flaring rim and a vertical rib on the neck as well as jugs with a collared rim and bowls with inverted rim.

Jugs, mugs, beakers and plates were produced from the typical coarse, grainy ceramic material characteristic of grey coarse ware (Fig. 2). Only a small number of red colour-coated ware is known from late Roman graves such as a bowl with ring bottom, a ceramic imitation of a cylindrical glass beaker, a two-handled bowl and a flask (Fig. 4.1). This latter piece represents a rare form, its analogues are known in glazed version. Glazed ware includes various pots, jugs, bowls, plates, cups, beakers and mortars. Vessels defined as candle holders are rare and can be dated to the second half of the 4th century AD. In several cases, an engobe was applied on the surface of the vessel beneath the glazing (Fig. 6.2). Only four examples of burnished ware characteristic of the late Roman period were found in the surveyed territory (Fig. 7.3). The location of the workshop which produced the above-mentioned late Roman pottery is still unknown.

Results on the pottery use of the various settlement units and cemeteries can be summarized as follows.

My survey touched only slightly upon the archaeological material of the military town, therefore the data gathered from here is not suitable for more detailed analysis. In the case of the legionary fortress the results have to be considered carefully as the excavation of 1942 (the material of which I examined in the framework of the dissertation) was carried out in survey ditches and without an accurate documentation. The excavation basically yielded late Roman period pottery, with a few fragments which fit the pottery types produced at the Gerhát pottery workshop. From the point of view of my dissertation, this excavation serves as basis for late Roman period pottery typology, however it does not provide any further data regarding the pottery use of Roman military.

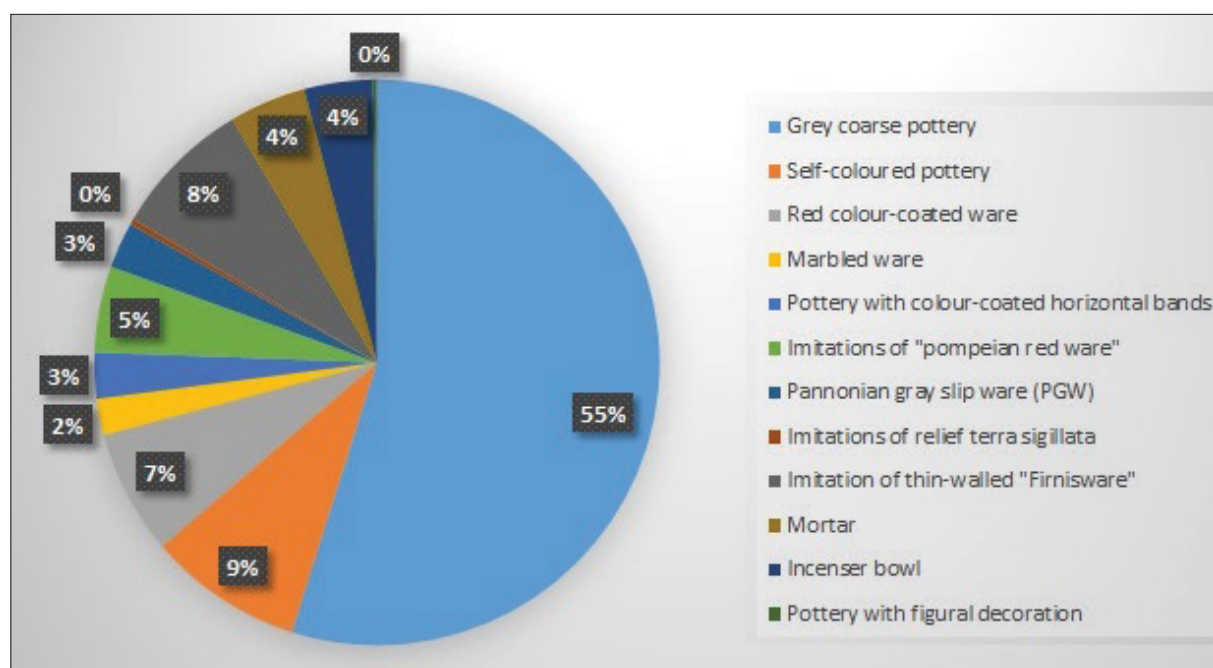


Fig. 9. The local pottery in the municipium of Brigetio (Szöny-Vásártér 1992–1996) (percentage, 913 p.).

The pottery material of the civil town is well suited for a detailed examination (*Fig. 9*). Most of the fragments correspond to the products of the Gerhát pottery workshop in both form and quality. Thus, the pottery workshop belonging to the civil town certainly had an important role in the supply of the settlement itself as well as of its cemeteries. I believe however, that any attempts at defining the exact production programme of the pottery workshop are abortive until a certified excavation on its territory could be carried out. Unfortunately, this is not likely to happen due to the high built-up density of the area.

Cemeteries belonging to the civil town and the military town were established along the limes road as well as the road leading to Tata (*Fig. 10*). The similarities between the pottery material of the graveyards reflect their contemporary use well. Therefore, the differences in the pottery material of the civil cemeteries and the military cemeteries are not in the presence or absence of certain vessel types; the 'style difference' can rather be documented in the proportion of pottery types and various forms belonging to certain types.

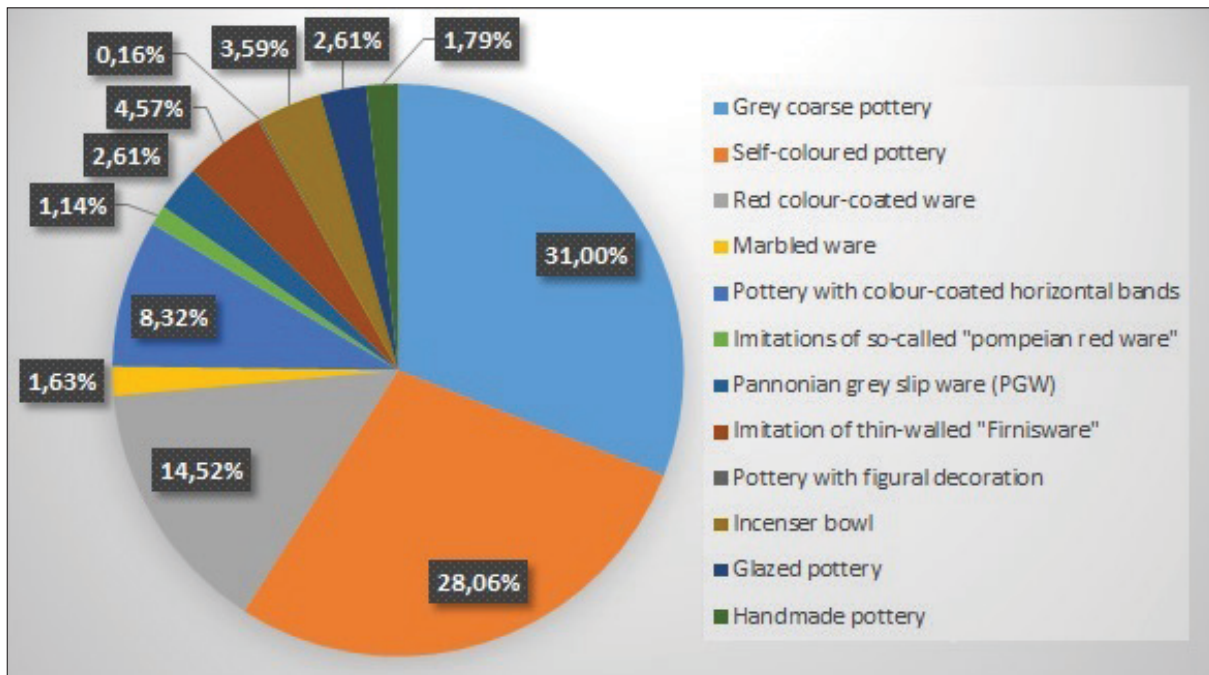


Fig. 10. The local pottery in the cemeteries of Brigetio (percentage, 613 p.).

Pottery forms are dominated by those suitable for containing food or drink given as grave goods: jugs, jars, bowls and beakers. The pottery material of cemeteries II and III located south and east of the road on the western side of the civil town correspond to each other, thus it seems certain that they once belonged to the same cemetery which occupied both sides of the road, and was in continuous use between the turn of the 1st and 2nd centuries up to the middle of the 3rd century AD. Cemetery I, situated on the eastern side of the municipium, can be dated to the same period. In both cases, the majority of the burials originate from the Antonine-Severan era. Among grave goods, the large number of self-coloured jugs is conspicuous; most of the thin-walled beakers (rough cast and folded beakers) as well as marbled ware also came to light from these cemeteries. On the western side of the military town, the 'Sörházkert' cemetery is located north of the limes road while the 'Járóka' cemetery occupies the southern side. These two sites did probably also belong to a single graveyard, contemporary with the

above-mentioned cemeteries I and II. The majority of the archaeological material which came to light here belongs to the Antonine–Severan period. Characteristic pottery from the graves include hand-formed grey pots, bowls with inverted rim, beakers and red colour-coated Faltenbecher. The Sörházkert and Járóka cemeteries yielded the highest number of imitations of black slipped ware (beakers). A small number of stray late Roman period graves are known from the northern side of the road. The Gerhát cemetery lies on the eastern side of the military town. This graveyard was established during the reign of Hadrian, that is, some time later than the Sörházkert and Járóka cemeteries mentioned above, and was used up until the end of the reign of the Severan dynasty. Only a few examples of grey pottery are known from the graves while self-coloured bowls with inverted rim as well as red colour-coated beakers and jugs can be considered characteristic.

Based on coin finds, cemetery V (the exact location of which is uncertain) was established in the 1st century AD and used unabruptedly until the middle of the 3rd century. Following a two-decade hiatus, its use continued up to the middle of the 4th century AD. The pottery material recovered from here includes a high amount of grey pots and beakers, but only a few bowls with inverted rim. Red colour-coated beakers, jugs, two-handled vessels and pottery with colour-coated horizontal bands also occur in high numbers, while self-coloured jugs appear only scarcely. In summary, the pottery material of cemetery V shows a closer relation to the “style” of the military town’s graveyards. Therefore, in my opinion, the location of the cemetery can be assumed in the vicinity of the canabae.

Only a few graves are known from the Caecilia cemetery situated along the inner-Pannonian road leading towards Tata. Compared to the above-mentioned graveyards, the archaeological material from this site is considerably less. Based on the grave goods, the cemetery had a phase contemporary with the graveyards mentioned earlier, and was also used in the late Roman period.

Late Roman grave groups and cemeteries cluster around the legionary fortress. Among grave goods jugs and beakers are characteristic, while bowls, plates and pots are mostly known from the territory of the fortress.

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Tab. 1. List of abbreviations of main forms.

<i>Abbreviation</i>	<i>Latin/Hungarian</i>	<i>English</i>
A	aryballos	aryballos
B	bögre	mug
Cs	csésze	cup
D	dugó	stopper
Dt	dörzstál	mortar
F	fazék	pot
Fe	fedő	lid
Fpe	fazék perem	pot's rim
Ft	füstölőtál	incenser bowl
GE	gömbtestű edény	vessels with roundish belly
Gy	gyertyatartó	candle holder
H	hombár	storage jar
He	háromlábú edény	tripod bowl
K	korsó, kancsó	jug, jar
KE	kétfülű edény	two-handled vessel
KiE	kiöntős edény	vessel with spout
Kpe	korsó, kancsó perem	jug's rim
P	pohár	beaker
Pa	palack	phial
Pe	persely	coin-box
S Tn	serpenyőnyél terrakotta negatívja	terracotta mould of casserole's handle
S	serpenyőnyél	casserole's handle
Sz	szűrő	sieve
T	tál	bowl
Tá	tányér	plate
Té	tégely	jar
V	vödör	situla
Vá	váza	vase

