

Cultural connections and interactions in the Late Bronze Age cemetery of Budapest-Békásmegyer, Hungary

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Zusammenfassung

KULTURELLE BEZIEHUNGEN UND INTERAKTIONEN IM SPÄTBRONZEZEITLICHEN FRIEDHOF VON BUDAPEST-BÉKÁSMEGYER, UNGARN. Mit seinen 324 Brandbestattungen ist der Urnenfeldekultur-Friedhof von Budapest-Békásmegyer einer der Größten in der Region. Er wurde von Beginn der Phase Ha A2 bis zum Ende von Ha B3 belegt. Zwei Drittel der Gräber enthielten Urnen, während die übrigen Brandschüttungsgräber waren. In Bezug auf die kulturelle Einordnung dieses Friedhofs konnten folgende Beobachtungen gemacht werden: Während der Periode Ha A2, in welche die ersten Gräber datieren, lassen sich Kontakte hauptsächlich mit Gruppen der Urnenfeldekultur in Bayern, Mähren und in der westlichen Slowakei nachweisen. Beginnend mit Ha B1 wurde dieses System von Kontakten (Kontaktnetzwerk) restrukturiert. Die Funde des Gräberfeldes dokumentieren nun wachsende Einflüsse auf die Bevölkerung der Urnenfeldekultur in der Region am Donauknie aus den ostalpinen Gebieten, dem nördlichen ungarischen Mittelgebirge und von den Kulturen der Großen Ungarischen Tiefebene. Die geografische Lage der Nekropole begünstigte intensive kulturelle Auswirkungen der auswärtigen Kontakte. Die Kombinationen von Formen und Motiven fremden Ursprungs führten im Gräberfeld von Békásmegyer zu einer lokalen Entwicklung mit besonderen Charakteristika.

Abstract

With its 324 cremation burials, the Urnfield culture cemetery of Budapest-Békásmegyer is one of the largest in the region. It was in use from the beginning of the Ha A2

to the end of the Ha B3 period. Two thirds of the graves contained urns (as part of the rite), while the rest were scattered-ash burials. When the cultural position of this cemetery is studied, the following observations can be made: during the Ha A2 phase, to which the first graves were dated, Urnfield culture populations in northeastern Transdanubia maintained contacts chiefly with groups in Bavaria, Moravia and western Slovakia. Beginning with the Ha B1 period, this system of contacts, i.e. network of communication, was restructured. On the basis of material recovered from this cemetery, increasing influences on the Urnfield culture populations of the Danube Bend Gorge region may be observed from the Eastern Alpine region, the Northern Hills in Hungary and by cultures that occupied the Great Hungarian Plain. Given the geographical position of this area, intense cultural effects may be reckoned with. In addition, new combinations of shapes and motifs originating elsewhere resulted in the local development of some special features in the Békásmegyer cemetery.

Introduction

The Békásmegyer Cemetery is located on the right bank of the Danube River at the northern fringes of modern Budapest. The geographically defined area surrounding the cemetery can be considered an intensively settled region during the Late Bronze Age. The Danube River Valley was attractive to settlement, and both the waterway and overland travel were equally important in establishing the region as a link between the western Slovakian Plain and the Great Hungarian Plain. The Békásmegyer site is located in this

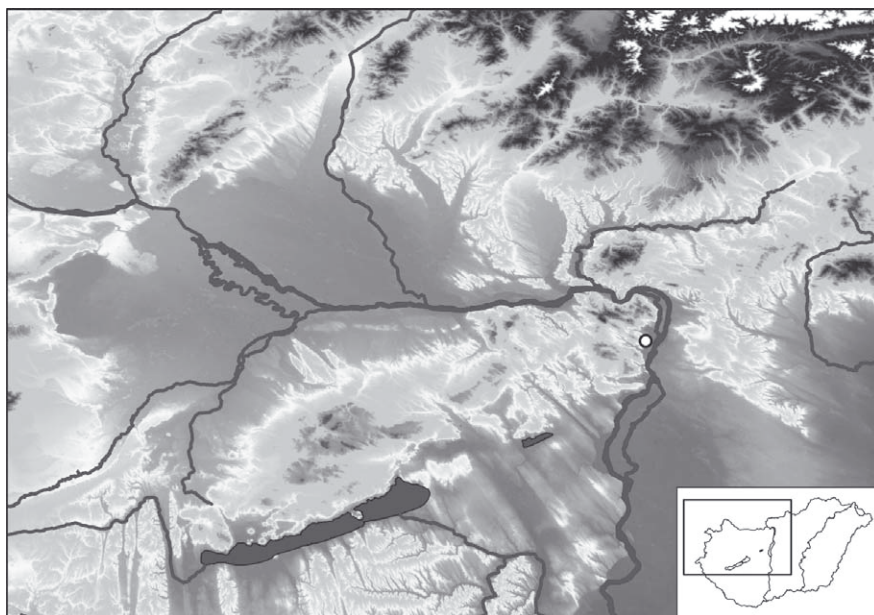


Fig. 1. Location of Budapest-Békásmegyer in the North Transdanubian region.

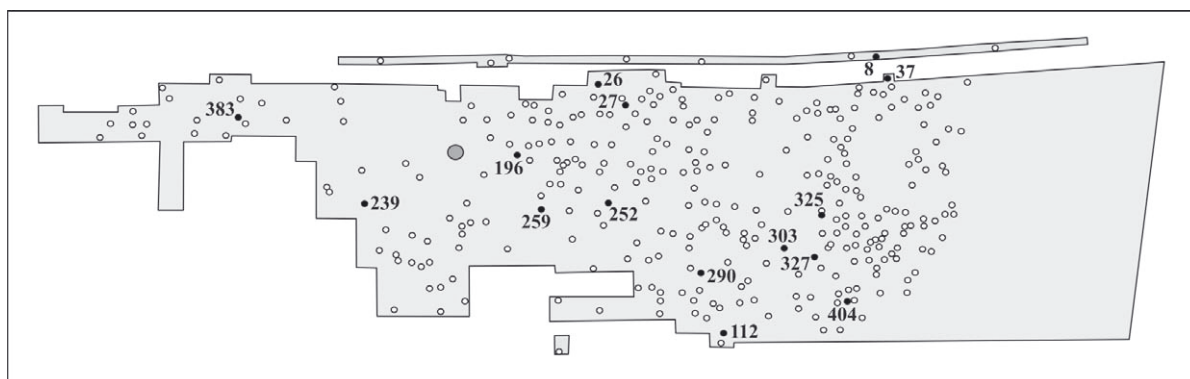


Fig. 2. Distribution of the graves discussed in the item.

region at the convergence of these natural travel corridors (Fig. 1).

Researchers have known about the Békásmegyer Cemetery since the 1960s. Excavations began in 1967 under the direction of Rózsa Kalicz-Schreiber and continued with further campaigns until 1983. Of the 477 graves scattered across the 7.500 m² excavated area, 324 graves can be assigned to the Urnfield Culture (Fig. 2). The Late Bronze Age cemetery contains an estimated 500 individuals. After the initial excavation reports, R. Kalicz-Schreiber published a preliminary report in 1991¹ followed by a paper in which

burials containing knives and razors were examined². A later paper discussed graves containing boot-shaped vessels³ and most recently, in 2002, a report on the stone packed graves of the cemetery was published⁴. The comprehensive evaluation of the cemetery was published in 2010.⁵

The main sources in the research into the cultural interactions of the community that used the cemetery are ceramic and metal artifacts deposited in the graves. The number of ceramic vessels recovered from graves ranged from a low

1. KALICZ-SCHREIBER 1991.

2. KALICZ-SCHREIBER, KALICZ 1996.

3. KALICZ-SCHREIBER, KALICZ 1997.

4. KALICZ-SCHREIBER, KALICZ 2002.

5. KALICZ-SCHREIBER 2010.

count of 3–5 vessels to a high count of 6–14 vessels. Graves with fewer potteries usually contain a bigger vessel, functioning as an urn, and 1–2 accompanying vessels. Graves with more grave goods characteristically contain – in addition to the vessel used as an urn – a set of smaller dishes, mainly consisting of bowls and cups.

Examination of the shapes and motifs of the vessels shows that 5–6 % of them differ from the finds of the Transdanubian Urnfield culture. According to the cultural conditions of the Late Bronze Age the origin of foreign forms and motifs can be found in the Eastern Alpine Region, in the northwestern area of the Carpathians or in the Great Hungarian Plain. In the case of some vessels the foreign origin of their form or ornamentation is obvious, compared to the characteristic forms and motifs of the Urnfield culture. In other cases a mixture of the elements used by the ceramic production of the Urnfield culture and the forms or decorations spread in neighbouring areas can be observed.

As is typical for the period, the most common metal artifacts were forms of pins and fibulae that are complemented by burial groups outfitted with knives and razors in the Békásmegyer cemetery. In the case of pins and fibulae found in the cemetery it is hard to specify the center or centers of production, since some of those items were widely used for a long time. It makes the interpretation of the Transdanubian findings difficult that only the stray finds of Velem⁶ and the pins of the depot from Románd⁷ can be dated to the Ha B period. As for knives and razors, the research of long-distance connections can only be based on the presence of non-characteristic forms in the Transdanubian region.

Eastern Alpine Region

The cultural influences originating in the Alpine Region and reflecting on the local material culture are not easy to demonstrate. Numerous overlaps between the ceramic finds associated with the Urnfield culture can be observed in the Eastern Alpine region and the northern part of Transdanubia, western Hungary. Among the ceramic finds only a cup with a conical bottom from Grave 259 (Tab. 5/2) shows that the communication network based in the Danube River Valley reached west as far as the northeastern area of the Alps. This type of cup was spread in the northern Alps, where it was often placed in graves in high numbers during the Ha B1 period.⁸

6. ŘÍHOVSKÝ 1983.

7. NÉMETH, TORMA 1965.

8. ECKES 1996, Taf. 15/11, 14; Taf. 19/2a and Taf. 21/1h. – PFAUTH 1998, Taf. 64/6 and Taf. 71/5.

In addition to new characteristics of form, decorative elements previously unknown in Transdanubia also occur during the time of the Urnfield Culture. Examples of these decorations are the geometric patterns made of impressed dots (Tab. 4/4–5). This kind of ornamentation appears during the latest period of the Late Bronze Age and provides evidence of the cultural/stylistic relations maintained with the Eastern Alpine Region.⁹

The razor handle found in Grave 303 of the Békásmegyer cemetery can be defined as a secondary item used as a pendant, since only a proportionately-shaped and polished stub remained of its blade (Tab. 6/9). The rhombic-shaped, ring-ended razor handle carved into an X-shape is unknown in the Transdanubian Urnfield culture. The territory of its distribution is the northern Alpine region and northern Bohemia.¹⁰ The closest parallel to the form of the handle found in Békásmegyer is the Heilbronn-type.¹¹ Based on burials in the Munich region their use can be dated to the Ha A1 period.¹² The dating of this type also verifies the assumption that the razor handle in question only had a secondary function when deposited in Grave 303 of the Békásmegyer cemetery.

Western Carpathian Region

As the northern neighbour of the Urnfield culture of the middle Danube region,¹³ it is natural that elements of the ceramic production of the Lausathian culture appear in the Békásmegyer cemetery.

The jar from Grave 290 shows a great difference from the pottery manufactured during the Late Bronze Age in northern Transdanubia because of its biconical body, sharply rounded shoulder and cylindric neck (Tab. 4/9). The form of the jar, with impressed decoration running around the neck and the shoulder, is similar to products of the Lausathian culture, and their parallels can be found in the cemeteries of Beluša¹⁴, Partizánske¹⁵ and in the settlement of Pobedim¹⁶. However, this stylistic variant of jugs is absent in assemblages of the Urnfield culture of western Slovakia.¹⁷

Further proof of the existence of the northern connection is the amphora from Grave 196 (Tab. 3/9) which has a number of analogies that spread across the western region of

9. HETZER, WILLVONSIEDER 1952, 63, Abb. 10/1. – LOCHNER 1991, 299.

10. SCHAUER 1995, 123, Abb. 2a.

11. JOCKENHÖVEL 1971, 105–138, Taf. 44B and Taf. 45A–B.

12. MÜLLER-KARPE 1957, 10, Abb. 2.

13. FURMÁNEK, VELIAČIK, VLADÁR 1999, 81, Abb. 35.

14. FURMÁNEK 1970, 438, Obr. 6/8.

15. VELIAČIK 1983, Taf. 22, 9/13.

16. STUDENÍKOVÁ, PAULÍK 1983, Tab. 57/4.

17. VELIAČIK 1983, 129–130.

the Lausathian culture.¹⁸ A pot from Grave 259 with a conical neck, compressed globular body and with a decorative disc on the belly (Tab. 5/7) also shows the strong northern connections.¹⁹

Hungarian Northern Mountain Hills

The pottery fragment revealed in Grave 239 and decorated with a herring bone motif could belong to an amphora or to a vessel with a conical neck (Tab. 4/1). The closest parallel of its decoration – the combination of horizontal channeling and rows of impressed dots – is known from the cemetery of Chotín.²⁰ This analogy helps the restoration of the vessel of Békásmegyer, since the herring bone pattern is a frequent form of decoration both on the finds of the Lausathian and Kyjatice cultures.²¹ The sherd from Békásmegyer and the vessel from Chotín can be connected to the Kyjatice culture based on the evidence of morphological features.²²

A deep bowl from Grave 37, with a biconical body and rounded shoulder (Tab. 3/1) and a similar, ring-footed variant from Grave 26 (Tab. 1/4) proves the presence of pottery traditions arriving from the direction of the Hungarian Northern Mountain Hills. The basic form of these vessels can be derived from the Kyjatice culture,²³ although the faceted rim and the slanted fluted decoration covering the shoulder of the bowl found in Grave 26 probably belong to the stylistic repertoire of local ceramic production.

Both the slanted channeled decoration and the motif of 5–7 dots arranged in lines usually appear together with a faceted rim, which most often can be found on vessels with conical necks and bowls with everted rims (Tab. 1/1, 3). The dotted decoration is indicative of the relationship maintained with the neighbouring Kyjatice culture and its pot production, which uses dotted lines for the separation of the channeling on conical-necked vessels.²⁴

The small, cylindrical-necked vessel from Grave 259 (Tab. 5/4) cannot be assigned to the group of the local, basic vessel forms because of its straight rim, round-walled and cylindrical neck, highly rounded, compressed shoulder and compressed, strongly narrowing bottom. Its direct formal analogies can be found among the pottery types of

the Kyjatice culture.²⁵ The shaping of the shoulder and bottom of the vessel from Grave 259 is also characteristic of the double-bodied vessels of the Gáva culture, therefore it is possible that it was made as a miniature copy of those. The big storage vessels originating from the east are also known from the find places of the Gáva culture, e.g. from Biharkeresztes-Láncos-major, Kaba-Bitózug, Polgár 1, Bódrogkeresztúr, Gyoma 133, Nyírbogár, Taktabáj.²⁶ On the basis of the analogies listed the miniature vessel of Békásmegyer can be associated with the pottery making tradition of both the Kyjatice and the Gáva cultures.

Great Hungarian Plain

Among the urns with everted and faceted rims, cylindrical necks, curved shoulders, and wide bellies found in the Békásmegyer cemetery, the vessel of Grave 404 is decorated with channelled, upright knobs (Tab. 8/3). The decoration of its shoulder has the characteristics of the ceramic production of the Upper Tisza Region during the Ha B1 period.²⁷ The slanted fluting of its rim (Tab. 8/2–3) offers evidence that it could have been produced during the transition of the Ha B1 and Ha B and Ha C periods.²⁸ The combination of these ornamentations can also be found in the pottery manufacturing tradition of the Gáva culture; the two forms of decoration appear together on a bowl from Hódmezővásárhely-Gorzsa-Cukortanya.²⁹

Although the low-based shape and the high, conical, decorated necks of the pots found in Graves 8 and 27 (Tab. 1/3, 6) are indicators of eastern stylistic connections, the burnished impressed decoration on their shoulders shows local traditions. The pottery of the Piliny and the Kyjatice cultures,³⁰ or possibly the traditions of the Belegiš II culture³¹ may have affected their development. As the form appears in greater numbers in assemblages of the Gáva culture³² the vessels found in the Békásmegyer cemetery seem to primarily show the connections maintained with the Gáva culture during the Ha B1 period.

The analogy of the pot from Grave 196, with everted rim, biconical body and rounded lower part (Tab. 3/8) is

18. HRALOVÁ 1962, Taf. 7/2, 9; Taf. 15/10 and Taf. 25/10. – DOHNAL 1974, 111, Taf. 15/12. – DOHNAL 1977, 134, Čis. 463, 152 and Čis. 778. – VELIAČIK 1983, 223 and Taf. 16/3 – VOKOLEK 2003, 13–14.

19. HRUBEC, KUJOVSKÝ 1994, 24–25.

20. DUŠEK 1957, Tab. 33/4.

21. DOHNAL 1974, 101 and Taf. 5/C3. – VOKOLEK 2002, Taf. 59/3. – VOKOLEK 2003.

22. FURMÁNEK, VELIAČIK, VLADÁR 1999, 96, Abb. 45/25, 27, 29, 31.

23. KEMENCZEI 1984, Taf. 79/6, 10 and Taf. 87/14.

24. KEMENCZEI 1984, 46–47. – MATUZ 1994, 23.

25. FURMÁNEK, VELIAČIK, VLADÁR 1999, 95 and Abb. 44/5; 96 and Abb. 45/1.

26. SZABÓ 2002, 45; 24. ábra/II.

27. KEMENCZEI 1984, Taf. 130/1, 2.

28. PENZ 2001, 273.

29. SZABÓ 1996, 23. kép/13.

30. KEMENCZEI 1984, Taf. 84/6, 11, 19. – FURMÁNEK, VELIAČIK, VLADÁR 1999, 106.

31. PRZYBYŁA 2005, 227. – PRZYBYŁA 2009, 92–95.

32. KEMENCZEI 1984, Taf. 160/1. – LÁSZLÓ 1986, Taf. 5/6. – FURMÁNEK, VELIAČIK, VLADÁR 1999, 97 and Abb. 46/13.

known among the settlement finds of Lengyeltóti, which are dated to the Ha A2 and Ha B periods.³³ Based on the shape, E. Patek connects this type of pots to the ceramic production of the Br D–Ha A1 period.³⁴ The type of pot in question is most likely to originate from vessels of the Great Hungarian Plain during the Proto-Gáva phase (Br D–Ha A1 period). These vessels have biconical bodies, shoulders decorated by knobs, and necks with channeled decoration. They are known from the sites of Szőreg C, Szőreg D and Polgár 29.³⁵ A variant with brushed surface shows up in the eastern region of the Carpathians during the time of the Ha A2 period.³⁶ This type of pots can also be found during the early phase of the Iron Age among the Prescythian finds of the Carpathian Basin, nevertheless the neck of these vessels is rounded and their surface is rough.³⁷ Although through its form the vessel found in Békásmegyer could be dated to the turn of the Ha A1 and Ha A2 periods, the pin revealed in the grave suggests a typochronological dating to the Ha B2/3 period.

The pot from Grave 325, decorated with a bundle of vertical wavy lines on the (Tab. 6/11) belly, occurs most often in the assemblages of the Gáva culture in the Tisza Region.³⁸ In most cases this kind of decoration was used on smaller pots and bowls with wavy rims and cylindrical necks. These artifacts found on the sites of the Lausathian culture are identified as evidence of the relations maintained with the Kyjatice and Gáva cultures.³⁹

The vessel from Grave 383 with a cylindrical neck, rounded shoulder and wavy channeled decoration (Tab. 7/7) belongs to the Late Bronze Age pottery style of the Great Hungarian Plain. This form and decoration can be observed on the finds of the Gáva and Belegiš II culture,⁴⁰ their appearance can be dated to the Ha B1 phase.⁴¹

South Pannonia

The jars placed in Graves 112 and 327 have conical necks, greatly faceted shoulders and compressed bodies (Tab. 2/2; 7/1), stylistic characteristics frequent in the area of South Pannonia. At the same time, in the Danube Bend Gorge

region, a variant with an elongated shape and unfaceted shoulder is the basic type.⁴² The two jars of the Békásmegyer cemetery belong to the variants of South Pannonia. The sites associated with these two types unambiguously show the communication corridor running along the Danube river.

Summary

Among the aforementioned grave goods the secondarily used razor handle (Tab. 6/9) belongs to the oldest finds (Ha A2 period) of the cemetery. The ceramic forms and decorations listed definitely appeared during the younger phase (Ha B1–Ha B2/3 period) of the cemetery. Using the evidence of the artefacts showing the connections of the population of the Urnfield culture living in Transdanubia during the Ha A1 and Ha A2 periods, cultural impacts from the Eastern Alpine and western Slovakian region can be observed.⁴³ That means the dominance of the general northwestern-southeastern polarity in the communication network.⁴⁴ At the same time the high number of characteristics in shape and motifs typical of the Kyjatice and Gáva cultures indicates that the population living in the Danube River Bend Gorge region during the Ha B period maintained intensive relations principally with communities inhabiting the Hungarian Northern Mountain Hills and the Great Hungarian Plain.⁴⁵

The material evidence of cultural interactions shows that the intensity of communication increases during the Ha B1 period at such a rate that it becomes visible in the deposition of goods in burials.⁴⁶ The warrior elite evolving on the Great Hungarian Plain had an intense impact on the material culture of the neighbouring areas, which can be observed not only in funerals but also in the composition of the hoards of the Hajdúböszörmény horizon and its customs of deposition.⁴⁷ The influence of the warrior elite living in the Great Hungarian Plain increases in the regions along the Danube in Transdanubia during the Ha B3 and Ha C periods.⁴⁸

33. PATEK 1968, 91, 1.

34. PATEK 1961, 68.

35. PATEK 1961, 67–68. – SZABÓ 1996, Abb. 51/1, 2 and Abb. 52/3. – SZABÓ 2002, 69, kép/2.

36. PRZYBYŁA 2005, 232.

37. METZNER-NEBELSICK 2002, 114–118.

38. KEMENCZEI 1984, 67. – SZABÓ 2002, 54, 30, ábra.

39. ŠALKOVSKÝ 2001, 47.

40. PRZYBYŁA 2009, 132–133.

41. KEMENCZEI 1984, 71. – GENITO, KEMENCZEI 1990, 121. – SZABÓ 1996, 37. – SZABÓ 2004, 110 and Abb. 10/2, 4.

42. METZNER-NEBELSICK 2002, 120–122 and Abb. 45.

43. PRZYBYŁA 2009, 381, Fig. 106 and 385–386, Fig. 107.

44. WIESNER 2009, 558.

45. PRZYBYŁA 2009, 396–397 and Fig. 109.

46. ZU ERBACH 1995, 310–312. – NOVOTNÁ 1995, 380. – A similar phenomenon can be observed among the Lausathian burials of the Kietrz Urnfield cemetery, in which, during the younger phase (period Ha A2–B1), numerous ceramic forms associated with the Urnfield culture appear in one group (PRZYBYŁA 2009, 342–343). However, in the cemetery of Békásmegyer there is no regularity in the location of the graves containing foreign stylistic elements (Fig. 2).

47. KEMENCZEI 1996, 269–270. – BORGNA 1999, 172. – PYDYN 1999, 18–19.

48. METZNER-NEBELSICK 2002, 490–491.

Relations between neighbouring regions can be studied through artefacts which act as means of the process of exchange⁴⁹ and giving presents⁵⁰ or are recognized as proof of imitation. One of their final ways of use is representation and the fact that they were wasted during the funeral.⁵¹ The nature of cultural interactions – maintained either between communities or within a society, horizontally or vertically⁵² is hard to understand in the cemeteries of the Urnfield culture in Transdanubia because they show signs of egalitarian funeral practices.⁵³

In the case of Graves 196 and 259 many foreign forms are combined among the groups of ceramic grave goods (Tab. 3/4–10; 5/1–8). Accumulating imported or imitated items⁵⁴ can be a way of expressing social status. The primary manifestation of this is the outstanding value of the funerary equipment because of its material or way of production. The distance of the source of production and the difficulty of obtaining an artefact can also determine its prestige value. Behind both symbolic events stands the system of exchanging prestige goods or the maintenance of the exchange network. They can demonstrate the stage of social and technological efforts and development.⁵⁵

On the vessels from Graves 8 and 27, a combination between forms of eastern origins and local design elements can be observed (Tab. 1/1–3, 5–7). It cannot be decided whether a mixture of ethnic or cultural elements stands behind the production of the foreign forms decorated with local features.

49. The exchange and donation (not the trade) of prestige goods has an effect on the contacting communities, the social positions within them, which means that it is impossible that a form of exchange or giving a gift would not involve social or political meaning (PYDYN 1999, 7–8).

50. HARDING 1993, 157–158. – PYDYN 1999, 8–9.

51. KRISTIANSEN 1994, 21.

52. FRANKENSTEIN, ROWLANDS 1978, 75–81. – KRISTIANSEN, LARSSON 2005, 36 and Fig. 9.

53. The lack of swords in the Transdanubian cemeteries (STOCKHAMMER 2004, 91–93 and Karte 43.) supports the assumption that the community using the cemetery applied the burial practice that had appeared at the end of the Late Bronze Age, showing less vertical social difference than the order of burials during the previous period (FOKKENS 1997, 370).

54. Without ceramic analysis the separation of imported or imitated goods is impossible (HARBOTTLE 1982, 16–17.), therefore it can not be decided whether an artefact deposited in a grave arrived from a primary, outer source or it was prepared locally, utilizing imported technological and intellectual skills (PYDYN 1999, 11. – KRISTIANSEN, LARSSON 2005, 13–14 and 55–56. – KREITER 2007, 38–39. – CHOYE 2008, 5–6).

55. PYDYN 2000, 229–230. – KÜMMEL 2001, 74–75. – PRZYBYŁA 2009, 23.

The movement of the items made of common material, the production of which does not require special technological skills, indicates the channels of communication evolving in addition to the trade of prestige goods. The 'secondary circulation' within communication networks is kept up by the circulation of prestige goods reflecting on the mental sphere that took effect on social life (e.g. burial practices) and forms of social organisations. In some cases, however, it could develop irrespective of material culture.⁵⁶ The information and ideologies arriving through the network of communication greatly affected, shaped and unified the self-perception of Late Bronze Age communities and the resulting image was manifested in formalities. This self-concept is confirmed by characteristics which are equally noticeable on the weapons, in burial practices and social forms across Central Europe and the Alpine region.⁵⁷

The controllers, primary receivers and distributors of the non-material, intangible goods of the cognitive exchange network, (e.g. information, technical skills and environmental knowledge), were probably individuals belonging to the higher stratum of society, as shareable knowledge and skills had a great value of prestige.⁵⁸ On the basis of the geographical position of the cemetery, imports and primary resources from neighbouring areas should appear in the assemblage.⁵⁹ On the contrary, the mixture of motifs and forms is evidence that the community of the Békásmegyer cemetery had more complex ideas from different origins.⁶⁰

Examining the cultural attributes of the cemetery the following may be established: The earliest graves reflect the material culture of the northeastern Transdanubian Urnfield population with traditions and connections that suggest strong links primarily with Bavaria, Moravia, and western Slovakia. The extent and orientation of the Ha A2 period interaction network conform to the network of the Br D and Ha A1 periods. At the beginning of the Ha B1 period this interaction and communication network was reorganized. Based on the assemblage from this cemetery it can be established that cultural practices of the eastern Alpine region, the Hungarian Northern Mountain Range, and of the Great Hungarian Plain had the greatest impact on

56. SCHORTMAN, URBAN 1987, 70.

57. HARRISON 2004, 170–176. – HARDING 2007, 141–144. – VANDKILDE 2007, 79–82.

58. NEEDHAM 1993, 167. – PYDYN 1999, 69.

59. KRISTIANSEN, LARSSON 2005, 13–14.

60. The exchange of ethnic and cultural elements may also take place through marriage that is not necessarily reflected in prestige goods (BOUZEK 1997. – PRZYBYŁA 2009, 29–31). Still, because of the lack of physical anthropological examinations, inter-regional marital exchange can only be mentioned as an assumption.

the Urnfield culture population living in the Danube Bend Gorge region. The maintenance of communication with these regions can be effectively demonstrated through their material culture.

Based on the assemblage presented here, the population of Békásmegyer must have played an important role in mediating between the communities of the Great Hungarian Plain and the western Carpathians. It is typical of the gateway communities, that their outstanding role originates from unique geographical facilities and that they are located between economically and culturally productive regions, however, their own economic and cultural potency tends not to be very strong.⁶¹ This system can be traced in the burial customs of the cemetery of Békásmegyer, as no particularly rich burials can be found there, none that would prove the significance of the local elite distinguishing the cemetery from those of other communities of the region. At the same time graves accumulating foreign forms and motifs testify that the maintenance of the communication network must have been an important tool of demonstrating social position.

Naturally, it is impossible to conclusively determine whether the strong mixing of cultural motifs and design elements of the Kyjatice and Gáva cultures with the Transdanubian and eastern Alpine Urnfield cultures at the Békásmegyer cemetery resulted from broader intercultural interactions or reflects an integrated society comprised of individuals from the various cultures.

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Gábor Vácz

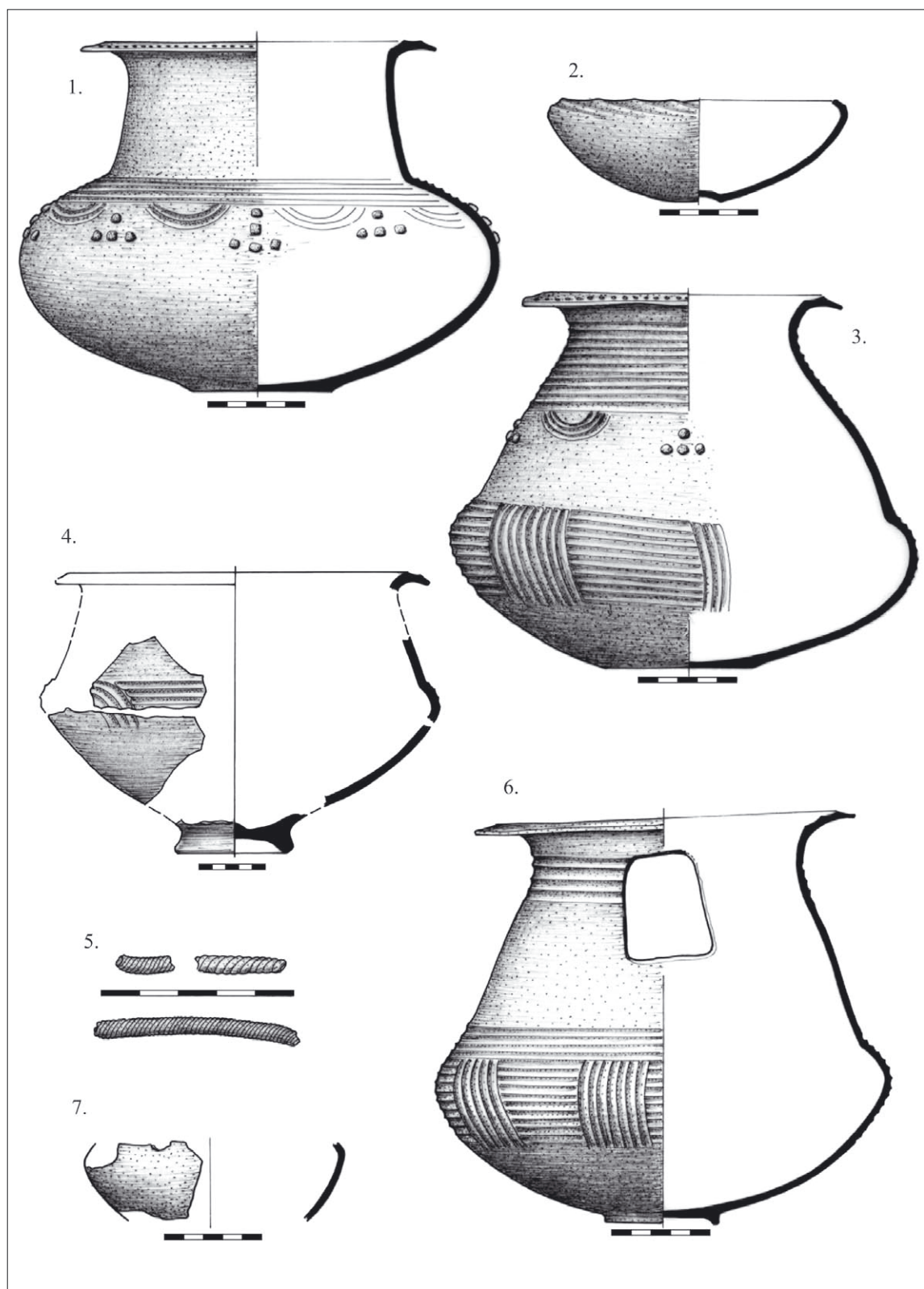
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Institute of Archaeological Sciences

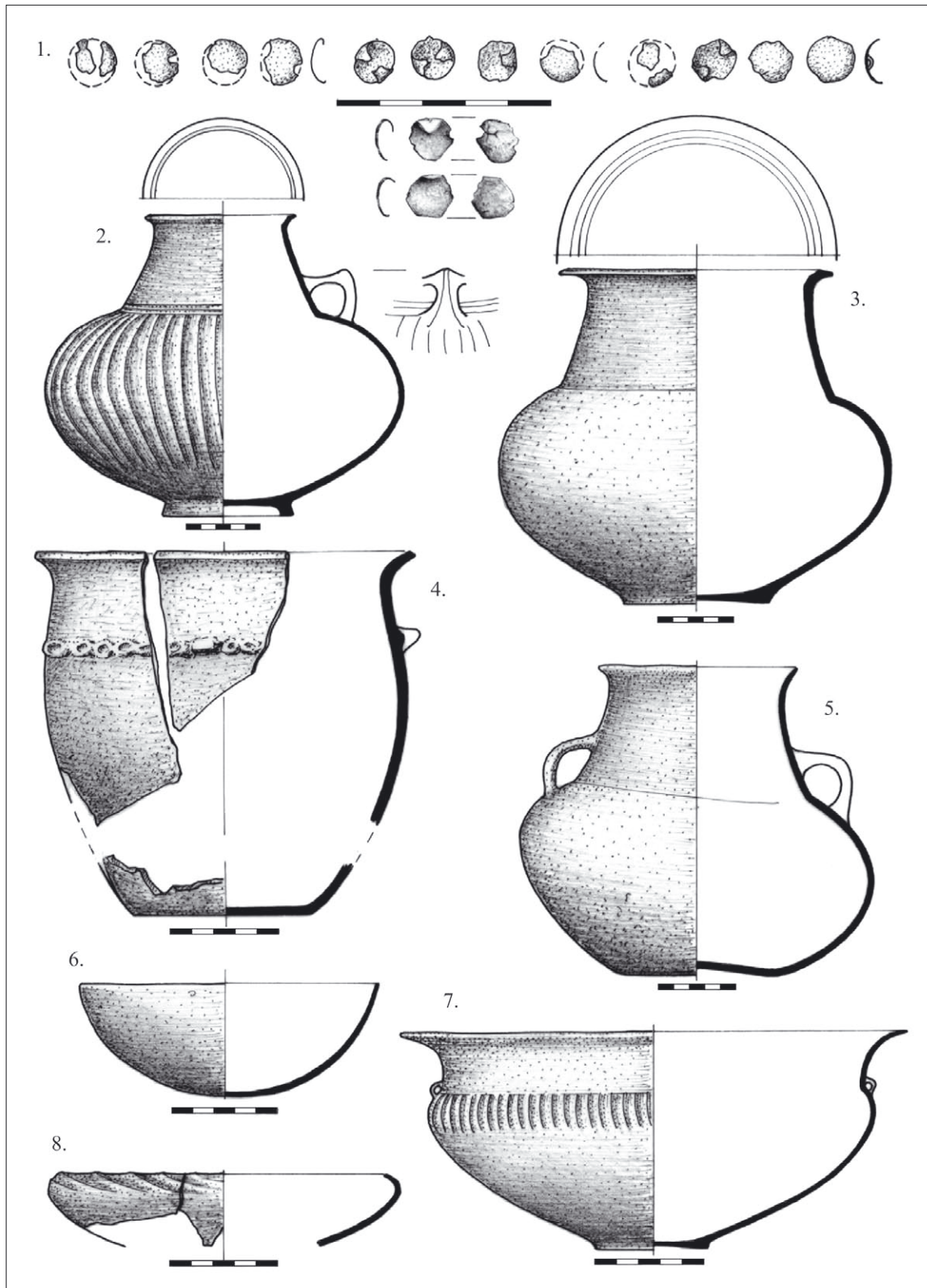
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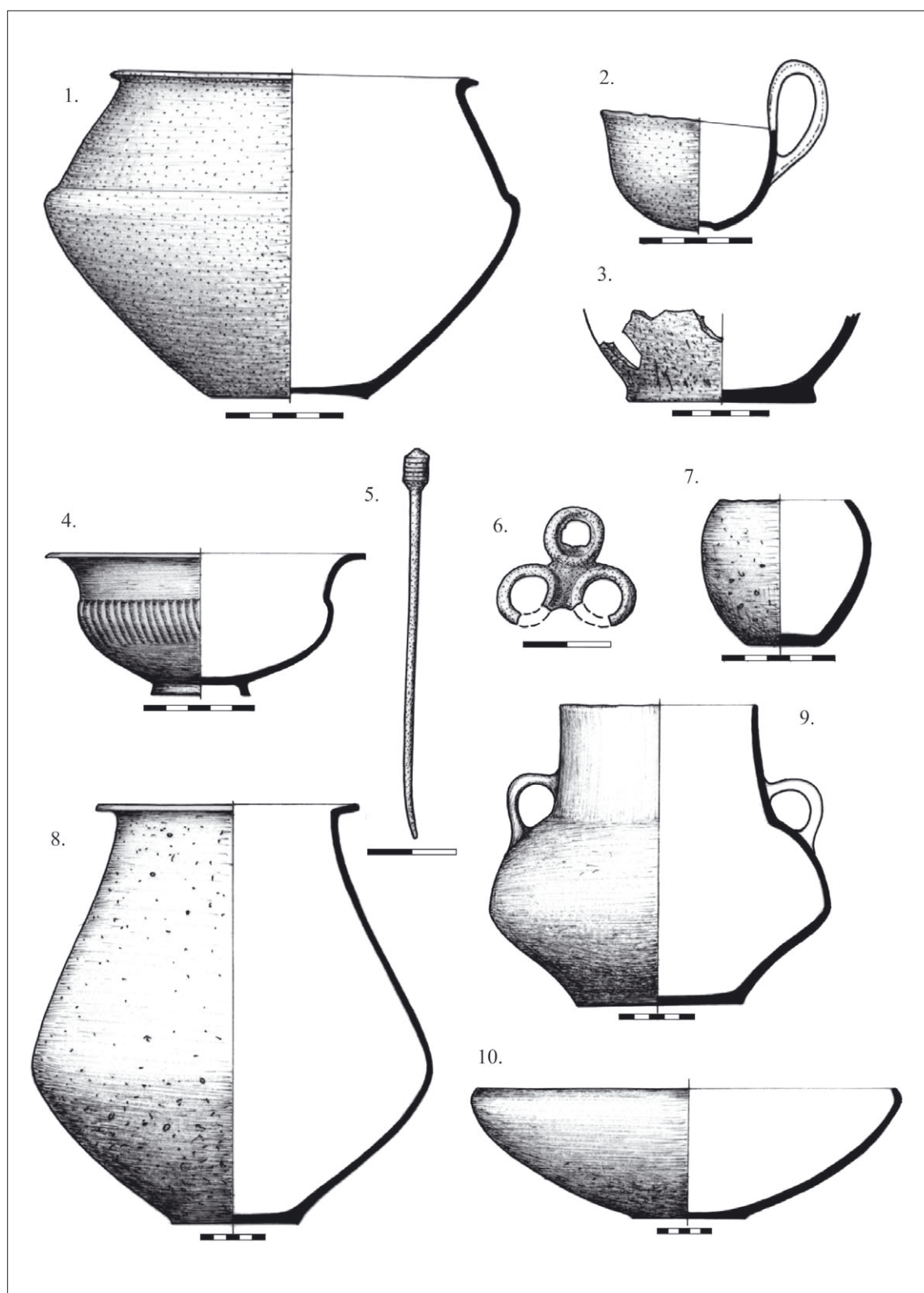
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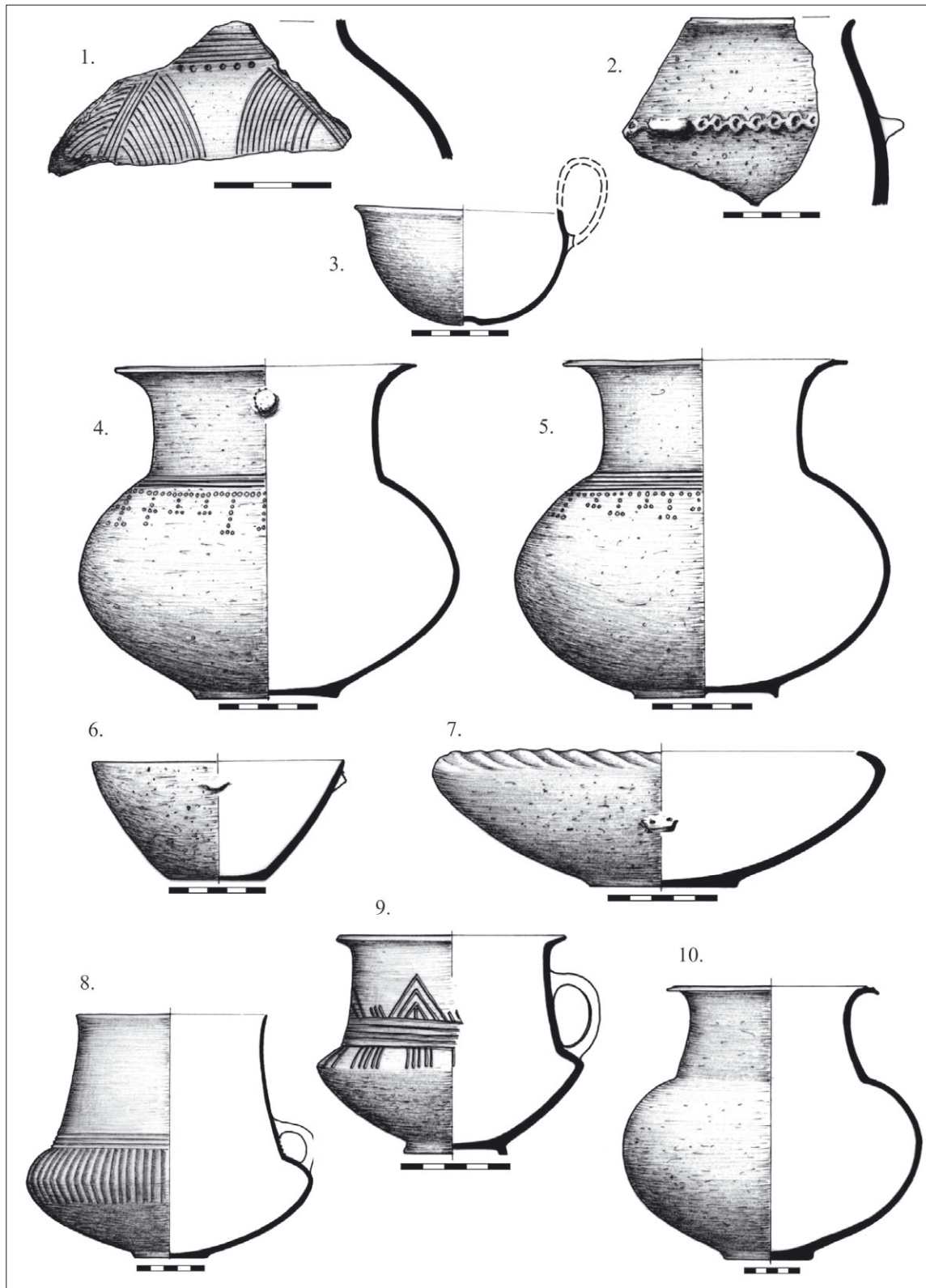
Tab. 1. 1–3: Budapest-Békásmegyer Grave 8. – 4: Grave 26. – 5–7: Grave 27.



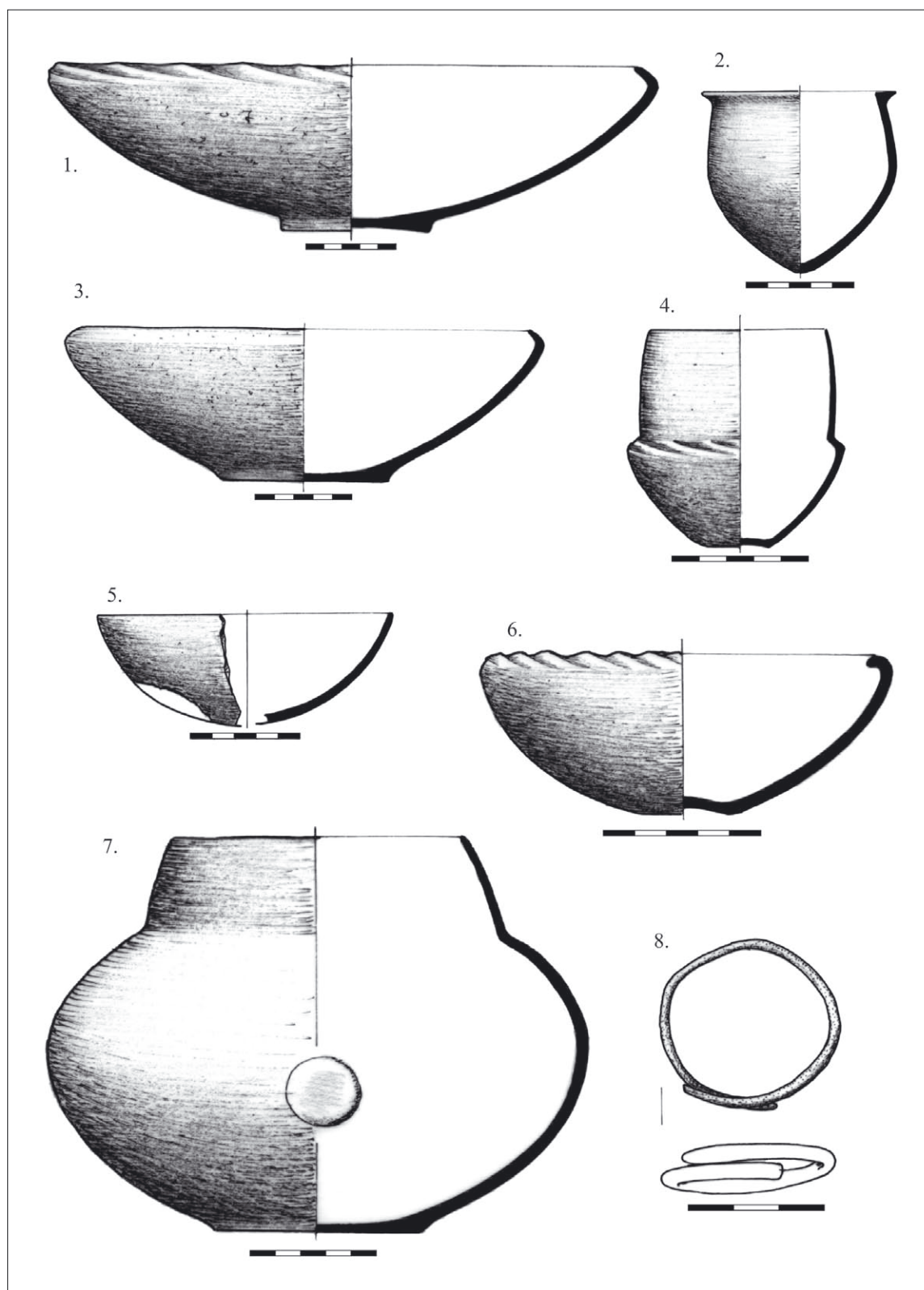
Tab. 2. 1–7: Budapest-Békásmegyer Grave 112.



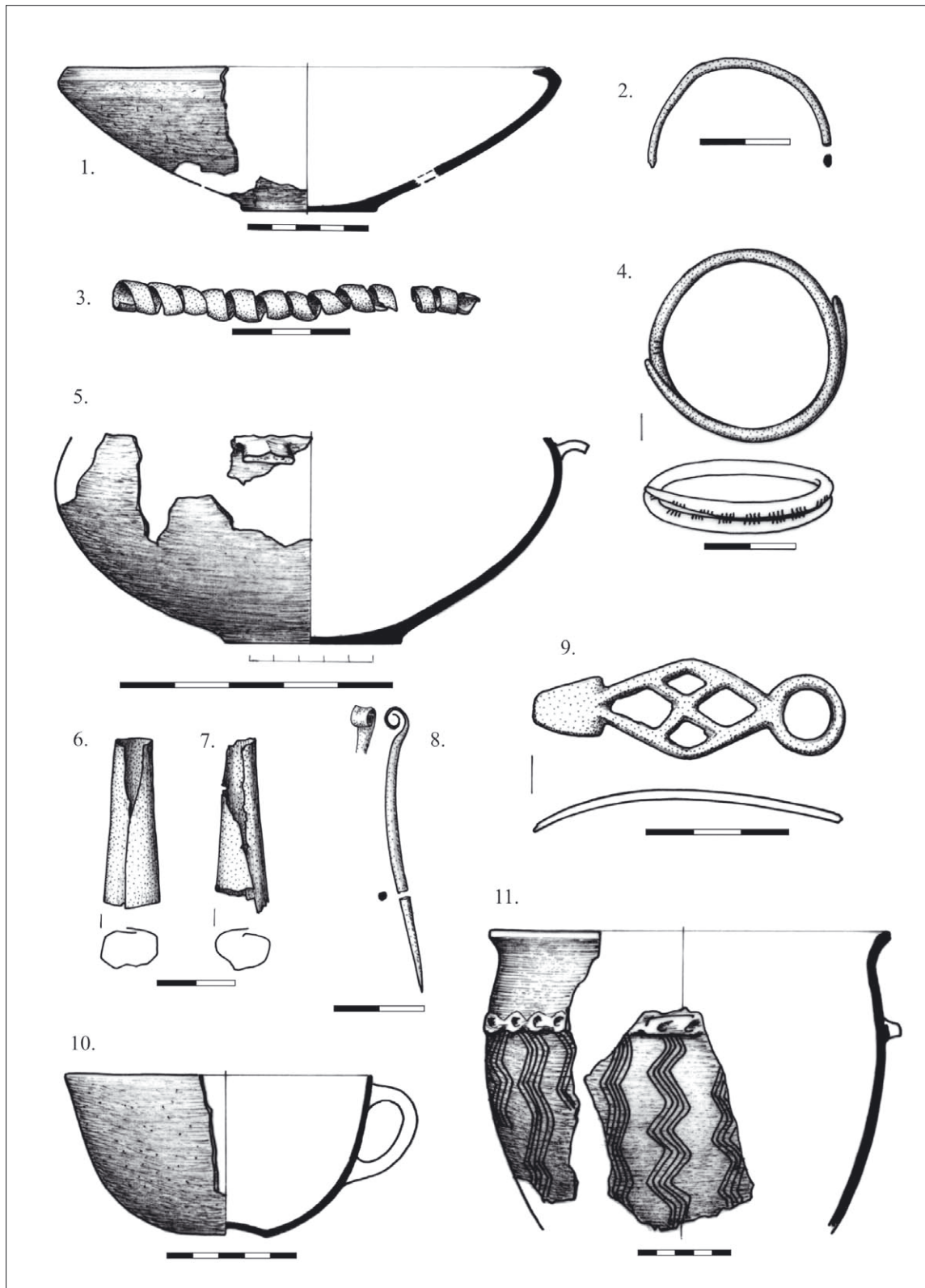
Tab. 3. 1–3: Budapest-Békásmegyer Grave 37. – 4–10: Grave 196.



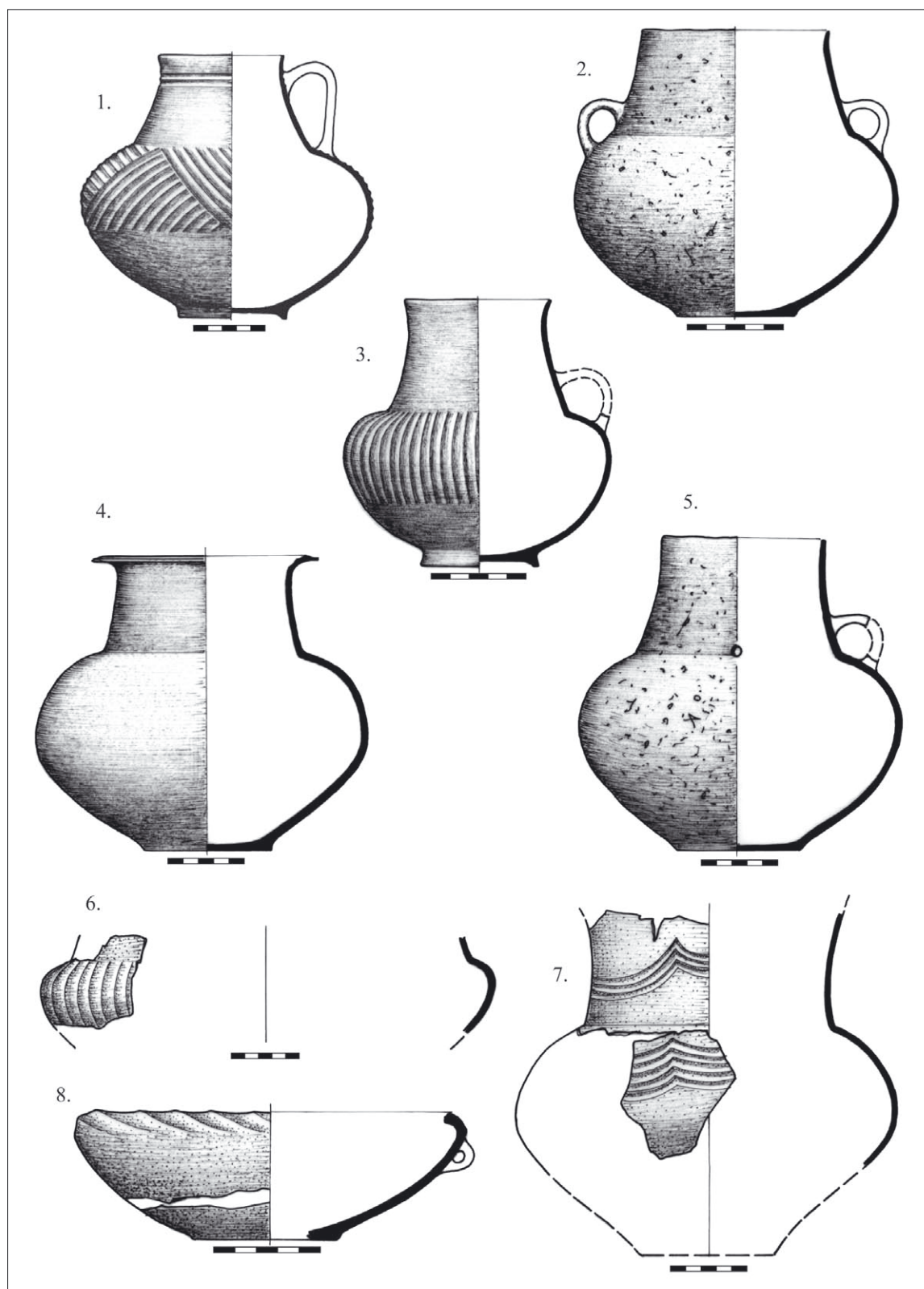
Tab. 4. 1–3: Budapest-Békásmegyer Grave 239. – 4–6: Grave 252. – 7–10: Grave 290.



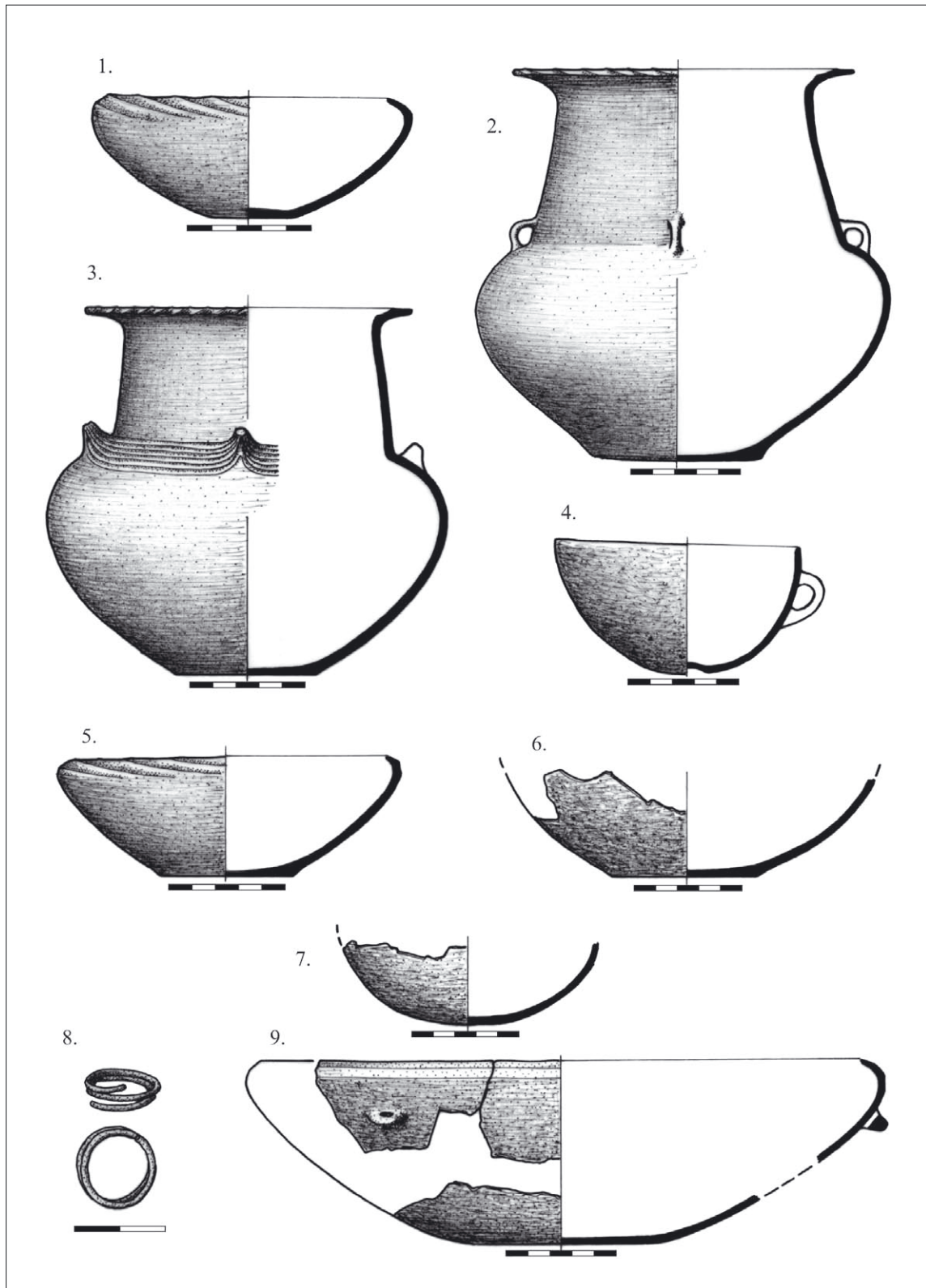
Tab. 5. 1–8: Budapest-Békásmegyer Grave 259.



Tab. 6. 1–10: Budapest-Békásmegyer Grave 303. – 11: Grave 325.



Tab. 7. 1–5: Budapest-Békásmegyer Grave 327. – 6–8: Grave 383.



Tab. 8. 1–9: Budapest-Békásmegyer Grave 404.