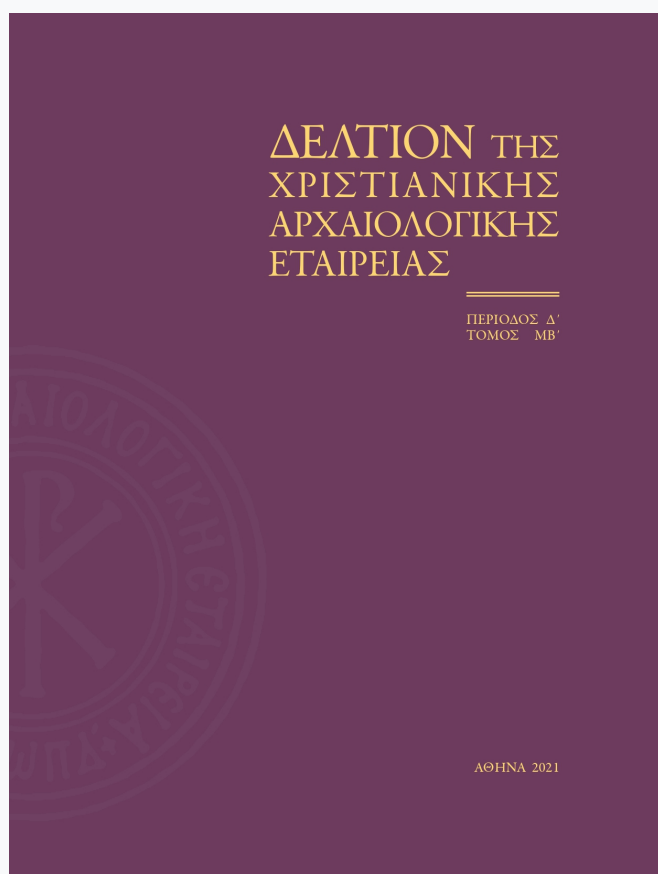


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Εφυαλωμένες κούπες από τη Σεβαστούπολη στην Αμπχαζία

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Liudmila Khrushkova

## GLAZED BOWLS FROM SUKHUM (SEBASTOPOLIS) IN ABKHAZIA

Η Σεβαστούπολη της Αμπχαζίας (σημερινό Sukhum) είναι μια από τις αρχαιότερες και μεγαλύτερες πόλεις στα ανατολικά παράλια της Μαύρης Θάλασσας. Η συλλογή εφνάλωμης κεραμικής από τη Σεβαστούπολη περιλαμβάνει 173 κομμάτια από ερυθρό και πέντε από λευκό πηλό. Η εφνάλωση είναι κυρίως κίτρινη ή καστανοκίτρινη, ενώ συνηθισμένο διακοσμητικό θέμα αποτελούν οι ομόκεντροι κύκλοι στο κέντρο. Στην παρούσα μελέτη εξετάζονται βάσεις από κούπες που χρονολογούνται στον 13ο αιώνα.

Sebastopolis in Abkhazia (modern Sukhum) is one of the most ancient and largest towns on the eastern coast of the Black Sea. The collection of glazed pottery from Sebastopolis comprises 178 items. Most of the finds are so-called red wares, with only five fragments of white ware. The glaze is mostly yellow or a yellowish-brown, a wide-spread decor is concentric circles in the center. The study focuses on bowl bases dating from the 13th century.

### Λέξεις κλειδιά

Υστεροβυζαντινή περίοδος, εφνάλωμη κεραμική, λευκός πηλός, ερυθρός πηλός, κούπες, Αμπχαζία, Σεβαστούπολη.

### Keywords

Late Byzantine period; glazed pottery; white wares; red wares; bowls; bowl bases; Abkhazia; Sebastopolis.

Modern Sukhum in Abkhazia is one of the most ancient towns on the eastern coast of the Black Sea. In the classical period it was called Dioscuria, in the Roman epoch, Sebastopolis, Georgian medieval sources call it Tskhumi. Byzantine sources used the old name Sebastopolis. In the period from the 7th to the 13th century Sebastopolis as the center of the Archbishopric of Abazgia was mentioned in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th, 8th, 11th and 12th Notitiae of the Patriarchate of Constantinople<sup>1</sup>. In the 13th-14th centuries, Sebastopolis was included in the system of maritime trade controlled by the Genoese. On Italian nautical charts of this era it is found under various names: Sebastopoli, Sebastopol, Sebast, San-Sebastian, Savastopoli, sometimes Skanoskopoli, as well as Malfitano and Porto Mengrello.

After the fall of Constantinople, the town was called Sukhum-kale. In the 19th-20th centuries it was named Sukhum, Sukhumi, Sokhumi, and from the end of the 20th century to the present day it regained its name Sukhum again<sup>2</sup>.

Glazed ceramics in the Eastern Black Sea region come from important historic centres of the Middle Ages. First of all, there is Sebastopolis. Further to the northwest follows Anacopia, the largest Abazgi fortress (modern New Athos). The village of Lykhny, located near the town of Gudauta, was the residence of the Abkhaz rulers from the 9th century and until the middle of the 19th century. It is five kilometers from the coast towards the mountains. Another centre of maritime trade in Abkhazia was Bambora or Aylaga-Abyku, near Lykhny. Timber was successfully

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\*\* Translation from the Russian by Alexander Romensky.

<sup>1</sup> J. Darrouzès (ed.), *Notitiae Episcopatum Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae* (La géographie ecclésiastique de l'Empire byzantin 16), Paris 1981, 207, 218, 233, 251, 266, 274, 294, 346.

<sup>2</sup> L. Khrushkova, *Les monuments chrétiens de la côte orientale de la mer Noire. Abkhazie, IVe-XIVe siècles*, Turnhout 2006, 18-27, 90-91. Ead., *Vostochnoe Prichernomorie v vizantijskuiu epokhu* (=The East Coast of the Black Sea in the Byzantine era), Moscow – Kaliningrad 2018, 59-62.

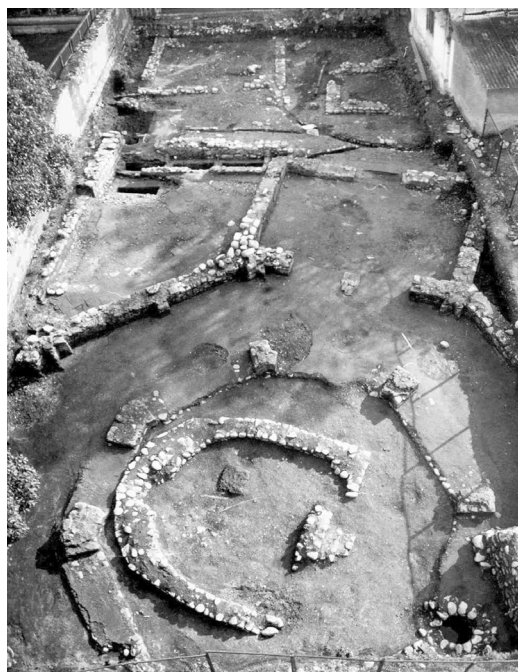


Fig. 1. Sebastopolis. Architectural complex, a view to the south.

traded here; it is referred to on the maps as Boxwood Harbor (Cavo di Buxo). As late as 1833, Frédéric Dubois de Monpéreux saw here a Genoese ship arriving for the cheap and high-quality boxwood for which these places have been famous since Antiquity<sup>3</sup>.

This paper is a preliminary publication of glazed pottery found during our excavations in Sebastopolis<sup>4</sup>. Further research will entail chemical analyses of the fragments, investigation of the technical features of ceramics, as well as a comparative study of the finds from Sebastopolis and similar ceramics from various places in the Black Sea region.

The collection of glazed pottery from Sebastopolis ("Sukhum Fortress") comprises 178 items<sup>5</sup>. Most of the

finds are so-called red-clay pottery, and only six fragments of white-clay pottery. Out of 172 fragments of red-clay pottery in our collection, 65 are bases of bowls (ca. 37,8%). The study focuses on bowl bases. Fragments of glazed ceramics in Sebastopolis were first discovered by V. I. Sizov in 1886, who made an "archaeological expedition" on behalf of the Moscow Archaeological Society<sup>6</sup>. In 1954, the excavations of Mikhail M. Trapsh discovered glazed ceramics in the so-called Bagrat Castle, the medieval fortress of Sebastopolis. In 1957-1958 Lev N. Soloviev and M. M. Trapsh found similar ceramics in Anacopia<sup>7</sup>. In 1977, a large collection of fragments of glazed bowls of the 11th-14th centuries was accidentally discovered during the construction works in the coastal zone of Sukhum<sup>8</sup>. We found similar ceramics during the excavation of the Tsandripsh basilica near Gagra in 1980, in the palace in Lykhny in 1981-1983, in the residential quarter of Sebastopolis in 1985-1992, as well as in the residential complex in Pitsunda in 2007-2009<sup>9</sup>. The number of finds at different sites is not the same. For example, they are fairly numerous in Lykhny and rare in Pitsunda.

Currently, the collection from Sebastopolis is the largest in the Eastern Black Sea region. The main discovery here was the Early Christian octagonal church<sup>10</sup> (Fig. 1). Due to the intensive construction activities of later eras, the stratigraphic picture has been disrupted. Our collection of glazed ceramics from Sebastopolis includes about 178 objects, mainly the bases, rims and lips of vessels<sup>11</sup>.

*in the context of world culture. International Conference dedicated to memory A. V. Bank, 1906-1984*, Saint Petersburg, 2019, 304-317.

<sup>6</sup> L. Khrushkova, "Geschichte der Christlichen Archäologie in Russland vom 18. bis ins 20. Jahrhundert (2. Folge)", *Römische Quartalschrift* 107 (2012), 74-81.

<sup>7</sup> O. Bgazhba, *Ocherki po remeslu srednevekovoï Abkhazii (VIII-XIV vv.)* [=Essays on the craft of medieval Abkhazia (VIII-XIV centuries)], Sukhum 1977, 23-35.

<sup>8</sup> M. M. Gunba, *Novye materialy po arkheologii srednevekovogo Sukhuma* (=New materials on the archeology of medieval Sukhum), Sukhum 1979, 75-85.

<sup>9</sup> L. Khrushkova, "Early Christian Monuments of the North-East Black Sea Coast: Excavations of 2001-2008", *Acta XV Congressus internationalis archaeologiae christianae, Toleti (8-12.9.2008)*, II, Vatican City 2013, 1310, fig. 5c.

<sup>10</sup> Khrushkova, *Les monuments chrétiens*, op.cit. (n. 2), 57-70.

<sup>11</sup> Khrushkova, *Vostochnoe Prichernomorie v vizantijskuiu*, op.cit. (n. 2), 248-311.

<sup>3</sup> F. Dubois de Monpéreux, *Voyage autour du Caucase chez les Tcherkesses et les Abkhazes en Colchide, en Géorgie, en Arménie et en Crimée*, Neuchatel 1839, 271.

<sup>4</sup> Khrushkova, *Les monuments chrétiens*, op.cit. (n. 2), 57-70.

<sup>5</sup> Khrushkova, *Восточное Причерноморье в византийскую эпоху*, op.cit. (n. 2), 250-311; Ead., "Srednevekovaia polivnaia posuda iz Sebastopolisa: chashi s ornamentom v vide volny" (= "Medieval glazed dishes from Sebastopolis: bowls with wave ornaments"), *Vizantia v kontekste mirovoi kultury. Mezhdunarodnaia konferentsiia, posviashchennaia pamiati A. V. Bank, 1906-1984* (=V. N. Zalesskaya (ed.), *Byzantium*

## CATALOGUE

The medieval glazed ceramics of the Byzantine area are divided into two large groups according to the quality and colour of the material: white wares and red wares.

### White Wares (Figs 2 and 3)

1. 88/4214, 88/4215. Fragments of a large plate with a wide rim (Figs 2.1, 3.1). The fabric is light grey, roughly mixed, layered, with grog and single particles of mica. The rim is separated from the main body with a projection. The glaze is green, with a bright “metallic” coating, partially preserved, stained on a yellowish slip. On the back there are spots of green glaze.
2. 90/1278. Plate, fragment (Figs 2.2, 3.2). The fabric is thin, light grey. The rim is 1.7 cm wide, bent inward, separated from the wall with a small rib. The transition from the wall to the base thickens; the base thickness is 5 mm, the rim is 7 mm. The glaze is yellow-brown, lighter on the inside. The rim is decorated with a zigzag line, on the inside it is in relief, on the other side the line is incised.
3. 89/2856. Bowl, part of the wall and base (Figs 2.3, 3.3). The fabric is light grey, the texture is thin, layered. The bowl height is 4.3 cm, the wall thickness up to 2 mm. The thin rim is bent; on the inside, it is separated

The latter are more numerous. In Abkhazia, this general pattern is very clearly expressed: in the collection from Sebastopolis there are only six fragments of white ware.

from the wall with a rib with incisions. The glaze is green with a “metallic” gloss, applied from the inside and outside to a light grey slip. On the exterior of the wall there is a relief decor, stamped before firing. Three rows of semi-ovals, with the motif of the bunch of grapes. A single such item in our collection.

4. 88/1388. Jug handle, fragment (Figs 2.4, 3.4). The fabric is greyish-white, with some particles of mica and grog; the texture is layered. The glaze is green on the slip, partly lost. The handle is almost oval in cross section, with a small groove.
5. 88/1991. Jug handle, fragment (Figs 2.5, 3.5). The fabric is almost white, layered, with rare particles of mica and grog. The glaze is a bright green, with dark green spots and stains. The handle is almost oval in cross section, a small rib on the outside. The fabric of the fragments described is white or greyish-white, some of them, as for example, the plate with broad rim (Figs 2.1, 3.1), has layered texture, there are rare particles of mica in the fabric.

### Red Wares (Figs 4-15)

Most pieces in the collection of Sebastopolis (173 fragments out of the 178) belong to the group of so-called red wares: the fabric ranges in colour from a light brown, pinkish (the most common) to a less common dense reddish brown. Almost all the vessels are made of thin clay.

The glaze of the bowls is mostly yellow or a yellowish-brown, less often a yellowish green or green. A

common decorative motif is concentric circles in the centre, less often a spiral; sometimes circles go along the base rim, in some cases they are complemented by a wave motif. The decor is done with an incised line or a slightly elevated strip, then covered with glaze. Geometric (occasionally vegetal) motifs are emphasized in brown in different shades.

6. 88/3158. Bowl base, diameter is 6 cm (Figs 4.1, 5.1). The fabric is light brown, with particles of mica. The glaze is light yellow, almost white. The base is decorated with two incised concentric circles in brown.
7. 90/416. Bowl base, diameter is 5.3 cm (Figs 4.2, 5.2). The fabric is brownish-pink, the glaze is yellow, plain. Decor: two circles, the interior one with a curl in brown. Two scars from the tripod.



8. 88/2261. Bowl base, diameter is 5.9 cm (Figs 4.3, 5.3). The fabric is light brown. The glaze is yellow, shiny, even. Decor: two circles on the base, in brown. Three scars from a tripod.
9. 88/121. Bowl, base diameter is 6.4-6.5 cm (Figs 4.4, 5.4). The fabric is thin, light brown, pinkish, glaze is yellow, partially lost. At the base in the centre is an open circle.
10. 88/3820. Bowl, base diameter is 7.2-7.3 cm (Figs 4.5, 5.5). The fabric is thin light brown, pinkish. Two scars from a tripod. The glaze is bright yellow, shiny, dense, even. At the base in the centre is a wide open circle surrounded by a double strip. On the reverse side at the base there are small spots of glaze.
11. 89/3707. Bowl base, diameter is 7.7 cm (Figs 4.6, 5.6). The fabric is light brown, with rare particles of mica. The glaze is yellow, even. The spiral motif is brown in the centre of the base. One scar from a tripod.
12. 88/3984. Bowl base is 7.3-7.4 cm in diameter (Figs 4.7, 5.7). The fabric is light brown and pinkish. The glaze is yellow, partially lost. Two concentric circles in the centre. Three scars from a tripod.
13. 89/589. Bowl base, diameter is 7.3 cm (Figs 4.8, 5.8). The fabric is light brown, pinkish, with particles of mica. The glaze is yellow, even. Two concentric circles in the centre. One scar from a tripod.
14. 89/676. Bowl base, diameter is 6.6 cm (Figs 4.9, 5.9). The fabric is light brown. The glaze is yellow, partly lost. In the centre there is an open circle with a curl, a circle along the rim. On the reverse side at the base there is an incised S-shaped motif. Three scars from a tripod.
15. 89/2217. Bowl base, diameter is 6.8-7 cm (Figs 4.10, 5.10). The glaze is light yellow. In the centre there is an open circle with a curl. One scar from a tripod.
16. 89/4262. Bowl base, diameter is 7.9-8.2 cm (Figs 4.11, 5.11). The fabric is light brown, with particles of mica. The glaze is light yellow, matte. An open circle in the centre of the base, two concentric circles on the edge. On the reverse side at the base there is an ornament: three lines diverging from one point. Three scars from a tripod.
17. 88/74. Half of bowl base, diameter is 7.5 cm (Figs 6.1, 7.1). The fabric is light brown, pinkish. The glaze is yellow. In the centre there are two circles. Two scars from a tripod.
18. 88/767. Fragment of bowl base, diameter is 6.3 cm (Figs 6.2, 7.2). The fabric is light brown, greyish, differs in colour from most other fragments. The glaze is light yellow, almost white, partially lost. In the centre are two concentric circles of different widths.
19. 88/968. Half of bowl base, diameter is 8 cm (Fig. 6.3). The fabric is light brown reddish, with rare particles of mica. The glaze is yellow, in the centre of the base there is a spiral.
20. 88/1195. Part of bowl base, diameter is 5.8 cm (Figs 6.4, 7.4). The fabric is light brown, pinkish. The glaze is yellowish, poorly preserved. Three concentric circles at the base. Three scars from a tripod.
21. 88/2863. Fragment of bowl base, diameter is not determined (Figs 6.5, 7.5). The fabric is light brown, with rare particles of mica. The glaze is yellow, partly lost. Two circles on the base and one on the rim of the bowl.
22. 88/1315. Half of bowl base, diameter is 7.6 cm (Figs 6.6, 7.6). The fabric is light brown, reddish. The glaze is yellow. Two circles at the base. Two scars from a tripod.
23. 88/1838. Fragment of bowl base, diameter is not determined (Figs 6.7, 7.7). The fabric is light brown. The glaze is yellow. Two circles at the base. One scar from a tripod.
24. 88/2347. Fragment of bowl base, diameter is not determined (Figs 6.8, 7.8). The fabric is brownish-grey, with rare particles of mica. The glaze is yellow-brown. Two circles in the centre and one along the rim. One scar from a tripod.
25. 88/1314. Fragment of bowl base, diameter is 6 cm (Figs 6.9, 7.9). The fabric is very thin, light brown. The

glaze is cream, almost white, with a light green tint. Two concentric circles at the base.

26. 88/3038. Fragment of bowl base, with a diameter of 6.1 cm (Figs 6.10, 7.10). The fabric is light brown, pinkish. The glaze is greenish, partially lost. Two concentric circles along the rim.
27. 88/3040. Fragment of bowl base (Figs 6.11, 7.11), diameter is not determined. The fabric is light brown. The glaze is yellow, partly lost. In the centre there is a circle, along the rim there are two concentric stripes. One scar from a tripod.
28. 88/3156. Fragment of bowl base (Figs 6.12, 7.12), diameter is not determined. The fabric is light brown, pinkish. The glaze is light, yellowish-greenish, spots, partly lost. Four concentric circles in the centre. One scar from a tripod.
29. 88/2340. Bowl base, diameter is 7 cm (Figs 8.1, 9.1). A rare feature in this group: a high base –2.6 cm from the inside. The fabric is light brown. The glaze is cream, almost white, with greenish spots, the coating is dense. Two circles in the centre. Three scars from a tripod. On the back of the base there is a painted ornament: a row of three connected rhombs.
30. 89/564. Half of bowl base, diameter is 7.8 cm (Fig. 8.2). The fabric is light brown. The glaze is yellow. There is a curl in the centre of the base, along the rim there are two circles. One scar from a tripod.
31. 90/175. Bowl base, diameter is 6 cm (Figs 8.3, 9.3). The fabric is light brown. The glaze is light yellow. Three concentric circles occupy the entire base surface. Spots of glaze on the outside. Three scars from a tripod.
32. 89/675. Fragment of bowl base (Figs 8.4, 9.4), diameter is not determined. The fabric is brown, pinkish. The glaze is light green. There is a spiral in the centre, a circle along the rim.
33. 88/3037. Fragment of bowl base with a part of the wall, the base diameter is 6.4 cm (Figs 8.5, 9.5). The fabric is light brownish, pinkish, rather roughly mixed, with rare particles of mica. The glaze is yellow, partly lost. Two concentric circles along the base rim, at the beginning of the wall there is a zigzag motif.
34. 88/2607. Fragment of bowl base (Figs 8.6, 9.6), diameter is not determined. The fabric is light brownish, pinkish, with particles of mica. The glaze is yellow. Decoration: at the beginning of the wall there are two incised intermittent wavy lines.
35. 89/2425. Bowl, base diameter is 7.3 cm (Figs 8.7, 9.7). The fabric is light brown, the texture is rougher compared to the other samples. Two large scars from a tripod. The glaze is yellow-brown. A spiral in the centre.
36. 88/4206. Bowl base, 7.1 cm in diameter (Figs 8.8, 9.8). The fabric is brownish, rather roughly mixed, with rare particles of mica. Decor: in the centre there is a small circle, on the wall there are three rows of dashed lines between two concentric circles. Three scars from a tripod.
37. 88/3157. Bowl base, in the shape of an oval, is 4.9–5.2 cm in diameter (Figs 8.9, 9.9). The fabric is light brown, pinkish, and has a rather rough texture. The walls are thick, near the base up to 1.1 cm. The glaze is yellowish-brown. Two concentric circles in the centre of the base and one at the rim. One scar from a tripod.
38. 88/3931. Fragment of a wide bowl, diameter is 8.3 cm, a part of the bent rim is preserved (Figs 8.10, 9.10). The fabric is light brown, with numerous particles of mica. The glaze is light green. The edge is decorated with a triple wavy line motif.
39. 89/3266. Bowl base, diameter is 7.2 cm (Figs 8.11, 9.11). The fabric is very thin, light brown, with many particles of mica on the surface. The glaze is yellow. Decor: along the rim there is a wide border of 3–4 wavy lines between two concentric circles. Three scars from a tripod.
40. 88/3819. Bowl base, diameter is 7.9 cm (Figs 10.1, 11.1). The fabric is thin, light brown, with particles of mica. The glaze is yellow, partly lost. Decor: three large leaves extending from the centre are depicted by

a double line, straight and wavy. Two round holes are marks of repair. Three scars from a tripod.

**41.** 88/1775. Base of a wide bowl, two pieces glued together; base diameter is 8.1 cm (Figs 10.2, 11.2). The fabric is thin, brown, with rare particles of mica. The glaze is light brown, even, dense. Decor: incised lines extending from the centre. Three scars from a tripod.

**42.** 89/4276. Bowl base, diameter is 7.3 cm (Figs 10.3, 11.3). The fabric is light brown, yellow glaze. Decor: brown incised lines and curls. One scar from a tripod.

**43.** 88/2345. Bowl base, diameter is 5.7 cm (Figs 10.4, 11.4). The fabric is light brown, rather roughly mixed, porous. The glaze is dark yellow. Decor: relief stripes diverging radially from the centre. A trace of burning on the surface. One scar from a tripod. A single item in our collection.

**44.** 89/3530. Fragment of bowl base (Figs 10.5, 11.5), diameter is not determined. The fabric is light brown, the texture is rather rough. The glaze is yellow. Decor: semiovals diverging from the centre, arranged in two rows. One scar from a tripod.

**45.** 88/2890. Fragment of bowl base, diameter is 6.9 cm (Figs 10.6, 11.6). The fabric is very thin, brown-pinkish. The glaze is yellowish-greenish, partly lost. Decor: a series of semi-oval incised lines between two concentric circles.

**46.** 88/56. Bowl base, diameter is 6.9 cm (Figs 10.7, 11.7). The clay is reddish, at the base there are rare particles of mica. The glaze is light brown, even, dense. Decor: two pairs of concentric circles, between them the motif of semiovals with “commas” inside. On the reverse side at the base, the incised mark “И”, partially preserved. Three scars from a tripod.

**47.** 88/2346. Fragment of bowl base, diameter is not determined (Figs 10.8, 11.8). The clay is light brown, the glaze is yellow. Decor is in the form of wavy stripes. One scar from a tripod.

**48.** 88/3921. Fragment of bowl base (Figs 10.9, 11.9), diameter is not determined. The fabric is brown, the

glaze is yellow. Decor in the form of wavy lines. One scar from a tripod.

**49.** 89/4275. Fragment of bowl base, diameter is 6.9 cm (Figs 10.10, 11.10). The fabric is light brown, with parts of mica. There are traces of light greenish glaze. The decor is made in a different technique than on other samples: incised curls are filled with a partially crumbled white slip. A single item of its kind in our collection.

**50.** 88/101. Fragment of the bowl base with a part of the wall, diameter is 3.1 cm (Figs 10.11, 11.11). The fabric is very thin, light, with rare inclusions. A fragment of light green glaze has been preserved. Three recessed concentric circles at the base, filled with yellow glaze.

**51.** 88/4205. Fragment of the bowl base with a part of the wall, diameter is 5.2 cm (Figs 10.12, 11.12). The base is 1.3 cm in height and is beveled inward. The fabric is light brown, reddish, fine texture, with small particles of mica. Yellowish glaze. Wall decor at the base: two concentric lines, between them – the wave motif.

**52.** 88/2861. High bowl base (1.6 cm), diameter 6.4-6.6 cm (Figs 12.1, 13.1). The fabric is light brown, pinkish. The glaze is green, dense. Decor: in the centre there are intersecting lines, between them there are triangles with a curl inside.

**53.** 88/49. High bowl base (1.2 cm), diameter of the base is 5.5-5.7 cm (Figs 12.2, 13.2). The fabric is light brown, the glaze is dense and green. Decor: four schematic branches arranged crosswise, made with incisions.

**54.** 88/2889. Fragment of the high bowl base (1.5 cm) with a part of the wall (Figs 12.3, 13.3), diameter is not determined. The clay is light brown, pinkish, the glaze is green. Decor: a triangle in which an oval with a floral motif is placed. Similar to fragment 470.1 described above.

**55.** 89/566. Fragment of the wall of a wide bowl (Figs 12.4, 13.4). The fabric is light brown, the glaze is yellow. Decor: a triangle made with a wide brown stripe, inside there is an incised triangle with a curl (looks like fragments 11.1 and 12.30).

- 56.** 89/3512. Small fragment of bowl base, diameter is not determined (Figs 12.5, 13.5 and 5a). The fabric is grey, the glaze is olive-grey. The decor is made of dark grey wide recessed stripes and incisions. Intersecting stripes form triangles and rhombuses with curls inside. On the back of the base, the Greek letter “alpha” with a broken crossbeam is marked with an incised line, next to a lower case “beta”. Single item of this type in our collection.
- 57.** 88/3527. High bowl base (1.5 cm), diameter of the base is 6.5 cm (Figs 12.6, 13.6). The fabric is very thin, light brown, pinkish. The glaze is yellow-brown, mottled; a cruciform motif made by an incised line is at the base.
- 58.** 90/1791. High bowl base (1.9 cm), diameter of the base is 8.1 cm (Figs 12.7, 13.7). The fabric is light brown, pinkish. The glaze is yellow and green. Decor: two concentric circles from which radial lines extend. The centre is green, the background is yellow.
- 59.** 88/2344. Base is irregular in shape, diameter is 5.9–6.8 cm (Figs 12.8, 13.8). The fabric is brownish-red-dish, with rare grog. Plant motifs are made by an incised line. A yellow-green field shows a large yellow leaf with an almond-shaped motif inside, in the centre a blurry brownish spot. Three scars from a tripod.
- 60.** Fragment of a plate with yellow glaze exhibited in the Abkhaz State Museum (Sukhum) (Fig. 12.9). The glaze is yellow. The base is divided into eight triangular segments, each with a curl. The ornament is analogous to the decor of fragments 88/2861 and 89/566. This group of three objects indicates that the same decor was used both for products with yellow glaze and for those with green glaze.
- 61.** 89/4277. Fragment of bowl base (Figs 12.10, 13.10). The fabric is light brown. An incised ornament on a white slip in the form of ovals and an elongated leaf, intersecting with oblique lines. The lines of the ornament are filled with yellow-golden glaze. A single item in our collection.
- 62.** 90/1229. Base of a large bowl, diameter of the base is 6.1 cm (Figs 14.1, 15.1). The fabric is light brown, mixed unevenly, slightly porous. The glaze is light green, partially lost, sometimes covered with a touch of lime.
- 63.** 88/4207. Base of a large bowl, diameter 6.9 cm, wall thickness at the base is 1.2 cm (Figs 14.2, 15.2). The fabric is light brown, porous, with rare particles of lime. The glaze is light green, with a “metallic” coating, which is partially preserved. One scar from a tripod.
- 64.** 89/1711. Fragment of bowl base (Figs 14.3, 15.3), diameter is 7.6 cm, with part of the wall. The fabric is light brown, the texture is rather rough, with grog and particles of mica on the reverse side. The glaze is green, with a bright “metallic” coating, partly lost. On the base there are two thin concentric circles, also green.
- 65.** 88/120. Fragment of bowl base, diameter is 6.1 cm (Figs 14.4, 15.4). The fabric is thin, light brown. The glaze is brown-yellowish, applied unevenly. Two thin incised brown circles along the rim of the base. One scar from a tripod.
- 66.** 88/3042. Fragment of the bowl base, diameter is 7.8 cm (Figs 14.5, 15.5). The fabric is brown, on the fracture it is greyish. The glaze is brown, even and dense. One scar from a tripod.
- 67.** 88/1446. Fragment of bowl base, diameter is 7.2 cm (Fig. 14.6). The fabric is brown, the glaze is dark-brown, applied smoothly. Two scars from a tripod.
- 68.** 88/2212. Fragment of bowl base, diameter is not determined (Figs 14.7, 15.7). The fabric is brown, rather rough texture. The glaze is olive brownish, smooth application. Three incised concentric circles along the base rim.
- 69.** 89/891. High base of a small bowl, 5.2 cm in diameter (Figs 14.8, 15.8). The fabric is thin, grey in colour. The glaze is greenish-turquoise inside and out. A black painted flower in a medallion on the inside; geometric motifs outside. A single item of its kind in our collection.
- 70.** 88/2888. High base of a small bowl, 4.7 cm in diameter (Figs 14.9, 15.9). The fabric is grey. The base is decorated with an ornament in three colours: turquoise, blue, black; the background is white. A circle and a circumference with seven petals extending from it are placed in the centre of the base. A single item of its kind in our collection.





Fig. 2. Sebastopolis. White wares. Glazed bowls (Cat. nos 1-5).



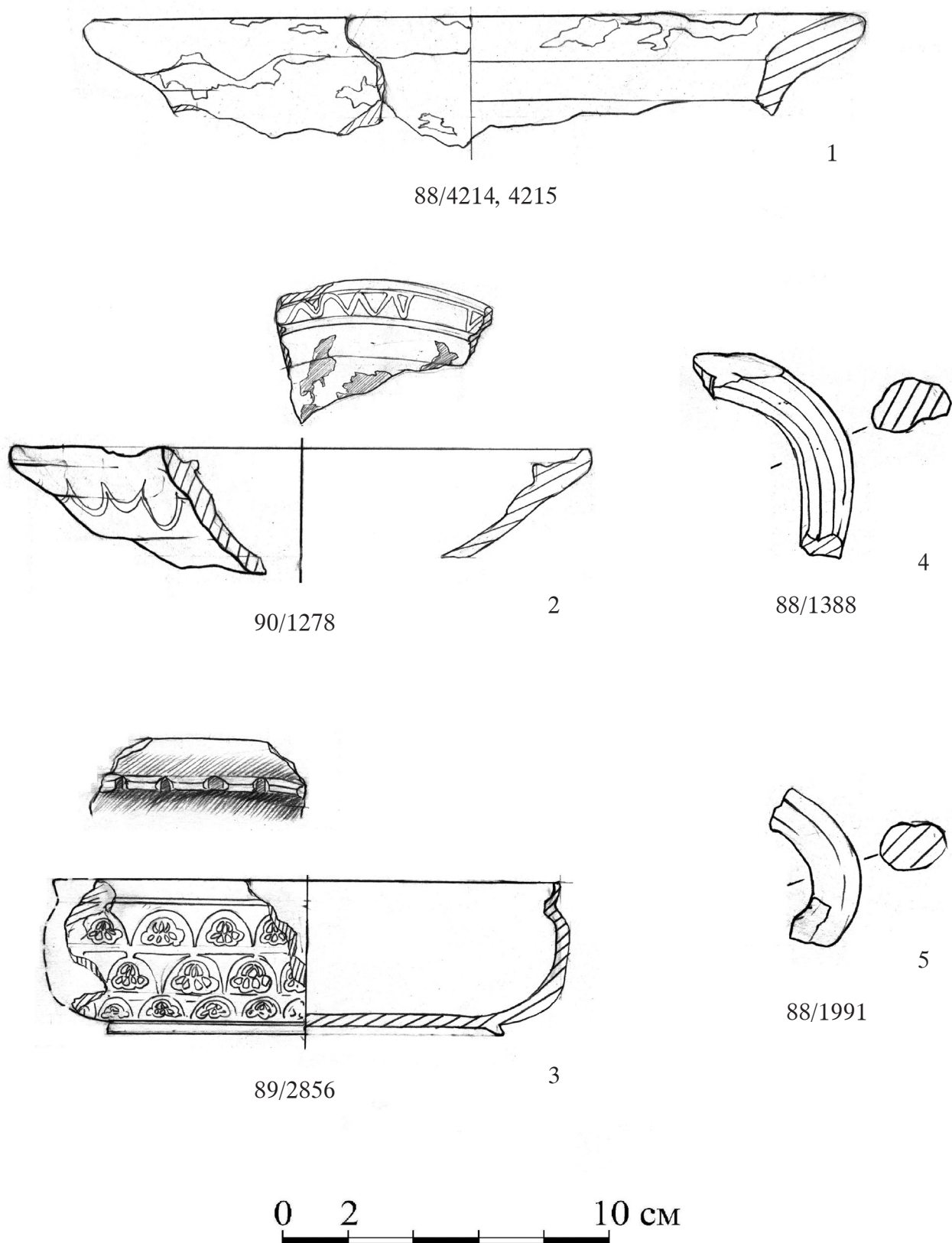


Fig. 3. Sebastopolis. White wares Glazed bowls, bases, sketches (Cat. nos 1-5).

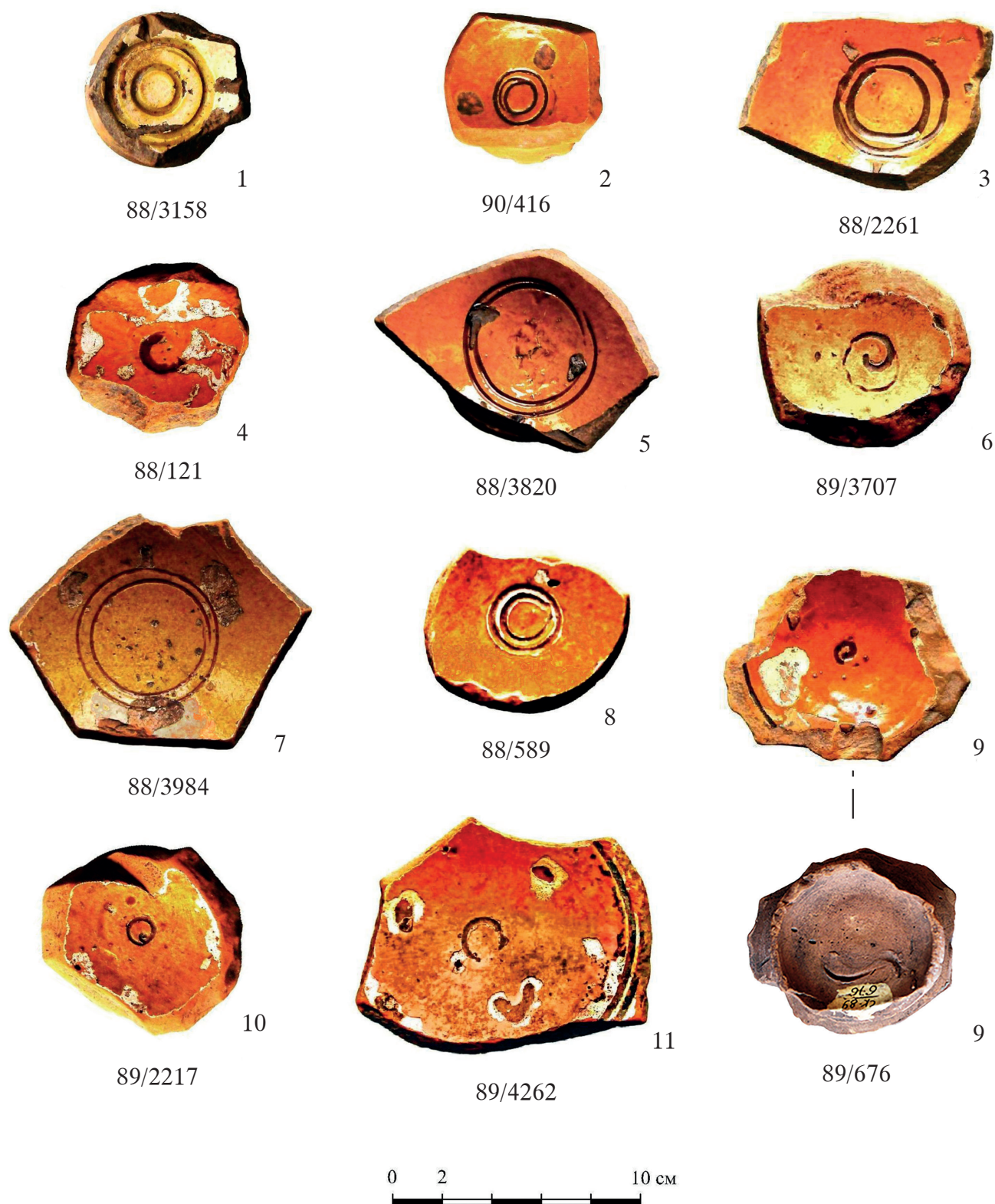


Fig. 4. Sebastopolis. Red wares. Glazed bowls, bases (Cat. nos 6-16).

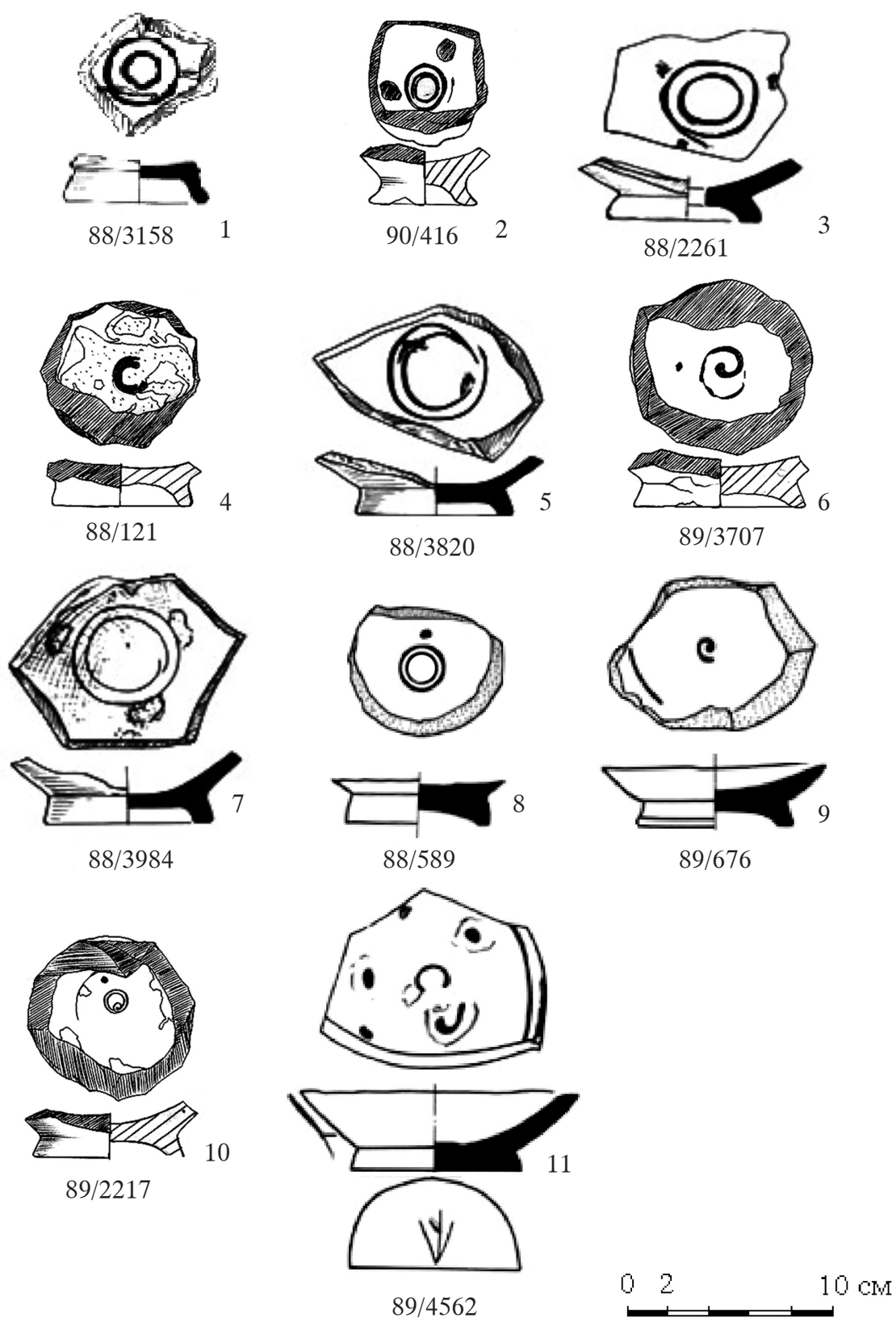


Fig. 5. Sebastopolis. Red wares. Glazed bowls, bases, sketches (Cat. nos 6-16).





1

88/74



2

88/767



3

88/968



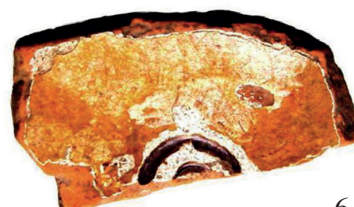
4

88/1195



5

88/2863



6

88/1315



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88/1838



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88/2347



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88/1314



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88/3038



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88/3040



12

88/3156



Fig. 6. Sebastopolis. Red wares. Glazed bowls, bases (Cat. nos 17-28).

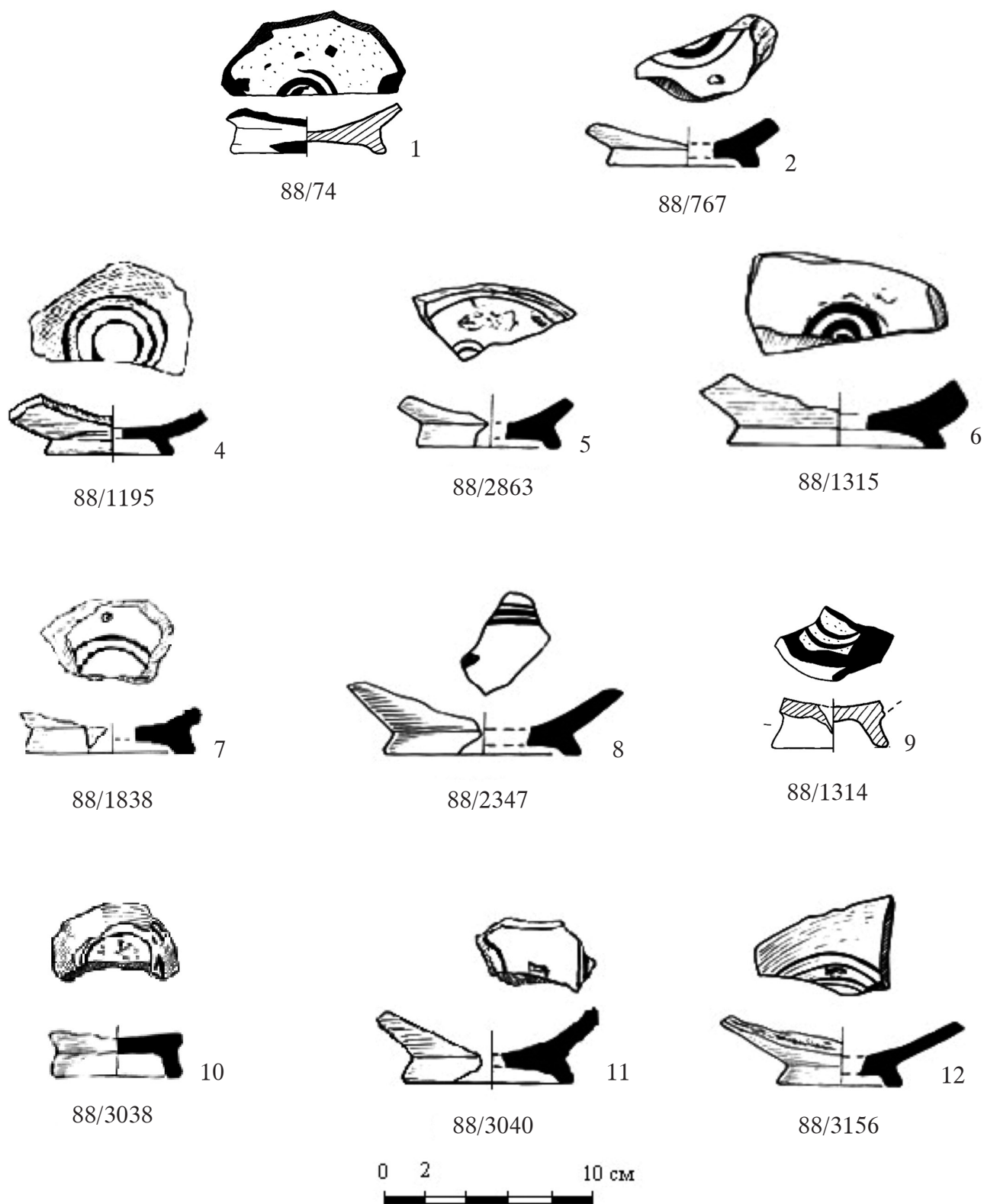


Fig. 7. Sebastopolis. Red wares. Glazed bowls, bases, sketches (Cat. nos 17-28).



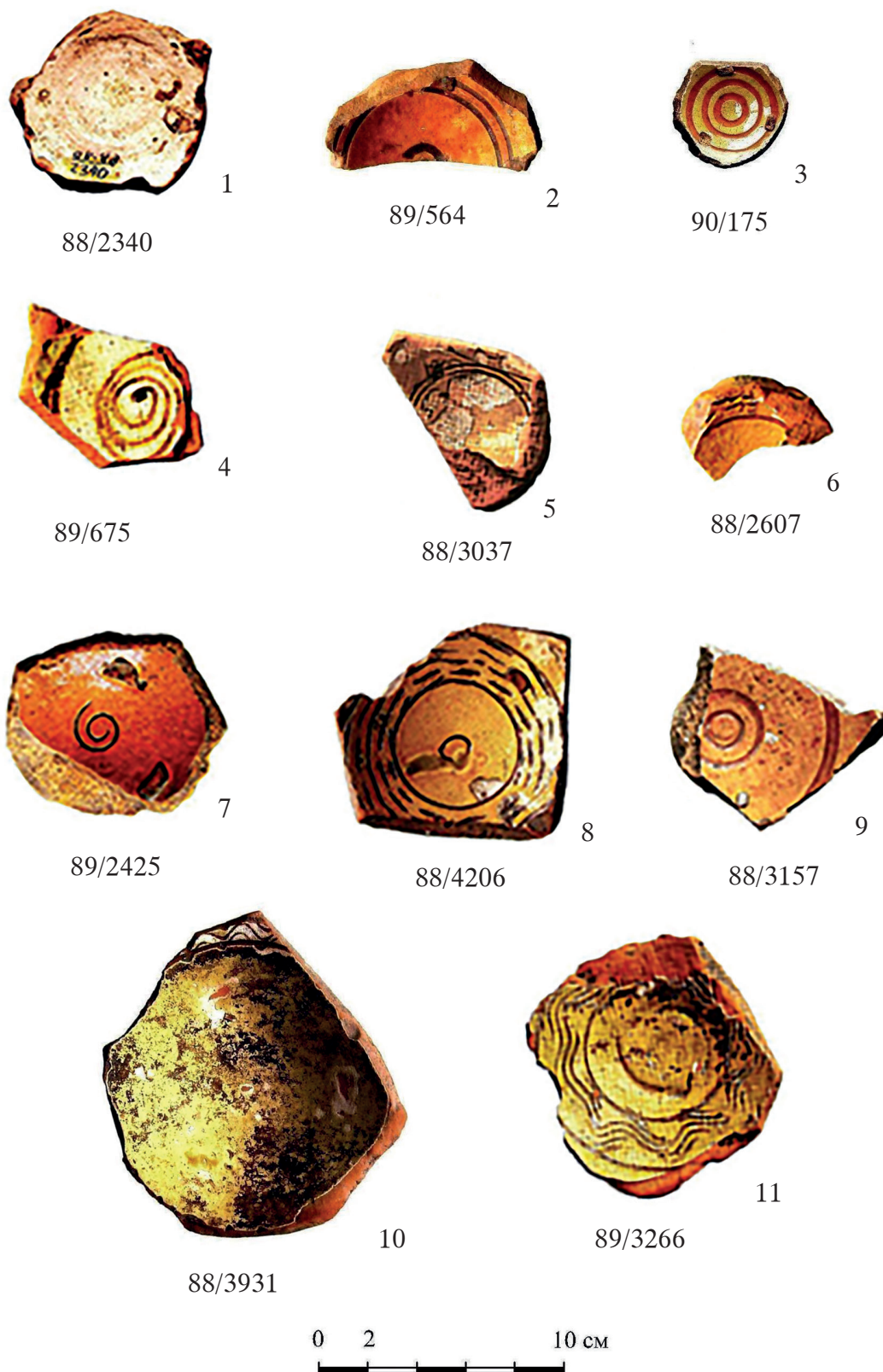


Fig. 8. Sebastopolis. Red wares. Glazed bowls, bases (Cat. nos 29-39).

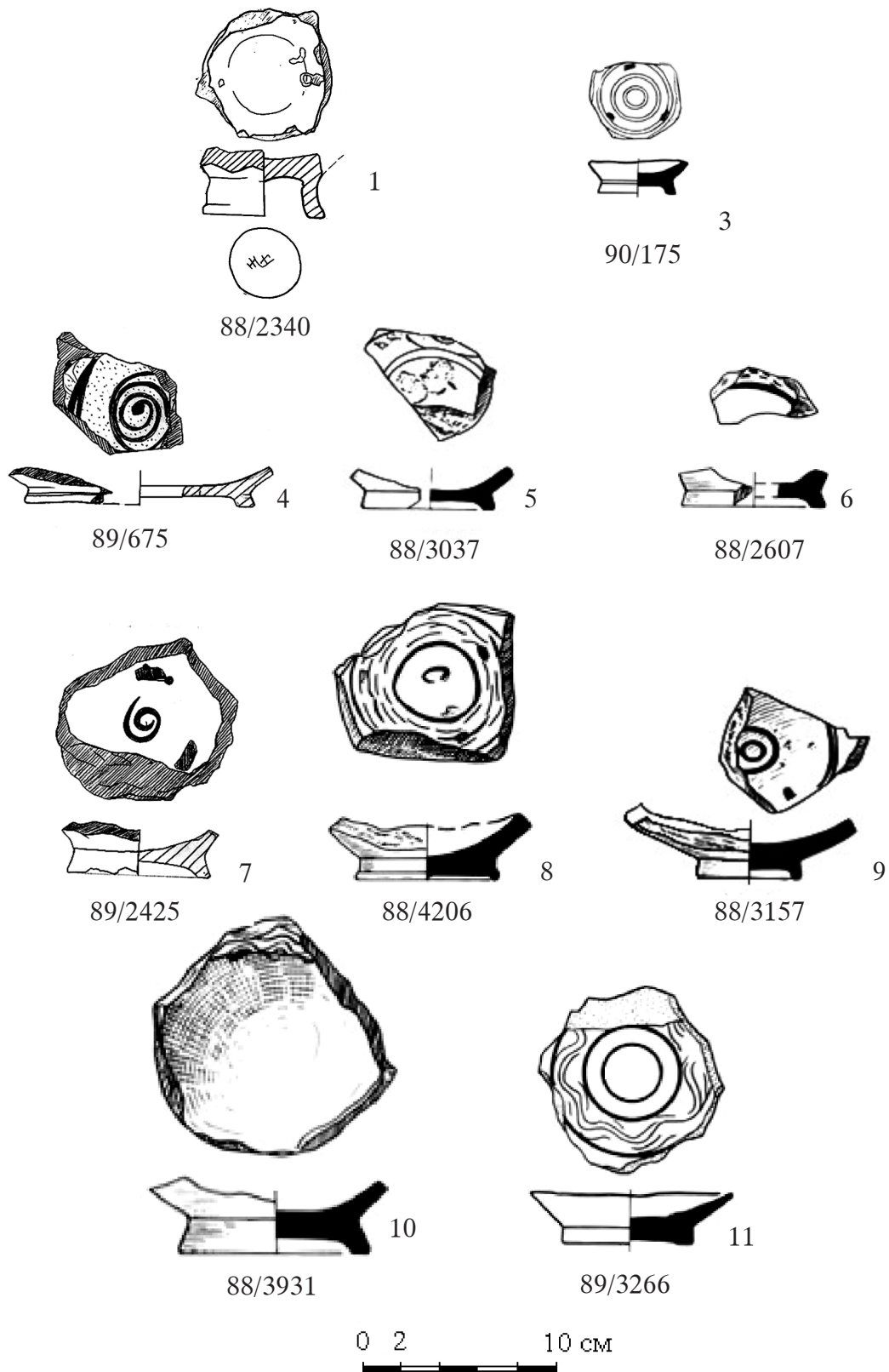


Fig. 9. Sebastopolis. Red wares. Glazed bowls, bases, sketches (Cat. nos 29-39).



Fig. 10. Sebastopolis. Red wares. Glazed bowls, bases (Cat. nos 40-51).

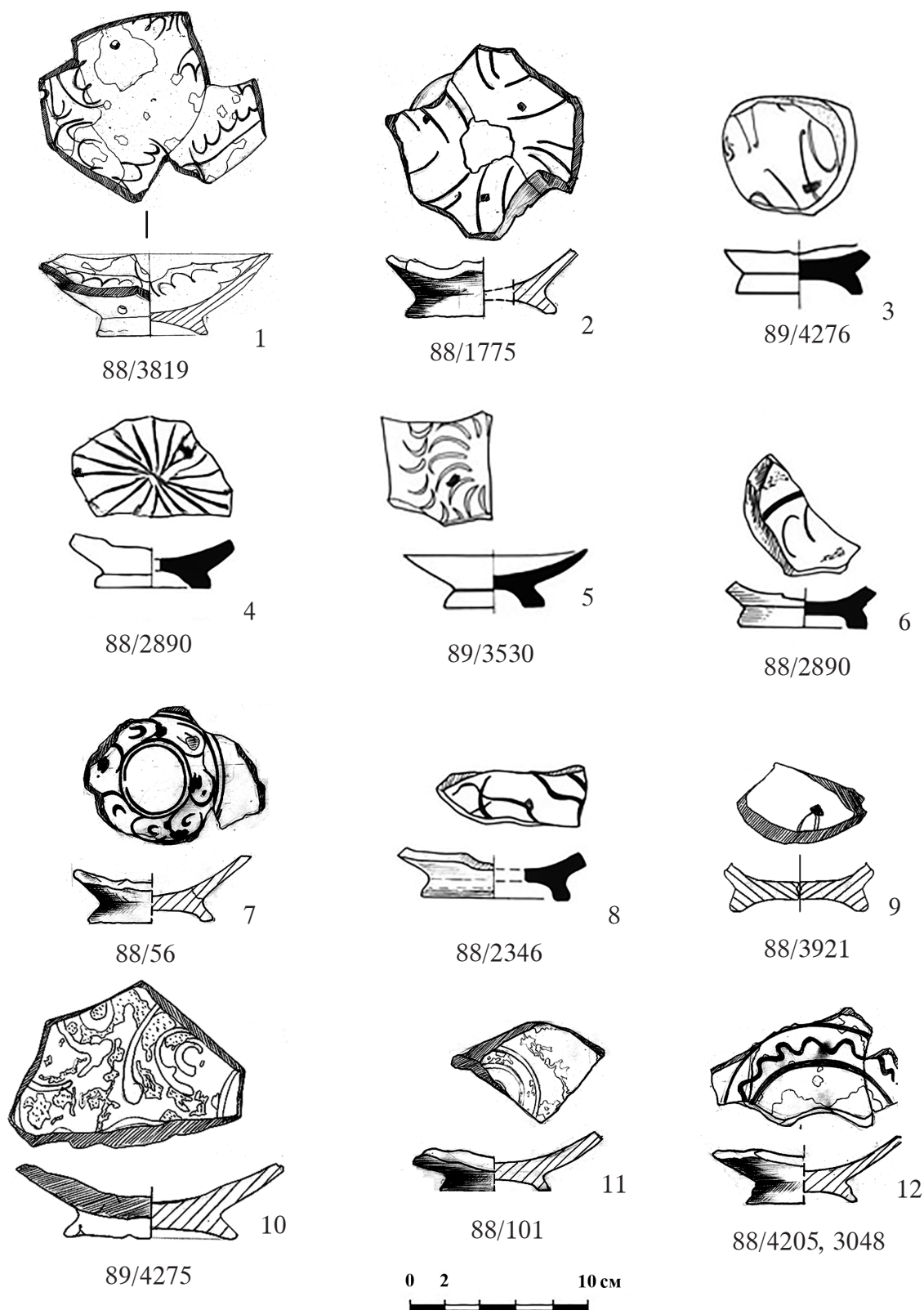


Fig. 11. Sebastopolis. Red wares. Glazed bowls, bases, sketches (Cat. nos 40-51).



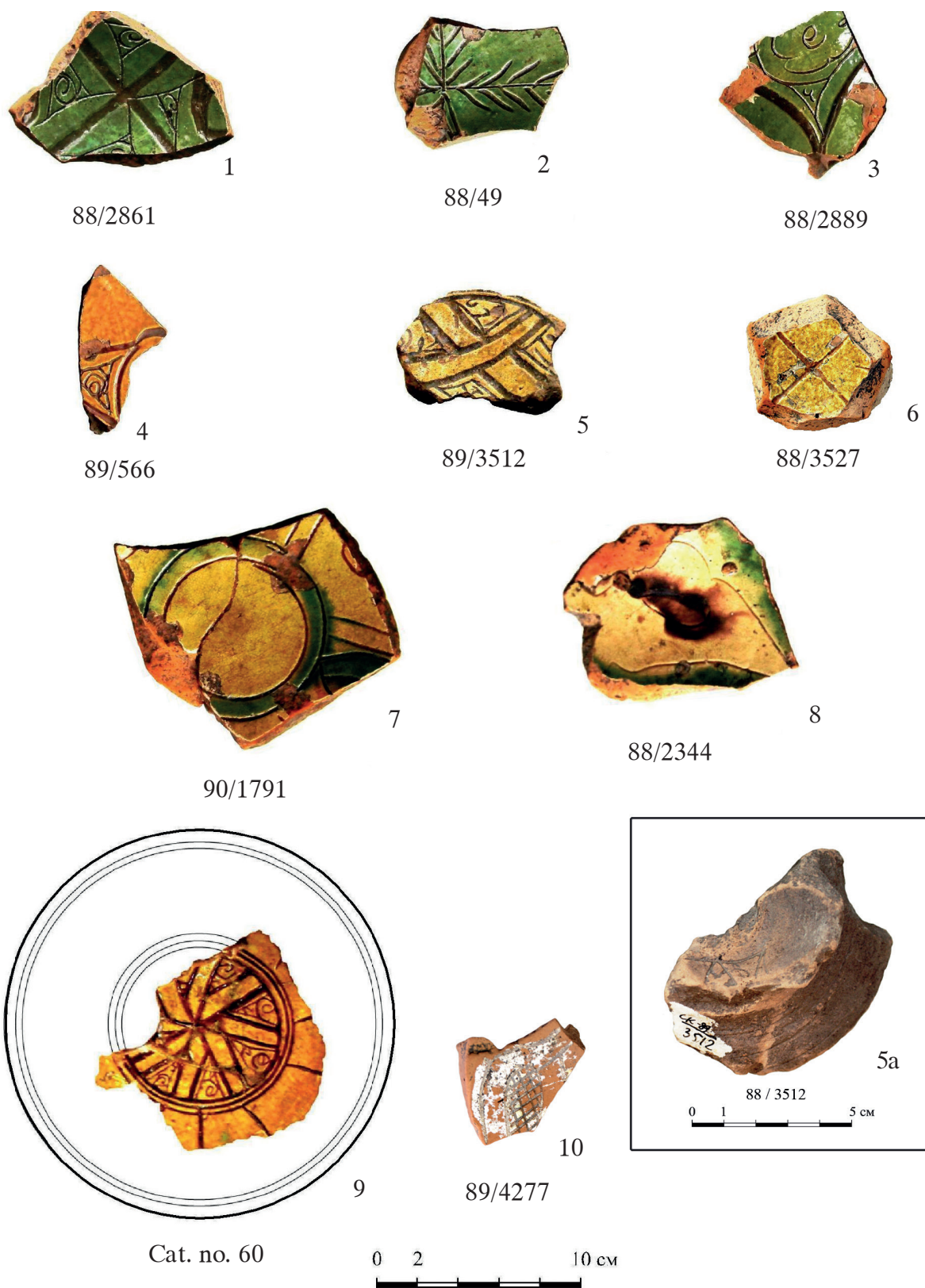


Fig. 12. Sebastopolis. Red wares. Glazed bowls, bases (Cat. nos 52-61).



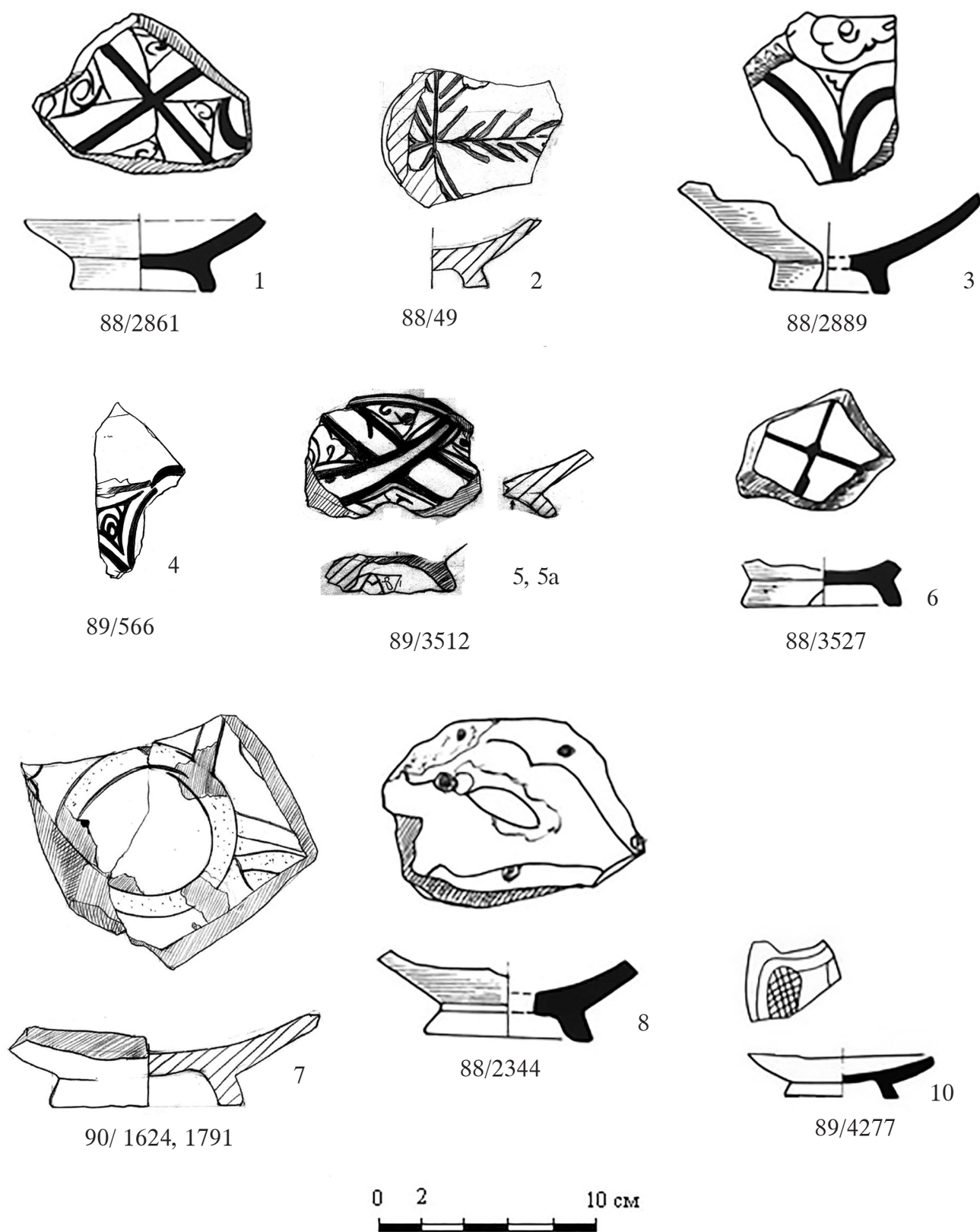


Fig. 13. Sebastopolis. Red wares. Glazed bowls, bases, sketches (Cat. nos 52-61).

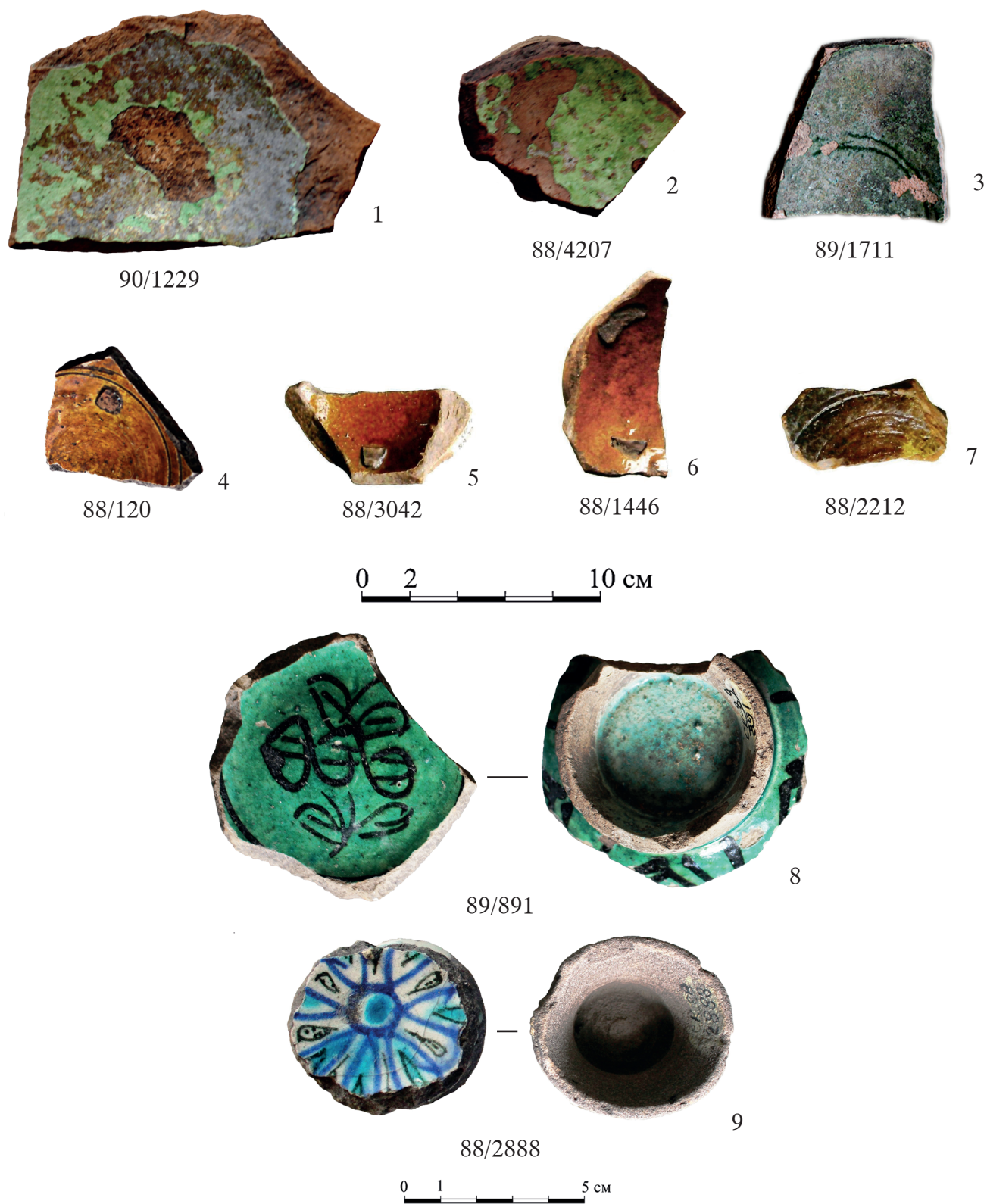


Fig. 14. Sebastopolis. Red wares. Glazed bowls, bases (Cat. nos 62-70).

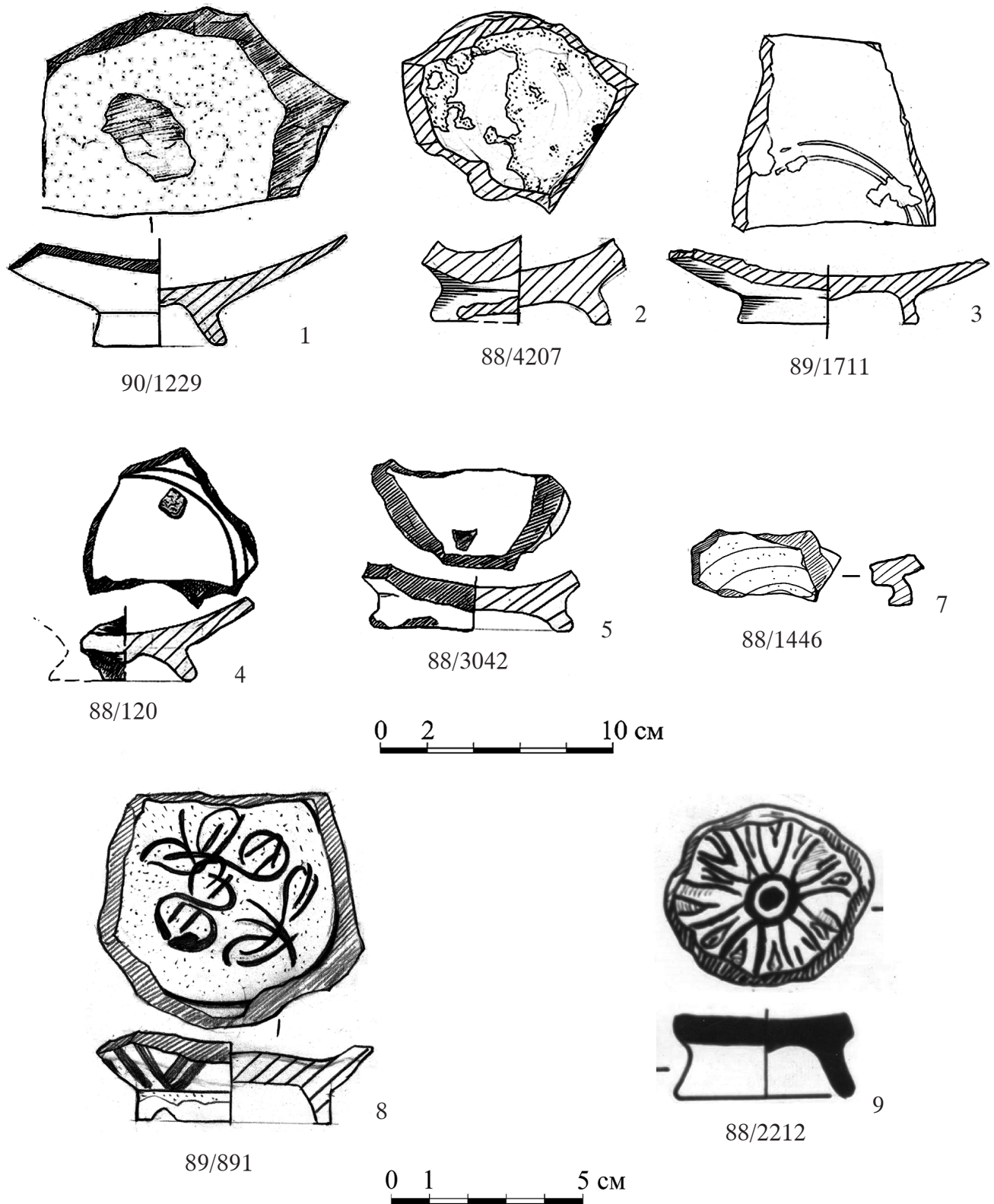


Fig. 15. Sebastopolis. Red wares. Glazed bowls, fragments, sketches (Cat. nos 62-70).



### The questions of typology and chronology

We have examined 70 items, of which 69 come from our excavations of the coastal quarter of Sebastopolis. One item (dish), which is stored in the Abkhaz Museum, was found earlier, also in Sebastopolis. Five items belong to the group of white wares and 65 to the group of mass red wares. Along with the bases of the bowls, we included one fragment (89/566, Cat. no. 55) as an analogy for the characteristic motif of a triangle with a curl in the review. Thus, of the total number of 173 fragments of red ware from Sebastopolis, the bases of bowls (64 objects) account for about 37%. This is the second largest group in our collection; the most numerous is that of the fragments of bowls.

In the group of bases, the bowls covered with yellow or yellow-brownish glaze and decorated in the centre with concentric circles or a spiral motif are more numerous, green glaze is less common. There are only two bowls with polychrome glaze: 90/1791 (Cat. no. 58) and 88/2344 (Cat. no. 59). The two small bowls of grey clay, with blue (88/2888, Cat. no. 70) and turquoise (89/891, Cat. no. 69) glaze stand alone. Most likely, they were imported from the East.

In Abkhazia we found similar ceramics during the excavation of the Tsandripsh basilica near Gagra in 1980, in the palace in Lykhny in 1981-1983, in the residential quarter in Sebastopolis in 1985-1992, as well as in the residential complex in Pitsunda in 2007-2009<sup>12</sup>. The number of finds at different sites is not the same. For example, they are fairly numerous in Lykhny and rare in Pitsunda (Fig. 16).

The nearest place to Sebastopolis, where a large amount of glazed ceramics was found, is Chersonesos in the Crimea. In terms of the quantity of finds, Chersonesos is second only to Constantinople<sup>13</sup>. In the last quarter of the 13th – first quarter of the 14th century glazed pottery was produced in different centres of the South-Western Crimea, on the territory of the Golden Horde: Sudak,



Fig. 16. Pitsunda. Glazed wares.

Caffa and elsewhere. The technology and decor of this pottery followed the Byzantine tradition. Among the Golden Horde pottery there are the well-known bowls with concentric circles and plates with a border formed by a wavy line between circles<sup>14</sup>. The collection of glazed ceramics in the Hermitage contains 485 items, almost all of them come from Chersonesos. White-clay ceramics from the Hermitage date back to the 9th-12th centuries,

<sup>12</sup> L. Khroushkova, "Early Christian Monuments of the North-East Black Sea Coast: Excavations of 2001-2008", *Acta XV Congressus internationalis archaeologiae christianae*, op.cit (n. 9), 1310, fig. 5c.

<sup>13</sup> A. I. Romanchuk, *Glazurovannaiia posuda pozdnevizantiyskogo Chersonesa, Portovyi raion* (=Glazed dishes of the late Byzantine Chersonesos, Port area), Yekaterinburg 2003.

<sup>14</sup> S. Bocharov – A. Maslovsky – A. Sitdikov, "The Beginning of the Glazed Ceramics Production in the Southeast Crimea During the Last Quarter of the 13th Century – the First Quarter of the 14th Century", *Dacia*, N. S. LIX (2015), 329-336, pls 1.9, 1.13, 2.1, 2.3, 4.6, 4.8.

and red-clay to the 13th century. These datings can be confirmed, in particular, by the discovery of the large collection of ceramics in the northern region of Chersonesos, which was abandoned by the end of the 13th century, therefore, in that area there are no layers of the 14th century<sup>15</sup>. Over 20 samples of wares, similar to the pottery from Sebastopolis, were found in the port area and in other parts of Chersonesos<sup>16</sup>. The Hermitage also has items analogous to the glazed bowls from Sebastopolis<sup>17</sup>. By analogy with the items of the Hermitage, we date the white wares from Sebastopolis to the 9th-12th centuries, and the red wares to the 13th century. The publications on glazed ceramics are quite numerous<sup>18</sup>.

The study of glazed ceramics, carried out by Y. Waksman and V. François, demonstrated that the “Zeuxippus type” ceramics were most common from the end of the 12th and for the entire 13th century. Classification by type takes into account not only the shape and decoration of the vessels, but also the chemical composition of the fabric; thus it is possible to determine (sometimes presumably) the place of origin of the items. To the class I of ceramics of the “Zeuxippus type” belong small vessels with monochrome yellow or colorless glaze, concentric

circles and other geometric motifs are often used as decoration. Class I is subdivided into three groups. Class II includes large-size plates, with brown-yellow, green and purple glaze; the decoration may include along with concentric circles, medallions, palmettes, as well as images of animals or horsemen. In Class II eleven forms are defined. Waksman and François distinguish between “ZW stricto sensu” and “ZW Derivatives” among ceramics of the Zeuxippus type<sup>19</sup>. V. N. Zalesskaya also divides glazed ceramics of the ZW type into two classes based on the idea of a transition from Zeuxippus I to Zeuxippus II<sup>20</sup>.

The question of the place of production of certain wares remains one of the most difficult ones. The hypothesis about the possible production of glazed ceramics in the Black Sea region has not yet been confirmed, despite the large number of finds here. In the Eastern Black Sea region, Sebastopolis is the only centre where significant quantities of glazed ceramics have been discovered. We identify the large part of the Sebastopolis collection published here as Class I of the type of “Zeuxippus Ware” and date it to the 13th century. The Eastern Black Sea region stands in contrast to Crimea, where the study of glazed ceramics is in the initial phase.

<sup>15</sup> V. N. Zalesskaya, *Pamiatniki vizantiyskogo prikladnogo iskusstva. Vizantiyskaia keramika IX-XV vekov, Katalog kollektsii (=Monuments of Byzantine applied art. Byzantine ceramics of IX-XV centuries, Catalogue of the collection)*, Saint Petersburg 2011, 22-23.

<sup>16</sup> Romanchuk, *Glazurovannaia posuda*, op.cit. (n. 13), 24, 35, 37-42, 46-47, pls 13.32-35; 14.36, 37; 15.38, 40; 16.39, 41; 17. 42; 18. 46-50; 19. 43, 51-53, 55, 56; 20. 57; 28.80-83.

<sup>17</sup> Zalesskaya, *Pamiatniki*, op.cit. (n. 15), 160, no. 341.

<sup>18</sup> V. François, *Bibliographie analytique sur la céramique byzantine à glaçure. Un nouvel outil de travail* (Varia Anatolica 9), Paris 1997.

<sup>19</sup> Y. Waksman – V. François, “Vers une redéfinition typologique et analytique des céramiques byzantines du type Zeuxippus Ware”, *BCH* 128-129/2.1 (2004), 629-724 (Bibliography: p. 636 note 6).

<sup>20</sup> Zalesskaya, *Pamiatniki*, op.cit. (n. 15), 153-158, nos 325-331, 333-338.

#### Illustration credits

Fig. 1: Khrushkova, *Восточное Причерноморье в византийскую эпоху*, op.cit. (n. 2), fig. 373. Figs 2-3, 16: *ibid.*, figs 460-473. Fig. 17: *ibid.*, fig. 128.



Liudmila Khrushkova

## ΕΦΥΑΛΩΜΕΝΕΣ ΚΟΥΠΕΣ ΑΠΟ ΤΗ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΟΥΠΟΛΗ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΜΠΧΑΖΙΑ

Η συλλογή μεσαιωνικής εφυαλωμένης κεραμικής, προερχόμενης από τις ανασκαφές μας στο αρχιτεκτονικό συγκρότημα της Σεβαστούπολης (σημερινού Σουχούμι), στα ανατολικά παράλια της Μαύρης Θάλασσας, περιλαμβάνει 177 θραύσματα. Ένα επιπλέον πινάκιο, το οποίο φυλάσσεται στο Αμπχαζικό Μουσείο στο Σουχούμι, είχε βρεθεί παλαιότερα. Μόνο πέντε θραύσματα είναι κατασκευασμένα με λευκό πηλό, ενώ τα υπόλοιπα 173 είναι με ερυθρωπό πηλό. Σχεδόν όλα τα αγγεία είναι από λεπτό πηλό, διαφόρων αποχρώσεων, από ανοιχτό καστανό και ρόδινο (τα συνηθέστερα) μέχρι έντονα ερυθροκάστανο. Η εφυάλωση είναι συνήθως κίτρινη ή υποκίτρινη, ενώ σπάνια απαντά κιτρινοπράσινη ή πράσινη εφυάλωση. Το πιο συνηθισμένο σχήμα είναι οι μικρές κούπες (βάσεις, χείλη και τμήματα από τοιχώματα). Ως προς τη διακόσμηση, κυριαρχούν οι ομόκεντροι κύκλοι και σπανιότερα σπείρες, ενώ κύκλοι

συχνά συνδυάζονται με κυματοειδείς γραμμές. Σε μερικές περιπτώσεις τα γεωμετρικά κοσμήματα συμπληρώνονται με φυτικά μοτίβα.

Σε αυτό το άρθρο εξετάσαμε 69 βάσεις από κούπες και ένα θραύσμα τοιχώματος (89/566, Κατ. αριθ. 55). Αυτό είναι το δεύτερο μεγαλύτερο σύνολο της συλλογής μας. Τα περισσότερα είναι χείλη και τοιχώματα από κούπες. Η εξεταζόμενη κεραμική ανήκει στην κατηγορία I της κεραμικής τύπου Ζευξίππου, η οποία ήταν διαδεδομένη στην Κριμαία, την Κύπρο και σε άλλα κέντρα της ανατολικής Μεσογείου. Με βάση συγκρίσεις με άλλα παράλληλα, οι κούπες από τη Σεβαστούπολη χρονολογούνται στον 13ο αιώνα.

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