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FOUR POTTERY ASSEMBLAGES BURIED BY LATE ANTIQUE ERUPTIONS OF VESUVIUS

This contribution describes the pottery assemblage from the Roman villa with baths in Pollena Trocchia (Mt. Vesuvius), whose importance resides mostly in its stratigraphy: it was built on top of the AD 79 ashes and buried by volcanic debris in AD 472 and 512, providing sharp chronological markers. After a brief discussion on the exact chronology of the late antique eruptions of Vesuvius, a contextual analysis of the deposits from four rooms of the baths is provided. A thorough description of the pottery assemblages, which are presented by context, classes, and typology, follows. Overall the analysis of the potsherds confirms the hypothesis that, during the last phase before the AD 472 eruption, the baths were abandoned and used as dumping area, while on a macroscopic level the assemblage seems pretty consistent with others from Naples in the third quarter of the 5th century AD.

1. The site

This paper describes four pottery assemblages buried by volcanic debris from the Roman villa with baths in Pollena Trocchia.[1] The site is noteworthy for its location, at 86.5 m above sea level, on the lower slopes of the north-western quadrant of the Somma-Vesuvius volcanic complex, in the ancient territory of Naples. It was discovered in 1988,[2] during the construction of the nearby high-rise apartment building. At that time the *camorra* destroyed part of the masonry, then transformed the entire area into an illegal dump. In 2004 this site became the centre of a multidisciplinary research undertaking named the Apolline Project, which is still active.

What has been brought to light so far can be interpreted as private baths (**fig. 1**, rooms A to K) of a sizeable villa (rooms P and R) which extends towards the east, under the modern building. The entire structure was set on a hill or mound (**fig. 2**), using the 2 m deep, compact ashes of the AD 79 eruption as foundation.[3] Considering the lack of humified soil above the ashes and the use of tiles made by the Domitii brothers for the hypocaust floor of the baths,[4] it is reasonable to suggest that the site was built at the end of the 1st / beginning of the 2nd century AD. The baths remained in use for at least two centuries, then part of the building collapsed (probably after an earthquake), its debris was accumulated along the walls in the northern area, and the rooms started being used as cemetery (mostly with infant burials) and dump, while probably part of the villa was still in use.

In AD 472 Vesuvius erupted and covered two thirds of the buildings, but resettlement was immediate – although more feeble – on the second floor. In fact within a few decades after the eruption[5] the site started being inhabited again, with the creation of a small hearth and the reuse of the cistern I. Soon after, in AD 505 or 512, another eruption occurred and buried the entire site.

The site not only shows the earliest traces of resettlement after the Pompeian eruption, but also provides the largest studied assemblage for late antique Campania, with 53,781 pottery fragments and 9,854 NMI. Because the villa was pillaged and used as dump in its last phase before the AD 472 eruption, the dataset mostly reflects that phase.[6] While in previous contributions we provided a general view of the pottery assemblage as a whole and studies on specific classes,[7] this paper uses a contextual approach to ilustrate the rather flat chronology of the site and to showcase the typology of vessels circulating in Campania during the third quarter of the 5th century AD. The volcanic fills also provide a sharp *terminus ante quem*, which can be used to fine-tune the chronology of specific types, especially those produced locally.

For this reason four contexts have been chosen. The *laconicum* B and the *praefurnium* G, although damaged in the illegal activities of 1988, still provide more than one metre of thick volcanic deposit of the AD 472 eruption above the cultural contexts. The same deposit filled the entire storage room H, while the cistern I, above it, was in use between that eruption and the later one, which likely occurred in AD 512.

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1 Section 4 was written by VC, sections 3.3 and 3.4 by SS, the rest by GFDS.

2 De Simone 2009.

3 The top of the ashy context has been identified in test trenches in the rooms G, H, in the open area north of the building, along the room H and in the corner of room P, while it has been excavated entirely in a test trench in room F.

4 Bloch 1947, n. 267. The brothers produced together from AD 60 to 93.

5 This assessment is based on the observation of a very thin layer of humus in which some shells of land snails are observed, which implies that only a few cycles of growth and decay had passed since the eruption.

6 Martucci et al. 2012.

7 E.g.: Martucci et al. 2012; De Simone et al. 2013; De Simone/Martucci 2016; Castaldo 2016; Martucci/Toniolo 2011.

2. The late antique eruptions of Vesuvius

The correlation between eruptions and literary passages is doubly tricky, since not all events leave a trace in the stratigraphy or have been recorded in literary sources. It can easily happen that volcanic events find no mention in the ancient sources or that the reference to a specific eruption finds no correlate in the field. Unfortunately the passages on the late antique eruptions of Vesuvius have been deemed biased or plainly wrong in the past scholarship. In fact, it has been suggested that the ancient authors confused the dates and that, instead of three eruptions in AD 472, 505, and 512, only one or two occurred, excluding the possibility of an event in the 5th century AD.[8]

Most recent contributions on the subject reject this option[9]. The ancient author who provides the date for the AD 472 eruption is Marcellinus Comes,[10] who is generally reckoned to be a trustworthy source, because he spent most of his life at the court of Constantinople and used the official archives to write his chronicles. Furthermore, this natural occurrence was a major event in the daily life of the people in Constantinople, because ashes fell from the sky and an annual procession was established as a sign of Christian atonement since then. Marcellinus Comes mentions also, in a subsequent passage,[11] that this procession in remembrance of that day was taking place still in 512, during the so-called "Trisagion revolt". The tradition of this ash-fall in Constantinople is mentioned also by several other Byzantine and Oriental sources, occasionally with a different date, which ranges from AD 429 to 474.[12] Other prominent authors refer to this event while describing later eruptions of Vesuvius. For instance, Procopius (Bell. Goth. II,4,76C) refers to the ashes of Constantinople as a noteworthy precedent while describing the AD 536 eruption, or Cassiodorus (Var. IV,50) who, in a letter dated between 507 and 511 requests a tax exemption for the people living around the volcano because of the damage created by a recent eruption (likely that of AD 505), citing such an exemption for a much bigger eruption whose ashes crossed the sea (likely the AD 472 event).

The exact dates for the later eruptions of Vesuvius come from the *Paschale Campanum* (M.G.H., A.A. IX, 330) by an anonymous author who, according to scholarship, might be a local author of the 6th century AD. As we saw, the existence of an eruptive event in AD 505 is compatible with the information provided by Cassiodorus, while for the AD 512 more sources are available, since the event was probably of bigger magnitude and also because it was tied to the prayers of the bishop of Naples Stephanus I. The *Paschale Campanum* mentions also an eclipse, whose occurrence has been verified through the NASA archives.[13]

In summary, it appears that three events are mentioned by multiple sources of different origin, and, because the earliest was the largest, there is no argument to dismiss any of them and especially that occurred in AD 472, on account of the impact that it had in the culture of that period. In a more volcanological perspective, it is worth mentioning that historically Vesuvius always acted consistently, with an eruption of higher magnitude (i.e. Plinian or sub-Plinian) at the beginning of a series of smaller eruptions before returning to dormancy. Thus, it seems reasonable to hypothesise that the biggest eruption was the first of the series, in AD 472, followed by several small events. All arguments considered, we think that the labelling of the thick volcanic debris as the AD 472 eruption should be pretty safe, while the labelling of the ashy deposit above it as the AD 512 is highly probable.

3. The contexts

3.1. Praefurnium (G)

The *praefurnium* G is one of the last rooms on the west side of the building. The structure is preserved up to the roof for all its length and about half of its width; the missing part was probably destroyed during the first discovery of the site, in 1988. As clearly shown by the stratigraphy, this disturbance affected just the upper contexts, all belonging to the volcanic debris of the AD 472 eruption, and all the artefacts come from lower contexts, with no possibility of modern contamination. The ancient access to this room was through a door on the east wall and another door led to the *praefurnium* F, while on the north wall there was a door to the storage room H. Most of the space in the room is taken by a built structure with stairs, likely a platform to access the boiler and the *testudo alveolorum* on the south wall.

The stratigraphy shows, in the upper part of the barrel vault, compact volcanic ash belonging to a post-AD 472 event, likely the AD 512 eruption. Underneath there are some 2 metres of volcaniclastic debris belonging to the AD 472 eruption. At the bottom of this context the first artefacts appear, mostly *tegulae mammatae*, animal bones, and metal fragments. The following context has chunks of masonry and potsherds with extensive traces of burning, as well as roof tiles, fragments of *tubuli*, *cocciopesto*, and plaster showing a certain variety of decorations (coming from several rooms). The subsequent stratigraphic unit covers the entire room for roughly 1.80 metres of depth and is probably the result of some extensive fire, as a large quantity of ash and charcoal throughout the room seem to suggest. The room was originally paved, as indicated by a few remains at the bottom of the stairs and in the threshold towards the *praefurnium* F, while the rest had been robbed out at some point between the mid-4th/5th century AD. This hypothesis is further confirmed by the evidence from a small test trench (1.70 × 1.30 m) between the threshold on the north wall and the platform of the *praefurnium* to the south. This test trench is in fact composed of few contexts with late antique artefacts mixed with earlier ones, down to 1.25 metres, where the ashes of the AD 79 appear.

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8 Colucci Pescatori 1986, 137-138; Pagano 1996, 35-37; Albore Livadie/Mastrolorenzo/Vecchio 1998, 71; Mastrolorenzo et al. 2002, 23, 33.

9 Savino 2004; De Carolis/Soricelli 2005; De Simone/Perrotta/Scarpati 2011.

10 Marcellinus Comes, Chronicon, M.G.H., A.A. XI, 90.

11 Marcellinus Comes, Chronicon, M.G.H., A.A. XI, 97.

12 De Simone/Perrotta/Scarpati 2011, 63-66.

13 De Simone/Perrotta/Scarpati 2011, 63-66.

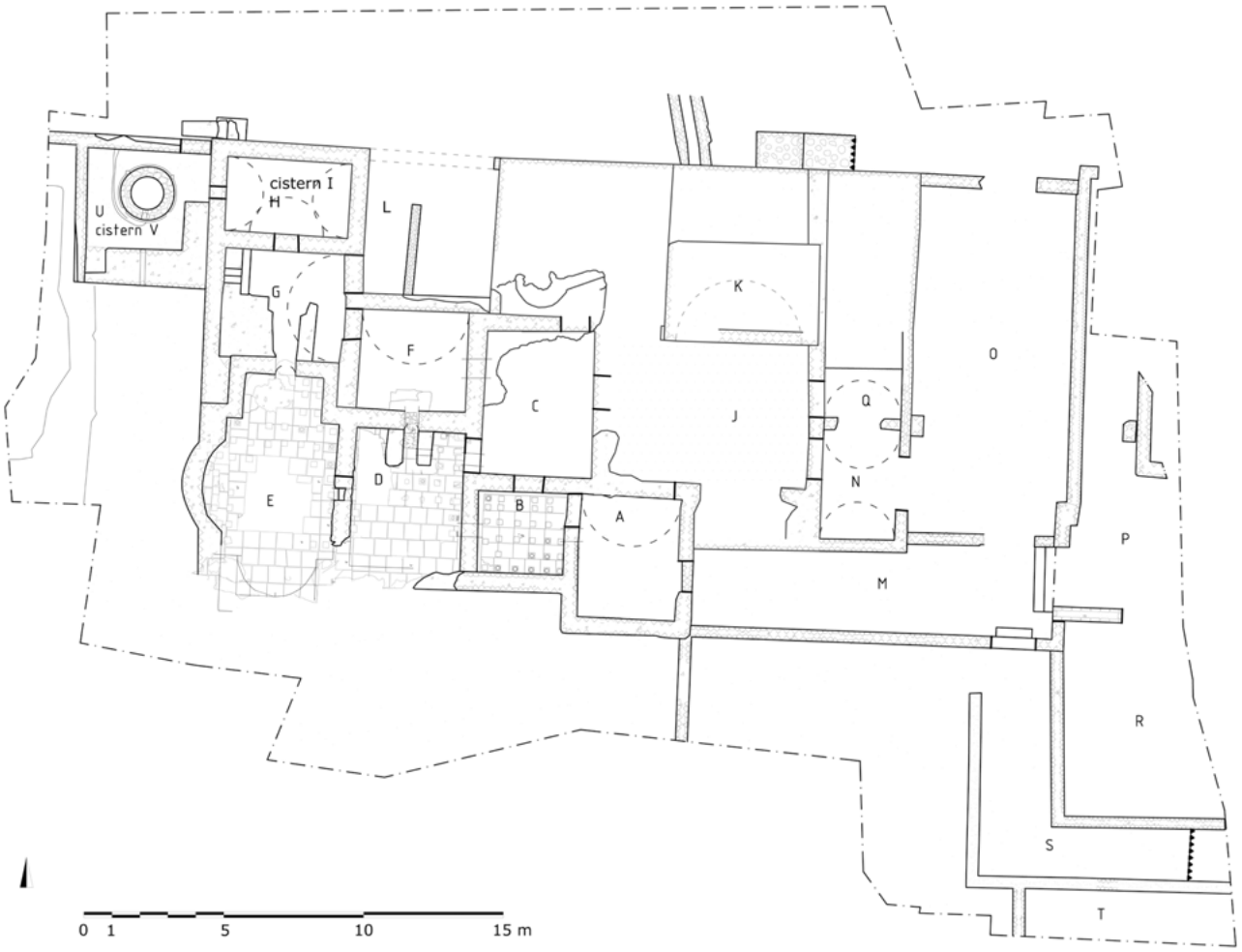

Fig. 1. General site plan of the villa with baths of Pollena Trocchia (updated to 2016, author: Josef Souček).

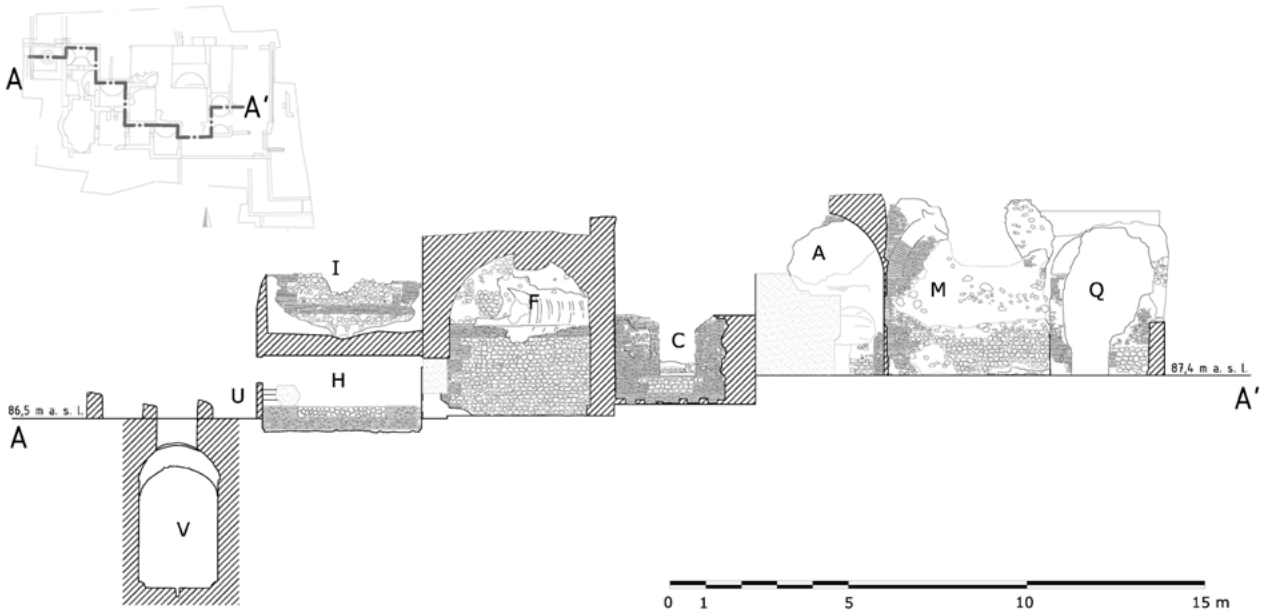

Fig. 2. West-east section drawing of the villa with baths of Pollena Trocchia (author: Josef Souček).

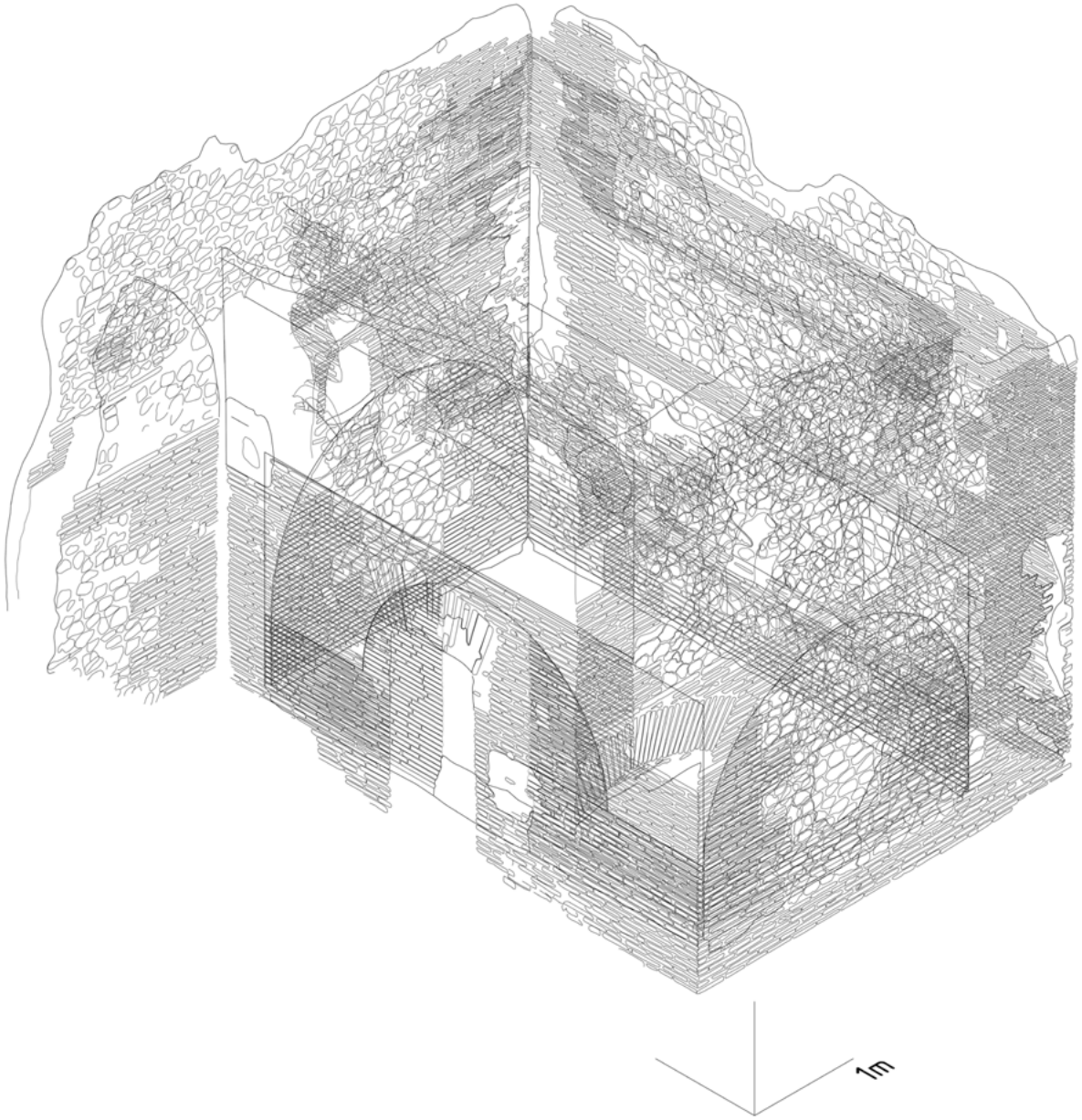

Fig. 3. Axonometric view of the rooms H and I (author: Josef Souček).

3.2. Storage room (H)

Room H is rectangular and has been interpreted as storage room (**fig. 3**). Its access is through a door in its south wall, which leads to *praefurnium* G. A small window is set on the west wall, towards a small external area where the *puteal* of an underground cistern is. The entire room, including its threshold remained undisturbed until our excavation (**fig. 4**).

The stratigraphic sequence shows a thick volcanic deposit which fills the structure up to 0.20 m from the vault. At the time of the eruption the debris must have taken up the entire space, but the progressive loss of water – which forms a large portion of the lahars – caused significant loss of volume.

Under the volcanic fill (ca. 1.30 m thick) an anthropogenic dump covered the entire room. It consisted of rubble, pottery, and a small quantity of terracotta sherds belonging to the heated rooms of the baths. The removal of this context brought to light the wall footing, but no traces of the original pavement. In this case also a test trench was carried out. Two levels have been identified and excavated, below which were the compact ashes of the AD 79 eruption, on top of which the entire building was set.

3.3. Cistern (I)

Room I is set above the storage room H and has been interpreted as cistern of the baths because it has no doors or windows, it is entirely plastered with *cocciopesto*, and shows two holes at the height of the pavement, one in the south-west corner (probably for a pipe towards the boiler in the adjacent *praefurnium* G) and another in the middle of the north wall, with a lead pipe still in it, probably used to empty the cistern for cleaning.

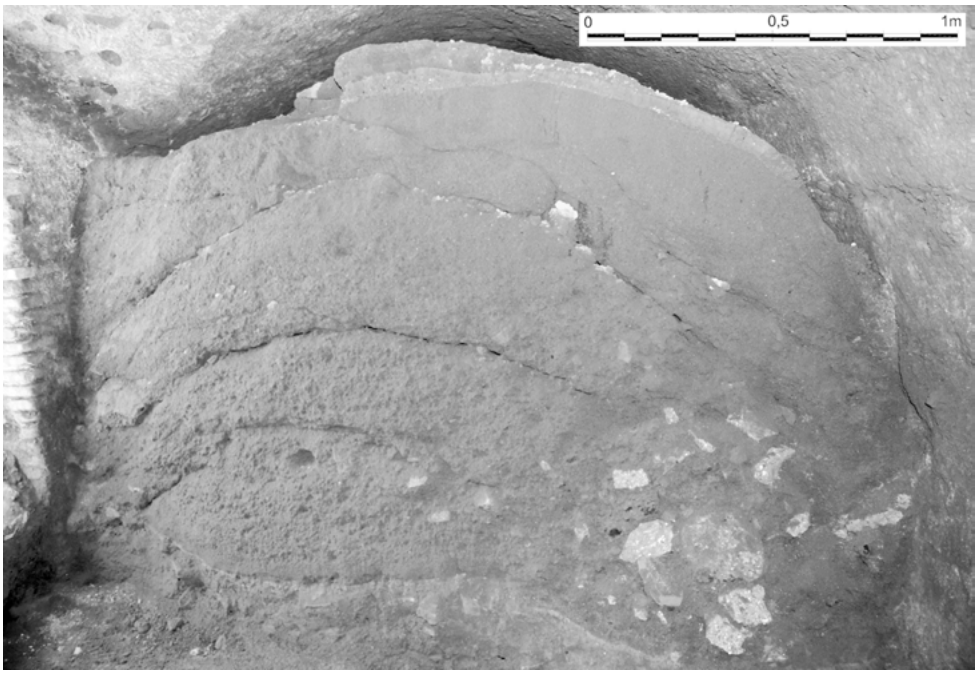

Fig. 4. Photo of the volcanic deposits filling the room H.

The stratigraphic sequence shows, from the most recent context, a thick (1.20 m) ashy deposit, clean and free of artefacts, clearly a primary deposit of a volcanic eruption of Vesuvius. The following context is silty sand with some pottery and *cocciopesto* bits, and is likely the result of anthropogenic accumulation. This context covers the *cocciopesto* floor, which was re-plastered using small clasts of the AD 472 eruption. Unlike *praefurnium* G (whose roof ends at the same height as the top of the cistern I) there are no remains of an actual volcanic fill. Therefore one can conclude that the cistern was originally filled, like the neighbouring rooms, by the AD 472 deposits, but was emptied in order to be used with the upper storey of the building and was then sealed by a later eruption of Vesuvius.

3.4. *Laconicum* (B)

Room B has been interpreted as *laconicum* because of its square shape and the presence of *suspensurae/pilae* still in place for the heating system. Like most of the rooms on the southern edge of the site, it was affected by the destruction which took place in 1988. Nevertheless, this activity removed just the upper portion of the volcanic fill of the AD 472 eruption, thus it kept sealed the anthropogenic contexts. Indeed within the box of the walls of the room, the clean, natural debris occluded for circa 1 metre the earlier contexts.

The *laconicum* was accessed from room A by a doorway in the east wall and had access to the *tepidarium* C through an opening in the north wall. The latter threshold was blocked in the 5th century AD by a shallow wall in *opus incertum*, probably to create a clear separation between the *tepidarium* C – which at that time was still provided with a suspended floor but was being used as burial area – and the *laconicum* B, which was probably used as a dump. Throughout the 5th century AD the *laconicum* B still retained the lower tiles of all the *suspensurae/pilae*, but the pavement above them was gone.

The context under the volcanic debris was silty sand, filled with rubble and clear traces of fire, often in association with charcoal. The rubble chunks were sizeable and appeared piled in the centre of the room for the upper part of the context, sloping to the four corners in the lower part. All contexts showed a certain horizontality and seem to be the result of human activities.

4. The pottery assemblages

4.1. Praefurnium (G)

The contexts filling the *praefurnium* provided a great number of sherds. Among the 144 individuals found, the best attested classes are cooking ware (65 NMI) and the slipped ware (32 NMI), while common ware (16 NMI), the ARS (4 NMI), and the burnished ware (4 NMI) are less represented. Although some of the fragments are clearly residual, most of the rims provide a uniform dating to the 5th century AD.

The first fragment presented here is a jug rim in burnished ware. The jug has straight neck with rounded rim. The body of the jug is rounded and a thick handle is attached under the rim (**fig. 5,1**). The external surface presents an orange slip burnished with a special tool. Similar pieces are found at Carminiello ai Mannesi from the second half of the 5th century (Carminiello form 86.1) and at Francolise in contexts dated between the end of the 4th and the middle of the 5th century AD.[14]

A rim of basin in slipped ware was found in the same stratigraphic unit. Its rim is inverted and the wall flares

[14] Arthur 1994, 199; 202 fig. 94,86.2; Cotton 1979, 186–188 fig. 62,43–44.

slightly outwards (**fig. 5,2**). This type is very similar to a basin found in contexts dated to the 6th century AD at Carminiello ai Mannesi[15] (Carminiello 36), although the *terminus ante quem* of AD 472 hints at an earlier dating.[16]

Another fragment from the same stratigraphic unit is the rim of a cooking pot (**fig. 5,3**). It shows straight neck and rounded rim, slightly thickened inward. This type is attested in Naples at Carminiello ai Mannesi,[17] (Carminiello 50) in the phase of the end of the 5th century, and at the Roman villa of Somma Vesuviana.[18]

In the praefurnium are attested also a number of casseroles. The first presents a rounded, inward thickened rim and blackened surface (**fig. 5,4**). This type of casserole is very common in late antique Campania like in Naples at Carminiello ai Mannesi (Carminiello type 2.5) at the beginning of the 6th century and in the hinterland at Somma Vesuviana and Nola in contexts dated to the third quarter of the 5th century. Also at Pollena the type can be dated to AD 430–472.[19] Another fragment (**fig. 5,5**) has a thick, inward folded rim with triangular profile, lug handles and flaring walls. The fabric shows large inclusions of quartz, limestone, and volcanic sand, which suggest local production. This type is attested at Carminiello ai Mannesi (Carminiello 3.1, middle of the 5th century) and at Piazza Municipio, both in Naples.[20]

The last fragment from this room is a complete profile of a distinctive dish in local fabric (**fig. 5,6**). This type has vertical walls, rounded rim, flat bottom likely used for baking bread. This is probably a micro-regional product, since other specimens have been found only in the countryside of Mt. Vesuvius (Somma Vesuviana, Nola, and at Villa Sora in Torre del Greco).[21] The dish can be dated in Pollena to the end of the 4th–5th century.

4.2. Storage room (H)

The ceramic assemblage (150 NMI) of this room shows the same variety of types already attested in the *praefurnium*. Also in this case the best attested class is the local cooking ware (79 NMI), but there are also fragments of painted ware (27 NMI), burnished ware (8 NMI), common ware (7 NMI), ARS (6 NMI), and Pantellerian ware (5 NMI).

The cooking ware is represented by two casseroles and a lid, all of local production. The first item is a casserole in local fabric (**fig. 5,7**), with inward thickened rim and curved walls. It shows one groove on the outer surface and lug handle. This type of casserole (Carminiello 2) is very common in Naples[22] and has been found also in the villa of Somma Vesuviana[23] in contexts dated to the late 5th century AD (later than the AD 472 eruption), while in Pollena this type can probably be dated to the middle of 5th century. From the same stratigraphic unit comes another casserole, of the Carminiello type 2, but in this case the rim is less thickened and the walls are blackened (**fig. 5,8**). The local cooking ware encompasses also the complete profile of a lid with grooved rim (**fig. 5,9**), very similar to one found at Carminiello ai Mannesi (Carminiello 70) and dated to the first third of the 6th century.[24]

The burnished ware (8 NMI) is represented by a wide-mouthed jug with flattened rim (**fig. 5,10**). This type is attested in late antique phases of Carminiello ai Mannesi (Carminiello 146), where its dating ranges between the end of 5th and first decades of 6th century AD.[25] The same type is also found in the Roman villa of Somma Vesuviana in a context of the third quarter of the 5th century,[26] and in the excavations of via Lepanto at Pompeii.[27] In Pollena it can be dated before theeruption of AD 472.

In local fabric there is also the rim of a bowl in common ware, with short flange (**fig. 5,11**). This bowl is very interesting and is a good imitation of Hayes type 91 in ARS.[28] A similar bowl is also attested in Naples at Carminiello ai Mannesi (Carminiello type 30) at the end of the 5th century AD.[29]

In the storage room are also found imported products like ARS (6 NMI) and Pantellerian ware (5 NMI). Among the ARS a rim of a flat based dish of the Hayes type 61 is noteworthy. The dish has triangular and incurved rim, flattened on the outside **(fig. 5,12**). This form is attested throughout the Mediterranean basin from the middle of the 4th through the first half of the 5th century.[30]

4.3. Cistern (I)

The number of finds from this room is rather low, especially compared to other contexts of the villa. The entire group of fragments consists of 37 sherds, with only 7 rims. The study of this assemblage is of special interest, since it is the only one found on the second floor of the building and the only one with traces of use later than the AD 472 eruption. Unfortunately only one of the stratigraphic units included pottery sherds.

The first finds here shown are the rim and the bottom of a spouted jug in painted ware. This has irregular, pinched rim with flattened handle (**fig. 6,13**). Similar jugs are attested in Neapolis in archaeological contexts dated to the end of the 5th century AD.[31]

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15 Arthur 1994, 187–189 fig. 84,36.

16 De Simone/Perrotta/Scarpati 2011, 61–71.

17 Arthur 1994, 238–240 fig. 114,50.

18 This cooking pot was found in Somma Vesuviana and is dated to the mid 4th c. AD; Aoyagi/Mukai/Sugiyama 2007, 441; 449 fig. 7.47; Mukai/Sugiyama/Aoyagi 2010a, 477 fig. 5,18–21.

19 Arthur 1994, 223 fig. 103,2.5; Mukai/Sugiyama/Aoyagi 2008, 188 fig. 9,51. Lubrano/Boemio/Sannino 2012, 234 fig. 5,17.

20 The type Carminiello 3.1 is dated to the third quater of the 5th c. AD; Arthur 1994, 225–226 fig. 105,3.1. In the contexts of Piazza Municipio this type is dated to the end of 5th c. AD, Carsana 2009, 679 fig. 7,3.

21 Mukai 2009, 185 fig. 6,35; Lubrano/Boemio/Sannino 2012, 234–235; Pagano 1991, 183 fig. 96.

22 Arthur 1994, 223–224 fig. 103,2.

23 Mukai/Sugiyama/Aoyagi 2009, 190 tav. 11,59.

24 Arthur 1994, 243–244, fig. 116,70.

25 Arthur 1994, 212 fig. 99,146.

26 Mukai/Sugiyama/Aoyagi 2009, 187 tav. 8.43.

27 This jug is attested in Pompeii to the end of the 4th / beginning of the 5th c. AD. De Carolis/Soricelli 2005, 320 fig. 4,8.

28 This bowl seems to imitate the form Hayes 91 in the variant Lamboglia 24/25. Atlante I, 105–106 tav. 49,1.

29 Arthur 1994, 187–188 fig. 83,30.

30 Bonifay 2004, 168 fig. 90,6.

31 Arthur 1994, 208–209 fig. 98,122.

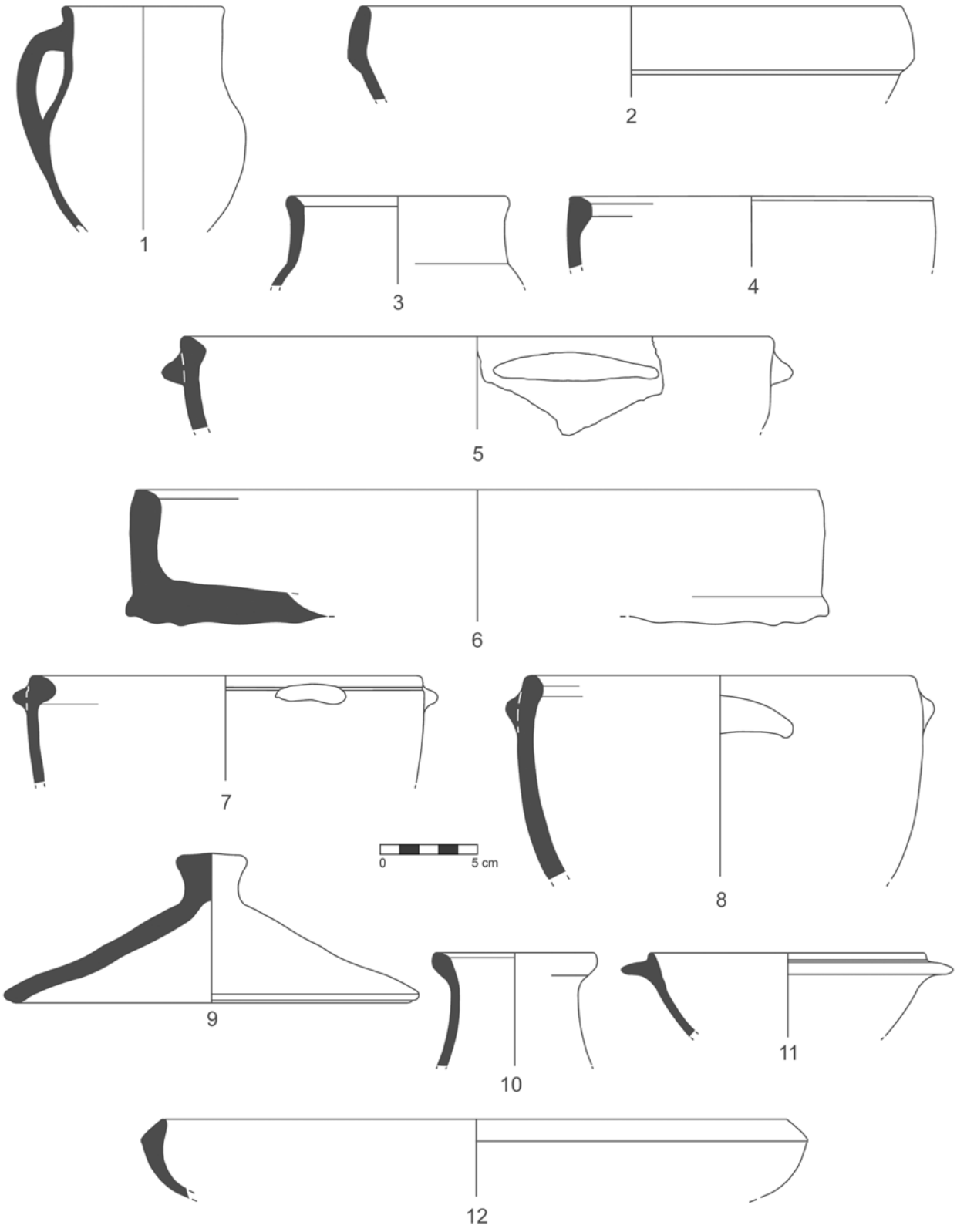

Fig. 5. Pottery from the *praefurnium* G (**1–6**) and the storage room H (**7–12**).

The local cooking ware (3 NMI) includes a lid rim. with triangular profile; the surface is burnt (**fig. 6,14**). This type is attested also in Naples (Carminiello 78) and is dated to the third quarter of the 5th century AD.[32] Another lid in local cooking ware has a rim rounded on the outside (**fig. 6,15**); the surface is lightly burnt. This form is also found in Naples from the end of the 4th century AD (Girolamini), while at Carminiello it is present from the middle of the 5th into the 7th century AD (Carminiello 72.2).[33]

Another fragment is a distinctive profile in burnished ware of a carinated bowl (**fig. 6,16**). The rim is thick and folded inward, with triangular profile, and the walls are carinated. The surface has an orange/brown slip and is burnished. A bowl found in Pollena may be a local variant of a carinated bowl of Vesuvian production,[34] present in Pompeii[35] (via Lepanto) from the end of the 4th century AD, and in the Roman villa of Somma Vesuviana in the same period.[36]

4.4. Laconicum (B)

From this room comes a considerable amount of potsherds, which add up to 281 NMI, most of which have been produced locally. The best attested pottery classes are the cooking ware (189 NMI) and the slipped ware (30 NMI), but common ware (15 NMI), ARS (15 NMI), and burnished ware (8 NMI) also appear.

Some of the samples here presented are in local cooking ware, since their fabrics show abundant volcanic inclusions typical of Vesuvius. The first is the rim of a cooking pot (**fig. 6,17**), slightly flattened on the inside, with a burnt surface. This type is attested in Carminiello ai Mannesi (Carminiello 48) where is dated to the end of the 5th century AD.[37] From the same stratigraphic unit comes also the rim of a casserole Carminiello 2.3.[38] This casserole has a rounded and inward folded rim, flaring walls and lug handles (**fig. 6,18**). This type is fairly common among the late antique contexts of Neapolis such as Carminiello ai Mannesi and the Roman villa at Ponticelli. In Campania, this type is dated rather broadly to the 5th–7th century AD, while the sample of Pollena Trocchia is dated before the AD 472 eruption. Another specimen in cooking ware is the rounded rim of a lid type Carminiello 75.1, dated to the end of the 5th into 6th century AD (**fig. 6,19**).[39]

From the *laconicum* slipped ware is attested by 30 specimens, among which are two bowls. The first of these (**fig. 6,20**) has an inward thickened? rim and shallow grooves on the outside wall. The slip is orange and covers both internal and external surfaces. This type had widespread in late antique Campania. Through typological comparisons with similar bowls found in Naples (Carminiello 62), Francolise (Cotton 20), and Somma Vesuviana, it can be dated from the late 4th into the 5th century AD.[40] From the same context comes another bowl rim (Carminiello 62). This bowl differs from the previous one because the walls are more convex (**fig. 6,21**). This specimen is very similar to another bowl found in the Roman villa of Somma Vesuviana where it is dated to the end of the 4th and 5th century AD.[41]

Among the imported cooking ware, the same context yielded the rim of a casserole in Pantellerian ware (**fig. 6,22**). It has a squared profile, outward smoothed, flaring walls and burnt surface. This type (Carminiello 112.3) is widely spread among the Neapolitan late antique contexts and is generally dated to the mid 5th century AD.[42]

4.5. General remarks on the pottery assemblages

The pottery assemblage from the baths shows an interesting variety of types and wares, as well as a rather large dataset which includes, just for the four rooms taken into account for this study, 482 NMI.

The best attested pottery class is the cooking ware of local production which, in correlation with other ceramics, provides the dating of the archaeological stratigraphies. The eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in AD 472 provides an important *terminus ante quem* for all the finds attested in the villa. This information offers the opportunity to provide an earlier dating for some types in common ware attested in other archaeological sites in Campania, and especially in Naples. This is the case of the basin type Carminiello 36 and the lids in local cooking ware types Carminiello 70 and 75.

On the other hand, the presence of residual finds in these assemblages of the 5th century could be explained with the emplacement dynamics of the site overall. Indeed the high breakage of the sherds, their different orientations, and the presence of several infant burials (one of which clearly dated to the mid-5th century AD due to the presence of a coin of the emperor Marcian) suggests that before the eruption of AD 472 the baths were no longer in use and were employed as cemetery and dump.

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32 Arthur 1994, 244 fig. 116,78.

33 Arthur 1994, 243–244 fig. 116,72.2.

34 De Carolis et al. 2009, 652–655; 660–662; Arthur/Soricelli 2015, 149–150.

35 De Carolis/Soricelli 2005, 517–518 fig. 3,8–10; Arthur/Soricelli 2015, 149–150 fig. 7,1–4.

36 Aoyagi/Mukai/Sugiyama 2007, 440; 446 fig. 4,17.

37 Arthur 1994, 238; 240 fig. 114,48.

38 At Carminiello ai Mannesi in Naples this type of casserole is found in contexts dated to the half of the 5th c. AD. Arthur 1994, 223–224 fig. 103,2.3.

39 At the Roman theatre it is present in a context of the 6th and 7th c. AD. Baldassarre et al. 2010, 127 fig. 65,19. At Carminiello ai Mannesi in contexts of the first third of the 6th c. AD. Arthur 1994, 244–245 fig. 116,75.1.

40 Arthur 1994, 191; 193 fig. 87,62; Baldassarre et al. 2010, 119 fig. 60,2-3; Cotton 1979, 184–185 fig. 60,20–26; Aoyagi/Mukai/Sugiyama 2007, 448 Fig. 6,43.

41 Mukai/Sugiyama/Aoyagi 2009 tav. 7,6.

42 Arthur 1994, 253 fig. 121,112.3; Baldassarre et al. 2010, 131 fig. 67,1; Carsana/D'Amico/Del Vecchio 2007, 437 fig. 9,21; Aoyagi/Mukai/Sugiyama 2007, 447 fig. 5,29.

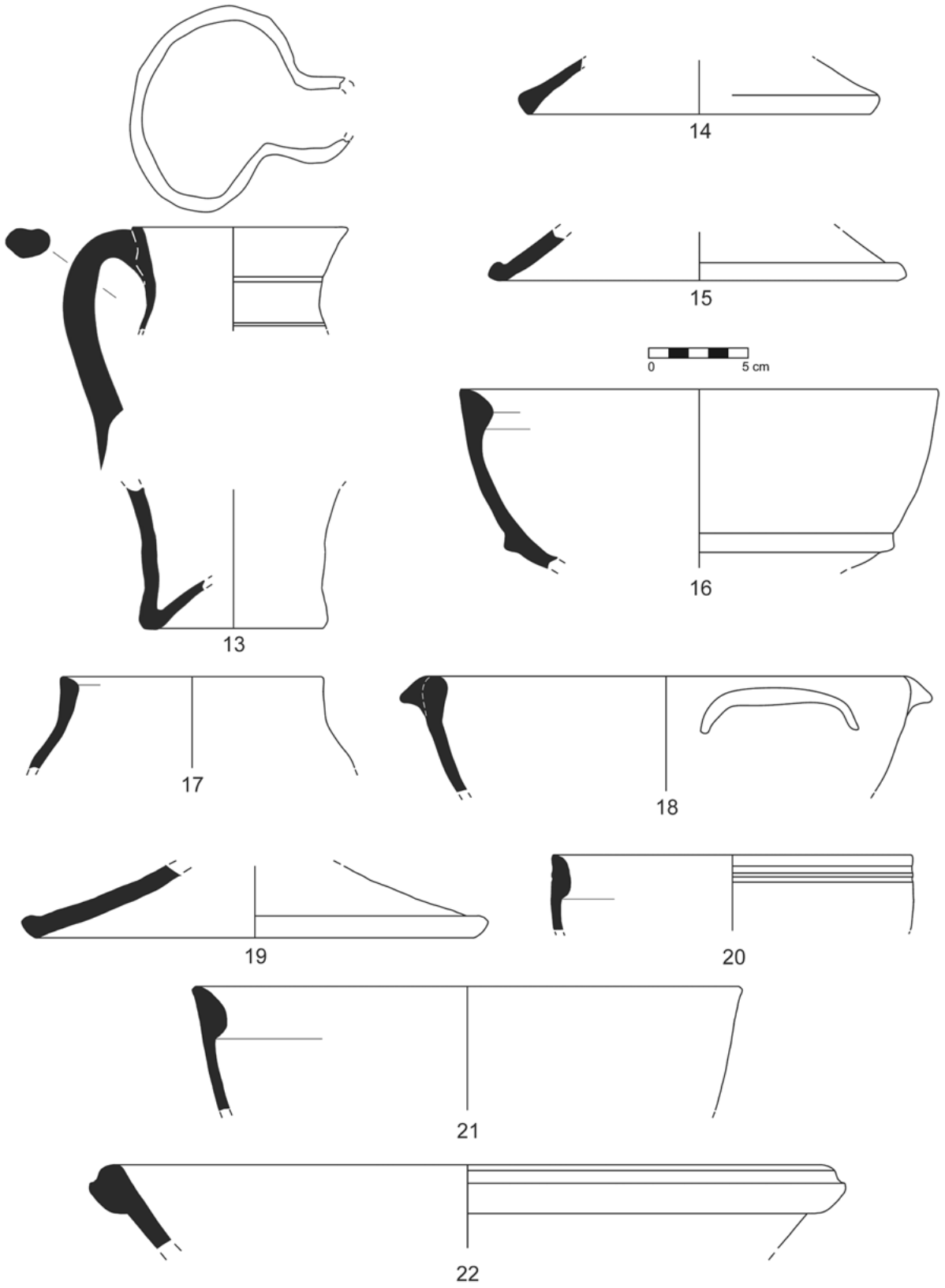

Fig. 6. Pottery from the cistern I (**13–16**) and the *laconicum* B (**17–22**).

5. Conclusions

The evidence analysed in this contribution confirms and further expands what has been hypothesised in previous articles. On a micro level, the assemblages from these rooms are very consistent with the general pattern from the site, and thus corroborate the hypothesis that all rooms of the baths served the same purpose (dump and cemetery) during the third quarter of the 5th century AD. On a regional scale, this assemblage seems pretty consistent with the others dated to the third quarter of the 5th century AD.[43] Though unlike the contexts in the city, ours shows a higher percentage of locally-produced vessels. Lastly, the presence of a sharp *terminus ante quem* and the correlation with imported fine wares allowed a more precise dating for some local wares.

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[43] See also the contribution by Martucci/Castaldo/De Simone in this volume.

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