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LOWLANDS WARE 1 CONTAINERS FROM XANTEN/COLONIA ULPIA TRAIANA

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to discuss the Arentsburg 140–142 vessels from Xanten/*Colonia Ulpia Traiana* (Germany). It also provides some additional information on the chemical composition and the distribution of Lowlands Ware 1¹. This pottery group is frequently found in the northern part of *Germania inferior*. Dutch and Belgian scholars have studied it for a long time, but the finds in the German part of the province are barely examined. According to De Clercq and Degryse the pottery was produced in the region of Bergen op Zoom (the Netherlands), although we do not know any production sites yet. Arentsburg 140–142² (figs. 1–2), a bowl with thickened rim, outnumbers all other types by far. As these vessels were distributed over far distances and never exposed to fire one can assume that they were used for transport. The content is unknown³.

2. Distribution

De Clercq and Degryse recorded Xanten and Cologne as find spots of Lowlands Ware 1 along the Rhine upstream from Nijmegen⁴. Further evidence about the distribution of Arentsburg 140–142 bowls is recorded from Schneppenbaum-Qualburg, Rees-Haffen, Weeze-Vorselaer, Wachtendonk-Meerendonk, Krefeld-Gellep, Dormagen, and Bonn⁵.

3. Chemical composition

The chemical composition of Lowlands Ware 1 clay was described by De Clercq and Degryse⁶. In order to get information about the trace elements, one sample was examined by wavelength dispersive x-ray-fluorescence analysis (table 1). The contents of main elements match the reference data well.

4. Arentsburg 140–142 bowls from Xanten

The dataset includes fragments of at least 294 Arentsburg 140–142 bowls and additional body sherds of indeterminable type, whose majority may also belong to this type⁷.

Dating: All vessels appear in 2nd and 3rd century contexts, the vast majority in the later 2nd and the first half of the 3rd century⁸.

Vessel sizes: It was possible to determine the rim diameter of 183 vessels. The exterior rim diameters vary from 13 to 41 cm. There are peaks at 26 and 35 cm (fig. 3).

Decoration: One vessel is decorated with a waveline (fig. 4).

Graffiti: 18 Graffiti post cocturam were recorded. On the rim one can find IIIIX (fig. 5,1), IV (fig. 5,2), II (fig. 5,3–5), I (fig. 5,6–9), II[---] (fig. 6,1), [---]II (fig. 6,2), I[---] (fig. 6,3), and [---]MIII (fig. 6,4). Furthermore one fragment was marked with as many as three well spaced out lines (fig. 6,5). On body sherds [---]VIS (fig. 6,6) and [---]I P P XIII (fig. 6,7) are observed⁹.

¹ Thanks to the following: M. Brüggler (Xanten) for information concerning finds from Weeze-Vorselaer and Wachtendonk-Meerendonk, C. Höpken (Cologne) for finds from Bonn, R. Niemeijer (Nijmegen) for finds from the Netherlands, T. Clerbaut and W. De Clercq (Ghent) for finds from Belgium, A. Geerling, J. Harnecker and T. Uffermann (Xanten) for finds from Xanten, S. F. Pfahl (Düsseldorf) for assistance when reading the graffiti, G. Schneider (Berlin) for the chemical analysis, T. Potthoff (Cologne) for correcting the English text.

² HAALBOS 1990, 151 (with further references).

³ M. MARTENS, Life and culture in the Roman small town of Tienen. Transformations of cultural behavior by comparative analysis of material culture assemblages (PhD Thesis, Amsterdam 2012) 287 suggests mussels. As the pottery workshop seems to be situated in the coastal area, it is likely that products as oysters and salted or smoked fish were stored in those bowls.

⁴ DE CLERCQ/DEGRYSE 2008, 456.

⁵ Schneppenbaum-Qualburg: H. VON PETRIKOVITS, Schneppenbaum. In: F. Oelmann, Bericht über die Tätigkeit des Landesmuseums in Bonn in der Zeit vom 1. April 1936 bis 31. März 1937. Bonner Jahrb. 142, 1937, 332 („zwei Stücke ... aus grauem Ton mit feiner Abmagerung“); 335 fig. 25,1. – Rees-Haffen: M. KEMPA, Haffen. Eine vor- und frühgeschichtliche Siedlung im Altkreis Rees. Rhein. Ausgr. 39 (Köln 1995) 164; 218 pl. 74,20–21. – Weeze-Vorselaer: LVR-LandesMuseum

Bonn, Ni 2007/0049, positions 35-11, 37-16; pers. comm. M. Brüggler. – Wachtendonk-Meerendonk: LVR-LandesMuseum Bonn, Ni 2014/0040, position 33-8; pers. comm. M. Brüggler. – Krefeld-Gellep: STÜBEN 1994, 53 fig. 87. – Dormagen: G. MÜLLER, Ausgrabungen in Dormagen 1963–1977. Rhein. Ausgr. 20 (Köln 1979) 63 pl. 62,11(?); 63,1. – Bonn: LVR-LandesMuseum Bonn, OV 89/0040, position 016-04 no. 12, position 080-29 no. 27; pers. comm. C. Höpken.

⁶ DE CLERCQ/DEGRYSE 2008, 449–453.

⁷ Other Lowlands Ware 1 types are, in comparison, represented in very small quantity, such as pots with everted rim Arentsburg 126a (find nos. C51336, C51371).

⁸ Since the exterior quarters of the *Colonia Ulpia Traiana* were abandoned after c. 250 AD, the site does not provide much information concerning imports of Lowlands Ware 1 in the second half of the 3rd century. The Xanten material is not useful when studying the typological development of Arentsburg 140–142.

⁹ WEISS-KÖNIG 2010, 204 described the latter fragment with the general term ‘coarse ware’, but undoubtedly it is of Lowlands Ware 1.

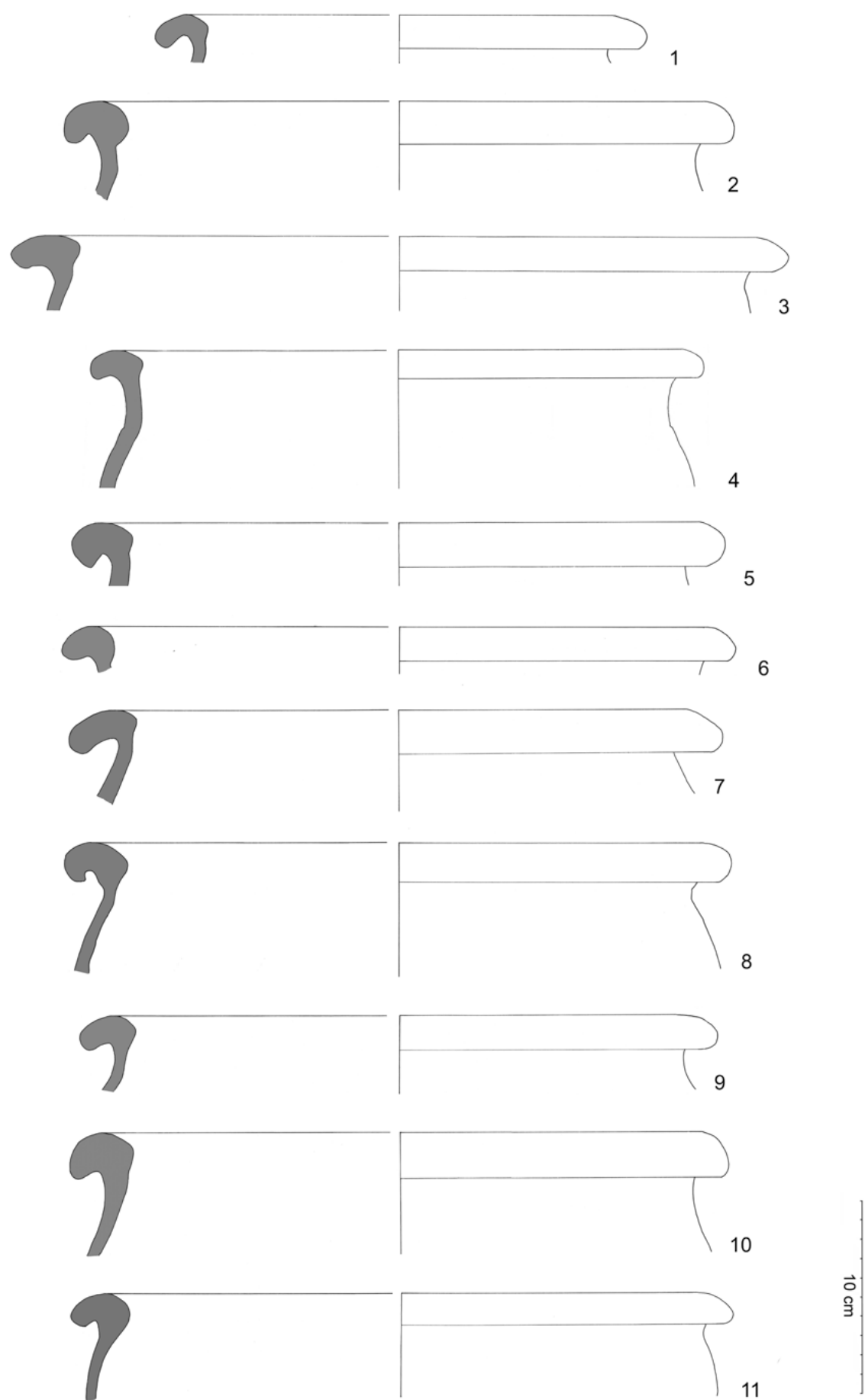


Fig. 1. Xanten/*Colonia Ulpia Traiana*. Lowlands Ware 1. Bowls (Arentsburg 140–142). – Scale 1:3.

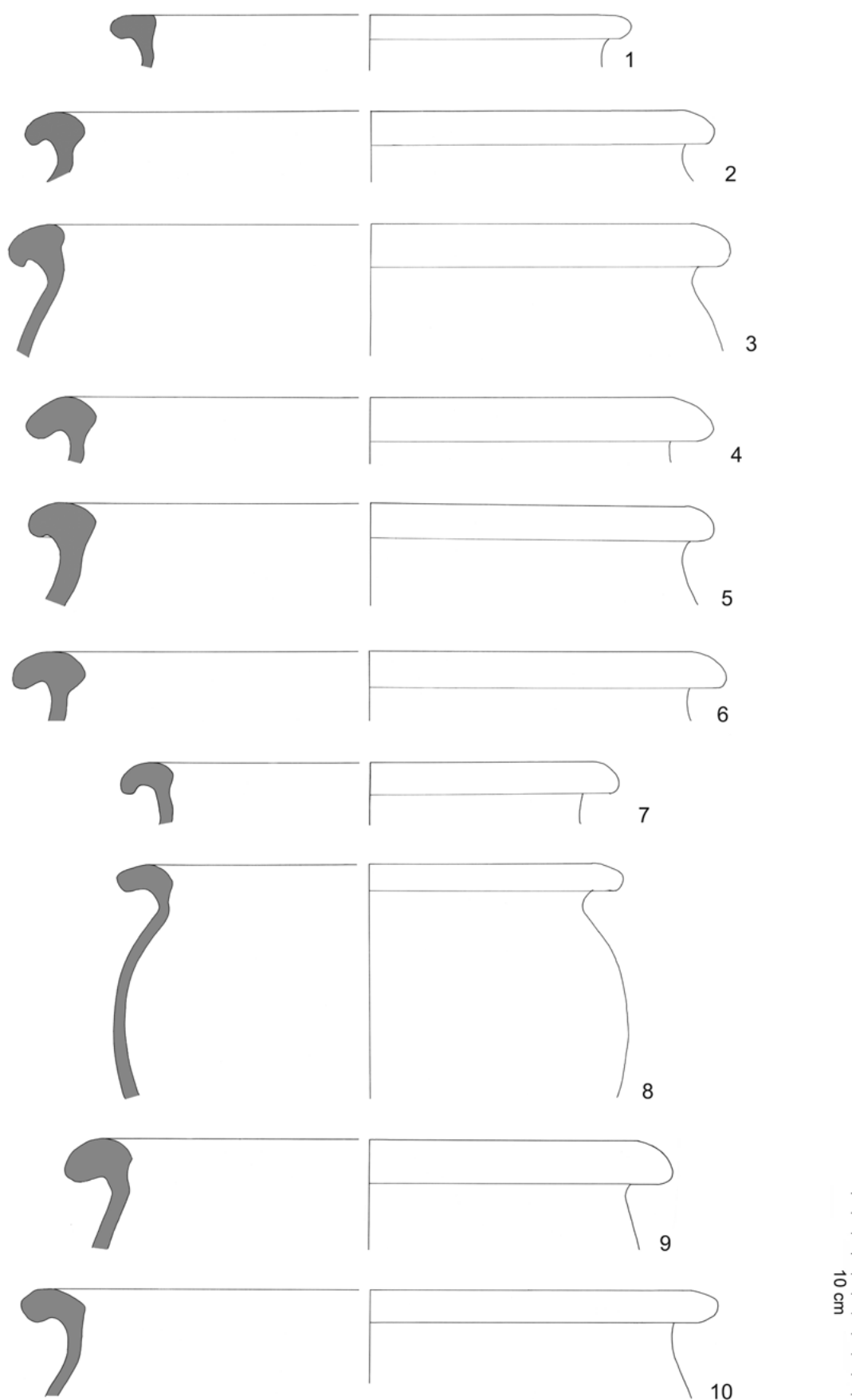


Fig. 2. Xanten/Colonia Ulpia Traiana. Lowlands Ware 1. Bowls (Arentsburg 140–142). – Scale 1:3.

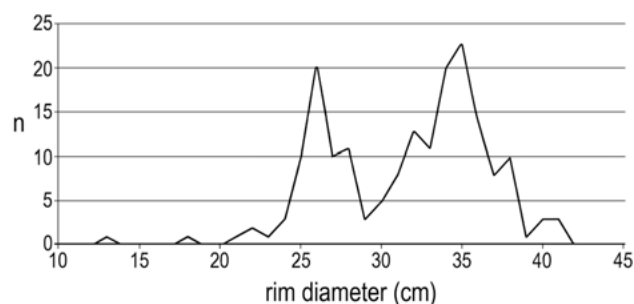


Fig. 3. Xanten/*Colonia Ulpia Traiana*. Lowlands Ware 1. Bowls (Arentsburg 140–142). Distribution of rim diameters.

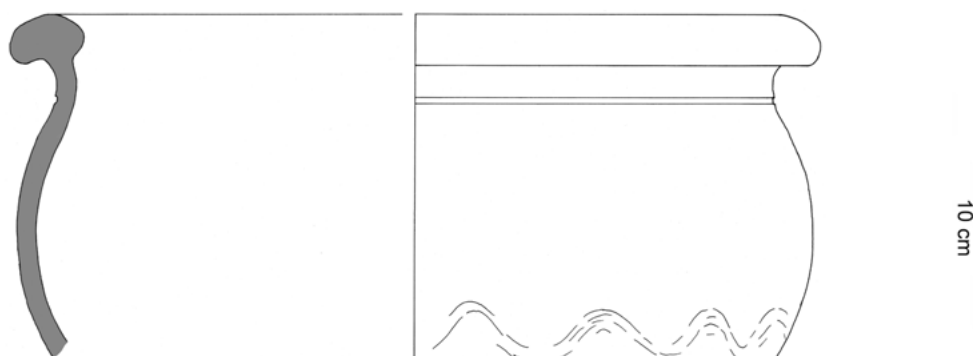


Fig. 4. Xanten/*Colonia Ulpia Traiana*. Lowlands Ware 1. Decorated bowl (Arentsburg 140–142). – Scale 1:3.

5. Discussion

According to their distribution it is likely that the transport of Arentsburg 140–142 bowls and their content was along water way. The quantity of Arentsburg 140–142 bowls south of Nijmegen is only small. Nevertheless can it be determined that within the German part of the province their number decreases from north to south. The amount of Lowlands Ware 1 in some 2nd to 3rd century layers at Xanten adds up to less than 1 %. Although there is no information on the quantity of Arentsburg 140–142 in the pottery assemblages in the hinterland, the bowls are still present even at rural sites such as Weeze-Vorselaer, Rees-Haffen and Wachtendonk-Meerendonk. On the other hand they are missing in Cologne and its hinterland, even though there are many well studied pottery assemblages. The sole exception are some vessels from Cologne city¹⁰. In comparison to selected data from Belgium and the Netherlands one can assume that Xanten was supplied with an average quantity of Lowlands Ware at findspots outside the core distribution area¹¹. Thus, these containers reached Xanten on the basis of an organized trade and not just sporadically.

Presumably Arentsburg 140–142 bowls were not regularly exported to Xanten before the second half of the 2nd century. This corresponds well to data from sites in Belgium and in the Netherlands¹².

The distribution of the rim diameters indicates that Arentsburg 140–142 was produced in two different sizes, but it must remain uncertain whether this reflects an approach to standardization, the activity of different workshops or chronological development.

Decorated vessels are uncommon. Wavelines such as on **figure 4** occur, for instance, on a bowl from Utrecht-De Meern¹³.

Graffiti are a regular feature on Arentsburg 140–142 of any size. The majority are numbers on the rim. One can assume that they refer to the quantity of the content¹⁴, but there is no clear evidence for any relation between the numbers and the rim diameter: at Xanten, for instance, the highest number XIII occurs on a relatively large vessel (exterior rim diameter 33 cm). However, the highest number known is XX on a bowl with a rim diameter of only 27 cm found at Utrecht-De Meern¹⁵. The meaning of [---]MIII (**fig. 6,4**) is uncertain. There are no comparative pieces for the three grooves (**fig. 6,5**) on

¹⁰ Cf. DE CLERCQ/DEGRYSE 2008, 456 (no references, pers. observation of the author).

¹¹ Cf. HAALBOS 1990, 146 (Nijmegen-Hatert). – E. VAN DER LINDEN/F. REIGERSMAN-VAN LIDTH DE JEUDE, *Het aardewerk uit de Romeinse tijd*. In: H. M. van der Velde et al. (red.), *Venlo aan de Maas: van vicus tot stad. Sporen van een Romeinse nederzetting en stadsontwikkeling uit de Middeleeuwen en Nieuwe tijd in het plangebied Maasboulevard*. ADG Monogr. 7 (Amersfoort 2009).

¹² DE CLERCQ/DEGRYSE 2008, 456–457.

¹³ R. A. J. NIEMEIJER, *Aardewerk*. In: A. C. Aarts, Scherven, schepen en schoeiingen. LR62: Archeologisch onderzoek in een fossiele rivierbedding bij het castellum van De Meern. Basisrapport. Arch. 43 (Utrecht 2012) 69–90 fig. 4; 6.1.

¹⁴ NIEMEIJER 2010, 176.

¹⁵ Ibid. 175 fig. 8.4F.

the rims of Arentsburg 140–142. Occasionally such graffiti are recorded on amphorae¹⁶. Graffiti on the body are less common than on the rim¹⁷. The graffito **figure 6,6** says that the filled vessel weighed [---] *p(lena) p(ondo) XIII*¹⁸. The rim of this vessel is missing, but it is very likely that it belongs to an Arentsburg 140–142 bowl. The graffito **figure 6,7** means *VI s(emis)* or probably [*p(ondo)*] *VI s(emis)*; as the bowl is quite small (exterior rim diameter 27 cm) it is likely that it provides information about the weight of the filled vessel¹⁹.

Other than the mentioned Arentsburg 140–142 there are some types of bowls which may also have served as transport containers during the 2nd and 3rd centuries: at Xanten both ‘Batavian Grey Ware’ bowls, whose origin cannot be determined with certainty²⁰, and bowls produced at Nijmegen²¹ are represented in small quantities.

6. Data

The dataset consists of the following sherds (all find nos. LVR-Archäologischer Park Xanten): C106, C180, C196, C213, C243 (**fig. 5,1**; HINZ 1971, 146–147; fig. 27,3), C250, C261, C380 (**fig. 5,6**), C498 (**table 1**), C872, C878, C980, C981, C1079, C1127, C1128/1239, C1244, C1358, C1359 (**fig. 5,7; 6,7**), C1360, C1368, C1376, C1385, C1736, C1750 (**fig. 5,2**), C2414, C2421 (**fig. 1,1**), C2425, C2850 (**fig. 5,3**), C3170, C3328, C3886 (**fig. 1,2**), C3894 (**fig. 6,4**), C3907, C4088, C4139, C4200, C4229, C4239, C4261, C4266, C4297 (**fig. 1,3**), C4312, C4351, C4417 (**fig. 1,4**), C4454 (**fig. 1,5**), C4489 (**fig. 1,6**), C4583, C4607 (**fig. 1,7**), C5146, C5179, C5251, C5302, C5330, C5388, C5464, C5816, C5890, C6000, C6001 (**fig. 1,8–9; 5,4; 6,7**), C6023, C6035, C6036, C6062, C6063, C6072, C6100, C6103, C6113, C6117 (**fig. 1,10**), C6126, C6130, C6135, C6145, C6147, C6148 (**fig. 1,11**), C6154, C6216 (**fig. 2,1**), C6230, C6257a, C6261, C6350 (**fig. 5,8**), C6427, C6515, C6523, C6528, C6539, C6571, C6583, C6594, C6614, C6615, C6691, C6715, C6725, C6783, C6793, C6812, C6813, C6821, C6871, C7004, C7005, C7051, C7055, C7063, C7070, C7075, C7079, C7139, C7148, C7149, C7152 (**fig. 2,2**), C7156, C7157, C7174, C7177 (**fig. 5,9**), C7179, C7193, C7197, C7198 (**fig. 6,5**), C7207, C7210, C7283 (**fig. 2,3**), C7288 (**fig. 2,4**), C7339, C7347, C7390, C7437, C7510 (**fig. 2,5**), C7513 (**fig. 2,6**), C7518, C7525 (**fig. 2,7**), C7544, C7585,

Lab. no.	X398
Find no.	C 498
SiO ₂	76.14
TiO ₂	0.774
Al ₂ O ₃	13.29
Fe ₂ O ₃	4.85
MnO	0.020
MgO	1.24
CaO	0.65
Na ₂ O	0.25
K ₂ O	2.66
P ₂ O ₅	0.13
V	93
Cr	109
Ni	35
(Cu)	9
Zn	63
Rb	124
Sr	80
Y	20
Zr	324
(Nb)	13
Ba	316
(La)	18
Ce	47
(Pb)	22
(Th)	14
l.o.i.	0.49
Total	99.20

Table 1. Chemical composition analysed by WD-XRF.
Sample ignited at 900°C (l.o.i. = loss on ignition).

C7586, C7599 (**fig. 2,8**), C7747, C7749, C7809, C7810, C7892a, C8274, C8407, C8436, C8466, C8534, C8540, C8541, C9126, C9184 (**fig. 2,9**), C9378, C9572, C9575, C9592, C9602, C9745, C9783, C9784, C9796, C9821 (LIESEN 2008, 213 fig. 135), C9826, C9848 (LIESEN 2008, 213 fig. 135), C10549, C10706, C10708, C10729, C12200, C12978, C14586, C15389, C15390, C17060 (**fig. 6,7**; WEISS-KÖNIG 2010, 204 no. 518; pl. 47,518.1; photopl. 5,518), C18197, C18908, C19327, C21046, C21302, C21624, C21815, C21819, C21837 (**fig. 2,10**), C23184, C24070, C24170, C24218 (**fig. 6,1**), C24284, C24317, C24320, C24426, C33301, C33627, C37701, C40970, C42748 (**fig. 4**; KRÄMER 2012, 148 no. 451-5; fig. 56,451-5), C43677, C44268, C44757, C47554, C47570, C48297, C48573, C49070 (**fig. 6,2**), C50335, C50424 (**fig. 5,5**), C50433, C50449, C50477, C50556, C50569, C50571, C50577, C50661 (**fig. 6,3**), C50667, C50882, C50889, C50892, C51328, C51336, C51361, C51372, C51374, C51384, C52149, C52304, C52310, C52318, C52320, C52406.

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¹⁶ J. KÜTTER, Graffiti auf römischer Gefäßkeramik aus Neuss (Aachen 2008) pl. 58,862; 62,905.

¹⁷ S. WILLEMS, Roman Pottery in the Tongeren reference collection: mortaria and coarse wares. VIOE-Rapporten 1 (Brussels 2005) 87 fig. 82.

¹⁸ WEISS-KÖNIG 2010, 61.

¹⁹ Cf. CIL XIII, 3.1, 10008.64. – For graffiti with *t(esta) p(ondo)* cf. CIL XIII, 3.1, 10008.55; R. NOLL, Ein Tongefäß mit Gewichtsangabe aus Flavia Solva. Schild von Steier 2, 1953, 101–103; STÜBEN 1994, 53 fig. 87.

²⁰ A. COLLINS/H. VAN ENCKEVORT/J. HENDRIKS, A grey area between the Batavians and the Romans. Wheel-thrown domestic pottery in the *civitas Batavorum*. In: H. van Enckevort (ed.), Roman Material Culture. Studies in honour of Jan Thijssen (Zwolle 2009) 179 fig. 7,8–16; 193.

²¹ J. HENDRIKS, Pottery from Ulpi Noviomagus – Nijmegen. First report on the Maasplein production site: kilns 1–2. In: B. Liesen (ed.), Römische Keramik in Niedergermanien: Produktion – Handel – Gebrauch. Beiträge zur Tagung der RCRF, 21.–26. September 2014, LVR-RömerMuseum im Archäologischen Park Xanten. Xantener Ber. 27 (Darmstadt 2014) 235 type Ulpia K5; 234 fig. 32,7–10.

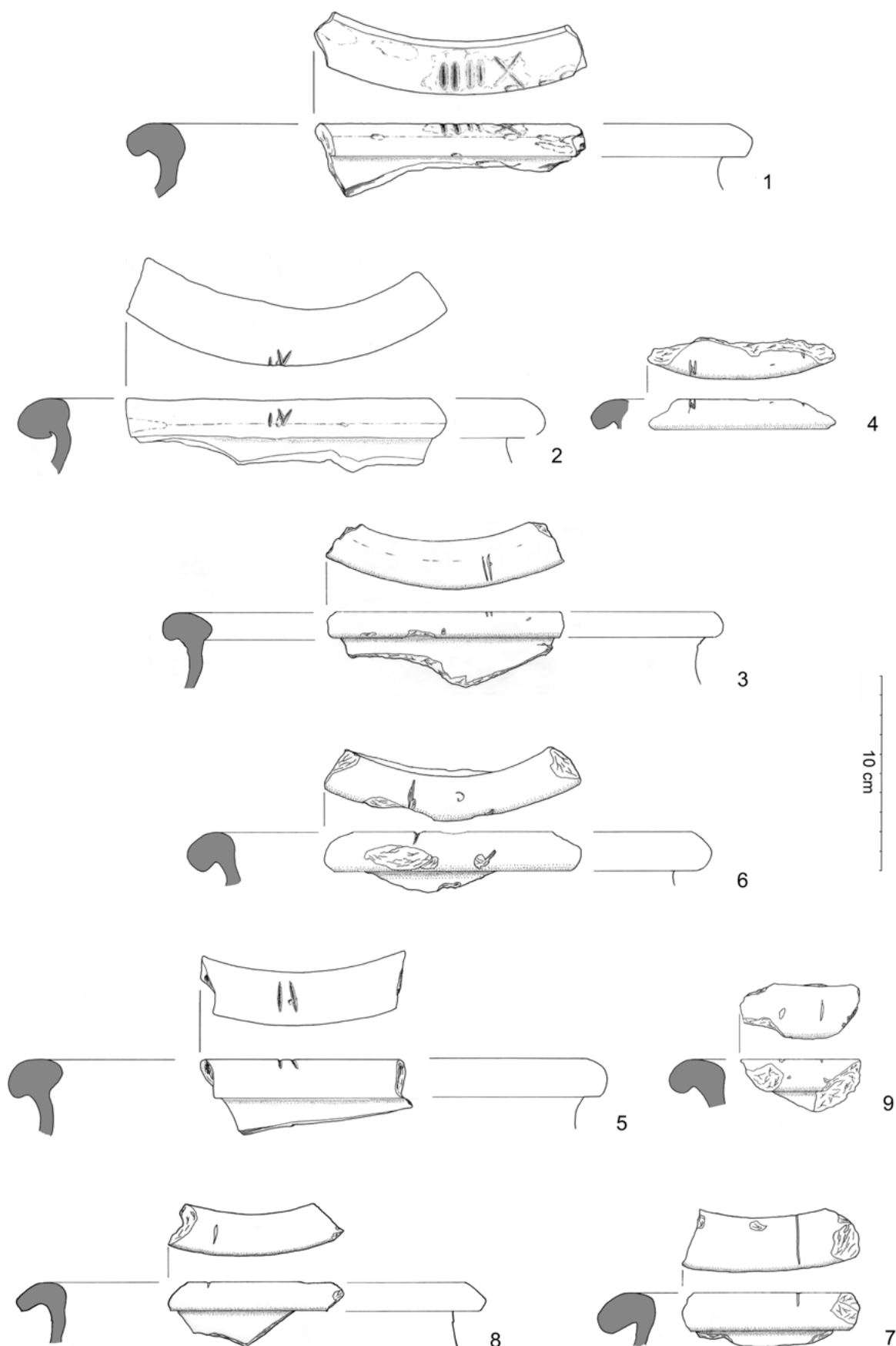


Fig. 5. Xanten/*Colonia Ulpia Traiana*. Lowlands Ware 1. Graffiti on bowls (Arentsburg 140–142). – Scale 1:3.

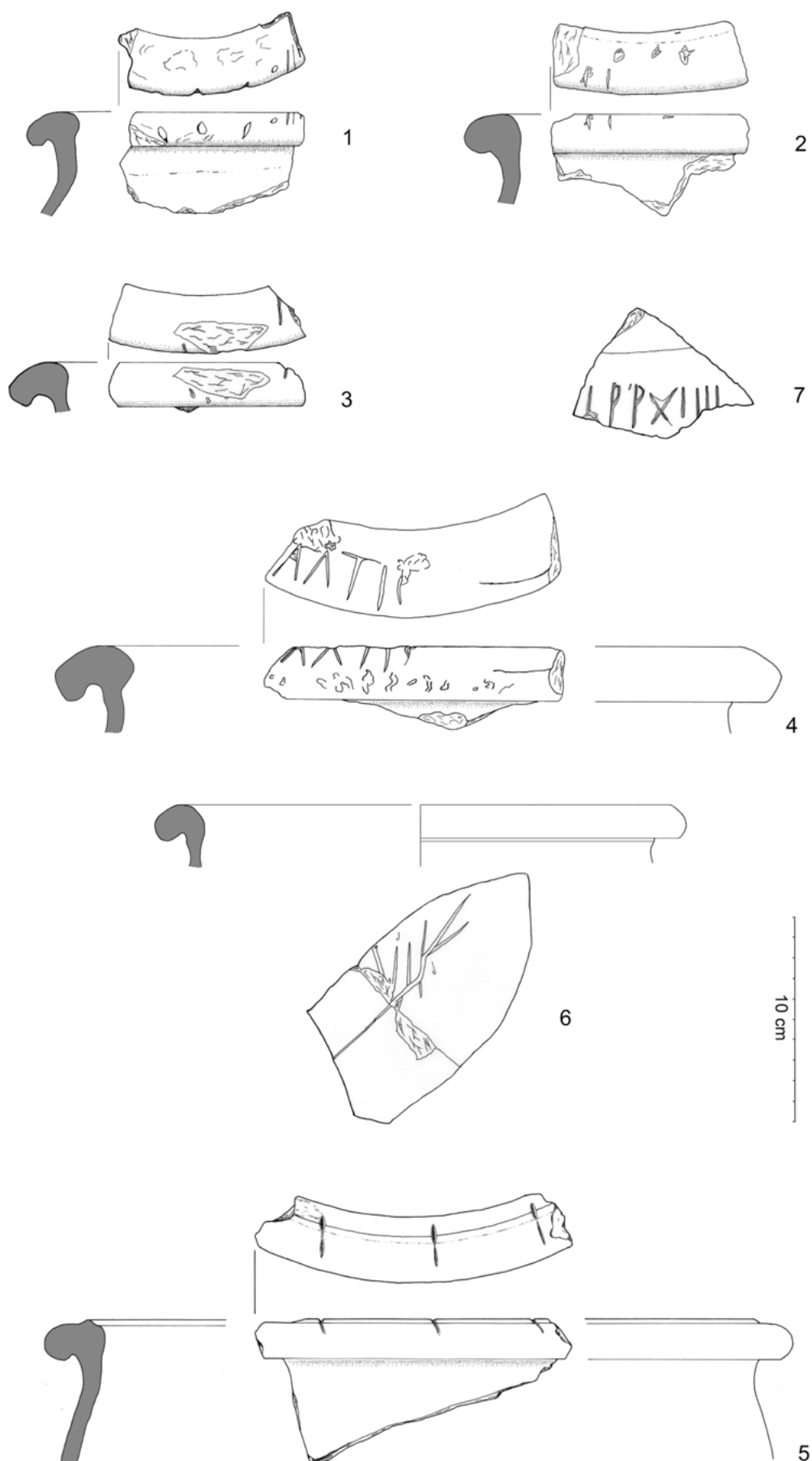


Fig. 6. Xanten/Colonia Ulpia Traiana. Lowlands Ware 1. Graffiti on bowls (Arentsburg 140–142). – Scale 1:3.

Illustrations

- Fig. 1,1–6; 1,10; 2,10: T. Duinkerken (Xanten).
 Fig. 1,7–9; 1,11; 2,1–8: T. Langenhoff (Freiburg i. Br.).
 Fig. 2,9: J. Krobbach (Bocholt).
 Fig. 3: B. Liesen/D. J. Krick, LVR-Archäologischer Park Xanten.
 Fig. 4: after KRÄMER 2012, 148 fig. 56,451–5.
 Fig. 5,1–2; 5,5; 6,5: M. Kröner (Bamberg).
 Fig. 5,3–4; 5,6–9; 6,1–4; 6,6–7: D. J. Krick, LVR-Archäologischer Park Xanten.

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