

OBSERVATIONS OF THE ARMENIAN-AMERICAN JOINT EXPEDITION OF SHENGAVIT

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The Armenian-American joint expedition focused the excavations mainly in the north-western part of the settlement, which was numbered as Site 2 in the 2000-2003 excavation period. The former 5x5m squares were enlarged up to 10x10m (Fig. 1). The entire territory of the preserved part of the monument was included into a united net of squares. In 2009-2010 and 2012 excavations were performed in squares J:5 (headed by Armine Hayrapetyan and Dan Rahimi), J:6 (headed by Armine Hayrapetyan and Nairi Manukyan), K:6 (headed by Mitchell Rothman), L:3, L:4, K:3, K:4, M:5 and I:14 (headed by Hakob Simonyan with archaeologists Harutyun Badalyan, Mery Safaryan, Karen Tseretyan and Levon Mkrtchyan). In 2010 excavations were also carried out in the Necropolis named as Site 3 (headed by Hakob Simonyan with archaeologists Khachik Vardanyan and Anna Sargsyan).

In the result of the excavations of 2012 unique architectural forms and stratigraphic horizons were unearthed. In square K:6 at the depth of 3.25 m from the surface the sterile soil opened (Fig. 2). Now as a result of it there is a new, clear stratigraphic picture of Shengavit, which suggests reviewing of the former notions. It is certain that cultural layers with the depth of three and a half meters contain at least 6-7 structural horizons here¹ (Fig. 3). As it was suggested before, according to Ye. Bayburtyan there were 3², to S. Sardaryan and to H. Martirosyan 4³ and in the author's opinion at least 5 building periods in Shengavit⁴. New observations not only proofread our views, but confirm the rapid, unceasing activities and lasting inhabitation of the city⁵.

¹ The lowest (bottom) Neolith-Chalcolithic layer, which yielded just a few artifacts, as well upper layer of the "Early Kurgan" culture of Middle Bronze Age period destroyed by agricultural techniques in 1950's, which J:5 and M:5 square pits and separate artifacts belong to, are not registered in the stratigraphy of the above-mentioned 6-7 structural horizons.

² Байбуртян Е., 2011, сс. 28, 33-34, 60.

³ Մարտիրոսյան Ա., 2004, էջ 196; Մարտիրոսյան Արտյուն Ա. (Martirosyan Harutyun A.) 1964, с. 23.

⁴ Սիմոնյան Հ.Ե., 2002, էջ 22-23:

⁵ The report of famous archaeologist Ye. Bayburtyan is still unclear for us that under the rooms excavated in the upper layers of the western part of the site there were clay substrates of 35 and 57 cm thickness bearing no traces of human activities. During our observations neither S. Sardaryan nor us have documented such an archaeological situation. Neither the report sounds convincing that the floor of the room was formed by mudbricks (Байбуртян Е. 2011, с. 27-28). Generally, the rooms in Shengavit had clay-plastered, finely polished floors. As we suggest the so-

The multi-floor room with round ground-plan on the bottom layer of Square K:6 with its narrowing to the top mud-brick walls of over 2m height of which only one quarter is excavated is a unique example of Shengavit architecture (Fig. 4). 3-4 masonry sections varying from each other are clearly seen on the walls. This may possibly be the result of rebuilding a new house on the “oldened” one but with the same ground-plan (Fig. 5). The lower rows of the walls were encircled by the defensive layer (masonry), which reinforced the basis of the building. A collection of semiprecious stones was discovered on the clay-plastered floor of the upper layer inside the room proving once its being the “jeweler’s” workshop (Fig. 6).

In 2012 in the northern side of the township we opened a section of a stone-laid city wall. Before, it was dug and published by S. Sardaryan⁶. Many archaeologists who were present at the latter’s excavations accepted this fact undoubtedly⁷, though several modern archaeologists argued upon the fact of the existence of a wall, particularly the defensive system in Shengavit in the Early Bronze Age. Recent excavations have proved there were really city walls. In order to protect their lives and possessions the ancient Shengavitiens had built strong walls, which were ideal for that period, as they consisted of stone-laid walls, strengthened with rectangular towers, with a secret tunnel to the river Hrazdan. These components of the defensive system of the ancient Armenian fortification-building were typical of the later period as well, including the Middle Ages. Among the discoveries of the 2012 excavations the multi-room construction for cult rituals discovered in M:5 stands apart for its architectural forms (Fig. 7).

CULT CONSTRUCTIONS

In the upper layer, only 5-10 cm deep from the surface, consisting of at least two sections, the top rows of the walls of an adjacently united construction were opened. The western one was a room with dimensions: 6x4.5 m from outside (Room N1). Adjacent to this on the east there was another rectangular room (N2). The eastern and southern walls of the latter were not opened as they were out of the square. The western and northern walls of Room 1 were “excavated” earlier and thus the upper masonry of mud-brick was totally destroyed (Fig. 8). Fortunately, the previous researcher had stopped his excavations on this level; thanks to this the other walls and the interior of the room were left untouched.

This carefully built Room 1 with its rectangular layout has north-south orientation. The basic walls of 75-77 cm width were laid in three rows of river stones and cut basalt, the facing row being of big stones with smaller ones in-between⁸ (Fig. 9).

called “clay substrates” were the platforms formed by the fallen mudbrick, and on the “oldened” building the walls of new houses were erected.

⁶ The first notes about the fort of Shengavit were written by Ye. Shahaziz, see Երվանդ Շահազիզ 2003, էջ 45, 258: Ye. Bayburtyan, too, mentioned the city-wall of Shengavit, see Байбуртян Е. 2011, с. 26.

⁷ Куфтин Б. А. 1944, с. 113; Мартиросян А. А. 1964, с. 24; Мунчаев Р. М. 1975, с. 154; Кушнарева К. Х. 1993, с. 57.

⁸ In the monuments of the EBA of Shengavitian culture, among them at Shengavit site, the excavated walls, as a rule, were built of stones and mudbricks in one or two rows. Three-row walls are rare [Հայաստանի ճարտարապետության պատմություն (ՀՃՊ) էջ 33-67].

The basalt corner stone on the north-west stood apart from others for its sizes⁹. On the basis of Room 1 stand 8-9 cm wide walls laid of two rows of rectangular, a bit protruding on top mud-bricks with sizes 41 x 28; 43 x 29; 44 x 30; 46 x 23; 50 x 28 were erected. The bricks were laid lengthwise on one side, and on the other side broadwise. This principle of mud-brick masonry and the technique of forming the walls was documented in the building horizons IVA and IVB of Mokhrablour, too.

In the about 10m deep cultural layers in the stratigraphic cavity dug in the sterile soil 11 building horizons were stated. Here, only in the layer IV the mentioned building art has been revealed. The commonness of the technique of masonry can serve as basis to conclude that the upper layers of Shengavit and the layers of IVA and IVB at Mokhrablour are contemporaneous¹⁰.

The available data testify that mud-bricks of various sizes were used in building houses in different settlements of the Shengavitian community¹¹.

We think that using bricks of various sizes in the masonry of the same wall proves the high technique of building art, when having at hand a variety of bricks the builder used them properly, according to the need. The mudbricks were joined with loam solution. The mudbricks were in most cases firmly stuck to each other. In some cases there were cracks between them where small stones were used. In the south-eastern

⁹ Our observations state that the tradition of putting big stones in the corners of the rooms with rectangular layout was typical to the building art of the upper horizons. The symbol of the ancient, man-made temples was the stone, to which supernatural power was ascribed, it found its reflection in written sources of later epoches, e.g.: "... And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house..." (The Bible, King James Version, Genesis 28:22). Christ told Peter: "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18).

¹⁰ In 1937 Ye. Bayburtyan stated the following sizes of mud-brick – 28 x 20 x 10 and 29 x 40 x 10 cm, without marking the layer or the depth (Байбуртян Е., 2011, с. 32). S. Sardaryan mentioned about sizes 38 x 18 x 10, 52 x 22 x 10 and 30 x 30 x 10 cm (Սարգսյան Ս., 2004, էջ 272). At Shengavit in the upper layer of the central part at the depth of 60 cm bricks of 30 cm in length and 12 cm width were opened Սիմոնյան Հ., Խաչատրյան Լ. 2005, էջ 57). Mud-brick fragment found at Igdir settlement and handed over to the Caucasian museum (presently in Georgia) is of sizes of 22 x 22 x 12/13 cm, where it was only completely preserved in the width (Куфтин Б. А. 1944, с. 83). At different horizons in Mokhrablour bricks of various sizes were stated, thus, at the bottom (lowest) XI building layer the mudbricks are square with sizes of 16x16 cm, at X and IX horizons the width of the bricks is 21-22 cm, which corresponds to the width of the bricks from Igdir: at the horizons of V and IV the bricks are of sizes 36 x 27 x 9 cm, and at the last III horizon 32 x 32 x 8 cm. In Norabats two types of mud-bricks were stated: a) in the crescent form with the length of 40-60 cm and width of 22-23 cm and thickness of 10-12 cm, b) rectangular with sizes 48 x 22 x 10/12 cm (ՀՃՊ, էջ 35-36). Mud-bricks of Shengavit are rather close in size to those from the second layer at Mokhrablour 1 in Nakhijevan correspondingly 40 x 20 x 10, 42 x 18 x 12, 42 x 22 x 12, 42 x 24 x 12, 44 x 20 x 12, 44 x 22 x 10, 50 x 24 x 10 cm, though here for each separate house bricks of the same size were used (ՀՃՊ, էջ 38). The massive walls of the house with rectangular layout at the building horizon of VII in the site of Tabara-el-Aqrud at Qirbet Kerak archaeological complex in Syria were also built by two and three-row complex masonry with mudbricks laid lengthwise on one side and broadwise on the other (Braidwood R. J., Braidwood L. S. 1960).

¹¹ Until now the very opinion dominates according to which the same house, even all the buildings of the same horizon, moreover, the clay-built constructions of all the monument were built of bricks of the same type and size (ՀՃՊ, էջ 40-43).

corner in the cut of the wall, in the mudbrick masonry a 15x8 cm sized rectangular ditch is clearly visible (Fig. 10). Most probably a vertical wooden squared timber was put in it so as to strengthen the tall column.

It is supposed that at the building horizon of V in Kharberd-Malatia Blour (Pulour) wooden walls were erected on the ground socle built of stone and mud-brick and carefully plastered on outer and inner sides; these walls had a skeleton made of logs and poles, on which walls were weaved with thin branches, and then plastered and covered with thick loam solution¹².

The stone-laid and brick-laid parts of the walls were covered with loam solution on the inner side, which in the northern side goes up aslantly from the floor, on the other sides it has a slight curving at the joint of the floor and the walls. Black colour is clearly seen on the plaster. Black are the surfaces of the bas-reliefs decorating the front part (fronton) of the altar, the wall behind the deity in Square J:5, and the loam plaster of the mud-brick house with round layout in the lower (bottom) layer of M:5. The preserved height of Room N1 is 95-105 cm, which according to S. Sardaryan, corresponds to the thickness of the upper layer of the settlement. The northern wall is considerably thick – 1.8 m. The excavations disclosed that it consisted of two layers. Probably, the northern wall was rebuilt during the long-time functioning of the temple. The new wall was built inside, as a result the surface of the room became smaller¹³.

On the eastern part of the southern wall there is the finely formed entrance with 90 cm width. The adjoining walls are covered with 3 cm thick clay plaster. Three steps, just from the entrance, lead to the dim, mysterious interior of the temple.

The discovery of the stairs leading down into the cult sector of the multy-room house N1 is an exceptional phenomenon, which is important in determining the constructive and stratigraphic picture of the site. The steps prove that the lower, stone-laid sector of the house was ground-dug. To build the house they have dug into the previous cultural layers, laid the basement with stone, and then erected the on-earth walls of mud-brick. It is certain that the threshold was on the same level with surface of the ground then. So, we can conclude that the thickness of the preserved cultural upper horizon around the building was only 10-15 cm, and inside the room - 105-120 cm. The 1.6 m high stone basement of the house with round layout in the settlement in Kharberd-Malatia was semi-ground, too¹⁴. These observations make us suspect Ye.

¹² Kosay H. Z. 1976. p. 128-130; ՀՃՊ, էջ 54. Pulour is a destorted form of the Armenian word "բլուր (blour) which means hill.

¹³ The room was possibly much bigger then and continued towards north. While rebuilding the "oldened" temple the northern wall was laid inside, in the result the length of the construction shortened. Unfortunately, the previous excavator had destroyed the top part of the brick-laid row of the northern wall, and destorted the stone basement. Therefore, it is difficult to have a true image of the northern wall. Judging by the position of the preserved stones, we can conclude that the northern wall had a hidden entrance. There was a narrow passage between the outer and inner northern walls. This must have given an opportunity to the priest or his proxy either to suddenly appear in front of the believer or speak to him from his hiding place from the name of the deity.

¹⁴ Esin U., Arsebük G. 1974. p. 154.

Bayburtyan's reconstruction of the house excavated in 1938, according to which the 2 m high stone basement was halved, i. e. for about 1 m the ancient builders had filled with the soil nearabouts then by centralized circles from the pebbles formed the floor¹⁵. New discoveries are bases to suppose that the former floor of House 2 unearthed by Bayburtyan was on the lower level of the basement, while the upper floor formed by pebbles was the result of re-building.

The steps of the cult room were made of mudbrick, clay and river stone. The threshold is noted for its intelligent construction. First the mudbrick was laid, then the river stone joined with loam solution, thus making them firm under the feet of the attenders (Fig. 11). Beneath the clay-plastered floor the steps of the staircase gradually become smaller.

According to H. Martirosyan's statement made in 1936, Ye. Bayburtyan unearthed a room with rectangular layout, which by several features repeated the cult construction of Square M:5. In the central part of Shengavit township where Ye. Bayburtyan had excavated, on the eastern side of the south-eastern wall of a round room with stone basement and mud-brick walls there was the entrance with a stone forestep, which was leading into to the adjacent rectangular room¹⁶.

A little to the north-west from the entrance, in the corner of the room, on the stone base, there is an altar of worship made of clay and mud-bricks, about 50 cm high; the wooden statue of a deity used to have been adjusted on it (the rectangular hole in which the stem of the statue was fixed is preserved) (Fig. 12). The front part of the altar is carefully plastered, it is decorated with a belt of bas-relief and relief geometrical figures, which are typical to the pottery decoration of the Shengavitian culture – ditches, interdrawn triangles, groove-like ornaments. In front of the deity, half-buried in the clay plaster, there was a hearth (*ojakh*)¹⁷ of baked clay 75 cm in diameter and 20 cm deep (Fig. 13).

The inside walls of the hearth are smokeblack. The broken to pieces bricks carefully arranged in the hearth were black, too. The hearth was round, wide and flat on top, with red painted mysterious bas-reliefs on it. Its outer walls are painted red, too. The inner space of the hearth is divided into three uneven parts by three projections resembling a ship prow. The composition consisting of three clover-like cavities, possibly, symbolized the idea of a tripartite alliance (the triplet): father-mother-son. On the projection edges there are relief balls resembling eyes and, perhaps, embodied “the image” of a totem, a ram or a bull (Fig. 14). In front of the hearth adjacent to the southern wall there was built a low bench of mudbrick. On it there was a “forgotten” deer horn punch with a drilled hole on the handle (Fig. 15, 15a). It is worth of notice that such

¹⁵ Байбуртян Е. А., 2011, с. 32–33.

¹⁶ Мартиросян А. А., 1964, с. 23.

¹⁷ In scientific literature the term ‘ojakh’ is very common. Some of the scholars consider that hearths had cult function, others, taking into consideration that hearths of baked clay were discovered in several rooms with round layout, suspect their ritual meaning (Куфтин Б. А. 1944, с. 175).

kind of a punch was discovered at Blur¹⁸ (Pulur) cult building (Fig.15b)¹⁹. In the central part of Shengavit city, in the round room unearthed by Ye. Bayburtyan in 1936, a round hearth was opened near which a deer horn was discovered with traces of sawing²⁰.

The discovery of deer horn punches near cult hearths in different monuments and in different cult buildings could not be incidental. Most possibly the cult of a deer was widespread among the bearers of Shengavitian culture.

In Shengavit site a fine bowl was unearthed with an ornamented belt of geometrical figures below the rim. Beneath this frieze there is an ornament depicting a herd of deer marching from left to right²¹.

In front of the bench in the space between the latter and the hearth, on the floor there was a decorated mat; its imprint, white straight lines, are clearly spotted on floor plaster (Fig. 16).

To the right from the entrance the bricks laid on each other by their narrow side were built two attached basins of different sizes with walls plastered on the outer side (Fig. 17). Inside the northern lower basin a tiny piece of green glass was found, and in the southern higher basin - ash, shards of pottery and fragment of a saddle-quern. We can suppose that in the southern basin the sacred ashes from the hearth were piled²². On the northern and eastern walls of the room, as well as on the walls of the northern basin, on the floor near the hearth and the deity lots of holes, tunnels and traces of insects are spotted (Fig. 18).

It is worthy of notice that a ceramics collection charactersitic to the Shengavitian culture was found in Haran. It is well-known that because of a vast demographic growth a part of the bearers of the Shengavitian culture migrated from the central regions of the Armenian Highland and ressettled in many countries including the Northern Mesopotamia and Palestine taking with them the cultural and religious traditions formed previosuly in their homeland.

The half-preserved sacred cup with wide mouth for libation was lying between the statuette of the deity and the fire-place (Image 2₂)²³. South from the hearth under the wall a grinder of river stone was lying (Fig. 19). In the central part of the room, on the floor, to the east of the mat imprint remnants of pots crashed on the spot were found; under them relief, net-like sediments of some organic stuff were unearthed (Fig. 20). Most probably those were the contents of two-handled pots (Fig. 21; Image 2₁₀), the

¹⁸ Բլւր (Blur, in Arm. mound, hill).

¹⁹ Kosay H. Z. 1976, p. 121-139.

²⁰ Байбуртян Е. 2011, с. 27.

²¹ Սարգսյան Ս., 1967, էջ 177, 186, աղ. LX1. In the sites of Kvartzkhelebi, Goudabertka and Gyoy-tepe disk-like lids were found on which deer with rich antlers engraved or in bas-relief were pictured (Мунчаев Р. М., 1975, с. 169).

²² According to ancient beliefs the sacred ashes should not be thrown out in order not to come in touch with foulness, lest the anger of the gods was aroused (The Bible, New Testament, Lucas, 6).

²³ Another analogous whole bowl with three parts was found in 1959 by E. Khazadryan in the cut on the western slope of a mound at Dvin (Square 12:H, depth from the surface of the earth 2.5m), in the complex of sherds of the Early Bronze Age, see Кушнарева К. X. 1977, с. 7-8, fig. 4.

hardened into stone traces of some liquid, which took the form of the cracks that appeared between the sherds.

On the floor and in the upper layers there were imprints of reeds, which means they used reeds to roof the building. Traces of reeds were stated on the upper south-eastern corner from the idol. The existence of the altar and the hearth where the eternal fire used to burn and burnt-offerings were performed enable us to suppose that there should have been a hole in the roof to let the smoke out and light in, and through it the deity would descend on to the altar²⁴. The small sizes of the cult room were conditioned by the fact that only the priest and the priestess had the right to enter the temple and maybe the owner of the offering. It is well known that the pre-Christian temples were not intended for a great number of people, and as a rule, attendance of the believers into the temple was forbidden.

The fact that the recently opened room was specially built for cult is confirmed by the density of constituent parts of the interior – the deity, the hearth, the basins cover the main space of the room, and there is, in fact, no space for living. Another evidence on the structure of being of ritual character is the discovery of N5 Phalange-Orxtra (Rite) Proximal segment (M:5, Loc. 24011, Bag 24071, Fig. 22)²⁵. Probably, it was a sacrifice evidence related to the initiation rite when girls sacrificed their little finger for marriage or for becoming a priestess²⁶. There are black tar-like sediments on the external part of the phalange of the little finger which are probably remains of some material applied during the sacrifice ritual.

As is mentioned above there was another building with stone-laid basement attached to this room on the eastern side, which entrance was on the opposite, north-western part (Fig. 23). On the outer western part of the entrance a basalt quern was attached. In the central part of the second room there was a stone-laid, cylindrical, clay-plastered two-stored storing-pit for grain, carefully closed with a tufa disk-like lid (Fig. 24 1, 2, 3). Beneath, about 70 cm deep down, there is a vacant space. Inside, remnants of charred grains of wheat and barley were discovered²⁷. The mouth of the pit is 70 cm high

²⁴ Либман М., 1991, с. 51-77.

²⁵ Characterized by Armen Martirosyan.

²⁶ It is well-known that sometimes fingers, particularly the little ones, are absent in the natural depictions of the stamped palms on the walls of the earliest examples of the Upper Paleolithic cave paintings. They are interpreted as the result of the sacrifice rite initiation to gain marriage right for the girls of the age of puberty (see Jean Clottes and Jean Courtin, 1996, p. 71-79). Both in the Indo-European and, particularly, Armenian fairy tales and legends the little finger is represented as a mediator, a tying circle among various persons, representatives of different sexes, various worlds, life, death and rebirth, living and dead ones, past, present and unknown future. The little finger which was perceived as a sacred sacrifice relic also used to be as a means of mediation with the Underworld through ritual tasting of the sacrifice (see Harutyunyan S., p. 307-313). This is a unique phenomenon when written and oral reports are based upon the archaeological discoveries, particularly in every royal tomb of Verin Naver and Nerkin Naver Necropolises (2400-1400 BC) teeth and finger phalanges belonging to dozens of persons have been well-attested, which, as we consider, are voluntary sacrifices during the funerary rite of the lord (see Симонян А., 2010, с. 621-638).

²⁷ We did not manage to dig this pit to the bottom, as it was dangerous to continue working without removing the cylindrically laid stones. The pit was filled with soil and fixed till the next year's excavations. The same decision was made for the pit in Square J:5 where we were digging a storing-pit of wheat built of with great care.

above the floor. Next to it there was a platform baked with fire and a broken quern²⁸. This level, most probably, corresponded to the second, upper floor of the room²⁹.

On the lower floor about 50-70 cm thick, rather a hard ash layer with multiple holes of insects in it were piled. Perhaps, when the basin in Room 1 was full, the ash of the hearth was piled here, whose hardness and the insect holes is conditioned by the burnt grease in it. On the eastern part of the room there were household pits. Fragments of cone-shaped sieve (filter) in one of them (Fig. 25, Image 2₃). It is certain that this was a dwelling (economical) construction.

It is possible this cult complex could have had other architectural components, which were either destroyed during previous excavations in the western and northern parts of the room, or have not been yet excavated on the southern or eastern sides. The excavations of these parts will shed light upon the proposed version, according to which there was a temple complex here consisting of a small room for ritual ceremonies and household attachments (cella).

Below we shall try to restore the ritual of sacrifice.

We can suppose that in front of the wooden statue adjusted to the altar the eternal fire used to burn in the hearth, on which, according to ancient beliefs, libation and burnt-offerings were performed very often. For the glory of the gods, they burnt the fat of the animals (a rite, which was very common in the beliefs of almost all of the ancient peoples); the smoke towered out into the sky through the garret-window in the roof.

The ash of the sacred fire, according to ancient beliefs, was piled up in special spaces; first in the southern basin and then in the adjacent room.

Here, the interior of the room has completely preserved to our days; the deity with bas-reliefs on the front part, and the terracotta hearth in front.

Inside the temple there were a great number of bones of small and cattle animals; this belonged to the sacrificed and the priests' food animals³⁰.

²⁸ E. Kvavadze analyzing the soil in the pores of the quern concluded that the tool was multi-functional. They grinded grain, dry roots, medical herbs, etc.

²⁹ One of the problems of archaeology is to determine how long the building "lived". It has an essential meaning to define the stratigraphy (the layers 'lying' on each other) of the settlements in the Early Bronze Age, the foundation of the old building and the new construction on its place, the gap of the period between them, in order to date the latter and the artifacts found on the floor. According to the results of the radio-carbon analyses the second layer of the first room in Square M:5 is dated at least 110-130 years later than the room founded (see of tab. I, 328809 /inside the hearth/, 345980 /inside the southern basin, probably the ash gathered here from the hearth/ and 345981 /of the second layer/ to compare the data of the samples). These observations reveal gap of the period between the foundation and the reconstruction of the room, which corresponds to the "life" of the buildings with stone basement and with the mud-brick walls. Thus according to the data obtained from the radio-carbon analysis the average difference between the two building horizons is 110-130 years. This means that the entire duration of the 6-7 building horizons stated at Shengavit is $110/130 \times 6/7 = 660-910$ years, which corresponds to the radio-carbon analyses, i.e. the utmost period gap is 3350-2340 BC, (see tab. I: 283206 the sample by this lab number is taken from the pit, which is dated to post-Shengavitian period, therefore is not included here). This period of about one millennium comprises the main stages of the duration of existence of the Shengavit site.

The cult objects found in Room 1 are: the terracotta bull statuette with huge horns (Fig. 26), the phallus-like stone amulet (Fig. 27). On the bench there was the sacrifice puncher of deer horn (Fig. 15). Two pieces of green glass stand apart from other artifacts (Fig. 28_{1, 2}). It is well-known that at the temples there functioned workshops, some of which producing glass beads.

Adjacent to the eastern side of the temple there was an economical room, which made one unity together with the temple. It is worthy of notice that the entrances of the temple and the economical room were on opposite sides; the entrance of the temple was on the southern side while the other with an economic significance was on the northern one, which, of course, could not be accidental. Considering the important role of the fire in ritual ceremonies we preliminarily called this temple "Temple of Fire".

Without any exaggeration we can state that the discovery made here is significant and important not only for Armenia but in the context of the entire Ancient Orient as well.

After the building "became old" the inner space of the room was filled with pieces of mud-brick, probably the bricks of half ruined walls and made a platform on which, according to the existing then tradition, an analogous building of the same significance should have to be built³¹. However, the destiny was not on the side of the inhabitants of Shengavit. Carefully performed excavations gave the opportunity to define the functional meaning of the construction. At the same time it became a clue to reveal the nature of analogous constructions in neighboring squares and other monuments. Quite alike to Shengavitian is one of the constructions unearthed at Tel-Judeydeh (Antioch Valley), which mud-brick walls were erected on carefully laid stone-base-masonry. Like in Shengavit, here, too, the building with rectangular layout stretches from north to south. The entrance is on the eastern part of the wider southern wall. There is a basin in the south-eastern corner of the room. There was a cult hearth in front of the entrance, and a rectangular platform to the north from it, perhaps the remains of an altar³². Buildings of analogous layout were excavated in Blur (Pulur) and Yanik-tepe (Fig. 29)³³.

³⁰ According to archaeozoologist Pam Crabtree's definitions the bones discovered here were not burnt but presented remains of meals (The animal bones were analyzed in Yerevan by Pam Crabtree who handed the results of the analysis to us so as to include them in the monography devoted to Shengavit). Mitchell Rothman³⁰, taking that as a basis concludes the excavated room could not be a temple, as there were no burnt bones stated here. The respectable scholar should be reminded that the Old Testament confirms that in the temples mainly the fat of intestines and the kidneys of domestic animals such as bulls, cows, calves, sheep and goats were burnt as offerings. Pam Crabtree confirms bones of only these animals were found in the room. The animals were burnt wholly exceptionally for especially great sins to redeem their sin, and the body of the sacrifice animals would be carried out of the settlement to some clean place and burnt. In other cases the priests should taste the meat of the animal presented as an offering. Hence, the bones found here as remnants of meals, do not contradict to the suggestion of the room of being a specially built cult construction. The next reasoning for suspicion to consider the room in Square M:5 as a temple is its small sizes, which could not hold a great number of believers.

³¹ The tradition of building a new one in the place of the old building was widespread in Mokhrablur as well. See ՀՃՊ, էջ 40:

³² Braidwood R. J., Braidwood L. S. 1960, pp. 259-263, 345-350; ՀՃՊ, էջ 56-58, աղ. 7դ:

According to the archive measurements at Mokhrablur site in the building horizon of V from the surface of the five-sided room was also of cult nature, with its clay made deity, hearth (*ojakh*) and clay basin to keep the sacred ash from the hearth (Fig. 30)³⁴.

A hearth buried in the floor and remains of a deity in a little damaged state were unearthed in the neighboring Square K:6 in the building horizon of III from the surface in 2012. Fragments of “oldened” and out of use *ojakh* were revealed in the horizon of IV of the same square. These are evidences of the ancient *ojakh* made of baked clay known to us so far, which gives us basis to conclude that the tradition of placing analogous hearths in front of the idols (deities) at Shengavit lasted for centuries.

In the measurements of the previously excavated dozens of rooms *ojakh*-hearths and rectangular base-stones are clearly seen nearby. The latter are untouched, natural slabs, on which, as we think, clay-made altars were erected. We can suppose that hastily performed excavations destroyed them, and the slabs were interpreted as bases for the wooden columns holding the roofs³⁵.

On these altars, possibly, tufa or maybe wooden and the clay statuettes of the deities were erected³⁶. Only 25 m to the east from the temple in Square M:5 in the II horizon of squares J:5 and J:6 a building with basis laid of big basalt stones (100 x 60 x 40 cm) and mud-brick walls (preserved in some places), with rectangular layout and inner sizes of 5x4 m. Under its northern wall 15 cm deep was the ritual basin with clay-plastered floor and walls. On the floor there were imprints of the half-moon clay-made contour of the idol (sizes 110x70 cm), with a circle-shaped ditch in the center (diameter 33 cm) in which, perhaps, the wooden idol was adjusted. South from the altar there was

³³ The mound of Yanik-tepe is situated about twenty miles south-west of Tabriz (Barney C. A. 1961. pp. 138, 141-147; Kosay H. Z. 1976, p. 131-142).

³⁴ G. Areshyan, the head of the excavations, believes the clay-made basin was a kiln for baking pottery, but the basin was too small for such function, and as the excavations at Velikend (10 miles far from Derbend) show the kilns for baking were built rather away from settlements. And this is logical, as it is difficult to imagine that the community would let an industrial building with poisonous smoke to function in the center of the settlement. I express my gratefulness to G. Areshyan for permission to publish the drawings.

³⁵ Байбуртян Е., 2011, с. 31, 34-37, 93, 104, 107, схема 1, таб. V, VI, фото 5, 28, 34; Սարգսյան Ս., 1967, էջ 174: Байбуртян Е. 2011, с. 32, 34, таб. V, VI: It should be mentioned that in Bayburtyan's reconstruction-drawing of the roof in the round room where the slab close to the *ojakh* is presented as basis for the roof-bearing wooden column is arbitrary; the slabs are not put in the center of the houses (Байбуртян Е. 2011, с. 32, 34, таб. V, VI), which is compulsory for such roofs. It is notable that almost for all of the monuments of Shengavitian culture on Malatia-Kharbert territory, the bases for the roof-bearing columns were buried in specially dug pits for stability³⁵. Probably a clay-plastered pit to fasten the basis of the column was discovered in 2012 at the site of Shengavit in Square J:6. The holes dug in the tufa cliff as column bases, according to architect H. Sanamyan, have been attested in Agarak site as well. And it is natural, as a column placed on a flat slab could be stable only for heavy roofs, while cone-shaped light roofs built of bows and reeds, which is typical for the buildings of Shengavitian culture, the bases for the columns were fastened by burying in pits.

³⁶ In the Ancient Orient, the altars were built of cube-form stone-piles. The basic slab of the altar was interpreted as the center of the world. To remind, in Square M:5 at the basis of the clay-made altar, as well as near the previously dug cult *ojakhs* at Shengavit, untouched slabs were placed. And this was not accidental for ancient times as it was forbidden to retouch the altar stone.

a round platform of mud brick with surface baked of fire. We can suppose that a portable hearth was placed on it. There are two pits south from the idol, one of them filled with ash. In the south-eastern corner of the room, probably, there was the clay-plastered basis of column, next to it there are holes with various diameters and drop-like remains of some organic stuff on the plastered floor. A. Hayrapetyan interprets them to be traces of sticks bearing fat candles³⁷.

Taking into consideration the data of Square M:5 we can insist that the ruins of the rectangular room stretching north to south are remains of another temple. The opinion that the cult *ojakhs* in the sites of Shengavitian culture are placed in room with round layout is rather common³⁸. In real the hearts are found in rooms with rectangular layouts as well. Could it be so that the round and rectangular rooms were devoted to various deities?

Rotundas (round temples) appeared in places of worship to htonic (subterranean) and female deities, heroons - consecrated the places where the heroes died - the eponyms of the given place, hipertral temples (without roof) were devoted to the heaven deities.

In the upper layers of Squares K:6-L:6-L:7 and I:14 in the south-eastern corners of the excavated large rectangular rooms with stone-laid walls there are rectangular small alcoves separated from the main volume of the rooms, which, maybe, were corners for praying (Image 1; Fig. 31). Especially impressive is the house of about 120 m², with a clay-made rectangular construction, probably a bench in front of the alcove. In this room various objects for cult ceremonies were discovered, of which a bowl-like vessel, perhaps a mixer for alcohol drinks (Fig. 32), male and female terracotta statuettes (Fig. 33-35). The separated alcoves in the south-eastern part of the dwellings were family corners for praying. For community or maybe even tribal ceremonies temple complexes were built. And it is not excluded that temples with various layouts were built for different deities. In this way we can explain the presence of various special cult and sacred constructions in the same horizon³⁹.

Thus, the rite ceremonies were highly esteemed in the mode of living of the ancient Shengavitians. Complex religious system and a priest class were formed. For the composition, layout, design of interior, building technique, the thickness of walls and other attributes the temple complex in Square M:5 at Shengavit is very much alike to the constructions of Shengavitian culture at Malatia-Kharbert and Antioch valley in Syria,

³⁷ Հայրապետյան Ա., 2012, էջ 52:

³⁸ Սարգսյան Ա., 1967, էջ 171, 174:

³⁹ As we see it, the so-called cult *ojakhs* were hearths (fire-places), which were placed in rooms built for such (cult) a purpose. The great amount of the clay-made (mud-made) *ojakh*-hearths and the stone or wooden idols erected in front of them is evidence of the existence of over a dozen of temples, which, from the first sight, seems to be contrary to our imaginations and confirms the opinion of some researchers that the clay-made *ojakhs* were for daily household needs. At the same time it is not a basis to suppose that Shengavit was not only an administrative, economic, cultural center but also cult center, a kind of sacred city where temples of regional significance devoted to various deities simultaneously functioned side by side.

which are dated to the 3rd millennium BC. On the other hand there is rather a great difference between the early-bronze-age constructions and their building principles in the basin of the River Kura and beyond to the North and Shengavitian architecture.

It should be considered that Shengavitian temple complex is much earlier than monuments of Shengavitian culture in Kharbert valley and in Syria. These facts prove that most probably together with the migration of the people the canonized (set) forms of cult buildings penetrated into the southern regions, too. If the adaptation to the local climate conditions and creating comfortable living conditions was important for the dwelling constructions, for cult complexes primary was building temples and designing their interior according to the religious and ritual dogmas and norms. Thus we can conclude that the people of Shengavit site that had a mighty demographic growth in the second quarter of the 3rd millennium BC and a part of them migrated and inhabited Kharbert valley, then the territory of Syria-Palestine, taking with them set forms of cult building principles.

THE COLLECTION OF POTTERY

The examination of the pottery from Square M:5 is important to define the typology and ornamentation of the pottery of Shengavit. They were discovered in the upper, untouched layer. After the temple building “became old” it was stuffed with broken pieces of mudbrick, thus making a flat platform for erecting a new building. This tradition is widely spread in Shengavitian culture and is stated in many monuments. However, the historical circumstances did not favor to build a new one. The sherds filled in the room were preserved untouched, without further interference. This, in fact, is a unique phenomenon for a multi-layer settlement, where a situation typical to closed complexes together with the functional meaning of the construction was stated. Layer by layer all the sherds were gathered, which then were classified and restored as possible. In the result about a dozen pots dating to 4620/2580-2470 BC⁴⁰ were completed; they present the pottery making technical and technological types and ornamentation typical to the closing period of the Shengavitian culture⁴¹.

So as to cook the flesh of the sacrificed animals in ancient time bowls, pots were used in which the blood of a sacrificed animal was gathered, fire pots (ash-pots) to gather the coal from the hearths. Vessels of this type were found in cult Room 1. They have almost the same shape, size, ornaments, and made with same technique. This is

⁴⁰ The results of the analysis of the charcoal from among the shards just from the floor of room 1 in square M:5, the laboratory number 345982, state data of an earlier period (2727-2650), which coincides with the data got from Berlin analyses (2748-2662).

⁴¹ The cleaning, marking, classifying, restoring, photographing, and drawing of thousands of sherds were done by Yelena Atoyants, Meri Safaryan, Lucine Khachatryan, Gohar Telumyan, Heghine Grigoryan, Anahit Grigoryan, Zaruhi Avetisyan, to whom I express my greatest gratitude. The collecting, washing and marking of the sherds found in the settlement irrespective of their sizes and state is a meticulous and painstaking process; however, it is very important as a precondition to observe the artifacts as basis for historical reconstructions.

worth of notice, which denotes that in the Early Bronze Age during worship ceremonies a stable set of pottery was used. This explains the custom of replacing the broken and out-of-use pots with new ones, which is proved by the existence of several sherds of the same type. The comprehensive study of the pottery of Room 1 becomes important by the condition that the stratigraphy of the found and published material at Shengavit site is by now not clear enough.

The researchers have united them by levels. The artifacts of the same depth considered being simultaneous (of the same period) without considering the peculiarities of the historical relief and ground-dug (dug-out) constructions. In reality, the pottery of the same period could be found at different depths, while artifacts on the same level can belong to different periods. In that sense, the discovery of the stairs leading into the semi-basement floor in square M:5 (Room 1) is very essential. The threshold was only 25-30 cm high above the surface of the earth, and the floor was 100-110 cm deep. So we can state that the upper layer at Shengavit around the temple complex is 0-30 cm, and the artifacts scattered on the floor at the depth of 100-110 cm are its contemporaries. Hence, outside the walls of the room the finds 20-90 cm deep precede the artifacts in the room found at a deeper level.

At present there are two viewpoints on the cultural values of Shengavit: a) The finds from all the layers are equivalent, and the materials from the lower and deeper layers, as well as, the types of the houses belong to a historical short period, and they are difficult to detach (to see any difference between them)⁴², b) the cultural horizons of Shengavit comprise all the stages of the Early Bronze Age, and the sherds from different layers distinctly differ from each other⁴³. The comprehensive study of the sherds from Square M:5 gives the opportunity to define clearly the typical attributes of the pottery of the upper horizon, i.e. the closing period of Shengavitian culture. Below the collections of sherds from the upper and lower layers is one by one discussed, from the basins and pits, as well as scattered sherds just from the floor.

The collection of the sherds on the floor, in front of the basins, crashed on the spot,

M:5, Loc. 24029, bag 24300

Jug - black-brown, with smoky surface and reddish lining. Half of the vessel was restored of 65 pieces; body - sphere-shaped swelled in the central part, a bit narrowing to the upper part, then with almost vertical neck, ending with a protruded, sharpening rim with smoothed sides and triangular in the cut. At the basis of the neck there is a slightly visible brook-like horizontal belt. At the mouth opposite of each other two semi-spherical handles are attached, the upper sides have inclined triangular landing (Fig. 21; image 2₁₀). The pot is made of sand-mixed clay, the meaning is a kitchenware. The

⁴² Байбуртян Е. А., 2011, с. 28, 49; Джавахишвили А. И., 1973, с. 169; Badalyan R. 1996, p. 12-14; Бадалян Р., Смит А., 2008, с. 45-68.

⁴³ Սարգսյան Ս., 1967, էջ 171, *ibid.* 2004, p. 196; Кушнарева К. Х., Чубинишвили Т. Н., 1970, с. 61-62.

surface and the lining are covered with little, cell-shaped cracks⁴⁴. The clay, perhaps, being constantly used as cooking pot on hot fire became fragile, and crashes when touched. It could be the result of the making quality and low-heat baking. The sizes are: the diameter of the mouth is 35.5 cm of the body - 42 cm, the height of the neck - 10 cm, the thickness - 1.6 cm. Such type of pots were stated in the final period of Shengavitian culture and lasted up to the early kurgans - Martkopi-Bedenian complexes⁴⁵.

Karas (storing-pot) - thick-walled, with red lining, black finely-polished surface, on which there are belt-lines in some places, thickness - 1.7 cm, the baking is of high quality. Furrow-like ornaments - triangular filled with slant lines with sharp points down (images 2₇; 5₁₀).

There are 31 fragments of pots crashed on the spot. They are dull (with dead surfaces), grey sherds with red lining, made of brick-colored and red clay mixed with sand, poor baking. One of them is a body part, another – a rim with slightly noticeable retouch of the side (triangular in the cut sharpening to the upper part). The thickness of the sherds is 0.8-1.9 cm (Image 4, 5). There is also a fragment of an ojakh (hearth) or a piece of a portable horse-shoe-shaped base (Fig. 36).

The pottery inside and around the hearth M:5, Loc. 24027

1. Between the deity cult and the hearth a partly preserved wide-mouth cup for sacred libation was lying. It had a narrow, little curved in the center, bottom, in the form of a cut-ball (semi-sphere) on the upper and lower parts, an abruptly separated body from the neck and the bottom almost vertical (straight), pipe-like neck, protruded, a little rounded rim (Image 2₂). The surface of the bowl (with tripartite design, the central part abruptly trespassing into the bottom part and the rim, very wide body for such a narrow bottom) is covered with delicate glaze; it is black polished, at the neck it has silver and brown glance. The lining is black, porous, at the rim glazed and polished⁴⁶. The walls of the central spherical part of the body are thicker than of the bottom and the neck. The sizes - the diameter of the bottom is 3, of the body -17, of the neck -15.6, of the mouth -16.1; the height is 7.4, the thickness of the bottom is 0.85, of the body -1.16, of the neck - 0.72 cm.

⁴⁴ An analogous but a whole jug again at the side of an ojakh-hearth was unearthed by Ye. Bayburtian, see Байбуртян Е., 2011, с. 27, 93, фото 3-6.

⁴⁵ Джапаридзе О., Авалишвили Г., Церетели А., 1986, с. 29-35, рис. 4-5 (на груз. яз.). According to N. Shanshiashvili this type of vessel was attested in Hittite-Luvian hieroglyphs NN 334, 342, 343 (numbers after/by Larosh) and widespread in Europe and penetrated into the Caucasus with Indo-European ethnic elements from the Balkans (Шаншашвили Н. 2004, с. 148-149). But as follows from the facts of the Indo-European homeland's localization in the region of Western Asia (including the Armenian Highland, Asia Minor and adjacent territories), the origin and spread of the Shengavitian culture from the Ayrarat valley and the Hittite-Luvian hieroglyphs' attestation, the mentioned vessels penetrated into Europe from the Armenian Highland via Asia Minor.

⁴⁶ Such bowl of tripartite design were found at Dvin, see -Кушнарева К. Х. 1977, с. 7-8, рис. 4; at a settlement of Igdir, see - Куфтин Б. А. 1944, с. 77-78, рис. 35_{1, 2}; at Gegharot settlement and other monuments.

2. Inside the ojakh-hearth two 1.8 cm thick sherds of a karas black-polished, in one part striped, brick-colored surface and reddish smoky lining. The sherd in the cut is two-colored black and red; it is made by the technique of alternation of male and female layers. The inner hand-made layer was plastered on inside and outside with thick clay glaze. The making technique and the sizes tell us they were fragments of Karas 2 found on the floor. It is worthy of notice that there is sediment of bitumen, which was, perhaps, for joining the different parts (sections). This technique was also widespread in other monuments of EBA in Armenia⁴⁷.
3. Two brick-color sherds with polished surface, on with black, dull lining 1.0 cm thick, the other with brick-color lining, 0.7 cm thick were discovered near the ojakh.

The collection of sherds of the lower layer of room 1 - M:5, loc. 24024; 24025, 24028

It consists of shards of different colors: black dull and shiny, gray, brown, dark brown, reddish surfaces and linings.

4. Terracotta pottery sherds with nut-brown polished surface and brown lining, one's rim painted red were found in Loc. 24024-24025. They were made of little-grain, sand-mixed clay, by the following technique: the basic part (skeleton) of the pot was hand-made, then this was plastered and hardened inside and outside with thick layer of clay and covered the surfaces with fine glazing, smoothed and polished. They belong to tableware; the thickness of the walls is 0.5-0.9 cm.
Of this collection the following types are distinguished: small, jar-like with tripartite design, with walls thick in the wider part of the body pots. The rims in the cut are triangular, polished on the sides, with sharpening to the top. In the passage between the body and the neck are deep grooves or slightly noticeable horizontal belts, which separate the upper and lower parts of the body. On the base of the rim of one of the pots is a horizontal belt, underneath delicate groove-lines; on one of the sherds is a ditch-like groove. It is either body ornament or a piece of the bottom.
5. Ninety-eight fragments of different size and shape pots, with black-polished, and gray, brown, reddish rarely red-painted linings were found. They were made of tiny-grain, sand-mixed clay. The skeletons were thickly plastered on inside and outside. Then covered with delicate engobe, smoothed and polished; belong to tableware. The walls are 0.52 cm thick. This is the biggest collection of the lower layer (image 24), where the following categories are distinguished:
 - a) Sixteen sherds of a pot with a swelled central part, deep belt separating the neck and the body, black-polished, with reddish lining were unearthed; inside yellowish sediment of some organic stuff.

⁴⁷ Shards of pottery with bitumen joining were discovered in Lori -Tagavoranist, Aragtsotn - Geghard, Shirak - Mets Sepsar, and other sites; the information is from Armine Hayrapetyan and Hamazasp Khachatryan.

- b) The rim part of a small karas with finely smoothed-polished surface, beige, lining - painted red at the rim. The neck narrows to the top and ends triangular in the cut, smoothed side, sharpening to the top (Image 2₅).
- c) Found a sherd of a semi-spherical bowl, reddish on the upper part, black on bottom, lining- reddish.

Rim parts:

- a) Sherds of two bowl-shaped pots with straight walls, flatly cut rims;
- b) rectangular in the cut rim part; the rim widens up to the top and is flatly cut at the edge making a horizontal platform. The width of the rim is 1.1 cm, height - 2.1 cm.
- c) a rim table-shaped (rectangular) in the cut. The rim flatly cut on top widens down into the vertical neck. The width of the rim is 1.2 cm, the height - 1.1 cm.
- d) ten sherds of small and medium vessels with straight necks, a bit projected, triangular in the cut, with smoothed and sharpening sides: e)
- e) two sherds of a pot discerning abruptly from the body with slant protruding position, triangular in the cut, smoothed on the sides, sharpening up to the rim; one lining was brown-polished (Image 2).

BOTTOMS: Small, sunken (like a small cavity); diameter -3.0-4.0 cm.

BODIES: Sherds of pots in the form of a semi-sphere in the central part from above and bottom, abruptly discerning from the neck and the bottom and with thicker walls; at the base of the neck -slightly noticeable horizontal belt.

ORNAMENTS: Only four sherds are ornamented; on three of them there are triangulars with the sharp ends down, one of them covered with slant grooves from right to left. The other ornament consists of delicately cut two parallel lines, which make narrow belts being cut at sharp angles, dressed with slant lines inside.

6. The pottery of the upper layer of room 1- M:5, Loc. 24000, 24001, 24003, 24008

Found half of a small jug with very narrow bottom, two-cone body, sharpening rim folded out, triangular in the cut, and two-sided cut. In the lower part of the body there is a horizontal, 3.2 cm wide belt-like thickening, in the center of the neck - slightly expressed horizontal engraved ring (Image 2₁). The surface and the rim part are black-polished inside the nucleus of the sherd and the lining is black in the cut. The sizes: height - 10.2, the diameter of the mouth - 13.1, of the body - 15.2, of the bottom - 3.2 cm, the thickness of the neck is 0.8 cm, of the lower part of the body - 1.0, of the bottom - 0.6 cm.

Collection of sherds in the southern basin - M:5, Loc. 24012

- 7. **The rim part of a jug with two-cone body:** The central part of the body is convex with an abrupt curve from the neck. It narrows to the top and ends in a protruded

sharp rim, sided and triangular in the cut. At the base of the neck there is a semi-spherical, carved handle. The surface is black, and polished in different directions. The lining is uneven, bearing clearly visible traces of horizontal connections. This means the jug was made by joining separate horizontal rings (layers). The lining is grayish, covered with delicate brown engobe. The rim is painted red inwardly. The zigzag nucleus, which is thickly covered with engobe on outside and inside is clearly seen in the cut. The jug is made of sand-mixed clay. The surface is covered with cut ornaments; on the neck there are three rather far away from each other horizontal cut belts. Underneath there are isosceles triangles with the sharp points up and with slant lines inside. Between the triangles a piece of a cut, spiral-shaped ornament has preserved. The handle is edged with slant lines, which resemble triangles with their sharp points up (Image 2₅). The sizes: the diameter of the body -24, of the neck -14.6, of the mouth -16.7cm, the height of the neck is 8.5 cm, the thickness of the walls is 0.75 cm.

The pottery of room 2, M:5, Loc. 24001, 24004, 24011, 24015

8. **Sieve:** The object was found in the pit of room 2, Loc. 24015. The body is fennel-shaped, mouth –wide. A narrow opening in the bottom part; the entire body is covered with holes (Image 2₃); is made of reddish clay. The sizes are: the diameter of the mouth is 15 cm, of the bottom -5.0 cm, the height -11.2 cm, the walls are 0.9 cm thick. The pollen analyses of the soil from the holes prove they sieved flour-made meals through it, according to Kvavadze –*erishta* (a kind of fried noodles). Analogous sieves, according to Bayburtyan and those recently discovered in Poland and analysed in one of the British laboratories, were for filtering the whey when making cheese⁴⁸. The filters were found in the central part of Shengavit site in the excavations of 1936-1938, 1958-1965 (in the upper horizon) and in 2000, and in 2009 in the necropolis; they were also found in Didube, Kwartskhelebi and other monuments⁴⁹.
9. **Two-pipe hollow cup:** with warped in body, pipe-like widening mouth and sharpening up to the end, triangular rims in the cut. The diameter of the base is more than that of the upper mouth (Image 2₆). It is made of mixed coarse-grained sandstone, black-reddish clay. The surface is covered with a thin layer of engobe, is smoothed and red-polished. The lining is roughly polished, covered at the rim wide at the base 4.5 cm in the upper part 3.3 cm wide belt-shaped reddish engobe. The body walls are thicker getting thinner towards the edges. It has a semi- spherical handle. The sizes: the diameter of the upper mouth is 17.6, of the body 18.6, of the lower mouth -26.4, of the handle 4.5cm, the height is 12 cm, the

⁴⁸ Байбуртян Е. А., 2011, с. 49; paleorama.wordpress.com/2012/...

⁴⁹ Байбуртян Е. А., 2011, с. 49; Սարգսյան Ս., 1967, էջ 176; Мунчаев Р. М., 1975, с. 163, рис. 20₁₀; Kiguradze T., Sagona A., 2003, p. 63, fig. 3.18/3, 6, 7.

wall of the body is 2.0 cm thick, and the rim is 0.9 cm thick. It is a cult vessel, which according to the ancient beliefs, was meant for the holy insemination of the soil.

10. Fragments of hearth-ojaks: crumbly nucleus is made of coarse-grain, sand-mixed black clay. They, probably, were "oldened" and thrown away fragments of the hearths. As the walls of the hearth were thick only the surface was baked - 0.7-1.0 cm thick, while the nucleus remained "raw".
11. The rim part of a dark brown-polished and brown lining bowl with a neck adjusted straightly, a little narrowing to the rim, the upper part smoothed. It is semi-spherical in the cut; found in the upper layer Loc. 24008 (Image 3₁₁).
12. Bowl: it is analogous to the libation cup found next to the hearth in Room 1. It has well-polished brick-colored surface. The body is ornamented with decorative lugs (Image 2₉). The sizes are: the diameter of the bottom - 3 cm, the body - 15.1 cm, the neck - 14.5, the mouth - 14.6 cm, the height - 6.5 cm, the thickness of the bottom - 0.6, of the body - 0.75 and of the neck - 0.40-0.55 cm.

Types: The collection consists of open, half-open and closed forms. Delicate pottery sherds of small and medium sizes as well as thick-wall, big pottery sherds were found. The tableware has mainly black-polished surface, black, brown and reddish lining. The linings and the rims of some pottery were in wardly painted red.

BOWLS: In the upper layer at Shengavit for the closing stage of this culture one of the most typical vessels are the bowls with tripartite (three-part) design. The central part of their body is thick, in the form of a cut sphere, well-stressed, bulging from the whole outline of the vessel and is clearly discerned from the bottom part and the neck. The bottoms are narrow in the center, warped in, they end with sharpening on top, in the cut are triangular.

JARS: a) bent out, wide-mouth (up to 25 cm in diameter), big pots, in the cut there is an angle-shaped crown, cylindrical, with a stretched long neck (up to 8 cm high), distinctly separated from the sphere-shaped body, the surface is pink, thick-walled (up to 1.5 cm). Usually there are two ball-shaped handles attached to joining part of the body and the neck. Similar pots are known from Igdir settlement⁵⁰.

b) Wide-mouth (up to 22 cm in diameter), protruded, triangular in the cut, sharpening rim, widening to top, short-neck distinctly separated from the ball-shaped body, black-polished surface and light-brown lining, thick-wall (up to 1.0 cm thick) big pots. Usually there are two ball-shaped handles attached to the joining part (junction) of the body and the neck. Similar pots are known from the Igdir settlement⁵¹.

HANDLES: a) Semi-spherical, horizontal, with wide holes. These are typical to Shengavitian culture, the so-called classical handles that are attached not only to the pots but to the lids, portable cult hearths and ritual two-pipe cups. The utmost diameter

⁵⁰ Куфтин Б. А., 1944, с. 77, рис. 34₁.

⁵¹ Куфтин Б. А., 1944, с. 77, рис. 34₂.

is 6-7 cm. According to B.A. Kuftin, the handles, as a rule, were joined on the junction of the body and the neck, so that one part was touching the body, and the other at the neck⁵². These handles were attached to the lower curve of the body as well, on finely black-polished or coarse, grey and pink surfaced walls of the pots.

b) Semi-spherical, faced handles with narrow central parts and arch-like widening to the edges. These, too, are divided into two sub-types: 1. Flat-cut on top at the joint with the rim with a flat platform. This form is common for the black-polished tableware and is known at Igdir, Mokhrablour and elsewhere⁵³. 2. Handles, a bit higher than the rim, round at the joint. They are typical of kitchenware.

c) Semi-spherical, miniature handles.

d) Lugs.

CONCLUSIONS

All the vessels of the upper layer at Shengavit, including the tableware, as was fairly defined by B. A. Kuftin though made with great care and finely retouched as a rule were hand-made⁵⁴. Some scholars consider hand-made vessels as the result of imperfect techniques. In our opinion the hand-made pottery produced with unique skills and care was conditioned by the religious and moral-philosophic concepts, which traditionally preserved in Armenia until the period of the Kingdom of Van⁵⁵. According to the color of the clay, the baking and painting the pots have: a) finely retouched and black-polished and b) coarse grey-pink surfaces. Though the walls of the pots are rather thick, the baking is homogeneous and only in the center spots of poor baking may be noticed.

The surfaces and the linings of the pots are covered with thin or thick layers of small-grained solution of glaze, which have tiny cracks. This is a typical attribute of the pottery of Shengavitian culture. The distinct border of variations of black and red on the surfaces and linings in some cases passes through the center of the cut of the pot.

The contrast between the black paint of the surface and the red of the lining could be conditioned by ancient beliefs marking the everlasting interchange of the night and day, the dark and light, may even presume the struggle of the evil (the outer world - black) and the good (native environment -red). The red here is inside as the native surroundings. The outer, enemy surroundings are the black.

The collection can be divided into two large groups: high-quality, well-baked, made of small-grain clay tableware and coarse, poorly baked, made of big-grain clay kitchenware, which crumbles if touched. The surfaces are smoky, which is evidence that they were used (cooking pots) on fire. They, as a rule, have at the rim typical to Shengavitian culture two semispherical handles, which on top are flattened forming triangular platforms⁵⁶. The lining is reddish covered with tiny cracks⁵⁷.

⁵² Куфтин Б. А., 1944, с. 76.

⁵³ Куфтин Б. А., 1944, с. 76, 99, рис. 54б.

⁵⁴ Куфтин Б. А., 1944, с. 74.

⁵⁵ Симонян А., 2010, с. 621-638.

⁵⁶ Vessels with analogous handles were found in the settlement at Igdir, see - Куфтин Б. А. 1944, с. 78.

The ornamentation compared with the previous stage of Shengavitian culture becomes limited and simplified. Cut in triangles with the sharp point down filled with parallel lines are very common. The other common ornament is zigzag belts made of delicate cut in edge-lines and filled in with slant lines.

The ornament forms and pottery making techniques of the upper layer at Shengavit are the same as that of the pottery from the grave-tombs (Image 4₁₂; Fig. 37). This clearly defines the period of the funerals (burying) - 27-25th BC, which is important to bring to light the social-economic, religious, community phenomena of Shengavitian culture. The forms and the ornaments of the pottery of the upper layer, as well as the artifacts extend up to the “early kurgan” culture (Fig. 38; Image 3₂₂). This interesting observation can serve as a basis to reveal the sources of the “early kurgan” culture.

As a conclusion it should be noted that the presence of a numerous population, the complex picture of the town planning, monumental architecture (defensive walls strengthened by towers), density of constructions, cult and dwelling buildings with round and rectangular layouts, (which denote the differentiation between the social classes/the different status of the families), symbols of power (heads of scepters, seals), luxurious samples of adornments of gold and semi-precious stones, great variety of works of art and cult objects, organized religious system, common weight system, developed craftsmanship, storing-pits for grain and other foods, being as well surrounded by satellite settlements, the class of skillful workers, developed metallurgy and other attributes are evidences of the deep class stratification in Shengavit society. These facts come to prove that Shengavit, contrary to the accepted opinion, was not a simple settlement, but an administrative, religious, and cultural center, which for a number of its attributes corresponds to the ancient oriental conception of a city. This viewpoint is essentially supported by the discovery of a newfound temple complex.

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⁵⁷ It is interesting that such lining is typical to the pottery discovered at Armavir, Igdir and other settlements: see – Кухтин Б. А., 1944, с. 76, 93.

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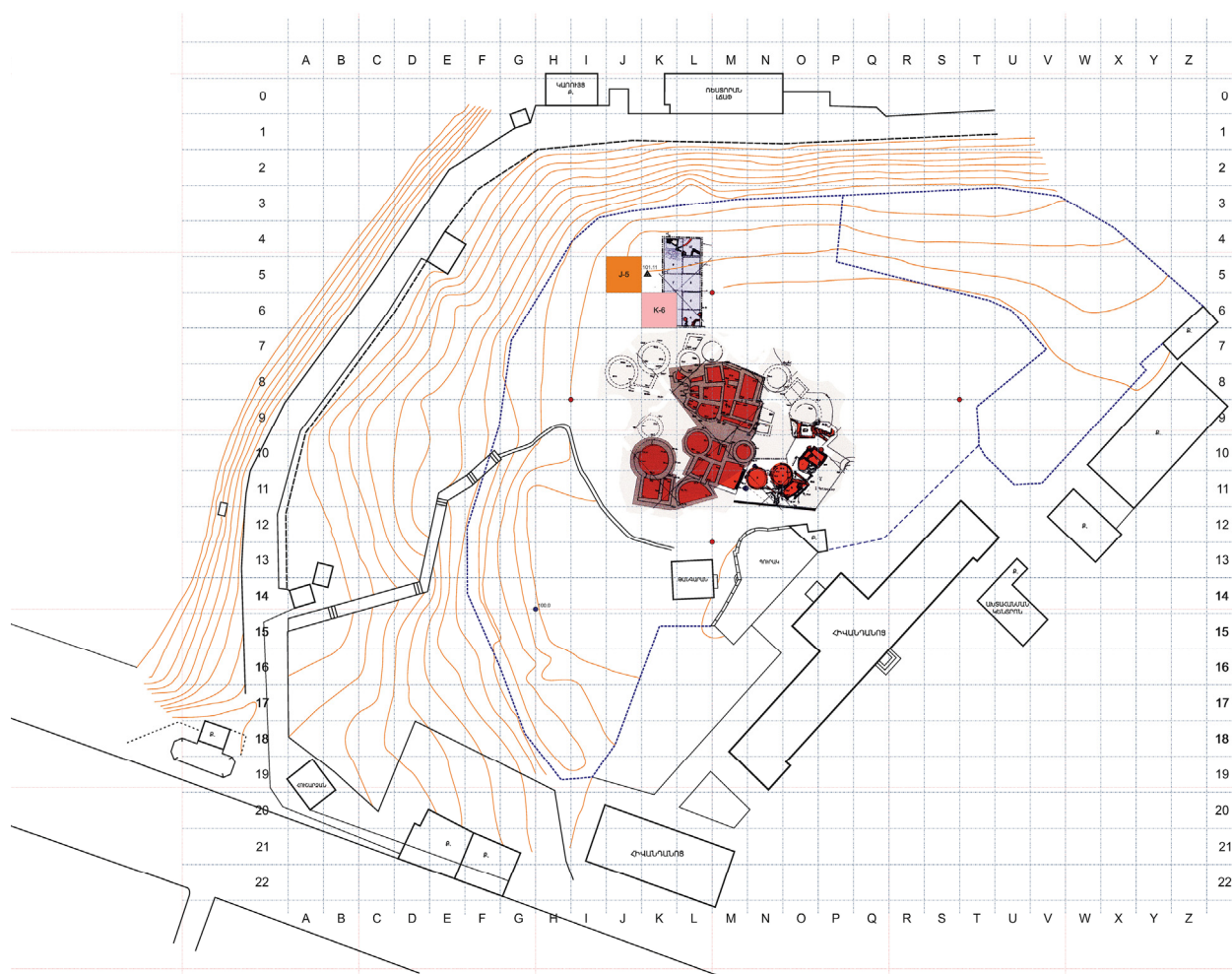


Figure 1 "SHENGAVIT" SETTLEMENT. (excavations: 2009) scale: 1:500



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

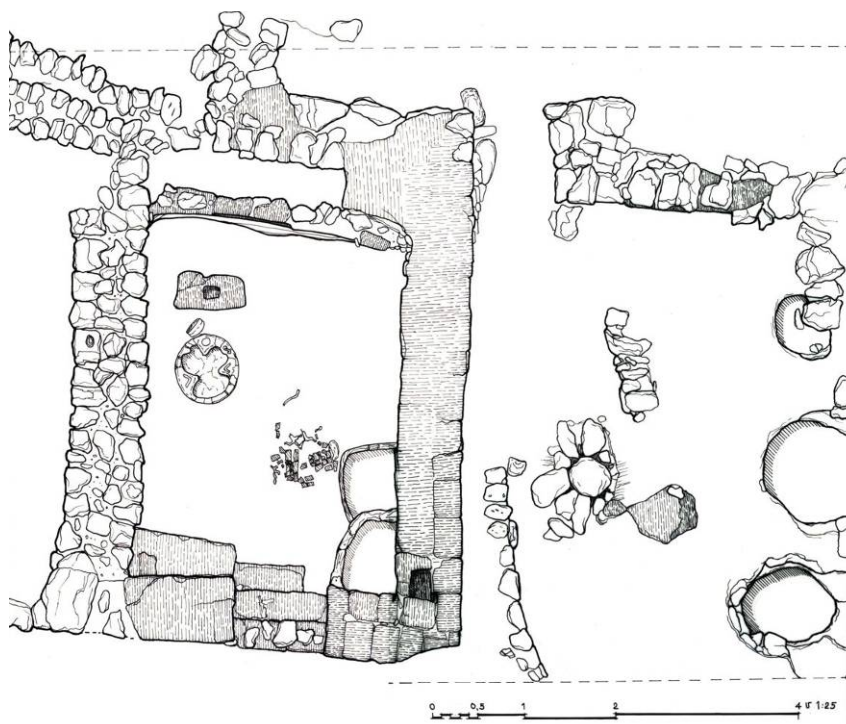


Figure 7 SHENGAVIT (excavations: 2012)



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 15₁

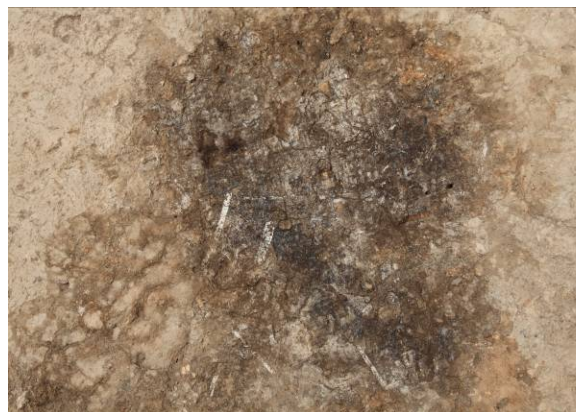


Figure 16



Figure 15₂



Figure 17



Figure 18



Figure 19



Figure 20



Figure 21



Figure 22



Figure 23



Figure 24₁



Figure 24₂



Figure 24₃



Figure 25



Figure 26



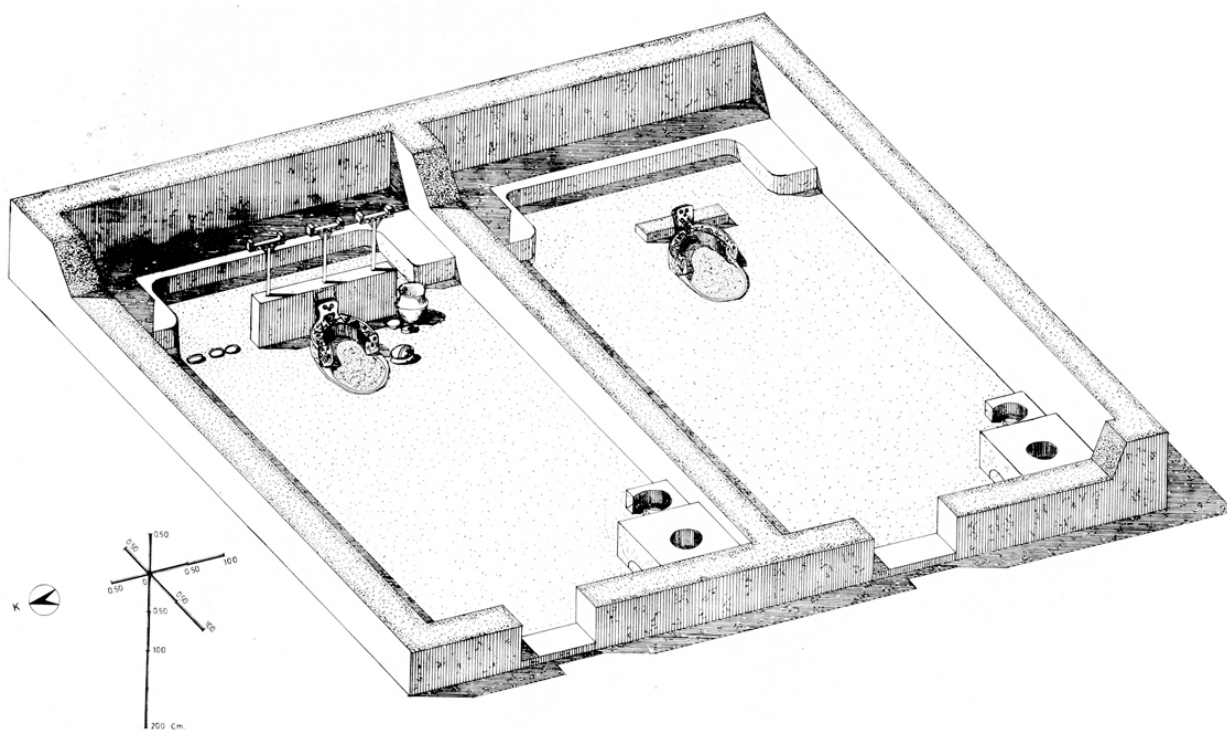
Figure 27



Figure 28₁



Figure 28₂



Shrines found in rooms no. 79 and 80, level X

Figure 29

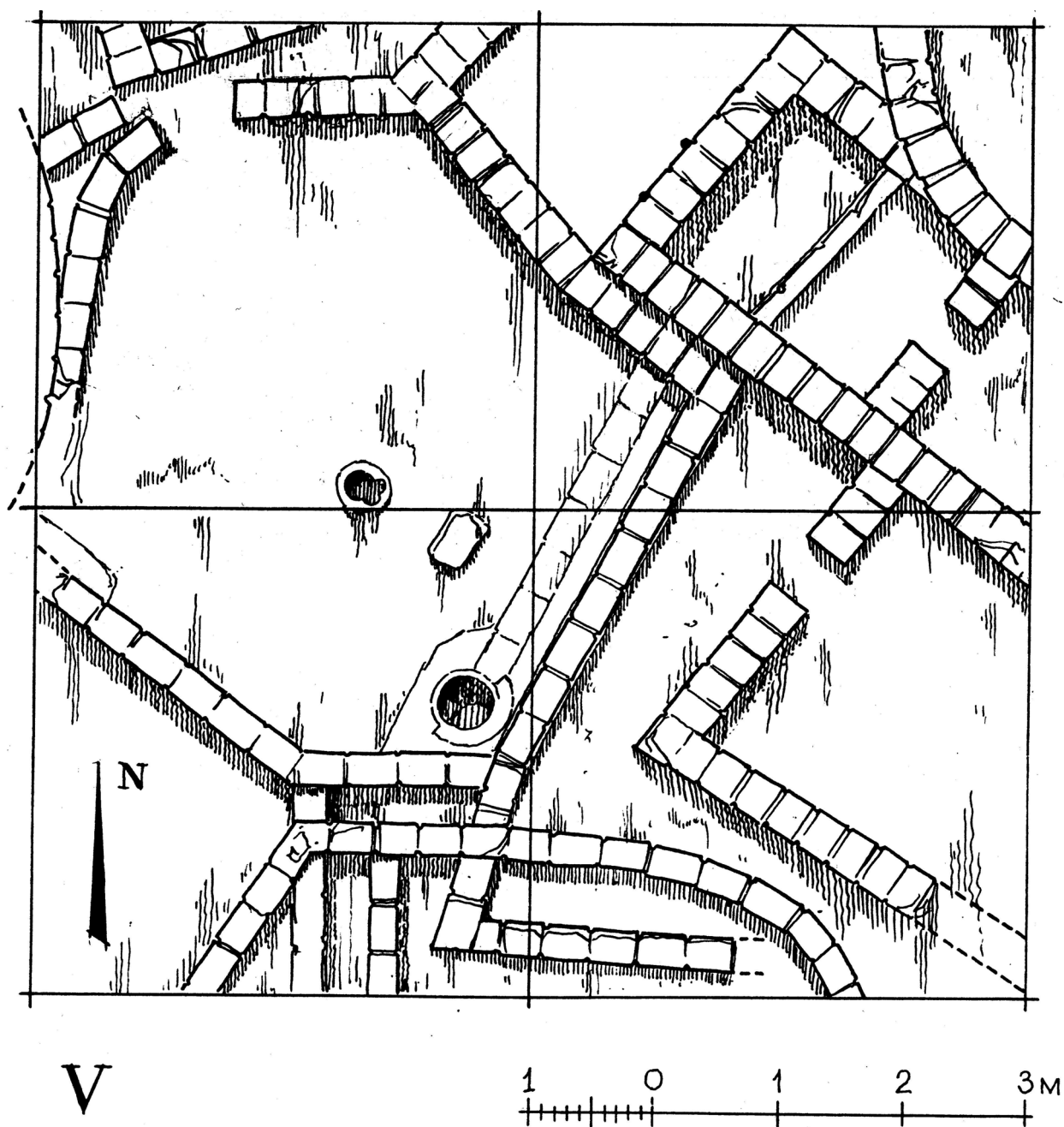


Figure 30

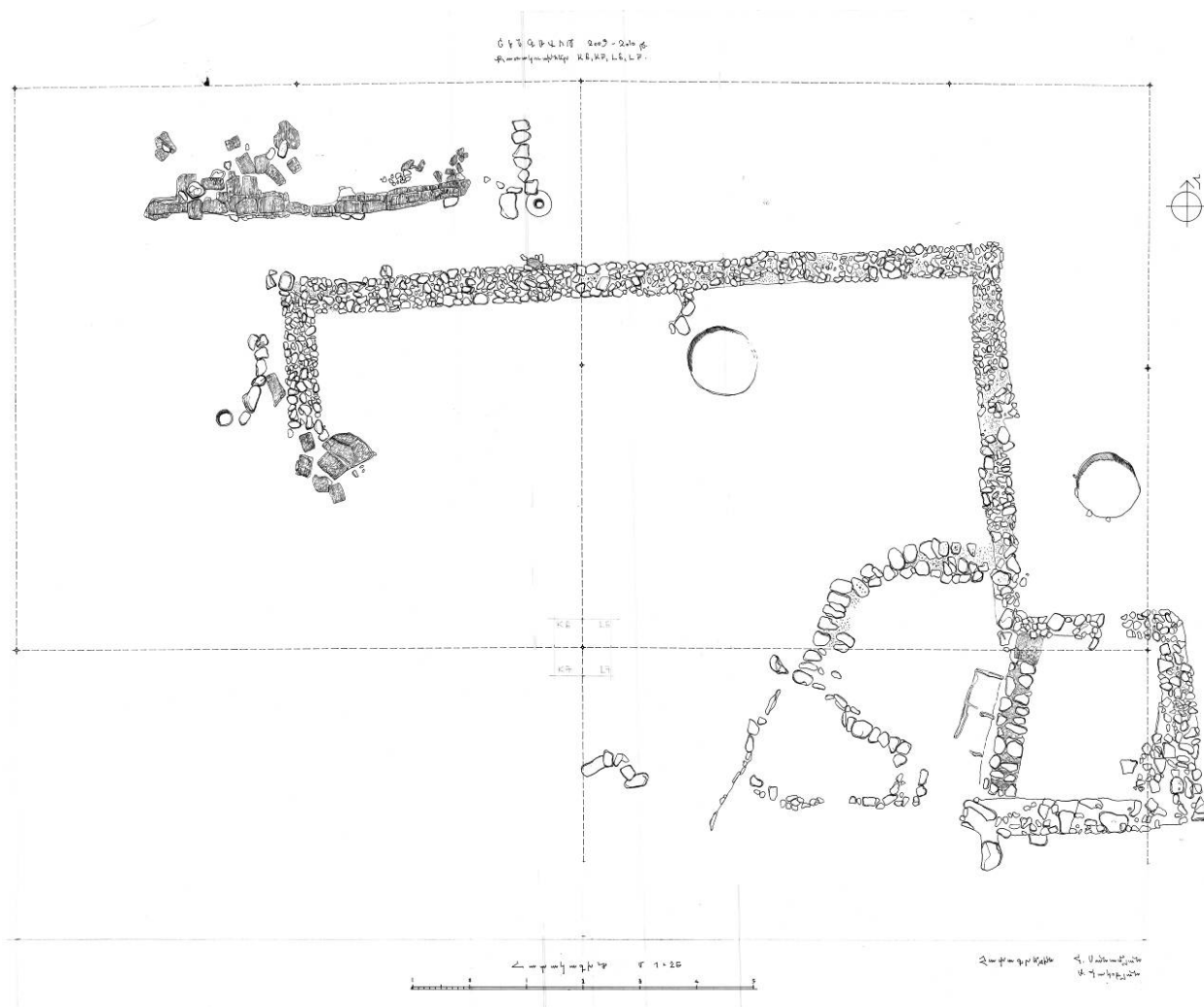


Figure 31

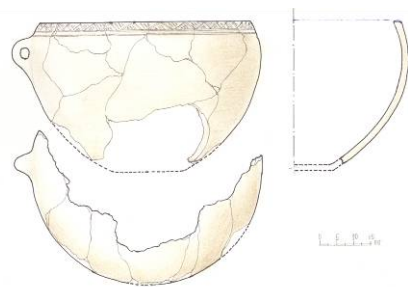


Figure 32

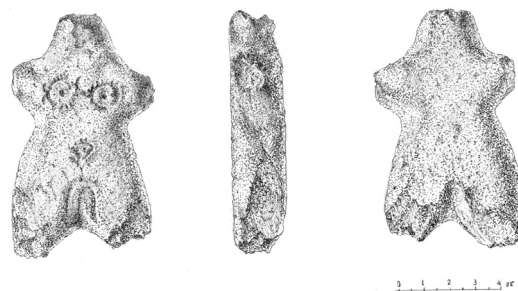


Figure 33



Figure 34



Figure 35



Figure 36



Figure 37 SHENGAVIT, TOMB N1

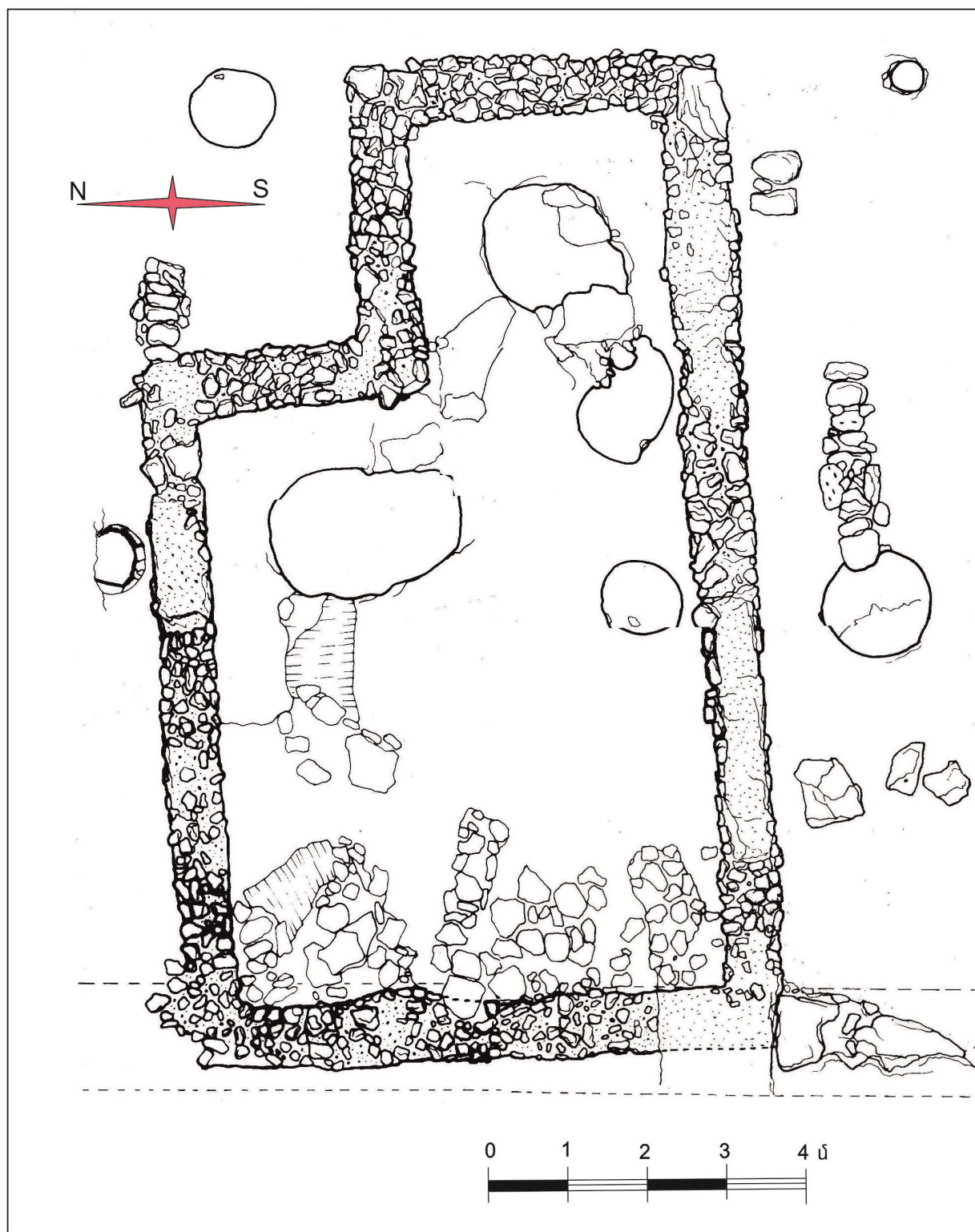


Figure 38

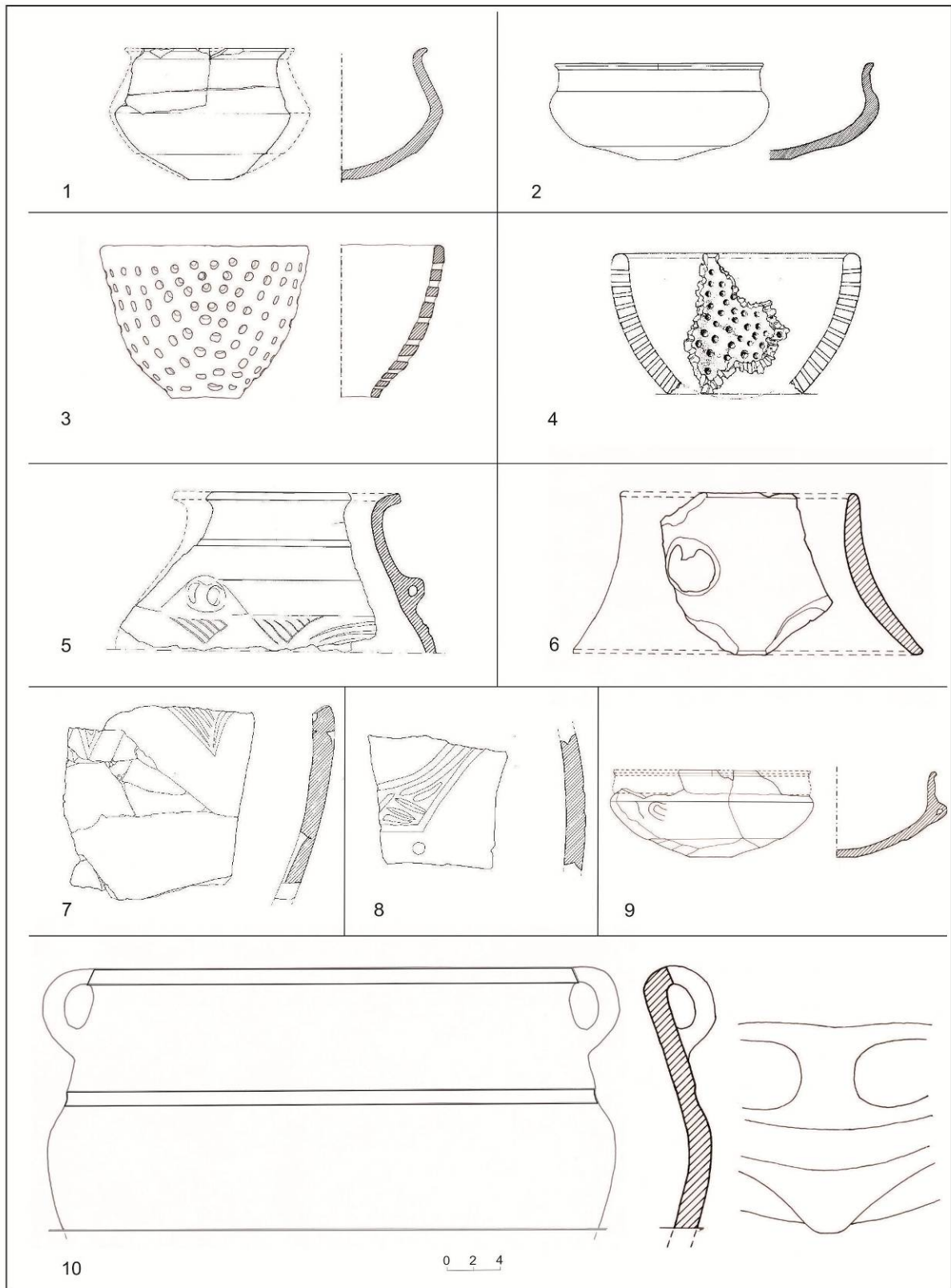


Figure 38

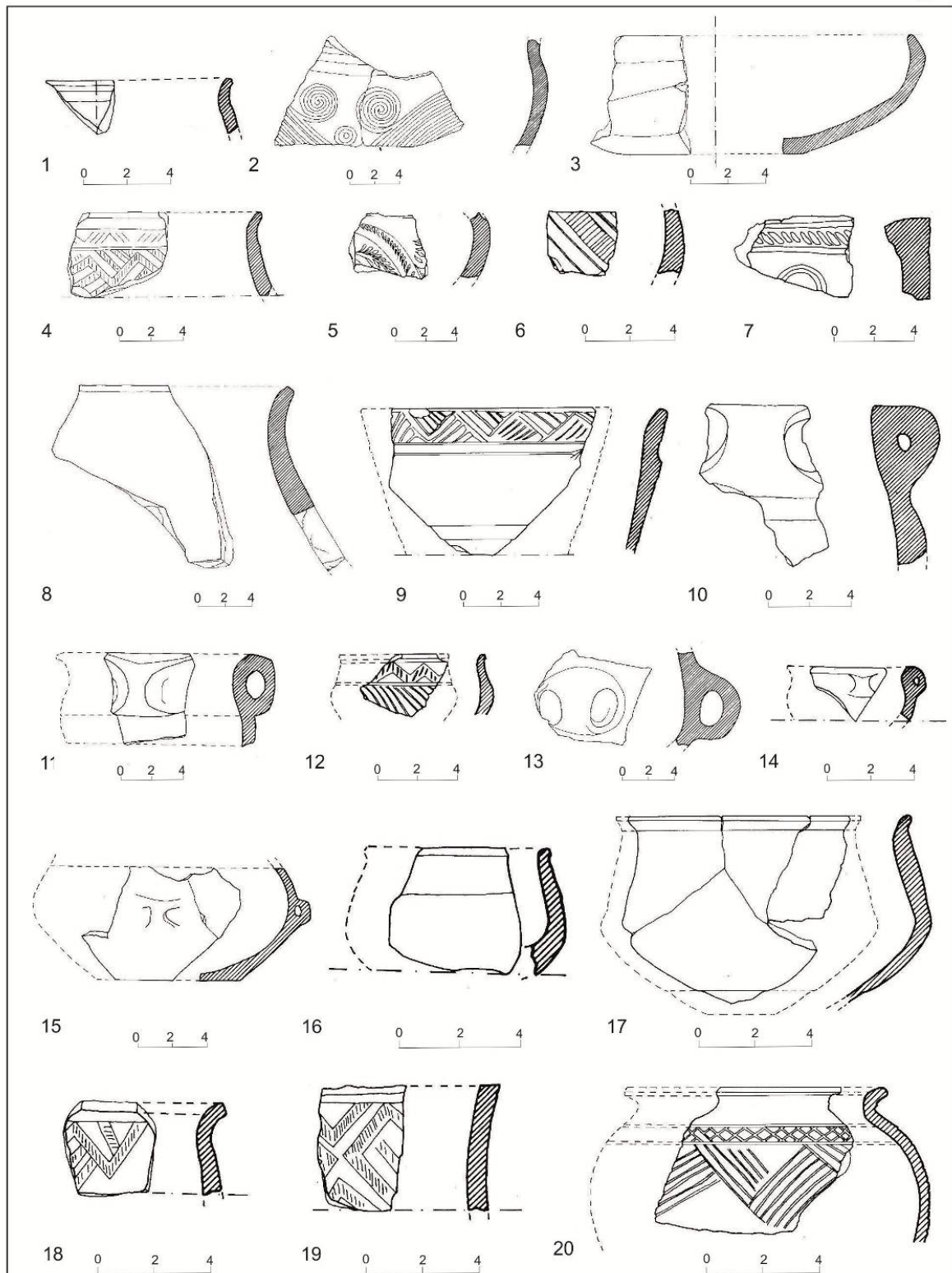
Image 1



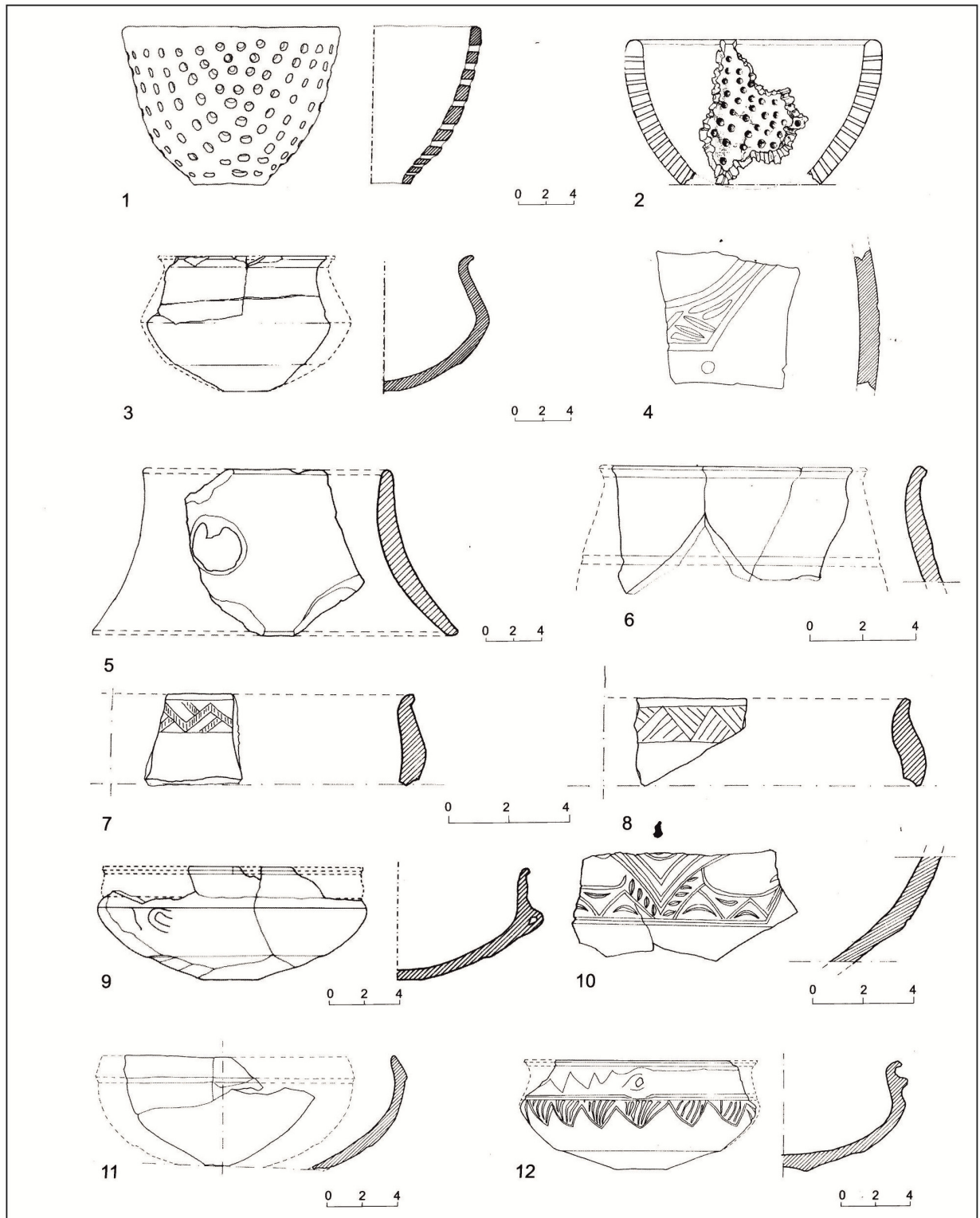
Shengavit; 2012, the plan of Square I:14 (measurement by H. Sanamyan, 2012).



Shengavit; clay tools, black and white drawings of applied and ritual vessels 1) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24000, 2) 2012, Square M:5, Room N1, locus 24027, 3) 2012, Square M:5, Room N2, locus 24004, 4) 2004, necropolis, Square B:14/15, locus 002, 5) 2012, Square M:5, 6) 2012, Square M:5, Room N2, locus 24004, 7) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24029 8) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24000, 9) 2012, Square M:5, Room N2, loci 24004, 24008 and 24011, 10) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24029.



Shengavit; black and white drawings of clay vessels 1) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24023, 2) 2012, Square M:5, 3) 2012, Square M:5, loci 24004 and 24008, 4) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24001, 5) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24003, 6) 2012, locus 24025, 7) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24001, 8) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24000, 9) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24001, 10) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24014, 11) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24008, 12) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24003, 13) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24001, 14) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24011, 15) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24001.



Shengavit 1) 2012, Square M:5, Room N2, from the pit, locus 24004, 2) 2004, necropolis, Square B:14/15, locus 002, 3) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24000, 4) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24011, 5) 2012, Square M:5, Room N2, locus 24004, 6) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24003, 7) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24000 8) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24001, 9) 2012, Square M:5, Room N2, loci 24004, 24008 and 24011, 10) 2012, Square M:5, locus 24004, 11) 2012, Square M:5, loci 24004 and 24008, 12) 2004, necropolis, locus 11006.



Image 5