

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE CLASSICAL SETTLEMENT AVAN-ARINJ IN
THE NORTH-EASTERN PART OF EREVAN
(2nd century BC - 1st century AD)**

Demirkhanyan A. H.

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In studying the history of Armenia, the discovery of the classical Armenian settlement Avan designated a chronological link between the monuments of the Bronze Age (Shengavit) (4th-3rd millennia BC) located in the territory of Erevan, those of the periods of the Van (Erebuni-Erevan: Arin-Berd, Teishebaini - Karmir-Blur) (8th-7th centuries BC) and the Haykazun-Ervanduni kingdoms (6th-3rd centuries BC) on the one hand, and on the other hand, the late antique period (Arin-Berd, Karmir-Blur, Hushablur, Tsitsernakaberd, etc.) (2nd century BC - 3rd century AD) and further. It is an important link for the study of the cultural and historical continuity of archaeological sites on the territory of Erevan.

Thanks to political independence the Armenian kingdom in the epoch of the Artashesian (a branch of the Haykazun-Ervanduni dynasty) experienced significant social and economic and cultural rise in the period of the reign of Artashes I (189-160 BC) and in particular that of Tigran II the Great (95- 55 BC). In the period of the reign of the King of Kings Tigran the Great Armenia turned into the strongest state of Western Asia, becoming one of the highly developed countries of the ancient world. On the basis of its traditional culture, Armenia, since ancient times characterized by the unity of the Armenian language throughout the country¹, creatively adopted the material and spiritual impulses of Hellenism.

At the present stage of the archaeological study of such multi-layered monuments of Armenia as its ancient capital cities and the major cities of Armavir, Ervandashat, Artashat, Tigranakert in Agdznik, the walled city of Tigranakert in Artsakh, Dvin (urban-type settlement or fortress-sanctuary), large ancient settlements Mokhrablur, Kartchaghbyur, Shirakavan, and others, the interpretation of each new discovered monument is important for the creation of an extensive and objective historical and cultural panorama of the era in the chain of previous and subsequent developments of material and spiritual culture.

The ancient settlement of the period of the Artashesian was found in 1980 in the north-east of Erevan, in the territory of the modern urban district Avan-Arinj, within the boundaries of the village Avan previously located here, which in written sources was for the first time mentioned by an Armenian historian of the 7th century Sebeos².

The archaeological study of the monument (table 1) revealed two major cultural layers with a total capacity of more than three meters, chronologically reflecting different

¹ Strabo resuming his description on political state of Armenia, notes: ὥστε πάντας ὁμογλώττους εἶναι (Strabo, XI, 14, 5).

² Սեբէոս, Պատմութիւն Սեբէոսի, աշխատասիրութեամբ Գ. Վ. Արգարյանի, Երևան, 1979, ԺԹ, ԼԳ:

periods of the settlement (table 9). Judging from the data of the stratigraphic pits, the lower layer, with a capacity of 0.5 m, which lies on the subsoil with a three-meter mark from the current surface, represents the Bronze Age culture of Armenia. The layer contains a variety of obsidian artifacts - inserts of composite sickles, knife-like plates, stone cores, and a fragment of a bicornuate hearth stand related to the cult of the bull and fire. Particularly expressive is an oval sickle insert with flat retouch, characteristic of the 3rd millennium BC, found also in the 2nd millennium BC. The ceramic material, marked in particular with a characteristic fragment of a thick-walled black-glazed vessel with a brown lining, is interesting not only because of the brown horn-type hearth stand with an unglazed surface, dating back to the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC, but also because of the finds of fragments of flat mobile hearths with the ratio of the vertical sides to the bottom diameter of 1:3, the tradition of making which can be traced up to the antique period. A white round discoid paste bead with a diameter of 3.1mm was found as well. The thickness of this cultural layer, growing to the bank of the river Getar gradually decreases at the foot of the flank of the hill (table 2).

The cultural layer, dating back from the 2nd century BC to the 1st century AD, which in some places reaches the power of over two meters, is separated from the above-mentioned Bronze Age layer by a small sterile interlayer. At the same time, in the main excavation sites, located in the northern, southern and western parts of the studied area of the settlement found were construction remains of structures, accompanied by a typical for this time rich archaeological material (tables 7, 8).

In the first, northern excavation site with an area of 250 square meters, two building horizons were discovered (table 9). The one of a later period contained remains of the wall foundation, made of several rows of ragged stones (basalt and tuff) and attached with clay mortar with the method "medius" with two-testaceous masonry, i.e. the wall bases are with a double-sided lining with intermediate backing (table 4, Fig. a, b; tables 10, 11).

The glass bead in the form of a teardrop, discovered in contact with the lower layer and the subsoil, finds its analogies in Artashat and Dvin, dating back to the 2nd-1st centuries BC. According to a coin - Parthian drachma of the late 80s- the first half of the 70s BC (table 15, a)³, the jar-burial (tables 16, 31) in the lower building horizon is dated no earlier than that time⁴.

The archaeological material of both building horizons presented mostly by fragments of ceramics and building remnants is distinguished by its uniformity, which indicates a relatively narrow chronological interval (2nd-1st centuries BC - the first half of the 1st century AD), uniting the periods of construction. It should be emphasized that such uniformity of the ceramic material is characteristic of many Armenian monuments of this era, which complicates a more precise dating of the layers. G.A. Tiratsyan emphasizes this in connection with the stratigraphy of Armavir: "The repeatedly

³ In the reconstructed legend of the coin may be read: Arsakes Theopator Euergetus (table 17).

⁴ Խաչատրյան Ժ., Սիսիանի դամբարանը (մ.թ.ա. I դ. երկրորդ կես), Երևան, 2009, աղ. XIV, 10:

observed uniformity and homogeneity of the archaeological material from the upper horizons of the Hellenistic layer to the lower ones makes such task very complicated"⁵.

The second excavation site with an area of 450 square meters was situated in the south of the studied area of the settlement, 20m from the artificial mound crossing the bottom of the hill (table 12). The cultural layer of the classical period decreases here, reaching a capacity of about one meter⁶. The excavations of the cultural layers of this period have revealed the wall foundations, built of roughly axed tuff and basalt debris (table 5, a, b).

At the same place were found three toroidal bases made of orange tuff. One of the bases is distinguished by the accuracy of its hewing and correct proportions (table 13). Such a base was found near the first one. Toroidal bases of this type starting from the 2nd century BC are widely spread in the territory of Armenia. They are known from the excavations in Artashat, Armavir, Dvin, Mokhrablur, Shirakavan, Beniamin and other monuments⁷.

In the northwestern part of the settlement in the ruined areas were found several more bases of toroidal type, different from the above-mentioned findings with roughness of surface treatment and materials - tuff in dark colours⁸.

The third - western excavation site with a total area of 100 square meters, near the left bank of the dry riverbed at the edge of the present pond, contained a good view of the wall foundation line, crossing it from north to south. The remains of this wall, which was revealed as a result of soil loss caused by the pond water, the level of which changed frequently, was traced for over 50 meters. The partly preserved width of the foundation reached 1.2-1.3m, narrowing to 0.7m and a little deviating from a strict straight line.

Excavations have revealed damaged collapses of the foundations and rich ceramic material; the cultural layer having the power of about 1 meter. The sterile surface is fixed at a depth of 1.2m. The cultural layer of the ancient period can be traced directly from the surface, acquiring a character of ceramic collapse at a depth of 0.2m and sharply differing from the layers of the southern and northern excavation sites by

⁵ Тирацян Г. А. , Культура древней Армении. VI в. до н.э. - III в. н.э. (по археологическим данным), Ереван, 1988, с. 85. See also Խաչատրյան ժ.Դ., Կանեցյան Ա.Գ., Արտաշատի VIII բլրի շերտագրությունը, Լրաբեր հասարակական գիտությունների, 9, 1974, էջ 79-80:

⁶ The Bronze Age stratifications are presented by occasional finds of obsidian artifacts directly in contact with the subsoil, which is explained by the morphology of the terrain.

⁷ Тирацян Г. А. , Культура древней Армении, с. 121. Խաչատրյան ժ., Արտաշատի VII բլրի 1973-1975 թթ. պեղումների արդյունքները, Լրաբեր հասարակական գիտությունների, 1978, 8, էջ 71: Քոչարյան Գ.Գ., Դվին III. Դվինը անտիկ դարաշրջանում, Երևան, 1951, էջ 44-45: Խաչատրյան Հ., Բենիամինի անտիկ դաստակերտի հեղինիստական ժամանակաշրջանի ճարտարապետությունը, Գիտական աշխատություններ, III, Գյումրի, 2000, էջ 33-35, աղ. I, 1-2:

⁸ About toroidal bases see Пичикян И., Традиции Востока в древнеармянской архитектуре, Второй международный симпозиум по армянскому искусству, Сборник докладов, Ереван 1981, т. 1, с. 258-261; Ibid. Торовидные базы (происхождение, хронология), Культура и искусство народов Средней Азии в древности и средневековье, Москва, 1979, с. 57-61.

the level of richness with ceramic material, wherein not differing by the characteristics of the material itself (various types of dining room, kitchen and household utensils). This layer with a capacity of 1m decreases to around 1.2m, forming a dense, as if a molded mixture of ceramic residues, osteological material and river sand.

The wall foundations revealed by the excavations, the architectural material discovered on the surface, as well as general observations made throughout the preserved area of the settlement, viewed ubiquitously, especially in the ruined areas, the traces of construction activity point to a continuous development and architecture of the territory. Dwellings obviously having flat and vaulted wooden ceilings may have adjoined the main walls. The roof rested on wooden support-pillars, standing at the toroidal and simplified disc-type bases. Built by the method of bicornuate technique, i.e. with two-sided lining, the wall foundations could carry the laying of mud-bricks or other building material with clay daubing, representing the traditional methods of construction. At the bases of the foundation drainage outlets in the form of rectangular openings were made for sewage disposal (table 6, a, b). Separate bases were strengthened from the outside, with the second row of stone masonry⁹.

The material culture discovered during the excavations, is represented by a rich collection of various ceramics, the analysis of which indicates the forms characteristic of the monuments of Armenia of the ancient period (Armavir, Artashat, Hatsavan, Oshakan, Mokhrablur, Kartchaghbyur, Dvin, Martuni, Shirakavan, Beniamin, Gandzak, etc.). This is a set of household, dining-room and kitchen utensils - different pythoi, flasks, pitchers¹⁰, bowls, pialas, cups, plates, dishwares, vessels with prominent outlets, pots, flat-bottomed brazier-hearths, lamps, etc. (tables 29, 34, 45).

With particular variety distinguished are the reconstructed forms of jars, revealing differences in surface treatment as well (tables 40, 41). To cutlery samples belong large jugs - *oenochoe*, the necks of which have rims with outlets in the form of a trefoil having a rounded or pointed shape (table 40, fig. 4, 5). The main trends characterizing the material culture of Armenia of the ancient period, traditional and Hellenistic, are again

⁹ During the study of the 1st northern excavation site a fragment of a ceramic water pipe was discovered. If this finding is dated by the ancient period it may be possible to suggest that it was an indicator of the existence of a water supply system in the Avan settlement. The pipe diameter is 18 cm., the wall thickness is 0.8cm. A small widening of the tube towards its base is noticeable. The surface is light brown. In its shape the fragment of the pipe of the Avan settlement resembles those from the ancient settlement of Garni, as well as from Artashat (Аракелян Б. Н., Гарни II, Ереван, 1957, с. 54, рис. 22; Խաչատրյան ժ. Դ., Արտաշատ, էջ 117, նկ. 39, 1).

¹⁰ Flasks are referred to the ancient Eastern forms of ceramics. In their form, principles of painting and, finally, chronologically flasks of the Avan settlement are similar to the analogous vessels discovered in all the ancient settlements of Armenia. These vessels have a rounded, flattened (up to the half of the 1st century AD inclusively), or (later) a globular body (table 39). The flask surfaces having bright colors are as a rule painted with dark and bright concentric circles (table 65). In the first half of 1st century BC there were also flasks with a globular shape of the body, with the well-polished surface covered with a thick red engobe and which persisted in the 2nd century BC as well. (Խաչատրյան ժ. Դ., Արտաշատ II. Անտիկ դամբարանադաշտեր, Երևան, 1981, էջ 121-123; Тер-Мартirosов Ф. И., Фляги как торговая тара, Проблемы античной истории и культуры, т. 2, Ереван, 1979, с. 409-414.). The collection of fragments of the flasks of the Avan settlement is presented by their both types. The simultaneous existence of these two types of flasks in the upper horizons of the monument emphasizes the chronological framework of the existence of the settlement.

clearly traced in the specifics of the design of these vessels. In particular, a variety of one-handled jugs with longitudinally emarginated handles, rims in the form of a trefoil and globular bodies dominate in the ceramics of the period of the Kingdom of Van (Ararat-Urartu). These vessels served as the basis for the development of this type of ceramics in Armenia until the late Middle Ages. In Avan, in particular in the upper horizons of the settlement, a fragment of the outlet of a small *oenochoe* decorated with discoid moldings in two points of the curve of the rim, perhaps in imitation of metal samples, was discovered (table 40, fig. 5). A typological parallel was found in Garni¹¹. This is a vessel with a brown, polished surface, decorated with a wide red stripe in the upper half of the body. The Avan *oenochoe* differs from the famous red-polished samples in the gray colour of the crock surface.

In the Greek world this type of pottery had widely been spread since the beginning of the 7th century BC, dating back, as we see, to the ceramics of Crete of the 9th-8th centuries BC. Researchers perceive the Greek influence in those samples of *oenochoes* of Armenia, the outlet part of the rims of which has a round shape¹². In the same samples, which have a pointed outlet, the influence of the prototype of the period of the Kingdom of Van is perceived. The pitchers-*oenochoes* discovered in Avan illustrate the combination of deep Armenian traditions and the Greek influence.

A fragment of the side of the body of a large closed vessel (tables 43, 44), the light brown surface of which was well glazed, polished and covered with rich paintings (table 66) can presumably be attributed to the collection of pitchers found during the excavations of the Avan settlement. Only the polychrome painting on fragments of vessels from Armavir shows a certain affinity to it¹³.

In the typological sense we can single out the fragment of a black-polished pitcher with a straight neck, going down to the horizontal shoulders with a wide, extending from the neck, flattened handle, the lower edge of which, bent at a right angle, is as if glued to the surface of the shoulder. This form of handle suggests imitation of metal samples. The same conclusion can also be referred to the shape of the large pitcher, the fragment of the neck of which, with a bent, L-shaped profiled rim has preserved traces of the red engobed polished surface.

A separate group is formed by large two or one-handled pitchers with bright orange crocks and surfaces covered with yellowish-greenish plastering (table 40₁₋₃). They find analogues in Artashat, which date back to the beginning of the new era¹⁴. In Avan fragments of two vessels were discovered as well, one of which is slightly larger than the other. A third vessel, typologically close to the first two, differs in that it has two symmetrical flattened handles directly extending from the rim. The outer flattened

¹¹ Хачатрян Ж. Д., Гарни V, Античный некрополь, Ереван, 1976, табл. XXIII, 1.

¹² Тирацян Г. А., Культура древней Армении, с. 119.

¹³ Мартиросян А. А., Аргиштихинили, Ереван, 1974, рис. 23а.

¹⁴ Խաչատրյան Ժ. Դ., Արտաշատ II, տախտ. XI, 1:

surface of the handle is covered with painting with thin red lines. Fragments of similar vessels were discovered in the ancient settlement of Kosh¹⁵.

In the collection of ceramics of the Avan settlement a special place is held by fragments of small elegant jugs differing in the thoroughness of making and high quality of surface polishing. We can single out the fragments of necks of two thin-walled jugs with complex profiled rims, one of which has a red, and the other a black-polished surface (table 63₇).

Two fragments belong to the light brown pitchers with elongated necks adorned with small-ribbed profiling of the surface - *cannelures* (table 63₅). Another fragment presents a small jug with a straight elongated neck and a bent rounded rim. The surface of this jug is covered with a light pink coating (table 63₆). In the variety of methods and forms of surface treatment of pitchers and their ornamentation we can single out two fragments of vessel walls, the ornament of which was done with the method of polishing - local technology having a long tradition in Armenia: applying a polished ornament was widespread since the Late Bronze Age (table 71₁₋₃).

The handles of pitchers also provide certain information about the techniques of ornamentation (table 62). In one of them the ornament in the form of alternating oblique shaded segments is applied to the surface, in another case, the ornament of sunflower seed-formed type (table 42) is placed in the hollow - at the bottom of the groove passing along the outer surface of the handle. The depth of the groove is 0.5cm and the width of the handle is 2.5cm.

We should especially mention the discovery, for the first time confirming the fact of branding ceramics in Armenia, evidenced since the days of the Kingdom of Van (table 62₁). It is a handle of a small brown jug which has an imprint of a rectangular stamp depicting a dog (table 25₂).

A separate group of the household ceramics of the Avan settlement are pythoi which are conventionally divided mainly into three types (tables 32, 33-35, 69).

We should also mention the discovery of the fragment of a large brown-clay two-handled pythos (the thickness of the crock - 1.3cm), the swollen globular body of which was painted in red, with traces of polishing. It is decorated with a broad ornamental belt in the form of circularly repeated groups of at least three inscribed red-linear chevrons, with a descended top and at the top adjoining the red encircling stripe with a thickness of 1cm, beautifully standing out against the light brown unpainted background of the vessel surface (table 32).

There were discovered also cranial bones from jar-burials with traces of trepanation operations (table 28).

A special place in the ceramic material of the settlement under study has a hand

¹⁵ Օհանյան Հ. Ա., Շամիրամի անտիկ ժամանակաշրջանի խեցեղենը, Բանբեր Երևանի համալսարանի, 1989, 2, էջ 217, աղ. VII, 7:

churn, reused as a vessel for the inhumation burial (table 30₁; table 31₂)¹⁶. In the vessel, together with the remains of a decomposed skeleton various items were revealed. The character of the items - beads and children's bracelets - allows us to conclude that remains of a little girl were buried in the churn. The churn is a pythos with an egg-shaped, little elongated body. The neck is lost at the base of the neck. At a height of 37.5cm from the bottom there is a through hole, designed with a small protruding ring-shaped outlet with a diameter of 4 cm, retreating from the surface of the vessel for 1 cm, designed to test the readiness of the oil and for the outlet of the fluid, formed as a result of churning. The surface of the Avan churn is light brown, well-smoothed and polished.

As the excavations of monuments showed, hand churns were known in the Armenian Highland since the Late Bronze Age, and existed later as well¹⁷. According to ethnographic data, hand churns of the same form are presently used in the rural areas both in Armenia and in the neighboring regions.

A considerable number of the ceramic fragments discovered during the excavations are *pots* made both on the potter's wheel and hand-fashioned (tables 36-37; 70-71). Some of the vessels are decorated with incised ornament motifs of wavy, comb-shaped or sunflower seed-shaped type. We found two intact vessels belonging to dinnerware and functionally designed, obviously, for the storage of vegetable oil.

A special group is formed by *vessels with a draining spout*, which are considered to be vessels for milk (table 38; table 64₁). As a rule, they have a bloated body with a wide neck and a thickened, outwardly bent rim. The spout designed in the form of a trefoil is attached under the vessel's rim. The diameter of the neck of such vessels reaches 26cm. The surface can have different shades - from red to tan, and it is usually covered with engobe and polished. In Avan there was discovered a fragment of such a pitcher with a bright red high gloss polished surface, enlarged size, close to the famous vessel from Armavir¹⁸.

In Armenia, *drinking bowls* with a wide, outwardly bent rim should be referred to deeply traditional forms of ceramic production dating back to the Kingdom of Van epoch. Cups-bowls of the Ervanduni and Artashesian periods are the characteristic form of ceramic production, occurring in a wide range of the monuments under study (Jrarat, Berd, Norashen, Argishtikhinili, Kartchaghbyur, Hatsavan, Oshakan, Garni, Armavir,

¹⁶ The vessel was laid vertically in the immediate vicinity of the wall foundation in the western part of the excavation site. The burial in a hand churn, found also in the ancient cemetery of Oshakan in a similar (in shape and size) vessel, allowed the reconstruction of the missing pieces of the Avan churn.

¹⁷ Мартirosян А. А. , Раскопки в Головино, Ереван, 1954, табл. XIX., с. 89. Fragments of hand churns were found in Artashat during the excavation of the hills I and VII, dating back to the 2nd century BC - 2nd century AD, as well as in Armavir, Oshakan, Mokhrablur and Garni (Խաչատրյան Ժ. Դ. , Արտաշատի VII բլրի 1973-1975 թթ. պեղումների արդյունքները, էջ 61-62, տախ. I, 12: Есаян С. А., Калантарян А. А. , Ошакан I, Основные результаты раскопок 1971-1983 гг., Ереван, 1988, табл. XL VI, 1).

¹⁸ Тирацян Г. А., Культура древней Армении, табл. XXXVII.

Artashat, Dvin, etc.)¹⁹. In the Avan settlement cup-bowls represent one of the most common types of dinnerware as well. We can often see bright red samples, which, like the black ones, are distinguished by the high quality of surface polishing. Some samples are painted near the rim, often from within, and sometimes from the outside, with black concentric *ovo/los* against a red background (table 67). In some cases the oval pattern is replaced by an ornamental plant belt.

Functionally also, obviously parallel to the preceding, one of the most common forms of dinnerware in the classical Avan settlement are hemispherical cups - the so-called *Megara type* - combining borrowed forms with the local tradition of surface treatment (table 55₂). The cups are mostly covered with polychrome painting of dark concentric *ovo/los* against a light background, groups of which are embraced by double semi-circular belts of black and red. The *ovo/los* are combined with the floral motif that occurs on its own, completely ousting the previous one. There are some samples painted from within with solar ornaments. The cups are also decorated with lattice ornaments, sometimes covering the outside of the vessel as well. A separate group is formed by egg-shaped cups, richly decorated with polychrome painting of the external surface (table 55₁). The Avan findings complement the known collections of data of ceramic types, introducing their original features into the elements of painting (table 68).

To one of the most common types of ceramic dinnerware in the classical Avan settlement belong *bowls* as well, differing in their diversity and sizes (tables 46-54; 72-79). The form of the vessels themselves, as well as the modeling of the rim and periphery reveal connection both with the Armenian traditions, and with the features characteristic of the Hellenistic world. In addition to the above-mentioned bowls connected with the deep tradition of shaping of the local ceramic production, there are also those whose shape is directly borrowed from Greek pottery. Excavations revealed fragments of such a vessel, allowing to fully reconstruct its shape. It is an elegant deep cup-bowl, having a hemispherical body with a circular tray (table 57), turning at the top (with a gentle curve) into short sides with a winding modeling and rounded, slightly curved inward rim end (table 48₁). From the outside the transition line of the body into the rim is marked with a shallow circular groove. The form of the cup-bowl is borrowed from the Greek ceramic production of the 3rd-1st centuries BC. Analogues are known, for example, among the red-lacquered ceramics of the Northern Black Sea coastal area of the 3rd-2nd centuries BC²⁰. Vessels of this type have been found in northern Bactria²¹. In Avan another fragment of a cup-bowl of a similar shape, but of a larger size was discovered. Bowls close in shape are known to us based on the materials of excavations in Artashat²².

¹⁹ Чарապետյան Ի. Ա., Հայաստանի նյութական մշակույթը մ.թ.ա. VI-IV դդ., Երևան, 2003, էջ 40, աղ. 26: Тирацян Г. А., Культура древней Армении, с.12.

²⁰ Археология СССР, Античные государства Северного Причерноморья, Москва, 1984, табл. CXXXVII, рис. 61.

²¹ Археология СССР, Древнейшие государства Кавказа и Средней Азии, Археология СССР. Москва, 1985, табл. CIX, рис.16.

²² Խաչատրյան Ժ. Դ., Արտաշատ II, նկ. 28, 9, նկ. 37, 1:

Of particular interest is a *fragment of a painted vessel*, analogues of which are extremely rare in the ceramic material of Armenia of the ancient period (table 55₃). Until now only seven samples have been known. Among them two intact vessels and four fragments were found at different times during the excavations of Armavir²³. Another piece of such a vessel was discovered in Artashat²⁴. G. Tiratsyan who first published all the known samples, describes them as flat-bottomed vessels with uniformly expanding walls, elongated body, low, not wide neck and slightly bent rim. The vessels are thick-walled, of uneven peculiar baking, made of poor sedimentary clay having an admixture of sand and small pebbles. These massive heavy vessels, resembling in their form a vase for flowers, are notable for their two-colour painting. The surface is covered with a thick layer of dark red paint and is polished. The Avan find is presented by a fragment of the board section of the body with a preserved segment of the lower belt made with a yellowish-whitish paint. The fragment was discovered during the study of the third, western excavation site. The discovery of this fragment allows to prolong the dating of the vessels of the type under study from the 4th-3rd centuries BC (Armavir, Artashat) to the 2nd-1st centuries BC, which apparently had a cult purpose.

One fragment belongs to the thin-walled *amphorisk*. Its bottom with a pointed end was found. The surface is polished, light brown (table 63₈).

The fragment of the handle with a characteristic ledge at the edge belongs to a small kantharos-type vial with a light brown polished surface. There are numerous and various finds of simple moulded *lamps* of light brown, reddish and dark brown, greyish-brown and black colours (tables 61, 84).

We should especially mention the extensive collection of wide flat-bottomed dishes with a low circular tray and low ledge protuberant from the outside (table 56). The surface of the dishes is covered with red-brown engobe followed by finishing with a polishing technique. They are made from good sedimentary clay on a potter's wheel. The elegance of form, the high quality of surface treatment, the brightness of its colouring, evoking a feeling of festivity, certainly satisfied the tastes of certain layers of society. That is why it was normal to find the dishes²⁵ in the most important center of ancient Armenia - in its capital cities, Armavir and Artashat, in Garni - the summer residence of Armenian kings, in a number of settlements (Mokhrablur, Dvin, Shirakavan and Avan-Arinj) situated close to the most important international trade route²⁶.

A significant place in the ceramic material of the Avan settlement is also occupied by fragments of large massive *portable brazier-hearths* with a flat bottom and wide,

²³ Тирацян Г. А., Об одной группе расписных сосудов из Армавира (Армения), Советская археология, 1971, 2. с. 246-249.

²⁴ Նախշքարյան Ա. Ֆ., Հայաստանի հեղինիստական ժամանակաշրջանի գունազարդ խեցեղենի զարդամոտիվները (Թեկնածուական ատենախոսություն), Երևան, 2003, էջ 52:

²⁵ These dishes imitate the samples of the so-called models of "Pergamon ceramics".

²⁶ Խաչատրյան Ժ. Դ., Արտաշատ II, էջ 110-111, նկ. 37,8, 9,14,15. Քոչարյան Գ. Գ., Դվին III, էջ 48:

vertically spaced sides (tables 58-59; 80). Such hearths were known in the Armenian Highland since the 3rd millennium BC. Perhaps they were used for heating of dwellings²⁷. However, the complete absence of soot on the interior surface rather indicates their use as stone - bakings for a type of bread called "karehats" ("stone-bread")²⁸. The brazier-hearths had a round (oval) or a rectangular shape. One fragment presents the upper part of a ceramic furnace - *tonir*. The ready-made products - grain and flour, could be stored in large and medium-sized pythoi, in the walls or bottom of which ventilation holes were opened for the preservation of products. For baking bread pastilles flat-bottomed brazier-hearths could be used. The bread was baked in clay tonirs, a fragment of one of which was found during the excavations.

Summing up the general results of the study of the ceramic material from the excavations of the classical settlement Avan, it can again be emphasized that the presented collection of the items of ceramic production illustrates the continuity in the development of ceramic art in Armenia for millennia, revealing, on the one hand, traditional local basis and on the other - elements infused in the Hellenistic period, - a conclusion repeatedly noted by researchers. There is no doubt that many ceramic samples were products of the local pottery industry²⁹. A prerequisite for its prosperity was the existence of local natural resources - excellent clay and river sand necessary for the manufacture of quality products and most importantly - the long traditions of Armenian ceramic art.

A number of finds illustrate the existence of another kind of artisan production - weaving. These are diverse and numerous round clay *spindle whorls* - heads of wooden rods - spindles for wool yarn (table 85₂). The yarn was used for embossing fabrics. For this purpose vertical weaving looms were used, the plummets of which were found during the excavation of the settlement (table 85₁).

In the Avan settlement were found stone mill tools - grinding stones, with the help of which grain milling was done for getting flour (table 83₁₋₃). The main type of mill used by the residents of the settlement was the so-called boat-shaped grinding stone, revealed as a whole and in fragments. A classical grinding stone of this type, found in the settlement, is made of porous basalt and is comprised of a massive lower stone, having a slightly concave, oval shape resembling a boat; and of the upper rubbing stone also having an oval shape, with flattened lower and protuberant upper surfaces. Grinding stones of a similar design are characteristic of a wide range of ancient societies and were used for thousands of years. A statue is known depicting the process of grain grinding, found during the excavations of monuments of the dynastic Egypt. In Armenia, the stone grinding stones were used from ancient times until the end

²⁷ Կարապետյան Ի. Ա., Հայաստանի նյութական մշակույթը մ.թ.ա. VI-IV դդ., էջ 42-43, աղ. 29, 5:

²⁸ Тер-Мартirosов Ф. И., Керамика эллинистической Армении как исторический источник, Автореферат диссертации кандидата исторических наук, Ереван, 1984, с. 15.

²⁹ The excavations revealed potter's tools - *stone polishers* for smoothing and surface treatment of the products on a potter's wheel (table 86). They have various forms - round, oblong, triangular; different sizes and are made of different materials - tuff, gravel, sandstone, limestone.

of the first millennium BC. In the settlement another type of grinding stone was discovered, reflecting the process of evolution of improvement of this ancient tool, set in motion by a lever. As mentioned by B.N. Arakelyan, such grinding stones appeared in Armenia in the 4th-3rd centuries BC, and existed along with the archaic ones³⁰. A longitudinal cavity was made in the upper stone of the grinding stone for securing in place the horizontal, wooden arm, operated with one hand (table 83, fig. 3). This increased the working surface of the base on which one could move the upper stone along an arc within the boundaries of the semicircle. This led to a noticeable facilitation of the working process, a better quality of grinding and increase of working efficiency. Later this evolution led to the appearance of high-performance tools for grain grinding - circular millstones. The millstones, as well as the boat-shaped grinding stones and those with lever control, similar to the Avan finds, were found, e.g. during excavations in Artashat. They are typical of other monuments of Armenia of the classical period as well³¹. A grinding stone with a longitudinal tray for the lever was found in the Avan settlement during the study of the southern excavation site.

It is possible that to the tools for processing agricultural products also belonged the item made of porous basalt in the form of a truncated cone with a small central hollow in the upper surface, which could be used as a *mortar* for grain peeling and pounding and other household purposes (tables 60₁₋₂, 83₄).

One of the important artisanal works of the settlement was blacksmithing, the products of which were discovered during excavations, along with numerous finds of waste products. These were primarily objects made of iron, presented mainly by a collection of a variety of *knives*. The collection of *knives* includes five fragments and two intact objects. It should be noted that knives close in their form were found, in particular, during the excavations of ancient Garni³². Also *scissors*, *bars* and a *fragment of a nail* (table 81) have been found. The fragments of *scissors* should be referred to household objects made of iron (table 81₂). The former was found in a destroyed jar-burial where the silver drachma of Alexander the Great was found (table 15, b). The blade has a round shape. The end has no sharp edge and is also rounded. In Armenia finds of scissors close in their form belong to the inventory of jar-burials discovered in Garni, Artashat and other monuments. Another fragment of iron scissors was discovered in the cultural layer and differs from the former in the form of the blade having a straight back, round edge and pointed end.

Two bars, one of which has a square section and a preserved length of 6.6cm (table 81₁) refer to the collection of iron objects. They are most likely hefts of arrows or darts. It should be noted that the iron rods with a square cross-section are characteristic

³⁰ Аракелян Б. Н., Арташат 1, Ереван, 1982, с. 30-32. Խաչատրյան Ժ., Երկանքի առաջացումը ըստ Գառնիի պեղումներից հայտնաբերված նյութերի, Պատմա-բանասիրական հանդես, 1964, 1, էջ 264-274:

³¹ Խաչատրյան Ժ., op. cit.

³² Аракелян Б. Н. , Гарни II, с. 47-48, рис. 12а, 12б.

of hefts of this type of weapon. Long hefts of arrows were discovered in the monuments of the Ervanduni era. For example, in the settlement of Norashen arrows (darts) with a heft length of 7.5cm were found³³.

All of the above-mentioned items of iron were discovered during the study of cultural layers of the settlement and are the crafts of local blacksmithing (table 82). The development of this type of craft in the settlement is evidenced by numerous finds of iron slags and wastes of the processed iron ore.

Unlike the iron objects, many of which were found during the excavations of the premises near the wall foundations, bronze products were found mostly in the inventory of burial places. Their collection includes a variety of simple female ornaments and toiletries - *bracelets, rings, earrings, hair clips*. Besides, a *bronze fibula* and a small bronze bell were found (tables 26-27).

The bronze bracelet with a curved back belongs to the inventory of the infant jar-burial, for which a vessel-churn was used. The dimensions of the longitudinal and transverse diameters of the bracelet are 3 and 4 cm. The preserved end of the bracelet is flattened and cross decorative incisions can be detected. As can be seen, the ends of the bracelet were stylized as snake heads. Judging by the small size, the bracelet belonged to a child. The design of the end of the bracelet in the form of snake heads is associated with the early tradition of jewelry production of ancient Armenia. The second child bracelet from the same burial has a more simplified form - it is round, without a curve in the back, with ends slightly going behind each other. The third bronze bracelet was found in a room with a toroidal base in the cultural layers of the southern excavation site. It is made of a circular in the cross-section bronze wire and has a regular round shape. In the aforementioned infant jar-burial a collection of *bronze earrings* of fine bronze wire of circular cross-section, as well as a *bronze ring* were discovered.

Bronze pins for adorning the hair and clothing were found during the excavations of the premises of the northern and southern excavation sites; three items were found. They are made of bronze rods with a circular cross-section. Pins found in the Avan settlement are on the whole identical to the finds in other monuments of Armenia, sometimes revealing differences in the design of ends. It should be noted that in addition to the metal hairpins, bone pins with shaped heads were used as well. Such a *bone pin* was discovered in the Avan settlement as well (table 26₇).

A *bronze fibula* was found there, as well - a fastener in the shape of a lyre (table 26₁). It has a semi-circular shape with a wide back - a flattened oval cover sheet. The fibulas are considered a certain social indicator as they were clothing accessories of city-dwellers, as were fasteners for securing the capes - *chlamydes*³⁴. They were used by ordinary residents of urban type settlements as well, along with button-fasteners. Bronze fibulas have been found in a number of Armenian monuments of the Hellenistic period, but they are relatively rare. Fibulas with leaf-shaped oval sheets are

³³ Կարապետյան Ի.Ա., Հայաստանի նյութական մշակույթը մ.թ.ա. VI-IV դդ., աղ. 40:

³⁴ Хачатрян Ж. Д., Гарни V, Античный некрополь, Ереван, 1976, с. 117-118.

characteristic of the Ervanduni epoch³⁵.

Objects made of silver are represented by two *earrings in the form of crescents* (table 26, fig. 2). They have identical shape, but different sizes. The bigger earring has a nominal diameter of 2.5cm, the smaller one - of 2cm. The rings belong to the inventory of the pair of jar-burials (table 14), discovered at one of the foundations of the northern excavation site (table 3). In the same inventory a silver coin was found - the abovementioned Parthian drachma of the 80s-70s BC.

To toilet ware belong two *stone buttons* functionally similar to the fibulas described above (table 26, fig. 4). Light gray (gravel) and black stones with a dense structure served as the material for their production. The surface is well-polished.

Products made of bone are represented by several items, among which there is a bone pin with a shaped head, teardrop-shaped beads - from red deer teeth and amulets - talismans made of phalangeal bones of limbs of small cattle.

The *bone hairpin* was part of the decoration of the head, could serve to secure the high hairstyles. The rod circular in the cross-section (with a diameter of 0.4cm) has an artistically shaped head in the form of a figure of a biconical shape, placed between two discoid bases with a diameter of 0.5cm. The end with the point is lost.

The *collection of beads* represented mainly by the inventory of jar-burial (tables 20-24) is particularly diverse. The beads of the Avan settlements vary in the material they are made of. Beads of carnelian, agate, onyx, black stone (jet), glass, glass and clay pastes different in composition and color, as well as bone - teeth of red deer, have been found. In the production of beads the finest gold and silver foil was used. The shape of the beads is diverse as well - spherical, barrel-shaped, prismatic, oval, cylindrical, biconical, round - discoid, tear-shaped, etc.

A considerable amount of gild round beads of transparent glass has been found. They may be considered the most numerous (together with glass beads) material in the collection. The beads belong to the inventory of two jar-burials [in the damaged one - 47 beads (table 19), and in the churn - 83 specimens]³⁶. The beads found in the churn are mainly of the same type, of a circular, slightly flattened shape, with a diameter of 0.3cm. A small number of these beads has a brighter metallic coating - perhaps here gold was replaced with silver. The beads from the destroyed jar-burial (with the drachma of Alexander the Great and the gem with an image of a dog) (table 25₁) vary in size - larger ones, having a diameter of 0,7cm and smaller ones, with a diameter of 0,45cm and 0,3cm. In Armenia, such beads were known from the Ervanduni period and continued to exist until the first centuries AD.

A special place in the collection is occupied by the beads with "eyes", which in addition to the aesthetic values had a symbolic value. One can rather confidently assert

³⁵ Կարապետյան Ի. Ա., Հայաստանի նյութական մշակույթը մ.թ.ա. VI-IV դդ., էջ 79-80, աղ. 51, 8-9:

³⁶ Алексеева Е. М., Античные бусы Северного Причерноморья, с. 27-33. Е.М. Alekseeva uses the terms "beads with inner gilding" and "gilded beads" as synonyms.

that from the earliest times "oculate" beads had been associated with solar symbolism, keeping the meaning of a talisman and having protective properties. The theme of "the eye," as the expression of the properties of a talisman, had been known since the earliest times and was widely used in the production of beads at different times, taking a special place in Armenian ethnography, where the eye was associated with the sun (cf. *արեգ/արեգակ* - *areg/aregak* where *areg* means sun, *-ակ* - *ak(n)/eye*)³⁷. We should also point out the bead-pendants from the burial in the churn made from red deer teeth. In Armenia the deer had been associated with sun worship since the earliest times. The tooth of the deer had to be endowed with the function of a talisman.

There were discovered also sacral objects (tables 87, 88, 89).

A number of finds testify to the development of wine-making in the ancient Avan settlement. This is primarily a bath-tank to gather grape pulp after secondary, extra grape squeezing on a stone winepress (table 60₃₋₄). A similar type of tuff bath was found in ancient Dvin, as well as in urban areas of Armavir³⁸. There the stone winepresses were opened. The Avan bath sample was discovered at the damaged section of the cultural layer, not far from the wall foundations of the northern excavation site. The bath-tank is made of black tuff and has the shape of an irregular tetrahedron.

It should be noted that the traditions of wine-making, rooted in Armenia from the Eneolithic epoch³⁹, reached the times of the Avan settlement, and continued there for centuries, as evidenced by traces of the winery dated to the 3rd-5th centuries AD and further.

The studied and dated archaeological material of the Avan-Arinj settlement of the period of the kingdom of Great Armenia of the Artashsian epoch discovered as a result of excavations, constituted the basis of the exposition of the ancient period of the Museum of History of Erevan.

***Translated from Armenian by
S.E. Chraghyan***

³⁷ Исраелян А. Р., Армянские бусы-обереги XIX - начала XX века, Աշխատություններ Հայաստանի պատմության պետական թանգարանի, հ. 7, Երևան, 1981, с. 83-102.

³⁸ Տիրացյան Գ. Ա., Կարապետյան Ի. Ա., Արմավիրի 1977-1978 թթ. Պեղումները, Պատմա-բանասիրական հանդես, 1979, 4, էջ 251-254: Քոչարյան Գ. Գ., Նոր նյութեր Դվինի հելլենիստական բնակավայրի վերաբերյալ, Լրաբեր հասարակական գիտությունների, 1990, 2, էջ 100-101:

³⁹ Areshian G. E., Gasparyan B., Avetisyan P.S., Pinhasi R., Wilkinson K., Smith A., Hovsepyan R. and D. Zardaryan, The Chalcolithic of the Near East and South-eastern Europe. Discoveries and New Perspectives from the Cave Complex Areni-1, Armenia, 2012, Cambridge, vol. 86, issue 331, March 2012, pp. 115-130.

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a



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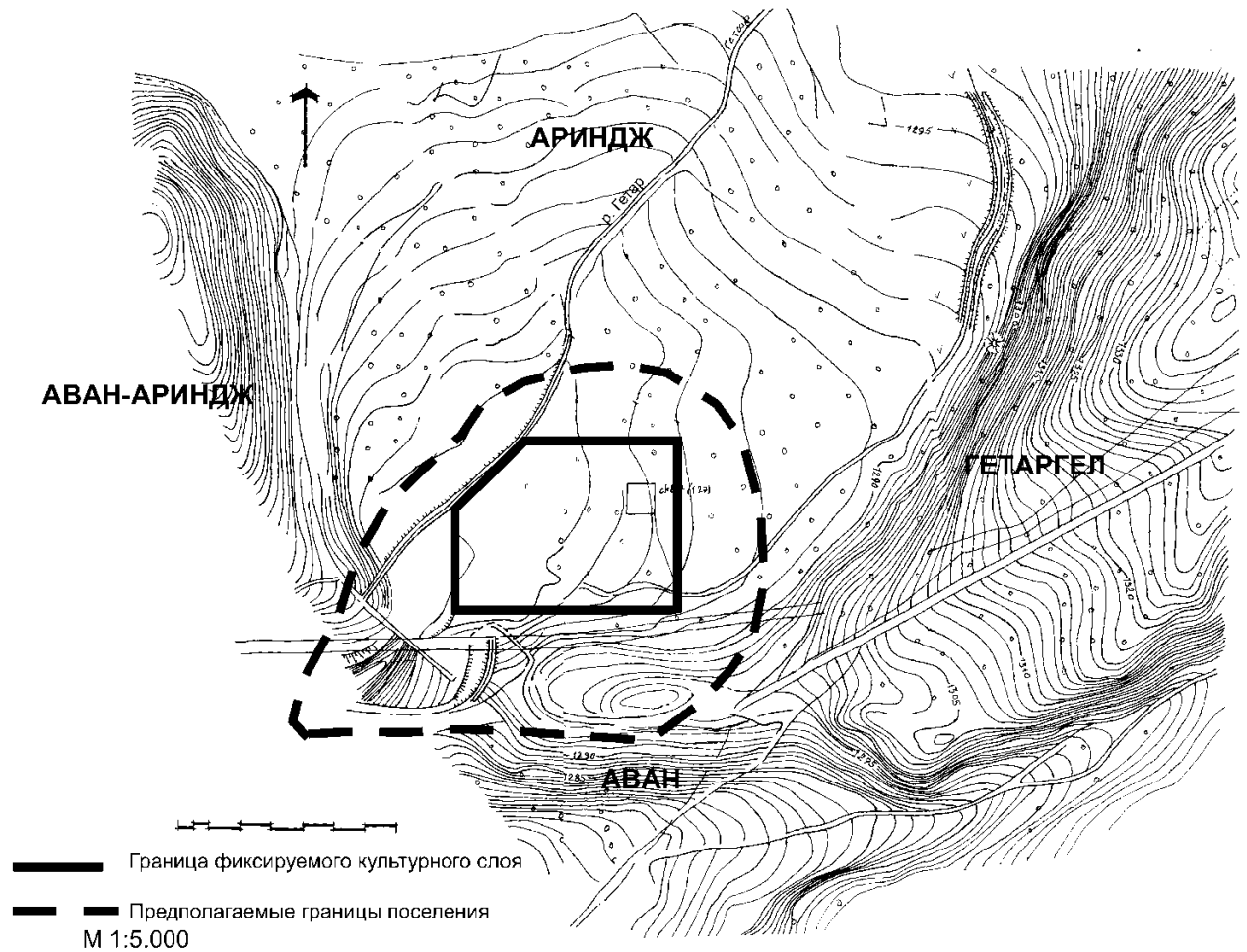


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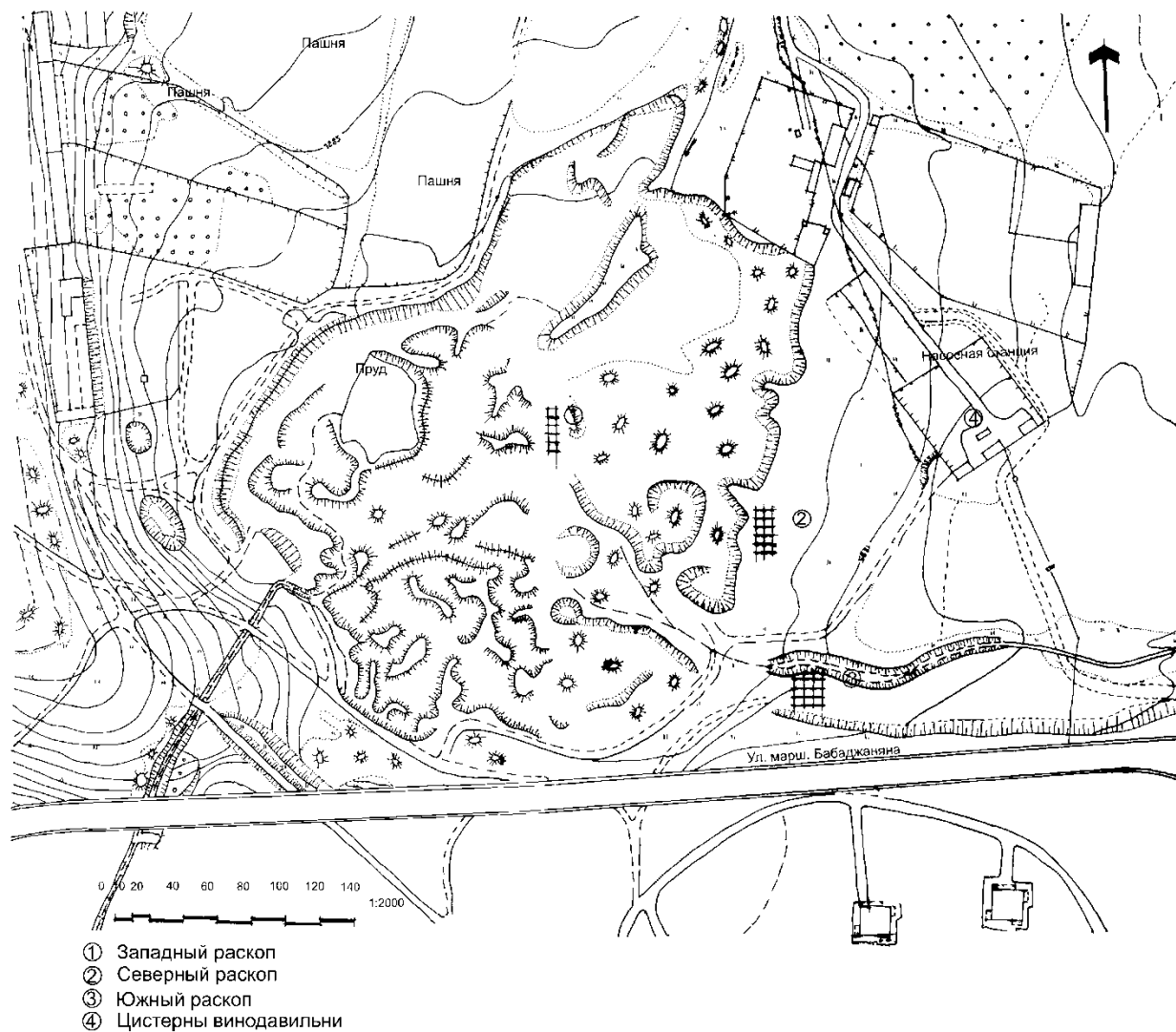


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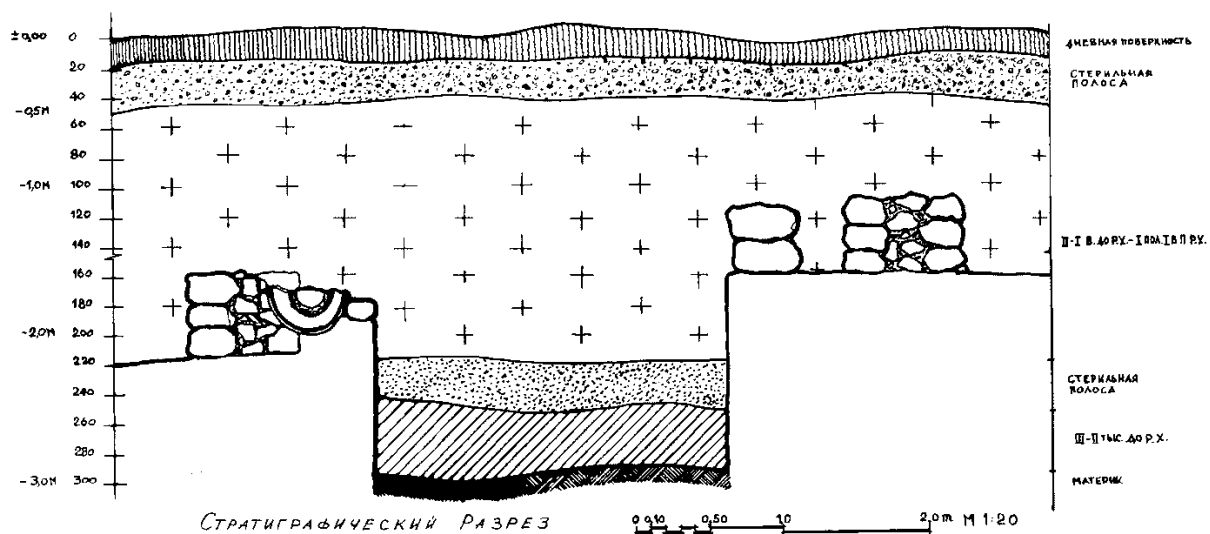
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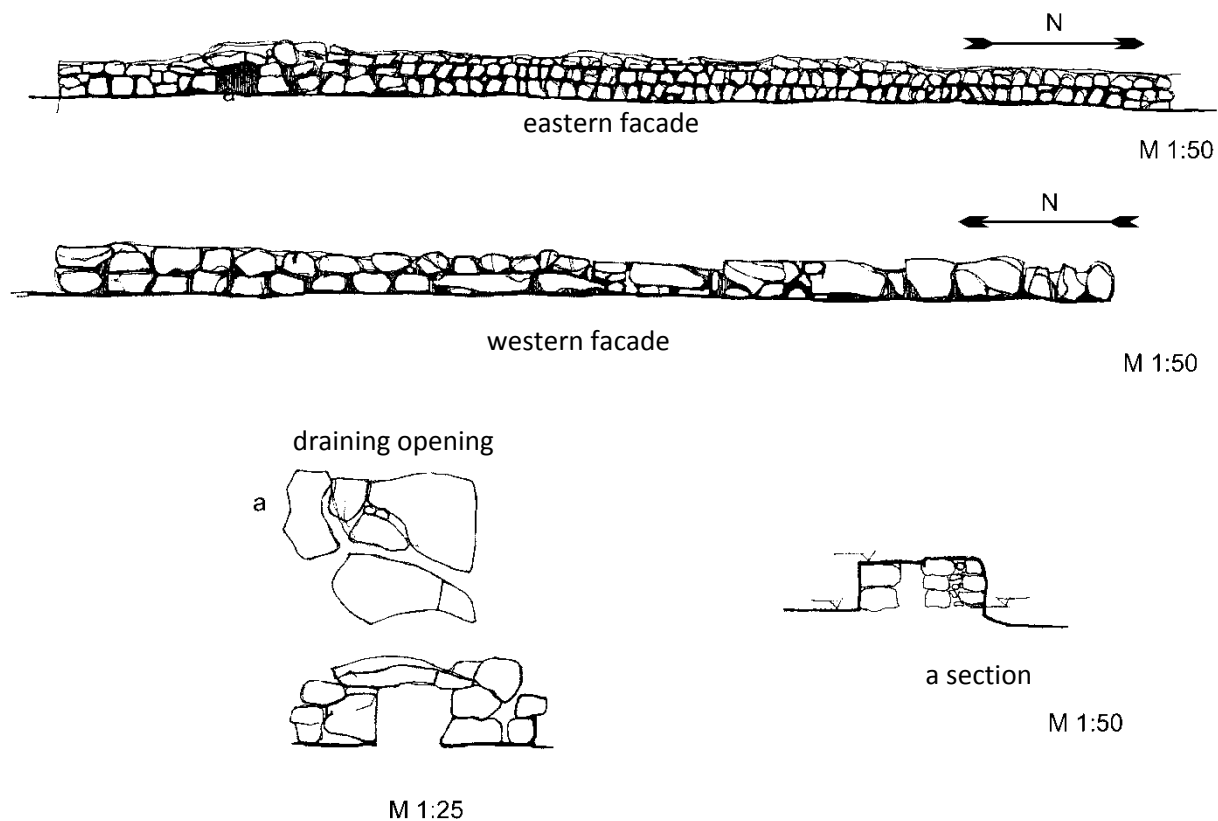
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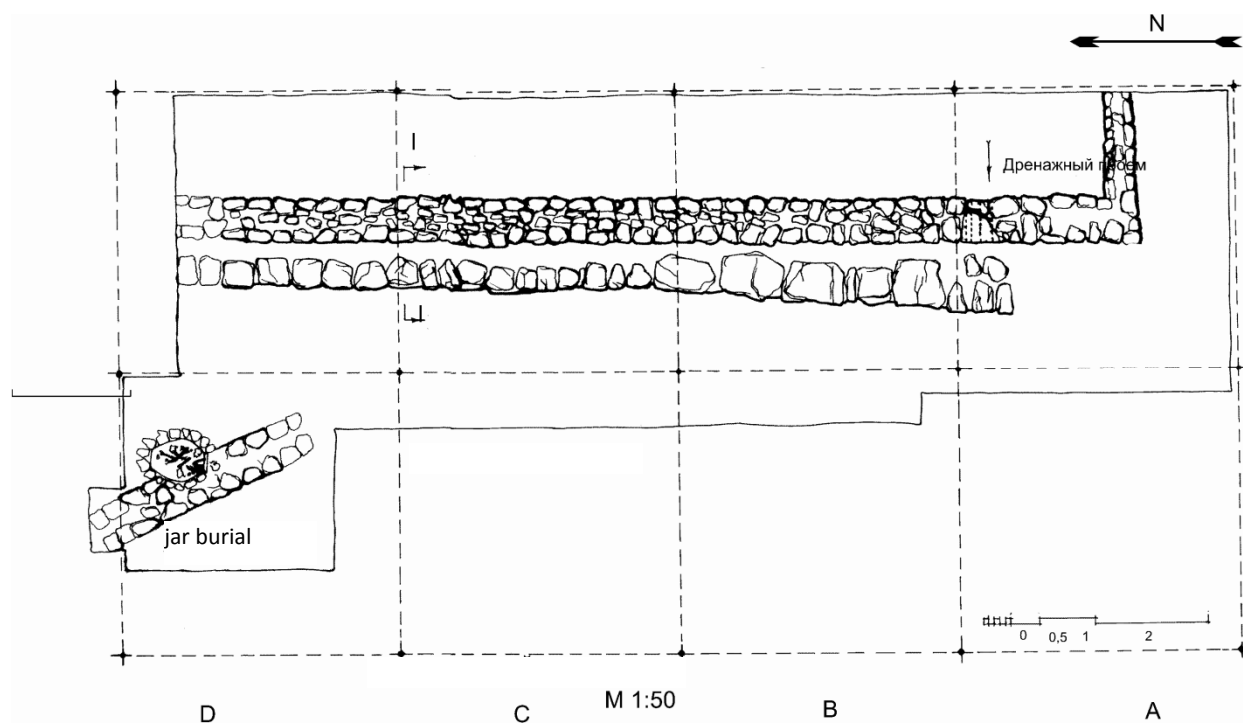
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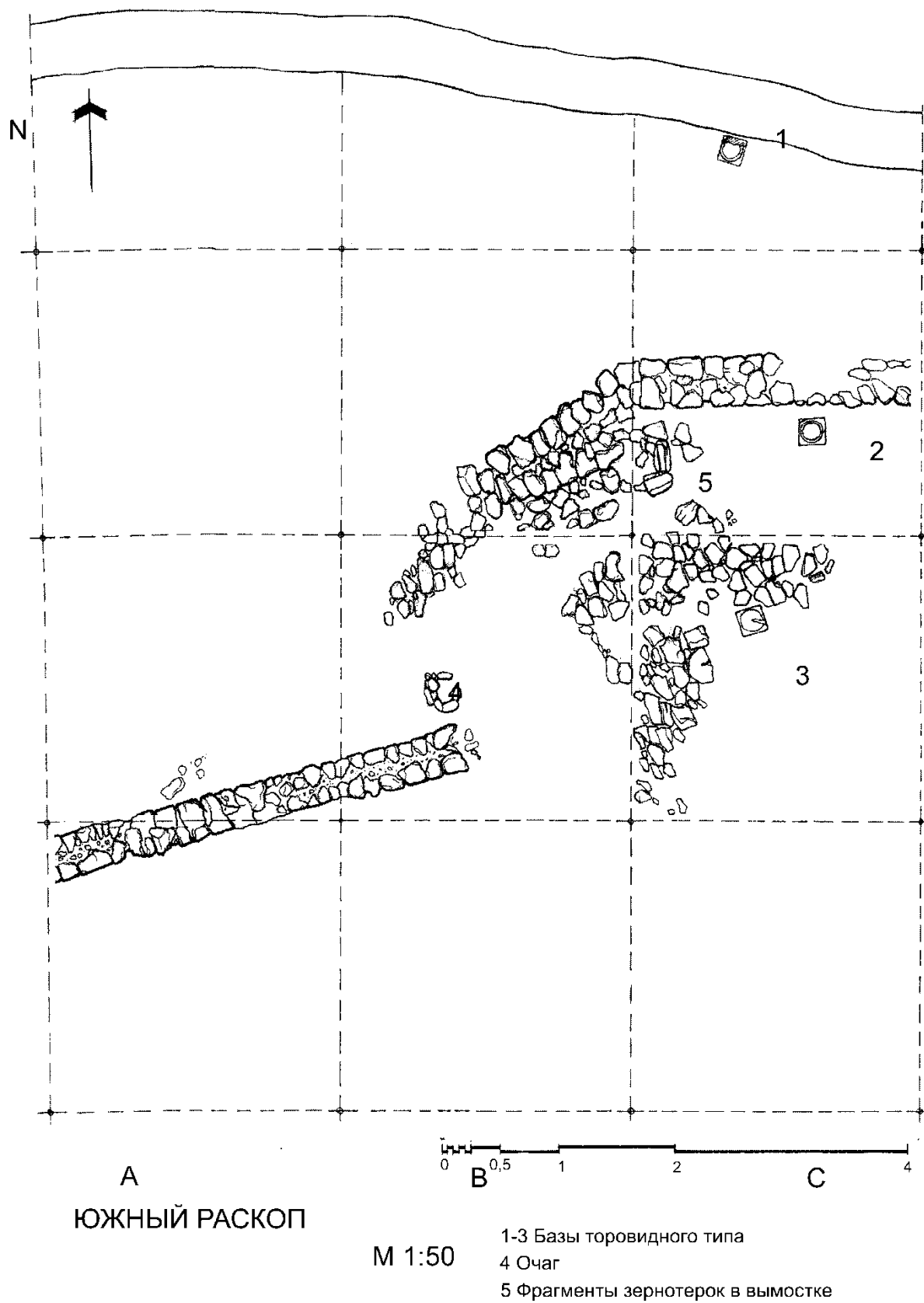
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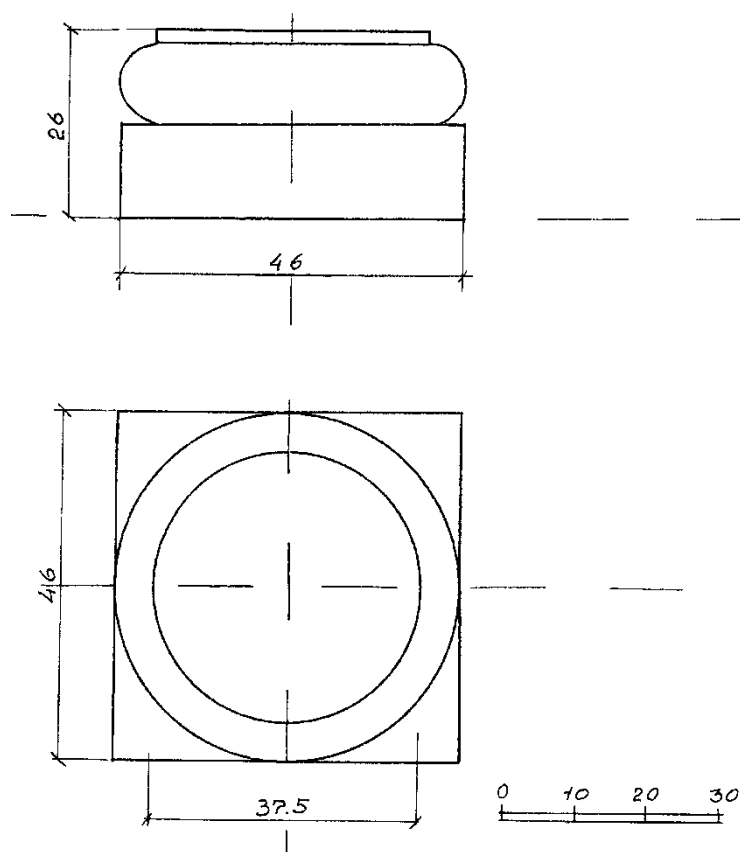
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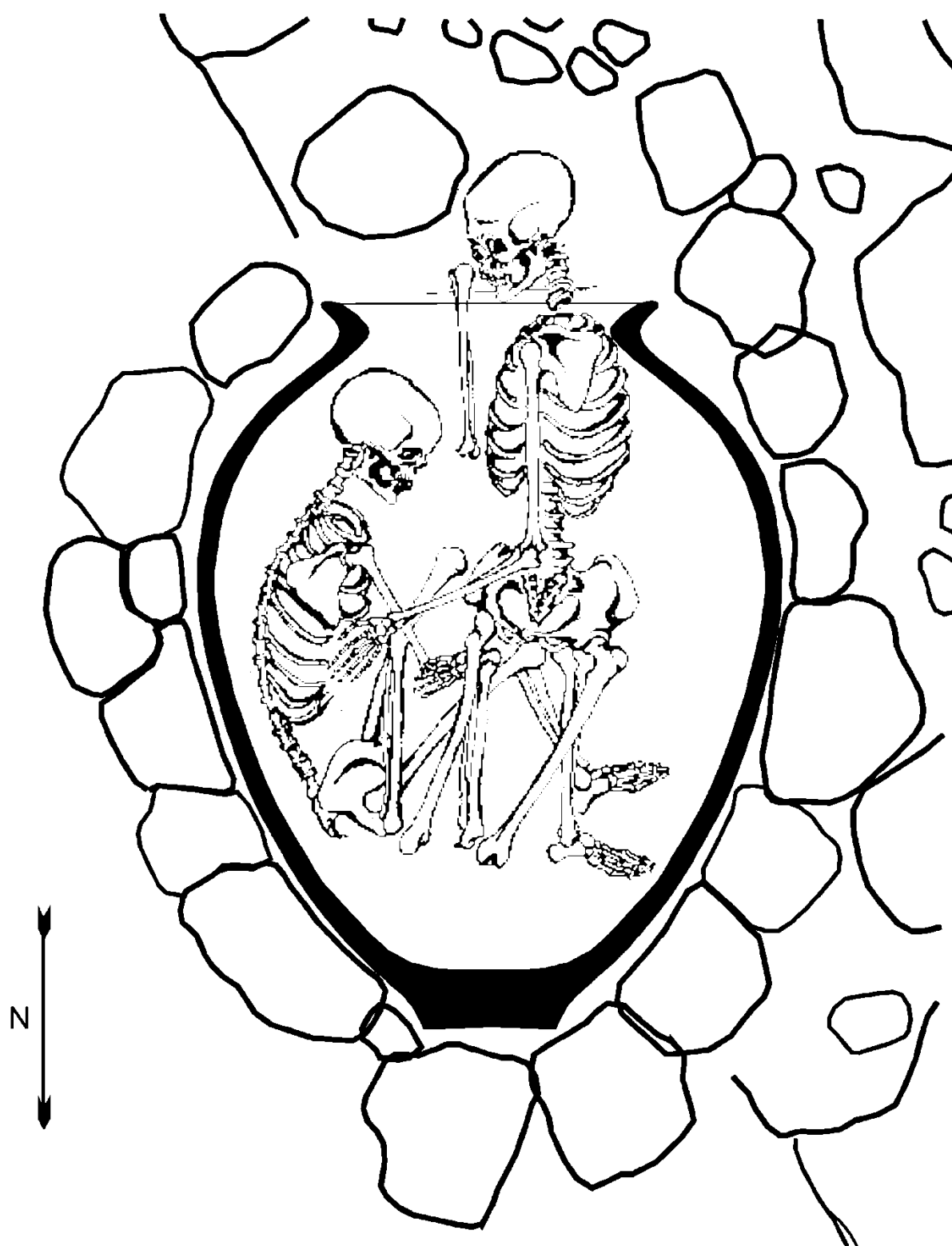
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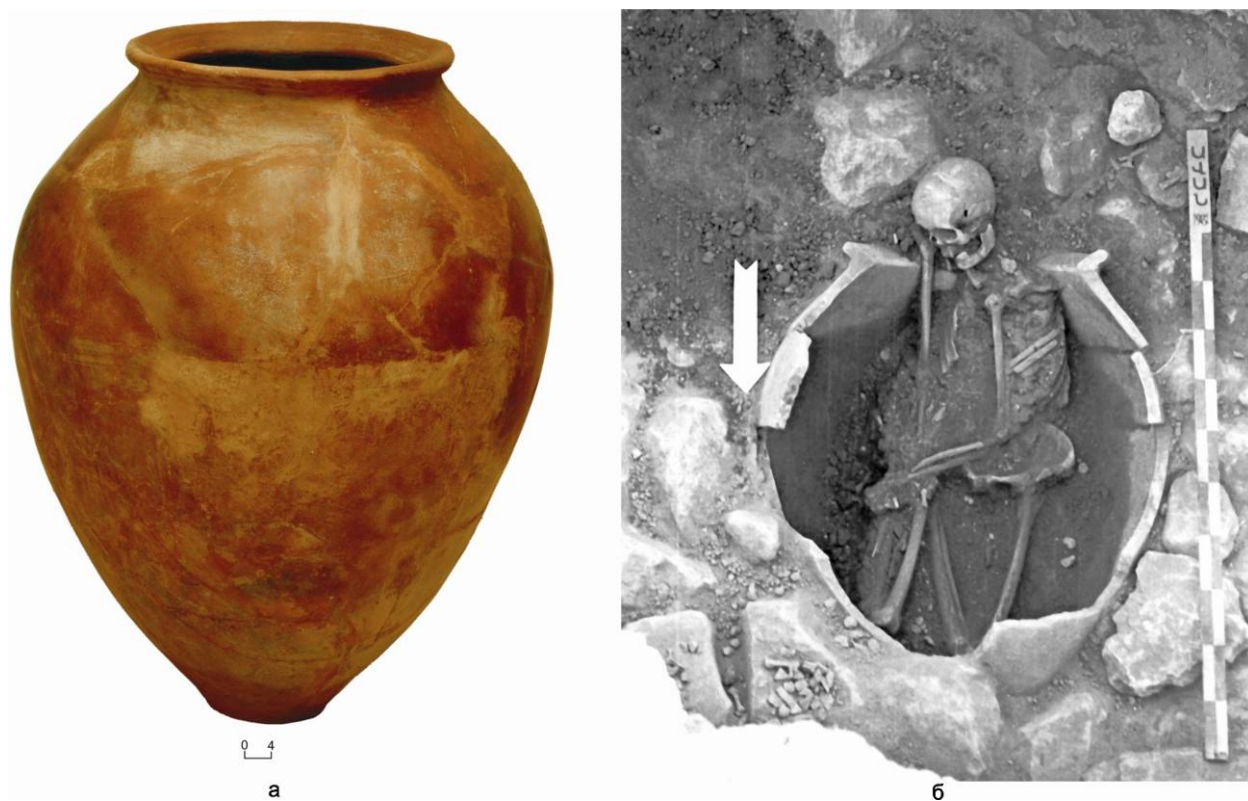
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a

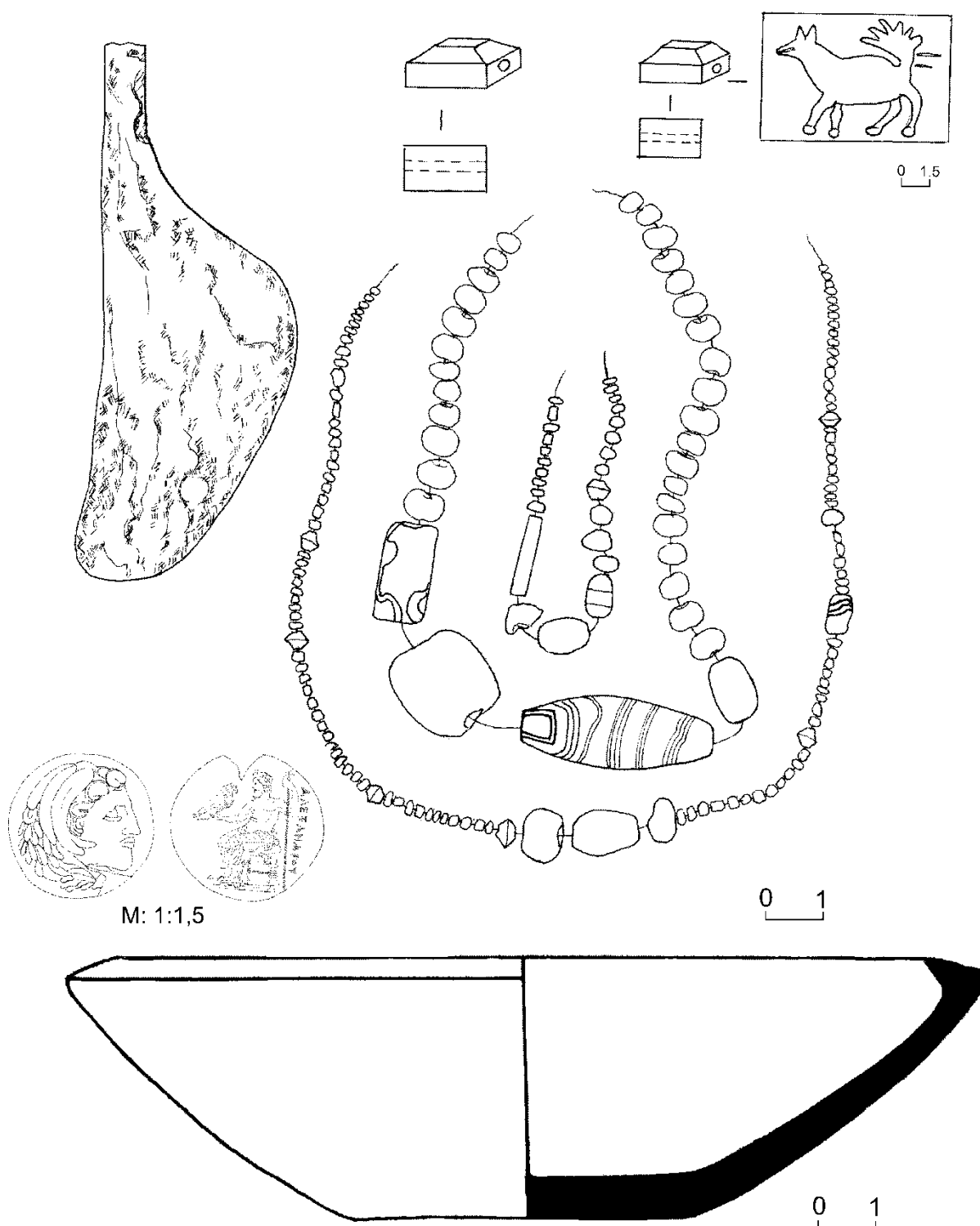


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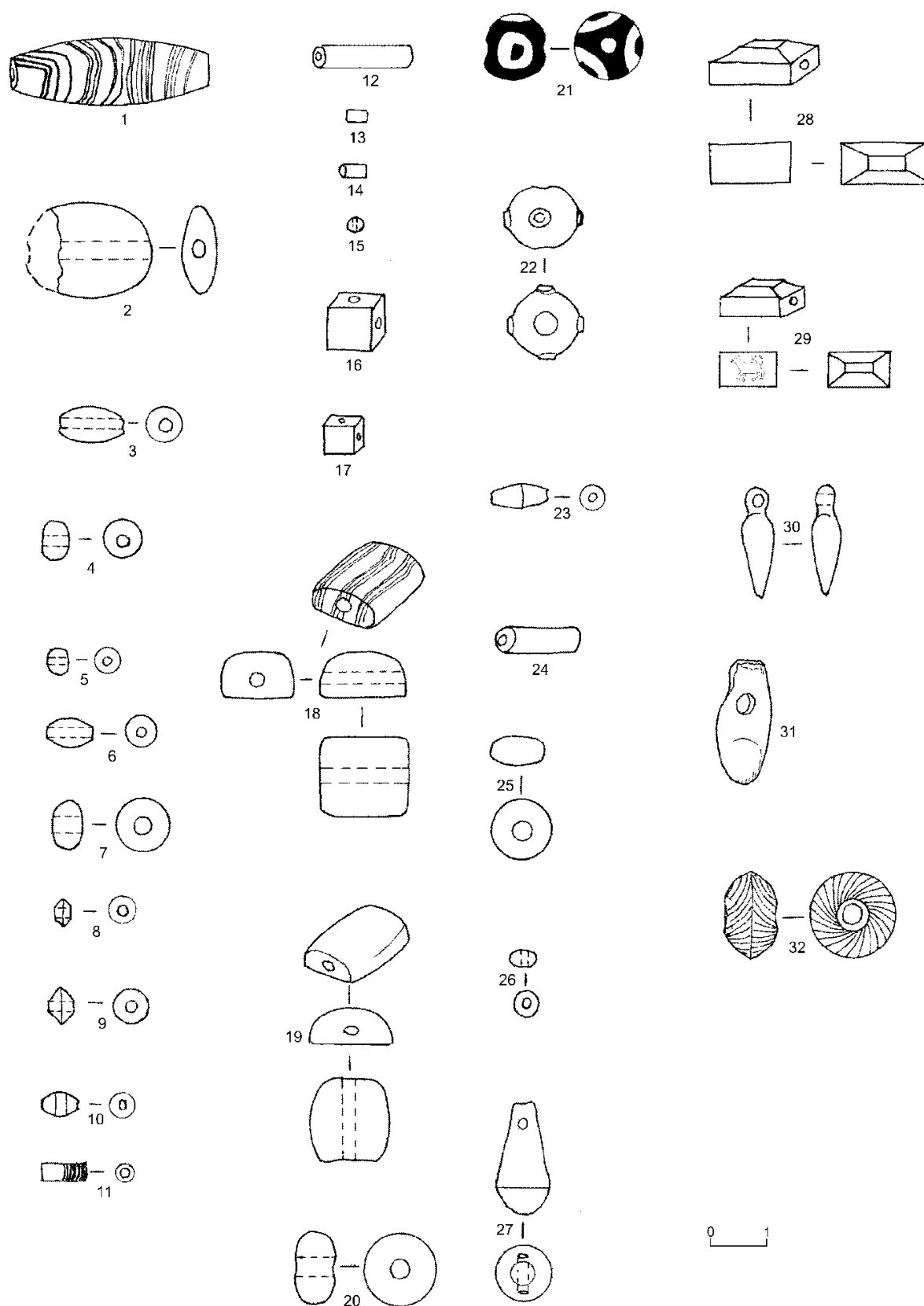
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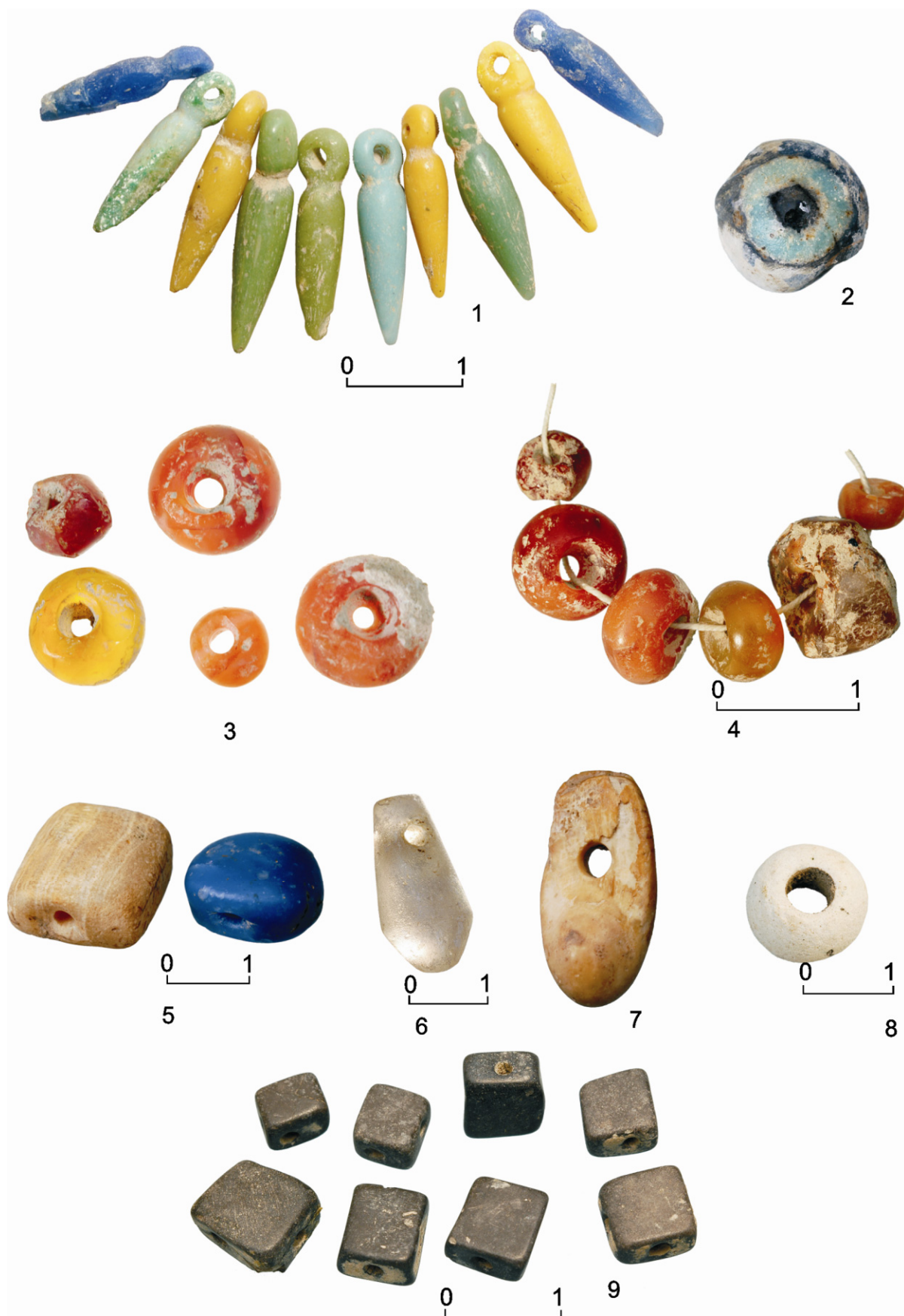
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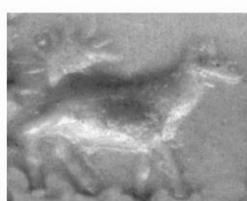
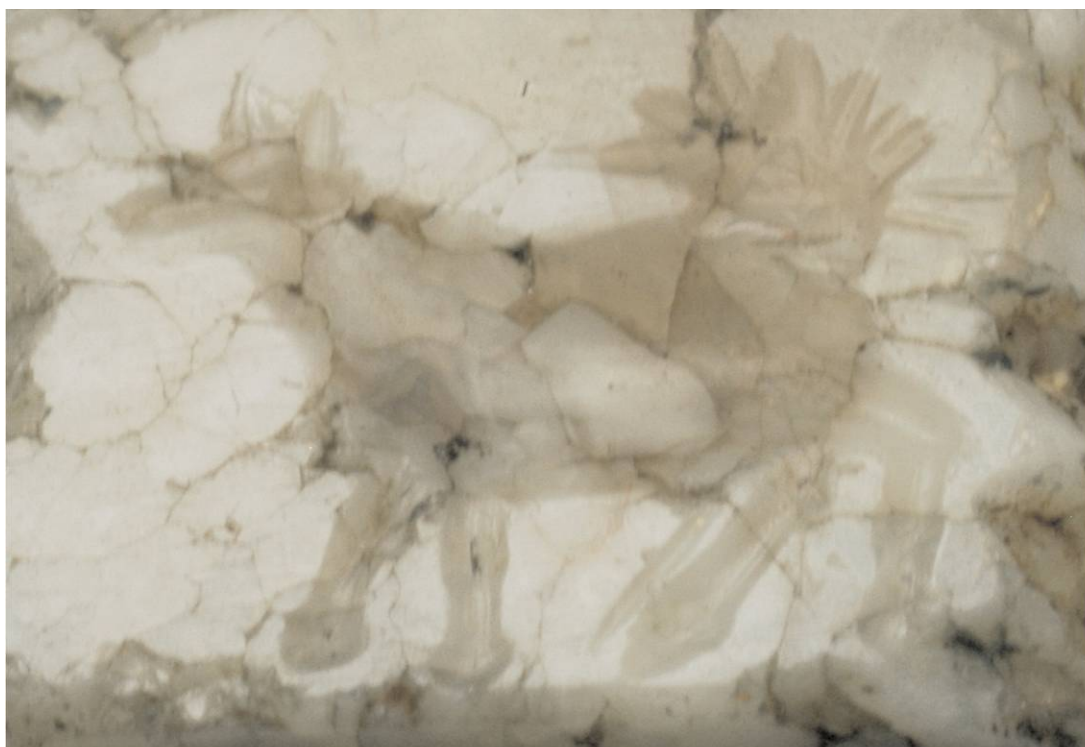
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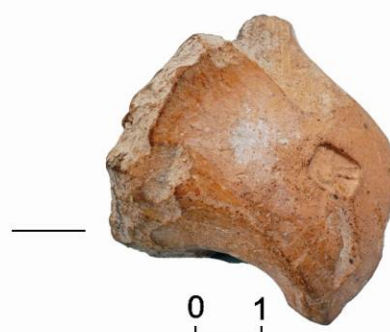
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6



0 1

2

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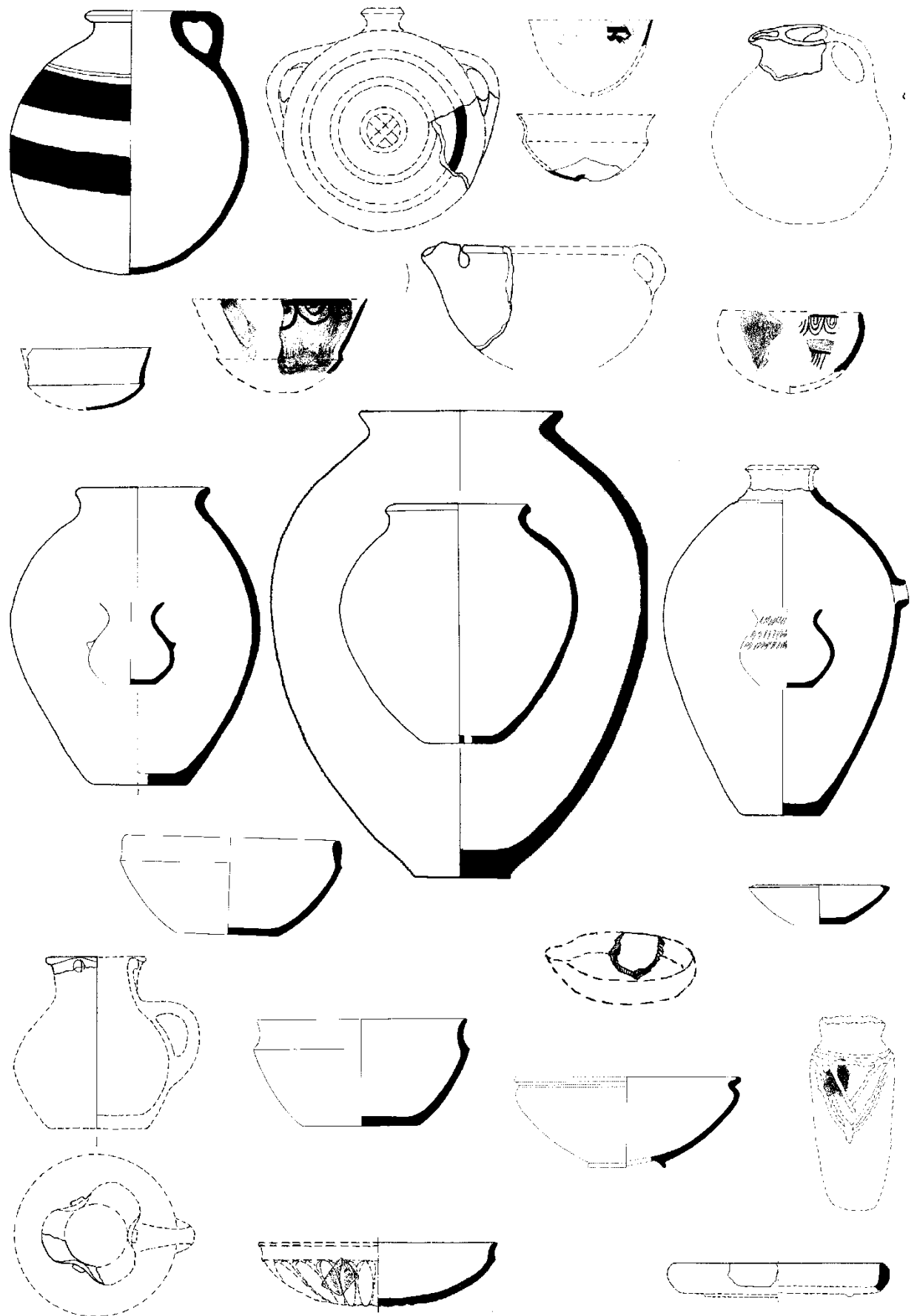
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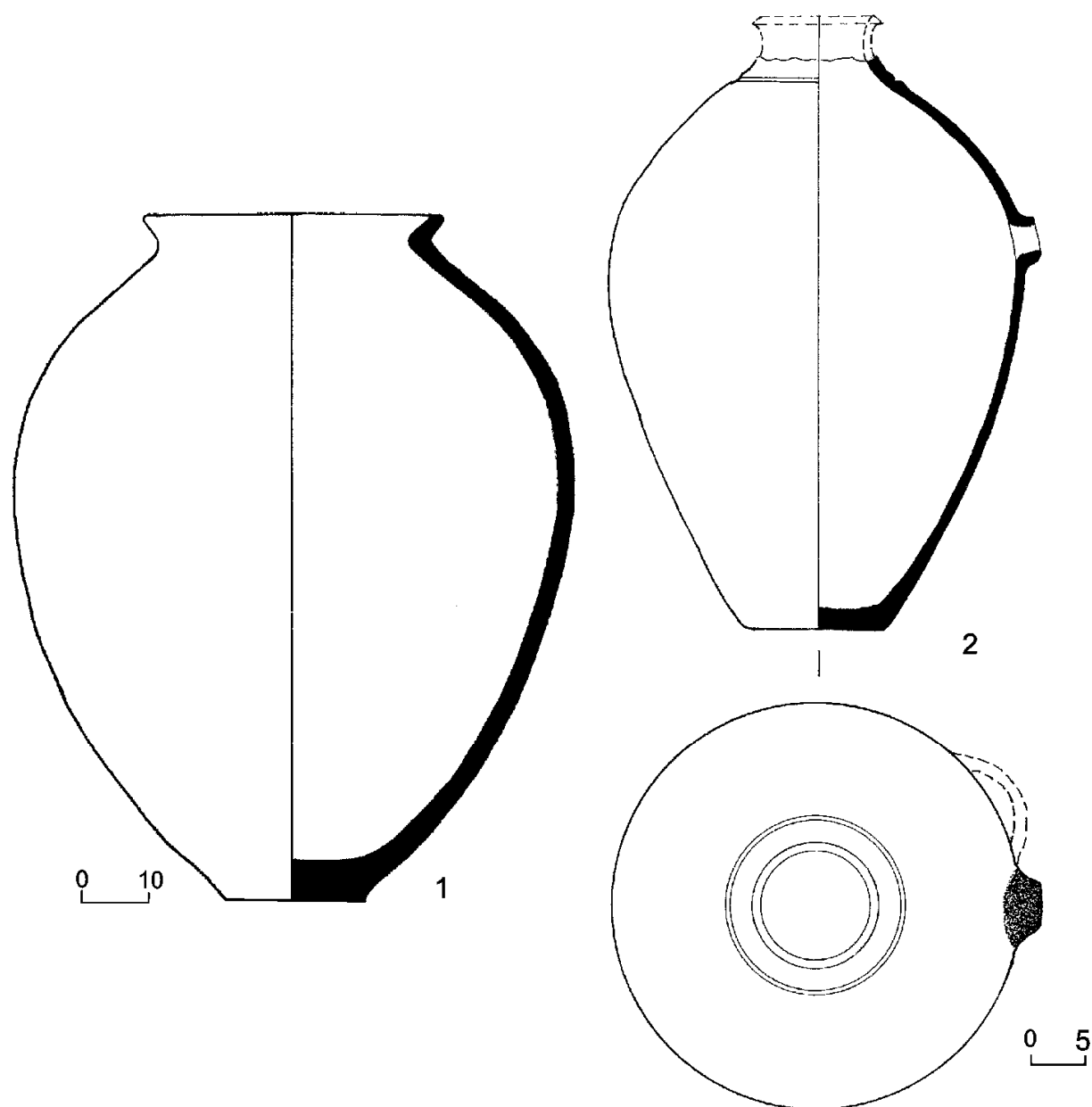
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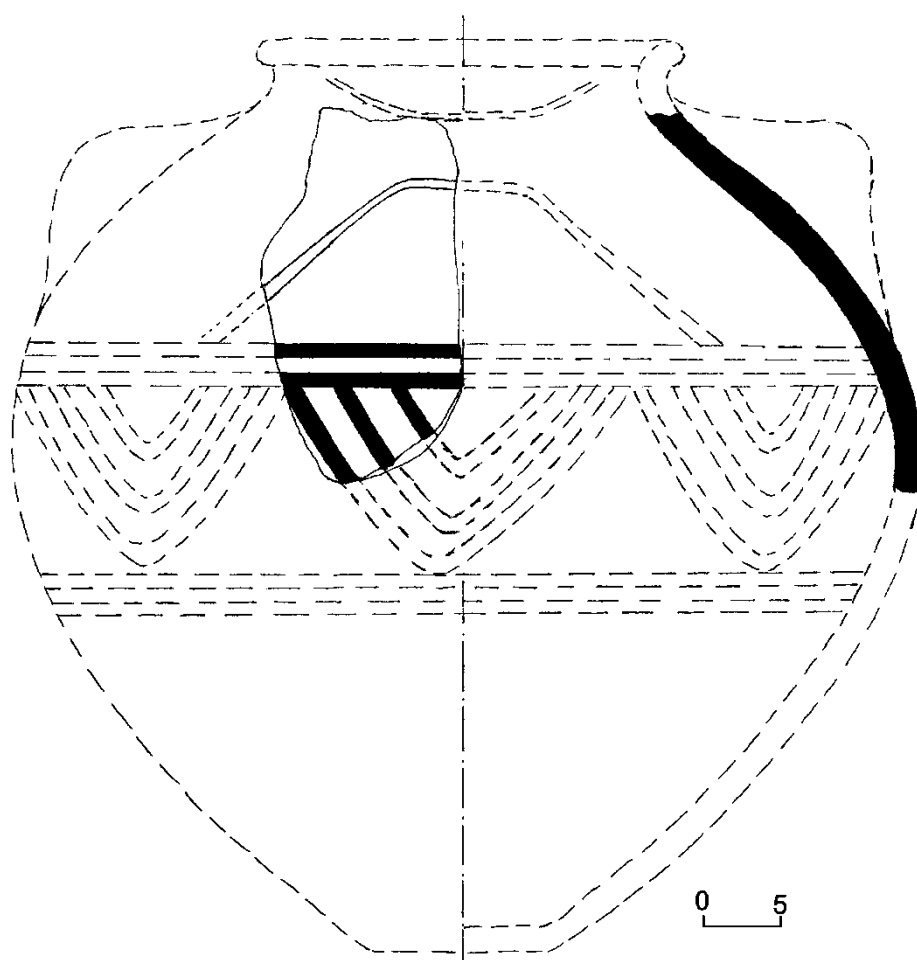
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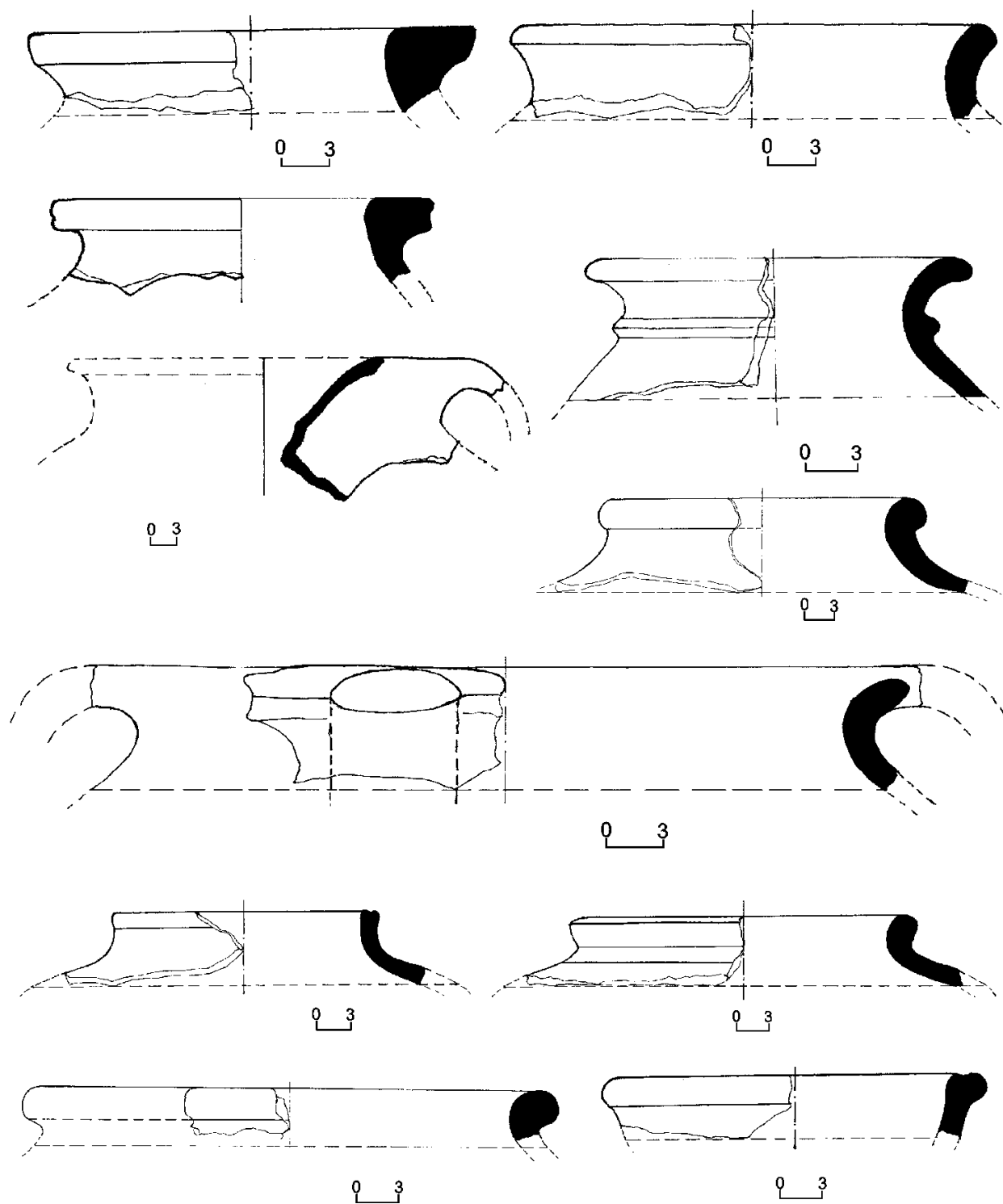
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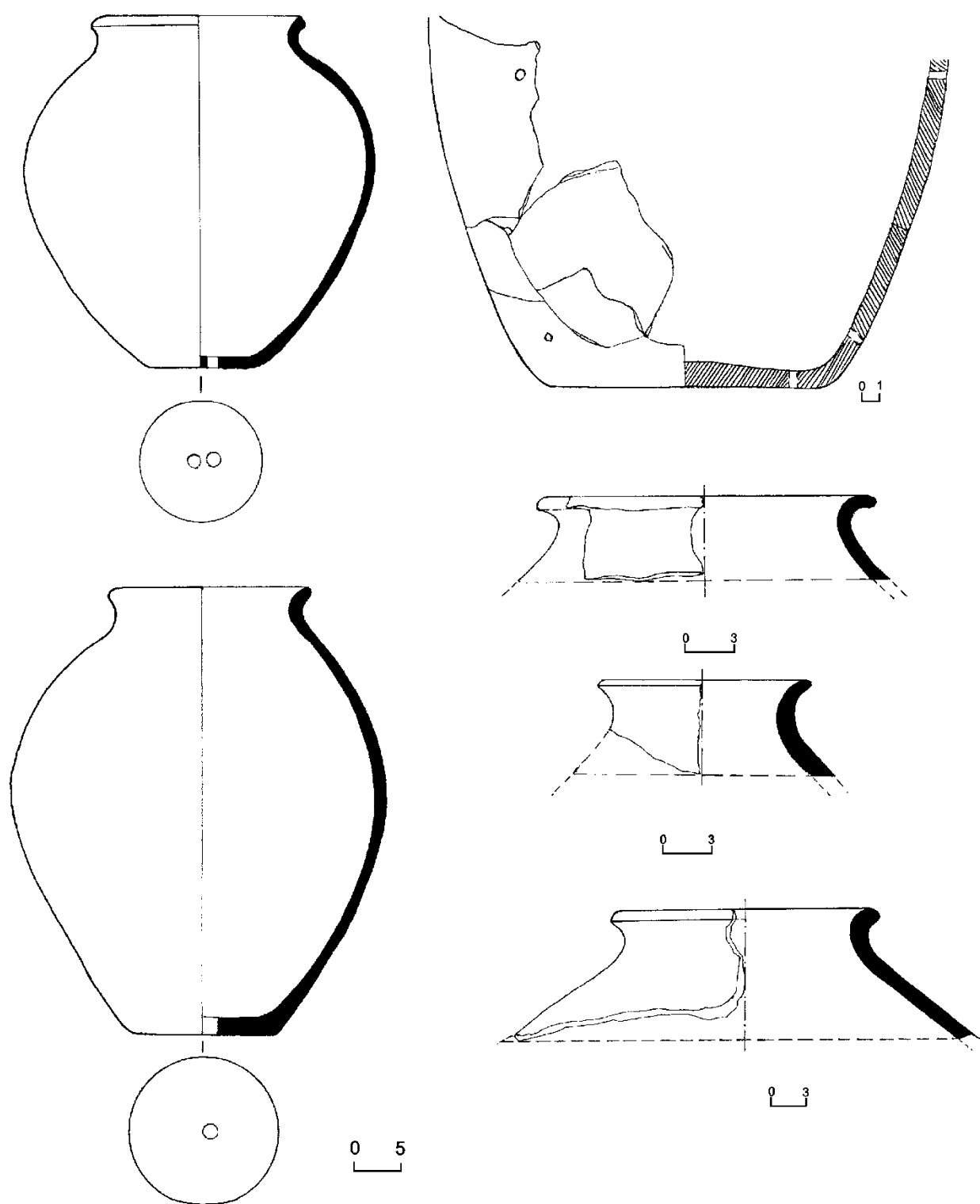
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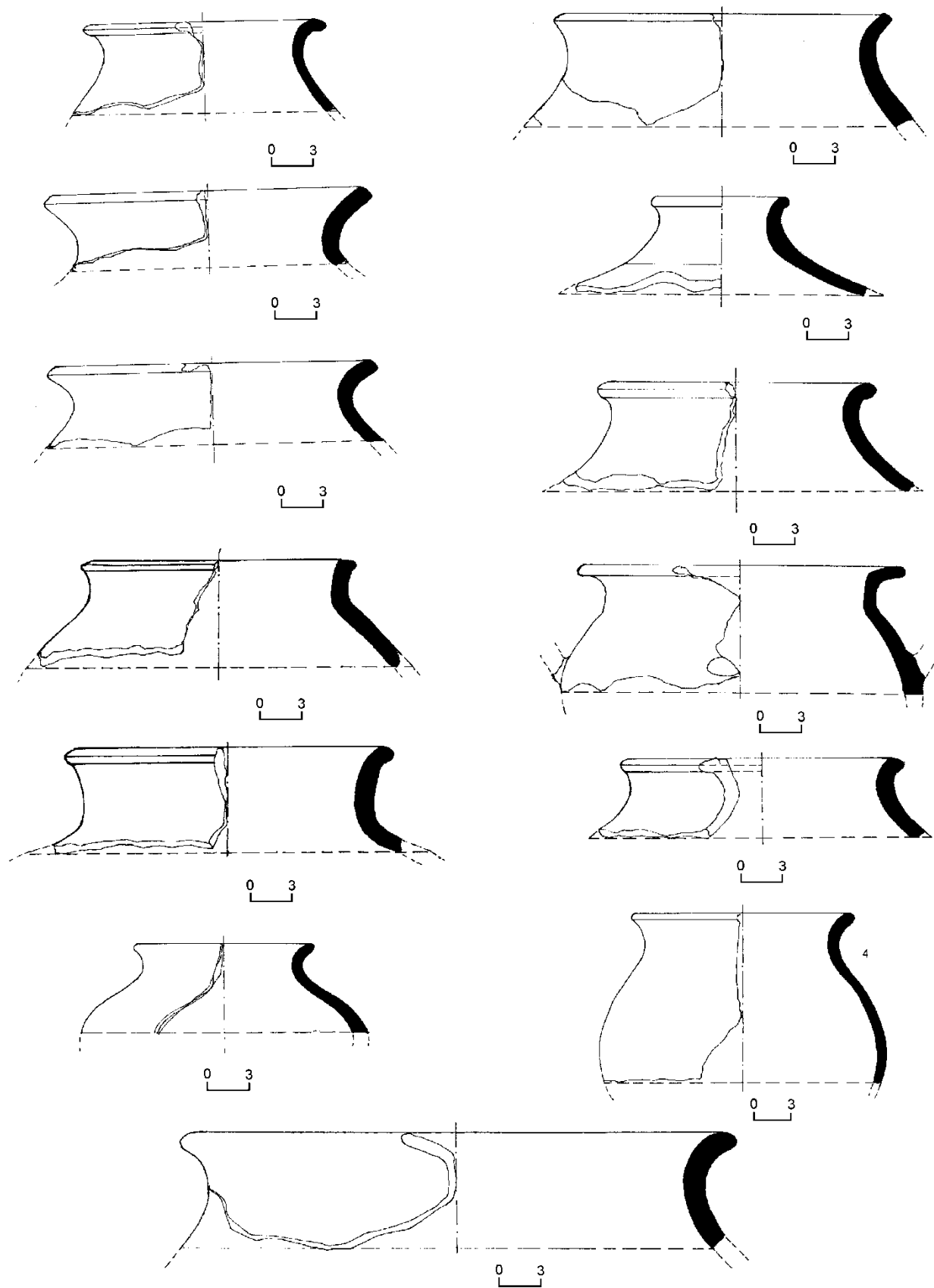
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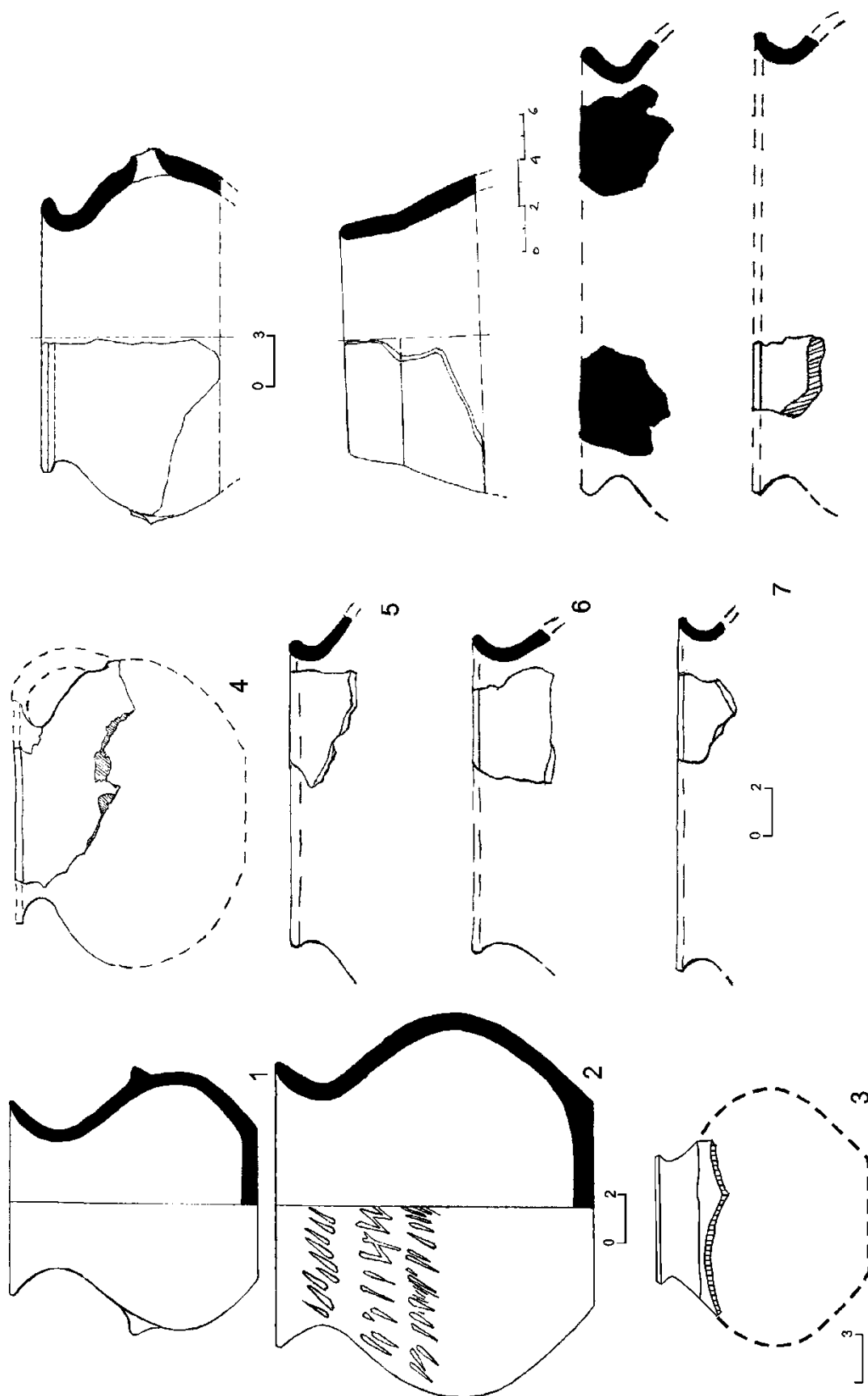
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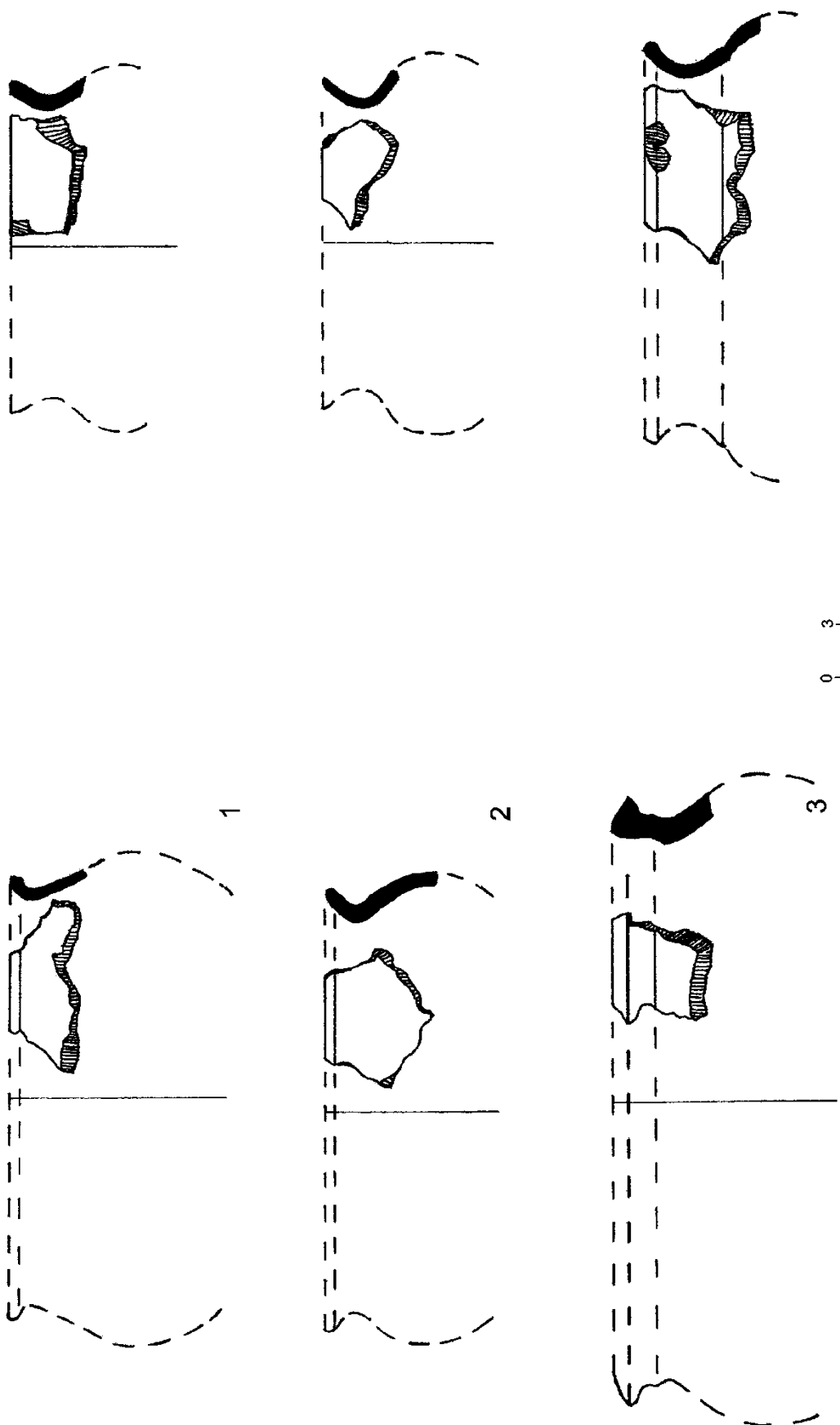
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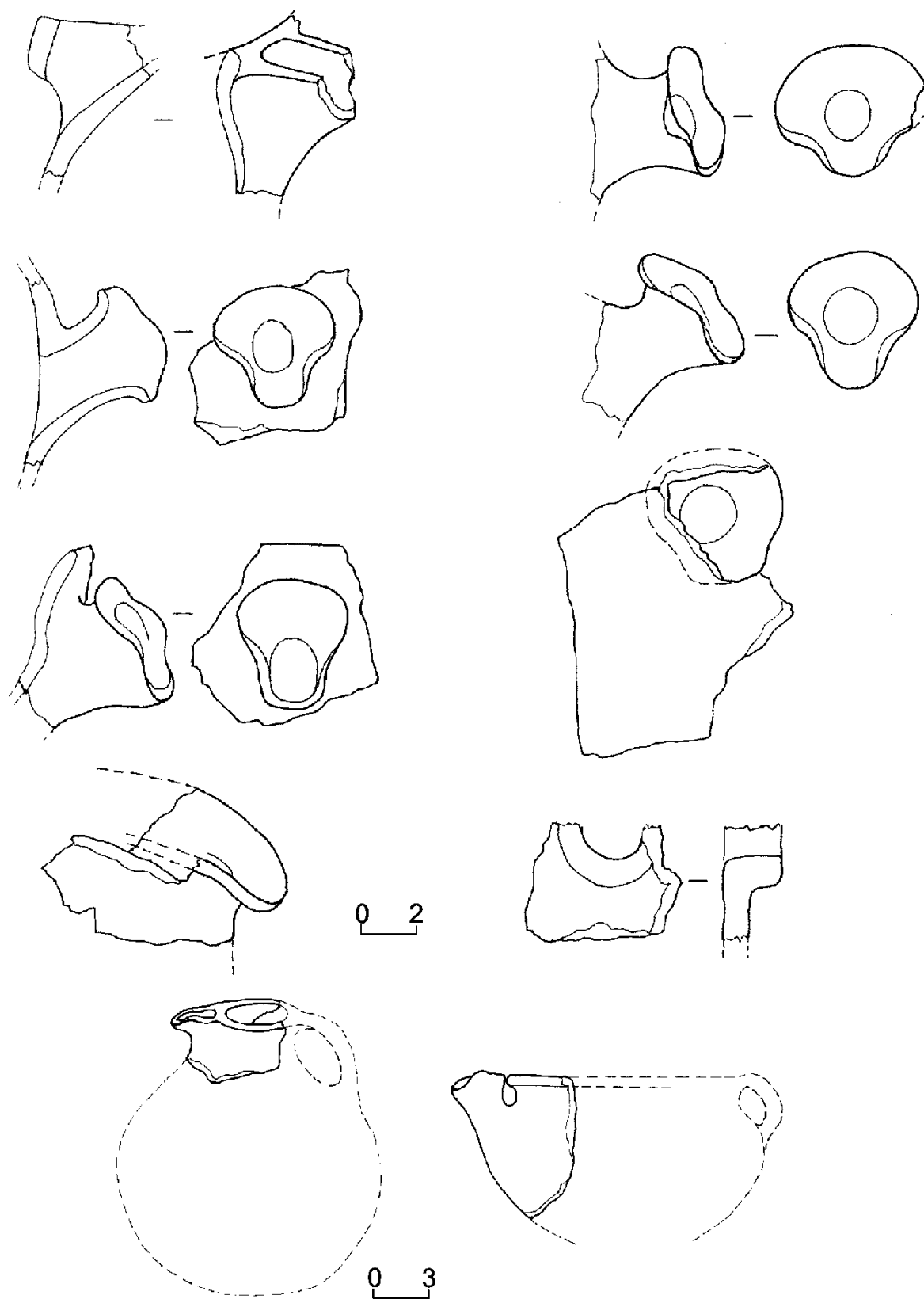
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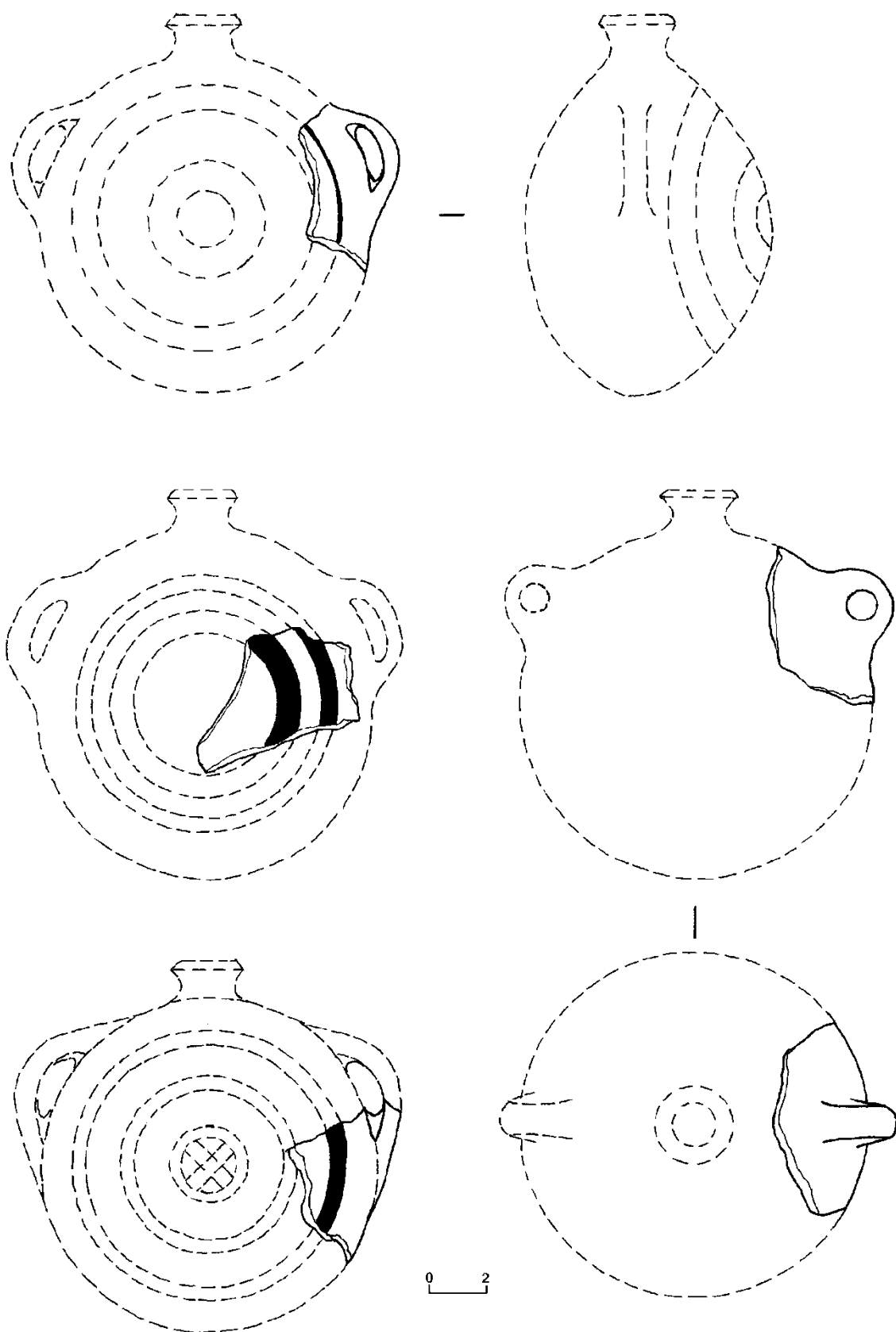
36. Pots.



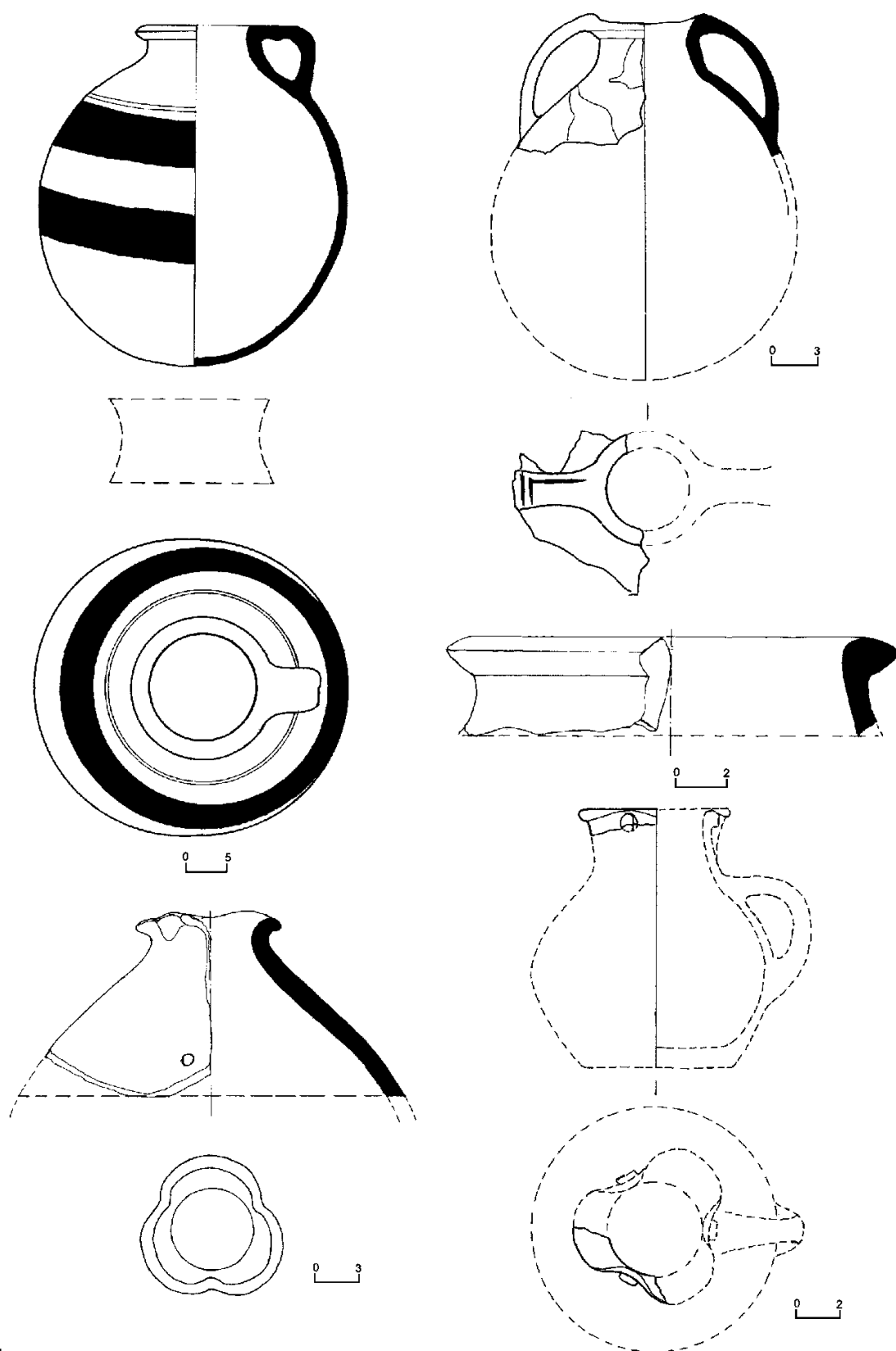
37. Pots.



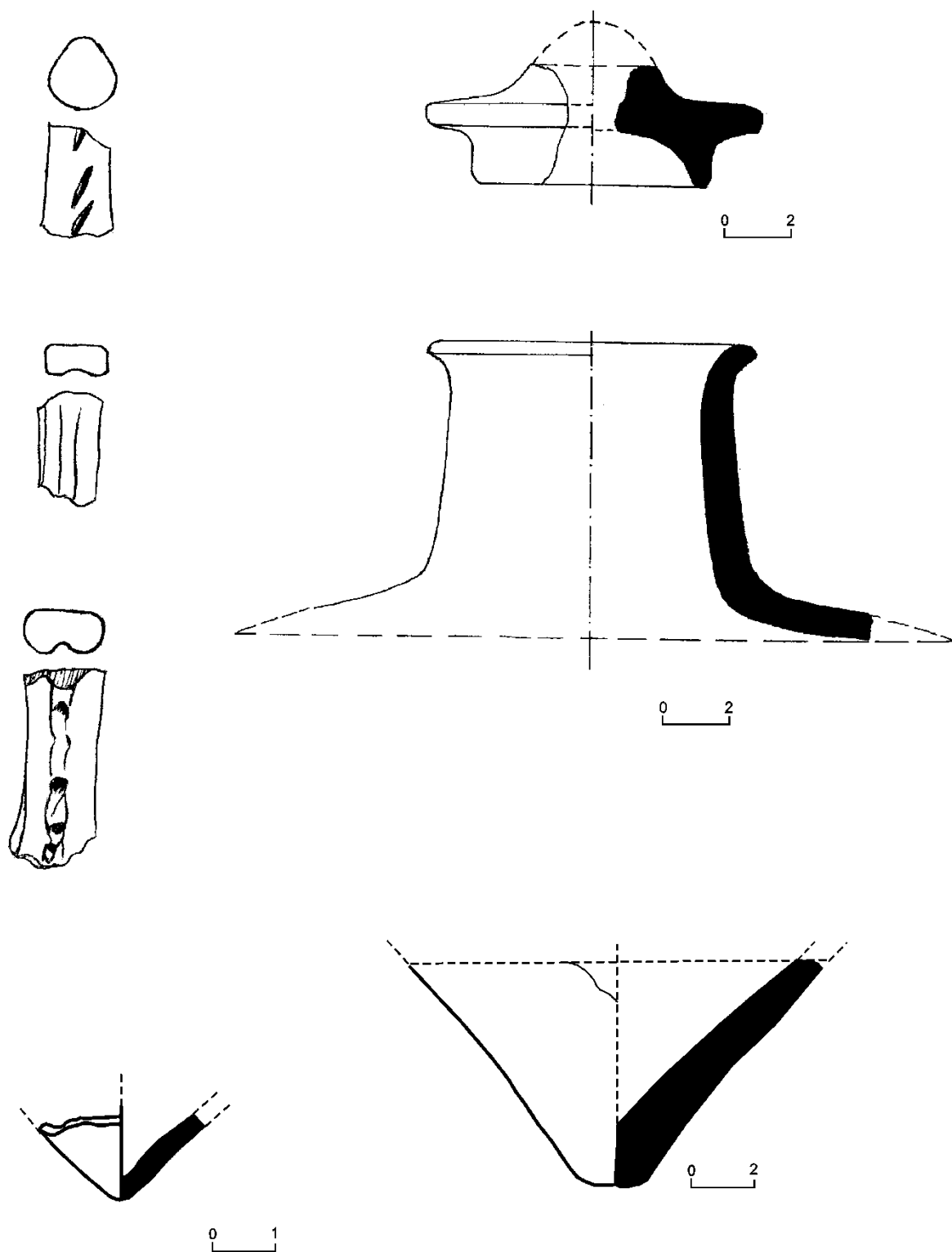
38. Kitchenware and dinnerware. Vessels with a discharge spout.



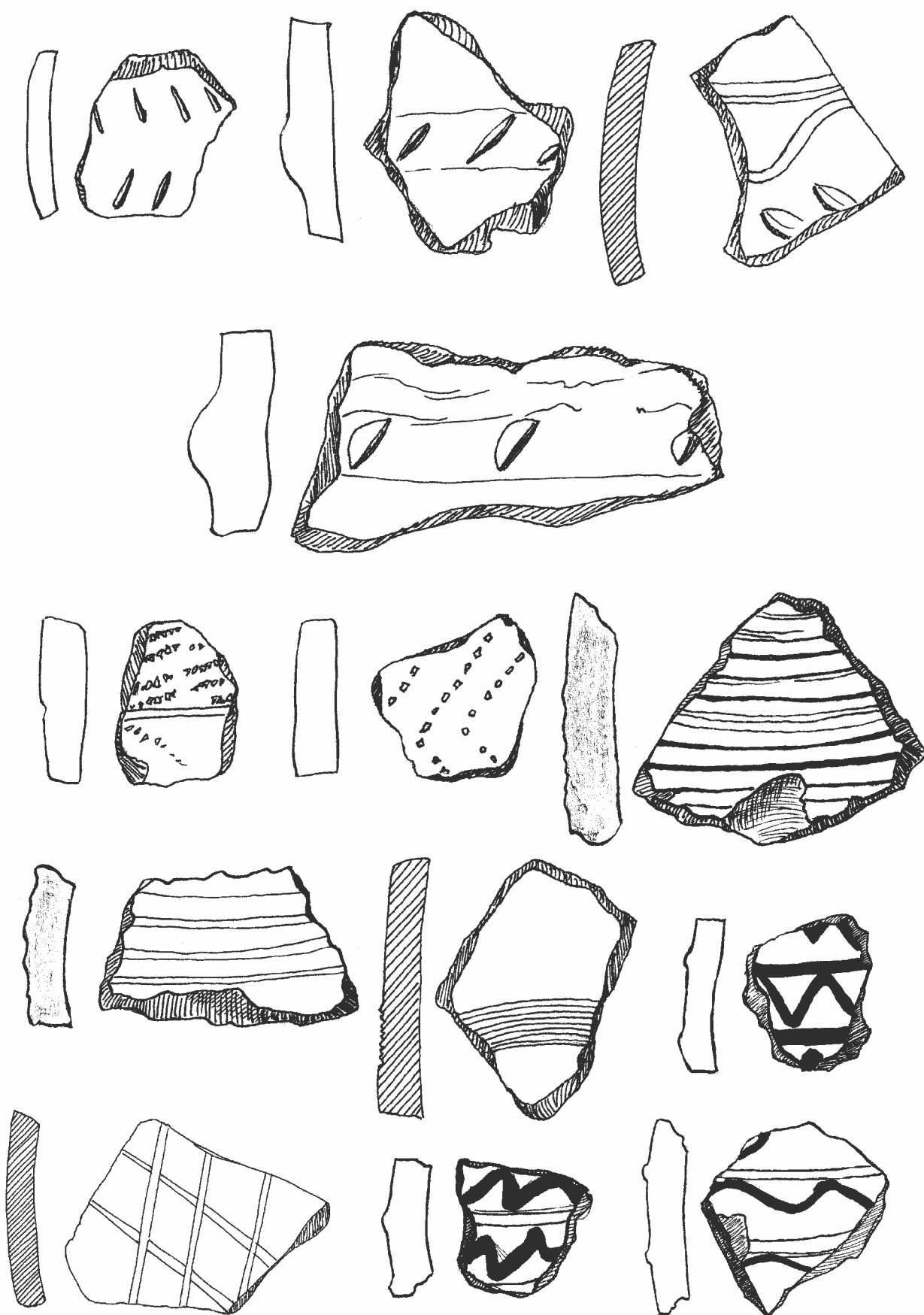
39. Flasks.



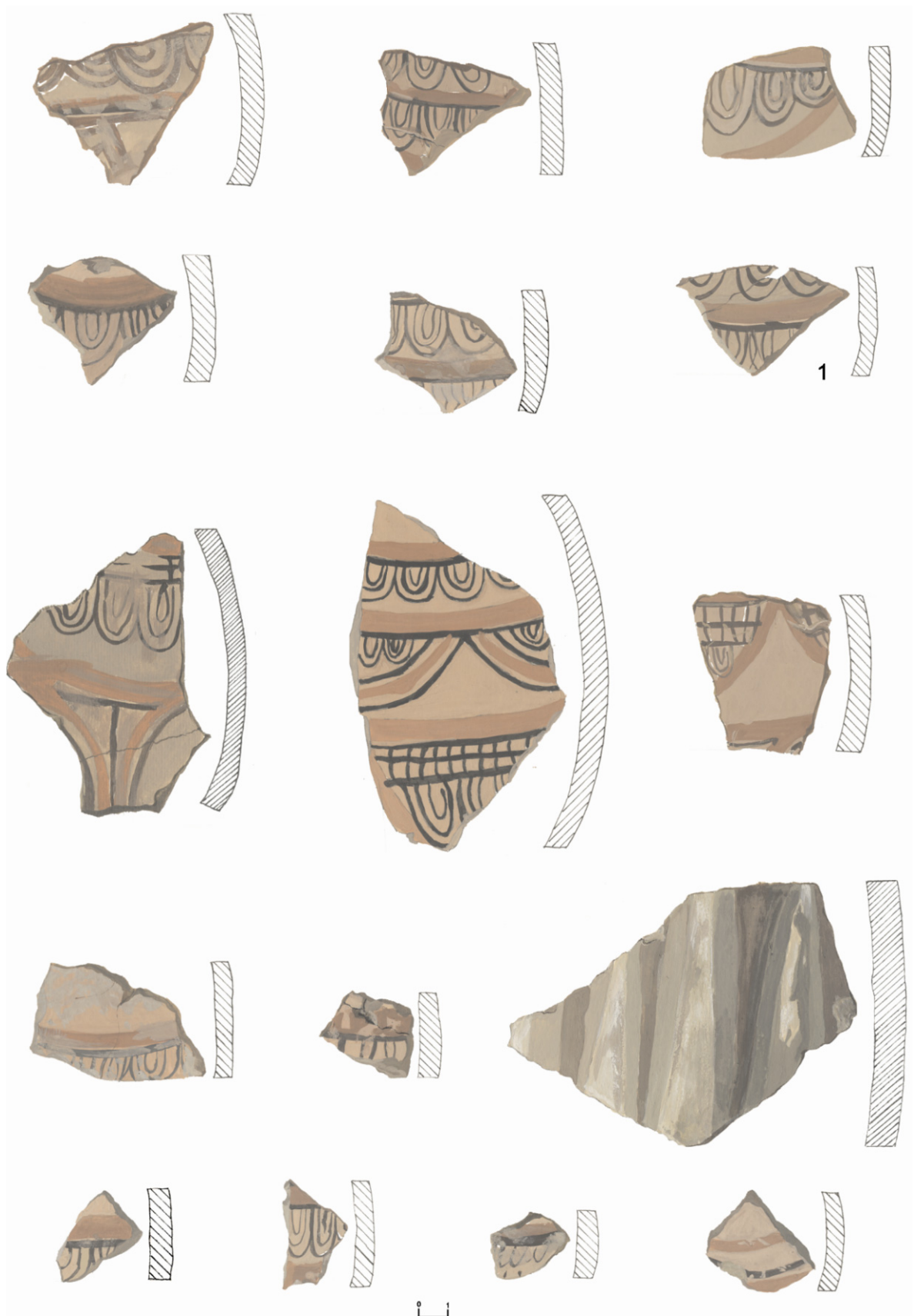
Фляги.



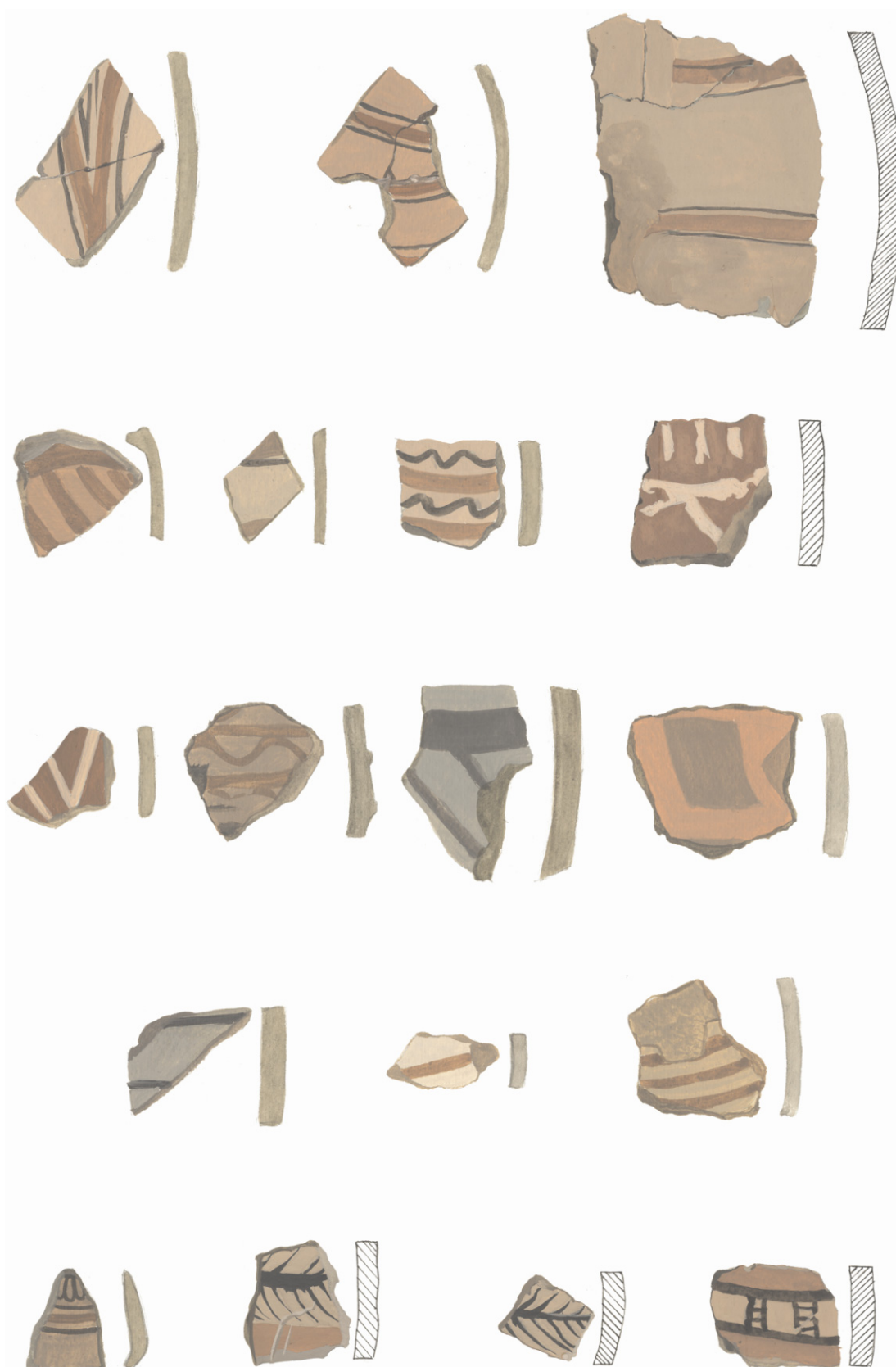
41. Pithers.



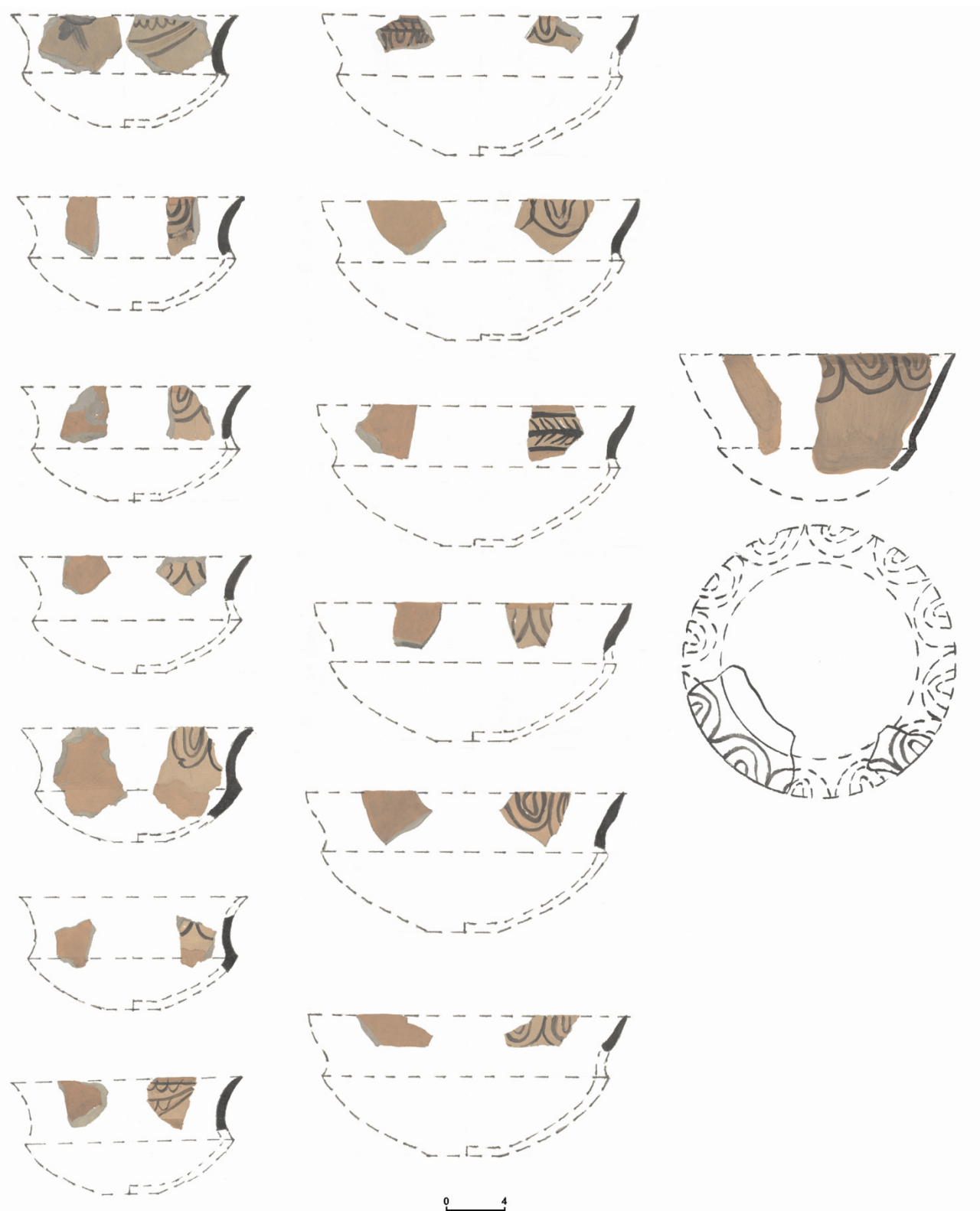
42. Types of ornamentation. Sunflower seed-like, point, mortise, polished.



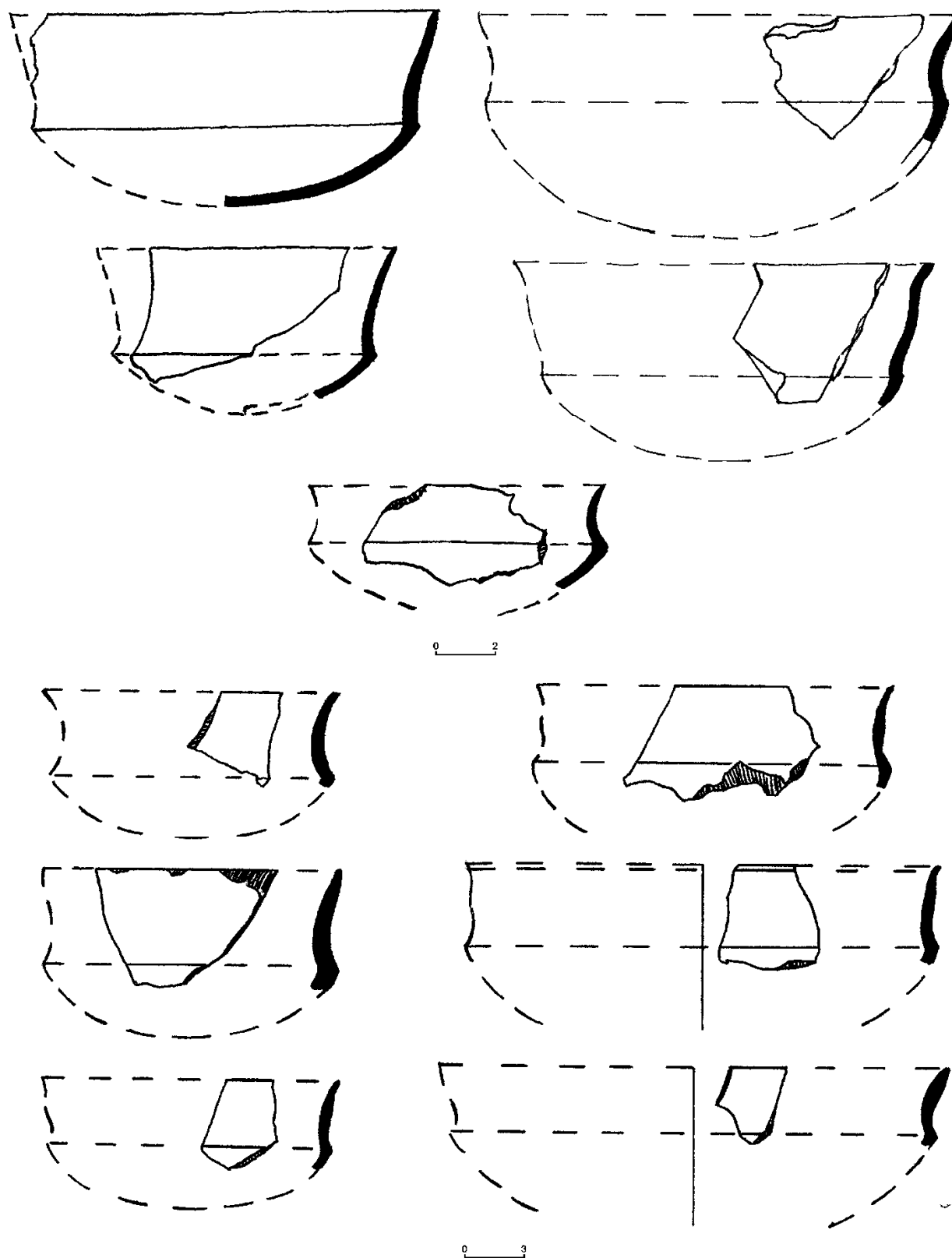
43. Types of ornamentation of painted closed vessels (pitchers).



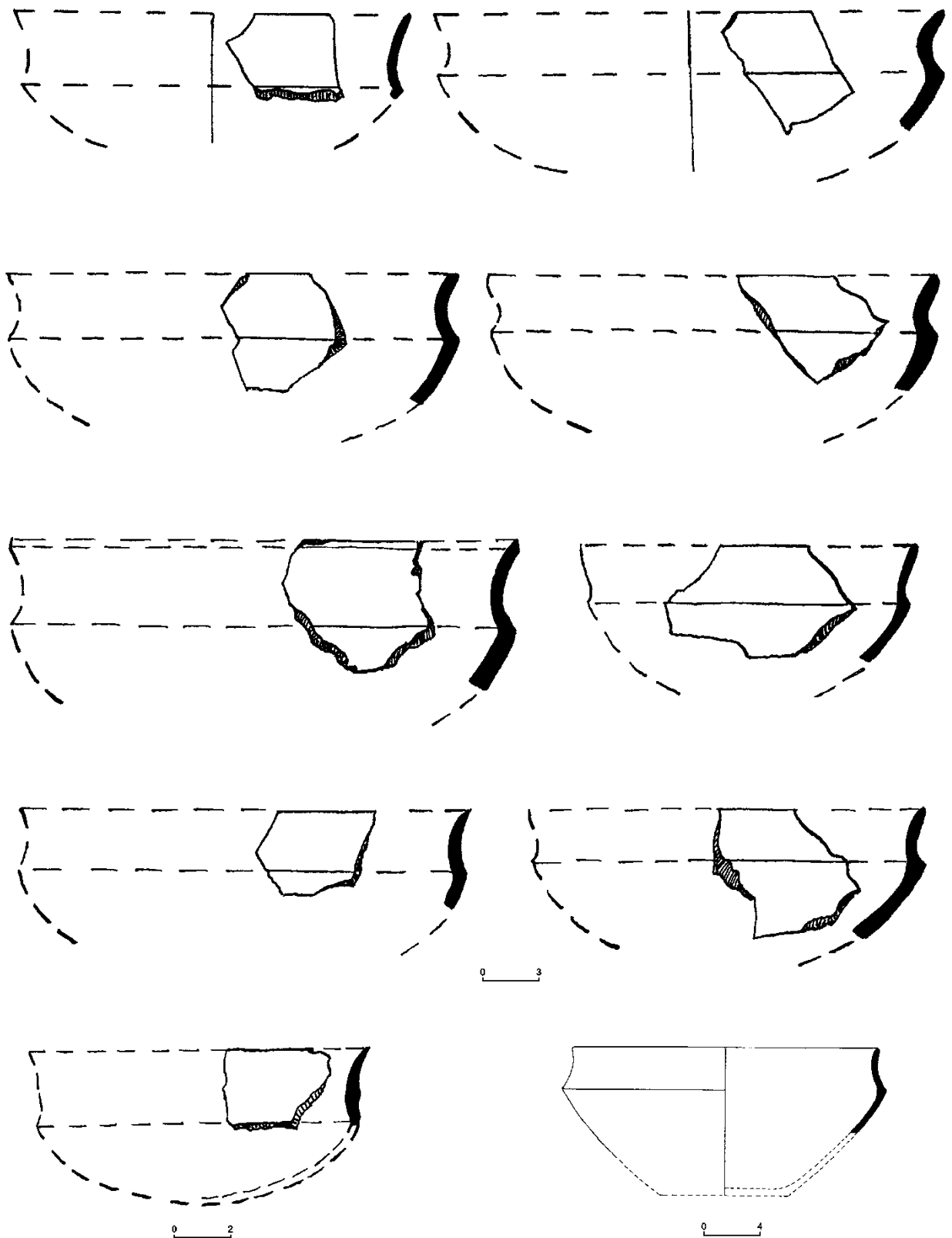
44. Types of ornamentation of painted closed vessels (pitchers, flasks).



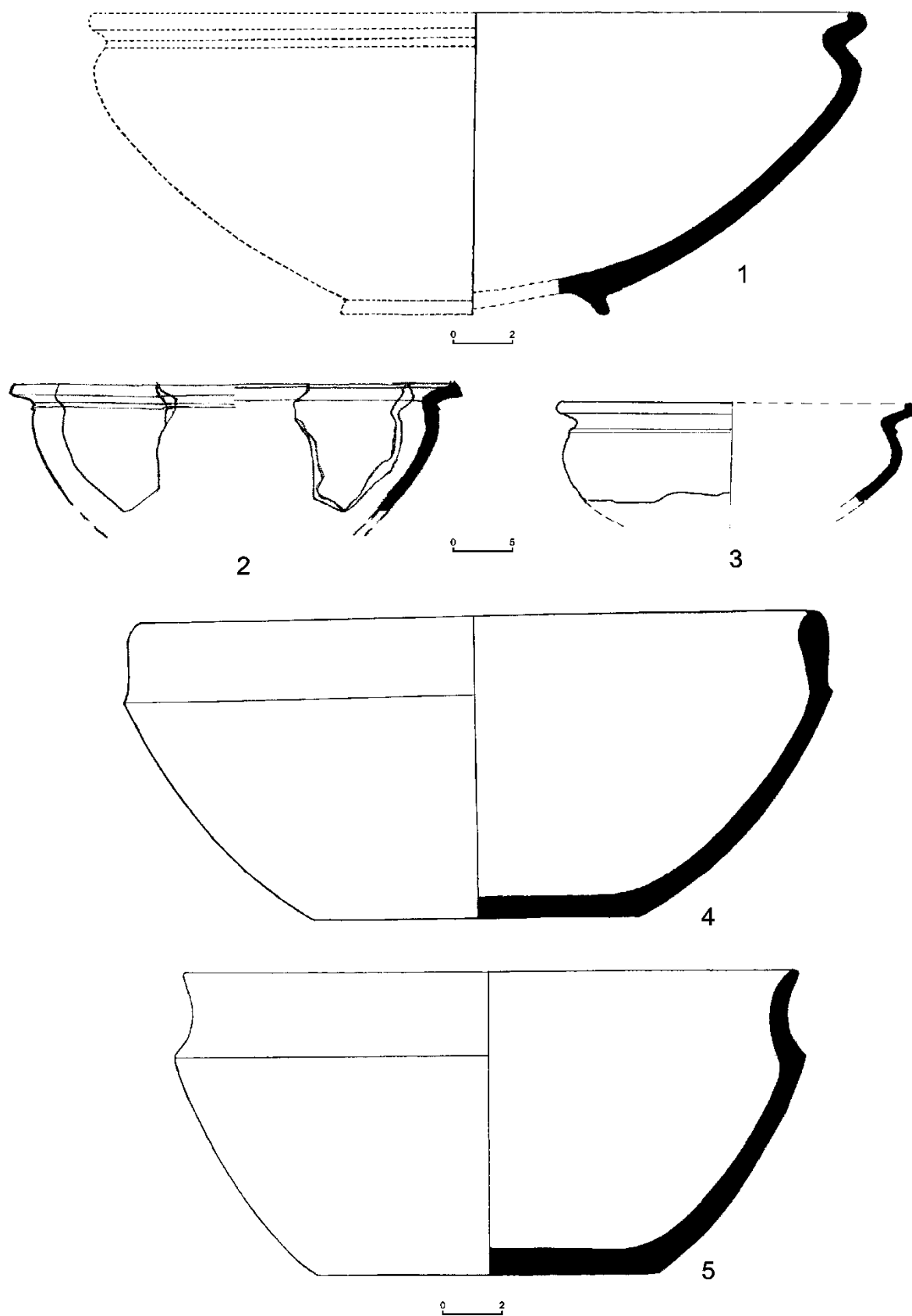
45. Painted pialas (with a bent edge).



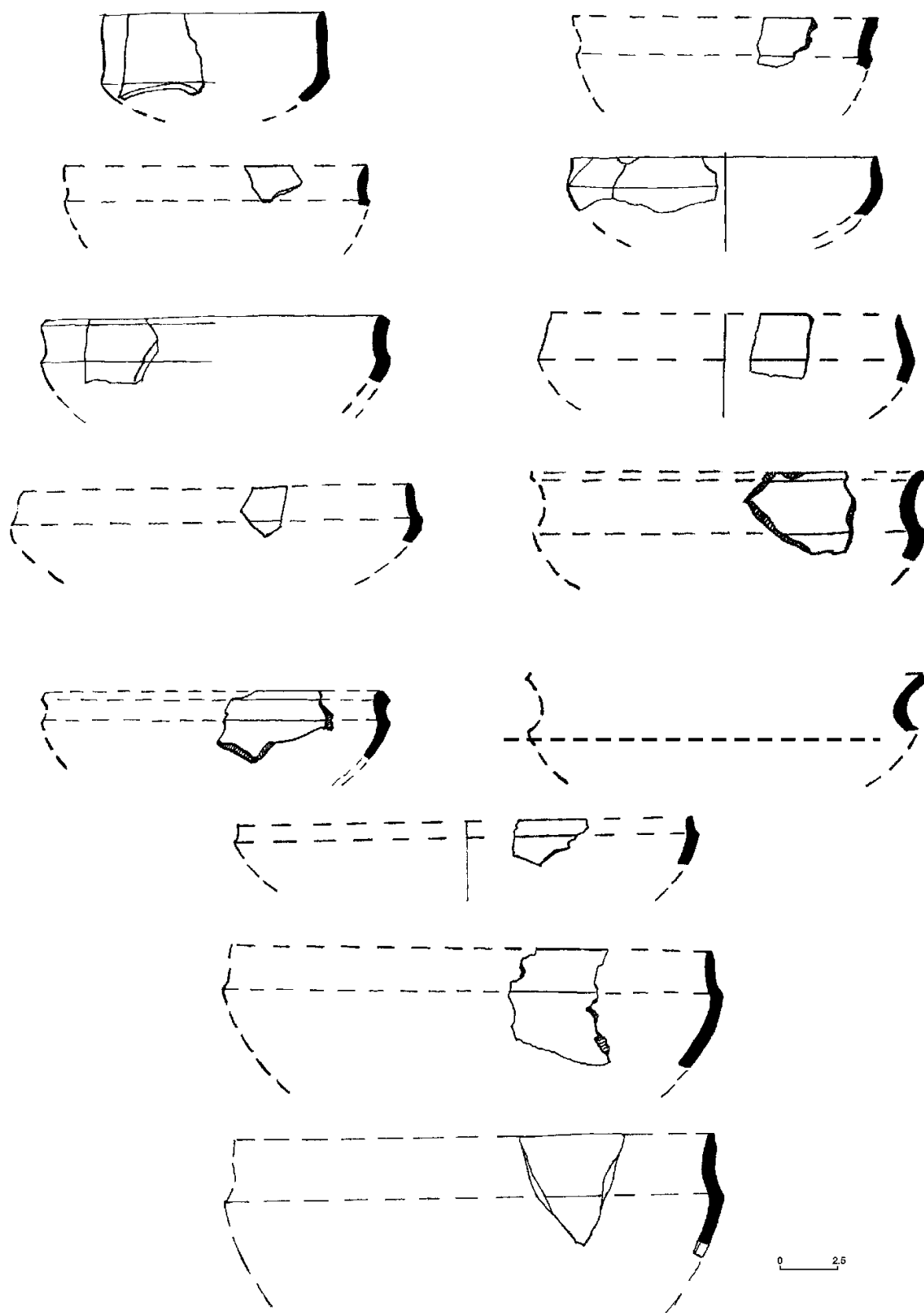
46. Types of bowls and bowl-like tureens (with a polished surface of red, black, brown and grey colours), with an edge bent outward.



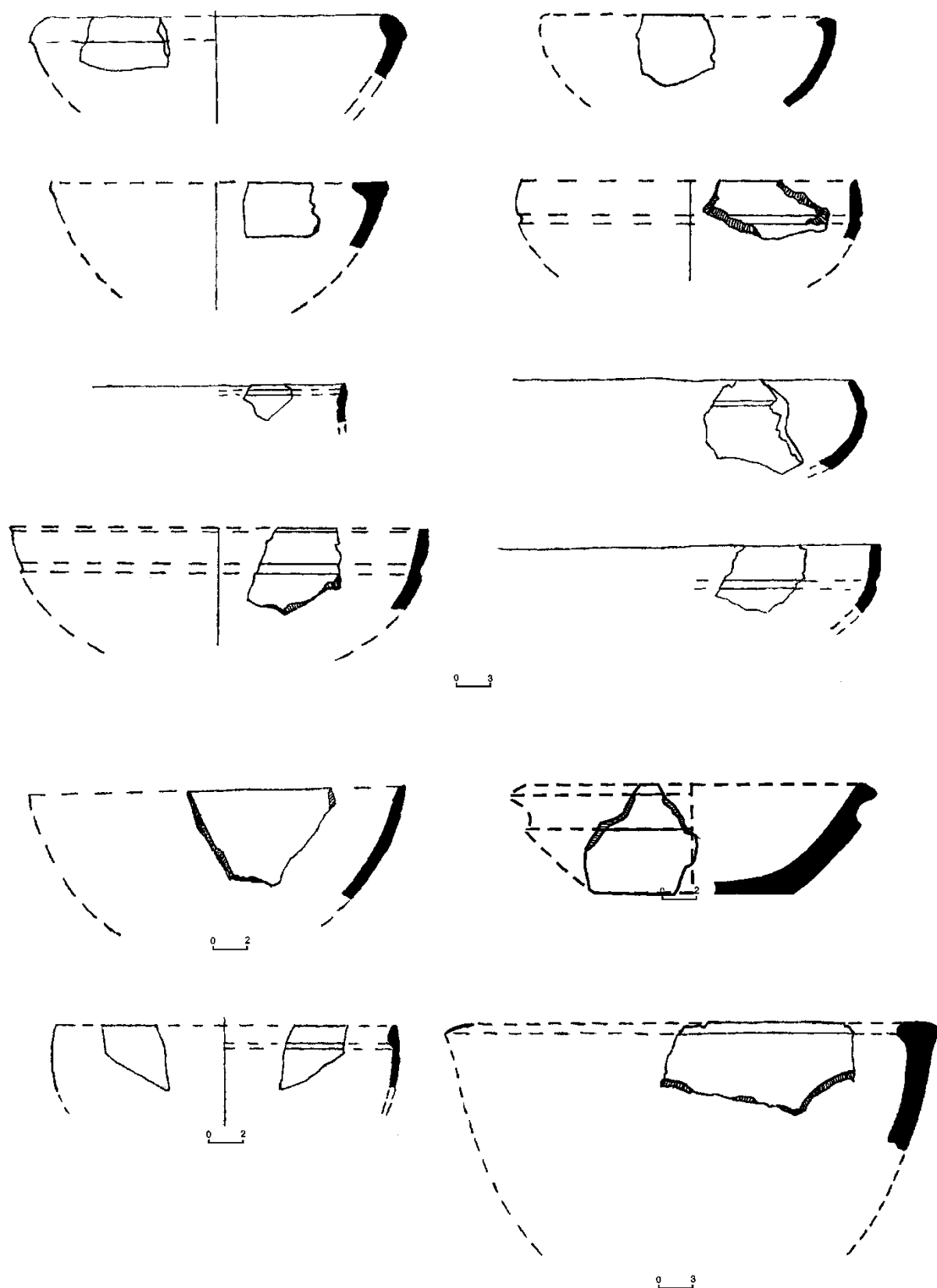
47. Types of tureens and cups.

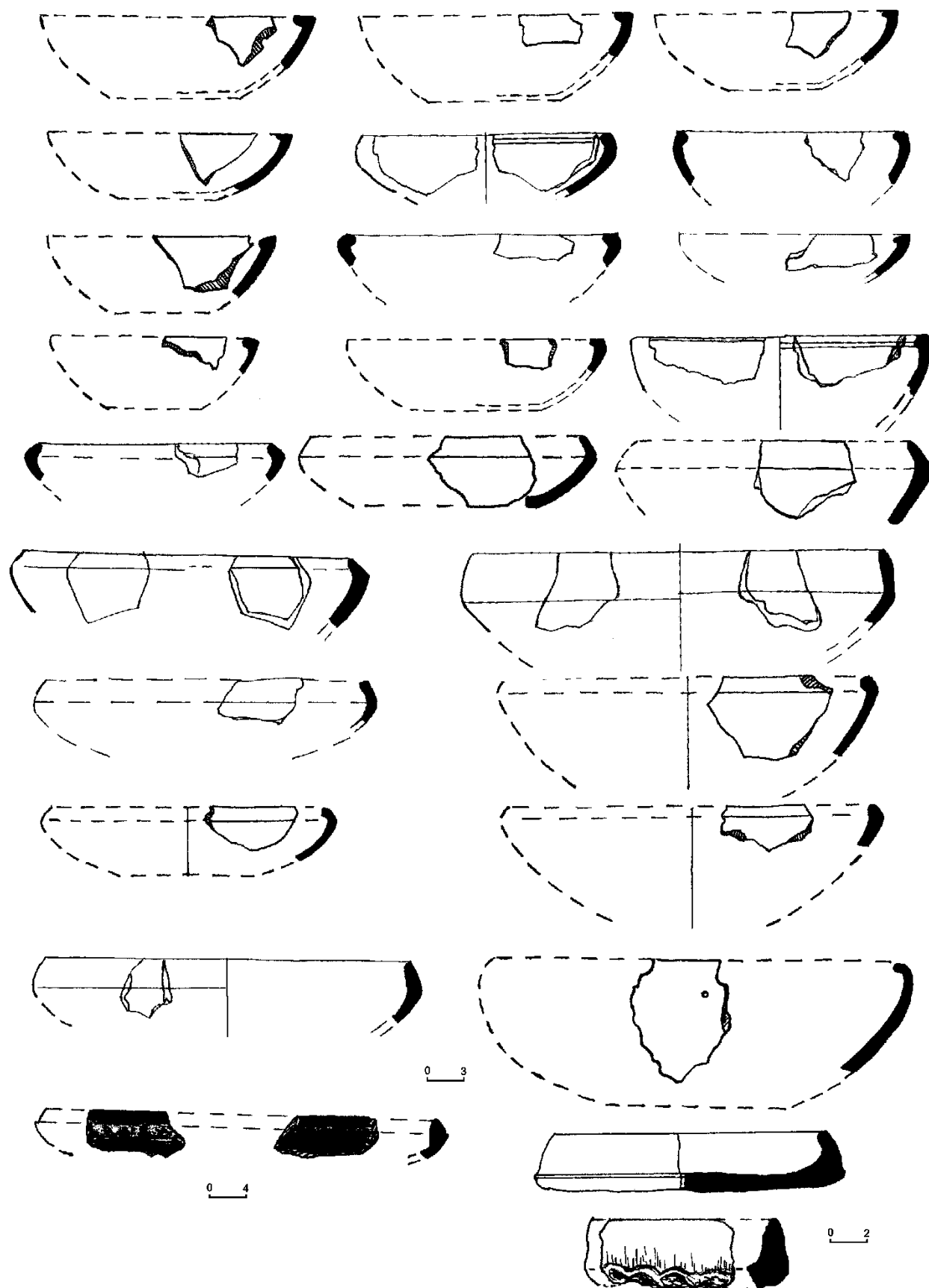


48. Types of large cups and tureens.

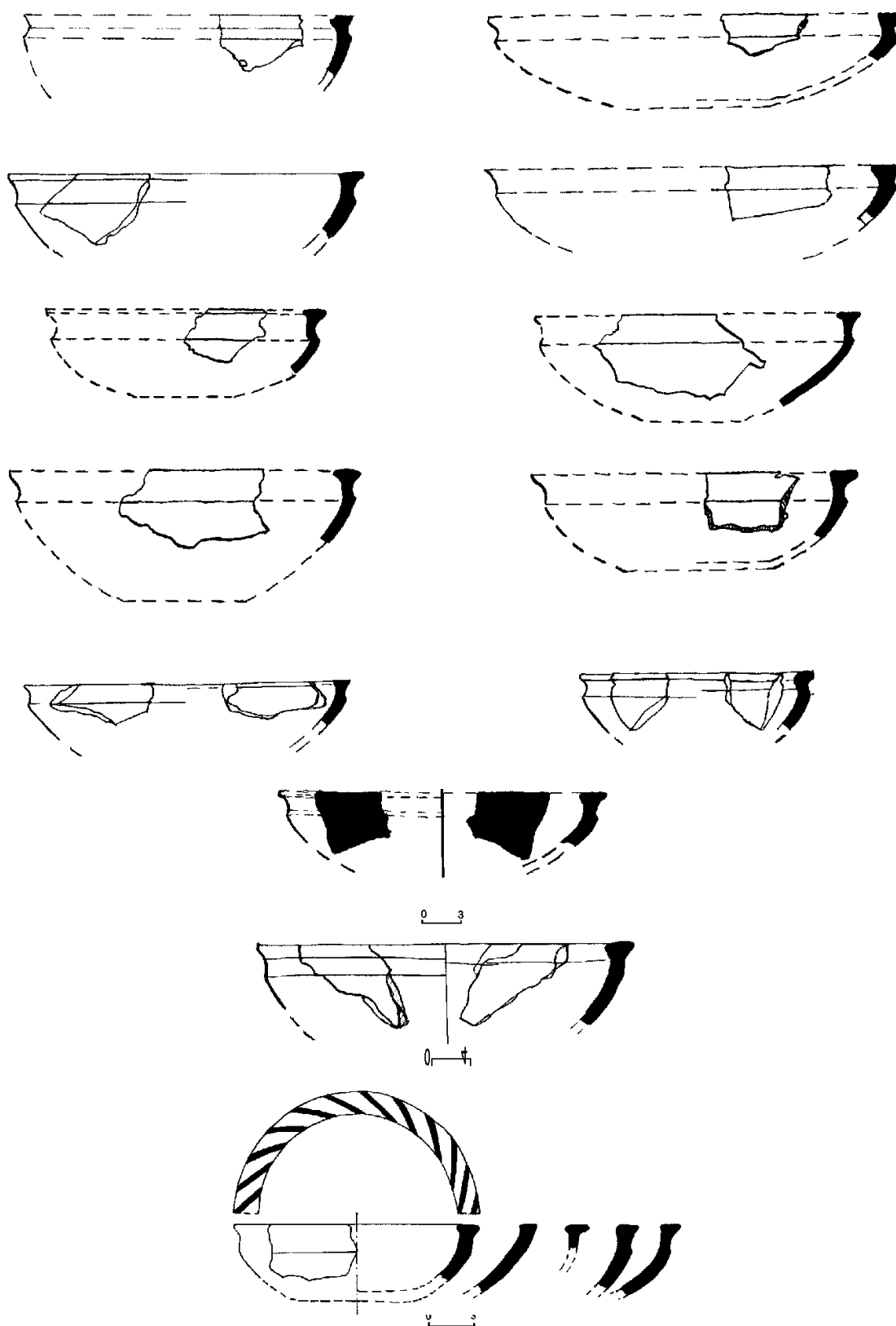


49. Various bowls, cups and tureens with diverse forms of edge profiling.

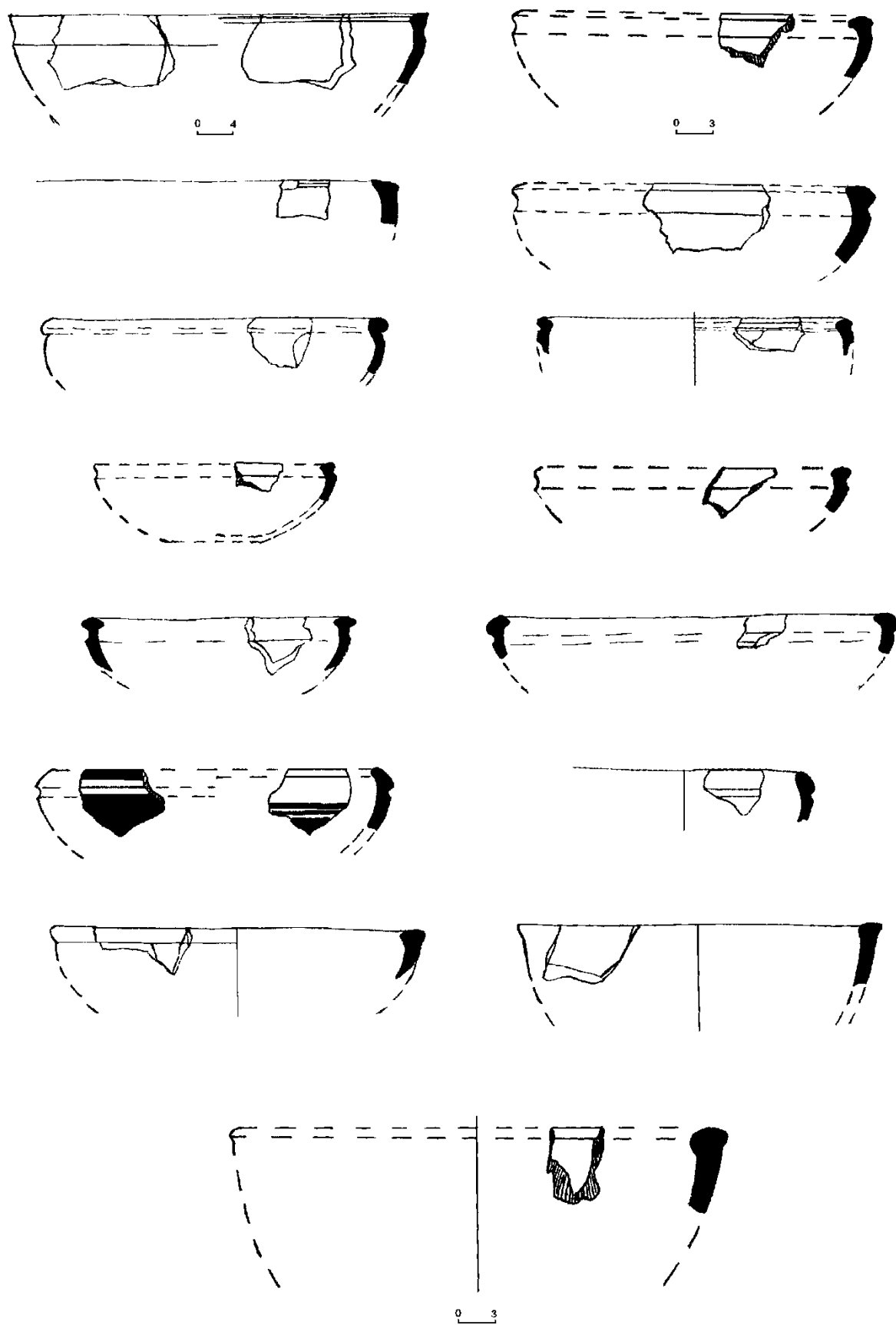




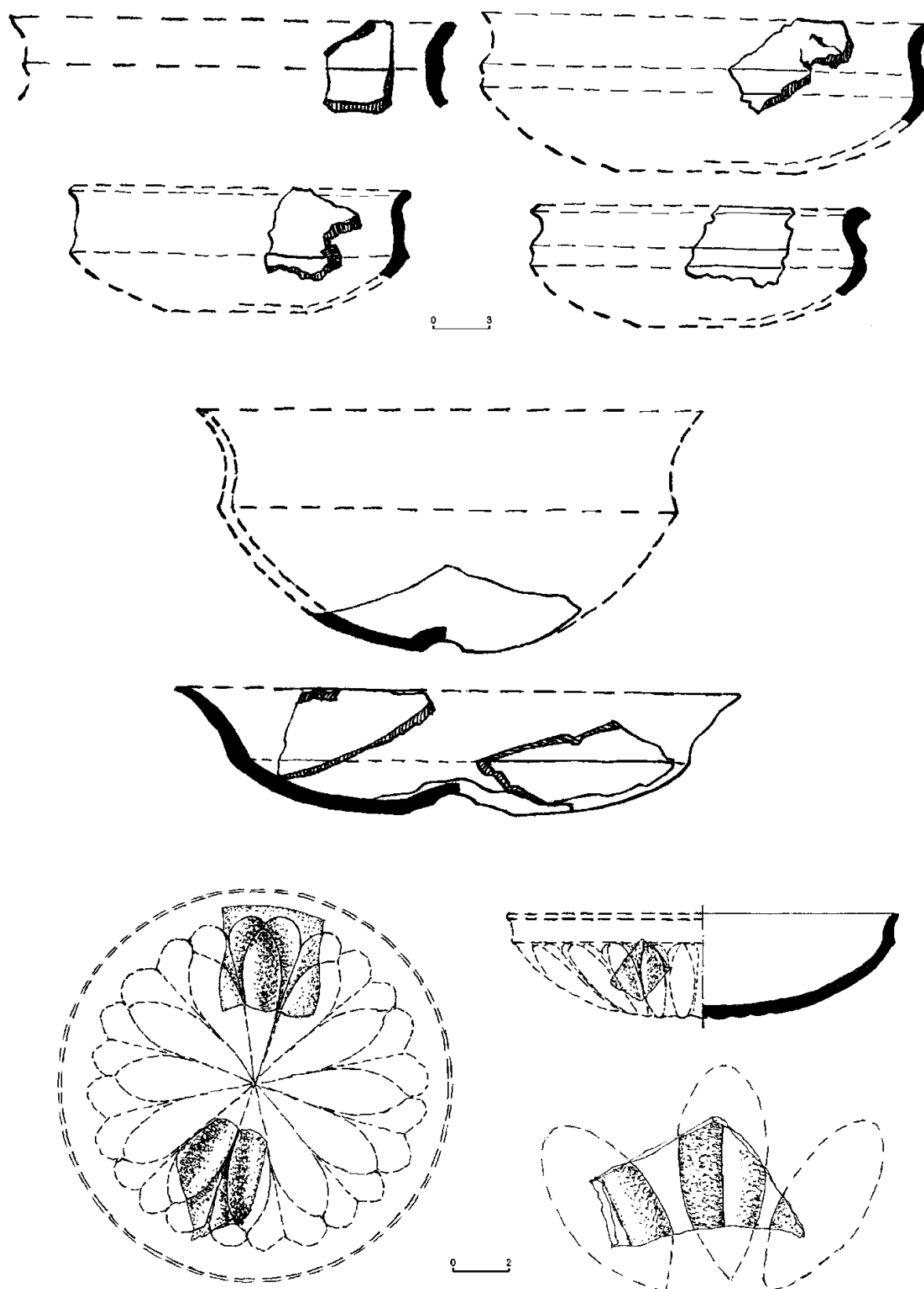
51. Types of cups and tureens with a concave edge.



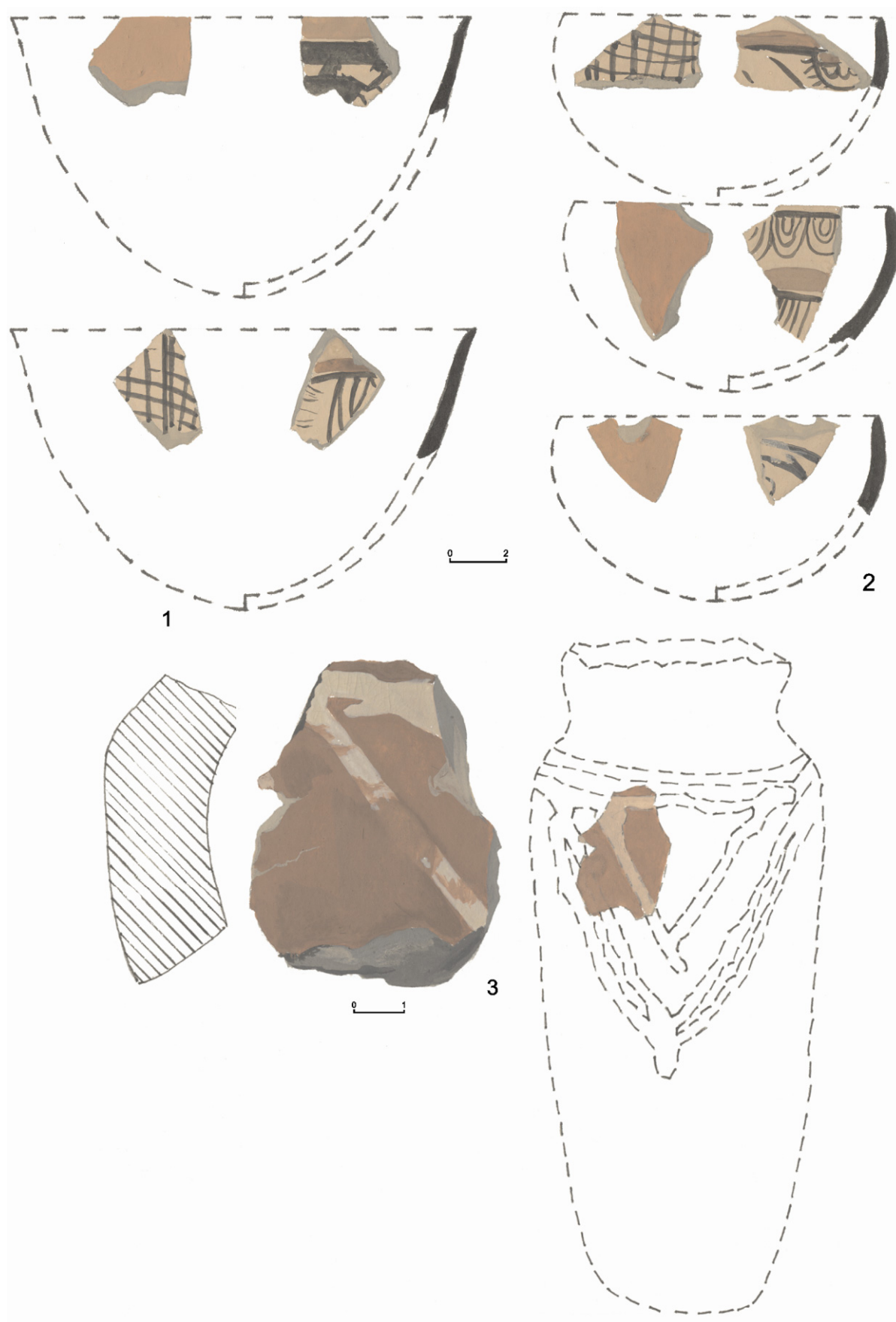
52. Various cups and tureens with a T-shaped rim.



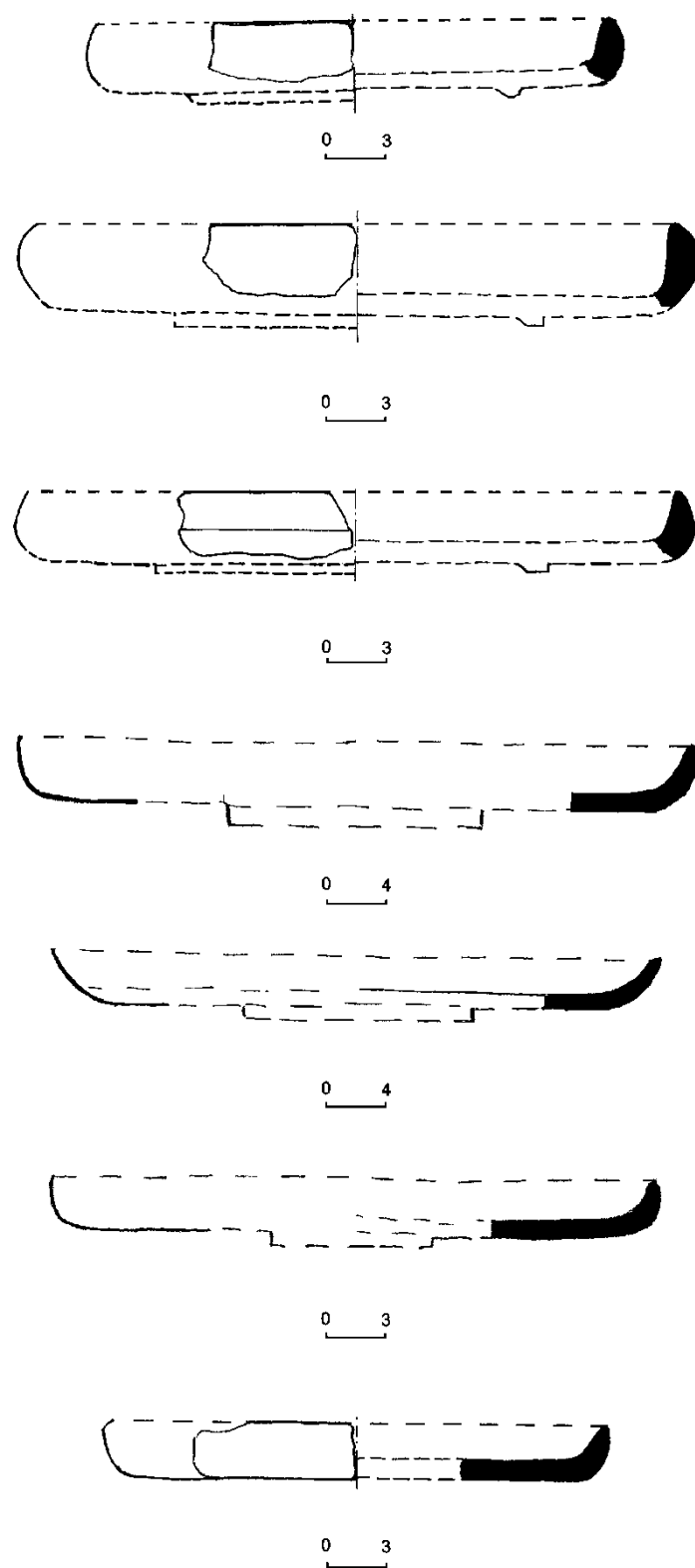
53. Various cups and tureens.



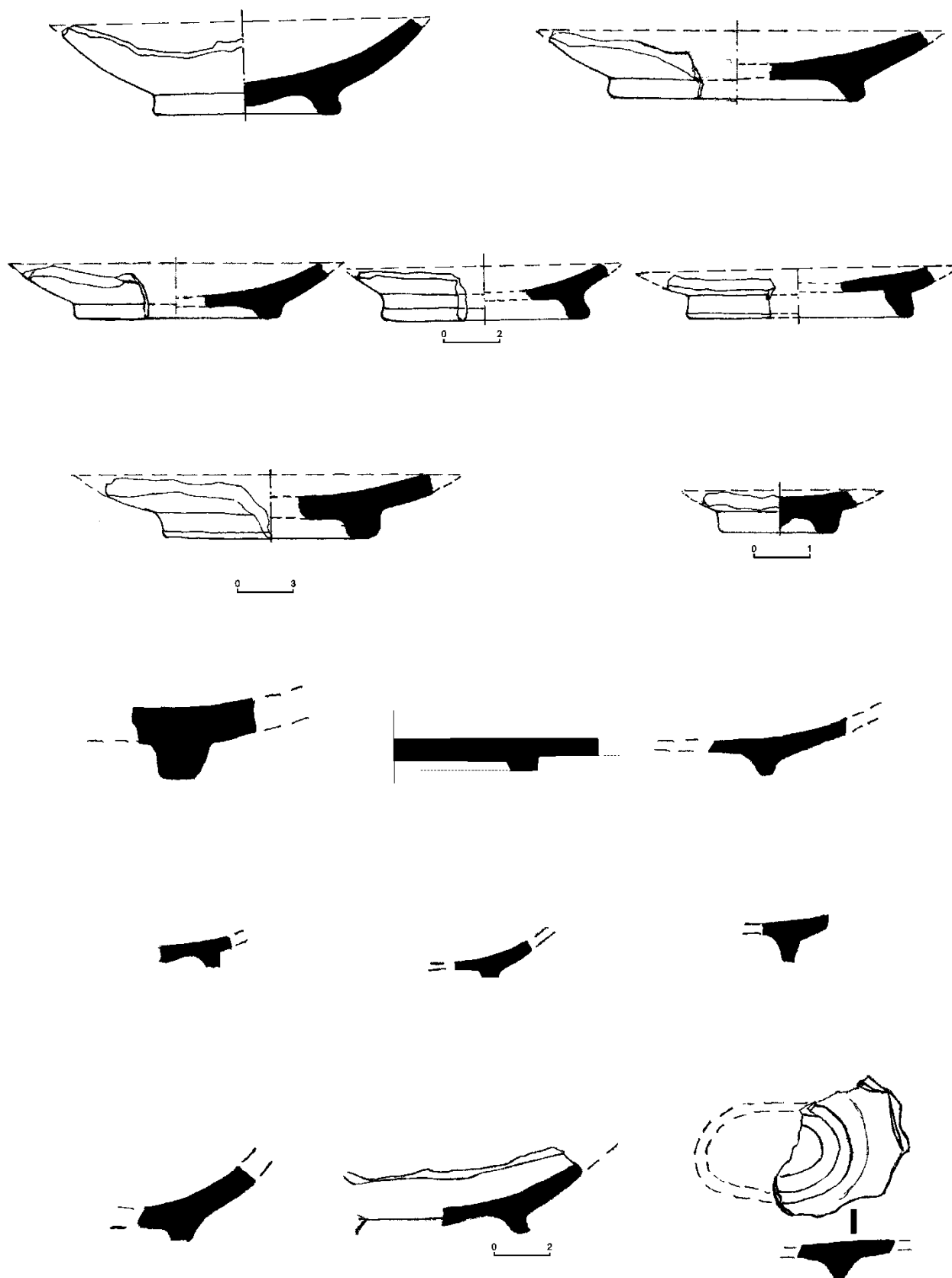
54. Tureens and pialas with an omphalos and relief decoration of the bottom in the form of a rosette.



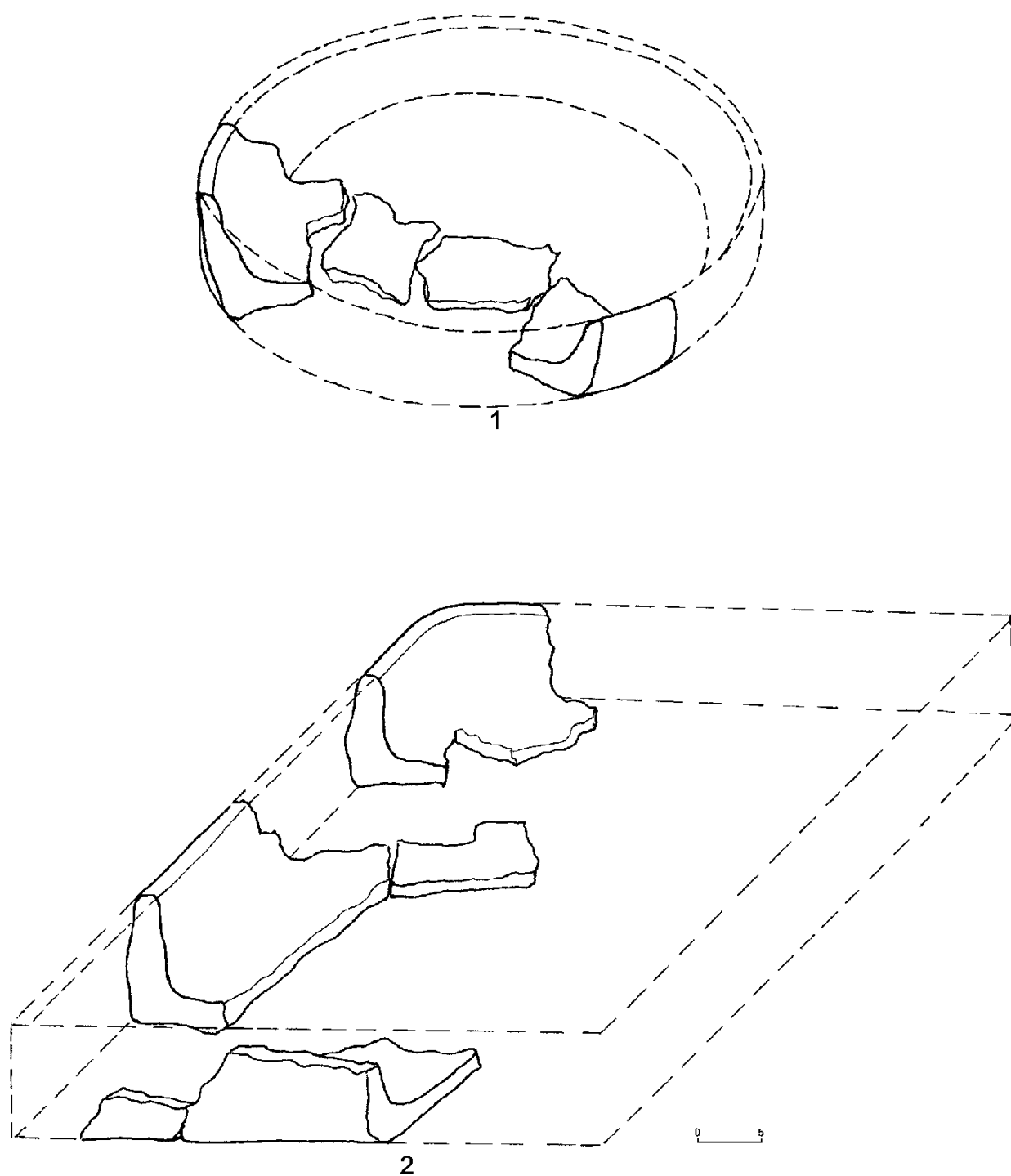
55. 1,2. Egg-shaped and hemispherical painted cups and bowls (of a Megarian type). 3. A painted vessel in the form of the so-called "alabastron".



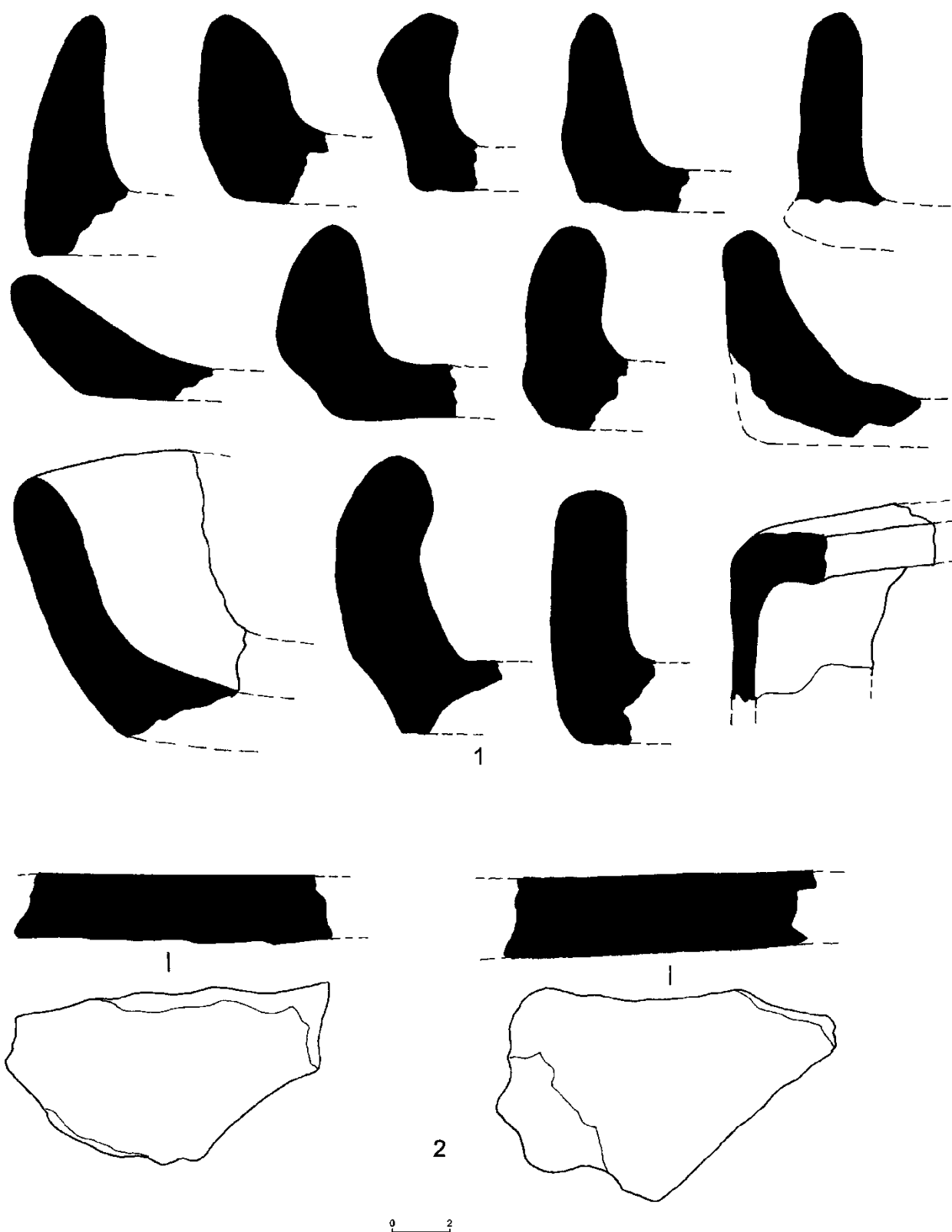
56. Saucers with a horizontal bottom and a circular tray, with a red-polished surface. Imitation of the so-called "Pergamum ceramics".



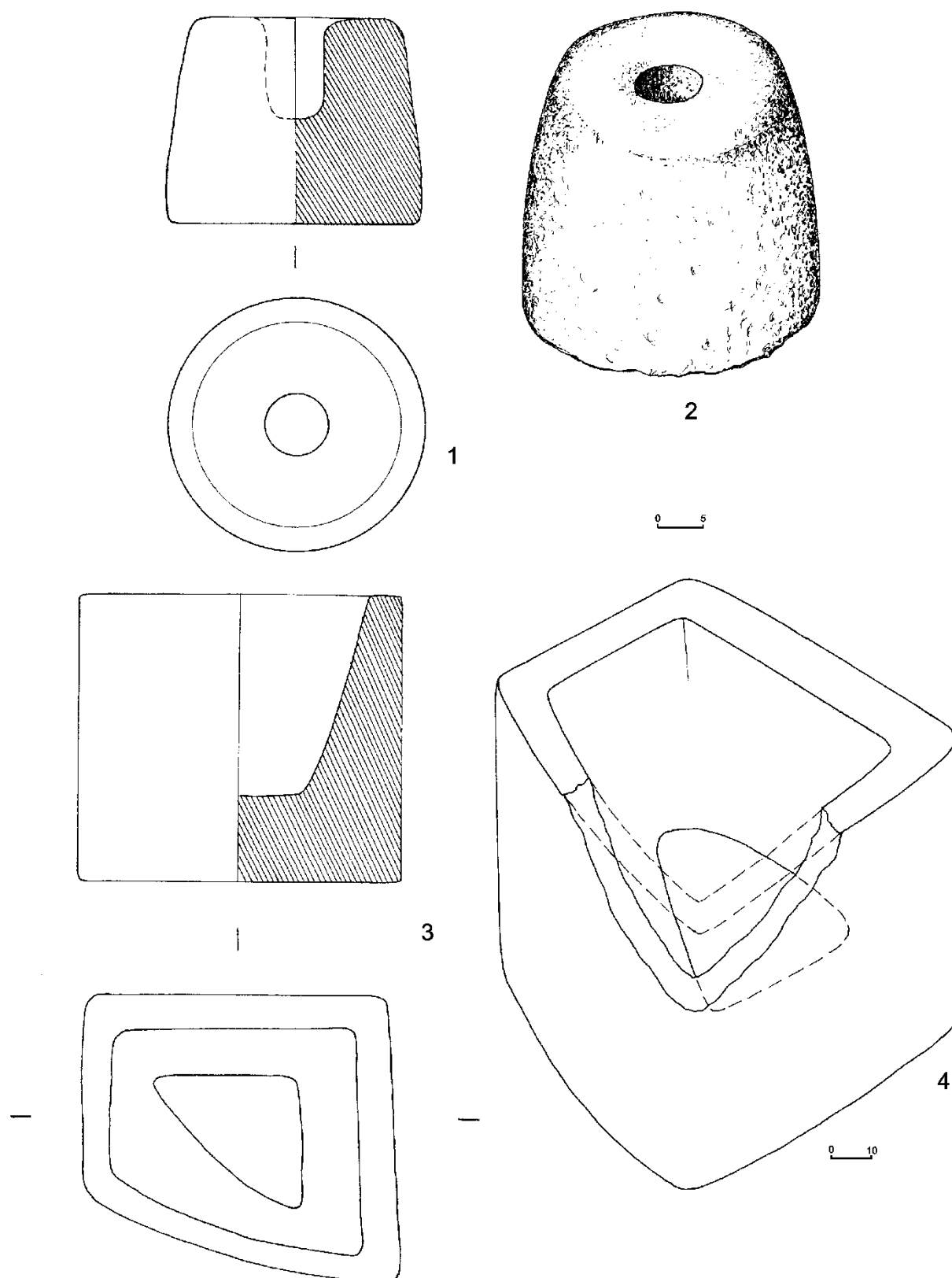
57. Saucers and cups with a circular tray.



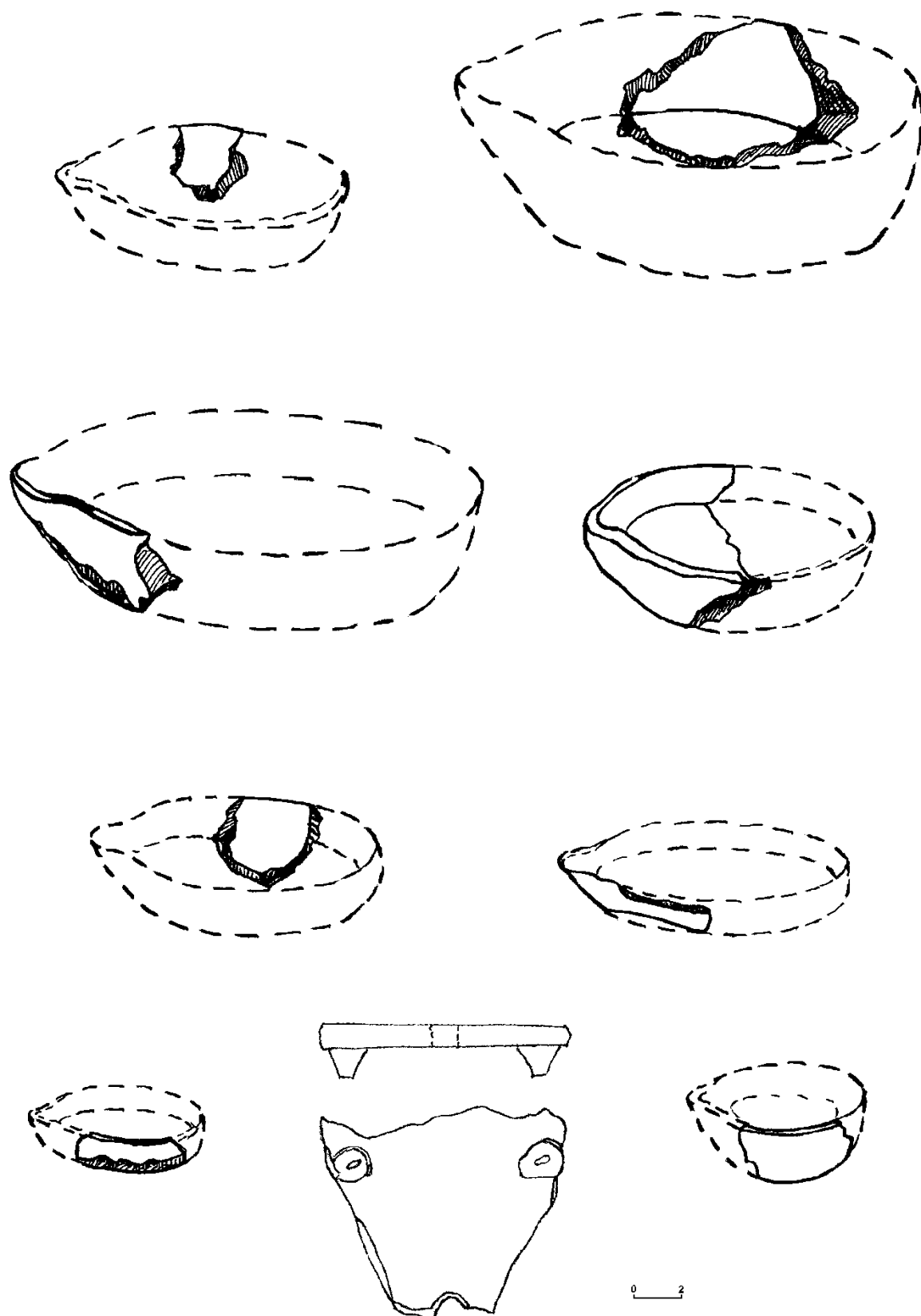
58. Types of "braziers".



59. Profiles of "brazier" sides and bottoms.



60. 1-2. An item in the form of a truncated cone with a hollow in the upper plane (basalt). 3-4. Bath (tub) for the collection of grape pulp (black tuff).



61. Types of clay lamps. A stand with three tapered legs and a central hole (for ceramic burning).



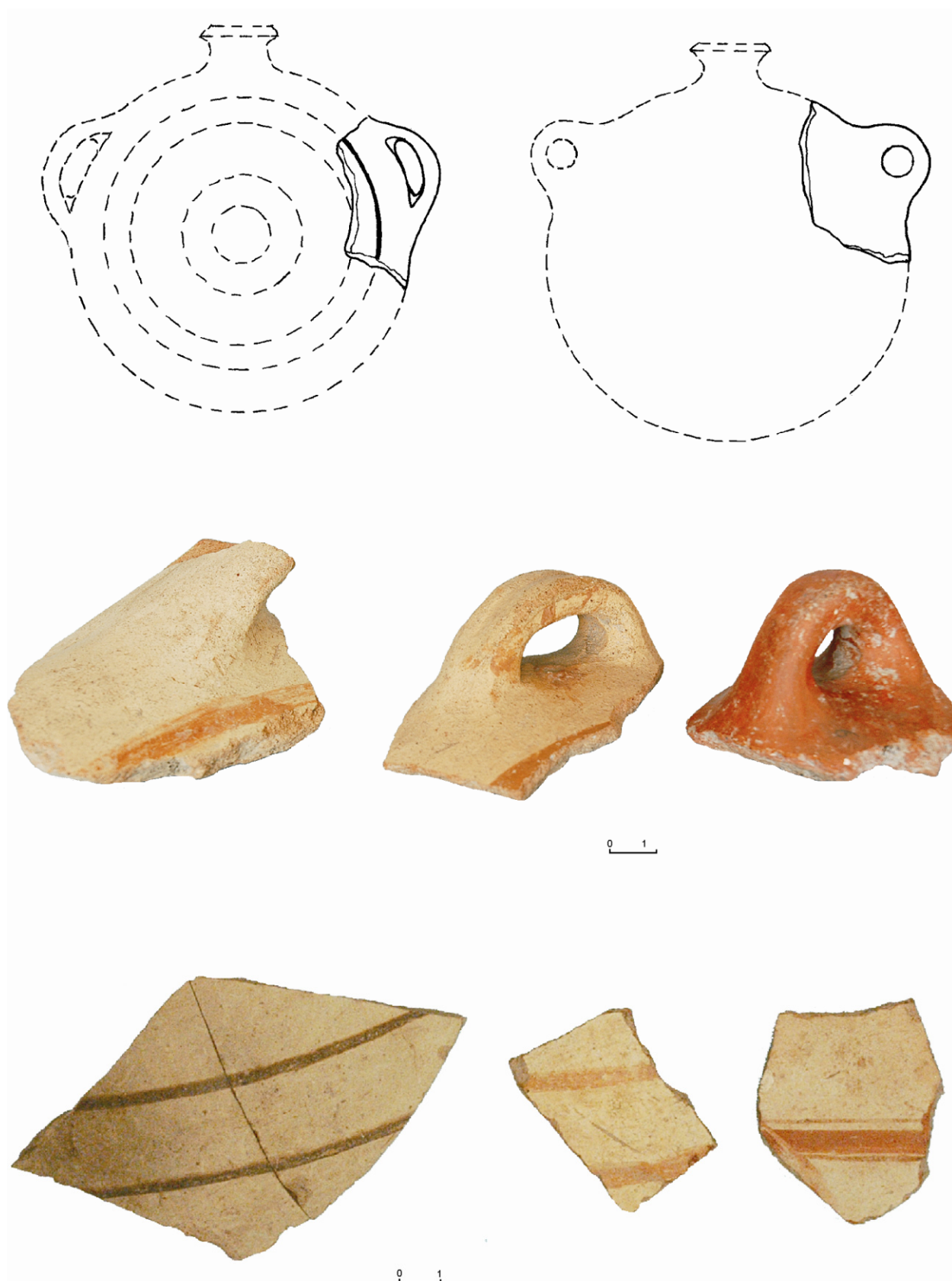
62. The handle of a vessel with a mark print. 2-3 Types of pitcher handles.



63. Fragments of various pitchers.



64. Fragments of vessels with a discharge spout.



65. Fragments of flasks.



66. Fragments of painted pitchers.



67. Fragments of painted bowls.



68. Types of painting.



69. Pythoi.



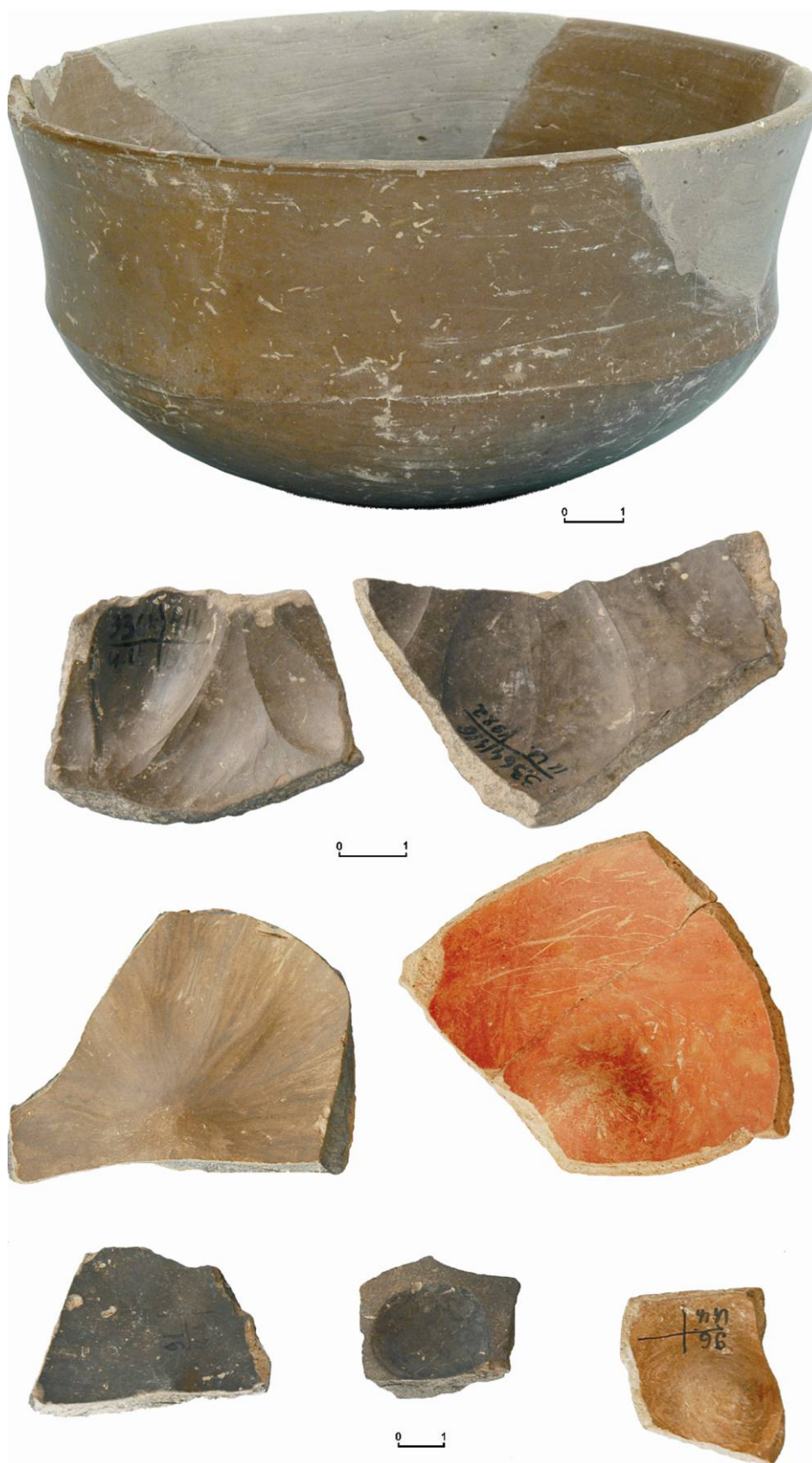
70. Pots.



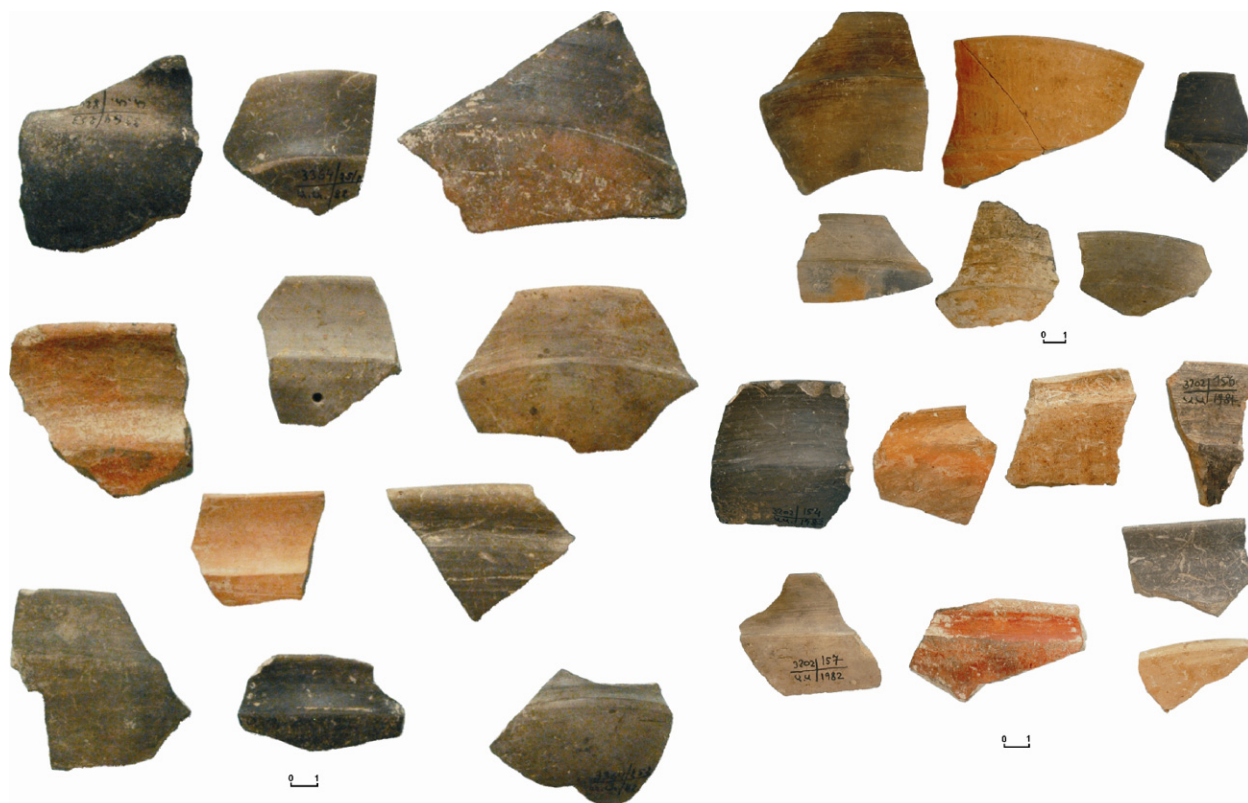
71. Types of ornamentation.



72. A painted bowl (reconstruction).



73. Bowls. Fragments of omphalos and bottoms with a relief decoration.



74. Fragments of bowls and cups.



1



2

75. Tureen-cups.



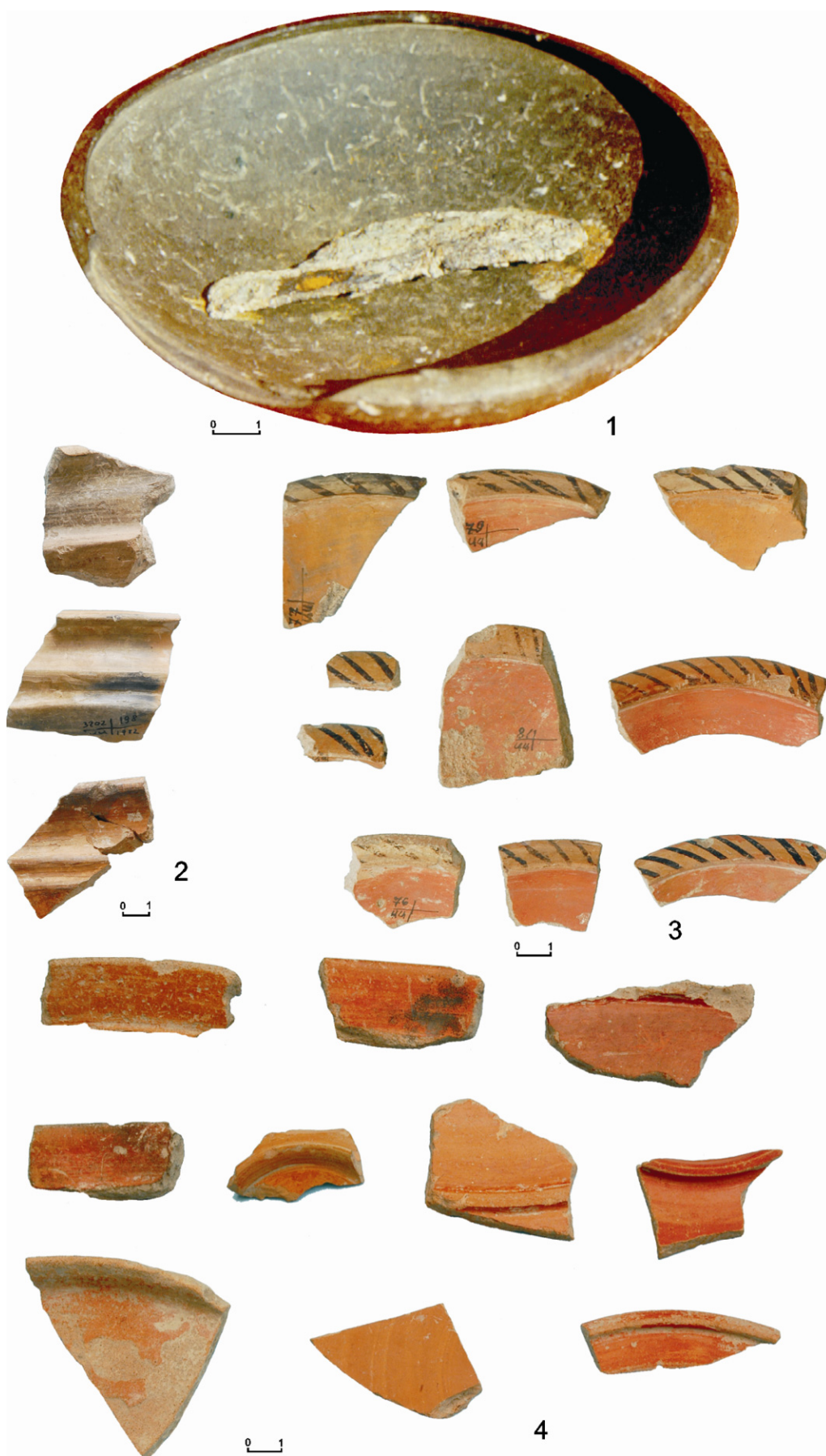
76. Tureens.



77. Tureens and saucers with a circular tray.



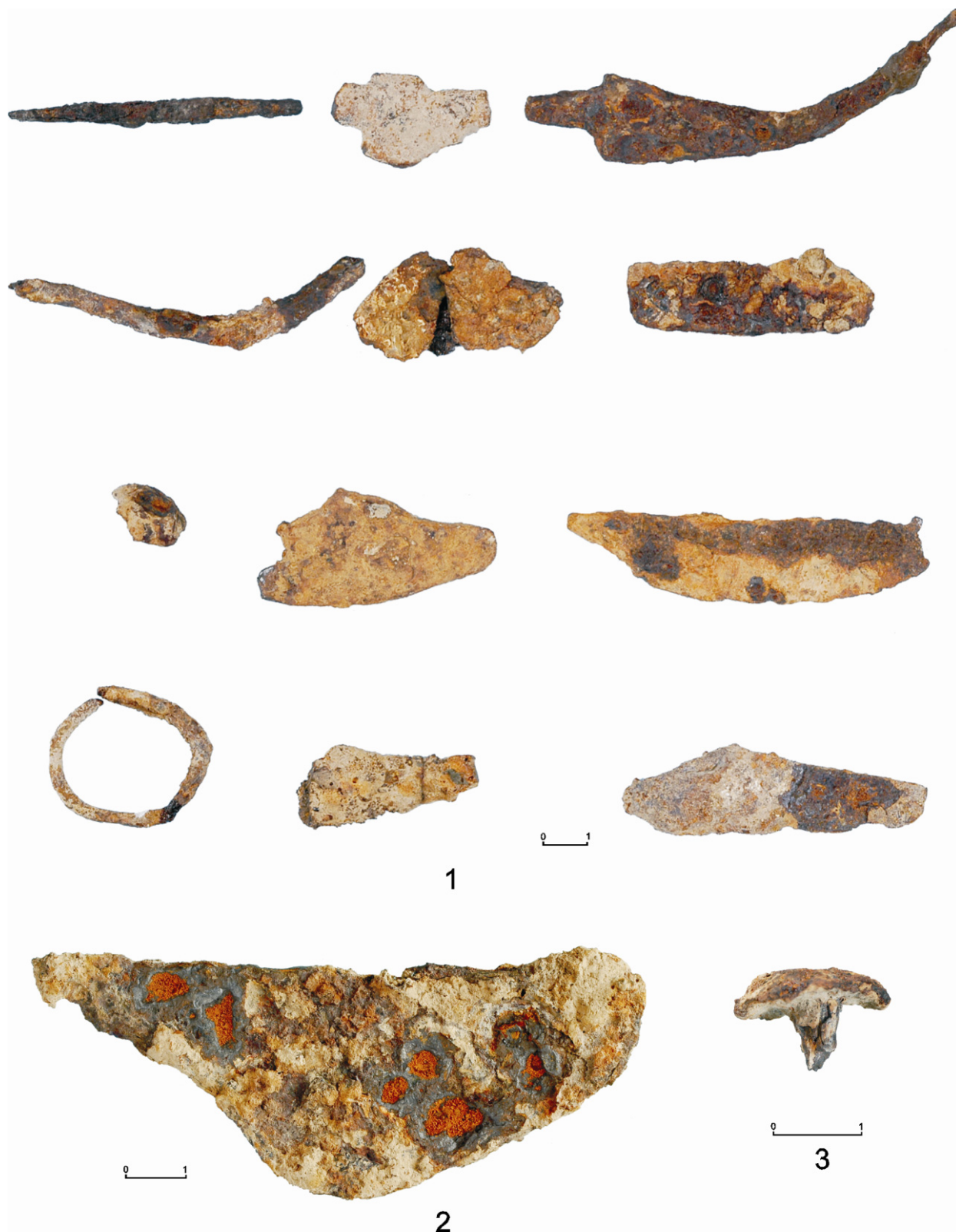
78. Fragments of tureens and cups.



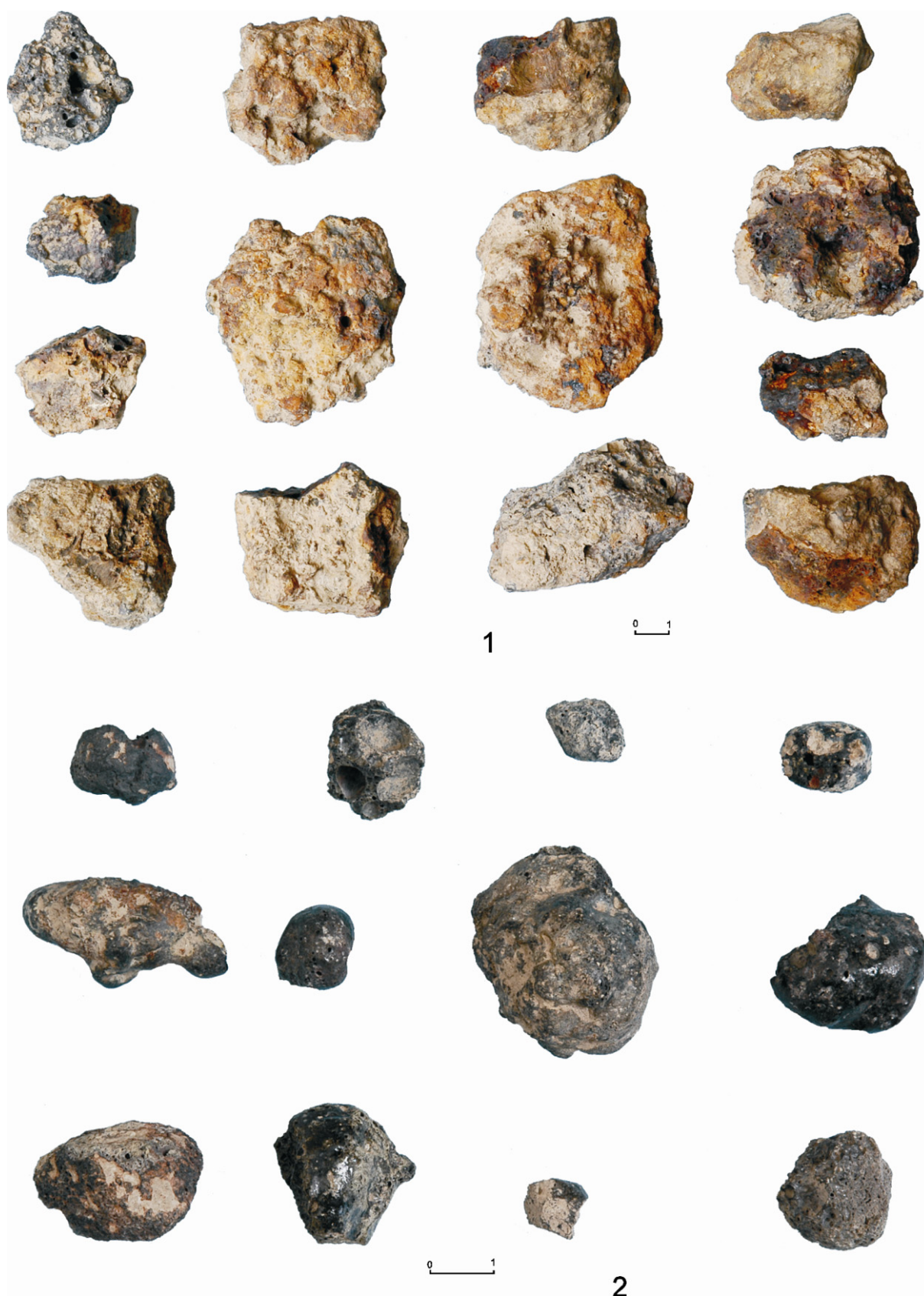
79. Tureens and saucers (fragments).



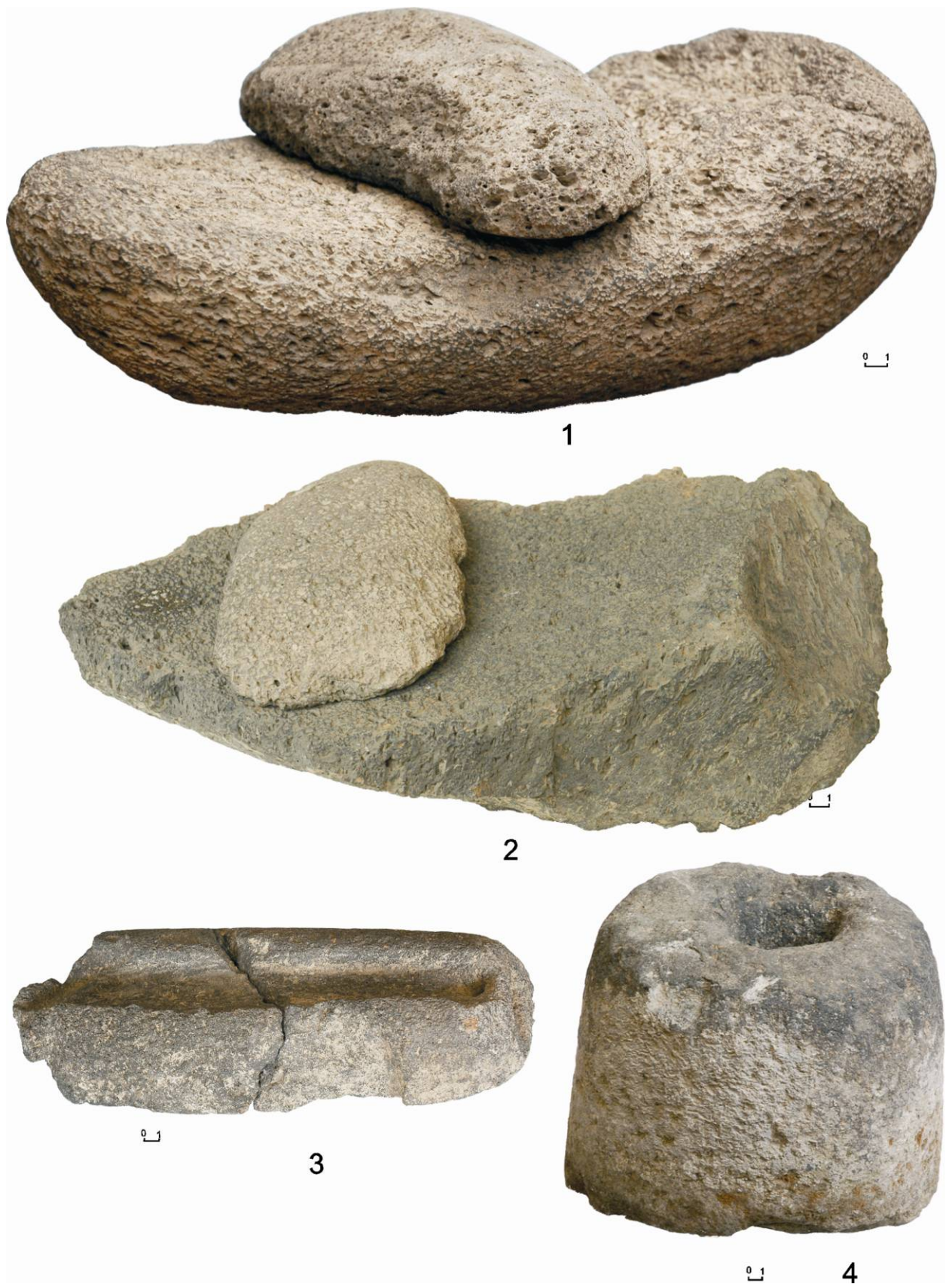
80. Fragments of “brazier” sides and bottoms. Fragment of a bottom with an imprint of a braided mat.



81. Items of steel.



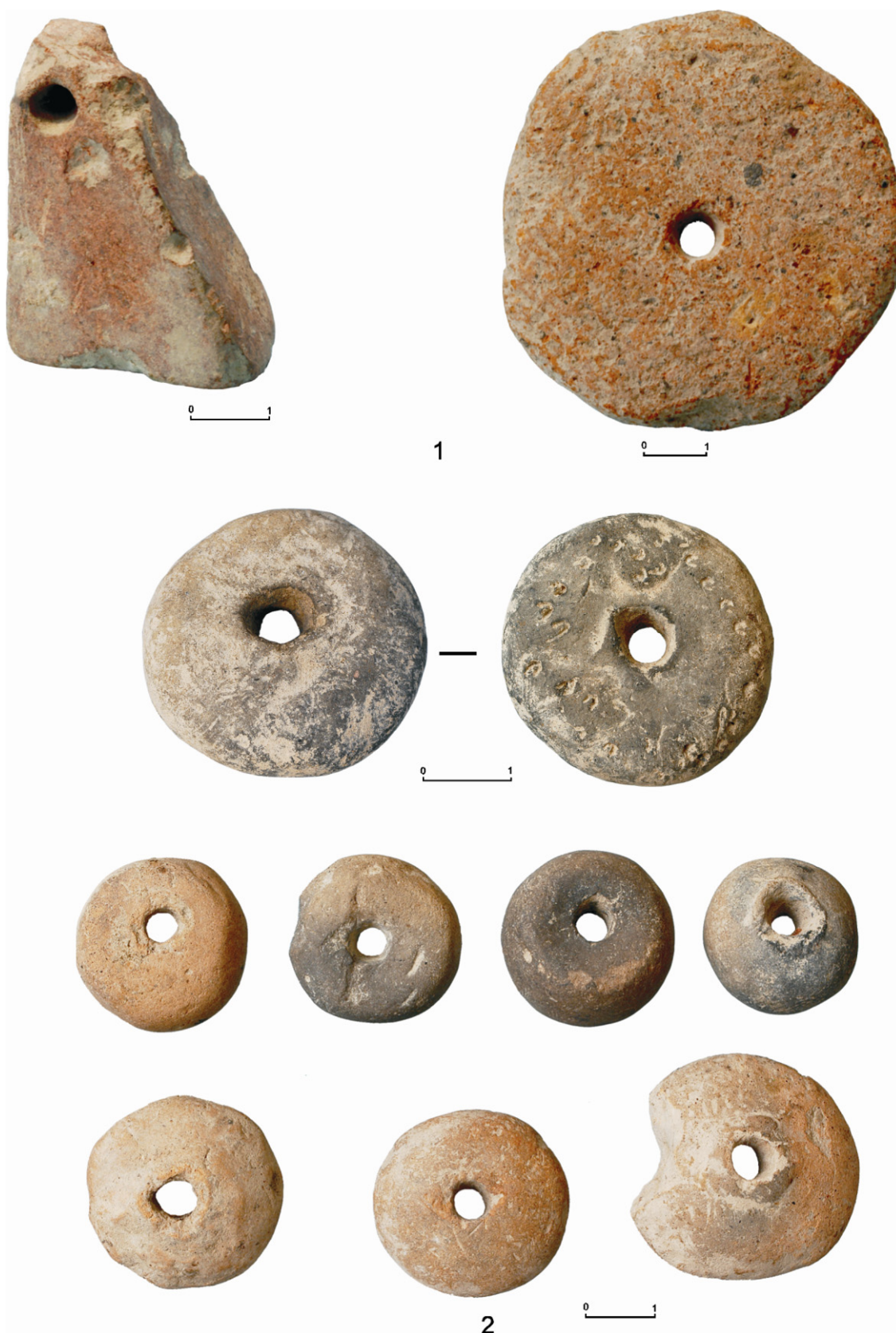
82. Waste of blacksmithing.



83. 1-3. Graters (porous basalt) .1-2. Of a navicular type. 3. With lever control. 4. Mortar (porous basalt).



84. 1. Fragments of lamps; 2. A stand for ceramic burning.



85 1. Stone plummets for looms (pyramidal and disc-type), 2. Clay spindle whorls.



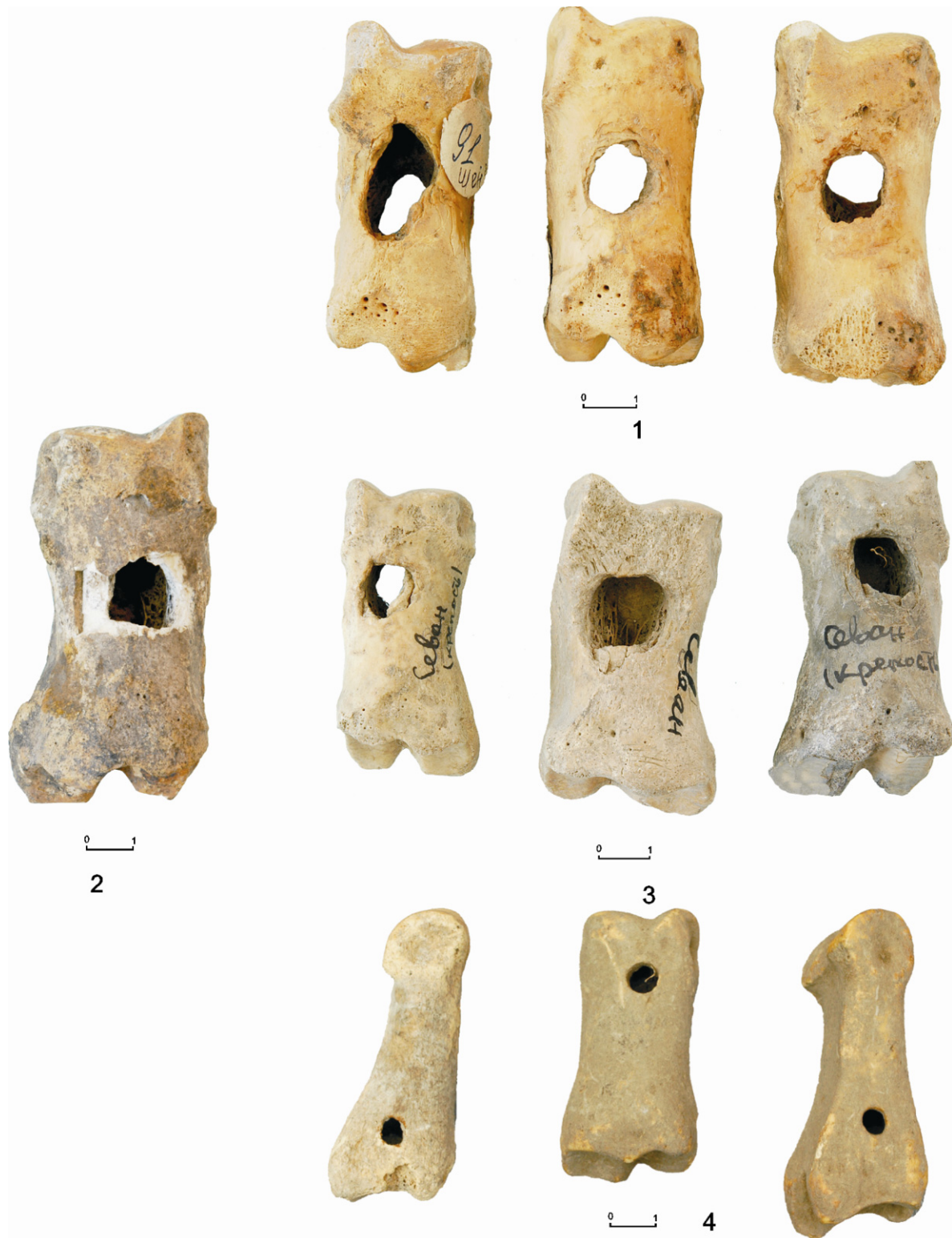
86. Polishers and graters (stone, clay).



87. Images of religious worship: 1. Avan-Arinj (basalt), 2. Karashamb. (basalt), 3. Shengavit (clay).



88. Sacral objects: phalangeal bone of a sheep (goat) limbs. Avan-Arinj (pitcher burial), 1st century BC. 2. Phalangeal bone of a red deer. Avan-Arinj. 3rd millennium BC. 3-4. Idols. Phalangeal bone of a sheep. Avan-Arinj. 2nd-1st centuries BC.



89. Sacral objects: Phalangeal bone of a cow or bull. 1. Shengavit. 3rd millennium BC. 2. Phalangeal bone of a cow or bull. Tsaghkunk. 5th-4th millennium BC. 3. Phalangeal bone of a cow or bull. Sevan fortress. 2nd-1st millennia BC. 4. An image of religious worship. Phalangeal bone of small cattle or a pig. Karnut, second half of the 3rd millennium BC.