

**Investigating Early Long-Distance Interaction in Caracol's Epicenter:
Caracol Archaeological Project Investigations for 2015**

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The 2015 field season constituted the first year of a three year program designed to investigate some of the earlier remains at Caracol with an emphasis on the site epicenter and on residential units that are in close proximity to the central architecture. The season ran from mid-January through mid-March 2015 and involved 32 individuals (see Table 1). The 2015 program focused on 4 specific areas of excavation: (1) the Central Acropolis; (2) the Northeast Acropolis; (3) the constructions immediately west of the base of Caana; and, (4) a residential group, nicknamed "Ultimo," located southeast of the Central Acropolis (see Figure 1). All four loci selected for excavation were selected because all had previously produced earlier remains, thus enhancing the probability of finding archaeological materials that pre-dated the Late Classic Period. In addition to the specific goals of the season, there was an investigation of a new Caracol stone monument on the summit of Structure A13 (A. Chase and D. Chase 2015).

Background

Significant debate remains over the connections that once existed between the Classic Period Maya and other Mesoamerican civilizations. In spite of more than two centuries of archaeological research, we are only beginning to understand the complex political and economic relationships that spanned Mesoamerica. Particularly problematic are the ties between the great city of Teotihuacan in the central highlands of Mexico (see Nichols 2015 for a summary of this city) and the Maya peoples of both the highlands and lowlands. Most scholars agree that connections existed, but the timing, direction, and kind(s) of contact remains unclear. It has been suggested by some that Teotihuacan peoples were influential in the rise to prominence of various Maya centers (e.g., Sanders and Price 1968); however, it is difficult to document face-to-face

interactions and control as opposed to trade within the archaeological data (e.g. Braswell 2003b). And, dates for contact also vary. Among the unanswered questions are: how closely intertwined were these civilizations; did exchange colonies exist between non-Maya peoples and the Maya to manage trade and political contact; did Teotihuacan insert itself into Maya politics; how early or late did these contacts take place; and, finally, what evidence exists in the archaeological record that can answer such questions?

For the Early Classic Period (A.D. 250-550), a time when Teotihuacan was viewed as active in the Maya area (Braswell 2003a), archaeological remains pertinent to this topic (e.g., finds showing clear Teotihuacan ties) are only sporadically found, usually providing intriguing hints at connections, but not definitive evidence for the precise nature of contact (e.g., Ball 1974; Pendergast 1971). However, an interment uncovered at Caracol in 2010 strongly suggests that direct contact took place between that site and Teotihuacan prior to A.D. 350 (A. Chase and D. Chase 2011) – and it is likely that other materials pertinent to Teotihuacan interaction exist in Caracol’s archaeological record. The research being carried out at Caracol for the 2015, 2016, and 2017 field seasons is focused on investigations attempting to answer these questions through the intensive excavation of a series of residential areas in and adjacent to the Caracol epicenter. These areas already are known to contain remains from the appropriate time period(s) because of prior archaeological excavation.

New investigations in these areas should flesh out the rise and development of Early Classic Period Maya settlement at Caracol. And, all selected areas (identified below) have the potential of yielding materials related to central Mexican contact. One of the loci selected for intensive investigation contained the previously identified, but deeply buried, Teotihuacan-related remains. Thus, it is believed that continued focus in the selected locales will result in the recovery of data relevant to the timing and nature of long-distance relationships that existed in Mesoamerica during the Early Classic Period between the highlands and the lowlands, at least at Caracol. This research builds directly upon previous seasons of field work that have examined the

site core, outlying residential groups, and neighborhood development and should help to contextualize the Early Classic long-distance relationships of Caracol.

The Problem: What was the Nature of Caracol's Interactions with Teotihuacan?

Our views of how Maya civilization arose and interacted are constantly changing, being driven by recently collected archaeological data, the use of evolving epigraphic interpretations, and the application of new theoretical perspectives. One question that has remained relevant is what impact other Mesoamerican civilizations had in the Maya area. In particular, there are two “mother cultures” from Mexico with whom the Maya are believed to have interacted, the Olmec of the Gulf Coast (Andrews 1990) and Teotihuacan in highland Mexico (Braswell 2003a). While it is difficult to fully assess the existence of any early relationship between the Olmec and the ancient Maya (but see Inomata et al. 2013), there was certainly some kind of relationship between the ancient Maya and the Mexican city of Teotihuacan. However, exactly what kind of relationship existed remains a matter of a debate. As Clayton (2005:427) has noted: “On one extreme, Teotihuacan is believed to have significantly impacted the political development of Maya civilization. On the other, Teotihuacan’s role in Maya politics is considered to have been largely inconsequential.”

In the 1960s, Sanders and Price (1968) argued that Teotihuacan was responsible for the florescence of Maya civilization and the rise of state level society in that region. According to their position, the Maya were a prime example of a “secondary state” development. Early on, Maya iconography and hieroglyphs were also appended to this model to argue for a Teotihuacan conquest of the Maya region during the Early Classic Period (Proskouriakoff 1993:4-10), something still given possible credence (Cowgill 2003). The iconography that appears on Early Classic carved stone monuments at Guatemalan sites like Tikal, Uaxactun, and Yaxha has been utilized in support of such an interpretation (e.g, Borowicz 2003; Hellmuth 1972), as have items from within the Early Classic burials from Tikal (Coe 1972; Coggins 1975, 1979).

More recently, a Teotihuacan entrada of conquest – or minimally of enthronement of an overlord (*kalo 'mte'*) in A.D. 378 (8.17.1.4.12 11Eb 15 Mak) – has also been identified in Maya hieroglyphic texts (Martin and Grube 2008; Mathews 1985; Schele and Freidel 1990; Stuart 2000). And, the conjunction of Maya epigraphy with iconography and limited archaeological data has led to the persistent postulation that Teotihuacan could have been responsible for the rise of complex forms of Maya political organization (see Braswell 2003b:23-27). Yet, this is not necessarily the case.

While some have suggested unidirectional impact of Teotihuacan on the Maya, others have suggested bidirectional and repeated interactions between Teotihuacan and the Maya area. Archaeological research at Teotihuacan itself has unearthed ceramic and artifactual material of Maya derivation that suggests that interaction took place throughout that site's history (Clayton 2005; Rattray 2001; <http://archive.archaeology.org/0301/newsbriefs/teotihuacan.html>) and Laporte (2003:215) argued that early Maya architectural forms, specifically an E Group (an important architectural assemblages for early Maya ritual and solar observation), were replicated in the Ciudadela at Teotihuacan. Teotihuacan has been viewed as attempting to control highland Guatemalan obsidian (Spence 1996) and possibly cacao on Guatemala's Pacific Coast (Hellmuth 1975). In the lowland Maya area, Early Classic ritual deposits that contain materials of clear Teotihuacan derivation have been recovered from several sites – particularly Altun Ha, Belize (Pendergast 1971), Becan, Mexico (Ball 1974), and Caracol, Belize (A. Chase and D. Chase 2011). Those recovered from Altun Ha and from Caracol antedate the events interpreted from the epigraphic record. While central Mexican green obsidian is found throughout the Maya area (Moholy-Nagy 1999; Spence 1996), certain pottery vessels in the Maya area also have been ascribed a Teotihuacan origin (Ball 1983; Sharer 2003); but how either the ceramics or the obsidian came to be in the Maya area cannot be stated with any certainty. Importantly, recent isotopic analyses of human bone also has shed significant light on the interaction question: peoples from all over Mesoamerica are represented at Teotihuacan (Spence et al. 2004; White et

al. 2002); in contrast, no one of Teotihuacan origin has yet been identified in the burials containing Teotihuacan items at Copan (Sharer 2003), Tikal (Wright 2005a), or Kaminaljuyu (White et al. 2000).

Early Caracol

Caracol is an excellent location to examine the nature of Teotihuacan interaction with the ancient Maya. The site has a long history, one that precedes typical 4th century Early Classic Period Teotihuacan influence, having been established in the Middle Preclassic Period (Chase and Chase 2005, 2006). Thus, incipient development and external impact can be assessed. Further, a Teotihuacan-related cremation occurs in the Northeastern Acropolis (A. Chase and D. Chase 2011) that can be bracketed by earlier and later primary deposits. This important interment was recovered deep in the central plaza of the Northeast Acropolis and the deposit has been interpreted as the possible remains of an actual Teotihuacano who married into the Caracol royal family, perhaps as a trade envoy. This individual was buried sometime between A.D. 300 and A.D. 350 in a completely non-Maya style – in a Teotihuacan-style cremation pit with green obsidian artifacts, a possible warrior's costume that included a mirror and atlatl, and a sizeable ceramic assemblage of vessels that are both Maya and central Mexican, at least stylistically (see Figure 1 and A. Chase and D. Chase 2011; D. Chase and A. Chase 2011 summarize typical Caracol burial patterns; Sempowski 1992, Sempowski and Spence 1994, Serrano 1993, and Sugiyama 2005 summarize Teotihuacan interment patterns). Burials with ceramics that are "Protoclassic" in date (ca. A.D. 50-350), or transitional from the Late Preclassic (B.C. 300 to A.D. 250) to the Early Classic Periods (A.D. 250-550), have been recovered from 6 residential groups in and around the Caracol epicenter. Another burial in the Northeast Acropolis, dating to A.D. 150, exhibits ceramic ties to the Guatemalan highlands around Kaminaljuyu (Chase and Chase 2005:22), a site that figures prominently in discussion of Maya-Teotihuacan interaction (Kidder et al. 1946; Sanders and Michels 1977). Other interments from Caracol contain later

Early Classic cylinder tripods (e.g. A. Chase 1994:167-169) that have been linked – at least stylistically - to Teotihuacan (e.g., Ball 1983; Demarest and Foias 1993).

Thus, previous archaeological investigations indicate that Teotihuacan-related remains are likely to be found in excavations at Caracol and these remains can be used to identify appropriate areas for further detailed investigation. The archaeological data imply that there was some kind of relationship between Caracol and highland Mexico, making it likely that a highly structured investigation will generate other archaeological data relevant to the research question and of interest to a broad range of Mesoamerican scholars.

2015 Research (to be continued in 2016 and 2017)

Given the fact that most mapped surface remains at Caracol date to the Late and Terminal Classic Periods, the research being undertaken during the 2015, 2016, and 2017 field seasons is focusing on deep excavation within raised plazas in Caracol's epicentral residential groups and on further investigations in nearby residential groups that have already produced materials of the appropriate Protoclassic to Early Classic time periods. Previously identified patterns are being used and tested. In particular, given the unusual early Early Classic cremation burial that was found during the 2010 field season (A. Chase and D. Chase 2011), the centers of plazas are being specifically investigated (something that has not previously been a project focus).

The Northeast Acropolis was a primary focus of 2015 research, as it was an area where previous excavations encountered Protoclassic and Early Classic Period occupation and strong evidence for a direct Teotihuacan relationship. Excavation of Structure B34, the eastern "ancestral" temple of the Northeast Acropolis, in 1994 and 1995 recovered a series of deposits and refuse ranging from the Late Preclassic through the Terminal Classic Periods, indicating that the group had a long occupation history and was certainly occupied until the final abandonment of the site. Deeper probes in this plaza in 1994 and 1995 recovered buried Preclassic buildings and Protoclassic deposits, including a probably Late Preclassic cache in the northern part of the plaza and a burial in the eastern side of the plaza that dated to approximately C.E. 150 and had 37

ceramic vessels and over 7000 shell and jadeite beads that were once sewn onto a cloth mantle (Chase and Chase 2005; Rich 2003). In 2010, a plaza test-pit on the cross-axis of the northern and eastern earlier buildings resulted in the recovery of the Teotihuacan-related cremation (A. Chase and D. Chase 2011) described above on the same eastern axis as the Protoclassic burial found in 1994 (A. Chase and D. Chase 2005). An Early Classic tomb also was recovered beneath the Terminal Classic palace on the summit of the northern building in 2010. The investigations undertaken during the 2009, 2010, and 2011 field seasons resulted in the buildings on the southern, western, and northern side of this plaza being cleared and stabilized. Yet, no royal tombs are known from the ancestral shrine for the Northeast Acropolis – unlike the Central Acropolis and Caana – and the building was left in a state of neglect and stone-robbled by the Maya during the Terminal Classic Period. However, it is suspected that there may be deeply buried Early Classic interments on the eastern side of this plaza – and, if found, given the previous elite association of Teotihuacan-related materials at this locus, they could provide additional information on the nature of Teotihuacan ties in this locus. Despite several seasons of investigation, therefore, much Protoclassic and Early Classic Period material likely lies untouched beneath the elevated Terminal Classic Period remains. Excavations undertaken during 2015 included a deep 9 m by 2 m plaza excavation tangent to both the 2010 test-pit and the 1994 eastern trench. During the 2016 field season, the earlier frontal core of Structure B34 will be investigated to add to the information gained from the 2015 field season.

A second locus for investigation is Caracol's Central Acropolis. Little excavation had been undertaken in this locale since the early 1990s. Previous investigation in this group focused on Late to Terminal Classic Period remains, but earlier occupation was also uncovered. A looted tomb of early Late Classic date was excavated in the core of Structure A37, an eastern building in this group, in 1985 (Chase and Chase 1987:34) and three other Late Classic tombs were recovered from Structures A34, a northern building, and Structure A38, another eastern building, during the 1992 field season (Chase and Chase 1996:66). The basal tomb in Structure A37 had a

painted capstone dating the construction of that chamber to either A.D. 577 or A.D. 582 (Chase and Chase 1996:75); it had been reentered and two additional bodies accompanied by pottery had been placed in the tomb some 100 years later (Chase and Chase, 1996, 2003). Areal clearing of the entire southeastern and southern edifices, Structures A38 and A39 were carried out in 1992, 1993, and 1995; these investigations recovered Late Classic and Terminal Classic remains. However, a deep excavation through the last plaza floor was made in 1993 behind Structure A38, penetrating almost 2 m of sterile marl before encountering a constructed wall. With the exception of slight investigation beneath the upper plaza floor to the front of both Structures A37 and 38 that encountered two Late Classic caches and two Late Classic burials, no further penetrating excavations were made into this plaza. However, the Central Acropolis platform rises almost 5 m above the surrounding terrain and surely obscures earlier buildings. During 2015, the central excavation attempted in the plaza encountered an early Late Classic tomb; during 2016, excavations should be able to accomplish deep plaza tests in this architectural unit.

A third area of interest is the raised area and constructions on the western side of Caana. Investigations here in 2004 recovered an in-filled Early Classic tomb as well as Protoclassic burials in the frontal terrace for Structure B36 almost immediately below the surface (2004 field report available at www.caracol.org). As these deposits are precisely dated to the time period that is being sought, the Structure B36 platform area was a focus of the 2015 field season and succeeded in finding an earlier structure that will be more fully studied during 2016. An additional focus for 2015 and 2016 is Structure B37.

Finally, two residential groups that are immediately adjacent to the epicenter have also produced Protoclassic burials. One of these burials, in Structure B118, was excavated in 1993 and was actually a tomb containing Protoclassic vessels. Early Late Classic burials were found in the plaza in front of this building. This area will be a focus for the 2016 field season. During 2015, new excavations were made into a residential group immediately southeast of the Central Acropolis. Two test excavations were placed in this residential group, named "Ultimo," in 1989:

the one in front of Structure B88 recovered part of a deeply buried Protoclassic interment; the one in front of Structure B89 recovered a deeply buried circular platform of probably Late Preclassic date. The 2015 excavations succeeded in finding Early Classic deposits, but not Protoclassic remains.

Ultimo Residential Group: Structures B88-B93

Situated southeast of the Central Acropolis, the Ultimo residential group was first excavated during the 1989 field season (Figures 2 and 3). The group is inset onto the south side of the rise supporting the Central Acropolis with a series of lower platforms grouped on the northern, western, and southern sides facing a distinctly higher mound situated on the eastern side of a plaza. In 1989 two test excavations were placed into the plaza of this group; both measured 1.5 m by 1.5 m. One was placed on axis, but in the plaza, in front of Structure B88 and the second was placed in the southwest corner of the plaza. The test excavation dug into the southwest plaza corner (Suboperation C49B) recovered a deeply buried facing for a round or oval building, suspected to be of an earlier, non-Classic date. The test excavation placed in front of Structure B88 (Suboperation C49A) found a series of disturbed burials and caches extending from the Protoclassic Period through the Late Classic Period. The deposits recovered in the eastern test pit included: 2 caches consisting of 3 finger bowls; 2 burials dating to the late Late Classic with 5 ceramic vessels between them; 1 burial with 1 ceramic vessel dating to the early Late Classic; and, 1 burial on bedrock from which a Protoclassic ceramic bowl was recovered. It was this last burial and the potentially earlier architecture buried in the southwest test-pit that piqued interest in further excavation in the eastern locus of Structure B88.

Structure B88

Structure B88 rises 0.85 m above its associated plaza and is the eastern mortuary shrine for the Ultimo residential group (Figure 4). There appear to have been two different construction episodes associated with Structure B88; the first may date to Early Classic Period and the second appears to date to the early part of the Late Classic Period. The excavation of this building

intended to find earlier materials. Given that Structure B118 had produced a Protoclassic tomb and that a Protoclassic burial had already been encountered in front of this building, it was hoped that a Protoclassic interment would anchor this eastern construction. Instead, the structure contained a Late Classic tomb set into bedrock that was located directly beneath the front summit of the building. The style of tomb closing (with a large slab leaning over the entryway), however, is typical of earlier tombs (e.g., Structures B40 and C5), suggesting the chamber may have been re-entered and re-used; supporting this interpretation is the recovery of an Early Classic interment to the front of Structure B88. The excavation of Structure B88 during 2015 revealed not only this tomb, but also a series of other special deposits (Figure 7); two burials were recovered in front of the building and a disturbed interment within the summit fill; also recovered were a series of 5 caches, most of them being finger bowls that actually contained fingers and obsidian blades likely used to detach the finger; one of the caches, however, consisted only of 6 obsidian eccentrics (Figure 10).

Operation C49D was designated for the axial excavation placed over Structure B88 (Figure 4). Because the original excavation that was laid out relative to the Ultimo eastern building was found to be off-axis after the removal of minimal humus material, the excavation was realigned to axis. This resulted in a 2.5 m wide trench that was 6.1 m in length with an eastern front extension to the east that measured 0.8 m by 2.9 m (Figures 4 and 5). Terminal Classic ceramics (Figure 6) were recovered in the humus associated with Structure B88; a broken jadeite earflare was also recovered in two different places in the building (Figure 8a,b). Human cranial fragments, isolated bone (including a subadult tibia), and phalanges were located in isolation in lots from across the front of Structure B88. Additionally, a human molar (right M1 or M2) with tartar and caries was located above the area of the tomb (possibly associated with S.D. C49D-8).

S.D. C49D-1 consisted of 6 obsidian eccentrics set directly above a capstone for S.D. C49D-6 (Figures 9 and 10). No other materials were associated with these eccentrics.

S.D. C49D-2 was assigned for 3 sets of finger bowls plus 1 extra single finger bowl (7 total; Figure 12f-i) that were located in a north-south row along the edge of S.D. C49D-2 (Figures 13 and 14). Based on spatial proxemics, these caches may have been associated with S.D. C49D-6. One of the cache bowls contained one middle, one terminal, and one intermediate human phalages.

S.D. C49D-3 was assigned for an Early Classic crypt set directly in front of the step for Structure B88 (Figures 15, 16, 17, 18). The interment contained the remains of 4 adults. Two of the adults were male; one was a young adult and the other was older; both likely had tau-shaped filed left upper central incisors. Two adults (1 older) could not be identified as to sex; one of these individuals was associated with a hematite-inlaid upper left central incisor. One sub-adult tooth from an individual approximately 2 years in age was also recovered (deciduous lower 2nd premolar). The cranial remains and teeth came from 3 different areas. One of the older adults had a mandible exhibiting tooth loss, resorption, and an abscess. Isolated teeth exhibit caries, tartar, and wear. Clearly accompanying the interment were 4 ceramic vessels (Figure 19); the deep bowl, pedestaled collared bowl, and basal flange bowl were at a lower level than the ring-based dish (which may represent a later deposition). Given the fact that the burial was disturbed as indicated by both earlier and later pottery in the fill over the interment (Figure 19a and 19f), it may be that the ring-based dish was a later addition to the frontal burial. Artifactual material associated with the interment included (Figure 20): 1 piece of worked spondylus, 4 shell fragments, 1 heavily burnt olivella shell fragment, 1 columella shell fragment, 1 limestone ball, 1 piece of worked jadeite, and 1 potential limestone burnisher.

S.D. C49D-4 was an agglomeration of finger bowls (Figure 12j-n) located in the front northwestern area of excv. C49D (Figure 21); this deposit is likely associated with S.D. C49D-6 and S.D. C49D-2. The cache consists of a total of 9 finger bowls: 1 single finger bowl and 4 sets of lip-to-lip finger bowls, each containing phalanges and an obsidian blade (Figure 22). One set of finger bowls contained 1 middle and 1 ephiphysis phalange with a complete obsidian

blade; a second set had a first and second terminal phalange with a snapped obsidian blade; the third set had a first, second, and third phalange plus an obsidian blade fragment; and, the final set had a terminal and middle phalange with a snapped obsidian blade.

S.D. C49D-5 was assigned for a single finger bowl (Figure 12e) located above the sealed tomb S.D. C49D-9 and behind the front step for the Late Classic structure (Figure 23). The finger bowl contained burnt unidentifiable bones that were not phalanges and that may not be human (Figure 24).

S.D. C49D-6 was assigned for a north-south crypt located in the western plaza area in front of Structure B88 (Figure 15s, 16, 25). The crypt measured 1.8 m in length by 0.5 m wide and had a height of approximately 1.1 m; it was constructed on bedrock on its southern end and softer marl on its northern end. The crypt, which was sealed by its capstones, held the remains of plastic bags that must have come from the previous excavation here in 1989; as the shredded bags were inside the chamber, this is taken as a potential indicator of animal activity. The limited skeletal material recovered on the bedrock and marl appears to represent a single individual adult placed in a supine position with head to the south. The third molar was erupted but not worn, an indication that it was likely not an older adult. There was wear or filing on the incisors and canines and possibly one extra tooth. There is exceedingly limited lipping on one vertebrae. No sex identification was possible. Artifactual material within the interment included (Figure 26): 1 jadeite bead, 19 shell beads, 1 whole shell, 1 modified shell, 4 shell fragments, and 1 tubular bone bead.

S.D. C49D-7 was assigned to a stone feature on the summit of Structure B88 (Figure 23). Upon excavation nothing was encountered, so this was determined to not be a special deposit even though isolated human bone was recovered in the excavation of the stone feature.

S.D. C49D-8 was assigned for a burial that appears to have been placed directly into the fill of the latest construction effort for Structure B88; it is likely that the burial was dug into in antiquity as the pottery vessels and recovered bone were very disturbed. Based on the

recovered material, the interment dates to the early part of the Late Classic Period. The interment contained the fragmentary remains of 2 individuals: 1 male older adult with substantial antemortem tooth loss and a possible notched lower left lateral incisor; and, 1 adult of unspecified sex with substantial tartar on their teeth, including the occlusal surfaces of molars, indicating that this person may have been ill and not eating solid foods for a substantial period of time before death. One femur exhibits relatively strong muscle markings. The human remains include one fragmentary sciatic notch that could indicate that the younger adult was female. Artifactual material that may be associated with the interment includes 4 ceramic vessels that include a pottery ladle, a stuccoed deep bowl, a ring-base dish, and a small plain dish; pieces of 3 partial cache vessels were also recovered in association with the interment (Figure 27).

S.D. C49D-9 was a tomb located in the area behind the building's front step and sealed by a floor that ran into the plaza area (Figures 28, 29, 30, 31, 32). The floor was disturbed in front of the step area, possibly for re-entry into S.D. C49D-3. The tomb measures 2.7 m in length by 0.95 m in width; it was dug into the soft bedrock and had a height of 1.4 m; a stepped entry was on the northern side of the chamber that was sealed by a diagonally-placed oversized capstone. Both Early Classic and Late Classic materials were recovered in a tomb that contained the remains of at least 3 individuals, all of who had filed or inlaid teeth. Although the teeth were not found in anatomical place, it is possible to articulate them as follows: one older adult with tau-filed central incisors (based on dental wear); one adult with slight tau-filing and less dental wear; and, 1 adult with inlay holes on the left upper and lower central and lateral incisors as well as left lower canine, which still has a jadeite inlay in place (the lower incisors are also either worn or filed flat). A total of 55 teeth were recovered; some are broken, have caries, or have tartar. One portion of a mandible shows ante-mortem tooth loss, but cannot be sexed. Other bones and phalanges are present and some lipping occurs on vertebrae. Artifactual materials in the tomb included 8 ceramic vessels plus 2 partial ceramic vessels (Figure 33). Two of the vessels are late Late Classic in date (Fig. 33a and 33c) and two are late Early Classic (Fig. 33d and 33f); the other

vessels can simply be assigned to the general Classic Period. Also included in the tomb was a large fragment of an incised jar and the upper part of a burner. Smaller artifacts included (Figure 34): 3 sets of conch earflares, half of clam shell bivalve, 2 triangular worked clam shells, 2 other cut clam shells, 4 miscellaneous shell flakes, 1 heavily burnt bird bone, and obsidian and chert fragments. Faunal bone also present.

S.D. C49D-10 was assigned for a partial finger bowl (Figure 12c; Figure 16) that was later found to be a fit for a finger bowl in S.D. 49D-11.

S.D. C49D-11 consisted of a cache in a stone-box feature in the area north of S.D. 49D-3 and S.D. 49D-6 (Figure 35). The deposit consisted of one barrel-shaped rounded urn and 4 finger bowls (all single and not in sets; Figure 36). The urn was set on a large fragment of a Sierra Red dish (Fig. xxe). The urn appears to be Early Classic Period in date. Included in the deposit were some small bone fragments, a cranial fragment, and one right canine with a hematite inlay. Also recovered were 2 partial clam shell fragments, 1 shell bivalve fragment, and 6 slate pieces.

Northeast Acropolis: Structures B30-B34

The Northeast Acropolis is situated immediately to the east of Caana and rises some 5 m above the enclosed plaza to its south. It has been investigated during a series of field seasons, beginning in 1994 and culminating in a 3-year investigation from 2009 through 2011 that saw three of its buildings stabilized. During the 2010 field season a deep excavation into the plaza of the Northeast Acropolis recovered an early Early Classic Period cremation that was likely derivative of Teotihuacan traditions (A. Chase and D. Chase 2011). Excavation at the front base of Structure B34 in 1994 and 1995 had recovered both the side of a Late Preclassic building and a Protoclassic burial dating to ca. A.D. 150 that was cut into this construction (A. Chase and D. Chase 2005), as well as a host of other caches and a burial of early Late Classic date. In order to determine the relationship between Structure B34 and the 2010 cremation, it was decided that a

trench linking the two excavations might produce other relevant – and early – archaeological materials; this trench was excavated during the 2015 field season (Figure 37).

Operation C205B, as originally laid out, was an 8.9 m by 2.0 m long trench that was designed to connect excv. C117B with excv. C117F in order to gain a better stratigraphic understanding of these two excavations (Figures 38, 39, 40) and specifically examine if, and how, Structure B34 was connected to the Teotihuacan interment. A series of at least 6 plaster floors were recovered in the excavation which was dug to bedrock on the eastern side of the excavation (Figures 41, 42, 44). The northern edge of a Late Preclassic building that had been completely removed except for its basal course was recovered in association with the third buried floor (Figures 42 and 43); the side of the building measured minimally some 4.7 m east-west and was its rear was outset by 0.2 m from its front. Mirroring past finds when the Northeast Acropolis plaza has been penetrated, the upper two meters of fill throughout the trench and above the earlier plaza floorings was full of ceramic and artifactual trash dating to the Late to Terminal Classic Period (Figure 45). The upper 2 m of plaza fill (over a 7.8 m area) contained 37,056 sherds weighing 223.39 kg. This fill also included faunal bone, 17 modeled stucco fragments, an incised bone pin, 72 censer pieces, shell inlay, 2 river cobbles, 6 slate fragments, 1 jadeite bead, 1 shell bead, 1 shell fragment, 1 bone awl, 2 bone needles, 1 incised bone, 6 ceramic figurine fragments, multiple pieces of obsidian and chert. Stephen Houston (personal communication, March 2015) examined the text on the incised bone pin (Figure 46) and wondered if there was a “female title” on the bone pin with “implicit ownership.” Knowing that the third hieroglyph is a representation of a stingray spine, he hypothesized that the text could deal with “a female version of someone who handles or deals with stingray spines . . . the female IX-a’-KOKAN-na.” Also recovered from this fill were a lower right human premolar with slight wear and caries and a human cranial fragment; this is consistent with other isolated human remains that include long bones that have been found in this fill in past excavations (e.g. 2010). The construction of the latest flooring of this trench can be dated to the Late Preclassic Period based on the kinds of ceramic materials that

were recovered in the bottom-most fill (Figure 47). A total of 10 caches were found either cut through or sealed by the lower plaza floorings (Figures 42, 48, 51, 54, 55). Based on the stratigraphic relationships of the floors, four of these caches date to before the placement of the Teotihuacan-related deposit and 6 date to after the placement of this deposit. These caches indicate that finger bowls and eccentric obsidians were in ritual use by the middle of the Early Classic Period.

S.D. C205B-1 was located a little over 1.0 m away from the eastern excavation limit in an intrusive pit cut through the lower plaza floors (Figure 48). The hole for the cache was sealed by a stone slab, underneath which were one set of finger bowls (2 total; Figure 49a) containing obsidian blade fragments and human phalanges (2 terminal, 1 second row, and 1 first row).

S.D. C205B-2 was located in the southeastern corner of the excavation in an intrusive pit cut through the lower floor (Figure 48). Set into the pit in the floor was a cache consisting of one plain small barrel with lid (Figure 49c) that contained at least 33 distinct fingers. There were no less than 57 clearly separate phalanges within the vessel that included fingers from both adult and subadult individuals (Figure 50). If all the fingers of both hands of single individuals were placed within this cache, which is unlikely, it would minimally represent 4 individuals (including 1 subadult). Included within the barrel were the phalanges from a minimum of 33 separate fingers based on the distal (3rd row) phalange. The totals for each row are as follows: 3rd row distal – 33; 2nd row middle – 16; 1st row proximal – 1; unidentified (probably 2nd row middle) – 7; epiphyses – 9 (2nd or possibly 3rd row), all subadult about 5 years of age; and, assorted phalange fragments. Interestingly, there is only one complete finger with all three rows present. The cache could date to either the Early or Late Classic Period.

S.D. C205B-3 was placed in a hole cut through the lower plaza floors on the northern edge of the excavation east of S.D. C205B-1 and west of S.D. C205B-8 (Figure 48). The cache was not sealed and consisted of 2 sets of finger bowls and 1 single finger bowl (5 total

ceramic vessels; Figure 49d.-f.). One of the sets of finger bowls held a human terminal phalange. The cache dates either to the Early or Late Classic Period.

S.D. C205B-4 was unsealed and placed in a pit dug through the lower plaza floors in the central portion of the eastern limit of the excavation (Figures 48, 51). The cache consisted of 4 sets of lip-to-lip finger bowls and 2 individual vessels (total of 10 finger bowls; Figure 49g.-m.). No human fingers were recovered, but the cache was associated with obsidian blades. It dates to either the Early or Late Classic Period.

S.D. C205B-5 was situated in an unsealed pit cut through the lower plaza floors in the northeastern corner of the excavation (Figure 51). Two limestone slabs capped the deposit, but were not sealed by a floor. The cache contained 1 set of small lip-to-lip finger bowls (2 total; Figure 49m., n.) that contained a human terminal digit. Also included in the deposit were 16 obsidian eccentrics (Figure 52), 3 jadeite balls, 10 limestone balls, 1 limestone bead (Figure 53), 23 pyrite chips, 54 spondylus chips, more than 150 jadeite chips, and a stingray spine. The deposit dates to the Early or Late Classic Period.

S.D. C205B-6 was a cache located approximately 1 m east of the western excavation limit and consisted of a sealed pit through an earlier floor (Figures 54, 55). Two stone slabs were set in the upper part of the pit and hid a set of lip-to-lip finger bowls (2 total; Figure 49o.) containing a human middle phalange. The cache was sealed by the 2nd deep floor and would date prior to the Teotihuacan-related deposit found in 2010.

S.D. C205B-7 was located in a pit in the southeast corner of the excavation that was sealed by a lower plaza floor (Figure 51). The cache consisted of two sets of lip-to-lip finger bowls (4 vessels total; Figure 49p., q.) set next to each other through a small circular hole made through a lower floor. Both sets of finger bowls contained one or more human phalanges; one set had a first and second phalange and the other set had a single terminal phalange. The cache was sealed by the 2nd floor, indicating a date before the 2010 Teotihuacan-related burial.

S.D. C205B-8 was an unsealed cache set into a pit intruded through the lower plaza floors (Figures 48, 51). The pit was capped by two limestone slabs but was not sealed with a plaster floor. Beneath the slabs was a cache of 1 set of lip-to-lip finger bowls (Figure 49r.) containing an obsidian lancet as well as 1 terminal, 4 middle, 1 indeterminate human phalange, and 2 epiphyses. As the cache is clearly intrusive to the buried floors, it can date to either the Early or Late Classic Period.

S.D. C205B-9 is interpreted to be a cache and consisted of 3 obsidian eccentrics sealed beneath 2nd floor that were recovered in the central northern portion of the excavation (see Fig. 42, Plan 4 and Figure 56h.-j.). Given the sealed position of these eccentrics, they would date to before the placement of the Teotihuacan-related burial.

S.D. C205B-10 was a cache situated approximately 0.5 m south of S.D. C205B-1. The cache was sealed beneath the 2nd lower floor (Fig. 42, Plan 4) and consisted of one set of lip-to-lip finger bowls and two single finger bowls (4 vessels; Figure 49s.-v.). All were associated with human fingers. The single finger bowls each held an indeterminate human phalange, while the lip-to-lip pair held 1 terminal, 2 middle, and 2 indeterminate human phalanges. As the deposit was sealed by the deep 2nd floor, this indicates that it would have been placed before the Teotihuacan-related interment.

Central Acropolis: Structures A33-A40

The Central Acropolis rises approximately 6 m above the surrounding plaza level upon which the rest of the Caracol epicentral structures are placed. This constructed platform supports 9 known buildings and likely conceals earlier construction efforts. Two pyramids dominate the northern (A34) and eastern (A37) sides of the Central Acropolis; both pyramids rise 7 m above the summit of the acropolis plaza. A looted tomb, dating to the early part of the Late Classic Period, was encountered in the eastern pyramid in 1985; further excavations on axis to and at the base of Structure A37 in 1992 recovered a large lip-to-lip cache secreted behind the front steps of the pyramid, a Late Classic sacrificial burial immediately west of the lowest step, and a pair of

face cache vessels in the plaza. Excavation of Structure A34 in 1992 recovered a re-entered tomb of early and late Late Classic date beneath the front stairway and an emptied and collapsed tomb chamber at the summit of the building (see D. Chase and A. Chase 1996). Structure A33, A38, and A39 each rise approximately 3 m above the summit plaza. Structure A38, investigated during 1992, included a Late Classic Period tomb within its frontal balk and a sacrificial burial in the plaza immediately in front of the balk; following excavation, this building was stabilized. The southernmost building of the Central Acropolis, Structure A39, was investigated during the 1992, 1993, and 1995 field seasons. Structure A39 has been stabilized and is an elaborate Late Classic Period palace structure consisting of 3 parallel rooms bounded on each end by a tandem room. Two earlier structures in a state of disrepair were encountered east of Structure A38 and two small platform pads occupy the northeastern corner of the summit area. Thus, while much is known about the visible structures on the Central Acropolis, nothing is known about the earlier history of this locus. Excavations were carried out, therefore, in the plaza of the Central Acropolis in 2015 in an attempt to encounter earlier construction levels and buildings.

Operation C206B was assigned to an areal excavation measuring 3 m north-south by 4 m east-west placed in the center of the plaza of the Central Acropolis so as to align with the axes of Structure A34 and Structure A37 (Figures 58, 59, 60, 61). Two plaster floors were encountered in the excavation, one approximately 0.5 m below ground surface and the other approximately 0.7 m below ground surface. Deeper excavation in the eastern edge of the excavation revealed a marl-like fill with Preclassic ceramics. This fill also produced 1 shell fragment, 3 slate fragments, 2 burnt incised and polished cranial fragment (parietal; Figure 67g), and multiple pieces of chert and obsidian. The excavation did not penetrate the depths of the plaza because of the need to concentrate effort on the tomb located in the southwest corner of the investigation (Figure 58).

S.D. C206B-1 was assigned to the tomb encountered in the southwestern corner of the excavation (Figures 62, 63, 64). Not including the entryway, the tomb measured 3.0 m in length by 1.4 m in width and had a height of 1.5 m. The bench that was appended to the eastern

wall measured 2.3 m in length by 0.9 m in width and had a height of 0.3 m. The tomb contained the fragmentary remains of one individual with head to the south. Because the tomb was subject to filling with water because of the clay-like matrix in which it was situated, both the bones and the ceramics were poorly preserved. The only portions of the skeleton reasonably well-preserved were the lower extremities. Cranial remains were located off the south side of the bench on top of and within the stuccoed bowl. A single tooth was recovered in another vessel. While it is clear that the individual was an adult, no sex identification is possible. Grave goods included 9 ceramic vessels (Figure 65): 7 red bowls, 1 stuccoed deep bowl, and 1 dish with a lateral flange. The vessels are consistent with an early Late Classic date similar to that for the original basal interment in the tomb at the base of Structure A34 (D. Chase and A. Chase 1996). Also recovered from within the chamber were 1 shell fragment, 3 jute shell fragments, and 24 pieces of chert.

Operation C206C was assigned for a 2 m by 2 m test excavation placed immediately north of the front projection of the Structure A37 stairway (Figure 66). This investigation encountered a plaster floor approximately 1 m below ground surface, substantially deeper than the plaza floors. The fill above this floor also consisted of sizeable boulders, something also not encountered in the central plaza. Artifactual materials recovered included sherds of mixed date, faunal bone, and some chert.

West of Caana: Structures B36 and B37

To the west of Caana, but still located on the summit of a broader platform supporting the B Plaza, is an area elevated by approximately 2 m. Structure B36 surmounts the southern end of this elevated area; this building was excavated during the 2004 field season and proved to be Late Classic in date. Structure B36 faced north and commanded a broad platform that extended north some 30 m from the base of the structure. Multiple excavations were made on the Structure B36 Platform in 2004 and these were substantially amplified by the data gained during the 2015 excavation season (Figure 68). Further north lay Structure B37, which ran to the north for the rest of the extent of Caana's basal platform, some 77 m, and which was separated from Caana by a

lower platform plaza area. During the 2004 field season, the southeast corner and a small portion of the building interior of Structure B37 was investigated and a small trench was excavated in the alley between the Structure B36 platform and Structure B37.

Structure B36 Platform

The summit of the Structure B36 Platform measures 23 m east-west by 29.5 m north south. Excavations into the platform in 2004 recovered an Early Classic tomb (in excv. C168E) and 2 Protoclassic burials (in excv. C168H) in the platform fill. Terminal Classic building pads surmount the surface of the platform and the humus levels of the platform contain modeled-carved ceramics, confirming the dating of these line-of-stone buildings, as well as small arrow-points that are also of Terminal Classic date (Figure 77). Excavations were undertaken into the platform during 2015 in an attempt to find other early burials; these were not found, but a buried structure was encountered which will be further delimited and penetrated in the 2016 field season (Figures 68, 69). Based on the corners found in the two excavations undertaken in 2015, the upper front projection of this structure measures 10.4 m and extends 1.85 m east of the actual building platform. The platform itself must be at least 15 m broad. A 0.5 m plinth borders the eastern projection and is 0.4 m in height. The sherd material within the platform fill overlying this structure confirms the earlier dating of the buried substructure (Figure 78).

Operation C207B was assigned for the northernmost platform excavation (Figures 70, 71, 72, 73, 74). Originally a 6 m by 2 m trench into the B36 platform, this investigation uncovered the northern side of a frontal projection for an earlier building. Upon the recovery of this earlier platform, Operation C207B was expanded 3 m to the west in order to expose the surface of the buried building that was found in the original excavation. This buried building rested on a floor that was 1.6 m below the current platform ground surface and an elevation of the structure platform reveals a talud-tablero profile. A single scribe line that was at the same alignment as the buried platform was found incised into the lower floor. Artifactual material recovered in the humus lot included: 1 spondylus shell bivalve, 2 river cobbles, 3 modeled carved

sherds, pieces of ceramic eensers, 1 small chert point, 1 tip of a chert projectile point, 3 pieces of faunal bone, 2 granite metate fragments, and fragments of obsidian and chert. A human tibia shaft was recovered in platform fill, consistent with the siting of burials in this fill excavated in 2004.

Operation C207C was assigned for a southern platform excavation that was placed parallel to and 7 m south of Operation C207B. Operation C207C measured 6 m by 2m and was designed to find the southeastern corner of the buried building that had been encountered in Operation C207B and to see if any other deposits that would have been placed in the platform fill could be located (Figures 75, 76). This excavation succeeded in finding the front of the buried building, but not the corner of the platform. It did, however, find 2, possibly 3, scribe lines carved into the lower floor that were at the same orientation as the earlier building. Artifactual remains in the humus included 2 biface point fragments, 1 complete small chalcedony point, 3 modeled carved sherds, 1 shell fragment, and fragments of obsidian and chert. The platform fill yielded 7 pieces of human bone.

Operation C207D was assigned for a small excavation extension running 2 m south by 1 m east on the southwest corner of Operation C207C in order to delineate the buried corner of the early platform (Figure 76). This excavation succeeded in doing that. Only the humus layer was removed in this investigation and resulted in the recovery of Terminal Classic modeled-carved sherds.

Structure B37

Structure B37 measures almost 77 m in length and runs north-south, being situated at the western base of Caana (Figure 79, 80). The structure rises 0.5 m in height and is approximately 8 m wide. Excavations on the southern end of Structure B37 in 2004 recovered pieces of a large storage jar and faunal remains of deer. The long length of the building is unusual for Caracol, but is reminiscent of constructions at other sites that have been interpreted to be royal kitchens (A. Chase and D. Chase 2014:10). The relatively large number of mano and metate fragments

recovered in these excavations, in combination with the faunal material, lends support to the presumption that Structure B37 was indeed an epicentral food preparation area.

Operation C208B was a 14.5 m long (north-south) by 2 m wide (east-west) excavation that was designed to expose the western face and southeastern corner of Structure B37 (Figures 81, 82). Artifactual remains that were recovered in the humus and fill east of the building included 2 metate fragments, 1 mano fragment, 1 large chert biface (Figure 87b), and 20 pieces of faunal bone.

Operation C208C was an 14.5 m long (north-south) by 2 m wide (east-west) excavation that was designed to expose the western face of Structure B37 and was started 3 m north of and in line with Operation C208B (Figures 81, 83). Within the humus and fill east of the building, limited artefactual materials were recovered that included 1 possible piece of a human skull fragment, 4 metate fragments, 4 mano fragments, and 1 chert hammerstone.

Operation C208D was an 11.5 m long (north-south) by 2 m wide (east-west) excavation that was designed to expose the western face of Structure B37 and was started 3 m north of and in line with Operation C208C (Figures 81, 84). Removal of the humus and collapse east of the building resulted in the recovery of 4 mano fragments and 2 metate fragments.

Operation C208E was placed so as to find the northeastern corner of Structure B37 (Figure 85). The investigation measured 2 m wide (east-west) and 3 m long (north-south). The northern limit of Operation C208E was in line with and exactly 30 m distant from the northern edge of Operation C208D. Recovered in the humus and fill east of the building were 1 metate fragment, 98 pieces of faunal bone, and 12 possible pieces of human bone.

Operation C208F was a 7 m long (east-west) by 2 m wide (north-south) excavation that was tangent to the southwest corner of Operation C208B and was designed to expose the southern facing of Structure B37 (Figure 86). Recovered in the humus and collapse from this side of the building were very limited artifactual materials that included 1 piece of turtle bone.

Structure A13

Structure A13 is a structure elevated approximately 8 m above ground level. It faced west and had a broad stairway in front of which 3 stelae were placed (Stela 5, 6, and 7). Investigation of the summit of Structure A13 during the 2002 field season recorded the building pads for 3 perishable structures. Excavations within the central building pad recovered a stratified series of plaster floors as well as a sealed Early Classic cache consisting of large lip-to-lip bowls and a lidded barrel that had been placed at different levels in the same pit that was intruded through earlier floors. In spite of careful mapping of the summit, no stone monuments were encountered on the summit of Structure A13. However, in January 2015 information was passed to us by Dr. Jaime Awe of a reported monument on the summit of Structure A13, including several washed out photographs of the altar taken by a tour guide. Indeed, Altar 26 was found in two pieces placed together on the ground at the southern end of the summit of Structure A13 on the first day of the 2015 field season. Immediately north of the altar was a disturbed, but backfilled, area that we suspected was the likely location for the monument. Green coloration on part of the edge of the stone indicated that part of the monument had likely protruded from the ground in an area of other dry-core fill (Figure 88).

Operation C209B was a 1.25 m east-west by 1.00 m north-south excavation placed over the disturbed area where it was believed that Caracol Altar 26 was originally located. The total depth of the excavation was approximately 0.50 m and covered an area that had been recently infilled. The excavation did successfully recover missing pieces from the altar, indicating that this was indeed the location where Caracol Altar 26 had been left in antiquity. No diagnostic artefactual materials were recovered.

Caracol Altar 26 measures 73.6 cm by 63.6 cm by ca. 13 cm and is the latest known carved stone monument from the site (Figure 89, 90). It highlights the calendar round date 8 Ahau 8 Mol, which refers to 10.2.15.0.0 or A.D. 884. The oval altar shows two individuals in conversation with each other; the Caracol lord sits to the right and a foreign lord sits on the left;

the text likely refers to a political alliance between these two lords. A more in depth contextualization of the monument has been published (see A. Chase and D. Chase 2015).

Significance

The archaeological investigations at Caracol that were undertaken during 2015 have added to our understanding of the early history of the site. With the exception of Structure B37, the areas that were investigated all yielded archaeological remains of the appropriate date to help better contextualize the nature and degree of Teotihuacan influence and contact at Caracol. These excavations also provide substantial ritual information that dates to the poorly understood Protoclassic and Early Classic time periods. In particular, the deep plaza excavation in the Northeast Acropolis demonstrates that Caracol-style finger caches and obsidian eccentrics were in existence before any presumed Teotihuacan contact. When contextualized within previous Caracol research, it is expected that the archaeological excavations carried out between 2015 through 2017 will provide sufficient new information to aid in the resolution of questions about the independent development of Classic Maya civilization at Caracol and the nature of Maya contact at Caracol with other Mesoamerican cultures. Because of the focus on defining the manifestations and kinds of cultural contact in the archaeological record, the results of this research are likely to be of interest to a broad spectrum of researchers working in Mesoamerica and beyond.

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**TABLE 1:
Caracol Project Members: 2015 Field Season**

Staff:

Directors

Arlen F. Chase	C1
Diane Z. Chase	C2

Lab and Field Director

Maureen Carpenter	C56
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Senior Field Supervisors

Lucas Johnson	C134
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Field Supervisors:

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Rachael Kangas	C220
Marc Marino	C205
George Micheletti	C227
Eric M. Patz	C223
Shane Montgomery	C228
Max Seidita	C207

Field Assistants:

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Nicholas A. Altizer	C230
Samuel A. Martin	C231
Lily Grace Sullivan	C232

Senior Clean-Up Crew:

Lisa Lomitola	C183
Amy Morris	C111

Belizean Labor:

Kitchen

Angelica Meneses
Linda Aurora Meneses
Emelita A. Chic
Alba Luz Chuc
Louyann L. Williams

Field

Saul Galeano
Jaime Iglesias
Nelson Alfonso Castellanos
Luis Alberto Mai
Minel Javier Camal
Carlos Ivan Mendes
Asterio Morales
Roberto Pacheco
Javier Dominguez
Omar Keny Jimenez

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Ultimo
exc. C49

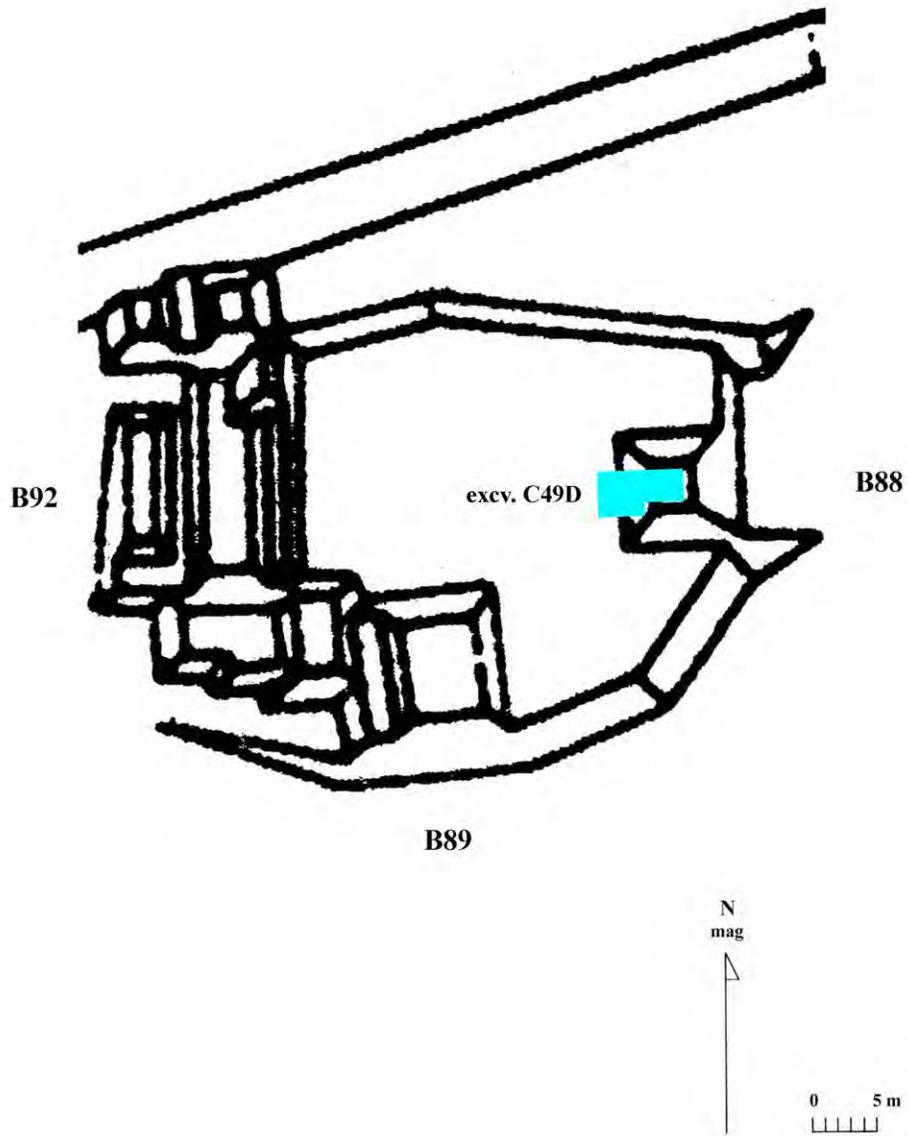


Figure 2: Plan of Ultimo Group, showing location of Operation C49D.



Figure 3: Photograph of Structure B88, where Operation C49D was located.

CARACOL Structure B88
excv. C49D

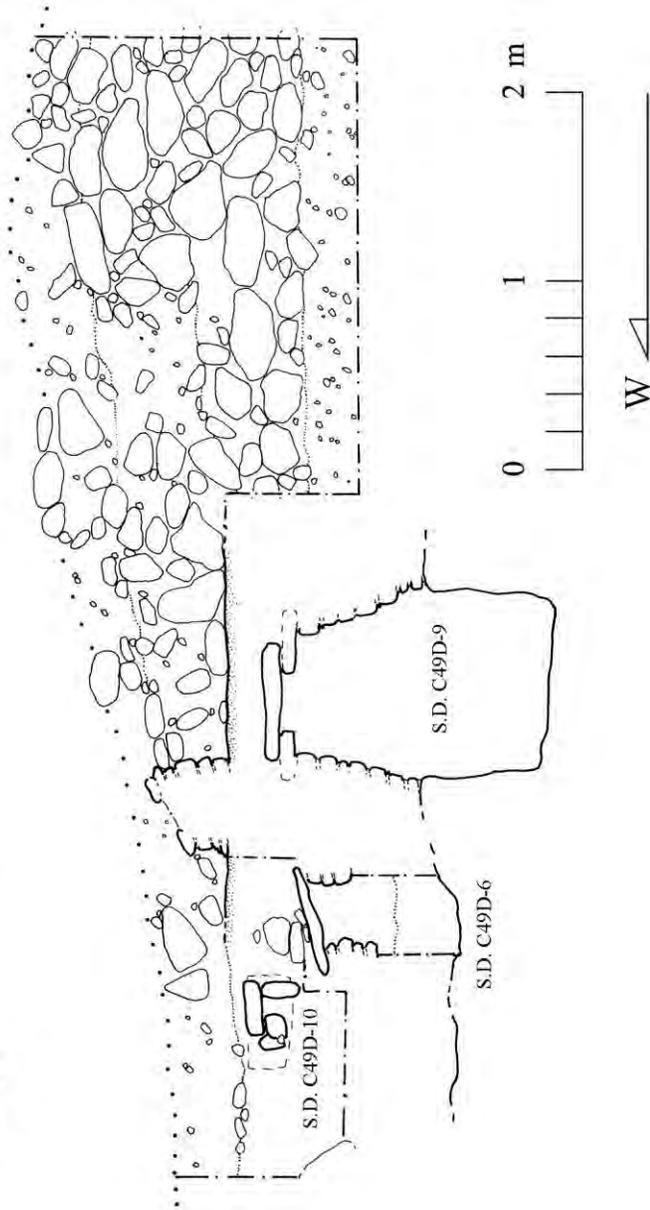


Figure 4: Caracol Structure B88 section.

excav. C49D

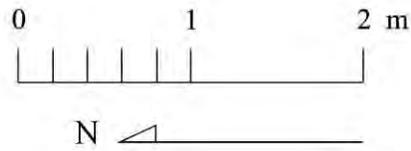
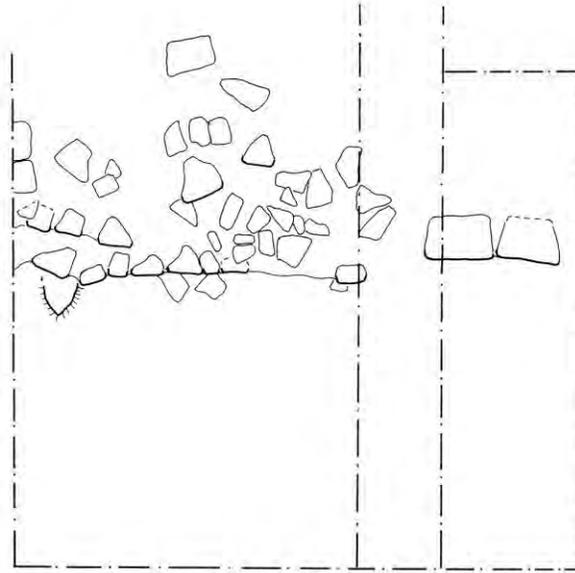


Figure 5: Plan of the front step associated with Structure B88.

0 1 2 cm

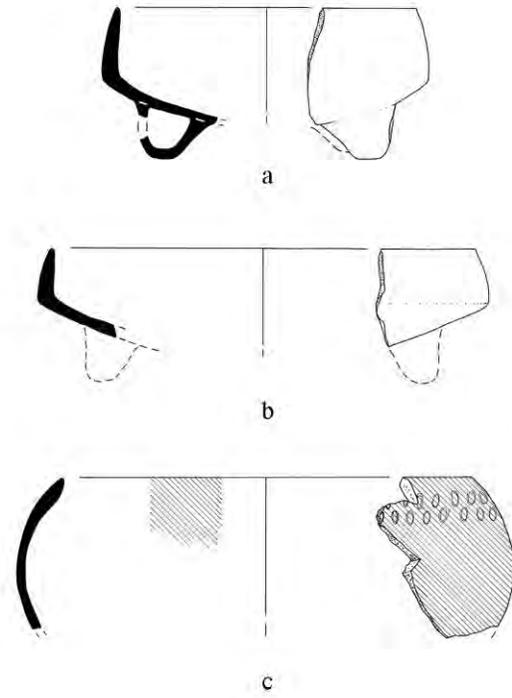


Figure 6: Ceramic vessels associated with the latest use of Structure B88: a., b. eroded Tinaja Red; c. Patano Impressed.

excv. C49D

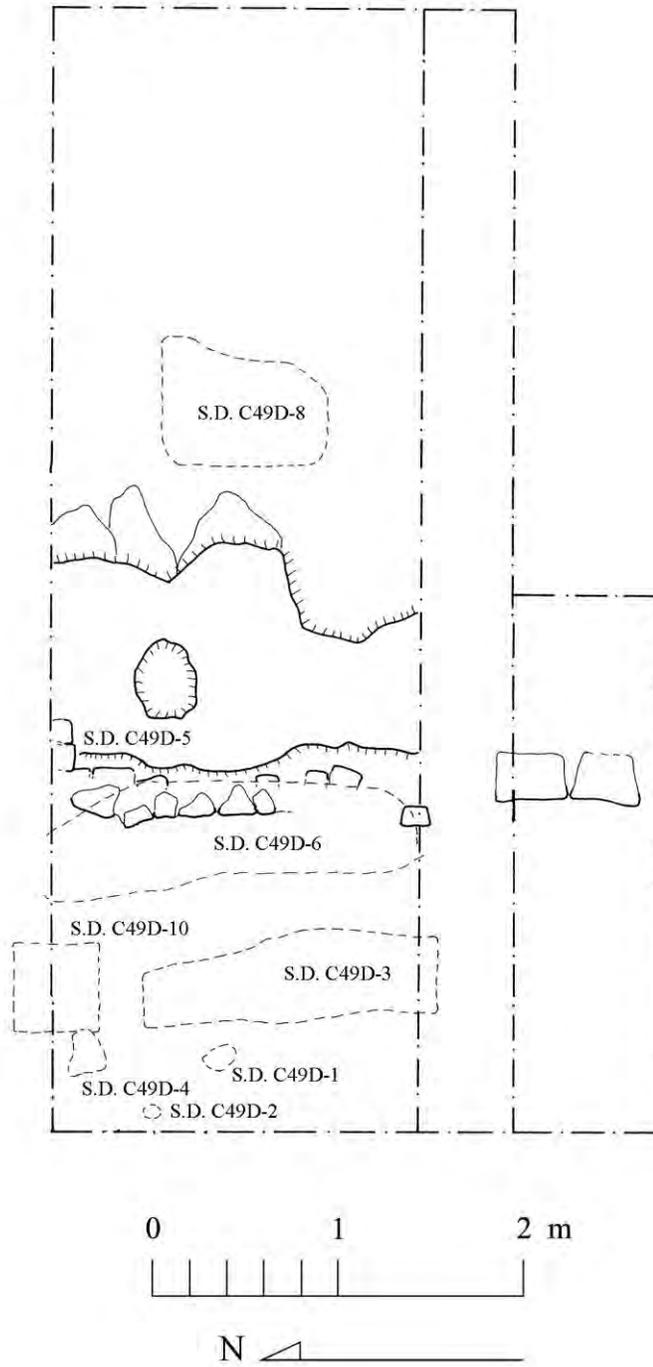


Figure 7: Plan of excavation C49D showing location of recovered special deposits.

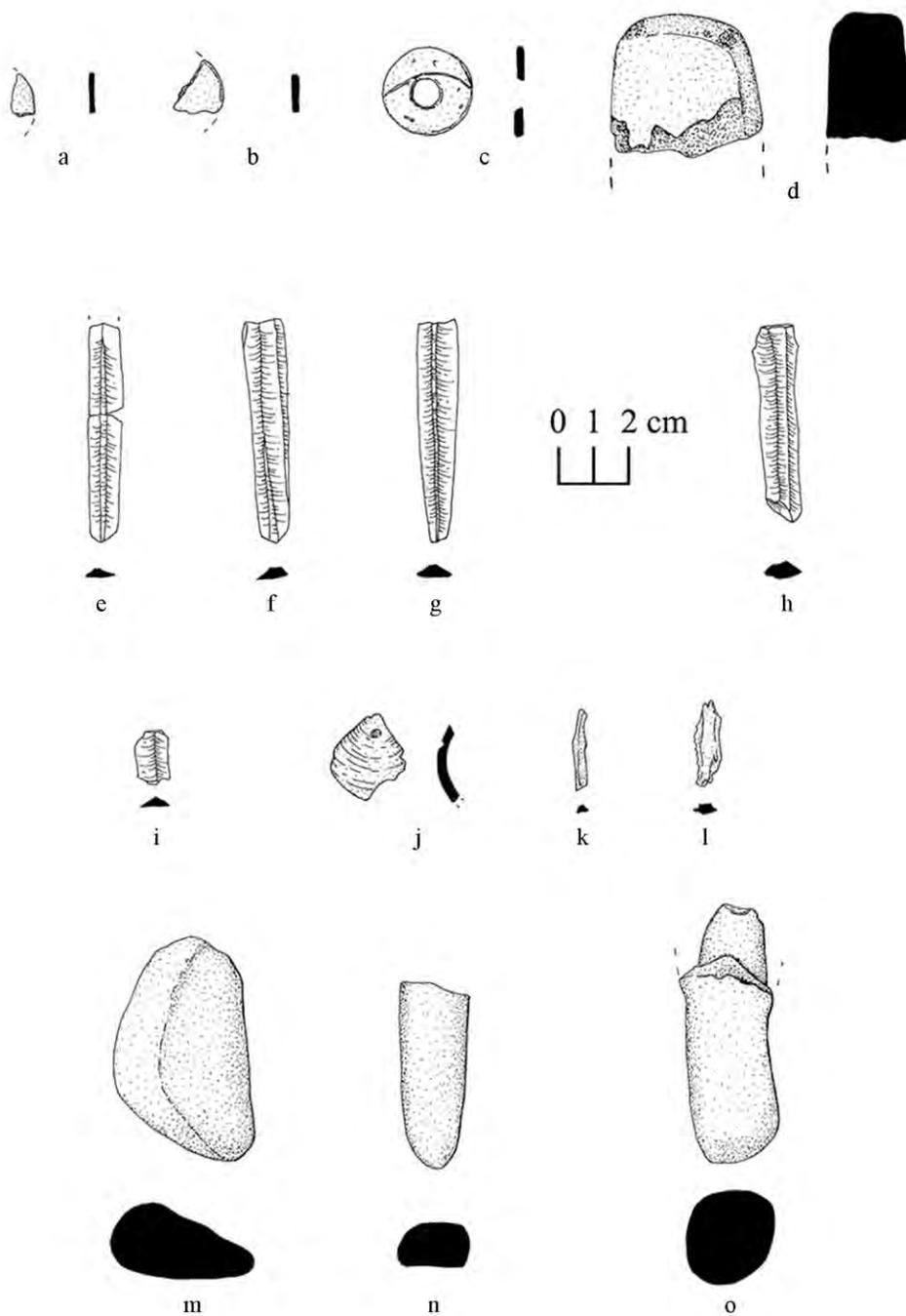


Figure 8: General artefactual material associated with Structure B88: a., b. jadeite disc fragments; c. conch adornment; d. greenstone axe fragment; e.-g. obsidian blades associated with S.D. C49D-4; h. obsidian blade associated with S.D. C49D-5; i. obsidian fragment associated with S.D. C49D-11; j. clam shell fragment; k., l. shell fragments; m., n. river cobbles; o. ceramic handle.

S.D. C49D-1

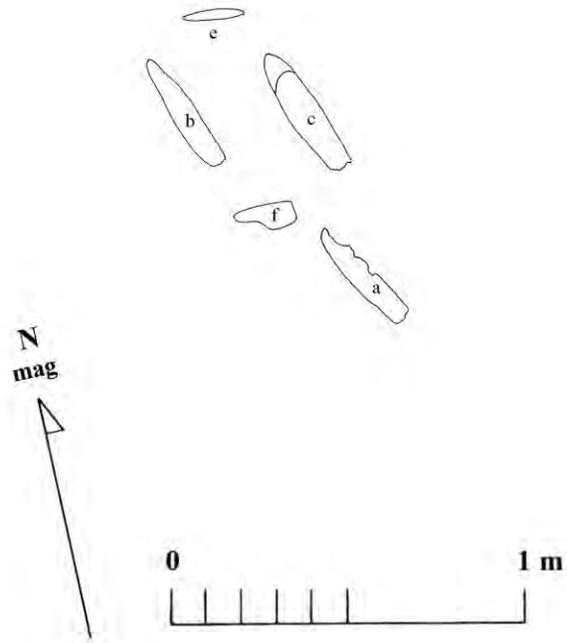


Figure 9: Plan of S.D. C49D-1.

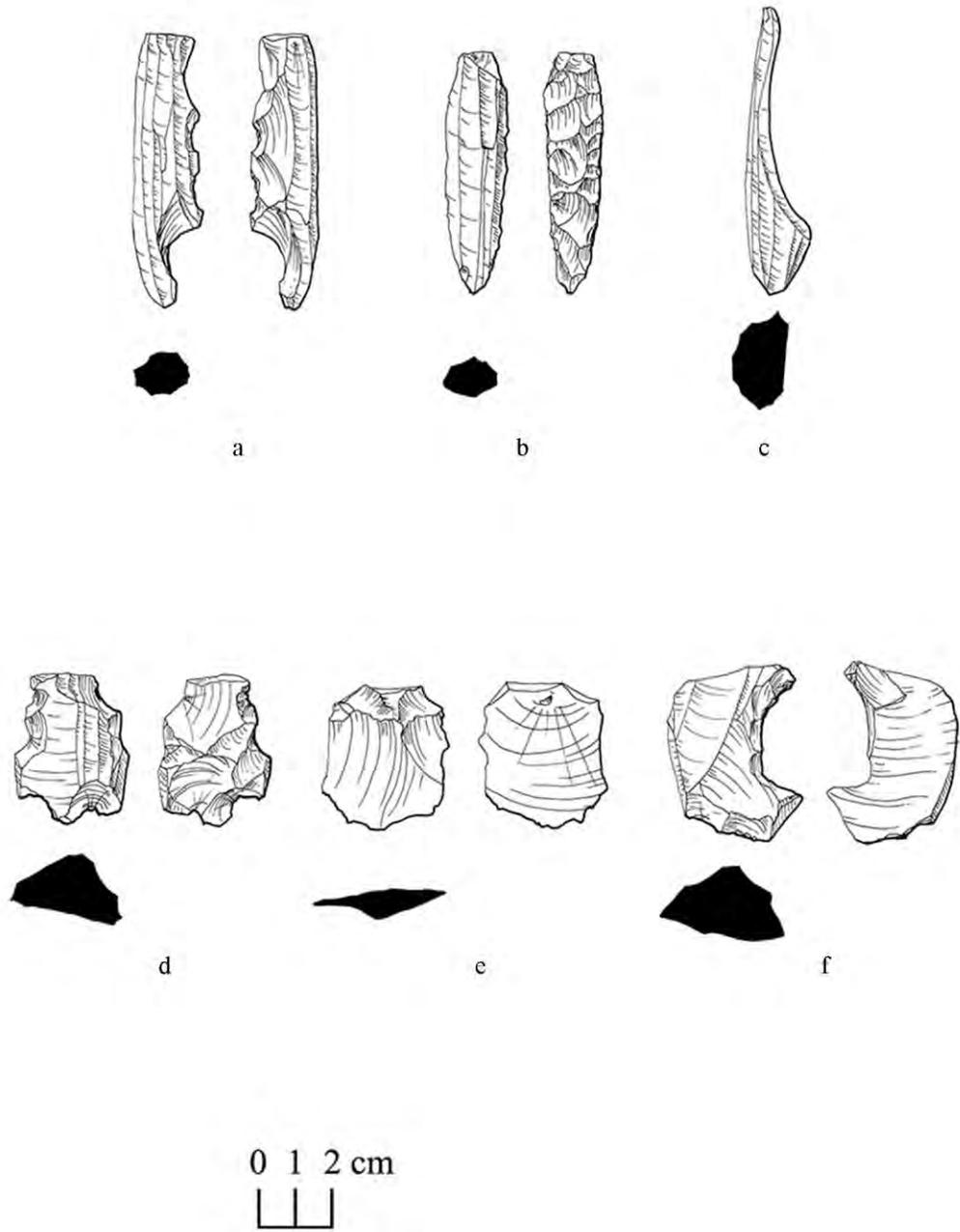


Figure 10: Eccentric obsidians from S.D. C49D-1.

Stones above S.D. C49D-3, S.D. C49D-6
and S.D. C49D-10

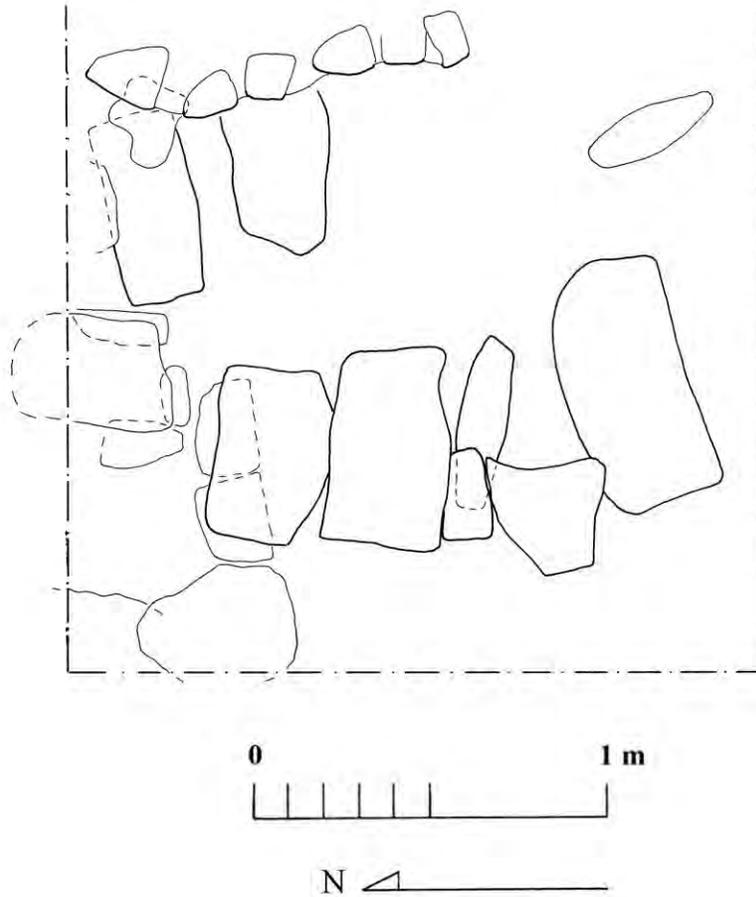


Figure 11: Plan of capstones found in the western portion of the C49D excavation.

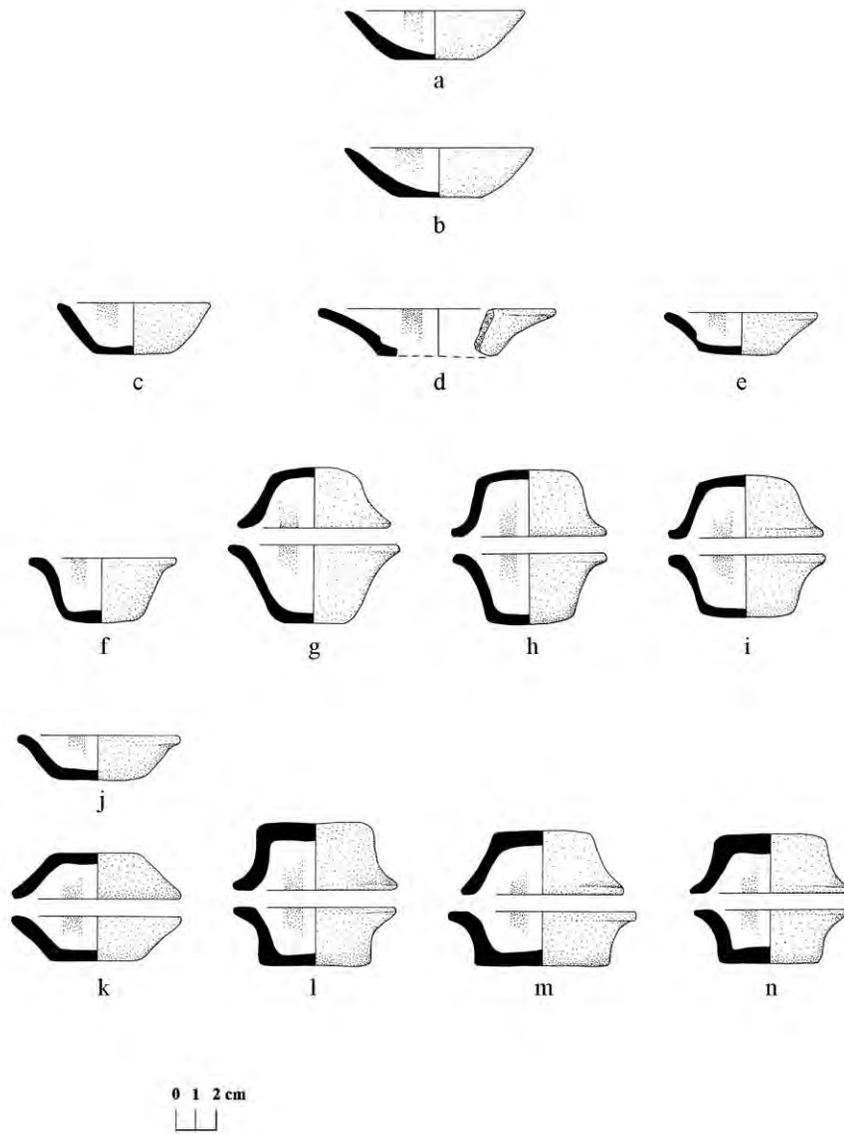


Figure 12: Cache vessels recovered in excv. C49D (all Ceiba Unslipped): a., b., d. recovered in general excavation; c. S.D. C49D-10; e. S.D. C49D-5; f.-i. S. D. C49D-2; j.-n. S.D. C49D-4.

S.D. C49D-2

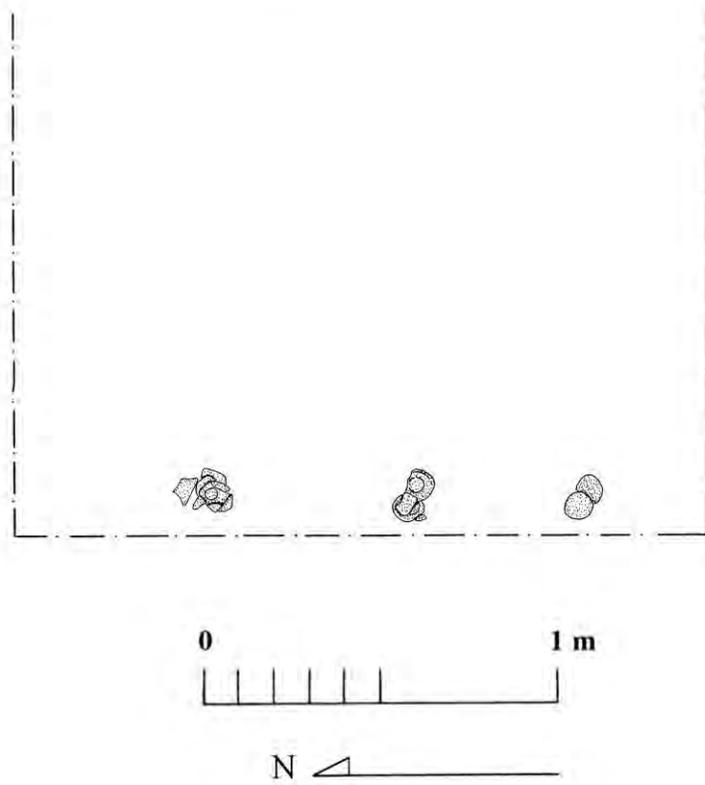


Figure 13: Plan of S.D. C49D-2.

S.D. C49D-2

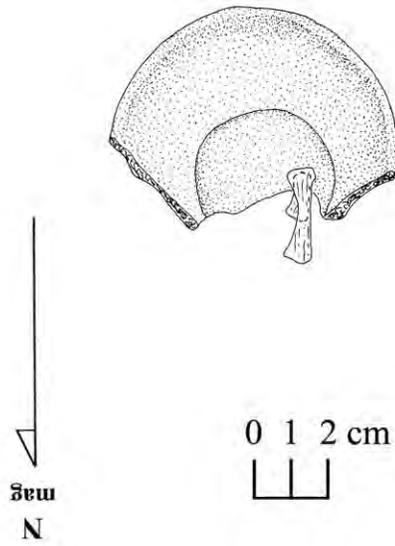


Figure 14: Detail of finger bone in cache vessel for S.D. C49D-2.



Figure 15: Photograph of S.D. C49D-3 and S.D. C49D-6.

excav. C49D

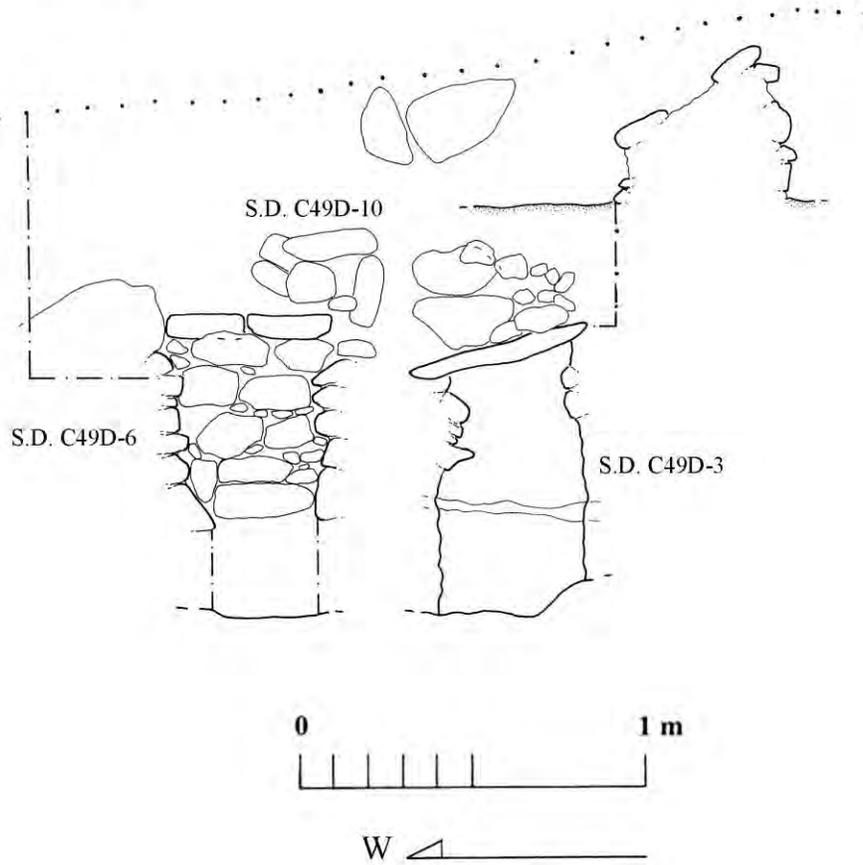


Figure 16: Detailed cross-section of S.D. C49D-3, S.D. C49D-6, and S.C. C49D-10.

S.D. C49D-3 basal plan

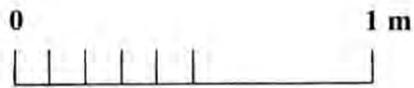
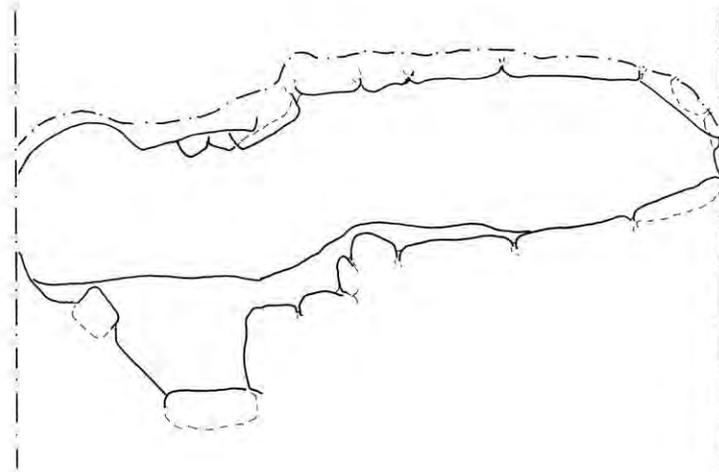


Figure 17: Basal plan for S.D. C49D-3.

S.D. C49D-3

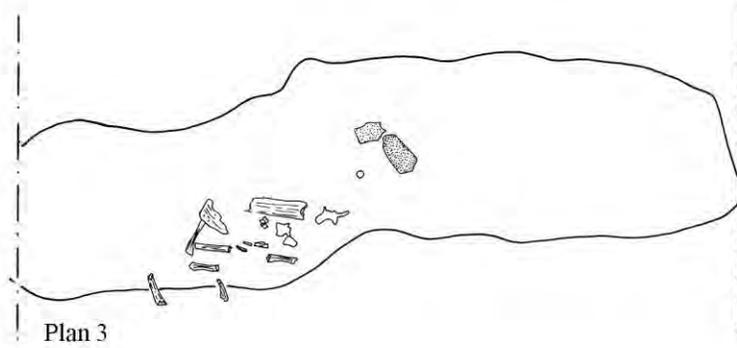
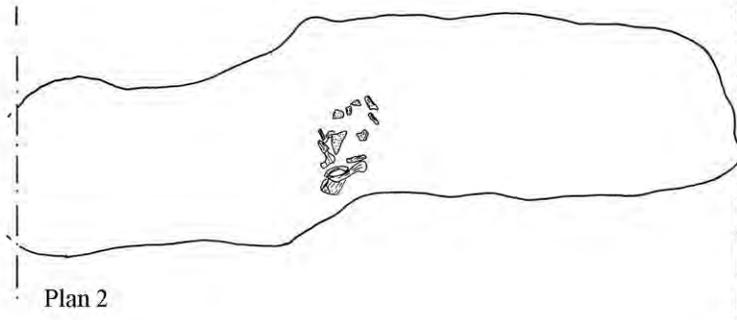
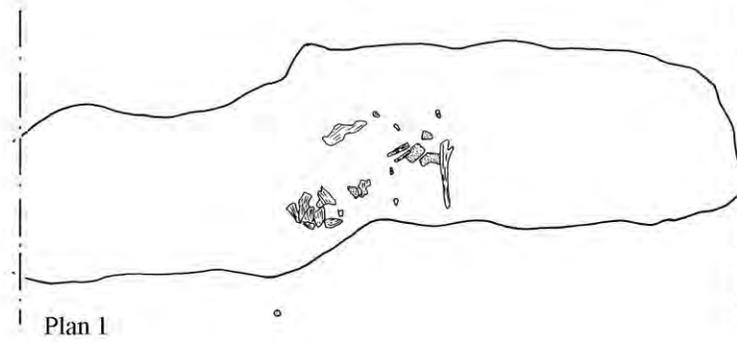


Figure 18: Detailed plans for S.D. C49D-3.

S.D. C49D-3

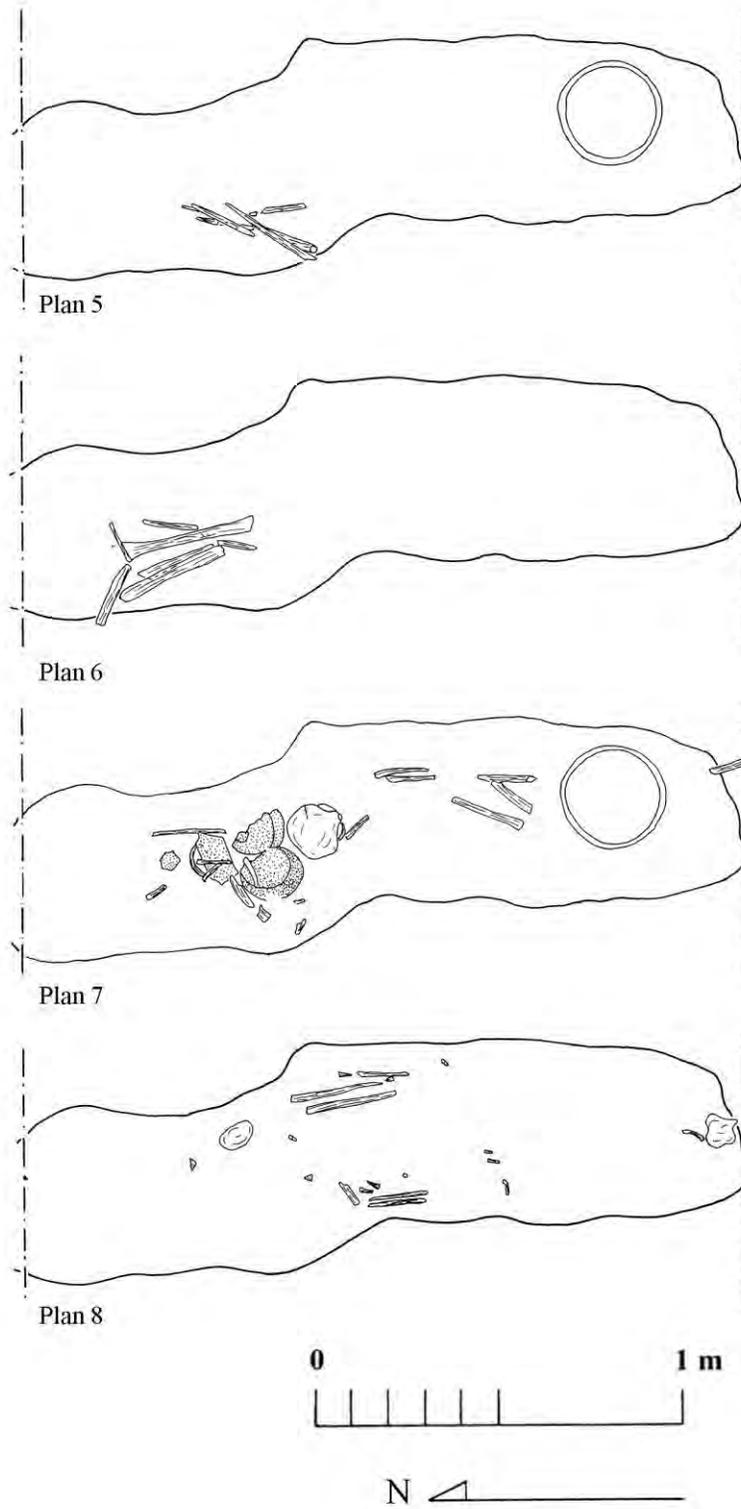


Figure 18: Detailed plans for S.D. C49D-3.

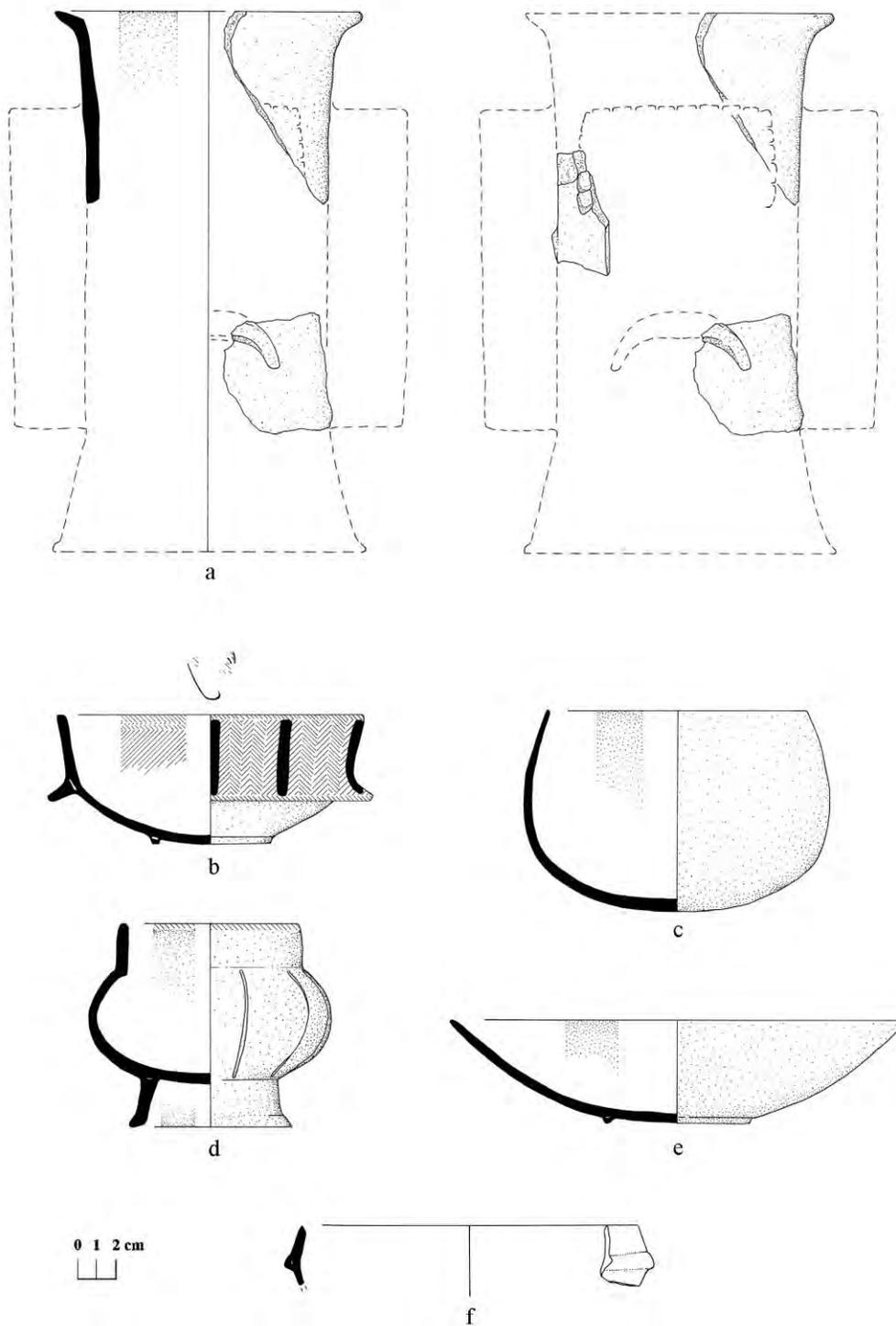


Figure 19: Ceramic vessels recovered in association with S.D. C49D-3: a. Pedregal Modeled; b. Dos-Arroyos Orange Polychrome; c. eroded Veracal Orange; d. undesignated type; e. possibly eroded Machete Orange-Polychrome; f. undesignated type.

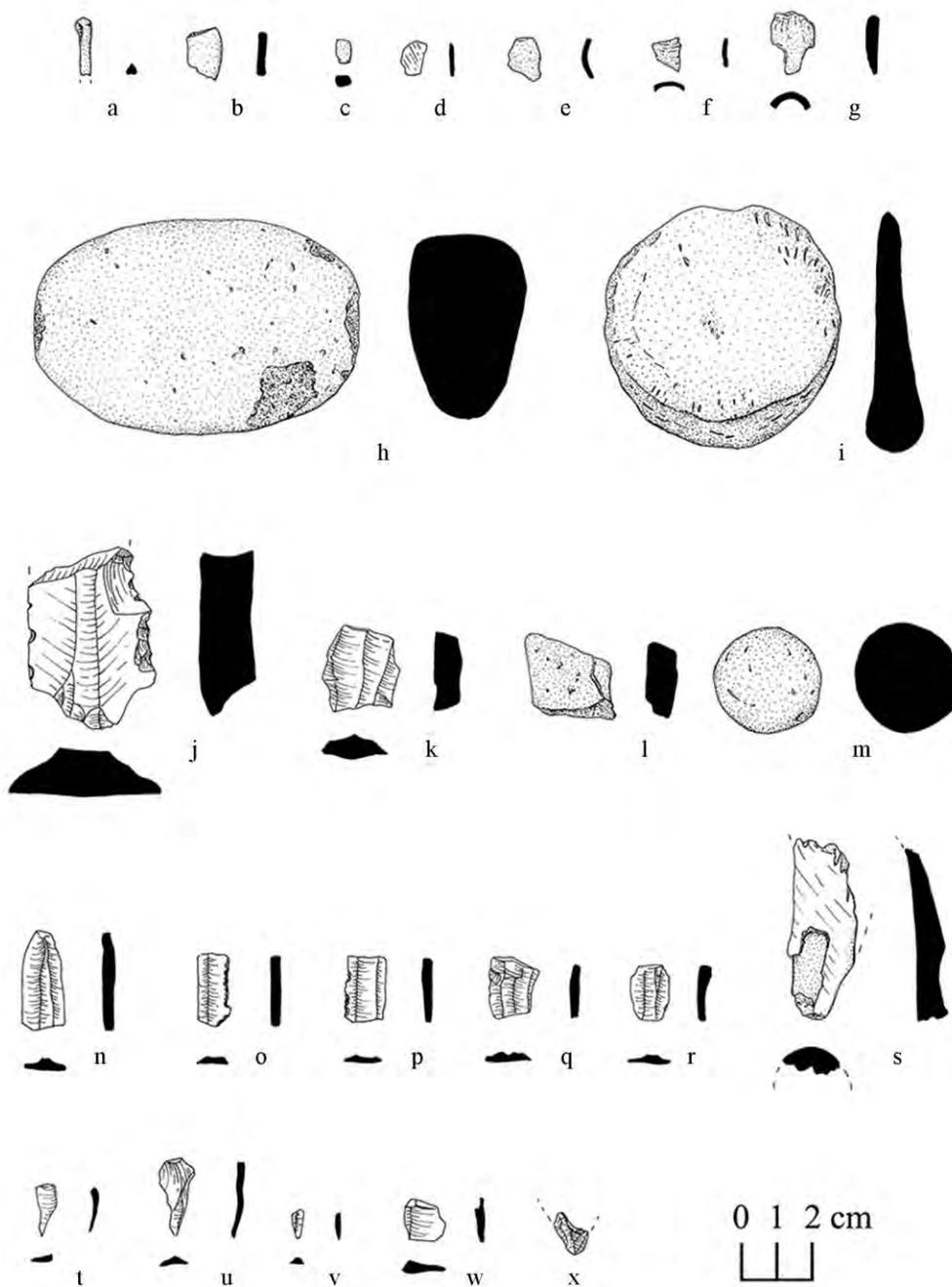


Figure 20: Artifactual material associated with S.D. C49D-3: a. burnt rodent bone; b. worked jadeite; c. worked spondylus; d.-g. shell fragments; h. river cobble; i. limestone burnisher; j. fragmented stemmed macroblade; k. chert fragment; l. slate fragment; m. limestone ball; n.-r. obsidian blade fragments; s. conch shell fragment; t.-w. obsidian flakes; x. obsidian distal core fragment.

S.D. C49D-4

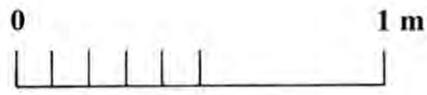


Figure 21: Plan of S.D. C49D-4.

S.D. C49D-4

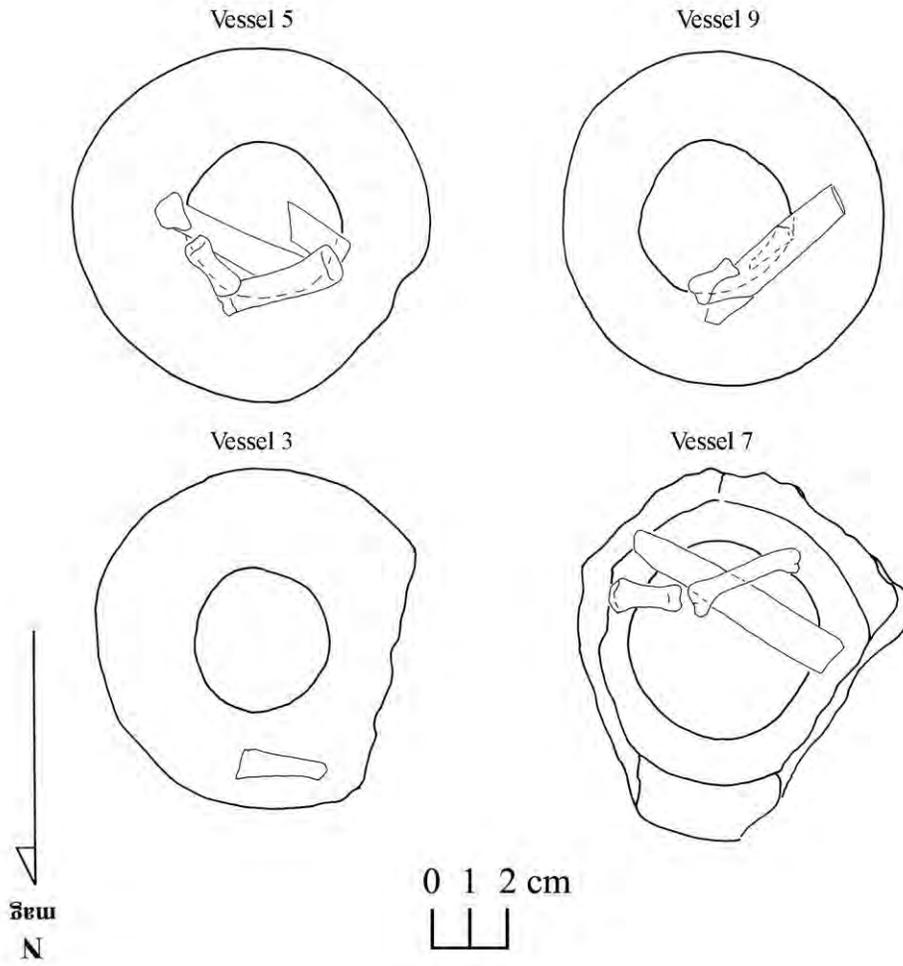


Figure 22: Detailed drawings of the contents of the vessels in S.D. C49D-4.

S.D. C49D-5 and S.D. C49D-7

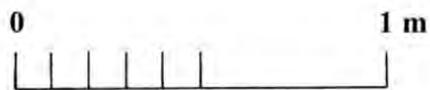
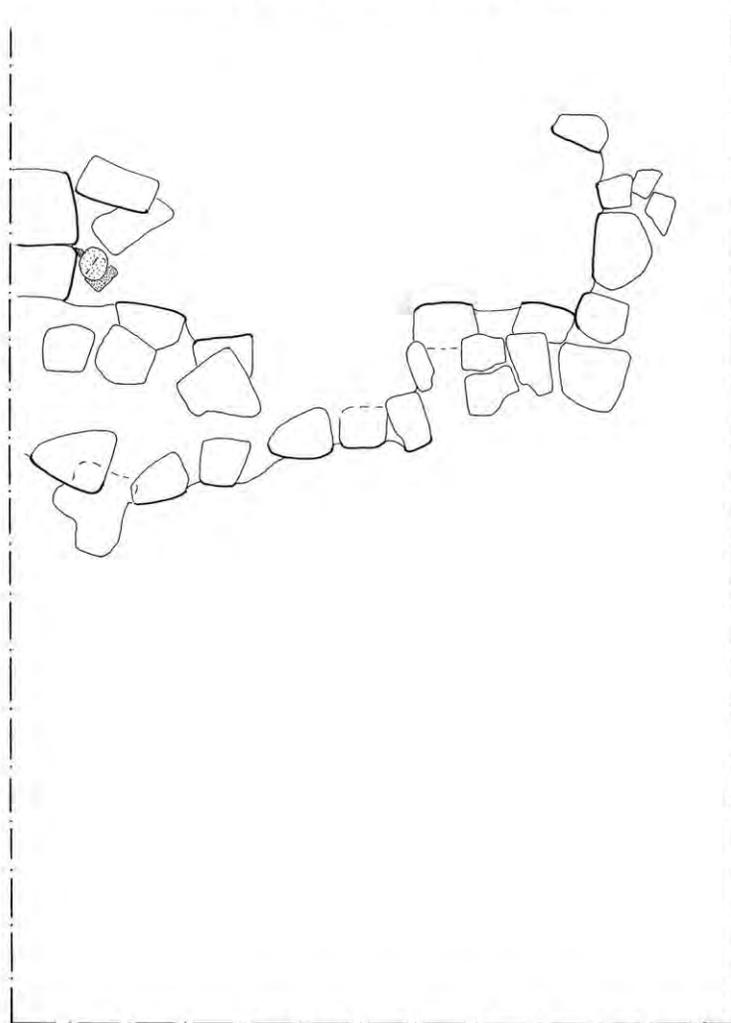


Figure 23: Plan of S.D. C49D-5 and S.D. C49D-7.

S.D. C49D-5

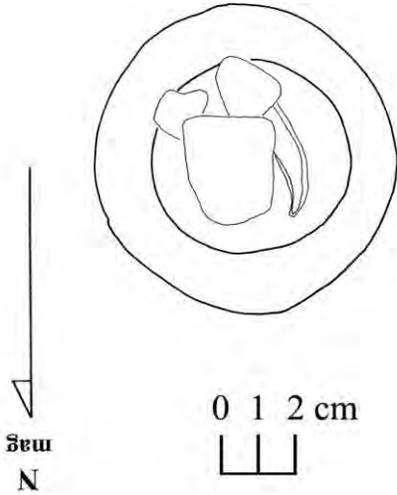


Figure 24: Plan of the contents of S.D. C49D-5.

S.C. C49D-6

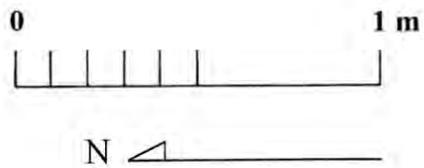
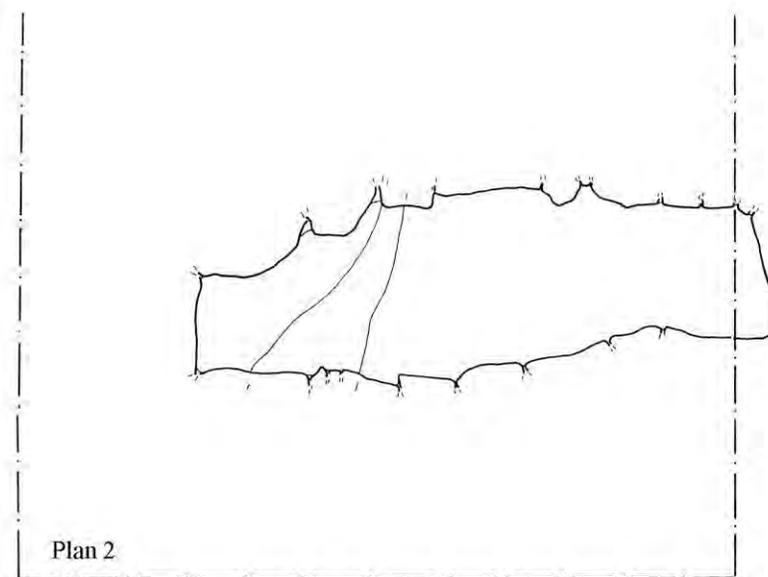
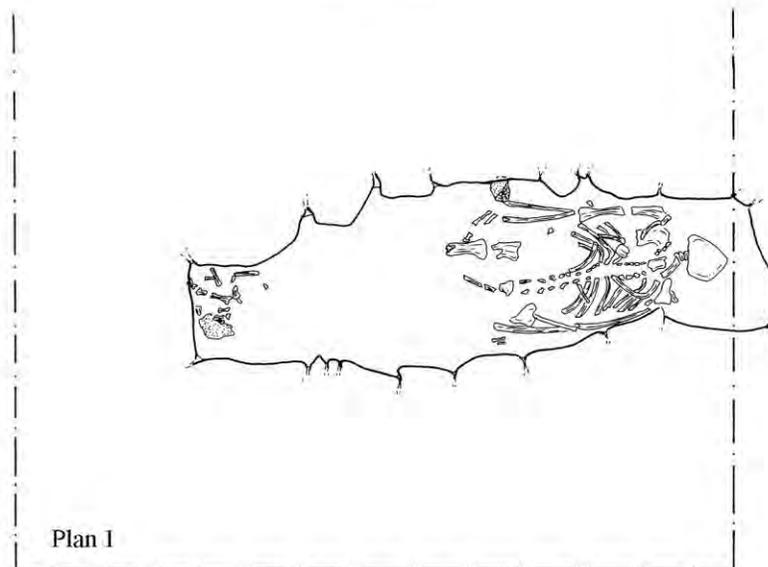


Figure 25: Plans of S.D. C49D-6.

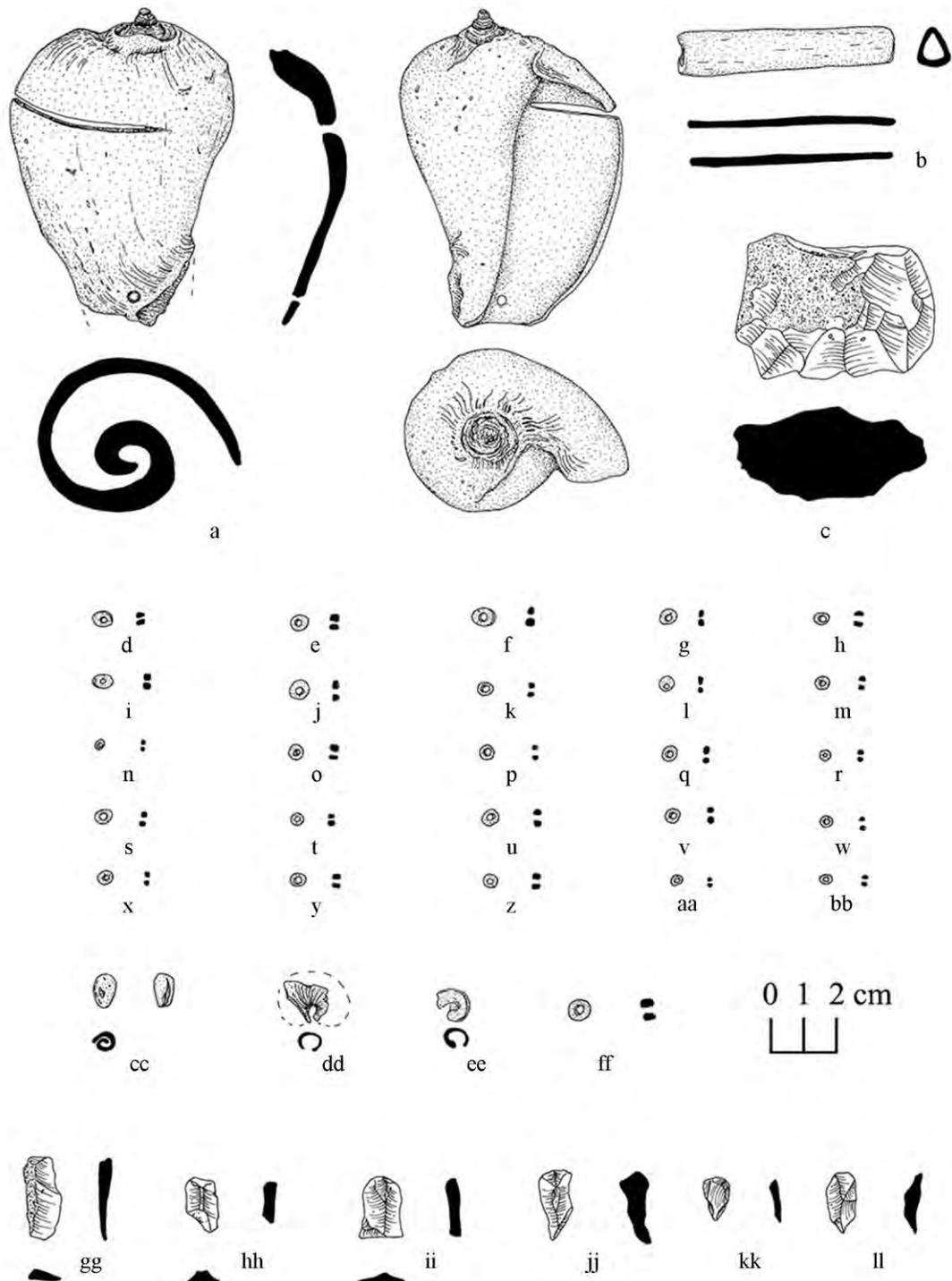


Figure 26: Artifactual material associated with S.D. C49D-6: a. worked fig whelk; b. worked bird bone; c. chert core; d.-bb. spondylus beads; cc. marginella shell; dd.-ee. shell fragments; ff. jadeite bead; gg.-ii. obsidian blade fragments; jj.-ll. chert flakes.

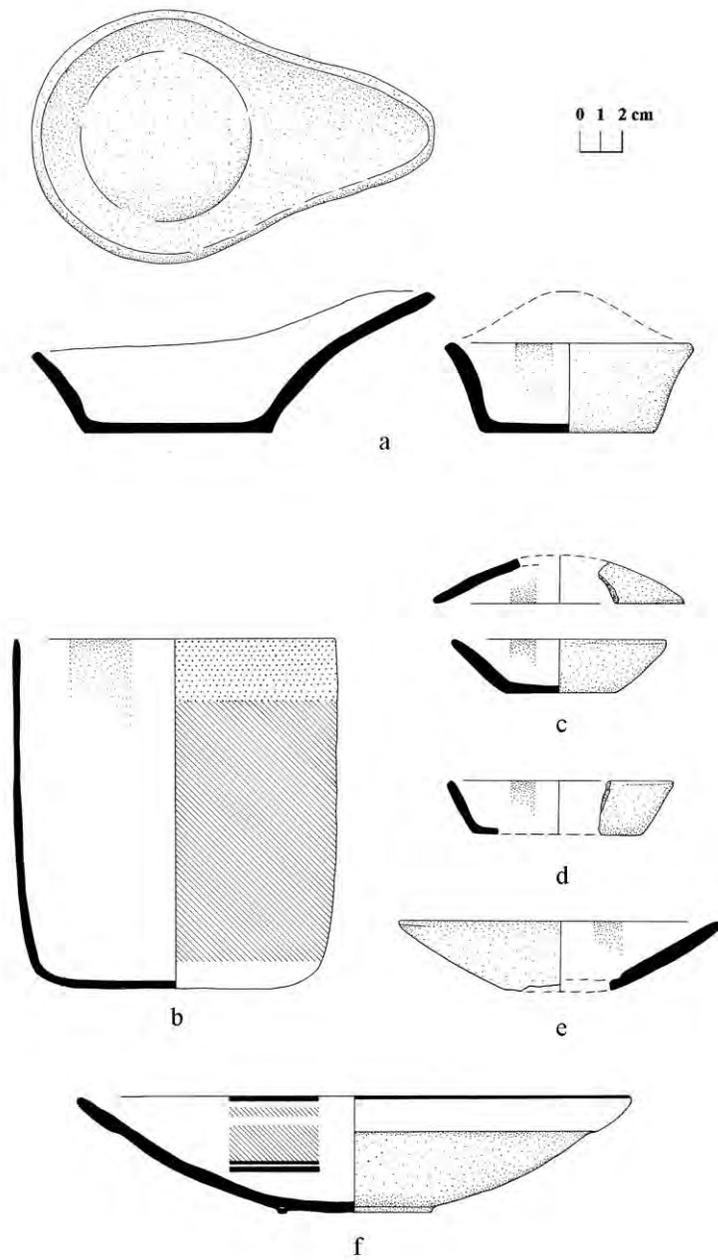


Figure 27: Ceramic vessels associated with S.D. C49D-8: a. undesignated type; b. probably Veracal Orange with stuccoed rim; c., d., e. Ceiba Unslipped; f. proably Machete Orange-Polychrome.



Figure 28: Photograph of S.D. C49D-9.

S.D. C49D-9

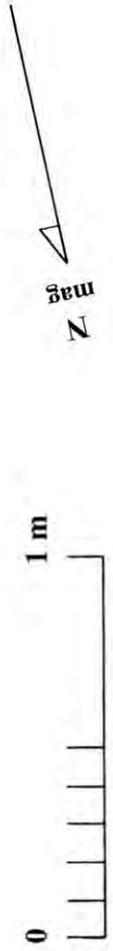
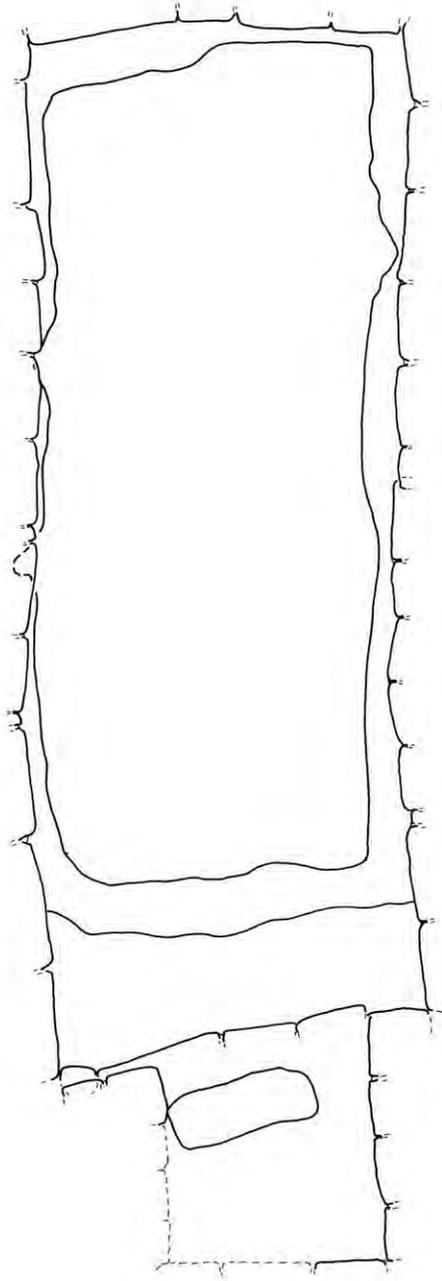


Figure 29: Plan of S.D. C49D-9.

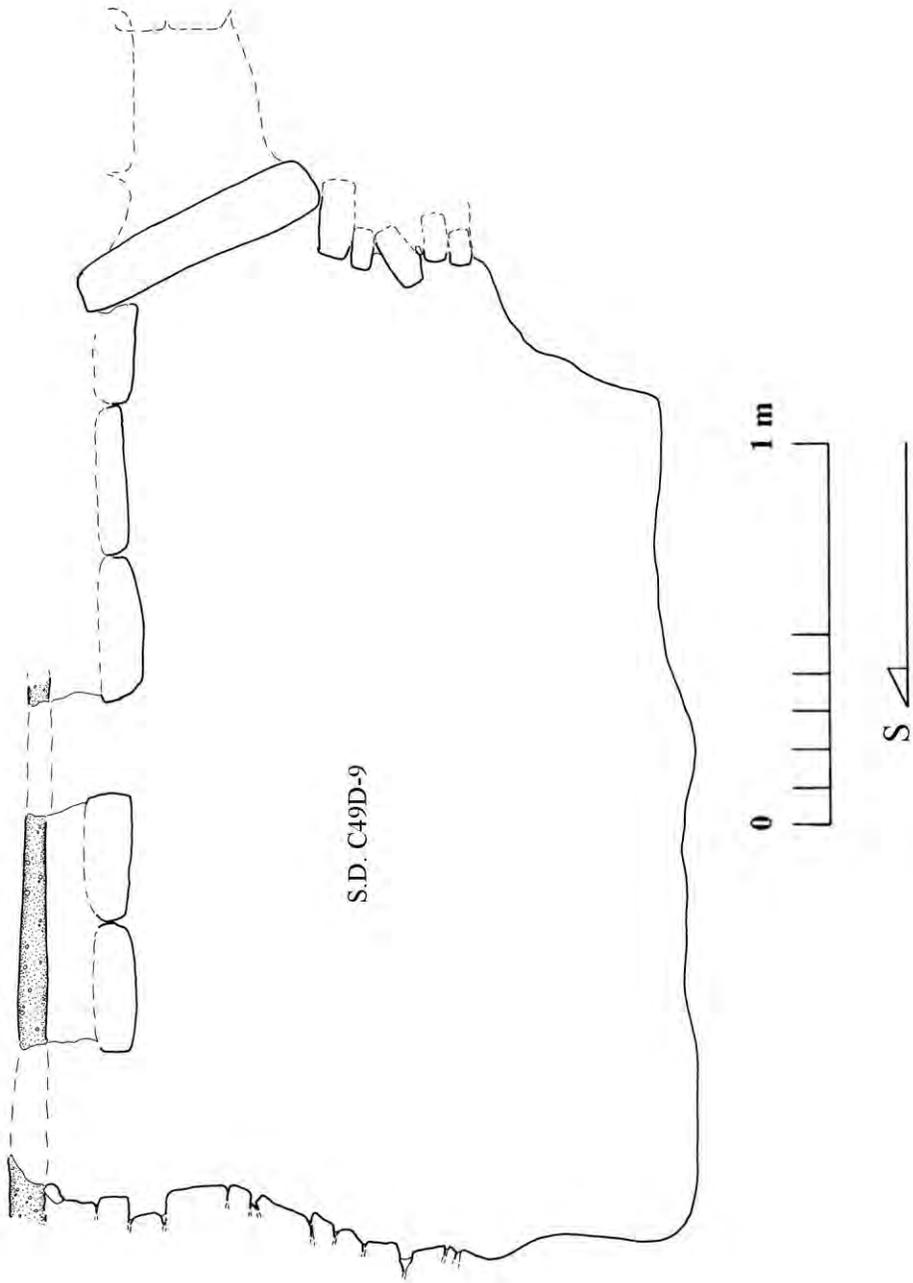


Figure 30: North-South cross-section of S.D. C49D-9.

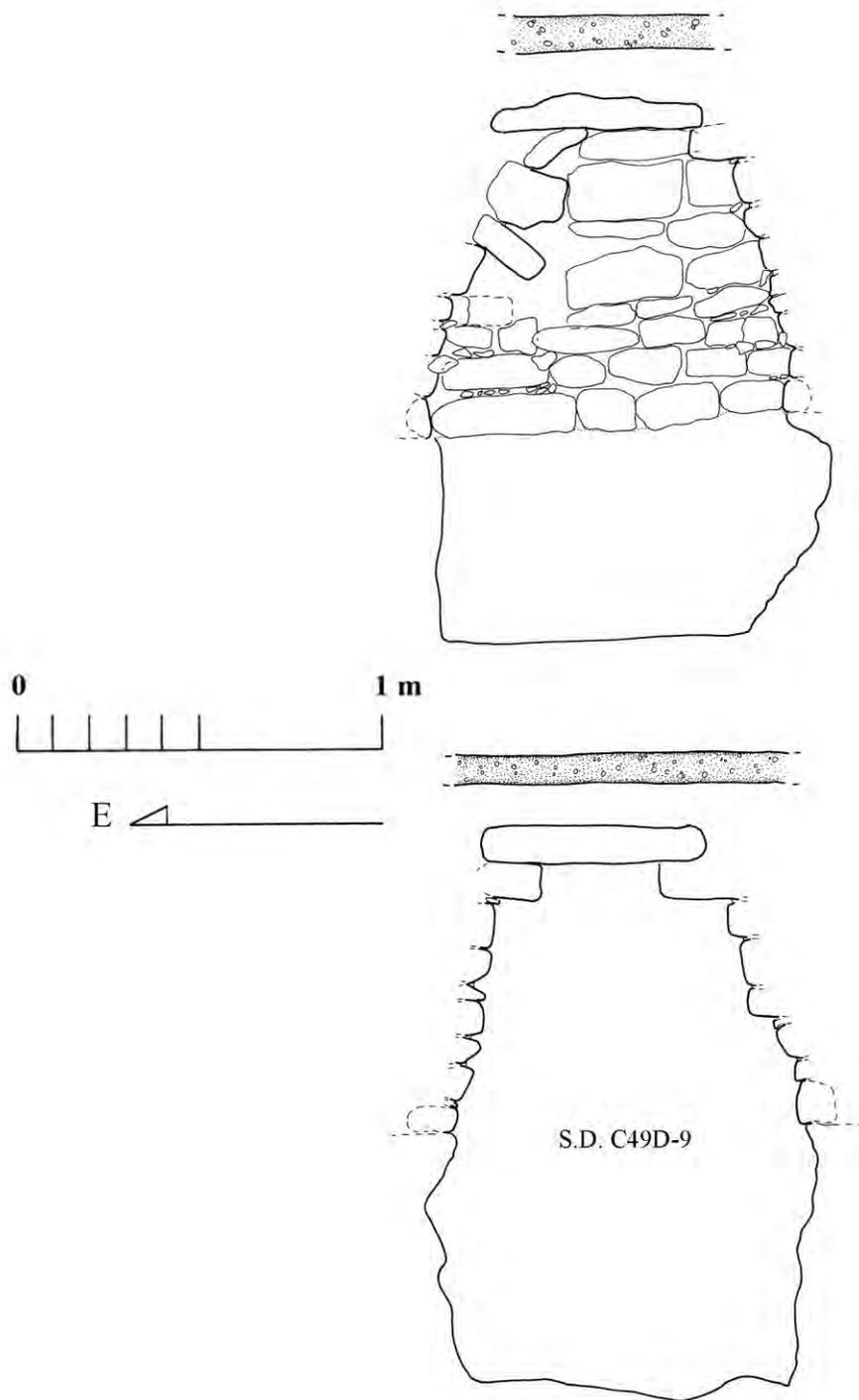


Figure 31: East-West cross-sections of S.D. C49D-9.

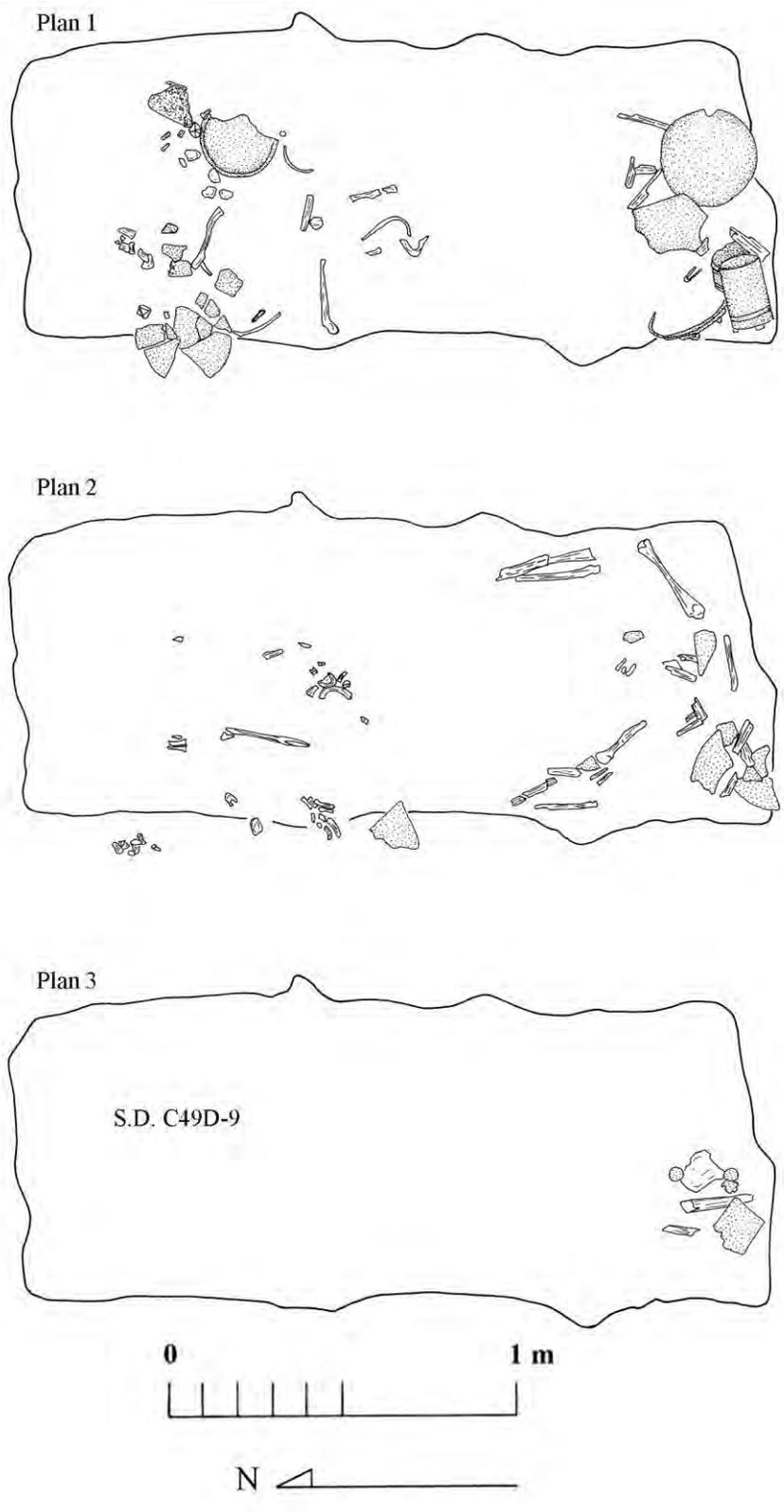


Figure 32: Plans of S.D. C49D-9.

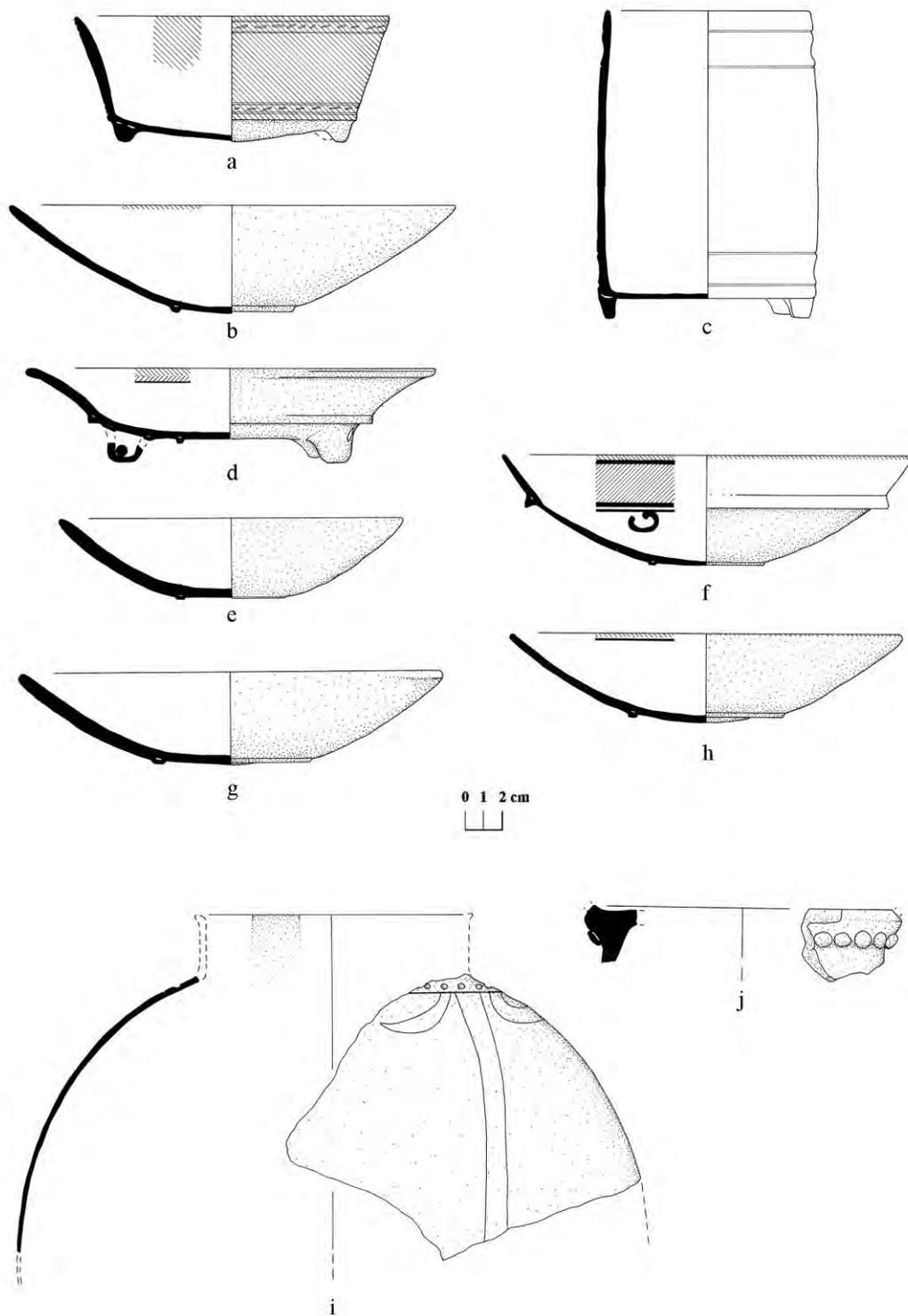


Figure 33: Ceramic vessels associated with S.D. C49D-9: a. undesignated punctate related to Belize Red; b., f., h. Pajarito Orange-Polychrome; c. possibly Tenaja Fluted; d. undesignated; e., g. Machete Orange Polychrome; j. possibly Monterey Composite; i. Carmelita Incised.

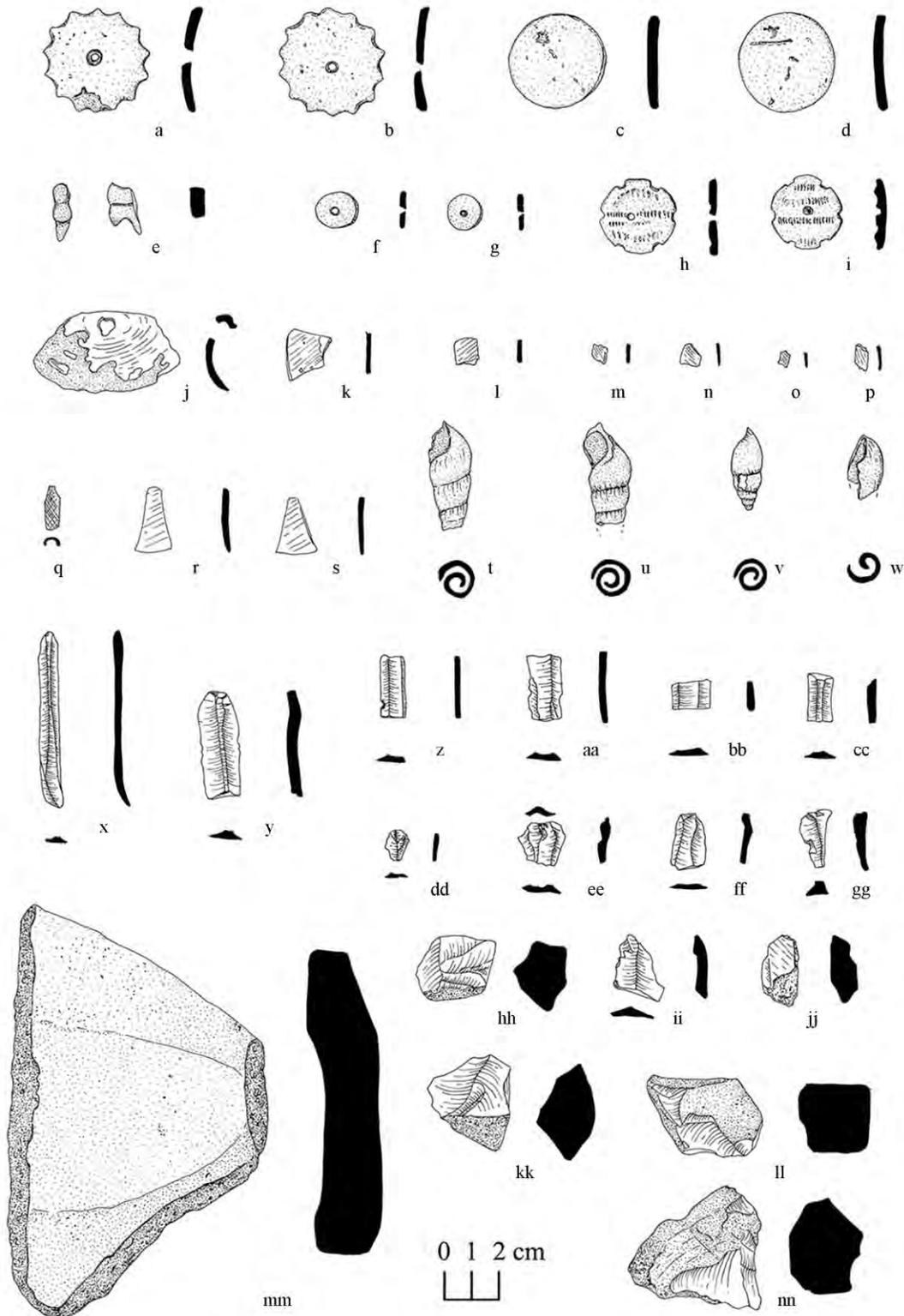


Figure 34: Artifactual material associated with S.D. C49D-9: a-d. Conch shell earflares; e. conch ear ornament; f, g. conch shell discs; h., i. conch discs, one partially drilled; j. clam bivalve; k.-p. clam shell fragments; q. burnt bone; r., s. worked shell ornaments; t.-w. jute snail shells; x. obsidian blade; y.-cc. obsidian blade fragments; dd.-ff. obsidian fragments; gg.-ll., mm. chert fragments; mm. slate fragment.

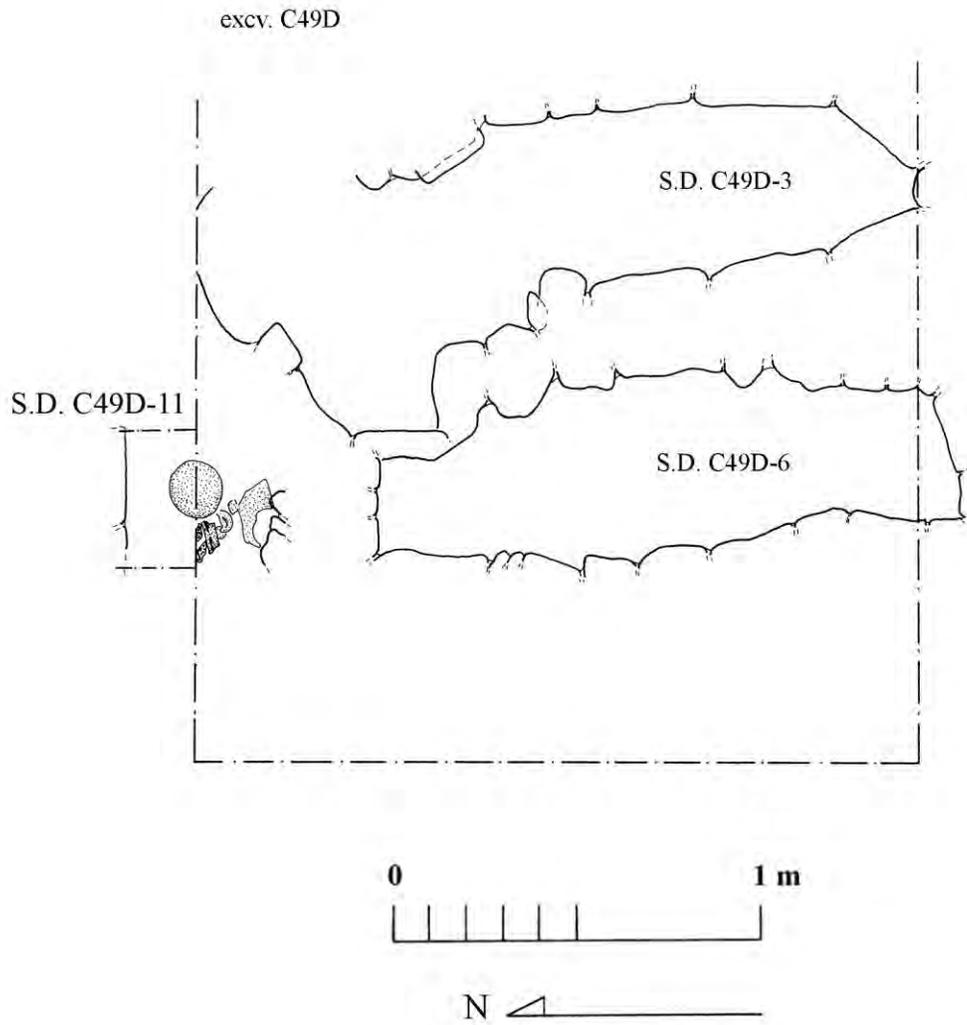


Figure 35: Plan of S.D. C49D-11 in relation to S.D. C49D-6 and S. D. C49D-3.

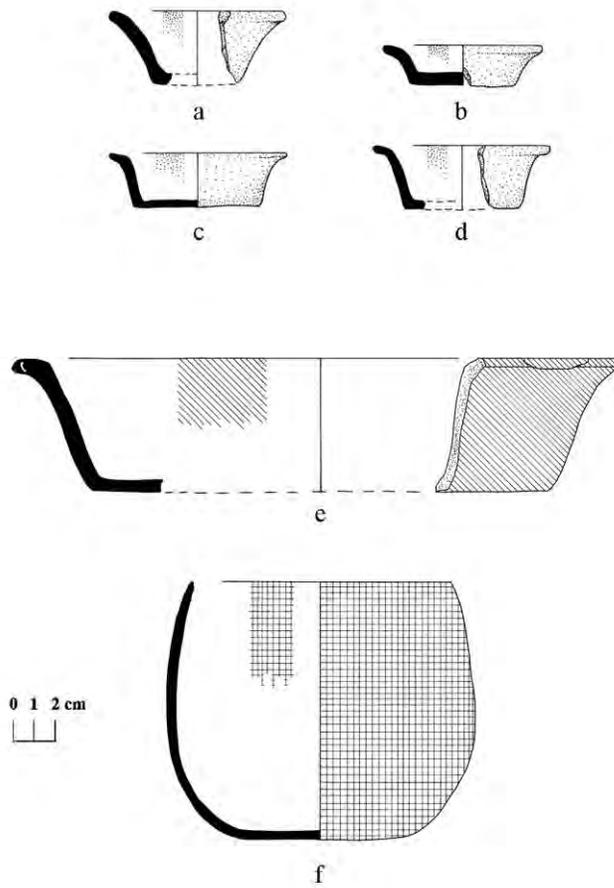


Figure 36: Ceramic vessels associated with S.D. C49D-11: a.-d. Ceiba Unslipped; e. Sierra Red; f. undesignated brown.

CARACOL Northeast Acropolis

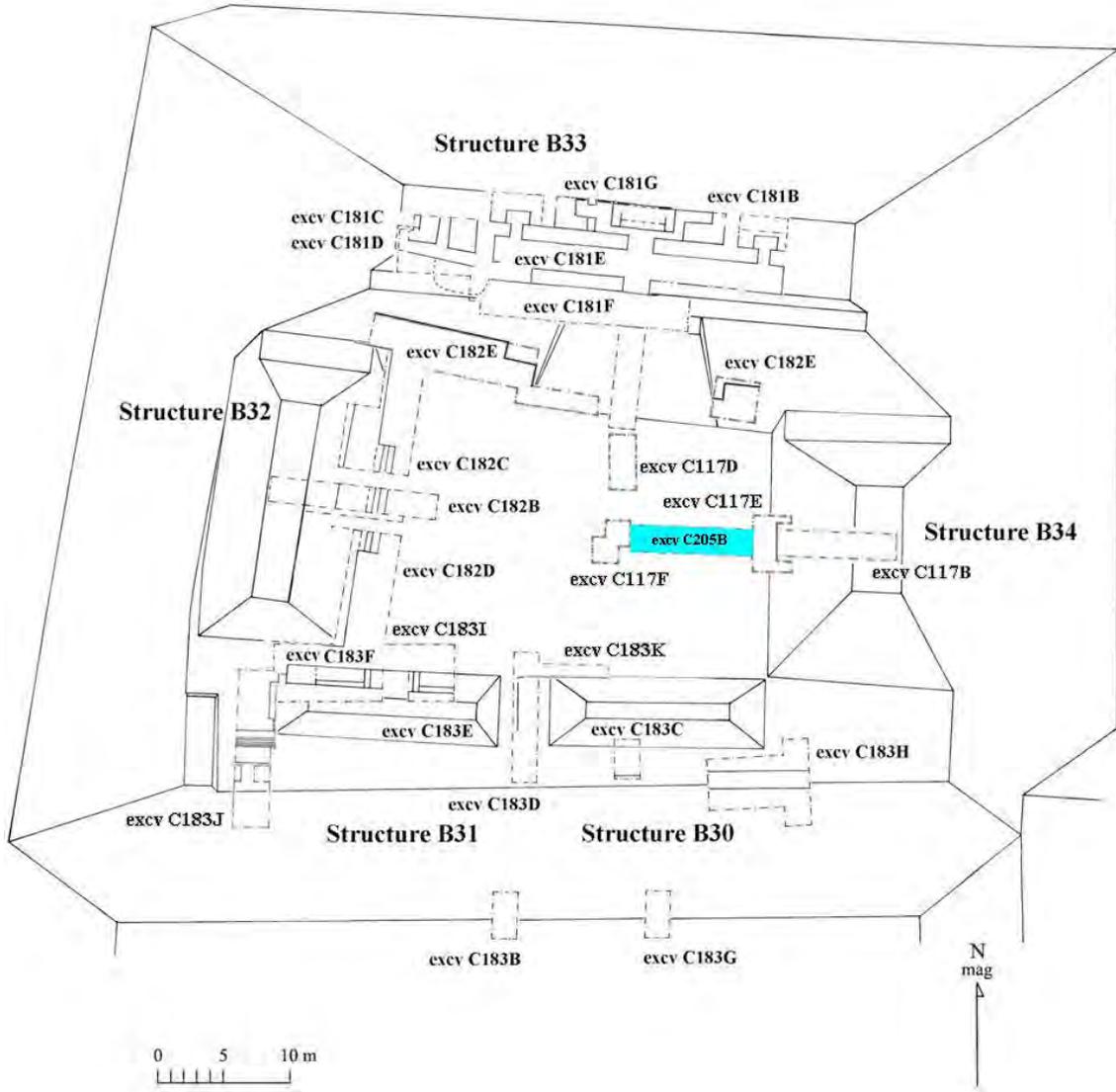


Figure 37: Plan of Northeast Acropolis, showing location of excv. C205B relative to earlier research.



Figure 38: Photograph of Northeast Acropolis, showing Operation C205B looking west.

CARACOL Structure B34

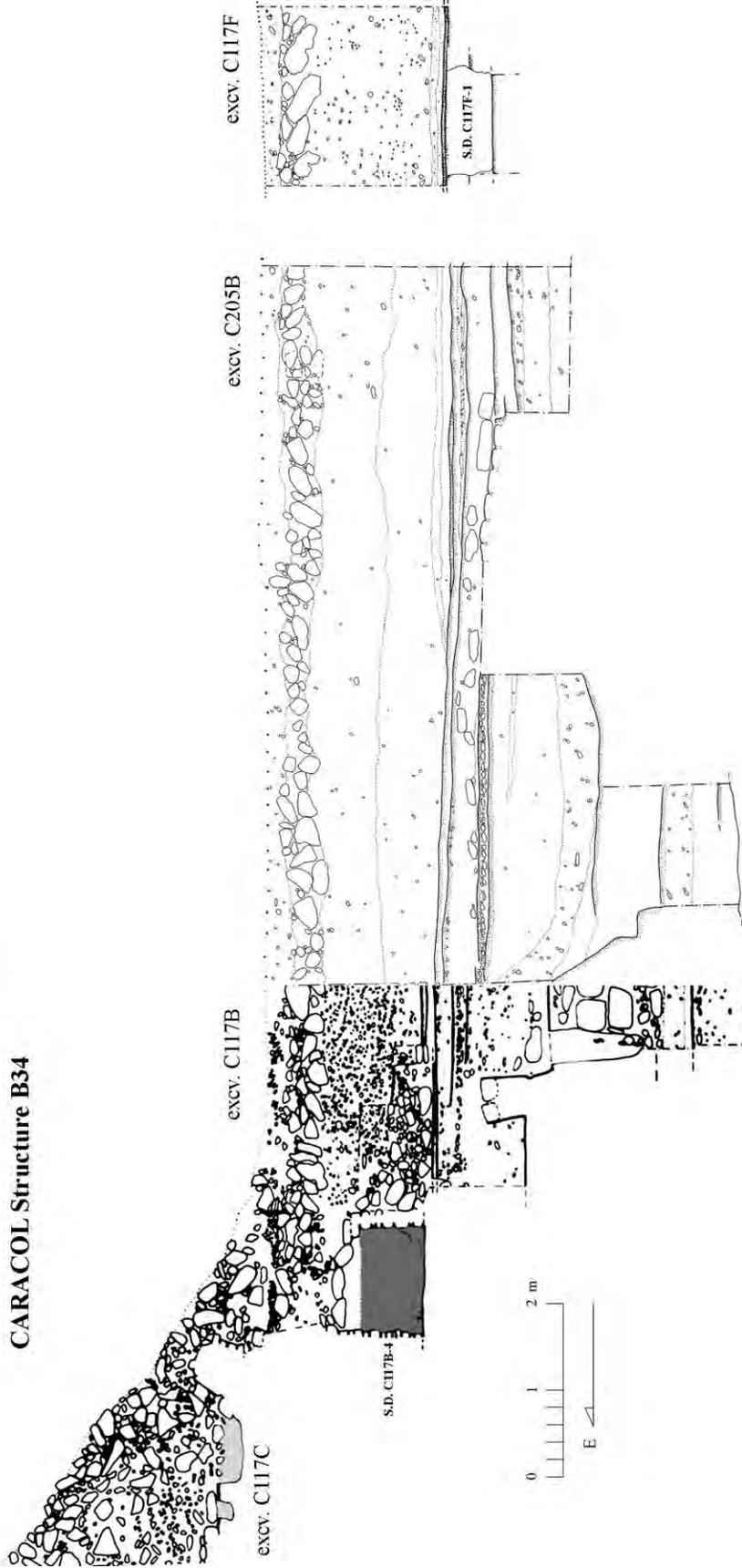


Figure 39: Combined sections showing Structure B34 (excv. C117B), excv. C205B, and excv. C117F.

excv. C205B

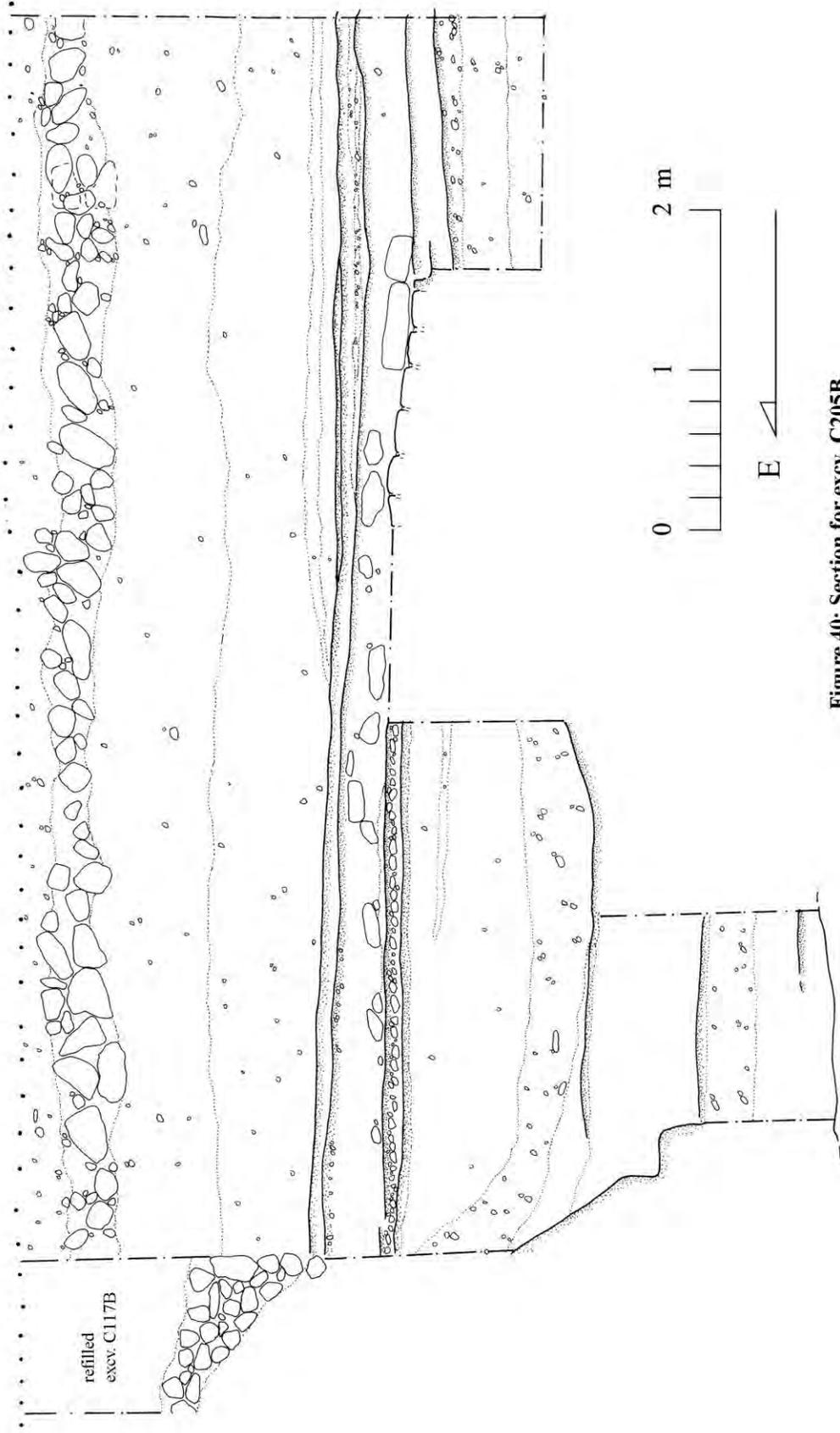


Figure 40: Section for excv. C205B.

excav. C205B
fill construction wall

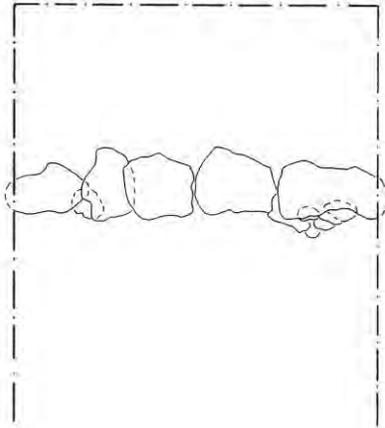
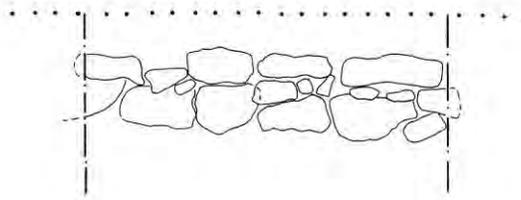


Figure 41: Plan and elevation of construction wall in western end of excav. C205B.

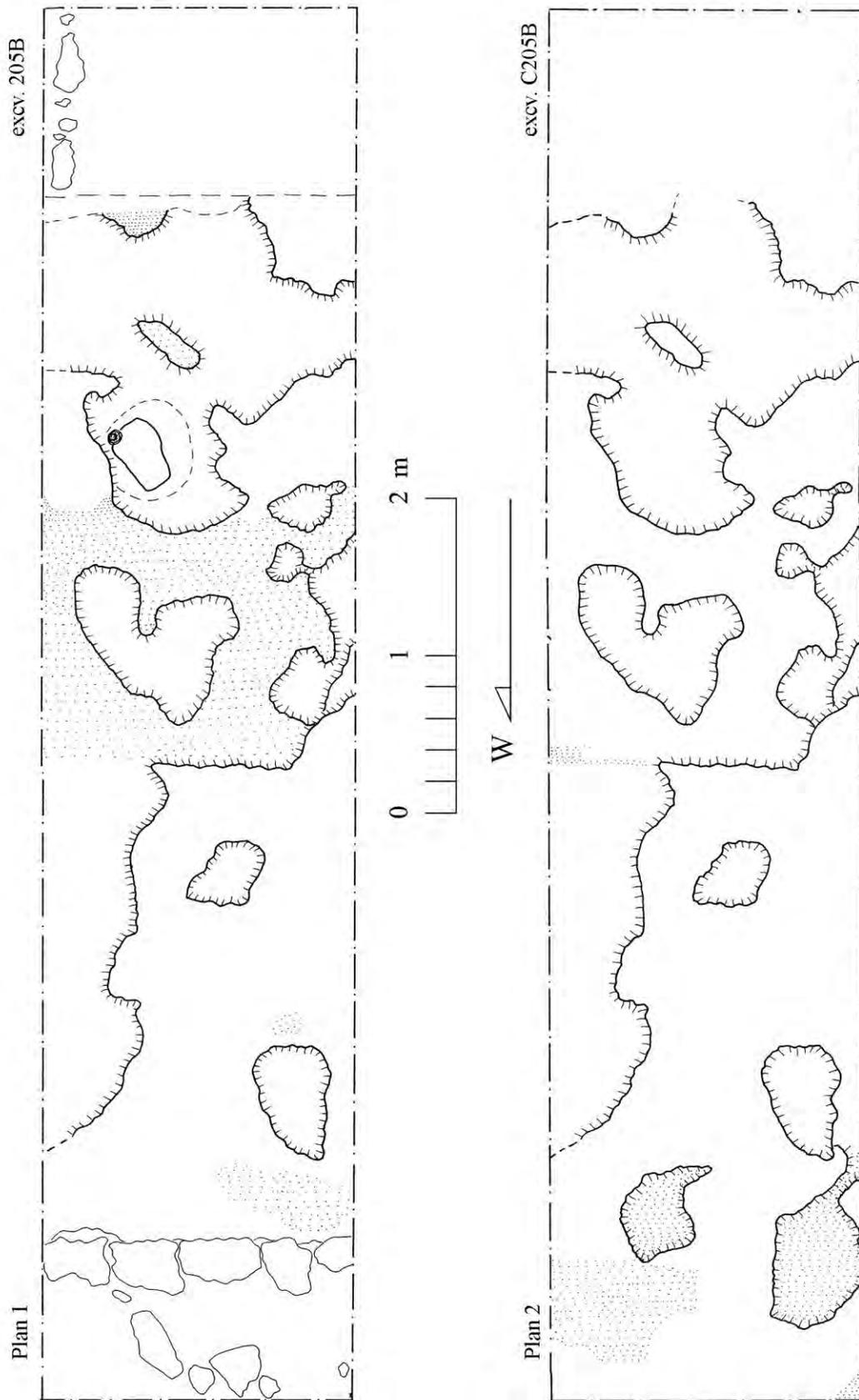


Figure 42: Plans 1-6 of excv. C205B.

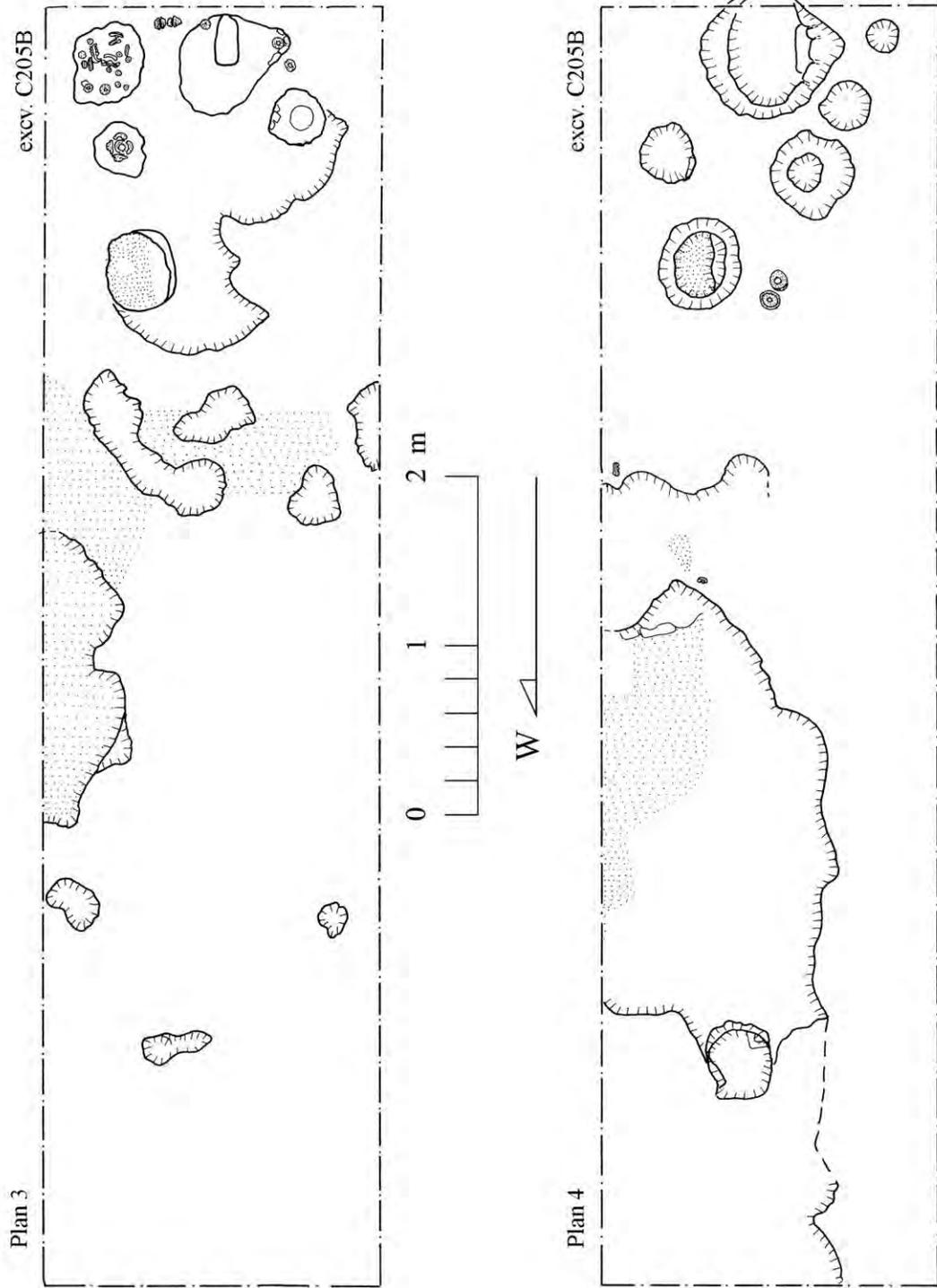


Figure 42: Plans 1-6 of excv. C205B.

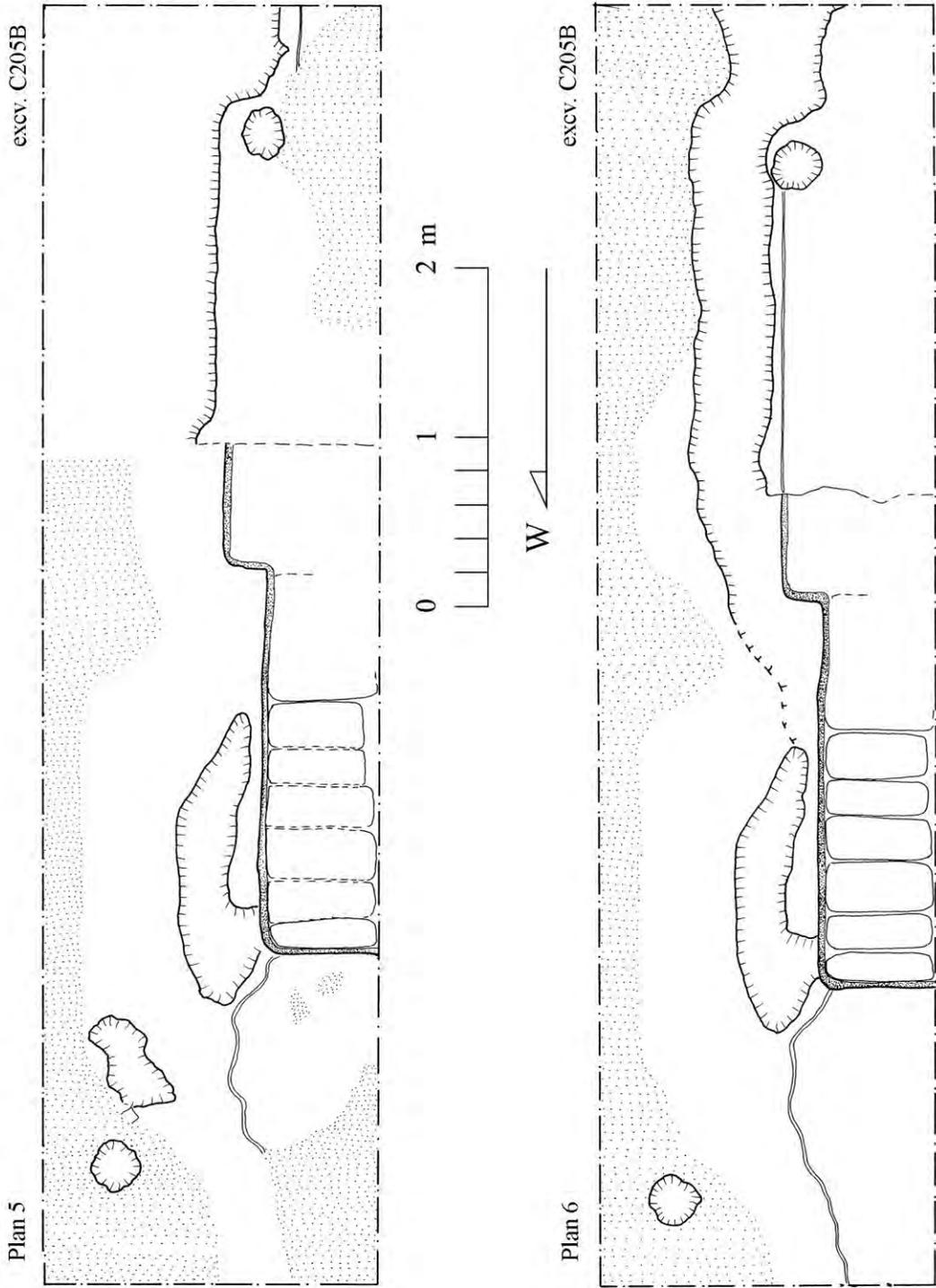


Figure 42: Plans 1-6 of excv. C205B.



Figure 43: Photograph of earlier ripped out structure sealed by lower plaza floors.

excav. C205B
Floor 5 and Floor 6

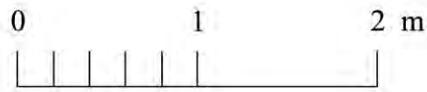
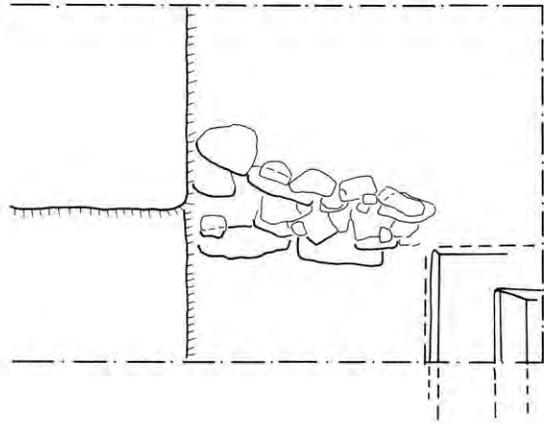


Figure 44: Plan of earlier features at the eastern end of excav. C205B.



Figure 45: Artifactual material from upper plaza fill: a.-j. ceramic figurine fragments; k. shell fragment; l. shell bead; m. incised bone; n. jadeite ornament; o. incised sherd; p. censer handle; q. shell inlay; r. shell whelk spire; s. fragment of chert macroblade; t. chert biface fragment; u. modified incised bone; v.-y. modified bone; z., aa. bone needles; bb. bone awl.

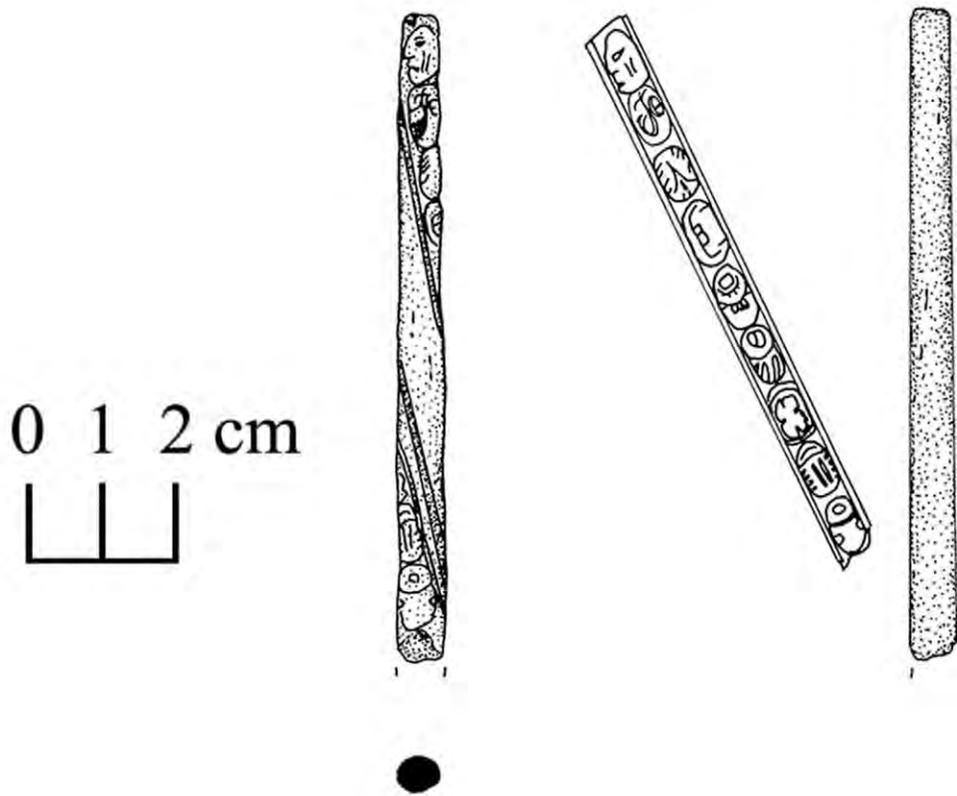


Figure 46: Carved bone pin with hieroglyphs from upper plaza fill.

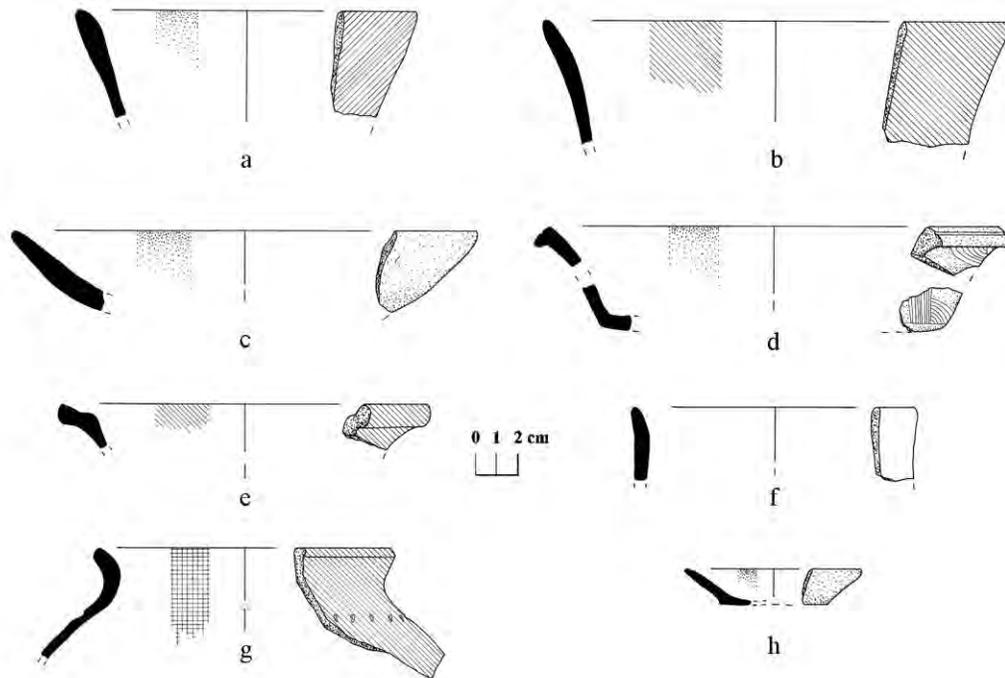


Figure 47: Ceramic profiles from fill above bedrock in excv. C205B: a., b., c. Sierra Red; c., h. Paila Unslipped; d. Laguna Verde Incised; f. undesignated; g. Lagartos Punctated.

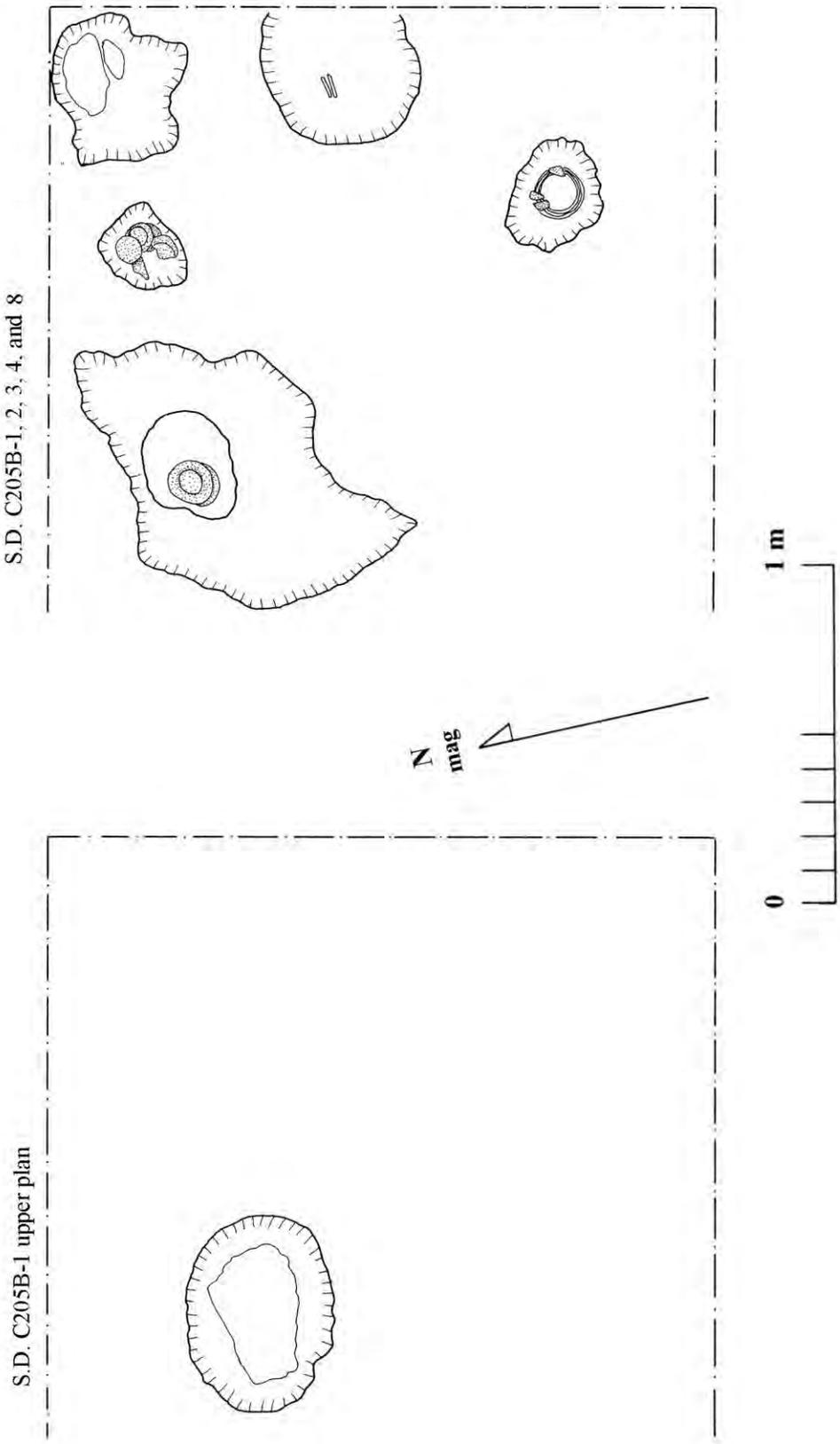


Figure 48: Plans of S.D. C205B-1, S.D. C205B-2, S.D. C205B-3, S.D. C205B-4, and S.D. C205B-8.

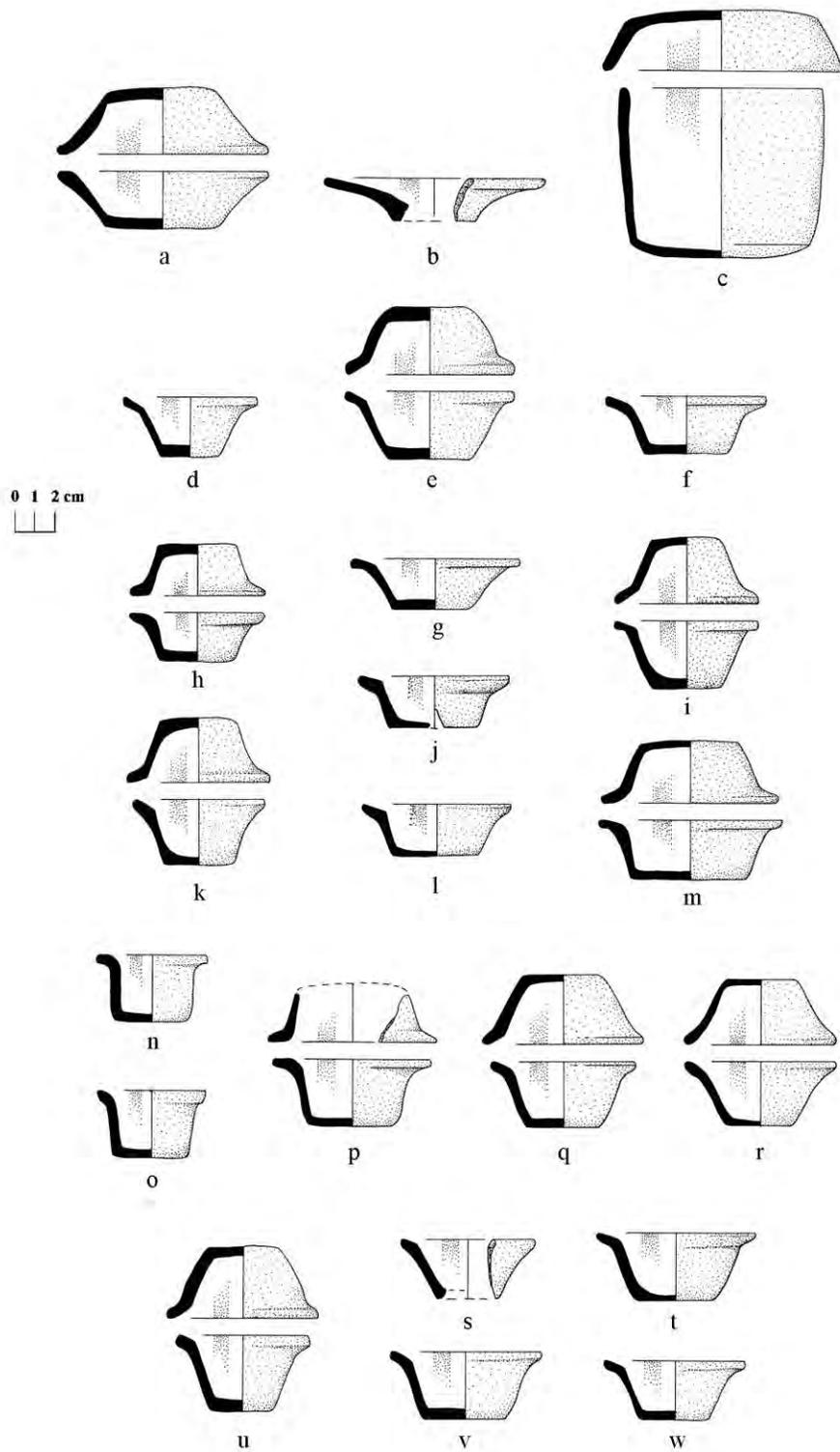


Figure 49: Cache vessels recovered in ex. C205B (all Cieba Unslipped): a. S.D. C205B-1; c. general collection; c. S.D. C205B-2; d.-f. S.D. C205B-3; e.-m. S.D. C205B-4; n., o. S.D. C205B-5; p. S.D. C205B-6; q., r. S.D. C205B-7; u. S.D. C205B-8; s., t., v., w. S.D. C205B-10.

S.D. C205B-2

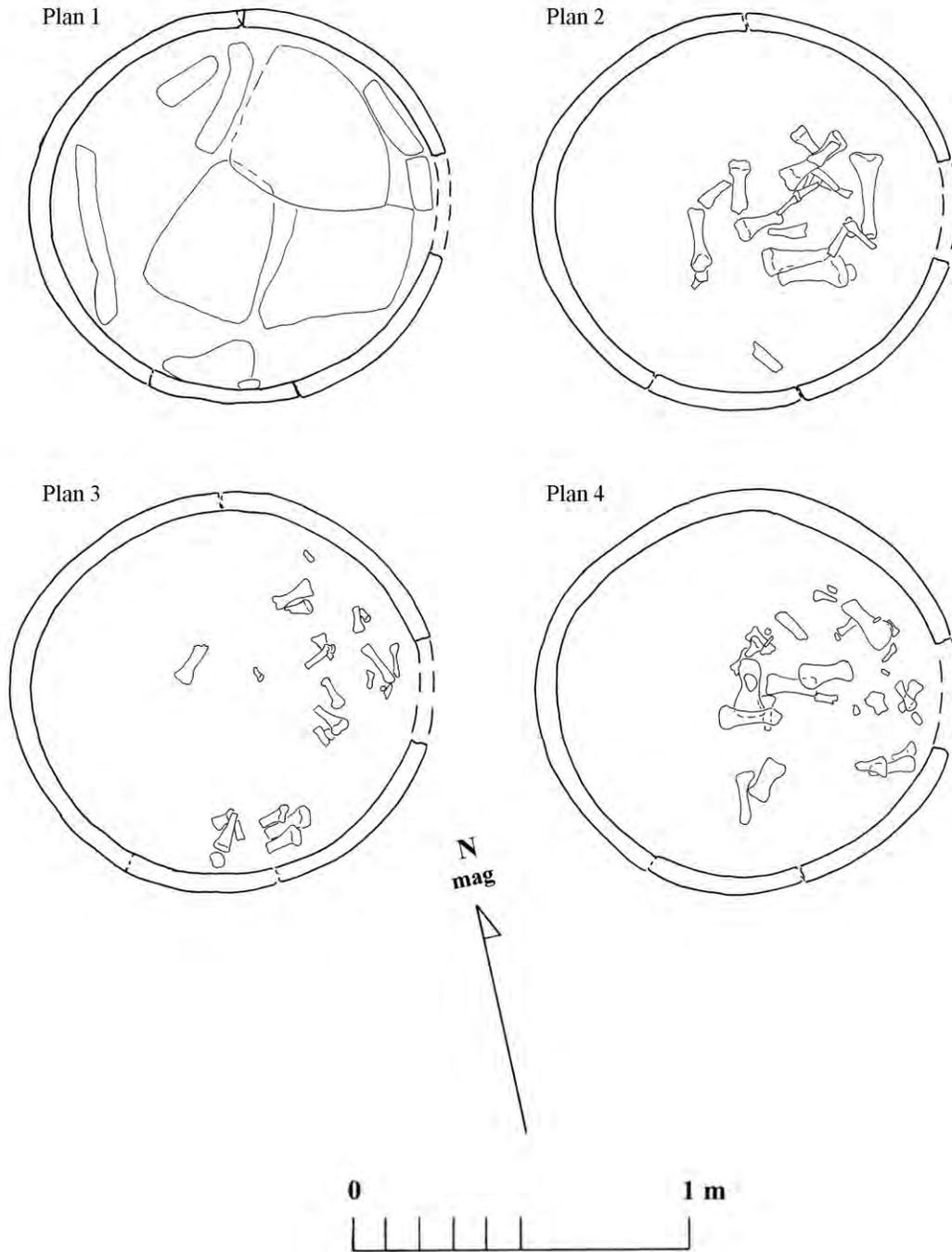


Figure 50: Detailed plans of S.D. C205B-2 (rocks in Plan 1; human phalanges in other plan views).

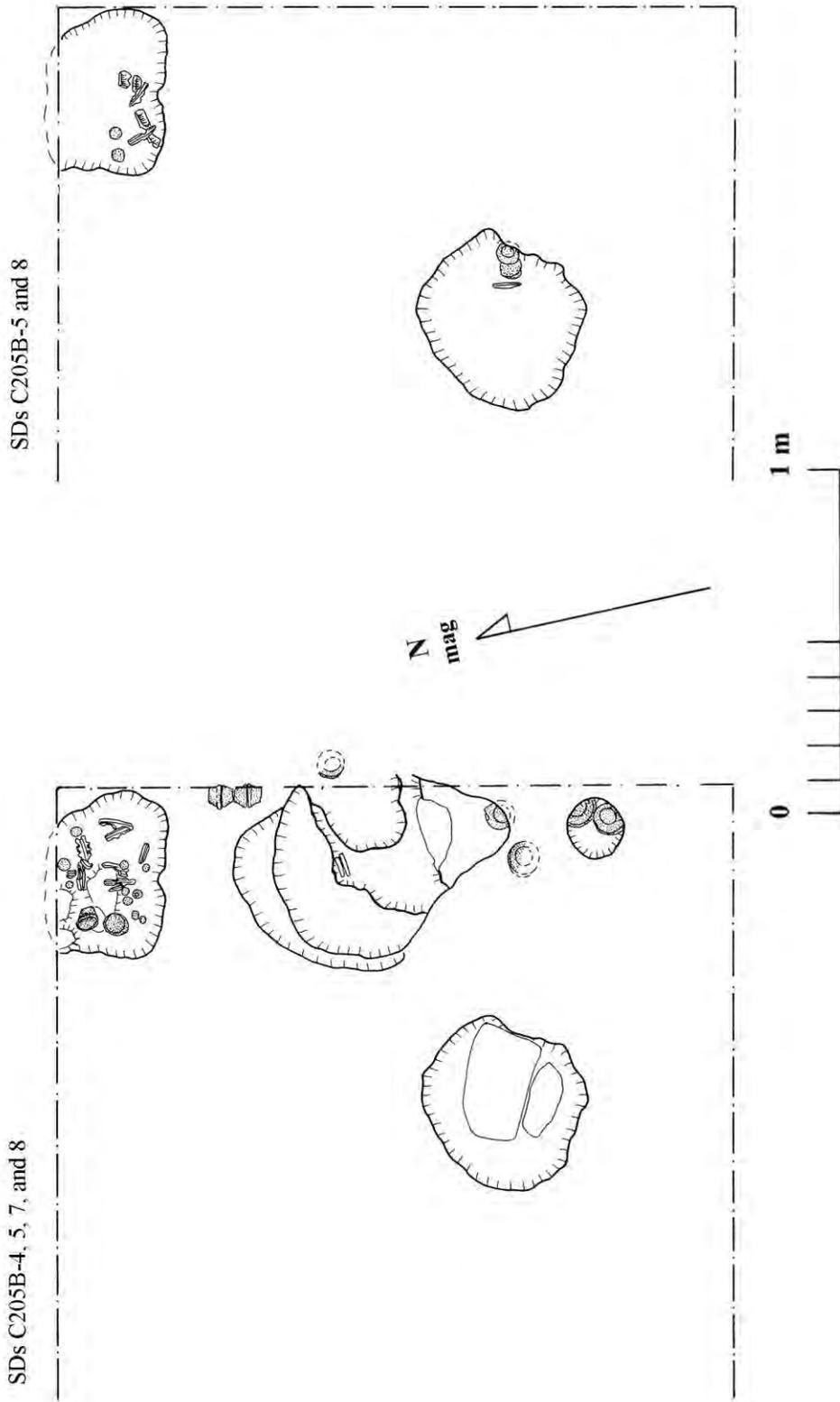


Figure 51: Plans of S.D. C205B-4, S.D. C205B-5, S.D. C205B-7, and S.D. C205B-8.

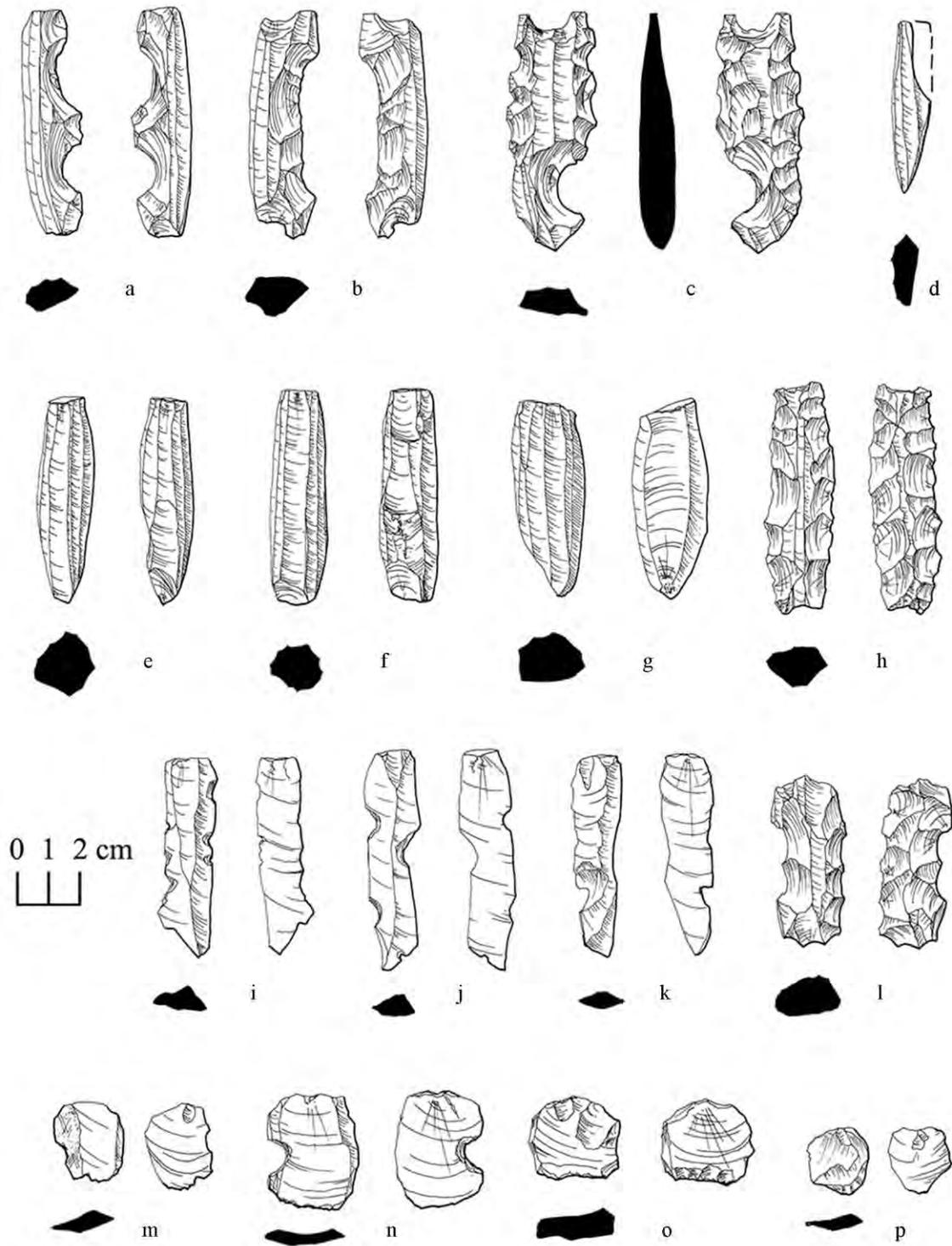
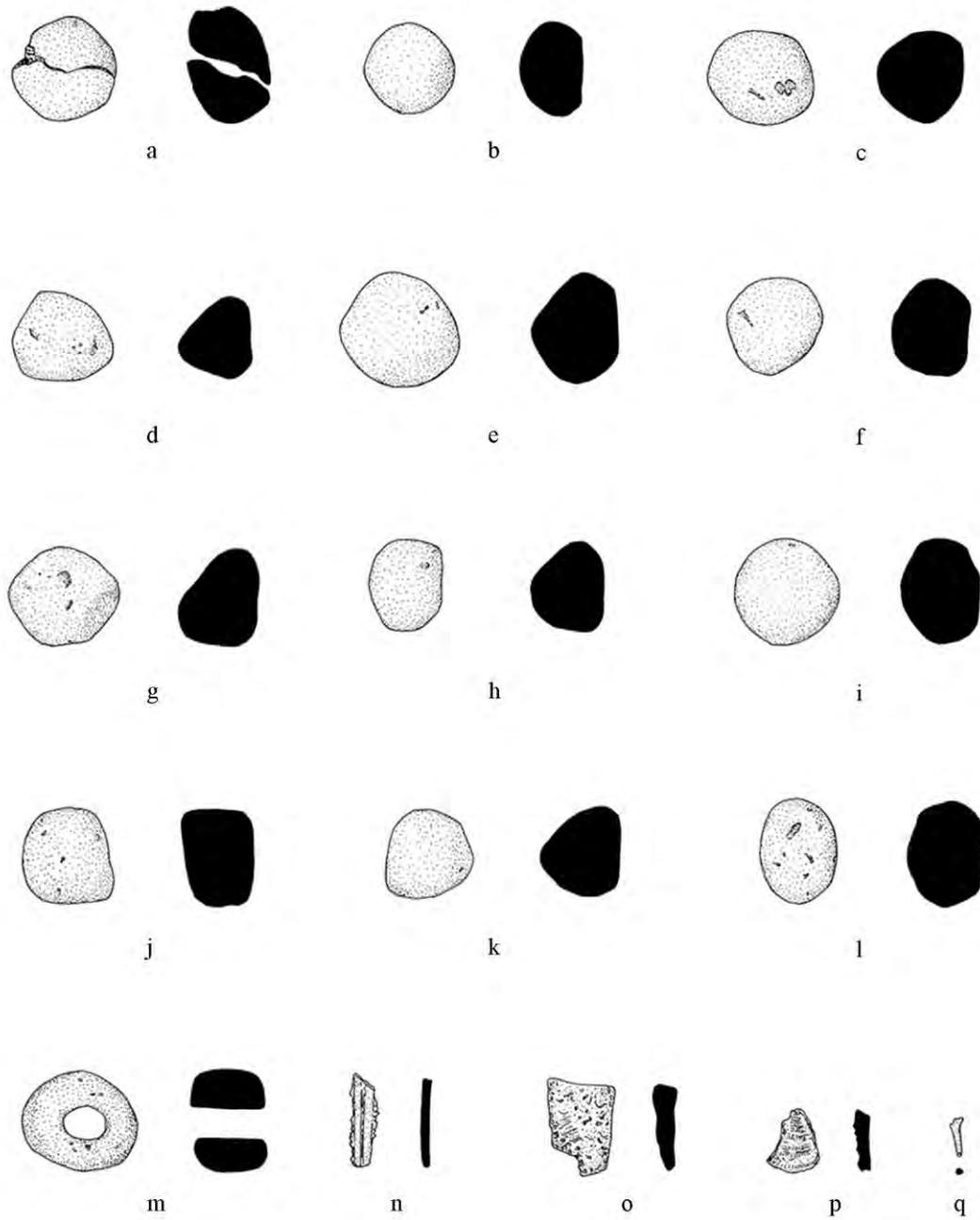


Figure 52: Obsidian eccentrics recovered in S.D. C205B-5.



0 1 2 cm

Figure 53: Other artefactual material recovered in S.D. C205B-5: a.-c. jadeite balls; d.-l. limestone balls; m. limestone bead; n. partial stingray spine; o.-q. spondylus chips.

S.D. C205B-6 upper plan

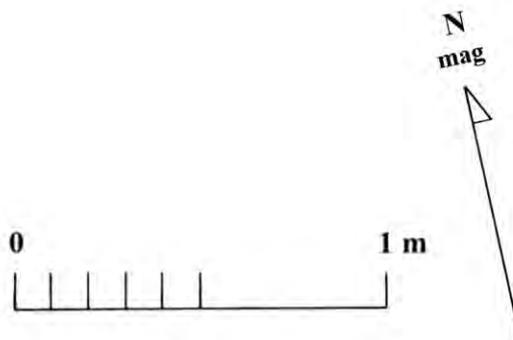
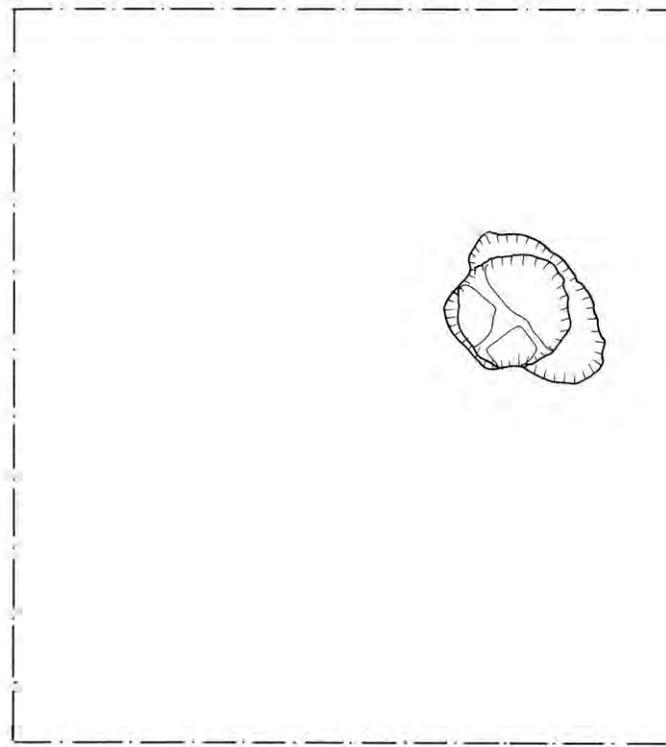


Figure 54: Upper plan for S.D. C205B-6.

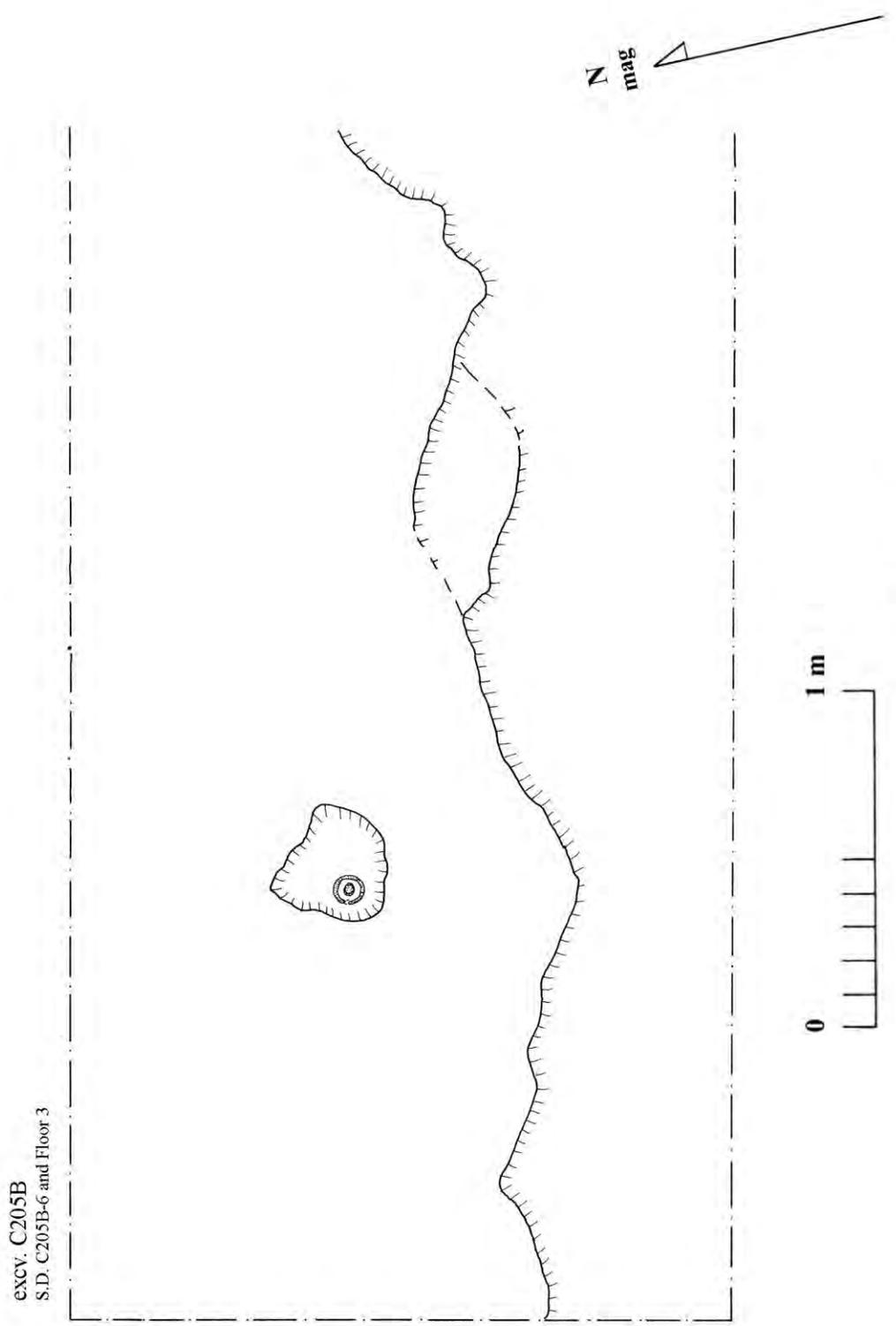


Figure 55: Lower plan for S.D. C205B-6.

0 1 2 cm
┌───┴───┐
└───┬───┘

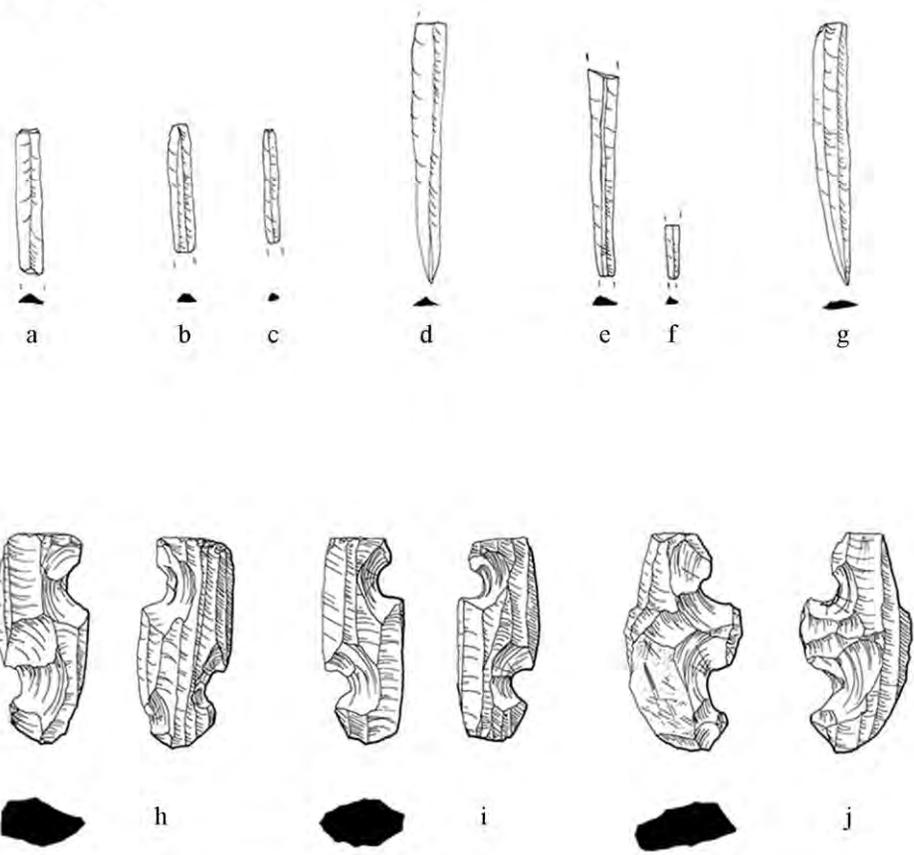


Figure 56: Obsidian lancets and eccentrics recovered from S.D.s in excv. C205B: a. S.D. C205B-4; b., c. S.D. C205B-1; d. S.D. C205B-8; e.-g. S.D. C205B-4; h.-j. S.D. C205B-9.

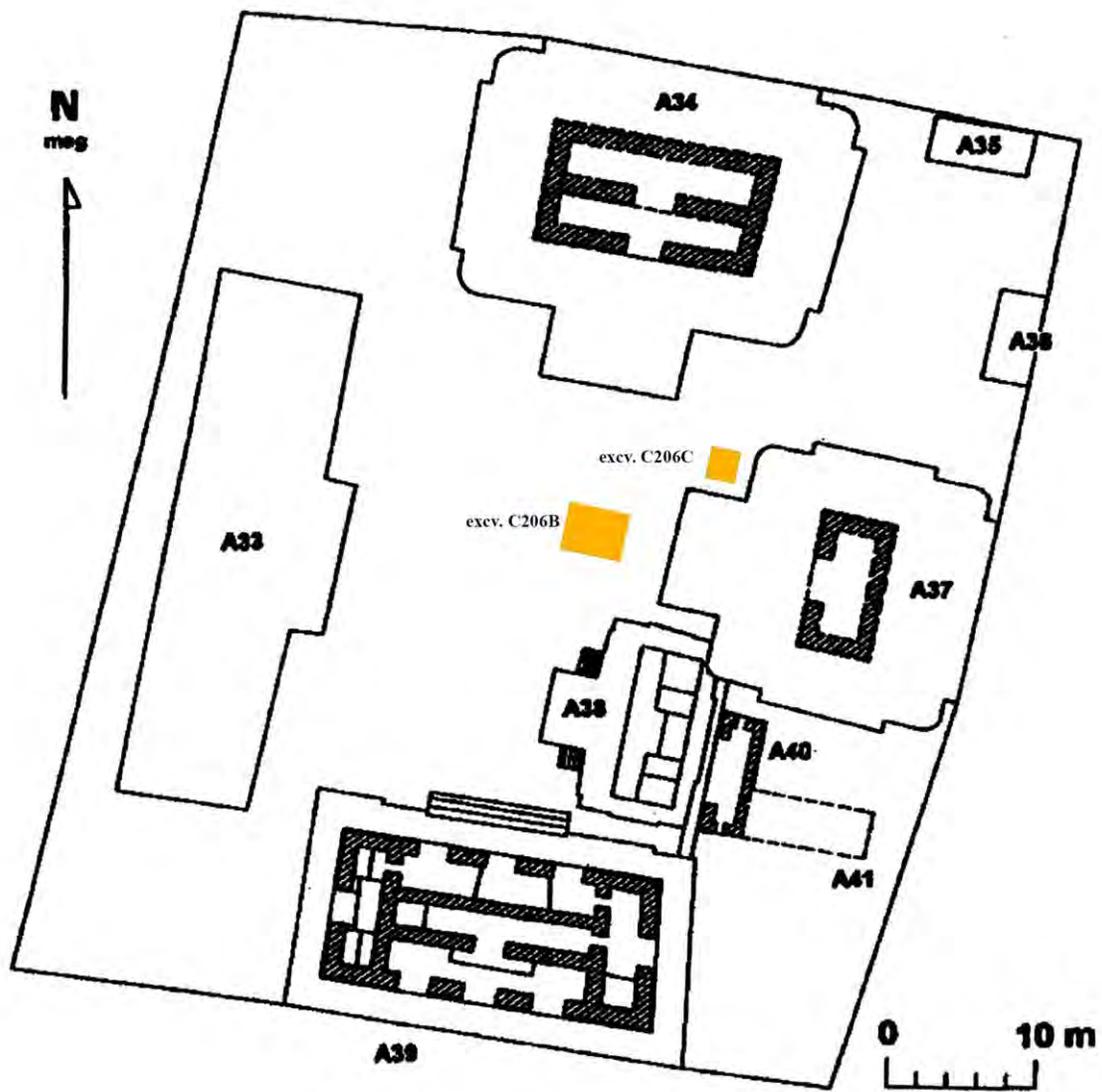
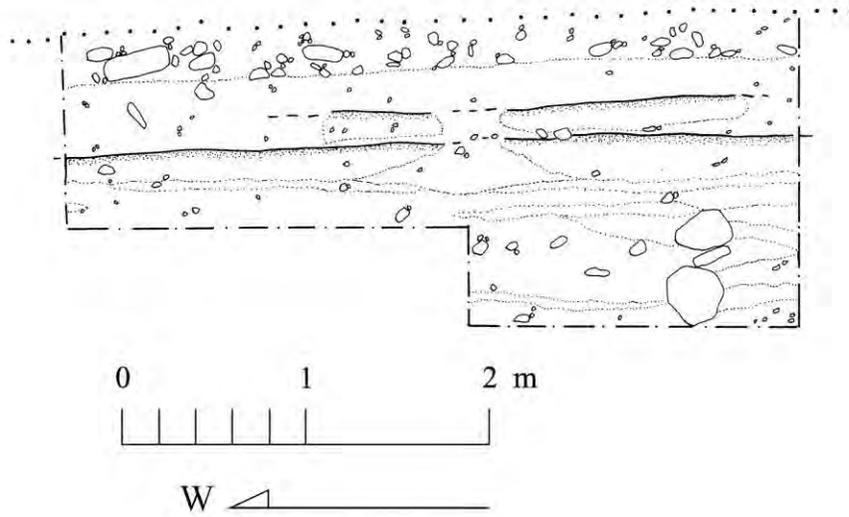


Figure 57: Plan of Central Acropolis showing location of 2015 excavations.



Figure 58: Photograph of Central Acropolis, showing tomb entry-point in excv. C206B.

excav. C206B



excav. C206B

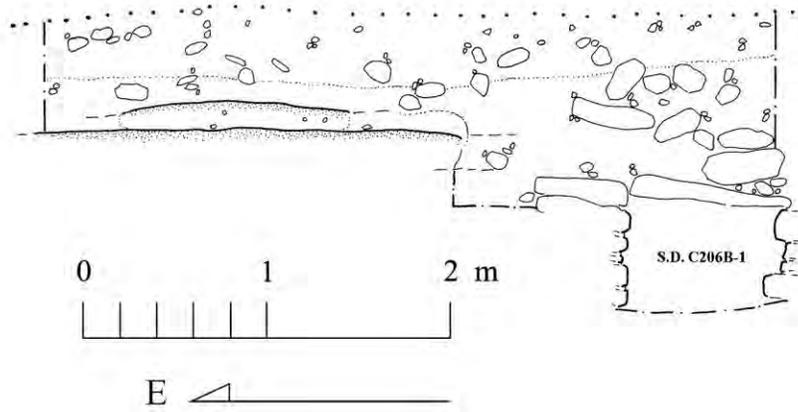


Figure 59: Northern and Southern Sections for excv. C206B.

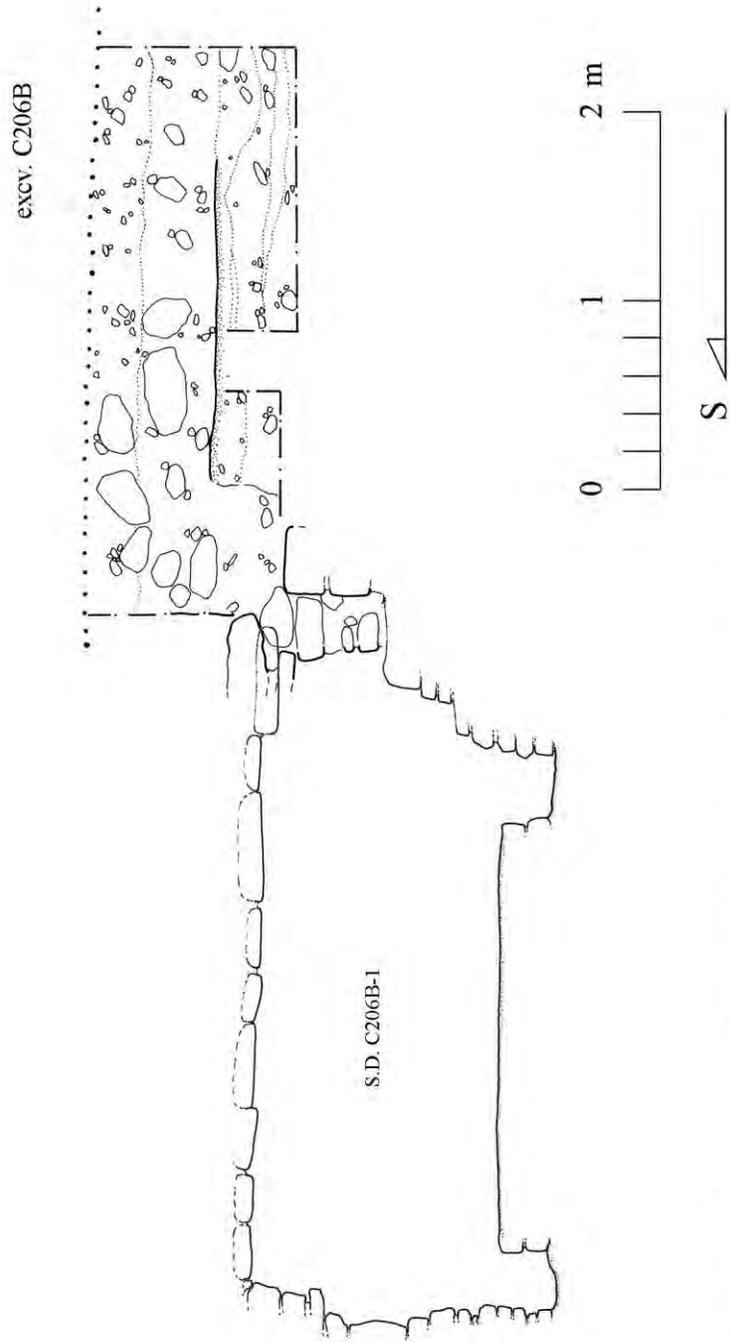


Figure 60: Western section for excv. C206B, showing long tomb cross-section.

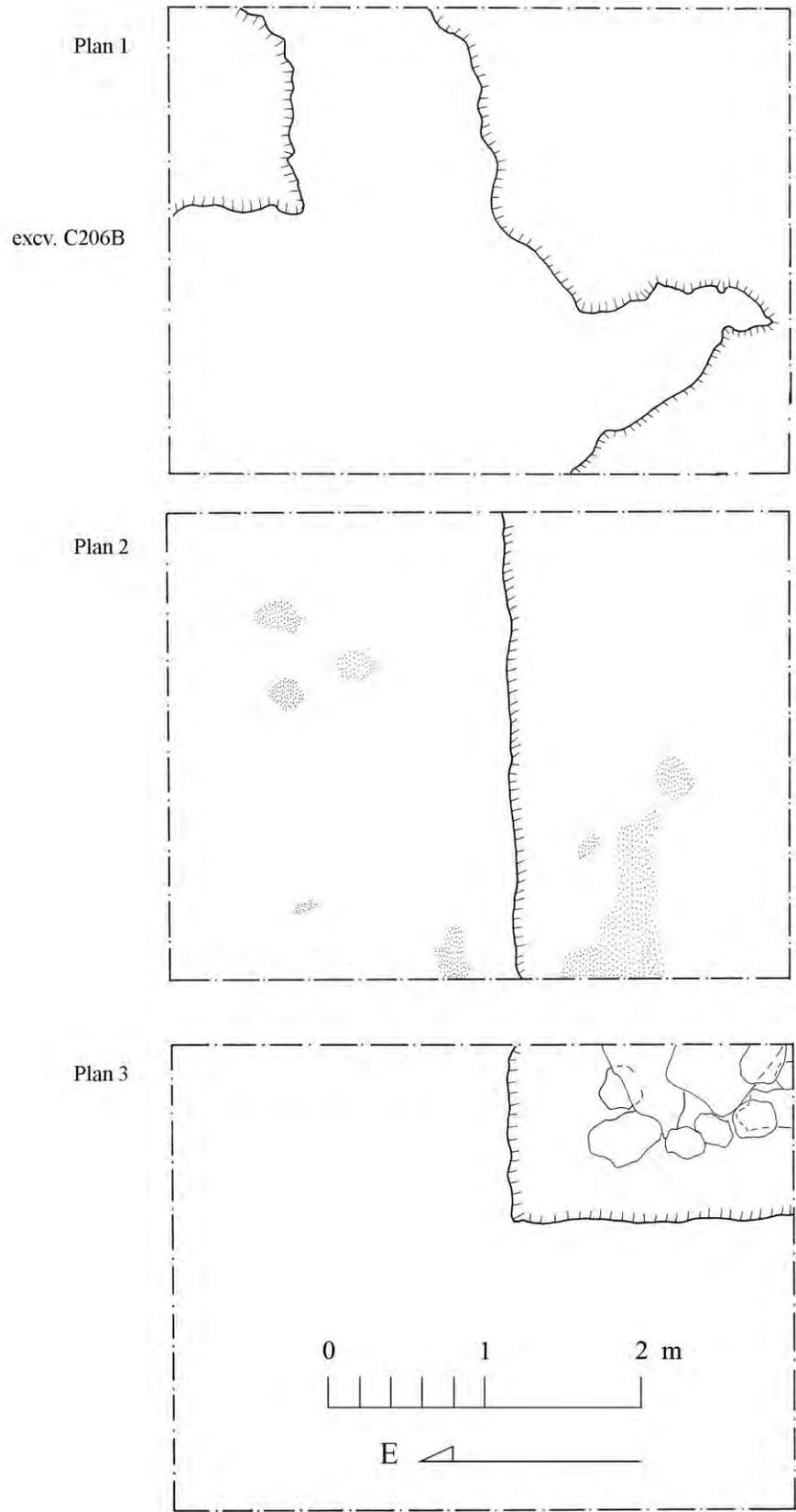


Figure 61: Plans of excv. C206B.



Figure 62: Photograph of tomb recovered in excv. C206B.

S.D. C206B-1

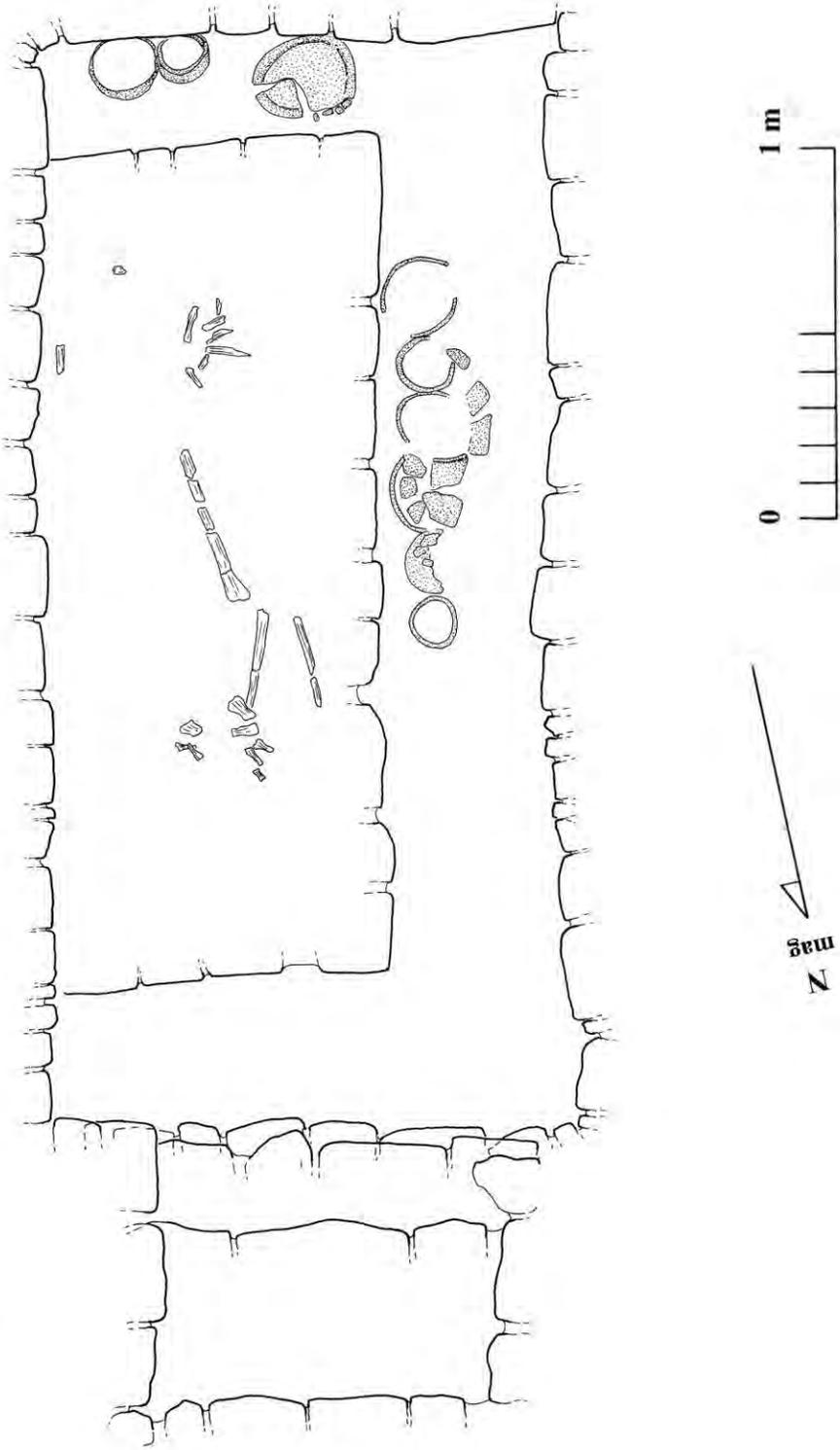


Figure 63: Plan of S.D. C206B-1.

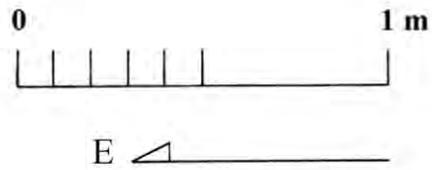
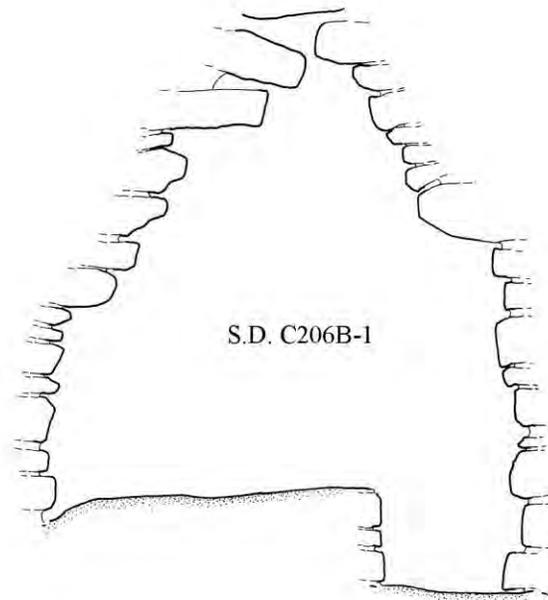
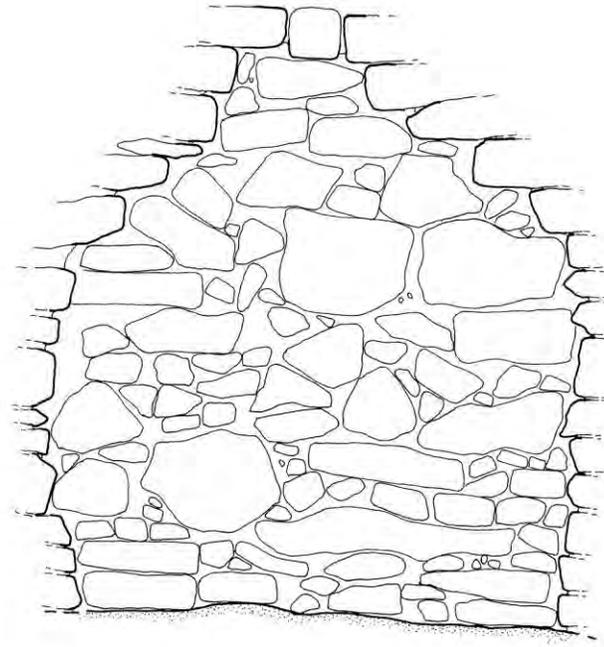


Figure 64: East-West cross-sections of S.D. C206B-1.

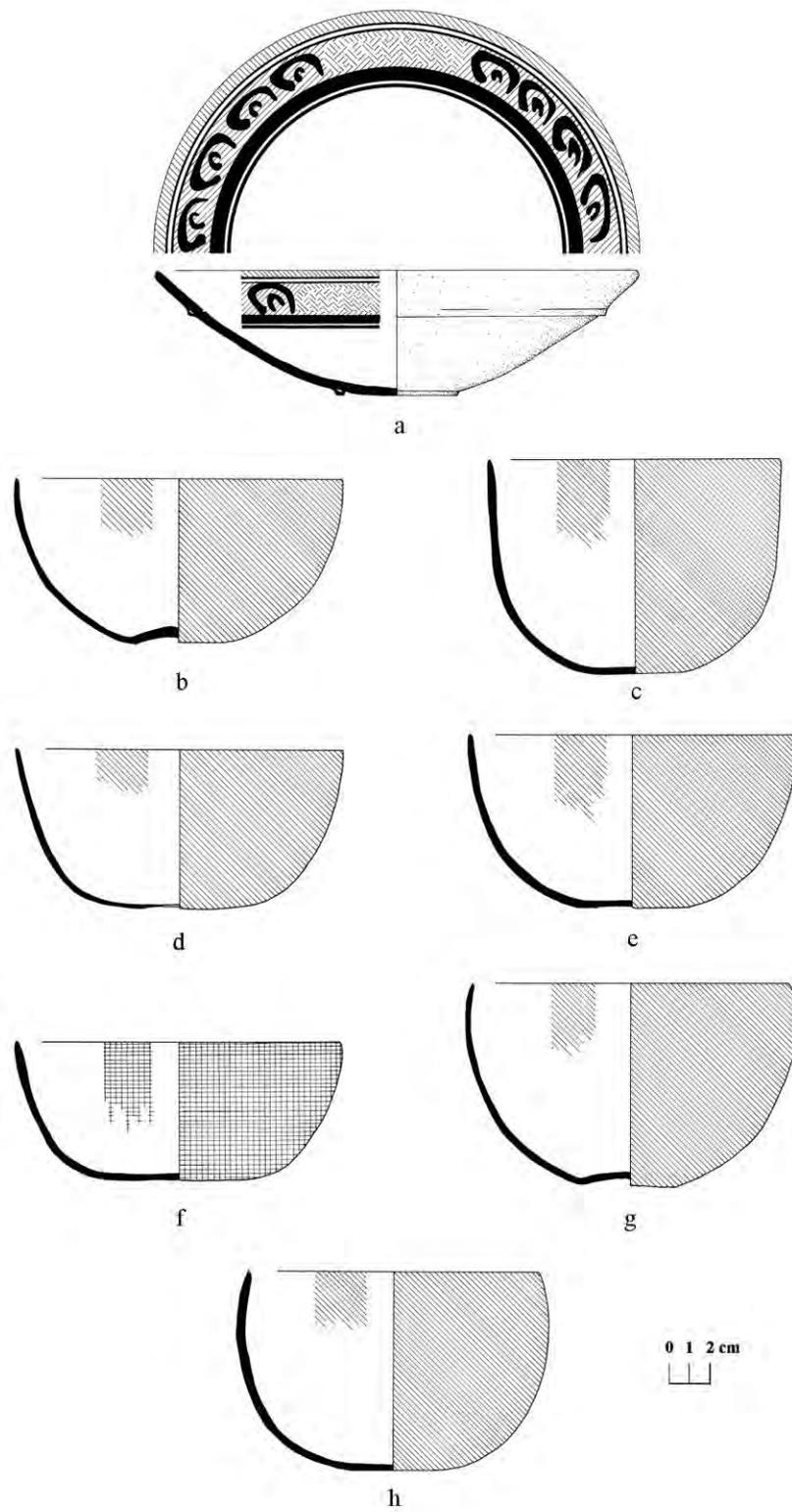


Figure 65: Ceramic vessels associated with S.D. C206B-1: a. Pajarito Orange-Polychrome; b.-e., g., h. Veracal Orange; f. probably Molino Black; i. Veracal Orange with exterior black and pink stucco.

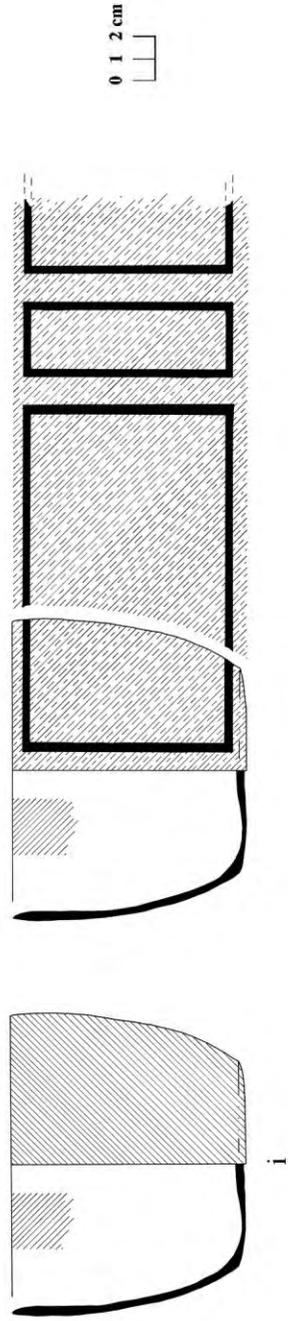
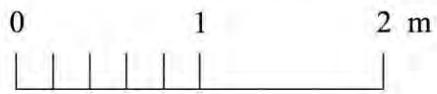
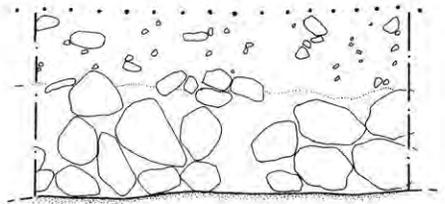


Figure 65: Ceramic vessels associated with S.D. C206B-1: a. Pajarito Orange-Polychrome; b.-e., g., h. Veracruz Orange; f. probably Molino Black; i. Veracruz Orange with exterior black and pink stucco.

excv. C206C



excv. 206C

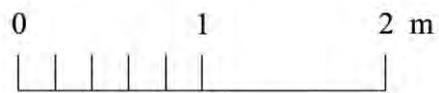
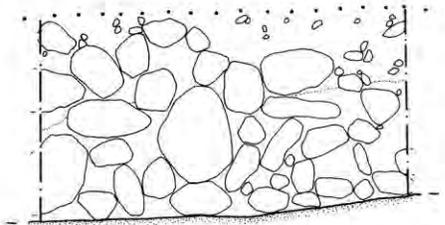


Figure 66: Sections for excv. C206C.

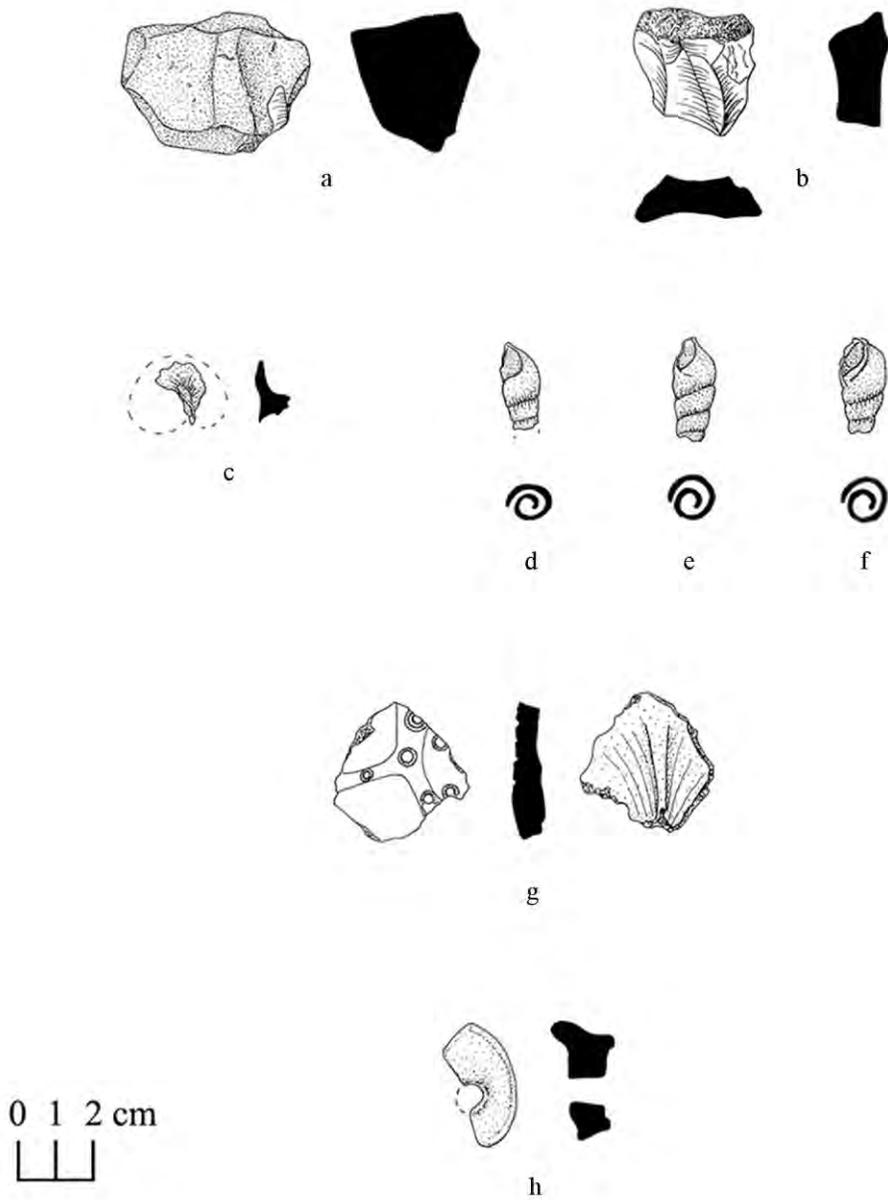


Figure 67: Artifactual material from excv. C206B (a.-g.) and excv. C206C (h.): a., b. chert fragments; c. shell fragment, d.-f jute shell fragments; g. burnt incised cranium; h. modeled sherd.

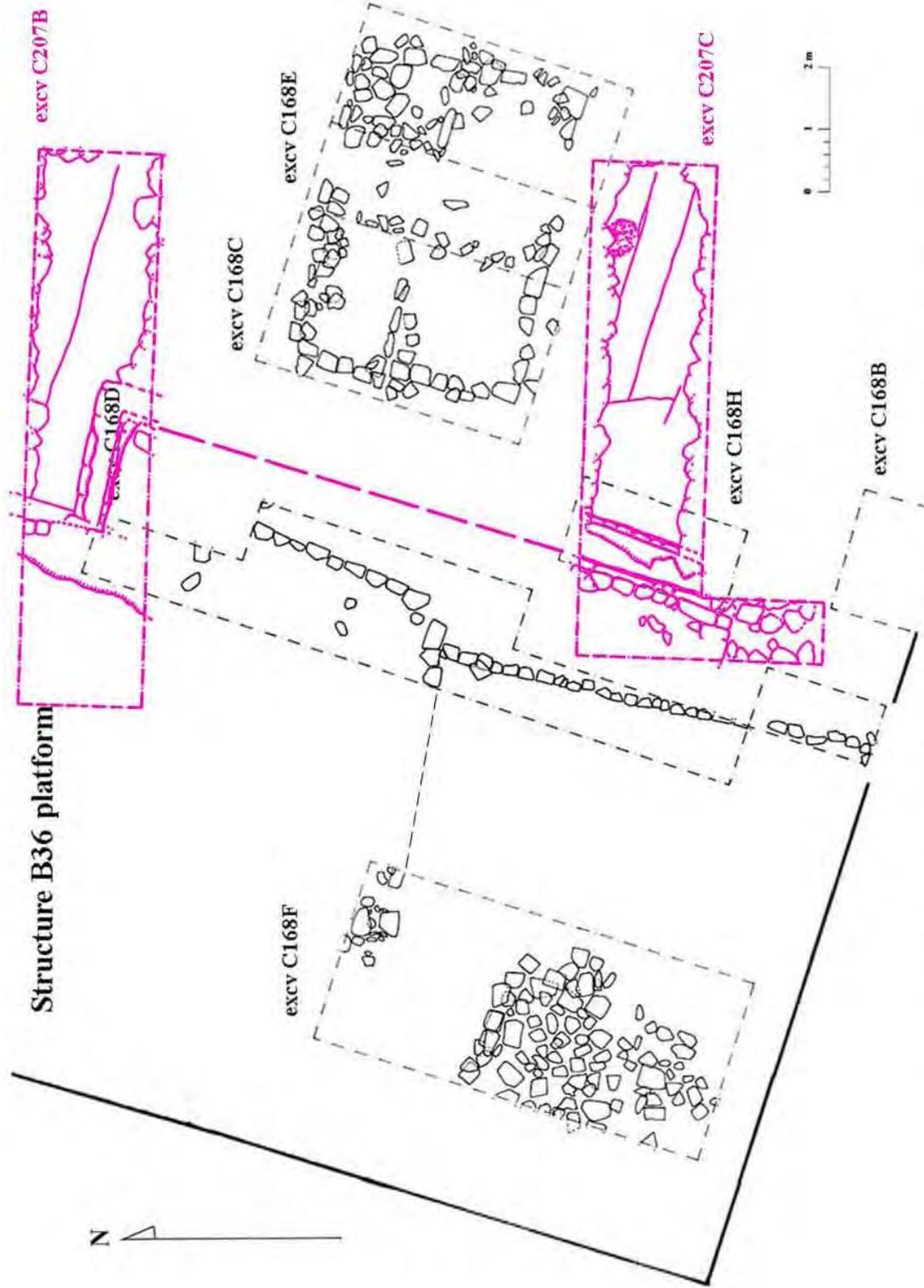


Figure 68: Plan showing the relationship of the 2015 excavations (in red) to the earlier 2004 excavations.



Figure 69: General photograph of excv. C207B and start of excavations into the Structure B36 Platform.

excv. C207B

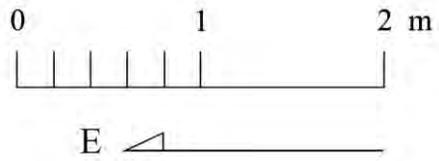
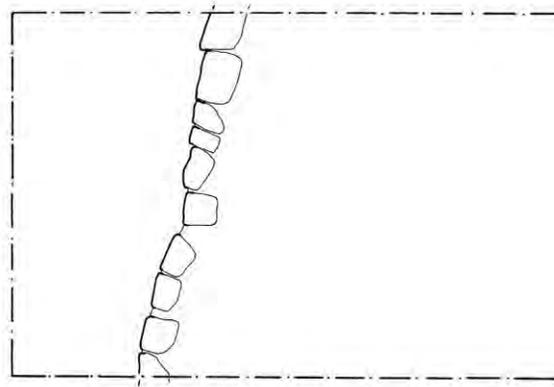
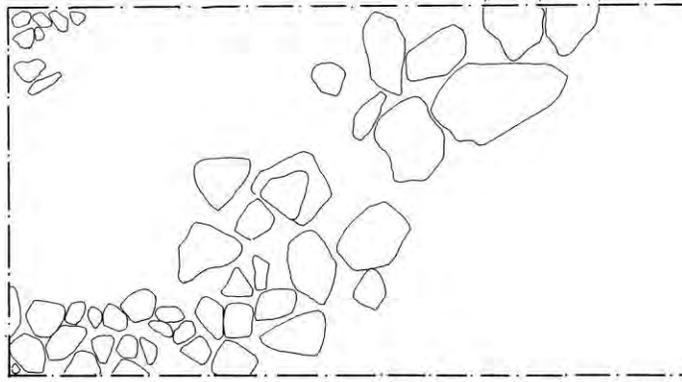


Figure 70: Line of stones encountered in eastern extent of excv. C207B.

excav. C207B

Plan 1



Plan 2

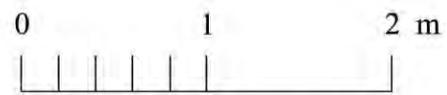
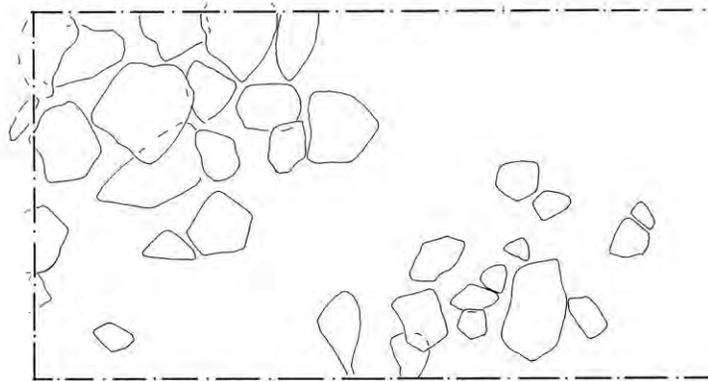
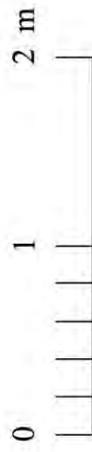
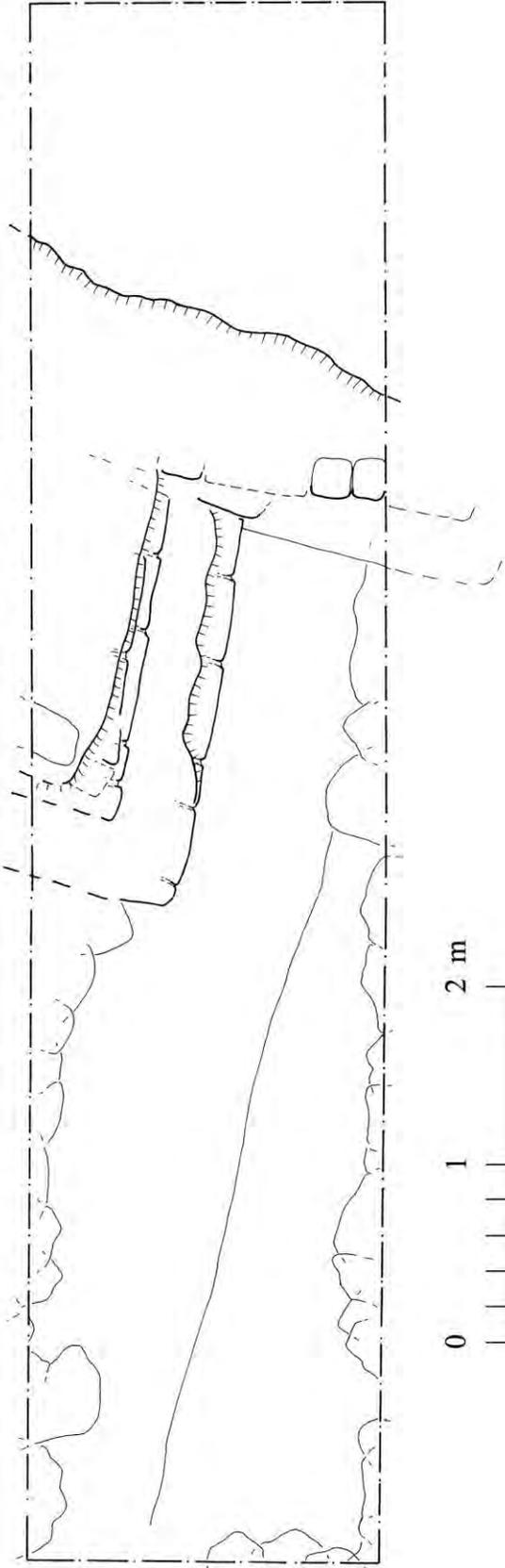


Figure 71: Upper plans of rubble in western part of excav. C207B.



Figure 72: Photograph of excv. C207B, showing buried platform.

excv. C207B



E ↘

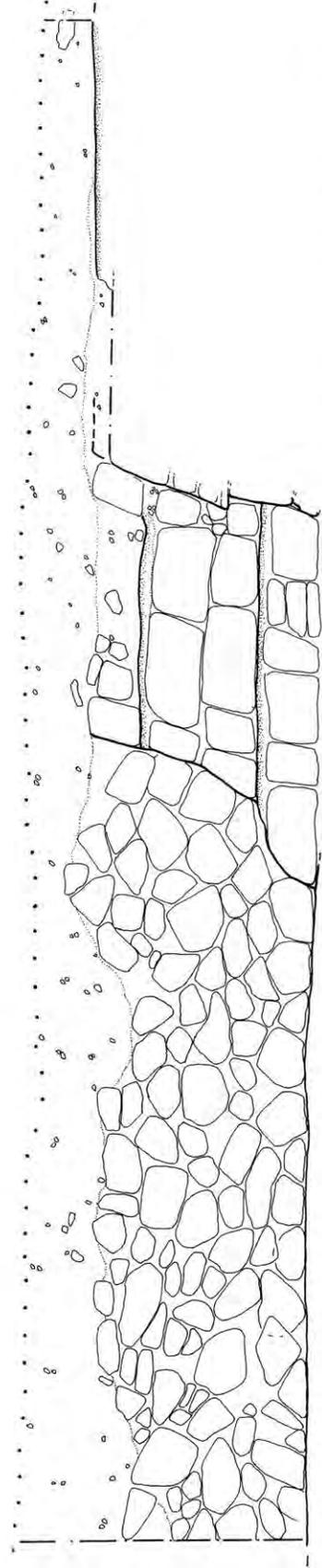


Figure 73: Plan and section for excv. C207B.

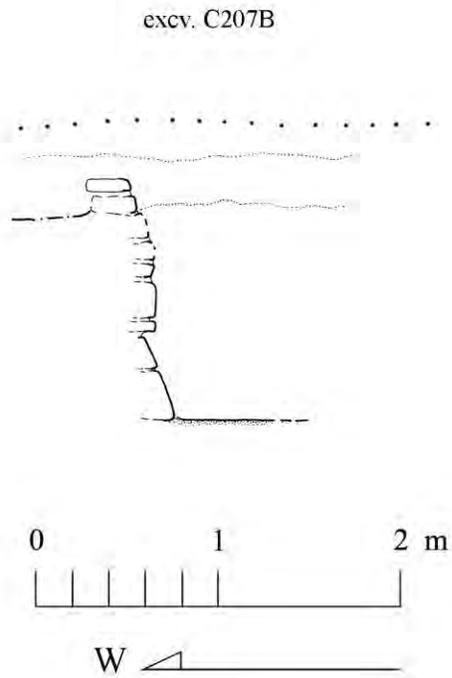
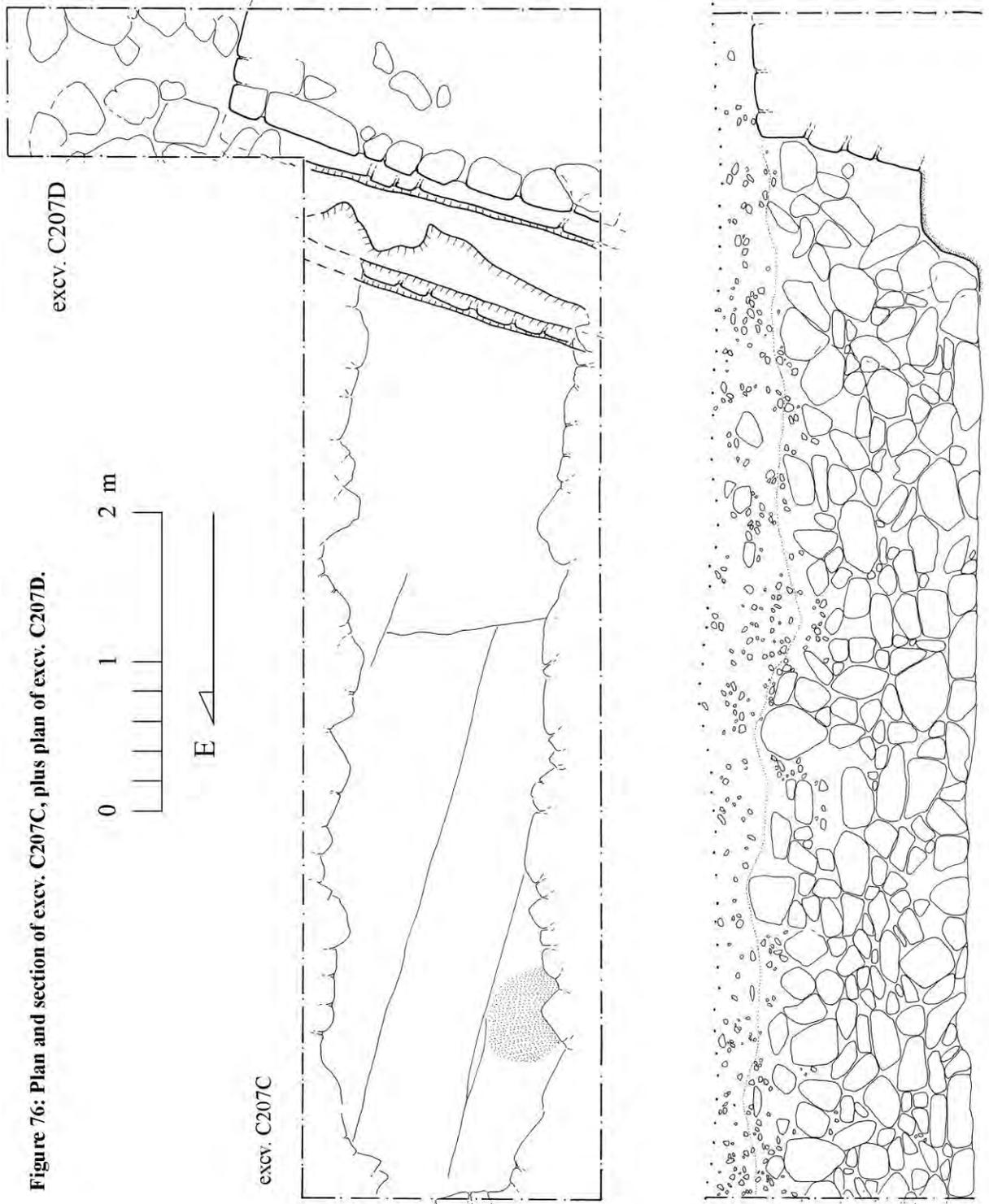


Figure 74: Profile of rear facing for the buried construction in excav. C207B.



Figure 75: Photograph of excv. C207C, showing buried platform.

Figure 76: Plan and section of excv. C207C, plus plan of excv. C207D.



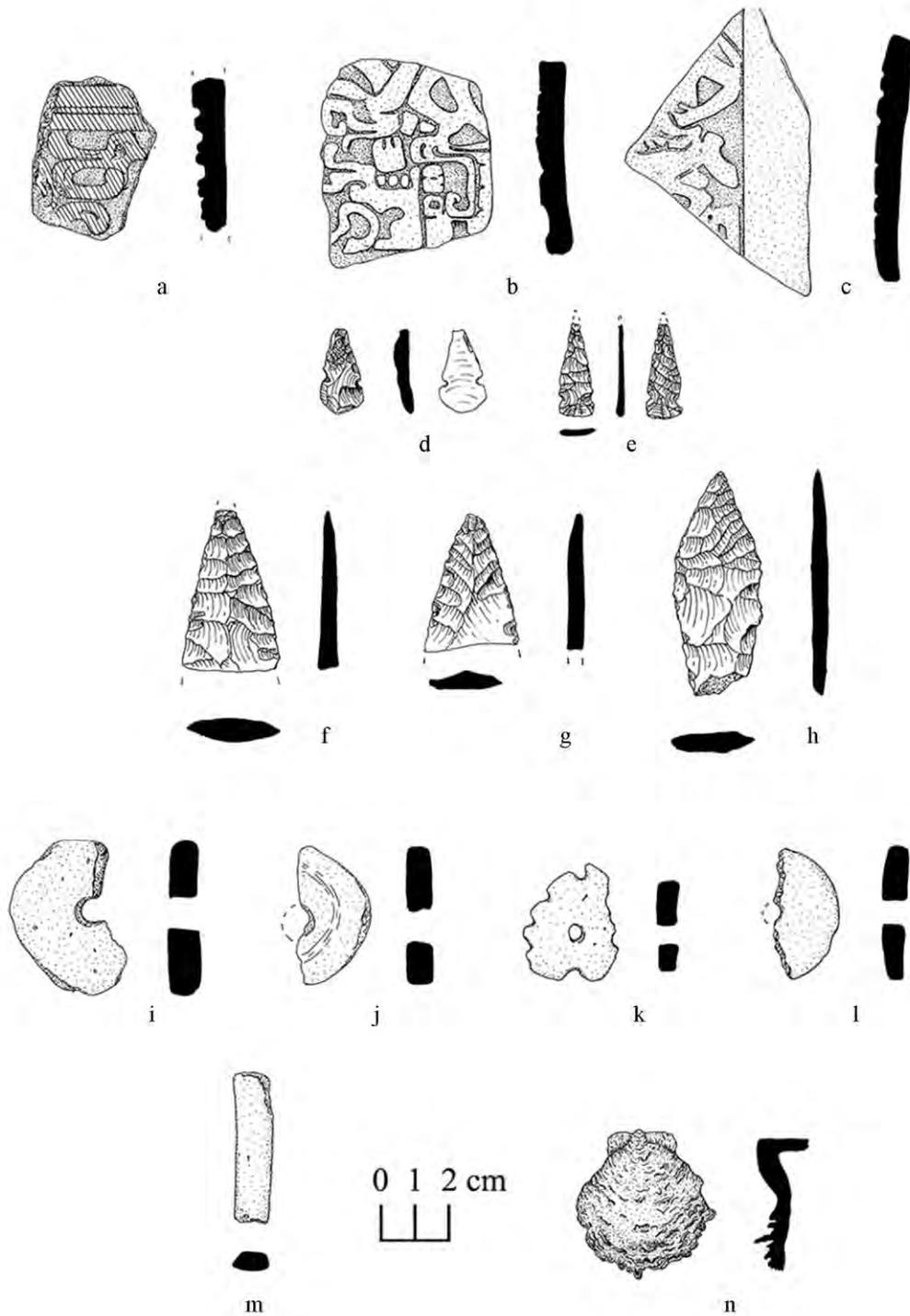


Figure 77: Artifactual materials recovered in the humus levels of the B36 platform: a.-c. modeled-carved sherds; d., e. projectile points (arrow points); f.-h. chert biface points; i. rounded and drilled sherd; j., l. worked sherds; k. sherd from a possible luninario; n. spondylus bivalve.

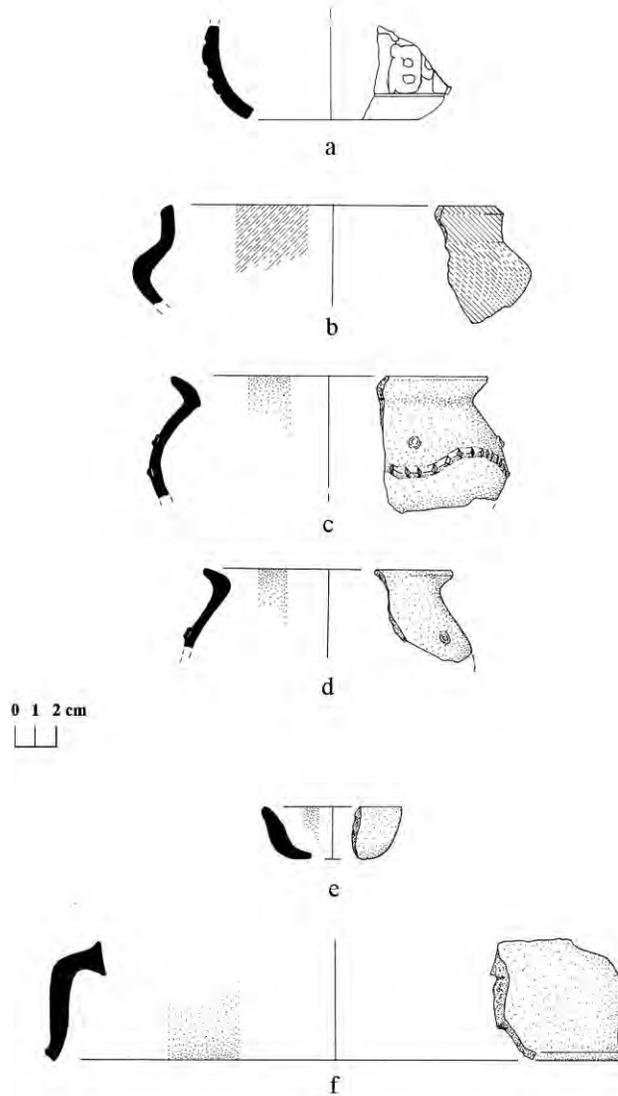


Figure 78: Ceramic material from platform fill of Structure B36 and associated with Structure B37:
 a. possibly San Clemente Gouged-Incised (platform fill); b. Sarteneja Usulután (platform fill);
 c., d. Corriental Appliqued (platform fill); e., f. Valentine Unslipped (Operation C208).



Figure 79: Photograph of Structure B37 looking north.

CARACOL Structure B37

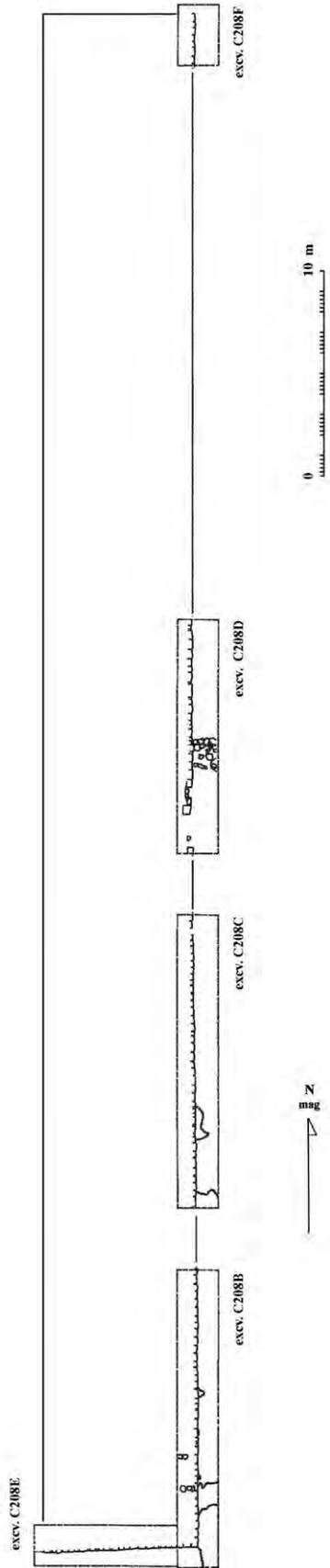
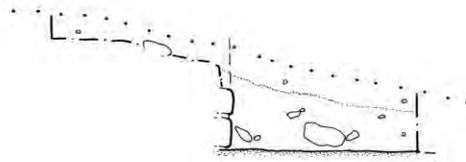
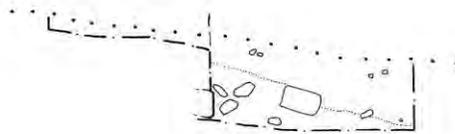


Figure 80: Plan of Structure B37 showing the spatial relationships of the various C208 sub-operations.

excv. C208B



excv. C208C



excv. C208D

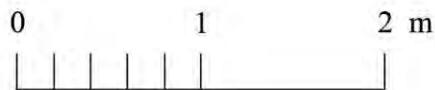
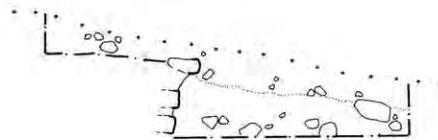


Figure 81: Sections for excv. C208B, C208C, and C208D.

exev. C208B

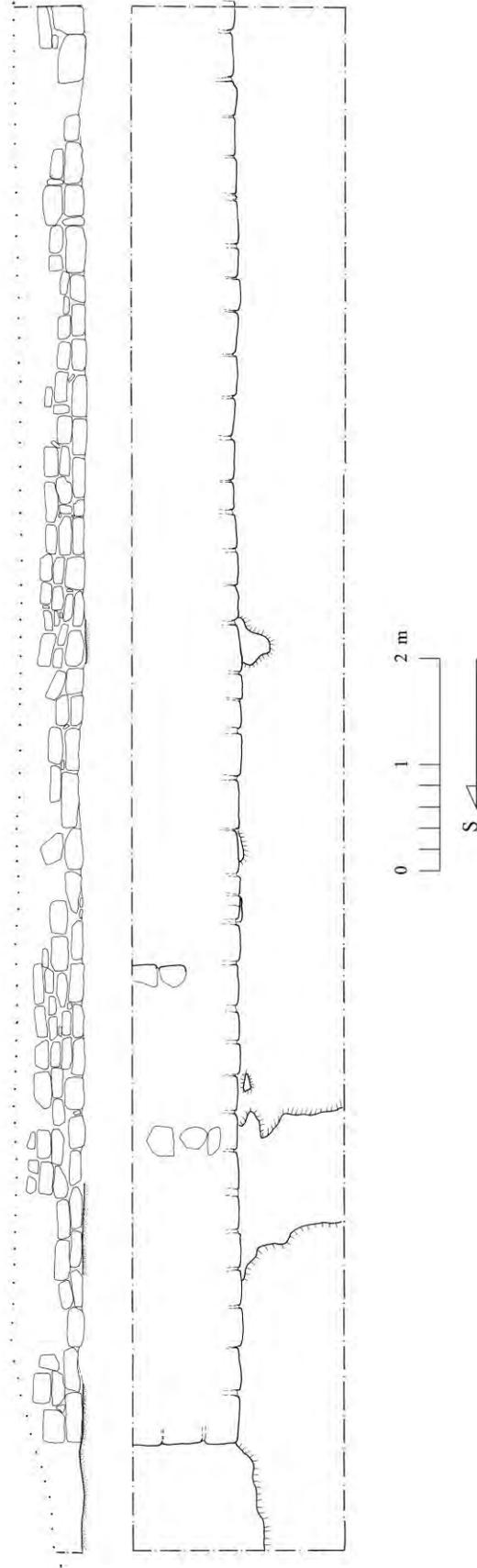


Figure 82: Plan and elevation of exev. C208B.

excv. C208C

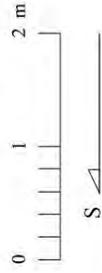
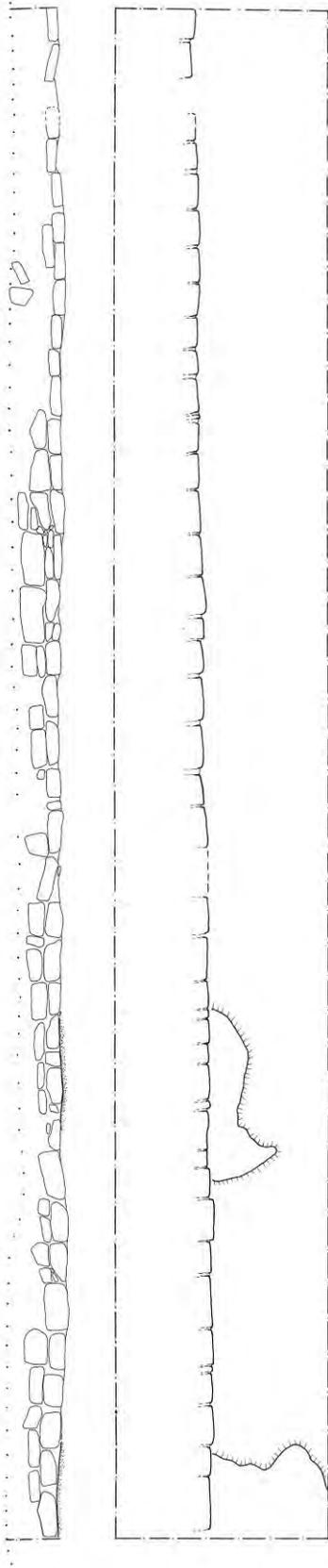


Figure 83: Plan and elevation of excv. C208C.

excv. C208D

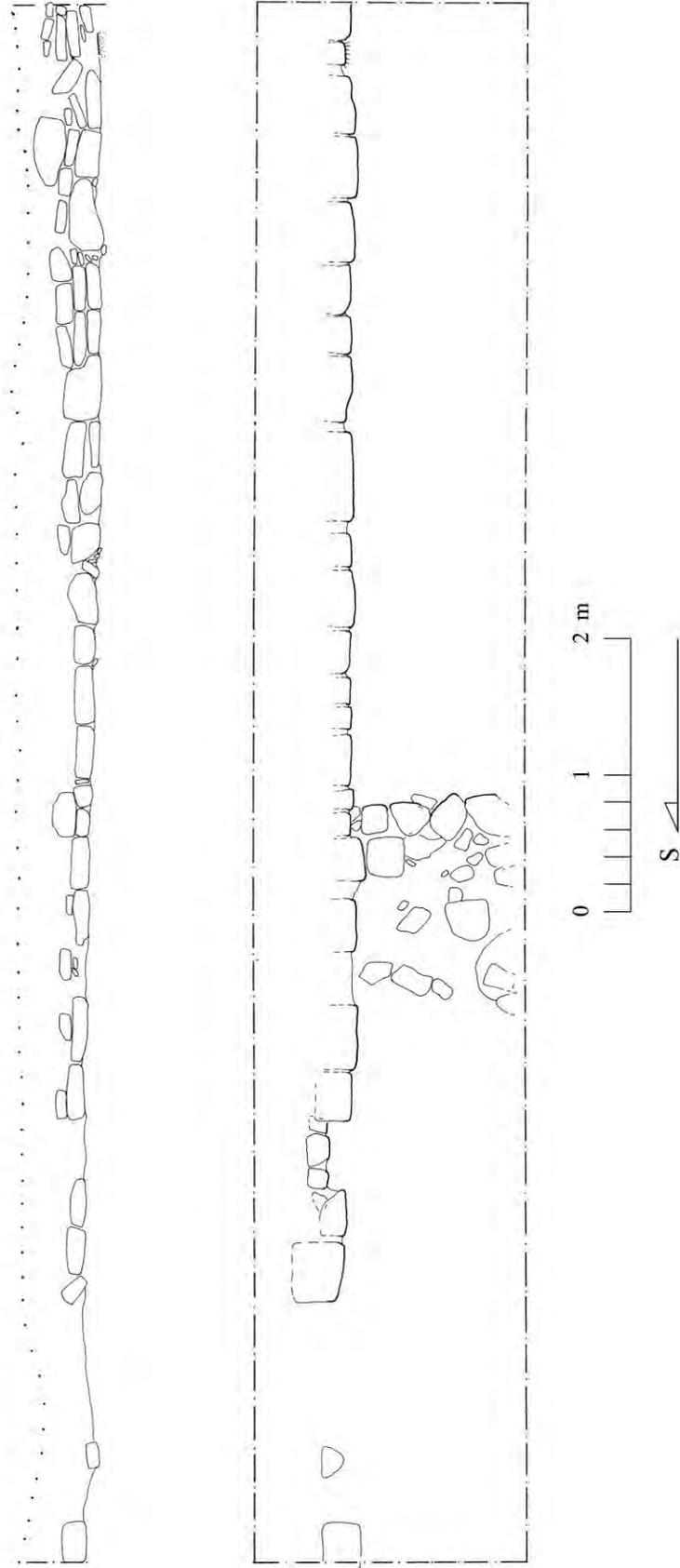


Figure 84: Plan and elevation of excv. C208D.

excv. C208E

excv. C208B

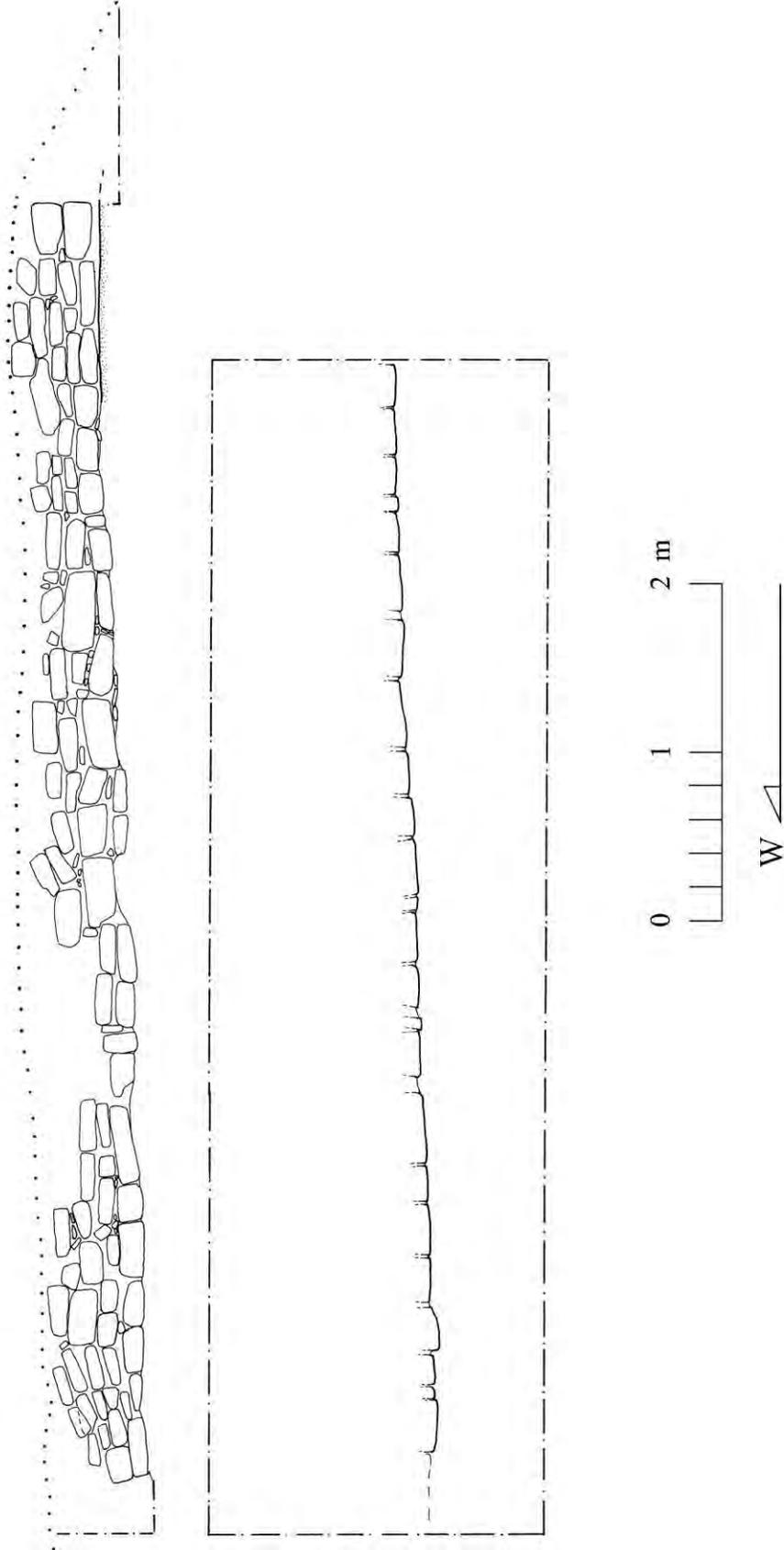


Figure 85: Plan and elevation of excv. C208E (with a southern elevation of excv. C208B).

excav. C208F

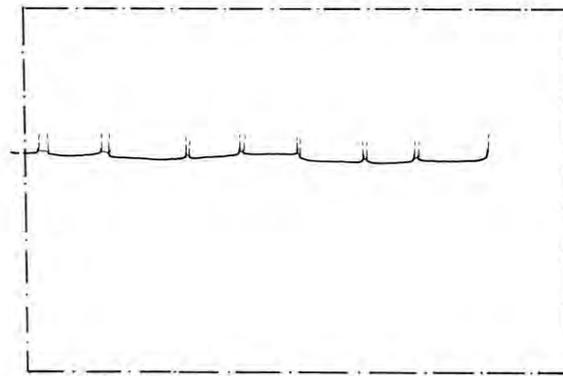
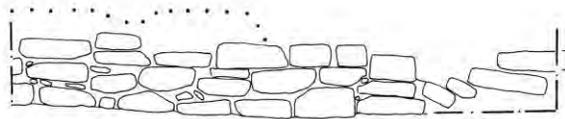
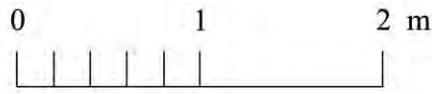
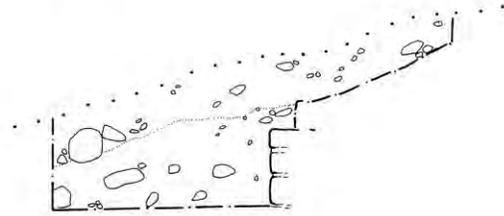


Figure 86: Section, elevation, and plan for excav. C208F.

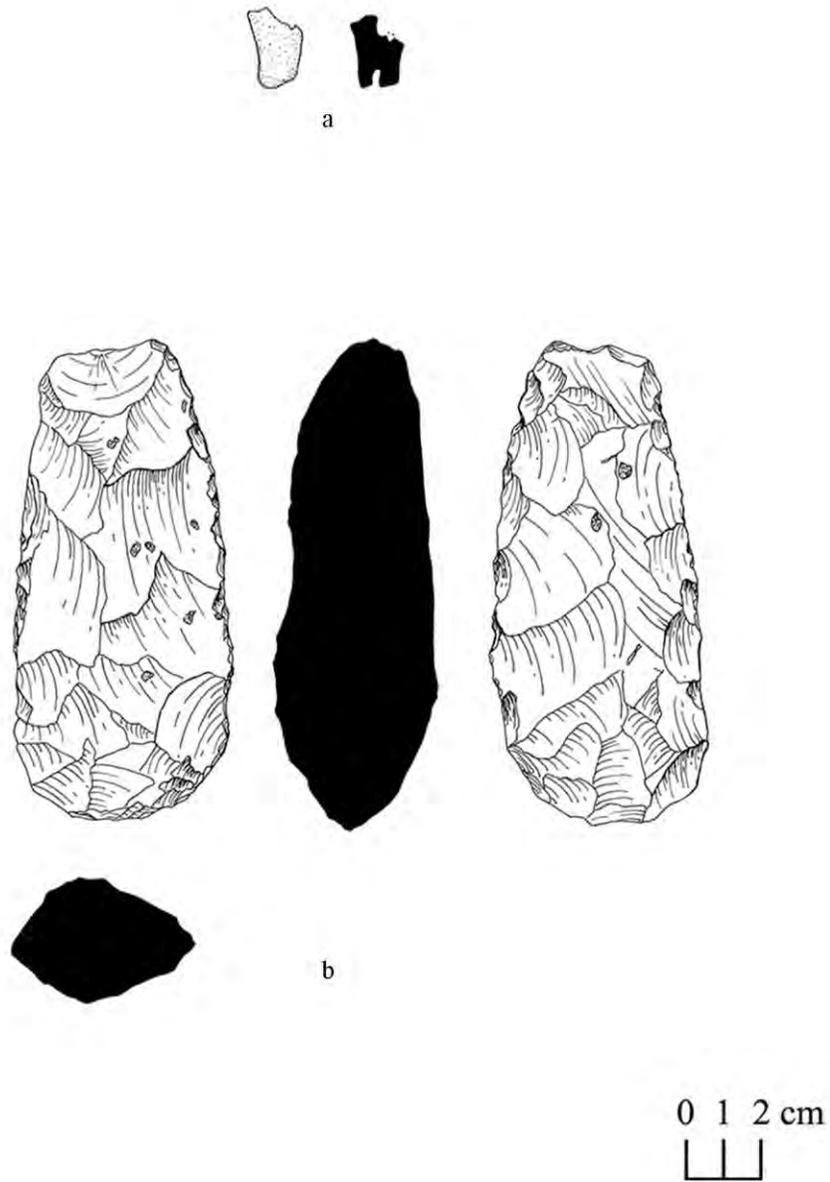


Figure 87: Artifactual material associated with excv. C208: a. ceramic whistle tip (C208F) ; b. chert biface (C208B).

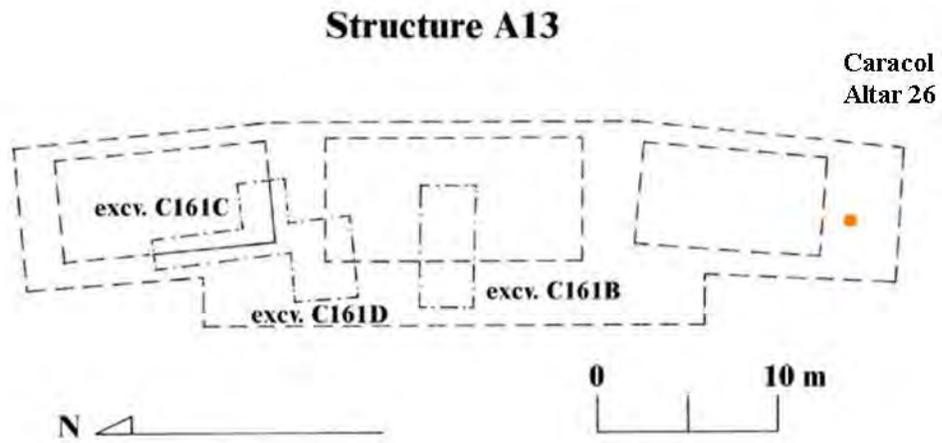


Figure 88: Summit of Structure A13 showing the location of Caracol Altar 26.



Figure 89: Photograph of Caracol Altar 26.

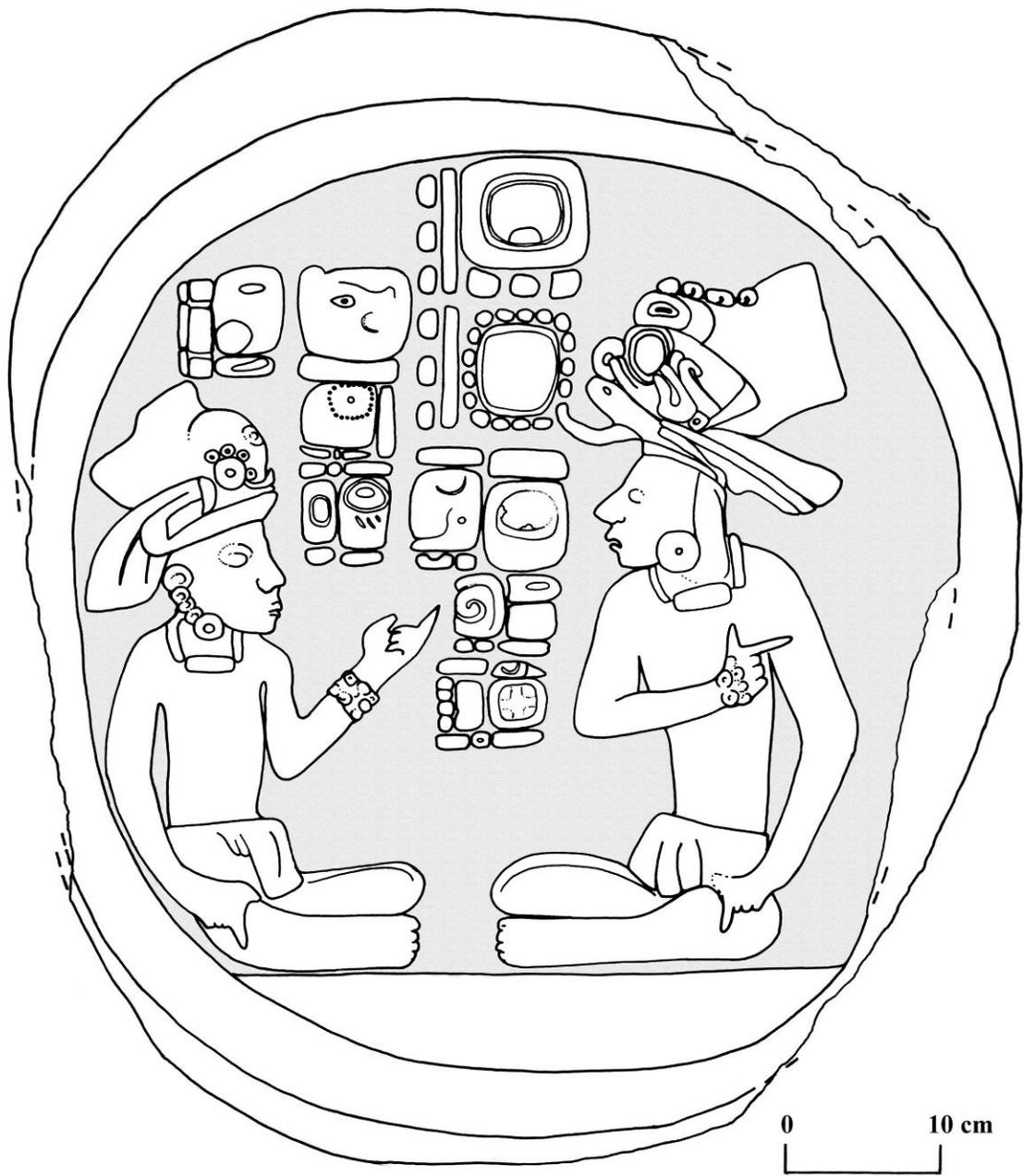


Figure 90: Drawing of Caracol Altar 26.