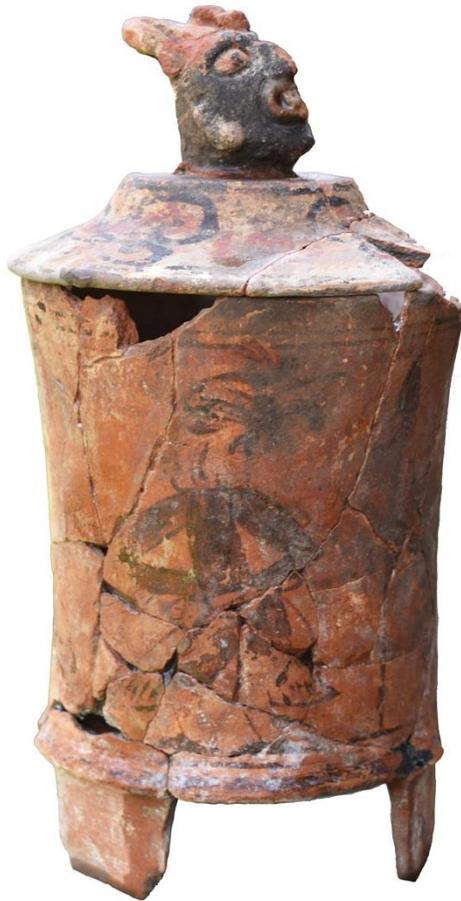


**Interpreting Ancient Maya Society Through Residential Groups:
Investigating Early Long-Distance Interaction in Caracol's Epicenter:
Caracol Archaeological Project Investigations for 2017**

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The 2017 field season constituted the third year of a three-year program designed to find and investigate remains at Caracol that date prior to the site's Late Classic Period peak. All of these investigations were located either within the epicenter or in residential groups in close proximity to the central architecture, with the 2017 field season specifically focusing on the largely unknown northeast portion of the site epicenter. The 2017 season ran from the middle of January through the middle of March and involved 29 individuals (see Table 1) as well as a visiting researcher and a German film crew. The 2017 program focused on four specific areas of excavation: (1) the lower floors in the summit plaza of Caana on axis to Structure B20; (2) the residential group northeast of Caana anchored by Structure I28, nicknamed "Rebel;" (3) the residential group northeast of Caana anchored by Structure I23, nicknamed "Rogue;" and (4) the residential group northeast of Caana anchored by Structure I17, nicknamed "Risk." The Caana excavation was believed to have the possibility of finding archaeological materials that dated to before the Late Classic Period, especially given the presence of an entire basal-flanged bowl in the building core for Structure B20-2nd (see A. Chase and D. Chase 1987: 23, fig. 16). The three residential groups that were selected for excavation had never been previously sampled.

Background (incorporated from 2016 field report)

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 and the Maya peoples of both the highlands and lowlands. Most scholars agree that connections existed, but the timing, direction, and kind of contact remains unclear. It has been

suggested by some that Teotihuacan peoples were influential in the rise to prominence of various Maya centers; however, it is difficult to document face-to-face interactions and control as opposed to trade within the archaeological data. 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. 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 carried out at Caracol for the 2015, 2016, and 2017 field seasons ocused on investigations that attempted to answer these questions through the intensive excavation of a series of residential areas in and adjacent to the Caracol epicenter. Many of these areas were already known to contain remains from the appropriate time period(s) and had the potential of yielding materials related to central Mexican contact.

The Problem: Caracol’s Interactions with Teotihuacan? (incorporated from 2016 report)

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 for a number of years 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 some 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. 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 (important architectural assemblages for early

Maya ritual and solar observation), were replicated in the Ciudadela at Teotihuacan. Teotihuacan was 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). At least the ones from Altun Ha and from Caracol antedate the events interpreted from the epigraphic record. While central Mexican green obsidian occurs throughout the Maya area (Moholy-Nagy 1999; Spence 1996), 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 region 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 is found in the burials with Teotihuacan items at Copan (Sharer 2003), Tikal (Wright 2005a, 2005b), or Kaminaljuyu (White et al. 2000).

Early Caracol (incorporated from 2016 field report)

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, being 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 Caracol epicenter that can be bracketed by earlier and later primary deposits (A. Chase and D. Chase 2011). 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 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. 50-300), 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 (A. Chase and D. 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 can be found in excavations at Caracol and dated remains from already carried out investigations have been utilized 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, like the one carried out during the 2015-2017 field seasons, could generate other archaeological data relevant to the research question and of interest to a broad range of Mesoamerican scholars.

The 2017 Caracol Research (Season 3 of the 2015-2017 research program)

The research undertaken during the 2017 field season built directly on that accomplished during 2015 and 2016 by continuing to focus excavation within architecture and plazas within Caracol’s epicenter and on nearby residential groups. Two areas of the site were investigated during 2017 (see Figure 1). First, having successfully tested the raised plazas of both the Northeast Acropolis and the Central Acropolis during the 2015 and 2016 field seasons, the 2017 field season focused on the summit plaza of Caana and penetrated floor levels located some 4 m below the current ground level. Second, a series of three residential groups to the northeast of Caana were selected for investigation and each

residential group provided new information on a portion of the site near the epicenter that had received inadequate attention.

The first research focus for the 2017 field season was the summit plaza of Caana. Penetrating excavations on Caana from 1985 through 1993 showed that the next finished plaster floor for the summit plaza is located some 4 m below the current ground surface (equivalent to the latest plaza floor). When the summit plaza of Caana was raised, the frontal facades and stairways of both pre-existing Structures B19 and B20 were modified to match this new level (see A Chase and D. Chase 2017: 16-17; D. Chase and A. Chase 2017: 193-194). The original versions of both Structures B19 and B20 articulated with a series of floors that were some 4 m below the current ground surface (Ballay 1994). While excavations went down to this deeper floor in front of both Structures B19 and B20, this plastered surface was not penetrated in front of Structure B20. A very limited probe beneath the lower plaster floor in front of Structure B19 revealed a total of 4 floors directly superimposed one above the other. Based on earlier constructions recovered within the core of Structure B20, it is known that at least some of the lower floor levels should articulate with buried Early Classic constructions in the core of Structure B20. The initial and deepest tomb recovered in Structure B20-3rd dates to 9.5.3.1.3 or A.D. 537, meaning that the materials beneath a plaza floor that abutted this earlier building could date even earlier. In most residential groups at Caracol, caches are found secreted beneath the floors in front of eastern buildings (A. Chase and D. Chase 1994; D. Chase and A. Chase 1998, 2017). Given that Caana was the place with the Caracol ruler lived (A. Chase and D. Chase 2001, 2017), it would be useful to know what, if any, cache deposits are associated with Structure B20 and how they compare with those recovered during 1993 and 2015 in the Northeast Acropolis, associated with mortuary deposits for a second tier royal elite. The Northeast Acropolis also yielded a sealed Early Classic cremation burial in 2010 buried at a depth of just over 2 m deep in the plaza on the axial intersection of both the northern and eastern buildings; this interment proved to be a Teotihuacan-related interment, as described above. Thus, given the presumed early dating of the lower plaza floors on the summit of Caana, the axial plaza intersection between Structures B19 and B20 was believed to hold the potential of yielding a deposit that could shed significant

light on the dynastic founding of Caracol and its potential relationship to exterior influences. For these reasons, during the 2017 field season a sizeable trench excavation into the Caana plaza was made on axis to Structure B20 that also encompassed the center of the earlier plaza. Because of the depth that needed to be penetrated and the presence of dry-core fill as the base for the latest plaza surface on Caana, the trench will began as 4 m wide excavation that eventually stepped down to a 1.5 m wide excavation.

The second focus of investigation during the 2017 field season built on our previous work on neighborhoods and variability within the Caracol residential areas by investigating a portion of Caracol that had seen no formal excavation. These are the residential groups located immediately northeast of and adjacent to Caana and the C Group (see Figure 2). These residential groups have been mapped (The I17 group is represented in A. Chase and D. Chase 1987:66; the other two groups were recorded in the 1990s) and can be easily seen in the Lidar imaging (see Figure 2). As Early Classic materials were recovered in the residential groups investigated during 2015 and 2016, it was hoped that similar materials would also be recovered as a result of these investigations, especially given their close proximity to the epicenter and to other architectural units, such as the Northeast Acropolis, that had yielded significant earlier deposits. Towards this end, three residential groups were selected for investigation to the northeast of Caana (see Figure 2). The first, nicknamed “Rebel,” consists of sizeable eastern and northern constructions overlooking a large quadrangular plaza that had a smaller southern building. The second group, nickname “Risk,” is immediately northwest of the C Group and consists of a small residential group of three buildings. The third is located north of the first group and constitutes a well-defined residential group with some 10 structures. Investigations within these three groups provide us with a firm foundation for the nature and dating of the settlement within this area. Taken together, the excavations undertaken during 2017 help us to better contextualize the earlier history of Caracol as well as the later time periods.

Excavations are described below in order of Operation number.

Caana Summit Plaza

Caana has been a focus of excavation since the beginning of the Caracol Archaeological Project. Most of its structures have been deeply trenched and its architecture has been exposed and consolidated.

The floors of its buildings and alleys yielded pottery vessels that date to the time of the site's collapse, but the majority of the tombs recovered on Caana (n=7) date from the Late Classic Period. Summaries of the excavations on Caana may be found in a number of both older and more recent publications (A. Chase and D. Chase 1987, 2004, 2007, 2017; D. Chase and A. Chase 1998, 2017). Excavations focused on the summit plaza of Caana during the 2017 field season in an attempt to recover caches that were associated with Structure B20 and that could be used to help date the ritual use of the deeply buried summit floors and buildings. The excavation yielded the desired result and it is clear that the lower summit floor, over 4 m below the current ground level (equivalent to the late Late Classic floor), was constructed in the middle of the Late Classic Period around C.E. 700. Apart from a host of deposits beneath the initial buried floor, no other deposits were recovered beneath any of the other deeply buried floors within the Caana summit plaza.

Operation C1K was designated to the plaza trench placed on axis to Structure B20 (Figures 2, 3, 4, 5). Because of the known dry core fill that would need to be penetrated, the excavation was laid out as a 4 m wide north-south by 12 m long east-west trench on axis to Structure B20 and tangent to its lower step. By the time the lower floor was reached some 4 m below ground surface, the trench had tapered in to be 1.35 m wide by 9.1 m in length. The eastern end of the trench re-exposed the basal mask for Structure B20-2nd that was first recorded in 1986 (A. Chase and D. Chase 1987: Figure 17); it also showed the damage that was done to the upper right portion of the mask by soldiers during the off-season in 1988, prior to it being backfilled in 1989. The rubble core that was penetrated down to the earlier plaza floor held few surprises, yielding only a stucco glyph for "5 Ahau" (Figure 6) and a piece of a slate stela fragment (Figure 7). The initial lower plaza floor did not present any evidence for having been penetrated or cut through; this surface actually passes beneath the Structure B20-1st buried mask and must have articulated with earlier architecture. There was a single step placed on this floor in front of the mask; this step was removed, confirming that the floor continued under this construction (Figure 8). The removal of the plaza floor resulted in the recovery of areas of disturbance and in visible pits in the bedding for the floor (Figures 8 and 9); also some finger cache vessels were uncovered that had been placed directly in

the fill bedding for this floor. All of the caches recovered were sealed beneath this surface; none of the other floors recovered and excavated yielded any caches beneath them. As 11 caches were recovered from beneath this surface, it provides the appearance of episodic caching similar to deposits from in front of Structure B24 in the Northeast Acropolis and from inside the summit core of Structure B19-2nd (A. Chase and D. Chase 2017; D. Chase and A. Chase 1998). The style of face caches recovered suggest that the caching activity took place after C.E. 690 based on style (see A. Chase and D. Chase 2013). The excavations also confirmed that an intrusive cremation burial had not been placed in the central plaza of Caana (as in the Northeast Acropolis; see A. Chase and D. Chase 2011), suggesting that any contact between Caracol and Teotihuacan likely occurred at the level of a secondary royal elite.

S.D. C1K-1 was contained in a pit sealed by both the final floor and the frontal step (Figures 8 and 9). It was located to the south of the Structure 20-1st axis. This pit contained 3 sets of finger bowls (Figure 10a-c) placed in a north-south line; the central finger bowl's lid had a modeled bird head protruding from its surface and incised wings and talons along the side of the vessel. All vessel sets contained human fingers (Figure 11). Vessel set 1 contained a 2nd row finger digit. Vessel set 2 contained a fragmentary digit. Vessel set 3 contained two digits, a 3rd row distal digit and a 2nd row digit.

S.D. C1K-2 was also placed within a pit within the fill for the deeply buried plaza floor (and sealed by that floor); part of the pit was beneath the initial step as well. Like C1K-1, this pit was south of the actual structure axis. This pit contained two pairs of cache vessels set to the north and south (Figure 10d and e); both contained human fingers (Figure 12). Vessel set 1 contained a 2nd row digit and a 3rd row distal digit, possibly from a right hand. Vessel set 2 contained 2 3rd row digits, 1 2nd row digit, and 2 1st row digits. Four other digits were recovered from outside of the vessels, 1 distal 3rd row digit and 3 second row digits.

S.D. C1K-3 consisted of a finger cache (Figure 10f) placed directly into the fill of the floor (and sealed by the floor). It was set in front of the lower step and on axis to the Structure B20-1st mask. This cache contained a total of 20 phalanges plus 1 epiphysis (Figure 13); for the phalanges there were ten 3rd row digits, seven 2nd row digits, and three 1st row digits.

S.D. C1K-4 was designated for a finger bowl cache set directly into the fill of the lower floor and to the north of the mask axis. It was sealed by the lower floor and was also beneath the initial step that had been set in front of the mask. A single 2nd row phalange was recovered from within the cache.

S.D. C1K-5 was designated for a large area of disturbance that was west of and on axis to the mask (see Figures 8 and 9); this area, however, was sealed beneath the lower floor. No finger caches were recovered in this deposit. However, a complete Belize Red brandy snifter (Figure 14a) was recovered in the center of the pit and immediately to the vessel's south was a broken stucco head that was elaborately painted in blue and red, as well as modeled to resemble the visage of Tlaloc, the Mexican god of rain (Figure 14b).

S.D. C1K-6 was assigned to what appeared to be a disturbed cache vessel. Pieces of both a large face cache and other materials generally found in a cache were recovered in the area around and within the pit containing the complete face cache labeled S.D. C1K-7. It appeared that the interment of C1K-7 resulted in the purposeful destruction of S.D. C1K-6. These materials may have been purposefully placed with the interment of S.D. C1K-7 or they could have been the result of the disturbance of a previously-existing cache in this locus and the removal of part of that cache as S.D. C1K-7 was placed. The face cache itself is not complete and is missing a lid; it was elaborately post-fire painted with black, white, red, and blue pigment (Figure 15); approximately half the vessel was recovered, meaning that the other half of this vessel must have been deposited elsewhere. Associated with this broken face cache were five obsidian eccentrics, three partial obsidian blades, one stone bead, one jadeite chip, one piece of marine shell, and a stingray spine (Figure 16). It is likely that these artefactual materials had once resided within the face cache from S.D. C1K-6.

S.D. C1K-7 was assigned for a two sets of finger caches (Figure 10g and h) that were just south of the building axis and between the pits for S.D. C1K-5 and S.D. C1K-8. The vessels were tangent to each other and roughly north-south; they were sealed in the core of the lower floor (Figure 9). Both sets

of cache vessels contain human fingers (Figure 17). Vessel set 1 contained 1 3rd row digit and 1 2nd row digit. Vessel set 2 also contained 1 3rd row digit and 1 2nd row digit.

S.D. C1K-8 was assigned for a complete face cache of a bird and its lid (Figure 18) that was set into the middle of a pit south of the building axis. The face of the bird was oriented to the west (see Figure 8). The deposit was the most westerly deposit recovered sealed beneath the lower floor. The placement of this cache either disturbed a pre-existing deposit that was labeled S.D. C1K-6 or was accompanied by half of an already destroyed face cache and its contents. A series of in situ obsidian eccentrics were recovered inside the base of this bird face cache (Figures 19 and 20).

S.D. C1K-9 was assigned for two sets of badly crushed face caches (Figure 10j and k) in an east-west arrangement set to the north of S.D. C1K-5 (Figure 8), again directly in the fill for the lower plaza floor and sealed by this surface. Recovered with these cache vessels were fragmentary phalanges; at least one 1st row digit and one 3rd row digit are identifiable; it is likely that each set of vessels held a single digit.

S.D. C1K-10 was assigned for a concentration of four sets of finger caches (Figure 10l, m,n,o) placed immediately to the southeast of S.D. C1K-8. These cache vessels were situated directly in the fill for the lower floor and were sealed by this floor surface; they rested directly on an even lower floor surface, thus being at the same level, and were set to the four cardinal directions. Only three of the vessel sets contained finger bones (Figure 22; see Figure 8 for the vessel sets). Vessel set 1 held 2 phalanges, 1 2nd row digit and 1 1st row digit. Vessel set 2 held 1 3rd row distal digit and 1 2nd row digit. Vessel set 3 held 5 3rd row distal digits and 4 2nd row digits. Vessel set 4 had no phalanges.

S.D. C1K-11 was assigned for a concentration of obsidian eccentrics, notched blades, and partial blades (Figure 23) set approximately 1 m south of S.D. C1K-5 (see Figure 8). Twenty-two discrete obsidian objects were recovered. All were placed directly in the fill for the lower plaza floor and were sealed by this surface.

Rebel Residential Group: Structures I25-I34

The residential group that was given the designation “Rebel” is located to the northwest of Caana and due north of the C Group in an area that had not witnessed any excavation. The only residential group that had been investigated in this part of the site was excavated in 1994 and was located approximately 350 m southeast of the Rebel Residential Group. This group, nicknamed “Centro,” had yielded an open tomb that produced several Early Classic pottery vessels (illustrated in A. Chase and D. Chase 2005:28), thus suggesting that other residential groups in this portion of Caracol could have earlier remains as well. The Rebel Residential Group is situated on high ground at approximately the same elevation as the plaza for Group C. The group measures approximately 40 m sq and is on a raised platform that supports 10 structures. Two smaller structures (I25 and I26) are on the northern end of the plaza. A long range-like building anchors the western side of the plaza (I33) with two smaller constructions (I32 and I34) set to either end of this structure. The southern side of the plaza consists of two attached platforms (I30 and I31). The eastern side of Rebel had a squarish central building (I28) with lower platforms to its north (I27) and south (I28). Trenches were placed into both Structures I27 and I28 with the trench into the northern platform being expanded in order to understand building plan and buried features.

Structure I28

Structure I28 was approximately 10 m wide and 10 m deep and rose approximately 2.85 m above the central plaza. An axial trench placed within this building yielded 1 tomb and 15 other special deposits. Architectural evidence was found that suggests that there were minimally three sequent buildings at this locus. The latest building was in a general state of disrepair, but its frontal steps were recovered and a partial granite axe (Figure 32i) and most of a relatively late Belize Red tripod plate was recovered in association with these steps (Figure 30e); these steps would have led to a summit level that covered the tomb (S.D. C210B-2) that was placed in the front part of the building; this latest structure was also likely associated with most of the caches placed into the building. Some of these caches disturbed earlier deposits, such as the crypt burial (S.D. C210B-5) that had been cut in half. A series of earlier cache vessels (e.g., Figure 30a-d) were also randomly distributed within the building fill and represent other

earlier deposits that were likely disturbed by Late Classic ritual activity associated with Structure I28. The tomb was also likely infilled during the end of the Late Classic when some of the other deposits were placed and included shattered cache vessels, incensario fragments, and part of a burner within its fill (Figure 31); a cache vessel (S.D. C210B-1) was set in an open-air area at the south end of the infilled tomb when the chamber was resealed. An earlier set of ripped-out steps existed in the core of the building south of the tomb (Figure 27) and represent the remains of Structure I28-2nd. These steps likely go with the construction likely dated to the Early Classic Period based on the placement of S.D. C210B-9, which was probably associated with this intermediate building. Special Deposit C210B-9 was beneath the disturbed S.D. C210B-5 in a pit that was cut into an even earlier rear facing. This deeply buried rear facing likely represents a Structure I28-3rd. Thus, Operation C210B recovered a long sequence of construction for Structure I28 that appears to have been continuously associated with ritual acts.

Operation C210B was assigned for a trench placed on axis to Structure I28. This operation found architectural information relating to at least three different versions of Structure I 28 (Figures 26 and 27) and also recovered 16 special deposits (Figures 28 and 29). The trench measured 10.1 m east-west by 2 m north-south. Only vestiges of the latest plaza floor were recovered in the plaza in front of the building, but 7 special deposits occurred in front of the building (S.D.s C210B-10 through C210B-16). Nine special deposits were recovered from within the summit of the building (Figures 26, 28, and 29). A large number of limestone bars (n=24) were associated with three of the special deposits (S.D.s C210B-6, C210B-7, and C210B-9) from the core of the building to the east of the tomb (S.D. C210B-10).

S.D. C210B-1 was assigned to a complete unslipped ceramic vessel (Figures 33a and 34a) found in an open cavity in the fill on the south excavation limit (Figure 29). The large globular vessel was set upright and was on top of what turn out to be an infilled tomb. The vessel dates to the late Late Classic or Terminal Classic Period. It would have been sealed within the latest construction, but clearly was associated with the infilling of the tomb, constituting the last ritual act.

S.D. C210B-2 was the designation given to an infilled tomb found in the extreme western summit of Structure I28. The tomb had been re-entered and refilled in the late Late Classic or Terminal

Classic era based on material in the fill (Figure 31) over the actual tomb contents and based on the cache set upon the infilled tomb (S.D. C210B-1) before the re-entry was resealed within the building core. Removal of the fill over the actual tomb contents eventually uncovered a large flat capstone that rested just above the actual materials in the tomb (see Figure 35). As with other infilled tombs from Caracol, the contents of the tomb were largely undisturbed by the refilling of the chamber (see D. Chase and A. Chase 2006). Because of the depth of the deposit and the multiple individuals contained in the bottom of the chamber, three different plans were made of the tomb contents (Figures 35 and 36). Ceramics included in the tomb (Figure 37) included 8 complete vessels, 1 partial vessel, and 1 finger cache (indicative of the re-entry to the chamber). Artifactual materials from the tomb included 3 worked bone tubes (Figure 38a,g, i), other worked bone that included pieces of at least three needles (Figure 38b-f), 5 worked shell artifacts (Figure 38h, j-l, n), other shell (Figure 38m,o,p), a modified sandstone river cobble (Figure 38u), a partial greenstone axe (Figure 38t), a drilled animal tooth, and various partial chert bifaces (Figure 38q-s,v,w) and partial obsidian blades (Figure 38x-dd). Within the multiple individual interment, only one individual was potentially articulated with head to the south; the other individuals were all partially articulated or disarticulated. Mandible and cranial remains recovered from at least five or six locations in the chamber; none of the manibles are complete. At least 5 human individuals were recovered from within the chamber: 1 subadult; 1 older adult, probably missing incisors; and 3 adults. One of the adults was likely female. Two of the recovered teeth had evidence for inlays: there was an intact jadeite inlay in a lower right lateral incisor; and, there was an open inlay hole in upper left canine.

S.D. C210B-3 was assigned for a deposit found in the middle of Structure I28 (Figure 28) that was stratigraphically late. The cache consisted of a reused Early Classic cylinder tripod and lid (cover; Figures 39, 40, and 41) that was recovered upright in the fill of Structure I28 (Figure 39). Faunal bone and a jadeite bead (Figure 32c) were recovered in the bottom of the vessel. The vessel that was reused as a cache container has been obviously recycled from an earlier deposit. Both the lid and the vessel are true polychrome. This is the only true polychrome vessel of this form and time period with which I am familiar; most others are plain with painting only on a stucco base. Besides the polychrome

painting on the lid, the handle for the lid consists of a painted modeled head that resembles others recovered at Tikal, Guatemala in Burials 10, 22, and possibly 48 (Culbert 1993: Figures 19, 20, 26, and 30). The painted scene on the side of the cylinder portrays three human figures (Figure 40). The first is an individual holding feathered objects in both hands. The second individual appears to have his hands behind his back and likely represents a prisoner. The third figure is a warrior holding a spear in the right hand and potentially a feathered shield with the left hand.

S.D. C210B-4 was assigned for a broken face cache and its contents located just to the south of S.D. C210B-3 (Figure 28; Figure 43) and at a slightly deeper level in the dry core fill. This large face cache (Figures 42 and 43) was lidded. The face had a modeled nose and eyes, but the features were fashioned in white and black paint to resemble a version of the jaguar lord of the underworld with barbules on the side of its mouth; white earrings were also added and the black face was outlined in white paint. On the whole this cache is very reminiscent of S.D. C1K-6 recovered on the summit of Canna (although not with the same number of fugitive colors; see Figure 15). Contained within this vessel were 2 exhausted obsidian core eccentrics (Figure 44e,i), 4 partial obsidian blades (Figure 44f-g,i), 2 jadeite chunks (Figure 44c,d), 1 marine shell (Figure 44b), and 1 stingray spine (Figure 44a).

S.D. C210B-5 was assigned for what at first appeared to be a stone crypt for a burial. The stone walls of this crypt ranged from one to three courses in height. Excavation showed that this crypt was, in fact, both cut in half (see Figure 28) and largely emptied of its contents, possibly as a result of placing S.D.s C210B-7 and C210B-8. The part that was preserved on the south side evinced a well-packed basal surface that yielded an eccentric obsidian (Figure 32d) and human bone fragments (long bone, finger, cranial, and mandible). The bones belonged to an older adult. A recovered upper right canine has a pyrite inlay.

S.D. C210B-6 was assigned for a special deposit that had been placed in the summit of Structure I28 just south of the earlier ripped-out stairs in a matrix of heavily burnt black soil. Vessels from a larger lip-to-lip cache were recovered (Figure 45a) in association with 3 limestone bars (Figure

46a-c), 1 jadeite bead (Figure 46e), 1 obsidian blade fragment (Figure 46d), and some isolated human bone. Two of the limestone bars had their ends discolored from burning.

S.D. C210B-7 was assigned to a concentration of limestone bars (Figure 47 top) in black burnt soil in the rear fill of Structure I28 (Figure 28). Eighteen limestone bars (Figure 48a-r) were recovered in this deposit. They were in association with 7 partial obsidian blades (Figure 48s-y) and 1 spalled obsidian core eccentric (Figure 48z). These limestone bars were immediately above the deeply buried rear facing for Structure I28-3rd and their scatter indicated that this deposit was made before S.D. C210B-8 had been placed.

S.D. C210B-8 was assigned to two pottery vessels (Figure 34b,c) recovered in the rear of Structure I28 in the fill for where the northern extension of the earlier crypt (S.D. C210B-5) should have been. One of these vessels was complete and the other was partial; both are ash-tempered wares that likely originally derived from the Belize Valley; both are early Late Classic in date. Whether or not they could have possibly derived from the original contents of S.D. C210B-5 is an open question.

S.D. C210B-9 was sealed beneath the packed basal level of S.D. C210B-5 (Figure 49). The first indication that there was a deposit was an open-air cavity in the fill and the recovery of a series of censer sherds and appliques, followed by the uncovering of half of a faced lid with a central perforation in its top (Figure 50: Plan1). Reconstruction of this material revealed two modeled lids (approximately half of each present; Figure 51a,b)) and also about half of a modeled flanged censer (Figure 51c). Beneath this censer material was the top of an inverted cache vessel (Figure 51e) in a clearly defined pit (Figure 50: Plan 2); the basal vessel for this cache (Figure 51f) was beneath the inverted bowl but was broken in disassociated pieces (Figure 50: Plan 3). Both of the cache vessels were complete. Other artifacts associated with this deposit included three limestone bars (Figure 52a,b,e) and two partial obsidian blades (Figure 52c,d). While a stratigraphic sequence can be established for this deposit (Figure 49), a behavioral sequence suggests that the deposit was disturbed and then ritually re-interred. The cache may have been found when individuals were attempting to place S.D. C210B-5, which is located directly above this deposit and is relatively shallow for a crypt burial. If that is the case, then the original cache was disturbed

and likely had some contents removed; the lower cache vessel was moved about and then the complete upper cache vessel was re-inserted above the disturbed deposit; subsequently, a ritual involving broken censers resulted in these partial censers being scattered on top of the cache vessels; S.D. C210B-5 was then constructed at a higher level either at this time or at a later date.

S.D. C210B-10 was assigned to a concentration of obsidian recovered within floor fill in the northwest corner of Operation C210B (Figure 29). This obsidian concentration yielded 10 obsidian eccentrics, 1 obsidian chip, and 1 partial obsidian blade (Figure 47 bottom). Three of the eccentrics (Figure 53a-c) were modeled from spent obsidian cores and seven of the eccentrics (Figure 53f-l) were modeled on blades. The blades were more elaborately crafted than other eccentrics using this medium that have been recovered at Caracol (e.g., www.caracol.org 2007 Season Report: Figure 53). Two of the crafted blades (Figure 53g,h) appear to have been fashioned into lancets with possible humans as their handles.

S.D. C210B-11 was found on axis to the building immediately in front of the lower building step and in bedding for the plaza floor. The cache consisted of a cluster of 5 miniature pottery cups (Figures 33 and 45b-f), a form that is not all that common for Caracol (see a comparative one in www.caracol.org 2007 Season Report: Figure 39b). No other artifacts were associated with the cups.

S.D. C210B-12 was assigned for a large model head (Figure 54a), probably of a monkey that was found on the central axis of the building in front of the steps and in fill for the plaza floor (Figure 29); it was bedded with a host of river shells. Excavation beneath it yielded an even earlier cache (S.D. C210B-15) set directly on bedrock.

S.D. C210B-13 was assigned for a concentrated deposit of pottery cache vessels (Figures 33 and 55) that had been placed immediately in front and partially under the lowest step for Structure I28-1st south of the main building axis (Figure 29). Three lidded urns (one being a bird face cache; Figure 55d) were recovered in this cache, as well as an extra lid (Figure 55a) and pieces from other cache vessels. Artifactual materials associated with this deposit included 4 obsidian eccentrics (Figure 56a-d),

one partial obsidian blade (Figure 56e), a slate mirror back fragment (Figure 56f), and 3 speleothem fragments.

S.D. C210B-14 was the designation given to two pottery cache vessels (Figure 45f,h) that were located immediately in front of the lowest step for Structure I28-1st in the plaza fill north of the building axis (Figure 29). Faunal bone was found in the vicinity of these broken vessels and may have been associated with the deposit.

S.D. C210B-15 was directly on axis to Structure I28 (Figure 29) and consisted of a large lip-to-lip set of unslipped dishes (Figures 33 and 54b). The upper dish was inverted, but fragmentary, and had probably been disturbed during the placement of S.D. C210B-12. The lowermost vessel was intact and set upon burnt cobbles that rested directly on bedrock. There were no contents recovered in association with this cache.

S.D. C210B-16 was not assessed as being a special deposit in the field. However, in the lab the recovered bone was recognized as being human. The bone had been directly placed on bedrock in the front of the building and was not concentrated, which is why it was not given the designation of a special deposit in the field. The recovered bone consists of assorted fragmentary cranial, post-cranial, and finger digits. Two individuals are represented; one is adult and one is an older adult. One had fused lower central incisors because of a tartar build-up.

Structure I27

Structure I 27 was located immediately north of Structure I28 and was likely separated from Structure I28 by a small alleyway. The low platform rose approximately 1.6 m above the plaza for the Rebel Group. Based on features recovered in the original trench that suggested the existence of a stair balk, the excavation was extended to the south in order to better define this feature (Figure 60). The investigation of this locus also revealed that there had been much rebuilding undertaken associated with extensive rip-outs and that the building axis had shifted considerably based on buried facings (Figure 61). Within the lower fill for the final construction of Structure I27, a deposit of limestone bars and also

redeposited refuse was recovered (Figure 65) that permits the dating for this last building phase to the early part of the Late Classic Period.

Operation C210C was an axial trench placed into Structure I27 (Figures 57-63). The trench initially measured 6.2 m east west by 2 m north-south. Given the frontal architecture that indicated that the southern wall of the trench had bisected a stair balk, the excavation was extended in the western extent of the trench 1 m to the south and 3 m to the east. Two sections were drawn for Operation C210C because of extreme differences in stratigraphy caused by east-west construction-related rip-outs. The northern section (Figure 58) shows a single construction arising from the plaza level associated with two special deposits that date this sequence to the early part of the Late Classic Period. The southern section (Figure 59) is much more complicated, yielding four sequent floors and a facing, and is indicative of a series of earlier constructions that existed in this locus, all existing prior to the early part of the Late Classic Period. Artifactual materials recovered during the excavation of Operation C210C included worked chert bifaces (Figure 64d,e,g,l,m,o), a pottery whistle (Figure 64f), a pyrite mosaic piece (Figure 64h), worked bone (Figure 64i), broken greenstone axes (Figure 64j,k), and a drilled olivella shell (Figure 64n). Two broken obsidian cores were also recovered in building fill.

S.D. C210C-1 was assigned for two complete limestone bars that were found deep in the fill of Operation C210C (Figure 65 and 66).

S.D. C210C-2 was assigned for material that appeared to be secondary refuse deep in the basal levels of the trench towards the northern side (Figures 64a-c, 65, 67, and 68); these materials date to the early part of the Late Classic Period and represent the time of the latest construction for Structure I27. Artifactual materials included a partial limestone bar (Figure 64a), a whistle tip (Figure 64b), a shell scoop (Figure 64c), and three manos (Figure 68). The recovered partial vessels include a series of large bowls (Figure 65b,e,h), serving dishes (Figure 65a,i) and bowls (Figure 65c,d,j), a water jar (Figure 65k), a drum (Figure 65l), a censer base (Figure 65m), an unusual unslipped cache bowl (Figure 65f), and a finger bowl (Figure 65n).

Rogue Residential Group: Structures I22-I24

The residential group designated “Rogue” is located to the northwest of Caana and due north of the C Group. It is approximately 100 m south of the Rebel Residential Group. The Rogue Residential Group is situated on the side of a hill; the group and its associated plaza project outward from the hill, giving an impression of scale as one enters from the west. The platform on which the group was constructed is completely man-made. The plaza group measures approximately 30 m north-south by 22 m east-west and supports three structures (with a possible fourth building being set into a terrace north of Structure I22); all three of the structures associated with the Rogue plaza were excavated. The northern end of the plaza is dominated by Structure I22, which excavation revealed as a well-constructed stone building that was likely vaulted; the burial of a newborn was recovered in the plaza fill in front of this construction. The eastern side of the plaza supported a ritual construction, Structure I23; it yielded seven discrete interments. Structure I24, a low 10 m long platform, was position on the southern side of the Rogue plaza. Excavations revealed that this locus was occupied from at least the Early Classic Period through the end of the Late Classic Period.

Structure I23

Structure I23 was constructed against the side of a hill. The building platform was approximately 10 m wide and 8 m deep and rose approximately 2.7 m above the central plaza. An axial trench placed within this building yielded 1 tomb, 2 crypt burials, 1 cist burial, and 3 other human interments. No caches were recovered in association with this building. Architectural evidence was found that suggests that there were minimally two construction episodes at this locus. A large boulder construction wall, rising a half meter, was uncovered in the summit of Structure I23 (Figure 72: Plan 2) The latest building was in a general state of disrepair (Figure 72) with a series of burials having disturbed its frontal steps on the building axis. Materials recovered during the excavation suggest that this locus was in use from the Early Classic through the late Late Classic Period.

Operation C211B was a trench that was placed on axis to Structure I23 (Figures 70 top, 71, and 72). Only a few architectural features were recovered from this investigation and it may be that the

platform was not surmounted by a formal building. The trench through Structure I23 initially measured 11.2 m east-west by 2 m north-south. Two small extensions were made to this investigation, both to recover burials. The first began 5.2 m from the eastern excavation limit and extended to the south; a 1 m north-south by 1.4 m east-west extension was excavated in order to recover S.D. C211B-5. The second extension began 1.9 m from the western excavation limit and extended to the north; it measured 1 m north-south by 1 m east-west and was undertaken to recover S.D. C211B-6. A partial handled incensario (Figure 73a) was recovered in the front of the building and two partial early Late Classic dishes (Figure 73c,d) were recovered in the building fill. Artifactual materials recovered in the excavation included worked chert bifaces (Figure 74a-e), a modified river pebble (Figure 74f), worked bone (Figure 74g-j), a quartzite earflare fragment (Figure 74k), a piece of a drilled slate mirror back (Figure 74l), worked shell (figure 74n), a pottery figurine arm (Figure 74o), and a crack-laced sherd (Figure 74m).

S.D. C211B-1 was assigned to a human interment uncovered in the western end of Operation C211B tangent to the southern excavation limit. Three capstones covered the cist burial of a single individual (Figure 75 and 76) who was accompanied with two shell earflares (Figure 77a,b), a worked bone tube (Figure 77c), and possibly another worked bone artifact (Figure 77d). The in-field designation saw this interment as having a single individual with extra bone; however, the excavator suggests that there may have been ancient co-mingling of this special deposit with a fill lot (C211B/13-2) from above the crypt that contained the fragmentary remains of 2 adults (cranial and arm bones as well as a mandible with 4 teeth [two left premolars and two left molars]) and 1 subadult (2 deciduous teeth [upper right lateral incisor; upper left molar] from an individual no older than 18 months). S.D. C211B-1 consisted of a single male older adult who had been placed face down with feet flexed up behind the body (possibly tied in place); 5 extra teeth were recovered with the interment, 3 from adults (3rd molar, upper left canine, and an upper right lateral incisor) and 2 from a child (both deciduous premolars). The primary individual shows unusual wear on the interior (lingual side) of the teeth and there is substantial tartar on the lower incisors.

S.D. C211B-2 was assigned for an interment found in the building core directly on an earlier floor surface (Figures 71, 78, and 79). The individual was accompanied by 4 shell beads in the area of the throat (Figure 77e-h). The individual had been placed face-down in an extended position with head to the south. Based on dentition and eruption patterns, the individual was less than 4 years of age at the time of death. All of the teeth were deciduous with the un-erupted permanent dentition still encased in bone. Both upper lateral incisors showed signs of having been filed and empty inlay holes were found in both upper canines. This is yet another example from Caracol of inlay holes associated with children (D. Chase and A. Chase 2017: 221) and the context for this interment is surely not indicative of high status, suggesting that the inlays and filing have other symbolic messages, perhaps having to do with role. One additional adult upper incisor with hypoplasia was associated with the interment.

S.D. C211B-3 was designated for an interment associated with a pottery vessel found in the eastern end of Operation C211B. These materials were deeper than the earlier facing recovered in the eastern end of the trench and the interments may have been placed prior to the incorporation of this area into the Rogue Residential Group. The pottery vessel (Figure 73b) likely dates to the Early Classic Period and is similar to pottery recovered west of Caana (www.caracol.org 2016 field report: Figure 106n,t) and in the Walled Group (www.caracol.org 2016 field report: Figure 42b). The vessel appears to have held the remains of a newborn individual and the bones of an older individual were strewn behind and over the vessel in a concentrated fashion (Figures 71, 78, and 80). Skeletal analysis confirms that two individuals were present in the deposit, one a newborn subadult less than 1 year of age and the other an older adult with 6 recovered teeth. No teeth were recovered for the subadult. The adult upper left molar has wear and caries and an upper left molar has tartar and caries. There was also a lot of wear on the lower right canine and lower right lateral incisor. Both the maxilla and mandible have ante-mortem tooth loss. There are possible cut marks on a radius. The shape of the mandible suggests that the older individual was a male.

S.D. C211B-4 was initially assigned for a skull that was uncovered to the south of S.D. C211B-3 (Figure 80). Further excavation revealed that the extended body was running into the excavation limit and it was decided not to extend the excavation to recover the rest of the interment. Skeletal analysis

revealed that two individuals were recovered in the limited excavation, one a newborn adult less than 1 year of age and the second an older adult. Like nearby S.D. C211B-3, no teeth were recovered for the subadult. While the sex identification is problematic for the older adult (as only the skull was recovered), it is possibly female based on the preserved mastoid. Both the upper and lower teeth of the adult were filed. The lower incisors appear to be notched while the upper incisors are systematically crenelated, being closest in pattern to Romero (1970) pattern A2, but more rounded. Caries is also present.

S.D. C211B-5 was designated for a small tomb placed in the middle of Structure I23 (Figure 71). The tomb required an areal extension to the south in order to enable its excavation; this extension recovered a building facing (at least two courses high; Plans 2 and 3 in Figure 81) and a floor that sealed the chamber (Figure 81). The tomb housed a single individual that was extended in a supine position with head to the north (Figure 70 bottom, 82). The legs of the individual covered two of the three pottery vessels on the south end of the chamber. The pottery vessels (Figure 83) date to the early part of the Late Classic Period. A concentration of artifacts was in the northeast corner of the chamber tangent to the skull. The artifacts recovered from this locus included a bone pin (Figure 84d), a shell earflare (Figure 84a) with two shell pins (Figure 84e,f), three shells probably from tweezers (Figure 84i-k), 3 jadeite chunks (Figure 84m-o), a drilled dog mandible (Figure 84l), two drilled animal teeth (Figure 84g,h), and two large animal canines (Figure 84b,c). The single individual buried is S.D. C211B-5 was probably an adult male based on the mandible. The mandible shows ante-mortem tooth loss and a worn right central incisor as well as tartar on the right canine. There are no filings or inlays, but the upper central incisors, lateral incisors, and canines were not present.

S.D. C211B-6 was designated for a crypt burial set into the front of the building on the northern excavation limit (Figures 78 bottom, 86, and 87). In order to recover this interment, an extension was made to the north that recovered first a step and then a floor over the crypt (Figure 85). A single adult individual was recovered from within the crypt (Figure 86). The body was laid out in a supine position and the head would have been to the north. No sex identification was possible. Nine teeth were recovered but no cranial material. Two upper left incisors either show wear or were flat-filed. An upper right canine

evinces hypoplasia and is also worn. A lower left first molar has both caries and tartar. A series of partial obsidian blades (Figure 74p-q) were recovered from within the crypt.

S.D. C211B-7 was assigned to a crypt burial set into the front of the building beneath the front steps south of the building axis (Figures 78 bottom, 87, and 88). The interment was located immediately east of S.D. C211B-1 at the same level as S.D. C211B-7; Figure 87 shows the relationship between S.D.s C211B-6 and 211B-7. The human bones within S.D. C211B-7 were jumbled, but some order can be ascertained from the location of the skeletal remains. The crypt held the remains of three individuals. The primary individual was a younger adult with head to the north; it is likely that he is associated with an upper left lateral incisor that has a jadeite inlay. Two individuals had their heads to the south; one of these was an adult with filed teeth (upper central incisors, closest to Romero [1970] pattern B4) that was possibly female. The other individual with the head to the south was an older adult with very worn teeth and was possibly a male. The teeth from these southern individuals show evidence of caries. No artifactual material accompanied the interment.

Structure I22

Structure I22 anchored the northern end of Rogue plaza (Figure 89), rising some 2.5 m above the plaza surface. The axial excavation revealed that Structure I22 was a stone construction that likely had a vaulted roof. The building was badly slumped to the west because of its hillside location. The excavation revealed that a central bench occupied the single room building, being attached to the northern wall (Figure 91). The bench extended out into the room 1.8 m from the north wall and had “arms on its ends (visible in the section, Figure 90). The room in front of the bench was 0.8 m deep, which was the same width as the door jambs for the building. Two steps dropped down in front of the building and ended on the latest plaza floor. An earlier version of the stone building was recovered within the section associated with a lower plaza floor. The axis of this earlier building appears to have been slightly to the east (Figure 92). The western front jamb of the building was recovered; a facing extending to the north indicated that an interior western bench had been added to the earlier building (Figure 92: plan 3).

Operation C211C was assigned for the trench placed on axis to Structure I22 (Figures 89 top, 90, 91, and 92). The excavation measured 7.8 m north-south by 2 m east-west. The investigations demonstrated that Structure I2 had been a well-constructed stone building that likely had a vaulted roof. No significant artifactual remains were recovered in association with the building and it is, therefore, difficult to firmly date (although it is clearly Late Classic Period). Two sequent plaza floors were recovered from the front of the excavation, matching the two different phases of construction noted in the section. Artifactual materials recovered in Operation C211C included a partial stone bead (Figure 93a), a broken drilled slate artifact (Figure 93b), and partial obsidian blades (Figure 93c,d).

S.D. C211C-1 was assigned for a subadult burial placed in the fill below the front plaza floor (Figure 90 and 94). The recovered human bone include postcranial remains, skull fragments, and a portion of the mandible. Thirteen teeth were recovered and additional teeth caps for the subadult exist within the mandible. The dentition indicates that the subadult was 3 to 4 years of age at the time of death. No artefactual materials were associated with the interment.

Structure I24

A low platform was situated on the south side of the Rogue Group. Given the lack of recovered architecture in the eastern building, Structure I23, and the well-constructed stone building, Structure I22, on the north end of the plaza, it was felt that determining the architecture that comprised Structure I24 would be informative. Accordingly, Operation C211 D was placed over the front of the building as an areal excavation with a secondary goal being to recover artifactual materials associated with the building.

Operation C211D was an areal excavation placed over the front wall of Structure I24 just east of its northwest corner (Figures 89 bottom, 95, and 96). The excavation measured 4.7 m east-west by 2 m north-south. The excavation recovered a relatively well-preserved platform that was some three courses in height. The plaza floor was not well preserved in the vicinity of the structure and the investigation was carried out to the base of the facing for Structure I24. The most interesting artifact recovered in association with the inferred plaza surface was a shattered chert biface (Figure 93g).

Risk Residential Group: Structures I16-I18

The final residential group investigated during the 2017 field season was a small residential group that was nicknamed “Risk.” Risk Group is located approximately 100 m due north of the Northeast Acropolis and 100 m southwest of Rogue Group (Figure 1). It is located at approximately the same elevation as the Caracol C Group. Three low platforms, on the west, north, and east sides of a raised platform are arranged around a plaza area. A single investigation was carried out within the eastern construction and revealed a very complex construction history.

Structure I17

Structure I17 is the eastern building in the Risk Residential Group. It is 9 m long by 5 m wide and rises only some 0.9 m above its associated plaza.

Operation C212B was an axial trench placed over Structure I17. It measured 4.7 m east-west by 2 m north-south (Figures 98, 99, and 100). Although the structure itself only revealed two single-course facings (Figure 100: Plan 1), the core of the construction revealed a host of architectural features that included three floors within the construction and three floors and an earlier step buried within the plaza (a fourth floor would have been required to go with the latest version of Structure I17). The lowest floor in the front and medial portion of the section (Figure 99) likely represents an earlier plaza surface. The earlier edge of a building was recovered resting on this lower floor (Figure 100: Plan 3). An upper floor recovered in the building core (Figure 100: Plan 2) likely articulated with the earlier step and represented an earlier version of Structure I17. No deposits were recovered within the core of the building or associated with Structure I17, but recovered ceramics (Figure 101) indicate that some of the earlier construction likely dated to the Early Classic Period.

Significance

The archaeological investigations at Caracol that were undertaken during 2017 largely recovered Late Classic deposits; Early Classic materials were, however, found in Operations all three residential groups that were investigated. When contextualized within previous Caracol research, the 2017 excavations, in conjunction with the 2015 and 2016 investigations, have provided significant new information that aids 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. These data strongly suggest that any contact between Teotihuacan and Caracol was only sustained with the royal elite. Yet, based on the excavations done on the Caana summit, it is unlikely that these contacts were undertaken by the ruler; rather they appear to have been carried out and solidified within the secondary elite of the royal family. The excavations in other acropolis and the residential groups surrounding the epicenter suggest that this contact did not percolate down to other levels of society. Thus, any contact between Caracol and Teotihuacan benefit the extended royal family and had only minimal impact on the rest of the population.

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TABLE 1:
Caracol Project Members: 2017 Field Season

Staff:		
Directors		
Arlen F. Chase	C1	
Diane Z. Chase	C2	
Lab and Field Director		
Amy Morris	C111	
Field Supervisors:		
Adrian S.Z. Chase	C154	
Melissa Badillo	C166	
Field Associate:		
Kelsey Sullivan	C237	
Field Assistants:		
Brooke Barteaux	C238	
Benjamin Bonner	C239	
Olyvia Johns	C240	
Jessica Turner	C241	
Senior Clean-Up Crew:		
Lucas Martindale Johnson	C134	
Visiting Researcher:		
Michael Smith		
Belizean Labor:		
Kitchen		
Angelica Meneses		
Linda Aurora Meneses		
Rosita Isadora Lolwani		
Amanda Lizeth Hernandez		
Field		
Saul Galeano		
Jaime Iglesias		
Asterio Moralez		
Roberto Pacheco		
Jose Eduardo Castellanos		
Tomas Emili Tujillo		
Alexter Evaniel Pacheco		
Francisco Rudel Pacheco		
Irvin Santiago Choc		
Erwin Santiago Choc		
Guillermo Elif Aldana		
Jovanni Bernabe Puc		
Eduardo Cunil		
Jorge Israel Itza		

Figures

- Cover: Early Classic polychrome cylinder tripod and lid that was reused as a Late Classic cache vessel (S.D. C210B-3)
- Figure 1: Map of Caracol Epicenter, showing where 2017 excavations occurred; lidar inset shows locations of the three residential groups excavated during 2017.
- Figure 2: Photographs of the summit of Caana at the beginning and end of excavation, showing the location of Operation C1K.
- Figure 3: Section through Caana plaza, showing Operation C1K.
- Figure 4: Plans of lower plaza floors in Operation C1K: Plans 1 through 3.
- Figure 5: Plans of lower plaza floors in Operation C1K: Plans 4 and 5.
- Figure 6: Stucco text containing the glyph “5 Ahau” found in the dry core fill of the Caana’s plaza in Operation C1K.
- Figure 7: Fragment of a slate stela found in the dry core fill of Caana’s plaza in Operation C1K.
- Figure 8: Photographs of Structure B20-1st mask with front step removed and the special deposits revealed during the stripping of the initial plaza floor 4.1 m below ground surface.
- Figure 9: Plan of the special deposits found in Operation C1K below the deep plaza surface.
- Figure 10: Finger caches from Operation C1K (all Ceiba Unslipped, except modeled bird lid, which is technically Hebe Modeled): a.-c. Special Deposit C1K-1, Vessel Sets 1-3; d.,e. Special Deposit C1K-2, Vessel Sets 1 and 2; f. Special Deposit C1K-3; g., h. Special Deposit C1K-7, Vessel Sets 1 and 2; i. Special Deposit C1K-4; j., k. Special Deposit C1K-9, Vessel Sets 1 and 1; l.-o. Special Deposit C1K-10, Vessel Sets 1-4.
- Figure 11: Plan of human digits in the lower vessels of Vessel Sets 1-3 in S.D. C1K-1.
- Figure 12: Plan of human digits in lower vessels of Vessel Sets 1 and 2 in S.D. C1K-2
- Figure 13: Plans of the human digits in lower vessel of S.D. C1K-3
- Figure 14: Contents of S.D. C1K-5: a. Belize Red pottery “brandy snifter;” b. painted stucco modeled face of “Tlaloc.”
- Figure 15: Pottery vessel from S.D. C1K-6: Hebe Modeled vessel with black, blue, and red paint.
- Figure 16: Artifactual material from S.D. C1K-6: a.-e. obsidian, possibly eccentrics; f. stone bead; g. jadeite chip; h. shell; i. stingray spine; j.-l. partial obsidian blades.
- Figure 17: Plan of human digits in Vessel Sets 1 and 2 of S.D. C1K-7.
- Figure 18: Photographs of face cache in situ and eccentric obsidian contents of S.D. C1K-8.
- Figure 19: Face cache from S.D. C1K-8 (Hebe Modeled).
- Figure 20: Detailed plan of the obsidian eccentrics within the face cache for S.D. C1K-8 (letters correspond with letters in Figure 21).
- Figure 21: Obsidian eccentrics (a.-h.) and one partial obsidian blade (j.) from within S.D. C1K-8; three of the obsidians (d.-e.) can be refitted to their original core.
- Figure 22: Finger digits within three of the four vessel sets from S.D. C1K-10.
- Figure 23: Obsidian (a.-v.) eccentrics and partial blades associated with S.D. C1K-11.
- Figure 24: Plan of Rebel Group showing locations of Operations C210B and C210C.
- Figure 25: Photograph of excavation in Structure I28 (Operation C210B) in Rebel Group (top) and of S.D. C210B-2 (bottom).
- Figure 26: Section through Structure I28, showing Operation C210B.
- Figure 27: Plans of Operation C210B.

- Figure 28: Detailed plan of the rear portion of Operation C210B, showing the locations of: S.D. C210B-3, S.D. C210B-4, S.D. C210B-5, S.D. C210B-6, S.D. C210B-7, and S.D. C210B-8.
- Figure 29: Detailed plan of the front portion of Operation C210B, showing the locations of: S.D. C210B-1, S.D. C210B-2, S.D. C210B-10, S.D. C210B-11, S.D. C210B-12, S.D. C210B-13, S.D. C210B-14, and S.D. C210B-15.
- Figure 30: Ceramics recovered from general excavations lots in Operation C210B: a.-c. Ceiba Unslipped (Lot C210B/4); d. Ceiba Unslipped (Lot C210B/8); and, e. Martin's Incised (Lot C210B/28).
- Figure 31: Ceramics recovered from within the infilled tomb chamber (Lot C210B/6) in Operation C210B: a., b. Ceiba Unslipped; c.-e. Pedregal Modeled (censer); f. Monterey Modeled (burner).
- Figure 32: Artifactual materials recovered from general excavation lots in Operation C210B: a. partial slate palatte (C210B/6); b. worked marine shell (C210B/6); c. jadeite bead (C210B/11; S.D. C210B-3); d. obsidian eccentric (C210B/13; S.D. C210B-5); e. river cobble (C210B/13); f. marine shell (C210B/15); g. pottery drum sherd (C210B/15); h. modeled pottery face, possibly from a handle (C210B/15); i. granite axe (C210B/28).
- Figure 33: Photographs of pottery vessels from S.D. C210B-1, S.D. C210B-11, S.D. C210B-13, and S.D. C210B-15.
- Figure 34: Pottery vessels from S.D. C210B-1 (a. Ceiba Modeled) and S.D. C210B-8 (b. Belize Red; c. possibly Gallinero Fluted).
- Figure 35: Plan of the large capstone in S.D. C210B-2 and of artefactual material from Layer 1 of S.D. C210B-2 (Plan 1).
- Figure 36: Plans 2 and 3 for S.D. C210B-2.
- Figure 37: Ceramic vessels from S.D. C210B-2: a. Tialipa Brown; b. Carmelita Incised; c., g. Belize Red; d. possibly Chilar Fluted; e. eroded Palmar Orange Polychrome; f., Tialipa Brown; h, Tialipa Brown Fluted; i. Ceiba Unslipped; and, j. eroded Nanzal Red.
- Figure 38: Artifactual materials from S.D. C210B-2: a., g., i. worked bone tubes; b., c. worked bone; d.-f. worked bone needles; h., j., k., l., n. worked marine shell; m. conch shell tip; o. oliva marine shell; p. marine clam shell; q., r., s., v. worked chert tools; t. partial greenstone axe; u. modified sandstone river cobble; w.-dd. partial obsidian blades.
- Figure 39: Photographs of S.D. C210B-3 in the ground and, then, reconstructed (see also cover illustration).
- Figure 40: Photograph (roll-out) of the three figures painted on the outside of the cylinder recovered in S.D. C210B-3.
- Figure 41: Ceramic vessel from S.D. C210B-3 (cylinder probably Dos Arroyos Polychrome; lid a polychrome variant of Positas Modeled).
- Figure 42: Photograph of S.D. C210B-4 in the ground and then the face cache and lid reconstructed.
- Figure 43: Face cache from S.D. C210B-4 showing areas of black and white paint.
- Figure 44: Artifactual materials from S.D. C210B-4: a. fragment of stingray spine; b. marine shell; c. jadeite ball; d. jadeite fragment; e., i. obsidian core eccentrics; f., g., h., j. partial obsidian blades.
- Figure 45: Ceramic vessels from special deposits in Operation C210B: a. Ceiba Unslipped (S.D. C210B-6); b.-f. S.D. C210B-11; g., h. S.D. C210B-14.

- Figure 46: Artifacts from S.D. C210B-6 in Operation C210B: a.-c. limestone bars; d. partial obsidian blade; e. jadeite bead.
- Figure 47: Photographs of the materials in S.D. C210B-7 (top) and S.D. C210B-10 (bottom).
- Figure 48: Artifacts associated with S.D. C210B-7: a.-r. limestone bars; s.-y. partial obsidian blades; z. partial spalled obsidian core (eccentric).
- Figure 49: Photographs of the excavation of S.D. C210B-9 showing three layers of pottery vessels.
- Figure 50: Three sequent plans of S.D. C210B-9 in Operation C210B.
- Figure 51: Ceramic vessels associated with S.D. C210B-9: a., b., c. probably Candelario Applied; d., e. Puchituk Unslipped.
- Figure 52: Artifacts associated with Lot C210B/19 (a., b.) and S.D. C210B-9 (c.-e.; Lot C210B/21): a., b., e. limestone bars; c., d. partial obsidian blades.
- Figure 53: Obsidian eccentrics associated with S.D. C210B-10: a.-c. more typical core-based Caracol eccentrics; d. small chip; e. partial blade; f.-l. finely crafted blade-based eccentrics.
- Figure 54: Ceramics associated with S.D. C210B-12 (a.) and C210B-15 (b.); types are not designated.
- Figure 55: Ceramic vessels associated with S.D. C210B-13: a.-c. Ceiba Unslipped; d. Hebe Modeled.
- Figure 56: Artifacts associated with S.D. C210B-14: a.-d. obsidian eccentrics; e. partial obsidian blade; f. slate mirror back fragment.
- Figure 57: Photographs of excavations in Structure I27 (Operation C210C) in Rebel Group.
- Figure 58: Section through Structure I27, looking north, showing Operation C210C.
- Figure 59: Section through Structure I27, looking south, showing Operation C210C.
- Figure 60: Plan 1 for Operation C210C.
- Figure 61: Plans 2 and 3 for Operation C210C.
- Figure 62: Plan 4 for Operation C210C.
- Figure 63: Plan 5 for Operation C210C.
- Figure 64: Artifacts recovered in excavation of Operation C210C (a.-c. are from S.D. C210C-2): a. partial limestone bar; b. pottery whistle tip; c. shell scoop; d., e., g., l., m., o. worked chert bifaces; f. pottery whistle; h. pyrite mosaic piece; i. worked bone; j., k. broken greenstone axes; n. drilled olivella shell.
- Figure 65: Plan showing S.D. C210C-1 and S.D. C210C-2 in Operation C210C.
- Figure 66: Limestone bars associated with S.D. C210C-1 in Operation C210C.
- Figure 67: Partial pottery vessels associated with S.D. C210C-2: a., g.-i. Machete Polychrome; b., c., e., h. possibly Subin Red; f., m. Valentin Unslipped; j. Nanzal Red; k. eroded Bontifela Orange; l. related to Palmar Orange Polychrome; n. Ceiba Unslipped
- Figure 68: Broken manos associated with S.D. C210C-2 in Operation C210C.
- Figure 69: Plan of Rogue Group, showing locations of Operations C211B, C211C, and C211D.
- Figure 70: Photographs of excavations in Structure I23 (top) and of S.D. C211B-5 (bottom).
- Figure 71: Section through Structure I23 (Operation C211B) in Rogue Group.
- Figure 72: Plans of Structure I23 (Operation C211B).
- Figure 73: Pottery vessels from excavations into Structure I23: a. undesignated type; b. possibly Dos Hermanos Red (from S.D. C211B-3); c., d. Machete Orange Polychrome.
- Figure 74: Artifacts from excavation into Structure I23 (Operation C211B): a.-e. worked

chert bifaces; f. modified river pebble; g.-j. worked bone; k. quartzite earflare fragment; l. drilled slate mirror back; m. crack-laced sherd; n. worked shell; o. pottery figurine arm; p.-q. partial obsidian blades (associated with S.D. C211B-6).

- Figure 75: Plan of capstones above S.D. C211B-1 in Operation C211B.
- Figure 76: Plan of S.D. C211B-1.
- Figure 77: Artifactual materials associated with S.D. C211B-1 (a.-d.) and S.D. C211B-2 (e.-h.): a., b. worked shell earflares; c. worked bone tube; d. worked bone; e.-h. shell beads.
- Figure 78: Photographs of S.D. C211B-2 (upper left), S.D.s C211B-3 and 4 (upper right), and S.D.s C211B-6 and 7 (bottom).
- Figure 79: Plan of S.D. C211B-2 in Operation C211B.
- Figure 80: Plan of S.D. C211B-3 and C211B-4 in Operation C211B.
- Figure 81: Plans of the excavation extension in Operation C211B over S.D. C211B-5.
- Figure 82: Plans showing capstones and burial constituting S.D. C211B-5.
- Figure 83: Pottery vessels from S.D. C211B-5: a. Monstera Orange Polychrome; b. possibly Desquite Red-on-Orange; c. Machete Orange Polychrome.
- Figure 84: Artifactual material associated with S.D. C211B-5: a. shell earflare; b., c. large animal canines; d. worked bone pin; e., f. shell pins for earflares; g., h. drilled animal teeth; i.-k. worked shell, possibly tweezers; l. drilled dog mandible; m.-n. jadeite pieces.
- Figure 85: Plans for the excavation extension in Operation C211B over S.D. C211B-6.
- Figure 86: Plans showing the capstones and burial constituting S.D. C211B-6.
- Figure 87: Plan showing the relationship between S.D. C211B-6 and S.D. C211B-7.
- Figure 88: Detailed plans of the capstones and different levels of S.D. C211B-7.
- Figure 89: Photographs of excavations in Structure I22 (Operation C211C; upper) and Structure I24 (Operation C211D; bottom) in Rogue Group.
- Figure 90: Section through Structure I22 (Operation C211C) in Rogue Group.
- Figure 91: Plan 1 of Structure I22 (Operation C211C).
- Figure 92: Plans 2 and 3 of Structure I22 (Operation C211C).
- Figure 93: Artifactual materials recovered from Operations C211C (a., c., d.) and C211D (b., e.): a. partial stone bead; b. broken drilled slate artifact; c., d. partial obsidian blades; e. shattered chert biface.
- Figure 94: Plan showing location of S.D. C211C-1.
- Figure 95: Section through Structure I24 (Operation C211D) in Rogue Group.
- Figure 96: Plan of Structure I24 (Operation C211D), showing corner of platform to the right.
- Figure 97: Plan of Risk Group, showing location of Operation C212B.
- Figure 98: Photograph of excavation in Structure I17 (Operation C212B) in Risk Group.
- Figure 99: Section through Structure I17 (Operation C212B) in Risk Group.
- Figure 100: Plans of Structure I17 (Operation C212B).
- Figure 101: Partial pottery vessels associated with Operation C212B: a. undesignated type; b. Caldero Buff Polychrome.

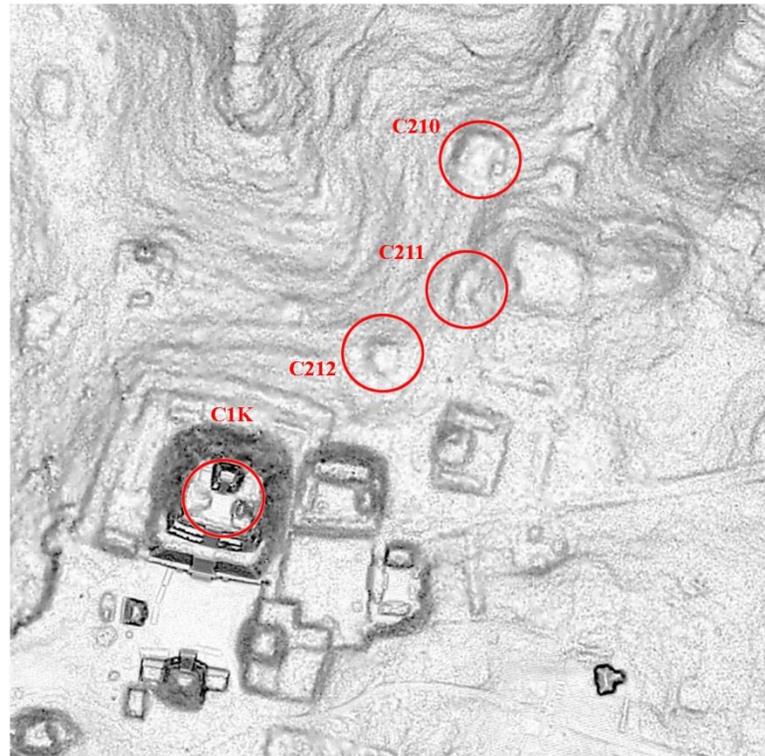
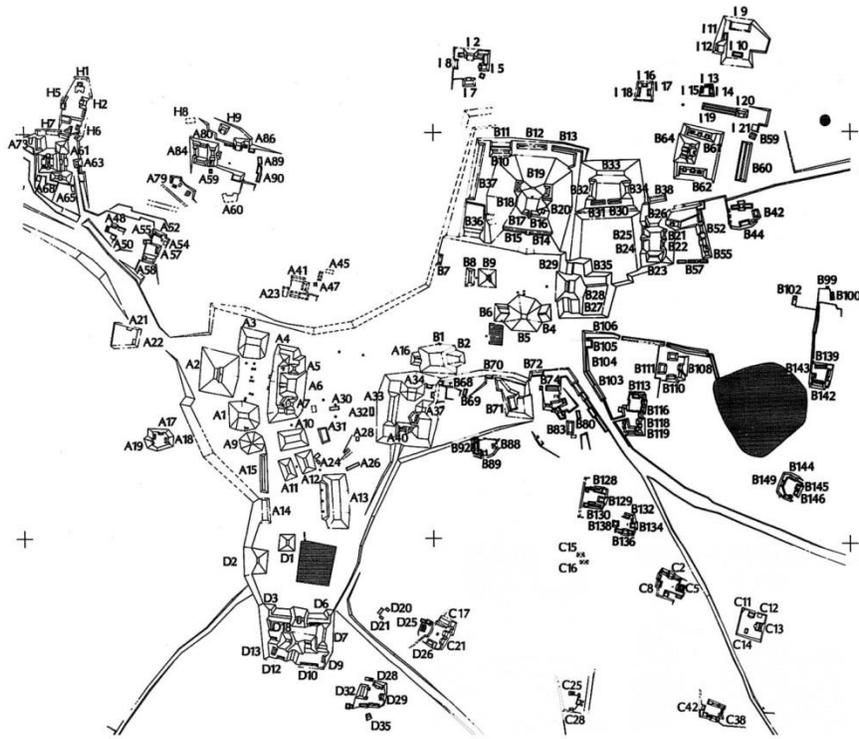


Figure 1: Map of Caracol Epicenter, showing where 2017 excavations occurred; lidar inset shows locations of the three residential groups excavated during 2017.



Figure 2: Photographs of the summit of Caana at the beginning and end of excavation, showing the location of Operation C1K.

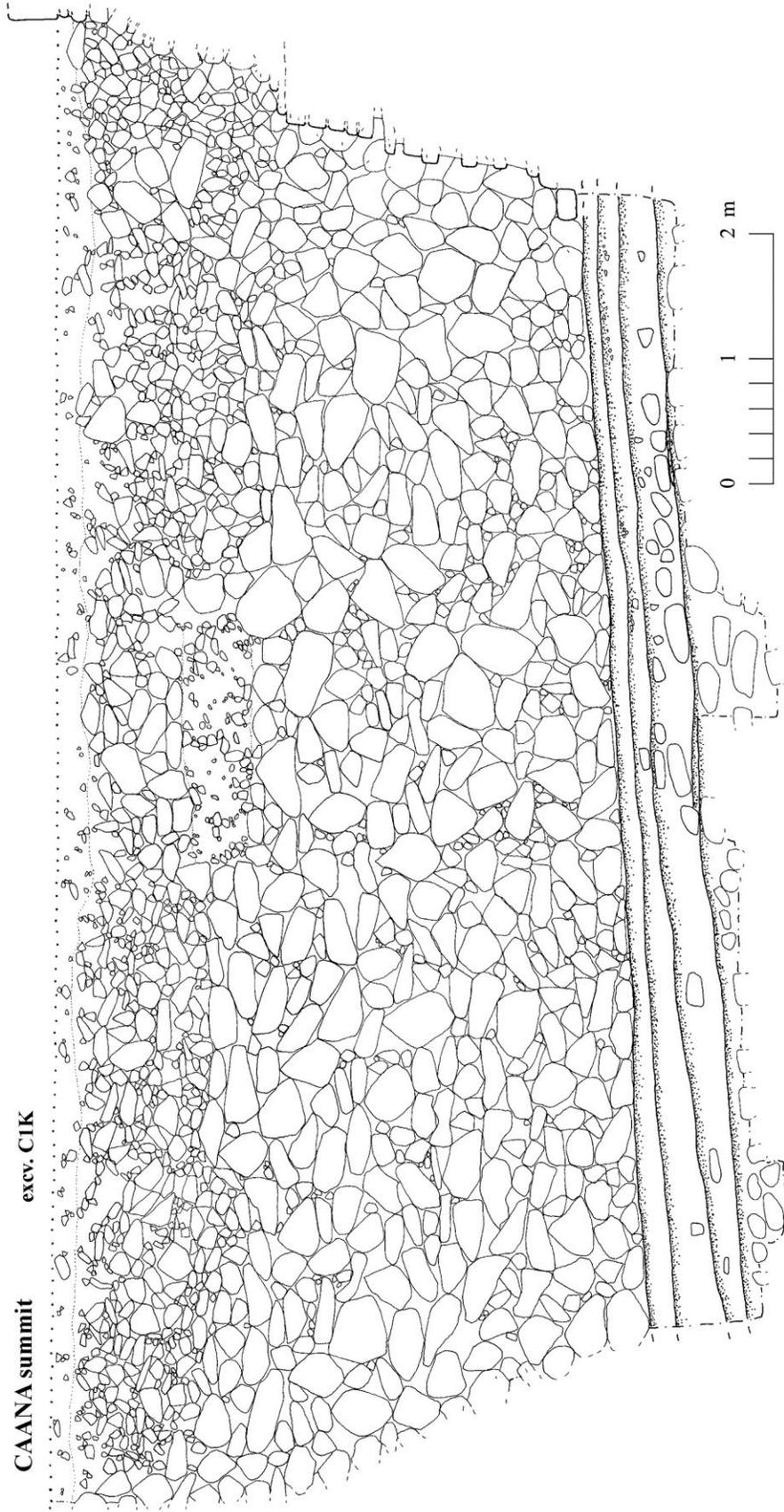


Figure 3: Section through Caana plaza, showing Operation CIK.

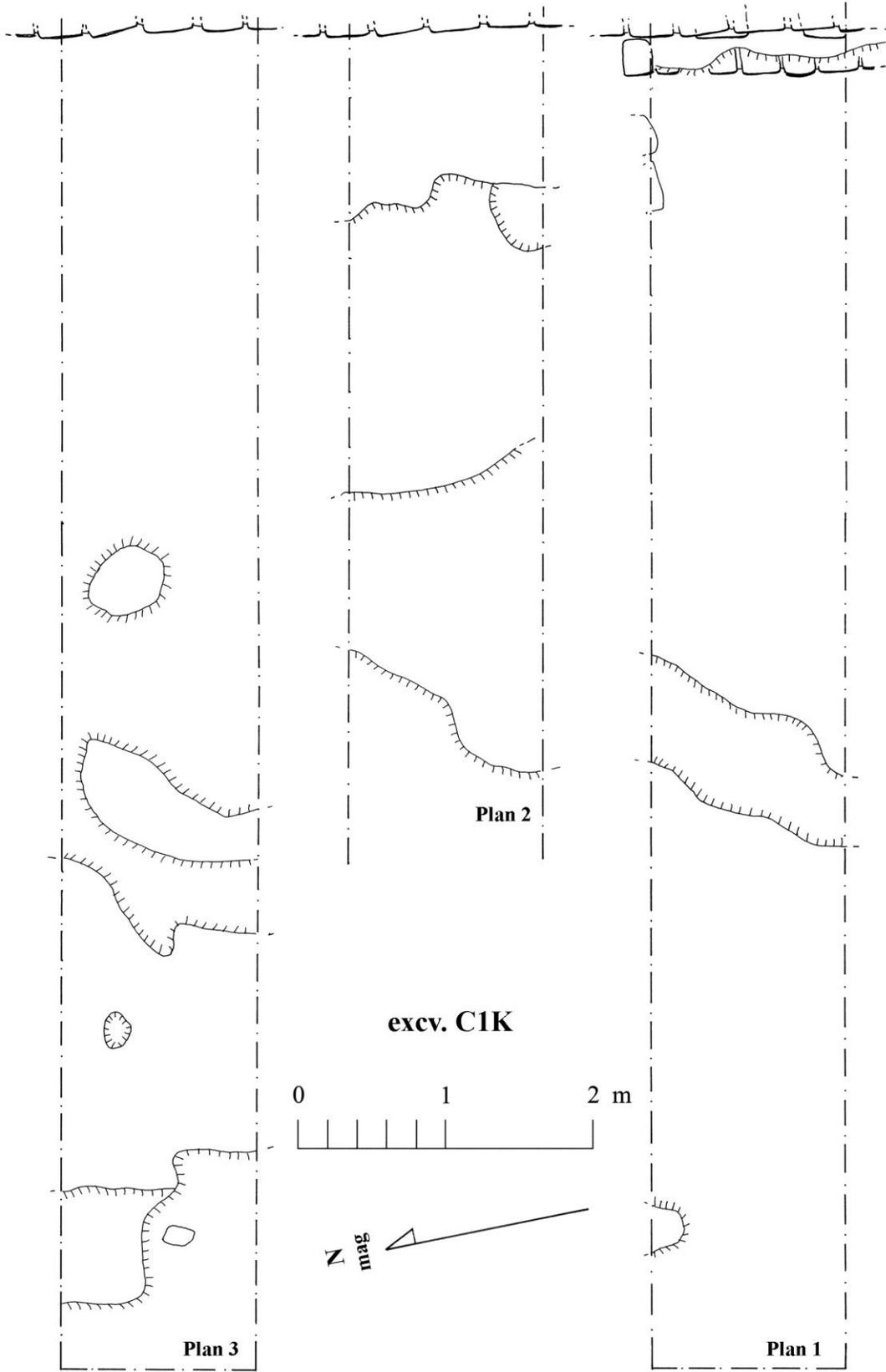


Figure 4: Plans of lower plaza floors in Operation C1K: Plans 1 through 3.

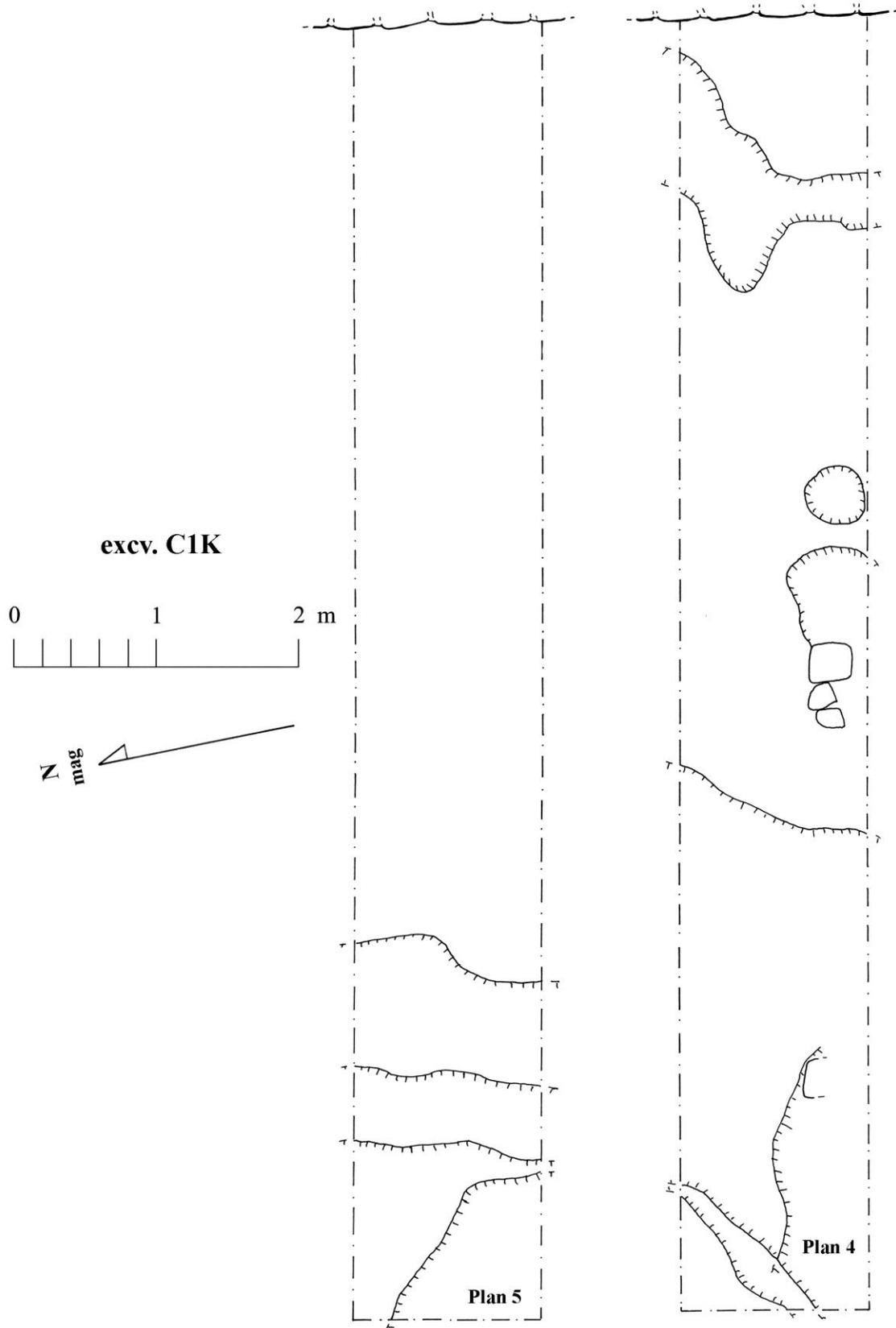


Figure 5: Plans of lower plaza floors in Operation C1K: Plans 4 and 5.

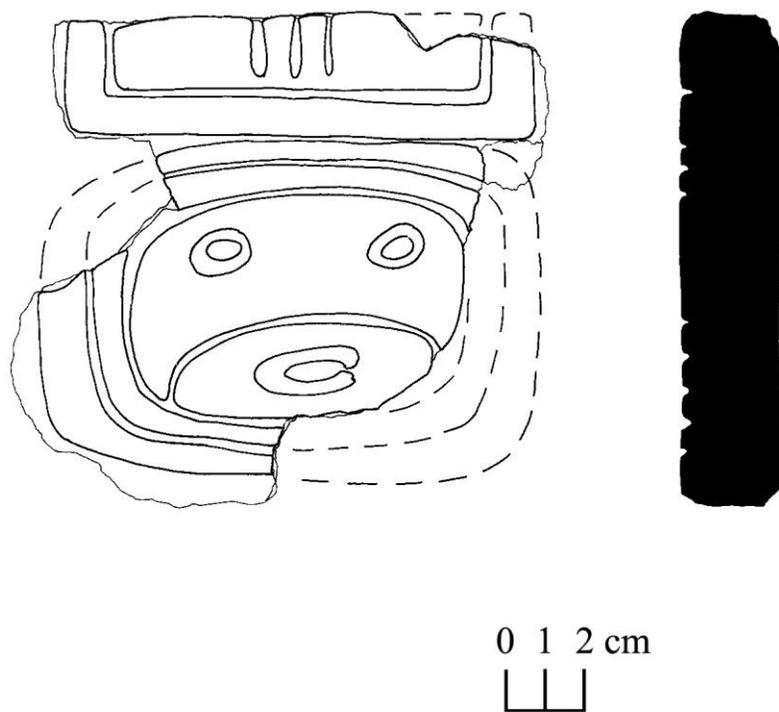


Figure 6: Stucco text containing the glyph “5 Ahau” found in the dry core fill of the Caana’s plaza in Operation C1K.

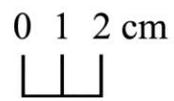
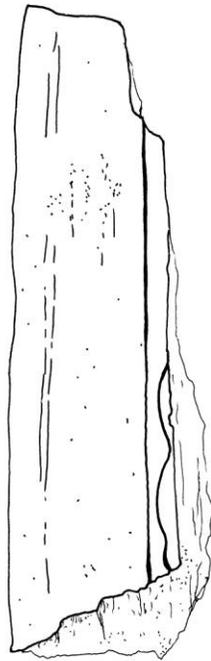


Figure 7: Fragment of a slate stela found in the dry core fill of Caana's plaza in Operation C1K.



Figure 8: Photographs of Structure B20-1st mask with front step removed and the special deposits revealed during the stripping of the initial plaza floor 4.1 m below ground surface.

excav. C1K

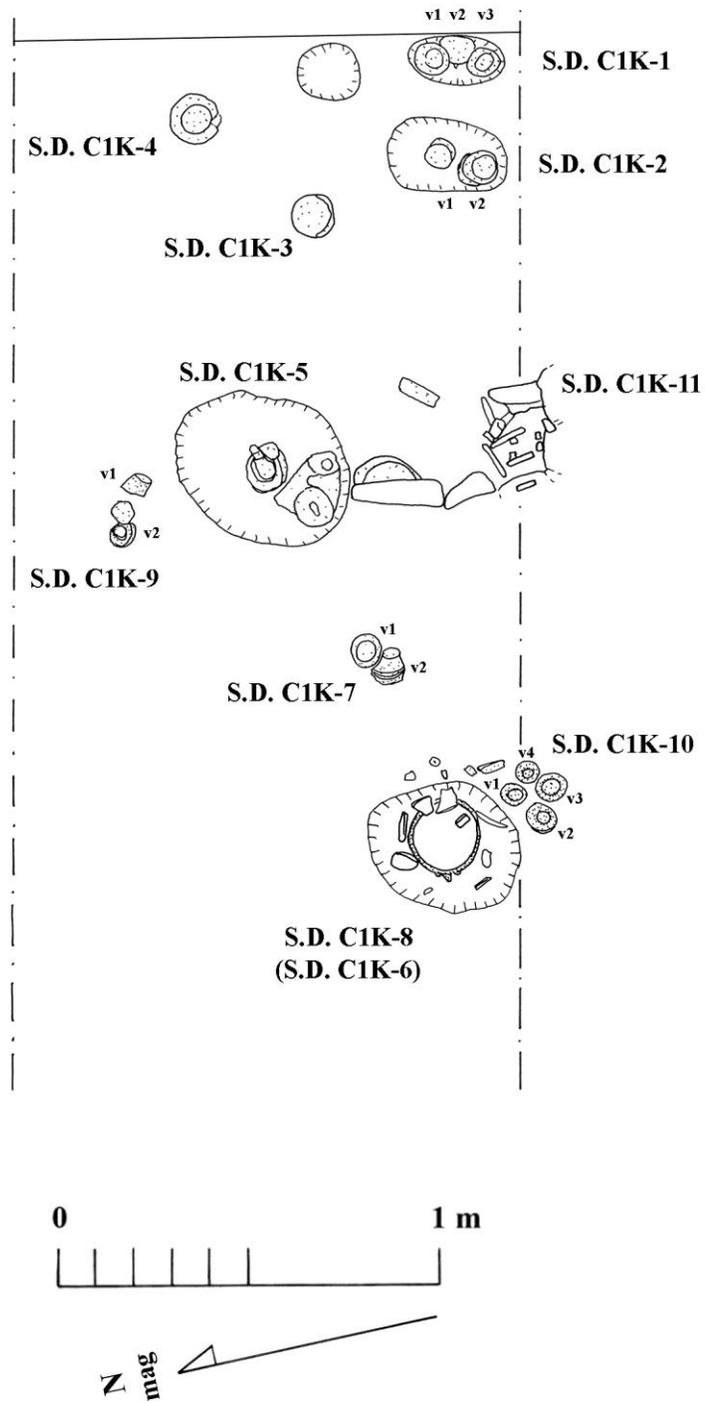


Figure 9: Plan of the special deposits found in Operation C1K below the deep plaza surface.

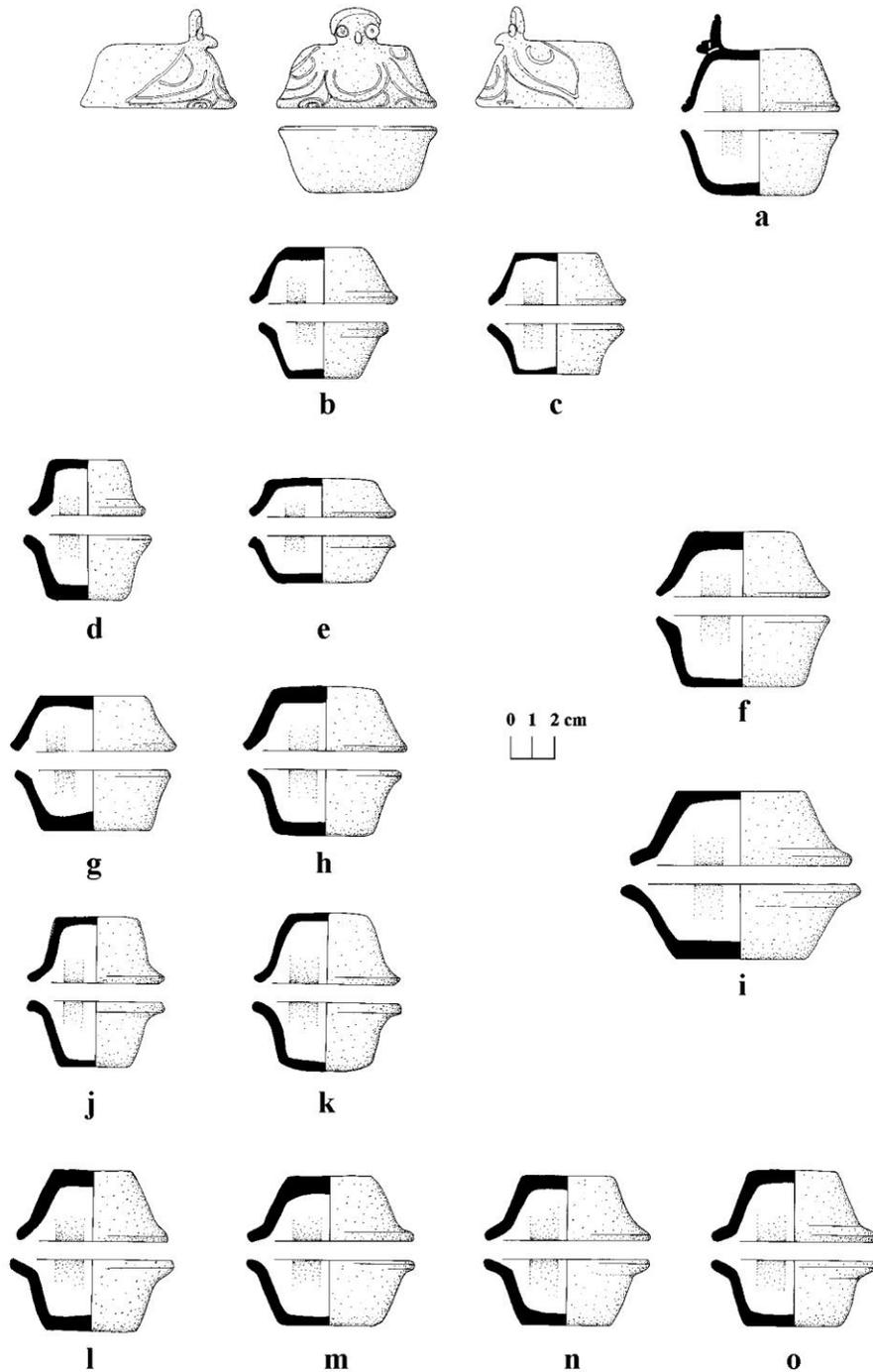


Figure 10: Finger caches from Operation C1K (all Ceiba Unslipped, except modeled bird lid, which is technically Hebe Modeled): a.-c. Special Deposit C1K-1, Vessel Sets 1-3; d.,e. Special Deposit C1K-2, Vessel Sets 1 and 2; f. Special Deposit C1K-3; g., h. Special Deposit C1K-7, Vessel Sets 1 and 2; i. Special Deposit C1K-4; j., k. Special Deposit C1K-9, Vessel Sets 1 and 1; l.-o. Special Deposit C1K-10, Vessel Sets 1-4.

S.D. C1K-1

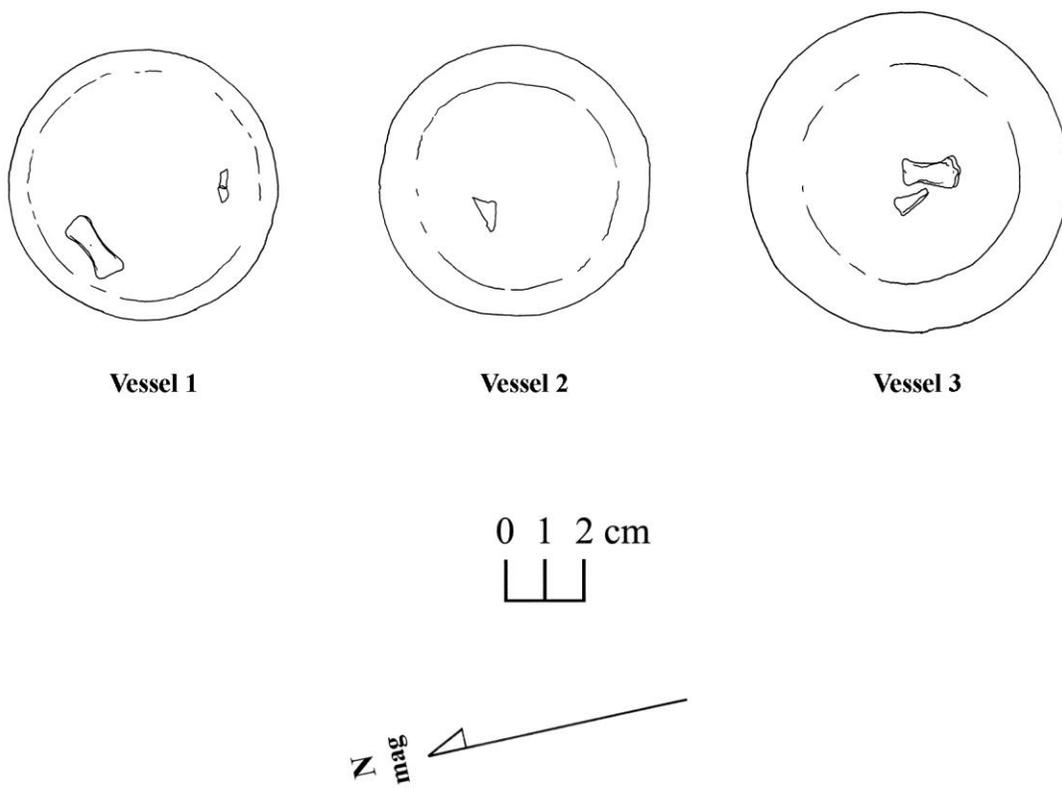
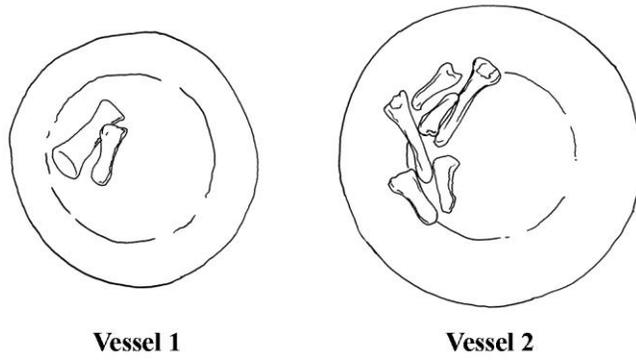


Figure 11: Plan of human digits in the lower vessels of Vessel Sets 1-3 in S.D. C1K-1.

S.D. C1K-2



0 1 2 cm
└─┬─┘



Figure 12: Plan of human digits in lower vessels of Vessel Sets 1 and 2 in S.D. C1K-2

S.D. C1K-3

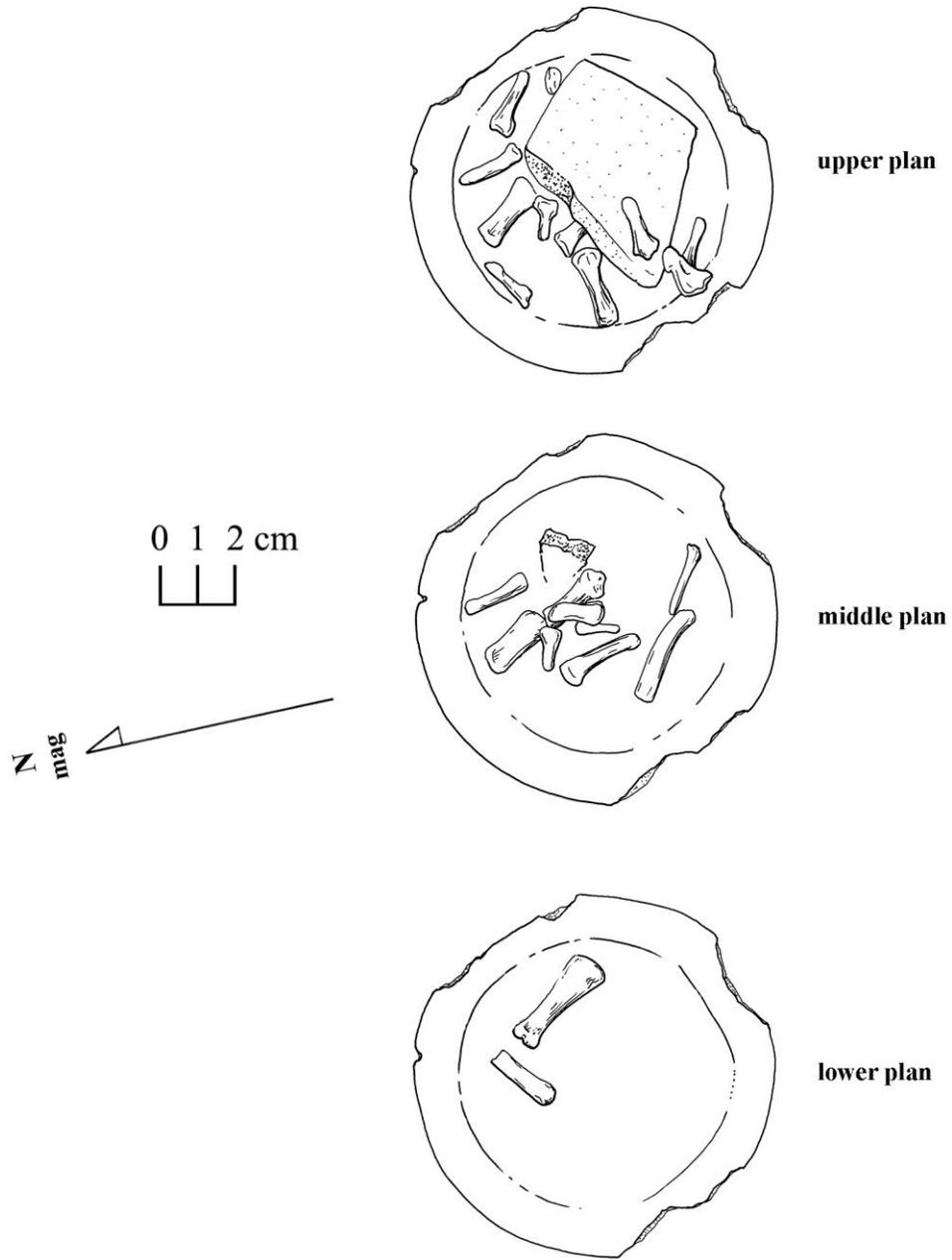


Figure 13: Plans of the human digits in lower vessel of S.D. C1K-3

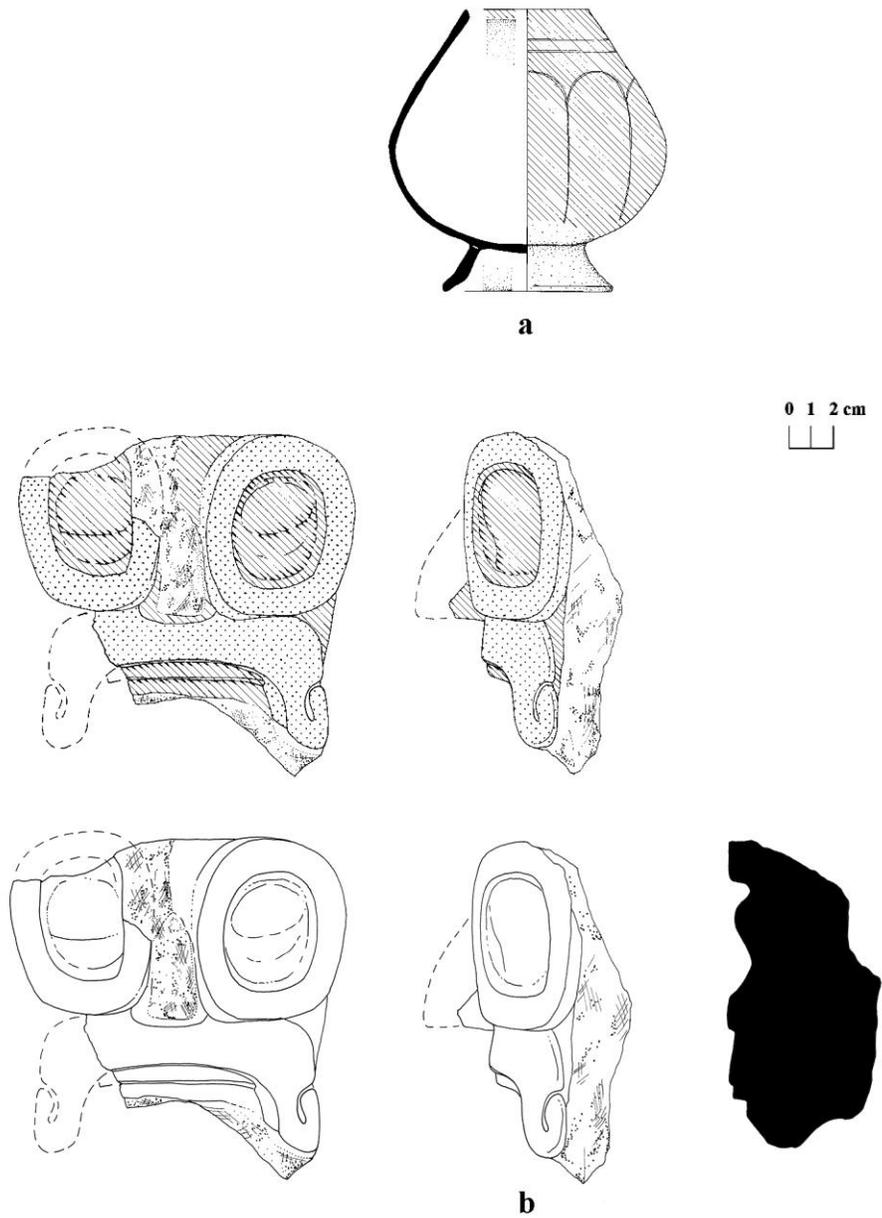


Figure 14: Contents of S.D. C1K-5: a. Belize Red pottery “brandy snifter;” b. painted stucco modeled face of “Tlaloc.”

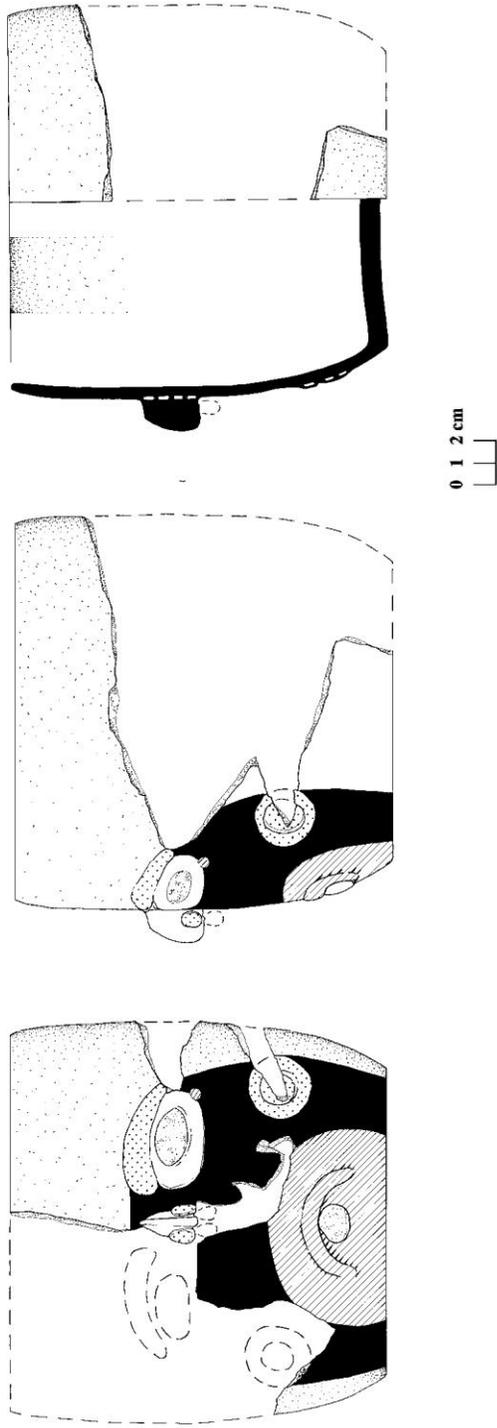


Figure 15: Pottery vessel from S.D. CIK-6: Hebe Modeled vessel with black, blue, and red paint.

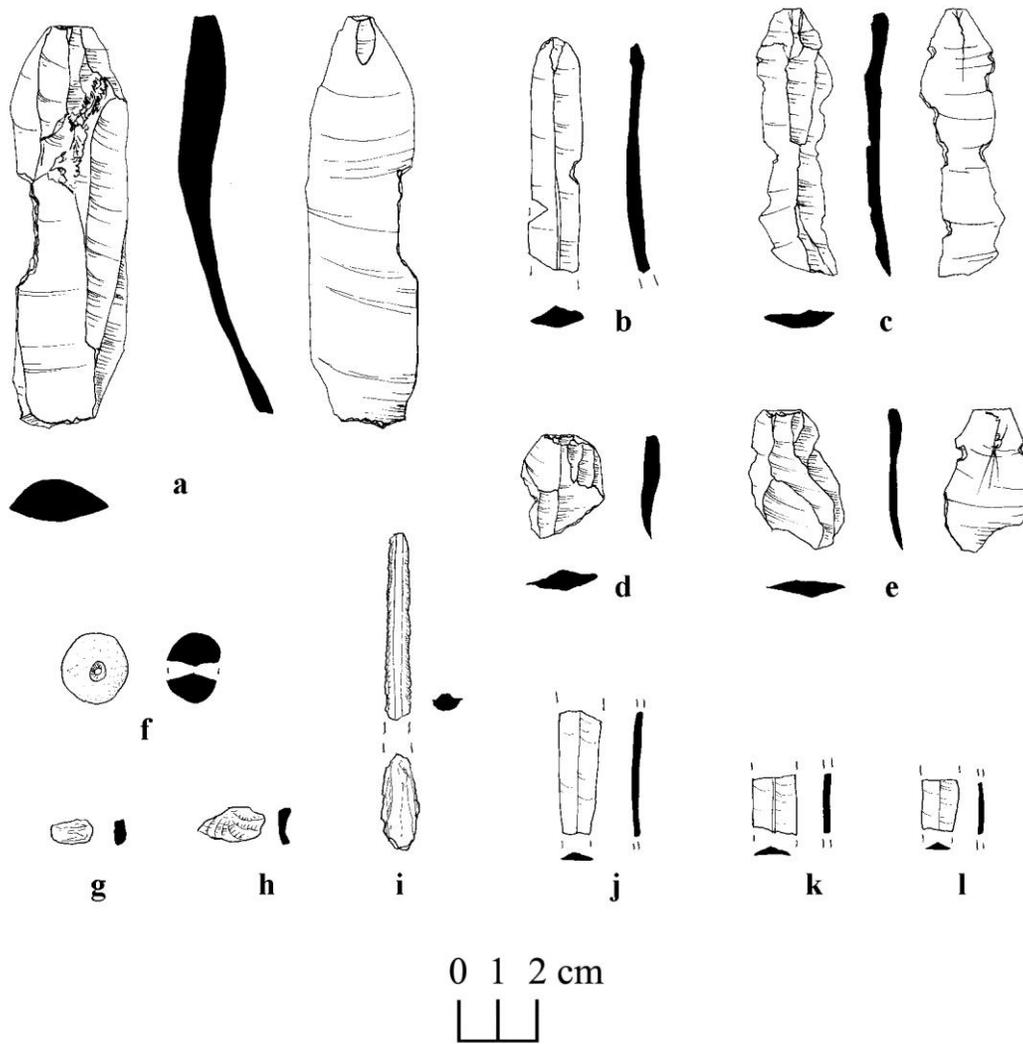


Figure 16: Artifactual material from S.D. C1K-6: a.-e. obsidian, possibly eccentrics; f. stone bead; g. jadeite chip; h. shell; i. stingray spine; j.-l. partial obsidian blades.

S.D. C1K-7

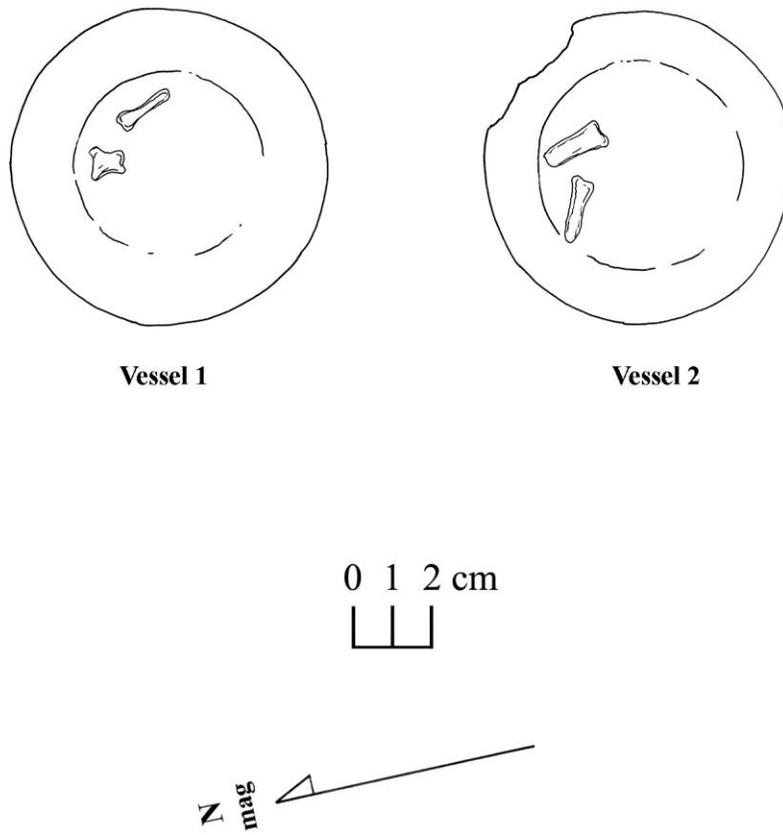


Figure 17: Plan of human digits in Vessel Sets 1 and 2 of S.D. C1K-7.



Figure 18: Photographs of face cache in situ and eccentric obsidian contents of S.D. C1K-8.

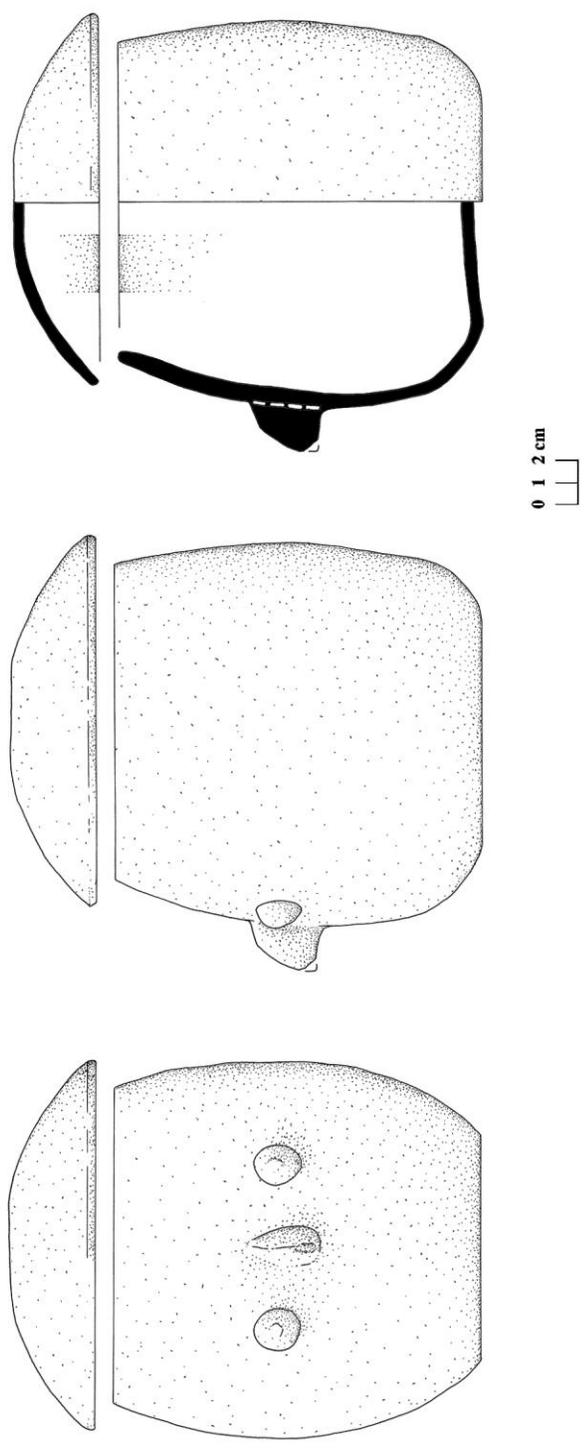


Figure 19: Face cache from S.D. C1K-8 (Hebe Modeled).

S.D. C1K-8

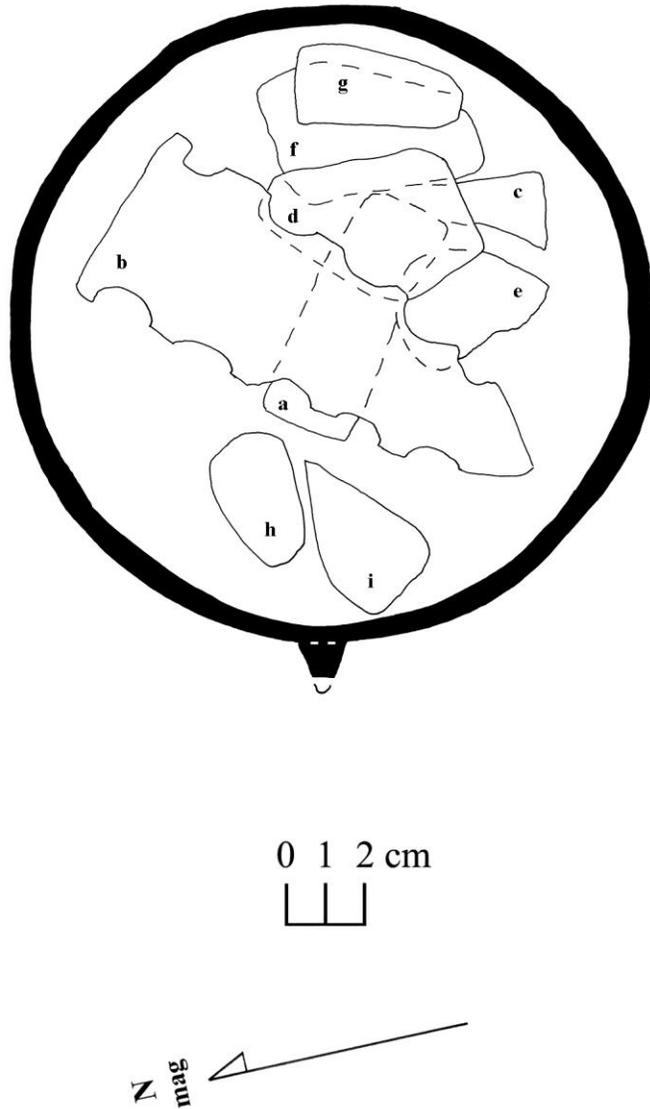


Figure 20: Detailed plan of the obsidian eccentrics within the face cache for S.D. C1K-8 (letters correspond with letters in Figure 21).

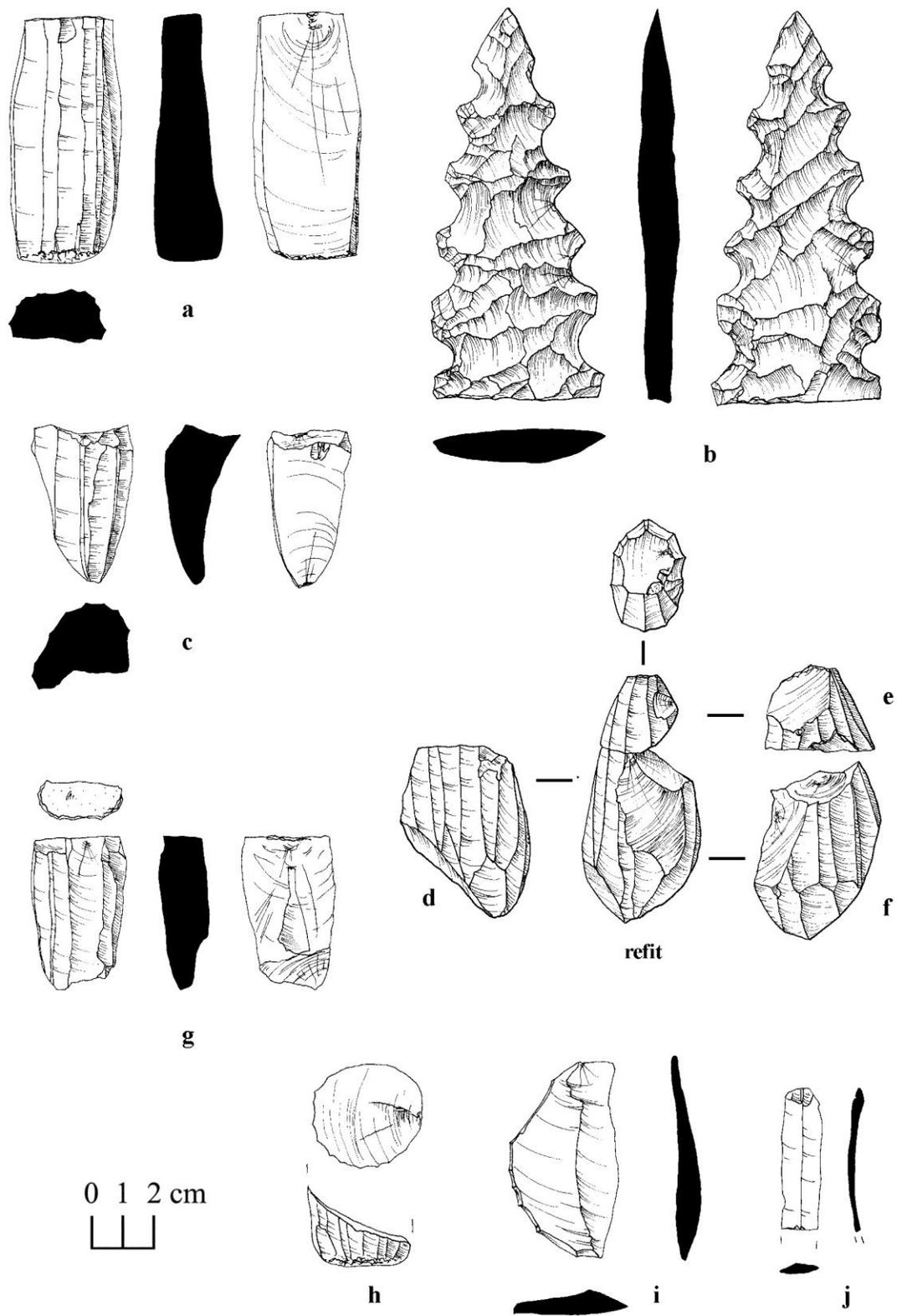


Figure 21: Obsidian eccentrics (a.-h.) and one partial obsidian blade (j.) from within S.D. C1K-8; three of the obsidians (d.-e.) can be refitted to their original core.

S.D. C1K-10

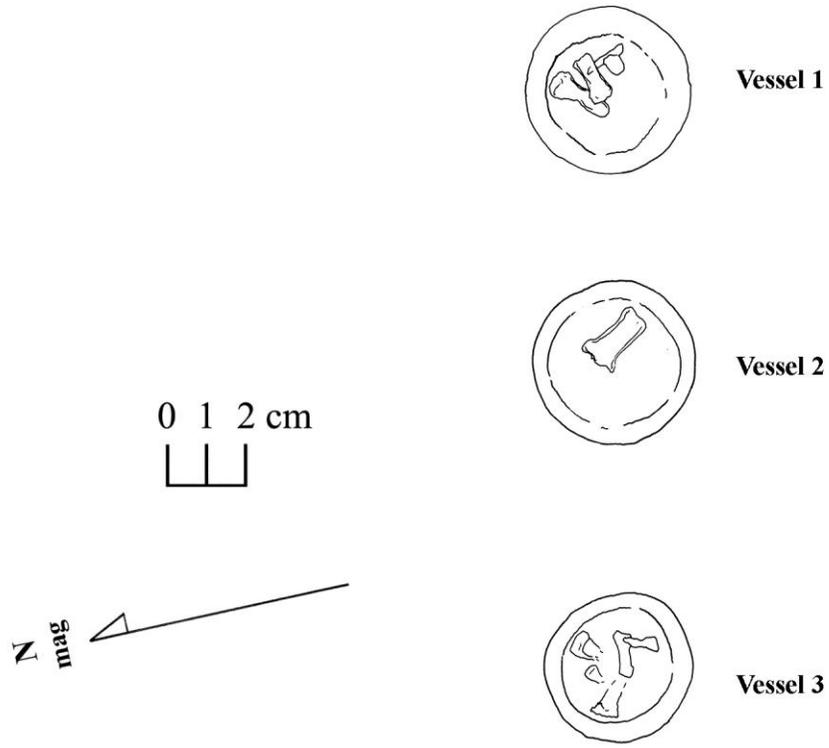


Figure 22: Finger digits within three of the four vessel sets from S.D. C1K-10.

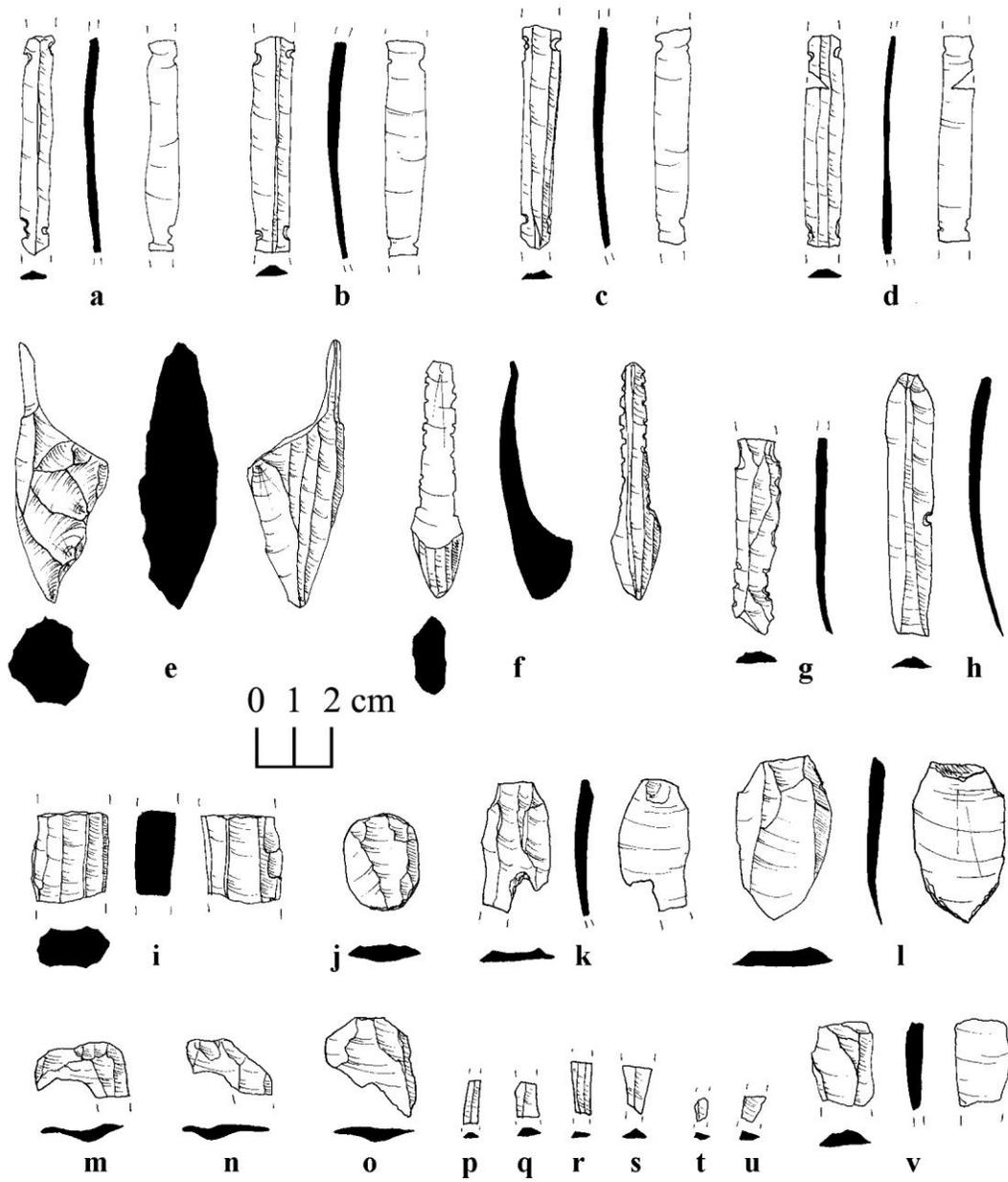


Figure 23: Obsidian (a.-v.) eccentrics and partial blades associated with S.D. C1K-11.

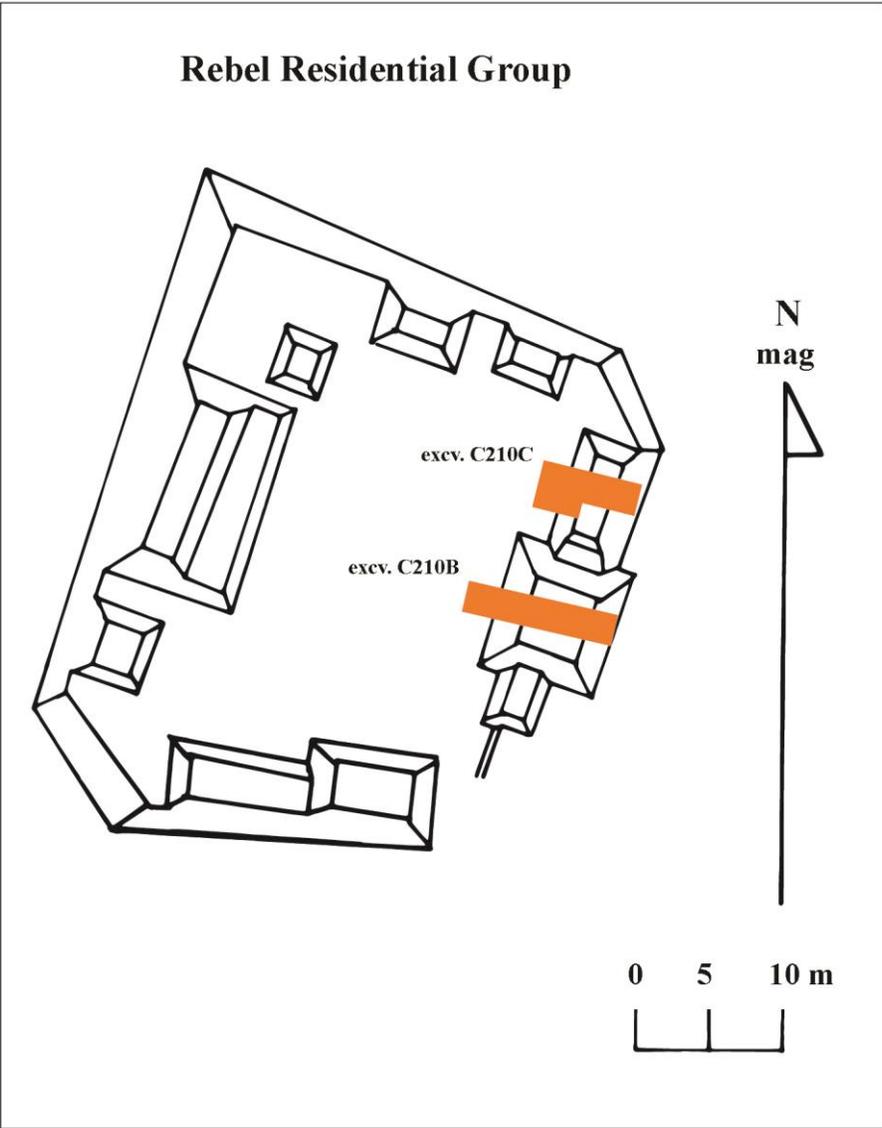


Figure 24: Plan of Rebel Group showing locations of Operations C210B and C210C.



Figure 25: Photograph of excavation in Structure I28 (Operation C210B) in Rebel Group (top) and of S.D. C210B-2 (bottom).

**Caracol Structure I28
excv. C210B**

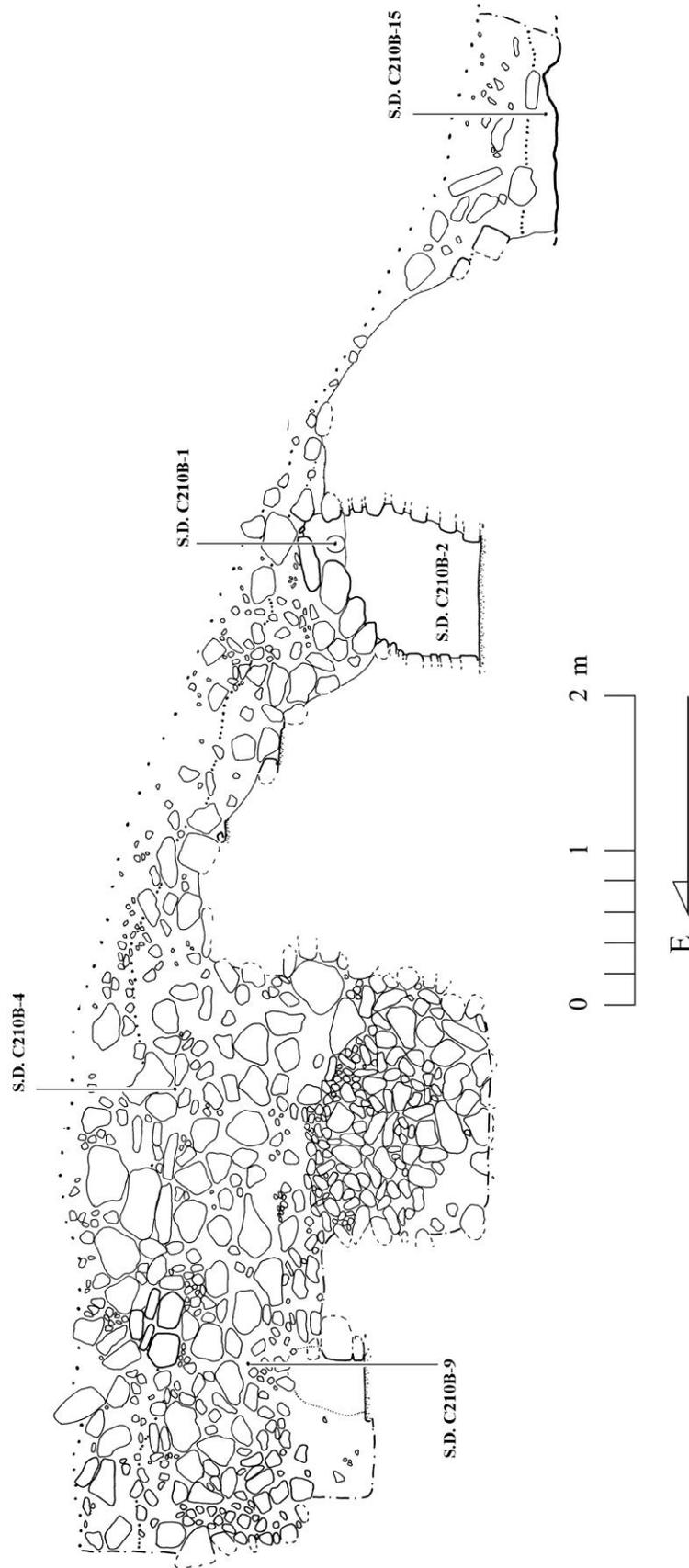


Figure 26: Section through Structure I28, showing Operation C210B.

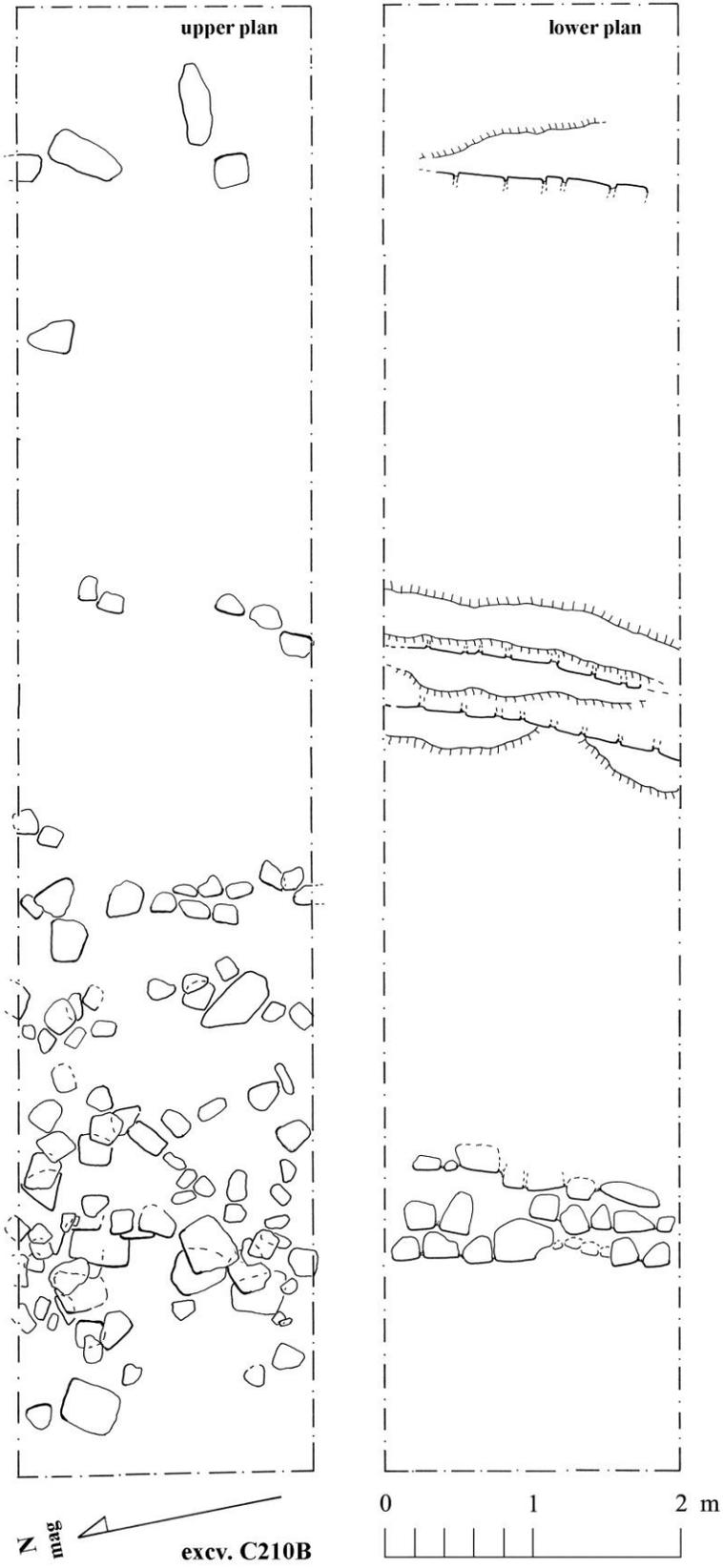


Figure 27: Plans of Operation C210B.

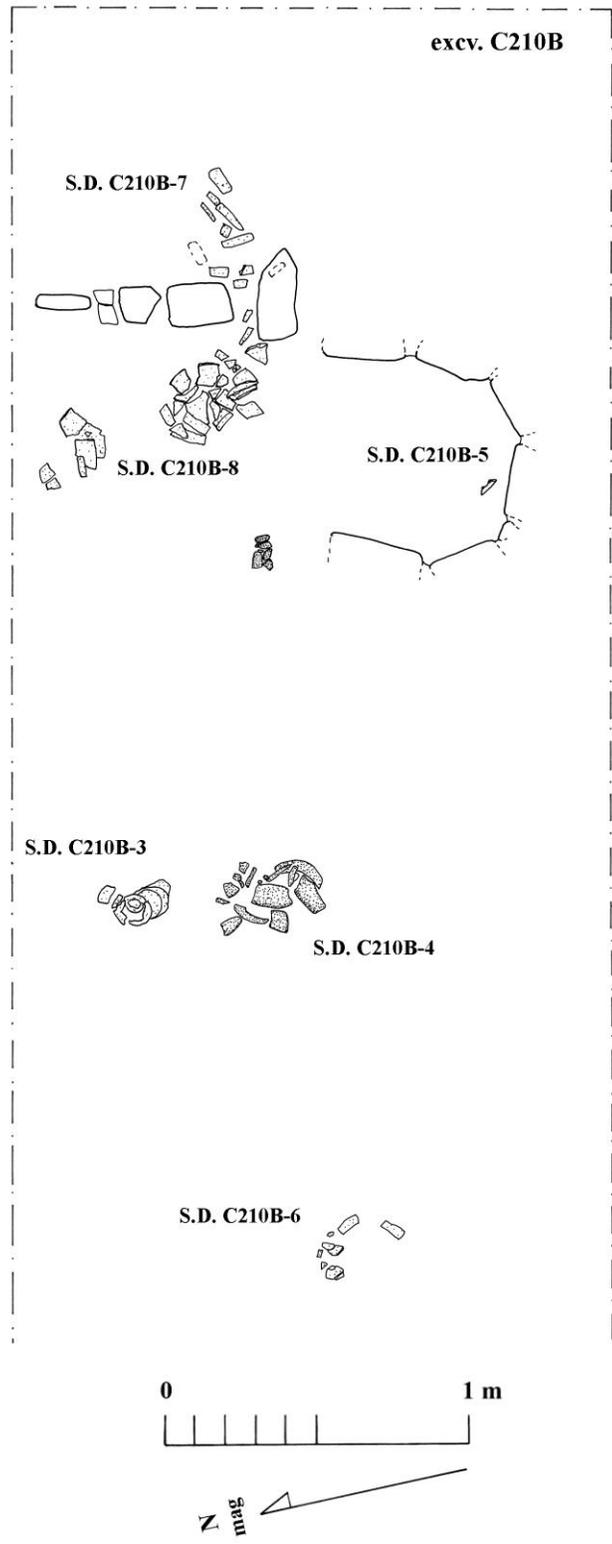


Figure 28: Detailed plan of the rear portion of Operation C210B, showing the locations of: S.D. C210B-3, S.D. C210B-4, S.D. C210B-5, S.D. C210B-6, S.D. C210B-7, and S.D. C210B-8.

excav. C210B

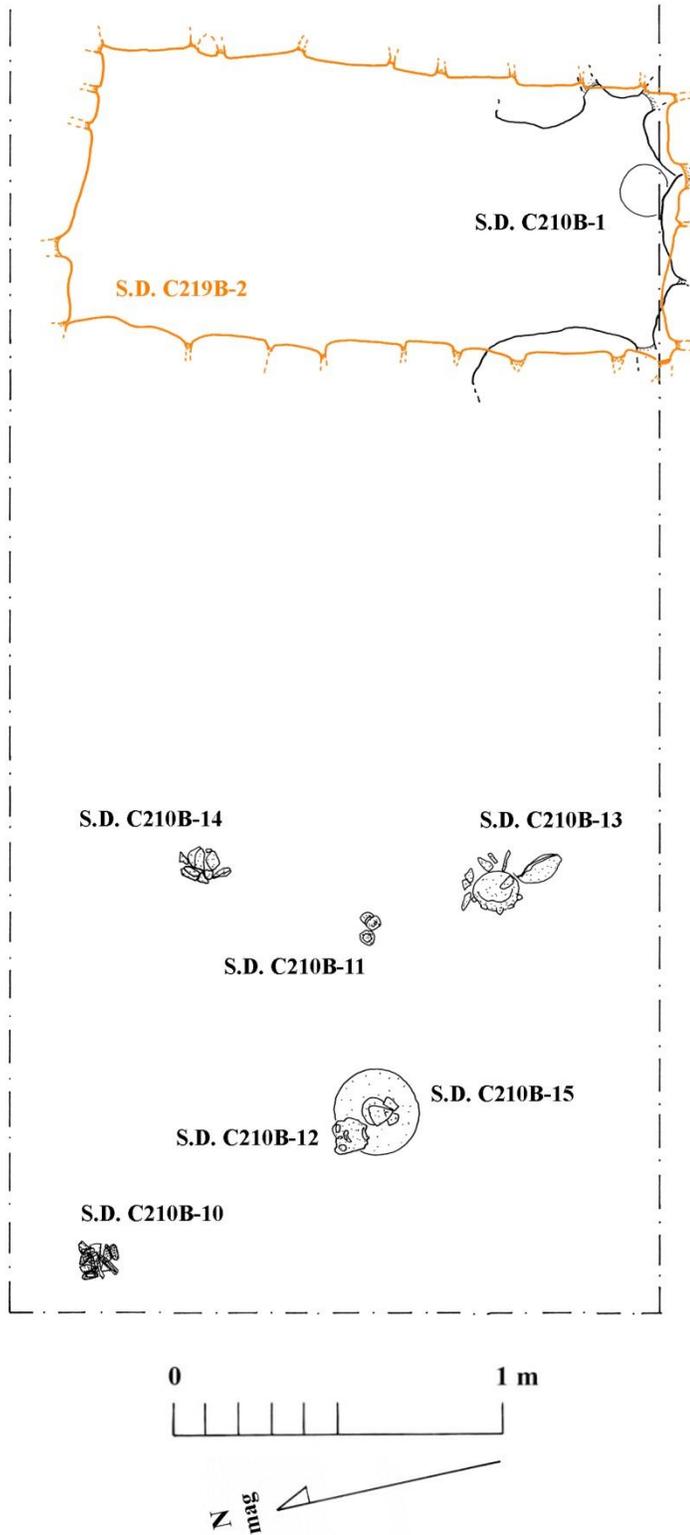


Figure 29: Detailed plan of the front portion of Operation C210B, showing the locations of: S.D. C210B-1, S.D. C210B-2, S.D. C210B-10, S.D. C210B-11, S.D. C210B-12, S.D. C210B-13, S.D. C210B-14, and S.D. C210B-15.

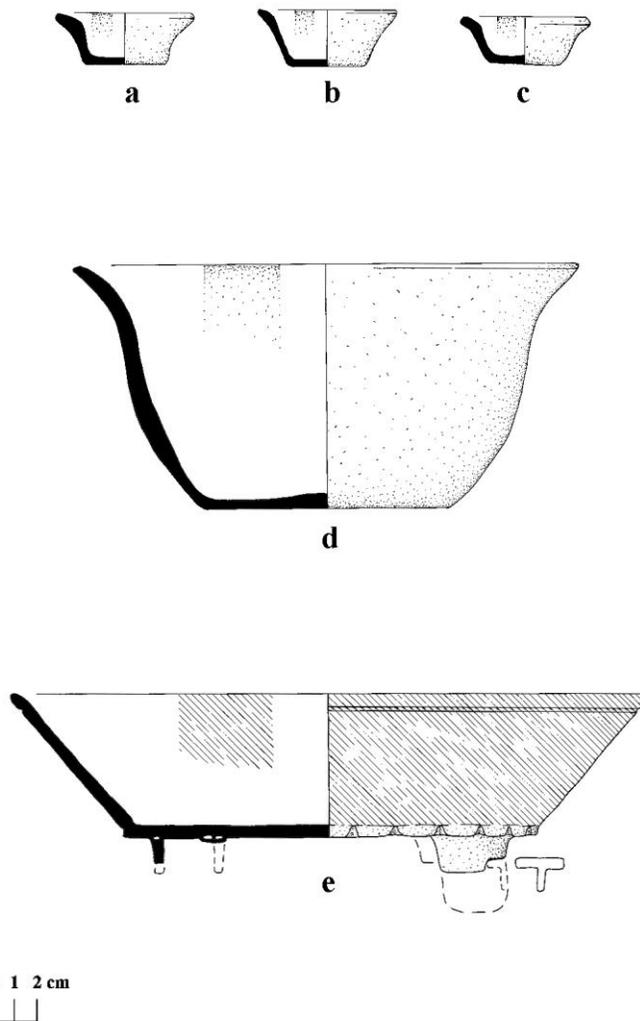


Figure 30: Ceramics recovered from general excavations lots in Operation C210B: a.-c. Ceiba Unslipped (Lot C210B/4); d. Ceiba Unslipped (Lot C210B/8); and, e. Martin's Incised (Lot C210B/28).

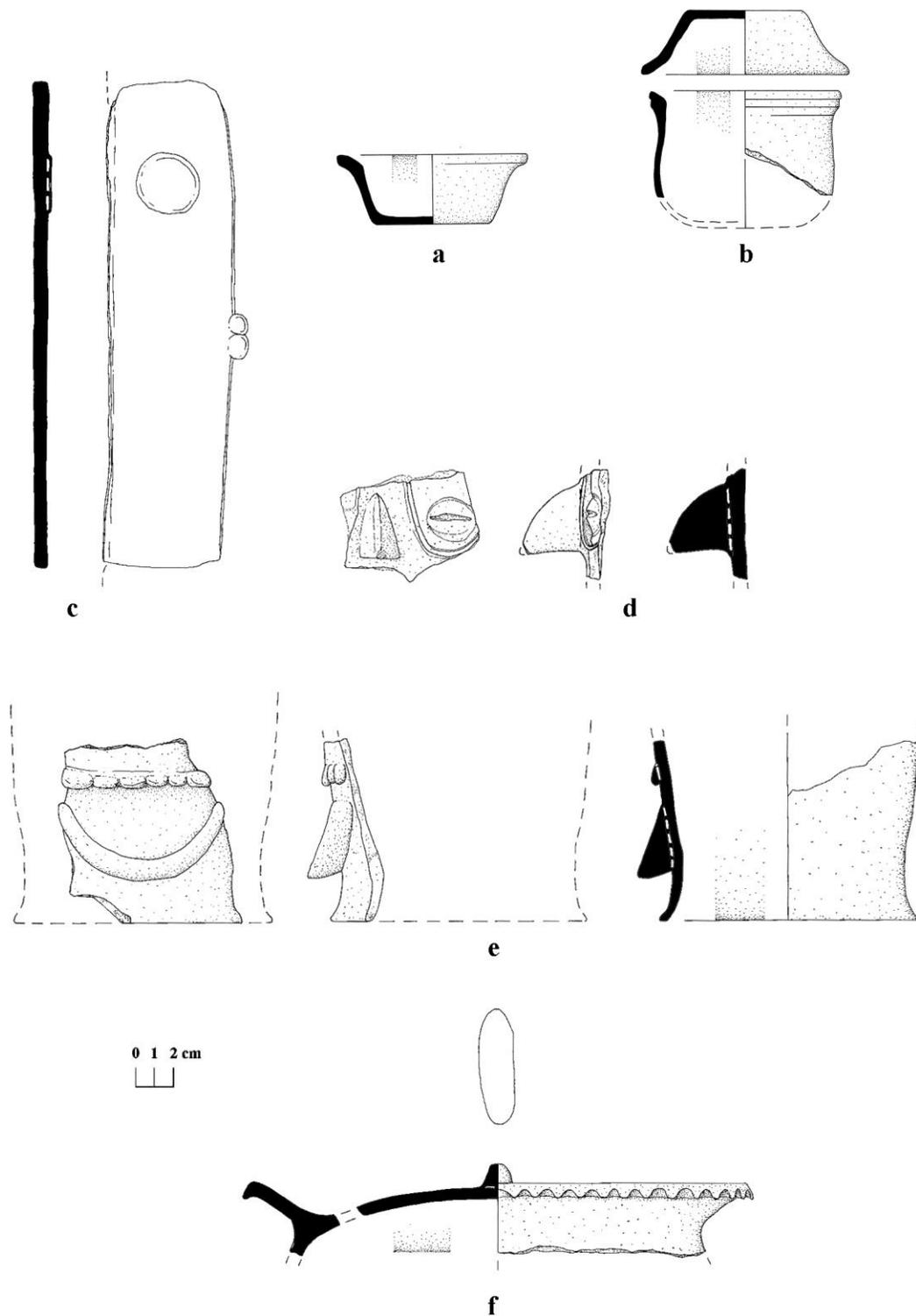


Figure 31: Ceramics recovered from within the infilled tomb chamber (Lot C210B/6) in Operation C210B: a., b. Ceiba Unslipped; c.-e. Pedregal Modeled (censer); f. Monterey Modeled (burner).

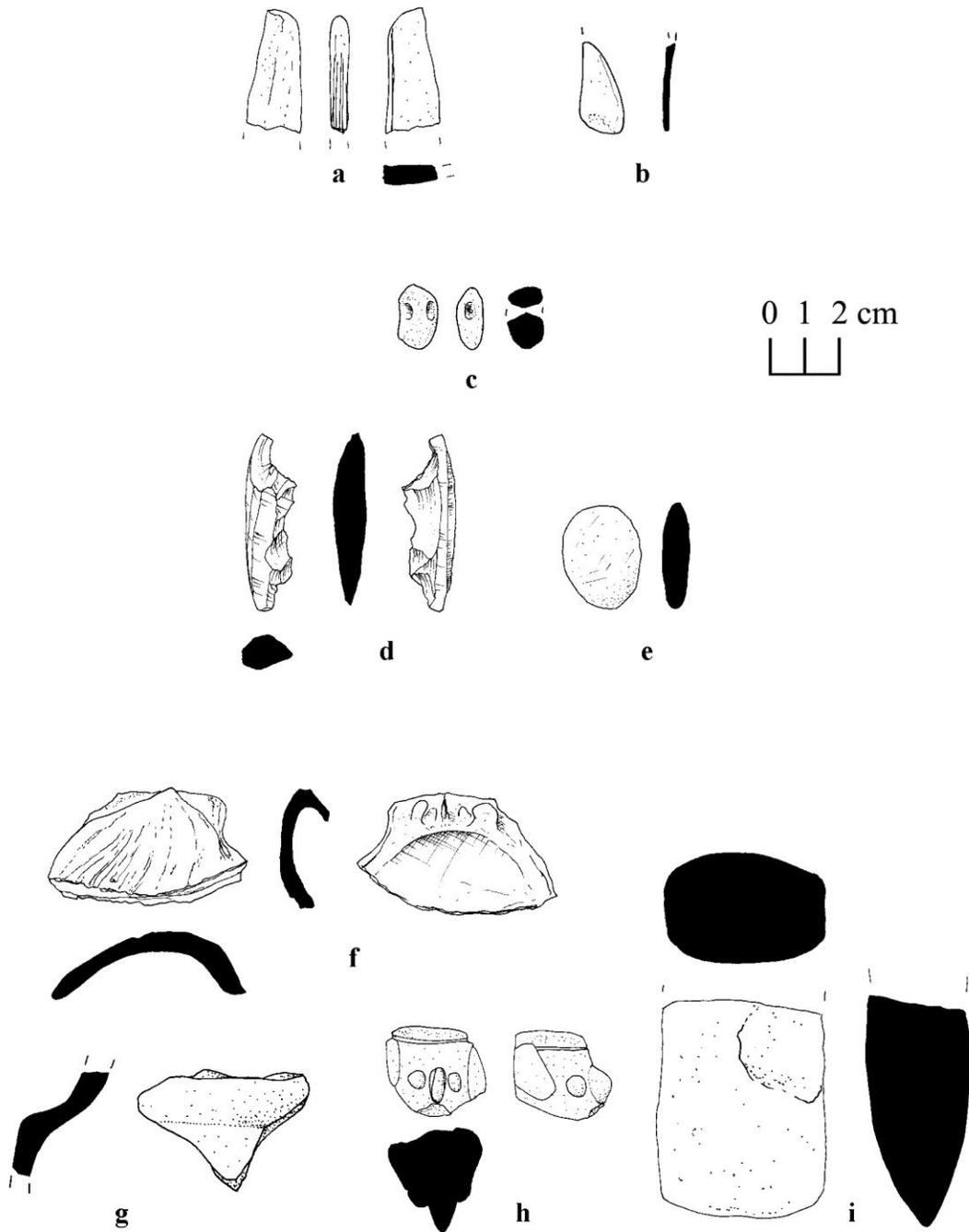
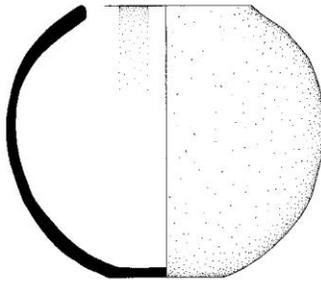


Figure 32: Artifactual materials recovered from general excavation lots in Operation C210B: a. partial slate palette (C210B/6); b. worked marine shell (C210B/6); c. jadeite bead (C210B/11; S.D. C210B-3); d. obsidian eccentric (C210B/13; S.D. C210B-5); e. river cobble (C210B/13); f. marine shell (C210B/15); g. pottery drum sherd (C210B/15); h. modeled pottery face, possibly from a handle (C210B/15); i. granite axe (C210B/28).

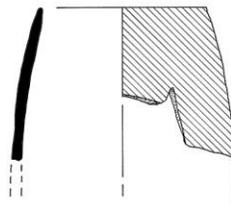


Figure 33: Photographs of pottery vessels from S.D. C210B-1, S.D. C210B-11, S.D. C210B-13, and S.D. C210B-15.

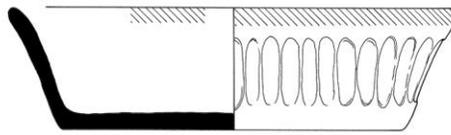


a

0 1 2 cm
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└───┘



b



c

Figure 34: Pottery vessels from S.D. C210B-1 (a. Ceiba Modeled) and S.D. C210B-8 (b. Belize Red; c. possibly Gallinero Fluted).

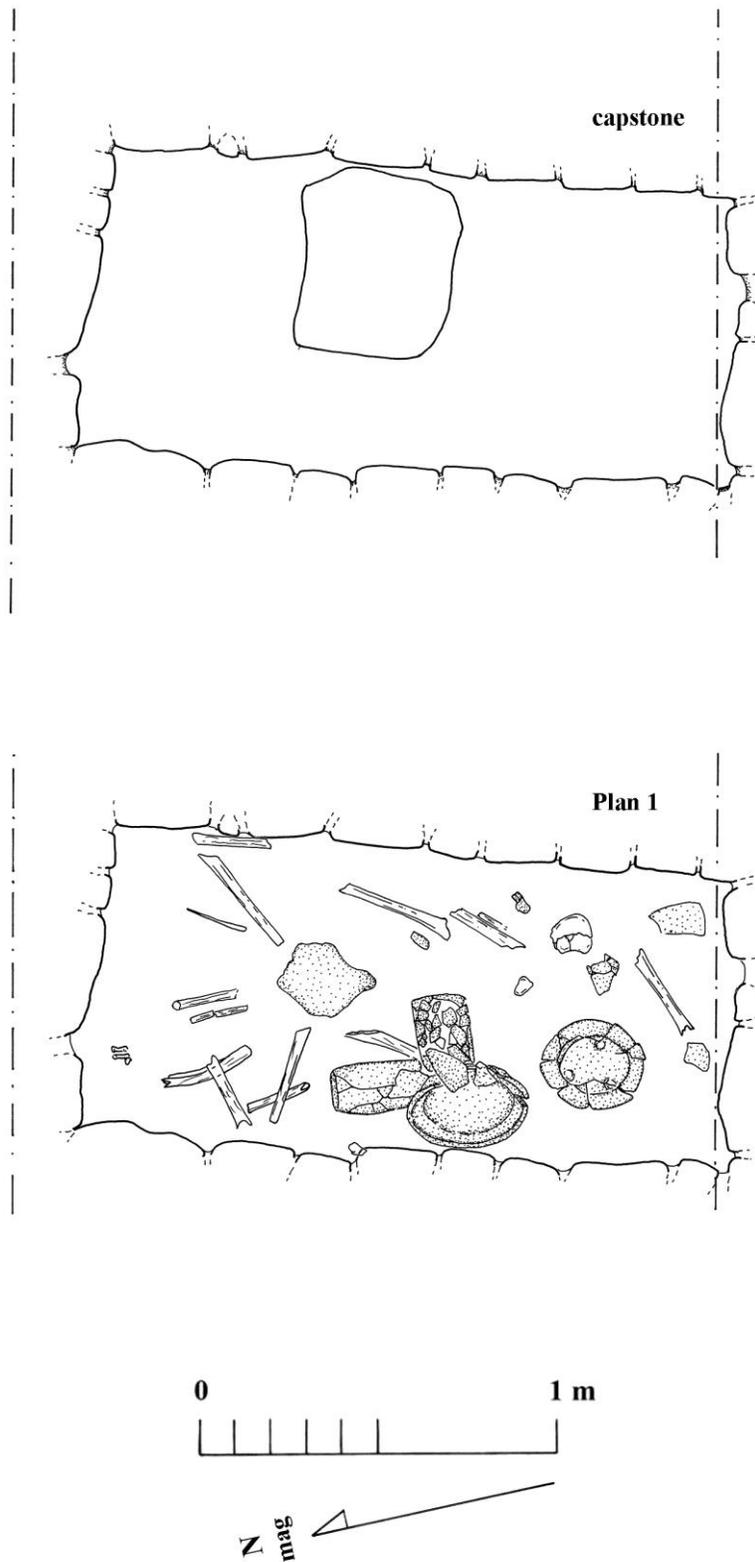


Figure 35: Plan of the large capstone in S.D. C210B-2 and of artefactual material from Layer 1 of S.D. C210B-2 (Plan 1).

S.D. C210B-2

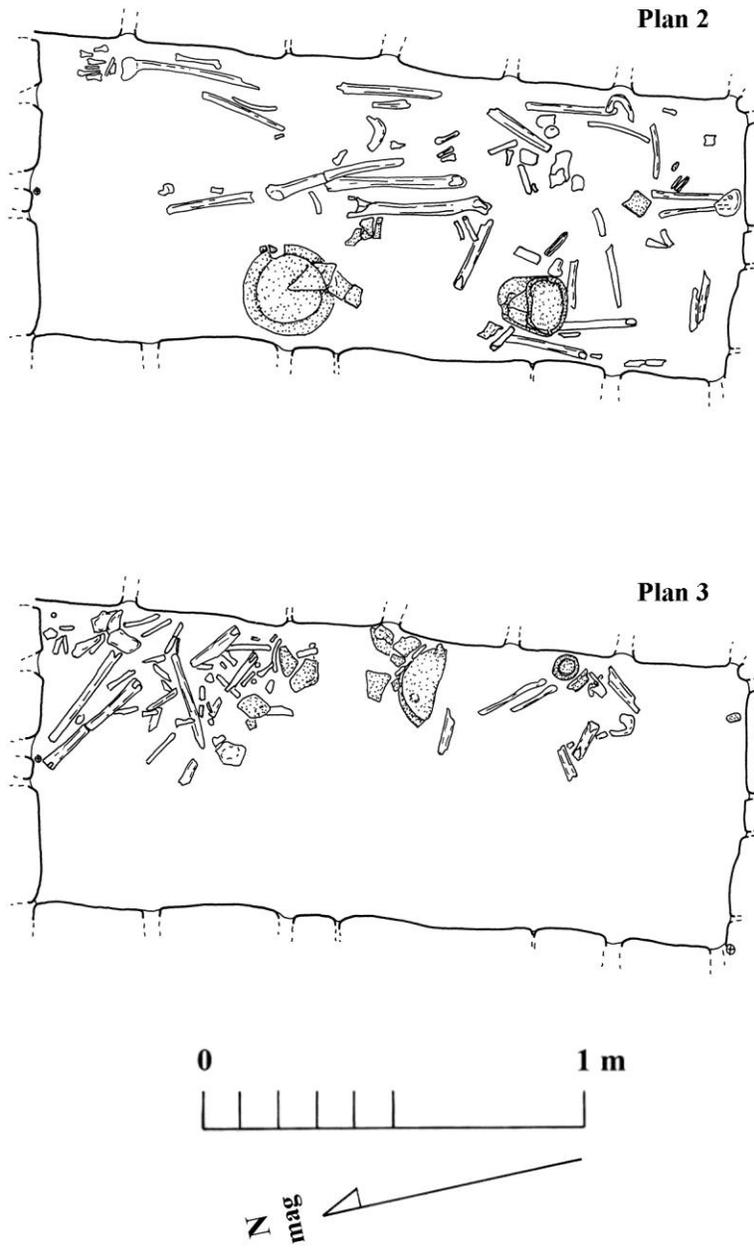


Figure 36: Plans 2 and 3 for S.D. C210B-2.

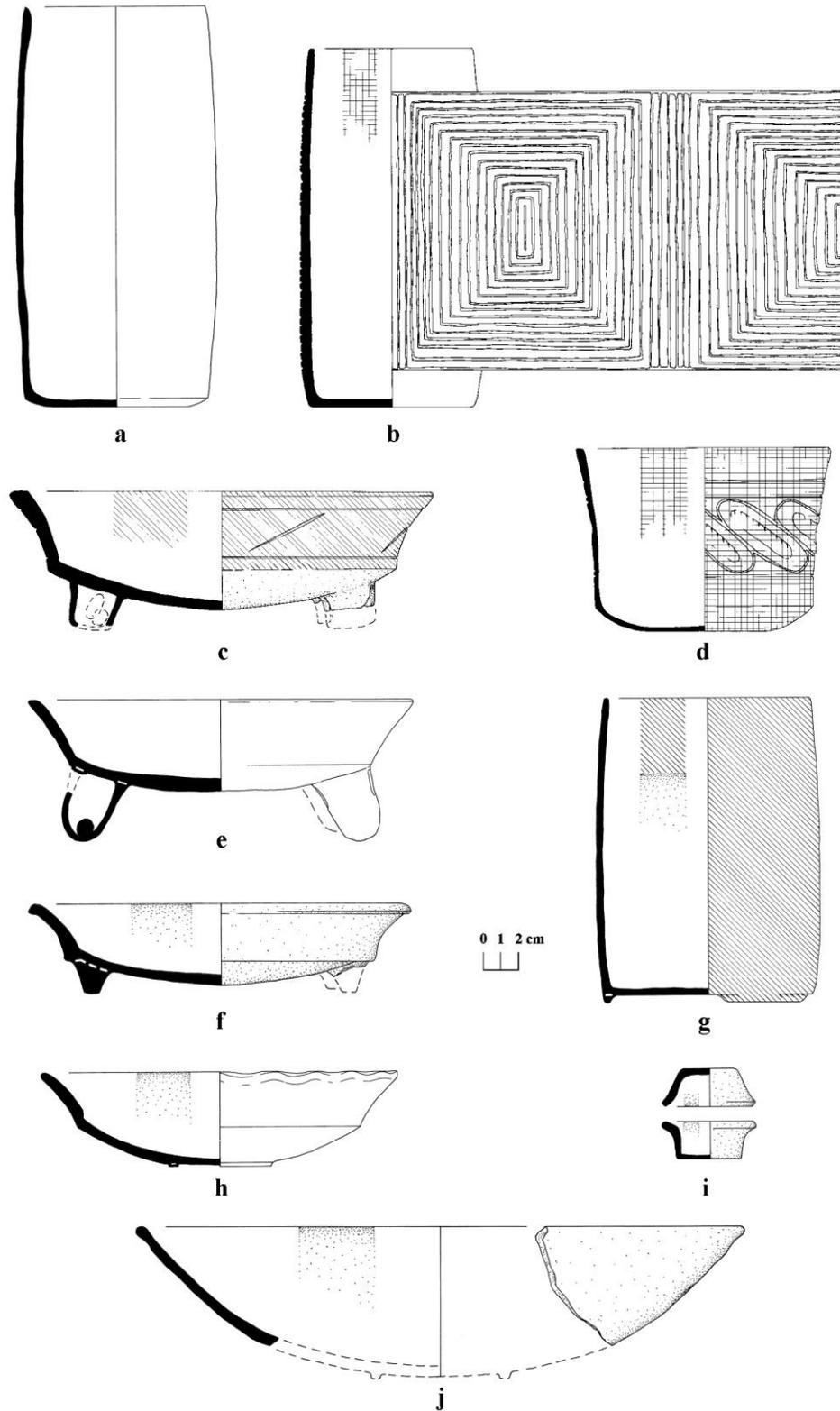


Figure 37: Ceramic vessels from S.D. C210B-2: a. Tialipa Brown; b. Carmelita Incised; c., g. Belize Red; d. possibly Chilar Fluted; e. eroded Palmar Orange Polychrome; f., Tialipa Brown; h, Tialipa Brown Fluted; i. Ceiba Unslipped; and, j. eroded Nanzal Red.



Figure 38: Artifactual materials from S.D. C210B-2: a., g., i. worked bone tubes; b., c. worked bone; d.-f. worked bone needles; h., j., k., l., n. worked marine shell; m. conch shell tip; o. oliva marine shell; p. marine clam shell; q., r., s., v. worked chert tools; t. partial greenstone axe; u. modified sandstone river cobble; w.-dd. partial obsidian blades.



Figure 39: Photographs of S.D. C210B-3 in the ground and, then, reconstructed (see also cover illustration).

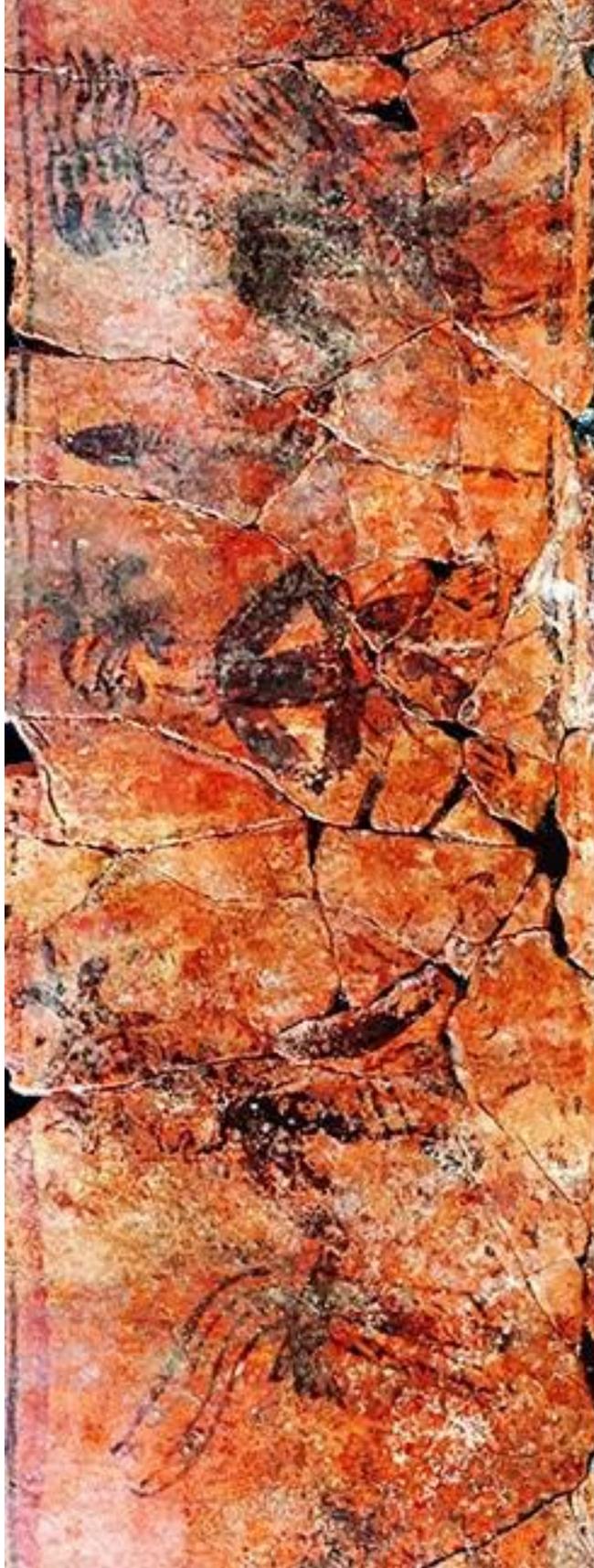


Figure 40: Photograph (roll-out) of the three figures painted on the outside of the cylinder recovered in S.D. C210E-3.

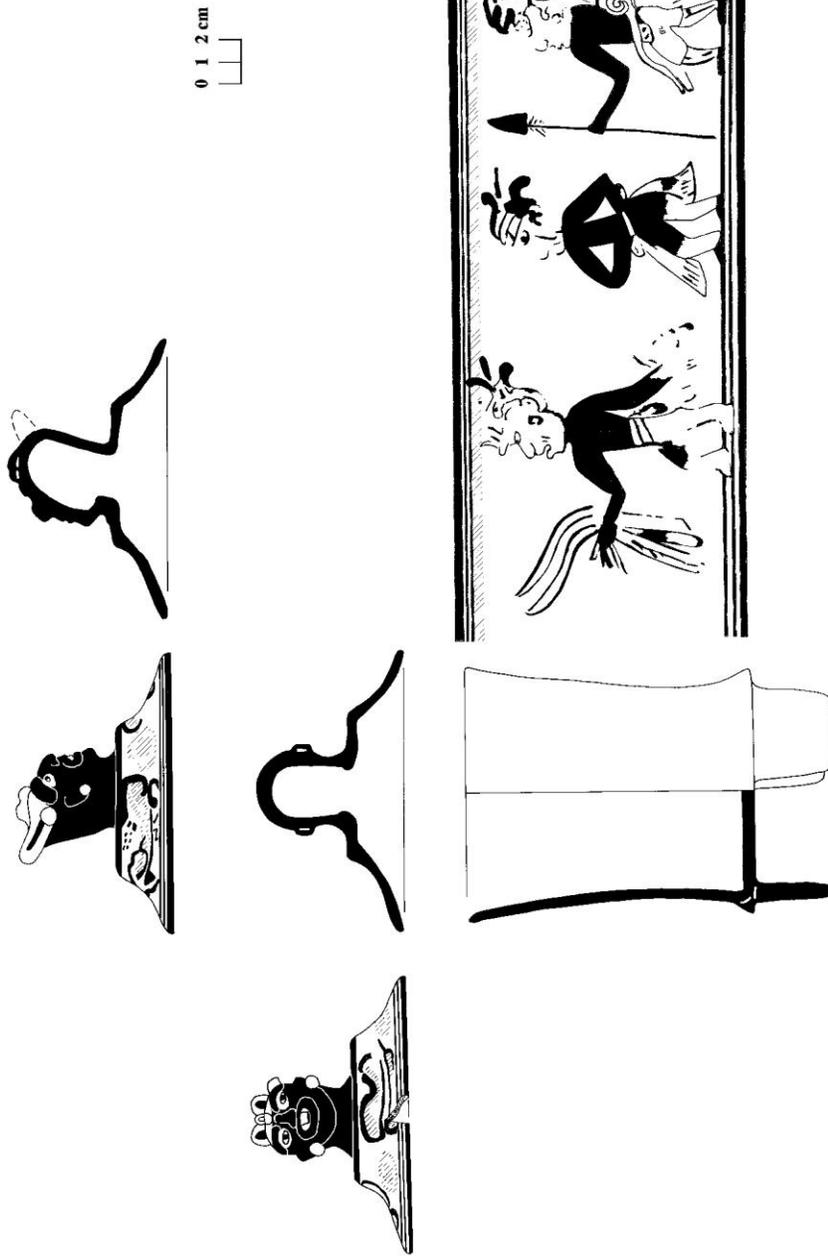


Figure 41: Ceramic vessel from S.D. C210B-3 (cylinder probably Dos Arroyos Polychrome; lid a polychrome variant of Positas Modeled).



Figure 42: Photograph of S.D. C210B-4 in the ground and then the face cache and lid reconstructed.

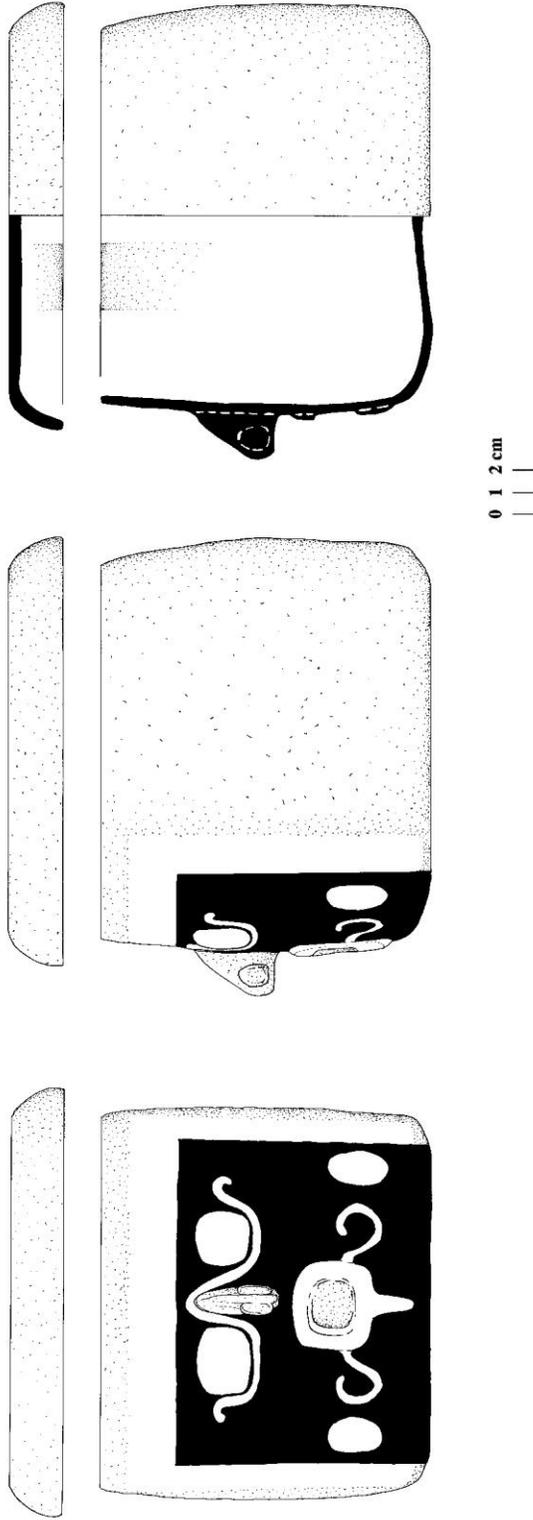


Figure 43: Face cache from S.D. C210B-4 showing areas of black and white paint.

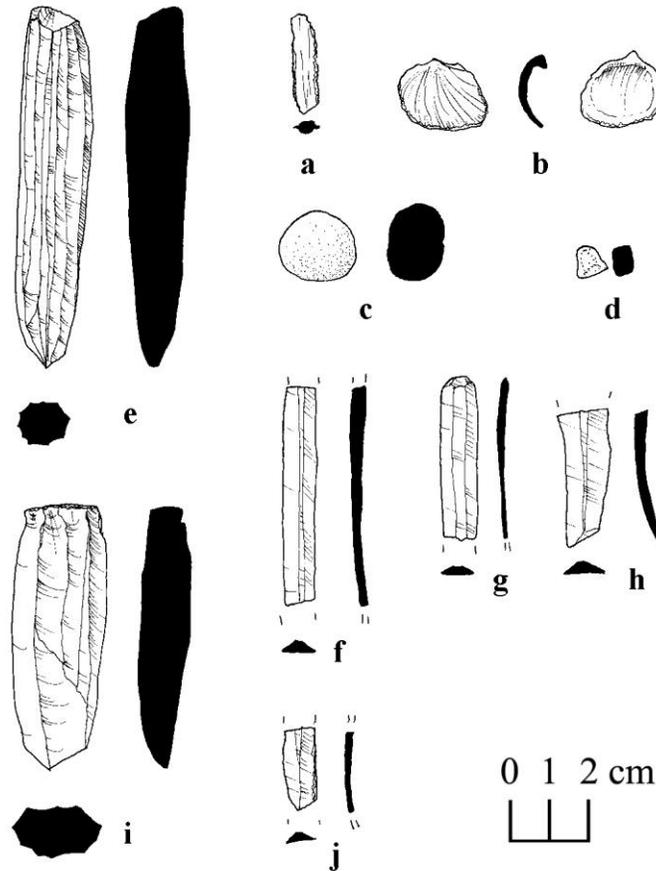


Figure 44: Artifactual materials from S.D. C210B-4: a. fragment of stingray spine; b. marine shell; c. jadeite ball; d. jadeite fragment; e., i. obsidian core eccentrics; f., g., h., j. partial obsidian blades.

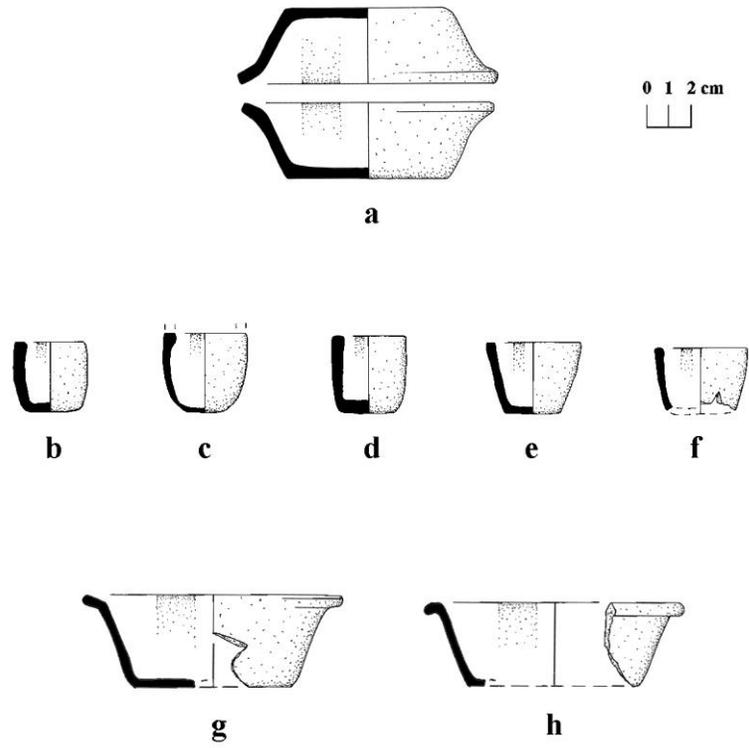


Figure 45: Ceramic vessels from special deposits in Operation C210B: a. Ceiba Unslipped (S.D. C210B-6); b.-f. S.D. C210B-11; g., h. S.D. C210B-14.

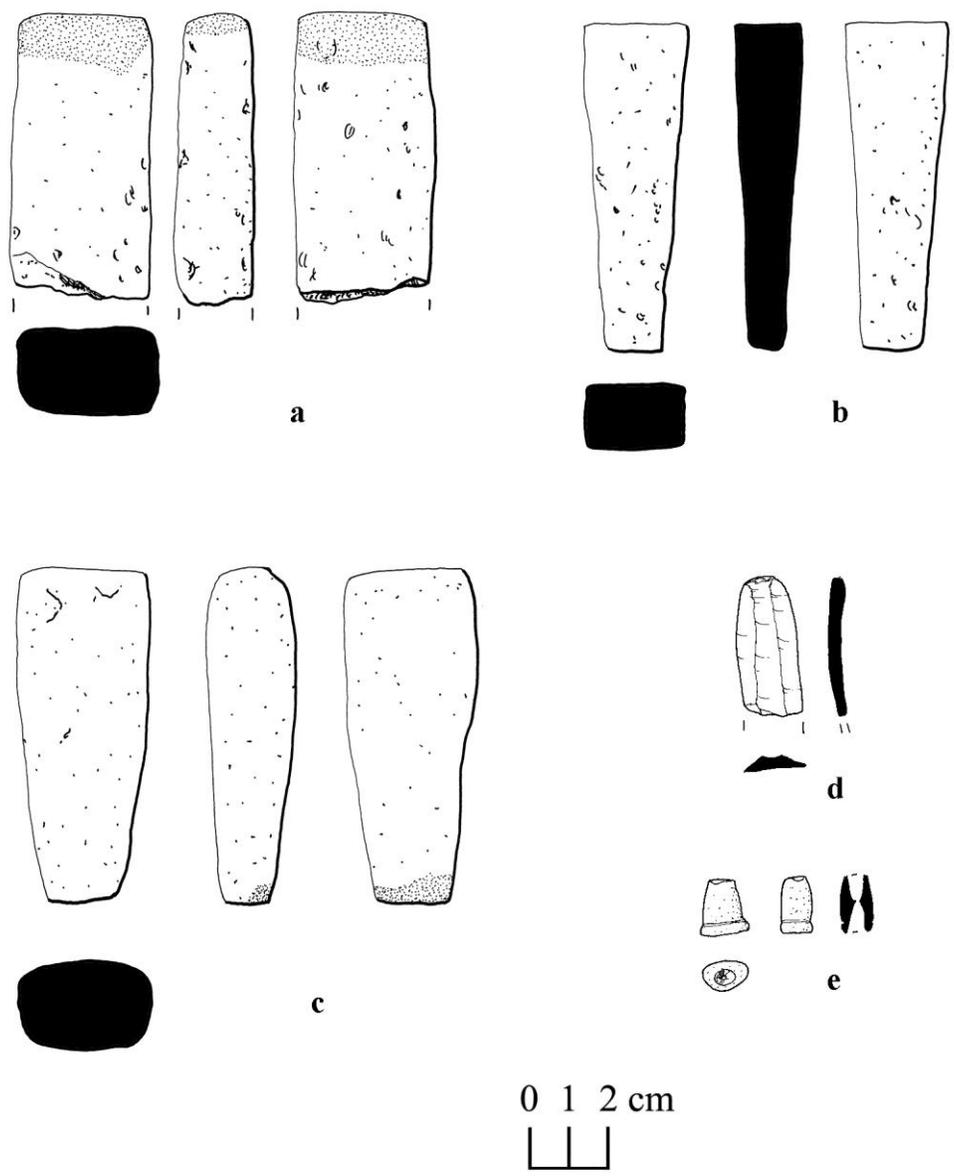


Figure 46: Artifactual materials from S.D. C210B-6 in Operation C210B: a.-c. limestone bars; d. partial obsidian blade; e. jadeite bead.



Figure 47: Photographs of the materials in S.D. C210B-7 (top) and S.D. C210B-10 (bottom).

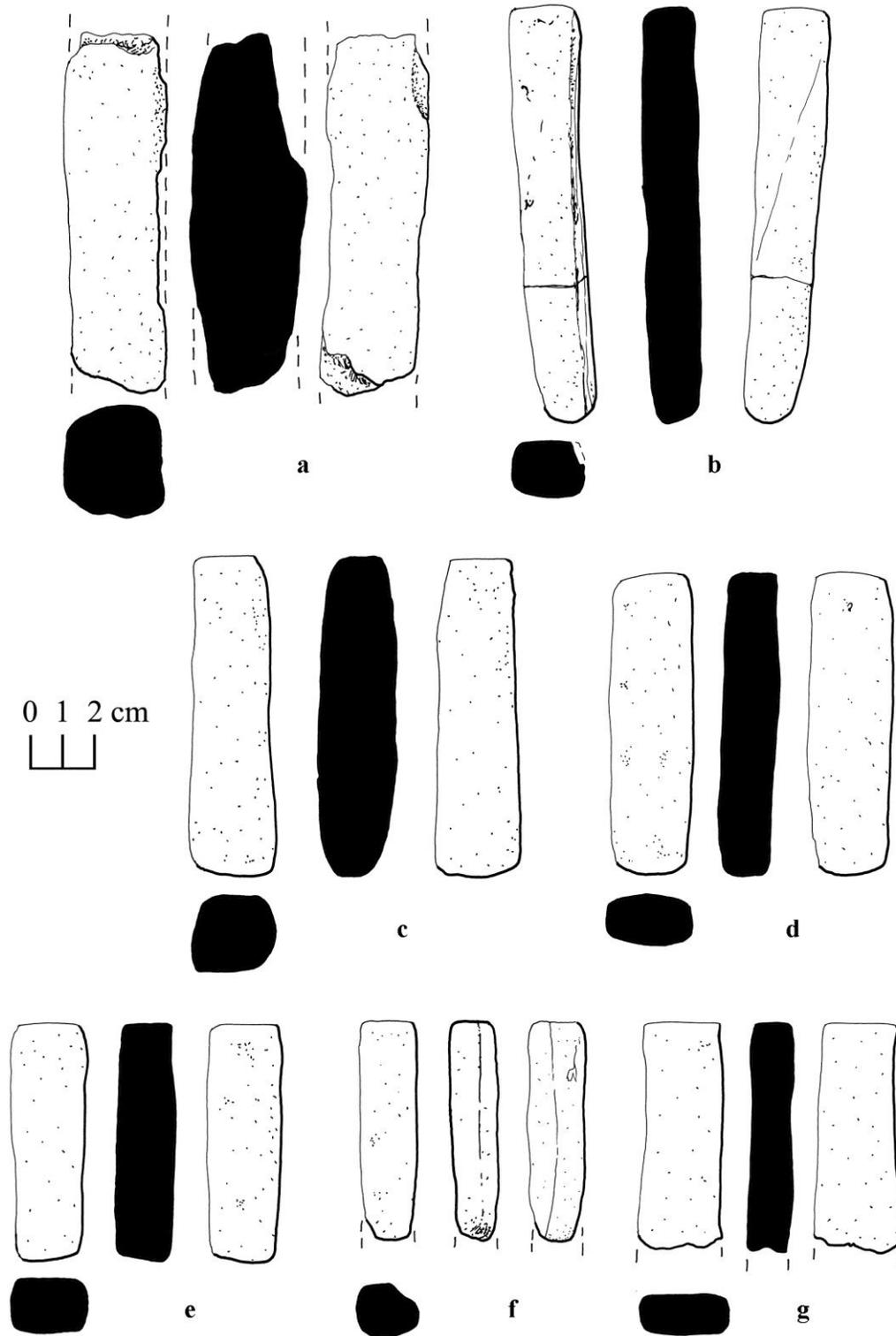


Figure 48: Artifactual materials associated with S.D. C210B-7: a.-r. limestone bars; s.-y. partial obsidian blades; z. partial spalled obsidian core (eccentric).

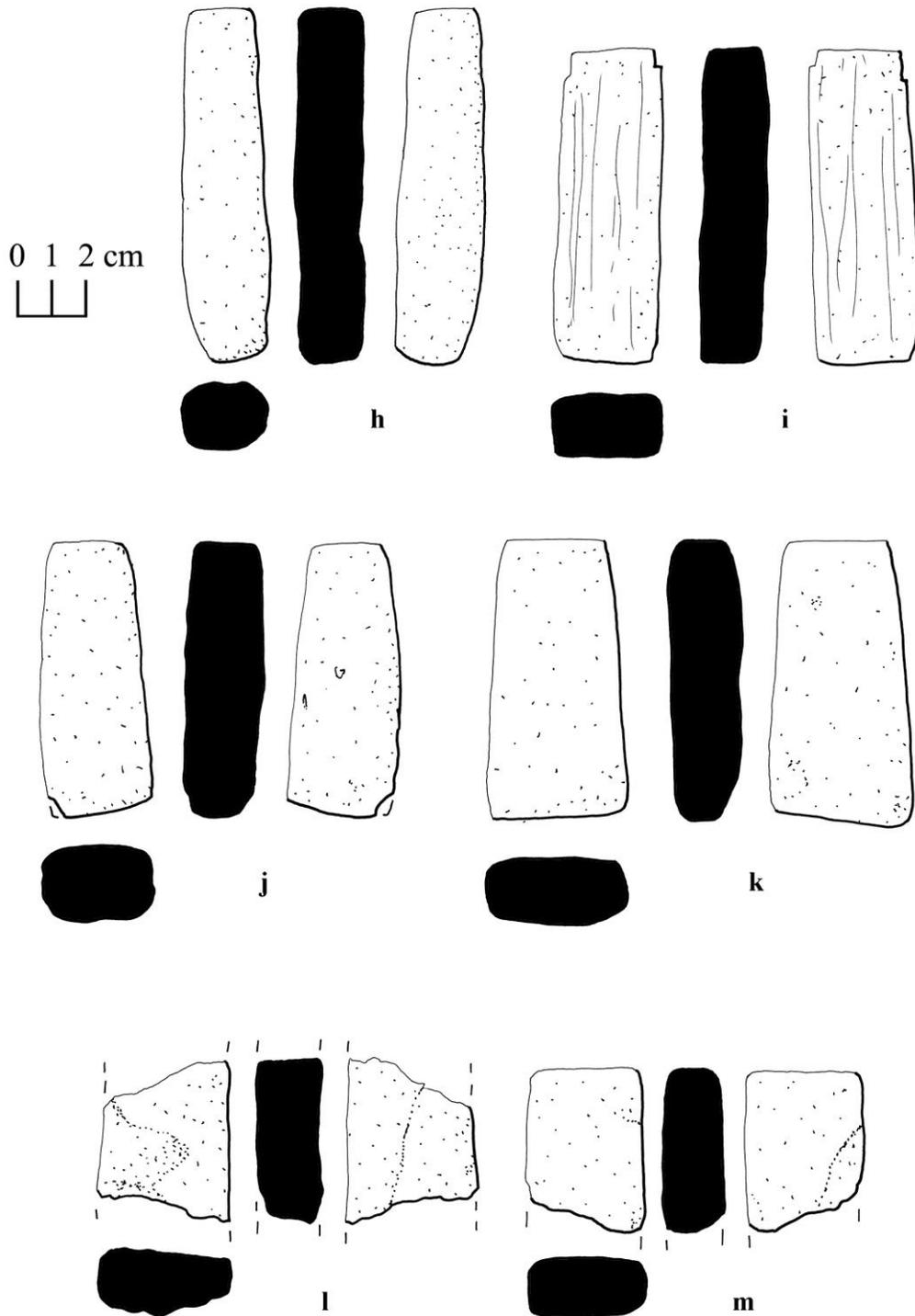


Figure 48: Artifactual materials associated with S.D. C210B-7: a.-r. limestone bars; s.-y. partial obsidian blades; z. partial spalled obsidian core (eccentric).

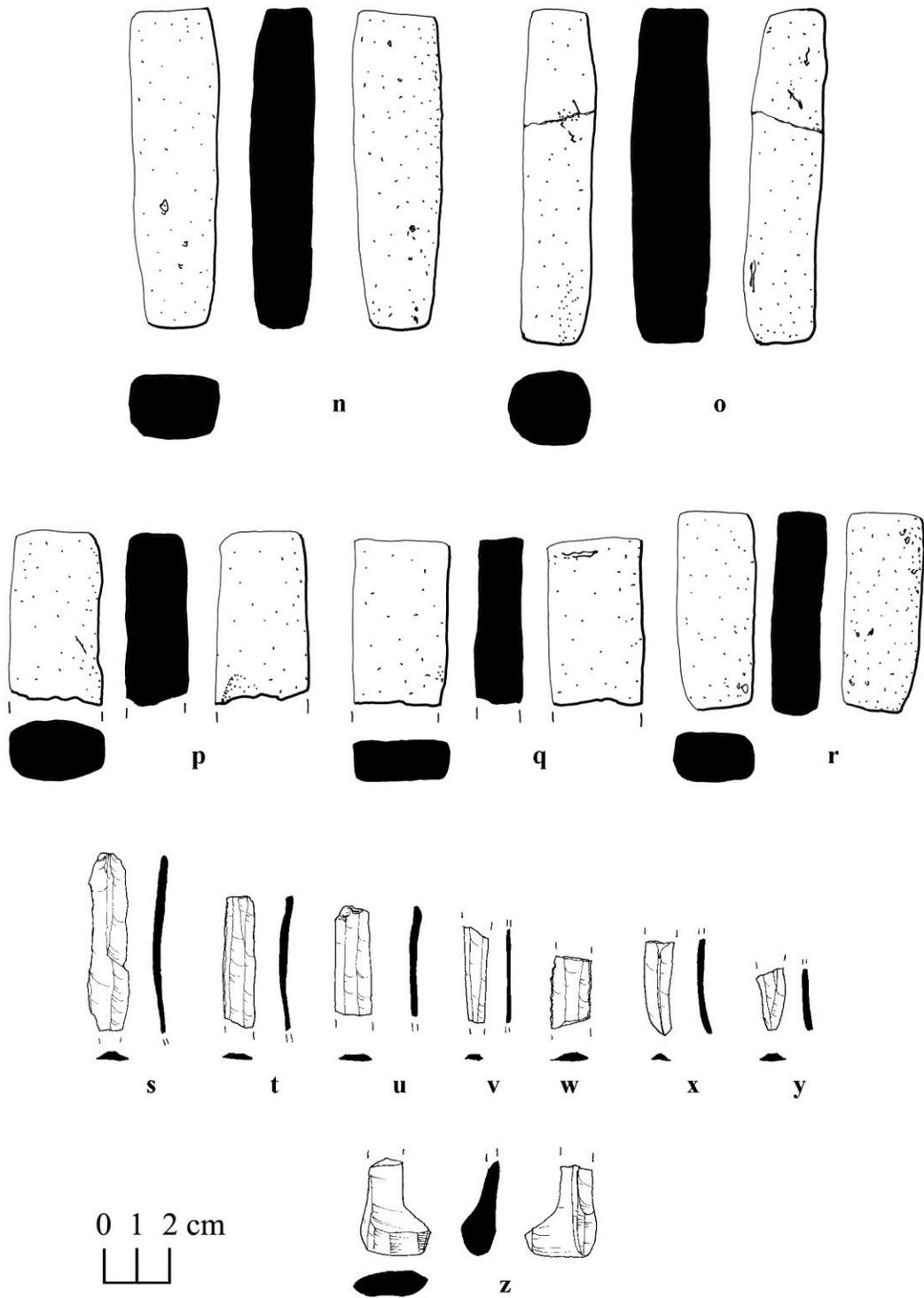


Figure 48: Artifactual materials associated with S.D. C210B-7: a.-r. limestone bars; s.-y. partial obsidian blades; z. partial spalled obsidian core (eccentric).



Figure 49: Photographs of the excavation of S.D. C210B-9 showing three layers of pottery vessels.

S.D. C210B-9

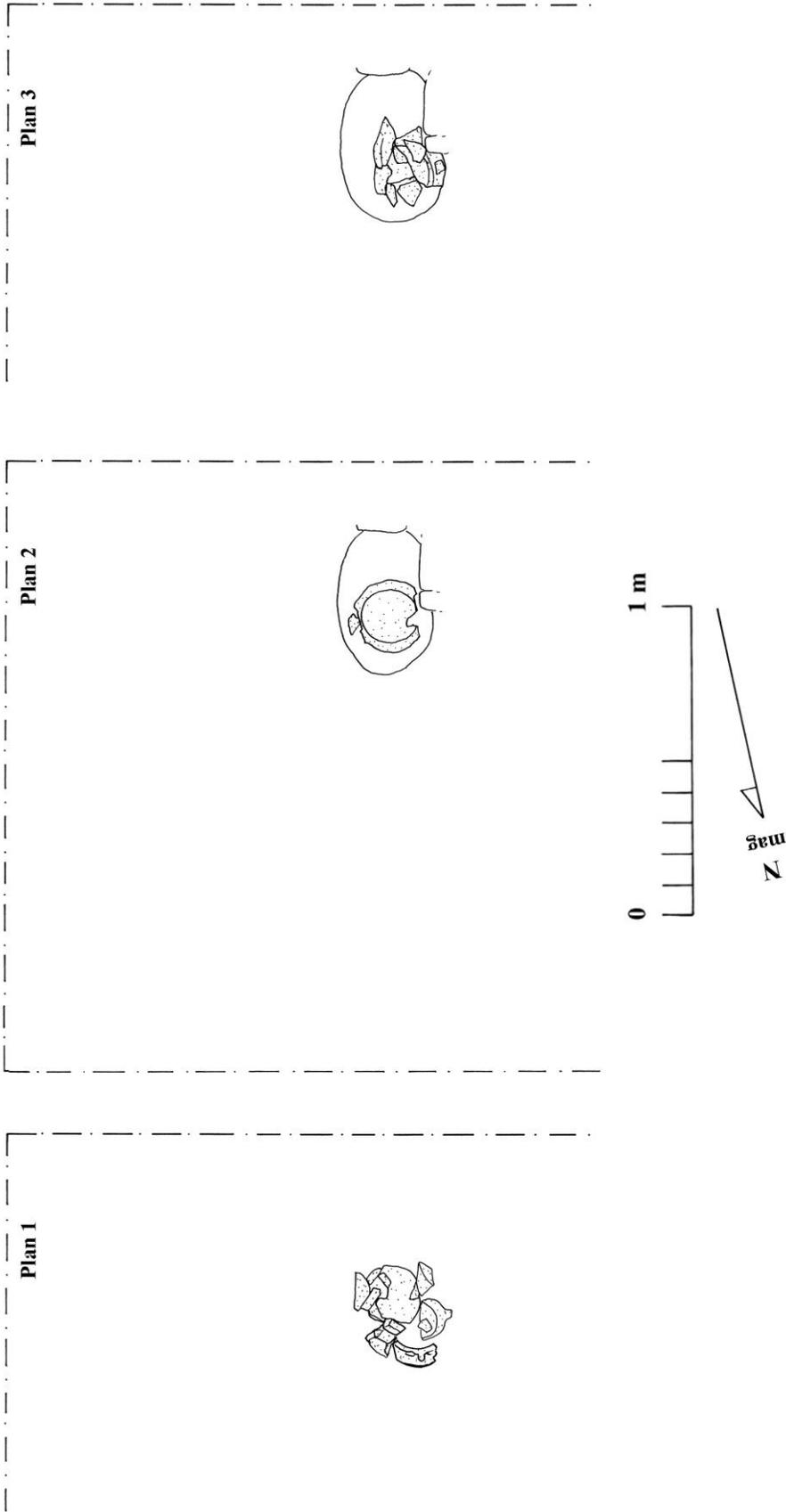


Figure 50: Three sequent plans of S.D. C210B-9 in Operation C210B.

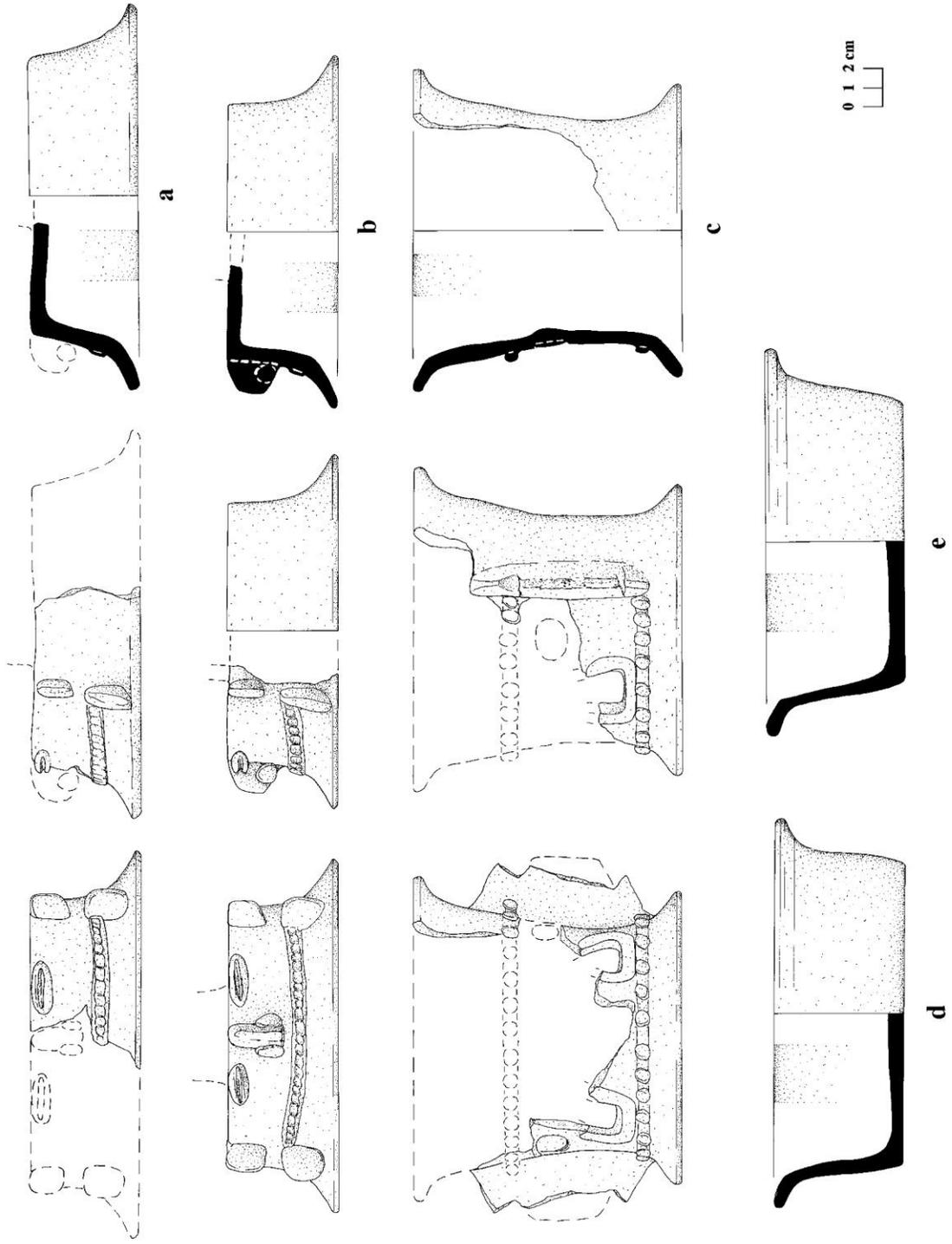


Figure 51: Ceramic vessels associated with S.D. C210B-9: a., b., c. probably Candelario Applied; d., e. Puchituk Unslipped.

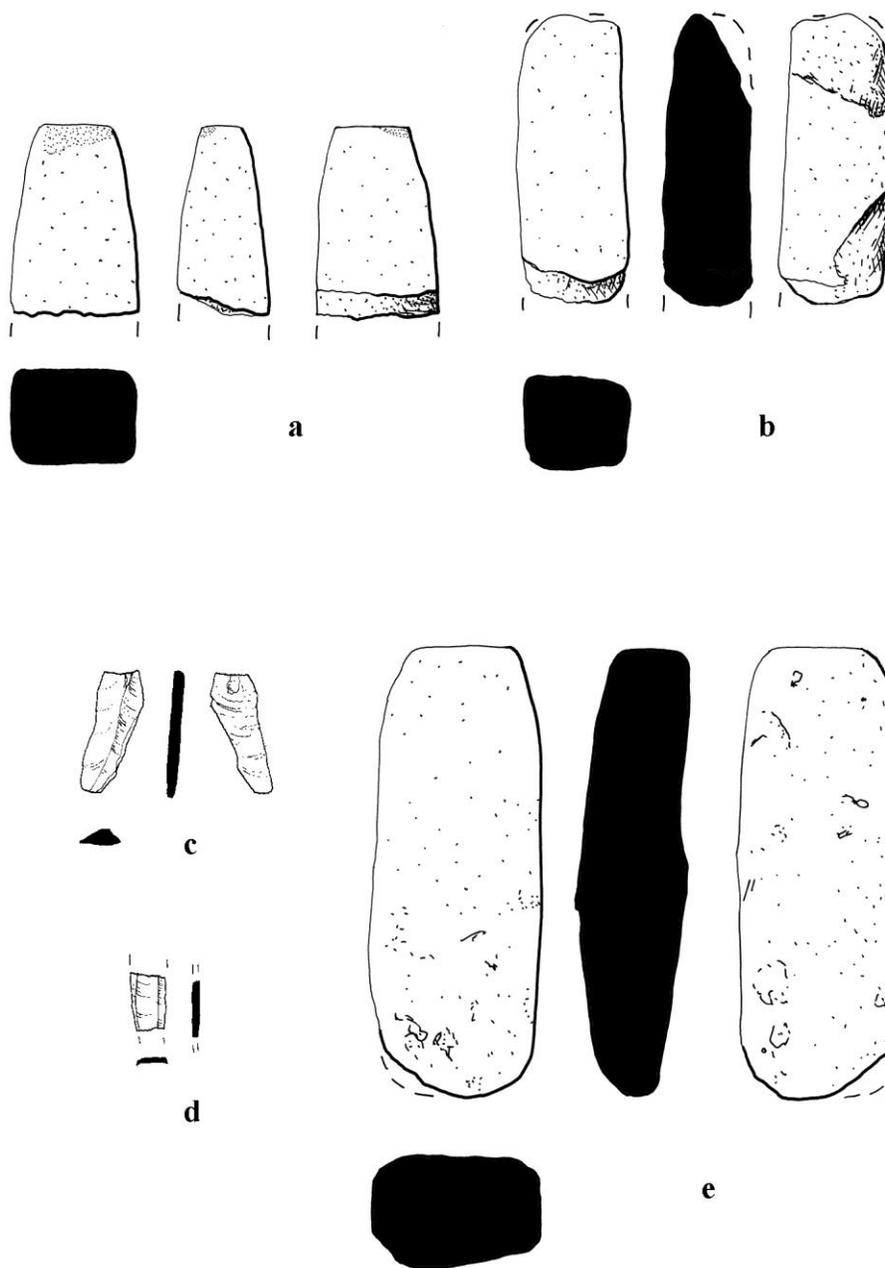


Figure 52: Artifactual materials associated with Lot C210B/19 (a., b.) and S.D. C210B-9 (c.-e.; Lot C210B/21): a., b., e. limestone bars; c., d. partial obsidian blades.

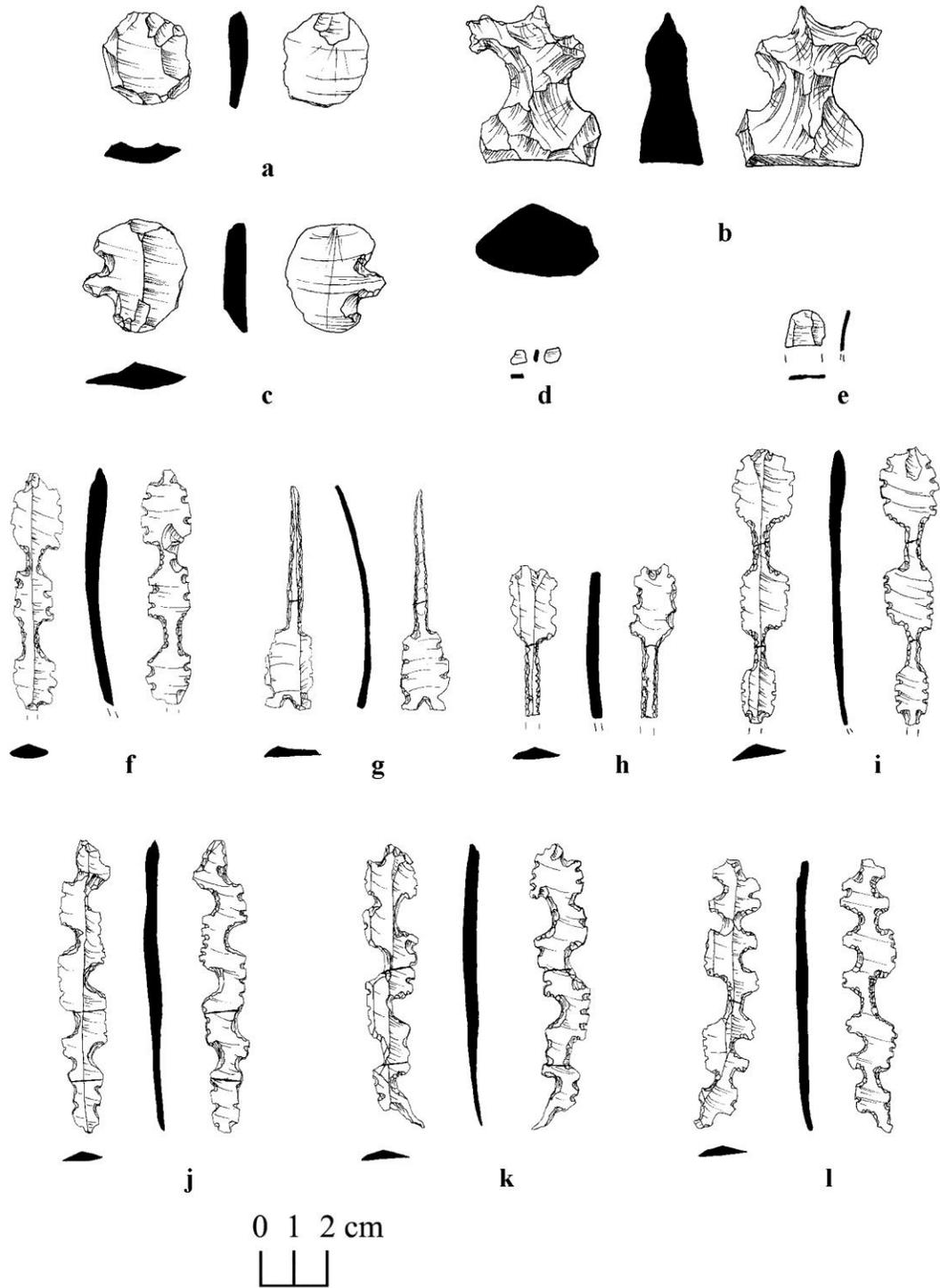
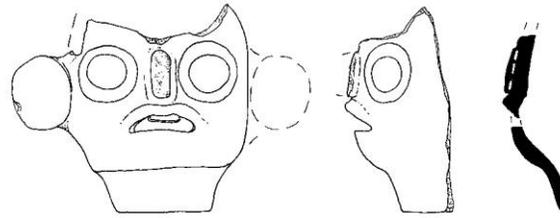
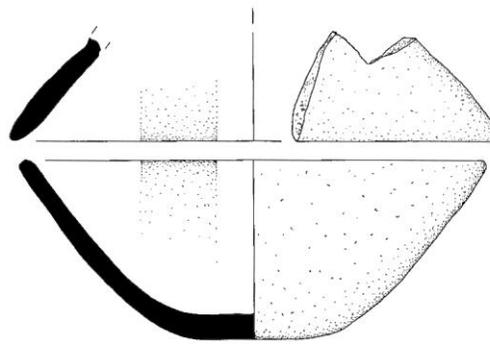


Figure 53: Obsidian eccentrics associated with S.D. C210B-10: a.-c. more typical core-based Caracol eccentrics; d. small chip; e. partial blade; f.-l. finely crafted blade-based eccentrics.



a

0 1 2 cm
┌───┐
└───┘



b

Figure 54: Ceramics associated with S.D. C210B-12 (a.) and C210B-15 (b.); types are not designated.

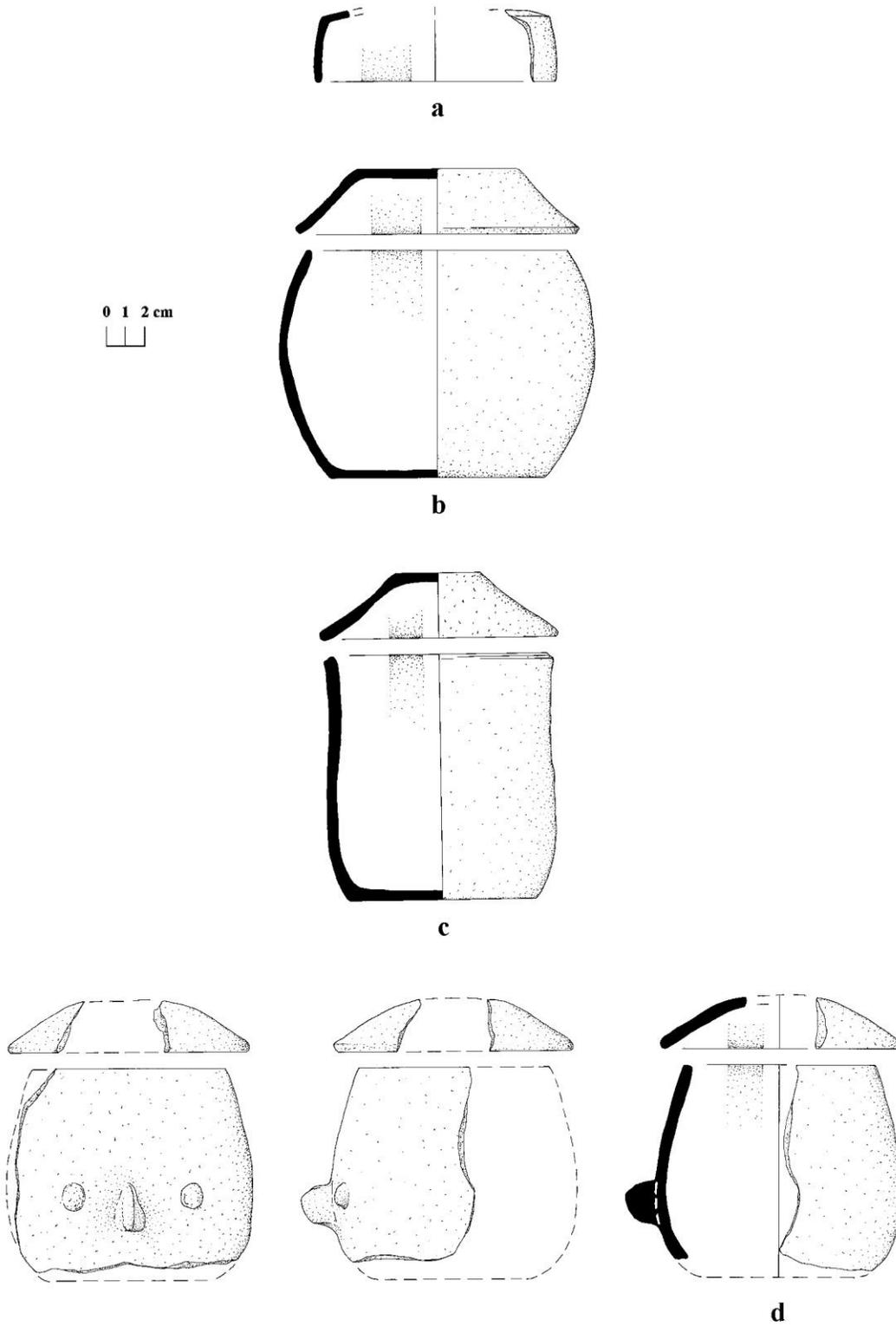


Figure 55: Ceramic vessels associated with S.D. C210B-13: a.-c. Ceiba Unslipped; d. Hebe Modeled.

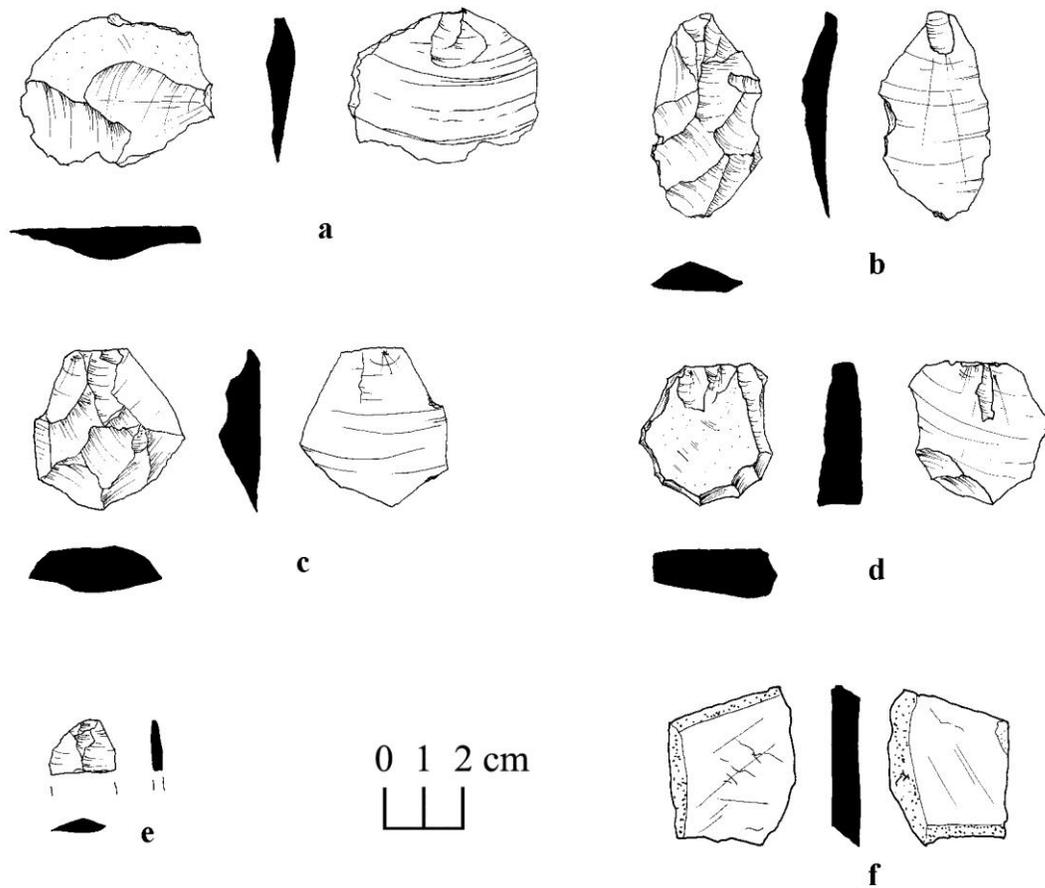


Figure 56: Artifactual materials associated with S.D. C210B-14: a.-d. obsidian eccentrics; e. partial obsidian blade; f. slate mirror back fragment.



Figure 57: Photographs of excavations in Structure I27 (Operation C210C) in Rebel Group.

Caracol Structure I27
excv. C210C

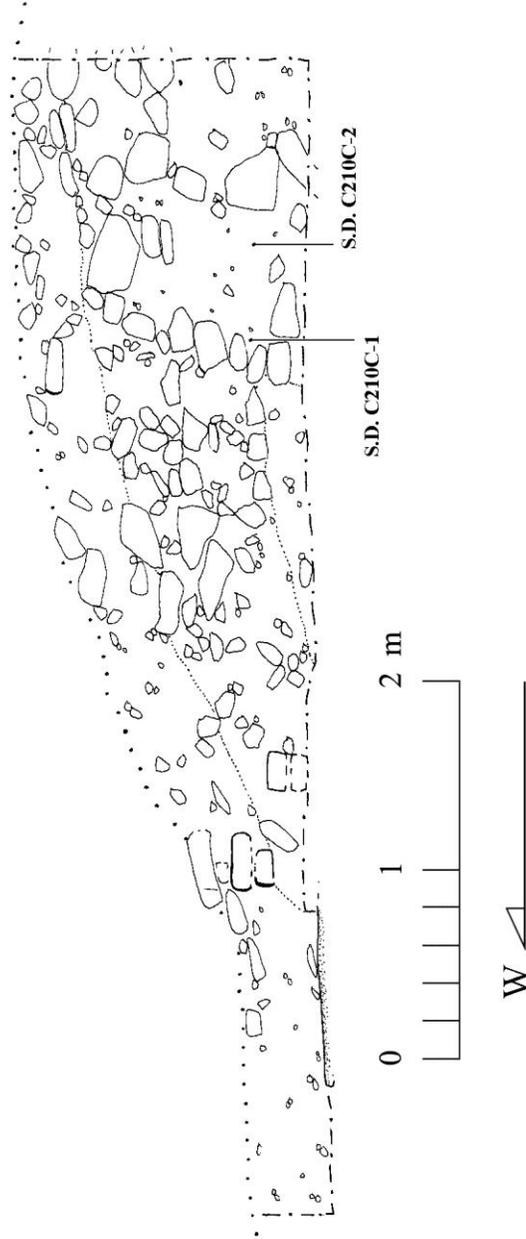


Figure 58: Section through Structure I27, looking north, showing Operation C210C.

Caracol Structure I27
excav. C210C

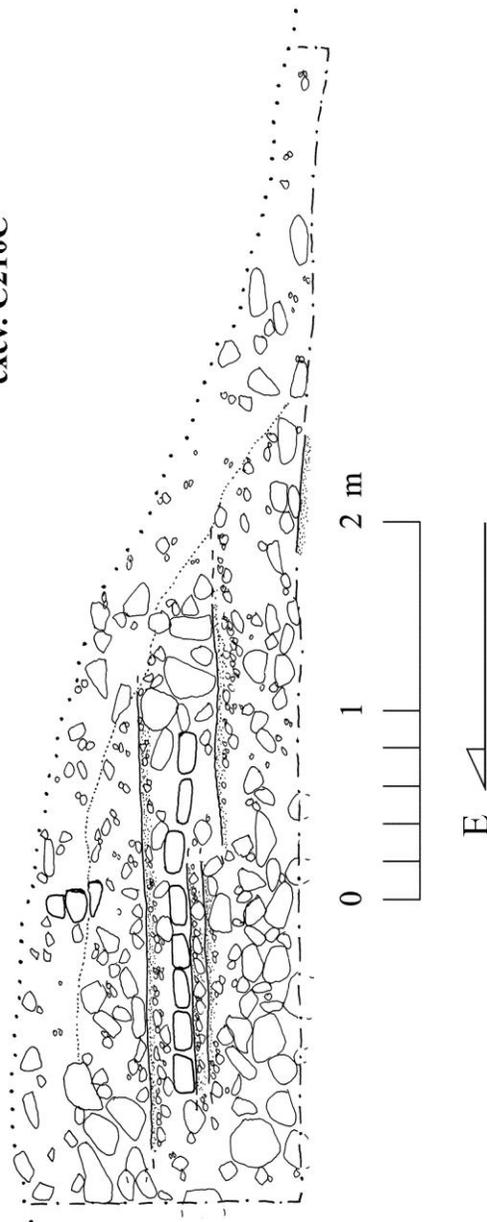


Figure 59: Section through Structure I27, looking south, showing Operation C210C.

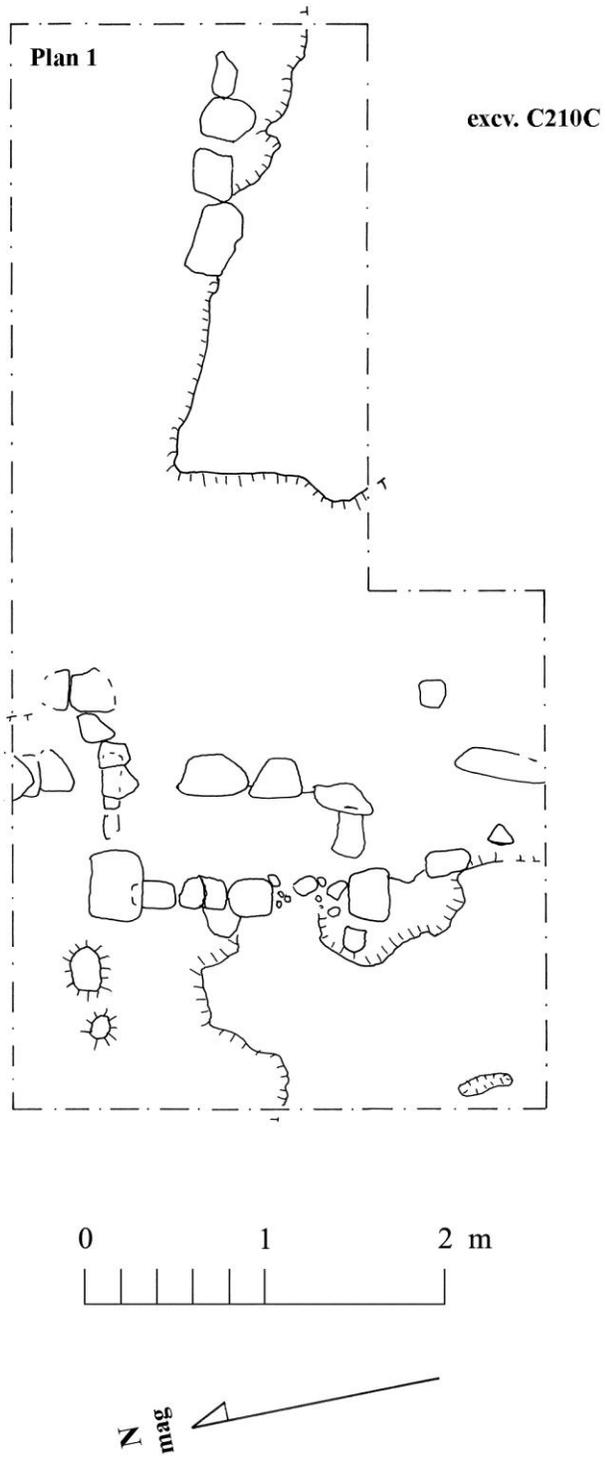


Figure 60: Plan 1 for Operation C210C.

excav. C210C

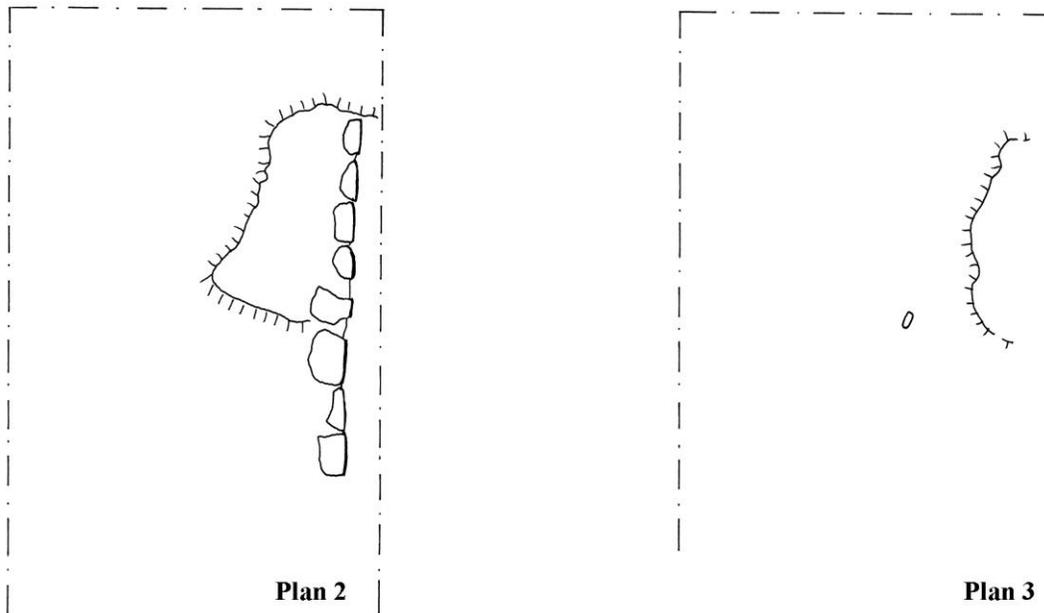


Figure 61: Plans 2 and 3 for Operation C210C.

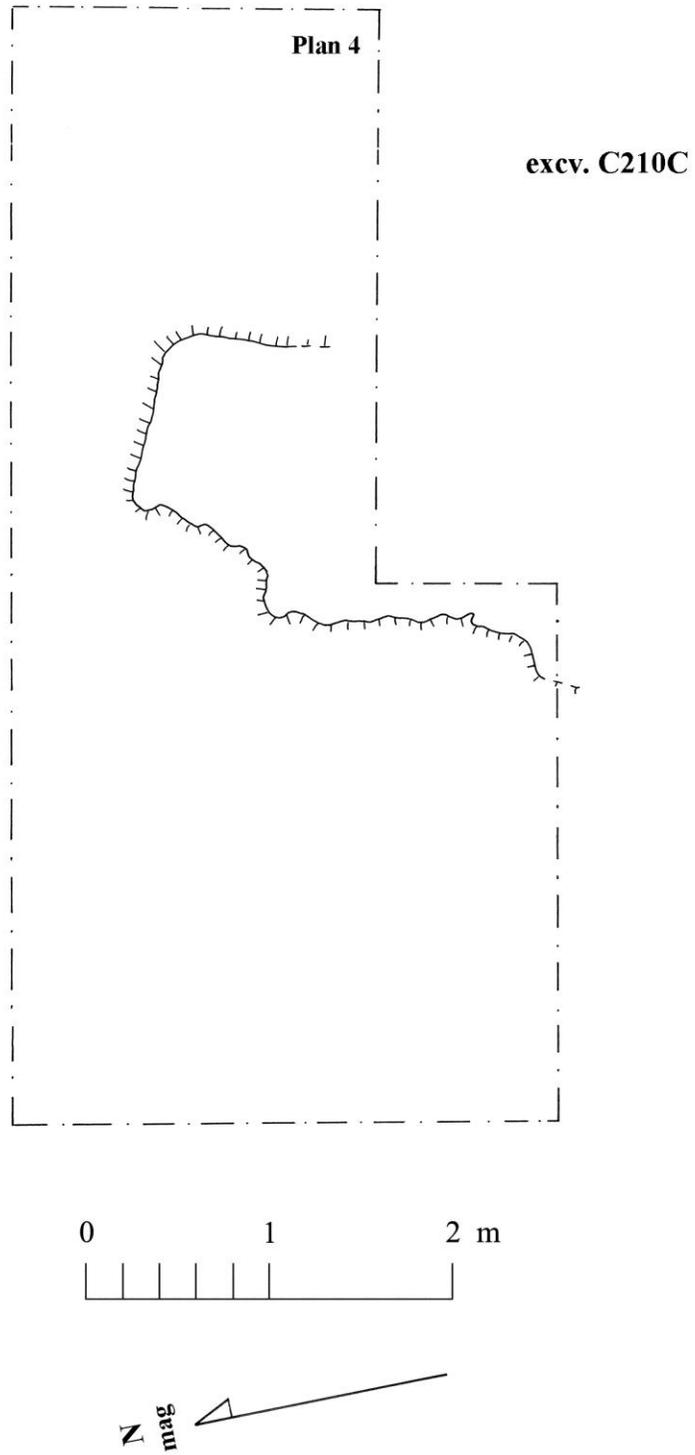


Figure 62: Plan 4 for Operation C210C.

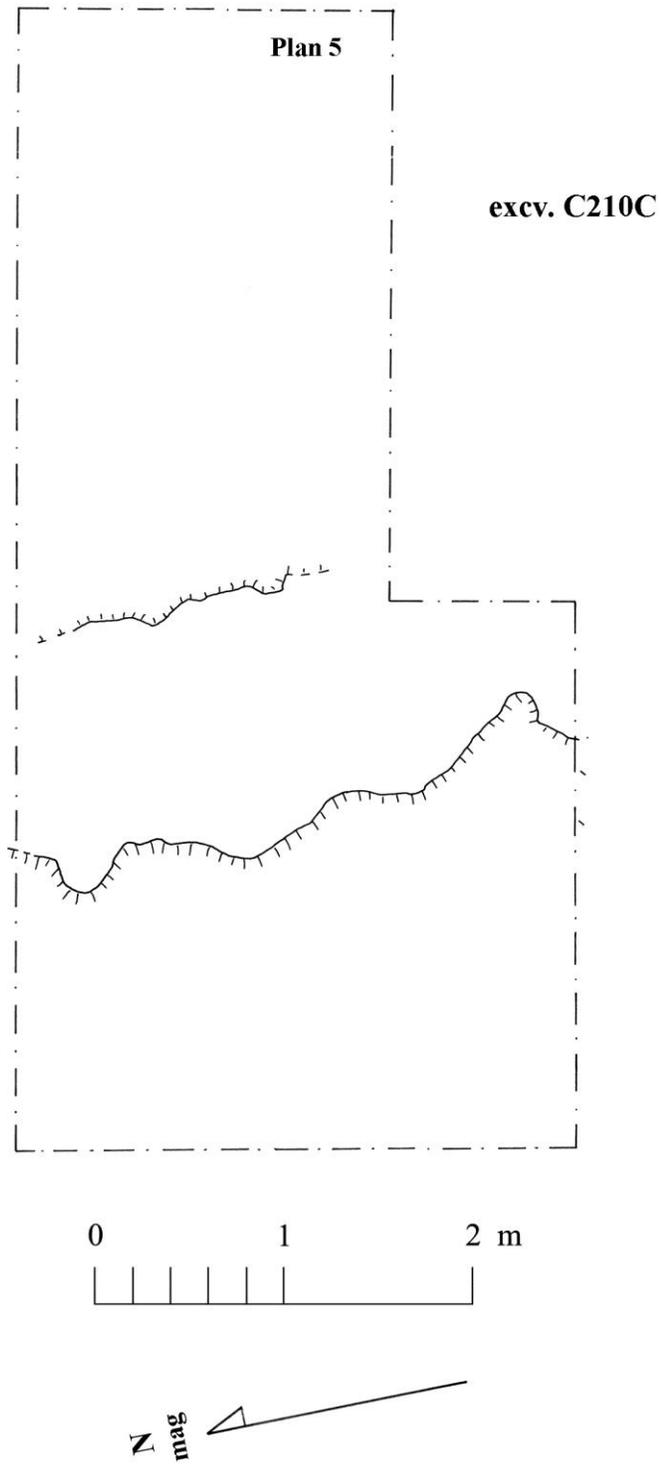


Figure 63: Plan 5 for Operation C210C.

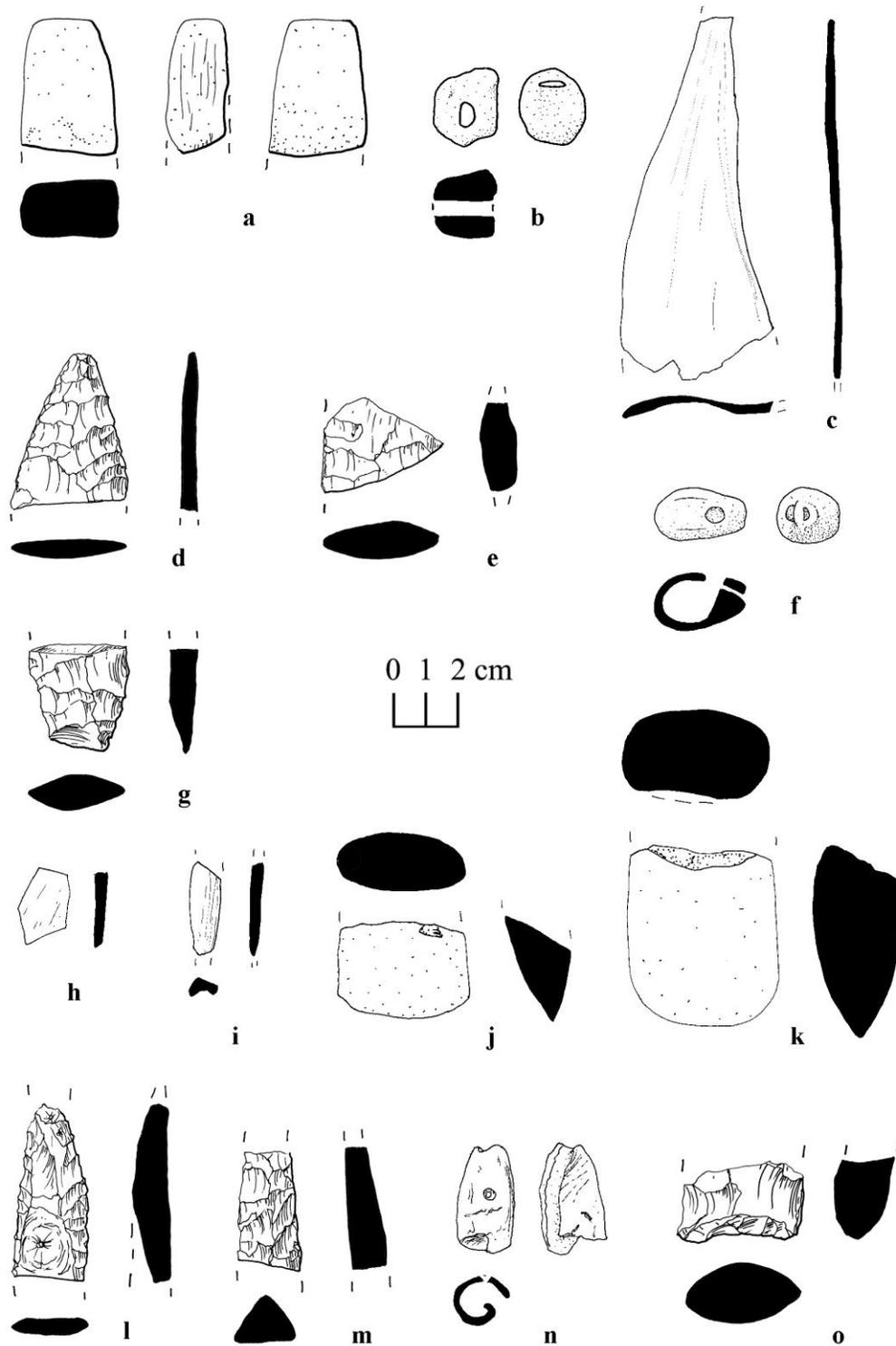


Figure 64: Artifactual materials recovered in excavation of Operation C210C (a.-c. are from S.D. C210C-2): a. partial limestone bar; b. pottery whistle tip; c. shell scoop; d., e., g., l., m., o. worked chert bifaces; f. pottery whistle; h. pyrite mosaic piece; i. worked bone; j., k. broken greenstone axes; n. drilled olivella shell.

excav. C210C

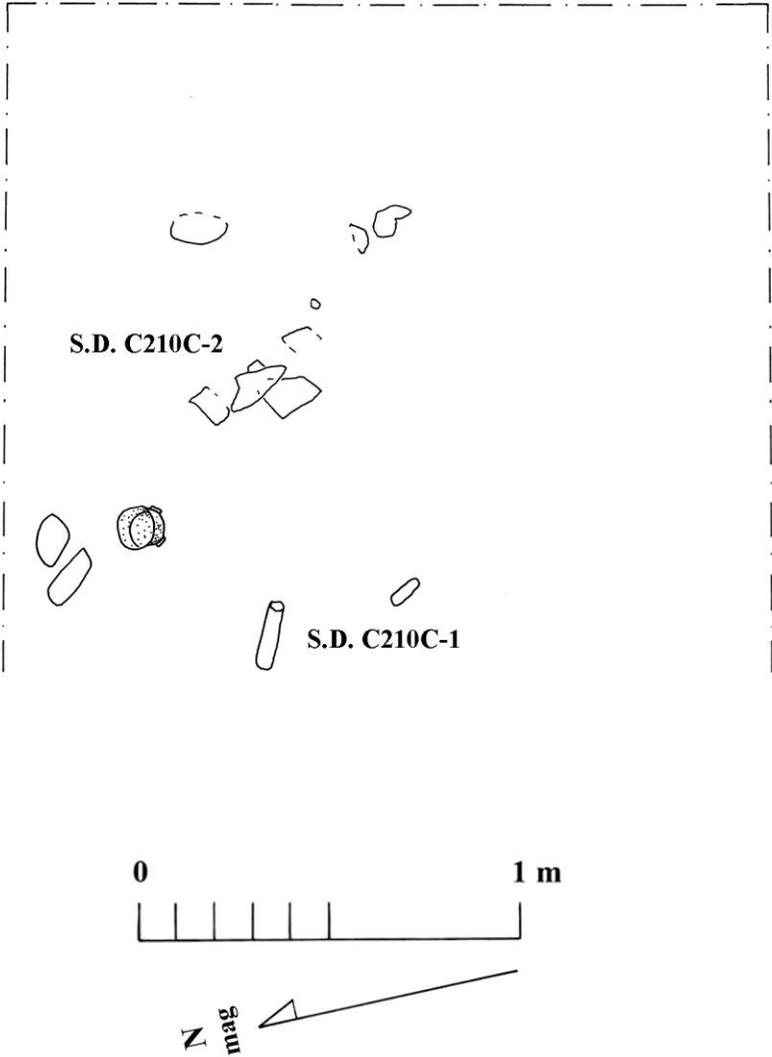


Figure 65: Plan showing S.D. C210C-1 and S.D. C210C-2 in Operation C210C.

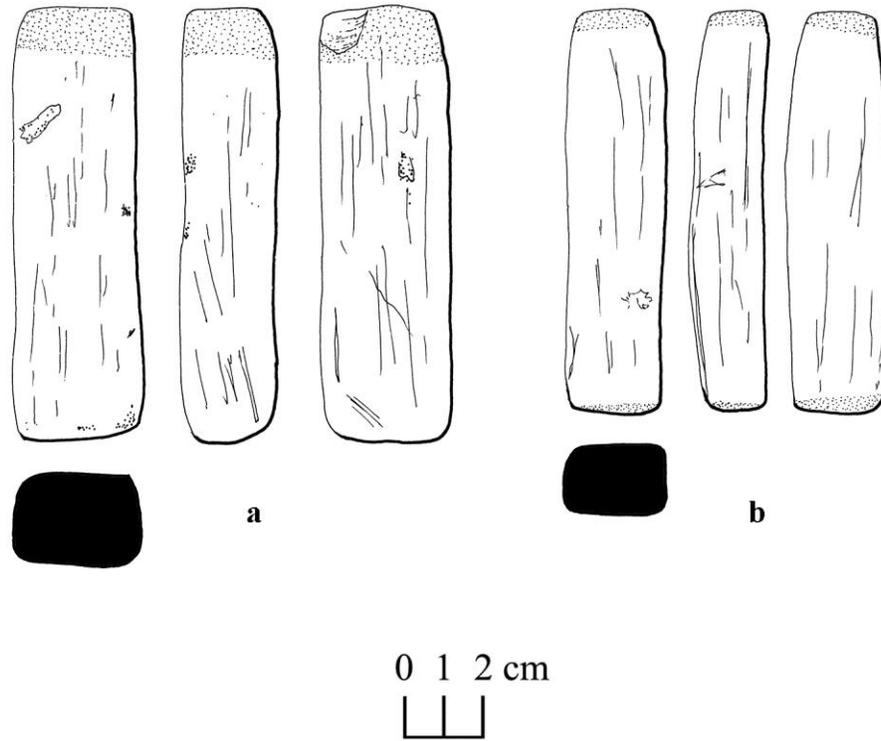


Figure 66: Limestone bars associated with S.D. C210C-1 in Operation C210C.

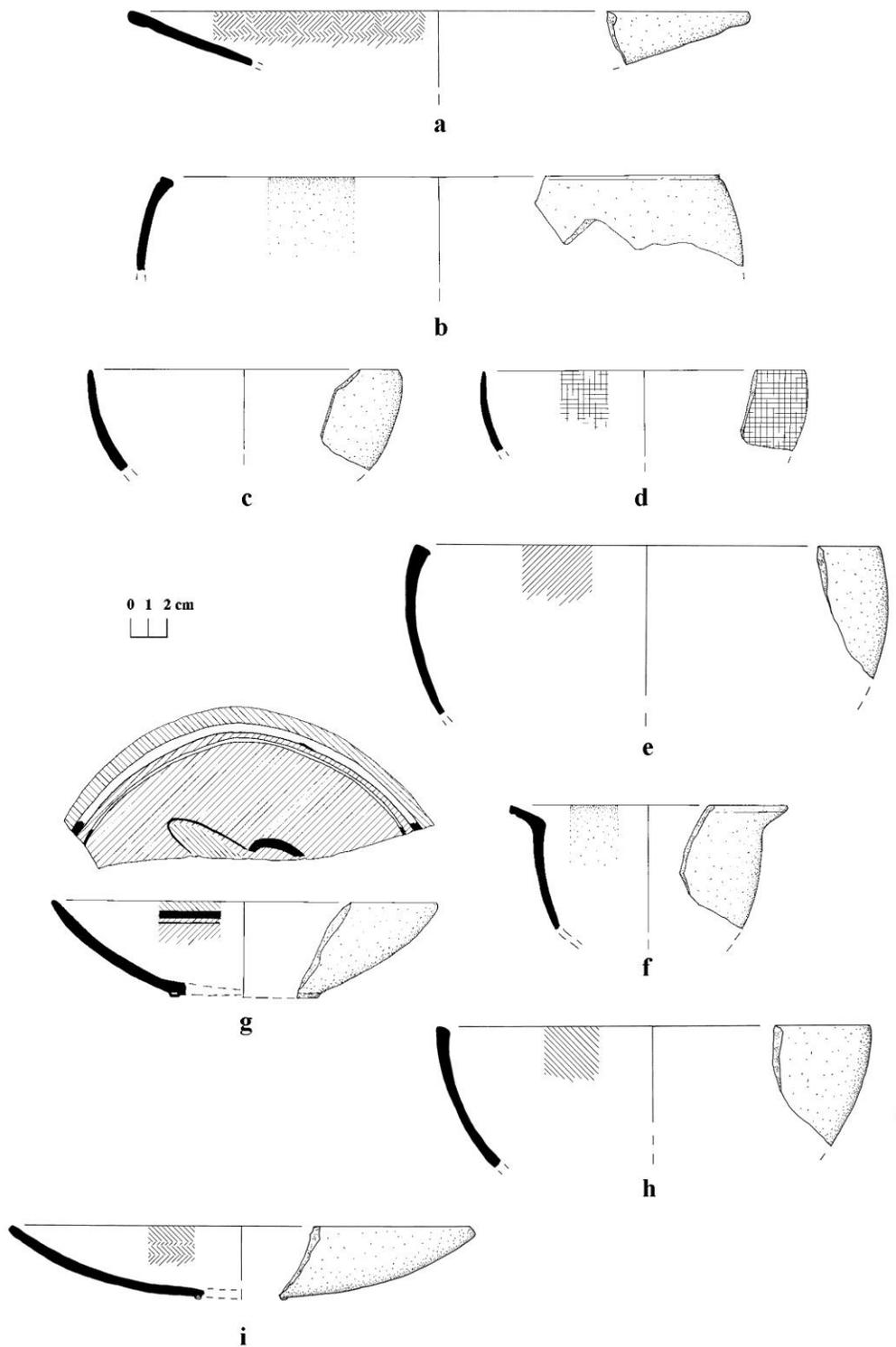


Figure 67: Partial pottery vessels associated with S.D. C210C-2: a., g.-i. Machete Polychrome; b., c., e., h. possibly Subin Red; f., m. Valentin Unslipped; j. Nanzal Red; k. eroded Bontifela Orange; l. related to Palmar Orange Polychrome; n. Ceiba Unslipped.

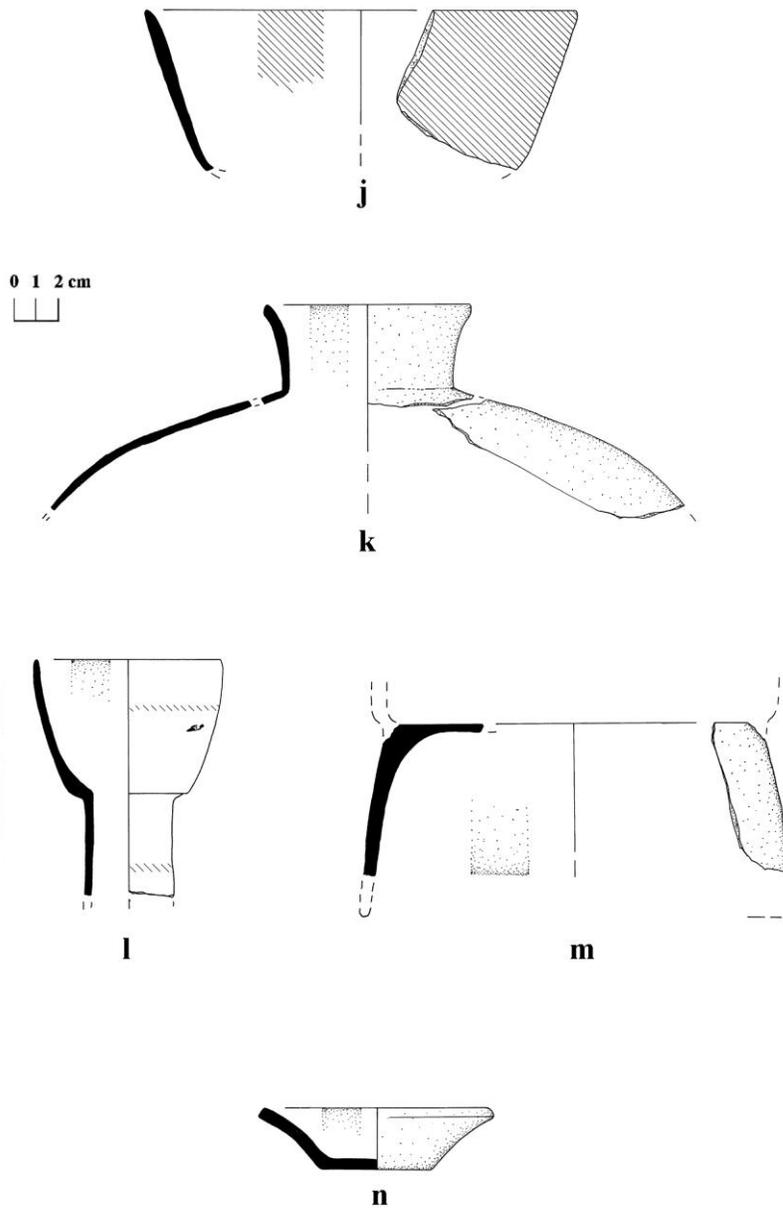


Figure 67: Partial pottery vessels associated with S.D. C210C-2: a., g.-i. Machete Polychrome; b., c., e., h. possibly Subin Red; f., m. Valentin Unslipped; j. Nanzal Red; k. eroded Bontifela Orange; l. related to Palmar Orange Polychrome; n. Ceiba Unslipped.

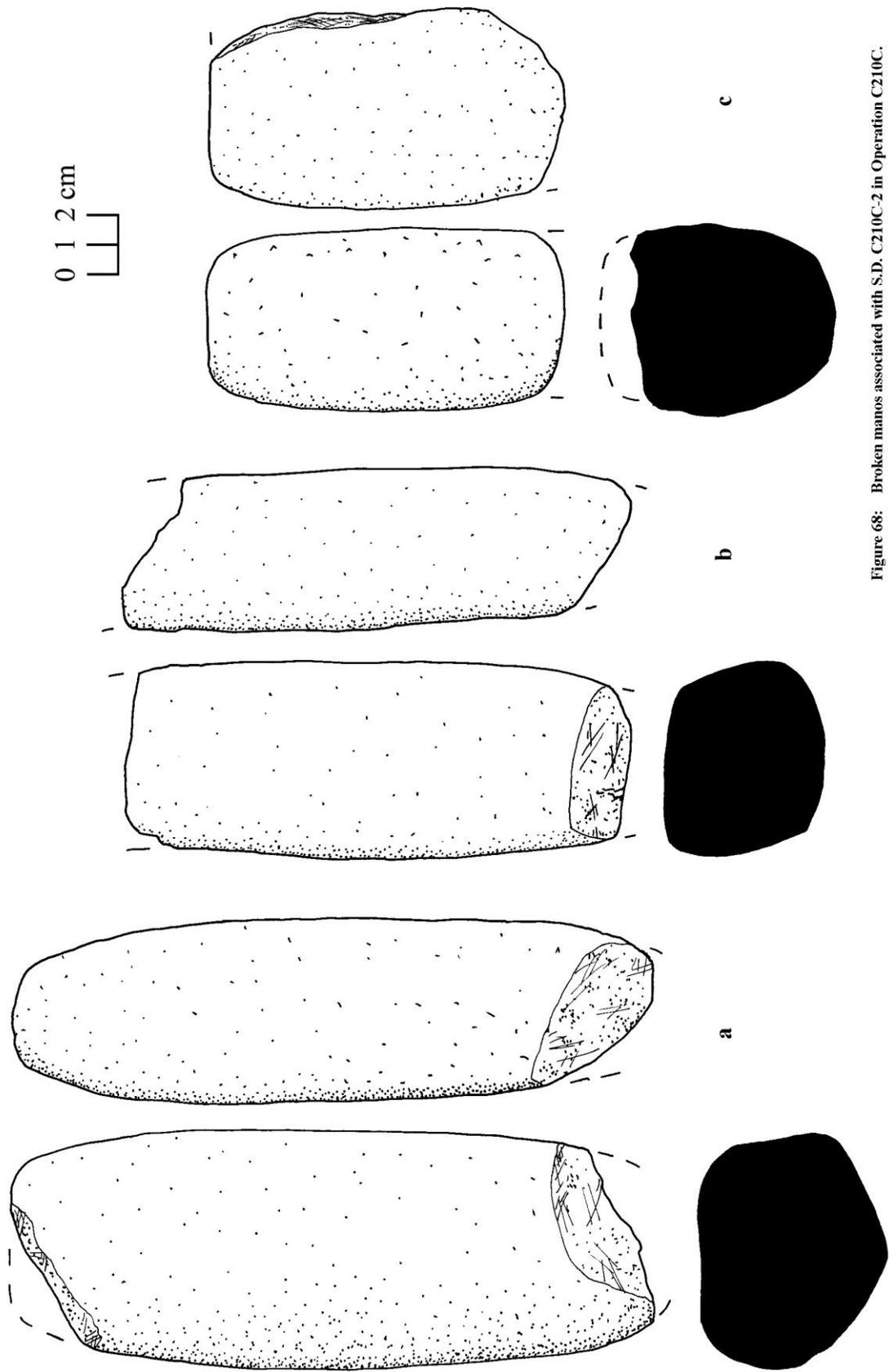


Figure 68: Broken manos associated with S.D. C210C-2 in Operation C210C.

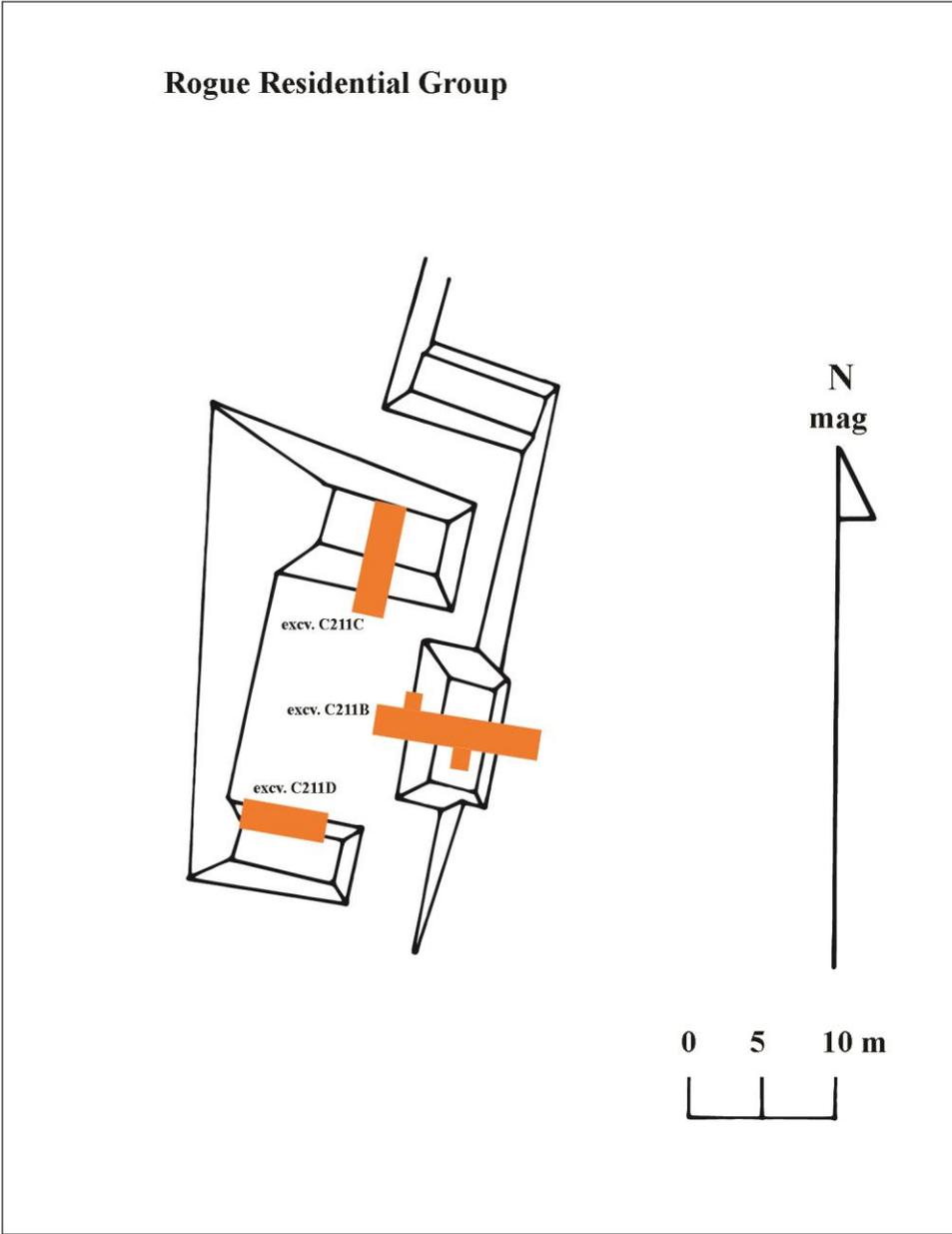


Figure 69: Plan of Rogue Group, showing locations of Operations C211B, C211C, and C211D.



Figure 70: Photographs of excavations in Structure I23 (top) and of S.D. C211B-5 (bottom).

Caracol Structure I23
excv. C211B

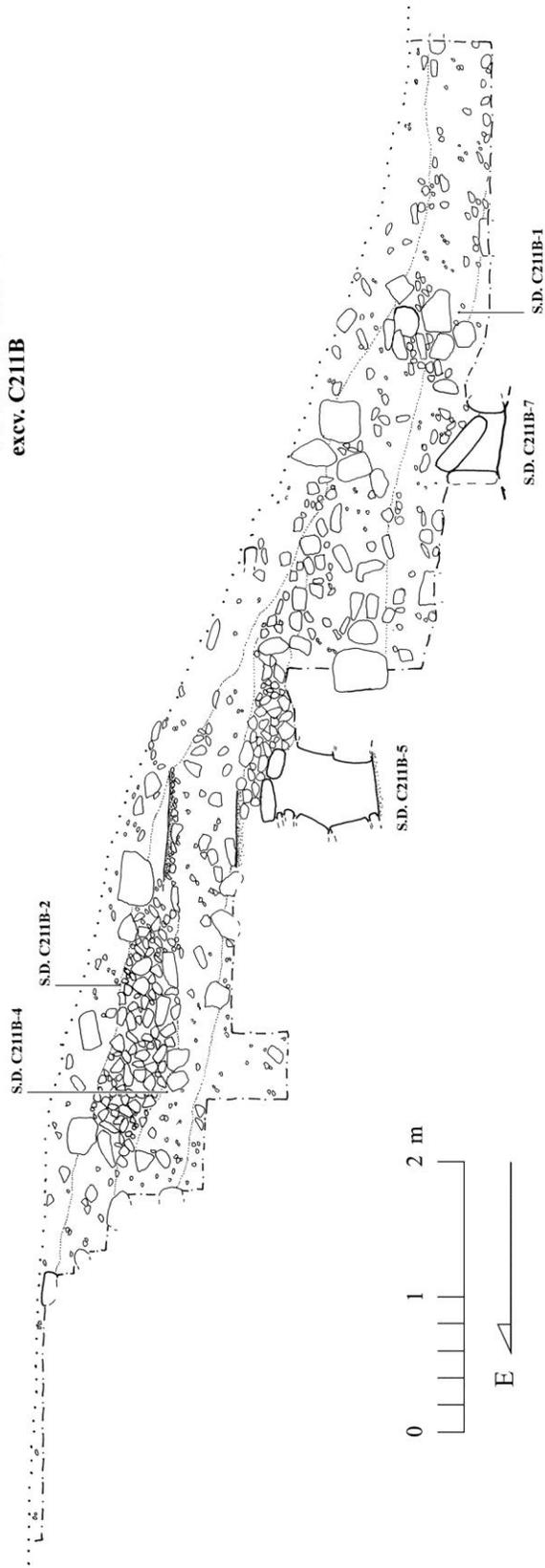


Figure 71: Section through Structure I23 (Operation C211B) in Rogue Group.

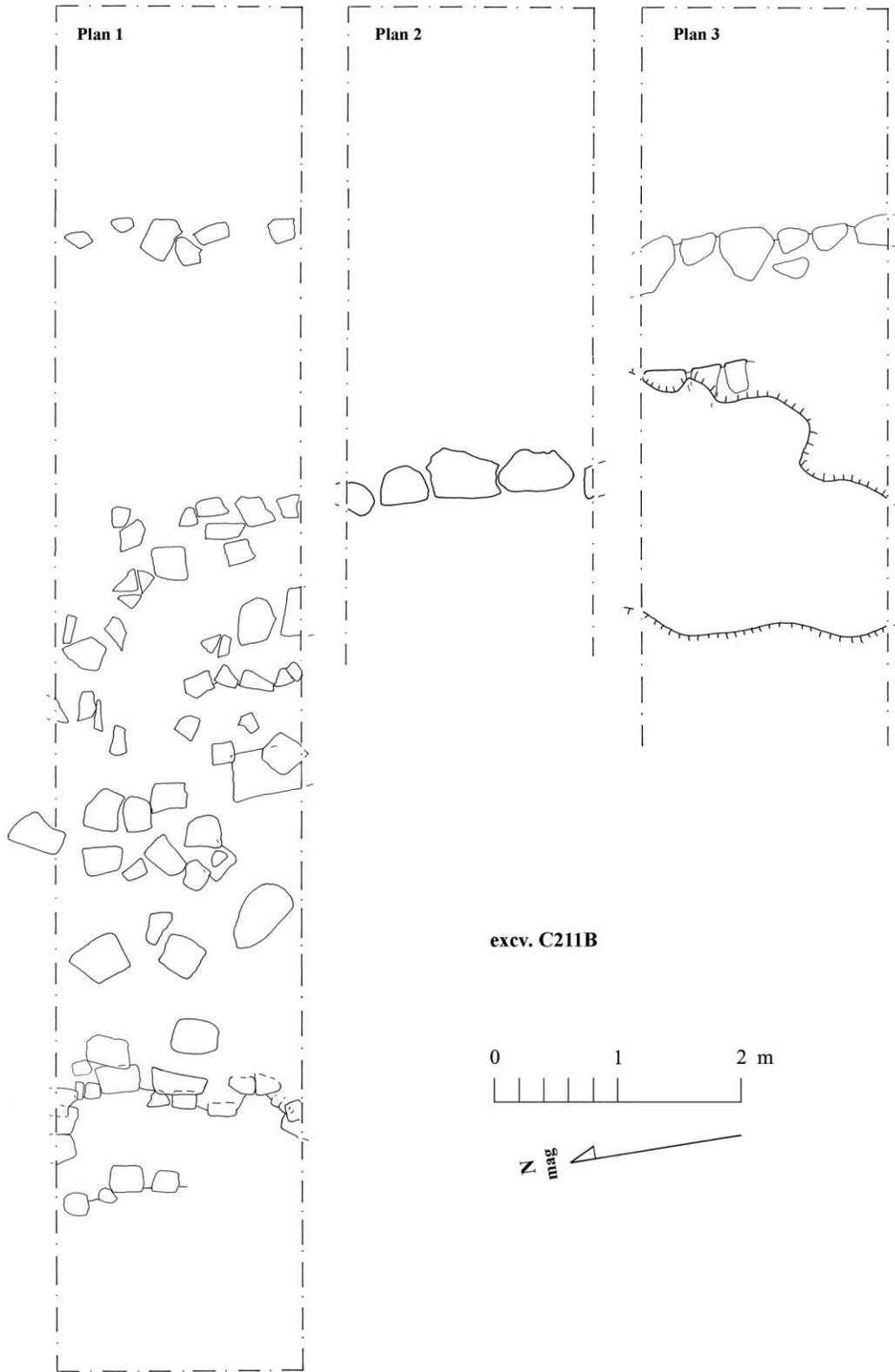
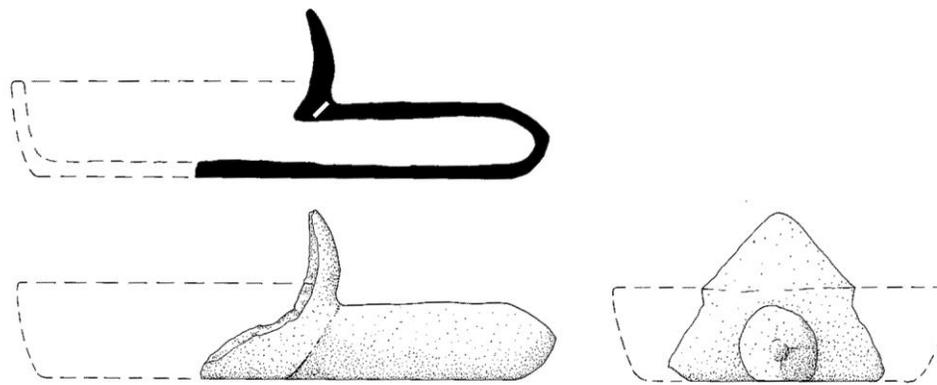
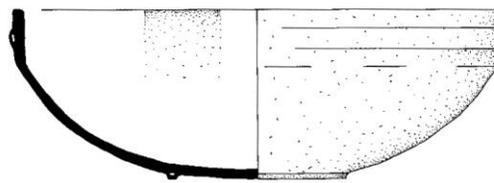


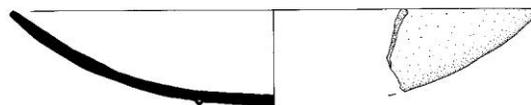
Figure 72: Plans of Structure I23 (Operation C211B).



a



b



c



d

Figure 73: Pottery vessels from excavations into Structure I23: a. undesignated type; b. possibly Dos Hermanos Red (from S.D. C211B-3); c., d. Machete Orange Polychrome.

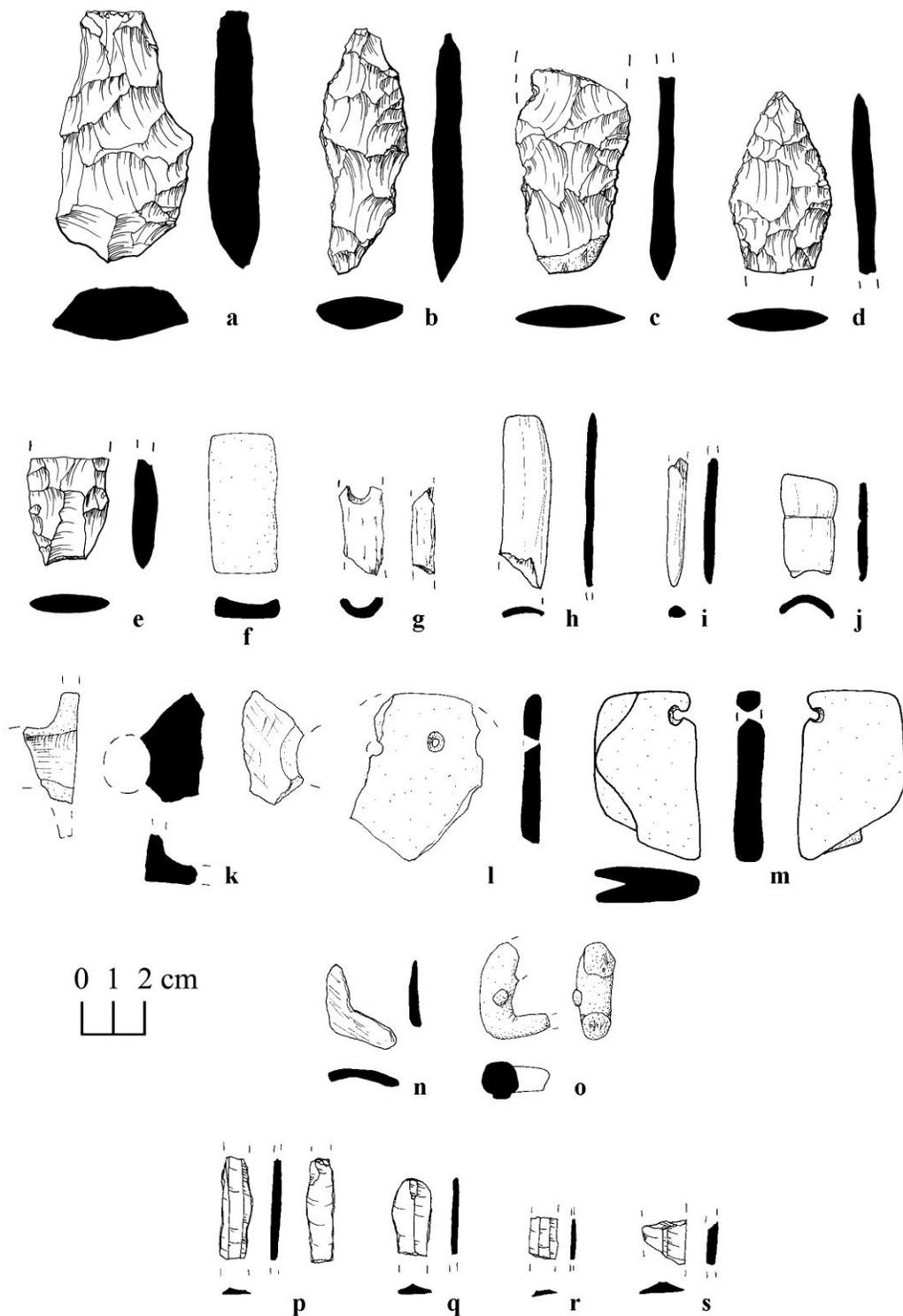


Figure 74: Artifactual materials from excavation into Structure I23 (Operation C211B): a.-e. worked chert bifaces; f. modified river pebble; g.-j. worked bone; k. quartzite earflare fragment; l. drilled slate mirror back; m. crack-laced sherd; n. worked shell; o. pottery figurine arm; p.-q. partial obsidian blades (associated with S.D. C211B-6).

excv. C211B

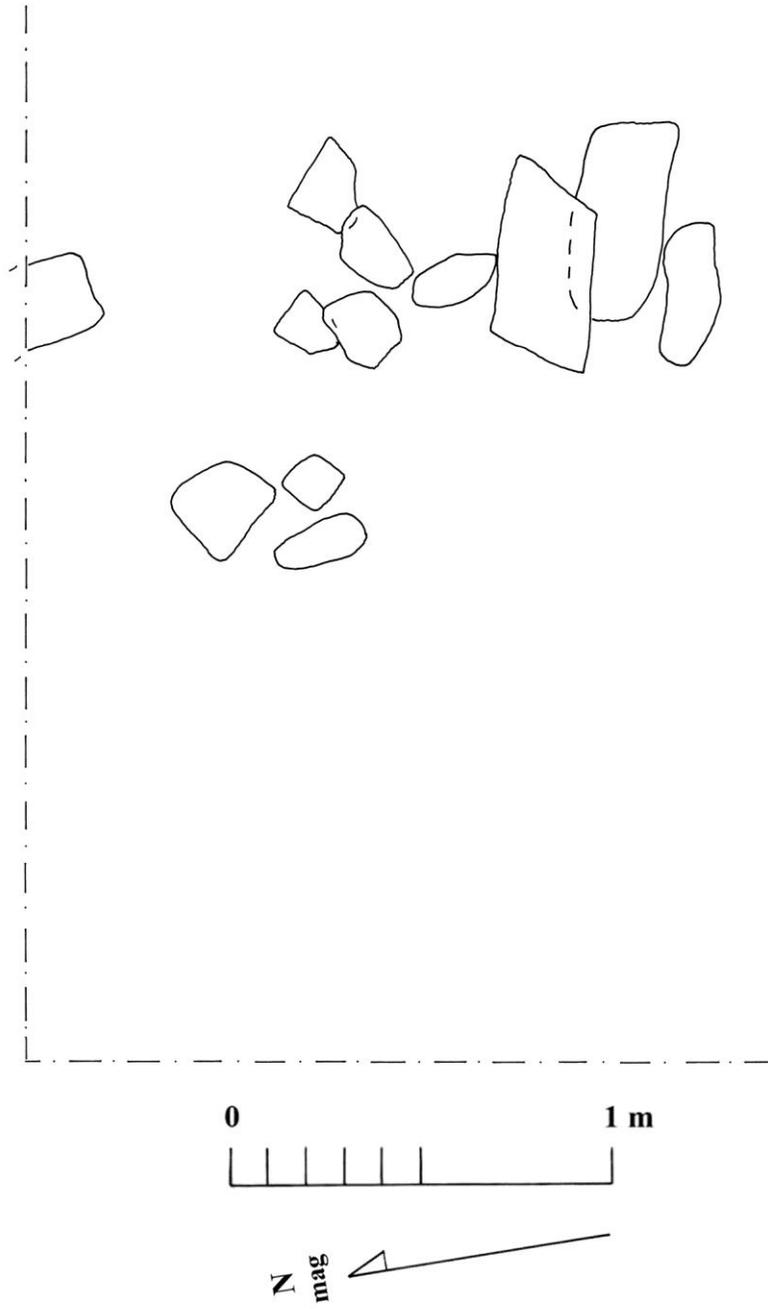
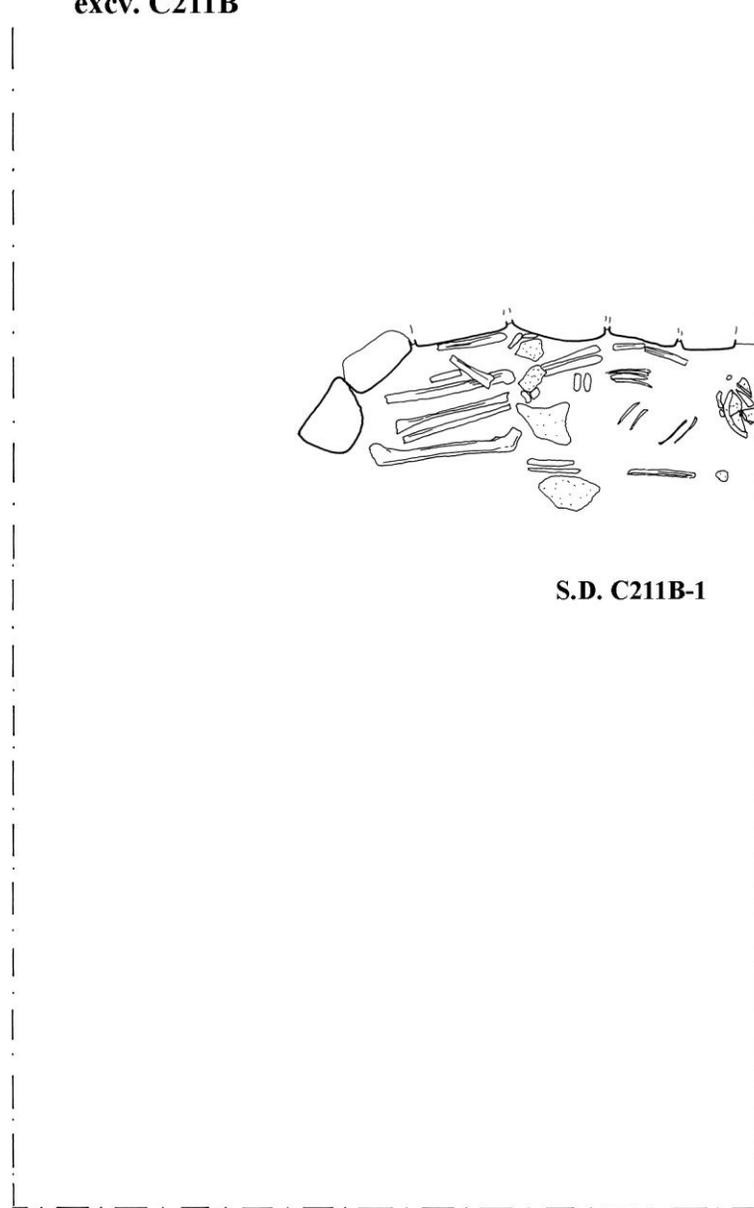


Figure 75: Plan of capstones above S.D. C211B-1 in Operation C211B.

exc. C211B



S.D. C211B-1

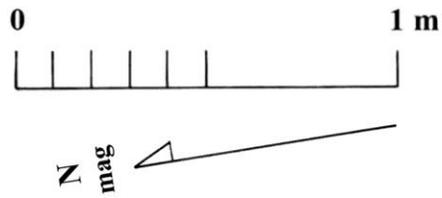


Figure 76: Plan of S.D. C211B-1.

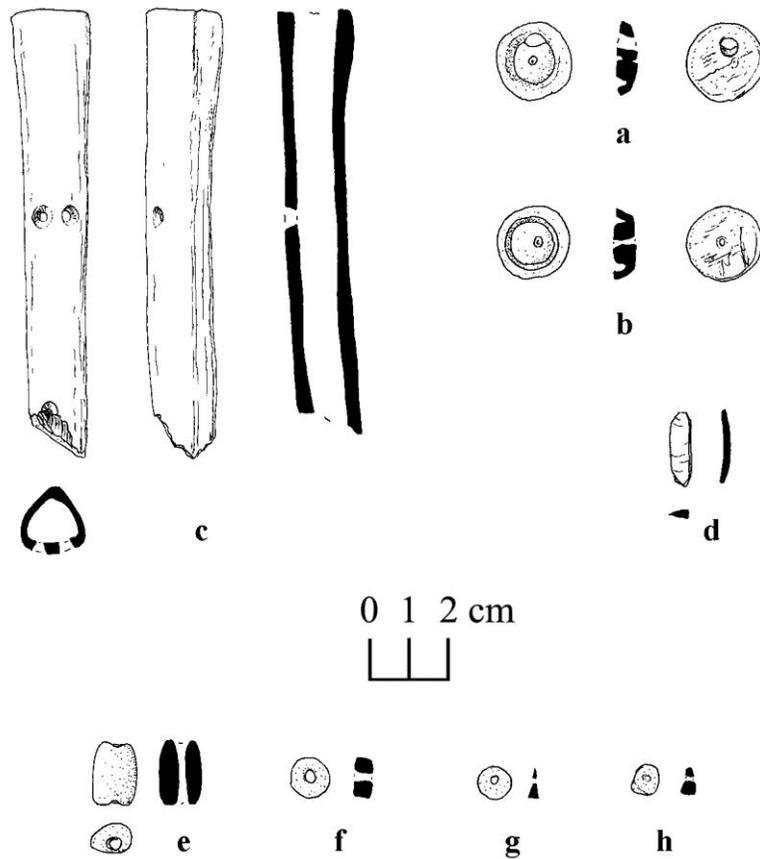
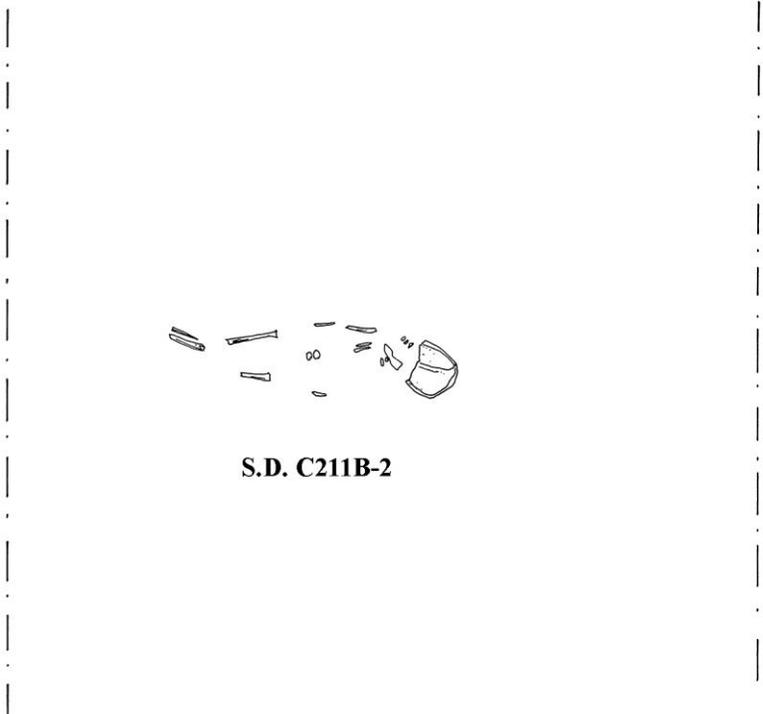


Figure 77: Artifactual materials associated with S.D. C211B-1 (a.-d.) and S.D. C211B-2 (e.-h.): a., b. worked shell earflares; c. worked bone tube; d. worked bone; e.-h. shell beads.



Figure 78: Photographs of S.D. C211B-2 (upper left), S.D.s C211B-3 and 4 (upper right), and S.D.s C211B-6 and 7 (bottom).

excv. C211B



S.D. C211B-2

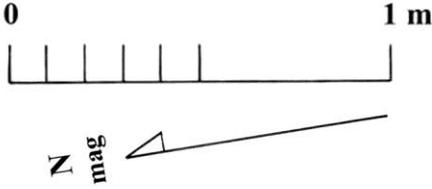


Figure 79: Plan of S.D. C211B-2 in Operation C211B.

excv. C211B

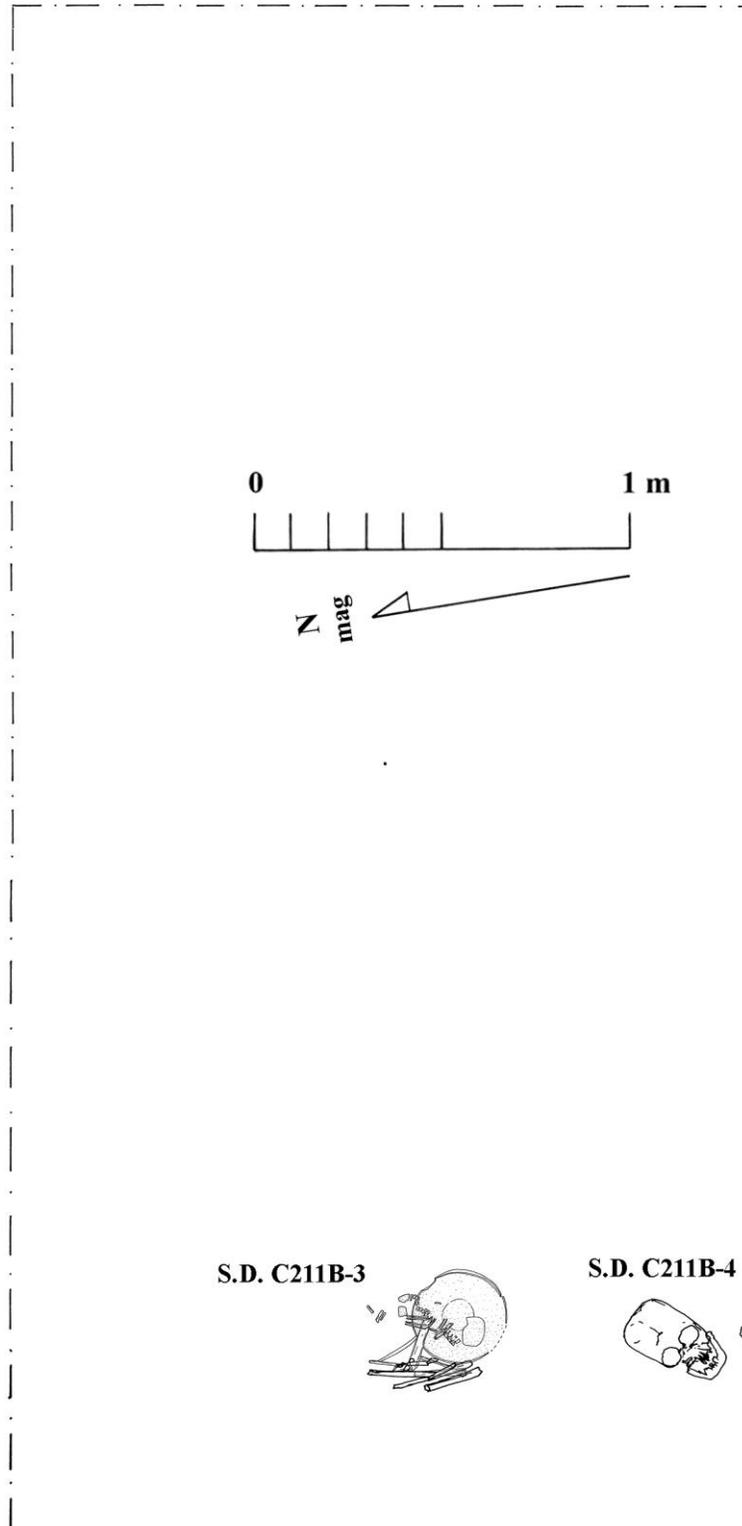


Figure 80: Plan of S.D. C211B-3 and C211B-4 in Operation C211B.

excav. C211B

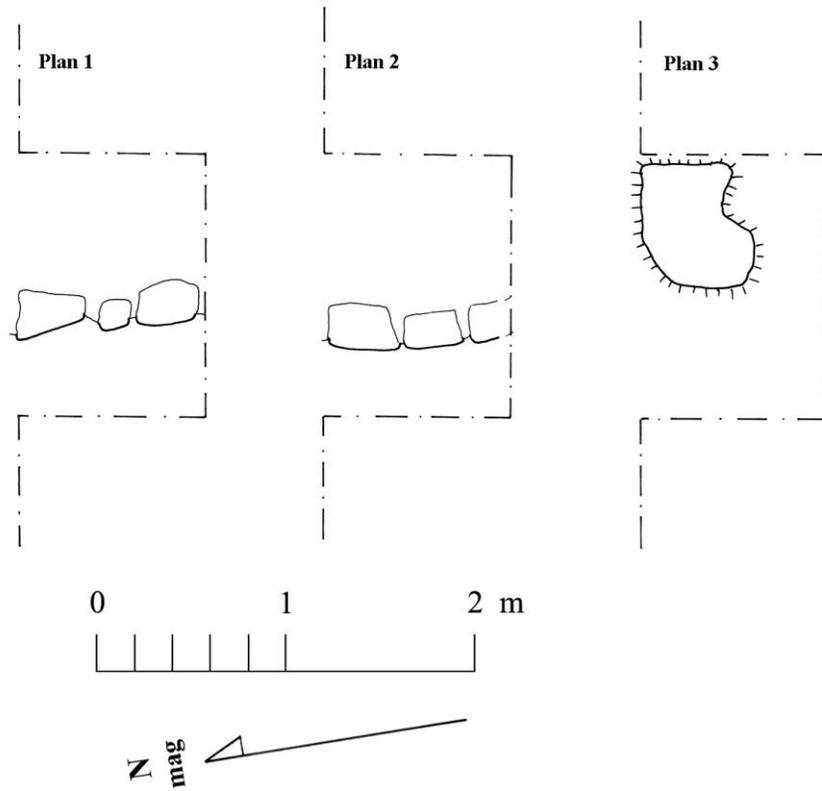


Figure 81: Plans of the excavation extension in Operation C211B over S.D. C211B-5.

excv. C211B

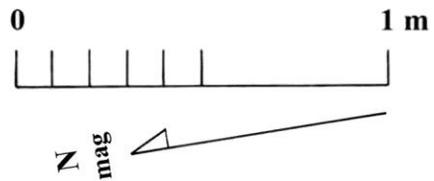
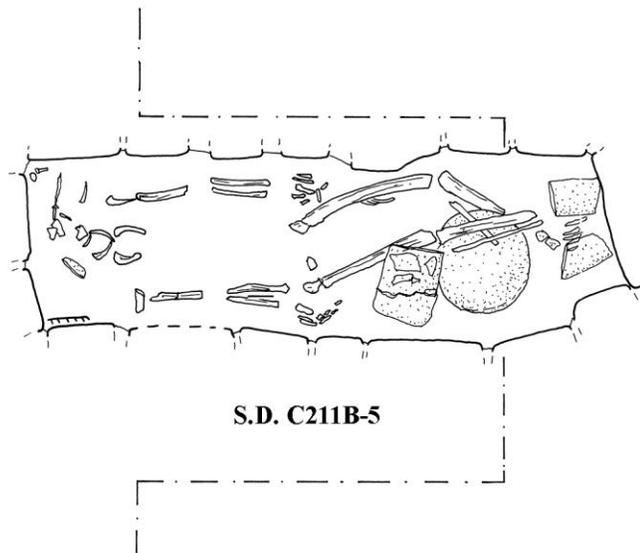
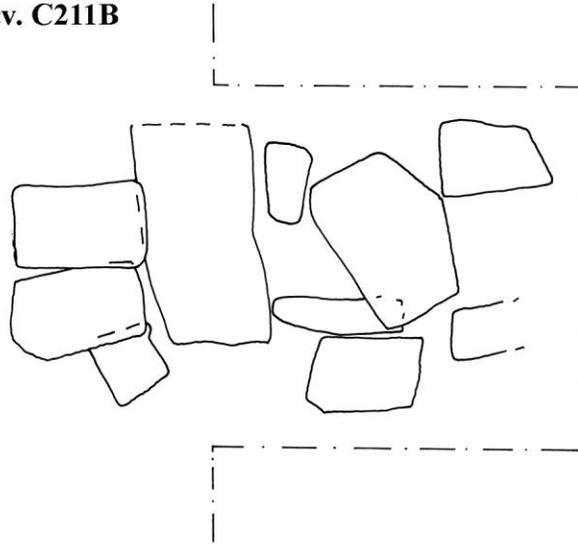


Figure 82: Plans showing capstones and burial constituting S.D. C211B-5.

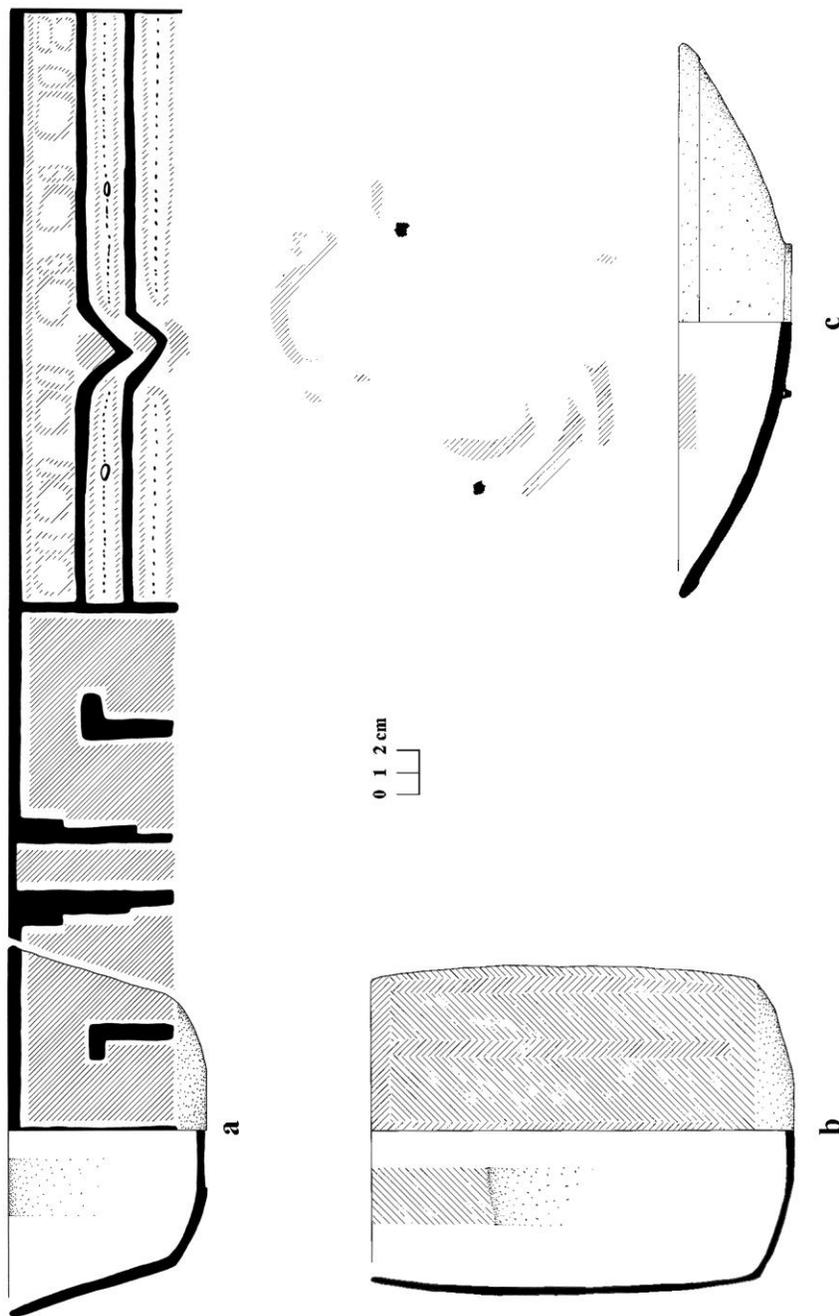


Figure 83: Pottery vessels from S.D. C211B-5: a. Monstera Orange Polychrome; b. possibly Desquite Red-on-Orange; c. Machete Orange Polychrome.

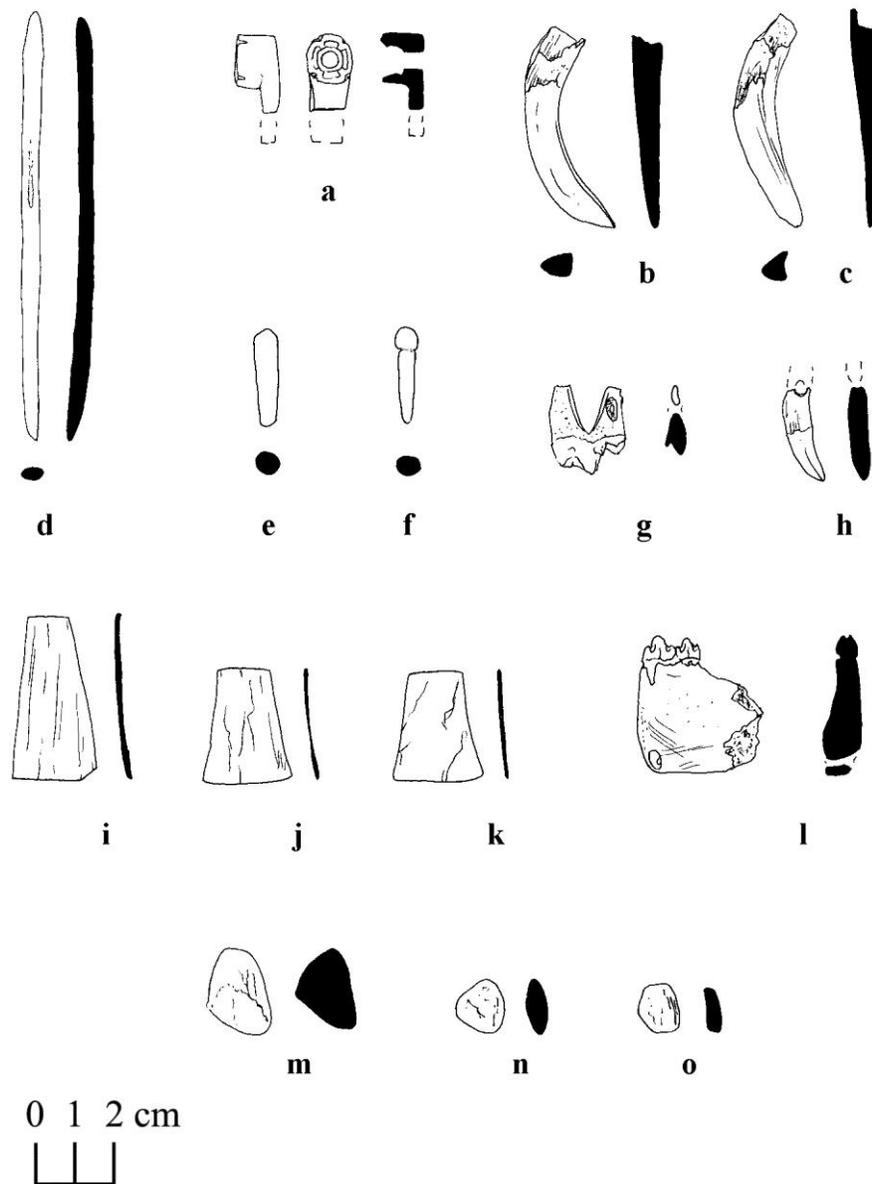


Figure 84: Artifactual material associated with S.D. C211B-5: a. shell earflare; b., c. large animal canines; d. worked bone pin; e., f. shell pins for earflares; g., h. drilled animal teeth; i.-k. worked shell, possibly tweezers; l. drilled dog mandible; m.-n. jadeite pieces.

excav. C211B

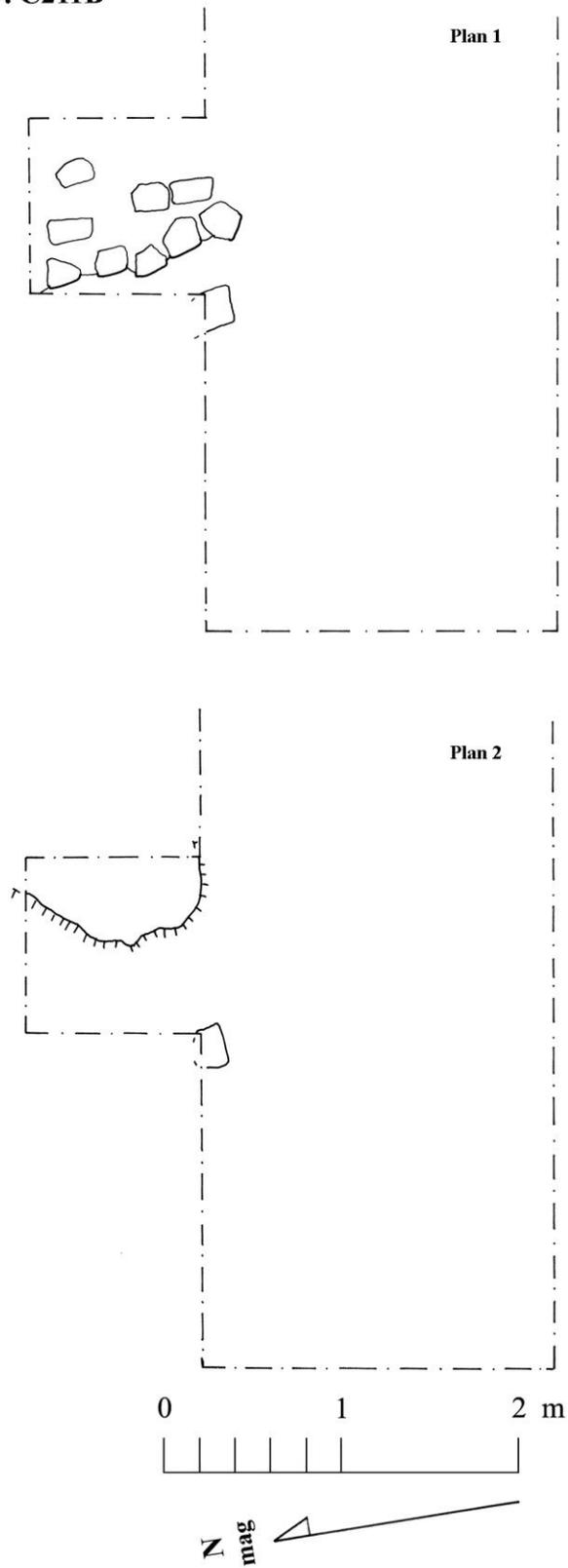


Figure 85: Plans for the excavation extension in Operation C211B over S.D. C211B-6.

excv. C211B

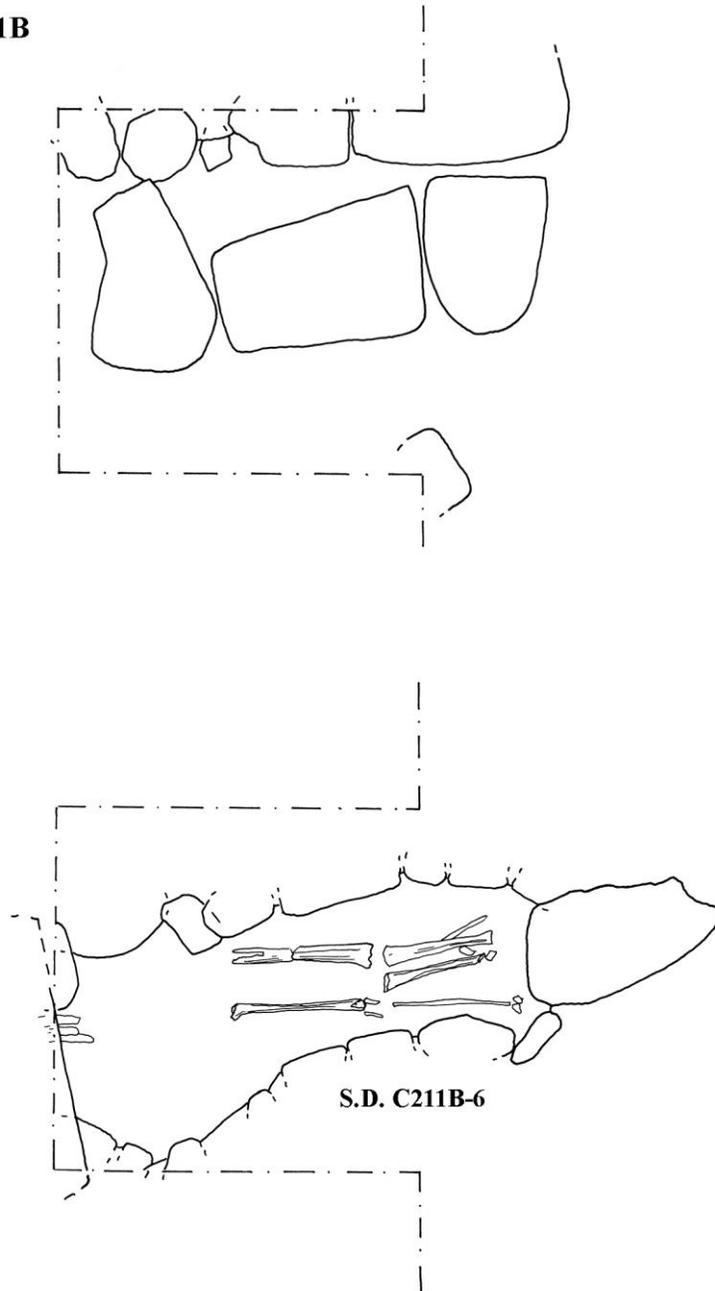


Figure 86: Plans showing the capstones and burial constituting S.D. C211B-6.

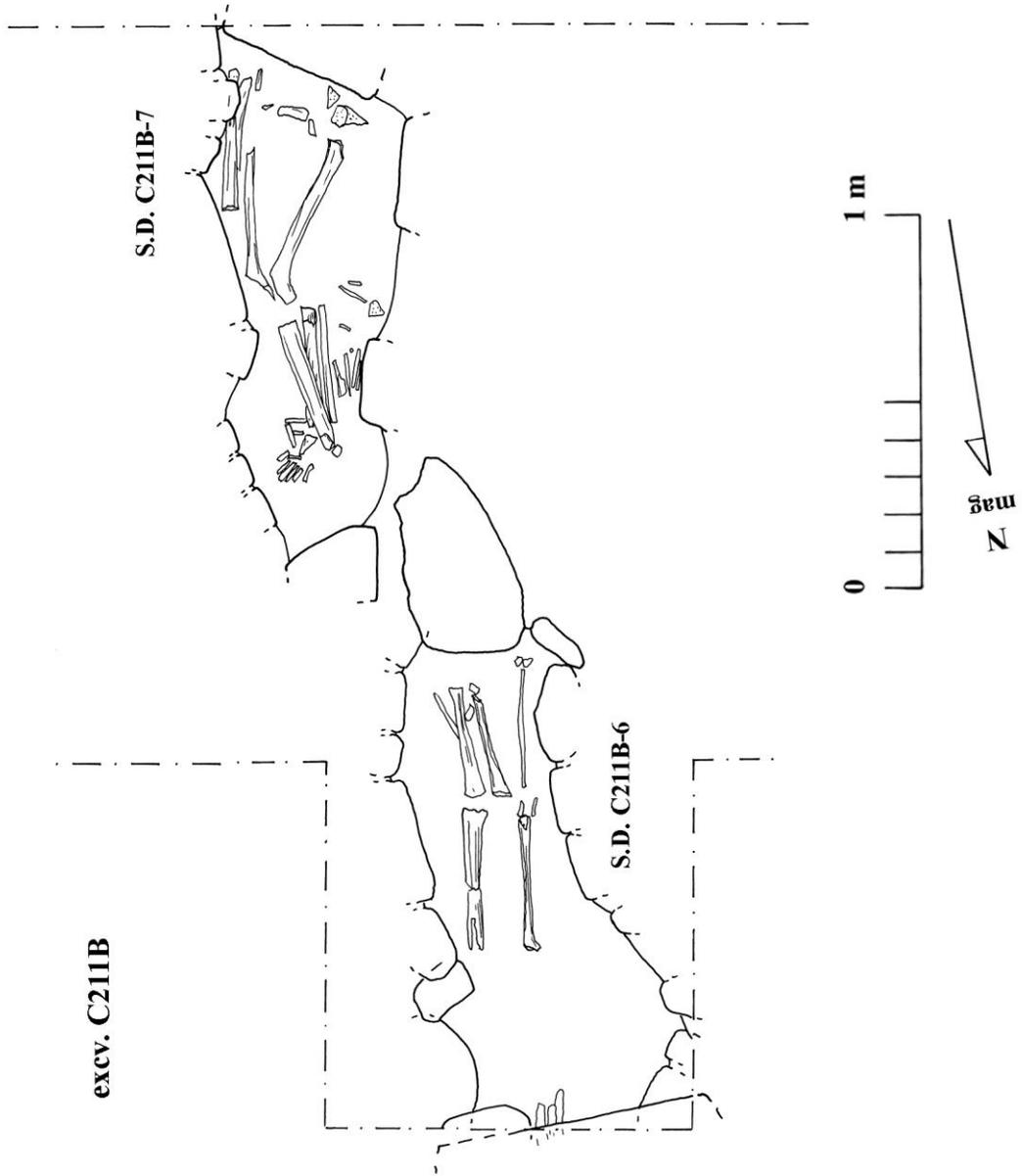
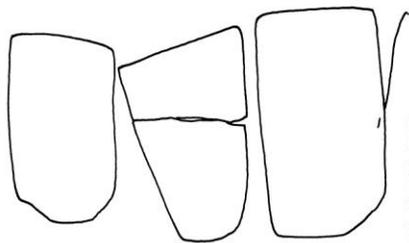


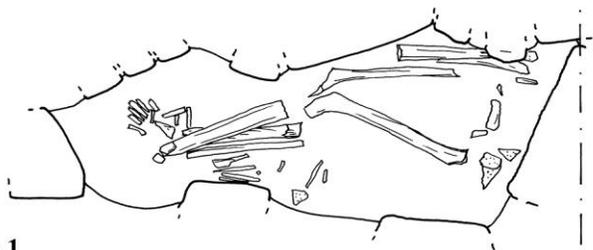
Figure 87: Plan showing the relationship between S.D. C211B-6 and S.D. C211B-7.

excav. C211B

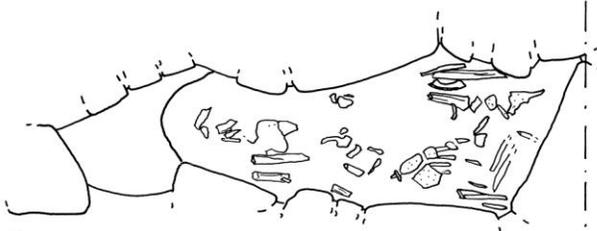
capstones



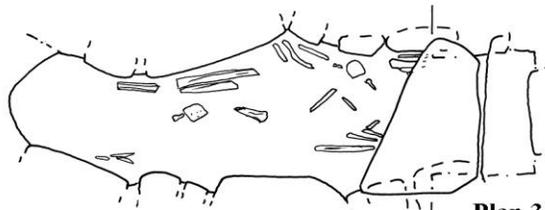
Plan 1



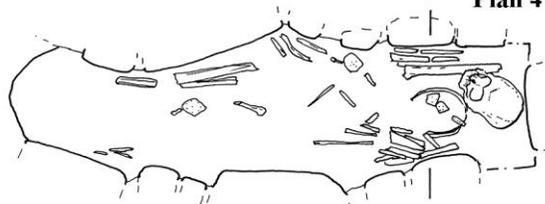
Plan 2



Plan 3



Plan 4



S.D. C211B-7



Figure 88: Detailed plans of the capstones and different levels of S.D. C211B-7.



Figure 89: Photographs of excavations in Structure I22 (Operation C211C; upper) and Structure I24 (Operation C211D; bottom) in Rogue Group.

**Caracol Structure I22
excav. C211C**

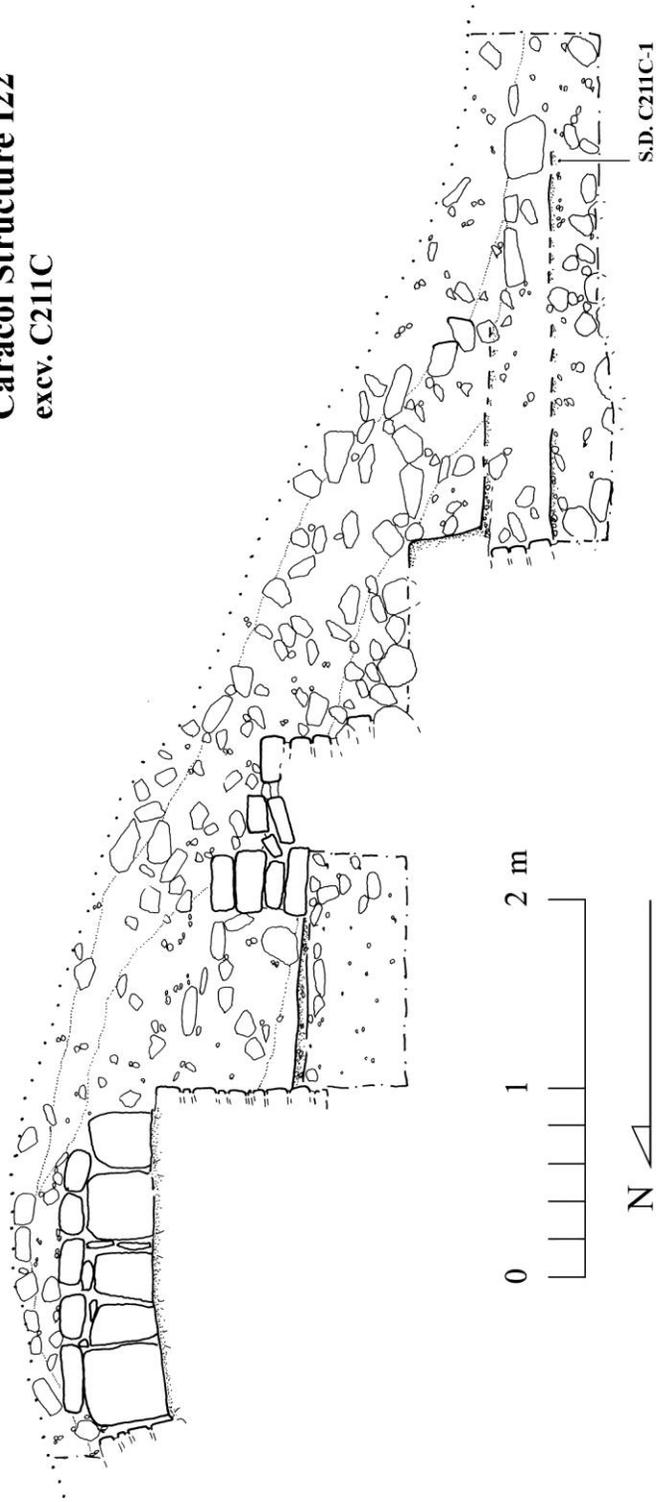


Figure 90: Section through Structure I22 (Operation C211C) in Rogue Group.

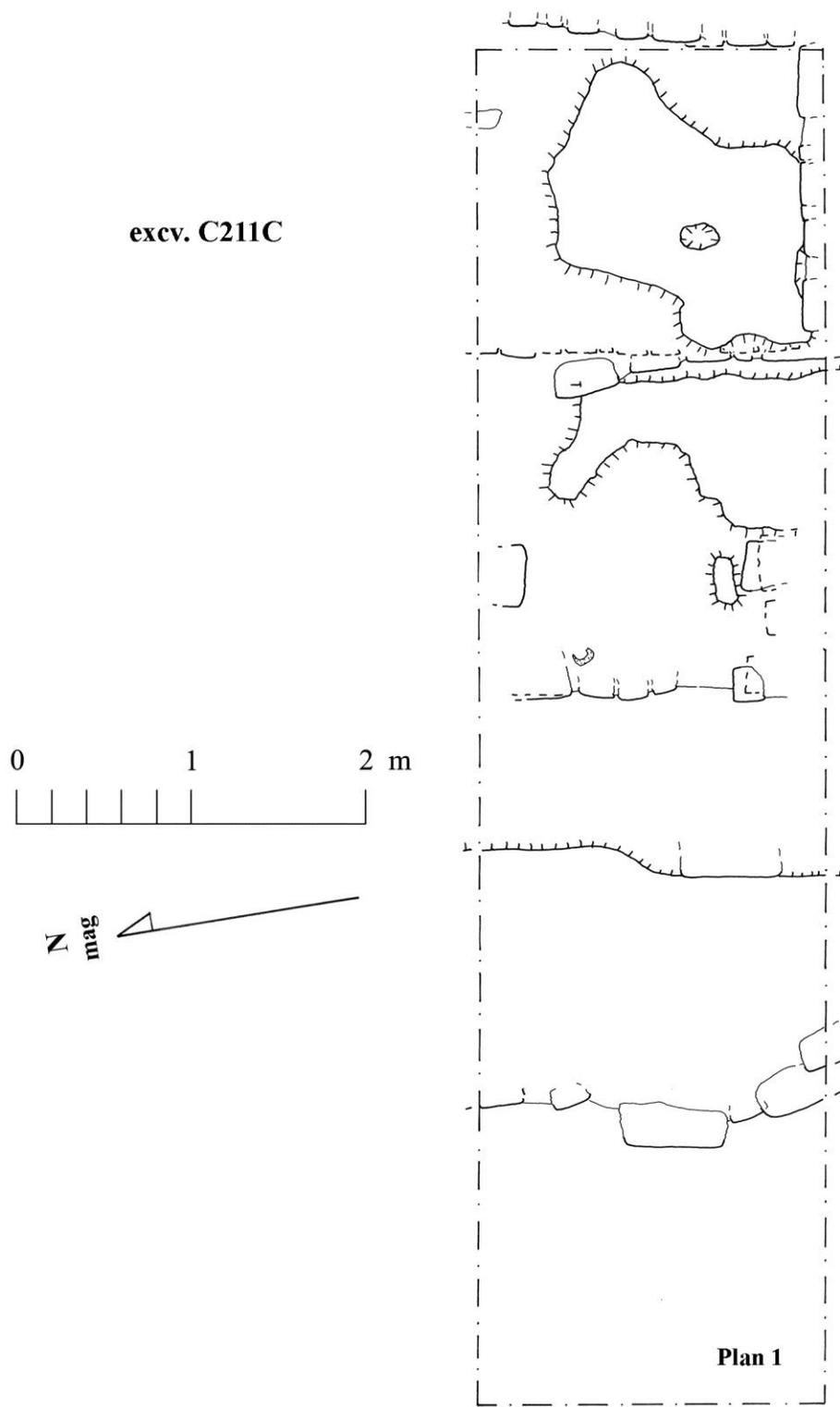


Figure 91: Plan 1 of Structure I22 (Operation C211C).

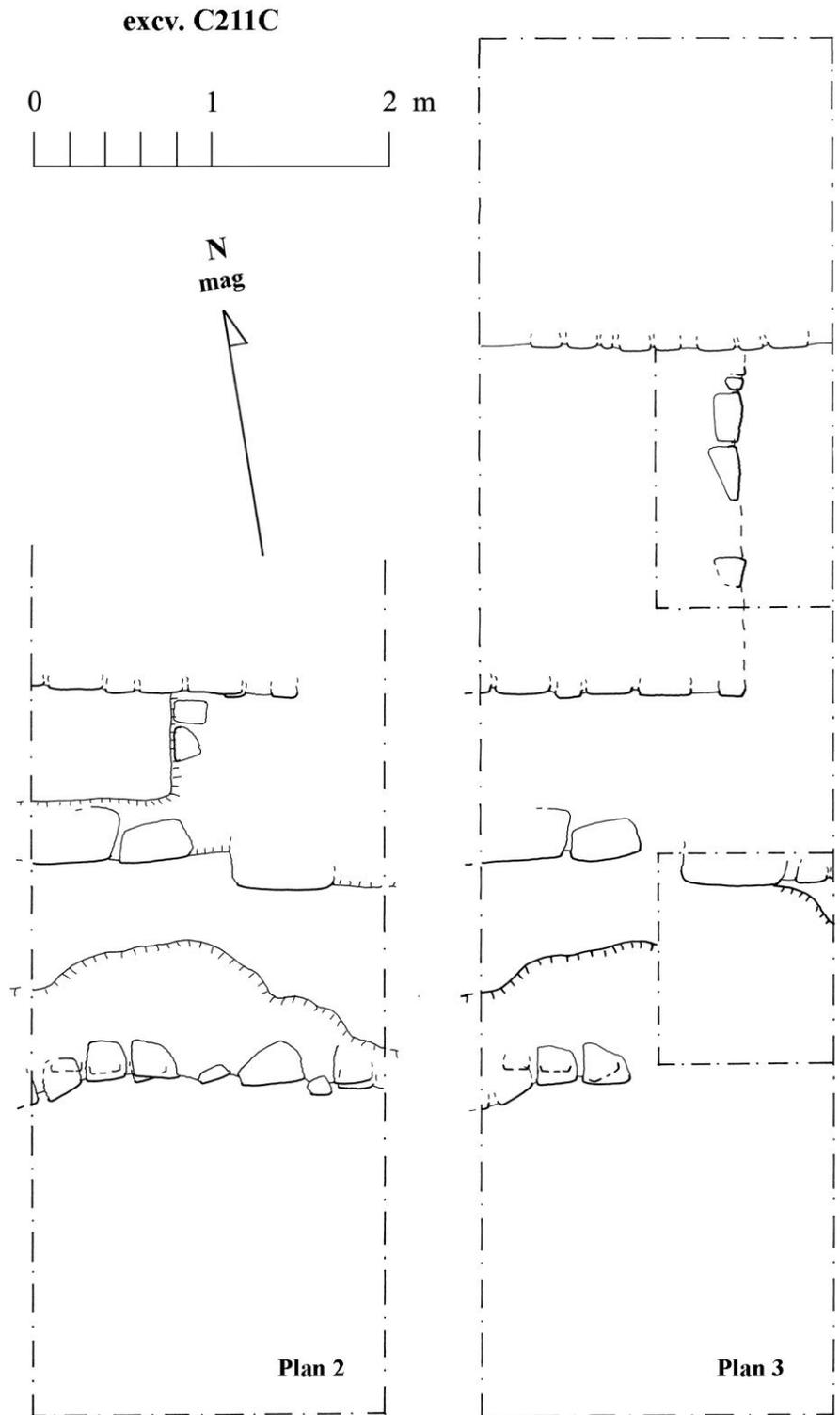


Figure 92: Plans 2 and 3 of Structure I22 (Operation C211C).

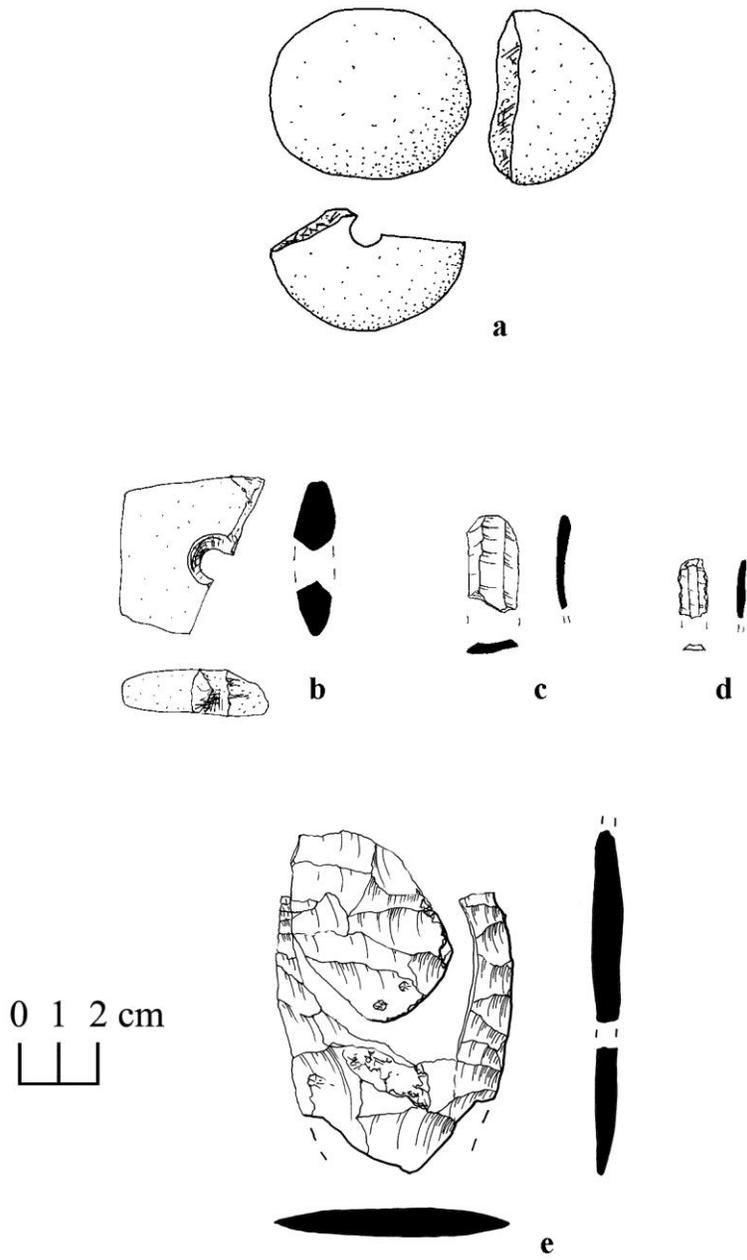


Figure 93: Artifactual materials recovered from Operations C211C (a., c., d.) and C211D (b., e.):
 a. partial stone bead; b. broken drilled slate artifact; c., d. partial obsidian blades;
 e. shattered chert biface.

excv. C211C

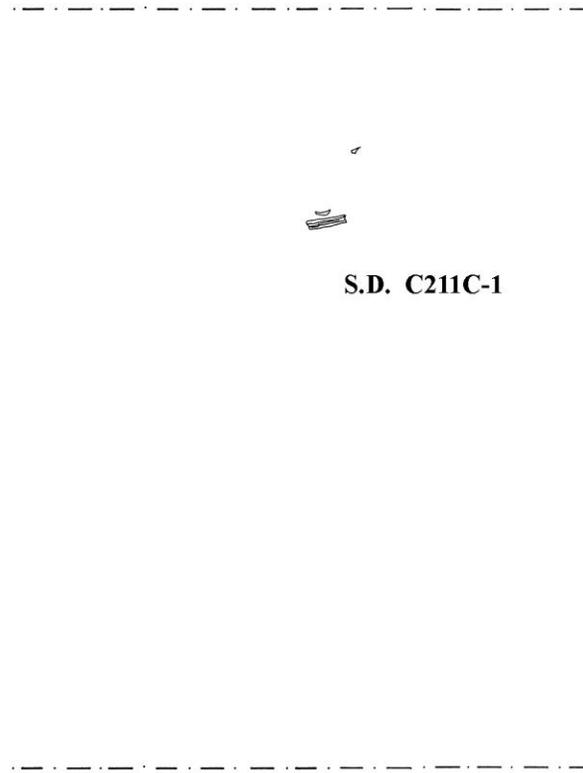


Figure 94: Plan showing location of S.D. C211C-1.

Caracol Structure I24
excav. C211D

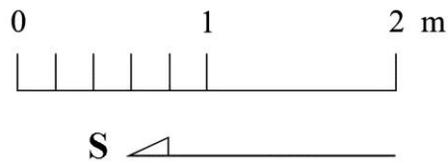
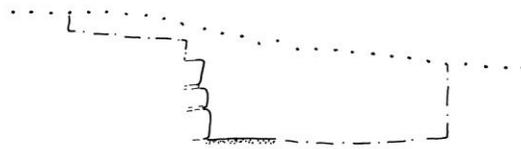


Figure 95: Section through Structure I24 (Operation C211D) in Rogue Group.

excv. C211D

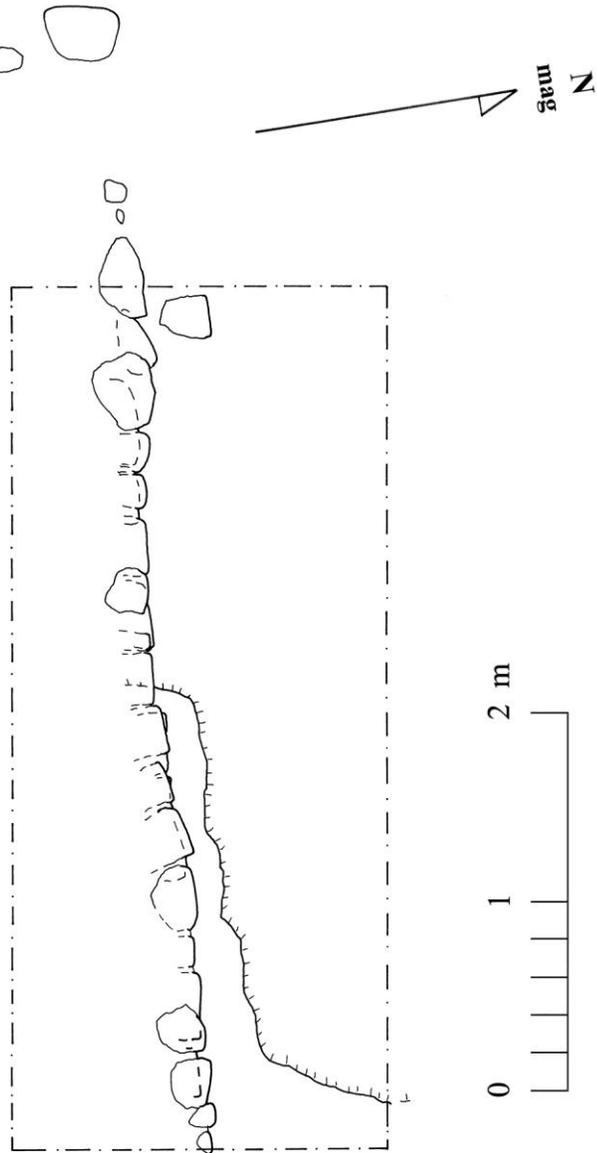


Figure 96: Plan of Structure I24 (Operation C211D), showing corner of platform to the right.

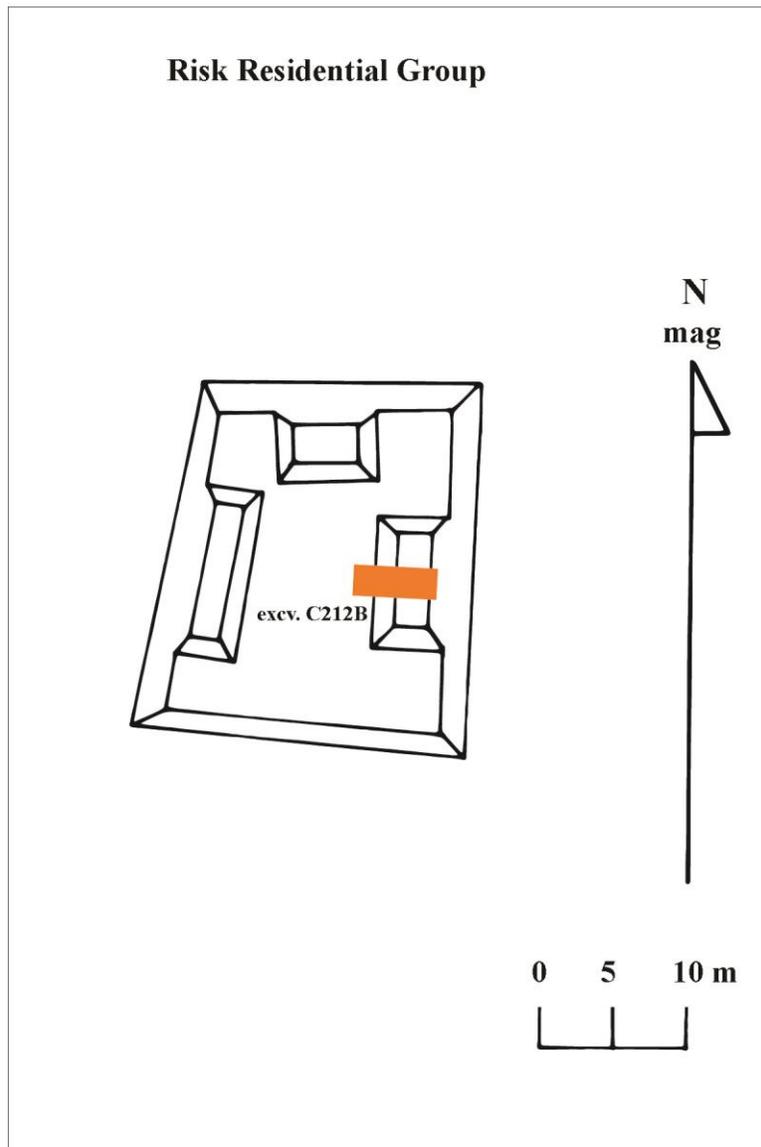


Figure 97: Plan of Risk Group, showing location of Operation C212B.



Figure 98: Photograph of excavation in Structure I17 (Operation C212B) in Risk Group.

**Caracol Structure I17
excav. C212B**

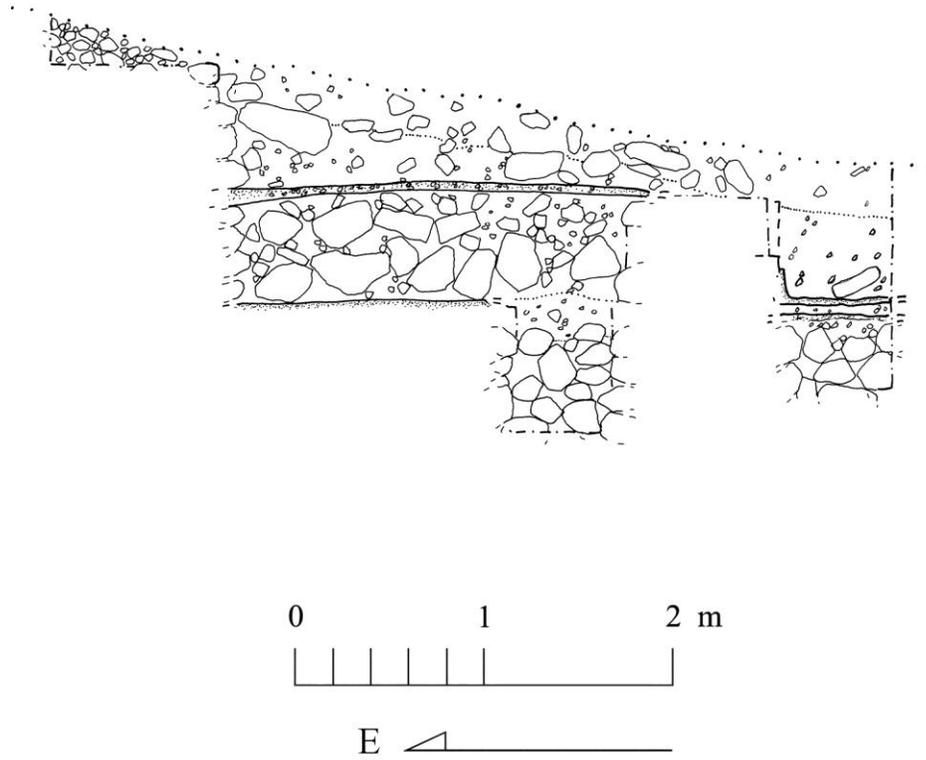


Figure 99: Section through Structure I17 (Operation C212B) in Risk Group.

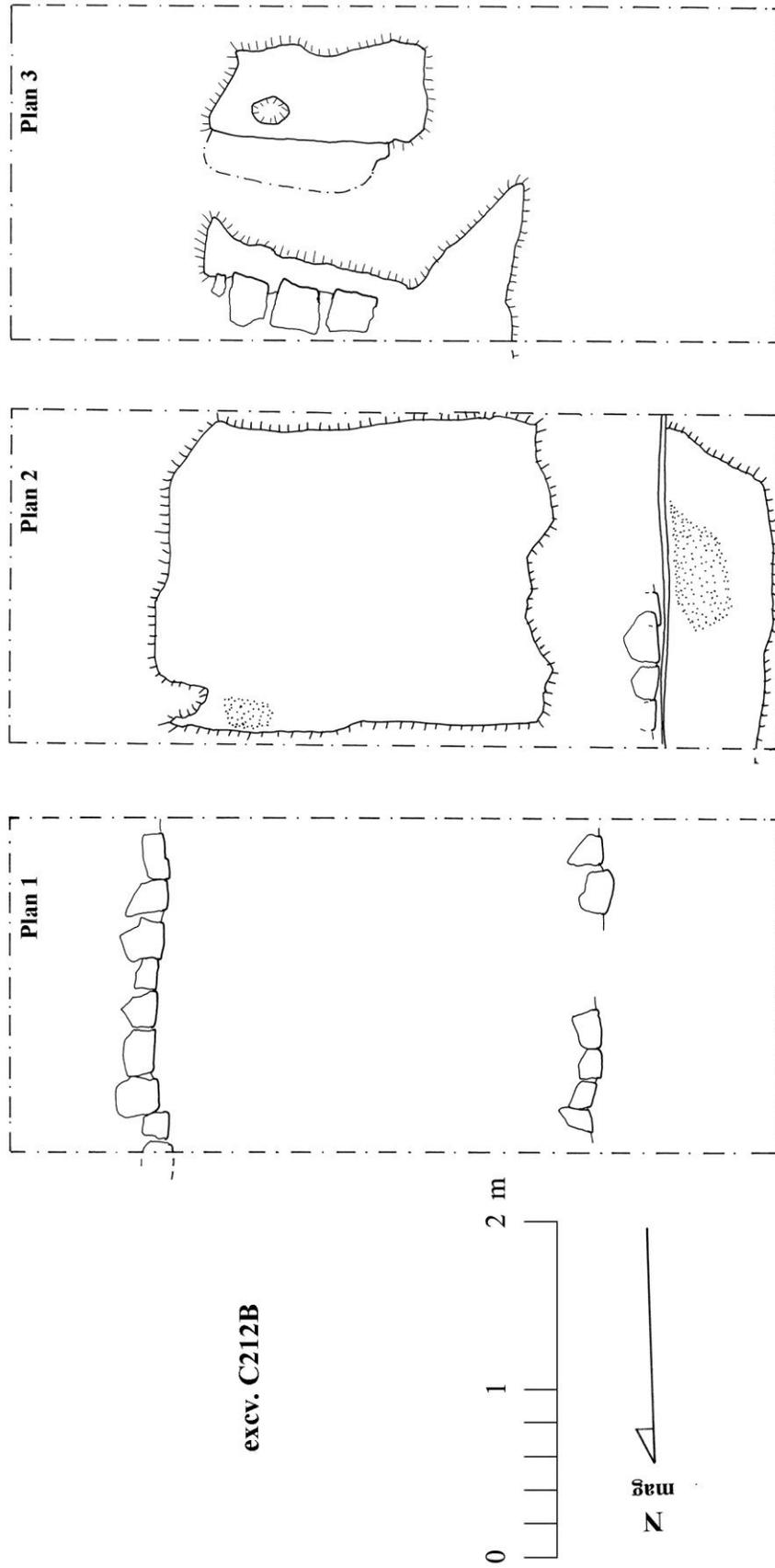


Figure 100: Plans of Structure II7 (Operation C212B).

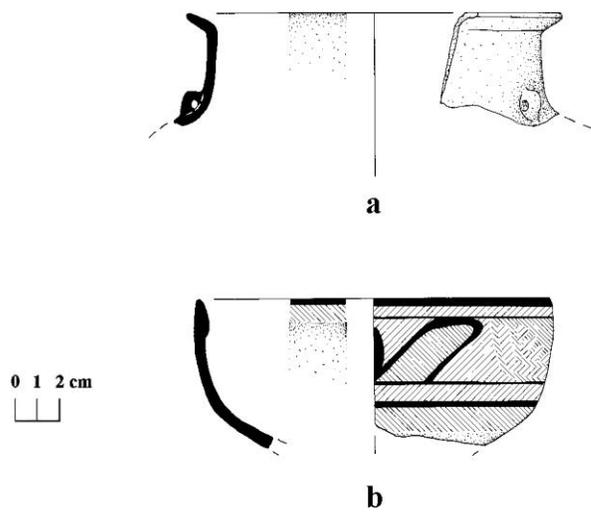


Figure 101: Partial pottery vessels associated with Operation C212B: a. undesignated type; b. Caldero Buff Polychrome.