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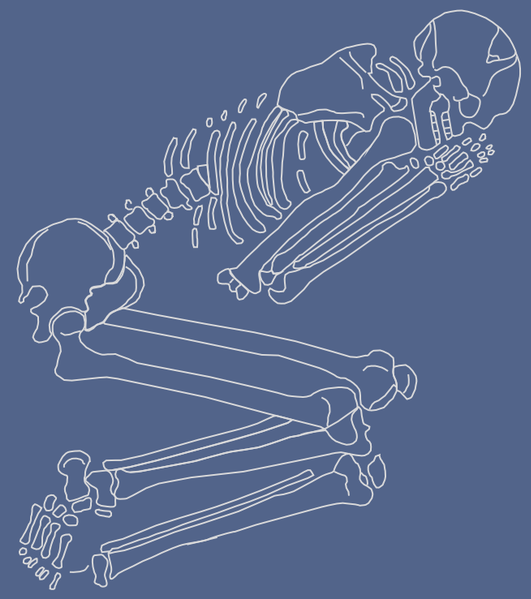
Settlements of Life and Death. Studies from Prehistory to Middle Ages

Proceedings of an International Colloquium Tulcea, 25th-28th of May 2016

Editors
Florin GOGÂLTAN
Sorin-Cristian AILINCĂI



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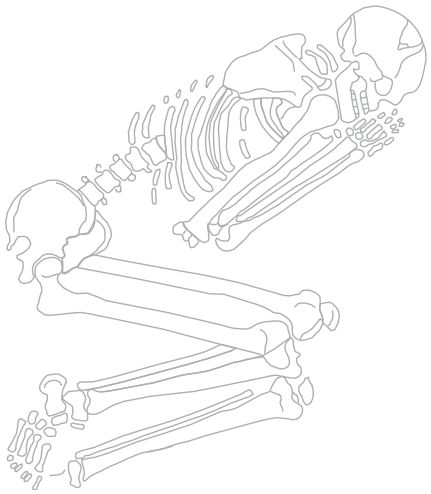

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"FUNERAL" AND "DOMESTIC" IN THE LATE IRON AGE SETTLEMENT AT BUCUREŞTI–*BĂNEASA, STRADA GÂRLEI* (SOUTHERN ROMANIA)

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Abstract: *The relationship between the deposition of human bodies in the domestic space and the deposition of isolated human bones and body parts in different contexts is a characteristic of the Late Iron Age north to the Lower Danube. The diversity of deposition practice also appears in the case of the dog skeletons found in the settlements. In the present article, we try to interpret these deposition practices using as a case study some contexts from the Late Iron Age settlement at Bucureşti-Băneasa, Strada Gârlei, in southern Romania (dated between the 2nd and the 1st century BC), investigated between 2008 and 2013. Children skeletons were discovered in C555 and C519A pits. The comparison between the structure of these pits reveals a certain contrast between their "domestic" aspect (similar to the other pits from the same settlement) and the formalism of the children deposition: placing them on the southern edge of the pits, the deposition at a certain moment of the filling, the crouched position on the right side, a certain bipolarity of the orientation of the bodies. This contrast is highlighted more clearly by the deposition of the child from pit C519A, that (also due to the discreet presence of the domestic waste) evokes a certain ceremonial gesture, characteristic of a burial act. Furthermore, a necklace of glass beads and bronze links (probably combined with iron links) builds the funerary identity of the child. In the case of pit C555, the elements with funeral characteristic are included in the continuous stream of the pits' filling, marked by the uniformity of the its content composition, as well as by the presence of the domestic waste underneath, among and above the human body. The "melting" until blurring of the images that evoke "the domestic" and "the funerary" is highlighted by the presence of a perforated calvaria fragment belonging to an young adult in the filling of pit-house C585. The fragment was treated like an artefact, in the sense that it has been preserved, used and discarded in the pit-house filling similarly to the other disused objects.*

The same complete-fragment concept, as well as the relationship between the structural character of the deposition (similar to a funeral), and the deposition of the disused objects and consumption waste can be also established in the case of the dog skeletons and of the isolated bones. Although the processing of the faunal material

from the whole settlement is in a preliminary stage, a certain opposition relationship between the age of the human skeletons and that of the dog skeletons emerged. On the one hand, the complete human skeletons belong to children, while the only skeleton fragment belongs to an adult. On the other hand, the complete dog skeletons belong to mature or old individuals, while the isolated bones discarded in the filling belong mainly to juveniles.

In a wider geographical area, the relationship between the deposition of bodies and the community of domestic waste and the disused objects with which they are associated in the filling of pits often fades the borders between different contexts (habitation, grave, "pit fields", "places of worship"). The "funerary" and the "domestic" images are transferred from a domain of the social space to another; they are combined in diverse material communities, building distinct meanings of an "everyday domestic life" impregnated by "funerary" and mortuary practices that are incorporated in the "domestic" materiality. The everyday space of habitation is a combination of practices which join to the "domestic" images of its death. The death of houses, workshops, and pits is knitted in certain significant moments with the death of objects, people, and dogs.

Rezumat: *Relaţia dintre depunerea în spaţiul domestic a corpurilor umane şi depunerea în diferite contexte de oase umane izolate sau părţi din corp este o caracteristică a celei de-a doua epoci a fierului din spaţiul de la nordul Dunării de Jos. Această diversitate a practicii depunerii există şi în cazul prezenţei scheletelor de câini în aşezări. În articolul de faţă încercăm să interpretăm aceste practici de depunere folosind drept studiu de caz câteva contexte din aşezarea din a doua epocă a fierului de la Bucureşti–*Băneasa, Strada Gârlei*, din sudul României (datată în sec. II-I a.Chr.), cercetată în anii 2008 şi 2013. În gropile C555 şi C519A au fost descoperite schelete de copii. Compararea structurii acestor gropi relevă un anumit contrast între aspectul „domestic" al acestora (similar celorlalte gropi din cuprinsul aşezării) şi formalismul depunerii copiilor: plasarea la marginea de sud a gropilor, depunerea la un anumit moment al umplerii acestora, poziţia chircită pe partea dreaptă, o anumită bipolaritate a orientării corpurilor. Acest contrast este evidenţiat mai clar de depunerea copilului în groapa C519A, care (şi datorită prezenţei discrete a resturilor menajere) evocă o anumită gestică ceremonială, caracteristică actului înmormântării. În plus, un colier de mărgele de sticlă şi verigi de bronz (combinate, probabil, cu verigi de fier) construieşte identitatea funerară a copilului. În cazul gropii C555, elementele cu caracter funerar sunt incluse în fluxul continuu al umplerii gropii, marcat de uniformitatea compoziţiei umpluturii, dar şi de prezenţa resturilor „menajere" sub, printre şi deasupra corpului uman. Topirea până la indistincţie a imaginilor care evocă „domesticul" şi „funerarul" este subliniată de prezenţa în umplutura gropii bordeiului C585 a unui fragment perforat de calotă aparţinând unui adult tânăr. Fragmentul de calotă a fost tratat ca un artefact, în sensul că a fost păstrat, utilizat şi aruncat în groapa bordeiului într-un mod similar celorlalte obiecte scoase din uz.*

În cazul scheletelor şi oaselor izolate de câini se constată aceeaşi prezenţă întreg-fragmentar, aceeaşi relaţie dintre caracterul structurat al depunerii (asemănătoare unei înmormântări) şi depunerea similară a obiectelor scoase din uz şi a resturilor consumului. Cu toate că prelucrarea materialului faunistic din întreaga aşezare este într-un stadiu preliminar, se conturează totuşi o anumită relaţie de opoziţie între vârsta stabilită pentru scheletele umane şi de câini. Pe de o parte, scheletele umane descoperite întregi aparţin unor copii, în schimb singurul fragment (calota) provine din craniul unui adult. Pe de altă parte, scheletele de câini aparţineau unor indivizi maturi sau bătrâni, în schimb oasele izolate, aruncate în umplutură, proveneau cu preponderenţă de la exemplare tinere.

Într-un spaţiu geografic mai larg, relaţia biunivocă dintre depunerea de corpuri şi comunitatea de resturi menajere şi obiecte scoase din uz cu care acestea se asociază în umplutura gropilor estompează adeseori graniţele dintre diferite contexte (locuire, mormânt, „câmp de gropi", „locuri de cult"). Imaginile „funerare" şi „domestice" sunt transferate dintr-un domeniu într-altul al spaţiului social, se combină în diverse comunităţi materiale, construiesc semnificaţii diverse ale unui „cotidian domestic" impregnat de „funerar" şi ale unor practici mortuare care incorporează materialităţi „domestice". Spaţiul cotidian, al locuirii este un amestec de practici care alătură „domesticului" imagini ale morţii acestuia. Moartea locuinţelor, atelierelor şi gropilor este împletită în anumite momente semnificative cu moartea obiectelor, oamenilor şi câinilor.

Keywords: *Late Iron Age, burials in the settlement, isolated human bones, dog burials, "domestic waste".*
Cuvinte cheie*: a doua epocă a fierului, înmormântări în aşezare, oase umane izolate, înmormântări de câini, „resturi menajere".*

INTRODUCTION

The presence of complete or fragmented skeletons in "non-funerary" spaces from the Late Iron Age is interpreted by some researchers as a possible clue for discoveries with a "sacrificial" characteristic[1]. As it has been observed, most of the children skeletons from such contexts are incomplete, often with traces of sectioning or smashing[2], observations that led to different assumptions about sacrifices, "ritual operations of trenching corpses", or about "practices involving exposure/decomposing"[3]. Without rejecting these assumptions, in the present paper we try to shift the focus on the interpretation of the endpoint of these possible (successions of) practices, *i.e.* the deposition of bodies or body parts in different contexts which could mark specific moments, with certain meanings referring to the status of individuals "buried", or to the time and space of the community.

As it is emphasized by the contexts from the settlement at Bucureşti–*Strada Gârlei*, in southern Romania, the pit-houses, the workshops, and the pits have a biography that continues after the end of their function. This post-abandonment biography is materialized by a certain "style of filling" the pits, which is dynamically defined by the movement and succession of gestures and, from a more static perspective, through an "aesthetics" of depositing[4] the disused objects and consumption remnants that provide the final appearance of the pit. Human bodies and scattered bones are introduced in different ways in the abandonment process[5], in the filling flux of the pits, forming different constellation together with the elements of material culture they are associated with. Also, we try to compare the diversity of practices for the deposition of the human body with those reserved for the skeletons and isolated dog bones[6].

These structured depositions of human and animal bodies could be gateways for reading a cultural semantics of the Late Iron Age – to use a concept defined by Jan Assmann who refers to "the great narratives and guiding distinctions that orient a society in the world and in time and that become obvious in its founding myths, symbols, images and literary texts"[7]. From this point of view, the inclusion of bodies of children and dogs in the living space must be related to the renewal of space and to the domestic and funerary practices of the Late Iron Age.[8]

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1 Sîrbu 1985, 104-105; 1993; 1994; 2008; Davâncă 2015, 115.

2 Sîrbu 1985, 90, 92, 95-97; 1988-1989, 69-75; 1993; Sîrbu and Anastasiu 1985, 128; Davâncă 2015, 86, 91-93, 116.

3 Sîrbu 1993; 1994; Davâncă 2015, 86, 91-93, 117.

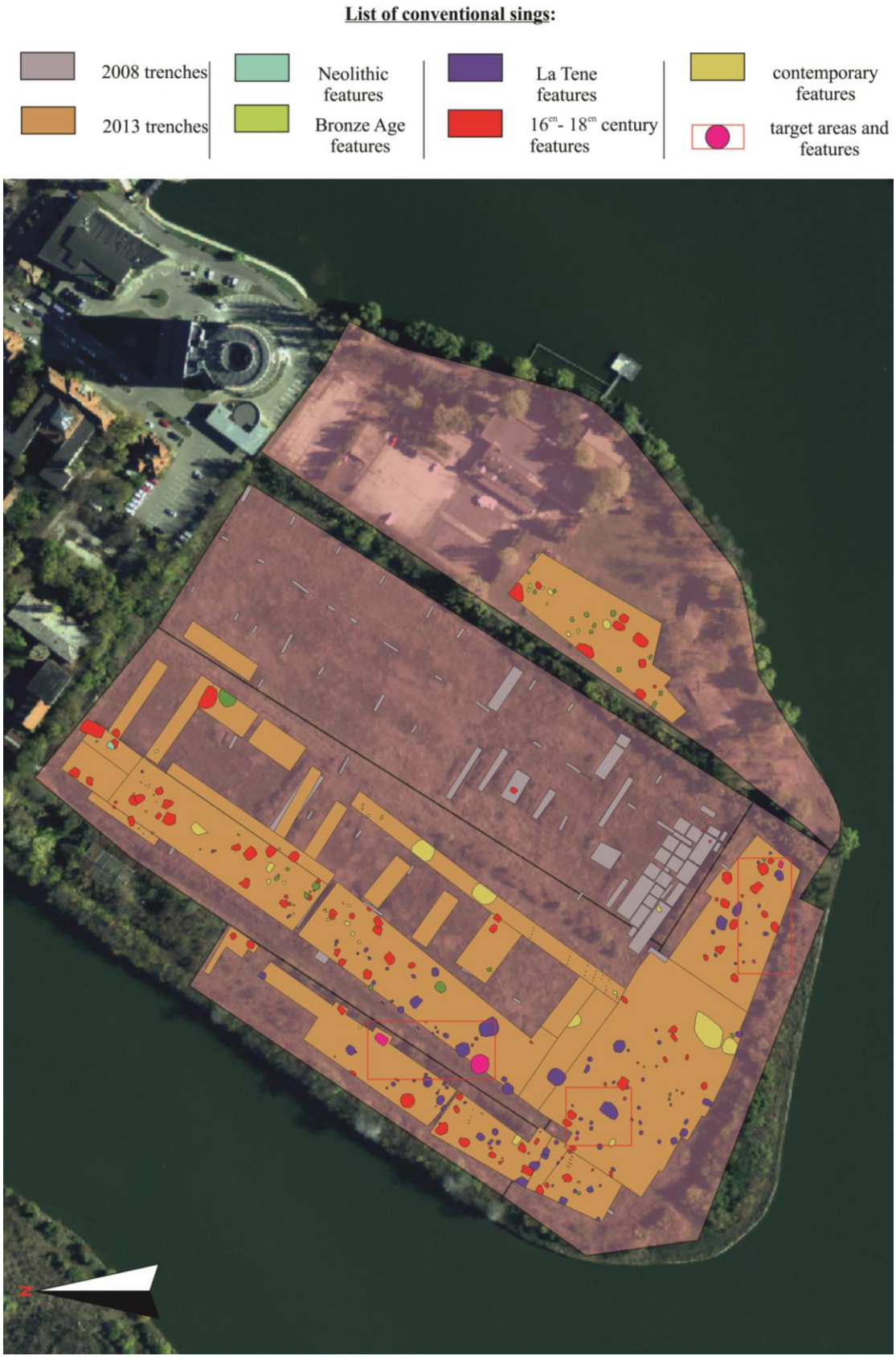
4 *cf.* Pollard 2001.

5 A synthetic discussion about abandonment, Steffens 2016, 21-33.

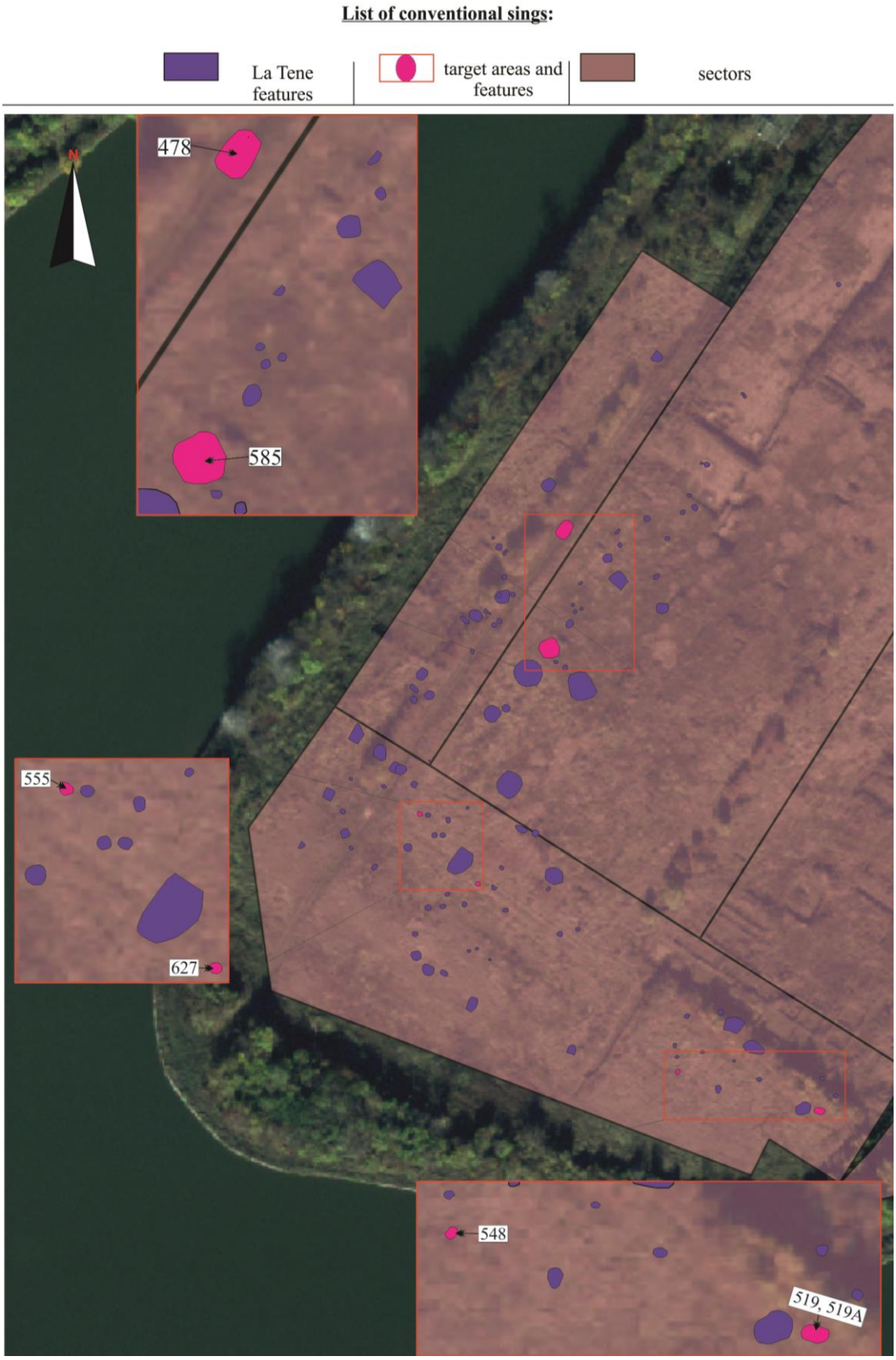
6 The anthropological study was conducted by Gabriel Vasile after the completion of the archaeological excavation. Unfortunately, no anthropologist was involved in the research team of the site, fact that explains the lack of detailed observations. The absence of certain bones is due to the fast pace at which we were obliged to conduct the research. The faunal remains from the discussed contexts were examined by Adrian Bălăşescu, except for the dog skeleton from pit C548 (Popa 2013).

7 Assmann 2012, 20-21.

8 Sîrbu 1993; Sîrbu 1994; Sîrbu 2001; Davâncă 2015.



Pl. 1. Bucureşti-*Băneasa, Strada Gârlei*. Plan of the investigated area.



Pl. 2. Plan of the Late Iron Age settlement.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AT BUCUREŞTI–*STRADA GÂRLEI*

In 2008 and 2013, a team of archaeologists from the National Museum of Romanian History conducted a series of rescue excavations at the Bucureşti–*Băneasa, Strada Gârlei* site, situated on the north bank of Băneasa Lake. The contemporary aspect of the landscape is the result of the extensive works conducted throughout the entire modern period in order to change Colentina River into a string of lakes. Before the transformation during the recent period, the present day "peninsula" was, in fact, a terrain defined by a meander of the river. A study about the evaluation marks and the soil quality[9] shows that "at contact with Băneasa Lake, on a 30 m distance, the terrain descends slowly with a 2-5% slope. The terrain has an absolute altitude of about 85 m towards north and slowly descends to 81 m towards south and east"[10]. The contemporary landscape appearance is the result of the uninterrupted works conducted by the Central Station of Research for the Cultivation and Industrialization of Tobacco from 1925[11] until the early 2000s, when the area was on the point of "deindustrialization" process. As it was observed from the diagnostic stage of research, the terrain was strongly affected by the ploughings, whose numerous traces can be observed in the natural yellow clay deposit in different parts of the terrain[12]. Furthermore, the above-mentioned study established that in 2000 one could still recognize on the surface "micro-depressions and fairly visible mounds of anthropogenic nature, resulting from ploughing with the mouldboard for a long time". The terrain, "over-fertilized with nitrates and cultivated with tobacco – Bărăgan variety", was characterized in concise terms as follows: "Biotope: flat terrain, mechanized 100%"[13]. The site's stratigraphy consists of a natural yellowish clay that contains carbonates and a lot of sand, with a low degree of compactness, medium saturated; this is overlapped by a compact, homogeneous, permeable, medium saturated, yellow-brownish clay deposit which, in turn, it is overlapped by a 0.30-0.35 m layer of cambic Chernozem, sometimes with a brown nuance, homogeneous, compact, with a low degree of saturation and by a 0.10 m greyish vegetal layer with a small degree of compactness, unsaturated, homogeneous, containing organic materials and sometimes contemporary archaeological material[14].

In the arable greyish layer, we discovered objects from different periods originating from the destruction of certain archaeological features, but also from the period in which tobacco was cultivated in the field (industrial parts, coins, even rope fragments); even on the hearth of some destroyed ovens we found contemporary glass fragments. The ploughings and the successive levelling of the terrain have destroyed the different habitation levels, any footpaths, hearths, agglomerations of disused and discarded objects, traces of postholes which held the wooden or adobe structure of constructions. In short, the natural yellow clay deposit is the material support in which the traces of the past were printed, a support which registered only the "underground" dimension of past spaces: the deep part of the

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[9] Conducted in 2000 by the Institute of Pedological Research and Agricultural Chemistry, under contract to The National Society "The Romanian Tobacco".

[10] Dumitru et al. 2000, 5.

[11] When, by a decree was founded the Experimental Institute for the Cultivation and the Fermentation of the Tobacco.

[12] Damian et al. 2014.

[13] Dumitru et al. 2000, 5, 10.

[14] Damian et al. 2014.

construction pits, of the refuse and/or extraction pits, or the pits with other functionality. Taking into account this observation, we adopted a method of mechanical excavation in the open area, keeping only some stratigraphical baulks, which allowed conducting in a short period of time the research of an impressive number of features (about 850) distributed over a large area (Pl. 1). These features are dated to the Neolithic, Bronze Age, Late Iron Age, Early and Late Middle Ages, World War II, but also to the recent and contemporary past.

LATE IRON AGE SETTLEMENT

The fragmented character of the habitation from Bucureşti–*Strada Gârlei* is emphasized especially by the traces from the Late Iron Age that are the most numerous from the investigated site (Pl. 1). The settlement from this period has not been fully researched because of the ruined buildings and greenhouses of the laboratory of the research station, of the gravel road (6 m wide) that crossed the land, of the rows of shrubs who delimited different lots, and of the compact tree groups that mark the lakeside[15]. The interventions from the modern period erased the upper parts of the pits, thus we do not have the full picture of their dimensions, of the expense of social energy to dig them, of the potential surface houses or outside hearths. Only in the southern part of the site, due to the presence of a "mound" which separates the two lots of the experimental station, we caught an "intermediary" layer, between the greyish and the yellow clay deposits. Unfortunately, despite of the numerous sherds and other elements of material culture characteristic to the Late Iron Age discovered in it, a habitation layer marked by features was not found in this limited preserved area. As it appears after the land transformation, the habitation from the Late Iron Age is a network of pit-houses and pits with different shapes, dimensions, functions, all concentrated on the bank of the peninsula (Pl. 1-2). The features are evenly distributed on the identified surfaces of the site: 13 pit-houses with ovens, 2 pit-houses whose walls contain reverberation ovens, 9 rectangular or oval shape pits of large sizes that can be interpreted as pit-houses, but without fire installations, and 124 pits.

The pit-houses are rectangular and have various orientations. In several cases, in one of the walls of the pit, ovens of circular shape were dug. Pit C369 contains two such ovens; also, pit C531, of small dimensions, is rather an oven with an access pit. Two of the pit-houses, located somehow at the outer edge of the settlement, have rather special traits due to the constructive style of the kilns, with two chambers – one for fire, divided by a central wall, and another for burning process. The perforated plate, sustained by a central wall, was preserved only in one kiln. Usually, the function that is assigned to this type of reverberation kiln is the production of pottery[16]. In the case of the two features from the site of Bucureşti–*Strada Gârlei* we have to emphasize the presence of the slag fragments and iron blooms in the pits of the constructions. The slag fragments where manipulated in different contexts in the settlement, from the pit-houses without a fire installation to the pits. The ceramic material is fragmentary, but covers a broad spectrum of shapes such as jars, pedestal-platters, jugs, *amphorae*, storage vessels. It is worth mentioning a fragment of an imported painted *kantharos* of Hellenistic tradition and a moulded bowl imitation.

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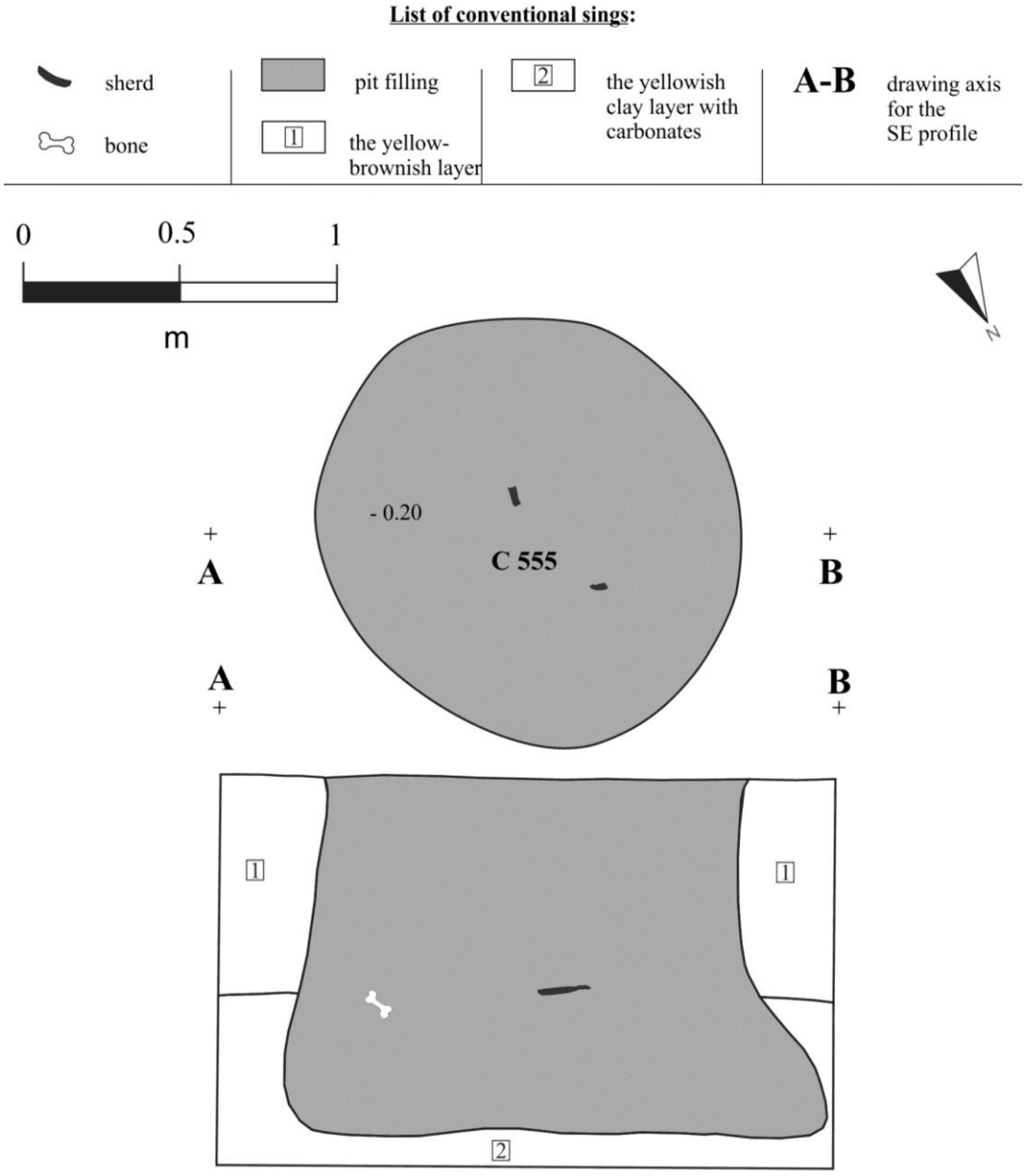
15 Damian et al. 2014.

16 Leahu 1962, 30, 33 fig. 12, 35, fig. 35.



Pl. 3. Plan/Profile of pit C 555.

Spindle whorls were discovered in the filling of certain pits, and the filling of construction C634 contained a copper or bronze object. In some of the contexts (pit-houses with or without a fire installation; pits) fragmented iron pieces, like spikes, nails and a bit were found. The preliminary analysis of the ceramic material from the excavated features suggests that the settlement had two distinct stages, dated to the 4th–3rd centuries BC and the 2nd–1st centuries BC. The contexts discussed in this paper belong to the latter stage.

PIT-HOUSES, PITS, AND "DOMESTIC WASTE"

Pits are documented on the entire excavated area of the settlement; usually they have a circular or oval shape and a cylindrical or a bell-shape in cross-section, being deepened in the natural yellow clay and in the white-yellowish layers rich in carbonates. After the fulfilling

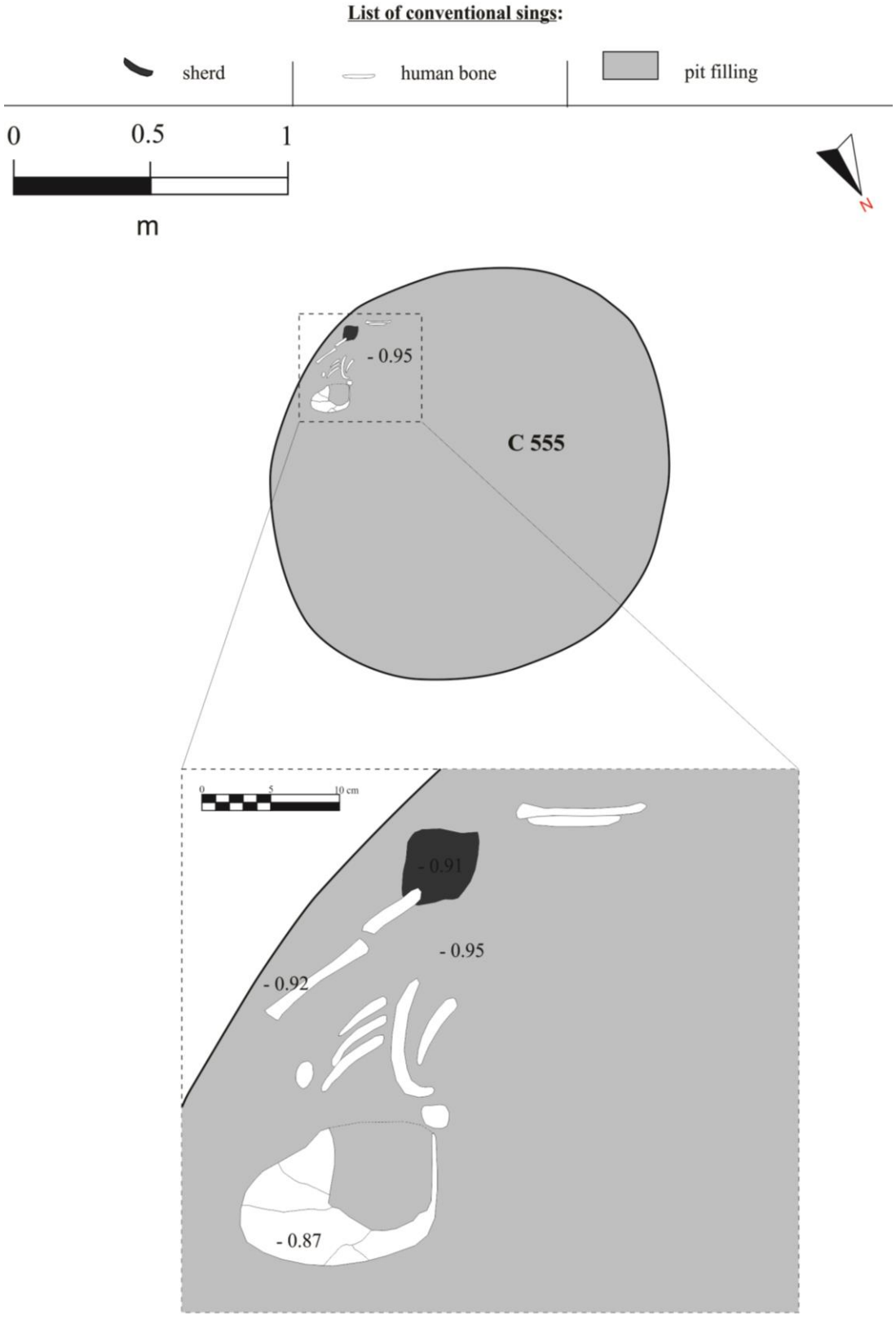
the purpose for which they were dug, the pits can be differentiated according to style of filling and by the "deposition aesthetics".

There is a type of pit with a domestic nature, which, regardless of its original function, contains many sherds in the filling (at different depths or only in some of the layers), associated sometimes with other disused objects (spindle whorls, glass beads, and iron fragments), casting scraps (slag) or animal bones. The yellow clay lenses derived from the collapse of the walls suggested that some of the pits stayed open for a while until they were naturally filled up to a certain level.

Pit C555 is part of this community of contexts with a "domestic" refuse character: it has an oval shape (D = 1.40 m × 1.10 m), a bell-shaped profile (D = 1.80 m) and deepens with 1.10 m in the yellow clay and in the white-yellowish natural layers rich in carbonates (Pl. 3). After accomplishing the function for which it was dug, the pit was evenly filled with brown colour sediment resulting from a mix of yellow clay, greyish sediment and ash, with small fragments of charcoal. In this filling 296 sherds were discovered: an almost complete jug, fragments of broken jugs, jars, storage vessels, bowls or pedestal-platters, an incense burner and two *amphorae* fragments (Pl. 5). All of them have a high fragmentation index (Table 1). We also found 16 animal bones (four of cow, one of goat, five of ovicaprine, two of pig, and the rest undetermined), a piece of sandstone, and some slag pieces. At a specific moment, on a level found at 0.50 m above the pit's bottom, in its south-eastern limit, a child oriented NE-SW was deposited on his right side (Pl. 4).

Table 1. The fragmentation index of the sherds found in the discussed features.

Feature	**No. of sherds**	**Fragmentation index (cm)**				
		≤ 2,5	**5**	**7,5**	**10**	**≥ 10**
C519A (pit; child skeleton)	60	16 *(26,67 %)*	38 *(63,33 %)*	4 *(6,67 %)*	1 *(1,67 %)*	1 *(1,66 %)*
C555 (pit; child skeleton)	296	18 *(6,08 %)*	166 *(56,08 %)*	65 *(21,96 %)*	42 *(14,19 %)*	5 *(1,69 %)*
C585 (pit-house; perforated human *calvaria* fragment; dog bones)	2446	162 *(6,62 %)*	1359 *(55,56 %)*	684 *(27,96 %)*	223 *(9,12%)*	18 *(0,74 %)*
C478 (pit-house; dog bones)	536	43 *(8,02 %)*	277 *(51,68 %)*	146 *(27,24 %)*	52 *(9,7 %)*	18 *(3,36 %)*
C548 (pit; one dog skeleton)	233	8 *(3,43 %)*	123 *(52,80 %)*	69 *(29,61 %)*	25 *(10,73 %)*	8 *(3,43 %)*
C627 (two dog skeletons, bones belonging to a third dog)	101	22 *(21,78 %)*	56 *(55,45 %)*	17 *(16,83 %)*	3 *(2,97 %)*	3 *(2,97 %)*



Pl. 4. Pit C555. Plan of the level in which the child skeleton was discovered.

The skeletal fragments are relatively well preserved (grade 2), the skeleton being nearly complete[17]. The neurocranium is fragmented and does not present the petrous part of the right temporal and the occipital; from facial skeleton only the zygomatic bones, fragments from the sphenoid and maxilla, and the mandibula were preserved. The clavicles and the *scapulae* have slight damages, and from the pelvic girdle only the right ilium was found. The costo-vertebral sector is well kept; from the upper limbs, the right forearm bones are missing, while the lower ones are complete. The bones belonging to the hand and foot skeleton were not found. The age of death was estimated taking into account the morphology of the deciduous mandibular molar crowns that are fully developed, and by the sequence of formation and eruption of teeth. Both methods indicated an individual with an age of the death somewhere between six and nine months. Additionally, supporting the methods in which dentition was used, we should mention the fact that the fusion of the two half mandibles on the symphysial level occurred recently, being almost fully completed (these bones fused close to the end of the first year of life), and the maximum size of the humeral, femoral and tibial diaphysis indicates the same age, *i.e.* six months – one-year interval. The stature was estimated on account to the left tibial diaphysis[18] to (674.3±97.0) mm. Table 2 shows a series of cranial and postcranial dimensions.

In this particular moment of pit's biography, elements of intentionality regarding the corpse deposition (the placement at the edge of the pit, the tendency to arrange it on the right side) intertwine with its inclusion in the "domestic" waste disorder that also contains

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[17] The conservation status of the skeletal material was estimated based on the model proposed by Brickley and McKinley (2004, 15-17). This involves the classification of the bone remains in seven grades of erosion and/or abrasion, using a scale starting from grade 0 (the morphological aspect: clear bone surface, visible, unaffected) and til the 5+ degrees (the degraded bone remains, strongly affected by the taphonomic agents). To establish the status of representation of the skeletons we followed the recommandation of Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994, 7). So, a whole skeleton is registered as being approximately complete when over 75% of the components are present; the bone remains located at the edge of the 25-75% interval define a partial represented skeleton and a poor represented skeleton is when are identified no more than 25% of the elements. To estimate the age of death for the subadult individuals (children <12 years-old), we used the measurements recorded from the *pars basilaris ossis occipitalis*: maximum length, sagittal length and width, in accordance with the results of the study performed by Scheuer and Maclaughlin-Black (1994, 378). The dentition was used also to estimate this parameter. In this regard, we followed the sequence of formation and eruption of teeth proposed by Ubelaker (1980, 46-47), as well as the chronology of teeth formation and resorption of the roots of deciduous canines and molars according to the study of Moorrees, Fanning and Hunt (1963). Also, we used a series of morphological characteristics using the treaty of fetal and juvenile osteology of Schaefer *et al*. (2009) or metric data, based on the maximum length of some of the long bones diaphyseal according to an appropriate intervals age, after the sequence proposed by Ubelaker (1980, 48-49). In order to assess the adults subject's age, we used the degree of obliteration of the cranial sutures, after the recommendations proposed by Meindl and Lovejoy (1985). The age categories were as described by Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994, 9). The skeletal stature could be estimated based on the regression equation obtained by Visser (1998, 415), that take into account the full length of the humeral, femural and tibial diaphysis. After Buikstra and Ubelaker approach (1994, 45), we calculated a number of cranial and postcranial feasible dimensions only for the newborn age range of 12 months-old.

[18] Although we benefited from the humerus and femur diaphyseals, the stature was estimated based only on the maximum length of the tibial diaphysis, the equations derived from them having a higher accuracy.

sherds, pieces of casting and animal bones. The elements with a funeral character are included in the uninterrupted flux that fills the pit, marked by the uniformity that characterizes the composition of the filling, and also by the presence of "domestic" scraps under, with and above the human body.

The melting until complete lack of distinction of the "domestic" and the "funeral" images is also emphasized by the filling of the pit-house C585. It has a rectangular shape (6 × 6 m) and deepened with 0.60 m in the yellow clay layer (Pl. 6). It did not have any fire installation, hearth or oven. 2446 sherds were found in the pit-house's filling (Table 1). They belong to hand-made or wheel-made pots (Pl. 7) – jars, bowls or pedestal-platters, cups or strainers, storage vessels, a miniature bowl, jugs, a moulded bowl imitation, an *amphora* foot and an incense burner. The sherds were associated with a spindle whorl, pieces of hearth and 140 pieces of mammal bones, from which 80 were determined to the species level (3 horse bones, 38 cow bones, 1 sheep bone, 1 goat bone, 17 ovicaprine bones, 19 pig bones and 3 dog bones).

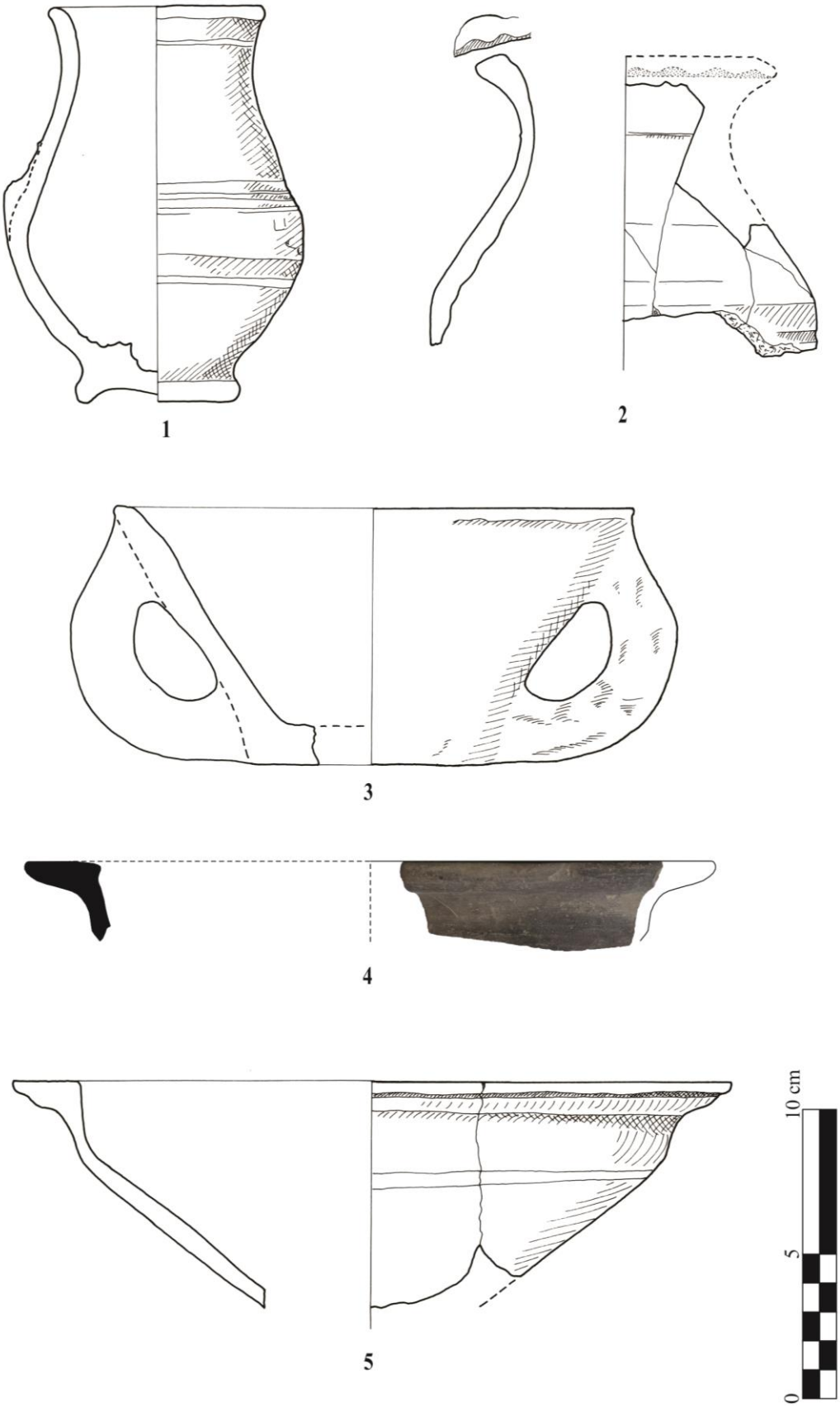
In the NW part of the filling, at the depth of -0.31 m from the level of identification of the pit, we discovered a bone fragment (Pl. 8) located in the right frontal and parietal area, which includes segments II-III of the coronal suture and the temporal lines of the frontal and parietal bones. On the frontal bone we identified intentional changes, in the form of an approximately circular-shaped cavity that perforates the bone entirely. Its diameter is 9.76 mm on the exocranial face, 10.12 mm on the endocranial and of 8.34 mm in the centre of the cavity. On the exocranial face, the perforation is accompanied by two shallow incisions (with the lengths of 8.01 mm and 4.52 mm), perpendicular on this one and which is not in simultaneity report, the incisions being made at an earlier date. We note also the presence of a glossy surface on the endocranial front, circumscribing the perforation, possible result of the usage of the bone. The minimum grade (1) of coronal suture obliteration from the coronal median and pterion cranial points, indicates an individual with an age of death included in the category young adult.

The perforation of the *calvaria* belonging to a child from Teliţa-*Celic Dere* was interpreted as a result of a trepanation made "right before the death or immediately after"[19]. In the case of the *calvaria* from Bucureşti–*Strada Gârlei*, the edges of the cavity are rounded, both exocranian and endocranian, and do not exhibit the markers of a lasting healing (the bone matrix with the formation of bone callus and/or bone remodelling processes). Therefore, the intervention was made post-mortem, ruling out the possibility of a trepanation, *i.e.* of an antemortem intervention; instead, we do not have any argument to make us believe that the perforation could not be carried perimortem, more exactly, immediately after the death of the individual. Whether or not it represented the material for a disc[20], similar to the clay pieces[21], we can say that the fragment of *calvaria* was treated as an artefact, in the way that it was kept, used and discarded in the pit-house's filling in a similar manner as the disused objects.

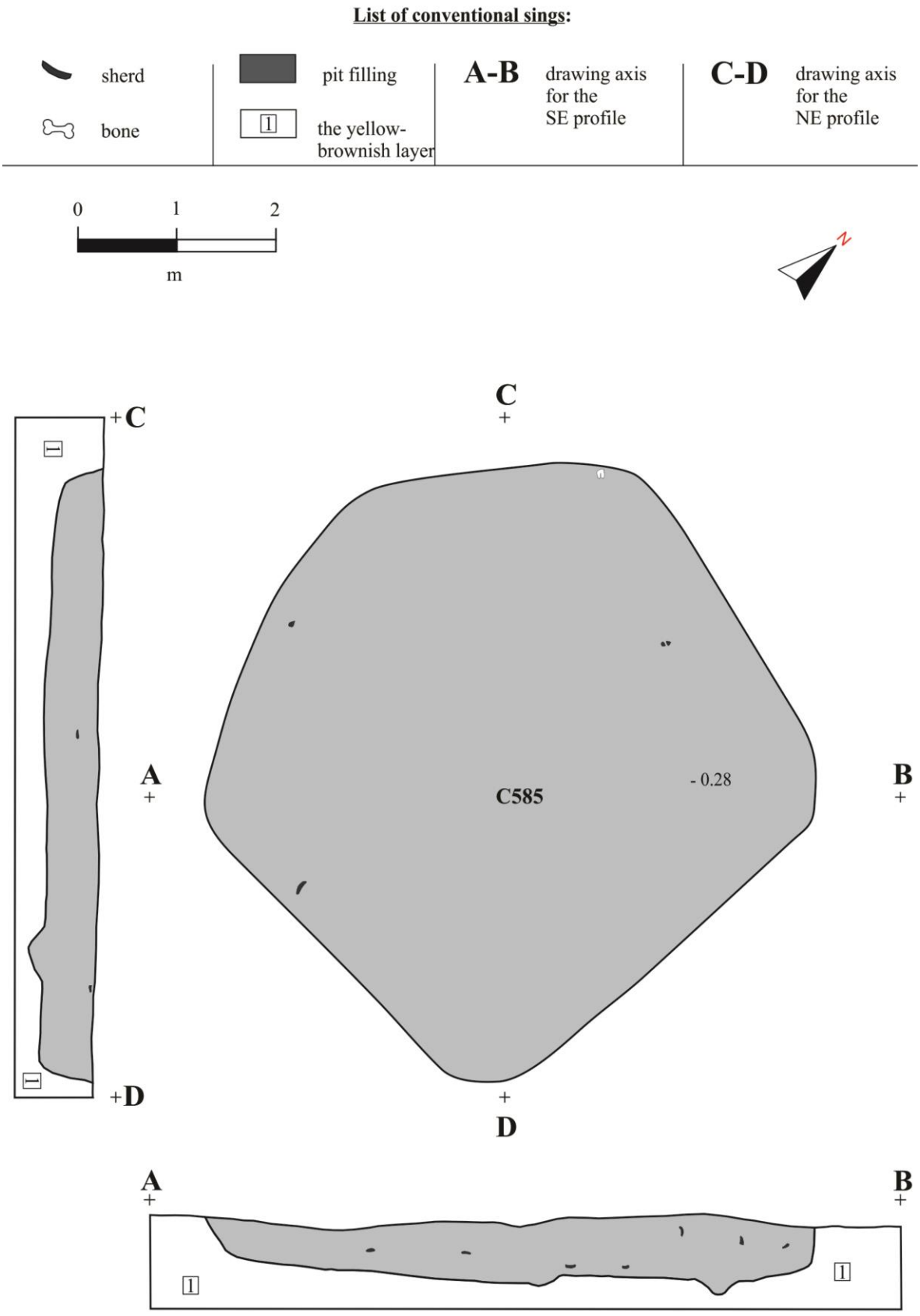
[19] Davâncă 2015, 65, 226 fig. 84/8.

[20] *e.g.* Rousseau 2011, 122-123.

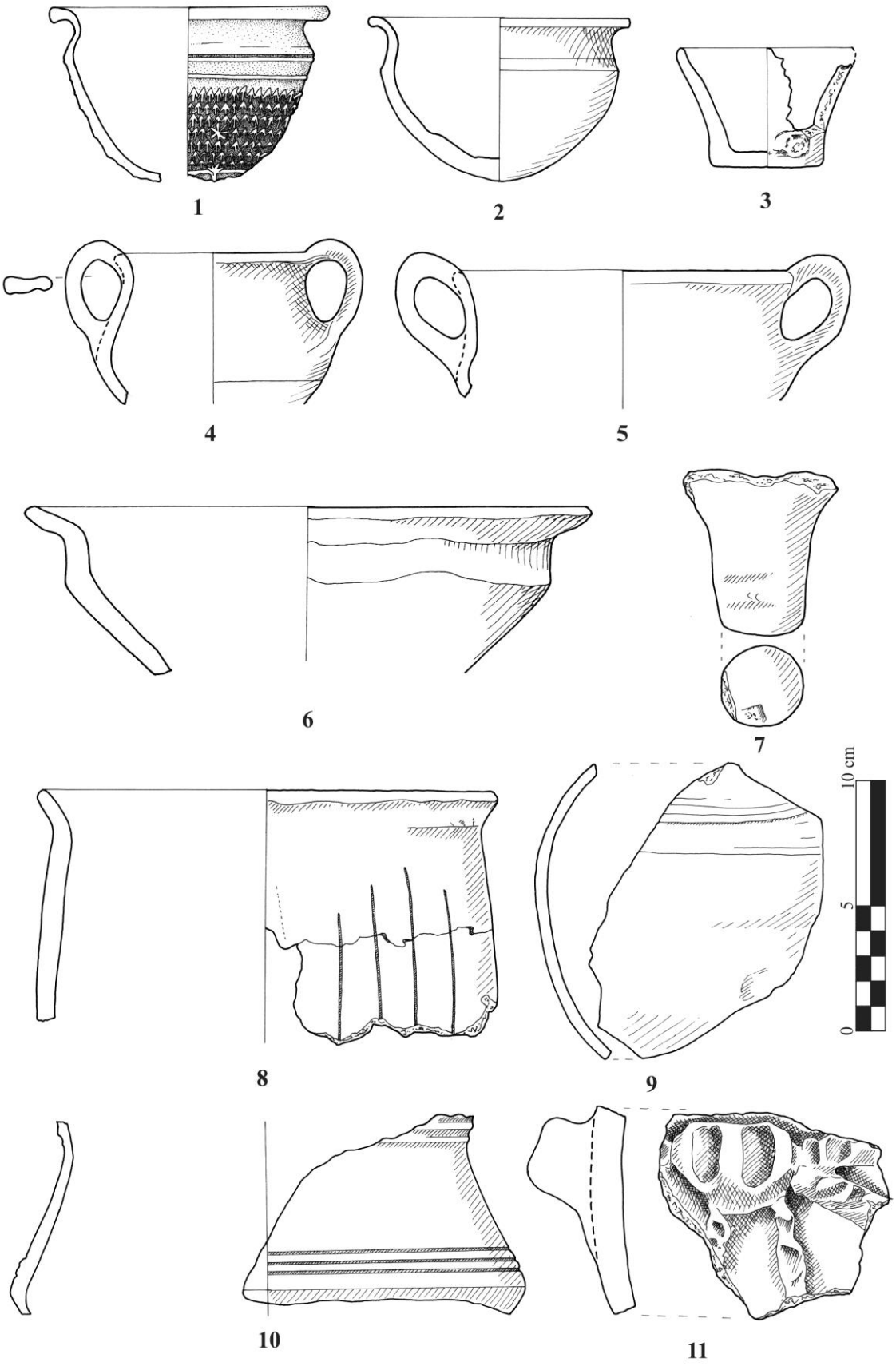
[21] *e.g.* Trohani 2006, pl. 142.



Pl. 5. Pottery from pit C 555.



Pl. 6. Plan/Profile of pit C 585.



Pl. 7. Pottery from C 585.

In the contexts discussed above, the human body and the *calvaria* fragment are elements closely related to the abandonment process that constructs certain "domestic" refuse aesthetics in the filling of the pits. In the case of pit C555, the disused objects, the food waste, and the human body form a single constellation; together with the sediment that is the filling, they are materiality of the same gestures that mark the end of the original function of the pit and transform it into a refuse pit. As indicated by the situation from pit C585 and other similar contexts, this change of function is also present in the case of the pit-houses, their "filling" being similar to the one of the pits. The fragmentary state of the pottery (Table 1), its distribution within the filling, and also the association with the animal bones (that grants a "domestic" refuse appearance), indicate that they were discarded after the abandonment of the construction[22]. Therefore, the research of these contexts captures the act of abandonment of these constructions, and not a frozen image of the daily inventory. In the specific case of the pit-house C585, the abandonment process shows that the human bones were treated like any other disused artefacts with which they are associated in the filling. The end of pit C555 and of pit-house C585 biographies are materialized by a certain abandonment practice in which the images evoking the "domestic" (consumption, discarding of the domestic waste) and the "funeral" (human bones and body parts) melt until total lack of distinction.

BURIALS, DOMESTIC PRACTICES AND THE TIME OF ABANDONMENT

In contrast to the refuse pits, the other pits have less artefacts and bones in their dull content of the filling. Among the former we find pits (some large and very deep) filled up to a certain point with yellow clay, with little archaeological material. On the top part, the pit filling consists in a greyish sediment in which the sherds and the animal bones are very well represented. Pit C519A belongs to this type.

The pit has a circular shape (D = 1.80 m) and deepens with 1.40 m in the yellow clay layers and the white-yellowish deposit with many sand particles (Pl. 9). The pit started to be filled with yellow clay that contained lenses of white-yellowish clay and lenses of greyish sediment and charcoal. It thus formed a layer of filling (519A-3), with the thickness of 0.70 m, in which we discovered small pieces of reddish burnt earth and two sherds: one non-diagnostic, from the body of a pot modelled by hand from a reddish paste, and a *kantharos* handle, decorated with middle grooves, of reddish paste, of Hellenistic or Roman tradition, which could be dated to the 2nd-1st century BC[23] (Pl. 12/2).

After the first moment of filling, a newly born child was deposited in this pit (Pl. 10). The skeletal remains are relatively well preserved (grade 2), the skeleton being partially represented. The neural skull is highly fragmented, especially at the squamous portions, best kept being the mastoid and petrous part of the temporals, the basilar parts and the lateral masses of the occipital, and from the facial skeleton, the sphenoid and the two half mandibles. From the postcranial segment, the left clavicula, some vertebra and ribs, the left *os coxae* and the right *ischium* were missing. Only some elements from the right side of the the upper limb skeleton were present, while from the lower limb only, the right femur, the tibias and a fragment from the peroneal diaphysis were found. The large majority of the bones from the hands and feet were missing.

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[22] The same observation was made in the case of the researches at Căţelu Nou, Chirnogi, Grădiştea; Sîrbu 1985, 102; Sîrbu, Anastasiu 1985, 127-128, 135; 1992, 149-152.

[23] We thank Adela Bâltâc for this information.

The age of death was estimated on account of the maximum width (16.6 mm), sagittal length (14.1 mm) and maximum length (18.6 mm) of pars basilaris. According to these values, the individual had an estimated age of two months. The age was also estimated after the sequence of formation and eruption of teeth. According to these criteria, the individual had a biological age comprised in an interval between the birth newborn and six months ± two-three months. Also, the development of mandibular deciduous molars (the dental crowns are half complete), indicates an individual with an age of death somewhere around three months-old. So, the analyzed individual was included in the age category *infant*.

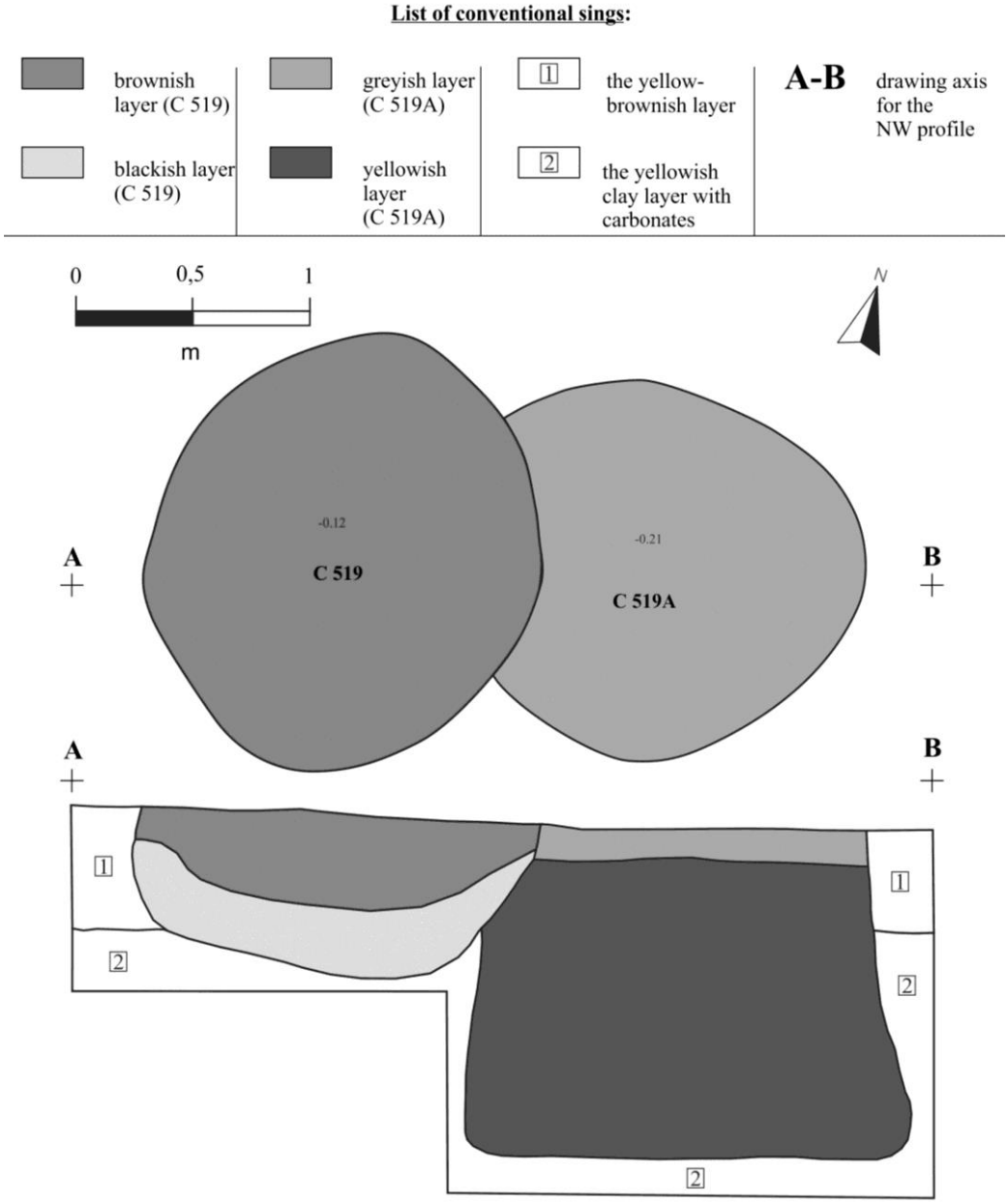
a - *Calvaria*, exocranian view **b** - *Calvaria*, endocranian view

Pl. 8. Piece of *calvaria* found in C 585.

Several cranial and postcranial dimensions could be calculated, as shown in Table 2.

The child was deposited in a small niche dug in the southern wall, in a sand lens collapsed in the yellowish filling, same as in the case of C555, at the edge of the pit (Pl. 10). Unlike the former context, the child from C519A was crouched on the right side, oriented WNW-SSE, and had a necklace in which glass beads alternate with metal links (Pl. 10/1–9; 11/1–9). One blue coloured glass bead with a relief decoration in the shape of an "eye", painted in yellowish colour, was discovered in the neck area (Pl. 10/1; 11/1), while under the nape, four bronze links alternate with four beads (one cylindrical, of blue colour with a blue ribbon that marks the diameter, two translucide, of dual-frustoconical shape and tube shape and one cylindrical, weathered, that, taking into account the high concentration of iron oxides and manganese, is possible to have been bright green coloured) (Pl. 10/2–8; 11/2–9). As indicated by a fragment kept on the inside of a bronze link (Pl. 10/7;11/7), most likely the necklace also contained iron links, which were not preserved. Another iron fragment was conserved on the inside of the tubular bead made from translucent glass (Pl. 10/2; 11/2). That is why we can assume that the beads were stretched on a wire from the same material. Traces of gold were found on the inner side of the dual frustum conical bead, possibly from the contamination with a thread that was lined up in an earlier period, before its inclusion in the necklace. The microscopic analysis also showed that traces of textile and leather are visible on the surface of

some of the bronze links[24]. The necklace gathers beads of older tradition (such as the dual-frustum conical shape bead) and forms that can be dated to the classical period of the Late Iron Age (1st century BC–1st century AD)[25]. The simple bronze links, similar to the pieces from C519A, are commonly found in different contexts from the classical period of the Late Iron Age (2nd–1st century BC)[26].



Pl. 9. Plan/Profile of pit C 519/519A.

[24] We would like to thank Zizi Ileana Baltă who kindly provided this information.

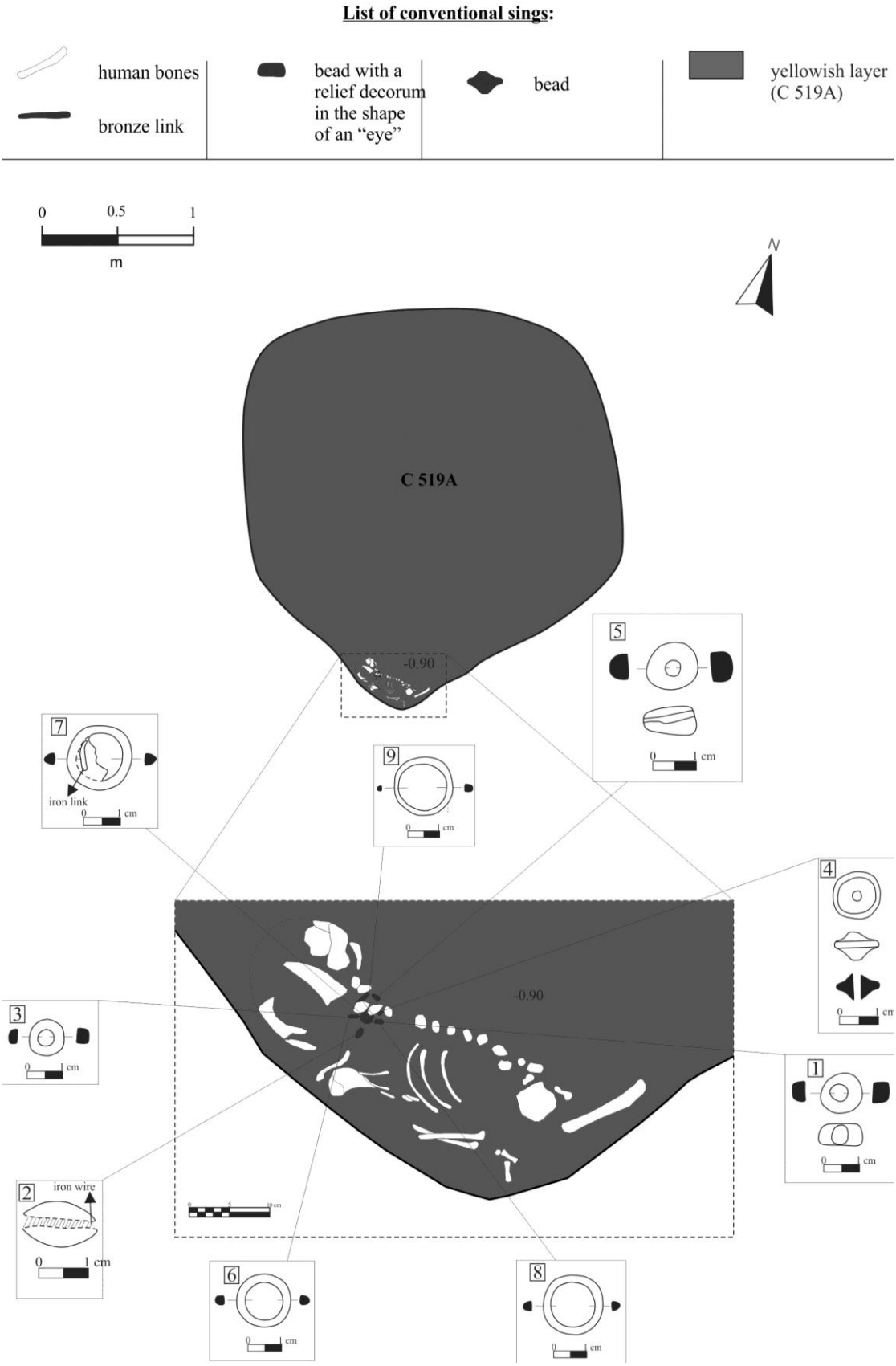
[25] Ocniţa (Berciu 1981, pl. 120/1-8, 10-12, 14), Zimnicea (Alexandrescu 1972, 21 pl. I/5-11; Sîrbu 1993, 186 fig. 16/5-8), Pietroasele–*Gruiu Dării* (Dupoi and Sîrbu 2001, 39, fig. 59/1-5; 64/5-7, 10-11), Mereşti (Crişan 2000, 138, pl. 110/3), Răcătău (Căpitanu 1991, 103, 122 fig. 12/1,4,13,15), Poiana (Teodor *et al*. 1997, 29-30, 45 pl. 12/8; 47 pl. 14/4-9).

[26] Rustoiu 1996, 105, 288 fig. 52/8-27.

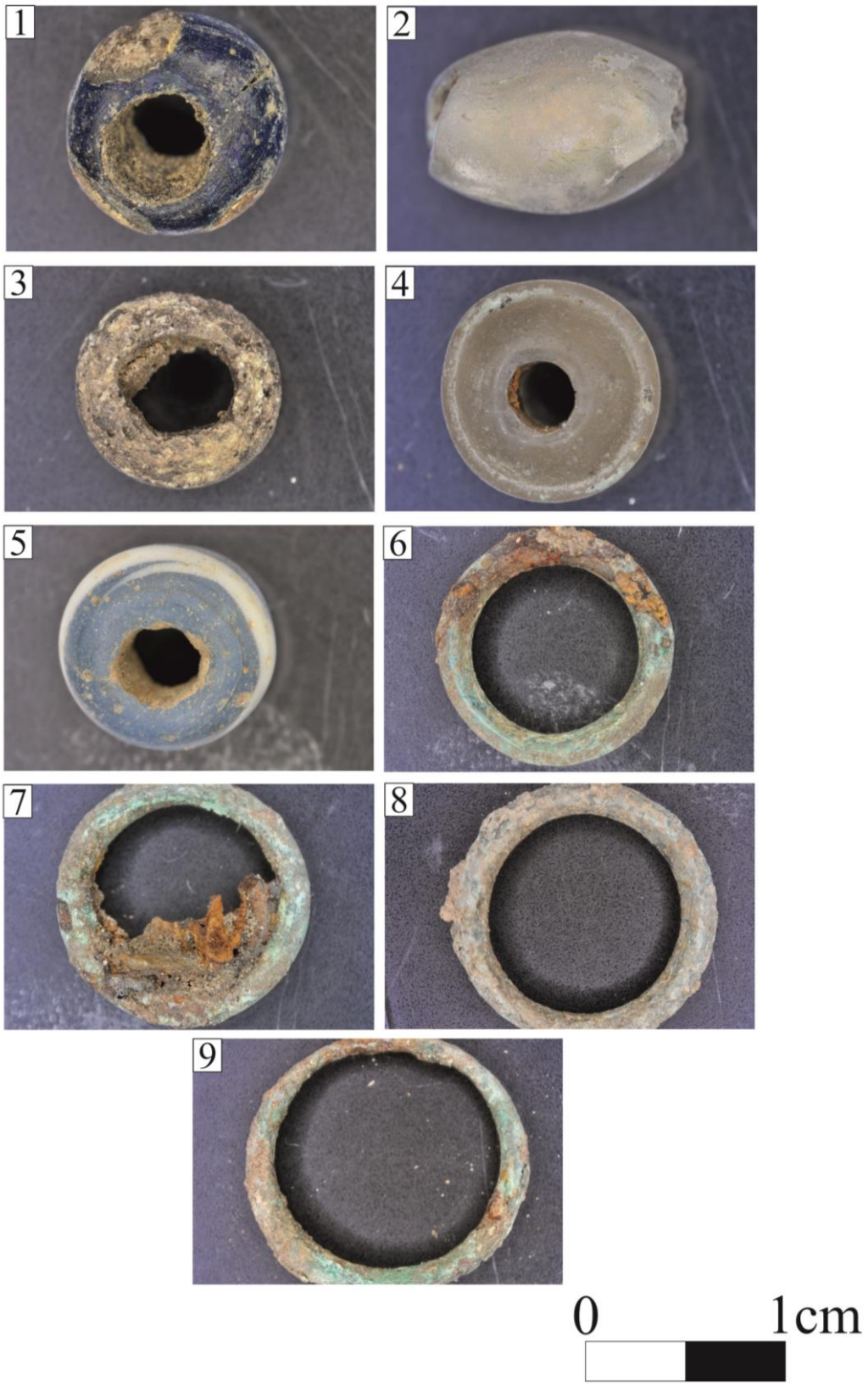
Table 2. Cranial and postcranial measurements highlighted in individuals aged up to 12 months.

Cranial measurements [27]		
Dimension	**C519A**	**Cpl 555**
Lesser wing of the sphenoid		
1a. length	21	
1b. width	14	
Body of the sphenoid		
3a. length	17	
3b. width	21	
Petrous and mastoid portions of the temporal		
4a. length	47 (R)	50
4b. width	22 (R)	22
Basilar part of the occipital		
5a. length	14	
5b. width	17	
Zygomatic		
6a. width		30
6b. width		24
(Hemi)mandible		
8a. length of the body	40	
8b. width of the arch	17 (R)	
8c. full length of half mandible	52 (R)	
Postcranial measurements		
Scapula		
10a. length (height)	40	42 (R)
10b. width	30	33 (R)
10c. length of the spine	34	
Ilium		
11a. length	42 (R)	46 (R)
11b. width	38 (R)	41 (R)
Pubis		
13a. length	19 (R)	
Humerus		
14a. maximum length		79
14b. distal width	20 (R)	21
14c. maximum diameter in the middle		8
Ulna		
15a. length	67 (R)	
15b. maximum diameter in the middle	5 (R)	
Femur		
17a. maximum length		97
17b. distal width		24
17c. maximum diameter in the middle		9
Tibia		
18a. maximum length		80
18b. maximum diameter in the middle		9
Fibula		
19a. maximum length		78 (R)
19b. maximum diameter in the middle		4 (R)

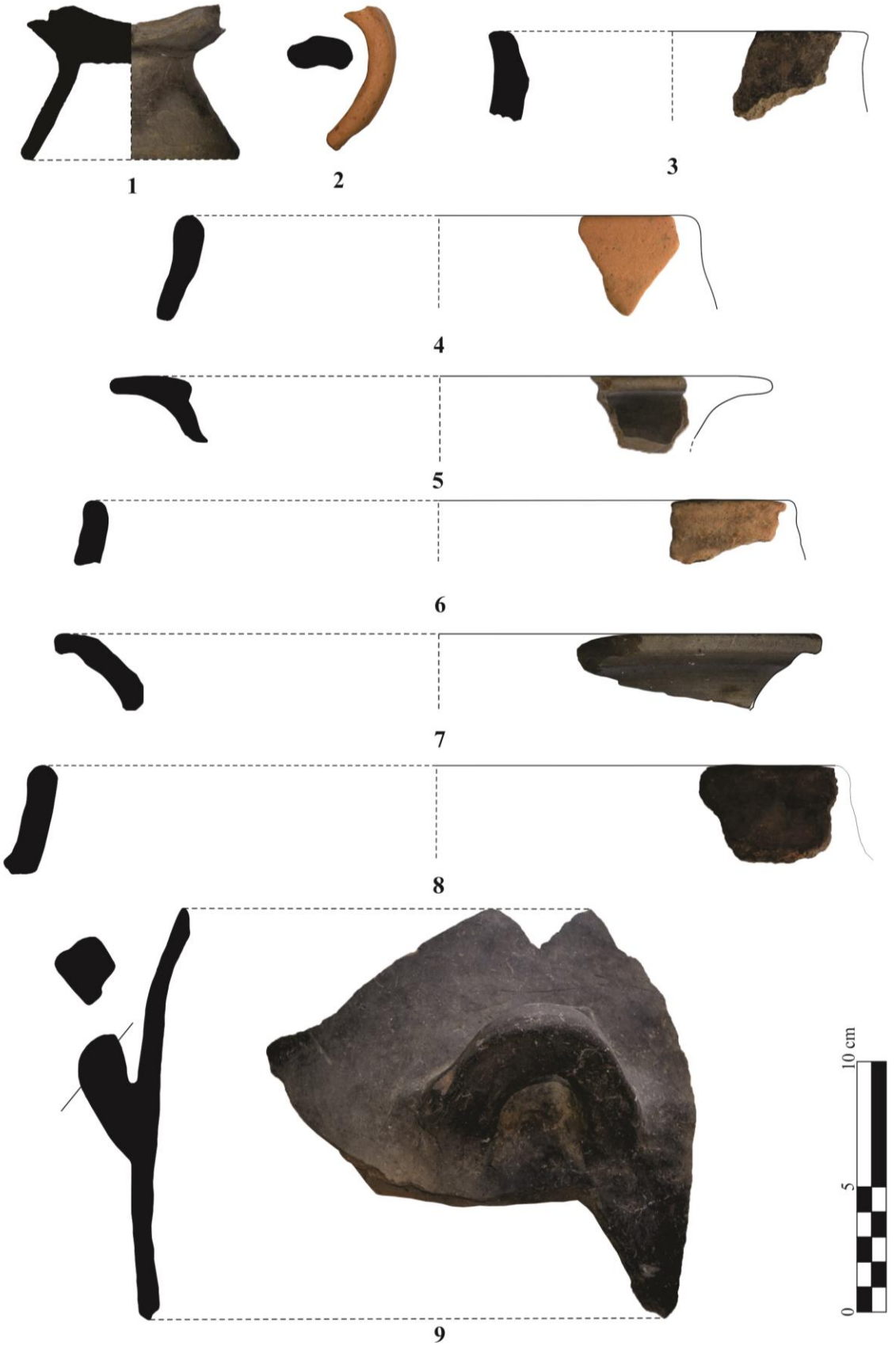
[27] The table values are given in millimeters and they were rounded. In the case of the bilateral measurements, the left side was used. When there were no elements on the left, they were measured on the right, and the values were accompanied with the "(R)" symbol.



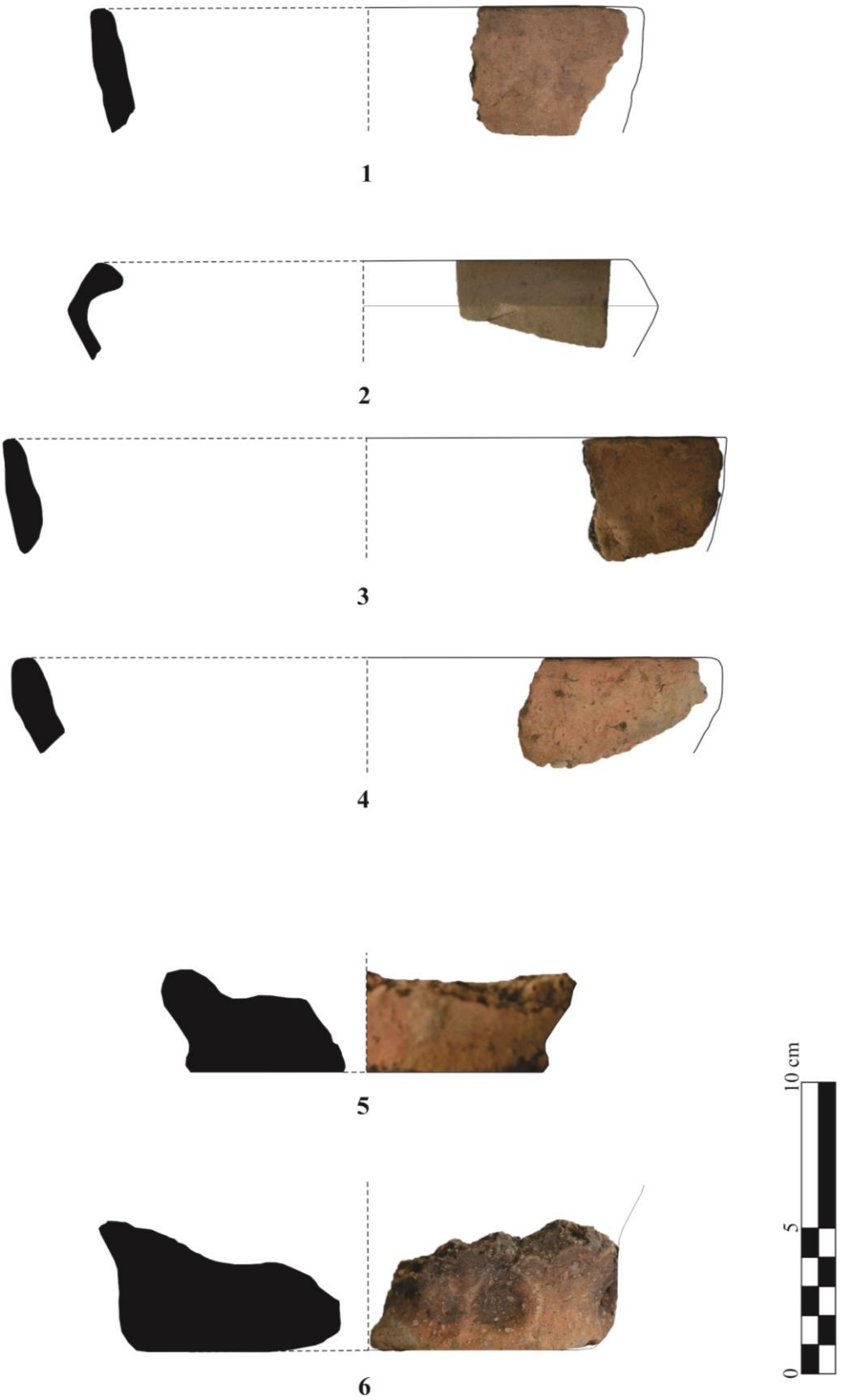
Pl. 10. Pit C 519A. Plan of the level in which the child skeleton was discovered.



Pl. 11. Pit C 519A. Bronze links and glass beads.



Pl. 12. Pottery from pit C519A.



Pl. 13. Pottery from C519.

After the moment of the child deposition, the pit continued to be filled with yellow clay mixed with greyish sediment, without archaeological material (519A-2). This filling was overlaid by a compact layer of greyish sediment (519A-1) whose top part was destroyed by the agricultural works. The filling contains a piece of burnt soil, a fragmentary grinder, 58 sherds (Table 1; Pl. 12): some non-diagnostic pots modelled by wheel, of greyish paste, some fragments (foot and rim) belonging to pedestal-platters, the thickened rim of a jar of small dimensions, and a bowl rim. These fragments, which can be dated to the classical period of the Late Iron Age, were associated with several other pottery fragments (most of them non-diagnostic, but also six rims of bowls and of pots with a cylindrical neck) belonging to pots modelled by hand from greyish, yellowish, or reddish paste, and also with a body fragment of a *krater* from greyish paste, modelled by hand, strongly polished, which can be dated to the 4th–3rd century BC (Pl. 12/9).

We could say that, similarly to pit C555, the degree of pottery fragmentation (Table 1) would indicate a "domestic" appearance of the pit. But, as shown by the *krater* fragment, some pottery fragments were driven from the older levels into the soil excavated during the digging of the pit, subsequently becoming part of the filling. Also, some "weathered" sherds (including the handle of the Hellenistic or Roman style discovered under the level of deposition of the deceased) suggest that at least part of the archaeological material from the filling was located in a tertiary position, after some exposure time outdoor. Unlike pits with an obvious "domestic" character, in the filling of pit C519A we discovered only four animal bones (two of cow, one of sheep and one of pig). Lacking the "domestic" appearance, pit C519A does not have the strict funeral characteristics either: the child was deposited on a certain level of the filling, and the marginal position of the body (in the wall area), similar to the position of the child from pit C555 and of other deceased from contemporary contexts[28], highlights that this was not the central element of the practices conducted in this context. The filling structure confirms the "domestic" character of the pit, similar to other pits in the settlement.

In addition to this, after the completion of the filling, the pit in which the child was deposited did not become a place of memory. At a certain time, in the eastern side of the filling, another pit was dug (C519; oval in shape; D = 1.90 × 1.70 m), orientated NE-SW, that deepened until the yellow and the white-yellowish deposits (Pl. 9). In its filling, we found 35 sherds modelled by hand and three sherds modelled by wheel that could be also dated to the classical period of the Late Iron Age (Pl. 13): an incense burner base marked by a string of impressions, two jars bases, a fragment decorated with striations (probably belonging to a cup), a bowl or a pedestal-platter rim, bowl rims, and several bases belonging to pots made of rough paste.

The comparison of pits C555 and C519A structures revealed a certain contrast between their "domestic" nature and the formalism of the deposition of children bodies, such as placing them on the southern edge of the pits, their deposition at a certain moment of the filling process, the crouching position on the right side, a certain bipolarity of the bodies' orientation. This contrast is underlined more clearly by the deposition of the child in pit C519A, which, because of the discreet presence of the domestic waste evokes a certain ceremonial ritual, characteristic to the burial act, stressed by the necklace that builds the funerary identity of the child. In the area north of Danube, this kind of glass bead necklaces, sometimes combined with copper/bronze links, constitutes the usual set of children buried in the area of cemeteries (at Brad, Bugeac,

[28] Such as from Brad, Grădiştea or Ocniţa (Sîrbu 1985, 91; Davâncă 2015, 174-176 fig. 5/2; fig. 7-8; 211 fig. 61).

Olteni, Platoneşti, Stelnica, Zimnicea), as well as in some "non-funerary contexts", such as those at Brad, Hunedoara, Orlea, Poiana, Grădiştea[29], Sighişoara–*Wietenberg*, or Stolniceni[30]. Glass beads were also discovered in relationship with the deposition of mature individuals in settlements or in "pit fields"[31].

Therefore, we can say that more obviously than in the case of pit C555, in which the child was intimately inserted in the "domestic" refuse filling, the deposition of the child from pit C519A, emphasizes this funeral episode added to a certain domestic practice and marking the end of pit biography. This episode marks a significant moment that temporary suspended the filing process. Taking into account the homogeneous structure of the filling in which the two deceased were "inserted", it results that the funerary episodes were short ones. This "small" interruption of the abandonment sends us to other contexts from the settlement of Bucureşti–*Băneasa*, tăiat *Strada Gârlei*, in which the "domestic" dynamics of the pit are temporarily frozen into images of the daily practices. For example, after the abandonment of the pit-house C543, a firing place was arranged on a certain level of the filling. Also, at a certain time of the filling, the function of the pit C634 was suspended; the walls were adjusted to gain a rectangular shape, and an oven was placed in a corner.

"DOMESTIC" AND "FUNERARY": DEPOSITION OF DOGS IN THE SETTLEMENT

In the case of isolated dog skeletons and bones discovered in the settlement of Bucureşti–*Strada Gârlei,* the same presence of the whole and of the fragmentary, the same relationship between the structured nature of the deposition (similar to a burial) and the submitting of similar disused objects and domestic waste are established.

On the one hand, in some of the habitation contexts, isolated dog bones and body parts are present. As we mentioned above, in the filling of pit-house C585, besides the perforated *calvaria* fragment, we also discovered three dog bones. They are one proximal, an epiphysis right *ulna*, one right diaphyseal from a *femur*, and one left diaphyseal from a *tibia* which are broken and fragmented, belonging to the domestic waste category.

In the small size pit C478-3 (D = 0.60 m) we discovered the remains of a foreleg from a young dog, with an estimated age between 6 and 12 months-old [32], but also of an older individual with the age over 1.5 years (a *radius* and an *ulna*)[33]. The pit was dug from the bottom of the pit C478-2 (of oval shape that deepened with 0.40 m in the yellow clay layer), before it was filled with a yellowish-brown sediment, with many sherds, a spindle whorl, an iron spike, lumps of adobe and animal bones. The pit represents the deepened part of a rectangular shape pit-house (with dimensions of 4.40 × 3.30 m, oriented NW-SE) (Pl. 14). After the pit-house's abandonment, 536 sherds – strainers, *amphorae*, jars, jugs, storage vessels of reddish paste, one column-shaped vessel were discarded in the filling (Table 1; Pl. 15).

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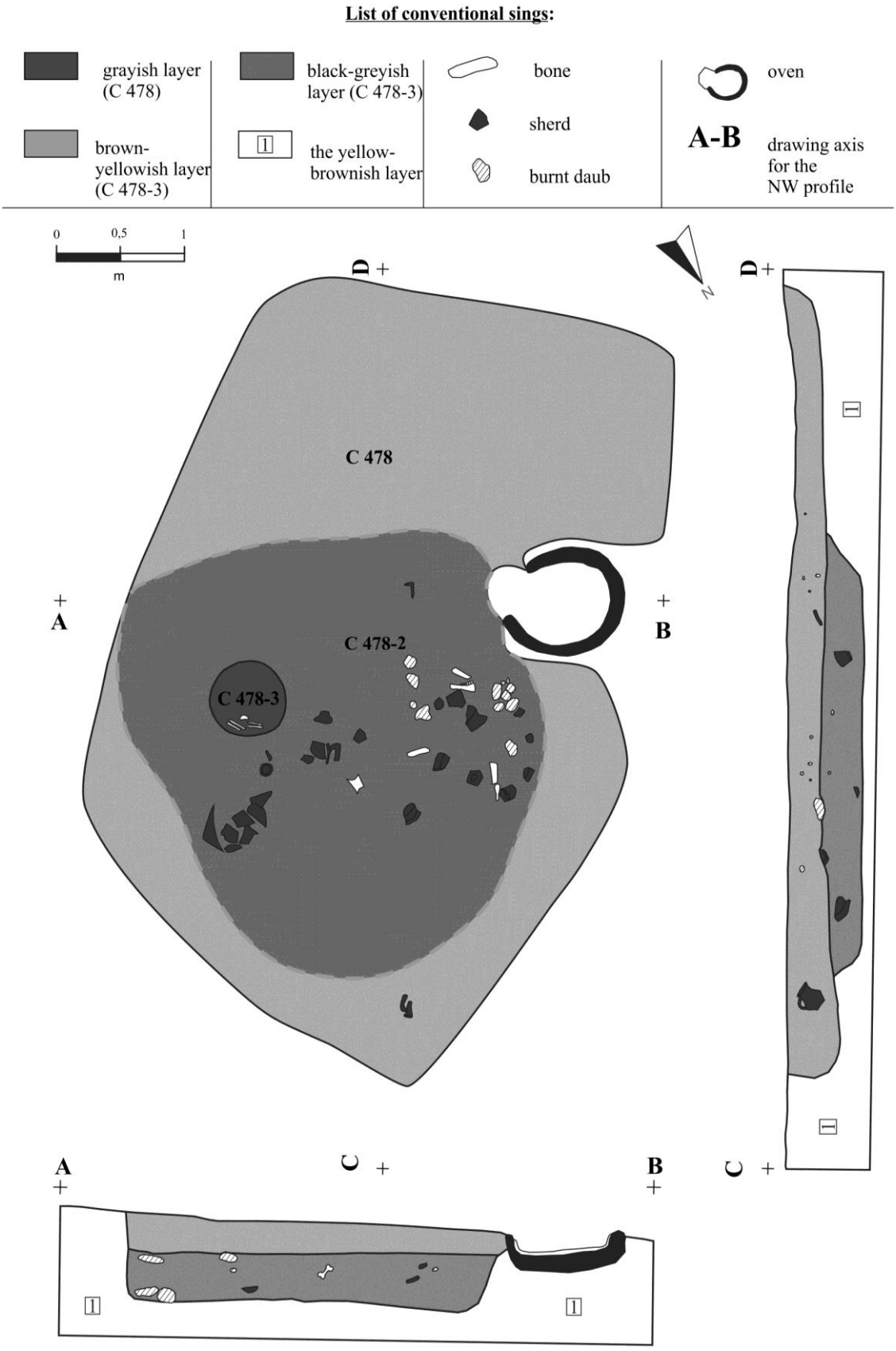
[29] Sîrbu 1985, 91.

[30] Sîrbu 1985, 91; 1993, 90; Davâncă 2015, 103.

[31] Pietroasele–*Gruiu Dării* (Dupoi and Sîrbu 2001, 39-40), Moigrad (Sîrbu 1985, 97), Poiana (Sîrbu 1985, 98), Grădiştea (Sîrbu, Anastasiu 1985, 128).

[32] The skeletons age of dogs were set after Schmid 1976.

[33] The shoulder height estimation of this dog according to the *radius* has a value of 52.9 cm (Koudelka index), or 54.2 cm (Harcourt index) and an index of gracility index of 7.17. This values indicates to a dog of overmedium size and a middle ruggedness (Udrescu et al. 1999, 108).



Pl. 14. Plan/Profile of pit C478.

This association of bones belonging to two dogs as well as the small dimensions of the pit differentiates this context from the other refuse pits in the settlement, and suggests a certain selection of the bones and a certain purpose of their deposition. Unfortunately, we cannot connect these practices with a specific moment of the pit-house's biography, from the bottom of which the small size pit with the bones was dug. These remains were either submitted or marked the beginning of habitation (like a foundation ritual), to emphasize a significant moment that took place during the pit-house's functioning. There is another possibility – that the deposition of the dog bones marked a change in the pit functionality, from the original to the refuse one, in a manner similar to other pits (C537, C599) in which the construction of a hearth immediately preceded the filling process. Regardless of these observations, in the case of pit C478-3, and in contrast to pit C585 and other contexts in which isolated bones were present, the intention to separate the dog bones from the domestic nature of the pit-house filling is obvious.

On the other hand, the dogs that were deposited in two of the pits in the settlement evoke – similarly to the above-mentioned children – the same funeral images in which the body is either "melt" until lack of distinction in the filling flux, or mark more obviously a short pause of the abandonment process. In the north-eastern part of the pit C548 (circular shape; D = 1.10 m; with a bell-shaped profile) (Pl. 16), in a filling layer of greyish colour, near the bottom, a dog was deposited on the right site, orientated NW-SE (Pl. 17). According to the preliminary archaeozoological study, the dog (a female "with the dental age no more than six years-old") died under natural conditions, from old age[34]. The dog's body [35] was then evenly covered with overturned hearth fragments (probably broken on the spot). After this moment, the pit was filled with greyish sediment that contained also pieces of charcoal. At different depths, the pit contained 233 sherds (Table 1), some secondary burnt (two cups of greyish paste, with a bottom ring, both with a broken handle – Pl. 17/1-2; jar-pots; bowls or pedestal-platters; storage vessels), a stone artefact, a dual frustum conical secondary burnt spindle whorl. It is noteworthy that in the filling, among other animal bones (seven of cow, five of ovicaprine, three of pig), we found other two bones from another dog; these are a right mandible, found relatively complete, and a right radius diaphyseal with traces of gnawing at the extremities level (epiphyseal).

Unlike this context, the presence of two dogs in another pit (C627) associates the "domestic" refuse stream of filling with the ceremonial image of the intentional deposition. The pit has an oval shape (D = 1.90 × 1.70 m), it was NE-SW oriented, and deepened with 1.60 m in the yellow and white yellowish clay; also, it has a bell-shaped profile (D = 2 m) (Pl. 18). In the lower part of the pit there is a brown-yellowish filling with yellow clay lenses. On top of this, a thin layer of white-yellowish clay (6 cm) was deposited, in which numerous big sherds from large pots, two dog skeletons and the bones of a third dog were discovered (Pl. 19). The first dog was laid on the left side, oriented NW-SE; the second dog was also on the

[34] Popa 2013, 37, 48.

[35] The medium shoulder height estimation of this dog is 59.9 cm (Koudelka index) based on seven whole bones (the *scapula*, the *humerus*, the *radius*, the *ulna*, the *femur*, the *tibia*, the *fibula*; the limitations between 57-63 cm) and of 60.5 cm (Harcourt index) based on five whole bones (*humerus, radius, ulna, femur, tibia*; the limitations between 59.7-61.2 cm). The animal is at the limit between overmedium to big dogs size category and of middle ruggedness (Udrescu *et al.* 1999, 108).

left side, oriented NNE-SSW. One dog was a mature adult[36] (worn dentition; the bones are all epiphysis > 2 years-old), of female gender (lack of the penian bone). The other dog[37] is an old adult (with an extremely worn dentition), of male gender (the presence of the penile bone). In the space between the skeletons, seven other bones were scattered (one *tibia* and six metapodial bones), belonging to a third dog. In this pit, five bones belonging to a *fetus* pig (one *scapula*, one *humerus*, one *coxal*, one *femur* and one *tibia*), and coming from the same individual, were also discovered. Based on the length of the *humerus* and the *tibia*, we can estimate the age of this animal to 95 days, indicating either the case of a sow that had foetuses, which was slaughtered; alternatively, we can think of an aborted *foetus*[38]. Up to the point that was identified, the pit contained two types of filling – a brown-yellowish and a greyish one –, in which we discovered 101 sherds (Table 1) belonging to some wheel- or hand-made pots, mainly of greyish paste: an *amphora* handle, bowls or pedestal-platters rims, jugs, and jars (Pl. 20).

Summarizing, the deposition of dogs in pits is structured in a style characterized by a balance between the whole and the fragmented. In pits C548 and C627, the deposition of mature dog bodies combined with the discarding of isolated bones belonging to younger individuals. The image of C627 combines the careful deposition of the dog bodies with the disorder of the domestic waste in the pit they were incorporated in. The disorder is emphasized by the lack of symmetry of the dogs position relative to each other, and by the scattered bones belonging to the third dog. Instead, the deposition of the dog in pit C548 and its covering with fragments of a hearth suggest a ceremonial interlude in the filling stream. The deposition episode combined funeral images (dog's position and its covering) with some "domestic" ones (the disused hearth), which creates a contrast between this stop-motion and the disorder and the fragmentation of the objects from the filling.

ABANDON, DEPOSITION, AND SIGNIFICANT MOMENTS

The relationship between the deposition of human bodies in the domestic area (in a manner similar to the burials themselves), children having an important place, and the deposition of scattered human bones or body parts is a characteristic of the Late Iron Age in the area north of Danube [39]. The same diversity of deposition practices also exists in the presence of dog skeletons in pits[40]. In the deposition area there is a privileged relationship between humans and some species of animals (dogs especially), expressed by a certain aesthetic, defined by the relationships between complete bodies – selected bones, and between structured depositions (similar to a burial) – depositions similar to the disused objects and of consumption. In the particular case of the settlement at Bucureşti–*Strada Gârlei*, although the processing of the whole faunal material is in a preliminary stage, we can still note that a certain relationship opposition emerges between the age established for the human and for the dog skeletons. On the one hand, the complete human skeletons belong

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[36] The shoulder height estimation of this dog its 53.5 cm (Koudelka index) and of 51.9 cm (Harcourt index) and was estimated according to a whole humerus. The animal it was part of the overmedium size category and is characterized by a middle ruggedness (Udrescu et al. 1999, 108).

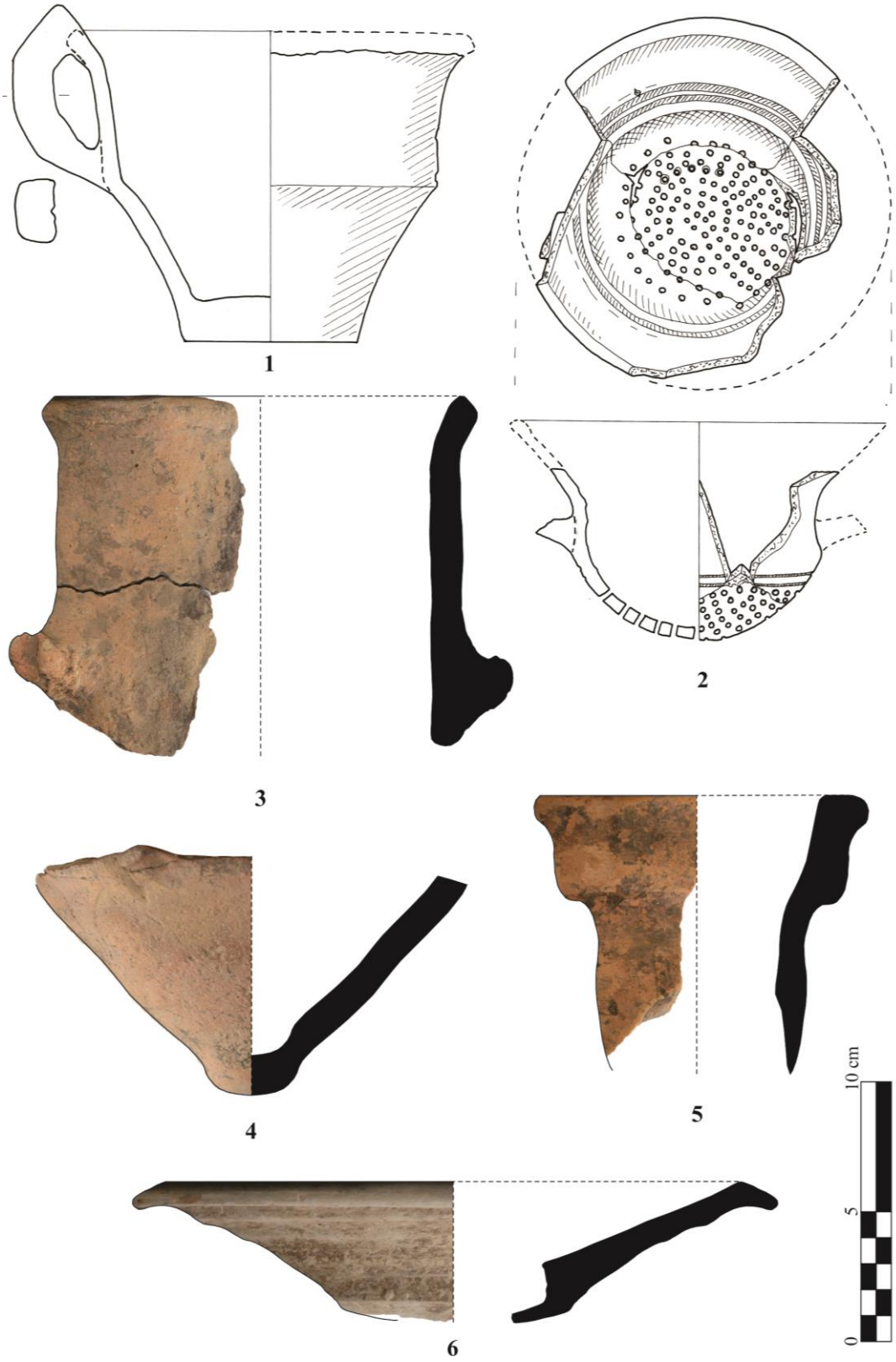
[37] The medium shoulder height estimation of this dog its 52.3 cm (Koudelka index) and of 53.7 cm (Harcourt index) and was estimated based on five whole bones (the *humerus* pair, the *ulna*, the *femur* and the *tibia*). The animal was part of the overmedium size category and is characterized by a middle ruggedness (Udrescu et al. 1999, 108).

[38] Prummel 1989, 78.

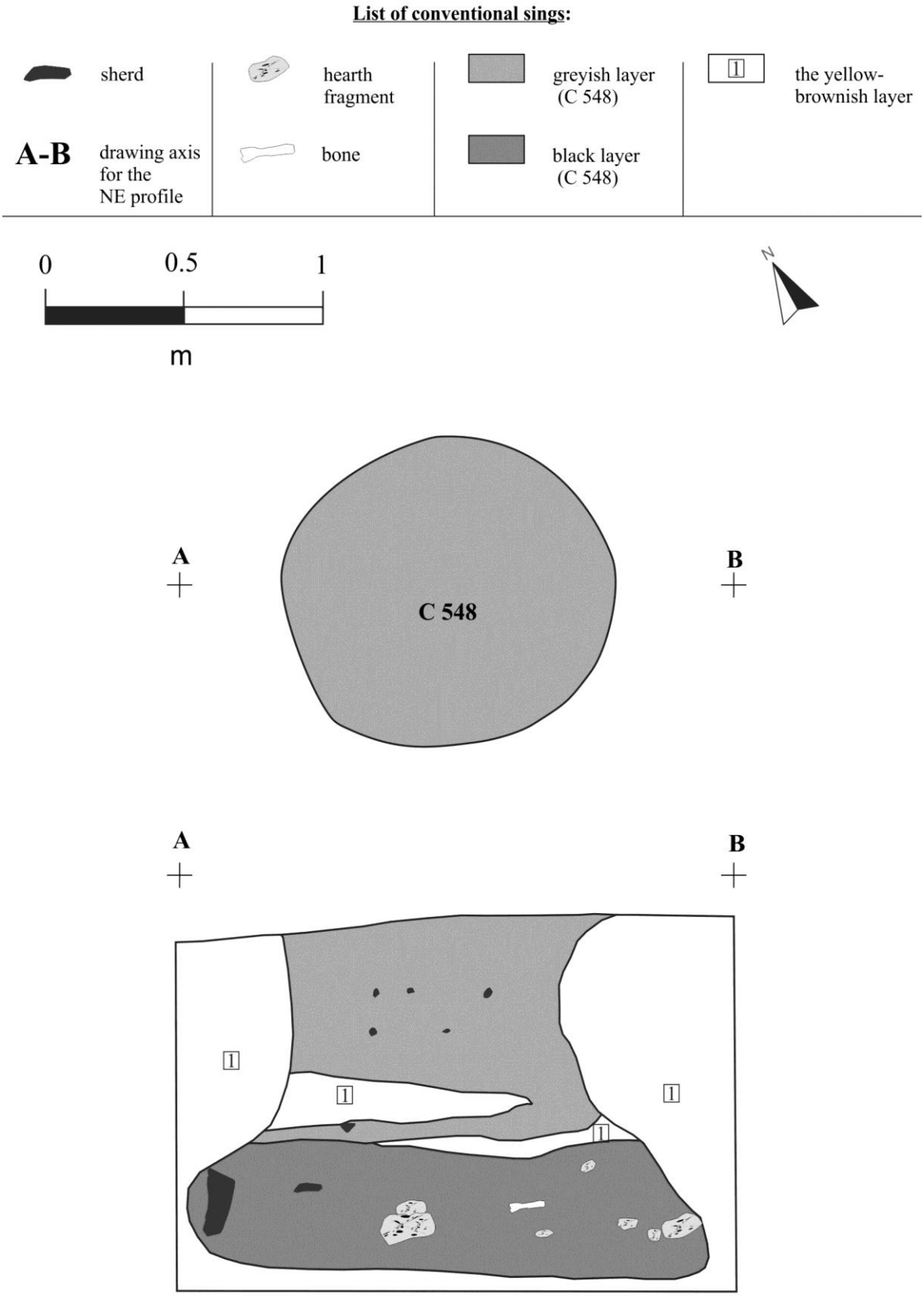
[39] Sîrbu 1985; Sîrbu 1993, 31-36, 86-94; Sîrbu 1994; Sîrbu 2008; Davâncă 2015.

[40] Sîrbu 1993, 46-57, 101-109; Sîrbu 2001.

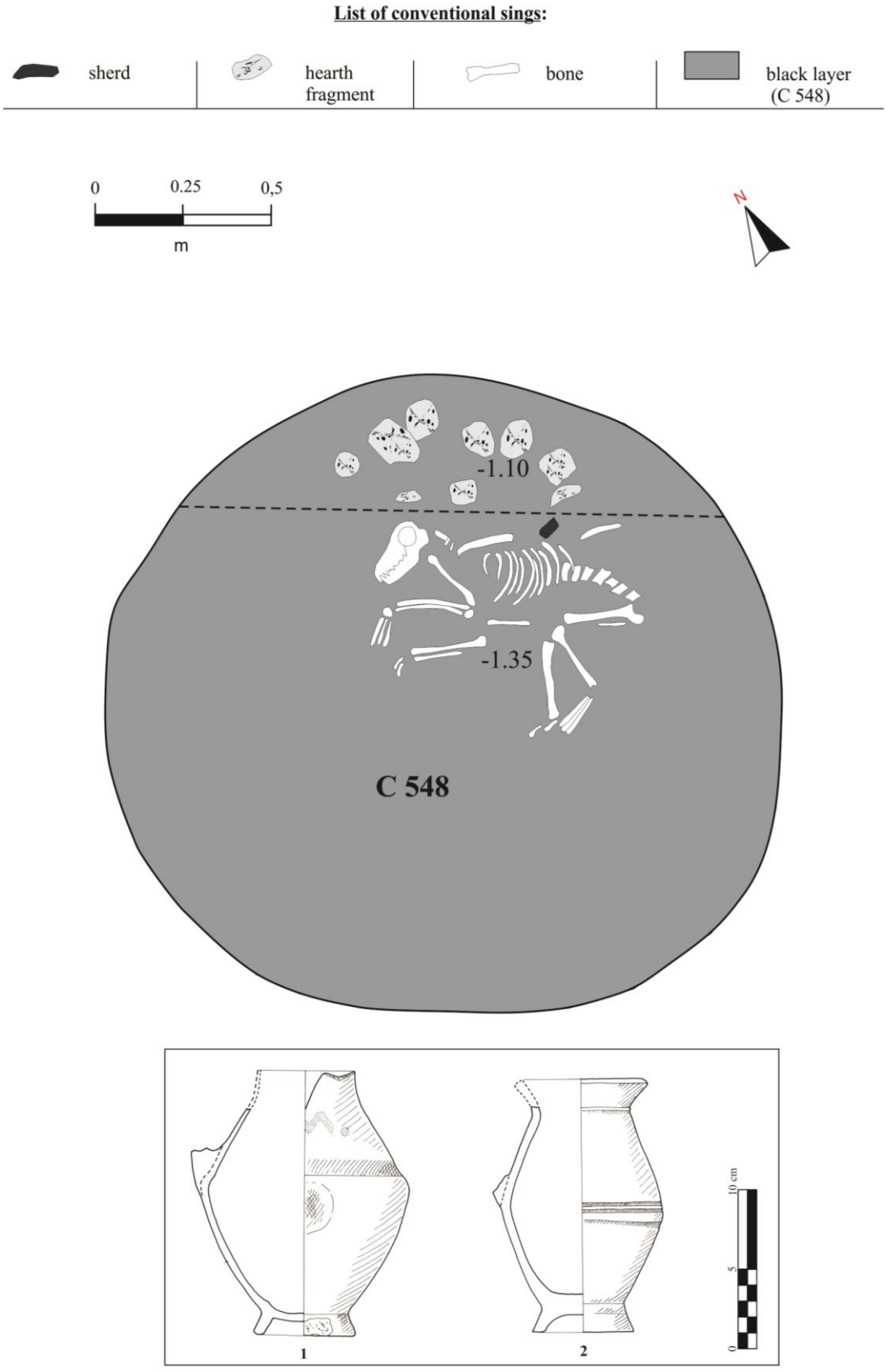
to children, with only one fragment – the *calvaria* – coming from an adult's skull, while on the other hand, the dog skeletons belong to mature or elderly individuals only the scattered dog bones discarded in the filling coming mostly from juveniles.



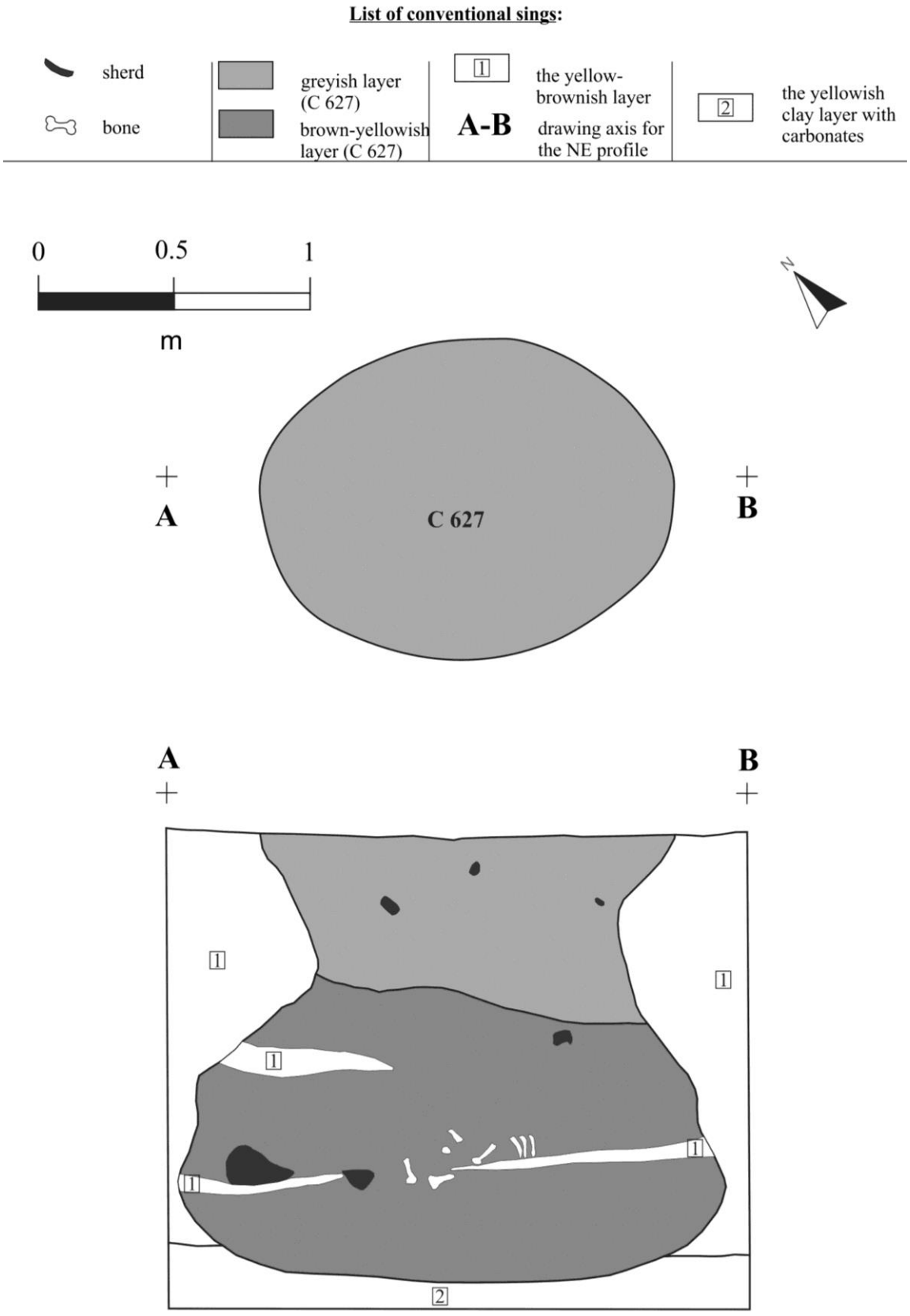
Pl. 15. Pottery from C478.



Pl. 16. Plan/Profile of pit C548.



Pl. 17. Pit C 548. Plan of the level in which the dog skeleton was discovered. 1-2. Jugs from the pit.



Pl. 18. Plan/Profile of pit C 627.

In a similar manner to the numerous refuse pits from the area north of Danube[41], in this structural relationship between the whole and the fragmented, we have to mention a unifying element: the presence of the disused objects and domestic waste. A two-way relationship between the waste and the deposited bodies from the pit can be thus established. By associating in the filling of the pits the human and animal bodies (or certain parts from their skeletons), with the objects and with the consumption waste, we reach the conclusion that it also contributes to what we might call cultural semantics. On the one hand, the human bones could be equated with the disused objects, with which they are associated in different contexts; the *calvaria* fragment from pit C585 could be included into this category. On the other hand, the attitude to what we call today "garbage" or "domestic waste" probably had a different meaning in the Late Iron Age.

This relationship fades the borders between different contexts (houses, graves, "pit fields", "worship places"). In the deposits located on the bank of the Bîrcă Lake at Conţeşti, in a place located in the exterior of any settlement and interpreted as a "place of worship"[42], cremated animal bones and pottery fragments with a "domestic" appearance were associated, in a similar manner to the filling of certain pits, domestic contexts, or so-called "pit fields" in the proximity of the settlements[43]. In a layer from the mantle of the Stolniceni mound, the skeletons of several individuals were associated with dismantled and "fragmented clusters of hearths", pottery fragments and animal bones[44], forming a constellation of depositions similar to some of the domestic contexts. At Cetăţeni, hearths were also arranged in the vicinity of a context in which several children were deposited[45]. Therefore, the "funerary" and the "domestic" images are transferred from one social space to another; they also combine in different material communities, constructing diverse meanings of a "daily domestic" impregnated with the "funerary". We could also add that the diverse funeral practices incorporate "domestic" materiality.

The body (or parts of it) is inserted in different "knots" of meaning networks in which the domestic and their instruments[46] meet, interfere, join, merge with the formalism of the burial act or with human bones treated as artefacts, source material, processing waste, "domestic waste", "offerings", etc. However, this kind of body deposition contexts – human and dogs –, or in which isolated human bones are handled, is no more than an occasional practice in the settlement at Bucureşti–*Strada Gârlei*. Despite the extensive excavation, such discoveries appear only in five contexts. Also, from all the representative settlements from Colentina Valley that forms a dense network of habitation (to which the settlement at Bucureşti–*Strada Gârlei* belongs as well), similar contexts are mentioned only at Bucureşti–*Tei*, a site considered to be uncertain or, anyway, dated to a later period[47]. Therefore, these deposition practices with a wide regional distribution have a particular character in each site. In other words, this deposition style belongs to a cultural semantics only as long as it is also structured by other elements. One such element would be what we call "significant moments".

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41 Sîrbu 1985, 90-91, 93, 102; 1993; Davâncă 2015.

42 Vulpe and Popescu 1976; Nicolăescu-Plopşor 1976.

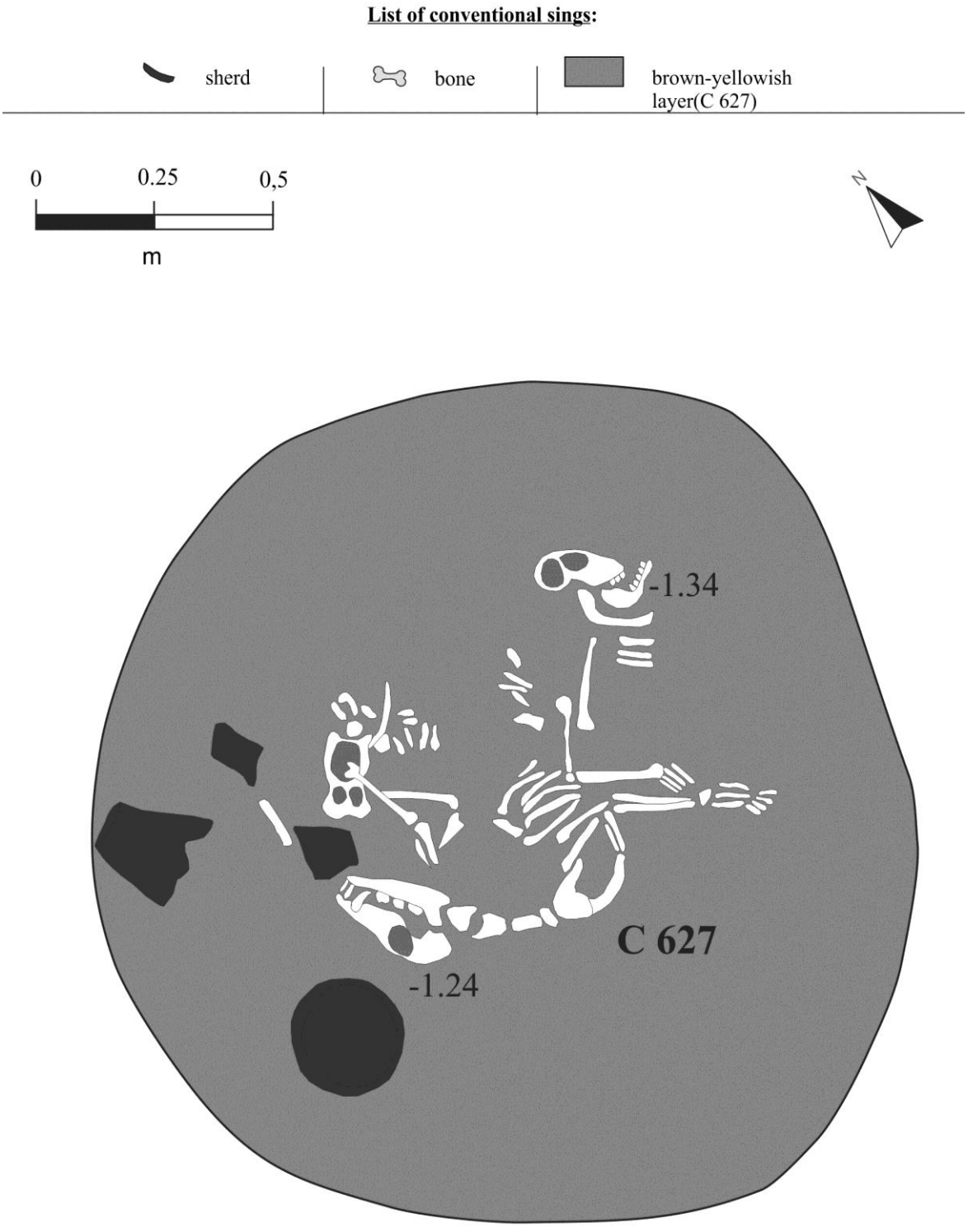
43 *e.g.* Andriţoiu and Rustoiu 1995, 430; "pit fields": Sîrbu 2006, 52-55; Sîrbu, Davîncă 2014.

44 Sîrbu and Arnăut 1995.

45 Sîrbu 1985, 95-96.

46 Like the grinder from C519A or the spindle whorl and the two sickles discovered in one feature of this kind from Sighişoara-*Wietenberg*; Andriţoiu and Rustoiu 1997, 72.

47 Sîrbu 1993, 93-94, 107.



Pl. 19. Pit C627. Plan of the level in which the two dog skeletons were discovered.

In certain settlements from this period, bodies of children and dogs are both handled in such contexts as they could be interpreted as material expressions of sacrifice/foundation rituals): in pit-houses fillings (Cățelu Nou, Celei, Chirnogi, Grădiştea, Unirea); near houses (Poiana); or on sites, before building the future houses (Borduşani) or the hearths

(Măşcăuţi, Căscioarele–*Şuviţa Hotarului*, Cucorăni)[48]. With the exception of the deposition of dog bones from pit C478-3, such practices were not documented at Bucureşti–*Strada Gârlei*. Here, the contexts involving human bodies and bones are materialities of some gestures and practices relating to the abandonment. The spaces end their habitation, storage or extraction function, and enter the new biographical stage of abandonment, constructed by a number of filling gestures of pits which need certain dynamism and a certain rhythm. As we have seen, the presence of a child skeleton and of the perforated *calvaria* fragment in pit C555 and in pit-house C585 is not distinguishable from the disused objects and the consumption waste (animal bones) with which they are associated in the filling. The piece of *calvaria*, considered by some scholars as a defining element for the practice of cannibalism[49], clearly suggests the fact that, after the death of the individuals, the human bones entered the same field of significations together with different artefacts. They could be selected and stored ("treasured") to be later deposited (discarded) during some important moments. Such moments could be precisely related to the pit and/or the pit-house abandonment; alternatively, maybe their space became one of deposition during other events with a certain meaning.

On other occasions, the "domestic" rhythms were temporarily suspended by the ceremonial stillness of the body in a certain position, by the jewellery that builds the funerary identity of the child, or by the hearth "snatched" from the daily life and deposited over the dog's body. This stillness defines moments opposite to the founding time. In the fortress of Măşcăuţi a hearth was later arranged on the spot where the fragmented body of a child was deposited[50]. Also, at Căscioarele–*Şuviţa Hotarului*[51] and at Cucorăni[52] the dogs have been deposited in pits dug on the spots where hearths were subsequently arranged. The relationship between the dog and the disused hearth from pit C548 is reversed to these foundation practices. In a way, in the pit is buried the symbolic daily link between the hearth and the dog, precisely buried there. In a larger geographical space, the act of human or dog bodies deposition involves the use of ashes, pieces of charcoal, and hearth fragments[53]. The daily space of housing is a combination of practices that joins together the image of the "domestic" and the death of it. The death of the houses, workshops, and pits is "braided" in some significant moments with the death of the objects, people, and dogs.

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48 Trohani et al. 1972; Sîrbu 1988-1989, 70; Sîrbu 1993, 86, 89, 91, 93, 103; Sîrbu 2001; Sîrbu, Anastasiu 1980, 209, 212; Sîrbu et al. 1995; Trohani 2004; 2005, 11-12; Zanoci 2004, 47-48; Sîrbu, Davâncă 2013, 195; Davâncă 2015, 79, 86, 118.

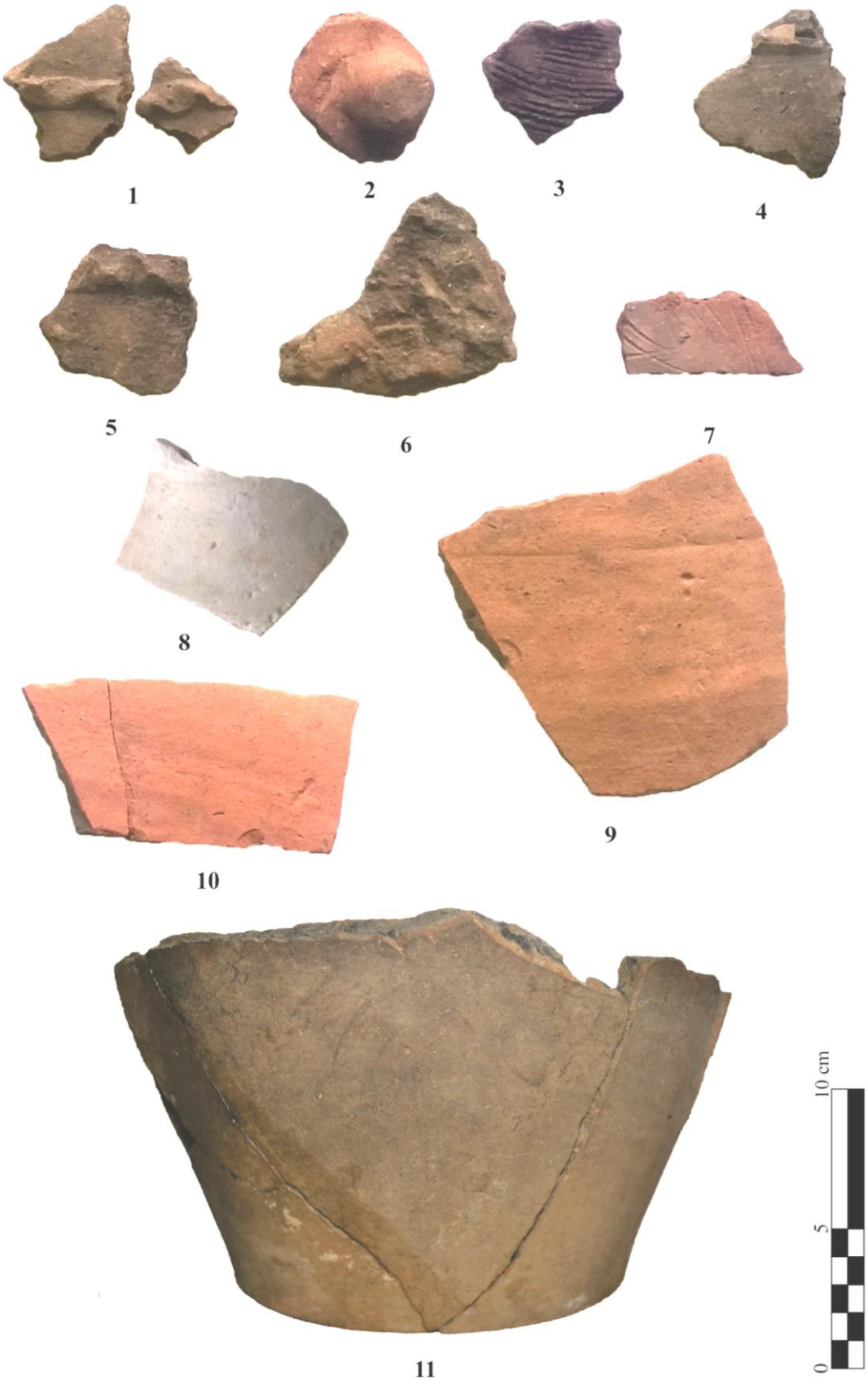
49 Sîrbu 1993, 33.

50 Zanoci 2004, 47-48; Davâncă 2015, 48-49.

51 Sîrbu 1993, 103; 325.

52 Teodor 1975, 127-128, fig. 6/b; Sîrbu 1993, 104; 2001, 325.

53 *e.g.* Sîrbu 1985, 90, 94, 100, 102; Sîrbu 1988-1989, 65; Sîrbu 1993, 89-91, 102-103; Andriţoiu, Rustoiu 1995, 430; Andriţoiu, Rustoiu 1997; Sîrbu, Davâncă 2013.



Pl. 20. Pottery from pit C 627.

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