

GÜVERCINKAYASI THE BLACK/DARK BURNISHED POTTERY¹: A GENERAL OVERVIEW

GÜVERCINKAYASI SİYAH / KOYU RENKLİ AÇKILI ÇANAK ÇÖMLEK: GENEL GÖRÜNÜM

To the precious memory of our
dear Professor Braidwood and
Linda Hanım

***Sevil GÜLÇUR**

Key words: Central Anatolia, Middle Chalcolithic, settlement planning, standardization, surplus management, Dark/Black Burnished Pottery, social classes.

Anahtar kelimeler: Orta Anadolu, Orta Kalkolitik, yerleşme planlanması, standartlaşma, artı ürün idaresi, Siyah/Koyu Renkli Açkılı çanak çömlek, toplumsal sınıflar.

1994 yılında saptanan Güvercinkayası, Orta Kalkolitik Çağ'a tarihlenen kaya üzeri yerleşmelerindendir. Ancak kaya yüzeyine açılmış olası kazık delikleriyle saptanabilen bir öncü evreden sonra, tek dönemi yansıtan, şimdilik kaydıyla, dört tabaka saptanmıştır. Tıpkı yöreye yabancı kazık delikli mimari gibi son, dördüncü tabaka da yerleşmeye yabancı, kerpiç tuğladan, sekmeli bir çevre duvarıyla sona ermektedir. Bu duvarla birlikte, açık renk yüzeyli bir tür çanak çömlek de envantere katılmaktadır.

Güvercinkayası kalıcı mimarisinin ana yapı ögesi taştır. Duvar örgülerinde, çamur harçla birbirlerine tutturulmuş, kabaca yontulmuş ocak, ya da çevreden derlenmiş taşlar kullanılmıştır.

Kayalığın doğal yapısı ve boyutları, yerleşmenin düzenini de etkilemiştir. Yerleşmenin plânı, belirli bir tasarım ürünüdür. Ana yapı tipi, birbirine doğrudan bitişen, yaklaşık aynı boyutlarda, dar cepheden girişli büyük bir oda ve odanın karşı ucundaki kiler hücresi tarzındadır. Konut içi taşınmazların yerleri de önceden saptanan düzene uyacak şekilde, kesin kurallara uymaktadır.

Her evde bulunan ufak silolar ve diğer depolama üniteleri, kuru tarımdan elde edilen ürünün saklandığını göstermektedir. Kayalığın en yüksek ve korunaklı alanına özel bir yapı topluluğu yerleşmiştir. Ağır bir yangınla sona eren yapı, artı ürünün denetimini elinde tutan, ya da diğer köy sakinlerine göre daha varlıklı bir köy ağasının evini anımsatmaktadır. Bu yapı topluluğu, yerleşme yönünde, kalın duvarlar ve kulemsi bir yapıyla berkitilmiştir.

Giderek içe kapanma Güvercinkayasası'nın en belirgin özelliklerinden biridir. Kuzey ve doğu teras basamağını alttan çevreleyen bir destek duvarıyla, kullanım dışı bırakılan kuzey yolu ve doğu yoluna bakan kapıların, dışarıdan bloke edilmeleri, savunma gereksinimini doğrulayan bulgulardır.

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Siyah/Koyu Renkli Açıklı Mallar, Güvercinkayası'nın baskın çanak çömlek gurubudur. Özenle açkılanmış depo kapları, çömlekler ve küpler en yaygın kap türlerini oluşturmaktadır. Kapların biçimleri ve boylarında bir normlaşma söz konusudur.

Depo kaplarının büyük bölümü, kendi başlarına ayakta duramayacak kadar ufak diplidir. Çogunluğu uzun boyunlu ve omurgalı bu kaplar, odaların belirli yerlerinde, kilden sokular için oturtulmaktadır.

Kapların üzerinde görülen, sembolik anlamlı stilize bezekler, kabartma tekniğinde uygulanmıştır. Göz, kaş ve boynuzdan oluşan betimleme öğeleri, zengin kulp çeşitlemesiyle kullanılarak, hayvan yüzlerini temsil etmektedir.

Bu betimlemeler, yerleşme içi depolanmış boynuzlarla birlikte ele alındığında, hayvanların ekonomik ve tinsel yaşamdaki rolü ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Güvercinkayası, Köşk Höyük'ün (Bahçeli, Bor-Niğde) I. tabakasıyla eş zamanlıdır (cal. C₁₄ M.Ö. 5210-4810). Tasarım ürünü, normlaşmış üniteleri barındıran mimari ve normlaşmış kaplar, tabakalanmış topluma doğru götüren bir sistemin habercisi konumundadır.

Introduction:

The visit to the Çayhane (teahouse) of Gökçe village, Momoasson/Mamasun, during the Aksaray, Nevşehir, Niğde 1994 Surveys, led to a fruitful discovery. The first aim of the long-term survey was the localisation of prehistoric sites. As usual the local people had been interviewed about possible concentrations of "deve cinciği/öküz gözü" (obsidian) or potsherds in their fields. The surroundings of Gökçe seemed not to be very promising, but Ahmet Ağa from the neighbouring village of Çatalısu, Apsarı (Aksaray/Gülağaç) in town just for a short visit with friends led the research team on his way back home to a rock in the Mamasun Dam reservoir. The first impression of this massif on the right bank of the Melendiz River called Güvercinkayası or Porsuklukaya (alt. 1106.084) (P33/54) was tremendous (Fig. 14). A high cliff formed the southern boundary of the massif; to the north was a steep slope with extensive debris of eroded stone walls. To the east was a high terrace sprinkled with artificial holes dug into the bedrock, and, along the edge of the flat settlement mound visible architectural remains on the surface. The flat settlement mound once covered the longitudinal plateau of the rocky

massif; the northern slope and the eastern terrace had been partly washed away by the waters of the artificial lake. Besides these remarkable observations, the terraces, slopes, and the lake basin were full of potsherds, worked obsidian, and animal bones (S. Gülçur 1996, Figs. 5 and 13, 1997, 85-86, 1999c, 111, Figs. 5-6).

A black or dark-coloured burnished pottery assemblage deserved much attention. This dominant group was represented mostly by nicely-finished storage vessels. At first study these reminded us of the Early Bronze Age burnished pottery groups of the Transcaucasus (Kura-Araxes Ware), and of Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia (Karaz Ware and Red-Black Burnished Ware), respectively. But soon clear affinities with earlier materials of Central Anatolian Chalcolithic settlements, first of all with Alishar and Köşk Höyük, could be attested (S.Gülçur 1997, 95).

Excavated since 1996, Güvercinkayası has revealed itself to be a remarkable, well-organised settlement of the Middle Chalcolithic Age

(cal. C14, 5210-4810 BC; Rijksuniversiteit Groningen Centrum voor Isotopen Onderzoek and the University of Washington Quaternary Isotope Laboratory) representing a single culture. After a preliminary phase, four main building levels -although still with some questions- could be recorded. The habitation level on the southwest-northeast-oriented massif starts with a first documented phenomenon in Central Anatolia: numerous regular holes ($R=15-12$ cm, $h= \pm 10$ cm) dug in a special order into the surface of the natural ground. To connect them with any solid architectural features like walls or floors of the upper levels was not possible. To declare them post-holes seemed the most reasonable solution. We then postulated a series of permanent or semi-permanent dwellings composed of organic and non-organic materials similar to wattle and daub technique (S.Gülçur 1997, 87, 103 Fig. 18, 1999a, 75 Fig. 11, 2003, 499, 508 Fig. 5).

The next three temporary layers with permanent houses are an excellent example of areal planning and social organisation. The limits of the settlement are dictated by the geological formation of the rock, and so the general concept of the architectural lay out. Roughly-shaped quarried or collected fieldstones in different sizes embedded in mud is the general technique of the masonry. One climbing up from the north terrace and the other from the east two narrow roads flanked by uniform attached houses leads into the town. During a later period the northern road was cut up by walls and the resulting units were added to the houses (Fig. 1). The general plan of the house units is simple ($\pm 4.00 \times 5.00 - 6.00$ m). The main type is a rectangular large room with a narrow cell for storage at its far end. Each house has a separate entrance. The threshold is marked by a suitable stone sill. A step leading into the room, and a door socket are the regular finds. Walls, floors, and other immobile inventories are neatly and multiply-plastered with mud.

Standardization is normal for Güvercinkayası

architecture. Also the placement of the immobile equipment in the houses should be understood in this sense. The left or right corner of the short wall by the entrance is always reserved for a domed oven accompanied by a horseshoe-shaped fireplace, and the center of the main room for a slightly raised round fireplace. Most of the houses have semi-circular storage bins. They are normally attached to the walls of the narrow storage cells or to the walls at the far end of the big rooms (S. Gülçur 2003, 500, 507 Fig. 3).

The economy of Güvercinkayası is primarily based on dry, rain-fed farming and animal husbandry. Storage devices of different types like bins or large vessels, grinding benches, grinding equipment, bones of domestic and wild animals, are the best proof for these activities. Horn and antler deposits are one of the special characteristics of Güvercinkayası. The large amount of horn and antler finds is in sharp contrast to the limited skull representations (H. Buitenhuis 1999, 64-69). Buried in pairs under the floors, placed on floors or in vessels, next to fireplaces or in out-of-the-way areas, imitating their normal placement on the head of the living animals (S.Gülçur 1997, 104 Figs. 20-21, 1999a, 75 Figs. 11-13), their exaggerated presence can not be explained simply as raw materials of the bone tool industry (R. Christidou 2002, 106-107, 110 Fig.1). They are surely, along with the naturalistic or stylized symbolic reliefs on pottery, indications of the economic and spiritual importance of the animals in the daily life of Güvercinkayası.

Further proof for agricultural activities, and probably early traces of the management of harvested surplus, can be found at a special storage complex. This complex is situated at the highest and most protected area of the rock plateau (7-8 H) (Fig.1). Here along the southern edge of the cliff two big north-south oriented adjacent rooms ($\pm 5.00 \times 10.00$ m) are placed. The width of the east room is dictated by a north-south oriented high rock. This room was secondarily in

use as a storage area with many big silos attached honeycomb-wise to each other along the west wall. The western central unit repeats the plan of the normal houses but differs from them in its dimensions and installations. The large main room contains two domed ovens instead of one; one in the southwest corner and another much larger one neighbouring the storage cell in the northeast (S. Gülçur 2003, 501, 508 Fig. 7). A grinding bench in the shape of a bulls head is placed in front of the short division wall, and next to it a small bin. A round fireplace is also present. The storage room was full of crushed vessels as was the area surrounding the fireplace and ovens (S. Gülçur 1999a, 58-61, 77 Figs. 16-17, 78 Fig 20, 79 Fig.21, 2003, 509 Fig.8).

A fortification system attests the importance of this by a big fire desolated building complex. Two strong walls and a round tower-like structure, cleared during the 2003 excavations, separate this unit from the village. Another external retaining wall is to be seen along the lower edge of the east and north terrace steps (Fig. 1). During its lifetime the settlement acquired more of a defensive character. Even all the house entrances facing the eastern road went out of use. They were blocked from the outside by domed ovens set on low podia. Güvercinkayaşı thus became one of the first Central Anatolian early settlements with a double fortification system.

A mud-brick wall represents the uppermost (fourth) occupation level. Facing the north it arises from the thick stone debris of the inner fortification system and parallel to it. To follow the extension of this wall towards the northern slope was possible only in some places. This stepped enclosure wall (?) is a foreign element in the history of Güvercinkayaşı, and marks without a doubt a fundamental social or even cultural change. A light-coloured pottery group with new forms is probably another remarkable component of this change (S. Gülçur 2003, 509 Fig. 9. S. Gülçur, M. Endoğlu 2001, 50, 56 Fig. 3, 1-2).

As a result of the long-term survey we found, besides Güvercinkayaşı, four other settlements with similar black/dark coloured pottery. With the exception of Alayhan Höyük the other three settlements were shifted to higher altitudes on high rocky outcrops. A common feature for all these habitations of the Middle Chalcolithic Period is the close linkage to the old migration roads (S. Gülçur 1996, 199, 203 Fig. 6, 1999c, 114-115, 2001, 273-274, 281 Fig.10-11. U. Esin, S. Gülçur, E. Özel 1999, 189-190, 198 Fig.1).

During eight seasons of excavation at Güvercinkayaşı (1996-2003) four major pottery groups could be distinguished. As mentioned above the dominant pottery group is the Black/Dark Burnished Ware (WI). The second group (WII), marked by simple V-incised decoration, is a minor subgroup of WI. Light Paste Ware (WIII), especially the surface-roughened (flint-scraped) conical bowls, seems to be the second dominant pottery group of the upper strata (S. Gülçur, M. Endoğlu, D. Kara 2000, 58, Figs. 64-66. S. Gülçur, M. Endoğlu 2001, 50, Figs. 55-57). Each area produced a small amount of bichrome painted sherds (WIV) (S. Gülçur 1997, 105 Fig. 22, 6). The best examples of this group are two restorable long necked jars, *in situ*, with similar geometrical designs (S. Gülçur, M. Endoğlu 2001, 50, 57 Fig.6). Some pieces decorated with zig zag lines of the group can be directly related to Köşk Höyük and Can Hasan 2B samples (A. Öztan 2002, 69 Fig. 15).

Room fill and *in situ* finds on floors (Figs 15-17, 19) are the major deposits for pottery collection. Isolated layers of ovens and fireplaces, which were paved with sherds, are another important resource (Fig.18). As evidenced by finds like an unfired handle in an oven, small triangular polishing stones, and various clay lumps, the Güvercinkayaşı pottery production was locally manufactured. With only few exceptions the paste of the hand-made wares is mineral tempered. Chopped straw (organic fibers), small tufa particles, and mica bits are frequent secondary inclusions. Tufa particles and mica can

be regarded as the natural impurities of the Cappadocian clay resources. Percentages, sizes, and shapes of the tempering materials differ due to wall thickness, form, and purpose of the fabrics. Nearly all the pottery sections are more or less reduced.

Middle to large vessels are manufactured using a stepwise, coiling technique. The joints of the broad coils can be detected by the potter's finger impressions left in the walls of the vessels. The straight breaks along the joints are long, and fluted or rounded in cross-section, so that one can assume the parts were formed separately and then stuck together.

Scraping of the leather-hard vessel surfaces with a rib made of wood, bone, obsidian, or pottery to remove the surplus clay is clearly visible in many cases as irregular, thin crosshatchings, even on carefully burnished surfaces. These scrapings and finger impressions below the rim zone are standard characteristics of the surface-roughened (flint-scraped) conical bowls (S. Gülçur 1997, 105 Fig. 22, 1. S. Gülçur, M. Endoğlu, D.Kara 2000, 66 Fig. 5,1-4).

The so-called "Black/Dark Burnished Ware" of Güvercinkayası was first recognized from big pieces of burnished storage jars whose exteriors were black (2.5YR,2/0), and interiors mostly red. Obviously the potters aim was to produce black burnished vessels (10R, 5/6-8). Other than red, the colours of the inner walls can be in different shades of light to dark gray (2.5YR, 5/0-4/0) or brown (7.5YR, 5/4-6). A fairly large number of small to middle-sized vessels such as bowls, hole-mouth jars, or jugs are black throughout (Fig.20). Simply brown or dark dirty gray bodies are, like light and dark mottled ones, also not a rarity. The primary colour changes should be accepted as a result of the agents in the paste and the firing techniques. The secondary colour changes are surely affected by use and storage conditions as the refired pottery of the burnt areas, which became red (Figs. 16-17), badly cracked, and deformed. Peeling of the bur-

nished surfaces in thick layers is also often noticeable. Long term calcination is another negative component of the Güvercinkayası pottery (Fig.19). The thick hard calcarous coatings leave dull surfaces behind, even after physical or chemical removal. Outside black and inside red fired vessels represents the high quality products of WI. The wall cross-sections of these high quality products are also divided into two colour zones. That means the outer surface of an already red fired pottery was deliberately reduced to black. A thin red oxidized line along the inner edge of the black fired vessel profiles is another indication of this treatment.

Simple formed rims are a common feature of the Güvercinkayası pottery. Only the thickened rims of some jars of the Light Paste Group (WIII) are an exception. Although not as abundant as the storage vessels, small to large, and shallow to deep, bowls and cups are represented in many variations (Figs. 2-3). The majority consist of simply-formed conical and semi-globular bowls and cups (Fig. 2). The bases are rounded (Fig. 2,1-2), flat (Figs. 2,3; 3, 5; 4,1-2), slightly incurving or raised (Figs. 2, 8; 4,5). S-shaped bodies with or without carination are not uncommon (Fig. 3) Their dimensions differ from very small cups to very large basin-like vessels. Deep bowls with thickened, small, unstable bases are a special type of the S-shaped group (Fig. 3, 9-12).

As far as they are attested the forms and sizes of the storage vessels are limited to a few types. Presumably, the limitation is another reflection of the social organization towards standardization. In comparison with the high amount of in situ long neck jars and pithoi the middle-to-big-sized hole-mouth jars appear less dominant. Two main types with globular (Fig. 5) or biconical bodies (Fig. 6) with or without carination are known.

Carination is another striking element of the Black/Dark Polished closed shape vessels. Long and straight breaks are almost always along

these carination lines (Figs. 8, 2; 9, 2). With few exceptions of middle-sized globular jars (Fig. 4, 8) nearly all types have sharp angular, long, cylindrical or conical necks (Figs. 4, 5-7, 7; 8, 1). The bodies are rounded (Figs. 4, 6, 8; 7, 2; 8, 2) and more or less carinated (Figs. 4, 5; 7, 1; 9, 2; 10, 1, 5). The flat or thickened conical bases do not correspond to the size of the heavy bodies (Figs. 7, 8; 1). They are too small to support the vessels. As known from *in situ* finds each room had a special area reserved for this kind of storage equipment. Set in upright position, these were embedded on the floors from the base up to the lower part of the body in wet mud. When dried the mud embedding became hard, and functioned as a pot stand.

Horizontal or vertical lugs (Figs. 3, 11; 10, 1-2) and handles (Figs. 4; 5, 1; 6, 1; 7, 1; 8; 9, 2; 10, 5-8, 11, 2; 12, 4) in various types and combinations are the accessories of nearly all pottery types. Beside their practical functions they are often used as decorative elements (Figs. 5, 1; 6, 1; 9, 2; 10, 5; 11, 2; 25). An elongated horizontal lug with raised discoid attachments is a special form of the Güvercinkaya pottery (Fig. 10, 1-2). Some handles also have similar discoid attachments (Figs. 5, 1; 8, 2). An angular vertical ribbon handle of a jug remains until now unique (Fig. 4, 2).

The decorations on Black/Dark Burnished Pottery are either in relief or incised/impressed in two different techniques. During the first campaigns of the excavations a group of pieces of small black vessels (WII) with simple V-incisions was categorized as a minor subgroup of WI (Fig. 13, 1-10). This group contained in comparison to the usual material a higher amount of included vegetable fibers. Additional incised features are panels filled with lozenges bordered by fluted lines (Fig. 13, 11-13). As exhibited by a few samples combinations of incisions with reliefs are also present (Fig. 11, 1, 21). Another common decoration of the black/dark burnished

group is panels filled with impressed dots on small to big-sized vessels (Fig. 12).

The most common decorative elements of the Black/Dark Burnished Pottery are simple or figural applications in relief. Decorative lugs, flattened (Fig. 10, 3-4; 25), ovoid (Fig. 3, 9), round (Figs. 3, 10; 4, 2; 13, 18) or conical knobs (Figs. 2, 9; 4, 5), straight or curving fluted lines (Fig. 13, 14, 16-17) or relief bands (Fig. 13, 15) are simple, and of types known from elsewhere.

The figural reliefs on Güvercinkaya can be studied in two groups as naturalistic and stylized symbolic designs. The themes of the naturalistic as well as the stylized symbolic designs focus on animals. Beside snakes (Fig. 11, 5-7) all represented species, all native animals of the surrounding region, are paralleled by faunal remains in the settlement (Buitenhuis 1999). Naturalistic reproductions are few and mainly known from the lower layers. A handle of a small juglet formed as a goat's head with eyes of obsidian chips (Fig. 11, 27), a bull's head below the rim of a small hole-mouth cup (Fig. 11, 3) and a beautifully designed antler (Fig. 11, 4, 23) on the belly of a middle sized jar represent wild or domestic consumable animals. Two examples of snakes, but differently fashioned, are observed. In harmony with the size of the applied vessel one tiny snake is modeled upright in climbing position (Fig. 11, 6). The other example is in high relief. The wavy body, which produces a gliding effect, is sprinkled with impressed dots presumably as imitation of the skin-pattern (Fig. 11, 7, 24).

The tendency towards uniformity is also reflected by the stylized designs of the Güvercinkaya pottery. Eyebrows, eyes (Fig. 9, 1, 3-5; 22) and horns (Figs. 3, 1; 5, 1; 6, 1; 8, 2; 9, 2; 17) are the repeatedly used symbols for animals. To produce the image of faces these limited attributes are combined with lugs or handles (Fig. 22). Manes are stressed by fluted lines between the eyes or on the handles (Fig. 9, 3-4).

Conclusions:

Stratified samples of Central Anatolian Chalcolithic pottery are rare. The last years Botaş Survey documented the extent of the Black/Dark Burnished Pottery further to the east to Sarız to the district of Kayseri (Code Nr.: L36b3/1; personal communication from A. Özdoğan-Erim). The Chalcolithic pottery of the Alishar Hoyuk comes from a deep sounding from a very limited area (E. F. Schmidt 1932, 45, Fig. 49-51. H. von der Osten 1937, Fig. 69-74). Beside Güvercinkayası, Tepecik/Çiftlik and Köşk Höyük are the only widely ranging, excavated reference settlements (E. Bıçakçı 2001 and 2003, A. Öztan 2002 with bibliography). The latest material of Tepecik/Çiftlik is older than the Güvercinkayası sequence, and shows close affinities to the materials of Köşk Höyük II-IV layers. On the other hand Güvercinkayası and

Köşk Höyük I with similar architectural features, pottery groups, and small finds are closely related (S. Gülçur 2003, 502). The general stratigraphic development indicates a process of social and economic transition from lower (II-IV) to uppermost Köşk Höyük Level I respectively to the well-organized Güvercinkayası type settlements (see for updated C14 dates of Central Anatolia <http://www.canew.net>). Surely not modern metrical but a practical approach to normative standardization as documented by the areal planning and by the uniformity of some vessel types and decorations is the result of this fundamental change. This change can not be understood without an economic force behind it. Probably this stimulating force affected the traditional political structures and led to a new formation of archaeologically detectable social classes.

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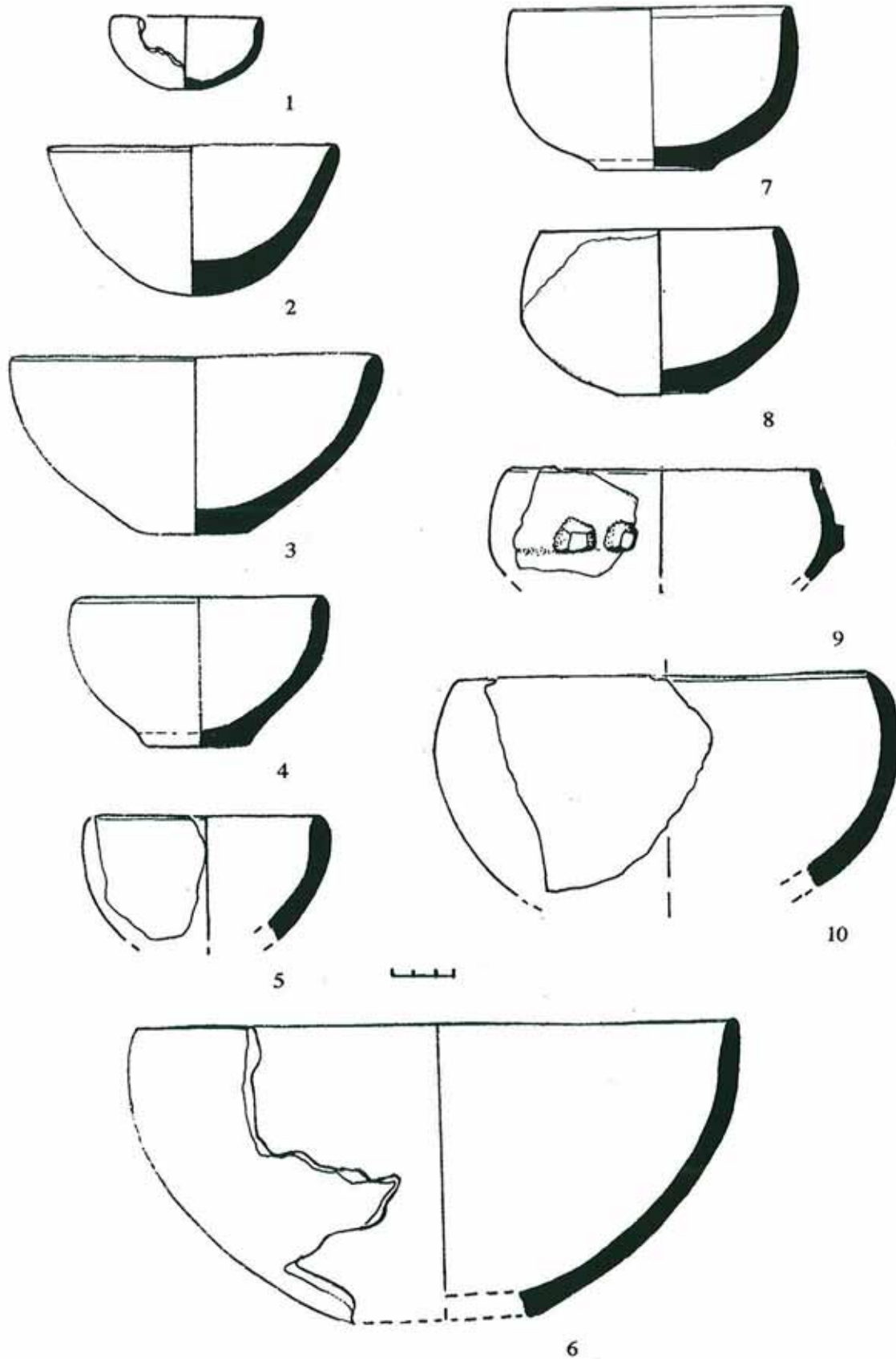


Fig. 2: Simple conical and semi-globular bowls.

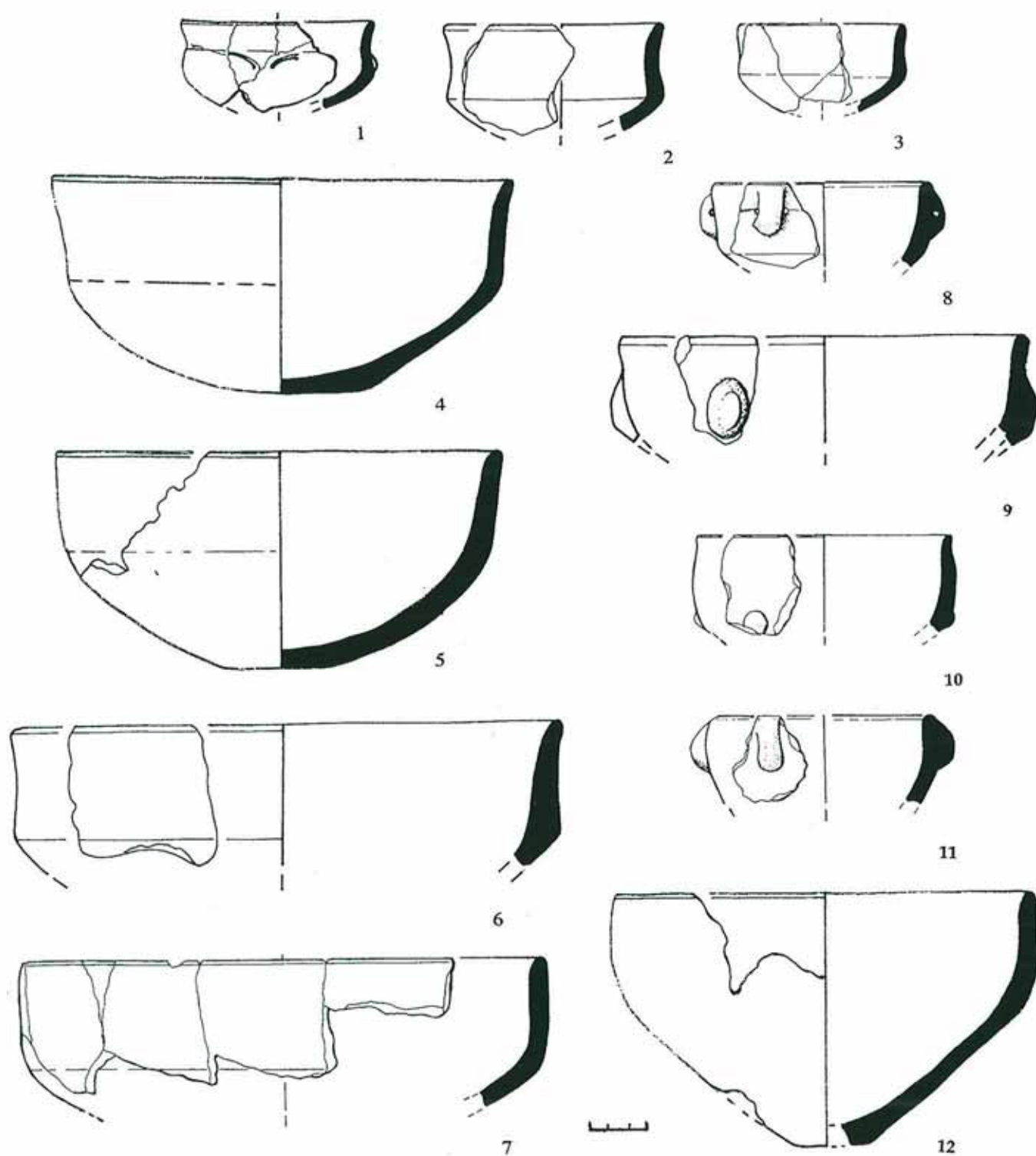


Fig. 3: S-shaped bowls and cups.

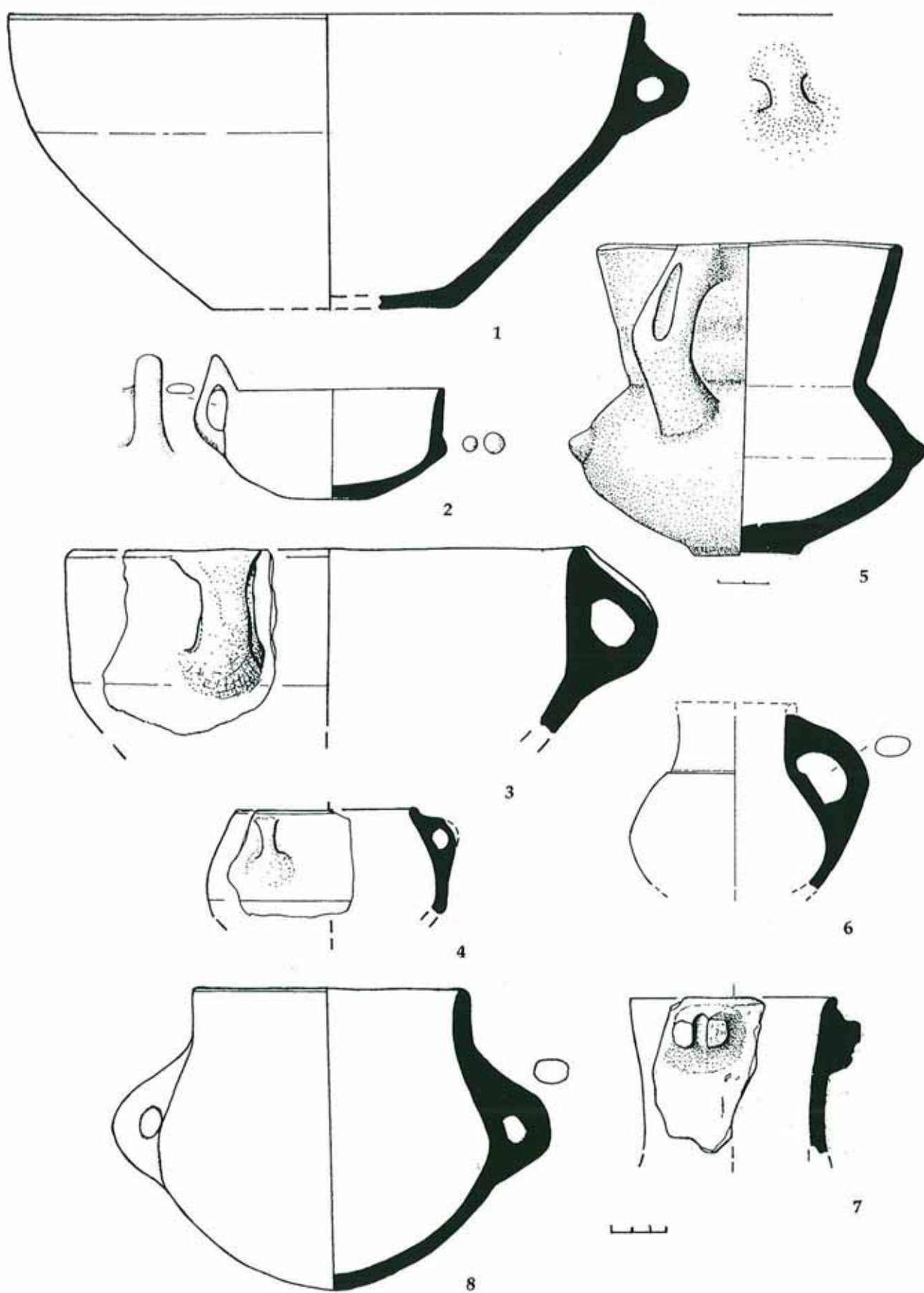


Fig.4: Handles on different shaped vessels.

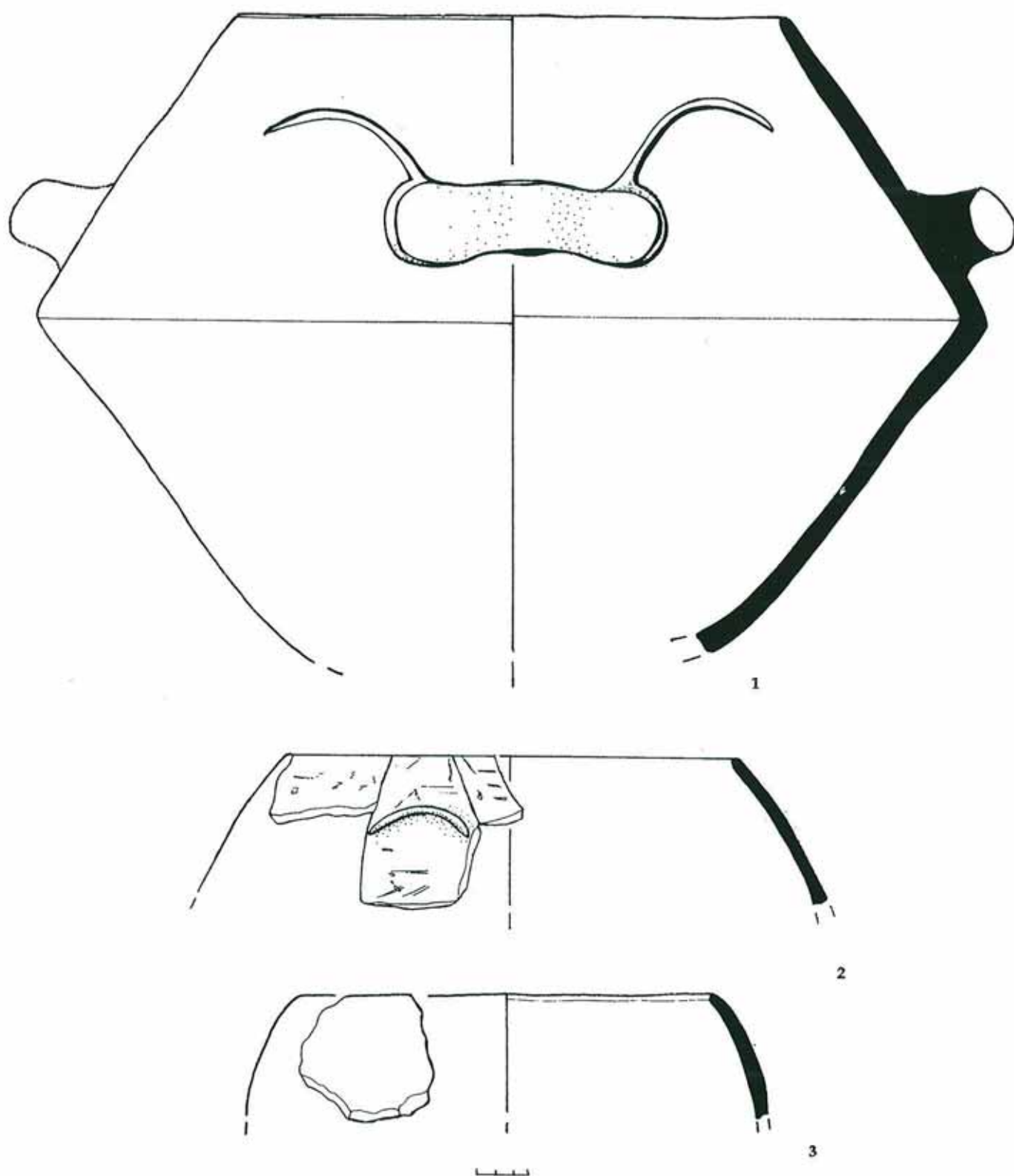


Fig. 5: Hole mouth vessels.

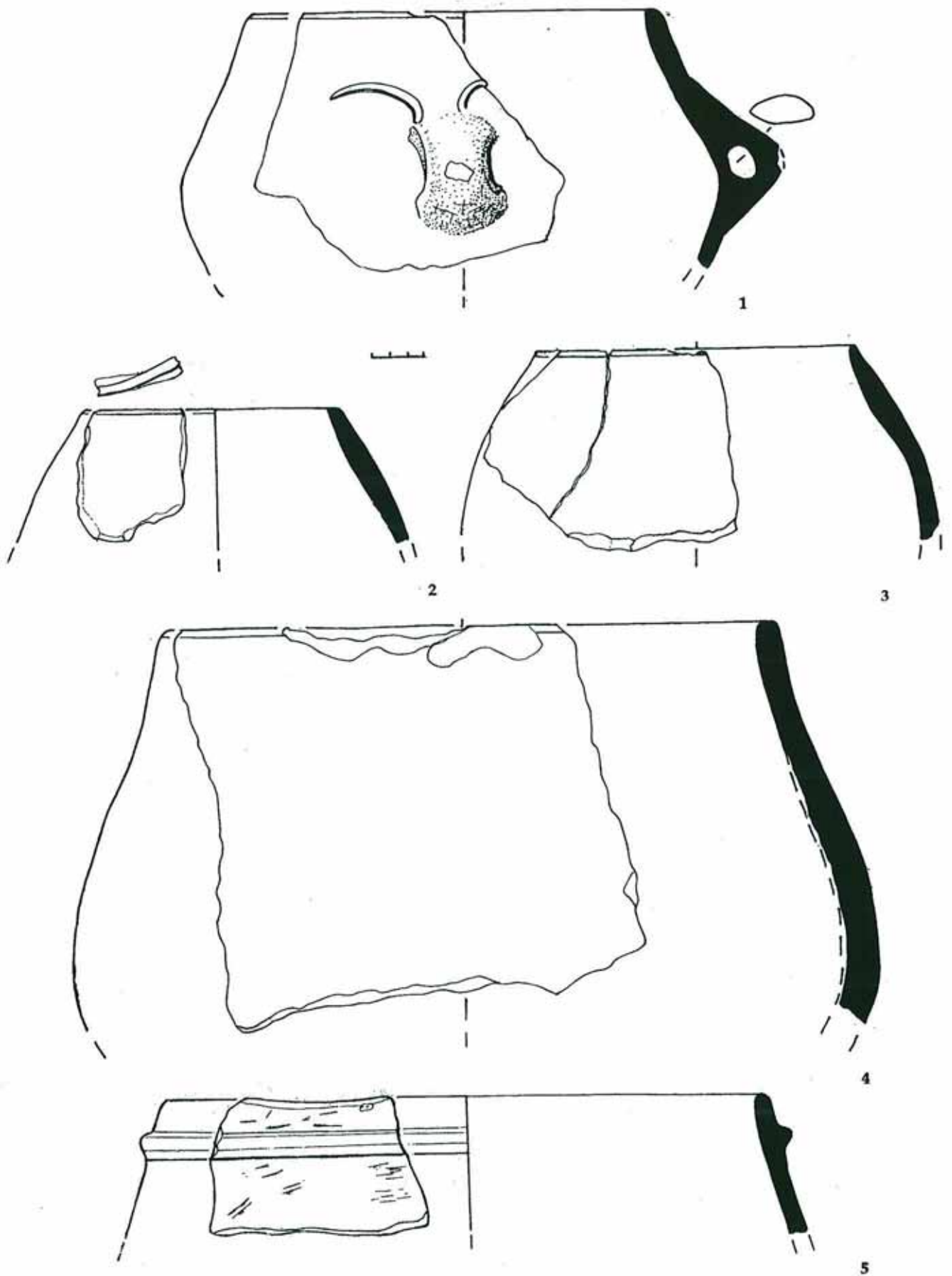


Fig.6: Hole mouth vessels.

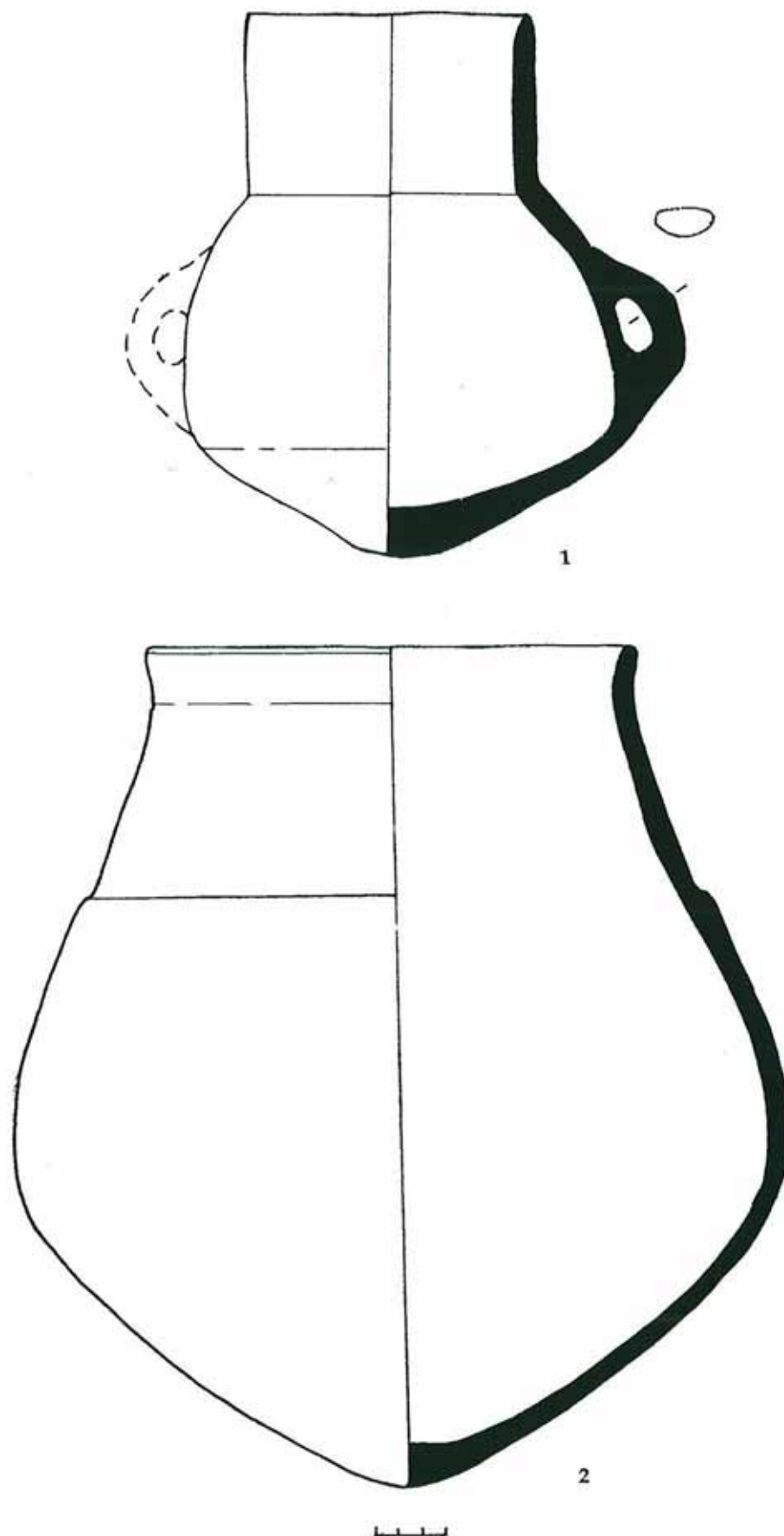


Fig. 7: Long necked storage vessels.

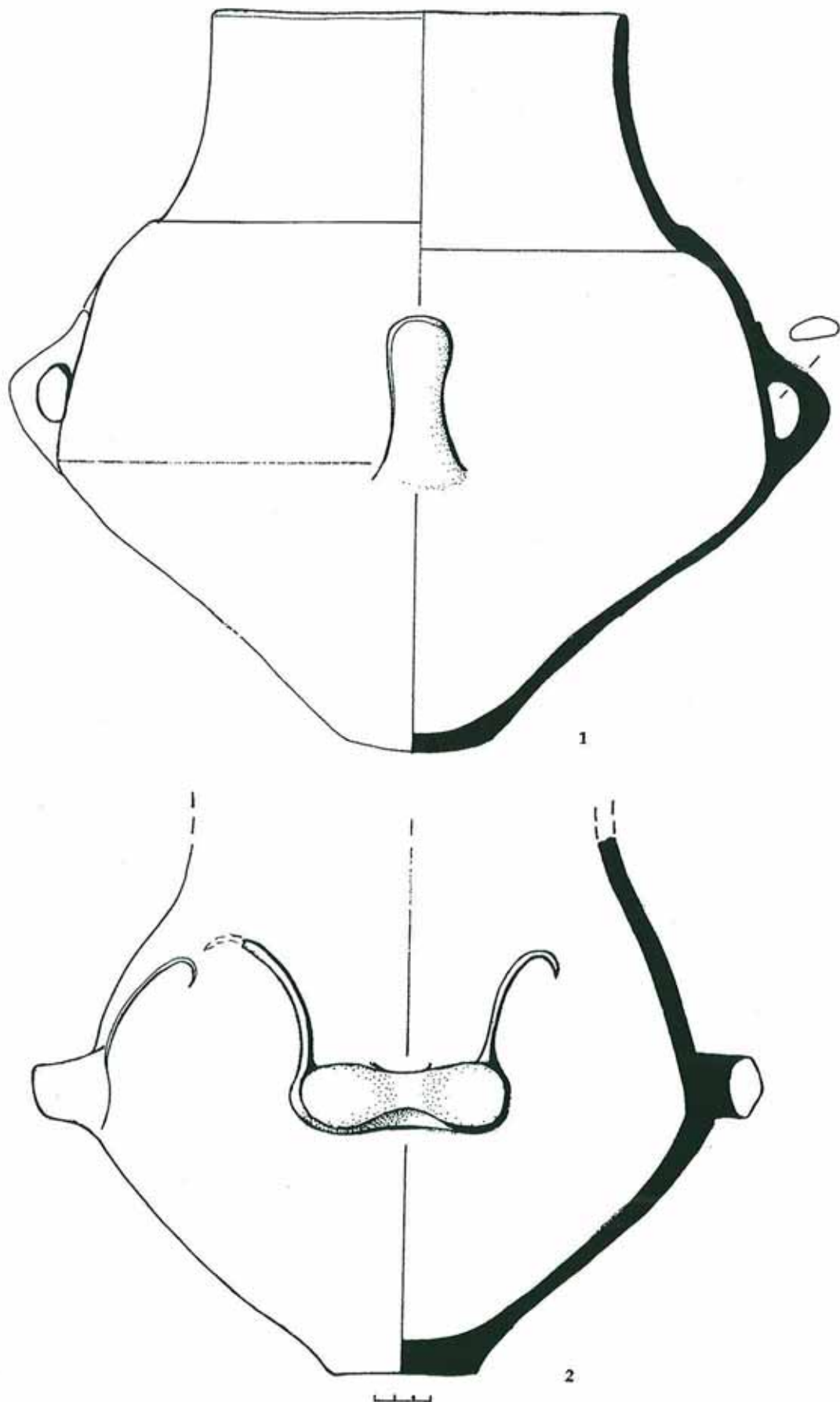


Fig. 8: Long necked storage vessels.

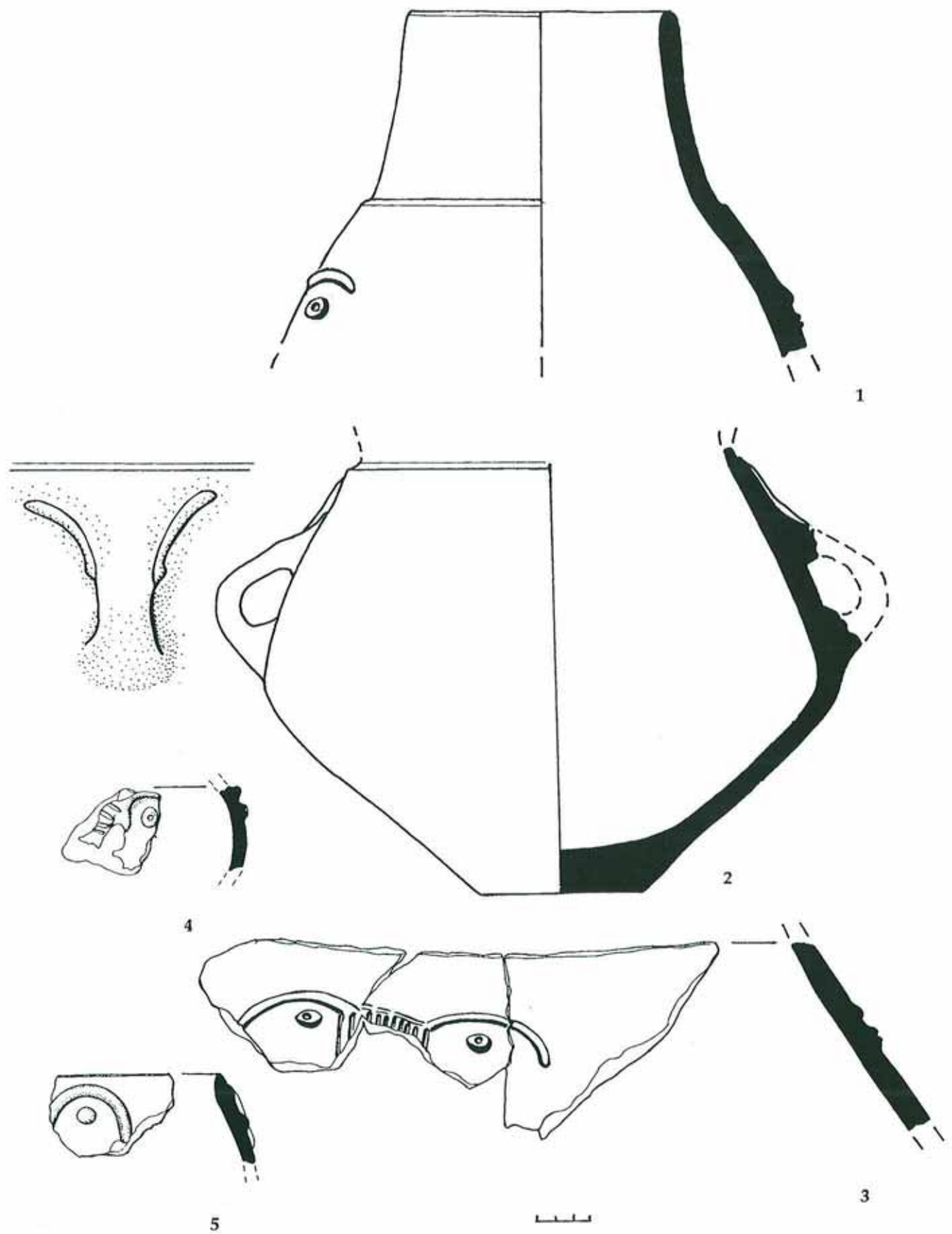


Fig. 9: Stylized symbolized relief decorations.

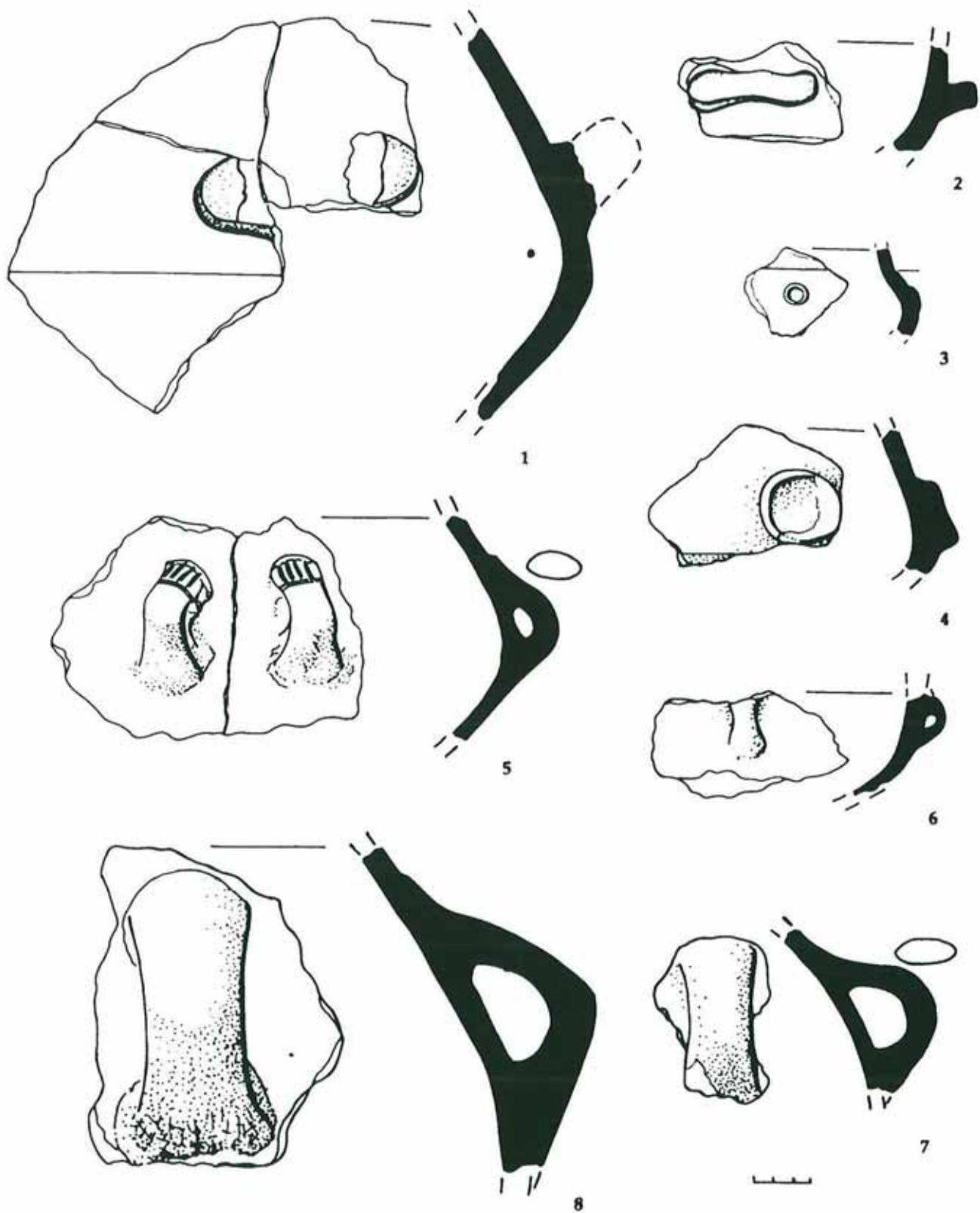


Fig.10: Elongated lugs, flattened knobs, and handles.

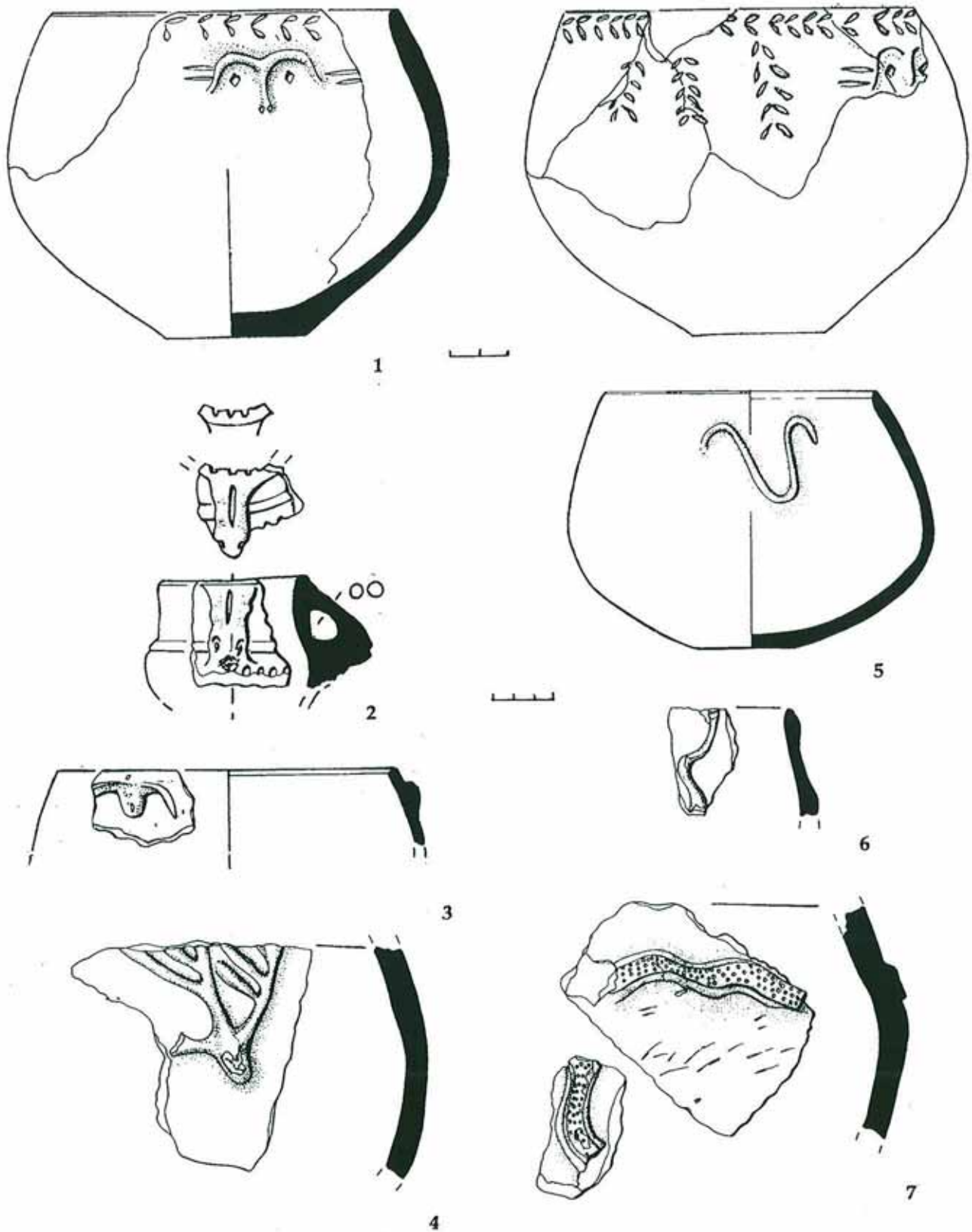


Fig.11: Stylized and naturalistic designs.

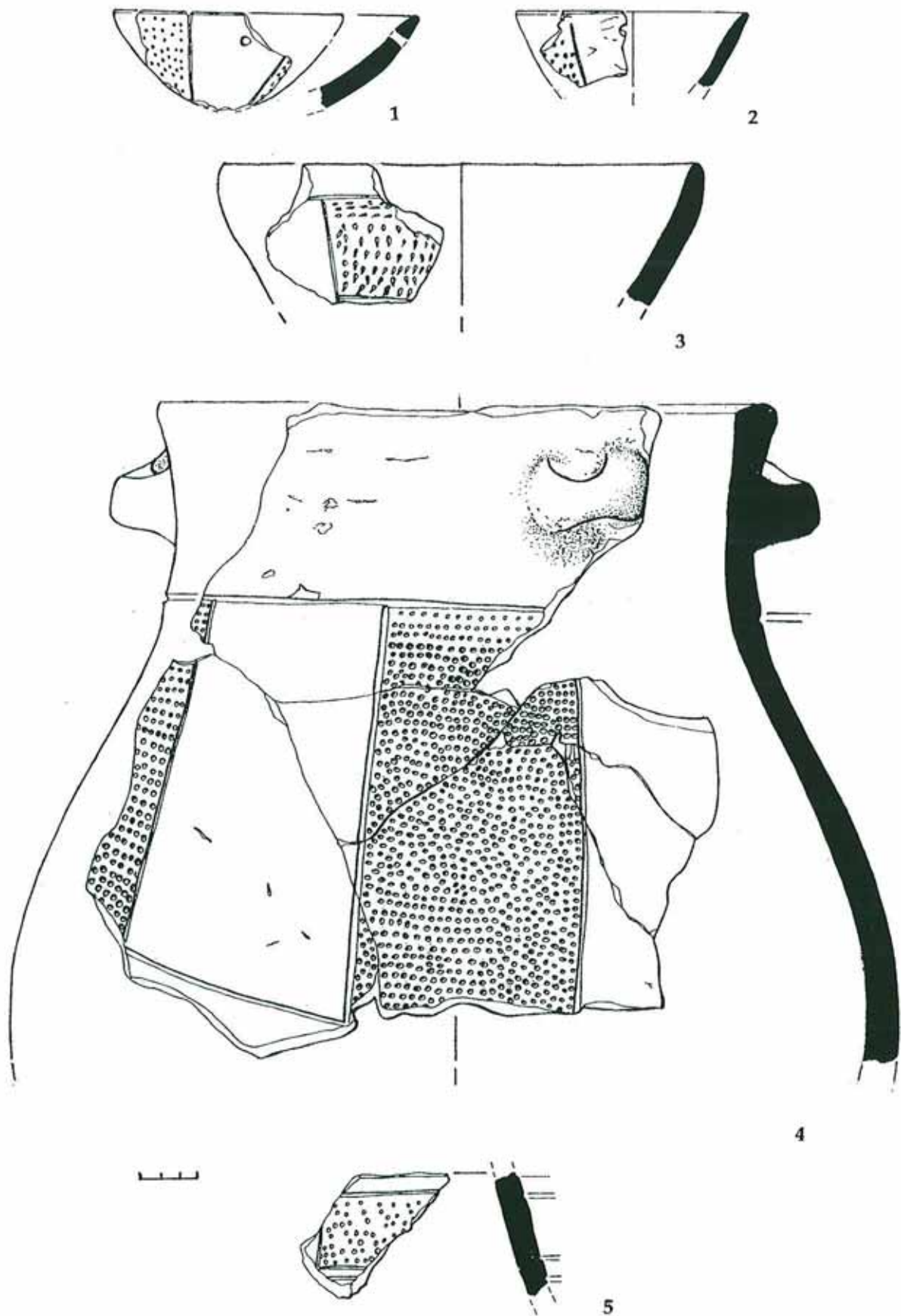


Fig.12: Panels filled with impressed dots.

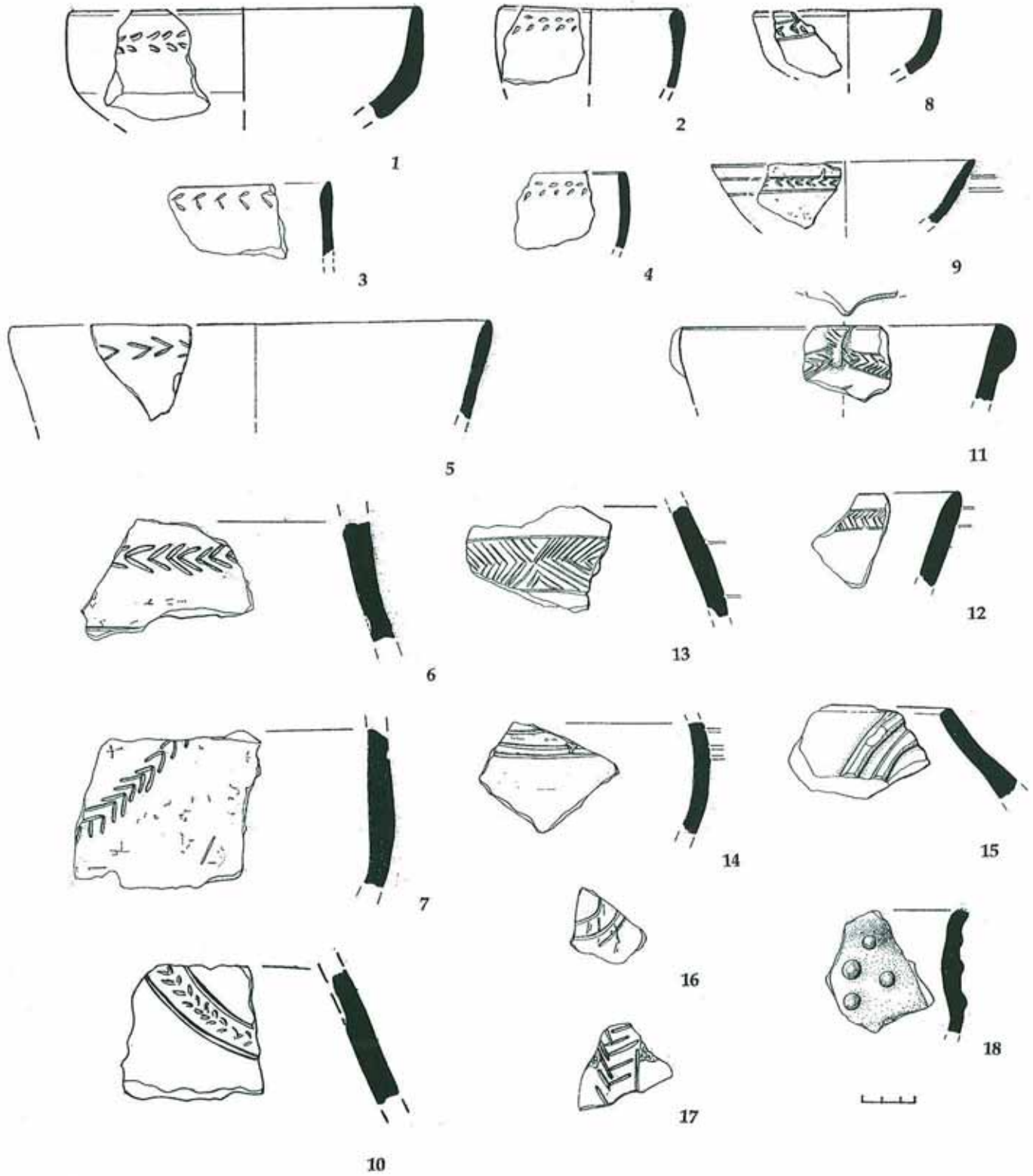


Fig.13: V incisions and other simple decorations.

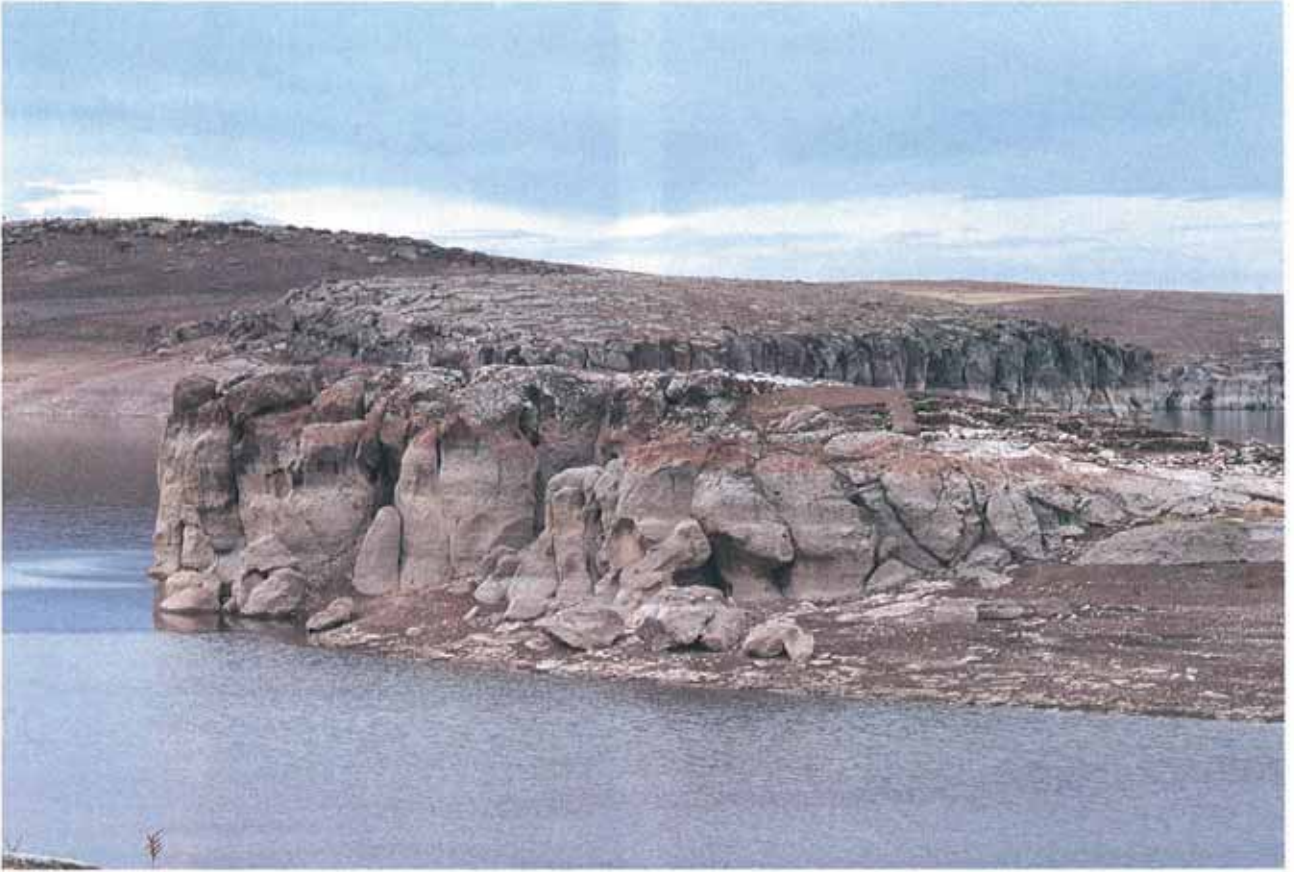


Fig.14: Güvercinkaya from southeast; general view.



Fig.15: Fortified complex storage room (7-8 H) with pottery *in situ*



Fig.16: Red refired in situ pottery sealed under melted walls



Fig.17: Red refired *in situ* storage jar decorated with knobs and horns.



Fig.18: Isolation layer of a round fireplace as resource for pottery.



Fig.19: Calcination on a storage jar with conical unstable base.

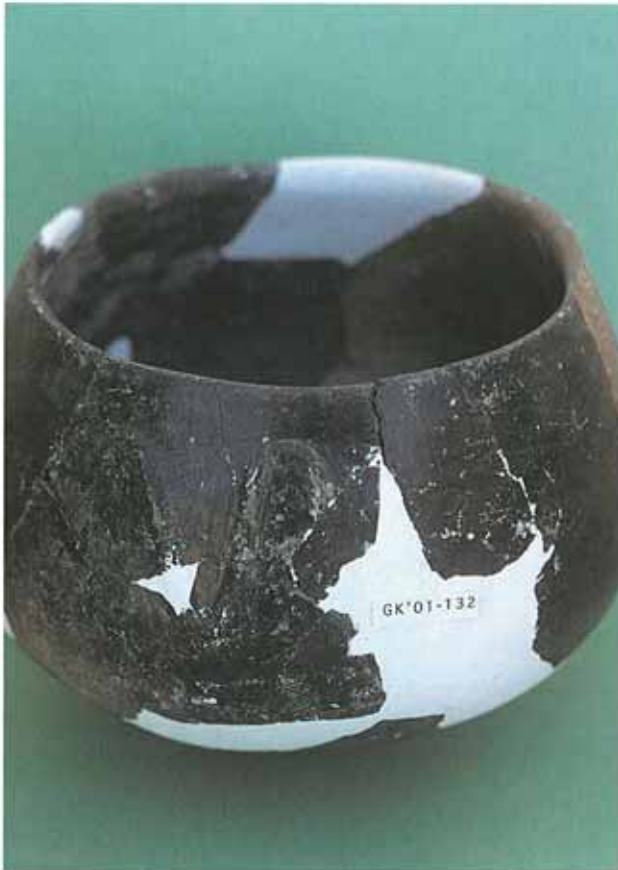


Fig.20: Black polished hole mouth vessel with stylized snake decoration in relief.



Fig.21: Brown coloured hole mouth vessel; V-incisions combined with stylized symbolic animal head in relief.



Fig.22: Horizontal handle decorated with fluted lines.



Fig.23: Naturalistic snake design in high relief with impressed dots.



Fig.24: Flattened knobs in panels on refired pottery.



Fig.26: Neatly formed naturalistic antler design in relief.



Fig.25: Stylized symbolic eye design in relief combined with horizontal handle.