SOCIAL IDENTITIES IN ROMAN CHILDREN'S BURIALS. ROMAN CEMETERY AT APULUM-DEALUL FURCILOR

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Abstract: *The children's graves from the cemetery at Apulum-Dealul Furcilor are a category of archaeological contexts that is worth studying because too little is known about the funerary treatments of the children from Roman Dacia. These graves contain the material remains of a number of practices that could indicate the perceived social identities of the child and the mourners. These coded identities can be deciphered by using statistical analyses, the process of understanding the archaeological assemblages being eased in this way. However, a proper interpretation of these contexts requires the incorporation of existing knowledge about the status of the Roman children, their activities, their surrounding material culture and the way in which it was handled, their obligations and rights, the relations with the parents and different relatives, etc. Therefore, the study of this theme could open many doors towards other related subjects.*

Keywords: *Roman Dacia, burial practices, Roman family, Roman childhood, social identities*

1. Introduction

Although the interest in studying ancient funerary contexts existed for a long time (beginning in the 18th century), the funerary archaeology as a sub-domain of archaeology only appeared in the second half of the 20th century, more precisely in the 1960s[2], under the influence of social anthropology which raised the interest in the so-called social death[3]. The analysis of funerary contexts and the associated artefacts and osteological remains is allowing a detailed discussion of the funerary treatment of the deceased in a particular society and also of different social, economic or cultural acts that characterized this society, or certain social groups[4]. One particular topic that has been targeted by the archaeology of death concerns the expression of individual or collective identity through the funerary practices. In this context, the shape and type of the grave, the treatment of the body, and the funerary inventory were specific elements of the funerary ceremony that differed from one community to another because they were, in most of the cases, related to practices that defined the beliefs of the community about the social life and the afterlife, while the individual preferences could have also been involved.

The social identities associated with an individual during his or her life are the result of social classification[5], made both by the community and the individual himself or herself[6]. Thus,

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[2] BROWN 2007, 299–300; CREȚU 2016, 7–10.

[3] For more details about the anthropological view of death, see MALINOWSKI 2004, 19–20; BECKER 2004, 28–30.

[4] EGRI 2012, 503.

[5] WHITE/BEAUDRY 2009, 210.

[6] JENKINS 2008, 5–6.

an individual can have multiple identities, related both to the personal features and interests, and to the social roles played within the community[7]. Some of the identities that an individual could have had in his or her lifetime are also expressed through the funerary rites and rituals. At the same time, the organizers of the funerals are often the ones who chose how to express the identity of the deceased according to their opinions and perceptions, and the funerary and religious norms of the community[8].

The archaeological study of the children and their life started to gain traction at the end of the previous century, the 1962 work of Philippe Ariès *Centuries of childhood* being the one that raised significantly the interest of the scientific community. Ariès suggested that childhood is a period of life that always differs according to the analysed social context and period of time[9]. Furthermore, the childhood is in fact a social construct influenced "by demography and socio-economic realities in addition to cultural beliefs and attitudes"[10]. In the 1980s, the archaeology of childhood expanded as a field of research and more aspects of childhood as a social construct were taken into consideration[11]. An important step forward was the establishment of the series of *Roman Family* conferences by Beryl Rawson, which contributed to the appearance of a large number of edited volumes about this period of life[12].

An aspect related to this theme which has attracted a particular attention is the nature of the relation between the parents and their children in the past. Many researchers have thought that until a certain age, children were not considered a distinct part of the society and the very young ones, especially the infants, were not shown much affection by their parents. These ideas have origins in many things, for example in the scarce archaeological evidence of infant burials that were apparently confirming the point of view of many Roman writers, like Cicero or Seneca, which describe the youngest children's death with serenity, advising the parents to not grieve, because the infants' life was not long enough to be regretted. The fact that infantile mortality was considered to be high in the past also informed these opinions. However, the awareness about the ancient writers' rhetoric subjectivity and the new archaeological discoveries from all over Europe proved the opposite[13]. The study of the children's graves can be thus useful for observing the social attitudes regarding the death of a young member of the society. This can allow the archaeologists to identify the assumed social identities of the children and their place within the social group to which they and their parents belonged, or the parents' expectations as they got older, and the general perception of the childhood within the respective society.

Considering all of these observations and using the discoveries from one of the cemeteries of Roman Apulum, located on Dealul Furcilor (Figs. 1–2), one scope of this article is to identify the ways in which the social identities of the children were expressed through the funerary practices of a major urban provincial community from Roman Dacia. Another scope is to observe the evolution of the ways in which child identities were expressed through time and to discover the possible causes of these transformations.

Methodologically, the article is divided into two parts: the first one discusses the place occupied by Roman children in their families and the wider society, their material culture and appearance, and the way in which the family dealt with a child's death. This part is largely based on previous theoretical works, ancient sources and some specialist studies. The second part is

[7] WHITE/BEAUDRY 2009, 210.
[8] POPA 2018, 18; FAHLANDER/OESTIGAARD 2008, 7.
[9] LUCY 2005, 53–54
[10] KAMP 2009, 72.
[11] LUCY 2005, 53–54.
[12] CARROLL 2018, 1.
[13] CARROLL 2018, 3–4; RAWSON 2003, 340–343.

based on the statistical analysis of a selected number of published burials from the Apulum-Dealul Furcilor cemetery[14]. The selection of the graves is relying on information about the estimated age of the children mentioned in the monograph of the cemetery and the preliminary results of the anthropological analysis conducted by Drd. Ileana Buzic from the "1 December 1918" University of Alba Iulia. Additionally, four more graves whose inventory contains objects commonly related to the Roman children, like *bulla*, *lunula*, and bells were also taken into consideration, even if the anthropological analysis is not available. Within this statistical analysis, the undisturbed graves were separated from the ones that were robbed or were showing other signs of disturbance, the two resulting groups being analysed separately. The disturbed graves were not taken into consideration for the statistical analysis of the inventories, their condition being part of another study.

The analysis of the intact graves involves the following steps: the burials are divided into two categories, according to the existence or not of the funerary inventory, then the key features of the funerary rite and ritual that are usually considered relevant for identifying identity-related patterns (the shape of the graves, the treatment of the pits, the funerary rite, the position of the deceased, the orientation of the grave, and its inventory) are classified and quantified. The statistical analysis of these variables is performed with the help of the *PAST* software, version 4.02. This software can perform two relevant analyses, the cluster analysis and the principal components analysis (PCA), which can highlight (through the "convex hulls" and "the minimum spanning tree" options) the existence of some grave groups, according to their rite, ritual and inventory. These identified groups can show the presence of some variations within the funerary ritual, which can in turn point to some possible patterns specific to certain ways of expressing individual or group identity. The graves with and without inventory are first classified using the main features of the pits and the body position. Then, the rest of the graves' characteristics are taken into consideration, according to the identified groups. Almost all of the required information about the selected graves was published in the monograph of the cemetery[15]. The preliminary anthropological study completes the information given by the author of the monograph, some of the child cremation graves being added to the analysed group.

The key features taken into consideration are divided into five categories. The category named "shape of the grave" includes two identified shapes, a round one (FG1) and a rectangular one (FG2). The "setting of the pit" includes: a simple setting (AG1), where the grave has no wood, brick or stone structure inside, but the body of the deceased could have been buried wrapped in a shroud[16]; a wood setting (AG2), including the graves with more than three iron nails; a brick setting (AG3); a slab setting (AG4); a steps setting (AG5); sarcophagus (AG6); Ionic capital setting (it was found inside the grave) (AG7); under a ceramic vessel (AG8). The "treatment of the pit" category includes: a simple treatment – there are no ritual interventions regarding the bottom and the walls of the pit (TG1); a pit with burnt walls and/or bottom (TG2); a pit with the bottom covered with slack lime (TG3). The "orientation category" includes the following: N-S, NE-SW, S-W, SE-NW, S-N, SW-NE, W-E and NW-SE. The last category consists of three body positions: crouched (PC); lying on the left side (PF); supine (PA). Each has several variants due to the diversity of the limbs' positions: supine, with an unknown position of the limbs (PA0); supine, with all limbs stretched out (PA1); supine, with the arms placed on the chest and the legs stretched out (PA2); supine, with one arm on the chest or the pelvis, and the remaining limbs stretched out (PA3); supine, with the arms crossed on the chest, or one placed on the chest

[14] BOLOG 2017.
[15] BOLOG 2017.
[16] BOLOG 2017, 254.

and the other on the pelvis, and the legs stretched out (PA4); supine, with one arm on the pelvis and the remaining limbs stretched out (PA6); supine, with the legs turned on one side (PA8).

The inventory is divided into functional categories which are discussed below. For now, it has to be said that in some cases the initial identification of the ceramic vessels was relying in the monograph on fragments that were often too small or wrongly drawn to be correctly identified typologically, and a reclassification of them is proposed in this article[17].

The statistical analysis of the inventory excludes the graves that included only fragments of unidentified objects, or the ones that contained just a few nails that could be part of an unknown artefact. The presence of mollusc shells is also not taken into consideration because it is not clear if they were purposefully placed in graves. Another grave that is not taken into consideration is M143, which is only containing animal bones with no other information about their position[18].

2. The Roman family, the social status of the child and the childhood stages

Children are considered today "people who play rather than contribute socially or economically to society"[19]. But this had also happened in Roman times? The social status of a person is different from one society to another, or from a life context to another because this social construct has to be validated by the community or the individuals with whom someone interacts. Also, every social status has some associated roles that are sometimes clear, because are defined by the society, and sometimes not, because they can appear during social interactions[20]. So, what did Roman children do and what was their place in their family and in the wider society?

The family, a complex social group of the Roman society, had in its centre the couple and their children. Besides them, the household often contained children from previous marriages, relatives, friends, slaves, and freedmen[21]. In this larger social group, the children had a special place because they had the capacity to transmit the family's traditions and values to the next generation[22]. Their parents also were putting in them hopes for the future, for a better living and the perpetuation of the family memory[23]. Yet, childhood was a dangerous period of life, when a lot of children died because of their biological vulnerabilities[24]. This period also was, and still is, a time when a person experiments a lot of biological and social changes[25]. As he grows, the child acquires physical and mental abilities that help him to discover the world and to be initiated into the practices that shaped the local social life.

The Roman view of this life period can be grasped from ancient textual sources. Still, these sources are commonly referring to the elite way of life, so the situation can differ from one family to another. There were a few important stages in the life of a Roman child, one of them being the first year[26]. This period had its important moments for the integration of the child into the family, and some of them were: after the birth, the ritual of the formal recognition of the child; *dies lustricus* (the name day), celebrated at eight days for girls and nine days for boys; the day in which the child (if was a Roman citizen) was recorded in the *professio* (starting with

[17] Dr. Mariana Egri has kindly helped with the identification of some of these vessels.
[18] BOLOG 2017, 35.
[19] DEREVENSKI 2000, 7.
[20] JENKINS 2008, 164–166.
[21] CARROLL 2006, 181–183; HARLAND 2013, 24.
[22] DASEN/SPÄTH 2010, 8.
[23] LARSSON LOVÉN 2020, 150.
[24] CARROLL 2006, 168.
[25] RAWSON 2003, 136.
[26] RAWSON 2003, 134–140; LARSSON LOVÉN 2020, 150.

the Augustan period at around thirty days after birth); at six months after birth, when the child was teething, being ready for solid foods; lastly, at one year the dead children could be officially mourned[27]. Another important stage was starting at five or seven years old, depending on the social status of the child. At this age it was considered that the child could fulfil different tasks, and the boys could go to the public school[28]. The young ones could also participate in religious rituals by dancing or singing[29]. They could participate in the funerary ceremonies as well, and this helped them to get familiarized with the respective customs. Even if they were not participating directly, the children were at least spectators at different public events, so they were able to learn the accepted social rules. Three more important life stages can be mentioned: at ten years old (when most of the childhood diseases stop), between twelve and fourteen years old (the age of marriage for boys and girls), between thirteen and eighteen years old (the age at which the boys can participate in maturity rites)[30].

As we have seen above, the life of Roman children went through different stages, each defined by different activities. They were first starting to know the family in which they were born and then, at around seven years old, were introduced to the society and to its rules. Unlike nowadays, some of the children started a married life at a young age, and maybe even had children of their own before reaching maturity. In general, they had more responsibilities than most of the kids today, and because of this, they were able to contribute to the wellbeing of their families, so they were surely important.

3. The clothes and the childhood objects

The physical appearance is considered to be a way of social communication, a method of sending visual information about personal or group affiliations[31]. In the children's case, their clothing and their material culture are often chosen by their parents[32], probably until a certain age. Thus, the information that can be read from any surviving artefact that is related to childhood is often reflecting the parents' beliefs (according to the social rules) about the social identities of their child, like his gender, age, social status, future occupations, etc. Besides that, when the study of the children is based on funerary contexts, one has to take into consideration that the inventory associated with the deceased individual can also be a reflection of the religious ideas about the afterlife[33].

The clothing, usually made of organic materials, can hardly survive in archaeological contexts, but iconographic and textual sources can offer some examples of Roman child dressing. Sometimes, accessories made of bone, metal, or other sturdy materials were attached to the clothes and their position in grave can give the archaeologists some clues about how different garments were worn, or can even help to reconstruct some of the garments[34]. Textual and iconographic sources indicate that the newborns could be "buried in a crouched position, indicating that they had not survived long enough to be swaddled"[35]. A toddler could wear a "sleeved tunic that covers his knees" and after a few years, over the mentioned tunic the child could wear a *toga praetexta*[36]. The last one was a garment that was worn by both the girls and the

[27] CARROLL 2018, 63–65.
[28] RAWSON 2003, 141.
[29] HARLAND 2013, 39.
[30] RAWSON 2003, 139–337.
[31] WHITE/BEAUDRY 2009, 213–214.
[32] BROOKSHAW 2009, 368.
[33] FAHLANDER/OESTIGAARD 2008, 7.
[34] ROTHE 2012, 235–252.
[35] DASEN 2009, 210–211.
[36] CARROLL 2018, 91.

boys, as can be seen on stone reliefs, and was a symbol of Roman citizenship[37]. Regarding the footwear, there are discoveries that indicate their presence, like small hobnails, while some stone reliefs also indicate that some of the children wore boots[38].

The material culture of the childhood differs according to the studied society because a lot of the objects used by children are inspired by the adult world. It can also differ according to the age of the child, because of the different abilities that the children usually have at a certain biological age[39]. Another factor that can be taken into consideration is the social status of the family in which the children were born, because that can also influence the type of the objects[40].

Some very common objects associated with the childhood are the toys. These had different shapes and were complex or simple, sometimes according to the imagination of the child[41]. The objects often considered to be part of this category are: dolls[42], game pieces (dice, tokens and knucklebones), rattles, various animal figurines[43], equestrian figurines, bells, leather balls[44], etc. A lot of toys were made of organic material, so they are not so frequent in the children's graves. There are also discussions about some miniature objects that in some contexts could be considered toys, like the miniature vessels. A miniature vessel is considered to be a small version of a real vessel, though without a practical function. These kinds of objects are found in many contexts, including graves and sanctuaries, and their purposes could differ according to the context in which they are found[45].

It was already noted that the objects used by very young children "appear to be gender-neutral and lack any explicit markers of juridical status". Some examples of these objects would be rattles, bells, leather balls, whistles, game pieces, etc. Other toys, like dolls or equestrian figurines, could have been markers of the child's gender and also of his status[46].

The body of a child is frequently associated with amulets, or beads[47]. In the Roman society, amulets were used for their social, religious, and protective roles and were worn also by children because of their health vulnerabilities[48]. Among the Roman amulets commonly associated with the children are the *bulla*, the *lunula*, and the *phallus/ fascinum*[49]. Besides them, animal teeth, bells, and beads could also be used for similar purposes[50]. These objects had different shapes and were made of a wide variety of materials, some of them (like gold, silver, and amber) also having presumed protective, ritual or social functions[51]. The colours of the beads can also have a protective function because they can distract the negative external influences[52]. Another thing that can be mentioned about amulets is the possibility of discovering more than one in a funerary context. Two possible interpretations have been offered for these situations: the number can reflect the age of a person, but it can also reflect his/her poor health, which

[37] HARLOW 2017, 44–45.
[38] CARROLL 2018, 94–95.
[39] BROOKSHAW 2009, 367–368.
[40] WILKIE 2000, 101.
[41] BROOKSHAW 2009, 368–369; LUCY 2005, 45.
[42] HUNTLEY 2017, 138.
[43] CARROLL 2018, 110–117.
[44] DOLANSKY 2017, 116–119.
[45] PEMBERTON 2020, 281–286.
[46] DOLANSKY 2017, 118–123.
[47] CARROLL 2018, 91.
[48] DASEN 2015, 177–178; RUSTOIU 2019, 261–262.
[49] DASEN 2015, 185.
[50] CARROLL 2018, 100.
[51] DASEN 2015, 186; RUSTOIU 2019, 146–150.
[52] CARROLL 2018, 102; RUSTOIU 2019, 149.

required more protection[53]. In the children's case, the second interpretation could be more likely, but this is not excluding the existence of other explanations for this practice. These protective objects were worn "attached to the body, usually around the neck, the thigh, the ankle, or the wrist"[54].

As previously mentioned, there are other objects made for the use of parents that could indicate the presence of a child, like feeding bottles, cribs, and cradles. From these examples, only the feeding bottles can usually be archeologically observed in funerary contexts, and they were sometimes interpreted as "a mother's last feeding for her dead child". In the Roman cemeteries, this kind of objects is mostly found in the burials of children younger than one year old, but there are some cases, like those from Rotweil, when they are found next to children of one or two years old[55].

4. The moment of death

The moment of death is always traumatic for the family and it comes with responsibilities for the living. According to the textual sources, the people who organized the funerals were usually the heirs of the deceased, relatives or not, though funerary associations could have also been involved[56]. That would mean that in most of the cases the children were responsible for dealing with the death of the parents. On the other hand, when a child's death comes first, the parents or other related adults were the ones who buried and commemorated the dead, as many funerary inscriptions are revealing[57].

A better understanding of the impact of the children's death on Roman families can only be achieved if both the archaeological and textual sources are taken into consideration, though the overall image could be still incomplete. An example that can illustrate this is the death of *Minicia Marcella*, the daughter of *Fundanus*. Her father's pain was recorded by Pliny the Younger, while on her funerary stone was recorded only the name of the deceased, her father, and the age of death. In some cases, the epitaphs reveal the suffering of the parents and their love even for the infants. The inscriptions, especially those set up for teenagers, can also indicate that their regret could come from the thought that the child could have helped the family (for example, a boy could have raised the social status of the family while keeping alive the memory of the parents)[58].

According to some Roman authors, in the case of very young children the mourning was less intense as in the case of an adult, and it would have differed according to the age of the deceased child[59]. Still the situation could have also differed from one community or family to another due to the cultural diversity existing in the Roman Empire, the social status of the families, emotional causes, and so on.

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[53] DASEN 2015, 196; CARROLL 2018, 100–101.

[54] DASEN 2015, 185.

[55] CARROLL 2018, 82–99.

[56] RAWSON 2003, 339; CARROLL 2006, 185–186; KLOPPENBORG/ASCOUGH 2011, 7; HARLAND 2013, 23.

[57] LARSSON LOVÉN 2020, 149.

[58] CARROLL 2006, 198–200.

[59] RAWSON 2003, 346; HOPE 2017, 89–93.

5. The studied area

The Roman cemetery on which this study relies is located in the area of modern Alba Iulia[60] (Fig. 1), a place known for its many archaeological sites[61]. Two Roman settlements were located in this area, one surrounding the legionary fortress of the Legion XIII Gemina, which gained municipal status in the Severan period, and another to the south of the Mureș River, which became a *municipium* under Marcus Aurelius and later a *colonia* under Commodus. The cemetery on Dealul Furcilor is situated between these two settlements[62].

The discoveries made in this cemetery, both the ones made until 2012 and those that appeared after this year, have been partially published[63]. In general, the researchers have provided descriptions of the graves and their inventories, accompanied by brief interpretations, some of them mentioning aspects related to the social identities that could be observed in the respective funerary practices. There are also articles dealing with some categories of artefacts, like the hobnails, some funerary monuments, the amulets, some jewellery, etc[64].

5.1. Problems of identification in the monograph

As it was previously mentioned, the analysed graves have been first published in the monograph of the cemetery, but the absence of some details made the identity analysis more difficult, and some corrections have also been needed.

Some of these issues concern the second part of the monograph, containing the catalogue of discoveries. The author has chosen to renumber the grave, and that seems to have contributed to some later errors regarding the precise identification of the inventory or the human remains of a specific grave. Furthermore, the position and possible use-wear traces of the inventory were not listed in all cases, and because of this, the analysis of the rituals cannot always be very precise. The typological determination of the ceramic vessels was sometimes based on small fragments, so it is not always reliable. Another confusing thing is the description of the graves, where different terminologies were used for the same artefacts or features. There are also inconsistencies in the general description of the rites and rituals: the orientation of the graves, the shape, setting and treatment of the pit graves, the condition of the human remains after the incineration process. In some cases, the vessels' dimensions were not provided.

There are also differences between the catalogue and the associated drawings. For example, the shape of graves M305, M417, M543 and M550 differs in the drawings. The same thing could be said about the position of the skeletons, for example in graves M184, M261, M268, M272 and M273. In one case (grave M203, object 1), the dimensions of the ceramic fragment listed in the catalogue were different from the ones in the drawing.

On the basis of the observations made above, the decision was to primarily use the information from the catalogue in the analysis and only when an information was missing from the catalogue, the drawings were taken into consideration (for example, in the cases of the missing shapes and orientations of the graves).

Some ceramic artefacts were re-classified and are listed below.

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[60] BOLOG 2017, 14.

[61] CIUGUDEAN 2003, 1.

[62] HAMAT/BOUNEGRU 2016, 135.

[63] GLIGOR ET AL. 2019, 123–135; BOUNEGRU ET AL. 2011; BOLOG 2017.

[64] CIUGUDEAN/TIMOFAN 2012, 443–454; BOLOG 2011, 153–162; BOLOG/BOUNEGRU 2012, 225–236; HAMAT/BOUNEGRU 2016, 135–155.

5.2. Catalogue of the re-classified artefacts[65]

1. Object 3, grave M118; pitcher in the monograph, but in fact it cannot be identified precisely (beaker or small pitcher);
2. Object 1, grave M154; cup in the monograph, but in fact it cannot be identified precisely (bowl, cup or plate);
3. Object 2, grave M154; cup in the monograph, but in fact it cannot be identified;
4. Object 7, grave M154; pitcher in the monograph, but in fact it cannot be identified precisely (jar or pitcher);
5. Object 1, grave M203; pitcher in the monograph, but in fact it cannot be identified precisely (beaker or small pitcher);
6. Object 6, grave M290; pitcher in the monograph, but in fact it cannot be identified;
7. Object 1, grave M478; cup in the monograph, but in fact is a jar.

6. The identity analysis of the children's graves

6.1. The analysis of the graves without inventory

This analysis was made to underline the possible ritual patterns that could exist in the groups consisting of graves without inventory. To achieve this goal, the following characteristics of the graves were taken into consideration: the shape of the grave, the setting and treatment of the pit, the position of the osteological remains, the selected cremation remains, and the orientation of the grave. The cremation graves without inventory have been analysed separately, and then compared to the rest of the group.

6.1.1 The cremation graves

Four graves belonging to this category were analysed (Fig. 4). All of them have a round shape, with a simple setting of the pit, while the cremated remains were scattered on the bottom of the grave. Two of them (M10 and M50) also have a simple pit without any treatment, while the human osteological remains were selected from the pyre without the ashes. The other two (M30 and M249) are different from the rest of the group and from each other. They are similar regarding the treatment of the pit, which was burnt, but the second one also contains ashes from cremation, besides the osteological remains.

In conclusion, this group of child graves is closely defined by the funerary rite, the shape of the grave, the setting of the pit, and the scattering of the cremated remains, besides the absence of inventory. The last characteristic of the rite could indicate that the remains were not deposited in an organic container[66]. The two sub-groups and their characteristics (the burnt pit and the selected cremation remains) can indicate a variation of the ritual, caused perhaps by ritual prescriptions related to certain social identities of the deceased children or of the mourners. The burning of the pit has been frequently interpreted as a purification ritual, executed before the deposition of cremation remains. These graves (M30 and M249) are similar to the Mala Kopašnica-Sase graves, type I, which are generally dated between the mid–1st and mid–3rd century AD. There are many hypotheses regarding the ethno-cultural origin of this kind of graves, but a certain attribution to a specific population is difficult because they appeared in many places in the Balkans and the Danubian provinces[67].

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[65] Artefacts re-classified with the help of Dr. Mariana Egri.
[66] GLIGOR ET AL. 2010, 118.
[67] GOLUBOVIČ 1998, 248–251.

6.1.2 The inhumation graves

The second group analysis is taking into consideration the inhumation graves and their already specified characteristics. In order to identify patterns in the funerary rites, the cluster analysis has first targeted the position of the osteological remains. The identified groups are then discussed according to the graves' characteristics (shape, treatment and settings of the pits), while the orientation is also added. This comparison can indicate whether the grave orientation is a relevant determinant of identity, similar to the one indicated by the position of the deceased.

However, in most of the graves the skeleton's position cannot be surely identified (Fig. 5) because the bones of the children are often too fragile to resist over time. Other reasons could include post-burial ritual interventions or grave robberies. In 19 cases the deceased were places in a supine position. Two of the remaining graves (M192 and M343) have individuals laid on their left side, while a single individual is in a crouched position (M288). In the case of M343, the position was determined in conformity with both the description in the catalogue and the drawing[68].

Among the individuals placed in a supine position, there are eight cases in which different limb positions were preferred. These positions are: PA1 (M132, M161 and M545), PA2 (M413), PA3 (M97), PA4 (M271), PA6 (M158) and PA8 (M383). The position of the body in grave can be an expression of a particular social identity[69], but more data are needed to identify them in this cemetery. However, most of these graves have other common characteristics. With the exception of M271 and M413, they have a rectangular shape, a simple setting and a simple treatment of the pit. Grave M271 is different because it contains a single brick, while M413 contains wood lining. The remaining graves in which the deceased was placed in a supine position have the same characteristics as the previously discussed graves: a rectangular shape, a simple setting and a simple treatment of the pit. The same thing can be said about three other graves in which the body was laid in other positions.

If the graves with an unclear position of the body are included, it can be seen that most of the undisturbed ones (36 graves) have a rectangular shape, and a simple setting and treatment of the pit. There are also six graves that have a rectangular shape and a simple treatment of the pit. The only difference between them is the setting of the pit: M168, M286 and M424 have a bricks setting, M603 has a pit with steps, M324 has the deceased covered by a ceramic vessel, and M87 has an Ionic capital placed inside the pit.

The remaining undisturbed graves that have an unclear position of the body (M597, M605 and M606) have a circular shape, and a simple setting and treatment of the pit.

In the case of the disturbed graves, 13 of them (M165, M172, M174, M261, M331, M335, M342, M359, M369, M426, M480, M547 and M548) have the following features: a rectangular shape, a simple setting and a simple treatment of the pit. Another group of graves with the same shape also contains 13 graves (M138, M294, M348, M360, M380, M381, M421, M472, M477, M485, M487, M557, and M609). They have bricks setting in the pit, excepting the first one that is different from the others, because it has a stone sarcophagus. Among them are four graves that have a layer of slack lime on the bottom of the pit (M360, M421, M477, and M485).

Four circular shaped graves can be found among the disturbed graves (M417, M474, M496 and M550). These have a simple treatment and a simple setting of the pit.

Another relevant feature is the orientation of the grave. One grave (M557) was removed from the analysis because no details were provided in the catalogue[70]. In the case of child graves, there are three or maybe four well represented orientations: the NE-SW orientation that occurs

[68] BOLOG 2017, 60.
[69] PARKER PEARSON 1999, 6.
[70] BOLOG 2017, 94.

in 21 cases; the E-W orientation in 20 cases; the NW-SE orientation that appears in 19 cases; and the N-S orientation that appears in 15 cases. The rest of them appear as it follows: the W-E orientation in nine cases; the S-N and SW-NE orientation in five cases for each of them, and the SE-NW orientation in three cases (Fig. 6).

Another cluster analysis has targeted the inhumation graves. In this case, only the graves with a known position of the body and a known orientation were taken into considerations, though the analysis also includes the graves with an unclear position of the limbs.

As it can be seen (Fig. 7), there are only three groups of inhumation graves that have the same orientation and position. The first group (M272, M106, M81 and M191) has its deceased laid in a supine position (PA0), orientated in the NW-SE direction. The second group (M124 and M190) has the bodies in the same position, but orientated in the W-E direction. The last group (M268 and M273) has its osteological remains in the same position, but orientated in the E-W direction. These groups indicate that the orientation was not an indicator of the same social identity as the position of the deceased individuals. Among the remaining graves, three have the PA0 position mentioned before (which is also observed in M134, M126 and M311), but all of them have different orientations. This variation can be also observed among the remaining graves from this cluster analysis, some examples being: M161, M132, and M545 that all have the same position of the skeleton (PA1), but different orientations (E-W, W-E and SE-NW); M343 and M192 that have the PF position and W-E, or E-W orientations. In the case of the less encountered positions (PA3, PA6, PA4, PA8 and PC), it can be seen that the orientations of the graves in which they are found are common for this group (the NE-SW orientation for the M97; the NW-SE orientation for the M158 and M271; the E-W orientation for the M383 and M288). This could also indicate that the orientation is not uniformly related to the position of the bodies.

In conclusion, regardless of the body position, there is one major way of burying the dead in the undisturbed child graves without inventory. This includes a preference for pits with a rectangular shape, a simple setting and a simple treatment. Even the graves with a circular shape (M597, M605, and M606) have similar characteristics. There are also some exceptions, like M87, M271, and M324. These three graves have unusual settings that include the placing of an Ionic capital, a single brick, and a cover made of a large fragment of a ceramic vessel. Some of these ways of burying the dead were also encountered in child graves from other areas of the Roman Empire[71]. These practices could indicate a more protective attitude towards the deceased, but they could also be a way of marking the grave. The other exceptions of the undisturbed group include graves with bricks settings (M168, M286 and M424), with steps (M603) and with wood settings (M413). All of the previous three categories of graves have the same shape and treatment as the majority of the graves. The first and the last types of settings are attested in other graves from this cemetery, and the first one was interpreted as an indicator of a higher social status[72], but other interpretations cannot be excluded. The stepped grave is a setting that could be have intended to give the grave a certain look, related perhaps to a living space[73].

Among the disturbed graves, there are 13 cases that have the general characteristics of the analysed group. Aside from the four circular graves that have similar settings and treatments of the pit, all other cases are different, because of their bricks settings (12 cases), and the stone sarcophagus, which can be interpreted as a social status indicator. The large number of disturbed graves belonging to this category could also support this interpretation, since they were more

[71] DASEN 2009, 210–211.
[72] GLIGOR ET AL. 2010, 119.
[73] PARKER PEARSON 1999, 5.

likely assumed to contain valuable objects. In four cases the brick graves have a different treatment, including a layer of slack lime on the bottom. This practice was also encountered in other graves from this cemetery, and in many Roman provincial cemeteries[74]. The presence of different lime derivates in graves is well attested in many regions and eras, and the reasons for using them are still debated. According to Pliny the Elder, lime was capable to decompose the flesh, but actually it is only doing that in acidic soils. The effect is partially different if alkaline soils are present, the decomposing process being delayed for a while. On the other hand, lime can also reduce the odours of dead bodies, which were considered dangerous for the health of the attendants, or could block contagious diseases[75]. The use of slack lime in the four child graves mentioned above could be related to any of these explanations.

The diversity of the body positions in graves having similar characteristics could indicate different motifs for these choices. The same thing can be said about the relation between the body position and the orientation of the graves. For example, the orientation can be an indicator of the time of the year in which the individual died[76], but could also reveal a certain internal organization of the analysed cemetery. In this case, the cluster analysis has highlighted that the graves have different orientations which are not uniformly related to the other elements of the funerary rite discussed above, being determined by different factors. So, any of the two interpretations can be valid, but the first one cannot be yet verified. For the second one, it is first necessary to date the graves more precisely. Stratigraphically, there is some overlapping among the funerary contexts, like in the cases of M417, M426, M545, M547 and M413. The first one, having a SW-NE orientation, overlapped two other graves that are not analysed, M408 and M409, which have two different orientations: the first one is orientated on the E-W direction, and the second one is on the N-S direction. This can mean that in this area (Sp. 8) the SW-NE orientation is a later dated one. Grave M417 also has a round shape, which could be in this case a later funerary custom. In the same area, grave M413, with a SE-NW orientation, overlaps cremation grave M398, with a round shape and orientated in the N-S direction. This could also mean that the SE-NW orientation is an earlier custom. In the third case, grave M426 was superposed by grave M427, so its NE-SW orientation appeared perhaps earlier than the SW-NE orientation in the Sp. 9 area. In the fourth case, grave M545 was superposed by grave M546, so it is possible that the SE-NW orientation had appeared earlier than the NE-SW one in the Sp. 18 area. Inhumation grave M547 was superposed by M523, which is a cremation grave. They have similar NE-SW orientations and the same rectangular shape. This could mean that this orientation and shape persisted in the Sp. 18 area for a longer period of time.

Unfortunately, these previous few examples are not enough to resolve, at this moment, the orientation questions. In order to be meaningful, the analysis has to take into consideration all graves from the cemetery and the general stratigraphy of each excavated area.

6.2. The analysis of the child graves with inventory

The second analysed group includes the child graves with inventory. As previously mentioned, the disturbed graves are not included in this analysis, being only taken into consideration for the analysis of the funerary rites. The inventory analysis for both the cremation and inhumation graves was performed with the help of the principal component analysis (PCA).

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[74] GLIGOR ET AL. 2010, 119.
[75] SCHOTSMANS ET AL. 2015, 464–466.
[76] LĂZĂRESCU/TURCU 2013, 129–144.

6.2.1 The cluster analysis

The analysis is based on the same characteristics of the graves as in the case of grave without inventory, discussed above: shape of the grave, setting and treatment of the pit, position of the osteological remains or the selected cremation remains, and orientation of the grave. Graves M452 and M460 were not included in the cluster analysis because the position of the osteological remains was not specified in the monograph, but they were included in the general discussion.

6.2.1.1. Cremation graves

As it can be seen on the graph (Fig. 8), all of the cremated graves have in common the position of the osteological remains (the graves are clustering at the 2.5–3.0 level). In all of these cases the cremated remains are scattered on the bottom of the grave. However, all other rite-related features are different.

The last three graves from the graph (Fig. 8) are different from M228 because they have in common the cremation on the *ustrinum*. There are two sub-groups, one that includes two graves (M203 and M516) and one that has only one grave (M154). The first two graves have in common the setting of the pit (with steps), the treatment of the pit (they have a burnt pit) and the selected remains (only the bones of the deceased). However, the shape of the graves is different (the first has a round shape and the second has a rectangular one). Grave M154 has a rectangular shape, a simple setting of the pit, and a simple treatment. This grave had a *bustum* cremation and the bones were not separated from the ashes, a round shape, and a simple setting and treatment of the pit.

The last two graves (M452 and M460), have the following features: cremations on the *ustrinum*, a round shape, a simple setting, a burnt pit, and the osteological remains scattered on the bottom of the grave.

In conclusion, the shape of the grave, the setting and the treatment of the pit do not seem to be related in these cases, so the reasons behind these practices are not the same. However, the number of the analysed graves is too small for further observations of this kind. Since the anthropological analysis of the cremation graves is not yet finished, this interpretation could change in the future. It is also worth noting that the children were usually cremated on the *ustrinum* in this cemetery. The scattering of the cremated remains on the bottom of the pit could indicate that the deposition had not included an organic container[77]. The presence of the burnt pits had been discussed before, this ritual having perhaps a purification role. The steps in two of the analysed graves could be, as it was said before, an indicator of the preference for a particular layout, and it has to be noted that the Mala Kopašnica-Sase type II graves are characterized by burnt, stepped pits whose origins are still debated[78].

6.2.1.2. Inhumation graves

For this cluster analysis, the position of the osteological remains is also taken into consideration. After the position groups are identified, the graves are analysed according to the rest of their features. In the end, the orientation of the graves is included in order to observe possible patterns.

The analysis of the body position (Fig. 9) is showing that the largest group of graves has an unclear position (P0 position, in 33 cases). The second group consists of graves that had the skeleton in PA0 position (M118, M300, M160, and M410). Another body position that seems

[77] GLIGOR ET AL. 2010, 118.
[78] GOLUBOVIČ 1998, 248–251.

to be more frequent is PA6 position (M184 and M404). The rest of the body positions appear less frequently, as it follows: PF position appears in grave M549; PA8 position is present in grave M379; PA3 position in grave M654; PA1 position in grave M299. Among the graves with an unclear position (P0), there are 11 graves that were disturbed.

The graves that have the skeleton in supine position (PA0, PA1, PA3, PA6, and PA8) seem to have the same rectangular shape, simple setting, and simple treatment of the pit. The two disturbed ones (M160 and M410) and the grave that has the body laid on the left side (PF) have the same features.

The graves with an unclear position can be divided into the undisturbed (22 graves) and the disturbed ones (M336, M340, M407, M416, M479, M489, M490, M493, M543, M607 and M677). The majority of the undisturbed graves (14 cases) have the same previously observed features (a rectangular shape, and a simple setting and treatment of the pit). Even the graves with a round shape (M478, M305 and M481) have a simple setting and treatment of the pit. There are also two graves that have the same rectangular shape and simple treatment, but they contain a wood setting. Another setting variation based on bricks is present in M484, M333 and M473. The last one also has the bottom covered with slack lime.

Most of the disturbed graves (Fig. 9) have a rectangular shape (11 graves), but they have different settings and treatments of the pit: four have a simple setting and treatment (M160, M336, M410 and M490); five have a bricks setting (M340, M407, M489, M607 and M677); one grave has a brick setting and the bottom covered with slack lime (M416); one grave has steps (M493). The graves with a round shape have similar features: a simple setting and treatment of the pit (M479 and M543).

The feature that remained to be analysed is the orientation. As it can be seen (Fig. 10), the most common orientations are: the NE-SW direction (in 18 cases); the NW-SE direction (in 10 cases); the E-W direction (in nine cases); and the N-S direction (in six cases). The less well represented orientations are: the SE-NW direction (M549 and M654); the W-E direction (M193 and M410); and the SW-NE direction (M551).

In the case of cremation graves, all of them are orientated in three of the most common directions: three of them are orientated in the NE-SW direction (M203, M452, and M516), two are orientated in the NW-SE direction (M228 and M154), and one has the N-S orientation (M460). None of these orientations is uniformly related to a particular rite, or to the shape of the grave. The NW-SE orientation appears only in graves that have a simple setting and treatment of the pit. Also, the NE-SW orientation seems to be present only in graves with a burnt pit. These results could be influenced by the small number of the analysed cremation graves though.

The orientation of the inhumation graves was analysed separately. As in the case of the graves without inventory, in this analysis were taken into consideration only the graves with a known position of the body and a known orientation (it also includes the graves where the positions of the limbs are unknown).

As it can be seen on the graph (Fig. 11), there are only two groups of graves that have the same orientation and body position: graves M160 and M118, with the PA0 position and orientated in the NW-SE direction, and graves M184 and M404, with the PA6 body position and orientated in the E-W direction. The rest of them have different positions and orientations, as it follows: grave M410 has the PA0 position and a W-E orientation; grave M299 has the PA1 position and a NE-SW orientation; grave M300 has the PA0 position and a NE-SW orientation; grave M379 has the PA8 position and a NE-SW orientation; grave M654 has the PA3 position and a SE-NW orientation; grave M549 grave has the PF position and a SE-NW orientation. Most of the analysed graves have the skeleton laid in supine position, which is associated with multiple orientations. Also, the grave that has its skeleton in the PF position is orientated

in the same way as grave M654. This lack of clustering could mean that the body orientations and positions are not meant to express social or religious differences.

In conclusion, regardless of the skeletons' position, a large number of intact graves have the same features. There was a clear preference for the rectangular shape and the simple setting and treatment of the pit. Even the graves with a round shape have the same setting and treatment of the pit. There are a few variations of the rite in five cases: two graves with a wood setting (M100 and M376) and three graves with a bricks setting (M484, M333 and M473). Similar settings are known from other graves in the cemetery, being previously discussed in this analysis, and the presence of bricks setting was interpreted as an indicator of the social status. One of the graves with bricks setting has slack lime scattered on the bottom of the pit, a custom well attested in this cemetery[79], and previously discussed. The existence of a large number of undefined body positions is a normal thing, since the skeletons of the young ones are very fragile.

Regarding the disturbed graves, in the most of them the osteological remains had no recognizable position, so it is difficult to say whether the body position is related to the rest of the features or not. Most of the graves have a rectangular shape (11 graves), but only four of them have simple settings. The remaining graves have bricks settings (six cases) or steps (one case). The graves with bricks settings are mostly damaged, most likely because they were expected to contain valuable objects.

When the orientations have been taken into consideration, the same results have been obtained. The reasons behind particular orientations and positions of the skeletons could be different. It was observed that some orientations appeared only in the simple pits (NW-SE orientation), and others only in the burnt pits (NE-SW orientation). It is important to note that only some of the graves had enough information to be included in the analysis. As previously mentioned, the orientation could indicate the time of the year in which the individual died, but could also be a result of a certain organisation of the cemetery at a certain moment in time. Stratigraphically, grave M410 is superposed by grave M416, so the W-E orientation could be earlier dated that the E-W orientation in the Sp. 8 area. If the graves with coins are taken into consideration (M100, M203, M376, M404, M612 and M654), the NE-SW and SE-NW were two orientations that appeared in Hadrian's reign or just after his rule. These orientations were used in different parts of the cemetery, the first one being encountered in the Sp. 6 and Sp. 7 areas, and the second one in Sp. 15 area. During the reign of Antoninus Pius, the NE-SW orientation persists, but is only located in Sp. 1 and Sp. 14 areas. It can also be seen that in the time of Septimius Severus or Caracalla, the E-W orientation was used in Sp. 8 area.

6.2.2. Types of funerary inventory in the undisturbed graves

The PCA (Figs. 13–14) has taken into consideration the main categories of funerary inventory from the undisturbed graves. The analysed graves (28 in total) contain eight main categories: ceramic vessels, body ornaments, coins, lamps, *turibula*, *unguentaria*, magical objects, and miniature vessels.

The second set of data concerns the total number of main categories of artefacts associated in each grave; this goes from one category of artefacts up to four categories of artefacts. Among the graves with a single category of artefacts, the graves with ceramic vessels (six graves), body ornaments (four graves), and magical objects (three graves) are the most common, while lamps, coins and *unguentaria* are each appearing alone in two graves for each category. The last category, of the miniature vessels, was found in just one grave. The graves with two categories of artefacts contain: ceramic vessels and body ornaments (one grave), ceramic vessels and magical objects (one grave), ceramic vessels and coins (one grave) and ceramic vessels and *turibula* (one

[79] GLIGOR ET AL. 2010, 119.

grave). Among the graves with three categories of artefacts can be found: one grave with ceramic vessels, body ornaments and lamps; and one grave with ceramic vessels, magical objects and coins. Only two graves contain four categories of artefacts each: one grave with ceramic vessels, lamps, *unguentaria* and coins; one grave with ceramic vessels, lamps, magical objects and coins.

The graves with ceramic vessels represent 50% of the 28 analysed graves (Fig.12). In total, there are 14 undisturbed graves (M86, M92, M100, M118, M154, M193, M203, M267, M290, M305, M478, M484, M612, and M654)[80]. It has to be mentioned that the ceramic vessels are not analysed here according to a typology, because the archaeological material was not accessible. In order to be analysed, the ceramic vessels were classified according to their more likely function on the basis of the information provided by the monograph's author and, in some cases, the new identifications listed above.

The artefacts associated with ceramic vessels are: body ornaments, coins, *turibula,* magical objects, lamps, and *unguentaria.* If the graves with coins and vessels (M203, M654, M612, and M100) are taken into consideration, it can be seen that most depositions of this kind were made during the 2nd century AD, and the ritual was less common for the children.

Most of these graves contained a single vessel (as it can be seen in M86, M100, M118, M193, M267, M305, M484, and M612), cups being preferred. When two vessels were found (in M92, M203, M290, M478, and M654), the most common form was again the cup, followed by the pitcher and the jar (in M203, M290, and M654), while the bowl was less common. Grave M154 stands out because it contains nine ceramic vessels, mostly jars.

The ceramic vessels contained food offerings given by the mourners to the deceased. The deposition of food offerings was associated with the belief that the dead could eat in the afterlife[81], but this explanation cannot be the only one. Another point of view considers that the food offerings, as a funerary ritual, were made to facilitate the separation of the dead and the living, and the acceptance of the new status of the deceased individual[82]. Regarding the type of food and vessels, it is now accepted that it could differ according to the analysed area and period of time, for example in some cases from Roman Britain and Rome being preferred the deposition of meat from domestic birds and pigs[83]. The graves that contain a larger number of ceramic vessels (like M154) could include a different funerary ritual, namely the funerary banquet[84].

The child graves with body ornaments represent 21.43% of the total number of graves (Fig. 12). This category consists exclusively of glass beads, which were found in different numbers, starting from one to 20 per grave. Though they are usually considered ornaments, the beads could have also had magical powers, acting like amulets. Previous studies have shown that their type, number and colours could sometimes indicate a magical function. Two graves from the cemetery in question contain strings of beads (M92 – 11 beads; M290 – 20 beads) which were more likely used as ornaments. The four remaining graves have two or three glass beads each, and grave M379 stands out among them because of the bronze pendant having the shape of a beehive, which was set between two green glass beads.

The child graves with coins represent 21.43% of the total number of graves (Fig. 12). A single coin was deposited in each grave, sometimes in the mouth of the deceased (M100 and M376), other times to the left of the skull or mandible (M404 and M654). There are also two cases in which the position of the coin is not mentioned (M203 and M612). The position of the coins can provide details about the ritual that was performed. For example, the coins found in the mouth of the deceased could have been placed there before the burial, while those found

[80] BOLOG 2017, 29–112.
[81] PARKER PEARSON 1999, 10; CARROLL 2006, 4
[82] LEPETZ ET AL. 2011, 110–112.
[83] LEPETZ 2017, 244–253.
[84] PARKER PEARSON 1999, 10.

near the body could be the result of a deposition made during the burial ceremony. According to the ancient texts, the coins found in the mouth of the deceased could be related to the belief in the myth of Charon[85], and this could perhaps also apply to the other coins found in graves. However, it is also possible that the decision behind the deposition of both categories of coins could have originated in other beliefs, related or not with the afterlife.

All of the coins from the child graves were identified: four coins issued during Hadrian's reign (from M100, M203, M376, and M654), one coin from the reign of Antoninus Pius (M612), and one coin from the reign of Septimius Severus or Caracalla (M404). Thus, it can be presumed that the custom of depositing coins in child graves was more common in the 2nd century AD. The preferred nominal, regardless of the period, is the bronze *aes*, which is present in five graves (M100, M203, M376, M404, and M612), while one *sestertius* was found in grave M654.

The child graves with lamps represent 17.86% of the total number of graves (Fig. 12). There are five graves that had lamps in their inventory (M92, M100, M184, M299, and M612). In funerary contexts, the deposition of lamps could be interpreted in different ways. In general, it is believed that these artefacts had a specific function of lighting the path of the souls into the afterlife. They could also be deposited symbolically, to be a reminder of an old personal habit, and sometimes as gifts from the mourners, so they could perhaps reflect their social identities, or the ones of the deceased[86]. Some important indicators of their functions could be their type and the precise context of discovery. In the discussed cases there are only Loeschcke X type lamps, which are commonly discovered at Apulum[87]. This could mean that the lamps deposited in the child graves were not selected according to a special feature, this type being just the most commonly encountered in the analysed area.

The potter's marks could also be an important feature of the lamps. Among the finds from child graves are only two lamps with workshop stamps, and because their ceramic fabric was not analysed, their origin cannot be identified precisely.

If the inventories in graves M100 and M612 are compared, it can be seen that a similar funerary ritual, which included the deposition of lamps, ceramic vessels and coins, was preferred in the 2nd century AD child graves. If the inventory of grave M92 is included, it can also be seen that the lamps are more often associated with ceramic vessels than with coins or other categories of artefacts. The presence of just lamps in two funerary inventories (M184 and M299) points to a different ritual whose meaning is less certain for now.

The child graves which contained *turibula* represent 3.57% of the total number of graves (Fig. 12). There is only one grave which contains two objects of this kind, associated with ceramic vessels (grave M305)[88]. This type of artefacts could have both a practical and a symbolic function. The presence of burnt traces could indicate that it was used during the funerary rituals as a lighting device, or to refresh the room in which the deceased was kept before the burial. *Turibula* were also used during the movement of the body towards the cemetery and during the funerary ceremony. The absence of burnt traces could suggest that its deposition had a symbolic meaning, perhaps referring to the light or scent that it could produce and its beneficial role for the spirit of the deceased[89].

The child graves that contained *unguentaria* represent 10.71% of the total number of graves with inventory (Fig. 12). Only three graves have *unguentaria* in their inventory. Grave M100 contained, besides the mentioned artefact, some ceramic vessels, lamps and a coin dated

[85] STEVENS 1991, 215–229.
[86] ŞÖFÖROĞLU/SUMMERER 2016, 259–264; RIFE/MOORE MORINSON 2017, 51.
[87] OTA/BOUNEGRU 2009, 93.
[88] BOLOG 2017, 56.
[89] HOPE 2017, 86–103.

to AD 138. In the two remaining graves, M318 and M349, the *unguentaria* were the only objects in their inventory[90]. The presence of this kind of artefacts could indicate a certain practice associated with the funerary ritual, which was more likely based on the decision of the mourners. These were containers for aromatic oils that were poured over the deceased body, being then just put next to the body, empty or full. In the latter case, their function was more likely symbolic. For a better interpretation of these objects, their position in the grave, their treatment, the quality of the material, their volume, and the eventual use traces have to be taken into consideration[91]. The discussed artefacts have in common their shape, with a globular body and a flat or concave base[92]. Ceramic *unguentaria* with a globular body were widespread during the 1st century BC and remained in use until the second part of the 1st century AD. Besides them, a significant use of the glass *unguentaria* can be observed from the second half of the 1st century AD[93]. In the first grave mentioned above, the *unguentarium* was made of ceramic, and was associated with a Hadrianic coin. The other two *unguentaria* were made of glass, the first one broken like the ceramic one, and the other damaged only at the neck. According to the observations mentioned above about the chronology of these objects, it can be presumed that the graves with glass *unguentaria* could be dated slightly later that those containing the ceramic ones.

The child graves with magical objects represent 21.43% of the total number of graves with inventory (Fig. 12). The amulets were objects that were considered to have magical powers, and were worn because of their ability to protect the owner against different diseases, spells and evil spirits[94]. One of the most common amulets found in the analysed graves is *bulla.* This type of amulet was in fact a container that held inside different plants, seeds, and other organic materials. It was worn especially by the Roman freeborn boys until they reached the puberty and were allowed to participate in certain rites of passage into adulthood. On that occasion, celebrated between the ages of fourteen and seventeen, the child took off his *bulla*, offered it to the *Lares*, and formally entered into the adult social group. Besides the legal status and age group of the child, this artefact could also be an indicator of the social status of the child's family, depending on the material used for the *bulla*[95]. In the selected graves, *bulla* pendants appear in three cases (M154, M333, and M516), and in the first case the artefact is associated with ceramic vessels. In all three cases, the amulets were made of bronze, and in the first two cases they were found complete, inside each of them being found a seed[96].

Another type of amulet commonly worn by children and women is the *lunula.* This crescent-shaped protective pendant, usually made of silver or bronze, was considered to have more power on women, protecting their health and fertility[97]. Only one of the analysed graves contained this kind of artefact, more precisely grave M654. The silver pendant was associated with ceramic vessels and a coin, dated to Hadrian's reign[98]. The use of silver could potentially indicate that the deceased child belonged to a wealthy family.

Other artefacts that can be sometimes associated with the small children are the bells. These noise-making objects were often employed as amulets, their sound being considered protective. Small bells are often found on the skeleton and it is believed that they were sometimes

[90] BOLOG 2017, 30–60.
[91] ANDERSON-STOJANOVIĆ 1987, 117–122.
[92] BOLOG 2017, 30–60.
[93] ANDERSON-STOJANOVIĆ 1987, 110–113.
[94] DASEN 2015, 177.
[95] DASEN 2015, 194–195; BOLOG/BOUNEGRU 2012, 225.
[96] BOLOG 2017, 37–89.
[97] DASEN 2015, 189–190.
[98] BOLOG 2017, 112.

attached to the clothes[99]. Two cremation graves from this cemetery contained bells in their inventory, M452 and M640. However, the second was not included in the analysis because it also had two military ornaments in its inventory. These artefacts could indicate that the deceased was an adult. On the other hand, the first grave contained only a bell, so it could be a child grave.

The functions of miniature mirrors found in both funerary and votive contexts are still debated. Their dimensions (most of them have a diameter of about 4 cm), the material from which they were made (lead), the messages written on some of them, and the occasional absence of the reflective material (which was perhaps ritually broken) indicate a ritual function. A mirror could have also had magical functions, for example to protect the owner against curses or the so-called "evil eye" through deflection. Most of the mirrors from burial contexts were found in the Balkans area, being dated to the 2nd and 3rdcenturies AD, and they seem to be associated with children and women[100]. In the Romanian archaeological literature, these objects are usually classified as toiletries[101]. Child grave M612 is the only one containing a miniature mirror, which was associated with three lamps, ceramic vessels, coins and an unknown object from which only a pin was preserved. The coin was dated to the Antoninus Pius's reign.

Only one child grave, M228, from the cemetery in question contained a miniature vessel (Fig. 12)[102]. This kind of artefacts can have multiple functions[103], and in the case of a child burial the miniature objects can be considered personal objects, more precisely they could have been the toys of the deceased individual.

6.1.3. The patterns resulted from the PCA

Convex hull groups (Fig. 13)

The use of statistical convex hulls allows the identification of the most likely clusters based on the presence / absence of the main categories of artefacts and their associations. Eleven graves fulfil the clustering conditions of the convex hull: five with body ornaments (M290, M300, M379, M551, and M596); four with ceramic vessels (M92, M100, M290, and M612); four with magical objects (M333, M452, M516, and M612); three with lamps (M92, M100, and M612); two with coins (M100 and M612); one grave with *unguentarium* (M100) (Fig. 13). This group of graves contains the most commonly encountered categories of artefacts. Among them, the body ornaments, the ceramic vessels and the magical objects are the most present artefacts, while the lamps, the coins and the *unguentaria* are less used. The miniature vessels and the *turibula* are falling out of the convex hull, more likely because they are exceptions to the common rule. This group of the most common artefacts probably indicates the most common rituals of the analysed group of child graves. Among these categories of artefacts, the beads and the magical objects could indicate the age-related identity of the deceased.

The first group (the upper left side of the graph)

The first group (Fig. 14) contains five graves (M290, M300, M379, M551 and M596) that have in common the presence of body ornaments, all of them being glass beads[104]. The first grave, which can also be included in the second group, contains two ceramic vessels besides the ornaments.

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[99] DASEN 2015, 189.
[100] GRAHAM 2018.
[101] BOUNEGRU/BOLOG 2011, 127–128.
[102] BOLOG 2017, 46.
[103] PEMBERTON 2020, 281–286.
[104] BOLOG 2017, 53–101.

The main characteristic of this group is the presence of body ornaments that could be interpreted as magical objects[105]. The grave that also contains ceramic vessels could indicate that in some cases the children who wore this kind of ornaments could have been also buried with food offerings. The absence of garment accessories made of durable materials could suggest simpler clothes. Although the body ornaments are in general considered indicators of the female gender[106], in this case the beads could have mainly had a different, magical functionality, though they could have also been offerings from the mourners[107]. If the features of the graves are taken into consideration, it can be seen that this group has rectangular graves with simple settings and treatments of the pits. Three of the graves have the same orientation (M290, M300 and M379), and this could perhaps indicate that the deceased were buried in the same time of the year.

The second group (the upper right side of the graph)

The second identified group (Fig. 14) contains eleven graves (M92, M290, M305, M86, M118, M193, M267, M484, M478, M100 and M203) that have in common the presence of ceramic vessels[108]. Two of these graves also appear in the third and fourth groups discussed below. This group displays two ritual tendencies: six graves contain only ceramic vessels; five graves also have other objects in their inventory (*turibula,* body ornaments, lamps, *unguentaria* and coins). As shown above, the beads are among the most common artefacts in child graves from this cemetery. If they are left aside due to age-related commonality, three sub-groups then emerge, indicating the same number of ritual tendencies. The first sub-group contains two graves (M290 and M92) that have in common the presence of beads and ceramic vessels. The second grave could have had a slightly different ritual, because it also contains a lamp. The second sub-group also contains two graves (M100 and M203) that have in common the presence of ceramic vessels and coins. However, the first grave in this sub-group also contains an *unguentarium* and lamps. The last sub-group includes six graves that contain only ceramic vessels, while one grave also has a *turibulum.*

It can be therefore observed that this second group is primarily characterized by the deposition of food offerings, a custom that could indicate the belief in the possibility of feeding the dead souls[109]. In two cases, the deposition of coins can also indicate a particular belief of the mourners in a funerary custom known as "the coin of the dead", maybe related to the one known as "Charon's obol"[110]. The presence of coins also helps dating the graves. Grave M100 can be dated to the reign of Antoninus Pius or later. The second grave can be dated to Hadrian's reign or later. It seems that the deposition of ceramic vessels was a popular custom during the 2nd century AD. The presence of lamps in two cases could also indicate a belief in the protective role of light. These artefacts could have been used during the ritual, and then deposited in the grave, or they could have been just deposited unused, their presence being only symbolic[111]. The deposition of the *unguentarium*, a container that could have held perfumed oils, could indicate a different ritual. This recipient could have been used during the funerary ceremony, or was just deposited symbolically[112]. The *turibulum* from grave M305 also shows a difference in the ritual. These objects could have been used during the funerary ceremony, or even earlier during the wake, but the way in which they were used in each case cannot be known precisely. *Turibula*

[105] CARROLL 2018, 100.
[106] STOUT 1994, 78.
[107] FAHLANDER/OESTIGAARD 2008, 7.
[108] BOLOG 2017, 29–85.
[109] PARKER PEARSON 1999, 10; CARROLL 2006, 4.
[110] STEVENS 1991: 215–229.
[111] PÎSLARU/BĂRBULESCU 2003, 19–21.
[112] ANDERSON-STOJANOVIĆ 1987, 115–122.

were usually used to burn aromatic substances[113], but they could have also been symbolically deposited in graves. Grave M100 differs from the other ones in the group because it has the most elaborate ritual, and probably the mourners were more superstitious. If the rite-related features of these graves are included into the analysis, it can be observed that most of them have a rectangular shape, only two of them having a round shape. The graves with brick settings or steps are associated with a simple ritual, their inventory consisting only of ceramic vessels, with a coin deposited in a single case. However, these particular settings are not restricted to this kind of inventory in the cemetery in question.

The third group (the lower right side of the graph)

The third identified group (Fig. 14) contains six graves (M100, M154, M376, M404, M612, and M654). The most common artefacts in this group are the coins (in M100, M376, M404, M612 and M654), followed by the ceramic vessels (in M100, M154, M612 and M654), the magical objects (in M154, M612 and M654), the lamps (in M100 and M612), and the *unguentaria* (in M100). Three sub-groups can be observed: one with graves that only contain coins, another one that has graves with coins and other objects (*unguentaria*, lamps, ceramic vessels, magical objects), and the last one that contains no coins, but only ceramic vessels and magical objects. Three of the graves have a more elaborate ritual (M100, M612 and M654). Grave M100 was also included in the second group because it contains ceramic vessels.

In the majority of these graves a more elaborate funerary ritual was preferred, including food offerings and the deposition of lamps and coins. It can also be seen that objects related to the belief in the afterlife are more common, which could mean that some of the mourners were more superstitious. The magical objects, with the exception of the miniature mirror found in grave M612, are amulets that were probably worn around the neck by the deceased. These amulets were meant to protect the wearer, some of them also being indicators of their gender, age and social status. In this case, it can be assumed that grave M654, which contains a *lunula* could have belonged to a child or a woman, and the one that contains a bronze *bulla* could have belonged to a boy. If this interpretation is correct, it can be seen that there is a difference in the rituals that were performed in these two graves, the ritual from grave M654 being more elaborate. Two graves, M404 and M376, from this group have only coins in their inventories. They form a sub-group that is also encountered within the previously discussed group, so they could be an indicator of a larger group of people that preferred this kind of ritual. The coins also provide a chronology for the graves in this group: M612 and M100 can be dated during Hadrian or Antoninus Pius or later; M654 and M376 can be dated to the Hadrian's reign or later; and M404 during Septimius Severus or Caracalla or later. This chronology points to an evolution of the ritual, the 2nd century AD graves having a simpler ritual (with ceramic vessels, coins and sometimes magical objects), the lamps appearing slightly later, while a single object was included in the 3rd century AD graves. The graves from this group have a rectangular shape, and two of them have a wood setting (M376 and M100). The orientations are different and cannot be attributed solely to a particular type of inventory.

The fourth group (the lower left side of the graph)

This group (Fig. 14) contains ten graves that could be divided into five sub-groups: one that has graves with magical objects (M333, M452 and M516); another that has graves with coins (M376 and M404); a third one that contains graves with lamps (M184 and M299); a fourth one that has graves with *unguentaria* (M318 and M349); and a fifth one with a single grave containing a miniature vessel (M228). Their common ritual characteristic is the presence

[113] RADU 2014, 100–101.

of a single category of artefacts and this could be the reason that statistically brought them together. Another reason could be the fact that some of the artefacts are not found in other graves (like the miniature vessel), while others tend to appear in graves that have more than two categories. These patterns could mean that each of the sub-groups mentioned above could be an indicator of a larger group of graves from this cemetery, including the adult ones. If this is the case, then some of the artefact depositions from this group could not always indicate the age identity of the deceased. Still, in the case of M333 and M516, the bronze *bulla* pendants are indicators of the age and male gender identity. Furthermore, two other graves (M452 and M516) contain magical objects, and the last one (M288) has a miniature vessel in its inventory, potentially linking them with the child dead.

7. Conclusions

The main scope of this article is to identify the ways in which childhood-related identities were expressed in the Roman urban cemetery at Apulum-Dealul Furcilor. The statistical analysis of the graves from this cemetery shows that the child graves are not so different from the adult graves[114], and are even similar in many cases. They have the same rite- and ritual-related features, and almost the same funerary inventory. Most of the children were inhumed, but cremation was also practiced, the rituals of these burials being similar. The preferred way of burying the children in this Roman cemetery is a simple one: in a rectangular shaped grave, with no particular settings, or treatments of the pit. The positions of the bodies and the orientations of the graves, like in the case of adults, are diverse, and their meaning is still being debated. Most of the child cremation burials have a round shape, a simple setting, and all of them have the osteological remains scattered on the bottom of the pit. Regarding the inventory of the child graves, some of the deposited artefacts indicate rituals that are also encountered in the case of adult deceased: the deposition of food offerings, lamps, coins (in the mouth, or close to the head), *turibula*, etc.

Still, there are also differences specific to the child burials, some of the inventories including glass beads, *bullae* and other protective artefacts, as well as a possible toy (a miniature vessel), which could indicate the age and gender identity of the children. The presence of other protective settings in some burials (the one-brick setting and the cover made of a ceramic vessel) can also indicate some different treatments of the dead children, maybe according to their age. The results of the anthropological analysis, which is in progress, will offer perhaps supplementary arguments for this interpretation.

In some cases, the material from which some of the artefacts were made (the silver *lunula*) or the more elaborate settings of the graves (the wood and bricks settings, and the sarcophagus) could indicate the financial status of the family. The presence of the *bulla* pendant could also indicate that the parents were Roman citizens and the child was a freeborn. Some of the graves with a brick setting also included a layer of slack lime on the bottom. This practice could have had many reasons, like the preservation, the destruction, or the disinfection of the corpse, and the chemical analysis of the lime and osteological remains could provide an answer.

A chronological evolution of these rituals can be sometimes seen in some graves and areas of the cemetery. These are indicating that in the 2nd century AD there were both simple graves with a limited number of grave-goods (mainly ceramic vessels, coins and sometimes magical objects), but also others with more elaborate rituals, involving the deposition of ceramic vessels, coins, lamps, and *unguentaria*. In the Severan period and later, a simpler ritual and inventory is

[114] Some of the adult graves were analyzed statistically in my BA dissertation "Analiza identitară a mormintelor din cadrul necropolei romane de la Apulum, Dealul Furcilor – Podei. Folosirea analizelor statistice", supervised by Dr. Mariana Egri.

attested, mainly based on the deposition of coins or ceramic vessels. Still, the number of well-dated child graves is too small for other observations.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE DESCRIPTIONS OF ARTEFACTS AND GRAVES

cm = centimetres
MST = minimum spanning tree
PCA = principal components analysis
PA0 = supine, but with an unknown position of the limbs
PA1 = supine, with all the limbs stretched out
PA2 = supine, with the arms on the chest and the rest of them stretched out
PA3 = supine, with an arm on the chest or on the pelvis, and the rest of the limbs stretched out
PA4 = supine, with the arms crossed on the chest, or one on the chest and the other on the pelvis, and the legs stretched out
PA6 = supine, with an arm on the pelvis and the rest of them stretched out
PA8 = supine, with the legs on one side
PF = lying on the left side
PC = crouched

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Fig. 1. Location of the archaeological site.

Fig. 2. Location of the cemetery (after BOLOG 2017).

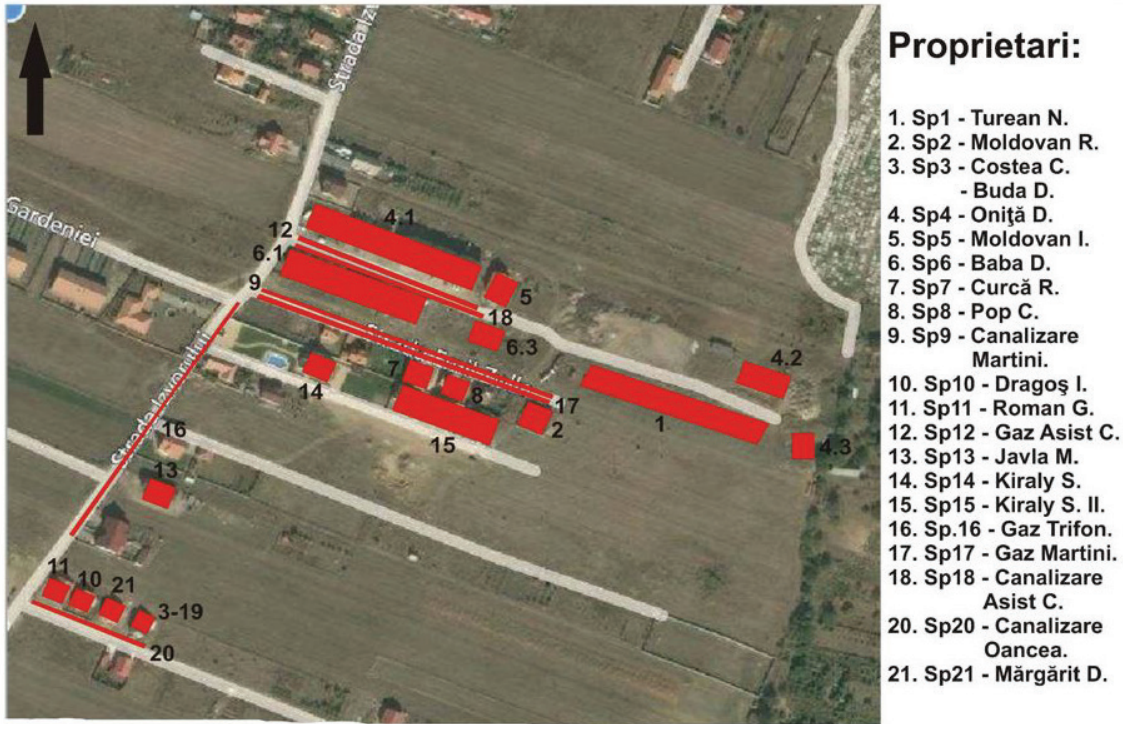

Fig. 3. The analysed areas (after BOLOG 2017).

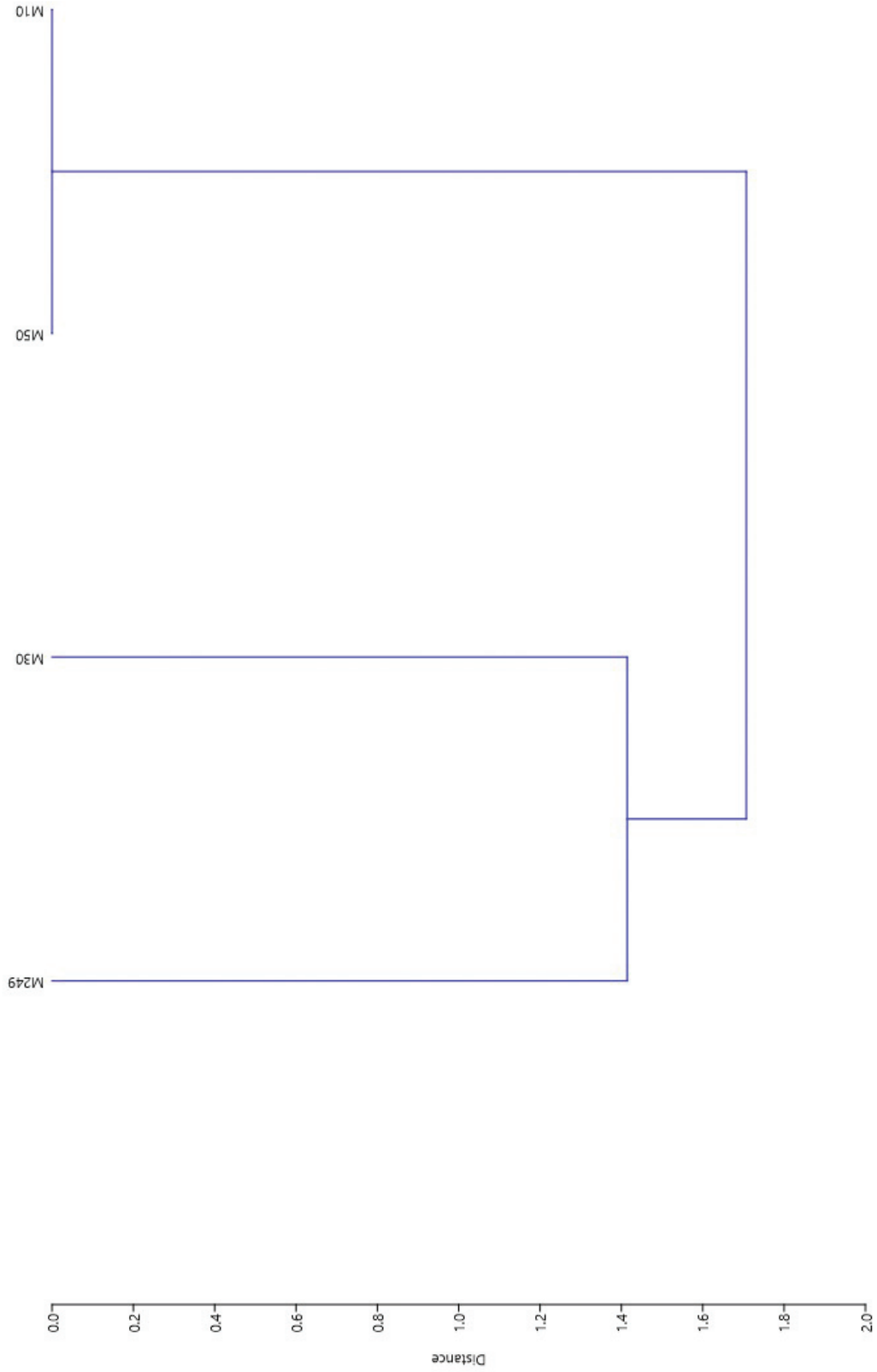

Fig. 4. Cremation graves without inventory – cluster analysis.

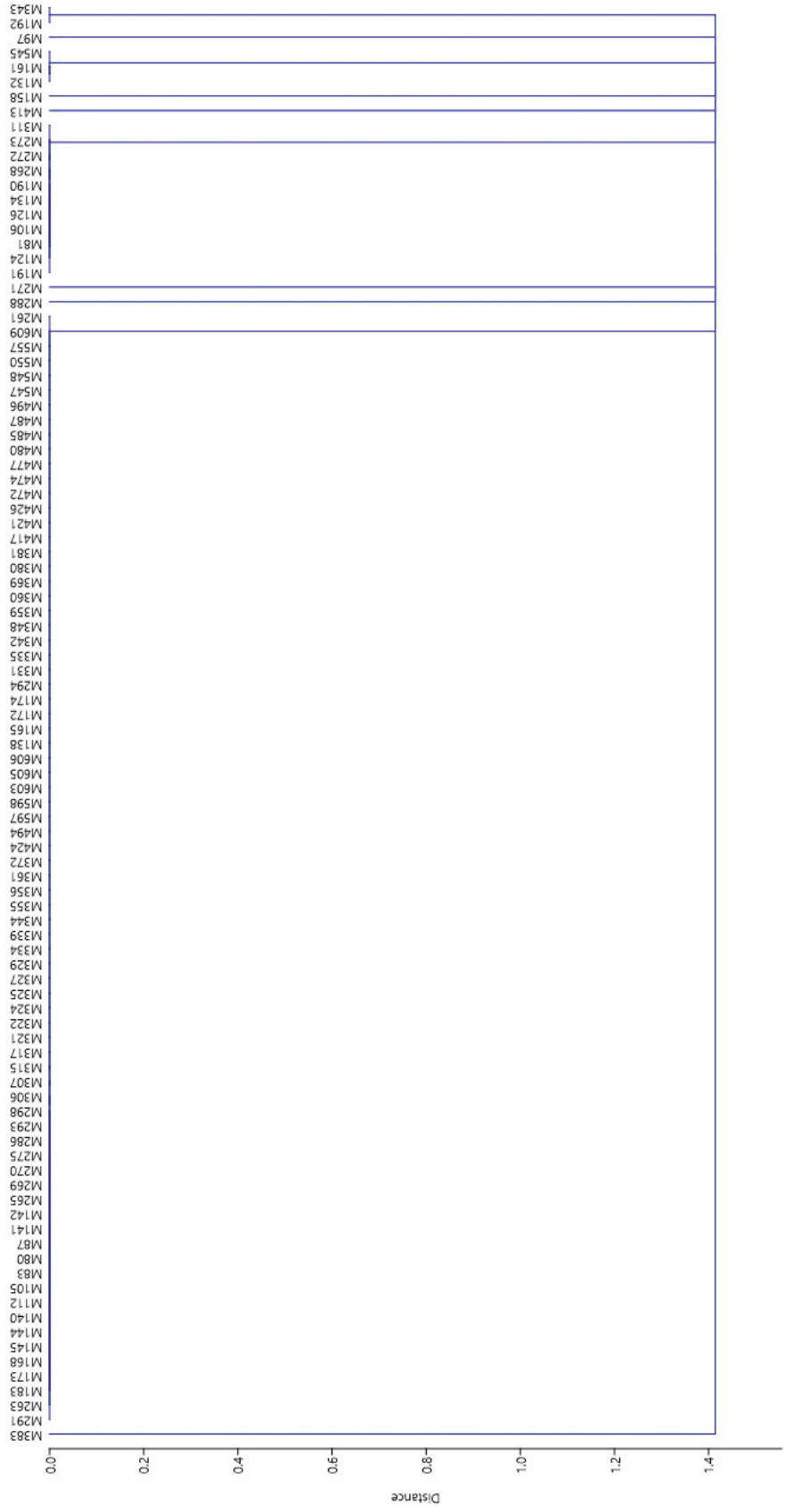

Fig. 5. Inhumation graves without inventory – groups by position.

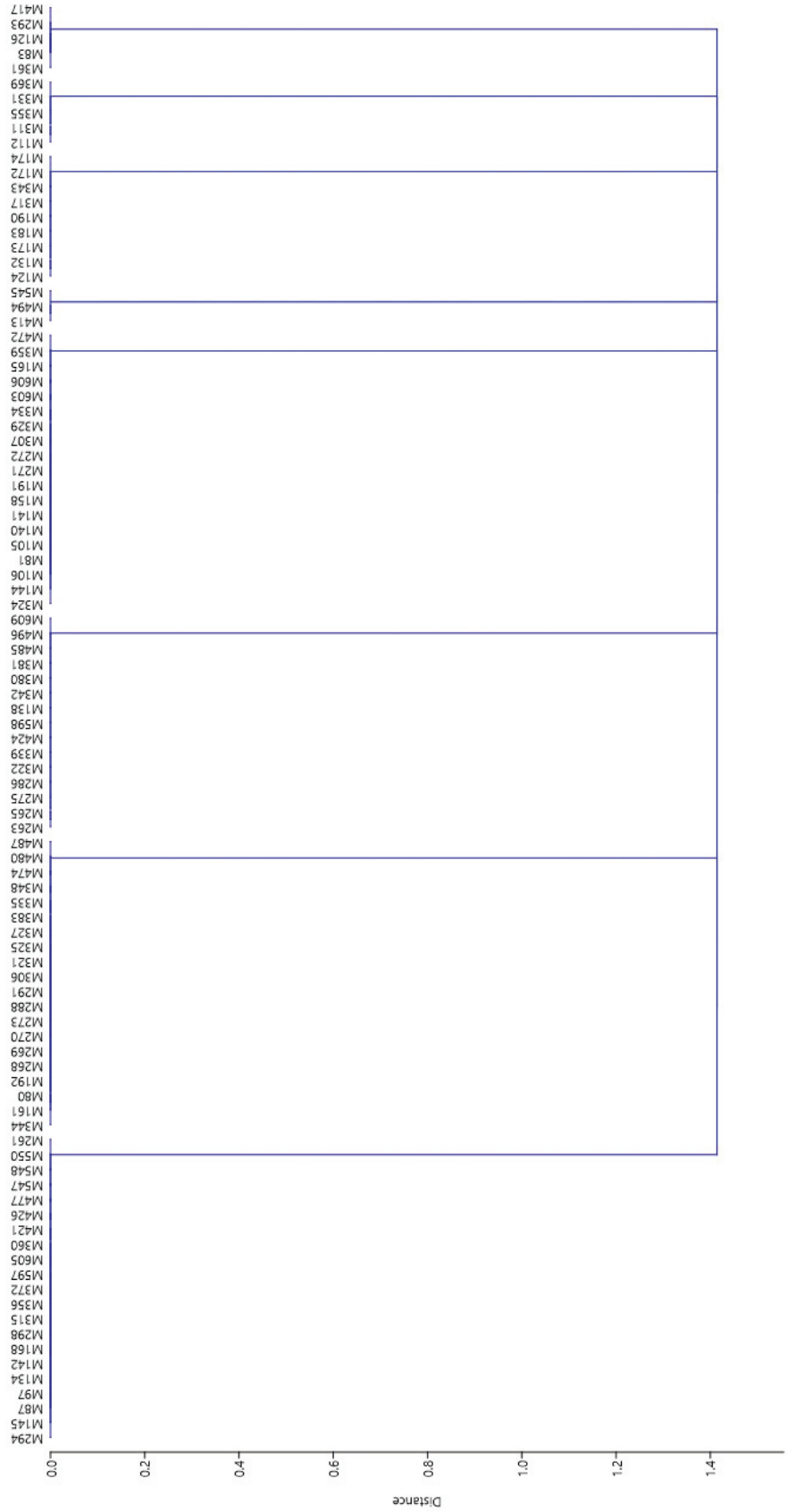

Fig. 6. Inhumation graves without inventory – groups by orientation.

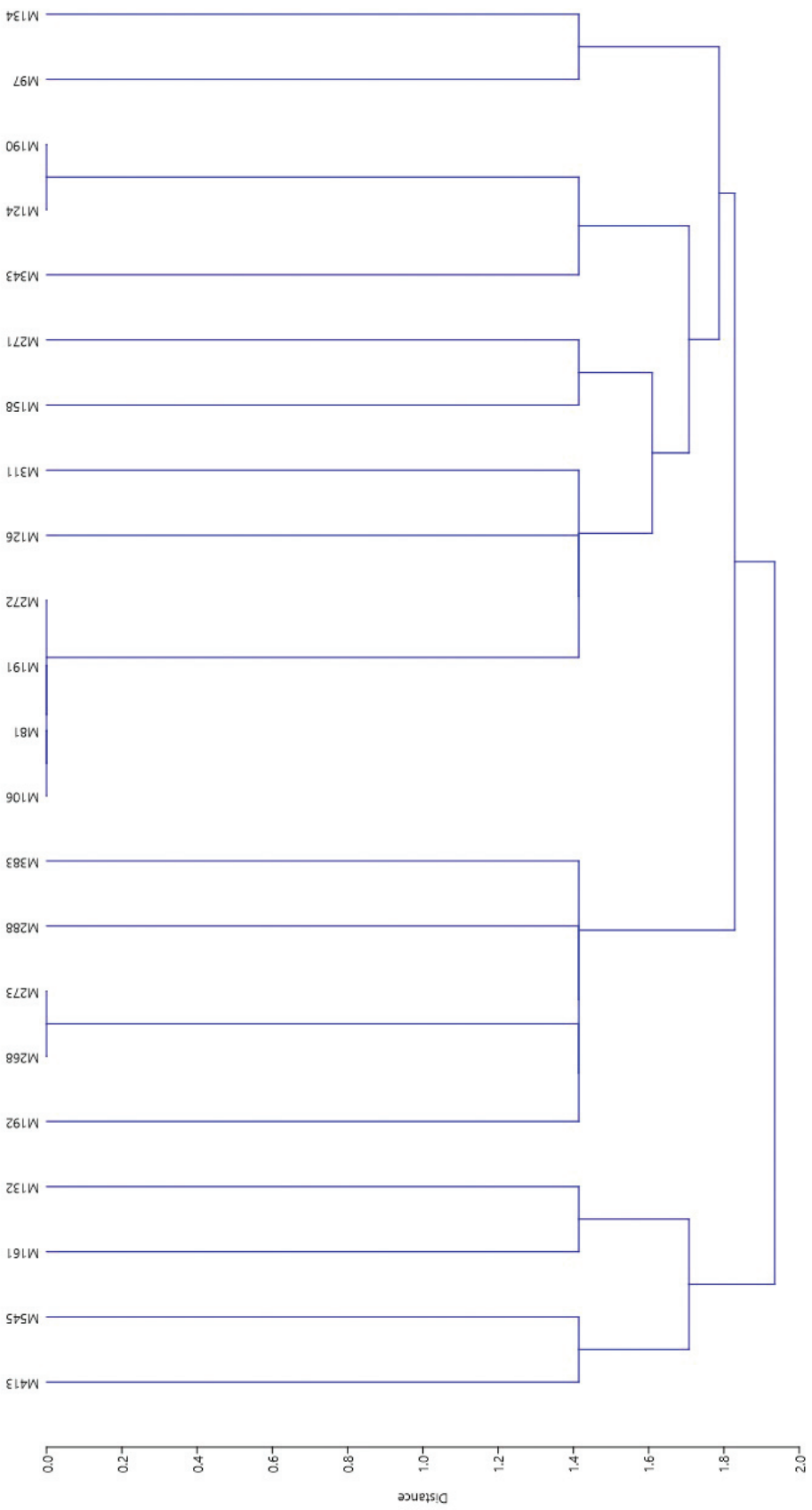

Fig. 7. Inhumation graves without inventory – groups by positions and orientations.

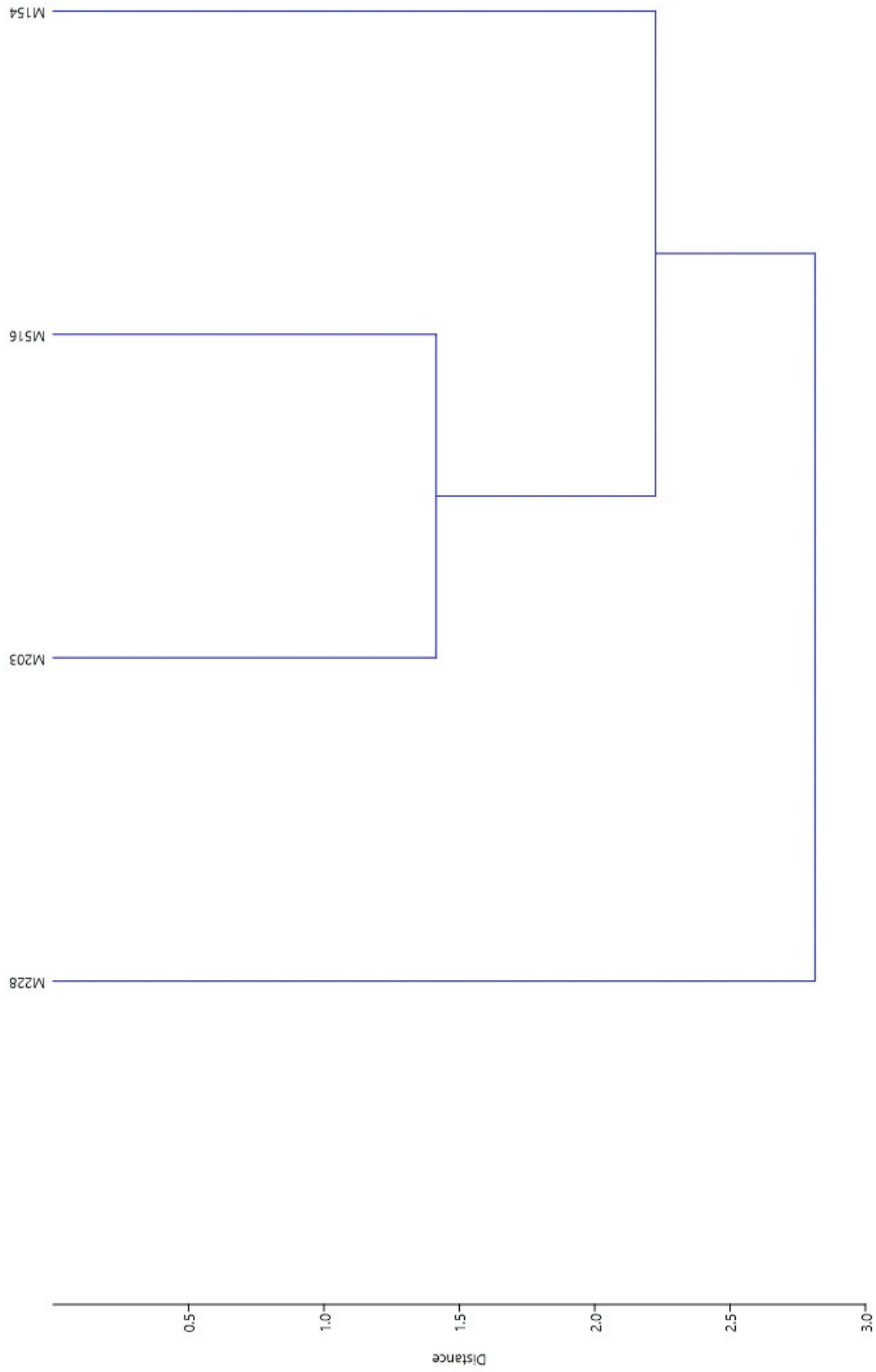

Fig. 8. Cremation graves with inventory – cluster analysis.

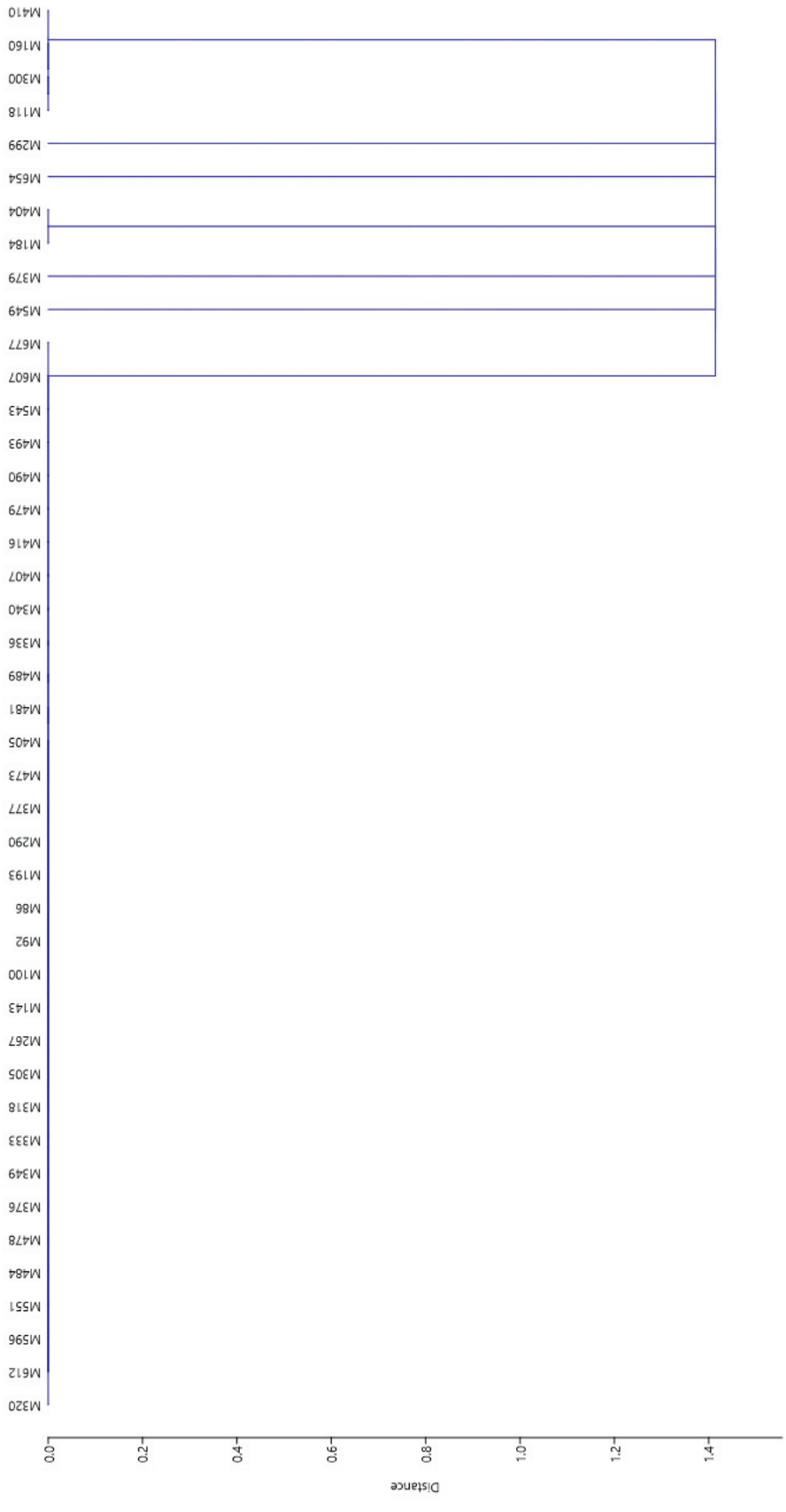

Fig. 9. Inhumation graves with inventory – groups by position.

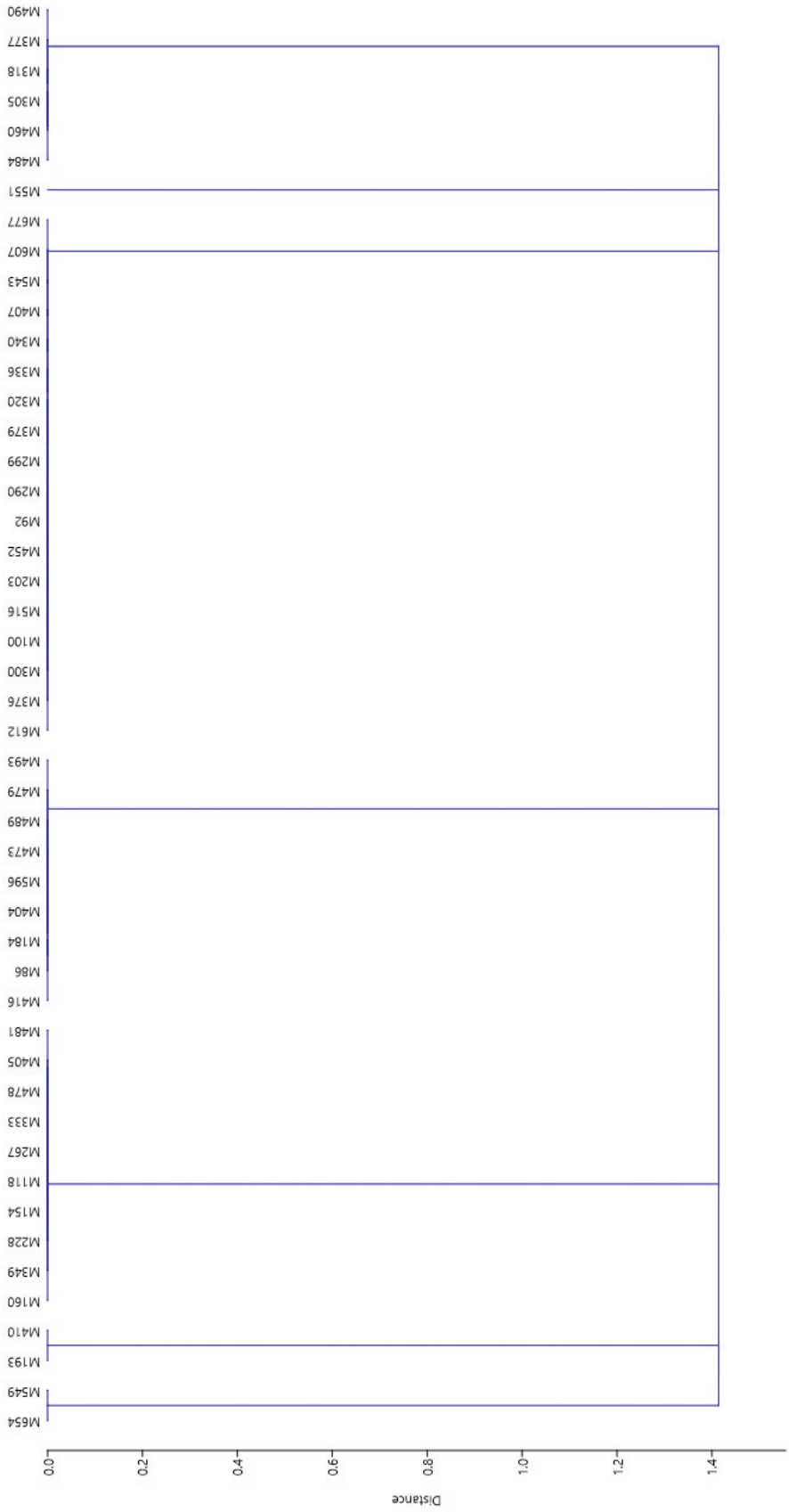

Figure 10. Inhumation graves with inventory – groups by orientation.

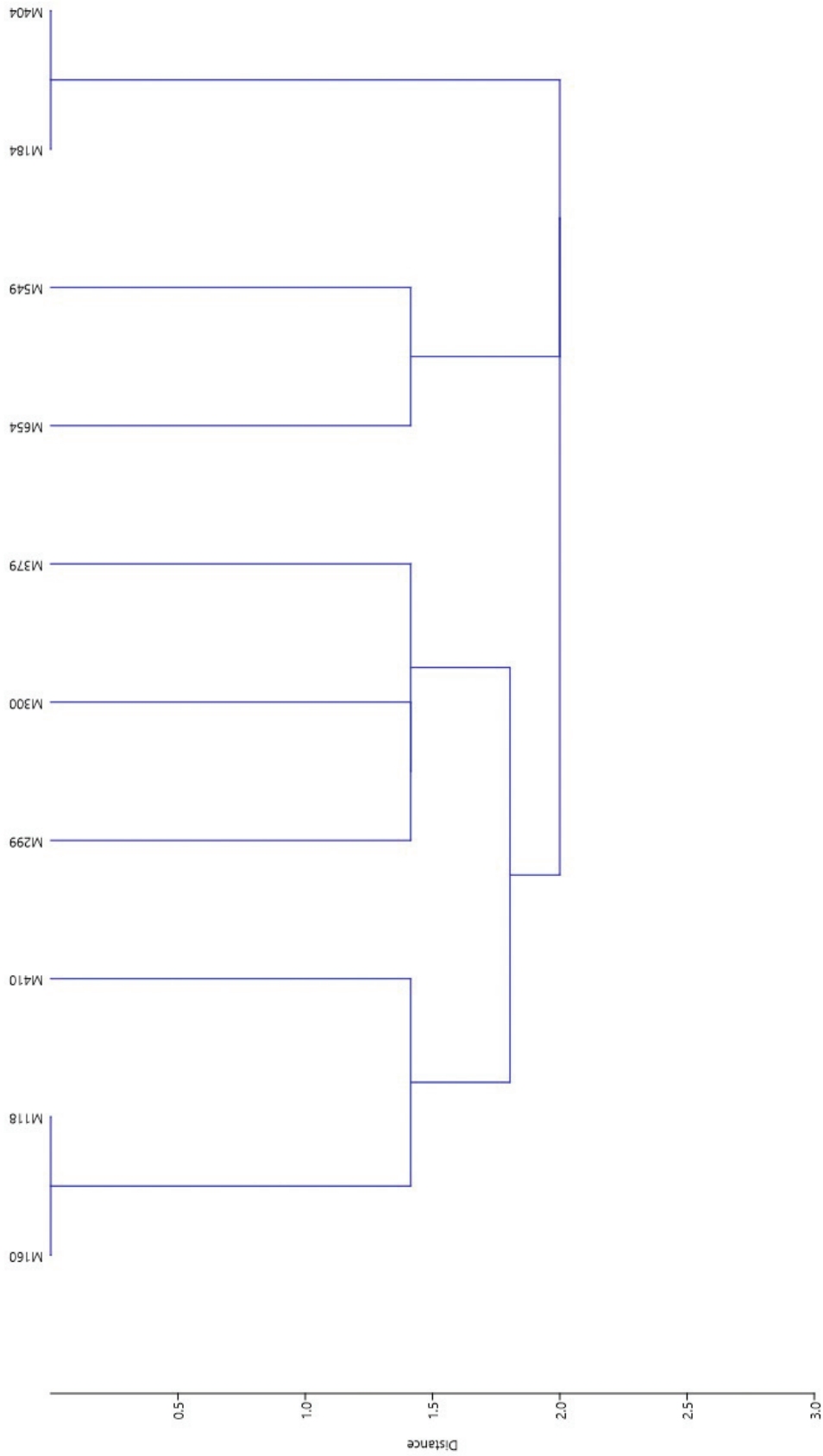

Fig. 11. Inhumation graves with inventory – groups by the positions and orientations.

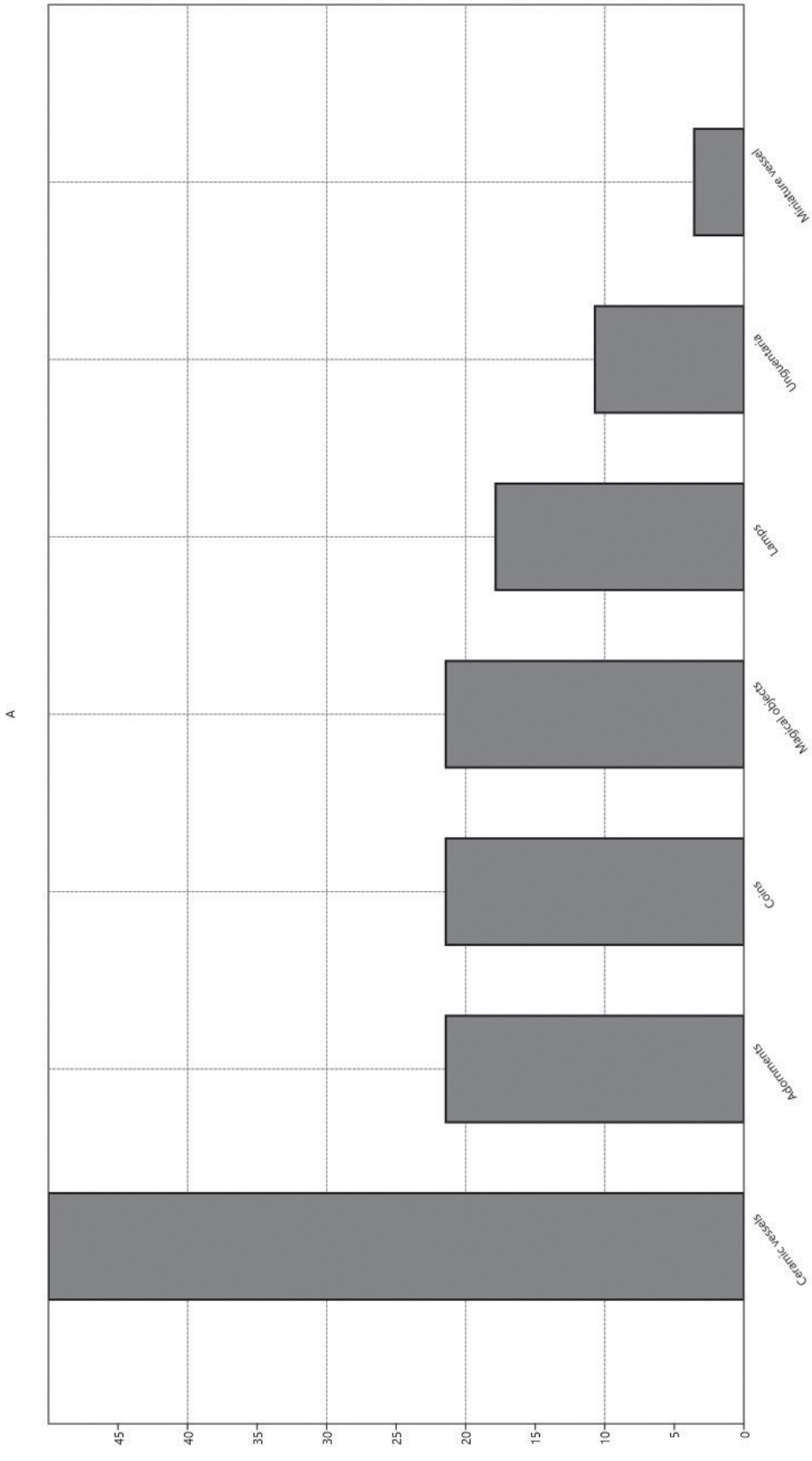

Fig. 12. Main categories of artefacts.

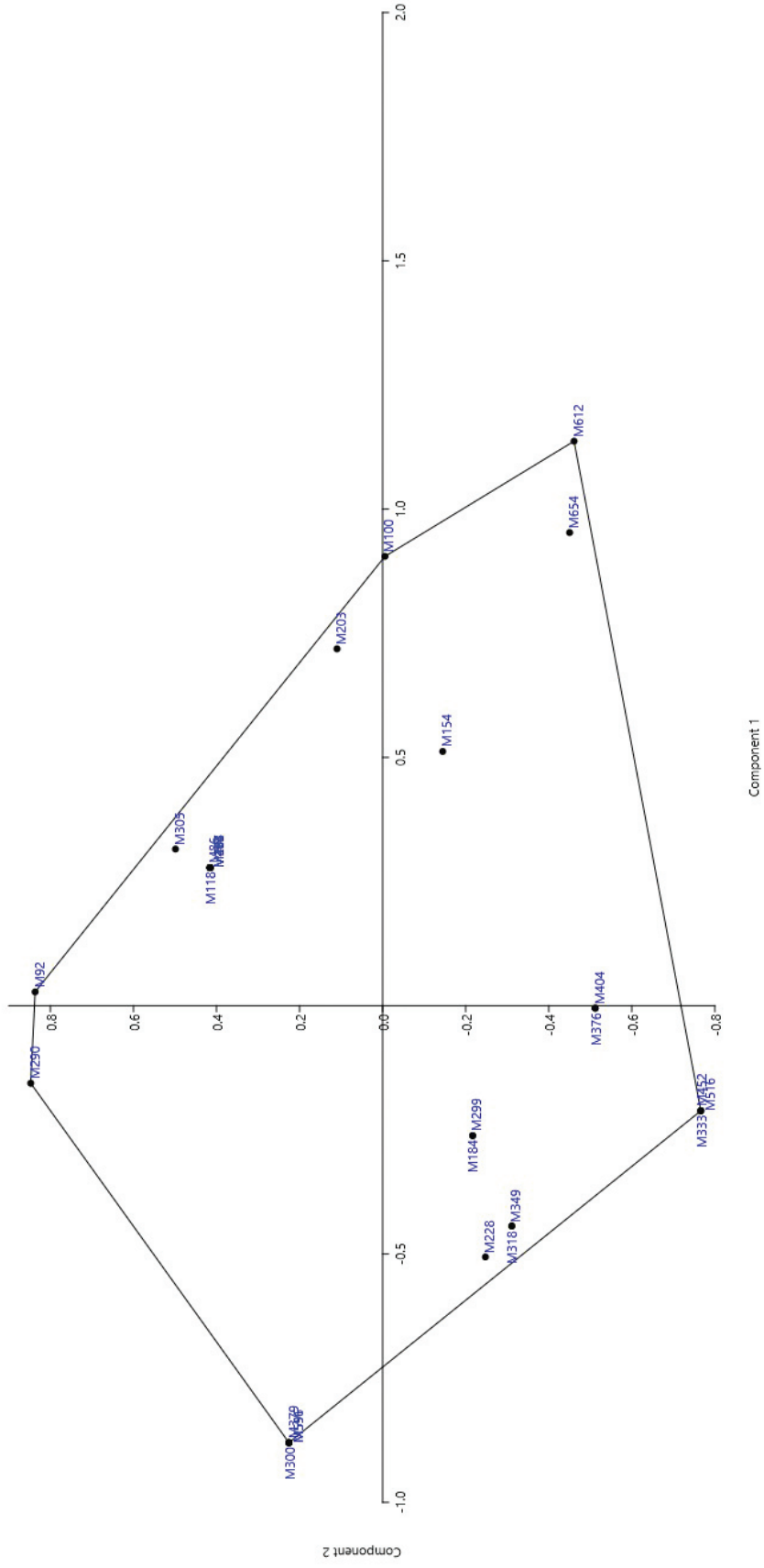

Fig. 13. PCA analysis – convex hulls

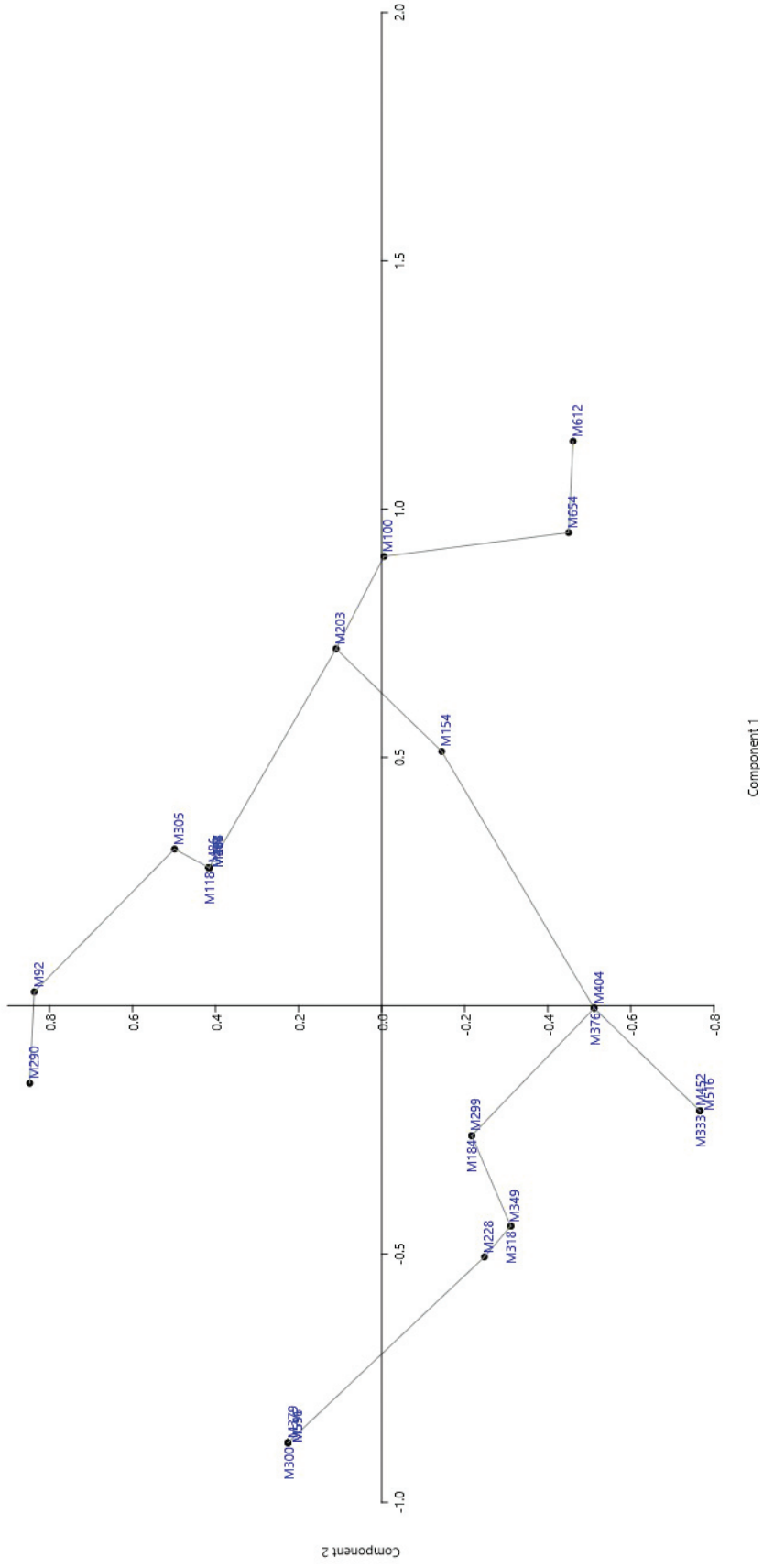

Fig. 14. PCA analysis – minimum spanning tree (MST)