

## EXCAVATIONS AT ARSLANTEPE (MALATYA) 1968.

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The Italian Archaeological Mission in Eastern Anatolia, organized by the Istituto di Paleontologia of the University of Rome and financed with funds of the CNR and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, continued excavations in the hüyük of Arslantepe (Malatya) from July 15 to October 15 1968. The staff consisted of: Director of the Mission, Prof. Salvatore M. Puglisi, Dr. Editta Castaldi, Eugenia Equini, Alba Palmieri, Paolo E. Pecorella, Miss Silvia Ferranti, Mr. Renato Medini and Cesare Placidi. Dr. Alberto Palmieri was responsible for the geo-morphological and the raw material studies. The Archaeological Service of Turkey was represented by Dr. Mehmet Turgut.

With the 1968 excavation some important observations relative to the general stratigraphy of the hüyük were acquired and, for the first time, the pre-Hittite levels were reached.

The field work was done in the area C3, located in the northern slopes of the hüyük where local inhabitants had removed soil and stones, thus considerably reducing the upper archaeological deposit.

The first excavations operations were directed towards the removal of loose soil and stones and the careful clearance of the strata which were intact. Then the area C3 was sub-divided into 5 zones (A, B, C, D, E).

In addition to the periods previously considered (cfr. S. M. Puglisi - P. Meriggi, *Malatya - I*, *Oriens Antiqui Collectio*, III, 1964), three more periods (V, VI, VII) have been found.

Within the limits of period V, the level Va has been identified only on the ground of some pits into a levelling soil which covered the settlement Vb. The pottery of the level Va is mostly decorated with red bands forming simple geometric motifs. (fig. 1). A similar decoration is found at Kültepe at level Ib (K. Emre, *The pottery of the Assyrian Colony Period*, Anatolia, VII, 1963, p. 93), while at Boğazköy it is common at the levels of the Imperial Hittite Period (F. Fischer, *Die Hethitische Keramik von Boğazköy*, Berlin 1963, p. 33, Tav. 16).

An artificial accumulation of strata consisting of little pieces of natural clay and of soil mixed with fragment of mud-bricks and loose stones, without archaeological material *in situ*, was found in C3 (D) trench (fig. 2). This series of strata represents a filling related to some structures of level Vb. The structures of this level generally consist of walls of considerable width, whose external surface is made of rough squared stones containing a filling of smaller irregular ones (figs. 3 and 4.). These walls-which have only been exposed in short sections-represent foundations and terraces that are part of an important systematization of the site.

Remains of mud-brick walls-provided in one case with horizontal beams at the basis - rest on some of the stone structures mentioned above. An underground channel built with slabs for drainage purpose, has also been found (cfr. fig. 3).

One house revealed to have been cut in the filling which provides the interior surface covered by plaster (fig. 5).

A great fire brought to a sudden end the settlement of level Vb where many vessels, almost complete, were found *in situ*. They consist mostly of large wheel-made pots, including *pithoi* (fig. 6), *hydriai* (fig. 7) and two-handled cooking-pots (fig. 8). Moreover one funnel occurs (fig. 9); the latter shape is known from levels of the last phase of the Assyrian Trading Colony Period, or slightly later, at several sites (K. Emre, The pottery from Acemhöyük, *Anadolu* X, 1966, p. 137; W. Orthmann, *Hethitische Keramik aus den Grabungen in Boğazköy in den Jahren 1962 und 1963*, MDOG 1965, fig. 5,1; H. Goldman, *Tarsus II*, Princeton 1956, p. 197, fig. 308; H. Z. Koşay and M. Akok, *Alaca Höyük Kazısı 1940-1948*, Ankara 1966, Tav. 102). In addition in the level Vb some pieces of pottery with red bands occur. A cylinder-seal (fig. 10) which prof. N. Özgüç considers as belonging to the "Schematic Old Assyrian" type has also been found.

Some architectural features of level Vb-particularly the stoneslabs drainage channel and the series of horizontal beams at the bottom of the mud-brick walls-are comparable to those of kültepe (T. Özgüç, *The art and architecture of Ancient Kanish, Anatolia VIII*, 1964, p. 37) and of Acemhöyük (N. Özgüç, *Excavations at Acemhöyük*, cit., Plan 4) in a late phase of the Assyrian Colony Period.

The first strata of the lower deposit revealed typical aspects of period VI; principally black-burnished pottery and painted pottery. The hand-made, grit-tempered, black-burnished pottery represents a class which is largely diffused throughout Eastern Anatolia - although with some regional differences - in the third millennium; it is connected to similar material of the Transcaucasia, Iranian Azerbaijan, and the Red-Black or Kirbet Kerak pottery of Syria and Palestine. Among the pots used for domestic purposes, jars and *pithoi* with rail rims and triangular ledge handles (fig. 11) - typi-

cal of the Malatya area (C. A. Burney, *Eastern Anatolia in the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age*, *Anat. St.* VIII, 1958, p. 195; A. Palmieri, *Insedimento del Bronzo a Gelinciktepe (Malatya, Origni, I*, 1967, figs 13-14) - were found, and among the finer highly polished vases there were carinated bowls (fig. 12).

The connections with Northern Syria are emphasized by a fragment on which a swastika is incised (fig. 13) in a particular style which is identical to that in the Amuq and Tabara el Akrad (R. J. and L. Braidwood, *Excavations in the Plain of Antioch*, cit, p. 461, fig. 358, 7; S. Hood, *Excavations at Tabara el Akrad*, 1948-49, *Anat. St.* I, 1951, fig. 7, 21b).

The painted pottery found at Arslantepe, which is usually monochrome or more rarely bichrome, belongs to the class considered by Burney to be characteristic of E. B. III in the Malatya-Elâziğ region (C. A. Burney, *Eastern Anatolia*, cit, p. 205). This ware, also hand-made and grit-tempered and generally cream-slipped, includes globular jars with plain or rail rims and inverted-rim bowls, which are usually decorated on the upper part with brown, black or red mat-paint.

The decorative patterns consist of wide horizontal bands-the lowest of which is a fringed band-which enclose groups of chevrons, vertical segments, wavy lines, grids and tree-like designs. Isolated groups of angular or wavy lines, star or butterfly motifs sometimes occur without connection with the main decoration. A typical example is represented by the jar provided with a cylindrical spout close to the bottom (fig. 14), while a particularly elaborated ornamentation appears on the lower part of the vessel illustrated in fig. 15.

The influence of the Cappadocian pottery is in some way evident in the painted inverted-rim bowls (G. H. Brown, *Prehistoric Pottery from the Antitaurus*, *Anat. St.* XVII, 1967, p. 133-34); this connection is clearly shown by a fragment of jar with bichrome pannelled decoration

of red and black triangles close to a clepsydra motif (fig. 16).

Together with the black-burnished pottery and the painted one a class of wheel-made chaff-faced ware appears: it is represented exclusively by bowl whose rim slopes to the inside (fig. 17).

Red-slipped burnished ware and some sherds of Reserved - slip and Simple Ware, belonging to the wellknown classes of the Amuq, are also present. Moreover, clay wheel-models and stamp-seals with geometrical motifs (fig. 18) are not unusual; stone industry includes querns and pestles, "cananean" flint blades and small obsidian triangle-shaped arrow-heads with rectilinear or concave basis (fig. 19).

This cultural development shows evidence of parallelism with the latest phases of Early Bronze Age at Kültepe and, on the other hand, with the Amuq I-J, although a lasting of this culture into the early phases of the Karum is to be considered.

In C3 (E) three floors belong to period VI. Three more floors appeared below, which must be referred to period VII because of the lack of painted pottery and

of the black-burnished one. The deepest floor showed one rectangular house built with mud-bricks (fig. 20). Classes of pottery which in the period VI are not so common (chaff-face ware, red-slipped ware, cooking-pot wares) are conspicuous in period VII. The use of some sort of potter's wheel must be admitted. The bowls with inside-sloping rim are usually string-cut and frequently bear cord or finger-nail impressions.

Red-slipped ware, burnished or not, includes typical high-collared small jars and pots with modeled rims known in the Amuq F and which are widely diffused in the Uruk-Gawran complex; on the other hand, unusual forms of pedestalled vessels with fluting decoration occur (fig. 21).

The discovery of a bone pin (fig. 22) characteristically shaped like the ones from the Amuq. (R. J. and L. Braidwood, *Excavations in the Plain of Antioch*), cit., p. 256-57, fig. 193, 5 and p. 338-39, fig. 256,10) emphasizes the connections with Northern Syria.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

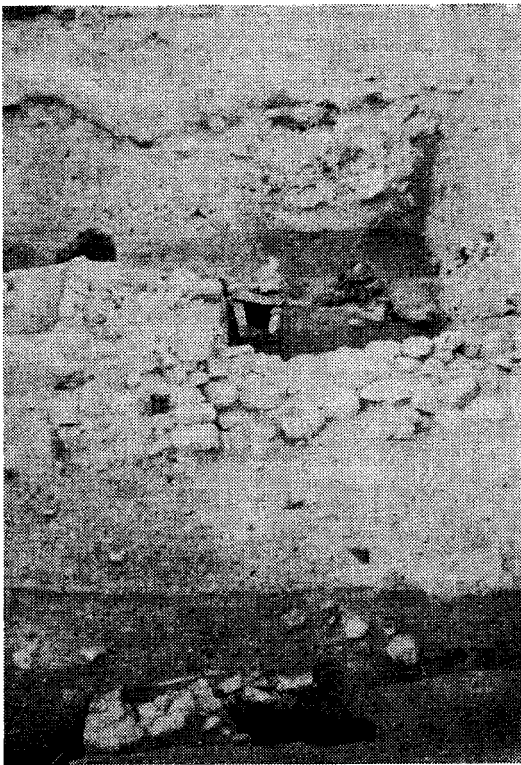


Fig. 3

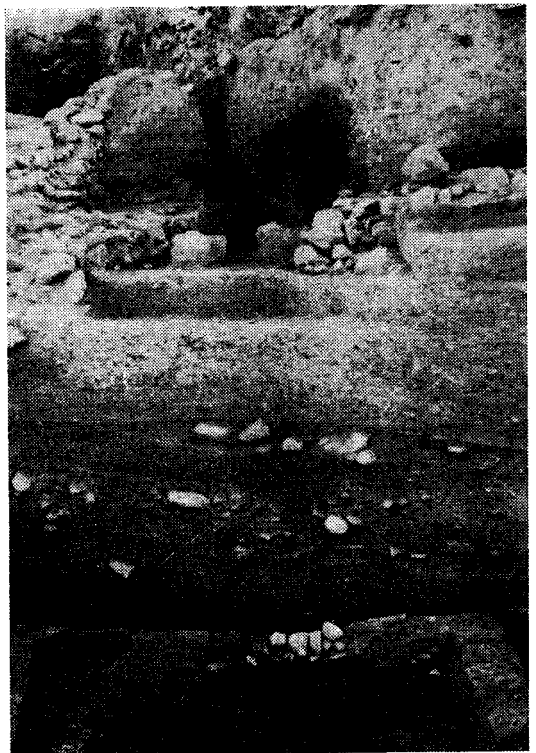


Fig. 4

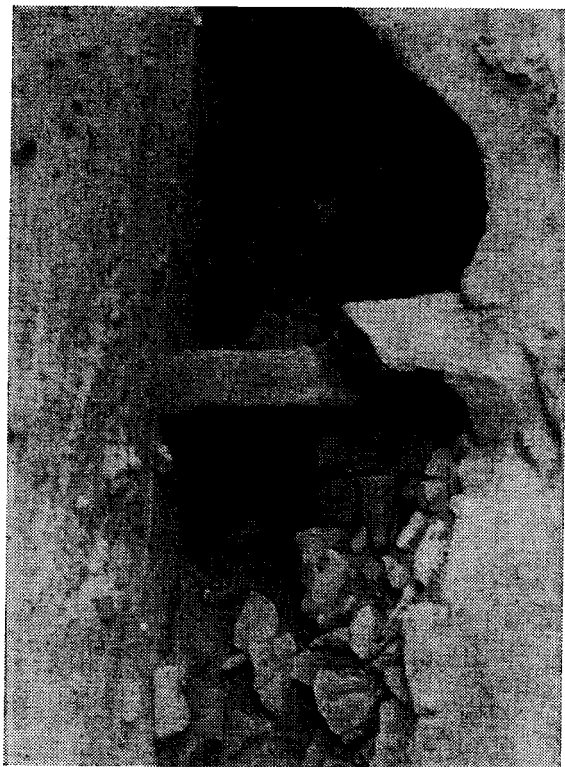


Fig. 5



Fig. 6

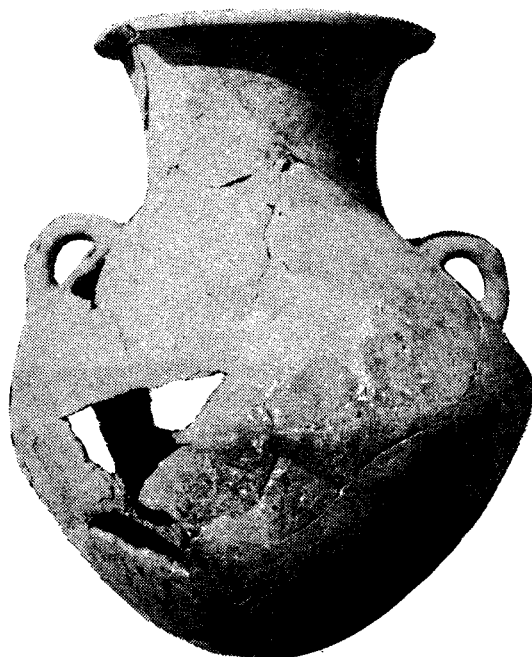


Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11

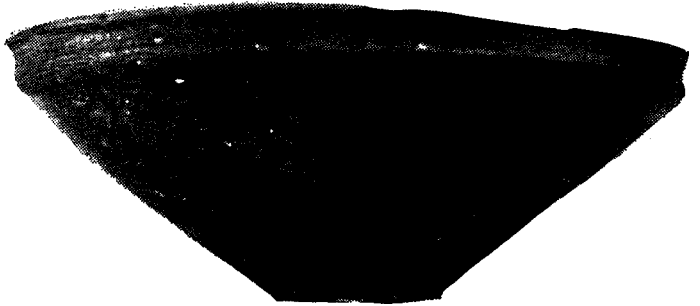


Fig. 12



Fig. 13



Fig. 14

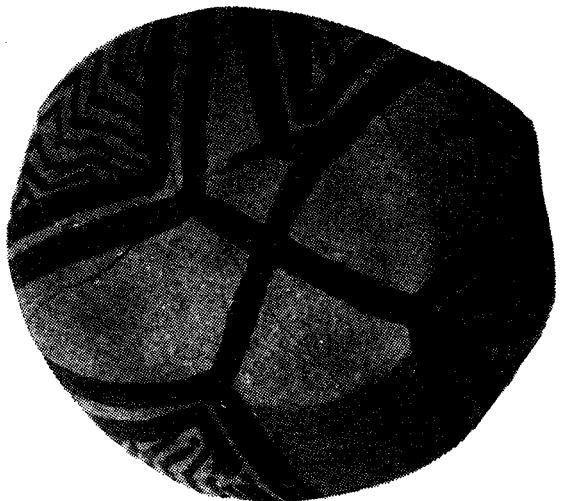


Fig. 15



Fig. 16

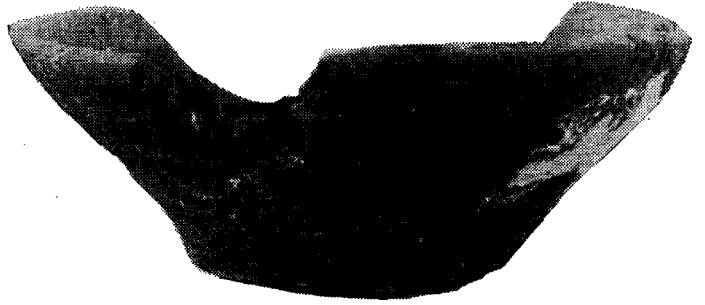


Fig. 17

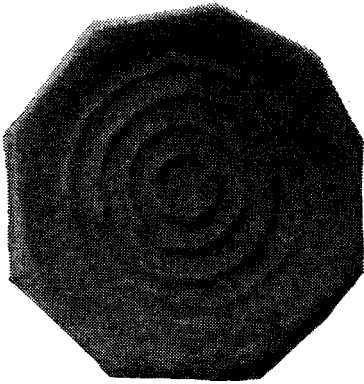


Fig. 18



Fig. 19



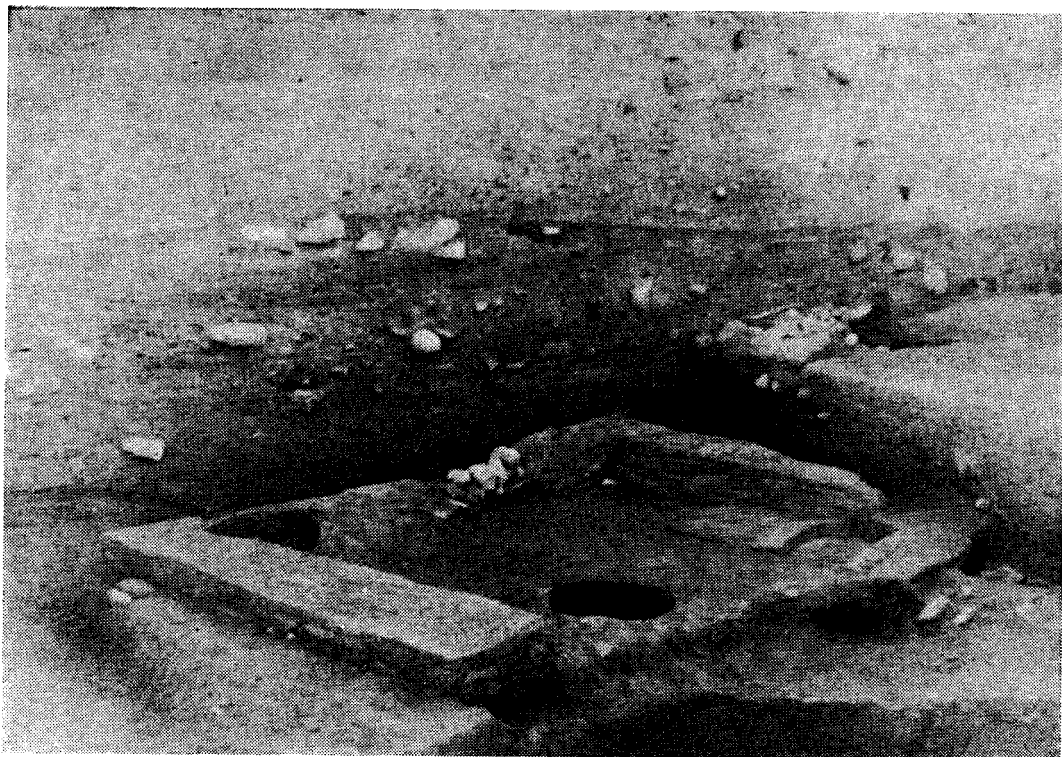


Fig. 20



Fig. 21



Fig. 22

