SECOND PRELIMINARY REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS IN THE VICINITY OF ANTIOCH - ON - THE - ORONTES (*)

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Our archeological activities during the summer of 1964 in the monastery St. Barlaam on the southern slope of Mount Gassios were confined to the northwest section of the monastic enclosure. 1 The area designated for excavation was 14x13 m. Our primary purpose was to examine the partly visible walls of the enclosure, to measure its foundations, as well as to determine the purpose of the compartments comprised in the section.

The clearing of the northern area of the outer wall of the enclosure (phot. 1) revealed that this section of masonry eleven m in length was a relatively recent structure and had evidently been used for the purpose of fortification in the same manner as in the southern section of the basilica. The original wall on the other hand was directed at a right angle toward the interior of the monastic enclosure leading toward the north (11. 65 m). Furthermore, it became apparent that point A (fig. 1) originally had been an entrace (1.60 m wide) which had subsequently been closed with a Corinthian column and a wall made of the same masonry as the rest of the adjoining wall. Evidently this had been the northwestern approach to the monastery, which later could have lost its function. It is not impossible that the closure of this entrance was motivated by security reasons. At the northern side of the gate we located a rectangular canal (H. 0.26 m, Br. 0.30 m) through which the rainwater accumulated in the court of the mandra was drained to the outside.

The walls of the enclosure (1.00 to 1.05 m wide) were double faced with a core of rubble in the center. In the inner face the stones were roughly shaped, laid in continuous and equal courses, and covered with revetment, of which now only some traces remain. The masonry of the outer face follows essentially the same rule with occasional exceptions, where large and evenly cut blocks were included. These large bloacks were obviouly reused, mainly from the remains of the wall dating from the end of the Fifth century A. D. A peculiar fact is that instead of mortar as binding material, mud had been used.

The site of the excavation revealed seven small chambers of various sizes connected with each other by means of narrow doors and galleries (fig. 1). These walls are considerably thinner (0.65 to 0.70 m) and poorly preserved, although the masorny is the same, and small unevenly cut stones are predominant.

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I am also gratuful to Dr. Ing. W. A. Hessenmueller who visited the site of excavation and contributed valuable information in regard to the waber supply system.

1. Sec the first preliminary report being publised in «Istanbuler Mitte ilungen», vol 15, 1965.

Theiheight of the remaining walls does not exceed two meters.

From the beginning it became clear that the stonecut, the measure of stone-blocks, and peculiar kind of masonry in this portion of the monastery were the same as in the basilica of Barlaam, which offers us enough evidence to conclude that these structures were built between the Tenth to Eleventh centuries A. D.

The rooms range in size from 5.25 x 4.30 to 2.70x3.00 m; they were connected by narrow doorways and galleries. Door sockets were found in rooms three and five. In view of the poor quality of the masonry and some metal clamps found in the debris, one can assume that the roofing of these rooms was of wood. The floor of these chambers (except No. 6 and 4) were finished with a reddish plaster of which only small traces remain. The masonry of the rooms No. one, three, five, and six was erected an the walls of the preceding structures, which in some cases are clearly visible at floor level. These walls, which may date from the first period, i. e. the end of the Fifth century A. D., are distinguished by the use of large evenly cut limestones laid in continuous and equal courses and held together by mortar.

The specific character of this construction indicates that there are two main structural periods to be distinguished. The first belongs to the end of the Fifth century, and the second to the end of the Tenth century. In the Eleven to Thirteenth century some minor structural changes could have taken place, although it is impossible to pursue and clearly establish a chronological sequence.

The findings consisted almost exclusively of glazed pottery and above all of large storage jars distributed in the compartments numbered three, four, and five. The compartments three and four conatined jars embedded in the floor (18-27 cm), however, not a single one was intact. The diameter of the bottom of the jars varies from 0.09 to 0.13 m; The diameter of the rims from 0.30 to 0.45 m. In the above mentioned compartements terra-cotta lids with circular handles were found. These fitted tightly to the rims of the jars. Since there were no other findings, from which one could determine the nature of these chambers, we may safely assume that they were storage rooms.

The fagments of glazed pottery display extremely rich and manifold geometric designs. Through tecnique and execution this glazed were is closely related to the pottery excavated in Al Mina near Celeucia Pieria by Sir Leonard Woolley[1] and by the Princeton Expedition near Antioch,[2] and those which were found in the previous season by our expedition during the process of excavation of compartments in the southern side of the *atrium* in the Mandra of St. Symeon in the Miraculous Mountain. The earthenware was obviously a local production and belongs to the thirteenth century.

Room No. 3 revealed two fragments of soft limestone one of them a columnette (H. 0.09 m, Diam. 0.10 m) decorated with a typical Georgian interlace closely related to similar findings in St. Barlaam and the adjacent mortuary chamber. It is certain that this material was imported. These fragments confirm the literary sources which mention that in the tenth to eleventh centuries the monastery was dominated by Georgian monks.

The findings include two fragments of a Doric frieze executed in very finegrained limestone (lithographic limestone), re-used in the main enclosure near *A* and in the eastern wall of room No. 3. The remaining triglyphs reveal accurate

(1) K. A. Lane, **Medieval Finds at Al Mina in North Syria,** Oxford, 1938, p. 19 ff.

(2) F. O. Waage, in**Antioch on-the-Orontes,** 1, 73, pl. XVI.

workmanship, the space for metopes are left plain (phot. 2, fig. 2).

«These findings, along with a drum of an Ionic shaft, excavated in the previous season, *offer dependable evidence that on Mount Kasios a temple was located,* where subsequently the monastery of St. Barlaam was built.» The badly damaged Corinthian capital (phot. 3) of white marble (1.00x1.10), re-used in the northern end of the western wall to close the entrance is another important finding. Its striking resemblance to the capitals of Daphne[1] and its stylistic and formal characteristics would justify dating it in the Second century A. D. Lamps, a few of which were glazed, were found in all compartments and they strikingly resemble the specimens excavated in the vicinity of Antioch[2]. Their forms, and above all their crude crafmanship indicate that they belong to the end of the thirteenth century.

The Mandra of St. Symeon Stylite the Younger on the Mirasulous Mountain

From july 19 to 25th our inquiries were directed twoard the southe westerm part of the octagon which is comprised of four main elements : 1. three thrones, directed toward the interior of the octagon; 2. a niche, enclosing a semicircular pond; 3. a cistern, and 4. a small irregular chamber above the cistern. All these components are cut from living rock, except theupper part of the irregularly shaped compartment (4.00x2.20 m) located about 3.60 m above the floor of the octagon (phot. 4.) Its lower part at the level of ca. 1.00 to 1.40 m in height is also cut out of natural rock and has only one access (0.95 m wide) from the western end of the southern aisle of the basilica, which is dedicated to the Trinity. Its remaining walls do not exceed 1.55 m in height.

No remains were found which could clarify the specific purpose of this compartment, except a large cistern of elliptical shape cut into the northwestern part of its floor. There also the neck of the cylindrical cistern was uncovered. Two large fragments of stone, also found in this chamber, could have served as the cover to the cistern. As stated above, the cistern is of elliptical shape, but not without irregularities. We did not clean the cistern entirely, but relying on its shape, we may assume that it could be 6.60 m deep (fig. 3). the neck of the cistern is 0.70 m wide, and its diameter reaches its apogee at 4.40 m. It is of importance to note that on the western side toward the niche into the interior of the cistern at a depth of two meters a smaller compartment had been cut in shape of a circular segment. This compartment had an outlet in its lower level piping the water into a basin cut into the niche behind the three thrones.

In regard to the purpose of this cistern and circumstances in which it had been cut, we are well infromed by the vita of S. Symeon the Younger. In chapter 100[1], among other important events, we are told that this was the fist cistern cut by masons on the advise by St. Symeon himself. The water reservior served as drinking water (during the period of construction) for the masons and resident monks (35 in number according to the biographer) as well as for cooking purposes. Since at the time of the construction of the cistern St. Symeon had not yet ascended to his column, it will be safe to assume that the cistern was constructed between 541 and 551.

The small basin found in almost semicircular shpe is situated in the conche

(1) R. Stillwell in **Antioch-on-Orontes,** III, p. 153 ff. pl. 30, No. 38; also DnN. Wilber, **Antioch-onthe-Orontes,** II, p. 91 ff.

(2) F. O. Waage, **Antioch-on-the-Orontes,** III, p. 68 (type 58).

(1) P. Van den Ven, **La vie ancienne de S. Syméon Stylite le Jeune,** S. H. No. 32, I, Bruxelles, 1962, p. 77.

behind the three chairs. It contianed the holy water, which played an important role in the numerous and manifold miracles performed by St. Symeon. This small pool is constructed in such a fashion that it could have been constantly nourished by the pocket cistern cut in the western side of the large cistern phot 5).

That the semicircular compartment located just behind the thrones, was originally planned, (fig. 4) and that it was used as a basin constantly containing water, is beyond doubt. This is confirmed not only by the *vita* of St. Symeon and the *vita* of his mother, St. Martha, but also through structural features of the southeastern part of the octagon. In addition, on the western side on the floor of the basin we located a drain 8 cm in diameter. It moves under the western throne into the narrow canal cut into the surface of the octagon, and finally, 0.95 m away from the southern side of the base of St. Symeon's column, it enters into another canal, which crosses the southern side of the octagon toward the rectangular cistern (7.00x7.00x8.00 m) located in the western section of St. Symeon's mandra. Our sondage revealed also a solid structure of large dimensions, siuated 40 m north of the northern gate of the mandra. The nature of the structure is not clear, but since its two compartments contain a small cistern builit into the thick wall (1.30 m) they could have served as quarters for pilgrims. This section (which at the end of the season was covered with earth) will be the subject matter of subsequent research.

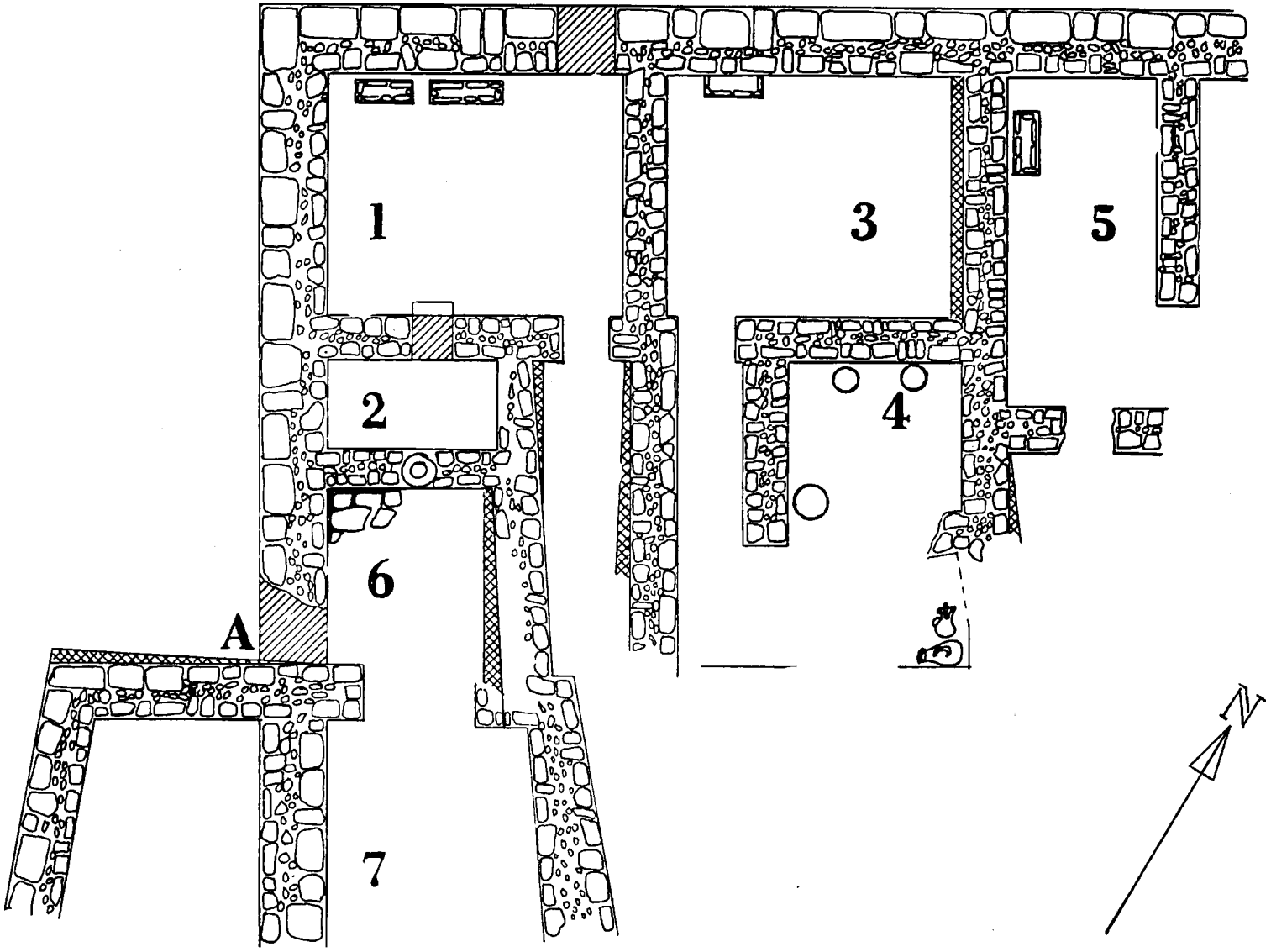
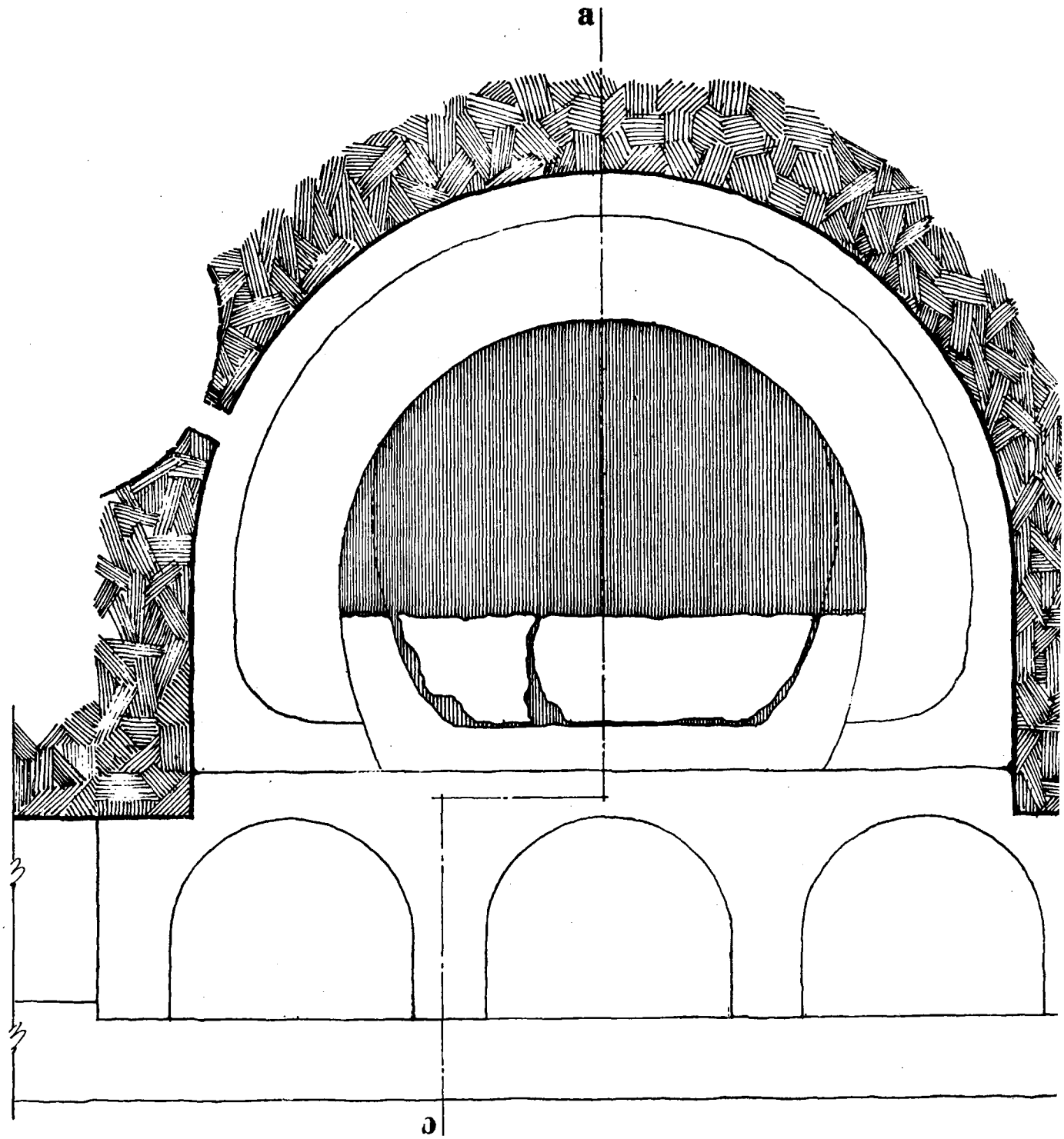
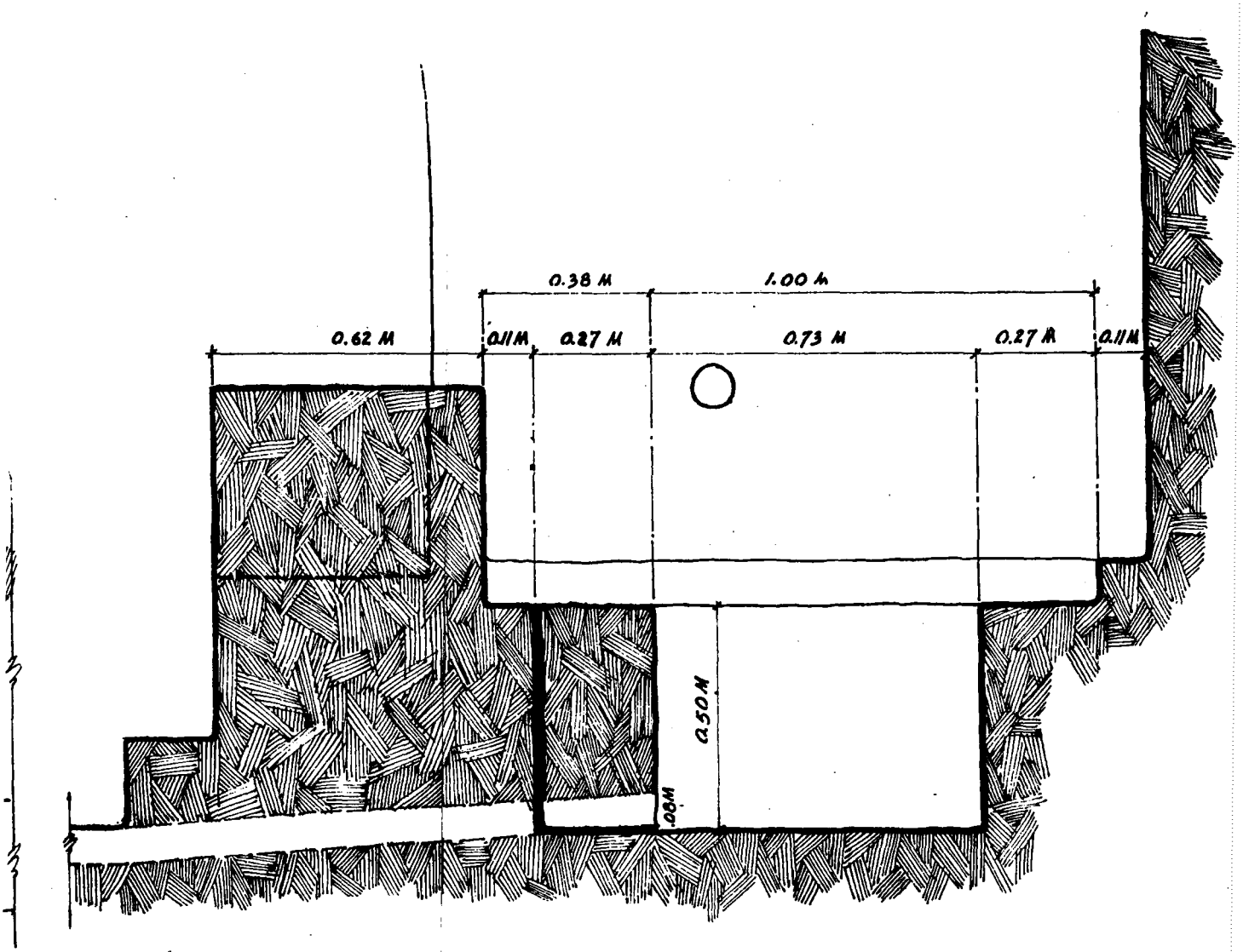


Fig. 1.



plan



section a-b

1 METER

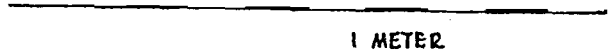


Fig. 2.

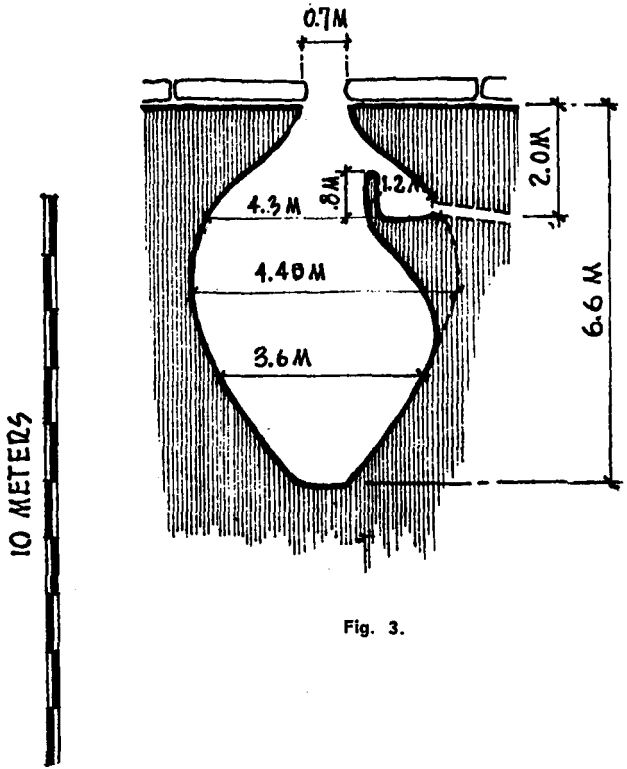
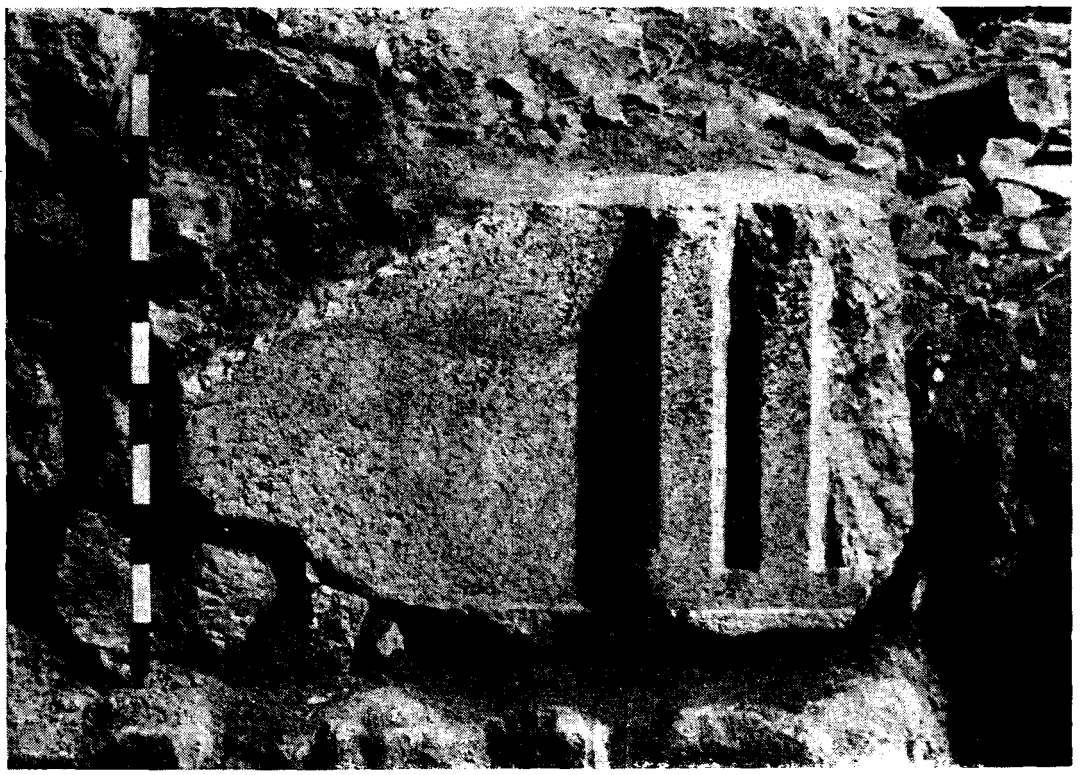


Fig. 3.

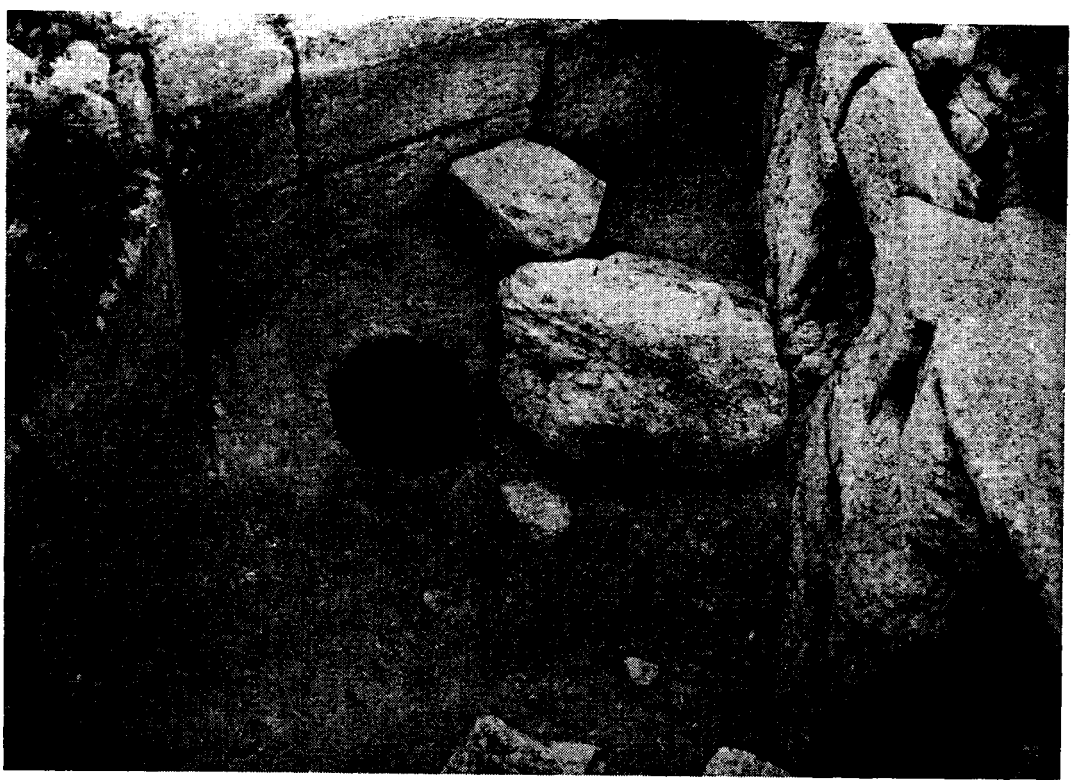
1.25 M
0.335 M
0.75 M
12cm
2 CM
3.1CM
9 CM
9 CM
4 cm

Phot. : 1



Phot. : 2

Phot. : 3



Phot. : 4

Phot. : 5