

## EXCAVATIONS AT KARATAŞ - SEMAYÜK 1968

Prof. MACHTELD J. MELLINK

The Bryn Mawr College expedition to Karataş in the plain of Elmalı completed its 6th season in the fall of 1968. The main results of this season are :

I. Excavation of large part of the Early Bronze Age cemetery in Trench 98, where in 1967 about forty surface markers, consisting of circular walls of field stones, c. 1 - 6.50 m. in diameter, had been excavated. The clearance of the pithos burials under these circles established the complete burial pattern for third millennium tombs in the plain of Elmalı. The burial (and additional burials) were put in large jars (fig. 1), set aslant in bedrock or subsoil. The tomb was closed with a stone slab, a large jar fragment, or a complete basin or bowl and covered with a number of smaller stones. At ancient surface level, about 25 - 75 cm. above the rim of the jar, a circular stone wall was built to mark the location of the tomb. The entrance to the rim was about in the middle of the circle. In some instances, retaining walls of field stones were built on the necks of the burial jars (fig. 2) to allow part of the circle fill to remain in place when the tomb was reopened.

About 110 burials were excavated in trench 98. The tombs of children sometime had circles, but often were just set at a shallow level among the more important circle burials. One of the smaller jars used for a child burial again had relief decoration on the shoulder in typical Elmalı fashion: chevron ribbing on the four handles and concentric circles as double medallions between each pair of handles (fig. 3). The tomb gifts were red

polished, white painted pitchers (fig. 4) and jugs of the Early Bronze II period; black and grey jugs, mostly of local fabric; and some black polished incised ware of Pisidian type. Metal tomb gifts included a special type of leaf-shaped razor, two daggers, a macehead, a spindle, many pins and toggle-pins. One child burial had gold and silver beads of tubular disc-shape, like beads from Troy IIg, and gold earstuds resembling those known from Alaca Hüyük, Karayavşan and Koçumbeli.

The largest circle in Trench 98 (fig. 5) contained a rectangular tomb built in the shape of a gabled cover over a türbe of earth. The tomb was reused. It may have been disturbed in antiquity and patched up in modified shape. The skeleton was in secondary position (fig. 6) and the tomb gifts were incomplete (fragments of silver casings, silver rivets, a razor, a gold button, a grey pitcher). In spite of the dearth of finds, this tomb is a good example of special burial customs observed for local chiefs or kings as opposed to pithos graves for commoners.

II. More houses of megaroid plan and of pisé-and-timber construction were excavated in the area to the southeast of the small mound of Karataş. These houses belong to the Early Bronze II period. The level is burnt; in some cases the inventory of wooden houses remains in situ, although the walls have left no traces except a general blanket of ashes over the inventory. A lead stamp-seal with geometric design came from one of these houses.

III. The western zone of Karataş, nicknamed Bağbaşı, yielded fragmentary houses of the beginning of the third millennium B. C. (Early Bronze I, tentatively). Here too wood was extensively used in the architecture, but the Early Bronze I system differed from that of Early Bronze II. Layers of carefully shaped pisé, resembling manufactured kerpiç, were used in conjunction with horizontal logs and mud mortar. One house was built of stacked logs, coated on the outside with mud plaster. Its west wall had fallen into the house and when turned over by us, yielded the pattern of horizontal logs superposed, with the bark still visible in the impressions (fig. 7). Remnants of the east wall footing were left on bedrock. The log-cabin was nearly  $4 \times 4$  m. large.

The pottery of the Early Bronze I period consists principally of grey ware, of simple shapes: straightrimmed jugs, globular jars, small twin jars, one-handled cups. Metal was known at this level.

IV. A few second millennium burials were found on the south slope of the mound at Karataş and in the area of Bağbaşı (figs. 9 - 10). The tombs consist of wheelmade, ribbed pithoi, oriented north rather than east. The tomb gifts are bowls and jars of wheelmade buff ware. Similar second millennium pottery was found in fields of the Bağbaşı area as a residue of otherwise vanished habitation. The houses were probably of timber. The pottery resembles central Anatolian, but also Cilician wares of the developed Middle Bronze Age, perhaps indicating Lycian contacts with the south-east coast of Anatolia.

The study of the archaeological material and of the anthropological evidence is continuing. Dr. J. Lawrence Angel will analyze the greatly increased series of Early Bronze Age skeletons from Karataş in the study campaign planned for 1969. Some supplementary digging is planned for the mound and the Bağbaşı area.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

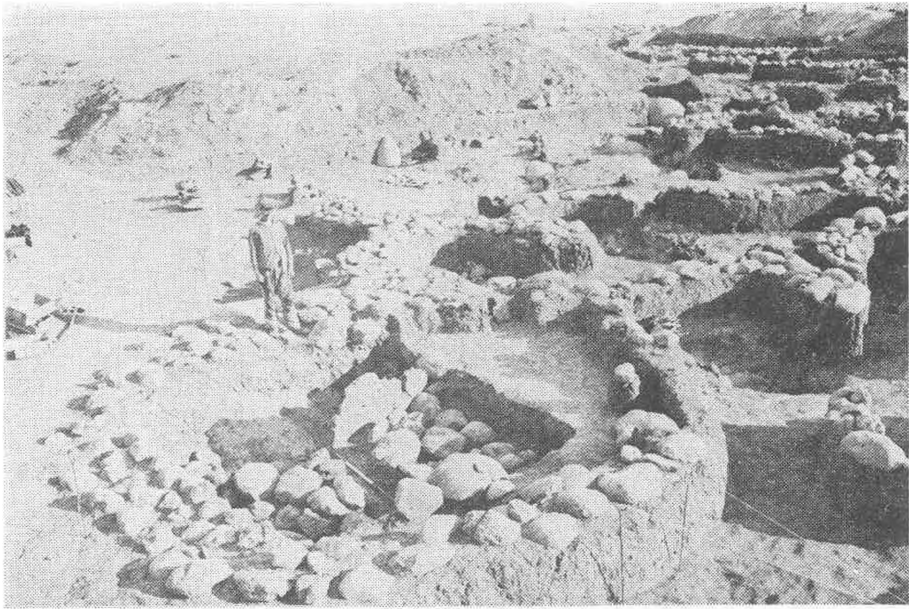


Fig. 5

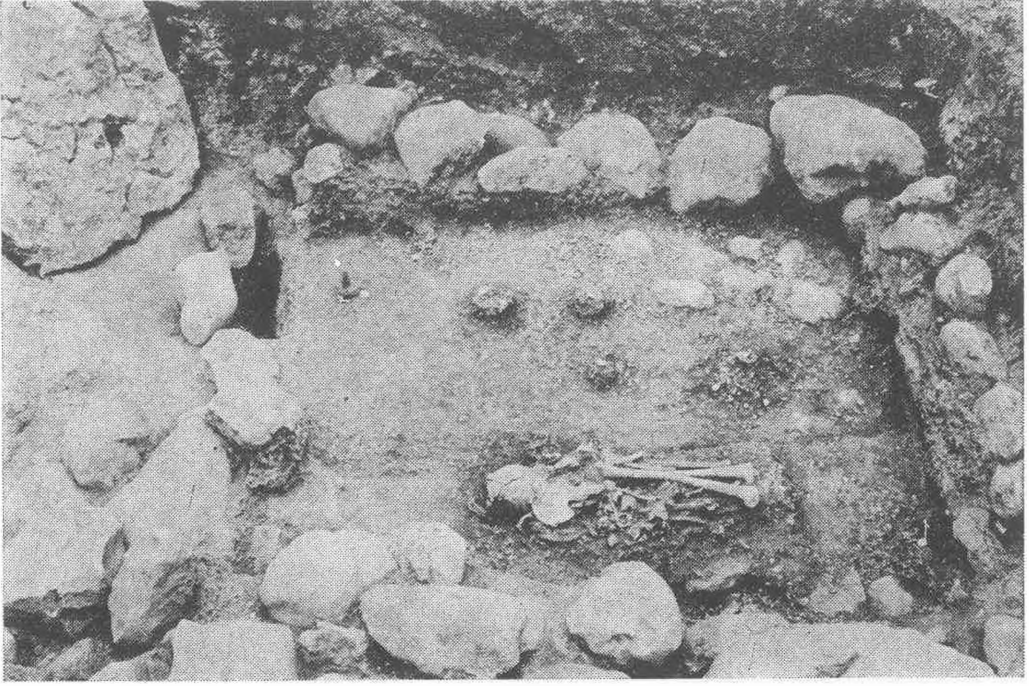


Fig. 6

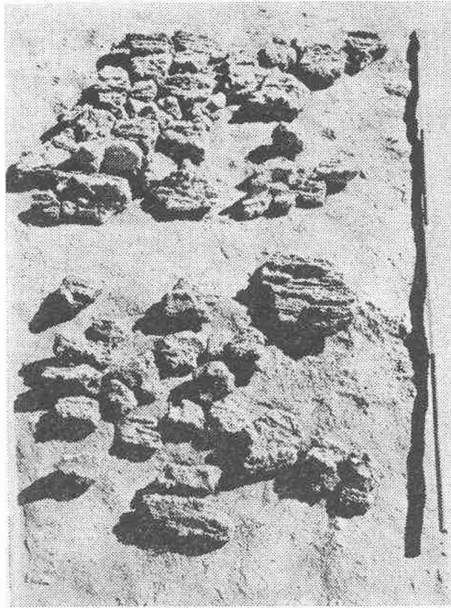


Fig. 7

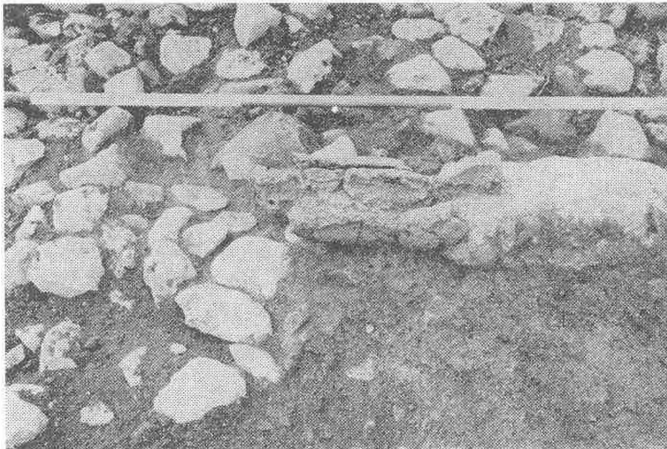


Fig. 8



Fig. 9

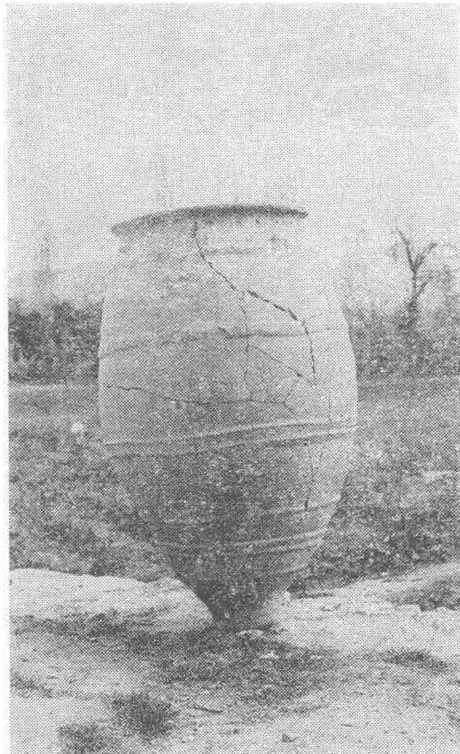


Fig. 10