

TOPAKLI

1973 FIELD EXPEDITION EXCAVATION

Prof. LUIGI POLACCO

The 1973 Field Expedition Dig¹ to the Topaklı höyükin Turkey, started on July 20th and ended on September 10th².

Our Mission was composed as follows : Prof. Luigi Polacco Head of Mission, Dott. Maria Trojani, Excavations Assistant, Dott. Architect Aldo Petronelli Survey Specialist, Mr. Giuseppe Penello Draughtsman and Restoration Expert.

¹ *Topaklı 1967 kazısı* in Türk Ark.Derg. "XVI 1967, p. 177 ff.; *Topaklı. Prima campagna di scavo 1967. Notizia preliminare* in "SMEA" VIII 1969, p. 76 ff.; *Topaklı. Campaign of Excavation 1968* in "Türk Ark. Derg." XVII 1969 p. 165 ff.; *Topaklı Campagna di scavo 1968. Notizia preliminare* in "SMEA" X 1969, p. 54 ff.; *Topaklı. Campagna di scavo 1969. Relazione preliminare* in "SMEA" XIV 1971, p. 7 ff.; *Topaklı. The 1970 Campaign of Excavation* in "Türk Ark. Derg." XIX 1970 (1972), p. 187 ff.; *Topaklı. Campagna di scavo 1970. Relazione preliminare* in "SMEA" XIV 1971, p. 27 ff.; *Topaklı. Campagna di scavo 1971. Relazione preliminare* in "Atti Ist. Ven. LLSSAA" CXXXI 1972-1973, p. 85 ff.; *Topaklı. 1971 Field Expedition Dig Preliminary Report* in "Türk Ark. Derg." XX 1973, p. 169 ff.; *Topaklı. Campagna di scavo 1972. Relazione preliminare* in "Atti Ist. Ven. SSSLAA" CXXXI 1972-1973, p. 169 ff.; Reports published in "SMEA" and now in the "Atti Istituto Veneto SSSLAA" from here on will be quoted with abbreviation as follows : *Topaklı 1967* etc.

The enterprise, effected by Padova University Institute of Archaeology under the sponsorship of the "Istituto Veneto di Scienze Lettere ed Arti", is financed by the National Board of Research (C.N.R.).

² These dates indicate the beginning and the conclusion of actual excavation, they do not include time spent in travelling or other duties of the Mission. This applies also to the preceeding reports.

Mrs. Nihal Koloğlu of the National Ethnographic Museum of Ankara acted as Inspector for the Turkish Government³.

Digging at Levels V-ZZ on the Startum Levels Trench (SLT), (Plates I-III; figs. 1-2)

Excavation work began this year at an altitude of -24,40, which was the last level where digging was left off in 1972. The excavation site was in the form of an L; the Southern portion (in relation to the long buttress wall of S level) had, in fact, been left as it was by us at S level, in order that the powerful hewn-stone skirting of the fortified enclosure at that level should remain in clear chronological evidence⁴.

As stated in the past, and as can be seen from Plate III, down to an altitude of -27,24 which comprises the whole of X level, we continued to encounter slanting stratas of the S embankment, an obvious sign of the extensive influence that this level represented in the general morphology of the höyük. On the other hand, the stratum that are related to other

³ The limitation of the numbers of members taking part in the Mission was caused by an unexpected and drastic reduction of funds on the part of the funding Institution. It seems superfluous to have regrets on this account but all the same, we sincerely hope that the reasons for this reduction are merely contingent and of a temporary nature.

⁴ *Topaklı 1972*, pp. 176, 179, fig. 14.

levels, are all more limited in their material consistency⁵.

The large rock that came to the surface at an altitude of -24,40; to be exact, on the spot where digging had been concluded in 1972⁶, soon proved, when work began, to be related to other similar stones that were unearthed in a piece of ground little more than half a metre thick. This structure appears to be some sort of fortified defence, in view of the imposing nature of the blocks that comprise its facing towards the valley - beyond it, there was such a heavy mass of packed rubble that it was quite impossible to trace its conclusion towards the hills. In this case, the structure seems to assume the form of a salient. The limited space available in which digging was carried out did not - in fact - allow us to uncover the inner facing and prevented us from establishing whether this represented a door, or a tower, or even the simple jutting out of the defensive enclosure. One thing is certain however, that it is an imposing piece of work; the rubble filling that we were able to discover has a thickness of 3,70 metres, and therefore in its entire width the enclosure wall could not have been less than five metres. If anything, it must be noted that unlike the defensive works of the higher levels, the base skirting in stone masonry is here limited to one or two courses; furthermore, how is it that the layer of earth over it, made up of large masses of crumbled *kerpiç*, did not appear to be of a more consistent nature?

The next level - W; about one metre thick, is represented by a rather compact stone casting. It does not present a well defined architectural form, however, this

⁵ We wish to point out (*Topaklı 1970*, p. 33 note 5) that we use the terms *level* and *stratum* with quite distinct significance. By level we mean an exact architectural moment : stratum signifies any variation of the ground.

⁶ *Topaklı 1972*, Plate II b.

must be the proof that it is either the ruin of a building placed under the enclosure wall V or else it was a sturdy pavement. Furthermore, the earth is distinctly of a different quality from the preceding portion, darker and richer, lying in several stratas with many traces of ashes and burnt bones : we even found here a common kitchen jug, practically intact. For all these reasons we consider that here we may indentify a new level - in fact, level W.

Between altitudes -26.00 and -28.75 approximately, by means of our spade-work, we were able to establish two different stratifications, to the East and to the West. The Eastern portion was distinguished by the presence of a large wall, situated in the usual NNE-SSW position (fig. 4). It appeared to be in a good state of conservation; but of course, this applies to the lower, stone masonry part. The building technique is, in fact, the usual one : hollow facing walls packed with rubble, the facings made up of large blocks, some even of unusual proportions (1 × 0,50 meters), placed in an upright standing position (therefore obviously foundations), whilst the inner space is packed full of rubble, crushed stone and mud. The bottom stratum, above all, is of stone chips that even extend under the outer facings in order to constitute a preparatory basis for the actual foundations. Thus the wall structure brought to light has a width of approximately two metres and is well preserved up to a height of about 1 metre 60. We were also able to verify the inner composition of the wall because in order to give the excavation site a guaranteed safety space and we were not able to dig further towards the East owing to the presence of a modern cart track and orchards, we deemed it indispensable to sacrifice the North portion of this wall. However, the South part has remained intact; furthermore, the East facing of the North portion has been left firmly embedded in the face of our SLT as evidence.

In the Western portion of our excavation site, between the same altitude of -26,00 and -28,60 some little walls were uncovered, their dimensions smaller in relation to the former one, and at different altitudes in respect to each other. These, with the exception of one : (Y3), do not appear in the plan shown on Plate I. Their dimensions and structures : *e* type⁷, reveal that they belong to the town dwelling architectural types. One of them is situated in a slanting NE-SW position and has survived for about a length of two metres at an altitude of approximately -27,09⁸; two more instead, are placed in a parallel East-West position at about an altitude of -27,60; on the other hand, the fourth, Y3, mentioned above, is unlike the preceding ones owing to the fact that it is limited in width to a single string course of stone without the usual hollow double walls packed with rubble filling; moreover it is of exposed masonry on the Western facing with the evident purpose of supporting a fill on the opposite side. This runs about parallel to the great Y enclosure wall, concerning which it most probably signifies the support for a sentry-walk similar to the one that was discovered at R level⁹.

The difference in stratification of the ground, in relation to the different altitudes of the above smaller walls leads us to the assumption that, within this great phase that we shall call Y, corresponding to the mighty enclosure wall (between altitudes -26,15 and -28,75 approximately) there have been some subphases in which the one corresponding to Yb, namely the smaller wall of the sentry-walk, was originally contemporary to the great enclosure wall, the one corresponding to Ya with the two small parallel walls : Y1 and Y2, should be placed as belonging to a period

in which the great enclosure wall was still extant, but not the small Y3 wall, which is situated under Y1 and Y2. Besides which, the phase corresponding to the small wall situated at an altitude of -27,09, is certainly subsequent both to Y1-Y2 and Y3 and represents a level of its own which we shall call X¹⁰.

Hence, in the Western portion, at an altitude of -28,60 a paved space of careful workmanship appeared, made up of large flat flag-stones (figs. 1-2) which are of considerable dimensions (one of the stones measures 1,00 × 0,60 metres).

Owing to reasons of altitude and stratigraphy, this architectural element (Plates II-III) cannot have been in relation to the great wall of Y. Consequently it must represent a new level, Z. Paving of this sort, which brings to mind similar Hittite levels¹¹, implies some great construction of which it represents the starting point or access. Due to the limited space of the area excavated, obviously we were not in a position to state whether we were within, or, more possibly, outside of a corresponding walled enclosure¹².

Beneath altitude -28,60, digging, as already mentioned, was reduced to an experimental trench of 3,70 × 2,00 metres including the tract that had been acquired by the demolition of the Northern portion of the great Y wall. At this point, the ground was beginning to be very slimy indeed and it was a great effort to carry out our spadework. Stratas here were in a

¹⁰ In a sequence that constantly denotes the qualifying presence of a fortified enclosure wall, this level without such a wall, probably signifies a temporary transitional phase.

¹¹ Even though a paving does not offer a dating criterium in an absolute sense, nevertheless, we see, for example, the differences in the pavings at Boğazkale (K. Bittel - R. Naumann, *Boğazköy-Hattusa*, Stuttgart 1952, Beil. 6-9 (Phrygian), 12-13 (XIII-XIV cent.), 10-11 (XVI-XIX cent.); other similar comparisons, I believe, can be made at Kültepe, Alişar etc.

¹² Space, in fact, would be lacking towards the East for the ruins of an enclosure wall which would have had to be suitably imposing.

⁷ *Topaklı* 1970, p. 28.

⁸ We wish to specify that the masonry structures, unless expressly stated are measured in altitude at their base.

⁹ *Topaklı* 1971, Plate II b.

horizontal position, slightly inclined downwards in an Eastern direction; spots of crumbled kerpîc alternated with stratas of ashes.

It is evident that we were now digging at a level underneath Z, for the difference of altitude in respect to the forementioned paving of Z, and, in fact, for the clearcut difference of the ground quality under the altitude of the paving which can also be visibly read on our SLT walls.

But right under the level of the great pavement, in a pit of approximately circular shape, of yellowish earth (was the pit, perhaps, lined with *kerpîc*?); at about 0,80 metres deep and about 0,60 metres wide (Plate III), we found a complete skeleton in a crouching attitude, leaning on its left hand side (fig. 5). The head and chest seemed to be resting on two stones; the right arm gathered to the chest and the left arm has slipped down under the legs. It appears to be the body of a male adult; the bones show a strange reddish colour. Logically this burial must still be referred to level Z. Unfortunately the bones are in a very bad state of conservation, practically reduced to a pulp in the slimy mud; Notwithstanding our specially careful work and the observance of certain scientific precautions (a gradual exposure to the air, an extremely slow isolation and withdrawal), the salvage has proved rather disappointing. We are confident, however, that what we have been able to lift out will represent enough material to guarantee an anthropological reading.

At an altitude of -29,60, there began to appear, already completely immersed in a slushy slime, two small parallel wall structures (figs. 2, 6; ZZ1 and ZZ2 in Plate I). Amongst the litter of scattered stones belonging to the Southern structure, at an altitude of approximately -29,75, we discovered a human skull and, at a short distance nearby, the related skeleton without, however, the legs. This body was placed in a supine position

lying in a North South attitude, the arms gathered against the chest. No signs whatever were to be seen of an intentional burial rite; everything here leads us to suppose that death was due to the collapse of some construction - the small South wall was, in fact, all disjointed and leaning heavily in a SSW direction. The bones of this skeleton are slighter than the other body: possibly, either a woman or a youth. We are unable to explain why the legs are missing. Unless they should be lying detached (as in the case of the head, from the rest of the body), at a far deeper altitude where, owing to the presence of the water-bearing stratum, we cannot proceed any further.

Thus excavation of our SLT - the investigation of Topaklı höyük's stratification - which had been initiated in 1967 with the first find of some Byzantine tombs, now draws to a close with the discovery of skeletons which we can at least classify as Hittite; a succession of deaths that have all the appearance of a continuous chain of life within the span of two thousand or more years of history.

Finds

Between the altitudes of -24,40 and -27,75, we continued to find many fragments of typical Phrygian ceramic-ware; these finds, however, were circumscribed to the inclined stratas of the embankment at level S (Plate III; fig. 7). The disappearance of the typical Phrygian pottery had already been noted from level U last year¹³.

Side by side with a shiny red glazed ceramic (figs. 8-9-11) (- basins with keel-shaped bottoms and angular handles, long lipped jugs, clearly of Hittite make) there now appeared a type of ware sometimes of fine paste, at others coarser with incised decoration. Most of the latter type are impressed with horizontal and vertical stripes or bands with herring-bone impressions or oblique dashes; but more

¹³ Topaklı 1972, p. 180.

frequently we have a series of brief and superficial lines applied vertically without, however, any apparent rhyme or reason on the lower part of the vessel.

Finds of this class of ware constantly remained with us in our progress throughout level Z (figs. 13-14). Besides this, we saw an increase of a type of painted pottery that we had attributed as proto-Phrygian¹⁴, but which, in reality, appears to have a typological and chronological extension that goes beyond a mere phenomenon of transition. These are vases of medium and large dimensions, prevalently having a light water-resistant finish, decorated in parallel or plaited bands, brown or red, at times wide and sparse, at others slender and narrow (figs. 15-16), or else there were vases of various sizes with complex geometrical patterns, lines wide or narrow, woven together with a certain freedom of style (figs. 17-20). This last type of pottery was present with an even and constant development at all levels examined, from U to ZZ and appears to lead back to where we have the hand-made vessels of the Alişar III type.

At level Y above all, the general picture of the pottery situation seems to be clearly defined, besides the fact that this ware is represented in astounding quantities : a strong presence of the red Hittite pottery - also handmade - many fragments of painted ware carried out in two colours : (red or yellow with red or brown bands) and others with geometrical designs of the forementioned type (some without doubt of Cappadocia make, others in the Alişar III tradition). As to their shapes, we find plates, basins or bowls, trays goblets, cups and bowls with strongly extroverted lips, flat or rounded bottoms or legs just lightly hinted at. The pastes are of various types which run from a more popular coarse ware for kitchen use, to the solid compact red glaze pottery

and on to a monochrome yellow type of delicate workmanship and eggshell consistency (figs. 10-11).

The glazes go from dark red to a shiny leather brown, either light or dark (fig. 12).

At levels Z and ZZ, fragments of hand-made painted vases of the Alişar III class were brought to light (fig. 20); in my opinion, neither these, nor the presence of Cappadocia or Alişar III ceramics - even though made with the turning tool (fig. 19) at level Y, authorize us to make categoric attributions in terms of an absolute chronology. On the other hand, the presence which we observed of a uniform sequence in constant development of a ceramic decorated with geometrical patterns, which, starting out from the typical Alişar III type reaches the Phrygian, gave us the possibility to make a general deduction which, according to my mind, is susceptible of important developments; as to what we call the 'Phrygian' ceramics, perhaps they should not be considered as the explosive and original phenomena that we have always believed - owing, above all to Thracian-Thessalonian ascendancies in the first place, and to Greek influences afterwards; but side by side with these factors and perhaps even before them this geometrically decorated pottery appears to reveal the outcome of a formal language that has far more ancient links with an Anatolian tradition of which it consistently bears the mark¹⁵. In other words, the two terms which we can apply, that for us, in fact, clearly result from the Topaklı series of levels - ZZ-S - namely Alişar III on one hand (but this is not certain, in fact I am of the opinion that the horizon can be extended even

¹⁴ Topaklı 1972, p. 180.

¹⁵ Such a report had already been included by E. AKURGAL in his fundamental work *Phrygische Kunst*, Ankara 1955, p. 25 ff., but it is to T. ÖZGÜÇ (*Demir devrinde Kültepe ve civarı*, Ankara 1971) that we owe the articulation of the phenomenon "Phrygian" within the framework of the Iron Age civilization of Central-Eastern Anatolia.

beyond such as Hacilar or Yümüktepe), Phrygian geometrical on the other, are not to be considered at two opposite points, far apart and indifferent to each other, but rather as being at two poles - or two stages - of one unique and consistent process of development which is the unmistakable structural language of Anatolian geometrical patterns.

The limited space of the site excavated did not give us the good fortune of any spectacular finds in other classes of monuments. Nevertheless, we cannot refrain from reporting the discovery of some significant bronze objects such as a very handsome brooch with large quadrangular-shaped pinhead, a triangular measuring instrument for weights, then, furthermore some stone implements, flints and obsidians of various types; finally, at level Y, the leg of an animal (fig. 21) and the small head of an animal (fig. 22) both wrought in a lovely red glazed terracotta, while, still at the same level, two volcanic stines were found, cut in a life-size dimension, one in the shape of a crouching female body (fig. 23) and the other, the head of a bird (fig. 24).

The collection and intentional conservation of such curious natural phenomena on the part of the ancient inhabitants of the höyük is something that has been noted more than once at the higher levels, and brings to mind the skull-head of an ox (bucrane) found at R. level in the past¹⁶.

Chronology

In terms of absolute chronology, we have a certain point of reference as represented by level S.

A large fragment of a wooden beam which was found in the inner core of the great enclosure wall¹⁷, has been subjected to a radioactive carbon scientific test;

consequently we are able to date it at 520 ± 50 ¹⁸.

Owing to the fact that between levels S and T (as will be remembered¹⁹), a large space of more than four metres and a half was not explored and as, on the other hand, T was the last level to produce typical Phrygian ceramics, consequently T should be dated at the VIII century B.C.²⁰. The V level enclosure wall would then be a part of a small town of the Early Iron Age and the Y level enclosure wall to a Late Bronze Age town. Z and ZZ would then represent Middle Bronze, and, perhaps even Early Bronze. In this case, a clearcut difference in the technological rhythm is most obvious between the levels above and below S. It would be advisable, however, to keep in mind above all, that the further we travel back in time, the slower is the rhythm of transformation and consequently the succession of the times themselves are closer to each other (we must also not forget that "time" is an artificial order of division of the human mind), furthermore, as our digging was carried out on the outskirts of the höyük, some intermediate levels, situated more towards the central core might have escaped our attention. However, in reference to these lower levels, we shall wait to see the outcome of some radioactive carbon analyses.

¹⁸ A scientific analysis of the sample piece (R 956), was carried out at the Geochemical Research Institute of Rome University (Prof. Cortese). Furthermore the wood has been identified as belonging to the *Juniperus* species (by Doctor Follieri of the Rome University Botanical Institute). To both scholars go our hearty thanks for their precious collaboration. The identification of the species of wood is, in fact, susceptible of translation into historical terms, as, by a general alignment of the juniper in the Southern zone of the Anatolian Plateau, we are able to deduce the existence of trade relations between this area and Topaklı, provided that we are not led to assume the existence of a different climate in the central Anatolia of antiquity.

¹⁹ Topaklı 1972, pp. 173, 179.

²⁰ AKURGAL, *Op. cit.*, p. 129.

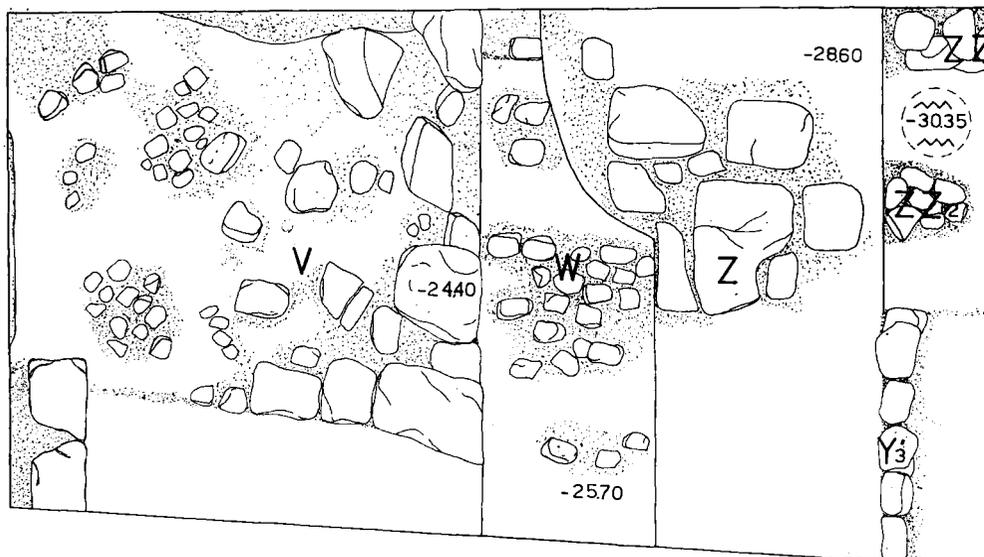
¹⁶ Topaklı 1971, p. 94, fig. 11.

¹⁷ Topaklı 1972, p. 175, fig. 8.

Meanwhile, to conclude, even though this is a temporary report, we shall give a comprehensive schematic picture of the stratigraphy of Tapaklı höyük and the relative Levels Trench scale.

Culture Byzantine Greek-Roman
 Hellenistic Iron Transition L.B. M.Æ.E.B.
 Level A B C - F G - L M - 02 03 - P Q - R
 S ... T U - V W-X-Y Z - ZZ
 Progres = sive No 25 24 23-20 19-16
 15-13b 13a-12 11 - 10 9 ... 8 7 - 6 5-4-3 2-1
 Settlements Cemetery Religious buildings and private dwellings

	Agricultural Quarter	III
	"	" II
	"	" I
7th	Fortified City	(Phrygian 4)
6th	" "	(3)
5th	" "	(2)
4th	" "	(1)
3rd - 2nd	" "	
1st	Fortified	" (Late Empire?)
	Middle and Early Empire	
Age VII-VI	A.D. V-IV	" " III-I " "
I-II	B.C. III	" " IV " " V " " VI " "
VII-VIII	" IX-X	" XI-XVI " XVI...

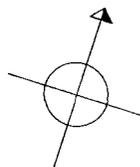


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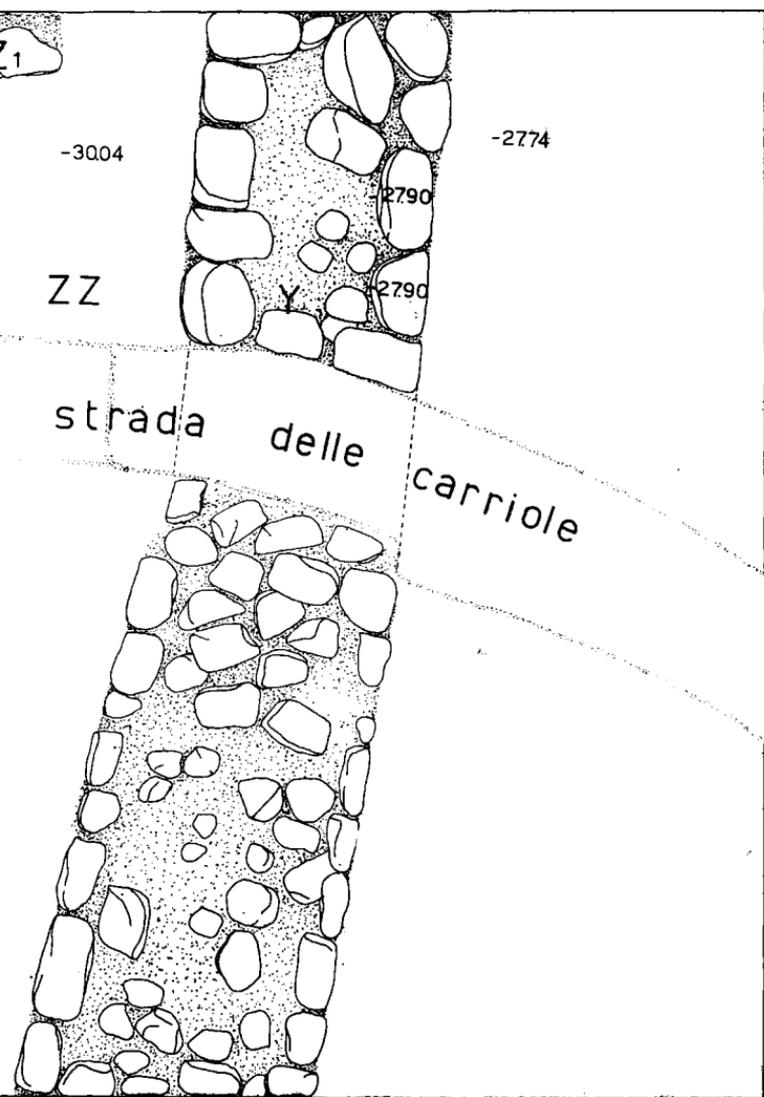
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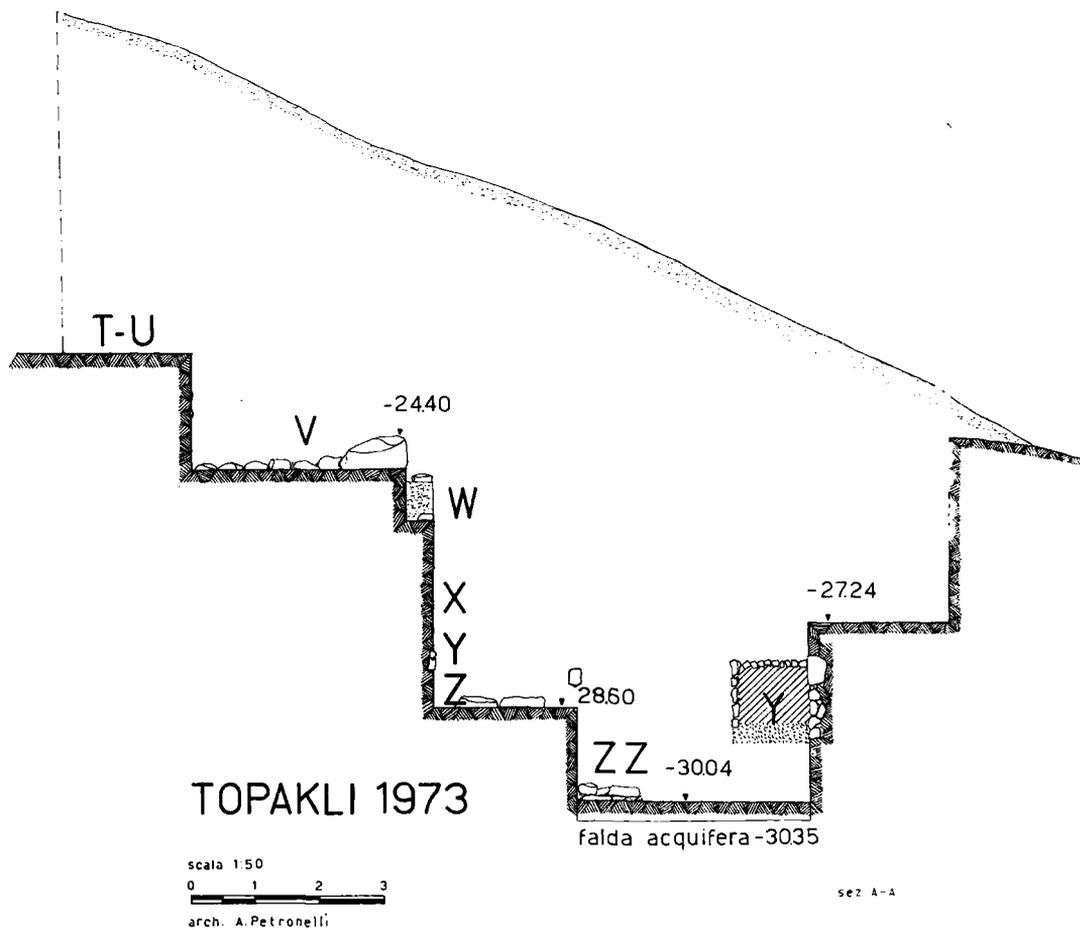


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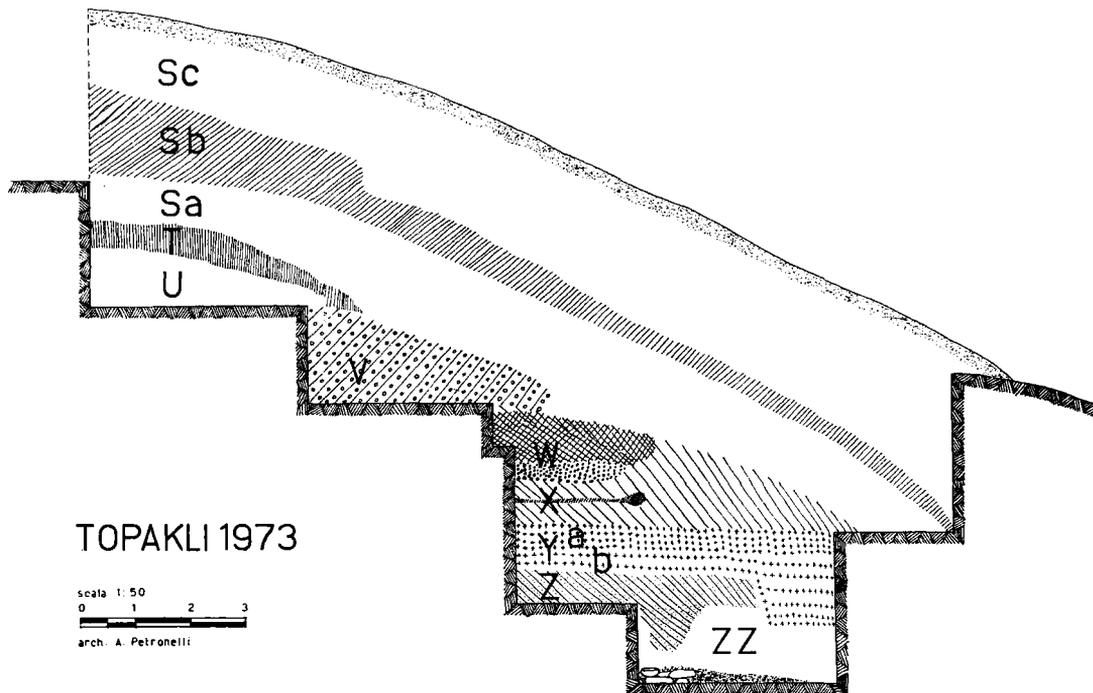


Pl. I





Pl. 2



Pl. 3

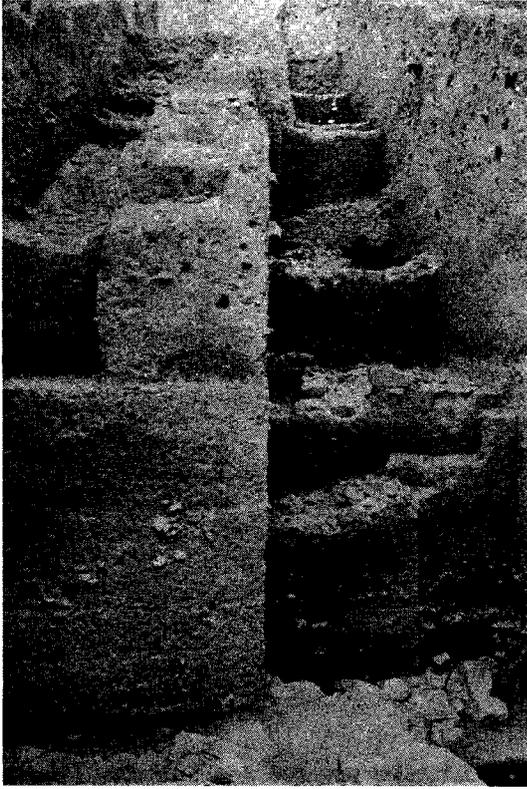


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

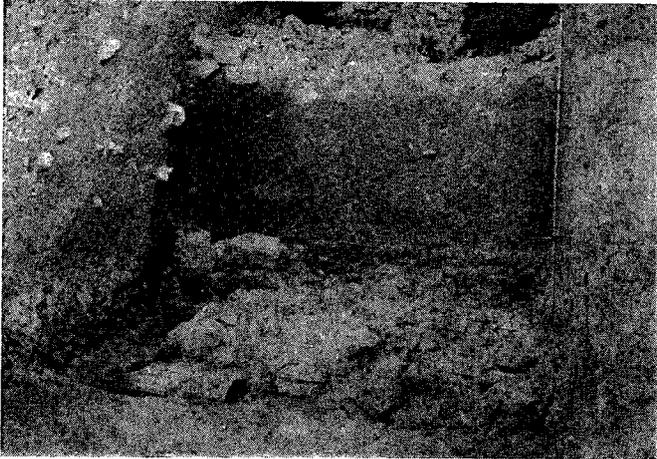


Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

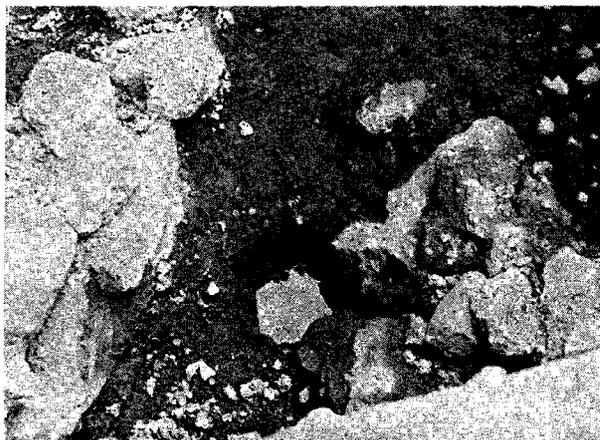


Fig. 6

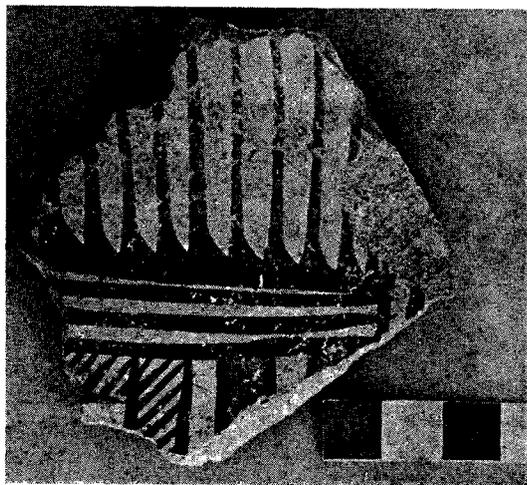


Fig. 7

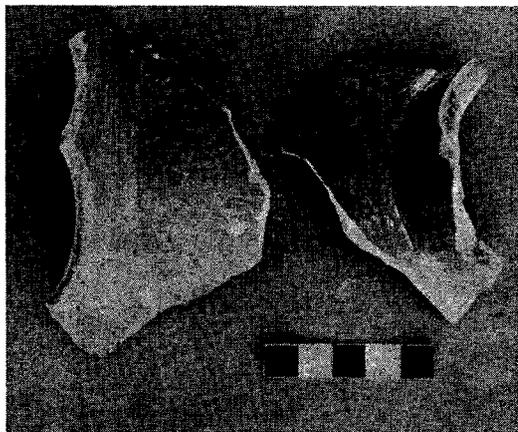


Fig. 8



Fig. 9

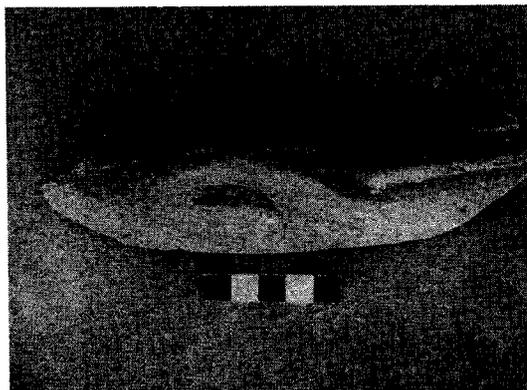


Fig. 10

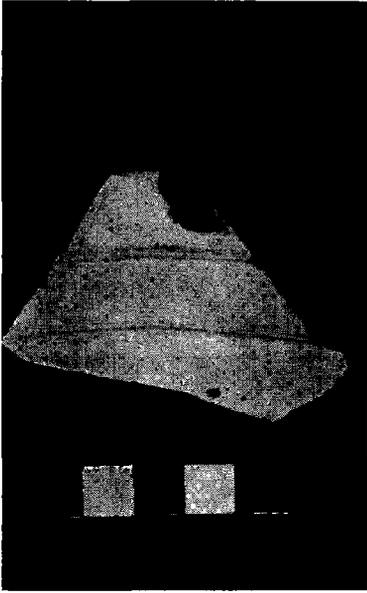


Fig. 11

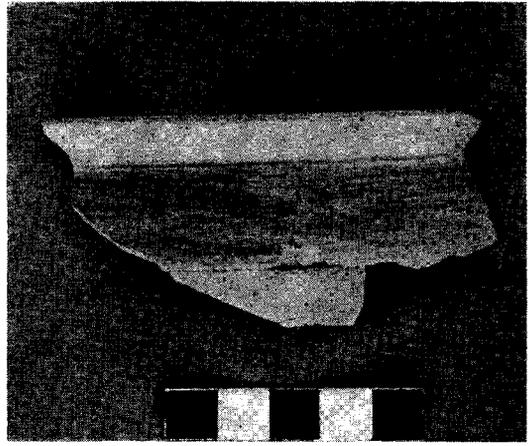


Fig. 12

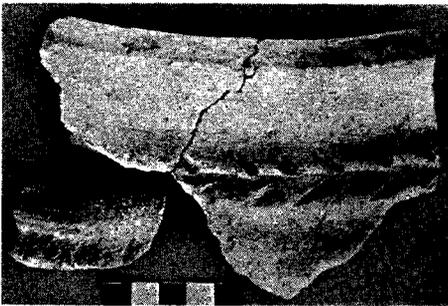


Fig. 13

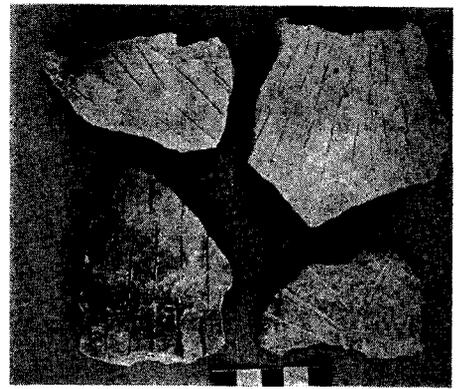


Fig. 14

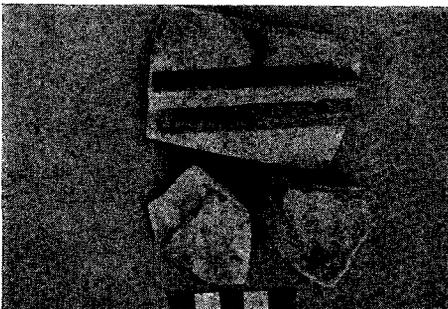


Fig. 15



Fig. 16

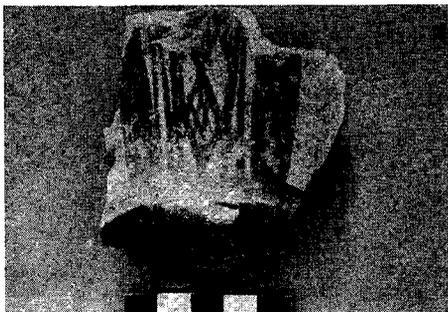


Fig. 17

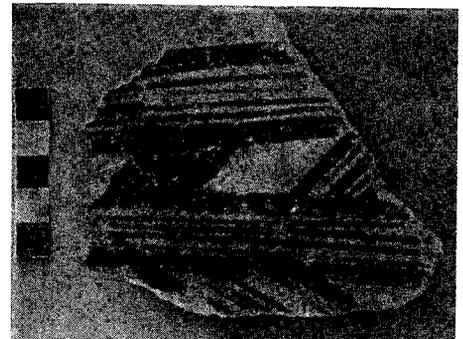


Fig. 18



Fig. 19



Fig. 20

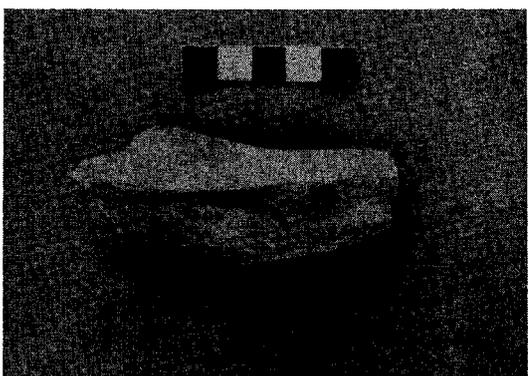


Fig. 21

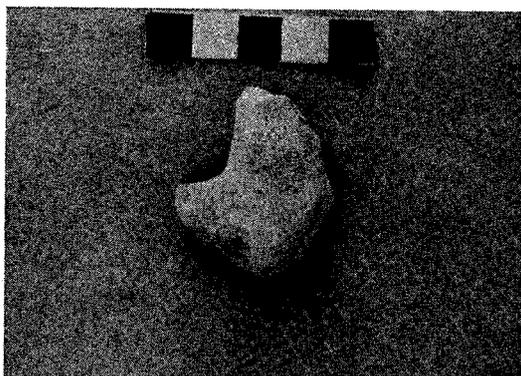


Fig. 22

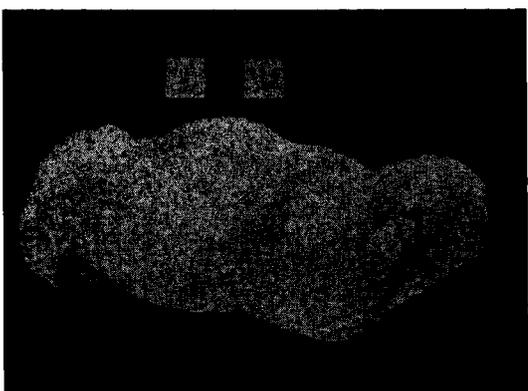


Fig. 23

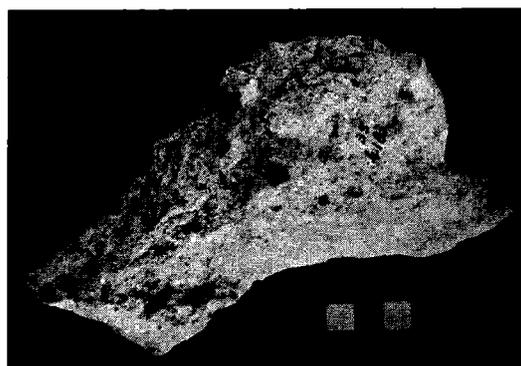


Fig. 24