

THE 1973 AND 1975 CAMPAIGNS AT ARSLANTEPE (MALATYA)

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During the campaigns of 1973 and 1975 the Italian Archaeological Mission directed by prof. S. M. Puglisi, included prof. A. Palmieri as vice-director, dr. I. Caneva, archaeologist, dr. A.M. Palmieri, geologist, L. Narisi and D. Terzi, topographers, C. Placidi, designer, M. Mazza and P. Pierfederici, Photographers, and R. Medini, restorer. Wide and very competent assistance was given to the Mission by the Representatives of the General Direction of Antiquities and Museums, Ayfer Aker and Alpay Pasinli. Excavations were developed in the south-west area of Arslantepe, where the oldest nucleus of the hüyük appears on the surface. Levels were identified here that may be referred to two successive horizons within the Early Bronze Age I (A. Palmieri, *Scavi nell'area sud-occidentale di Arslantepe, Origini VII*, 1973, p. 55 ff.).

E.B.A. I - Horizon 1

Structures - The oldest horizon is basically documented through a temporal structure (fig. 1,2) destroyed by a fire that has sealed a large amount of material in situ. The main body brought to light so far consists of two communicating rooms, A 36 and A 46, flanking a rectangular elongated room, A 42, with a central «podium» and other features that allow to consider it the «cell» of the temple. Against the back wall of this room, ornamented with two niches that do not extend down to the floor, there is a mud-brick rectangular basin and a white-plastered clay bench next

to it (fig. 3). The central podium is also white plastered and all the walls of the cell are white painted. The central part of the back wall, made prominent by the two niches delimiting it, shows traces of paintings in various tonalities of red and black on a cream-coloured background, made before the final white - painting of same. In the north-east corner of the room there opens the access to a corridor yet to be excavated.

The wall that separates the cell from the two communicating rooms A 36 and A 46 (clearly used as storerooms) has three windows through which objects could be received and exchanged; this function is all the more evident for the two openings more at the east (A 43 and A 48) on each of which three typical bowls were found upside down. Within the largest of the two communicating rooms, A 46, a large jar was found close to the wall just between the two windows, while, for the rest, the vessels were generally medium- and small-sized. The smaller room, A 36, contained instead large-sized pots for the most part, and presumably was the storeroom proper.

The larger room, A 46, has a bench, A 49, on the short eastern wall that is ornamented with a niche; all the walls of the room are covered with plastic decorations with oval concentric patterns, painted red at first and then painted white like those of the cell (fig. 4). It is evident that the adaptation of

this room to serve as a store - room is a modification that was made at a later time in respect of the original construction: this is confirmed by its delimitation at north by means of a narrow wall added at a later time, together with another bench (A 44), and by the fact that the decoration continues also on a wall of the adjoining room A 37. It seems that also room A 28 was part of this structure, but it could not be directly connected with the main body owing to alterations caused by the pit K 9.

It may be observed that while the podium at the center of the cell appears to be in Mesopotamia a northern feature (Tepe Gawra), the wall decoration rather calls to mind the plastic decoration and, as a probable model, the mosaic one of South Mesopotamia.

The elongated rectangular room A 51, that partially flanks the cell at the south, and that had been initially thought to be a part of the last arrangement, was subsequently found to be of an earlier date (together with room A 74) than the cell itself. There are some indications that lead us to believe that these earlier rooms were part of an outstanding structure and that other structures, even earlier than that, are to be found more at the south; it actually seems that an important structural sequence is to be found in this area, that is characterized by a progressive shifting northward of the later edifices.

Pottery - The wheel-made pottery dominates and can be divided into three wares: coarse, semi-fine and fine.

The coarse ware is represented by a number of bowls with unfinished yellowish surface, rather carelessly manufactured; the typical shape is a truncate conical one with slightly convex walls (fig. 5), and it is the one that quantitatively prevails among all the

pottery found.

This type takes the place of the bowls of the Late Calcolithic; such a sequence, that seems to be parallel with the mesopotamian Glockentopf-Blumentopf sequence, is a good example of the shift of mass-produced pottery types, characteristic of the urbanization process in Mesopotamia (H.J. Nissen in R.M.C. Adams and H.J. Nissen, *The Uruk Countryside*, Chicago 1972, p. 99 ff.).

In the semi-fine ware, the surface is frequently covered with a mat yellowish or whitish slip; reserved slip ware is present together with impressed or incised decoration. The most common forms are represented by large jars with a marked shoulder and cylindrical neck (fig. 6) while quite exceptional is a basin with a rimmed hole (fig. 7) and a spouted jar (fig. 8).

The fine ware has its surface covered with a yellowish slip and burnished; only in a few cases its colour is dark red. Necked jars represent the most usual shape (fig. 9). There are also included «fruitstands» with truncated conical bowl and high tubular stem, decorated with holes and/or plastic bands (fig. 10); P, spouted bowls (fig. 11) and a four lugged jar (fig. 12) (cfr. Tepecik: Esin., *Keban Projesi*, pl. 107,4).

Also present are hand-made cooking-pot wares. A hand made red-black burnished ware also appears with only a few specimens but of an outstanding interest, including types that are related to the E.B.A. of central Anatolia.

The forms include «fruit - stands» with open bowl and straight- or sinuous - sided stem (fig. 13), sometimes decorated with holes or with plastic bands; carinated jugs (fig. 14) and single - handled bowls (fig. 15).

Some fragments show a decoration with animals in relief (fig. 16).

Lithic industry - Many «cananean» blades were found in situ on the floor of some rooms, while other blades and arrowheads come from the filling. No other tools or rejects are present. The material used is flint and transparent obsidian for a part of the arrowheads. These are triangular, some equilateral with a concave base, some isosceles with a rectilinear base. Some of the «cananean» blades were clearly used as components of sickles or as sickle-blades (I. Caneva, Note sull'industria litica di Arslantepe, Origini VII, 1973, p. 183 ff.).

Other objects - Most of the seal impressions found in this level come from a room in a rather poor state of preservation (A 39); these objects bear, as it seems, only the mark of stamp seals, with animal figures for the most part, among which that of the lion (fig. 17), and of the scorpion (fig. 18) representing a new aspect of the Anatolian glyptic with mesopotamian relationships (P. Amiet, Aperçu préliminaire sur la glyptique archaïque d'Arslantepe, Origini VII, 1973, p. 217 ff.).

Also present is a number of clay objects of the andiron type, usually interpreted as supports for spits. (fig. 19).

Also found were some cereals, a small concentration of sea shells and impressions of matting.

Metal is represented by some fragments of copper pins.

Fauna - The material was examined that was found in room 42, the «cell», the only one in the temple where animal bones were discovered in large amounts, both on the floor and in the filling. In the filling the presence was ascertained only of domesticated animals, with a clearcut prevalence of capra and Ovis over Bos; in fact, only 25 % of findings may be referred to the latter (These informations have been

kindly furnished by C. Placidi of the Istituto di Palaeontologia, University of Rome). On the floor near the mud-brick basin parts of goat, ox and wild boar were found beside a human skull; probably all of them are to be considered remains of offerings.

Archaeological connections and C-14 dates - The first clearly defined horizon identified in the E.B.A. I is represented by the temple level.

Moreover, some indications already exist on the possibility of identifying more in detail, in the stratigraphic sequence of the south-west area of the hüyük, the transitional phase from the Late Calcolithic to the Early Bronze Age.

In the temple as a whole, a predominating cultural mark may be recognized that is tied up with the syro-mesopotamian area: the wheel-made pottery, with its mass-production aspect, the «cananean» lithic industry, the glyptic, the very templar structure, prove that the complex belonged to that sphere. A correlation may be established with Amuq G and with the connected mesopotamian aspects (Jemdet Nasr - Early Dyn. I) (R.J., L.S. Braidwood, Excavations in the Plain of Antioch, Chicago 1960, p. 259 ff., p. 516 ff.); a correspondence can be established between the sequence of phases F - G of Amuq and that of Late Calcolithic - Early Bronze I, Horizon 1 of Arslantepe.

In the framework of the wheelmade pottery, the affinities found concern not a well defined group of types, but rather the pottery classes themselves, their decoration (reserved slip ware), some characteristic elements, such as the curved tubular spout and the four pierced lugs, or an isolated type, such as the narrow-necked spouted jar. These connections clearly fall within the «incipient internationalism» pattern as outlined by Braidwood for the Amuq G range.

An element that seems to be connected with a different central Anatolian tradition, is represented by the red-black burnished pottery; it thus appears as an indicative tract of the wide economic and political interrelations promoted by the temple.

The following C-14 dates have been determined by the laboratory of the University of Rome (Alessio M., Bella F., Improta S., Belluomini G., Calderoni G., Cortesi C. and Turi B. University of Rome Carbon-14 dates XIV, to be published on Radiocarbon, vol. 18, 1976):

		B.P.	B.C.
A 28	R - 1010	4420 \pm 50	2470
A 36	R - 1013	4360 \pm 50	2410
A 36	R - 1014	4270 \pm 50	2320
A 36	R - 1015	4310 \pm 50	2360
A 44	R - 1017	4360 \pm 50	2410
A 46	R - 1018	4410 \pm 50	2460
A 46	R - 1019	4470 \pm 60	2620

E.B.A. I - Horizon 2

Structures - The level that appeared to be stratigraphically superimposed to the temple witnesses a notable change for what concerns both structures and materials. However C-14 dates would indicate that in between the two levels no appreciable period of time should have elapsed. (The following date has been determined for this level: A 33, R - 1009, B.P. 4360 \pm 50, B.C. 2410).

The temple, after it was destroyed by fire, was not rebuilt, at least in the same area, and on its ruins new edifices were built which were also burned down. Their remains do not show any monumental aspects. These are two contiguous rooms, with a narrow rectangular plan; in one of them, two plastered adjoining pits were close to a wall.

A further structural level is superimposed to the said rooms and, although only a limited area has been so

far brought to light, also this level seems to belong to E.B.A. I.

Pottery - In the second horizon of E.B.A. I, handmade red-black burnished pottery and wheelmade pottery, appear in a different proportion vis-à-vis the first horizon; also in regard of typology, clear-cut differences emerge from a comparison between the two complexes.

Among the wheelmade pottery, present in small quantities, there are some coarse truncated-conical bowls and some cups, often decorated with reserveslip, showing affinities both with Amuq G and with E.B.A. I of the Altınova (Norşuntepe: A Hauptmann, Keban Projesi 1970 Pl. 73, 13; Taşkun Mevki: S. Helms, *ibid.*, Pl. 39,4,13).

Among the prevailing red-black burnished pottery, a set of shapes seems to be connected with the typical «East-anatolian and Transcaucasian E.B.A.» production; among these, there appear jars with high cylindrical neck (fig. 20), high-necked jars with two vertical handles between neck and shoulder, cooking-pots with two triangular lugs on the rim. There are also bowls and small bowls of a very fine workmanship, with a flat base or with a peculiarly concave base, as they are found also in the phase G of the Amuq.

Decoration is represented only by knobs and by a flared edge of a loop handle.

Unlike what it was observed for Horizon 1 of E.B.A. I (temple), there may be noticed in Horizon 2 the prevalence, in terms of quantity, of the burnished red-black pottery, and its east-Anatolian and transcaucasian typological affinities. This clearly indicates a change in the cultural development, to be related to the tradition of which Burney stressed the wide diffusion from southern Caucasus to central and western Iran, to the Malatya-EI-

aziğ area, with infiltrations in Syria and Palestina (Khirbet Kerak) (C. Burney, D. Marshall, *The Peoples of the Hills*, London 1971, p. 43 f.) To this tradition the subsequent E.B.A. development at Arslantepe seems related; similarly to what may be observed in other perimesopotamian areas (cfr. Godin Tepe: H.

Weiss and T. Cuyler Young, Jr., *Iran*, XIII, 1975, p. 1 f.), although in different ways, the incidence of the transcaucasian tradition seems to coincide with the reflux of the protourban aspects tied up with Mesopotamia and with the spreading of a culture proper of village communities.

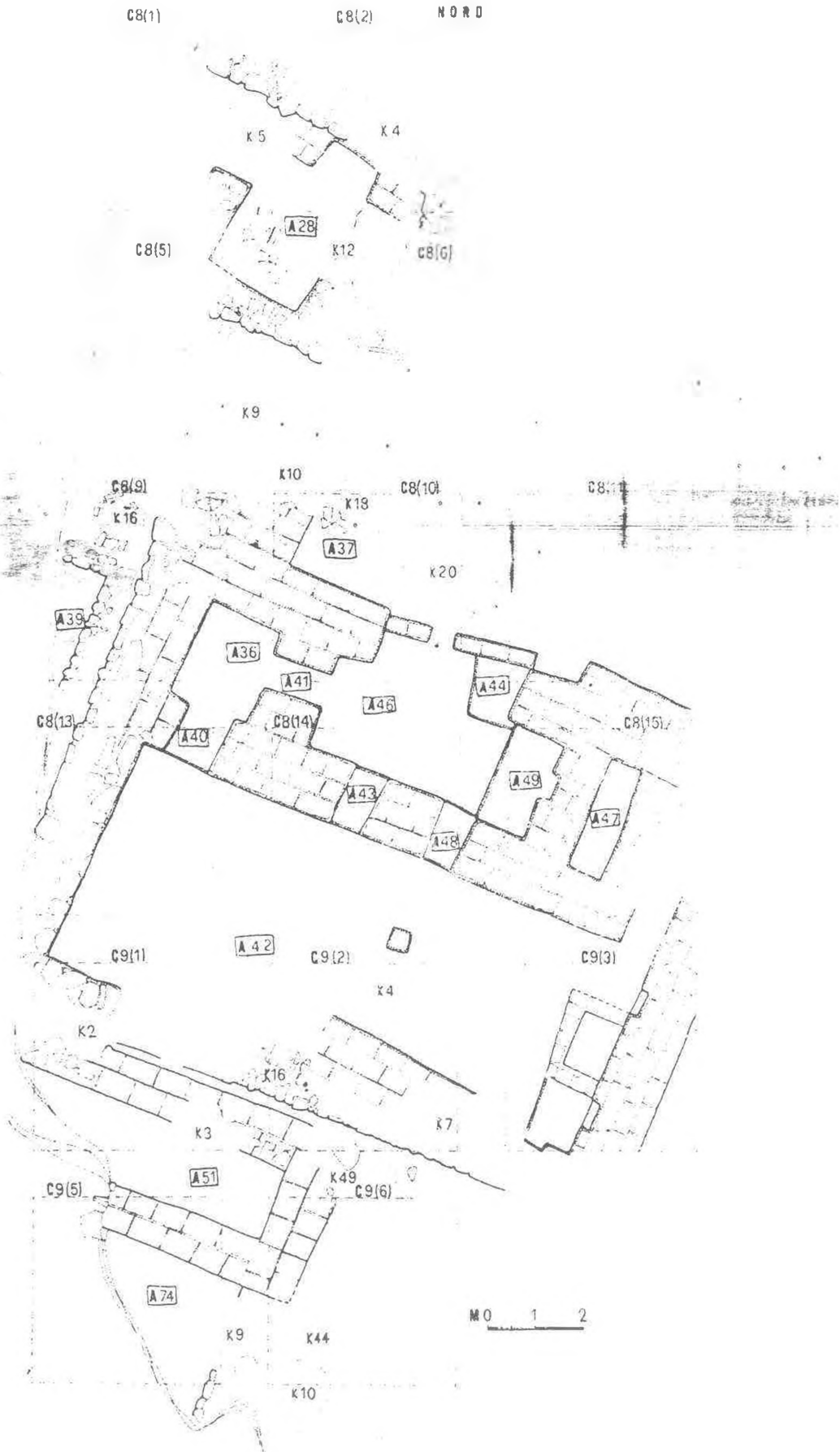


Fig. : 1

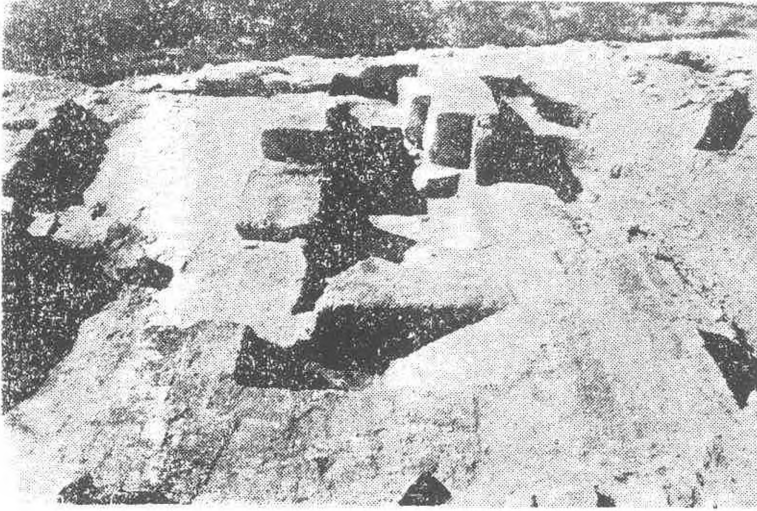


Fig. : 2

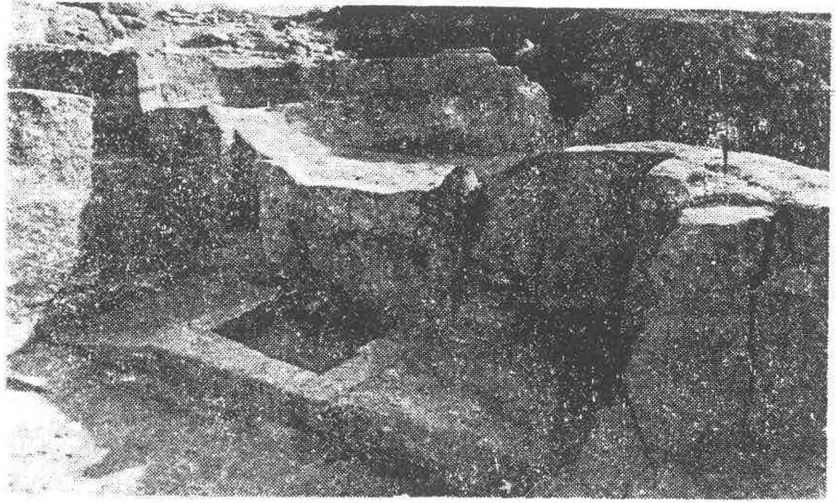


Fig. : 3



Fig. : 4

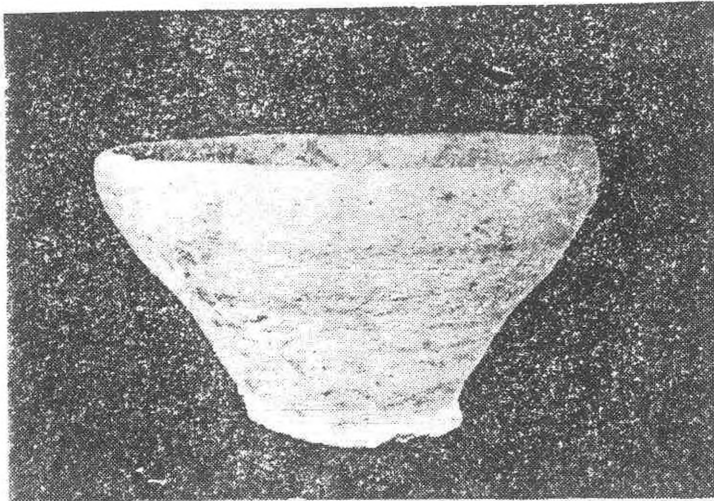


Fig. : 5

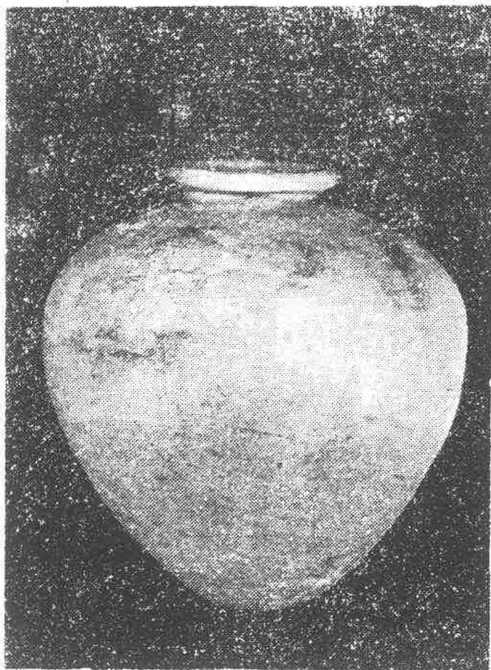


Fig. : 6

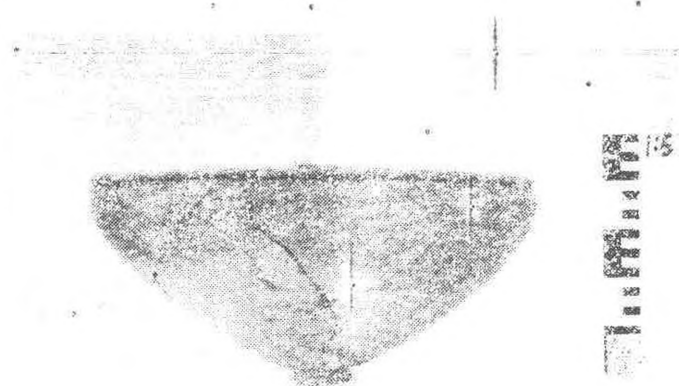


Fig. : 7

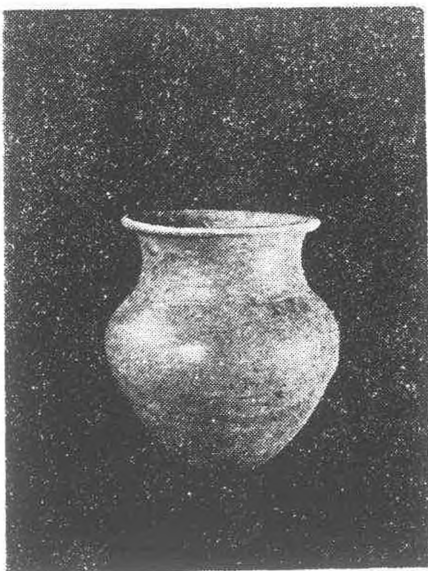
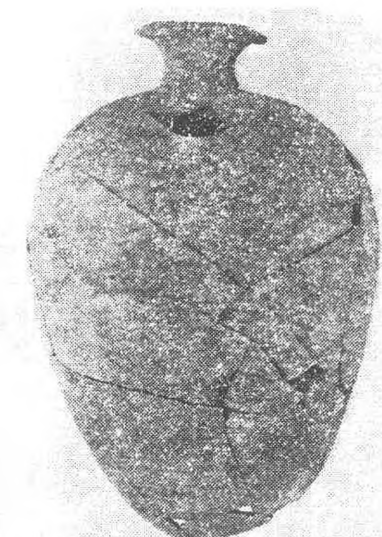


Fig. : 9



1/2

Fig. : 8

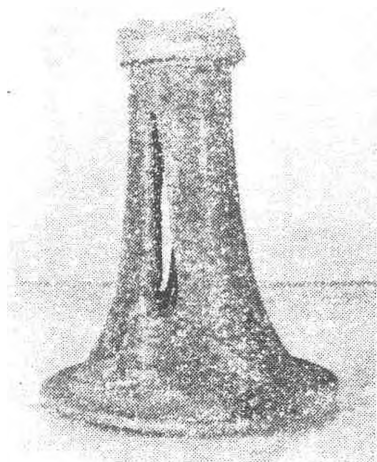


Fig. : 10

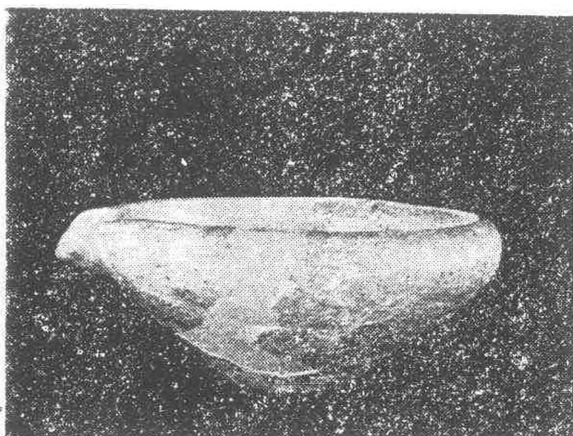


Fig. : 11



Fig. : 12



Fig. : 13



Fig. : 14

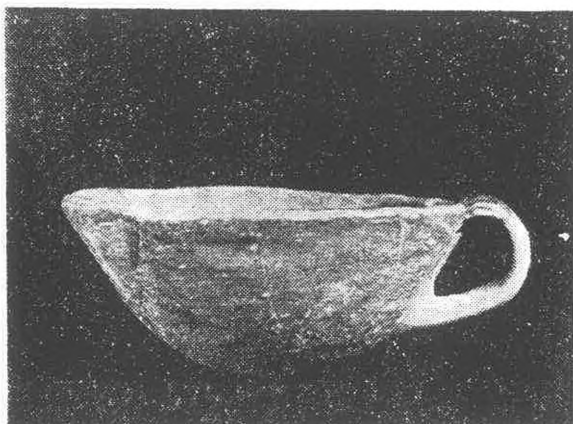


Fig. : 15

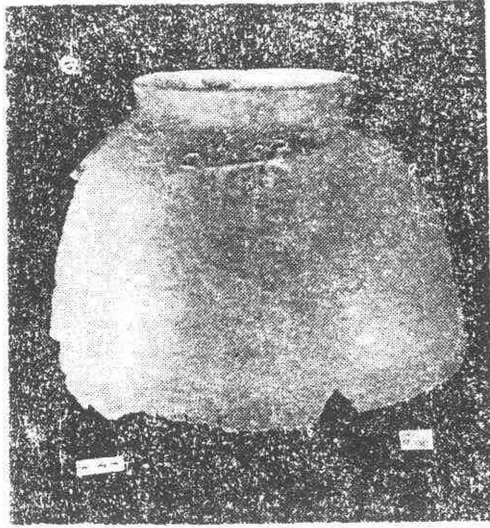


Fig. : 16

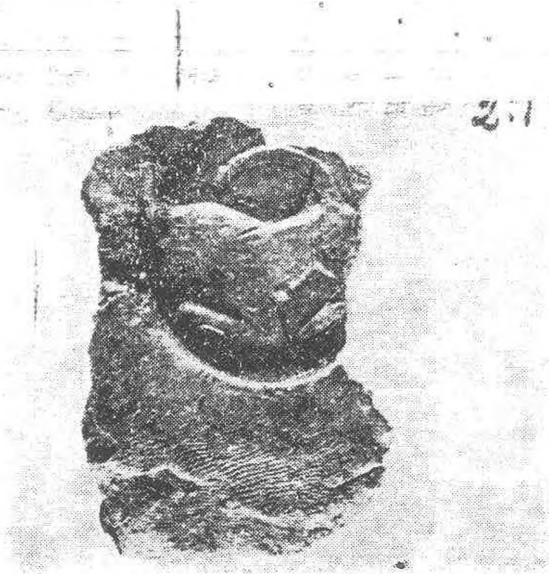


Fig. : 17

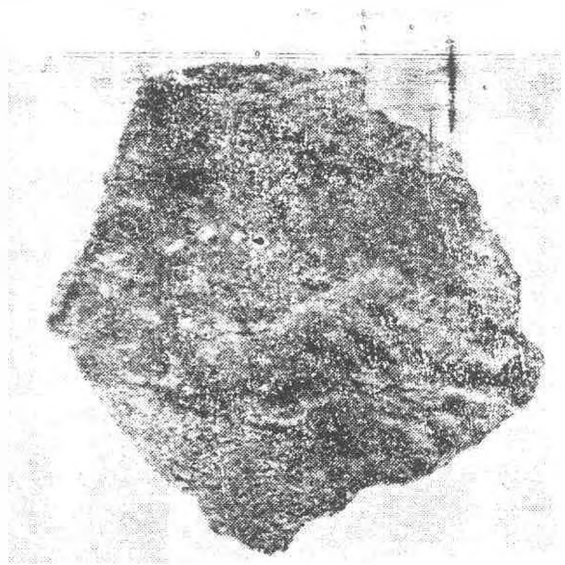


Fig. : 18

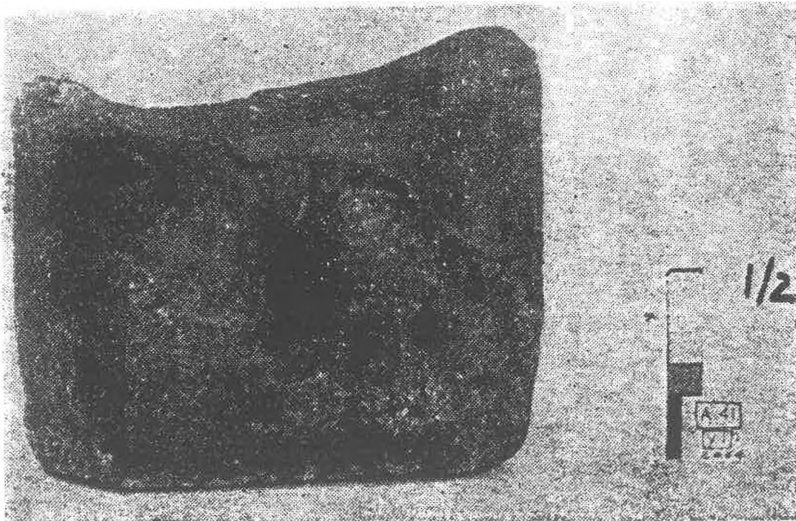


Fig. : 19



Fig. : 20