

TOPAKLI THE 1970 CAMPAIGN OF EXCAVATION

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The 1970 campaign to excavate the hüyük of paleochristian martyrion and the other Topak.li¹ took place from July 5th to 1st concerning the Hellenistic pottery -two September. Taking part in it were Professor important themes which have found new and Luigi Polacco, director; Dr. Elena di Filippo well-defined material in the excavation of and Dr. Guido Rosada, excavation Topak.li and which will be dealt with in assistants; Giuseppe Pennello, restorer and separate reports to appear shortly. Both by draughtsman; Severino Ton, personnel re-examining the building structures that manager. The Commissioner for the have so far come to light at the various Turkish Authorities was Mr. Şemsettin levels of the dig and by making analogous Köksal. The fact that the campaign did not investigations into the hills surrounding last as long as usual and that there were Topakli, I was able to start work on a general fewer people taking part in it, was due to report on the lapidary materials and the bureaucratic hitches and delay in the construction techniques used in the different assignment of funds, with the result that it levels.

was necessary to formulate a reduced emergency plan at the last moment; on the other hand the calendar of academic and scientific duties made it impossible for the expedition to taken place at any time other than that previously allotted to it.

We have therefore attempted to make up for the smaller amount of digging by greater individual effort and this pause for reflexion and re-thinking should perhaps, in the end, be considered largely positive. Most important of all we were able to revise and record material previously excavated and thus to embark on two specific studies, one concerning the

¹ *Topakli 1961 Kazisi* in "Türk Ark. Derg." XVI 1967, p. 177 sq.; *Topakli. Prima Campagna di scavo 1961. Notizia preliminare* in "SMEA" VIII 1969, p. 76 sq.; *Topakli, Campaign of excavation 1968* in "Türk Ark. Derg." XVII 1969, p. 165 sq.; *Topakli, Campagna di scavo 1968. Relazione preliminare* in "SMEA" X 1969; p. 54 sq.; *Topakli, Campagna di scavo 1969, Relazione preliminare* in SMEA XII, 1971 (in print). The reports in SMEA are henceforward quoted in an abbreviated form: *Topakli 1961* etc.

Investigation into the quarries which led us to explore the surroundings of Topakli within a range of about 10 km., and the chance discovery of some colossal pithoi in the near by village of Çaliş (fig. 1) (c. 3 km. E of Topakli) by some workmen who were putting down electric cables, gave us the starting point for some deductions which seemed, though with obvious reservations, to be very important. On July 30th Mr. Katip Bekir, the vicemuhhtar of Çaliş, came to Topakli to tell us that when digging a ditch for a pylon actually in the village, three enormous vases had come to light intact. I went over there with the Turkish Commissioner Şemsettin Köksal. They were indeed very beautiful pithoi, oval in shape and with braided decoration, Roman in date at least judging from the masks that had been applied to the shoulders of one of them.

Çaliş is a village with a thousand inhabitants lying in a valley that goes down longitudinally from Ismail Zirvesi. There

appears to be no hüyük on the site or in the eco-Roman inscriptions, various moulded immediate neighbourhood. Nevertheless the objects) which were shown to us, did not presence of the pithoi is sufficient to indicate however come from Çaliş but from Bel-the presence of social life, not a village perhaps, kuyu, a locality 10 km. to the north. On but at least a farın. This small valley is irrigated August 11th I went there with K. Bekir and and faces the sun and even today it is inten-S. Köksal.

sively and carefully cultivated with allotments and vineyards. Bel-Kuyu is a small and sheltered hollow in the not very high range which separates the

Two volunteers from the village extended the territory of Topakli from that of Kalaba ditch mentioned above in our presence and a (Fig. 3). As the crow flies it lies about 10 fourth pithos was found in fragments of even km S of Çaliş and 10 km W of Topakli. A more colossal dimensions. The three complete practicable track for vehicles goes from Çaliş pithoi were taken to the muhtar's house (to await to Bel-kuyu, but the hollow is chiefly open transfer to the Nevşehir Museum, of which it to the NW in the direction of Kosakli (to had been duly advised) and the fourth pithos in which another track leads but which we did fragments was taken to our headquarters for not take). The range gets steeper towards restoration first.

But our visit to Çaliş was the occasion of what crossing a small and easy pass. The whole I think to be an even more important of the inside ridge of the range is dotted discovery, namely of a Roman inscription (fig. 2) which was preserved in K. Bekir's house and which I have transcribed here²:

IMPERATOR CAESAR
CAIVS IVLIVS VERVS
MAXIMIVS PIVS
FELIX INVI
CTVS AUG ET CAIVS
IVLIVS VERVS
MAXIMVS NO
BILISSIMUSCAE
SAR VIAS E PONTE
VETUSTATE CVN LAPSAS A
SASRES [EN]E VER

This inscription together with other material (marble funeral stelai with Gra-

² While the reading for the lines 1-11 is certain, there is some doubt about line 12 which could perhaps read SASREV in place of SASRES. Line 13 is badly damaged but we hope eventually to get a reliable reading from it. The inscription is to be found on a local cippus (landmark) with oval sections and rapidly decreasing in diameter towards the top. It is in fine grained marble with strong greish impurities. H. 0.92 m.; diam. at the base 0.42 m. and at the top 0.32 m.. Unfortunately the lower part is missing below line 13.

Kalaba; a third track goes in that direction Kalaba; a third track goes in that direction ing a small and easy pass. The whole hollow is dotted with twenty or so small tumuli. Today the hollow is all inhabited; wheat is grown in the bottom of it (men come up from Çaliş to work there), the slopes on the other hand are steppe-like with vast solid slabs of hare stone. Not in the hollow itself but immediately around it there are some quarries both to the S and E. in the bottom of the hollow the traces of a city are clearly visible. The colour range in the grain crops, traces of wall structures breaking the surface, long open corridors (roads?) great heaps of rubble, plenty of pottery on the surface and even of decorated marble elements (fragments of funerary stelai and architectural motifs) all denote the presence of a considerable urban settlement, definitely of the Roman period. The area of the city seems to be about 1 km. sq.. Nearby, on the edge or perhaps just outside the city, to the East, is a small hüyük about 5 m. high, on an oval plan with axes c. 20 X 40 m.. Pottery fragments can be found on the surface of various periods from Graeco-Roman to E. B. Surreptitious excavations have been carried out in the middle (the excavated earth heaped up nearby has formed a small summit on the E slope). But the small hüyük did not

seem. to me, at least not at this initial moment, to be as important as the Roman city.

The inscription preserved at Çaliş and mentioned above tells us explicitly that here we have an important road network system. It is to be supposed that the bridge was on the Kizil Irmak either near Avanos or rather towards Kayseri. The *Sasresene* (or *Sasrevene*) is perhaps to be identified with the *Aquas Aravenas* of the Peutingerian Tablet and therefore with the *Sarvena* of Ptolemy, the site of which has been a controversial point. The reckoning of the miles referred to in the Peutingerian Tablet could lead us to identify *Sermusa* here (54 from *Mazaca Caesarea*, Kayseri; 40 from *Aquas Aravenas*, Kirşehir?, distances which approximately coincide with those of Belkuyu from the modern localities just mentioned).

But setting aside this very important topographical question, (which we intend to return to and discuss in a separate study), the presence of this large inhabited centre only a few kilometres away from Topakli makes us re-think about what has so far emerged from Topakli and to see archaeological data in a different light. We are confronted with the necessity of providing a historical explanation of how a big city in Roman times such as appears from the ruins of Belkuyu and a conspicuous *hüyük* such as Topakli come to be so close to each other. Without in any way wishing to anticipate a solution which can only come from a comparative examination of the widest possible series of historical, archaeological and topographical data, I cannot but remember how in the levels C-G, which we defined generically as Hellenistic-Roman, all datable finds were earlier than the usual period or later than 3rd Century A.D.. Only because "a priori" it seems impossible for there not to have been 'Roman' levels below the Byzantine ones and having taken account of the conti-

nunity of typology and style in Hellenistic pottery right up to late antiquity, we preferred to speak in our preliminary reports of a single Hellenistic-Roman period. But the presence only a few kilometres away, of a considerable sized city certainly Roman in date, has suggested the hypothesis which is very far from being unsupported, that in the stratigraphy of the *büyük*, levels that are typically Roman are absent or at least are drastically limited in their importance³. The amphora seal and the Hellenistic lamps already found in level D⁴ may now perhaps be taken not merely as a general terminus post quem but as true and proper labels of absolute chronology.

If this new prospect should be confirmed by an analytical study of the material, a new and important typological and chronological classification of Hellenistic pottery in Asia Minor could emerge from the excavation of Topakli. For this reason also, when the excavation was closed on August 15th, the journey I undertook with Dr. Rosada looking at many excavation sites and Anatolian Museums, particularly in the central-east area, was very useful.

This year too, at the end of the dig, 22 vases which had come to light during the campaign that had just closed, were handed over to the Nevşehir Museum as well as 15 finds of various sorts which had been dug up in the 1968 and 1969 expeditions and which had been restored in 1970. In one of the rooms of this Museum we have already seen exhibited, among other things, about twenty pieces that come from the *hüyük* of Topakli. We have been assured that during the winter measures will be taken to equip a

³ Even the finding of pithoi in the surrounding countryside could bring us to imagine a scattered agricultural environment. And I must mention (something that I have not done so far) that in 1967 during the building of a Mobil filling station a little outside the inhabited area of Topakli towards the E, another pithos was found.

⁴ Topakli 1969.

room with the material from Topak.Ji. The Com.inissioner himself S. Köksal will be seeing to its arrangement.

The Excavation

The construction of the TT (Time-scale trench), which in 1969 had reached a depth of -9.00 m. had left two problems unsolved (fig. 4). The presence of the late Roman building right at the opening of the TT towards the NE slope put us in a dilemma as to whether to divert the TT to the N or to sacrifice a bit of the building itself. What was more from -6.00 to -9.00 m. work had had to be done in a very restricted area (8 X 4 m.). in the program.ine for 1970 it was intended to open up the whole of the TT to the outside and to bring all the remaining part to the same depth of at least -9.00 m.. This would have allowed us to check the levels A-G further and to extend the documentation of the levels H-M. Thus, once the TT had been opened up down-hill, the conditions would at last have been realized for subsequent excavations below -9.00 m. to be carried out more easily and quickly without the serious problem of removing the excavated earth to the outside, since by then it, whould have a clear road onto the downhill face of the TT to be dumped directly outside and below the TT to the N or S.

Just as the upper terrace of the büyük slopes very gently outwards, except for here and there where it rises slightly towards the edge, the stratigraphy shows an analogous inclination⁵. The negative values in one and the same layer are obviously different and gradually increase the closer one gets to the periphery. The values we assumed this year as an index

⁵ The terms *leve* and *stratum* have been used with quite different meanings. Level refers to a precise architectural organism and so the reference to a cultural moment is implicit in it. Stratum is simply a variation in the terrain due to any cause. A leve] therefore may have several sırata nor need these be constant and homogeneous throughout the level to which they belong.

of the various levels have been calculated on the N wall corresponding approximately to the intersection of the quadrants HG 12-13. Since the level of excavation here is at -2.50 m. we can say that the 1970 dig has run the TT to a maximum width of 6.50 m. and for a maximum length of 24.50 m. (calculated at a depth of -9.00 m.).

I will say first of all, and I take the responsibility for this, that we decided to sacrifice the part of the late Roman building which stood in the TT. Although I was fully aware, as I have said before of, the importance of that building, to have preserved it, would have meant jaking the TT make a bend along the quadrants H 12-13 and G 12. The increase in labour involved (and all for levels already wellrecognized), the difficulty of marking the quadrants exactly as we no longer had a trigonometric cippus, the unpleasant appearance and the awkwardness of a bend in the trench, our distrust based on ample experience, of being able to preserve a rubble-filled structure against the rigours of the Anatolian climate, the fact that the building had already been extensively uncovered and photographed and in any case about three fifths of it would remain untouched outside the TT, a significant and valid testimony to an architectural type and a cultural phase, all of which seemed to us to be more than adequate reasons for preferring to keep the TT to its original line.

The dig, as we have said, was concerned with the end part of the TT and was to take it from -3.70 m. (the average depth of the floors of the late Roman building) to -9.00 m., i.e. the maximum depth reached so far in the TT. The succession of the levels C to M was therefore re-checked revealing the continuity of the architectural structures up to the edge of the büyük, their morphology and succession. Documentation of the finds was considerably enriched, some being dated or datable with adequate approximation. On the whole

both vertically for chronology and horizontally for culture, the picture that emerged from the 1969 dig was confirmed.

Levels C-D: -3.70/4.20 m.. No architectural structure. The stratification seemed uniform with occasional and confused strata (of broken kerpiç, desiment, films of aslı). In the periods relating to these levels the settlement seems to have been limited to the centre-west area of the hüyük. There is a uniform coherence in the finds among which a considerable quantity of pottery fragments so called "Megarian", some of excellent workmanship with zone decoration, in which the motifs in high relief are chiefly of plants (palmettes, lanceolate leaves, "drop" motifs, etc.) or with eagles and even with an erotic symplegma. Other fragments show an engraved decoration and others still are partly engraved and partly impressed with geometric patterns. Very much present is that common type of pottery found in great quantities in the corresponding levels of the "acropolis", with a smooth surface sometimes painted in red or brown bands: plates, cups, bowls, jugs, pots, and pitchers. There are others with red or black paint among which there is a noteworthy fragment of an unbelieved patera with engraved palmettes and a small jug. The cultural qualification of these levels as Hellenistic or at the latest at the beginning of the Imperial age now becomes clear, as we said above. A definite confirmation is offered by a fragment made up of three bits put together of a vase for common purposes made of a fine play impasto, with a well-diluted yellow "ingubbiatura" bearing the inscription . . . OY XAPIC (fig. 5). A similar fragment with a similar inscription came up from T 16 NE in level D in the 1968 campaign. From the writing and comparison with known Pergamene material J. Sehafer considers this formula to come at the latest from the beginning of the Imperial age.

Level E: -4.20/5.85 m. (fig. 12 above). On this level the architectural structures

go right up to the edge of the hüyük; it is therefore the last period of complete extension of the settlement, before it draws itself in towards the W. In fact from an architectural point of view, it is closely linked to level F below, of which it is merely an integration or partial re-making. I shall therefore go into greater details about the architectural forms later on when discussing that level. A large quantity of ferrous fragments and scoriae were noted in the corresponding stratification. The considerable percentage of "Megarian" and engraved pottery continues but there is also some pottery painted with rather fine generic geometrical motifs and with plant motifs. Particularly interesting were: a) a necked vase (fig. 6) with a narrow opening, no handles and mostly put together by restoration, made of good impasto with a yellowish "ingubbiatura" and decorated with horizontal brown bands round the bulge, it had a very narrow network in the zone between the bulge and the foot, with palmettes on the shoulders; b) a fragment of a grey clay vase with a shiny brown glaze and narrow vertical ribbing in relief; c) an piriform aryballos in pale clay. These types bring us well into the Hellenistic period. Two coins found at this level cannot be used as testimony -as indeed finds of this type never can. One of them is of Constantine and the other modern, arabic or osmanlic but they are scarcely legible as they are almost completely worn or oxidized.

Level F: -4.85/5.20 m. (fig 12 above). Running along the whole of this end part of the TT in an E direction are some long wall structures. So the orientation encountered last year at the same level remains; then it was thought to be some courtyard but now a long corridor has also appeared and two great bases that mark perhaps the front of a doorway opening towards the edge of the hüyük. The "Megarian" pottery seems to have disappeared and instead there is a large quantity of painted fragments with red

bands, wolves' teeth, red or brown zig-zags, levels underlying these rooms on the out- on a grey or yellow background. Particularly skirts, we were to find, as we shall soon re- noteworthy is a borie pin that has been well- late, thick deposits of fire-clay and a- mong worked with an elegant head with rigid the finds some chalk shapes were to come profile (another fine pin had been found at to light and some strange bowls of very poor the same level last year) and a fragment of a quality earthenware which still bear traces plate of green veined marble. of coloured earths. Great fire-places, scoriae Level G: -5.20/6.10 m. (fig. 12 down). The and syloi were found in T 15-16, that is at "critical" nature of this level glim- pshed last the extreme opposite end of the büyük, year at this point has been deci- sively during the 1968 dig. Perhaps all round the confirmed. An important pheno- m non has inside on the out- skirts of the inhabited area, been verified, namely that there is a change the artisan quarters were placed. in G the in the orientation of the peripheral "Megari- an" pottery has completely architectural structures in re- lation to the disappeared together with the red and black central structure (fig. 7). The spaces 1 and 2 shiny glazed pottery. A brown or red are disposed radially more or less following spatulated pottery begins to appear. Even the the external line of the hüyük, but the inner painted pottery is very different from levels are orientat- ed on the cardinal points analogous pottery in the upper levels (which as in the levels above. At first there was a however does not disappear): alongside the suspicion that we were faced with a usual wide bands or wolves' teeth in a very defensive structure, but the walls are of the dilute red colour, there are much richer and normal dimensi- ons and technique and seem more organic decorations both as regards the to enclose the inhabited area. Naturally we subject-matter, which is more varied, and cannot for the moment say whether this fact technique, which is more careful, and the is veri- fied along the whole of the colour is warm and alive. Although I cannot, periphery or not; we can only suggest is as I would say, call it Phrygian, it is an obvious a work- ing hypothesis. in reality it would continuation of it. Certain basins with a seem possible to guess at a particular rigid profile and inverted lip seem to us purpose for these places. Already in level F typical both with and wit- thout a small foot. atten- tion was drawn to the considerable There is another typi- cal shape which amount of scoriae and ferrous fragments should be noted and that is the keeled vase, found. These continued to appear in this and example of which was found almost level too but in smaller quantities and several complete in its "box" in the oval paved area syloi and fireplaces appeared; almost on the described above (fig. 9). very edge a singular oval structure (fig. 8) Level H: -6.10/6.70 m. (fig. 13 above). appeared consisting of a paved area The radial nature of the periferal stru- ctures surrounded by a circle of upright stones is to be found at this level too. Here too there (diametres 1.30 x 1.10 m;). Near the is a circular floored area that has been external circumference and inside the paved considerably upset and on top of it and near area there is a construction like a square it, as we have said above, there is a large box with upright stones at the sides and two quantity of fire-clay. The pottery is stones Jaid one on top of the other at the decidedly of the brown or red spatulated bottom. That this could be a tomb was glaze type. I would again men- tion the chalk absolutely excluded and we thought it more shapes and the cups for the colours. The very likely that this was the working surface of close unity of the levels G and H hits the eye. some artisan, a potter perhaps. Something of By now we are out- side the material culture this sort can still be found in Anatolian of the Hellenis- tic age and come into what villages. in the is rather an

extreme continuation of Phrygian culture. greater width 0.80/1.00 m. and are more solid in their composition, since larger blocks than usual have been used which have been more carefully squared and joined. in H Level I: -6.70/7.20 m. (fig. 13 down). this level fragments of painted pottery of a clearly Phrygian type appear in great quantities, both as regards its shape and decoration. There are plates, cups, dishes with rigid profiles, the lip is turned outwards and is distinct from the body. A keeled vase like that found in G but shorter and better proportioned, with an omphalos on the base is particularly notable (fig. 10); also another small piriform vase with perforated base narrow neck and straight edge whose external surface seems to have been polished with a stick. At this level some glass paste pearls were found as well as a hone of green basalt, a bone gaming-dice which in addition to the cavities indicating the various numbers on the faces also has two holes to be used perhaps, as an apotropaic ornament. Other small strange clay objects came to light, they were trapezoid in shape with a flat base and a vertical border open on the smaller side; perhaps these too make up part of the artisan equipment mentioned above. At this level there are two rectangular paved areas of 1.80 x 1.40 m. and 2.00 x 1.50 m. respectively whose regularity of shape and lack of relationship to the wall structures lead one to think that they serve a purpose similar to that of the circular platforms of the preceding levels.

Level L: -7.20/8.00 m. (fig. 14) The general lay-out of the structures in this level seems to be based on different criteria from those of the levels above, namely towards a greater unity of orientation. Only towards the edge of the hüyük did we establish the presence of a wall whose lay-out is secondary to the boundary itself. it is too early to talk of an enclosing wall (which in the upper levels is certainly and constantly absent); its seriously damaged state has prevented us from measuring its thickness. it is certain that the technique with which the walls at this level have been built shows some differences: the structures have a

13 NE there are some areas of different shapes enclosed with small stones. The earth contained in them is mixed with ash and the stones and walls nearby are blackened by fire. Three vases have been found in situ here of which two are quite common while the third is of pale clay although not of excellent im- pasto and is covered with a shiny yellow glaze and painted with plant motifs in a reddish brown. The vase is of the mam-elonated type with random linear partitions (fig. 11). Another interesting structure is to be found to the E of the previous area in G 13 SW. Here some blocks of sandstone of considerable size (e.g. 0.80 x 0.40 m.) have been arranged carefully so as to form a very open angle. it is certainly the NE surface that can be

seen; other blocks which are arranged in the inside area lead one to think that all or almost all that area must have been carefully and solidly paved in this way. Since the series of blocks shows signs of continuing within the S wall of the TT, we are not in a position to be able to say what the finished shape of this area must have been and still less what was its function.

The painted vase described above may be set alongside that found in E but it is a good deal more elegant and imaginative. Many fragments of painted pottery of the late or middle-Phrygian type and two gems (one a cornelian and the other a hard stone of a lovely green colour) oval in shape and without any decoration confirm the difference of the cultural horizon found at this level.

Level M: -8.00/9.00 m.. This level has not been defined architecturally yet. The structures indicated at Fig. 14 will have to be integrated with others that are still buried. The pottery finds are more and more typical of late and middle-Phrygian. Of note is a strange pebble of grey-

green sandstone, oval (axes 0.26 x 0.225 m.) and one, of reddish impasto and yellowy- green hemispherical (h.m. 0,137) which has a very rough glaze carries a rather untypical alpha, the drawing of a sort of cross of which three arms are other, of similar impasto and glaze, reads uix pointed while the fourth has a flat base. Again there [...] or else [uz].

are two fragments with inscriptions;

The writing on the second fragment takes us back quite clearly to the Archaic period.

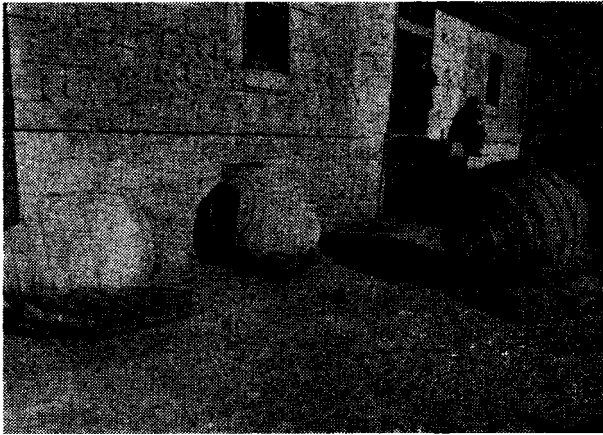


Fig. 1

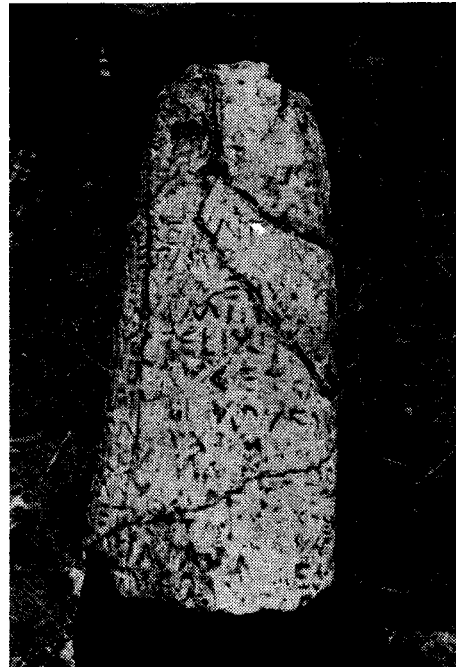


Fig. 2

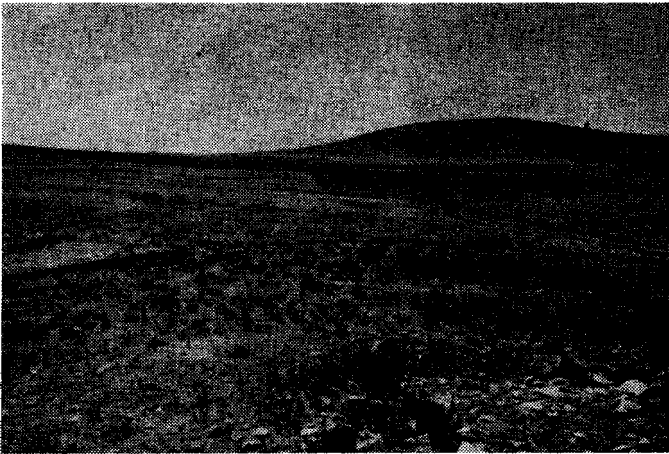
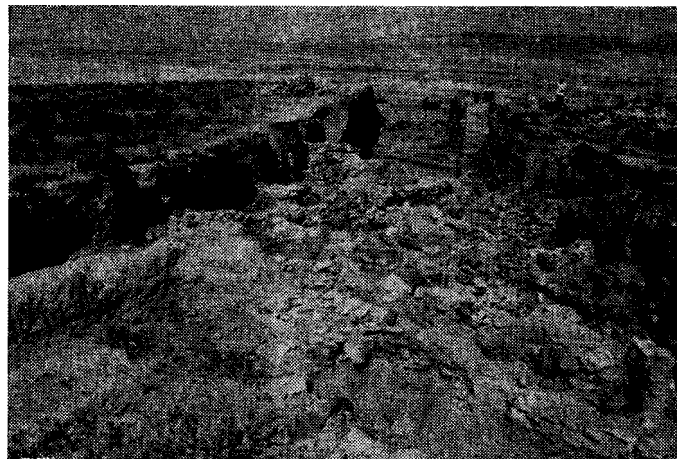


Fig. 4



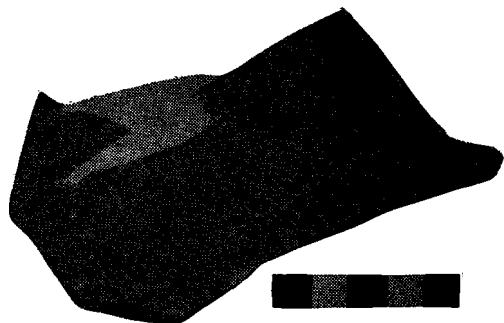


Fig. 5 6

= "8



Fig. "8 J



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

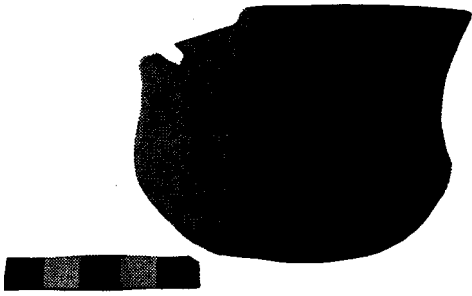


Fig. "98

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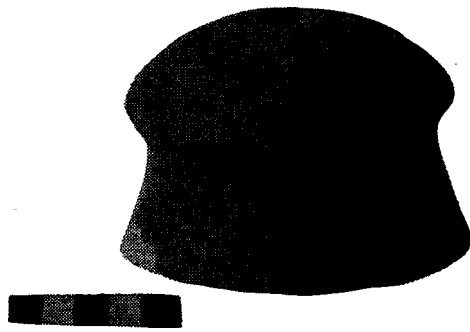


Fig 5 18

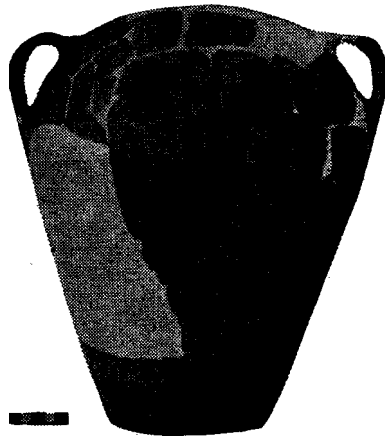


Fig. "18

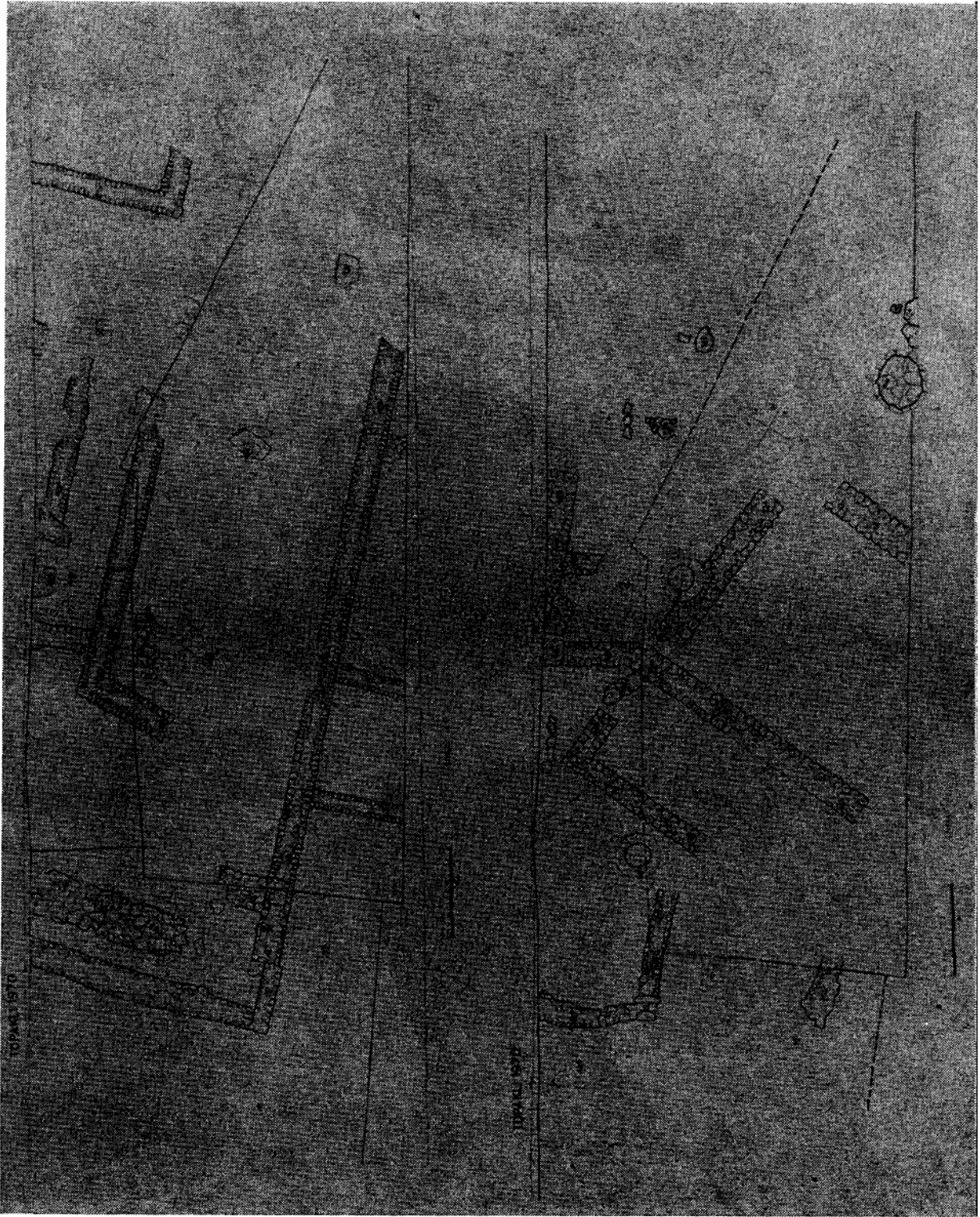
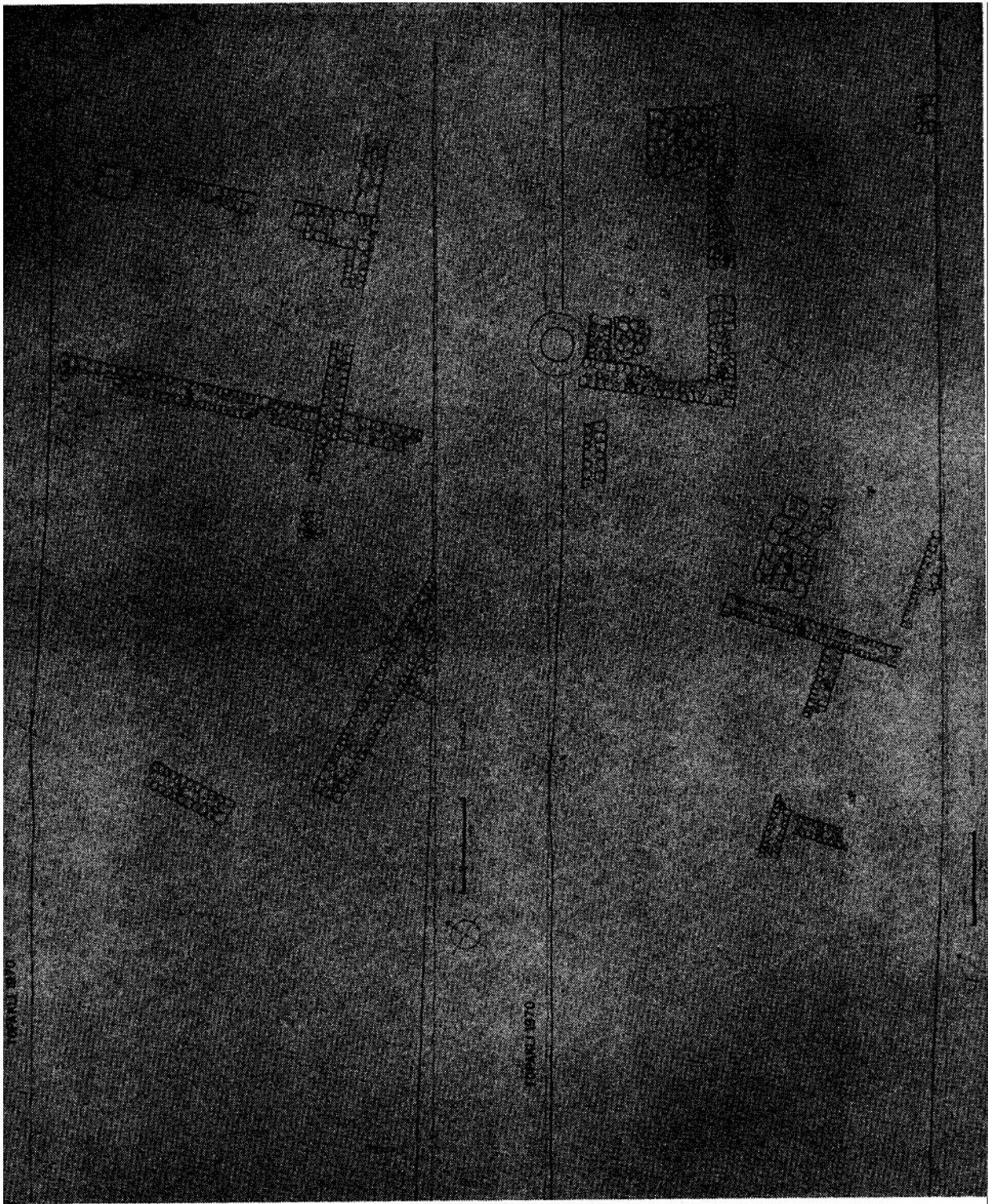


Fig. 12



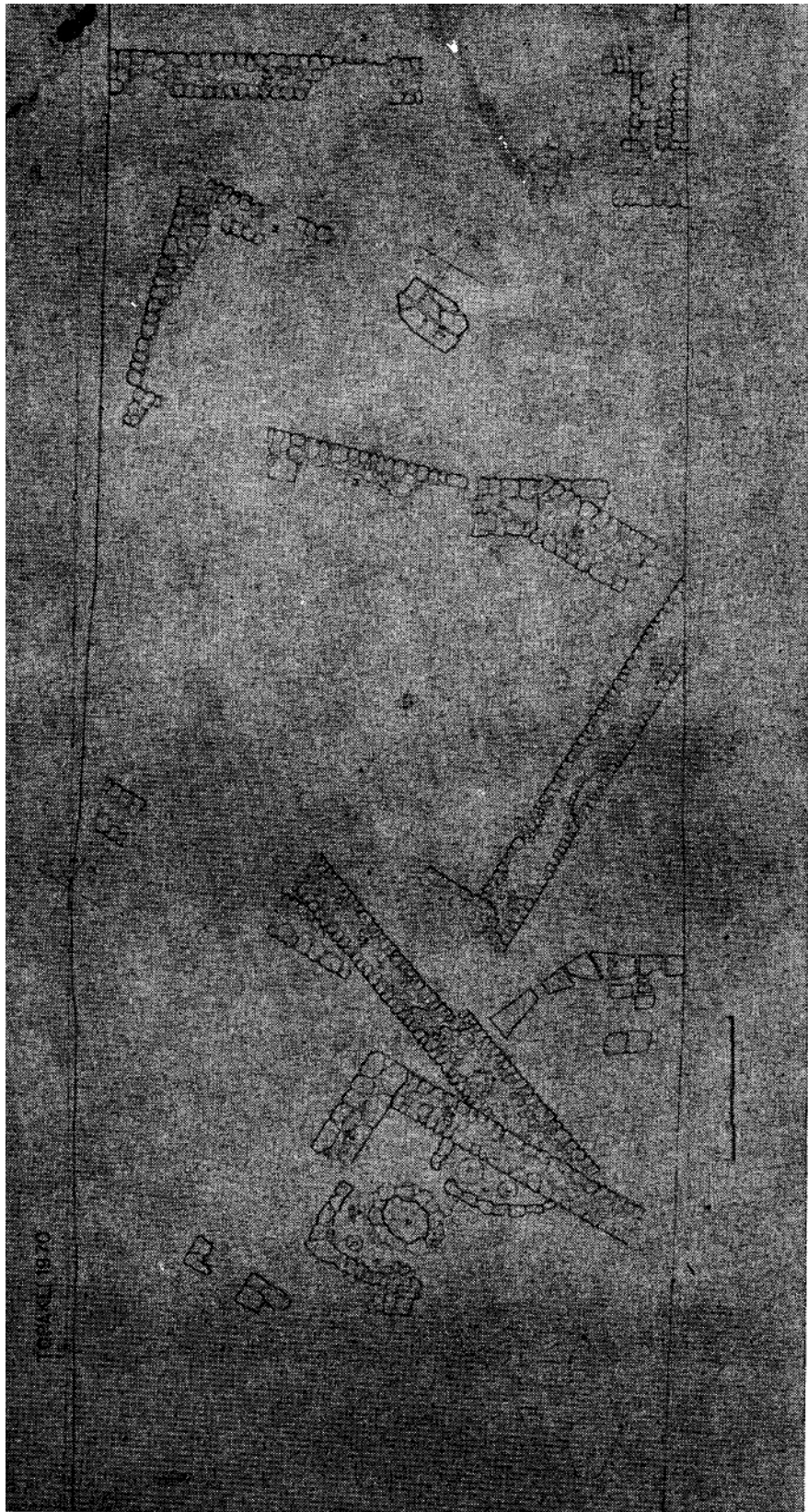


Fig 14