

**THIRD REPORT ON THE EXCAVATIONS AT ARSLANTEPE
(MALATYA)**

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The Italian Archaeological Mission at Malatya, sponsored by the Centre for the Antiquities and History of Art of the Near East, resumed excavation at Arslantepe in the Spring of 1964. Operations had been temporarily suspended so that the work done during the previous campaigns (1961 and 1962) could be coordinated, and the results obtained systematically outlined in an initial monograph (S. M. Puglisi - P. Meriggi, *Malatya - I*, *Oriens Antiqui Collectio*, III, Rome 1964). Apart from Prof. P. Meriggi, Leader of the Mission, and myself, Director of Excavations, the following took part in the 1964 Expedition: A. Davico (architect), Drs. E. Castaldi, A. Palmieri, P. E. Pecorella, R. Tamassia, and Sig. G. Franconi. As in former years, official assistance was provided in a friendly spirit of collaboration by Mr. H. T. Uçankuş on behalf of the Turkish Department for Antiquities.

As is known, in terms of stratigraphy, the Hüyük of Arslantepe contains a series of layers ranging from late Chalcolithic (as at present attested) to the Islamic age. Since excavation is now in a phase of full development here, exploration has to be divided up into various sectors and accompanied by detailed observation, and these requirements can only be met by the presence of a fair number of investigators. An extension of the cuttings made on the extreme north-east side of the hill (sectors B1 and B2) has helped to clarify the general stratigraphy and tell us more about the deeper levels. In fact, between the late Chalcolithic level (evidence for which was found in 1961 in sector B1) and that dating back to the second half

of the 1st millennium, which the 1962 exploration reached in sector B2, it had not been possible previously to identify the nature of the intervening layers (Cf. *Malatya - I*, cit., p. 44, fig. 4). This was done during the third campaign, albeit over a limited area. The presence of an Early Bronze Age level has been attested: it is characterised by handmade pottery with a red-slipped surface and would seem to provide evidence of two distinct phases. In these sectors (corresponding to an external area situated some distance from the neo-Hittite defence wall - which was probably built on the foundations of the old imperial-Hittite enclosing wall) the side of this rising terrain would seem to have been cut into in ancient times for the erection of buildings dating from the imperial-Hittite age. Investigation of the pre-Hittite stratigraphy, therefore, could only be carried out on those strips of ground that had not been cut into, and will have to be resumed and accompanied by more thorough observation of archaeological material.

Other important factors of a topographical nature are emerging and relate to the urban centre in the imperial-Hittite age. The fortified perimeter wall has been proved to belong to at least three different periods (Cfr. *Malatya - I*, cit. p. 18 et seq.; p. 28, and p. 44, fig. 4) as a result of the 1964 excavation work, and the «Gateway of the Lions» has accordingly been three times built. Now this wall is of modest extension and limited to the top of the hill: is it, then to be related only to the «palace» citadel? And if this is so, does a second perimeter wall

exist and enclose a much larger inhabited area around the citadel? The shape of the Hüyük, bounded by a modern road that has modified its original form, and the fact that discovery of arhaeological material has extended into surrounding cultivated fields, makes such a hypothesis plausible and offers a more exact explanation of the historical importance that Malatya seems to have had in the changing vicissitudes of Hittite civilization (Cf. P. Matthiae, *Das hethitische Malatya*, in «Raggi», 4,2,1962).

In the area to the west where, in the previous campaign, a massive construction in large blocks had emerged and was thought to be connected with the east side of a monumental gate earlier than the complex studied by Delaporte (*La Porte des Lions*, Paris 1940), further checking removed all doubt and led to the discovery of the west side of the entrance and the uncovering of the entire structure (fig. 1). A general stratigraphical survey seems to indicate that this gate (which, as other material found at the same level has shown, was rightly assigned to the imperial Hittite period) was already in a state of decay and abandonment when the outbreak of an extensive fire spread a layer of combustion over those ruins from which the fallen débris of higher structures and eventual decorative elements had been removed. No trace of the latter has been found. Remains of a road-bed previously noted belong to a period subsequent to the fire and form part of a complex that was re-built between the «imperial» gate and that of «the Lions».

The plan of this monumental entrance of the imperial age is typical of the architectural development characterizing defensive gateways to Anatolian urban centres from the time of the ancient pattern observed at Troy IIB, 2 (J. Mellaart, *Notes on the architectural remains of Troy I and II*, *Anatolian Studies*, IX, 1959, p. 141, fig. 5) down to fortified gates like those at Bogazköy (K. Bittel and H. Çam-

bel, *Bogazköy*, Istanbul 1951). The two sides, built in large blocks of stone, contain two openings of which only the outer one was destined to be completed by a double-leafed door as the existence of two massive sockets shows. The small inner courtyard, formed by two recesses placed opposite each other in the wall and the road itself that passed through this double entrance, were paved with slabs. A difference in the two recesses must be noted: they are not symmetrical, the western one being twice as large (2.70 m.) as though it was meant to contain some ornamental motif (a statue?). But in both there is a step of about 30 cm. at a height of about 50 cm. from the paved surface, and this leads one to postulate the existence, originally, of a revestment consisting of slabs perhaps decorated with ornamental figures. The general impression is that of a monumental complex that must have been imposing both in terms of masonry and decorative additions. This gate was certainly restored twice and from the time of its earliest imperial-Hittite phase down to the end of the VIIIth century B.C. its plan and its position remained unchanged. Hence it is very plausible, as I have already suggested, that its ornamental features at one with its architectural conception were renewed through the use, if partial, of old material and the re-fashioning of figurative motives (Cf. *Malatya - I*, cit., p. 19).

Material found in the layer of combustion and at the level of the foundation structures have unmistakable features: wheel-turned pottery with a yellowish-red surface of somewhat coarse appearance together with polished hand-made vessels, large and small bowls, bottle-shaped vases with a single handle, *oinochoai*, ovoid jars with pointed or slightly flattened bottoms (Cf. H. H. von der Osten, *The Alishar Hüyük*, II, Chicago 1937; H. Z. Koşay, *Les fouilles d'Alaca Hüyük*, Ankara 1951). Other finds in the same layer consisted of: more than 50 cylindrical

clay weights with narrow centres, piled up near the western side of the gate; a series of hard stone, amber and gold necklace beads (fig. 2); a copper arrowhead similar in shape to those specimens in bone discovered in layers corresponding to the imperial Hittite period (*The Alishar Hüyük*, II, cit., fig. 270); a copper flat axe with side projections (fig. 3).

The most valuable find was that of a laminated copper jug; its body is squat, its neck high and cylindrical and it rests on a high stem (fig. 4). The thickness of the lip was obtained by folding the edges of the copper plate outwards: the handle, decorated on the outside by three cord-like ridges, has been fixed with small rivets. The production of metal vases, especially in gold and silver, was a well-known Anatolian industry from the «Copper Age» onwards (Troy II, Alaca Hüyük), and the common view is that the products of this craftsmanship in metal (which were much sought after) were a conspicuous factor in fixing and maintaining the specialized forms characterizing clay vases. As far as the latter are concerned, the standard type is represented by the one-handled, narrow-necked jug which displays an uninterrupted development in Anatolia throughout the Bronze Age, especially in the most common oblique-lipped variety and in the *oinochoai*.

A very thorough investigation has been carried out in the neo-Hittite level and in the one we conventionally term «Hellenistic» (representing the transition to a Roman-Byzantine culture) in the area south of the «Gate of the Lions». Here, in 1962, a large, rectangular building was discovered measuring 8 by 15 m. (*Malatya - I*, cit., p. 28): its foundations are imposing with three rows of large stone blocks placed one above the other on the north and west sides. A stratigraphical survey proved that this palace-like building belonged to the neo-Hittite age: a covering layer of combustion noted at

various points - the same layer mentioned in connexion with those events which destroyed the whole citadel, and with it the last defence wall, towards the end of the VIII th century B. C. A series of dwellings in mud bricks (fig. 5) that flank and rise above the foundations of this building belong to an archaeological level covering the whole of the second half of the first millennium B. C. In fact foundations of the walls of these brick dwellings can be clearly seen to cut into the combustion layer. The building technique in *kerpiç* is one of the most refined so far manifest at Malatya and is to be related to that used in a mud brick building which flanks the «palace» structure to the north, and which we suspected to belong to the Achaemenian period (*Malatya - I*, cit., p. 32).

Apart from the persistent traditional style in vases, found at the neo-Hittite level and here forming the basis of the «Hellenistic» level, the latter also provided evidence of the re-emergence of ceramic specimens (redslipped handmade pots) that are to be related to Early Bronze Age traditions. This archaic influence could be attributed to peoples of a «barbarian» type, ranging from the Cimmerians to the Galatians, whose incursions into Anatolian regions are mentioned in historical sources. (F. Hommel, *Ethnologie aund Geographie des alten Orients*, München 1926). Affinities with pottery found at post-Assyrian levels at Nimrud in Upper Mesopotamia (D. and J. Oates, *Nimrud 1957: the hellenistic settlement*, Iraq, XX, 2, 1958, p. 114 et seq., Pl. XX1, 14), are of great importance for an accurate understanding of the Achaemenian material of Malatya.

On the eastern side of the excavated area, exploration was extended along a wide stretch of the Roman-Byzantine village that forms the upper layer (I) of the Hüyük. The artisan character of this group of dwellings (intact on the eastern slopes) was perceived after the discovery

in 1962 of the «four-ovened house» - probably a smith's workshop - and was confirmed after the emergence of structures deemed to be a potter's laboratory (fig. 6).

This group of buildings consists of an inner courtyard, originally paved with slabs, around which there are a series of irregularly-shaped rooms; it is built with shapeless pieces of stone and the technique used was somewhat careless. In the centre of the courtyard a circular construction was noticed (external diameter : 2.10 m.); it was sunk into the floor, and at its base there was a horizontal beam. A wooden pivot fixed so as to support a rotating mechanism must have been inserted into this. A wheel of this type provides a variant to the potter's lathe. The smallest of the rooms backing on to the western wall of these buildings was in fact an oven for the baking of vases : piles of these, in fragments, were found to be still in place but buried beneath ash and charcoal. Of notable importance for the study of the various vases belonging to this period was the discovery of this oven full of vessels not removed owing to some sudden catastrophe or collapse.

The qualitative and decorative features of this Roman-Byzantine pottery have already been outlined (*Malatya - I*, cit. p. 38). It comprises big bowls, plates, two-handled pots, lids, large storage-jars, usually coarse or with brown-slipped surface; to these must now be added a type of ovoid jar, very much lengthened out in appearance with a flat base and a lip that is slightly bent outwards; it has a single, horizontally fixed, handle (fig. 7). A good many specimens of this type of object were found which proves that there

was a common demand for it. One particular shows that these vases were intended for a specific purpose : the presence in all cases of a small hole near to where the handle is joined to the body of the vessel. We had the opportunity to compare them with others of the same shape manufactured until a short time ago, in the Malatya area, and we noticed the same characteristics as to the shape, the single side handle and hole. Now these recent specimens - like their Roman - Byzantine models - were intended, it seems, for the preparation of an acid and thirst-quenching drink - the *ayran*, obtained by diluting yoghurt in water. This proves how important a function is as a factor in determining and conserving types; and such a factor should be fully considered in studying the phenomenon of a persisting tradition that has already been referred to.

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- Fig. 3 — Arslantepe (Malatya). Copper flat axe (imperial Hittite level).
- Fig. 4 — Arslantepe (Malatya). Laminated copper jug (imperial - Hittite level).
- Fig. 5 — Arslantepe (Malatya). Mud brick houses of the second half of the first millennium B. C.
- Fig. 6 — Arslantepe (Malatya). The «potter's house» (Roman-Byzantine level).
- Fig. 7 — Arslantepe (Malatya). Jars for the preparation of the *ayran* (Roman-Byzantine level).

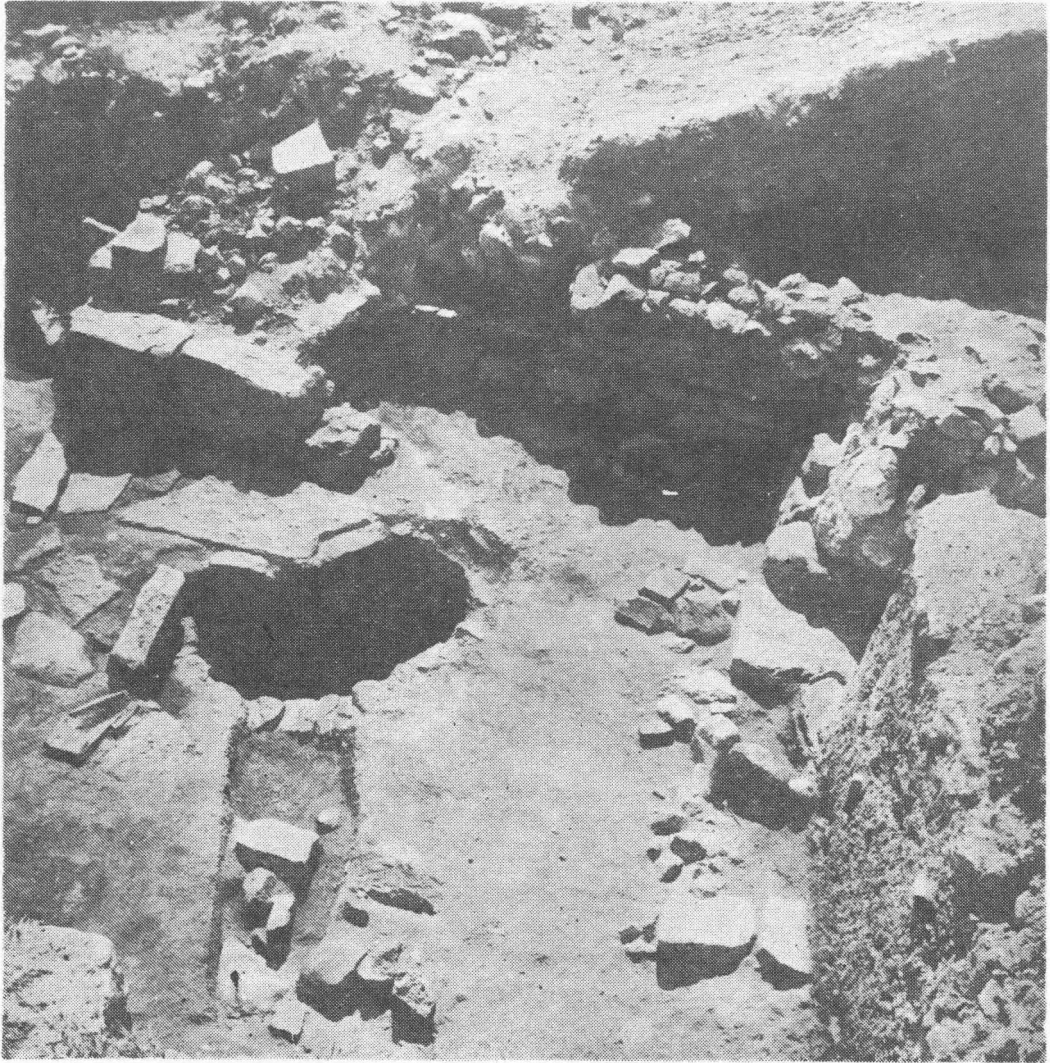
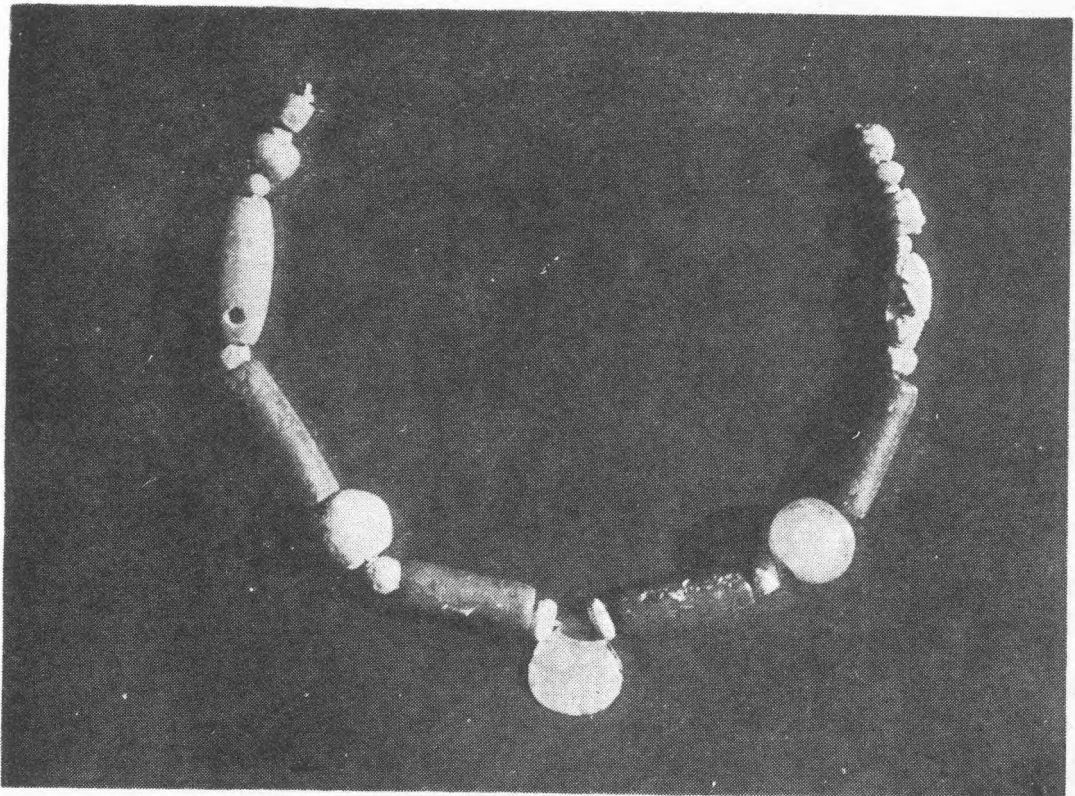


Fig. 1



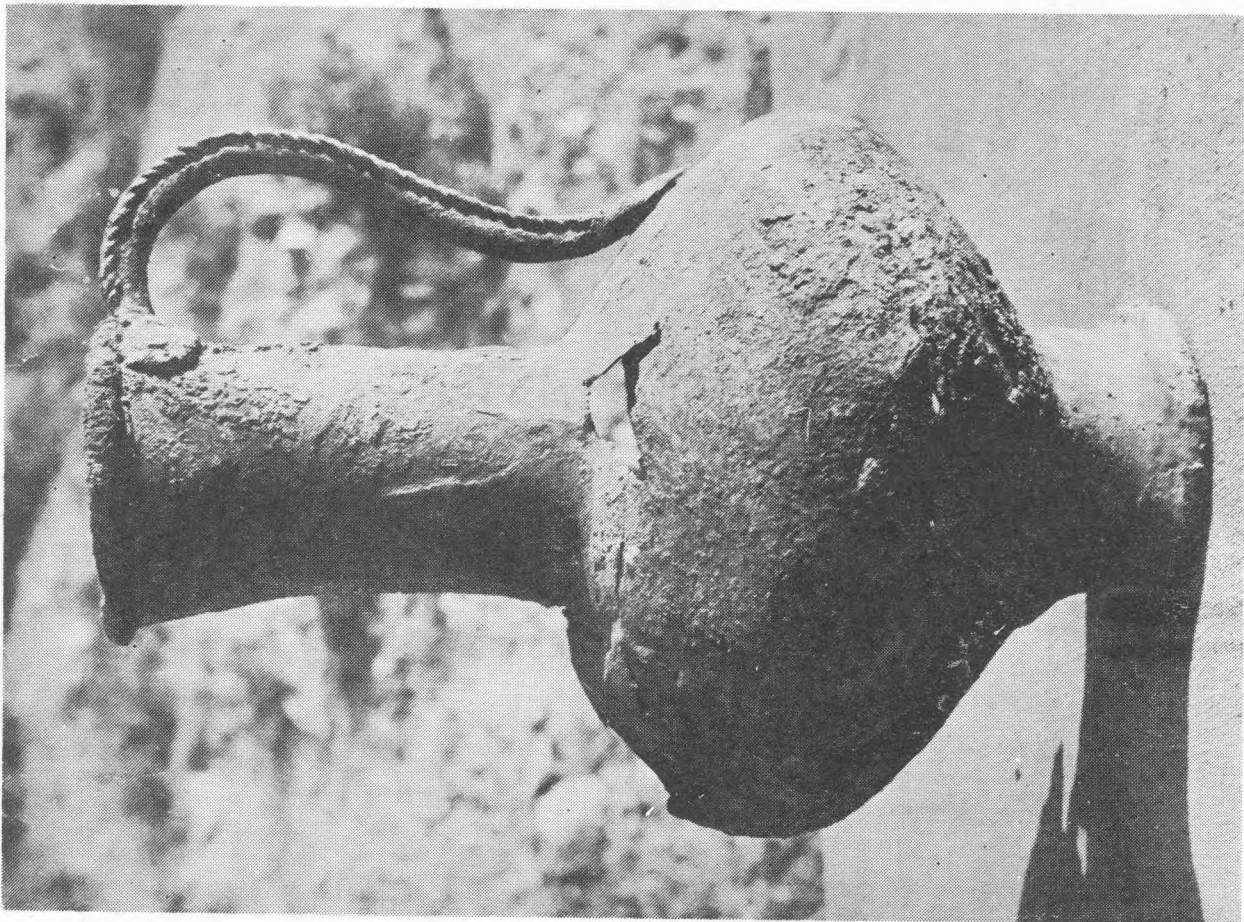


Fig. 4.

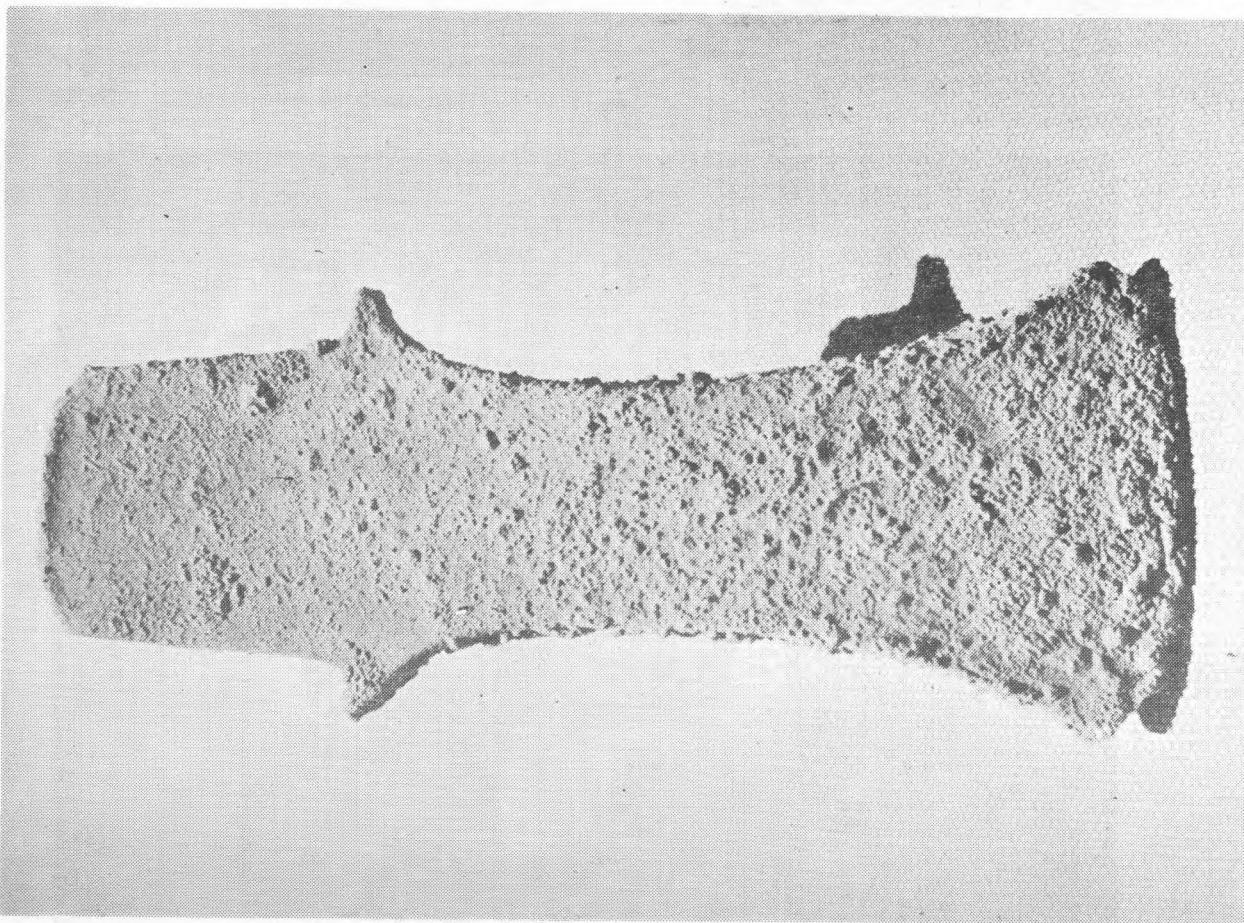


Fig. 3.

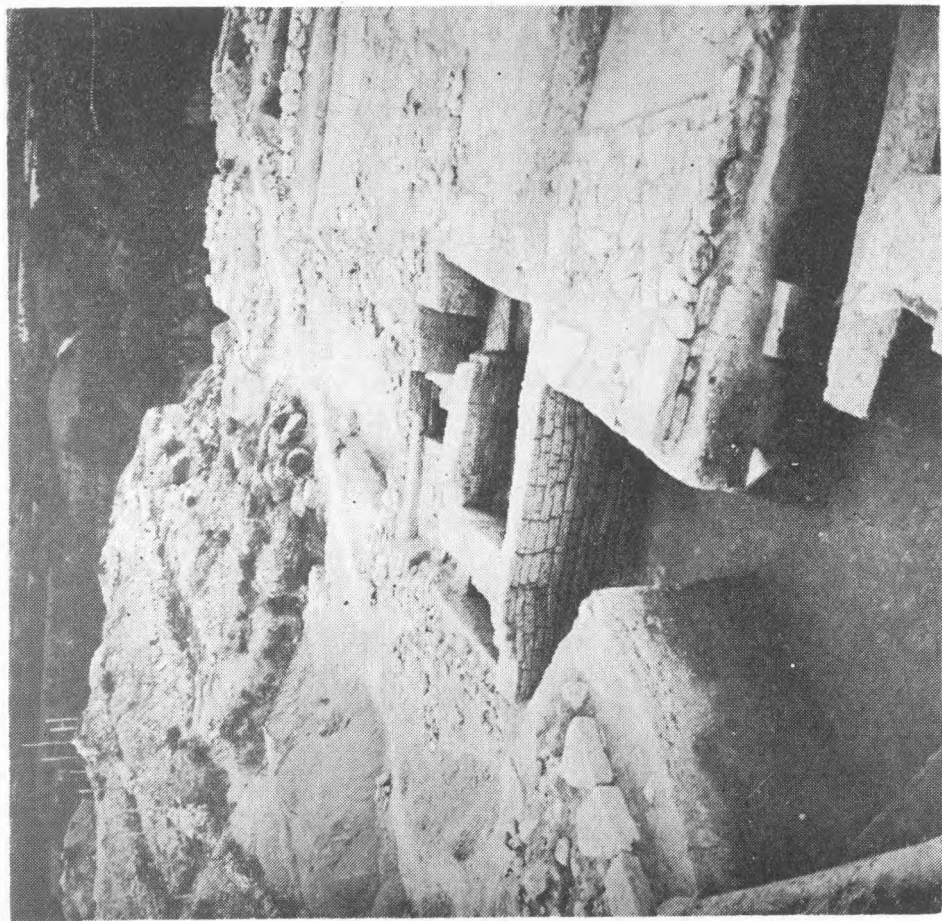


Fig. 5.

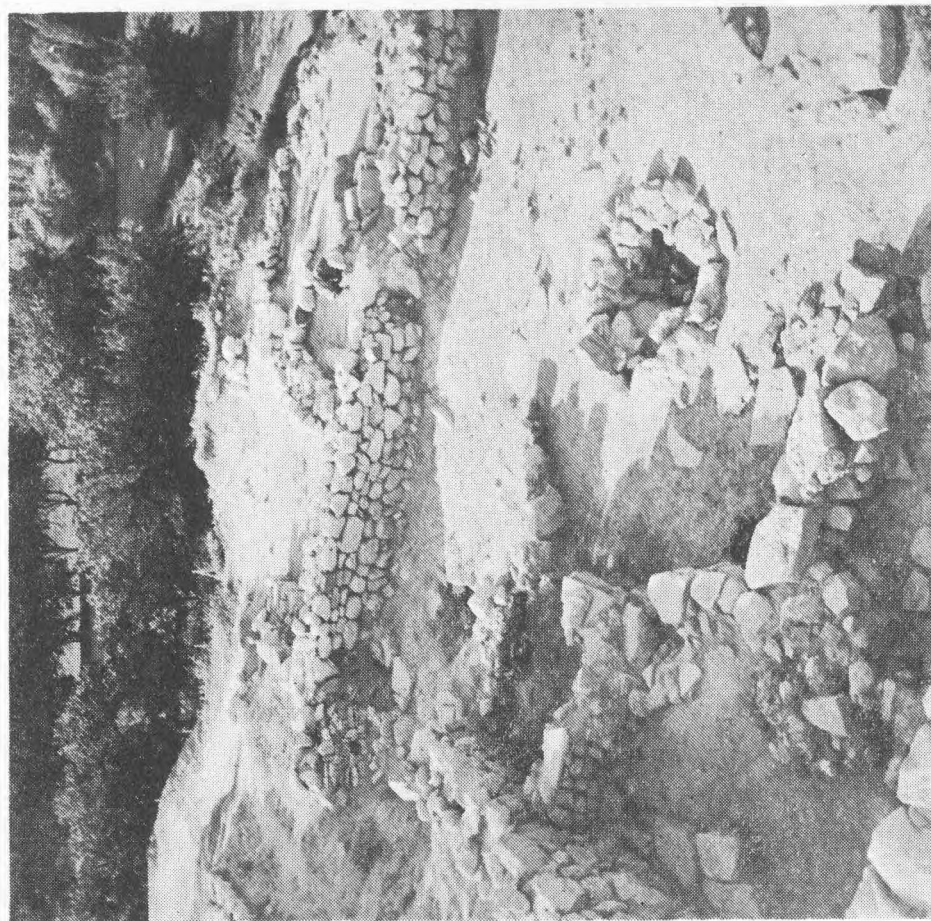


Fig. 6.

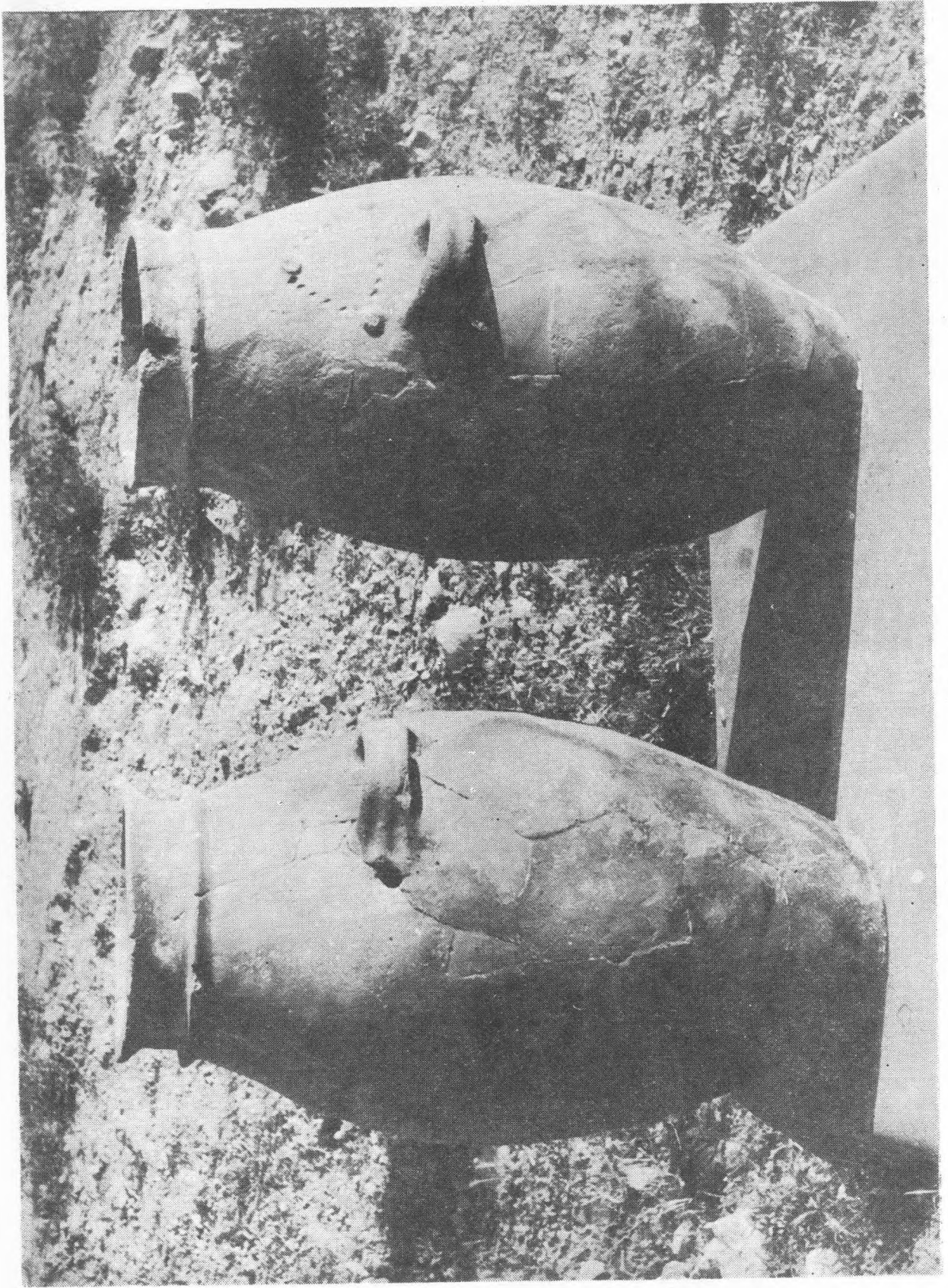


Fig. 7.