

TOPAKLI - THE 1969 CAMPAIGN OF EXCAVATION

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The operations of the 1969 campaign of excavation began on July 10th and ended on September 15th¹. Starting this year, the Expedition has at its disposal at Topaklı, on a five-year rent, a spacious house of recent construction, which belongs to the Community of Topaklı. This house in addition to accomodation for the members of the expedition has also been equipped with adequate facilities for the technical services (restoration, drawing, photography) and store-rooms.

The following took part in the 1969 Expedition: Prof. Luigi Polacco, director; dott. Elena Di Filippo, Bianca Maria Scarfi, Guido Rosada, Umberto Dalle Mulle, excavation assistants; dott. Marisa Rigoni, in charge of the register and the store-room; arch. Mario Balestrazzi, geom. Giovanni Meng, surveyors; Mr Giuseppe Penello, restorer; Mr Luigi Ruzzarin, photographer; Mr Severino Ton, personnel manager. The Commissioner for the Turkish authorities for this year also was Mr Şemsettin Köksal. The workmen for digging and such like activities were recruited on the spot with an average of 50 men working each day.

THE EXCAVATION

The digging operations were carried out in three sectors (Pl. I).

¹ L. Polacco, *Topaklı, I campagna di scavo 1967*, notizie preliminare in "St. mic. egeo-anat." 1969 p. 76 sq.; ID., *Topaklı 1967 Kazısı* in *Türk Ark. Dergisi* XVI 1967, p. 177 sq.; ID., *Topraklı, Campaign of Excavations 1968* in "Türk Ark. Derg." XVII 1969, p. 165 ss.

I. Squares MNO 15-16-17 ("Acropolis").

With respect to last year the area under excavation has been extended on the surface into the squares MNO 17. That is a total of 1.000 m.sq.: an area at the centre of the hüyük (presumably its focal point) sufficiently large to reveal organic architectural groups (Fig. 1).

Level A: Byzantine chapel and cemetery (Pl. II). The tombs that have so far come to light in the various campaigns already number more than a hundred and fifty. The typology forecast in the 1969 report was confirmed. However some tombs have appeared which have been built with blocks of greater dimensions and which are orientated NW-SW or NW-SE: these are at a greater depth and precede the cemetery proper (Fig. 2). Among the most interesting finds are a pair of bronze and lead filigree earrings, an earring of pasta vitrea bound in gold, and an inscription.

Level B: structures of a Byzantine castle. There are scattered strips whose formal identification is, for the present at least, difficult. In square M 17 a door flanked by a tower is clearly visible. This level can be distinguished equally from the one above as from the one below by sharp and continuous layers of ash.

Levels C and D (Pl. III): here we come to the Hellenistic-Roman area. An organic group of houses appears with courtyards that are more or less porticoed. This inhabited area extended downwards along the slopes of the "Acropolis" (see

sector II), where however the dwellings, terraced one behind the other, seem to get closer together. The structures were placed one on top of each other fairly consistently at the various levels. One can see partial rebuilding with regard to individual dwellings and due to restorations, improvements, etc., and complete rebuilding due to earthquakes and fires. It does not however seem that there are any cultural differences to be noted between the levels C and D, unless perhaps a greater architectural intention and a superior quality of finds in D. Particularly notable are some red glaze pots (of the Pergamum type) of perfect technique and excellent quality, among which there is a big plate (42 cm in diameter) and an amphora (Fig. 3). A beautiful black paint lamp and a noteworthy amphora seal can shed some light in establishing absolute chronology: the former is clearly of Hellenistic type, if not classical, and came from level D, the latter (level C) is undoubtedly of Roman date.

II. *The Diachronic Trench* (abbreviated DT) (Fig. 4).

The 1967 and 1968 campaigns (see the relative reports) had begun to uncover a trench 9 m. wide, 25 m. long and a maximum depth of 6 m., thereby ascertaining the presence under level C of four other levels (D-G) all belonging to the Hellenistic-Roman horizon. We are dealing with the same collection of houses that had been brought to light on the "Acropolis" for the levels C and D and which is therefore present in the hüyük with a strong layer about 5 m. deep.

In the 1969 campaign the excavation of the DT put forward three plans:

a) to re-examine the passages C-G of the 1968 dig to get a better idea of their order;

b) to prolong the excavation of the DT for another 25 m. until it came out on the side of the hüyük;

c) to cut into the hüyük as far as possible below level G.

As regards the first plan, the continuity and homogeneity of the Hellenistic-Roman levels has emerged more clearly than ever (Fig. 5). One knows how little known this period is, due to the habit on Anatolian digs of failing to submit these levels to precise stratigraphical observations. Now we have collected a mass of data of every sort on the dig and side by side we have proceeded to a very detailed record of the finds (about a hundred cases of selected pottery fragments, as well as about a hundred vases more or less intact or recomposed by restoration and many other various objects in metal bone, pasta vitrea, etc.).

As regards the second plan, we had to face a vast mountain of manual labour, since about 900 m.cu. was dug up. Unfortunately (if one should use that word) the excavation of the DT at once brought to light, on the very edge of the upper terrace of the hüyük, some Byzantine structures which because of their very completeness suggested a separate excavation beyond the limits of the DT (cf. sector III). This blocked the opening to the outside of the DT except for a corridor 2.5 m. wide and considerably complicated the already difficult problem of the excavated earth from the DT.

The third plan is the most important. We proceeded to beyond 9 m. in depth. The architectural levels that have been verified are four (H-M). The cultural horizon is decidedly different here. At level H an architectural structure appeared of the "a megaron" type situated under an apsidal structure (Pl. IV and Fig. 6). The lack of specific finds has (so far) made it impossible to establish whether we are dealing with a religious or civil building. Beside it there is a courtyard and a small prothyron. Some of the pottery corresponds to the types already known in the Hellenistic levels, and some to new types, of brown glaze and with sharper and more metallic shapes, which seem rather to be derived from shapes

commonly known as "Phrygian" (particularly notable is a quadrangular bowl (Fig. 7) of a grey-brown impasto polished up, taurine protomai with bulls' heads). Some fragments have also appeared painted with geometric patterns of certainly "Phrygian" type. Still a Greek coin very corroded but in any case classifiable in the late Hellenistic period was found in the crevices of a wall of H and brings in a note of caution, even if it is known how easy it is for coins to drop down deeper on their own. Here too it will be interesting to evaluate the importance and the cultural character of this period which seems to be one of transition.

Starting from level L, that is at about 7.50 m., every type of pottery previously present definitely disappears. We have only one kind of beautiful pottery of a black or brown (sometimes red) impasto, with sharp outlines and well-defined "Phrygian" shapes. I would be very cautious about the validity of this term, particularly for the area of Topaklı and in any case at the moment we are far from possessing sufficient basic material. Indeed the fragments painted with geometric patterns have been numerous, but unfortunately no vase either intact or which could be reconstructed.

The appearance of some red paint fragments already of neo-hittite type should be noted at the bottom levels; it is probable that we have thus reached the threshold of the Hittite levels. Nevertheless the presence of a strong "Phrygian" layer in the hüyük of Topaklı, if confirmed and better documented by subsequent excavations, seems a fact of considerable importance.

III *The Byzantine building to the E of the Martyrion* (Pl. V and Fig. 8).

While proceeding to the excavation of the upper levels of the DT towards the edge of the upper terrace, some structures appeared which were shown to be Byzantine by their technique and on the basis of the finds. These structures showed, as

the excavation proceeded a certain accuracy and completeness and so it was decided to preserve them even if this meant blocking two-thirds of the advancing DT. At first the orientation and regularity of the buildings made us suspect the presence of the basilica which according to the hypothesis should be near the martyrion but for which we searched last year without success (see 1968 report). But the lack of symmetry in some of the buildings and the presence of finds that are undeniably linked to daily life (mill-stones, pestles, oil-presses, ploughshares (Fig. 9), etc.) excluded this possibility; it is certainly a civil building, perhaps a small palace.

The structures continue *immediately under* the martyrion. They belong to a phase of level B (the uninterrupted section in the wall of the DT by now begins to allow stratigraphical connections between the DT and the "Acropolis"). Above the structures we are talking about, there are some strips of wall similar to those found above the martyrion and below the cemetery. We can therefore put forward, if only provisionally, a certain articulation of the Byzantine period: 1) chapel with cemetery 2) castle 3) martyrion 4) small palace, in relative chronological order.

RESTORATION, PRESERVATION AND STUDY OF THE MATERIAL

All the material has been, where possible, restored. The restoration has been carried with great skill and ability by Mr Penello. About fifty vases, among which some pythoi and a large and an unusual bowl of conic-trunk form (Fig. 10), have been put together. The better material has been handed over to the Nevşehir Museum, where it is hoped a room will be reserved for it, the preparation of which will be seen to on the next campaign. The pieces that have been handed over to the Nevşehir Museum are by now about a hundred including bronzes vases pasta vitreas and various *instrumenta*, thus illus-

trating cultures that extend, at present, from the Proto-Byzantine to the "Phrygian" period.

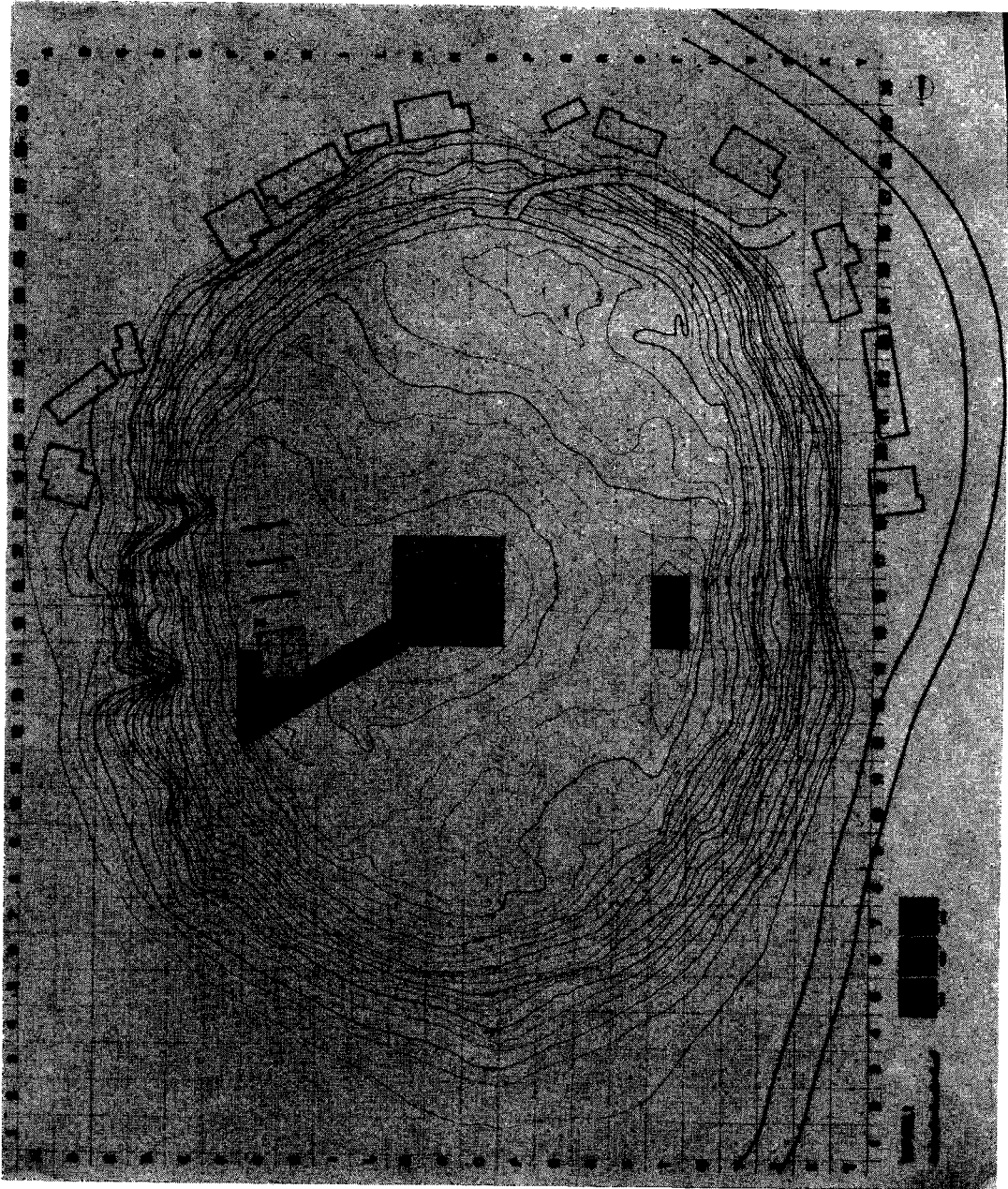
The cases with selected clay fragments, the vases (more or less intact) of less importance, a lot of other minor material and the paleonto-anthropological remains have been left at Topaklı. The anthropological remains have been put at the disposal of the Department of Anthropology of the University of Ankara. All the material has been registered with an entrance number, separately object by object; the cases of sherds distinguished by type and level, have also been registered with the progressive number of the same series. The photographs also have been registered by date and subject.

Until now the scientific personnel of the Expedition has co-operated in their daily assistance at the digging operations and their relative registration. The outcome of the excavation has been the object of their various preliminary reports. But the great quantity of Hellenistic-Roman ceramic material that has already come up, necessarily requires a specific study, which dott. Rigoni has already begun to get under way.

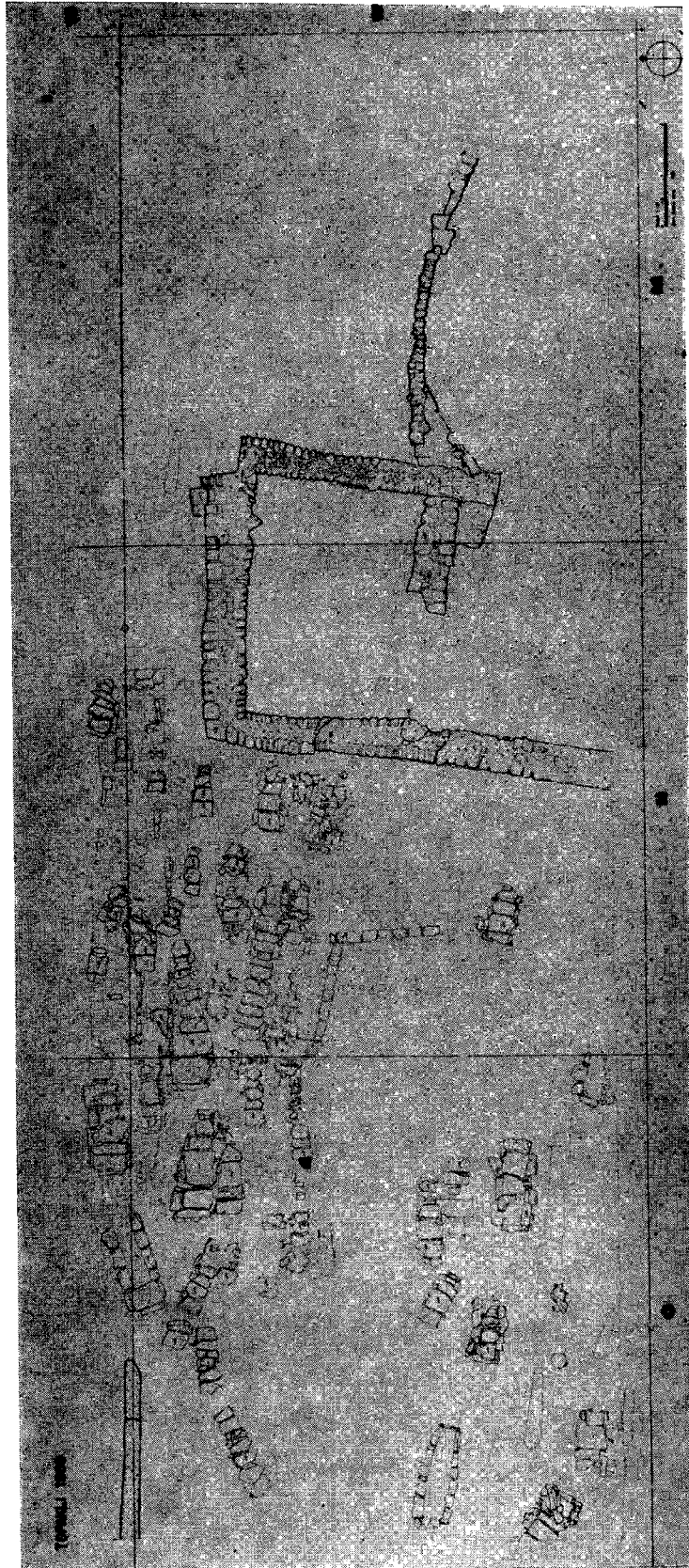
EXPLORATION.

This was one of the things we have never been able to do on previous expeditions as they always took place in the spring when the surroundings of Topaklı are a sea of mud, but which this year since the summer season was in our favour, we were able to accomplish without difficulty. On Sundays we explored the surroundings of Topaklı. The area very rich in hüyük, for the most part already indicated by Meriggi², but above all in tumuli, some of outstanding dimensions, such as the three in a row to be found on the crest of the hill which dominates Özkonak to the West. In the course of these explorations we were able not only to keep up friendly relations with the local population, who have always been very hospitable, but we were also able to carry out some interesting observations which are indispensable if we are to have a more exact historical-topographical framework of the hüyük of Topaklı.

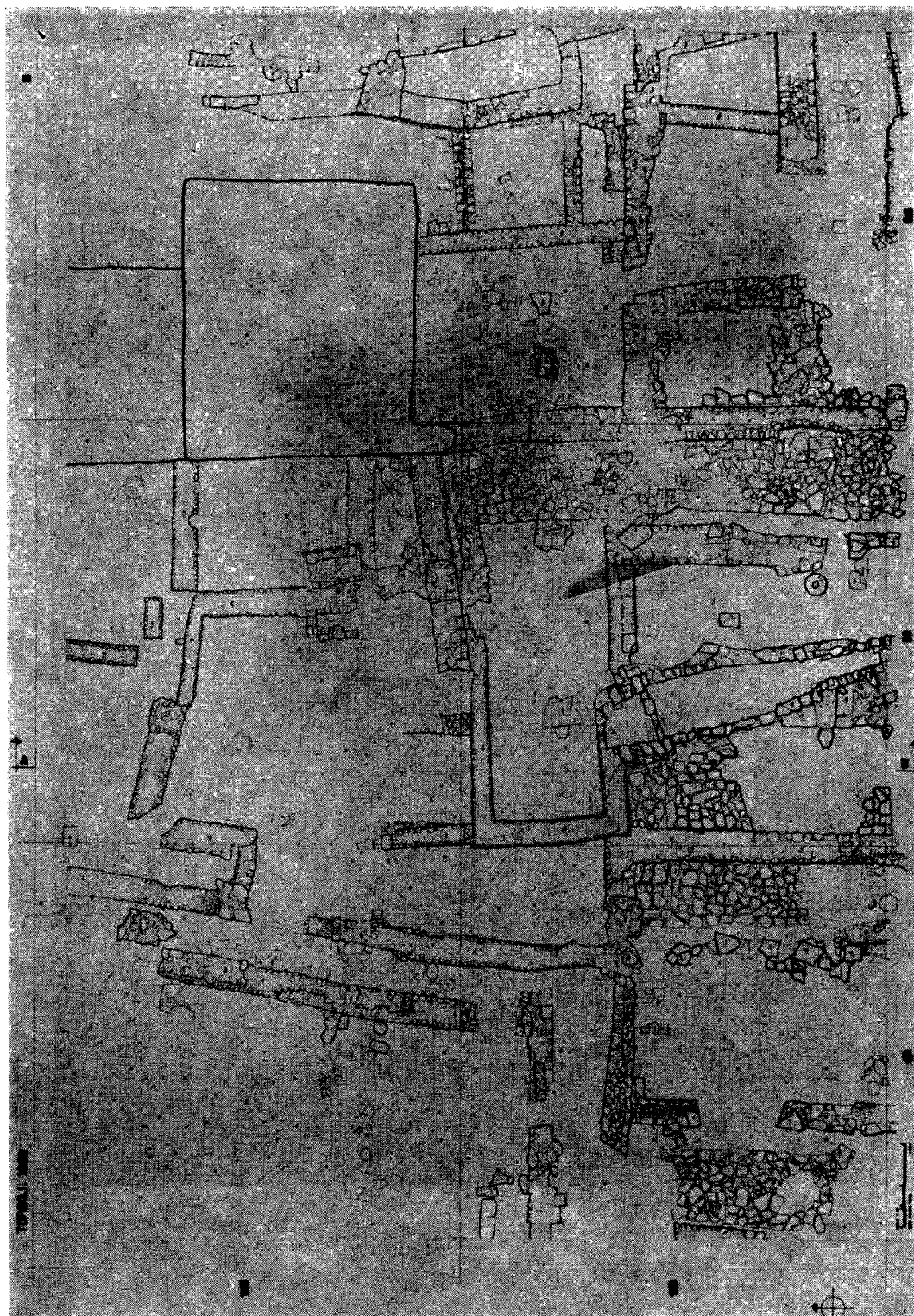
² P. Meriggi, *Quinto viaggio anatolico* in "Oriens Antiquus" V 1966, p. 67 sq.



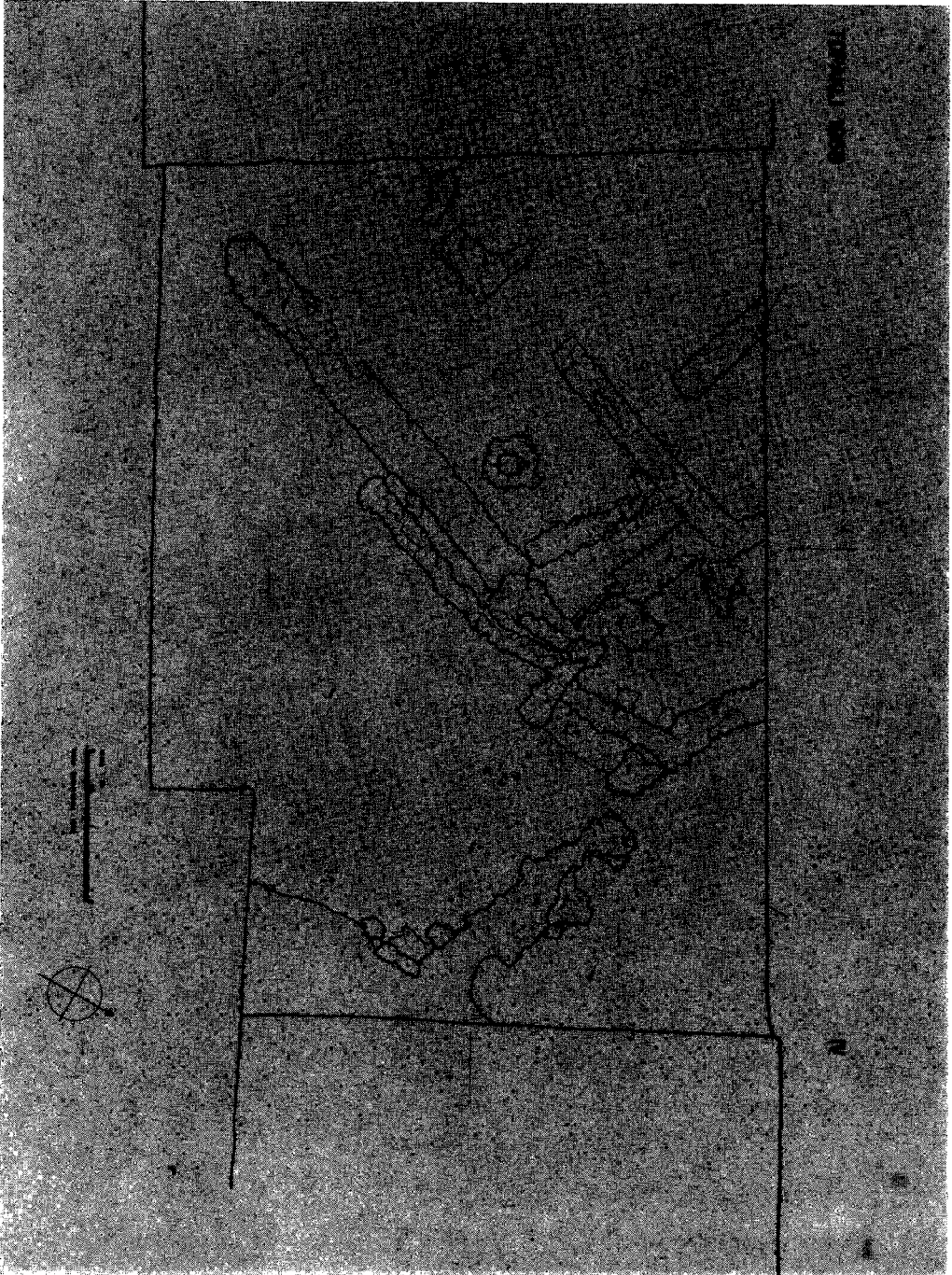
Pl. 1



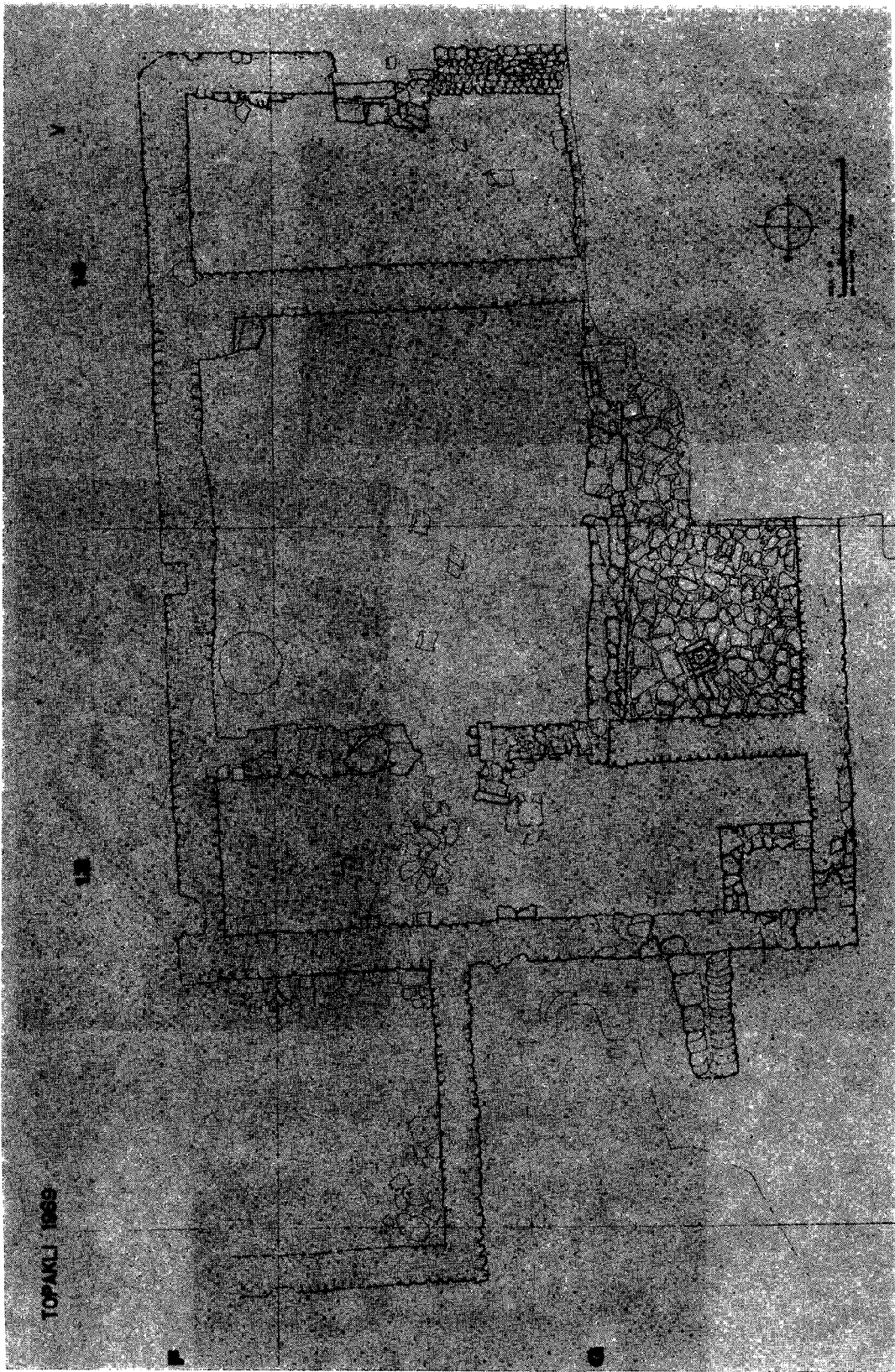
Pl. 2



Pl. 3



Pl. 4



Pl. 5



Fig. 1

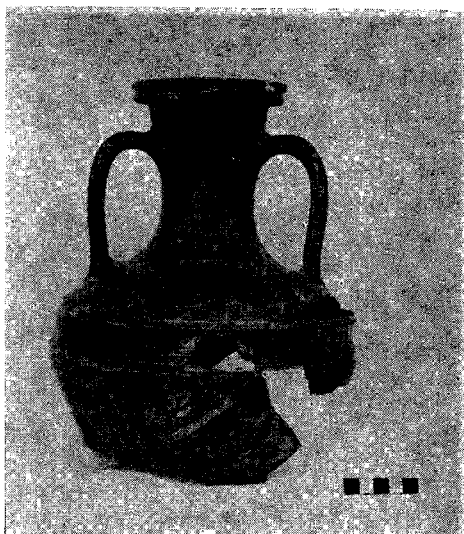


Fig. 3



Fig. 2

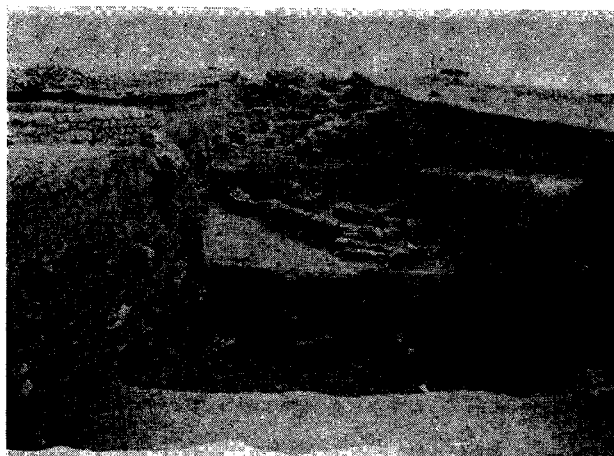


Fig. 4

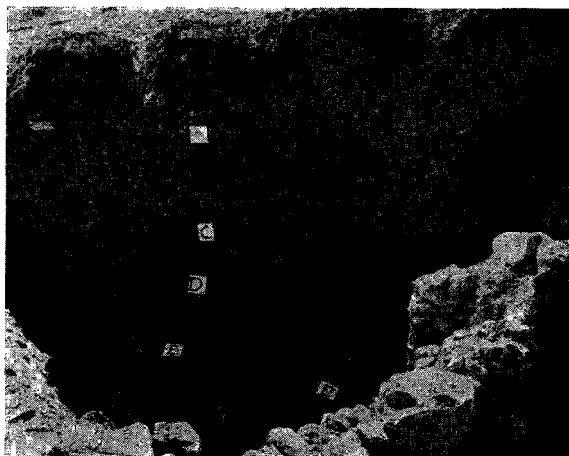


Fig. 5



Fig. 6

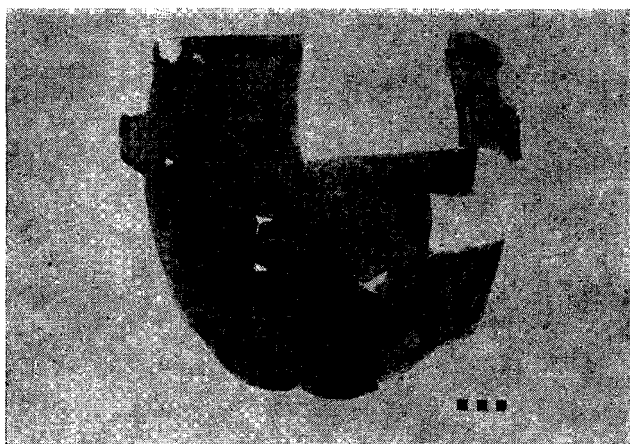


Fig. 7



Fig. 8

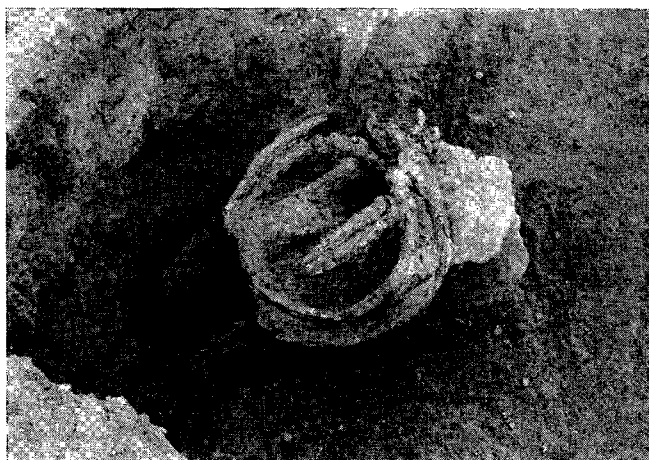


Fig. 9



Fig. 10