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AN EARLY BRONZE AGE SHRINE AT BEYCESULTAN

By SETON LLOYD and JAMES MELLAART

PREVIOUS PRELIMINARY REPORTS in this journal have dealt with the results of excavations at Beycesultan conducted by our Institute in 1954 and 1955.¹ Excavations in 1956 were on a slightly reduced scale, occupying the period of six weeks from the beginning of June until mid-July. During that time most of our energies were concentrated on a major sounding, whose purpose was to investigate the Early Bronze Age occupations of the site. By the end of the season's work, this sounding had not yet been completed. A level had been reached corresponding to one of the early sub-divisions of the Second Settlement at Troy ; but at this point it was estimated that some 9 metres of occupational debris remained to be excavated, before the original virgin soil was likely to appear. Under these circumstances it has been considered that any report on our stratigraphical results would for the present be premature and should await the completion of the sounding during the course of the coming season. The notes which follow are concerned with a single isolated discovery, made in the fifteenth occupation level—the deepest to which we have yet penetrated—shortly before the temporary suspension of our work in July, 1956.

The discovery of a structure recognisable as a religious shrine was made not in the main sounding itself (Fig. 1, trench "S") but in the narrow "barrow-passage" kept open in the side of the hill for the disposal of earth. Already in Levels XIII and XIV this trench had been found to be cutting diagonally across a substantially built chamber whose original foundation belonged to Level XV, and which had apparently been destroyed by fire on three successive occasions. It was not until the earliest remains of the building were reached that it was found to have contained a complex structure of mud-brick, faced with fine plaster, whose religious significance was indicated by the profusion of votive pottery lying around it.

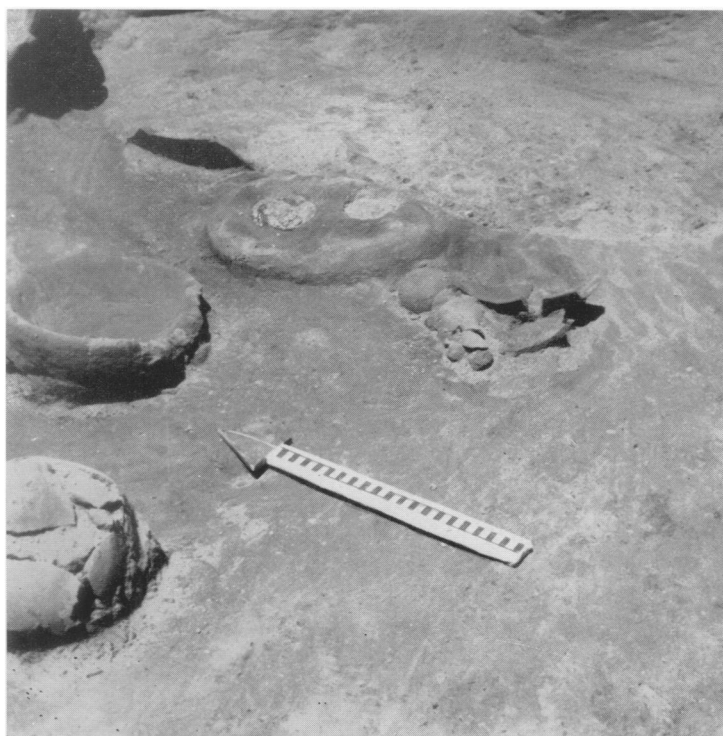
In the plan (Fig. 2), the general shape, which we presume the shrine-chamber to have taken, is indicated in dotted lines. The parts of the walls which fall within the area of the trench are 50 cm. thick and remained standing to an average height of 60 cm. Their orientation enables one to estimate the breadth of the chamber at almost exactly M. 5.00, though its length unfortunately remains uncertain. There was a doorway at the south end, one-half of which has been cleared, revealing the impression of a wooden door-jamb—a tree-trunk split in half and plastered to match the walls themselves. Outside this door there was a sort of bin, perhaps for depositing the discarded surplus of offerings, though it was found to be empty save for the remains of some hairy material resembling felt. The curb-wall which enclosed it and still remained intact stood 60 cm. high, rounded at the top and carefully plastered.

The "shrine" itself stood approximately in the centre of the chamber, M. 5.00 from the south wall, placed at a slight angle to the main axis,

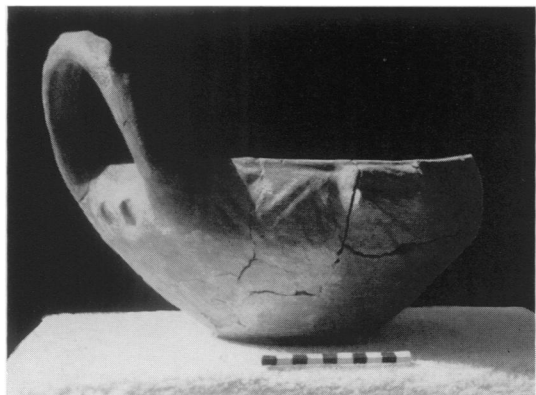
¹ *Anatolian Studies* V, 1955 and VI, 1956.



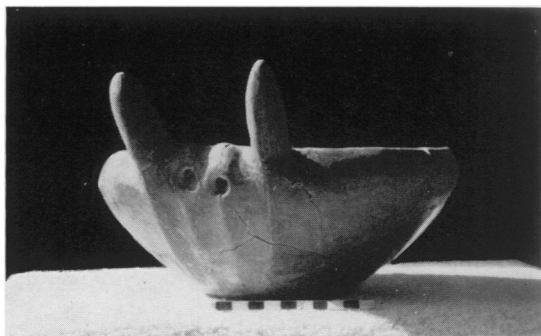
(a) Remains of shrine after removing votive pottery.



(b) Clay base with impressions of twin wooden columns.



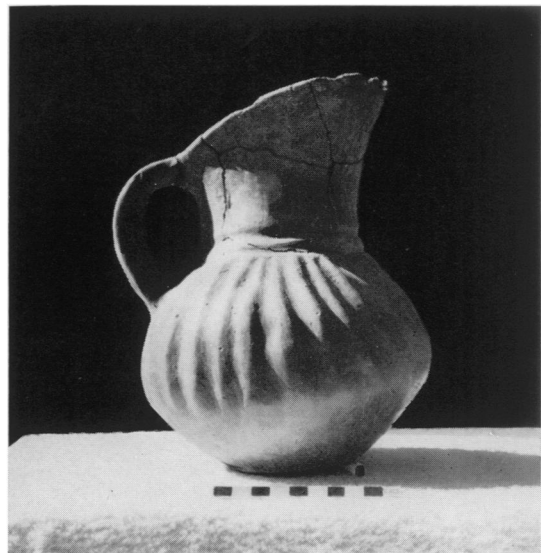
(a) Bowl with twisted handle. No. 3.



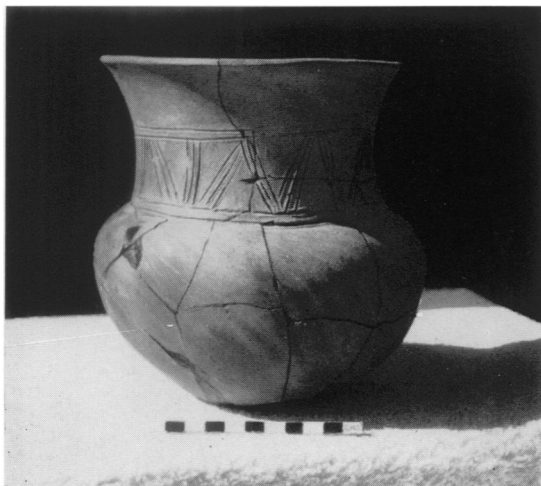
(b) Carinated bowl with horned lug. No. 4.



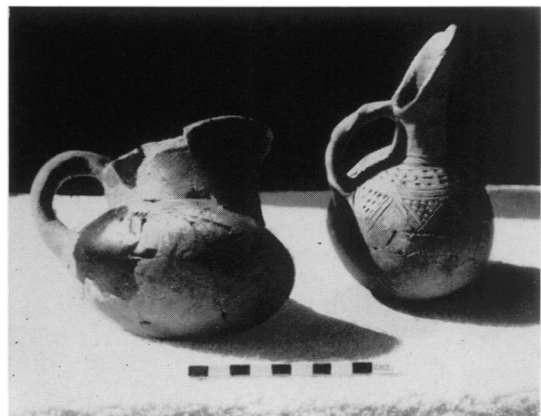
(c) Pedestalled bowl. No. 19.



(d) Spirally fluted jug. No. 42.



(e) Incised fluted jar. No. 6.



(f) Black burnished juglet. No. 1. Incised juglet. No. 32.

perhaps in order to face the doorway. It consisted of two upright stelae about 65 cm. wide and 12 cm. thick, which remained standing to a height 70 cm. [We gained the impression that they might originally have stood almost to the height of a man and perhaps had rounded tops. (See reconstruction in perspective, Fig. 3.)] They were placed 50 cm. apart and the gap between them was emphasised by a structure projecting from their base, which resembled in shape the so-called "horns of consecration" in Cretan architecture of a much later date. There was a semi-circular hollow in the plastered floor immediately in front of this and, built into the backs of the two stelae, were large pottery storage-vessels, 50 cm. in diameter, of two different shapes (Fig. 5, Nos. 1 and 4). The whole structure was carefully finished in a fine, hard, bluish plaster.

Behind the shrine, at a distance of M. 1.50 from the stelae, there was a light screen of wooden columns or posts. The oval-shaped bases of hard clay, in which these had been set, still retained an exact negative impression of them, which showed that pairs of circular posts, 12 cm. in diameter, alternated with single supports of rectangular section, measuring about 12×25 cm. (see Plate II). The outer frame of the screen, which stood directly against the wall, was also of wood, some of which survived in a decayed state. It had been plastered over like the door-jamb previously referred to.

The votive pottery was for the most part crushed and broken, presumably by the fall of the roof, since it was overlaid by much carbonised wood and ashes. The whole or parts of more than forty-five vessels were recovered from the part of the chamber excavated. A few items, including some of the best-preserved bowls and jars, had evidently been left standing on the pavement between the shrine and the door; but the vast majority lay behind the shrine and between the wooden columns. There was also an accumulation of smaller vessels between the two stelae. It was here also that some evidence was recovered to show what the pots had contained. Scattered among the broken fragments were carbonised grains of wheat, barley, lentils, grape-stones and some sort of pulse or groundnut. Rather unexpectedly in such a setting, there were no animal bones. Many of the vessels had contained liquid, which in drying had left a dark ring on the clay; and one may perhaps assume that the two built-in vessels were intended to receive surplus offerings of this sort. Other large storage-jars, perhaps for the same purpose, stood part-sunken in the floor behind the screen of columns.

The large quantity of burnt timber discovered in the chamber suggests that it was covered by a roof, though no trace was found of structural supports to reduce its considerable span. The structure of the shrine itself did not seem to be of the sort which would stand permanent exposure to the weather; and there was no provision for the drainage of rainwater. The screen of wooden posts does not, unfortunately, explain itself.²

² Dr. W. Lamb has published a very full and well-documented discussion of such shrines in *Anatolian Studies* VI, 1956, under the title: "Some Early Anatolian Shrines."

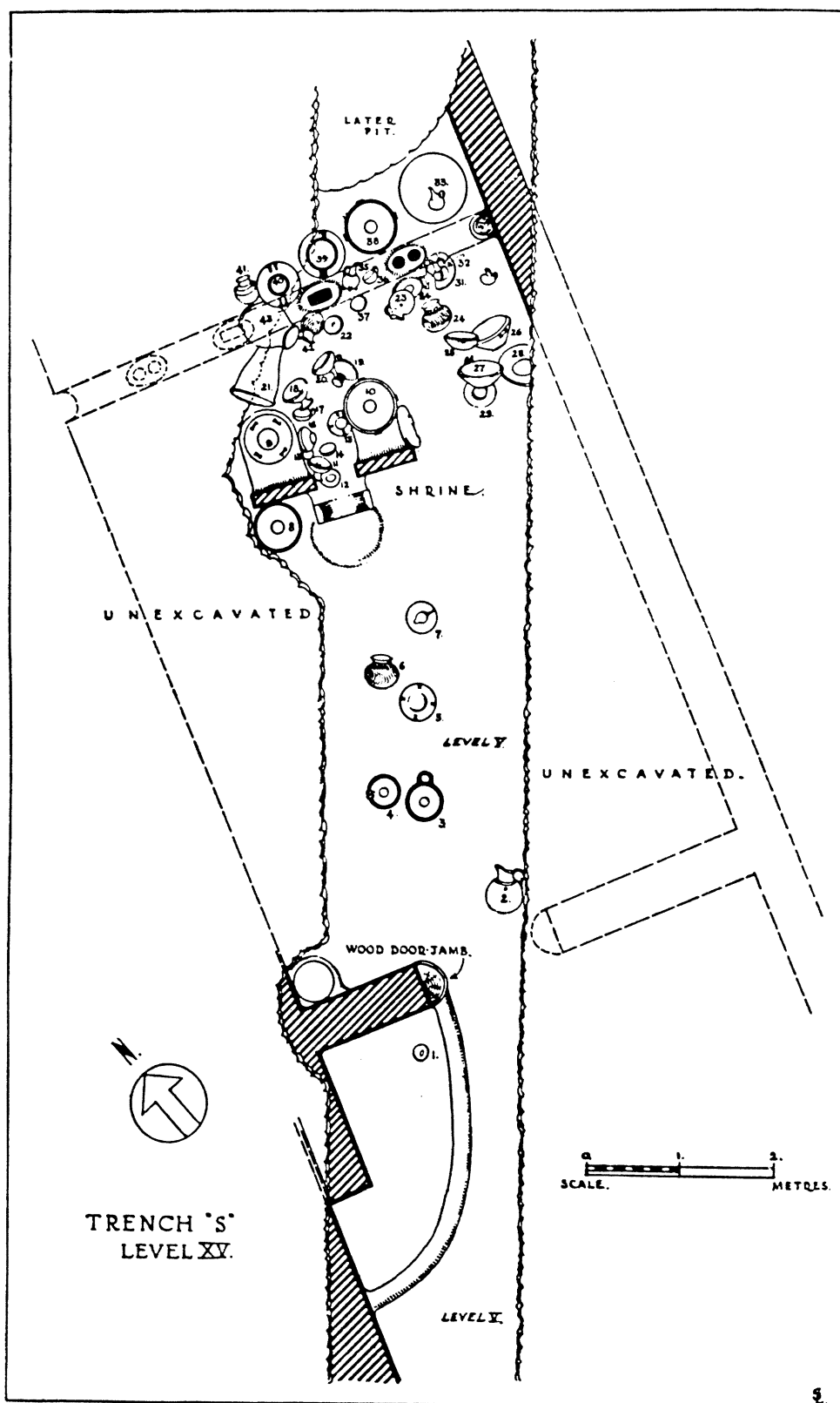


FIG. 2. Part of shrine-chamber exposed in "barrow-passage".

POTTERY FROM THE SHRINE IN BEYCESULTAN XV ³

The finds from the shrine in Level XV consisted almost entirely of pottery ; objects of metal and other materials being conspicuously absent.⁴ This circumscribed group of about forty-five complete or reconstructible vessels is of considerable interest inasmuch as it represents a hitherto unknown West Anatolian culture, only distantly related to those already familiar. Its only close parallels, in fact, are found at Beycesultan itself, in the two subsequent levels, XIV and XIII ; and it would be premature to discuss its antecedents until the sounding which led to its discovery has been completed. All that can be said for the moment is that the culture represented by Levels XV-XIII is totally different from that by which it was replaced in the subsequent occupations, starting from Level XII, which our stratigraphy shows to be contemporary with Troy III and accordingly dated to about 2300 B.C. The three deepest levels themselves have been equated to the early sub-divisions of Troy II, and the shrine in Level XV may therefore be provisionally dated to about 2500 B.C.

This makes the absence of resemblance between the "Shrine" culture and that of the contemporary levels at Troy all the more remarkable. The Troy II culture, in common with the collateral "Early Bronze III" of Cilicia, appears to represent what may be called a "coastal" civilisation and is characterised by technically advanced features such as the use of wheel-made pottery. The "Shrine" culture, by contrast, suggests an "inland" civilisation, more akin to that of the Yortan - Kusura "B" - Isparta group, which appears to have been relatively unaffected by changes in the coastal area and to have retained regional peculiarities.

It is not until the beginning of the Troy III period that features characteristic of the "coastal" civilisation begin to appear in the pottery of Beycesultan and their arrival then corresponds to the abrupt cultural change in Level XII, after the final destruction by fire of the building in which the shrine had stood. The transformation on this occasion is so complete that only a radical change in the population of the settlement could satisfactorily explain it. New pottery, sometimes wheel-made, with a preference for red-polished or red-washed wares ; new methods of construction, introducing a timber framework into both the foundations and the superstructure of the walls ; changes in the design of small objects such as spindle-whorls (which now have incised ornament on one side only) and the disappearance of minor features such as marble figurines all point to a fundamental change in the identity of the mound's inhabitants in about 2300 B.C. At no other epoch in the prolonged occupation of the site at Beycesultan is there evidence to suggest that any further change of this sort took place. A continuous development of pottery types can be

³ As only part of the shrine has been cleared, this note is necessarily of a preliminary nature.

⁴ Two perforated stone discs and three spindle whorls are the only other objects found in the shrine.

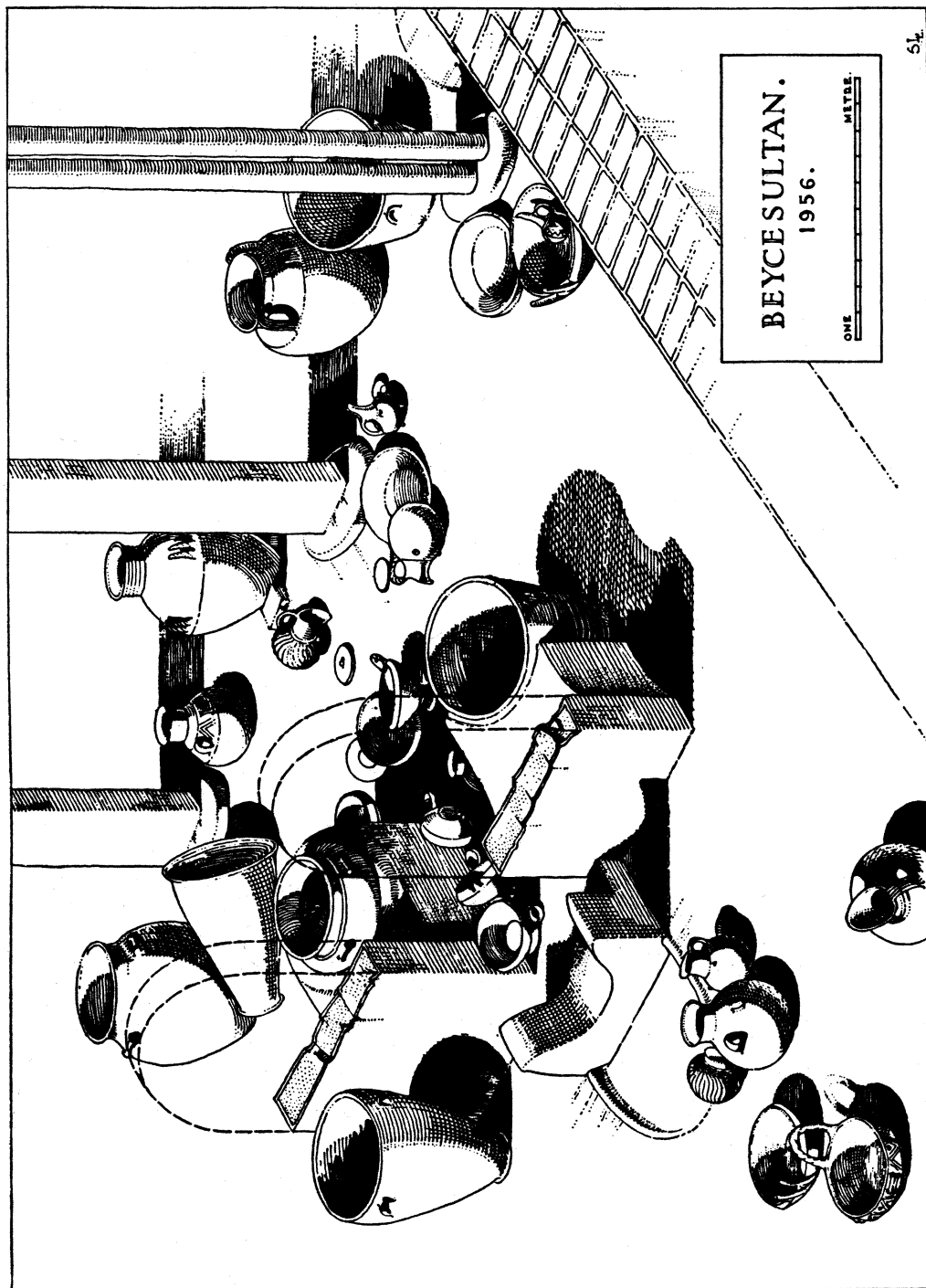


FIG. 3. Reconstruction of Shrine with pottery in place, as found.

recognised and traced from Level XII right through to Level IA, which marks the end of the Bronze Age, at least 1250 years later.

The historical implications of this circumstance are obviously of great importance, since it leads one to assume that the people who make their first appearance at Beycesultan in about 2300 B.C. cannot be differentiated from their descendants who are to be found still inhabiting the site in the Late Bronze Age. By that time evidence from Hittite sources enables them to be identified as Luvians—a people who, like the Hittites themselves and the Greeks, spoke an Indo-European language. If, then, we are to postulate the arrival in the Upper Meander Valley in about 2300 B.C. of a people speaking an Indo-European language, some indication of the direction from which they arrived has already been provided by ceramic affinities with the coastal area to the west. Hypothetical migrations, in the middle of the third millennium, which would suggest for them an origin as far afield as the Balkans, are discussed in detail elsewhere in this volume.⁵

All pottery of Beycesultan XV (and that of XIV and XIII as well) is hand-made. The fabric is rather heavy and coarse and contains straws and grits. Except for the finest pieces, which are uniform and hard fired, the ware is inadequately fired, leaving grey cores. Two classes of pottery can be distinguished: a plain ware of greyish-buff colour with an untreated surface, and a much more common slipped and burnished ware, the colour of which varies from jet-black through grey-black, grey, brown, red-brown, red and orange to buff. The predominant tones are, however, greyish-black and red-brown. A very coarse brown ware is only used in some clumsy votive cups and miniature bowls.

Decoration is common in the burnished ware and less so in the plain ware. Most characteristic is the use of grooves, ribs, flutes and knobs. Incision is rare and white-painted decoration not found. The absence of the latter type of decoration, which is, however, very common in the district,⁶ strongly suggests that it belongs to a period, presumably that of Troy I, which we have not yet reached at Beycesultan.

With the exception of the big storage vessels, all pottery in the shrine appears to have been deposited as containers of offerings by the worshippers of some deity, and we may therefore well ask, whether the plain-ware vessels found in the shrine, but not (yet) encountered elsewhere in the Beycesultan XV settlement (where even cooking pots show some signs of burnishing) should not be recognised as special votive pottery. The poorer citizens may not have been able to spare their better crockery when depositing offerings in the shrine and some kind of cheap substitute may well have been provided.

Once deposited in the shrine the container as well as the offering itself no doubt became the god's property and the broken and discarded fragments of earlier offerings were, indeed, found buried in a pit within the shrine itself.

⁵ See the article "Anatolian chronology in the Early and Middle Bronze Age", p. 55.

⁶ *AS. IV* (1954), pp. 202 ff.

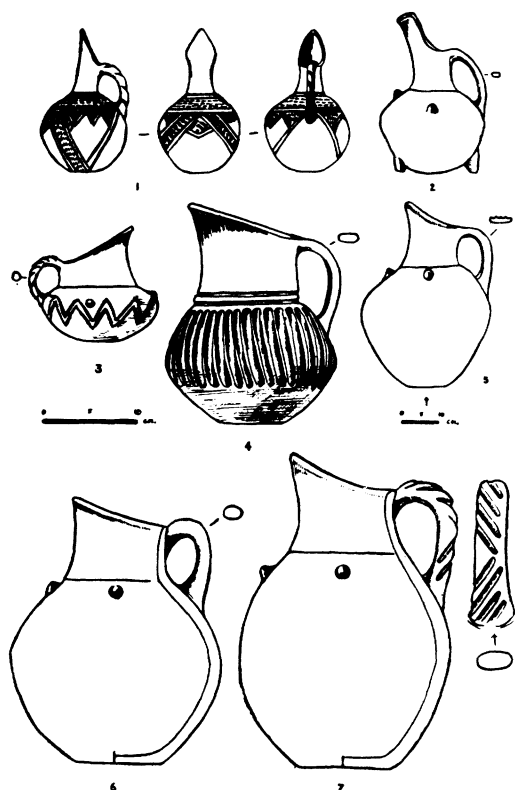


FIG. 4.

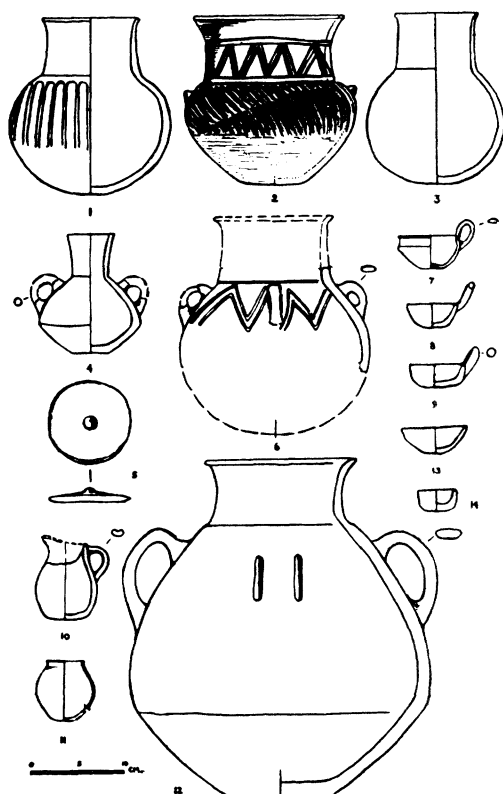


FIG. 5.

INVENTORY OF POTTERY VESSELS FROM SHRINE IN LEVEL XV

FIG. 4.

1. Beak-spouted juglet with grooved and incised decoration. Buff polished ware.
2. Jug on three stumpy feet with cutaway neck. Red burnished ware.
3. Jug with oblique mouth. Lightly grooved decoration : black burnished ware.
4. Beak-spouted jug with spirally fluted body. Brown burnished ware
5. Beak-spouted jug. Plain (greyish-buff) ware.
6. Beak-spouted jug. Plain ware.
7. Beak-spouted jug with fluted handle. Plain ware.

No. on Plan.

32 (Pl. II*f*)
 35
 1 (Pl. II*f*)
 42 (Pl. II*d*)
 2
 7
 23

FIG. 5.

1. Jar with fluted body. Plain ware.
2. Jar with incised neck and spirally fluted body. Pale red burnished ware.
3. Jar with collared neck. Plain ware.
4. Small two-handled jar. Plain red ware.
5. Flat lid with unperforated knob. Coarse ware.
6. Small collar-necked, four-handled jar. Grooved decoration. Light brown burnished ware.
7. One-handled small cup. Polished buff ware.
8. Votive one-handled cup. Coarse ware.
9. Votive cup. Clumsy coarse ware.
10. Small jar. Coarse ware.
11. Miniature jar. Buff polished ware.
12. Two-handled storage jar. Red burnished ware.
14. Votive cup. Clumsy coarse ware.

15

No. on Plan.

6 (Pl. II*e*)
 24
 30
 22
 41
 17
 36
 13
 44
 37
 5
 14

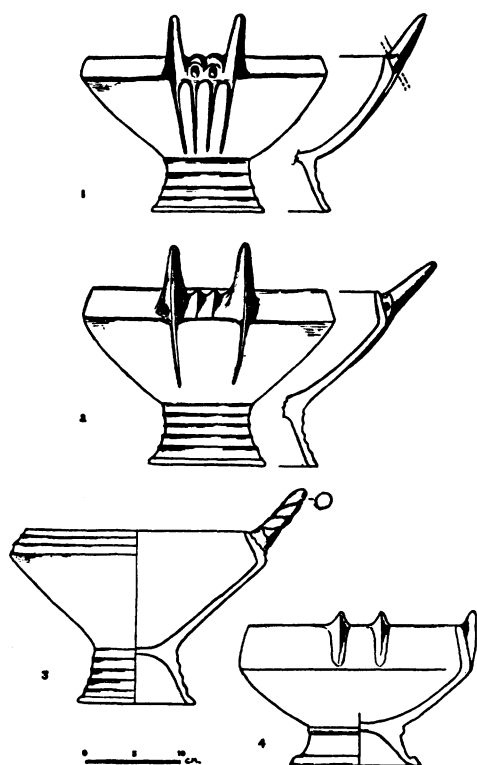


FIG. 6.

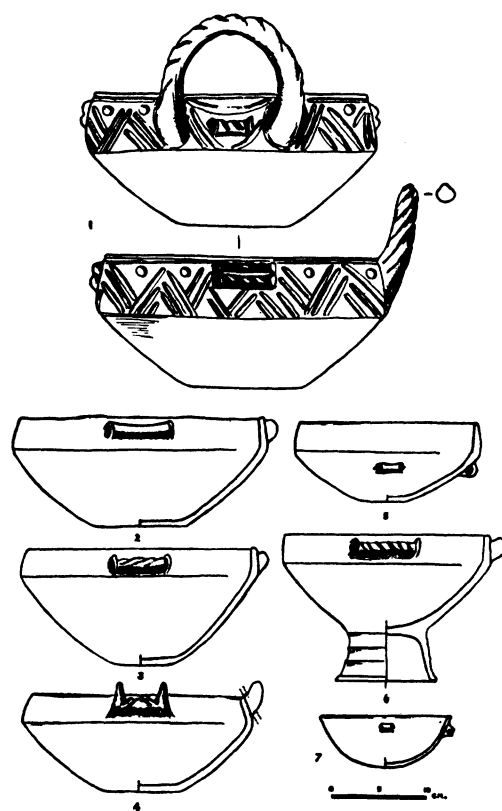


FIG. 7.

FIG. 6.

1. Pedestalled bowl with horned lug. Pedestal broken in antiquity and break pared with knife. Reused as simple bowl like No. 31. Red burnished ware.
2. Pedestalled bowl with single horned lug. Base broken in antiquity, pared and reused as bowl. Buff burnished ware.
3. Pedestalled bowl with ribbed rim and single twisted handle. Black burnished ware.
4. Pedestalled bowl with two horn lugs. Plain ware.

No. on Plan.

4 (Pl. IIb)

31

19 (Pl. IIc)

12

FIG. 7.

1. Large bowl with twisted handle. Three pairs of fluted unperforated spool-shaped lugs and one single lug beneath the handle. Grooved decoration. Red-brown burnished ware.
2. Bowl with plain unperforated spool-shaped lug. Red burnished ware.
3. Simple bowl with ribbed unperforated spool-shaped lug. Red burnished ware.
4. Simple bowl with vertically perforated horned lug. Red burnished ware.
5. Carinated bowl with tubular lug below carination. Black burnished ware.
6. Pedestalled bowl with ribbed spool-shaped lug. Red-brown burnished ware.
7. Small bowl with tubular lug. Jet-black burnished ware.

No. on Plan.

3 (Pl. IIa)

29

28

27

20

26

25

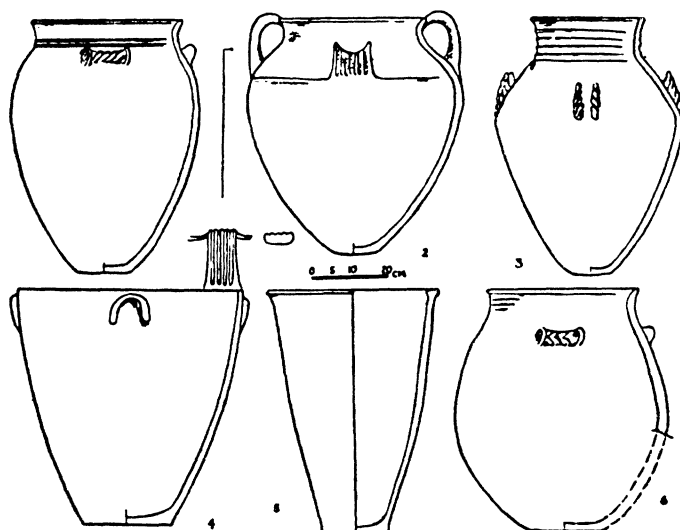


FIG. 8.

FIG. 8.

	<i>No. on Plan.</i>
1. Large-necked storage jar with two unperforated ribbed spool-shaped lugs. Fine deep red burnished ware.	9
2. Large-necked storage jar. Two (?) fluted handles and probably two fluted lugs. Red burnished ware.	39
3. Large-necked storage jar with two pairs of spirally fluted vertical lugs. Red-brown burnished ware.	40
4. Large storage jar like No. 8, but with four crescent lug handles. Red burnished ware.	10
5. Large storage jar of flower-pot shape. Brown burnished.	21
6. Large-necked storage jar like No. 9. Brown burnished.	43

ITEMS NOT ILLUSTRATED

No. on Plan.

- 8. Large storage jar with two crescent lug handles and two vertical fluted lugs. Red burnished ware.
- 11. Pedestalled bowl with two horn lugs. Plain ware.
- 16. Simple bowl with single ribbed unperforated lug. Red burnished.
- 18. Pedestalled bowl with ribbed rim. Grey burnished ware.
- 33. Fragment of beak-spouted juglet like No. 32. Earlier offering swept into pit.
- 34. Platter. Coarse ware.
- 38. Large storage jar like No. 10. Red burnished ware.