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The Early Bronze Age Pottery in Northwest Turkey in Light of Results of a Survey around the Marmara Sea

Sinan KILIÇ

ABSTRACT: Archaeological research has to date determined the presence of 121 Early Bronze Age sites in the Marmara region. The presence of Troy I pottery facilitates the location of these findspots. Despite the fact that different types of pottery are found in the plains in the southeast part of the region, (i.e. especially the area of southern Marmara and the coastal regions of Turkish Thrace on the Marmara Sea and the North Aegean), the culture of Troy I is most widespread. In studying the Early Bronze Age, the Marmara region can be divided into five geographical areas: 1) The European coastal region of the Marmara Sea, 2) the Troad and Gelibolu Peninsula, 3) the flat lowland region south of the Marmara Sea, 4) around the İznik Lake and 5) the Balıkesir Plain and surrounding area. The most widely distributed form of Troy I pottery is the bowl with inverted rim.

It is possible to make a distribution map of Early Bronze Age sites in the Marmara region according to the pottery of Troy I (Fig. 1). Archaeological research has been carried out in the Troad since the end of the 19th century, and studies have been conducted throughout the Marmara region in the middle of the present century¹. A survey project was organized by İstanbul University in the 1980's with the purpose of documenting archaeological and historical sites around the Marmara Sea and Turkish Thrace². The Early Bronze Age pottery of this survey have been analyzed by the author in a M.A. thesis, in which the published finds from the excavations and earlier surveys have been taken as comparative material³. This paper will focus on the Early Bronze Age sites which have been identified as a result of the collective research in the region.

The archaeological research has so far determined the existence of a total of 119 sites with identifiable Early Bronze Age ceramics. 80 of these sites have been published as Early Bronze Age find spots. As a result of recent survey projects, 39 new sites have been identified⁴. Pottery similar to Troy I has facilitated the locating of these sites. Despite the fact that different types of pottery are found in the plains in the southeastern part of the region, i.e. the area between Central Anatolia and the Marmara region, where the "Yenişehir bowl", as recently termed by D.H. French, appears in the same context as pottery similar to Troy I. The same situation also applies to Turkish Thrace, where Ezero pottery is found together with comparable Troy I examples.

Although Troy I pottery has been named according to its first find-spot, Hisarlık Tepe, Troy, it can be found throughout the north Aegean and west Anatolia, and evidence for the

¹ The Troad had been visited by scholars and travellers until the Englishman F. Calvert initiated the first archaeological research in the area. After Calvert, H. Schliemann began his excavation at Troy. Following Blegen's excavations at Troy, research in the entire Marmara region increased, especially after the 1950's. When considering the many discoveries made by archaeologists such as J. Mellaart, C. Burney and K. Kökten, the contribution of D.H. French's survey results has been particularly substantial. French was able to locate many new Prehistoric sites (French 1967; 1969).

² A new survey project was directed by M. Özdoğan between 1980 and 1989 in the areas surrounding the Marmara Sea and in Turkish Thrace (Özdoğan 1982; 1983; 1984; 1985; 1987; 1988; 1989; 1990).

³ Kılıç 1994.

⁴ These findspots are: (1) Menekşe Çatağı, (7) Gladina Mevkii, (8) Keşan Höyük, (9) Eski Bağlık Mevkii, (10) Barbaros, (12) Yeşilköy, (13) Pandırbağçe, (14) Hasköy, (15) Güneyli Limanı, (16) Kartaltepe, (17) no name, (19) Kocaçeşme, (22) Musaltepe, (24) Tepecik, (25) Kalanuro, (27) Maltepe, (28) Manastır Mevkii, (29) Yalı Mevkii, (30) Hamamtepe, (31) Karaağaçlar, (47) Baştepe, (52) Altıkulaç Kalesi, (54) Tütüncüyolu Üyücek, (55) Üyücekaltı, (56) Taraççı Mevkii, (57) Taşlıbayır Mevkii, (58) Tepetarla, (76) İnlimanı, (82) Kurmaköy, (83) Pazarköy I, (84) Pazarköy II, (96) Ergama, (97) Bayramhoca Sayası, (105) Atköy Üyücek, (110) Incirlik Mevkii, (111) Saraçköy Üyücek, (112) Ashıhan Üyücek, (113) Emre Mevkii and (114) Değirmen Eteği.

beginning of this culture has been excavated at Kumtepe. The beginning of this level, known as Kumtepe B, has been dated to 3400 B.C., based on the calibrated radiocarbon dates⁵. This is considered to be the beginning of the Early Bronze Age in Anatolia. The level of Kumtepe B couldn't be found out at Troy. However during the new investigations a new phase was discovered under the foundations of Troy I-Early. According to the radiocarbon results, this phase has been dated between 3700-3500 B.C., as the early phases from Beşik-Yassitepe prove⁶.

In studying the Early Bronze Age, the Marmara region can be divided into five geographical areas. The pottery of each area has the following local characteristics:

1. The European coastal region of the Marmara sea (Fig. 1): A total of 11 sites are contained in the region (1-7, 10-12), all on the coast, apart from two which are in the hinterland of Turkish Thrace (8, 9). Two additional sites are situated near the Aegean coast (13, 14) on a flat coastal plain which is today far from the sea, but could have been located on the coast during prehistoric times. "Wheat row" decoration is characteristic for the pottery of this region. Although the bowl forms can vary, the surface is usually dark-burnished (Fig. 2). They have been dated to the EBA II by French⁷.

2. The Troad and Gelibolu Peninsula (Fig. 1): These 33 sites occur mostly in the coastal areas; 16 of them are on the Gelibolu Peninsula (15-20, 22-25, 27, 43-47), five on the Asiatic side of the Dardanelles (26, 48-51), and 10 in the Troad (72-80, 87). The inland sites (81) or the sites in the southern coastal areas (88, 181) are representative of communication routes leading to other regions. This pottery is already known from Troy, and was analysed in detail by C. W. Blegen et al. Recent excavations in the Troad have generated new information about this pottery⁸.

3. The flat lowland region south of the Marmara Sea (Fig. 1): The 13 sites are located far apart (28-31, 53-59, 82). The pottery has no local characteristics, and various types of other pottery have also been found. This area can be explained as a transitional zone between the other Marmara regions.

4. Around the İznik Lake (Fig. 1): 26 sites have been located around the İznik Lake (21, 32-41) and the plains to its south (62-71, 85, 86). Contacts may have been established with the cultural areas to the east in Central Anatolia. Two sites are situated in the still unexplored mountainous territory to the southwest (60, 61) of the İznik Lake. The pottery typical for the Eskişehir region west of Central Anatolia is found together with Troy I pottery (Fig. 3). The distinguishing characteristics of the bowl are a convex-shaped form with an upright rim and a lip which can be rounded, flattened or bevelled. A figurine head has been found in Köristan Üyücek, a form found in different variants in Anatolia and the Aegean in EBA (Fig. 5).

5. The Balıkesir Plain and surrounding area (Fig 1): The Balıkesir Plain, with its 20 sites (99-117, 119), is linked in the west by an additional 10 sites to the Aegean (88-98). Two sites near Pazarköy in the north determine the northern communication routes into the flat lowland region south of the Marmara Sea (83, 84). The Balıkesir area is well-known as the Yortan culture zone. Yortan is an EB II cemetery the pottery⁹. The typical Balıkesir pottery consists of shiny black-burnished fine ware comparable to Troy I material although conical pierced lugs appear on Balıkesir sherds (Fig 4).

The most widely distributed form of EB pottery is the bowl with an inward contracted rim. This type of pottery has a very wide distribution area from Anatolia to the Balkans and the Aegean. Troy I pottery, which is spread throughout the Marmara region, is generally dark burnished and hand-made. The clay has sand as temper. Different types of incised

⁵ Korfmann et al. 1995.

⁶ Korfmann & Kromer 1983.

⁷ French 1968.

⁸ For recent excavations can be gave as examples Beşik-Yassitepe and the new investigations in Troy and Kumtepe. Also, the prehistoric pottery in the

Hanaytepe collection in Berlin has been analysed recently by A. Schachner.

⁹ Kâmil 1982.

decoration, pierced lugs and white paint are also common characteristics.

It can be understood that the number of settlements in the Marmara region increases in the EB, and it is possible to see how contacts were established between the different areas. Thus, one can easily observe how and in which direction this culture spread. It is also interesting to note that similar routes are used today.

There are indications that there was also occupation of the high plateau area, besides the costal regions and the plains. With the location of the settlements of this plateau area, it will eventually be possible to construct a more comprehensive map of the settlement patterns of the Marmara region during the EB.

Moreover, as very few of the total 119 sites have been excavated, one hopes that the archaeological information yet to be unearthed will throw more light on the cultural characteristics and differences of the settlements of the Marmara region.

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List of Findspots for Fig. 1

1. Menekşe Çatağı -East
2. Şerefli Çiftlik
3. Damnarca Çeşme
4. Umurca Çiftlik
5. Kanallı Köprü
6. Selimpaşa
7. Gladina
8. Keşan Höyük
9. Eski Bağlık Mevkii
10. Barbaros
11. Toptepe
12. Yeşilköy
13. Pandırbahçe
14. Hasköy
15. Güneyli Limanı
16. Kartaltepe
17. no name
18. Buruneren Çiftliği
19. Koçaçeşme
20. Şarköy
21. Yeniköy
22. Musaltepe
23. Asartepe
24. Tepecik
25. Kalanuro
26. Kemiklihan
27. Maltepe
28. Manastır Mevkii
29. Yalı Mevkii
30. Hamamtepe
31. Karaağaçlar
32. Ilıpınar
33. Hacılartepe
34. Çakırca
35. Yenişehir II
36. Çardak
37. Yüğücek
38. Babasultan (Yenişehir I)
39. Menteşe
40. Köristan Üyücek
41. Karadin
42. Köprühisar
43. Karaağaçtepe (Protosilaos)
44. Kilisetepe
45. Maltepe
46. Akbaş Şehitliği
47. Baştepe
48. Abydos
49. Çobantepe
50. Işıldak Tepe
51. Harapkale
52. Altıkulaç Kalesi
53. Pekmezli
54. Tütüncüyolu Üyücek
55. Üyücekaltı
56. Taraççı Mevkii
57. Taşlıbayır Mevkii
58. Tepetarla
59. Kuş Cenneti
60. Çayırköy
61. Demirtaş
62. Marmaracık
63. Cumatepesi (İnegöl I)
64. İnegöl II
65. Karasil I
66. Karasil II
67. Söylemiş
68. Kurşunlu
69. Okuf
70. Kınık
71. Demirköy
72. Kumtepe
73. Beşik-Yassitepe
74. Beşik-Sivritepe
75. Troy
76. İnlıman
77. Hantepe
78. Kümbet Kocabahçe
79. Alexandria Troas
80. Hanaytepe
81. Çiftliktepe
82. Kurmaköy
83. Pazarköy I
84. Pazarköy II
85. Pazaryeri I
86. Pazaryeri II
87. Aktaşovası
88. Gülpınar (Chryse)
89. Papazlı
90. Araplar Höyüdü
91. Sezai
92. Eşikçitepe
93. Karanlık Mağarası
94. Köylüce
95. Boztepe
96. Ergama
97. Bayramhoca Sayası
98. Gaventepe
99. Naipli Üyücek
100. Pamukçu-South
101. Pamukçu-North
102. Pamukçu-Cemetery
103. Paşaköy Üyücek
104. Ovaköy II
105. Atköy Üyücek
106. Üçpınar
107. Balıkesir
108. Köseler Üyücek
109. Ovaköy I
110. İncirlik Mevkii
111. Saraçköy Üyücek
112. Ashhan Üyücek
113. Emre Mevkii
114. Değirmen Eteği
115. Kırçayır
116. Mandıraköy
117. Ovabayındır
118. Assos
119. Babaköy
120. Sazlıdere
121. İncidere

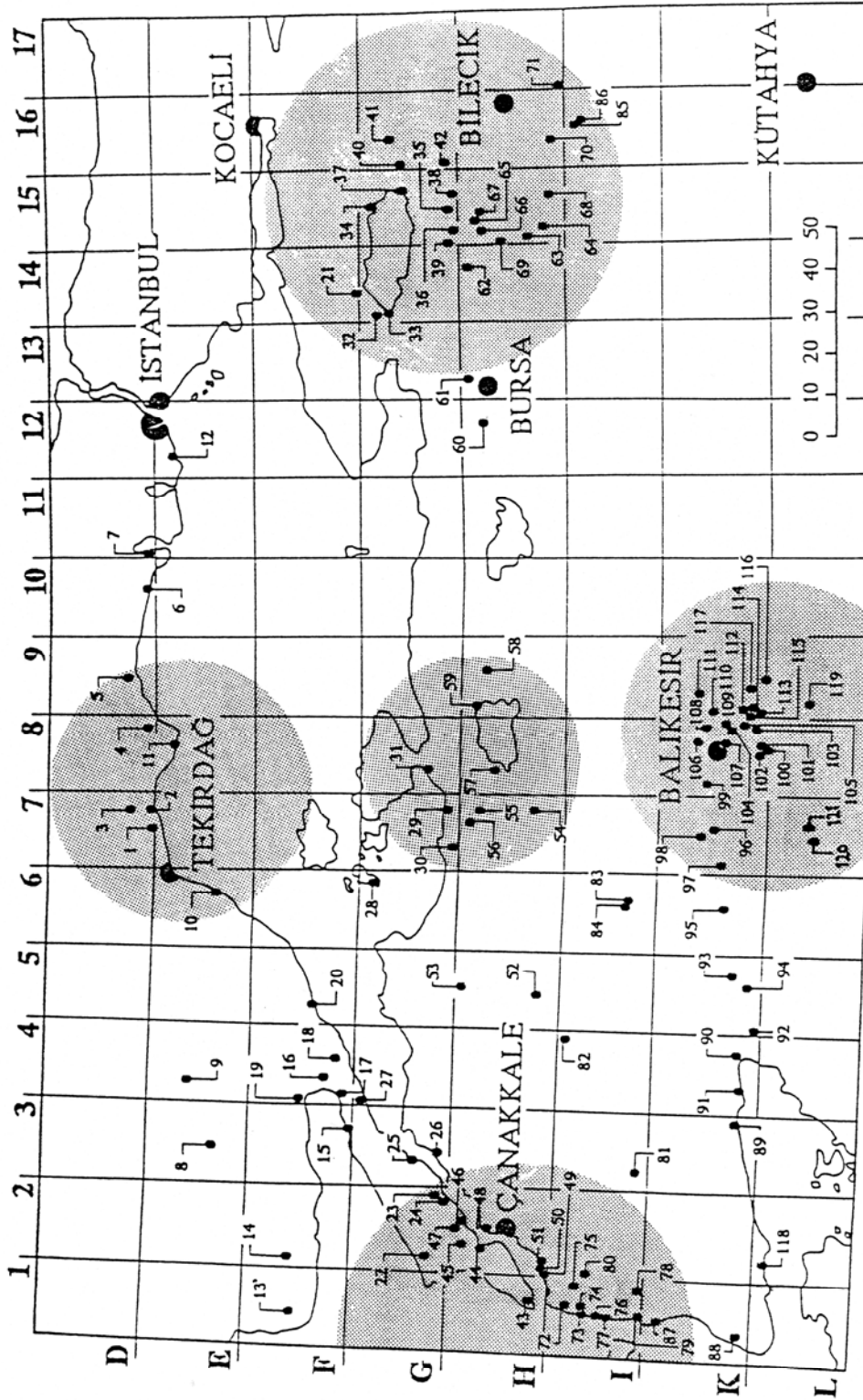


Fig. 1

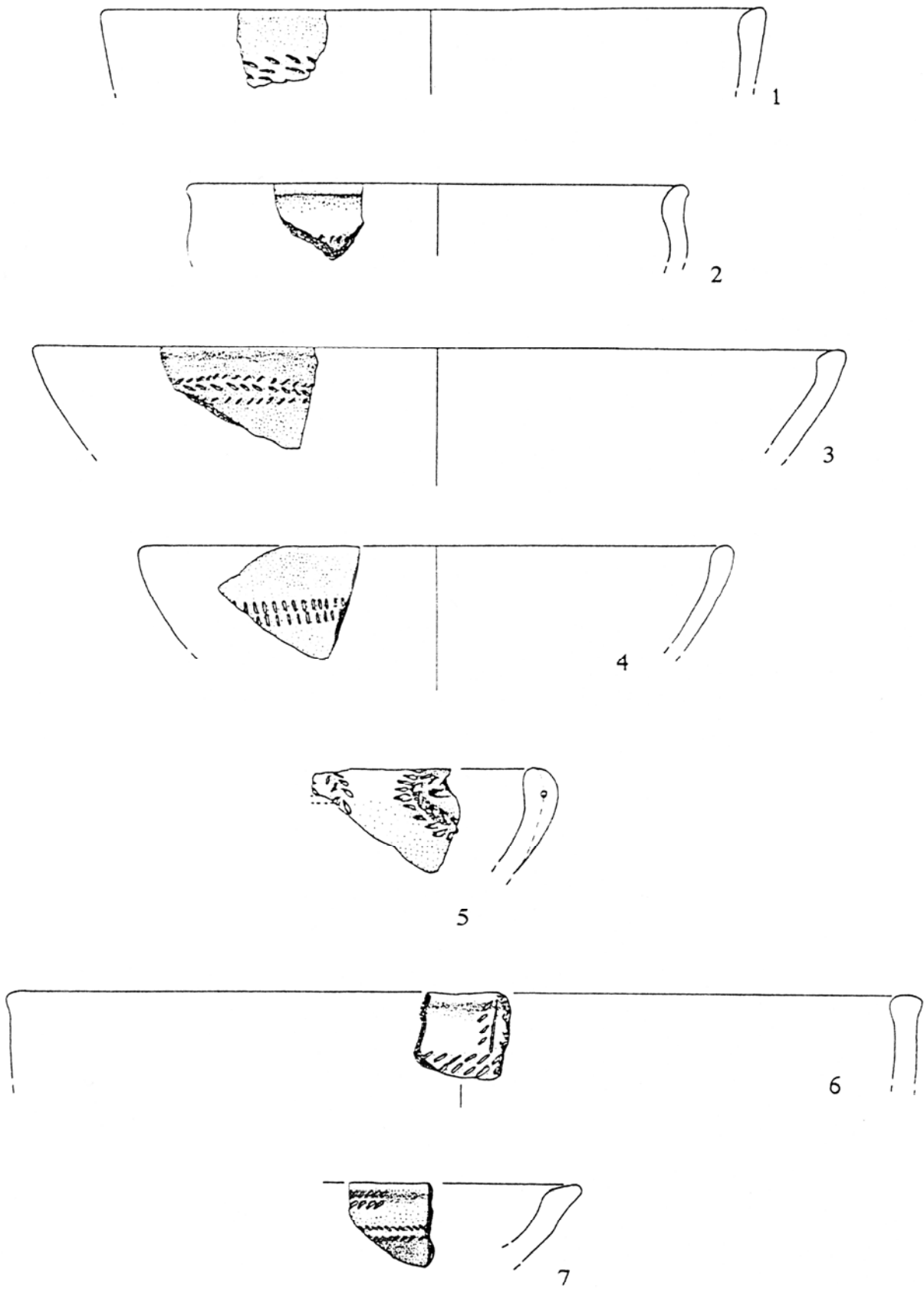


Fig. 2

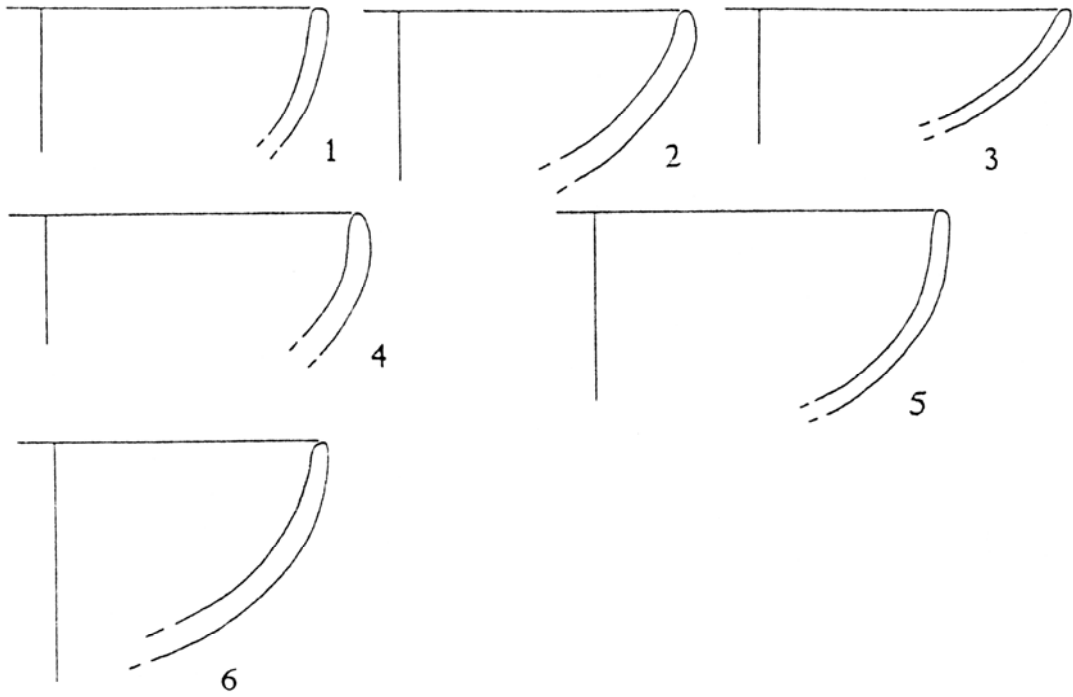


Fig. 3

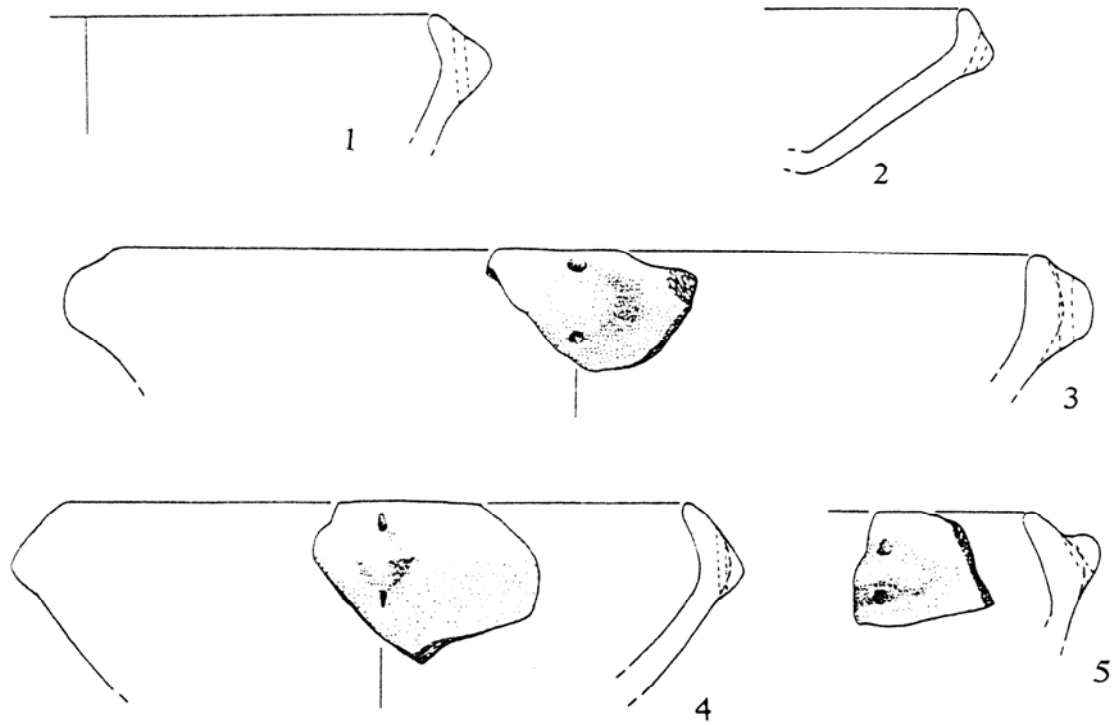


Fig. 4

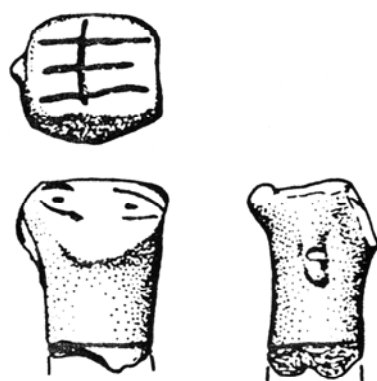


Fig. 5