

EXCAVATIONS AT TELL TABAN, HASSAKE, SYRIA: PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE 2007 SEASON OF EXCAVATIONS

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Introduction

Tell Taban is located in the Hassake Dam Salvage area and has been excavated by the Kokushikan University (Japan) Archaeological Mission since 1997 [Ohnuma et al. 1999, 2000; Ohnuma and Numoto 2001; Numoto 2006, 2007, 2008] (Fig. 1). The excavation has so far focused on revealing a Middle Assyrian regional centre. The major discovery is a palace structure which contained the archive of Old Babylonian and Middle Assyrian clay tablets. The seventh excavation season was carried out from 11 August to 26 September 2007.

The mission members of the 2007 season at Tell Taban were as follows: Hirotooshi Numoto (Director Archaeology, Kokushikan University), Isamu Ono (Architectural Engineering, Kokushikan University), Shigeo Yamada (Assyriology, University of Tsukuba), and Daisuke Shibata (Assyriology, Postdoctoral Fellow of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science). Mr Salem Isa was our representative from the Directorate General for Antiquities and Museums (DGAM) of the Syrian Arab Republic.

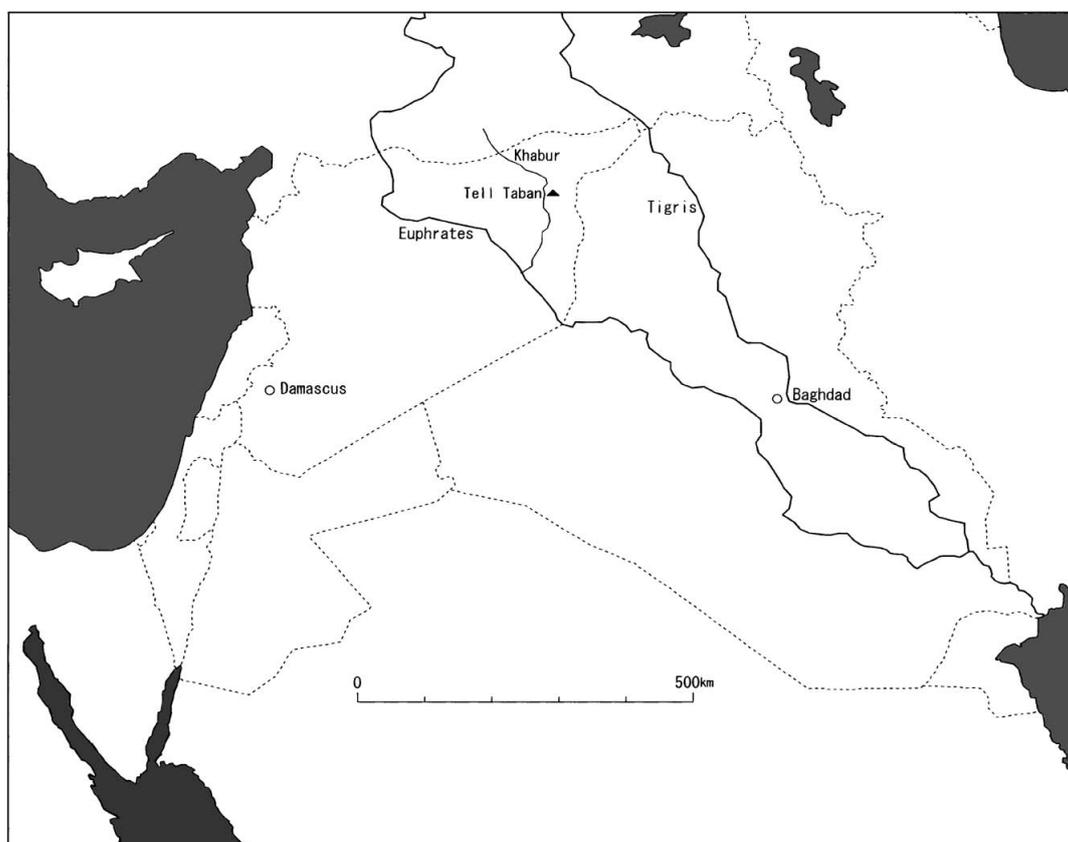


Fig. 1 Location of Tell Taban

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The 2007 season was successfully conducted by generous support and encouragement from the DGAM, Damascus. We would like to thank especially Dr. Bassam Jammous, Director General and Dr. Michel al-Maqdissi, Director of Excavation, DGAM for their unfailing support. We would also like to thank Mr. Abdul Masih Bagdoo, Director of the Department of Antiquities and Museums in Hassake, who provided us with necessary needs to our excavations.

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Summary of the 2007 Season

Since the Middle Khabur (Hassake) dam discharged water during the summer, the water level around Tell Taban was ca. 286 m above sea level at the beginning of the excavation (Figs. 2, 3; Pl. 1). The water level continued to become lower during the excavation and it finally reached ca. 283.5 m above sea level by the end of September (Figs. 2, 3; Pl. 46). The west side of the mound was eroded ca. 2 m than the condition we saw in 2006 due to the exposure to water during the winter when the dam water touch the west side [Numoto 2007]. Soil debris, which was eroded by river water, was accumulated on the edge of the mound and Trenches 8, 10 excavated in the previous season was totally backfilled by it. The edge of the mound where river water washed away the soil has revealed some new archaeological structures.

Abundant round pits with diameter between 1 and 3 m dated to the Hellenistic period, and round kiln pits dated to the Middle and Neo-Assyrian periods were dug into the gypsum bedrock terraces at the northeast and south sides of the mound (Pl. 2a).

We were able to collect 28 cuneiform materials (17 fragments of inscribed bricks, three tablets, five cylinder inscriptions, two clay nails, one decoration of wall) from the area where river water receded (Pls. 2b, 3, 47–50, 52).

We continued to excavate the large mud-brick palace structure of the Middle Assyrian period located to the western slope of the mound (Fig. 12; Pl. 5b). The major discovery of the 2007 season include (1) a massive mud-brick structure dated to the Neo-Assyrian period superimposed on the Middle Assyrian palace structure (Figs. 4, 5; Pls. 8–23), (2) a jar urn with a cuneiform inscription (Figs. 20–21; Pl. 27), (3) a bronze figurine (possibly a foundation deposit) embedded in one of the mud-bricks which constitute a wall of the Neo Assyrian palace (Pls. 14, 15), and (4) a baked cylinder with Middle Assyrian inscription found in the pottery kiln dump (Pls. 40, 51).

1. Excavation

The main aim of this season’s excavation was to further investigate the Middle Assyrian royal palace structure (Room 1 and the brick pavement in Trenches 5 and 7) where the clay tablets were discovered during the previous seasons [Numoto 2006, 2007, 2008] (Fig. 12). We also hope to discover further evidence of inscribed materials at the site. In the 2006 season, we clarified that the thickness of the East Wall of the royal palace had over 2.5 m (Pl. 5b). However, since the Neo-Assyrian large mud-brick wall was superimposing on the East Wall (Pl. 5a), we postponed the excavation of the area of the East Wall. Since we assumed that the main part of the Middle Assyrian royal palace was buried at the central part of the mound, we placed a new trench (Trench 14) at the west slope of the mound to further expose the Middle Assyrian palace structure which we excavated in 2005 and 2006 (Fig. 3; Pls. 4, 6). The size of Trench 14 measured 6 × 6 m and by the end of the season reached ca. 5 m at the deepest point. A total of four levels were identified. Following is the summary

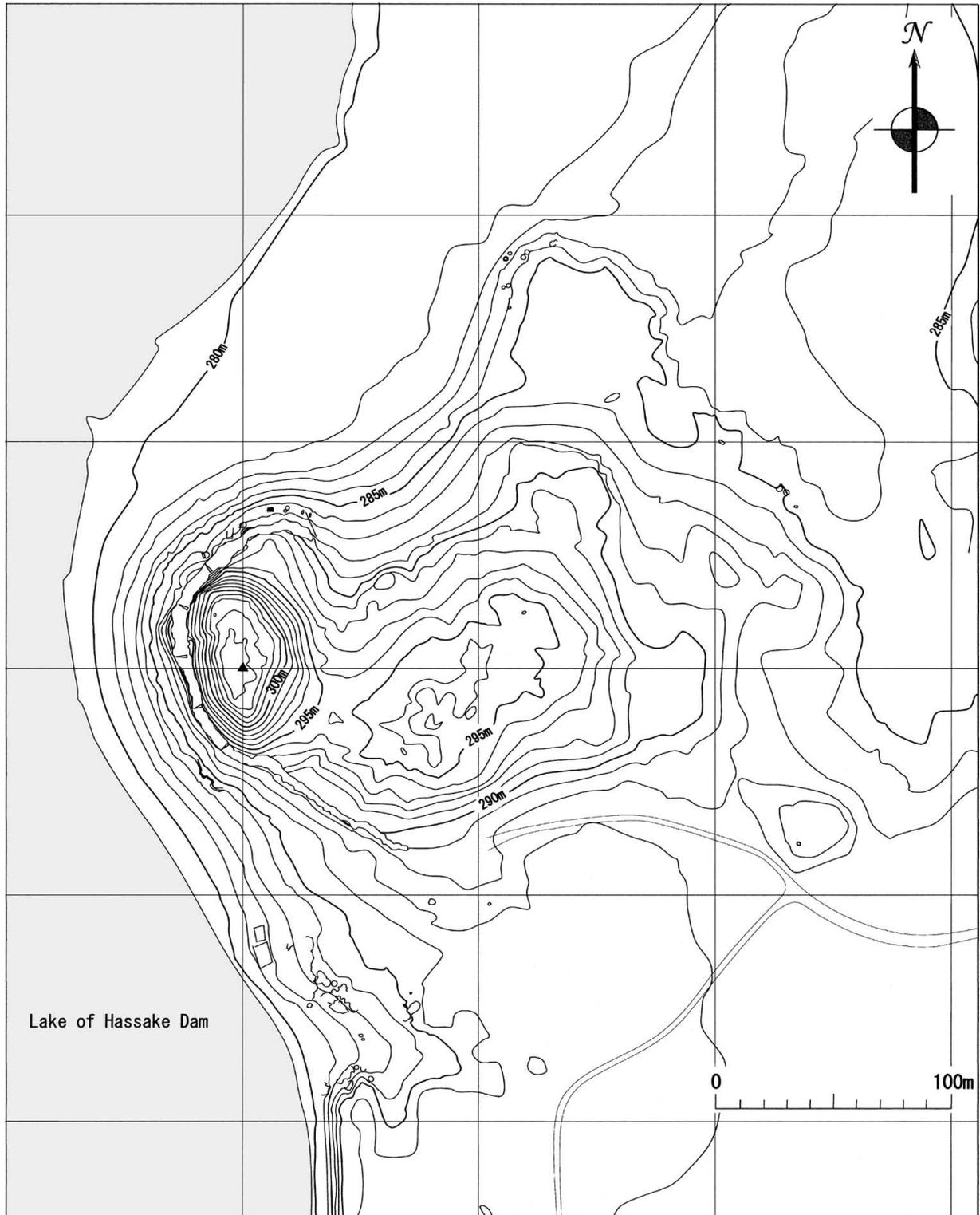


Fig. 2 Contour map of Tell Taban (2008 summer)

of each level from top to down.

Level 1: Hellenistic period

After removing the top soil, we encountered three layers dated to the Hellenistic period (Pl. 7).

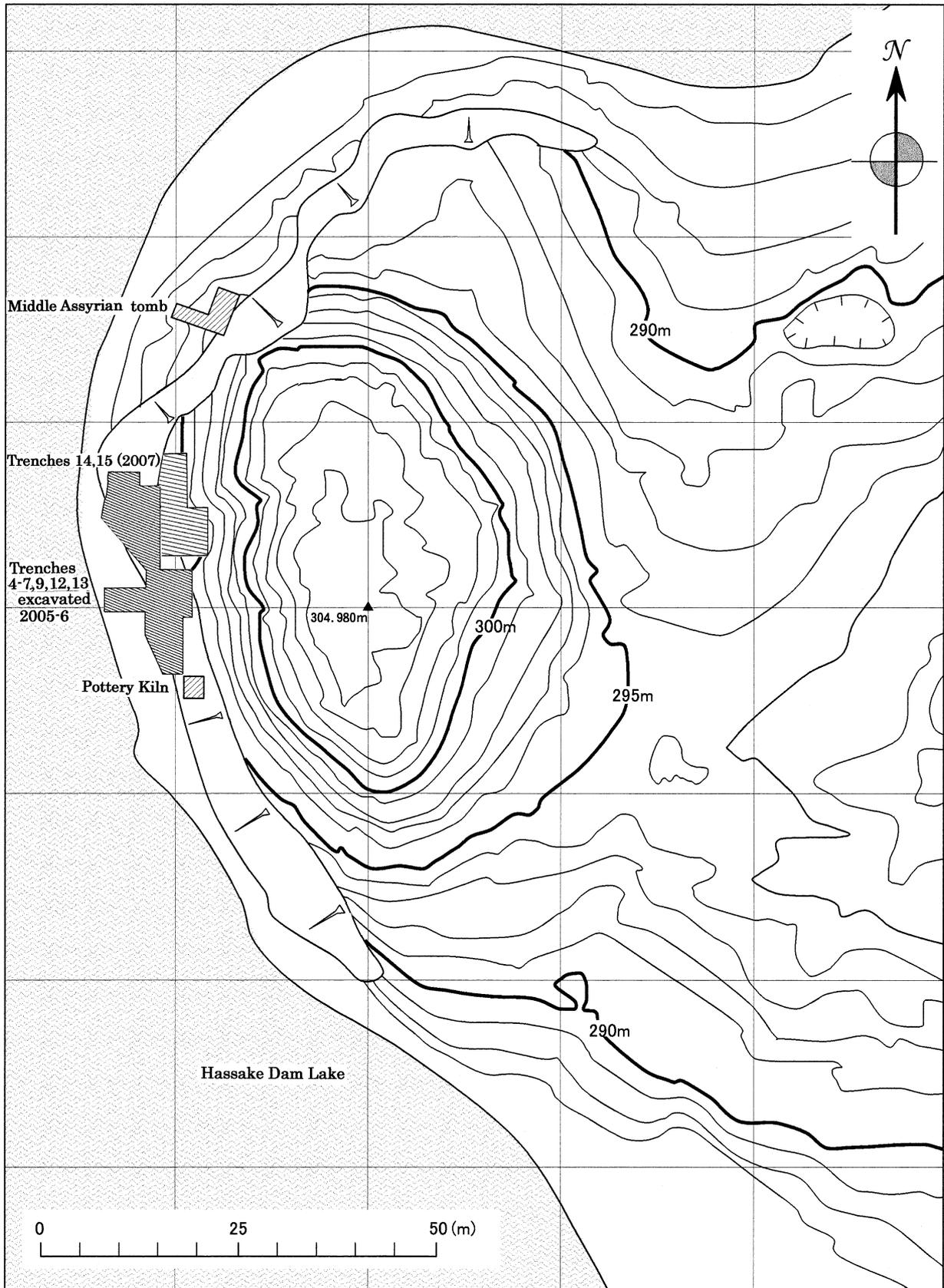


Fig. 3 Contour map of the western area of Tell Taban

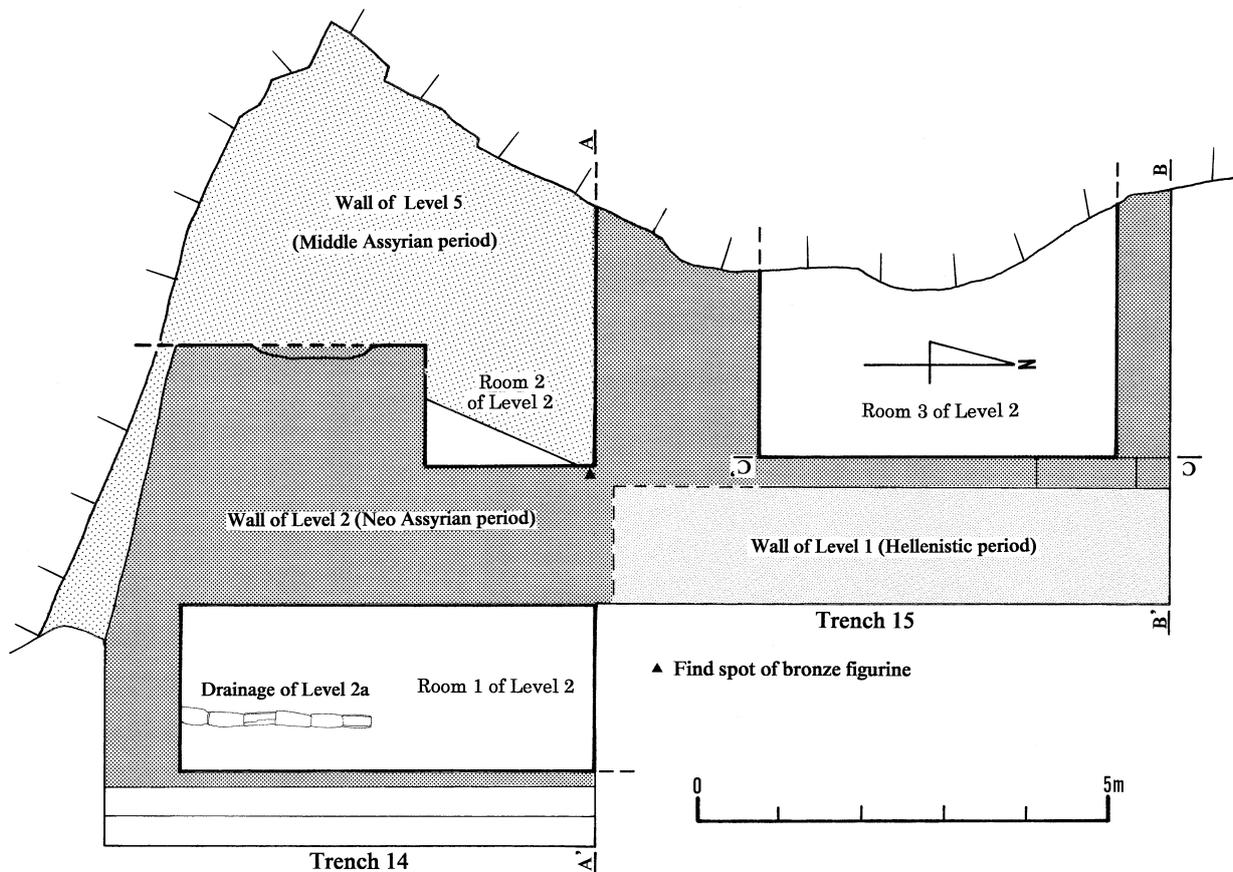


Fig. 4 Plan of structures in Trenches 14, 15

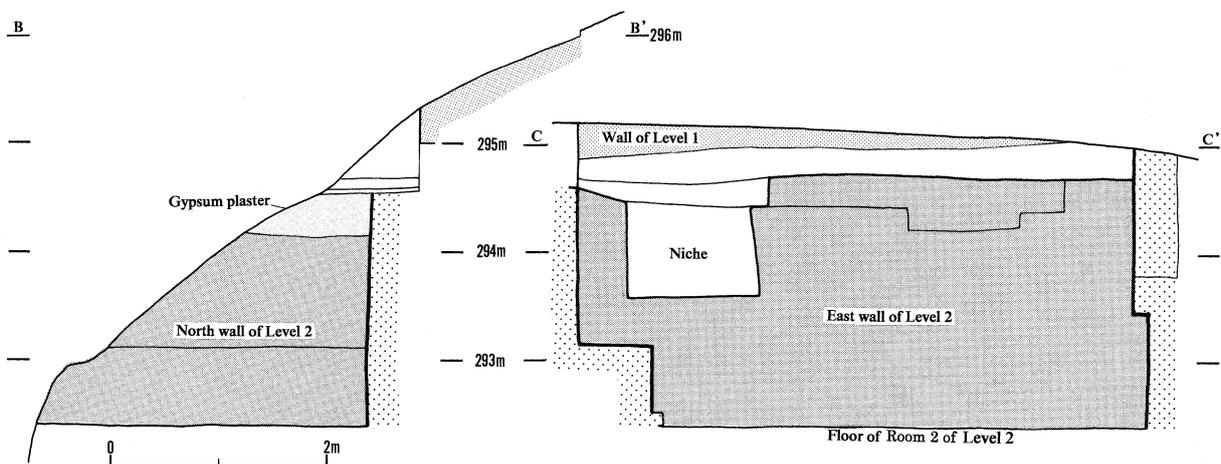


Fig. 5 North and east sections (B-B', C-C') of Room 3 in Trench 15 (Neo Assyrian mud-brick wall of Level 2)

No building structures were found in Layers 1 and 3. This may be due to the excavated area was located on a steep slope and the exposed area was small. In Layer 2, part of several mud-brick walls were identified in the south and the east parts of the trench. Since the exposed area was small we were not able to identify the structure of Layer 2. Fragments of typical Hellenistic black or red painted wares were discovered on the floors associated with above mentioned mud-brick walls (Fig. 13). To the north of Trench 14, a mud-brick wall probably dated to the Hellenistic period was

found in the surface layer (Fig. 4).

Level 2: Neo-Assyrian period

A large wall, which measured ca. 2–3 m wide and ca. 2.4 m in remaining height, was identified (Fig. 4; Pls. 8–23). The wall runs in the north-south direction and the size of mud-brick measured 37–40 × 37–40 × 13 cm. The mud-bricks have very hard and densely packed texture with brown colour.

This large wall was associated with two floor levels. In the first floor level (Level 2a), part of drainage structure constructed by six pottery pipes (each measured ca. 40 cm long and ca. 20 cm in diameter). The total length of this drainage measured ca. 2.4 m and run in the south-north direction (Pls. 8b–11).

The pottery pipes continued into the south wall and reach to a small room with a vaulted ceiling (Pls. 9, 10). The room measured ca. 70 cm wide and ca. 80 cm in height (Pl. 11a). The pottery pipes passed beneath the room and reached at the south slope of the mound where we can observe the exposed end of pipes.

(As for the structures in Level 2a, we recorded their 3D plan by Pl. 12)

The second floor level was identified ca. 1.4 m below the first floor level (Level 2b). In this floor level, we encountered a room which measured ca. 2.2 m wide (east-west) and more than 2.5 m long (north-south) (Room 1) (Pls. 18, 19). The wall had ca. 1.2 m in remaining height (Fig. 8; Pls. 19, 42). The room was located to the east of the large wall and bordered on the north and east side of the trench (Fig. 4). The floor of this room was probably paved by stones since part of the stone pavement was unearthed at the north part of the room. Some typical Neo-Assyrian potsherds, which resembles to those found in Nimrud, fragments of glaze ware and glass ware were found on the floor (Figs. 14, 15, 19b).

To investigate the connection of the large wall, we opened another trench to the north of Trench 14 along the edge of the mound. This newly exposed area (Trench 15) measured 7 m wide and 3–4 m long (Fig. 4). In Trench 15, a room, which measured ca. 4.5 m wide and ca. 3 m long with ca. 2.5 m in remaining height of the wall, was unearthed (Room 3) (Pl. 22).

The most remarkable discovery in Level 2 was a bronze male figurine, which the lower body formed like a nail (Pl. 15). The figurine was discovered in one of the mud-bricks of the large wall at the second floor level (Level 2b) in Trench 14. This mud-brick was located on the northeast corner of Room 2 in Level 2 (Fig. 4; Pls. 14). Just above the mud-brick a large stone was placed (Pls. 13, 14a). In addition, the mud-brick was located ca. 1.3 m above the floor level of Room 2.

The bronze figurine measured ca. 9 cm high and ca. 1.1–2.2 cm wide (Pl. 15). The figurine clasps its hands in front of abdomen and the legs are stylised in the shape of a nail. It is highly possible that a cuneiform inscription was engraved on the back of the figurine. However, due to heavy rust, it is not possible to identify the inscription at the present condition. We must wait for the cleaning to identify the presence of inscription on the figurine.

The bronze figurine was properly placed in the central part of the mud-brick (Pl. 15). On the surface of the mud-brick, a finger scraping mark was identified. The finger mark was placed on the surface which the figurine faces.

We assumed that the figurine was embedded in the mud-brick as a foundation deposit to mark the construction of a large public structure. The structure formed by such large wall with the foundation deposit may have been a palace or temple. The large wall and its related walls found in Level 2 were identified on a wide area of the west cliff of the mound (Pl. 23b). It can be assumed that the above series of walls was part of the public structures during the Neo-Assyrian period.

Level 3: Neo-Assyrian period

In this level, two mud-brick walls, which run in the north-south and east-west directions, respectively were identified. The walls measured 0.7–1 m thick and 0.6–0.8 m in remaining height. The two walls were part of the walls of a room which measured ca. 4 m long (east-west) and ca. 3 m wide (north-south) (Pl. 24). The mud-brick had creamy white colour and the size measured $38 \times 38 \times 10$ cm. Some Neo-Assyrian potsherds were unearthed from the floor of the room (Figs. 14, 15). Judging from the exposed level, we assumed the two walls corresponds to a wall found in Level 3 of Trench 4 which was excavated during the winter of 2005 [Numoto 2006].

Grave 2: Further excavating below the floor of the above mentioned room, we discovered two jar burials (Graves 1 and 2) dated to the Neo-Assyrian period (Fig. 9; Pls. 24, 25).

In Grave 2, a jar with a cuneiform inscription was found. This grave measured ca. 1.5 m long and 0.7 m wide and a coffin was consisted of three pottery jars and a large bowl (Fig. 6; Pls. 25b, 26). According to the observation during the excavation, the grave was used at least twice. First an adult, probably a woman, was buried using two jars (P1 and P2) as a coffin (Figs. 7c, 24, 25; Pls. 30, 31a). At some later point, the lower jar (P2), containing the lower body of the adult, was smashed, and a child was buried in the upper jar (P1) (Fig. 7b; Pl. 29). Then, the coffin was closed by placing the third jar (P3) to the upper jar (Figs. 7a, 25; Pl. 28). Since the child body was not

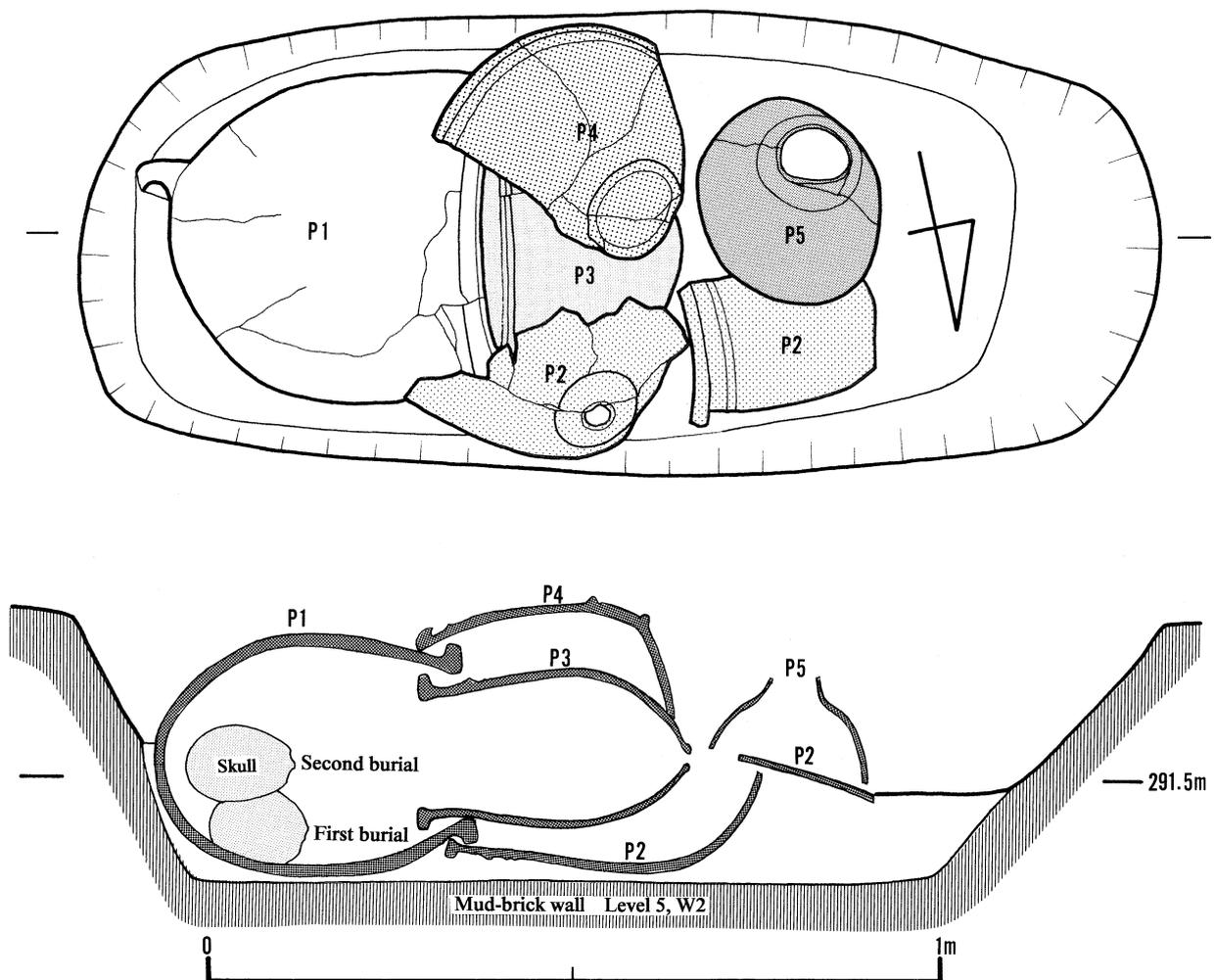
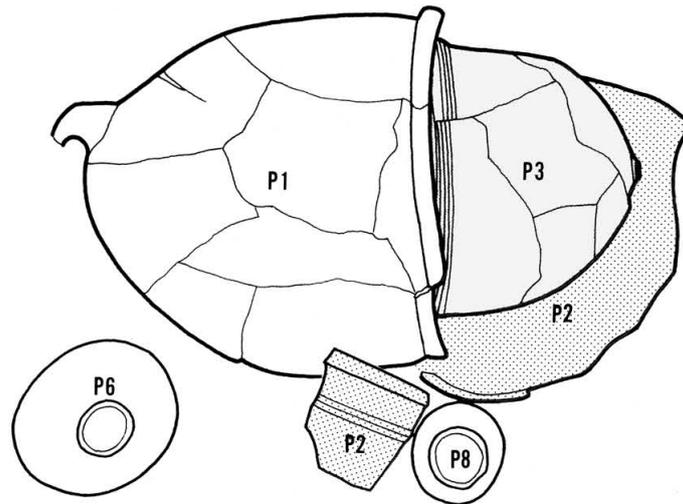
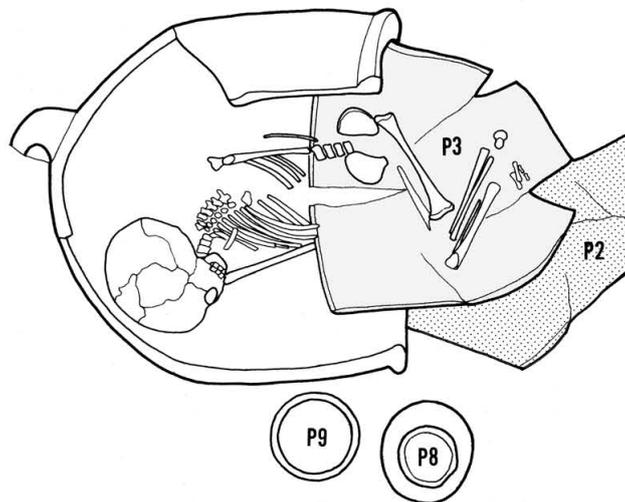


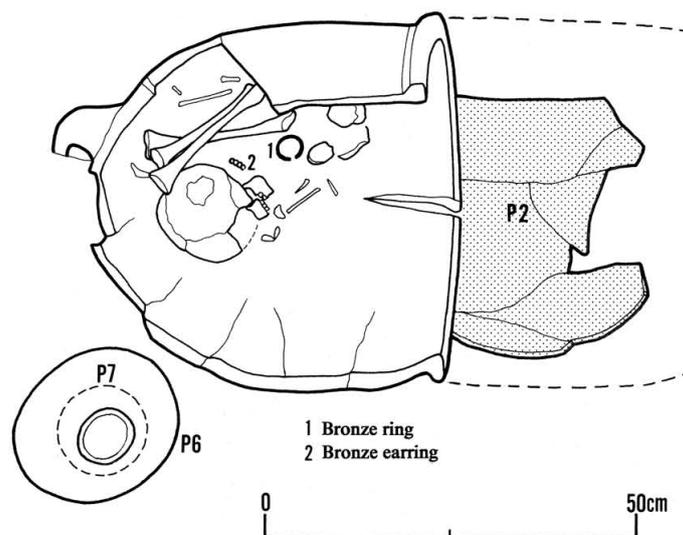
Fig. 6 Plan and section of Grave 2 in Trench 14 (Level 3, Neo-Assyrian period)



a. Second burial, P3 was used as a coffin of second burial



b. Second burial (child skeleton), P8, P9 were buried with second burial



c. First burial (Adult skeleton), P2 was used as a coffin of first burial, P6, P7 were buried with second burial

Fig. 7 Plans of burials in Grave 2

fully placed into the upper jar, the third jar (P3) was used to cover the lower half of child body. Fragments of the smashed jar (P2) and a large bowl (P4) were used to cover the coffin consists of two jars (P1 and P3) (Figs. 6, 23; Pl. 26a).

To the east of the coffin, a broken jar (P5) with its upper part remaining (from the mouth to the upper body) was located (Fig. 6; Pls. 26b, 27). On the surface of the jar, an engraved figure and a cuneiform inscription were found (T07-12; Figs. 20, 21). According to our epigraphists, the inscription reads “belonging to [.....]-*apla-eresh*”. The style of cuneiforms also indicates to the Neo-Assyrian period.

To the left of the inscription, the engraved figure representing a standard which is composed of a square pedestal, with a circular motif on a column. The figure, which measures ca. 9 cm in height, probably symbolizes a god or goddess. Further analysis will clarify the meaning of the motif in relation to the inscription.

We assumed that the broken jar (P5) was re-used as an object indicating an epitaph for the dead. This is due to the broken condition of the pottery, as well as the fact that the figure and the inscription were engraved after the firing of the pottery.

The stratigraphic observation clearly indicates that the broken jar apparently accompanied the child burial. Thus, the inscription might have been an epitaph for the child.

Some ten bronze earrings, two rings, and a fibula were found around the upper skeleton of the adult (Fig. 7c; Pls. 30, 31a, 32d,e,f). Although we need osteological analyze the bones, there is a high possibility that the adult was a woman. If this is confirmed, the child might have been her child. This is a unique example that the two bodies were buried in the same jar coffin that may hold the possibility of mother and a child burial.

Four offering pottery were found to the east of the coffin (Figs. 7, 22; Pls. 28, 32a,b,c). Two bowls (P6 and P7) belong to the adult burial, while a small jar (P8) and a small bowl (P9) belong to the child burial. A rim fragment of the coffin (P2) was re-used as a lid of the small bowl (P9).

Level 4: Middle Assyrian period

In this level, we unearthed a room (Room 2) which measured ca.4 m long (east-west) and 2.7 m wide (north-south) (Figs. 8, 9; Pls. 33–39). The room was constructed by mud-brick wall. The west wall of the room (W1) was unusually thick which measured ca. 3 m wide and ca.1.5 m in remaining height (Pls. 33, 34). The size of mud-bricks used for the west wall was 35 × 35 × 10 cm. The mud-bricks had very fine and densely packed texture with light brown colour. The thick wall was also used as the east wall of Room 1 in Level 5 of Trenches 5 and 7 which was excavated in 2005 (Fig. 12; Pl. 5b). According to the excavation, it became clear that this wall was constructed in two phases (Levels 4 and 5). The west wall of Room 2 (W3) was constructed in the later phase in Level 4 (Figs. 8, 9).

The south wall of Room 2 measured ca.1.7 m wide and ca. 5.5 m in remaining height (W2). The foundation of the south wall was dug ca.3 m in depth reaching into the Old Babylonian level (Figs. 11, 18; Pls. 43–45).

Room 2 had two floor levels. In the early floor level, a pottery kiln, which measured ca. 1 m in length, 0.9 m wide and ca. 0.2–0.25 m in remaining height, was unearthed (Figs. 9, 10; Pls. 37g,h, 38, 39). The kiln was made by mud-bricks and had a horseshoes shape plan. The pillars measured ca. 30 cm for supporting the shelves in the baking chamber was found in the firing chamber (Pl. 37h). When the pottery kiln was in use, the east part of Room 2 was an open space. In Room 3, which is to the west of the kiln, a kiln dump containing ash, burnt soil, and charcoal was accumulated to the thickness of ca. 1 m. From this kiln dump, a large amount of baked bricks and Middle Assyrian potsherds were discovered.

Among these finds, five fragments of inscribed bricks were found. These fragments bore Middle

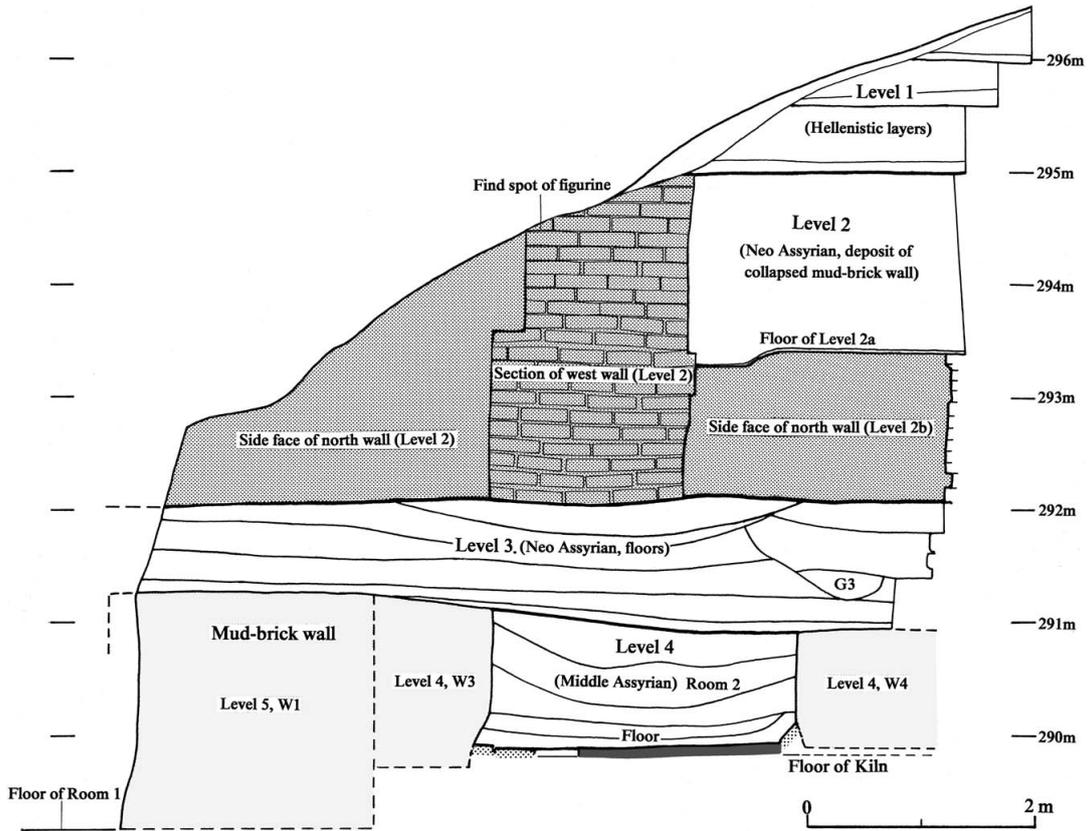


Fig. 8 North section of Trench 14 (A-A')

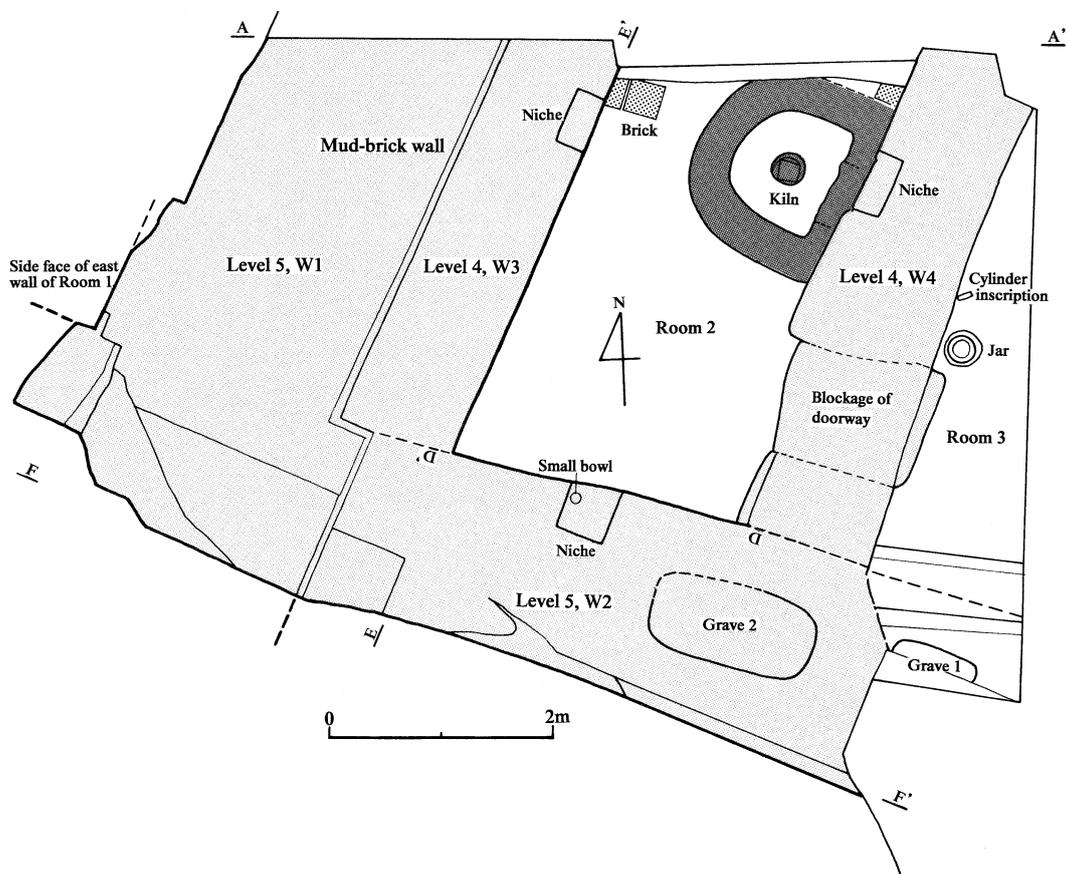


Fig. 9 Plan of structures in Levels 4, 5 (Middle Assyrian period) of Trench 14

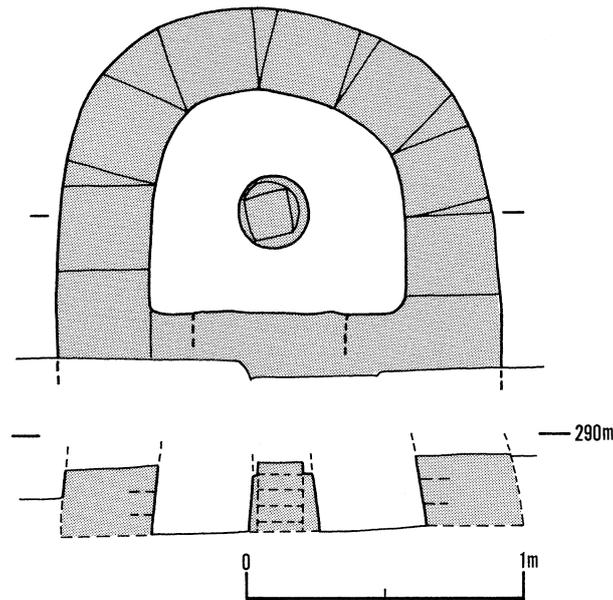


Fig. 10 Plan and section of pottery kiln in Level 4

Assyrian inscriptions. (Pl. 53b).

An impressive find from the kiln dump was a fragment of a baked cylinder inscription (Pl. 40). This discovery indicates that the pottery kiln was also used to bake cylinders. The cylinder measured ca. 17.5 cm long and ca. 5 cm wide and was found on the floor of Room 3 (Pl. 51). Since the fragment was badly fired and fragile, it was probably dumped as a failed specimen. This example bore the longest inscription among other cylinders discovered at the site.

Based on the decipherment, the inscription resembles the foundation inscription of Assur-ketta-lesir II found during the 1997–1999 seasons (see Shibata and Yamada report). This discovery shows that the construction date of the pottery kiln can be dated to the 11th century BC.

In addition, a pottery burial was unearthed from the floor of Room 3 (Figs. 17, 19g; Pl. 41).

After the pottery kiln was abundant, a wall (W4) with ca. 1.2 m in thickness was placed to the east of the kiln. Thus, a new room (Room 2) was constructed to the west of Room 3 (Pls. 38, 39). Room 2 measured ca. 2.5 m (east-west) in width and over 4 m (north-south) in length. At the lower end of the west and south walls, engravings (ca. 20–30 cm in depth) were made on the mud-brick wall. In these engravings fragments of baked bricks and pottery were struck in (Pls. 35, 36, 37c,d,e). Then thin layer of mud was placed on them to cover the surface. We do not understand the meaning of its activity, but might have been to protect the foundation of the wall from erosion.

Among the fragments of baked bricks which were placed in the engraving, we found seven inscribed brick fragments (Pls. 36b, 37c,d, 53b). High rate of inscribed brick fragments found in the engraving might indicate that these fragments were intentionally buried here from some purposes.

The west wall was well preserved with thick layer of plaster placed on the wall surface. On the plaster, some remains of brown, and white pigments were observed (Pl. 37f). It is possible that the wall was originally covered with the wall painting.

On the upper part of the west, south and east walls, small niches (ca. 35×35×15–20 cm) were identified (Pls. 38, 39). The upper part of the niches were broken. A pottery lamp was found inside the niche on the south wall (Figs. 16–18, 19c; Pls. 35a, 37a,b).

Room 1 and brick pavement which are located to the west of Room 2 was originally used as an archive room where we discovered clay tablets (Fig. 12). After the archive room in Room 1 and brick pavement were abandoned [Numoto 2006, 2007], Rooms 1 and 2 were transferred into the

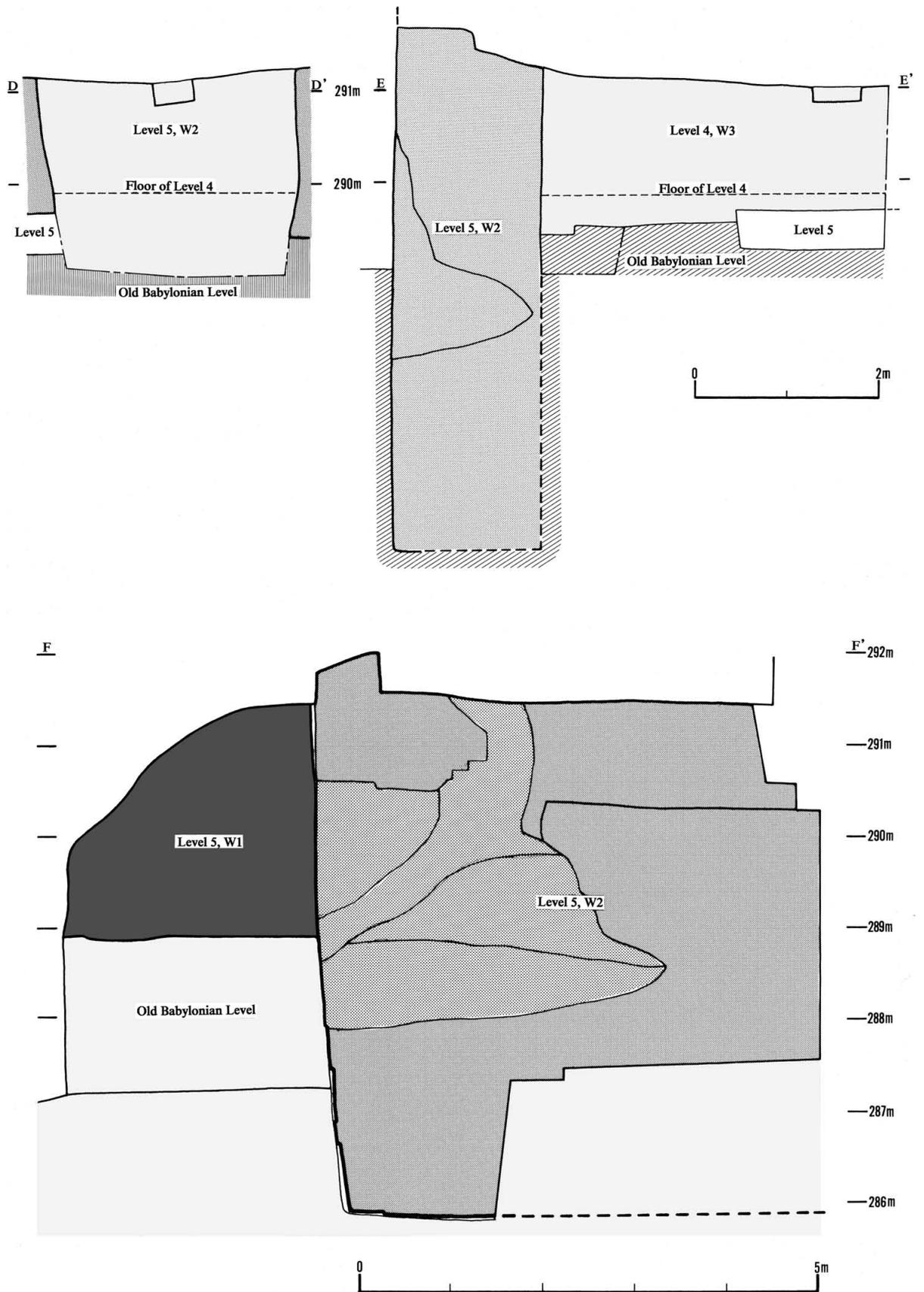


Fig. 11 Sections of structures in Levels 4, 5 (D-D', E-E', F-F')

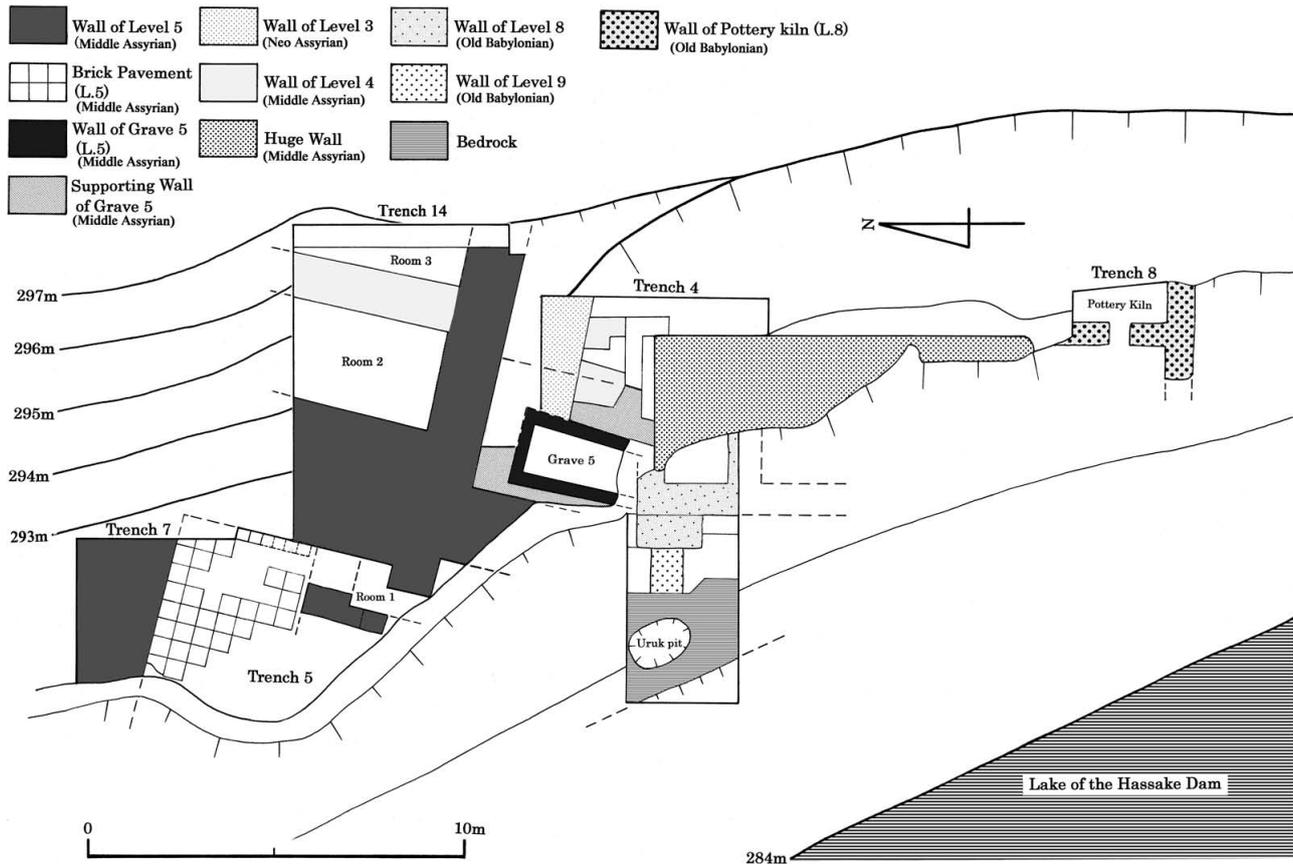


Fig. 12 General plan of structures in the western area excavated at 2005-07

rooms used for craftwork space which include jewellery and pottery manufacturing.

2. Cuneiform Inscribed Finds

In the 2007 season, we collected 51 cuneiform inscribed finds (Pls. 47–53). The summary contents of the finds were as follows:

1. Three clay tablets (Two belong to the Old Babylonian period, and one to the Middle Assyrian period)
2. Six cylinders (Middle Assyrian period)
3. Two clay nails (Middle Assyrian period)
4. One pottery with an inscription (Neo-Assyrian period)
5. Thirty nine baked bricks (Middle Assyrian period)
6. One fragment of wall decoration (Middle Assyrian period)

Conclusion

The 2007 season of excavation provided new discoveries of the Assyrian regional centre at Tell Taban. One of the major discoveries was the identification of a large public building dated to the Neo-Assyrian period superimposed on the Middle Assyrian palace structure. The excavations carried out since 1997 were mainly focused on the edge of the mound identifying structures dated to the Middle Assyrian and Old Babylonian periods. The 2007 season newly set trenches on the middle part of the west slope to identify the large structures. This strategy led to the discovery of the large Neo-Assyrian building.

This discovery clearly indicated that Tell Taban was continued to be used as a major regional centre along the Khabur during the Neo-Assyrian period. Although the name of Tell Taban appears in the Neo-Assyrian wine list unearthed in Nineveh, no archaeological evidence was reported until today. This season's discovery provides new evidence of Tell Taban during the Neo-Assyrian period. In addition, the remains of the large Neo-Assyrian period mud-brick structures can be observed on the edge of the main mound, especially in the north, south, and west. The Neo-Assyrian settlement was probably extended to the large area of the mound centring on the public structures located in the west part of acropolis mound. The extent of the Neo-Assyrian settlement probably resembles that of the Middle Assyrian period.

The discovery of inscribed pottery in Grave 2 is the first excavated example of the Neo-Assyrian inscription at the site. This discovery is not only important for the inscription, but also for the study of burial customs during the Neo-Assyrian period in a regional centre.

Finally, the discovery of a bronze male figurine imbedded in a mud-brick conveys the importance of the building structure as well as suggests a building ritual during the Neo-Assyrian period at Tell Taban.

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Catalogue of Pottery Specimens in Figs. 13–26

Fig. 13

1. Small bowl: from Level 1 in Trench 14 (Hellenistic); greenish grey surfaces and core; large amount of fine sand and sparse vegetable (1–3 mm) inclusions; containing chalky particles; scraped on the lower part of outer surface; handmade ring base; worn away surfaces; Rim diam.: 12 cm; Base diam.: 4.9 cm.
2. Rim of painted bowl: from Level 1 in Trench 15 (Hellenistic); creamy buff outer surface; brown and blackish brown paint on surfaces; light buff core; sparse fine sand and chalky particles inclusions; fine fabric; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface after scraping; hard.
3. Rim of jar: from Level 1 in Trench 15 (Hellenistic); creamy buff outer surface; grey inner surface (carbide sticking); reddish brown core; large amount of very fine sand and gold colored mica inclusions; fine fabric; trace of horizontal burnishing remained on the outer surface of body.
4. Body of jar with stamp: from Level 1 in Trench 14 (Hellenistic); dark reddish brown surfaces; dark brown core; large amount of fine sand and sparse vegetable (1–3 mm) inclusions; exfoliated inner surface.

Fig. 14

5. Rim to body of dimple beaker: from the floor of room of Level 2b in Trench 15 (Neo-Assyrian period); creamy grey surfaces and core; sparse fine sand inclusions; fine fabric; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface of body after scraping; three dimples (1.5 cm diam.) remained; identical to Fig. 20a.
6. Base of dimple beaker: from Level 2b in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); greenish grey outer surface; creamy buff inner surface; light buff core; sparse fine sand inclusion; wet-smoothed on the outer surface after scraping.
7. Rim of bowl: from Level 3 in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); greenish grey outer surface; creamy buff inner surface and core; sparse fine sand and vegetable (1–3 mm) inclusions; containing chalky particles; fine fabric; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface after scraping.
8. Rim of bowl: from Level 2a in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); greenish cream surfaces; light brown core; large amount of very fine sand inclusions; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface after scraping.
9. Rim of bowl: from Level 3 in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); greenish grey surfaces; grey core; large amount of very fine sand inclusions; hard; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface after scraping.
10. Rim of bowl: from Level 2b in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); greenish cream (slip) outer surface; greenish cream/reddish brown inner surface; light buff core; sparse fine sand and vegetable (1–3 mm) inclusions; fine fabric; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface after scraping.
11. Rim of bowl: from Level 2b in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); dark buff/light brown outer surface; light brown/buff inner surface; dark brown core; sparse fine sand and vegetable (1–8 mm) inclusions; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface after scraping; burnished on the lower part of outer surface after wet-smoothing (horizontally, 3 mm in width).

Fig. 15

12. Rim of bowl: from Level 2a in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); creamy buff surfaces; light buff core; sparse fine sand and vegetable (1–5 mm) inclusions; fine fabric; scraped on the lower part of outer surface.
13. Rim of bowl: from Level 3 in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); reddish brown outer surface; reddish brown/greenish cream inner surface; greenish grey core; sparse fine sand and vegetable (1–3 mm) inclusions; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface after scraping.
14. Rim of bowl: from Level 2b in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); creamy grey surfaces; light buff core; sparse fine sand and vegetable (1–8 mm) inclusions; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface after scraping.
15. Rim of bowl: from Level 2a in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); light brown/cream outer surface; light brown inner surface; light buff core; sparse fine sand inclusion; fine fabric; hard; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface after scraping; wet-smoothed on the inner surface.
16. Rim of bowl: from Level 3 in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); creamy grey/reddish brown outer surface; light brown inner surface and core; sparse fine sand and vegetable (1–5 mm) inclusions; fine fabric; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface after scraping; burnished on the lower part of outer surface after wet-smoothing.
17. Rim of bowl: from Level 3 in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); pinkish cream surface; reddish brown core; large amount of fine sand and vegetable (1–10 mm) inclusions; containing coarse chalky particles; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface after scraping.

Fig. 16

18. Small bowl: from the niche of Room 2 of level 4 in Trench 14 (Middle Assyrian period); dark buff outer surface; light buff inner surface; carbide sticking on the lip; large amount of vegetable (1–10 mm) and sparse coarse sand inclusions; wet-smoothed on surfaces; wet-smoothed on the bottom after pallet-cut; used as a lamp; complete; Rim diam.: 8.1 cm; Base diam.: 3 cm; Height: 3.1 cm; identical to Fig. 20d, Pl.37a,b.
19. Small bowl: from the floor of Room 2 (floor of kiln) of Level 4 in Trench 14 (Middle Assyrian period); dark grey surfaces; light buff core; middle amount of vegetable (1–5 mm) and sparse fine sand inclusions; wet-smoothed on surfaces; wet-smoothed on the bottom after pallet-cut; complete; Rim diam.: 8.6 cm; Base diam.: 3.7 cm; Height: 3.3 cm; identical to Fig. 20c.
20. Small bowl: from the foundation of wall of Room 2, Level 4 in Trench 14 (Middle Assyrian period); greenish grey/light buff surfaces; reddish buff core; middle amount of vegetable (1–5 mm) and coarse chalky particles inclusions; wet-smoothed on surfaces; wet-smoothed on the bottom after pallet-cut; Rim diam.: 10.2 cm; Base diam.: 3.5 cm; Height: 3.7 cm; 1/2 extant.
21. Ring base bowl: from the upper deposit of Room 3 of level 4 in Trench 14 (Middle Assyrian period); greenish grey/greenish cream slip surfaces; buff core; middle amount of vegetable (1–5 mm) and fine sand inclusions; stuck ring-base on a bottom; slightly soft; worn on surfaces; later type of the Middle Assyrian bowl; Rim diam.: 16 cm; Base diam.: 6.2 cm; Height: 5 cm; 1/2 extant.
22. Bowl: from the foundation of wall of Room 2, Level 4 in Trench 14 (Middle Assyrian period); greenish grey surfaces; greenish cream core; sparse vegetable (1–5 mm), fine sand and chalky particles inclusions; wet-smoothed on surfaces; pallet-cut on bottom; Rim diam.: 14.2 cm; Base diam.: 3 cm; Height: 3.9 cm; 2/3 extant; identical to Pl.36a
23. Bowl: from the foundation of wall of Room 2, Level 4 in Trench 14 (Middle Assyrian period); greenish grey/pinkish cream surfaces; reddish buff core; large amount of vegetable (1–5 mm) and chalky particles inclusions; wet-smoothed on surfaces; wet-smoothed on the bottom after pallet-cut; Rim diam.: 15 cm; Base diam.: 4.3 cm; Height: 3.9 cm; 2/3 extant.
24. Bowl: from the foundation of wall of Room 2, Level 4 in Trench 14 (Middle Assyrian period); reddish brown/pinkish cream surfaces and core; large amount of vegetable (1–5 mm) and sparse fine sand inclusions; wet-smoothed on surfaces; wet-smoothed on the bottom after pallet-cut; Rim diam.: 19.5 cm; Base diam.: 5.9 cm; Height: 5 cm; 1/2 extant.
25. Bowl: from the foundation of wall of Room 2, Level 4 in Trench 14 (Middle Assyrian period); greenish grey surfaces and core; middle amount of vegetable (1–5 mm) and sparse fine sand inclusions; wet-smoothed on surfaces; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface of body after scraping; pallet-cut on the bottom using wheel-turn; Rim diam.: 20 cm; Base diam.: 6.3 cm; Height: 6.2 cm; 2/3 extant; identical to Pl.37e.
26. Bowl: from the foundation of wall of Room 2, Level 4 in Trench 14 (Middle Assyrian period); greenish grey surfaces and core; middle amount of vegetable (1–5 mm) and sparse fine sand inclusions; wet-smoothed on surfaces; pallet-cut on the bottom; Rim diam.: 22 cm; Height: 4.5 cm; 1/3 extant.
27. Large bowl: from the foundation of wall of Room 2, Level 4 in Trench 14 (Middle Assyrian period); greenish cream surfaces; reddish buff core; middle amount of vegetable (1–2 mm) and sparse fine sand inclusions; wet-smoothed on surfaces; scraped on the lower part of outer surface of body using wheel-turn; pallet-cut on the bottom; Rim diam.: 28 cm; Base diam.: 9 cm; Height: 5.8 cm; 1/2 extant.
28. Nipple base beaker: from the floor of Room 2 (floor of kiln) of Level 4 in Trench 14 (Middle Assyrian period); greenish grey surfaces and core; sparse vegetable (1–3 mm) and fine sand inclusions; fine fabric; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface of body after scraping; stuck nipple base on the bottom; complete; Rim diam.: 6.7 cm; Max. diam.: 7.7 cm; Height: 8.5 cm; identical to Fig. 20e.
29. Nipple base beaker: from the foundation of wall of Room 2, Level 4 in Trench 14 (Middle Assyrian period); greenish grey surfaces; light buff core; sparse very fine sand inclusion; fine fabric; wet-smoothed on the outer surface of body after scraping; stuck nipple base on the bottom; complete (except rim); Max. diam.: 7.3 cm; Height: 7.9 cm; identical to Fig. 20f.

Fig. 17

30. Body to base of jar: buried jar; from the floor of Room 3 (belongs to pottery kiln) of Level 4 in Trench 14 (Middle Assyrian period); light buff surfaces; dark buff core; large amount of vegetable (1–10 mm) and fine sand inclusions; containing chalky particles; roughly scraped on the lower part of outer surface of body; complete (except rim); Base diam.: 7 cm; Max. diam.: 28 cm; Height: 36 cm; 1/2 extant; identical to Fig. 19g, Pl. 41.

Fig. 18

31. Base of jar/beaker: Old Babylonian level in Trench 14; light brown surfaces; reddish brown core; fine fabric; containing chalky particles; very hard; wet-smoothed on the outer surface of body after scraping; button base made by scraping.
32. Base of jar/beaker: Old Babylonian level in Trench 14; greenish grey outer surface (natural slip); reddish buff inner surface and core; fine fabric; containing chalky particles; very hard; wet-smoothed on the outer surface of body after scraping stuck button base on the bottom.
33. Rim of jar: Old Babylonian level in Trench 14; cream surfaces; reddish buff core; sparse vegetable (1–3 mm) and very fine sand inclusion; fine fabric.
34. Rim of jar: Old Babylonian level in Trench 14; greenish grey surfaces; light buff core; sparse vegetable (1–3 mm) and very fine sand inclusion; fine fabric.
35. Rim of bowl: Old Babylonian level in Trench 14; greenish cream surfaces; light buff core; sparse vegetable (1–3 mm) and large amount of chalky particles inclusions; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface after scraping.
36. Rim to base of coarse bowl: Old Babylonian level in Trench 14; dark buff surfaces; blackish grey core; large amount of vegetable (1–10 mm) inclusion; scraped on the lower part of outer surface of body.

Fig. 19

- a. Dimple beaker shards: identical to Fig. 14–5
- b. Glass shards: from Level 2 in Trench 14 (Neo Assyrian period)
- c. Small bowl: identical to Fig. 16–19
- d. Small bowl: identical to Fig. 16–18
- e. Nipple base beaker: identical to Fig. 16–28
- f. Nipple base beaker: identical to Fig. 16–29
- g. Body to base of jar: identical to Fig. 17–30

Figs. 20, 21

- P5: Jar with cuneiform inscription (T07-12); from Grave 2 of Level 3 in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); creamy buff/reddish buff outer surface; reddish brown inner surface; pinkish brown core; large amount of fine sand and middle amount of vegetable (1–8 mm) inclusions; wet-smoothed on the lower part of outer surface of body after scraping; trace of burnishing sparsely remained on the outer surface of body (vertical and horizontal ways: 2–3 mm in width); figure and cuneiform and three dots were engraved on the outer surface of body after baking; Rim diam.: 11 cm; Max.diam.: 28.5 cm; Extant Height: 23 cm; Rim 1/4 extant; Body 2/3 extant; since the jar was fragment and carbide was stuck on the rim and section of lower part of body, the jar was re-used to carve the epitaph.

Fig. 22

- P8: Small jar; from Grave 2 of Level 3 in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); goods for second burial; creamy buff/light buff surfaces; light buff core; sparse very fine sand and vegetable (1–10 mm) inclusions; wet-smoothed on the outer surface of body after scraping (using wheel-turn, horizontal way); ring-base stuck on the bottom; complete; Rim diam.: 7.8 cm; Max diam.: 12.5 cm; Height: 16.5 cm.
- P9: Small bowl; from Grave 2 of Level 3 in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); goods for second burial; creamy buff/reddish brown surfaces (gypsum stuck on surfaces, original color is unknown); middle amount of vegetable (1–5 mm) and spares fine sand inclusions; wet-smoothed on the outer surface of body after scraping; ring-base stuck on the bottom; complete; Rim diam.: 11.3 cm; Base diam.: 5.6 cm; Height: 4.6 cm; Rim of P2 was used to lid for this bowl.
- P7: Small bowl; from Grave 2 of Level 3 in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); goods for first burial; light buff outer surface; light brown inner surface; middle amount of vegetable (1–5 mm) and spares fine sand inclusions; wet-smoothed on the outer surface of body after scraping; ring-base stuck on the bottom; complete; Rim diam.: 11.7 cm; Base diam.: 5 cm; Height: 3.8 cm; P6 was covered with this bowl as a lid.
- P6: Bowl; from Grave 2 of Level 3 in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); goods for first burial; dark buff outer surface and core; reddish brown inner surface; middle amount of vegetable (1–5 mm) and spares fine sand inclusions; wet-smoothed on the outer surface of body after scraping; vertical burnishing (3 mm in width) arranged on surfaces; ring-base stuck on the bottom; nearly complete; Rim diam.: 20 cm; Base diam.: 6.7 cm; Height: 6.8 cm; P6 covered with P7 as a lid.

Fig. 23

- P4: Large bowl; from Grave 2 of Level 3 in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); P4 was used as cover of P3 coffin; reddish buff surfaces; light buff core; reddish brown inner surface; large amount of vegetable (1–5 mm), fine sand

and chalky particles inclusions; wet-smoothed on the outer surface of body after scraping (using wheel-turn); scraped on the bottom; ring-base stuck on the bottom; nearly complete; Rim diam.: 39 cm; Base diam.: 13 cm; Height: 23 cm; 2/5 extant.

Fig. 24

P1: Large tripod jar (coffin); from Grave 2 of Level 3 in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); P1 was used to coffin of first and second burials; greenish cream/light buff surfaces; light buff/reddish buff core; large amount of vegetable (1–15 mm) and fine sand inclusions; fabric of tripod contain very large amount of vegetable; wet-smoothed on the outer surface of body after scraping; tripod stuck on the bottom; complete; Rim diam.: 45 cm; Height: 46 cm; identical to Fig. 26a.

Fig. 25

P3: Coffin; from Grave 2 of Level 3 in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); P3 was used to coffin of second burial; greenish grey outer surface and core; greenish grey/reddish brown inner surface; large amount of vegetable (1–10 mm) and fine sand inclusions; complete; Rim diam.: 34 cm; Height: 39 cm; identical to Fig. 26b.

P2: Coffin; from Grave 2 of Level 3 in Trench 14 (Neo-Assyrian period); P2 was used to coffin of first burial; greenish grey surfaces and core; large amount of vegetable (1–15 mm) and fine sand inclusions; nearly complete; Rim diam.: 45 cm; Height: 47 cm; 1/3 of rim to body was cut for lid of coffin; identical to Fig. 26c, d.

Fig. 26

- a. P1: identical to Fig. 24-P1
- b. P3: identical to Fig. 25-P3
- c. P2: identical to Fig. 25-P2; left: lid of coffin; right: body of coffin
- d. P2: identical to Fig. 25-P2; cutting section of lid of coffin; cutting was carried out before firing.

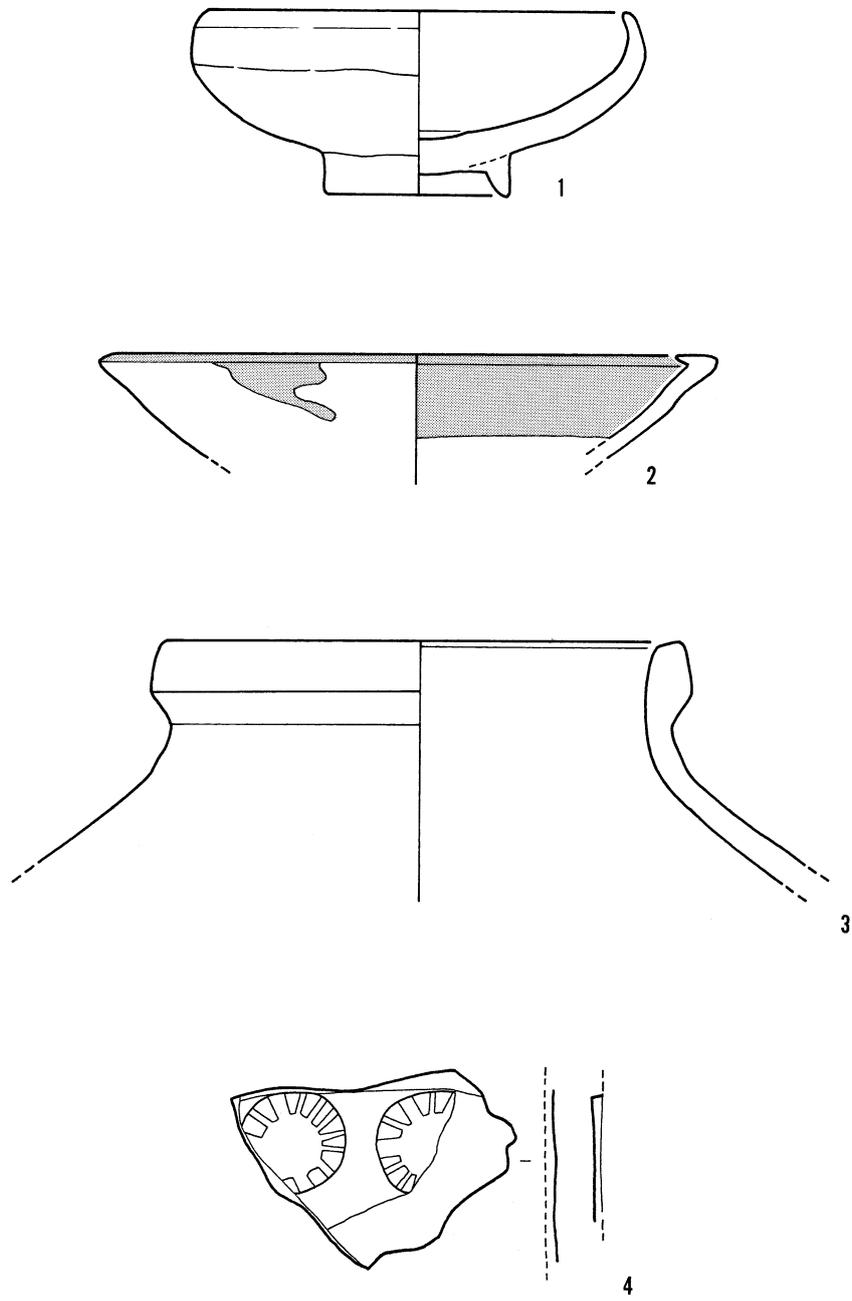


Fig. 13 Pottery from Level 1 (Hellenistic period) in Trenches 14, 15

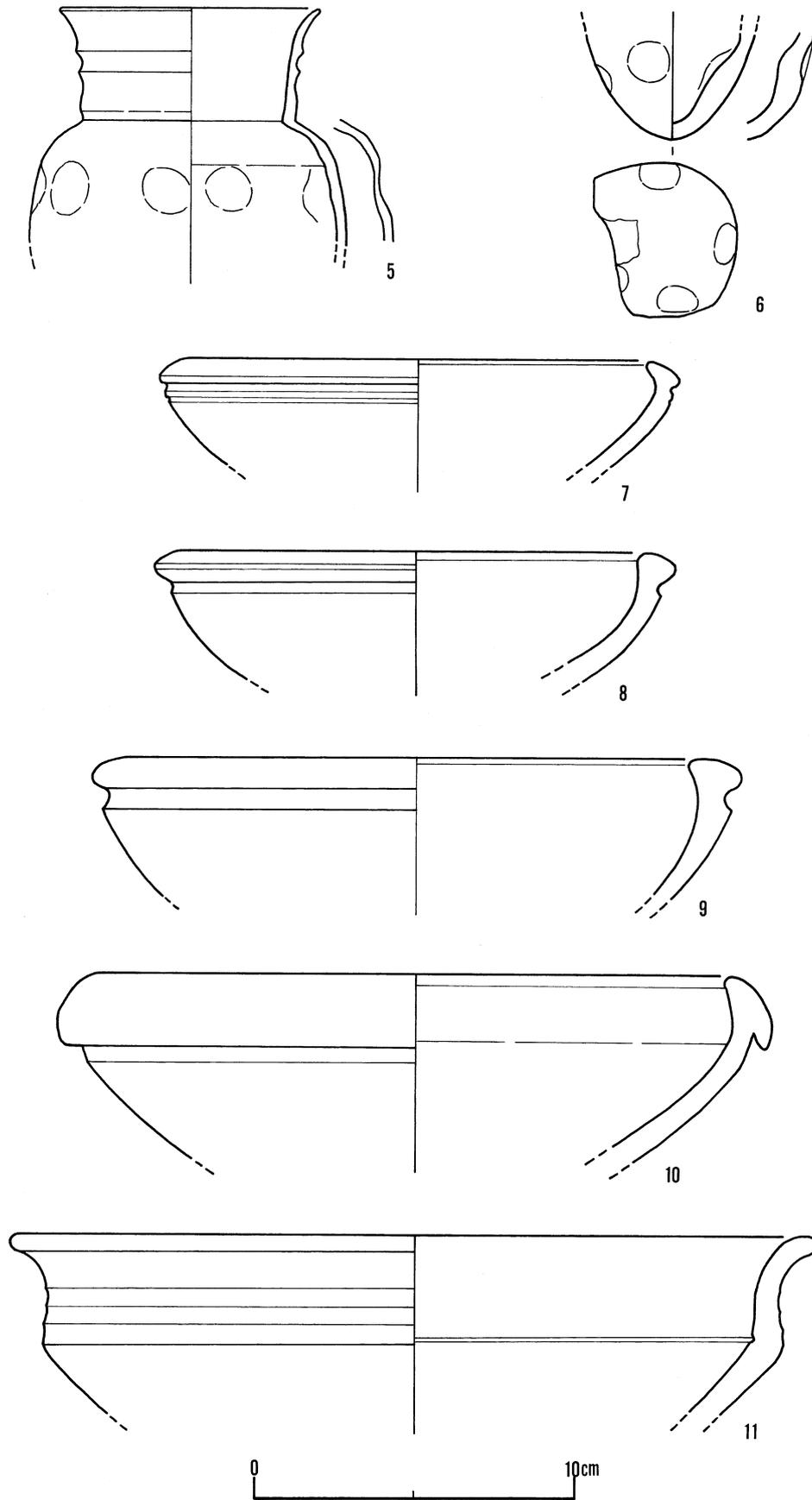


Fig. 14 Pottery from Levels 2, 3 (Neo-Assyrian period) in Trenches 14, 15

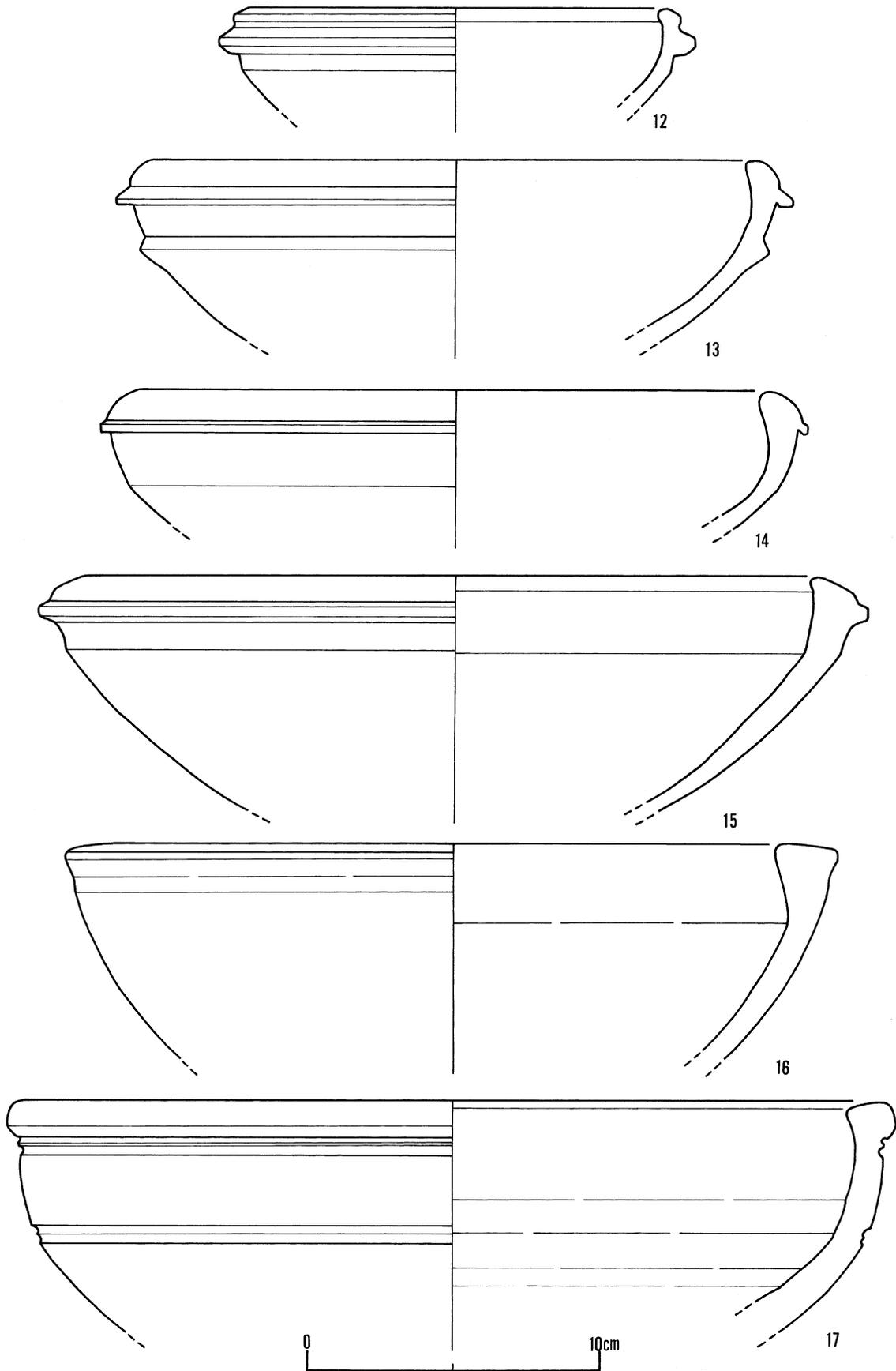


Fig. 15 Pottery from Levels 2, 3 (Neo-Assyrian period) in Trenches 14

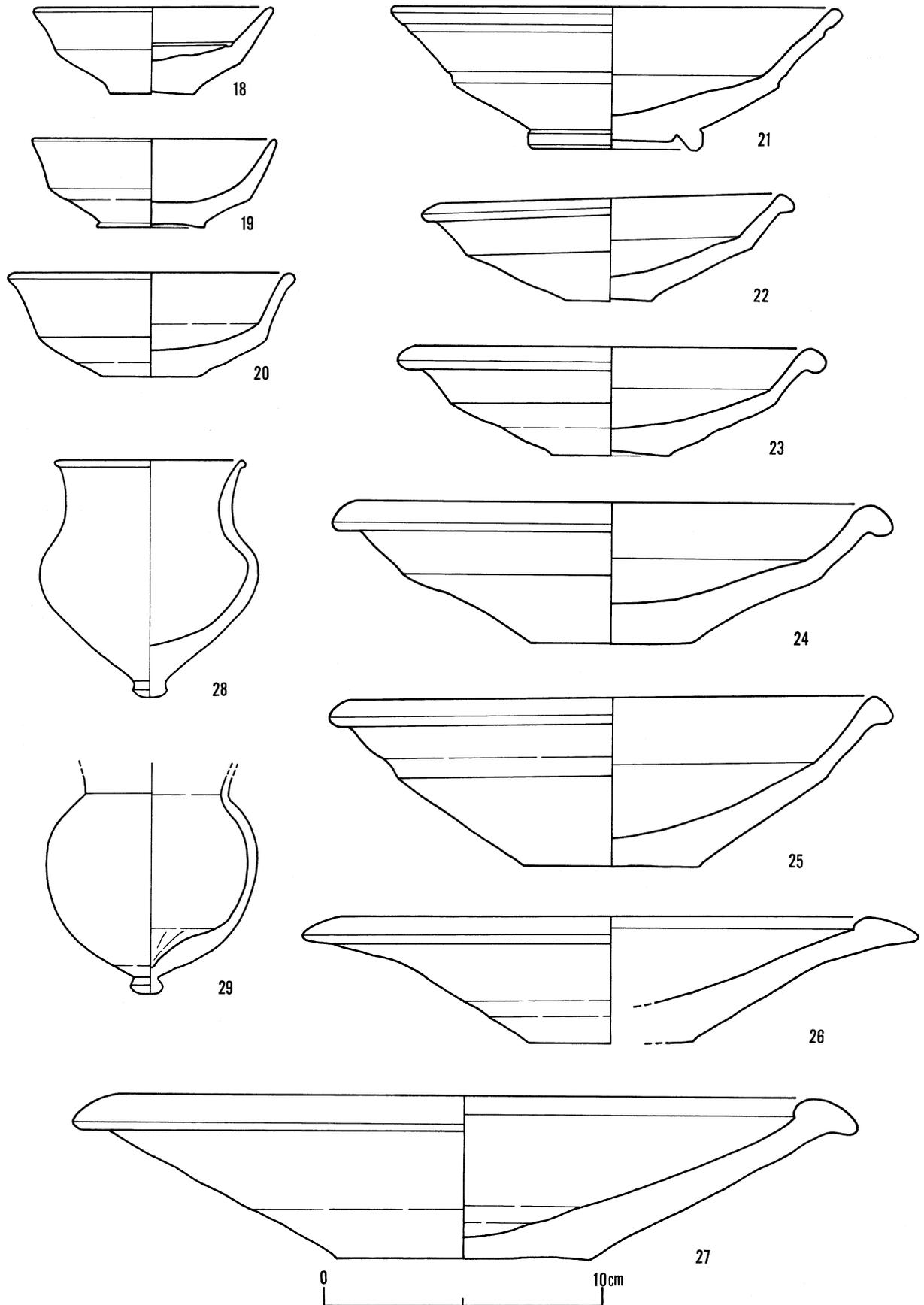


Fig. 16 Pottery from Level 4 (Middle Assyrian period) in Trenches 14

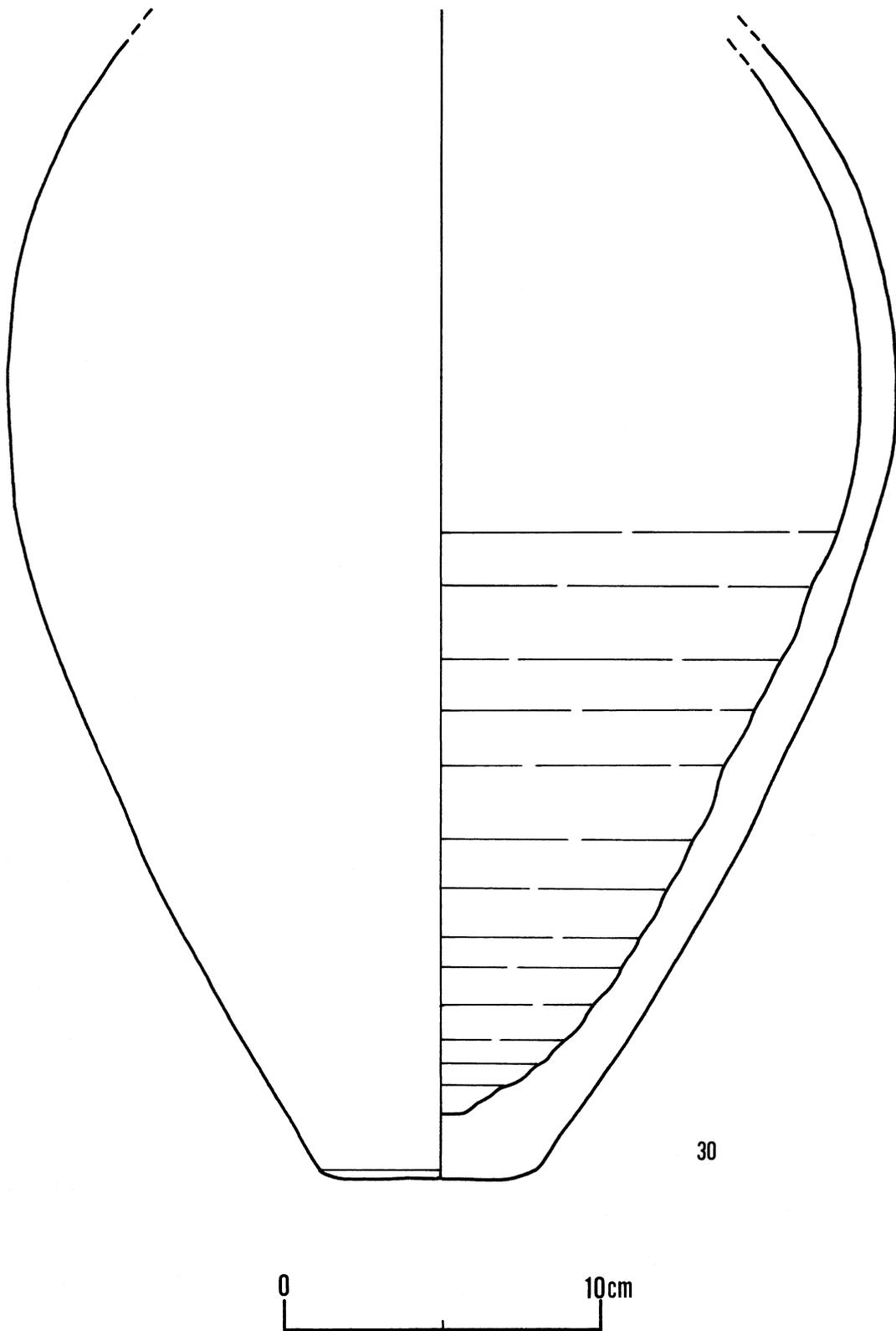


Fig. 17 Pottery from Level 4 (Middle Assyrian period) in Trenches 14

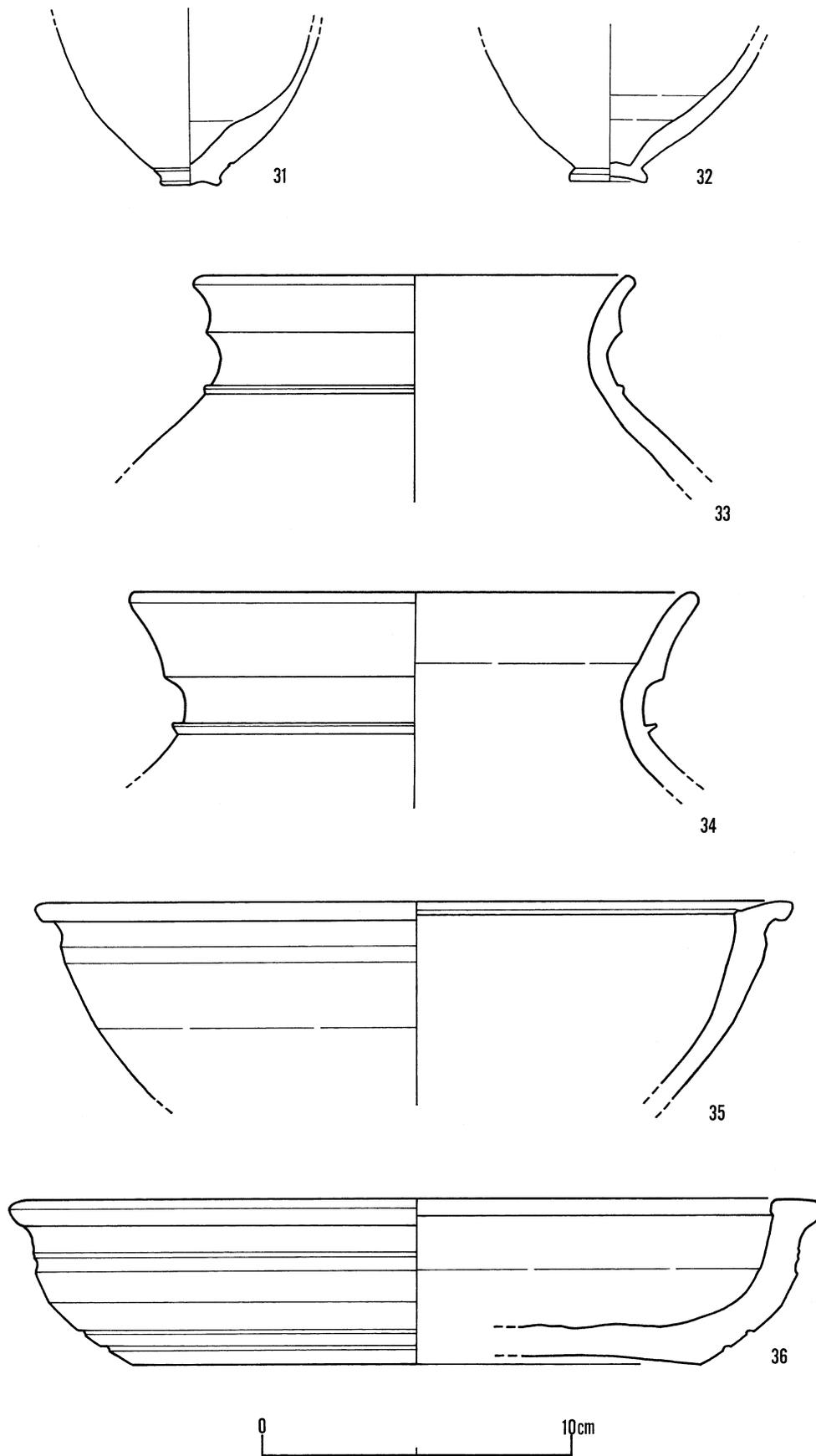


Fig. 18 Pottery from the Old Babylonian Level in Trenches 14



a. Dimple beaker shards (5)



b. Glass shards from Level 2



c. Small bowl (19)

d. Small bowl (18)



e. Nipple base beaker (28)



g. Body of jar (30)



f. Nipple base beaker (29)

Fig. 19 Neo-Assyrian beaker and glass ware, and Middle Assyrian pottery
*Numbers of figures are identical with those in Figs. 14, 16, 17

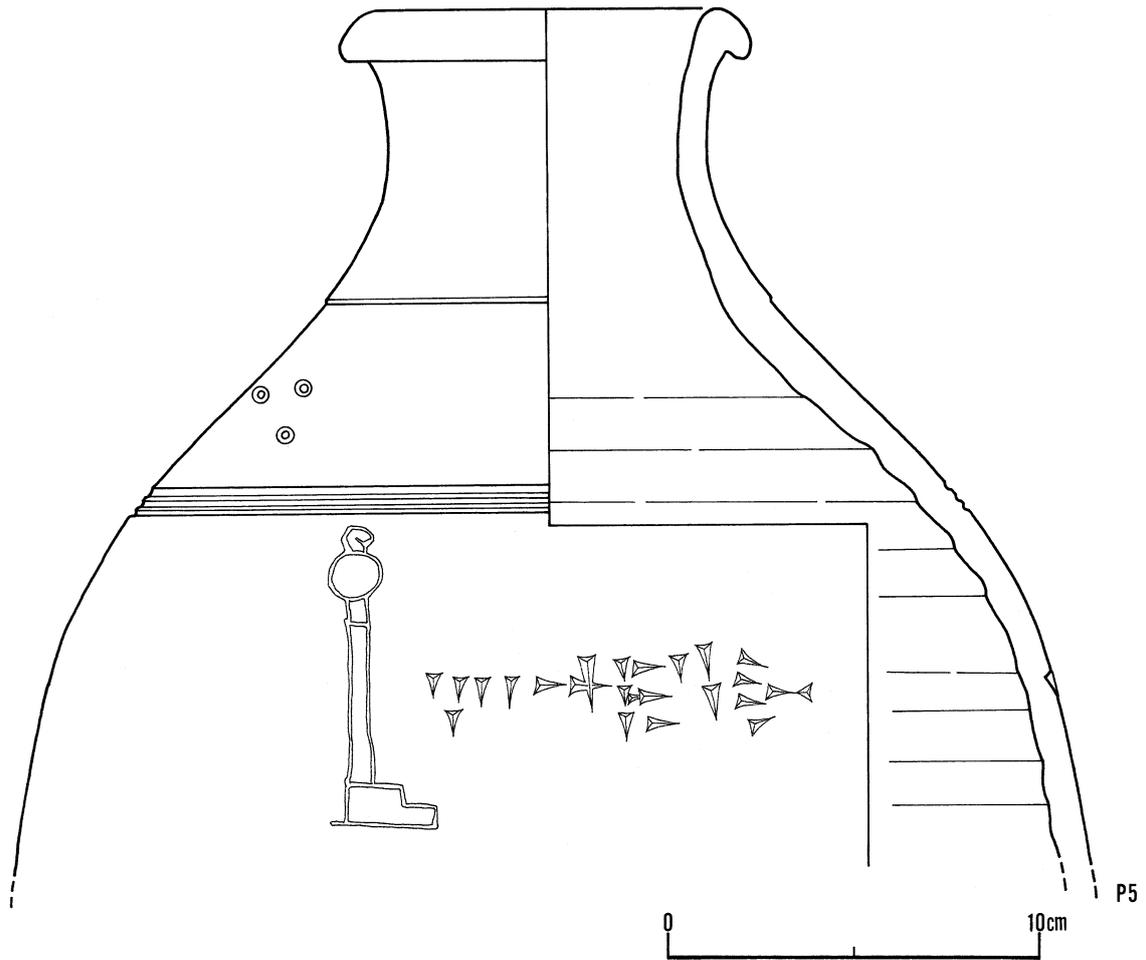


Fig. 20 Jar with cuneiform inscription (P5) (T07-12) from Grave 2 (Neo-Assyrian period) (figure and inscription were copied by Yamada)



Fig. 21 Cuneiform inscription of Jar (P5) (T07-12) (Neo-Assyrian period)

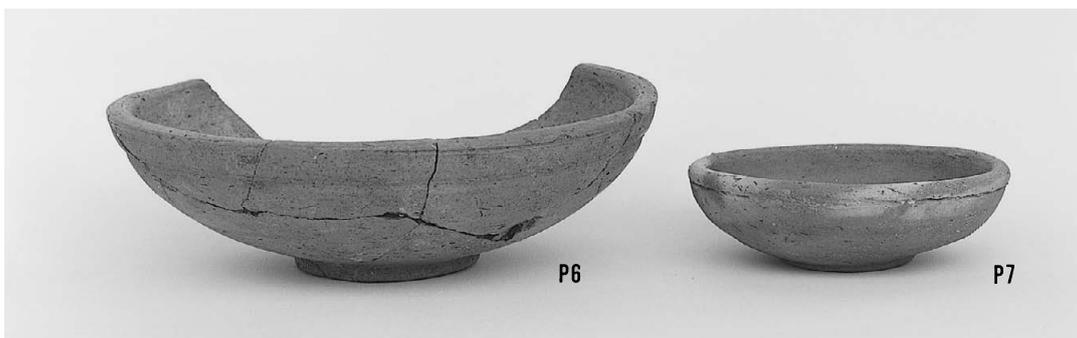
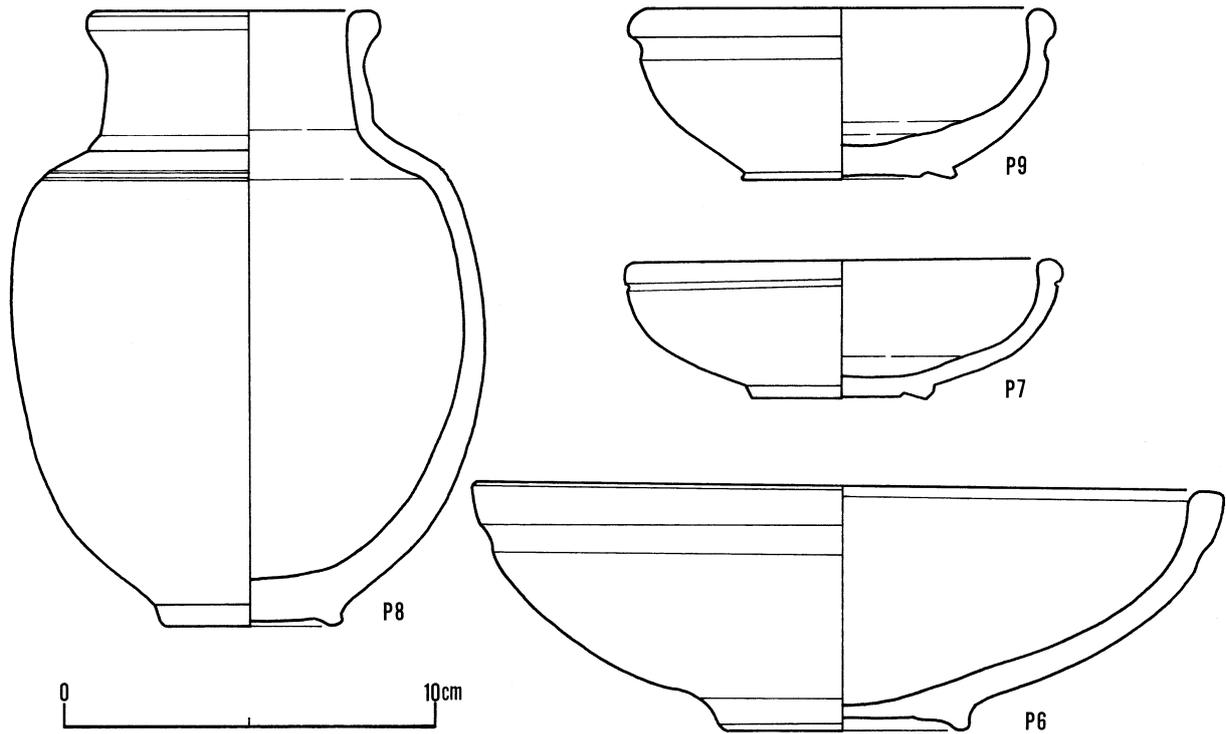


Fig. 22 Offering pottery from Grave 2 (Neo-Assyrian period) (P8, P9 belong to second burial, P6, P7 belong to first burial)

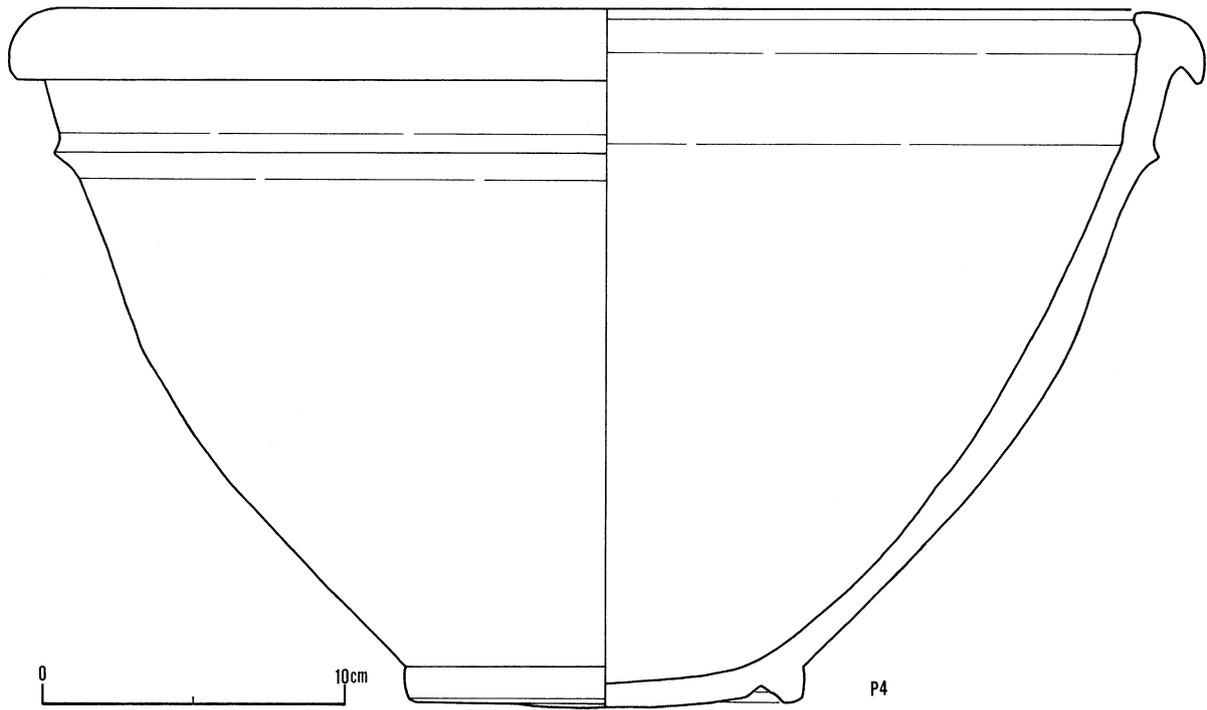


Fig. 23 Bowl from Grave 2 (Neo-Assyrian period) (P4 was used as a cover of coffin of P3)

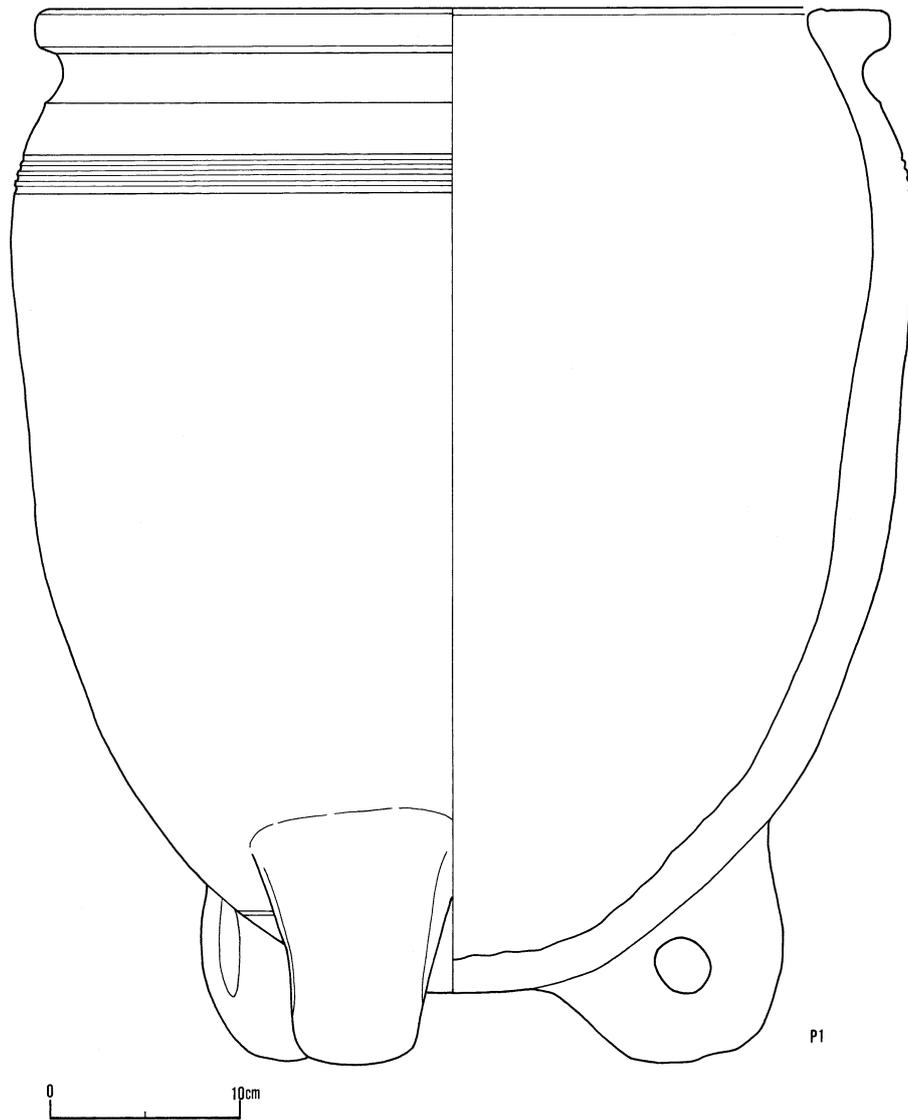


Fig. 24 Coffin from Grave 2 (P1) (Neo-Assyrian period)

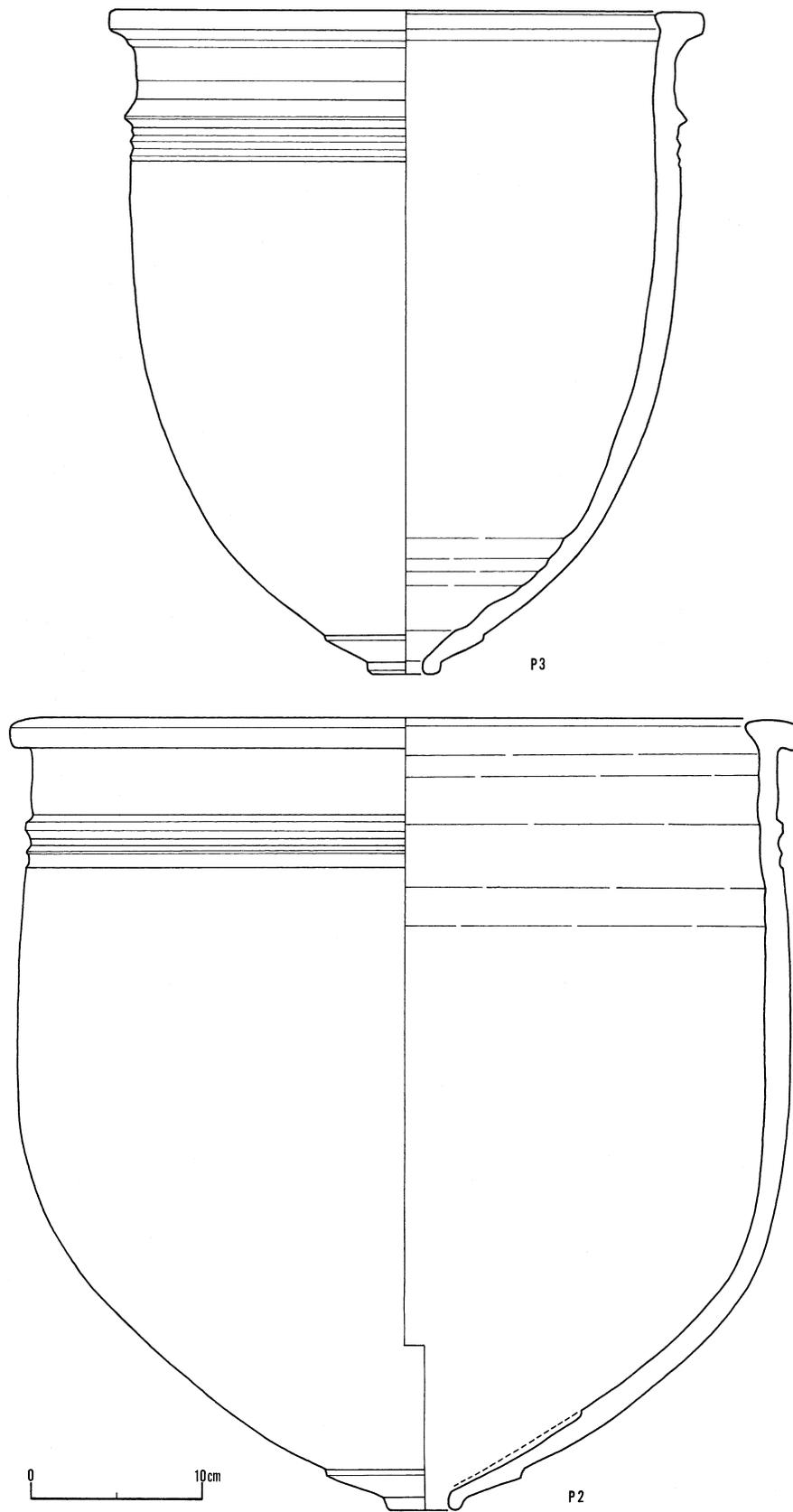


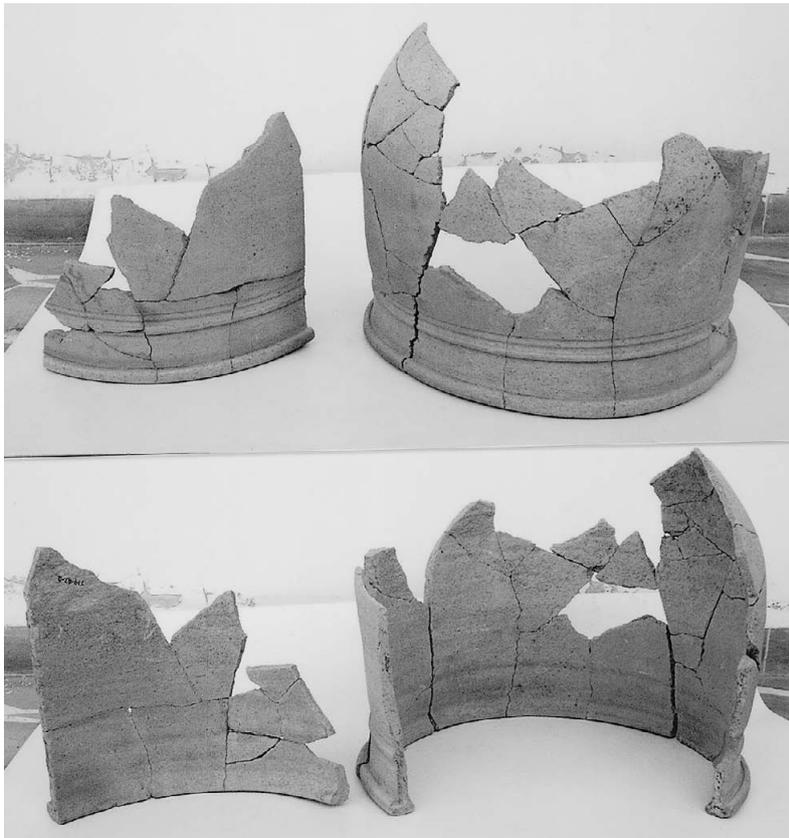
Fig. 25 Coffins from Grave 2 (P2, P3) (Neo-Assyrian period)
(P2 was used as a coffin of first burial; P3 was used as a coffin of second burial)



a. P1



b. P3



c. P2, left shard: lid of coffin, right shard: body of coffin



d. P2, cutting section of lid of coffin

Fig. 26 Coffins from Grave 2 (P1.P2.P3) (Neo-Assyrian period)



a. General view of Tell Taban, from the west, before 2007 excavation



b. General view of Tell Taban, from the north west



c. General view of Tell Taban, from the north



d. General view of Tell Taban, from the south

Pl. 2



a. Pits from the bedrock at the waterside of southern area



b. Clay tablet (T07-2) from the waterside of near Trench 10



a. Cylinder with inscriptions (T07-6) from waterside of near Trench 11



b. Cylinder with inscriptions (T07-8) from waterside of the south area

Pl. 4



a. Western area of Tell Taban, before excavation



b. Western slope of Tell Taban, before excavation of Trench 14



a. Mud-brick wall (Neo-Assyrian period) from surface in Trench 14



b. Mud-brick wall (Middle Assyrian period) from Trenches 5, 6, 9 excavated at 2005,06 seasons



a. Beginning of excavation in Trench 14, from the west



b. Beginning of excavation in Trench 14, from the south west



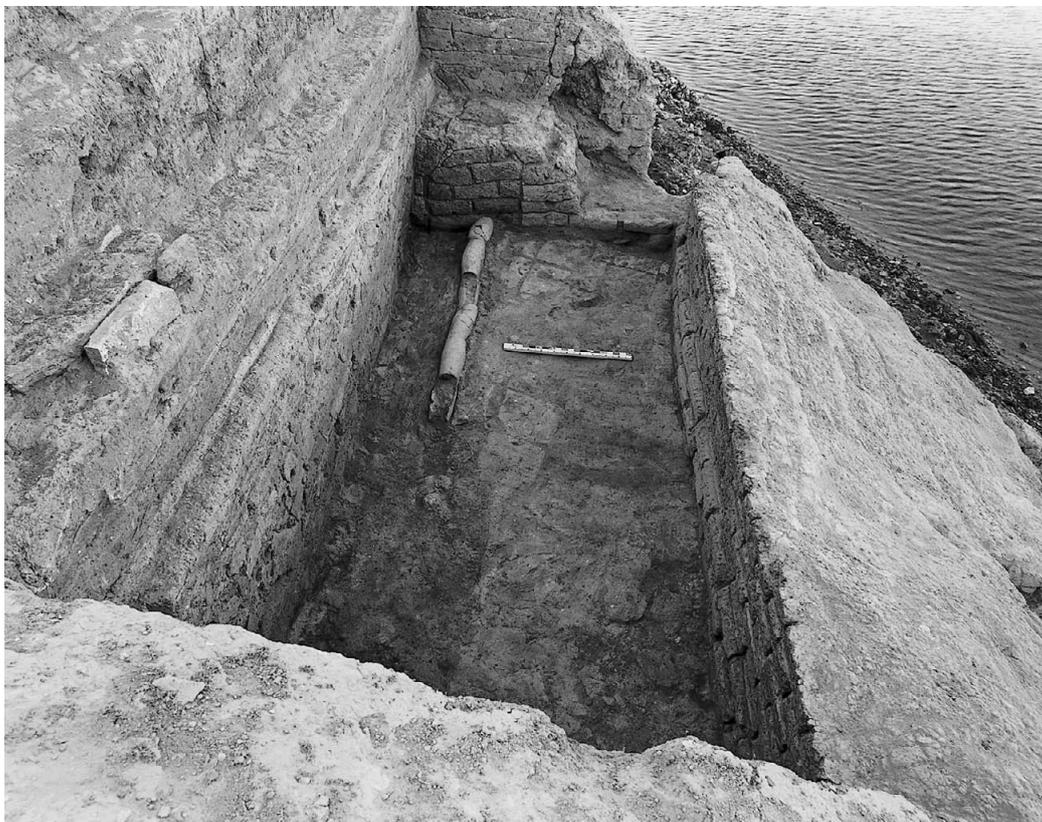
a. Hellenistic layer in Trench 14



b. Level 1 (Hellenistic layers) in Trench 14



a. Surface of Level 2a (Neo-Assyrian period)



b. Structures of Level 2a in Trench 14



a. Structures of Level 2a in Trench 14, from the north



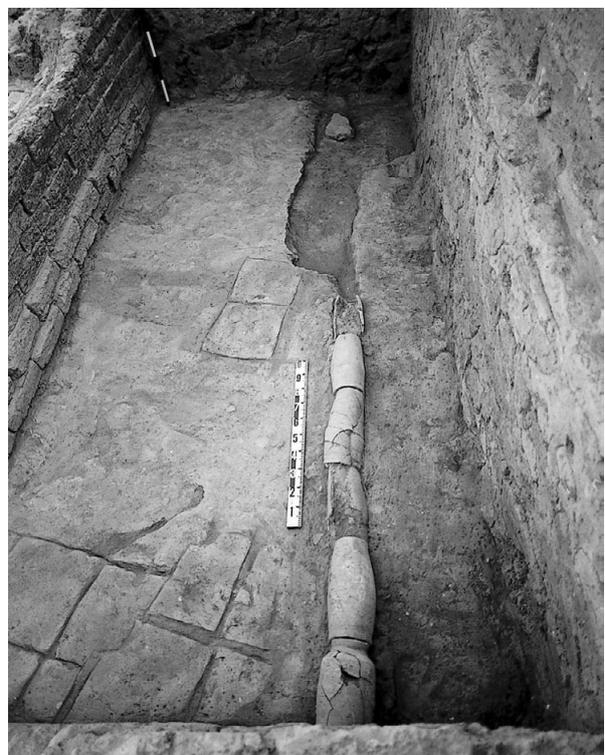
b. Drainage structure of Level 2a in Trench 14



a. Drainage structure of Level 2a, from the west



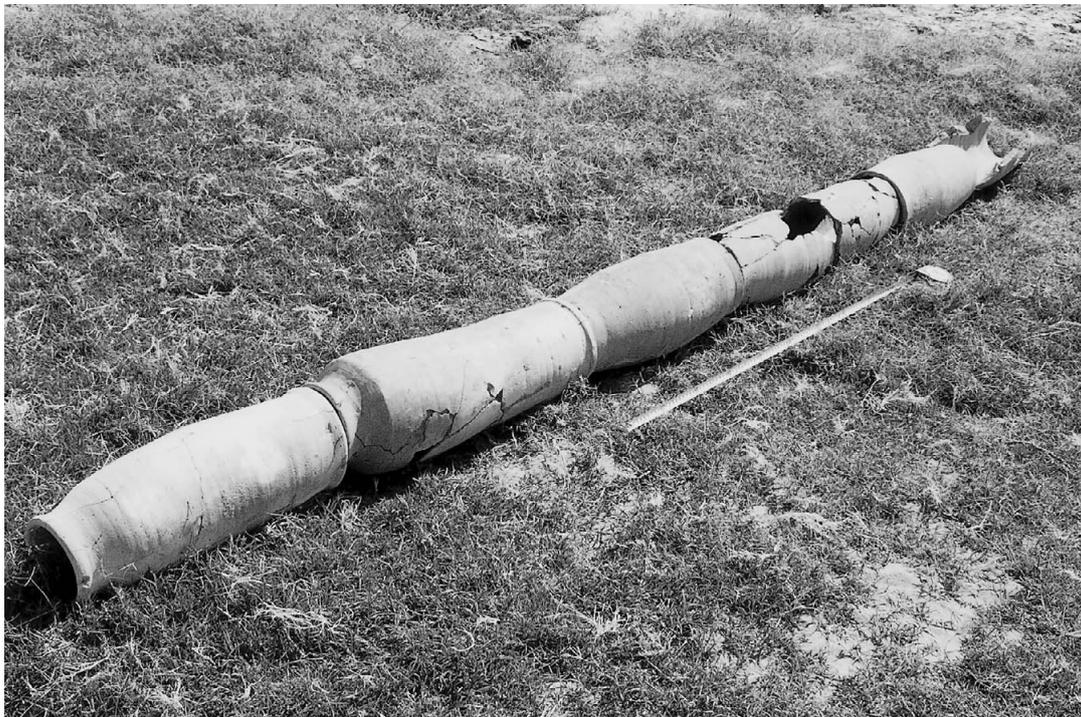
b. Drainage structure of Level 2a, from the north



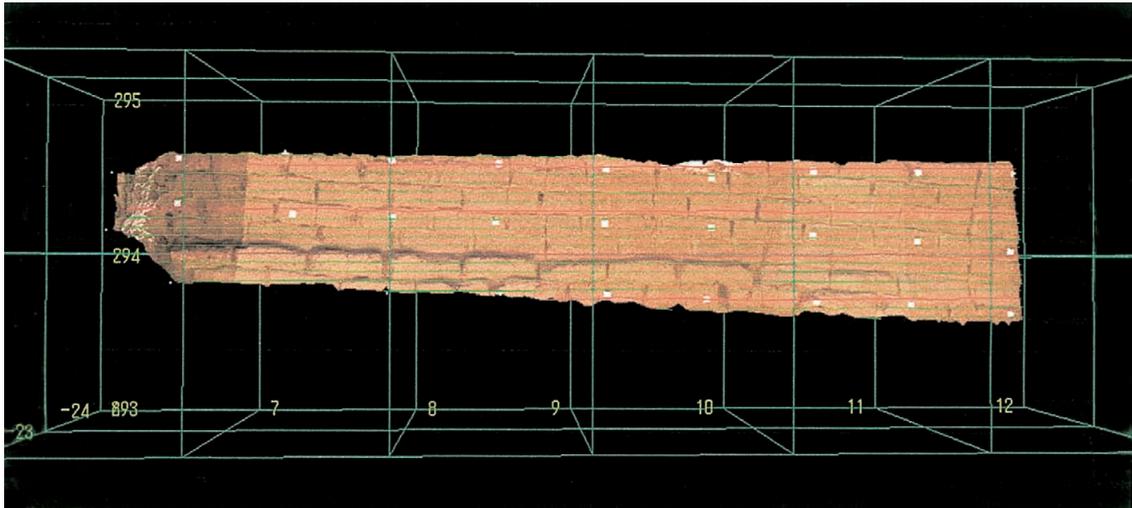
c. Drainage structure of Level 2a, from the south



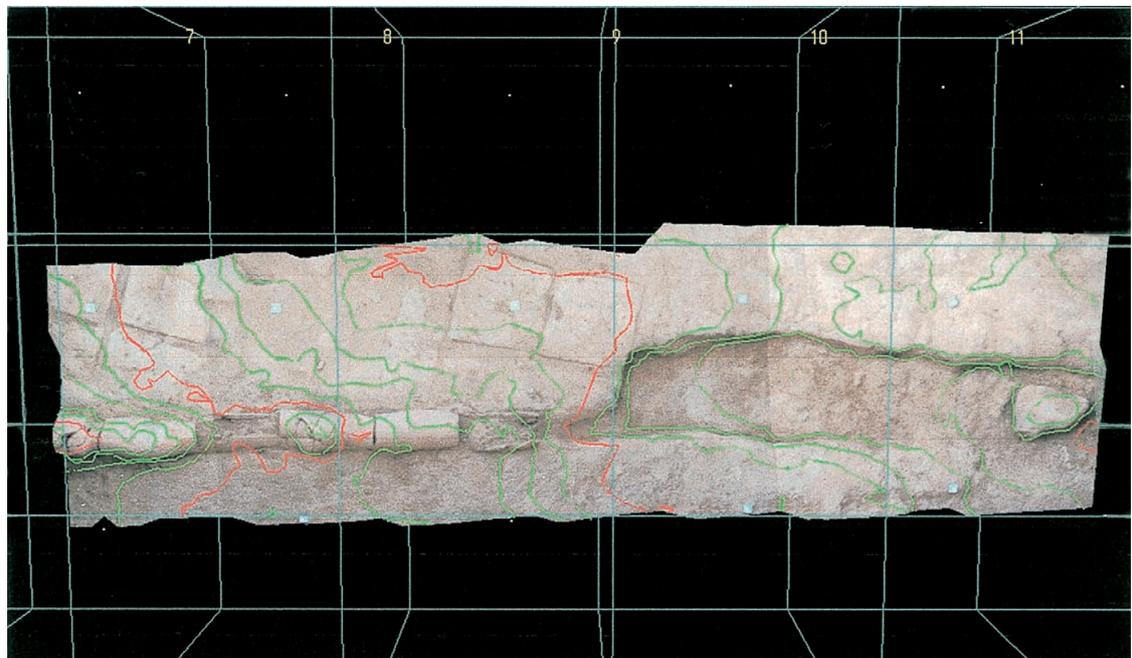
a. Drainage structure of Level 2a, from the east



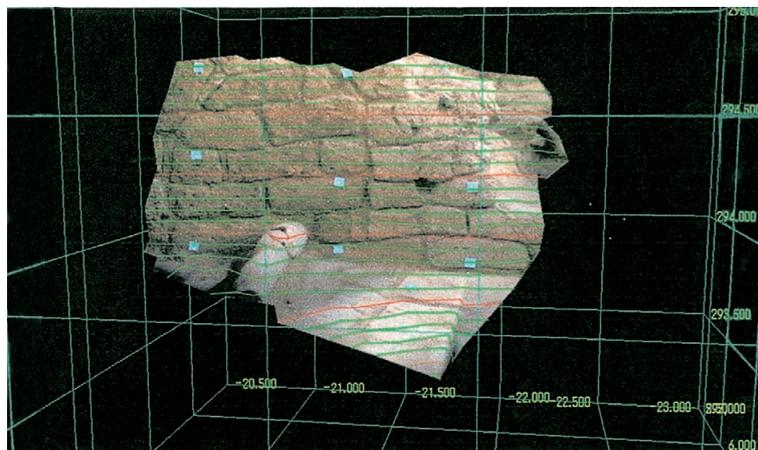
b. Pottery pipes used in drainage structure of Level 2a



a. West wall of Level 2a in Trench 14 (3D plan)



b. Drainage structure of Level 2a in Trench 14 (3D plan)



c. South wall of Level 2a in Trench 14 (3D plan)



a. Wall of Level 2, from the north, large stone is designated as a arrow



b. Room 2 of Level 2, from the north, large stone is designated as a arrow



a. Wall and Room 2 of Level 2, from the south, large stone is designated as a arrow



b. Bronze figurine discovered from the wall of Level 2, from the south



Bronze figurine discovered from a mud-brick in wall of Level 2



a. Wall of Level 2 in Trench 14, from the north west



b. Wall of Level 2 in Trench 14, from the north



a. Wall of Level 2 in Trench 14, from the south east



b. Wall of Level 2 in Trench 14, from the south



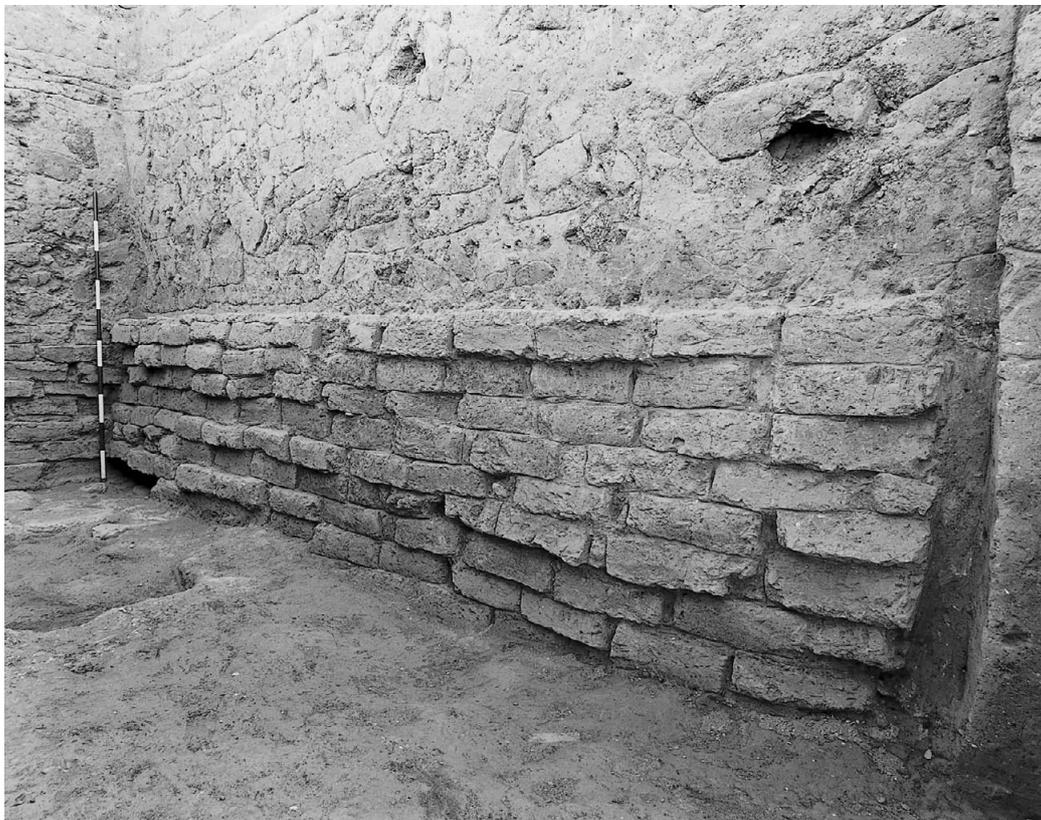
a. Room 1 of Level 2b in Trench 14, from the south



b. Room 1 of Level 2b in Trench 14, from the north



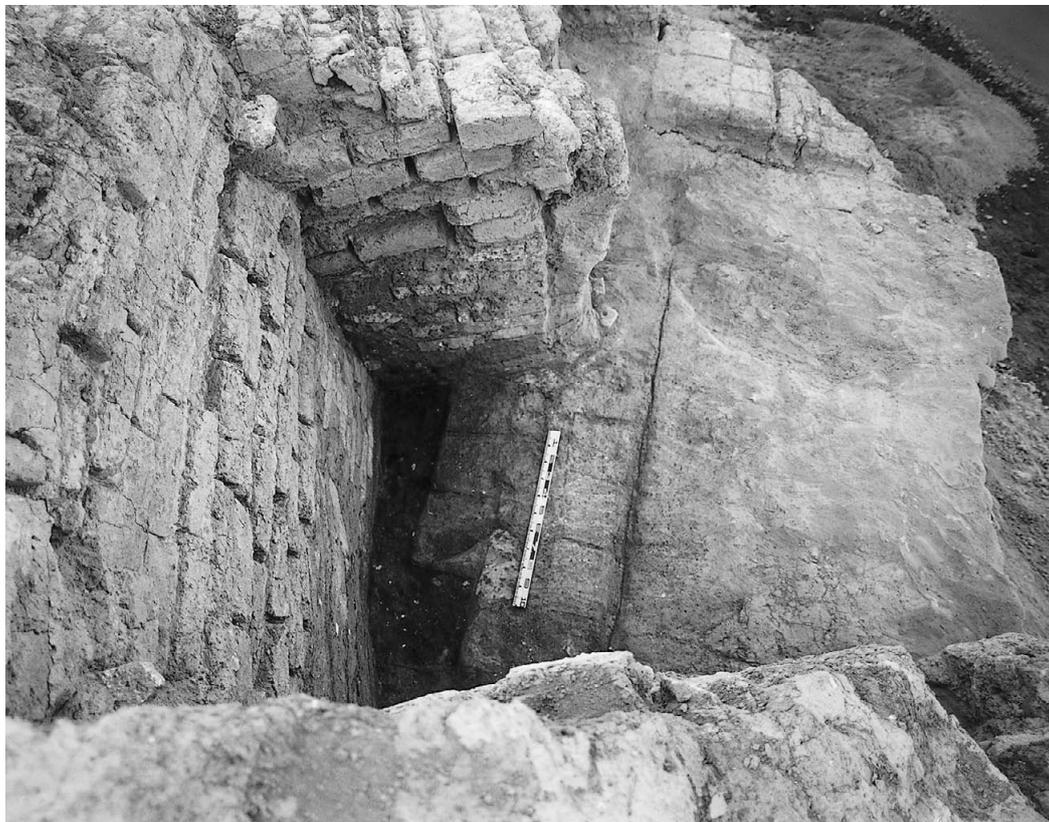
a. Western wall of the Room 1 of Level 2 in Trench 14



b. Eastern wall of the Room 1 of Level 2b in Trench 14



a. Walls of Levels 2 and 5 in Trench 14, from the south west



b. Walls of Levels 2 and 5 in Trench 14, from the north



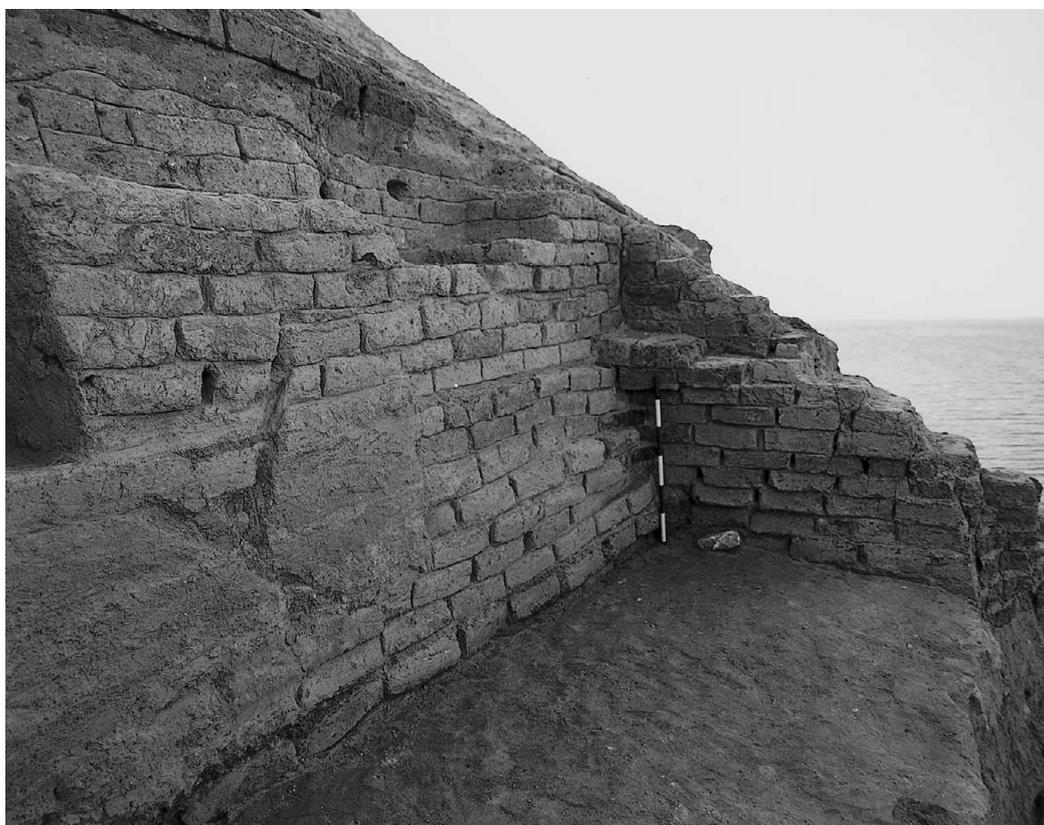
a. Walls of Levels 2 and 5 in Trench 14, from the north



b. Lower layer of wall in Level 2, from the north



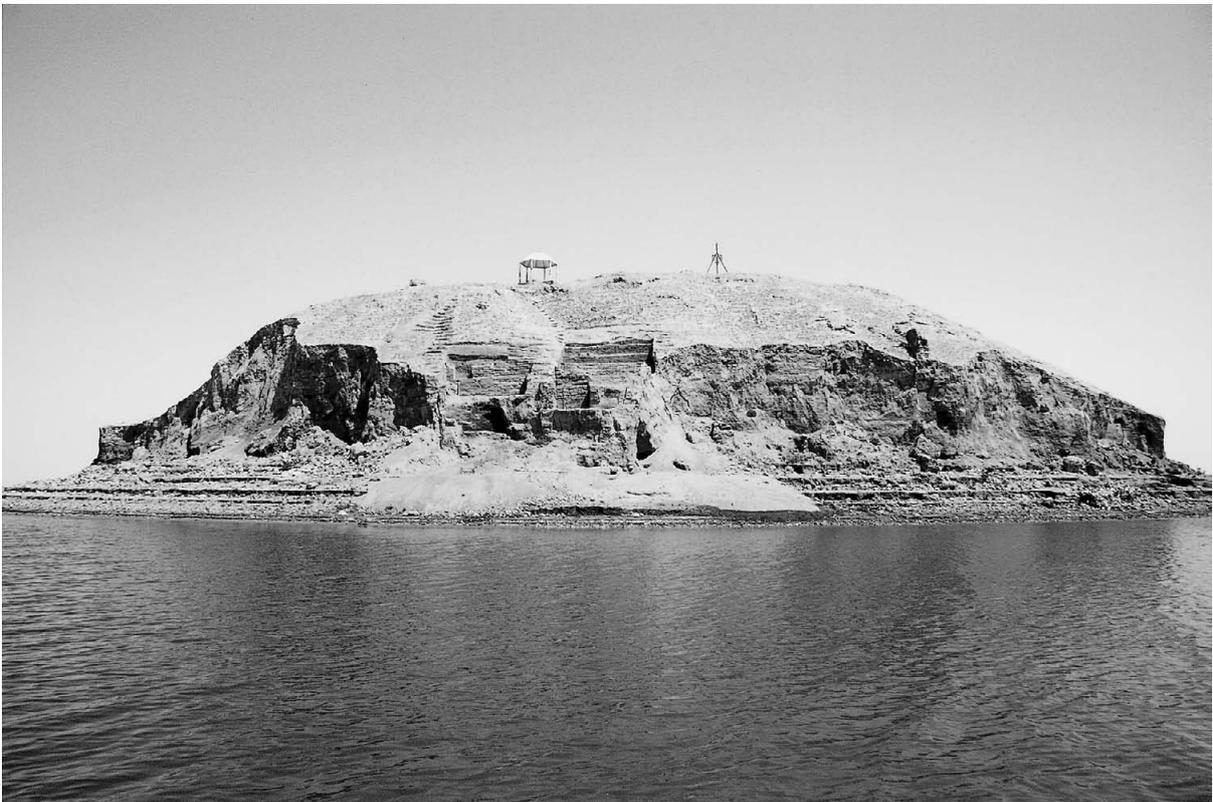
a. Room 3 and walls of Level 2 in Trench 15, from the south



b. Room 3 and walls of Level 2 in Trench 15, from the north



a. Walls of Level 2 in Trenches 14 and 15, from the west



b. General view of Trenches 14 and 15, from the west



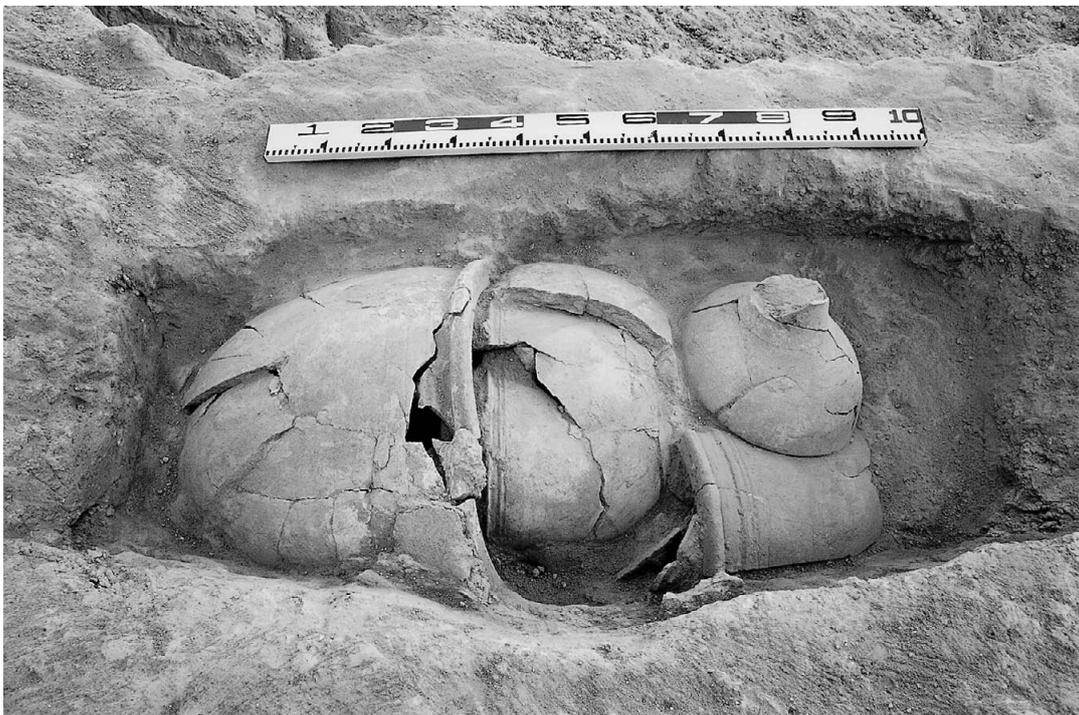
a. Walls of Level 3 and Grave 2 in Trench 14, from the north



b. Walls of Level 3 and Grave 2 in Trench 14, from the east



a. Grave 1 (child burial) of Level 3 (Neo-Assyrian period) in Trench 14, from the north



b. Grave 2 of Level 3 (Neo-Assyrian period) in Trench 14, from the north



a. Beginning of excavation of Grave 2 (PI, P2, P3), from the north



b. Grave 2 (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5), from the north



a. Jar with cuneiform inscription (P5) from Grave 2



b. Jar with cuneiform inscriptions (P5) from Grave 2



a. Coffins (P1, P3) of second burial from Grave 2, from the north



b. Coffins (P1, P3) of second burial from Grave 2, from the west



a. Child skeleton of second burial from coffins (P1, P3) of Grave 2, from the north



b. Child skeleton of second burial from coffins (P1, P3) of Grave 2, from the north



a. Bones of first burial from coffin (P1) of Grave 2, from the north



b. Bones of first burial from coffin (P1) of Grave 2, from the north



a. Bones of first burial from coffin (P1) of Grave 2, from the west



b. Pit of Grave 2, from the north, after excavation



a. Jar (P8) and bowl (P9) from Grave 2



b. Bowl (P6) from Grave 2



c. Bowl (P7) from Grave 2



d. Bronze ring and earrings from first burial of Grave 2



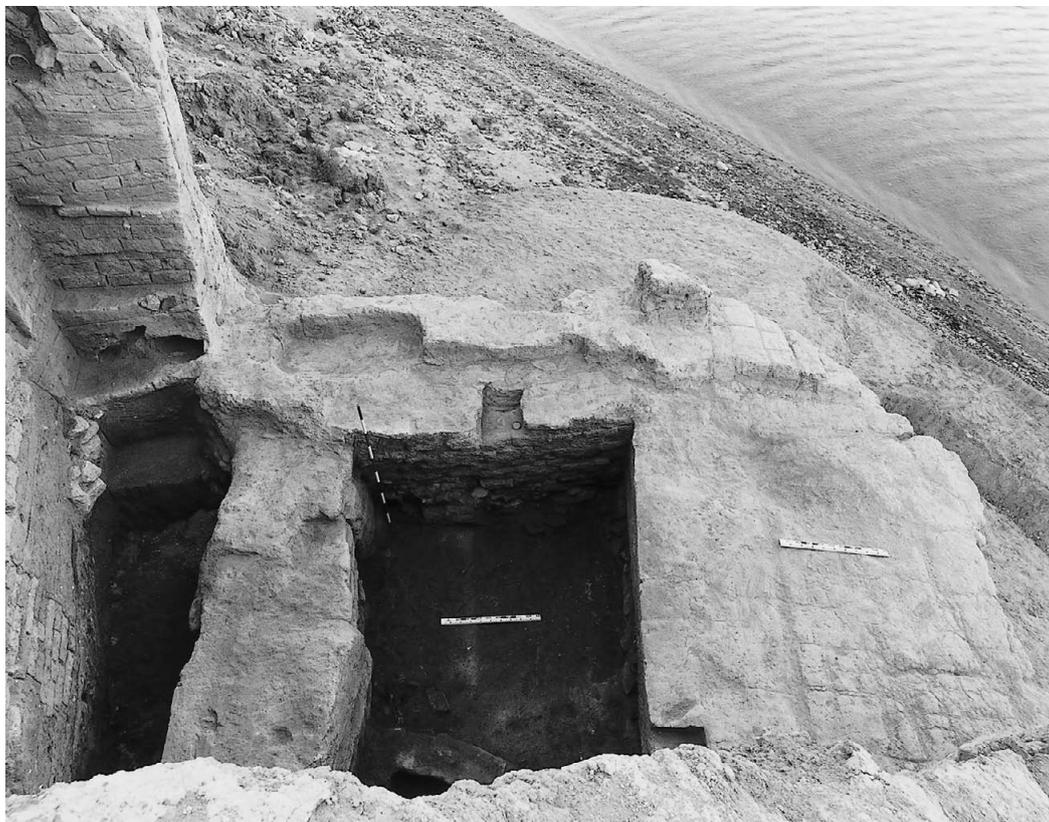
e. Bronze rings from first burial



f. Bronze earrings from first burial



a. Surface of Level 4 (Middle Assyrian period) in Trench 14, from the north



b. Rooms 2, 3 and walls of Levels 4, 5 in Trench 14, from the north



a. Surface of Level 4 (Middle Assyrian period) in Trench 14, from the east



b. Rooms 2, 3 and walls of Levels 4, 5 in Trench 14, from the east



a. Room 2 and walls of Level 4 in Trench 14, from the north



b. Room 2 and walls of Level 4 in Trench 14, from the east



a. Western wall of Room 2 in Level 4, from the east



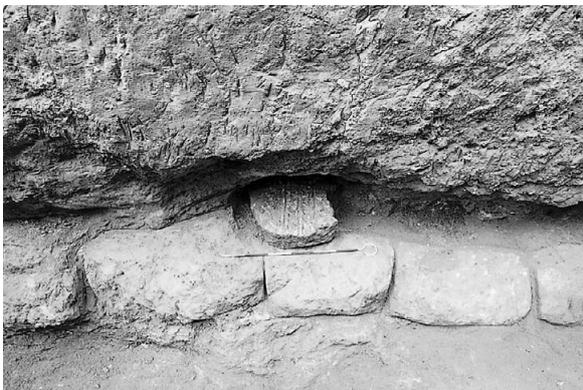
b. Inscribed brick and pottery from foundation of the western wall of Room 2



a. Niche of the southern wall of Room 2



b. Small bowl (used as a lamp) from niche



c. Inscribed brick from foundation of the western wall of Room 2



d. Inscribed brick



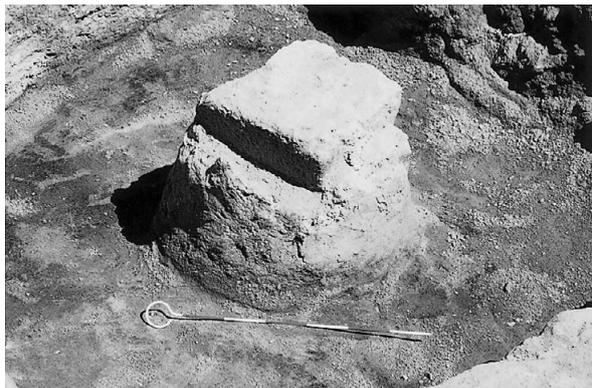
e. Bowl from foundation of the western wall of Room 2



f. White pigment on the western wall face of Room 2



g. Pottery kiln, from the east



h. Pillar of pottery kiln



a. Room 2, pottery kiln, and wall (W4), from the west



b. Room 2, pottery kiln, and walls (W3, W4), from the south



a. Structures of Level 4, from the north



b. Room 2 of Level 4, from the north west



Cylinder with cuneiform inscriptions from Room 3 in Level 4



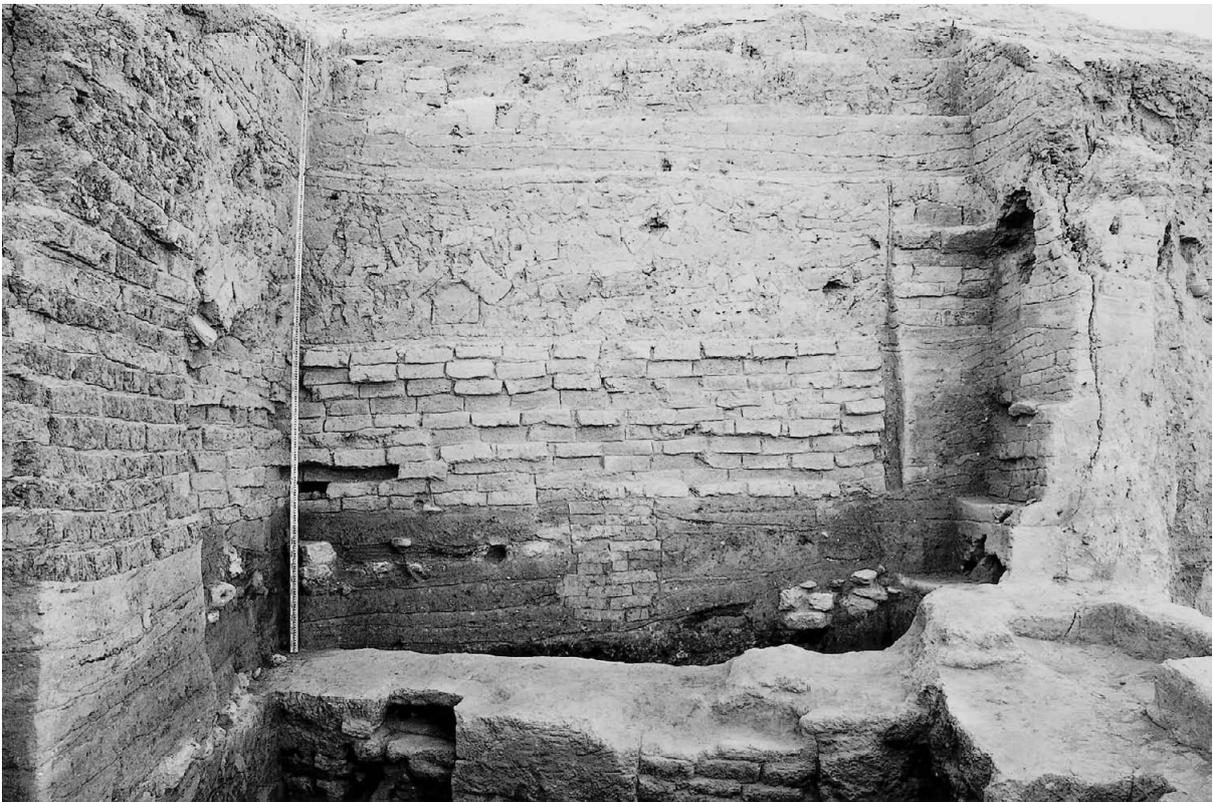
a. Room 2 and buried jar from Room 3 in Level 4



b. Buried jar and floor of Level 4



a. North section of Trench 14



b. East section of Trench 14



a. Southern wall face of W2 in Levels 4, 5, from the south, before excavation



b. Southern wall face of W2 in Levels 4, 5, from the south, after excavation



a. Southern wall face of W2 in Levels 4, 5, from the south



b. Southern wall face of W2 in Levels 4, 5, from the south east



a. W1 and W2 of Levels 4, 5, from the south west



b. Foundation of W2 in Levels 4, 5, from the south



a. After excavation of Trenches 14, 15, from the west



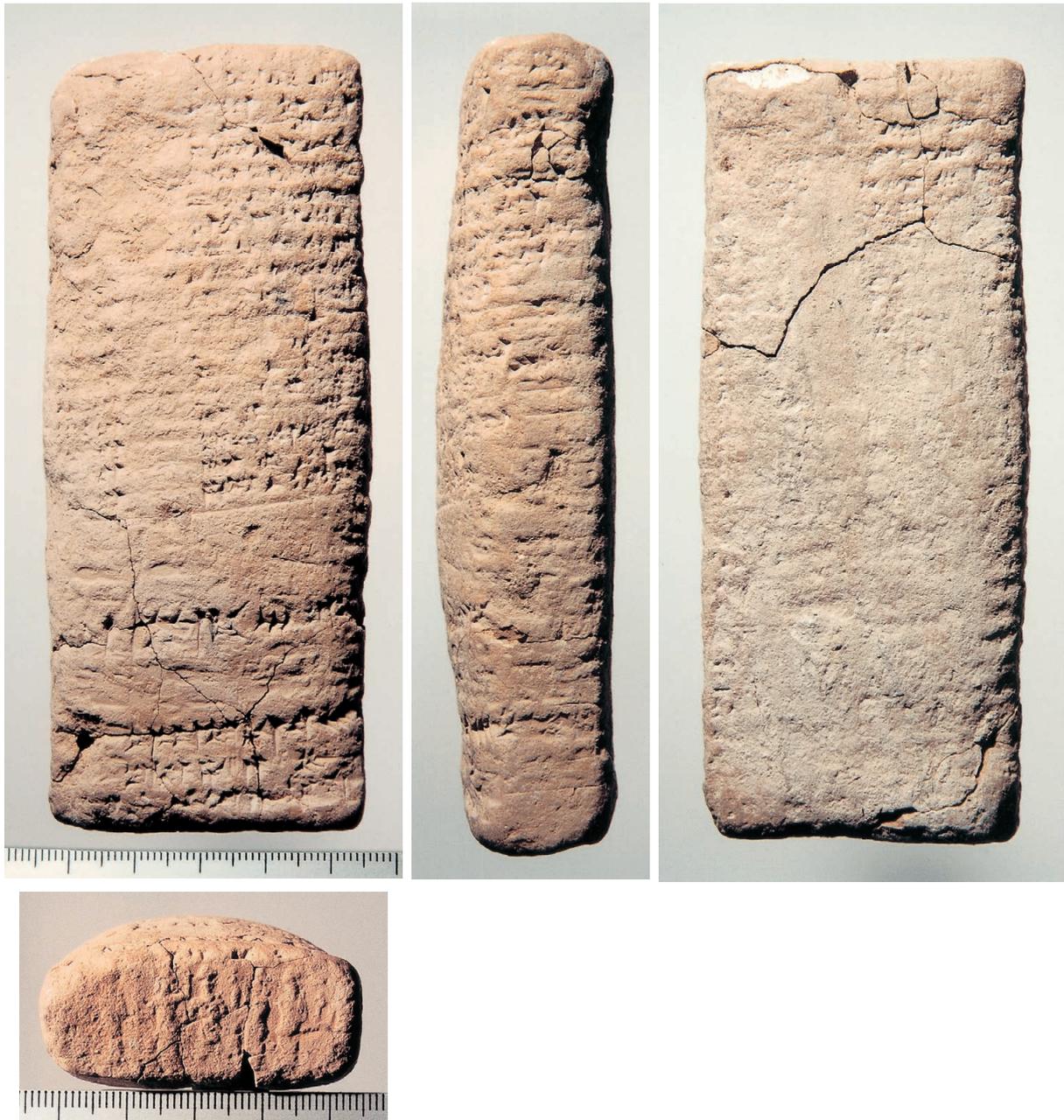
b. General view of Tell Taban, from the west, after excavation



a. Old Babylonian baked clay tablet (T07-1) from waterside of near Trench 7



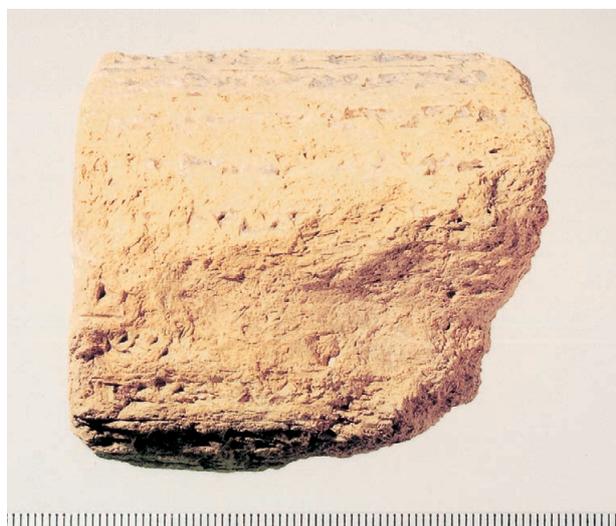
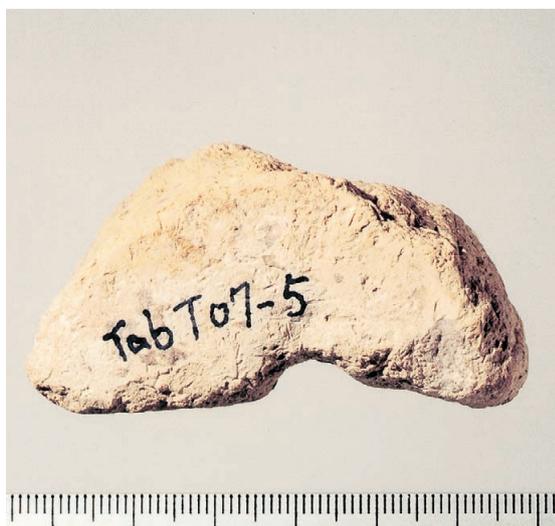
b. Old Babylonian baked clay tablet (T07-1)



Old Babylonian clay tablet (T07-3) from waterside of near Trench 4



a. Middle Assyrian clay tablet (T07-2) from waterside of near Trench 10



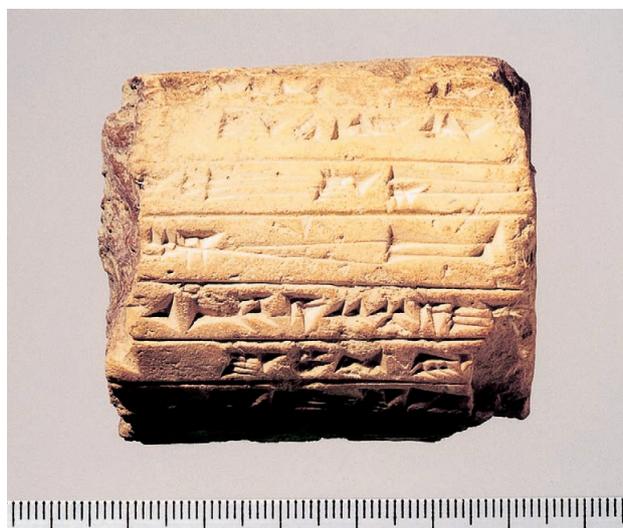
b. Cylinder with inscriptions (T07-5) from waterside



c. Cylinder with inscriptions (T07-6) from waterside of near Trench 5



a. Cylinder with inscriptions (T07-7) from waterside of near Trench 11



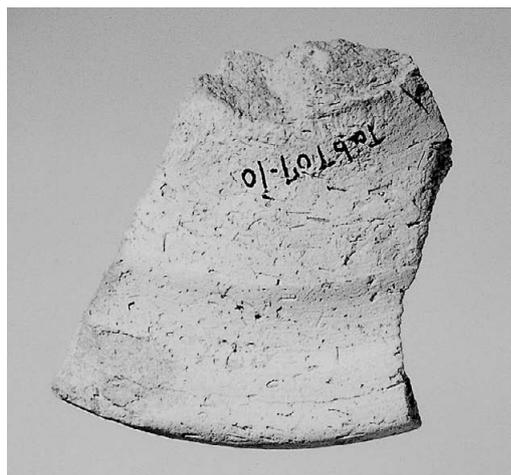
b. Cylinder with inscriptions (T07-8) from waterside of southern area



c. Cylinder with inscriptions (T07-9) from waterside of southern area



Cylinder with inscriptions (T07-4) from Room 3 of Level 4 in Trench 14



a. Clay nail with inscriptions (T07-10) from waterside of near Trench 4

b. Clay nail with inscriptions (T07-11) from waterside of near Trench III



c. Inscribed bricks from surface



a. Inscribed bricks from Trenches 5, 7 and Level 3 in Trench 14



b. Inscribed bricks from Level 4 in Trench 14