

**PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE  
FOURTH SEASON OF EXCAVATIONS  
AT PELLA, 1982**

by

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### **Introduction**

A team from the University of Sydney conducted excavations at Pella between December 15th, 1981 and February 25th, 1982. We are indebted to the Director-General of the Department of Antiquities, Dr. Adnan Hadidi and the Department representatives, Dr. Ghazi Bisheh and Mr. Sultan Shraideh, for their invaluable assistance. Work was continued in Areas III, IV, VI and XIV, while Area XI on the NE summit of Tell el Husn was investigated after an hiatus of some seasons. A major new area containing a late mosque, was opened up in the centre of the main mound as Area XVII.

The report will deal with the season's results in chronological order.

### **Late Chalcolithic Settlement**

#### **Area XIV**

An area of some 450.00 square metres upslope of the 1981 excavation (McNicoll, Smith and Hennessy, 1982: 31-34) was cleared of topsoil, exposing two single room structures half dug out of the bedrock (Pls. LXXIII, LXXIV) and a stone wall associated with a hardened earth surface on a level platform beside a rocky escarpment jutting out over the slope. Half the exposed area showed no evidence of use in antiquity: such widely-spaced settlements have been found in the Golan (Epstein, 1978: fig. 1 and 1981, fig. 1).

The two adjacent rooms had been roughly cut directly into the hill to a depth of 1.50 m. at the rear. The western room had the natural surface levelled and raised to a depth of 0.23 m. with a plaster and earth floor, filled out with stones, plaster bricks, a broken basalt quern, sherds,

flaked stone, and chert axe heads. On top, two subsequent mud floors had been laid and, at some time, side walls of rough mudbrick and stones had been constructed against the bedrock face. The area was partially enclosed by a stone wall which rested on the bedrock on two sides of the room. Mudbrick and stone tumble in the fill of the room suggest the wall was several courses higher. A flattish bedrock outcrop in the north corner of the room showed strong evidence of burning, and was probably used as a hearth during all three phases of occupation.

Debris from the final phase included a basalt bowl and five ceramic vessels beside the hearth (fig. 2: 1, 10, 12), grinding stones and worked flaked stones, including a pierced flint disc (fig. 3: 8) of the type common at Neve Ur (Perrot, *et. al.* 1967: fig. 8) and the Golan, and found at Safadi (*ibid.* fig. 9, 1) and Deraá (Nasrallah, 1948: pl. 5).

To the west of the room, a pit dug 0.70 m. into the bedrock, was filled with ceramic debris, notably fine ware bowls, flaked stone and bone. Slightly beyond, a (natural?) declivity in the friable bedrock had been half blocked by a bedrock and plaster retaining wall forming a shallow circular pit at the head of two contiguous bedrock depressions draining down the hill side (Pls. LXXIII, LXXIV). The bedrock here is almost clay-like in substance, particularly on the floor of the declivity. Nodules of such rock were found in the upper two floors of the room, and it is possible that this pit was used for puddling to make floors, bricks and mortar. Such pits were found at Ghassul (Hennessy, 1967: 7).

The second room was separated from

the first by a metre of bedrock. It was even closer to the surface, and much affected by erosion. There was some evidence of side walls against the bedrock, lying on a single plaster floor containing Chalcolithic sherds, but no enclosing wall around the edge of the room. In each of the two far corners was a circular niche, over a metre wide, protruding out of the room, the base of one level with the floor of the room (but with no plaster), the other forming a shallow basin some 0.20 m. deep. Both had been excavated from the fill of the room and used, the one as a dump for late Hellenistic pottery (including a fine painted imported pedestal vase) and bone (mandible of *Sus*), the other as a fire pit into which a late Hellenistic jar had been dropped.

The small bone assemblage comprised mainly *Caprovines* and gazelle. A single olive pit was found in a sealed layer.

#### Pottery (Fig. 1, 2)

The finds from the first two seasons in Area XIV would suggest that the pottery types remained uniform throughout the life of the settlement.

The majority of the pottery is of medium-fired buff ware, handmade, with grit, chert and/or limestone temper. Much of the pottery has painted decoration applied after firing, characterised by a band of reddish-brown slip of widely varying width both inside and outside the rim, and down the shoulders and sometimes body of the vessel. The application is often deliberately slapdash, some times wildly so, leaving flecks and dribbles over the unpainted part of the vessel. Some of the ware, particularly the fine ware bowls and vases, show signs of being finished on a wheel. Applied thumb impressed decoration is common around the necks of the large storage jars. Incised decoration is rare, consisting of rows of dots or short vertical incisions on the neck. The fine ware almost never has incised, and never applied, decoration. All bases are flat, sometimes coil bases, but never with mat impressions. The large storage vessels commonly have broad loop handles on the larger vessels. Small horizontal

pierced lug handles are common on the shoulders of the smaller cooking vessels, and vertically pierced button-like handles are characteristic of the fine globular bowls.

The base of a cornet cup, and part of what may be a small bird vase, were also found. No ceramic pedestal bowls nor spouted vessels were found.

Four broad types of vessels may be distinguished, within which the form and fabric vary considerably: storage vessels, holemouth jars, small fineware wide-rimmed bowls, vases and jars and large wide-rimmed bowls, vases and jars.

1) Storage vessels: 13% of total rim assemblage: normally very large (rim diam. up to 60 cm.), thick coarse ware with strong filler content. Typical shapes are the ubiquitous flaring rims with applied bands of thumb-impressed decoration at the neck (Fig. 1:7) and large globular open-rim vessels with loop handles on the shoulders.

2) Holemouth jars: 32% of total rim assemblage: three basic rim shapes: straight, concave, and convex. The ware is normally medium fine to medium coarse with high filler content, often showing signs of burning. Occasionally there is incised decoration on the rim. Painted decoration is rare. Noteworthy are a few examples of fine ware with concave rim.

3) Fine ware bowls, vases and jars: 39% of total rim assemblage: ranging from flaring rim vases to globular jars, but without clear categories (Fig. 2: 1-11). Rims are frequently painted (inside and out) and bodies (outside). The vessels are often finished on a wheel. Distinctive are the high number of small globular jars with vertically-pierced button-like handles half way down the body. Similar jars are common at Neve Ur (Perrot, *et. al.*, 1967: fig. 15. 11, 12, 14 and 16), and present at Meser (Dothan 1957, fig. 2.5).

4) Large bowls?, vases and jars: 16% of total rim assemblage: particularly vases with straight sides. Some short broad lug handles (Fig. 2: 12).

The closest ceramic comparisons are undoubtedly from Neve Ur, some five miles upstream on the west bank of the

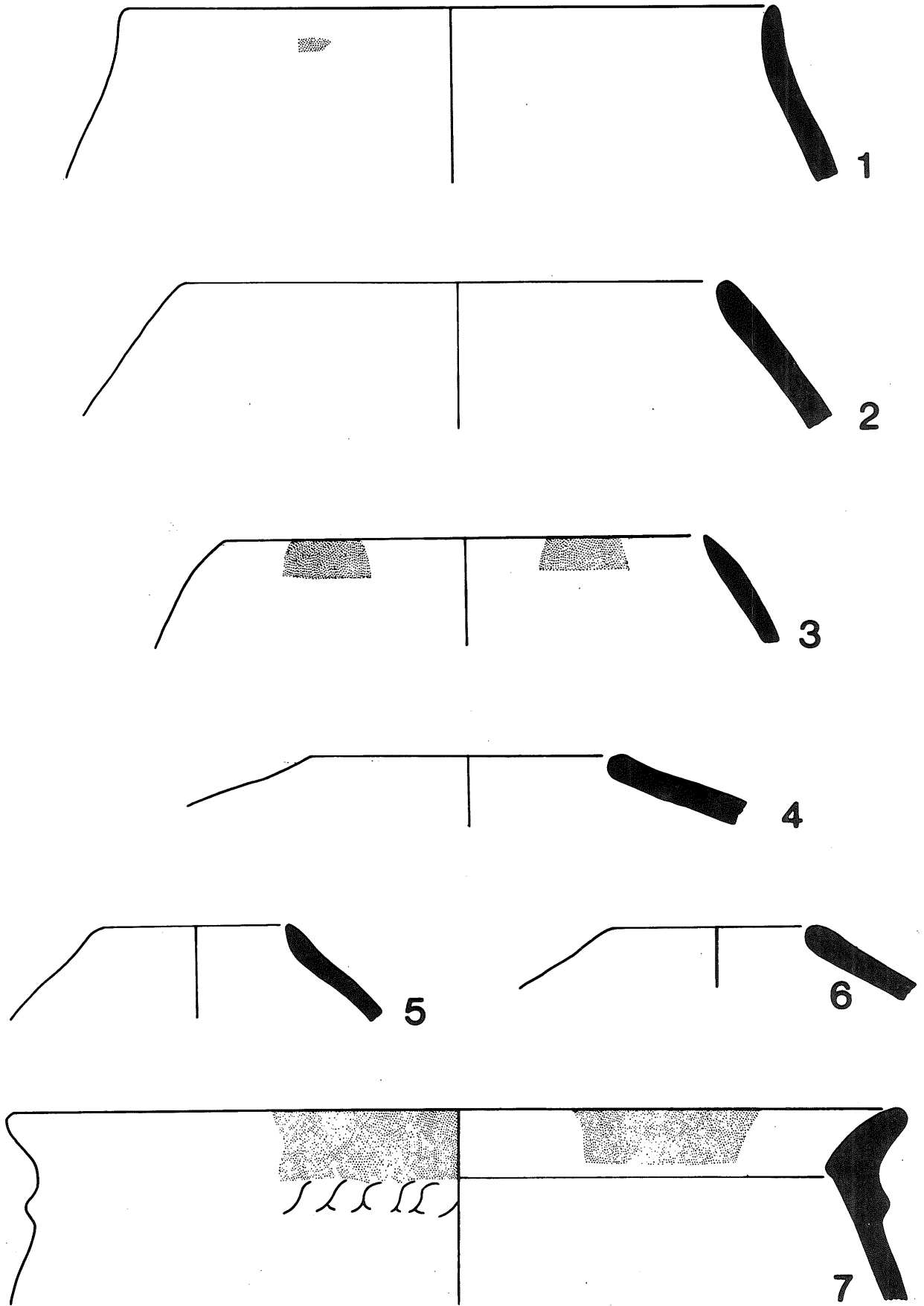


Fig. 1: Pella Area XIV Late Chalcolithic Pottery

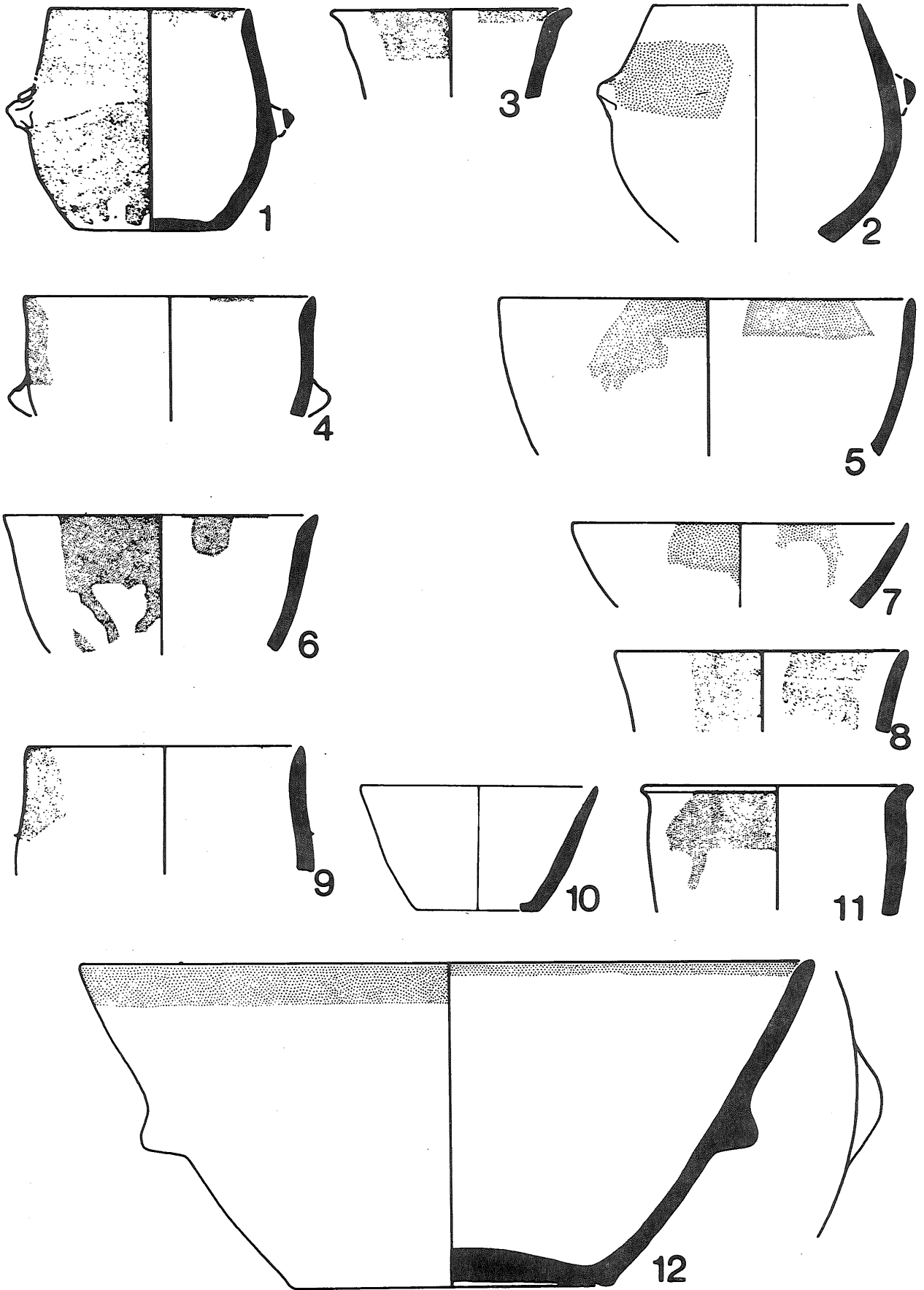


Fig. 2: Pella Area XIV Late Chalcolithic pottery



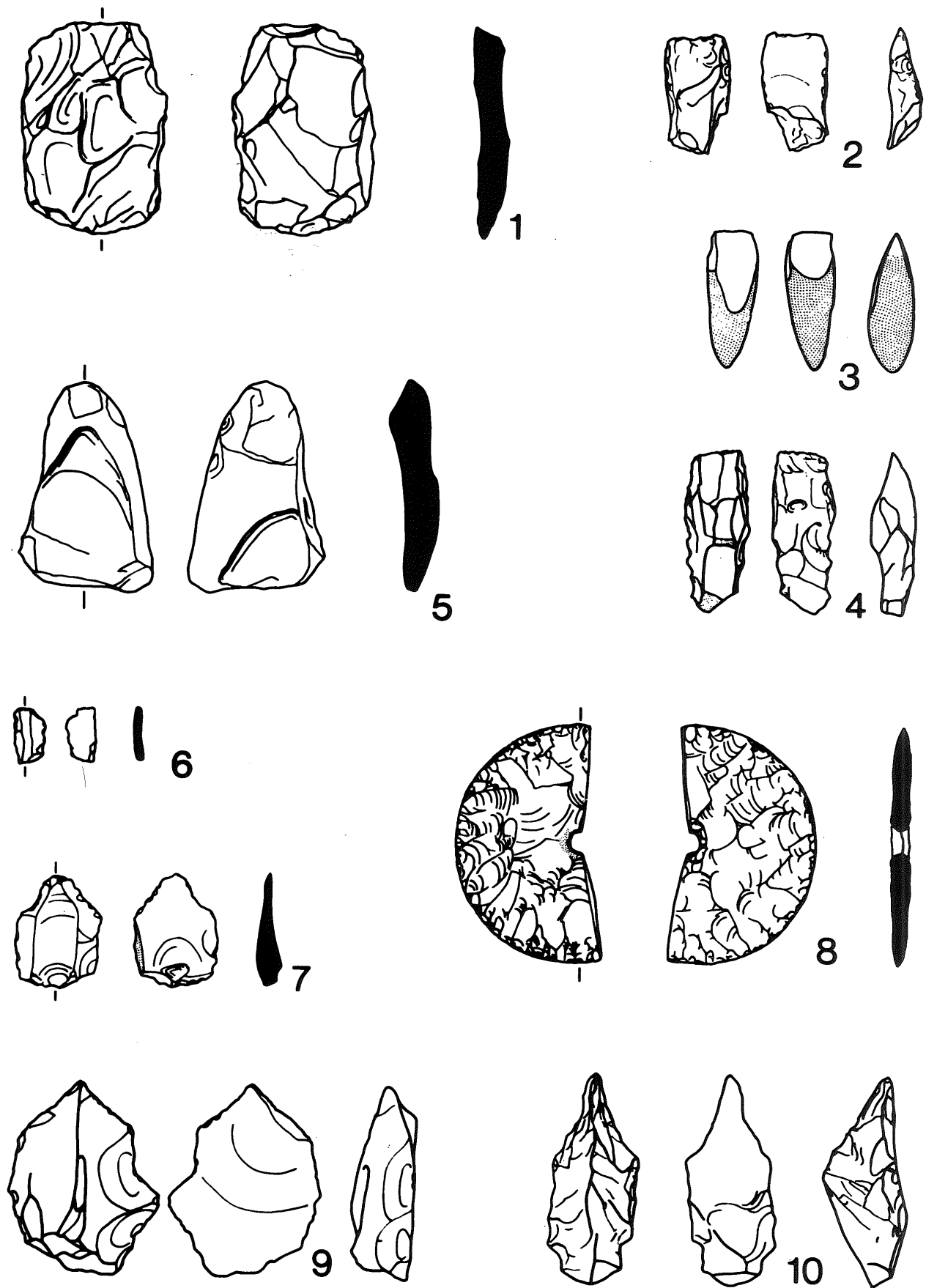


Fig. 3: Pella Area XIV Late Chalcolithic Flaked Stone

Jordan, particularly in the bowls and vases (Perrot, *et. al.*, 1967: fig. 15. 1-8, 11, 12, 14, 16) and storage vessels (*ibid.*: fig. 17, 1, 6). The most notable discrepancy is the few holemouth jars at Neve Ur, which do, however, include medium fine concave-rimmed vessels (*ibid.*: fig. 16.3).

There are general ties with Megiddo XX and Beth Shan XXVIII-XVI in applied thumb-print decoration (Fitzgerald, 1935: pl. 1.3 4, 13, 16) and (Loud, 1948: pl. 2.44-49), in the stubby ledge handles (*ibid.*: pl. 2.13, 26, 27), and fine bowls (*ibid.*: pl. 2.1-7), but broad comparison here is somewhat suspect. More useful are the parallels with the upper layers at Ghassul, the holemouth jars (Hennessy, 1967: fig. 5.7), the rounded rim vases (*ibid.*: fig. 6.2; fig. 7a. 10, 12; fig. 7b. 1), and jars (*ibid.*: fig. 5.3; fig. 6.3, 8) and the vertical lug handles (Mallon, *et. al.*, 1934: pl. 42.13, 14, 19 and pl. 43.34-36).

Similarities with Meser are restricted to the fine ware bowls and jars (Dothan, 1957: fig. 2.5; fig. 9). Beersheba has general similarities in holemouth jars (de Contenson, 1956: fig. 3.1-6, 10-17), fine ware bowls and jars (*ibid.*: fig. 6.7, 8, 17-20, 23-25) and larger bowls (*ibid.*: fig. 7.8, 10-12), but the fabric is very different and the ware is rarely painted (*ibid.*: 169) and, when it is, the decoration is distinctly patterned (*ibid.*: fig. 11. 17-23). Incised decoration (*ibid.*: fig. 12) is also very different.

The scarcity of cornet cups, the churn the basalt bowls and the basalt chalice of the 1981 season, provide chronological ties with Beersheba, but the cultural tradition is clearly late Ghassulian, and clearly local. There is evidence for strong Chalcolithic occupation of the area, on the low hills of the Jordan Valley (Zori, 1948: 46 ff., and Glueck, 1951: 139 ff. *passim* ).

### *Flaked Stone* (Fig. 3)

The flaked stone assemblage is both small (420 pieces) and undistinguished (two-thirds unretouched). Much of the material suggests a relaxed approach to tool manufacture and usage: unretouched cores and flakes show evidence of use, and

secondary working is often very slight, and unrestricted to specific shapes.

The assemblage is, without exception, from the local chert. While multiple subdivisions are possible, a classification of seven distinct kinds of retouched flakes seems useful.

- 1) Core tools: flakes removed, the core then restruck and reused for some mechanical purpose. Size variability 5 x 1 — 10 x 7.5 cm.
- 2) Points: include awls, burins, borers. Some flakes have a serrated edge, some are very crude. Size variability 3.5 x 2 — 6 x 4 cm. Also present are small triangular flakes with pronounced bulbs. Similar to PN arrowheads, and identified as 2a.
- 3) Core scrapers: a scarab-like rounded core, no cortex, with some rough retouch on the base to provide an effective scraping edge. Size variability 4.5 x 3 — 7 x 4.5 cm.
- 4) Flake scrapers: a thick primary flake, often with the cortex retained and a strong bulb, sharply retouched at the end to provide an effective scraping edge. Not to be confused with the Ghassulian fan scrapers, of which none were found. Size variability 1.5 x 1.5 — 9.5 x 7 cm.

The use of backed blades (Koepfel, *et. al.*, 1940: pl. 110), unretouched blades (*ibid.*: pl. 108, 109), and points with a retouched blade on one edge (Mallon, 1934: pl. 32.8-10) is paralleled at Ghassul, as well as the comparative scarcity of points (Hennessy, 1967: 19). Of the most significant categories at Pella, the retouched flakes are not repeated at Ghassul, and the core and flake scrapers, though frequent in the early phases, decline rapidly with the appearance of fan scrapers in Level D (*ibid.*: 18). At Neve Ur, the point (Perrot, *et. al.*, 1967: fig. 7.3), the backed blade (*ibid.*: fig. 7.4) and the amorphous - looking "hachette" (*ibid.*: fig. 7.5) are reproduced at Pella. It is clear that the basic flaked stone industry has a long local tradition, stretching in part to the Wadi Rabah phase (Kaplan, 1969: Fig. 12, 13), and is pragmatic.

Quite clearly related to Ghassul,

where they have no chronological significance, are Ghassulian chisels, picks, hammers, ground pebble and chert axe heads, flaked chert axe heads, and a hoe. These are all paralleled at Neve Ur, as is the aforementioned pierced flint disc.

### Bronze Age

#### Area IIIC (Fig. 4)

Excavation in previous seasons had revealed a massive stone wall (W3) running north-south through the centre of the trench. It divides IIIC into two independent and stratigraphically unconnected halves.

East of W3 (Phase A), a large east-west mudbrick wall (W10) partitions the area into two rooms. W11 and W23 form the northern and southern boundaries of these rooms. By the end of the 1981-82 season, signs of other architectural remains were beginning to appear in the area. However, as excavation this season was concentrated west of W3, their precise date and significance will have to await further excavation.

As previously noted,<sup>1</sup> Phase V had only been uncovered in the north-western corner of the plot. Continued excavation west of W3 has, however, revealed further architectural remains of this phase. They are as follows.

Bonded to the western side of W3 are two parallel east-west walls (W17, W15). W16 divides the area into two rooms connected by a doorway. There appears to be another doorway leading to a third room further north. The remaining architecture (Walls 24 and 25) defines a fourth room in the south of the plot. W24 abutts the southern face of W15 and comes to a 'T' intersection in the south (W25). This latter wall is bonded to the western side of the massive defense wall (W3). A narrowing, midway along W25 would appear to be the only possible entrance to this room.

A number of floors and surfaces can be associated with the architectural

remains of Phase V. The earliest level was a white plastered floor which extended over the entire area. It ran up to walls 3, 15, 16 and 17, south beyond the limits of the locus, and west into the western baulk. W25 was built directly on this surface. The impressions left in the plaster by the stones of W25 would seem to suggest that this latter wall was built while the plaster was still wet. Post holes in the floor of the room south of W15 indicate that its ceiling was originally supported by sturdy posts. A second plastered floor was laid immediately over the earlier one. As there was no evidence of any significant build-up between the two surfaces, the temporal interval involved need not be more than a few years. The pottery too is best considered as virtually contemporary. W24 was built on the new plastered floor level except its northernmost extent (1.50 m.) which rested on soil packing. The extensive weathering or wearing away of the plaster west of W24 and south of W25 suggests a possible open area (courtyard). Above these floors, a number of varying deposits could be traced: mudbrick collapse, plastered floors and trampled earth surfaces.

There was approximately half a metre of collapse debris and build-up separating the architectural remains of Phase V from those of Phase IV.

#### Pottery (Fig. 5-7)

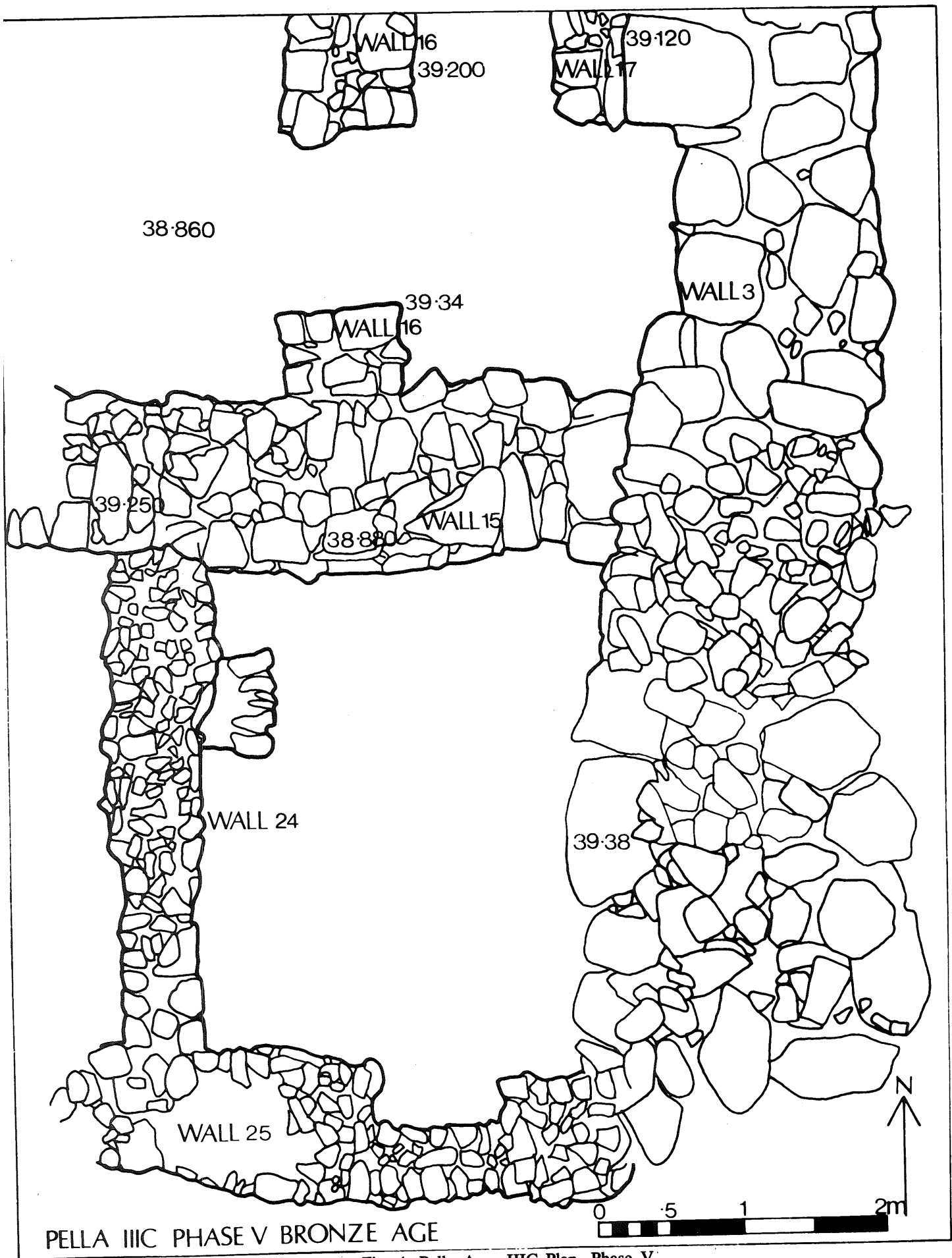
The pottery associated with the earliest plastered floor and the levels immediately above it, points to a date in the early Late Bronze, i.e., 1550-1500 B.C., for its construction.<sup>2</sup> Of the characteristically early Late Bronze I types, the cooking pots (Pl. LXXIII: 1, 3, 4; Fig. 2. 1-3) may be noted. The presence of chocolate-on-white (Fig. 2. 8-10) also supports a mid to late sixteenth century date. Pottery from the later levels of Phase V (Pl. LXXIII: 2, 5, 6; Fig. 1. 11) suggests that the structure was still in use in the Late Bronze II period.

#### Figure 5

<sup>1</sup> McNicoll, Smith & Hennessy, 1982: 24

<sup>2</sup> Good parallels can be found, for example, from

Megiddo Str. IX-VIII; Lachish Temples I and II; Hazor (LB I).



PELLA IIIC PHASE V BRONZE AGE

Fig. 4: Pella Area IIIC Plan. Phase V

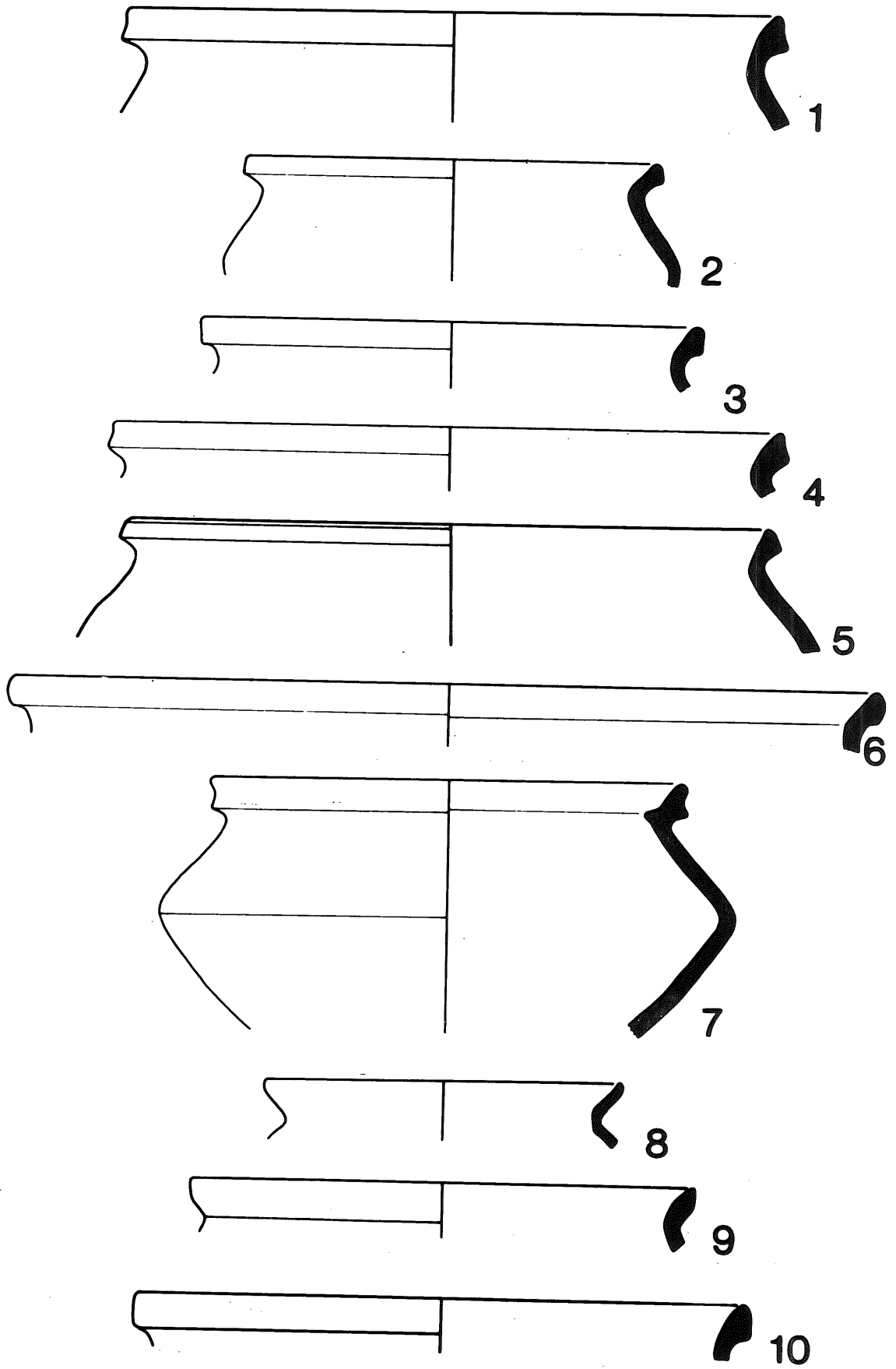


Fig. 5: Pella Area IIIC Phase V Pottery

1. CN 2498. IIIC 24.14. Cooking pot rim. Coarse ware fired brownish-buff throughout. Black-grey core. Many small to large chert grits. Some chaff. Self slip. Parallels: Lachish II, Pl. LV. 353 (Temple 1). For a clearer representation of the Lachish parallel, see Amiran, Pl. 42. 6.
2. CN 2717. IIIC 35.1 Cooking pot rim fired brown throughout. Many small to large chert grits, blackened rim and body below shoulder. Parallels: Megiddo II, Pl. 55.4 (str. IX-VIII) Megiddo II, Pl. 61.27 (str. IX-VIII).
3. CN 2583. IIIC 24.16. Cooking pot rim. Finely levigated clay with numerous tiny and medium grits, fired brown with grey core. Self slip. Parallels: Lachish II, Pl. LV. 356 (Temple I). Similar to Hazor I, Pl. CXXXVIII. 10 (L.B. I).
4. CN 2583. IIIC 24.14. Cooking pot rim. Coarse ware fired brown exterior, grey-black core, many medium to large chert grits, blackened rim. Self slip inside the rim. Parallels: Very similar to CN 2498 (IIIC 24.12). Similar to Lachish II, Pl. LV. 353 (Temple I).
5. CN 2497. IIIC 24.14. Cooking pot rim. Well levigated clay, fired orange-buff throughout with yellow-buff core. Many tiny to medium chert grits, few chaff inclusions. Self slip, lightly blackened inside the rim. Parallels: Hazor I, Pl. LXXXV. 21 (Str. Ib). Similar to Ain Shems IV, Pl. LVIII.29 (str. IV).
6. CN 2695. IIIC 35.1. Cooking pot rim. Fairly coarse clay, fired orange-buff throughout with black core. Many tiny to large chert grits. Parallels: Lachish II, Pl. LVI. 371 (Temple III). For a clearer representation of the Lachish parallel, see Amiran, Pl. 42.16.
7. CN 2494. IIIC 24.14. Cooking pot rim. Coarse ware, fired brown throughout with black core. Many medium chert grits. Blackened rim and lower body.
8. CN 2928. IIIC 24.18. Cooking pot rim. Fairly coarse clay, fired brown throughout with grey-brown core. Small to medium chert grits, darkened rim. Similar to MB/LB cooking pot types.
9. CN 2927. IIIC 24.18. Cooking pot rim. Coarse clay, fired brown throughout, many small to medium chert grits. Blackened rim. Similar to MB/LB cooking pot types.
10. CN 2582. IIIC 24.16. Jar/cooking pot rim. Well levigated clay, fired brownish-buff, thick buff core. Parallels: Hazor I, Pl. CXXXVIII. 9 (LB I).

Figure 6

1. 2003. IIIC 17.1 Cooking pot rim. Well levigated clay, fired brownish-buff. Many tiny to medium chert grits. Parallels: Hazor I, Pl. CXXXIX.16 (LB I). Similar to Ain Shems LVIII. 27 (str. IV).
2. CN 2391. IIIC 31.1. Cooking pot rim. Fired brown exterior, grey-brown interior, with black core. Many large chert grits.
3. CN 3017. IIIC 34.6. Bowl rim. Well levigated clay with medium and tiny grits, fired dark buff. Thin matt light brown slip interior and exterior. Parallels: Megiddo II, Pl. 29.24, 26 (str. XII-IX). Megiddo II, Pl. 37.14 (str. XIII-IX).
4. CN 2713. IIIC 35.3. Bowl rim. Finely levigated clay, fired orange-buff exterior, yellow-buff interior. Many small to medium chert grits. Self slip. Parallels: Megiddo II, Pl. 29.7 (str. XIV-IX); Megiddo II, Pl. 38.2 (str. XII-IX); Lachish II, Pl. XXXVII.5 (Temple 1).
5. CN 3023. IIIC 24.18. Bowl rim. Well-levigated clay with many medium and tiny grits, fired greyish-buff. Self slip.
6. CN 2114. IIIC 30.3. Bowl rim. Well-levigated clay with many medium and tiny grits, fired greyish-buff. Self slip. Parallels: Lachish II, Pl. XLI. 106, 107 (Temple 1).
7. CN 3022. IIIC 24.18. Bowl rim. Finely levigated clay with a few large and many medium and tiny grits, fired orange-brown with grey core. Interior

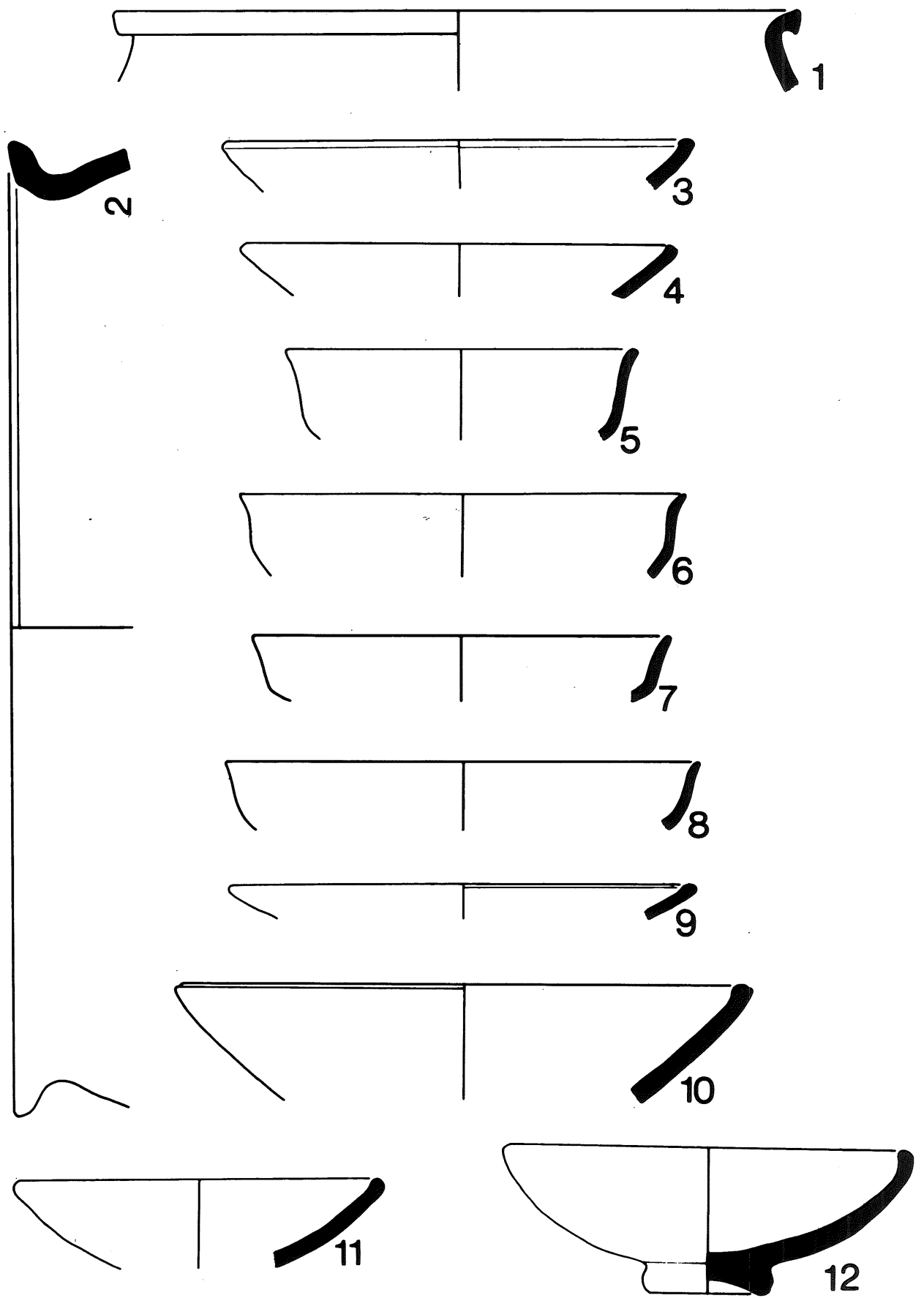


Fig. 6: Pella Area III C Phase V Pottery

- and exterior is covered with a burnished orange-buff slip.  
Parallels: Lachish II, Pl. XLI.111 (Temple 11).
8. CN 2914. IIIC 34.3. Bowl rim. Well levigated clay, fired brownish-buff, tiny chert grits. Similar to 3022.  
Parallels: Lachish II, Pl. XLI.111 (Temple 11).
  9. CN 3007. IIIC 24.18. Bowl rim. Well-levigated clay with a great many medium and tiny grits, fired buff throughout. Self slip. Similar to CN 3017 (fig. 2.3).
  10. CN 2502. IIIC 24.14. Bowl rim. Well levigated clay, fired orange-buff throughout, grey-brown-buff core. Tiny to medium chert grits.
  11. CN 2703. IIIC 35.1. Bowl rim. Finely levigated clay, fired pinkish-buff throughout, small to large chert grits. Parallels: The Bronze Age cemetery at Gibeon, fig. 28.1 (Tomb 20); Lachish II, Pl. XXXVII. 31 (range Temple 11 and 111).
  12. CN 2586. IIIC 24.14. Bowl. Finely levigated clay, fired light brown-buff throughout, small to medium chert grits. Self slip.  
Parallels: Lachish II, Pl. XXXVIII. 41 (Temple 11).
4. CN 2496. IIIC 24.14. Bowl base. Well-levigated clay, fired yellowish-buff throughout, small to medium chert grits. Self slip interior.
  5. CN 3015. IIIC 36.2. Jar rim. Well-levigated clay with a great many medium and tiny grits, fired greyish-buff. Self slip.
  6. CN 2712. IIIC 24.15. Bowl base. Finely levigated clay, fired orange-buff throughout, grey-buff core. Many small to medium chert grits. Thick white slip.
  7. CN 2913. IIIC 34.4. Bowl base. Well-levigated clay, fired brown throughout, dark-grey core, few small chert grits.
  8. CN 2883. IIIC 30.3 Jar rim. Chocolate-on-white. Fairly well levigated clay, fired orange-brown core. Thick cream slip. Matt purple painted decoration.
  9. CN 2910. IIIC 34.4. Bowl rim. Chocolate-on-white. Very well levigated clay, fired light-brown-buff throughout, very few tiny grits. Thick, burnished cream slip on the interior and exterior surface. Very finely made.
  10. CN 2911. IIIC 34.4 Bowl/jar rim. Chocolate-on-white (Imitation?). Fairly coarse clay, fired light brown-buff with a grey-buff core. Thick cream slip on the interior and exterior surface, burnished. Matt purple-brown painted decoration covering the exterior. Crudely made and decorated — possible imitation. Many small to medium chert grits.

#### Figure 7

1. CN 2493. IIIC 24.14. Bowl. Fine, well-levigated clay, fired dark grey-brown throughout, tiny to medium lime and black grits. Cream slip interior and exterior discoloured to greenish grey.  
No exact parallel has yet been found. This type of carinated bowl does, however, occur in MB II/LB I period: Lachish II, Pl. XLI.100 (Temple 1).
2. CN 2829. IIIC 24.18. Bowl. Finely levigated clay, fired light brown to orange-buff throughout with grey-brown-buff core. Many small to medium chert and lime grits.
3. P 50015. IIIC 24.18. Bowl. Well-levigated clay, fired brown throughout with dark grey core. Many small to medium chert grits. Similar to CN 2829.

#### Iron Age

##### Area IIIN (Figs. 8-14)

Iron Age material has now been found in a stratified context in a second plot, N, of Area III, the East Cut. It is situated next to IIIC on the steep southern edge of the eastern side of the mound.

Unfortunately, like IIIC, IIIN has suffered considerably from water erosion. To the south, a large gully formed and eroded a considerable depth of deposit from the edge of the *tell* (Gully 11.3). Excavation in this area has revealed much unstratified Iron II material. Further



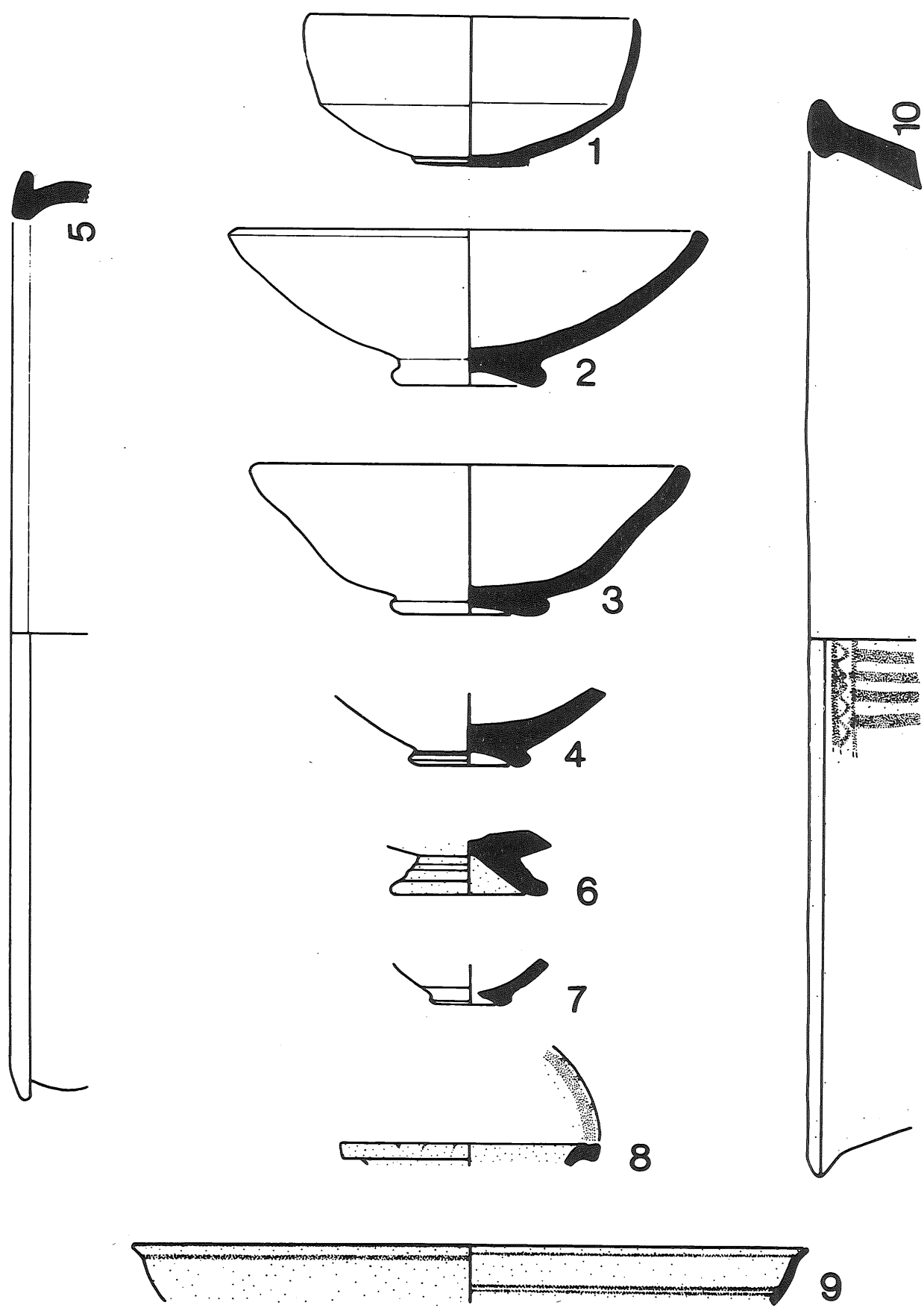


Fig. 7: Pella Area III C Phase V Pottery

north, a second gully has also cut through the Iron Age deposits (Gully 9.13). As a result, a proportion of both architecture and original stratified deposits have been disturbed.

At this stage of excavation, IIIN can be divided into three architectural phases:

*Phase III: Apsidal House (Early Phase)*  
(Fig. 8)

The architectural remains of Phase III<sup>3</sup> include a sturdy east-west wall which formed a truncated semicircle at its western end (W19). Within the room, there was a circular hearth pit sunk into the floor (F.49). Bonded to the eastern end of W19 was a second stone wall (W11) running approximately north-south. To the east of this wall was a paved room. There was a single step up to another paved area to the north, which had been partially destroyed by the IIIC Hellenistic gully. No paving was evident west of the gully. The floor surface consisted simply of packed earth. The paved room in IIIN represents the western half of the paved house already known and excavated in IIIC in 1979. W11 and W18 (respectively), form the western and southern boundaries of this structure. The pottery associated with the stone paved house is contemporary in both trenches (Fig. 12: 1, 3-5, 10; Fig. 13: 1-3, 5).

A low row of stones (W25) abutts the north face of W19. It divided the area to the north of W19 into two rooms (loci 18 and 19). Both rooms were contemporary with the whole apsidal and paved structure. Unfortunately, however, the floor surface west of W25 was cut by architecture from a later phase.

The architectural remains west of the apsidal house include two walls (W40, W41) running east-west from the widest points of the apse. W40, the north wall of this room, extends from a mudbrick bench (which abutts W19) to the west baulk. There was evidence of a second room south of W41 (W43, W44). The effects of erosion in this area have, however, made it

difficult to determine the original nature and extent of the architecture.

The associated pottery from Phase 3 (Fig. 12; Fig. 13. 1-5) suggests that the apsidal and paved structure were in use in the early Iron Age, i.e., 1200-1050 B.C.

*Phase IIa: Apsidal House (Late Phase)*  
(Fig. 9)

Phase IIa is marked by the construction of W26 directly above and in line with W41. It also included the addition of a group of stones (F. 53) at the western end. The temporal interval involved, however, need not be more than a few years. W26 is only two courses high and, like W41, abutts the end of apse W19. The pottery too is best considered as virtually contemporary with that from the apsidal house (early phase).

Throughout the entire occupational phase of the apsidal house, the area west of apse 19 suffered repeated minor rebuildings. Phase IIa is the most extensive example of a rebuilding in the Iron I period.

The relevant architectural remains have been cut by a gully (9.13) in the north and gully (11.3) in the south. Again we must content with the effects of erosion.

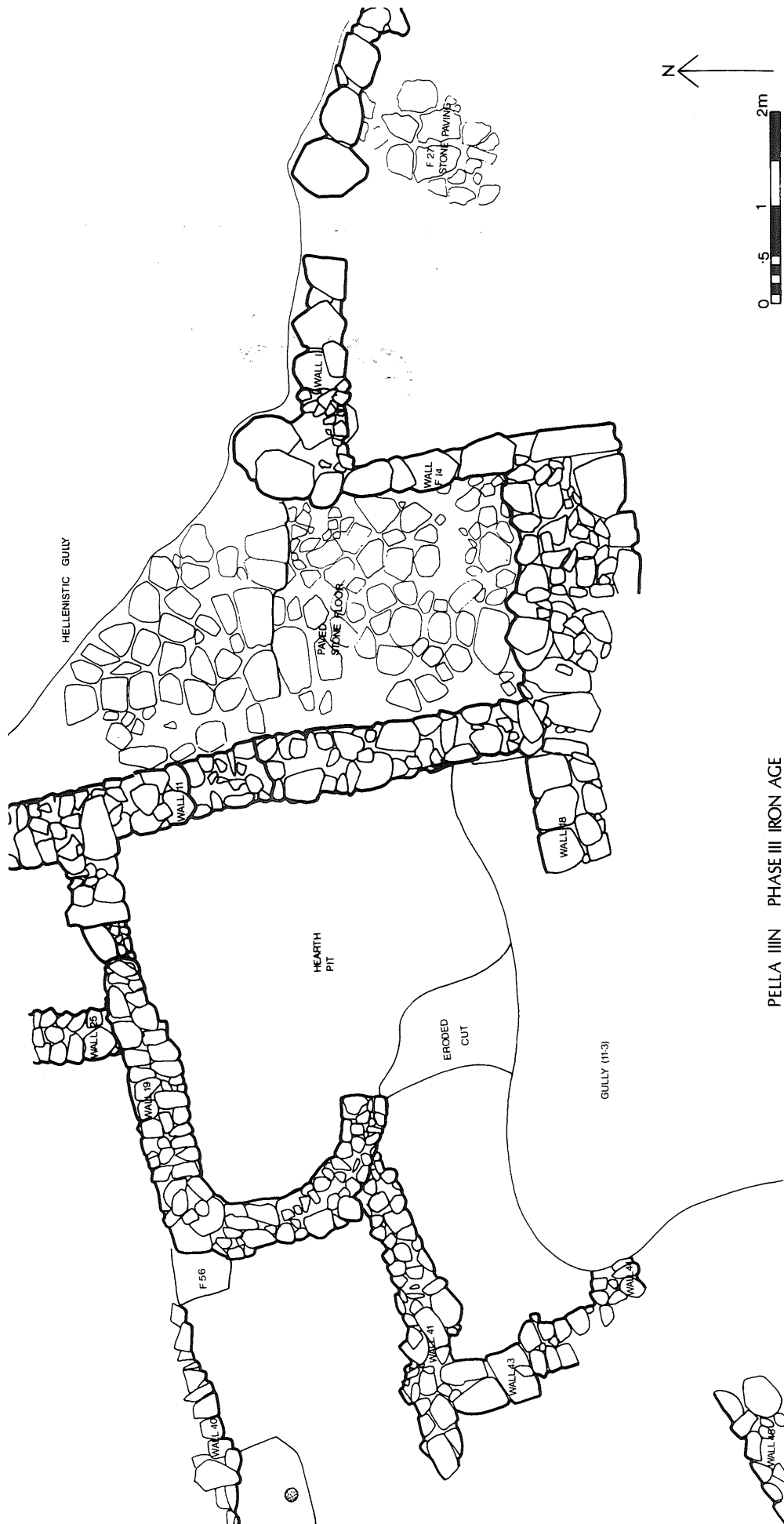
*Phase IIb* (Fig. 10)

Further architectural additions were made to W26. These include W23, running north-south from its south face, and W24, running west.

A 0.20 m. deposit of hard mudbrick separated Phase IIb from Phase IIa. It surrounded the western extension of W26 and ran under W23. This deposit showed no evidence of any significant build-up. The temporal interval involved then, need not be more than a few years. Walls 23 and 24 were simply architectural additions made to W26 within the period of occupation of the apsidal house.

Unfortunately, these levels were cut by a cooking pit from Phase I. The area also suffered heavily from water erosion.

<sup>3</sup> Because excavation is still in progress and earlier phases will presumably be found, the phases have been numbered from latest to earliest.



PELLA IIN PHASE III IRON AGE

Fig. 8: Pella Area IIN Plan: Iron Age Phase III

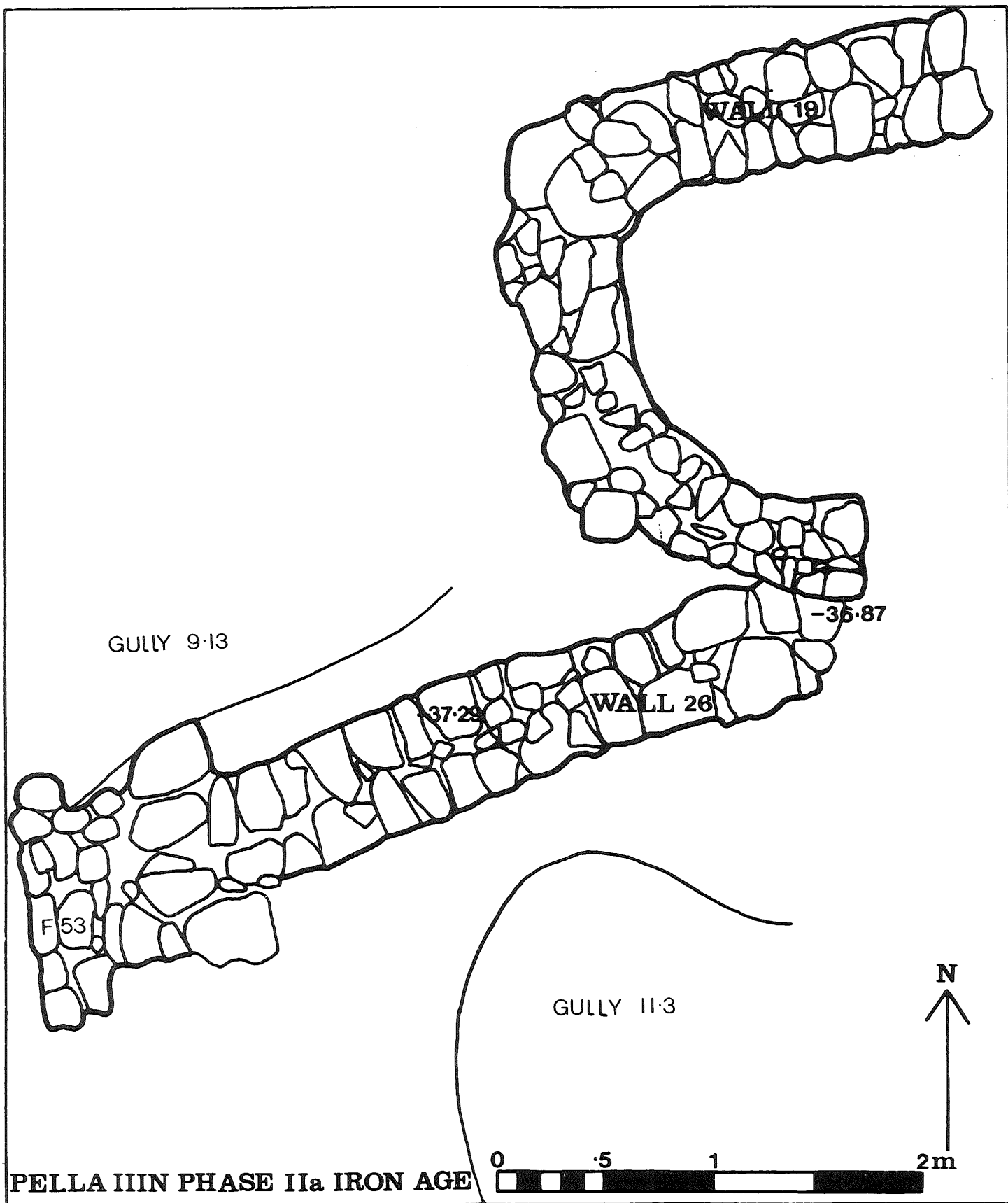
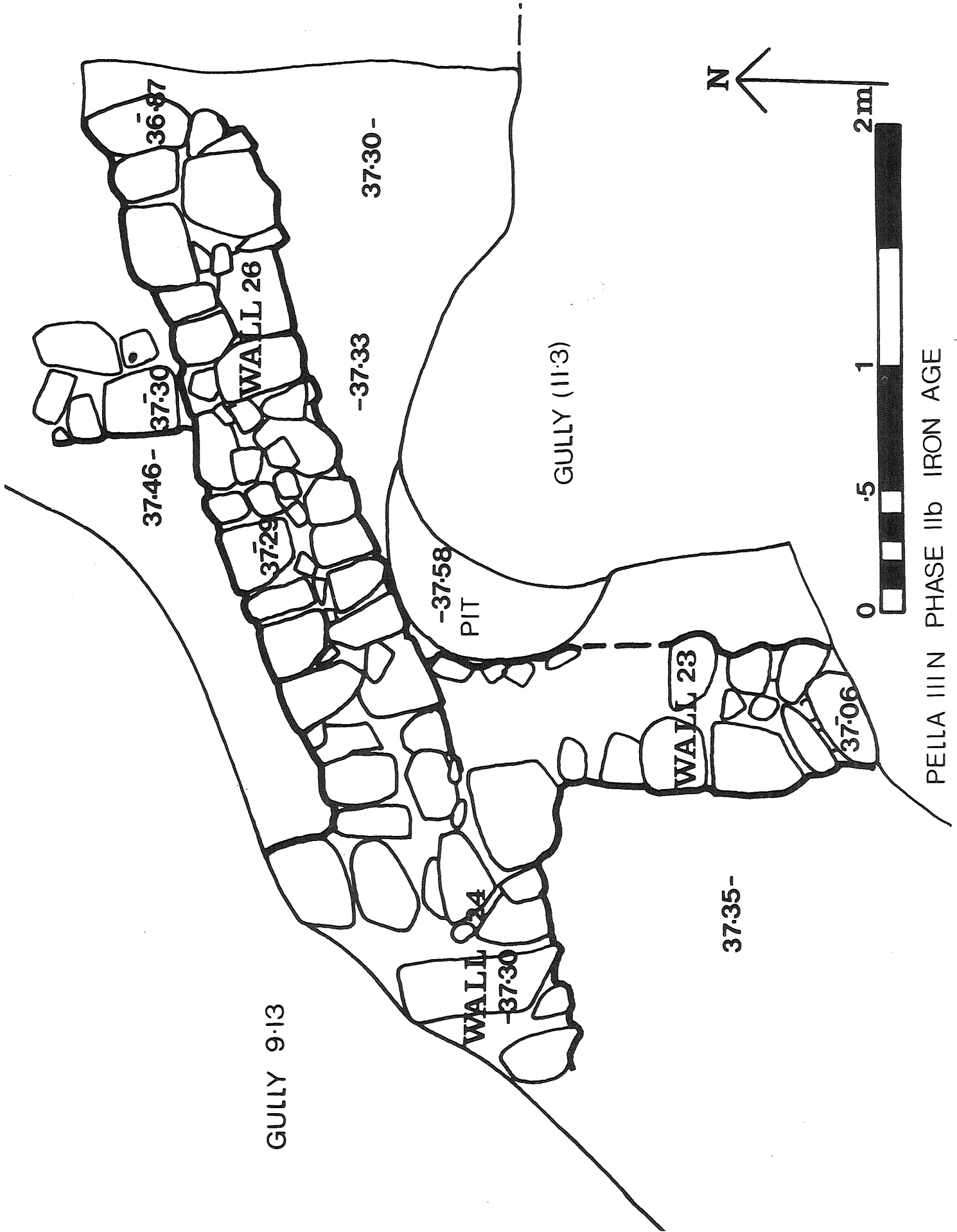


Fig. 9: Pella Area IIIN Plan. Iron Age Phase IIA



PELLA III N PHASE IIb IRON AGE

As a result, the original architectural situation is rather difficult to reconstruct.

There was approximately half a metre of collapse debris overlaying Phase II. This covered all of the apse, the paving and the architecture in the north-west.

*Phase I: The Plastered House Phase* (Fig. 11)

A new north-south wall was built on this collapse (W12). It crossed over W19, coming to a 'T' intersection in the south (W16). A well-plastered house was built in the north-western corner of the trench. A floor (10.5) connects this house with walls 12 and 16.

As previously noted in Phase 11b, a deep cooking pit was cut into these levels. The southern extent of this floor was also destroyed by a gully (11.3).

The whole area appears to have suffered a destruction associated with much burning. On this surface lay a group of broken pots, including a number of jars (Fig. 14: 4, 6-10) and a krater (Fig. 14: 5).

The architectural remains east of W12 are minimal. They include a *tabun* cut into the floor and the highest stones of W11 are just visible through the destruction.

### Pottery

As the parallels cited below indicate, the pottery of Phases III-IIb (Fig. 12; Fig. 13. 1-5) appears to date to the early Iron I period, i.e., ca. 1200-1050 B.C.<sup>4</sup> Of the characteristically Iron Age I types, the cooking pot (Fig. 12: 1) and the various bowls (Fig. 12: 2-8) and jar forms (Fig. 12: 9, 12, 13) may be noted. Close associations can be made with the pottery of Phases II-Ia from IIIC. No imported fabrics are present.

The stratigraphical evidence would suggest no significant gap in the sequence. At present, it would appear that Phase III

covers a wider span than Phase II.

The pottery associated with the architectural remains of Phase I, points to a date extending from late Iron I-Early Iron II, i.e., ca. 1050-800 B.C.<sup>5</sup> Of the characteristic types, the storage jars (Fig. 14: 4, 6-8) and cooking pots (Fig. 13: 7; Fig. 14: 1-3) may be noted.

### Iron Age Pottery (Figs. 12-14)

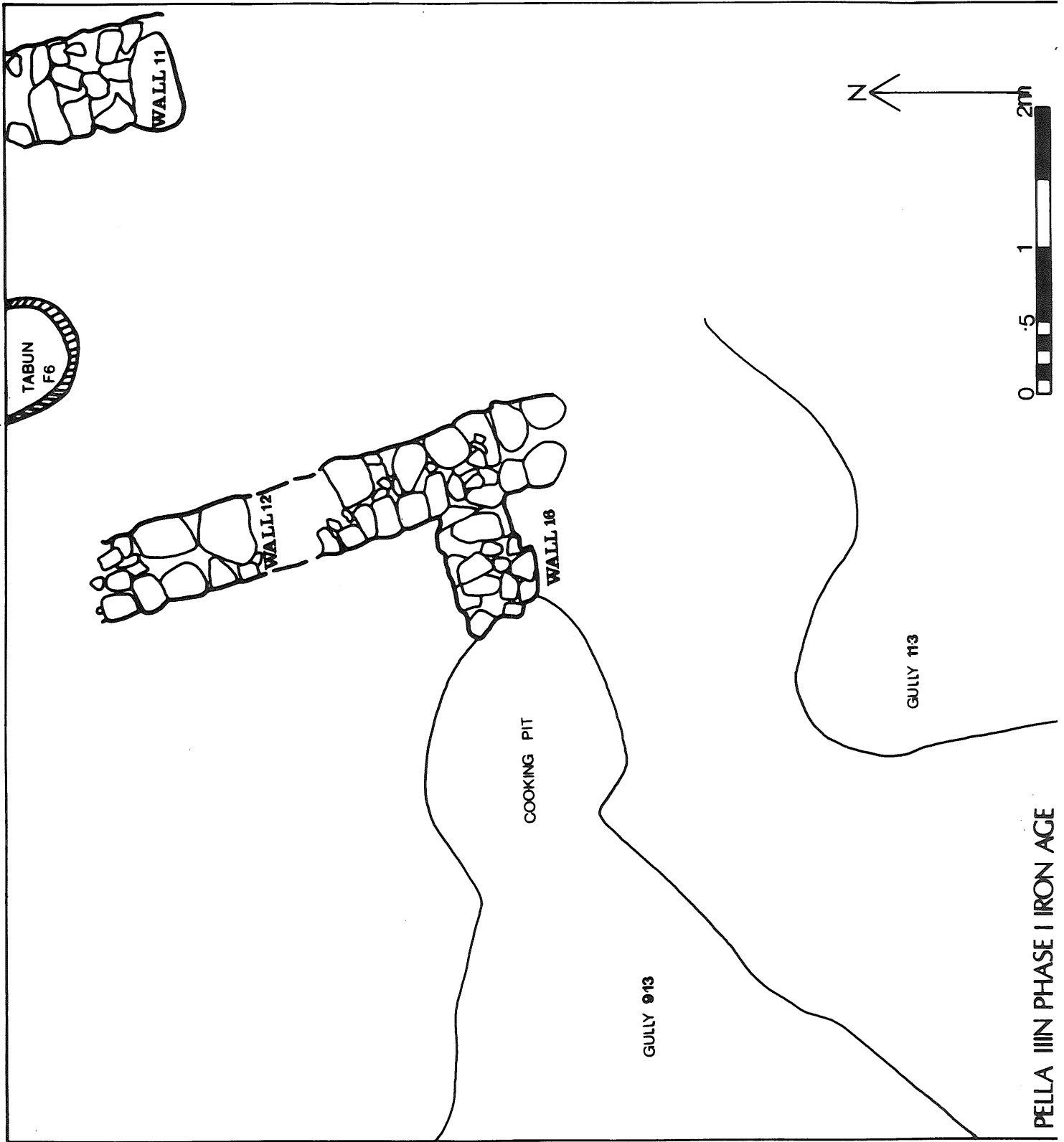
#### Figure 12

1. CN 2396. IIIN 14.2. Cooking pot rim. Well-levigated clay with many medium and tiny grits, fired creamy-buff throughout. Self slip. Parallels: Deir 'Alla I, Fig. 46.1 (Phase A).
2. CN 2377. IIIN 16.1. Bowl rim. Well-levigated clay with medium and tiny grits, fired brownish-buff with light grey core. Self slip. Decoration in thin matt reddish-brown paint on both the interior and exterior surface of the rim. Parallels: Gezer II, Pl. 28.11, 12 (Field II, str. 10); Gezer II, Pl. 25.18 (Field II, str. 12); The Northern Cemetery of Beth Shan, Fig. 44a.7 (Tomb 90); Deir 'Alla I, fig. 54.53 (Phase C).
3. CN 2477. IIIN 15.2. Bowl. Well-levigated clay with many medium and tiny grits, fired brownish-buff throughout. Self slip. Parallels: Megiddo II, Pl. 84.19 (str. VI).
4. CN 2476. IIIN 15.2. Bowl. Well-levigated clay with many medium and tiny grits, fired brownish-buff throughout. Self-slip. Deocraton in thin matt reddish-brown paint over rim. Parallels: Pella, Prelim. II, fig. 14.2 (IIIC 1.15 Phase Ia); Megiddo II, Pl. 74.1 (str. VIIB-VI).
5. CN 2484. IIIN 15.2. Bowl rim. Well-levigated clay with numerous medium

<sup>4</sup> Good parallels can be found, for example, from Beth Shan level VI and lower level V; Iron Age tombs from the Northern Cemetery; Deir 'Alla Phases A-D; Megiddo str. VIIB-VIA; Gezer field 11 str. 12-10; Ain Shems str. III, Pella IIIC Phases 1a, 1b, 2.

<sup>5</sup> The dates for the end of Iron I and beginning Iron

II, and the Megiddo, Deir 'Alla levels follow R.H. Dornemann, *The Cultural and Archaeological History of the Transjordan in the Bronze and Iron Ages*, p. 65, 169. Good parallels can be found, for example, from Megiddo str. V, IV; Horvat Haluquim; Gezer field II str. 7; Hazor str. IX-VII; Beth Shan Upper level V.



PELLA III IN PHASE I IRON AGE

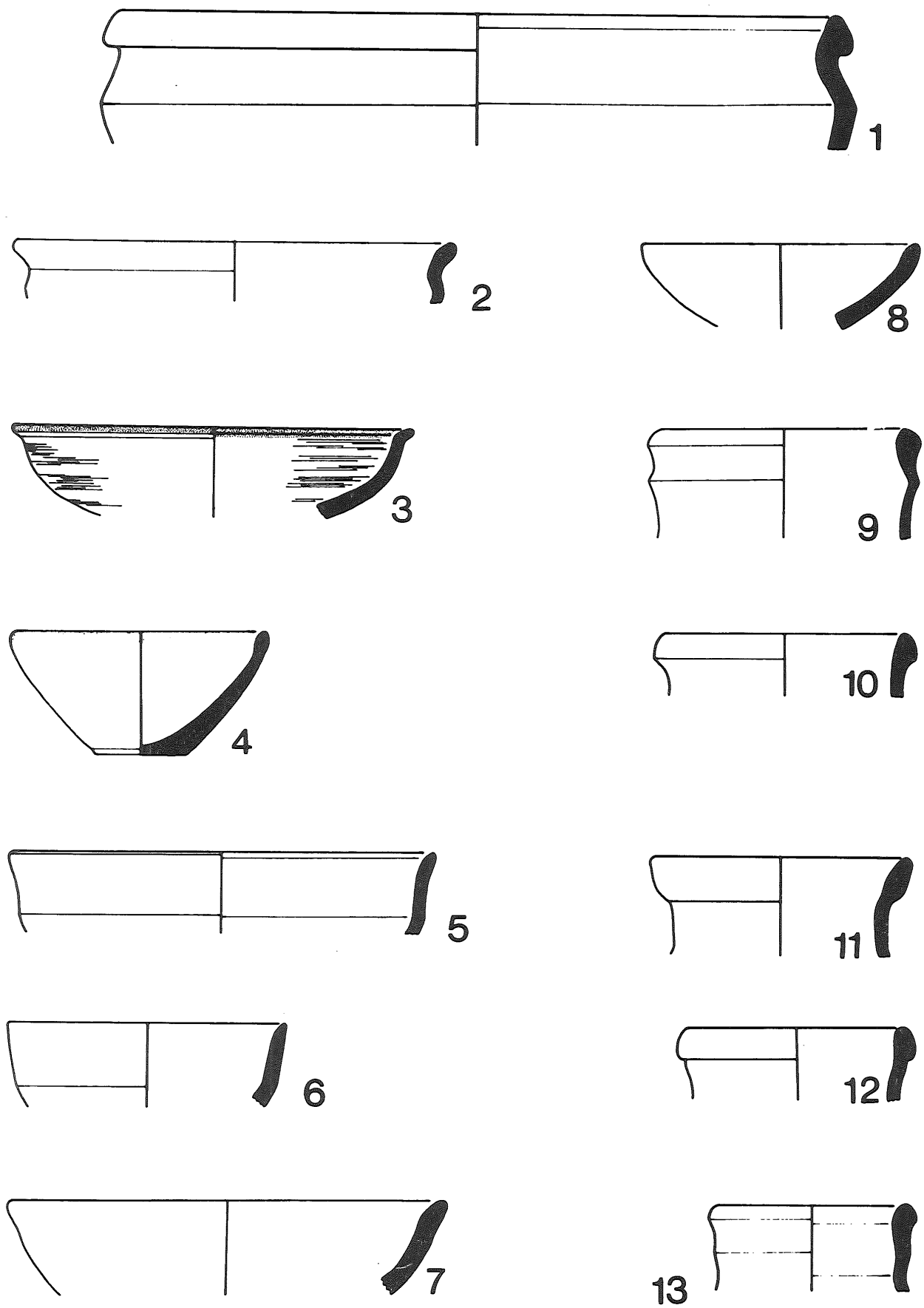


Fig. 12: Pella Area IIIIN Pottery. Early Iron Age.



- and tiny grits, fired buff throughout. Self slip.  
Parallels: Deir 'Alla I, Fig. 46.24 (Phase A); Deir 'Alla I, Fig. 54.27 (Phase C).
6. CN 2321. IIN 12.1 Bowl rim. Well-levigated clay with many medium and tiny grits, fired brownish-buff. Self slip.  
Parallels: Pella in Jordan, Pl. 123.7 (IIC 13.3, Phase Ia).
  7. CN 2210. IIN 12.2. Bowl rim. Well-levigated clay with some large, medium and tiny grits, fired grey-buff with darker grey core. Wet slurry.  
Parallels: Megiddo II, Pl. 79.10 (str. VIIB-VIA); Ain Shems IV, Pl. LXII.18 (str. 111).
  8. CN 2213. IIN 12.2. Bowl rim. Well-levigated clay with some large, medium and tiny grits, fired grey-buff with darker grey core. Wet slurry.  
Parallels: The Iron Age at Beth Shan, fig. 59.6 (Lower Level V).
  9. CN 3117. IIN. 11.11. Jar rim. Well-levigated clay with a great many medium and tiny grits, fired buff throughout. Self slip.  
Parallels: The Iron Age at Beth Shan, Fig. 53.12 (Level VI).
  10. CN 2402. IIN 14.2. Jar rim. Finely levigated clay with medium and tiny grits, fired buff with thin brownish-buff faces. Self slip.  
Parallels: Deir 'Alla, fig. 50.94 (Phase A).
  11. CN 3039. IIN 18.2. Jar rim. Well-levigated clay with a great many medium and tiny grits, fired brownish-buff with grey core. Self slip.  
Parallels: Pella Prelim. II, Fig. 16.7 (IIC 11.1, Phase Ib); Hazor I, Pl. CXLVI. 1; Megiddo II, Pl. 73.11 (str. VIB).
  12. CN 3082. IIN 11.5. Jar rim. Well-levigated clay with medium and tiny grits, fired orange and buff throughout. Self slip.  
Parallels: Deir 'Alla, fig. 50.94 (Phase B).
  13. CN 2378. IIN 16.1. Jar rim. Well-levigated clay with a few medium and many tiny grits, fired greyish-brown. Self slip.

Parallels: Megiddo II, Pl. 76.4 (str. VIIB - VIA).

#### Figure 13

1. CN 2399. IIN 14.2. Krater fragment. Finely levigated clay with many medium and tiny grits. Densely compacted clay, fired chocolate brown with very distinctive buff faces. Wet slurry.  
Parallels: Megiddo II, Pl. 69.15 (str. VIIA-VIA).
2. CN 2324. IIN 14.1. Body sherd. Well-levigated clay with numerous tiny grits and sand, fired buff throughout. Self slip. Decoration in thin matt reddish-brown paint.
3. CN 2479. IIN 15.2. Chalice. Finely levigated clay with some medium and many tiny grits, fired buff with thin brownish-buff faces. Self slip. Decoration in thin matt brown paint above, outside carination. Distinctive shape - as yet unparalleled.
4. CN 3045. IIN 9.14. Jar/jug rim. Well-levigated clay with many medium and tiny grits, fired orange-buff. Self slip.
5. CN 2483. IIN 15.2. Handle. Well-levigated clay with a few large and many medium and tiny grits, fired buff but with dark brown patches. Self slip. Decoration in thin matt orange-brown paint.
6. CN 2172. IIN 11.2. Deep bowl/jar rim. Well-levigated clay with many tiny grits, fired buff. Wet slurry.  
Parallels: Megiddo I, Pl. 31.153 (str. V).
7. CN 2168. IIN 11.2. Coking pot rim. Well-levigated clay with many tiny grits, fired light brown with thin variable grey core. Wet slurry.  
Parallels: Horvat Haluquim, fig. 10.3 10th Century B.C.

#### Figure 14

1. CN 2331. IIN 11.4. Well-levigated clay with numerous medium and tiny grits and sand, fired grey-brown with thin inner and outer faces. Self slip.  
Parallels: Horvat Haluquim, fig. 10.3 10th Century B.C.

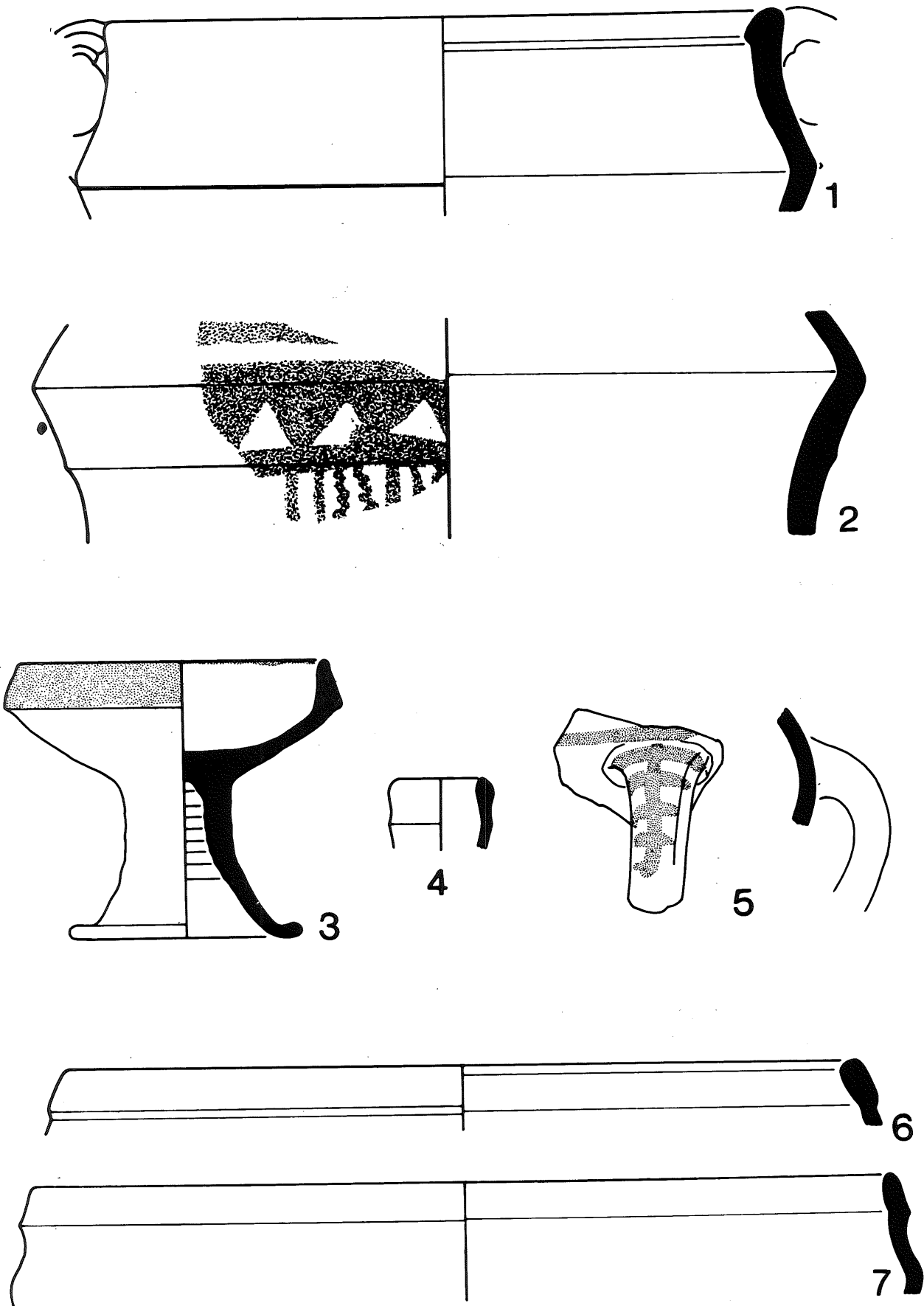


Fig. 13: Pella Area IIN Pottery. Early Iron Age

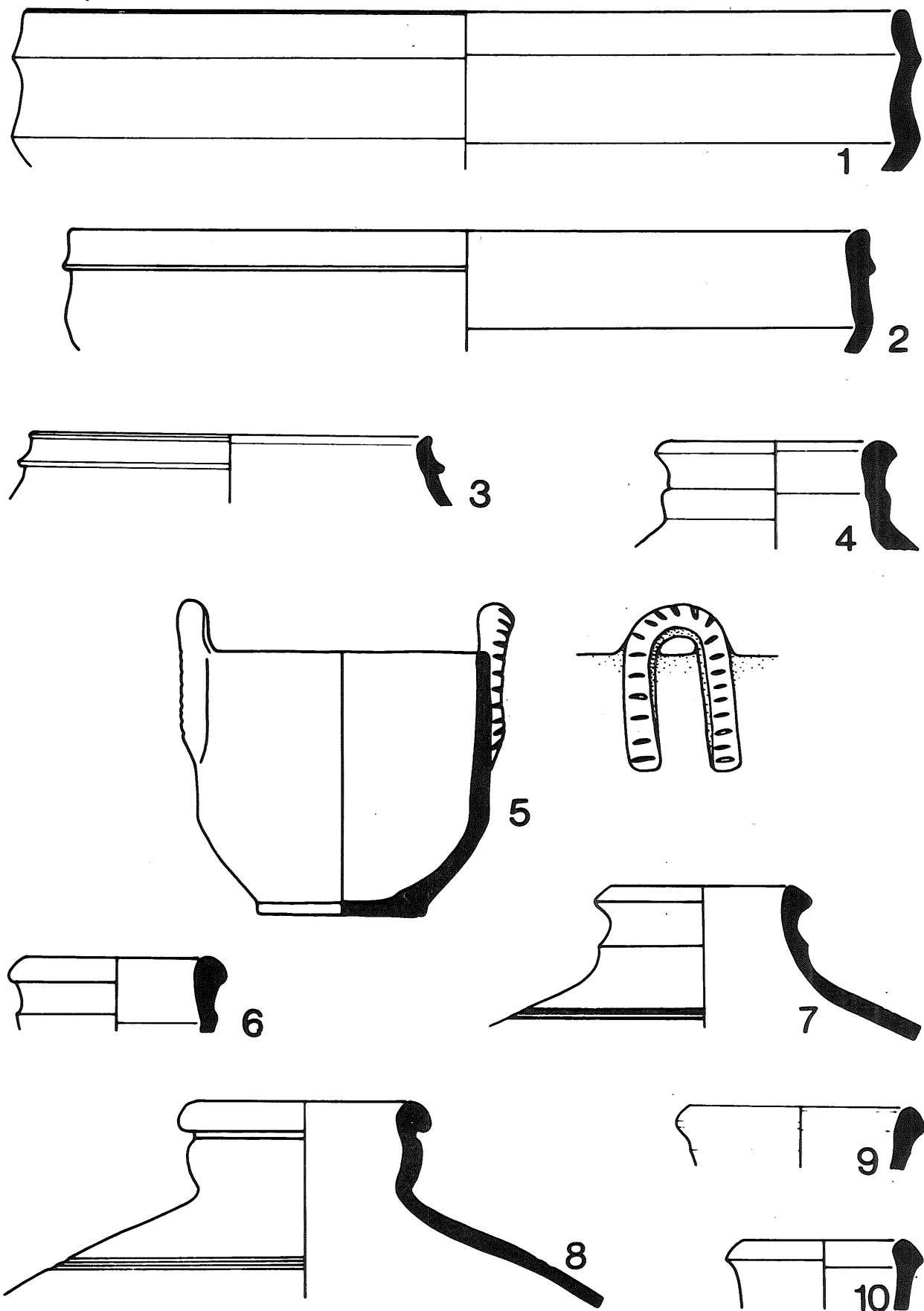


Fig. 14: Pella Area IIN Pottery. Early Iron Age

2. CN 2166. IIN 11.3. Cooking pot rim. Well-levigated clay with many tiny grits, fired light brown with thin variable grey core. Wet slurry. Parallels: Horvat Haluquim, Fig. 10. 1,3 10th Century B.C.
3. CN 2167. IIN.2. Cooking pot rim. Well-levigated clay with some medium and a great many tiny grits, fired brown with thin grey core. Wet slurry. Parallels: Hazor III-IV, Pl. CCIX.1 (str. IX).
4. CN 2433. IIN 10.4. Jar rim. Well-levigated clay with numerous medium and tiny grits, fired orange-brown with thin brownish-buff faces. Self slip. Parallels: Deir 'Alla I, fig. 67.35 (Phase H); The Iron Age at Beth Shan, fig. 49.10 (Upper Level V); Megiddo I, Pl. 15.76 (str. IV-II).
5. CN 2076. IIN 10.4. Krater. Very shallow ring base, outward swelling lower wall with angle to upright upper wall, simple lip. Two handles — applied loops, projecting above the lip at the curve of the loop. Incised decoration on the handles exterior. Very coarse gritty ware, fired brown. Self slipped exterior. Distinctive shape. Possible Assyrian connections.
6. CN 2437. IIN 10.4. Jar rim. Fired orange-buff throughout, grey-buff core. Tiny and medium chert grits. Parallels: Hazor I, Pl. L.34 (str. VII); The Iron Age at Beth Shan, Fig. 49.10 (Upper level V); Megiddo I, Pl. 15.76 (str. IV-II).
7. Not catalogued as yet, IIN 9.11. Jar rim. Parallels: Megiddo I, Pl. 14.70 (str. IV-III); similar to Hazor I, Pl. LXVI. 18 (str. VII).
8. Not catalogued as yet. IIN 9.11. Jar rim. Parallels: The Iron Age at Beth Shan, fig. 64.3 (upper level V).
9. CN 2488. IIN 9.11. Jar rim. Well-levigated clay with a great many medium and tiny grits, fired buff throughout. Self slip. Parallels: Megiddo I, Pl. 21.124 (str. V).
10. CN 2489. IIN 9.11. Jar rim. Well-levigated clay with many medium and

tiny grits, fired dark buff inside, reddish-brown outside. Self slip. Parallels: Megiddo I, Pl. 11.52 (str. V? IV filling).

#### **Hellenistic/Roman** Area XI

High on the north-east slope of Tell Husn a trench, initially intended to investigate a possible tomb, was opened. It soon became evident that beneath the thick wash layers in the south-west corner of the trench there were walls of a structure which had originally stood above ground. Short lengths of two walls forming a right angle were uncovered. They were built of rubble bound with mud mortar and measure between 1.20 m. and 1.50 m. wide. Inside the structure, i.e., on the south, upslope side, a smaller wall constructed in similar style was unearthed. The nature of the building is not yet clear, but it is possible that it was a tower of Pella's fortifications.

The pottery from the strata sealed by the wash layers is consistently late Hellenistic and early Roman. Large quantities of storage jar and cooking vessel sherds of second and first century date were found, along with several bow-spouted ('Herodian') lamp fragments.

#### *Roman* Area VI

The excavations of the dromos of Tombs 39A and 40, commenced in the third season (McNicoll, Smith and Hennessy, 1982: 84-101), were recommenced and extended northwards and westwards. Several columns, which lay up to twenty or so metres north of the entrance of Tomb 39A, 'to all appearances like a cluster of uninscribed milestones' (ibid.: 87), were disengaged from the soil and cleaned. All are extremely weathered, but on three of them traces of inscriptions can be seen. They are evidently the same columns observed by Germer-Durand at the end of the last century (1899: 31). In his day, as when Schumacher visited the site some ten years earlier (1895: 59), one of the columns remained upright; on it

Germer-Durand observe <sup>1/</sup>A He deduced that this point marked the formal completion of the first thousand paces from the centre of Pella: 'Le point de départ était sans doute au centre de la ville haute, appelée aujourd'hui *Tabghat Fahl* ....' The problem is that from the milestones to the top of the *tell* of Tabqaq Fahl, even by the most zig-zag route, is scarcely more than 700 m.

The three inscribed milestones are now set up in the dig-house courtyard. Brief inscriptions and tentative readings follow:

1. Hard limestone, weathered. Cuboid base, tapering shaft, total height approx. 2.17 m. Inscription obliterated, except <sup>1/</sup>A at bottom of shaft ( Germer-Durand 1899: 31).
2. Limestone, weathered. Shaft with ovolo moulding at bottom, height approx. 2.20 m. Broken in two and

mended with Tenax.


CAES [
  
HAD [
  
PONTMAX [
  
POTESTXIII COSIII
  
MP I
  
A

The milestone is dated to A.D. 130 when Hadrian visited Transjordan.

3. Limestone, very pitted and weathered. Cuboid base, irregular tapering shaft, total height approx. 2.07 m. Shaft cracked.

1 [ ]
  
SEPSEV
  
EROPIO [
  
ERAVGAR [
  
5 ADIPARBR
  
ITMAET
  
MAVRAN
  
TONINOE [
  
/////

10 ΑΠΟΠΕΛ  
ΛΩΝ

A  
On base 

The form Pellōn (11.10-11) appears clear. It is not attested elsewhere. Could the settlements on Tabqaq Fahl and on Tell Husn have been considered in some sense twin towns? Or was the inscription cut by someone with little Greek, and possibly less Latin?

Geta's name following Caracalla has probably suffered *damnatio memoriae*. The milestone was presumably erected some time after A.D., 210 if the reading BR/ITMA for *Britannico Maximo*; is correct.<sup>6</sup>

Two more milestones remain to be unearthed and examined.

#### Byzantine Area IV

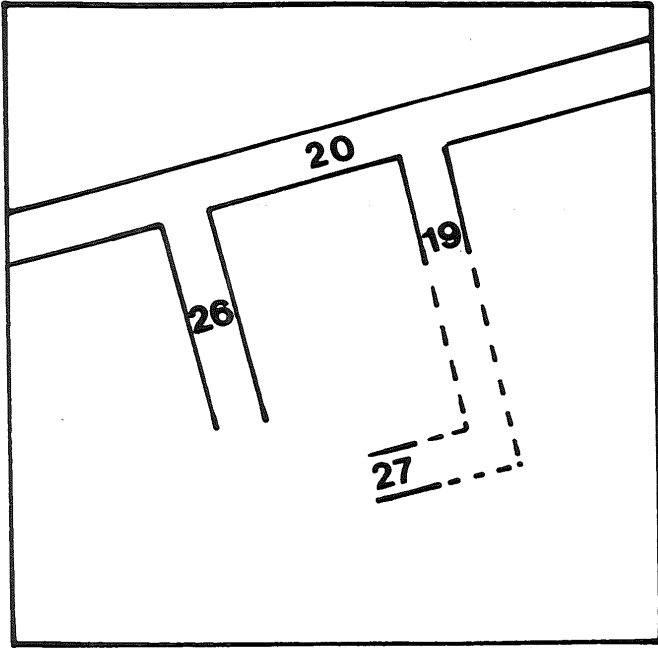
Excavation of domestic settlement of the Byzantine period has continued in Area IV on the eastern side of the mound.

Work has been concentrated in plot E, although a new plot was opened adjacent and to the south of IVE, designated as IIIP. In this plot the earliest Umayyad phase has been reached revealing buildings to the south of the courtyard in IVE.

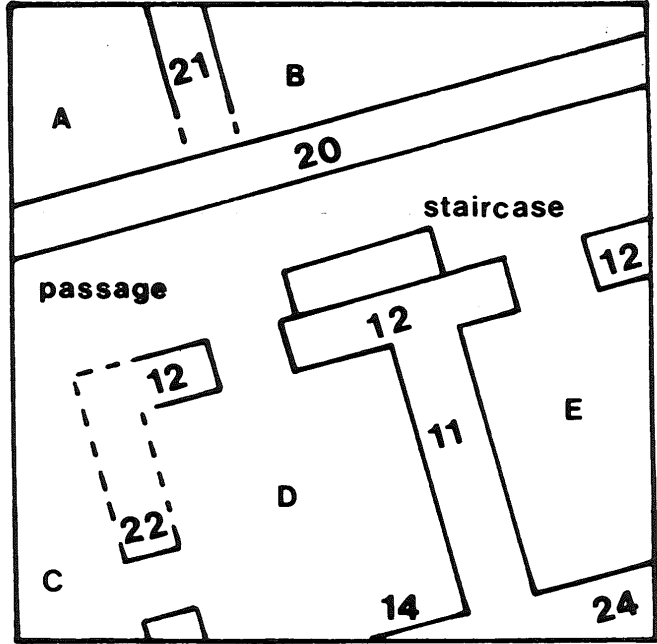
A number of architectural phases preceding the Umayyad period have been identified in IVE. These are shown schematically in Figure 15. Phases III and V are fully illustrated in Figures 16 and 17. The earliest, phase I, was superficially exposed at the end of the season. No deposits associated with walls of this phase (19, 20, 26 and 27) have yet been excavated and little can be said about their date. Walls 19, 26 and 27 appear to have been demolished almost to floor level in preparation for new construction work in the area.

Wall 20, however, was retained and in

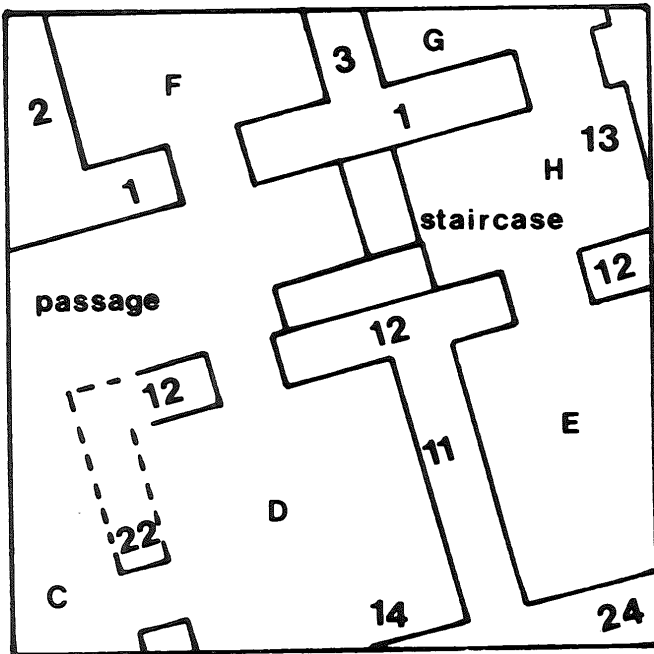
<sup>6</sup> Thanks to Dr. Dexter Hoyos, Department of Latin, University of Sydney, for help with the reading of inscription No. 3.



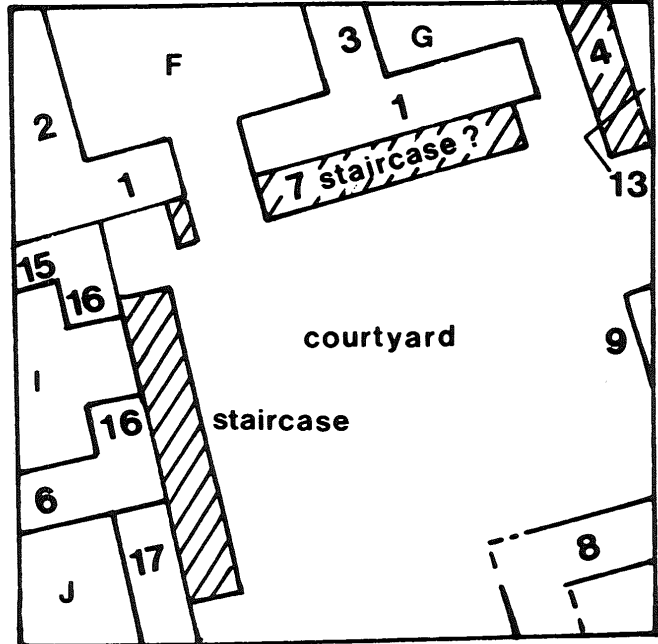
I



II



III



IV

V 

AREA IV PLOT E  
 SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF BYZANTINE - EARLY UmayYAD PHASES  
 PELLA

Fig. 15: Pella Area IVE Byzantine-Umayyad Phases



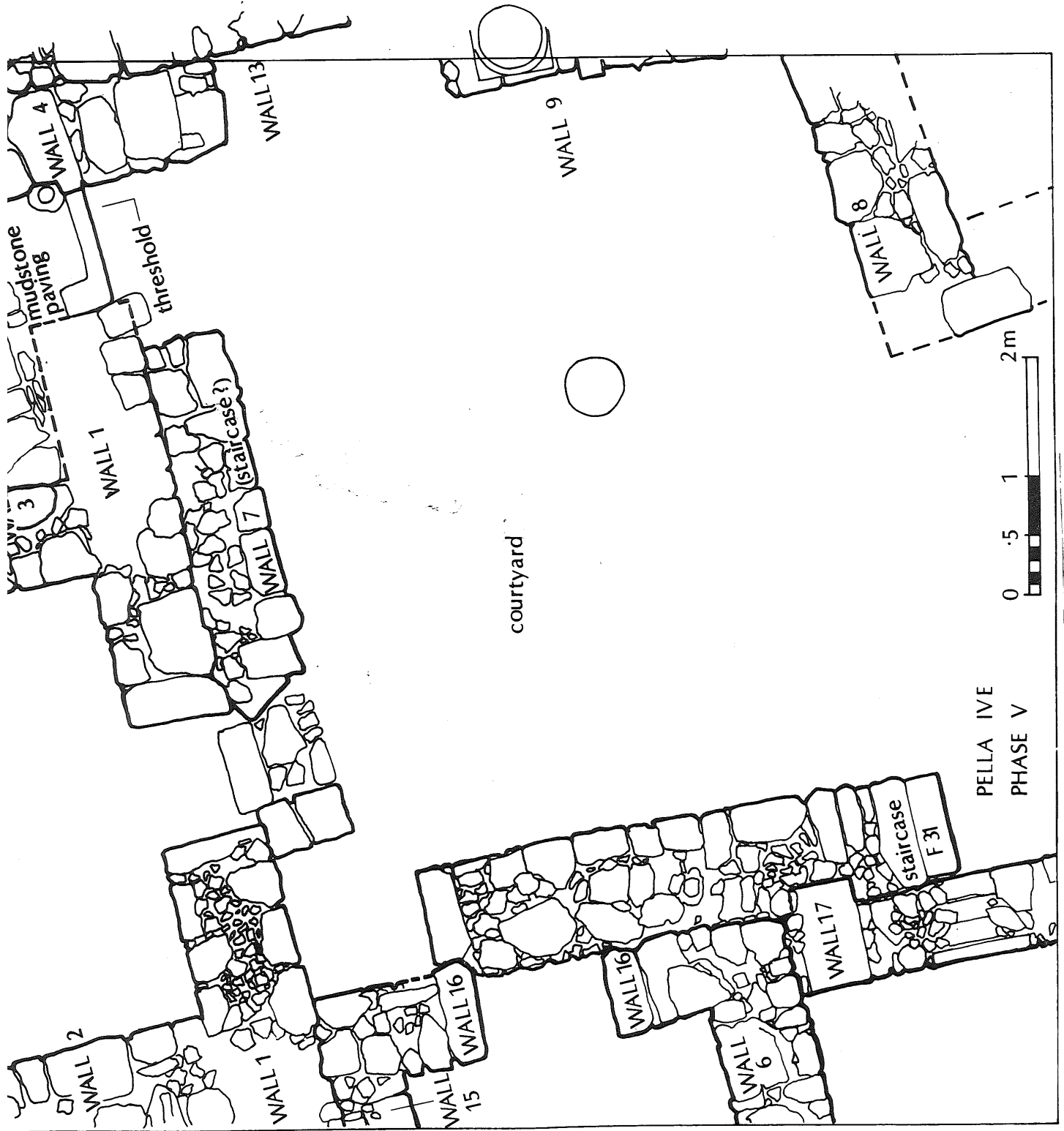


Fig. 17: Pella Area IVE Phase V



Phase II, wall 21 was added without foundations to divide the space (A and B). A small area of two successive floor levels associated with wall 21 has been found, the remainder being destroyed in the extensive trenching undertaken in the construction of phase III. In phase II a completely new building (walls 11, 12, 14, 22 and 24) was erected to the south. Between its north wall 12 and wall 20 was a small passage, probably unroofed. Two complete rooms of the building have been exposed (D and E), both opening onto the passage. Room D also opened westward to locus C, the precise nature of which is yet to be determined. The floor of room E was approximately 0.30 m. higher than the floor in D. The walls, which had virtually no foundations, reflect this terracing and the lowest course of wall 12 is higher on the east side of wall 11 than on the west. An exterior staircase abutting wall 12 probably provided access to the roof rather than an upper storey, in view of the lack of foundations for the walls. The floors in these rooms were simply beaten earth flecked with white lime.

In phase III the building north of the passage was demolished. A new building was erected in its place with higher surfaces north of wall 12. The new building is represented by walls 1, 2, 3 and 13. Wall 20 was dismantled to below the surface level of phase II and this involved extensive trenching. Substantial foundations were laid for the new walls. Wall 1 sits partially upon wall 20 and is offset somewhat to the north. The gravelled earth floor for the new room F runs over the top of wall 21 which was demolished to a level half a metre higher than wall 20. Exaggerating the terraced system, the floor of room G was set 0.75 m. above the floor level in F and was neatly paved in mudstone flags.

In order to match this raised occupation surface in the north, the passage was built up level with room F. Layers of large stones and earth were used in the packing and the surface was slicked with yellow clay. A north-south leg abutting wall 1 was added to the staircase and effectively blocked the passage at this point. The floor levels in the southern

building remained as established in phase II. However, the level of the north doorway in room D was raised by a stone packing and two steps led up to the new surface of the passage. The doorway in room E involved a similar step upwards to the north.

Living arrangements were substantially altered in phase IV. A new room (I) represented by walls 6, 15, and 16, was built in the west abutting wall 1 of the northern building. Originally wall 16 extended further south, defining room J. It partly covered wall 22 of phase III, which had been dismantled to threshold level. The rest of the southern building of phase III (rooms D and E) was dismantled to a uniform level approximately 1.00 m. above the surface of room D. Rooms D, E, H and the remaining passage areas were then filled to the height of the dismantled walls and the resultant large surface was slicked with a yellow clay. Thus an internal courtyard had been created onto which opened rooms F, G and I. Walls 8 and 9 were built on top of the courtyard fill and helped define the south-east boundary of the enclosure. A substantial *tabun* and a nearby column base, (useful in breadmaking activities?), are associated with this courtyard.

At a later stage, phase V, the south extension of wall 16 was replaced by wall 17, cutting through two floor levels in room J. An external staircase was built alongside walls 16 and 17, blocking the doorway in wall 16. It sat directly upon the courtyard surface. At the same time a "wall" (7) was added alongside wall 1. Only one course of this structure remains and it may have been a staircase. Finally, wall 4 was constructed alongside wall 13. Access between rooms F and G and the courtyard was maintained. A roughly constructed feature partly exposed in room F may have been a feed-bin and could indicate a change in function in the latest use of this room, from human habitation to stable. Such occurrences have previously been noted at Pella.

Although the finds from deposits associated with these phases are still to be analyzed in detail, some remarks can be made concerning phases III and IV. A

study of some of the pottery from the fill beneath the courtyard in phase IV was made by Walmsley (report on the 1981 season, *ADAJ; Pella in Jordan I*, p. 152 ff.). Two fragments of red slip ware as classified by Hayes (*Late Roman Pottery*, 1972) suggest a date for this courtyard construction in the early seventh century A.D. Whether this change was due to the Islamic take-over or occurred earlier is still debatable. Aside from these two fragments (African Red Slip ware, Form 105 and Late Roman C/Phocaeen Ware, Form 10A), the numerous remaining examples of red slip ware from the studied deposit and other contemporary deposits date uniformly to the first half of the sixth century at the latest. The vast majority belong to Late Roman C/Phocaeen Ware Form 3.

Two vessels of interest are illustrated here from these phase IV deposits. They are supplementary to those published as "assemblage 2" by Walmsley. Fig. 18: 2 is a small open bowl of well levigated terracotta. Extensive chisel decoration covers the exterior body below the slightly everted rim. The interior is decorated with thick wavy vertical bands in yellow paint. No parallel to this piece has been found. Fig. 18: 1 is a two-handled open cooking pot in coarse terracotta. The straight side sloping inward to a sharp carination then curving to a dimple base is an unusual variant within this common form.

At this stage the only indications of date for phase III are again provided by the red slip wares. A fragment of Late Roman C Form 3 Type C is dated according to Hayes' chronology in the second half of the fifth century. An African Red Slip Ware Form 67 (with no decoration visible) could date as late as A.D. 480.

The two types of cooking pot characterized by Walmsley in assemblage 2 (the open variety and the jar with two vertical handles from rim to body), are also found in phase III. The ware is predominantly coarse terracotta although one example of the open form is in medium terracotta, a ware generally restricted to the typical Byzantine ribbed cooking pot with an upright neck of

S-shaped profile and two handles from rim to shoulder. Water jars in dark brown, white painted ware with collared rim and a ridge just above the join between neck and shoulder, also extend back into phase III. The absence of the handmade flat based bowls and jars in dark grey to buff ware (cf. *Pella in Jordan I*, p. 154) seems to indicate that they begin in phase IV. However, the remarks concerning the finds from phase III are based on a single deposit. Examination of all related deposits may necessitate a revision of the chronology.

### Islamic

#### Area IV

##### *Introduction*

In the last two decades the rapidly growing interest in the archaeology of Islamic Jordan has led to a major change in attitude towards the excavation and preservation of Islamic sites. At Pella, known as Fihl after the Islamic conquest, excavations by the University of Sydney have exposed more than 1700.00 square metres of Umayyad domestic settlement. In addition to architecture the excavations have produced a wide range of objects in daily use at Pella during the Early Islamic period, particularly an excellent corpus of pottery and other objects of glass and bronze from the A.D. 747 earthquake destruction of the site (McNicoll, Smith and Hennessy, 1982: Chs 7 and 8). This season further investigations into the Umayyad occupation at Pella have turned up spectacular evidence of the destructive nature of the A.D. 747 earthquake, as well as confirming the mid-eighth century date for the end of Umayyad occupation at the east end of the main mound.

The later Islamic history of Pella, until now known from burials and a surface scattering of pottery, has been greatly augmented this season by the excavation of a village mosque constructed in the thirteenth century A.D. Although designed to serve a small community probably of no more than 140 at its greatest extent, the mosque confirms late Medieval settlement at Pella.

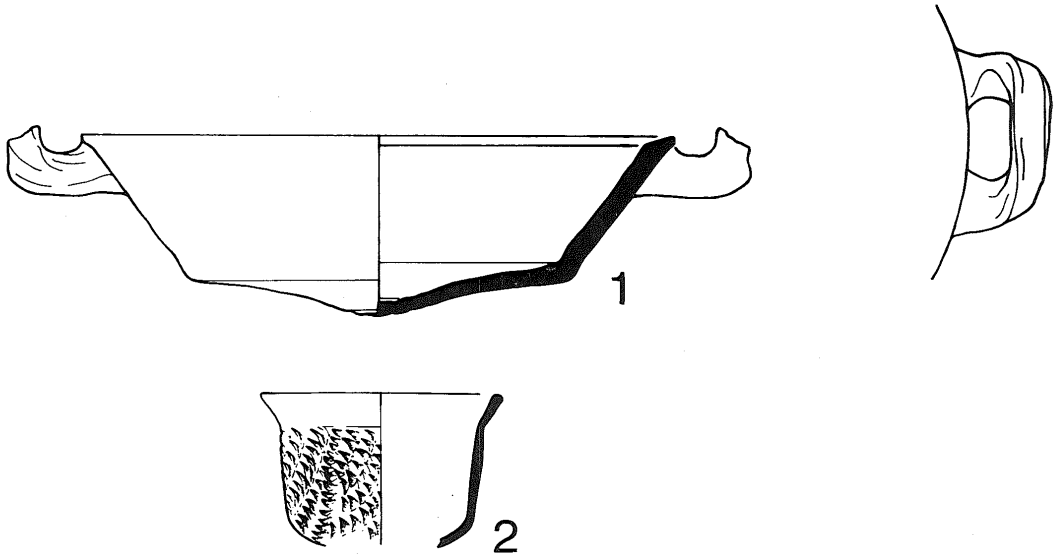


Fig. 18: Pella Area IVE Pottery

### *The Early Islamic Period (A.D. 635-750)*

At the end of the 1981 season, most of Plot IVP, comprising two large rooms and half a stable, remained to be excavated. In the 1980 and 1981 seasons adjacent rooms had turned up a considerable amount of material, e.g., pottery, iron and bronze objects, reused marble pieces, coins, skeletons of animals and a human skeleton. This season the destruction level of the house revealed a continuing list of earthquake victims: three more horses, six chickens, one squashed underneath a basalt quern that had fallen from the floor above, a cat and a charred human. More pottery, mostly cooking ware, was recovered, as well as six more *dinars*, two of the year A.H. 94/A.D. 712-3, and others of years A.H. 110/A.D. 728-9, 112/730-1 and 122/739-40, the last just seven years prior to the A.D. 747 destruction of the house.

Following the earthquake the debris of the dwelling caught alight, generating sufficient heat to crack the fallen columns and fire the unbaked bricks from the upper storey walls. Also recovered from the collapse layer were charred beams, many large white tesserae and sizable lumps of a pebble and white plaster mix, in one case with tesserae still attached. The full effect of the earthquake is apparent here — collapse, burning, loss of wealth, personal tragedy!

With the completed excavation this season of IVP and the removal of all baulks the Umayyad house in plots IVM, P and S can be viewed as one dwelling of three occupied in Area IV in the second quarter of the eighth century A.D. Initially it was suggested that the organization of this dwelling was of a number of rooms around a central peristyle courtyard. It now seems that the large central room was roofed over, above which was another large room with a plain white mosaic floor. The roof of the upper room was flat, made of pebbles and cement and like the mosaic floor laid on wood beams and cane.

### *The Late Medieval Settlement*

Work on Islamic remains this season

was also conducted in a new area, Area XVII (Fig. 19). Surface indications of a major structure located to the north-west of the modern cemetery were noticed by the Sydney team when visiting the site in 1977. This building appears on Schumacher's map of 1888 and Richmond's map of 1933, both reproduced in Smith (1973: 6, 11) in which book the ruin can also be clearly seen in the endpaper photographs. It was concluded that this structure was most likely a mosque, the excavation of which was decided upon in order to ascertain the date of construction.

### *Stratigraphy and architecture*

The walls, visible on the surface, extended for a depth of around a metre to floor level. The excavated deposit from ground surface to floor was a homogeneous dark topsoil, disturbed in two areas by a robber pit and a late Bedouin burial. Objects recovered included bone, glass and assorted pottery. The whole of the mosque was exposed, and stratigraphical soundings sunk through the floor to investigate both construction techniques and the possibility of an earlier building. From the floor and its makeup a considerable amount of pottery was recovered and nearly two metres below an earlier structure was discovered, this being a house of the Umayyad Period.

The primary building material utilized was stone, much of it reused. Large, well squared blocks were used to strengthen the corners of the outside walls, but generally the two-faced dry rubble core walls were constructed of undressed stone, each being carefully chosen to fit in with adjacent stones.

The mosque was built on a flat, open area to the south of the Late Medieval village. Facing the village was the only entrance into the mosque, this doorway being flanked on either side by three narrow windows. The doors and window shutters were most likely of wood, with no evidence of iron grills in the windows. A portico, constructed in light materials such as wood and reeds, may have existed in front of the mosque, although this was

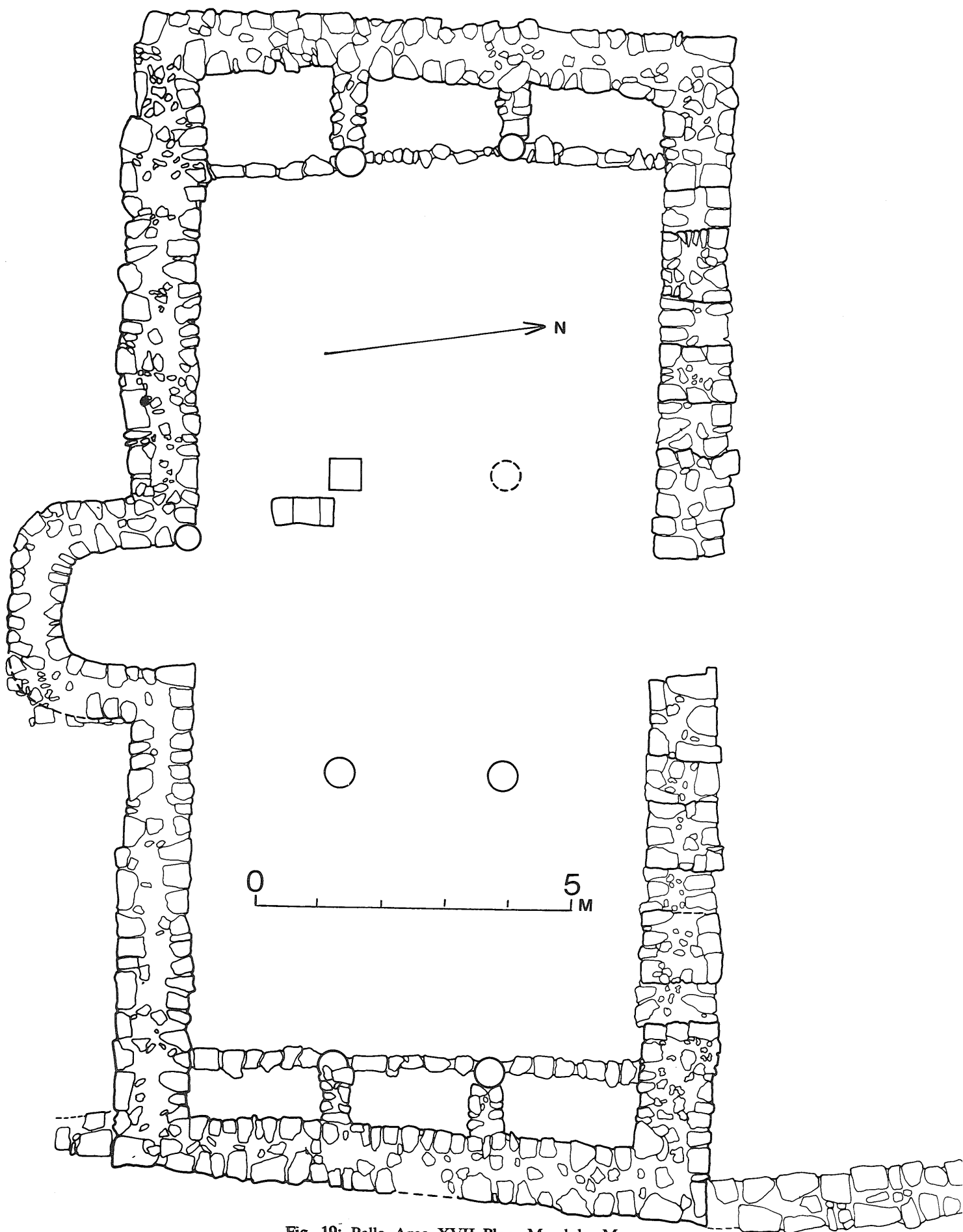


Fig. 19: Pella Area XVII Plan. Mamluke Mosque.

hardly necessary as the prevailing winter wind comes in from the south-west. The internal arrangement of the mosque was centered on a deep column flanked *mihrab* in the south wall, indicating the *qibla* or direction of prayer. To the west of the *mihrab* was a *minbar*, of which three stone steps remain. The super-structure of the *minbar* was probably of wood, abutting the south wall. The rows of four columns each provided support for the steep-sloping pointed arches on which the roof, also it is suggested of wood and reeds, was carried. Between the columns, which on average stand only a metre above floor level, voussoirs from collapsed arches were recovered, the width of which indicate the roof was not of any considerable weight. Rather surprisingly the floor appears to have been simply packed mud, although in the vicinity of the *mihrab* a chippy white plaster surface was located. This may have originally spread over the whole floor inside the mosque, but if this was the case, it is surprising that no evidence was found for the plaster floor close to the walls in other parts of the mosque.

The soundings below floor level provided interesting information on the techniques utilised in the construction of the mosque. While the north, west and east walls were trench built, the south wall had been constructed almost straight onto the ground surface. This arrangement can be explained by the design of the building, where the north wall was weakened by the doorway and six windows, while the east and west walls were required to carry the thrust of the arches, on the outermost columns through short buttress walls. The *qibla* wall was neither pierced nor required to carry extra weight, so accordingly less effort was made in securing good foundations. The *mihrab*, in any case, provided a convenient buttress in the centre of the wall.

## Conclusions

Because of the apparent consistency of Ayyūbid and Mamlūk ceramics between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries A.D., and the lack of a foundation

inscription or coins, any estimate of the date at which the mosque at Pella was constructed must be largely guesswork. We know that up to the time Izz ad-Din was appointed by Salah ed-Din in A.D. 1184-1185 to secure the Ajlun region, northern Transjordan and Damascus was open to frequent raiding by the Latins (Johns, 1932: 21-33). It is likely that up to this time and probably until the Battle of Hattin (A.D. 1187) Pella was abandoned, being no-man's land between Crusader held Beisan and the Ayyubid defenses against the much reduced Latin Kingdom, although more likely resettlement took place in that period of stability and prosperity which followed the repulsion of the Mongols by Baybars at Ain Jalut in A.D. 1260. Certainly the second half of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries was a time of considerable building activity; for example the shrine at Maqam an Nebi Musa (A.D. 1269-70), renewal of a mosque at Nablus (A.D. 1273-4), the Red Mosque at Safad (A.D. 1275-6), a shrine at Tiberias (A.D. 1295) and the caravanserai Khan al Ahmar at Beisan in A.D. 1308 (Mayer, 1933: 27-32; Mayer 1932a: 37-39; Stephan, 1935: 160; Mayer, 1932b: 95).

The literary sources indicate, in so far as they specifically refer to Pella (as *Fiḥl*), that by around A.D. 1300 *Fiḥl* had been reoccupied. Yaqubi and Ibn Faqih at the end of the ninth and beginning of the tenth centuries A.D. refer to *Fiḥl* as a district of the military province of Jordan (Smith 1973: 75; Ibn al Faqih: 16-17, 116). By the end of the tenth century, Ibn Haukal and Maqaddasi both omit *Fiḥl* from their description of the Jordan Province, as does Yaqut in A.D. 1225 (A.H. 623). Most likely from the mid- to late tenth century A.D. until the mid-thirteenth century A.D. Pella was correspondingly unoccupied. Then about A.D. 1300 *Fiḥl* once again is mentioned in the literary sources in the work of Dimashqi, suggesting repopulation of the district in general probably specifically the site as well and its re-establishment as an administrative district in *esh-Sham* (Smith, 1973: 76).

Some confirmation of a thirteenth century construction date is found in the similarity of plan between the mosque at Pella and the supposed Ayyūbid mosque at Azraq. As at Pella, the Azraq mosque is rectangular in plan with the long axis parallel to the *mihrab* wall, although overall the Azraq mosque is shorter with two instead of three arches per row. Other variations are that the arches rest on pilasters where they met the end walls, rather than on buttressed columns as at Pella, the doorway of the Azraq mosque is located in the short east wall, and the windows are two elevated openings flanking the *mihrab* in the south wall. But the underlying concept is the same, and construction techniques similar. These include two-faced rubble core walls built from undressed stone and deeply sunk load-bearing pillars. More interesting is that the arch spans in both mosques are within five centimetres of each other; at Azraq 4.25 metres and at Pella 4.20 metres. Consequently, it seems very likely that these two mosques were constructed within a generation or two of each other.

Because of the similarity in design between the Azraq and Pella mosques, an accurate estimate of ceiling height is possible for the mosque at Pella. The arches at Azraq stand to a height of 2.50 metres from their springing on the columns to underneath the arch keystone. For Pella this would give a floor to under keystone height of 3.50 metres, onto which the thickness of the arch should be added, some 0.35 metres to give a total floor to ceiling height of 3.85 metres.

The available floor area of the mosque allows some estimate to be made of the total population of Pella in the Late Medieval period. The mosque could take up to 35 persons comfortably, perhaps a few more, and it as it can be expected that one-third to one-quarter of the total population attended Friday prayers, the size of the mosque suggests it was built for a village of around 105 to 140 people. Most likely, however, numbers never reached this maximum and Pella was, during much of the Late Medieval period, a village of approximately 100 persons.

A surface investigation of the main mound at Pella has located the remains of village houses contemporary with the mosque. These are situated to the north of the mosque in the centre of the main mound. House walls of the medieval village show quite clearly in the aerial photograph of the site published by Smith (1973: Endpaper) and cover an area of roughly 110 metres by 80 metres. It is unlikely that this was concentrated settlement, but rather individual units of house and courtyard with a surrounding wall. Associated with these house remains is a surface scatter of pottery of the types recovered from the mosque. Unfortunately, none of this medieval village has been excavated to date.

Also associated with the mosque are the copious Late Medieval burials at the eastern end of the main mound. Up to the end of the 1982 season over 200 skeletons had been excavated, although this does not represent the whole cemetery. Burials were nearly always in simple grave pits, the body in an extended position on its right side with the head to the west, facing south. Many burials were stone capped, and frequently women were buried with jewellery of some sort, especially bronze ear- or finger rings. Similar burial grounds are known for a number of Palestinian sites, of which the burials at Tell el Hesi, dated to the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, are the most thoroughly studied (Eakins, 1980: 89-96).

It is unclear at what time Late Medieval occupation at Pella came to an end. Following the final expulsion of the Crusaders (A.D. 1291, the fall of Akka), the threat of further Latin expansion in north Palestine was averted and the strategic position of Pella no longer of importance. From the mid-fourteenth century onwards the depopulation of Palestine which started with the black death of A.D. 1348 became a serious problem, and by the end of the century Mamluk Syria and Egypt had descended into political and economic chaos which was further complicated by the Turco-Tartar invasion lead by Timur (A.D. 1400-1401).

As Lewis remarks:  
“Plague, locusts and the depredations of the unleashed Bedouin completed the work of the departed Mongols, and the Mamluke Sultanate suffered a blow to its economic and military strength from which it never recovered.” (Lewis, 1970: 157).

We can expect that by this time Late Medieval occupation of Pella/Fihl had come to an end.

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