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# NEO-LITHICS 2-3/00

## A Newsletter of Southwest Asian Lithics Research

## Editorial

This issue (*Neo-Lithics* 2-3/00) appears as a combination of two issues, as is reflected in the relative thickness of the publication. There are several reasons that we have combined them, which brings up the focus of this editorial.

When *Neo-Lithics* began in 1994, the newsletter was intended to be a means to communicate issues of lithic analysis: it was to be a forum where approaches to analysis could be proposed, explained, and modified as a consequence of friendly exchange among researchers dealing with common interests. *Neo-Lithics* has provided this channel of communications, but it is clear that the progress of lithics analysis did not proceed at a rate at which an annual newsletter was worth publishing.

As a consequence, the role of *Neo-Lithics* was expanded by the co-editors to include brief reports on current Neolithic (and even late Epipaleolithic) field work and aspects of non-lithic research as a means of rapid exposure of what is being examined by excavation projects and what is being pursued in the laboratory in addition to lithics analysis.

We have been able to cobble together some useful newsletter issues in the past as a result of the cooperation of field directors and laboratory researchers. It is pleasing for us to note, for example, that many recent publications cite reports in *Neo-Lithics* in their bibliographies simply because other avenues of publication are more time-consuming before other reports eventually emerge.

But we would also like to point out that the publication of *Neo-Lithics* is not an easy task. Both of the co-editors are fully employed in academic work and research projects themselves, and while we are very happy to produce this newsletter, we desperately need the cooperation of our colleagues. We very much appreciate the manuscripts that have been submitted for past issues (repeatedly by some colleagues, which we admire). We have appealed via email and other avenues for others to contribute manuscripts, and we have received several responses to these appeals.

It is in this regard that we raise the question of future issues of *Neo-Lithics*. We want to reserve *Neo-Lithics* as a primary communications vehicle for discussion of lithics analysis. But we realize that research projects on lithics analysis per se will not produce manuscripts on a predictable basis, so other aspects of Neolithic (and late Epipaleolithic) research are also encouraged as foci for publication in *Neo-Lithics*.

We ask again that short reports on research be submitted to *Neo-Lithics* when the opportunity arises. It might be the case that we have to reduce the current number of three issues per year to two (as is the situation for *Neo-Lithics* 2-3/00).

What has been written above are the views of the co-editors. What is not present there, or anywhere else, are the views that you as the subscribers might hold. We can easily establish a "Letters to the editors" column to include comments and criticisms that you might wish to communicate on a "less-than-article" means. Let us know.

Gary Rollefson & Hans Georg K. Gebel

**Deadline** for the coming issue of *Neo-Lithics* is  
**May 1st, 2001** (next deadline: Sept. 15th, 2001)

Please, note that the text of contributions should be sent directly to Dr. Gary Rollefson (Email: rollefo@whitman.edu or to the Department of Anthropology, Whitman College, Walla Walla, WA, 99362 USA). Illustrations should be sent separately to H.G.K. Gebel at the Berlin address (Free University of Berlin, Hüttenweg 7, D-14195 Berlin, Email: hggebel@zedat.fu-berlin.de).

### Status of your subscription of *Neo-Lithics*

In the upper right part of the address field (envelope) you will find the issue mentioned until which (included) you paid your subscription. If you find an invoice with this issue, a renewal of subscription is necessary for the next two years/ 6 issues.

If invoices are not paid it is understood that a prolongation of the subscription is not wished, and no further issues will be sent.

## Dr. Mujahed al-Muheisen *Rahmatu Allahi Aleik* A Personal Obituary

Dr. Mujahed al-Muheisen, born in Tafila, devoted his academic life to Jordan's prehistory. He died in Irbid in July 2000 at the age of 46. His family lost a caring and loving father and husband, and we who knew him and worked with him have lost a friend, an expert in chipped lithics analysis, and a colleague who demanded high standards of research from himself and others.

Dr. Mujahed taught prehistory at the Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology at Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan, a tenure interrupted by a period as curator at the Museum of National Heritage at Yarmouk University. He was the excavator of Epipaleolithic Kharaneh IV and co-director of the Basta and 'Ain Rahub Joint Archaeological Projects, in which he represented his institute, shared the direction of the excavations and analyzed the chipped lithic materials that were recovered. He was also involved in many other projects, both in analysis of materials and excavation.

Dr. Mujahed finished his studies in 1988 with the *Doctorat d'État* in Bordeaux, France, using materials from his excavations at Kharaneh IV.

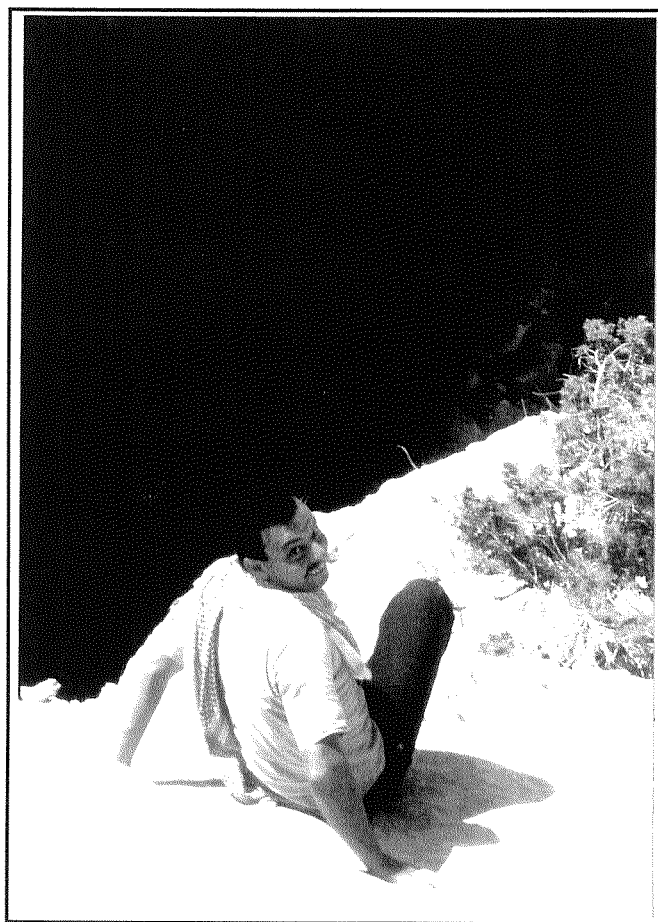


Fig. 1. Dr. Mujahed Muheisen visiting Ba'ja in 1987.  
<photo: H.G.K. Gebel>

Mujahed was my dear friend for 19 years. I met him first in 1981 when he was appointed as the Department's representative for my first surveys in the Petra area. Something one immediately noticed about him was that he liked to joke, and one of his favorite phrases was "No problem!" when real problems occurred. But already by 1981, when we dreamed of working together on an Arabic-English-French-German dictionary of chipped lithics terminology, in order to promote more Arab specialists in the field, he often withdrew from others to take rest in the shade; he did not talk about the severe headaches he suffered. These signs were not understood when he sought medical help in France, where he worked on his *Thèse du Troisième Siècle* until 1986. By 1985, we excavated together at 'Ain Rahub, a time that was one of his most productive. One year later, Mujahed was – among others – instru-

**Acknowledgments:** This research is part of the Wadi Ziqlab Project at the University of Toronto. I would like to thank Dr. E.B. Banning and David Lasby (Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto) for supervision and comments. In addition, Dr. John Tomenchuk (Department of Anthropology, Royal Ontario Museum) provided useful advice, while Matthew Betts provided valuable comments on an earlier draft. I am solely responsible for any errors, omissions, or misinterpretations.

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## An Early Neolithic Settlement in the Center of Şanlıurfa, Turkey

Bahattin Çelik (Harran University)

In 1997 evidence for a stratified Early Neolithic settlement was found on Yeni Yol Street in the central part of Şanlıurfa (Urfa), towards the southwestern part of town near the surrounding city wall (Fig. 1). In 1993, during construction of a building complex to the east of this area, a limestone statue of a male nearly 1.90 m high was recovered (Fig 2). A comparison of this statue with the large sculptures excavated at Nevalı Çori indicate that it also belongs to the Early Neolithic (cf. Hauptmann 1993). Both of these finds constitute the first verification of Early Neolithic occupation under the city of Şanlıurfa.

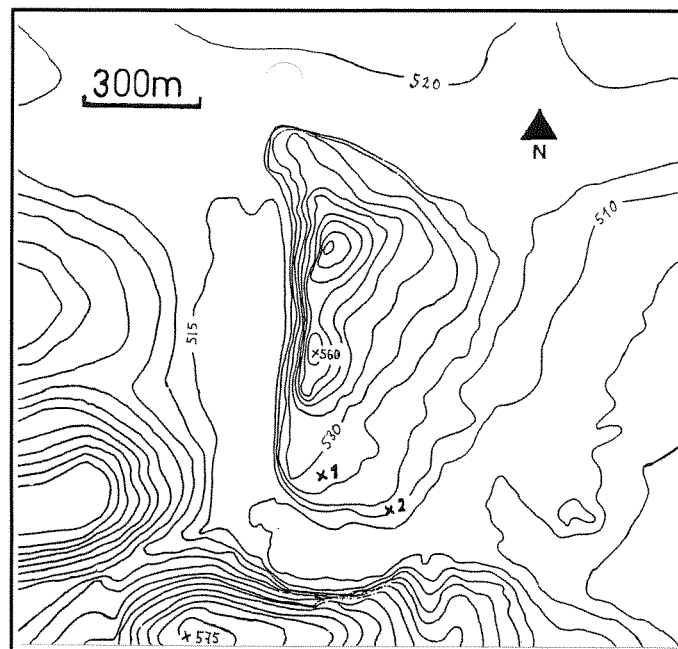


Fig. 1. Topographic map of the Şanlıurfa city area. 1: Profile in Yeni Yol Street. 2: Location of human statue.

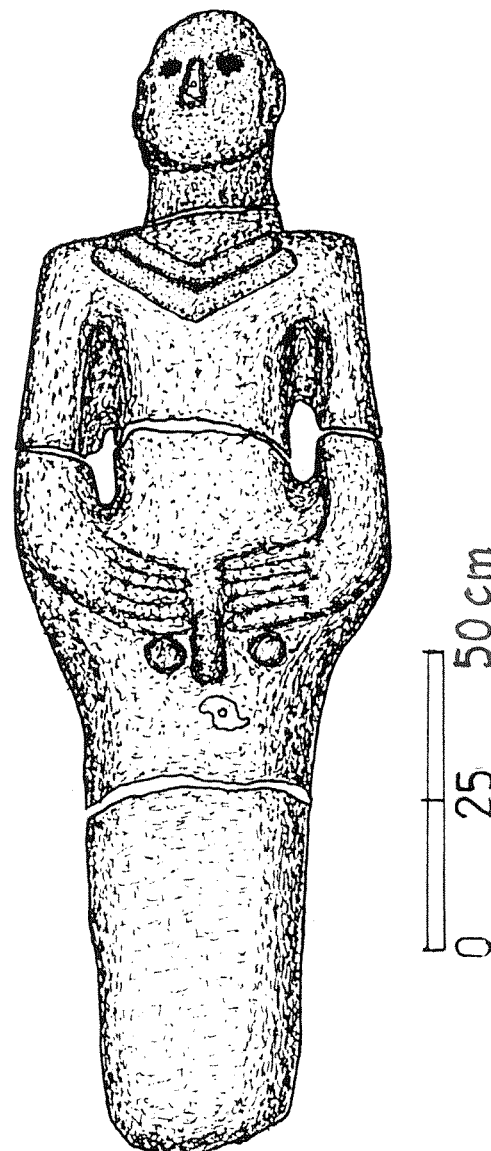


Fig. 2. Şanlıurfa, Yeni Yol Street: The human statue (drawn from a photograph).

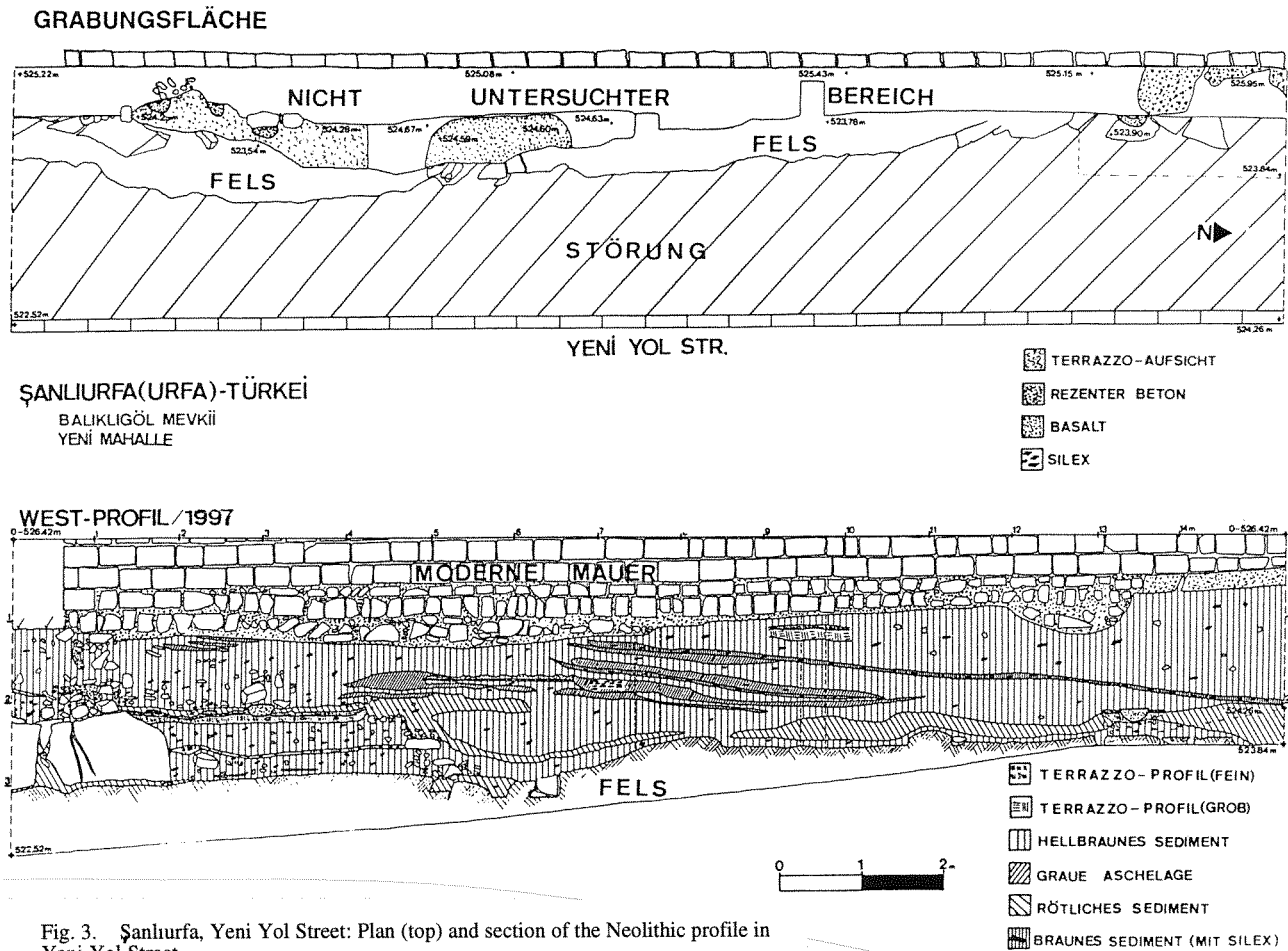


Fig. 3. Şanlıurfa, Yeni Yol Street: Plan (top) and section of the Neolithic profile in Yeni Yol Street.

The old city of Şanlıurfa was constructed near the Karakoyun River (Dayshan-Skirtos) before the Justinian period (527-565 a.d.), and at that time there were some lakes that were considered to be holy. To the south of the city were high rocky hills, and the broad Harran Plain lies to the east; there is a large open area that climbs in elevation to the north of the city. The strategic advantages made this an ideal location for early Neolithic settlement.

Yeni Yol Caddesi is a narrow street that climbs northward from the southern edge of the city in a section of town called Yeni Mahalle. During reconstruction of the street in 1993, when it was lowered and widened, a stratigraphic section nearly 2m high and 70m long appeared. Most of the thickness of the profile is datable to the Early Neolithic, with Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, and Islamic material appearing in the upper reaches. There is no sign of Bronze Age occupation in this profile.

In 1997 an in situ section of this profile 15m long and 0.5m wide was investigated (Fig. 3). There were no Neolithic potsherds, but many lithics artifacts were recovered, including 239 flint tools and 15 tools made of obsidian. The tools included projectile points, perforators, burins, endscrapers, and sidescrapers. Some bone tools also occurred here, as well as basalt stones that perhaps used as weights to anchor tents or tent poles. The profile also contained four terrazzo floor areas similar to those at Çayönü, Göbekli Tepe, and Nevalı Çori (cf. Hauptmann 1993; Özdoğan 1995).

An Early Neolithic age can be assigned to these layers based on typological analysis of the tools. One projectile point (Fig. 4: 2) is a variant of the Helwan point and may be dated to the PPNA. Others (Fig. 5: 3-5) show close similarities to El Khiam and Nevalı Çori points dated to the PPNA and Early PPNB periods (Schmidt 1996). No Palmyra points (Schmidt and Beile-Bohn 1996) or Çayönü Tools, ascribable to later PPNB periods, were found. Compared to the Nevalı Çori stratigraphy (which is some distance away), the Şanlıurfa material seems to fall between Strata I and III.

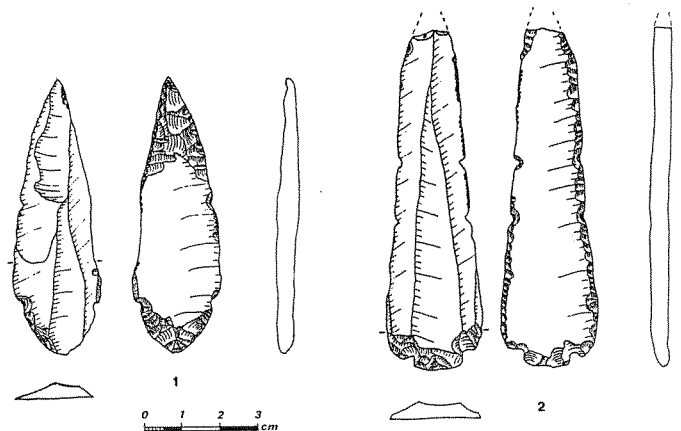


Fig. 4. Şanlıurfa, Yeni Yol Street: Flint arrowheads from the 1997 examination of the Yeni Yol profile.

The profile is currently under the city wall and modern buildings, but a basalt grinding stone could be seen and examined. The presence of terrazzo floors and the larger-than-life human statue indicate at least one special building.

Göbekli Tepe is a site located atop a mountain not far from Şanlıurfa (Beile-Bohn *et al.* 1998). Although there are ritual aspects to Göbekli Tepe (Schmidt 1998), there are no holy springs or ponds as there were at Şanlıurfa. This might indicate that Şanlıurfa played a greater role in terms of ritual activity. With additional excavations at the Şanlıurfa site, a better idea of its layout can be obtained and a more reliable comparison with Göbekli Tepe can be achieved.

Note 1. A detailed study of the finds from Şanlıurfa is being carried out as part of continuing postgraduate work.

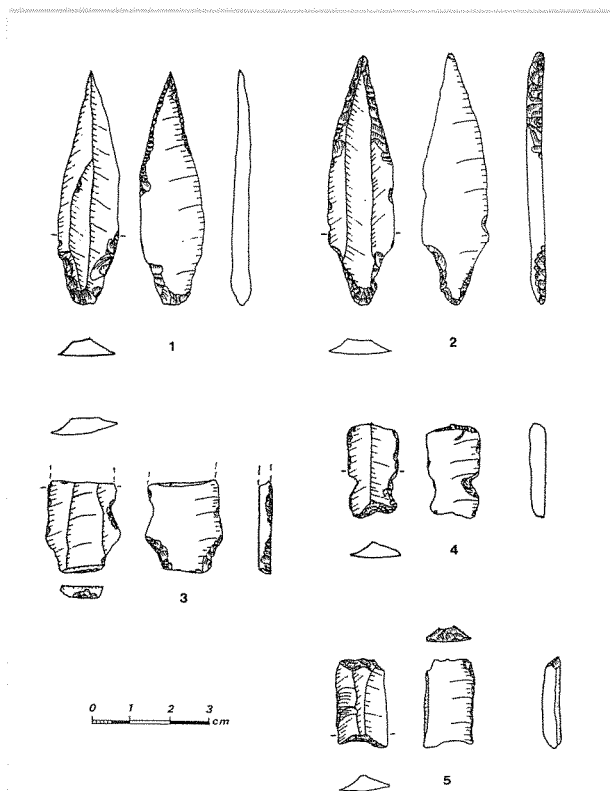


Fig. 5. Şanlıurfa, Yeni Yol Street: Flint arrowheads, and notched and retouched pieces from the 1997 examination of the Yeni Yol profile.

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## A New Early-Neolithic Settlement: Karahan Tepe

Bahattin Çelik (University of Harran)

Karahan Tepe lies some 63 km east of Şanlıurfa (Urfa), southeastern Turkey in an area called Tektek Dağları (Tektek Mountains). Some 266 *in situ* pillars were observed in the fields on the northern and eastern slopes of the hill. Since this area, which was discovered by the author in 1997, was not named on the maps, it was thought to be suitable to name the site "Karahana Tepe" after a hill nearby (Footnote 1)

Geomorphologically, the Tektek Mountain area in the vicinity of the Karahan Tepe settlement in the southeast part of Harran plain is more of a range of high hills rather than mountains (Güzel n.d.: 170-171). It is a dissected Eocene and Miocene limestone formation whose valleys which were formed by erosion during interglacial and post-glacial periods under humid climatic conditions (Atalay 1994: 280-282). There is no basalt in Tektek

Dağları; the nearest basalt source is 15 km to the north of the settlement. Flint probably was obtained from the nodules found in the limestone of the area. The region has an average altitude of between 600 m and 800 m. It is a rural area where people today are

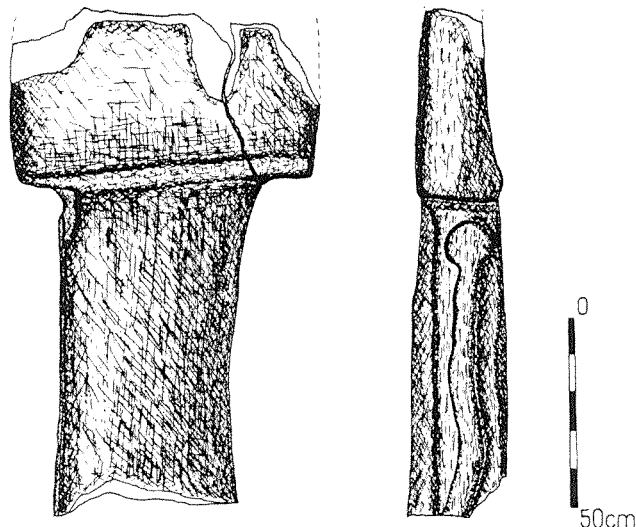


Fig. 1. The limestone "T"-shaped pillar with a snake relief.  
 <drawing: B. Çelik>

involved primarily in animal husbandry and some agriculture. This poorly watered area was also settled in Antique Age (Sinclair 1990: 183-184). It is still observed in the autumn that nomadic families come down from Karacadağ Mountain in northern Şanlıurfa to stay in the Tektek Mountain area during winter and graze their animals on the pasture. The vicinity is also very rich in wild

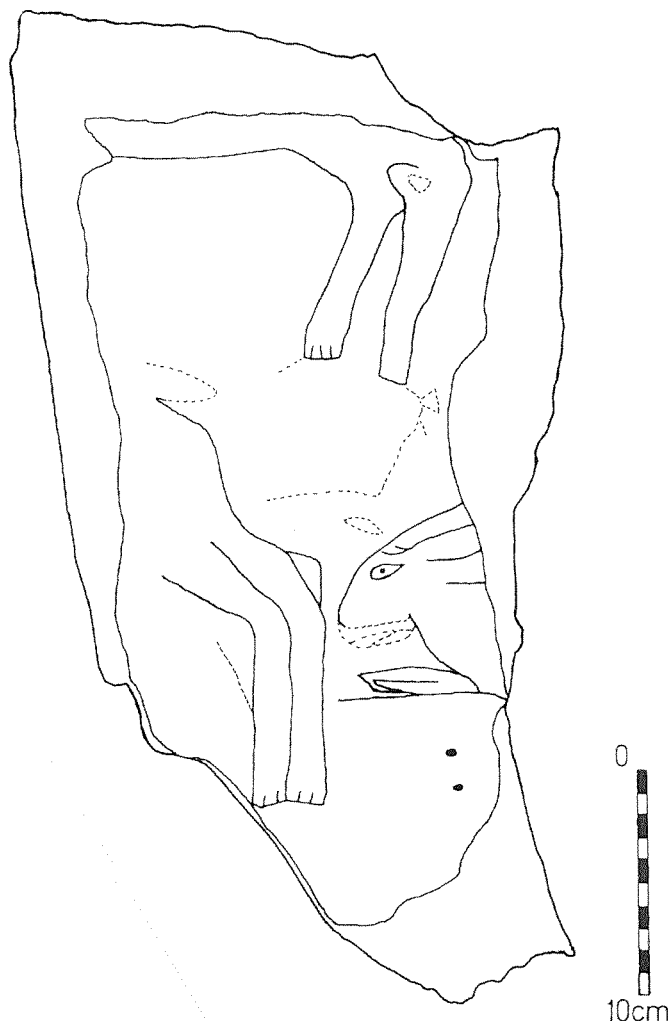


Fig. 2. Part of a limestone pillar decorated with animals.  
 <drawing by B. Çelik>