Chapter 7

NATUFIAN USE OF THE SITE

A glance at the stratigraphic picture of el-Wad clearly indicates that the Natufian, especially the Early Natufian, is the most extensive layer at the site. It may also be the best preserved. It is the only culture of which there is evidence in the various parts of the site: the terrace, the outer chambers and, at the rear part of the cave, the relatively dark Chamber III. This raised the likelihood that it would be possible to identify some sort of spatial organization within the site, which, in turn, would offer us some insight into the various kinds of use the Natufian inhabitants may have made of the cave.

What we come up against almost immediately, however, are some inevitable limitations imposed, first of all, by the restricted surfacial extent of the excavations on the terrace and then also by later disturbances. Garrod excavated only the higher part of the terrace and left the vaster talus area untouched. Going by other Natufian sites, for example the Hayonim cave and terrace (O. Bar-Yosef, 1991b; Henry and Leroi-Gourhan, 1976; Valla et al., 1989; 1991), we may assume with confidence that the original el-Wad site extended far beyond the excavated area as we have it now. As for later disturbances, these were quite extensive throughout (Garrod and Bate, 1937) and, as can be clearly seen in Fig. 3, certainly affected the Natufian layers, including the Early Natufian. Disturbances were evident in Chamber III as well, where signs of later activities included, for example, the levelling of the cave's floor in the passage to Chamber IV (see above, Chapter 5, "Stratigraphy"). In fact, the entire cave floor seems to have been levelled in recent times, abutting against the medieval wall closing the entrance (Fig. 3). Garrod also remarked that "with the exception of a slight fall from SW to NE in Chamber I, and a marked rise in Chamber VI, the surface of the deposit was remarkably level all over the cave" (Garrod and Bate, 1937:5). It seems highly probable that the floor levelling (including the one observed at the rear part of Chamber III) and the wall put up to close the entrance were all part of one and the same construction activity, presumably carried out in Byzantine times.

One might add that, in a way, Lambert's trial excavation also constituted a "recent disturbance". Trench 3, in Chamber I of the cave (Fig. 3), was 7m long (Director of Antiquities, 1928) and some 2m wide. It was also deep enough to enable a

detailed excavation of several, successive layers and to reach the Early Natufian burials and incorporated art objects. Together with the earlier disturbances, Lambert's sounding makes it impossible for us today to reconstruct the lay-out of architectural or other features in the cave. This is especially critical since it had apparently been laid at the very centre of the Early Natufian deposit, itself already quite limited because of later disturbances (Fig. 3). Lambert's trench is represented by the long deep "void" along Garrod's longitudinal section of the cave (Fig. 3) and, as Garrod (1930c:1) states, it "occupied a large space in this chamber". (The measures she gives [4.10mX2.30mX1.90mX2.20m] are different from those cited above, and are exactly half of those given in Plan II of the same report [Fig. 79].)

Being one of the main Early Natufian base camps, el-Wad stands out for the significance of its socio-economic position. This is due to a number of factors: its relatively large size, its rich flint industry, the great number and wide variety of ground stone utensils it contained, its rich bone-tool industry and the many decorative and artistic objects it produced. The variety, richness and density of the finds all point to intensive occupation, while the abundance of cores, blanks and waste within the lithic assemblage indicates on-site manufacturing of artefacts. High proportions of "unworked to worked material" in the Natufian assemblages are also reported by Garrod (Garrod and Bate, 1937:10). Together with the rich faunal assemblage, including bones exhibiting signs of human manipulation (see below, Appendix III) and, as Garrod puts it "Animal bones, broken for food and often burnt" (idem), all the above clearly suggests domestic or economic activities within the site.

The most distinctive feature, however, is the Natufian cemetery (Garrod and Bate, 1937) that Garrod uncovered in the outer chamber and on the terrace (Fig. 3). It included the burials of some 96 individuals (Belfer-Cohen et al., 1991). As already mentioned, the burials vary in position, number of individuals per grave, decoration and grave structure (see Garrod and Bate, 1937, for a detailed description of the graves and modes of inhumation). It is not always easy to establish the stratigraphic differentiation between Early and Late Natufian burials, but it seems that decorations can only be related to the Early Natufian burials (Garrod and bate, 1937; Belfer-Cohen, 1991a). The social stratification as earlier inferred from these burials by Wright (1978) has been questioned recently by Belfer-Cohen (1995; see also Byrd and Monahan, 1995). According to Garrod, the few structural features found on the terrace (Fig. 3), including the terrace wall and the slab pavement, together with a series of rock cut basins, were apparently related to the burial activities of the Early Natufian.

The Early Natufian finds from our recent excavations in Chamber III, at the entrance to the "corridor", indicate that this part of the cave was used for again a different purpose. Unlike the front of the cave and the terrace, where possible domestic and burial activities took place, the rear part of the cave may have served as a waste dump, as can be deduced from the composition of the flint industry found there, with its conspicuous rarity of microliths but its abundance of cores, many of which are "exhausted" and burnt. The abundance of gazelle horn cores (see below, Appendix III, Table 16), often burnt, lends further support to this view. The shepherds who used the cave in recent years had the same habit of burying horns there, as part of their non-disintegrable waste (see above, Chapter 3, "Interviews"). Gorring-Morris (1995) has suggested that, amongst other uses, Chamber III served as a repository of symbolic objects, which he based on the art objects found in this part of the cave (Weinstein-

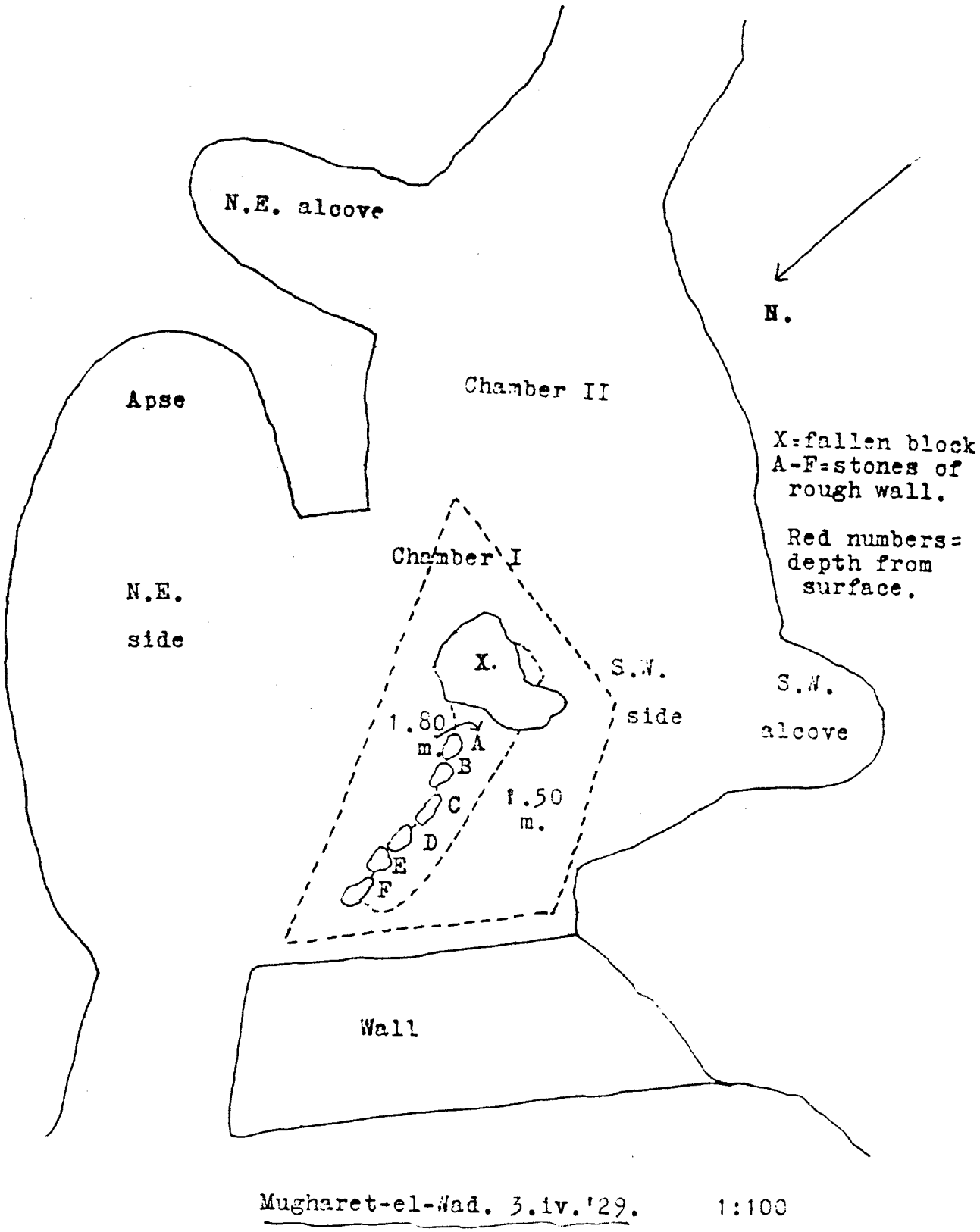


Fig. 79. Garrod's plan of the cave at the beginning of her excavations, with Lambert's Trench 3. A-F, the stones of Lambert's wall.

Evron and Belfer-Cohen, 1993, and see above, Chapter 5, "Decorative and Art Objects"). In our view, however, it is impossible to establish with certainty either whether these objects were used in Chamber III, intentionally "reposited" there, or simply dumped there as part of the general waste. That similar objects were found in Garrod's excavation in the outer parts of the site (Garrod and Bate, 1937) also seems to speak against the occurrence of a well-defined "repository" for symbolic objects in Chamber III.

So far then, according to the available data, the Natufian habitation of el-Wad can be divided roughly into three activity areas: a dwelling area in the outer chambers and possibly also on the terrace, a cemetery, mainly on the terrace and the entrance to the cave, and a dumping area in Chamber III (Weinstein-Evron, 1997).

As already mentioned, it is highly probable that the Natufian habitation of el-Wad extended much further than indicated by the excavated area, both inside the cave and on the terrace. Geophysical investigations in the cave (Weinstein-Evron, et al., 1991 and see above, Chapter 4) revealed the occurrence of rather deep, unexcavated sediments in the inner Chambers IV-VI. The "corridor" is rather spacious and could have been used for various purposes, from sleeping to ritual practices. Whether the rear part of the cave was utilized by Natufian (or other) inhabitants, to what extent, and whether these activities were such that they could have left traces in the archaeological record, is as yet unknown.

Charcoal remains and the many flint artefacts and bones which exhibit signs of thermal influence suggest the use of fire on the site. Garrod carried out no detailed mapping of hearths but she does report the occurrence of several hearths both in the cave and on the terrace, often related to burials. No hearths were encountered by us during the recent excavations. It seems unlikely that fires could be lit beyond Chamber III of the cave: attempts to keep a fire going in the rear of the cave during recent filming activities demonstrated that, since there is no proper airing in this part of the cave, there will always have been the risk of suffocation from smoke.

As for the terrace, Garrod excavated only a limited area here and concentrated her efforts on the upper part, in the area broadly delimited by a wall constructed by shepherds who had been using the cave in recent times. She noted the existence of an additional, unexcavated, area within the terrace, comprising a talus *c.* 45m in diameter, sloping sharply towards the coastal plain. In the course of excavations currently being carried out by Daniel Kaufman and the author, a Natufian wall was recently found on the terrace, some 5m NE of the area excavated by Garrod. Admittedly, "one wall does not make a village", but its discovery clearly demonstrates that the terrace has further archaeological potential and that the existence of other built features is probable. It is unlikely that the relatively straight and long "ruined ancient walls" within the talus area as illustrated by Garrod (Fig. 15) are Natufian; they certainly have no parallel in other Natufian sites. As it runs across the wadi bed, from southern to northern bank, one of these walls could have served to dam water in this part of the wadi, either permanently (prior to the recent capturing of springs) or seasonally, that could have been used for domestic purposes and for the herds belonging to the inhabitants of the cave and the area. When documented, there was already "a breach in the wall at the point where a stream runs through the valley in the rainy season" (Director of Antiquities, 1928:3). Though the age of these walls is unknown, it is tempting to relate them to the wall at

the entrance of the cave, as well as to the important construction activities, often connected with wine and oil industries, which are widespread in the area (Lahav and Farkash, 1986). A small ruin and a water cistern on the terrace were also reported by Mülinen (1908).

At this point in of our speculative discourse it becomes impossible to go any further and, for example, to envisage differential use of the various parts of the site, or developments and changes through time, as has been suggested for Hayonim Cave and Terrace (O. Bar-Yosef, 1991b; Henry and Leroi-Gourhan, 1976; Valla et al., 1989) and for Eynan/Ain Mallaha (Perrot, 1966; Valla, 1991). It is also impossible to ascertain whether the layout of the Natufian settlement at el-Wad in fact included constructions in the entrance to the cave and on the terrace, as is the case, for example, at Hayonim (O. Bar-Yosef, 1991b), although the abundance of stones in Garrod's Layer A seems to speak in favour of such an assumption, as does the large amount of stones used in the "Medieval wall" that closed the cave prior to Garrod's excavation (Figs. 3,5), and which incorporated Natufian remains. Other stones may have been used by the shepherds to build walls and huts on the terrace or entrance to both el-Wad and Jamal caves. Fig. 80 shows part of Lambert's excavation in Chamber I and clearly indicates the availability of large stones in the upper layers of the cave, which could have been used for the purpose. A climatological explanation for the formation of these stony layers, to account for the widespread phenomenon in other Levantine caves, has been proposed by Ronen (1971). Significant also is Garrod's statement that Layer A on the terrace "might in fact be regarded as a disturbed Upper Natufian deposit containing a large amount of intrusive material" (Garrod and Bate, 1937:6).

Fig. 80. Lambert's Trench 3 in the cave. A Natufian construction, made of large stones, appears under a layer of medium-sized stones.

The scanty architectural remains on the terrace including the terrace wall, and the rock cut basin/mortars (originally related to the burial activity), as well as the slab-paved surfaces have been re-interpreted recently by Gorring-Morris (1995). Based on a detailed comparison with other Early Natufian sites in the Levant, Gorring-Morris has argued that the poorly preserved Early Natufian structures unearthed by Garrod represent but portions of larger and more complex architectural features. The curved "terrace" wall can be completed to form a U-shaped or circular residential structure, some 8-9m in diameter (Fig. 81:A), similar to structures from Eynan (Valla, 1981, 1988, 1991) and Wadi Hammeh 27 (Edwards, 1991, 1993). The rock-cut basin and slab pavements, together with several group (H25-26, H57, H28-32, H23, according to Gorring-Morris) and individual burials, and a stone-lined hearth are taken to represent secondary features. He argues, furthermore, that the way these are arranged within the main structure is reminiscent of internal, spatial organizations found also at the other sites. Another group burial unearthed by Garrod in Chamber I (Fig. 81:B) comprised ten individuals (H1-10), accumulated in three separate events and included two distinct hearths. It is located on the main axis of access from the cave entrance to the interior chambers, off-centre to the chamber itself. The entrance area (Fig. 81:C) and the proposed ledges (Fig. 81:D-F) formed by short terrace walls were apparently used for more sporadic, individual burials. According to Gorring-Morris, the patterning that emerges from these tentative reconstructions, in the form, nature and size of residential architecture, accords well with the evidence from the Early Natufian sites of Wadi Hammeh 27 and Eynan, indicating a high standardization of architectural concept in terms of both planning and implementation. He also argues that the envisaged site lay-out implies a spatial segregation of certain activities between the cave and terrace, with residential occupation being limited to the latter.

As convincing as these attributions are, this scenario leaves several questions unanswered. First, as shown above, the residual character of the Early Natufian deposit in Chamber I does not allow a straightforward reconstruction of the possible use(s) of this part of the cave. Second, taking the topographical data into consideration, regarding the terrace deposits, the difference in height between the rock-cut basins and the northern edge of the "residential structure" is no less than 1m, that is if we assume that the latter was found at the upper part of the Early Natufian layer (Fig. 3). If, on the other hand, this segment was uncovered deeper in the sediment (according to Garrod it was unearthed 1.2m below surface), the difference in height could have been more important. In that event, the possibility should not be ruled out that the basins and the northern end of the reconstructed wall do not represent a single architectural feature but may have belonged to different structures, built either on different topographical levels at the site, or even at different chronological stages.

In fact, other observations, too, seem to cast doubt on the contemporaneity (or even quasi-contemporaneity) of the various features within Gorring-Morris's reconstructed "residential structure". According to Garrod, several of the burials clearly predate the paved surfaces above them. H41 and H43 lay close together against the edge of the rock-platform, and immediately underneath two of the slabs which made up the pavement. Thus, as Garrod herself puts it, "It is obvious that these skeletons must already have been in place when the kerb was laid down, and this suggests that the comparable burials containing bodies with shell head-dresses, ... which lay between the rock-edge and the lower end of the trench, are older than the

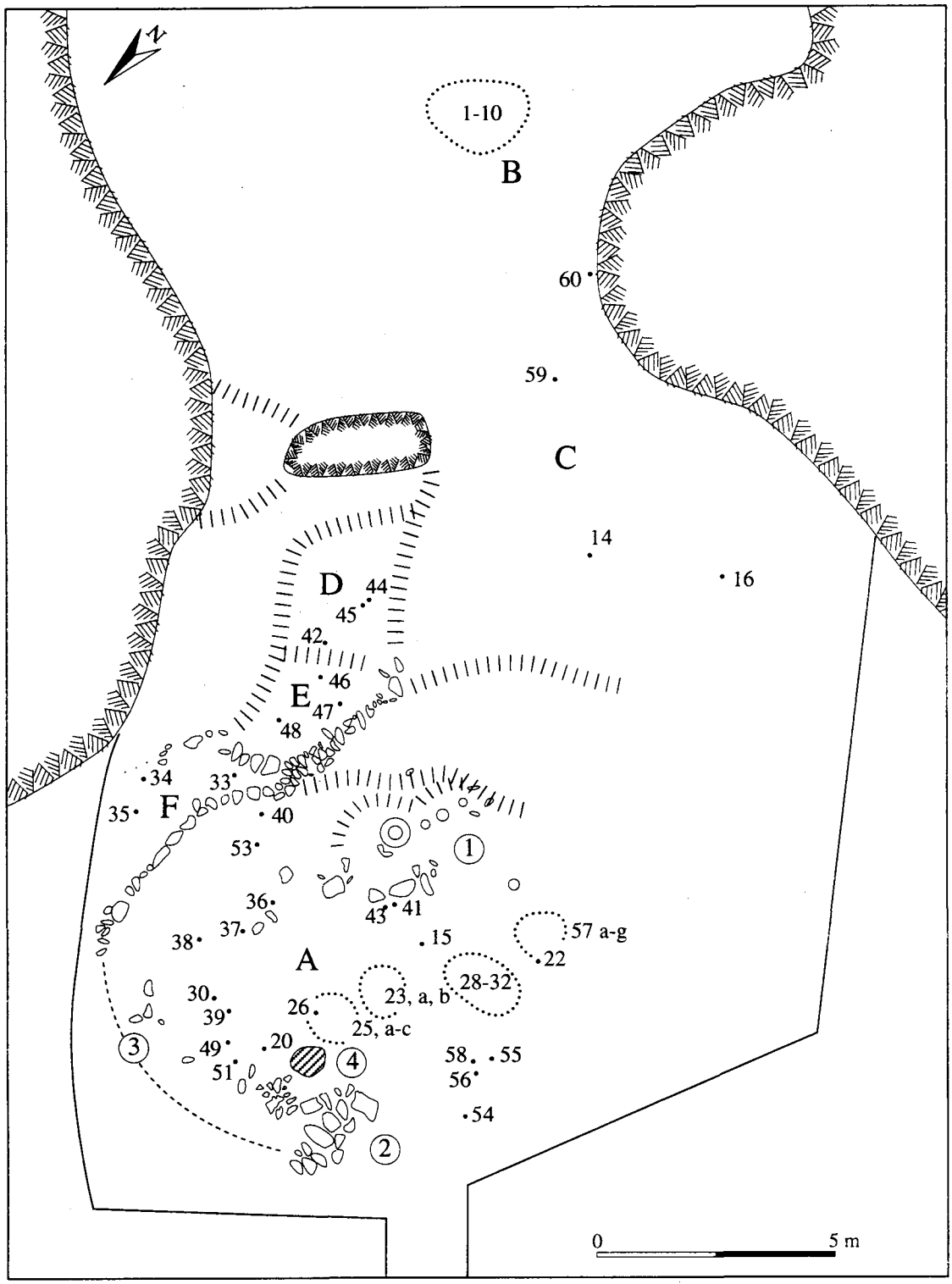


Fig. 81. Tentative re-interpretation of the Early Natufian occupation of Layer B2 on the terrace and in the cave of el-Wad based on Garrod's reports.

pavement and basins, and that if the pavement was at one time more extensive, and was afterwards destroyed, this was not done in order to admit these burials" (Garrod and Bate, 1937:17-18). Furthermore, the burials assigned by Gorring-Morris to the group burial/*cimetière* type (H23, H25, H28, H56?, H57) all came from a completely undisturbed Early Natufian deposit predating the basins and pavement, themselves of Early Natufian date (Fig. 82). "They can therefore be assigned with reasonable certainty to a fairly early stage of the Lower Natufian" (Garrod an Bate, 1937:19).

If we go by Garrod's observations, it seems highly probable that many of the terrace burials, and especially the group burials, belong to an earlier stage than the walls, basins, "kerb" and pavement. Moreover, in our view, it is not evident that the terrace wall, "kerb" and rock-cut basins, by themselves, belong to a single phase. According to Garrod, most of the stone slabs of the "kerb" were bedded in the red earth of Layer B2, which filled the trench to the NW. A few stones actually lay on the rock (Figs. 82, 83). She thus concluded that "the kerb had been made at a time when the terrace deposits covered the slope up to the edge of the rock platform, leaving the platform itself still exposed, and it is reasonable to suppose that the basins were cut at the same time, as they appear to be part of the same scheme" (Garrod and Bate, 1937:11). At least one other scenario is possible, namely that the levelled platform and rock-cut basins belong to an earlier stage than the "kerb" above them. The basins could have been associated with an early phase (or phases), such as that of the group burials. The "kerb", on the other hand, and possibly also the other pavement, could represent a later phase, either contemporaneous with or still earlier to the various walls. The "rough lump of limestone ... firmly wedged into Basin 2, and two blocks of the tabular variety into Basin 3" (Garrod and Bate, 1937:11), could have been used for the levelling of the pre-existing structures, before the kerb was laid down. If this is acceptable, then the Early Natufian sequence on the terrace can be roughly divided into two main phases: an early burial phase, probably related to the levelled platform and basins, and a later "residential" phase or phases, with the construction of paved structures and walls.

That even the architectural remains of this latter phase, may more adequately be attributed to different structures, at two to three different construction phases, represented by the northern pavement, the "kerb" and possibly also the "terrace wall", rather than to a single, large "residential structure", is further supported by the topography of the bedrock on the terrace (Figs. 81, 83). The height difference between the base of the closest wall and the levelled area near the eastern, rimmed basin is more then 50cm, with the basins and "kerb" situated at a somewhat lower step than the wall itself. This suggests again that these elevationally distinct features could easily have belonged to different construction phases. Moreover, Garrod's description of the terrace wall itself indicates two distinct modes of construction for its various parts (Fig. 84). "The lower or northern half of the wall was made up of a single row of blocks, varying roughly from 0.50m. to 0.70m. in diameter, set close together. Where the blocks were not large enough, a rough second course of smaller lumps was added to bring the average height up to 0.70m. In the upper or southern half of the wall no large blocks were used, and the many stones of irregular size and shape, piled together without regular course, had a higgledy-piggledy appearance..." (Garrod and Bate, 1937:11). In fact, the location and mode of construction of the southern part, "like that of the mortarless stone walls built by the Palestinian fellahin to-day" (idem) accords

Fig. 82. View to the NW of the excavations on the terrace, showing rock-cut basins, "kerb" and a pavement, with H.23 and H.25 *in situ*, May 1931.

Fig. 83. View to the NE of the terrace, showing rock-cut basins, "kerb", and rough stone wall. May, 1931 (The division on the stave = 0.50 m).

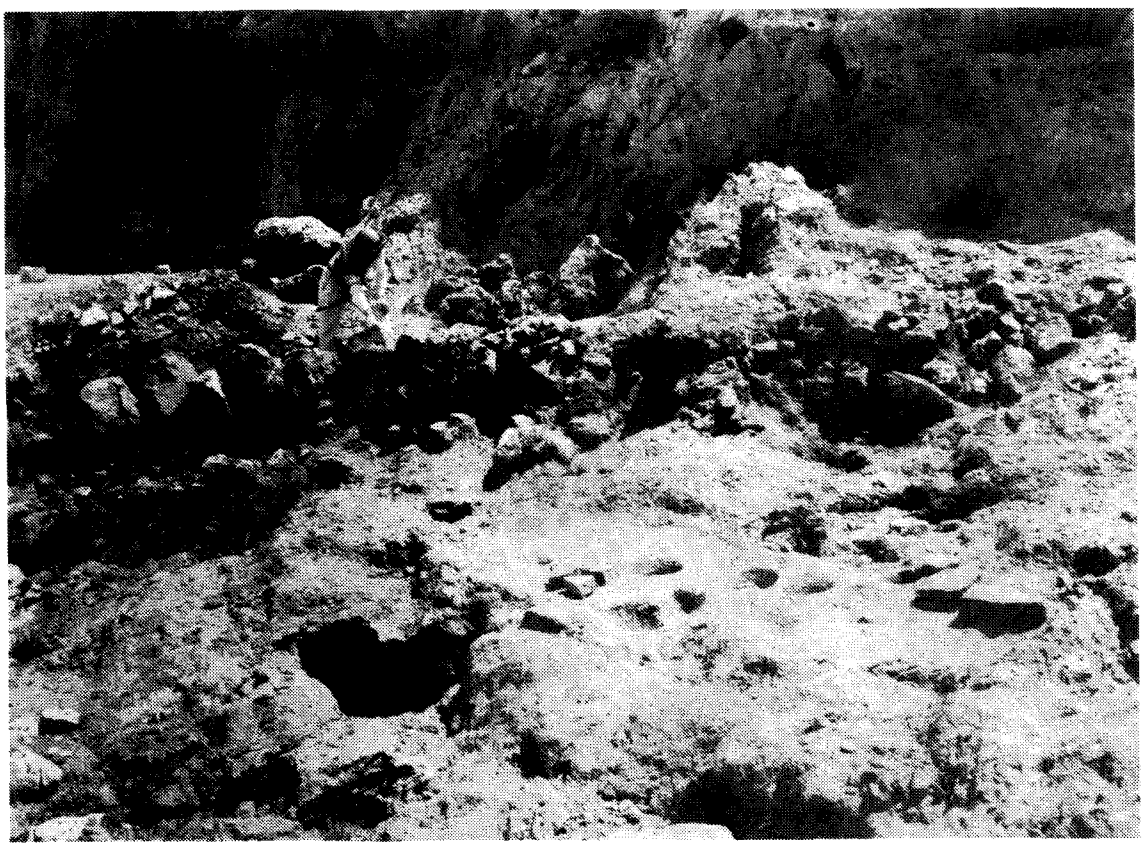


Fig. 84. A view to the SE of the terrace, showing rock-cut basins, "kerb", and rough stone wall. Note the two modes of construction of the different parts of the wall.

well with some kind of a terrace wall, which could have served as a basis for constructions on the higher terrace or for the protection of structures situated below it. The carefully laid stones of the northern part of the wall could have belonged to another, "residential" structure. Significantly, the northern pavement and the kerb, by themselves, clearly exhibit different modes of construction (Fig. 82).

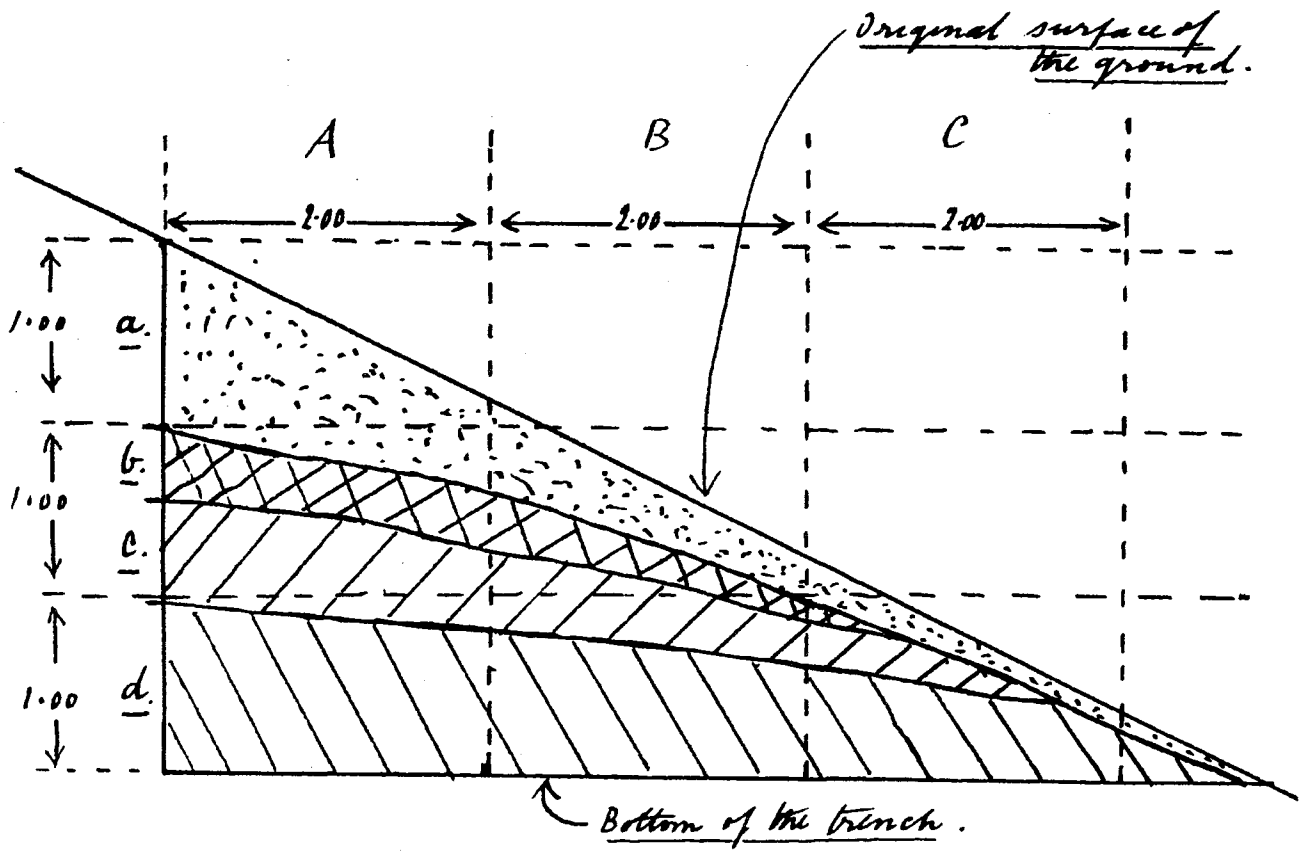
Because of the residual nature of the architectural remains, which could have belonged to different stages of construction, reuse or amendment, any attempt at reconstructing the terrace structures in greater detail remains highly speculative. Of course, if one assumes there ever was such a thing as a Natufian "blue print", one could correlate the discussed area of Early Natufian el-Wad with similar areas within other cave sites, such as Hayonim, with its round structures, between 2-2.5m in

diameter, as entrance area (O. Bar-Yosef, 1991b). As at el-Wad, they post-date an earlier phase, in which the cave seems to have been used for burial purposes, or else the preservation of structures is rather poor. A link between burial practices and basins/cup marks is also suggested by data from Hayonim (idem), as well as Eynan (Perrot, 1966; Perrot and Ladiray, 1988) and Erq el-Ahmar (Neuville, 1951).

However, there is one piece of very recent "evidence" that goes somewhat to remedy the situation, made all the more tantalising by the fact that it was summarily discarded by Garrod. Meant are the notes Lambert made during his trial excavation in the cave and on the terrace. Carefully reading through them, one cannot escape the impression that his detailed observations clearly imply the existence of Natufian "constructions". These include curved walls, paved areas, burials, hearths, and sometimes a "white limy substance" (Lambert, 1928:8). The description of the material he retrieved indicates typical Natufian flint, groundstone implements ("querns") and bone tool assemblages. Lambert seems to have been rather meticulous in the way he went about his excavation, witness his detailed descriptions and the accompanying drawings and photographs. Much of the excavated sediments were sifted, and many samples were taken for further analyses from various materials, including soil, charcoal, the "limy substance" and "lumps of red and yellow earth [ochre?]".

Lambert made five trenches, two on the ground in front of the cave, and three within the cave. Trench 1 was laid on the slope below the enclosed terrace in front of the cave, and is represented by the long, narrow, northern protrusion in Garrod's ground plan of the terrace (Fig. 3). Trench 2 was dug in the enclosed terrace near the cave (Fig. 5), along the C-D line (Fig 21). Trench 3 was laid along the A-B line, Trench 4 in Chamber II and the last sounding in Chamber VI.

Of special interest is Lambert's description of the finds from his Trench 1. The trench was initially 6 m long (Fig. 85), and was divided into three sections, A-C, from top to bottom, each two metres long. It was later extended southwards by 1m, towards the entrance of the cave. The sequence was divided into four units. The top layer (Unit a) contained "small flints" and Roman or Byzantine sherds "similar to flints and sherds found on the surface" (Lambert, 1928, 1:2; the description of each trench was numbered separately). In Unit b, the second layer, there was no late pottery, but many flints "including small crescents, and others of types found at Shukbeh" (Lambert, 1928, 1:2). This indicates that, in fact, Lambert was the first(!) to note the presence of a Natufian layer at el-Wad. The third layer, Unit c, contained many medium sized and small stones, but also a few large ones. It contained flints "of the same kinds" (Lambert, 1928, 1:2), and bone. Unit d, layer four, was characterized by large stones, flint implements and bones. For Section A, Lambert states that these "larger stones below, though rough, seemed to have been laid with some care, consideration being given to their shape; some were placed crosswise — i.e., crude headers and stretchers. There was a filling of smaller stones between the bigger ones" (Lambert, 1928, 1:4). The same was observed for Section C where "the big stones were left in place as it became evident as the work proceeded that they were not accidental but [deliberately placed] — part of a primitive construction" (Lambert, 1928, 1:3; square brackets in original). In the deeper Section A an additional feature seems to have emerged, as suggested by Lambert's description that "Under some of the larger stones ... were smaller stones which appeared to be arranged in a curve (continuing under the walls of



a. Surface soil with many small stones, flint chips, Byzantine or Roman sherds.

b. Larger numbers of small stones, with flint chips, quern stones, bone, sherds.

c. Few large (40 x 20 x 20) and more medium sized (20 x 10 x 10) stones, with small ones and flint implements and bone.

d. Large stones, with small ones between and below, flint implements and bone.

Fig. 85. Lambert's rough diagram showing a section of the stratification in his Trench 1.

the trench on either side) enclosing a small pocket of soil [see our Fig. 86] ... There were signs also of a circular arrangement ... among some of the smaller stones left in position in Section B. Here the larger stones were nearer to the surface, and in C. they were still nearer, indicating that the construction was on one plane in the parts excavated, and did not follow the present slope of the ground" (Lambert, 1928, 1: 4-5). The excavation in section C was probably not deep enough to unearth the underlying, small-stoned circular features, found in the more southern sections A and B. Lambert concludes that "It seemed better not to remove any more stones or to continue work on this trench until a clearance could be made from the top over a much larger area" (Lambert, 1928, 1:4). He reported similar "arrangements of stones" in trench 2 (Fig. 87), dug in the enclosed terrace near the cave (Fig. 5), extending some 6m northwards from a point 1m from C. on the plan (Fig. 21). The trench was about 1.5 to 2m deep. Trench 2 yielded two burials. Their exact stratigraphic position was not determined. "The arrangement of stones in trench 2. was similar to ... trench 1; but in the part of the trench where the burials were found the stones seem to be placed in a more haphazard way. The rain exposed further bones [in the side of the trench ...]. Excavation over a wider area will be necessary to clear the bones and to determine whether the layers of stones above them are undisturbed" (Lambert, 1928, 2:4; square brackets in original); large stones were placed horizontally above the first skull and at the sides.

Lambert's description not only fits well with Garrod's sequence of the terrace, but is even more detailed. Lambert divides her Layer A into two phases: historical layers (Unit a), and a "sub-recent" phase (Unit b) with no late pottery. Given the finds from the recent layer in our own excavations, the latter could have belonged to the Neolithic, Chalcolithic and probably also Early Bronze. In fact, the small crescents he mentions in his report may well represent the Final Natufian later identified by Valla et al. (1986) in the lower part of Garrod's layer A. Lambert's Unit c most probably represents Garrod's layer B1, his Unit d, with its distinct architectural features, Garrod's Early Natufian (Layer B2). An additional phase, the one with the circular arrangements of smaller stones, emerges at the bottom of Lambert's trench, which may have been Early Natufian or older still. In no place did Lambert reach bedrock. Lambert's observations are remarkably coherent and detailed, especially if we consider the swiftness with which his excavation had to be carried out. At the end of the first day of excavation, for example, Trench 1 was 2.6m, 1.6m and 1m deep in sections A, B and C respectively (Fig. 85).

The excavation of Trench 3 is described in equally minute detail (Lambent, 1928, 3). The trench was excavated along the A-B line, in Chamber I of the cave (Fig. 21), from the rough stone wall inwards. It maximum extension was 7m from point B. The trench was at first divided into two sections, A and B (section A being nearest to the point B on plan), each two metres long. Two additional sections, C and D, were added later, since "at various stages during the work it became necessary to widen and lengthen this trench" (Lambert, 1928, 3:1). In section C, at 4 metres from B, there was a large rock, probably the one marked within Lambert's sounding in Garrod's section of the cave (Fig. 3b).

The upper layer, to a depth of 20-25cm., "on and just below the surface of the cave floor" (Lambert, 1928, 3:1), contained large numbers of small stones, with some Arab and Byzantine or Roman sherds, and "some painted sherds" (Lambert, 1928,

a

b

Fig. 86. Lambert's Trench 1 showing circular arrangement of stones: (a) a general view; (b) view after rain.

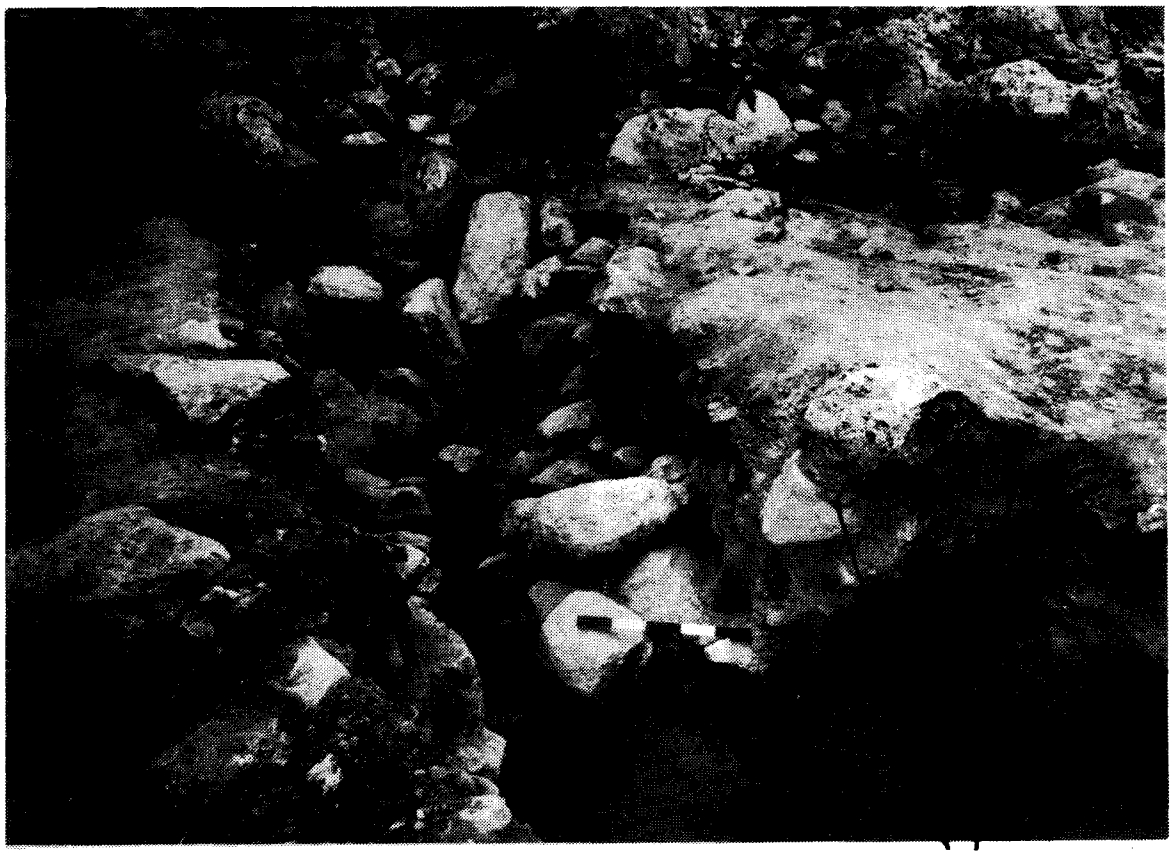


Fig. 87. Lambert's Trench 2, with the position of burials.

3:1). Below the upper 20cm., larger stones were found in section B, with under them flint implements and quern stones but no pottery. The layers below these recent levels "had the appearance of being undisturbed" (Lambert, 1928, 3:3). At 30cm below the surface, medium-sized stones, measuring 30x20x20cm, were encountered (Figs. 80, 88a). Bigger stones (65x45x45cm) occurred at 50cm below the surface (Fig. 88b). Once more Lambert states quite clearly that "the arrangement of stones was on the same lines as in trenches 1 and 2" (Lambert, 1928, 3:2). Deeper still, and separated from the arrangements of large stones by some 20cm of smaller stones, a hearth was found. It was bordered by stones (Fig. 88c), and contained blackened earth and traces of charcoal. The trench was widened to enable its exposure, whereby Lambert made sure that "before widening, the parts excavated were covered with canvas so that earth from the upper layers should not fall in" (Lambert, 1928, 3:3). The westward widening of the trench led to the exposure of a wall, most probably belonging to the phase of large stones that ran northwards in an apparently curving line towards the barrier of stones blocking the entrance to the cave (Figs. 89, 90). Surprisingly, though she does not mention it in her final report, Garrod was aware of Lambert's wall, which was left in place at the bottom of Trench 3, and she states "A row of limestone blocks ran

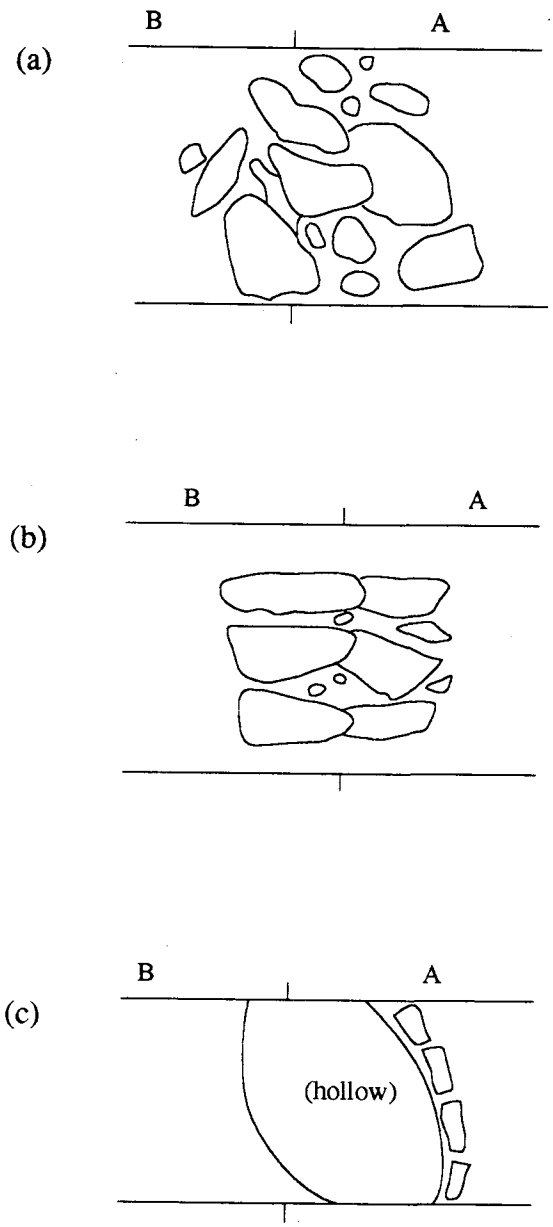
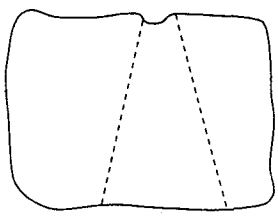


Fig. 88. Structures from Lambert's Trench 3: (a) medium sized stones; (b) large stones; (c) hearth.

Fig. 89. The Early Natufian wall in Lambert's Trench 3.

Fig. 90. The Early Natufian wall in Lambert's Trench 3. View from the west.

across it [the trench] approximately from N. to S., as though to make a rough wall or enclosure. There was no trace of a second course ... The wall ended against a large fallen block (X)" (Fig. 79; Garrod, 1930c: A1). Underneath the wall, at a depth of 1.3m, a layer of smaller stones (Fig. 91), probably similar to the one encountered further to the east, yielded "a piece of black polished bone carved in the form of a (deer's?) head" (Lambert, 1928, 3:7; Fig. 56a). "At the same level was a seam of red earth and white limy substance, of which samples were taken, running across the trench" (Lambert, 1928, 3:7). Charcoal and charcoaled earth, similar to the finds further east, were found under stones x, y (Fig. 80), with in turn "some reddish soil" underneath. Stone y (*recte* x?) "had a conical hole ground through the middle and stood with the narrower opening uppermost" (Lambert, 1928, 3:7):



Secondary use of groundstone implements was indicated also by the incorporation of a quern fragment into the wall (Fig. 89). The finds excavated in the lower parts of the trench are typical Natufian and include quern stones, bone needles, and a skull, found at a depth of 1.8 m below the surface "in what appeared to be a small circle of stones, with a quern near [to the south of it]" (Lambert, 1928, 3:9). "The first three stones in the wall (counting from the rock) were then removed ... to facilitate clearance round the skull. Under these stones there was more charcoal, red earth and whitish substance" (Lambert, 1928, 3:10; parentheses in original). Furthermore, from under the stones removed from the wall came "a large bone with a hole bored in it [the "baton de Commandement"]" (Lambert, 1928, 3:12; square brackets in original; Fig. 56b). Then the skull was removed, "loose fragments being collected and the remainder consolidated with paraffin wax ... the direction of the rest of the skeleton could not be followed without moving a large number of stones and widening the trench, which was impossible owing to the fact that the excavation had to be closed" (Lambert, 1928, 3:12). The skeleton turned out to be the first of a group of ten (H. Group 1-10) later excavated by Garrod (Garrod and Bate, 1937) who writes "Lambert had removed head, but body passed under his rough wall" (Garrod, 1930c: B17). In the third section of the trench (section C), excavation did not proceed below the layer of large stones. Two subsequent drawings of this layer, at depths of 0.9 and 1.4m, were given by Lambert (Fig. 92). They provide a detailed description of the stones, between two large rocks, practically protruding to the surface, some 90cm apart (the rock in the upper part of Fig. 92 is the one given in Fig. 3, the second rock was unearthed further east). A fragment of a "circular altar(?) of black basalt, with three legs - originally four - was found at a depth of 1.1 metres [midway between the two rocks, near the beginning of Section D]" (Lambert, 1928, 3:5; square brackets in original; Fig. 93b). It is probably a Chalcolithic chalice, intrusive from the upper layer.

Fig. 91. A layer of small stones underneath the Natufian wall, in Lambert's Trench 3. The incised sickle haft (Fig. 56:1) was discovered within the large stones of the wall.

Like the terrace, it would appear that the cave sequence contained two main Natufian construction levels: arrangements of medium-sized stones, and overlying walls built of large stones. Here, too, an additional, earlier phase emerges. This lower Early Natufian phase yielded the finest art objects found in the cave to date. In spite of these similarities, a direct correlation between the terrace and cave deposits would have been difficult to establish even during excavation, mainly because of the stone wall across the cave entrance which separated the two excavation areas and which was not dismantled until the last, 1932-1933, season (Garrod, 1934). Again, as in the terrace, the Natufian sequence of the cave was topped by two phases of recent material.

It is also worth emphasizing that, in view of Lambert's observations, the suggested depth of Garrod's Layer A in Chamber I (Fig. 3b) seems much exaggerated, and that most of it should probably be considered Natufian. Lambert's "constructions" and associated material are reported from as high as 25-30 cm. below surface, where "the layers had the appearance of being undisturbed" (Lambert, 1928:3). The depth of Trench 3 in Chamber I is 1.8 m. These observations accord well with the proposed layout of Early Natufian el-Wad, and make it reminiscent of that of Hayonim where similar structures and materials were found. As at Hayonim, Lambert's observations seem to indicate at least two construction phases within the Early Natufian: an earlier phase with relatively smaller stones in curved lines (similar to Hayonim Locus 3?), and a later stage with constructions made with more massive stones.

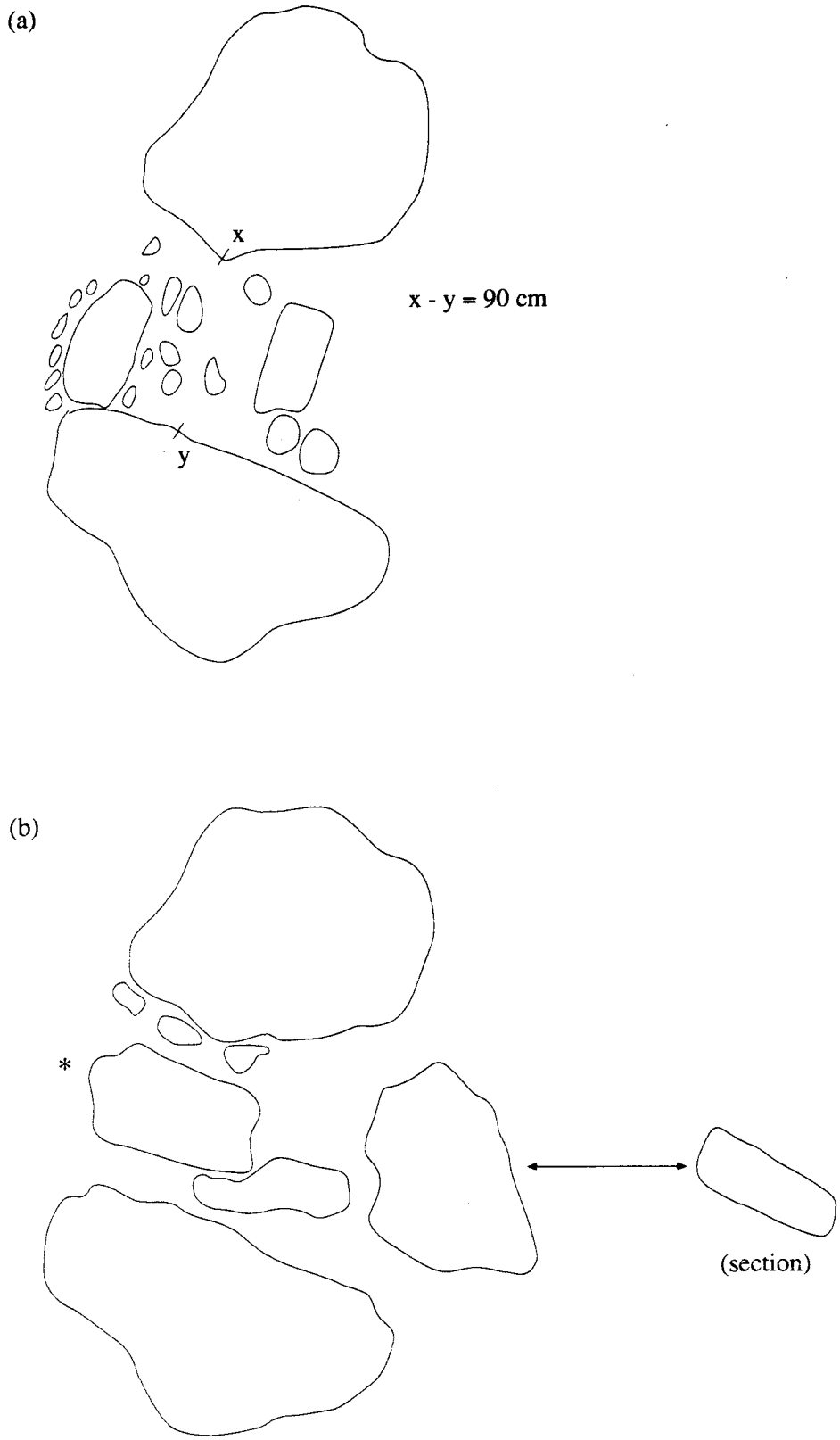


Fig. 92. Arrangements of large stones in section C of Lambert's Trench 3. The * marks the place were the "altar" (a basalt chalice?) was found, at a depth of 1.1 m.

Another observation concerns the remnants of breccia that were found on the terrace bedrock. Garrod noted that "the characteristic material of layer B was a dry red earth, growing tougher towards the base, and forming in places a thin layer of hard breccia in contact with the rock" (Garrod and Bate, 1937:10). Patches of what seems to be a thin layer of breccia were observed by us in the south-eastern, higher part of the terrace, beyond areas E, F of Fig. 81. However, we recently spotted a block of thicker breccia, containing flints and bones, east of Garrod's terrace wall, roughly on the easternmost limit of her excavation. In general appearance it resembles that of Middle Palaeolithic breccias from other caves in the area, for example Jamal Cave (Weinstein-Evron and Tsatskin, 1995), Skhul (Garrod and Bate, 1937), and from our Chamber III, but excavation is required before a specific cultural/chronological attribution can be made. Yet, if the remains are found to represent Middle Palaeolithic breccia, this may very well mean that, during Middle Palaeolithic times, el-Wad Cave extended further to the north, and was furnished with an additional, outer chamber. This hypothetical chamber probably occupied the higher part of the terrace.

If indeed such a chamber existed in Natufian times, it would certainly have influenced their use of the cave, which then also means that we shall have to reconsider our perception of el-Wad, especially as to the subdivision between its day-lit and dark portions. The existence of this additional chamber is supported by the well-developed flowstone which can be found on the higher part of the terrace, near the entrance to the cave. Such flowstone could have been formed within but not outside the cave (Mira Bar-Mattews and Avner Ayalon, personal communication, 1996).

To sum up, despite the fact that it is impossible to reconstruct exactly the layout of the Natufian settlement at el-Wad, the remains found so far, and their topographical setting, conform well to the "terraced" concept, i.e., terrace-like layout, displayed by certain other Natufian sites. Natufian settlements or villages on terraces have been found at Nahal Oren (Stekelis and Yizraely, 1963), Hayonim (Henry and Leroi-Gourhan, 1976; Valla et al. 1989) and Eynan (Perrot, 1966; Valla, 1991). In the first two, the Natufian complex included a cave, while in the latter there is no cave to occupy or use and the settlement lies on the eastern slopes of the Upper Galilee, facing the Hula Valley.

Another apparently unique characteristic of the Natufian of the Mount Carmel Caves is the use of all other caves within the same cliff. Even though el-Wad was undoubtedly the major element within this complex, slight evidence for Natufian occurrences are reported from Tabun and Skhul (Garrod and Bate, 1937) and probably also existed in Jamal (Fig. 93). We are in the dark as to the specific use of these caves, but it was probably part of the ensemble of activities carried out within the composite site. The same could probably be suggested for earlier cultures and other sites: for example, in Nahal Oren, some 5km north of Nahal Me'arot, Abu Usba Cave (Stekelis and Haas, 1952) may have formed a complex with Oren Cave (Stekelis, 1942, Stekelis and Yizraely, 1963).

The picture that emerges from this "flight of fancy" is of a rather large Natufian settlement (Figs. 93, 94) which probably included many of the typical architectural/ sociological characteristics observed in other sites (for which the picture is probably incomplete also): dwelling areas in the cave and on the terrace, burial activities on the terrace and in the cave entrance, dumping area at the rear. It seems logical to suppose

that Chamber III served as a dumping area only for activities performed in the cave itself with other dumping areas in existence elsewhere within the site. The other caves, higher up on the cliff and better situated as observation points, for example, were in use as well (Figs. 93, 94).

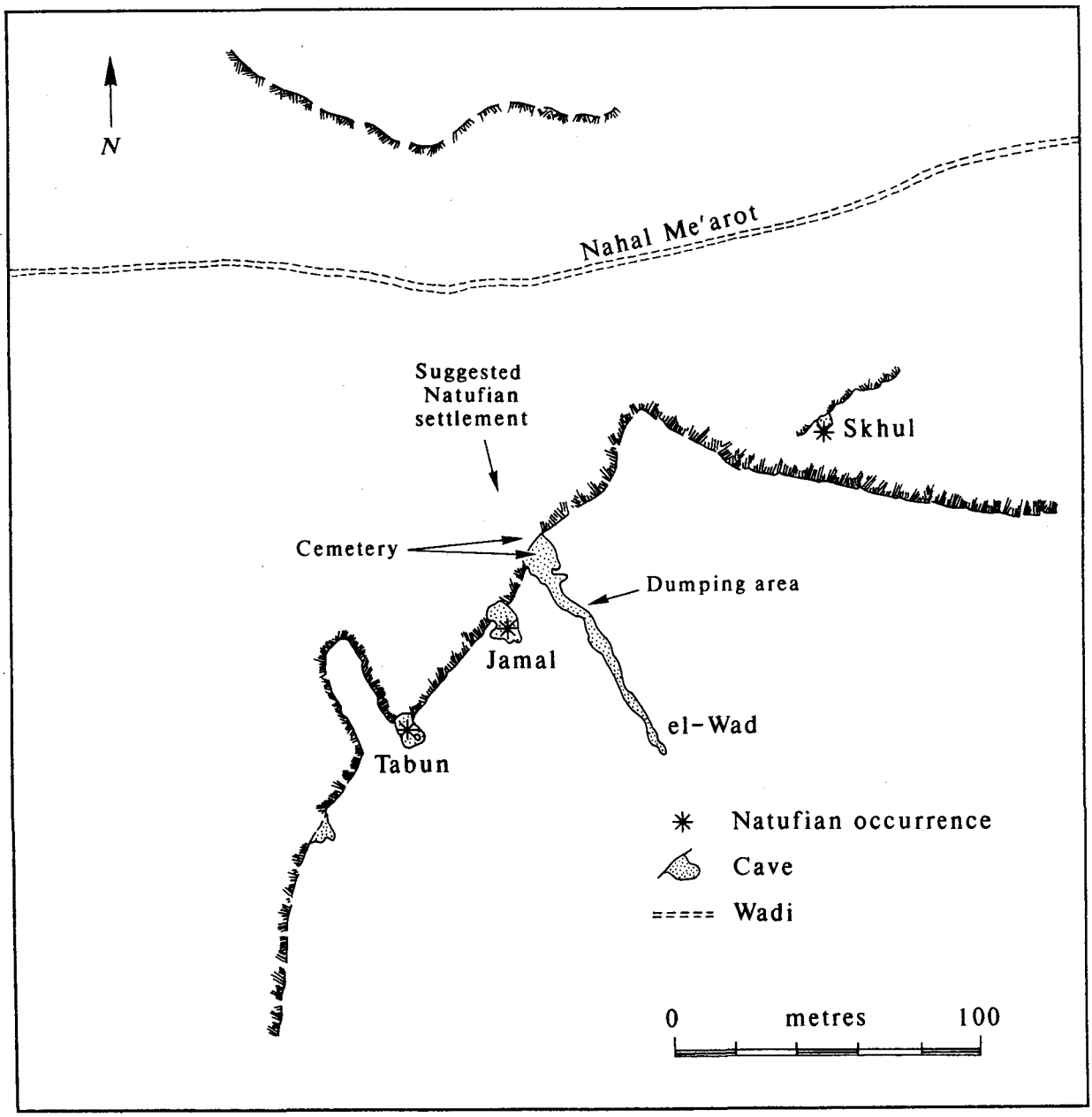


Fig. 93. A suggested general layout for the Natufian site at el-Wad.

Fig. 94. General view of the caves at the close of excavations, 1934: 1. el-Wad; 2. Jamal; 3. Tabun; 4. Natufian wall; 5. rock-cut basins