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# THE CONSORTIUM FOR THE BETHSAIDA EXCAVATIONS PROJECT

LICENSE G-46/2014

## REPORT ON THE 2014 EXCAVATION SEASON

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FISHER, GREGORY C. JENKS

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FIGURE 1, SATIRE ON A HELLENISTIC OIL LAMP



FIGURE 2, A SMALL SIX PETAL FLORAL SILVER DECORATION



Figure 3, TYRE, TYCHE WEARING TURRETED CROWN, VEIL, AND EARRING, BEHIND PALM BRANCH, 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY BCE- 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY CE.

## *The Expedition*

The 2014 excavation season at Bethsaida took place during May 18<sup>th</sup> to July 5<sup>th</sup>. One hundred and twenty five faculty, students and volunteers took part in the expedition. The expedition was housed for four weeks at Kibbutz Hukok and two weeks at Kibbutz Ginosar. We are very grateful for the extraordinary hospitality that we have had in the two places. The following faculty students and volunteers took part in the expedition.

## *Faculty (In alphabetical order)*

Dr. Mark Appold, co-director, Truman State University

Dr. Rami Arav, Director of the Excavations, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Senior Fellow  
Zinnman Institute of Archaeology

Dr. Miriam Belmaker, zooarchaeologist, University of Tulsa

Dr. Toni Fisher, Area T Supervisor, Zooarchaeologist

Dr. Richard Freund, Project Director, University of Hartford

Dr. Gloria Epps, Area C supervisor, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Dr. Gerome Hall, co-director, University of San Diego  
Dr. Gregory C. Jenks, co-director, Area T Supervisor, Bethsaida numismatic curator, St. Francis  
Theological College, Brisbane Australia  
Dr. Harry Jol, Geophysics, University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire  
Dr. Stefi Keim, co-director, University of Munich Germany  
Dr. Heinz-Wolfgang Kuhn, co-director, University of Munich Germany  
Dr. Kate Raphael, Excavations Director, Area A South Supervisor, Independent Scholar  
Dr. Nicolae Roddy, co-director, Creighton University  
Dr. Patrick Russell, co-director, Sacred Heart School of Theology  
Dr. Carl Savage, Excavations Director, Area A West Supervisor, Drew University

### *Staff*

Dr. Donald T. Ariel, numismatics, Israel Antiquities Authority  
Ariel Berman, Israel Antiquities Authority, medieval numismatics  
Orna Cohen, Conservation  
Maha Darawsha, University of Connecticut  
Christina Etzrodt, Cartography  
Charleen Green Pottery restoration  
DreAnna Hadash, Artist  
Hanan Shafir, Photography  
Bernard Trams, Pottery restoration

### *Students from the following Institutions*

University of Tulsa (OK)  
University of Nebraska at Omaha  
St. Francis Theological College (Australia)  
Truman State University (MO)  
Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology (WI)  
Drew University (NJ)  
University of Hartford at Connecticut  
University of San Diego (CA)  
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

### *Consortium members Class of 2014*

University of Nebraska at Omaha  
University of Hartford,  
Drew University  
Wartburg College  
St. Francis Theological College

University of San Diego  
Truman State  
Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology  
University of Tulsa  
Munich Germany

*The following Volunteers are acknowledged for digging at Bethsaida for five seasons and more*

Barry Davis  
Emmit and Kelen Wilson  
Karin Nobbs  
Aureila Roddy  
Clare James-Jenks

## *The Excavation*

A total of 55 loci were excavated in 2014 at Bethsaida.

Area	location	Grid	Number of loci
<b>A South</b>	South of Stratum V city gate	H,I 59, 60 L,M 58,59	24
<b>A West</b>	West of Stratum V city gate	F,G, 58, 59	19
<b>C</b>	At the north of the site	D, 29; ZZ, 28,29	5
<b>T</b>	At the southern slope of the site	B, C, D, 68, 69, 70	7
<b>total</b>			55

Since Bethsaida is located below Sea Level, all elevation numbers are negative.

### ***Area A South***

Area Supervisor: Dr. Kate Raphael

### ***Stratum VI c. 1000 – c.920 BCE***

In previous years we have selected the lower date (850 BCE) on the C14 scale for dating the destruction of the granary of Stratum VI as has been published (Arav and Boaretto 2009, 203; Boaretto et al. 2005; Sharon et al. 2007). This date is the least probable; most scholars would follow the 1 sigma results of 68% probability. We maintained this date for a few important reasons. 1) There is no Philistine pottery found at Bethsaida. Philistine pottery perhaps reached by trade was found at nearby site such as Tel Kinorot. 2). Stratum VI at Bethsaida did not yield pottery similar to early 10<sup>th</sup> century sites such as Tel Hadar and Tel Kinorot. However, we have sent samples from Emmer wheat found in the granary of Stratum VI to Beta labs in Miami and obtained similar results to the result Wietzman Institute in Israel retrieved from the same granary. Therefore we hold now the date c. 920 BCE as the date of the destruction of Stratum VI.

Here are the Beta results:

Conventional radiocarbon age – 2780 ±30 BP

2 Sigma calibrated results 95% probability Cal BC 1005 to 840 (Cal BP 2955 to 2790)

Intercept of radiocarbon age with calibration curve Cal BC 920 (Cal BP 2870)

1 Sigma calibrated results 68% probability Cal BC 940 to 900 (Cal BP 2890 to 2850)

A copy of Beta letter is at the end of this report.

*Loci report:*



FIGURE 4 LOCUS 1205, NOTICE THE CHANNEL LEADING FROM INSIDE THE TOWN TO THE RAVINE.

Loci 1201, 1205, 1207, 1209,

Grid: M59

Elevation: 169.48 to 173.16



FIGURE 5, LOCI 1201, 1205, 1209



These loci are on the southern continuation of the outer city wall (W1185). The purpose of excavating there was to see whether the wall continues or not. The excavations reveal that the wall does not continue and instead debris of mud bricks, stones and collapse filled up 2.5 m. of debris. At the bottom of this collapse excavations reached a mud packed floor, shards of large jar, and a drainage channel, one meter wide and were so far discovered to the length of 3 meters. Some of the stones of the drainage channel were removed. The channel was built with field stones and covered with large stones. No finds were discovered thus far in the channel. Next to the channel there were remains of pavement.

It is very plausible that this is the gate of Stratum VI. Channels were found in number of gates from the Iron Age including Gezer, Hazor, Megiddo and recently in Kh. Qeiyafa.



FIGURE 6, LOCUS 1205, THE TOP OF THE DRAINAGE CHANNEL





FIGURE 7, LOCI 1205 AND 1207, SEGMENTS OF THE FLOOR AND PAVEMENT ARE SEEN NEAR THE SCALE STICK. THE CHANNEL LID STONES ARE PARTIALLY REMOVED. THIS IS PERHAPS THE PASSAGEWAY TO THE GATE OF STRATUM VI.



FIGURE 8, POTTERY FROM LOCUS 1205

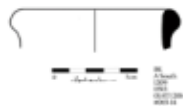


FIGURE 9, LOCUS 1205, AN IRON AGE IIA JAR.

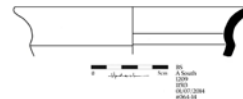


FIGURE 10, LOCUS 1205, CARINATED BOWL



FIGURE 11, LOCUS 1205, AN IRON AGE II JUG

## *Stratum V, 950 – 732 BCE*

### Locus 1210, outer city wall

While the northern end of the outer city wall was found to be constructed in Stratum VI (grid N 57), the southern extend of this wall, widen slightly from 2.1 m to 2.3 meters and was built in stratum V and presumably on the ruins of Stratum VI gate. Indications leading to this conclusion derive from the high elevation of the foundation of this wall at the southern extend.

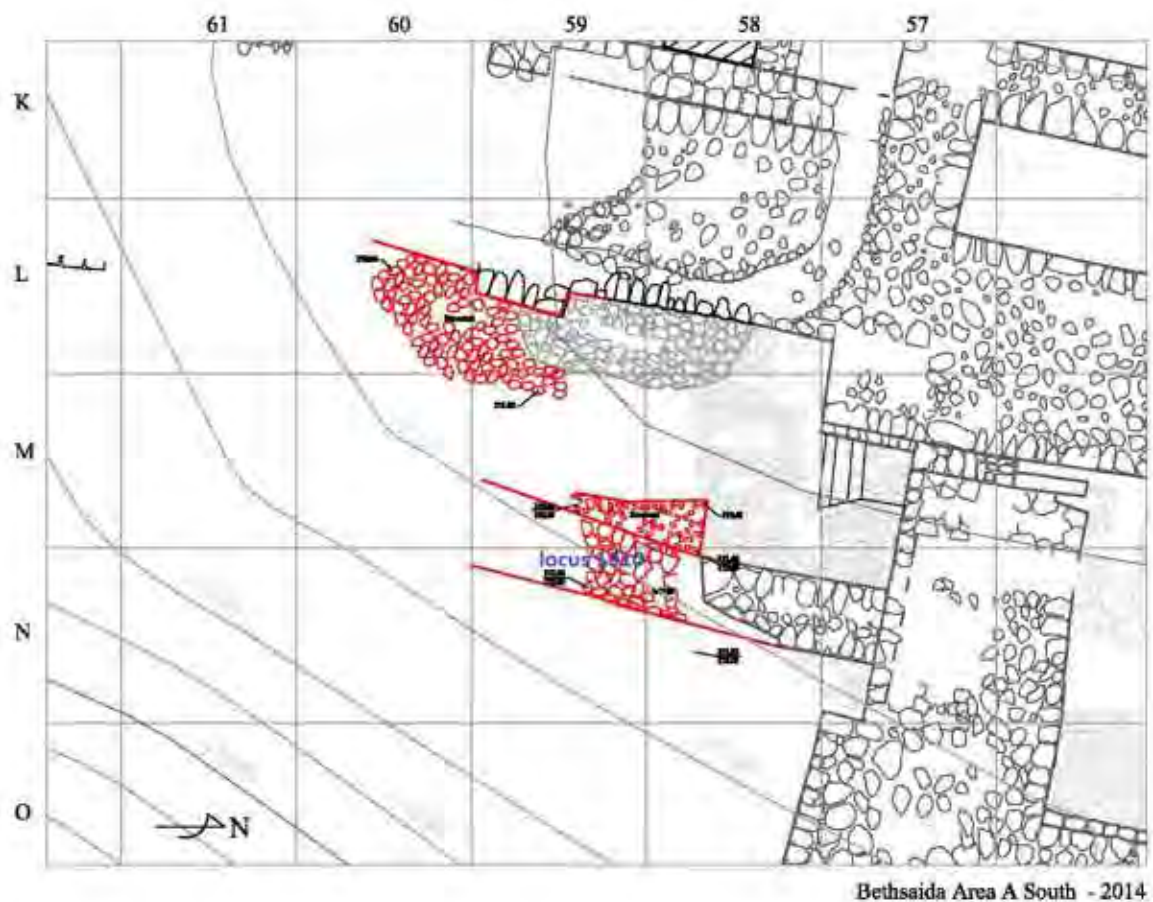


FIGURE 12, LOCUS 1910



FIGURE 13, NORTH OF LOCUS 1209 IS LOCUS 1210. NOTICE THE "FLOATING" STONES OF W1185 IN THEIR SOUTHER EXTEND.



FIGURE 14, LOCI 1209, 1210. THE CHANNEL IN THE LEFT OF THE PICTURE AND THE "FLOATING" WOUTHERN EXTED OF W1185

Loci: 1197, 1200, paved room

Grid H 59

Elevations: Opening 169.69; Pavement: 170.02



FIGURE 15, LOCUS 1200, A POSSIBLE CULT AREA

This locus is situated west of the storage house and is bordered by W1190 in the east, a short wall at the north, the balk of the dig at the west and debris at the south. Locus 1197 contained mixture of pottery from the Mamluk period down to the Iron Age. Locus 1200 consists of large boulder, a pavement at the bottom and the finds on that floor. The southern end of the pavement is still unknown to us and consists of one large standing boulder, perhaps a stele and boulders surrounding it.

The finds from Locus 1200 contain large amount of animal bones and pottery dating from Iron Age IIb. The finds may indicate that this room serves for a certain cultic purposes.





FIGURE 16, LOCUS 1197 BEFORE REMOVING THE LARGE BOULDERS.



FIGURE 17, LOCUS 1200, NOTICE THE PAVEMENT, THE LARGE UP STANDING STONE AND THE LARGE BOULDERS.



FIGURE 18, NOTICE THE PAVEMENT AND THE UPSTANDING STONE.





FIGURE 20, CROSS MARK ON A HANDLE



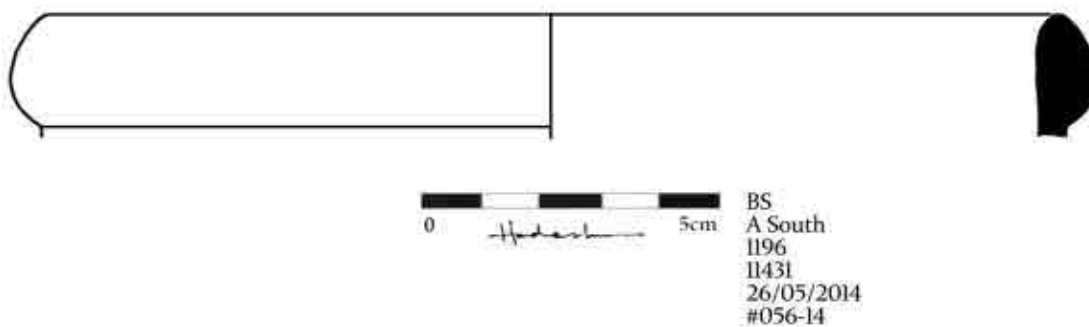


FIGURE 21, LOCUS 1196, JAR

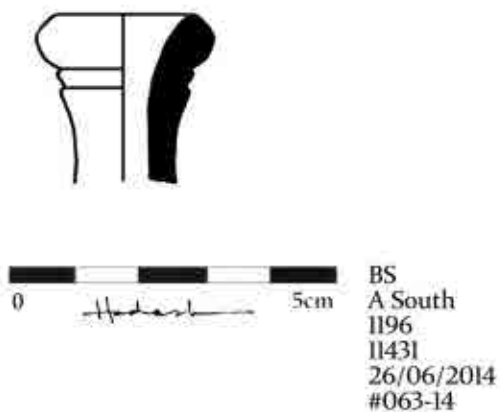


FIGURE 22, LOCUS 1196, DECANTER

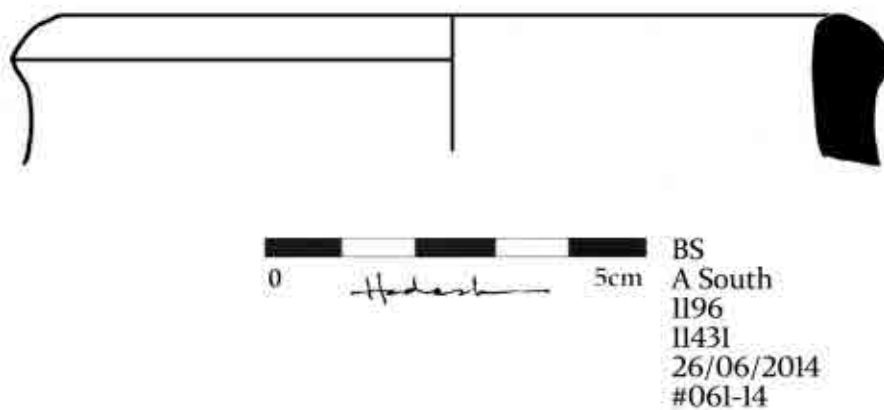


FIGURE 23, LOCUS 1196, JAR





FIGURE 24, LOCUS 1200 BONES OF CARPID AND CANINE

Loci: 1202, 1204, 1206

Grid: H 59

Elevation: 169.68 – 169.86

These loci are located west of W 1194 and east of W1190. A few patches of hard packed dirt floor were found.

Part of W1194 continues south from the southwest corner of the storage house. It seems to be either a blocking of entrance or high steps to this passage.



FIGURE 25, LOCI 1202, 1204, 1206



FIGURE 26, LOCI 1202, 1204, 1206

Loci: 1215, 1216, 1219, 1220

Grid: H, I, 60

Elevation: top soil 169.97 – bottom: 170.14

These loci are located south of the paved room and were found to contain debris of large boulders. Pottery and finds from these loci contain Hellenistic to Iron Age II shards. Since the majority of the shards are Hellenistic/Roman it is possible that these loci were in use during the Hellenistic/Roman period.



FIGURE 27, LOCI 1215, 1216, 1219, 1220



FIGURE 28, LOCI, 1215, 1216, 1219, 1220, NOTICE SCATTERED LARGE BOULDERS.





FIGURE 29, POTTERY FROM LOCUS 2015 INCLUDE MAMLUK GLAZED SHARDS, HELLENISTIC BLACK GLAZED, HELLENISTIC COOKING POTS AND JARS.



FIGURE 30, LOCUS 2019, NOTICE MIXTURE OF ROMAN JAR, IRON AGE II AND REDDISH BROWN LINES ON WHITE SLIP SHARD.

## ***Cited Bibliography***

Arav and Boaretto 2009

R. Arav and E. Boaretto, Radiocarbon dating of the City Gate, in: Arav, *Bethsaida A city by the North Shore of the Sea of Galilee*, edited: R. A. Freund, Volume VI, Kirksville MO.

Boaretto et al 2005

Dating the Iron Age I/II transition in Israel. First inter-comparison results. *Radiocarbon* 47/1:39-55

Sharon et al 2007

Report on the first Stage of the Iron Age Dating Project in Israel: Supporting a Low Chronology, *Radiocarbon*, Vol. 49, Nr 1, 1-46



## ***Area A West***

Area supervisor: Dr. Carl Savage

*Stratum II (Hellenistic Roman Periods)*



FIGURE 31, LOCUS 2262

### **Locus 2262**

Grid F 59,

Elevation 167.92 to 168.86

This locus is an area between two excavated areas at Area A West. After the top soil was removed scattered stones and boulders were discovered at the locus. The finds contain a mixture of medieval, Roman and Hellenistic pottery.

Among the special finds was a small silver six petal floral decoration. The back side indicated that it was attached to something else, perhaps a garment.

Another special find was a bone handle for an unknown tool.

Perhaps the most outstanding discovery was an intact Hellenistic oil lamp depicting a face of a bearded man with coffee beans eyes and large nose. The figure may be identified with Dionysus or Satire.



FIGURE 32, LOCUS 23655, NOTICE POTTER FROM GLAZED MAMLUK TO ROMAN COOKING POT



FIGURE 33, SILVER SIX PETAL FLORAL DECORATION



FIGURE 34, A BONE HANDLE



FIGURE 35, A SATYRE OR DIONYSUS ON A HELLENISTIC OIL LAMP, A PICTURE USING RTI TECHNOLOGY.



FIGURE 36, HELLENISTIC OIL LAMP



FIGURE 37, LOCUS 2262, COOKING POT, NOTICE THE TWISTED TYRIAN HANDLE OF A JAR, THE FIRST LEFT IN THE MIDDLE ROW.



FIGURE 38, LOCUS 2262



FIGURE 39, LOCUS 2262, SPATTERED WASH WARE JUGLET, NECK, AND HANDLE BROKE IN ANTIQUITY.



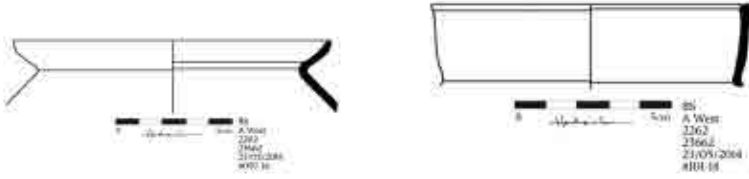


FIGURE 40, COOKING POTS

## Locus 2263

Grid F 59

Elevations: 168.34 – 169.96

The locus consisted of modern Syrian military disturbances. After removing 1.7 m of debris without ancient context a large metal sheet was discovered. This indicates that the entire locus is totally disturbed. The pottery retrieved from this disturbance included shards from the middle ages to the Hellenistic period. Among the distinct small finds was a shard of an “Herodian” oil lamp.



FIGURE 41, LOCUS 2263, MODERN SYRIAN DISTURBANCE AND FILL



FIGURE 42, LOCUS 2263, MODERN SYRIAN DISTURBANCE, NOTICE THE METAL SHEET.

## Locus 2264

Grid: G 59

Elevations: 168.37 – 168.63

This locus number was erroneously given to this location, it has been used for a different location (H 56) in the 2013 season.

It consists of an irregular room, containing packed dirt floor between W1191, W 1188, W1190.

Pottery included shards dating from the Roman period to the middle ages. The room dates apparently from the Roman period.



## Locus 2265

Grid: G 59

Elevations: 168.84 – 169.06

The locus is situated west of W1191, south of an ash layer and below locus 2258.

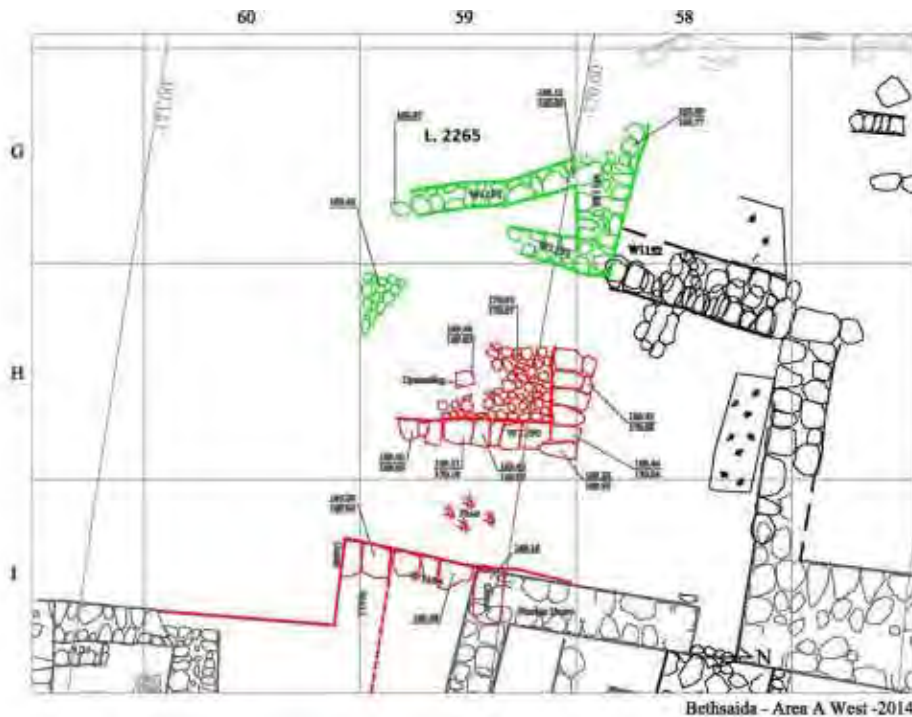


FIGURE 45, LOCUS 2265

The most outstanding discoveries from this locus were two coins, one Ptolemaic and the other Herodian. The Herodian was minted in 85/4 CE by Agrippa II, the last Herodian. This is perhaps also the last coin of the Herodians. This discovery reinforces our conclusion that Bethsaida together with many other places in Galilee and contrary to Gamla, did not take part in the revolt against Agrippa II and the Romans.



FIGURE 46, LOCUS 2265, AGRIPPA II, 84/5 CE, THE EMPEROR DORMITIAN, SEE COIN REPORT.



FIGURE 47, LOCUS 2265, AGRIPPA II 84/5 CE





FIGURE 48, PTOLEMAIC COIN

## Locus 2266

Grid: G, 57

Elevations: 168.46 – 169.15

This locus situated near W1193 and W1170, was erroneously given the same number as a locus used in 2013 and located in H 56.

The locus contained remnants of walls scattered stones and modern disturbances. Pottery included Roman and medieval shards. Among the modern coins noteworthy is an Ottoman coin of Selim III (1789 – 1809) minted in Egypt and used as an ornament by the local Bedouins.



FIGURE 49, LOCUS 2266, FROM TOP TO BOTTOM, GLOBULAR COOKING POT, EVERTED RIM CASSEROLE AND MEGARIAN SHARD.



FIGURE 50, LOCUS 2266, SHARDS INCLUDE, GALILEAN BOWL, COOKING POTS,



FIGURE 51, TYRE, 98/97 BCE-84/85 CE



FIGURE 52, LOCUS 2266

### Locus 2271

This locus consists of removing balk material for W1182, hard packed surface was found. This locus is disturbed by Bedouin activities and contains finds from recent to Hellenistic periods.

Among the finds is an interesting silver coin minted by Antonio Venier the Duke of Venice (1382-1400). This coin was pierced and reused as a Bedouin ornament.



FIGURE 53, THE DUKE RECEIVING A FLAG FROM ST. MARK. RIGHT: CHRIST ENTHRONED

Loci: 2273, 2274, 2275, 2277, 2280

Grid: G 59

Elevation: 169.06-169.74

Notes: below locus 2269, removing material across loci.

Finds and pottery vary from the Hellenistic period to late middle ages. Among the interesting finds are a group of beads and buttons, a Crusader silver coin, a late Roman coin, a Hellenistic coin and a Hungarian coin of Leopold (1657-1705).



FIGURE 54, LOCUS 2274, BEADS AND BUTTONS



FIGURE 55, ETS BOWL



FIGURE 56, GALILEAN BOWL

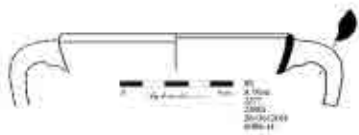


FIGURE 57, HELLENISTIC CP, TALL NECK



FIGURE 58 UNGENTARIUM



FIGURE 59, CRUSADER SILVER COIN OF AMAURY KING OF JERUSALEM (1163-1174), POSSIBLY SECONDARY USE AS JEWELRY



FIGURE 60, CONSTANTIUS 335 CE





FIGURE 61, TYRE, PTOLEMAIC COIN 3RD CENTURY BCE



FIGURE 62, LEOPOLD OF HUNGARY, (1657-1705), KREMNITZ, SILVER 1671

## ***Area C***

Supervisor: Dr. Nicolae Roddy, Vanesa Workman

The area is located in the north portion of the mound. Excavations in this area were conducted during June 25 to July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014. The excavations revealed more segments of the pavement sloping east west in grid A, ZZ 29, 28 and a probe was excavated in the house in D 29. The pavement flanks a wall in its southern end W671. A probe was excavated south of this wall. This pavement is part of the street running to a corner in square E 27, where it turns south. The northern loci of this year yielded debris and scattered stones.

Most finds and coins date from the Hellenistic period mixed with Iron Age shards.





FIGURE 63, AREA C

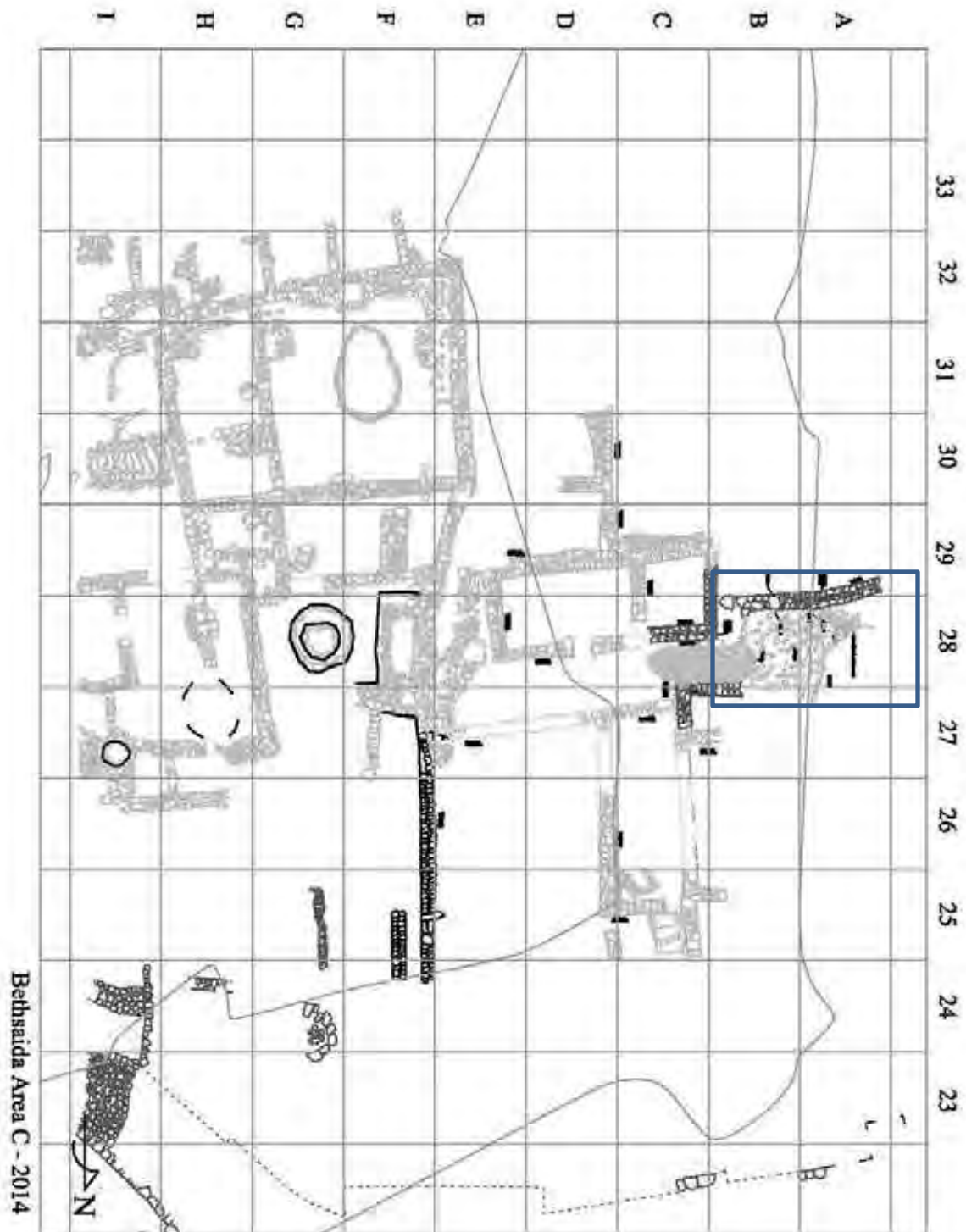


FIGURE 64 AREA C, EXCAVATED AREA MARKED IN BLUE SQUARE

## *Locus 5738*

Stratum II

Grid: A, ZZ 28

Elevations: 169.75 – 169.72



FIGURE 65, LOCUS 5738

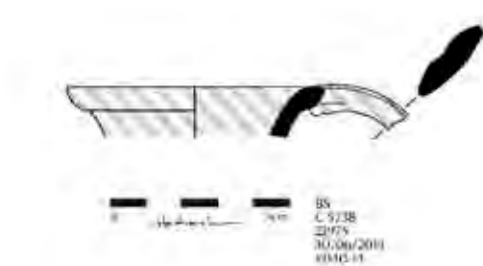


FIGURE 67, ORANGE SLIP AND BURNISHED JUG

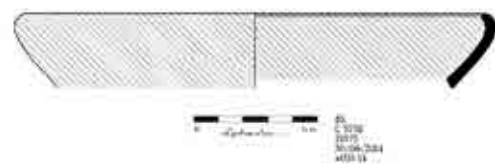


FIGURE 66, ETS BOWL



FIGURE 68, AKKO, ANTIOCHUS III 198-187 BCE

### *Locus 5739*

Grid: D 28

Elevations: 168.50-168.78

A probe under the foundations of the Hellenistic house, yielded Hellenistic pottery and coins.



FIGURE 69, LOCUS 5739



FIGURE 70, LOCUS 5739, INCLUDES HELLENISTIC POTTERY

## *Locus 5740*

Grid: ZZ 30

Elevation: 168.94-170.24

This is a probe 2.5 X 2 on the south side of W 671. Most finds are Hellenistic with some Roman shards. Coins range from Ptolemy (240-260 BCE) to Antiochus III 198-187 BCE minted in Akko. Another Seleucid coin was minted in Tyre.





FIGURE 71, LOCUS 5740 IS LOCATED AT THE UPPER RIGHT SIDE OF THE PICTURE.



FIGURE 72, PTOLEMY, 260-240 BCE





FIGURE 73, SELEUCID, BRONZE, 198-126 BCE, TYRE

## *AREA T*

Area Supervisor: Dr. Gregory Jenks

Grid: B, C, D, 69. 70

This area is situated in the southern slopes of the mound. It consists of Mamluk and Ottoman rural settlement. Seven loci were excavated in 2014, all except for 4013 are associated with Stratum I.

Dr. Gregory Jenks reports:

AREA T

During 2014 we opened a large square to the East of the two squares opened in 2012 and 2013. The northern half of this 10m x 4m “square” was excavated during weeks three and four, while the southern half was excavated during weeks five and six. A number of stone walls were exposed, some of which seem to be continuation of walls exposed in the previous two years. One of the walls included a doorway joining the space from this year’s excavation with the larger space excavated in 2013. Some intersecting walls at a higher elevation seem to be from a later period and this suggests at least two phases of Mamluk occupation in this area of the site.

The Mamluk date for these walls seems assured by the presence of more than 175 glazed pottery pieces and more than 1000 medieval pottery shards. By contrast there were very small numbers of Iron Age and Hellenistic items found.

Four (4) coins were found in Area T this year, 3 bronze and 1 silver. The silver coin has been identified by Ariel Berman as a 5 para Ottoman coin, minted in Constantinople by Mehmed V (Resad), the last of the Ottoman rulers, in 1913 (his 5th regnal year).

We continued to find several Ottoman smoking pipes as well as small amounts of ash as well as metal nails, as had been the case in the previous two years. The significance of these materials became clear after discovery of a small pit used as a kiln to melt limestone, some examples of which were found in and around the pit. Most likely, the kiln was used by Bedouin workers in the late Ottoman period to create limestone for use as fertilizer in the adjacent area. The many smoking pipes help to date the activity to a time after the spread of tobacco in the Middle East, while the Roman nails could be residue from the use of timber material as fuel for the kiln.

A portion of a Doric capital and part of a grindstone were found south of wall W1206. Neither appeared to be in secondary use as construction material in the existing walls, but were presumably brought to the location for that purpose.

At the SE corner of the excavation we exposed a Syrian bunker, which presumably opened to the adjoining gun position that lies just outside the area being dug.

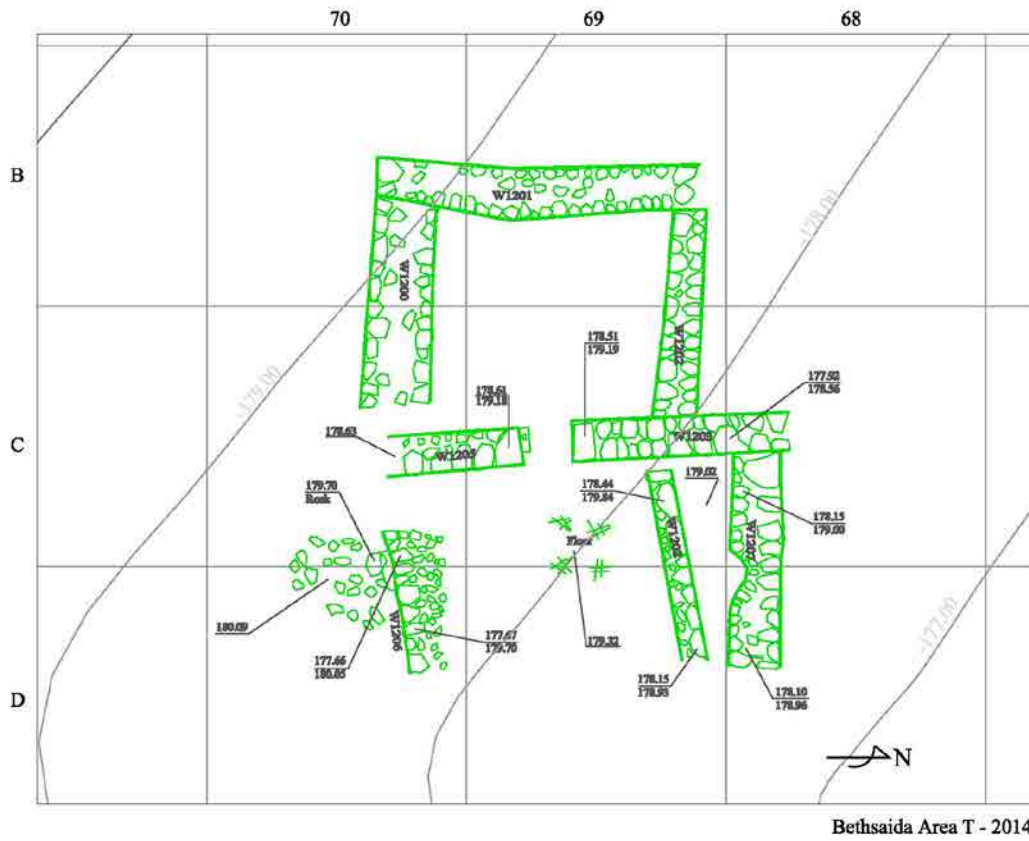


FIGURE 74, AREA T

## *Locus 4009*

Grid: C 69

Elevations: 177.64 - 179.37

The locus consists of removing top soil. Finds include Mamluk and Ottoman shards.

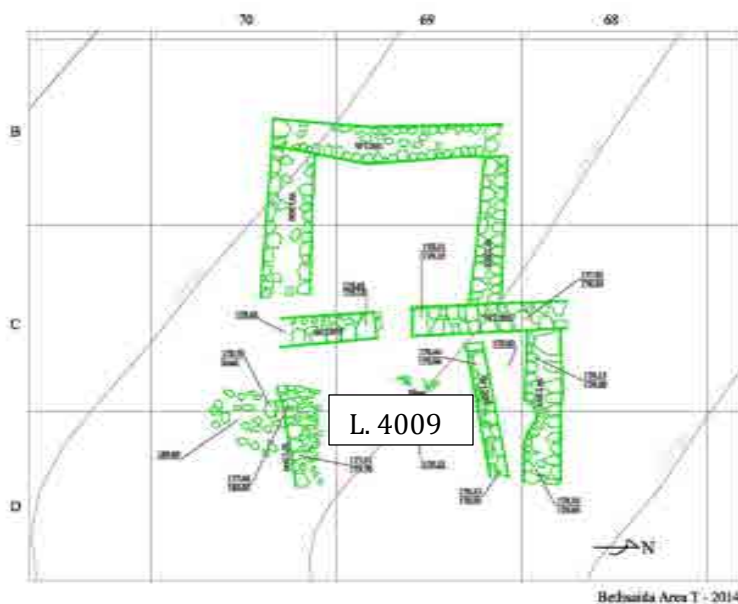


FIGURE 75, LOCUS 4009



FIGURE 76, LOCUS 4009, GLAZED POTTERY



FIGURE 77, LOCUS 4009, OTTOMAN PIPE

## *Locus 4010*

Grid: D 69

Elevations: 177.83 – 177.92

The locus is perhaps a lime kiln, finds inside the kiln were an iron nail, plaster pieces and plaster floor.



FIGURE 78, LOCUS 4010, LIMESTONE KILN?

## *Locus 4011*

Grid: C 69

Elevations: 178.15 – 178.42

This locus includes a doorway. Some plaster on stone was discovered on the doorway indicating plaster and white wash covering the entrance. One stone on the door jamb is an olive oil extracting device. Pottery includes Mamluk and Ottoman shards.





FIGURE 79, LOCUS 4011



FIGURE 80, DOORWAY IN LOCUS 4011, NOTICE THE SECONDARY USE OF AN OLIVE OIL EXTRACTION DEVICE.



FIGURE 81, LOCUS 4011, DIAGNOSTICS SHARDS

## *Locus 4016*

Grid: C 70

Elevations: 178.97 – 179.23

The locus consists of remnants of plastered floor.

Pottery and coins indicate Mamluk and Ottoman pottery and coins.



FIGURE 82, LOCUS 4016



FIGURE 83, LOCUS 4016, GLAZED POTTERY



FIGURE 84, LOCUS 4016, OTTOMAN, AHMED II 1703, CONSTANTINOPLE

### *Locus 4017*

Grid: D 70

Elevations: 178.92 – 180.06

The locus is situated south of wall 1206 and consists of remains of paved floor disturbed by a modern Syrian bunker. Pottery indicates Mamluk, Ottoman occupation. An outstanding find is segment of a Doric capital in an early Roman style. The capital was reused as a mortar.

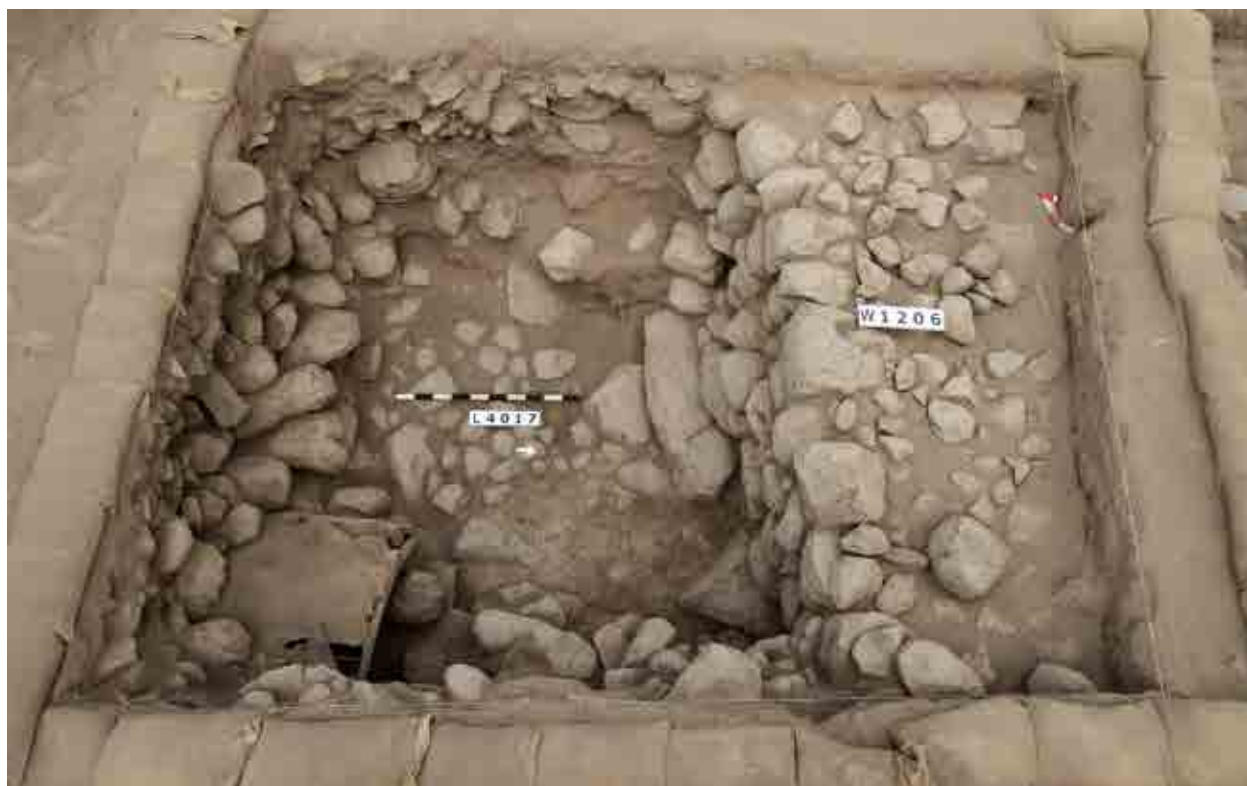


FIGURE 85, LOCUS 4017





FIGURE 86, A FRAGMENT OF A DORIC CAPITAL IN SITU.





FIGURE 87, LOCUS 4017, DORIC CAPITAL



FIGURE 88, LOCUS 4017, SECONDARY USE OF A DORIC CAPITAL

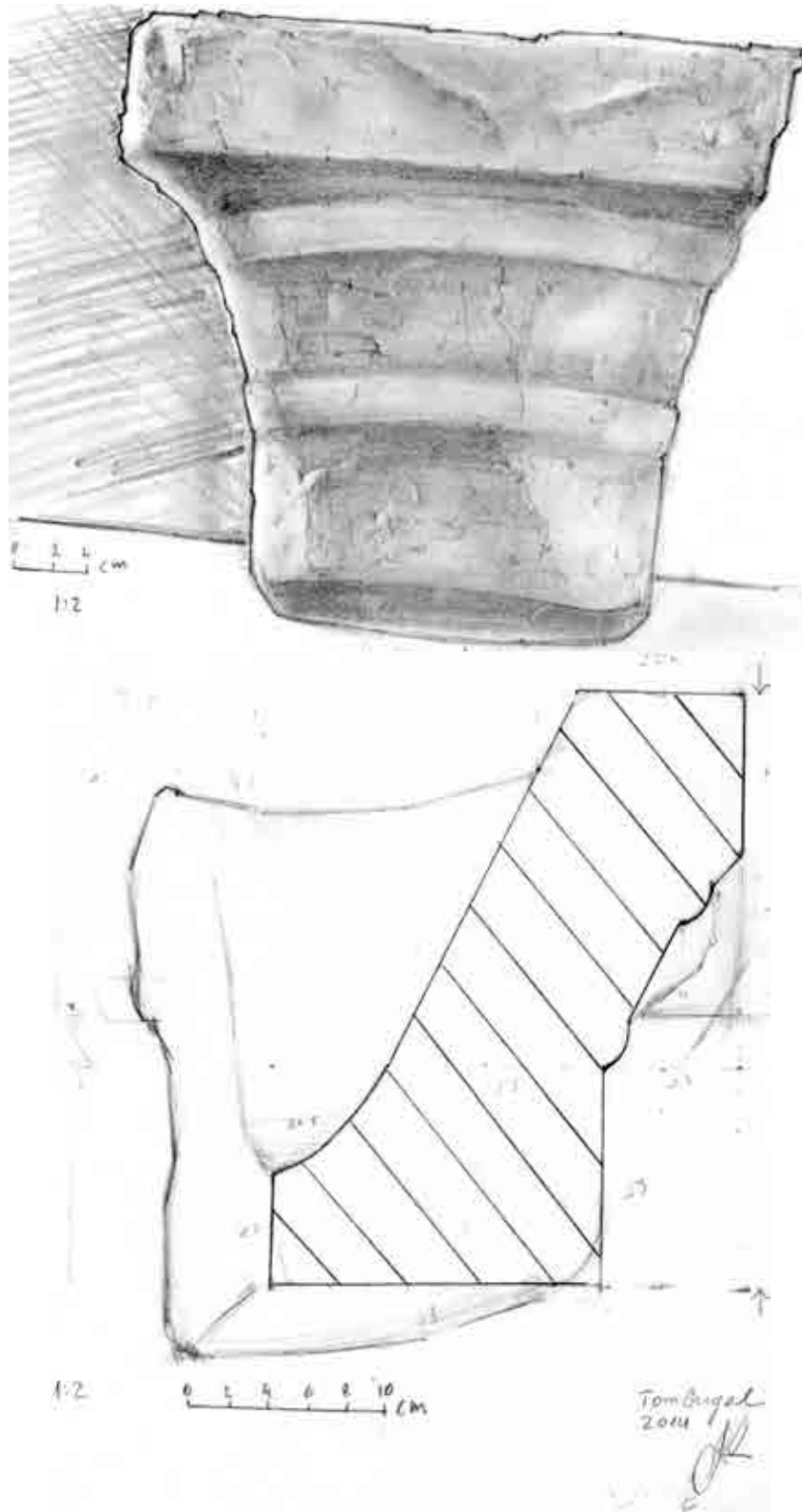


FIGURE 89, LOCUS 4017, DORIC CAPITAL