

**Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography
of Azerbaijan National Sciences Academy**

COMPREHENSIVE SCIENTIFIC REPORT

**Excavations at Hacialili II settlement
at KP 279.3 SCPX pipeline**

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1 SUMMARY

The report provides information on result and progress on the archaeological excavations carried out from April 13, 2015 to April 20, 2015 outside the Hajjalili village of Samukh district. Hajjalili I settlement located at KP 279,380 of the main export pipeline corridor of the SCPX project. Remains of household pits, household wells, fireplaces, ash layers, as well as pottery items, metal and obsidian items, were discovered there during the excavations. Actual archaeological data that sheds light on the economic activities and domestic life of the residents of this rural settlement was obtained on the site.

According to the analysis of the archaeological content, it was established that the settlement, which dates to the time period spanning from the end of the ancient times to the early Middle Ages, served as a rural settlement in the 2nd-8th centuries.

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2 INTRODUCTION

SITE DISCOVERY

The Hajjalili I settlement, located in KP 279,380 of the SCPX route, was recorded during the first and second stages. As early as in 2005, archaeological excavations were carried out upon this monument during the laying of the BTC main oil export route nearby and rich archaeological materials were discovered there. Therefore, archaeologists were aware of this monument. Since the area of the monument is used for sowing purposes, just like in previous years, and differs from the surrounding territory in terms of its relief, it is difficult to identify a settlement there visually. Numerous pottery and stone items available above the ground are the only proof of a potential archaeological area. Initially, the Hajjalili II settlement was registered in compliance with the agreement reached by the IoAE and BP (SCPX) and listed among the monuments in the SCPX corridor where archaeological excavations would be carried out.

2.1 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The Hajjalili I settlement is located in the territory of the Samukh district at the N-4519278.021; N-4519315.614; E-8621297.524; E-8621283.835 coordinates, 208-210 metres above sea level. It is situated about 550-600m southwest of the Hajjalili village of the Samukh district on the left-hand side of the Samukh-Hajjalili highway in KP 270,380 of the SCPX route. The settlement is surrounded from all sides by sowing areas. There is a stripe of sparse woods approximately 2.5 km southwest of this monument. The area has plain relief. Soft black soil has been used for sowing areas for many years [1, p. 1-2].

2.2 WHO CARRIED OUT THE EXCAVATION AND WHEN

An archaeological expedition group of the IoAE of ANSA carried out archaeological excavations at the Hajjalili I settlement from April 13, 2015 to April 20, 2015 overseen by PhD in History, senior research fellow Vagif Asadov, with the participation of the Institute's employees, PhD in History, senior research fellow Anar Aghalarzade and junior research associate Ahliman Abdurahmanov. SCPX Cultural Heritage Site Manager Mahammad Novruzov and the BP (SCPX) representative on environment, environmental expert Emin Ibrahimov contributed to the excavation work as observers.

3 RESULTS OF EXCAVATIONS

3.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The Hajjalili I settlement is located in a plain area. The monument is situated 208-210 metres above sea level at N-4519278.021; N-4519315.614; E-8621297.524; E-8621283.835. The settlement has a general title and in terms of administrative division it pertains to the Hajjalili village of the Samukh district. It was named during the BTC drilling operations. The reason for naming it Hajjalili I is the fact that two more settlements with the same title, namely, Hajjalili II and Hajjalili III, are situated nearby [5, p. 3-5]. The settlement is located about 550-600m southwest of the village with the same title on the left-hand side of the Samukh-Hajjalili highway in KP 302 of the BTC route and KP 280,370 of the SCPX route. The settlement area is used for sowing. There is a stripe of sparse forestry about 2.5 km southwest of this area. This plain territory, which has black soil suitable for sowing, has been used for this purpose for many years.

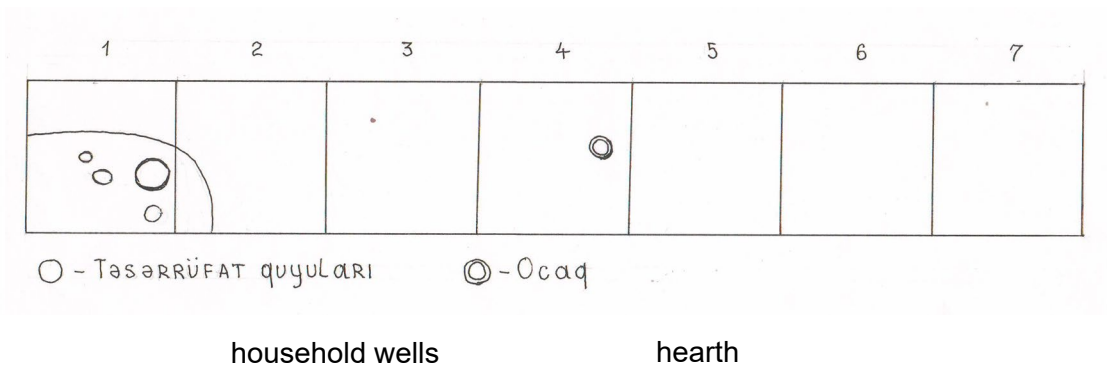


Figure 1. Schematic plan of archaeological excavation areas (no excavation was carried out in the white coloured units).

While walking around the settlement and the surrounding territories one may come across numerous pottery samples above the ground. The tangible cultural remains discovered in the mentioned areas are mainly significant in terms of the archaeological evaluation of those areas. However, the samples found in those areas generally resemble the typical pottery samples in the Hajialili settlement. Thus, the Hajialili territory is considered a common archaeological zone in general. The fact that numerous pottery samples of a wide variety dating back to the past centuries were found in this territory allows making a conclusion that life was burgeoning in those areas during that period.

The location of the settlement is very conducive for a habitat. Suitable soil reserves and sources of water for farming are available around the settlement. Perhaps, animal husbandry played a bigger role in the farming activities of the local residents. However, the available artefacts prove that there had been very suitable conditions for sowing there as well [6, p.17].



Figure 2. General view of the excavation. View to west.

Work began with the selection of the excavation area. The chosen territory was located in the new pipeline corridor 40 metres away from the BTC-SCP pipeline corridor. The length of the excavation area was 28 metres and its width was 4 metres. A total of seven 4x4m units were

outlined. The units were numbered in the south-east-north-west, i.e. in the direction of the pipeline stretch, and excavations were planned in the shape of chess. Initially, the upper suitable layer of the soil that is 20cm thick was scraped and taken off and piled on the edge of the excavation area. Though sowing work had been carried out there for many years, numerous pottery samples were encountered on the surface, which indicated the richness of the settlement's occupation layer. A 68-metre excavation stripe ended up in the sowing area. Pottery samples were discovered within the 20cm soil layer that was taken off.

Hajjalili I and Hajjalili II monuments are an integral part of one and the same residential compound and form a constituent part of Hajjalili III. Hajjalili I is located 600m southwest of Hajjalili II.

During the excavations it was ascertained that the Hajjalili I settlement consists of one layer and that the thickness of the occupation layer is 100-120cm. The observations revealed that the tangible cultural remains of the upper stratum of the 25cm-thick occupation layer are not rich. Certainly, this was due to the fact that this soil's upper layer had been used for sowing for many years. The section of the occupation layer with coal, ash strata, fragments of pottery vessels, animal and bird bones lies between the depths of 30cm and 1-1.2m. Fireplaces and household wells have been researched in the excavation area.

Depth of the units in the excavation were as follows:

Unit 1 depth - 120cm

Unit 2 depth - 120cm

Unit 3 depth - 120cm

Unit 4 depth - 120 cm

Unit 5 depth - 120 cm

Unit 6 depth - 120 cm

Unit 7 depth - 120cm

Initially, Units 1, 3 and 5 had been specified for excavation. However, an oval shaped stain distinguished by its dark colour from the surface soil was revealed at a depth of 39cm from the surface in the Unit 1 (Figure 2). Excavation of this unit was carried out at the same time with the Unit 1, as half of this stain extended into Unit 2. A large household pit was revealed while excavating the stain. The pit was located at a distance of 2.2m from the east wall, 2m from the west wall and 0.4m from the south wall of the unit. A small section of the pit extended towards the north wall of Units 1 and 2. The household pit radius was 4.05m. The household pit was determined to be 50cm deep when its interior was cleaned. Then 4 various diameter (from 40cm up to 1.05 cm) wells (№ 1, 2, 3 and 4) were revealed in the pit. (Figure 3; 6). Evidently, the wells were used to store different foodstuff. Various pottery fragments and 1 iron knife blade were found while cleaning the pit. A sherd of a large jar body was found inside the largest well No. 3.

A circular hearth was discovered at a distance of 50cm from the east wall of Unit 5 at a depth of 60cm from the ground level (Figure 7). A thick burned clay-like brim remained at the half-section of the hearth edges. Coal and traces of burns were observed inside the hearth. Hearth diameter was 70cm.

Wells inside the household pit:

Household well No. 1. A well for storing foodstuff was discovered at the northwest side of the pit. It was the household well No. 1. Well had been drilled at the bottom of the pit at a depth of 70cm from the ground level. Well dimensions were as follows:

diameter = 40cm

depth = 35cm

Household well No. 2. This well was located 45cm southeast from the first well. Well had been drilled at the bottom of the pit at a depth of 70cm from the ground level. Well dimensions were as follows:

diameter = 55cm

depth = 60cm

Household well No. 3. This well is located 1.65m southeast from well No. 1 and 1m southeast of well No. 2. Well had been drilled at the bottom of the pit at a depth of 70cm from the ground level. Well dimensions were as follows:

diameter = 105cm

depth = 60cm

Household well No. 4. This well was discovered 2m southeast from well No. 2 and 80cm east from well No. 3. This well too had been drilled at the bottom of the pit at a depth of 70cm from the ground level. Well dimensions were as follows:

diameter = 50cm

depth = 35cm

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS

Pottery:

The pottery discovered in the excavation area are the same as samples found in Lek I, Hajjalili II and Girag Kasaman in terms of their shape and content. These samples can be traced to the 2nd-8th centuries based on their typological features. Unglazed pottery fragments were discovered more frequently than glazed fragments.

Unglazed pottery samples were also encountered among the items discovered above ground. These mainly included the orifices, shoulders and stocks of clay vessels. Vessels with clean and compacted clay composition were more abundant.

The samples obtained in the excavation area are excellent and are of a great variety. They are parts of clay vessels similar to pitchers, jugs, long jars and plates.

Light pink, pink and red coloured vessel fragments were more abundant among discovered pottery samples. Their surfaces were sometimes engobed in whitish and pinkish-yellow colour.

Jar formed pottery had flat bases (Figure 4.5; 8). Their bodies get narrow towards the base (Figure 4.5; 8). Mouths are usually wide and low opening sideways. However, sometimes narrow necked vessels were discovered (Figure 4.2; 10-11).

Household jars too have forms similar to jars. The difference is in their dimensions. Household jars have large bodies. Their bodies are mostly shrouded by moulded stripes surface of which is usually decorated by chained or impressed sunken patterns (Figure 4.4; 12; 13). Large jars are one of the integral attributes of medieval husbandry and domestic life. They are usually found in the settlements of all ages, including, those of medieval ages [14].

Platters usually differ from tureens and plates with their small volumes. Their mouths are wide directly passing to body. Bases are large and flat. One of the acquired platter fragments is part of a platter type pottery's body. Mouth edge is circular moving directly to body. Wall is thin. Colour is pink. Wall thickness = 0.5cm (Figure 18).

The fragments of water *jug and pitchers* discovered most were their handles. Handles were wide and ribbon shaped at the cross-section usually connecting narrow mouth with body (Figure 4.1-3; 14-15; 16-17). There is a scratch on this type of handles usually running along the mid-section. These pottery were pin coloured and composed of clean and compact clay.

Iron objects:

Two iron items were discovered during archaeological excavations. One was a knife blade made of iron sheet. The blade was broken into three pieces; end was tapered. Blade length was 10cm, width was 1-2cm (Figure 5.1; 19). The second was fragments of a round product made of iron stem. One end was tapered with two protuberances underneath. Diameter = 3.2cm (Figure 5.2; 20). It should be noted that analogous artefacts were also discovered during the archaeological excavations carried out at the first excavation site of Hajjalili I monument [s.74].

Glassware:

Only one sherd of glass was discovered. It was a sherd of the mouth of a small vessel made of greenish glass belonging to a platter type large, mouthed vessel. Mouth edge was round with traces of a gold plate visible on the surface (Figure 21).

4.1 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS ACHIEVED AT THE SITE

Overall, the excavations carried out in the settlement were very successful. Very valuable information was collected during the excavations with regard to various facets of the economic life and craftsmanship of the residents of the rural settlement, which dates back to the end of ancient - Early Middle Ages. Hajjalili I was a settlement of an agricultural nature, i.e. the local population was engaged in farming along with animal husbandry. The fact that many household wells in a limited area were found during the archaeological excavations along with palaeontological remains of horned cattle, sheep and goats proves that sowing was very highly developed in the area along with animal husbandry.

The material-cultural specimens discovered during the archaeological excavations carried out at the sites selected at Hajjalili late ancient-early medieval age settlement area indicates agrarian nature of the settlement area. It becomes clear from the facts obtained as a result of ethnographic observation and archaeological excavations that Hajjalili population had peculiar farming culture during early medieval ages.

Relative abundance of the household wells discovered following the excavations also allows obtaining certain information about the number of the village population.

5 ANALYTICAL RESULTS

It is noteworthy that the archaeological excavations at the Hajjalili I settlement were successfully completed and, having taken into account the previous excavations conducted in the BTC and SCP corridors, we may conclude that a significant part of the settlement has been excavated. In addition to creating a very comprehensive database regarding the nature, peculiarities, type and time period pertaining to the settlement by means of these stage-by-stage excavations, the obtained artefacts provide us with sufficient knowledge about the economic life and activities of the residents of the mediaeval settlement.

5.1 PALAEOLOGICAL, PALEOZOOLOGICAL AND PALEOBOTANICAL REMAINS

Animal bones were the only palaeontological remains encountered during the archaeological excavations carried out in the Hajjalili I settlement.

Research conducted in the region's rural settlements shows that the raising of sheep and goats took the lead in animal husbandry in the Ganja-Gazakh region in the 2nd-8th centuries. Small cattle occupied a leading role in cattle husbandry. This is due to the availability of rich pastures and hayfields. The research of the animal bones found in Hajjalili II indicates that sheep and goats had a special place in the raising of small-horned animals. Some of their parts, such as skulls, ribs, backbones and thigh bones were discovered. Undoubtedly, this is due to the significant role of these animals in animal husbandry and their great importance in the domestic life of people.

Horned cattle had a certain place in animal husbandry, along with sheep and goats. Such cattle were also used as harnessing power. Undoubtedly, large-horned cattle played a certain role in the development of wheeled transport. Two-wheel wagons hauled by bulls had been used until the latest periods in Azerbaijan.

An analysis of the bone remains was not carried out.

Palaeobotanical remains were not encountered in the settlement.

5.2 PERIOD AND CHRONOLOGY

The determination of the chronological range of the Hajjalili I settlement dating back to the Middle Ages is based on stratigraphical observations and comparative analysis of the obtained tangible cultural samples.

Hajjalili II was a rural medieval settlement and it has retained samples reflecting high cultural and economic development. Though the settlement contains only one occupation layer, the established facts prove that habitation continued in this area for several centuries. Based on some comparative analyses, it is possible to say that life at Hajjalili I medieval village began in the 2nd and ended in the 8th century AD. Changes in this chronological range resulting from further researches are not ruled out.

Features of highly developed urban craftsmanship is traced in the artefacts discovered at the settlement area. Undoubtedly, some artefacts discovered in the course of excavations and made very beautifully were not local products and imported here from a developed nearest town by way of trading.

Most probably, life at the early medieval village of Hajjalili, which had developed highly with regard to economic-cultural and commercial relations continued until VIII century.

No carbon dating and year ring analyses were carried out with respect to the settlement area.

6 DISCUSSION

When the outcomes of the archaeological excavations are summarized and the results of the work are further put on open discussion, the scientific views and final conclusions of the report author are grouped. These scientific results have been confirmed by the observations of other research fellows involved in the archaeological excavations.

6.1 INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE EXCAVATION

The archaeological excavations conducted on the site of a ditch to be drilled for a pipeline in the future were designated for rescue purposes. The observations regarding the occupation layer slope, as well as the research conducted in the excavation areas, allow making a conclusion that the length of the settlement in the pipeline corridor exceeds 80m and the archaeological excavations were probably conducted in the central and northern sections of the monument.

The production remains, household and domestic wells, fireplaces, the discovered unglazed and glazed ceramic vessel fragments, iron items and tools, glassware fragment and obsidian cutter, revealed on the occupation layer slope, are attributed to the 2nd-8th centuries based on the typological and analytical methods. Evidently, there was a rural settlement there in the mentioned period.

6.2 RESULTS COMPARED WITH SIMILAR SITES LOCATED ON THE PIPELINE ROUTE

Several previously known settlements dating back to the Middle Ages were discovered as a result of archaeological field research in the SCPX corridor and researched through excavations. For instance, the first excavation site of Hajjalili I, Hajjalili II, Fakhrali, Dashbulag and Girag Kasaman mediaeval settlements where excavations were carried out as early as during the laying of the BTC and SCP pipelines are among such monuments. The tangible cultural remains revealed in the occupation layer slope of the Hajjalili I settlement, as well as the results of research of the monuments referenced in the commentary regarding finds slated for various purposes and a comparative analysis with archaeological materials obtained from those monuments, were of great importance. The archaeological excavations at the Lek I, Lek II, Hajjalili I, Hajjalili II and Hajjalili III settlements, which are located very close to one another, allowed tracking down habitation in this territory from the ancient times to the 13th century.

6.3 THE SITE IN A REGIONAL AND NATIONAL CONTEXT

Ancient sources cite some data regarding Albanian cities, though this information is scarce. If we take as a basis the data provided by mediaeval sources, it is clear that these sources contain ample information about Azerbaijani cities of the Middle Ages. However, only insignificant and superficial references are available with regard to the villages dating back to the ancient times and the Middle Ages. Therefore, the tangible cultural remains obtained through archaeological excavations are the primary source for restoring the picture of life in the rural areas that existed in Azerbaijani territory in these periods. The fact that the region's rural settlements had not been closely involved in archaeological excavations further increases the significance of the excavations carried out in Hajjalili I.

7 INVENTORY

No.	Item	Description	Unit/ Depth	Dimensions
1	handle	Handle belonging to a large, bodied pitcher type pottery. Handle is ribbon like long the section and wide. It was vertically attached to the pottery. There are shallow scratches running along the surface of the handle. Clay is compact. Colour is pink. Surface is engobed in whitish grey. Figure 14.	unit 1-2 interior of househ old well	cross-section- 4cm
2		Part of the handle of a water jug vessel. Cross-section is ribbon like and wide. Clay is compact. A shallow scratch runs along the mid-section of the handle. Clay is of reddish colour. Surface is engobed in yellowish-pink colour. Figure 15.		cross-section- 4cm
3		Part of the handle of a water jug vessel. Cross-section is ribbon like and wide. Two narrow scrapes run along the surface of the handle. Clay is compact. It was vertically attached to the vessel. Clay colour is pink. Surface is engobed in yellowish-pink colour. Figure 16.		cross-section- 4cm
4	mouth	Part of the mouth of a small sized pot like vessel. There is trimming around the mouth edge. Wide and low neck gradually passes to shoulder. Colour is light pink. Wall is thin. Figure 10.		mouth wall - 7,5cm wall thickness 0,5cm
5	body	Part of the thick-walled faience vessel body. Clay is yellowish coloured. Exterior is decorated with green circles internals of which are filled with dark blue against white background. There are black coloured wave shaped and straight lines against blue and white background inside with black dots arrayed underneath in the form of ornaments. Surface is glazed from both sides. Figure 23.		wall thickness- 1cm
6		Bottom section of a large, bodied pot type vessel. Body widens upwards. Clay is compact. Colour is pink. Surface is engobed in whitish colour. Figure 9.		body wall- 16,7cm
7		Part of the body of a large household pot. Clay is compact. Surface is surrounded by a band consisting of moulded chain shaped patterns. Figure 12.		wall thickness 1,2cm
8	knife	Knife blade made of an iron sheet. Divided into three sections. End is pointed. Figure 5.1., 19.		uzun-10cm eni-1-2cm
9	ferrule	Parts of a round product made from an iron rod. End is pointed. There are two protuberances underneath. Figure 5.2., 20.		dia-3,2cm
10	body	Part of the body of a small platter type vessel. Mouth rim is circular. Directly passes to body. Wall is thin. Colour is pink. Figure 18.	unit 3 depth 60cm	wall thickness 0,5cm
11		Part of a large bodied, thick walled pottery. A roughly made band composed of impressed indentations runs along the surface. Colour is pink. Surface is engobed in yellowish colour. Figure 13.	unit 5 depth 60cm	wall thickness- 1cm
12	base	Bottom section of a medium sized clay pot. Base is wide and flat. Body widens upwards. Clay is compact. Colour is dark pink. Figure 8.		base wall-8cm wall thickness- 1cm
13	mouth	Fragment of a mouth of small sized vessel made of greenish coloured glass. It belongs to a platter type wide mouthed vessel. Mouth rim is circular. Gold plate traces are visible on the surface. Figure 21.	unit 1-2 well interior	
14	handle	Lower section of a handle belonging to a pot type pottery. Cross-section is ribbon like. Wide. Mid-section is slightly furrowed along the handle. Clay composition is clean. Colour is pink. Figure 17.	unit 3 depth 80cm	cross-section- 4cm
15	cutter	Cutting tool made of the shatters of a silvery obsidian. Useable section is jaggy. It has three angles and is triangular shaped. Figure 22.		dimensions: 3,5x4,2cm
16	mouth	Part of narrow necked thin walled vessel mouth. There is trimming around the mouth edge. Low neck gradually passes to shoulder. Clay composition is clean. Colour is dark pink. Surface is polished. Figure 11.	unit 7 depth 40:60c m	mouth wall - 4,5cm wall thickness 0,3cm neck section-1cm

8 APPENDICES

8.1 REFERENCES

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8.2 ILLUSTRATIONS

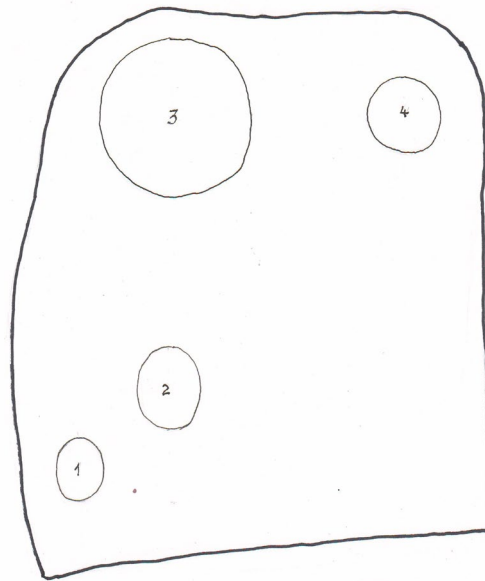


Figure 3. Household pit and well. Units 1 and 2.

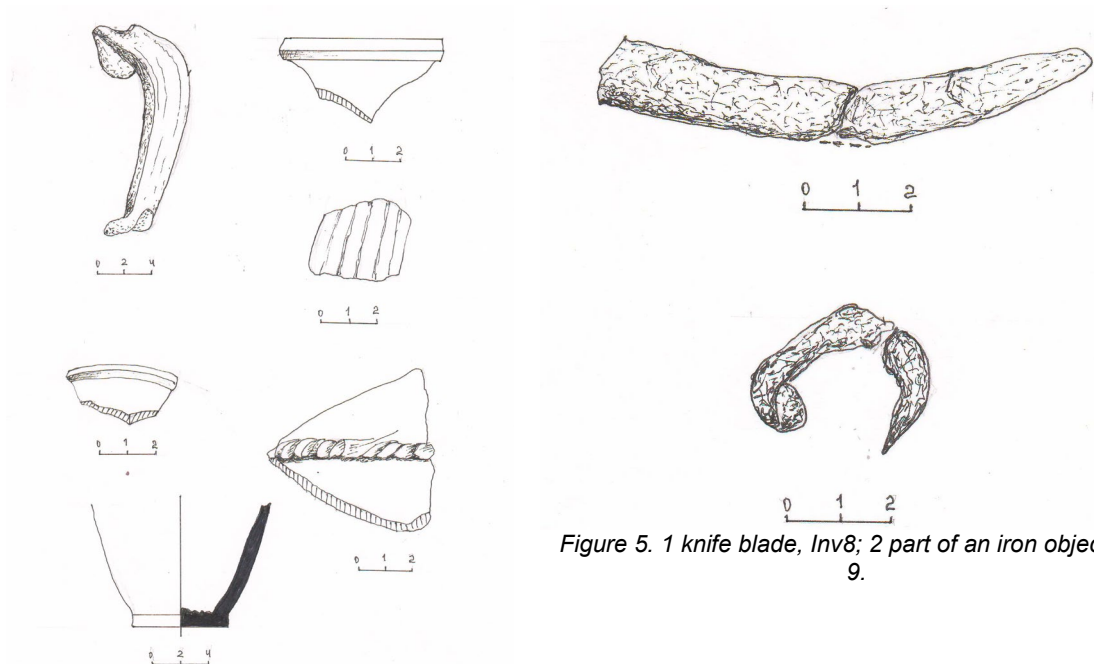


Figure 4. 1-handle with a ribbon like cross-section; 2-4-small sized pot mouth fragments; 3-fragment of a handle with round cross-section; 5-molded chain like band on the vessel surface; 6-lower section of a pot type vessel.

Figure 5. 1 knife blade, Inv8; 2 part of an iron object, Inv 9.

8.3 PHOTOS



Figure 6. Household pits and food storage wells. Units 1 and 2. View to south.



Figure 7. Hearth. Unit 5. View to southeast.

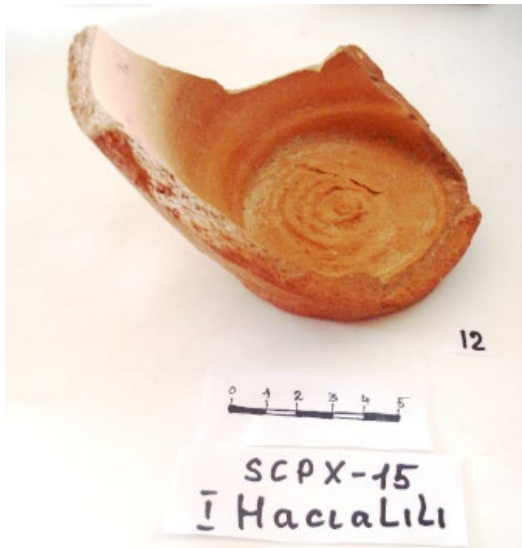


Figure 8. Part of a pot base. Inv 12



Figure 9. Potsherd. Inv 6.



Figure 10. Rim sherd. Inv 4.



Figure 11. Rim sherd. Inv 16.



Figure 12. Moulded band on pottery. Inv 7.



Figure 13. Moulded band on pottery. Inv 11.



Figure 14. Water jug handle. Inv 1.



Figure 15. Water jug handle. Inv 2.



Figure 16. Fragment of water jug. Inv 3.



Figure 17. Fragment of pitcher. Inv 14.

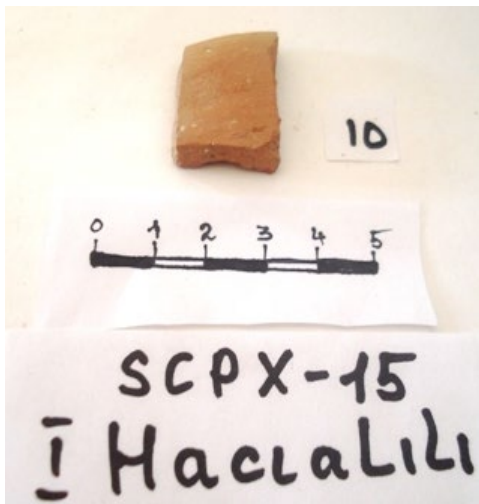


Figure 18. Fragment of a platter body. Inv 10.



Figure 19. Iron knife blade. Inv 8.



Figure 20. Part of iron object. Inv 9.



Figure 21. Glass vessel rim. Inv 13.



Figure 22. Obsidian cutter. Inv 15.

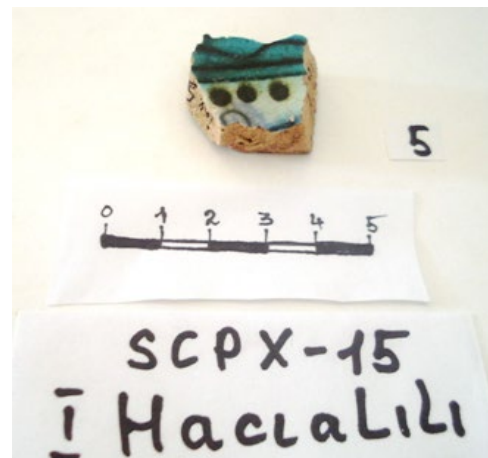


Figure 23. Faience vessel body. Inv 5.