

## 5. KWO LO WAN (UPPER)

### THE SITE

The lower slopes above the bay at Kwo Lo Wan began to be cultivated in the 1950's, and this cultivation brought to light a Middle Neolithic site similar in many ways to that at Fu Tei. At approximately the same elevation and distance from the beach, this site has less depth of deposit than Fu Tei, and over much of the site the combined effects of cultivation and erosion had begun to wear away the deposit. In some squares, only 20-30 cm of deposit was discovered, lying on the same caveats as mentioned previously with regard to Fu Tei apply to this basal "DG", "residual soil" or "hillslope deposit".

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The exposure of the site enabled an accurate assessment to be made during initial survey of its extent and its dating. The site is smaller than Fu Tei, and has been subject to greater human and natural disturbance. Many loose potsherds were collected and in situ clusters were noted. These surface collections of pottery yielded many specimens of the typical Middle Neolithic chalky and coarse wares, but no other types. Part of a small fired clay structure was also observed on one of the footpaths, and marked down for excavation.



*Figure 5.1 -- View of Kwo Lo Wan facing north; the upper site in the centre, between the two houses; the lower site is obscured.*

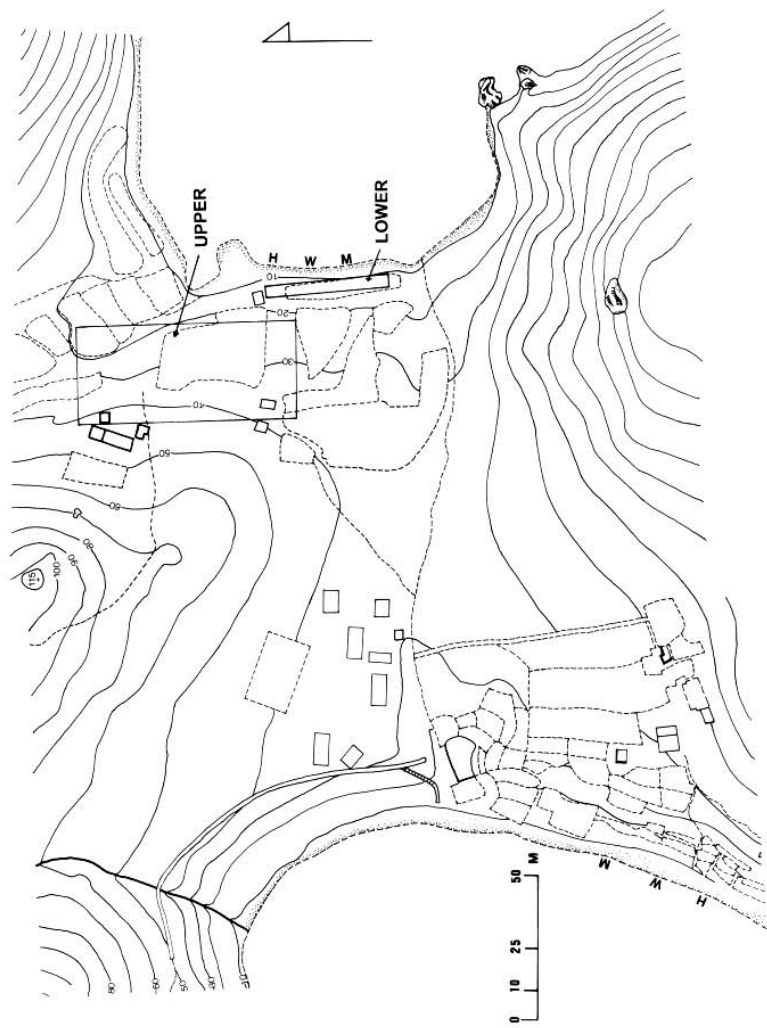
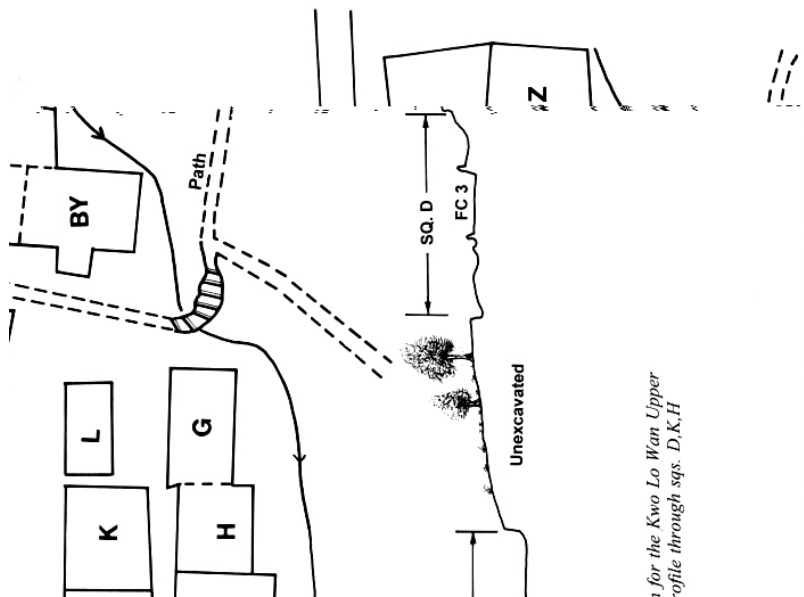


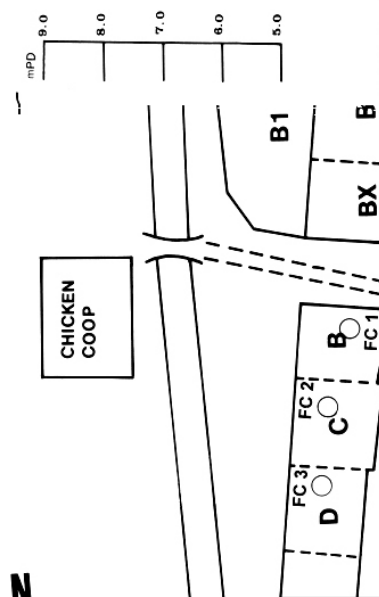
Figure 5.2 -- Map of the Ha Law Wan and Kwo Lo Wan area.



Figure 5.3 -- Excavation of the fired clay feature.



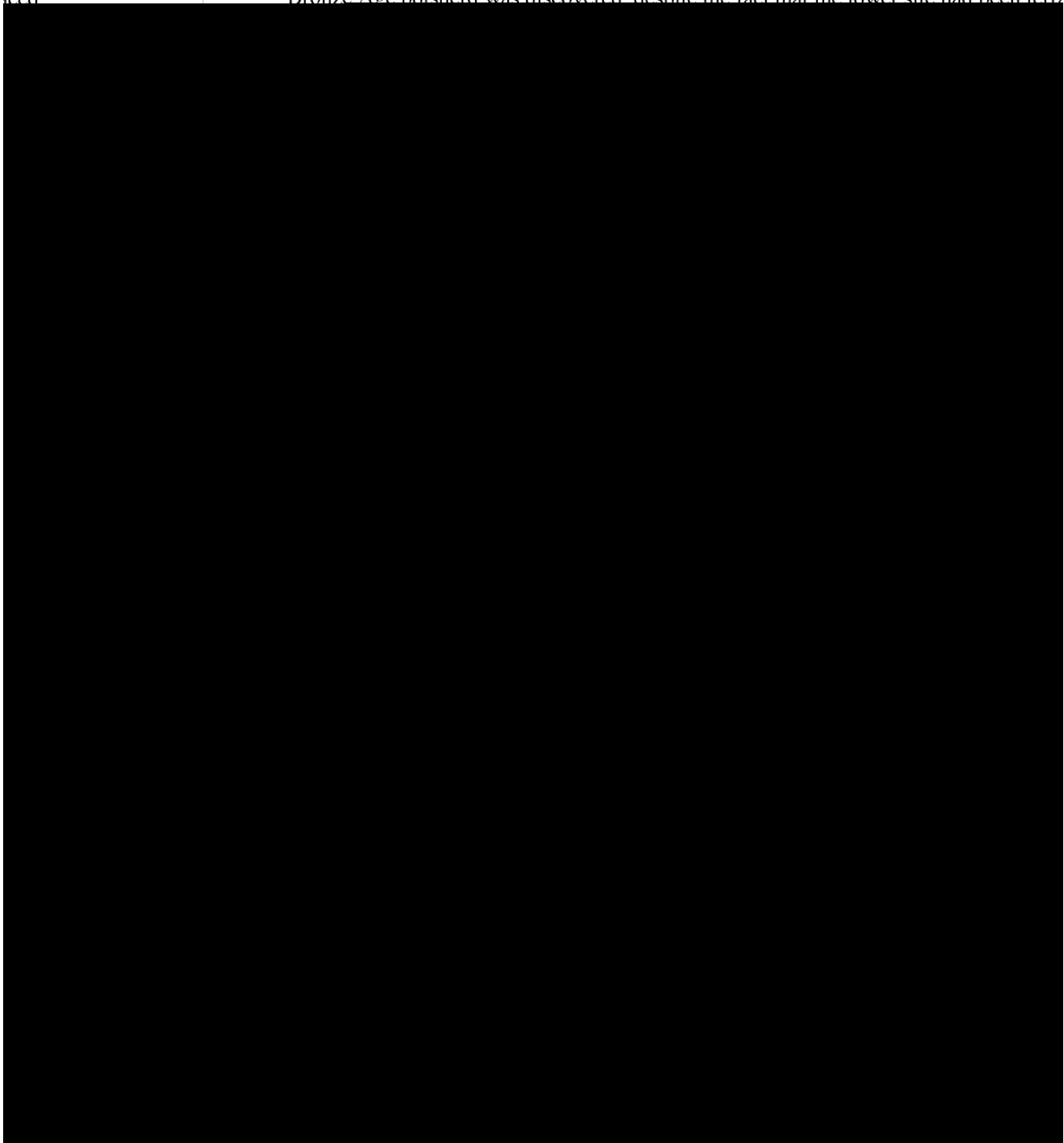
for the Kwo Lo Wan Upper  
profile through sqs. D,K,H



Another site, belonging to the Bronze Age, was discovered just behind the beach,

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and termed "Two Lo Wan" lower. The upper and lower sites were not only different in pottery types, but neither site had a single representative example of pottery from the other. It is of course conceivable that the Bronze Age people might have confined their activities to the immediate back-beach area. But it is surprising that Middle Neolithic potsherds were found there, especially when the extensive erosion in recent decades is considered. It seems likely that the vegetation cover was once protective of each site. During his visit in 1933 Schofield did not find any prehistoric material at all. During the many visits by archaeologists in the period 1960-1990, no Bronze Age potsherd was discovered, despite the fact that the lower site had been terraced.





*Figure 5.5 -- Excavation of Square L.*



*Figure 5.6 -- Floor of Square L showing holes in the DG.  
[For floor plan and closeup view see Figure 5.10]*

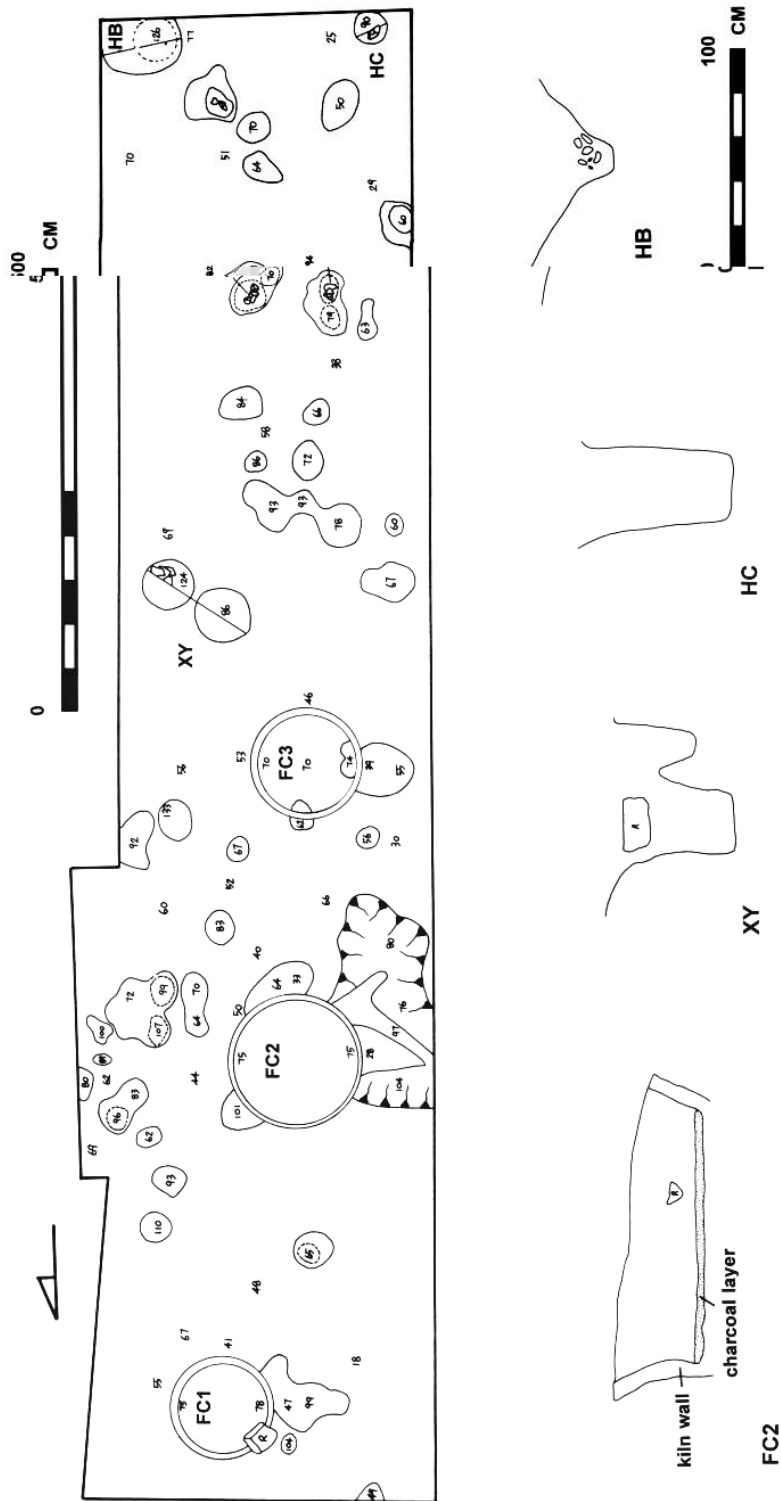


Figure 5.7 -- Floor plan of Squares B-E showing holes in the DG and fired clay structures, and profiles of the main features.



*Figure 5.8 -- Excavation of Squares B-E facing south, with FCI in the foreground.*



*Figure 5.9 -- (at right) Squares B-E after excavation; same view as figure 5.8.*

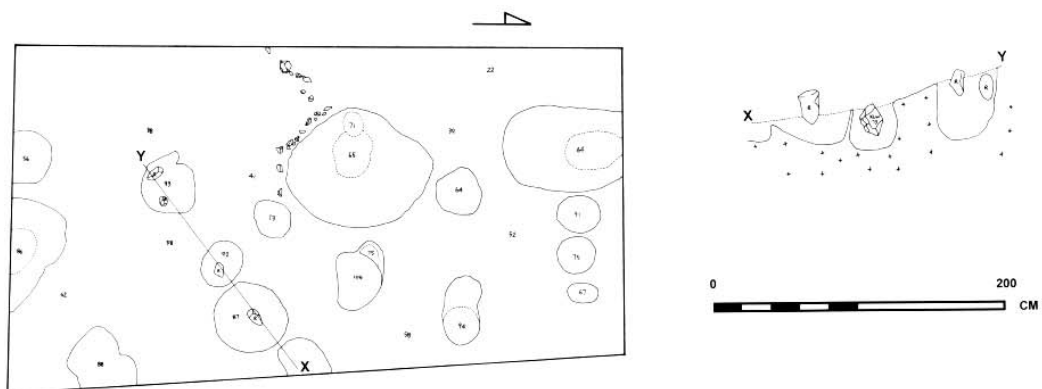
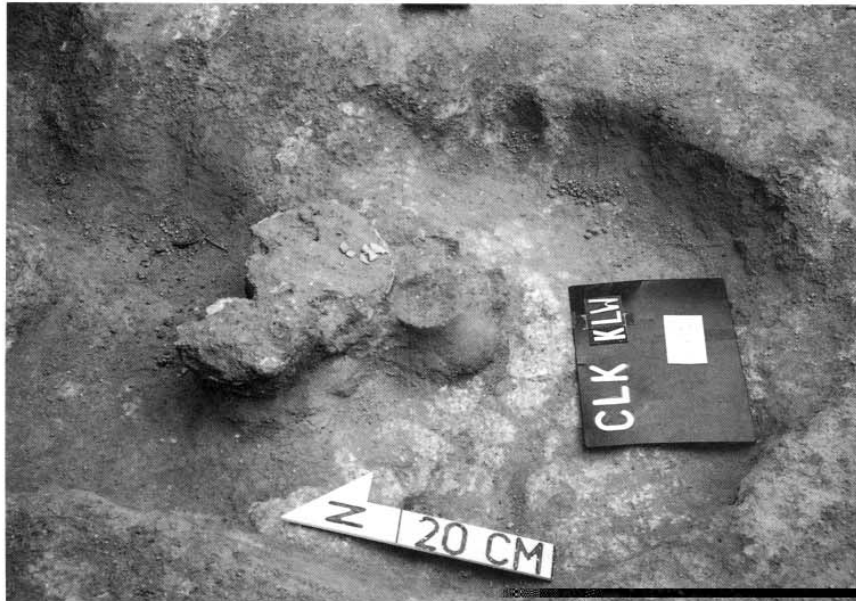


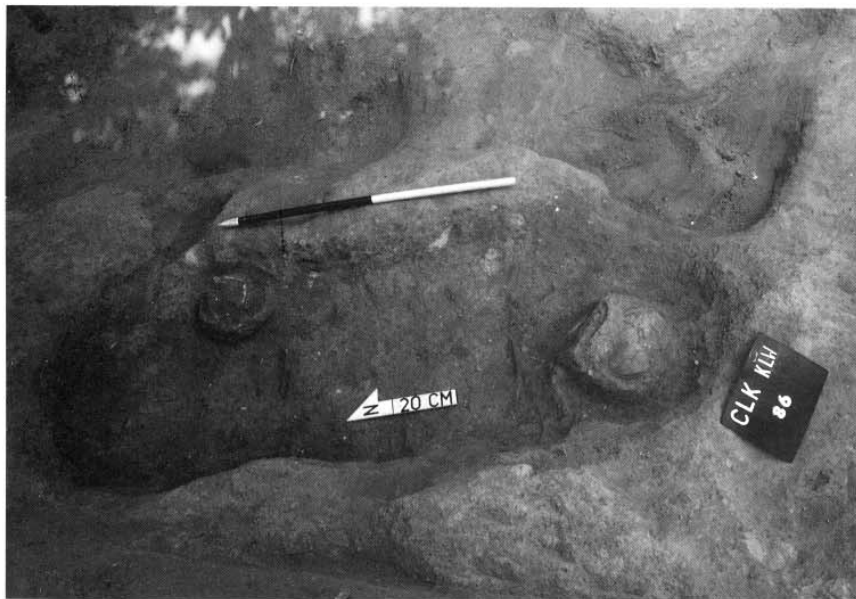
Figure 5.10 -- Floor plan of Square L and profile of the four-hole feature; below -- closeup view of three of the holes.







*Figure 5.11 -- The cluster of pottery (KLW20-22) of burial 1.  
[See Figure 5.13]*



*Figure 5.12 -- Burial 2 with pottery (KLW86 and 87) exposed.  
[See Figure 5.13]*

The entire available area adjacent to square BX was then opened up, and a total of five clusters of objects was unearthed. These presumed burials are summarized in the table below.

MIDDLE NEOLITHIC BURIALS  
KWO LO WAN UPPER

<i>Burial</i>	<i>Square</i>	<i>Cat. no.</i>	<i>Catalogued object</i>	<i>Figures</i>
1	BX	KLW20	chalky vessel (partial)	5.11, 5.20
		KLW21	corded pot (partial)	5.11, 5.21
		KLW22	large chalky bowl	5.11, 5.14
2	BX	KLW86	corded pot	5.12, 5.16, 5.21
		KLW87	chalky vessel	5.12, 5.15
		KLW89	chalky pot	5.17, 5.23
3	BY	KLW58	corded pot	5.17, 5.21
		KLW78	chalky vessel(s) (partial)	5.17, 5.20
4	B1	KLW92	chalky sherds	
		KLW97	polished adze	5.28
		KLW98	flake ( ?blank for small adze)	5.28
		KLW99	polished adze	5.28
5	B1	KLW102	corded pot	5.21
		KLW103	corded pot	5.21
		KLW104	polished adze	5.28
6	BX	KLW84	polished adze	5.28
7	FX	KLW69	chalky vessel	5.18, 5.19
		KLW70	coarse pot	5.18, 5.23
		KLW111	polished stone ring	5.23

In several cases (KLW 20, 21, 78, 92, 103) the pots were fragmentary and/or missing large portions; only partial or no reconstruction was possible. Nevertheless, several nearly complete vessels were recovered, as well as polished stone adzes which were obviously placed with the pottery. Just as at Fu Tei, an adze blank was also included among the offerings. The single adze in burial 6 was at the bottom of the shallow pit, and probably also represents a burial offering.

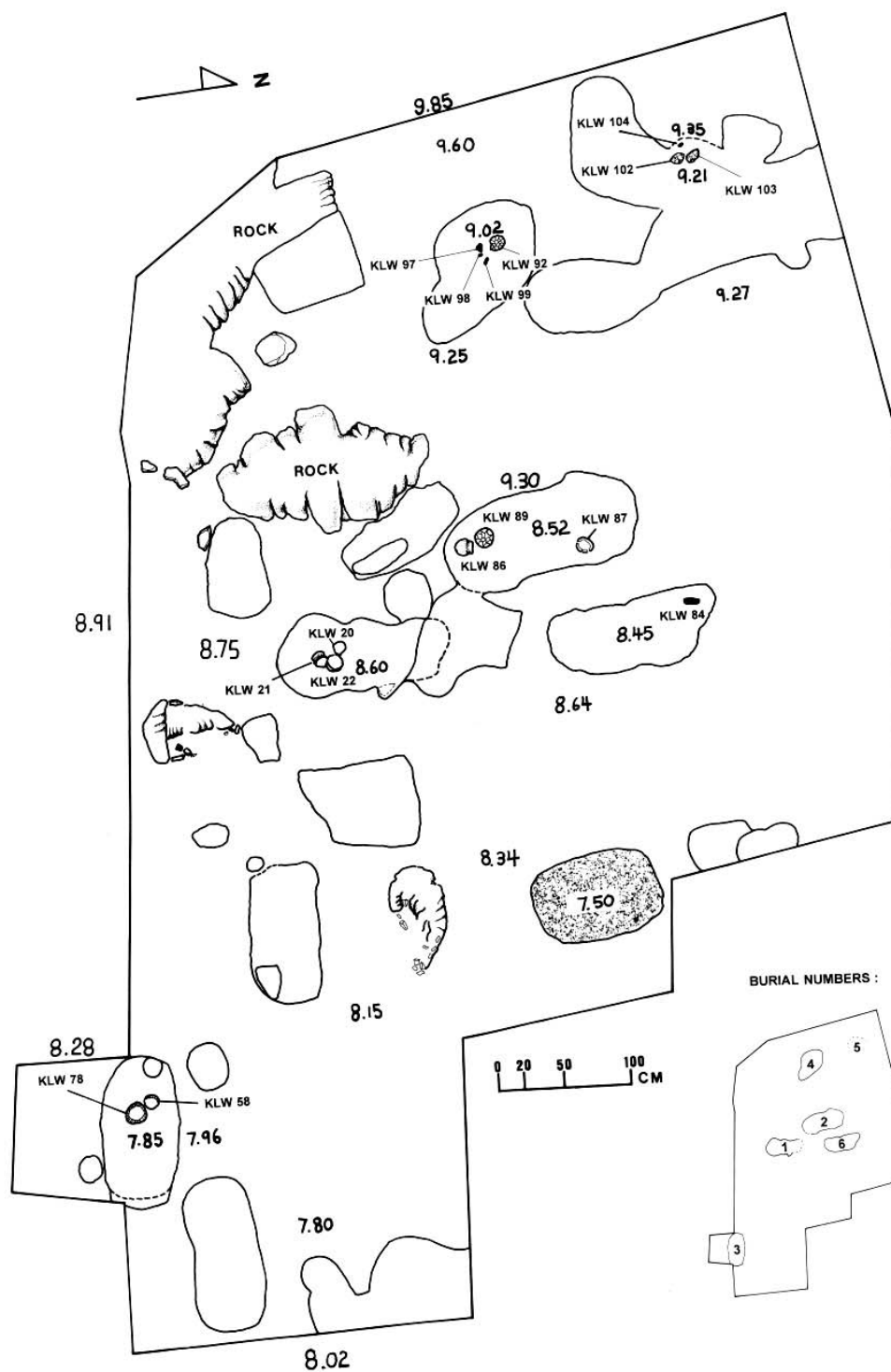
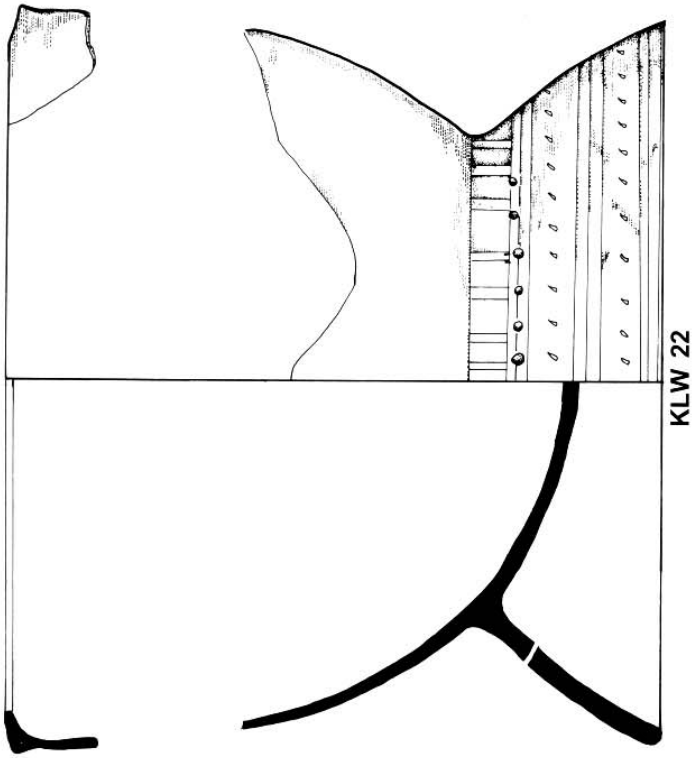
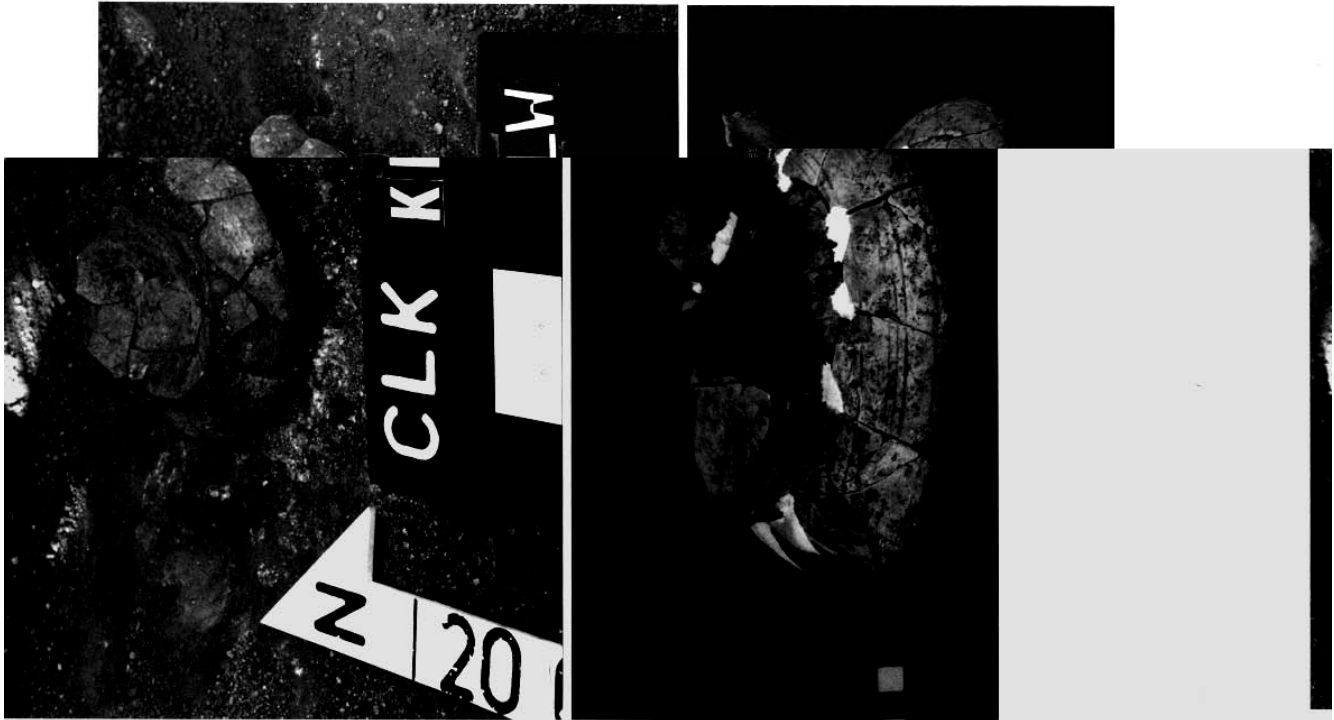
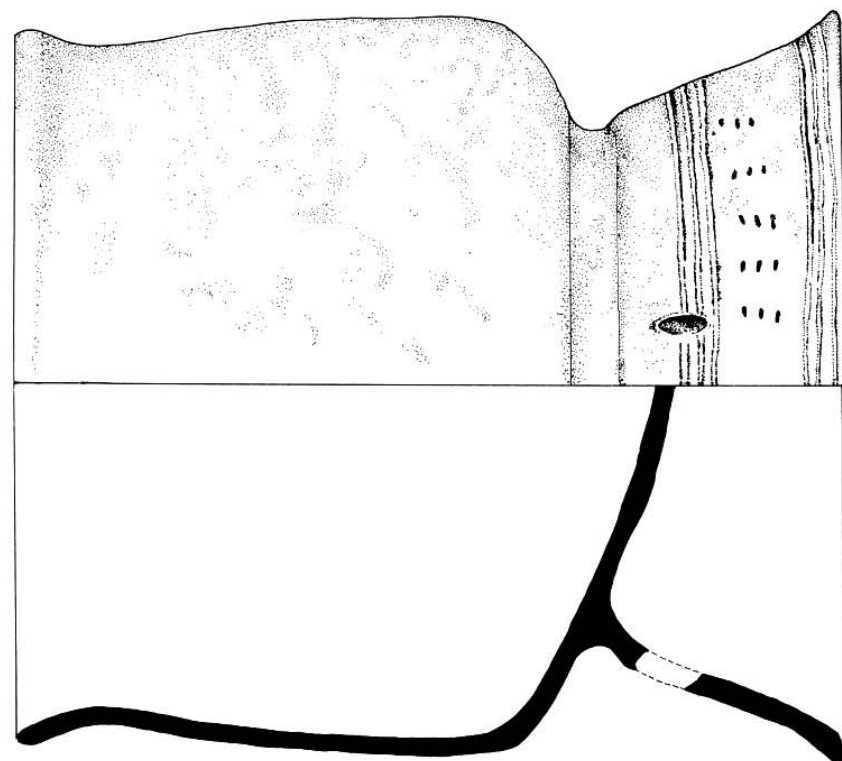


Figure 5.13 -- Floor plan of Squares BX-BZ and B1 showing burials 1-6 and other holes in the DG. [For burial 7 see Figure 5.2]



Figures 5.14 -- The incised chalky bowl with footrim (KLW22) in situ at upper left and in studio at lower left.



K LW 87

Figure 5.15 -- The incised chalky vessel with footrim (K LW87) in a block of soil at upper left and after conservation at lower left.





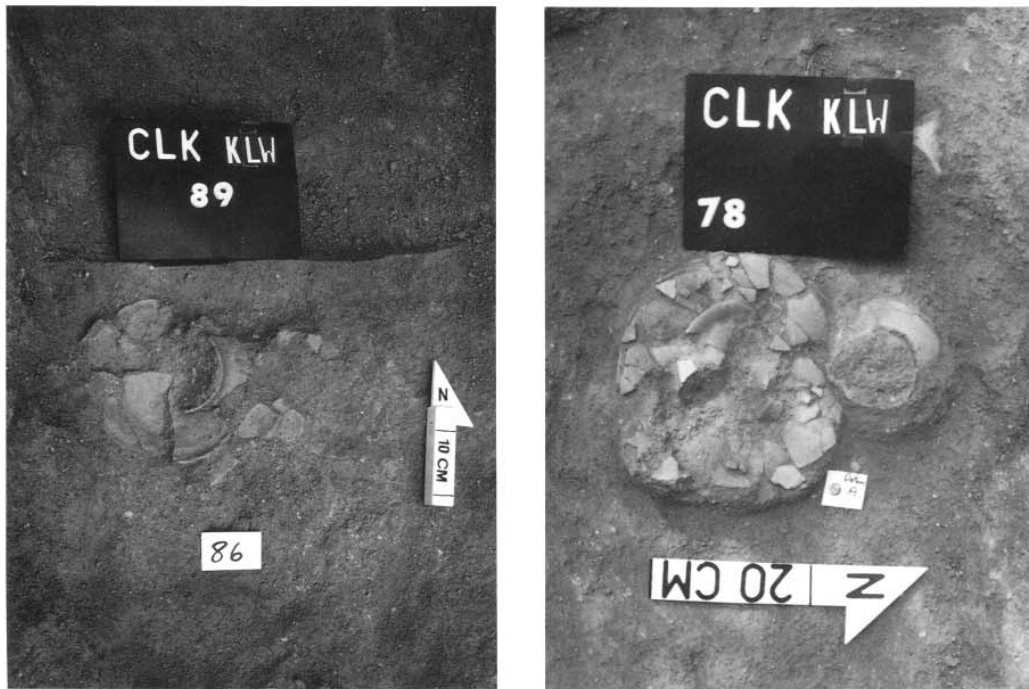


Figure 5.17 -- The fragmentary chalky vessel (KWL89) in situ (left) after the removal of KWL86 , and the two pots of burial 3 (KWL58 and 78) in situ.

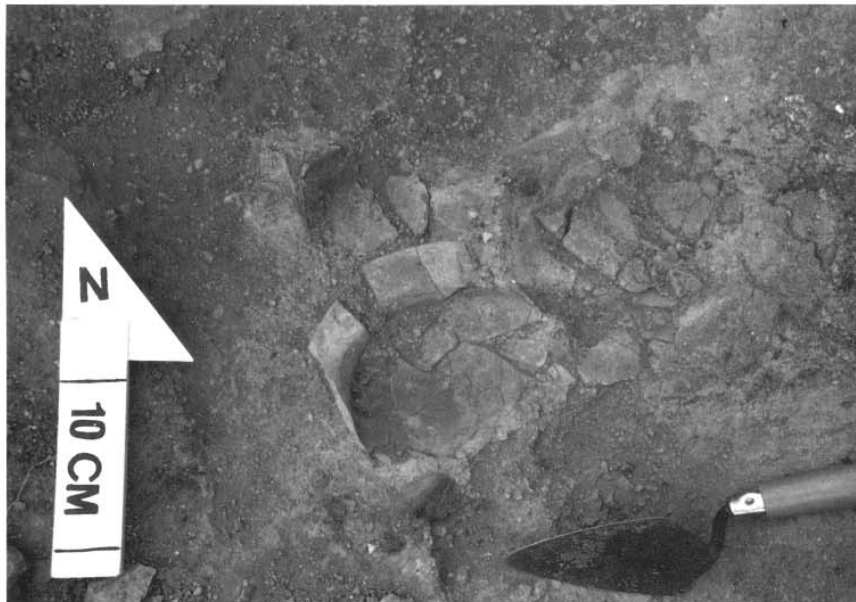


Figure 5.18 -- The two pots(KWL69 and 70) of burial 7 in situ (see Figure 5.4).

With the exception of number 7, all the burial pits could be seen, but they were very shallow and sometimes irregular in shape. The four (1,2,3,6) which have a more regular shape are between 1.2 and 1.4 m in length. Unlike the burials at Fu Tei, these pits seem to have been for primary burial, although they are generally not long enough for a full length adult burial. The bodies may have been flexed. Orientation of numbers 1,2,3 and 7 is north-south; 3 is west-east; 4 is northwest-southeast; and 5 is indeterminate. Several pits near 3 had a similar shape and west-east orientation, but were without artifacts. It is likely that these pits were also burials unaccompanied by goods. Another pit (level of base 7.50) was full of charcoal, but the cut for this pit was very neat, with straight walls; it was assumed to derive from modern activity related to the clay "ovens".

## **DESCRIPTION OF FINDS FROM KWO LO WAN UPPER**

The Middle Neolithic material from this site is highly similar to that of Fu Tei. The pottery types correspond exactly, with the two major classes of coarse corded and fine chalky wares (see Figures 5.19 to 5.21). Both classes have the same typical Middle Neolithic characteristics as seen at Fu Tei: the coarse corded pottery is often superincised on the body and inside the rim with large combed arcs, while the chalky ware is generally incised on the footrim only with simple lines, dots, semi-circles or circles. The chalky footrims are occasionally perforated. No painted pottery was found. K LW16 is very unusual in its incised decoration about the shoulder of a closed vessel. K LW69 and others restored from fragments (see Figure 5.19) have no decoration at all, a condition previously thought to be very rare among chalky vessels.

The complete chalky vessels from the burials are large open vessels, rather too large to be called "bowls." These shapes are akin to FT43, and virtually unknown from other Middle Neolithic sites in Hong Kong, although the reason for this absence is undoubtedly the fragmentary and unrestorable nature of most of the chalky ware hitherto unearthed.

The amount of pottery excavated on the site is comparable to that of Fu Tei, when corrected for the smaller area excavated and thinner deposit surviving. A total of 275 square metres was excavated, yielding 27 kg. of pottery, for a ratio of 206 g/sq.m. At Fu Tei the ratio was 269.

Stone tools included all the same types found at Fu Tei, with one perhaps important exception: there were no grooved polishing stones at Kwo Lo Wan upper. The significance of this fact cannot unfortunately be appreciated, since the function of the grooved stones is not known. If, as has been proposed, their function is to smooth wood or bamboo arrowshafts, then for some inexplicable reason this activity was not carried out on the site. The question of the function of the major pebble tool types is discussed further by Robert Esser in Chapter 10.

Polished stone adzes (see Figures 5.24 to 5.28) range from medium (10-12 cm in length) to very small, and a few shouldered adzes are present, though much fewer than at Fu Tei. The single projectile point K LW34 is the only one its kind from a Middle



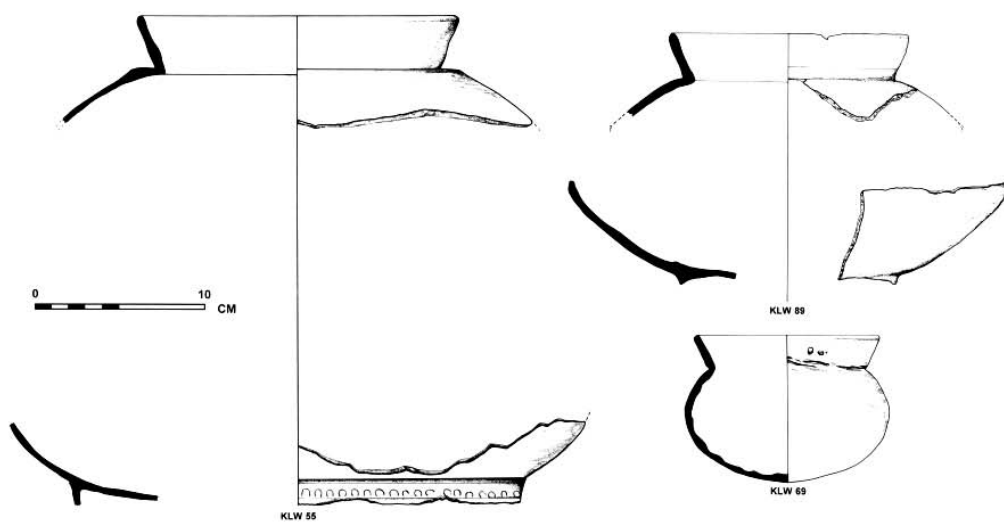


Figure 5.19 -- Plain chalky pots.

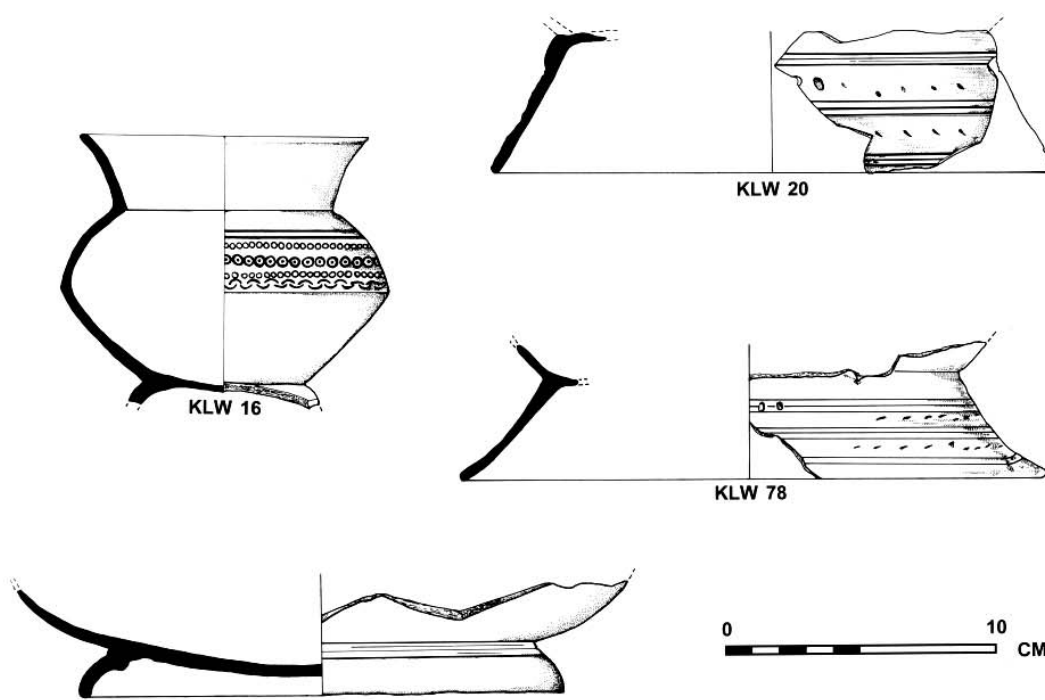


Figure 5.20 -- Chalky ware with incised decoration.

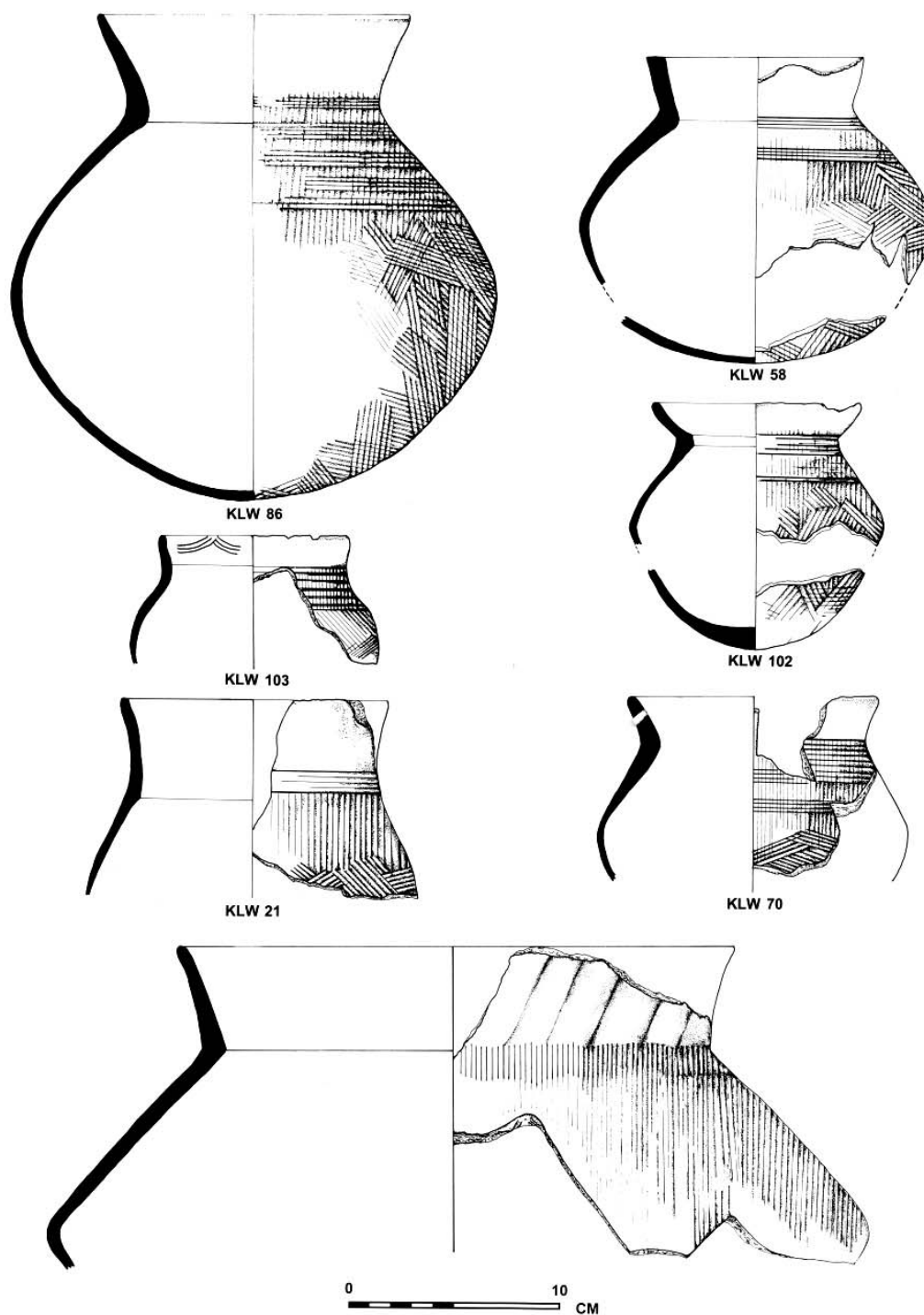


Figure 5.21 -- Coarse corded pottery, some with super-incising.

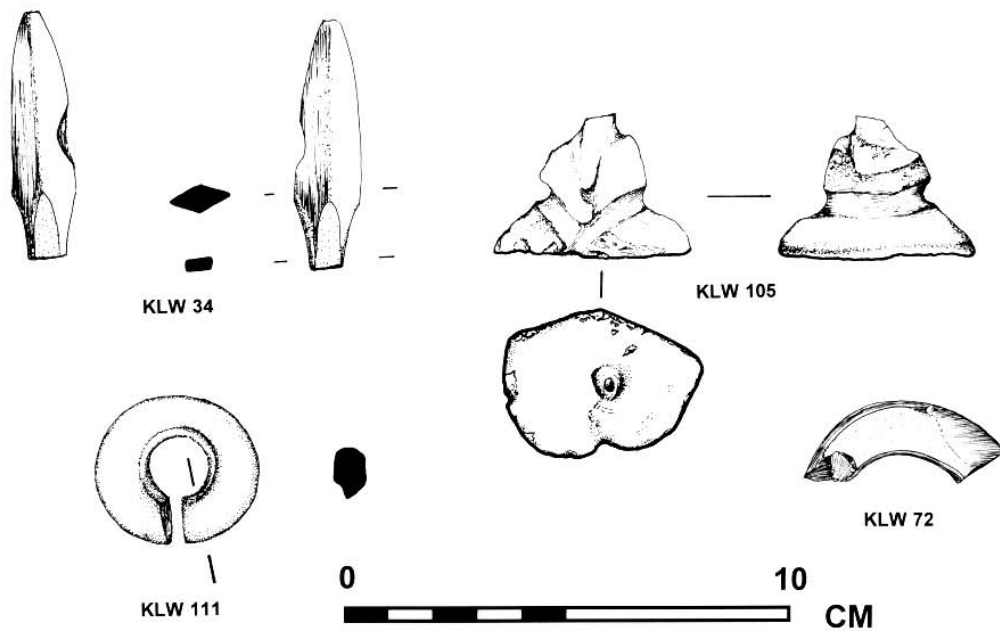


Figure 5.22 -- Polished stone artifacts and a grooved stone of unknown function.

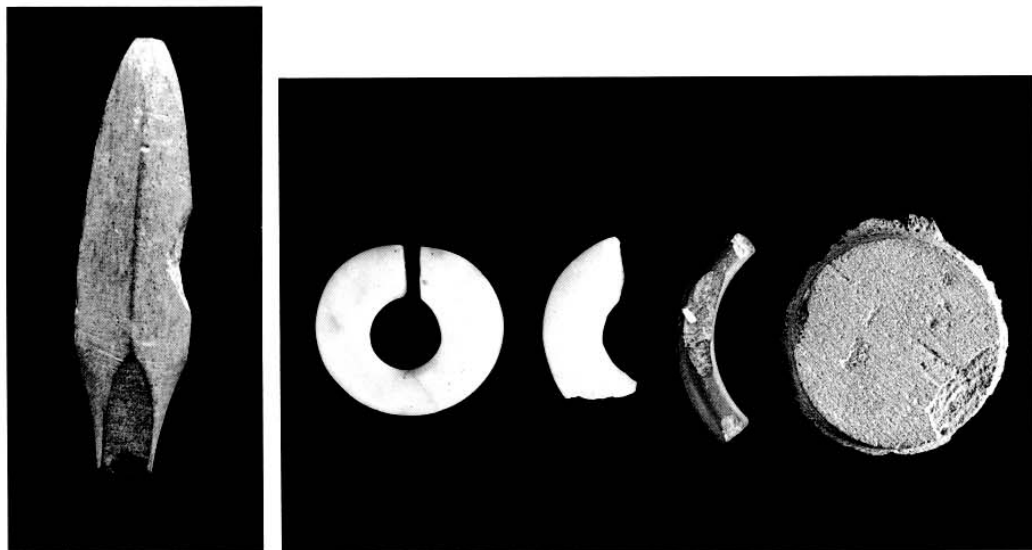
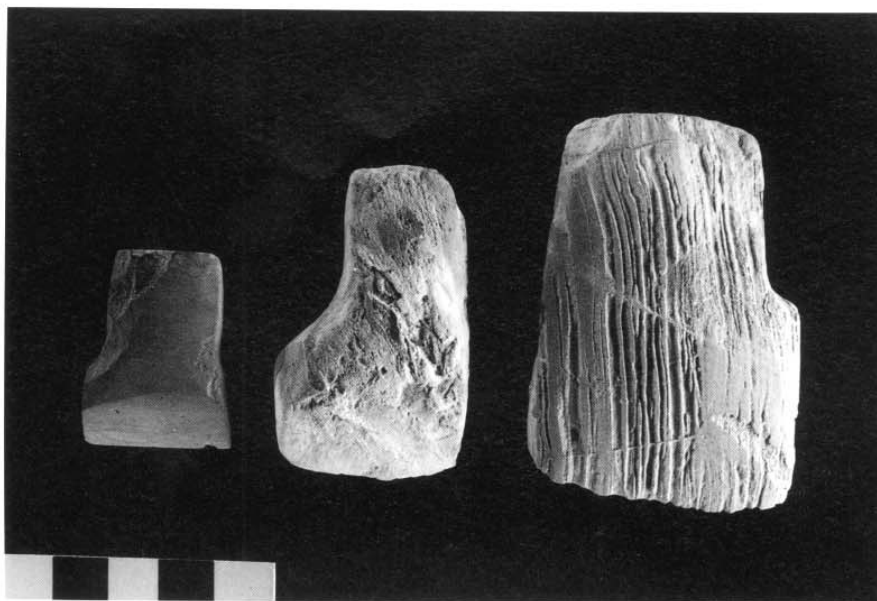


Figure 5.23 -- Polished stone projectile point (KLW34) and slotted quartz ring (KLW111); the two ring fragments and ring core are from Fu Tei.



*Figure 5.24 -- Semi-shouldered adzes from Kwo Lo Wan.*



*Figure 5.25 -- Very small adzes.*

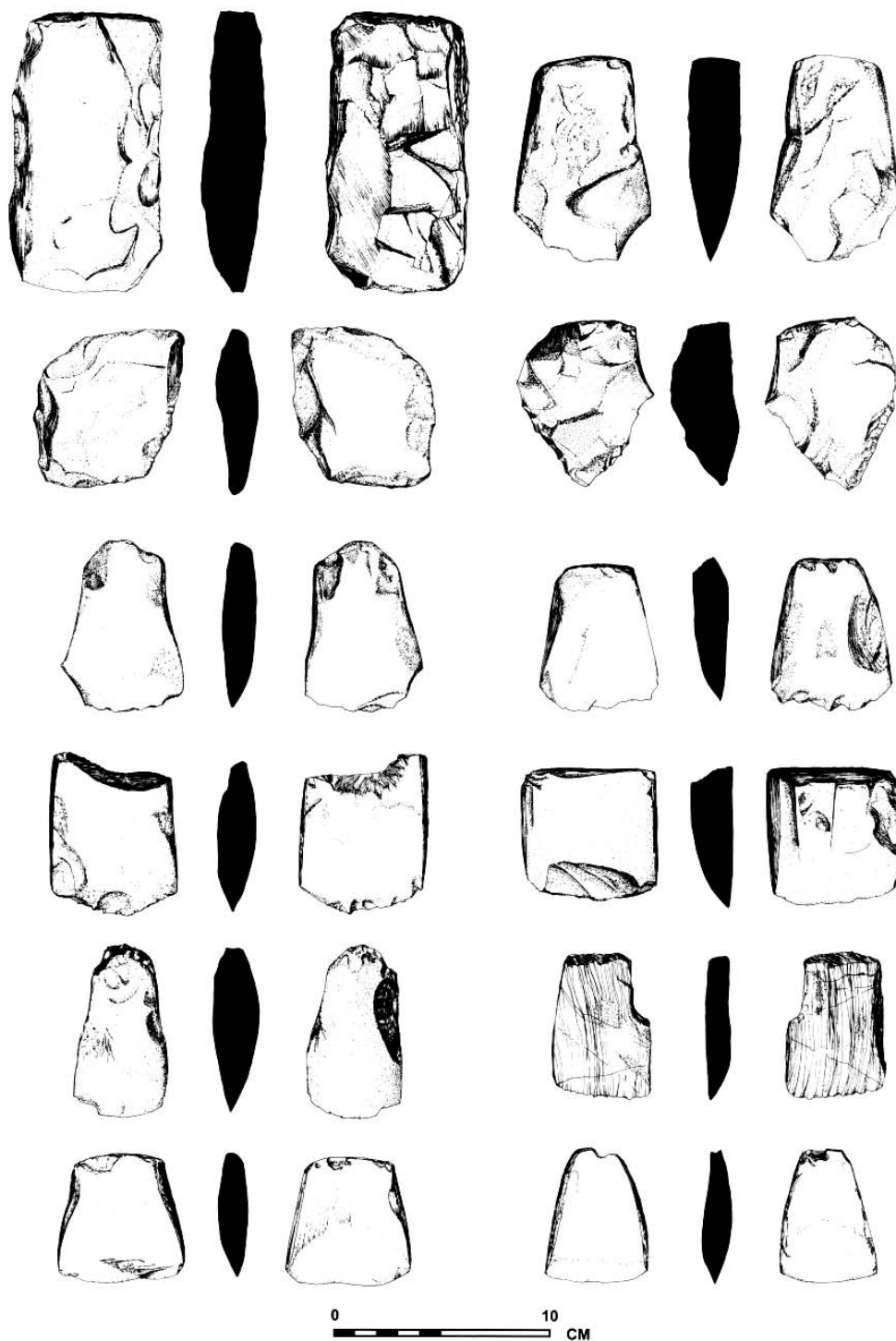


Figure 5.26 -- Adzes and chipped pebble tools (second row) from Kwo Lo Wan.

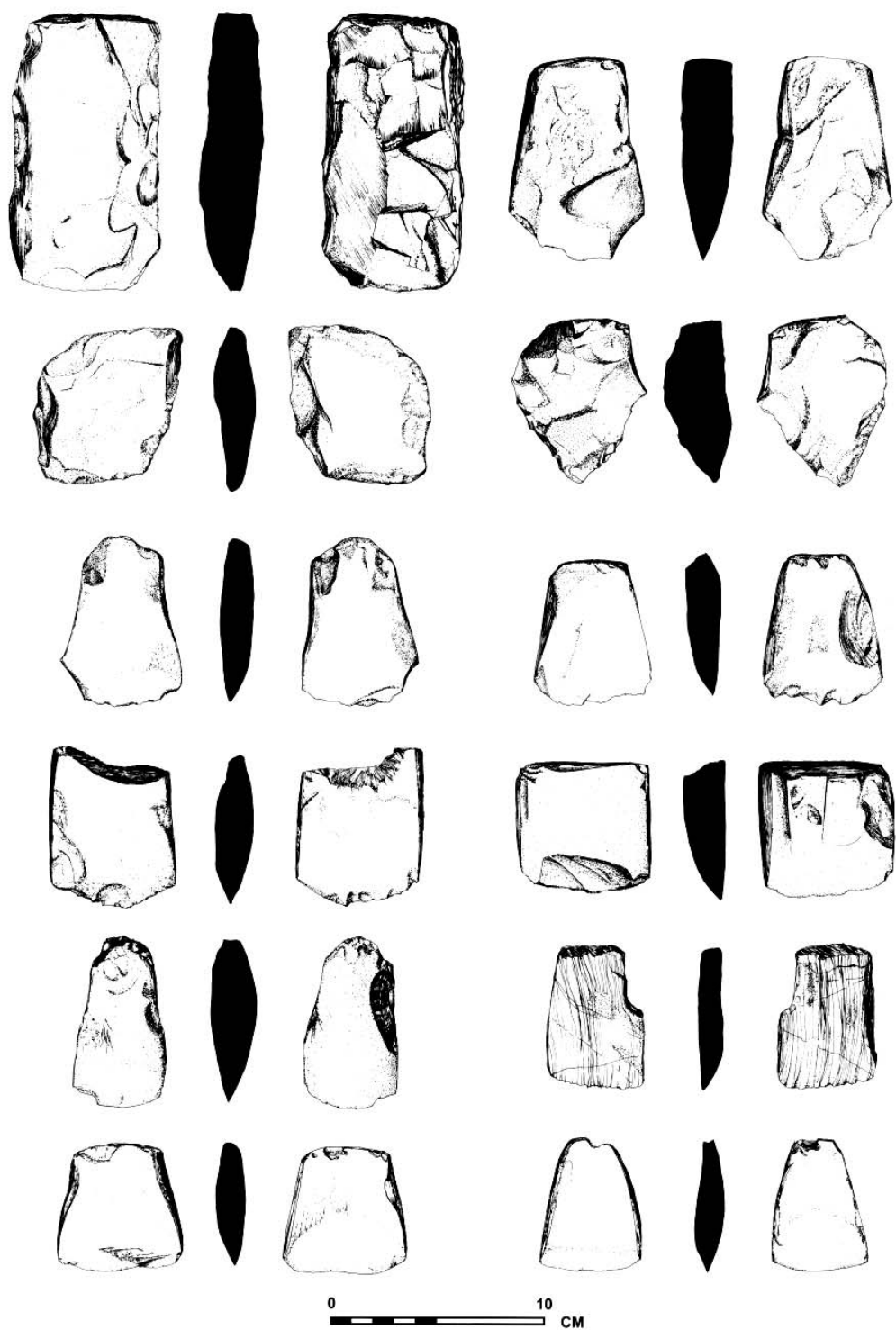


Figure 5.26 -- Adzes and chipped pebble tools (second row) from Kwo Lo Wan.



Figure 5.27 -- Adzes, including flakes reworked as adzes, from Kwo Lo Wan.

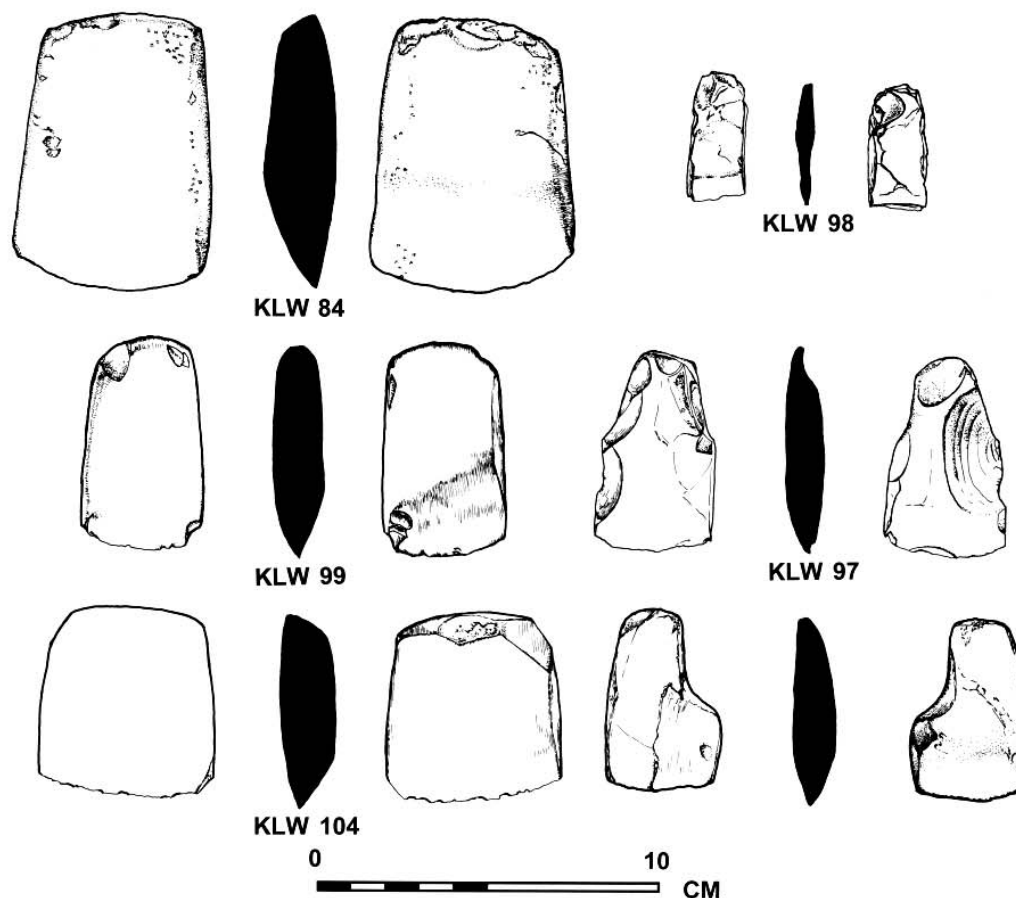


Figure 5.28 -- Adzes from Kwo Lo Wan.

Neolithic site in Hong Kong, and resembles the most common type in the earliest ("Yung Long") phase of the Late Neolithic. Slotted stone rings are found at other sites, and the complete specimen FT111 is similar to others from this phase. The grooved stone artifact KLW105 is unique, and of unknown function (see Figure 5.22).

As at Fu Tei, stone flakes are relatively few, the ratio of sherds (weight in grams) to flakes ranging from 50-150 in most squares to 225-270 in squares J and K. No large clusters of flakes were encountered.

#### ANALYSIS OF MATERIAL FROM KWO LO WAN UPPER

Two radiocarbon dates were obtained on charcoal from the Middle Neolithic cultural layer:



Square J, hole -- 4410 +/- 80 (BETA-45150) calibrating to 3350-2900 B.C.  
Square L, hole -- 4610 +/- 90 (BETA-60795) calibrating to 3628-3039 B.C.

The results are internally consistent and indicate an occupation of the site sometime between 3500-3000 B.C. This range is later than those of Fu Tei Wan, but believed that their occupation must have been very close in time, if not overlapping. See chapter 10 for further discussion of the dating of the cultural phases represented at Chek Lap Kok.

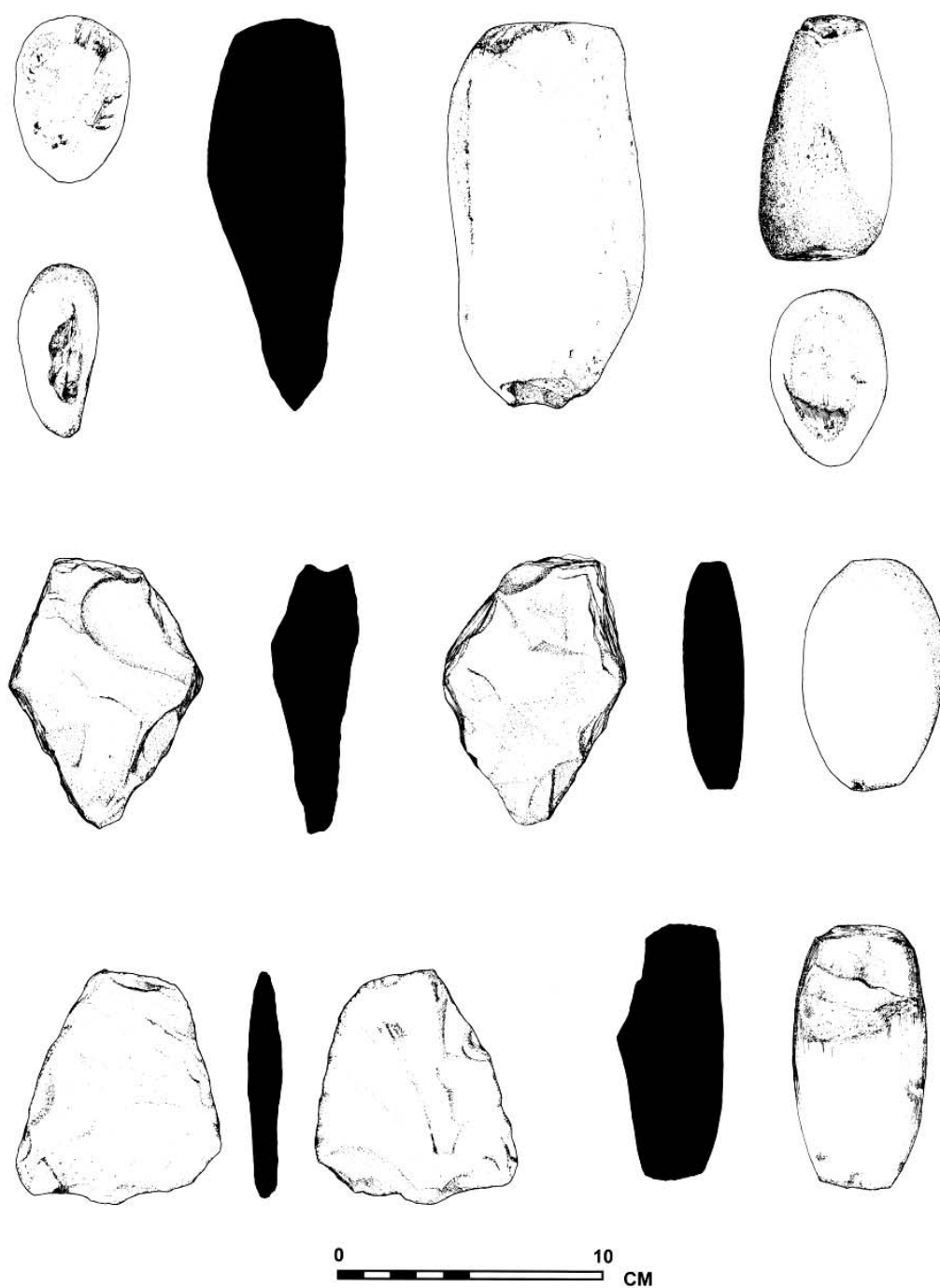
A sample of charcoal from the fired clay structure FC2 gave a result of 100.8% of modern (BETA-46867), indicating a date after the commencement of atomic bomb testing in 1944.

#### DISCUSSION OF THE KWO LO WAN UPPER SITE

This site has much in common with Fu Tei, providing similar types of material and data. Many of the uncertainties and problems posed in the discussion of the Fu Tei site apply here as well. The importance of the Kwo Lo Wan upper site lies mainly in the records and the examples of complete flexed burials recovered from the site.

Most of the burials appear to have been primary, flexed burials, unlike the secondary burials suggested by the evidence from Fu Tei. The orientation varies from north to west, and the quantity and type of burial goods are not consistent. Like Fu Tei, this site has many pits in the burial area containing nothing, possibly representing simple burials unaccompanied by any grave goods.

The holes in the DG are certainly evidence of habitation structures of some kind, but unfortunately once again no clear picture emerges concerning what shape these huts or tents had. It certainly seems that the lack of a pattern of postholes is the pattern. One can only assume that the habitation structures were irregular, used only a few posts, and that the impression of a regular grid is a result of the way the postholes were recorded.



*Figure 5.29 -- Pebble tools from Kwo Lo Wan.*

Another artifact conspicuous by its absence is the spindle whorl. At neither site was any example found, and this absence contrasts sharply with the frequent occurrence of whorls in the next prehistoric culture, the "Yung Long phase" of the Late Neolithic. It seems likely that bark cloth continued to be the main source of cloth during the inhabitation of Fu Tei and Kwo Lo Wan upper.

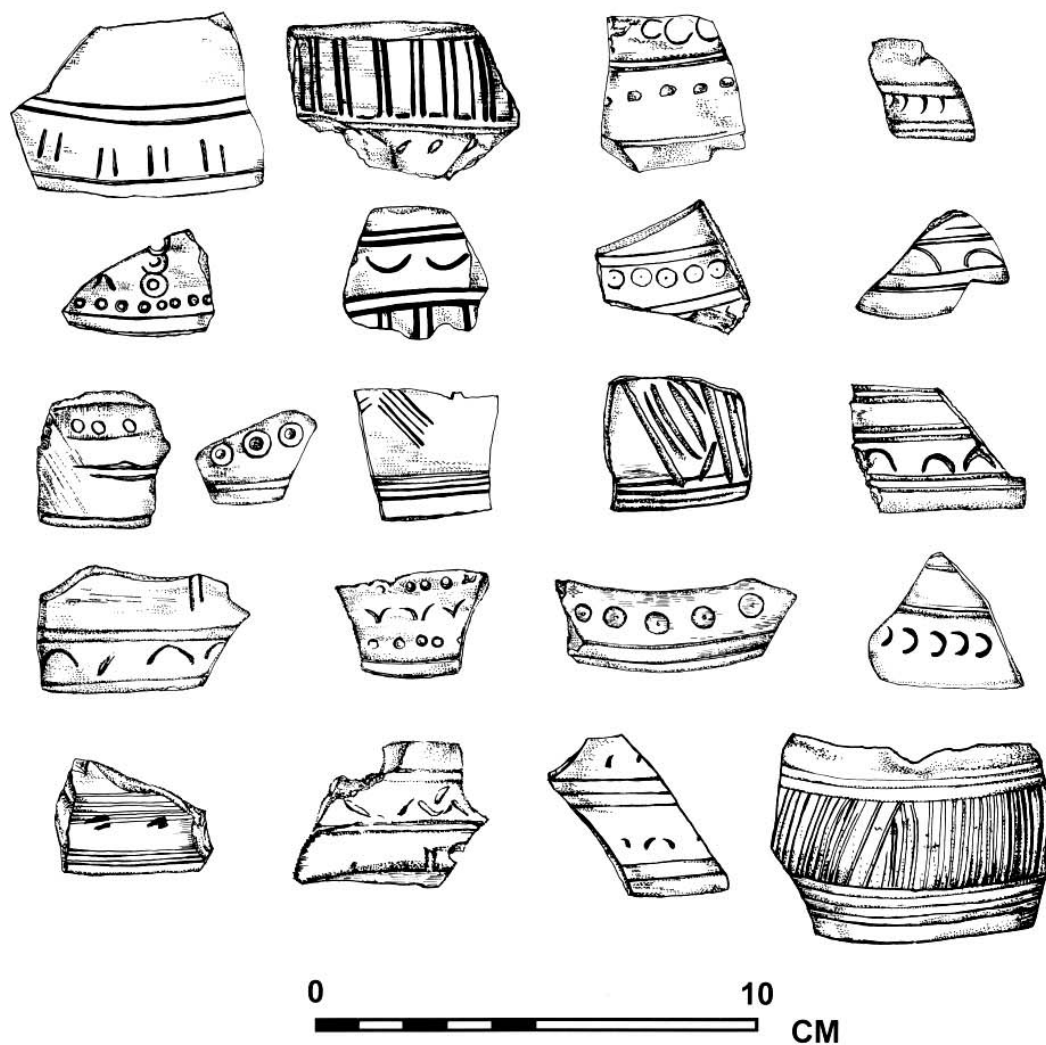


Figure 5.30 -- Incised chalky sherds from Kwo Lo Wan, Fu Tei and Sham Wan Tsuen East Valley (see chapter 8).