

Prehistoric archaeology. The site of Garba IV

The test trenches A and B

and the sounding in Level E

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Two test trenches were excavated during the 1979 field season, about 16 m from the main excavation, to attempt an evaluation of the extension of Level D. Both were excavated over an initial area of about 1.5 square metre. Test trench A was halted at a depth of about 120 cm from the present land surface. Test trench B was about 150 cm deeper than test trench A. The location of the test trenches is indicated in Fig. 1. Fig. 2 is a schematic synthesis of the stratigraphy of both trenches from mapping undertaken during the excavation.

Material from test trench A

At the base of test trench A a small portion of a paleosurface was found. It included eight faunal elements and 25 lithic artefacts (Figs. 3, 4). Among the eight faunal elements (three tooth fragments and five bone fragments) the only identifiable piece is a part of an antelope tooth. The lithic industry is classified typologically as indicated in Tab. 1.

Types	N
Flakes	4
Fragments	2
Choppers	3
Battered pebbles	8
Broken pebbles	8

Tab. 1. Typological classification of the lithic industry from test trench A.

All the tools on pebbles are made of basalt; the flakes and one of the fragments are of obsidian, the other fragment is made of tuff.

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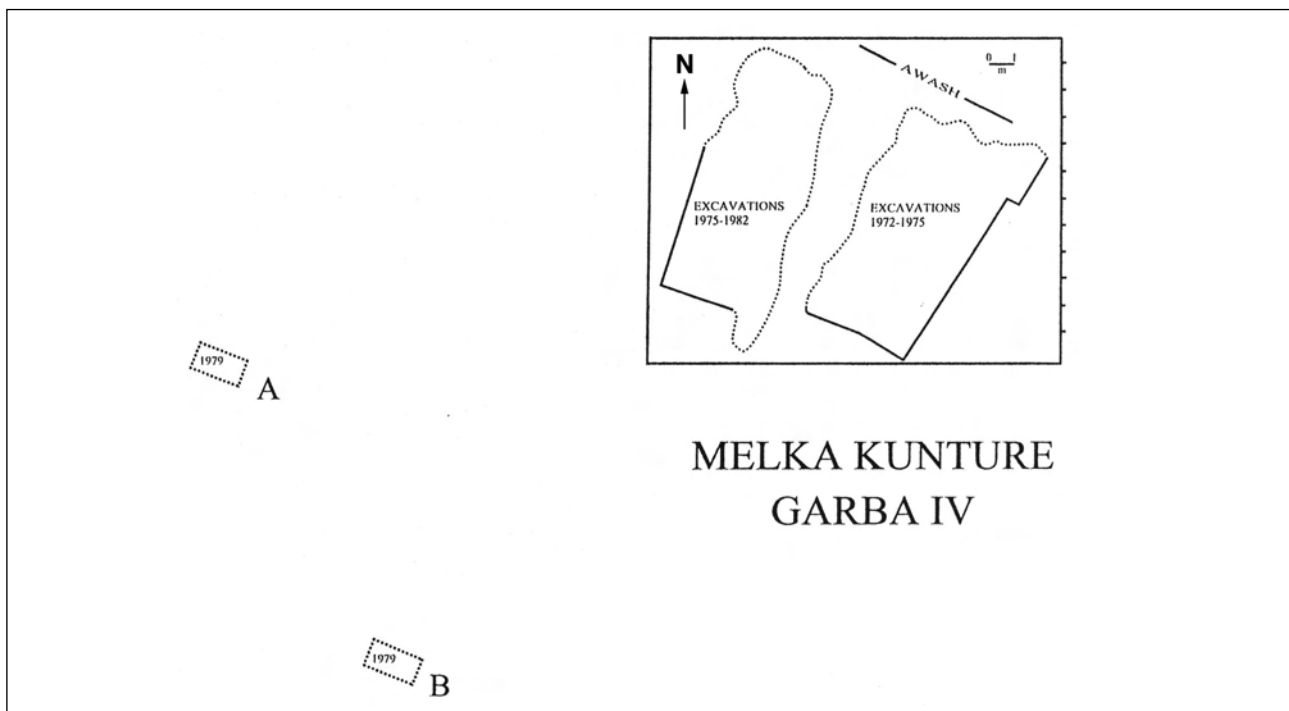


Fig. 1. Location of test trenches A and B.

Flakes

The flakes are small, ranging between 57 mm and 90 mm in length, 31 mm and 36 mm in width, and 10 mm and 44 mm in thickness. Their weight ranges from a minimum of 10 g to a maximum of 248 g. Two of them show clear traces of use.

Fragments

The two fragments (one of obsidian and one of tuff) are small (length: 57, 78 mm; width: 54, 55 mm; thickness: 22, 37 mm; weight: 60, 152 g).

Choppers

All are bifacial choppers made of basalt, two lateral and one distal. The length of the three choppers is between 75 mm and 110 mm; the width between 72 mm and 78 mm; the thickness between 58 mm and 69 mm. The weight ranges from 345 g to 800 g.

Battered pebbles

The length ranges from 77 mm to 135 mm; the width from 57 mm to 114 mm; the thickness from 45 mm to 74 mm. The weight is between 220 g and 1420 g.

Broken pebbles

The length ranges from 65 mm to 210 mm; the width from 58 mm to 180 mm; the thickness from 31 mm to 110 mm. The weight is between 140 g and 4040 g.

GARBA IV

Excavations 1972-1982

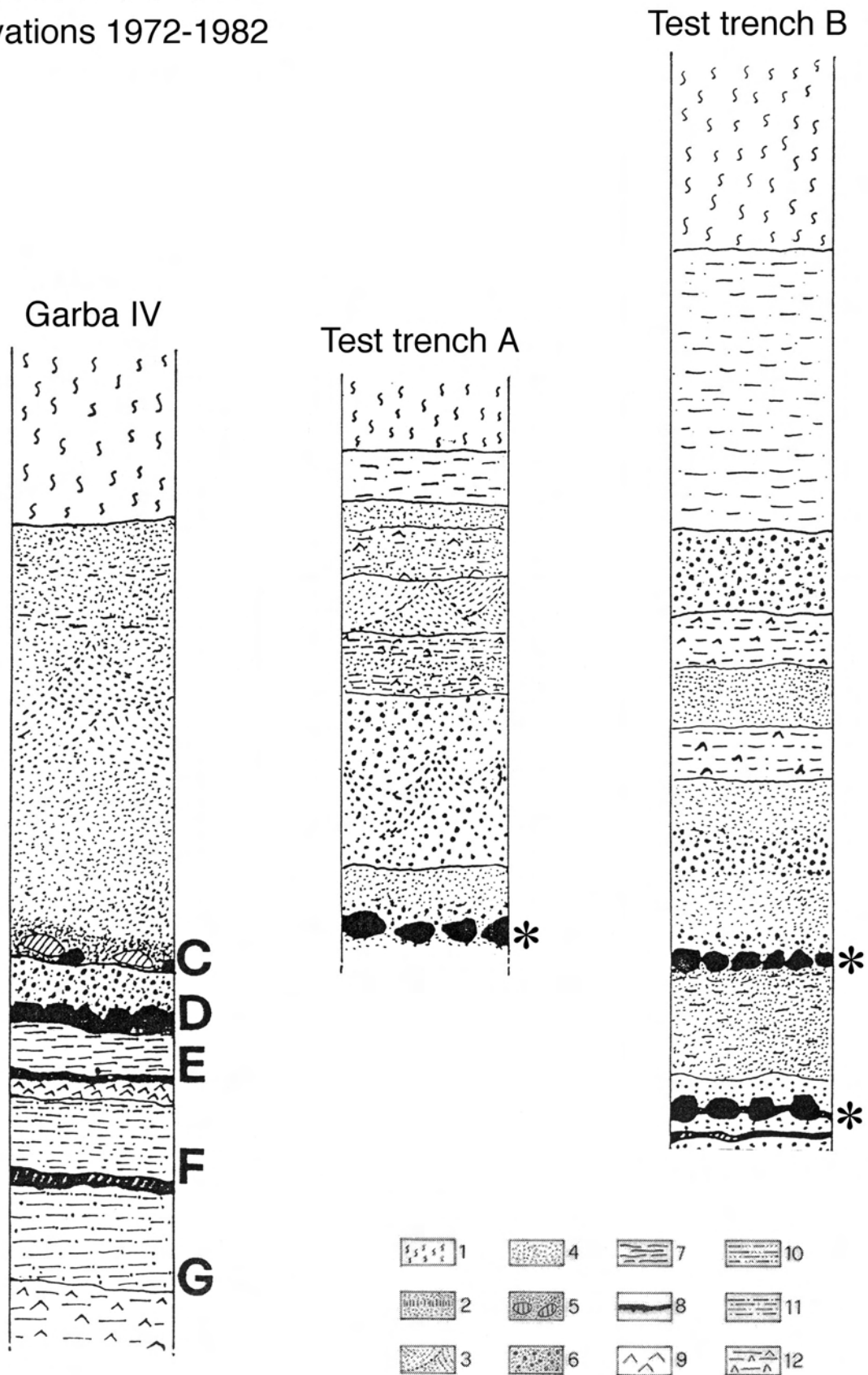




Fig. 3. Garba IV. The archaeological level of test trench A.

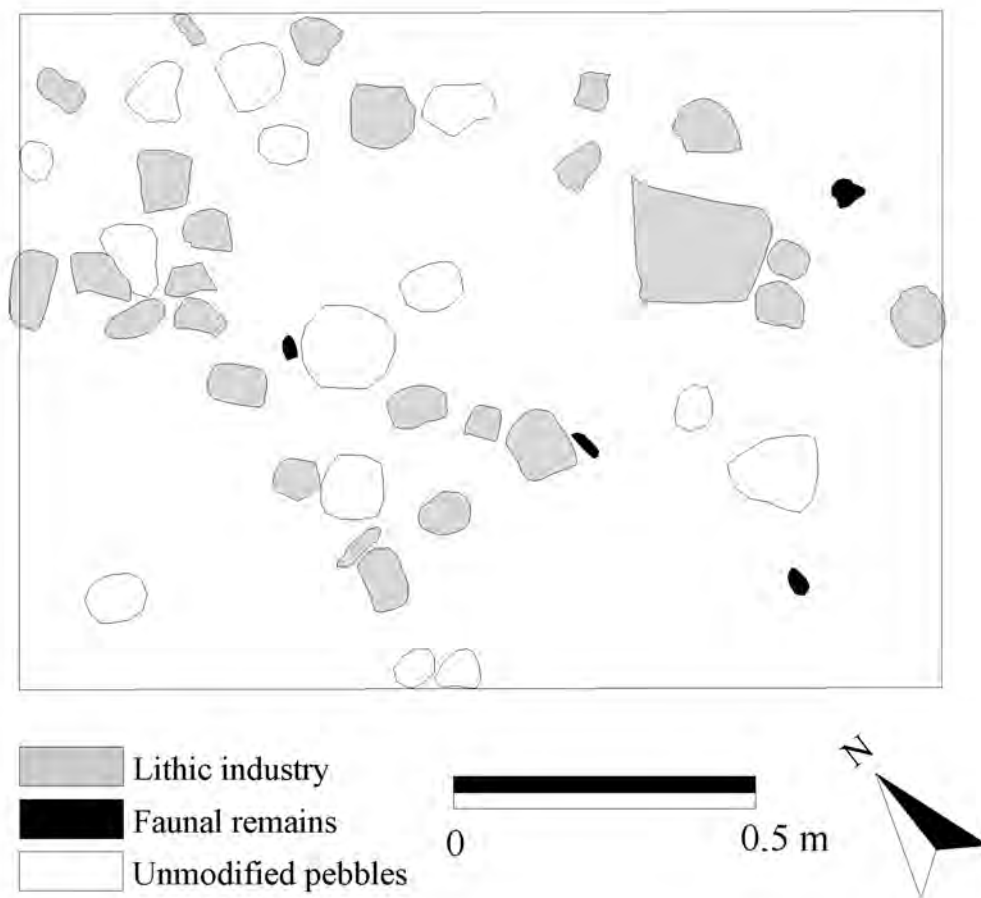


Fig. 4. Plan of the archaeological level of test trench A.

(Original plan by G.M. Bulgarelli and M. Piperno, digital map by R. Gallotti)

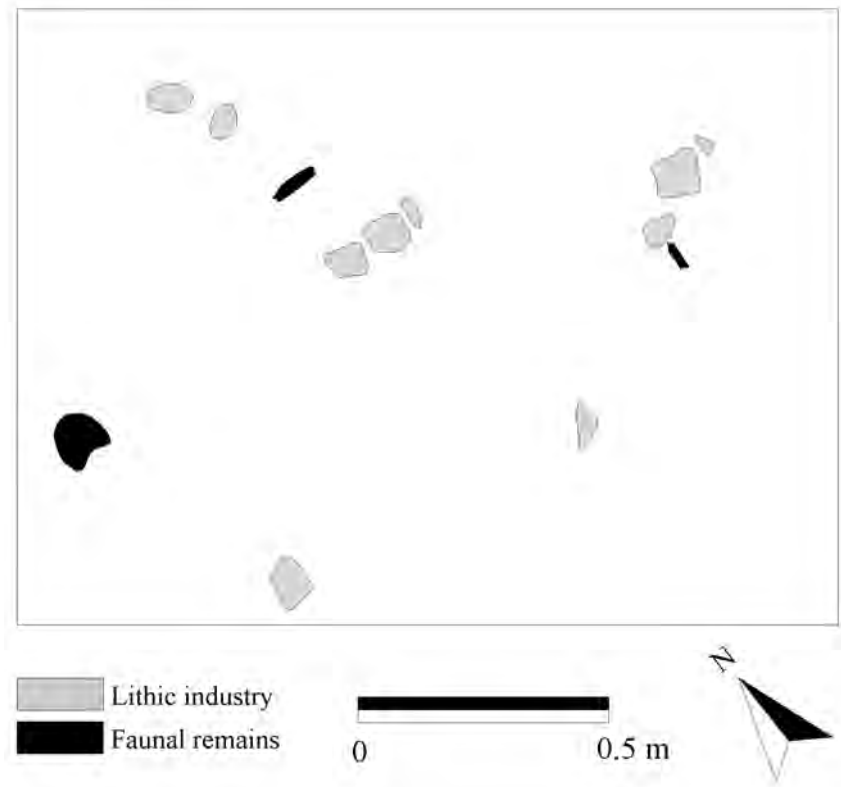


Fig. 5. Plan of the upper archaeological level of test trench B.
 (Original plan by G.M. Bulgarelli and M. Piperno, digital map by R. Gallotti)

Material from test trench B - Level 1

In the first Level (B1) identified in this test trench, at a depth effectively corresponding to the portion of paleosurface in test trench A, a total of three unidentifiable bone fragments and ten artefacts were found (Fig. 5). The artefacts include two obsidian flakes, one made of basalt, one retouched tuff flake, one basalt chopper, three battered pebbles, and two broken pebbles.

Material from test trench B - Level 2

The deepening of the test trench B by about 60 cm allowed us to identify a further Level (B2), possibly corresponding to one of the lower levels of the main excavation.

In the explored area it was possible to identify five bone fragments and unidentifiable tooth fragments in addition to eight flakes (seven of obsidian and one of basalt), one denticulate on an obsidian flake, one lateral bifacial chopper, one obsidian formless core, five broken pebbles and eight battered pebbles.

Concluding remarks

Although the material recovered was sparse and not very significant, considering the limited size of the excavation area the importance of these two test trenches is that they confirmed the wide extent of the paleosurfaces explored in the main excavations.

This observation is comparable to other sites of Melka Kunture, such as for example Simbiro, where outcrops of some of the levels attributed to the Acheulian can be followed along the sections for several hundred metres. Also in the area of Gombore II, several excavations carried out in different zones far from each other have consistently confirmed the extension of some levels with high concentrations of artefacts and faunal remains.

The meaning of such concentrations of material is difficult to understand at the moment, and it will be possible to explain it only by applying excavation methodologies designed to sample large areas referable to the same archaeological level, or to identify the nature and the characteristics of the limit of such concentrations.

The sounding in Level E

The sounding in Level E, identified since the beginning of the excavations, was carried out towards the end of the 1981 field season, after Level D was removed. The sounding covered four square metres 2-3E/6-7N (Fig. 6).

The materials attributed to Level E were found at an average depth of about 60 cm below the base of Level D.

A total of 51 faunal remains attributed to Bovids, Equids, Hippopotamus and Suids, and 27 artefacts were recovered. Of the artefacts 15 were made of basalt, eight of obsidian, two of trachyte, and two of tuff.

The lithic industry is classified typologically as indicated in Tab. 2.

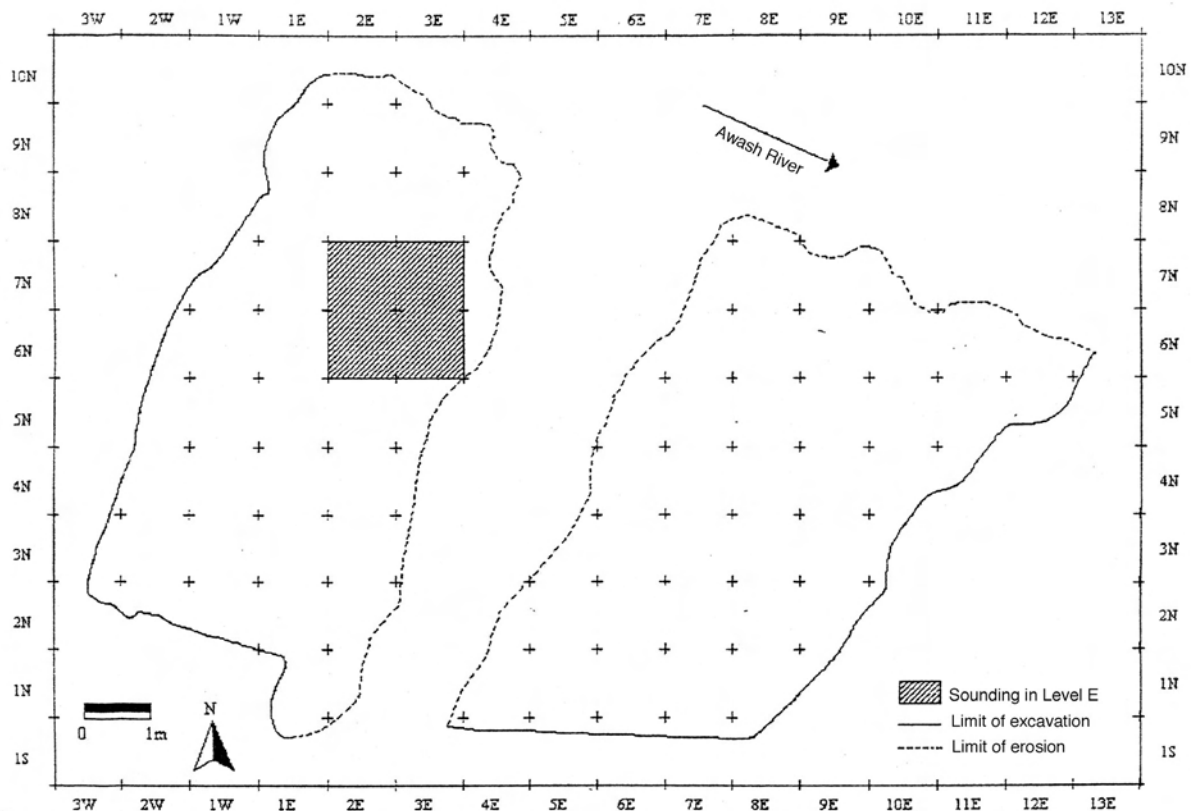


Fig. 6. Map showing the location of the sounding in Level E.

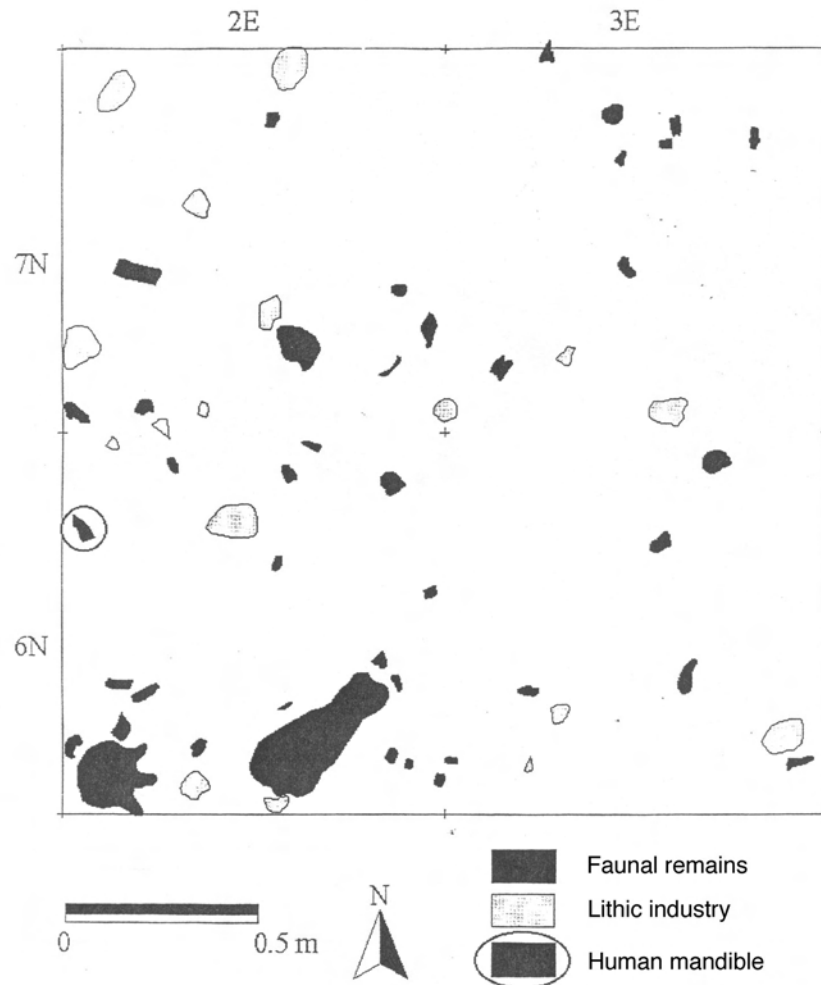


Fig. 7. Plan of the sounding in Level E. (Original plan by G.M. Bulgarelli and M. Piperno, digital map by R. Gallotti)

Types	N
Flakes	3
Notches	2
Choppers	3
Polyhedrons	3
Rabots	1
Cores	1
Battered pebbles	3
Broken pebbles	7

Tab. 2. Typological classification of the lithic industry from the sounding in Level E.



Fig. 8. View of the *Homo erectus* child mandible from Level E.

The location of the materials from Level E is indicated in Fig. 7.

From the small sample analysed it is not possible to demonstrate clear differences between it and the lithic industry from Level D.

Particularly important is the finding of a left mandible (Gar IV E 0043), attributed to a *Homo erectus* child (see Condemi, in this volume), lying among the material from the sounding in Level E (Fig. 8).