Zagros Epipaleolithic

Principal sites

- Zarzi
- Palegawra
- Warwasi
- Pa Sangar
- Gar-i-Khar

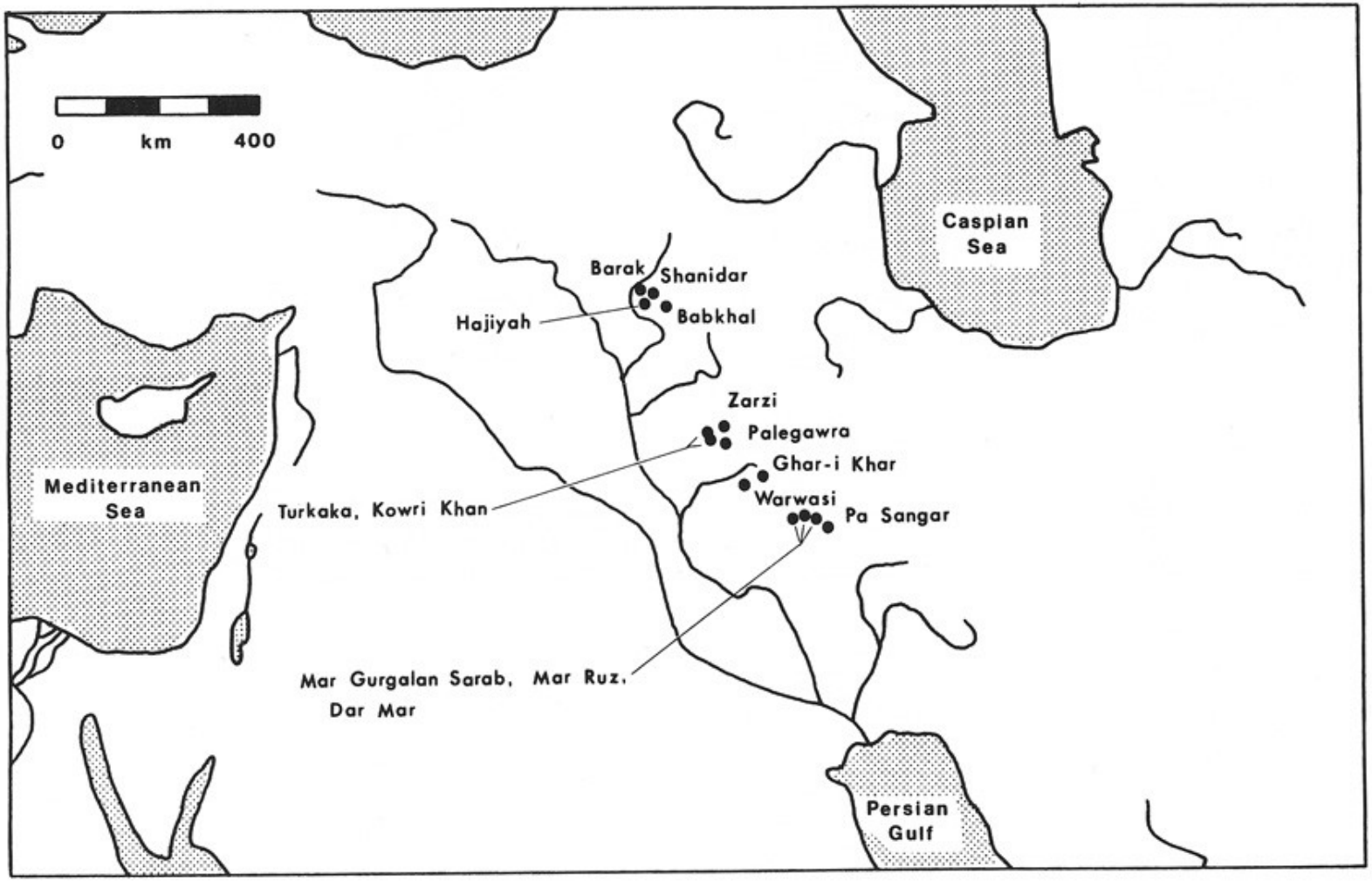
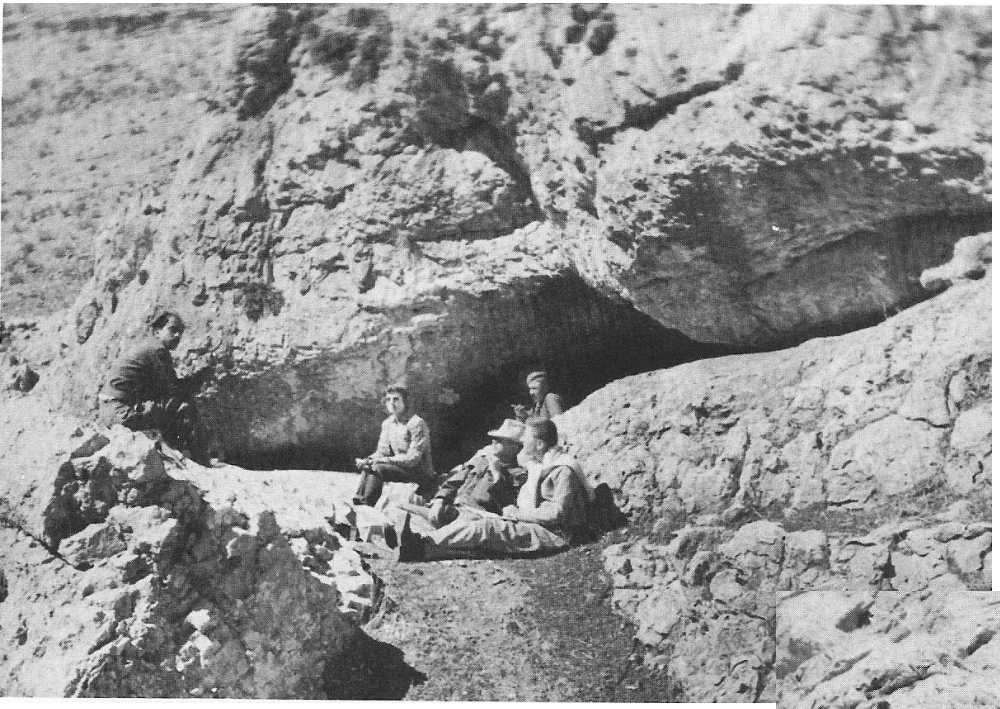


Figure 8.3. Zarian sites in the Zagros area.

OLSZEWSKI

Zarzian sites in the Zagros

Baradostian & Zarzian Sites



At Zarzi – Bruce Howe,
Linda Braidwood, et al

Palegawra Cave

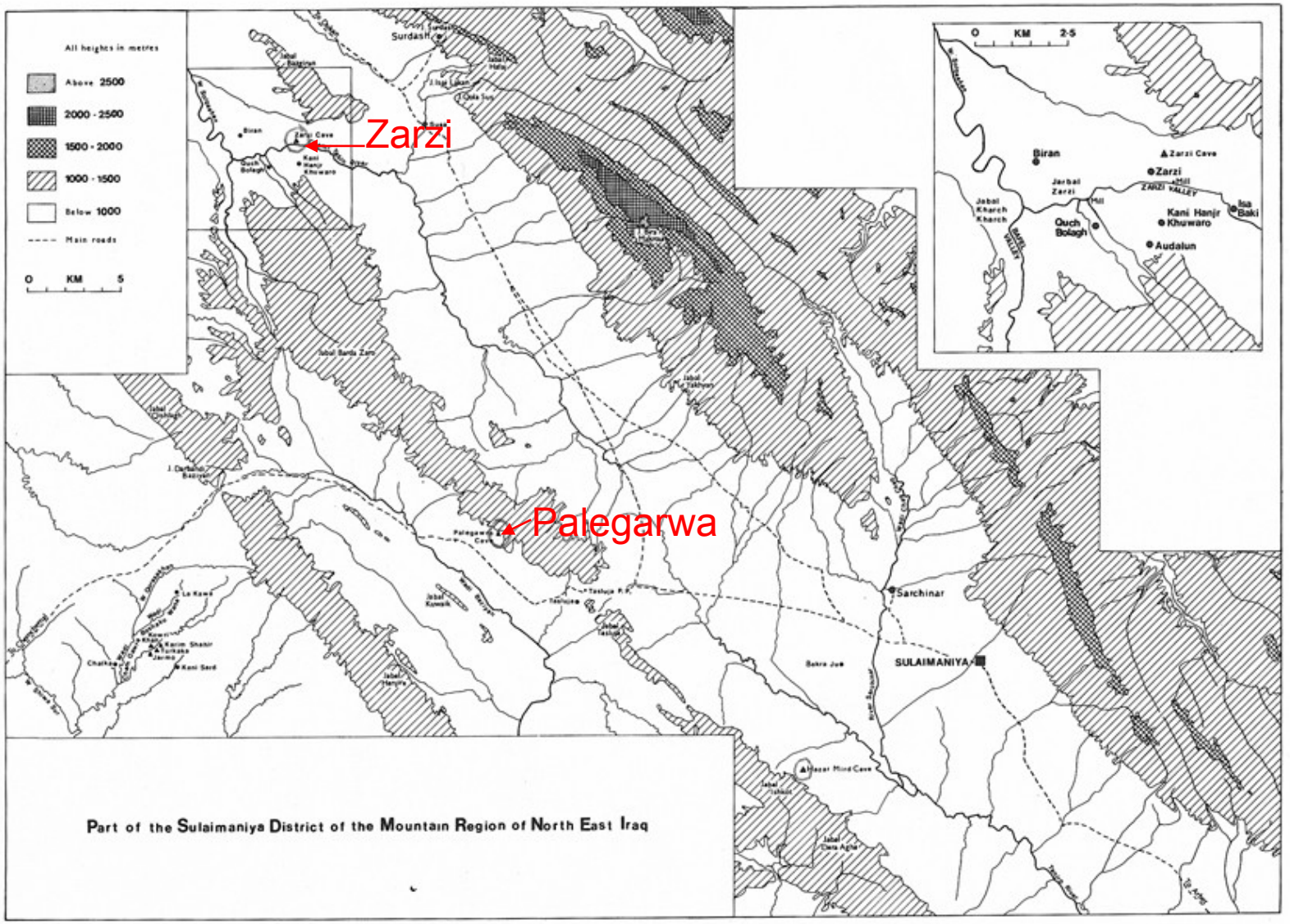


Fig. 2
Part of the Sulaimaniyah District, where Zarzi and other important sites lie.

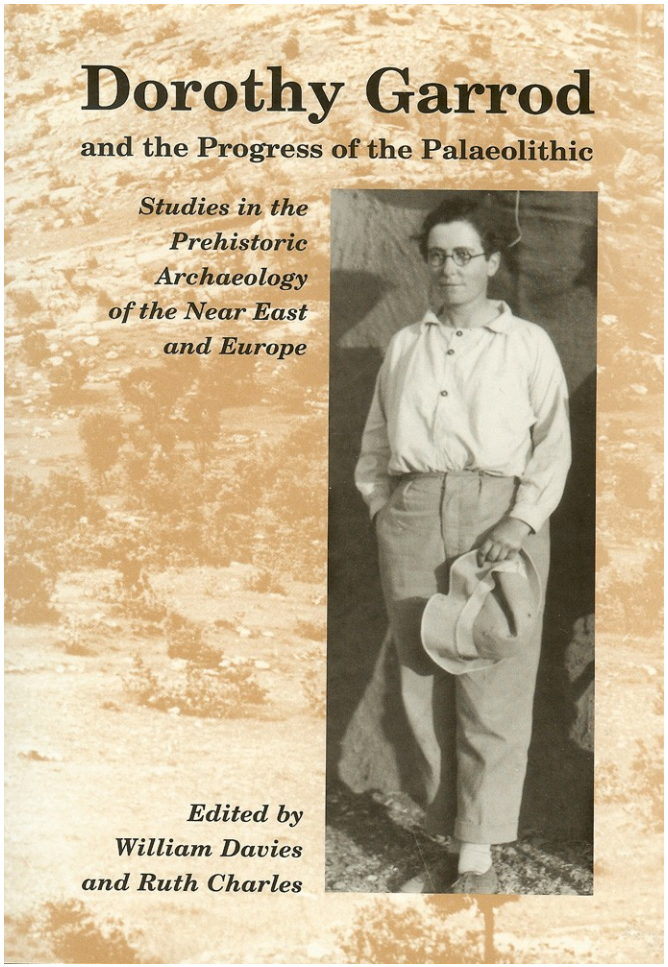
Wahida's map of Sulaimaniyah District and Zarzi-Palegawra

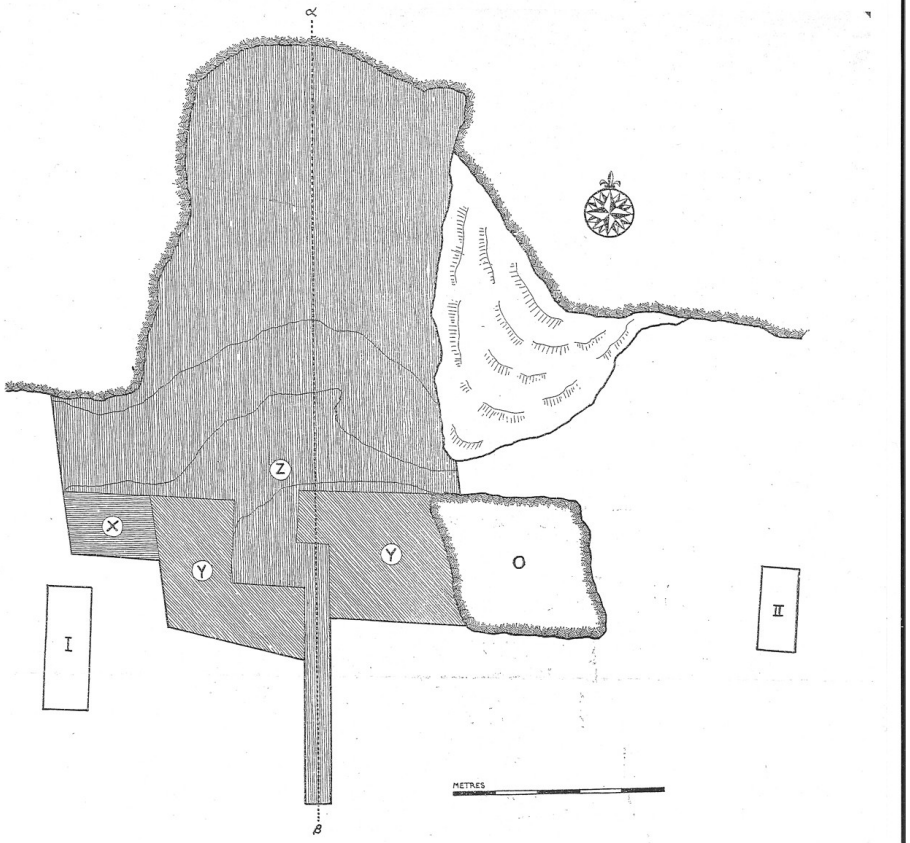
The Zagros

- Mountain environment (Iraq-Iran)
- Most known sites in caves and rock shelters
- No permanent settlements
- Little or no ground stone
- Cultural sequence: Baradostian (Aurignacian), Zarzian, “Pre-pottery Neolithic”

Zarzi and Palegawra

- Excavated by Dorothy Garrod in 1928 and Ghanim Wahida in 1971





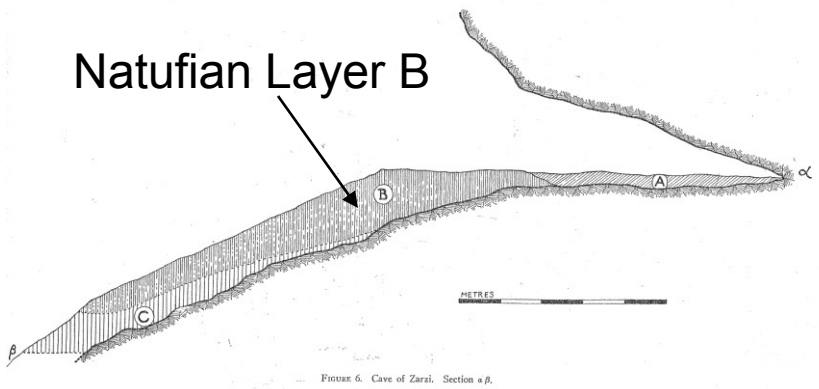


FIGURE 6. Cave of Zarzi. Section α β.

Garrod's plan and section of Zarzi

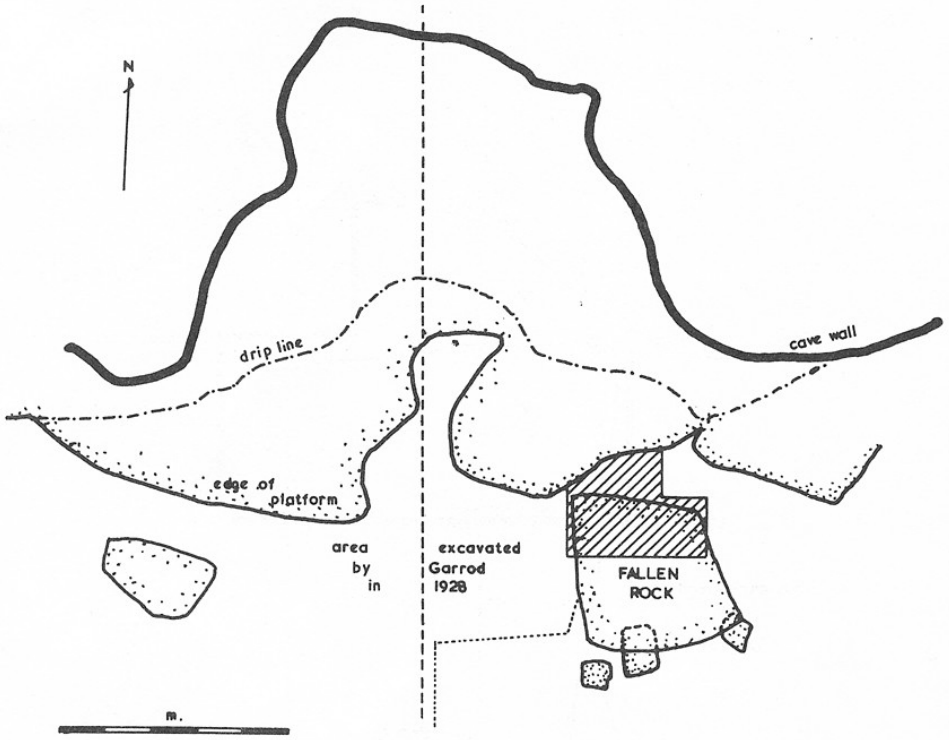


Fig. 3
Ground plan of cave and platform, showing the areas excavated in 1928 and 1971. The broken line indicates Garrod's line α-β on her fig. 5, running roughly north-south.

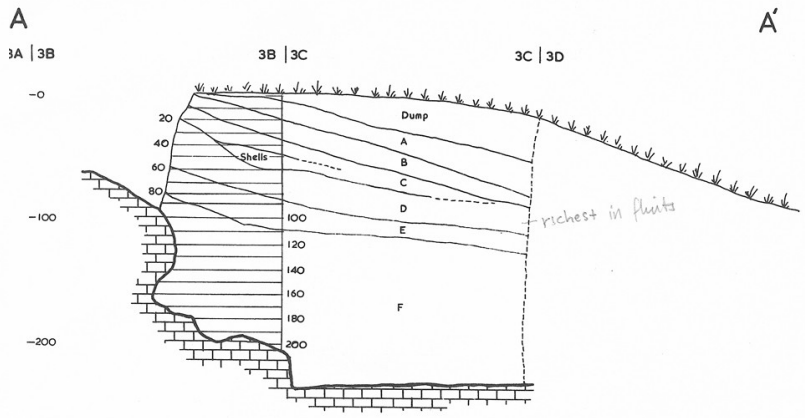


Fig. 5
The A-A′ section showing the south face of the main cutting.

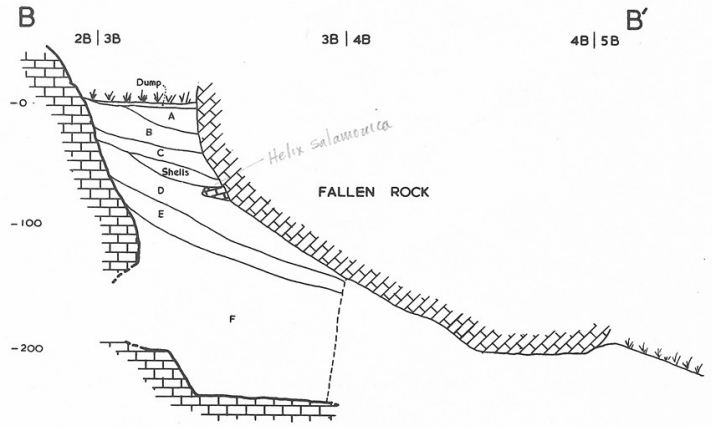


Fig. 6
The B-B′ section showing the north-south face of the cutting in Sq. 3B. The section is at the interface between the areas dug by spits and by natural layers (compare section A-A′, fig. 4).

Wahida's plan and section – Note sloping strata

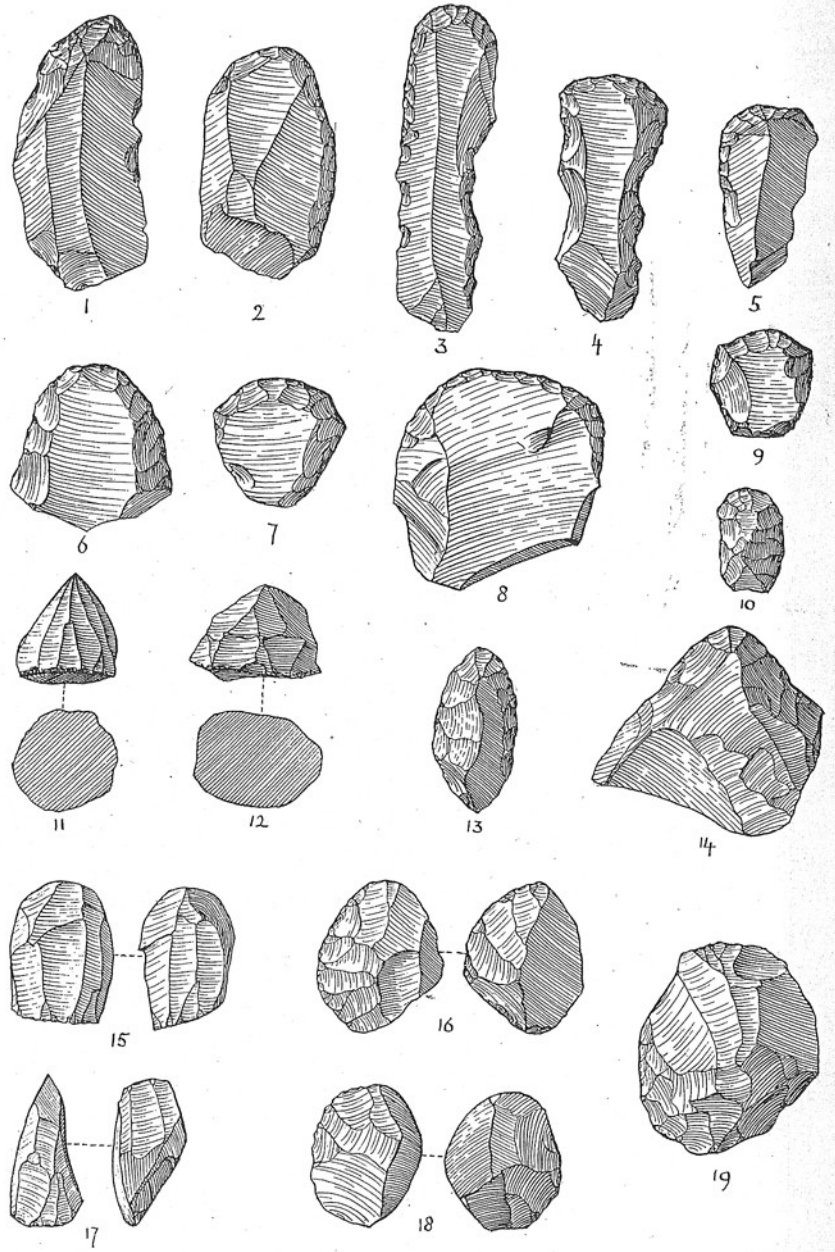


FIGURE 8. Implements from layer B. Zarzi. Scale ⅔.

The double specimen has the graver-blows to right and left at the same end of the flake. There are three examples of the small Noailles graver (no. 20).

(b) *Bec-de-flute* (flute mouthpiece) gravers (nos. 21-24). No. 23,

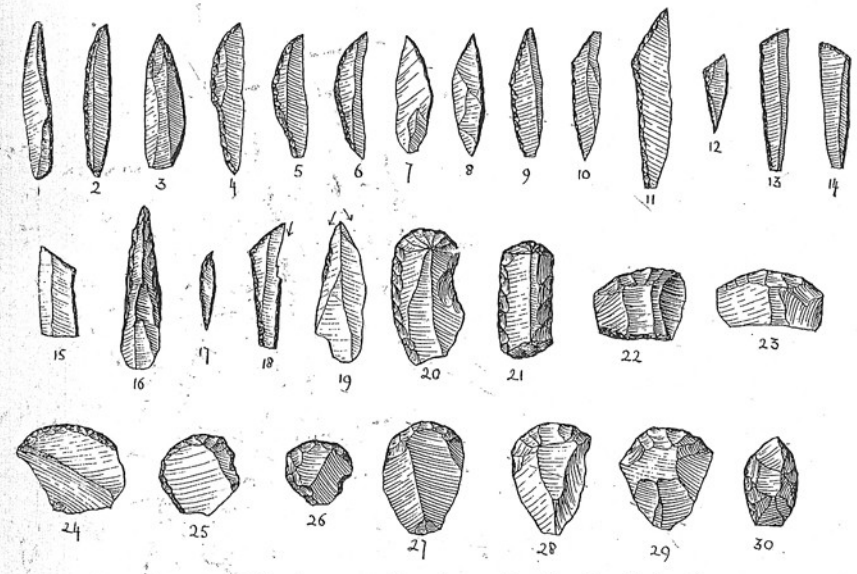


FIGURE 9. Implements from layer B. Zarzi. Scale ⅔.

which is double, has been renewed several times at both ends.

(c) Prismatic gravers.

(d) Plane-graver. A single specimen.

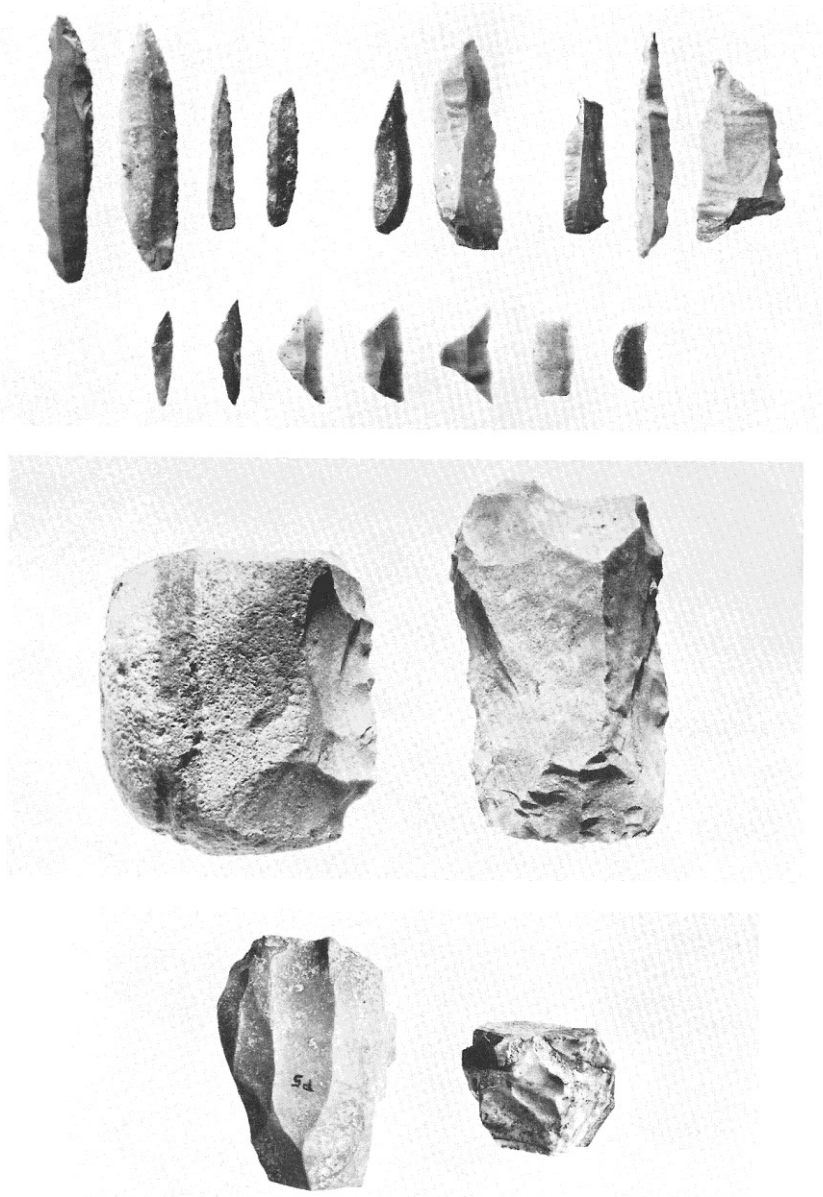
In addition to these there are a few single-blow gravers of no special interest.

Scrapers.

(a) End-scrapers (fig. 8, nos. 1-5). The majority are single, and are made on rather wide blades, more or less retouched along the edges. A few (nos. 3, 4) are deeply notched. Some of the smaller specimens, made on flakes, are roughly pear-shaped (no. 5).

(b) Discoidal scrapers (fig. 8, nos. 6, 7, 8). These vary in size and shape, but the majority are small and roughly circular.

Garrod's first description of Zarzian lithics



Palegawra chipped flint. Backed blades, backed bladelets, diagonally truncated and retouched blades, and borers (top row), geometric microliths (2d row), coarse scrapers (3d row), elongated blade core and stubby flake core, both pyramidal with single platform (bottom row). Scale, 3:4

Palegawra Zarzian lithics

Warwasi

- Excavated in 1959 by Bruce Howe
- A rockshelter that overlooks the Kermanshah Valley – an ecotone
- Elevation is ca. 1500 m
- Has sequence – posibly continuous – Mousterian, Baradostian, Zarzian
- Hunting look-out for game on the plain below

Warwasi rockshelter

Bruce Howe and Liz Morris at Warwasi, 1959

Warwasi excavation trench in 1959

University Museum Monograph 83

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THE PALEOLITHIC PREHISTORY OF THE ZAGROS-TAURUS

Deborah I. Olszewski
Harold L. Dibble
Editors

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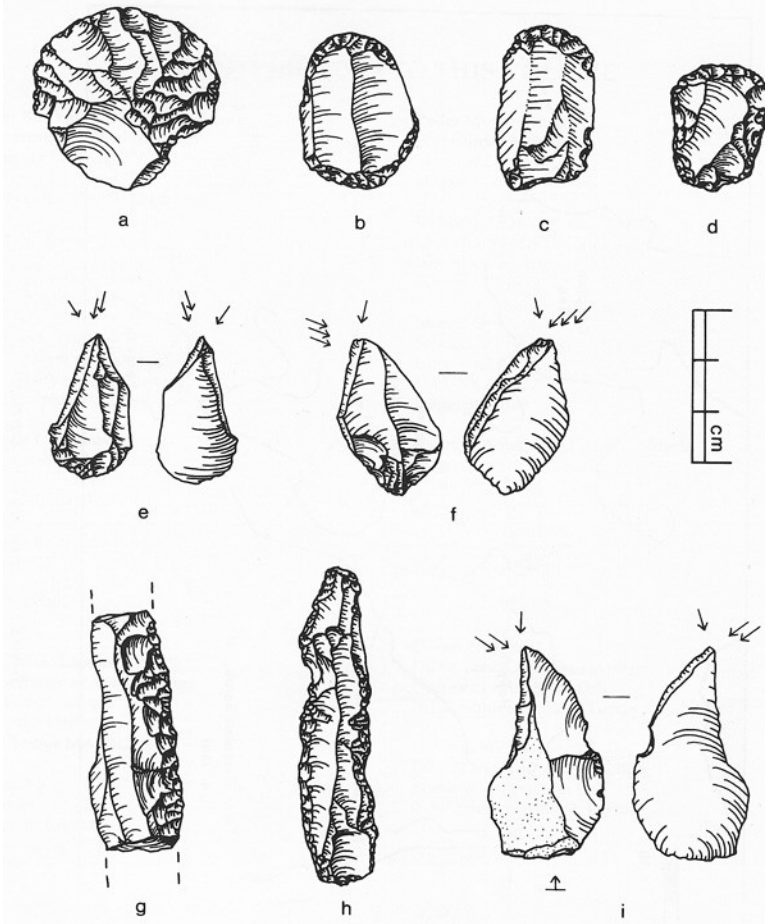


Figure 8.2. *Zarzian tools from Warwasi: (a) fan-shaped scraper; (b) double end-scraper; (c-d) end-scraper o blade; (e) end-scraper and dihedral burin; (f,i) offset (déjeté) dihedral burin; (g) side-scraper; (h denticulated blade.*

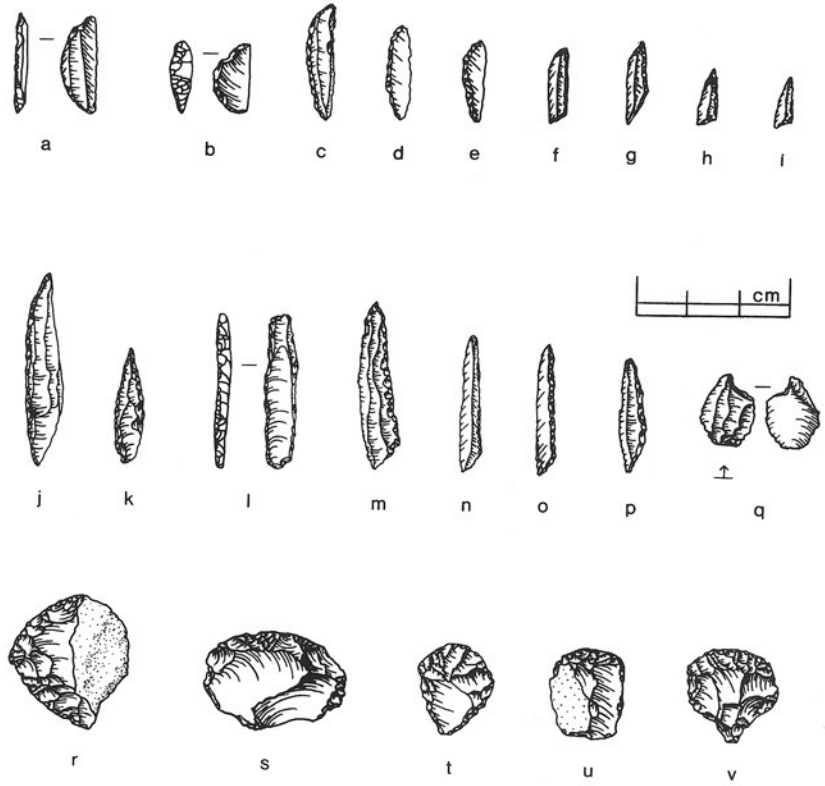


Figure 8.1. *Zarzian tools from Warwasi: (a-b) lunate; (c-e) curved backed form; (f-g) parallelogram; (h-i) scalene triangle; (j-k) microgravette; (l) rectangle; (m-p) elongated scalene triangle; (q) microburin; (r-s) end-scraper on flake; (t-v) thumbnail scraper.*

Deborah Olzsewski's analysis of the lithics

Garrod's (1953) speculations

- Kebaran: blunted-back blade;other types as in UP, but smaller; few bone tools
- Zarzian is quite different from Levantine UP and, with a few shouldered points and Gravette-type backed blades, reminds of the Gravettian of the Ukraine
- "May not the Zarzi culture…proved to have evolved…from the Russian source?"

Pa Sangar

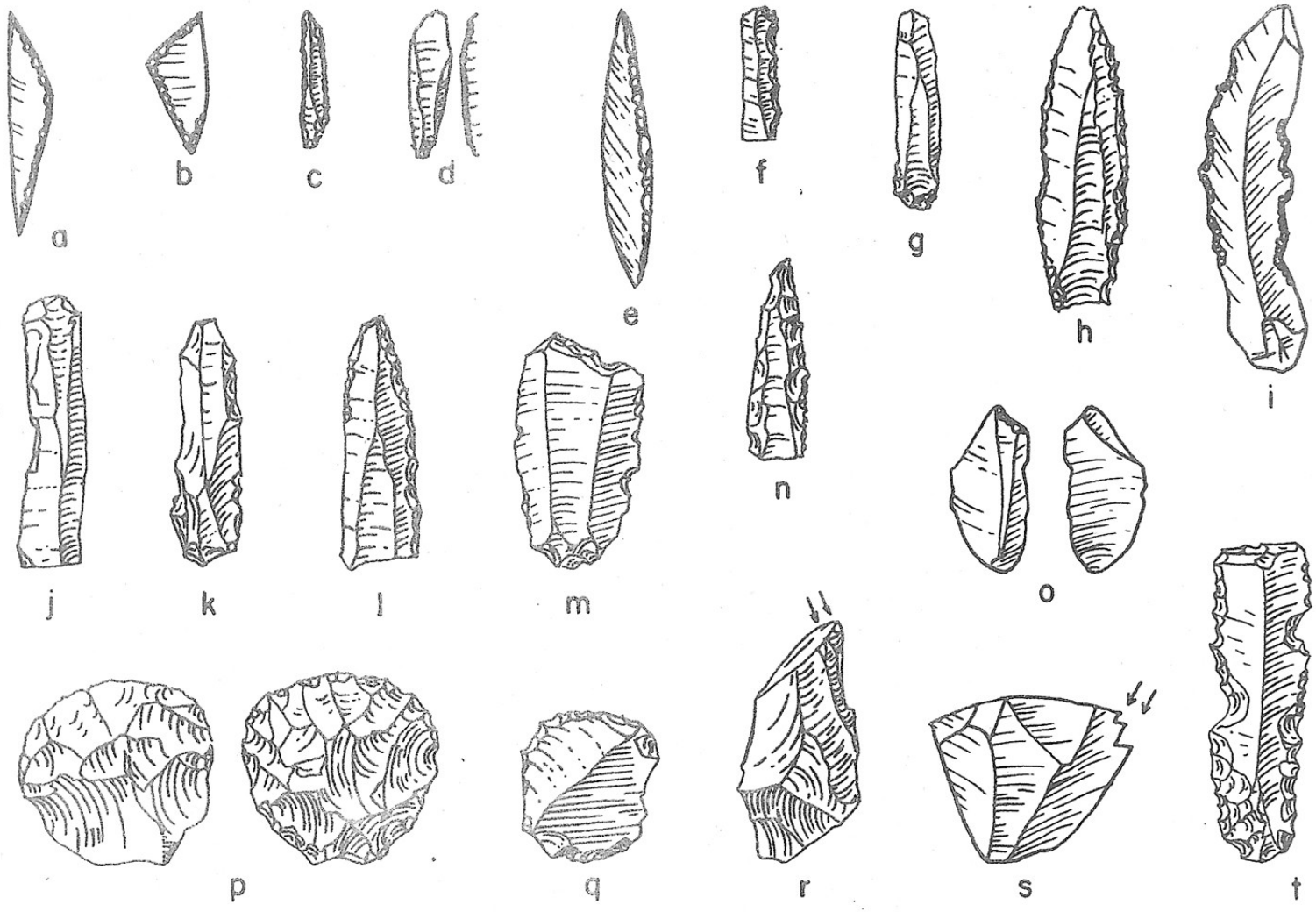
- Excavated by Frank Hole and Kent Flannery in 1963
- A rockshelter in the Khorramabad Valley of the Central Zagros, near the town of Khorramabad
- Sequence of Late Baradostian-Zarzian

Pa Sangar rockshelter during excavation in 1963

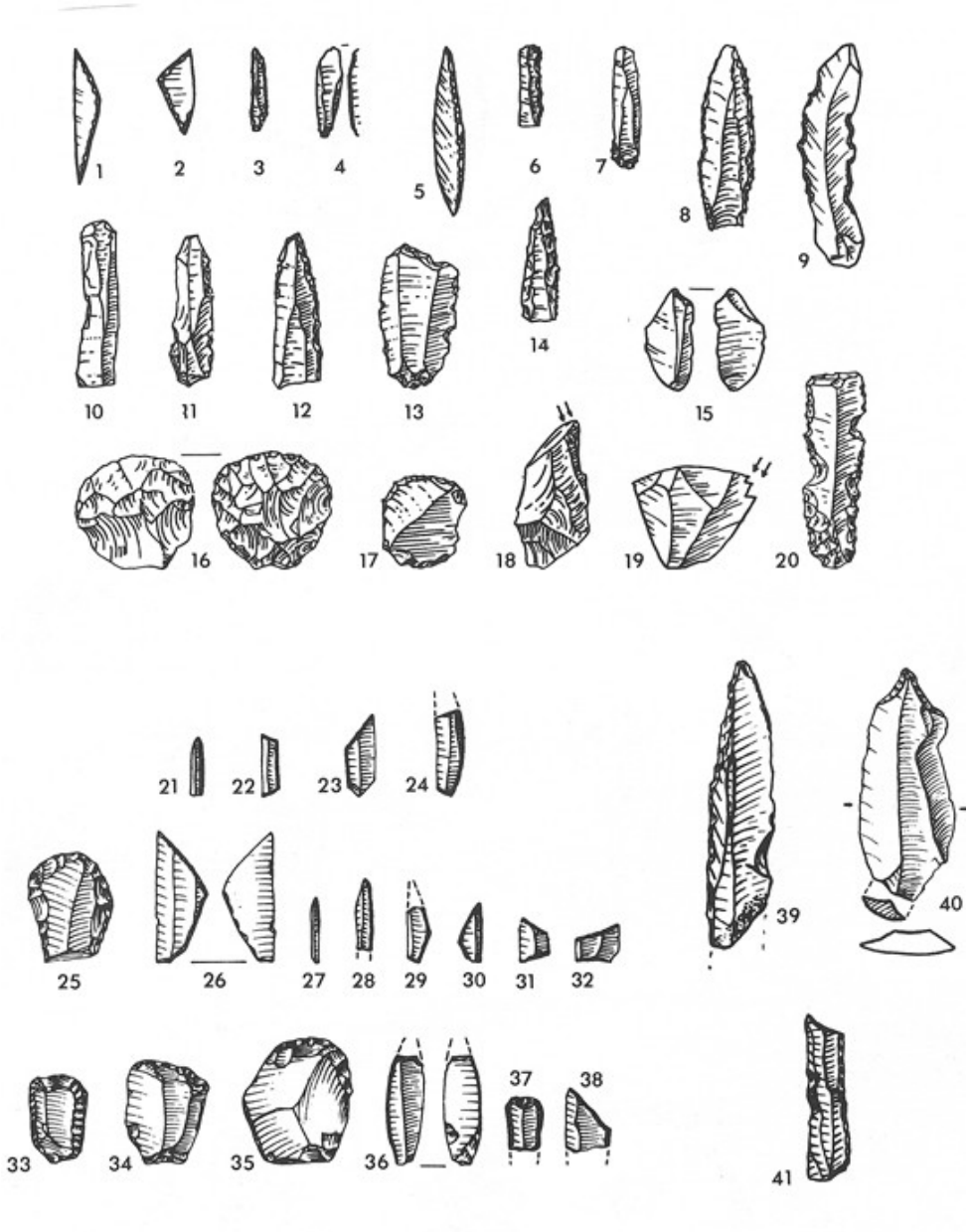
Excavation in three adjacent rectangles

Pa Sangar burial

Shells found in Zarzian layers in Pa Sangar

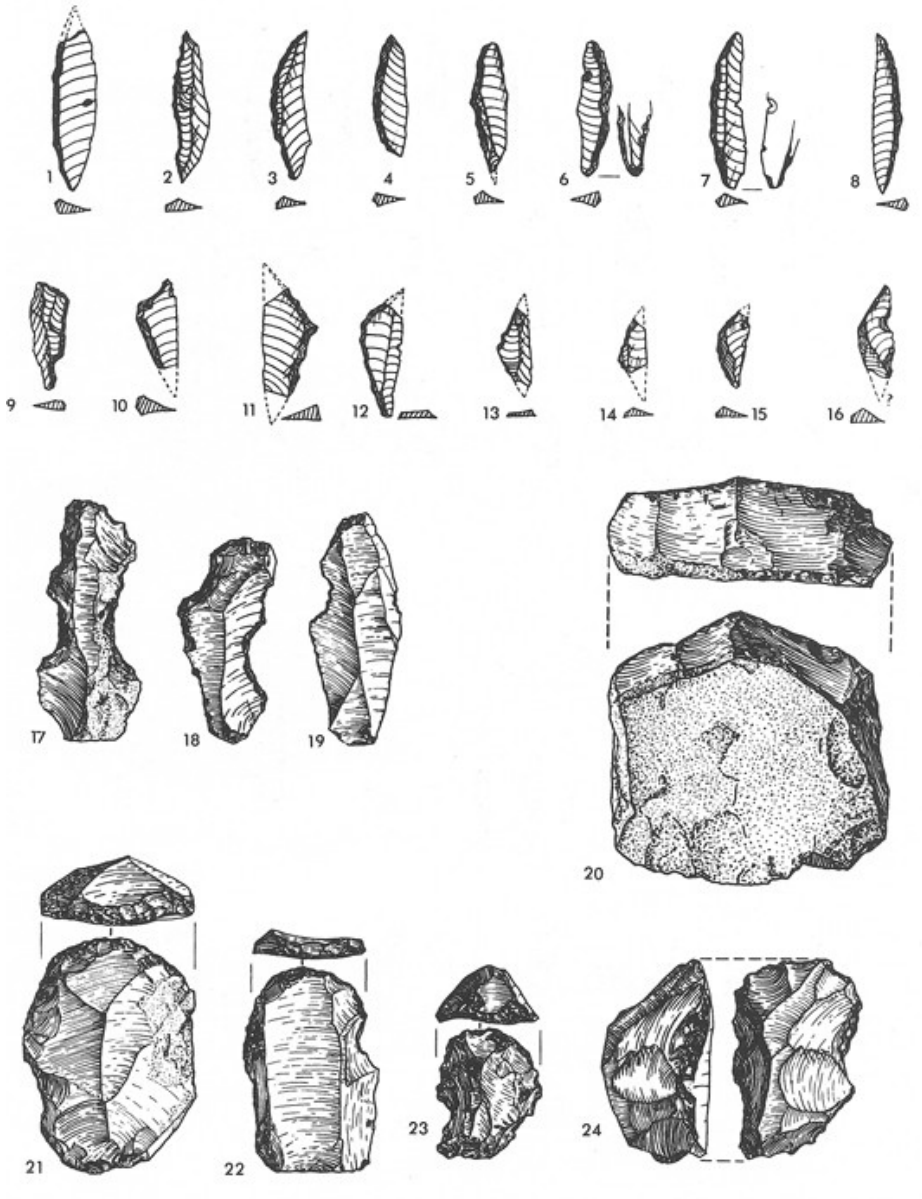


Zarzian lithics from Pa Sangar



Zarzian lithics from the Central Zagros

Zarzian artifacts from Khorramabad sites, Hulailan Valley site, and Ghar-i-Khar.



Epipalaeolithic artifacts from the Caspian area: Ali Tappeh I and Hotu Cave.

Epipaleolithic lithics from the Caspian region

Questions

- Is there more variability in the Baradostian-Zarzian than recognized?
- Why is this set of industries so homogeneous as compared with the Levant?
- Why are Baradostian and Zarzian restricted to the central and northern Zagros?
- Is there continuity between Baradostian and Zarzian (as Hole says) or a substantial gap?
- Does a “broad spectrum” adaptation begin with the Zarzian?
- Does the Zarzian play a role in the emergence of agriculture?