

FURTHER REPORT ON THE SAI-YOK EXCAVATIONS  
AND ON THE WORK AT THAI PICTURE CAVE

by

*Eigil Knuth*

From the date of v. Heekeren's departure, on Feb. 7th until March 24th the Sai-Yok group kept on working, consisting now of two men only: Mr. Chin You-di and Eigil Knuth. According to plans the efforts during this last period had to serve two different purposes: 1) continuation of the diggings and the surveyings at the Sai-Yok site, and 2) investigations of the wall paintings and the rock shelter at Khao Kiew or "Green Hill".

**1. Work at THAM PRAH (Sai-Yok).**

As mentioned in v. Heekeren's report, here there had previously been opened two sectors on the 20 m. terrace, about 8 m. under the rock shelter. One of them—sector X—was situated close to the lower end of the slope leading down from the rock shelter, the other one, Z, was placed 6 m. in front of X, at the edge of the terrace. When v. Heekeren left Sai-Yok the excavations in *sector X* at an average level of about 250 cm. below the surface had gone through a neolithic layer and reached the upper part of a mesolithic one. The registered finds counted 473 items. At the end of the campaign on March 24th the deepest level in the sector was 373 cm. and the total number of finds had increased to 1545 items. The mesolithic layer proved to be extremely rich in stone implements of fine workmanship, and as in the rock shelter it was succeeded by a layer of coarse choppers and tool fragments of decidedly more primitive aspect, while, at the very bottom finer tools again seemed to appear. All in all this sector more clearly than the rock shelter shows the sequence of prevailing types, and thanks to samples of charcoal from the lower strata it will probably be of use to the dating.

In *sector Z* a neolithic layer was reached before v. Heekeren left Sai-Yok. At a depth of 260 cm. below the surface this layer, however, stopped to give place for more than 70 cm. thick deposits of sterile silt. Below this another neolithic strata appeared, rich in very rotten potsherds, and with apparently waterworn axheads, some charred bones and pieces of charcoal. When the diggings stopped, this neolithic complex gave room for mesolithic tools about 400 cm. below the surface.

Beside these sectors on the 20 m. terrace 4 new sectors were dug in the two caves at both sides of the rock shelter. The first of them, *sector S*, was placed in the small cave, the three others in the large one. Most worth mentioning are the *sectors P and Q* established as prolongations of a ditch (EFGH) from last years investigations. Both of these sectors lay close to the cave wall, and what they contained of earth and finds rested on rather steep sloping rock, giving most favourable conditions for sliding. Nevertheless, many of the things in these two neighbouring sectors lay so close together, that it is likely they belong to a cultural unit. This unit was a burial, the skeleton of which lay in the upper part of P. The head had disappeared apart from a jaw-fragment with 3 teeth as well as many other teeth spread around separately. Undoubtedly connected with this skeleton were 16 small pots, all hand-modelled and rather carelessly done, apparently only to serve as symbolic grave-goods. Furthermore were found: 6 polished neolithic axheads, 1 head of a shouldered axe, 1 spinning wheel, 4 grinding stones, 2 iron fish-hooks, 4 iron chisels, 8 pieces of bronze arm (?) rings, some pieces of tortoise shells and many potsherds. At a level above this grave was a large cremation urn with bones and ashes, and at a lower level several mesolithic pebble tools.

In between the archaeological work a survey of the whole cave mountain was carried out, and a horizontal plan drawn in scale 1:100, showing the rock shelter and all caves as well as all sectors. To this was added two vertical cuts, one at a right angle to the back wall of the rock shelter, reaching from the 20m—terrace to the very top of the cliff,—the other one following a longitudinal axis through

the larger cave. A front picture of the mountain and many plans of the different sectors were also drawn.

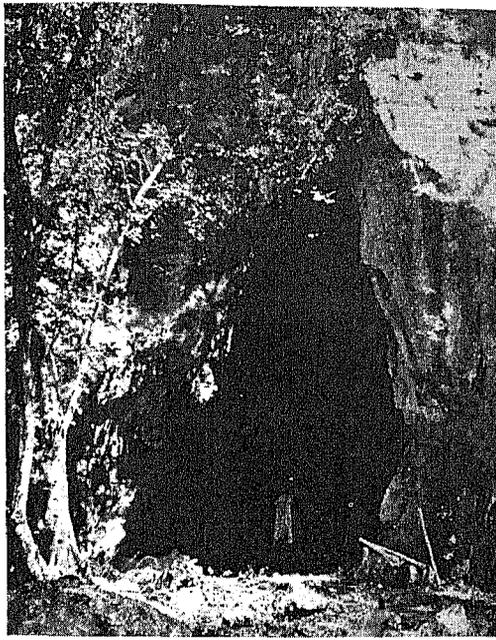
## 2. Work at THAM ROOB (the Picture Cave).

On February 15th Mr. Chin You-di and Knuth left Sai-Yok in a speedboat, accompanied by 6 of their labourers. The boat brought them to the village of Hard Ngiew, north of Kang Lawa, from where they reached the pond Pu Khao Laem ("the water-place of the pointed hill") after 6 hours walk, the equipment being carried by 2 elephants. At Pu Khao Laem they met with Dr. Nielsen's team, and next day both groups moved three camps across the Khao Kiew pass to another pond called Pu Kob ("the water-place with the frogs"), from where the distance back to the Picture Cave at Khao Kiew is only 2 km., After the departure of Dr. Nielsen's party 2 days later on Feb. 18th. Chin You-di and Knuth stayed at Pu Kob and worked in the Picture Cave until Feb. 26th.

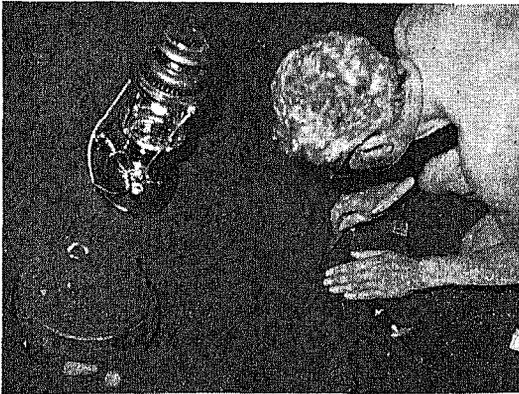
During this stay a ground plan in scale 1:40 was measured at the Picture Cave, which is really no cave but a rock shelter. By means of a small T-12 Wild theodolite bearings were taken of all of the most important wall paintings, and another drawing with these pictures fixed vertically in scale 1:40 was made. This plan again served as a basis for the following measuring and drawing of the entire painted wall in scale 1:10. Excavation of the floor of the rock shelter was carried out but only a few man-worked stones and still fewer pebble tools were found. About 50 m. from the picture shelter was found another, smaller rock shelter at the head of which was a vertical fissure in the cliff, leading up to an apparently large cave 10-15 m. above. By means of a ladder it became possible to survey only the outer part of this cave, where no pictures could be seen. The rock shelter was excavated and some pebble tools and tools made of limestone were found. Furthermore diggings were carried out upon some terraces in front of the rock shelter, and many stone pieces collected, the archaeological value of which, however, is very doubtful.

The study of the wall paintings through 10 days revealed many pictures and groups of pictures, which because of unclearness and shifting light otherwise are hard to discover.





Entrance to the Chande Cave



Eigil Knuth excavating a neolithic burial  
in the Chande Cave



Excavating in the cave

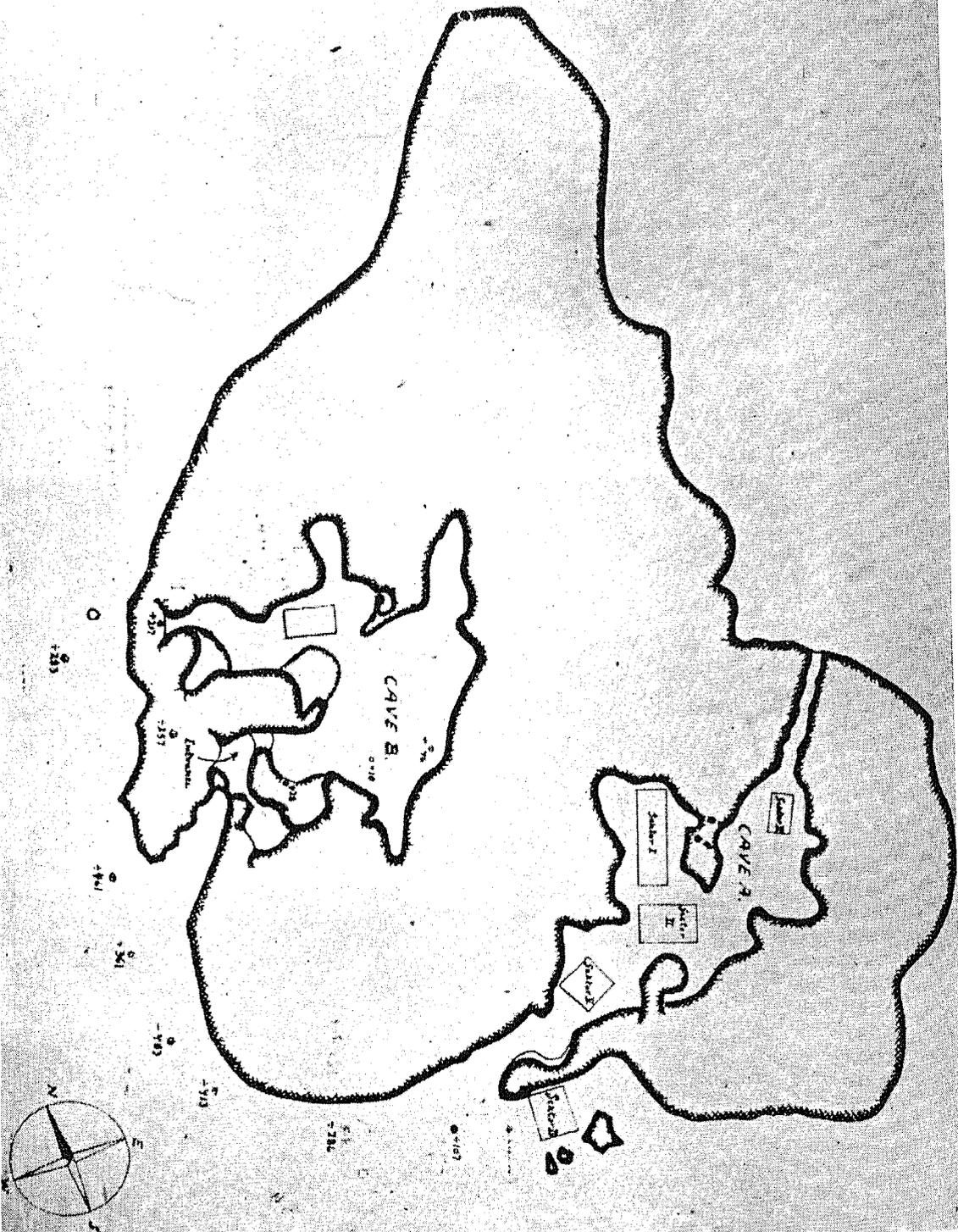


Neolithic grave goods from a  
burial in the Chande Cave

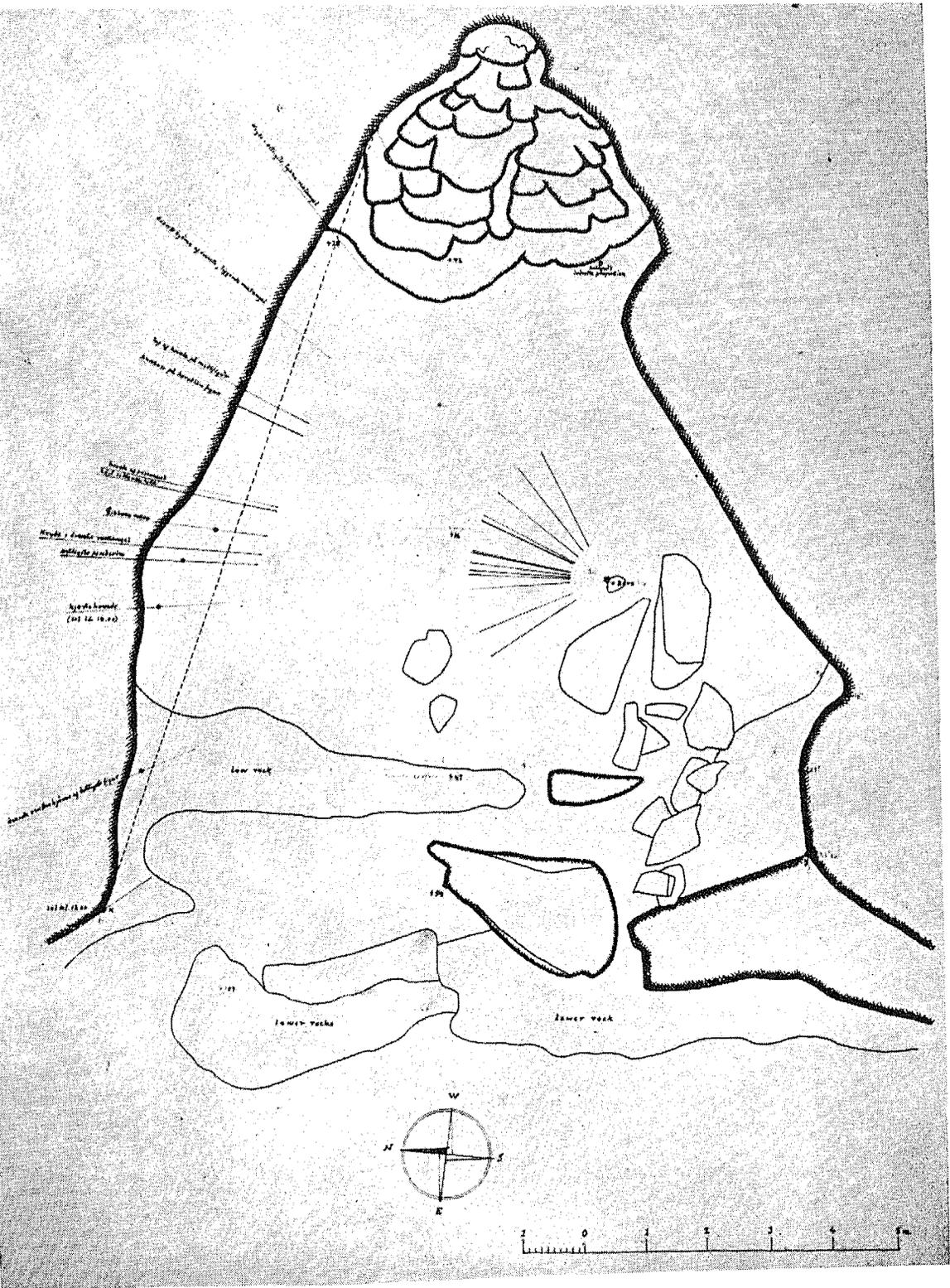


Pratuang, one of the workmen at  
Chande shows how to make fire

Drawing I : Chande Cave.

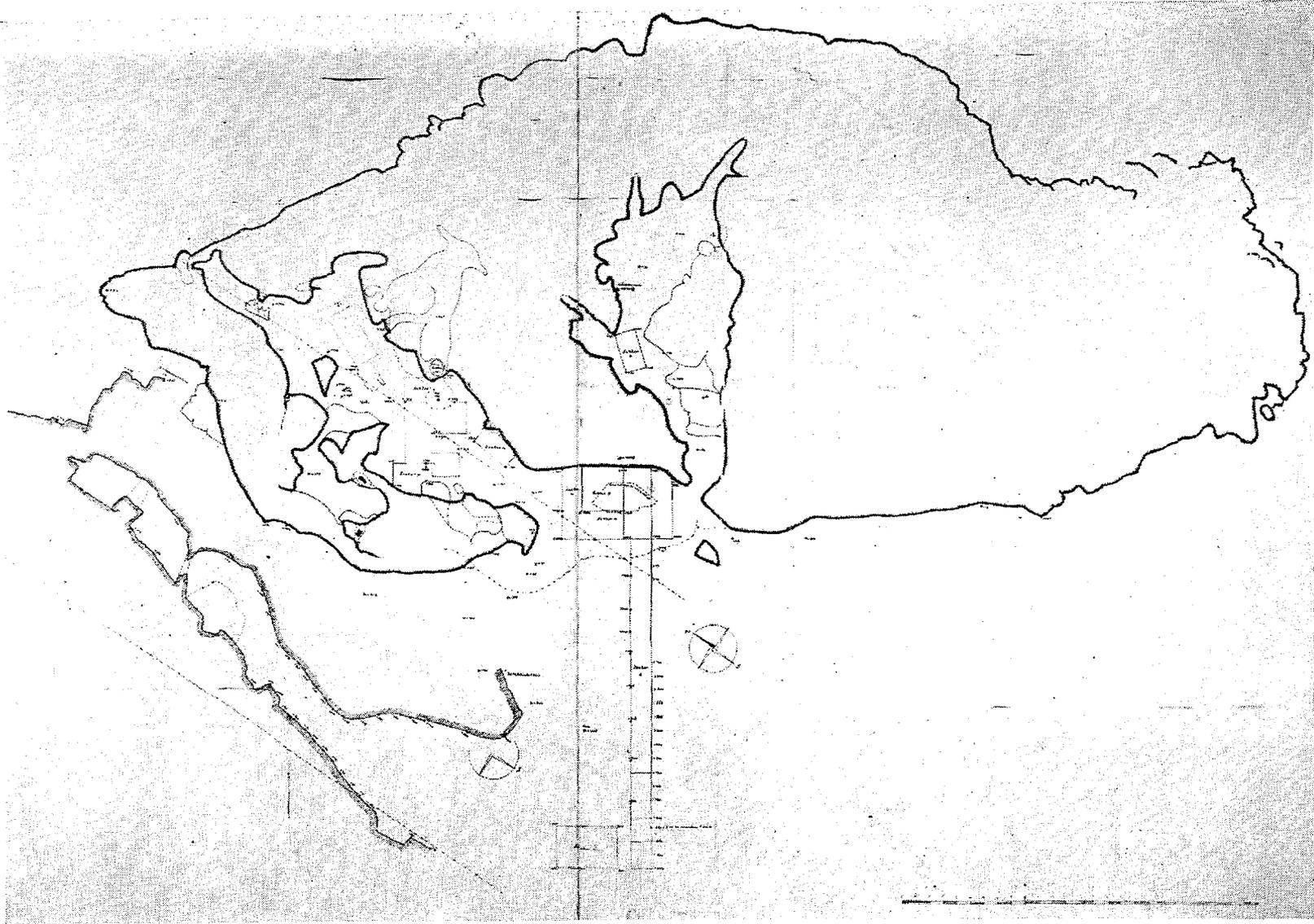


(By Egil Knuth)



Drawing II: Tam Roob (Picture Cave)

(By Eigil Knuth)



Drawing III: Sai Yok caves and rock shelter

( By Eigil Knuth )