APHRODISIAS IN CARIA. THE 1973 CAMPAIGN

KENAN T. ERİM

Excavations at Aphrodisias in Caria were conducted once again with the support of the National Geographic Society and under the aegis of New York University between July 1 and September 25, 1973. The staff for the campaign included: Miss Sheila Campbell, Mr. Mehmet Erol, Mr. Michael Hendy, Prof. and Mrs. David MacDonald, Mr. Ewald Mühlmeier, Miss Joyce Reynolds, Mr. and Mrs. Mossman Roueche, Mrs. Teresa Tomory, and Mr. Heribert Witte. Mr. Reha Arıcan, of the Istanbul Archaeological Museums, supervised again our restoration and laboratory activities. The Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums was represented by Messrs. Orhan Gürman, now Director of the Sinop Museum, and Selçuk Başer, of the Burdur Museum. Mr. M. Ali Düğenci, finally, was as usual delegated through the courtesy of the Türk Tarih Kurumu and Professor Ekrem Akurgal to assist us in our photographic recording in September.

The primary focus of the 1973 campaign was, as in previous years, the *Theatre* and its vicinity. (*Fig. 1*) Investigations were concentrated on the approaches to the structure from the north as well as from the south. Simultaneously, the *North Post Scaenam* area opened in 1972 behind the stage was explored through a series of trenches dug to the east and the northeast, and supervised by Dr. David Mac-Donald and Mr. Orhan Gürman.

The fortification wall built in Middle Byzantine times with a variety of architectural, epigraphical and sculptural mate-

rial to block the backstage building (Fig. 2) and strengthen this whole east side of the Acropolis citadel yield an attractive torso of a togatus boy. (Fig. 3) It was extracted from the middle course of the wall near the porta regia of the stage. In its northward extension, the wall proved to form a right angle in the vicinity of the parodos and then continue for about 10 m., to return at an approximate right angle westward, thus creating a sort of bastion. (Fig. 4) Between this "bastion" and the large buttressed wall supporting the northeastern part of the Acropolis, in the area of the north analemma, a series of steps was uncovered. (Fig. 5) Eight of these were preserved, but later transformations damaged the upper stairs. It seems likely, however, that steps belonged to a vomitorium leading to the diazoma and the upper cavea. A paved area in front of the analemma wall, now only partly preserved, must also be part of this system of access to the upper portion of the theatre.

Practical considerations made excavations within the "bastion" mandatory. The higher level of this area and the need to connect it with the large vaulted chamber built off the north *parodos* in late Roman times demanded gradual and organised investigation. A well-preserved rectangular room was brought to light here. (Figs. 6 and 7) Its walls are preserved to a height of about 3 m. and it communicated via a vaulted passageway, including a sort of narrow antechamber, to the west with the late Roman vaulted hall facing the

"archive wall." The room featured an arcuate niche and airvents or loop-holelike windows in its south wall. (Fig. 8) A shelf or stand built of plastered masonry and fitted with two marble mortars was lodged to the right of the niche. (Fig. 9) A larger arched doorway was partly preserved on the east side of the chamber, but the construction of the "bastion" and the stage-blocking wall immediately beyond left only a narrow closet-like space between the doorway and the outer fortification wall. (Fig. 10) The room was once vaulted, though its upper walls are considerably damaged. Its date is obviously anterior to the stage-blocking, but it was transformed to fit inside the "bastion" of the eastern flank of the citadel. Its function remains uncertain. It could have been used at one time as a guards' room or storage area. Its walls bear traces of stucco, which seems to have been plain, without colour or decoration. Several coins and lamps of the sixth century found on its floor level suggest that the room was particulary used in Early Byzantine times.

The "bastion" itself included a large number of re-used sculptural and architectural fragments. The most striking of these were nine frieze blocks reset in an orderly, yet not original sequence on an upper course of the east wall of the "bastion" facing the "piazza" to the east. The frieze belonged to a type much favoured by Aphrodisian sculptors, namely, heads or masks joined by elaborately beribboned garlands. Though damaged by weathering and re-use, many of the heads can be recognised as theatrical masks. Some are even tentatively identifiable as those pertaining to stock comic or pseudo-tragic characters such as slaves, courtesans or procurers. (Figs. 11, 12 and 13) It seems likely that these fragments were placed purposefully here for decorative reasons, but came originally from a building closely affiliated with the theatre. Rather than connected with the well-known frieze of the Portico of Tiberius of the Agora of Aphrodisias, they may have

decorated one of the porticoes of the "piazza" behind the stage building. Many column drums and bases found reworked in the stage-blocking fortification wall must indeed also come from the colonnades of these porticoes. Several large fragments of pilasters and lintels decorated in the "peopled scroll" manner were also found dumped before the "bastion." They are excellently finished and echo those found in 1904-5 by Paul Gaudin during the excavation of the facade of the Baths of Hadrian. Their original location is, however, difficult to ascertain at the present time. They have obviously no connection with the Baths, since this type of sculptural decoration was very much used by Aphrodisian artists. They may have been part of a nearby monumental gate or doorway. Two other attractive discoveries of an architectural character made before the east wall of the "bastion" also featured favourite decorative Aphrodisian motifs. These consisted of two large half bases, the faces of which were adorned with respectively a satyr's and a handsome bearded head flanked by the usual beribboned swags of flowers and fruits. These well-preserved items must have belonged to a facade decoration, a monumental altar, a portico or a fountain. (Figs. 14 and 15).

To the east of the "bastion," extensive excavations were pursued in the "piazza" discovered last year behind the stage building. The construction of the Byzantine stage-blocking fortification wall and "bastion" caused much damage to the porticoes flanking the "piazza." The "bastion" obliterated the northwestern corner of the north portico. (Fig. 16) The stylobate of this portico with at least three column bases in situ was traceable running eastward before the "bastion." A rare and unusual epigraphical item was discovered in this vicinity: it proved to be a base once supporting a statue of Atia. mother of the emperor Augustus. (Fig. 17) The existence of such a portrait statue is thought-provoking, not only because of the rarity of representations of Atia, but also because of the additional light it sheds on the close ties between Aphrodisias and the Julio-Claudian dynasty. Such connections have already been illustrated through the dedication of the theatre stage by Zoilus, freedman of Octavian-Augustus, and the discovery of statuebases to Germanicus and Agrippina (including possibly a portrait-head) last summer.

The pavement of the open "piazza" in its eastern extension proved to be in very good condition, though some slabs had been removed. (Fig. 18) The most significant feature uncovered in this area was a circular platform about equidistant from the south and north porticoes. It consisted of a 1.50 m. wide edge built of well-fitted blocks forming a total diameter of 6 m. (Fig. 19) In its centre, a separate element included a terracotta pipe and suggested that this must have been once part of a fountain-like arrangement. It is plausible that this was not the original function of the platform which could well have belonged to an earlier circular monument, perhaps an altar. As the easternmost limit of the "piazza" remains to be ascertained, it is still difficult to know whether this "fountain" arrangement was located at the centre of the "piazza" or not.

Several significant finds were made to the north of the circular platform: one was a female portrait head of the early first century whose iconographic characteristics fit well those of the empress Livia. (*Fig.* 20) A well-built, lifesize nude male torso was recovered further to the north, at the edge of the trenched area. (*Fig.* 21) Its finished back and well-defined muscles suggest that it was part of a seated statue. The neck of a horse found in 1972 in this same vicinity might belong to this figure which could therefore represent a horseman (Fig. 22).*

Investigations in the southern sector of the theatre were shifted from the South Post Scaenam area to the vicinity of the south parodos (Fig. 25) They included the continued excavation of the impressive circular structure labelled Aula termale in 1972. (Fig. 26) Under the supervision of Mr. Ewald Mühlmeier, initial work here, concentrated, however, on defining access to the theatre and the nature of the stepped platform found last summer at the southwestern corner of the "piazza" against the Byzantine stage-blocking wall. It now seems probable that the platform was built by the Byzantines out of steps originally belonging to a vomitorium and served the purpose of providing access to an upper area. (Fig. 27) Fragmentary steps were also discovered on a higher level beyond the stageblocking wall in a room of late date built adjacent to the south parodos area (Fig. 28) The function of this room, which is nestled against the south analemma wall and features uneven rectangular recesses on its north and south walls, remains uncertain. It is, however, surely contemporary with the modifications and additions made to the area of the north analemma, i.e. in late Roman-early Byzantine times. Other constructions of the same date were traced at the extremity of the south analemma wall, where two parallel vaulted corridors, perhaps part of another vomitorium or gallery complex were brought to light. The smaller one to the east seems to have been built later and eventually blocked and the stones of its vault robbed. (Fig. 29) Another smaller, vaulted lateral passageway was discovered next to the north wall of the Aula termale and led down from the vicinity of the south analemma and the above-mentioned corridor. (Fig. 30)

The most impressive development of the operations conducted in this south sector was the complete excavation of the so-called *Aula termale*. As already evident last summer, this remarkably wellpreserved circular hall, 12 m. in diameter,

^{*} Other discoveries of sculpture here included the lower part and limb fragments of a *chlamydatus* type statue. (*Figs. 23 and 24*).

formed an important element of a large complex intimately connected with the theatre and probably built in the third century. Its walls are preserved to a height of over 10 m. (Fig. 31) Its large four arcuate niches proved to be matched by four smaller, rectangular ones situated between the larger niches. Three doors were cut at a later date through the west. east and south smaller niches. (Figs. 32-34) Three original, low vaulted corridors, on the other hand, led from the large southeastern niche into two rectangular rooms to the south yet to be excavated. (Figs. 35 and 36) A third passageway communicated with the southwestern corner arch of the 'nymphaeum' adjacent to the Aula termale, briefly investigated in 1962. (Fig. 37) A similar corridor not yet opened led from the northeastern large niche into the third arch of the 'nymphaeum.' (Figs. 38 and 39) In the latter part of the summer, the northernmost end of this 'nymphaeum' complex, contiguous to the south portico of the "piazza" was investigated. (Fig. 40) A door, subsequently blocked, gave access from the portico to a hall the north and west walls of which were cut by small rectangular recesses. Its pavement consisted of attractive black and white marble square tiles and featured two handsome opus sectile panels in the shape of rosette patterns. (Figs. 41 and 42) The hall was joined to the northern 'nymphaeum' via a central door. Only a limited area in front of the northernmost arcuate niche was excavated. (Fig. 43) Opposite the niche, a door was revealed, (Fig. 44) and the whole eastern wall of the 'nymphaeum' traced above around, giving it the total dimensions of 23 m. by 12 m. (Fig. 45) This east wall also featured rectangular niches paralleling those of the western wall. Brief exploration also indicated that a vaulted entrance or door was located opposite the southernmost niche of the west wall. Marble paving was fragmentary in the north portion of the 'nymphaeum.' Details in construction, characteristics of the ma-

sonry suggest that the lateral hallway adjacent to the "piazza" (i.e. with the opus sectile floor) is a later addition, perhaps contemporary with the late Roman layout of the "piazza" itself.

The precise nature of the Aula termalenymphaeum complex is still uncertain. Yet, an identification with a thermal establishment (or a variation thereof) remains plausible. A number of pipes embedded in some of the walls of the complex clearly betrays an elaborate water conducting or evacuation system. Although many sculpture fragments were found in the excavations of this area, none of these helps a more precise identification. Three marble ex-votos of eyes and male genitalia (Figs. 46 and 47) require mention, however, but they are probably part of the later Byzantine and Turkish dumps which gradually filled the interior of the building. The size of the whole complex, on the other hand, is much more considerable than originally assumed. Many walls are traceable to the south and the east and suggest an imposing and complicated structure (Fig. 48).

Restoration work was continued throughout the summer on the stage of the theatre. (Fig. 49) The resetting of the pulpitum blocks fallen into the orchestra permitted a complete reading of the inscription carved on these stones. It appears that Tiberius Claudius Zelus assumed the expenses of the work on the columns and decoration including the panelling of the walls and floor (presumably of the stage) and dedicated this to Aphrodite, Antoninus Pius, Lucius Verus and Marcus Aurelius. The date of this document, which should be between 139 and 161, is quite significant for the chronology of the transformation of the theatre from a Hellenistic into a Roman structure. The additional inscription discovered in 1970 in the conistra recording the dedication of this portion of the work by Menestheus Scopas indicates that the transformation was completed by the reign of Marcus Aurelius.

Further restoration concentrated on the proskenion. The main task undertaken by Mr. Reha Arican, of the Istanbul Archaeological Museums, was the consolidation, including repair, of the half colums. Two important missing fragments of these columns were recast. Simultaneously, an initial reassemblage of the architrave and cornice blocks of the proskenion was completed in the courtyard of the excavation house. Lack of time prevented the resetting of this entablature on the colonnade. It is hoped that this will be begun in the 1974 campaign.

Extensive excavations, supervised by Mr. Selçuk Başer, were continued to the east of the Odeon and aimed at clarifying the character of the rooms found here in 1972. (Fig. 50) The area apparently witnessed a long and complicated series of building, rebuilding and modifying activities and was consistently inhabited until the Middle Byzantine period. The complex, two rooms of which were partially cleared in 1972, had been erected near and partly over an earlier structure located to the north. Only two rooms of this earlier construction were traceable. (Fig. 51) One of them had a mosaic pavement, partially preserved, featuring an emblema with a female figure and an inscription referring to Aphrodite (Fig. 52) Further to the north, a complicated maze of walls and crosswalls were uncovered and should be connected with the latest phase of habitation in this area. Three Byzantine tombs, probably of the tenth or eleventh century, were discovered in the upper layers. In the fill of one of the rooms, a most attractive terracotta medallion showing the bust of the Aphrodite of Aphrodisias was found. It was broken off a votive offering, vessel or similar dedication. (Fig. 53)

The original function of the building discovered last year remains obscure. Its northern room was paved with a combination of marble slabs and geometric mosaic panels. Two of its doors opening unto the corridor to the west had later been sealed. It communicated via three doors,

on the other hand, with a square room to the south, whose pavement was completely destroyed. (Figs. 54 and 55) If these two rooms form a reasonably harmonious and constructionwise satisfactory unit, structures uncovered to the east and northeast are much more complex and the sequence of their construction difficult to establish. They must be considered generally either additions or radical transformations which obliterated the earlier buildings. A room immediately to the east of the two-room complex betrayed similarities in construction detail, yet also yielded evidence of late Hellenistic and early Roman occupation under its floor level. A hoard of three cistophori was discovered in this context. Later habitation, on the other hand, was illustrated by another coin hoard of small Byzantine copper found in some roof debris and consisting of one copper follis of Justinian, two of Tiberius II and one of Maurice Tiberius, the latest coin being datable to 587/8. A third, larger hoard of 56 bronze issues was discovered in another room immediately to the north. It incluedd 30 folleis and 5 half folleis of Justin II, 2 folleis and 2 half folleis of Tiberius IIand 15 folleis and 2 half folleis of Maurice Tiberius. The chronological distribution of this hoard (566/7 to 591/2) tallies well with that of the other Byzantine hoard. Both in turn fit the evidence provided last year by the bronze hoard found near the theatre in front of the stepped platform of the South Post Scaenam ranging in date from Justinian to Maurice Tiberius. It seems, therefore, obvious that Aphrodisias witnessed much uncertainty and even suffered destruction and damage in the last decade of the sixth century. Among the top layer of debris in one of the southeastern rooms, a heroic male portrait head was found. It represented probably an idealised prince or ruler intentionally imitating the physical characteristics of Alexander. Though battered, the face and its overall physiognomy may echo some portraits identified as Mithradates VI of Pontus (Figs. 56 and 57).

Two rooms, finally, excavated in the northeastern section of the East Odeon area, similarly betrayed transformations obscuring earlier buildings. (Fig. 58) One of the rooms featured thick, solid walls, as well as two doors opening to the east. Its last occupants turned it into a utilitarian area by constructing two parallel rows of three storage "bins" contiguous to one another. (Fig. 59 and 60) On the other hand, the existence of an earlier structure here was indicated by the discovery of a large number of excenlletly carved architectural fragments, including frieze, cornice and other entablature elements. In style and size, these fragments suggest a small, possibly public, building of the early Imperial period. Several epigraphical items were recorded here : one pertains to an official letter perhaps referring to the Senatorial Archive at Rome; another fragment seems to be concerned with taxation. A statue base originally cut in the first century appears to have been re-used in the second (Fig. 61).

Numerous sculpture fragments were also found in the overall excavation of this northeast sector. They included a seated underlifesize female figure, a fragmentary late Roman portrait, and the head of an unfinished helmeted warrior protecting himself with a round shield. (Figs. 62-64) At the extremity of the excavated area, a curious Byzantine tomb arrangement incorporated a complete box of a garland sarcophagus in the centre, framed on four sides by several other Roman sarcophagi panels. All of the panels in question belonged to variations of the garland sarcophagus type. (Figs. 65-69) Another garland sarcophagus box was uncovered re-used at the southern edge of the excavated area. (Fig. 70)

A brief attempt at reaching and defining archaic levels along the northern slope of the Acropolis was made and supervised by Mr. Orhan Gürman. A trench was staked above an earlier one dug in 1968 at the northern foot of the mound, and produced mixed Byzantine and Roman stratification at first. An attractive head of a herm was found in this context. (Fig. 71) But at a depth of ca. -5m., archaic and some Iron Age sherds were discovered and the outline of mudbrick walls on stone foundations traced. Excavation was then suspended because of time limitation (Fig. 72).

Important epigraphical material was unearthed in a brief exploration of the west side of the Portico of Tiberius near the Baths of Hadrian. The twenty columns of this short end of the portico had smooth lower drums with laudatory inscriptions honouring a man called Albinus, otherwise unknown. Several of these had been recorded by the French excavations of 1904-5 and seen even earlier by eighteenth and nineteenth century travellers. The inscriptions are cut deeply and clearly, but in an irregular and inconsistent script, with occasional traces of red paint. Eighteen of the twenty inscriptions are now available and show that they pertain to a series of acclamations put up in the late fifth or early sixth century in honour of Albinus, who probably provided funds to restore this section of the agora. Though single acclamations are known, the present set represents the largest group yet discovered and add much to our knowledge of the formulae used. The archaeological evidence thus supports the literary references (including Libanius and the reports of occumenical councils) and shows that there existed an established ritual for acclamations, starting with praises of God, then of the emperor(s), then of all other authorities in order, ending with detailed praises of the honoured individual.

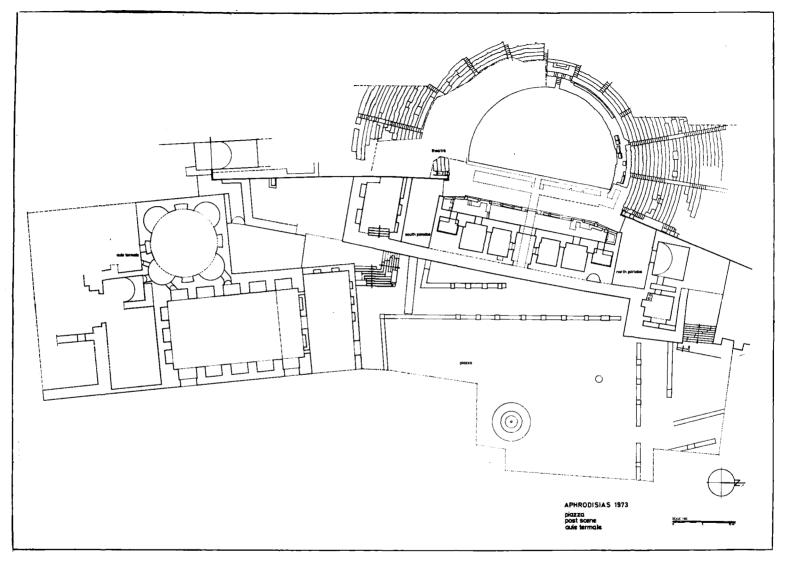


Fig. 1 — Plan of 1973 Aphrodisias theatre excavati ons, including North Post Scaenam and Aula termale complex.

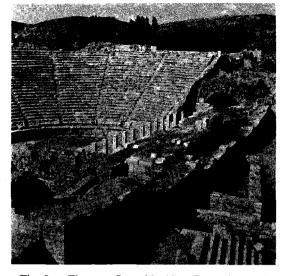


Fig. 2 — Theatre. Stage-blocking Byzantine wall.



Fig. 3 — Theatre. Togatus torso of boy.

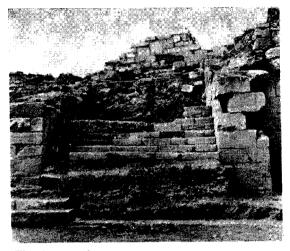


Fig. 4 — North Post Scaenam. "Bastion" of Byzantine fortification.



Fig. 5 — North Post Scaenam. Vomitorium steps.



Fig. 6 — North Post Scaenam. Room within "bastion" in foreground.

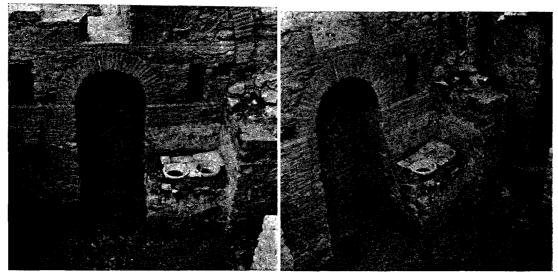


Fig. 7 — North Post Scaenam. Room within "bastion", south wall.

Fig. 8 — North Post Scaenam. Room within "bastion" in south wall.

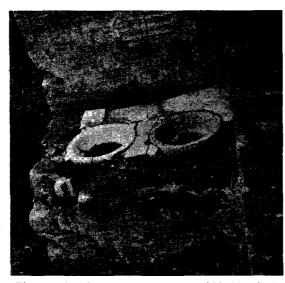


Fig. 9 -- North Post Scaenam. Room within "bastion" south wall. Ledge with mortars.



Fig. 10 — North Post Scaenam. Room within "bastion." East wall.



Fig. 11 — North Post Scaenam. Frieze blocks re-used in "bastion."

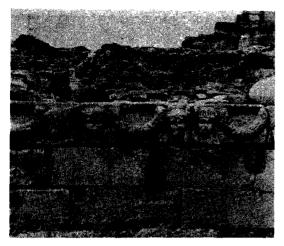


Fig. 12 — North Post Scaenam. Frieze blocks re-used in "bastion."

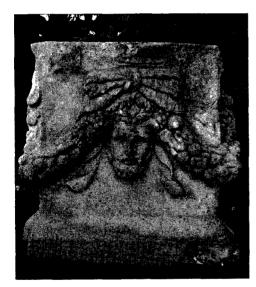


Fig. 14 — North Post Scaenam. Half base with satyr's head.

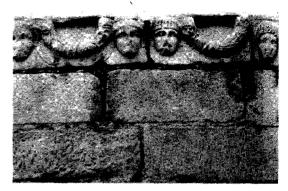


Fig. 13 — North Post Scaenam. Frieze blocks re-used in "bastion."



Fig. 15 — North Post Scaenam. Half base with bearded head.



Fig. 16 — North Post Scaenam. East portico and "piazza."



Fig. 17 - North Post Scaenam. Statue base of Atia.



Fig. 18 — "Piazza." Looking northeast.

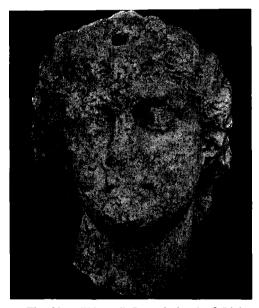


Fig. 20 — "Piazza." Portrait head of Livia.



Fig. 22 — "Piazza." Neck of horse.



Fig. 19 — "Piazza." Central circular platform.



Fig. 21 - "Piazza." Seated male torso.

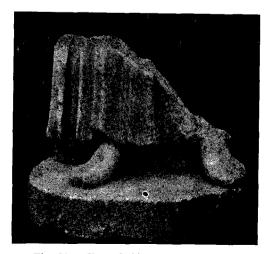


Fig. 23 - Feet of chlamydatus statue.

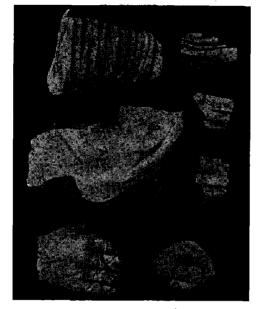


Fig. 24 — "Piazza." Limb-fragments of chlamydatus statue.



Fig. 25 - South Post Scaenam area.



Fig. 26 — Aula termale in centre.



Fig. 27 - South Post Scaenam. Stepped platform.



Fig. 28 — South Post Scaenam. Remaining upper vomitorium steps near south analemma wall.

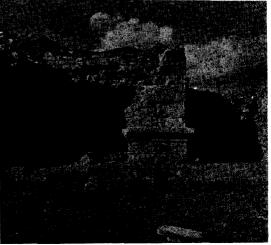


Fig. 29 — South Theatre. Two parallel vaulted corridors from *vomitorium* (?)



Fig. 30 - South Theatre. Lateral, vaulted passageway.

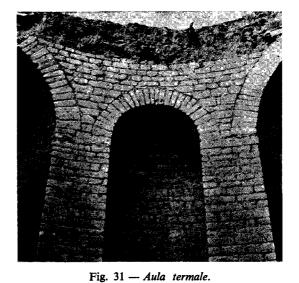


Fig. 32 — Aula termale. Tor., door cut through west niche.

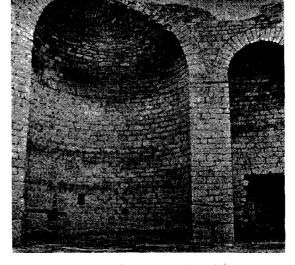


Fig. 33 - Aula termale. Door cut through east niche.



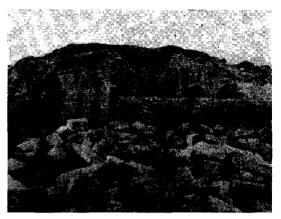
Fig. 34 — Aula termale. Centre, door cut through south niche.



Fig. 35 — Aula termale. Original low vaulted passageway. SE niche.



Fig. 36 - Aula termale. Original low vaulted passa- Fig. 37 - 'Nymphaeum' adjacent to Aula termale. geway. SE niche.



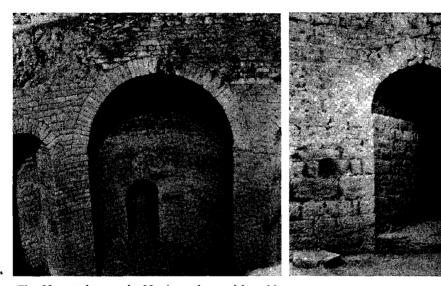


Fig. 38 — Aula termale. Northeast large niche with Fig. 39 — Aula termale. Passageway in NE large niche. passageway to "nymphaeum."

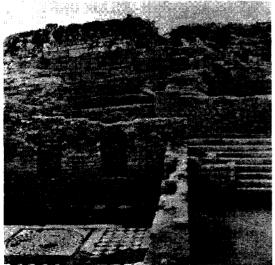


Fig. 40 — 'Nymphaeum'. North end.

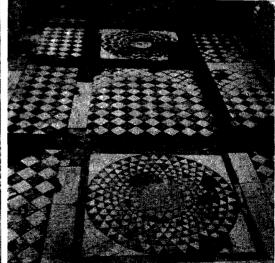


Fig. 41 - 'Nymphaeum'. Opus sectile floor of north hall.

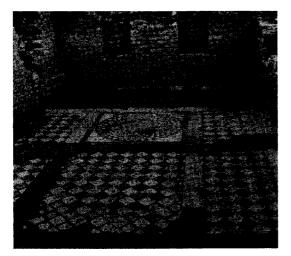


Fig. 42 — 'Nymphaeum'. Opus sectile floor of north hall.



Fig. 43 — 'Nymphaeum.' Northern niche.



Fig. 44 — 'Nymphaeum.' Door opposite northern niche.



Fig. 45 — 'Nymphaeum.' Overall view.

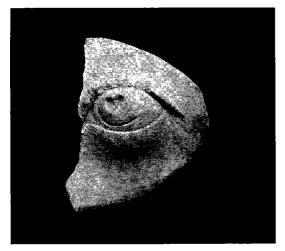


Fig. 46 — 'Nymphaeum." Fragmentary ex-voto of eyes.

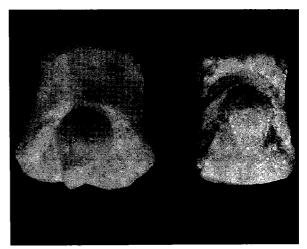


Fig. 47 -- 'Nymphaeum.' Ex-votos of male genitalia.

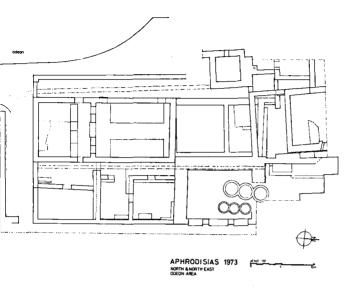


0

Fig. 48 — Aula termale-Nymphaeum. Walls to south, part of complex.



Fig. 49 — Theatre. General view looking east.



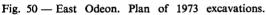




Fig. 51 - East Odeon. Northern rooms.

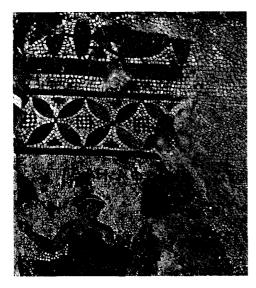


Fig. 52 — East Odeon. Mosaic panel or *emblemawith* Aphrodite (?) figure.

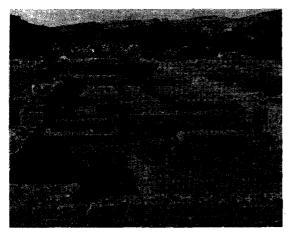


Fig. 54 --- East Odeon. Western rooms looking north.

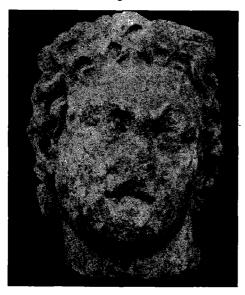


Fig. 56 — East Odeon. Ruler portrait head (Mith-radates VI?)

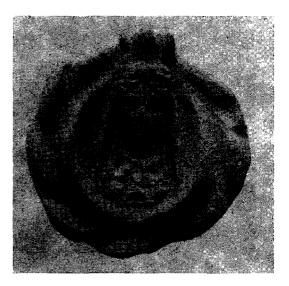


Fig. 53 — East Odeon. Terracotta medallion bust of Aphrodite of Aphrodisias.



Fig. 55 — East Odeon. Western rooms looking southeast.



Fig. 57 - East Odeon. Profile of same.

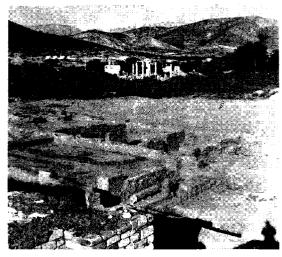


Fig. 58 — East Odeon. Eastern rooms.



Fig. 59 — East Odeon. Eastern rooms looking north.

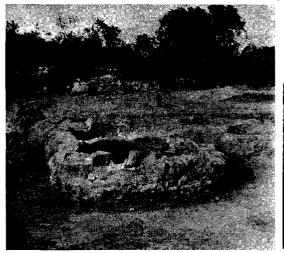


Fig. 60 - East Odeon. Northeastern room. "Bins."

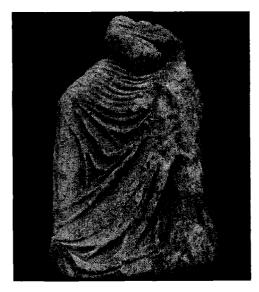


Fig. 62 — East Odeon. Seated female figure.



Fig. 61 — East Odeon. Re-used statue base.

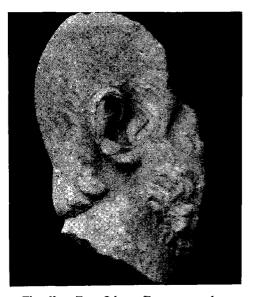


Fig. 63 — East Odeon. Fragmentary late Roman portrait.



Fig. 64 — East Odeon. Helmeted warrior.



Fig. 65

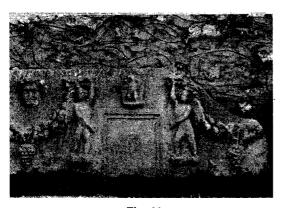


Fig. 66



Fig. 67



Fig. 65.-68 — East Odeon. Re-used garland sarcophagus panels.

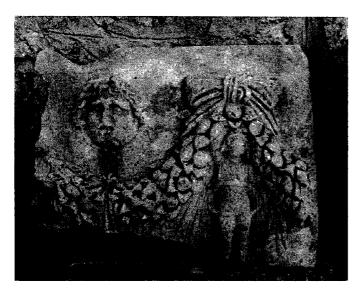


Fig. 69 — East Odeon. Ae-used garland sarcophagus panels.



Fig. 70 — East Odeon. Re-used garland sarcophagus box.

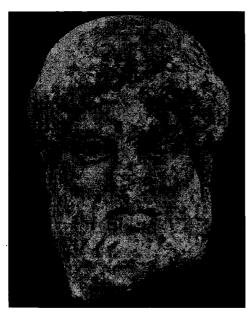


Fig. 71 -- North Acropolis. Head of herm.



Fig. 72 — North Acropolis. Iron Age foundations.