

## APHRODISIAS, 1965 CAMPAIGN

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During the summer of 1965 which marked the fifth campaign of excavations on the site of Aphrodisias conducted by New York University, a number of significant discoveries and important archaeological problems were brought to attention. The area of the temple - basilica of Aphrodite, its temenos, the Odeion and its adjacent portico, the so - called "Bishop's Palace" continued to yield most rewarding information, while the "acropolis" and the monumental Baths of Hadrian provided in their turn rich new evidence for the history and the artistry of the monuments of Aphrodisias as well as the specific talents and tendencies of the Aphrodisians in sculpture and architecture.

Several sondages and trenches initiated in and outside the temple - basilica of Aphrodite in 1963 and 1964, particularly those revealing the foundations of the cella of the pagan temple destroyed by the Byzantine remodellers to the building were continued. It appears now that even some of these substructures or foundations of the cella were robbed in Byzantine times in their eastern parts. The precise arrangement of the pronaos cannot be quite accurately determined as a result. A trench dug in alignment with the still standing column bearing the presumably southeast Ionic corner capital of the temple peristyle revealed part of what may be the packing of the stylobate. Yet, this packing had obviously incorporated the remnants of earlier walls and/or foundations pertaining

to an earlier structure. Upon careful clearing, one of these foundations proved to betray a direction or axis different from that of the cella foundations. It was more in alignment with the axis of the early Hellenistic mosaic pavement uncovered previously in the area of the pronaos and destroyed during the laying of its foundations, at a depth of ca. - 1.25 m. These remains must be associated with a building, possibly a temple, of early Hellenistic date, ca. the third century B. C., destroyed and incorporated in the temple begun as indicated by the evidence unearthed in 1964 in the first century B. C., and not during the reign of Hadrian, as generally believed before.

Two probes under a portion of the early Hellenistic mosaic brought to light under the bedding abundant fragments of coloured stucco decorations and a great number of crushed gold leaf fragments, probably ornaments judging from the recognisable floral patterns of some. Another sondage led to the discovery at ca. - 0.95 m. under the mosaic level of a roughly circular pit and a pithos embedded next to it. The precise character of this evidence remains to be clarified and interpreted. The pit, which might be the remains of a storage bin or area, and the pithos could be part of either a sacred or a private building and obviously antedate the Hellenistic period. Removal of a dyke of earth left in the northeast corner of the pronaos foundation revealed, on the other hand, a few almost complete pots at a level and

in a stratum approximately equal to those of the pithos: an aryballos and a one-handed mug decorated with wavy and concentric lines show some affinities with Lydian or Corinthian Geometric and Protocorinthian wares, though distinct in many ways and consequently to be considered local variants. If so, as was indicated by the evidence found in 1964 along the foundations of the cella, an archaic occupation in the area of the temple must be recognised and the strata under the mosaic pavement represent accumulation dating back to at least the seventh century B. C.

If the pre-Hellenistic antecedents of the temple still lack precisions, the Byzantine transformations of the pagan sanctuary into a church also hinders a full understanding of the Roman temple complex and its lay-out. Further excavations behind the apse and clearance of the east end of the building from the outside revealed the exterior of the east wall to have been built in excellent masonry, which appears essentially still *in situ*, although at first it was thought to have been built by the Byzantines out of the blocks which they removed from the cella. If indeed *in situ*, this wall would then have been incorporated by the Christian architects into the eastern extremity of their basilica, immediately behind the apse. Unfortunately, the original height of the wall cannot be determined now and renders an interpretation of its role difficult to grasp, as it would tend to obstruct somewhat the approach to the temple from the east through the second propylaea. For the time being, one can only suggest that the wall might be associated with an early temenos arrangement or a terracing operation, or even part of an altar in front of the temple. The evidence for the dating of this wall through stratification and ceramic evidence is unfortunately confused as a great number of Byzantine tombs (mostly of the eleventh and twelfth centuries) and some drainage channels were dug next to it. However, excavations at

several points along the foundations of the wall revealed again as in several 1964 attempts sherds of Lydian, Attic, and East Greek wares mixed with the later Hellenistic fragments, as well as several terracotta figurine fragments, notably another headless seated goddess, of the sixth century B. C. and earlier. Also available in the lowest levels dug here were quantities of silex and small obsidian blade fragments of types similar to those found *passim* elsewhere at Aphrodisias. This evidence once more raises the question of the origins of the site of Aphrodisias which might well conceivably date back to the Bronze Age or earlier, although it could be argued that these implements may have had some practical or ritualistic purposes in the historic period as well.

Investigations of the northern part of the temenos of Aphrodite, in the area immediately to the north of the remains of the temenos wall, led to the discovery of what is probably a private (?) Byzantine complex consisting of a small squarish court with four high-based, slender Corinthian columns of blue Aphrodisias marble with several (five or six) rooms connected with or opening into it. A door situated off axis with the court to the north led to a presumably larger, handsomely marble-paved court. The walls of this larger court were apparently lavishly decorated and revetted with marble, judging from the fragments of revetment found here, including fluted pilaster shafts and two charming and almost intact figured capitals probably pertaining to them: one of the capitals showed among the curving acanthus leaves the figure of the famous Aphrodite of Knidos by Praxiteles, while the other, obviously a pendant to the first, had a draped female figure in the center holding out an object in her right hand (*a patera?*). It is possible that this was also modelled after a well-known type in sculpture, even perhaps, as suggested by Miss Ellen Davis, another Praxitelean creation, the Aphrodite of Kos. Although the function of this building remains as yet obscure

re, chronologically speaking it seems to date to the early Byzantine period in parts (with, of course, re-use of earlier Roman material), more precisely the sixth century (Justin II, 565-578) with its abandonment and destruction traceable probably to the eleventh or twelfth century. The elegant columns of the small courtyard, which were found fallen near their bases, were re-erected and two of their capitals reset onto their shafts.

Excavation in the western portion of the *porticus post scaenam* of the Aphrodisias Odeion were resumed last summer. The back wall of this portico, following two interruptions or doors, proved to continue to the west beyond the vicinity of the Odeion and its backstage corridor proper. Unfortunately, work here was slightly impeded by seeping underground water. It is clear indeed now that the water table in the region fluctuates in accordance with the extent of precipitations in the preceding winter and spring which were apparently quite rainy last year.

The architectural peculiarities of the portico are beginning to become understandable. The row of Corinthian columns and their capitals unearthed since 1963 in this area at 6.50 m. from the back wall appear to have formed the inner row of the *porticus*. This would explain their wide intercolumniations (*ca.* 5.50 m.), the absence of metal clamps and pins between the drums and their capitals and the lack of appropriate architectural elements for a stone entablature. Several probes to the south of these columns led to the discovery *in situ* of what is certainly the exterior row of columns which opened onto the Agora. These columns were situated at *ca.* 6 m. from the inner row and at *ca.* 2 m. from one another. They were of the Ionic order, quite similar to those columns still standing to the southeast and presumed to have been part of the Agora, their lowest drum being similarly unfluted. However, the portico seems to project forward more into the open area of the Agora than those other columns traceable in

the northeast corner of the said Agora. The columns of the vast portico adjacent to the Agora and the so-called "Portico of Tiberius", excavated by G. Jacopi in 1937, also bear stylistic resemblances to those of the *porticus post scaenam*. A fragment of an architrave block, of appropriate length, found between two of the exterior columns of this portico, further accentuated this relationship. Indeed, it bore two words of the dedicatory inscription ΔΙΑΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΙΑ whose letter forms show strong resemblances to those of the epistyle inscription of the "Portico of Tiberius", which is assumed to have been begun between 14 and 29. It might be therefore surmised that the monumentalisation of Aphrodisias came into full swing in the first half of the first century A. D. with the lay-out of the two porticoed piazzas, and continued in the second century with the erection of the Odeion and other complexes.

Along the back wall of the western part of the *porticus*, two statues tooped in front of their inscribed bases were uncovered and proved to be worthy companions to the Diogenes and Claudia Antonia Tatiana found in 1964 behind the stage corridor area of the odeion. One of these was an exquisitely worked *chlamydatus* of the fifth century, similar to the one found by Paul Gaudin in 1905 in the front portico of the Baths, and representing a notable lawyer or poet (?) by the name of Oikoumenios, according to its inscription composed in elegiac couplets. The inscription of the second statue was also in couplets, but its octagonal base on which it was cut had been re-used and an earlier second century inscription had been turned against the wall. The later, outward-facing lines, probably executed in the third century, extolled a man named Alexandros Dikaios, whose "stone image" is said to have been sent by the "Mother of Phrygia to the Mother of Caria". The statue itself was of the himation-type with its head carved and inserted separately. Unfortunately, neither this nor the

head of the *chlamydata* have as yet been found. The southern part of the portico where they may have rolled out is not yet fully excavated. Operations here were furthermore hampered by problems of seeping underground water, surprisingly enough still carried by the ancient terracotta water conduits excavated along the length of the portico.

The "Bishop's Palace", to the northwest of the Odeion, was also the scene of further excavations in its approaches. A group of two and one and one half rooms were opened west and southwest of the peristyle situated in front of the triconch discovered and restored in 1963 and 1964. Two of these rooms communicating with one another had been filled up and re-used at a higher level in later Byzantine times, just like the west portico of the peristyle. Their original floors, however, were preserved and consisted of handsome and delicately hued geometric mosaics of the fifth or sixth century; one a nine medallion carpet-like pattern with familiar meander, guilloche, and ivy patterns, the other, made up of blue, yellow, and white intertwining lozenge star motifs. Another room, immediately to the southwest but not communicating with the other two had an attractive blue and white marble *quasi - opus sectile* type pavement. As it appears now, the western part of the "Bishop's Palace" may have been reached here since neither of the two rooms with the geometric mosaic pavements opened further to the west. However, the antechamber of the lateral hall with the aspidal end corresponding with and connected to the triconch unit and its peristyle does show a number of doors opening off it, two leading to the west and one to the north.

A probe to the south of the east apse of the triconch executed in the course of wall consolidation operations brought to light a door cut into this apse, and beyond, a northeastward ascending flight of seven steps. A marble pithos was uncovered fitted at the bottom of the steps. Among

the finds made in the "Bishop's Palace", the lower part of a third century bearded portrait needs mentioning.

In an attempt at gathering information concerning the origins of the "acropolis" of Aphrodisias, which is certainly a hillock of artificial or man-made origin, three trenches were cut along its eastern and northeastern flanks. One of these was also intended to verify the location of the presumed large theatre whose presence on the east slope was suggested by the remains of several tiers of seats and an upper *ambulacrum* visible among the village houses built here. The trench was aimed at the approximate area of an orchestra and a lower *cavea*. The results proved to be beyond any expectation despite laborious beginnings. At a depth of over 5 m., large fallen architectural blocks were encountered. After their removal, beyond the 6 m. depth, the large black and white marble slabs of the proscenium, carefully laid out, appeared. A small aperture on the face of the *pulpitum* led to the discovery of a perfectly preserved, vaulted, and only partially filled tunnel running along the length of the proscenium and opening by means of at least one central door onto the orchestra. Upon exploration, this tunnel proved to be about 2 m. wide and run for a minimum length of 25.30 m. and was joined perpendicularly at the center of the *scaena* by another similar corridor 1.40 m. wide and at least 13 m. long. Further investigations were naturally impeded by the difficulty of earth and stone removal and the lack of certainty as to the solidity of the *scaena* floor and the vaults that supported several tons of accumulated earth and stones above them. Similar corridors, often labelled *via venatorum*, exist in a number of Asia Minor theatres, such as Termessus, and must have served the practical purposes of coulisses or storage areas for special performances, particularly gladiatorial and similar combats. The actual floor of the orchestra was reached in front of a small area before the aperture leading

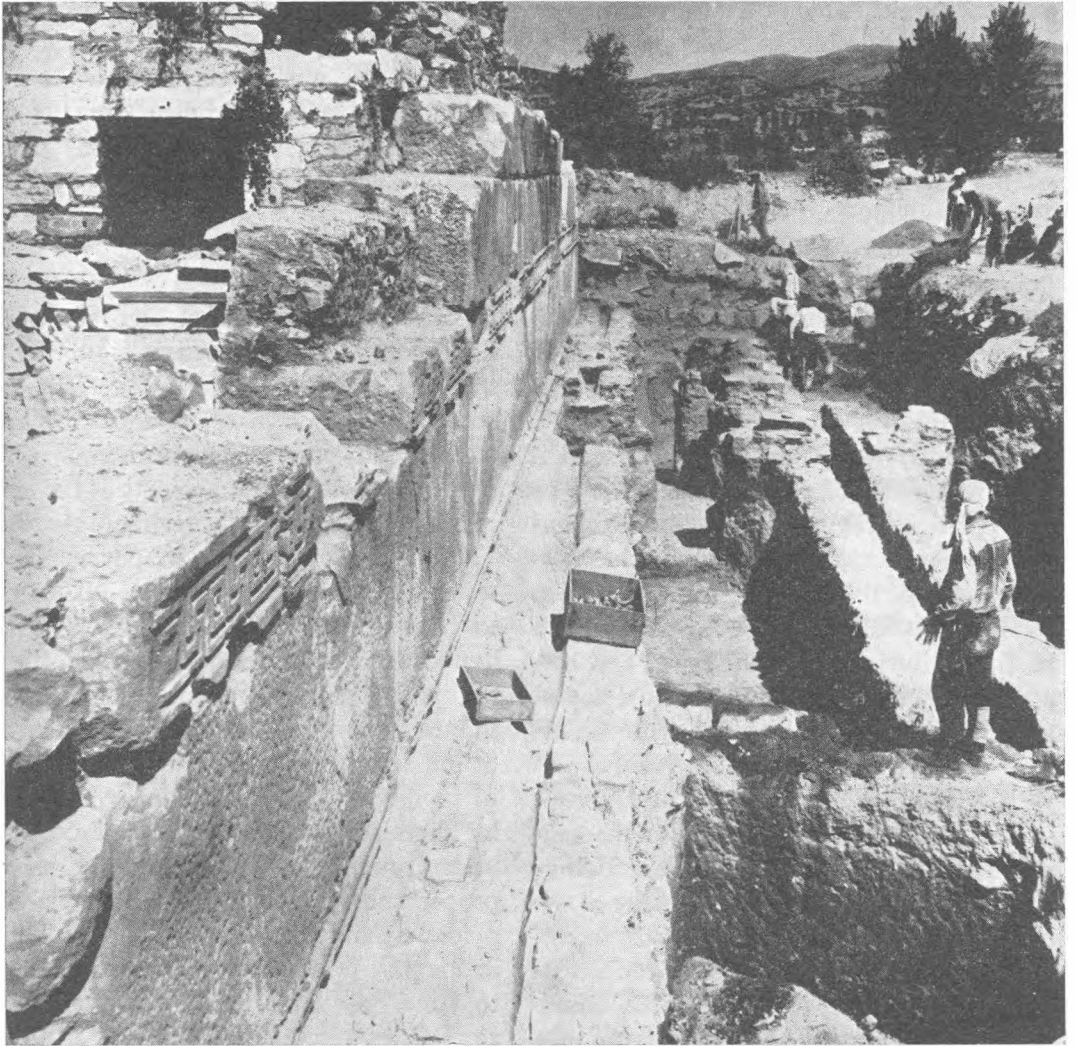
into the tunnel, which had been cleared of the encumbering blocks fallen presumably from the upper *scaenae frons*. The stage appears to have been almost 2 m. high and the drainage channel cut into the floor of the orchestra was also detected here. It is very likely that once much earth removal is accomplished in this slope of the "acropolis" and excavations continued, the theatre of Aphrodisias can prove to be in an excellent state of preservation and one of the most interesting structures of its kind in Asia Minor.

Another well - preserved and significant monument of Aphrodisias, the Baths of Hadrian, was also tackled last summer. This complex, situated in the western sector of the site, was initially started by Paul Gaudin in 1904-5, who opened its front courtyard, or *palaestra*, and discovered its handsome and unusual sculptural decorations, and briefly continued in 1937 by the Italian mission. The courtyard, as well as the whole structure, appears to have been endowed with the network of underground corridors and tunnels, obviously connected with the servicing and water usage of this establishment. A number of these corridors were investigated, particularly those under the courtyard or *palaestra*, where one passage ran under the court eastward, dividing it into two and passing under a triple stairway acceding to the "Portico of Tiberius". Several attractive fragments of sculpture were discovered in the eastern end of this tunnel: a handsome male portrait of Trajanic date formed a contrasting pair with a skilfully executed and lively head of a satyr puffing his cheeks while playing the pipes.

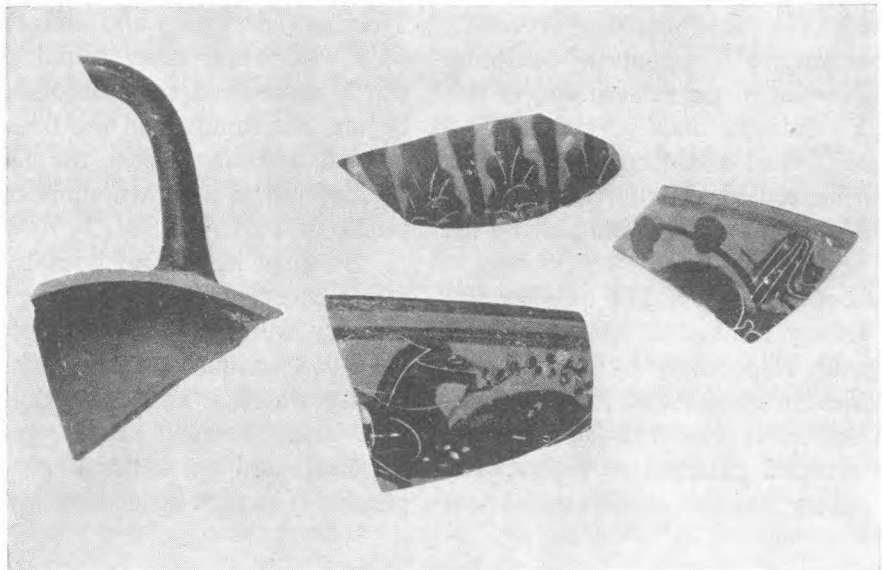
The core of the building consists of a central gallery flanked to the north and to the south respectively by two subsidiary galleries interconnected with one another, if one trusts present surface observation by arcaded passages or niches. The central gallery was the *calidarium*, as was

proven by our summer excavations. It was cleared to the level of its marble pavement after much struggle with the monumental tufa blocks fallen from its upper walls. The gallery was entirely paved with marble and the walls equally revetted with large marble slabs with, of course, hypocaust arrangements under its pavements. It was monumental in size, measuring about 30 m. by 15 m. Two sets of semi - circular niches faced one another to the west and to the east respectively, and some of them seem to have been geared to trap and circulate hot air. There were parallel poollike arrangements at the eastern and western extremities of the hall. The marble revetments and pavements as well as most of the hypocausts turned out to be amazingly well - preserved. Other hypocaust arrangements accessible through the *praefurnium* and the underground tunnel system to the north and the south of the central gallery or *calidarium* and to be connected with a *tepidarium* and similar facilities were brought to light. The underground area between the *calidarium* proper and the *exedra* framed by the two pylons opening into the *palaestra* probably forms part of the *praefurnium* and proved to be connected also with the corridors running under the floor of the *palaestra* itself. A hoard of 27 Byzantine coins, bronzes mostly of the reigns of Maurice Tiberius (582 - 602) and Heraclius (610 - 641) was found here. Initial efforts towards restoration and consolidation were begun, last summer, in the Baths with financial assistance from the Department of Antiquities and Museums of the Republic of Turkey.

It goes almost without saying that many excellent and interesting pieces of statuary were recorded in the course of the 1965 campaign from various areas, among which a handsome double herm (one head of which might represent Xenophon) and an unusual group (Polyphemus?) require special mention.

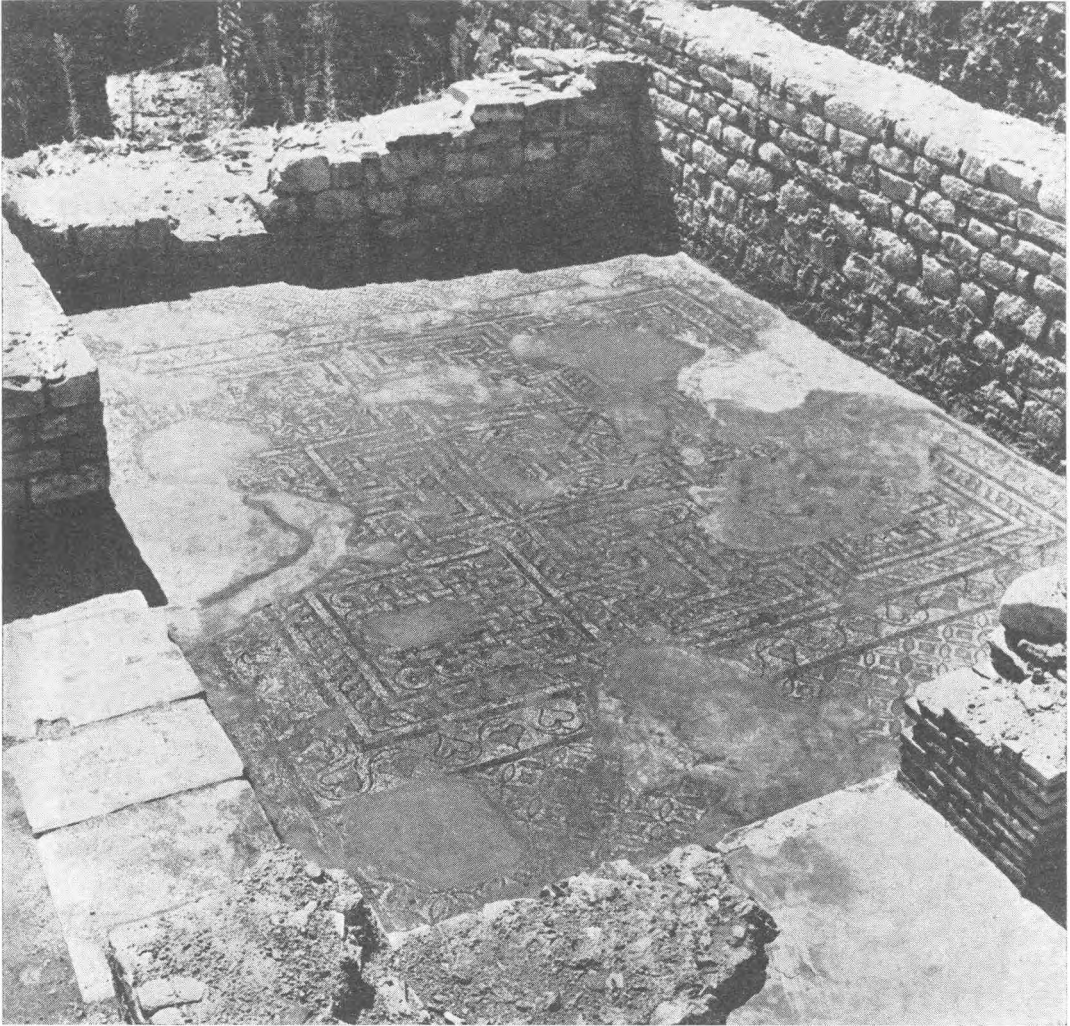


Res. 1 — APHRODISÍAS - 1965 wall behind Apse of (Temple) basilica of APHRODITE - Possibly part of a Hellenistic Temenos



Res. 2 — APHRODISÍAS - 1965. Temple Area. Black - Figured fragments.





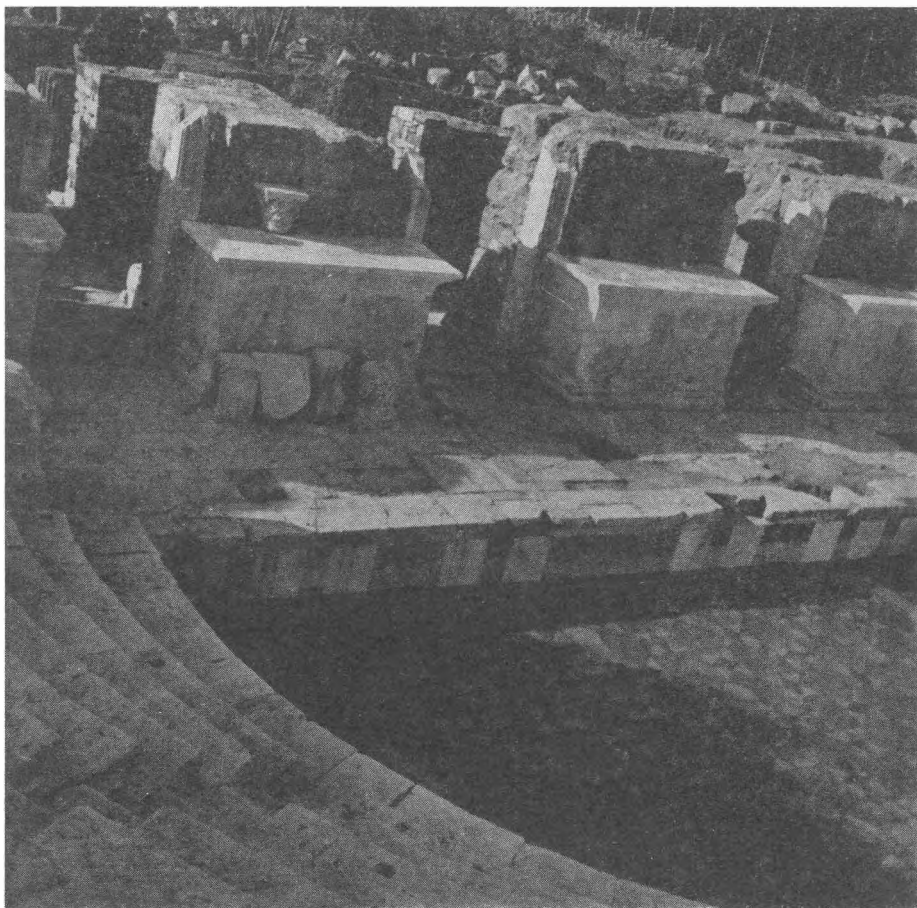
Res. 3 — APHRODISIAS - 1965. "Bishop's palace" mosaic of west room.



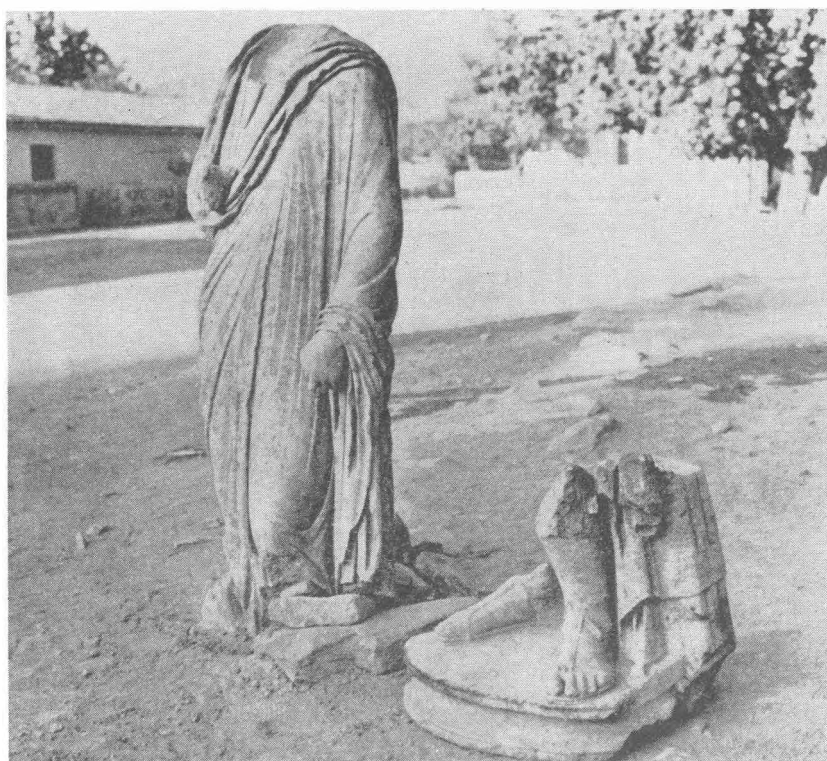
Res. 4 — APHRODISIAS - 1965. "Bishop's palace" door and stairway in central apse of Triconch



Res. 5 — APHRODISIAS - 1965. Baths of Hadrian. Hypocausts of *calidarium*.



Res. 6 — APHRODISIAS - 1965. Odeion. Scaena partially restored and consolidated.

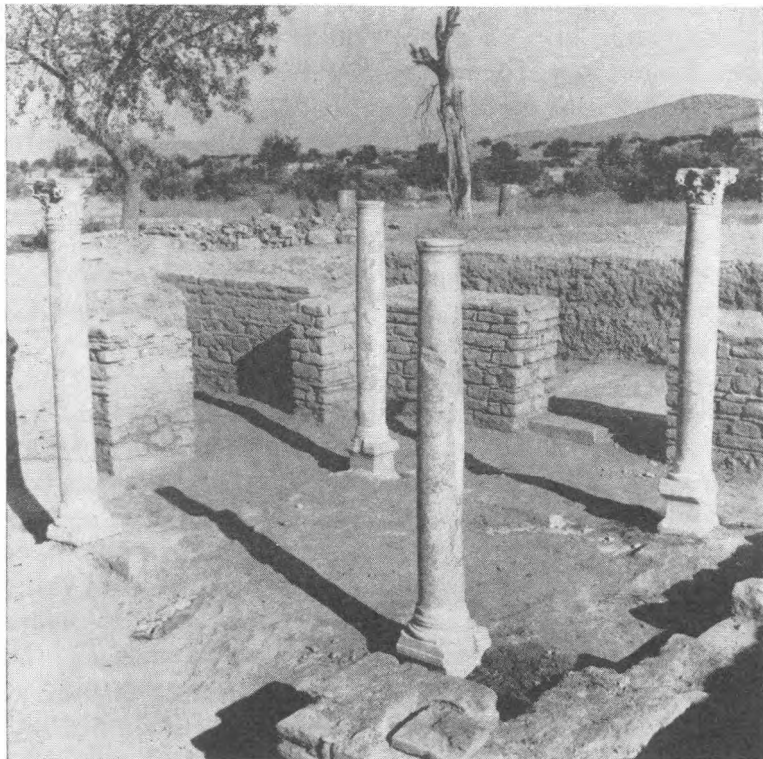


Res. 7 — APHRODISIAS - 1965. Statue of Alexandros Dikaïos found in portico behind odeion.





Res. 8 — APHRODISIAS - 1965. *PORTICUS* behind odeion.  
*CHLAMYDATUS* statue of Oikoumenios



Res. 9 — APHRODISIAS - 1965 - North temenos complex with 4 re-erected  
columns of square court.