

EXCAVATIONS AT SARDIS, 1965

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The 1965 season of the Harvard-Cornell Archaeological Exploration of Sardis began ca. June 20; excavation activities terminated on August 28, while restoration work continued thru November. The excavation was again sponsored by the American Schools of Oriental Research, and the Corning Museum of Glass was again a participant. A grant under the provisions of Public Law 480, administered by the United States Department of State, again greatly aided the work. As always, it is a pleasure to thank the Department of Antiquities and Museums of the Ministry of Education of the Turkish Republic for its manifold assistance and encouragement. We have also to thank our commissioners, Bay Kemal Ziya Polatkan, Director of the Manisa Museum, and Bay Muharrem Tağtekin, who served as second commissioner (for Bin Tepe) for countless favors and courtesies.

The excavations at Sardis centered in three major areas in the western part of the city; Sector PN, along the Pactolus River; Sector "Lydian Trench" (HOB), south of the modern highway, and Sector B-Syn, the gymnasium-synagogue complex, where restoration and excavation took place side by side. Excavation also continued at the Royal Cemetery of Bin Tepe.

At Sector "Lydian Trench" Gustavus F. Swift, Jr., assisted by Andrew Ramage, exposed a wide area of the seventh and early sixth century B. C. strata in

the Lydian bazaar area (S 90-130/E 5-W42; cf. Plan, fig. 1). Considerable progress was made in clarifying the often confusing history of this area, where flood deposits and destruction levels alternate with occupation horizons. Under small buildings of the sixth century B. C., probably shops and small industrial establishments, a series of floors was encountered, in which extensive deposits of Lydian pottery were found stratified with Protocorinthian and East Greek sherds. One of the most impressive of the former was a Middle Corinthian linear skyphos of ca. 650 B. C. (P 65.61, 6671), clearly dating this level. From a mate to the wild goat *deinos* discovered in this area in 1963 (P 63.366) is a sherd with a lively pacing sphinx (P 65.6, 6593; cf. fig. 2), the product of a school of individually Lydian orientaling vase painting which flourished ca. 600 B. C. The most striking small object discovered on one of these floors (W 24.5/S 112.5, *98.5), firmly dated near the middle of the seventh century, is a small circular bone plaque (BI 65.2, 6636; fig. 3) carved with a fantastic animal curled in an embryonic position. Its curvilinear stylization, reminiscent of Scythian-style animal art from south Russia and central Asia, raises anew the question of the identity of the Kimmerian horsemen who repeatedly devastated Sardis during the seventh century B. C.

Below this level, considerable portions of a heavily burned clay floor, encounte-

red during previous seasons in different parts of the area, were uncovered. Much of this floor had been sealed in with a covering layer of clay. The burned floor was riddled with large circular pits, dug from higher up, some of them over a meter in depth. These bothroi suggest that the entire area may have been devoted to some industrial purpose, perhaps something involving the storage and use of liquids in bulk. The severely burned floor is thought to have been caused by one of the Kimmerian attacks.

Around the western side of the area, and making a right angle turn at S 128/W 30, is a massive rubble wall, 0.60 m. thick and up to 1.85 m. high (plan, fig. 1). Although the full extent of this wall is not yet known, its curving exterior face, and the sizeable rooms which adjoin it, suggest that it formed a precinct or compound wall surrounding this commercial and industrial area -- a feature of highest interest for the early urban development of Lydian Sardis. It is tentatively dated to the mid-seventh century B. C.

Small finds recovered from the market area include three bronze fibulae (e. g. fig. 4: M 65.2, 6669), a tiny blue faience scarab (fig. 5; Seal 65.1, 6670) and a terracotta stamp seal, perforated for suspension at one end (fig. 6; Seal 65.2, 6847).

At Sector PN Robert and Marcia Ascher excavated a block of houses (plan, fig. 7) which had been continuously inhabited from the sixth century B. C. through the late third century B. C.; work was continued during the latter part of August by George M. A. Hanfmann and Metin Kunt. Parts of several rectangular units, with doors and well-built walls, were cleared. Their construction reflects a complex series of alterations and reoccupation, including intermittent flooding and conflagrations which are tentatively equated with the destructions of Sardis in 547 B. C. and 499 B. C. These habitations were levelled after the siege by Antiochos III in 213 B. C. The structures excavated this season appear to be a northward con-

tinuation of the sixth and fifth century houses excavated by Noel D. Robertson in 1964.

Some fine pieces of pottery were recovered. From a krater of the first half of the seventh century B. C., probably produced somewhere in East Greece, is a sherd with a ship manned by hoplites sailing through a sea alive with dolphins -- a later version of a subject famous in Geometric vase painting (fig. 8; P 65.98, 6742). Testifying to Sardis' flourishing relations with the major Greek powers on the mainland is the handle fragment of a *lakaina*, a special form of deep-handled chalice produced in Lakonia early in the sixth century B. C. (fig. 9; P 65.138, 6772). A tiny but monumental fragment of Attic black-figure draftsmanship (fig. 10; P 65.47, 6647), probably from a hydria, may represent Zeus and Hera or another divine couple; it cannot have been made much after 525 B. C.

A well of the Persian period, similar to one cleared at HOB in 1963, produced quantities of roof-tiles dated by palmette-stamped Attic black glaze ware and a squat lekythos (fig. 11; P 65.58, 6661) to the fourth century B. C. From early Hellenistic house floors came several small bronze coins of the third century B. C., principally of issues from cities such as Ephesus, for which little stratigraphical data has until now been available. The emerging picture here is one of a gradual Hellenization of Lydian Sardis, which only becomes complete with the radical replanning of the city after its destruction under Antiochos III near the end of the third century B. C.

The expedition continued work at the center of the Bin Tepe cemetery across the Gediz River from Sardis. In the second season of tunneling in the huge burial mound, Karniyarik Tepe, the massive *krepis* wall around the inner mound was traced for an additional stretch of the circle toward the east and north until the wall ended, but digging in the center failed to encounter the tomb chamber. At the

north-eastern end of the *krepis* wall, Crawford H. Greenewalt, Jr., noted that the rising bedrock outcrop had been chiselled flat for a bedding to receive the final stones of the wall, which were never set in place (cf. fig. 12). Fragments of Lydian shoulder-drop oinochoai and other pottery suggest that the mound may have been enlarged to its present size sometime in the seventh or early in the sixth century B. C. Tunneling in the center of the mound ran into irregular accumulations of rubble, several of which were investigated.

Work in the Roman synagogue concentrated in testing the layers beneath the main hall for underlying structures and examining the foundations of the walls and piers for structural safety in anticipation of proposed consolidation and restoration. No earlier floor was found, although the smashed fragments of marble and granite columns reused in the foundations may have been appropriated from an earlier structure on the site. Surprising was the discovery of a large barrel vault (E 71-74/N 1.2-24, crown *96.20) running north-south just under the floor of the main hall and resembling the parallel series of barrel vaults found in 1964 under the Marble Court farther north. This vault may have been part of a terracing system upon which the synagogue was built.

A deep pit under the southeastern corner of the main hall yielded numerous fragments of molded bowls and lamps of the first century B. C., as well as an inscribed lamp (*Phos Agathon* around the rim; fig. 13; L 65.9, 6765, L: 0.10 m.). A tile grave, 2.75 m. long by 0.85 m. wide by 0.58 m. deep, was found at *91.42, five meters beneath the level of the floor of the main hall. It was empty, but its construction resembles tile graves of the first century B. C. - first century A. D. excavated in 1959 south of the modern highway, and probably represents a northward continuation, upon steeply sloping ground, of the same cemetery.

In 1962-63, finely worked limestone steps were discovered protruding from the south foundation of the synagogue at a different orientation from that of the synagogue-gymnasium complex (*Dergi* 12 (1962) 30; *BASOR* 174 (1964) 47, figs. 29-30). Parallel walls, found this year at right angles to these steps, probably form the side walls of a small building of the first century B. C., extending northward under the synagogue.

Immured in the foundations of Pier S 1 in the main hall was a marble lion (fig. 14: S 65.11, 6904), which was found, facing east, ca 1 m. below the floor (E 87/N. 1.5 *95.70-95.35). This wide-mouthed, crouching animal is another example of the archaic spoils liberally incorporated into the synagogue building by its architects. The lion is 0.52 m. long and 0.37 m. high. With its block-like body and the petal-like stylizations on its forelegs, it cannot date much later than 600 B. C., and is perhaps the oldest piece of Lydian sculpture yet discovered.

Further work was done in clearing the southern colonnade of the palaestra, which adjoins the north wall of the synagogue. A large portion of this wall was discovered, lying where it had collapsed, to the north of the main hall. The construction appears to be alternate zones of rubble masonry and brick lacing bands, reinforced at intervals by vertical piers of ashlar masonry. At the southeastern corner of the palaestra, where the southern and eastern colonnades intersect, part of the stylobate of the southern colonnade was cleared to E 93, where it had been broken up for lime (cf. plan, fig. 15). Broken shafts of four unfluted columns were encountered, as well as a battered Corinthian capital with female head in the acanthus foliage (similar to several which had been recovered in other seasons from the Marble Court of the gymnasium), of the late second or early third century A. D., and a fine Ionic corner capital which is datable to the early fifth century A. D., according to Prof. Hans Buchwald of the Harvard School of Design.

The problem of restoration of the main gate of the Severan Entrance Court into the gymnasium (Marble Court) was energetically pushed forward under the direction of James W. Yarnell. Mehmed T. Ergene was in charge of the assembling and reerection of the gate columns, Fikret Yeğül was responsible for design problems, and Tankut Akalin handled supply procurement and re-erection of the piers and wall structures behind the gate. By the end of the season, with the help of the pipe tripod loaned by the Austrian Archaeological Institute Excavations at Ephesus, two of the spirally fluted columns, Number 2, the southern of the inner pair,

and Number 4, the northern of the outer pair, had had been re-erected; their missing portions were supplied in steel-reinforced concrete. The work was greatly facilitated by the fortunate recovery of three long pieces of column shafts, buried in the rubble filling the hall "B/A" just to the west of the entrance gate, where they had been dragged and left by Byzantine marble plunderers.

The "South Hall," a nearly square unit south of the Marble Court, was completely cleared by A. Ramage, revealing an Early Byzantine pavement of marble slabs over a much-battered mosaic floor, possibly of the fourth century A. D.



Fig. 3 — Bone plaque with engraved animal (BI 65.2, 6636). Midseventh century B. C.

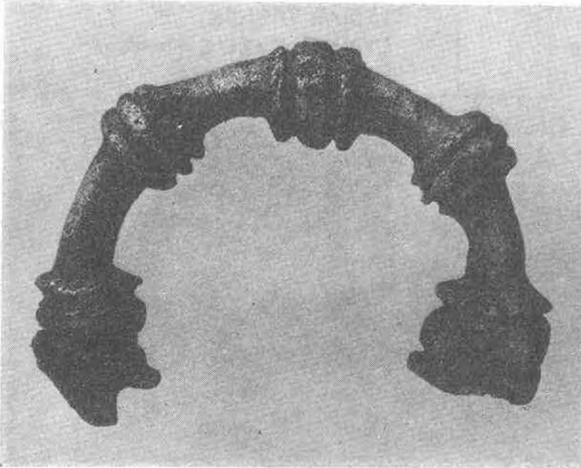


Fig. 4 — Bronze fibula (M 65.2, 6669), Sixth century B. C.



Fig. 5 — Faience scarab (Seal 65.1, 6670), sixth century B. C.



Fig. 8 — Fragment of East Greek krater : ship
manned by hoplite; dolphins (P 65.98, 6724).
Seventh century B. C.

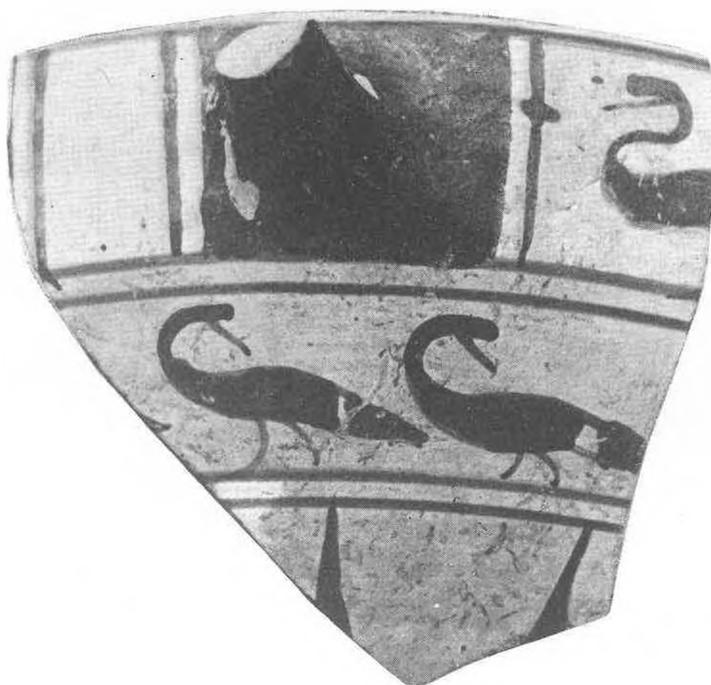


Fig. 9 — Fragment of Lakonian lakaina (P 65.138,
6772). Early sixth century B. C.



Fig. 10 — Attic black-figure sherd (P 65.47, 6647).
Late 6th century B. C.



Fig. 11 — Squat lekythos from well (P 65.58, 6661). Fourth century B. C.

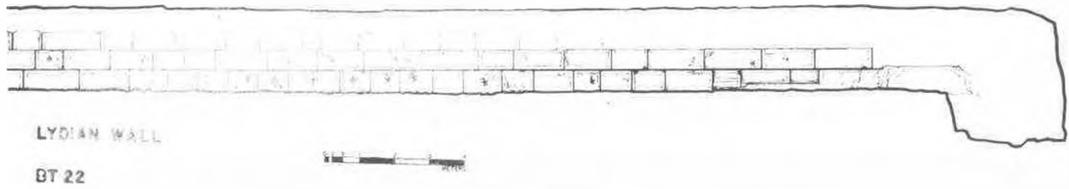


Fig. 12 — Elevation of *krejis* wall, extension to northeast.



Fig. 13 — Mold-made lamp from pit beneath
synagogue (L 65.9, 6765). First century B. C.



Fig. 14 — Marble lion built into foundations of synagogue (S 65.11, 6904). Early sixth century B. C.

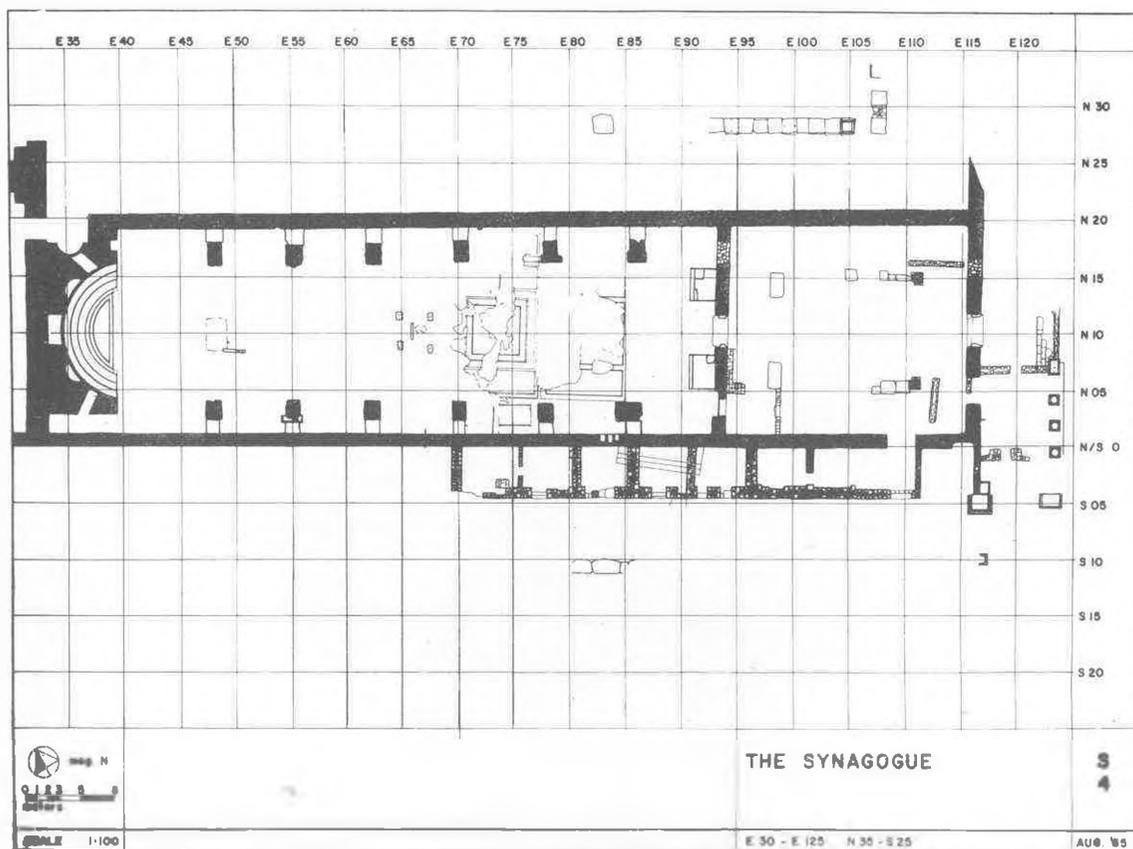


Fig. 15 — Plan of Roman synagogue and vicinity, 1965 season.