

EXCAVATIONS AT APHRODISIAS IN CARIA, 1974

KENAN T. ERİM

The fourteenth campaign of excavations at Aphrodisias in Caria (Fig. 1) was conducted between July 2 to August 15, then September 10 to October 7, 1974. The National Geographic Society once again generously provided the main support. The staff for the 1974 campaign included : Mr. Reha Arican, Miss Sheila Campbell, Mr. Orhan Gürman, Mr. Michael Hendy, Prof. and Mrs. Frederick Lauritsen, Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Marchese, Miss Joyce Reynolds, Miss Gülderen Süzek and Mr. Memduh Taşcıoğlu. Messrs Selçuk Başer and Ali V. Kılıçkaya represented the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums. Mr. M. Ali Dügenci as usual through the courtesy of the *Türk Tarih Kurumu* and Prof. Ekrem Akurgal undertook our final photographic recording.

The area of major concentrated work in the 1974 campaign was, as in past summers, the *theatre*, its immediate vicinity and adjacent buildings intimately connected with it (Fig. 2). The main tasks were the continued excavation of the Late Roman "piazza" (Fig. 3) stretching behind the stage and the exploration of the northern accesses to the theatre. The chief obstacle to the latter investigations is the presence of terracing walls and considerable fill over the area of the north *analemma*, including a half-ruined structure, long disaffected but once used as a mosque (Fig. 4). The condition of this ex-mosque, which was built of an assortment of odd ancient architectural

fragments, and displays few special characteristics of its own, proved to be too flimsy to attempt a suitable preservation or restoration. Earthquake and exposure to the elements following the collapse of its roof caused irreparable damage to its core. A beguiling feature of the *camii*, however, was the attractively primitive paintings decorating the walls of its interior and its front porch (Fig. 5). Unfortunately, these had been seriously effaced and damaged by exposure to weather. Nevertheless, it seemed judicious to salvage some of the better preserved among the paintings and thereby keep a record of this most recent phase of the history of Aphrodisias. An inscribed date over the entrance reveals that the decoration was executed in 1901-2. It appears that several similarly painted mosques still exist in western Anatolia and that their style combines a mixture of traditional elements with European motifs. The responsible artists were probably itinerant workers. In the specific case of Geyre, they were probably not quite unaffected by the ruins of Aphrodisias. Indeed, some features of the painting, such as garlands, floral motifs and pseudo-Ionic capitals may well have been influenced by the ancient monumental remains. Mr. Reha Arican painstakingly lifted from the walls a number of representative panels, including the entire, though battered, *mihrab*. A survey of the building and a photographic record of all its decoration *in situ* were also duly completed prior to these operations.

Excavations *per se* in the north theatre concentrated on uncovering the layout of the area north of the "piazza" and its colonnade and on revealing the buttressed fortification wall over which the *camii* was in part built (Fig. 6). The precise function of this wall, partly cleared in due course down to the level of its foundation, is still difficult to determine. Its relationship with the north *analemma* which is concealed by the ex-mosque is not clear. Its original construction date, however, is surely late Hellenistic and contemporary, therefore, with the theatre. Its five strong buttresses are puzzling. Upon close inspection, the uneven surface of its large blocks appeared to have been reworked at a later time (Fig. 7). An inscription extolling the dedication of part of the theatre (essentially its *cavea*) by Artemidorus Molossus was undoubtedly cut in the second century, though the work in question was actually completed by the late first century B.C. The surface reworking, however, must have been undertaken at a late date in Byzantine times, when the Acropolis was transformed into a fortress. The intent may have been to eliminate certain typical Hellenistic features of the masonry which would have facilitated the eventual assault of a besieging enemy force. Regular, well-joined blocks were also found at the foot of the wall, as well as in front of the *vomitorium* steps immediately south of the buttressed wall. These seem to form a sort of "sidewalk", as they only appear for an average width of ca. 50 cm. along the *vomitorium* and the wall. The rest of the area to the east does not appear to have been paved.

Two parallel walls, the eastern one of which featured at least three doors opening to the east, reached the north portico of the "piazza" at an oblique angle (Fig. 8). These may have lined an unpaved street of Middle Byzantine date. Two odd column bases were found re-used at the junction of these walls with the

north portico. From the fifth century on, this area was subjected to much destruction and rebuilding. Many architectural, epigraphical and sculptural fragments were found scattered in all of the four strata recorded here. These included another half column base similar to two discovered in 1973 before the "bastion" of the Byzantine stage-blocking wall. Its face was decorated with the head of satyr flanked by swinging garlands (Fig. 9).

A sondage dug in front of the above-mentioned "bastion", within the north portico of the "piazza" revealed the lower courses of the "bastion" as well as the remnants of the "sidewalk" paving blocks under the back wall of the portico. It is clear, therefore, that the "sidewalk" antedates the layout of the "piazza". A terracotta water-conduit was discovered running eastward from beneath the "bastion" wall. In a pocket below the level of the water-conduit, several archaic sherds and Early Iron Age material were tentatively identified. It is likely that these belonged to a fill resulting from building operations that took place here in late Hellenistic and Roman times (Fig. 10). A miniature marble figurine of a crouching lion was also recorded near the back wall of the north portico, just below the level of the "sidewalk" remains in front of the *vomitorium* (Fig. 11).

Two trenches were dug to the east of the *South Post Scaenam* area, first cleared in 1972. They were aimed at investigating the continuation of the south portico of the "piazza". The stylobate of this portico was traced and proved to be well-preserved, but none of its column bases were found *in situ*. Several broken column shafts were, however, located. One of them bore parts of a dedicatory inscription, probably of second century date. As many elements of the porticoes, this was re-used here when the "piazza" was laid out in Late Roman times. The pavement of the "piazza" continued to be in excellent condition (Fig. 12). Again

most of its slabs were of bluish marble and featured several repetitive letters or initials. On the other hand, here as well as to the north of the "piazza" excavated earlier, portions of the pavement seem to have been occasionally robbed, often in a rough circular fashion, leaving visibly looser soil pockets. A brief examination of one of these revealed a large terracotta water-conduit at a depth of over 2 m. In another instance, the compact quality of the sides of the sondage was striking in contrast to the loose fill (Fig. 13).

Closer, but accidental, re-examination of the walls of the irregular, oblong room located at an oblique angle in front of the southern half of the Byzantine stage-blocking wall betrayed the re-use of many sculpture fragments. Already when this area was excavated in 1972, several items had been recovered in his room. The new pieces extrated therefrom pertained to a nude Aphrodite including fragments of the torso (Figs. 14-16) and to a lifesize draped female statue with part of the artist's signature on the base (Fig. 17). In the course of the same operations, several blocks of the stage-blocking wall on either side of the *porta regia* tunnel had to be removed for practical purposes. They revealed that the face of the masonry of the *porta regia* was not fully finished here. Cuttings on blocks flanking the arch furthermore suggested that a stairway system once existed on either side of the *porta* (Fig. 18).

Exploration of the *aula termale* complex initiated last year was pursued in three phases. One operation focused on the excavation of the large hall once labelled "nymphaeum" (Fig. 19). In the other two, the interior of the *aula termale* itself and its southern dependencies were investigated. All three phases entailed much stone and earth removal and, therefore, required suitable strategic planning because of the impressive size and condition of the remains (Fig. 20).

The "nymphaeum" hall featured walls preserved up to a height of over 8 to

10 m. and cut by a series of arcuate niches or recesses. Its west wall included five such niches (Fig. 21). These were partly paralleled on the east wall. However, in lieu of the north and south recesses, doors opened there towards the east. In its late history, after the hall had been partly filled with debris, the east wall was robbed at regular intervals, probably to serve as support to a late farm building or animal pen (Fig. 22). The first and third niches (from the south) of the west wall communicated with the *aula termale* via two well-built vaulted corridors. Large amounts of handsome marble revetment fragments were recovered in the overall excavation of the hall. They included several well-preserved corner Corinthian capitals (Fig. 23) as well as fragments bearing monumental lettering. Many of the latter involved two distinct inscriptions carved on opposite faces of the revetment slabs. This obviously implied re-use and suggested two different periods in the history of the structure. One group of inscribed fragments cut in a later hand (Fig. 24) seemed to include part of the name Ampelius. A Flavius Ampelius of the fourth (?) century is already recorded in Aphrodisias as responsible for the restoration of the West (or Antioch) Gate of the fortification system, and of the odeon. It may be he again who helped restore or transform the *aula termale* bathing complex. The other inscription was naturally anterior to the fourth century, as revealed by its letter forms (Fig. 25). Unfortunately, the fragments do not yet provide a more precise date. It seems nevertheless plausible now that the *aula termale* complex was built in the second or the early third century. Such a date is indirectly echoed by a number of other epigraphical documents found in its excavation. One is a dedication to Hadrian, as Saviour and Zeus Olympios; another, probably of second or third century date, is the beginning of a citation of a decree of the Boule and the Demos in honour of a Lucius Antonius.

The south wall of the "nymphaeum" hall consisted of three arcuate niches, all of which were subsequently tampered with and broken through with doors (Fig. 26). The north wall, already cleared in 1973, featured only a central door communicating with the antechamber built later and contiguous to the south portico of the "piazza". The precise function of this large "nymphaeum" hall remains uncertain. Its floor proved to be well paved with marble slabs, but these had often been pilfered or betrayed signs of repair or re-use. In front of the northernmost niche of the east wall, a circular pit was discovered in the course of excavation. This may have been part of a short-lived Byzantine lime-burning operation (Fig. 27).

The most interesting sculpture item among the many recovered here was an exquisitely carved small head of the Sun-god Helios. Its almost intact face was so highly polished as to create an impression of alabaster or even ivory. Stylistic considerations suggest a fifth century date for this masterpiece which provides additional evidence for the vitality and accomplishment of the School of Aphrodisias well into the Early Byzantine period (Fig. 28).

Discoveries made in the circular *aula termale* and to its south unequivocally proved that the whole complex to which it belonged formed a monumental bathing establishment, as already suggested last year (Fig. 29). Indeed, further excavations and investigations inside the *aula* itself (Fig. 30) revealed an arrangement of two contiguous pools separated by a low wall. The pool to the west was polygonal-shaped in part and shallower (Fig. 31), while the other to the east was rectangular and larger, occupying more than half of the interior of the *aula* and featuring a system of various terracotta pipes at its eastern end (Fig. 32-33). The marble slabs of its pavement had been unfortunately robbed in antiquity. Further-

more, the four large apsidal niches of the hall also appeared to have been used as shallow basing and receptacles, judging from several surviving water-conduits and pavement fragments. A most attractive torso of a Nike was unearthed near the northeastern one of these niches communicating with the large "nymphaeum" hall (Fig. 34).

Finally, trenches opened immediately to the south of the *aula* beyond the vaulted passageways of the large southeastern niche and the smaller southern one (Fig. 35) led to the discovery of a hypocaust arrangement belonging to a vaulted *calidarium* (Fig. 36). This area, however, appeared to have undergone many transformations in its later history (Fig. 37). A large quantity of small, Early Byzantine oil or perfume flasks was extracted between the columns of the hypocaust (Figs. 38-39). Part of a stepped pool, its marble revetment still partly intact, but also betraying signs of repair (an inscribed fragment was re-used here) was excavated to the south. A water-channel system connected it with the *calidarium* (Fig. 40).

The state of preservation of the *aula termale* complex, or Theatre Baths, is truly remarkable. Most of its walls stand to a height of 10 to 12 m. Only a small portion of it, however, has so far been excavated. Additional halls and rooms to the east, southeast, south and west are suggested by many remains of walls visible above ground. There can be no doubt that this was an imposing structure, built solidly and once lavishly decorated. It now has become one of the most impressive ruins of Aphrodisias.

Restoration work initiated in 1972 in 1972 in the theatre, especially in the stage and the north *parodos* area was continued in 1974 (Fig. 41). The western wing of the "archive wall", much damaged by the collapse of the *scaenae front*, was tackled and its consolidation begun (Fig. 42). The purpose of this restoration was to strengthen this and other walls in

order to reset the architrave blocks of the *proskenion* colonnade bearing the dedicatory Zoilus inscription. Such an operation cannot obviously be attempted until the entire *proskenion* and adjacent portions of the stage building are seriously re-examined and consolidated. Repair and preparation of the architrave blocks themselves were simultaneously initiated by Mr. Reha Arican. It is hoped that these operations will be accelerated in 1975.

Only laboratory work was undertaken in connection with the *prehistoric phases of the Acropolis* mound. Attention was specifically concentrated on material excavated in Trenches 8 and 9 on the west slope in 1971 and 1972. Final analysis was begun. Specific levels of occupation from the Ottoman period down to the Late Bronze and Iron Age, were more precisely defined. Appropriate building phases were suitably correlated with excavated material. A detailed report featuring plans and pottery analysis was completed by Mr. Ronald T. Marchese and will be published in due course. As noted earlier, the Late Bronze Age ceramic finds of Aphrodisias complement as well as supplement the evidence from several other Anatolian sites, especially Beycesultan (Figs. 43-47).

Initial correlation between the *Acropolis* west slope trenches and a trench started last year on the *north slope* was also completed. Indeed, the latter trench, intended to determine Iron Age and archaic occupation, was briefly continued down to Late Bronze Age levels (Fig. 48). The archaic material recovered included "Lydian" type sherds as well as local variations thereof (Figs. 49-50). An interesting discovery made here under the foundations of an Early Iron Age building was the burial of an animal, possibly a dog.

An adjacent sondage staked out west of the preceding north slope trench was also briefly undertaken. Its stratification, however, had been seriously disturbed by the building of the Byzantine fortifica-

tion system girding this part of the mound (Fig. 51). A segment of this Byzantine wall was cleared. A round bronze box was found secreted at its foot (Fig. 52). It proved to contain a cache of gold and silver jewelry. The restoration efforts of Mr. Reha Arican produced pendant earrings, brooch and ring fragments from the amorphous metal lumps into which the jewelry had been transformed over centuries of burial (Figs. 53-57). The date of this attractive small hoard should be tentatively placed in the thirteenth century. Proper identification of two coins also found in the box, one of them a western mediaeval silver issue, should eventually provide a more accurate date for the burial of the treasure.

Towards the end of the campaign, time was devoted to a brief continuation of investigation in the *northwestern part of the Portico of Tiberius* near the Baths of Hadrian (Fig. 58). Another inscription in the series of acclamations from the late fifth or early sixth century in honour of Albinus was discovered on the lower drum of a north column of the portico (Fig. 59). A new fragment of Diocletian's edict on Maximum Prices was also recorded here. A find most auspicious for future excavations in this area was a handsome overlifesize head of Aphrodite with her characteristic "bow-knot" hairdo. It was recovered near one of the column bases (Fig. 60).

Finally, surveying along the western portion of the city wall led to the accidentally discovery of three handsome large reliefs. Two of these represented sphinxes in frontal position (Figs. 61-62). The third, and by far the best preserved and most interesting, portrayed a male figure in barbarian or Persian dress, grasping a tragic mask in his right hand and holding out his left in a hailing or declaiming gesture (Fig. 63). The identity of this figure is open to much discussion. It may well represent an actor. There is little doubt, however, that all three panels

belonged to the decoration of the same building, probably a monumental tomb or *heroon* and were dismantled from their original position to be incorporated in the city wall.

Epigraphical studies were as usual continued in September by Miss Joyce Reynolds. Efforts were concentrated on recording new finds, surveying further the city-wall and re-examining fragments catalogued earlier. Review of several of the Diocletian's Price Edict, including some recently found, confirmed the superiority of the Aphrodisias copy, especially in comparison with the Aezani text. Among stray finds, one needs to mention a stele recording the dedication of statues of Asclepius and Hygeia together with altars by an "archdoctor" of the city in the name of his son, and a sarcophagus lid from the tomb of a veteran soldier. A visit in search of epigraphical data to the Aphrodisias marble quarries revealed no inscribed evidence, at least at surface level. The presence of a cross in a circle in one quarry, however, indicated that marble was extracted here well into the Byzantine period.

Numismatic studies were also pursued. Work was initiated on the large (over 7,500) hoard of fourth century bronzes found in 1966 at nearby Eymir by Prof. Frederick Lauritsen. Preliminary observations suggest that the coins were probably buried shortly after 393-394. Further analysis and study will provide interesting information about Late Roman

coinage in the East, as few such hoards have been adequately studied and published from this area of the Empire.

The study of stray Byzantine coins by Mr. Michael Hendy revealed that the large number of such finds confirm and supplement the evidence available from the coins recorded in organised excavations. Such information will prove to be most valuable in the overall numismatic study of Byzantine Aphrodisias as well as the rest of western Anatolia.

Considerable progress has been made in the construction of the main exhibition halls of the *Aphrodisias Museum*, started in 1972 under the auspices of the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums of Turkey, and with assistance from the National Geographic Society (figs. 64-65). Most of this wing of the building was roofed by September, and work on the administrative storage and adjacent areas is currently underway. It is hoped that construction may be sufficiently advanced by 1975 to permit preliminary installations. First of all, however, careful study and analysis of the sculpture and other material to be exhibited will be duly carried out. Initial study and consideration has already been given to the selection of material to be exhibited in the various halls. If all proceeds according to schedule, a formal opening date in 1976 can be easily envisaged. There can be no doubt that the Aphrodisias Museum will then surely rank among the most remarkable art and archaeological museums in Turkey.

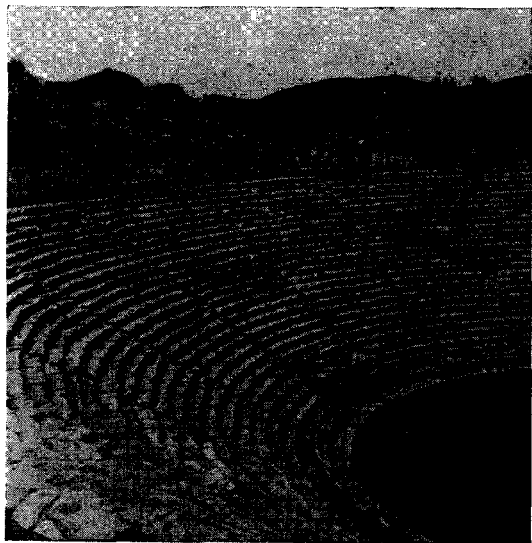


Fig. 2 — Theatre.

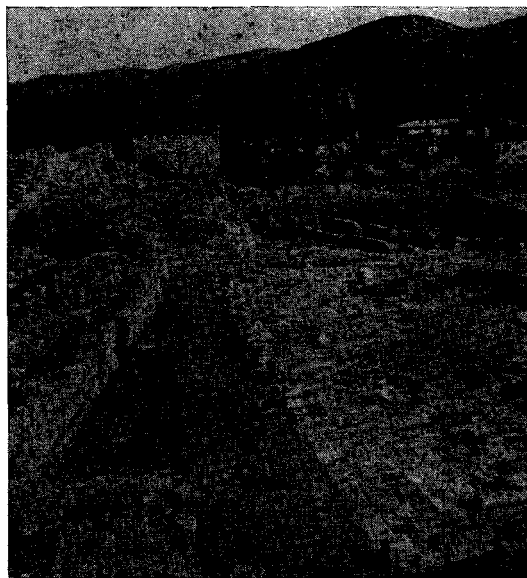


Fig. 3 — "Piazza" behind theatre stage building.

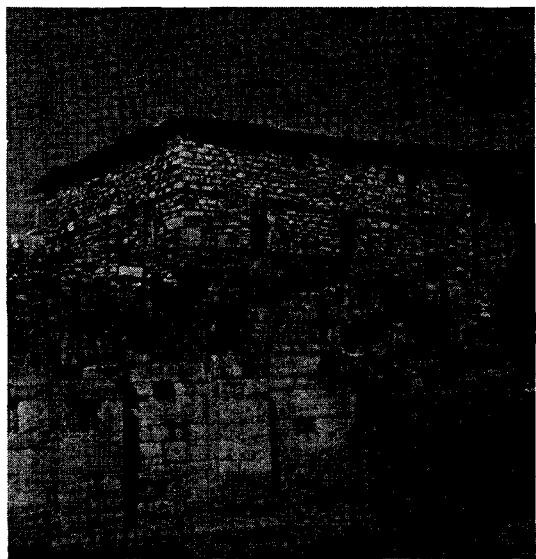


Fig. 4 — Buttressed wall and ex-mosque.



Fig. 5 — Ex-mosque. Paintings surviving in entrance porch.

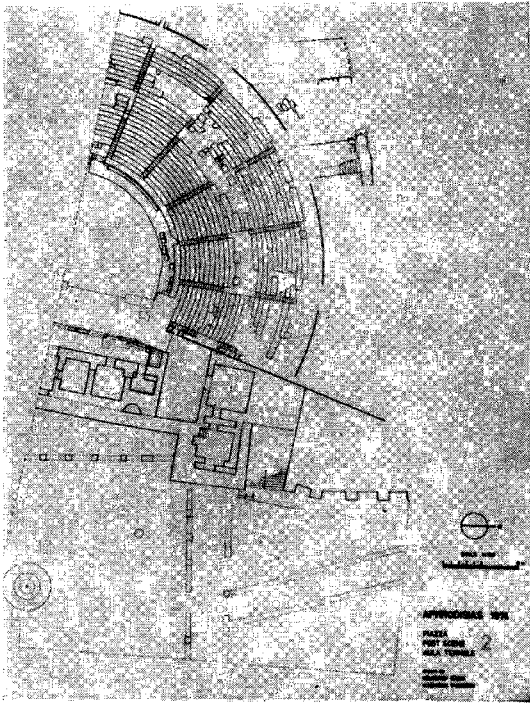


Fig. 6 — Plan of north "piazza" and theatre.

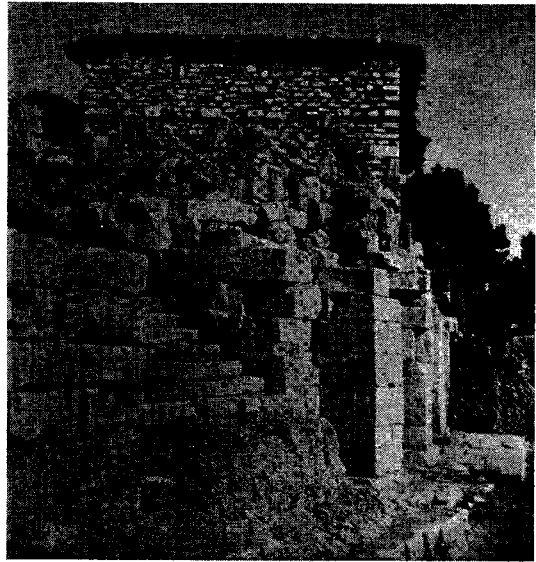


Fig. 7 — Butressed wall, vomitorium and "sidewalk".

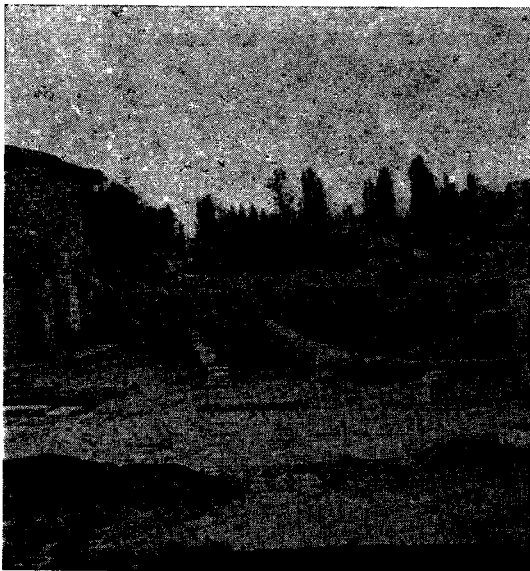


Fig. 8 — North "piazza" and unpaved Byzantine street.



Fig. 9 — Half column base with satyr's head.



Fig. 10 — Sondage in front of "bastion".

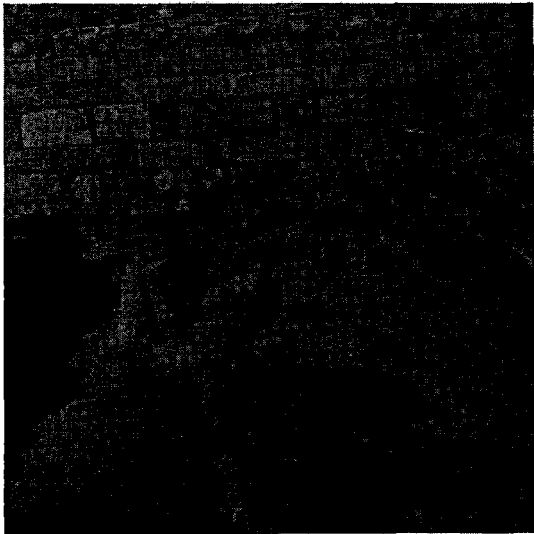


Fig. 11 — Marble couching lion figurine.



Fig. 12 — South "piazza", looking northeast.



Fig. 13 — Circular fills in "piazza".

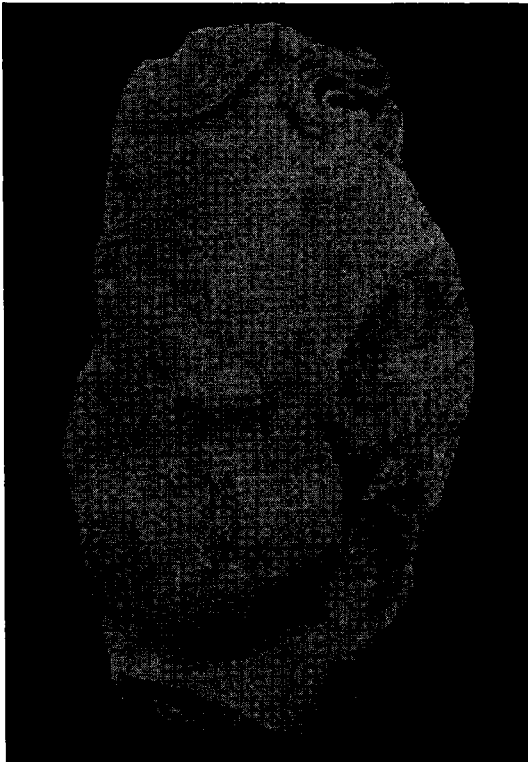


Fig. 14 — Right breast of nude Aphrodite.

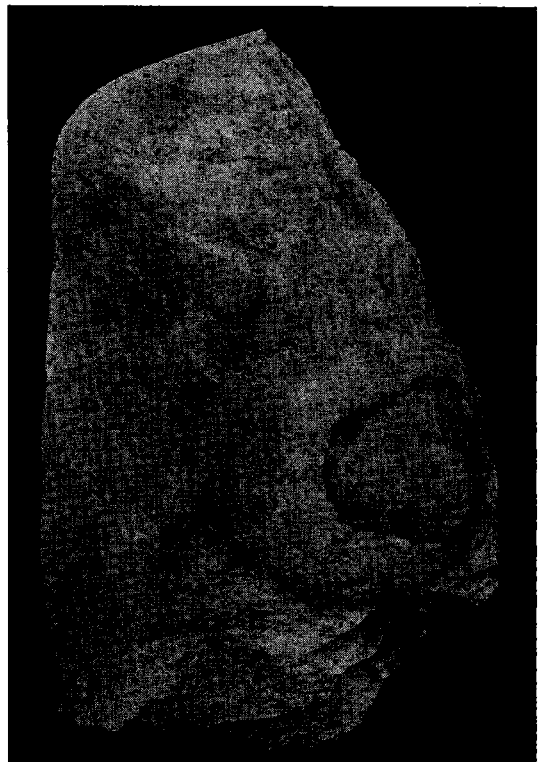


Fig. 15 — Left breast of Aphrodite.

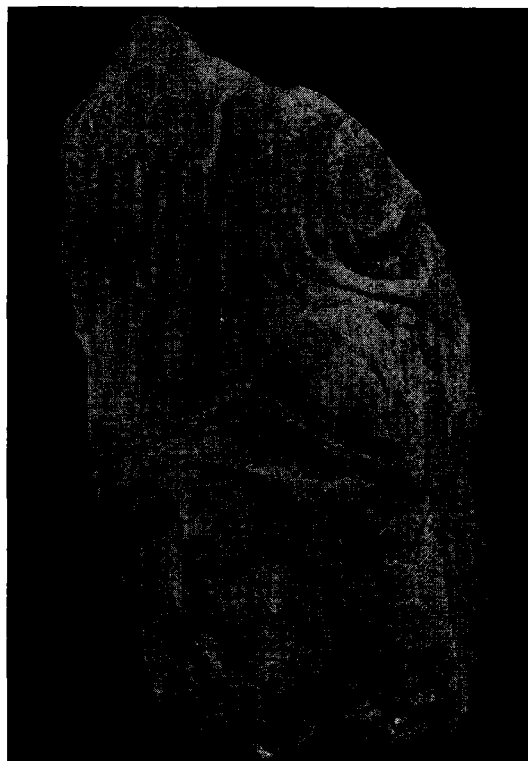


Fig. 16 — Right hip and pubic area of Aphrodite. Fig. 17 — Left foot of female figure with inscribed base.



Fig. 18 — *Porta regia* tunnel and arched doorway facing "piazza".

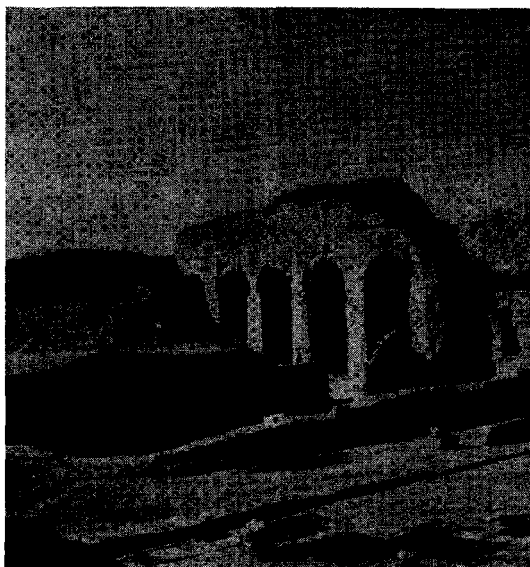


Fig. 19 — "Nymphaeum" part of Theatre Baths

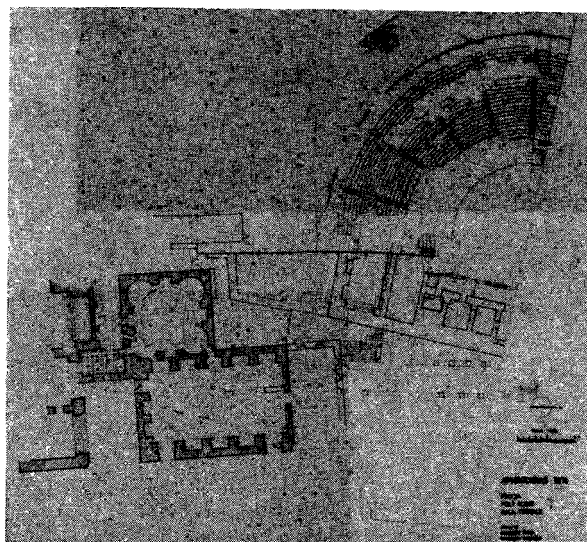


Fig. 20 — Plan of south "piazza", theatre, and *aula termale* (Theatre Baths).

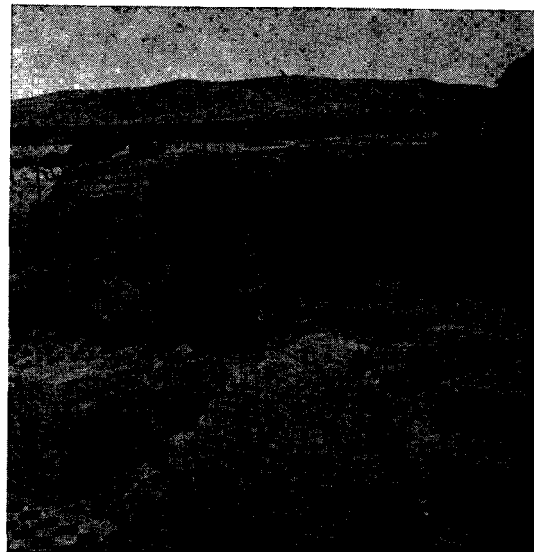
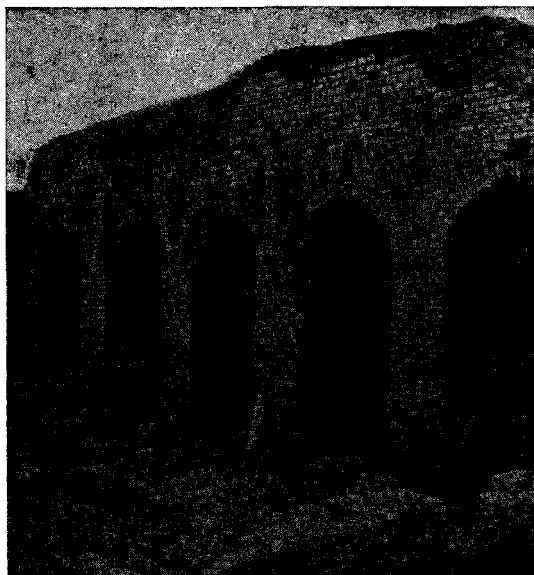


Fig. 21 — Arcuate niches of west wall of 'nymphaeum'

Fig. 22 — Arcuate niches of east wall of 'nymphaeum'.

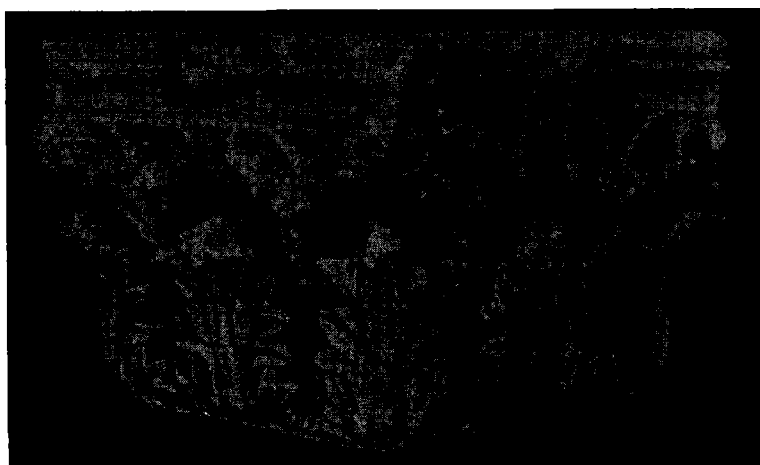


Fig. 23 — Corner Corinthian
revetment capital.

Fig. 25 — Revetment inscription fragment
(second century?)



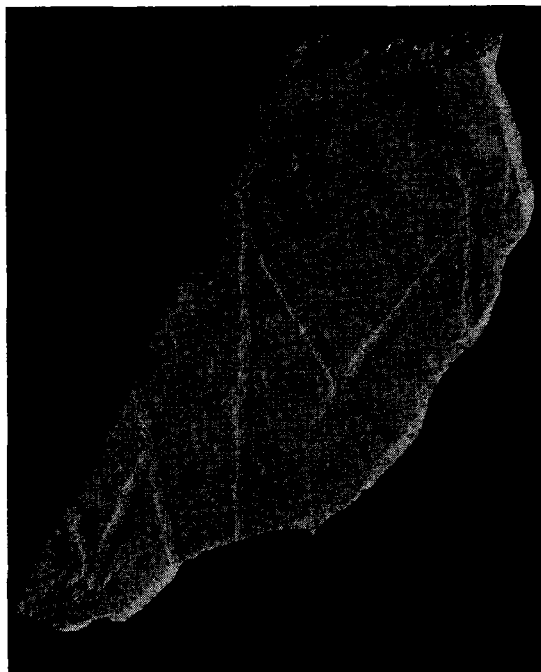


Fig. 24 — Re-used revetment inscription fragment
(fourth century?)

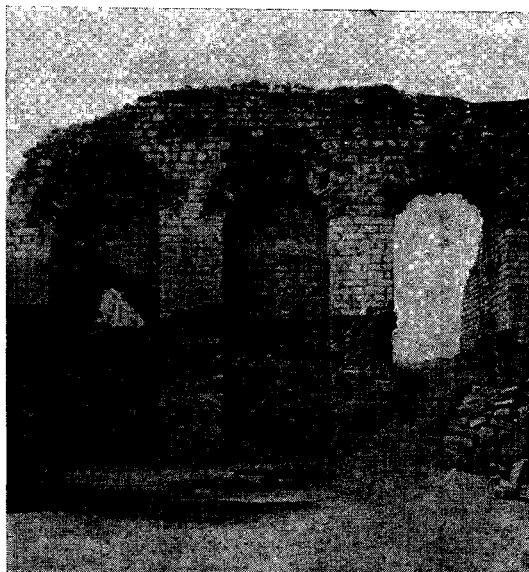


Fig. 26 — South wall of 'nymphaeum'.

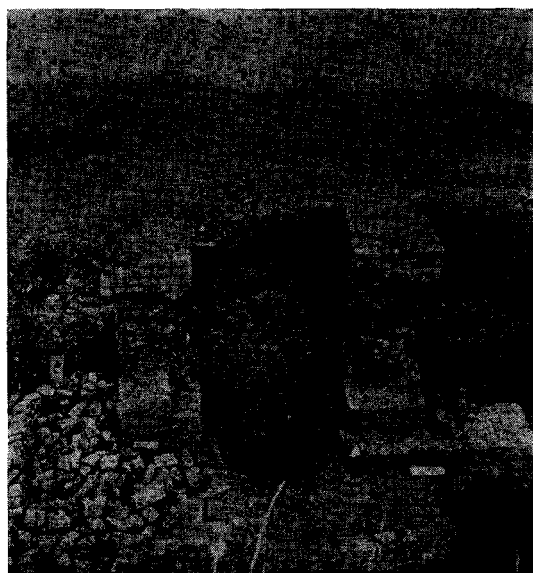


Fig. 27 — Byzantine pit on east wall of 'nymphaeum'.

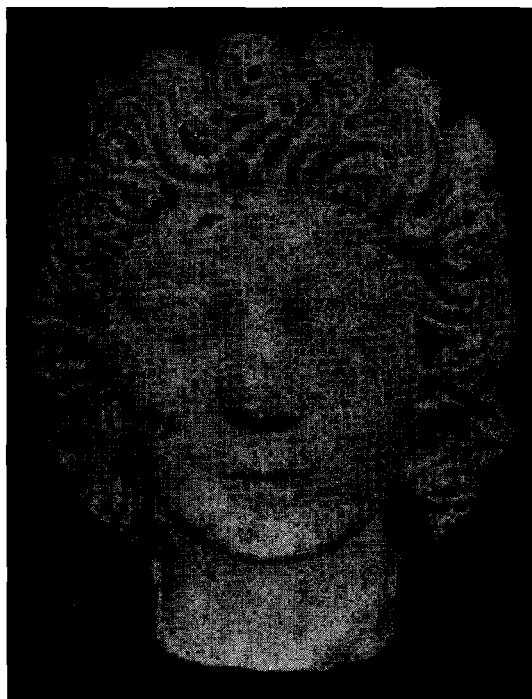


Fig. 28 — Small head of Helios.

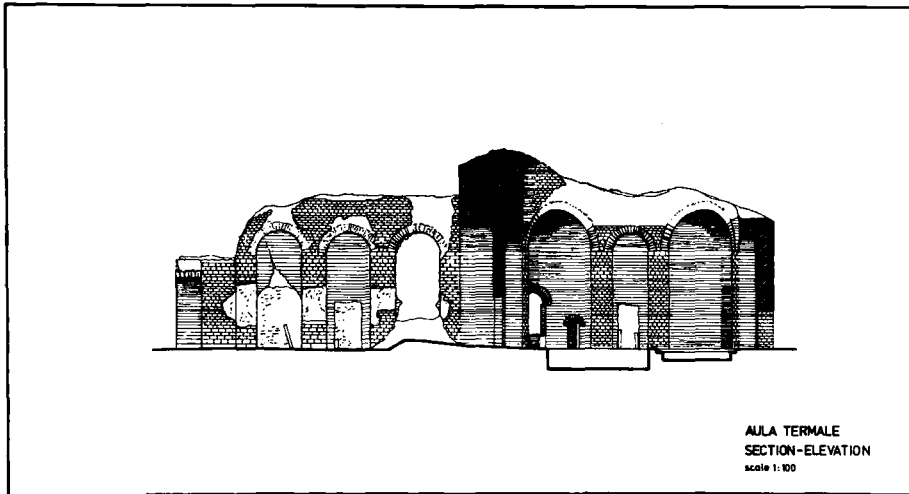


Fig. 29 — Section-elevation of *aula termale* (Theatre Baths).

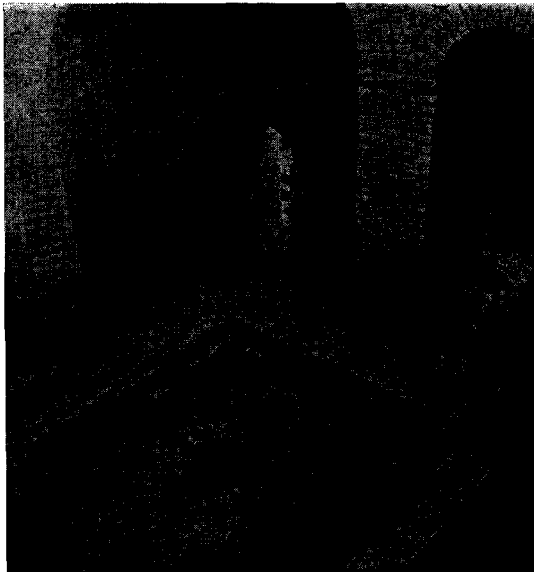


Fig. 30 — *Aula termale*. Interior view.

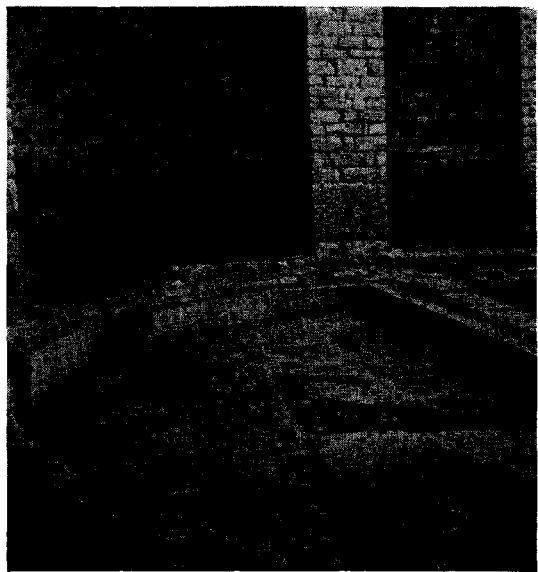


Fig. 31 — *Aula termale*. Polygonal pool to west.

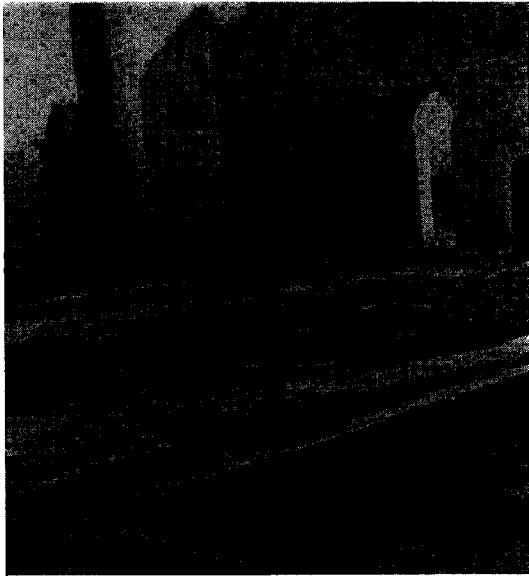


Fig. 32 — *Aula termale*. Rectangular pool to east.

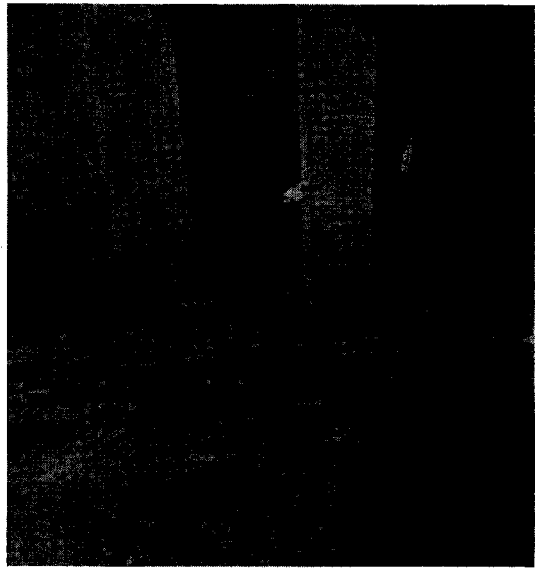


Fig. 33 — *Aula termale*. Pipes on east end of rectangular pool.

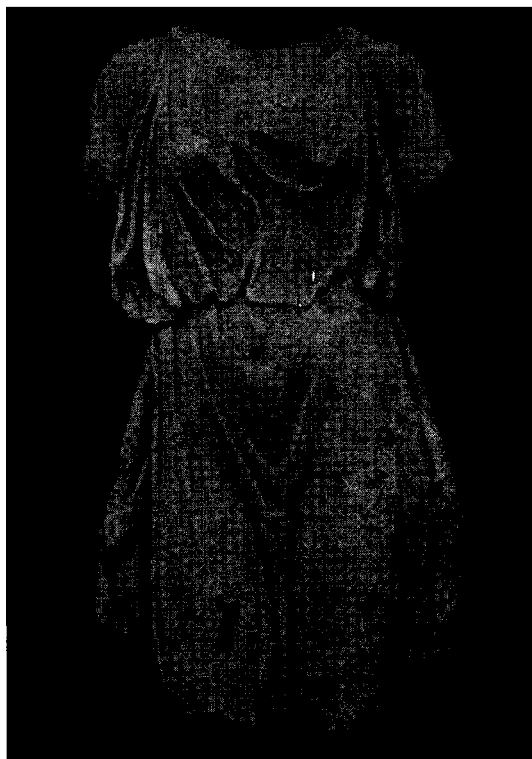


Fig. 34 — Torso of Nike.

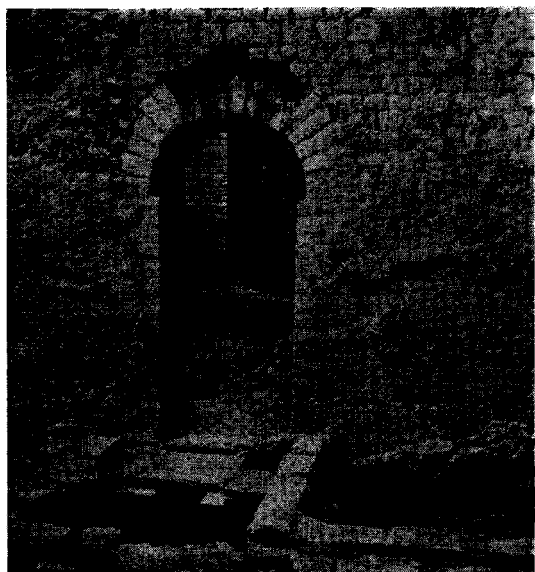


Fig. 35 — Arched doorway connecting *aula termale* and *calidarium*.

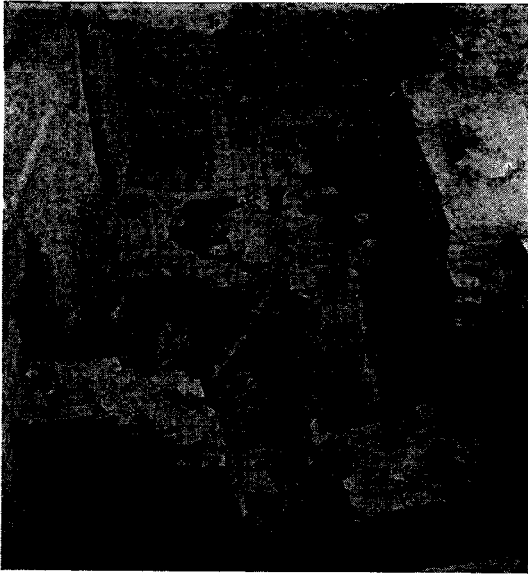


Fig. 36 — *Calidarium*.



Fig. 37 — Hypocaust system of *calidarium*.

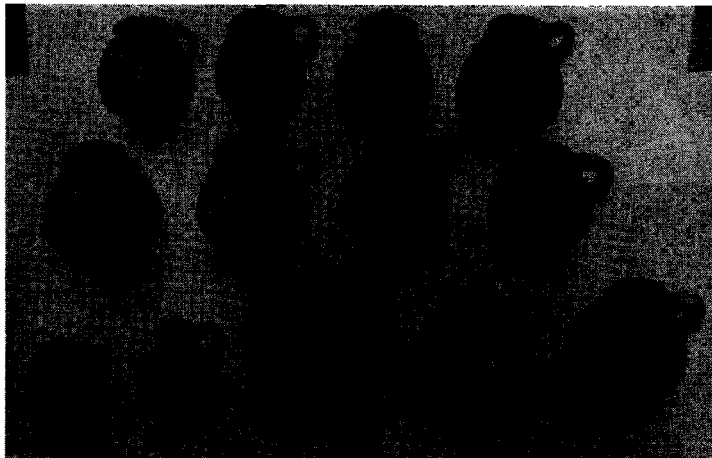


Fig. 38 — Early Byzantine small oil or perfume flasks.

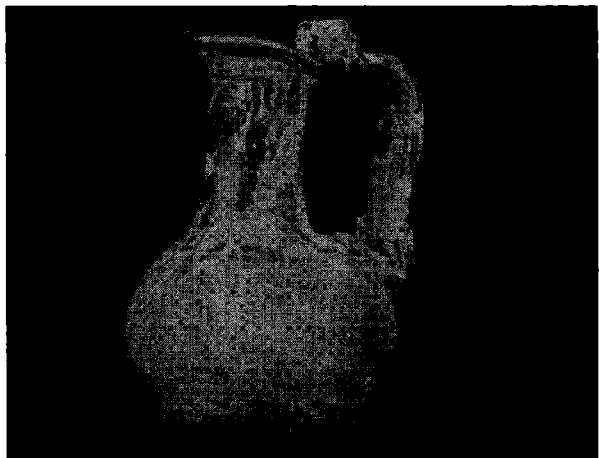


Fig. 39 — Early Byzantine glass oil or perfume flask.

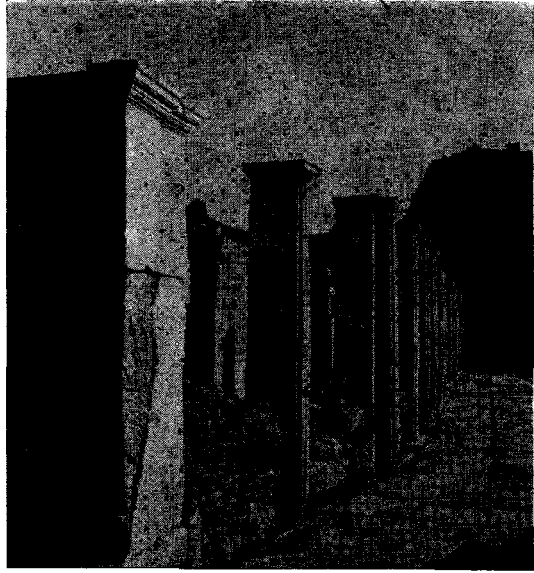


Fig. 40 — Stepped wading pool. Behind *calidarium*. Fig. 41 — Theatre. *Proskenion-logeion*. Looking south.

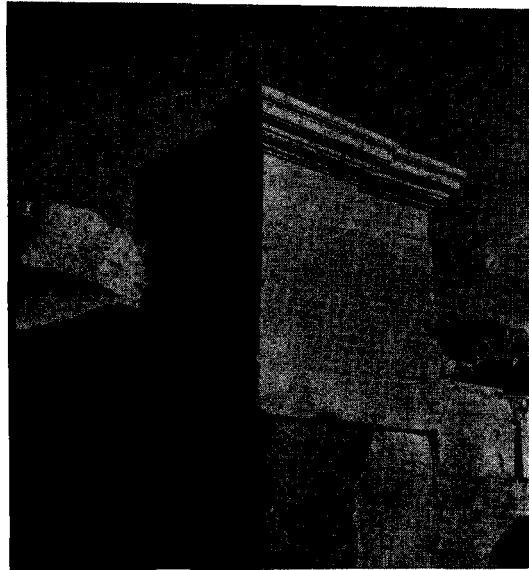


Fig. 42 — Repaired junction of "archive wall" and *proskenion* by north *parodos*.

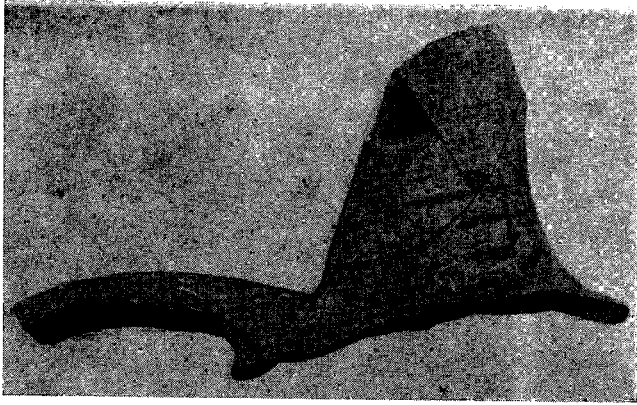


Fig. 43 — Late Bronze painted ware.
Handle and spout.

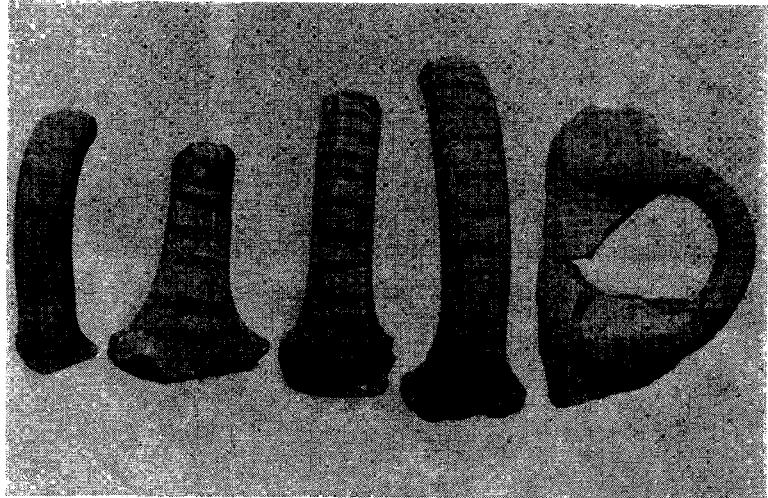


Fig. 44 — Late Bronze painted ware. Handles.

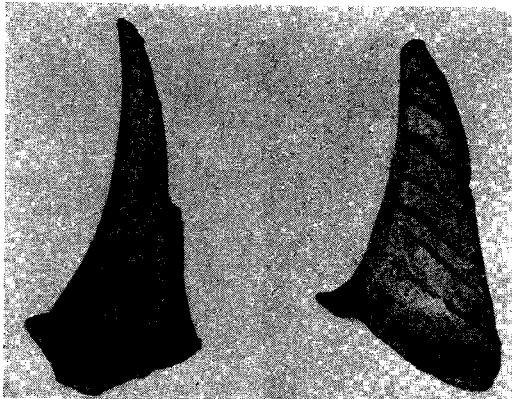


Fig. 45 — Late Bronze painted ware. Beak spouts.

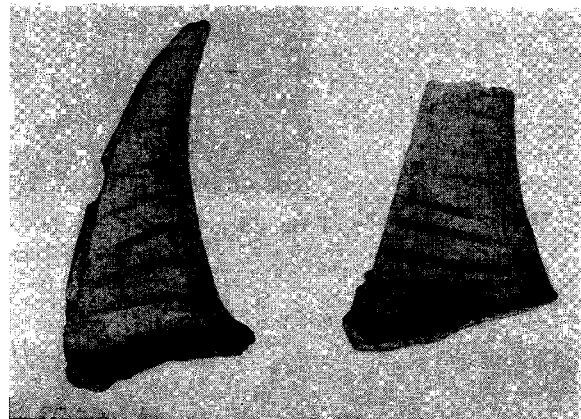


Fig. 46 — Late Bronze painted ware.
Beak spouts.

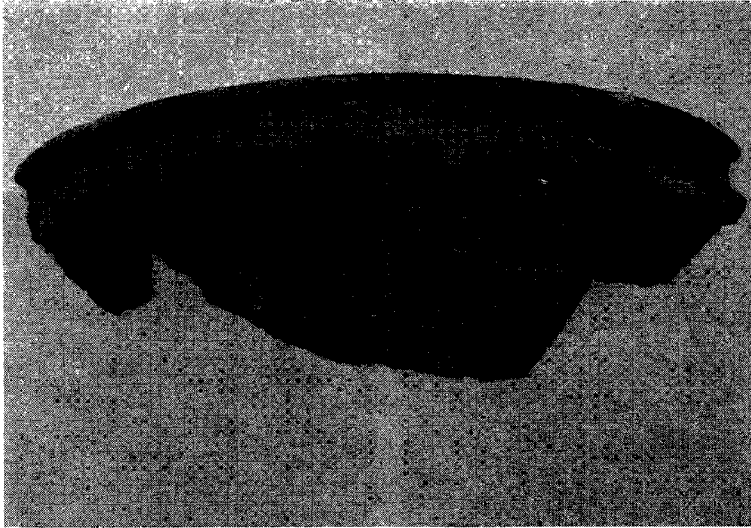


Fig. 47 — Late Bronze bowl, with “horn” decoration below rim.

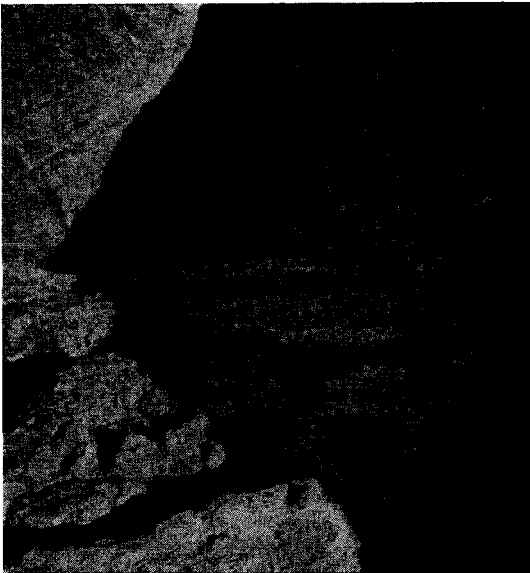


Fig. 48 — Acropolis. North slope trench.

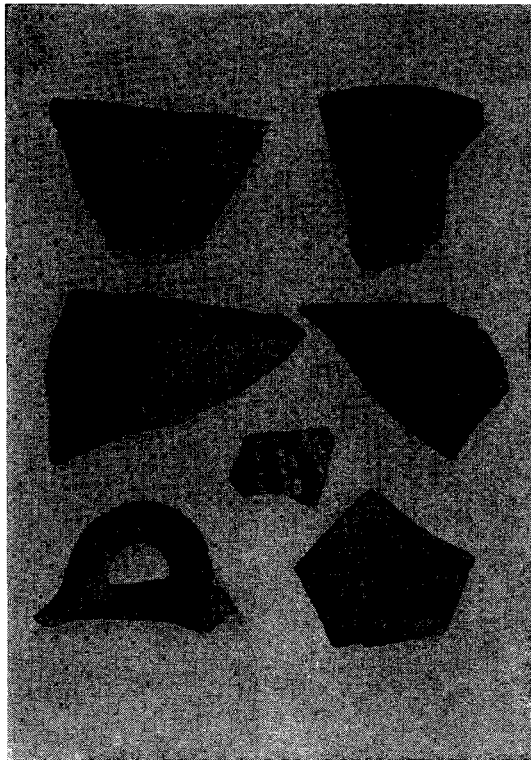


Fig. 49 — Iron Age sherds.

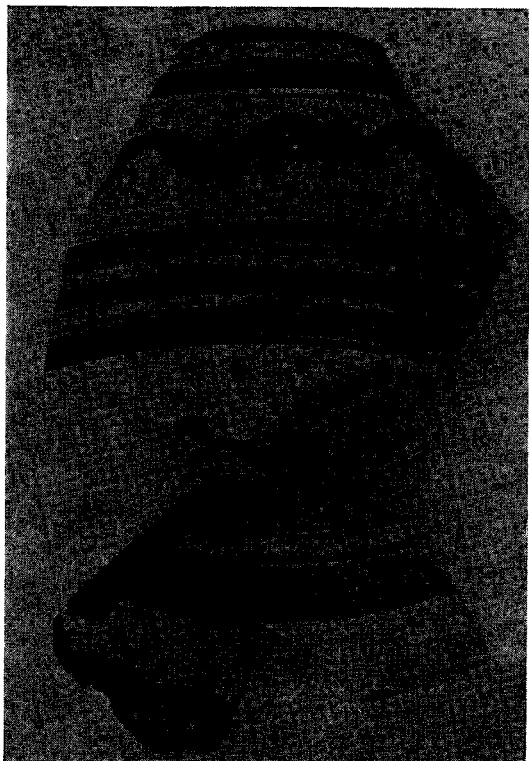


Fig. 50 — Fragments of painted archaic pottery.

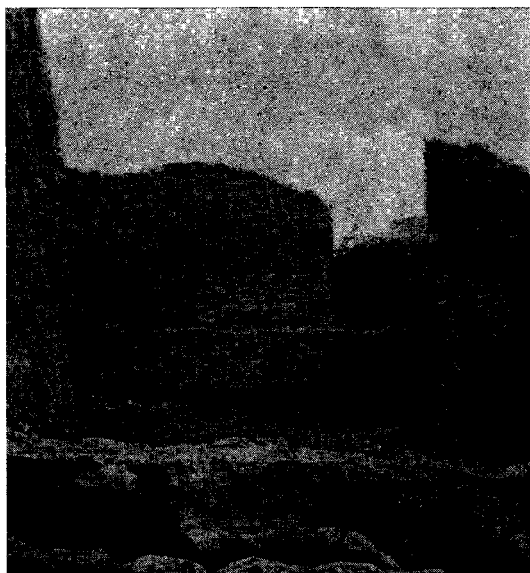


Fig. 51 — Byzantine fortifications on north slope.

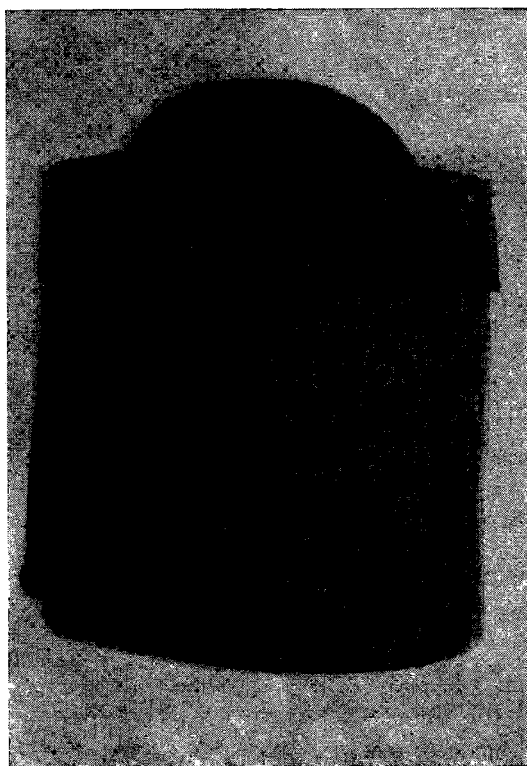


Fig. 52 — Bronze box.

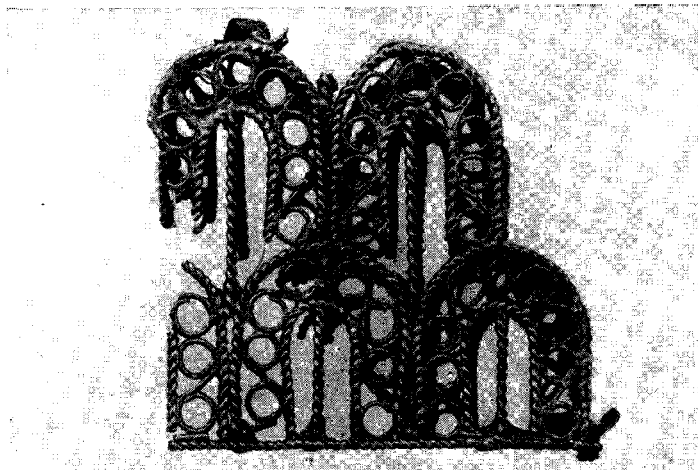


Fig. 53 — Gold brooch?

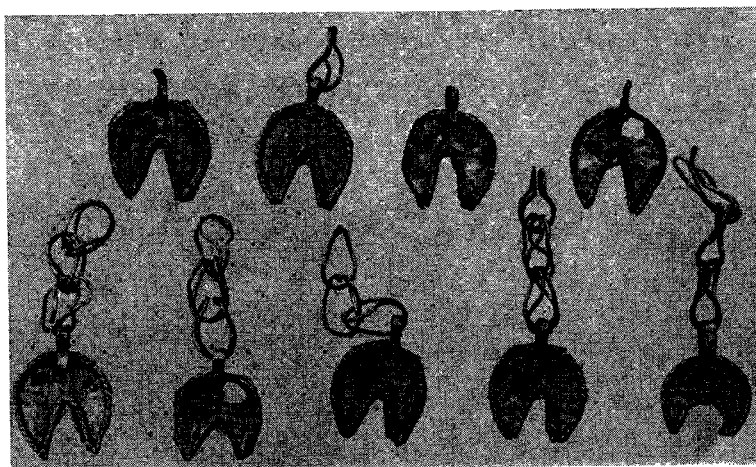


Fig. 54 — Gold pendants.

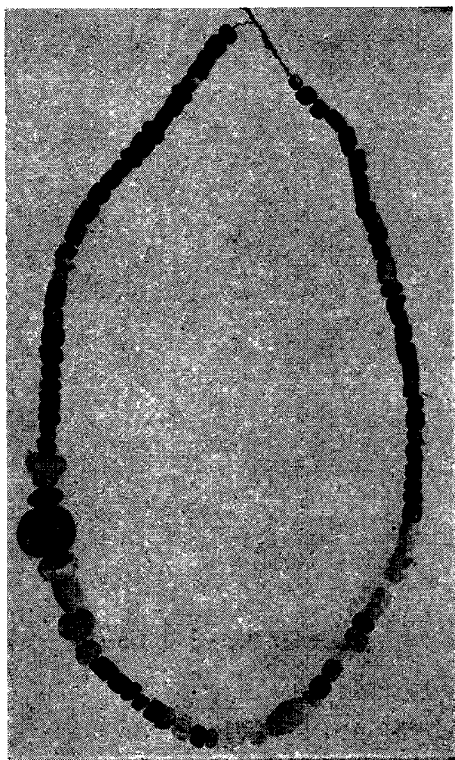


Fig. 55 — Beads.

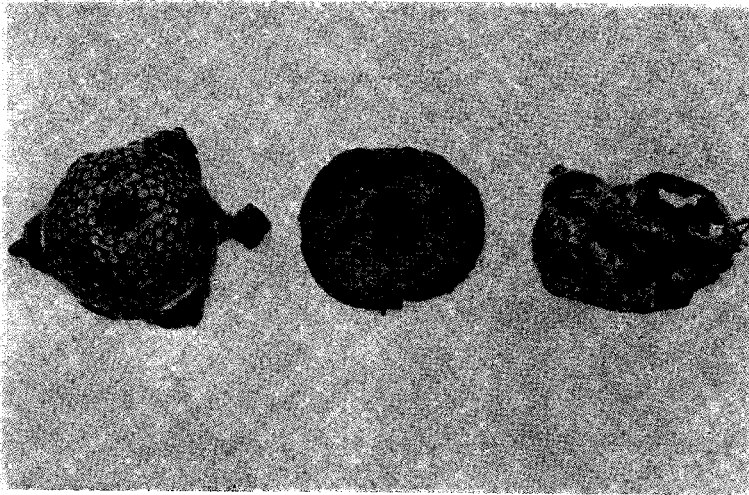


Fig. 56 — Pendants, gold and silver. Inlaid.

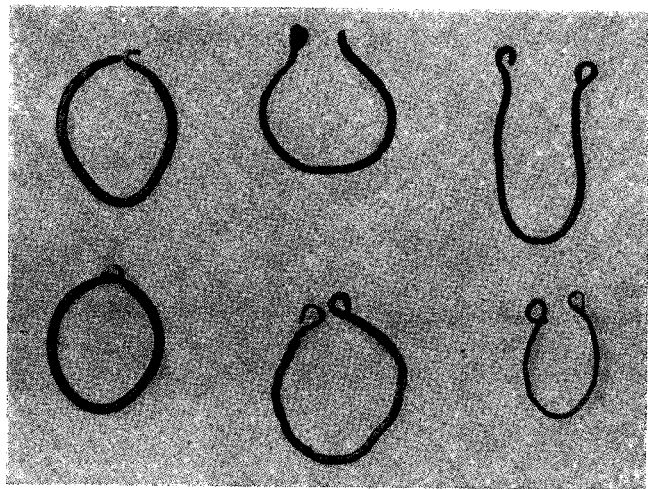


Fig. 57 — Silver jewelry (earrings?)

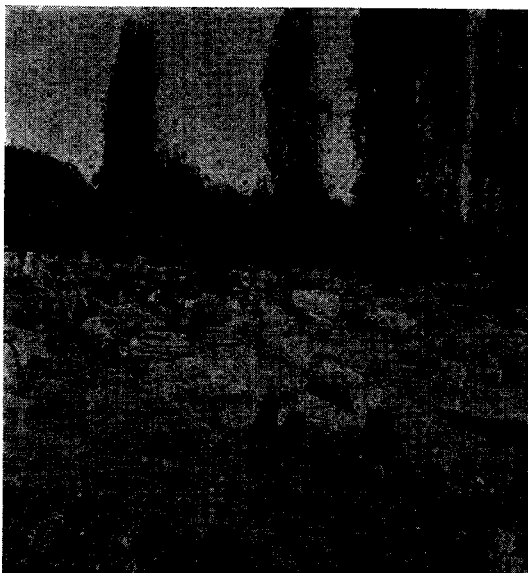


Fig. 58 — Northwest Portico of Tiberius.

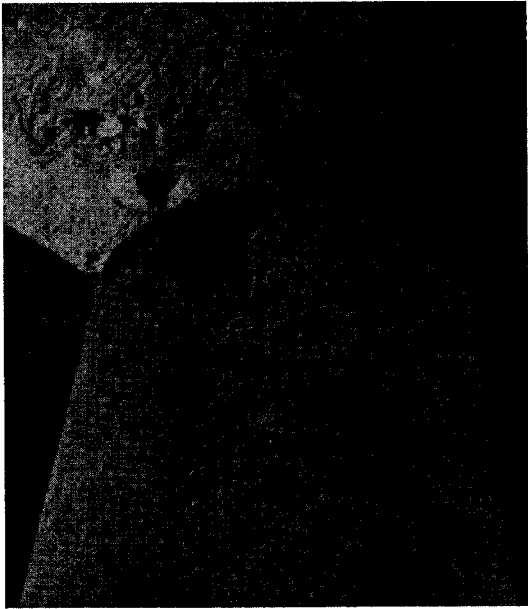


Fig. 59 — Inscribed column drum of Portico of Tiberius.

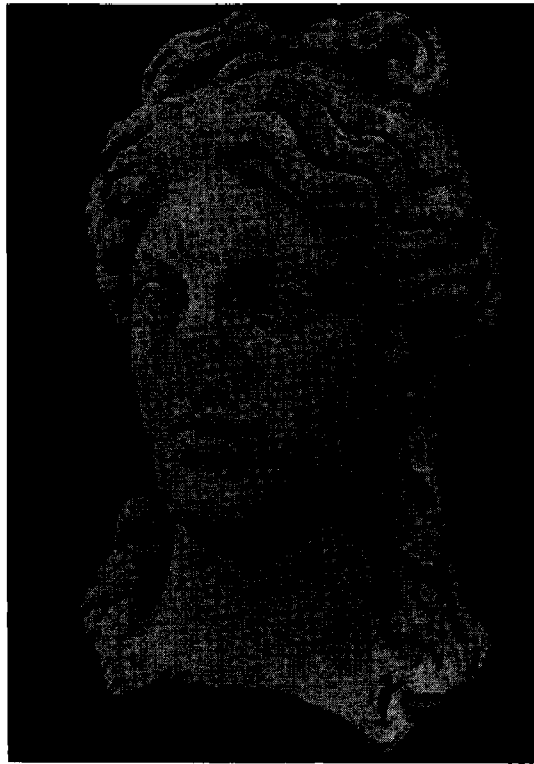


Fig. 60 — Colossal head of Aphrodite.

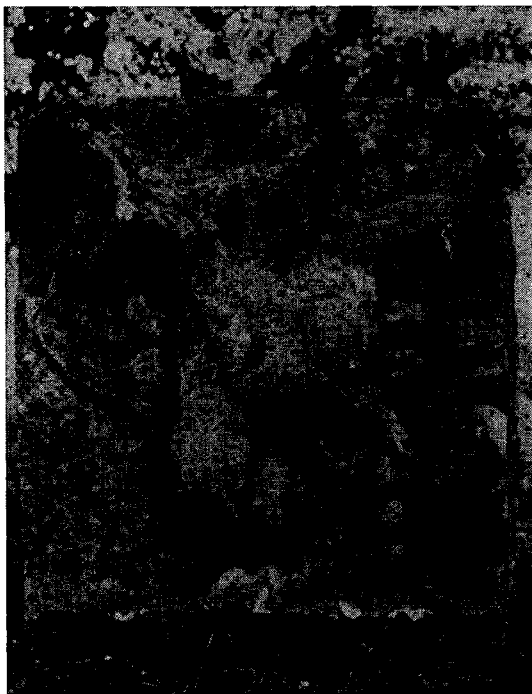


Fig. 61 — West city-wall. Relief panel of frontal sphinx.



Fig. 62 — West city-wall. Relief panel of frontal sphinx.

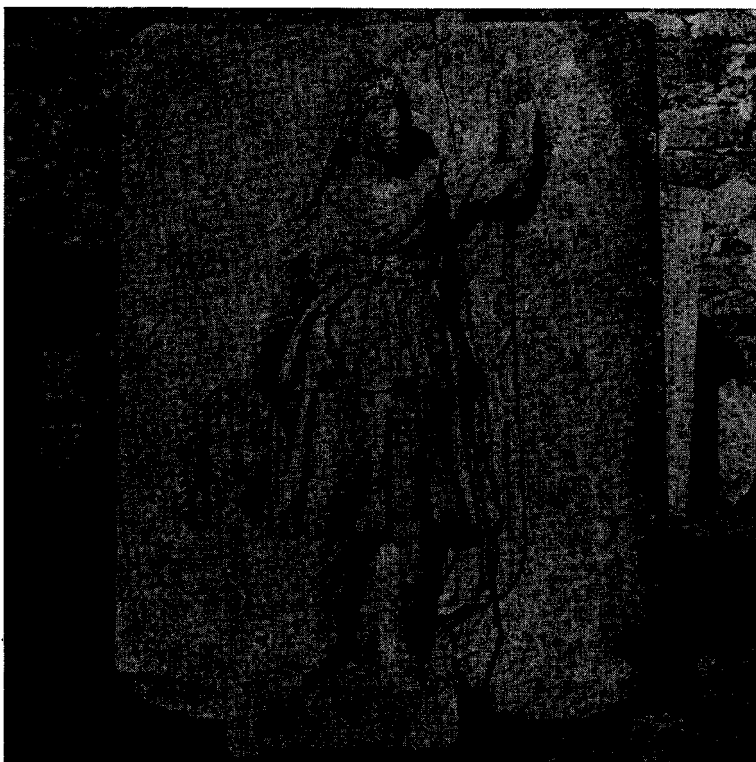


Fig. 63 — West city-wall. Male figure (actor?) in barbarian dress.

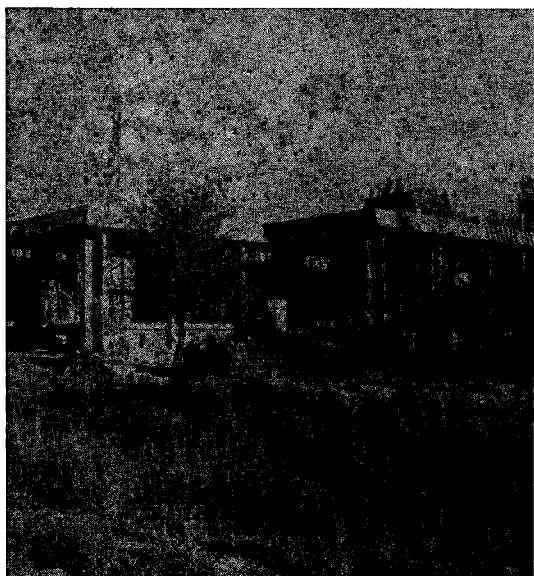


Fig. 64 — Aphrodisias Museum. Under construction.
Exterior view.



Fig. 65 — Aphrodisias Museum. Under construction.
Interior of one of exhibition halls.