

THE TUMULI OF ÖMERLİ ON THE ŞİLE - ÜSKÜDAR HIGHWAY IN BITHYNIA

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In the summer of 1953, while digging trenches for drilling purposes a group of soldiers came upon a tomb, and military authorities notified the Archaeological Museum of İstanbul of its existence, whereupon I was sent to the spot and carried out investigations on behalf of the Museum. Upon investigating this wooded district I found it to be full of these tumuli and suggested that further investigations should be made on a larger scale. Work on the opening of these tumuli was begun in the first week of September, and lasted through the first week of October 1954 (1).

Ömerli is a small village in the district of Beykoz (2), and it is situated in the hills on the left bank of the stream Riva (Rhebas) (Fig: 2) and the Üsküdar-Şile highway passes through the village which is 35 km. away from Üsküdar (3) and 120-140 metres above sea-level. The researches resulted in excursions in search of new tumuli and other works, in the district and in investigating some of the tumuli opened previously and excavating some new tumuli. The excursions proved the tumuli to be found in groups about Ömerli. Besides this, three unimportant antique settlements, the remains of a

Roman building known as the Hamam (bath) in the west of the village and traces of a big wall on the northern peak of Çaltadağ, called the "Kalebayırı", in the south of the village, were discovered (Fig: 1).

The existence of the tumuli were not known up to that time. But they are small tumuli similar to the ones found in other parts of Bithynia (4) and can be dated with precision according to the coins found in them. The coins belong to Marcus Aurelius, Macrinus and Ebgabalus of Kalkedon, Nikomedia and Nicaea. Therefore they should belong to a period between the second half of the 2nd century and the first quarter of the 3rd century A. D. As the district was covered until recent years with thick forests the tumuli being very small in size remained hidden from the eye of the investigator. Now that the great forests of this district once called the "Sea of Trees" have been destroyed (5), the tumuli have become visible.

Ömerli being on a secondary road, away from the main highway and possessing nothing of prominence had naturally been overlooked by travellers and investigators. The river Rhebas which flows in the north of Ömerli, reaches the sea at such an important point as the mouth of Bosphorus, and was furthermore referred to in the myth of the Argonauts, for this reason it has been mentioned in antique

(1) For the first short note on the investigation, see *A/A*, 59, 1955, P. 236.

(2) For further detail about these parts of Bithynia consult map "*Karte des Bosphorus und Bithynische Halbinsel*", prepared by R. Fitzner. Apart from this V. Cuiet mentions Ömerli as one of the two most outstanding villages of Beykoz, in interior, and has included it in his map (*La Turquie d'Asie* IV, P. 292-296).

(3) The state of the Üsküdar-Şile road in recent years was described by E. Mamboury *The Tourists' İstanbul*. Pp. 585-588.

(4) A tumulus opened in the forests of Yaylapınan, in Kefken was also of the same size (N. Firatlı, *Bulleten* 17, 1953, P. 16, Fig:5).

(5) C. F. v.d. Goltz, *Anatolische Ausflüge*, Berlin, 1836, P. 320; F. K. Dörner, *Inschriften und Denkmäler aus Bithynien*. Berlin, 1941, P. 2.

sources (6) as well as by the travellers of the last century (7), but they were only interested in the part where the river reached the sea, and have not recorded anything about the interior where Ömerli now is. In spite of this Ömerli should not be considered as an aH together neglected place as it holds an almost central point on the road which joins Üsküdar with the Black Sea. Although there is no direct mentions of a road between Şile and Üsküdar in antique sources, according to Ottoman sources a road existed between Şile and Gelbze (8). Now this road could only reach Gebze by way of Sarıgazi, and as there still is a road between Sarıgazi and Şile leading to İzmit (9), it would not be wrong to assume that the present Üsküdar-Şile road had always been in existence. The tumuli round Ömerli are most on this road. It could therefore be argued that Ömerli had once been the first halting-place on this road, and so the residential quarters near the village and the tumuli were formed there. Although we can not be certain we could also assume that the Anabasis must have used the same route as they came from Kalpe to Chrisopolis by land (10), and they must have followed the road that passes through Ömerli and joins that part of the Black Sea with Üsküdar.

Towards the middle of the last Century E. Bore (11), who was travelling to the east stopped at Ömerli as his first halting-place after leaving Üsküdar and

(6) Ruge, "Rhebas", *RE*, I A1, 1914, P. 348.

(7) See, for example Andreossy, *Essai sur le Bosphore* II, 1818, P. 150, He tells us that ships could go up the river to get wood for İstanbul. Alexander Timoni, *Nouvelles Promenades dans le Bosphore* II, 1844, P. 1-9; Pitton de Tournefort, *Relations, d'un Voyage au Levant* II, Amsterdam, 1718, P. 82.

(8) F. Taeschner, *Das Anatolische Wegetz nach Osmanische Quellen* II, Leipzig, 1924, P. 65 ff.

(9) F. Taeschner, I, P. 112.

(10) Xenophon, *Anabasis*, VI, 4, 1-6 and VI, 4, 2.

(11) Eugene Bore, *Correspondance et Memoires d'un voyageur en orient*, Paris, 1840, P. 183-185.

spent the night there, on his way to Kalpe where he had Anabasis campen for a while.

On leaving Ömerli, Bore reached the Black Sea at Şile and from there went on to Kalpe. He talks about the forests between Üsküdar and Ömerli and those between Ömerli and Şile. What is so remarkable is the fact that a traveller coming to Anatolia to study ancient works should spend the night at Ömerli in a century when there were no motor conveyances. There should be no difference between the positions of the Ömerli of the last century and that of ancient times. On other words, Ömerli was a halting-place on the Üsküdar - Şile road and the tumuli were grouped round this place. Naturally there is not much left of this halting - place among the forests, but the remains of the bath and the tumuli are sufficient to give an idea of the position of the district at that time (12).

We can come upon tombs of this kind everywhere that was once under the Roman Empire. Even in the Sahara Desert, along the trade-routes of the Romans there are a great number of small tombs of this kind, containing similar material in them (13). The tumuli in Thrace are the nearest to our tumuli. In Umurca, nMr

(12) On the Bithynian Peninsula starting from the Bosphorus on all the other roads that go to the east, the tumuli begin to be seen, at the 35th or 40th kilometre, that is at the first halting - place, just as on this road. On the road that runs parallel to the shore, the first tumulus is near Gebze, on the right - hand side of the present highway. And farther inland on the route leading to İzmit over Sarıgazi and Samandra, are to be found on the hills beyond Samandra.

(13) B. Pace - S. Sergi - G. Caputo, Scavi Sahariani, Ricerche nell Uadi el-Agial e nell Oasi di Gat, *Monumenti Antichi*, XLI, 1951, pp. 150-151. Here the tomb seen in Fig: 142 is exactly identical with the Ömerli tombs. Prof. B. Pace gave detailed information on these tumuli in his lectures, at the University of İstanbul in 1954.

lıkların da ion kymation'una ait bir yumur'ta ve bunun da altında lesbos kymationunun stilize edilmiş bir ornament'i bulunur.

Lahdin geniş yüzünde üç aedacula ve bunlar arasında iki de aralık olmak üzere figürlerin yer aldığı beş niş bulunur. Ortadaki aedacula'nın üzeri üçgen biçiminde bir çatı, yandakilerin ise kemerle kapanmaktadır. Bu üç nişin yukarı kısımlarında midye kabuğu tezyinatı yer alır. Akroter yerindeki stilize yaprak ve hayvan tasvirleriyle sanduka üzerindeki mimari tezyinat son bulur.

Yunuslar lahdiinde mevzuu olarak Herakles'in oniki işi seçilmiştir (8). Bu mevzuu t9.svir bakımından lahdin bünyesine gayet iyi uymaktadır. Geniş yüzlerdeki beşer nişe işlerden onu, dar yüzlerden birisine de ikisi yerleştirilmiştir. Baş taraftaki dar yüzde lahdin içine gömülen şahıs ve ailesi tasvir edilmiştir (Res: 3). Ölen şahıs ayakta duran karısına (Res: 5) son sözlerini söylemekte ve bu vasiyet esnasında da arka tarafta sakallı bir şahıs bulunmaktadır (Res: 7).

Kapak:

Kapak, dış sırası şeklindeki süsü ile kendisini sandukadan ayırır. Bunu lesbos kymation'una benzeyen bir süs şeridi takibeder ve daha sonra ince bir silme gelir. Bu silme üzerinde lahdin geniş yüzlerinde üçer, dar yüzlerinde birer tane olmak üzere kapağın sandukaya oturtulmasında rolü olduğunu tahmin ettiğimiz işlemeden bırakılan kısımlar vardır. Daha yukarıda görülen ikinci bir silmeden sonra kare şeklinde süsler ve bunlar arasında yer alan fiyonklar görülür. Kapak köşelerinin her

(8) Herakles'e ait 12 işin lahit üzerinde sıralanışı: (Ön geniş yüz res: 1) 1 - Nemea aslanını, 2 - Hydra denilen 9 başlı yılanı öldürüşü, 3 - Domuzun öldürülerek getirilmesi, 4 - Rüzgar gibi koşan geyiğin yakalanışı, 5 - Tüylerini ok gibi fırlatan kuşların yok edilmesi, (dar yüzde res: 2), 6 - Herakles'in Amazon'dan kemeri alışı, 7-Kiral Augeias'a ait ahırın temizlenmesi, (arka geniş yüzde res: 3) 8 - Girit'teki yabani boğanın yakalanması, 9 - Trakya Kırılı Diomedes'e ait atların, 10 - Geryones'e ait öküzlerin, 11 - Kerberos adlı yer altındaki köpeğin, 12 - Hesperidlere ait elmaların getirilmesi.

birinde kare şeklindeki süsler hizasında az kabartılmış birer baş tasvir edilmiştir. Kapağın ön cephesinde kare şeklindeki süslerin üzerinde kabartma halinde çeşitli hayvanlar görülür ve köşelere doğru da birer eros bulunur. Kapağın üstünde sadece gövdelerinin alt kısımları kalmış olan yatır vaziyette iki heykel vardır, bunlardan birisi elinde kitap tutmaktadır.

SİDAMARA TEKNİĞİNDEKİ LAHİTLER

Anadolu sütunlu lahitlerini toplu bir şekilde ilk defa C. Rufus Morey tetkik eder ve gösterdikleri teknik ayrılıktan dolayı bunları iki gruba ayırır (9). C. R. Morey daha fazla keski-kalem kullanılarak yapılanları Lidya, matkap kullanılarak yapılanları da Sidamara grubu adı altında toplar (10). R. Morey bu esas ayrılıktan baka tali derecedeki diğer farklılara da işaret eder. Yukarıda tasvirini yaptığımız Yunuslar lahdi gösterdiği özelliklerden dolayı Sidamara grubuna girer. Bu nevi lahitler üzerinde kısaca durarak Yunuslar lahdinin yerini ve zamanını tayin etmeye çalışalım :

Yunuslar lahdi, gösterdiği özelliğ bakımından bugüne kadar bu grubun esas örnekleri olan Sidamara ve Silifke lahitleriyle birlikte mütalaa edilmesi icaheder. Bu üç lahitten Sidamara örneğinin ustasının icabı kenardaki sütunları muhafaza ederek aradakileri tasvirde sarfınazar etmiştir. Silifke ve Yunuslar lahitlerinin birer dar yüzünde de sanatkarların aynı şekilde hareket etmiş olduklarını görüyoruz. Bunu, bahsettiğimiz üç lahit birbirine yaklaştıran bir özellik kabul ediyor ve sütunlu lahitlerin erken örneklerini teşkil eden Lidya grubunda bu halin görülmediğine işaret etmek istiyoruz. Bir bakıma bu, sütunun önemini gittikçe kaybetmek -

(9) R. Morey, Sardis, v, 1 s. 21, ve gerisi. Anadolu sütunlu lahitlerini başlık şekillerine göre ilk defa ikiye ayıran Weigand olmuştur (Jdl 1914 s. 73).

(10) Sardis V, 1 s. 28.

