

GORDION REPORT, 1958

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Excavation at Gordion during the summer of 1958 (1) was concerned with structures and levels dating from just after the Kimmerian destruction of Gordion in the early 7th century B.C. down to the time of the abandonment of the city, which may have taken place in the early 2nd century B. C. The areas in which excavation was undertaken were (Figure 1) : (1) the Küçük Hüyük, for further investigation of the course and history of the great mud-brick fortification wall there; and (2.) the City Mound where levels subsequent to the Kimmerian destruction were excavated in preparation for further investigation of pre-Kimmerian levels in 1959.

THE KÜÇÜK HÜYÜK

Excavations here during a number of seasons, since conducted by Professor Machteld J. Mellink, have shown that the basic structure responsible for this high mound and the tongues of rising ground extending from it to north and west is a massive fortification wall of mud-brick. It is preserved almost to its full height within the Hüyük itself. On lower ground it is preserved to a considerable height also, due to the fact, as established this season, that the ground level has risen as much as four or five meters since antiquity in its vicinity in the alluvial plain of the Sarigarios River.

(1) The season extended from June 13 to September 21. The staff consisted of the undersigned as acting field director; J. S. Last of Epskopi, Cyprus, architect; Miss Ann K. Knudsen, in charge of records and conservation; excavators: Professor Machteld J. Mellink of Bryn Mawr College, on the Küçük Hüyük; Mr. & Mrs. Wallace E. McLeod of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, and the acting field director on the City Mound. Miss Saadet Onat represented the Turkish Government as commissioner; to her we are especially grateful for great help and assistance.

Previous excavation had traced the course of the wall from the Hüyük toward the southwest. In this year's work it was traced for an additional distance of about 250 meters to the north of the Hüyük.

In the new stretch of the wall Miss Mellink located a gateway of unusual and complicated design which is nearly opposite the Phrygian gate of the City Mound. Three periods of construction of the fortification wall are now distinguished. It seems possible that the wall was originally erected as an emergency defense shortly after the Kimmerian destruction of Gordion in the early 7th century by the surviving Phrygians. The purpose would seem to have been to enclose a crescent-shaped area adjoining the east side of the destroyed City Mound where the Phrygian king and his government might resume their functions. In a second period of construction, probably also of the 7th century, a wall of green mud-brick, about 7 meters thick, was added to the first. The third period of building, dating prior to the middle of the 6th century, included repairs and revisions of the wall of the second period. The fortification system went out of use about 540 B. C., for houses built within it were destroyed at that time by fire and collapse.

THE CITY MOUND

After the Kimmerian destruction of Gordion, at a date not yet closely determined, reconstruction of a new city was undertaken above that which had been destroyed. The old city was covered with a heavy filling of clay several meters thick over most of the area. In it the builders, probably Phrygians working in the architectural traditions of the earlier city, set the foundations for the buildings; of the new city. This city existed during the early years of the Persian occupation of

Gordion after the middle of the 6th century, and is therefore called the Persian Level, whether or not its construction in whole or in part was sponsored by the Persian overlords.

Figure shows the extent of the Persian Level cleared by the end of the season in the area within the city wall *OL* that level. The excavations were concentrated on an irregular strip about 100 meters long running from the west of the building 1 on the plan through Building 11 and 12 in the rectangular area between Buildings 11 and *H* on one side and the *NLA* Building on the other.

In this rectangular area patches of paving were found suggesting that there was a large open paved court here giving access to the three large buildings mentioned. Below beneath the level of the paving came a gold rosette once attached to a garment (Figure 3).

As a result of this season's work Building 11 is now seen to be of a form already familiar in other public buildings at Gordion, resembling a Greek temple with pronaos and cella. A date for its construction about the middle of the 6th century is provided by fragments of an Attic black-figured amphora of about 560 - 550 B. C. found in its earth floor. In a number of pits dug during the lifetime of the building into and below its floor were found a large number of complete pottery vessels. One such hoard, as it was found, and the pot from it as restored appear in Figures 4 and 5. The largest vessel, a heavy pithos of red fabric, bears a graffito in Phrygian: HENADONO! and four compass drawn circles, the latter probably being an indication of the jar's capacity.

Parallel to the back wall of Building M a short additional section of the Enclosure wall was uncovered, pillaged far below the top of its foundations. From the earth thrown in as a refill a terracotta ring (Figure 6) with terminal lion's heads, probably of the middle of the 6th century.

The structures of the Persian Level

were apparently put out of use by violence about 500 B. C. or soon thereafter. The five succeeding levels indicate a progressive impoverishment of the city. In the later phases private dwellings and industrial establishments supplanted the large public buildings of the Persian Level.

Of the late structures one complex, of the advanced Hellenistic period, the 'Potters' Establishment', located in the topmost level of the city above the paved area already mentioned, was of special interest. Its plan is shown in Figure 7. In its courtyard, however, were found two fragmentary, successive rooms, the first structural evidence so far found for the manufacture of pottery at Gordion. In the earlier, larger kiln, A on the plan, were found unfired fragments of pottery including unguentaria, small bowls and other open vessels. In a smaller kiln, B, (Figure 8) were found more fragments of unfired unguentaria and also two unfired moulds. One mould (Figure 9) was intended for a bowl or finial decorated with long petals in relief. Two fired fragments of similar bowls or finials were found in the establishment (Figure 9; left and right). The other mould was to produce a female mask or protome of half life-size, with one hand raised to her head (Figure 10).

The Potters' Establishment was destroyed by fire perhaps shortly before the final abandonment of Gordion. In the debris near Kiln B was a nest of fired unguentaria (Figure 11), probably among the latest products of the kiln. In the courtyard and in one of the adjoining rooms were found two black-burnished pots, one, a jug, decorated in incision and red paint in a probably Phrygian Hellenistic style. When the Roman general Manlius arrived at Gordion in 189 B. C. he found it deserted by reason of the flight of its inhabitants. If this is the moment when Gordion was finally abandoned these objects found on the floors of the Potters' Establishment were ones abandoned by the last citizens of Gordion in their flight.

