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from room to room.

In general, the ceilings had collapsed and buried the objects on the lower floors. The remains from the upper storeys, e.g. the marble table and small fragments of mosaics depicting birds, show that the upper storeys served as living quarters. This was confirmed in the adjacent area to the west, whose excavation was almost completed this season. The mosaic fragments from the upper storeys are amongst the most important finds of this year's season, as they proved to be very fine, with intricate geometric designs and representations of animals. It seems likely that the coarser mosaics with relatively simple patterns found at Shiqmona belonged to workshops, shops and storerooms.

(2) The most surprising discovery of this season was made in the excavation of the public building to the south of the mound. In the 1964 season, a building with an apse had been uncovered there, a hall with magnificent mosaics and a courtyard 20 m. long. It was clear at once that this was a public building, but its character had not been established at the time. This season, about twenty more squares were opened up in this area and it was established that this building was part of a complex of buildings belonging to a very large monastery. This was confirmed by a Greek inscription found on one of the floors, which mentions the holders of various offices (read by V. Tzaferis). Within this complex, twelve architectural units were uncovered, most of them paved with coloured mosaics in rich geometric patterns, others paved with marble, also in geometric patterns. These buildings have not been preserved very well — there are no walls or even thresholds. Large parts of the marble floors had also been robbed, but many fragments of marble columns and Corinthian capitals were preserved. The excavation of the monastery has not been completed and apparently the central church has not yet been found. Neither pottery nor small finds were discovered. We distinguished three building phases; there were superimposed floors and some floors were cut by later walls. Although there is no ceramic or numismatic evidence, it is reasonable to assume that the monastery remained in use for a long time, even after the Moslem conquest and the destruction of the

town, although at present it is impossible to say for how long.

(Communicated by Joseph Elgavish)

Tel Dor, 1980

The first season of excavations at Tel Dor, directed by Ephraim Stern on behalf of the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Israel Exploration Society, was divided into two phases. The first, during three weeks in April, was conducted in cooperation with Seymour Gittin, who represented the American Schools of Oriental Research and Brandeis University; about 25 students from Brandeis participated. The second, which lasted from 3 July to 15 August, was arranged with the cooperation of New York University under the direction of Lawrence Schiffman, Boston University under the direction of H. Neil Richardson and James D. Purvis, and California State University at Sacramento under the direction of Howard P. Goldfried. In addition, the project was supported by the Harvard Semitic Museum, Ambassador College, Pasadena, and a private contribution by Mr. Arnold Fliegenheimer of New York. There were approximately a hundred participants, including volunteers under the auspices of EARTHWATCH of Belmont, Mass. Besides the scholars mentioned above, the staff included Renate Rosenthal, Brachah Guz, Osnat Mish, Shalom Yankelevich, Ilan Sharon, Gary Lipton and Kurt Rave. Zev Radovan served as photographer, and Bianca Lepori as architect. The project was also a training excavation of the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The expedition was greatly aided by Kibbutz Nahsholim, our hosts during the first phase of the excavation, and by the staff of Meir Shefaya Youth Village, the agricultural school which provided accommodation during the second phase.

The mound is approximately 500 m. long and 350 m. wide; its area is about 120 dunams (30 acres). From aerial photographs it was evident, even before the excavations, that the mound consists of two parts. The main area in the south is square, and the depth of deposit is 15–18 m. It

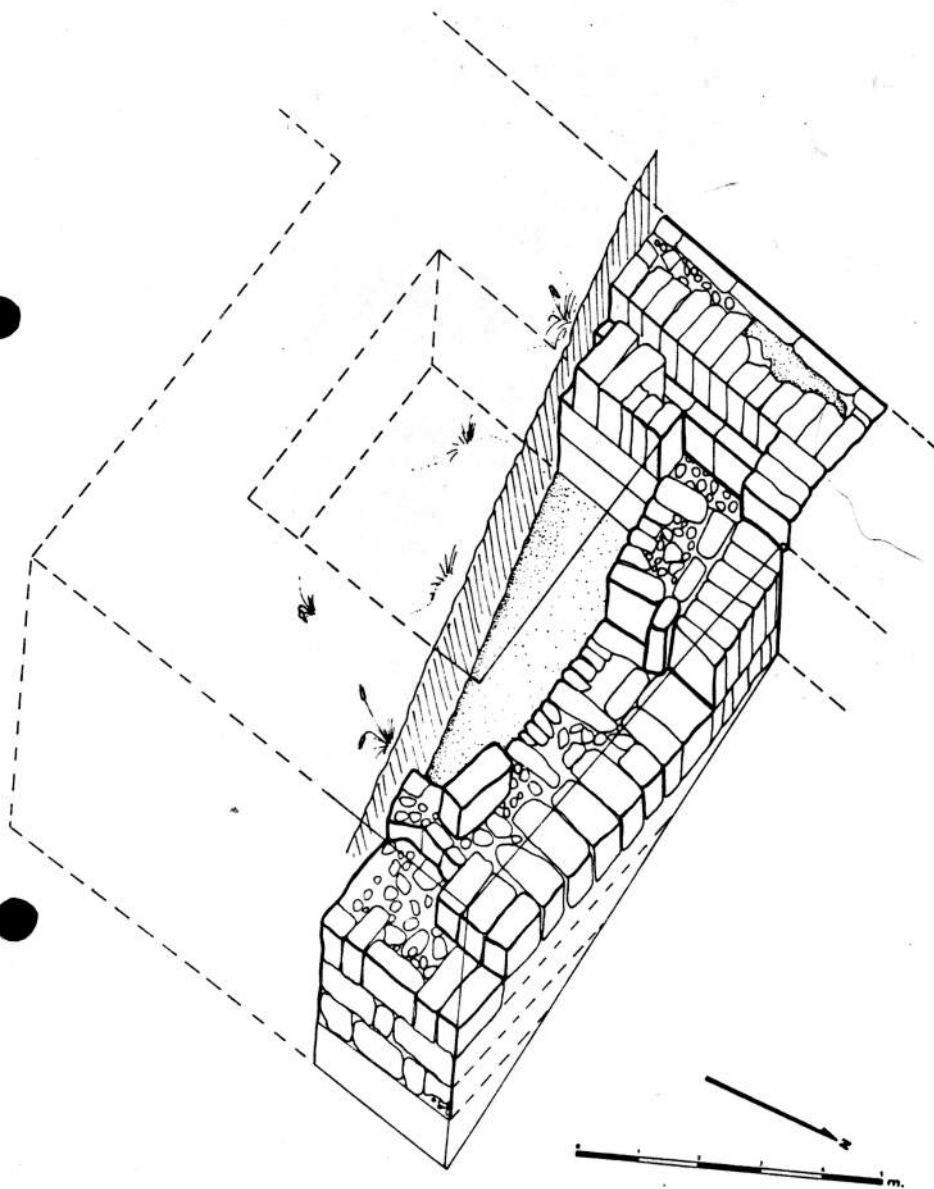


Fig. 1. Area A, Hellenistic tower, axonometric view.

was formed, as far as can be determined at present, by an earthen embankment of the MB. The second section, relatively long and narrow, extends from the central square to the inlet at the north of the mound. At both ends, still preserved

on the surface, are remains of public buildings of the Hellenistic and Roman periods, the most prominent of which is a theatre. This part of the mound was no doubt created in later periods.

This season we excavated in three areas, all on

the eastern side of the central square. Area A, in the centre of the eastern side, was intended as a stratigraphic probe trench of 5 x 25 m.; Area B, which is assumed to be the area of the gates, is an area of 15 x 20 m. south of Area A in a depression in the middle of the slope; Area C (15 x 15 m.) is located in the north-eastern corner of the central square.

Area A: In the upper stratum of the Byzantine period were uncovered two sections of aqueducts constructed of stone and plastered. The first crosses the centre of the eastern slope of the mound and is part of a continuous line which frequently protrudes from the surface. The second appears to extend from it and conveyed water inwards to the city, above the ancient remains. Under this stratum, the area is divided into two. The eastern section is completely occupied by a magnificent wall of the Hellenistic period which continued in use during the early Roman period; it is perhaps the most impressive fortification of this period discovered so far in Israel. The wall is built entirely of ashlar blocks of local sandstone, and is preserved to a height of more than 2 m. A tower, of which only the northern half was excavated, extends outwards for 15 m., and was also constructed of large ashlar, laid so that the end of the blocks face outwards ('headers') (Fig. 1). Beneath this tower, about 1 m. outside the city-wall, a wall of the Persian period was uncovered, built of large unhewn limestones.

In the western half of the area, within the wall, two strata from the Roman period and two phases from the Hellenistic period were distinguished (as opposed to Area C, below, where many more Hellenistic phases were identified); below them are three levels of the Persian period. Because of the narrow area excavated, it is still difficult to determine the nature of the Persian period structures, though it seems likely that these were dwelling houses. In most of the levels a row of rooms was built against the wall; beyond this was a street, and across it the façade of a large structure. At the end of the season our impression was that we had reached the Iron Age level. Especially noteworthy is the continuity in construction from the Persian to the Hellenistic periods. In the western baulk a wall over 2 m. high is constructed segment by segment, layer upon layer.

Construction during the Persian and early Hellenistic periods was in the 'Phoenician' technique common in this region, with rows of ashlar on either side of a fill of unhewn stones; in the later Hellenistic period the walls were solidly constructed of 'headers'. At this site it is easy to distinguish between the periods by building styles.

The finds in this area were numerous: local and imported pottery, coins and Greek seals. Especially rich were Attic and East Greek wares.

Area B: The uppermost stratum in this area was Byzantine. Two segments of a stone pavement were uncovered and appear to be the remains of a large structure which is almost completely obliterated. Two segments of aqueducts were also found in this area. The first, built of large stones robbed from earlier structures, was apparently an offshoot of the main aqueduct discovered in Area A. The second water channel, a considerable length of which was exposed, was covered with stone slabs and was possibly connected with an industrial installation. These fragments were built over the earlier remains without taking account of them.

Remains of the Roman period were encountered in two levels which may have belonged to two separate strata. Of these, it was mainly the uppermost which was preserved. The southern third of the area is entirely occupied by the central eastern city-gate, which is heavily damaged by erosion. There remains a section of a street leading into the city, paved with large stone slabs; two layers of pavement were found. Underneath runs a domed drainage channel of ashlar stones, extremely well preserved (Pl. 26:B). It runs out of the gate and descends, turning sharply, to the other side of the city-wall. The width of the road here is 7 m., and we have not yet reached its outer limits, outside the excavated area. Attached to the gate is a wall built in the Hellenistic period, which continued in use in the Roman period. We believe that this is the continuation of the wall found in Area A, although here, because of erosion, only the foundation course remained. The wall ran along the entire length of the excavated area, from south to north. The northern section had been destroyed and rebuilt, apparently during the Roman period.

Inside the city-wall a large area had been damaged by a defensive trench built by the

British army during the Second World War. To the west of it, in the upper Roman level, a large structure of several rooms paved with stone was uncovered. Its outer walls were built upon the walls of a Hellenistic tower. In the lower Roman level an industrial installation was found, with a floor of hardened stone and cement. Two small well-plastered cisterns were found in it; in one of them were a few jugs. Beneath the Roman levels three strata from the Hellenistic period were discovered. We have already mentioned the city-wall, which was built and repaired several times in this period. This wall comes to an end here, probably indicating the entrance to the city; however, the floor surface of the city-gate in this period has not yet been reached. A wall of a rectangular room constructed of large stones may belong to the northern tower of the city gate.

Beneath the Hellenistic strata parts of monumental structures of the Persian period were excavated. It is impossible at present to determine whether they are of one or more levels. A wall made of very large, rough stones is very similar to the Persian period city-wall unearthed in Area A and is likewise located about 1 m. outside the Hellenistic city-wall. In the centre of the area the wall turns and undoubtedly forms a city-gate. A wall built of similar huge stones runs southwards and apparently constitutes the beginning of a tower of the southern gate. A stone-paved road leads into the city. Round holes found in two of the paving stones near the entrance were apparently intended to hold vertical bars. There is no doubt that here are the scanty remains of the southern half of the eastern city-gate of the Persian period.

The *favissa* of a temple which may have been located nearby was found in a narrow segment (about 1 x 2 m.) between the Persian period wall and the Hellenistic wall. It contained about twenty figurines of a type common in this period, mainly fertility goddesses in the shape of women, pregnant or holding children, as well as of bearded deities (Pl. 26:C). One figurine may represent a woman giving birth. A limestone statue of a Cypriote type commonly found in caches of this kind was also discovered here.

Towards the end of the season another fortification, also built of very large unhewn stones, was discovered outside and near the Persian

period wall. It has not yet been determined if this third fortification belongs to an earlier Persian level or, more likely, it is from the Iron Age. In any case, many Iron Age sherds and a female ivory head (Pl. 26:D) were found close by.

Pottery from all three periods, both local and imported, and seal-impressions were found in Area B. About a dozen well-worked catapult stones and two fragments of marble memorial stelae inscribed in Greek should be mentioned.

Area C: In this area nothing remained from the Byzantine period; the latest remains discovered were two strata from the Roman period. In the uppermost stratum two stages of construction were discovered several centimetres below the surface; however, they had been almost entirely obliterated. The main element was a drainage channel covered with stone slabs passing through the entire excavated area from north to south. Also found were several segments of walls, stone floors, a black and white mosaic floor, and part of a cement floor, apparently part of a pool. Several *tabuns* and other installations were also unearthed. On the basis of these finds it is possible to assume that the upper Roman stratum consisted of one large building complex, which in most of the area was razed to below floor-level. It also seems that the building extends beyond the excavated area. The head of a marble statue of Hermes was incorporated in one of the walls of this building.

The lower Roman stratum was better preserved. Here it was possible for the first time to distinguish two distinct parts of the area: (1) rooms in the east apparently connected with the city-wall (not yet excavated) and a street; and (2) behind it, a large dwelling house which extends north, west and south beyond the excavated area. Almost all the walls were superimposed on walls of the Hellenistic period. In several rooms, floors and even a few *tabuns* remained. A well-constructed stone drainage channel was revealed under the floor of the building. Also found were remains of one or two industrial installations.

Beneath these were unearthed three levels of the Hellenistic period, all phases of the same structure (Fig. 2; Pl. 26:A). In the east is a block of small rooms connected with the city-wall. In several rooms were found industrial installations,

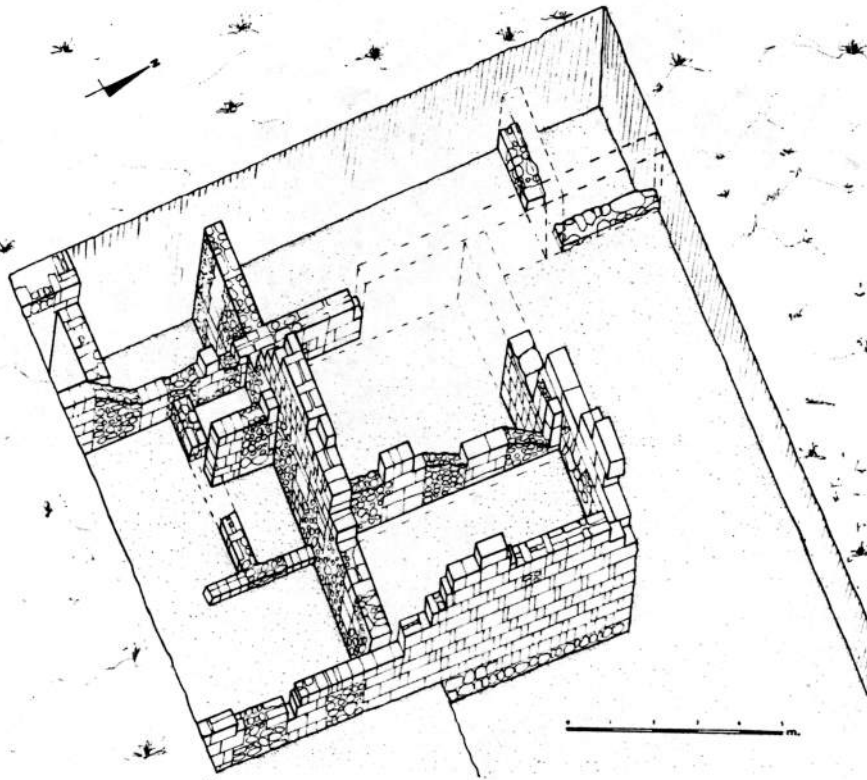


Fig. 2. Area C. Hellenistic building.

... of which is of especial interest: it contained a large heap of crushed murex shells and probably served for the manufacture of purple dye.

A street, which apparently ran parallel to the city-wall, separated this row of rooms from the central building. The latter contained many rooms, including a cistern for storing water. It seems that the plan of the structure remained basically unchanged though it was rebuilt several times. Most of its walls were retained in all three phases, though the internal divisions were slightly altered. The complete plan of the building has not yet been clarified, since it extends beyond the excavated area. The façade of the structure on the east of the street is preserved to a considerable height. It is built throughout of ashlar blocks set as 'headers', while the internal walls are constructed in 'Phoenician' style. The walls stand to about

2 m. in several places, but we do not yet know the depth of the foundations. In all the rooms were found a number of clay floors and on them were rich assemblages of Hellenistic pottery, among them many oil lamps and pottery with Greek seal impressions (mostly from Knidos and a few from Rhodes). Numerous coins were found. The recurrent reconstruction over several centuries has caused a problem; when earlier walls were used as foundations for new ones, the entrances were closed up, and we have not been able to identify the entrance to any room with certainty. It is our intention to expand this area of excavation in the future in an attempt to understand the structure in its entirety and to connect it with the fortifications which lie to the east.

(Communicated by Ephraim Stern)