

Victory on the Harbor

Greek Remains Found at Dor

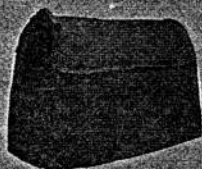
For 15 years, archaeologist Andrew Stewart has been hoping to find more evidence of life during the Hellenistic period at Dor, the ancient port city along Israel's northern coast, where he directs the University of California at Berkeley team digging with Ephraim Stern of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The team has uncovered rich remains from the Canaanite, Israelite, Phoenician and Persian eras* (c. 1200-330 B.C.), although Stewart, a professor of art history and classics, has uncovered frustratingly few Hellenistic remains. But this past season he had his Victory.

Last August, Stewart's team discovered a 2,200-year-old headless statue of the Greek goddess Victory (more commonly known by her Greek name, Nike). The statue was found along with fragments of a Greek temple and

*See Andrew Stewart, "A Death at Dor," BAR, March/April 1993 and Ephraim Stern, "The Many Masters of Dor," (in three parts), BAR, January/February 1993, March/April 1993 and May/June 1993.

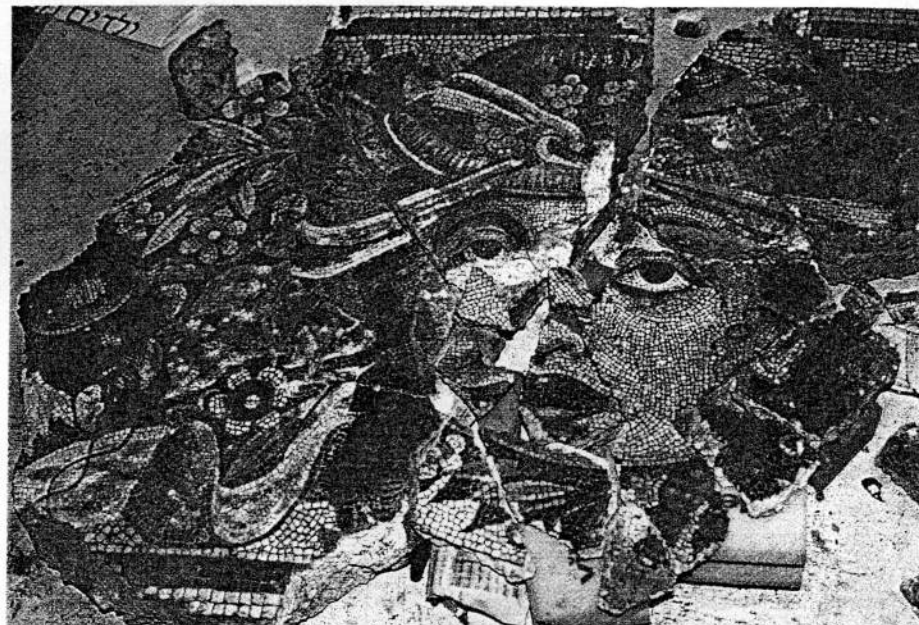
WHAT IS IT?

- A Coffin
- B Dog house
- C Scroll repository
- D Oven



(Answer on p. 18.)

BRITISH MUSEUM



ZEV RADOVAN

A MOSAIC of a Greek theater-mask and a now-headless statue of Nike (Victory) are providing the first major evidence of life in Hellenistic Dor.

remains of the temple's columns in a late-second-century B.C. pit that had been filled with debris when the temple was destroyed. Stewart speculates that the destruction occurred during the invasions by Antiochus VII Sidetes (a Seleucid king) and Simon Macabee in 139/8 B.C. or by the Jewish king Alexander Jannaeus in 100 B.C. In another pit, barely 50 feet away from the first and probably filled in the during a first century A.D. Roman campaign of urban renewal, the excavators discovered a floor mosaic—probably from a villa dining room. It depicts a theater-mask consisting of a young man wearing a fantastic party hat decorated with fruit and flowers. Such masks were used in the performances of Greek comedies. The mosaic, says Stewart, is unique in the Hellenistic east and "is easily the equal of the famous mosaics from Delos, the palaces at Pergamon and the House of the Faun at Pompeii, which it most closely resembles. It puts Hellenistic Israel squarely on the map in the sophisticated art of fine mosaics, hitherto known at this time only from Alexandria."

The mosaic, like the temple, probably dates to the second century B.C. Both finds seem to predate by at least 100 years any other monumental evidence of the Greeks in this part of the Levant.

Dor, a city known from the Bible, was



ANDREW STEWART

originally settled by the Canaanites, then ruled by a group of the Sea Peoples. In the tenth century B.C. King Solomon made it his harbor city; in 732 B.C. it was captured by the Assyrians and served as the capital of the coastal province of Duru.

Although Greeks were known to have settled in Dor and even to have controlled the city at times, it has never been clear how large their settlement was. The new discoveries point to a substantial community.

"These finds add a new chapter to Greek art and architecture," Stewart says. "As far as I'm aware, no one had found Greek architecture, sculpture and mosaics like these in Israel before."