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GOLEMO GRADIŠTE AT KONJUH, 2005 AND 2006 SEASONS: THE NORTHERN TERRACE

Golemo Gradište at the village of Konjuh is the site of an anonymous, Late Antique city, located ca. 40 km east of Skopje, on the Kriva River.¹ Now belonging administratively to Kratovo, in antiquity the city stood near the southeast edge of the province of Dardania.² The international project entitled "Archaeological Investigation at Konjuh," sponsored by Gettysburg College in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, USA, and the Museum of Macedonia in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, carried out excavations on the acropolis of the site from 2000 through 2004.³

The investigation of the acropolis led to the conclusion, briefly summarized, that a fortress had been constructed there in the second quarter of the 6th century and that intensive activity, characterized by rebuilding after destruction, had continued until the end of that century or the beginning of the 7th. At least one destruction resulted from earthquake, as indicated by the collapse of a fountain house into the cistern it had once sheltered.⁴

By the end of the 2004 season, it was clear to the staff of the project that more information was needed about the lower city as background and context for the fortress on the acropolis. Two test trenches, excavated on the northern terrace during the final week of the 2004 season, offered more puzzles than useful information about occupation on the terrace. Thus systematic excavation was planned to begin in Sektor II, the lower city, in the 2005 season.

Earlier investigations on the northern terrace, Sektor II

Very little was known about either architecture or stratigraphy on the northern terrace before the 2005 season. In 2001 an illegal trench, dug during the previous winter near the foot of the acropolis,

¹ I express my thanks to the Macedonian Archaeological Scientific Society for their hospitality at Delčevo in 2006. Thanks are expressed as well to Gettysburg College for its long-term support of my research through a series of Research and Professional Development grants. We appreciate the assistance of Todor Začev and his colleagues at the Katastar in Kratovo, both for establishing a grid on the northern terrace in 2005 and for providing fixed points for the trench plans in 2006.

The location, description, and history of excavation (with full bibliography) of the site has been provided in several articles: Snively C., 2002, 2006, 2008, and forthcoming.

See now the preliminary report on excavations at another site in the region: Nikolovski Z., 2008.

² Mikulčić I., 2002, 22-24.

³ For reports on the investigations on the acropolis, see the first three articles cited in footnote 1.

⁴ Numismatic evidence is very sparse; the ceramic dating suggests that the earthquake was later in the 6th century than the one described by Marcellinus Comes in the province of Dardania in 518.

was cleaned and enlarged in order to provide stratigraphic sections. In Trench 1, two deposits and associated walls were distinguished, tentatively dated to the 4th and the 5th-6th centuries; below the earlier deposit appeared sterile yellow bedrock.

Trench 2 was excavated in June 2003.⁵ It was a 3 x 4 m test, located ca. 8 m south of the city wall that runs beside the Kriva River. The purpose of the trench was to investigate the stratigraphy in this part of the terrace, close to the river, and to search for a Neolithic settlement, since pottery of that period had appeared here and there on the surface.⁶ The depth of cultural material was ca. 2.20 m. Below lay compact gravel and sand. Wall 1, running north-south, appeared just below the surface. Its foundation had been dug deeply into the earth, to the gravel layer. Built of stones bonded with lime mortar, its width was 0.60 m, and its preserved height 1.80 m. The excavator interpreted it as the west perimetral wall of a relatively large object, which extended to the east, with a probable 5th century date. A short piece of wall 2, ca. 0.50 m wide and built of stone and mud mortar, was found at a lower level; its probable date of construction was 4th century. Although a small amount of Roman pottery was found, there is no evidence for occupation before the 4th century. The Neolithic material found in the lower levels of the trench was unstratified and mixed with pottery from Late Antiquity.

Trenches 3 and 4 were excavated in July 2004, in order to provide additional information about the stratigraphy of the terrace, to confirm or disprove the hypothesis that a Roman settlement had stood there, and in hopes of finding the basilica mentioned by both Radojčić and Mikulčić as being located in the middle of the lower city.⁷

Trench 4, 10 x 2 m in size, was laid out on a northeast-southwest orientation.⁸ The location was chosen after conversation with local residents about the spots from which bricks and worked stone blocks had been removed in the past. Although surrounded by disturbed areas, the trench included apparently intact deposits with many pieces of worked and unworked stone blocks, along with floor tiles and roof tiles. The only surviving architectural feature, however, was a large stone slab that stood in front of a small piece of wall in the northeast corner of the trench. Dimensions of the slab were 0.60-0.70 m high, 0.70 m wide. The face of the wall was visible for a length of 1.10 m and displayed three courses of stones; it formed a corner at its north end. The ceramic material was dated 5th-6th centuries.

Test Trench 3⁹ was also 10 x 2 m in dimension and was oriented ENE-WSW. The stone features that began to appear just below the surface deposit turned out to be a drain, a partly destroyed cist grave at the east end of the trench, and—just west of the previous one—two parallel, intact, cist graves. Only the northernmost of the two burials was opened: Grave 2. Four roughly worked stone slabs had been placed upright on each side of the grave, together with one slab each at head and foot, to form a box in which the deceased was placed. Six roughly worked stone slabs were then placed across the top of the vertical ones.¹⁰ The skeleton was that of a male, extended on his back with arms crossed on the chest.¹¹ There were no grave goods.

⁵ Voislav Sanev, Museum of Macedonia, Emeritus, supervised Trenches 1 and 2.

⁶ Somewhat to Sanev's surprise, both Neolithic pottery and the remains of wattle-and-daub wall construction were found below the fortification wall along the south side of the acropolis fortress, in Sektors IB and ID, in 2003 and 2004 respectively.

⁷ Radojčić S., 1952, 149; Mikulčić I., 1973, 180.

⁸ Elena Stojanova Kanzurova supervised Trench 4, which is not shown on a plan; it was located approximately 25 m west of Trench 13 in the northern area of excavation.

⁹ Mihail Stojanoski supervised Trench 3, which is not shown on a plan; its southwest end lay 3 m east of Trench 14 and ca. 2 m north of Trench 22 in the southern area of excavation.

¹⁰ The stone at the west end of the south side of the grave was a reused piece of an inscribed Roman funerary monument; the inscription has been read by Slavica Babamova, epigrapher at the Museum of Macedonia, whom we thank for her assistance, and will be published separately.

¹¹ Charlotte Maxwell-Jones, our anthropologist on site, and Fanica Veljanovska, anthropologist at the Museum of Macedonia, agreed that the deceased was certainly over 50 years of age and probably much older; he had at one time done heavy physical labor but, by the time of his death, was suffering severely from arthritis.



Fig. 1. Golemo Gradište, Konjuh; the northern terrace/Sektor II, at the end of the 2006 season, showing the two areas of excavation. From the acropolis, from south.

Trenches 1 and 2 pointed to two phases of occupation on the terrace, one in the 4th century and the second in the 5th and/or 6th centuries. Other conclusions from the tests in Sektor II were mostly negative; no trace was found of a Neolithic settlement, of a Roman town, or of the Early Christian basilica whose presence had been noted by earlier investigators. The lack of architectural remains in Trench 4 was puzzling, and the presence of burials in Trench 3, within the walls of a Late Antique settlement, was surprising and, at the time, inexplicable.

Excavation in 2005 and 2006

The 2005 season began on 13 June and ended on 22 July; excavation on the terrace took place between 16 June and 7 July. During the last two weeks of the season, in addition to photographic and architectural documentation of the trenches, informal survey was carried out around the site and the immediate region.¹² The 2006 season lasted from 12 June until 5 August.¹³ Funding in 2005 was provided by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Macedonia, by Gettysburg College through a Research and Professional Development Grant, and by an anonymous American private donor; in 2006 the Loeb Classical Library Foundation in Cambridge, Massachusetts, funded the project.

The northern terrace of the site is the space between the northern foot of the acropolis and the Kriva River (Fig. 1). Although described as a gentle slope, the south central part at least consists of a series of terraces, each 20-30 m in width. During the 2005 and 2006 seasons, excavation was carried out within a 30 m east-west x 60 m north-south rectangle placed approximately midway between the east and west edges of the overall northern terrace, but located closer to the foot of the acropolis than to the Kriva river. Four 5 x 5 m or larger trenches, i.e., Trenches 5-8, were dug in

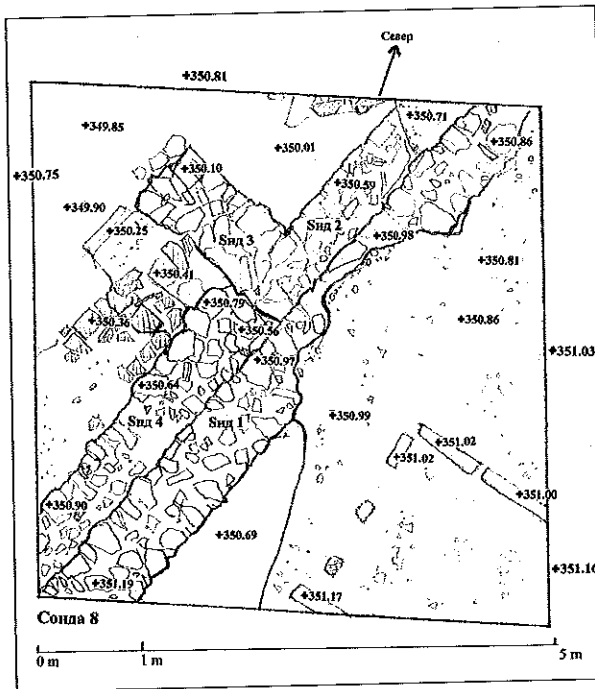
¹² As noted in Snively C., 2008, 339 and note 16, 349 and note 28, two small, clean-up excavations were carried out on the acropolis after excavation ended on the terrace.

¹³ The staff members in both 2005 and 2006 included Carolyn S. Snively, Gettysburg College, and Mila Šurbanoska, Muzej na Makedonija, the co-directors of the project; Virginia Anderson-Stojanović, Wilson College, ceramics analyst; Mihail Stojanoski and Elena S. Kanzurova, archaeologist-curators, and Miroslav Dimovski, photographer and camp manager, all from the Muzej na Makedonija. Other members of the staff were Ana Jordanova (2006), archaeologist; Maria Videska (2005), architect, Muzej na Makedonija; Valentin Tanevski (2006), architect; Mima Božinovska (2005) and Dončo Naumovski (2006), archaeology students, University of Kiril and Metodius, Skopje; Charlotte Maxwell-Jones (2005), graduate student, University of California, Davis; Christina Kolb (2006), graduate student, University of Cincinnati.

Fig. 2. Plan of Trench 8, Sektor II. The kaldrma, presumably a street, is at the right. Plan by M. Videska, July 2005.



Fig. 3. Trench 8, from southwest. The kaldrma is visible in the right background; Wall 1 divides it from Walls 2 and 3 on the left and from Wall 4 and other features in the lower right.



2005. In 2006 excavation took place in spaces adjacent to Trenches 5, 6, and 7, with the result that two large areas were opened up within the rectangle. The southern area lay on the first terrace close to the foot of the acropolis, while the northern area was placed on the third terrace. Trench 8, located at the east edge of the rectangle and between the two major areas of excavation at north and south, will be described first.

Trench 8 (2005)

Trench 8,¹⁴ 5 x 5 m in size, sloped down from east to west and from north to south (Figs 2, 3). Wall 1, running NNE-SSW, divided the trench into eastern and western halves. On the east side, at a depth of ca. 0.15 m, a *kaldrma*-like surface appeared, at 351.15 MASL at the south, 350.81 at the north; it consisted of very hard-packed gray earth with small stones embedded within it. This type of floor or pavement is characteristic of Golemo Gradište; several examples have been found both on the acropolis and on the northern terrace. The pavements vary in respect to the size, density, and material (stones or tile fragments) embedded in the earthen matrix. Although the ready availability of stone would lead one to expect stone paving at the site, there is no evidence to suggest that the *kaldrma*-like surfaces served as foundations or substructures for stone slab or other paving.

Near the east corner of the trench, two rows of east-west stone blocks interrupted the surface. Toward the north, two blocks appeared, one 0.15 x 0.70 m, and the second one, which ran into the scarp, of similar length or longer. Ca. 0.85-0.90 m to the south, part of a second east-west block was visible. The *kaldrma* sloped down from south to north and has been tentatively interpreted as a street; Wall 1 was very shallowly founded and apparently served only to mark and support the west edge of the street.

Several walls and features appeared in the west half of Trench 8. Walls 2 and 3 formed the southeast corner of a room, but Wall 3 ended ca. 1.20 m from the corner. The space formed by Walls 3 and 4 was

¹⁴ M. Stojanoski supervised Trench 8. It began as a test in hopes of tracing the course of the drain discovered in Trenches 3 and 7; the subsequent enlargement of the test to a 5 x 5 m trench resulted in its odd orientation and slightly irregular shape.

paved with tiles and may have been a porch or entryway from the *kaldırma*-paved area. A fragmentary ceramic pipe for water, found in the “porch” area, suggested the possibility of a basin, but the tile-paved area would not have been waterproof without hydraulic mortar, of which no traces were found.

Below the surface deposit, in the western part of the trench, appeared a deposit of fairly heavy debris; consisting mostly of large stones, it included some roof tiles. This debris covered the tops of Walls 2, 3, and 4 as well as the two spaces formed by them. Roof tiles fallen both onto the tile floor south of Wall 3 and into the room north of Wall 3 indicate that these spaces were roofed. They also suggest that the final floor level in the room north of Wall 3 was at ca. 350.40, similar to the level in the “porch”.

The chronological relationship between the east and west halves of Trench 8 remains uncertain, as does the nature of the structures and spaces in question. The ceramic material is domestic in nature, dated to the late 5th and 6th centuries. In addition to glass fragments and unidentified bits of metal, Trench 8 yielded a knife blade and two other iron tools, a piece of carved bone, and two joining pieces of relief sculpture.

Northern area of excavation

The area of excavation at the northern end of the rectangle included Trench 5 from 2005 and Trenches 9, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, 23, and 25 from 2006 (Fig. 4).¹⁵ The defining feature in this area was a north-south street, Street A, which ran NNE-SSW for at least 18 m. The street sloped down toward the north, i.e., ca. 348.45 MASL at its south end and ca. 347.50 at the north. At the north end of the street, in Trench 23, two pebbled surfaces succeeded two street surfaces of hard-packed earth. A thin layer of orange sand covered each of the last three street surfaces; the sand probably pointed to repeated flooding. Debris found above both the second and the last street suggested destruction and rebuilding of adjacent structures.

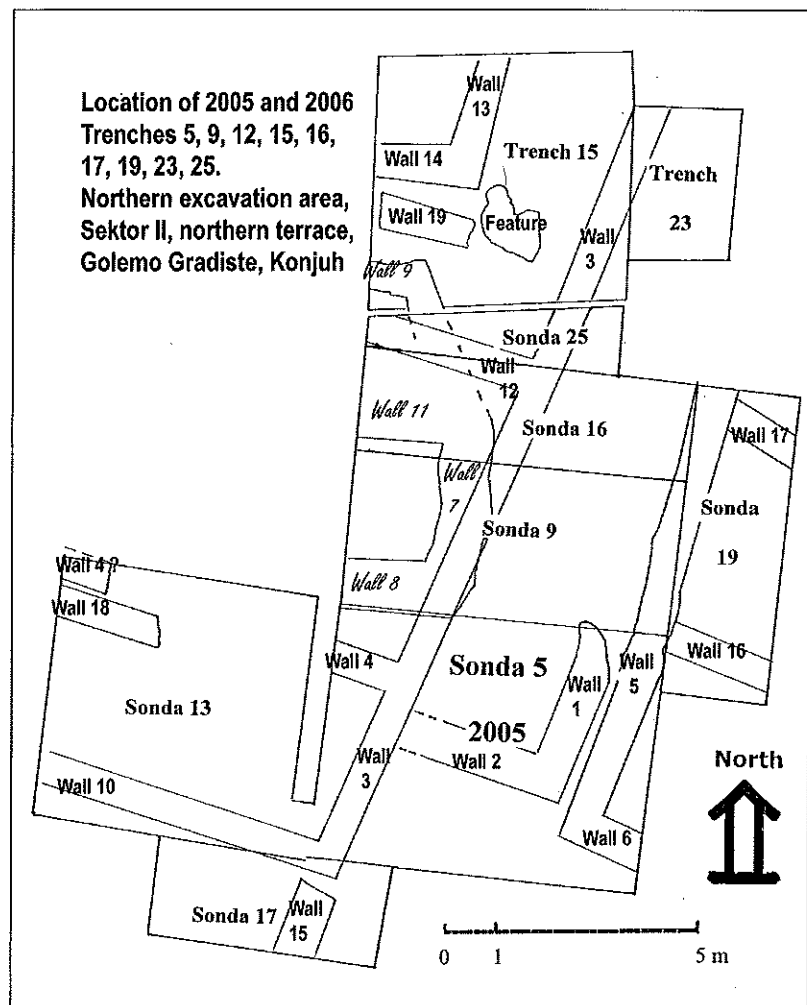


Fig. 4. Plan of trenches in northern area of excavation, Sektor II, 2005 and 2006.

¹⁵ Elena Stojanova Kanzurova supervised Trenches 5, 9, 13, 16, 17, 19, and 25; Christina Kolb supervised Trenches 15 and 23.

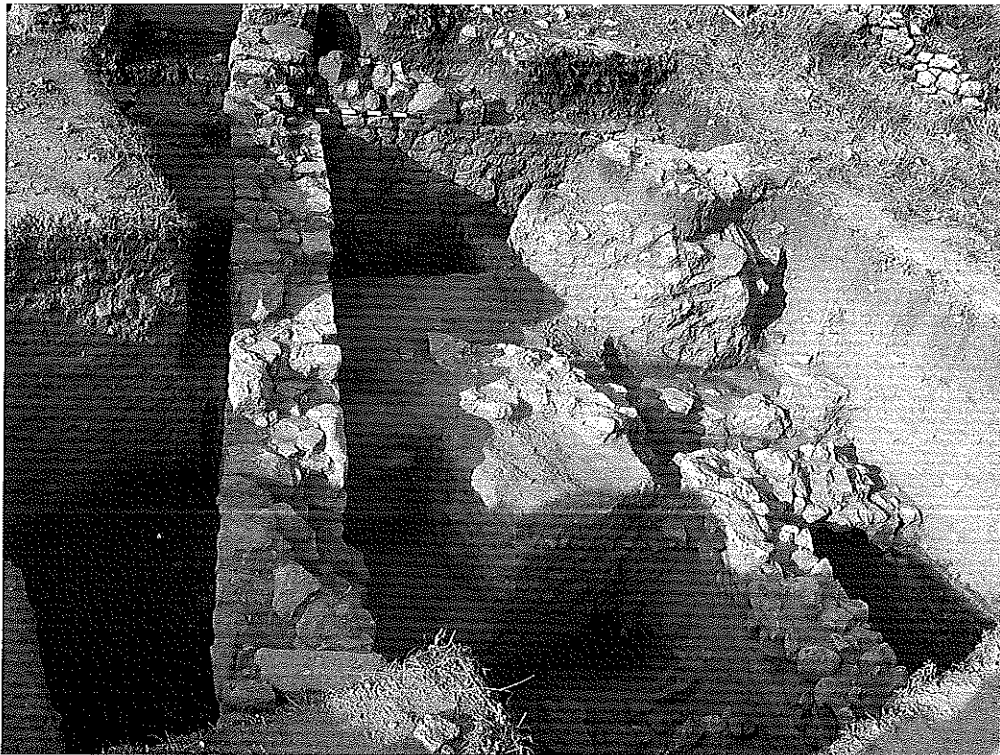


Fig. 5.
Northern area of excavation, Trenches 15 and 25, i.e., the northern room west of Street A; from northeast. Wall 3 bonds with Wall 12 at the meter stick. Stone and mortar feature is in the middle of the room. Walls 13 and 14 form a corner at lower right.

Wall 3, originally found in Trench 5, marked the west side of Street A; it ran in a straight line for ca. 16.5 m and displayed evidence of at least one rebuilding as well as a change in construction toward its north end. At its south end, Wall 3 formed a corner with Wall 10, which ran to the west; they defined the southeast corner of a building and probably of a city block, since a second street, Street C, ran to the west beside Wall 10. Wall 3 formed the facade of three large rooms along the west side of the street; it is not clear whether all three belonged to a single building or the northern room was part of a separate structure. No doorways have appeared in either wall 3 or Wall 10, so that the method of access to the building(s) is unknown.

The southern room, much of which was excavated in Trench 13, had suffered considerable damage. The northern wall of the room, Wall 4, had been destroyed to floor level for much of its length, the floor itself had been damaged or removed, and the contents or furnishings of the room had been taken away, before the roof collapsed and left a substantial layer of roof tiles above the putative floor level. In the deposits above the tiles, architectural sculpture was found: a piece of a mullion column, a column base, and a column fragment.

The middle room of the three, formed by Walls 3, 4, and 12, was not extensively investigated because of the presence of later walls above it. Most of the northern room was excavated in Trench 15. Its stratigraphy was relatively simple. Below the dark brown topsoil was a layer of debris in light brown earth; this debris was found in the east and south sides of the trench and resulted from the gradual collapse of Wall 3 and probably Wall 12 as well. The third deposit, with chunks of mortar, roof tiles, and many fragments of glass, in a gray or yellow earth, represented the destruction of the room or building bounded by Walls 3 and 12; the debris had fallen onto a hard-packed earthen floor at ca. 346.75 MASL. The remains of a stone and mortar built feature protruded above the floor as did a vertical column fragment;¹⁶ both were associated with the floor. This hard-packed surface at 346.45 covered the tops of Walls 13, 14, and 19, which belong to structures earlier than the one

¹⁶ Several similar column fragments, smoothly cut at both ends, have been found in the excavations on the terrace; our hypothesis is that they served as supports for tables.

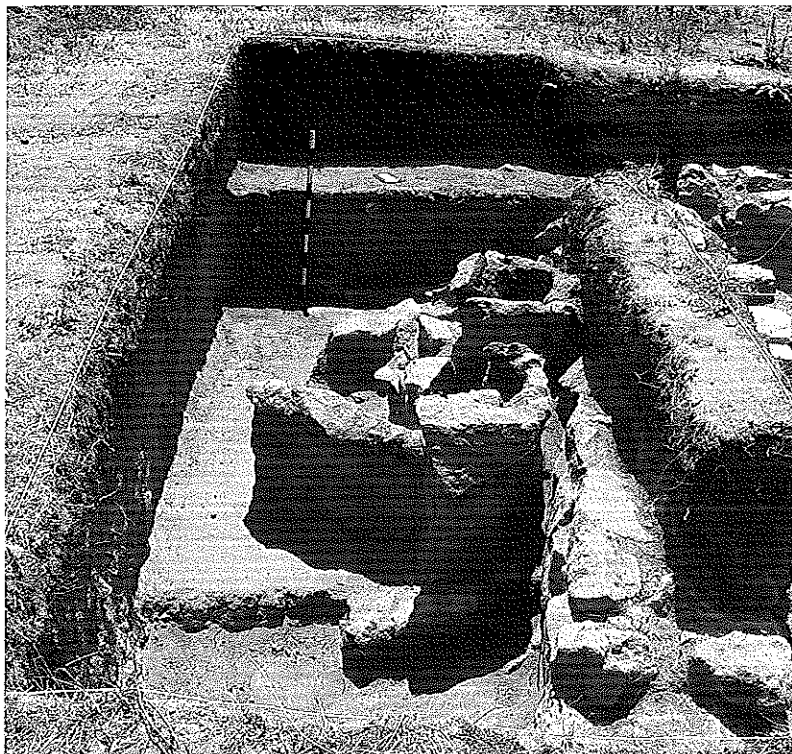


Fig. 6. Northern area of excavation, Trench 19, from north.

The unidentified feature appears in middle ground; Wall 5 is emerging from the baulk at the right.

formed by Walls 3 and 12. Walls 13 and 14 formed the southeast corner of an earlier room; the function of Wall 19 and its relationship to the earlier walls is unclear (Fig. 5).

Wall 3, although built of worked and unworked stones and mud mortar, displayed leveling courses of tiles and thin slabs of stone; it shared these characteristics with Walls 4, 10, and 12 and was bonded with them. In Trench 5, Wall 3 was preserved nearly 2 m in height, although the lower 0.65 m consisted of foundation. The trench for the foundation of the wall had been dug into prehistoric deposits.

Wall 5 defined the east side of Street A; it changed direction slightly and showed evidence of possible reconstruction, so that the south end of Street A was 3.75 m wide, but 10 m to the north it narrowed to ca. 2.80 m. Excavation below the surface of Street A was not carried out beside Wall 5. Investigation in the limited space of Trench 19 east of Wall 5, however, revealed two east-west walls, 16 and 17, which had once abutted the east face of Wall 5 but had later been dismantled to an elevation lower than the preserved height of Wall 5. The space between Walls 16 and 17 was then occupied by the feature described below, so that it remains unclear whether or not in an earlier phase Walls 6, 16, and 17 formed three sides of a room. The series of activities documented on the west side of Wall 5, together with the observations about its change of direction and possible rebuilding, suggests that Wall 5 pre-dated Wall 3 and was re-used in or rebuilt for the major phase of construction represented by the building to which Walls 3, 4, 10, and 12 belong.

Trench 19 provides a glimpse of possible industrial activities at the site. Two millstones and a belt buckle came to light, as did a complicated but unidentified feature located immediately east of Wall 5 (Fig. 6). At the top, six stones resting on earth formed a rough circle. The feature displayed two openings, on the northwest and southeast sides. On the north side, a single line of stones, together with the east face of Wall 5, appeared to form a channel, but 0.75 m from the feature, the line of stones turned to the east. At the south side, stones again form a channel going toward the east. The earth around this feature, as well as in the east end of Trenches 9 and 16, was soft, gray, and full of ash, but it contained no traces of actual burned material or any artifact that would help to identify the function of the feature.

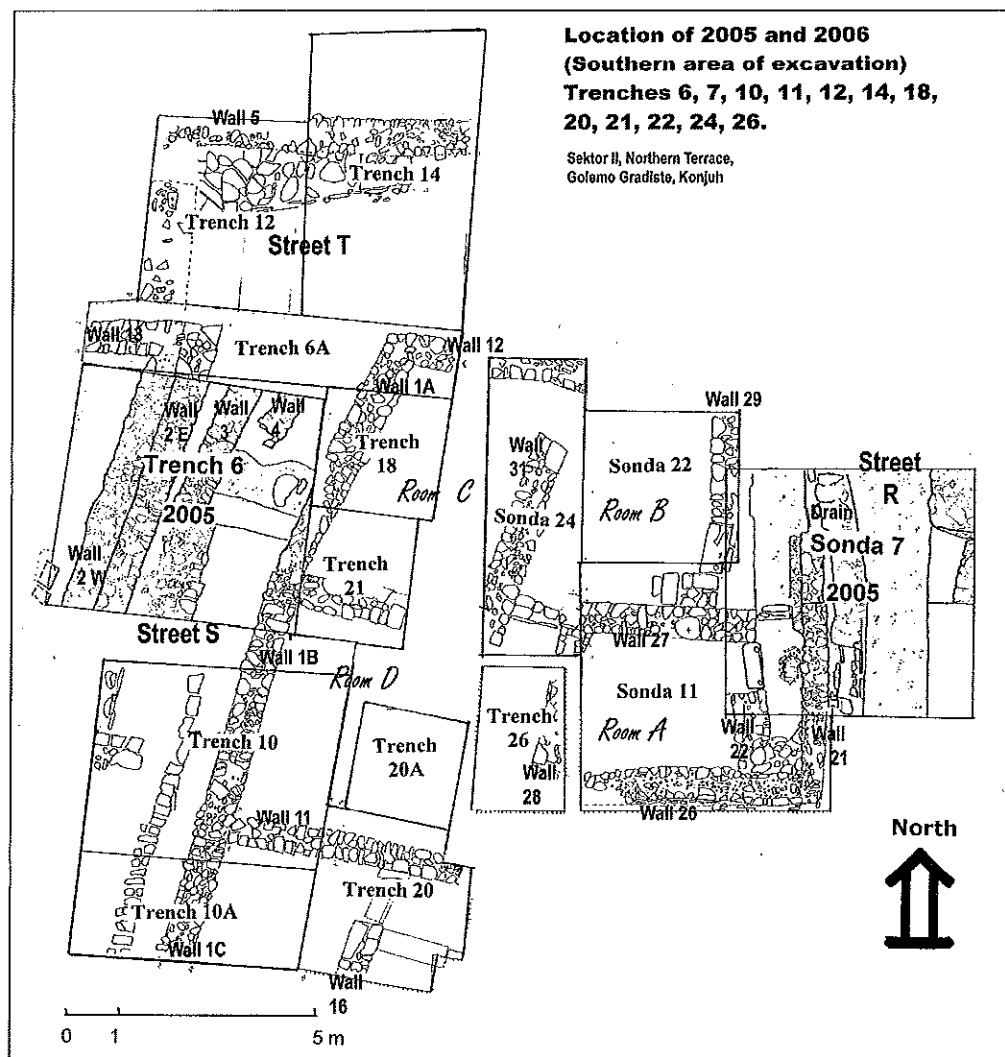


Fig. 7. Plan of trenches in southern area of excavation, Sektor II, 2005 and 2006.

Fig. 8.
Southern ar-
ca/residen-
tial complex,
general view,
from south.
Street S is at
the left.



Southern Area of Excavation: Residential Complex

The area of excavation at the southern end of the rectangle consisted of Trenches 6 and 7 in 2005; it was expanded in 2006 into Trenches 10, 11, 12, 14, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, and 26 (Figs. 7, 8).¹⁷ The area is located at the north side of a gentle south to north slope, beyond which the terrain drops steeply ca. 2 m to the next terrace to the north. Excavation here revealed the northern end of an irregularly-shaped city block bounded by streets on the east, north, and west sides.

At the east side of this area, Trench 7 revealed Street R, running north-south, ca. 3.50 m wide at the north, but narrowed to ca. 2 m. at the south by Wall 21 to the west. Hard-packed earth with small stones, a version of *kaldurma*, formed the surface of the street, except for the cover slabs of a drain that ran north-south beside Wall 21 and was probably part of the same drain found in Trench 3. The most puzzling aspect of this street was that it had been covered with a deposit of gravel, in some places mixed with sand and earth and pottery, in other places nearly sterile gravel; it appeared immediately beneath the surface deposit of grass roots and humus, both over the street and the space to the east of the street. Unlike other deposits of gravel and/or sand that probably resulted from flooding, this gravel layer, 0.50 m in depth above the street, may have been deliberately deposited.

Street T, investigated in Trenches 12 and 14, ran east-west and defined both the northern side of the building block¹⁸ and the northern edge of the terrace on which the residential complex stood (Fig. 9). A terrace wall, Wall 5, ran along the north edge of the street; it marked a drop in level between the stone pavement immediately to its south and floors of structures to the north.¹⁹

Street T existed in at least three phases. The first phase consisted of the stone slab paving visible immediately south of Wall 5; a hard-packed earthen surface was noted further south at a similar elevation.²⁰ The construction of Wall 5, which covered the northern edge of the pavement, initiated the second phase of the street; the north face of the retaining wall continued down below the level of the pavement to an unknown depth. In a third phase and at a higher elevation,²¹ Walls 12 and 13 formed the south side of Street T, to east and west of the intersection with Street S. Street T was apparently ca. 3.50 m in width.

Street S ran northeast-southwest along the west side of the block and thus not parallel with Street R. Although nearly 3 m in width at the north end where it met Street T, Street S narrowed to ca. 2.5 m at the south side of Trench 6; the west edge of the street was not clearly defined in Trench 10. At the north end (Trench 6) the street surface was of packed earth with a preserved patch of *kaldurma*; at the south (Trench 10) the surface consisted of a jumble of large stones,²² except for a strip clear of stones beside Wall 1.

Investigation of the stratigraphy of the terrace in Trench 6 provides some information about the history of Street S. Four walls came to light, all running north-south²³ and roughly parallel. The earliest was Wall 4, rather fragmentary, in the north end of the trench; the preserved top of the wall, at 351.14 MASL, was covered by a deposit (Deposit A) of earth with many small stones and two stone slabs that were probably part of a pavement at ca. 351.20. Above this floor accumulated the mixed earth and clay with sand of Deposit B, whose top formed another use surface. Both Wall

¹⁷ Mihail Stojanoski supervised Trenches 7, 11, 22, and 24; Carolyn S. Snively supervised Trenches 6, 10, 12, 14, 18, 20, 21, and 26.

¹⁸ As the plan indicates, the intersection of Streets T and R was not excavated.

¹⁹ Elevations on the stone pavement found along the north side of the street immediately next to Wall 5 were 351.28 and 351.40 MASL; the floors of the church found 10 m to the northwest lay at ca. 349.0.

²⁰ Traces of an earlier construction were found below the level of the street, but its nature was unclear.

²¹ There was evidence for intervening phases that could not be clearly defined; see the discussion of Deposit C in Trench 6.

²² Several of these very rough pavements have now been found on the terrace; we assume that they would have been covered with a layer of earth to prevent people and animals from breaking their legs.

²³ In fact, like most of the walls on the terrace, slightly NNE-SSW. Sterile soil had not been reached at 350.98 MASL, at a depth of ca. 2 m below the modern surface.



Fig. 9.
Southern area
of excavation,
Street T, from
east. Note
Walls 2 and
13 at the up-
per left, Walls
1 and 12 at the
lower left, and
Wall 5 along
the north edge
of the street
at the right.
Stone paving
is visible be-
side Wall 5.

1A and Wall 3 were built from this surface at ca. 351.50 MASL, although the two walls differed in construction. A ca. 0.30 m deep trench was dug into Deposit B for the foundation of Wall 1, and the wall displays careful construction. Wall 3, not so carefully built, was soon dismantled or destroyed; its upper surface was preserved to a height of 351.44 MASL at north, 351.78 at south. It is probable that Walls 1 and 3 formed the first phase of Street S.²⁴

Deposit C then filled the area west of Wall 1 and covered the remains of Wall 3; in Trench 6 this sandy deposit was ca. 0.90 m deep, i.e., ca. 351.50 to 352.40 MASL. Deposit C was also found in Trenches 6A, 12, and 14, where it filled the northern end of Street S and covered the pavement of Street T to the level of the preserved top of retaining Wall 5. This deposit consisted of many thin horizontal layers, some with more sand, others with more silt, and included a large quantity of animal bones and many small potsherds. It was originally interpreted as evidence for one large flood or other catastrophic event, but now seems more likely to represent a longer period of time with each thin layer as evidence for a major rain or annual flooding. It gradually raised the level of both Street S (whose western boundary at this time is unknown) and Street T.

A surface of dark earth and a few small stones (Deposit D) was created above Deposit C at 352.57 MASL. Wall 1A was reconstructed from this level; Wall 2 was a double wall, whose eastern part was built at approximately the same time as the reconstruction of Wall 1 and from the same level. These two walls, together with Walls 12 and 13, formed the final arrangement of Streets S and T.²⁵

Residence 1 is the building whose four rooms occupy the north end of the block formed by Streets R, T, and S.²⁶ Two major phases have been observed, with the floors of the first phase ap-

²⁴ It is not clear whether Walls 1, 3, and 12 (the wall that formed the southeast corner of the intersection of Streets S and T) were constructed at the same time as Wall 5.

²⁵ The very scanty remains of an apsidal structure, found in Trenches 6, 12, and 14, apparently still from the Late Antique period, covered the intersection of the earlier streets and must have belonged to a totally different urban or post-urban plan.

²⁶ Excavations further south in the block have revealed several one or two room houses (or workshops?) and thus raised questions whether Rooms A, B, C, and D all belonged to one residence. While Room A may have been accessible only from the street, Room B certainly communicated with both Rooms C and D.

Fig. 10.
Southern ar-
ea/residential
complex, from
north; Room A
is in the back-
ground, the
paved floor
of Room B in
foreground.
The entrance
corridor is vis-
ible in upper
left, and a bit
of Room D in
upper right.



pearing at ca. 351.70 MASL and those of the second phase at ca. 352.10, although a number of questions remain.

Room A, excavated mostly in Trench 11, was entered indirectly from Street R to the east. A narrow corridor ran north-south in front of the threshold block of the doorway into the east side of Room A; it continued south beyond the doorway, and it displayed a small stone and mortar base of some feature opposite the doorway. At a later time, probably contemporary with the second phase of the residence, Wall 21 and the corridor were extended to the north, approximately even with the north side of the doorway into Room B.²⁷

Within Room A, the stratigraphy was straightforward, except for the question of the phase 2 floor. Under the surface deposit, heavy stone debris appeared, much of it from the south wall, Wall 26, of the room; below the stone debris was a layer of roof tiles. Beneath them, however, was a mixed deposit of debris in earth, which continued down to the packed earthen floor of phase 1 at ca. 351.70 MASL. Two pithoi were completely buried in the floor, and a column fragment stood next to the north wall, Wall 27 (Fig. 10).

This wall divided Room A from Room B (Trenches 11 and 22) to the north, but did not become visible until after the removal of the layer of roof tiles, so that the question of communication between the rooms in phase 2 remains open. Room B, in addition to its doorway from the corridor to the east, displayed a floor paved with slabs and smaller pieces of stone, a doorway to Room D to the south, access to Room C at its northwest corner, both Walls 30 and 31 at the west side, and the apparent remains of a stairs leading along its south side. The doorway in the east wall and the paved floor clearly belong to the second phase of the residence, while some of the other features may be remnants of the earlier phase.

²⁷ M. Stojanoski points out that similar entrance corridors have been found in houses at other sites, e.g., in Buildings 1 and 5 of the Late Antique residential complex above the Theater at Herakleja Lynkestis. See Janakievski T., 2001, 46 and 55.



Fig. 11.
Southern area, south side of residential complex, from east. Wall 1 and Street S are in background, Wall 11 runs at right.

Rooms C and D were excavated only in part. The stratigraphy was similar to that of Room A. Identifiable fragments of mud bricks were found in Room D and suggested that the upper part of the walls of the first phase had been built with mud bricks. A pithos stood on the first phase floor in the northwest corner of Room D.

Wall 11, running east-west at the south side of Room D, appeared to mark the southern limit of Residence 1 (Fig. 11). Limited excavation on the south side of Wall 11 revealed a hall or vestibule at the east side; one threshold block led into an unexcavated room to the south, while a second threshold block provided access to a room to the west. In this ca. 2 x 10 m space south of Wall 11 (Trenches 10A and 20), on or near the floor, were found three pithoi (one intact, two broken), two column fragments, one small colonnette, a stone slab with molded edges, a polished conglomerate slab, a ceramic pipe set vertically in the floor next to Wall 16, the base and capital of a mullion column, iron nails and clamps, an arrowhead, a clay spool (?), and three carved bone objects.

The stratigraphy in this area was as follows: 1) stone debris with many large cut blocks, 2) roof tiles in soft earth, and 3) a deposit of soft earth with many finds above the floors. Our interpretation of the space south of Wall 11 in 2006 was that it was part of a second residence and one that had neither been looted before its destruction nor its debris dug through later in search of usable objects or construction material. The situation was in distinct contrast to that in Residence 1, which appeared to have been abandoned and/or looted before destruction and to have suffered disturbances even later. The ceramic material from the entire southern area of excavation was primarily domestic in nature and dated 5th-6th centuries.

Preliminary conclusions

No evidence has appeared for the existence of a Roman, i.e., earlier than 4th or 5th century, town on the northern terrace. The stratigraphy suggests prehistoric occupation followed by a Late Antique settlement, with only scant evidence for activity on the terrace during the intervening centuries

or millennia. This conclusion is not surprising; the disadvantages of a cold northern terrace would have been outweighed by the defensive advantages of the acropolis and the river only in a time of crisis, e.g., in Late Antiquity.

The discovery of burials in Trench 3 in 2004 raised the possibility that the area of investigation might lie on the periphery of the Late Antique settlement. The multiple phases of construction encountered in all trenches where excavation continued below the structures of the major phase do not confirm the hypothesis that the area is on the outskirts of town. Only additional excavation will demonstrate how far up the lower slope of the acropolis occupation extended.

Perhaps the most surprising discovery was the series of constructions that must have existed within a period of no more than 150 years. As noted in earlier publications, the ceramic evidence shows that the town on the northern terrace was in existence already by the second half of the 5th century and continued at least into the third quarter of the 6th century; the fortress of the acropolis was created during the second quarter of the 6th century.²⁸ The four or five phases of construction observed on the terrace must be fitted into this chronological framework. Our hypothesis at present is that the major phase of construction, represented by the building on the west side of Street A in the northern area of excavation and by Residence 1 and associated structures to its south, belongs to the first half of the 6th century and may be contemporary with the creation of the fortress on the acropolis in the second quarter of the 6th century.

The scanty foundations of buildings, discovered just below the modern surface in both northern and southern areas of excavation, indicate that even the final phases of Late Antique construction have been destroyed by erosion and/or human activities;²⁹ scattered buildings may have shared the terrace with small cemeteries and shepherds until the end of the 6th century or the early 7th - or even later.

The building block along the west side of Street A in the northern area of excavation shows a more regular plan than the residential complex in the southern area. In the northern block walls meet at right angles, and the rooms -even though not completely excavated- are larger in dimension. The rooms in the southern residential block are not strictly rectangular and the walls often do not form regular corners. The impression given is that rooms were added haphazardly to the complex with little concern for its overall layout. Investigation is at too early a stage to say whether buildings differed in plan and/or in function between the more central part of the site and the area near the foot of the acropolis.

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²⁸ Because of the paucity of numismatic finds, Virginia Anderson-Stojanović has provided most of the dates for the site, based on her analysis of the ceramic material.

²⁹ Generations of local villagers used the site as a quarry for building material in general and for bricks and tiles specifically.

КАРОЛИН ШНАЈВЛИ

Гетисбург Колеџ

ГОЛЕМО ГРАДИШТЕ КАЈ КОЊУХ, ИСКОПУВАЊА 2005 И 2006: СЕВЕРНА ТЕРАСА

р е з и м е

Локалитетот Големо Градиште на Крива Река кај селото Коњух е непознат доцноантички град на 40 км источно од Скопје. Локалитетот административно припаѓа на Кратово, додека во антиката се наоѓал во близина на југоисточната граница на провинцијата Дарданија. Во рамките на интернационалниот проект „Археолошки истражувања на Коњух“, финансиран од Гетисбург колеџ од Гетисбург, Пенсилванија и Музејот на Македонија од Скопје, Република Македонија, од 2000 до 2004 година беа изведени истражувања на акрополата. Во 2005 г. започнаа ископувања и во долниот дел на Северната тераса, наречена Сектор II, кои продолжија и во 2006 година.

Истражувањата на Северната тераса, која што се наоѓа помеѓу северниот дел на акрополата и Крива Река, беа изведени по следниот редослед: 1) проучување на стратиграфијата на терасата; 2) одредување на фортификацијата на акрополата од Јустинијаново време; 3) потврдување или негирање на претпоставката дека римска населба некогаш постоеа на терасата; 4) откривање на базиликата која ја спомнуваат Радојчиќ и Микулчиќ во центарот на долниот град. Резултатите од четирите контролни сонди, истражени на терасата во периодот меѓу 2001 и 2004, укажуваат на две фази на живеење, едната во текот на 4-от век од н.е. и другата во 5-6 век од н.е. Најголемо изненадување претставуваше откривањето на малата некропола.

Голем дел од ископувањата во 2005 и 2006 година се одвиваа на северниот и јужниот крај на простор во форма на правоаголник со димензии 30 x 60 м, поставен на средината меѓу источната и западната граница на Северната тераса, но лоциран поблиску до акрополата отколку до Крива Река. Во северниот дел, беше пронајдена улица со правец на протегање север - југ (Улица А), која ја дефинираше аголот на една градба со најмалку три големи простории. На источната страна од Улицата А, беше пронајдена конструкција која можеби претставува индустриска инсталација. Во јужниот дел на истражуваниот простор, улиците R, T и S ја дефинираат источната, западната и северната граница на урбаниот, неправилно формиран резиденцијален дел. Резиденцијата на северниот крај има четири простории, и во неа можат да се забележат две фази. Кон југ, беше откриен претпоставен дел од втора резиденција. Откриениот материјал укажуваше на затворен интактен слој: питоси, фрагменти од столбови, камена плоча со профилирани агли, една полирана камена плоча, база од капител, железни шајки и кламфи, стрелка и три гравирани коскени предмети.

Според керамичните наоди, населбата во овој дел од градот почнала да живее во втората половина на 5-от век од н.е. и продолжила барем до третата четвртина на 6-от век од н.е. Остатоките од темелите на градбите, сугерираат дека и најдоцните доцноантички градби се распаѓаат со ерозија или некоја друга активност на терасата. Јасно е дека фортификацијата била изградена на веќе постоечки град, кој веројатно бил значително реизграден во првата половина на 6-ти век од н.е. Но нема никакви траги од римски град или од базиликата која што претходните истражувачи ја спомнуваат.

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