

By Mary M. Voigt

C at E Gordion L THE LATE T HELLENISTIC S SETTLEMENT

In 278 B.C., a group of Celtic immigrants crossed from the Balkans into Anatolia, or present-day Turkey. The long journey to the Bosphorus from their European homeland had taken these wandering Celts, known as Galatians, through Hellenized states, where they settled temporarily as allies. The culture they established in Anatolia may have reflected Greek elements from that sojourn, influences from the indigenous peoples they encountered, and remnants of their own European customs and traditions. Today, archaeologists examining the site of the Galatian settlement at Gordion are piecing together the nature of Celtic culture in Anatolia.

Gordion is unique within central Anatolia because of the archaeological information that it can provide for the Hellenistic period, the late fourth through second centuries B.C. While working at the site, Rodney Young, director of the University Museum's Gordion Project from 1950-1973, found a well-preserved Hellenistic level. Houses discovered there showed evidence of some fire damage and large quantities of pottery and other artifacts left on the floors. Young nicknamed this discovery the "Deserted Village." Dated to the late third century B.C., its archaeological remains have been generally linked to a dramatic event in Gordion history: In 189 B.C., a Roman army led by Consul Manlius Vulso looted the city. The historian Livy — drawing on a contemporary account by Polybios that is preserved only as a summary — describes Vulso's campaign against the Galatians. When the Romans arrived at Gordion, they found that its inhabitants had fled, taking refuge in a mountain stronghold called Mount Olympus. This strategy failed when the Romans defeated and slaughtered the refugees, who scholars agree were members of the Galatian tribe known as the Tolistobogii.

IN SEARCH OF THE CELTS OF ANATOLIA

Although the Greeks and Romans saw the Galatians as barbarians who raided to acquire portable wealth, modern scholarship interprets their journey as a quest for something quite different — good agricultural land. They entered Anatolia as allies of King Nichomedes of Bithynia (located just east of the Bosphorus), who offered them pay, booty, and land in what is now north central Turkey.

Before the 1988 excavations, Gordion scholars had thought that the site was abandoned between the destruction of 189 B.C. and the late first century B.C., when the Romans resettled it. But research at Gordion since 1988 has provided new information on the timing and nature of the Galatian immigration into the city. Ongoing work is yielding a more detailed picture of material culture, both before and after the time the Celts arrived, and exploring previously neglected areas of the site such as the western Citadel and



Photograph of Gordion showing the Citadel Mound and Lower Town taken in 1989 by William and Eleanor Myers. Rodney Young's excavations on the eastern half of the Citadel covered an area of over two hectares and exposed a burned Phrygian palace dated ca. 800 B.C. The area to the south, or Lower Town, was still walled during the Galatian occupation.

J. WILSON AND ELEANOR EMLEN MYERS



BOTTOM LEFT: Map of the Citadel Mound showing excavated areas. TOP LEFT: View of a Galatian house adjacent to Young's Main Excavation Area. The wall foundation has slots for vertical wooden posts on its exterior or courtyard face, which would have supported an upper wall made of organic materials (branches, reeds) covered with plaster. A large mortar that was presumably used for grinding grain is just inside the doorway. RIGHT: Clay loomweights from the house shown to the left, being excavated by Julide Aker and Lupe Gonzalez. Warp threads suspended from a horizontal beam were kept in place by the weights during weaving.

the Lower Town. Analysis of this material has just begun, so this article provides a preliminary description of a newly defined Hellenistic sequence and settlement and some of its implications for our understanding of the Celts of Anatolia.

In 1988–89 Gordion excavators defined the Yassihoyuk Stratigraphic Sequence, a closely controlled series of occupation levels for the Citadel Mound that extended from the modern surface down to the Bronze Age. Three trenches were placed along the edge of the large area cleared by Young on the eastern half of the Citadel. We quickly encountered a deposit typical of the Deserted Village. On house floors and courtyard surfaces were gray and buff-colored ceramic jars and cookpots, a cluster of small containers for oils and cosmetics, a pile of clay loomweights, Macedonian and Seleucid coins of the late fourth and early third centuries, and shells from the Mediterranean. In one corner of the room was a large ceramic tray covered with bright blue pigment, a color favored by Celtic warriors and apparently by Celtic housewives as well.

Some aspects of the houses were surprising, however. There was no evidence for the use of mudbrick, which Gordion scholar Frederick Winter had considered characteristic of the Hellenistic buildings excavated by Young. Instead, stone foundations had vertical slots for posts to support a superstructure that was made of organic materials plastered with mud (which had decayed into a pink soil flecked with white plant remains). Moreover, one of the paving stones in a courtyard proved to be the top of a carved stone slab or stela that had been broken up to a usable size and set with its sculpted side down. Such stelae were



MAP: GORDION PROJECT DRAWING; PHOTOGRAPHS: LAURA FOOS



used as grave markers or public monuments in the Greek and Hellenized world, and its reuse indicates a lack of respect for the earlier people of Gordion by the Galatian newcomers.

Chronological evidence was disconcerting in that it did not fit very well with the accepted picture of a late-third-century occupation terminating in 189 B.C. A complete lamp found in the newly excavated area of the Deserted Village dated to the early part of the Hellenistic period, the late fourth and early third century B.C. This could perhaps be explained as Galatian booty, collected along with Balkan coins of similar date that were abundant in the Deserted Village, but unlike coins, household items in daily use do not normally survive for a century or more. Even more startling was evidence for walls rebuilt above the Deserted Village. This evidence all belies the pre-1988 theory that the site was abandoned between 189 B.C. and the Roman resettlement of the late first century B.C.

Beneath the Deserted Village floors, resting immediately above deposits that were securely dated to the Late Phrygian, or Achaemenid, period (ca. 540–330 B.C.), was an outside surface covered with pits and postholes that seemed to represent the earliest Galatian occupation. Scattered across this outside work area were many basin-shaped hearths of a type not found in earlier levels, and one of these hearths was filled with burned horse bones. In a paved area, plain flat stones surrounded a larger rectangular block with a roughly cut hole in its center. When the sides of this block were exposed, we found that it was sculpted with two lions and was a statue base of a type commonly used to support images of the gods in the Greek world, another example of reuse reflecting a change in values.

Recent excavation in the northwest zone of the Citadel Mound has documented a discontinuity in architecture between the early Hellenistic and Galatian settlements. Among the things that changed were construction techniques, house plans, and orientation of the walls. Changes in the form of hearths and ovens, as well as in the tools used to process food and produce cloth, suggest a profound difference in the



LEFT: View of Northwest Quadrant with major buildings dated to the initial Galatian occupation in the mid-third century B.C. RIGHT: Statue base with lions reused as paving in the earliest phase of the Galatian occupation. The lions had a long history, and were cut down and recarved so that the current head is located in what had been the lion's chest. The opening in which a statue was once set has also been crudely reworked.

activities carried out by women within Early and Late Hellenistic households. On this basis we can argue that the immigrants included not only mercenaries, but also their families.

As suggested by Young's use of the word "village" to describe Galatian Gordion, his excavation found little evidence of wealthy or powerful members of the community. This gap in our knowledge has been closed by our work in the northwest zone, which uncovered a large building built of stone blocks, or ashlar, with a tile roof. Adjacent to this monumental structure, which may have had a political and/or religious function, was a workshop used by potters and figurine makers and an open area used by metalworkers. During the first phase of the Galatian occupation this complex was separated from the rest of the settlement by a 2-meter-thick wall. The elite complex provides physical evidence for Livy's description of the site as a trading or market center and perhaps accounts for his use of the term *oppidum*, or "walled settlement," to describe Gordion.

There is now convincing evidence from two distant parts of the settlement for a migration during the Hellenistic period at Gordion. That at least some of these immigrants were European Celts is suggested by historical sources, by a Celtic name (Kant[x]uix) on an inscription from Young's

LEFT: MARY VOIGT; RIGHT: LAURA FOOS



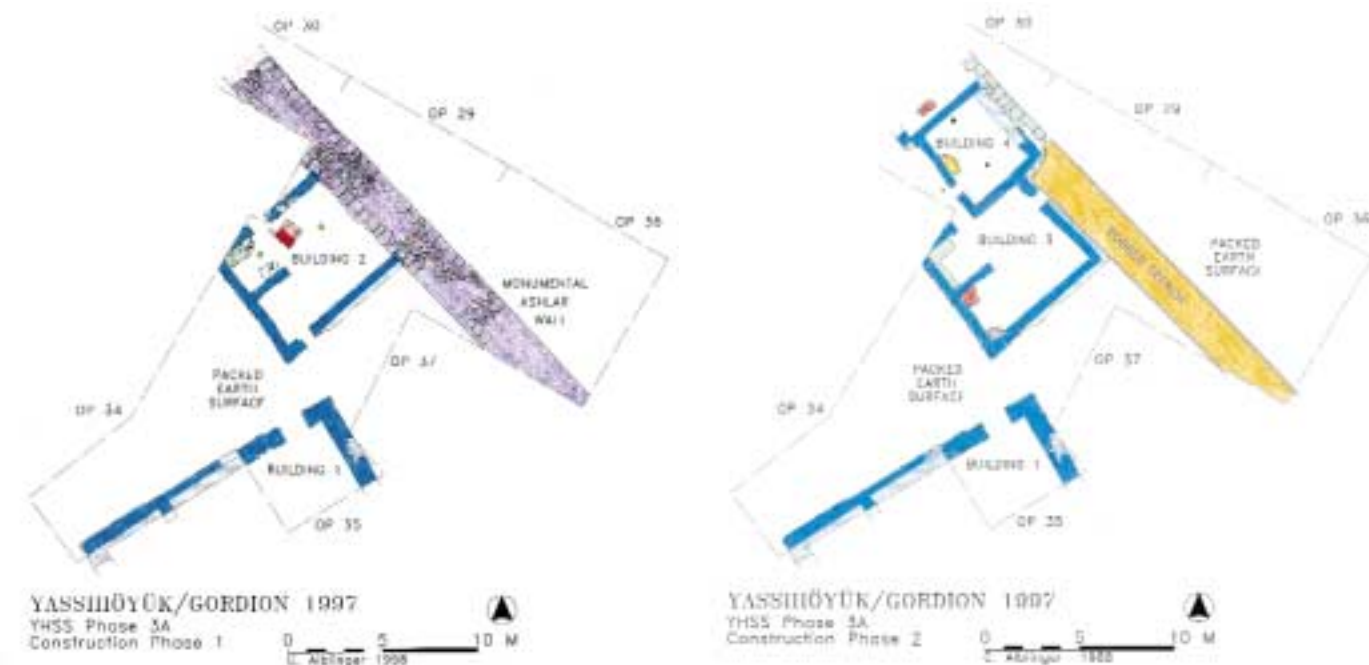
TOP: Tableware found on a courtyard surface outside the potter's workshop (Building 2). Light-colored pottery decorated with red or brown bands is common in this part of the site. BOTTOM: Plans of the initial Galatian occupation in the Northwest Zone showing monumental building, workshop, and enclosure wall

excavation, and by new finds. In a recent article in *Archaeology* magazine, which I wrote with Jeremiah Dandoy and Page Selinsky, we described deposits of human and animal bone in Gordion's Lower Town. This find provides evidence for rituals also practiced by European Celts: headhunting, caching of mixed human and animal bone, and human sacrifice by hanging or garrotting.

of Celtic design. The ornament is made of iron wire and has not yet been fully conserved and restored, but the identification made by Celtic scholar Gareth Darbyshire seems certain.

THE GALATIANS IN A BROADER CULTURAL CONTEXT

The problems involved in relying on texts written about nonliterate societies by dominant literate societies have been



PHOTOGRAPH: MARY VOIGT; MAPS: GORDION PROJECT DRAWINGS

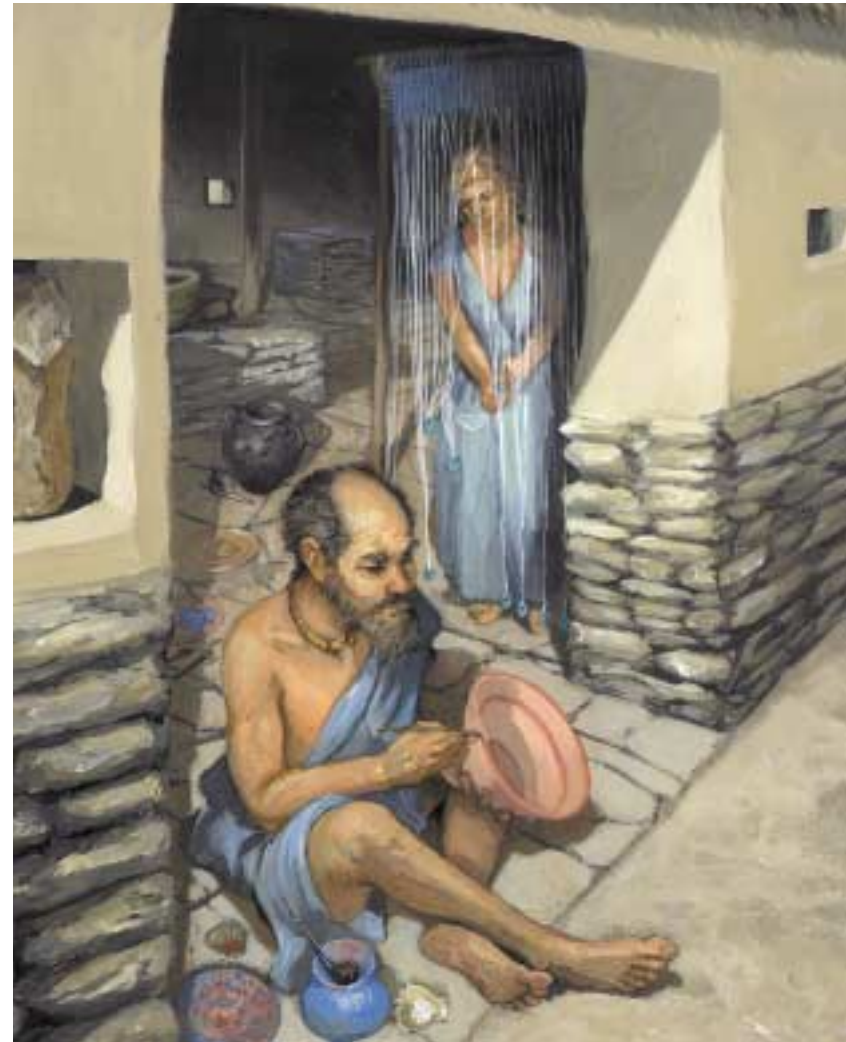
discussed for decades by archaeologists studying Celtic societies in Europe. Historians and art historians as well as archaeologists have stressed the necessity of looking at material culture and the archaeological record in conjunction with, and as a balance to, texts. Over the past decade a similar process has occurred with respect to the Anatolian Celts or Galatians, with new syntheses of the evidence developed by scholars such as Steven Mitchell, Karl Stroebel, Gareth Darbyshire, and Levent Vardar. But their work has been hampered by the small available sample of archaeological data.

Significant differences in the historical context of the Celts in Europe and Anatolia change the nature of the questions that must be asked and the archaeological data needed to provide answers. First, the Galatians represent immigrants rather than a people indigenous to Anatolia. A fully documented sequence of occupation over large areas of the settlement is needed in order to document patterns of continuity and change and relate them to processes such as the adaptation of immigrant farmers and herders to a new environment, or the use of material culture to symbolize a Celtic identity distinct from that of the indigenous population. Differences in the form and contents of houses might be a clue to the number of immigrants. For example, if only a few parts of the settlement show the kinds of changes that we observed, one might conclude that the only resident Galatians were a ruling military elite and their entourage.

On the other hand, if large areas of the Deserted Village show new forms of architecture and household contents, we could conclude that a relatively large number of immigrants displaced the indigenous Phrygian residents.

Second, in Anatolia it was the Celts who dominated, and the development of a specifically “Galatian” identity would have been a response to groups they had conquered rather than to incursions by larger and stronger polities (such as Rome). Did the newly arrived Celtic groups symbolize their ethnicity by retaining traditions from their European homeland, or did they adopt some of the trappings of the Hellenized kingdoms they encountered during their long journey through the Balkans and their sojourns as allies and soldiers in small Hellenistic states?

Third, in Europe, archaeologists and ethnohistorians traditionally have examined the formation of tribes and the development of urbanism as a result of pressure from states in adjacent



Reconstruction of the Northwest Zone potter's workshop by Michael Rothman. Small pots full of paint and pigments were found on the floor of the building near the doorway, as was a pile of loomweights.

regions. The Galatians arrived in Anatolia with a tribal form of political organization that allowed for effective military action. Boundaries between tribal groups have also been important evidence for archaeologists, as discussed by Peter Wells in *Beyond Celts, Germans and Scythians*. Texts tell us that there were three tribes in Anatolia (the Tolistibogii, Trocmi, and Tectosages). Scholars have suggested the location of the territories controlled by these groups, but few sites have been systematically investigated, and defining boundaries or border zones based on archaeological remains is impossible at present. A tightly controlled archaeological sequence with distinctive ceramic types securely dated would help us look at changes in the countryside. Was the distribution of small settlements across the landscape the same or different after Galatians took control of central places? Were the fortresses recently identified by surface surveys built to enforce control of strategically important

MICHAEL ROTHMAN



FOR FURTHER READING

Cunliffe, Barry. *The Ancient Celts*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Dandoy, Jeremiah R., Page Selinsky, and Mary M. Voigt. “Celtic Sacrifice.” *Archaeology* Jan–Feb (2002): 44–49.

Darbyshire, Gareth, Stephen Mitchell, and Levent Vardar. “The Galatian Settlement in Asia Minor.” *Anatolian Studies* 20 (2000): 75–97.

DeVries, Keith. “The Gordion Excavation Seasons of 1969–1973 and Subsequent Research.” *American Journal of Archaeology* 94 (1990): 371–406.

Freeman, Philip. *The Galatian Language: a Comprehensive Survey of the Language of the Ancient Celts in Greco-Roman Asia Minor*. Ancient Near Eastern Texts and Studies Vol. 13. New York and Queenstown, Ontario: The Edwin Mellen Press, Ltd., 2001.

Hannestad, Lise. “Greeks and Celts: The Creation of a Myth.” In *Centre and Periphery in the Hellenistic World*, edited by Per Bilde, et al. Studies in Hellenistic Civilization 4. Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 1993.

Henrickson, Robert C. and M. James Blackman. “Hellenistic Production of Terracotta Roof Tiles among the Ceramic Industries at Gordion.” *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 18 (1999): 307–326.

Mitchell, Stephen. *Anatolia. Land, Men and Gods in Asia Minor I. The Celts and the Impact of Roman Rule*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Pauli, Ludwig. “Early Celtic Society: Two Centuries of Wealth and Turmoil in Central Europe.” In *Settlement and Society: Aspects of West European Prehistory in the First Millennium B.C.*, edited by T.C. Champion and J.V.S. Megaw. Cambridge: Leicester University Press, 1985.

Stroebel, Karl. “State Formation by the Galatians of Asia Minor. Politico-Historical and Cultural Processes in Hellenistic Central Anatolia.” *Anatolica* 28 (2002): 1–46.


Voigt, Mary M. “Excavations at Gordion 1988–89: The Yassihoyuk Stratigraphic Sequence.” In *Anatolian Iron Ages 3*. British Institute of Archaeology in Ankara Monograph 16. D. French and A. Çilingiroğlu, eds. Ankara, Turkey: British Institute of Archaeology, 1994.

Wells, Peter. *Beyond Celts, Germans and Scythians*. Bath: Gerald Duckworth and Co. Ltd., 2001.

Winter, Frederick A. “Phrygian Gordion in the Hellenistic Period.” *Source*: 7 (3–4.1988): 60–71.

NAOMI F. MILLER

places? If so, when did this form of settlement develop?

We have addressed here only one of the major problems set out above: documenting the migration of Celts to Gordion by establishing distinctive patterns of material culture. We can also draw other preliminary conclusions. Although the Galatians were strongly Hellenized, they retained their native language and practiced rituals carried with them from their European homeland. The rulers were prosperous and ambitious, erecting public buildings and supporting specialized craftsmen in a prosperous town. This sketch can be made into a more richly shaded image of the settlement and the landscape around it by analyzing the vast amount of archaeological data accumulated from the more than 2.5 hectares excavated since 1950. It is a daunting but enticing research problem. 

Mary M. Voigt is Chancellor Professor of anthropology at the College of William and Mary and a research associate in the Near Eastern Section of the University of Pennsylvania Museum. She received her B.A. in history and English from Marquette University and her Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania. She has taught at Vanderbilt University, Bryn Mawr College, and the University of Pennsylvania, and she is a former editor of Expedition magazine. She



Mary Voigt in Kermanshah bazaar, Iran.

has conducted fieldwork in Iran and Turkey and has been director of excavation and survey for the Gordion Project since 1988.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Excavation at Gordion since 1988 has been sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania Museum, the Royal Ontario Museum, and the College of William and Mary, all of which provided funds, personnel, and other support for the project. Major funding was also provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Geographic Society, the Kress Foundation, the Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada, and the Joan and Carl Tandberg Memorial Fund, Michael DeLuca, and other private donors. Field and artifact conservation was contributed by the Gordion conservation team directed by Jessica Johnson, part of the larger site conservation effort led by Gordion Project Director G. Kenneth Sams. I thank them all, along with the large, lively, talented, and hard-working Gordion excavation staff. None of the recent work at Gordion could have been accomplished without the support of two directors of the Museum, Robert H. Dyson and Jeremy A. Sabloff.