

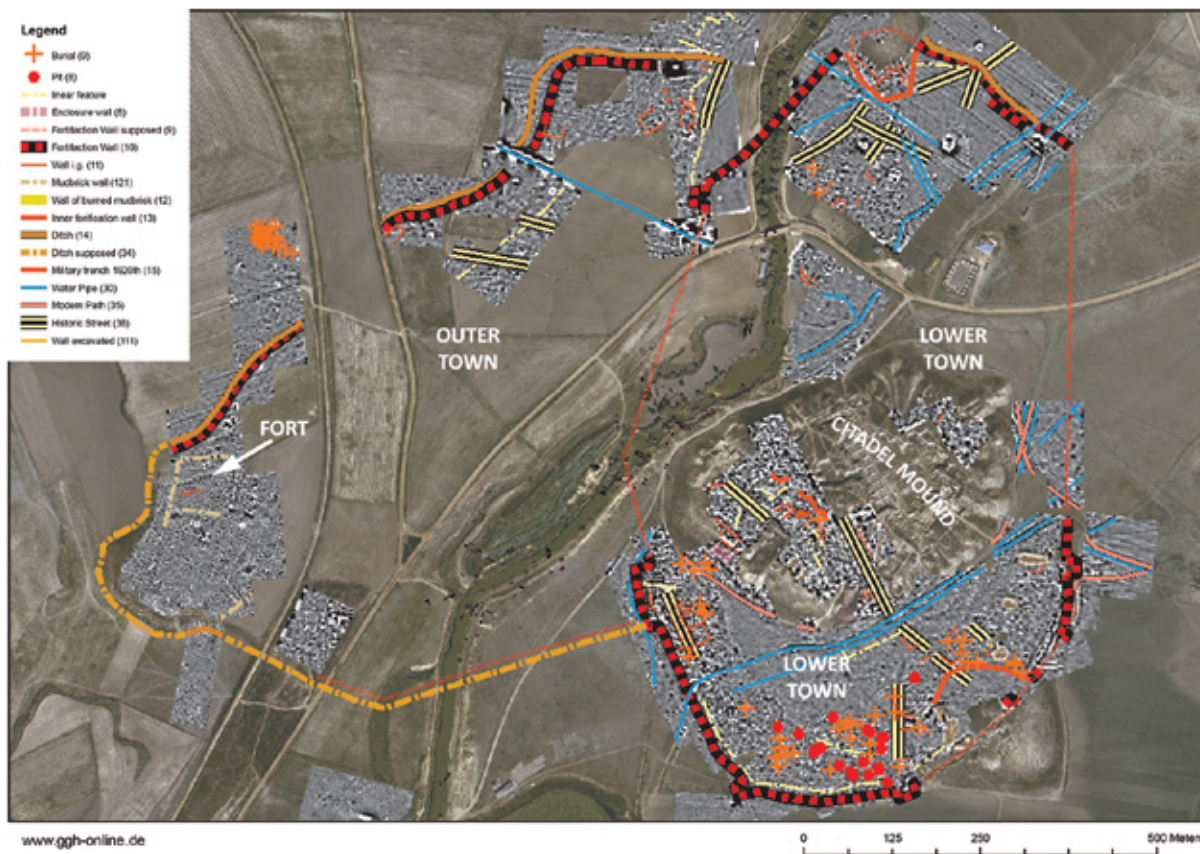
THE NEXT DECADE at Gordion

BY C. BRIAN ROSE



Given the fact that fieldwork at Gordion has been ongoing for over six decades, it may seem surprising that so much excavation and conservation remains to be done, but the ancient settlement was enormous, encompassing over 250 acres, and the majority of the monumental burial mounds that surrounded it remain to be explored. Consequently, as the project looks toward the next decade, there are several key initiatives that figure prominently in our agenda.

The first involves Gordion's city plan. We hope to determine the ancient road system as a way of understanding the physical links among the administrative, industrial, and residential districts. This involves extensive use of remote sensing, which allows us to detect subsurface features such as walls and streets without excavation. Although we employ a number of remote sensing techniques, the most effective method



The fortifications and settlement districts of Gordion detected through remote sensing. *Plan by GGH.*

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for us has been magnetic prospection, which detects magnetic anomalies (such as mudbrick or stone) up to a depth of nearly three meters. We are in the process of examining the outer fortifications of the two residential districts, the “Lower” and “Outer” Towns, each of which was considerably larger than we suspected, and at least three more years of such work will be necessary before we complete our investigations. Remote sensing cannot answer all of an archaeologist’s questions, especially when we are dealing with a complex series of layered settlements such as one finds at Gordion.

There are times when only excavation can clarify the construction history of a building or district, and this is the case with the monumental gateway on the southern side of Gordion’s Citadel, which we assume will lead to a monumental road that runs through the center of the mound. Two large trenches positioned over the presumed gateway and above the street’s projected northern extension will occupy us for the next three years, and will also supply a valuable cross-section of most of the settlements contained within the Citadel Mound.

Conservation is vital and the most time-consuming of

In 2015, the international team at Gordion included students and senior scholars from Turkey, the United States, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, England, Romania, Russia, and Iraq. *Photograph by Gebhard Bieg.*

our current operations; this is the case at most Old World sites that have been excavated for a long period of time. Since archaeologists in earlier days seldom stabilized the walls, streets, and buildings they discovered, many of them are now in danger of collapse and require emergency intervention. This is the situation with the Early Phrygian Citadel Gate, the Terrace Building or industrial quarter, and the large megarons that were intended for the elite. The conservation of all of these structures will require at least another decade, as will the maintenance of the buildings uncovered during the new excavations.

The Gordion staff is in residence at the site for only two months each year, which means that we need to rely heavily on the local community to protect and promote the surviving ancient remains. Gordion’s Deputy Director, Ayşe Gürsan-Salzmänn, has therefore pioneered a new program to educate the children of the region in ancient history and cultural heritage protection. Archaeological teams typically neglected this type of community outreach program in earlier days, but we need to incorporate it into our strategic plans to ensure that our programs to preserve the past will survive well into the future. ●