

A New Nabataean Tomb At Sadagah

By

HANAN KURDI

In 1971 a Nabataean tomb was discovered at Sadaqah, about 26 Kms. South-east of Petra in southern Jordan. (Pl. IV, Fig. 1) A modern settlement has been established upon the ruins of the ancient city. In his survey Glueck (1) refers to the site as a large ruined Roman City by the side of Trajan's road which led from Amman in the north to Aqaba on the Red Sea. (2) Recent sherding of the tell revealed not only Roman, Byzantine, and Medieval Arabic occupation, but also indicated Nabatean occupation of the site. Chipped flint implements were also found in various parts of the tell (3)

In October 1971 the tomb was cleared by the Department of Antiquities under the supervision of Mr. Mahmoud Rousan, the local Inspector of Antiquities. (4)

Description and Plan of the Tomb (Pl. IV ; 2, 3)

The tomb is located on top of the tell, overlooking the modern village to the west. There is no staircase of any kind leading to the shaft which is covered with big slabs of limestone, each measuring

150-170 cms. long, 40 cms. wide, and 25-30 cms. thick.

The shaft is rectangular and measures 450 cms. in length, 100 cms. in width, and 210 cms. in height. The side walls of the tomb are composed of loculi arranged in four tiers in each side. In each tier there are six loculi, each measuring 175-190 cms. long, 45-47 cms. wide, and 40-45 cms. high. The loculi are separated laterally and the tiers horizontally by thin walls of limestone 20 cms. thick, 65-70 cms. long (Pl. 1).

Parallels

Some Nabataean tombs of varying types have been discovered in eastern Jordan at Petra (5), Amman (6), Umm el Jemal (7), and Dhat Râs (8). The nearest example in eastern Jordan to this new discovery at Sadaqah is that in Umm el Jemal, dated in the first century A.D.

This tomb lies to the southeast of the ruined city of Umm el Jemal and is almost entirely below the surface. The plan of the interior consists of a chamber divided by

- 1) AASOR XV (1934-1935), p. 71.
- 2) Other references to the site are found in : R.E. Brünnow and A.V. Domszewski, *Die Provincia Arabia I B* (Strassburg, 1909), p. 468; A. Musil *Arabia Petraea II, Edom*, p. 232; *Z D P V LVIII* (1935), pp. 1-78.
- 3) Sherding of the site took place in January 1973 by the Registration Center of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan.
- 4) A report by Mr. Rousan is on file in the Department of Antiquities.
- 5) G. and A. Horsefield, «Sela-Petra, The Rock of Edom and Nabatene», *QDAP VIII* (1938), p. 87-115; M.A. Murray and J.C. Ellis, *A Street in Petra* (London, 1940), p. 1-37.
- 6) G. Lankester Harding, «A Nabataean Tomb at Amman», *QDAP XII* (1946), p. 58-62.
- 7) H.C. Butler, *Umm Idj-Djimal, Ancient Architecture in Syria*, Div. II, Sec. A, Part 3 (1913), pp. 206-207.
- 8) Fawzi Zayadine, *Une Tombe Nabateenne Près de Dhat-Râs*, *Syria XLVII* (1970), p. 117-35.

three transverse arches into four unequal bays. The side walls of the bays are composed of the ends of loculi arranged in three tiers in the same pattern as that found in the tomb of Sadaqah.

Clearance of the Tomb.

The clearing operation of the tomb consisted of the removal of the debris which had collected in the shaft and loculi. The broken condition of some of the finds and their scattered location right upon the floor of the shaft (9) indicated that the tomb had been previously disturbed and searched. The finds included twenty clay lamps, four clay pots, and many fragmentary objects. Complete human skeletons placed inside the loculi were found probably in situ. It may be presumed that the bodies of the dead were placed into the loculi by sliding them on a board, the funeral objects were then placed around the body (10).

LIST OF FINDS

Serial No.	Excavation No.	Description of Objects
1	22	Round cup, (11), with a wide flaring-out rim, and a ring base. Pinkish clay, small grits with traces of incisions over the body. Height 6,5 cms., Diameter 5,5 cms

- 9) Except for one lamp and fragments of a juglet which were placed in one of the loculi in the north-western side of the shaft.
 10) Butler, *op. cit.*, pp. 206-207.
 11) Parallels in:—
 QDAP IX, pl. XXXVIII, No. 318 B.
 Dr. Manfred Lindner, *Petra und das Königreich der Nabätaer*, 1970. p. 60
 12) Parallels in:—
 M. A. Murray and J.C. Ellis, *A Street in Petra*, (London, 1940), Pl. XXVI, fig. 33.
 QDAP IX, pl. XXI, No. 154.
 AASOR XXXVI-XXXVII. (1964) fig. 56: 4.
 Fawzi Zayadine, «Une Tombe Nabatéenne Près

(partly broken) (pl. II : 22).

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | 1 | Juglet (12), globular body, carinated rim, with one handle attached to the upper part of the body, and a small ring base. Pinkish clay, small grits. Height 10 cms. complete. 1st century B.C./A.D. (pl. II : 1) |
| 3 | | Similar to object No. 2 (Serial No.) Height 11 cms. (partly broken) (12) |
| 4 | | Unguentarium (13), yellowish clay, and small grits. Total height: 17 1/2 cms., Height of neck 7,5 cms., 1st century B.C./A.D. (pl. II : A) |
| 5 | 2 | Pottery lamp (14), with a circular form ending in an obtuse angled nozzle. The upper part is ornamented with incised lines and small rosettes, while the nozzle is decorated with a floral volute design. Yellow clay, remains of greyish-brown slip. Diameter 6 cms. 1st |

- de Dhat-Râs,» *Syria*, XLVII (1970), Fig. 11: 222
 13) AASOR XXXIV-XXXV, (1954-56), pl. 17: A.
Syria XLVII (1970), fig. 11: 217.
 QDAP IX, pl. XXI, No. 155.
 QDAP XII, (1966) pl. XX: 5 a, 5 b.
 14) Parallels in :—
 QDAP, IX, pl. XI, No. 42, pl. LIV, No. 418.
Archäologischer Anzeiger, (1968), p. 514, pl. II, 42.
 Dr. Fawzi Zayadine has read and translated the Nabatean inscription on the bottom of each of the three lamps as follows: (7 1 8 7)
 «I saw», (pl. III:1).

		century A.D. (pl. II : 2)			kish clay. Diameter 5 cms. After middle of 1st century A.D. (pl. III 3 : 10)
6	4	Pottery lamp, similar to object No. 5 (serial No.). Diameter 6,1 cms., 1st century A.D. (Pl. II: 4).	10	14	Pottery lamp, similar object to No. 9 (serial No.) Buff ware. Diameter 6 cms. (pl. III : 3 : 14)
7	3	Pottery lamp, similar to objects Nos. 5, 6 (serial No.), with pierced handle added separately. Diameter 6 cms. (Pl II:3).	11	11	Pottery lamp, similar object to No. 9 (Serial No.) Greyish clay. Diameter 7 cms. (pl. III : 3 : 11)
8	16, 13	Pottery lamps. (15) Rosette on discus, with 12 petals, long nozzle, pinkish clay. Diameter 5 1/2 cms. After the middle of 1st century A.D. (pl. III : 16, 13)			This type of the clock shaped lamps is also traced in the 2nd (17) and 3rd (18) centuries A.D.
9	10	Pottery lamp. (16) Clock shaped, pierced handle added separately. Rim with common stamped pattern of ovules. Pin-			

Date :

Parallels to the Sadaqah pottery found in other Nabatean tombs strongly suggest a date in the first century A.D. This date is also substantiated by the similar tomb plan found at Umm el Jemal.

Hanan KURDI
Department of Antiquities

15) Parallels in:—
QDAP IV, pl. XXI, No. 161.
Archäologischer Anzeiger, (1968), p. 514, pl. II: 43.
 16) Parallels of objects Nos. 9, 10, 11 in:—

QDAP IX, pl. XXI, No. 161.
QDAP XI, p. IX, VIII, Nos. 167, 133.
 17) J.H. Iliffe, **QDAP XI**, 1945, p. 2.
 18) G. & A. Horsefield, **QDAP IX**, 1941, p. 144, no. 161.