



*Tomb of Imam at Shah Abad, ancient Gunde Shapur*

### **ARCHEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE AT GUNDE SHAPUR**

*In charge: ROBERT M. ADAMS, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Director.*

Gunde Shapur is representative of a later, and significantly different, type of Oriental city. Founded in the 3rd century after Christ by a victorious Sassanian king as his capital, it went on to become an important intellectual center (famous in particular for its medical school), a focus of commercial activity (particularly in the weaving of textiles), and the cosmopolitan crossroads of Persian, Greek, and Aramaic influences. A great walled rectangle covering more than a square mile, the grid-plan of its streets still can be perceived on aerial photographs. After the Islamic conquests, however, it gradually declined in importance and finally was abandoned to the wheat fields which cover it today.

Originally surveyed by Dr. Adams in 1961 as the nerve center of the surrounding Sassanian irrigation system (see above, p. 12), the surviving traces of the city-plan of Gunde Shapur were systematically mapped by Dr. Donald P. Hansen in 1963. Test excavations, briefly carried out in February, 1963, exposed parts of a bridge and water conduit system leading to the city as well as a later Islamic palace.