

The Royal Palace Institution in the First Millennium BC

Regional Development and
Cultural Interchange between
East and West

Edited by Inge Nielsen



Monographs of the Danish Institute at Athens
Volume 4



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Cover illustration: The central part of the Palace of Pasargadae
seen from the Tall-i Takht. Photo: *R. Boucharlat*

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Introduction

Inge Nielsen

This book contains the majority of the papers presented at the conference on “The Royal Palace Institution in the First Millennium BC” held under the auspices of the Danish Institute at Athens, November 17-20, 1999. The purpose of the conference and of the present book is to use the royal palace, a term covering both the building and the institution, as a kind of microcosm to illuminate historical processes, including the relationship between conquerors and conquered. Also the various notions of kingship, and the development of the roles of the king and the monarchy, may be studied through this institution, as may the process of acculturation between East and West. Being at the same time the centre of power and the centre for the creation of cultural currents, this institution may throw light on other parts of society as well. Thus the king and his court always played a normative role in the society they ruled, constituting a model for the aristocracy as well as for the (urban) upper class. It was to the palaces that the rich and powerful turned to be informed of how they ought to build their houses and villas and embellish them after the latest fashion, and also of how to conduct themselves and what to appreciate and rate highly.

The royal palace institution has from far back in time been very central to the societies of the Near East and Egypt, as was the case in the Minoan and Mycenaean period in Greece. In the First Millennium we see two major powers span the gap between East and West, namely the Achaemenid Empire and the Hellenistic Empires. They constituted themselves in areas with an old monarchic tradition, whether Egypt, Urartu, Assyria (already an

Empire), Babylonia, or Macedonia, as well as in areas dominated by Greek city-states. It is one of the tasks of this volume to study how these new great kings set about creating palatial institutions suitable to reign conquered land.

With the creation of a great empire followed the necessity to delegate the power, or at least the administration, which meant the formation of a hierarchy of “states within the state”, which in status extended from the nuclear areas of the empire to semi-independent vassal monarchies, with various grades of governor-ruled areas and satrapies in between. Of course this affected the palace both as an institution and as a building. Its contents and appearance may thus reveal the new status of this or that area after the conquest of one or the other of these great kings. Not only the buildings themselves may help to throw light on the life in the palace and the “nationality” and status of its inhabitants, however; the same is the case with the many finds made in the various rooms and parts of the palace, as well as its embellishment and decoration. Both rich artifacts imported from other parts of the kingdom/empire or from outside its borders, as well as more humble tools and implements, stores, etc. may be of help to us here.

Although many of the articles in this volume treat single palaces or groups of palaces from an archaeological point of view, this does not mean that the written sources have been disregarded. Although the comments of the ancient authors in this regard is rather well known, these sources are always open to new interpretations. A very important tool is the epigraphical material, which has attracted

increasing attention in later years and meant that much information has been added. It is clear that only by using all available sources is it possible to reach a trustworthy picture.

A natural focus in many articles has been on the functions of the palaces. It is obvious that a study of the functions as well as their eventual development may illuminate the type of monarchy housed in the palace. Also the situation of the palace, whether in an isolated area or in the centre of the city, is highly indicative of the king's relationship to his people, as is its degree of visibility and accessibility. As for the king's helpers in ruling and administrating his kingdom, the type of palace chosen by them in the various provinces may partly say something about the situation before the conquest, and partly about the manner of administration.

One of the main aims of the conference, to create a common ground for scholars in various fields of study, both geographically and thematically, has been amply achieved also in this volume. Thus both nuclear areas, such as Iran and Macedonia, and peripheral areas of varied status have been treated. One of the latter areas is constituted by Armenia, Iberia and Albania in the Caucasus, on which special emphasis had been placed because of the many interesting palatial buildings found here, and because of the relative ignorance of this area among many scholars. Another such area is Syria. Finally, there is a special focus on Parthia, since it represents an independent state with close ties to both of its predecessors, the Achaemenid and the Seleucid empires. A comparison with the "centres" in the various periods will hopefully prove fruitful for the discussion

also of the, all too well known, but nonetheless important notion of centre-periphery.

In almost all the articles, the great importance of the connections between East and West, that is, between the Greek and the "Oriental" world, have been underlined. Although each monarch and each kingdom had its own predilections and ideologies, none of them existed in a vacuum. The continuous and often close contact between these two "worlds" has been amply documented, and although the gap or limit parting them has not been eliminated, it has certainly been crossed and also somewhat blurred. This, I consider one of the highest achievements of the present book.

After an introductory article with a great chronological and geographical range, the book has as far as possible been structured chronologically, with four major periods: the period before the Achaemenid Kingdom, including articles on Cyprus, Assyria and Babylon; the Achaemenid Period, including articles on the early Achaemenid palaces in the centre, as well as treatments of palaces of the periphery, such as Armenia and Georgia. The Hellenistic Period is especially documented in Macedonia, the Caucasian states, and Syria, and by an overview article concerning a special phenomenon, the garden. An article on the Parthian palaces of the Arsacid dynasty finishes the volume.

In the first article, *David Braund* has chosen to illuminate the Greek view of monarchy and the crucial relationship between *polis* and palace by focusing on three central ancient authors: Herodotus, Euripides and Plutarch. Through these,

and many other sources, he shows which qualities were considered crucial for a good king, and which should be avoided. It is important that in general, the view on monarchy is not consistently negative, and that the palace had a central role to play, as had the god Dionysus as a destroyer of (bad) palaces, but also as a supporter of good kings. It is no coincidence that Dionysus in the Hellenistic period became one of the most popular tutelary deities among the new rulers of the East.

Stephen Lumsden sees the world from another side, that of the great Neo-Assyrian Empire. He studies the strategies used by the Assyrian kings to control their empire from the palaces and the great influence of these on their imperial successors, the Achaemenids in this regard. The policy of mass movement of conquered peoples and the following acculturation, taking place not least in the new capital cities, is studied as well. One of the roles of these new cities with their palaces placed in citadels was thus to diminish the power of the old local elites and to create new elites dependent only on the king. This imperial policy was taken over not only by the Achaemenids, but also by the Hellenistic rulers of the East.

Thierry Petit describes how this period of Assyrian rule influenced the situation of far away Cyprus indirectly. Using anthropological and ethnological methods, he studies the development of the kingdoms of Cyprus and the chronology of their creation. Basing himself specifically on the recent excavations of a palace and temple in Amathus, he argues for a development from a petty chiefdom to a monarchy. Petit supports the theory of an inspiration from Phoenicia and, directly, from the

Phoenician colony of Kition for the development of these local monarchies, rather than accepting a sub-Mycenaean development 300 years earlier. The palace of Amathus may support this theory, but at the same time dates this development half a century earlier than is usually done.

A crucial role in filling the vacuum after the fall of the Neo-Assyrian Empire was played by the Neo-Babylonian Kingdom. *Amélie Kuhrt* collects the material which may illuminate the palace and the palace institution of this period, centred upon Babylon. An important difference to Assyria is the placement of the palace in the city rather than in an independent citadel, although the close relationship with the principal sanctuaries of the city remains the same. She places special focus on the functions served by the Babylonian palaces, which may be elucidated primarily through the written sources. The reuse of these palaces by both the Achaemenids and the Seleucids without much change, shows how new dynasts and their helpers adapted to local circumstances.

The creation of the great Achaemenid Empire meant also the creation of suitable palace architecture. With the well-known diversity among the palaces of the various Neo-Assyrian kings in mind, *David Stronach* has made a diachronic investigation of the palace-activities of the three first Achaemenid kings, Cyrus the Great, Cambyses, and Darius. He concludes that the uniformity of these palaces is not so great as has been previously argued, and that each king contributed in his own way (and with his specific political message) to create what has become to be regarded as Achaemenid architecture, the qualities and legacies of which he discusses.

Two of the most important Achaemenid royal palaces were situated in Pasargadae and Susa, the former being built by Cyrus the Great from scratch, the latter placed by Darius in an old Elamite city. In his article, *Rémy Boucharlat* investigates the surroundings of these two very different palaces in order to trace whether these palaces were, in fact, so isolated as it now seems. On the background of new investigations in Pasargadae, he shows that Cyrus' palace was, indeed, surrounded by some kind of dwellings. In Susa, on the other hand, there is only very little to indicate the continued presence of a city near the palace; rather was only the military stationed there, and the old inhabitants were moved to an as yet unknown spot. In any case the new investigations in Pasargadae show that the Achaemenid palaces could, indeed, be placed in cities, and in Susa, the author sees great opportunities in a similar search for non-permanent structures by using modern methods.

From the centres of the Achaemenid Empire we move with *Florian Knauss* to the periphery, in this case to present day Georgia in the Caucasus. Basing himself on the recent Georgian-German excavations in Gumbati, East Georgia, where a very Achaemenid-looking monumental building of the late 5th-4th century was found, he argues that the Achaemenid presence in this area has been underestimated. Not only the palace of Gumbati, but also similar structures found in Armenia and Azerbaijan, indicates that the Achaemenids did, in fact, rule this area for a certain period. That this was indeed the case is also underlined by other buildings in Georgia, as well as by the many finds of Achaemenid court-art there.

The situation in Armenia is discussed by two scholars, *Aminia Kanetsian* and *Felix Ter-Martirossov*. Also here, there is a current discussion whether or not the Achaemenids ruled and built palaces in the area. Kanetsian gives us an overview of the many palatial structures preserved in Armenia and stresses the strong Urartian palace-tradition in this area, forming part, as it did, of this great kingdom in the early first millennium BC. She sees a heavy influence from the Urartian palaces upon the new Achaemenid palaces, including the *apadana* hall. Ter-Martirossov, treating the many columnar structures in the palaces of Armenia, does not deny the presence of such hypostyle halls in Urartian palaces, either, but sees the development from an elongated hall to a square hypostyle building/*apadana* as a sign of Achaemenid presence and as a royal prerogative of this dynasty.

With the Macedonian king Alexander the Great's huge conquests in the East, which resulted in the inclusion of the entire Achaemenid Empire from Egypt to India, this new great king, and his successors, the diadochi, faced considerable problems. A presentation of the inspirational sources for the palaces of these new kings is given by *Inge Nielsen*, taking as a point of departure the royal gardens, since gardens constituted a crucial element in the palaces and a well-known way of showing richness and power. Three types of gardens with various predecessors are studied, partly the great parks surrounding the palaces, the *paradeisoi*, which, it is argued, was taken over from the Achaemenids, partly the enclosed gardens placed near the palace-building, which may have been inspired partially from the

Greek gymnasia, and finally the peristyle garden with clear models in old Egyptian palaces, thus illustrating the great eclecticism of the new Hellenistic kings.

Alexander the Great came from Macedonia, and the type of monarchy and palace existing here is accordingly of the greatest importance for understanding the Hellenistic situation. *M. B. Hatzopoulos* treats in his article a very central subject, namely the relationship between palace and *polis* in Macedonia. He refutes the long held view that no cities existed in Macedonia, and that the palaces lay rather isolated. Basing himself on the large epigraphical material which has been published in recent years, he argues that both the palace in the old capital of Vergina, and the palace in the new capital of Pella, was situated in close relation to the cities, and that these cities had a constitution very similar to the *poleis* of Greece. The close relationship between the Macedonian kings and their Friends and subjects is thus underlined also by the accessibility of the palaces.

That the palace in the first capital, Vergina/Aigai was, in fact, far from isolated is also shown by *Chryssoula Saatsoglou-Paliadeli*, who in her contribution at the same time presents new excavations in the peculiar round room or *tholos* in that palace. The close relationship between palace and city is shown both in the placement of the theatre just below the palace, and in the closeness of the agora to it. The function of the *tholos* in the palace itself may now to be ascertained as a sanctuary of the tutelary deity of the Macedonian kings, Herakles, and the structures which have previously made this interpretation difficult are now dated to a period

after a major destruction connected with the Roman conquest.

When the new kings, who were mostly of Macedonian stock, were to rule the enormous kingdoms constituting the heritage of Alexander the Great, they needed many palaces. Since the palaces of the new capitals of Antiochia, Seleucia on the Tigris, and Alexandria have not been preserved, it is of crucial importance also for this reason to study the palaces of the governors of these kings. One such palace has recently been excavated in Syria, near the great bend of the Euphrates. Its excavator, *Graeme Clarke*, presents in his article this highly interesting building, and discusses the functions of the various rooms. He concludes that although superficially the palace looks Greek/Macedonian, this is not the case in detail. A comparison with the nearby palaces of Dura Europos supports the great importance of local architecture and of climate for the appearance of this early Hellenistic Seleucid palace.

Other areas formerly under Achaemenid rule became independent during the Hellenistic period. This is the case with Caucasian Iberia, the eastern Georgia of today, where a local dynasty reigned from its capital of Mtschketa, while various buildings for the administration of the kingdom were spread all over the area. *Vachtang Licheli* gives a short presentation of the excavated structures of the post-Achaemenid period and discusses their chronology. One of the most interesting buildings excavated in recent years in Caucasian Iberia is the palace-complex of Dedoplis Gora, situated near the very important, perhaps dynastic temple of Dedoplis Mindori. Its excavator, *Iulon*

Gagoshidze, interprets the numerous finds of the excavated parts of this palace, including mainly magazines, workshops, and offices, although the rich finds fallen from the first floor show that luxurious rooms existed there. This rare and lucky preservation of an unplundered palace may thus give us detailed information on the in most cases unknown palatial service-sector.

In Caucasian Albania, the Azerbaijan of today, monumental structures have also been found from this period in the old capital of Gabala. Its excavator *Ilyas Babayev* in his article gives a short overview of the public buildings found in this area, among them a very large oval structure with inner columns, and discusses their function.

Also Parthia gained its independence during the Hellenistic period. As a former province first of Achaemenid Persia and then of the Seleucid kingdom, Parthia was influenced from both of the two major empires of the first millennium BC. When the Arsacid dynasts finally succeeded in liberating this area from the Seleucids, they had to create not only a quite new administration, but also to built new palaces to house it. While the famous Parthian palace in Ctesiphon on the other side of the river from Seleucia on the Tigris has not been preserved, this is, on the other hand, the case with what is probably the first palace of this new dynasty, in Old Nisa, situated on a hill opposite the city itself. The head of the excavations of this palace *Antonio Invernizzi* discusses the functions of the various buildings found here, many of them unique in form and with a very interesting sculptural decoration, which under-

lines the eclecticism of the Parthian kings, also amply illustrated in the architecture and in the other arts. The change of function of certain buildings may also perhaps illustrate a change in the monarchy. Thus Invernizzi draws attention to certain similarities to Macedonian palace architecture, perhaps a reflection of a similarity in type of rule.

The background for the conference was the wish to create a network on the royal palace institution in Antiquity. It is the purpose of this network to strengthen the co-operation between scholars of classical Antiquity and scholars of the Ancient Near East and Egypt. The contact between these two areas of research has often been slight or entirely lacking, with the result that the understanding of a given subject, whether a certain period, or, as is the case here, a certain institution, has become too narrow, and often misleading. Interdisciplinarity being crucial in this regard, historians and archaeologists as well as scholars in other relevant disciplines are invited to join in. While the present volume treats the royal palace institution in the 1st millennium BC, it is the idea that the network should cover also the Roman period, and thus include the third great ancient empire spanning the gap between East and West. The palace institution would indeed be very well suited to illuminate the change of type of monarchy from the Hellenistic to the early Roman period too, as well as the gradual development towards an Oriental-style autocracy in late Antiquity.

Lastly, I should like to thank all the speakers, the majority of whom have also writ-

ten in this volume, as well as the other participants in the conference, for having contributed from their different angles to create many fruitful discussions. Thanks are also due to the then Director of the Danish Institute at Athens, Signe Isager, for accepting to publish the results in the Institute's series of Monographs, and for

help and support during the planning of the conference. Economic support from the Danish Research Council for the Humanities and from the Hjerl Hansen Foundation has made the realization of the conference as well as of the present presentation of its results possible.

Palace and polis: Dionysus, Scythia and Plutarch's Alexander

David Braund

The purpose of this paper is to explore the significance of palaces by bringing together some apparently-disparate accounts (especially of Plutarch, Herodotus and Euripides). The argument proceeds through three sections. First, Greek perceptions of the palace are sketched as a broad phenomenon,¹ with a view to broaching the recurrent tension in Greek thought between the palace and the polis or community at large. Second, Herodotus' account of Scyles' "palace" at Borysthenes is interpreted in the light of the first section, with a particular focus upon the role of Dionysus in that destruction. Third, Plutarch's account of Alexander's actions in palaces is set in the context of what may be termed "Dionysiac politics", not least as practised by kings themselves.

It is worth stressing from the outset that this paper is concerned not so much with events as with ideas expressed in literature about palaces. Moreover, the texts discussed here are stretched across a substantial chronological range, from Homer to Plutarch at least. That is not to deny the importance of questions of historicity and of historical change across time, but instead to give priority to the overwhelming conservatism not only of religious ritual but also of ideas about monarchy through antiquity. In what follows I have attempted to give prominence to change over time only insofar as it seems to affect the argument. Moreover, I have not attempted to offer any kind of definition of "the palace" (or indeed of "the king"). Of course, I am aware that a Homeric palace or king is quite a different matter from, say, an Achaemenid palace or king in the fourth century BC. For the present

argument my focus is not upon such differences and variations, but upon similarities and what various rulers and their dwellings (real and imagined) have in common.

Section 1: Palace and polis

The poems of Homer present a range of palaces, for theirs is a world of kings. Perhaps most striking is the Homeric account of Odysseus' approach to the palace of Alcinous, king of the Phaeacians (*Od.*7.78ff.). Odysseus (as indeed the audience of the poem) is startled at its splendours. His reaction is all the more suggestive in view of the fact that, as we see elsewhere in the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is both a personage of exceptional experience and the master of a substantial palace of his own, at home in Ithaca (*Od.* 17. 264ff.). Alcinous' palace dazzles Odysseus with its walls of bronze and doors of gold, set around with silver posts and lintel and a threshold of bronze. The dogs which guard its door are not the likes of Odysseus' faithful Argos (*Od.*17. 290ff.), made of flesh and blood, but are gold and silver dogs created by the supernatural skills of Hephaestus. Within the palace, there is an endless feast, like but unlike the predatory feasting of the suitors in Odysseus' own palace. This is the king's freely-given hospitality, his sharing of his bottomless resources with the select among his people. All is illuminated within. Meanwhile, Alcinous' maidservants work well and hard, by contrast with their slovenly counterparts on Ithaca, whom Odysseus will slaughter. Moreover, the palace has a garden. It is full of different fruit-trees, which crop throughout the

year, summer and winter alike. There are also vines, which bear grapes continuously, so that wine is always in the making. The palace also has a kitchen-garden, no less productive. A pair of fountains waters the garden. These were the gifts of the gods, we are told. It is easy to understand why even Odysseus wonders at the sight.

Yet he presses on under the protection of Athena, to supplicate the queen, Arete. He awaits his fate in the hearth of the palace, whence Alcinous (whose name underscores the power of his wisdom) raises him and gives him a place of honour. Once again, there is a contrast here with the brutal and dishonourable treatment that Odysseus will later receive upon his return to his own palace on Ithaca (*Od.* 17. 336ff.).

More important for the present discussion, however, is the contribution of this passage to the typology of Greek concepts of the royal palace, which it no doubt played a large part in creating. The palace stuns the visitor by its specialness. It is a manifestation of the wealth of the king. In turn that wealth implies not only the royal power but also (and Homer makes the point explicit) the king's favour with the gods. The gardens feature very prominently: they are at once decorative and practically-productive. The gardens express the fertility that good kingship ensures, not least through divine favour (*Od.* 19.111-14). In principle the king himself may participate in the gardening, though Homer does nothing to suggest that Alcinous did that much.² Through their productivity, gardens contribute to the overwhelming resources of the palace. However, Alcinous does not hoard for its own sake, but uses his wealth to feast his leading subjects. He is shown giving to them, not taking from them. The palace is a microcosm in which the king establishes and maintains his chosen style of rule. It is to be noted that the Phaeacian elite at the feast feel free to offer their views to the king, for example on the proper treatment of Odysseus. In due course, the king's self-control and moderation are seen to match his generosity and openness, though the

dreadful potential of his power is never far away.

The wealth of Alcinous' palace is beyond measure. Greeks perceived palaces not only as the exhibition of wealth, but also as a place wherein wealth was stored as the fuel of royal power. Herodotus' King Croesus goes further, for he presents the wealth stored in his palace to the visiting Solon as an exhibit in its own right. Moreover, he goes so far as to imagine that his stored wealth, and by extension his palace itself, confirm not only that he is happy but that he is the happiest human being. Plato's Socrates has no time for such arguments on grounds of psychology, as we shall see, but Herodotus' Solon sees a rather different problem with Croesus' claim. Wealth and position can easily be lost, however their significance may be estimated; Croesus shortly suffers that loss and attains what may be greater happiness in the process.³

Homer places particular emphasis upon Odysseus' entrance to Alcinous' palace. It is only with Athena's help that he can penetrate the palace at all. Greek accounts of palaces regularly place a particular emphasis on doors, gates and entrances. Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* returns to the issue several times (e.g. 8.1.33; 3.11; 6. 10). There is also an emphasis in Greek accounts upon the individuals who control admission to the palace and the king and his court within. Accordingly, while Athena brought Odysseus into Alcinous' palace, Telemachus had to make his own way past the doorman Eteoneus to enter the palace of Menelaus in Homeric Sparta. Homer makes much of the obstacle, no doubt largely because it demonstrates Menelaus' generous hospitality. For it is Menelaus' decision that overrides Eteoneus' cautious response at the door (*Od.* 4.20ff.). Xenophon, in his *Cyropaedia*, makes much of the relationship between the future Cyrus the Great and the doorman of the king, with whom (after initial tensions when Cyrus' entrance is obstructed) Cyrus forms a warm relationship (*Xen. Cyr.* 1.1.3).

Given that entry is so prized, to be

called to the palace from afar may seem a great honour. And it may be. However, such invitations contain also an element of danger, as the younger Cyrus was to discover, called to his father and embroiled in deadly palace-intrigues (Xen. *Anab.* 1.1). In similar vein Plato's Polus expatiates on the bloody crimes of the contemporary Archelaus of Macedon. Archelaus invites his uncle and his cousin to feast at the palace in order to murder them, while he does away with his young brother by drowning him in a well, presumably within the palace complex.⁴ To enter the palace is to participate in a confined and deadly world, often complicated (if not vitiated) by the empowered presence of royal women and courtiers. Herodotus in particular offers a range of examples, from Candaules' wife and Gyges at the beginning of his *Histories* to Amestris at the end.⁵

A major function of the palace is to divide. The palace admits and includes some, whether for short visits to outer rooms, or for fuller participation in palace life. The best available typology for the functions of palaces, rooted in material remains, lays an appropriate stress upon the importance of admission, whether for an audience or a banquet or some other purpose.⁶ But the palace excludes others completely; they are the great majority, which can only look at the palace from outside. The style of the king is set in part by the degree of his exclusivity, which is also the degree of his seclusion or, conversely, his hospitality. Herein lies a key tension which recurs through Greek literature, between the microcosm of the palace and the macrocosm of the community at large. The good king has a relatively open palace, a place for his beneficence, at one with his community; the bad king keeps his palace closed, a place for amassing wealth for himself, at odds with his community.

Xenophon, whose works have much to say about palaces (especially Persian ones), sets out the ruler's options very starkly in his *Hiero*, as a choice between palace and polis. For the *Hiero* presents a fictional dialogue between Simonides the philoso-

pher-poet and Hiero the tyrant, which explores the dilemmas of monarchy in the face of everyday assumptions about the desirability of the ruler's lifestyle. Palaces and the goods within them (including the women) are cited by Simonides as a key attraction of the ruler's life from the viewpoint of the multitude. On the recurrent pattern of the dialogue, Hiero proceeds to stress the lack of wisdom in such a viewpoint. The palace, stresses Hiero, bemoaning his position, is no more than a matter of external appearance, whereas the real issue is the mind of the ruler within. Moreover, he continues, the palace is not a place of safety and security for the ruler, like the home of the ordinary man, but is itself a place wherein the ruler lives as the object of the especial anger of his enemies and must be ever on his guard. In that sense, his life is one of unremitting conflict, with enemies declared and undeclared; Plato's Socrates takes a similar line on Archelaus, whom he adjudges unhappy by reason of his mind, not happy by virtue of his royal position, as might commonly be imagined (Plato, *Gorgias*, 471dff.).

As the *Hiero* draws to a close, Simonides advises (Xenophon, *Hiero* 11):

"But, Hiero, you must not grudge to spend a portion of your private substance for the common weal. For myself, I hold to the opinion that the sums expended by the monarch on the state form items of disbursement more legitimate than those expended on his personal account. But let us look into the question point by point.

First, the palace: do you imagine that a building, beautified in every way at an enormous cost, will afford you greater pride and ornament than a whole city ringed with walls and battlements, whose furniture consists of temples and pillared porticoes, harbours, market-places?"

The rhetorical question demands Hiero's agreement to a style of rule which benefits the community as a whole. This, it is argued, is the solution to Hiero's dilemma: to render the community as a whole grateful and loving towards the ruler. In

in this context it is striking that Xenophon has Simonides specify the palace first, before proceeding through a list of other matters and expenditures. The choice offered is between a fine palace or a fine community at large, each with appropriately fine paraphernalia. On this view, a fine palace is heavy expenditure on the royal self, not the community, for which the palace is, by implication, a drain and to which it stands in opposition.

Of course, the choice which Xenophon's Simonides offers to Hiero is too stark, no doubt so as to make the argument more clear. The case of Alcinous demonstrates an alternative view, according to which a fine palace may abide within a fine community. Certainly, the Phaeacians enjoy the special favour of the gods, but, as the palace of Menelaus serves to show, elsewhere too the best kind of ruler may have both a stunning palace and a fine community. In his *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon shows that there need be no strong tension between palace and community, at least among the Medes and Persians and where the ruler was wise and self-controlled.⁷

Plato, writing in much the same intellectual climate as his contemporary Xenophon, shows a similar concern with monarchy through his various works. In his *Laws* he pays particular attention to the rulers of Persia (*Laws*, 694–5). It is worth stressing that (although the Medes are presented here as luxurious and degenerate, by contrast with the hardy Persians) Plato does not deploy familiar Greek arguments about the otherness of Medes or Persians, according to which such peoples were more willing to submit to monarchical power than were Greeks. Rather, he draws important distinctions between the styles of different Persian kings, with Cyrus the Great and Darius as good kings and their respective sons, Cambyses and Xerxes, as variously bad. The important issue for the present discussion is the role of the palace in Plato's analysis.

Plato offers no general condemnation of the palace in the Achaemenid empire.

By implication he accepts that good kings can have fine palaces, for he refers to the palaces of Cyrus and Darius, who are for him good kings. At the same time, he accepts and accounts for the success of the Achaemenid empire by allowing that its rulers included these good kings. Such a position was not so controversial, given Plato's insistence on a distinction between positive Persian and negative Median traditions and his safe location of his good kings in the past, more than a century earlier. By contrast, he has nothing good to say about kings after Darius; Artaxerxes II gets his full share of Plato's criticisms of Darius' successors, as being great only in name and appearance (*Laws*, 695e; contrast Plutarch, *Artaxerxes*).

For Plato in the *Laws* the palace is only a problem when the ruler allows it to become one. He criticises Cyrus (despite general approval) for failing to attend to the upbringing of his son and successor, the deranged Cambyses. It is in this sense that the palace is allowed to become a problem. Plato's Cyrus is imagined as a man on campaign. By contrast, his palace is female space, where the women dominate; their style is one of Median luxury, not Cyrus' Persian toughness. Cyrus' failure is to attend to that palace and to ensure that his offspring are brought up in masculine Persian tradition (as he is taken to have assumed) and not in female-dominated Median luxury. The result of the latter is a spoilt Cambyses, never controlled and incapable of self-control. Accordingly, Darius' goodness is attributed to his upbringing outside the ruling family, while the failings of his son Xerxes are seen to be the result of the same kind of upbringing as had spoilt Cambyses.⁸

For Plato, then, as elsewhere in the works of Xenophon and the Homeric poems, the key issue is not the palace but the mentality of the ruler, of which the style of the palace (materially and morally) is a likely symptom. The good ruler fosters his community; success and wealth enable good rulers to have BOTH a fine community AND a fine palace. But, of course, such rulers do not use their palaces to

exclude and appropriate; rather their palaces are a focus for their subjects, who, as it seems, are taken to share in the splendours of the dwelling of their king, as well as enjoying its hospitality, feasting there. Yet even the good king should be on his guard against the dangers implicit in the palace, where luxury and women above all need to be kept under control, in particular lest they corrupt the next generation.

However, the good king is a comparatively rare beast in Greek outlooks. The abuse of monarchy is a far stronger theme. Even Xenophon's *Hiero*, who seems to have been trying his best, needs the advice of Simonides before he can begin to set about a more positive style of government. For the most part in Greek literature there is a powerful tension between the monarch and his community, within which the palace has a central significance, the microcosm in which the ruler lives, set apart and at odds with the community at large – unless, that is, he is a good king.

It has been well observed that much of Athenian tragedy is built around that tension, which reproduces the rituals of the Athenian democracy and its notional early history.⁹ The possible development of the theatrical stage at Athens from the Achaemenid royal tent captured after the Battle of Plataea serves to confirm the vital importance of monarchy and the palace in Athenian drama.¹⁰ Although the matter is probably beyond proof, it is tempting to speculate that the royal tent (the standard term, but “tent” fails adequately to express the grandeur of the king's residence on campaign) was taken to be an appropriate model for the stage precisely because the setting was regularly the royal palace.

For from Aeschylus onwards, at least, the royal palace recurs through extant Athenian drama. We should expect to find women prominent therein, to the extent that their leaving the palace is a matter of some interest in a play. In Aeschylus' *Persians*, when Atossa appears on stage she immediately explains why she has come out of her gilded palace (*Pers.* 159–61).

She soon announces her intention to return to the palace for the purposes of cult (*Pers.* 226–31), something which Greek city-states would tend to perform publicly, reinforcing their community-identities. Later, in Euripides' *Bacchae* the departure of the royal women from the palace of Pentheus at Thebes is symptomatic of the destruction to come (*Bacchae*, 27–38), while the play closes with Agaue's farewell to her palace, with her house and household dissolved (*Bacchae* 1368). And, of course, in tragedy women in the palace are variously troublesome and dangerous, whether with the sex and violence of a Clytaemnestra or the cunning of a Phaedra and her nurse, or, as in these cases, both.

The tension between palace and polis, as we may encapsulate the issue, is at its sharpest in the context of Athenian democracy for the very reason that the palace entails monarchy and the polis is a democracy, its polar opposite, with its stress on community.¹¹ Once again the good king can avoid such tension, to the extent that Theseus can appear on stage as the champion of democracy and community, as he famously does in Euripides' *Suppliant Women*. More usually in Athenian drama, however, the audience (that is, broadly, the democratic community) experiences vicariously the problems of monarchy and is thereby encouraged to rejoice in the superiority of its own system and polis. In the *Persians*, Aeschylus has Atossa display her complete ignorance of Athens by asking not only about its location but also about the quantity of wealth in their palace.¹² Palace? Atossa's ignorance is such that she assumes Athens to be some kind of monarchy (*Pers.* 241). Achaemenid ignorance of Greece in general and Athens in particular is a theme not limited to Aeschylus; Herodotus in particular has much to say on the theme.¹³ However, Aeschylus is using the discourse of monarchy (including the palace) not only to underline that ignorance but also to remind the audience of its own very different system and community, whose victory is celebrated through the play.

As Seaford in particular has shown,¹⁴ the key god in much of this is Dionysus. After all, these plays were performed in Dionysiac festivals, celebrations of the god. Of course, Dionysus is presented on stage only rarely, but he can never be far away from his own festivals. And where he does appear on stage in the *Bacchae* his destructive hostility towards at least one example of monarchy, Pentheus, could hardly be more explicit. The centrality of the palace in the action of the play has a range of convergent explanations.

First, as we have seen, monarchy readily suggests a royal palace, with all its dangerous associations. Second, the palace is also a house, at once in a material sense and in the sense of a dynasty; on both counts it is implicated in the dishonouring of Dionysus' mother Semele and of Dionysus himself. While it stands as the palace of Pentheus, the house of Semele (and by extension that of her son, Dionysus himself) lies blasted by lightning-fire nearby (*Bacchae*, 6-9). At the same time, Dionysus expresses particular bitterness at the role of his mother's sisters in the denial of his birth from Zeus, by which they had dishonoured himself and his mother (*Bacchae*, 24-31). Pentheus, as Dionysus is made to tell the audience, is the son of one of these sisters, while he maintains the dishonour of the god (who is also his cousin) and his cult (*Bacchae* 43-6). If Pentheus had embraced the cult, we might have found such cult within the palace itself; in its absence too the palace may be deemed culpable. Third, the palace embodies the power and ruling style of Pentheus. His treatment of the disguised Dionysus expresses his unconcern for hospitality and thus by implication his abusive and exclusive regime. Euripides does not elaborate on the style of Pentheus' regime, but he shows the audience that Pentheus lacks wisdom, even the wisdom to take good advice, so that his ruling style is beyond doubt. Accordingly, the lamenting Cadmus can describe Pentheus as a "terror to the polis",¹⁵ that is to the community which Dionysus wants to mock him in his transvestism.¹⁶ Pentheus is no Alcinous,

nor even Xenophon's Hiero before his discussions with Simonides.

Fourth, and arguably most important for the play as a whole, the autonomous monarchical power of the ruling dynasty of Thebes is "antithetical to the undifferentiated participation of the polis in Dionysiac cult".¹⁷ The palace is central here. Whereas the palace tends to exclusivity, especially when the ruler is a Pentheus, the cult of Dionysus is broadly democratic in the sense that (at least in principle) it mixes together persons of every condition and status. The women of the palace, sent forth in a frenzy by Dionysus, frolic in the mountainous wilds together with ordinary women of Thebes, with Greek and barbarian women who have followed Dionysus from Asia (though at least some remain with Dionysus, set around – indeed, laying siege to – the palace itself) and with wildlife and the forces of nature in general. The democracy of Dionysiac cult is appropriate enough to the ideology of the Athenian polis, but it sits uncomfortably with the palace of an abusive monarch.

Given these four linked considerations, it is no surprise that Dionysus soon destroys the palace of Pentheus. Particularly so in the light of Connor's important observation that religious and political impropriety (including abusive monarchy, and the desire to instal it) is regularly punished in the Greek world by the razing of the house (or palace) of the transgressor.¹⁸ Pentheus' treatment of Dionysus, quite apart from the negative tenor of his regime, seems to invite the razing of his palace, replicating the destruction meted out to Semele's house by the vengeful Hera. As Plato observes in a neglected passage (*Gorgias* 469e), the capricious destruction of houses is a feature of the abuse of absolute power. Hera may be convicted of such abuse; Dionysus has a substantial measure of justice on his side against Pentheus, even if he may seem to go too far in the end (*Bacchae* 1346-7).

More surprising at first sight are the Dionysiac festivities which are said to have accompanied the destruction of Athens'

own city walls at the end of the Peloponnesian War. Dionysus is nowhere mentioned in our accounts of the destruction, but Connor is probably right to perceive the flutes, hetaerae and joyous revelry surrounding the destruction as Dionysiac.¹⁹ From the perspective of the destroyers of these walls, namely Athenian oligarchs and their allies under the aegis of Spartan Lysander,²⁰ the Athenian democracy had itself become an abusive monarch. The oxymoron of tyrant-democracy had been in vogue in oligarchic circles for decades, perhaps even from the 470s BC.²¹ Many will no doubt have interpreted the destruction of Athens' city-walls as a return to a more balanced form of government and in that sense to a restored community, such as Dionysus might be thought (at least by oligarchs) to have sanctioned. Of course, these were the walls of a city, but a city which had become (on this view) a tyrant, fenced around by the walls of the polis as if they were the walls of a palace. Accordingly, the destruction of Athens' walls too may be understood as the destruction of a kind of palace.

Section 2: a Scythian palace at Olbia-Borysthenes

As we have seen, Herodotus has much to say about palaces in his *Histories*. However, his account of Scythians, like other Greek accounts, stresses the nomadic pastoralism central to Scythian society (Hdt. 4. 46). On this view Scythians do not build: they have neither cities nor palaces. The absence of palaces is all the more remarkable, since they do have kings. Accordingly, Herodotus' disquisition on the region mentions limited exceptions which serve to prove the rule; as we shall see, Greek influence is taken to be the cause of such building as might be attributed to Scythians.

The largest building endeavour involved is the city of Gelonus (Hdt. 4.108-9). It is often identified in modern scholarship with the large site at Bel'sk, near modern Poltava in the Ukraine. However, the present discussion is not concerned to assess the reality of

Herodotus' account, but the ideas which it presents.

Herodotus describes the huge city wall of Gelonus. He must explain that wall, for he has earlier emphasised that Scythians do not have walls (4.46). So too the existence of images, altars and temples, which (with the exception of the cult of Ares) are not built in Scythia (4.59). For Herodotus the solution is simple, indeed it is the point of his description: Gelonus' population is of Greek origin; it had moved inland from the Black Sea coast. When they came to the land of the Budini (whose Scythianness is not really discussed), these migrant Greeks built Gelonus. While the Budini maintain a nomadic lifestyle after the manner of Scythians, the settlers in Gelonus practise agriculture and horticulture after the manner of Greeks (Hdt. 4.109). Moreover, the people of Gelonus (Geloni, as Herodotus calls them) do not look like the Budini; evidently they have a Greek appearance more than a Scythian one. Their language is a mixture of Greek and Scythian, we are told (Hdt. 4.108). Here Herodotus makes explicit the polemic that one often senses in his account of Scythia.²²

The temples, as everything else at Gelonus, are built of wood, for that is the material abundantly to hand, not stone. In Scythia proper, there is no such abundance (4.61). The use of wood apart, Herodotus describes a city which would not seem out of place among the Greek cities of the Black Sea coast, whence the Geloni had come, or even among the Greek cities of the Aegean world. Yet Herodotus offers very little detail on the buildings at Gelonus; after all, he does not claim to have been there, and makes it clear that he is not the first Greek to talk of the Budini. He specifies only one Greek deity: Dionysus. For Herodotus mentions that the Geloni have a triennial festival in honour of Dionysus and states that at time of festival the celebrants experience a bacchic frenzy. We may reasonably wonder why Dionysus is singled out for comment. The foregoing discussion tends to suggest that

the festival of Dionysus implies not only Greekness (which is evidently Herodotus' first concern here), but also that Gelonus is a city with a strong sense of community and a political system to match. There is no suggestion that Gelonus is a democracy, but neither is there mention of a king or a palace there; if Gelonus has a monarch, he must be imagined after the fashion of Euripides' Theseus in the *Suppliant Women* and some of the other rulers so far discussed, that is a ruler attuned to community and participation – or at least claiming to be as much.

Herodotus' decision to specify Dionysus becomes more understandable when it is set beside his account of King Scyles' behaviour at Borysthenes (alias Olbia). In this story three broad factors are in play. First, Herodotus is concerned to stress the fierce traditionalism of the Scythians in the face of foreign (and especially Greek) cultural influences. Having related the story of Scythian Anacharsis and his deadly attempt to worship Cybele, Herodotus proceeds immediately to Scyles' deadly attempt to worship Dionysus. Hartog has explicated the numerous parallels between the twin stories; here it will suffice to stress that the two deities in question are regularly associated, as for example in the opening of the *Bacchae*.²³

Second, Scythian traditionalism is threatened by Greek influences. Herodotus is careful to explain that King Scyles is both Scythian and Greek, for his mother was a Greek woman from the city of Istria (4.78). Herodotus states that she was responsible for Scyles' upbringing. We may recall Plato's comments on the baleful influence of female upbringing in the Achaemenid empire, though in this case the consequences are rather different. Scyles is not made a tyrant like Cambyses, but he does prove to have insufficient wisdom and self-control. Whereas, according to Plato, a female upbringing inculcated in Cambyses a taste for alien Median customs, not his native Persian, here in Herodotus' *Histories* Scyles' mother passes on to her son not only her Greek blood but also an education in Greek language

and literature, leaving him with an outlook alien to and broader than Scythian traditionalism.²⁴

Third, Dionysus. Herodotus presents the cult of Dionysus as a locus of the cultural gap between the citizens of Olbia and the neighbouring Scythians. Once again, historicity is not our concern here, but it is perhaps worth observing that the cult of Dionysus (and Cybele) was indeed important in the city, but that Herodotus (who had visited the city and the Scythians of the area) draws the distinction between Greek and Scythian too sharply, as his own remarks earlier indicate (Hdt. 4.17–18); that helped his story. Of course, Herodotus was most interested in cultural gaps and the misunderstandings which they generated between peoples of different customs.²⁵ Whereas Cambyses shows his folly by mocking the beliefs of the Egyptians (Hdt. 3.38), the story of Scyles entails two forms of such folly. It is the Scythians in general who show folly by mocking the Borysthenites' worship of Dionysus, on the (inadequate) grounds that there cannot be a god who induces madness (Hdt. 4.79). Scyles is complicit in that Scythian mockery, for he is after all the king of the Scythians and spends most of his life among them. Like Pentheus (albeit in rather different circumstances) Scyles exhibits his personal folly by expecting that he can combine the lives of a Greek and a Scythian and, crucially, can include Dionysus in the attempt. For Scyles cannot expect to worship Dionysus at some times (in Greek mode) and reject him at others (in Scythian), or even to escape retribution for the mockery of the god by his fellow Scythians.

While Herodotus' narrative is articulated in accordance with these three factors, a palace is central to Scyles' story. As a result of his upbringing Scyles prefers a Greek lifestyle, so that whenever he and his forces come to Borysthenes he leaves his fellow Scythians outside the city-walls, enters the city and swaps his Scythian clothing for Greek. In the city he moves around the public places without the entourage of a king; he even offers sacri-

fices there in the Greek manner. After a month or so there, he leaves the city to resume his Scythian identity. His visits were repeated; he even built a house in the city and married a local woman.

All went well enough until he sought initiation in the rites of Dionysus. At the point of initiation, his house in the city was razed to the ground by lightning-fire. Undaunted, Scyles proceeded to be initiated; the step was fatal. A Borysthenite reported Scyles' initiation to the Scythians outside the walls, who witnessed Scyles revelling from a place of hiding in the city. Outraged the Scythians rose up and Scyles was beheaded (Hdt. 4.80).

Although the narrative is different, there is a startling similarity of details between the story of Scyles and that of Pentheus in the *Bacchae*. We need not suppose that the *Bacchae* was written with an eye to Herodotus, or that Herodotus wrote with an earlier version of the story of Pentheus to the fore in his mind (though the latter is entirely possible, note e.g. Aeschylus' *Pentheus*). We may be sure that Euripides and Herodotus were sensitive to Dionysiac cult in a much broader sense than through their knowledge of particular texts.

In both works the cult of Dionysus is at stake. In both, after initial rejection of the cult (explicitly for Pentheus, implicitly for Scyles), the king seeks initiation. In both, the introduction to Dionysus' rites is shortly followed by death. In both there is a change of clothing: Scyles from Scythian to Greek, and back, Pentheus from king to bacchant. In both, rites are observed from a place of hiding and on high: by Scythians watching Scyles, by Pentheus watching bacchants. In both, the unwise king is not simply killed, but beheaded by his own people: Pentheus by his mother and her companions (although it is unclear in the play whether his mother actually rips his head off), Scyles by Octamasades. In both cases the king is not an authentic initiate: Scyles is not said to have abandoned his Scythian side, which mocked the god. Most important for the present discussion, both stories entail the destruction of the king's

house by lightning-fire. We may surely be confident that, just as it is Dionysus who razes the palace of Pentheus, so it is Dionysus again who razes the palace of Scyles.

It may be objected that Scyles' house in Borysthenes is not a palace. For it is true that Herodotus stresses that Scyles' conduct in the city was not that of a king; indeed his behaviour in the community of Borysthenes may set a significant context for his desire to be initiated in the cult of the communitarian Dionysus. To that extent Scyles' house is not a palace. However, Herodotus also stresses the luxury of the house. It is not enough for Scyles to break Scythian norms by building a house; he takes Greek norms to the limit by building an outstanding house.²⁶ It is of vast size and built at great cost, set around with sphinxes and griffins sculpted in white marble (Hdt. 4.79). The choice of statuary is telling, for its themes are appropriate to Scythian taste, as Scythian art confirms, but marble statues have no place in Scythia. Moreover, whatever his desires, Scyles remains a king. Scyles' house in Olbia is more than a house; it is the very fine house of a king and thus inescapably it is ALSO a palace.

Scyles' particular folly lies in his attempt to have his cake and eat it too. He seeks to maintain his position in Scythia, his paternal Scythian royal heritage, with its attendant nomadism. But he wishes also to play the Greek and the private individual, following his maternal Greek civic tendencies, with its attendant fixed abode. His construction of so fine a house illustrates his failure to divide the two sides of his inheritance: seeking to build a house, he builds what looks like a palace. Herodotus tells us that Scyles preferred a Greek lifestyle. If so, he should perhaps have abandoned his Scythian lifestyle altogether, leaving his position as Scythian king. His house should not have been palatial. However, whether such strategies would have saved him from the wrath of Dionysus is not at all clear, for the god had prior cause to be angry.

As the *Bacchae* demonstrates, Dionysus may be expected to exact extreme

vengeance from a king with a history of mocking his rites. Therefore, we may wonder how far Dionysus has brought about the whole affair, drawing Scyles into the city in the first place. The anonymous Borysthenite who brings Scythians into the city to show them their king in Dionysiac frenzy uses Scyles to repay the Scythians for their mockery of the god and his fellow-citizens. It is possible even to imagine that this Borysthenite is Dionysus in disguise, like the stranger at the beginning of the *Bacchae*; certainly, there is a measure of similarity between these two men with no name. Be that as it may, the case of Scyles (like that of Pentheus) shows that those who mock Dionysus can expect to be mocked in return, and with deadly interest. Laughter is very much the style of Dionysus.²⁷

At the same time, the story of Scyles sheds fresh light upon Herodotus' decision to single out Dionysus later in his narrative, in his account of Gelonus. In the light of Scyles' story we can see that, while Scythians may recognise some Greek deities (Hdt. 4. 59), Dionysus and his rites constitute a sharp distinction between Scythian and Greek religion. The fact that other non-Greek peoples in Herodotus have their own form of Dionysus, as notably the Egyptians (Hdt. 2.42), serves to underline the Scythian rejection of him. Accordingly, since Herodotus is concerned to show that the city of Gelonus is not Scythian, but Greek, the cult of Dionysus there is for him a clinching proof. On Herodotus' view no Scythian community would celebrate a Dionysiac festival.

Scythian difficulties with Dionysus may well be related to the strong tradition of their torrid dealings with wine. In his account of Scythian customs Herodotus has little to say about wine at all; where it appears in Scythia it does so in controlled fashion, for the wine is mixed by a district-governor and drunk only by those Scythians who have killed an enemy (Hdt. 4.66). Herodotus may well have avoided further comment on wine for the very reason that the Scythian taste for unmixed

wine was a hackneyed feature of the Scythian stereotype with which, on other grounds, he was taking substantial issue through his account.²⁸ Herodotus himself later tells us that Scythian drinking of unmixed wine was even proverbial at Sparta (Hdt. 6.84).

On a Greek view, it seems that Scythians did not know how properly to handle Dionysus and his world. Vines, we are told, do not grow in Scythia. Scythian austerity rejects the symposium, with its wine, flutes and hetaerae. Scythian rejection of trade and seaborne interactions in general cannot accommodate Dionysus the bringer of good things from afar, across the sea.²⁹ It may well be that the Greeks of the Black Sea took Dionysus as a strong marker between Greek and Scythian, after the fashion of Herodotus, who indeed may well have taken his lead from his informants in Borysthenes.³⁰

Dionysus' destruction of the "palace" of Scyles, echoing his destruction of Pentheus', follows the pattern traced by Connor, in that here again the transgressor is punished for religious and political impropriety. Dionysus again is to the fore, taking vengeance for a multiple transgression.³¹ There is no sign that Scyles has been tyrannical among the Scythians, but he has set himself apart from his community to the extent that he has attempted to join a very different one, in Borysthenes. Herodotus stresses that Scyles' subjects are shut out, until witnesses are admitted by the unnamed Borysthenite. They have access neither to the city nor, *a fortiori*, to the "palace" of Scyles, which stands as a monument to his betrayal of them and his self-centred expenditure instead of beneficence and the affection that he should have fostered, according to Xenophon's Simonides. Dionysus, in taking vengeance for himself, also shatters the abusive power of the king, not least as embodied by his "palace".

Section 3: Plutarch's Alexander and Dionysus

Plutarch displays a substantial interest in

Dionysus in his works. His *Life* of Crassus shows that he can incorporate Dionysus (and indeed the *Bacchae*) into a biography, both explicitly and through the selection (if not invention) of telling details, including the beheading of the foolish Crassus and the use of his head in a performance of the play.³² The role of Dionysus has been noted also in his *Life* of Alexander, though not perhaps elucidated in full. Indeed, the strong tradition which associated Alexander with Dionysus gave Plutarch every encouragement to weave Dionysiac themes into his biography.³³ Here again the destruction of palaces is a central theme.

Plutarch's account of Alexander's conquest of Susa and Persepolis serves to illustrate key aspects of the Persian palace, viewed from a moralizing Greek perspective under the Roman empire. At Susa Plutarch mentions first the coined money kept in the palace. The sheer, massive amount of this money is overwhelming, for Plutarch mentions 40,000 talents; that is, very approximately, towards 100 times the annual income of the Athenian empire of the fifth century BC. Plutarch mentions also the other paraphernalia and riches of the palace, beyond recounting (*Alex.* 36.1; cf. Arrian, 3.16). Among all this was a huge amount of purple, which was antique and of the best quality. There also, according to the imaginative Deinon, was kept water brought from the Nile and from the Danube. Plutarch offers a plausible explanation, whether inherited from Deinon or his own interpretation: the possession of waters from these distant rivers affirmed the size of the Persian empire and that the kings of Persia were lords of all (*Alex.* 36.2). As we have seen in other cases, the palace presented the power of the king, at once great and vulnerable.

At Persepolis, a similarly massive amount of money was also found. According to Plutarch, the paraphernalia and riches at Persepolis were so vast that an army of pack-animals was needed to convey it (*Alex.* 37.2). Plutarch offers none of the further detail given for Susa, but focusses instead on Alexander's encounter

with a fallen, colossal statue of Xerxes (*Alex.* 37.3). Alexander addresses the statue, as if it were the flesh-and-blood Xerxes himself. Alexander wonders aloud whether to leave the statue cast down, in vengeance for Xerxes' invasion of Greece, or to raise it up again, in view of Xerxes' magnanimity and virtue in other respects. Alexander thought for a long time; he then left the statue where it lay and passed on. Alexander's dilemma is that Xerxes – at least on this view (contrast Plato's remarks in the *Laws* (discussed above)) – deserved both to be cast down and to be raised up, because he was no Pentheus or Scyles, but, as Plutarch's Alexander would have it, more a reformed Hiero: Xerxes was praiseworthy except for his invasion of Greece.

There soon follows the famous fire in the palace. It is idle to speculate about the historical Alexander's intentions, to which we have no significant access.³⁴ It will suffice here to observe that our sources tell us that he soon put out the fire; thanks to him the palace was not razed to the ground, like Pentheus' and Scyles'. It seems more productive to examine Plutarch's account as a text, setting aside issues of literal truth and fiction.

The Dionysiac features of Plutarch's account of the fire could hardly be clearer. The context is a drinking party in the palace. The Athenian *hetaera* Thais suggests that she had gained recompense for wandering about Asia by enjoying the life of luxury in the Persian palace. She adds that it would be better still to revel and set fire to the house of the Xerxes who burnt Athens, so that the story would go that the women with Alexander had exacted a greater penalty from the Persians on behalf of Greece than had all his male forces. There was much noise in approval, so that Alexander jumped up and took a garland and torch, leading the procession. The revellers surrounded the palace, shouting; the other Macedonians rushed to join in with torches of their own. They took his action to mean that he would not dwell among the barbarians. He then extinguished the fire.

Drink, an hetaera, and a procession of revellers all suggest Dionysus. Thais' notion of an army of women on extended campaign with Alexander further recalls the army of women who travelled far with Dionysus, not least in the *Bacchae*.³⁵ The noise too may recall the cries and percussion of the bacchants. The surrounding of the palace replicates the surrounding of the palace of Pentheus in the *Bacchae*. Garlands and torches accord with the Dionysiac picture, for torches in particular may take the place of lightning-fire in Dionysiac cult.³⁶ The burning of this palace recalls the burning of the palaces of Pentheus and Scyles, with Alexander to the fore, after the manner of Dionysus himself.

It is easy to see why the Macedonians took his action to indicate a decision not to remain among the barbarians, whether or not they are imagined as particularly sensitive to the Dionysiac overtones of the scene. The destruction of the palace might also be taken, in view of the foregoing discussion, as the rejection of an autocratic form of monarchy in favour of a monarchy committed to community, as seems to have been more traditional in Macedon. But this was not destruction; Alexander extinguished the fire.

Alexander had mixed feelings about Xerxes, so that indecision about the treatment of his palace might be expected. More to the point, Xerxes was history. Alexander's attitude towards the ruling king, Darius, is presented as firmly supportive. After the episode in the palace, in Plutarch's account, Alexander deploys his Dionysiac wrath not against Darius, but against his killer and would-be successor Bessus. Plutarch states (*Alex.* 43. 3):

"When he later found Bessus he shot him apart: he bent down two upright trees to the same point and attached a part of Bessus' body to each of them; he then released them and as each sprang back with force, the attached portion was pulled away."

Commentators have noted that this mode

of execution recalls Theseus' treatment of Sinis.³⁷ However, it is surely more relevant that it also embraces Dionysiac elements. The bending and sudden releasing of upright trees is a firmly Dionysiac process, as Niasfas has recently stressed.³⁸ Characteristic too is the violent dismemberment of the living body, though often by ripping apart by hand. Alexander, in Dionysiac mode, targets as his victim not the honourable Darius, but Bessus the murderous usurper of Darius' monarchy.

Whereas Plutarch is by no means the earliest extant source to present the fire at Persepolis in Dionysiac terms, he is exceptional in his version of the treatment of Bessus. Nor is this the only unusual feature of his account to recall Dionysus. For, shortly before the fire at Persepolis, Plutarch digresses on Harpalus' attempt to re-plant the palace and walks at Babylon with Greek plants.³⁹ This is an intriguing instance of appropriation and cultural realignment, whereby the palace is rendered Greek. More important for the present discussion however is the particular detail that Plutarch picks out: while all other plants grew, ivy would not (*Alex.* 35. 8). Of course, ivy was inescapably associated with Dionysus and his entourage;⁴⁰ Dionysus' plant would not grow in the palaces of Babylon. Evidently Dionysus was not at home there.⁴¹

However, as Alexander's extinguishing of the fire at Persepolis tends to indicate, Dionysus need not be the enemy of palaces. After all, the kings of Macedon had long accepted Dionysus, as well as having fine palaces; Plutarch recounts the Dionysiac activities of Alexander's mother, Olympias, at home in Macedon (*Alex.* 2. 6). Accordingly, we should not be surprised that, after the famous Dionysiac revel through Carmania, Alexander proceeded to celebrate a festival of the god in the palace at Gedrosia, with no hint of damage to its fabric (*Alex.* 67). Similarly, many rulers of the hellenistic world had no difficulty in placing Dionysus prominently even in their royal nomenclature:⁴² as Pentheus' case shows, such was the safer course of action.

To sum up: the cases reviewed above combine to show that the good king (and his palace or his household) had nothing to fear from Dionysus. For the wisdom that made him good would also ensure his acceptance of the god and his cult. Accordingly, hellenistic rulers could embrace Dionysus enthusiastically, especially because by so doing they proclaimed their good relations with their community. However, rulers who behaved with impropriety towards their subjects, and especially where they denied Dionysus' cult, could expect to suffer horribly, rent asunder, or if they were lucky only beheaded. The royal palace was a recurrent feature of the god's anger, because it

embodied the royal power and the royal family, while it also expressed the alienation of the bad king from his community and his selfish expenditure, for the god himself supported mixture, integration and community. The point is not, of course, that Dionysus was hostile to palaces *tout court*. Rather, palaces were at the centre of a nexus of concerns about royal exploitation, seclusion and alienation, so that palaces were always at risk from the god; they were preserved only by the king's good conduct and attitudes within his community. As we have seen, in Greek thought the palace was emblematic in a range of ways, but the prior issue and key point is the mind of the ruler within it.

Notes

NOTE 1

Nielsen 1999 provides a substantial treatment of hellenistic palaces which fleshes out the skeletal case presented here.

I would like to express my gratitude to Richard Seaford and Stephanie West, who both commented on a draft of this paper; also to those (led by the editor) who met in Athens under the auspices of the Danish School there to discuss the broad issue of palaces.

NOTE 2

Xen. *Econ.* 4.5, with Pomeroy 1994, 238–40 on the Achaemenid gardener-king.

NOTE 3

Hdt.1.30ff., with Braund 1998.

NOTE 4

Plato, *Gorgias*, 470c–471d, with Dodds 1959, ad loc.

NOTE 5

Hdt.1.8ff; 9.108ff.; cf. Braund 1998.

NOTE 6

Nielsen 1999, 14 presents the essence of this typology in clear tabulated form; cf. 18–23 on audience-halls and banqueting.

NOTE 7

A key difficulty for the analysis of Greek treatments of monarchy is that so much of Greek literature explores the system in the context of non-Greek peoples, so that there is often some room for doubt as to how far comments on monarchy are generalisable to Greek society itself. However, the difficulty should not be allowed to hamper the discussion, for it is clear enough that the principal concern of most Greek theorists is primarily with monarchy itself.

NOTE 8

On Plato's language here, see Pomeroy 1994, 240.

NOTE 9

Connor 1985; Seaford 1996.

NOTE 10

Nielsen 1999, 48–9. Significant doubts have been raised about the importance of the tent in this context (e.g. Miller 1997, 235–6), but they are far from conclusive; there remains some life in the hypothesis that the Achaemenid tent contributed to the design of the theatrical stage at Athens.

NOTE 11

Braund 2000 and the literature there cited.

NOTE 12

Pers. 237, with the astute remarks of Hall 1996 ad loc.

NOTE 13

Braund 1998 discusses the matter at length.

NOTE 14

Seaford 1996; cf. Dabdab Trabulsi 1989.

NOTE 15

Bacchae 1310, with Seaford 1996 ad loc.

NOTE 16

Bacchae 854, with Seaford 1996 ad loc; cf. 439, 842, 1021 on laughter.

NOTE 17

Seaford 1996, 153.

NOTE 18

Connor 1985.

NOTE 19

Connor 1985, 97–8.

NOTE 20

Xenophon makes Athenian oligarchs responsible, having returned from exile under the democracy (*Hell.* 2.2.23); Plutarch gives the initiative to the subject of his biography, Lysander (Plut. *Lys.* 15).

NOTE 21

On the oxymoron, see Braund 2000.

NOTE 22

Thomas 2000, esp. 213–48; Braund 2001

NOTE 23

Hartog 1988, esp. ch. 3.

NOTE 24

See Steiner 1994, 179–80 on Scyles' literacy in Greek.

NOTE 25

Braund 1998.

NOTE 26

On the vogue for simplicity, at least in Athenian housing, see Pomeroy 1994, 291–6. Of course, Herodotus' intended audience was much broader than Athens alone.

NOTE 27

Seaford 1996, 186.

NOTE 28

Levy 1981; Braund 2001.

NOTE 29

Braund 2001 explores Scythian austerity at length.

NOTE 30

Most obvious is Dionysopolis on the west coast, but on that side of the Black Sea the Thracians did worship Dionysus (e.g. Hdt. 5. 7). More relevant is Panticapaeum, which was evidently linked with Pan in its own civic traditions, as its later coinage shows. Further, Borysthenes itself was also Olbia, “Prosperous” or even “Happy”: it is at least worth noting that Dionysus could be “prosperous-making” (*Anth. Pal.* 9.525).

NOTE 31

Or, on a more generous view, warning the transgressor, though his fate seems beyond warning: Hdt. 4.79.1.

NOTE 32

On the Dionysiac features of the work, see Braund 1993.

NOTE 33

See esp. Mossman 1988 and 1992; cf. Bosworth 1996.

NOTE 34

Hamilton 1969 reviews the key positions.

NOTE 35

Chuvin 1991 offers much on this subject, though his principal concern is with Nonnus.

NOTE 36

Seaford 1997, 144–5.

NOTE 37

Notably, Hamilton 1969, 115.

NOTE 38

Niafas 2000.

NOTE 39

Hamilton 1969, 95 traces the story to Theophrastus.

NOTE 40

Seaford 1996, 159.

NOTE 41

Common to Plutarch and other sources is the notion that Dionysus' anger at the

destruction of Thebes led to the killing of Cleitus and the Macedonian refusal to proceed against the Indians (*Alex.* 13. 3, with Hamilton 1969, *ad loc*). Here Alexander is not Dionysus, but the victim of the god; Thebes after Pentheus could evidently be considered a favourite of Dionysus (cf. Seaford 1996, 37–8).

NOTE 42

See, for example, Rice 1983 on the Ptolemies.

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Power and Identity in the Neo-Assyrian World

Stephen
Lumsden

Introduction

When the Medes and Babylonians breached the walls of Nineveh in 612 BC 300 years of Assyrian domination were brought to an end.¹ The more brutal methods of Assyrian conquest and control are emphasized in Biblical accounts and in the propagandistic textual and pictorial sources of the Assyrians themselves. In the creation of the Assyrian Empire the policies of destruction and mass deportation acted to transform the demographic and linguistic landscapes of the ancient Near East, not only in the conquered periphery, but also in the core, within the Assyrian heartland. Within Assyria this process is often referred to in terms of a linguistic and cultural symbiosis – or, fusion – between Assyrians and Aramaeans, especially, which led to a modification of what constituted an “Assyrian”.² It is the aim of the present paper to summarize current information about the integrative processes of Assyrian imperial actions, to place these processes in a broader context, and to underline the role of the new royal cities in the Assyrian heartland, especially, in the creation of new identities within the imperial power structure.

Many of the strategies adopted by the Assyrians to control the Iron Age Near East are shared by other imperial systems in the old and new worlds (see Sinopoli 1994). A common element in many empires is the conflict between the centralizing tendencies of the palace and the power-diffusing impulses of an entrenched nobility. Two strategies adopted by Assyrian kings in the forging of centralized power will be addressed here: the establishment of new royal cities, which “may

remove recalcitrant elites from traditional sources of power” (Sinopoli 1994, 170), and the further diffusion of the power of the traditional Assyrian nobility by the enlarging and broadening of the imperial ruling class.

Identity is a complex phenomenon. Social identities are frequently fluid and situational, and ethnic identity, based on kinship ties, is one of many social identities a single individual may have.³ It seems important to try to understand the processes involved in the creation of the Assyrian Empire, at least in part because of its role in the transformation of ancient Near Eastern society – of group and individual identities – and because of its important contributions to ideological and administrative structures of later Near Eastern empires.

Supreme Power

The path towards centralization of administrative control, the growth of royal power, and the transformation of the relationship between the king and the traditional Assyrian nobility is, in its broad outline, fairly well documented.⁴ During the Old Assyrian Period, in the first half of the Second Millennium B.C., there existed within the city-state of Ashur a kind of power-sharing between the king and the families of highest status. In addition, the palace of the king was not the economic and administrative center of the city in this period (Larsen 1974, 297).

During the Middle Assyrian Period in the second half of the Second Millennium B.C., when Assyria expanded to the Euphrates, there is evidence for the usurpation of certain noble-family prerog-



atives by the king (Larsen 1974, 299). Still, it is clear that the king depended on powerful old families to administer these new territories. Indeed, it seems that provinces were run as profit-making concerns by “houses” over more than one generation (Larsen 1979, 83; Postgate 1988, xxiii-xxv).

Even in the Neo-Assyrian Period, at least down to the mid-eighth century, powerful figures were able to govern huge provinces over decades, and with a certain amount of independence from central control (Grayson 1991, 273-79; 1994, 74-5). The disruptive friction between the centralizing force of royal power and the centrifugal force of a powerful nobility seems only to have been abated with the reorganization of the empire beginning with Tiglath-Pileser III. Although very powerful individuals and groups continued to exist, the new structure of the empire, and the expansion and broadening of the bureaucratic elite, seem to have made it

more difficult for powerful men to acquire and maintain power independent of their connection to the palace.⁵

Fig. 1. View of Kuyunjik from the East.

Landscapes of Power

Beginning in the middle of the eighth century, the varied political and cultural geography of the parts of the Near East within the orbit of the Assyrians was transformed to one defined by one of two types of relation to the core. Most drastic, in political, cultural, and human terms, was incorporation within the “Land of Ashur” as a province. Less extreme was a continued role as a semi-autonomous client state, under the “Yoke of Ashur” (Grayson 1991, 203; Postgate 1992).

The Assyrian center was also transformed in the process of empire-building, most notably in the massive urbanization represented by the new royal cities founded at Nimrud, ancient Kalhu, by Ashurnasirpal II in the 9th century, at

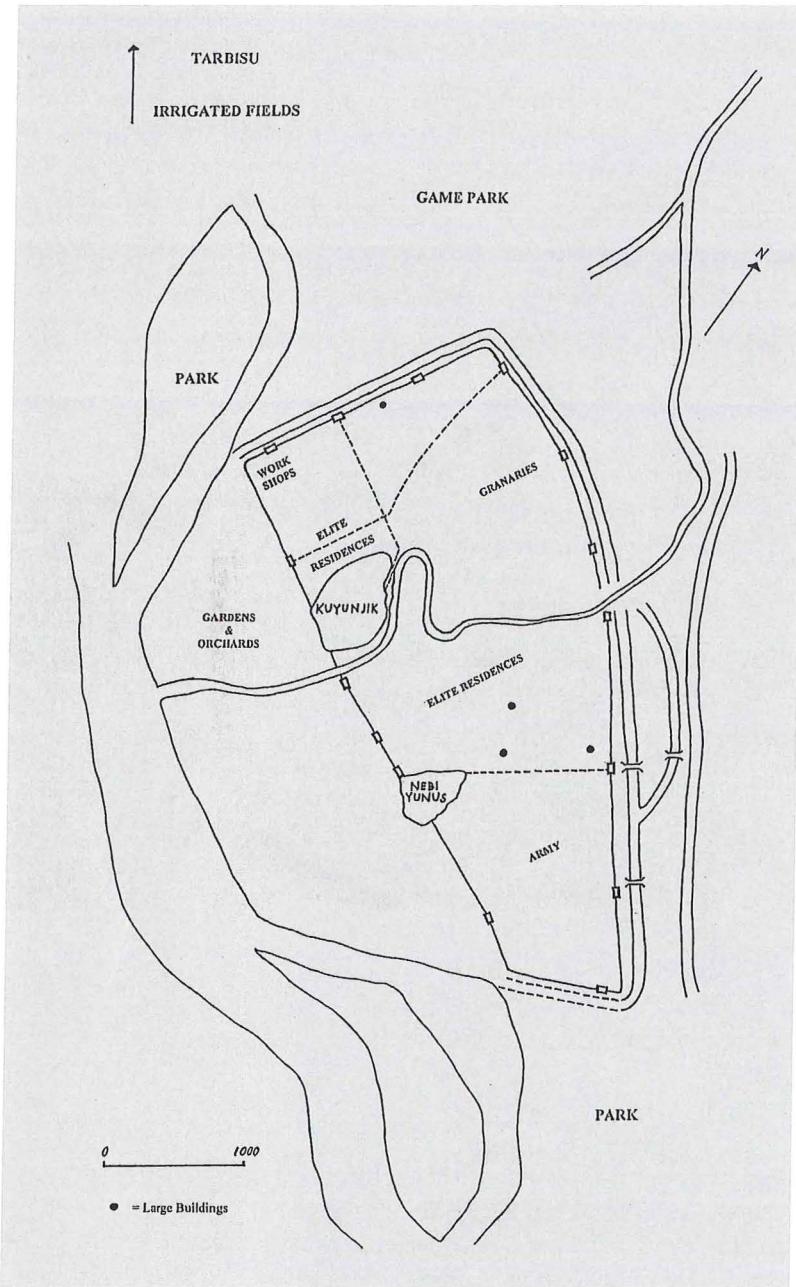


Fig. 2. Suggested layout of 7th Century Nineveh. (After Lumsden in press a, Fig. 9).

Khorsabad, ancient Dur-Sharrukin, by Sargon in the last decades of the 8th century, and at Nineveh, by Sennacherib at the end of the 8th/beginning of the 7th century. Nineveh, the largest of these new cities at 750 hectares, far exceeded the natural upper limit of settlement size in the northern dry-farming zone, and was supported by the massive irrigation schemes undertaken by Sennacherib in the vicinity of the city, by the expansion and intensification of agriculture within the nearby Sinjar plain, and by the contin-

ued integration of mountain production zones into the imperial economy.⁶

Sennacherib's reign represents both a break from the intensive expansionism of his immediate predecessors and a new focus on the Assyrian heartland.⁷ His new center of the empire at the ancient city of Nineveh is a marvelous physical manifestation of the culmination of the centralization of power in the position of the Assyrian king by the end of the 8th century (see Winter 1993, 38). A city whose size and grandeur was unparalleled, Nineveh was dominated by the high citadel at Kuyunjik (Fig. 1). The huge royal palace towering above the city on its high platform proclaims the distant and supreme position of the king in the imperial hierarchy (see Pecirkova 1988, 247). Its position opposite and at a distance from major gates and across the city from the high eastern terrace created new types of sight lines, which served to emphasize the visual and symbolic centrality of the palace⁸ (Fig. 2).

It is clear also in the Neo-Assyrian Period that it is from the royal palaces that rule was exercised and the empire run (Winter 1993, 27). Yet, at the same time, the size and complexity of the empire seem to have led to a diversification of administrative units which, in turn, may have been spread throughout the capital city. One such unit, which signified the important role that the army played in the empire, was represented by the *ekal masarti*, or arsenal, a huge building on its own raised platform, typically at a distance from the royal citadel. This building, first attested at Nimrud, was new to the administrative geography of urban Mesopotamia, and served as a kind of army headquarters, and supply and storage depot (Eph'al 1983, 101; Turner 1970).

A number of lines of evidence seem to suggest that, unlike the citadels at Nimrud and Khorsabad, the citadel at Nineveh may not have contained several palatial administrative buildings, in addition to the royal palaces of Sennacherib and Ashurbanipal (Lumsden in press a) (Fig. 3). Such administrative units as the palace of the

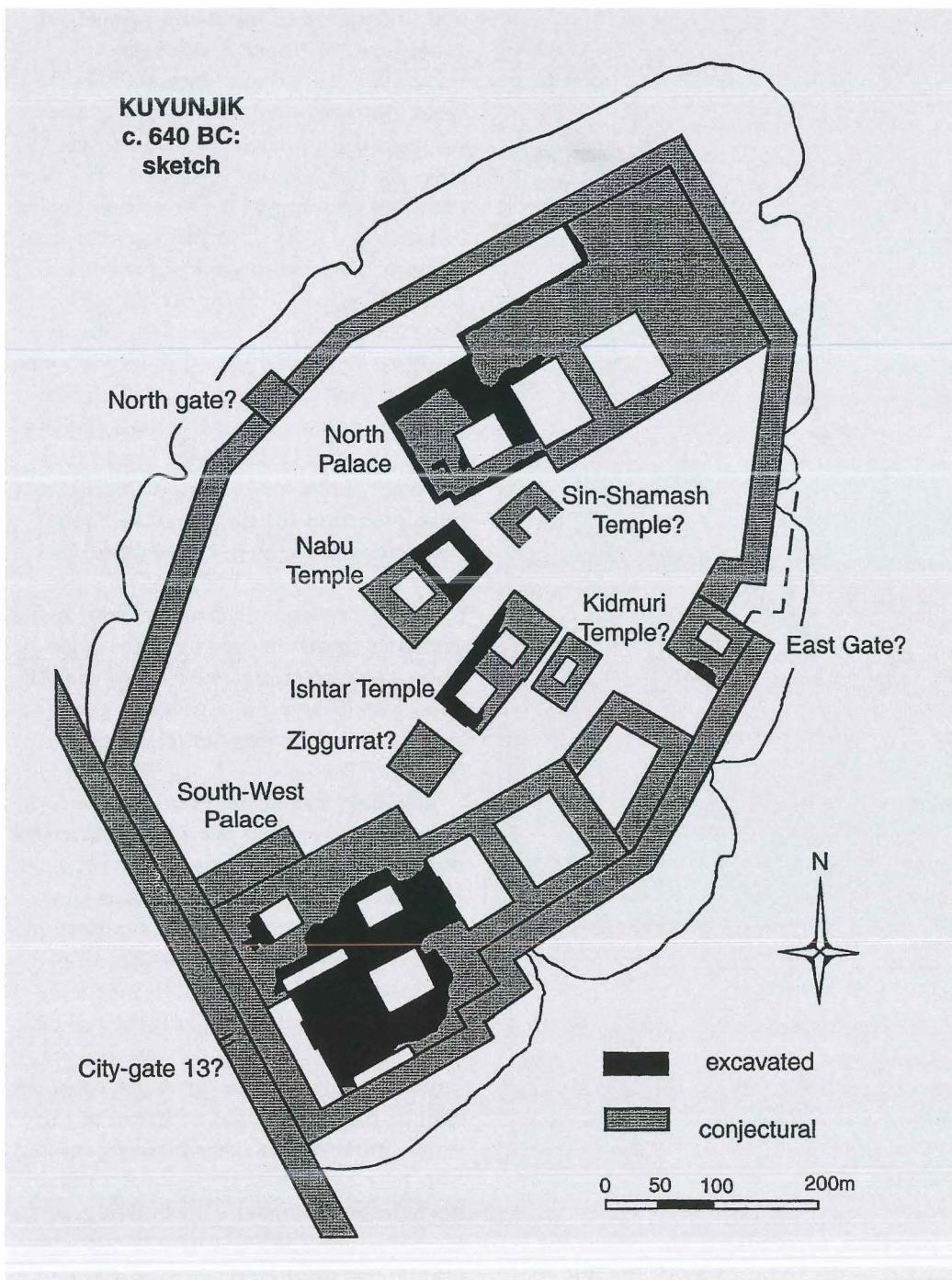


Fig. 3. Known buildings on Kuyunjik. (After J.E. Reade, Assyrian Illustrations of Nineveh, *Iranica Antiqua* XXXII/1998, Fig. 9).

provincial governor, located on the citadel at Nimrud, most probably were located within the lower town at Nineveh, beneath the high citadel (Lumsden in press b). For example, it is possible that a partially uncovered building, located between Kuyunjik and Nebi Yunus, may have represented such an administrative unit within the lower town. This large building, which inscribed bricks and frag-

ments of prisms suggest was built by Sennacherib, includes formal features typical of palatial/administrative buildings known from the citadels of the three capital cities: at least two large square courtyards give access to suites of long parallel rooms, with special features such as stone "ablution" slabs and columned entrances (Postgate 1975, 60).

Other types of administrative units situ-

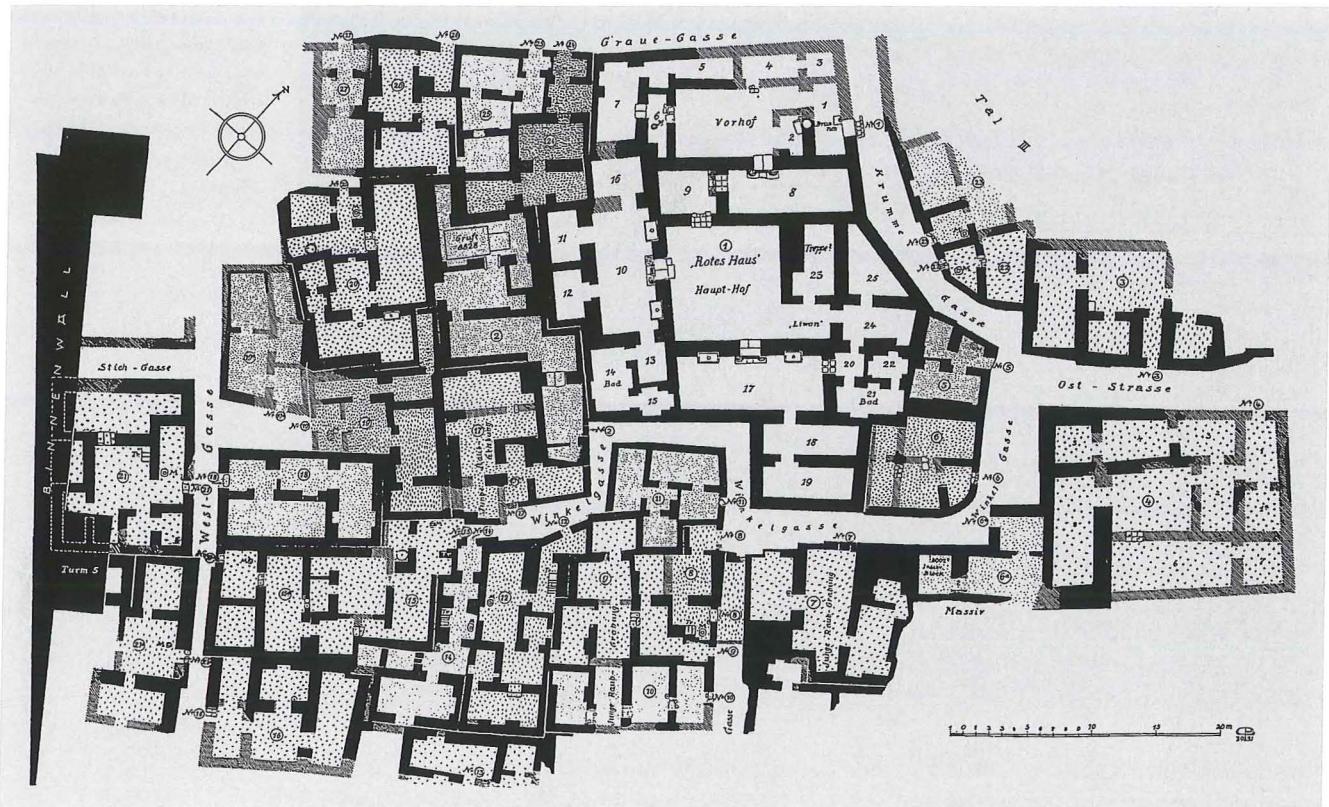


Fig 4. The “Red House” neighborhood in Ashur.
(After C. Preusser, *Die Wohnhäuser in Assur*, WVDOG 64, Berlin, 1954, Taf. 9).

ated in the city below the citadel may be represented by an arrangement that seems to be suggested by a text in connection with the construction of Khorsabad,⁹ in which a large domestic/administrative structure belonging to a high official may be surrounded by smaller domestic units of his administrative “household”. Such an “administrative cluster” might, for instance, resemble the *Rotes Haus* neighborhood at Ashur (Lumsden in press b) (Fig. 4). Municipal administration, possibly associated with city gates, might be represented at Nineveh by a building associated with the Shamash Gate in an inheritance text and by a large structure partially excavated in 1989 and 1990 beside the Mashki Gate.¹⁰

If these suppositions can be shown to be true, then it can be suggested that a significant amount of the municipal, provincial, and possibly, imperial, administration took place within the lower town at Nineveh, at least; a function similar to that suggested for the lower town at the provincial capital of Dur Katlimmu in the Lower Habur.¹¹ At the imperial capital,

these administrative buildings would have been interspersed among the houses of the imperial elite, “embassies” of vassal and independent states, and monuments to empire, in the central part of the city, closest to the citadels (Stronach and Lumsden 1992; Lumsden in press a and b).

Language and Power

The populations of Nineveh and of the other great Assyrian cities were composed of native Assyrians and of people from throughout the empire, who had either been deported unwillingly from their homelands, or who had willingly become members of the imperial hegemonic class. Huge numbers of people were moved around by the Assyrians through the practice of mass deportation; a large percentage of these seem to have been transported into Assyria proper.¹² It might be expected that such an influx of people might have led to a practical problem in terms of communication, particularly within the royal cities. Indeed, Sargon admits as much: in the peopling of his



Fig. 5. Relief from Ashurnasirpal's palace, with Assyrian and Aramaic battlefield scribes and an officer presenting an award to a soldier. (Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).

new city he states that he “settled in its midst deportees from the conquered countries, [and that he] made them speak one language” (Parpola 1995, 54; Oded 1979, 31).

The solution in the cities and in the imperial bureaucracy, for those who did not speak the enforced common language, at least, was bilingualism.¹³ It is in the Neo-Assyrian Period, of course, that Aramaic became the most commonly spoken language in the Near East, and began to replace Akkadian, in the western part of the empire at least, as the international language of communication,¹⁴ circumstances which were probably at least partly due to Assyrian imperial policies (Fig. 5). The intense interaction between the Assyrian and Aramaean languages and the growing importance of Aramaic within the empire can now be better understood in light of the new paradigm proposed by Mario Liverani (1988) and Hartmut Kühne (1995) for Assyrian-Aramaean relations at the beginning of the Neo-Assyrian Period and for the manner in which the Assyrians regained control of the lands west to the Euphrates. Assyrians and Aramaeans were together in the Habur Region, for instance, much earlier that

previously thought, and Aramaean elites had been integrated into Assyrian control of the area already before Ashurnasirpal's advances in the 9th century (Liverani 1988; Kuhrt 1995, 397–8), thus adding time-depth and complexity to the relationship between the two peoples.

Whether the predominant spoken language in a city like Dur-Sharrukin at the end of the 8th century was Assyrian or Aramaic is not clear; perhaps it was not even very important. In antiquity language seems not to have been invested with identity in the same way that modern nation states invest it, and language and identity may have been more fluid and negotiable in the past.¹⁵ Texts during this period indicate that the Aramaic-speaking town dwellers of the Middle Euphrates region did not consider themselves to be Aramaeans, “but applied this designation to their nomadic adversaries” (Zadok 1995, 280). In addition, in the Assyrian heartland the Standard Babylonian dialect of Akkadian had begun to replace the Assyrian dialect in certain categories of annalistic and scholarly literature already in the Middle Assyrian Period (Gelb 1960, 326–7; Kuhrt 1995, 476).

While bilingualism must have been a

requirement in the civil and military administration of the empire, Aramaic annotations on clay tablets may indicate that some low level officials could not, at the least, read cuneiform in 7th century Nineveh (Millard 1983, 101; Grayson 1991, 185). There is no indication that the Assyrians imposed their language on conquered populations; outside the major cities, at least, in the vast agricultural hinterland and in the provinces at a distance from the core, it seems that Aramaic speakers far outnumbered Assyrian speakers (Zadok 1997). Assyrian Akkadian does not seem to have penetrated the periphery of the empire in places like southern Palestine, for instance: The episode in Isaiah in which a high Assyrian official negotiates with the defenders of Jerusalem seems to indicate that in this part of the empire Aramaic was the second language, after Hebrew, and it was mainly only understood by administrative officials (Machinist 1983, 732-3; Ahlström 1993, 683).

In addition to its increasingly important role as an administrative language and *lingua franca*, Aramaic was also acquiring the properties of a language of culture and prestige within at least parts of the imperial system, already in the Neo-Assyrian Period (Greenfield 1978; Eph'al 1999). Bar-Rakib of Sam'al, a loyal vassal of Tiglath-Pileser III, composed the inscription dedicated to his father's exploits in the local dialect of Aramaic.¹⁶ However, he composed his own inscription, outlining his own exploits and emphasizing his loyalty to Tiglath-Pileser, not in the local dialect, nor in Akkadian, but in the "Mesopotamian Aramaic" that had developed in the Jazira, within Assyria (Greenfield 1978, 95). And, at the other end of the empire, within the Zagros south of Lake Urmia, in ancient Mannea, a monumental Aramaic inscription attests to the aura of prestige and culture that this language had acquired in this non-semitic speaking area already at the beginning of the 7th Century BC (Eph'al 1999, 118; Sokoloff 1999, 106).

Identity and Power

The interplay between the two languages, and the increasing use of Aramaic,¹⁷ was only one aspect of the transformation of both the Assyrian and the Aramaean cultures. Another transformative mechanism was the integration of non-Assyrians, from throughout the empire, into all levels of Assyrian society (see Oded 1979, 75-115). An increased role in the administration of the empire for foreign "new men", as well as eunuchs (see Grayson 1995), even at the highest positions, acted to advance royal power at the expense of the entrenched native Assyrian aristocracy.¹⁸ These incorporative strategies of the Assyrians resulted in the loss or modification of old identities throughout the empire, the creation of new ones, and, as has often been noted, the genesis of a new and broader, more inclusive, "Assyrian" identity (see Zadok 1997, 216). The methods adopted to create this new imperial society were many and varied, and are common to those used in other empires.¹⁹

As noted earlier, an important element for understanding the increasingly important role that Aramaeans came to play in Assyria is the new paradigm proposed by Liverani and Kühne for the Assyrian recovery of the plains west to the Euphrates (see also Morandi Bonacossi 1996). These studies indicate that the Assyrians never completely lost control of at least parts of this area, and that local Aramaean elites were integrated much earlier than previously thought into Assyrian administration of the Habur and Balikh zones and beyond, thus extending the time-frame for Assyrian-Aramaean integration (see also Kuhrt 1995).

West of the Euphrates in the 9th and 8th centuries developing alliances with local elites led to the creation of a class structure that cross-cut ethnic and political boundaries, and which was distinct from earlier local patterns of social hierarchy.²⁰ Contrary to their propagandistic accounts, the Assyrians were not met with unrelenting antagonism by the states in the west, nor did Assyrian conquest mean "total

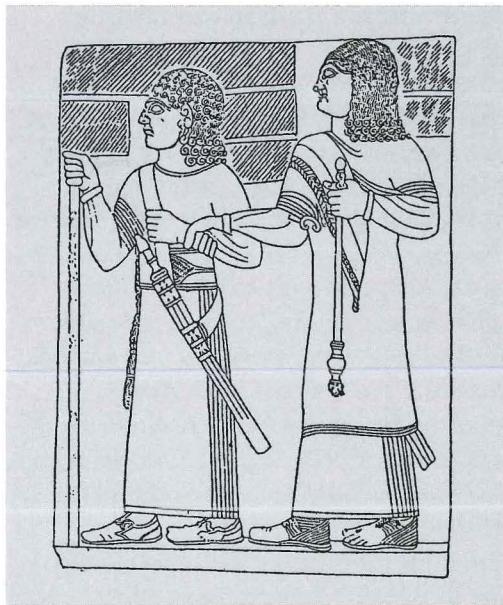
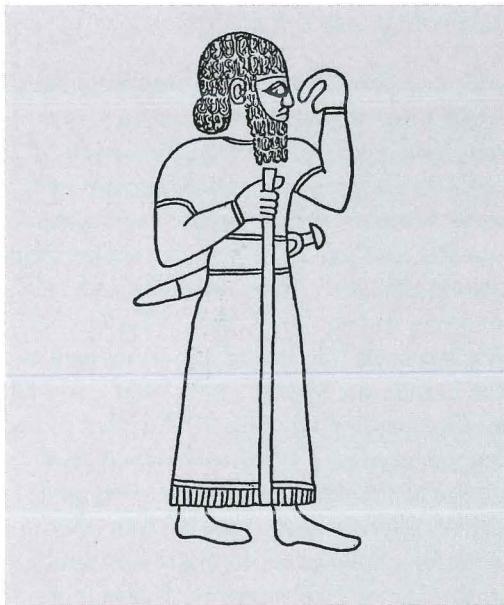


Fig. 6. Representations of early 9th Century and 8th Century rulers and soldiers at Carchemish. (After E. Akurgal, *The Art of Greece: Its Origins in the Mediterranean and Near East*, New York, 1968, Figs. 80, 81, 83, 93).

annihilation" (Lanfranchi 1997, 81-2). Pro-Assyrian factions were common, and many states were loyal allies to the Assyrians (Lanfranchi 1997; Kuhrt 1995, 485), increasingly eager to profit politically, economically, and in terms of status-enhancement by association with Assyria. Bar-Rakib of Sam'al, for example, proudly described how his father "ran at the wheel" of his Assyrian overlord's chariot during his military campaigns (Greenfield 1978, 95; Lanfranchi 1997, 85).

Increasingly, then, many local elites from North Syrian and Southeast Anat-

lian states began to connect status, and its enhancement, to their connection with the Assyrian power structure. This cooption of local identities is reflected in the reliefs of the 9th and 8th centuries at places like Carchemish, where, through emulation and, most probably, the bestowal of honors such as particular types of robes and emblems of status, the rulers and their nobles adopted Assyrian dress, hair styles, and emblems of rank²¹ (Fig. 6). This change in "self-symbolization"²² may represent a new identification with an international ruling class that was develop-

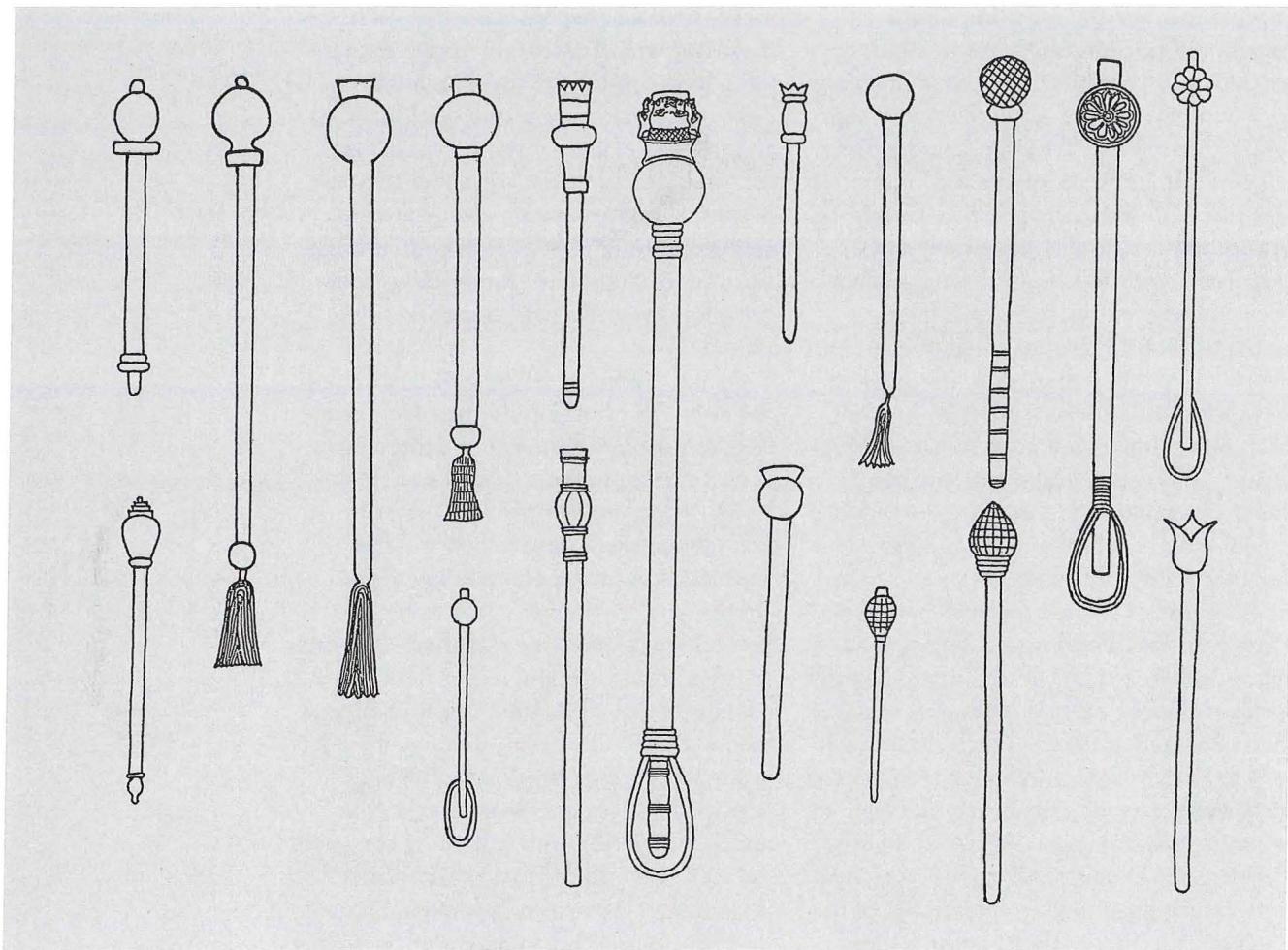


Fig. 7. Maces represented on Assyrian reliefs from the 9th Century through the 7th Century.

(After T.A. Madhloom, *The Chronology of Neo-Assyrian Art*, London, 1970, Pl. XXXI).

ing along with the Assyrian conquests. Many local elites, then, had already begun to look like Assyrians before their conquest and integration into the Assyrian administrative and military hierarchy. As noted in a recent description of this process in Egypt, assyriannization “was not a matter of birth but of outward appearance” (Kemp 1997, 128).

Another powerful tool of integration was the imperial army. On the one hand, the recruitment of men and units from conquered territories and beyond had a devastating effect on local cohesiveness (Fales and Postgate 1992, xxiii). On the other, onomastic data and the adoption of Aramaic military terminology again attest to the important role played by Aramaeans in the army, although Samarians, Urartians, Nubians, Medes, Neo-Hittites, and many other groups, were also successfully incorporated into this institution.²³ That

the royal guards units, closest to the royal family, were made up principally of foreigners attests to their perceived loyalty (See Liverani 1995; Lanfranchi 1997, 85).

Recruitment into the Assyrian army represented an advancement for local military elites and common soldiers in the form of prestige, material benefits, and the possibility of advancement (Lanfranchi 1997, 85). Allegiance was assured through rewards for success in the form of land grants, booty, and honors (cf. Sinopoli 1994, 167). Indeed, this may have been the first modern army, in at least one sense, in that this mingling of many different ethnic military units was given organizational and integrative cohesiveness through the standardization of uniforms and equipment for various units and ranks and standardized symbols of rank and honor²⁴ (Figs. 5 and 7).

On a broader scale the policy of mass

deportation was the most important instrument of population control and assimilation. The movement of populations to new homes at the opposite end of the empire, or into the Assyrian heartland, acted to transform both urban and rural identities (see Emberling 1997). In this regard, the creation of huge new cities, populated with folk from throughout the Near Eastern world, was a new phenomenon. These centers of empire acquired new buildings, new institutions, new administrative structures and served as contexts for an intensive social transformation and the radical restructuring of identities among the emerging imperial ruling class (see Liverani 1979, 308; Grayson 1991, 199–200).

New forms of civil society, characterized by a militarization and regimentation, are especially evident in the urban context of the imperial capitals, and seem to have been adopted, at least partly, as a means to organize the massive influx of laborers and craftsmen into the center, and as a tool of assimilation (Postgate 1987, 260). Thusly, civilian pursuits increasingly were carried out by groups under the command of the *rab kisri*, a military cohort commander (Postgate 1987, 259).

Another significant repercussion of the particular form of urbanization within Assyria was the development of professional associations that cross-cut ethnic identity.²⁵ These connections clearly came to play an important role as an organizing principle in cities like Nineveh. They are manifested physically by an apparent link to specific quarters of the city; for instance, by the group of weavers at Ashur (Fales 1997, 36) and by the lists of neighborhoods at Nineveh, such as the “residences of the scribes”, “the residences of the brewers”, “residences of the chief singer” and so on, and the possible “administrative clusters” suggested above.²⁶ Evidence for the construction of Khorsabad seems to indicate that the palace was actively involved in this process.²⁷

The new royal cities, then, were characterized by an especially high ethnic and

social diversity (see Sinopoli 1994). At these imperial centers new multiple identities were forged, the most important facets of which were probably class, rank, and professional association. Onomastic data indicate, however, the continued role of ethnic identity which cross-cut class and profession.²⁸ Most significant, though, was the forging of an over-arching collective identity as the new imperial ruling class.²⁹

In the provinces at some distance from the Assyrian heartland the massive disruption of populations through deportations served other purposes. The conquest of independent states, their incorporation into the empire as provinces, and the introduction into them of often great numbers of foreigners, acted to replace any national, or political, identity that may have existed with new regional and local identities; to replace states with territorial minorities.³⁰ All were treated equally and were “counted as Assyrians” (Becking 1992, 29–30; see also Machinist 1993). Liverani describes this process as one in which “A world made up of Urartians and Elamites, of Aramaeans and Neo-Hittites, of Phoenicians and Israelites, of Babylonians and Chaldeans, an extremely rich world, enriched by different cultural, political, social and economic experiences in the end becomes simply a world made up of Assyrian subjects” (Liverani 1979, 305).

Cultural homogenization and ethnic fragmentation can take place simultaneously (Eriksen 1997). The old loyalties of those displaced groups were replaced by new connections to the core, to a new identification with the Assyrian state (Liverani 1979, 300; Oded 1979, 46–8). Their new situations, sometimes as members of the dominant class in the new land, would have given such groups a sense of social advancement and prestige enhancement.³¹ Possible hostility directed towards these groups by native populations might also have acted to magnify their sense of distinctiveness (see Oded 1979, 46; Emberling 1997).

While populations of provincial towns

were mixed, texts indicate that the majority of the peasants, whether free or tied to the land, in the vast rural farmland of the central provinces in the Jazirah, bore West-Semitic, mainly Aramaean, names.³² The policy proudly proclaimed in royal annals of intensive resettlement and agricultural expansion – Adad-Nirari III claims to have founded 331 villages in the Jazirah (Grayson 1996, 210) – is reflected in settlement patterns as revealed in archaeological surveys. In the Sinjar there is a huge increase in the number of settlements, mainly villages and farmsteads, basically filling the entire available agricultural landscape (Wilkinson 1995, 145–6). This “dispersal into small rural settlements” seems to have been typical throughout the dry-farming zone in the Assyrian Period, and appears to have provided “a template for the settlement pattern that followed during the Hellenistic, Roman/Parthian and, to a lesser extent, Byzantine/Sasanian Periods” (Wilkinson 1995, 157). In addition, the settlement hierarchy in the Sinjar seems to have devolved into a 2-tier one,³³ and here and elsewhere the loss of first rank settlements symbolized the disappearance of independent local and regional political, ideological and economic systems of self-awareness (Liverani 1992, 130).

The creation of the empire also acted to open borders and markets (Lehmann 1998, 31). Texts attest to the mobility throughout the empire of administrative officials, military men, merchants, and artisans.³⁴ Material correlates of this process may include an increased standardization of ceramics and the spread of particular types of Assyrian ceramics west of the Euphrates, perhaps as symbols of prestige.³⁵

In common with other imperial systems,³⁶ within client states on the edges of the Assyrian Empire, local elites were incorporated into the emerging class structure of the empire, and were rewarded for their cooperation by a system of awards of economic benefits, privileges, and social advancement. This process is most evident in the states on the south-

western frontier (Ekron, Edom, Ammon, etc), which prospered greatly during the so-called *Pax Assyriaca* in the 7th century (Gitin 1997; Finkelstein 1995). The adoption of certain ceramics and other Assyrian-style objects, and the use of objects in stone and shell in a new “international” style point to the integration of local elites here into the culture of the ruling classes that spanned the empire (Routledge 1997, 39; Singer-Avitz 1999). The new international role as clients of the Assyrian king “led to the emergence in the 7th century of a new kind of leadership in [places like] Ammon, Moab and Edom, one less dependent on local forms of authority (such as kinship) and more closely tied to an international community of other elites” (Routledge 1997, 39).

Conclusion

In the creation of its empire, Assyria offered both devastation and opportunity, and each played a role in the transformation of the ancient Near East. Boundaries were abolished, conquered populations were “counted among the Assyrians” and were instructed by native Assyrians “how to behave” and were shown “their duties to the Assyrian king and his gods” (Dalley 1985, 35). A multi-ethnic and cosmopolitan class of administrators and soldiers developed from the addition of foreign elites to the native Assyrian ruling class.

Israelite “ideological resistance to imperial tyranny” was mainly expressed by the condemnation of this “annihilation of nations . . . the removal of national boundaries . . . and the exile of populations” (Weinfeld 1986, 170–2). Aramaean resistance may have been characterized by what Oppenheim called their “refusal” to adopt Akkadian and cuneiform.³⁷ Native Assyrian resistance to the changing nature of the empire and its ruling class is more difficult to document, but may be represented by at least some of the civil unrest within Assyria from the end of the 9th to the middle of the 8th century, and perhaps, strangely enough, by Sargon’s unwillingness to receive, directly, at least,

messages in Aramaic,³⁸ and by the abandonment of Nineveh by the “old Ninevite families” shortly after it became the central city of the Empire.³⁹

The founding of the new royal cities in the heartland played a pivotal role in the creation of the multi-ethnic, militaristic ruling class that came to dominate the Near Eastern world during the Neo-Assyrian Period. It was in the inclusive process of peopling these urban centers and of integrating this diverse population into the imperial elite that a new Assyrian identity was created. This group was connected to other members of the administrative and military class throughout the empire by a shared sense of collective identity.⁴⁰ The cosmopolitan royal cities, then, served to embody the wider empire (Liverani 1979, 314; Machinist 1993, 88). As ties that connected elites throughout the empire would have become more important than ties to local communities, the population of the empire, spread out

across the landscape in mainly small agricultural villages, might be expected to have become increasingly alienated from the imperial structure and its ruling class. Already in the Neo-Assyrian Period, then, the foundation for the chasm that separated the imperial elite from the masses that characterized later empires in the Near East⁴¹ had been set.

Still, 150 years after the fall of Assyria the ruling elites in Samaria expressed their cohesiveness, their distinctiveness, and their status in relation to their neighbors in terms of memories of events of the 7th century. In a letter to Artaxerxes I to protest the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, they describe themselves as “the men of Uruk, and of Babylon, and of Susa – that is, the Elamites – and other peoples whom the great and glorious Osnappar (=Ashurbanipal) deported and settled in the city of Samaria, and the rest of the province of Beyond the River”.⁴²

Notes

NOTE 1

This paper has benefited immeasurably from comments by Irene Winter, Geoff Emberling, and Mogens Trolle Larsen. Any errors in fact or interpretation that remain are the author's alone.

NOTE 2

This topic is most explicitly treated in Postgate 1989. See also Tadmor 1975, 43–4; Millard 1983, 101; Machinist 1993; Kuhrt 1995; Brinkman 1999, 2.

NOTE 3

Emberling 1997; Eriksen 1993; J.M. Hall 1997; Jones 1997.

NOTE 4

Larsen 1979; Pecirkova 1988; Kuhrt 1995.

NOTE 5

See Larsen 1979; Pecirkova 1988. However, there is some evidence that eunuchs, for instance, formed associations with each other, and separate from their ties to royal power, which may not have served royal interests. See Grayson 1995, 96.

NOTE 6

See Jakobsen and Lloyd, 1935; Oates 1968; Reade 1978; Wilkinson 1995, 158–9. The title for the Hallahu Gate at Nineveh, “bringing the Products of the Mountains” (Reade 1978, 51), suggests that mountain zones were producing food for the imperial capital.

NOTE 7

Reade 1978, 47; Grayson 1991, 103; Russell 1991, 260–2.

NOTE 8

A possible layout of 7th century Nineveh is proposed in Lumsden in press a & b.

NOTE 9

For this text see Parpola 1987, 100.

NOTE 10

Many kinds of activities took place at or

near gates: Gelb *et al* 1965, 20–22. Mayors – or at least their districts – are distinguished by gate names at Neo-Assyrian Assur: Klengel-Brandt & Radner 1997, 154. For the “gate of the mayor”, see Gelb *et al* 1956, 164. For the Shamash gate building, see Kwasman 1988, 80. The building next to the Mashki Gate is discussed in Stronach & Lumsden 1992, Stronach 1997, and Lumsden in press a and b.

NOTE 11

See Kühne 1995, 82. This aspect of urban organization may have characterized many, if not most, northern political centers: see Stone 1999, 204, 211–12; van de Mieroop 1999, 254.

NOTE 12

Oded 1979, 28. Oded's acceptance of the Assyrian account of at least 4,5 million deportees during the entire imperial period seems unrealistic: see Millard 1991; de Odorico 1995.

NOTE 13

Machinist cautions against concluding from Sargon's statement that the Assyrians had a general policy of enforcing a standard language on conquered peoples (Machinist 1993, 96). The extent to which Assyrians learned Aramaic, for instance, is not clear, although it has been asserted that the rising importance of Aramaic within the empire may indicate that they could, and did, learn this language. See Millard 1983, 103–4. On bilingualism in Assyria, see Tadmor 1982, 453–55; Parpola 1987, xv–xvi. See, more generally, J.M. Hall 1997, 178.

NOTE 14

Tadmor 1982, 451–53. For the increasing role of Aramaic as an official language of the Assyrian Empire, and of its replacement of Akkadian as the *lingua franca* of the ancient Near East already in the Assyrian Period, see also Greenfield 1978, 94; Machinist 1983, 732; 1993; Millard 1983, 103, 107; Fales 1986, 35, 45–6.

NOTE 15

See Safran 1999; Emberling 1997; J.M. Hall 1997.

NOTE 16

For this text see Gibson 1971–82, vol. 2, no. 14.

NOTE 17

It is clear that it is in the Neo-Assyrian Period that the use of Aramaic spread throughout the empire and into all levels of imperial society. See Greenfield 1978; Tadmor 1982, 451–53; Machinist 1983, 733; Millard 1983, 103–4, 107; Fales 1986.

NOTE 18

Kuhrt 1995, 506. Foreign elites and eunuchs might be expected to be more tied to the king, their patron, and less likely to have divided loyalties than the ancient Assyrian aristocratic class. For this perception of eunuchs, see Grayson 1995, 95–6. However, see also note 5 above.

NOTE 19

Cf. Patterson 1987; Gledhill 1988 and 1989; D'Altroy 1992; Sinopoli 1994.

NOTE 20

For this imperial pattern elsewhere, see Gledhill 1989, 121; Patterson 1987.

NOTE 21

See Kinnier Wilson 1972, 41; Fales and Postgate 1992, xxiii. For the cultural exchange between west and east, see Winter 1982.

NOTE 22

For this concept, see Marcus 1995.

NOTE 23

Kinnier Wilson 1972; Tadmor 1982, 451; Dalley 1985; Fales 1991, 103–6; Kuhrt 1995, 398. See also Garelli 1982 and Kuhrt 1995 for the important role, in general, of Aramaeans in Assyria.

NOTE 24

For standardized equipment and symbols of rank, see Reade 1972, 102; Millard 1983, 103; Dezsö and Curtis 1991; Fales and Postgate 1992, xxvii–xxix; Bedal 1992; Postgate 1994. It does seem, however, that at least certain royal guards units made up of non-Assyrians and special units in the army, such as the *Itu'aeans*, retained their native costumes. See, for illustrations of these, Wäfler 1975.

NOTE 25

Fales 1997; Fales and Jakob-Rost 1991, 10. See also van de Mieroop 1997, 102, 110–15. For the state's role in subverting kinship ties in an earlier urban context, see Stone 1987, 5, 18, 20–28, 128.

NOTE 26

Fales and Postgate 1992, xvii–xix; Lumsden in press b.

NOTE 27

Letters indicate that Sargon took an active interest in all aspects of the construction of his new royal city (Parpola 1995, 52–3). The palace administration not only organized the construction of the city wall, palaces and temples, but also built houses within the city for certain state employees, such as the recruitment officers mentioned in a letter to the king (Parpola 1995, 64–7; Parpola 1987, 100–101. See also Lumsden in press b.). The palace may also have been involved in designing (and building?) houses in Nimrud (see, for this text, Parpola 1987, 66).

NOTE 28

Fales 1997; Zadok 1997; see also Radner 1998; 1999.

NOTE 29

Contra Mann, who, although he notes a move towards “more extensive, diffused identities” in the Assyrian Period, argues

that the Assyrians did not extend “Assyrian citizenship/national identity” to the ruling classes of conquered peoples” (1986, 236).

NOTE 30

See Postgate 1979, 217; Oded 1979, 43–4; Ahlström 1993, 676; Na'aman 1995. For examples of this process in other imperial situations, see Gledhill 1989; Patterson 1987, 122; T.D. Hall 1998.

NOTE 31

For a similar phenomenon in a later period in the Near East, see Wieserhöfer 1996, 193.

NOTE 32

Becking 1992, 116–18; Na'aman 1993, 1995, 110–11; Fales and Postgate 1995, xxxi; Postgate 1997, 165–6; Zadok 1995; 1997.

NOTE 33

Wilkinson 1995, 148. At a distance from the Assyrian heartland and royal cities, in the Habur Valley, the rural population – much of which was deported from the west – was tightly controlled through a local, many-tiered administrative/settlement system: see Bernbeck 1993; 1999.

NOTE 34

Fales and Postgate 1995, xix; Dalley 1985, 48; Parpola 1995, 54–6.

NOTE 35

Lehmann 1998, 19, 30–31. There may also be evidence at 7th Century Nineveh for the development of a more mass-produced and standardized ceramic assemblage to meet the increased demands of the most populous city of the empire (Lumsden 1999, 4–5).

NOTE 36

Cf. Gledhill 1989, 116, 119–23; Sinopoli 1994, 163–4; 1995, 7.

NOTE 37

See Oppenheim 1967, 34–5 on the Aramaean resistance to the adoption of cuneiform and Akkadian.

NOTE 38

See Parpola 1987, xvi. On the other hand, as Parpola notes, Sargon's refusal to accept communications in Aramaic may have been due to security reasons.

NOTE 39

For a discussion of the relevant text, see Tadmor 1982, 451. Machinist also suggests that an apparent hardening of Assyrian attitudes towards conquered peoples after Sargon may have represented “an effort ideologically to clarify boundaries between us’ and them’ precisely because the boundaries were dissolving” (1993, 94–5). On resistance to the Assyrians, in general, see Garelli 1973.

NOTE 40

This collective identity was, in turn, symbolized by the exchange among the imperial elite of luxury goods (ivory-decorated furniture, ivory objects, decorated metal vessels, jewellery, garments, seals, horse trappings, etc.), many of which were in the western, “exotic” style. See Winter 1982; Marcus 1995, 2493–98; and, more generally, Sinopoli 1994, 172. For an “Assyrian Empire style” of furniture, see Curtis and Reade 1995, 123. For the impact of this imperial culture on a peripheral society, see Winter 1977; 1980; Marcus 1996.

NOTE 41

Brown 1976, 14, 16, 26–28, 34, 60, for the late Roman Near Eastern world.

NOTE 42

Book of Ezra 4.7–16; Eph'al 1988, 149.

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The First Palace of Amathus and the Cypriot Poleogenesis¹

Thierry Petit

The question of palace architecture in Cyprus is related to a very important and at the same time very sensitive problem, namely the origins of the Cypriot City-Kingdoms. There are two conflicting theories: either historical states occurred in the Late Bronze Age (12th-11th cent. BC) and were due to the new Achaean settlers who imported their own kind of polity, which may have undergone some Canaanite influence,² or they were a later consequence of the Phoenician influence in the island from the 9th century onwards. This conflict is similar to the controversy, which a few decades ago divided the supporters of a continuity and the defenders of a rupture between the Bronze Age and the Late Geometric period in Greece.

The Achaean hypothesis is supported by foundation-myths. According to these traditions, some Achaean heroes landed in Cyprus and founded the historical kingdoms: for instance, Salamis was founded by Teucros, son of Telamon, king of... Salamis in Greece, and Paphos was founded by the Arcadian Agapenor. The origin of almost all the Greek-speaking cities was explained in this way.³ The use of such etiological legends was of course impossible for Kition, the main Phoenician city,⁴ and for Amathus whose inhabitants were considered as autochthonous (Ps. Skylax *GGM* I, 77-78) because they spoke a very strange language called 'Eteocypriot'.⁵ But according to the myth the Amathusians were either descendants of the Ethiopians, or heirs of the local King Kinyras, the only Cypriot mentioned by Homer.⁶ As a matter of fact, Theopompus explains that Kinyras was expelled by Agamemnon's Achaeans and fled to the south of the

island where he founded Amathus (Theopompus, *FGH* 115, F 103,3). In this way, according to the legends, there was a state-continuity: the Greek-speaking kingdoms as well as Amathus were founded immediately after the arrival of the Achaeans in Cyprus, which is generally dated to the beginning of the 11th century BC.⁷

However, the textual sources offer no evidence for Cypriot kingdoms before the late 8th or early 7th century BC. The name of several kingdoms in Cyprus is mentioned for the first time in some Assyrian royal inscriptions: for instance the Asarhaddon prism from 673/2 BC gives a list of ten Cypriot kings and the name of their cities. Thus there is a four-century gap in the textual evidence.

The question is: may archaeology help us to fill this gap. The supporters of the theory of continuity between the late Bronze Age and the 8th century are of course inclined to deny the existence of 'Dark Ages' in Cyprus.⁸ Thus Snodgrass (1988) argues that the case of Cyprus is quite dissimilar to that of Greece during the so-called Dark Ages, which appear now to be less 'dark' than once thought.⁹ Other scholars minimize the significance of the decreasing number of settlements and the obvious poverty in material culture during the Cypriot Geometric (CG) I-II period (1050-850 BC), and some refuse to attach any importance to qualitative and quantitative factors¹⁰ – but in this case one must abstain from any archaeological hermeneutic at all. Others argue that royal artefacts or prestige goods do exist in the 11th century, such as the Kourion sceptre,¹¹ and the *obelos* from the Palea-Paphos – Skales necropolis.¹²

The first difficulty occurs when these authors must admit that the very few settlements of the 11th century do not square with the cities mentioned in the Assyrian lists, nor with later known city-states.¹³ Possibly the only occupied sites during all the Late Bronze (LB) A – CG IA period are Kition and Paphos.¹⁴ Furthermore, it is commonly admitted that there is no decisive evidence for kingdoms as early as the 11th century¹⁵ and that a decline within the material culture did exist in Geometric Cyprus.¹⁶ Indeed, from a political point of view, one could add that the petty kingdoms and kingships of the Archaic and Classical periods are closer to the Phoenician ones or to the principalities of the ‘World of Odysseus’ than to the Mycenaean states as known from the linear B texts. In any case, it is very unlikely that the ruling classes of the late Mycenaean kingdoms could have succeeded in reproducing their former political structure in Cyprus (*pace* Iacovou 1995, 103 and 1998, 11-12). The loss of the Linear B script and the absence of evidence for a Cypro-Minoan or Cypro-syllabic script is a very important indication for the disappearance of state formation in Cyprus, or at least for the great difference between the political organization in Cyprus in the 11th century and the Mycenaean kingdoms in the 13th century BC (cf. Iacovou 1998, 111-12).

It is also worth noting that there is a wide gap of three centuries between the supposed 11th century royal items and the first signs of economic and political Renaissance in the 8th century BC.¹⁷ During the 11th and 10th centuries BC, no objects have been found in tombs to identify them as royal and thus to distinguish them from the burial sites of common people.¹⁸ Moreover this is true also of the 9th century BC, as the first “royal tomb” is the tomb NW 194 of Amathus dating from the end of the 9th century BC,¹⁹ followed a century later by tomb I in the royal necropolis of Salamis.

On the other hand David W. Rupp has developed in some recent works what one may call the ‘Phoenician hypothesis’. He

emphasizes several points to support this view: the existence of city-walls, the distribution of luxury and/or imported items, the magnificent burial rituals in built tombs, the reappearance of the script, and the founding of sanctuaries. All the evidence shows that some kind of Cypriot Renaissance did take place during the 8th century BC.²⁰ As in Greece at the same time, there is in Cyprus a dramatic increase of population.²¹ The most important innovations occurred during this time as well: the first built tombs,²² the founding of great sanctuaries like that of Apollo Hylates in Kourion, and of Aphrodite in Amathus, and the development of some others like that of Aghia Irini.²³ Also the contacts with the outside world increased from the Cypro-Archaic period onwards.²⁴ Thus in most regions of the island the links with the Levant are first documented during this time,²⁵ and also the Greek imports were very scanty before the 8th century BC, Amathus thus constituting an exception.²⁶ Certainly, the revival of the script in the 8th century is a very clear sign of a political Renaissance, too.²⁷

For these reasons, it seems more likely that the real emergence of the Cypriot city-kingdoms occurred during the 8th century,²⁸ namely immediately after the arrival of the Phoenicians in Kition, which took place according to the *opinio communis* in the middle or sometime during the second half of the 9th century;²⁹ and it is certainly easier to consider their appearance a consequence of this last event. One may agree with scholars opposed to this new theory that the archaeological evidence is rather scanty.³⁰ Since some of them have asked for ‘new hard evidence’,³¹ the aim of this paper is to draw attention to some of that evidence.

One must admit that Rupp’s ‘Phoenician hypothesis’ is mainly based on social stratification as it appears in the burials,³² and some scholars certainly agree with the viability of this method.³³ However, there is a general consensus that excavated settlements and survey data provide better indications for population change than do

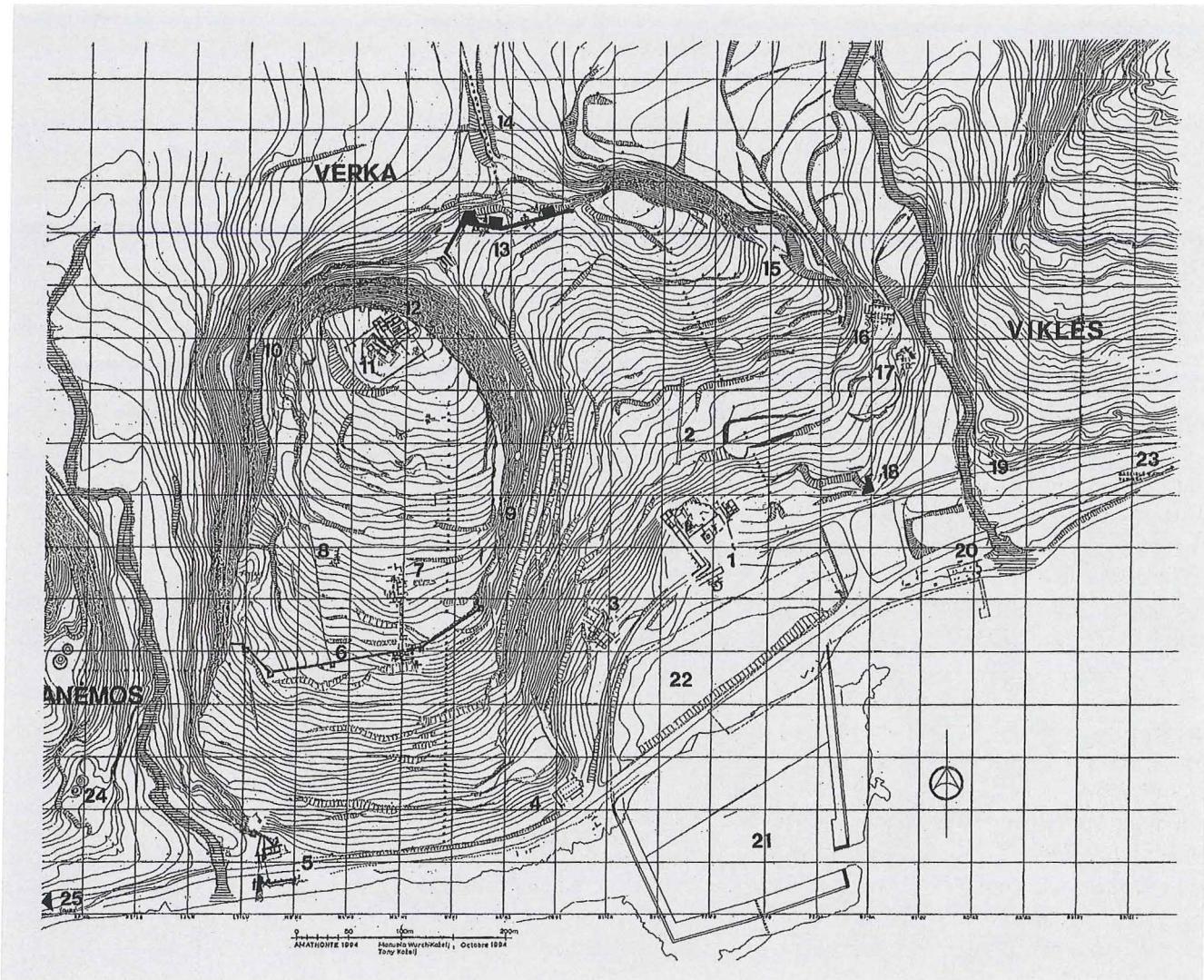


Fig. 1. The archaeological site of Amathus, with the palace (7) and the temple of Aphrodite (11).

burial assemblages.³⁴ In particular everyone agrees that the monumental architecture is a very decisive correlate for the existence of royal power: first the palaces, then the built tombs.³⁵ In fact, such buildings were discovered in several capitals of these kingdoms: the palaces of Hadji-Abdullah and Evreti in Paphos, some monumental walls in Soloi, and the store-rooms belonging to a public building in Idalion.³⁶ Unfortunately these monumental buildings have not been completely excavated and the uncovered strata begin only with the (late?) sixth century at the earliest (however, it is not impossible that the Hadji-Abdullah palace could be earlier). Except for Vouni which constitutes a special case – mainly because it is not situated in a kingdom capital – the earliest

layers, that is, the first phases of these buildings, have not yet been reached.

From this point of view, Amathus is a crucial site for judging the validity of both theories. Do archaeological excavations conducted by the French School of Archaeology in Athens and the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus (Fig. 1) confirm the foundation by Kinyras or the 'Phoenician hypothesis'? On the city acropolis itself the two oldest groups of artefacts are gambling stones found in an 11th century tomb dug on the top of the hill (Fig. 1, n° 12), a burial which could be the tomb of Ariadne mentioned in texts,³⁷ and a small ceramic deposit of the CG IA period uncovered in an incomplete cistern next to the palace;³⁸ these

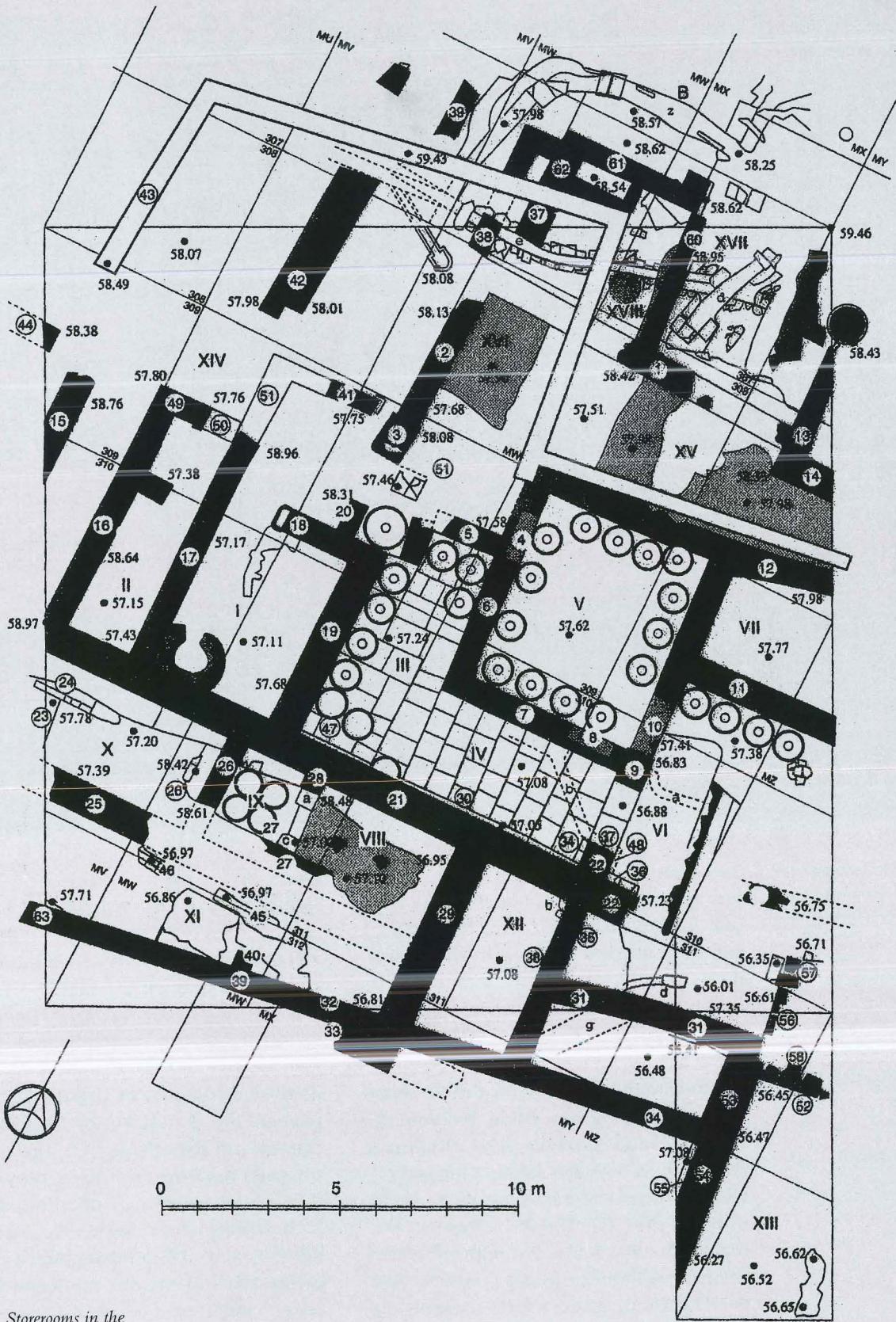


Fig. 2. Storerooms in the palace of Amathus

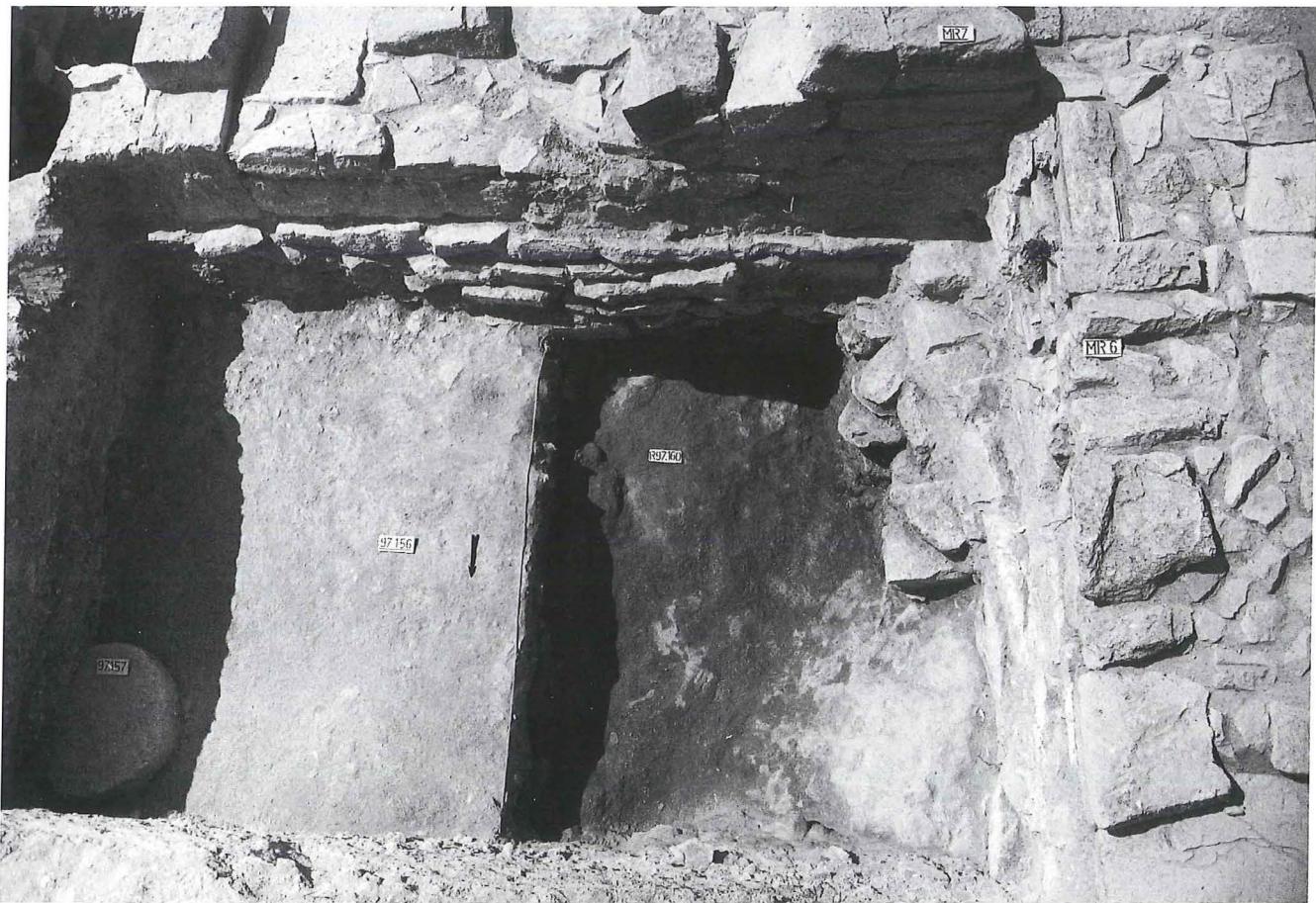


Fig. 3. Trial excavation in the floor of the first palace of Amathus.

sherds have been recently studied by Maria Iacovou and interpreted as evidence of a settlement or even as a “township” on the acropolis,³⁹ and it has been inferred that Amathus was founded in the 11th century BC. It is rather daring to conclude from a few sherds that a “township” existed, however. No architectural remains were linked to these objects and it seems more likely that they are burial artefacts from a tomb destroyed by the construction of the first palace.⁴⁰ After the CG IA period (late 11th cent. BC) documented by scanty evidence, it seems that there was a gap in the occupation of the hill, since no artefacts dated before the CG III period has yet been found on the acropolis, neither in the great sanctuary excavations nor in the palace (Fig. 1. nos. 11 and 7). From a political and ideological point of view, the evidence from the royal dwelling is very significant as everywhere the appearance of this kind of monumental building is linked with the rise of a monarchy.⁴¹

The French excavations on the acropolis began in 1975. During the first campaigns the excavators discovered the remains of storerooms with a number of *pithoi* (about thirty so far: Fig. 2). This building was called “a large public building” (Fig. 1, no. 7).⁴² The exploration of this area was abandoned in 1977 and only resumed in 1987. Since that time five campaigns have been conducted, revealing very important archaeological and historical data. The two last phases of the building cover the archaic and classical periods. The former cannot be dated with certainty (maybe early 6th century BC). However, an earlier layer was found just above the bedrock. It was only in 1997 that this first palace could be firmly dated. Within a small trench under the 3rd (‘classical’) and the 2nd (‘archaic’) phases, the floor of the first phase of the palace was reached (Fig. 3). No doubt it was already then a conspicuous building since, embedded in the lime-mortar floor, a limestone base for

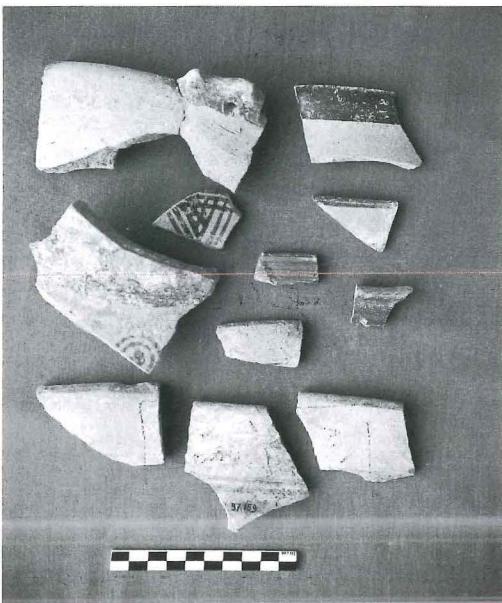
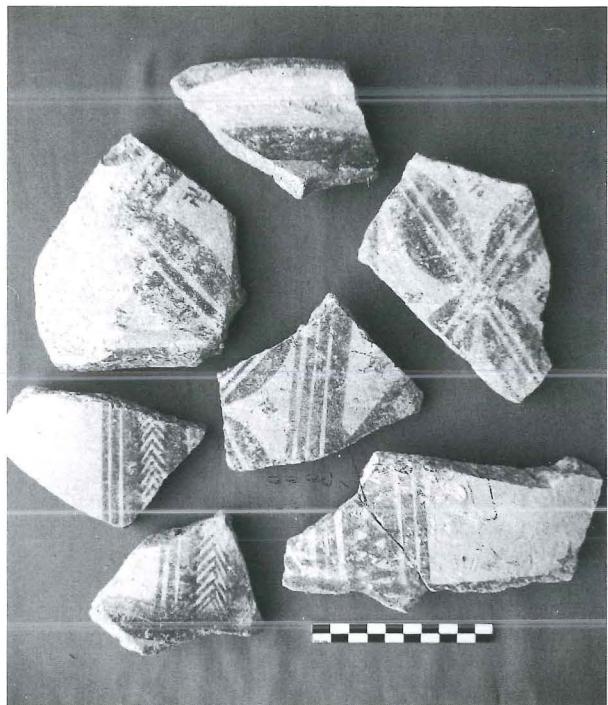


Fig. 4A-C.
Cypro-Geometric
sherds from below
the floor of the
first palace of
Amathus.

most important symbolic, administrative and religious buildings, was not occupied before the CG III period, *i.e.* the end of the 9th or the beginning of the 8th century BC.

Although the city of Amathus was well furnished with Greek imports during the Cypro-Geometric I and II periods, no doubt on account of its strategic position on the trade route between Greece and Phoenicia,⁴⁴ the first palace occupation on the city acropolis nonetheless did not take place before the late 9th century: this is two or three centuries later than the mythical foundation by Kinyras, but very soon after the Phoenicians founded the new Kition, the direct neighbour of Amathus to the east. Thus in Amathus, the main types of archaeological evidence, which according to the anthropologists constitute an indication of kingship, is only attested from about 800 BC. D.W. Rupp supposes that the rise of the state in Iron Age Cyprus occurred in the middle of the 8th century BC.⁴⁵ In the light of the recent discoveries in Amathus, one can hypothesize that this happened at least half a century earlier. Does other evidence from Amathus support this conclusion?

a column was found, a very unusual feature in this early period (see Petit 1999, 2000). The great amount of pottery found under this floor (Fig. 4 A-C) was dated to the end of the ninth century BC.⁴³ This evidence is consistent with other finds from other excavations on the acropolis as, for example, those of the great sanctuary on the top of the hill (Fig. 1, no. 11). According to these finds, the site of the acropolis of Amathus, which received the

Besides palaces, monumental architecture is evidenced in temples, storerooms, administrative buildings, and royal burials, all of them building-programmes which presuppose intensive labour mobilization and craft technology. But other kinds of evidence can also be used to this end: for example the emergence of full-time specialists to serve the need of an elite and accordingly a division of labour;⁴⁶ a highly developed ceramic tradition and an elite ceramic style, luxury metalwork, prestige and imported goods, all objects that represent the ‘Great Tradition’ of the elite;⁴⁷ to this should be added the presence or reappearance of the script, the existence of a symbolic ideology, and a state and/or elite cult performed in official sanctuaries.⁴⁸ All these things constitute *indications* of kingship and statehood, and will be examined in the following. Moreover, the *conditions* for their emergence did exist in the 9th and 8th centuries BC, namely commercial trade and a demographic increase.⁴⁹ Thus it is necessary for several signs forming a systemic structure to be present⁵⁰ before the existence of a state can be ascertained. The ‘Yoffee’s rule’ says “if you can argue whether a society is a state or isn’t, then it isn’t” (Yoffee 1993, 69). According to this author, state power operates in three directions: economic, social (including ideological) and political; and a state must thus rest upon three different kinds of power. Archaeologically, the economic power is manifest in “differing sizes of residences”, “accompanying features and artefacts”, and “mortuary furniture”; the second social one, in “urban complexes”, “ceremonial buildings”, “artistic and literary representations, symbols of cultural and political commonality”; the last political one “in the founding new capitals”.⁵¹

a) Sanctuaries

The creation of a state is archaeologically attested also through the changes in religious structures reflected in the appearance of the main sanctuaries. With the rise of the state, cults were performed in official temples reserved for the elite; religious authority emerges with political

authority.⁵² We must not omit the important fact that these changes affected the ritually defined sacred space as well as the sacred landscape.⁵³ In Cyprus, the rare sanctuaries which had existed continuously from the late Bronze Age suddenly changed their types of votive iconography in the CG III period. In Aghia Irini, the sculptures of the level 3 dating from the middle of the CG III (ca 850–750 BC) constitute the first anthropomorphic representations of worshippers and these human-size statues are a sign of fundamental changes.⁵⁴ The great majority of armed figures, and the chariot statuettes “indicate that the god [of Aghia Irini] was a god of war as well as god of fertility: he had developed to a *theos sozopolis*”.⁵⁵ When social stratification occurs, so does a change in the cultic practice and in the type of the sacrifices; and this seems to be the case in Cyprus during CG III.⁵⁶ As a rural sanctuary, the development of Aghia Irini *per se* could be a criterion for such political changes.⁵⁷ In the same way, CG I-II remains are very scanty in Idalion, while in CG III, new architecture and evidence for a new sanctuary appeared.⁵⁸ At this time the acropolis was enclosed with a fortification wall, too.⁵⁹

Moreover, in this period (CG III) great sanctuaries housing poliad deities such as Apollo Hylates near Kourion emerged all over the island.⁶⁰ In Amathus, the excavations in the main sanctuary of the Great Goddess, later called Aphrodite, have provided no artefacts dated before the beginning of the 8th century (CG IIIB). Indeed, the founding of this great sanctuary on the top of the hill with a very high visibility, is only understandable if linked with the emergence of the Amathusian state, since it reorganizes the (sacral) landscape⁶¹ and because the (re)construction of a main sanctuary is generally considered as a royal prerogative.⁶² From that moment a clear centralization of the settlements and of the cults took place in Amathus. The existence of other deities worshipped in this city and, more precisely, in this sanctuary, as evidenced by some inscriptions and texts, as well as the likely existence of

different cults in palatial chapel(s) (Petit 1996c), could also be viewed as a consequence of the creation of a state. Usually, when a state emerges, the king adopts the different local cults and makes himself the servant of all former local gods.⁶³

b) City-walls

The existence of defensive city-walls is an important criterion, although not a decisive one.⁶⁴ It seems that the first rampart of Amathus was not built before the last half of the 6th century BC,⁶⁵ thus a century later than in other towns in Cyprus.⁶⁶

c) Royal Graves

Besides palaces and official temples or sanctuaries it is well known that the emergence of the state is often accompanied by ostentatious burials and monumental royal tombs;⁶⁷ the more recent the state the more monumental the tombs.⁶⁸ Within the necropolis of Amathus, there are some CG I and CG II tombs, but the first “royal” tomb is T. NW 194, built in the middle or in the last half of the 9th century.⁶⁹ The finds are exceptionally rich even for Amathus, and may be compared with the Tomb I of Salamis; the architecture of the latter might have been derived from the Amathusian tomb.⁷⁰ Taking into account the date of the burial, the inhabitants of the first palace on the Acropolis (built about 800 BC) may well have been the owners of the tomb.

d) Prestige goods and exotica

Less important than monumental architecture for tracing the emergence of a state are the prestige goods and especially the imported items or *exotica*. These are obviously linked to high status groups.⁷¹ Iacovou (1995, 104) admits that in the regions which are eventually designated kingdoms there is not a single tomb with precious objects indicating the presence of a royal tomb before CG III. In the greater part of Cyprus the links with the outside world were revived much later than in Amathus.⁷² Amathus was placed on a trade route with good etesian winds which favoured trade between the Aegean and Tyre; and,

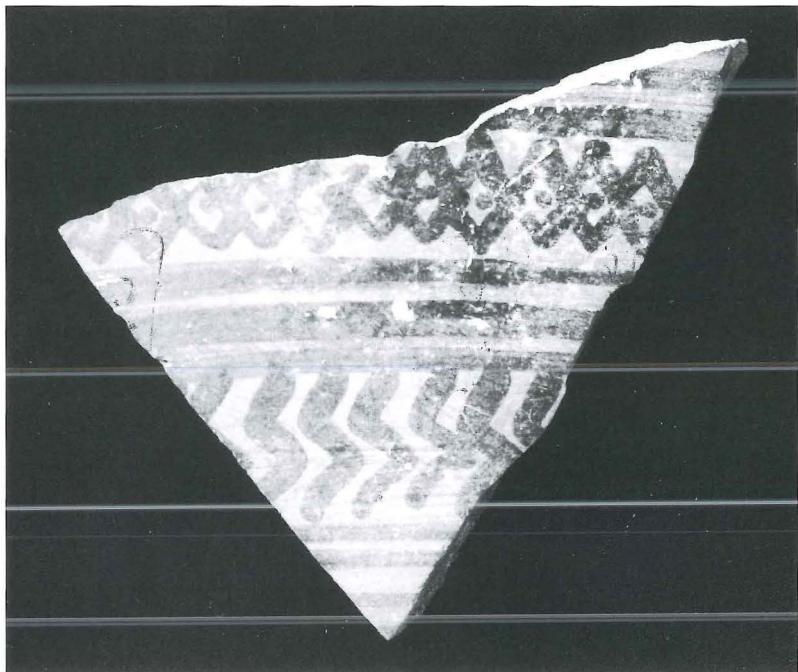


Fig. 5. Sherd from a big Aegean crater found in the palace of Amathus.

for that reason, the links with the Aegean never really stopped during CG I-II period.⁷³ Such a favourable situation might well have led to a quite large distribution of imported goods among the population of Amathus. This is, however, not the case: in the more than 500 Amathusian tombs, almost half of the Greek Geometric and Archaic pottery was found in no more than ten tombs. One could ask with Coldstream whether this concentration reflects the existence of special links among some Amathusian families with the Aegean, or the elite status of small groups within the state.⁷⁴ Though these solutions are not exclusive, it is worth noting that the Greek pottery was found in tombs where there was a great quantity of Phoenician imports as well.⁷⁵ Some tombs of the CG II period, it is true, also show a concentration of imported, prestige and/or metallic goods;⁷⁶ but it is worth noting that in Amathus as elsewhere in Cyprus the number and quality of prestige and/or imported goods increased suddenly during CG III;⁷⁷ as mentioned the first ‘royal’ tomb dates from the late 9th century and contained Greek Euboean *skyphoi* which can only be compared with similar dinner sets in Salamis Tomb I.⁷⁸ In the excavations of the palace, a fragment of a

big Aegean *crater* (Euboean?) from 730–710 BC, maybe a witness of Gift Trade, shows the desire of the Amathusian King to hold his rank within the social competition (Fig. 5: max. length:11 cm; cf. Petit 1996b, 212, fig. 1, 219–220). Thus Amathus seems to correspond to the ‘prestige goods economy model’ (Knapp 1996) only from that time onwards. It is thus clear that the emergence of the Amathusian state was linked with, if not due to, privileged access to prestige goods and *exotica*. Nevertheless there is no need to consider as royal every tomb where exotic artefact or imported pottery where found. Greek ware found in the West necropolis of Amathus has been interpreted as gifts from the king to some aristocrats (Rupp 1989, 356). This was a common practice in several societies as well as in the contemporaneous Achaemenid Empire.⁷⁹

e) The script

Everywhere, the emergence of the script is intimately linked with the rise of the state.⁸⁰ Although the script never totally disappeared in Cyprus after the end of the Bronze Age, since it reappeared in quite similar form as the old Cypro-Minoan script, the sudden reappearance of several written documents during the 8th century cannot only be due to the random character of the archaeological discoveries.⁸¹ For that reason, it has been stated that in Cyprus the script is linked to power as an ideological tool since the 8th century BC.⁸²

In Amathus the appearance of the script happened much earlier than it has been assumed. All the ‘Eteocypriot’ inscriptions are generally thought to have been written in the 4th century BC.⁸³ But two documents considerably antedate this time.⁸⁴ The big limestone vase, which remained *in situ* in the Great sanctuary until the 19th century, and is now in the Louvre, bears on one handle some syllabograms that surely note Amathusian (‘Eteocypriot’) words. Although it is quite difficult to date it, the vase is surely archaic.⁸⁵ Another undeciphered inscription was painted on an 8th century amphora,

called ‘vase aux taureaux’,⁸⁶ found in 1987 in the excavations in the same Aphrodision. Thus syllabic inscriptions appear on the acropolis of Amathus immediately after the founding of the sanctuary, that is during the first stage of its *floruit* (Cypriot Archaic (CA) IA: Hermay 1999, 55). It is very likely that this early appearance is linked to the creation of the state and its royal ideology.

f) Symbols of power and warfare

The script is by itself a sign of symbolic power, but in non-literate societies iconography is more directly understandable as an ideological vehicle to common people.⁸⁷ The presence of a *Stand* in the Weberian sense involves the necessity for this group to maintain an image of itself and often to use specific items produced for its exclusive use. This particular type of objects is sometimes called ‘The Great Tradition’.⁸⁸ The royal images can be linked to the role of the king as benefactor or protector, especially as military leader (Petit 1996c). The warfare is very important for the emerging states.⁸⁹ It does not appear with statehood; it usually emerges at an earlier stage. The increase of warfare is thought to precede the emergence of the state.⁹⁰ In the context of endemic warfare, the military leaders generally rise to prominent status.⁹¹ Technological progress, especially in warfare, such as the chariot, or, during other periods, the gunpowder, can lead to statehood.⁹² The tombs of warriors bear witness to the existence of a ranked society, not necessarily of a state;⁹³ but warfare holds its importance during the first stage of the state, when it is not completely stabilized and the dynasty itself not yet well assured. That is the reason why this latter aspect is often emphasized in recently formed states. In this sense one can say that warfare creates a state and on the other hand that warfare is stimulated by statehood.⁹⁴

In CG III Cyprus, the elites’ ability to defend the state territory, their privileged access to the new techniques of warfare (esp. the chariot) and their ability to use it, can be illustrated by the votive offerings.

In the whole island, the beginning of the ‘warrior cult’ may be placed in the middle of the CG III period, *i.e. ca* 800 BC.⁹⁵ This increased number of votive offerings showing warriors is attested in several sanctuaries. In Aghia Irini, the images of warriors and charioteers of the CG III period⁹⁶ seem to be contemporary with the rise of the state and directly linked to this phenomenon.⁹⁷ In the stage immediately prior to the rise of polities, it seems that the sanctuaries did not to any high degree have a warrior character, since warriors and charioteers did not appear before CG III. The same is true of burials. Indeed the main and richest warrior tombs only arose during the period of CG III as well.⁹⁸ The appearance of a certain type of what is called a mace-head, (a sceptre or command-stick) is attested since CG III, too.⁹⁹ But there are other burials with an indication of warfare before that period.¹⁰⁰

The new states needed to be protected against each other, since the struggle for space often became more and more important during the formation stage of the state.¹⁰¹ For example, the Lelantine war has been considered a classic case of a “circumscription war”.¹⁰² Was it the case in Cyprus? It is surely not accidental that images of warriors and charioteers appeared in Cypriot sanctuaries¹⁰³ immediately after the massive settlement of Phoenicians in Kition. One may think that the Phoenician demand for copper and the ensuing struggle between Cypriot petty chiefs to control copper mines was a more decisive phenomenon in Cyprus than the lack of land.¹⁰⁴

g) Demography

The rise of the state presupposes the presence of several conditions, such as a sufficient population, emergence of complex forms of government and recruitment of different kinds of full-time specialists.¹⁰⁵ Although Cyprus did not undergo a demographic collapse comparable to the one in Greece during the Iron Age,¹⁰⁶ there had been a decrease in the settlements during the CG I-II periods and a

dramatic increase during the CG III period.¹⁰⁷ The choice of the site of Amathus, namely the acropolis and the lower town (Fig. 1) about 800 BC, may also be a sign of a demographic increase.

h) New capital cities

It has been suggested that the foundation of new capital cities by political elites goes hand in hand with the emergence of the state.¹⁰⁸ The founding of such new cities constituted a way for the elite to assure and display its control over the surplus labour and to shape the landscape.¹⁰⁹ In Amathus the creation of the sanctuary of the Great Goddess on the top of the hill and the placement of the palace on an artificial terrace (for this terrace, see Petit 1993, 705–707), which occupied exactly the centre of the acropolis (Fig. 1, no. 7), are two signs of this ability. Although at the present it is difficult to evaluate the size of the population in the city of Amathus, the new town corresponds to the distribution in the ‘city state system’ of Trigger (Trigger 1974, 102) and it is identical to Renfrew’s ‘permanent functioning central place’ (Renfrew 1975, 12),¹¹⁰ which is “one of the features distinguishing civilizations from chiefdom societies”. The choice of this new settlement as a seat for the public institutions, *i.e.* the main sanctuary and the palace, is a sign that at this time (second half of the 9th century) Amathus became a state and emerged from the rank of a chiefdom. Thus the Renfrew’s ESM (‘Early State Model’), inspired by Greece, Etruria, Mesopotamia and the Maya land, is usable also in Cyprus (and in the neo-Hittite principalities, Phoenicia, Israel, etc.). The latter display several features characteristic of such entities: in the ESM system, the distance between “central places” is *ca* 40 km,¹¹¹ which for instance is more or less the distance between Salamis, Kition, Amathus, Kourion, and Paphos, on the eastern and southern coasts of Cyprus (see Rupp 1987, map 4); most ESM have small territories of *ca* 1500 km².¹¹² the map of the supposed territory of the kingdom published in the guidebook of Amathus

shows a territory of less than 600 km² (Aupert 1996, 22); the map proposed by Rupp (1987, map 4) is based on the method of Thiessen's polygons and shows a kingdom slightly larger than 800 km². This small size may be explained by the lack of territorial depth due to the wooden and steep slopes of the Troodos Mountains, which limit the kingdom to the north. There may have been other larger states, such as Salamis, Soloi and Paphos (see Rupp 1987, map 5).

From chiefdom to State

The archaeological evidence of Amathus during the CG I-II period corresponds to what has been observed elsewhere as the features of chiefdom.¹¹³ People must have lived in the neighbourhood of the future city-acropolis since there are several CG I-II tombs in the necropolis, but nothing has been found on the hill itself.¹¹⁴ Thus the settlements around the hill must have been non-permanent dwellings, which have left no visible traces. This kind of settlement corresponds to the archaeological correlate of the chiefdom or "big-man society".¹¹⁵ The great amount of pottery discovered under the first floor of the palace of Amathus (Fig. 4 A-C) shows that the CG III palace was not built on a completely deserted hill. So far, no architectural remains of this first settlement has been found but, judging from the pottery, the settlers belonged to what can be described as the 'upper-middle class' (Iacovou, pers. com.)¹¹⁶, maybe chieftains or "big-men" in anthropological terms. This provisional settlement occurs immediately before ca 800 BC, or during the second half of the 9th century. It is worth noting that this time corresponds to the period of the arrival of the Phoenicians in Kition and squares with other signs of Phoenician influence in the necropolis of Amathus.¹¹⁷

The existence of such "big-man" communities in Cyprus before the emergence of the historical states has already been suggested by some scholars, who are not directly involved in the debate concerning

the two theories. Catling (1994, 137-8) imagines that Cyprus was then divided between 'predator heroes'; and Deger-Jalkotzy (1994, 16) had a similar idea since she states that: "military leaders may well have played an essential role during the troubles of time". It is thus likely that Cyprus did not know statehood during the CG I-II period, but rather simply stratified societies, known as chiefdoms, of which the chieftains were military leaders.¹¹⁸ In this way one could explain the presence of some evidence of status signs at this time, such as the *obeloi* found in the Palea-Paphos – Skales cemetery, and maybe the Greek import of the 10th century in some tombs of Amathus.¹¹⁹ The state formation in Cyprus was perhaps a long process,¹²⁰ and the Cypriot states could have been in formation during the CGI-II Periods as assumed by M. Iacovou.¹²¹ Nevertheless, what we know about Cypriot polities during this period does not square with the criteria of statehood, and, to say the least, this level was not achieved before the end of the 9th century; Cyprus then went through the crucial phase of the development, which otherwise could have stopped before reaching the state.¹²²

It is a well-known phenomenon that the state is frequently preceded by a chiefdom or a "big-men" society.¹²³ It is the competition between chiefs which can lead to a state.¹²⁴ The way which leads from chiefdom to state is likewise well-known.¹²⁵ First: isolated communities, with centres of similar size, are separated by buffer zones. Second: there occurs a rapid nucleation of the population at one centre, apparently at the expense of defeated or threatened neighbours;¹²⁶ in some cases, archaeological data suggest that raiding was replaced by organized warfare (at this point we should remember the appearance of the warriors and charioteers at Aghia Irini). Third: the creation of a general centre, the new capital, entailed a supplementary level of social stratification (the fourth one according to Flannery 1999). In Amathus, the second phase at least, is archaeologically visible, as is the third.

No doubt the arrival and installation *en masse* of the Phoenicians in Kition were very important factors in this development to statehood (see above, the warfare). Although some scholars have, indeed, minimized the role of trade in the emergence of the state, it is nonetheless a well-established factor (Peltenburg 1996, 37): “...intensive trade has a major effect on the activities of the indigenous inhabitants, amongst whom an economic organization develops with increasingly more intensive interaction. This can lead to the development of civilization without any extensive adoption of the technology, customs, or beliefs of the colonial newcomers (...) External trade brings exotic prestige artefacts which confer status on those individuals controlling the supply. A prominent hierarchy can thus emerge in what was formerly only partly a stratified society” (Renfrew 1975, 33). Referring to second millennium Cyprus Peltenburg says, “Traditional models of state formation have invoked managerial conflict and synthetic theories. The last one in which several interacting processes operate at once is most plausible. In the case of Cyprus, turmoil in the east, centre and north occurred when the eastern Cyprus came into increasing contact with Near Eastern kingdoms apparently for purpose of trade (...) Copper export, therefore, rather than agricultural surplus, or population expansion was one essential ingredient to the emergence of social stratification and urbanism” (Peltenburg 1996, 36). In my view, there is nothing but a few words to add to this statement concerning the reappearance of the state in Iron Age Cyprus. Although we know almost nothing about the exploitation of copper between 1050 and 750 BC,¹²⁷ an increase in the exploitation of copper seems to have occurred in the last half of the 8th century.¹²⁸ In this connection Amathus was a rather privileged centre as the texts say (Ovidus, *Met.* 10.220, 531) and the surveys show.¹²⁹ But perhaps it was not so much the economic pressure of the Phoenicians in search of copper which led from chiefdom to state in Cyprus, as it

was the consequence of this demand, which led to the competition between local chieftains to control the sources of commodities, and mainly the copper mines, in order to respond to this demand and to increase their privileges emerging from an unequal access to resources.¹³⁰ Thus, as usual, trade and conflict go hand in hand to give birth to state.¹³¹

The way in which chiefdoms got access to statehood is well evidenced from other ethnological or historical cases. To take an example well documented by texts, it is striking that the state-formation in Amathus (perhaps in all Cyprus), hypothesized on the basis of the scarce sources at our disposal, is very similar to the process better known in Israel. A few years ago, the present author proposed this comparison¹³² and it seems now to be widely accepted.¹³³ In fact a new theory tends to place the origins of the Greek *poleis* within the context of the Iron Age, especially in Phoenicia and Israel, but also in Ammon, Moab, Aram, Damascus, etc.¹³⁴ Cyprus is thus included in that political area.¹³⁵ Although the historian must use these sources very cautiously (Finkelstein 1999), the Old Testament texts are quite detailed about the way Israel came to be a state (*1Kings*, 3,1; *2Chronicles*, 14,1; 17,1-12).¹³⁶ After a period of chiefdoms (the “Judges”), the Hebrews chose a military leader, Saul, the chief of Benjamin (*1Sam.* 10, 17-20), who quickly became a king. The reason for this decision was either that the military pressure of the Philistines was too high to be faced by single tribes, and/or that other people, amongst whom the Philistines, had a king (*1Sam.* 8,4-6; 8,19-20).¹³⁷ But this first monarchy was quite unstable. Saul was overthrown by David, who founded a more stable dynasty (*2Sam.* 2; see Finkelstein 1999, 42). He conquered Jerusalem from the Jebuseites and chose it for his new capital (*2Sam.* 5, 6-10; *1Chron.*, 11, 4-9), which remained quite small in size until the 7th century BC.¹³⁸ He immediately built a palace (*2Sam.* 5, 11; *1Chron.* 14, 1-2), and he later planned to build a temple to YHWH (*2Sam.* 7; *1Chron.*, 17; 28-29); but he was

hindered in doing so by his very important military activities (*1 Kings*, 5, 17). It was his son, Salomon, who had the honour of building the Temple (*1 Kings*, 5-8; *2 Chron.* 2-6).

In Amathus, the sequence of events as revealed by the archaeological investigation seems to be the same: the new king (?) chose a new site to establish his capital, and he founded on the acropolis, first his palace, *ca* 800 BC, on an artificial terrace in the centre of the hill, then the sanctuary of the Great Goddess on the top of the hill, in the first half of the 8th century BC.¹³⁹ Of course, as the French proverb says, *comparaison n'est pas raison*, and it is not sufficient for this model to be true that the anthropological pattern seems to fit with archaeological and historical data. Indeed, in reasoning with

sociological comparison, one is maybe reduced to think in terms of "Everything goes on as if...". But in the present case there is, in fact, convergent evidence which cannot be due to chance. At least one must conclude that from the second half of the 9th century BC and only from that time, the Amathusian polity displays the archaeological evidence of a state.¹⁴⁰ Thus the discovery of this monumental building dating from the end of the 9th century BC, which is very likely the first royal palace of Amathus, pushes back the date of the rise of the Amathusian polity, one of the most important for the history of Iron Age Cyprus, but does not fill the gap between the mythical foundation by Kinyras and the Phoenician settlement in Cyprus.

Notes

NOTE 1

I would like to thank Dr. D. Bodi for his very kind remarks.

NOTE 2

Maier & Karageorghis 1984, 120.

NOTE 3

For the complete literature on Cypriot foundation-myths: Vanschoonwinkel 1994, 122ff.

NOTE 4

But see Baurain and Bonnet, 1992, 183-88.

NOTE 5

For this language, see Petit 1997/1998.

NOTE 6

Ethiopians: Petit 1998; heirs of Kinyras: Petit 1995, 62-64.

NOTE 7

See, for instance, Coldstream 1985, 47.

NOTE 8

Snodgrass 1988; Reyes 1994, 24-25.

NOTE 9

Snodgrass 1991; Donlan 1997.

NOTE 10

For example, Iacovou 1995, 98-99.

NOTE 11

Snodgrass 1988, 16-17, fig. 10; Buitron-Oliver 1997, 28.

NOTE 12

Karageorghis 1989, 15-16.

NOTE 13

Iacovou 1995, 101-02.

NOTE 14

Steel 1993, 151.

NOTE 15

Iacovou 1995, 107; Hermary 1998a, 24.

NOTE 16

Steel 1993, 153; Coldstream 1985, 50-51.

NOTE 17

Baurain 1995, 24; Crielaard 1998; Matthäus 1998, 137. One may seriously doubt that the Kourion sceptre belongs to the 11th century B.C. (Iacovou 1995, 104; Steel 1993, 148 and n. 20; see now, Goring 1995). By evoking this object and a *crater* dated from the second half of the 8th century BC, Buitron-Oliver 1997, 29, thinks that there was a "continued prosperity", although we have no tangible evidence for almost three centuries!

NOTE 18

Iacovou 1995, 100, 104; cf. Gjerstad 1980, 147.

NOTE 19

Coldstream 1995a and 1995b.

NOTE 20

Crielaard 1998; Matthäus 1998, 137.

NOTE 21

Rupp 1987, 149; cf. Steel 1993, 149.

NOTE 22

Hermary 1998a cf. *Id.* 1998b, 267.

NOTE 23

Kourion : Buitron-Oliver 1997, 29; Agia Irini: Hermary 1998a, 24-25.

NOTE 24

For examples, see Hadjisavvas 1996; Matthäus 1998, 137, 140-2.

NOTE 25

Marion: Childs 1997, 37; Kourion: Buitron-Oliver 1997, 29.

NOTE 26

Yon 1981, 51; Buitron-Oliver 1997, 34; Childs 1997, 37. Amathus: Coldstream 1988 and 1989.

NOTE 27

Baurain 1995, 84 and notes; cf. Baurain 1997, 374.

NOTE 28

Matthäus 1998, 142-43.

NOTE 29

Gjerstad 1948, 436; Karageorghis 1976, 95 and 97; Coldstream 1985, 51.

NOTE 30

Certainly, because of the weakness of the *argumentum e silentio* one cannot deduce from the absence of archaeological evidence for the state system during CG I-II period that a state did not exist; but, conversely, this weakness cannot be used to conclude that states did exist.

NOTE 31

Iacovou 1999, 155.

NOTE 32

Rupp 1987, 151; 1988; 1989.

NOTE 33

Morris 1987; Whitley 1991a, 354-61; Said 1998, 13-15; ; Morgan and Whitelaw 1991, esp. 93; Yoffee 1993, 69; Coldstream 1995b, 212.

NOTE 34

Antonacci 1995, 259.

NOTE 35

See for instance, Driessen 1999, 122; Knapp 1996, 82-84; Trigger 1974, 100-01; Cherry 1978, 425-26; Rupp 1987, 152; Marcus and Flannery 1994, 65.

NOTE 36

Maier 1989; for Idalion M. Hadjicosti 1995.

NOTE 37

Paion, *apud* Plutarch, *Theseus*, 20; Hermary 1994.

NOTE 38
See Laffineur and Marchetti 1978, 950–52, figs. 20–21.

NOTE 39
Iacovou 1994, 155 et 160; Iacovou 1999, 152–153, and fig. 3a, where these pots are strangely qualified as “foundation deposit” cf. Vanschoonwinkel 1994, 112 et 125.

NOTE 40
See below; cf. Petit 1991/1992, 7.

NOTE 41
See Finkelstein 1999, 39; and below for Israel.

NOTE 42
Laffineur and Marchetti 1978, 797.

NOTE 43
These vases belong to the second and the third classes of Gjerstad’s typology: Gjerstad 1948.

NOTE 44
Coldstream 1989; 1995b, 212.

NOTE 45
Rupp 1985; cf. Demand 1997, 101.

NOTE 46
Trigger 1974, 100–01; Cherry 1978, 425–26.

NOTE 47
Trigger 1974, 99 and 101; Cherry 1978, 422–23; see already Weber 1972, 651.

NOTE 48
See for instance Knapp 1996, 82; Trigger 1974, 96, 100–01; Cherry 1978, 425–26; Rupp 1987, 152; Steel 1993, 149; Claessen 1996, 352.

NOTE 49
Peltenburg 1996, 37 (trade); Claessen 1996, 352; Rupp 1987, 149–50, see below.

NOTE 50
Ruby 1993, 812.

NOTE 51
Yoffee 1993, 69–70.

NOTE 52
Trigger 1974, 100–01; Cherry 1978, 425–26; Rupp 1987, 152; Steel 1993, 149; see, for Hawaii between 1100 and 1300 AD, Van Bakel 1996, 323–25; in Sri Lanka: Gunawarada 1981, 140–41.

NOTE 53
Knapp 1996; van Bakel 1996, 323–25

NOTE 54
For Aghia Irini: Gjerstad *et al.* 1935, 777–92.

NOTE 55
Gjerstad *et al.* 1935, 817–22.

NOTE 56
See for instance Gjerstad *et al.* 1935, 821–22.

NOTE 57
Rupp 1988, 123.

NOTE 58
But see now Gaber *et al.* 1999, 329.

NOTE 59
Gjerstad *et al.* 1935, 627.

NOTE 60
Hermay 1998b, 267.

NOTE 61
Knapp 1996.

NOTE 62
Serandour 1996, 11.

NOTE 63
Tanabe 1996, 210–11.

NOTE 64
Snodgrass 1977, 21–24.

NOTE 65
I am grateful to Claire Balandier for this information.

NOTE 66
Rupp 1988, 135.

NOTE 67
Knapp 1996, 82; Trigger 1974, 100; Rupp 1987, 151; 1988; 1989.

NOTE 68
See for instance the Egyptian Pyramids of the Old Empire: Cherry 1978, 429.

NOTE 69
Coldstream 1995, 187ff and 192f.

NOTE 70
Coldstream 1995a, 195; Rupp 1988, 125.

NOTE 71
Trigger 1974, 96, 99–101; Rupp 1988; 1989; Knapp 1996.

NOTE 72
Matthäus 1998, 137, 140–43; for Marion, see Childs 1997.

NOTE 73
Coldstream 1988, 43; 1989, 90–91.

NOTE 74
Coldstream 1995b, 212.

NOTE 75
Coldstream 1995b, 212, n. 51; Antonaccio 1995, 227 and n. 135.

NOTE 76
Gjerstad *et al.* 1935, T. 13: 79–84, T. 19; cf. Crielaard 1998, 190.

NOTE 77
Crielaard 1998, 187; Matthäus 1998, 140–43; cf. Hermay 1999, 58.

NOTE 78
Coldstream 1995a, 192–95.

NOTE 79
See Petit 1996a, 126–27; cf. Petit 1996b, 218–21.

NOTE 80
See for instance Lévi-Strauss 1955, 173–174; Skalník 1978, 607; Finkelstein 1999, 39.

NOTE 81
Cf. Baurain 1995, 84.

NOTE 82
Rupp 1987, 151; 1988, 123; Collombier 1991, 437; Steel 1993, 149.

NOTE 83
Reyes, 1994, 15; Given 1998, 22.

NOTE 84
See Petit 1999, 110–15.

NOTE 85
Petit 1997/1998, 250; 262; Petit 1999, 112, 114, fig. 1a–b.

NOTE 86
Petit 1999, 113–15, fig. 4a–b.

NOTE 87
See, for example, Trigger 1974, 103–04.

NOTE 88
Cherry 1978, 422–423; Yoffee 1993, 66–67.

NOTE 89
Trigger 1974, 99 and 101.

NOTE 90
Webb 1975, 184–89.

NOTE 91
Lewis 1981, 212; Gunawardana 1981, 136–40.

NOTE 92
Cohen 1978, 61–62.

NOTE 93
Rupp 1988, 123.

NOTE 94
Cohen 1978, 62; Joyce and Winter 1996, 38–39.

NOTE 95
See Gjerstad *et al.* 1935, 777ff; 822; and pl. CLXXXIX–CXCVI, esp. pl. CXCIV, n° 1385+1530.

NOTE 96
Gjerstad *et al.* 1935, 817–22.

NOTE 97
See for Greece, Polignac 1995, 27; 42–44; 64–78.

NOTE 98
See for instance, T. 18 of Amathus: Gjerstad *et al.* 1935, 103–109; T. 2: Gjerstad *et al.* 1935, 16.

NOTE 99
See, for instance, Gjerstad *et al.* 1935, pl. VII–VIII, CL; Moorey 1971, 92–95; Snodgrass 1988, 17 fig. 11; Kourou 1994.

NOTE 100
Gjerstad *et al.* 1935, T. 21: CG II, T. 6: Gjerstad *et al.* 1935, 27ff.

NOTE 101
Carneiro 1970; Webb 1975, 180–94.

NOTE 102
Morris 1987, 166.

NOTE 103
In Aghia Irini: Gjerstad *et al.* 1935, 817–22.

NOTE 104
As it is maybe the case in Greece: Polignac 1995, 51–78.

NOTE 105
Claessen 1996, 352.

NOTE 106
Even for Greece we cannot retain anymore the calculations of Snodgrass: see Morris 1987; 1991; Snodgrass 1991.

NOTE 107
Rupp 1987, 149–51; cf. Steel 1993, 149.

NOTE 108
Knapp 1996, 82; see for instance Gunawardana 1981, 140–41; Yoffee 1993, 70; Marcus and Flannery 1994, 63–65; Joyce and Winter 1996, 36.

NOTE 109
Knapp 1996, 83–84.

NOTE 110
See also Etienne *et al.* 2000, 99.

NOTE 111
Kletter 1999, 21; Renfrew 1975 13–15; see also Cherry 1978, 422–23.

NOTE 112
Renfrew 1975, 113; Cherry 1978, 422–23; Hodges 1978, 444; Kletter 1999, 21.

NOTE 113
Crielaard 1998, 190.

NOTE 114
Even if we may think of a settlement placed to the west of the acropolis or maybe at the foot of the hill as suggested cautiously by Hermary 1999, 57–58.

NOTE 115
Crielaard 1998, 190; for Greece see Whitley 1991, 346–52; cf. Gunawardana 1981.

NOTE 116
I am very grateful to Dr. Iacovou for her comments about these sherds, and I beg her pardon for my criticisms which I hope she will consider as friendly and constructive.

NOTE 117
For instance, see Gjerstad *et al.* 1935, 30ff: T. 7 the end of CG II or beginning of the CG III (*i.e. ca* 850 BC) with some Black-on-Red imported juglets; cf. Hermary 1999, 56–57.

NOTE 118
Crielaard 1998, 187–90; cf. Earle 1991 and Gunawardana 1981, 136–40.

NOTE 119
Palea–Paphos–Skales: Karageorghis and Lo Schiavo 1989, 15–17; Amathus: Coldstream 1989; Hermary 1999, 56–58. It is often the omission of this ethnological category, namely the chiefdom, which can supposedly explain the use of prestige goods as evidence for statehood during the CG I–II period, that creates the problem (see Crielaard 1998, 190). Prestige goods and *exotica* are evidence for *stratified society* but not necessarily for *statehood*, which is not the only form of social hierarchy. In this way, Steel (1993) seems to ignore chiefdom as a sociological concept since she considers sign of stratification as sign of statehood (p. 152–53); thus she confuses king of an early state and military leader in a chiefdom in which there are already signs of social stratification (see Whitley 1991, for 9th-century Athens). In spite of her arguments, everything she says corroborates the idea of a decline (if not a ‘Dark Age’) during the 10th and 9th centuries BC. Besides, several mistakes can be found in her article: for example, p. 147, Theopompus does not say that Kinyras is expelled from Paphos; Hermary does not state that Amathus is the first Phoenician colony before Kition; Baurain does not complete the word *Nuria* by *Ki-* but by *Kin-*, etc.

NOTE 120
Iacovou 1999, 154–155

NOTE 121
Iacovou 1995, 102. But it seems that this new position of the supporters of the ‘Achaean hypothesis’ is rather a withdrawal to a middle term position. They admit that the process of political formation in Cyprus which led to the historical kingdoms was not finished before the CG III period and that the process may have endured in the entire Geometric period, from before 1050 till after 750: for example, see Iacovou 1999, 154–55, which contrasts with Iacovou 1995, 100, where it is stated that in the non monumental settlements the Cypriot city-kingdoms were actually in their early stage (ἐν τῇ γενέσει τοῦ) and Iacovou 1995, 107, where she states that in 707 the kingdoms were still “in their swaddling-clot-thes”. Such a statement does not fit with the stabilisation of the polities at the end of the 11th cent. BC (*ibid.* 104).

NOTE 122
It seems that Cyprus underwent the same development to statehood at least twice, since what we can hypothesize for the Iron Age seems to have already occurred in the

second millennium too: Knapp 1986; Peltenburg 1996.

NOTE 123

For Greece, see Ferguson 1991; Whitley 1991a, 348–51; Donlan 1997; this ‘big-men society’ could be described by Hesiod: Morris 1987, 2 and/or Homer: Whitley 1991a, 361–65; see also Spencer 1998.

NOTE 124

Earle 1997; Flannery 1999; cf. Gunawardana 1981.

NOTE 125

E.g. Flannery 1999; but see Yoffee 1993.

NOTE 126

See Gunawardana 1981, 140–41; Hagerstein 1996, 192f.

NOTE 127

Muhly 1996, 48.

NOTE 128

See for Tamassos, Buchholz 1993, 195.

NOTE 129

C. Petit *et al.* 1989, 895–96; contra Iacovou 1995, 102.

NOTE 130

Cohen 1978, 56–57.

NOTE 131

Webb 1975.

NOTE 132

Petit 1991/1992, 14, n. 36.

NOTE 133

Iacovou 1995, 97–98; Hermary 1999, 55. Iacovou (1995, 104) admits that a period of chiefdoms followed the end of the Late Bronze Age in Cyprus. But 1) she thinks that this period did not last longer than to the end of the 11th cent. BC (1955, 103–04); and 2) she compares the Cypriot chiefdoms with the period of the Judges and the division in twelve tribes in Israel. But 1) as she states earlier, there is no evidence of social distinction in the tombs before the end of the 9th cent. BC and no monumental architecture in the capitals (Iacovou 100, 104); 2) it is quite obvious that the Cypriot polities are not only chiefdoms but correspond to Renfrew’s Early State moduls (Renfrew 1975, 17–18) and can be compared with the kingdoms of Israel or Tyr (for the criteria of the Early States, see, for instance, Claessen and Oosten 1996).

NOTE 134

Phoenicia and Israel: Morris 1991; 1992; Ammon etc. Finkelstein 1999, 43, 47–48.

NOTE 135

See Demand 1997, 103.

NOTE 136

For the ideology, see Whitelam 1986.

NOTE 137

Claessen and Oosten 1996, 364.

NOTE 138

See the map in Finkelstein 1999, 44; for the significance of the new capital in the new state: Yoffee 1993, 70.

NOTE 139

See also for Monte Albán in south Mexico: Flannery and Marcus 1983.

NOTE 140

Trigger 1974; Yoffee 1993, 69–70; see also for instance Joyce and Winter 1996, 36.

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Abbreviations

AJA *American Journal of Archaeology*
BASOR *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BCH *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*
RDAC *Report of the Department of Antiquities. Cyprus*

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The Palace(s) of Babylon

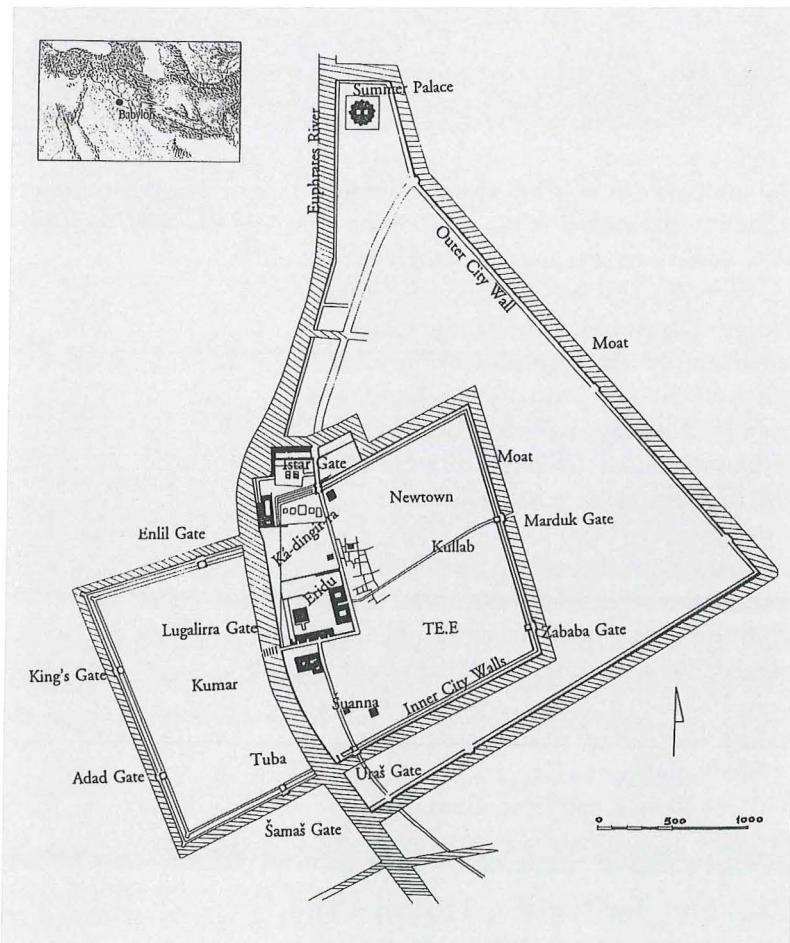
Amélie Kuhrt

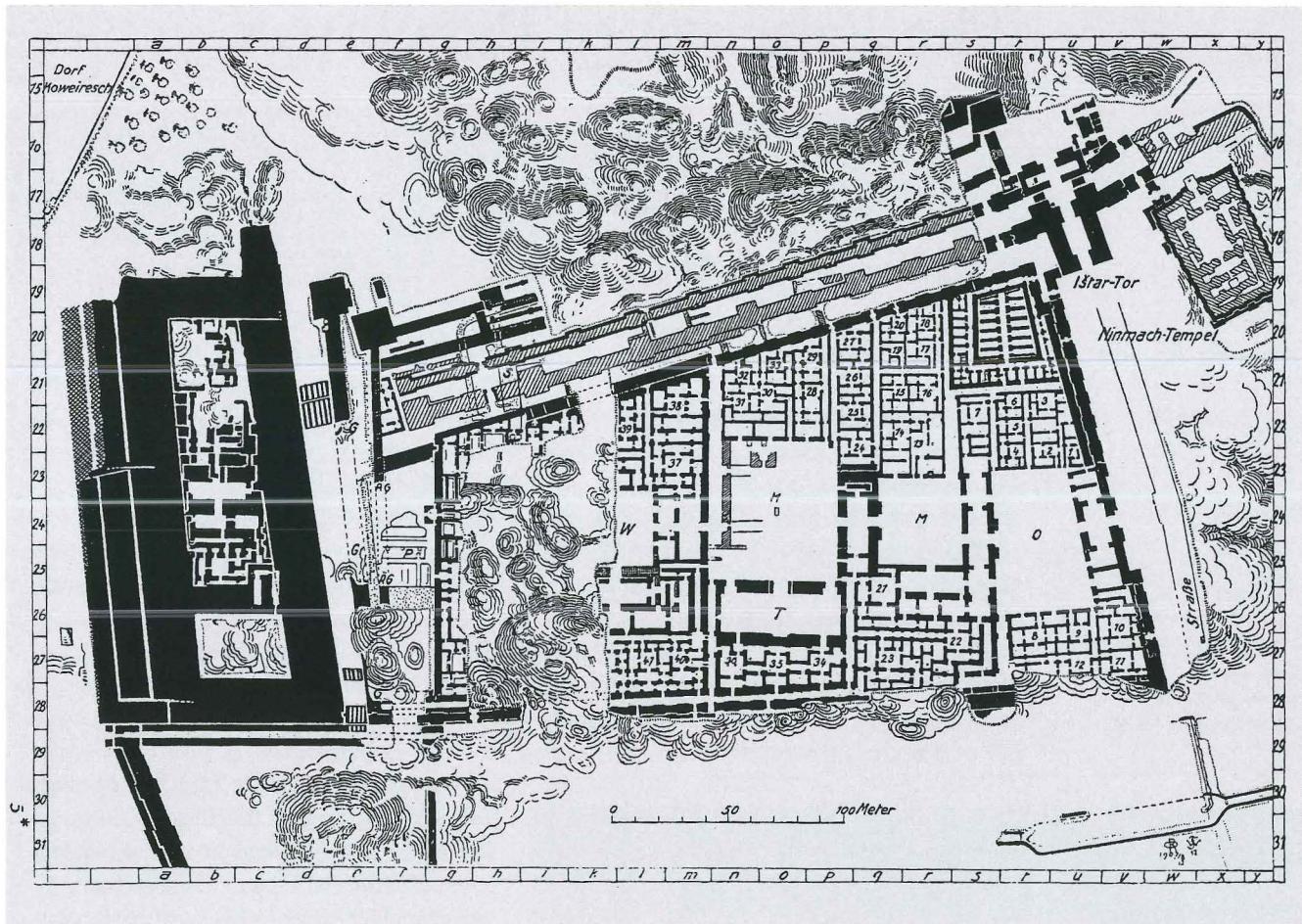
1. Introduction

Fig. 1. Plan of Babylon, showing the three main areas of the city, the city quarters and the gates (after Goodnick-Westenholz 1996, Fig. 1).

In contrast to Assyria in Northern Iraq, relatively little is known either textually or archaeologically about the palaces of Babylonia in the south. This reflects a cultural divergence between the two regions, although what this divergence signifies precisely is unclear. In Assyrian cities, the palace, main temples and ziggurat, were set together on a walled-off citadel riding on the city-walls.¹ But in Babylonia the temple of the city's patron deity and associat-

ed ziggurat were located in the centre of the city, with the palace probably a considerable distance away on the city's edge. I say 'probably' because very few have been found and identified with any degree of certainty. One, the palace of Sinkashid, dates from nineteenth century Uruk, the other from fourteenth century Dur Kurigalzu (Aqr Quf); the plan only of the former has been more or less completely revealed.² The great palace of Babylon, built at the turn of the seventh to sixth centuries BC, is thus the chief, surviving representative of a Mesopotamian royal dwelling of the first millennium BC in the south. Babylon was excavated by the Deutsche Orient Gesellschaft between 1899 and 1916, with particular attention focussed on the city-walls, the ziggurat and Marduk temple and part of the main palace. As a result, we have a fairly clear picture of the urban plan (see Fig. 1), which can be supplemented by texts celebrating the city, known as 'The Description of Babylon'.³ Virtually all the recovered remains date from the Neo-Babylonian (626–539 BC) and later periods. Investigation of earlier levels was seriously hampered by the high levels of ground water in most of the site. How much might have been found from earlier periods if this problem had not existed is debatable, since the city was massively extended, replanned and rebuilt by the Neo-Babylonian rulers following their defeat and take-over of the Assyrian empire in the 620s and 610s BC. At that time, Babylon was fundamentally refurbished as a new royal centre in order to mark the shift in imperial power definitively. Its reputation as a great cosmopolitan city, familiar to us from classical and





biblical writers, is based on the Babylon of that period.⁴

2. The siting and building of the palace

A palace had, of course, existed previously in Babylon – there had been kings ruling in alliance, opposition and subject to the Assyrians throughout the ninth to seventh centuries BC,⁵ and several Assyrian rulers visited Babylonia and resided in the city for extended periods.⁶ But where it was in the city is unknown. It has been suggested, on rather slight evidence, that it may have been in the western half, the district of Tuba (Beaulieu 1989, 98–104), but nothing is known of its lay-out, as no trace of it has been found. It is, indeed, conceivable that the royal residence was not particularly elaborate at this stage, as Nebuchadnezzar II, the chief architect of the new Babylon, says that earlier kings

had built palaces in other cities and only resided in the capital at the time of the New Year Festival (Langdon 1912, Nbk 15, vii 9–25). The Neo-Babylonian palace, therefore, begun by Nebuchadnezzar's father on the northern edge of the city, was a wholly new structure: nothing had been built on the site before as the excavations established (Klengel-Brandt 1990, 28); the urban area was expanded to accommodate it and its plan differs markedly from that of the known Babylonian palaces of second millennium (see n. 2). It was restructured, repaired and extended several times by all the major Neo-Babylonian kings, as their surviving inscriptions, found in the palace show.

The building was large and complex, and not all of it had been excavated by the time archaeological exploration was forced to stop. It consists of a southern section, the 'Südburg' (Fig. 2), sitting within the rough square made by the new city

Fig. 2. Plan of the Südburg (After Koldewey 1990, Abb. 44).

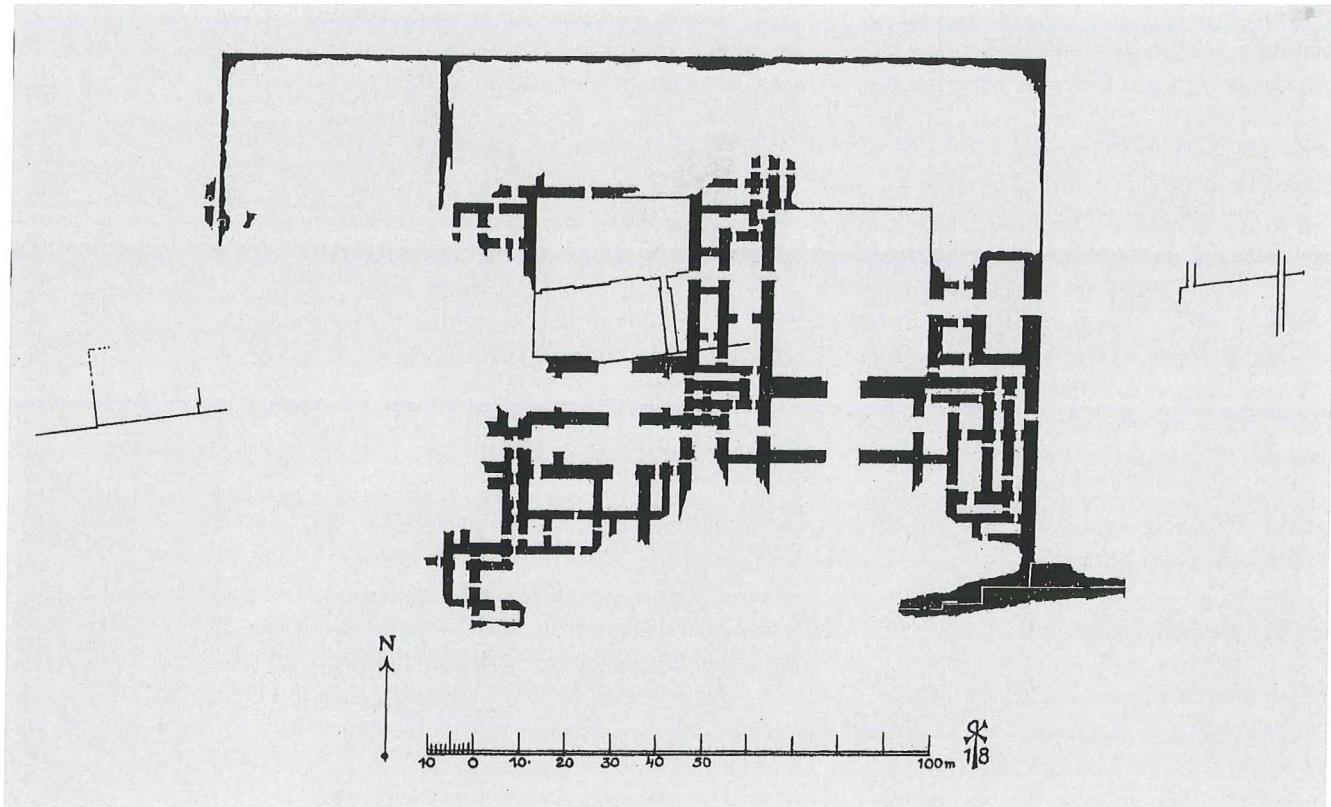


Fig. 3. Plan of the Hauptburg. (After R. Koldewey, *Die Königsburgen von Babylon II*, 1932, pl. 8).

with a bastioned projection jutting out over the Euphrates in the west, and comprising a series of courtyards. North of the inner city-wall, another palace, the 'Hauptburg', was constructed by Nebuchadnezzar II, which has only been very partially investigated (Fig. 3). The two sections were linked and enclosed by their own very substantial fortifications, and, by the end of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, the whole sat on an 8 metre high terrace. The effect was to create an immense citadel bestriding the urban fortifications, looking down on, and dominating, the city below. The only other building in the city outstripping its height was the ziggurat to the south.

The location was significant in other respects, too. The site chosen abutted directly on what was considered to be the oldest and most sacred city-quarters (Kadingir-ra and Eridu). Immediately to the east of the palace, and forming virtually part of the outer palace walls on the eastern side, ran the Processional Way decorated with brilliantly blue and gold coloured, glazed, moulded bricks showing bulls,

lions and dragons (the animal sacred to Marduk, Babylon's city-god). The street passed through the immense, identically decorated Ishtar gate. The central section of the street was paved with white limestone slabs, with red breccia paving on either side, creating the effect of a modern street, designed for traffic. It was along this street that the king led the procession of cult-statues, temple attendants and citizenry, followed by displays of booty from royal campaigns (living and material) on the occasion of the New Year Festival (Berger 1970). Immediately to the south of the palace, again to the west of the processional way lay the temple of Nabu-ša-Hare (Pongratz-Leisten 1994, 103), where the kings were invested with the symbols of Babylonian kingship, a ceremony that may have been re-enacted annually (George 1996) in the course of the festival. Directly south of that lay the Marduk cultic complex, with its great ziggurat (Etemenanki) and sanctuary (Esangil), the most important in Babylon and, indeed, in the country, which was the scene of the first part of the elaborate New Year Festi-

val, and in which the king himself was a central actor. So, although the palace was physically separate from the urban cultic space, it was annexed, as it were, by the Neo-Babylonian kings through the locating of their palace(s), which created a continuous sequence of highly significant, symbolically charged structures, all linked by the processional street. A further feature worth noting is that the processional way gradually sloped upwards on both sides of the city wall, so that the Ishtar gate stood on a level with the palace, seeming from afar to be linked to it directly. Location and elevation, thus, created a powerful image of sacrality intertwined with the exercise of royal power.⁷

3. Internal layout

If we look at the internal space of the Südburg (Fig. 2), we confront something of a problem, because the excavators found relatively little in the way of furnishings, decoration or textual material that might indicate functions of rooms. Koldewey's visualisation (1990, 71ff.) of how it was used was frankly impressionistic and unsupported by any contemporary evidence. But some deductions can reasonably be made. It is plain that the main entrance was from the processional street in the east through a large arched gateway, flanked by double rooms, into a substantial paved court (O) with smaller residences to north and south; from there one moved into a similar, but smaller court (M) before entering a large central courtyard (55 x 60 m; the 'Haupthof' (H)), south of which was a room of very substantial proportions (T. 17 x 52 m), with fine paving. Opposite the central door, against the back wall was a niche. The outer facade of the entrance to this room was decorated with beautiful glazed brick panels: against a deep blue background, geometrical plant motifs were picked out in gold, pale-blue and black, with a row of lions beneath. Koldewey's assumption that this room was the throne-room is persuasive and has been accepted by all commentators.⁸ If this identification is right, then it looks as though the plan

of the palace followed the lay-out of some of the Assyrian palaces in being divided into an outer, public section to the east (*bit babani*) and an inner, domestic section to the west (*bit bitani*), separated by the audience and reception suite at its heart. There is, in fact, a reference to a superintendent of the *bitanu* of the palace (Cyr. 312; cf. Spar 1979, no.1; Joannès 1996, 170) in an economic text, so that this division of the internal space receives some support.

4. Palace personnel

A unique document helps to flesh out the picture of the Neo-Babylonian court, even if it does not allow us to label the chambers with any precision. This is the so-called 'Hofkalender' of Nebuchadnezzar (Unger 1931, Nr. 26).⁹ Following on an inscription commemorating his constructions, the text lists the king's courtiers, nobles, governors, and city-officials within Babylonia by name; this is succeeded by a fragmentary list of subject rulers (the preserved places are coastal cities in the Levant). This allows us to gain some insight into the important posts and government departments centred on the palace. Where definable, the text presents evidence for military-commander(s), palace-superintendent, major domo, cup-bearers, singers, boatmen, merchants and female slaves (two overseers are listed). The crown-prince may have had his own apartments and staff within the palace, as in Assyria,¹⁰ since his secretary figures in the list. A substantial part of the palace was devoted to the accommodation of the women of the palace (*sekretu ša ekalli*), as both an official (*mašennu*) in charge of the 'House of the Palace Women' is listed among the highest court dignitaries, as well as a scribe attached to this establishment. Both, we might note in passing, have masculine names. The term *ša rēši*, usually, but somewhat controversially, translated as 'eunuchs', does not appear in Nebuchadnezzar's 'court calendar', although they figure in the biblical description (Jer. 39.3; 13) of the make-up

of Nebuchadnezzar's army.¹¹ It is worth mentioning that the first person named in the list has the title 'chief baker', but his name suggests identity with the commander of the Babylonian forces in Judah in 587 BC, which would show that, as is often the case with royal dignitaries, title and function need not converge. The title *q/gallabu* is, unfortunately, less clear: Unger translated it 'chief hairdresser', a court position attested earlier in Babylonia (cf. *CAD G*, s.v. 'gallabu'); but it could also be rendered 'chief engineer' (*gallapu*; see *ANET*: 308 n.3).

More information on function and staffing of the palace comes from the surviving contemporary administrative documents found by the German team (cf. Pedersén 1998, 184). Approximately 290 tablets were discovered in a room with staircase leading to some curious chambers of undefined function (see below, p. 82). They were partially published by Weidner (1939), who analysed the contents of the whole archive. They list distributions of grain, oil and dates made to foreigners in the palace of Babylon between 595 and 570 BC, and give us an insight into the many non-Babylonians supplied by, and resident at, the Babylonian court in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II. We can divide them into several distinct groups. First, there are royal deportees or, perhaps, hostages, such as Jehoiachin, king of Judah, who, according to 2 *Kings* 25: 27, was freed from his chains and fed at the king's table by Nebuchadnezzar's short-lived successor, Amel-Marduk. The 'sons' of the kings of Judah and Ashkelon also appear, but no women. A second group is constituted by workers with specific functions, both from inside and outside Babylonian imperial territory: sailors from Tyre (190+), Ashkelon (11+) and Egypt (46). There are also singers from Ashkelon, with several 'chiefs', which implies the presence of a troupe of singers from this city at the Babylonian court. 30 carpenters from Ionia and 11 from Byblos and Arvad were distributed in different sections of the palace, as were 12 Egyptian guardsmen, 8 of them attached to something called the

governor's residence, which may indicate that the local governor of Babylon was also housed in the palace. Two Egyptians were in charge of delivering supplies to the palace, another in charge of the palace horse-grooms, and yet another looked after the royal monkeys. These specialists, several of whom are named, need to be separated from the undifferentiated groups of 'people' from various places: e.g., 126 Tyrians appear, as do 713 Elamites working under a Babylonian superintendent; there are further mentions of the presence of Lydians, inhabitants from Smooth and Rough Cilicia and a small number of Persians. One term, not as yet understood, is applied to some individuals: both a named Mede and a Lydian are called *baktu*. A possible rendering, is 'exile', 'fugitive'. It would certainly not be surprising to find exiles from neighbouring regimes sheltering at the court of Babylon, although the translation remains uncertain (see *CAD B*, s.v. 'baktu').

5. 'Museum' and 'library'

There are a great many problems associated with trying to define function and use of space in the palace of Babylon, linked in part to the fact that only part of Nebuchadnezzar's palace was fully excavated and recorded. As a result, the westernmost court of the Südburg was never explored, and the immense Hauptburg (Fig. 3) only very sketchily investigated (Klengel-Brandt 1990). The superficial study and recording of the Hauptburg has left modern scholars with a puzzle. Unger, in his 1931 study of Babylon using inscriptions, literary and economic texts, excavation reports and later writers, proposed the existence of a royal 'museum' and 'library' in the Hauptburg. The existence of the library rests on very thin foundations and cannot be substantiated at present.¹² But the find of royal statues and stelae dating to older rulers and governors from beyond Babylonia, as well as some Neo-Hittite material, could imply the existence of a kind of museum where trophies from conquered regions were kept.

Unfortunately, it seems that several items were not found in the Hauptburg itself, but in the area outside and some of the antique statues may have been used as fill (Klengel-Brandt 1990). So the evidence, while tantalising, is far from clear and must remain moot at present.

6. Palace gardens

A somewhat different problem is presented by the 'Hanging Gardens'. Koldewey (1990, 90–108) thought he had found their substructure in some curious vaulted chambers, where the ration-lists were stored, but further consideration of the technicalities involved make this location unlikely. Other sites in, or near, the palace area have been proposed (most recently, Stevenson 1992), but none have any real foundation in evidence and so lack plausibility. A quite different argument, starting from the fact that Herodotus makes no mention of the gardens, concluded that they were, in fact, located in seventh century Nineveh (Dalley 1994). Certainly, there is no direct mention of gardens in the many inscriptions of Nebuchadnezzar relating to his palace building, nor in those of his predecessors and successors (overview in Wiseman 1985: 56–60; Finkel 1987).

Yet gardens certainly existed somewhere in Babylon, although a direct link with the palace must remain tenuous. Several hellenistic period texts¹³ refer to cypress and juniper gardens, in association with the main temple in the centre of the city. A list of plants connects the late eighth century king, Marduk-apla-iddina II, with a series of vegetable gardens (Mieissner 1891), while a sadly fragmentary, Late Babylonian epic about the Kassite king Adad-shum-usur sets part of the action in the palace garden (*kiri ekallim*).¹⁴ According to Arrian (*Anab.* 7.25.3–6; cf. *Plut. Alex.* 76.7), a garden lay on the west bank of the Euphrates facing the palace, and it was there that Alexander lay on his deathbed. The location has been confirmed by an astronomical diary, which reports Antiochus III crossing from the central temple, Esangil, to the royal garden

on the west bank of the river during a festival in 188/7.¹⁵ Another structure, which may have been associated with a palace garden, is a 250 metre square structure, set on an 18 metre high terrace, and lying well to the north of the main city (see Fig. 1). It is outside the inner city-wall and traces of shafts were thought by the German excavators to have been intended to conduct cooling air into the rooms – a system used until recently in the Middle East. It was, therefore, dubbed the 'Sommer Palast' by Koldewey (1990, 11–12), who connected it with the text of a Nebuchadnezzar II cylinder (Langdon 1912, Nbk 14, iii 11–29), which refers to the erection of a building on the edge of the city, a 'mirror image' of the palace in Babylon. It is not unthinkable that this was essentially a large pavilion surrounded by a park. However, the badly weathered structure was not fully investigated at the time, and a more recent examination suggests that the visible remains are the remnants of a Parthian fort, with the 'airshafts' forming part of the substructure (Nasir 1979).

In sum: while the legendary hanging gardens cannot be located, sufficient evidence exists to indicate that gardens were associated with the palace in Babylon. If one uses the analogy of Assyrian palace gardens, one might assume that they were planted with a great variety of trees – fruiting, exotic, sweet-smelling, shade-giving – a place for relaxation and intimate parties, possibly equipped with pavilions, as evoked in the description of Ashurnasir-pal II's garden (Grayson 1991 A.0.101.30). They would have been used for the trial-planting of new crops and exotic plants, as Sennacherib did (Luckenbill 1924, 111 1.56) and Harpalos is said to have done (*Plut. Alex.* 35.15; *Mor.* 648c). It would also have been a place for exhibiting rare animals presented to the king as gifts or brought back from distant campaigns. Obviously much of this remains hypothesis, but the cumulative evidence for royal gardens in Babylon encourages us to visualise a park of this

nature associated with its palace. It is, for example, possible that the caged lion and leopards, said to have been presented by the Babylonians to Alexander in 331 BC (Q.C. 5.1), came from such a palace garden – part of a long-established Near Eastern tradition of creating royal parks as microcosms of empire, famously continued by the Achaemenids.¹⁶

7. Festivals and ceremonies

Just as it is only possible to make tentative statements about palace gardens in Babylon, similar caution has to be exercised about the use of the palace as a setting for public festivals and ceremonies of kingship. Using again the analogy of Assyrian palace-building accounts (Lackenbacher 1990, 146ff.) and earlier Babylonian references, it seems highly likely that completion of construction was marked with a public inauguration, but what form this took, whether it could have involved a banquet for citizens and prominent individuals from further afield, is unknown.¹⁷ What may be significant is that many of Nebuchadnezzar's building records end with an almost identical prayer to Marduk, in which the king asks the god to make his building endure for ever, allow him to reach old age within its walls, beget a multitude of sons, receive the tribute of the nations and be succeeded by a strong dynasty of kings.¹⁸ The likelihood is that this royal prayer was recited in the context of an inaugural ceremony, which probably involved the gods being formally invited into the palace, as well as the empire's dignitaries and conceivably neighbouring rulers.

The mourning ceremony, ordered on the occasion of royal deaths, is slightly better attested. When his 102(104)-year old mother, Adda-guppi', died, Nabonidus (556–539 BC), commanded the citizenry of Babylon and Borsippa, representatives from provinces, as well as provincial governors and rulers to assemble for the obsequies, which included sacrifices by the king and seven days of public lamenting:

"they ... scattered dust on their heads ... they walked about heads hung low, stripped of their attire."¹⁹

At the end of that period, all participants washed and shaved, and the king equipped them with new clothing, fine oils and perfume, feasted them with food and drink and gave them provisions for their homeward journey. The implication is that, despite the fact that the inscription commemorating Adda-guppi's life was set up in Harran, some of these ceremonies took place within, or at least close to, the palace.

When and where Nabonidus' mother was buried is not revealed: Nabonidus says that her body, wrapped in fine textiles and accompanied by precious items, was placed in a 'hidden tomb'. Little in the way of royal burials has so far been found in Babylonia,²⁰ and no one knows the precise burial place of the Neo-Babylonian kings, although Unger (1931, 51) speculated that their mausolea were located in the southwest of the 'Neustadt'. It is possible that at least some members of the royal family were buried under the floors of the royal palace. Evidence to support this is three-fold. First is the fact that the individuals buried under the floor of Sinkashid's palace at Uruk were members of the ruling family. Secondly, in 1989, the remains of several Assyrian queens of the ninth and eighth centuries were found under the courtyard paving of the North-West Palace at Nimrud, together with inscriptions, remains of elaborate textiles and gold jewellery (Damerji 1998). Thirdly, a burial was found inside the north wall of the Südburg. The corpse's identity is unknown, but it was laid in a substantial clay sarcophagus, dressed in a gold-ornamented robe and the building level suggests that it dates to the time of Nebuchadnezzar II (Koldewey 1990, 117). An important ritual for the dead (at all levels of society; Bayliss 1973), performed by surviving family members involved regular offering (*kispu*). Nabonidus' mother describes that she carried out this cult for earlier Babylonian kings:

“... I every month without interruption in my finest garments made them a funerary offering (*kispu*) of oxen, fat sheep, bread, best beer, wine, sesame oil, honey and all kinds of garden produce, and established abundant offerings of sweet smelling incense as a regular due, and placed it before them.” (Bayliss 1973, 124)

What she does not say is where these elaborate monthly offerings were made. It is possible that they took place before statues of kings set up in temples, rather than in the palace or at the grave-side. In this context, then, the palace as the ceremonial setting remains opaque.

There is similar ignorance about the extent to which the palace may have provided one of the arenas for the annual, two week long, New Year Festival, which drew people from all over Babylonia to the capital, and in which the king's role was prominent.²¹ However, van der Toorn 1991 has argued that it was also the occasion for inducting and formally confirming palace officials in their positions, which would place the royal residence centre-stage at some point in the ceremonies. Further, a study of Assyrian administrative documents (Mattila 1990) suggests that the palace provided enormous quantities of food and gifts for palace staff and guests, perhaps formally presented by members of the royal family at some point during the festival. It is likely that this most important festival of the Babylonian calendar would have entailed similarly lavish provisions in Babylon. Given the close physical links between palace and urban cultic space, it is not unthinkable that some public feasting took place inside the palace walls on this occasion. But the uncertainties loom large.

8. Subsequent use of palace in the Achaemenid and Seleucid periods

The palace buildings were not abandoned by the Persian or Macedonian conquerors, although Babylon was no longer the exclusive imperial capital, so that specific use and function changed. The fabric of the building was repaired repeatedly, its walls strengthened and new architectural elements added (Koldewey 1990, 126–29; see further below, pp. 85–87).

8a: Royal presence and use

Both Babylonian and Graeco-Roman evidence shows that it was used on several occasions by king and royal family right through the Achaemenid and Seleucid periods. Cyrus and Cambyses must have resided there immediately after Babylon's fall in 539/8 BC (Grayson 1975a, no.7 iv 19–28), and there is evidence that Artaxerxes I, his wife and sons were in residence at Babylon at the end of his reign (*FGrH* 688 F15). Subsequently, Artaxerxes II and his designated successor were there in 379/8, while Darius III was based in Babylon with his family and retinue overseeing the preparations for the crucial Battle of Gaugamela in 331 BC.

When Babylon surrendered to Alexander, he moved into the palace (QC 5.1.23). His appointees were left in charge of the citadel and its treasury. On his return in 323 BC, the palace was the scene of the enactment of the old Mesopotamian substitute king ritual (Parpolo 1983; Smelik 1978–9), while Alexander rested his sick body in the garden on the river bank opposite (see above, p. 82). It was in the palace that his corpse was prepared for the long and spectacular journey to its final resting place. Archon and, shortly after, Seleucus, as the first Macedonian satraps, dwelt there, and it is the Babylon citadel that appears as a focus of the long drawn-out fighting between Seleucus and Antigonus' forces in 312/11–309/8 BC (Grayson 1975a, no.10, r.7).

After Seleucus' victory and assumption

of the royal title in 305, it served him as chief residence until the building of Seleucia-Tigris. Soon after that, Seleucus' crown-prince, Antiochus, spent considerable time in Babylon renovating Babylonian shrines damaged in the bloody struggle for Babylonia between Antigonus and Seleucus (Grayson 1975a, no. 11). In 245 BC, three of Antiochus II's sons were involved in activities in the main temple of Babylon and must have dwelt in the palace. There is also a reference to a banquet taking place in the same year at which Antiochus II's co-regent, Seleucus, the administrator and college of Esangil plus the 'law officer' (*databara*) of the Babylonians were present. Interestingly, the setting is called 'the former house of Laodike', which may have been within the palace. In 205/4 and 188/7 BC, Antiochus III appears participating in elaborate public festivals in Babylon – the former was certainly the New Year Festival.²²

8b: The palace household and the palace as administrative seat

All of this implies that a staff and household must have been maintained in the Babylon palace, and many hints of that appear in the texts. A majordomo appears in Cyrus' reign (see above, p. 80), and a possible 'palace steward' is mentioned in a fragmentary context in 382/1 (Sachs & Hunger 1988, no.-381 r.3'-4'). In 345 BC, women prisoners from Sidon were sent to the palace in Babylon to be enrolled in its labour force (Grayson 1975a, no. 9 ll. 6-8). Royal servants and officials, as well as troops and guards, appear repeatedly throughout the Seleucid period in association with the palace. It was, of course, the seat of the governor of Babylon and its administrative district, as well as his deputy (attested in the Seleucid period).²³ The archive of a governor of the Achaemenid period (late fifth/early fourth century BC) has been found in the palace; unfortunately, it is only partially published and, so far, has only revealed documents relating to his private business interests.²⁴ But its existence serves to remind us that governors had a substantial administrative staff work-

ing under them, run by secretaries. It was here that decisions related to local communities and central government edicts were stored (cf. *Ezra* 5.17);²⁵ the governor himself served to resolve serious conflicts and enforce royal directives. In other words, the Babylon palace continued to be a hive of activity and important focus for the citizens of Babylon.

8c: The palace's physical appearance

The physical fabric of the palace of Babylon was largely maintained in the form initially planned by Nebuchadnezzar II by the rulers who succeeded the Neo-Babylonian kings. However, there were also some alterations and additions over time. A striking one was the erection of at least one, possibly more, copies of Darius I's Behistun inscription, proclaiming his seizure of the throne and victory over numerous challengers, including two Babylonian ones (von Voigtländer 1978). The inscription was surmounted by a version of the Behistun relief, showing (at least) Darius himself, lifesized, triumphing over the prostrate figure of Gaumata, with the winged disc hovering above the group, with possibly four further captives shown. The whole was set on a block c.3 m. high and 3.60 m wide. The precise position of relief and inscription, of which only several fragments have been found, is uncertain. Seidl has argued that it could have been placed on top of the wall between the processional way and the north palace, while other versions flanked the great street itself (Seidl 1976). Re-examination of more fragments (Seidl 1999) now reveals that the text was, in fact recast to show Bel-Marduk (in place of Ahuramazda) as bestower of the kingdom on Darius. So the great Neo-Babylonian citadel was embellished with a prominent Persian monument driving home the message of Babylon's defeat, at the behest of its own patron deity.

A further restructuring was undertaken by the Persian régime within the westernmost part of the Südburg. Artaxerxes II constructed a fairly substantial palace in pure Achaemenid style (34.8 x 20.5 m)

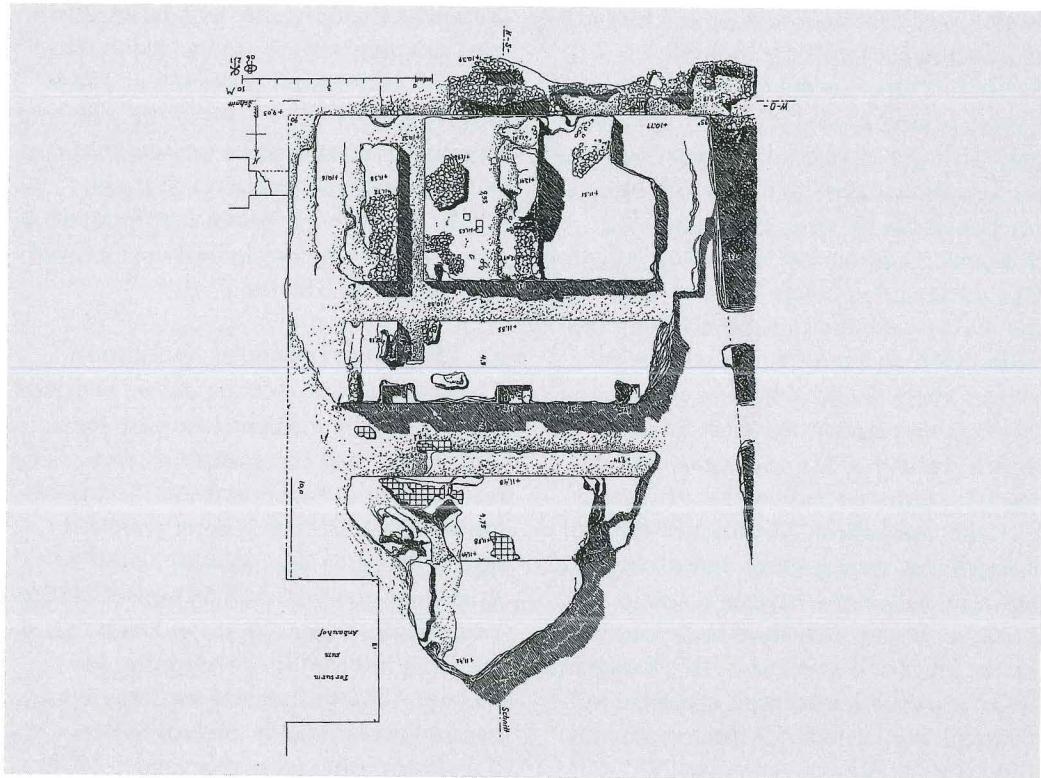
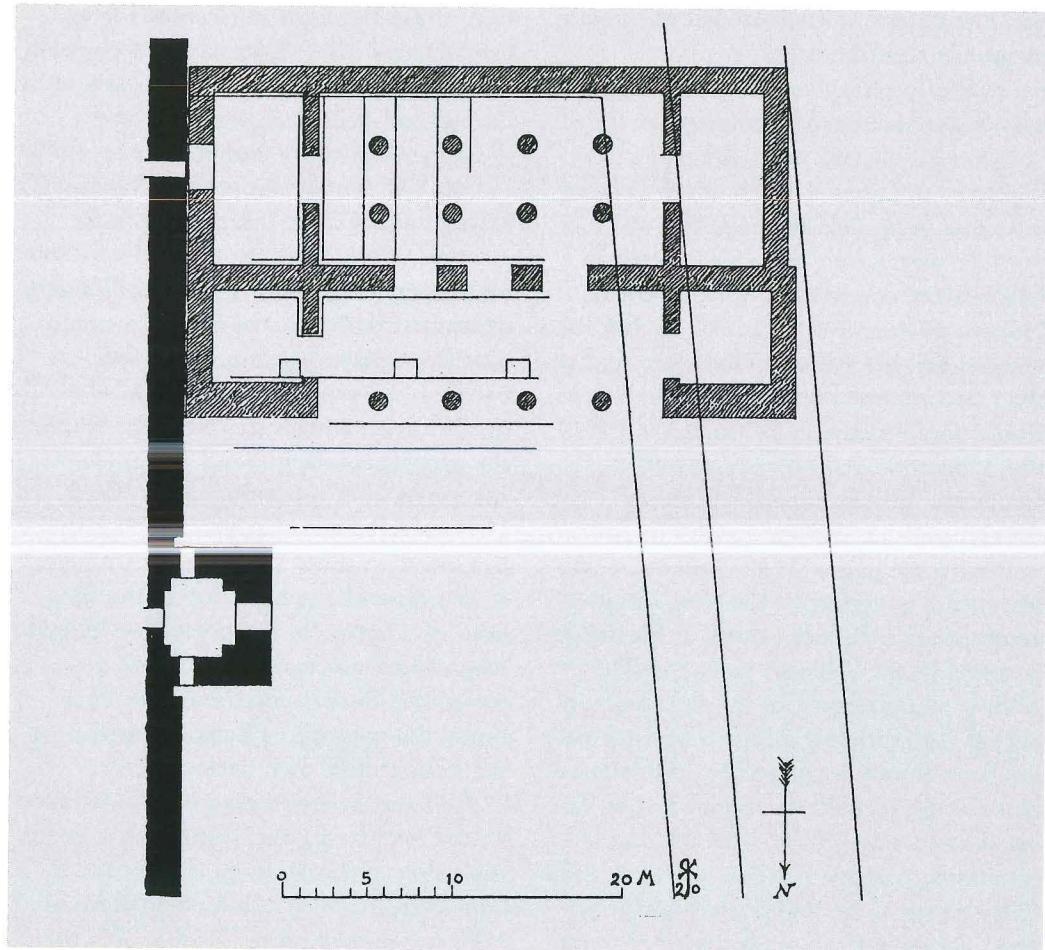


Fig. 4. Plan and reconstructed plan of the "Persian Building" situated in the western part of the Südburg. (After R. Koldeway, *Die Königsburgen von Babylon I*, 1931, pls. 26 and 28).



(Fig. 4). As in Fars and Susiana, some of it was built of stone which, it has been suggested, may have come from an Iranian quarry (Haerinck 1990; 1997). The four-columned portico was flanked by square towers, and the outer walls decorated with figured glazed bricks, flat and in relief, depicting the Persian guards, familiar from the finds at Susa, both lifesize and smaller (half-size). Fragments of the internal glazed decoration have also been found – geometric and floral motifs – as well as bits of Old Persian inscriptions commemorating Artaxerxes' building (Vallat 1989). Some tiny remnants of stone-reliefs (human and plant) raise the possibility that elements of the Persepolitan iconographic repertoire were disposed in the palace. The materials used to make the moulded bricks (sand and lime), the colours used (no red) and the flooring all mirror building practices known from the central Persian capitals and unfamiliar in Babylonia. There is even a possibility that part of the old eastern courtyard was decorated with Persepolis style columns (Koldewey 1990, 89 and Abb. 58). One further development, not clearly datable, took place in the Persian period: the Ishtar gate, processional street and palace were all drawn together within a light enclosure wall, thus tying the politically potent and sacral locations even more visibly together (Stolper 1994, 260). All in all, then, while the Persian period Babylon palace seems at first sight to be unchanged from Nebuchadnezzar's original design, the Achaemenid imprint on its interior and exterior was quite

unmistakable. Whether the Persian rulers used the 'summer palace', too, has not so far emerged from the published excavation reports.

The evidence for remodelling of the palaces in the Seleucid period is less striking, but nevertheless significant. The base for Seleucid control of Babylon was the citadel of Babylon: *bullae* with royal portraits (although no surviving inscriptions) are reported to have been found to the south-west of the summer palace, suggesting that a registry/archive house could have been located here (*Iraq* 45 (1983), 207). There is evidence for parts of the palace being redecorated and restructured in keeping with Greek models, with peristyle courts erected inside the older Babylonian buildings, while some of the walls were decorated with painted wall-plaster, including plant-motifs and figures in Greek style. At the same time, it is notable that the Achaemenid-period apadana in the Kasr not only survived into the hellenistic period, but was reconstructed, in keeping with its original architectural and decorative style (Haerinck 1973, 108f. n. 4; 113 n.16; 115 n. 26; Schmidt 1941, 802-08; 828-30). So while we may identify significant Greek-style remains in the hellenistic period palaces, much of the physical environment in which king, royal family and governors operated continued to be Babylonian and Achaemenid – as we would expect of a dynasty that proclaimed itself to be the heir of Mesopotamian and Persian monarchic traditions.

Notes

NOTE 1

See, e.g., plan of Dur Sharrukin (Khorsabad) in Hirmer & Strommenger 1964, 445, fig. 52; Nineveh: Russell 1991, 2, fig. 1. See also Lumsden in this volume.

NOTE 2

For Palace of Sinkashid, see plan in Postgate 1990, 140, fig. 7.3; for Aqr Quf excavations, see Baqir 1942–46 and Tomabechi 1983 (wall paintings). A royal palace is also textually attested in Uruk from the Neo-Babylonian to Hellenistic period; the implied location is close to the main Eanna sanctuary, see Kessler 1999. For the late Achaemenid administrative(?) residence at Abu Qubur, north of Sippar, see Gasche 1989, 1991, 1995, 207–208.

NOTE 3

Koldewey 1990; Unger 1931; Bergamini 1974; George 1990; 1992; 1993; 1997. The ‘Description of Babylon’, which provides a kind of sacred topography of the city, was copied and recopied in Babylonian schools into the late hellenistic period; one surviving version was transliterated into Greek letters, see Goodnick-Westenholz 1996, 205, fig.6. (*ibid.* for a useful introduction to the city).

NOTE 4

For the history of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty, see von Voigtlander 1963; see Kuhrt 1995, ch.11 for an introduction.

NOTE 5

Brinkman 1968; 1984; Frame 1992; Kuhrt 1995, ch.11. Note also the references to the palace in the ‘Nabopolassar Epic’, Grayson 1975b, 82–3, ii, 12–13.

NOTE 6

Certainly attested are Tiglath-pileser III between 729 and 727 BC, Sargon II between 710 and 706 BC and Ashurbanipal’s brother, Shamash-shuma-ukin, who reigned as sub-king of Babylonia from 668 to his death in the course of a rebellion in 648 BC.

NOTE 7

I have given some space to the significance of this aspect of the palace’s location because no cultic installations were found inside the palace itself, so that a, to my mind false, separation of temple and palace could be envisaged.

NOTE 8

See further on the throne room and its facade, Polony & Winkler 1968; Hrouda 1986; Andrae 1990.

NOTE 9

Translation of part in *ANET*, 307–08 and Kuhrt 1995, 605–07; discussion of some terms and names only: *TUAT* I, 405–06

NOTE 10

For discussion of the ‘House of Succession’ (or ‘Administration’) in Assyria, see Seux 1980 paras. 61–2. It was here that the selected successor dwelt, in order to be associated with his father in the running of the empire.

NOTE 11

For the vexed question of eunuchs, see Briant 1996, 279– 288. Note that Joannès 2000, 66 goes for the neutral rendering ‘officers’.

NOTE 12

It is not, of course, unthinkable in the light of Ashurbanipal’s well-attested collection of learned texts at Nineveh. For discussion of other libraries in possible palaces, see Pedersén 1998, 262–65.

NOTE 13

The mentions appear primarily in the Astronomical Diaries, e.g. Sachs & Hunger 1988, no. -328 (garden between Esangil and Eturkalamma); nos. -277, -270 (cypress garden); 1989, no. -240 (juniper garden).

NOTE 14

See Grayson 1975b, 64–65, i 6.

NOTE 15

Sachs & Hunger 1989, no. -187 A r.10’–12’; the significance was first noted by van der Spek 1995, cf. Boiy 2000, 91.

NOTE 16

For gardens in the Near East in general, see *RIA*, s.v. ‘Garten’; further Oppenheim 1965; Wiseman 1983. Egyptian gardens are primarily attested in private, temple and mortuary contexts, see Germer 2001 (but note that palace gardens provide the setting for several Egyptian stories, e.g. *Westcar Papyrus*, see Lichtheim 1975, 216 (Second Intermediate Period) and possibly the third-century demotic story about King Amasis (Spiegelberg 1914, 26)). Persian *paradeisoi*: Briant 1996, 244– 252; 456–459; garden at Pasargadae: Stronach 1990. See also Nielsen in this volume.

NOTE 17

See Russell 1991, 224–9 for the invited participants in Assyrian festivities on completion of a new palace (gods, foreign rulers or their representatives, Assyrian nobles, officials, commanders, elders, ‘the people of the land’); Moran 1987/1992, no.3 for the letter of the Kassite king, Burnaburiash, inviting the Egyptian ruler to the inauguration of his new palace.

NOTE 18

See, e.g., Langdon 1912, Nbk. 9 iii 43–59: ‘I raised my hand, prayed to the Lord of Lords, my pleas went to Marduk, the merciful, “Oh lord of lands, Marduk, hear the words of my mouth! The house I have built, may I have my fill of its glory! In Babylon, within it, may I reach old age, may I have my fill of descendants! May I receive within it the heavy tribute of the world’s rulers, of all people! May my offspring rule mankind forever in this palace!”’

NOTE 19

Gadd 1958 H1B; translation only *ANET* 561–2; Longman 1991, 227–28; Kuhrt 1995, 607–08. The public mourning by the

crown prince and army for her is also mentioned in the Nabonidus Chronicle (Grayson 1975a, No.7 ii 13–15), although this lasted only three days. Note also the seven day long public mourning in Babylonia on the death of Cyrus' wife in 538 BC, Grayson 1975a, No.7 iii 23–4 ('all people bared (shaved?) their heads').

NOTE 20

Several elaborate burials of the Early Dynastic period (c.2900–2350 BC: Kish, Ur) have been assumed to be royal, but the evidence argues against it, see Pollock 1991. The 'mausolea' of the Third Dynasty of Ur rulers (c. 2100–2000 BC) probably relate to the funerary cult, and are not royal tombs, see Moorey 1984. Royal family

vaults located under the floor of the Sinkashid palace in Uruk have been more certainly identified, see Strommenger 1971, 593.

NOTE 21

See the discussions by Black 1981, Kuhrt 1987, Pongratz-Leisten 1994, 93–111, esp. 107 & 109–11 on the role of the king.

NOTE 22

The relevant astronomical diary references are: Sachs & Hunger 1988, no. -378, obv. 5'; 1989, nos. -245, -204, -187.

NOTE 23

Discussion, with attestations, in Boiy 2000, 197–98.

NOTE 24

For general circumstances of find, see Pedersén 1998, 184. The governor's archive, who, unusually, was a Babylonian appointed by the Persian régime, is being published and analysed by Stolper 1987; 1990; 1995.

NOTE 25

Note also the possible reference to a royal archive in hellenistic Babylon (Strassmeier, 8e Congrès 32–4; discussion in Boiy 2000, 204) and the deposition of valuables in the palace for safe-keeping in 262/1 (Sachs & Hunger 1989, no.- 261).

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Abbreviations

AA *Archäologischer Anzeiger*
 AchHist *Achaemenid History IV: IV centre and periphery*, eds. H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg & A. Kuhrt, Leiden 1990
 AMI *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*
 ANET *Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testament*, ed. J.B. Pritchard, Princeton NJ, 1969
 AnOr *Analecta Orientalia*
 AnSt *Anatolian Studies*
 AOAT *Alter Orient und Altes Testament*
 BAI *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*
 BaM *Baghdader Mitteilungen*
 BiOr *Bibliotheca Orientalis*
 CAD *The Assyrian Dictionary of the University of Chicago*, Chicago 1956-
 CAH *Cambridge Ancient History*
 Cyr. *Inschriften von Cyrus, König von Babylon (538-529 v.Chr.)* (Babylonische Texte 7) J.N. Strassmaier, Leipzig 1890
 FuB *Forschungen und Berichte (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin)*
 IrAnt *Iranica Antiqua*
 JNES *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
 MDOG *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orientgesellschaft*
 NAPR *Northern Akkad Project Reports*
 ÖAW *Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften*

OIP *Oriental Institute Publications*
 OLA *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta*
 Or *Orientalia*
 RIM *Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia*, Toronto
 RIA *Reallexikon der Assyriologie*, Berlin, 1928-
 SAAB *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin*
 TCS *Texts from Cuneiform Sources*
 TUAT *Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments*, ed. O. Kaiser et al, Gütersloh, 1982-1997
 VTS *Vetus Testamentum Supplement*
 YNER *Yale Near Eastern Researches*
 ZA *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*
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From Cyrus to Darius: Notes on Art and Architecture in Early Achaemenid Palaces

David Stronach

The present paper seeks to underline the far from uniform historical circumstances that can be seen to have influenced the evolution of Achaemenid palace architecture during the reigns of Cyrus II (559–530 B.C.), Cambyses II (530–522 B.C.) and Darius I (522–486 B.C.). It is proposed that, for all the evident continuities that are to be found in Achaemenid royal construction from the mid-sixth century down to the late fourth century, the contrasts between the respective building programs of the above-mentioned monarchs call for probably closer examination than they have hitherto received. Thus, in the same way that most studies of the arts of Neo-Assyria have long since drawn attention to the separate developments that are to be detected in the building programs of the main Assyrian royal architects, it now seems to be more than time for students of Achaemenid art and architecture to take a closer look at the individual traits that inform the key constructions of these three earliest Persian rulers of note.

With special reference, then, to the process of dynamic growth which occupied a sixty-year period from 546 B.C. (the earliest year in which Cyrus would have been in a position to initiate construction at Pasargadae) down to 486 B.C. (the year in which Darius died), the following pages will not only seek to chronicle a select number of the more important distinctions that can be detected in any diachronic survey of early Achaemenid palace architecture, but they will also aim to elucidate something of the political and historical context of such changes. In the process, moreover, an attempt will be made to give sharper focus to the role of Cyrus as a significant innovator, to the

possible role of Cambyses as something substantially more than a mere follower of his father's architectural models, and to the role of Darius as nothing less than the final arbiter of the formal canons of Achaemenid taste.*

Cyrus

The known history of Achaemenid architecture begins with the construction of Cyrus' capital at Pasargadae. According to Strabo (*Geog.* 15.3.8) Cyrus chose to erect "a palace" at this location as a memorial to his victory over Astyages, the last king of Media. While this critical battle took place in or near 550 B.C., it is evident from the advanced characteristics of the big stone masonry attested at Pasargadae that formal construction at the site could not have begun until such time as the highly skilled masons of Sardis had fallen into Cyrus' hands in the aftermath of the conquest of Lydia in late 547 B.C. at the earliest.¹

In many ways, in fact, Cyrus' unique capital provides a very "readable" reflection of both his local, southern Zagros heritage and of his wider conquests. Apart from all else, the strategic position of Pasargadae on the direct line of march between Media to the north and the core valleys of Fars to the south clearly accords with the tenor of Strabo's observation.² Indeed, the location of the new capital is likely to have served as a constant reminder of Cyrus' signal triumph over Astyages as well as of the parallel moment when he was suddenly able to claim dominion far beyond his homeland.

The physical bounds of Pasargadae also tell a vivid story. Even before the fall of

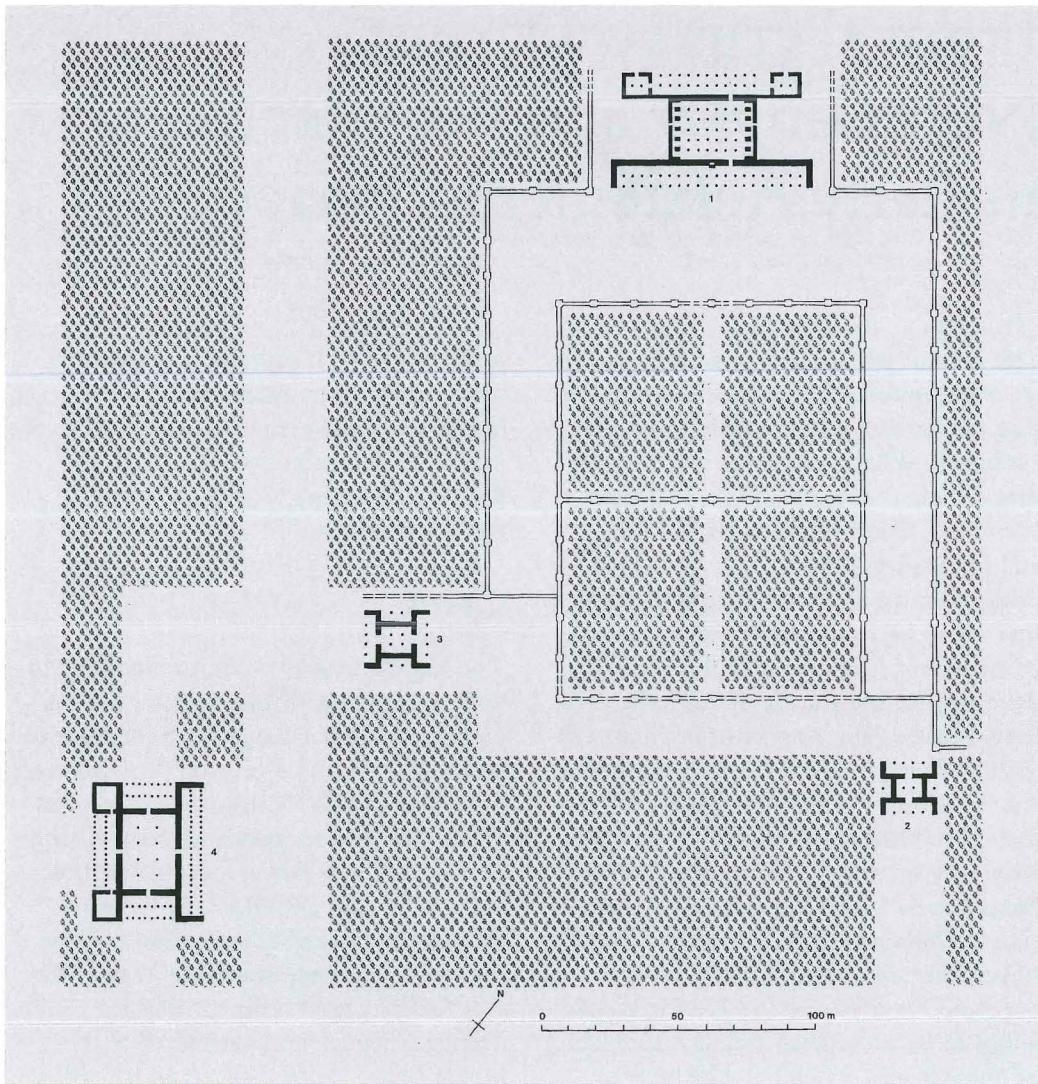


Fig. 1. Plan of the Palace Area, Pasargadae. The numbered monuments include: 1: Palace P, 2: Pavilion A, 3: Pavilion B, and 4: Palace S. The axial “view of power” (perpendicular to the external throne seat in the main portico of Palace P) completes the fourfold organization of the inner garden.

Babylon in 539 B.C. Cyrus apparently felt confident enough to take an extraordinary step. In defiance of every existing canon for the construction of either a local or an imperial capital in the first half of the first millennium B.C., Cyrus laid out an expansive seat of government that had no fixed defences. So far as is known, nothing more than a modest boundary wall defined the limits of the site. On the one hand this condition represented, in all likelihood, a statement of supreme power. And, on the other hand, it is worth reflecting that Cyrus may have wished his capital and last resting place to project a certain air of invitation.

The messages conveyed by his individual palace constructions were, it has been pointed out, similarly inviting.³ In the case

of Gate R, the formal four-door entrance-structure to the Palace Area, the building was freestanding. Pointedly enough, it was not embedded (in the manner of say, the city gates of Nineveh) within the thickness of a huge defensive wall. Thus, even if Gate R would appear to have benefited from the formidable protective imagery of Assyrian-style winged colossi in its opposed main doorways (Herzfeld 1929–30, 11), this majestic portal appears to represent the first clearly documented free-standing propylaeum.⁴

The inner palaces, Palace S and Palace P (Fig. 1), can also be seen to lack forbidding configurations. In the case of Palace S, in particular, shaded porticoes looked out on all four sides of the building. More than this, each of these porticoed palaces

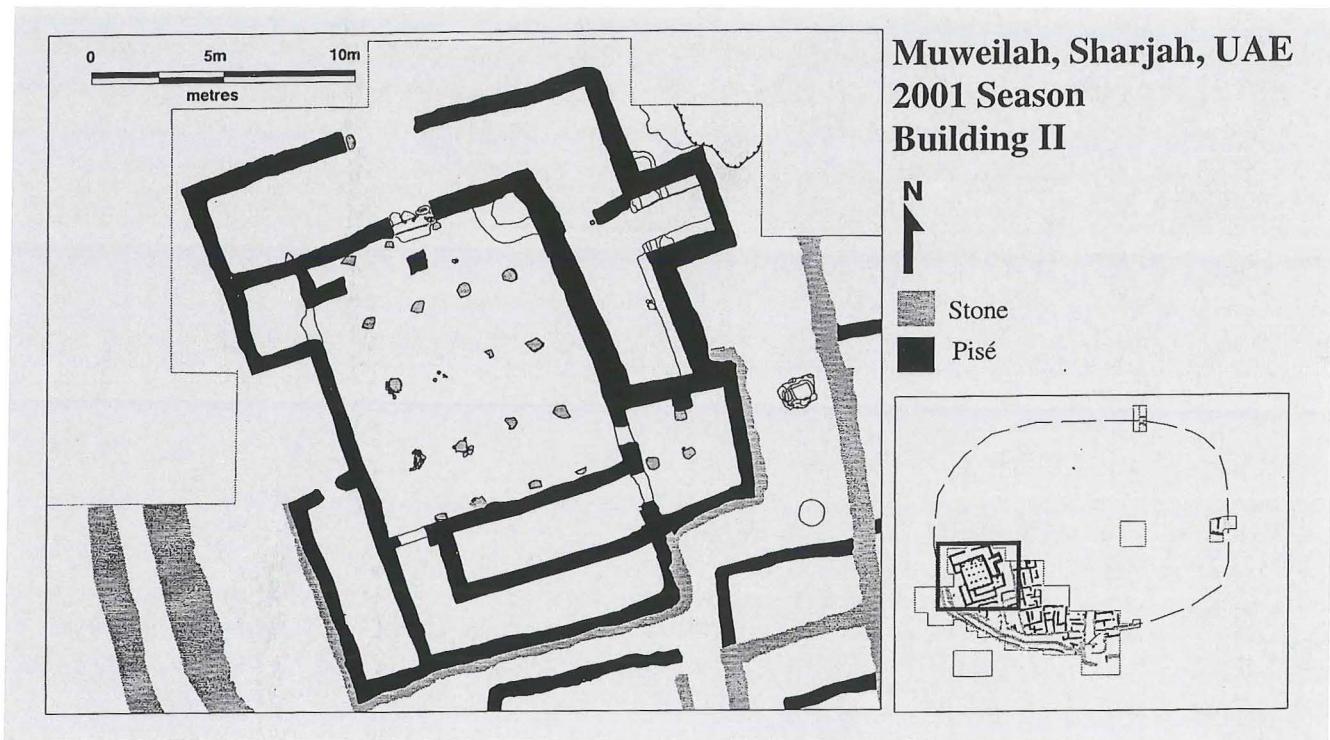


Fig. 2. Plan of the columned hall (Building II) at Muweilah. Plan prepared by Emma Thompson (After Magee, 2001, fig. 2).

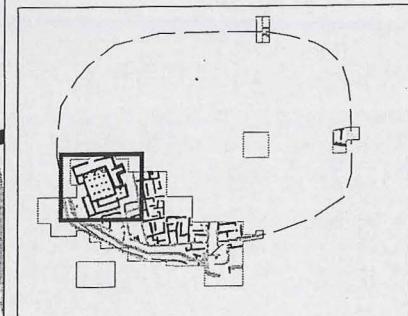
is now known to have stood amidst elegant well-watered gardens which themselves appear to have made a hitherto unprecedented contribution to the spatial organization of a coherent palace design.⁵

In order to appreciate the full significance of the transformations that Cyrus introduced it is necessary, at this juncture, to offer a small excursus on what is known of the antiquity of the columned hall in Iran and its immediate vicinity. In this respect one of the speakers at the November 1999 Conference volunteered a suggestion to the effect that the columned halls of Achaemenid Iran were descended from the columned halls of Urartu. This point of origin for the hypostyle halls of the Achaemenid homeland is entirely unlikely however. As is well known, the spacious columned halls of Hasanlu IV (1100-800 B.C.) pre-date even the narrow pillared halls of Urartu by an appreciable period of time – and the broader columned halls that are known from within the former limits of Urartian territory, i.e. those from Altintepe and Arin-Berd, are themselves likely to be Achaemenid in date.⁶

Accordingly, it seems preferable to

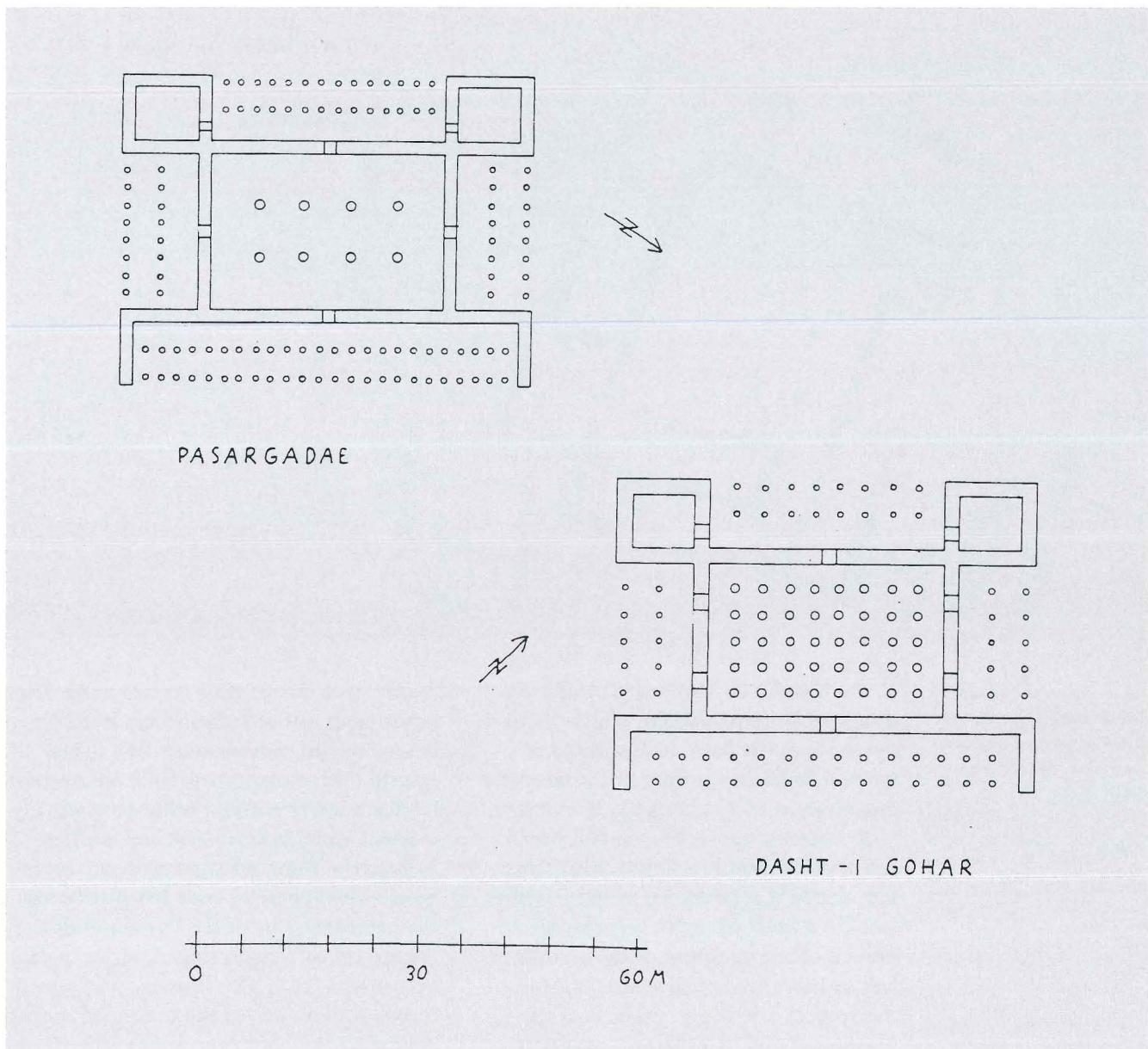
Muweilah, Sharjah, UAE 2001 Season Building II

N
Stone
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assume that this popular architectural form never went out of fashion after its early emergence in northwestern Iran in the second half of the second millennium; that it subsequently reached other parts of western and southern Iran; and, on the basis of the latest available evidence, it would also appear to have travelled across the narrowest part of the Persian Gulf to the region of Sharjah (Fig. 2) at some date before 800 B.C.⁷ Even if we are at present unaware, therefore, of the nature of almost any building activities in Fars in the centuries immediately before Cyrus' accession, it would appear more than likely that future work in this region will one day reveal the presence of similar columned halls in this same approximate time-frame. In other words, Cyrus' fidelity to the basic unit of a rectangular columned hall (however that unit may have been manipulated in various separate instances) could very well be viewed not so much as a reference to the prior prestige of the columned hall in say, adjacent Media as a reference to the conceivably longstanding prominence of such halls in highland southwestern Iran itself.⁸

At the same time Cyrus' unprecedented



achievement in imposing Iranian rule over distant Lydia and Ionia assuredly called for tangible acknowledgement within the new capital (just as, much later, Darius drew attention to his ultimately firm control of Egypt through the introduction of various Egyptian-inspired motifs in the architecture of Persepolis). In the case of Cyrus' inspired building program the adoption of state-of-the-art Lydo-Ionian masonry conveyed an instantly understandable message – and a wealth of construction in fine limestone began to appear throughout the limits of the site. Aside from its use in palatial contexts, it is

possible to cite the understated perfection of Cyrus' evocative stone tomb, the exquisite gradations in course-size in the stone fabric of the Zendan and, not least, the close to twenty courses of well-drafted limestone blocks which once distinguished the huge stone platform at the west end of the Tall-i Takht.⁹

Within the Palace Area at Pasargadae this new-found delight in tightly jointed stonework found vivid expression in flawless stone floor surfaces, stone wall-socles, stone doorframes, stone antae and, above all, in a striking use of stone columns and capitals. With reference to changes to the

Fig. 3. Restored plans of Palace S at Pasargadae and the palace at Dasht-i Gohar. (After Kleiss 1980, fig. 3).

plan of the traditional Iranian columned hall – a building which previously appears to have had either a low columned portico on the entrance facade or no space for a portico at all – the source of inspiration for the novel, freestanding four-sided plan of Palace S (Fig. 3), continues to be debated¹⁰ just as do the sources of inspiration for the long, almost stoa-like southeastern portico of Palace P.¹¹ But whatever the possibilities are for a certain degree of western influence in the separate, unusual ground plans of each of these palaces (always keeping in mind the fact that Cyrus' own intentions for the final design and decoration of Palace P were never realised owing to his untimely demise),¹² it deserves to be remembered that the buildings in question stand beside what later became an enduring Persian concept: namely, a fourfold garden, marked by elegant pavilions, together with stone water channels and basins.¹³

With reference to the types of sculptured motifs which Cyrus had time to add to the fabric of his two completed palatial structures (Gate R and Palace S) at some point before he lost his life, the richest single source was quite clearly the art of Assyria. This choice was without doubt partly dictated by a desire on Cyrus' part to indicate that he had fallen heir to the overarching authority of the last great kings of Assyria. But at the same time it is only appropriate to acknowledge that earlier borrowings from Neo-Assyrian iconography almost certainly took place through broad areas of the Zagros from the 9th century onwards¹⁴ and that such prior borrowings could always have helped to set the stage for this proclivity. Even in the case of the Elamites, who were at deadly odds with the Assyrians for the greater part of the 7th century,¹⁵ local craftsmen in Elam were apparently willing to use traditional Assyrian divine guardians to lend apotropaic efficacy to a protective limestone plaque.¹⁶ In addition, the presence of bull colossi at the city gates of Susa would seem to be affirmed by Ashurbanipal's boast, in connection with his army's assault on the city in 646 B.C., that

he "tore out the raging wild bull (-figures), the attachments to the gates."¹⁷ With reference to just these few indications, then, it is possible to surmise that Cyrus' preference for Assyrian motifs was at least partly dictated by already longstanding Assyrian influences that had reached not just northwestern and central Iran but southwestern Iran as well.

On the other hand the extraordinary quality of Cyrus' apotropaic doorway figures indicates that he never sought to model his guardian figures on far from accurate Elamite copies of Assyrian originals. Instead, faithful attention to often minor points of detail strongly suggests that his artists drew their inspiration from original Assyrian monuments wherever these were still available for inspection.¹⁸ But when it came to the actual carving of the figures in Gate R and Palace S certain modifications were seen to be in order. Thus typical Assyrian ritual equipment, such as the bucket and cone, was discarded; full profile views were invariably employed; musculature was softened to suit the less obviously muscled character of all Persian sculpture; and, as Boardman has suggested (2000, 102), certain details in the rendering of the human feet in the doorway reliefs from Palace S could well suggest the presence of "a Greek hand" or at least an awareness of "the new Greek mode for relief."¹⁹

But notwithstanding the numbers of craftsmen that may have been drawn from the Lydo-Ionian sphere, it is manifest that Cyrus was never tempted to introduce the kind of sculptured column drums that were erected in the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus²⁰ in or near 550 B.C. Instead, the elegant types of column base that he borrowed from the West were matched to markedly slim, smooth column drums and addorsed animal capitals (which came to represent, with the benefit of further refinements introduced by Darius, a permanent hallmark of Achaemenid palace architecture). We can only guess as to how Cyrus hit upon the novel creation of capitals of this kind, but it is at least noteworthy that the Neo-Elamite world held a

special regard for elevated, apotropaic wall decorations – and that these frequently included animal protomies.²¹

In sum, then, the artistic choices of the founder of the Persian empire were by no means inconsequential, especially with reference to what was to follow in terms of palace construction. Freestanding hypostyle halls with certain required stone elements continued to remain the preferred form of audience hall for all subsequent Persian rulers down to the last days of the empire. Moreover, even if the sculptured images that Cyrus chose to employ were less than singularly creative – the famed Winged Figure from Gate R has a particularly *ad hoc* appearance – his legacy did demonstrate the virtues of mining the arts of Assyria for images that could spell out the power and “inherited legitimacy” of the new Persian empire. And his example very conceivably strengthened Darius’ own eventual resolve to continue to experiment with the use of Assyrian-related imagery, especially with reference to the “everlasting” statements that would be made at Persepolis.

Cambyses

Remarkably enough, the death of Cyrus on a distant battlefield did little or nothing to disturb the tranquility of the huge empire that he had so recently created. Herodotus says nothing of any attendant revolts; and, while there is no evidence to suggest that Cambyses made any attempt to complete his father’s projects – perhaps because the site of Pasargadae might have counted, in the period immediately following Cyrus’ untoward end, as inauspicious? – it seems more than likely (at least on the available archaeological evidence since textual evidence is not to be had) that the new occupant of the throne felt confident enough to call for the construction of a second undefended capital, albeit one in a notably more central location.

The chosen site, situated in the level, fertile Dasht-i Gohar (which is itself part of the more extensive, strategically central,

Marvdasht plain), suggests that Cambyses, like his father, was content to envisage a kind of carefully planned “garden capital.”²² Its location was at once commended by its proximity to far earlier intimations of far-flung royal rule (in the form of Old Elamite reliefs on the cliff-face at Naqsh-i Rustam),²³ by its position athwart the principal east-west and north-south trunk roads through highland southwestern Iran, and by, not least, the presence of the adjacent perennial waters of the Kur and Pulvar rivers.

Even within the brief span of Cambyses’ short rule the actual period of construction at Dasht-i Gohar may well have been shorter still. That is to say that, since there are no visible Egyptian traits in the surviving remains, it is more than likely that the buildings were all founded (and completed to the extent that they were completed) before Cambyses set out, in 525 B.C., on a campaign that took him to Egypt, to all intents and purposes, for the balance of his reign.

As far as the character of the extant remains at Dasht-i Gohar is concerned, several points deserve to be made. In the first place – if the whole thesis concerning Dasht-i Gohar is of any validity without the benefit of textual corroboration – Cambyses clearly had it in mind to follow a number of his father’s prior architectural models. In particular, the unfinished funerary structure, known to-day as Takht-i Rustam, was almost certainly intended to accord, in more or less precise detail, with the size and form of Cyrus’ tomb.²⁴ Moreover, in the context of palatial construction, Cambyses can be seen to have sought important guidance from each of his father’s two main palace designs. In the surviving floor plan of his now very denuded palace we witness, for example, the adoption of a design which again called for the use of opposed, low-roofed colonnades (Fig. 3). And the model of Cyrus’ latest, unfinished palace, Palace P, was clearly invoked when Cambyses not only introduced a multitude of columns in the main hall but also took pains to ensure that the columns in the opposed porticoes

were aligned with the larger columns in the interior hall.²⁵

Innovation was sought in other directions. Costly stone floors were given up²⁶ and, in an intriguing departure which seems to have failed to attract any later imitators, the column bases in the Dasht-i Gohar palace were given a wholly new form. Stepped bases were abandoned and, instead of continuing to use either a slim torus (on the model of Palace S) or a horizontally fluted torus (on the model of Palace P), Cambyses elected to introduce a version of the long-lived relatively plump torus base of Syrian origin which also found favor for a time in Neo-Assyria.²⁷ In keeping with the relatively austere nature of most stone elements in early Achaemenid architecture Cambyses refrained, however, from retaining the kind of carved, surface floral patterns such as had originally distinguished many Mesopotamian *tori* of this form.

As far as the adoption of such column bases is concerned, it is only appropriate to recall that Cambyses spent an important part of his short-lived career in Mesopotamia²⁸ and that, if he chose to distance himself from his father's predilection for Lydo-Ionian models, the use of a Syro-Mesopotamian motif was a perhaps not inappropriate vehicle for what appears to have been intended as a readily recognizable personal statement.²⁹

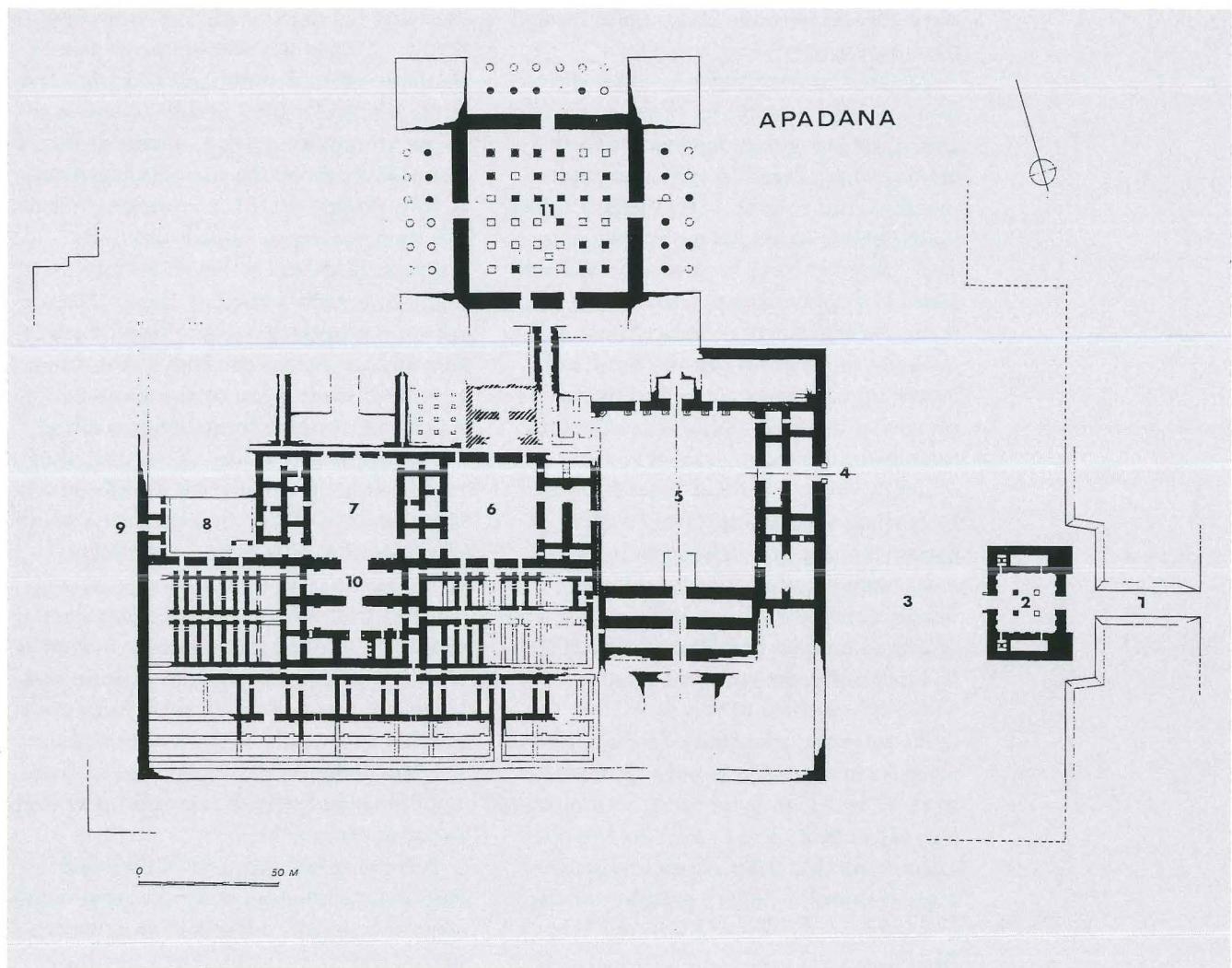
Darius

The circumstances in which Darius began his reign could not have been more different from those which attended Cambyses' accession. Suffice it to say in the present context that Darius was not the legitimate heir and that only a succession of hard-fought campaigns in the first year of his reign would seem to have allowed him to retain his grip on the throne.³⁰ Darius' initially not always secure situation is reflected, it seems fair to say, by the character of the two sites where he chose to make his principal investments as a royal builder. In the case of Susa – located at the strategic snow-free Iranian end of the great trunk

road that led northwards and westwards to Sardis – Darius was able to recast part of the huge mounded remains of Elam's erstwhile lowland capital in such a way as to create an imposing palace-platform that stood 18 m above the surrounding plain.³¹

In seeking a site for a complementary, still more evocative capital within the highland heartland of his realm Darius made an equally prescient choice. His eye fell on the neglected possibilities posed by an outlying spur of the Kuh-i Rahmat at a location some 3 km to the south of Cambyses' aborted constructions. While the principal part of the site consisted of a partly natural platform that jutted out from the base of the mountain (at a height of up to 14 m above the level of the plain), he no doubt took considerable comfort in the nature of the steep scarp which overlooked the platform. Indeed, it is clear that this sharply angled slope was separately fortified on all sides and, very possibly in keeping with its potential use as a "last redoubt," it can be seen to have been equipped with an exceptionally deep rock-cut cistern.³²

Following his selection of Susa and Persepolis as the two main sites that could most dramatically advertise his new-found power, Darius embarked on a notably rapid program of palatial construction at Susa. The entire process, moreover, from the preparation of the foundations onwards, was turned into a potent instrument of propaganda in which, as we learn from his exceptional DSf inscription (Kent 1953, 144), Darius claimed the availability of the most exotic and remote materials and the active assistance of not a few of his most distant subjects. In this sense the DSf inscription offers a far more complete picture of the imperial significance of palatial construction than even the most graphic building relief of any Assyrian ruler. More than this, the text stands in its own right as an intellectual precursor to Darius' equally arresting *visual* expressions of empire in his funerary relief at Naqsh-i Rustam as well as in the great sculptured friezes on the north and east sides of the socle of the Apadana at Persepolis.³³



Yet even at the same moment as the participation of craftsmen from numerous different locations is not to be denied, it stands to reason that not all of Darius' subjects could have participated in equal measure to the work that went forward at Susa. Indeed, the very fact that such an exceptional innovator and consciously Persian ruler as Darius was willing to let the southern half of his new palace be erected in a connected, triple courtyard format (Fig. 4, nos. 5-7), which effectively mirrors part of the plan of the palace of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon,³⁴ is quite striking. Apart from the adoption of this essentially Mesopotamian plan, certain of the individual motifs in the panels of glazed and unglazed bricks (which came to represent a major factor in the decoration of this part of the palace) can be seen

to subscribe to earlier Neo-Babylonian models. Thus, while the Achaemenid lion-griffin was introduced instead of the idiosyncratic Babylonian dragon, striding lions and bulls (each no doubt equipped with new associations in their new cultural setting) were again to the fore. It is almost as if Darius elected (at a moment when even his prodigal talents were stretched to the limit by various pressing concerns) to abdicate from the demands of design; and that he chose, instead, to make particular use of the designers and artisans of not-so-distant Babylon in order to take advantage – at least as far as the southern portion of his palace was concerned – of a number of the tried and trusted norms of elite Babylonian art.³⁵

As far as strictly Persian polychrome glazed brick motifs are concerned, it is

Fig. 4. The Palace of Darius I at Susa. (After Perrot, 1981, pl. 36).

interesting to observe that Darius already found a way to introduce an abbreviated symbol for Ahuramazda.³⁶ The most powerful impression comes, however, from the large number of polychrome bricks that were used to create long files of resplendent royal guards. These formidable “archers” were assuredly intended to convey a message of disciplined, yet instantly available, irresistible force. And in keeping with an attractive new suggestion that Darius might have started to issue the earliest type of “royal archer” *siglos* (Type 1) as early as c. 520 B.C. (Vargyas 2000, 38), it is now perhaps possible to link the invention of the glazed brick archer motif with Darius’ own portrayal of himself as the first archer of the realm both in his Bisitun relief and in his newly minted *sigloi*.

Most of the plan of the adjacent Apadana – Darius’ throne hall *par excellence* – was recovered by Loftus in the course of his excavations of the mid-nineteenth century.³⁷ It is hardly a matter for surprise, therefore, that various details of the layout of the building still remain obscure (Fig. 4, no. 11). Nonetheless this once towering expression of power is instantly recognizable as a decidedly original, wholly reworked version of the long-lived Iranian columned hall. With an estimated height of close to 20 m, the structure included a square columned hall with six rows of six columns, four corner towers, and three columned porticoes each of which rose to the full height of the building. When compared to the older design of Palace S, we can see that Darius opted, in contrast to Cyrus’ once transcendent conception, for a fully square plan, a uniform roof height, and, above all else, still more impressive size.³⁸ The new plan was not of course equipped with a fourth portico. Instead, a fourth “closed” side is likely to have accommodated a variety of facilities; and it certainly can be presumed to have included the commencement of a secure route to the king’s more southerly, private quarters. In sum, more than a little at Susa suggests that Darius’ curiously incongruent Perso-Babylonian palatial

complex was born in part of urgent political need. In contrast, historical circumstances were to permit a far more leisurely approach to the work at Persepolis.

Yet given the decisive nature of Darius’ character, and his overarching determination to associate his rule with his Persian heritage, it is difficult to imagine that the inception of work at Parsa – the unquestionably Persian name that he bequeathed to both the land of his birth and his new palatial capital – was left to lag too far behind the beginnings of construction at Susa.³⁹ At the same time, however, the circumstances that prevailed at Parsa (Persepolis) were very different. The preliminary tasks of cutting away part of the rock outcrop, excavating the huge underlying drains, and subsequently building up different parts of the great stone platform had to take a substantial number of years. Only then was it possible to make a beginning with reference to the erection of individual structures.⁴⁰

Various other contrasts with Susa also slowed the pace of the work. Among them was the considerable extent to which stone was used in the construction of the royal buildings as well as in the creation of numerous reliefs and staircases, even if mud-brick walls were ubiquitous and even if polychrome glazed brick panels were also employed. It was presumably a somewhat painstaking process, moreover, to go back to the traditional “highland” interest in predominantly unconnected, freestanding buildings, especially when Darius chose to make a new and subtle use of elevation as a mark of status, particularly with reference to his two most significant buildings, *viz.* the Apadana and his nearby Palace, each of which came to be given an individual stone socle.⁴¹

Various changes of plan, not all of which are fully understood, no doubt also slowed the progress of the work. But the major dispositions for the platform at Persepolis as they came to take shape during the first half of the 5th century B.C. (Fig. 5) suggest that, with time for more leisurely reflection, Darius eventually drew an important measure of inspiration from

both Gate R and Cyrus' unfinished staircases on the Tall-i Takht.⁴² Thus a recess (for what may have been a temporary stone staircase?) at the location of a modest south entrance (near the aforementioned foundation inscription) was duly blocked with stone⁴³ and, in a quite remarkable development, a huge monumental double staircase, with the free-standing Gate of All Lands at its summit, came to provide the one formal approach to the complex as a whole.⁴⁴

This ultimate, permanent plan can be seen to represent a reversal of the pattern of circulation that obtained at Susa; for, whereas visitors to the Apadana at Susa were obliged to pass through a succession of control-points, including the East Gate (at the eastern limit of the Ville Royal), the Propylaeum, near the western limit of the same mound, and the tall monumental Gate at the inner end of the solid "bridge" leading to the isolated palace platform (cf. Perrot 1981, pl. 43), visitors to Persepolis were brought almost at once to confront the dazzling sight of the empire's greatest audience hall (Krefter 1971, pl. 22). In addition, the immediate details of the approach to the Apadana at Persepolis were more logical than those which applied at Susa. As Boucharlat has noted (1997, 59), visitors to the Apadana at Susa would have noticed the southern part of Darius' palace directly before them as they left the monumental Gate with its larger than life-size statue(s) of Darius, but they would still have had to work their way northwards in the space between the palace and the deep fosse on their right (Fig. 4) in order to enter the Apadana (in keeping with the evident protocols at Persepolis) through the monumental north portico – opposite the king's throne, which itself stood towards the rear of the central aisle.

In view of the stress that has been laid in this paper on the sometimes forceful (and not rarely Persian-specific) perspectives that can be detected in Darius' monumental art, and still more particularly in various of his proclamations, I cannot pass over a sometimes still current assumption

that the Medes enjoyed a special position within the empire of Darius. This view finds no echo, for example, in the Foundation Charter from Susa where the Medes, in contrast to the Persians, are mentioned as contributing their skills to the construction of the palace.⁴⁵ It should not be forgotten, moreover, that Media is by no means always given pride of place among the lands which Darius "holds." Thus in the DSm inscription (Kent 1953, 145) Media is listed in no more than eighth place!

This supposedly special status finds no echo at Persepolis either. It is of course manifest that the Medes are the first of the twenty-three delegations to appear in the long procession on the socle of the Apadana, but it is inescapable that the Persians are not shown at all. And while it used to be asserted that the ushers and nobles in "riding dress" as opposed to "court dress" were Medes rather than Persians, this claim is now greatly weakened in so far as a noble Persian, Aspathines (Aspacanā), who is described by Herodotus as one of Darius' principal Persian supporters, is shown in the former costume in one of the side panels of Darius' funerary relief at Naqsh-i Rustam.⁴⁶

It is evident, in other words, that the riding dress — the so-called Median costume — was one of two principal, acceptable forms of court attire. Further, its regular depiction in the sculptures at Persepolis cannot be taken to reflect any kind of special status that was accorded to the Medes. Rather, the dress in question appears to have been introduced in order to give needed variety to the sculptures. Beyond all else, the present conclusion affirms Margaret Root's original suggestion (1979, 282) that the nobles, who are shown in both the "court" and "riding" costumes, were intended to depict a Persian assembly.

Finally, if these various perspectives are taken into account, it is perhaps possible to paint a relatively consistent picture of the messages contained in Darius' monumental art throughout his reign from the moment that the Bisitun relief was carved

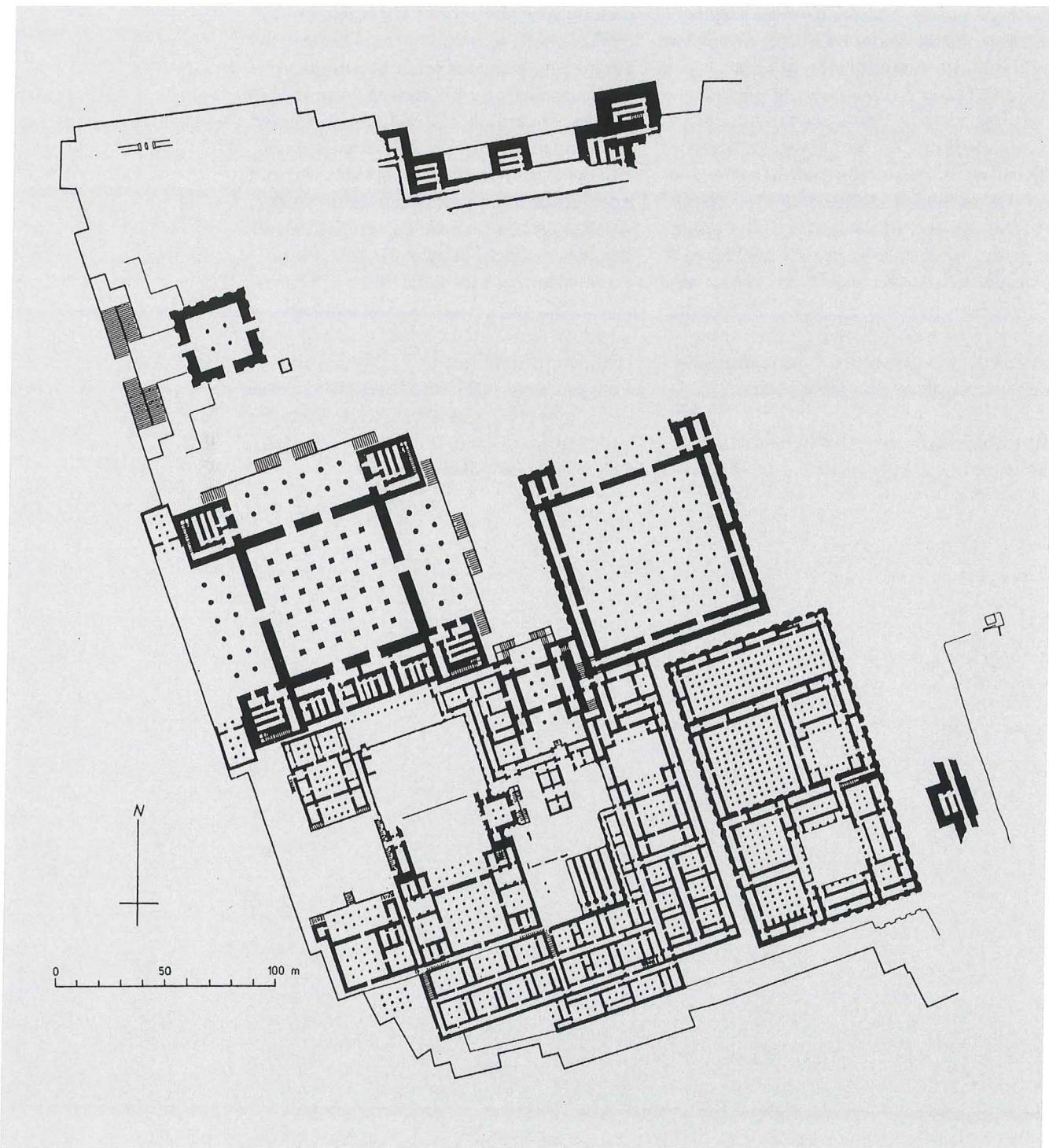


Fig. 5. The Persepolis platform before 450 B.C. (After Roaf 1983, fig. 155).

c. 520 B.C. down to the time of his death when the execution of his unfinished works, at the Apadana and elsewhere, became the responsibility of his son and successor, Xerxes. In this reconstruction (even if we can only judge relevant aspects of the situation at Susa from the presence of the incomplete statue of Darius and the

existence of certain other telling fragments of royal stone sculpture, including fragments that probably depict part of the face of a ruler and part of the shoe of a "royal hero"),⁴⁷ the various schemes invariably appear to have sought to glorify the king, his majesty, and his power. If we think (at Persepolis alone) of the serried ranks of

the royal guards, and of the prominently rendered motif of the bull being overcome by the lion (or, presumably, of great strength being defeated by still greater strength), there is also a consistent stress on invincibility: on the physical prowess of the ruler, on the strength of the army and on the undivided loyalty of, above all, the Persian subjects of the realm.⁴⁸ The point is made, not least, because it is all too easy to suppose that the motifs that appear on Persian seals are (on occasion) more militant and/or more chauvinist than those that appear in the reliefs – something that may very well not be the case at all.⁴⁹

In conclusion, it probably behoves us to be wary of possibly more palatable inter-

pretations of the art of Darius which could be said to volunteer not necessarily convincing perspectives concerning the purposes of that art.⁵⁰ Indeed, even if Darius may have found himself unexpectedly involved in a long-running dispute with Athens from c. 500 B.C. onwards, it is still not improbable that the blueprint for the Apadana reliefs was drawn up as a second, still more comprehensive victory monument than that erected at Bisitun. That is to say that visitors to the Achaemenid court were no doubt called upon to contemplate (in the spirit of DNa §4) the consequences of Darius' multiple victories or, as matters might also be expressed, the successful outcome of the judicious exercise of Persian military power.⁵¹

Notes

NOTE *

The drawings for this article were prepared by Cornelie Wolff. I am also grateful to Michael Roaf for reading an early version of the text and for saving me from making a number of errors.

NOTE 1

Nylander 1970, 126ff.

NOTE 2

Not to mention the testimony of Babylonian sources to the effect that “(Astyages) mustered (his army) and marched against Cyrus, king of Anshan, for conquest.” Grayson 1975, 106.

NOTE 3

Nylander (1970, 115) refers to “the dissolution” of traditional, massive mudbrick facades.

NOTE 4

Virtually nothing has been done so far to define the precise character and course of the boundary wall at Pasargadae. In Herzfeld’s site plan (1929–30, plan after pl. 3) the nearest, western end of the wall appears to end some 40 m short of Gate R.

NOTE 5

See, *inter alia*, Stronach 1990, 176, where it is suggested that the innermost, fourfold royal garden might have been intended to symbolize the “four quarters” of the universe, i.e. the Achaemenid empire in microcosm.

NOTE 6

For the columned structures of Hasanlu V (c. 1500–1100 B.C.), as well as those of Hasanlu IV, see now Dyson 1989. On the probable Achaemenid date of the halls at Altintepe and Arin-Berd, see Forbes 1983, 59, 71, and Summers 1993. See Kanetsian and Ter-Martirossov in this volume.

NOTE 7

Magee 2001, 1ff.

NOTE 8

Since bridge-spouted jars are associated with the columned hall at Muweilah it has to be conceded that the possible patterns of diffusion discussed here would be greatly fortified if similar ceramics were to be found in some quantity in the course of future excavations in Fars. For the moment the closest parallel from Fars is represented by a single bridge-spouted jar of uncertain date from Tall-i Taimuran. Vanden Berghe 1966, 44 and pl. 60f.

NOTE 9

Stronach 1978, 12ff.

NOTE 10

For a number of slightly varying perspectives, see Nylander 1970, 115, Stronach 1978, 56ff., and Boardman 2000, 61.

NOTE 11

See especially Nylander 1970, 118ff.

NOTE 12

For Darius’ additions to Palace P, including the well known doorway reliefs which depict Cyrus (and which label him in the third person), see most recently Stronach 1997a and 2000, 685–92.

NOTE 13

Stronach 1994.

NOTE 14

Certain of the worked ivories from Hasanlu IV are amongst the earliest objects which document the influence of the iconography of Neo-Assyria in western Iran. See Muscarella 1980, 148ff.

NOTE 15

Carter and Stolper, 1984, 47ff.

NOTE 16

See most recently Stronach 1997b, 53, n. 8 and pl. 15.

NOTE 17

Kuhrt 1995, 500.

NOTE 18

Just where such originals could have been examined is by no means clear. One possible explanation is that a number of the former centers of Neo-Assyrian rule in the central western Zagros still remained relatively intact. (It is also possible that late 7th or early 6th century Media could have acted as an intermediary source; for the moment, however, too little is known about the art of the Medes to either affirm or deny a Median role).

NOTE 19

The presence of craftsmen in Iran who possessed a knowledge of the new modes of Greek relief sculpture in the interval between the death of Cyrus and the first years of Darius’ reign may have done more than a little to help to define the sculptural conventions which ultimately permitted the voluminous folds of Persian court dress to be rendered with conviction, first at Bisutun (Luschey 1968, pls. 27ff) and then in some of the earliest representations of the Susian “archers” (for which see now, Muscarella 1992, nos. 155 and 156).

NOTE 20

See, conveniently, Boardman 2000, fig. 2.40.

NOTE 21

Amiet, 1966, nos. 368, 382.

NOTE 22

Tilia 1978, 73ff and figs. 1,3. For the presence of further contemporary palatial remains in the same vicinity (including a broad, paved gateway that would appear to have been flanked, as in Gate R, by huge winged colossi), see also Tilia 1978, 80 ff and figs. 5,6.

NOTE 23

Potts 1999, 182 and fig. 6.9.

NOTE 24

See Kleiss 1971, 157 ff and Stronach 1978, 302ff.

NOTE 25

As Wolfram Kleiss first noted (1980, 201) in his own penetrating comments on the unfinished palace at Dasht-i Gohar.

NOTE 26

This was a cost-cutting exercise which Darius was only too pleased to emulate: his formidable palaces came to be associated with durable, red-surfaced cement floors. Cf. Schmidt 1953, 31.

NOTE 27

See, for example, Naumann 1955, fig. 146; Parrot 1961, 223 and fig. 275; and Curtis and Reade 1993, no. 44.

NOTE 28

See, in a notice of commendable brevity, Schmidt 1953, 25.

NOTE 29

Apropos the authorship of the monuments in the Dasht-i Gohar, a few additional comments may not be out of place. The extremely neatly worked and finely smoothed column bases at the site, which show no trace of any toothed chisel marks, are most likely to have been made between say, 546 B.C. and the first years of Darius' reign – with a bracket between 530 and 520 B.C. having the greatest appeal (Tilia 1978, 80 with figs. 21, 22). Cyrus himself would presumably have had no interest in building a second freestanding tomb; and, as we shall see below, Darius would appear to have been too concerned by considerations of at least minimal security to have wished to experiment with the merits of such a far from defensible location at the beginning of his reign (when, just conceivably, he had not yet hit on all his subsequent arresting choices concerning the nature of his palaces, his columns, and the placement of his tomb). In fact, the Dasht-i Gohar monuments could have been erected shortly before 522 B.C. as a reflection of the short-lived regal ambitions of Cyrus' second son, Bardiya. But this would leave the considerable figure of Cambyses with no known architectural imprint anywhere in his homeland – and, on balance, Cambyses' "Mesopotamian hand" appears to be in evidence.

Based on the foregoing, it seems not at all unlikely that each of the first three Persian rulers had very separate preferences when it came to the employment of col-

umn bases (cf. also Boardman 2000, 66). Indeed, in arguing near the beginning of the 1970's (personal information) for a date in the reign of Cyrus for the stepped black and white stone column bases in the compact pavilion at Borazjan (on the highway leading from central Fars to the vicinity of Bushire), Ali Akbar Sarfaraz was anticipating lines of argument that are now more or less uniformly accepted.

NOTE 30

For recent appraisals of the events in question, see Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1995 and Briant, 1996, 195ff.

NOTE 31

Although Darius' Dse inscription from Susa indicates that he rebuilt the long-neglected outer wall of a town (name missing), the reference may have had nothing to do with Susa. Indeed, the extensive researches that were conducted at Susa between 1967 and the end of the 1970's suggest that the limits of the drastically reconstituted Achaemenid city were defined by "an almost vertical glacis" (Boucharat 1997, 57) rather than by a curtain wall. Cf. also Perrot 1981, pl. 34.

NOTE 32

Schmidt 1953, 212. Other more mundane uses for the cistern could also have been in prospect (cf. Roaf 1983, 157) and these presumably applied for as long as the site was occupied. If we look for later, possible parallels for certain aspects of the topography of Persepolis the juxtaposition of a flat stretch of major construction and an adjacent, fortified ridge does much to recall the character of Ai Khanoum in Bactria as well as two of the main elements of Shapur I's capital, Bishapur, which stands at a point midway between the uplands of highland Fars and lowland Khuzistan.

NOTE 33

But note that the DNA text, which is inscribed on Darius' tomb, does much to reveal the purpose behind the major reliefs in question – a purpose to which we will have cause to return in just a moment. Thus in DNA §4 the viewer is directly addressed: "If now thou shalt think that 'How many are the countries which King Darius held?' look at the sculptures (of those) who bear the throne, then shalt thou know, then shall it become known to thee: the spear of a Persian man has gone forth far; then shall it become known to thee: a Persian man has delivered battle far indeed from Persia." The inscription ends, moreover, with a blunt, very probably associated

thought: "O man... do not leave the right path; do not rise in rebellion!" (Kent 1953, 138).

NOTE 34

Amiet 1974, 65-7, fig. 2. See also Kuhrt Fig. 2 in this volume.

NOTE 35

In terms of the degree to which the DSf text can be said to reflect at least parts of the reality of the building process, the aptness of the reference to the Ionians and Sardians as "the stone-cutters" who wrought the columns of the Apadana has long been recognised. In the context of what can be inferred on archaeological grounds about the significant role of the Babylonians (for which see also Perrot 1981, 93 and Curtis 2000, 46) it is of interest to find that the latter are mentioned more often than any other separate group. Attributed to "the Babylonian people" is the fact "that the earth was dug downward, and that the rubble was packed down, and that the sundried brick was *molded*" (my emphasis). After beams of cedar had been brought from the Mediterranean to Babylon, the Babylonians were among those who transported such timber to Susa and, more telling still, "the men who wrought the baked brick, those were Babylonians." At the same time new studies of the glazed bricks prove that the Babylonian specialists at Susa were not left to do things as they had always done them. After all, (unmentioned) Elamites already possessed long experience of decorating walls with baked bricks in relief (Amiet 1988, figs. 62-3); innovation and experiment were no doubt in the air; and hard evidence from the laboratory now indicates, not surprisingly, that the excavated glazed bricks exhibit "technical features peculiar to Achaemenid workshops" (Cauvet 1992, 223).

NOTE 36

The busless, winged disc hovers above two confronted sphinxes. Muscarella 1992b, no. 157.

NOTE 37

On Loftus' activities at Susa, see now Curtis 1993, 1-15.

NOTE 38

See Stronach 1985 for further comments on the structural qualities that may have been called for in an Apadana. But see also Muscarella 1992a, 218, n. 9 for a probably justified plea for a less absolute interpretation of the term.

NOTE 39

In this connection the Old Persian version of Darius' foundation inscription, DPe, makes a clear distinction between the Persians and all other peoples. In addition, the inscription ends with the following, exceptional prayer. "Says Darius the king: if thus thou shalt think, 'May I not fear an enemy, protect this Persian people; if the Persian people shall be protected, welfare for a long time undisturbed will through Ahura descend upon this royal house.' (Translation taken from Schmidt 1953, 63.)

NOTE 40

A good part of a separate paper could be addressed, yet again (cf. Stronach 1989, 442ff), to the issue of the date of the foundation deposits of the Apadana. Suffice it to say here that the numismatic evidence no longer forces the deposits to be made as late as 500 B.C. At a minimum, a decade earlier could also work. In other words Roaf's supposition that work on the Apadana as a whole started "early in the 5th century" (1983, 157) deserves (at least in my view!) to be revised to something more akin to "a few years before the end of the 6th century."

NOTE 41

See Schmidt 1953, fig. 22.

NOTE 42

For Gate R and the staircases on the Tall-i Takht, see Stronach 1978, 44ff and 15ff. respectively.

NOTE 43

Tilia 1972, 11-17 with fig. 21.

NOTE 44

Krefter 1971, pl. 1. Schmidt appears to conclude, even in the absence of any express confirmation of the point by Xerxes, that these notable features were indeed part of Darius' grand conception – and may well have been started by him. Cf. 1953, 65, n.5.

NOTE 45

"The goldsmiths who wrought the gold, those were Medes and Egyptians." Kent 1953, 144.

NOTE 46

Schmidt 1970, 86 and pl. 24. Cf. also Root, 1979, 281.

NOTE 47

Muscarella 1992a, 219-20.

NOTE 48

In this context the oft-noted relaxed and companionable bearing of the assembled nobles is presumably connected with something more significant than mere bonhomie. It could have been recognised as a code for a condition of considerably

greater import: that is to say, the nobles' contentment with the existing prescriptions for the rule of Darius and his line.

NOTE 49

As is strongly urged in M. Roaf's paper, "Art and War at the Achaemenid Court." Roaf, forthcoming.

NOTE 50

Notably along the lines of Margaret Root's seductive concept of a family of nations existing in harmony under Achaemenid rule. See especially Root 1979, 282-299 and 311 and, more recently, Root 2000.

NOTE 51

In this last respect the reliefs on the Apadana could be said to illustrate not only a more distant view of the "aftermath of victory" than was the case at Bisitun, but even a perhaps inadvertent echo of Ashurbanipal's singularly compelling victory relief, set within the verdant delights of one of Nineveh's royal gardens (Reade 1999, fig. 106), where the last great Assyrian ruler palpably relaxes from his labors.

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CANE *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*

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The palace and the Royal Achaemenid City: two Case Studies – Pasargadae and Susa

Rémy
Boucharlat

The spatial organisation of the royal Achaemenid capitals, as cities, has not attracted much interest among the archaeologists who focused on the palaces. The palace as a constructed area, its location within the city limits, or rather the city itself including the palace are the subjects of this paper.

Two of the five Achaemenid capitals are considered here, Pasargadae, the oldest, founded by Cyrus, and Susa, which was built 30 years later by Darius and his successors. While Persepolis is mentioned in relation to parallels with Susa, Babylon and Ecbatana are set aside; it is hoped that

the current excavations at Ecbatana will soon provide clear results for the Achaemenid period.

Pasargadae and Susa cannot be directly compared in their chronology – date of foundation and period of function –, or in the history of their settlement: there is nothing prior to the Achaemenid period in the central part of Pasargadae, but more than three millennia of occupation at Susa. However, these two capitals share one striking feature, despite the dissimilarity of the lay-out: both contain a few palatial stone constructions set within an apparently empty city. At Pasargadae, this is

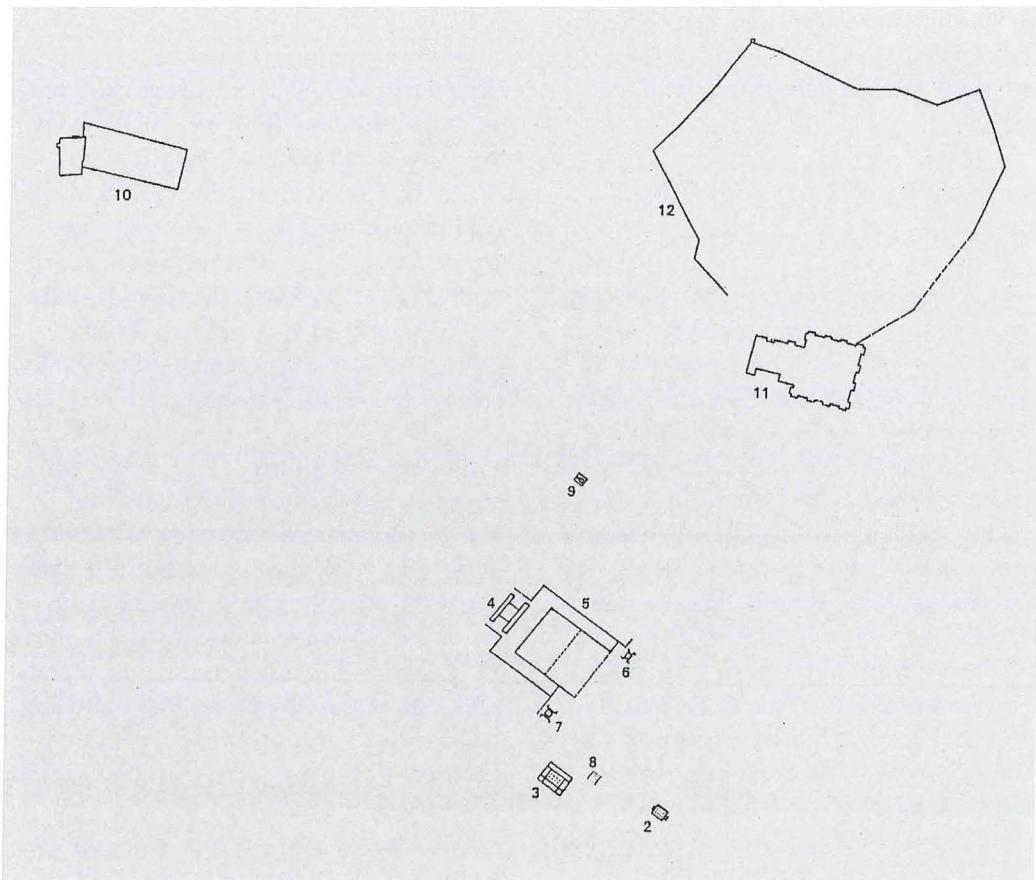


Fig. 1. Plan of Pasargadae with locations of the known Achaemenid buildings. (After Stronach 1978, fig. 3).

quite clear in the aerial photographs taken after Herzfeld's limited excavations (Schmidt 1940, pls. 14-15; *id.* 1953, Figs. 3-5), and is still true today after the British excavations, as seen on the map and in the photograph (Figs. 1 and 2). At Susa, the plan of the city after nearly a century of French excavations provides the same result (Fig. 5). However, it must be noted that this idea of empty cities is not universally accepted (Briant 1996, 268-269); it is pointed out that the excavations only reveal certain areas of the sites. This argument is worthy of consideration, demonstrated recently at Pasargadae, where a preliminary survey was carried out in the autumn of 1999 by a small French-Iranian team.¹

Concerning the location of the palace and the surrounding area which is thought to correspond to the royal city, the questions are: What do we expect to find around the palace itself? What was actually found? Is the lack or rarity of remains at Pasargadae and Susa, apart from the royal buildings, significant or fortuitous? These questions lead to a more general problem: the functioning of these grandiose buildings as centers of royal power.

Let us put forward two preliminary remarks :

- **The first one** concerns the *multi-capital system* of the Achaemenid empire. The Great King had several residences in different regions, moving from one to the other to enjoy the most comfortable according to the season, as attested by the classical authors. However, from the epigraphic and archaeological evidence, and from several discrepancies in the texts of the Graeco-Latin writers, it is now clear that the migrations of the royal court were neither seasonal nor regular.² Apart from Pasargadae, which seems to have had a peculiar function after the reigns of Cyrus and Cambyses,³ the other city-capitals were functioning at the same time.

We are concerned here with the multi-capital system because this feature of the

Achaemenid state has an important consequence for the functioning of the Empire. "The seasonal migration of the Achaemenid King" (C. Tuplin) made the Achaemenid Empire an "État itinerant" (P. Briant), not only because of its temporary installation in several capitals, but also because of the travels of the royal entourage between and beyond the cities. The location of each city capital in an important province was significant of the attention paid by the king to important political or historical entities, and was a means of control and representation of Achaemenid power. Travelling took up several weeks and months of the year, in order to visit the local populations; the impressive royal camp, large and well organised, was actually the king's seat and played the role of the capital at that moment (Briant 1988; *id.* 1996, 267-68).

Thus the possibility could be entertained that since the king had struck upon a way to rule his empire while travelling far from a permanent center, a settled city-capital is almost useless as the king's seat.

However, we know that the Achaemenid kings built extensively, erecting huge stone monuments, and carefully maintained and repaired them over two centuries. The architectural remains as well as the majority of the royal inscriptions are evidence of this. But in these texts, it is notable that the king mentions "buildings", "houses", palaces, city walls and gates, but not a single temple or sanctuary, nor public or city buildings.

- **The second point** to be mentioned concerns the *duration* of the building activity: there are several cases of building being undertaken by a king but not completed by him, the task being left to his successor. Several examples from Darius to Xerxes are well known at Susa and Persepolis and one may wonder how the King managed to govern from an unfinished (unroofed?) building. There is the example of the Apadana built by Darius in Susa which burned down under Artaxerxes I, in the middle of the fifth century BC.

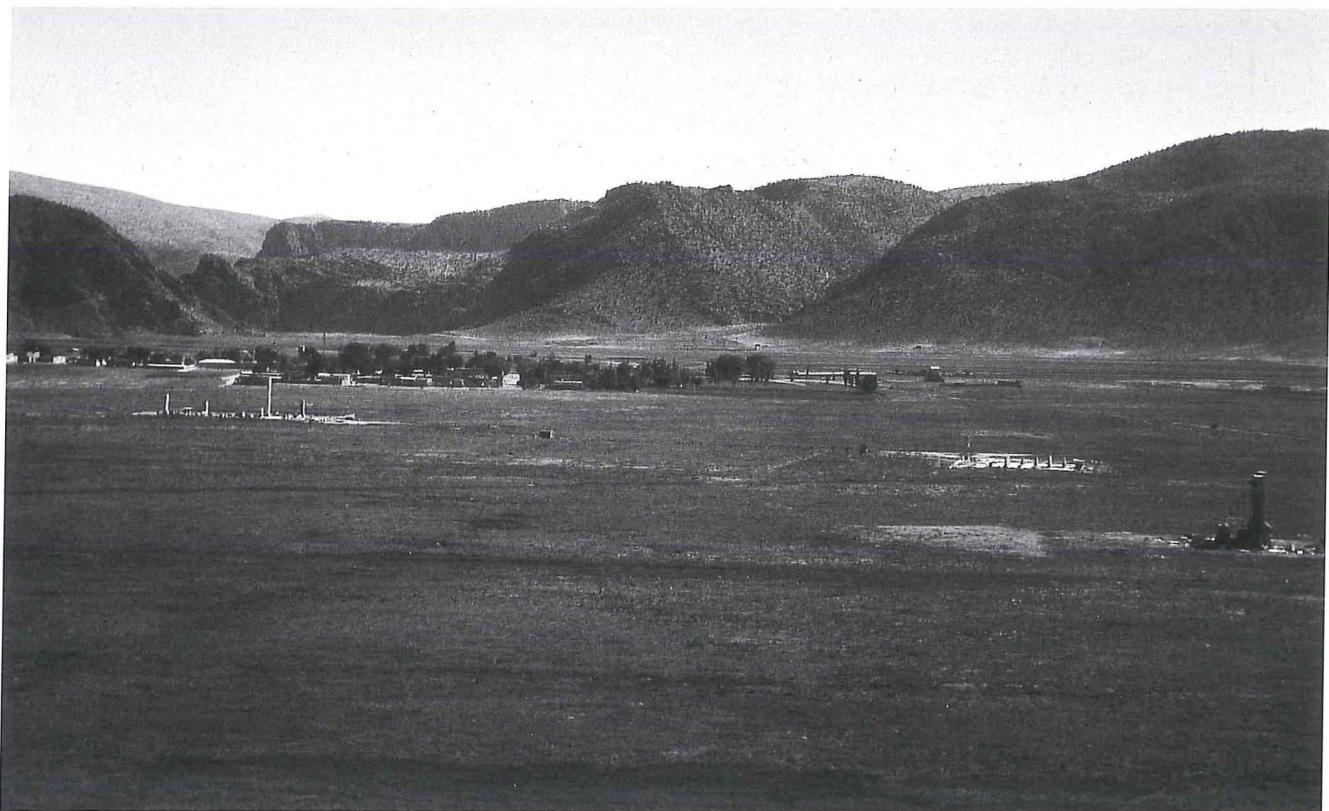


Fig. 2. Pasargadae, the central part of the site, seen from the Tall-i Takht overlooking the plain. Note the linear features running between the main buildings on the site.
(R. Boucharlat).

Rebuilding by his grandson Artaxerxes II took place many decades later, in the early 4th century BC.⁴

The question is how and from which place in his capitals the Great King actually ruled his empire during construction of the cities and the palaces? Construction lasted for many months and even years.⁵ No doubt the king, the court and the administration, which included the storage of goods and archives, were able to adapt to such unfinished buildings, as they were obviously adapted to the travelling camp. Thus the palaces may not possess the importance we usually attribute to such buildings.

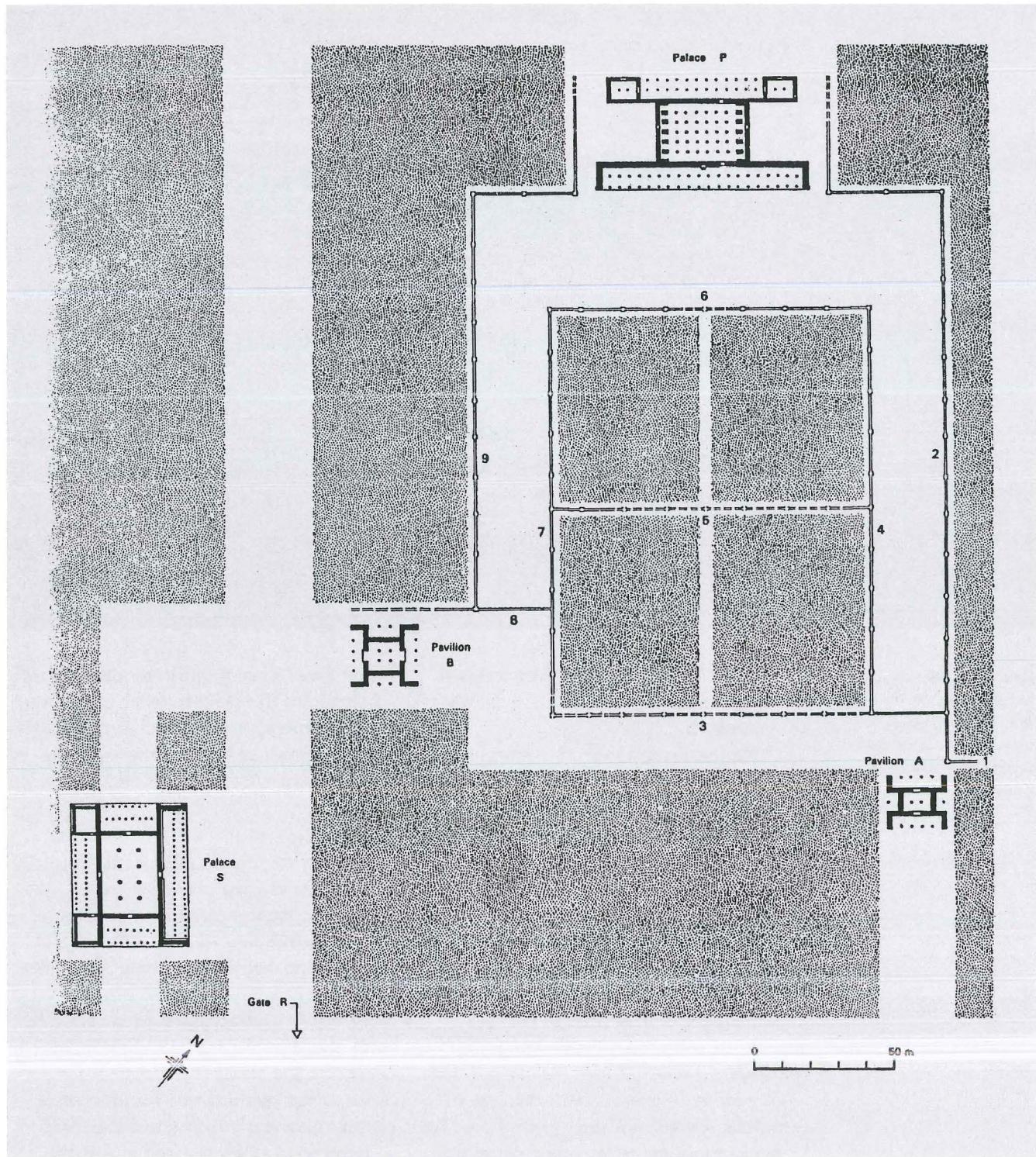
Despite its huge size, even the case of Persepolis strengthens this assumption. The 12 hectare terrace itself cannot contain all the elements of the political and administrative capital: aside from the two main hypostyle halls and the residential palaces, little space is left for administration, storage and habitations. The surface is doubled with the series of stone buildings erected south of the terrace (partly excavated) but is still not enough. In fact, where is the

Royal City? This question requires a careful survey of the plain in front of the terrace; and the surveys carried out in the seventies produced some answers (Tilia 1978).

Pasargadae

The capital of Cyrus is today a romantic site, where some beautiful constructions are still visible. Spread over a flat area of 170 hectares, half a dozen stone buildings are the only known remains of the royal city (Figs. 1-2). They have been carefully studied and published by D. Stronach and constitute the *available* evidence for Pasargadae as the political and administrative center of the early Achaemenid period.

Because of this loose and apparently irregular organisation, a capital planned as a tribal encampment has been evoked following E. Herzfeld's opinion (Herzfeld 1929, 6, Hansman 1972, 110). Stronach (1978, 44) clearly counters this theory, demonstrating some evidence of careful planning, with axes and symmetry. The discovery by A. Sami, then D. Stronach, of



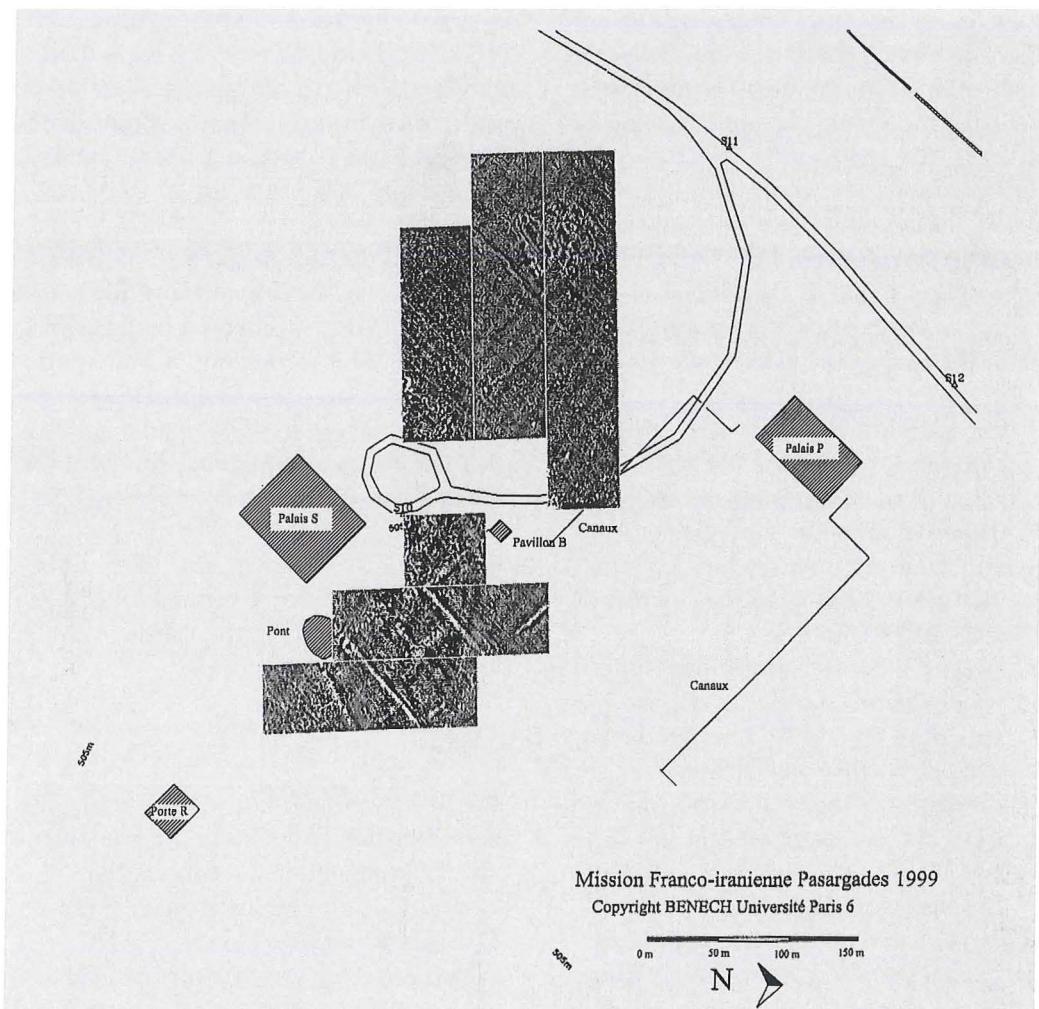
a stone-built channel system for a garden is the best evidence for planning of the royal area (Fig. 3). Moreover, the platform crowning the summit of the nearby hill, the Tall-i Takht, is evidence of Cyrus' decision to build a fortress, a project which was completed after his reign

(Fig. 1). However, Pasargadae lacks any suitable building for the accommodation of the king and his court and administration.

Apart from these few buildings, the central part of the archaeological site resembles a flat and empty plain. Small

Fig. 3. Pasargadae, sketch plan of the Royal Garden, according to the stone built water-courses; the lines of the paths are conjectural. (After Stronach 1989, fig. 2).

Fig. 4. Pasargadae, provisional sketch plan of the Royal Garden and its surroundings according to a geomagnetic survey. (After Benech et al. forthcoming).



low mounds are noticeable, however, as well as some rectilinear marks on the surface (Fig. 2). These features cover buried structures of undetermined date; some of them may correspond to modern cultivation activity.

The main question addressed in this paper – the empty city – prompted us to test the site with geophysical survey methods, selecting Pasargadae because of the very favourable conditions (Fig. 4).⁶

- the central part of the archaeological site (today fenced) is free of any cultivation and, more importantly, free of modern constructions;
- the site was not occupied before the Achaemenid period and was not reoccupied after the Achaemenid period, except for the citadel on the Tall-i Takht;

- the network of stone channels within the royal garden indicates that some modest structures could have existed in such favourable natural conditions. These structures could be related to irrigation and drainage, but others, as yet undiscovered, could have met the needs of a large settlement: network of roads and paths, water supplying device, esplanades, terraces, granaries, low walls defining areas of special function (administration, military, storage, etc.).
- geophysical methods of investigation have the advantage of covering much larger areas than excavation, and such information can be made available without any destruction of the surface or below it.

Basically our objective was the reconnaissance of the spatial organisation of Cyrus'

capital, and our underlying question: are there any more permanent buildings and other remains of the urban settlement between the visible monuments and outside the main part of the site?⁷

The preliminary results are currently being analysed but some provisional considerations are offered here.⁸ Altogether they clearly refute the idea of an empty city or a settlement without construction:

- in the area of the palaces, the garden discovered by A. Sami in 1951 and D. Stronach in 1963 most probably has an extension towards the old river. This contains more channels and other structures, some of them made of stone, which are not in a random location; they are in relation to the orientation and axis of Palace S;
- west of the rectangle defined by the water-courses, a series of unexpected structures are visible between the two palaces. Further west, towards the tomb of Cyrus, the constructions seem to be more loosely distributed; at this time the test is too restricted to conclude that the area was empty.
- in the opposite direction, east of the garden and south of the tower known as the Zendan-i Solaiman, a tested area of one hectare indicates an unknown stone building and several long rectilinear structures. This part of the site between the garden and the Tall-i Takht seems to be more densely organised than the western part;
- beyond the Tall-i Takht, the outer fortifications, visible on the aerial photographs as a polygon (Fig. 1), are confirmed by a sounding carried out by D. Stronach; the wall is 3.20 m thick (Stronach 1978, 159). Another section is quite clear from the geophysical survey. More importantly, inside the polygon, the slope between this fortification and a central depression is filled with many small quadrangular structures; in contrast, the central flat depression, which is cultivated today, appears to be empty.

In this first survey, Pasargadae presents a new aspect and can no longer be consid-

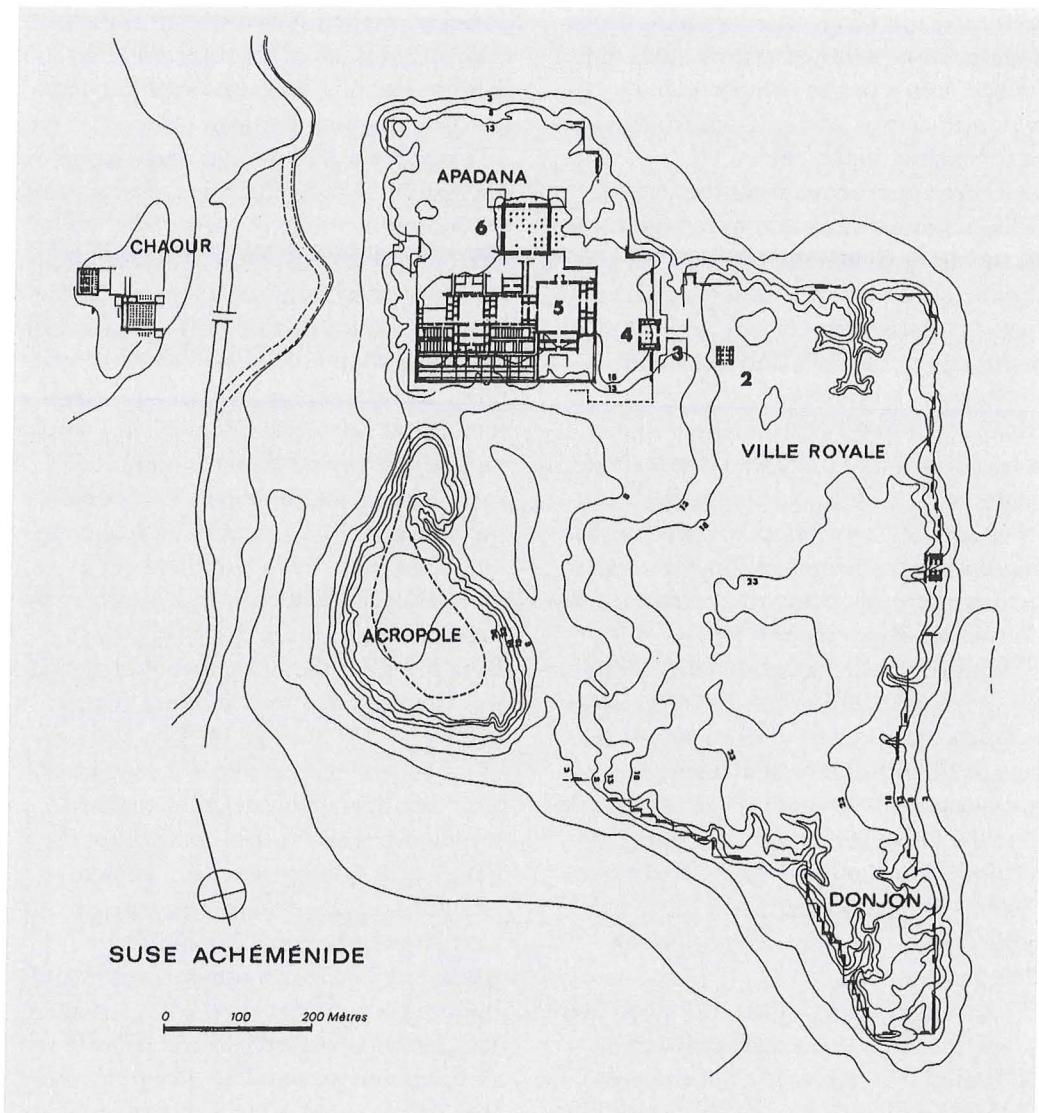
ered as a city without constructions. However, the use of tents for some royal activities, such as a banquet hall, and other more modest purposes remains probable. The rather neglected outer fortifications beyond the Tall-i Takht appear to be the most densely built area on the site. This well-protected area might have played an important role similar to that of the central area at Susa, as proposed by J. Perrot (1981, 90). The comparison is now more conclusive if we consider the flat low area which appears to have no constructions, surrounded by constructions on the slope forming an amphitheater (see below). To the south of the Tall-i Takht, the remaining part of the site does not appear to be so densely built, but is certainly not as empty as it appears in the various published plans of Pasargadae.

Susa

Located about 600 km west of Persepolis and Pasargadae, Susa lies in a quite different environment, in a south-eastern extension of the Mesopotamian plain. Darius was in this region in 519 BC, which is the earliest date for the beginning of the construction of his palace and the royal city. At that time, Susa was no longer the great city it had been, but was still a bustling town and the centre of a small kingdom, which had experienced close relations with the Persians for some time.

The details of the building period are unknown, but it may have lasted for several decades, as did that of the Apadana of Persepolis, which was not completed when Darius died. The foundation techniques for the building of Darius' palace consisted of a general levelling of the mound, then a lowering of the central part and a refilling of the periphery in order to spread the available surface over 12 hectares; this operation demanded some one million cubic metres of earth and gravel (Perrot 1981, 85). After the completion of this sophisticated foundation layout, the masons could have begun construction of the walls of both the resi-

Fig. 5. Susa, plan of the Achaemenid city, bounded by a glacis. Within this limit, the constructions are restricted to the northern part, the palace of Darius and related buildings. (After Perrot 1981, Taf. 34).



dence and the Apadana, and of the stone columns, rising to 20 m (Perrot 1981, Taf. 35).

We may assume that the residence of Darius and his court could not have been completed during the first years of his reign, either at Susa or on the platform at Persepolis. Therefore in order to live at Susa and to rule his empire from there, the King had to adapt to the situation and find a solution, using other areas of the city.

To design his new capital Darius had to remodel the old Elamite city and expel the local population.⁹ The king placed a boundary – a glacis not a fortification – enclosing the three old mounds in a lozenge of about 100 hectares (Fig. 5). He

selected the northern mound for his palace, but he raised or levelled the large Ville Royale mound to the same level, retaining the Acropolis mound at a higher level (Perrot 1981).

Apart from the palace, within the protected area, the Achaemenid remains are rather scarce (Boucharlat 1997a). We presume that the Acropolis mound supported the citadel which had been observed by some of Alexander's companions. Unfortunately the first French excavators at Susa did not pay much attention to these "late" remains. However de Morgan found traces of a thick mudbrick wall on the edge of the mound which may correspond to a citadel extending over some 5 ha (Fig. 6). Within these limits and on the slopes, he

recovered several remains of monuments, column bases, some inscribed, a 121 kg bronze lion, a bronze weight, and a Greek-inscribed astragal from Miletus, as well as some minor objects.

There are no remains of the palaces an Achaemenid king would have built on the Acropolis, – habitation, treasury, store-rooms for the tribute (Strabo 5.3.21). The major part of the inner city appears to us as an empty area, not only the central depression of more than 12 ha, which is today 10 m lower than the surrounding mounds, but also the Ville Royale mound which covers 30 hectares (Fig. 5). In the NW area of this mound, the building facing the Darius Gate, the Propylaeum, actually belongs to the royal palace. At the south end of the mound, the so-called “Donjon” Palace has never been shown to be of Achaemenid origin, although some scholars are inclined to think that it is. I favour the possibility of a Seleucid construction, with re-used Achaemenid architectural elements brought from other places (Martinez-Sèvre 1996; Boucharlat 2000, 145–47). Nevertheless, the “Donjon” covers half a hectare within the 100 hectare city.

The central part, “Place d’Armes”, was a low area in the Achaemenid period, indicated by the low level of the post-Achaemenid structures.¹⁰ The size of this empty area has convinced some scholars, such as J. Perrot (1981, 90) who notes the possible similarity with the outer fortification at Pasargadae, and I. Nielsen (1994, 49) who suggested that the southern front of Darius’ palace overlooked a garden.

To the east some thirty hectares remain an object of speculation in the picture of the royal city. A geophysical survey (electrical method) carried out in 1976, failed to indicate the foundations of any large constructions. Several trenches – some of them very large according to the habit of early 20th century excavators, the more recent ones being more meticulously excavated – did not reveal any Achaemenid level with mudbrick or baked brick constructions.¹¹ Neither the excavation techniques nor the soil condi-

tions can explain such a negative result since the same trenches revealed Neo-Elamite building levels and quite consistent later Seleuco-Parthian ones.

Thus, the royal buildings seem to be restricted to the Apadana and probably to the Acropolis, while the rest of the walled city only held non-permanent buildings, at best constructions with light materials. Since we do know that Darius levelled the three tells, he intended to include all of them in his building programme around the central depression. Tentatively, I would suggest that the royal city mound held barracks and encampments. This could have been for the administration and the army and for storage (food and equipment), not to exclude a royal purpose: the importance of the tents has long been recognised for the Achaemenid king, and was later imitated by Alexander (Briant 1988; *id.* 1996, 267–69; Nielsen 1994, 46–47). The low central area was intentionally kept free of any construction, perhaps serving for military drills in front of the King’s palace, rather than as a garden.

In this tentative reconstruction, the surroundings of the city should not be neglected. The only known Achaemenid building outside the royal city gives us an idea of the occupation of the plain in the Achaemenid period. The Shaur palace was found by chance in the late sixties, and it remains the only known palace of its type west of the city.¹² The few preserved structures found in these excavations are but a small part of the actual extension of the palatial complex as revealed by geophysical survey. The layout of the gravel foundations left the central area empty. This area has therefore been interpreted as a garden (Boucharlat, Labrousse 1979, Figs. 25 and 38).

The only other building, the so-called Ayadana, 4 km farther north, has proved to be a post-Achaemenid building. We cannot rule out the existence of other Achaemenid constructions elsewhere, but in any case they would have been much smaller than the Shaur palace, or in a bad state of preservation long before the last century. Their possible existence, based

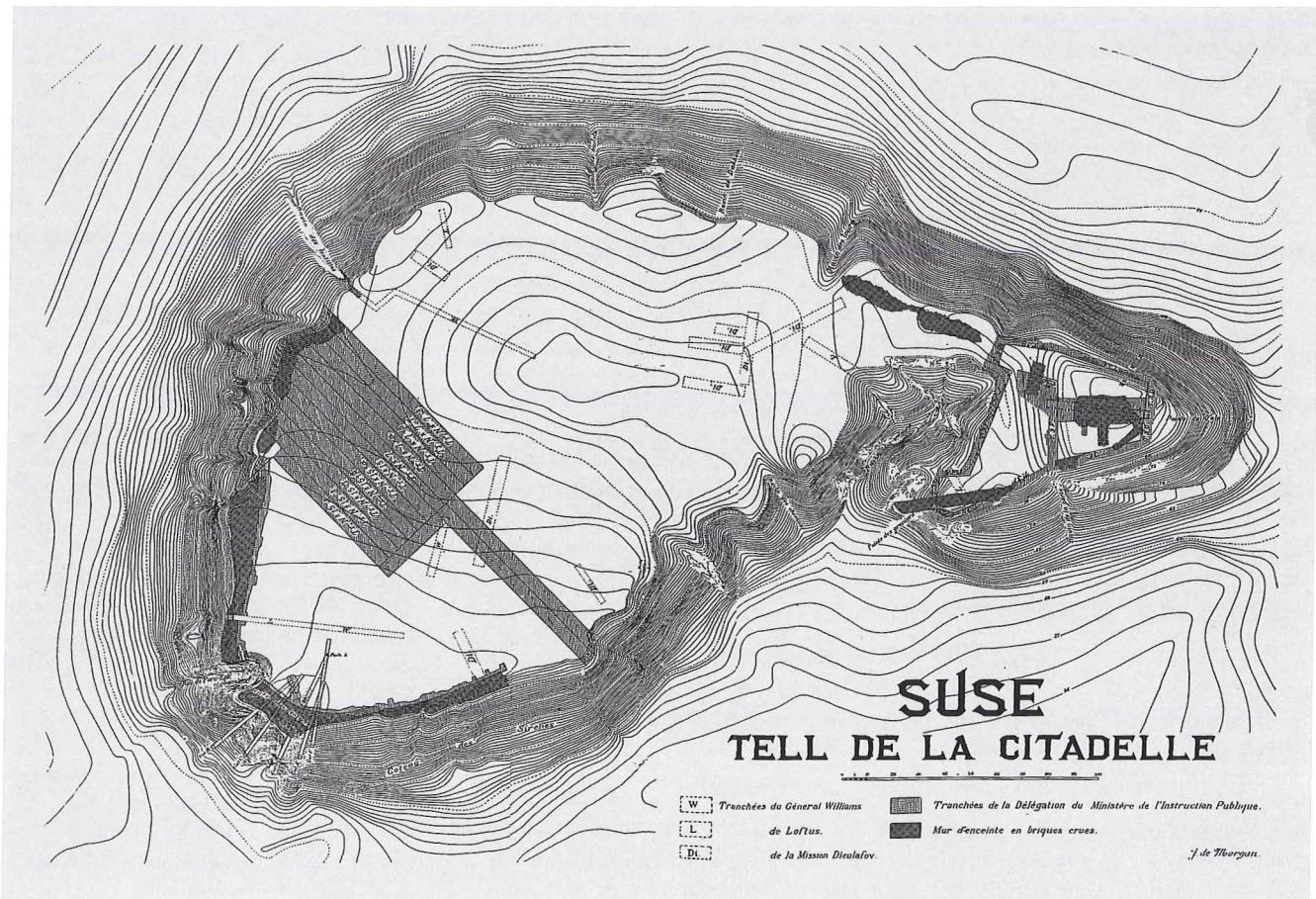


Fig. 6. Susa, sketch plan of the citadel on the Acropolis mound. Only parts of the thick outer wall (criss-cross hatching) have been recovered. (After de Morgan 1900, Pl. II).

upon the examples in the Persepolis plain, remains an open question (Tilia 1978, 71–91).

To conclude

For a long time, historians and archaeologists did not question the rather strange planning of the Achaemenid capitals: a loosely distributed architecture in Pasargadae, a rather empty city in Susa, a palatial complex without a city in Persepolis. The emphasis on the importance and efficiency of the royal camp led the present author to doubt the existence of a constructed capital; this is proving to be wrong at Pasargadae. No doubt a better picture will emerge with a change in strategy. Excavation is not the most accurate method of large-scale investigation of a city-capital. In this respect, the attempts

made in the seventies in Susa were far from complete. It is possible that new strategies and methods applied at Susa may change the previous perception of the Achaemenid city, and they are certainly worth trying. The hypothesis of a settlement partially consisting of tents and / or barracks should be tested, without excluding the existence of stone buildings still to be discovered. The case of Pasargadae as a city belonging to a single period is highly promising. Modern methods provide an unique chance to perceive the past existence of temporary installations and structures, next to more permanent ones. Although Pasargadae is not a typical Achaemenid capital, it may provide the best example of spatial organisation of an Achaemenid royal city. When Pasargadae is better understood, Susa and Persepolis may be regarded anew.

Notes

NOTE *

I warmly thank Mrs Elizabeth Willcox for revising the English text.

NOTE 1

I have previously developed this view, in too systematic a way, see Boucharat 1997b; for a general description of Pasargadae, Stronach 1978, 8–10, figs. 3–4, pl. 42; for Achaemenid Susa, Perrot 1981; Boucharat 1990; 1997a.

NOTE 2

See Briant 1988; *id.* 1996, 200–05; Tuplin 1998, 6 4–77, especially table p. 66.

NOTE 3

As is evident in the Persepolis cuneiform tablets, Pasargadae was still an important place during Darius' reign, its main though not unique function probably being a dynastic and/or religious centre.

NOTE 4

See the well-known inscriptions of Darius DSf, with DSz, DSaa, as well as those of Xerxes, and for the second period the inscription of Artaxerxes II A2Sd (Kent 1953, 142–44; Lecoq 1997, 108–16).

NOTE 5

Compare the usual plan of Persepolis with the state of building activity at the end of Darius' reign ca. 490 BC (Roaf 1983, figs. 152 and 156). Despite the paucity of constructions (unfinished Apadana and Gate, temporary plan of the Treasury), the efficient organisation of Darius' empire is not questioned.

NOTE 6

Needless to say such methods were not available, or in their infancy, in the early sixties when D. Stronach carried out his excavations.

NOTE 7

The fieldwork was made possible thanks to the co-operation of the Iranian Cultural Heritage Organisation with our team.

NOTE 8

Three areas, altogether more than 7 hectares, were surveyed in October 1999. Two of these were chosen for proximity to the visible monuments, in order to test the equipment and to start from these known structures as a reference for discerning stone structures from possible mudbrick or baked brick structures.

NOTE 9

Despite several decades of field research, the French archaeologists have not succeeded in finding the location of this new town or series of small towns where the Susians had to settle.

NOTE 10

It is still low and very humid today; in winter and spring, which possibly correspond to the sojourns of the king in Susa, this area turns into marsh after the seasonal rains.

NOTE 11

See Boucharat 1993, fig. 1; this map only locates the areas which provided dated material; the other indicated trenches, mainly dug by Dieulafoy, are not described in the published reports.

NOTE 12

Visited by M. Dieulafoy in the late 19th century, it was surveyed and excavated between 1970 and 1976 by the French Mission.

Bibliography

Abbreviations

AMI *Archaologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*
AOAT *Alter Orient und Altes Testament*
CDAFI *Cahiers de la Délégation Archéologique Française en Iran*

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Persian Rule in the North. Achaemenid Palaces on the Periphery of the Empire

Florian Knauss

For Friedrich Hiller
On the occasion of his 75th birthday
(*12.3.1926)

To this day there is no agreement among scholars about the extension of the Achaemenid Empire, where its north-western border is concerned.¹ Apart from this, historians and archaeologists studying the Achaemenids have not laid special emphasis on Transcaucasia, i.e. the territories of modern Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, until the early 1990s.² However, the situation has significantly changed in the recent past, as it became clear by the number of publications concerning Achaemenid architecture in this region, referred to during the conference.³

A few years ago our knowledge of the history of Eastern Georgia – or Iberia, as it was called in ancient western sources – in the Iron age before the arrival of the Romans under Pompey in 65 BC, was rather disappointing.⁴ The literary sources are silent until Strabo, and the archaeological evidence was scanty for a long time, too.⁵ Even in recent publications the treat-

ment of Georgia seems to be restricted to its western part, the ancient Colchis.⁶ The fabled wealth of Colchis early became known to the Greeks and found symbolic expression in the myth of Medea and the Golden Fleece. Archaeological finds give ample proof of contacts with the Greek world since at least the 7th century BC.⁷

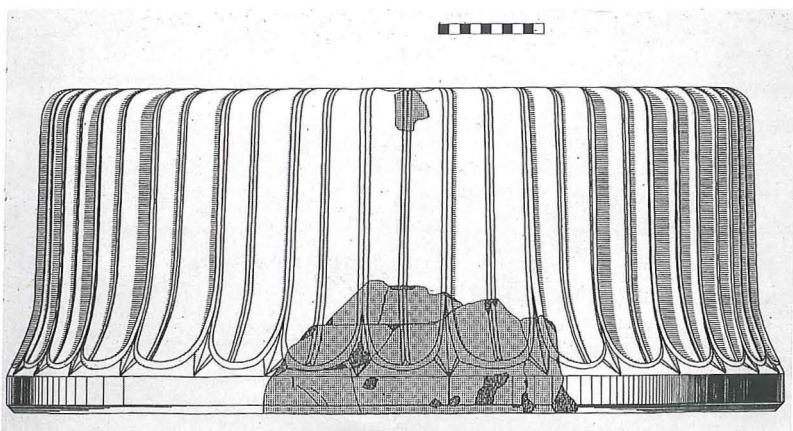
Already at the beginning of the 20th century Smirnov published a number of Achaemenid gold and silver objects from sites in Central and Eastern Georgia.⁸ However, the vast majority of archaeologists and historians still refuse to regard Iberia as part of the Persian Empire.⁹ Although in later years, even in Colchis precious objects worked in genuine Achaemenid court-style were found,¹⁰ the same remains true also for Colchis.¹¹ This is even more surprising, since Herodotus writes:

“Gifts were also required of the Colchians and their neighbours as far as the Caucasian mountains (which is as far as the Persian rule reaches, the country north of the Caucasus paying no regard to the Persians); these were rendered every four years and are still so rendered, namely, an hundred boys and as many maidens”.¹²

Moreover, when Xerxes invaded Greece, according to Herodotus Colchian infantry marched in his army beside Transcaucasian troops of Persia’s nineteenth satrapy and under Persian command.¹³ Nevertheless, most scholars see this as a “superficial co-operation” rather than as a sign of direct Persian control over Colchis, and, to these authors, Iberia is usually thought to be beyond the reach of the Persian king.

However, in the light of recent archae-

Fig. 1. Gumbati: Column base, reconstruction.
(F Knauf).



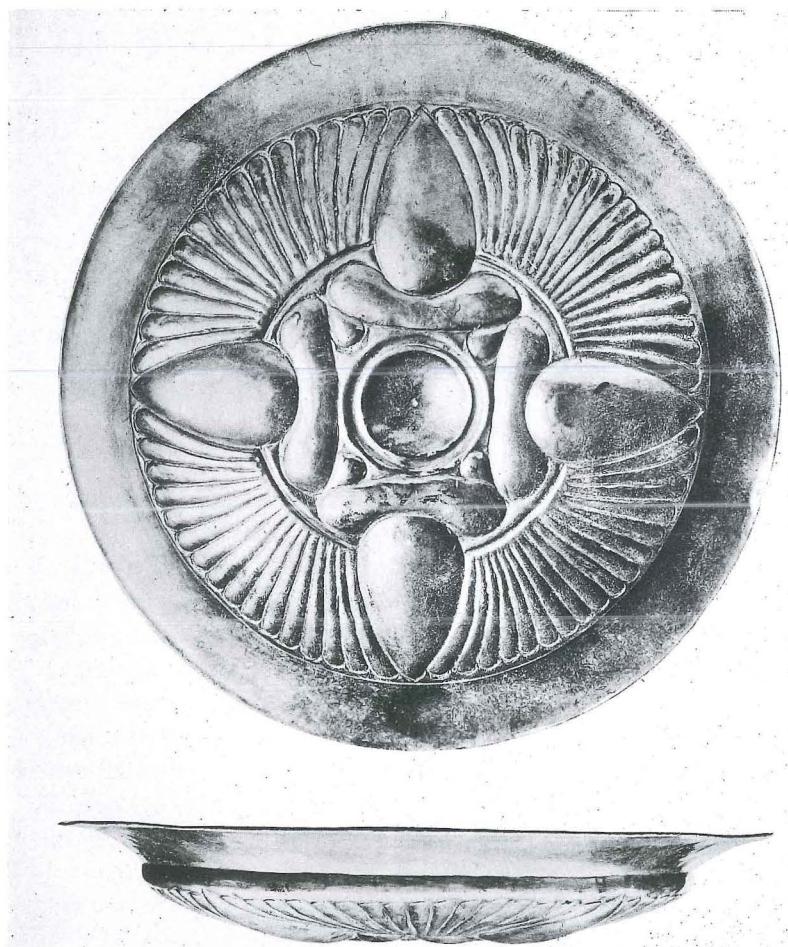
ological research it seems appropriate to take Herodotus' statement seriously.¹⁴

In the 1970s local peasants, digging an irrigation ditch, found some architectural fragments in the easternmost region of Georgia, Kakheti, at a site today called Gumbati (Fig. 1). These fragments belonged to column bases of Persepolitan type.¹⁵ In the hope to find a building of a certain importance, a Georgian-German expedition team carried out archaeological excavations there between 1994 and 1996, and found the first proof of direct influence from Achaemenid Persia in this region.

As we have seen above, traces of indirect Achaemenid influence are not completely unknown in eastern Georgia, since Achaemenid gold and silver vessels (Fig. 2) and Achaemenid jewellery¹⁶ as well as local imitations of those¹⁷ have been found at several sites in ancient Iberia, for example in the famous hoards from Akhalgori and Kazbegi. Nevertheless, such objects may have found their way to Georgia through trade or as diplomatic gifts. Therefore, they may well prove contacts between Iberians and the Persian Empire without necessarily proving the presence of Persians in Iberia for a longer time.

The site nowadays called Gumbati is an almost imperceptible elevation in the wide valley of the Alasani river, between the Caucasus in the north and the Gombori mountain range in the south west.

The horizon that has been called level C was the earliest settlement there, except for a rather small Middle Bronze age *kurgan*, which should probably be connected with the nearby "tall" of Naomari Gora.¹⁸ The large building (Fig. 3), which will be examined in detail in the following, belongs to this level C. In level B1 and B2 poor remains of settlements were observed in the ruins of the former structure. These settlements date back to the time when the edifice of level C was abandoned.¹⁹ Finally, in the youngest level A, the site served as a burial ground. The grave of a young girl belongs to this noticeably later



period, probably dating to the turn of the 1st century BC to the 1st century AD.²⁰

Fig. 2. Akhalgori: Silver phiala. (After Smirnov 1934, pl. 8).

The fact that the mud-brick walls have been erected on the levelled ground without any kind of foundations made it difficult to find the architectural remains which ought to belong to the earlier found base-fragments. Furthermore, the mud-bricks, measuring 32 x 32 x 12 cm, could hardly be distinguished from the soil, and modern deep ploughing had destroyed much of the building. Two or three layers of mud-brick, at most, remain in the southern part (Fig. 4), whereas the northern part has been completely demolished. On the plan (Fig. 3) the walls that have been excavated are dark, whereas the reconstructed walls are light.

The obviously complete southern wall of this complex (M 2), measures about 40 m in length. In its western part it has a small entrance. The easternmost wall M 1,

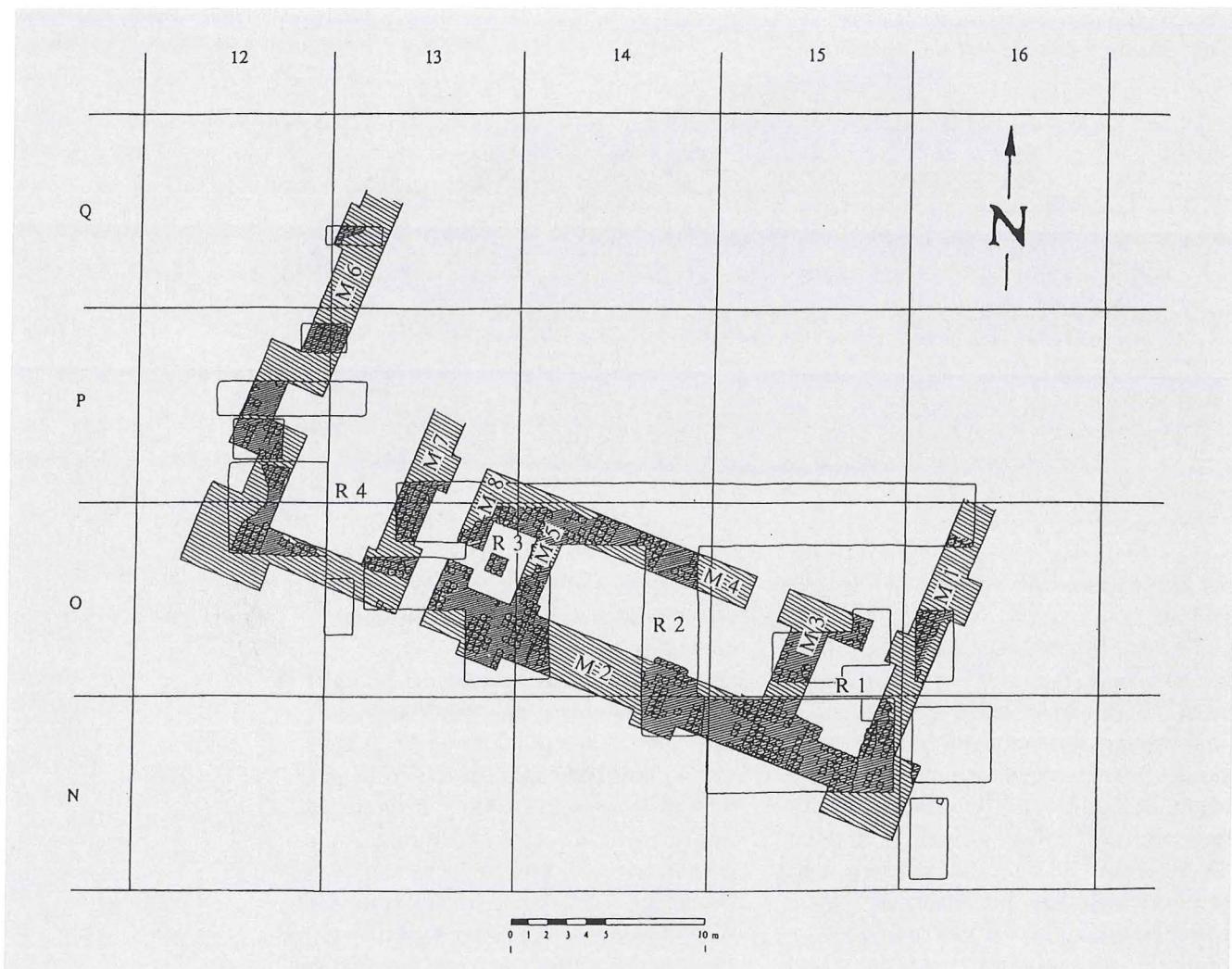


Fig. 3. Gumbati: Palace, plan (F. Knauf).



Fig. 4. Gumbati: South-eastern corner of the palace. (H. Löhr).

which is approximately 14 m long, turns at a right angle to the north, while M 6, which vanishes after about 16 m, once

formed the western wall of the whole building. M 1 and M 6 must have been fairly long. In any case the floor plan of this construction must have been rectangular.

At the south-eastern corner a square tower has been excavated. I suppose, by analogy, that there must have been similar towers at each of the four corners. Furthermore, the exterior of the outer walls was subdivided by ressauts. On the western exterior wall of the building there seem to have been projecting, rectangular buttresses, although the distance between one of them and a supposed tower at the south-western corner seems to be too narrow to support such an interpretation.²¹ The outer walls, measuring 1.90–2.70 m in width, are generally wider than



Fig. 5. Gumbati: Fragment of a column base. (D. Morche).

the inner walls, with a width of 1.50 and 1.90 m.

The interior architecture can be ascertained only in the southern part. Adjacent to the small, almost square room R 1, with a bench or banquette in the south-eastern corner, a much larger, oblong room, R 2, is located. As in room R 1 the only entrance is from a corridor to the north. Room R 2 also had a bench at the southern wall. The importance of this room is stressed by the protruding elements in its south-western and south-eastern corner. Although no small finds were excavated in any of the rooms, which could give us the slightest hint at their function, the mere size of room R 2 as well as the conspicuous structure of the walls²² may indicate that this was not just a storage room.

A pillar in the centre of the small and square room R 3 leads to the assumption that it once housed a staircase. Lots of pieces of burnt clay with remains of wooden beams have been found, obviously from the roof or from a second floor. One could enter the stairs from a small passage, which connected the great corridor to the north with a small side entrance to the south. The presence of this corridor could indicate that the centre of the whole complex was once taken up by an internal courtyard or central hall. Although the trenches in this area pro-

duced masses of burnt mud-brick, unfortunately no recognizable architectural structures were found.

Although the archaeological evidence is rather fragmentary, one would imagine that such a huge building ought to have had an impressive main entrance, bigger than the one in the south.²³ If the layout was more or less symmetrical, this entrance would most probably be situated on the west side, where the exterior wall is most impressively designed. As far as we can see, the western part was not divided into a row of smaller and larger rooms. There might have been an entrance hall or the like.

After three campaigns of excavation, fragments of at least five bell-shaped column bases have been found (Fig. 5),²⁴ unfortunately none of them *in situ*. The same is true of some fragments of a *torus* and of a square slab. The *torus* might be connected with a plinth, a well-known feature in Achaemenid architecture,²⁵ or it may have belonged to a column base of Persepolitan type, which often has a *torus* above the *cyma-recta* profile.²⁶ The capitals and column-shafts were probably made of wood, since no pieces were found that could have belonged to them.

Three of the bell-shaped bases had a maximum diameter of approximately 84 cm, and two were somewhat smaller, with

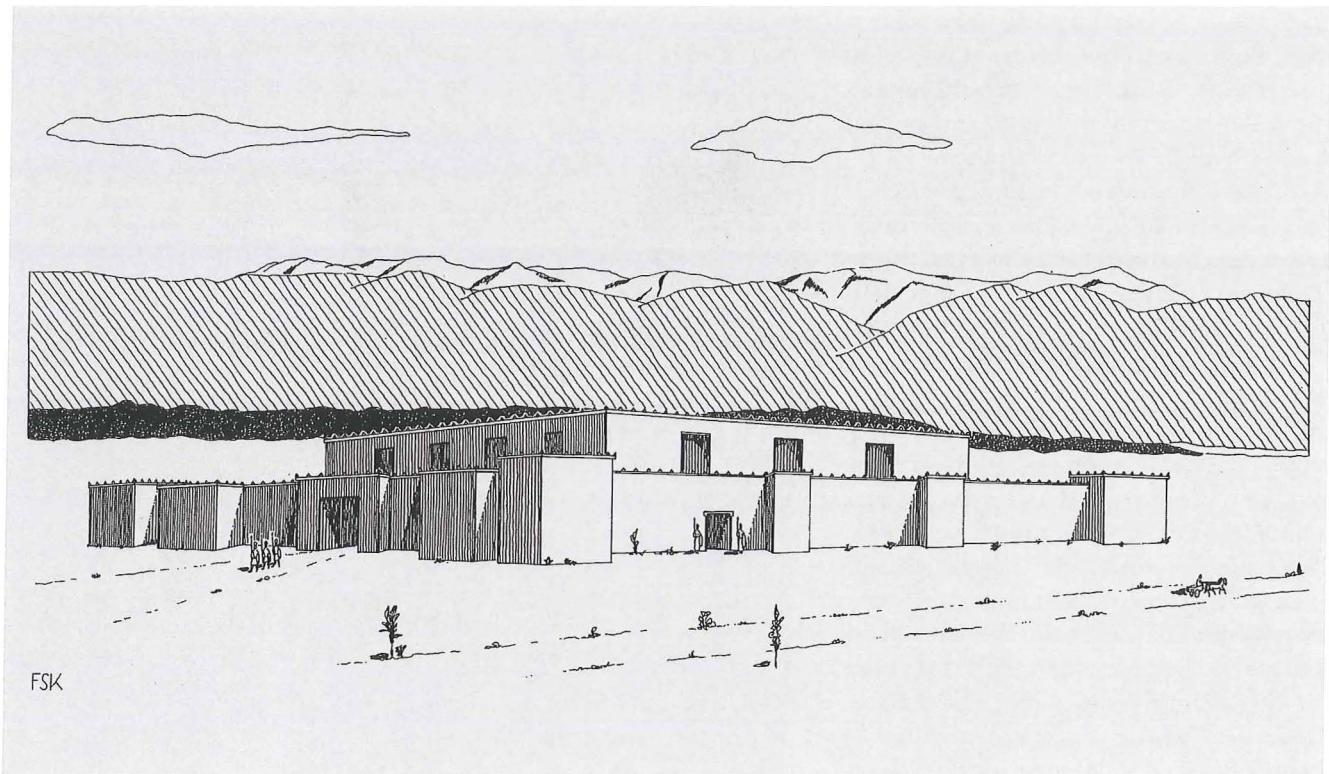


Fig. 6. Gumbati: Palace, reconstruction. (F. Knauß).

a diameter of 73.5 cm. Therefore, one may suspect that there were at least two hypostyle rooms, perhaps an entrance hall to the west and a main hall in the centre.²⁷ Whether the central part was completely roofed – as in my proposed reconstruction (Fig. 6) – or whether the interior had been designed, at least partly, as an open courtyard cannot be ascertained.

It seems to be clear that in an undeveloped environment as was eastern Georgia at that time,²⁸ an edifice of this size and with such architectural ornaments must have been primarily an official building. It may have incorporated ritual functions, but neither its architecture nor any finds indicate that it was a temple.²⁹ In spite of the towers and buttresses on its exterior, which give this building a fortified character, the column bases alone show that it was not a mere fortress. Rather one gets the impression that it was a kind of palace, in the sense of a representative building, which combined public with residential functions. It may even have accommodated a small military detachment.³⁰

Yet, who was the builder-owner of this residence and who lived here? And, where are the forerunners for this architecture?

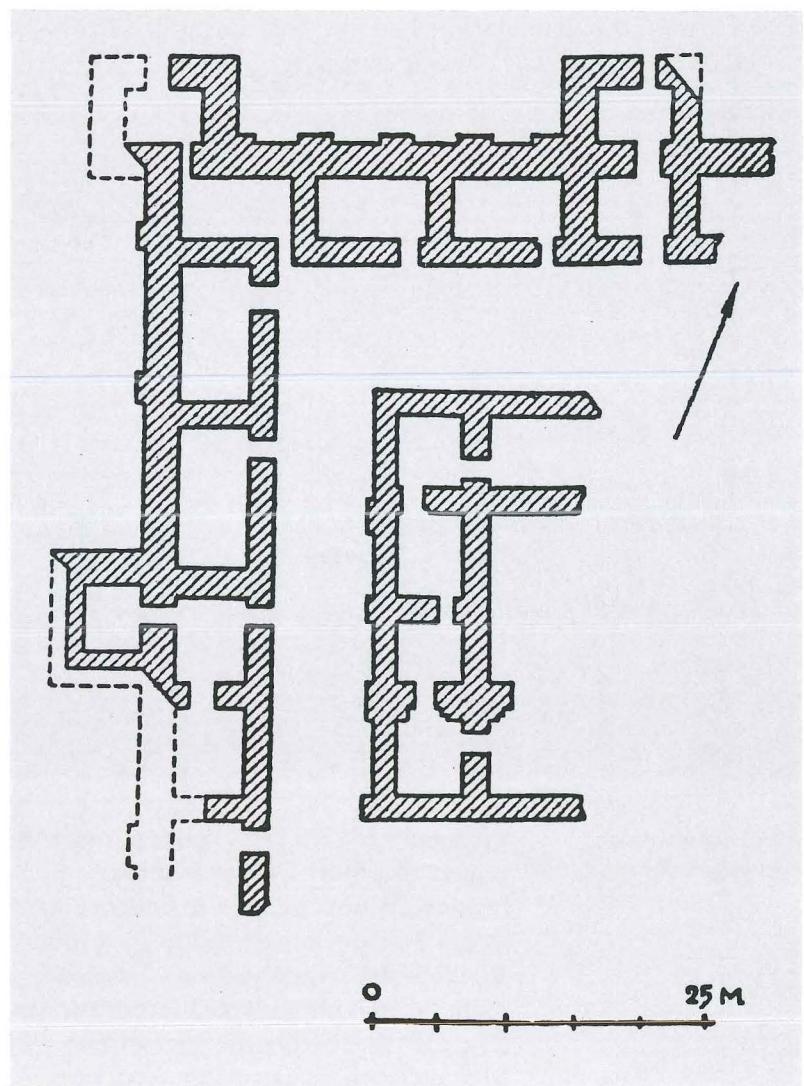
In searching for answers, we first studied the local architectural tradition. Recent excavations have shown that the architecture of the early Iron age in Kakheti³¹ as well as a somewhat further west, in Samtawro³² and Treligorebi,³³ was rather modest, with no major discernable architectural developments until the 5th century BC.³⁴ It thus did not seem possible to link the architecture of the palace in Gumbati with local traditions. This is true not only of its monumental size but also of a number of constructional details: The Iberians did not know neither regular mud-bricks, nor ressauts, stepped walls and an interior architecture of similar complexity. Last but not least, stone masonry had no forerunners at all in Iberia. The quality of the execution of the building makes us suspect that at least some of the craftsmen were foreigners. The column-bases show that the builder-owner had close relationships with Achaemenid architecture, while some other features are of Oriental origin in a broader sense.

A 5th or 4th century BC tower-like building in Samadlo³⁵ further supports our assumption that the beginning of monumental architecture in Iberia must be connected with influences from the Achaemenid Empire. The building in Samadlo resembles the Persian type of tower, which is familiar to us from the Zendan-i Sulaiman in Pasargadae or the Ka'bah-i Zardusht in Naqsh-i Rustam.³⁶

Another three Transcaucasian sites – Sari Tepe and Qaracamirli Köyi in Azerbaijan, and Benjamin in Armenia –, where the same type of column-base with *cyma-recta* profile has been found, enlarge the number of Achaemenid monuments in this region significantly.³⁷ The large complex in Sari Tepe (Fig. 7),³⁸ about 85 km south-west of Gumbati in the Kura valley, offers the closest parallels with our palace. In Qaracamirli Köyi, 60 km east of Sari Tepe near Şamkir, no architecture has been excavated in relation to the bases so far. The palace in Benjamin (see Fig. 4 on p. 158), 130 km south west of Sari Tepe near Kumairi, shows a different architectural plan. It has been rebuilt and changed in two later phases.³⁹

The simultaneity of the palaces in Gumbati and Sari Tepe is further supported by a comparison of the pottery. In both cases the most impressive shapes, *phialai* imitating metal prototypes, have Achaemenid models from the 5th and early 4th century BC.⁴⁰

In comparison with our construction in Gumbati, let us now take a look at the Achaemenid palaces. In doing so, we may rely on a list of features which are characteristic for Achaemenid palaces and which we owe especially to the studies of Wolfram Kleiss and Inge Nielsen:⁴¹ First of all, the residences of the Persian kings, according to Nielsen and Kleiss, were built upon a large artificial platform, which raises the palace above its surroundings. Usually monumental staircases created an impressive approach. Another common feature is the presence of a hypostyle hall. The earliest examples, from Pasargadae, were oblong, while later a square



“*apadana*” was the rule.⁴² Finally, Achaemenid palaces were characterized by parks, or *paradeisoi*, for recreational purposes. We find only two of these features in Gumbati: the rectangular layout and the hypostyle halls. Of course it would be difficult to prove the existence of a *paradeisos* from the archaeological evidence.

The most famous palaces of the Achaemenid kings are the ones in Pasargadae, Susa and Persepolis, but only the residential palace of Darius I in Persepolis (Fig. 8)⁴³ shows perceptible similarities to our palace. The dimensions are almost the same, as the palace of Darius I measures about 40 by 30 m. Moreover, here we find similar reinforcements on the corners, comparable rows of larger and smaller

Fig. 7. Sari Tepe: Palace, plan. (After Narimanov 1960, fig. 1).

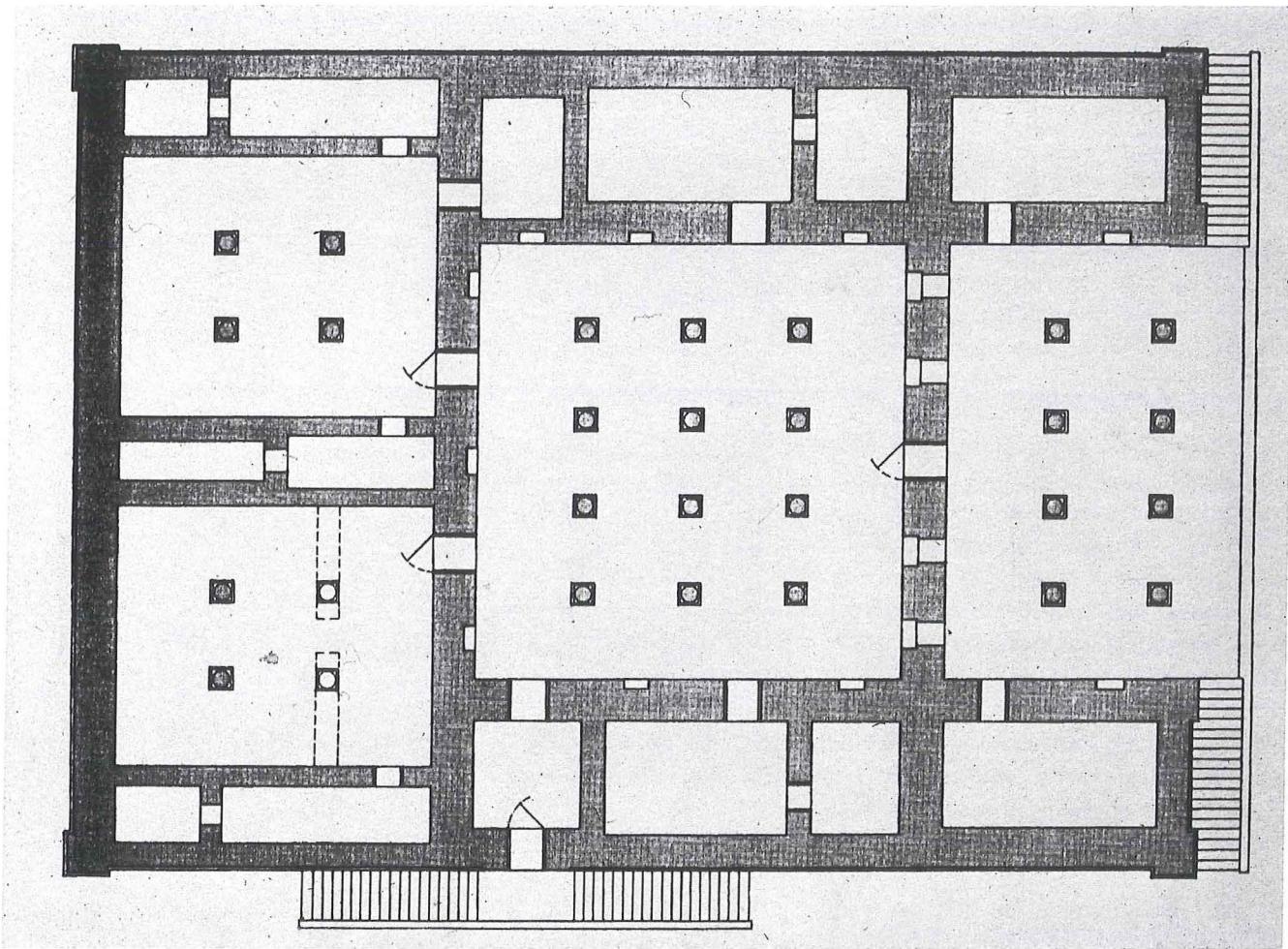


Fig. 8. Persepolis: Palace of Darius I. (After Schmidt 1953, fig. 92).

rooms with entrances on the sides, and a small side entrance. In general however, residences of satraps or minor governors probably rather constituted the prime model for the palaces of Gumbati, Sari Tepe or Benjamin, because of their similar functions.

Unfortunately the archaeological evidence for the residences of satraps and minor governors is insufficient.⁴⁴ From literary sources we know that in many cases Persian satraps resided in and reused the palaces of the former local rulers, for instance in Sardes.⁴⁵ If these local dynasties were loyal to the Persian kings, they could even remain in power. In the few palaces of Achaemenid governors or satraps, which we know, a traditional local element is often predominant, whereas Achaemenid influence is rather selective. For instance the palace of Lachish combines the Neo-Babylonian "Hofhaus" and

the North Syrian Bit-Hilani, but there is a total lack of Achaemenid features.⁴⁶ The situation in Vouni on Cyprus is similar.⁴⁷

To sum up, those residences of Persian satraps which have been excavated never represent true Achaemenid architecture,⁴⁸ even if they sometimes may have gained inspiration from the royal palaces. This is surprising, because according to the written sources at least in Anatolia the satraps often followed the models set by the Persian kings.⁴⁹ The archaeological facts thus in a way contradict the literary tradition. It is therefore astonishing that the great buildings in Gumbati and Sari Tepe have far more features in common with royal Achaemenid palaces than any of the preserved residences of a Persian satrap.

The poor state of research concerning the palaces of Persian satraps, minor governors

and vassal kings, is not only an archaeological problem. Although some publications have enlarged our general knowledge of the administration in the Achaemenid Empire,⁵⁰ we still know very little about especially the lower administrative levels in the periphery of the Empire.

In this context a statement by Xenophon⁵¹ may be of importance. When marching through Armenia, the leaders of the "10.000"⁵² Greeks, Xenophon and Cheirisophos, meet a so-called "*Komarch*", apparently a representative of several villages. One might regard him as a traditional local official, but Xenophon explicitly stresses that the "*Komarch*" as well as some other inhabitants of the village spoke Persian.⁵³ Perhaps such a "*Komarch*" represents instead a government official on the lower level of the administration of the empire. Could it be that in nearby Kakheti and in the Kura valley the political structures were similar, and that Gumbati and Sari Tepe were centres of administrative districts headed by a so-called "*Komarch*"?

So far, every proposal concerning the date of the palaces of Gumbati, Sari Tepe and Benjamin mainly depends on the column-bases. The excavators of Sari Tepe and Benjamin date them to the 5th or 4th century BC.⁵⁴

The stylistic differences between the bases from the four Transcaucasian sites are insignificant. They are all made of local stone. The high standard of execution and the incisions at the bottom of one of the bases (Fig. 9) indicate that the bases from Gumbati had been made by experienced stone-cutters. The purpose of those incisions was to divide the area of a circle into four identical sections, using geometrical considerations. At the resulting points the stone-cutter made a notch on the exterior. These notches are often still visible at the end of the spandrels (Fig. 5).⁵⁵

Although possibly influenced by East Greek models,⁵⁶ this type of bell-shaped column-base is a typical Achaemenid feature. The latest thorough investigation by Burkhard Wesenberg demonstrates that the

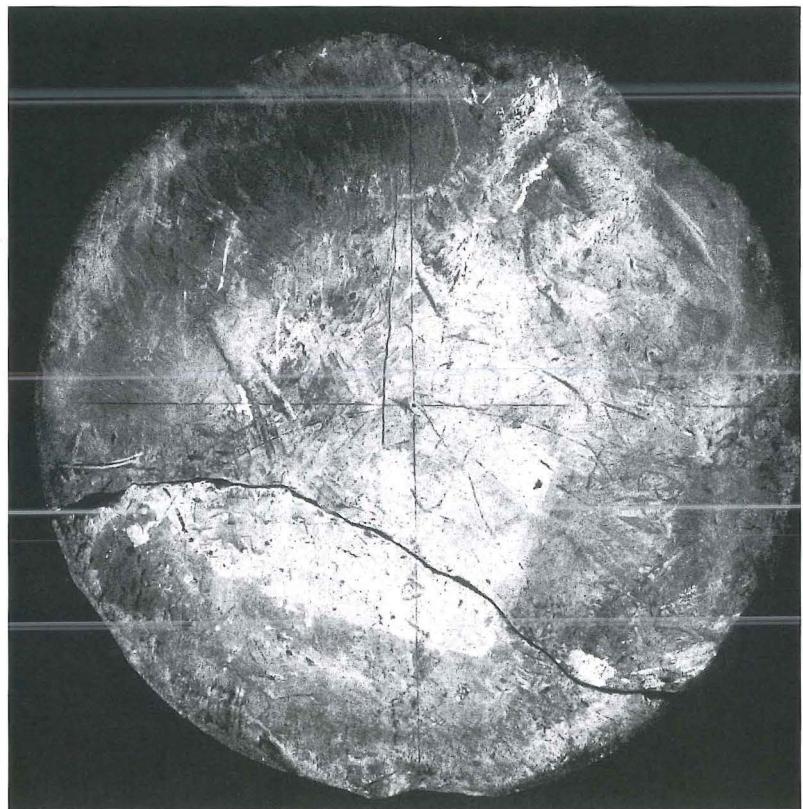


Fig. 9. Gumbati: Column base, bottom. (D. Morche).

different variants of this type cannot be brought into a chronological framework. They existed simultaneously. The type of bell-shaped base, represented by the examples from the Transcaucasian sites, belongs to Wesenberg's group B.⁵⁷ The earliest known example of group B was manufactured during the reign of Darius I and the latest at the time of Artaxerxes II. In the centre of the empire the closest parallel can be found at Susa, but it cannot be connected with a certain date.⁵⁸

The distribution of the bell-shaped column bases is quite interesting: Up to now they were mainly known from the capitals of the empire, that is, from Persia, Media and Babylon. The northernmost find-spot was Hamadan. All these bases were found in royal palaces or at least in impressive public buildings. Apart from the already mentioned sites, Transcaucasia is the only region in the vast Achaemenid Empire where such bases have also been found. Later, in Hellenistic times, we know some examples from Failaka and from India.⁵⁹ As a tradition in stone-cutting is completely missing in Iberia, these Transcau-

casian palaces must have been of major importance. Due to the refinement of the stone-cutting, these bases were probably made by craftsmen, trained in Anatolian or Iranian workshops.

The local pottery in Gumbati as well as a few *phialai*, following Achaemenid metal prototypes, support the assumption that the great building in level C was built in the 5th or early 4th century BC. The later settlements of level B1 and B2 can be dated in the 4th and 3rd century BC.⁶⁰

From stratigraphical observations we can approximately reconstruct the history of Gumbati.⁶¹ The palace was built on virgin soil; only in some places the ground had been levelled. Probably the palace was later deserted, because there was very little material in the destruction layer. After the inhabitants had left, it was burnt down and the bases were smashed to pieces by the local population. Soon afterwards, some people inhabited the ruins. At that time the ruins were still visible. A little later the site was completely levelled in order to construct a few small houses.

To conclude

In Gumbati, and almost analogously in Sari Tepe and Benjamin, we have structures that should be interpreted as administrative headquarters and residences of local officers or vassals. The building-plan as well as the architectural details show strong Achaemenid influence. We may

assume that Iberia belonged to the Persian Empire, at least for a while.⁶² The inconsistent political structures in Iberia did not constitute a major problem for the Persians.⁶³ The exposed position of the palace of Gumbati, in the middle of the Alasani valley, is ample proof that the Persians did not feel unsafe there.

Probably during the unsuccessful expedition of Darius I against the Scythians in 513/12 BC at least one part of the Persian army went through Iberia.⁶⁴ When Herodotus⁶⁵ tells us that Colchis was under Persian rule in the 5th century BC, Iberia, which was famous for its enormous fertility already in antiquity,⁶⁶ must have been incorporated as well. The distribution of Transcaucasian sites with Achaemenid architecture⁶⁷ suggests the existence of a kind of network of administrative centres. It seems reasonable that tributes for the Persian king were gathered in those residences. Whether the officials residing in Gumbati or Sari Tepe were minor Persian governors or local vassal chiefs cannot be decided with certainty.

Gumbati and similar places demonstrate that in those areas of the Persian Empire, where the local tradition did not provide an impressive architecture, the governors or vassal kings imitated the royal Achaemenid models rather closely.⁶⁸ That means that the situation is quite different from other parts of the empire, for instance Anatolia, Syria or Palestine, where local traditions are dominating.

Notes

NOTE 1

Roaf 1990, map p. 203; Koch 1992, fig. 2 and Wiesehöfer 1993, map 1, leave this question open, though these maps are often not very precise, according to Bengtson & Miločić 1953, 12; Ghirshman 1964, fig. 588; CHI II, 257 maps 11–12 [J.M. Cook]; TAVO B IV 23; Jacobs 1994, 179–80, 182, 183–86 map 4, Colchis as well as the later Iberia belonged to the Achaemenid empire; Nagel 1982, Beil. VI, extends the frontier of the empire even further up to the Hypanis (Kuban), whereas Frye 1984, 111 map 2 (p. 415); Lordkipanidse 1991, 110–11, 147 and Braund 1994, 122–23 and *passim*, doubt that Colchis and Iberia ever have been an integral part of the empire, while Miron & Orthmann 1995, 129–38, 159–62, do not even consider this possibility. For further comments on the borders of the Achaemenid empire, see Calmeyer 1982, 105–06; Calmeyer 1983, 141–42; Calmeyer 1987, 129–30.

NOTE 2

Except for the former Urartian sites, Achaemenid finds and architecture from this region have only very scarcely attracted the attention of western scholars; Kleiss 1992, 93–94; Shefton 1993, 178–209. Weber & Wiesehöfer 1996, 310–16 do not mention even one site. And, even in these countries, it seems that archaeologists and historians rather tended to neglect the presence of the Achaemenids: cf. still Lordkipanidse 2000. For instance, the monumental architecture as well as the small finds from Sari Tepe in Azerbaijan have not been published in detail yet. There are only a very short and rather preliminary report by Narimanov 1960, 162–64, and later references by Chalilov 1985, 44 pl. 16.2 and Kipiani 1993, 72 pl. 1–4. The situation is similar in Armenia. From the great Achaemenid building in Benjamin/Draskhanakert, which has been excavated in the 1980s, so far only a drawing of one of the column bases has been published, but neither photographs nor a ground plan of the architecture; Zardarian & Akopian

1994, 187 fig. 6; even recent articles and exhibition catalogues (Ter-Martirossov 1994, 71–73; Armenien 1995, 56 [F Ter-Martirossov]; Ter-Martirossov 1996, 187–189) just mention the site and its Achaemenid remains. But see now Ter-Martirossov in this volume.

Commenting on the results of the new excavations in Eastern Georgia, Briant 1997, 26, stated: „Mais, d'ores et déjà, c'est une nouvelle 'province' qui semble ainsi s'ouvrir aux investigations des archéologues et des historiens de l'Empire achéménide.“

NOTE 3

For instance, see A. Kanetsian and F. Ter-Martirossov in this volume.

NOTE 4

Cf. Treidler 1962, 1899–911; Treidler 1967, 1329–330; Burney & Lang 1975, 389–95. In this context the pioneer work, which has been done by D. Braund, can hardly be overestimated. It is one of his major merits that he did not only try to give an actual state of the ancient history of Georgia according to the written sources, but he also offers quite a broad overview of at least the most interesting archaeological material. For the history of Iberia see now: Meissner 2000.

NOTE 5

Braund 1994, 1–2, 315.

NOTE 6

Lordkipanidse 1991, 146–50; Braund 1994, 71–151. Not only in the western countries, the Bronze Age period, especially the Kura–Arax and Trialeti culture, is far better known than the Iron Age in Georgia.

NOTE 7

The archaeological evidence leads to the conclusion that the first Greek settlers did not reach the eastern shore of the Black Sea before the late 6th century BC (Ehrhardt 1983, 84–86; Ehrhardt 1984, 153–58; Lordkipanidse 1985; Lordkipanidse 1991, 125–32; Braund 1994, 93–94; Tset-

khladze 1994a, 78–95; Tsetskhladze 1994b, 113–15, 120–22; Tsetskhladze 1998, 5–6, 56–58; Tsetskhladze 1999, 99–102), but bronze-work from Colchian workshops in the sanctuary of Hera on Samos (Jantzen 1972, 80, 83–84 pl. 81.B 452; Mikeladze 1995, 18, 20–21 figs. 18–20; Knauß 1999b, 219) proves earlier contacts with the Greek world. In the recent past especially the Vani bronze of a youth has directed the attention of western archaeologists towards the eastern Black Sea coast (Lordkipanidse 1991–92, 13 figs. 4–5; Lordkipanidse 1995, pls. 86.5; 87; Mattusch 1996, 206–16 fig. 6.4 pl. 9; Boardman 1994, 220 fig. 6.51), while a stele from Sukhumi (Pfuhl & Möbius 1977, pl. 17.65) as well as several Attic red-figure vases from the cemeteries of Pitchvnari, though still not fully published, have been known for a long time (Lordkipanidse 1991, 125–32; Kacharava 1995, 63–73; Miron & Orthmann 1995, 129–42 figs. 129–30, 135–36, 139; Tsetskhladze 1994a, 90–93; Tsetskhladze 1999, 58–59 figs. 72–98 pp. 67–72 tabl. 5).

NOTE 8

Smirnov 1909, pl. 3.13–14; Tallgren 1930, 116–117 fig. 4a–b; Smirnov 1934, pl. 8.41; Miron & Orthmann 1995, fig. 5; Gagoshidze 1996, 129.

NOTE 9

Lordkipanidse 1991, 147; Braund 1994, *passim*; Plontke-Lüning 1998, 878; Lordkipanidse 2000, 11–12.

NOTE 10

Rehm 1993, 105–07 pl. 17.1–2; Tsetskhladze 1993–94, 11–24, 40–41 tabl. 2,2; Tsetskhladze 1994a, 95–96; Miron & Orthmann 1995, figs. 123, 148–49; Lordkipanidse 1995, colour pl. V1–2, 4; Gagoshidze 1996, 129; Briant 1996, 763; Gagoshidze 1997, 134–36; Knauß 1999b, 220; Gagošić & Saginavašvili 2000.

NOTE 11

Lordkipanidse 1991, 110–11; Braund 1994, 122–23; Tsetskhladze 1993–94, 31; Tset-

skhладзе 1994a, 95–96; for the Achaemenid influence upon the material culture of Colchis, see Knauß 1999b, 218–21.

NOTE 12

Hdt. 3.97; translation by A.D. Godley (Herodotus II. London-Cambridge/Mass. 1957).

NOTE 13

Hdt. 7.79.

NOTE 14

In my opinion, the fact that Herodotus mentions “the Colchians as well as the neighbouring peoples” in his list of “*nomoi*” (i.e. satrapies) substantiates that, at least from the Persian point of view, this area belonged to the Achaemenid empire. The Colchians, just as many other subjects of the Persians, were obviously “gift-bearers”, not “tribute-bearers”; cf. Tuplin 1987b, 109–66; Briant 1996, 79–81, 406, 409–10.

I am indebted to I. Gagoshidze, who pointed out to me an interesting parallel in the later history of Georgia: In the 17th and early 18th centuries A.D. the kingdom of Kartli has for most of the time been considered to be one of the provinces of Safawid Persia, though it had a particular status. After Shah Abbas I (1587–1629) had driven out the Turks, many thousands of the Christian population were deported to distant regions of Iran. A few years later there was a period of respite under the viceroys of the house of Mukhran, a line of Bagratid rulers, who governed at Tbilisi under the aegis of the shahs from 1658 until 1723. At this time of Persian dominance the Kartlian kings were obliged to participate in military operations of the Persians (sic!), and every three years – later every seven years – they had to send a gift to the Shah personally: seven captive young women and seven men, wine, horses and hawks. Officially, the kingdom of Kartli did not pay (regular) tribute to Safawid Persia, and the gifts from Kartli were not counted into the state budget, for they went straight into the Shah’s treasury. Vice versa the Kartlian kings received presents from the Shah, too (cf. the Achaemenid golden bracelets and precious dishes in Vani!), and they even had properties in Persia. This was the basis of personal vassalage relationships between the Shah and the kings of Kartli. A special tax was collected in the kingdom of Kartli which was used to pay for captive young people from the Northern Caucasus, i.e. Ossetia and Cherkessia (Egnatashvili 1959, 280; Vakhushhti 1973, 419; Amilkhvari 1939; Gabashvili 1958, 242–250,

375 [*non vidi*]; Kutelia 1979, 6; Lang 1957, 21–23).

NOTE 15

Kipiani 1993, 72 pl. 5.1–2; Furtwängler 1995, 177, 188–94.

NOTE 16

Smirnov 1909, pl. 3.13; Smirnov 1934, pl. 8.41; Rehm 1993, 105–07 pl. 17.1–2; Miron & Orthmann 1995, figs. 1, 123, 148–149, 166; Lordkipanidze 1995, 379 colour pl. V1–2, 4; Gagoshidze 1996, 129; Gagoshidze 1997, 134–35.

NOTE 17

Smirnov 1934, pls. 3.26; 4.47, 51; Lordkipanidze 1991, pls. 52.3–4; 53.1–5, 7, 9–11; 54.1–2; Tsetskhladze 1991, 125 fig. 65; Rehm 1993, 107 pl. 17.4–5; Miron & Orthmann 1995, figs. 162, 167; Lordkipanidze 1995, 372–73, 379 colour pls. V3; VI1–2; Gagoshidze 1997, 134–36 figs. 23, 24.3–6; Gamkrelidze 1998, figs. 1–2; Knauß 1999b, pl. 20a figs. 81–82; Knauß 2000a, 170–171 fig. 8.

NOTE 18

Furtwängler 1995, 186–87.

NOTE 19

Furtwängler 1995, 180–83; Furtwängler & Knauß 1996, 365–67; Furtwängler & Knauß 1997, 354.

NOTE 20

Furtwängler 1995, 180.

NOTE 21

Although this solution is rather unsatisfactory, it is in accordance with the archaeological evidence. In 1996 an investigation trench was dug to confirm the western limit of the building (Furtwängler & Knauß 1997, 353–54). It clearly showed that there had been no structures, belonging to this building, west of M 6.

NOTE 22

Similar stepped walls can be observed in several rooms of the Achaemenid building at Sari Tepe in Azerbaijan (Narimanov 1960, fig. 1; Knauß 1999a, fig. 9: here: Fig. 7).

NOTE 23

Nevertheless, it must be conceded that the Achaemenid residence at Abū Qubūr proves that this was not necessarily the case (Nashef 1990, 264–65 fig. 5; Gasche et al. 1990, pl. 1 plan 2).

NOTE 24

Furtwängler 1995, 188–94 figs. 10.1–3; 11.1–2 (Knauß).

NOTE 25

Furtwängler & Knauß 1996, 374. For this type of column base, see Wesenberg 1971, 104–11 figs. 214–229.

NOTE 26

Wesenberg 1971, 141–45 figs. 283–306; Furtwängler 1995, 189–94 (Knauß).

NOTE 27

For such a portico in front of a hypostyle hall cf. e.g. the Persian building in the Southern Palace of Babylon, Koldewey 1931, 120–125 pl. 26–28. See also Kuhrt in this volume, Fig. 4.

NOTE 28

See notes 31–34, below.

NOTE 29

Cf. Ghirshman 1964, figs. 184, 277; Stronach 1978, figs. 56–60, 68d–e pls. 95–98 (I am well aware of the uncertain function of these tower-like buildings in Pasargadae and Naqsh-i Rustam); Stronach 1985, 605–27 figs. 2–4; Pitschikjan 1992, figs. 1a–b; 15; Pitschikjan 1996, 226–33 figs. 1–4, 9.

NOTE 30

For the many different functions a palace could serve, see Nielsen 1994, 11, 18–26. Cf. on Achaemenid military garrisons Tuplin 1987a, 167–245, 198–99; Kleiss 1993, 331–32.

NOTE 31

The houses of Kakhetian peasants in Tqisbolo-gora (level 2), Ciskaraant-Gora (level E–C) and Noname-Gora are still built with pisé; Mansfeld 1996, 371–72 figs. 10–11; Furtwängler & Knauß 1997, 378–83 figs. 21–23; Furtwängler – Knauß – Motzenbäcker 1998, 341–48 fig. 18; Knauß 1999a, 92–97; Furtwängler – Knauß – Motzenbäcker 1999, 265–66 figs. 5, 8–10. Neither their size nor the building-technique can be compared to the great building of level C in Gumbati.

NOTE 32

Lordkipanidze 1991, 87–88, 92 fig. 45; Miron & Orthmann 1995, 116 [Pizchelauri]; Knauß 1999a, 92–93 fig. 8.

NOTE 33

Lordkipanidze 1991, 88; Miron & Orthmann 1995, 198.

NOTE 34

In Ciskaraant-Gora e.g. the houses of the late 8th – 6/5th centuries BC (levels E-C) are all built with rammed earth walls without any kind of foundation. A 4th/3rd century BC house (level B) already had a stone foundation (Furtwängler – Knauß – Motzenbäcker 1998, 340–41, 347–48). Whether this house still had pisé walls could not be observed any more.

NOTE 35

Gagoshidze 1979, pl. 5; Gagoshidze 1983, 1–3 fig. 1; Kleiss 1992, 93–94 fig. 2 (proposes another, rectangular reconstruction of this building); Gagoshidze 1996, 130 fig. 3.

NOTE 36

Ghirshman 1964, fig. 184, 277; Stronach 1978, figs. 56–60, 68d–e pls. 95–98.

NOTE 37

For the column bases from these sites, see Narimanov 1960, 163 fig. 2; Kipiani 1993, 4–29, 72–73 pls. 2–4; Zardarian & Akopian 1994, 187 fig. 6; Furtwängler & Knauß 1996, 374, 376 fig. 9; Knauß 1999a, figs. 11–12.

NOTE 38

Narimanov 1960, 162–64 fig. 1; Chalilov 1985, 44 pl. 16,2; Kipiani 1993, pl. 1; Furtwängler 1995, 183–84; Knauß 1999a, 95–96 fig. 9.

NOTE 39

Zardarian & Akopian 1994, 185–87; Ter-Martirossov 1996, 187; Ter-Martirossov 1994, 71–73. From the rather meagre information provided by these publications, it is impossible to decide whether the different kinds of column bases all come from the earliest building of the 5th–4th centuries BC. It seems that only one of the bell-shaped column bases of the first building has been found *in situ*.

NOTE 40

Narimanov 1960, fig. 3; Furtwängler 1995, 202 figs. 15,6; 18; Knauß 1999a, 95 fig. 10. For ceramic comparisons as well as for the metal prototypes of such *phialai*, see Luschey 1939, figs. 22, 23, 29a; Schmidt 1957, pls. 68, 72, 89; Stronach 1978, 242–43; Moorey 1980, 37 figs. 100, 106; Abka’i-Khavari 1988, T1C1, F1C1; Dusinberre 1999, 76–78 figs. 4, 7.

NOTE 41

Kleiss 1980; Kleiss 1989; Nielsen 1994, 39–51.

NOTE 42

Kleiss 1980, 202, 209.

NOTE 43

Schmidt 1953, 222–24 figs. 90, 92.

NOTE 44

Nielsen 1994, 51. The Achaemenid residence at Abū Qubūr in some respects may be a close parallel, i.e. regarding the size and (perhaps) its architectural layout (Nashef 1990, 264–65 fig. 5; Gasche et al. 1990, 18–24 pl. 1 plan 2 [D.A. Warburton]). The „pavillon royal“ in Tepe Suruvan (Ghirshman 1944–45, 175; Atarashi & Horiuchi 1963, 1–15 pls. 10–11; Ghirshman 1964, 224) and the pavilion in Borazjan (Sarfaraz 1971, 22–25; Safaraz 1973, 188–89) are comparable in size, and in Tepe Suruvan even similar bases have been found (Atarashi & Horiuchi 1963, pls. 3e, 4a, 13, 23c, 24–26); but the layout of these buildings is rather different.

NOTE 45

Hanfmann 1975, 17; Nielsen 1994, 63.

NOTE 46

Tufnell 1953, pl. 119; Nielsen 1994, 51 figs. 25–26. The plan of the Achaemenid residence at Abū Qubūr „is that of a large multi-court Babylonian Court House with „salles à quatre pilastres““ (Gasche et al. 1990, 20 [D.A. Warburton]). In Tell Sheikh Hassan on the banks of the Euphrates a Neo-Assyrian/Neo-Babylonian palace („bit hilani“) was still in function in the Achaemenid period, and the pottery as well as the other small finds show hardly any Persian influence, Boese 1995, 206 and *passim*, 218 fig. 4, pp. 232, 235–37, 246–47 figs. 3–4, p. 253.

NOTE 47

Gjerstad et al. 1937, fig. 119 plans XXVI and XXVII; Nielsen 1994, 54–61 figs. 28–31.

NOTE 48

The satrap’s palace in Sidon has not been excavated, but at least the famous bull protome capital (Ghirshman 1964, fig. 448) has Achaemenid ancestors, although this capital shows strong Greek influence. For Pergamon, see Höpfner 1996, 42 fig. 2; Höpfner 1997, 24 fig. 2, has recently suggested that the tower-like building on top of the citadel once was the residence of the Gongylid dynasty, but from the archaeological evidence neither the date nor the function of this construction can be deduced; cf. Radt 1988, 90–91; Nielsen 1994, n. 212.

In Larisa on the Hermos we find a palace, which obviously shows great resemblances with early Achaemenid palaces (Boehlau & Schefold 1940, fig. 4 pl. 30; Lauter 1975, 33–57 figs. 4–8, 11–12). Nylander 1970, 117 suggested that the palace in Larisa might have been inspired by the palace of Croesus in Sardis. The satrap’s palaces in Kelainai (Hanfmann 1975, 16–17), Daskyleion (Akurgal 1956, 20–24; CAH IV2, 219–21 [M. Mellink]; Bakir 1992, 23–24; Bakir 1995, 274–78) and Sardis (Hanfmann 1975, 8, 17; Hanfmann 1977, 145–54 figs. 3–4 pl. 41.1–2; CAH IV2, 217–219 [M. Mellink]; Ratté 1989, 18–22, 218–37 figs. 117–127, 129–141; Greenewalt 1995, 131), well known from the written sources (Kelainai: Xen. *An.1.2.7–9*; Daskyleion: Xen. *Hell. 4.1.15–16* [861C, D]; Sardis: Xen. *Oec. 4.20–24*; Arist. *An. Post. 94a, b*; Vitr. 2.8.10; Plut. *De Herodoti malignitate 24*), are still almost unknown. In Achaemenid Sardis the material culture seems to be mainly Anatolian and Greek; cf. Greenewalt 1995, 132–35. The construction at Meydancikkale to a great extent seems to follow local architectural traditions, but some architectural details as well as the reliefs undoubtedly copy Achaemenid models, Davesne & Laroche-Traunecker 1998, 147–48 figs. 25–26, p. 202 fig. 22b, p. 210 fig. 33, pp. 301–06 figs. 1–15. For more Achaemenid governors’ palaces, see Nielsen 1994, 51–72.

NOTE 49

Xen. *Cyr. 8.6.10–14*. Cf. Briant 1996, 357–59.

NOTE 50

Weisskopf 1982; Petit 1990; Koch 1990; Jacobs 1994.

NOTE 51

Xen. *An. 4.5.9–10*.

NOTE 52

Of course, at least during his way through Armenia, Xenophon did not command such a great number of soldiers any more, see Stronk 1995, 19–23.

NOTE 53

Briant 1995, X; Briant 1996, 525.

NOTE 54

Narimanov 1960, 162–164; Kipiani 1993, 72; Akopian & Zardarian 1994, 185; Furtwängler 1995, 193 (Knauß); Furtwängler & Knauß 1996, 376–77; Knauß 2000b.

NOTE 55

E. g. see Furtwängler 1995, fig. 10.2.

NOTE 56

For possible models from Neandreia and Larisa see Wesenberg 1971, 144–45 figs. 275–77.

NOTE 57

Wesenberg 1971, 142, 143–45.

NOTE 58

De Mecquenem 1947, 36 fig. 16.10; Wesenberg 1971, fig. 223.10; Knauß 1999a, fig. 14.

NOTE 59

From Failaka (Jeppesen 1989, figs. 28, 34, 40, 42–43) and from Sarnath and Karli in India (Ghirshman 1964, fig. 458; Wheeler 1966, 120–21 figs. 132–133) we know Post-Achaemenid bell-shaped bases and capitals. According to Megasthenes' description (*FGH* 715), the palace of Chandragupta Maurya in Pataliputra derived from Persian models (Wheeler 1974, 252–53; Sherwin-White & Kuhrt 1993, 91–98). For the find-spots of bases of so-called Persepolitan type see Furtwängler 1995, 192–93 (Knauß); Furtwängler & Knauß 1996, 374–78 fig. 10.

NOTE 60

In her investigation of the local pottery from Gumbati N. Ludwig (Die eisenzeitliche Keramik Gumbatis. Halle 1999, unpublished M.A. thesis) was able to confirm the preliminary results of the excavators: Furtwängler 1995, 180–85; Furtwängler & Knauß 1996, 369–70; cf. Narimanischwili 1991.

NOTE 61

Furtwängler & Knauß 1996, 365–69 fig. 7; Knauß 1999a, 105–06 fig. 16.

NOTE 62

See now Briant 1997, 25–26; Jacobs 2000. In the light of Herodotus' (3.97) statement that the Persian Empire reached as far as the Caucasus it is up to those who think of a rather superficial Persian influence to prove that Herodotus was wrong, not vice versa.

NOTE 63

A critical look at the ancient sources shows that the unification of eastern Georgian tribes in a state, which later in Roman sources has been called Iberia, hardly took place before the second century BC; Meissner 2000, 203 (with discussion of the earlier literature). Recent excavations in Kakheti (Furtwängler & Knauß 1997, 384; Furtwängler – Knauß – Motzenbäcker 1998, 360; Furtwängler – Knauß – Motzenbäcker 1999, 233, 238, 257, 259, 262–63, 268) have shown that in the late 8th or early 7th century BC several settlements have been destroyed by mounted nomads. Since the material culture of those sites gives no indication of significant changes before at least the 4th or 3rd century BC, it is hard to imagine that the local tribes could have threatened the Persian army.

NOTE 64

CAH IV2, 67 [T.C. Young, Jr.], 235–43 esp. 240–41 [A. Fol & N.G.L. Hammond]; Briant 1996, 154–56; Knauß 1999a, 109; Jacobs 2000. Already Cyrus the Great may have reached this region during his fatal campaign against the Scythians in 530/29 BC, but it is more likely that he marched along the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea.

NOTE 65

Hdt. 3.97.

NOTE 66

Strabo 11.2.19–11.3.2.

NOTE 67

Several finds of architectural remains may indicate that there have been at least two more Achaemenid administrative centers in Georgia, at Zikhiagora (eastern Colchis) and Sairkhe (western Iberia); Kipiani 1986, 62–65 pls. 2–13; Shefton 1993, 179, 195–196 figs. 1–2; Furtwängler 1995, 206–207; Gagoshidze & Kipiani 1997, 8–11, 41; Gagošišvili & Kipiani 2000).

NOTE 68

Against Jacobs 1994b, 556, who stated: "Für eine nennenswerte Verbreitung der Achämenidenkunst außerhalb der Königsresidenzen Persepolis, Pasargadae, Susa, Babylon und – vielleicht – Ekbatana spricht ... wenig". E.g. the reliefs in Meydancikkale (Davesne & Laroche-Traunecker 1998, 301–06 figs. 1–15) constitute further evidence for the distribution of Achaemenid royal art.

Bibliography

Abbreviations

AA *Archäologischer Anzeiger*
AJA *American Journal of Archaeology*
AMI *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran und Turan*
CAH *Cambridge Ancient History*
DNP *Der Neue Pauly*
ESA *Eurasia Septentrionalis Antiqua*
EurAnt *Eurasia Antiqua*
JbRGZM *Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums Mainz*
SovArch *Sovjetskaja Archeologija*
TAVO *Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients*
ZPE *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*

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Urartian and Early Achaemenid Palaces in Armenia

*Aminia
Kanetsyan*

Fig 1. Plan of the citadel in Erebouni at the time of the king Argishti I.

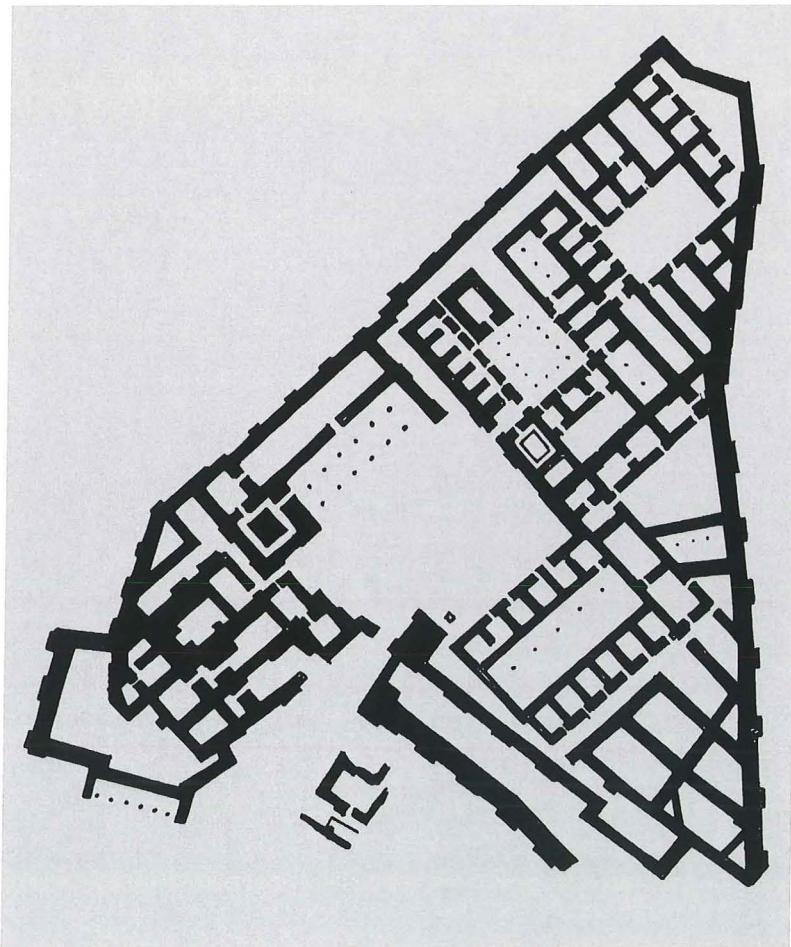
Since the 9th century BC, because of the wars of conquest, the vast state of Urartu had spread to the East region of the lake Van. By the 8th century BC, this state already had a developed architecture of its own with an advanced building technology, as well as a great material culture. The traditions of the native, enslaved nations, along with the influence of Assyrian and Median cultures, definitely facilitated this development. However, having assimilated these various cultures, architectural concepts proper for Urartu were developed.

In the 6th century BC, this vast Anatolian state was broken up as a result of hectic events in this region, and Armenia was formed on most of Urartu's territory. In the middle of the 6th century BC, after a stubborn resistance, Armenia entered the 13th and 18th satrapies of newly formed, mighty Achaemenid Empire.

In the Achaemenid period, new cities and settlements were created in Armenia. At the same time, old administrative and economical centres, as well as a number of fortresses and settlements situated in the territory of the former Urartu (Erebouni, Argishtichinily–Armavir, Tushpa–Van, Oshakan) continued to function. The following Armenian as well as Achaemenid rulers thus kept the layout scheme of the cities, and the investigations of these localities show that the Achaemenids, while reusing the Urartian administrative centers, did not change the configuration of the fortresses and the palace complexes. An excellent example of this is the citadel of the city of Erebouni, which in the Urartian period was a large military and administrative centre.

The city of Erebouni was founded on the south-eastern outskirts of the present city of Yerevan in 782 BC, in the fifth year of Argishti the First's reign. The hill on which the citadel was situated had a height of 65 m and a surface area of 3 ha. The shape of the hill was very favourable for the construction of a fortress (Fig. 1).

The greater part of the citadel was taken up by a palace complex. From the gate, a wide corridor led to the rectangular (17 x 19 m) peristyle court, which constituted the core of the palace with its official and ceremonial functions. It was connected with the temple of "Susi" and to other



official reception halls. On the right side of the entrance was a rectangular room with a massive pylon in the centre. Around the pylon were remains of stairs, which led to the roof of the tower crowning the pylon. The latter strengthened the façade of the palace from the forecourt. Also premises for secular purposes were connected to the peristyle, among them the large hall with three columns along the longitudinal axis and a mud-bench at the south wall. It was a dwelling-room for a certain group of people. Opposite this columnar hall there were three rooms set in a line and facing the peristyle court in front of the temple of "Susi".

In the eastern part of the palace, there was another large hall with five columns along the longitudinal axis (12 x 40 m) surrounded by rooms on three sides. This hall was evidently intended for official, festive receptions and solemn ceremonies. In the northern part of the palace, at some distance from the peristyle court, household rooms were grouped around the northern internal court. Thus a large

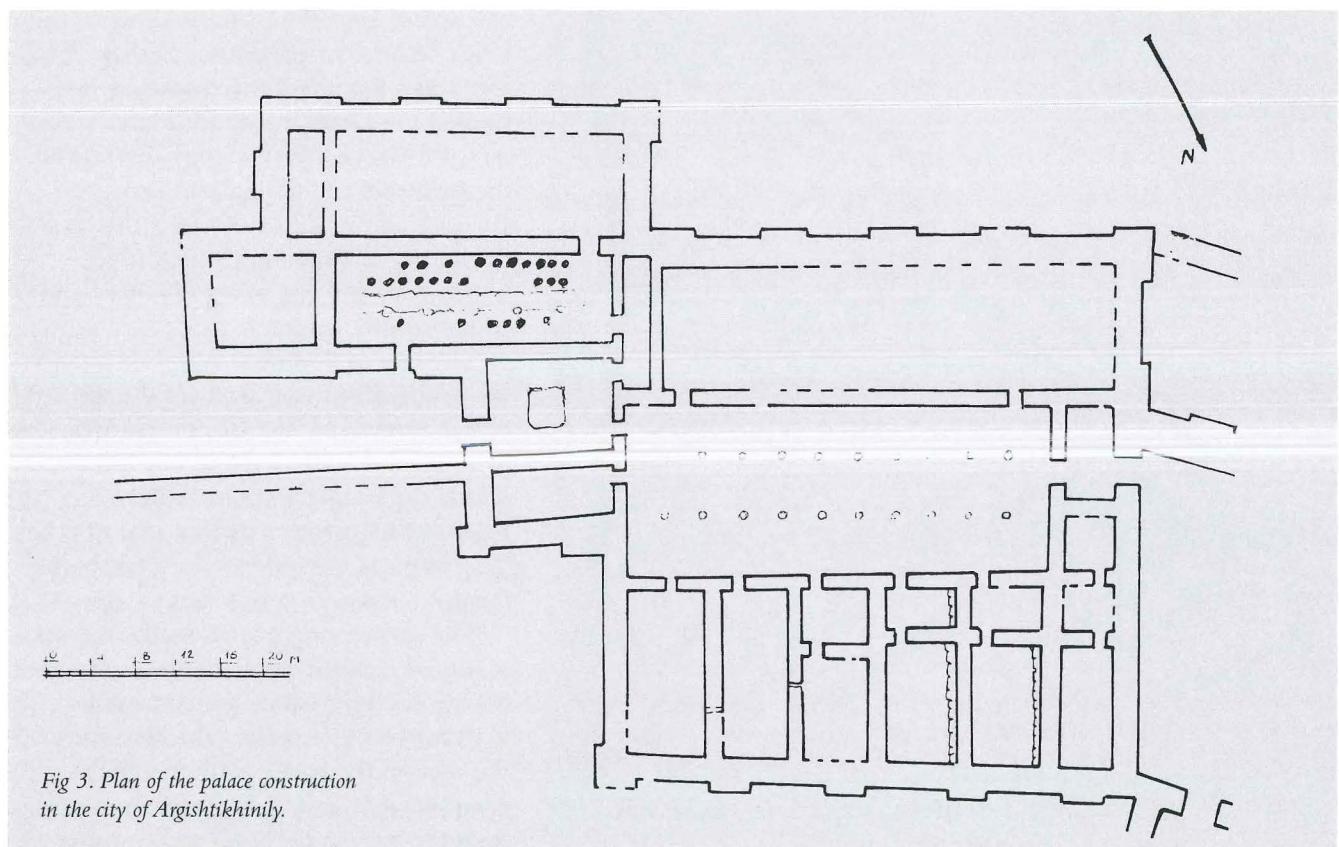
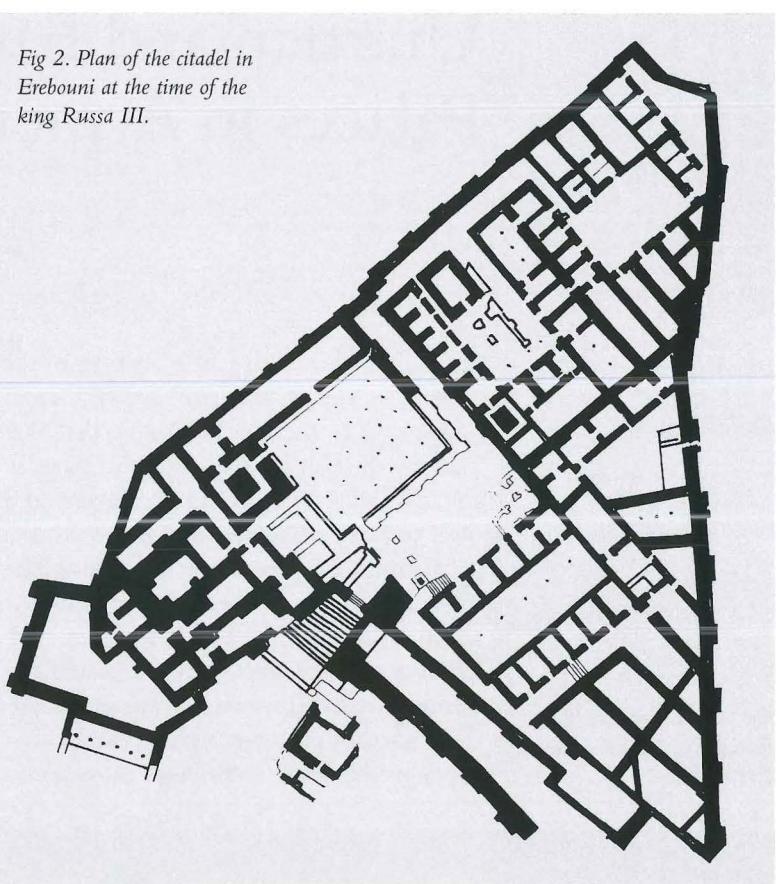


Fig. 3. Plan of the palace construction in the city of Argishtikhinily.

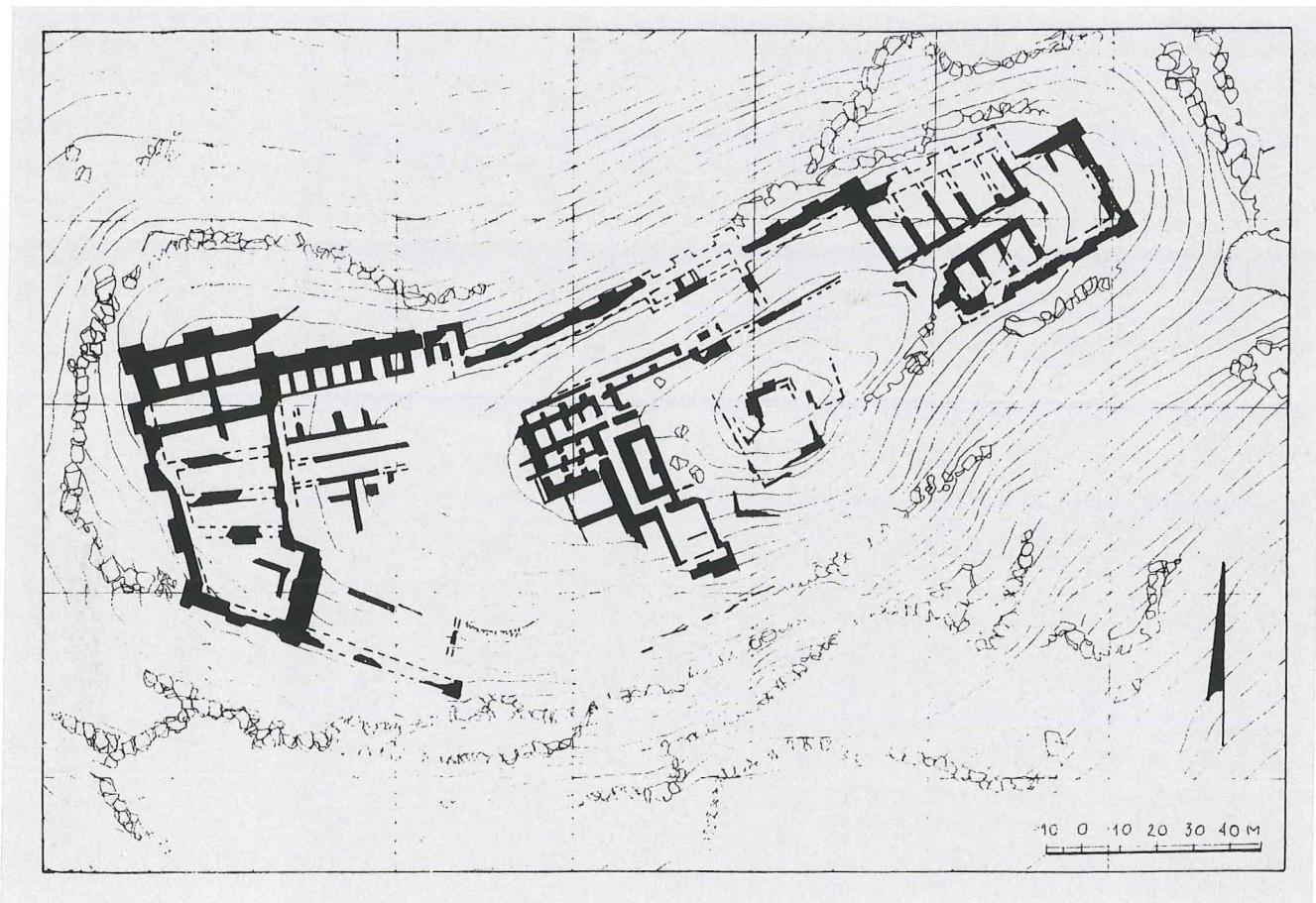


Fig 4. Plan of the eastern citadel in the city of Argishtichinily-Armavir.

number of big jugs ("karas"), broken dishes, etc. were found here.

Near the entrance to the palace, to the west, was the temple of the God "Chaldi". Originally, there was a portico with six columns in two rows in front of this temple. In the southern part of the temple a tower-like construction was discovered, within which there was a massive pylon. The corridor round the pylon included a staircase.

It is interesting to note that later, this portico was reconstructed and another three rows of columns were added. Thick walls enclosed the space, which now formed a 30-column hall (Fig. 2). Many scholars (B.Piotrovski, K.Oganessian¹, G.Tiratsian², etc.) consider this multi-column hall to be an Achaemenid rebuilding. Columnar halls in the territory of the ancient Armenia were, however, well known already in the Urartian period.

A similar palace layout was revealed in another administrative centre of Urartu, in

the city of Argishtichinily-Armavir, constituting the western citadel.³ Here, the core of the palace complex, unlike the peristyle court in Erebouni, was a roofed 20-column state hall. There were rooms serving many different functions around the hall: official ceremonial, cult, dwelling, and household functions, as well as other constructions (Fig. 3). The 20-column state hall had an oblong rectangular plan (40.70 by 15.20 m) with a total area of 660 square m. There were two rows of ten bases for wooden columns. The distance between the axes of the bases was 3.70 m. On one of the bases there was an inscription: "built by Argishti, the son of Menua", which dates the hall to 781-760 BC.

The city of Argishtichinily-Armavir consisted of two citadels. In the Urartian period the western citadel was secular and the eastern one housed cultic functions (Fig. 4). On this eastern hill, in its western, central part a large building was revealed (Fig. 5). This construction seems to be

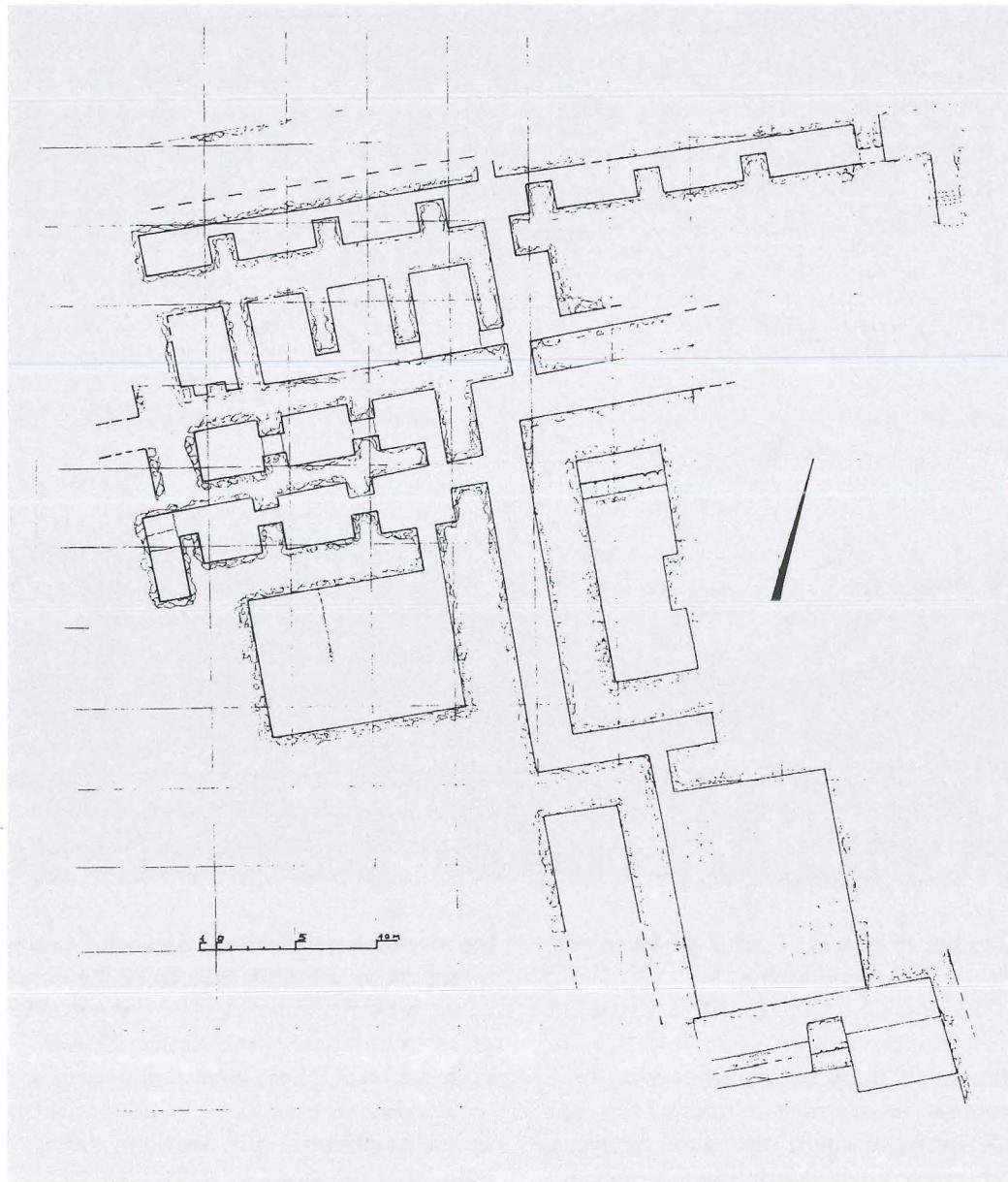


Fig 5. Plan of the palace construction of the eastern citadel, Argishtikhinili – Armavir.

two-storeyed. It consisted of a huge state hall with a number of interconnected rooms located around it. The architectural layout and certain details – decorative windows, a rich plaster embellishment – indicate the significance of this construction. The great size and the unfortunately not totally excavated layout of this structure make us think that functionally this part of the hill had a palace-cult character. Built by the Urartians, this construction continued to function in the Achaemenid period, too, as is proved by the archaeological material. Its new owners might have used it as a secular palace complex.

It is noteworthy that to the west of this complex, between the two fortress walls, an area with several building periods was exposed. It is clear that during the last years of the Urartian reign the necessity of a reorganization of this area arose. The construction of a multi-column hall in the place of large household rooms, which were pulled down to floor level, goes back to this time. During the excavations, ten stone bases for wooden columns were found. The investigations showed that this huge trapezoid space (30/25 x 42/46 m) situated at the entrance of the fortress and in the vicinity of the palace was a state

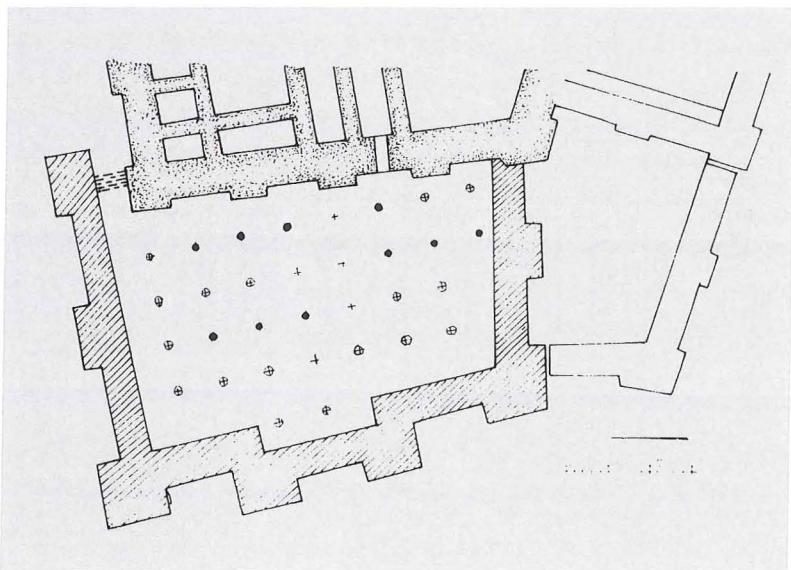


Fig 6. Multi – column hall in the citadel in Argishtikhinily – Armavir.

hall. Everything seems to indicate that the vast hall was intended for official festive receptions and solemn ceremonies (Fig. 6).

By reconstructing the layout of the columns, and by taking into account the distance between the axes of the bases found *in situ*, it could be ascertained that there were 4-5 rows with 7-8 columns in each row. The distance between the base-axes was about 5 m. According to our estimates, the hall had 32 columns. The Urartian type of bases found in this multi-column hall must be regarded as evidence that the columns were already erected in Urartian times, probably in the late Urartian period just before the downfall. Such an interpretation of the building-remains becomes even more likely due to an inscription found here, dating from the reign of the last Urartian king, Rusa III.

The existence in Armavir of a multi-column hall, hitherto unknown in Urartian architecture, make us assume that also the 30-column hall in Erebouni was rebuilt in the last period of Urartu and by the same king, Rusa III (Fig. 2). It should be added that the Urartian style of the hall in Erebouni was also reflected in the way, in which the basalt plinth blocks were used in the northwestern part of this columnar hall. Another building detail should be mentioned, too, namely the mud-bench, found both outside and inside the buildings of Erebouni. Undoubtedly,

this architectural element reached Urartu and later also Iran (Pasargadae, Persepolis) from Mesopotamia. Scholars consider this architectural element to be alien to Persian architecture.

The columnar halls appeared in Achaemenid Iran only in the second half of the 6th century BC, and by this time, this type of column-construction had already been formed in Urartu. Such halls existed in Altin-tepe (3 by 6 columns), and in Argishtichinily, here in the shape of long halls with two rows of ten columns. One may find this kind of halls also in Erebouni and Oshakan. We can thus conclude that multi-column halls like those in Erebouni and Argishtichinily constitute the forerunners of the Persian “*apadana*” which received its canonical form in Persepolis and Pasargadae.

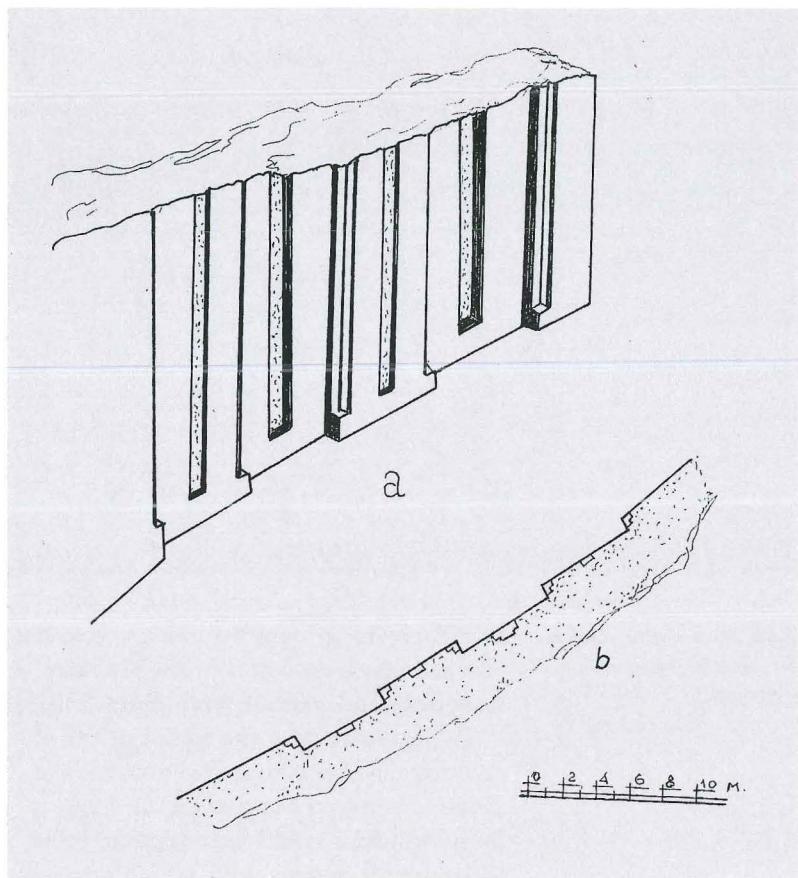
The influence from Urartian architecture on the formation of the Achaemenid architecture may, however, not only be traced in the layout scheme of the palaces but also in their external design and building technique. An excellent example of this influence is the décor on the high smooth surfaces of the fortress- and palace walls.

It should be noted that during the excavations of the ancient capital of Armenia, Artashat, a fortress wall (Fig. 7) was revealed on the north slope of citadel hill at a height of 50-55 m above the plain. According to the archaeological material, this wall dates from the Urartian period,⁴ which is confirmed by this wall's décor design. This fortress wall, which had been excavated for a length of 400 m, is partly preserved up to a height of 6-7 m. The width of the wall is 2.70 m. From the outside, the fortress wall had buttresses, which projected 1 m from the main wall. The pedestal part is built in rubble-stone reinforced by clay mortar, and the higher part is made of mud-brick. The corners of the buttresses were three-stepped in plan with 30 cm deep vertical grooves along the whole height of the buttresses. The walls between the buttresses (1.70 m wide) had in their central part an identical

décor. By relieving the monotonous smoothness of the surface of the wall through vertical grooves, such façade décor promotes the interplay of light and shade. This wall was undoubtedly built in the times of Argishti, the son of Menua (8th century BC), who launched a building programme on a large scale in the conquered areas. Unfortunately, there is as yet no written data to confirm this. The discovery of the Artashat wall confirms once again the high level of fortress building in Urartu. It is interesting that even in the Hellenistic period (400 years later) it was more reasonable to use this wall for military purposes than to erect a new one.

A similar wall design occurs in other places in Urartu, and is also used in the depictions of two- and three-storeyed constructions and tower façades on bronze plates from Toprakkale, Karmir-Blur and Van, confirming the wide usage of this element in the architecture of Urartu (Fig. 8). This ancient Oriental custom to brighten up the walls from the outside with buttresses also found broad acceptance in Achaemenid architecture. In this way were built the walls of the 100-column hall in Persepolis, the walls of the Persepolis treasure house, etc.

In the upper complex of the Armavir citadel, west of the temple construction, a basalt fragment was found.⁵ The study has shown that this fragment belongs to the lower part of a decorative window (Fig. 9). A well-smoothed band frames this niche-like two stepped “blind window”. Its back was only roughly cut, showing that this side of the block had been built into a wall. We meet decorative “blind windows” in Achaemenid architectural monuments as well: the windows in the tower-type constructions (“Kaabazarathrusta” in Naksh-i-Rustam and Sendan-i Sulejman in Pasargadae) were built in dark-coloured stone, which formed a contrast to the light colour of the sandstone blocks.⁶ These “blind windows” are really a niche in a niche. The windows were of course not meant for illumination but only served as an enlivening element in the “blind walls”.



Judging from the reliefs depicting fortresses, towers or palace buildings, one can assume the existence of such windows already in Urartian architecture. Such windows made of dark basalt were also found north of the Urartian temple in Toprakkale,⁷ and in another Urartian temple in Haykaberd in the southeastern part of Van, a monolith decorative basalt window with preserved platband was found.

As was noticed by D. Stronach⁸, this detail – “blind window” – of the Urartian architecture was used not only in stone buildings, but also in brick constructions. It is well known that the sanctuary at Nush-jan-Tepe, located in the very centre of Media, also had a stone pedestal and mud-brick upper wall with “blind windows”. The combination of the light-coloured brick and basalt window was a typical feature of Urartian architecture. The find of the Armavir fragment of a basalt “blind window” in the ruins of a large building erected in mud-brick and located in the western part of the central

Fig 7. Urartian fortress wall in Artashat, a façade, b plan.

Fig 8. Bronze plates with illustrations of buildings and towers (British Museum).

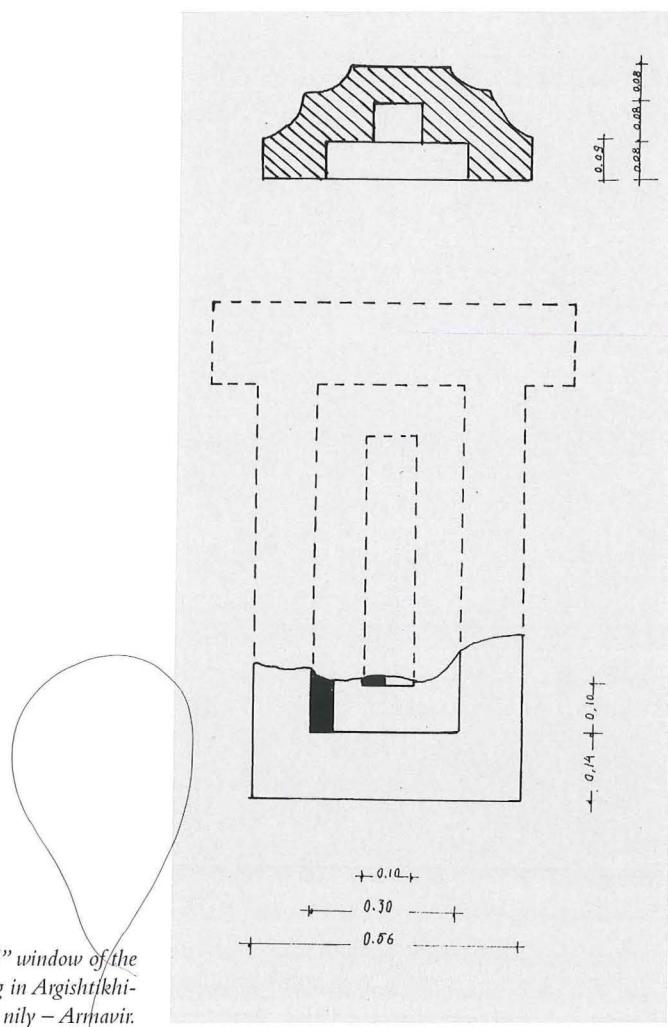
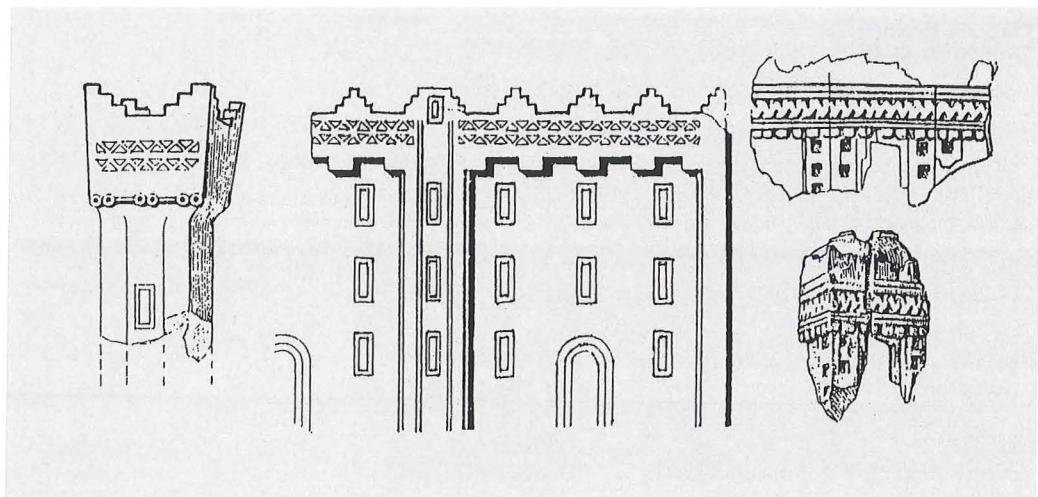


Fig 9. "Blind" window of the palace building in Argishtikhinili – Arriavir.

temple construction proves that this window was related to the part of the palace which continued to exist in the Achaemenid period. Also in central Achaemenid monuments (in Pasargadae, Persepolis, Susa) this Urartian architectural style can be observed.

Thus the architecture of Urartu strongly influenced all the neighbouring areas. The direct successors of Urartian culture were the Armenians, who inhabited the same territory and continued and developed the architecture and building traditions of the Urartians. Also in the "Imperial art" of the Achaemenids, the Urartian impact is obvious. The Achaemenids, as is well known, created their magnificent architecture with the help of skilled masters from conquered neighbouring countries, certainly including the land of the Armenians with its age-old building traditions. Thus, Urartian planning concepts, as well as building-design and – technique, were adopted in Armenian architecture and adapted to the local traditions by the builders of Achaemenid Iran.

Notes

NOTE 1

Oganessian 1961, 75-79

NOTE 2

Tiratsian 1960, 99-115. See also Ter-Mariossos in this volume.

NOTE 3

Ghafadaryan 1987/4, 71.

NOTE 4

Khachatryan 1987, 162.

NOTE 5

Tiratsian 1978, 108

NOTE 6

Schmidt 1953, figs. 4-5.

NOTE 7

Barnett 1954, 5, fig. 1

NOTE 8

Stronach 1969, VII-VIII.

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The Typology of the Columnar Structures of Armenia in the Achaemenid Period

Felix I.
Ter-Martirosov

The architecture of the Achaemenid Empire is known mainly from the palatial buildings of Iran, the central nucleuses of which are large multi-column halls – *apadanas*. Therefore, the discovery of columnar structures of the Achaemenid period in Armenia (Armavir, Erebuni, Drashkanakert, Oshakan), is of great interest. These monuments are diachronic, and consequently it is practical to consider them chronologically.

Fig. 1. Oshakan. Plan of the rectangular hall.

Oshakan: The structure in question is situated in the northern part of the valley of

Ararat on the bank of the river Kasakh. It was excavated by Dr. S. Esayan and Dr. A. Kalantaryan in the middle of the 80s, and the report was published in 1988. The monument consists of two building-complexes of which the palace-complex located below the hill is of particular interest for our present topic. This well-preserved complex is dated to the 7th to 4th centuries BC and thus covers the pre-Achaemenid and Achaemenid period of Armenian culture. The excavations revealed a hall of rectangular form in the eastern part of the complex. The floor was paved with stone slabs along one of the longitudinal walls of the hall, and cylindrical stone bases for wooden columns were placed in the central part, on the clay-rimmed floor along the paving (Fig. 1). The complex of finds from the hall, which includes a hearth, idols and other material, has allowed the excavators to identify it with confidence as a sanctuary.¹ Architectural structures of this form are not known from Achaemenid complexes. On the other hand, buildings with paving flanked by columns are characteristic of Armenian architecture in the Achaemenid (Drashkanakert) and Hellenistic (Shirakavan, Hoghmik) periods. Their continuous significance as cult complexes is most clearly traced in the temple complex of Shirakavan, where in the rooms with paved floors and columns along them altars and cult objects such as idols and statuary images of *phalloi* and *kteis* were found. At the same time, however, paved floors with columns along them are found also in complexes of secular purpose (Shirakavan, Hoghmik).² This allows us to consider such structures as a parameter for architectural buildings of prestige and sig-

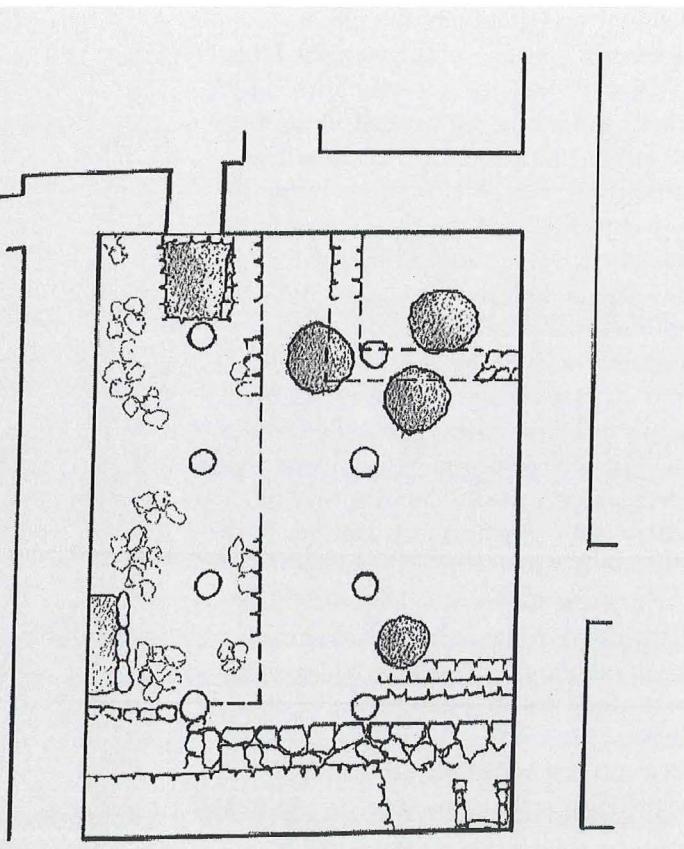




Fig. 2. Armavir. West part of the Urartian Citadel.

nificance in Armenian culture of the Achaemenid and Hellenistic periods. It is possible that the complexes with paved floor and columnar structures were inherent also in the local Urartian culture, but they have not been detected so far.

Armavir: The structure in question is situated on a high hill in the central part of the valley of Ararat, and in antiquity, up to the 3rd century BC, it was washed by the waters of the river Araxes. In the Urartian period, Armavir, a citadel with cult buildings, was included in the city Argishtikhinili. Armavir was described by the ancient Armenian historian Moses of Khorene as the ancient centre of the Armenian state,³ which was confirmed in the course of archaeological research. The excavations of the monument have been conducted since 1964 under the direction of B. Arakelyan (up to 1971), G. Tiratsyan (up to 1991), and I. Karapetyan.⁴ Complexes of the Urartian and Hellenistic periods were revealed. Things are more complicated with the cultural stratum of the Achaemenid period. Despite the recovery of a great deal of objects in the

building including a gold pectoral, which can be determined as items belonging to Achaemenid culture, no Achaemenid cultural stratum was found on the hill.⁵

Further stratigraphic analysis of the cultural strata of the Armavir hill, has, however, shown that constructions of the Achaemenid period do indeed exist and are mainly represented by a hall with 21 columns in the western part of the citadel⁶ (Figs. 2, and Fig. 4 on p. 147). The bases of the columns found here are divided into two groups. The first group includes bases of the Urartian type made of basalt with an untreated block of stone at the bottom. While this block was buried into the ground the cylindrical part of the 40 cm high base remained above the surface. The second type included conically formed bases made from tufa of a cylindrical form similar to those in Oshakan. The attempt to date the construction of this columnar hall to the late Urartian period is contradicted by the general situation in the territory of the city of Argishtikhinili, as well as by the topography of the hill of Armavir. The study of the western, Urartian part of the city – accomplished by A. Martirosyan – has shown that in the last period of the city's existence, its entire population tried to take refuge inside the fortress walls. Even the palace constructions here were changed into small dwelling complexes.⁷ Therefore, the supposition that the only entrance to the eastern citadel of the city was changed into a vast columned hall in this period seems to be incorrect. The attribution of its construction to the Achaemenid period seems more natural. The discovery of tablets with cuneiform inscriptions in the Elamite language here completely refutes the existing theory that life on the hill terminated in the Achaemenid period. Despite differences in the reading of the text of the tablets, philologists do agree in dating them to the end of 6th and the first quarter of the 5th century BC.⁸ Obviously, at the same time the columned hall was built at the entrance of the fortress. The hall with 21 columns with similar proportions as the columnar hall in

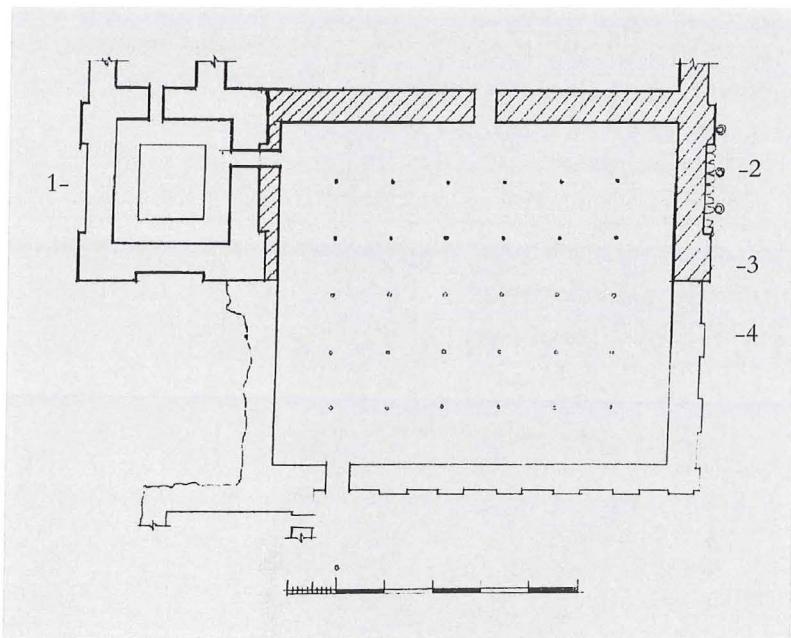


Fig. 3. Erebuni. The Apadana.

1. Urartian
2. Posturartian
3. First Achaemenid Period
4. Second Achaemenid Period.

Chivin-Tepe was added. In the opinion of G.D. Summers this monument constituted the centre of the 13th Armenian satrapy.⁹ The archaeological material of this time allows us to assume that Armavir constituted a large administrative centre and was, possibly, the centre of the Armenian satrapy in the given period.

Erebuni: The structure in question is located in the valley of Ararat, on a large hill called Arin-Berd in the suburbs of Yerevan city. The excavation of this structure began in 1951 under the direction of K. Hovhannisyan. During the excavations of 1958, the discovery of a building inscription of the Urartian king Argishti I (786–764 BC) concerning the establishment of the city of Iripuni – Erebuni (the name of which had been considered by number of scholars to be connected to the name of the city of Yerevan), created an occasion for the realization of large restoration works in 1966–68,¹⁰ which unfortunately have caused a significant loss to the monument. In the 1980s the archaeological work on the structure stopped. The material of the excavation has been published in a general way, with special attention being paid to the architecture. In all publications the monument is identified as a fortress-complex belong-

ing to the Urartian town, in which there are three buildings of the later Achaemenid period.

In 1998–99, however, the author conducted archaeological excavations on a small scale at the centre and in the environments of the monument. These investigations made it possible to identify a more precise stratigraphy, to reveal fortification constructions of the Achaemenid period preserved up to 2 metres in height, to trace an Achaemenid cultural stratum, which in a number of places had a thickness of more than one metre, and to identify a territory of about 3 hectares untouched by the previous excavations, where architectural complexes, including fortifications of the Urartian and Achaemenid periods, are still preserved. Despite the small scale of the work conducted, its outcome allows us to reconsider the identification of the monument, which now appears to be a fortified Achaemenid centre, built on the site of an Urartian fortress, and also to reconstruct part of its buildings.¹¹

Of special interest was the discovery of an architectural complex with a hall of 30 columns – an *apadana* (Fig. 3, see also Fig. 2 on p. 146). This identification constituted the basis for a valid definition of Erebuni as a centre of the 18th satrapy (G. Tiratsyan).¹² It was supposed that at the place of the apadana stood originally a gallery with 12 columns belonging to the Urartian temple of Khaldi. It was also suggested that in the 5th century, a hall with 18 columns was attached to the gallery, thus creating an apadana.¹³ The exploration conducted in 1999 in the territory adjacent to the apadana has revealed a more complicated situation, however. The Urartian cultural stratum is bedded deeper, and the level of the floor of the Urartian structures is thus 120 cm lower than that of the floor of the gallery of 12 columns. The study of the stratigraphy has given the following picture: the Urartian cultural stratum was covered by a new clay-rammed floor 40 cm above the Urartian floor. Here, the excavations revealed part of a paved floor of stone slabs under

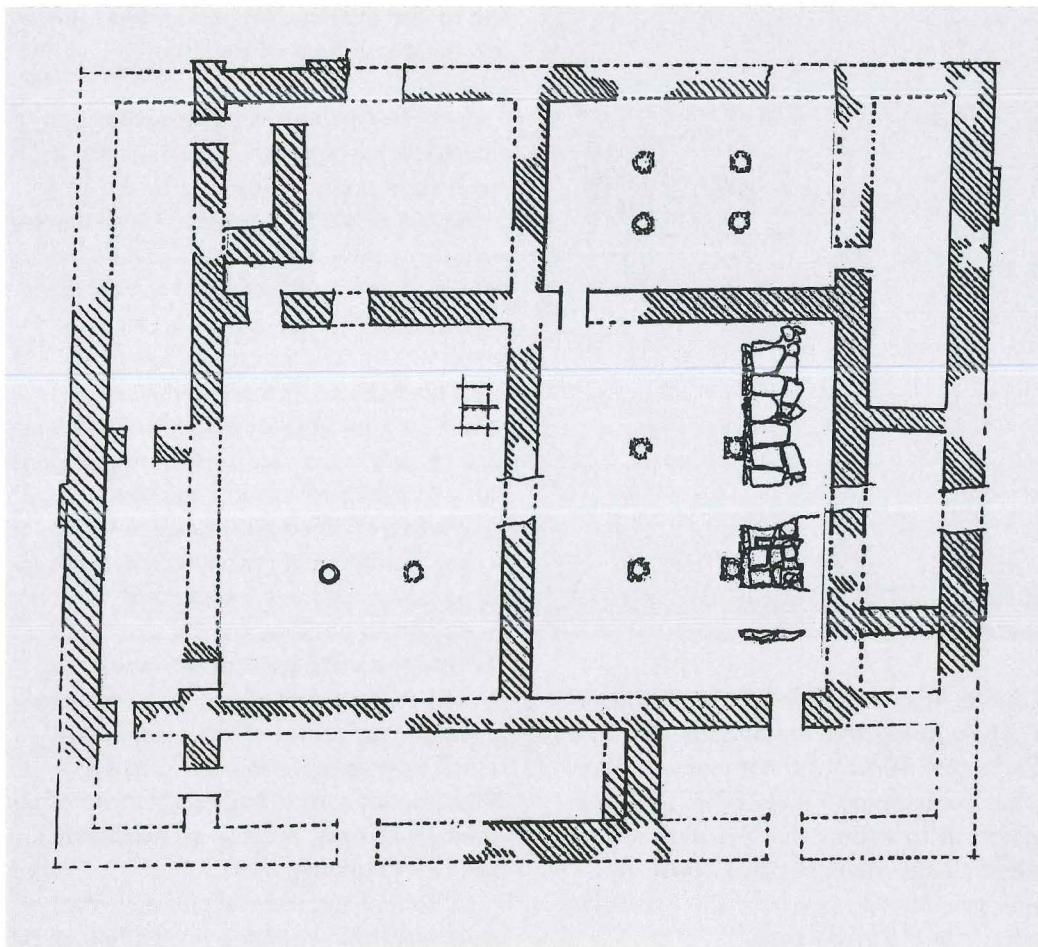


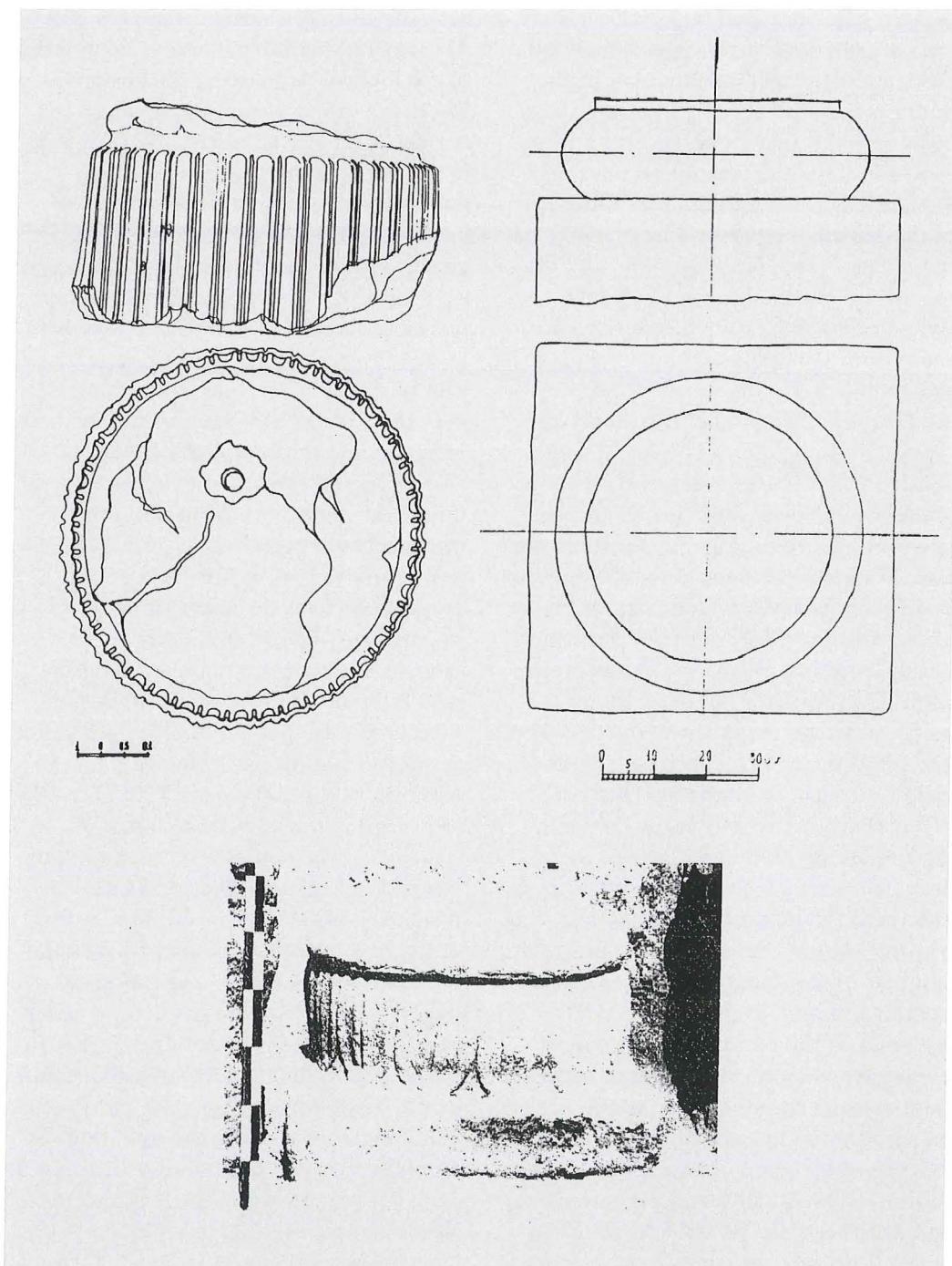
Fig. 4. Draskhanakert (Beniamin). Plan of the Palace-Sanctuary.

the wall of the 12-column-gallery, and also three large column bases of cylindrical form standing along the paved floor were uncovered. The construction of the paved floor is similar to that of Oshakan. Later on, this structure was covered by another clay-rammed floor and the walls of the 12-column-gallery were erected on it. Only later, the walls of the apadana became attached to it. Thus, the site in question first housed the Urartian temple of Khaldi; then, obviously in the 6th century, a construction with paving and columns was erected near the temple. Hereafter the 12-column-gallery was built. It seems that the construction of the 12-column-gallery in Erebuni was also connected to the transformation of the site into the centre of 18th satrapy in the 5th century BC. The construction of the apadana is supposed to be dated to the middle of the 4th century BC.

Draskhanakert: The structure in question is situated in the north-eastern part of the Republic of Armenia in the historical province of Shirak, 10 km to the south of Gyumri. The excavations began in 1989. The site occupies a vast territory of about 80 hectares of fields and several hills. In antiquity, the area was a 'dastakert', that is, in the private possession of the governor of Shirak. On the top of the central hill the excavations have uncovered the foundations of a large palace of rectangular form. The palace was established in 5th century BC. Later on, it was exposed to numerous rebuildings and existed at least until the early Roman period, as the Augustan coins found here testify.

For our topic, the initial layout of the palace is of greatest interest. At this first stage, the palace was almost square in plan, c. 28 x 28 m (Fig. 4). The lower part of the walls was made of stone, on which walls of mud-bricks decorated with flat

Fig. 5a-c. Types of column-bases from Drashanakert (Beniamin).



pilasters rested. The building included two large, square rooms located in the central part, which were surrounded by rectangular rooms. The palace had two entrances from the south. Functionally, the complex combines cult rooms in the eastern part and rooms of secular character to the west. The eastern central room had cult significance, judging from the finds of vessels for burning incense and a protome

with a horned animal's head with the mark of female genitalia on its forehead. At the eastern wall of the room a shed was built, with a crib, which had a carefully made floor paved with stone slabs and a gutter covered with plates. The shed was probably intended for sacred cows, which had not calved. To the north of the sanctuary opened a room with columns, which can be identified as a treasury. The

western part, separated by a wall without passages, obviously had a palace function. Here, a lotus shaped column base with fluting was found (Fig. 5a). The base was made of black tufa-stone, and has a diameter of 70 cm. The greatest number of column bases was found in the other part of the building, however. The majority of them had a *torus*-like shape (Fig. 5b). Of special interest is a base in black tufa, whose ornamentation reminds one of those from Persepolis, although its shape is different. It has a low square plinth, on which rests a large round torus with the surface decorated with boldly cut, large, stylized petals. There is another flat torus above it, with a marked area for the column on its surface (Fig. 5c). Probably the base in question is a product of influences from both Asia Minor and Iran. At the same time, the edges of the petals, which spring outwards from a smooth cylinder, are characteristic of buildings from the reign of Artaxerxes I, that is, the middle of the 5th century BC. This base may thus help us to date the building. During rebuildings carried out in the palace in post-Achaemenid times, some of these bases were rearranged, while others were destroyed. Judging from the number of completely preserved bases and from the amount of fragments, one may suppose that in antiquity there were 8 or 10 columns in the building. The columns themselves were made of wood. Taking into account the placement of the column bases found *in situ* and the character of the later reorganizations, the original lay-out of the building and the disposition of its columns seems to be the following: two torus bases were situated in the sanctuary, either placed along the paved floor or, which is more probable, at the entrance into the sanctuary. In the central part of the treasury stood 4 or 6 bases, while another two bases were situated in the central part of the palace room.¹⁴.

It is necessary to underline that the disposition of bases and their quantity in one room or another does not depend on the size of the room. This is well documented

not only in architectural complexes of the Achaemenid period, but also in complexes of the Hellenistic period in Armenia. Therefore one may suppose that in ancient Armenia the existence of columns in the buildings and specifically their number, may reveal a certain system of prestige, connected to the status of the person inhabiting the building. It is, however, possible that the same phenomenon was characteristic of Achaemenid culture as well. In this connection, the identification of the structures in Chivin-Tepe as the centre of the 13th satrapy, and of those in Erebuni as the centre of the 18th satrapy, and also the availability of 12-column-halls in both of them, is of great interest. The reorganization of the 12-column-construction in Erebuni into an *apadana* confirms this supposition. It is important to remark that so far the *apadana* of Erebuni, is unique, being the only building of this type found outside Iran. One may suppose that this fact is not accidental and may be connected to a certain historical person, namely Orontes, the son of Artaxir, who was the satrap of Armenia at the end of 5th - beginning of 4th century BC and married to the daughter of the Achaemenid king Artaxerxes. As is well known, Orontes had led the revolt of the satraps and had even begun to mint his own gold coins, which was the king's prerogative. Therefore it is possible to assume that the reorganization of the 12-column-gallery into an *apadana* was connected to the royal aspirations of Orontes and used to underline his right to imperial prerogatives. One may also mention that near the Erebuni hills a *rhyton* representing Orontes was found.¹⁵ It is interesting that during the excavations of the *apadana* of Erebuni an altar adjoining the southern wall was found. One may therefore argue that the *apadana* not only symbolized the highest authority, but also served a function connected with the cult of the Achaemenid kings.

As for the status of the *apadana* type of building, which only appeared in Iran with the formation of the Achaemenid

empire, one may assume that such apadanas, connected to the king's cult and symbolizing his imperial status, were identical with those temples – *ayadana*, for the destruction of which Darius I accused Bardia-Gaumata, and for the recovery of which he was proud. It is possible that what Bardia had destroyed, thus underlining his adherence to the ancient, pre-imperial traditions, were the apadana buildings, which by that time were connected not with the cult of the Achaemenid house, but rather with the new form of cult belonging to the imperial authority. This kind of authority is precisely reflected in the titles of king

Darius I: 'great king, king of kings, king of Persia, king of all countries'. No doubt this supposition needs more research, and also the theory of a connection between the columnar structures and the administrative status of the owner seems to open perspectives for further investigations into Achaemenid culture.

Already now we may, however, conclude that the consideration of certain architectural constructions in Armenia is important for the understanding of the character and of the development not only of the culture of Armenia, but also of the Achaemenid empire as a whole.

Notes

NOTE 1

Yesayan & Kalantaryan 1988, 29, 115.

NOTE 2

Ter-Martirossow & Karakhanyan 1977, 32,
depicted on pp. 41-42.

NOTE 3

Moses of Knorene, *History of Armenia* 1,12;
2,8.

NOTE 4

Arakelyan 1969; Tiratsyan 1988; Kara-
ptetyan 1996, 35f, Karaptetyan 1988, 35f.

NOTE 5

Tiratsyan 1988, 22

NOTE 6

Ter-Martirossov 1974, 62f.

NOTE 7

Martirosyan 1974, 34, 135.

NOTE 8

Koch 1993; Vellat 1995, 9.

NOTE 9

Summer 1993, 96.

NOTE 10

Oganesyan 1980

NOTE 11

Ter-Martirossov in print.

NOTE 12

Tiratsyan 1960, N 7-8; Oganesyan 1980,
61-64, 93-96.

NOTE 13

Oganesyan 1980, 61-64, 93-96.

NOTE 14

Ter-Martirossov 1993, 59-72, N1; Ibid.
1999, 32-49, Fig. 33.

NOTE 15

Harmatta 1979, 309; Ter-Martirossov, 1996,
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The Gardens of the Hellenistic Palaces

Inge Nielsen

Gardens have always formed a very important part of royal palaces, and those belonging to the period treated in this volume are no exception, as has long been known from written and iconographical sources. In later years, our knowledge has been considerably augmented by the discovery of preserved gardens, made possible by improved excavation techniques and increasing use of scientific disciplines such as agronomy and botany. Thus gardens have been excavated in several localities, primarily in the area around the Vesuvius, where the possibilities are especially favourable on account of the unique circumstances of the destruction of this area in 79 AD.¹ While the gardens unearthed there were mostly related to late Republican and early Roman private houses and villas, palatial gardens have been traced both in Achaemenid Pasargadae, in Seleucid Jebel Khalid, and in Herodian Jericho. In none of these cases has it unfortunately been possible to ascertain which plants and trees they contained.²

In general, for such gardens to be present in a palace a certain abundance of water was necessary, the amount varying according to the kind of garden concerned. Thus whenever possible, the garden should be situated near a water source, whether a river or a lake. If this was not possible, aqueducts could solve the problem of water supply. To distribute the water the gardens were furnished with water channels, basins and pools of various kinds. To limit the gardens from the land, they were always surrounded by walls or other limitations, sometimes with monumentalized portals. For recreational purposes, they could be furnished with pavilions and *stibadia/triclinia* for dining and

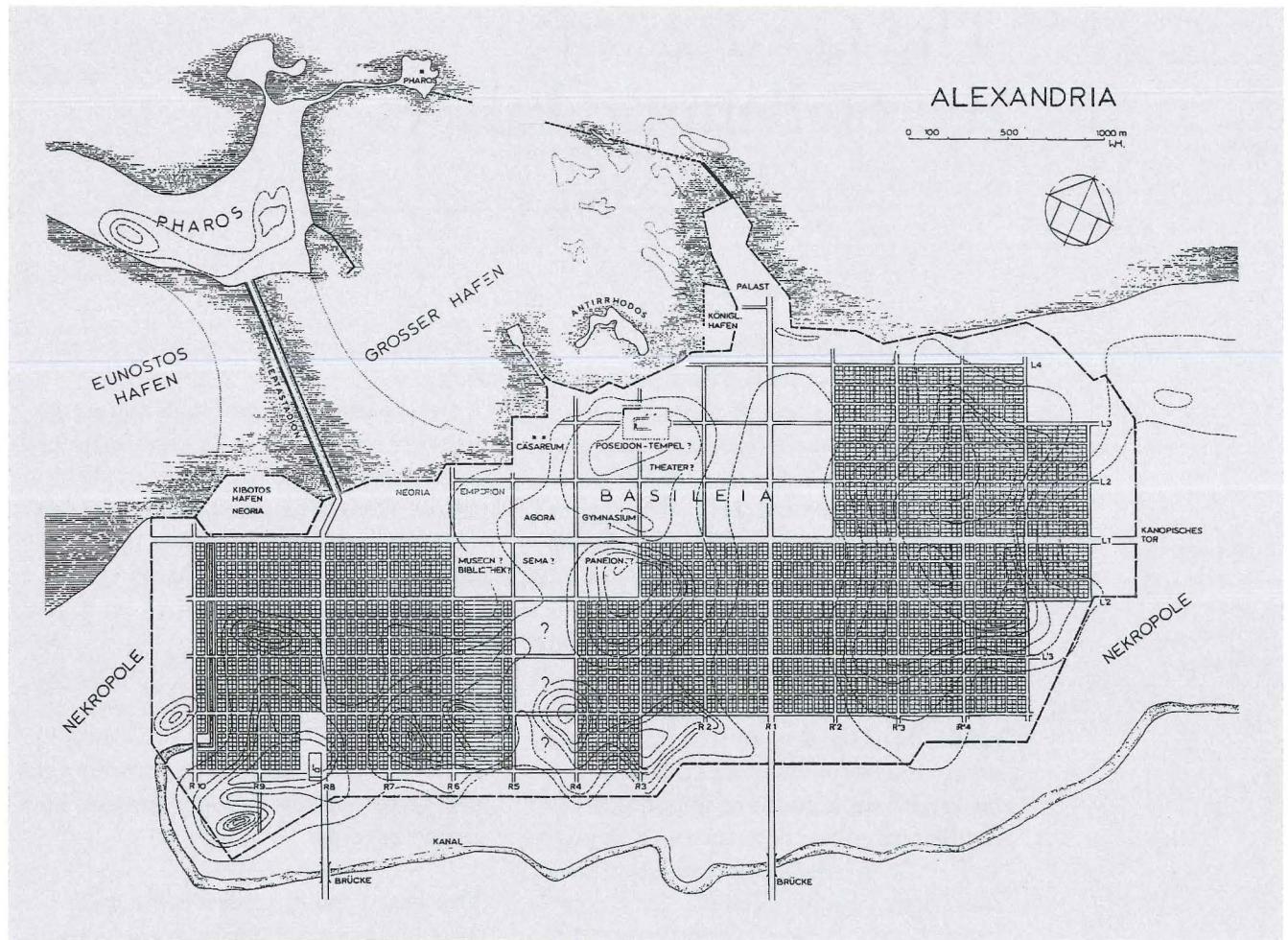
towers for enjoying the view of the garden.

In this article, the task will be first to investigate which types of garden the Hellenistic kings chose to include in their palaces. Then these types will be used to elucidate partly which models the kings preferred to draw on, and partly which heritage they eventually passed on to their successors.³

Typology

In the Hellenistic palaces, there were basically three different types of gardens, with various subtypes:⁴

The first type of garden is the great fenced but expanded park, placed around the palace. If the palace in question consisted of several buildings and was what one might call a palace complex (cf. Nielsen 1999), these various structures were all spread in this park, which in antiquity could be designated *paradeisos*, of Persian origin, or *alsos*, a Greek word.⁵ This type of garden belonged exclusively to the royal palaces and is not normally present in governor's palaces. It was filled with trees and bushes of various kinds, some of which might be utilitarian or semi-utilitarian in character, and crossed by bordered paths. Besides rivers and lakes, there were often great pools, which could sometimes be used for swimming. These parks were almost exclusively recreational and intended for promenades, private dining, etc.⁶ They may, however, also sometimes have been used officially, for great dinner parties, for example, or for receptions so big, that there was no place for them in the palace itself.⁷



A subtype is constituted by the huge parks belonging to the king and used for hunting, although they were not always connected to the palace. These were also sometimes designated *paradeisoi* (cf. n. 5).

The second type of garden is closely related to the first one, and in fact often took up a part of it. It was, however, smaller, although still copious, and was of a regular form, mostly rectangular, and surrounded by a wall, and sometimes also with porticoes, which, however, seldom included rooms. This type of garden was as a rule not bound architecturally to the main palace. In it grew bushes and trees of various kinds, among them plane trees and utilitarian trees, planted regularly. This type of garden belonged exclusively to royal palaces, and especially to those that took the form of palace complexes. It could be designated *kepos* or *alsos*, but also, interest-

ingly enough, be called *gymnasion* or *palaestra*, thus taking its name from the garden-filled Greek gymnasium. Best known are the three old gymnasiums of Athens, Academia, Lykeion, and Kynosarges, which were probably all founded in the 6th century BC and placed near local *heraoa*. Plane trees were typical of these gardens, which from the 4th century BC were used also by philosophers for teaching.⁸ In the palaces, on the other hand, this type of garden was used for promenades, private dining, recreation, and as a target for views from the parts of the palace facing it, rather than for sports and philosophical discussion. Neither were they normally used for official purposes.

A subtype of this kind of garden is the specialized garden such as botanical and zoological gardens and aviaries sometimes mentioned in connection with the royal palaces. This kind of garden had a special

Fig. 1. Alexandria. Plan of the city with suggested size of the basileia and with the palaces and other buildings mentioned in the written sources tentatively indicated. (After Nielsen 1999, fig. 69).

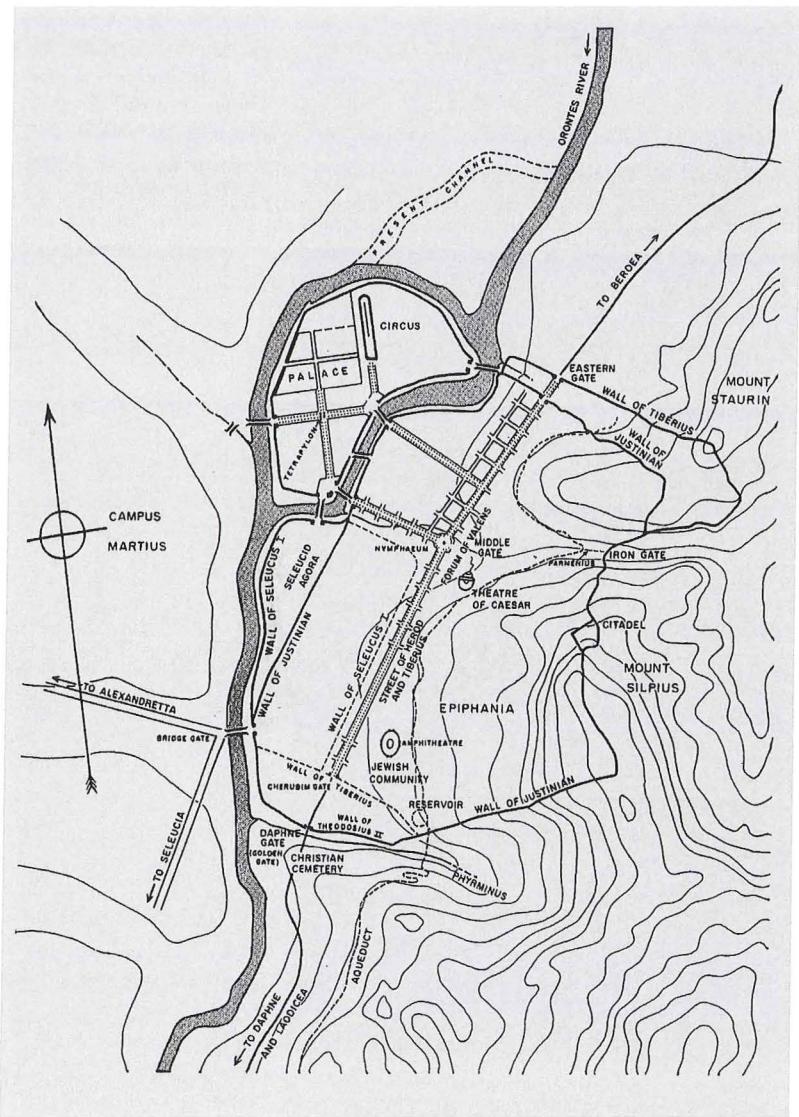


Fig. 2. Antioch. Plan of the palace of the Seleucids placed on an island in the Orontes River, with the hippodrome. The orthogonal lay out may be deduced from the written sources. (After Nielsen 1999, fig. 58).

significance for the kings, since the sheer amount of foreign and exotic plants and animals collected in them constituted a microcosm of the huge empire reigned by their owner.

The third type of garden is of a radically different kind. This garden was placed within the palace itself, in a courtyard, and was more often than not surrounded by a peristyle. It had invariably rooms facing it on several or all sides, and thus constituted primarily a target for views from these rooms, most of them used for dining.⁹ These internal gardens were normally filled with flowerbeds and bushes, although also trees of a moderate size could grow there, and included orna-

mental basins and pools. They, too, could sometimes be used for limited promenades. This kind of garden could be called *kepos*, and could be present in royal, governors' and even private palaces. They were especially typical of the compact palaces (cf. Nielsen 1999), where they took up the main peristyle court, but they could also form part of some of the separate buildings in the palace complexes.

A: The First Garden Type

The example par excellence of the first type of garden, or rather park, is the great *basileia* of Alexandria (Fig. 1). This palace has not been preserved, but we are all the same relatively well informed about its appearance from ancient authors, first and foremost Strabo and Polybius. We hear that various official and private buildings were spread in a huge park, called *alsos*. These included pavilions, a *palaestra*, the *maiandros*, which was a water channel or pool of some kind, the *sema* with the tomb of Alexander and the Ptolemies, the *museion* with the famous library, and various temples and sanctuaries. This park was apparently laid out orthogonally with wide promenades connecting the various parts.¹⁰

Another example, although less well known, is the royal palace of the Seleucids in Antioch, which was situated on an island in the river Orontes.¹¹ (Fig. 2). Again, we get an impression, albeit from much later sources, of a regularly laid out huge fenced park with palatial buildings spread in it. Its placement in the middle of the river solved the problem of watering the park efficiently. Further we hear of gardens and parks flanking the road to garden-filled Daphne, and Syria was also later famous for its gardens and gardeners.¹²

It may be from this palace that the palace of Ai Khanoum in far away Afghanistan was inspired, since it was first built as a Seleucid Governor's palace, around 300 BC, before it was transformed into a royal palace by an independent local dynasty in the middle of the 2nd century BC¹³ (Fig. 3). Also this palace was a palace

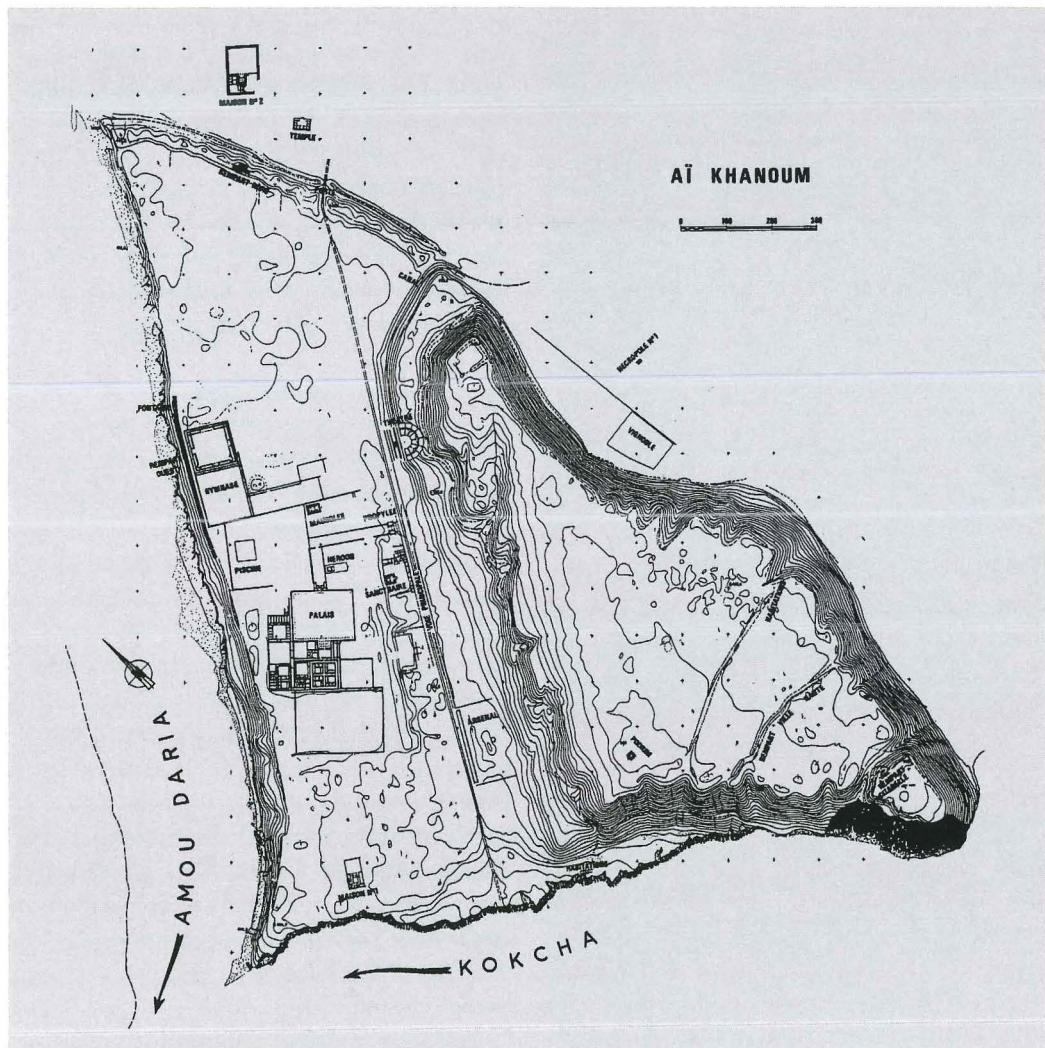


Fig. 3. Ai Khanoum. Plan of the city with the palace. The area of the garden is situated between the palace and the river, with "gymnasion" and piscina placed within. (After Nielsen 1999, fig. 66).

complex, and at least the area west of the main palace, and limited by the river, was undoubtedly laid out as a park. In it was placed a huge swimming pool, as well as a "gymnasion", among other things.

The palace of Tyrus in Transjordania, which belonged to a kind of vassal king, Hyrcan the Tobiad, was probably inspired from the basileia of both Antioch and Alexandria, since it was laid out in a huge fenced park, which formed part of an even huger domain (Fig. 4). Built in the beginning of the 2nd century BC, it consisted of several buildings, according to Josephus, who calls the park a *paradeisos* and the main building, a unique structure surrounded by a lake, *baris*. From this palace there was a marvelous view to the park and the lake.¹⁴

There is a certain affinity to the great

palace complex built by the Jewish Hasmonean dynasty in the late 2nd century BC in nearby Jericho (Fig. 5). This palace was placed in a fenced park in connection with the very prosperous oasis constituting the royal domain.¹⁵ This palace, which was enlarged continuously in its c. 100 years of existence, included a great many swimming-pools surrounded by gardens, and also a fine pavilion.¹⁶ One may imagine that these swimming pools constituted an inspiration from the Egyptian palaces, a theory, which is enforced by the linear combination between pools and pavilions, a typical feature of Egyptian gardens.

In this connection it may also be reasonable to mention the Parthian palaces. Although not Hellenistic in a political sense, these palaces all the same drew on the same models as did the Hellenistic

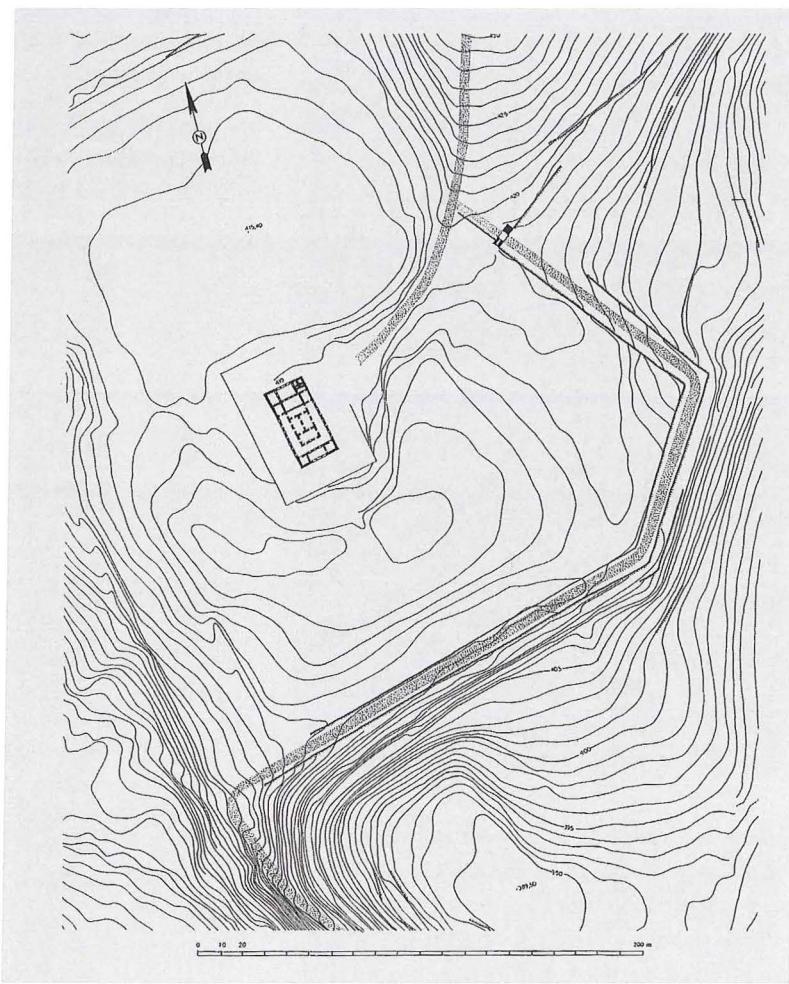


Fig. 4. Tyros. The palace of Hyrcan the Tobiad with the central palace, baris, surrounded by lakes and a huge fenced park surrounded by a moat. (After Nielsen 1999, fig. 73).

palaces, not least the Achaemenid and the Macedonian models. It is, in fact, possible that the main palace of the Parthian kings in Old Nisa, first built by Mithridates I in the 1st half of the 2nd century BC may have included a huge garden or park (see Fig. 1, p. 298). At least the palace, which took the form of a palace complex with many buildings spread over a large fortified hill, may well have flanked a sunken garden surrounding a great pool placed in a depression near the centre of the hill. One may compare with the depression in Susa, south of Dareios' palace, which had tentatively been interpreted in the same way.¹⁷

Finally, one may mention the somewhat later palace belonging to the Iberian dynasty in Dedoplis Gora, Georgia, dating to the 1st century BC-1st century AD, since a park apparently combined the hill with the palace proper with that housing the sanctuary of Dedoplis Mindori (see Fig. 1, p. 259).

The models for this kind of park are not difficult to find. As the word *paradeisos*, often used about these parks, indicates (see n. 5), the immediate model was surely the

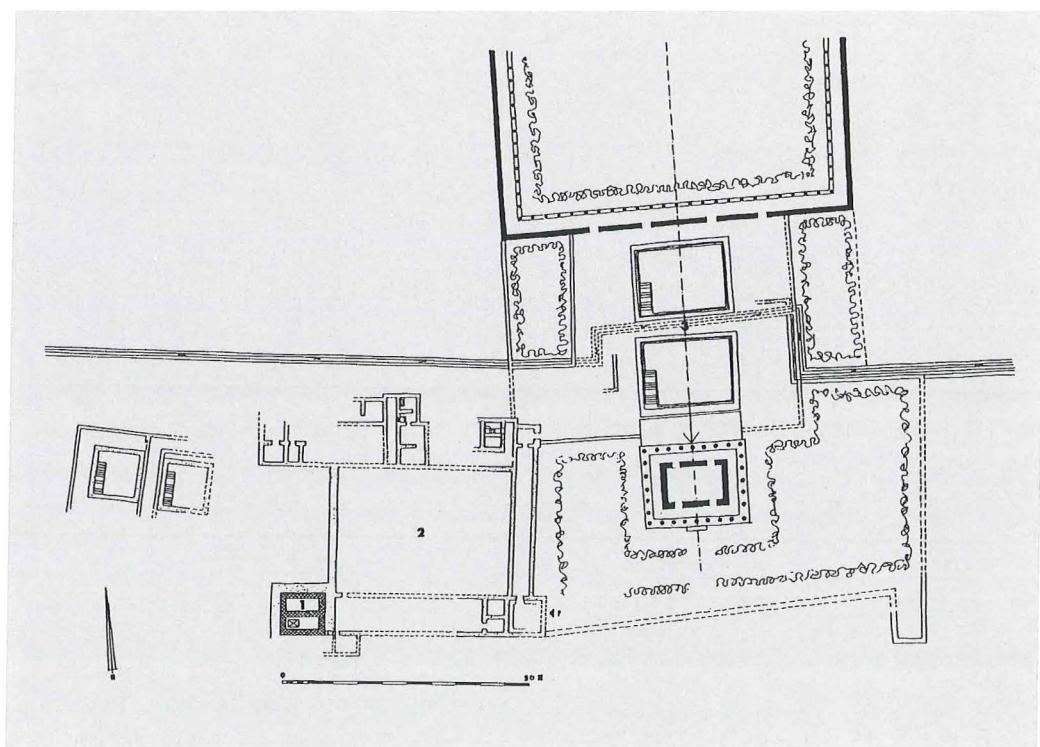


Fig. 5. Jericho. The Hasmonean palace complex with swimming pools surrounded by gardens and with a pavilion in the centre, and, to the north, the fenced garden surrounded by porticoes and a wall. (After Nielsen 1999, fig. 83).

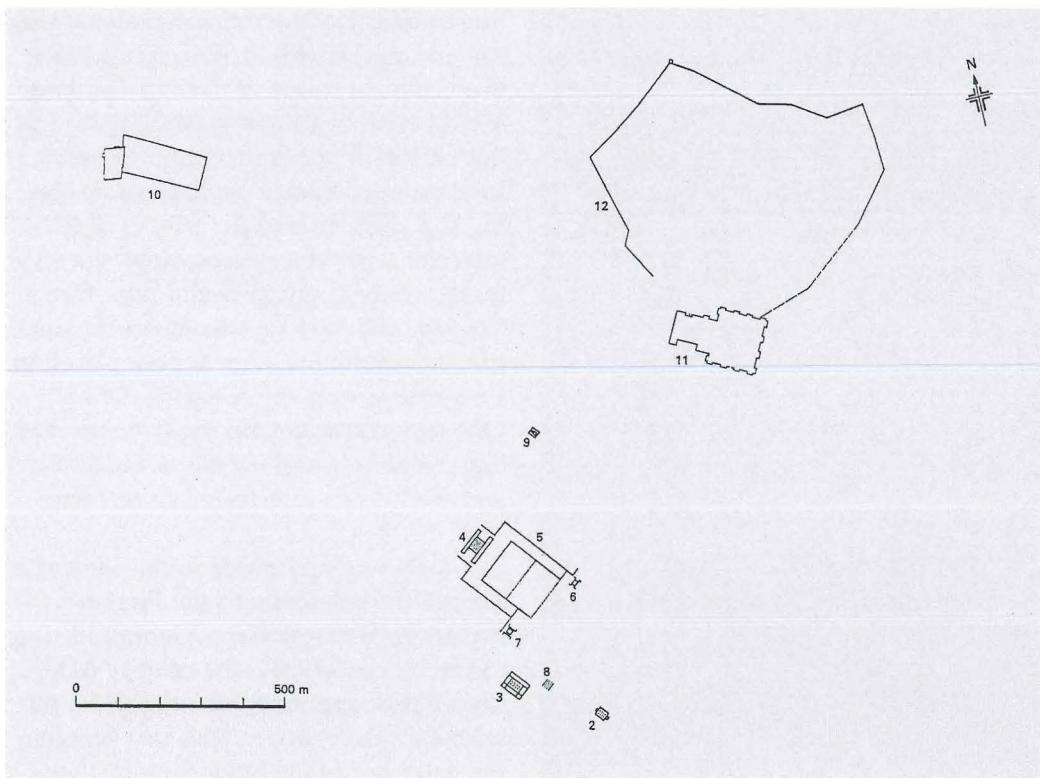


Fig. 6. Pasargadae. The huge palace complex built by Cyrus the Great and placed in a *paradeisos*. The excavated garden (5) is flanked by a palace (4) and two pavilions (6-7). (After Stronach 1978, fig. 4).

Achaemenid palaces, most of which were known or even reused by the Seleucids. In fact we know from Arrian (*Anab.* 7.25) that Alexander the Great when he became ill in Babylon, first rested in a small garden

house with a pool in a *paradeisos* on the other side of the river from the palaces. The park in Pasargadae, in which were spread palatial buildings of various kinds, including also the tomb of Cyrus and a

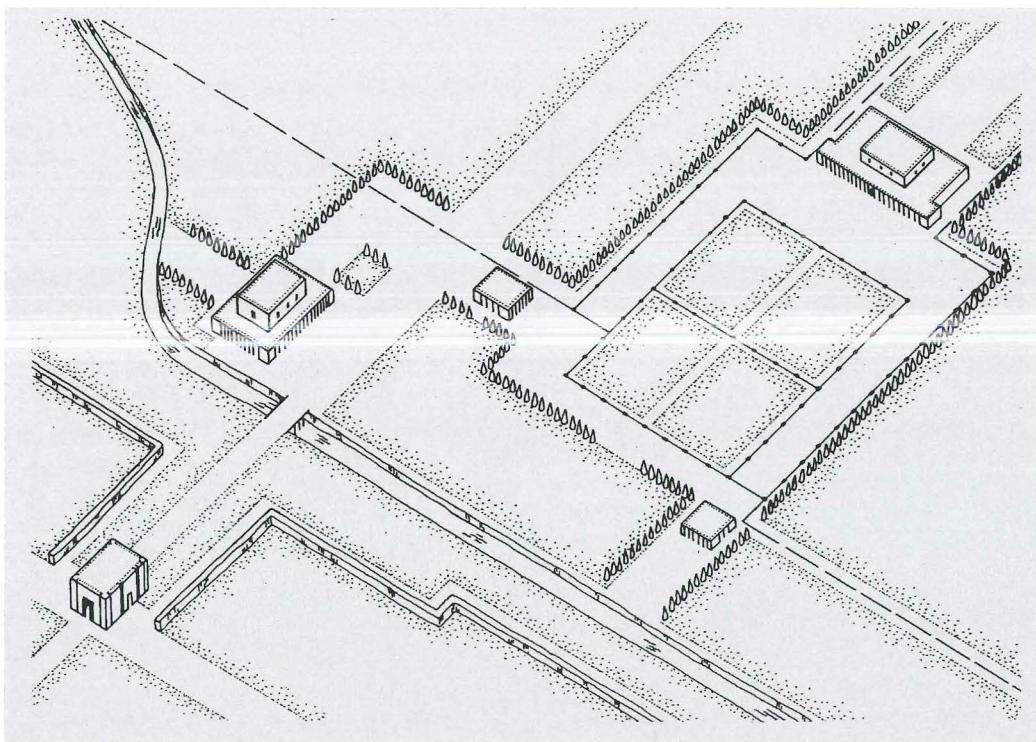


Fig. 7. Pasargadae. Schematic reconstruction of the excavated garden. (After Stronach 1989, Fig. 3).

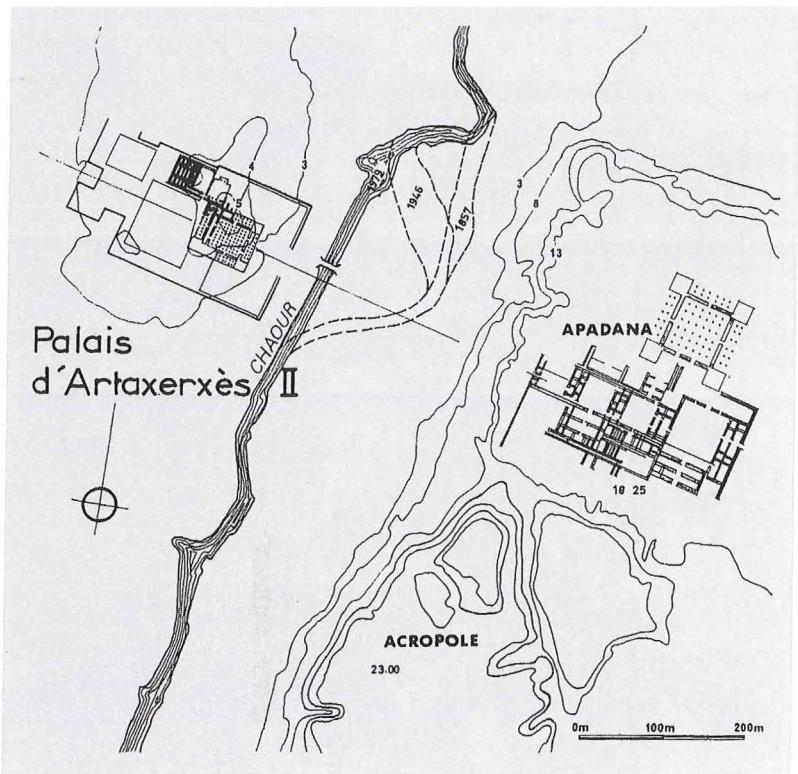


Fig. 8. Susa. The palaces of Dareios and Artexerxes. (After Boucharlat & Labrousse 1979, fig. 10).

sanctuary, has even been partly excavated; it was regularly laid out and divided into four parts (a typical feature also in later

Persian parks) with paths flanked by channels and pools¹⁸ (Figs. 6–7). In Susa, the capital of the Achaemenid kingdom, there may as mentioned well have been a large garden behind the main palace to the south, arranged around a depression.¹⁹ Another *paradeisos* surely surrounded the palace of Artaxerxes II below the palace of Dareios in Susa, which apparently included an inner garden of the same type as the excavated one in Pasargadae as well²⁰ (Fig. 8). Perhaps one may also introduce the well-watered plain below the main palace of Persepolis, with its many palatial structures, with water channels in terracotta and collecting basins indicating the presence of gardens²¹ (Fig. 9). Finally, according to written sources, among them Xenophon, such *paradeisoi* formed part of royal and also satrap's palaces in Kelainai and Daskyleion in Anatolia and in Sidon and the palace belonging to Belyses in Syria. Also in Jerusalem, there was a royal *paradeisos* belonging to the Persian king, from which timber for the rebuilding of Jerusalem was to come.²²

The Achaemenids were, on their side,

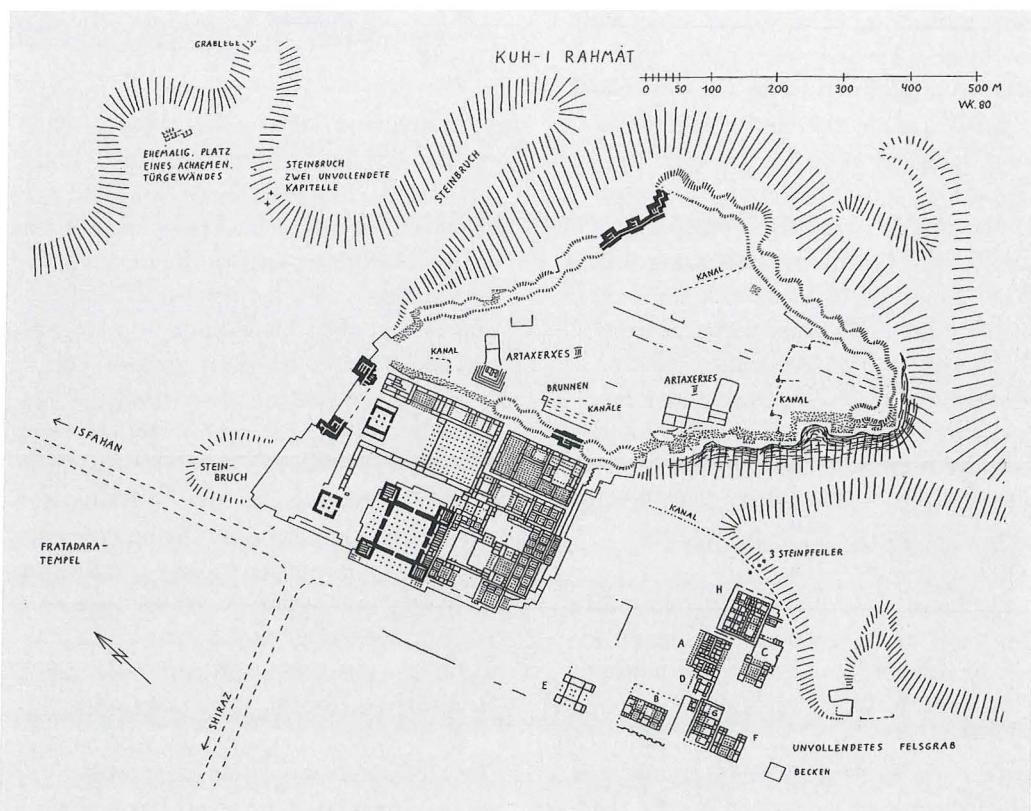
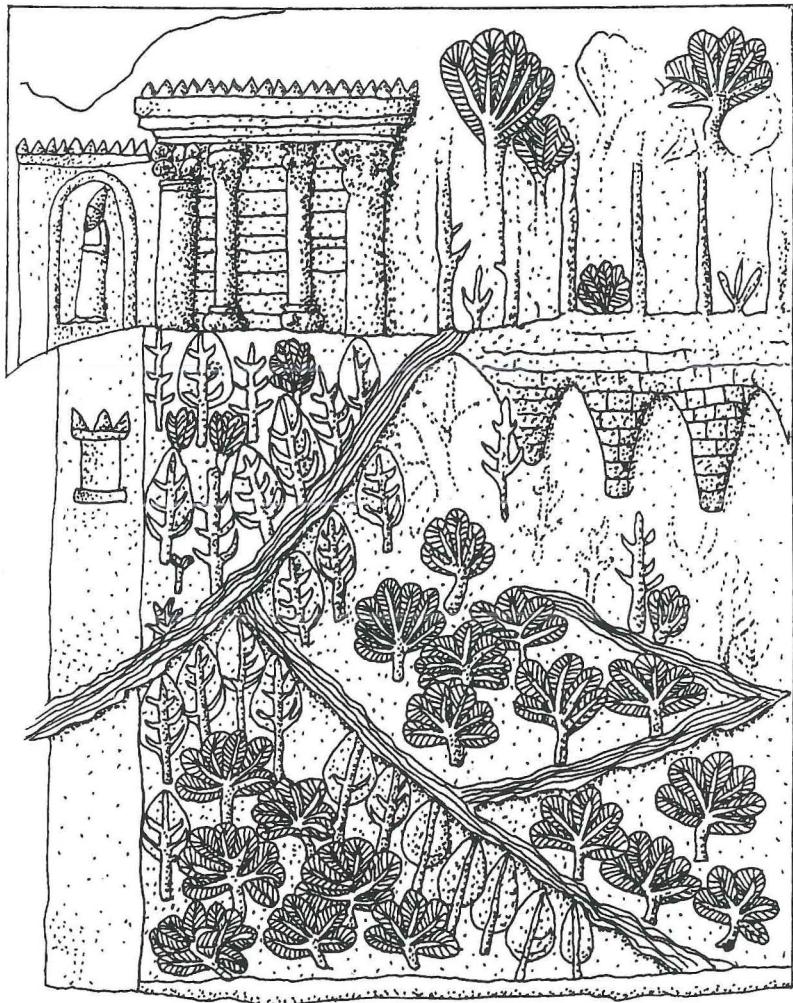


Fig. 9. Persepolis. The palace on the terrace and the surroundings with palatial structures and gardens. (After Nielsen 1999, fig. 14).

inspired by the parks of this type belonging to their predecessors, the Assyrian kings, who, as we know from written and iconographical sources, were fond of gardens and parks and used them for recreation and dining²³ (Fig. 10); and although none have been excavated in this area, we know for certain that there were parks in connection with the palaces in both Nineveh, to which Sanherib brought water from a distance of 70 km via an aqueduct, Khorsabad, and Nimrud, where it surrounded the city. Whether the famous Hanging Gardens traditionally constructed by Nebukadnezer II (604–562 BC) belonged to this type, and whether they were situated in Babylon or Nineveh is uncertain, but their royal context is beyond discussion, as is the prestige combined with the effort to introduce a mountainous landscape into the river lowlands. There was as mentioned also a great park with a variation of trees on the other side of the river in Babylon, in Sittake, where Alexander lay ill and which Xenophon visited.²⁴

The rather little known royal palaces of the pharaohs in Egypt were furnished with parks too.²⁵ This was the case with the huge palace complex called Malkata built by Amenotep III in Thebes, as well as with the palace first constructed in the early 13th dynasty and reused by the Hyksos at Avaris/Tell el Dab'a in the Delta, and also with the great palace complex in Tell el-Amarna belonging to Ank Aten. The only palace which still existed in the early Hellenistic period, that of Apries situated in Memphis, was surrounded by parks which included lakes too. While the palace itself was reused only by Alexander and the first Ptolemy, the park still formed part of the new garden-filled palace built by the later Ptolemies there²⁶ (Fig. 11).

In Greece, we have no certain indices for parks in connection with the Mycenaean palaces. Whether or not Homer's description of a garden outside the court in Alcinous' palace should be taken as an indication of their presence is uncertain, and in any case it was a utilitarian garden,



not a luxurious one.²⁷ Also, it is possible that the old Macedonian kings had such parks, since they were highly inspired in many ways by the Persian presence in Asia Minor. Herodotus (8.138) mentions a rose-garden called the garden of Midas, which existed in Macedonia from an early period, and later, Polybius notes a game reserve in connection with the defeat of Macedonia by the Romans. But one may, in fact, argue that also the palace of Aigai, probably dating to the time of Philip II, which included not only the terrace on the Acropolis, but the theatre and the area including the "agora" with sanctuary to the north, belongs to this type, since it took up a great area and contained several structures, including also royal tombs.²⁸

Even before that time, the palaces of the Sicilian tyrants could apparently include recreational parks. Thus Gelon's

Fig. 10. Assyrian Relief from the palace of Nineveh with garden, aqueduct, water canals, trees and pavilion. (After Margueron 1992, Abb. 15).

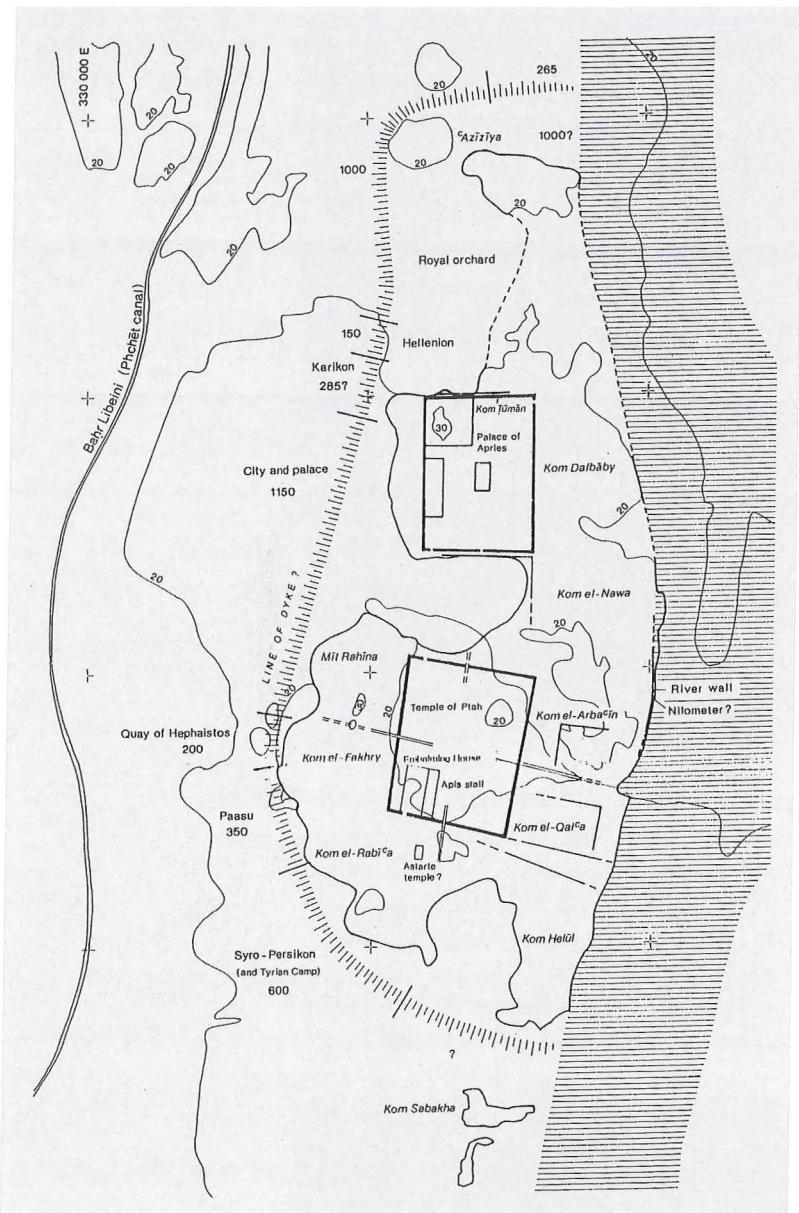


Fig. 11. Memphis. The palace of Apries and surroundings, including parks and lakes to the north. (After Nielsen 1999, fig. 2).

great pool with fish and birds lay in a park, and from Plato, we get the impression that the palace of Dionysius I in Syracuse had a walled garden with many promenades. The same Dionysius laid out a *paradeisos* with plane trees in Rhegion.²⁹ They were probably inspired by the Achaemenid gardens and parks, as well as the Egyptian ones.

Successors of this first type of Hellenistic palace garden have primarily been found in Italy. Thus the already mentioned garden-excavations around the Vesuvius have also included great recreational villas

belonging to the late-Republican and early imperial elite. Among them is the famous villa of Oplontis, which was surrounded by parks, which undoubtedly were inspired by the Hellenistic palatial ones and can thus give us an idea of what these looked like (Fig. 12). Both large pools surrounded by statues, and parks with trees and promenades have been excavated by the great scholar of garden research, Wilhelmina Jashemsky (see note 1). The same kind of villas placed in parks is also amply illustrated in the wall paintings, according to which they had pavilions and were often placed by the sea or by rivers. It is highly probable that the Cyzicene *oecus* described by Vitruvius (6.3.10) as a type of room not very usual in Italy, may reflect this kind of pavilion with a view to a garden. Thus Vitruvius mentions folding doors and windows and the importance of such a view. The general impression of this room is that of a tall and light structure. One may, in fact, compare the main dining hall of the palace of Domitian on the Palatine with such an outsized Cyzicene *oecus*, as done by Gibson (*et al.* 1994), since it opened both to two small gardens and a large one.

In Rome, the aristocracy had at least from the 2nd century BC parks laid out around the centre of the city, and these aristocratic *horti* were gradually taken over by the emperors in the first century AD.³⁰ The Roman emperors also continued this trend, suffice it to mention Nero's Domus Aurea, laid out in a huge park and constituting a pleasure villa in the middle of the city. In a royal context too, such huge parks have also been preserved in Palestine, where Herod the Great in the later part of his reign, after his position had been made secure by Augustus, built huge palace complexes of that kind, in Cae-sarea, Jericho and Herodion. A great amount of swimming pools and lakes dominate these parks³¹ (Fig. 13-14).

B. The Second Garden Type

This limited fenced garden without direct connection to the palace building but situated in its park, has been ascertained in

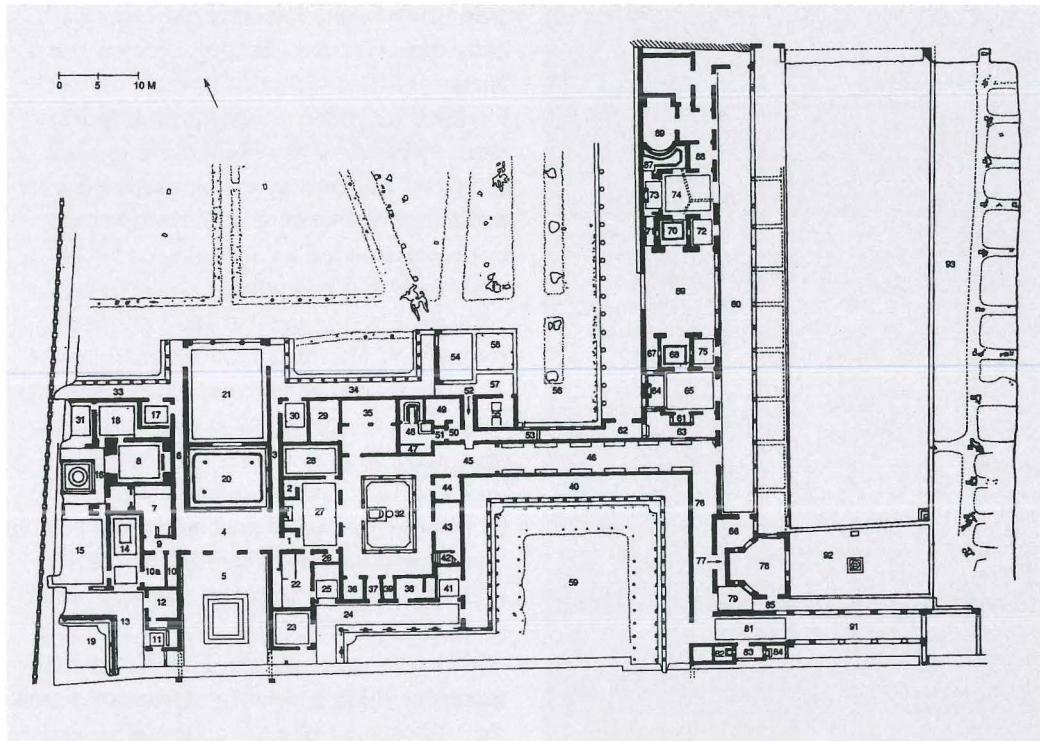


Fig. 12. Oplontis. Plan of the Villa with excavated gardens. (After Jasheński 1979, fold-out plan).

many Hellenistic palaces. Again, one may mention the Alexandrian *basileia*, where a *palaestra* is mentioned close to the *maian-dros* (see n. 10). Since there was a huge gymnasium in the centre of the city, this *palaestra* was surely not primarily used for sports, rather was it a garden. Also the *museion*, which included *peripatoi*, that is,

promenades, might have had a garden of this type (see n. 10). At least its models, the famous gymnasia in Athens had *museia* in their gardens, and Aristotle's school in the Lykeion in fact took its name from such *peripatoi*.

That the Seleucids, too, included such gardens in their palaces, is indicated by the

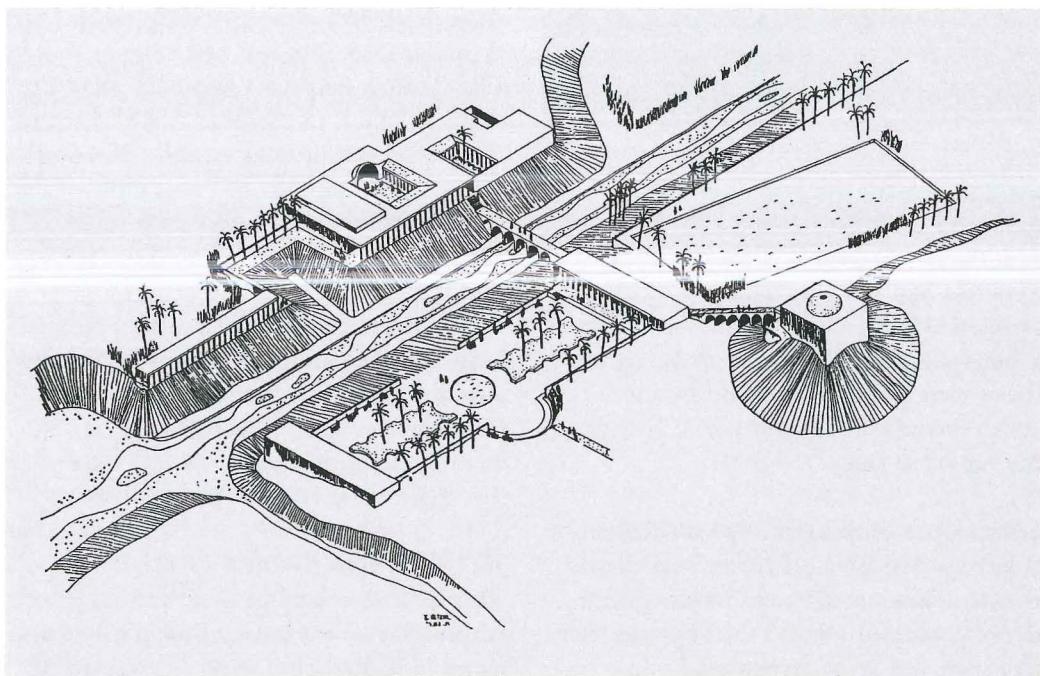


Fig. 13. Jericho. The third Winter Palace of Herod the Great in Jericho with the excavated peristyle garden in the main wing marked by a vaulted hall, and the sunken garden on the other side of the wadi Qelt. (After Nielsen 1999, fig. 109).

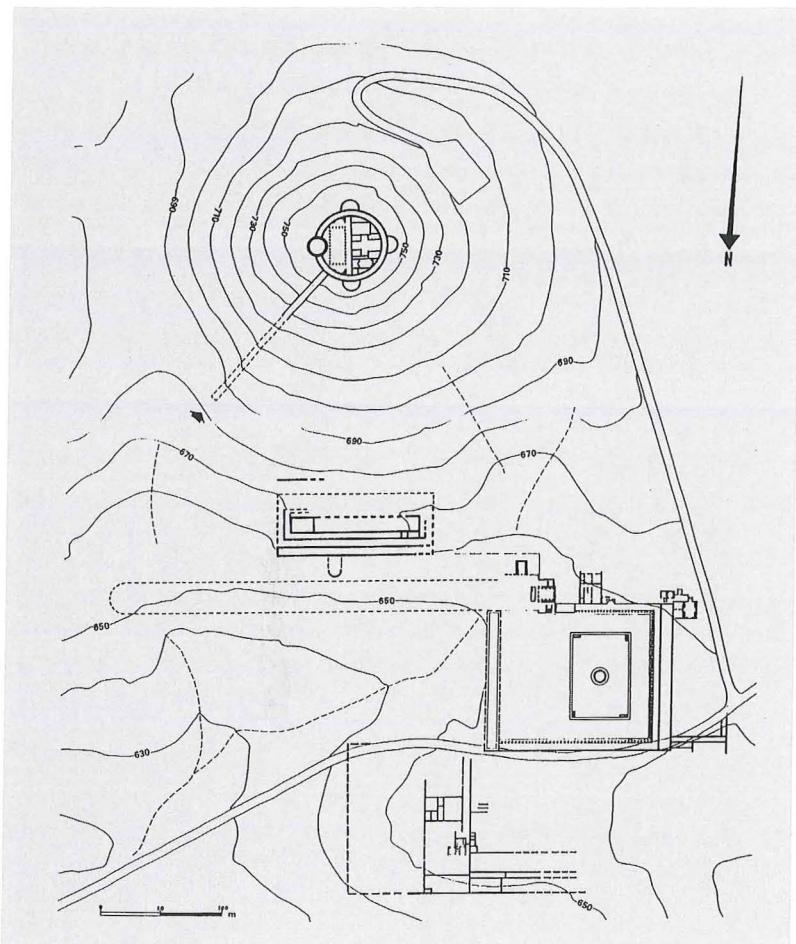


Fig. 14. Herodion. The palace complex of Herod the Great with round upper palace and a huge park with various buildings below. A great garden with pool and surrounded with porticos with i.a. a bath building dominates the park. (After Nielsen 1999, fig. 111).

description of the palace which Seleucus II placed at the disposal of Demetrius Poliorchites; in it were *peripatoi basilikoi* and a *dromos*, both giving associations to the gymnasium.³² Such *peripatoi* with beds flanking them is in fact mentioned together with a *gymnasion* and a garden in connection with the huge royal bark, called Syracusia, built by Hieron II of Syracuse as a present to Ptolemy IV of Egypt.³³ In relation to this garden was a dining-hall *cum* temple for the garden-loving Aphrodite as well as a library, evidently a kind of museion. Also 2 pools are mentioned, one of them with fish.

A preserved example of such a garden has probably been found in Ai Khanoum, since a building called "gymnasion", which was added to the park of the palace in the middle of the second century BC, that is, after this palace had been taken over by a local dynast, probably belonged to this type (see n. 13, Fig. 3). It was situ-

ated near the huge swimming-pool and constituted a closed courtyard with water channels, surrounded by porticos and furnished with only few and strangely formed rooms. One may compare with the later Roman palaestrae in Pompeii and Herculaneum (*v.i.*). It was certainly rather a garden than a Greek-style palaestra for sports.

A similar enclosed garden has been found in the Hasmonean palace of Jericho, in the area just north of the main swimming-pools mentioned above (see n. 15, Fig. 5). A huge fenced garden, probably with partly utilitarian trees and perhaps surrounded by a portico and reached from the recreational area, have been ascertained. Later, this garden was opened up and an entrance portico was added, making it possible to get a view of it from the dining hall facing the swimming-pools. This happened during the reign of Alexandra, widow of the former king Alexander Jannaeus, and it was also she who built the so-called twin palaces. Both had closed courts with swimming-pools, and in one of them a Roman-style open-air *triclinum* was found, showing that this kind of dining was popular already in this period in Palestine; it may have been inspired by similar dining arrangements in Alexandria.³⁴

In the Third winter palace built by Herod the Great in the same locality, this kind of garden had been further elaborated; thus a huge elongated sunken garden was placed on the south side of the wadi Qelt, facing the main palace, and surrounded by walls and porticos with exedras. It was, again, situated near an enormous pool and a pavilion³⁵ (Fig. 13).

The models for these gardens of the second type, may as mentioned at least partly be found in the Greek gymnasias.³⁶ These were situated on the outskirts of town, in tree-filled areas near streams and rivers, and consisted not only of a sports area, but also of enclosed gardens for promenades, according to the ancient authors. Although the most famous of these gymnasias were situated in Athens and later

developed into philosophical Schools, they were far from limited to that city. Thus there was one with plane trees in Sparta, the famous round *platanistas* gymnasium mentioned by Pausanias,³⁷ and probably also one, likewise on the outskirts of the city, in Corinth, namely the Old Gymnasium mentioned by Pausanias (2.4.5) near the Lerna spring. Further, it is very probable that such gardens existed on the upper terrace of the 4th century gymnasium in Delphi, and on the middle and the upper terrace (where later the East Baths were built) of the huge gymnasium of Pergamon (Gotheim 1909). The development from parks for sport and recreation into philosophical gardens took place in Athens, where Plato moved his school from the Akademy proper into his own house with garden furnished with *exedra* and *museion*, and where, a generation later, Epicurius bought a plot inside the walls, probably near the Dipylon gate, and planted a garden for his own use and for his pupils. At the same time Theophrastus bequeathed his garden to the Lykeion *gymnasion*, including the *museion* therein (Diog. Laert. 5.52). It has been suggested, but not ascertained, that it was a botanical garden.

Successors: These *gymnasia* could also, synonymously, be called *palaestrae*, for example by Vitruvius (5.11), who also mentions a garden in the building he describes. In this connection it is important to remember that the Roman aristocracy could also name gardens in their rural villas after famous Greek *gymnasia*. Thus Cicero called two gardens in his villa in Tusculum after the Academy and the Lyceum of Athens, respectively, and he also boasted a *palaestra*, undoubtedly a garden, in his house on the Palatine.³⁸ Finally one may perhaps include the oblong garden with a swimming pool, 60 x 17 m, in the villa of Poppaea in Oplontis in this connection, too (Fig. 12). It was flanked by columns and statues and looked very much like similar gardens in Villa Adriana.³⁹

This transition of the meaning of the

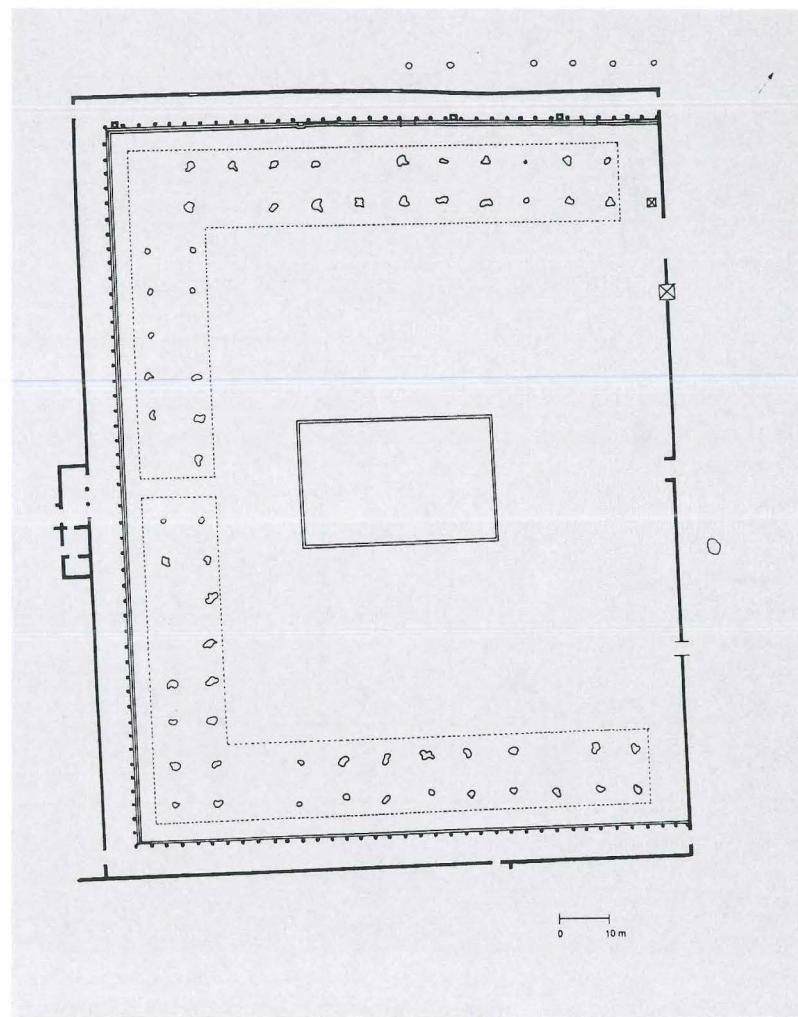


Fig. 15. Pompeii. Plan of the Palaestra by the amphitheatre in Pompeii, with traces of roots for plane trees along the three porticos and a huge swimming-pool in the centre. Only a porch, but no rooms faced the court. (After Jashemski 1979, plan 29).

gymnasium seems even to have inspired the public *gymnasia* of the Campanian cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum as well, for the *palaestrae* belonging to these towns in fact included plane trees and swimming-pools in their huge courts, as proven by garden excavations⁴⁰ (Fig. 15). One may compare with the *xystos* along which was a garden with plane trees for promenades referred to by Vitruvius in his description of the *palaestra* (5.11). The ultimate result of this development is seen in the Roman *thermae*, whose recreational areas were originally taken over from the Greek *gymnasia*, but with a radical change of function from hard sports to pleasure garden for strolling. It is worth remembering that when the “gymnasium” part of the Roman *thermae* were finally added to the public baths in Rome by Agrippa, this section was rather mirrored

IL PALATINO

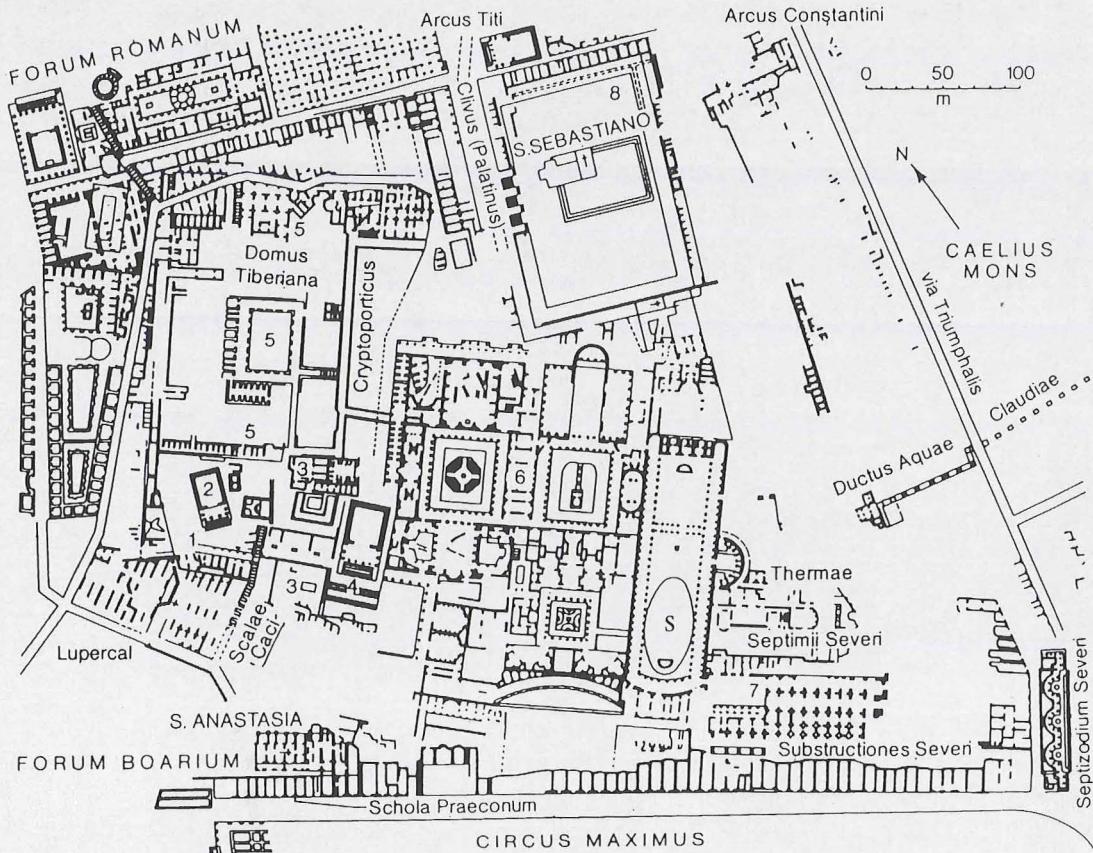


Fig. 16. Rome. General plan of the Palatine. (After *Roma. Area Archeologica centrale*. 1983).

from the royal "gymnasion" pleasure garden type than from the Greek gymnasia.⁴¹ Agrippa may, in fact, as far as his gardens and *thermae* with the huge swimming-pool, *stagnum*, in the Campus Martius are concerned, also have been inspired by Herodes the Great's huge palaces, with which they were contemporary.⁴² The same general idea certainly lay behind the so-called *stadia*, which turn up in Roman villas and palaces, the most famous being the one related to the palace of Domitian on the Palatine (Fig. 16, s). Comparison may be made with the sunken garden in Herod the Great's Third Winter Palace in Jericho, of similar size⁴³ (Fig. 13).

C. The Third Garden Type

This type of garden was placed inside the palace, often in a peristyle court. These gardens have been much discussed, among

other things has it been doubted that they ever existed in the Hellenistic palaces, although this would make their sudden appearance in the rich houses of the Vesuvian area during the 2nd century BC difficult to explain.⁴⁴ However, recently what seems to constitute a proof that such garden did, in fact, form an integral part of the Hellenistic palaces has finally been delivered by Graeme Clarke, in connection with the early Hellenistic governor's palace in Syria by the Euphrates. The 80 cm wide and up to 1 m deep border along the peristyle filled with loose nitrogenous soil does, indeed, indicate that a garden decorated at least part of this main court (see Fig. 7 p. 218).⁴⁵

Since this early Hellenistic palace was owned by a Macedonian governor, it would not be surprising to find such gardens in the palaces belonging to the kings

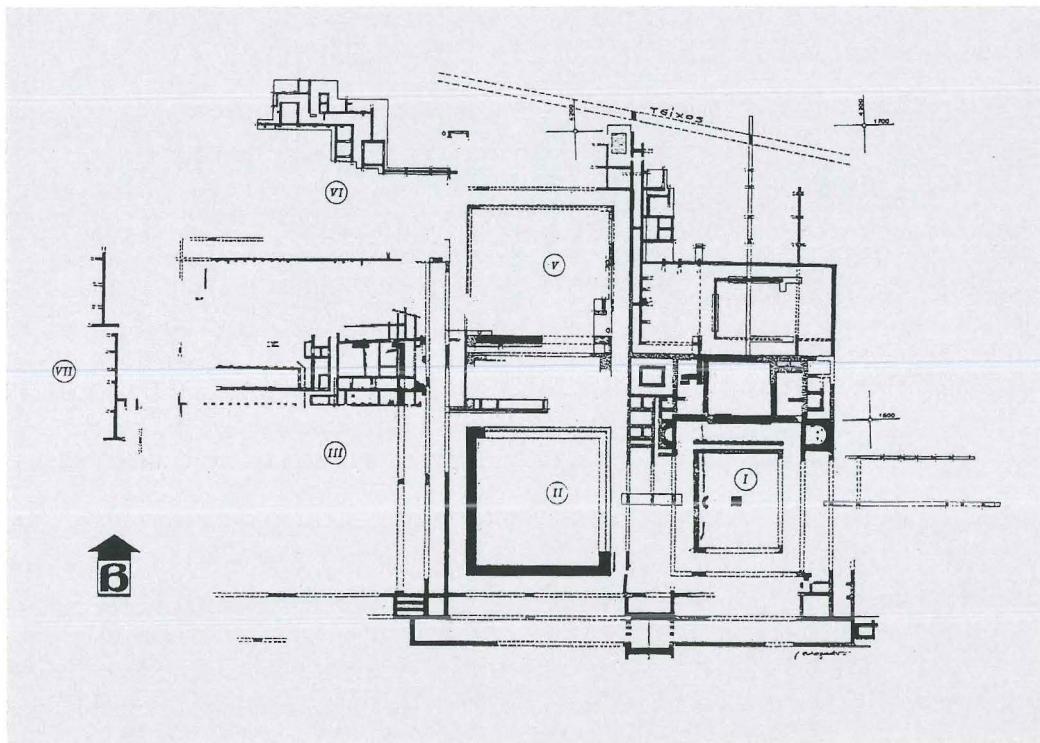


Fig. 17. Pella. Plan of the Palace on the acropolis. The suggested gardens are in court I, the main peristyle, and court V, the so-called palaestra. (After Nielsen 1999, fig. 45).

of Macedonia, too. Thus I think there might well have been a garden in the main official peristyle of the royal palace at Pella⁴⁶ (Fig. 17). That this was the case is indicated both by the presence of water installations including what probably amounts to a fountain or the like, and the fact that this court had no traces of a pavement. Taking these two criteria as a point of departure, I think it would really be well worth trying through excavations to trace such peristyle gardens also in other preserved palaces, for example the ones

owned by the Macedonian kings in Aigai and Demetrias. Although the earth has often disappeared, there may be traces of water channels, and it should be possible to ascertain whether a certain peristyle court had ever had a paving.

Similar gardens undoubtedly also decorated the main peristyle of the Ptolemaic governor's palace of Ptolemais in Cyrenaica, since this oblong peristyle had an ornamental pool in the centre and room for promenades along the columns (Fig. 18). In fact this oblong court has clear

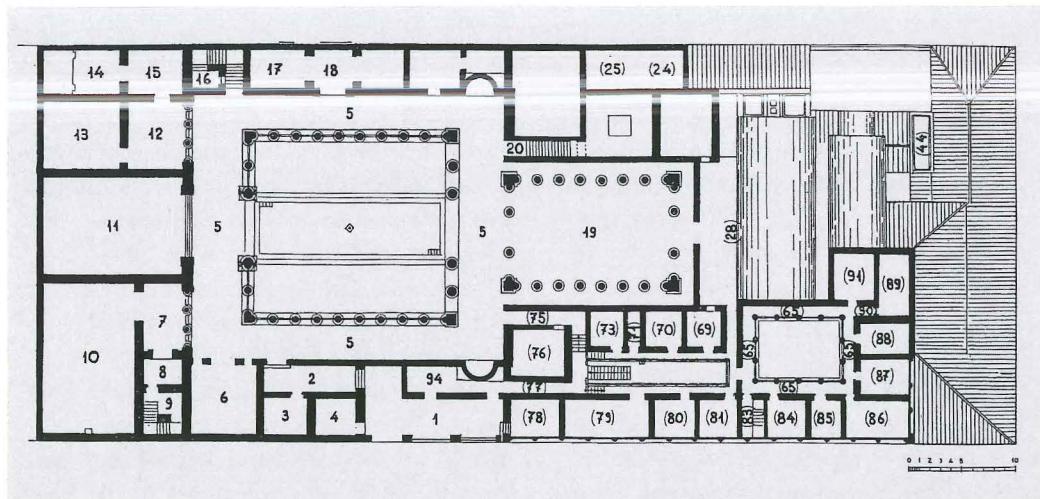


Fig. 18. Ptolemais. The palace probably belonging to the Ptolemaic Governor, with peristyle court including a pool with probably gardens flanking it. (After Nielsen 1999, fig. 78).

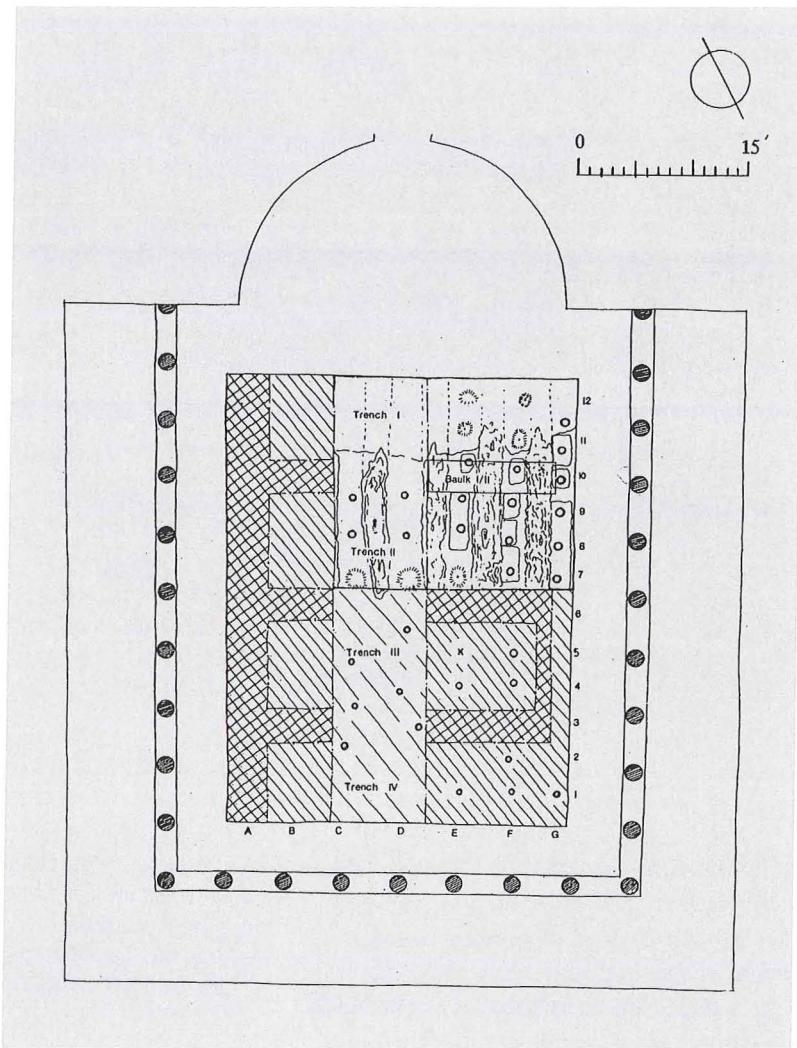


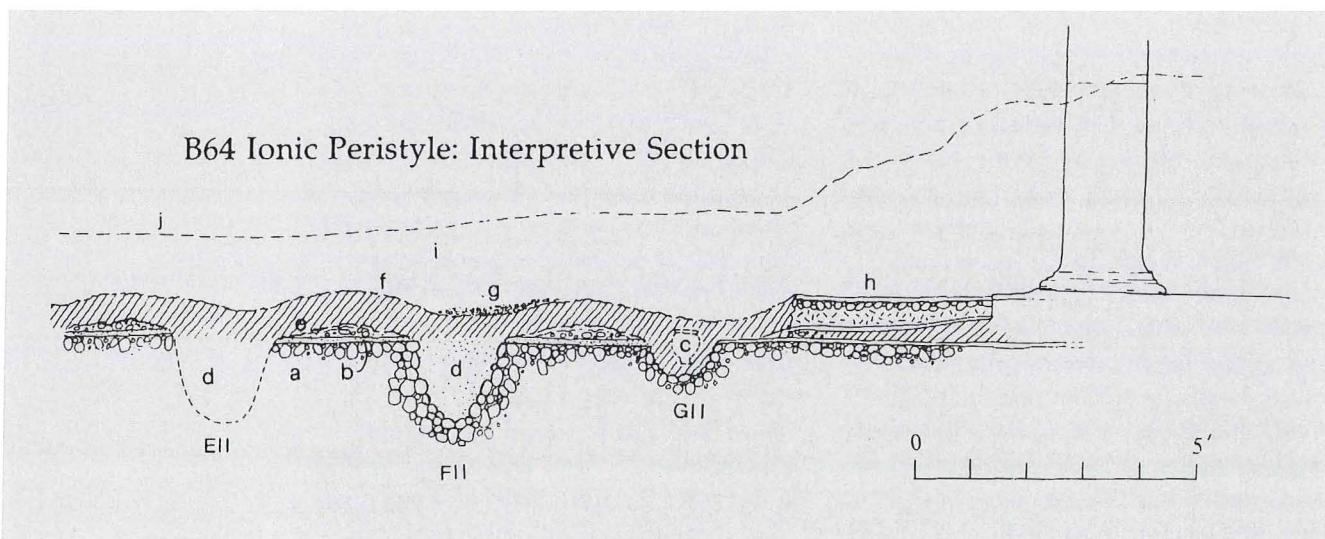
Fig. 19. Jericho. The excavated garden. Plan and section (After Gleason 1993, figs 3 and 5).

affinities to the gardens of the old Egyptian palaces such as the one in tell el Amarna⁴⁷ (see below and Fig. 20). Also,

two fine dining halls faced this area, which surely must have had some greenery.

Since two governors' palaces, belonging to the Seleucid and the Ptolemaic dynasty respectively, included gardens in their peristyles, they were certainly not lacking in the royal palaces of these kings in Alexandria and in Antioch, either. One may mention the flowers and bushes placed in the court of the *akra* in the Alexandrian *basileia* when the dining pavilion of Ptolemy II was raised.⁴⁸ Comparison may be made with the marquee, which the Persian king had raised and used for banquets for the people of Susa, and which was set up in a large square in front of the park by the palace.⁴⁹ Perhaps also the *megiston peristylon* mentioned by Polybius in the palace of Alexandria had such a garden, probably in that case with a view from the *chrematistikon pylon*, that is, the audience hall. In fact gardens in front of the main rooms, reached through a monumental propylon, may have been typical of hellenistic palaces, as indicated by Apollonius Rhodius' description of the palace of Aeetes of Colchis (see n. 27), which may well have been inspired by his home town Alexandria's royal palace.⁵⁰ A royal context of peristyle gardens has in fact been ascertained by Josephus, who describes round connected peristyles with gardens, together with trees and promenades flanked by channels and basins, in Herod the Great's palace in Jerusalem.⁵¹

B64 Ionic Peristyle: Interpretive Section



That Josephus is telling the truth is now evident from the excavations of a garden peristyle in a palace belonging to the same king, namely his Third Winter Palace in Jericho. This garden, which was situated in the official part of the palace, with an apsidal audience hall facing it, was surrounded by a paved promenade along the columns and measured 20 x 21 m⁵² (Fig. 19). The stratigraphy shows a coarse subsoil layer of poorly cemented river pebbles (a), then a thin layer of earth covered by plaster (b), constituting the surface of the courtyard. Garden pots were found dug in straight rows into the plaster (c). There were seven rows each consisting of eleven pots placed in a distance of 1-1,20 m, and between the rows were raised areas, for irrigation (e). Around and above these pots was a layer of fertilized garden soil 10-15 cm thick (f). To the north, facing the apsidal room, were a row of big planting pits for trees likewise dug into the subsoil, which could thus shade the main hall (d). Unfortunately it has not been possible to trace what grew in this garden, but as a qualified guess, taking into account its situation in Jericho, this garden may well, as suggested by the excavator, Kathryn Gleason, have grown date palms in the great pits, and balsam plants in the pots.

The models for these gardens have been much discussed. Rather than searching, in vain, for them in the Greek area, it is, in fact, better to go to Egypt, where such gardens have been ascertained from far back, both iconographically and archaeologically, in the courts of the royal palaces as well as in the houses of the elite.⁵³ These closed gardens were normally centered on a pavilion and a large rectangular pool with fish and ducks. These pools, which were deeply sunk in order to reach the ground water, were flanked by beds and trees (Fig. 20). Even in the palace of tell el Amarna from the middle of the 14th century BC such gardens furnished with peristyles and surrounded by rooms have been found. That gardens of this type, albeit without peristyle, also existed

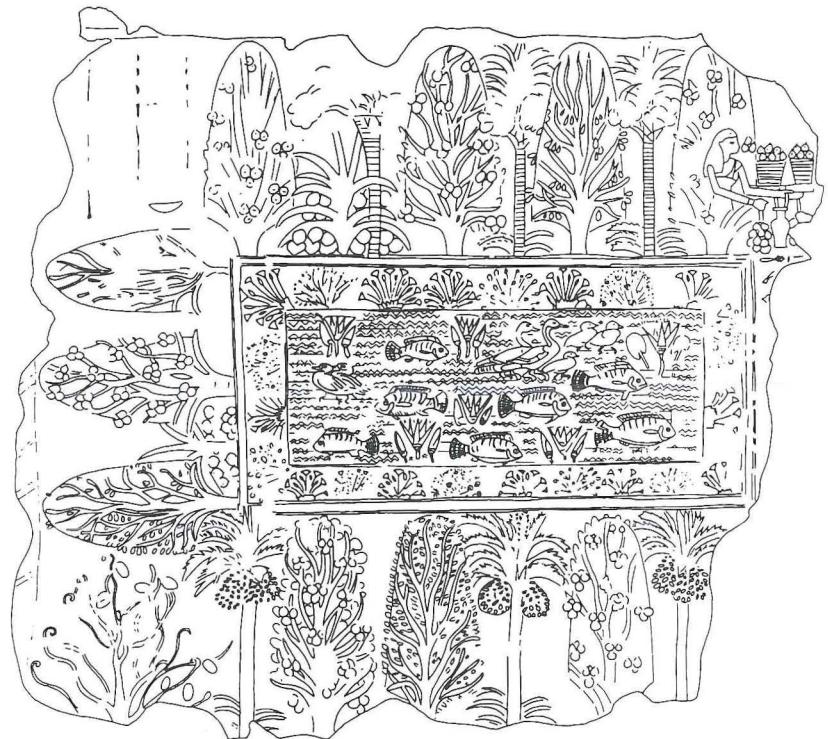


Fig. 20. Thebes. Wall painting from the 18th Dynasty with garden pool surrounded by beds and trees, and filled with fish and birds. (After Hugonot 1992, Abb. 6).

in Syria is documented in Ugarit, where a courtyard in the palace contained a garden, to which a pavilion with columns opened, and in connection with which was a well with a small basin, from which a channel led water to the garden (Fig. 21). A great hall with two columns *in antis* flanked the garden too, probably for receptions. Unfortunately we do not know what grew in it.⁵⁴

As for the **successors** of the Hellenistic palatial garden peristyles, there is no need to go into detail with the many fine gardens found in the peristyles of the rich houses and villas of Pompeii and Herculaneum. One may only mention one example of an excavated peristyle garden where the plants could be ascertained, namely that of the House of Polybius in Pompeii, which not only included bushes but also trees of an impressive size, among other things fruit trees, proving that these gardens could also be utilitarian, although this was not the most typical use, especially not after the introduction of the aqueduct during the reign of Augustus (Fig.

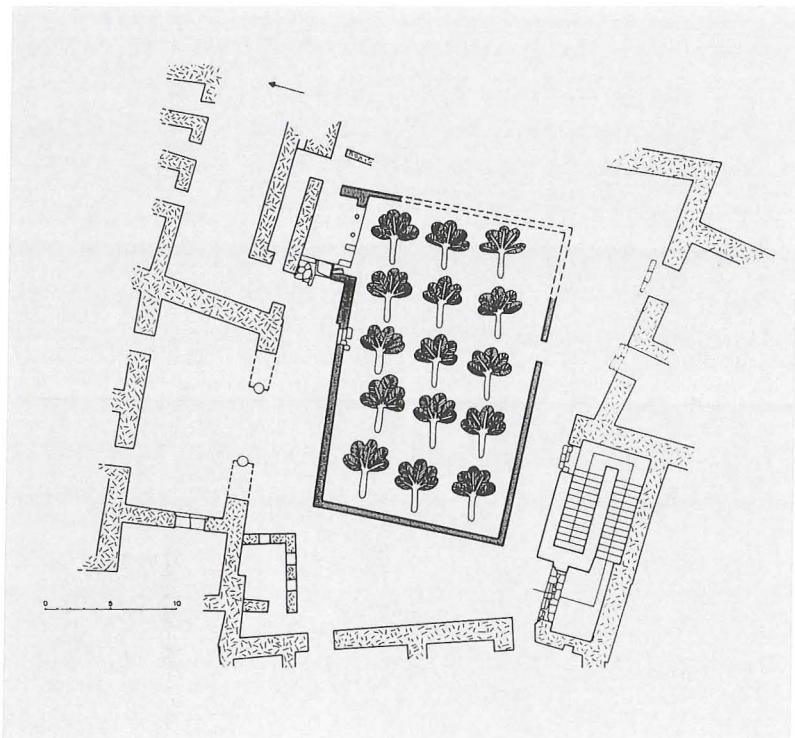


Fig. 21. Ugarit. The palace with the garden, and pavilion facing it. (After Margueron 1992, Abb. 22).

22). The garden of the House of the Vetti with evergreen bushes, fountains and basins, is typical of this new type of luxury garden, also well known from wall paintings. Gardens of a variety of peristyle types have been found among the thirteen excavated in the villa of Poppaea in Oplontis⁵⁵ (see Fig. 12). It was certainly this kind of garden that according to Vitruvius filled the peristyle courts of the Roman elite already before they came to decorate the palaces of the Roman emperors, beginning with Augustus' palace on the Palatine.⁵⁶ This palace included two peristyles flanking the temple of Apollo, of which the Portico of the Danaids had a garden filled with statues and is comparable with Pompey the Great's great garden peristyle built in relation to his theatre and his villa on the Campus Martius. A preserved example has further been found associated with Domitian's palace, likewise on the Palatine, in the official peristyle court, to which there was a view from the main dining hall (see Fig. 16). And recently it has even been suggested that the Farnesine garden on the north-western corner of the Palatine in fact reflected the

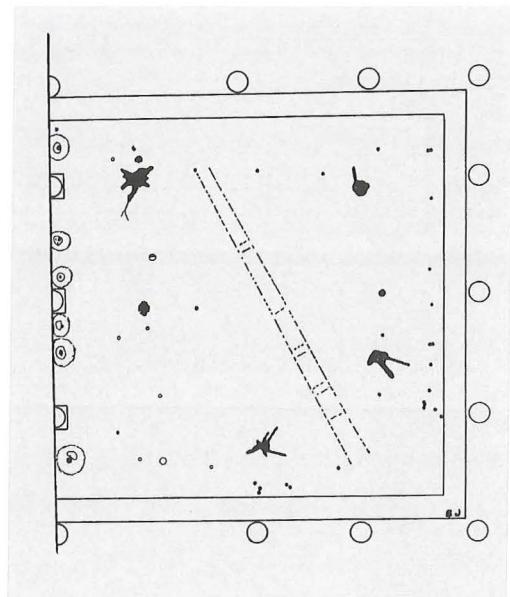


Fig. 22. Pompeii, The garden in the House of Polybius. (After Jashemski 1979, fig. 42).

garden in the Neronian Domus Tiberiana, in whose courtyard it was later planted.

Conclusion

The three types of gardens characterizing the Hellenistic palaces were inspired from various models, reflecting the eclecticism so characteristic of the Hellenistic monarchies. Both the Persian *paradeisos*, the Egyptian courtyard garden, and the Greek gymnasium garden thus gave inspiration both to the new kings, such as the Ptolemies and the Seleucids, when they were to build their palaces in their new kingdoms, and to the kings of the old kingdom of Macedonia, when they wished to enlarge and embellish their old palaces. Whatever little we know, the evidence of gardens that we do have, is, to me at least, sufficient for us to be quite certain that the Hellenistic palaces, like their precursors in the Near East and Egypt, and like their successors, both the Italian late Republican villas and houses, the Parthian palaces, and the Roman and Byzantine imperial palaces, were, indeed, paradisiac in appearance.

Notes

NOTE 1

See Jashemski 1979 and 1993. For excavated gardens of the Roman period elsewhere, for example in Tunisia, see Jashemski 1995.

NOTE 2

For Pasargadae, see Stronach 1989 and this volume; for Jebel Khalid, see most recently Clarke in this volume; for Herodian Jericho, see Gleason 1993; Netzer 2001, 175ff. and below.

NOTE 3

For ancient gardens in general, see Gotheim 1909; Grimal 1969; Carroll-Spillecke 1989 and 1996.

NOTE 4

For these gardens and palaces in general, see Nielsen 1999; and for the Hellenistic palace gardens specifically, Sonne 1996.

NOTE 5

Paradeisos was originally a Persian word. Although its original Persian meaning is uncertain, its later usage, especially in a biblical context, is very well known. Cf. Stronach 1989. For *paradeisoī* in general see e.g. Xenophon, who at *Oec.* 4.13–14 emphasizes the interest that the Persian kings took in the layout of these parks and their cultivation. Cf. Ziegler (s.v. *paradeisos*, *RE* 18, 1949, cols. 113–134), who deals mainly with the biblical meaning of the word, but also with the attitudes of the Greeks to the parks, which they identified with *kepoi* and *alsoī* (cf. Carroll-Spillecke 1989). See Also Grimal 1969, 79ff and Gentelle 1981. Such gardens continued in use under the Sassanids and the Arabs, and were also known in Iran much later; in fact they still exist. See Sackville-West 1953; Kawami 1992.

NOTE 6

See Nielsen 1998 for the use of parks and gardens for dining, including the presence of *stibadia* and *triclinia* in gardens.

NOTE 7

This may have been the case during Alexander's campaign, since it is mentioned that *klinai* and a throne on one occasion were placed in a *paradeisos* (Athen. 12.537d, cit. Ephippus). Comparison may be made with the Achaemenid Great king, who often held court in his garden. We also hear that Hieron II of Syracuse used gardens near the city for audiences (Athen. 12.542a, cit. Selinus).

NOTE 8

For these gymnasia and their gardens, see Gotheim 1909; Delorme 1960, 51ff and *passim*; Grimal 1969, 69ff and *passim*; Carroll-Spillecke 1992, 161ff. For example, Plutarch (*Cim.* 13.7 (487c)) mentions that Cimon planted plane trees, ulmen, poppels, and olive trees in the Academy *alsoī*.

NOTE 9

For this important aspect of the garden, see Nielsen 1998. In connection with this view one may mention the famous pavilion described by Callixenus (Athen. 5. 196–197), which was put up in the court of the *akra* in Alexandria by Ptolemy II. Although the court was undoubtedly paved, there was a view to flowers and plants from the pavilion for the diners.

NOTE 10

For *alsoī*, *sema*, *museion*, see Strabo 17.1.8; for *palaestra*, Polyb. 15.25.3, 15.28.4, 15.30.6, 15.31.2–4; for *maiandros*, Polyb. 15.30.6.

NOTE 11

See Nielsen 1999, cat. no. 15. Downey 1961, 640–50.

NOTE 12

These late sources are: Liban. *Or.* 11.206; Theodoret, *Ecd. Hist.* 4.26.1–3, and Evar-
grius 2.12. For Daphne and the road to it, see Strab. 16.750; Liban. *Or.* 11. 356ff.

NOTE 13

See Nielsen 1999, cat. no. 19; Bernard *et al.* 1973 (publication).

NOTE 14

See Nielsen 1999, cat. no. 21; Will 1991 (publication); cf. Netzer 1997, who draws attention to the mirror effect of the lake.

NOTE 15

See Nielsen 1999, cat. no. 23, and the recent publication by Netzer 2001, 11ff.

NOTE 16

Perhaps the Cyzicene *oecus* described by Vitruvius (6.3.10) as a type of room not very usual in Italy, may reflect this kind of pavilion with a view to a garden (see below).

NOTE 17

See Invernizzi 1996, 239, and this volume. For the suggestion that the depression in Susa see Nielsen 1999, 49. This idea was supported by D. Stronach at the conference. Cf. Bourcharlat in this volume, who does not agree with this identification, however.

NOTE 18

See Nielsen 1999, cat. no. 3; Stronach 1978 (publication); 1989; Kawami 1992, and Bourcharlat in this volume. Unfortunately we do not know what grew in this garden.

NOTE 19

See Nielsen 1999, cat. no. 5 and note 17 above.

NOTE 20

See Nielsen 1999, cat. no. 6; Bourcharlat & Labrousse 1979 (publication).

NOTE 21

Nielsen 1999, cat. no. 4; Schmidt 1953 (publication).

NOTE 22

Kelainai (Xen. *An.* 1.2.7-9); Daskyleion Xen. *Hell.* 4.1.15-16. North Syria, Xen. *An.* 1.4.9-11. Sidon: Diodor. 16.41-45. Jerusalem, *Nehem.* 2.8-9; royal parks are also mentioned in connection with the Babylonian destruction (*II Kings* 25.4).

NOTE 23

See Margueron 1992 and Lumsden in this volume.

NOTE 24

See for this ongoing discussion on the Hanging Gardens, Margueron 1992, 74ff; for the theory that this garden was instead situated in Nineveh, see Dalley 1994. For the park on the other side of the river, at Sittaka, Xen. *An.* 2.4.14. Cf. Kuhrt in this volume.

NOTE 25

See Hugonot 1992.

NOTE 26

See Nielsen 1999, cat. no. 1. Petrie 1909; Thomson 1988, 9ff.

NOTE 27

Homer, *Od.* 7.112-132, cf. Braund in this volume. See for these gardens, Gotheim 1909, and for Minoan gardens, Schäfer 1992. One may compare with the description of the Palace of Aeetes in Colchis, given in the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius (3.164ff), a contemporary of Ptolemy II and originally from Alexandria. Here, a wide vestibule led to a garden with fountains, which led to the palace proper, the *messaulos*, used in the Homeric sense of the word.

NOTE 28

See Saatsoglou Paliadeli in this volume.

NOTE 29

See Nielsen 1999, 79f. For Rhegion, see Pliny, *HN* 12.7; Theophr. *Caus. Pl.* 4.5.9. For Gelon's garden, Athen. 12.541c-542a. Cf. Grimal 1969, 77.

NOTE 30

See La Rocca 1986, Häuber 1994.

NOTE 31

For these Herodian palaces, see Netzer 1999, 32ff; Nielsen 1999, 180ff, and cat. nos. 26-31. Gleason 1999. At Caesarea, the lower palace situated on a peninsula was furnished with a swimming-pool surrounded by a peristyle, between the columns of

which were beds for flowers etc. cut into the rock.

NOTE 32

Plut. *Demetr.* 50.1-2.

NOTE 33

See Athen. 5.206d ff (cit. Moschion).

NOTE 34

One may compare with the *stibadia* seen in the Nile Mosaics found in Italy. See Nielsen 1998, and Dunbabin 1991.

NOTE 35

See Nielsen 1999, cat. no. 30; Netzer 2001, 287ff (publication).

A subtype of this kind of garden is as mentioned above the specialized garden such as botanical and zoological gardens and aviaries sometimes mentioned in connection with the royal palaces. This kind of garden had a special significance for the kings, since the sheer amount of foreign and exotic plants and animals collected in them constituted a microcosm of the huge empire reigned by their owner (one may compare with the specialized gardens of the Victorians). For example, we know that Greek plants were introduced into the East in connection with Alexander's conquests, and according to a Zenon papyrus, the Ptolemaic official Tobias of Transjordania sent rare animals to Ptolemy II for his zoo. We hear also that Ptolemy VIII Physcon wrote a treatise on the breeding of birds in the palace area. An interesting example is mentioned by Megastenes (*Indica, FGrH* 715, early 3rd cent. BC) who says that the palace belonging to Chandragupta in Pataliputra in India included great parks with animals and cultivated plants. One is reminded of the old Egyptian palaces, especially the proposed aviary in the palace of Tell el Amarna (Hugonot 1992), but they also formed part of palaces in the Near East, e.g. in Assur (Margueron 1992). This custom was, like so much else, taken over by the Roman elite, who often had aviaries *cum* dining halls in the gardens of their villas. The same was undoubtedly true of the fish pools with exotic types of fish so popular among this elite and already known from Sicily much earlier (see n. 29). See Plut. *Alex.* 35.8; *P. Cairo Zeno* 59075, 257 BC; Athen. 14.653c (cit. Ptolemy Physcon). For Italian aviaries, Plut. *Luc.* 39.4-5; Varro, *Rust.* 3.4.3.

NOTE 37

Paus. 3.14.8-11. In this connection mention should be made of Torelli's recent comparison between the round *platanistas* gymnasium in Sparta and the "teatro maritimo" in Villa Adriana (Torelli 1991).

NOTE 38

Palatine, Cic. *Att.* 2.4.7; Tusculum, Cic. *Tusc.* 2.9. Cf. Varro (R 2, Proem), who says that while in the old days there were no *gymnasia* of the Greek type, now they (the elite) are not satisfied unless their villas teem with Greek names.

NOTE 39

See Jashemski 1992.

NOTE 40

See Jashemski 1979, 1993, 1992, 198f.

NOTE 41

See for this development and the Roman thermae in general, Nielsen 1993.

NOTE 42

See most recently Netzer 1999. One remarks the great importance of the bath-buildings in these palaces, as well as the many swimming-pools.

NOTE 43

For Domitian's palace, see latest *LTUR* 2, 1995, 40-45 (L. Sasso D'Elia). For the Third Winter Palace, see Netzer 2001, 229ff.

NOTE 44

For this theory, see Carroll-Spillecke 1989.

NOTE 45

See most recently Clarke in this volume, pp. 217ff.

NOTE 46

See Nielsen 1999, cat. no. 12. This is further supported by the interesting passage by Livy (40.7.8) also cited by Hatzopoulos in this volume (see p. 193): it is mentioned that Philip V walks up and down (*inambulavit*) in his palace, which indicates, as M.B. Hatzopoulos says, the presence of an *ambulatio*, a promenade there; as we have seen, such *ambulationes* were often associated with gardens. Another candidate for a garden in this palace is the peristyle V with a bath in the north wing, identified as a palaestra by the excavator M. Siganidou (1996), who did not think that gardens ever existed in these courts. Sonne (1996, 141) on the other hand, regards the presence of such gardens not only in the Macedonian

palaces, but also e.g. in the peristyle V of the palace of Pergamon, as probable (compare for Pergamon, Nielsen 1999, 107).

NOTE 47

See Nielsen 1999, cat.no. 22; Pesce 1950 (publication).

NOTE 48

McKenzie (1990, 85ff) argues convincingly that many of the gardens seen on the Second Style paintings were inspired by Egyptian gardens, just as the fantastic architecture of these paintings were probably inspired from Alexandria.

NOTE 49

This is mentioned in the *Book of Esther* (1.3-8).

NOTE 50

Comparison may be made with the Roman pleasure villas, where the main rooms were reached through a garden peristyle, instead of through an atrium, as in the city houses, probably an inspiration from Hellenistic palaces.

NOTE 51

See Joseph. *BJ* 1.21.1 (401-02). Cf. Nielsen 1999, 182ff; Netzer 1999, 15ff.

NOTE 52

See Gleason 1993.

NOTE 53

See Hugonot 1992.

NOTE 54

See Margueron 1992, 71ff. The courtyard measured 20/25 x 40 m, the garden 12/15 x 21 m, and was surrounded by a low stone wall.

NOTE 55

See Jashemski 1992. The plants which according to the ancient authors were typical of these formal gardens are efeu, buks-bum, laurel, myrths, acanthus, rosemary, and various flowers.

NOTE 56

Vitr. 6.5.2): "For persons of high rank who hold office and magistracies, and whose duty it is to serve the state, we must provide princely vestibules, lofty halls and very spacious peristyles, plantations and broad avenues finished in a majestic manner". For Augustus' palace, see Nielsen 1999, 171ff, cat. 25.

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Abbreviations:

AJA *American Journal of Archaeology*
AM *Athenische Mitteilungen*
ASMA Aarhus Studies in Mediterranean Antiquity
DAFA Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan
JRA *Journal of Roman Archaeology*
LTUR *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae*
PBSA *Papers of the British School at Athens*

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Macedonian Palaces: Where King and City Meet

M.B.
Hatzopoulos

More than a hundred years ago, L. Heuzey, in discussing the palace of Palatit-sia-Vergina, which he had recently excavated, stressed that in Macedonia “l’architecture se lie si étroitement à la question des institutions, qu’il est impossible de l’en séparer”.¹ One may recognise a reminiscence of the great pioneer’s words in an important point that Inge Nielsen made a few years ago: “Since there can be no doubt that the palaces reflected the functions they were designed to encompass, it is important to study the kind of monarchy we are dealing with”.² Although some of the conclusions she has drawn from architecture concerning the evolution of Macedonian institutions have recently been challenged,³ there should be no doubt that she was fully justified in underlining the need for study of palatial architecture within its institutional environment. Indeed, the art of building, perhaps more than any other art, reflects the political ethos of a society.

In a Greek context the main problem to be discussed in a volume devoted to palaces is that of the correspondence between the urbanistic-architectural and the institutional relation of the *βασιλεύς* (and his residence) to the *πόλις*.

The first question concerns the location of the palace. The palaces of Vergina and of Pella were not built in the middle of nowhere, as for instance Versailles practically was, nor were they built in some obscure provincial town, as for almost a century was thought about the first of them.⁴ On the contrary they were both erected in each of the capital cities of the kingdom. Such does not seem to be the case of other palaces of contemporary civilisations, as for example those of Pasar-

gadai or Persepolis, which formed the first nucleus of these Persian capitals.⁵ When the palace of Vergina which we see today was constructed in the fourth century BC, Aigeai had been a royal residence for some three hundred years, and the settlement had existed for another three centuries before the coming of the Macedonians.⁶ Similarly, the existence of Pella, is attested in our literary sources since the end of the sixth century BC⁷ and its most ancient remains go back to the prehistoric period,⁸ whereas its palace does not predate the reign of Amyntas III at the earliest.⁹

The second question which should be asked is, to use Heuzey’s own words, “si les villes macédoniennes étaient des simples agglomérations d’habitants, ou bien si elles avaient été formées par cette association religieuse et politique des familles, sur laquelle reposait, chez les races gréco-latines, la constitution vivace et forte de la cité”.¹⁰ The great French archaeologist had no evidence whatsoever, either literary or epigraphic, to answer it. Moreover, did not an *argumentum e silentio*, “the rarity of inscriptions of the Hellenic period in Macedonia and above all the absence of any public act engraved on stone on the initiative of the cities”,¹¹ plead against the existence of civic constitutions? To take only two of the currently most popular manuals of Macedonian history in the English-speaking world and in Germany, the first does not even devote one line to the question of civic institutions,¹² whereas the other concludes that the Macedonians had no “democratic” experience.¹³ It should not come as a surprise then that a handbook of Greek history produced by “four leading authorities on the classical

world" and published by a prestigious university press as recently as 1999 asserts that there was no city life in Macedonia proper and that Aigeai and Pella were mere "dynastic centers without civic institutions", without making the slightest allusion to Philip II's contribution to the development of such institutions in Macedonia.¹⁴ Yet the evidence, mostly epigraphic, but also numismatic, which was lacking in Heuzey's days, has been accumulating during the past decades.¹⁵ Thus his intuition that "l'esprit d'association municipale était trop inhérent à l'organisation intime et originelle de la race grecque, pour que l'on n'en retrouvât pas quelques traces même dans les villes macédoniennes",¹⁶ proved more clear-sighted than the dogma of Macedonian "Stadtfeindlichkeit", which after being promulgated by U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff,¹⁷ J. Kaerst,¹⁸ F. Hampl,¹⁹ A. Heuss²⁰ and F. Schachermeyr,²¹ is still propounded by some obdurate scholars desperately clinging to past certainties.

Today, more than thirty laws and decrees from large cities such as Amphipolis, Kassandreia, Thessalonike, Beroia, Pella, or Pydna, or small and obscure ones, such as Gazoros, Anthemous or Morrylos, and dating from the middle of the fourth century BC to the end of Macedonian independence leave no doubt not only that Macedonia was subdivided into civic territories, but also that these civic units constituted self-governing bodies.²² The fact that, whereas in the Epidaurian list of *theorodokoi*, dating from 360, Macedonia appears as a unitary state with a single *theorodokos*, king Perdikkas III residing at Pella,²³ in the Nemean list, dating from the late twenties or tens of the fourth century BC, it is already subdivided into constituent cities appointing each its own *theorodokos*,²⁴ as well as the fact that the big administrative and military subdivisions (Upper Macedonia, Bottia, Amphaxitis etc.) appear first at the very beginning of Alexander the Great's reign,²⁵ leave no doubt that the decisive reform which shaped Late Classical and Hellenistic Macedonia was due to Philip II.²⁶ How-

ever, at the same time, these relatively late documents provide evidence for an earlier stage of civic self-government and the corresponding institutions.

Evidence from the fifth, but even more strongly from the early fourth century shows that the Macedonian kings had to face a growing independence movement from the cities of Macedonia, which under the reign of Amyntas III culminated in the secession of the two most important harbours of the realm: Pydna and Pella itself.²⁷ Such an independence movement is unthinkable not only without the social forces which promoted it, but also without the political structures within the cities which could embody and maintain it.

What were the constitutional organs of local self-government before Philip's reforms? After these reforms, as in most Greek cities so too in Macedonia proper, they consisted in a popular assembly, a council and a board of magistrates, around a chief magistrate. For the popular assembly the only term transmitted by our sources is *ἐκκλησία*. The council is termed *θούλή*, and its members, in all our epigraphic documents but one, *θούλενται*.²⁸ The exception is a letter of Philip V to the city of Dion, in which these are referred to as *πελειγᾶνες*.²⁹ All sorts of junior magistrates are attested (*ταμίαι*, *ἀγορανόμοι*, etc.), but the principal magistrates receive various titles in the different cities of the kingdom: they are called *ταγοί* at Mieza, Tyrissa (or Pella) and probably Beroia, *δικαιοτάι* at Thessalonike and simply *ἀρχοντες* at Amphipolis, Morrylos, Apollonia and Anthemous.³⁰ Finally, the chief magistrate seems to be always styled *ἐπιστάτης*.³¹ Now the dialectal, North-Western Greek term *peleiganes*, which also occurs with the same meaning in two Macedonian colonies of the Seleucid kingdom,³² cannot be a creation of Philip II's chancery that had deliberately introduced the Attic *koine* as the administrative language of the kingdom.³³ The same is true of the also dialectal term *tagos*, epigraphically attested only in Thessaly and in Central Greece (Phokis, Doris)³⁴ and

known in the literary tradition from Hesychius as a Macedonian term coupled with the dialectal term *ἀγά* (magistracy).³⁵ One may also wonder whether the term *epistates*, which was clearly borrowed from the Chalkidian *koinon* and Amphipolis,³⁶ is not the Attic substitute of the older dialectal term *σκοῖδος*, epigraphically attested in Upper Macedonia,³⁷ if Kalléris' derivation from the radical (*s*)*kow-* (= "observe", "oversee", cf. German "schauen") be accepted.³⁸ Be that as it may, the inescapable inference is that even before Philip II's reforms Macedonian urban settlements did possess civic institutions, albeit in a rudimentary form. For the Hellenistic period the epigraphic evidence leaves no doubt – despite H. Bengtson's pleading to the contrary –³⁹ that Pella was a fully autonomous city. It dated its civic documents by its eponymous priest, most probably of Asklepios, it voted its decrees, it managed its own finances and appointed its own *theorodokoi*.⁴⁰ The king communicated with it through letters addressed to its chief magistrate. Whenever he wanted something done in the city, he had – formally at least – to follow the appropriate civic procedures.⁴¹ Although we do not possess comparable epigraphic evidence from Aigeai, there is no reason to believe that matters stood differently there. In conclusion we may posit that the settlements in which the fourth-century Macedonian palaces were erected either possessed full-blown civic institutions, if their foundation be placed after Philip II's reforms, or at least already enjoyed some rudimentary civic life, if the palaces were indeed raised before his reign.

Having described the type of settlements in which the Macedonian palaces were built, we may proceed to examine the physical relation between the cities and the royal abodes.

Excavations have not yet revealed the city plan of Aigeai.⁴² Given though the long history of the first Macedonian capital, a Hippodamean plan is not to be expected. Nor do we know anything about the occupation of the area south of and above the palace. Nevertheless, it is

certain that it was not included in the fortified area of the acropolis. The excavated constructions nearest to it are the theatre and the sanctuary of Eukleia. The location of the palace midway between the acropolis at the southernmost district and the tomb of Romaios, situated outside the fortified citadel, but at the same time on a terrace at a higher level than the other public buildings, reflects the ambiguous situation of the king vis-à-vis the city: the central figure in the city, but at the same time above it to the point of becoming external to it.

Mutatis mutandis, a similar picture emerges from the still incomplete excavations at Pella. There too the palace is not only distinct from the *arx* on the Phakos island,⁴³ but it is also situated at the opposite, northern, end of the city.⁴⁴ Moreover, it is completely integrated into the grid of the Hippodamean city plan, occupying an east-west front of eight modules and a north-south one of at least four.⁴⁵ It is thus fairly certain that its planning was contemporary with the extension of the city in the middle of the fourth century BC and that both should be attributed to Philip II.⁴⁶

The originality of the position of the palaces of Macedonia vis-à-vis its capital cities becomes evident, when it is compared to solutions adopted by other contemporary monarchical regimes facing similar situations. B. Funck has justly stressed the pertinence of Dionysios I's *τυπαρνεῖα* erected on the small island of Ortygia.⁴⁷ The Syracusan tyrant, "perceiving that the Island was the strongest section of the city and could be easily defended, he divided it from the rest of the city by an extensive wall, and in this he set high towers at close intervals ... He also constructed on the Island at great expense a fortified acropolis as a place of refuge in case of immediate need, and within its wall he enclosed the dockyards which are connected with the small harbour that is known as Laccium".⁴⁸ It is obvious that such a palace on the acropolis, separated from the rest of the town by strong walls and towers, is the extreme

opposite of the Macedonian palaces of Aigeai and Pella, integrated as they are into the urban tissue of the two capitals. Dionysios' fortified palace was so identified with the tyrannical regime that Timoleon's first act after the liberation of Syracuse was to raze it to the ground.⁴⁹

In Ptolemaic Alexandria, the royal quarters constituted "another city"⁵⁰ within the city occupying "one-fourth or even one-third of the whole circuit of the city"⁵¹ and included a fortified citadel.⁵² Moreover, the palace, or rather the palaces, disposed of their own harbours, just like Dionysios' *tyranneia* at Syracuse: "Below these (the inner royal palaces) lies the harbour that was dug by the hand of man and is hidden from view, the private property of the kings, as also Antirrhodos, an isle lying off the artificial harbour, which has both a royal palace and a small harbour".⁵³

Very little is known about the Seleucid palace of Antioch, except that like the Syracusan *tyranneia* it was built on an island on the Orontes and was fortified.⁵⁴ The use by Polybios of the verb *ἀποδιδράσκω* in order to describe the simple fact of Antiochos Epiphanes' going out of the court to some other quarter of the town⁵⁵ underlines that the palace was a *corpus separatum*.

The distance that separated the royal palaces from the other parts of the capital cities of the Ptolemies and the Seleucids may perhaps be explained by the sense of insecurity felt by these dynasties founded so to speak in *partibus infidelium*. This, however, cannot apply to the Attalid kings nested in the reassuring environment of the *μαλαιιόθεν ἐλληνική* city of Pergamon.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, they erected their palace on the highest point of the city's acropolis. To use W. Hoepfner's sober but accurate description "Sie waren von einer eigenen Wehrmauer umgeben und deutlich von der Wohnstadt abgesetzt".⁵⁷ Perhaps for more security or simply in order to underline the distance separating the kings from the city, the cliffs outside the acropolis walls were originally meant to remain free of constructions.⁵⁸

How is the contrast between Aigeai and Pella on the one hand and Syracuse, Alexandria, Antioch and Pergamon on the other to be explained? Our host, Inge Nielsen, suggested an interpretation in terms of the difference between the national kingship of metropolitan Macedonia and the personal monarchies of the Hellenistic East.⁵⁹ But she laid herself open to criticism by further suggesting that "the enormous royal complex from Philip V's time in Pella 'represented' an increasingly personal or absolute kingdom".⁶⁰ In effect there is no evidence at all that Philip V's kingdom was any less national or more personal than that of his predecessors. On the contrary, it seems that by his reforms he extended the autonomy of the cities and the regions of his kingdom, which under his rule begin to issue their own coinage.⁶¹ Nevertheless, in my opinion, Inge Nielsen's intuition is basically correct. What then of "the enormous royal complex" of Pella? Firstly, as the excavator prudently stressed: "Das grösste Problem der Ausgrabungen des Palastes stellt die Datierung dar".⁶² Nevertheless and despite Heermann's and Hoepfner's assertions,⁶³ unless there is proof to the contrary, I am inclined to accept her approximate dating of buildings I and II in the second half of the fourth and of building III in the beginning of the third century.⁶⁴ In that case there would be no connexion at all between Philip V and the main construction phases of the palace of Pella. Secondly, I wonder whether the palace of Pella is really so enormous. The palace of Aigeai measured some 8.300 m²,⁶⁵ in a city the surface of which certainly does not exceed 360.000 m².⁶⁶ W. Hoepfner estimates the surface occupied by the palace complex of Pella at 75.000 m²,⁶⁷ but building I measures approximately only 7.500 m². If we add to that the two other buildings II and V united by the same monumental façade, which formed together the palace proper, we should hardly exceed a figure of 25.000 m²,⁶⁸ three times the size of the palace of Aigeai, but in a city, the surface of which is reckoned at 2.500.000 m²,⁶⁹ that is to

say, which was at least seven times larger than the old capital. The really enormous but unfinished building III, the stylobate of which measured 89 m, constitutes a particular case which has to be explained.⁷⁰ Anyhow, the size of the palace of Pella should not be judged independently of that of other dwellings in the same city. For instance, the house of the abduction of Helen measures about 2.350 m² and that of Dionysos about 3.160 m².⁷¹

A vivid description by Livy, certainly going back to Polybios, of the quarrel between the two sons of Philip V, Perseus and Demetrios, which as far as I know has gone unnoticed, helps to better visualise these stately mansions, the splendour of which has been recently revealed.⁷² After the purification of the army and a mock battle, which exacerbated the enmity between the two brothers, Perseus and Demetrios, instead of partaking in the same banquet, organised separate ones, each in his own house. It is thus revealed that the royal princes do not live at the palace, where they go the following day, but have separate establishments in the residential quarters of the town. The parts of these mansions which are mentioned are the *ianua* (*θύρα*), the *vestibulum* (*πρόθυρον*), the *triclinium* (*ἀνδρῶν*) and, most interesting, the upper storey and its windows in a sentence, which is worth citing: "He (Perseus) ordered the door to be bolted in order to make the affair look serious, and from the upper part of the house and the windows that faced the street he kept the revellers, as if they were coming to murder him, from approaching the door" (*ianuam obserari iubet, et ex parte superiore aedium versisque in viam fenestrarum comisatores, tamquam ad caudem suam venientes, aditu ianuae arcet*).⁷³ In the same passage there is also a suggestive reference to the palace. The day after the banquet Perseus goes to the palace to see his father, who receives him first in a spacious place, where the king, much worried because of the quarrel, walks up and down (*inambulavit*).⁷⁴ Could not the Latin verb be taken to suggest that the scene is taking place in an *ambulatio*, a covered prome-

nade,⁷⁵ such as the ones offered by the porticoes of the court of building I? This impression is strengthened by the fact that when Demetrios and Philip's two friends whom the king summoned arrived, "he retired into the interior part of the palace" (*secessit in partem interiorem*),⁷⁶ which may correspond to the "privater Bereich" situated north of the peristyle of building I according to Hoepfner.⁷⁷

If all is told, the relation of the palace to the capital city is no more and no less than the sensible image of the relation of the king to the citizen body. According to Herodotus the Median king Deiokes was the first to wall himself in his fortified palace and to establish that nobody would have access to the king, that all communications with his subjects should be carried out through messengers and that the king should be seen by no one.⁷⁸ This rule was perpetuated by the Persian kings, an exception being made only after the assassination of the false Smerdis, when the privilege of penetrating into the royal quarters without being introduced by an *εἰσαγγελεύς* was granted to the seven conspirators.⁷⁹ Similarly, the Persian king normally dined alone, isolated from his guests by a curtain.⁸⁰ No wonder the author of *De Mondo* describes the Persian king as "invisible to all".⁸¹ One could hardly imagine a more complete antithesis to the traditional ethos of Greek kingship. Arkesilaos, king of Cyrene met his death in the agora of Barke according to Herodotus, where he was lounging in company with his father-in-law.⁸² The Greek kings, be they Spartan, Epirote or Macedonian, ate and drank with their officers, companions and friends, in a spirit of freedom and essential equality, at the extreme opposite of the Persian court etiquette, which in Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* animates Kleitos' famous taunt to the Macedonian king, urging him "to speak out freely what he wished to say, or else not to invite to supper men who were free and spoke their minds, but to live with Barbarians and slaves, who would do obeisance to his white tunic and Persian girdle".⁸³ Xenophon too devotes a whole

chapter of his *Agesilaos* to the contrasting portraits of the Persian and the Spartan kings. The first points he makes concern visibility and accessibility: “In the first place the Persian thought his dignity required that he should be seldom seen: Agesilaus delighted to be constantly visible, believing that, whereas secrecy was becoming to an ugly career, the light shed lustre on a life of noble purpose. In the second place, the one prided himself on being difficult of approach: the other was glad to make himself accessible to all ...”⁸⁴ Philip II was affectionately remembered by the Macedonians for his moderation and, above all, his accessibility (*κοινός*).⁸⁵ There is good reason to believe that at the root of the Macedonians’ alienation from Alexander the Great was his increasing inaccessibility. Phylarchos⁸⁶ and Aelian⁸⁷ describe the overwhelming ceremonial of the royal audiences in Asia, concluding that the number of his courtiers was so great that no one dared to approach Alexander. Aelian adds the comment that “so great was the awe of him, whom character and Fortune had elevated to tyrannical rule”. It is not certain that such pomp and circumstance were restricted to audiences for Asiatics, as Polyainos asserts.⁸⁸ Otherwise it would be difficult to understand the recriminations aired by Kleitos during the fatal brawl that led to his death: “We pronounce those happy who are already dead, and did not live to see us Macedonians thrashed with Median rods, or begging Persians in order to get audience with our king”.⁸⁹

One gets the impression that the traditions of Alexander’s court were perpetuated in the successor states of the Seleucids and the Ptolemies. Why, otherwise, would Antiochos Epiphanes’ going out of the palace be termed “escaping”, or the fact that he visited other parts of the city with one or two companions deemed a scandal?⁹⁰ Similarly, the success of the more or less protracted concealment of Ptolemy

Philopator’s death, recalling to memory the analogous case of Smerdis,⁹¹ finds its explanation in the incidental description of the royal quarters, which illustrates the inaccessibility of the king: galleries and no less than three consecutive gates separated the public from the inner palace.⁹² But it is the downfall of Demetrios Poliorcetes which best exemplifies the distance separating national from personal kingship, Aigeai and Pella from Antioch and Alexandria.

Demetrios, along with his father Antigonos, was the first to assume a purely personal kingship and to reign as such over a colonial empire.⁹³ When he became master of Macedonia in 294 BC, he continued in his old ways as if he did not reign over free Macedonians but over Orientals accustomed to despotic regimes.⁹⁴ It was not only the luxury of his attire and of his court and his harsh and abrupt manners that provoked the indignation of his subjects, but also his inaccessibility. Instead of being *εὐπαραίτητος* and *δημοτικός*, as was expected from Macedonian kings and as later Antigonids did not fail to show themselves,⁹⁵ he was *δυσόμιλος* and *δυσπρόσοδος*, and even when he took the trouble to mingle with the simple people of Pella, he refused to hear their complaints or threw the petitions which they handed to him into the Axios.⁹⁶

I think that we do not have to look any further for the king who in the beginning of the third century BC started building the really enormous building III of the palace of Pella, but was unable to finish it and the construction of which his successors were unwilling to pursue. This king was most probably Demetrios Poliorcetes and thus the palace of Pella, far from refuting, may well confirm Inge Nielsen’s intuition about the correspondence between different styles of kingship and types of royal abode.

Notes

NOTE 1

Heuzey & Daumet 1876, 206.

NOTE 2

Nielsen 1996, 209.

NOTE 3

Etienne 1998, 352-55.

NOTE 4

Heuzey's conjecture that the site of Palatit-sia (Vergina) could be identified with the practically unknown city of Balla was uncritically repeated by almost all scholars until N.G.L. Hammond (Hammond 1970, 65-67) proposed and M. Andronicos (cf. Andronicos 1984, 55-83) established that it should be identified with Aigai. For discussion of an unfortunate attempt to rehabilitate Heuzey's proposition, cf. Hatzopoulos, 1996c, 264-69.

NOTE 5

On the construction of the Persian royal palaces, cf. Briant 1996, 98-99. Cf. Boucharat in this volume.

NOTE 6

The "Phrygian" period of Vergina begins at about 1000 and lasts until 700 BC (cf. Andronicos 1984, 25) and a succession of seven kings from Perdikkas I to Alexander I (Hdt. 8.137.1) implies that the foundation of the kingdom should be placed at the beginning of the seventh century BC.

NOTE 7

Hekataios, *FGrH* 1, F 144; cf. Hammond 1972, 147.

NOTE 8

Cf. Papakonstantinou-Diamantourou 1971, 5-7.

NOTE 9

Hatzopoulos 1985a, 42-44; cf. Ginouvès 1993, 89.

NOTE 10

Heuzey & Daumet 1876, 207.

NOTE 11

Heuzey & Daumet 1876, 207.

NOTE 12

Borza 1992 (2nd edn.).

NOTE 13

Errington 1986, 109.

NOTE 14

Pomeroy *et al.* 1999, 373.

NOTE 15

This evidence has been collected in Hatzopoulos 1996b, and particularly I, 127-65 and II, 54-110, nos. 36-93; cf. *id.* 1997, 7-25.

NOTE 16

Heuzey & Daumet 1876, 207.

NOTE 17

von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1923 (2nd edn.), 154.

NOTE 18

Kaerst 1926, 177.

NOTE 19

Hampl 1934, 78.

NOTE 20

Heuss 1963 (2nd edn.), 279-80.

NOTE 21

Schachermeyr 1944, 17 and 29.

NOTE 22

See n. 15, above.

NOTE 23

IGV 1.94.

NOTE 24

Miller 1988, 147-63; cf. Hatzopoulos 1996b, I, 472-76.

NOTE 25

Cf. Arr., *Anab.* 1.2.5.

NOTE 26

Hatzopoulos 1996b, I 231-60; cf. *id.* 1997, 22-23.

NOTE 27

Hatzopoulos 1985b, 248-53; *id.* 1996b, I, 465-72.

NOTE 28

Hatzopoulos 1996b, I, 139-49.

NOTE 29

Bulletin Epigraphique 2000, 453, 4; cf. Hatzopoulos 1999, 1195-96.

NOTE 30

Hatzopoulos 1996b, I, 149-65.

NOTE 31

Hatzopoulos 1996b, I, 156-60 and 372-96.

NOTE 32

Roussel, 1942-1943, (Laodikeia) 21-32; Polyb. 5.54.10 (Seleukeia on the Tigris).

NOTE 33

Hatzopoulos 1996a, 35; cf. the *diagramma* and the letter of Philip II which have come down to us, Hatzopoulos 1996b, II, 23-25, nos. 4-5.

NOTE 34

Helly 1995, 19-38.

NOTE 35

Cf. Hatzopoulos 1999, 1196-98.

NOTE 36

Hatzopoulos 1996a, 37.

NOTE 37

Rizakis & Touratsoglou 1985, I 74.

NOTE 38

Kalléris 1954, 262-64.

NOTE 39

Bengtson 1954-55, 463.

NOTE 40
Hatzopoulos 1996b, I, 139–40.

NOTE 41
Hatzopoulos 1999, 1190–91.

NOTE 42
For the latest synthesis on the archaeological discoveries, see Drougou-Paliadeli 1999.
Cf. Saatsoglou-Paliadeli in this volume.

NOTE 43
See Papakonstantinou-Diamantourou 1971, 62–63, with references.

NOTE 44
Siganidou 1996, 144–47.

NOTE 45
Cf. Hoepfner 1996, 27, fig. 21.

NOTE 46
Strab. 7, frg. 20, states unambiguously that the extension of Pella was due to Philip II, which is precisely the period assigned by the excavator to the façade of the palace (Siganidou 1996, 147).

NOTE 47
Funck 1996, 44.

NOTE 48
Diod. Sic. 14.7.1–3 (C.H. Oldfather's translation in the Loeb series).

NOTE 49
Diod. Sic. 16.69.4; Nep. *Timol.* 3.3; Plut. *Tim.* 22.

NOTE 50
Achilles Tatius, *Leuc.* 5.1.88: ἄλλην πόλιν.

NOTE 51
Strab. 17.1.8.

NOTE 52
Cf. Nielsen 1994, 131.

NOTE 53
Strab. 17.1.9 (H.L. Jones' translation in the Loeb series).

NOTE 54
Cf. Nielsen 1994, 113–14.

NOTE 55
Polyb. 26.1.

NOTE 56
Cf. Xen. *An.* 7.8; *Hell.* 3.1.6.

NOTE 57
Hoepfner 1996, 17.

NOTE 58
Hoepfner 1996, 17.

NOTE 59
Nielsen 1996, 209.

NOTE 60
Nielsen 1996, 209.

NOTE 61
Touratsoglou 1993, 40–41; cf. Hatzopoulos 1997, 25.

NOTE 62
Siganidou 1996, 147.

NOTE 63
Heermann 1986) 226–31; Hoepfner 1996, 27.

NOTE 64
Siganidou 1996, 147.

NOTE 65
Hoepfner 1996, 9.

NOTE 66
Phaklaris 1997, 70, estimates the length of the city walls at 2.500 m.

NOTE 67
Hoepfner 1996, 27.

NOTE 68
Cf. Hoepfner 1996, 29 and fig. 22 and 23 on p. 28.

NOTE 69
Touratsoglou 1995, 138.

NOTE 70
Siganidou 1996, 146.

NOTE 71
Makaronas & Giouri 1989, 18.

NOTE 72
Livy, 40.6.1–16.3; cf. Polyb. 23.11.

NOTE 73
Livy, 40.7.8.

NOTE 74
Livy, 40.8.5.

NOTE 75
Cf. Ginouvès 1998, 166.

NOTE 76
Livy, 40.8.6.

NOTE 77
Hoepfner 1996, 29; cf. Nielsen 1994, 92.

NOTE 78
Hdt. 1.99.1.

NOTE 79
Hdt. 3.84.2.

NOTE 80
Herakleides apud Athenaeum 4.145b–d.

NOTE 81
Arist. *[Mund.]* 398a 14.

NOTE 82

Hdt. 4.164.4. One may also recall that the younger half-brother of the Macedonian king Archelaos was drowned in a well as he was chasing a goose (Pl., *Grg.* 471)! -which, as Heuzey (Heuzey & Daumet 1876, 209) stresses, shows the simplicity of the Macedonian court.

NOTE 83

Plut. *Alex.* 51.3 (B. Perrin's translation in the Loeb series).

NOTE 84

Xen. *Ages.* 9; cf. Funck 1996, 49-50.

NOTE 85

Plut. *Dem.* 42.6.

NOTE 86

Phylarchos, *FGrH* 81, F 41.

NOTE 87

Ael. *VH* 9.3.

NOTE 88

Polyaenus 4.3.24.

NOTE 89

Plut. *Alex.* 51.1.

NOTE 90

Polyb. 26.1.

NOTE 91

Cf. Walbank 1967, 436.

NOTE 92

Polyb. 15.30.6-8.

NOTE 93

Diod. Sic. 20.53.2; Plut. *Dem.* 17-18.

NOTE 94

Plut. *Dem.* 41.6-8; cf. Tarn 1913, 90-91.

NOTE 95

Cf. Plut. *Aem.* 8; Polyb. 10.26.1-2 (in spite of Polybius' comments).

NOTE 96

Plut. *Dem.* 42.4-5.

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Abbreviations

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CRAI *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres*
REG *Revue des Études Grecques*

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The Palace of Vergina-Aegae and its Surroundings

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Saaatsoglou-
Paliadeli

The palace at Vergina, on the northern slopes of the Pierian mountains, is still the most impressive of architectural remains at the archaeological site, which coincides with the location of Aegae. We owe its discovery and short investigation to L. Heuzey and H. Daumet -who excavated part of its eastern side- in 1861, and its complete revelation to the archaeologists of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. The recent re-investigation of the *tholos* by the author of the present article aims to further the understanding of the ruins of the palace, which may be illuminated also by the new material evidence from the surrounding area, a result of the systematic excavation at the ancient city.

1. The Palace and its function

Impressive for the high quality of its construction,¹ its architectural design,² its imposing location,³ and its extraordinary dimensions,⁴ the palace at Vergina⁵ has always been related to the Macedonian royal family; yet, its function has been highly affected by and strongly dependent on the identification of the archaeological site with a specific Macedonian city (Fig. 1).⁶

Leon Heuzey and H. Daumet, choosing finally, among other possibilities (of which Aegae was one)⁷ to identify the archaeological site with Balla,⁸ an unimportant and poorly attested Macedonian city in the district of ancient Pieria,⁹ interpreted

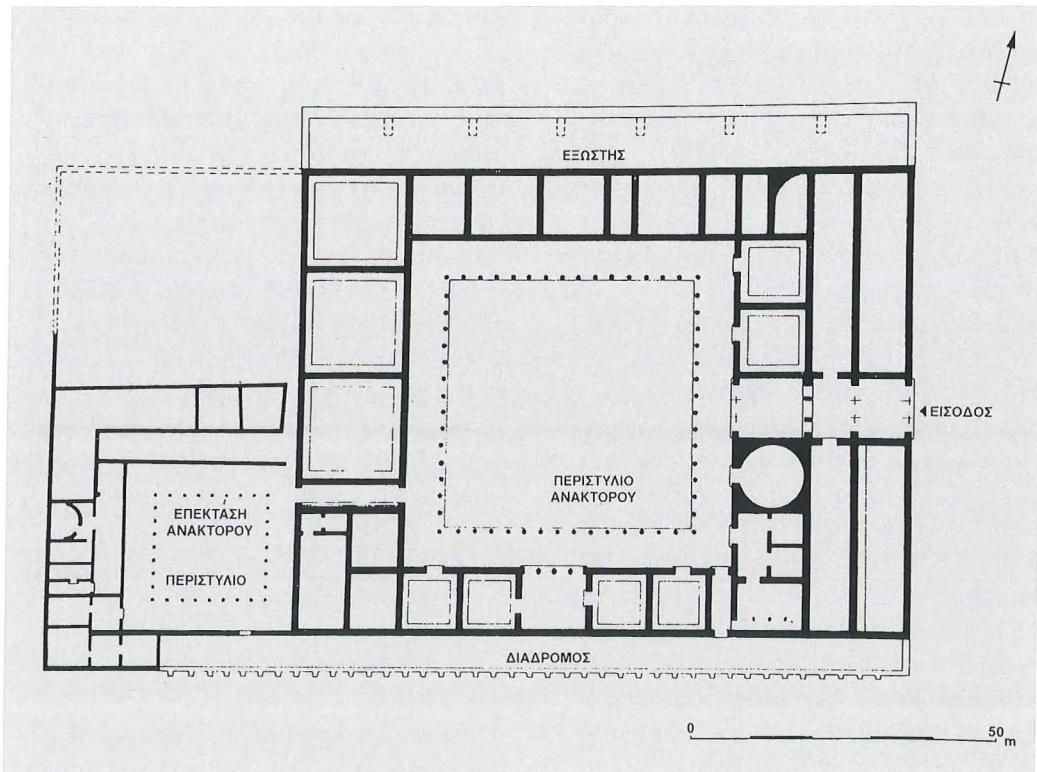


Fig. 1. Plan of the palace at Vergina-Aegae.
(After J. Travlos).

the building as a “*prytanée royale*”,¹⁰ to conclude that “le bel arrangement des dispositions intérieures, aussi bien que l’élégance de la décoration architecturale, ne paraîtront que mieux justifiés, si l’on admet avec nous que le palais de la cité est en même temps ici un édifice royal, un lieu de résidence pour le chef de la nation”.¹¹

The relation of the palace to the royal family was also recognized by the later excavators of Vergina: despite his support to the Balla theory,¹² K.A. Rhomaios preserved the term *palace* to characterize the monumental building, but without explaining its existence in the area.¹³ With no alternative suggestion for the identification of the site, G. Bakalakis and M. Andronikos, were rather reluctant in 1961 to combine the “Balla theory” with the existence of a palace in the area. They preferred to speak of an unknown Macedonian city, and concluded by suggesting that the palace of Vergina should rather be understood as a “royal summer resort”.¹⁴

N. G. L. Hammond was actually the first to approach the problem from a fresh point of view:¹⁵ using as a starting-point the disassociation of Edessa from Aegae,¹⁶ in 1968 he had a sound basis for arguing, on historical and topographical grounds, that the archaeological site of Vergina should be disconnected from Balla and identified with Aegae, the old Macedonian capital.¹⁷ He was, thus, the first to propose a direct relation of the palace to the Macedonian dynasty. If the site was to be identified with the cradle of the Macedonian kingdom, the monumental building could be easily explained as a true royal residence, occasionally used –after the transference of the administrative center of the kingdom to Pella- not as a summer resort but whenever members of the royal family had to return to the old Macedonian capital. The marriage of Philip II’s daughter Cleopatra to Alexander of Epirus at Aegae, the king’s own assassination during the wedding celebrations, and the days which followed Alexander’s rise to the Macedonian throne are well attested in Diodorus’ detailed description.¹⁸

The excavation of the Great Tumulus by Manolis Andronikos and his team between 1976 and 1980¹⁹ offered supportive archaeological evidence, and the archaeological results which followed vindicated Hammond’s suggestion:

1. the broken tombstones, unearthed in the debris of the huge burial mount in 1976 were directly related by the excavator to the destruction of the cemetery at Aegae, when Pyrrhus, king of Epirus established a Gallic garrison in the old capital²⁰ in 274/3 BC.²¹ The publication of the tombstones supported a date from the late 5th to the early 3rd century BC.²²

2. the discovery of the un-looted Macedonian tombs in the following years²³ justified the importance of the archaeological site as a royal burial ground at least for the members of the Temenid dynasty.²⁴

3. the dedicatory inscription of the early Hellenistic period to Herakles Patroos (the mythical ancestor of the Temenid dynasty, according to Herodotus and Thucydides)²⁵, which was revealed in the *tholos* in 1970,²⁶ thus proved to be an important epigraphic evidence for the function of the building as a true royal residence, even after Alexander’s death.²⁷

To conclude: seen from a fresh point of view, the archaeological site of Vergina gained in historical importance and the excavators were encouraged to continue researching the neighboring area for further material evidence that would contribute to the knowledge of the town-planning of the ancient city. The recent archaeological results,²⁸ mainly the discovery of the theatre²⁹ and part of the agora of the ancient city,³⁰ show that the palace at Vergina is not an isolated monumental construction in the middle of nowhere, but an important part of a complex of buildings, which foreshadows the conception of the Hellenistic *basileia*.³¹

A. New archaeological evidence from the Tholos

Despite its long period of investigation, the palace of Vergina has never been fully



Fig. 2. The exedra in the Tholos. Actual condition.

published.³² Certain issues referring either to major questions, such as its dating,³³ or minor issues, such as the study of its architectural components and their details,³⁴ are still waiting for a full reconsideration.

A short campaign at the tholos of the palace at Vergina, in the search for new material evidence that would lead to the understanding of its plan and the furnishing of its interior, has been initiated in 1998, by the author of this article.³⁵ The work has just begun and it will probably take a long time to complete. However, the first results of our current investigation, which was primarily focused on the re-examination of the *exédra* ("sorte de tribune en marbre"), which Heuzey and Daumet revealed more than a hundred years ago,³⁶ suggest a later date of its construction and a different approach to the issues related to the circular room and its function. It seems that the tholos in the palace at Vergina – where apart from the dedicatory inscriptions, votive reliefs were also found³⁷ – was neither a banquet

hall,³⁸ nor a bath,³⁹ or a throne hall,⁴⁰ and certainly not a room with a multiple use,⁴¹ but a room which served the religious tasks of its royal inhabitants.⁴²

1. The form and dating of the exedra

The rectangular exedra which Heuzey and Daumet revealed in 1861⁴³ was placed obliquely to the entrance of the *tholos* and consisted of two marble steps bearing traces of separate pillars on the corners (Fig. 2):⁴⁴ "Mais le détail le plus surprenant que présent cette salle ronde est la présence d'une sorte de tribune en marbre, adossée à la muraille et orientée vers le sud, dans une position oblique et tout à fait irrégulière par rapport à la porte d'entrée. Ce sont deux marches superposés, dont on a évidé la face antérieure de manière à laisser aux angles des espèces de bras ou de socles saillants". When the Aristotle University excavation was initiated in 1938, those marble steps were already absent, along with the marble threshold which Heuzey and Daumet found *in situ*

at the entrance to the circular room.⁴⁵ It can thus be concluded that the Greek refugees who fled from the Pontus in 1922 and built what is now the modern village at Vergina⁴⁶, removed them in order to re-use them as building material for their houses, a practice extensively used also in other buildings of the area.

What we found in place during the 1998 campaign was a non-canonical construction,⁴⁷ of a roughly rectangular shape placed obliquely to the E-W axis of the room and consisting of irregularly piled limestone pieces of broken architectural elements. Since the construction has the same orientation and approximately the same dimensions as the *exedra*, which Heuzey and Daumet saw in place, it can be safely concluded that it belongs to its foundation, which was never uncovered by the French excavators.⁴⁸

The construction of the foundation of the *exedra* with pieces of broken architectural elements suggests a later date for its construction than that of the erection of the palace. Our recent investigation has shown that a, the *exedra* should not be related to the original furnishing of the *tholos*, and b, that it therefore should not be used as evidence for the interpretation of the circular room.⁴⁹

To conclude: the remains of what Heuzey and Daumet understood as part of the original furnishing of the circular room must be attributed to a later intervention,⁵⁰ which presupposes the destruction of the original building in the mid-second century BC and suggests a late Hellenistic reconstruction, meant to accommodate worshipping demands once more; it obviously belongs to a period of decline, which postdates the Roman occupation.⁵¹

The only pieces which can be securely related to the original furnishing of the circular room are the small rectangular bases partly removed but still approximately close to their original positions, and which seem to correspond with Daumet's "série de dés en pierre, que je regarde comme ayant été destinés a porter une

décoration ou un revêtement d' une certaine saillie".⁵²

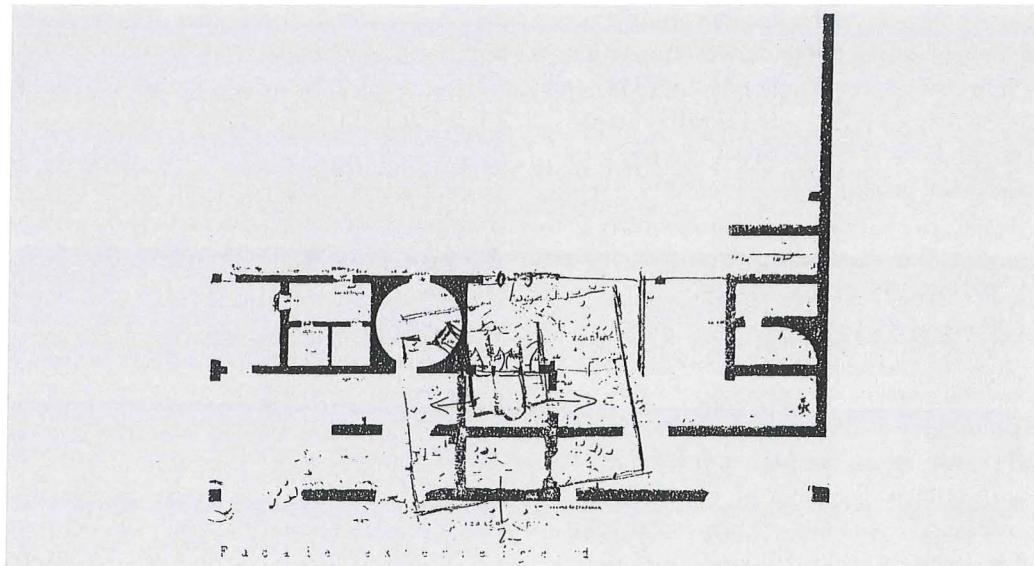
Heuzey and Daumet mention pieces of a richly ornate pillar which was removed from the area around the *exedra* : "Près de ce degrés (of the marble *exedra*) nos ouvriers ont tiré de terre les fragments à demi calcinés d' un étroit montant de marbre, sorte de pilier votif, qui semble avoir appartenu à la décoration de la même tribune. Les riches ornements ioniques qui le surchargent portent encore le caractère hellénique, mais l'exécution en est trop négligée pour appartenir à une époque aussi haute que la construction principale. Cette tribune, ainsi décorée et certainement ajoutée après coup, était-elle destinée à porter un autel, une statue ou un siège? Son orientation particulière tenait-elle à une cause religieuse?".⁵³

Marble pieces bearing the same decoration were revealed during an emergency excavation in 1970, in front of the area where the *exedra* of the French excavators was once standing.⁵⁴ Two of them bear dedicatory inscriptions to Herakles Patroos and they are now kept at Vergina, awaiting to be restored and studied.⁵⁵ Since they are identical in decoration with the ones taken to the Louvre,⁵⁶ they should be attributed to the same monument or monuments, but not necessarily related to the *exedra*, as Heuzey and Daumet suggested.⁵⁷

B. The propylon

The monumental propylon, placed in the middle of the eastern part of the building and consisting of three successive rooms, was completely uncovered and extensively studied by the French excavators (Figs. 3).⁵⁸ I. Travlos reconstructed the inner side of the propylon with two Ionic pillars with attached semi-columns, thus accepting Daumet's reconstruction.⁵⁹ Later plans of the palace differ in marking as unknown the form of the supports of the inner side⁶⁰ of the palace. Our short investigation in the *tholos* offered further evidence which justifies the reconstruction of the inner (western) side of the propylon with two impressive supports *in antis*.⁶¹

Fig. 3. Plan of the palace.
(After Heuzey-Daumet).



Among the building material used for the foundations of the exedra some pieces belong to the lower part of Ionic semi-columns, attached to both sides of a rectangular pillar. It seems that the limestone pieces, which were revealed during our current investigation, belong to the same architectural complex, since their lower profiles and dimensions leave no doubt that they are similar to the pieces of the *grande ordre ionique* taken by the French excavators to the Louvre⁶²: "Cet ordre est le plus parfait et le plus original de ceux qui ont été retrouvés à Palatitza. Ce n'est pas proprement un ordre de colonnes, mais un ordre d'élégants piliers, portant, adossées et engagées juste à moitié, deux demi-colonnes ioniques.... De nombreux morceaux de ces colonnes adossées étaient déjà entassés sur le sol du plateau, ou ils formaient principalement le mur d'enclos de l'église⁶³. Mais c'est à nos fouilles que nous devons d'avoir trouvé plusieurs fragments portant les doubles bases et surtout une pierre unique, qui nous montre l'avancement des deux chapiteaux adossés. Ce précieux débris, avec l'une des doubles bases correspondantes, fait aujourd'hui partie de collections du Louvre".⁶⁴

Heuzey and Daumet attributed these fine pieces of architectural design to the inner façade of the *propylon* and reconstructed it accordingly. The identity in form and dimensions of the new pieces

with those in the Louvre suggests that they, too, should be attributed to the inner (western) side of the propylon, which can be thus reconstructed with two pillars *in antis*, bearing semi-Ionic columns on two sides, as Heuzey and Daumet originally suggested.⁶⁵

The reconstruction of the inner side of the propylon in this way is further suggested by a similar architectural conception in the southern part of the palace; in an area, that is, which was never investigated by the French excavators but revealed much later during the Greek investigations: the entrance to the banqueting halls consists of three pillars *in antis* preserving their lower parts *in situ*; identical in form and close in dimensions to the ones of the propylon, they support the solution applied for the propylon and reflect the same high aesthetic principles of the architects who designed the palace.

Conclusion

The discovery of all these pieces around and below the level of the foundation of the exedra in the tholos indicates a deposit of ruined monuments resulting from a massive destruction, most probably due to the Roman invasion, just like the deposits revealed in the area of the agora of the ancient city.⁶⁶ The conditions for their discovery during our recent campaign sug-

gest that future investigation may offer further material evidence which may contribute to our knowledge of the history of the palace, placed in an area which must have preserved its sanctity up to the Byzantine period.⁶⁷

2. Monuments in the surrounding area

A. The theatre

The theatre of Vergina was discovered in 1982 just below the palace, and it has recently been presented in a preliminary report by Dr. Stella Drougou.⁶⁸ Built in an area sloping towards the north and the west, it used the natural slope in its eastern part, while a retaining wall had to be erected in the west, in order to accommodate the artificially shaped western part of the *koilon*.⁶⁹ While there is no indication of a second *diazoma*, the *koilon* is divided by narrow corridors into eight *kerkides*. There was no traces of stone seats apart from those on the first row. The probably wooden structure would accommodate no more than 3000 people.⁷⁰

The orchestra, which had a diameter of 28.44 m and an altar of Dionysos, *thymele*, in the centre, is among the largest known.⁷¹ Of the *parodoi* only the eastern one is preserved in a fairly good condition. Its rather peculiar shape, forming a small square court, has been explained by its being especially designed to accommodate a monumental entrance directly related to the palace.⁷² The stage-building is only poorly preserved, but its reconstructed plan indicates that the theatre of Vergina is among the earliest known.⁷³ A wall excavated behind and under this stage probably belongs to an even earlier date, indicating the existence of an older stage-building.⁷⁴

The dating of the theatre to the third quarter of the 4th century BC and its close architectural relationship with the palace suggest that both buildings were conceived as part of the same unit and support the dating of the palace to the same period⁷⁵

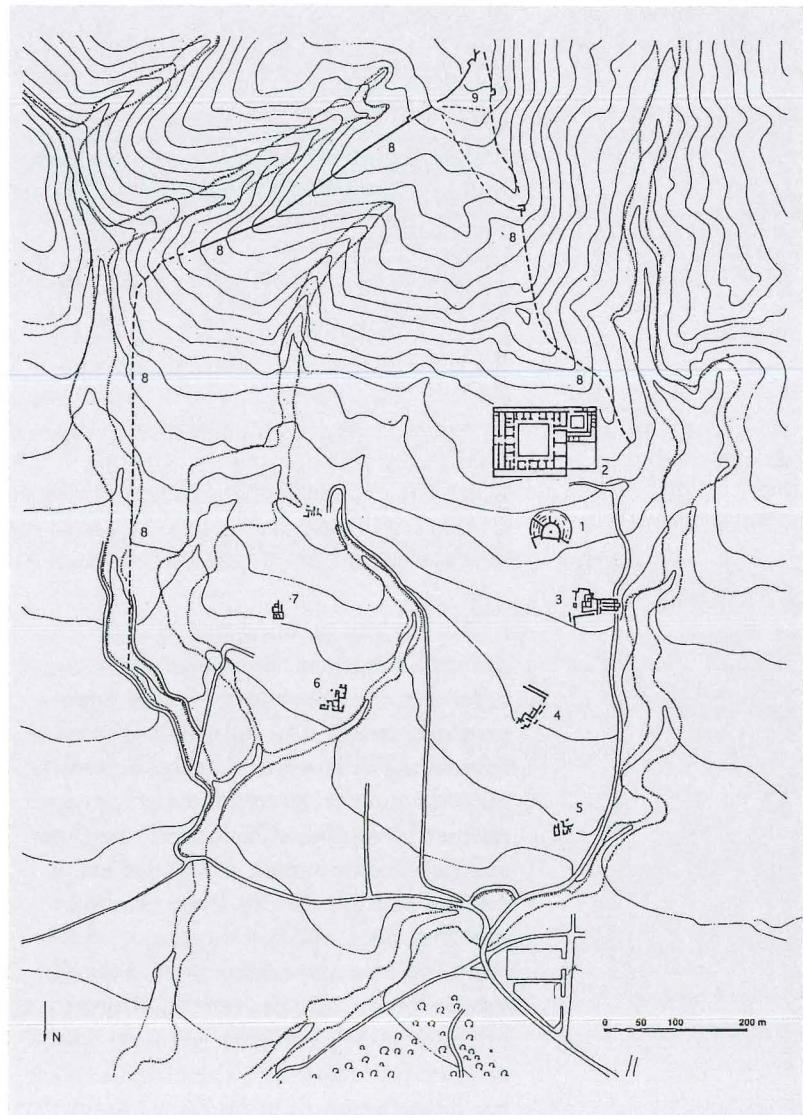


Fig. 4. Vergina-Aegae. The topography of the site.

Contrary to E.N. Borza who questioned the function of the theatre at Vergina as a true theatre,⁷⁶ the main characteristics of the building do not support any other interpretation. It seems that the conservative Macedonian society preserved the originally multifunctional character of the ancient Greek theatre, as a gathering place not only for theatrical events but also for political ones.⁷⁷ Thus the actual setting for the glamorous ceremony, which preceded Philip's assassination at Aegae, has actually been preserved, and helps to revive and visualize Diodorus' detailed description of this event.⁷⁸

B. The Agora

During the same campaign of 1982,⁷⁹ which brought to light the theatre of Vergina-Aegae, a most important archaeological site was partly excavated less than a hundred meters to the north, and its systematic investigation since then has revealed unexpected material and epigraphic evidence, which contribute significantly to our knowledge of the history, topography and town planning of the ancient city (Fig. 4).⁸⁰

The epigraphic material⁸¹ enabled the identification of the site as a shrine of Eukleia,⁸² and since the worship of this specific deity⁸³ was typical of the agoras of the ancient Greek cities,⁸⁴ the identification of the site as part of the agora of the Macedonian capital is ensured.

The monuments excavated until now reflect the public character of the area, from the mid-fourth century BC to the mid-second century BC, if not even later:⁸⁵ two temples, the foundations of a monumental altar, a stoa, inscribed royal offerings,⁸⁶ and a most important group of fourth-century BC monumental sculpture⁸⁷ related to Eurydice, queen of Amyntas III,⁸⁸ all reflect the climax of the flourishing of the area during the mid-fourth century BC. Architectural remains and later epigraphic evidence, quite possibly related to Laodice, queen of Perseus,⁸⁹ certify the continued importance of the site for the royal families of the Hellenistic period, while a partly revealed long road connecting the agora and the theatre adds to our knowledge of the town planning of a city, which was built on sloping ground, with the use of successive terraces.

Epilogue

Old and new archaeological research in the area of Vergina-Aegae has already revealed ample material evidence and enabled an exhaustive appreciation of its ruins in 1984.⁹⁰ Later investigations in the area have offered new material evidence of the ancient city and encourage a fresh approach to its long-known remains. As an outcome, the reconsideration of certain issues related to the palace as a true royal residence may clarify aspects of its plan and function, which have been only vaguely approached and thus inaccurately reported. The preliminary results of our short campaign in its tholos have already shown that there is still room for further investigation, and we hope that its completion and final publication will be of use to the scholars dealing with a building whose importance for the Late Classical and Early Hellenistic architecture is unanimously acknowledged. The royal appearance in the area, epigraphically attested from the mid-fourth century BC onwards, proves that the palace of Aegae (and its precedent) was never really abandoned by the Macedonian dynasties, but was constantly used during the Classical and the Hellenistic times, at least by some members of the Macedonian royal family. Future generations may locate the palace of Archelaus under or near the present royal residence. What we are faced with for the time being is the building itself and its surroundings, the mutual relations of which are certain to shed light on many aspects of ancient Macedonian court life before Alexander's campaign to the East.

Notes

NOTE 1

Limestone, dressed with white stucco, was used for all its architectural features (lower parts of the walls, columns, and entablature); the upper parts of the walls were built with mud-bricks, covered with a variety of coloured stucco (white, yellow and blue) and presumably with wall paintings. Marble was used for the thresholds (Haddad 1995, 109ff.) and wood supported the roofing of the building with impressive tiles of the Corinthian and the Laconian type (Pandermalis 1987, 579–605 pls. 112–118). The doors were also made of wood (Haddad 1995, 108f.).

NOTE 2

The plan (Andronikos 1984, 43 fig. 18) consists of a square court with Doric colonnades, around which rooms or complexes of rooms served different functions. The building was entered from the east through a monumental tripartite *propylon*, placed in the middle of a two-storeyed colonnaded façade. A veranda running along its northern side offered a magnificent view of the Macedonian plain, and a complex of three rooms with mosaic floors, to the south, were used as banquet halls.

NOTE 3

The palace occupies the smallest but most imposing terrace of the ancient city. The acropolis to the south and the fortification walls to the east, north and west augmented the natural fortification of the palace. The theater, the agora and other public buildings have been revealed to the north, along with other public and private buildings, which have been excavated to the north-east of the palace. The vast cemetery, dating from 1000 BC to the 1st century AD, spread outside the fortification walls.

NOTE 4

Length (E-W): 104.50 m. Width (N-S): 88.5 m.

NOTE 5

Pandermalis 1976, 387–95; Heermann 1986, 239ff; Nielsen 1994, 81–84 and 260–62 (Cat.no. 10), figs. 41–42, pls. 10–13; Hoepfner 1996, 9–17, figs. 5–8, and 11–12; Brands 1996, 62–72 Abb. 3–5.

NOTE 6

For the identification of the site with Aegae see Hammond 1979, 53–67, esp. 65–66, and 1972, 153–58; Andronikos 1976, 123–29, 1977, 1ff., and 1984, 59–62. The recent attempt by P. Faklaris (1994, 609–16), to doubt it, has been strongly criticized: Hatzopoulos 1996, 264–69; Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1996, 225–36, pl. 45; Hammond 1997, 177–79.

NOTE 7

Heuzey-Daumet 1876, 179ff.

NOTE 8

Heuzey-Daumet 1876, 179ff, esp. 182 and 457f.

NOTE 9

Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1996, 225ff. esp. 232–33 notes 67–72.

NOTE 10

Heuzey-Daumet 1876, 211f.

NOTE 11

Heuzey-Daumet, 1876, 212.

NOTE 12

Rhomaios 1951, 12ff.

NOTE 13

Rhomaios 1955, 142–50.

NOTE 14

Andronikos et al. 1961, 1ff.

NOTE 15

See above n. 6

NOTE 16

Papazoglou 1988, 127ff. s.v. Edessa and 131ff. s.v. Aegae.

NOTE 17

Hammond 1972 and 1979.

NOTE 18

Diod. Sic. 16.91–95.

NOTE 19

Andronikos 1984.

NOTE 20

Plut. *Pyrrh.* 26,6: μετά την μάχην δε ενθύς ανελάμβανε τας πόλεις, των δε Φιγαίων κρατήσας τά τε ἄλλα χαλεπώς εχρήσατο τοις ανθρώποις και ψυρράν Γαλατικήν εν τη πόλει κατέλιπε των μετ' αυτού στρατευομένων. Οι δε Γαλάται, γένος απληστότατον χρημάτων ὄντες επέθεντο των βασιλέων ανιδόθι κεκηδευμένων τους τάφους ορύπτειν, κα τα μέν χρήματα διήρπασαν τα δε οστά προς υβριν διέρριψαν.

NOTE 21

Andronikos 1976, 123ff.

NOTE 22

Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1984.

NOTE 23

Andronikos 1977, 1ff.; Andronikos 1984, *passim*.

NOTE 24

Philip III Arrhidaios, his wife Eurydice and his mother-in-law Cynnane are also attested to have been re-buried in the old capital some months after their assassination and their primary burial elsewhere. See Papazoglou 1988, 131 n. 45

NOTE 25

Hammond 1991, 11–14.

NOTE 26

ADelt 25, 1970, B2 Chr 394.

NOTE 27

For epigraphic evidence reflecting the royal appearance at Vergina–Aegae, see Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 2000 (in press)

NOTE 28

Annually reported in the *AEMTh* 1, 1987, onwards, by the excavators, St. Drougou, Chr. Saatsoglou-Paliadeli and P. Faklaris, along with the results of the rescue excavations of the Archaeological Service in parts of the cemetery by Dr. A. Kottaridou.

NOTE 29

See below.

NOTE 30

See below.

NOTE 31

Lauter 1986, 64ff, esp. 85–99.

NOTE 32

Pandermalis 1987, 579–605 pls. 112–118.

NOTE 33

The palace is usually dated to Cassander's reign, on uncertain, mainly stylistic grounds, although Touratsoglou 1997, 218 has suggested a dating to the third quarter of the 4th century BC. The dating of the palace to the times of Philip II is increasingly suggested by most scholars: Nielsen 1994, 81 n. 180; Hoepfner 1996, 17.

NOTE 34

Velenis 1997, 25–37 figs. 1–12.

NOTE 35

Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 2000a (in press)

NOTE 36

Heuzey-Daumet 1876, 190 pls. 7–8

NOTE 37

Heyzey-Daumet 1876, 216–17 pls. 13, 1–3; Hamiaux 1998, 180–82, nos. 199–201 figs. 199–201.

NOTE 38

Miller 1972, 78f; Cooper & Morris 1990, 66–85.

NOTE 39

Lawrence 1967, 312 n. 4.

NOTE 40

Andronikos et.al. 1961, 16f; Heermann 1986, 253; Andronikos 1984, 42.

NOTE 41

Nielsen 1994, 83

NOTE 42

Hoepfner 1996, 15 notes 59–60; Kunze 1996, 109–29, esp. 120f. n. 87. For the religious obligations of the Macedonian kings, see Hammond 1991, 32–33.

NOTE 43

Hoepfner 1996, Abb. 11

NOTE 44

Heuzey-Daumet 1876, 190–91; Hamiaux 1998, 232 ff. nos. 254–55.

NOTE 45

Heuzey-Daumet 1876, 190: “Un seul de marbre blanc, taillée avec la même élégance que les précédents (seuils de marbre) decore cette porte unique.”

NOTE 46

For the nearby Palatiza and the small settlements Koutles and Barbes in the area before 1922, see Heuzey-Daumet 1876, 179ff; Andronikos 1984, 17.

NOTE 47

Revealed during a short investigation in the late '60s– early '70s by G. Bakalakis and M. Andronikos, *ADelt* 25, 1970, *Chron* 394.

NOTE 48

Heuzey-Daumet 1876, 190 revealed the floor of the circular room, which was already missing when the Aristotle University continued the research 80 years later: “Le sole est revêtu de ce pavage antique en grands éclats de marbre empâtés dans du ciment, dont la tradition a été conservé, comme nous l'avons dit, dans la mosaïque vénitienne”.

NOTE 49

Kunze 1996, 121 n. 85 interprets the exedra as a base supporting a statue of Herakles Patroos.

NOTE 50

Heuzey-Daumet 1876, 196 and 216 remarked a chronological difference between the *tholos* and the exedra, which Kunze 1996, 121 n. 81 rejects as incompatible with the chronological indications.

NOTE 51

A similar attitude has been attested in the agora of the ancient city (see below).

NOTE 52

Heuzey-Daumet 1876, 190

NOTE 53

Heuzey-Daumet 1876, 190f. pls. 13, 7. Hamiaux 1998, 241–42, nos. 272–273 figs. 272–273

NOTE 54

ADelt. 25, 1970, *Chron* 394; Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1999, 353–67, esp. 353 n. 10 and fig. 1.

NOTE 55

Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1999.

NOTE 56

See above n. 53.

NOTE 57

Their original shape is not yet easy to decide, but it is obvious from their inscriptions and their decorative themes that they might have been free-standing and possibly related to a later, early Hellenistic addition to the furnishing of the *tholos*. Their decorative system recalls the one met with in the Arsinoeion at Samothrace, dated to the early third century BC. The pieces are going to be published by the author of the present article.

NOTE 58

Heuzey-Daumet 1876, 186–88 pls 14 and 14 bis.

NOTE 59

Andronikos 1984, fig. 18.

NOTE 60

Pandermalis 1987, fig. 1 is repeated by Nielsen, 1994, 82 fig. 41. Hoepfner 1996, Abb. 5 suggests two columns *in antis*. Brands 1996, 62–75, esp. 64, Abb. 3 and Kunze 1996, 109–29, esp. 120 Abb. 8, adopt a reconstruction attributed to Travlos (Andronikos 1984, fig. 18), which is different, however, from the one depicted in Andronikos 1984, fig. 18 in that the inner side of the propylon had three (instead of two) supports *in antis*.

NOTE 61

Heuzey-Daumet 1876, pl. 14 and 14 bis, b; I. Travlos in Andronikos 1984, 43 fig. 18

NOTE 62

Heuzey-Daumet 1876, 195–200, pls. 10–11; Hamiaux 1998, 232ff. nos. 254–255.

NOTE 63

Daumet refers to the Byzantine church built over the ruins of the palace.

NOTE 64

Heuzey-Daumet, 1876, 195–96, pls. 10–11.

NOTE 65

Heuzey-Daumet 195ff. pl. 14 and 14 bis b. – The reconstruction was further accepted by I. Travlos, in *Andronikos* 1984, 43 fig. 18, but questioned by Pandermalis and others (see above n. 60).

NOTE 66

Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1990, 21–34 figs. 1–12; 1991, 9ff. esp. 12ff., and 1996, 55ff.

NOTE 67

For the small Byzantine church of Aghia Triada, which gave the name to the area see Heuzey-Daumet 1876, 184f. pls. 7–8.

NOTE 68

Drougou 1989, 13–20 figs. 1–5, and 1997, 281–305, Taf. 37–41.

NOTE 69

Drougou 1997, 284 Abb. 2.

NOTE 70

Drougou 1997, 289.

NOTE 71

Drougou 1997, 288f. Abb. 4.

NOTE 72

Drougou 1997, 289–90 Abb. 5.

NOTE 73

Drougou 1997, 294f. Abb. 6.

NOTE 74

Drougou 1997, 295f. Abb. 6.

NOTE 75

Nielsen 1994, 262; Hoepfner 1996, 17 defends the dating of the palace during Philip II's reign, against previous suggestions relating it to Antigonos Gonatas.

NOTE 76

Borza 1990, 255f.

NOTE 77

Kolb 1981, 11–15, 82–83.

NOTE 78

Diod. Sic. 16. 91–94. Hammond & Griffith 1979, 675–98.

NOTE 79

Praktika 1982, 52ff.

NOTE 80

Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1996, 55ff.

NOTE 81

Praktika 1982, 52f.

NOTE 82

Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1987, 733–744, pl. 144.

NOTE 83

Farnell 1909, 446 n. 233; Hamdorf 1964, 56–57; Hampe 1955, 107ff.; Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1987, 739–42. For the representations of Eukleia see Hampe 1970, 82–83, no. 115 pl. 78; Shapiro 1977, 216–22, esp. 218.

NOTE 84

Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1982, 742–43, n. 53; Kolb 1981. For the temple of Eukleia erected in the Athenian Agora from the spoils of Marathon (Paus. 1.14.1–5) and its assumed identification with the Temple of Athena and Hephaistos (the so-called Theseion), see Harrison 1977, 139 n. 17.

NOTE 85

The decadent period from the beginning of the Roman occupation to the mid-first century AD, is reflected at the site in architectural remains of a much lesser quality.

NOTE 86

Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 2000.

NOTE 87

Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1990, 25f. figs. 1–6.

NOTE 88

Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 2000, with all relevant literature.

NOTE 89

Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1991, 15 fig. 7, and 1990.

NOTE 90

Andronikos 1984, 38–46.

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Abbreviations

AA *Archäologischer Anzeiger*
AAA *Αρχαιολογικά ανάλεκτα εξ Αθηνών*
AE *L'Année Epigraphique*
ADelt *Archaeologikon Deltion*
AEMTh *To αρχαιλογικό έργο στη Μακεδονία και Θράκη*
AJA *American Journal of Archaeology*
AM *Athenische Mitteilungen*
BCH *Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique*
BSA *The Annual of the British School of Athens*
JHS *Journal of Hellenic Studies*
REG *Revue des Études Grecques*
RM *Römische Mitteilungen*

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The Governor's Palace, Acropolis, Jebel Khalid¹

Graeme Clarke

Jebel Khalid is a Hellenistic fortress situated on the West Bank of the Euphrates River in the middle of the "Big Bend" of the Euphrates in North Syria, just to the north of the headwaters of Lake Assad formed by the construction of the Tabqa Dam (Fig. 1). For a survey of the site (with previous bibliography) and, in particular, for a description of its 3.4 km of fortification system see P.J. Connor and G.W. Clarke, Jebel Khalid in North Syria: The First Campaigns, *Mediterranean Archaeology* 9/10, 1996/7, 151-183 and Plates 30-34.

It is apparent that there was once a large limestone outcrop within the Acropolis at the highest point of the Jebel, providing panoramic views up and downstream of the Euphrates valley (Fig. 2). This outcrop was quarried to a rough level, leaving a rocky bluff (and evident quarry face) on the Western side, against which

a stout retaining wall was built, also serving as the exterior western wall of room 24 (Fig. 3). (There is a large dump of chippings from quarrying operations just outside the south-east corner of the Acropolis wall.) The basis of the flooring of the subsequent building is consequently levelled bedrock, but where the bedrock is pitted and degraded, or slopes away as it does, for example, at the northern end of rooms 6 to 9 and on the eastern side of rooms 9 to 10, 13 to 19, there needed to be considerable packing underfloor – up to two metres and more in places – of chippings and reinforced in places (as in the eastern end of room 1) with some clay admixture, until a suitable floor level was attained. In room 12 the plinth for the central column base is quarried bedrock, designedly left standing 0.44 m high above the subfloor of the room which throughout room 12 is levelled bedrock

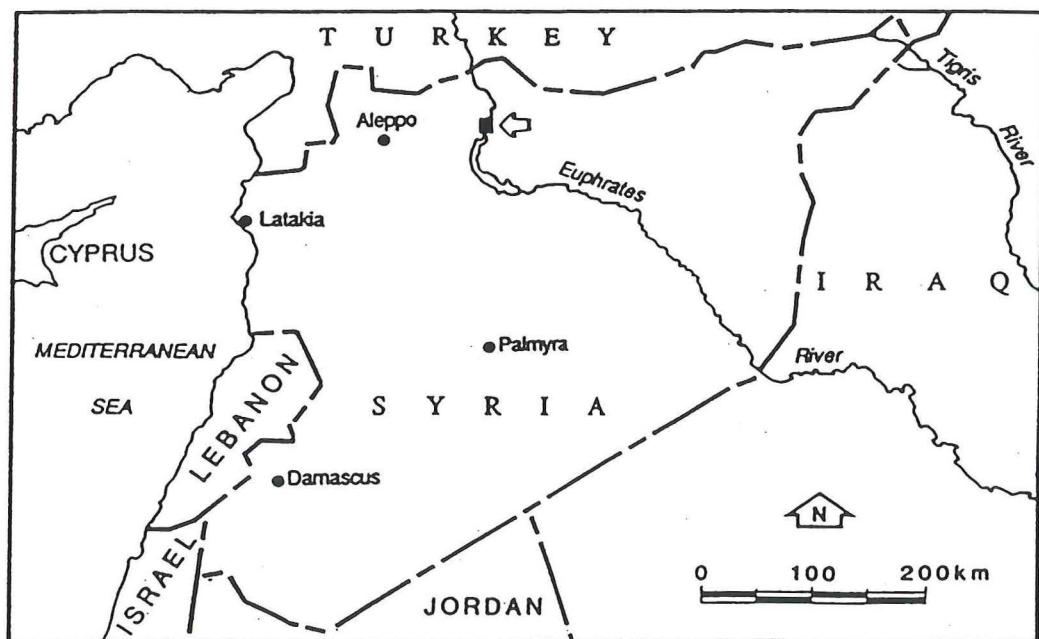


Fig. 1. Sketch map showing location of Jebel Khalid on the Euphrates

(Fig. 4). Nowhere, even in foundation trenches, is there any trace of previous occupation. This building was laid out on a virgin site – or at the very least the initial quarrying operations totally cleared away any vestige of any earlier habitation.

Description

The building was planned around a square central courtyard, 'room 26' (measurements from central point of column bases are N.17.1 m, S.17.1 m, E.17.8 m, W.17.8 m; measurements from the corners of 'room 26' are N.25.3 m, S.25.1 m, E.26.2 m, W.26.0 m). The bedrock floor of this courtyard was evidently quarried to drain towards a large cistern in the south east of the courtyard, conveniently located close to a major entertainment room (room 20) with two store-rooms and kitchens (rooms 19 and 21) adjacent to either side of it. This cistern is bell-shaped, and appears not to have required to be lined with any impermeable mortar; it has a roughly circular mouth, one metre wide and the cistern at its currently measurable widest is 5.58 m, depth undetermined but certainly well over the three metres at which depth the débris level begins (as yet uncleared). No well-head was found. Whilst it can be assumed that water from the roofs of the surrounding courtyard rooms was collected, no drainage immediately into this cistern nor any associated settling pond was detected. Indeed some water may have been collected into large *pithoi* or barrels into which water from lion-headed water-spouts overhead may have debouched. A circular stand was found carved into the bedrock (c. 5 cm deep, 37–38 cm in diameter) by the northern stylobate in the courtyard: it may have served to house a garden pot. There is a drain 4.9 m in length, 14 cm in depth cut into bedrock across the colonnade floor on the south-western side of the courtyard but this could be to release any water seeping down from the western rocky outcrop and accumulating beneath room 24. There is a further drain with a similar function towards the north end of the western sty-

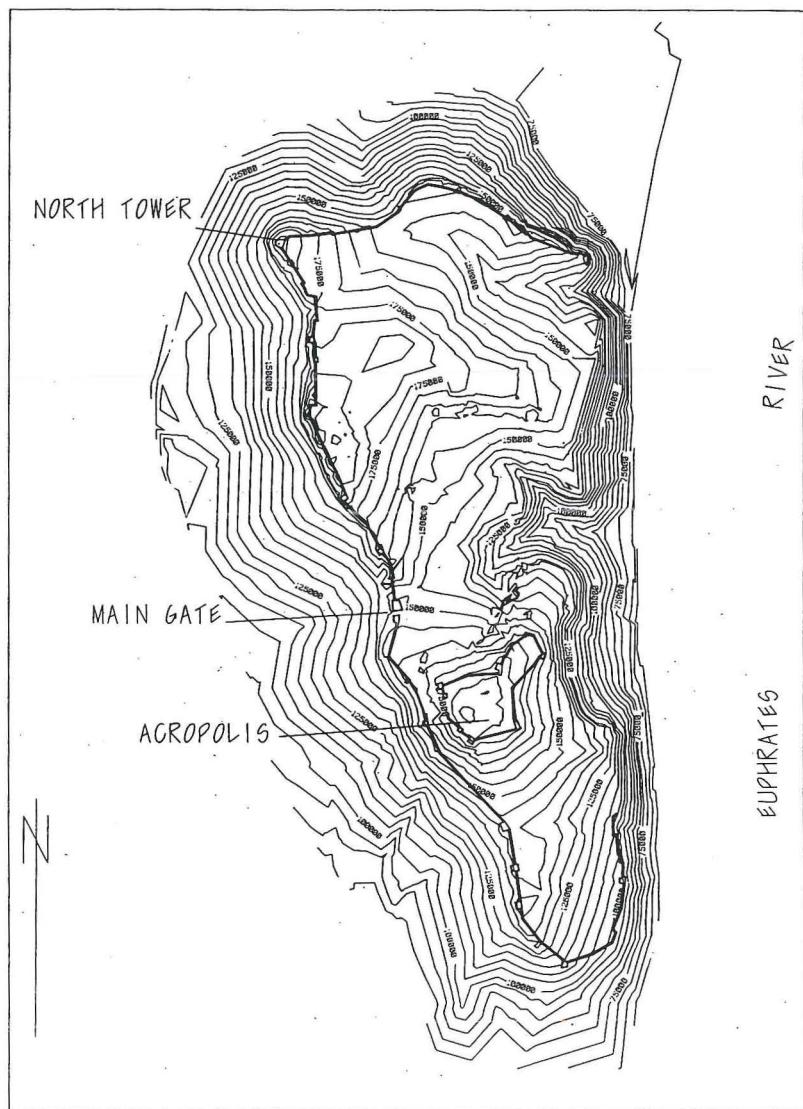


Fig. 2. Jebel Khalid contour map (c. 1:10,000).



Fig. 4. Bedrock plinth and column base, room 12.

Fig. 3. Ground plan. The Governor's Palace, Jebel Khalid.

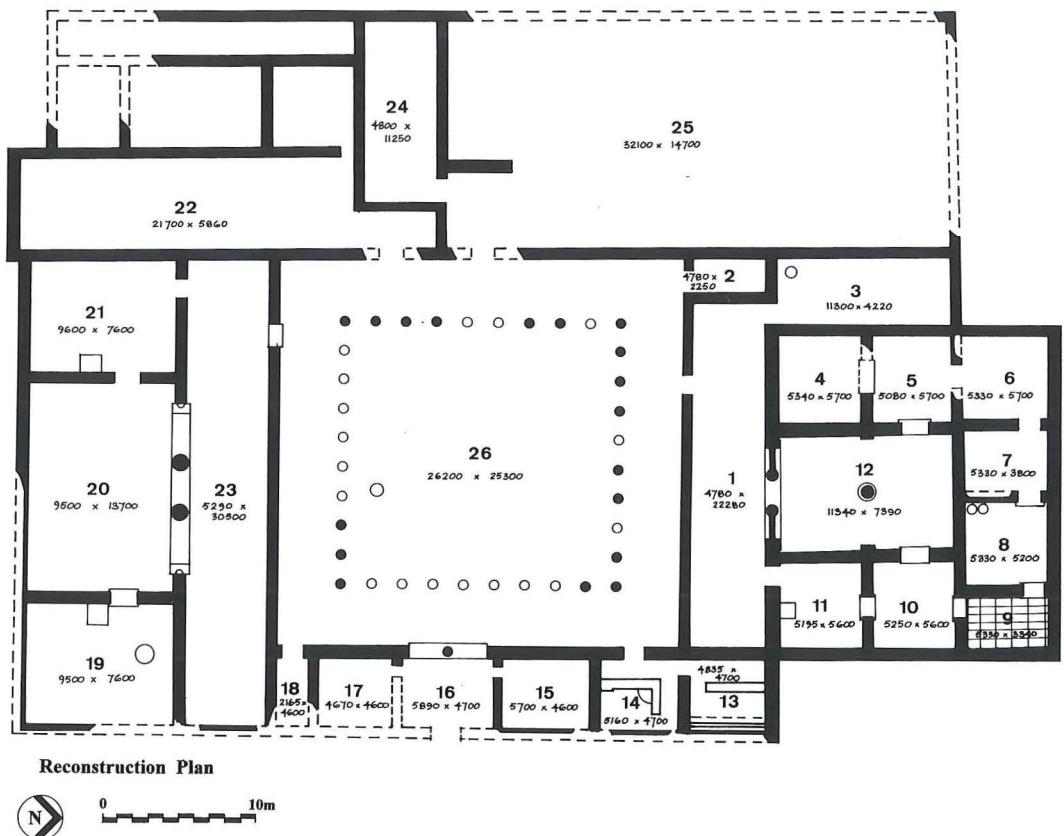


Fig. 5. Stylobate (peristyle), room 26.

lobate which released water into the courtyard across a shallow channel cut into the stylobate; it did not however continue across the courtyard floor. The courtyard floor itself consisted of a few centimetres of a very hard packed mixture

of clay and gritty limestone over bedrock, creating a particularly hard surface. The floor of the colonnade was similarly constituted. As flagstones have manifestly been robbed elsewhere in the building it is possible that the whole area was once paved over this prepared surface.

A stylobate was laid on the four sides of this courtyard on levelled bedrock using ashlar blocks with neatly drafted edges (av. dimensions: 86 x 68 cm and 21–26 cm deep, but there is considerable variation) with some rustication visible on the courtyard side below the courtyard floor level (Fig. 5). Some metal clamping was used but no mortaring: generally the blocks are very tightly fitting. A column was placed regularly on alternate blocks, where a smoothed circular impression, some guidelines and a central dowel hole are visible (Fig. 6). The colonnade is decastyle – ten columns to a side, 36 all told. A deep and unusually wide foundation trench was cut in front of the stylobate on the courtyard side – going down in places 97 cm from the paving level and

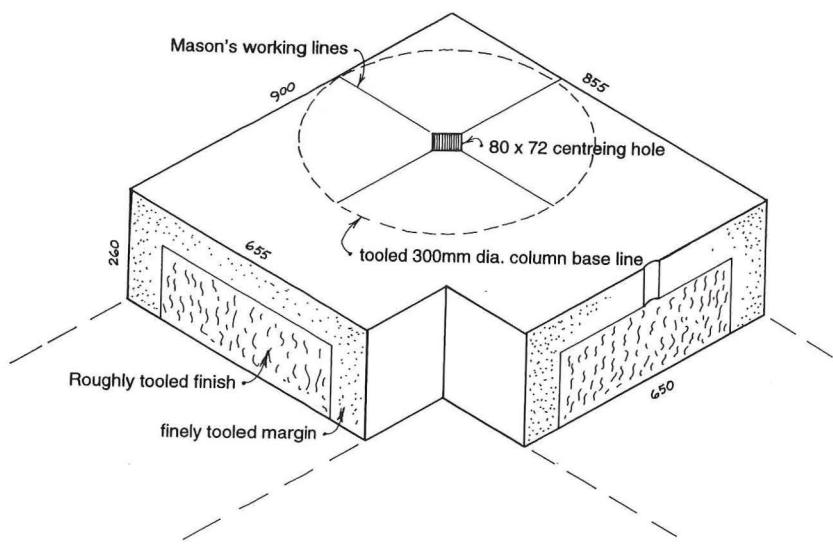




Fig. 6. Stylobate, central courtyard ("room 26").



Fig. 7. Foundation trench, stylobate, central courtyard.

being up to 82 cm wide (Fig. 7). Normally one would expect such a trench to be filled with builders' rubble and chippings: in this case, however, it is filled with stone-less, rich brown, nitrogenous soil (not the light grey wind-blown dust that has accumulated over time elsewhere). Though courtyard gardens are rather more a Roman feature, nevertheless one won-

ders whether a formal garden may have been installed round the inside perimeter of much of the courtyard, easily watered from the roof-water collection (soil-samples taken, yet to be analysed: there is no other sign of any further courtyard planting).² This perimeter trench is cut too deep and wide to serve as a drain: if any terracotta or stone guttering channels

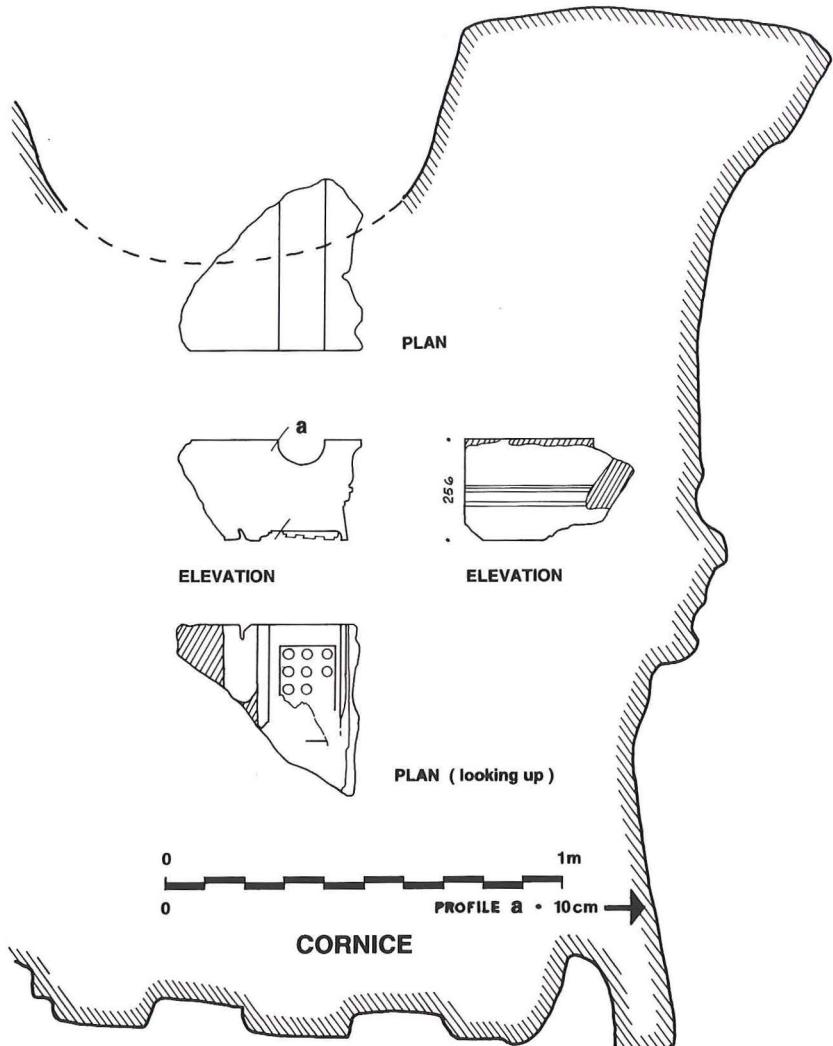
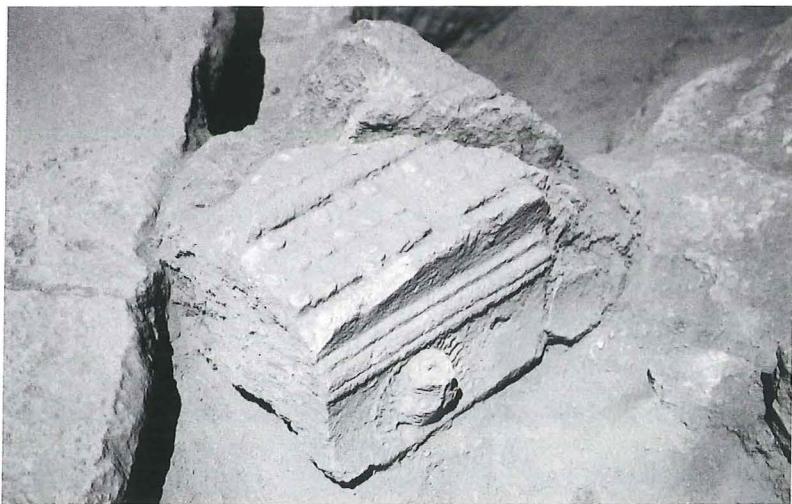


Fig. 8. Cornice and guttae, room 26.

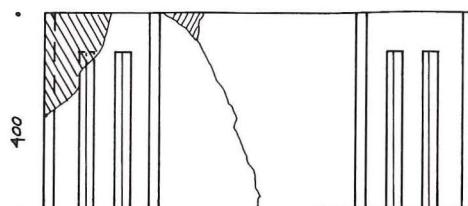
Fig. 9. Guttae and lion-headed waterspout, central courtyard Room 26.

were laid above this trench to collect and drain off the roof-water they certainly have all been lost.

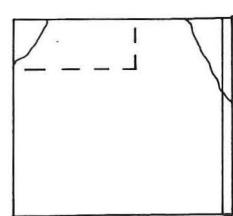
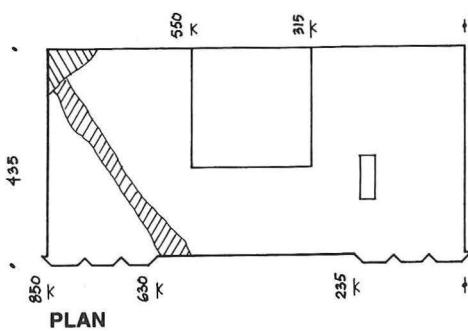
The colonnade is Doric in order, the bases of the columns being a relatively



slender 35 cm in radius, with some minor variations. Only column fragments were recovered but in large numbers (nearly 100 pieces of shattered column flutings all together) showing that there were 20 deep flutings, though it seems the lower portions of the columns may have rather been decorated with shallow strap flutes: the longest surviving column length – 1.13 m – with flutes barely visible, may suggest this, but it is much abraded and the deduction is, therefore, uncertain. With so little remaining of the original 36 columns it is clear that much robbing of the stonework has occurred. However samples of all the canonical elements of a Doric colonnade were recovered, including *mutules* (3 examples), 8 examples of sets of *guttae* (Figs. 8-9), 11 examples of triglyphs and 6 undecorated metopes (showing traces of both red and blue paint: Fig. 10), one Doric capital (*abacus* 74 cm square; an



ELEVATION



ELEVATION

Fig. 10. Triglyphs and metope, room 26.

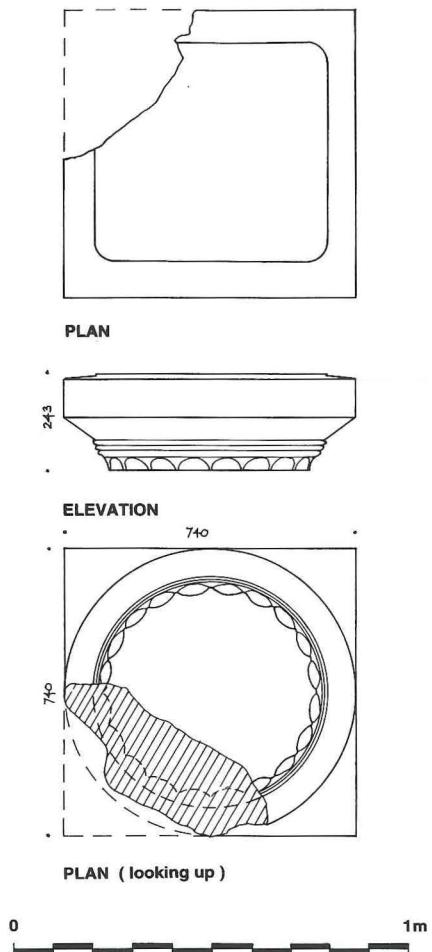


Fig. 11. Doric capital, room 26.



Fig. 12. Doric capital, central courtyard.

omicron engraved on the abacus) with triple necking rings (Figs. 11-12), many fragments of cornice moulding, 7 examples of lion-headed waterspouts (Fig. 13 and 9), as well as *geison* blocks. At the corners half-triglyphs met (Figs 14-15) and an eight-petalled rosette was crisply carved between the corner sets of guttae (a sample of these came from the north-west

Fig. 13. Lion-headed water-spout, room 26.

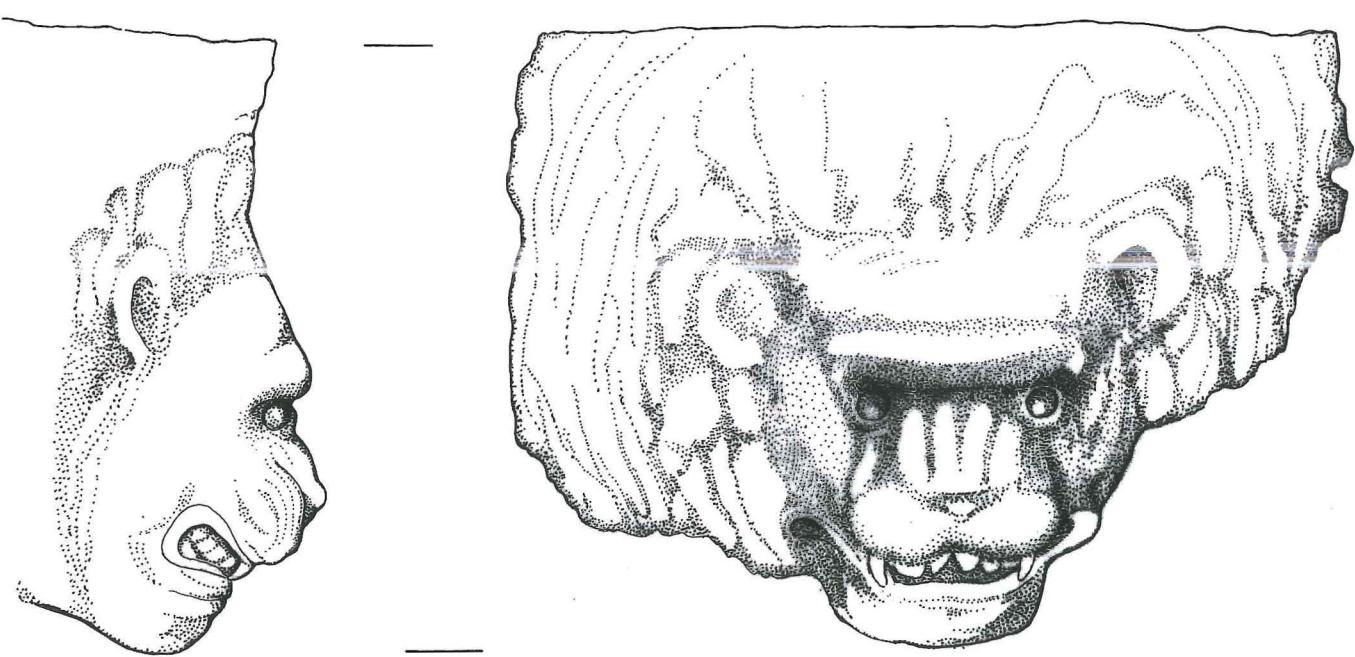


Fig. 14. Corner block with half-triglyph, and architrave, room 26.

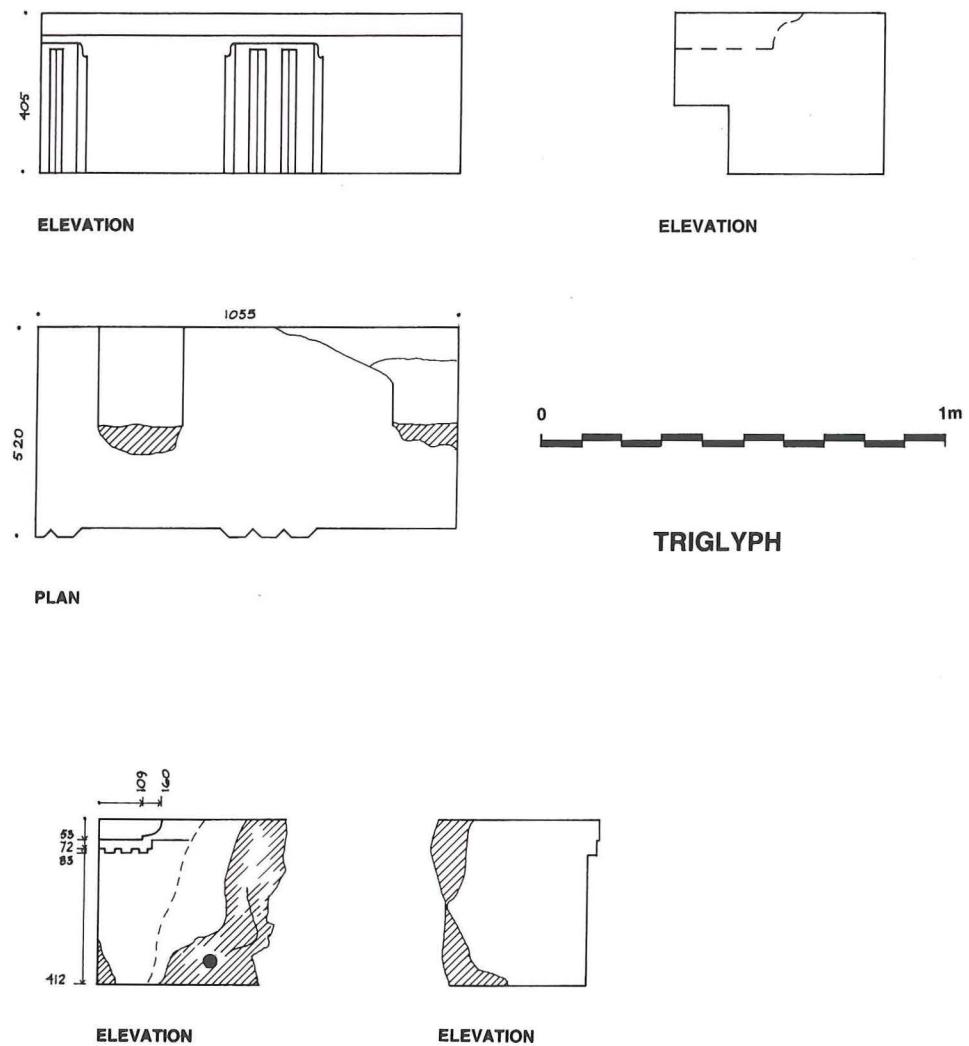


Fig. 15. Corner block with half-triglyph, north-west corner, central courtyard.



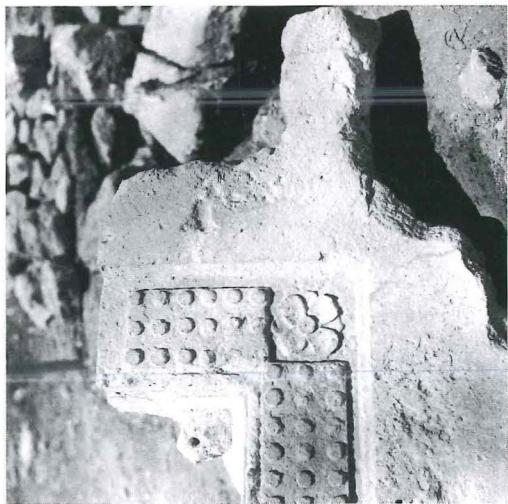
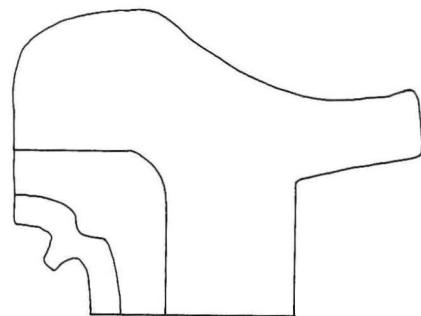
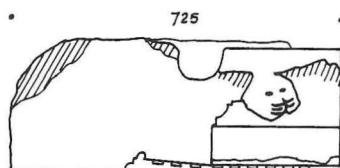


Fig. 16. Corner cornice stone, room 26.

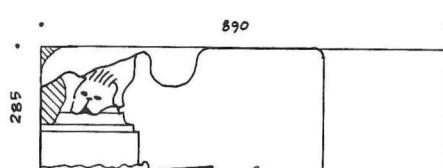
corner (Figs. 16-17): a second rosette was found in the south-east corner). It is clear that the colonnade itself had filled with wind-blown dust to some 25 cm and more before the building here had eventually collapsed – onto this accumulation some of the roofing elements had directly fallen: the building had therefore stood abandoned, open to the sky in this area, for a good many years before its collapse. There is not the evidence to suggest that this may have been a double-level colonnade (Fig. 18).



PLAN



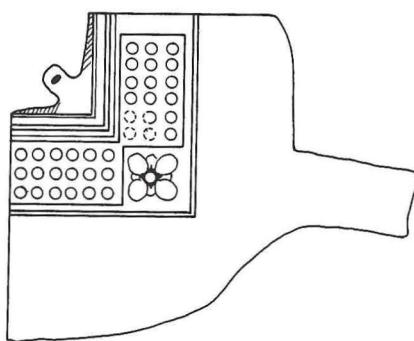
ELEVATION



ELEVATION



CORNER CORNICE STONE



PLAN (looking up)

Fig. 17. Corner block with guttae, rosette and lion-headed waterspout, north-west corner, central courtyard.

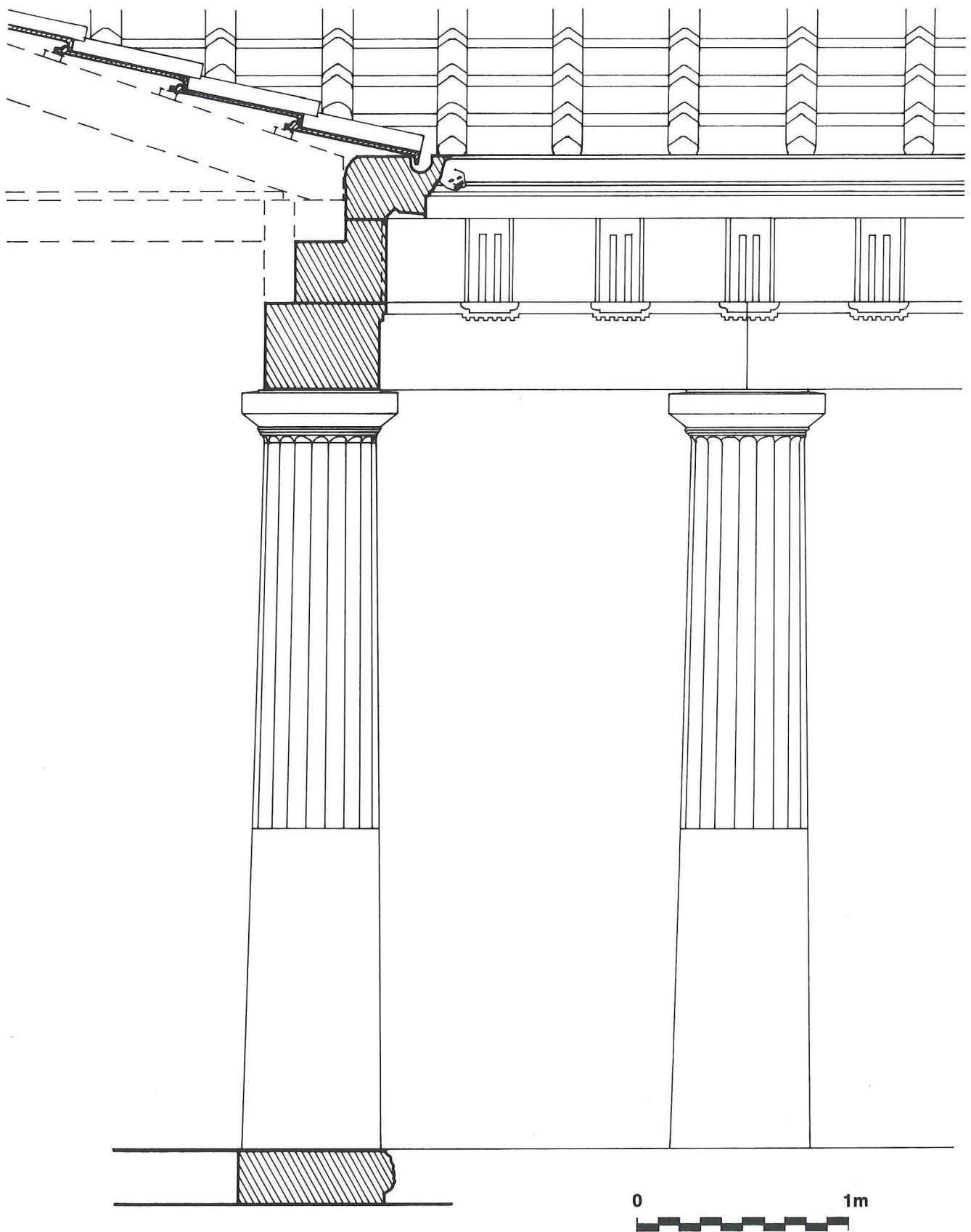


Fig. 18. Reconstruction of Doric colonnade, room 26.

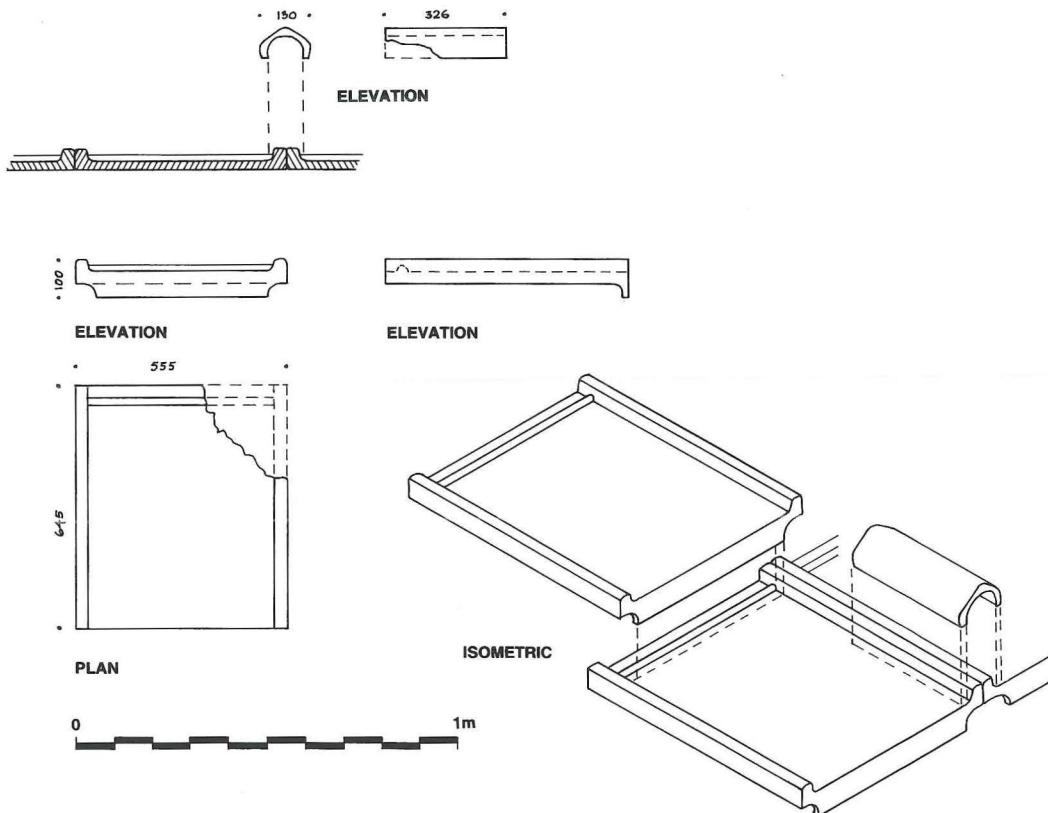


Fig. 19. Roof tile and ridge capping.

Throughout the excavation of the Acropolis building complex, with the notable exception of room 3, broken roof-tiles were collected in quantity – along with several kilos of nails – from the floor levels. The total amount of roof-tiling collected, however, is insufficient to cover the entire building and rather indicates systematic stripping of tiles (both pan and ridging; (Fig. 19)) along with the wooden roof-beams, with dropped and broken tiles and fallen nails left behind. Two decayed lengths of beams, 2 m and 2.13 m in length (Fig. 20), were however recovered lying side by side in room 19 and one (even more decayed) in room 17 (4 m long) – no doubt left ready for a collection which was never made (final results of dendrochronological analysis pending: the timber is all of *Pinus* sp.).³

From the colonnade two lengthy vestibule-type long-corridor rooms opened, one to the north (room 1), and one to the south (room 23), extending nearly the full length of the colonnade on

these sides, allowing immediate access to rooms 3, 11 and 12 on the north side and to rooms 20 and 21 on the south side. Essentially, however, these rooms acted as ante-chambers to the audience and banqueting halls of rooms 12 and 20. In both cases the doorway into these areas of rooms 1 and 23 from the colonnade is off-centre (towards the west end); the doorway on the south side measures 1.495 m (the one on the north side is too damaged for accurate measurements). In the case of room 1 the area was subdivided at its western end by a cross wall to create a small area (room 2) which had access immediately on to the colonnade (room 26) but not to room 1. The stonework of this internal north/south cross wall of room 1 does not conform to the walls elsewhere in the building, being somewhat decayed and apparently roughly patched in part with re-used stonework but close examination certainly suggests that it belongs to the original construction, being bonded with the south wall of room 1. (The rough repair work would in all like-

Fig. 20. Timber beam length,
room 19.



lihood have been carried out when the wall was to be reused after being damaged in the demolition process: see on room 2 below).

Room 1, on excavation, produced a number of elements fallen from the adjacent colonnade and roof. It had, however, been subjected to severe robbing, with robber pits in evidence at its eastern and western ends. Its south wall – also the supporting wall of the colonnade roof – survived to two courses at best and it had disappeared entirely, except for its foundation trench, towards its east end. This wall is constructed of regular ashlar blocks laid in a “header/stretcher” arrangement, the blocks measuring 1 cubit (c. 35 cm) x 2 cubits x 3 cubits (stretcher) and 1 cubit x 2 cubits x 2 cubits (header), with two stretchers laid side by side followed by one header. There is no mortaring apparent here but there is some packing with small limestone chippings between the stretchers. Whilst some fragments of coloured wall plaster were collected in room 1 they were in insufficient volume to suggest that this area itself was once plastered in colour (rather, these fragments will have drifted in from the adjacent rooms). But there are traces suggesting that this south wall of

room 1 was finished both on the colonnade side and inside room 1 with a rough lime plaster (certainly the case on the equivalent wall in room 23).

In room 2 there is evidence of much disturbance. In it, on an extremely weak rubble base, a very temporary staircase of reused ashlar blocks had been raised – 5 risers surviving: one of the reused blocks is dressed with fine white plaster even on its current underside and tread. The staircase was erected across the centre of the room and against the east wall. Perhaps this temporary structure was thrown up in order to provide easier access for stripping the roofing. But if this had been the area’s original function – to give access to an upper storey – all traces of such a storey and staircase have here disappeared, and there is, unfortunately, no firm evidence elsewhere of an upper storey in the building, however likely one was in this sort of construction (but see on rooms 12 and 18). Nevertheless, the original function of room 2 is best conjectured as having housed a staircase. Access to the adjacent room 3, an outdoor area with drum altar *in situ* – where religious rites would have been performed – was through room 1.

The area of room 2 as excavated cer-

tainly showed evidence of domestic re-use (as does the area immediately to the west in the enclosed garden courtyard – “room 25” – outside the original building): in the course of this re-use the original flooring in the north half of the room had been destroyed and a weak rubble wall raised across the centre of the room in an east-west direction; a further wall continued outside the building. Deposit from this domestic re-use included many lamp fragments, 13 circular and 2 triangular loom weights, 3 spindle whorls, 4 surgical instruments or applicators, a number of beads etc. All coinage recovered from the area, however, was Seleucid in dating, including a coin of Antiochus VII (JK inv. 93.624) and one of Antiochus VIII (JK inv. 93.483). To judge from the material remains it would appear that this re-occupation occurred fairly promptly after the abandonment and partial demolition of the original building. The assemblage is still to be classified as “late Hellenistic”.

Entry into room 3 could be made directly from room 1. Its major feature is a drum altar (uninscribed) in the south-west corner still standing *in situ* on a rectangular pedestal, its only decoration, apart from the moulding at top and base, being a simple raised ring around its centre (diameter at base 0.630 m, at top 0.605 m,

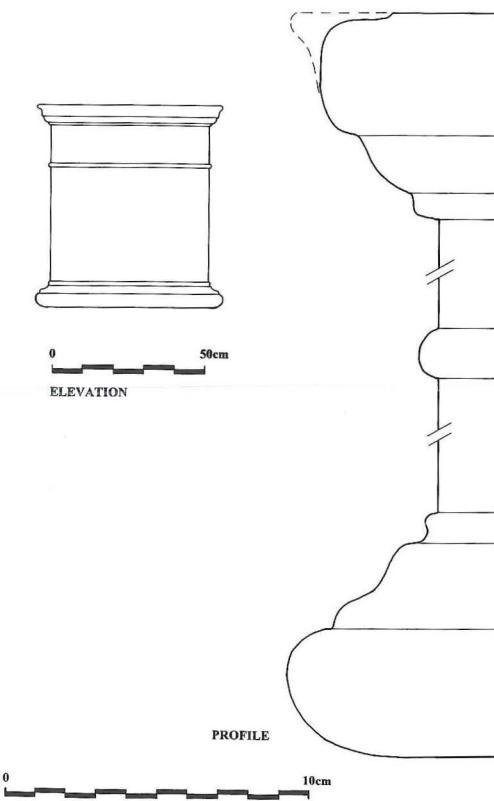


Fig. 21. Drum altar, room 3.

height 0.670 m)⁴ (Figs. 21–22). There was much charcoal and ashy black soil in the vicinity of the altar as well as an unusually heavy deposit of bone. Are we to imagine here official ceremonies honoring the Seleucid dynastic gods and /or the tutelary gods of the household? Unlike all other areas of the building only a couple



Fig. 22. Drum altar, room 3.

Fig. 23. Sample of the grinders and pounders from room 5.

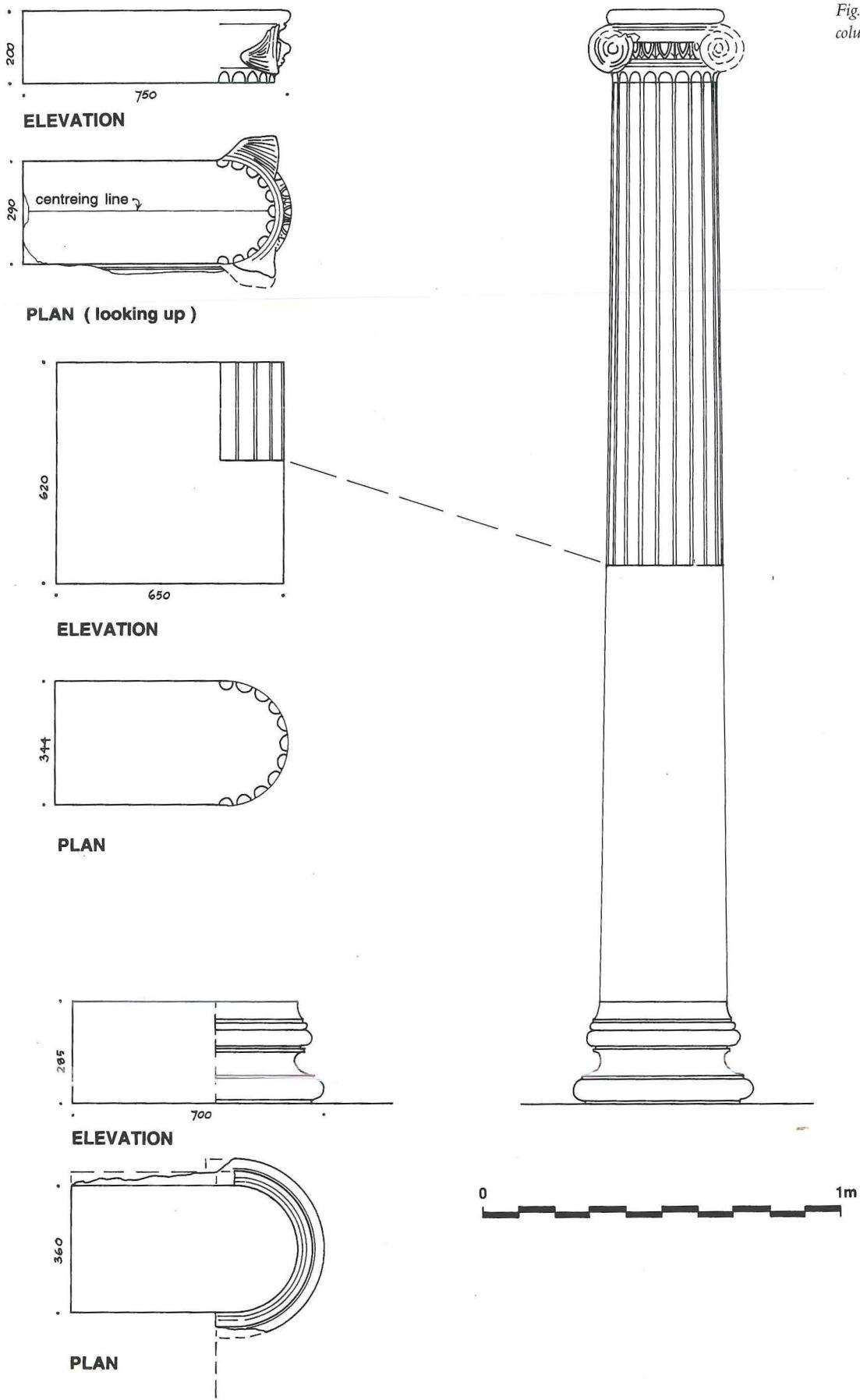


of roof-tile fragments were recovered from room 3 and very little in the way of plaster fragments. This was an unroofed and undecorated, non-peristylar courtyard area, open to the sky (as one would expect in any case where a functioning altar was situated). The floor (a little uneven) consists of a very hard white limestone plaster over a packing of limestone chippings on bedrock. To judge by the scatter of pounders and basalt grinders, mortars and pestles, some food preparation may have also occurred in this open back courtyard adjacent to room 5 but there was no sign of any location for actual cooking. No provision seems to have been made to allow access from room 3 into the enclosed "garden" area ('room 25').

Room 4 undoubtedly functioned as a store-room: four storage pits were sunk into the hard floor consisting of a concretized aggregate over packing of small chunks of limestone – amphora toes were found still *in situ* in several (and 8 toes of large amphoras were amongst the débris as well as a large *pithos*). 21 clay loom weights were also in the floor deposit. Despite this service function the room was plastered in solid colours of red, black and yellow. It would appear that there was

a bottom course of red up to 28 cm and then it was replaced by a horizontal band of black (plaster survives in places to a height of 36 cm). Fragments were also recovered in the room of red, black and yellow with incised lines and some with bevelled edges, suggesting panels of solid colours above a dado level of red and black. Room 4, being a service-room, could be reached only from room 5.

Room 5 (which may have had direct access to the back courtyard, room 3, and certainly had to the storeroom, room 4, to the reception room, room 12, and presumably to room 6) shows every indication of having been an area for food preparation and cooking. Its northern end, unfortunately, has been severely damaged by robber activity so that the flooring, consisting of packed pebbles pressed into hard-packed limestone chippings, is broken away. Even so, the contents of the room are indicative enough: they included (amongst a voluminous collection of pottery) 13 river pounders and 6 basalt pounders, 10 clay and 1 basalt loom weight, 18 basalt grinders and slabs, 1 footed basalt bowl, 1 stone trough, 1 stone quern, 1 whetstone (Fig. 23), 2 amphora stands, 2 *pithoi*, and a large number of



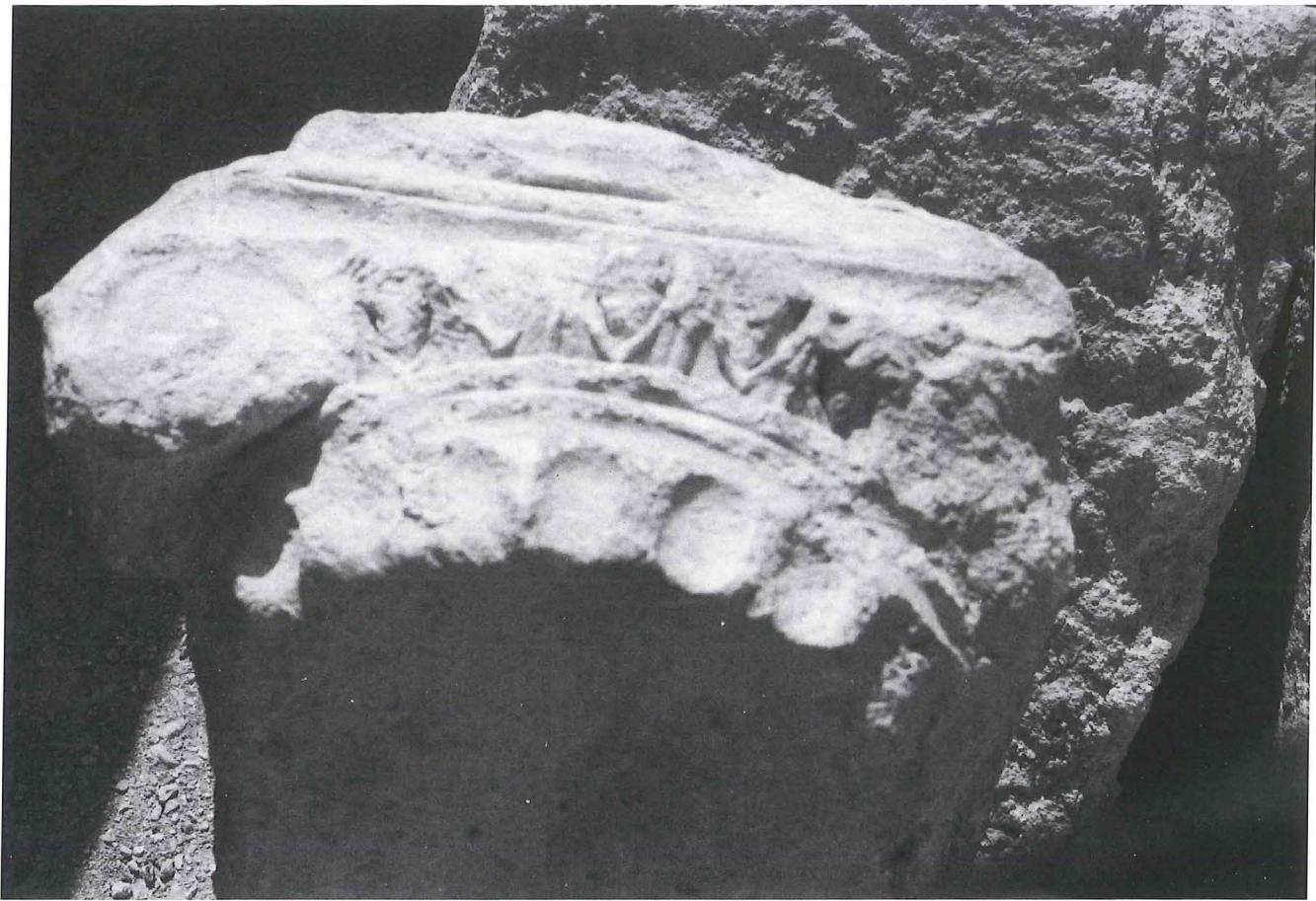


Fig. 25. Ionic doorway element found in room 8.

amphoras (at least 18), many cooking vessels etc. At the very northern end was much bone, charcoal and ashy deposit perhaps intruding from room 6 as the result of severe robber disturbance. The plaster recovered in the room (in quantity) was consistently white with a hard gritty finish, though none was found still adhering to the walls.

In room 5 a battered piece of engaged fluted column, 0.46 m in height, with 8 flutings surviving, was found near the carefully blocked doorway into room 12. A further fragment of an engaged column was found just inside room 12 by this doorway also. They were presumably part of a doorway treatment. A further fluted doorway piece with ionic volutes and egg and dart moulding between was found out of context in room 8 designed for a similar function, as was another piece with some fluting only. These pieces may all have decorated the doorways from room 12 into rooms 5 and 10, once fitted with

doors as the keying holes still visible indicate, though they are more likely to have come from an upper storey (Figs. 24-25). There may have been a step up into these rooms, now robbed away, from room 12: the frontage of the doorways are not picked for receiving stucco unlike the walls generally in room 12.

Robbing activities have made it impossible to determine precisely the decoration and function of rooms 6 and 7. However the south-east sector of room 6 also produced a great deal of bone, charcoal and ash as well as the remnants of an oven, and this suggests that rooms 4, 5 and 6 together formed a storeroom/food preparation/kitchen complex with access into the reception room 12 via room 5. The stonework of these two rooms (6 and 7) has been robbed in places down to foundation levels but their dimensions are clear and several courses of fine rusticated stonework on the exterior north wall of



room 6 survive (Fig. 26). One assumes doorways existed from room 5 into room 6 and from 6 into room 7 but the robbing has been so severe that it has gone well below floor level, which as the jebel bedrock slopes away had to be built up by two to three metres to attain the desired floor level (as the parallel rooms 8 and 9 clearly demonstrate). Only a small section of the original floor survived in the south east sector of room 7. A coin recovered from the robbing area dates to Constantius II (JK inv. 93.235).

Room 8, however, is fully preserved. The doorways into room 7 and room 9 are both blocked but no secondary occupation was observable. The present floor-level is several centimetres below that of the thresholds and whilst it is hard and packed neatly with small pebbles and stones it evidently was once fitted with flagstones (as is the adjacent room 9), now robbed

away. Two very large *pithoi* (one measuring 0.75 m at the belly) were found *in situ*, complete, along with a great deal of coloured plaster, largely white but a good quantity of pink/red also, a little ochre, some duck-egg/turquoise blue, some black. What still clung to the walls (east and west) was white but a number of the coloured pieces showed bevelled edges indicating that there were raised panels in solid colours: in one case a panel of greeny-blue adjoined one in ochre, in another white was followed by one in greeny-blue, some pieces show a dividing line between colours of a red band etc. There may well have been a horizontal dado band of white (as still on the wall) followed by one in black – some pieces have white and black joining with an incised line. One interesting discovery found lying loosely on the floor level was a marble paving slab (19 cm x 11 cm) in mottled brown, blue, buff and green, carefully

Fig. 26. Foundation blocks, north wall, room 6.

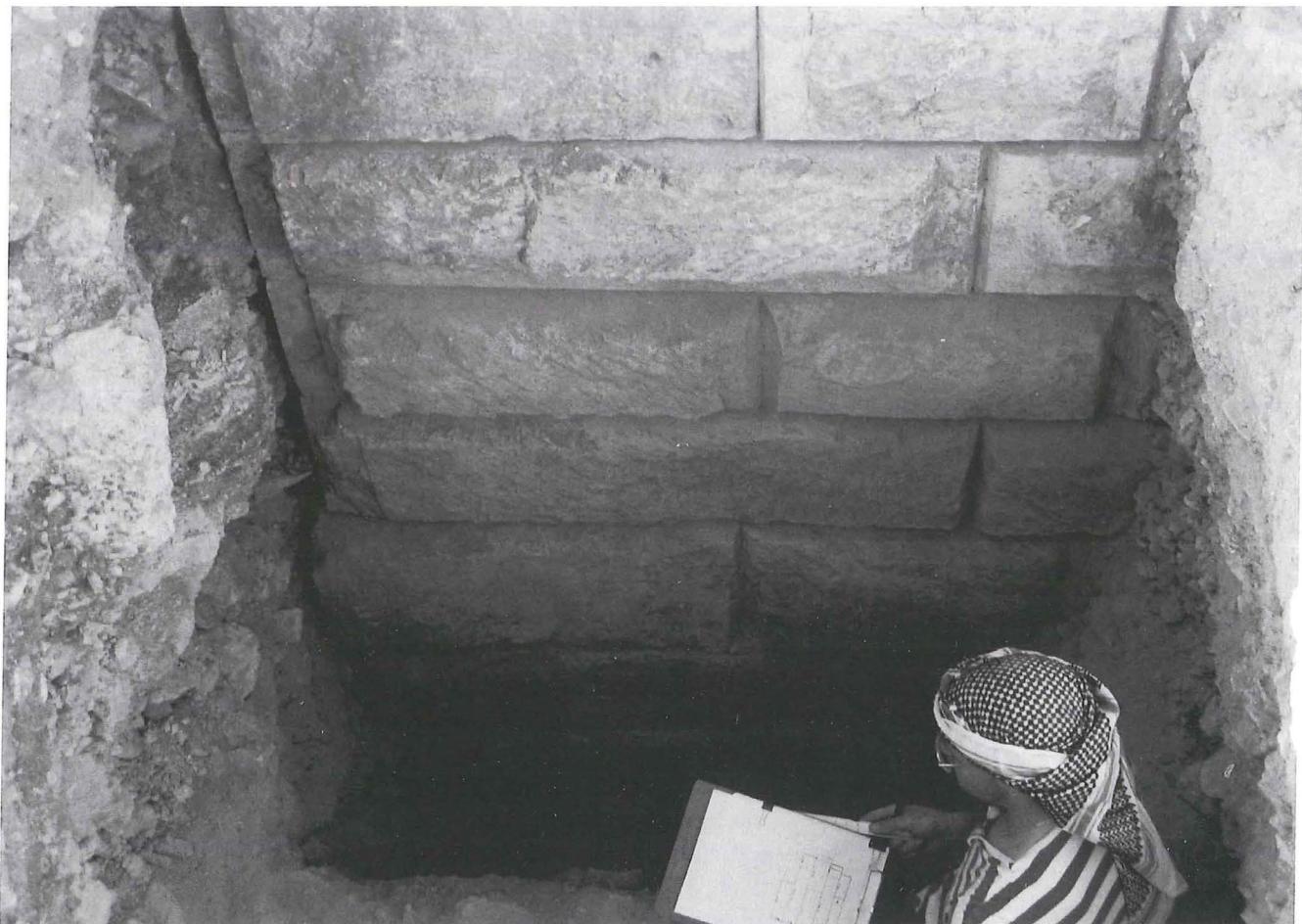


Fig. 27. Foundation blocks, north-east corner, room 9.

incised on the underside with an Alpha and a Beta in the two corners along one edge. This may well be a remnant of the robbed-out flooring of the adjacent room 12. There is little else surviving to distinguish the function of this room, apart from the obvious and very large storage *pithoi*, a cache of 34 clay loom weights stored in a large pot and an unusually large number of basalt grinders, as well as pounders (both basalt and riverstone). Their presence means at least that it was an unlikely venue for eating or sleeping, rather a magazine room.

Room 9 appears to have had the walls and roof collapse on it and its abandoned contents before it could be fully robbed – although its doorways (with rooms 8 and 10) are both blocked. Its flagstone paving is, however, intact (the only room in the building to have this flagstone paving survive) and scattered on it was an unusually

dense volume of pottery, especially coarse ware, and pottery for tableware and domestic use (there is an exceptional number of reconstructible whole vessels). Above that there were building and roofing blocks and tiles in unusual abundance (a complete pan tile was recovered measuring 6.5 x 5.5 cm, inscribed with an omega – or possibly epsilon – on one of its sides). By a sounding on the north east exterior corner it was found that foundations of 3.55 m were built up from bedrock to reach floor level (Fig. 27), and there are ashlar blocks beneath the floor to support the flagstones. On the exterior east side there are surviving two courses of dressed blocks and then at least five courses of neatly rusticated blocks, going down more than three metres. Where the rusticated blocks begin the stratum changes to packed rubble, i.e. to below ground level. In one of the flagstones a circular hole c. 17 cm in diameter, 11 cm

deep, was cut, apparently to support the toe of a vessel. Again the walls were plastered with a rather hard render in basic colours of white and duck-egg blue with a smaller amount of black, some of which is still affixed to the south west corner of the walls. On the available evidence one of the functions of this room was to store an abundant supply of crockery designed for catering for the entertainment of large numbers. (A coin from the floor dated to Antiochus III =JK inv.91.155).

Very little survives in room 10 that would distinguish its function, though pottery from amphoras was in unusual abundance. Like the room 5 opposite it gave access down a (presumed) step into room 12 (doorway in this case unblocked but it was once fitted for a door) and it had doorways (now blocked) into rooms 9 to the north and 11 to the south. Its current floor level consists of a rather uneven underlay packing with its presumed flag-stone overlay having been robbed away; this subfloor goes down in the south west corner (where a sounding was cut) 1.5m until bedrock is reached, the interior south wall being supported underfloor by three courses of foundation blocks. Like the adjoining room 9 its exterior wall consists as it survives of two courses of smoothed stonework before at least five courses of rusticated stonework begin and, again, the soil changes at that point of change in stonework to packed rubble (i.e. to below ground level). The room was plastered in solid colours of white, pinky red and a little black, though none survives on the walls.

Room 11 was consistently plastered in white throughout though this was relieved by some narrow bands of red. Good sections of white plaster over a *terre-pisé* backing still cling to the walls. The floor is a hard-beaten clayey earth with a great deal of ash and charcoal trampled in. (A coin of Antiochus I =JK inv.90.353 was found on this floor near the doorway to room 10). Bone and charcoal were recovered in very large quantities as well as an

unusual number of decayed wood samples and much cooking ware – and excavation revealed why. A rectangular hearth was built up against the south wall (1.04 m in length x 0.995 m in width x 0.340 m in height) covered with layers of baked dark grey mud as was the south wall immediately behind the hearth. Like rooms 5 and 6 on the other side of room 12 this was a further cooking area. A doorway (1.1 m wide) with a fine threshold block, 74 x 40 cm, gave access into room 1 on the south side (Fig. 28). This area had been the subject of robber digging and coins JK inv. 90.127 (Constantius II), JK inv. 90.192 (Abbasid), and JK inv. 90.119 (Islamic) were recovered from the disturbed fill.

Whilst, on excavation, the contents of room 12 gave few clues as to its function, its mode of decoration and its grand architectural features and its scale (7.39 x 11.34 m) make the deduction inevitable that this was a large reception room suitable for entertainment on a large scale, equipped with a number of storerooms, food preparation rooms and two kitchens on either side which had access into it via rooms 5 and 10. No signs of benches or dining couches were detected in it, however, (no *kline* bands visible around the walls)⁵, the original flooring having been robbed away (consisting perhaps of ashlar blocks overlaid with multi-colored marble tiles – see on room 8 above) and only the subfloor, clearly below the threshold level, now remaining, composed of crumbled limestone over levelled bedrock.

Room 12 was entered from room 1 down a step through a generous doorway (1.66 x 0.83 m) fitted for a bi-leaf door with elaborate keying holes and flanked by two addorsed columns (both 67 cm in diameter) which, to judge from curved plaster pieces found adjacent, were plastered in solid red. There is then a further step down into the room. Certainly there was a pilaster *in antis* in the south west corner of this southern side of the room, its (broken) base being visible and a pilaster capital with white plaster still adhering being found on the floor adja-



Fig. 28. Hearth and southern doorway, room 11.

cent (base 81 cm wide). A further matching pilaster capital was found in the north-west corner, also on the floor but no plinth survives there. Additional pilasters, plastered in white, jutted out half-way along the eastern and western walls, being composed of unusually lengthy smooth-finished blocks of particularly hard stone: a pilaster capital, with white plaster, was found adjacent to the one on the west side. The north-east and south-east corners of the room were presumably symmetrically fitted with pilasters *in antis* (a further matching pilaster capital being found in the tumble in the east sector of room 1).

Roofing support for this large room was provided by a tapering column in its centre, the plinth, consisting of bedrock lined with rough render (designed for added stucco), still stands and six of its

column drums lie in a row adjacent, fallen on 75 cm of wind-blown fill, indicating that this room stood open to the air for very many years before this column eventually collapsed. Three further drums lie adjacent. It was clearly plastered in white, some still adhering to the first length of column, still on its plinth. The elaborately carved base was damaged with three edging pieces knocked off, but all three pieces were found scattered at floor level under fallen masonry: evidently some vandalism had occurred at or shortly after abandonment (Figs. 29-30 and 4).

The matching base of a second column was found lying nearby, undamaged, close to but not on the floor, but its plinth is missing and seven of its drums lay scattered on the floor adjacent, many with fine white plaster still adhering and each drum roughly picked for receiving stucco



Fig. 30. Central column base and collapsed drums, room 12.

and marked with a mason's mark (alpha, beta, gamma, delta, epsilon, zeta, eta) to indicate their order in the tapered column (ranging from 77 cm down to 66 cm in diameter, each c. 50 cm high). A further six very battered and partly decayed column drums were found scattered in the tumble on the floor. Unlike the other column, given the floor-level location of the drums, this second column must have been toppled at an early stage in the pilaging of the building. One column capital only was found, with square abacus (82.7 cm, diameter of 66.9 cm at base of capital), and simple raised echinus with one necking ring only, also fully plastered in white.⁶ The second column base and drums are clearly out of context, possibly transported during demolition from room 20, and left ready to remove and recycle as a pair, but the attempt was later abandoned.

Graffiti cut into white plaster were found fallen off blocks in the north-east corner: whilst the writing is in Greek it may not necessarily be contemporary with the building but could date to the time of robbing activities – some of the blocks involved were originally at ceiling height.⁷ This is a room which, while the side walls

still stand up to two metres high, has suffered greatly from stone robbing given its especially fine finish – robber pits were in clear evidence especially in the north east and north west of the room as well as in the south east. Roof-tiles and nails were collected in abundance from the floor-level, fallen before the room began to fill with light wind-blown dust (up to 1.5 m before further wall and roof elements eventually collapsed on the accumulation). What appears to be a statue base was also recovered in the tumble as well as a number of fragments of worked marble (part of four toes of an over-lifesize right foot in marble has been found on the Jebel as a surface find).

What excavation did reveal, however, is that this room was elaborately decorated in *trompe l'oeil* "first-style" plastering – well over 40 kilograms of coloured plaster fragments were collected. Unfortunately no coloured fragments still remained on the walls which were deeply picked for holding the plaster – only patches of coarser terre-pisé backing, in places up to 5cm thick. The plaster work was found at all levels of the débris having flaked off over time as the room lay exposed to the elements. The northern half of the room

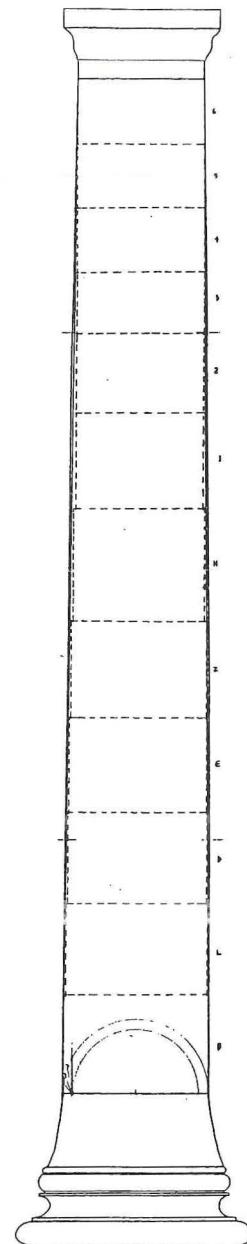


Fig. 29. Reconstruction of tapering column, room 12.

Fig. 31. Lime-mortar flooring, bathroom, room 14.



beyond the central pilasters seems to have been less dramatically decorated producing more in the way of solid colours (in panels) – especially white and pink/red but with some black and ochre. But here the robbing activities were most severe and the surviving evidence may be deceptive. There are some pieces showing over-plastering.

There is no evidence of figurative work but there are some fragments with vegetal decoration – perhaps from a string course:

- black branch and leaves on a bright blue background
- water-plant in white on a bright red background with black underneath
- black with white tendrils and splotches of red
- black with white stalks, spade-shaped leaves and tendrils
- black with white lotus bud with added dots of red
- white with green leaves, branches and stalks with dashes of red

The following were among the marbled combinations that were recovered:

- dark red marbled with white, blue, lighter red and black
- ochre stippled with red, black, orange and white

- grey with added black, red and yellow
- white with stippled red, black, blue and yellow
- brown with dashes of ochre
- black with red splotches and veins
- red marbled with black and ochre
- ochre marbled with black, grey, red and white
- white with speckles and swirls of black and red
- dark red veined with white dashes
- red marbled with white and blue
- black marbled with ochre and white
- black and white with red swirls
- white with thick black lines
- black with veins of white
- black with marbling in pink, white and red
- red marbled with swirls of black and white with touches of blue
- white with light speckles of blue, black and pinkish red
- red marbled with black and blue

It is clear from the many fragments with bevelled edges that there were raised panels of marbled plaster set off by plain colours, although there are plenty of examples also of panels in the basic colours of red, black, white and ochre.

Given the fact that this lavishly decorat-



Fig. 32. Latrine channel, room 13.

ed great hall was fitted with doors, could this have functioned as a ceremonial audience chamber, court room and council chamber as well as at times a banqueting hall (with removable couches)?

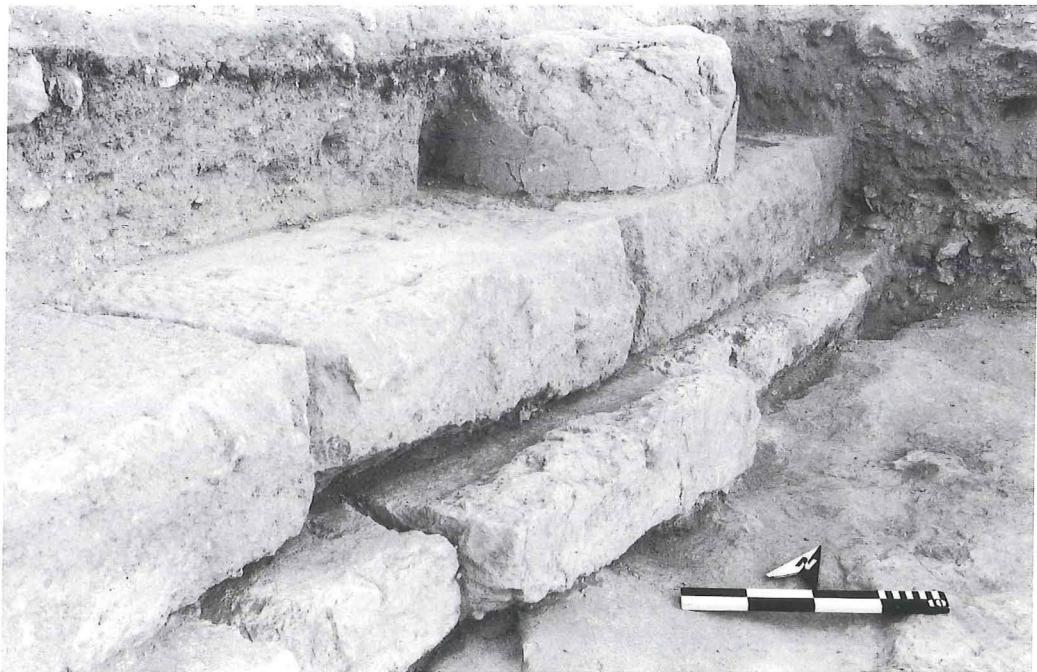
There can be no doubt about the function of rooms 13 and 14 which were entered via a door and corridor from the colonnade, that is, they were accessible from all wings of the building. (The floor of this corridor has been substantially robbed away – a further coin of Constantius II =JK inv. 96.152b was recovered here.) Both rooms are fitted with neat rubble sub-dividing walls (plastered in adobe – full height preserved of 1.265 m in room 13 and 68 cm in room 14 – the partition in room 14 has a short return towards the east (to provide some privacy?). Room 14 also shows two stands made of stones and baked clay evidently used for fires (one is semi-circular in the north west corner inside the return of the dividing wall). The floor of room 14 as well as the north end of its corridor and up several centimetres of the wall is lined with extremely well-preserved lime-mortar carefully sloped to drain towards the north east corner (Fig. 31). This is a washroom with the fireplaces serving no doubt to heat water and/or the

room (no evidence for bath-tubs, no underfloor heating).⁸ The water used in washing (from basins?) emptied through a drain under the north wall of room 14 and flushed out a stone-cut channel running north-south the full length of room 13, close to the east wall (the channel is also lined with lime-mortar): this served as the latrine (perhaps once fitted with a wooden or stone seating-frame?).⁹ The channel (Fig. 32) emptied into a large circular stone-cut drain which runs down at the northern end outside the building (doubtless to a sump, as yet uncleared).

The floor as it survives in room 13 is a rather uneven packing of stones and clay. There appears to be no direct access from the kitchen (room 11) into room 13 (latrine), though adjacent kitchens and latrines are standard, with drainage arranged external to the dwelling. There is a clear mason's mark (delta) cut into a foundation stone of the south wall of room 14.

Unfortunately the following rooms 15 to 18 have been subject to severe robbing, being originally most accessible via the entryway into the building (room 16). The eastern (exterior) wall has in large part been robbed away to the deep foundation

Fig. 33. Column base,
room 16.



trench cut into the jebel and floors have partly disappeared, so that whilst the dimensions of the rooms are clear, room function is beyond hope of reconstruction in the case of rooms 15 and 17.

Room 15 appears to have a narrow doorway into it from room 16 in its south west corner. The original floor level survives only in the north of the room, sub-floor packing only elsewhere. Very little plaster was recovered and such as was found (black and white) may well have drifted in from room 16. In the centre of the room, as excavated, was a very large *tanoor* (circle of c. 2.5 m diameter) with a great deal of ashy deposit and charcoal, some decayed wood, a very large *pithos*, olive pips and associated domestic articles such as loom weights, spindle whorl, grinders and pounders and metal slag – as well as a large deposit of pottery: that is to say, secondary domestic occupation after initial demolition and robbing activities. The one coin recovered from this area (JK inv. 95.326) is of Antiochus VI.

Room 16 would appear to have provided the entry-way into the building leading directly into the colonnade up one step. On the step (forming a stylobate) stood

the remnants of pilasters at the north and south corners and a small column (diameter c. 67 cm), without base, in the centre (Fig. 33): all three elements were still plastered as well as the adjoining north wall (the south wall being virtually disappeared to its foundations). Plaster fragments from the area were recovered in red, duck-egg blue, green, white and black with some evidence of bevelled edges, some patterning with ?leaves, some (from cornice level) of white with a black geometric design. The plaster on pilasters and column was greeny-blue, with black towards and at floor level on the adjoining wall-blocks on the north wall of room 16. Robbing activities have regrettably meant that any further definition of this entry has been lost, the sub-floor only remaining (very hard-packed rubble over a shallow level of rich brown soil on the bedrock) and the east wall being merely defined by the foundation trench cut into bedrock. Should there have been any monumental treatment to the actual entrance way, it is entirely lost: it is more likely to have been unspectacular. Was the approach up into the courtyard through room 16 up a ramp? Given the present condition of the south wall it is impossible to tell whether there was (as appears to be the case with



Fig. 34. Sub-floor ashlar blocks left in room 17.

room 15) a small doorway into room 17. Could room 15 have served as a guard-room immediately adjacent to this entry-way? A coin of Antiochus III (JK inv. 96.105) was recovered in the débris of room 16.

Room 17 has been almost totally robbed: only its dimensions are recoverable with a possible doorway (1.4 m wide) via the corridor (room 18) at its very east end on the south side: surprisingly one length of seven ashlar blocks for its subfloor remains, running east-west, at the southern end of the room, next to which a very decayed timber beam (c. 4 m in length) had also been left: apparently demolition work had not been fully completed before being abandoned. The original paving to the room has been robbed away (Fig. 34). The adjacent room 18 seems to have functioned only as a corridor to provide a very private access into room 17 from the colonnade. Can room 17 have, therefore, functioned as sleeping-quarters? Or even as a treasury/ archive room? It is very conceivable that room 18 might have also contained a staircase to an upper storey on this south-east side of the building but, whilst very probable, firm evidence for this is lacking (Fig. 35): a piece of fluted

column, with dimensions that do not match any location on the ground floor, was found adjacent. Plaster recovered (black) was not in large quantity. The exterior east wall of rooms 17 and 18 has rusticated blocks in its lowest courses matching the exterior walls to rooms 9, 10, 13 and 14 on the east and rooms 6, 7, 8 and 9 on the north of the building. Late Seleucid coins were recovered from the disturbed débris in room 18 (JK inv. 96.017 and JK inv. 96.046: Antiochus VIII, and ?Antiochus VII or IX). Room 18 was equipped with a clear threshold and door-sockets from the colonnade in its south-east corner. An engaged column fragment and pilaster capital were found nearby in the colonnade, probably indicating the decoration of this doorway at the east end of the colonnade. It is conceivable (though much less likely) that room 18 rather than room 16 provided the entry-way into the building complex.

Room 19 was entered via room 20 only, through a well-constructed doorway equipped with a door-pivot-hole and bolt-holes visible on the fine threshold stone and door jamb. The floor was hard-packed earth with a fine white plaster-like finish making a particularly firm surface:



Fig. 35. Room 18, robbed to below original floor level (above rusticated blocks).

at the southern and eastern ends of the room, where the bedrock slopes away, the underfloor consisted of a sterile fill of limestone chippings to over a metre. The walls were plastered in white – stonework is picked for stucco and a little survived *in situ* on west, east and north walls near the floor level. The function is clear: this is a food preparation and cooking area. A raised hearth, similar to the one in room

Fig. 36. Raised hearth in room 19.



11, was constructed against the west wall in the south of the room, plastered in hard baked clay (Fig. 36), and a large circular *tanoor* (1.47 m in diameter, average depth of 15 cm) was located in the floor in the centre north of the room: both were associated with much ash, charcoal and bone as well as seeds (olive, date, wheat) and small finds (e.g. arrow head, small beads, rings, nails etc.). The base of the circular oven itself was carved into the bedrock over which lay layers of baked clay (8 mm), a white lime deposit (3 mm) and then 80 mm of hard brown deposit and ash. Two wooden beams, in advanced stages of decomposition, were found lying parallel on the floor, measuring 2 m and 2.065 m in length. A circular storage vessel hole was also cut in the floor to the east side of the circular oven, evidently for a large *pithos* of which fragments including the toe were recovered in the fill.

Room 21, on the western side of room 20, had a similar function to room 19: it was equipped with a parallel doorway



Fig. 37. Raised hearths in room 21.

access into room 20. However, this room was subdivided by a well-constructed rubble partition wall, carefully plastered in adobe still in an excellent state of preservation, running east-west in the northern part of the room, with a doorway between the two divisions at the east end, 1.32 m wide and 0.78 m deep, consisting of carefully placed ashlar blocks, and showing a clear swivel hole for the door post. Against the south face of this partition wall was a large raised hearth covered in hard baked

clay as well as a second one against the east wall, and cut into the excellently preserved floor (Fig. 37), identical to the white plastered finish in room 19, were five pits for storage vessels in the southern end of the room (a complete amphora stand was also recovered). The area was filled with nearly two metres of wind-blown soil largely devoid of artefactual material. The northern part of the room, to judge by the quantity of plaster recovered in this area, was basically plastered in



Fig. 38. Doric capital, room 20.

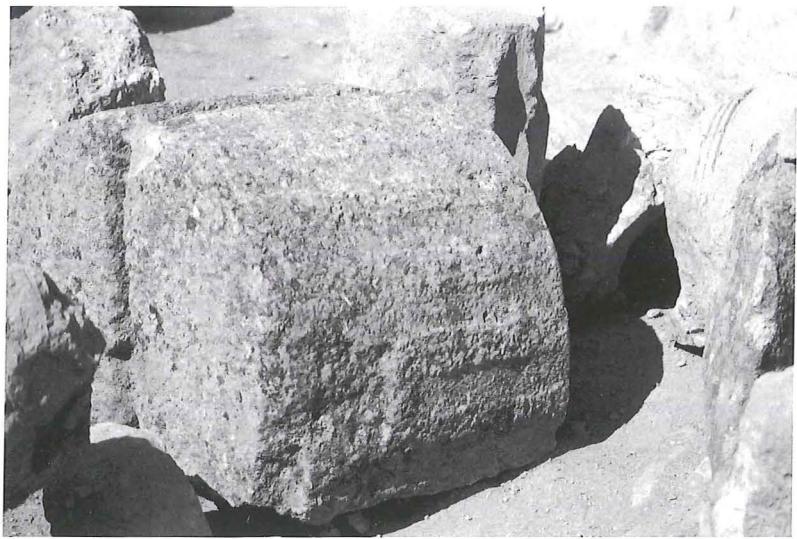


Fig. 39. Column drum,
room 20.

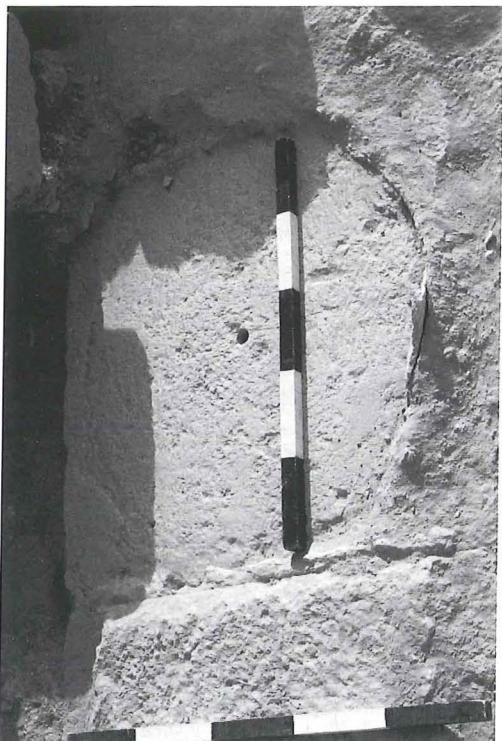


Fig. 40. Base for column,
stylobate, room 20.

solid black but with yellow and white also well represented. Early in the abandonment period a fire, leaving a residue of ash and charcoal, had been lit on the floor against the north side of the sub-dividing wall but otherwise room 21 showed remarkably few signs of disturbance. Could the northern sub-division of room 21 have created a small eating area?

Both rooms 19 and 21 were clearly designed to service room 20 into which

they opened. This grand-scale room (13.7 m x 9.4 m)¹⁰ had an open entry from room 23, decorated with two massive columns on a stylobate consisting of ten squared blocks regular in size (1.14 m x 1.14 m x 0.30 m deep) raised a little (by 15 cm) above the floor level of room 23: the columns stood separated by two blocks of the stylobate (2.30 m apart). The order is Doric: two capitals were found (one in several fragments), with triple necking rings and deep flutings on the column (Fig. 38). Several other column fragments, however, show only strap flutings, which should indicate that the lower portions of these columns were strap-fluted (Fig. 39). Two triglyph and metope (undecorated) fragments were also recovered. The stylobate shows central circular sockets and north/south centering lines for these two columns with evidence around the edge of two layers of plaster, internal one of rougher lime and external one of fine white, evidently applied to the lower strap fluting (Fig. 40). The stylobate blocks supporting the columns are set slightly down in relation to neighbouring blocks. Given the dimension of the columns at their base (1.10 m in diameter) they must have soared to a grand height.

At either side of the stylobate are matching blocks fitted with a deep socket hole on the superior outer edge, perhaps for keying-in further similar blocks above: it is clear, however, that there was always open access into room 20 from the antechamber room 23. Only the subfloor of room 20 remained but some flagstones appear to lie underneath a large deposit of plaster currently left unexcavated by the east wall. Around the north-east corner of the room plaster still adhered to the wall – a greenish blue (the Macedonian composition of cobalt and copper?) with a fine lower moulding in white, up to 48 cm at its greatest height in the north east corner and diminishing to 23 cm at its lowest point where it terminates, 2.3 m in total length. There is also evidence of plaster around all the other walls, fallen in dense deposits up to half a metre high in the case of the east and west walls and one

metre in width (on the south there is a fragile residue of plaster by the floor for its entire length). Samples recovered are not only in solid colours of ochre, black, white, blue and red, but there is some floral patterning and varieties of marbling, including brown background with dashes of red, white, green and black, as well as white with a geometric pattern in black. The plaster deposits have been left, however, largely undisturbed *in situ*. In the adjacent room 21 a white plaster fragment with gold leaf embedded as well as a small separate piece of gold leaf were recovered: these could well have originated in the obviously rich decoration sumptuously lavished on room 20. The room itself had been otherwise cleared of contents but its function is parallel to that of room 12 in the north wing: a large-scale entertainment room, a banqueting hall suitable for symposia and similar ceremonials.

Room 22 shows abundant evidence of domestic reoccupation throughout its long length but most especially in its northern end, with several weak rubble walls built as east-west subdivisions and several degraded earthen floor levels, two fire-places with associated deposits of ash, bone and charcoal, a stone quern, two limestone blocks worked to serve as post-holders, a rubbish dump outside along the western wall, and abundant associated domestic and cooking pottery, utensils, lamps, figurine fragments etc. This assemblage is, however, late Hellenistic and associated coins recovered in the débris are late Seleucid (JK inv. 93.070 = Demetrius II and JK inv. 95.278 = Antiochus IX). Only the original dimensions of the room are clear and the level of the original sub-floor (just above levelled bedrock). One of the weak rubble walls rests on the original ashlar blocks of the room on the north west side, indicating that the room had already been robbed of its stonework to that level (generally down to two courses at most) when reoccupation occurred. In a number of places the bottom course of the room-wall consists of shaped bedrock.

Only a small amount of plaster was col-

lected (red, yellow, black) but given the disturbed nature of the deposit it is impossible to tell whether this indicates that the original room was plastered or not. A pilaster capital and cornice stone found among the tumble in the southern half of the room presumably came from the original doorway treatment into room 22. Given the extremely generous dimensions of the room (it is 21.65 m long) it is unlikely to have been designed for use as a sleeping quarters. Two official Seleucid sealings, found at the lowest floor level, are the best indicators available for its original use – for official administrative business, perhaps, or an armoury. At this level a coin of Seleucus II (JK inv. 93.232) was recovered.

Generally speaking, the corridor-room 23, which runs the length of the south side of the colonnade, seems to have had the same function as its equivalent on the north side, room 1, and to have been equipped with a similar floor, that is to say, its function was as an ante-room to provide a vestibule area directly or indirectly to the south wing rooms, being fitted with a floor consisting of a hard-packed mixture of clay and gritty limestone over bedrock. But in the case of room 23 the present floor is very uneven, the surface having been broken by heavy fallen masonry blocks exacerbated by the fact that the underlying bedrock is rather pitted and degraded in places and that it was seriously disturbed at the far eastern end by the construction of a secondary north/south cross-wall of reused building material (including a block with *mutules* and a fluted column length). The construction technique of its north wall also parallels the south wall of room 1 (the supporting wall of the colonnade roofing), consisting of one header followed by two parallel stretchers with the same dimensions as in room 1: a rough lime plaster is evident on both of its sides and on stonework elsewhere in room 23. There is also some evidence of metal clamping in this north wall.

The west wing of the Acropolis building revealed the most intense reuse and reoc-

cupation of the whole complex. Room 24 was entered by a doorway (later blocked) in its north-east corner directly off the colonnade protected by a low retaining wall to the west creating a small vestibule area with a bedrock floor. Room 24 had already been robbed down, in parts, to its lowest course of wall (visible especially on the north wall) when new occupation levels were laid right across the original wall-line. There are at least three new beaten-earth floor levels of occupation with associated weak cross-walls (sitting on soil), thresholds, doorposts and doorways (consisting of rubble and reused masonry), post-holders, two ovens, and a roughly circular rubbish-pit defined with a stone surround cut in the centre of the room to bedrock. The western third of the room (blocked off by a cross north/south wall) was not reoccupied and here, and elsewhere where located, the original floor level consisted of a few centimetres of very hard-packed clayey soil mixed with limestone above levelled bedrock, creating a very hard surface. The "vestibule area" in its reused phase had a further fire-place and a small upturned capital (*abacus* 40 cm square) used for metal-working (with associated ash, charcoal and slag), a mould (apparently for casting a handle for a knife or dagger) was found here, and a circular hole (used in grinding or for an amphora-stand?) was cut into the bedrock: the reoccupation continued further to the west, towards but not reaching the western retaining wall of room 25 as well as to the north where it was joined by the reoccupation of room 2, a reoccupation which extended outside the original building structure west of room 2.

Whilst coins of late Seleucid dating here dominated the numismatic finds – JK inv. 95.286 (Antiochus IX), JK inv. 95.168 (?Antiochus VIII), JK inv. 95.411 (Antiochus IX), JK inv. 95.306 (Antiochus VIII or IX), JK inv. 91.652 (Antiochus VIII), JK inv. 91.651 (Antiochus VII), JK inv. 91.562 (Antiochus VIII), JK inv. 93.167 (Alexander II Zebina) – there were, however, also much later Roman coins JK inv. 93.166 (Arcadius), JK inv. 93.264 (Constans II) as

well as some significantly earlier ones e.g. JK inv. 93.171 (?Antiochus III), JK inv. 93.009 (?Antiochus III), and JK inv. 95.208 (a Roman Republican *sextans* of before 70 BCE – the only Roman Republican coin recovered on the site). The reoccupation, however, appears to be exclusively late Hellenistic and basically domestic in character, producing the full range of domestic utensils and paraphernalia, abundant cooking and tableware, pounders and grinders, loomweights (6), and spindle whorls, bronze and bone pins, spatulas and probes, knife blades (6), lamps, figurine fragments (14), beads and jewellery etc.

The original function of this large room (11.3 m x 4.25 m) is now irrecoverable: like its close neighbour, room 22, it may possibly have also been intended for official administrative purposes: an official Seleucid sealing was found adjacent to the doorway into room 24. Or were these rooms (22 and 24) the women's quarters – or residential suites for guests?

There are further well-built header/stretcher ashlar walls outside the building structure to the west of room 22 and south of room 24, running both north/south and east/west. Some are certainly retaining walls – with drainage channels for the run-off from the western rocky outcrop. The function of the others remains unclear. Soundings to bedrock confirm that they do not enclose internal rooms (there are no floors and high bedrock outcrops inside these areas are still left unquarried). It is feasible that foundation walls were laid as part of the original floor-plan of the building but that the rooms themselves were never completed. Essentially an area parallel to room 22 on its west side would have been incorporated but divided by east/west walls, creating additional rooms: gaps were left for doorways.¹¹

A sounding trench (three metres square) in the extreme north west of the complex proved that the retaining western wall continued northwards from room 24 to meet the westward continuation of the north wall of room 3. Foundation blocks

cut out of bedrock were uncovered in a context of packed chippings mixed with soil, running southwards and eastwards. Coarse plastering was recovered with rough pebbled backing coloured red and white: some fragments have white with red lines. This is an outdoor enclosure wall of a backyard area. Two coins of Antiochus III (JK inv. 96.344 and JK inv. 96.376) were located just above the foundation blocks, indicating perhaps the approximate time of construction of this enclosure wall, creating a private recreational garden area, perhaps once formally planted, possibly a modest *paradeisos* (no water features).

Interpretation

On the above analysis heavy allowance was made in planning this building for receptions and entertainment as well as for storage.¹² Thus the whole of the north wing and most of the south wing would seem to be devoted to these functions. The governor and his men were expected to behave socially as Macedonians, following the rituals of banqueting and drinking together frequently, whilst it has also to be appreciated that this complex forms part of the walled Acropolis with its separate gateway and nine interval towers, acting as a redoubt should the city-walls below be breached. A storage function with magazine rooms is to be expected also (e.g. rooms ?7 to 9) – hence the particularly large cistern also. This leaves few rooms available for administration, archives, treasury, armoury etc. (? rooms 22, 24), let alone any servants' quarters or residential area for family or guests. Whilst the evidence for an upper storey is unfortunately not proven, it would make sense for upper-level rooms to have been located above (say) the wings of the house surrounding the high-ceilinged *oikoi* of rooms 12 and 20. If so, rooms 2 and 18 would be the likely locations for staircases. The external walls could certainly support such an addition. No tell-tale drainage grooves, however, from any upper storey were detected in any of the walls.

Like many a major Hellenistic resi-

dence on a palatial scale, this building is erected on high ground and effectively on a raised podium on the north and east sides where the bedrock slopes away. However, its major rooms do not seem to take advantage of the magnificent panoramic views up and down the Euphrates valley which this elevated position afforded – unless any window treatment in room 20 provided this to the south: any upper storey rooms would, however, have certainly enjoyed spectacular prospects, whereas the ground floor rooms on the north and east overlooking the valley seem basically to have a service function.

At first sight the overall plan appears to be basically Hellenistic – axial and strictly orthogonal around a peristyle courtyard, with cistern, raised upon a podium. But the long ante-chambers (rooms 1 and 23) with their indirect "bent" entries from the colonnade, leading to the "broad-rooms", the hypostyle halls of rooms 12 and 20, are all features rather in the eastern/Achaemenid tradition, as emphasized by Susan Downey and Inge Nielsen.¹³

Geophysical survey, surface survey and aerial photography all confirm that in the long tongue of land enclosed by the acropolis circuit there is a lengthy, relatively narrow, multi-roomed building running in a north east direction close to the inside north wall of the Acropolis. This constituted, presumably, the barracks for the governor's men – unless this, rather than an hypothetical upper storey, provided the residential quarters for the family of the *epistles* and his guests in a separate but closely located building (currently left unexcavated).¹⁴

By the standards of royal Hellenistic palaces the Acropolis building of Jebel Khalid is undoubtedly a relatively modest and quotidian affair. The closest parallels in character, function and date would be provided by the citadel and redoubt palaces at Dura (especially the latter). The features of reception hall with access to rooms either side (as in room 12 with rooms 5 and 10, room 20 with rooms 19 and 21) is replicated in the citadel palace in the southern large pillared hall (9.48 m

x 6.8 m) with three columns *in antis* and five internal rectangular pillars, with rooms opening internally to east and west.¹⁵ The better preserved so-called redoubt palace also has many features in common with the Jebel Khalid building, having two “broad rooms” on the south and west wings, reached from the central courtyard (17.10 m x 12.10 m) by two ante-chambers, each entered via two columns *in antis* (Doric, 0.708 m in diameter at ground level), the reception room on the south measuring 10.47 m x 6.57 m, that on the west 11.33 m x 6.45 m.¹⁶ A staircase in the north-east led to upper-storey rooms. It, too, was situated on the acropolis, raised on a high terrace, with an extensive view and like the Jebel Khalid building had a rather fortress-like appearance.¹⁷ A military context should not be overlooked. And like so many building projects of Hellenistic Dura, the governor’s residence on Jebel Khalid also may have never been fully completed in the south-west wing.

Overall, the multi-functional purpose of such a building as the Jebel Khalid palace is clear:

military: as a redoubt, equipped with separate defence system and towers, along with water storage and magazine rooms
strategic: providing long-distance views of all river traffic and activities across into Mesopotamia

gubernatorial: equipped with room suitable for sitting in judgment, holding audiences and convening councils

administrative: with rooms suitable for treasury, armoury, storing archives and documents, offices

religious: with an area and permanent altar reserved for religious ceremonies

service: with four kitchen and storage areas, as well as bathroom and latrine

social: with large rooms suitable for entertainment, in which the governor could display the appropriate mixture of authority and lavish camaraderie

domestic: with a presumed upper storey for domestic, servant and guest quarters

recreational: equipped both with a sheltered, walled, back open courtyard as well as with panoramic views to enjoy
imperial: this Greek structure, visible on its elevated position for miles around, would have additionally stamped the Greek imperial presence upon the landscape

The dating of the construction period of the building can be fixed only imprecisely.

The coins found in the course of excavation on the Acropolis included two of Antiochus I, one of Antiochus II, three of Seleucus II, one of Seleucus III, 12 of Antiochus III, 6 of Antiochus IV. The evidence of finds then trails off until the later second century (one of Demetrius I, one of Alexander Balas, two of Antiochus VI, five of Antiochus VII, two of Demetrius II, six of Antiochus VIII, two of Alexander II Zebina, 15 of Antiochus IX, followed by one of Demetrius II [restored], one of Antiochus XII, four of City issues of Antioch 92-72 BCE). This raw evidence suggests a building phase within the third century (perhaps later rather than earlier?) with abandonment and associated demolition activity late in the first quarter of the first century BCE or shortly thereafter. The evidence of the ceramics and other finds (e.g. lamps) certainly fits within this range as does that of the stamped amphora handles. Some reoccupation, especially in the south-west and west wing followed promptly upon the demolition and abandonment. The coin evidence then suggests that apart from one stray piece of Nerva, further (robbing) activity took place in the fourth century CE (five coins of Constantius II, three of Valentinian, two of Arcadius) and again later (e.g. one of Justinian I, one of Maurice, one of Constans II).

On general grounds the construction of the governor’s residence should follow not too long after the major work on the defence system, which seems to belong to the first third of the third century or thereabouts (the dating of the North West Tower and Main Gate). A date in the course of the third century is therefore a reasonable deduction for the construction period.

Notes

NOTE 1

The Acropolis building was excavated over seven years between 1988 and 1996. Trench supervisors and assistants over that period included Gillian Shepherd (1988), Nicholas Sekunda, Boris Rankov (1989), Judith Littleton, Thomas Hillard, Edward Clarke (1990), Julia Clark, Geoffrey Edwards, Thomas Clarke, Jennifer Anderson (1991), Brian Tunks, Geoffrey Edwards, Lyle Smith, Edward Clarke, Julia Clark (1993), Brian Tunks, Geoffrey Edwards, Lyle Smith (1995), Edward Clarke, Geoffrey Edwards, Jamie Travis, Basil Al-Asaly (1996). Architects were Bryce Raworth (1989), Jennifer Branton (1990), and Barry Rowney (1990, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1996) to whose skill the final plans and drawings are due. The photographs are by Graeme Clarke and Bronwyn Douglas, the drawing of Figure 13 by Judith Sellers. Our representative over all these seasons was Radi Uckdi (Museum of Hama) with the exception of 1993 (Labib Siba'i) and 1995 (Fayez Swede). To all of these and the members of the Syrian Department of Antiquities and Museums (especially to Dr Sultan Muhesen and Dr Adnan Bounni) my sincere thanks are due.

NOTE 2

Sonne 1996, 136ff. for an analysis of the typology of Hellenistic gardens and 141f. on peristyle gardens, with full bibliographical references. See also Nielsen in this volume.

NOTE 3

I am grateful to Professor Peter Kunihom and Carol Griggs of The Malcolm and Carolyn Wiener Laboratory for Aegean and Near Eastern Dendrochronology, Cornell University, for their work on wood samples from Jebel Khalid.

NOTE 4

On cylindrical altars see especially Fraser 1977, 25–33 (with rich annotation) and plates 58(a)–91(h).

NOTE 5

On Hellenistic dining couches, their various dimensions and arrangements, see Murray 1990, esp. Section 11 (symptotic space) and Section 111 (symptotic furniture), Nielsen 1998, 102ff. and Dunbabin 1998, 81ff.

NOTE 6

It seems unlikely that a column of this size would have come from an upper storey – and that its base would have fallen from such a height undamaged: its (now missing) plinth would have made a particularly desirable piece of hard stone. An upper storey would, however, have provided accommodation for the governor's family (and/or servants) and might have been expected in a building of this scale.

NOTE 7

Clarke 1992/3 117ff.

NOTE 8

On Greek bathing, see Ginouvès 1962, *passim* and Nielsen 1990, vol. 1, 6ff.

NOTE 9

On the use of over-flow water, waste-water and drainage systems generally to flush out latrines in bathing complexes, see Nielsen 1990, 163.

NOTE 10

For the use of the tie-beam truss for spanning lengths much over 11 m, see Coulton 1997, 157f., and Winter 1984, 374 and n. 120 with further references.

NOTE 11

Compare the planned extensions to the north of the palace of Vergina/Aigai, never completed: Nielsen 1994, 82.

NOTE 12

It hardly needs emphasizing that an analysis based on finds from the period of abandonment can only be expected to reveal the function to which rooms were put in their latest phase: this need not coincide with the original planned functions.

NOTE 13

Downey 1985, 111–19 and especially Downey 1986, 27–37; Nielsen 1994, 44ff and *passim*, and Nielsen 1996, 209ff.

NOTE 14

The Pergamon complex has a residential building adjacent to the palace, Nielsen 1994, 105ff (Palace IV – residential – plus Palace V).

NOTE 15

Baur & Rostovtzeff 1931, 12–15, 20–22, 53–57 and Pl. IV. Of course, the earlier building underneath the citadel palace might have provided closer parallels. On the problems in dating both the citadel and redoubt palaces, Allara 1986, 45ff.

NOTE 16

Note, too, that the Hasmonaean “twin palaces” at Jericho each had a reception room situated on the south of the courtyard and opened on to it through a distyle *in antis*: see Netzer 1996, 207; Roller 1998, 171ff.

NOTE 17

Baur & Rostovtzeff 1933, 21–27 and Pl. 111; Hoepfner and Schwander 1986, 220ff.; Leriche *et al.* 1997, 55–80.

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Caucasian Iberia in the Post-Achaemenid Period

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE PRINCIPAL MONUMENTS

Vakhtang Licheli

Caucasian Iberia, located in the central part of the Transcaucasus, borders to the East on historical Albania, to the South on Armenia, to the West on Colchis and to the North on the high Caucasus mountain range.

Of the sites excavated in the territory of Caucasian Iberia more than 20 belong to the Post-Achaemenid period; most of these, however, revealed only cultural layers. For the present purpose of determining the archaeological and cultural sequence of these sites, it has been considered useful only to include those which have been excavated more or less completely. These are as follows (Fig. 1): Samadlo and Nastakisi; Tsikhia-Gora; Sairkhe; Atsquri; Uplistsikhe-Bambebi set-

tlement; Bagineti; Sarkine; Ghartiskari; Dedoplis Mindori and Dedoplis Gora.

The excavated remains of these nine sites have here been divided into three categories according to their main function: a) cultic monuments (Samadlo, Tsikhia-Gora, Uplistsikhe, Sarkine, Dedoplis Mindori); b) settlements (Atsquri, Sairkhe, Dedoplis Gora); c) fortification systems (Gartiskari, Bagineti).

Samadlo is situated in the central part of Iberia, on a rocky hill on the right bank of the river Mtkvari or Kura (Gagoshidze 1979). On the opposite side of the river, the Nastakisi settlement is located. It is suggested that these two sites were connected with each other and that Samadlo functioned as Nastakisi's acropolis. The

Fig. 1. Map of Georgia.
Distribution of the principal monuments.

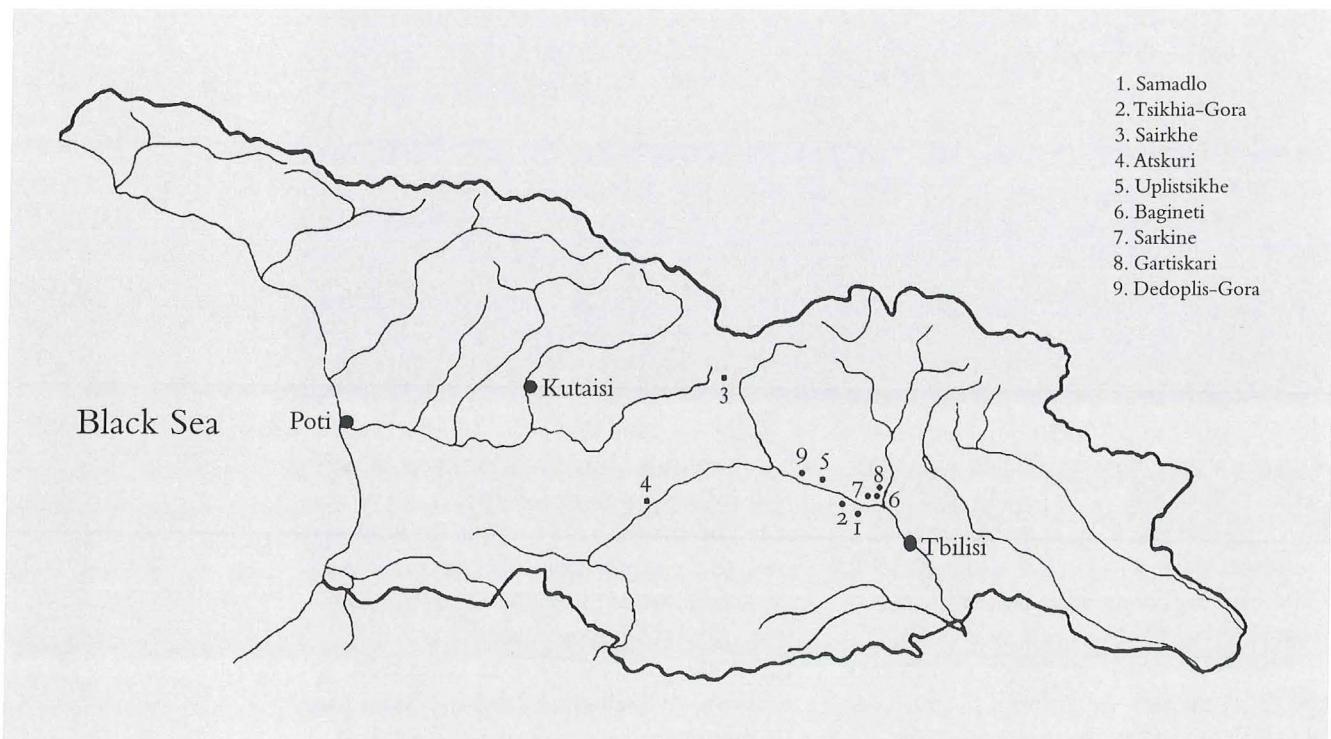
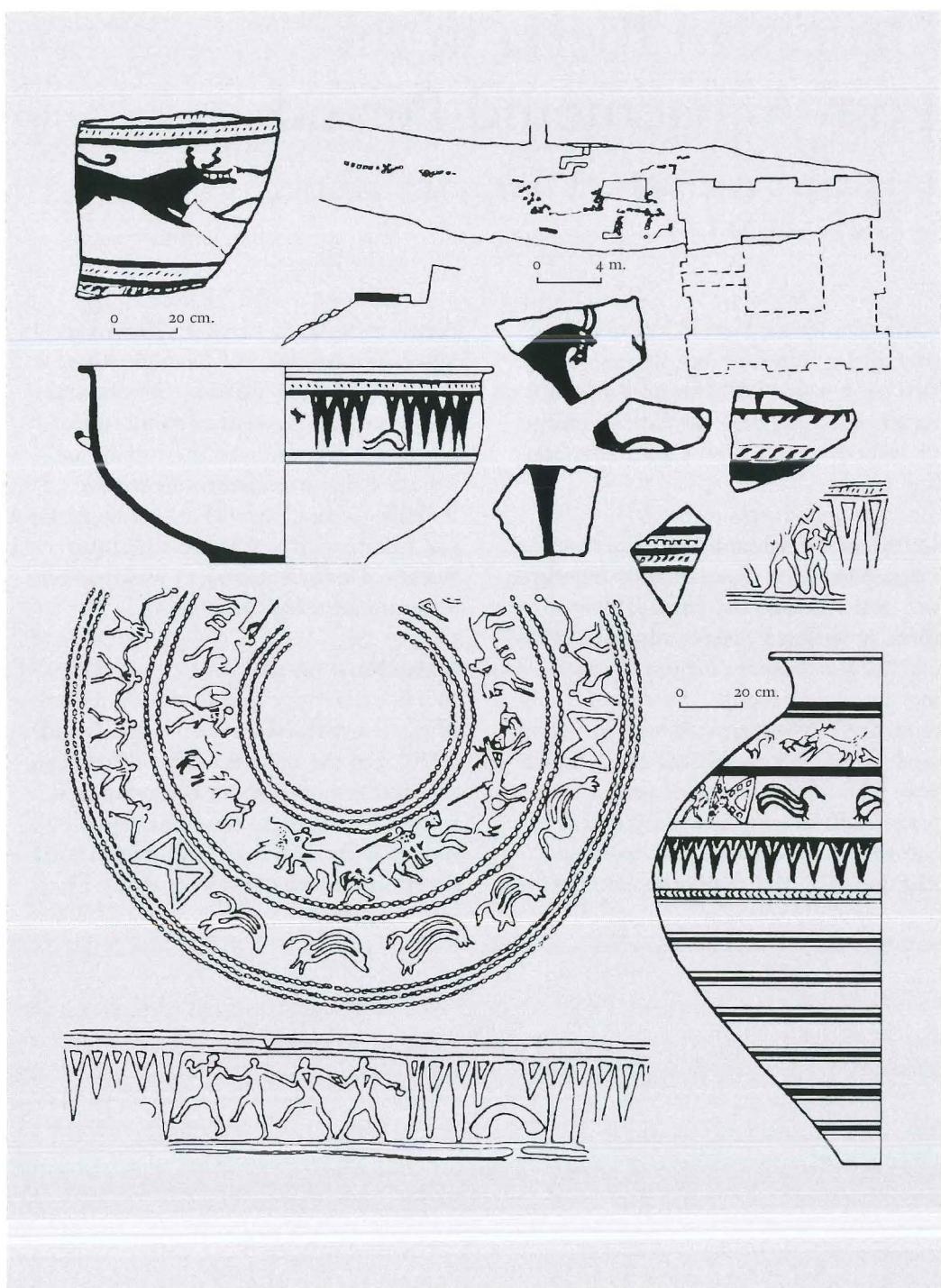


Fig. 2. Samadlo
(after I. Gagoshidze und
O. Lordkipanidze).



separation by the river of a site into two parts constituting the acropolis and the lower part of the City respectively, is a common feature in ancient Georgia (cf. in Colchis, Vani-Saqanchia). Samadlo was destroyed in the 2nd century BC.

The main structure, which determines the function and the cultural position of Samadlo, is the "watch-tower temple." This

is a rectangular building, constructed with walls of ashlar and mud-bricks. It has corner- and central risalites (Fig. 2). Typologically this construction belongs to the type of temple, which was known in the Urartian and Achaemenid periods as a "fire-tower-temple", and may be compared with the Achaemenid Zindan-i-Suleiman in Pasargadae or the Kaaba-i-Zarducht

(Gagoshidze 1979, 51-74; Kipiani 1992, 12-14).

On the hill of Samadlo cultural strata from the 7th-6th century BC and from the Hellenistic period were also excavated, so that three main cultural strata may be identified in Samadlo.

The cited construction could belong to Samadlo's second period (4th-3rd cent. BC), when for the first the time unique painted pottery was found in Georgia (Fig. 2). Painted pottery (*pithoi*, *crateres*, jugs etc.) generally appeared in the territory of Iberia without any comparable development in the material culture of the Transcaucasus in the previous period. Therefore this phenomenon should be explained by external influence. I agree that the source of such an impulse could be the north-western regions of Achaemenid Iran (Narimanishvili 1991, 69-80), since the style and the painting-technique of the pottery of Samadlo are close to West Iranian traditions.

As for Nastakisi, this settlement is suggested to be the part of Samadlo's 3rd period, because the layers excavated there date to the 3rd -2nd century BC.

Although the archaeological finds are numerous, no Samadlo type painted pottery was found here. The material included locally made pottery and some Greek, black glazed and "West Slope Ware" shreds, as well as an *unguentarium* (second half of the 3rd century BC).

Tsikhia-Gora is located on a small hill on the right bank of the river Mtkvari or Kura, approximately 8 km west of Samadlo. The earliest cultural layers belong to the Bronze Age. In the 2nd half of the 2nd millennium BC, a fairly large settlement developed, which functioned until the 7th-6th century BC (Tskitishvili 1977, 87-93; Tskitishvili 1990, 169-170). After this time, the settlement moved to the nearby valley. Also the hill changed its function, as documented by the discovery of a double-protome capital and the casual find of a bell-shaped column base, which could belong to a layer from the 6th-4th century BC (Gagoshidze & Kipiani 1997,

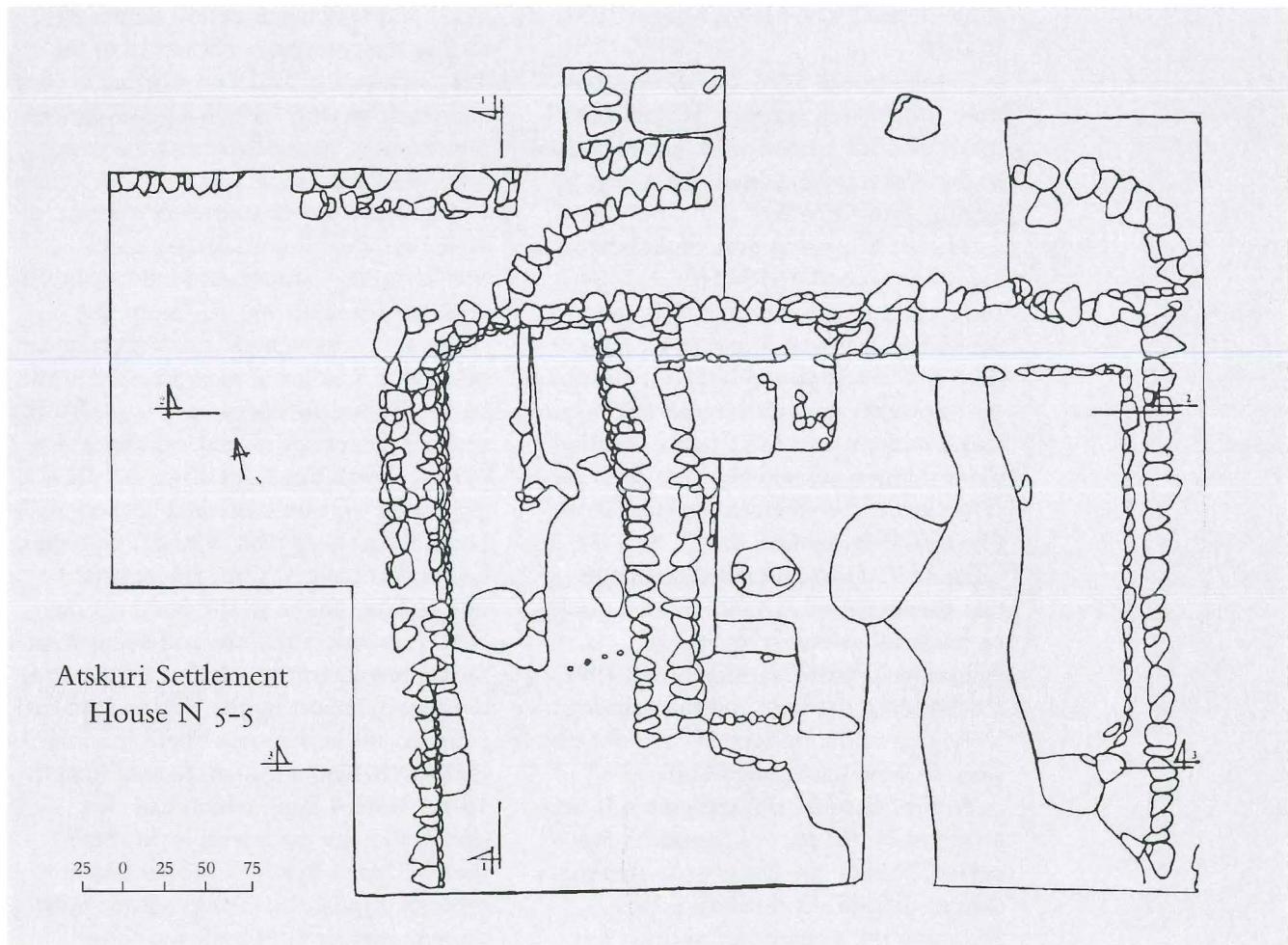
8-11) and which was almost destroyed during the constructional works of the 4th -3rd century BC. The remains of these construction works are in a good state of preservation, especially is that the case with the fortification wall.

Inside the fortification wall several structures were found, among them a temple, built of stone and mud-bricks. The width of the walls was 1.5 m. In the courtyard of the temple was a rectangular pillar with a height 2 m, which seems to be an altar. In the corner of the yard was a square structure of stones and clay (3.5 x 3.5 m), which functioned as a sacrificial place; here an iron knife and burned bones from sheep were found. The temple had two entrances. Some interesting objects were found in the building: clay altar fragments, and disks and bullas with the representation of a horse, a rider and the moon, indicating the existence of the Mithras cult in this area. There is a long building behind the main temple (length 18 m, width 4.5 m), which had two storeys like the main temple. In these premises, on a layer of tile, the double protome capital made of limestone with the representation of bulls was found.

Of other constructions at this site a barn consisting of 6 rooms should be mentioned. Burnt grains, a mill with clay disks inside and 30 hand-mills upon it, and a wine store with 48 *pithoi* of various sizes, were found there. Grape stones belonging to the saperavi grape species, which still exists nowadays were discovered as well, as was an oven for the baking of bread, as well as three dwellings with different ground-plans.

To the North of Tsikhia-Gora, a necropolis with pit-burials of the 13th-1st century BC was excavated. Only one relatively rich grave should be mentioned, in which a disc-shaped, typical Achaemenid golden rosette (diam. 16 cm), figurines, seals and beads were discovered.

In **Sairkhe**, a fragment of an Achaemenid type capital was found several years ago. Sairkhe is the most remote point of distribution of such architectural elements from



the centre of Achaemenid world. This capital is dated to 4th-3rd century BC (Kipiani 1987, 6-12).

The city-site of **Atskuri** is situated on the left bank of the Mtkvari (Kura) river. This is the reason why the south-eastern part of the site was entirely washed away by the river. The stratigraphy is the same in each section of the site: the humus (5-15 cm thick) is followed by a loamy sterile layer (0.8-3 m thick), which in some places (trench 3) is replaced by a sandy sterile layer (5.5 m thick) or by a loose sterile one (Licheli 1997, 91-93; Licheli, Fossey & Morin 1997, 46-48; Licheli 1998, 25-37). The cultural layer directly following the sterile one is of varying thickness (from 1.5 cm, as in trench 1, to 4.6 cm, as in trench 5).

The architectural remains are mainly represented by various foundations built

with cobblestones and ashlar, allowing us to distinguish two different types of planning: one rectangular, the other circular. It should be noted that chronologically circular structures are characteristic of the 5th-4th century BC, while in the subsequent period only rectangular buildings occur (Figs. 3-4). It is noteworthy that the circular altar (diam. 1 m) found in trench 3, (made of cobblestone) is also datable to the 5th-4th century BC.

The ceramic material falls into two groups: local and imported (Fig. 5). The local manufacture is represented by Colchian (jugs with tubular handles, *pithoi*, cups) and Iberian (painted jugs, *pithoi*, *phialae*, plates, etc.) forms. Pottery imitating Greek forms constitutes a separate group (*luteria*, some types of bowls) and dates to the Late Hellenistic period (2nd - 1st century BC). Imported wares, represented by Ionian bowls dating to the 6th

Fig. 3. Atskuri. Rectangular house from the 5th-4th cent. BC.

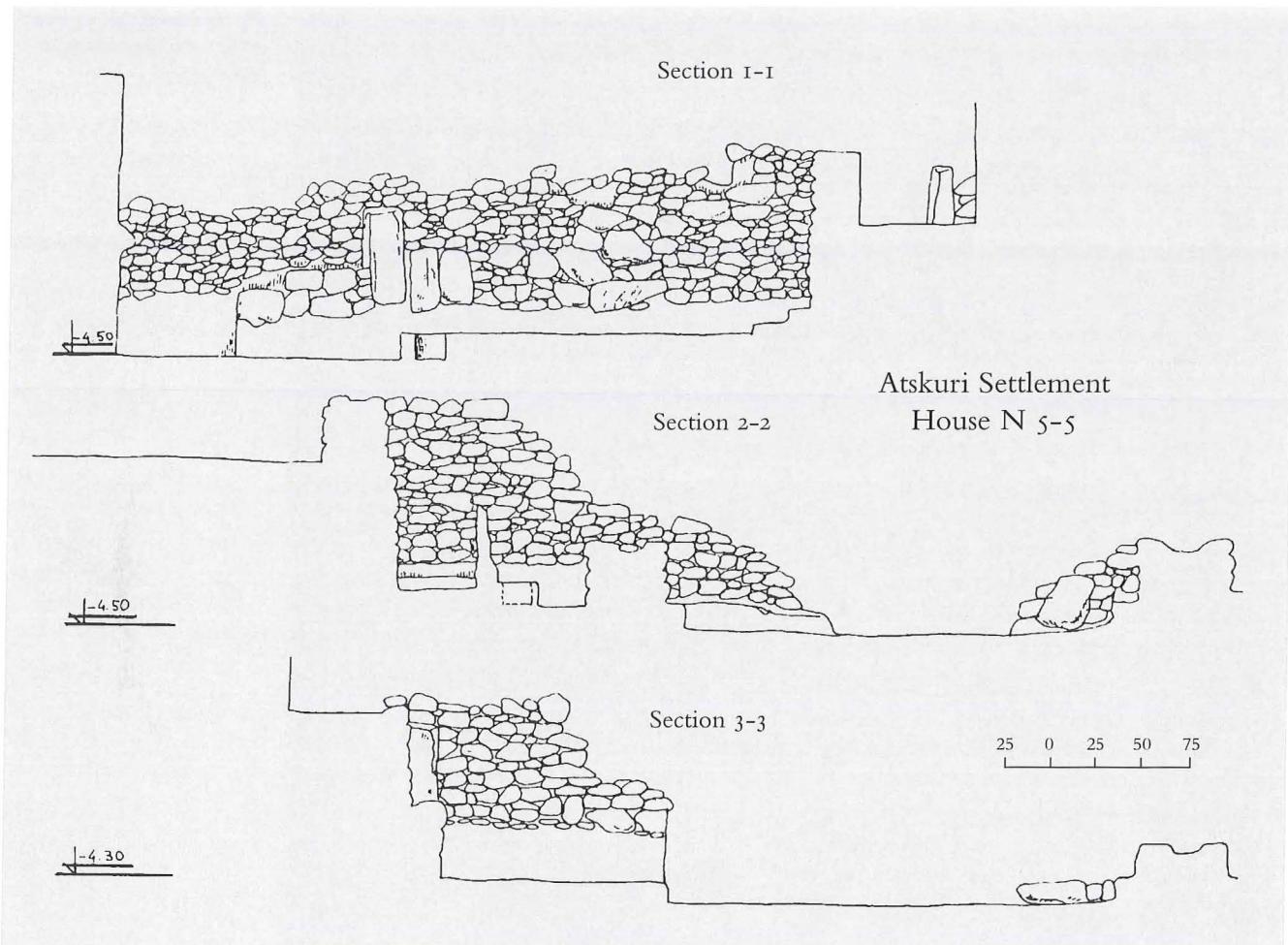


Fig. 4. The Atsvari Settlement. Sections of houses.

century BC (the first example of this type found in the hinterland of Transcaucasia), Attic *kylikes* dating to the 5th century BC, and black-glazed pottery from Asia Minor dating to the 4th-2nd century BC. The discovery of *amphorae* is also noteworthy. According to the colour and fabric they must be the product of a South-Pontic city (Licheli 1998, p. 25-37).

There are several bronze buckles among the artifacts found in Atsvari, which have analogies from Talish and Susa in contexts dating to the late 1st millennium BC, and from Luristan (in the Metropolitan Museum of Art). Worth mentioning are also bone harness fittings like those found in Mashat (North Anatolia), Sardis, Karmir-blur, Gordion, and Persepolis (Koch, 1992, 237; Waldbaum, 1983, 40, pl. 86).

Uplistsikhe is planned according to the morphology of the left side of the river

Mtkvari (Fig. 6), and is carved into the rock. Most of the buildings have cultic functions. There are several sacrificial pits and wine storages (58 *pithoi* were found). Many artefacts of various functions were found here, among which wheels of a chariot with bumps should be mentioned. An analogy for this wheel type was found in Vani (western Georgia). This type of chariot is known from various representations, including from the Apadana reliefs in Persepolis, and belongs to the Achaemenid world (Khakhutaishvili 1963; 1964; Sanikidze 1987). This site is unique for the Hellenistic period of Georgia.

Bagineti is the acropolis of the ancient capital of Iberia, Mtskheta. It is located near the junction of the two rivers Mtkvari and Aragvi, on a high triangular hill. The fortification wall borders an area of approximately 30 hectares. The structures

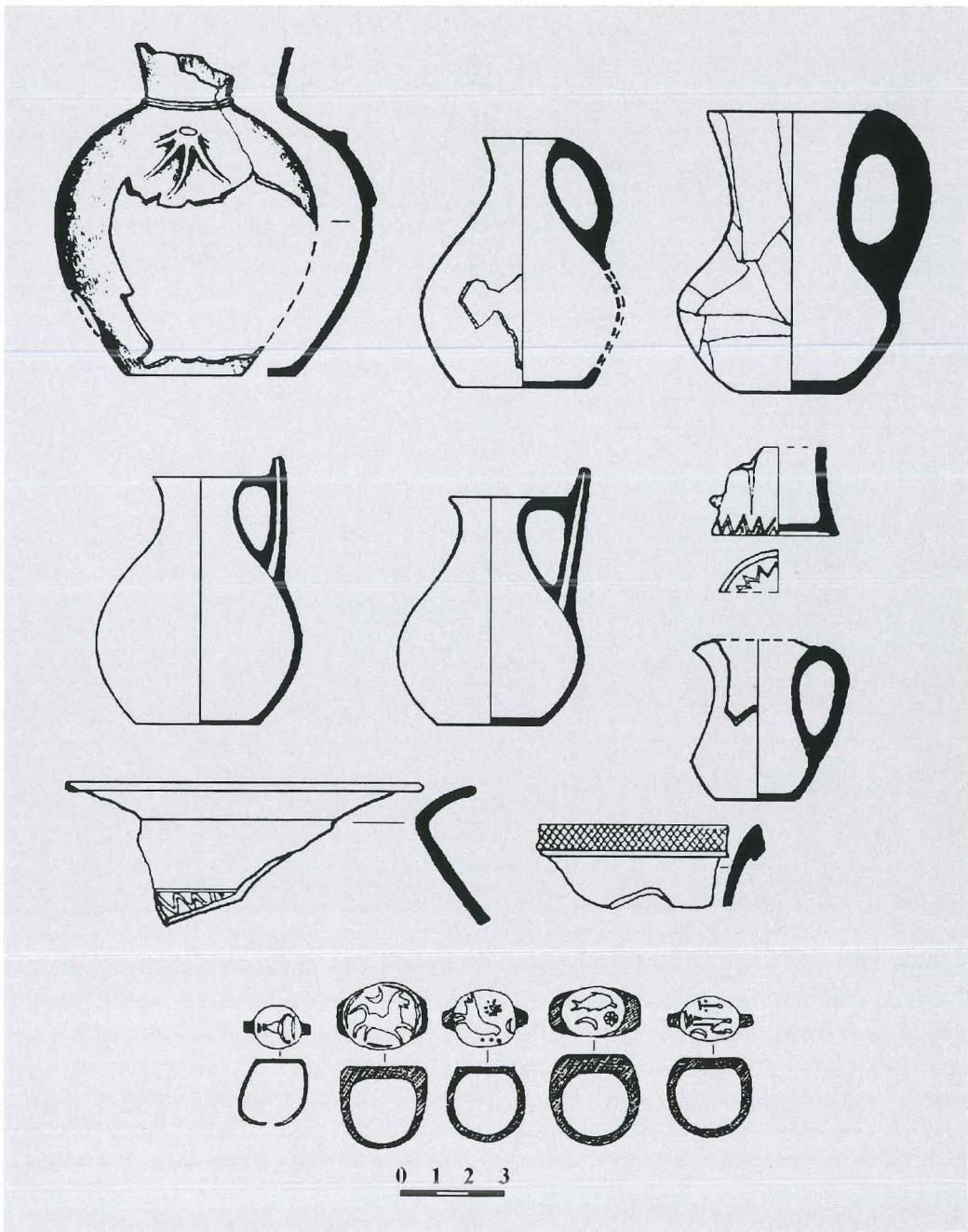


Fig. 5. Atsquri. Locally made pottery and finger-rings, 5th-4th cent. BC.

are dated approximately to the 2nd -1st century BC (Apakidze 1963, 214).

The main part of the settlement of **Sarkine** has been destroyed, but some parts of the city wall constructed of mud-bricks (2nd -1st century BC) have been preserved. In Sarkine, a Ionian capital (2nd -1st century BC) and masks depicting Dionysus and Ariadne, as well as a Maenad were found.

Ghartiskari. This big, fortified system protected the capital of Iberia from the north (Apakidze et al. 1985, 45). The fortifications of Ghartiskari were probably constructed in the 2nd-1st century BC.

Dedoplis Mindori and Dedoplis

Gora. The great temple of Dedoplis Mindori and the palace of Dedoplis Gora are dated to 1st century BC-1st century AD. The excavated material reveals close relations with the countries of the Orient

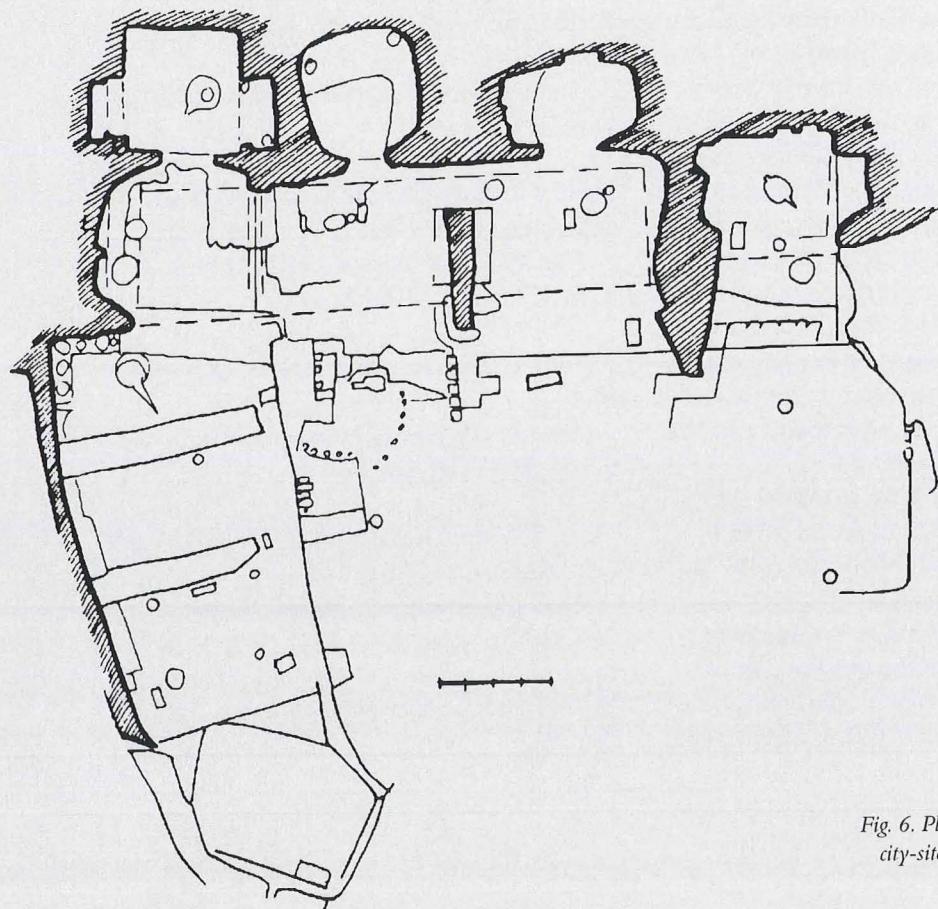
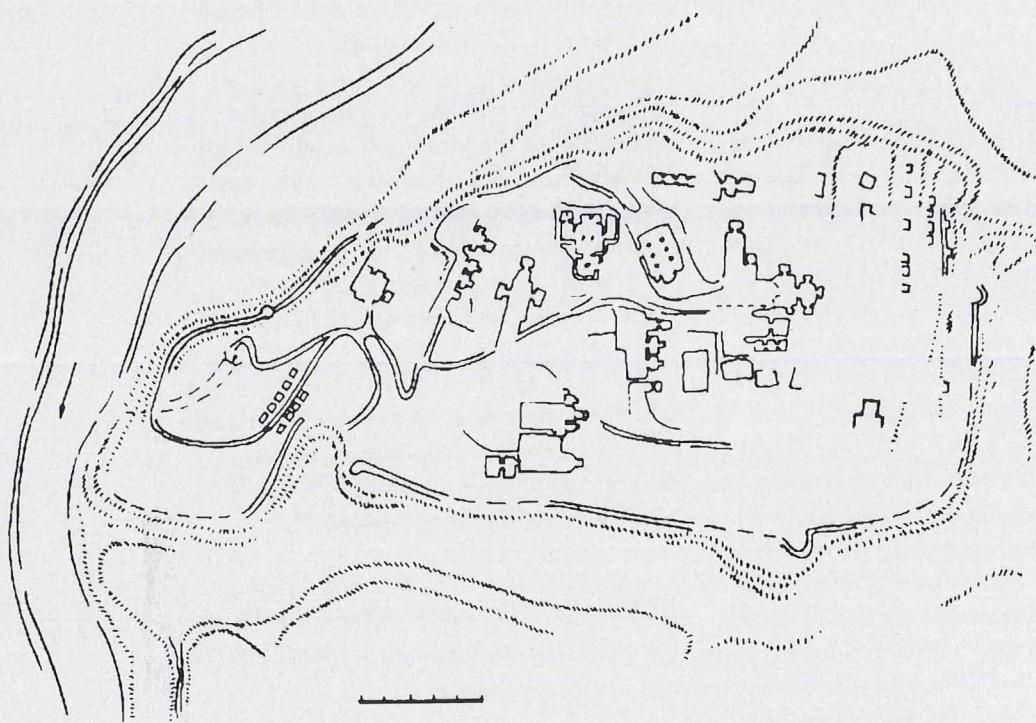


Fig. 6. Plan of the Uplistsikhe city-site, and of the so-called "big house," plan (after T. Sanikidze).

(Gagoshidze 1977, 102–08, and in this volume).

The comparison of these sites presents the following picture:

The second layer of Samadlo (“watch-tower”) is contemporary with the Tsikhia-Gora cultural strata of the Achaemenid period. These layers were destroyed during the new construction work of the end of the 4th century BC, but the double protome capital and the bell-shaped base were preserved from that phase. I suggest, therefore, that they belong to an Achaemenid-style palace, and that these structures may illustrate Iberia’s unification in the eighteenth Achaemenid Satrapy. They thus belong to the first chronological phase, which lasted from the 5th cent. BC to the last quarter of the 4th century BC. Atsquri’s circular constructions belong to this phase as well. The second phase, from the end of the 4th century BC to the beginning of the 2nd century BC, includes the Tsikhia-Gora temple and the rectangular planed constructions of Atsquri, as well as all the cultural layers (so-called. Hellenistic Period Strata) of Samadlo and Tsikhia-Gora. To this period belong also the complex of Uplistsikhe and most of the buildings and cultural layers of Atsquri, with material dating to the 3rd – beginning of the 2nd century BC. To the third phase, which lasted from the 2nd cent. BC to the middle of the 1st century BC, belong the Ghartiskari fortification system, and the layers with masks and Ionic capital of Sarkine, as well as the Bagineti fortification walls and Atsquri IV.

The fourth phase covers the period from the second half of the 1st c. BC to the 1st century AD.

The Dedoplis Mindori temple complex, the Dedoplis Gora palace, and the left bank with the upper cultural layers of Atsquri belong to this phase. Only in the

third phase (=Iberian II, 200–64 BC), do we see some influence from the Hellenistic culture. In all the other phases the influences came primarily from the East.

Finally, I would like to comment briefly on the Tsikhia-Gora temple complex (second phase). In my opinion it corresponds functionally and chronologically quite well with the passage in Strabo (*Geography* 11. 3. 5–6) about the existence of four classes in Iberia. Presumably the constructions belonging to Tsikhia-Gora’s second phase represent the Palace of priests, about which Strabo wrote: “The second class is that of the priests, who among other things attend to all matters of controversy with the neighbouring peoples.”

Summary of the chronological phases of the principal archaeological monuments of Caucasian Iberia:

Ph. 1. The proto-Iberian (Achaemenid)
Period: 5th cent. BC – 2nd half of 4th cent. BC.

Samadlo II; Tsikhia-Gora III; Atsquri II; Gumbati

Ph. 2. The Early Iberian period (Iberian I): 2nd half of 4th cent. BC – 200 BC.

Samadlo III; Tsikhia-Gora IV; Uplistsikhe I; Atsquri III; Sairkhe I

Ph. 3. The Iberian II period: 200 BC – 64 BC.

Atsquri IV; Sarkine; Uplistikhe II; Ghartiskari; Bagineti (?)

Ph. 4. The Iberian III period: 64 BC – 1st cent. AD.

Dedoplis Mindori; Dedoplis Gora; Atsquri V

Ph. 5. The Late Iberian Period: 1st – 3rd cent. AD.

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A Royal Palace in First-Century Iberia

ACCORDING TO THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MATERIAL FROM DEDOPLIS GORA, GEORGIA*

*Iulon
Gagoshidze*

Dedoplis Gora is a fairly high (34 m) hill, which is situated in Shida Kartli, almost in the geographical centre of Georgia, on the left bank of a left tributary of the Kura – the Prone. The south slope of the hill has been washed away by the river, revealing cultural layers with a depth of about 14 metres.¹

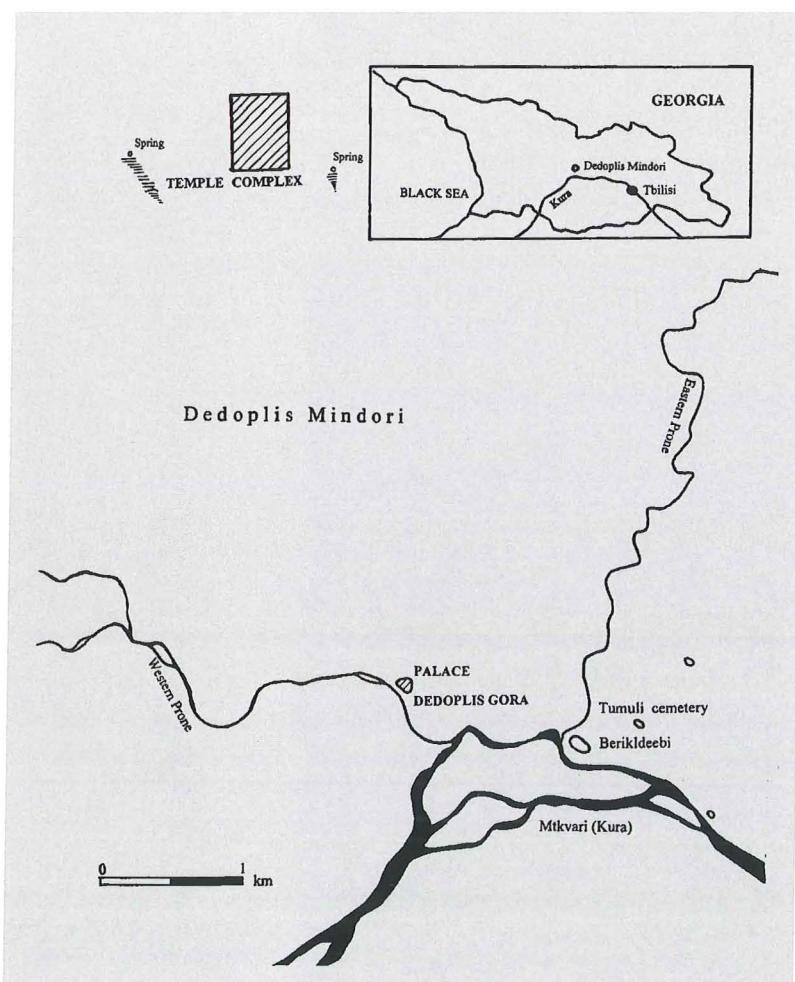
The lower cultural layers of Dedoplis Gora belong to the Chalcolithic, early and late Bronze, and early Iron ages. The next layer is formed by the ruins of an old

palace, while these ruins are covered by four levels of late Roman – early medieval cultural layers dated to the 4th–7th cent. AD. There has been no population on the hill since the 7th cent. (Fig. 1).

To the east and north of Dedoplis Gora there are two more formerly populated hills, which are lower but with a much larger surface than Dedoplis Gora: one has an area of about two hectares, the other of more than 4 hectares. On the eastern hill only cultural layers of the late Bronze and early Iron Age are represented, but on the northern hill, the surface of which was damaged by builders, we excavated in 1979 some early Iron and late Bronze age houses and some pits full of early Bronze (Kuro-Araxian culture) and middle Bronze age material. To the north of the hills, at Dedoplis Mindori, is a vast cemetery, where in the same year we studied 13 tombs of the first half of the 3rd millennium BC, 41 pit-burials of the 2nd –1st millennium BC and a late Bronze age (14th – 13th cent. BC) tumulus with a chariot. The Bronze Age settlement extends to the west of the hills, too, beside the Eastern Prone, which together with the Western Prone joins the Kura.

On the left bank of the Eastern Prone, in the area called Berikldeebi, spread a vast tumulus cemetery, where about 50 barrows have been listed. Eight of them were excavated between 1979–1985. Two of them appeared to belong to the early Bronze age (Bedeni culture), five to the middle Bronze age, and one to the transitional period from middle to late Bronze age (15th cent. BC). On the place where the Eastern Prone flows into the Kura, a sanctuary-site was excavated in 1979–1990, where the remains of Chalcolithic,

Fig. 1. Dedoplis Mindori.
Situational map.



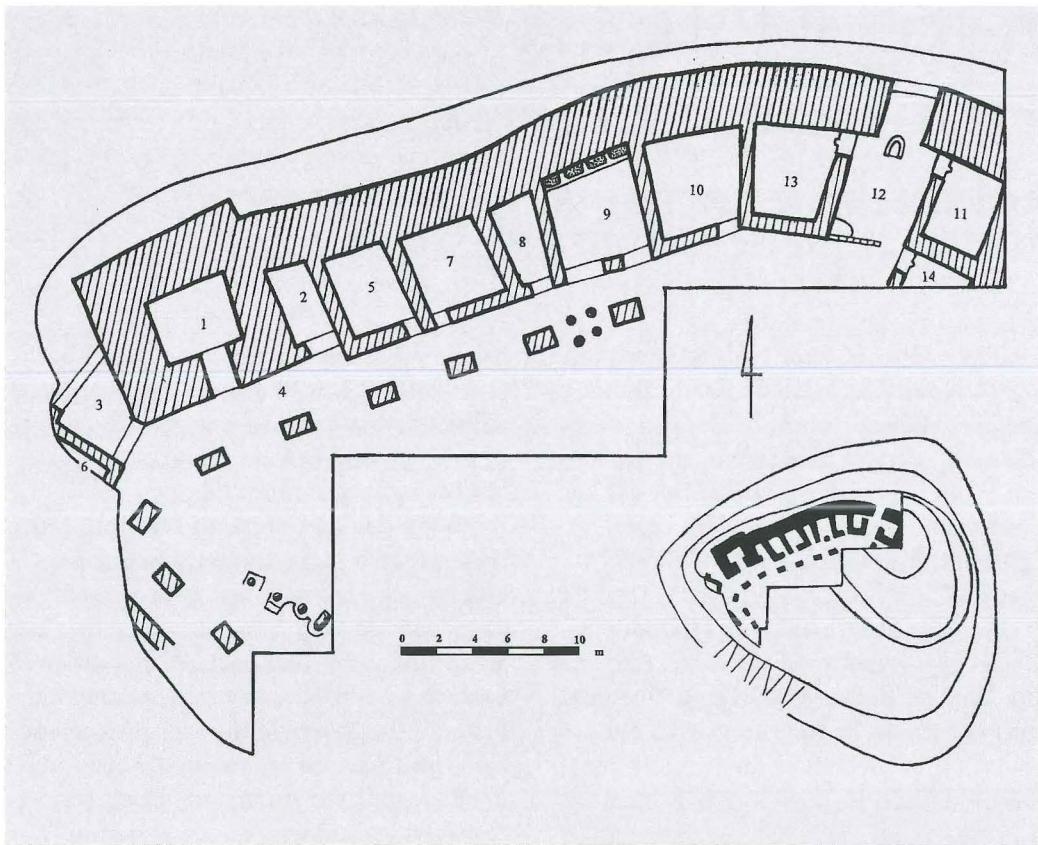


Fig. 2. The palace at Dedoplis Gora. Plan of the excavated area and of the hill of Dedoplis Gora (by G. Gagoshidze).

early Bronze (Kuro-Araxian and Bedeni cultures) and late Bronze – early Iron age buildings and several burials of the Chalcolithic and Middle Bronze Age were found.²

There does not exist a settlement of such range elsewhere in the territory of Shida Kartli and in my opinion, it must have been the central residential area of a larger region in Bronze Age.

At Dedoplis Mindori, about 3 kilometres to the north of the hills, a grandiose temple complex of the 2nd-1st cent. BC-1st cent. AD was excavated in 1972-1977. It has been identified as a family sanctuary of the kings of Kartli, or Iberia (Caucasian Iberia), as it was called in the Greek and Roman sources (Figs. 3-5).³ We are of the opinion that in the palace at Dedoplis Gora, which is contemporary with the temple complex, a ruler must have lived, who probably governed the royal domain around Dedoplis Mindori. Thus when the King of Kartli and his family went on a pilgrimage to the temples at Dedoplis

Mindori, this palace was temporarily turned into a royal residence.

In the 1st cent. BC, when the construc-

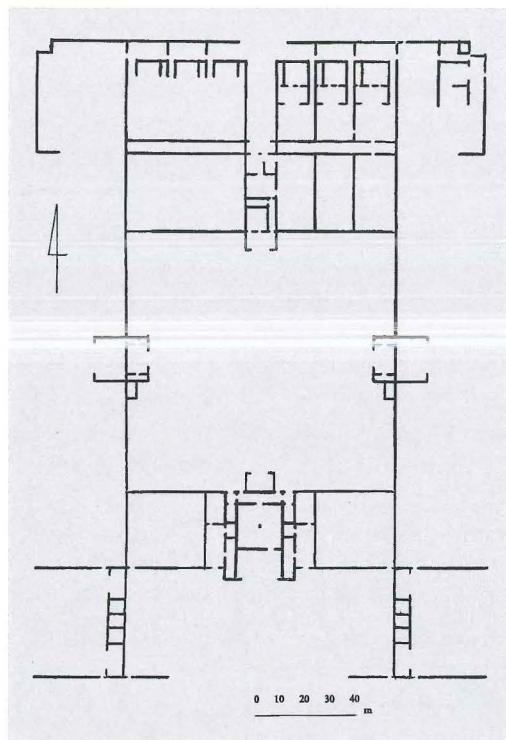


Fig. 3. The temple complex of Dedoplis Mindori. General plan.

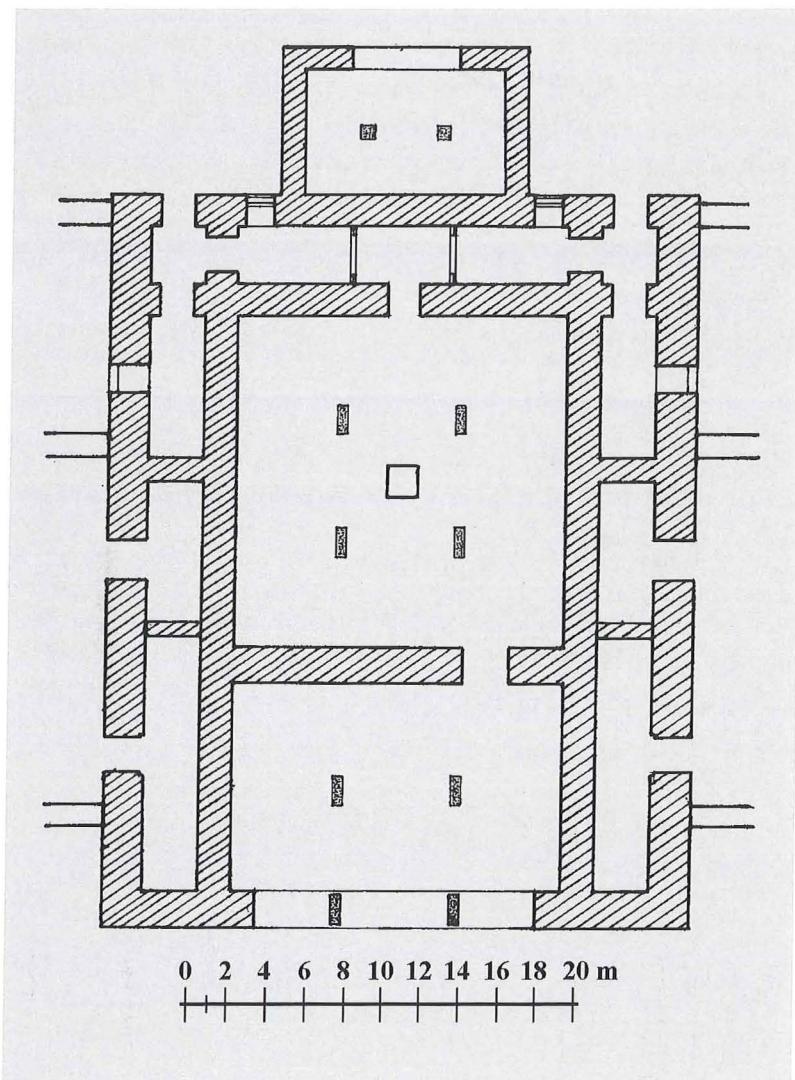


Fig. 4. The temple complex of Dedoplis Mindori. Main Temple. Plan.

tion of the palace began at Dedoplis Gora, this hill was 10 m higher than that of Dedoplis Mindori. Moreover, considering that Dedoplis Gora is separated from Mindori (as well as from the other two hills) by a 10-metre deep moat made already in the Bronze Age, we must conclude that from a strategic point of view the builders had chosen a quite convenient place for building a fortified palace (Figs. 1-2).

According to the archaeological evidence, which has been confirmed by radiocarbon analysis, the palace was destroyed at the end of the 1st cent. AD, apparently together with the temple complex of Dedoplis Mindori.⁴⁴ The Palace was ruined by a strong fire, and the arrowheads found in the ruins of the wall make us suppose that it might have been

besieged at the time of this fire. The ruins of the two or three-storey palace-walls and of the tile roof, which has turned into a pumice-like substance because of the heat, have preserved the rooms on the ground floor and everything that survived from the fire here untouched. There are quite a number of finds that were not damaged, since the temperature was not too high near the floor: not only metal, stone, clay and glass items have survived, but also organic material – wood and bone ware, fruit-stones, walnuts, grains and even some cloth as well. Besides, it is noteworthy that the siege and the fire hindered the removal of goods from the palace, and that after the fire was extinguished, it was impossible to rob the palace. That is the reason why the material excavated in the complex at Dedoplis Gora is so rich and varied, sometimes even unexpected – pieces of furniture, dishes, weapons and tools, food items, and so on. This archaeological material gives us a unique opportunity to look into the everyday life of an Iberian nobleman, and to discuss his economy, entertainment, education, religion, internal and foreign relations, clothes and armour. Thus it lets us illuminate many details of everyday life, which would have been difficult to discuss even with the help of written sources. In short, it gives us an opportunity to carry out ethnological research into 1st cent. Iberia.

The excavations clearly revealed the chaos that preceded the final destruction of the palace: things were scattered round, on the threshold of one of the rooms (N 1) a sealed sack was found full of wheat, and a bronze amphora buried in wheat appeared in one corner of the room, while its one handle was found in the other corner, on a couch, etc.

After the fire neither the palace, nor the temples of Dedoplis Mindori were rebuilt. This means that at the end of the 1st cent. AD there must have occurred important changes in the Kingdom of Iberia, which apparently affected the religion of the Royal House as well as the administrative

organization of the country. In any event, life at Dedoplis Gora died out, and for about 200 years nobody lived there. Only at the end of the 3rd cent. or the beginning of the 4th cent. AD new settlers appeared at Gora. Very often the floors of their dwellings had been plastered over the mud-brick masonry of the palace, and they sometimes used what remained of the palace walls for their dwellings.

This settlement at Dedoplis Gora continued until the 6th-7th centuries AD and a big cultural layer accumulated here during three centuries, the thickness of which varies from 50 cm to 4 metres in different places. Stratigraphically four building levels are clearly distinguished, and in the fourth and lowest level, additionally 2-4 floor levels are revealed. The type of settlement characterizing the period from the 4th to 7th cent. AD was completely different from the previous type. Here we have not one building only, but separate houses. Buildings with mud-brick walls on a stone basis founded on the rooms of the old palace are situated on the perimeter of the surface of Dedoplis Gora forming a kind of a wall around the top of the hill, inside which a lower court-like area can be distinguished.

There are many pits for different uses, some of which especially in the lowest level, are the result of treasure hunters: the settlers of the 4th cent. AD had apparently found some things worth using and later hunting for "treasures" became quite common. Fortunately, the rooms of the palace were so deeply protected by burnt and fused ruins of walls and roofs that robbers could not reach the floors, at least in the 12 rooms excavated so far (Fig. 2). But the inner court of the palace, where the depth of the ruins was far less, has been completely dug out and plundered. There must have been lots of finds in this courtyard, too, and actually we managed to find a few pieces here: glass, stone and metal beads, bronze vessels, and even some golden items as well: a plaque to be sewed on clothes and a coin (*stater*) minted in the name of Lysimachos in Byzantium in the beginning of the 2nd cent. BC.

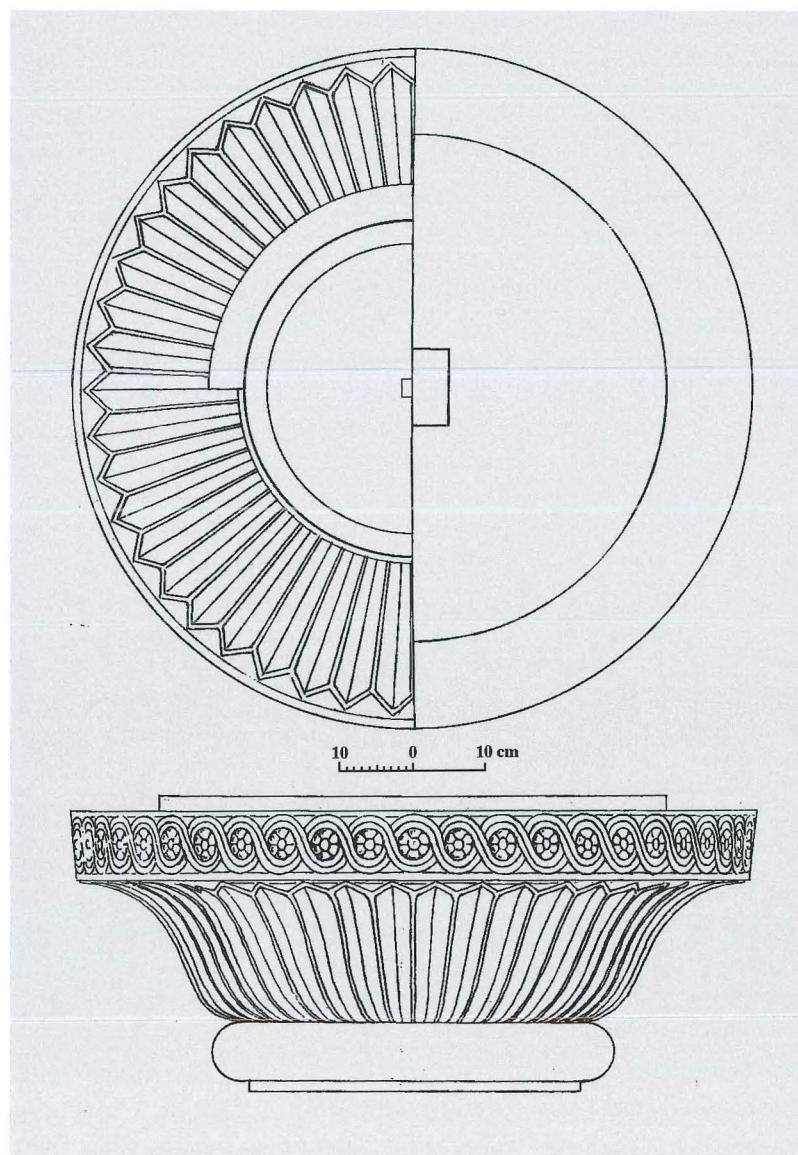


Fig. 5. The temple complex of Dedoplis Mindori. Capital.

In the centre and comparatively low part of the flat top of Dedoplis Gora, there was a place of worship in the 4th-6th cent. AD. A series of altars were excavated here which, in their manner of construction, are not different from those found nearby, on the northern hill and Berikdeebi dating from the Bronze and Early Iron ages. These altars took the form of approximately 70 cm high cubic podiums built of stone and clay and very accurately plastered, on top of which rectangular braziers are built in. The braziers are open to the front. To the right there is a deeper groove for ash, which is also open to the front. Finally, in the cut step of the podium a clay pot is usually built in. These

altars were placed in small rooms with walls of clay-plastered wicker. In one of the best-preserved rooms two small wine vessels were dug into the floor at the front (north) wall. These altars had been renewed time after time on the same place during three centuries.

The discovery of pagan altars of the early medieval epoch at Dedoplis Gora requires special attention. Firstly, this discovery shows a permanency of religious tradition from the Bronze Age to the early medieval epoch, which proves undisputably that no ethnic changes had taken place here during this period. Secondly, ancient Georgian pagan astral cults of fertility were preserved untouched among the common people of Iberia in spite of the fact that the religion of the royal family of Iberia and probably of the ruling aristocracy, too, must have been some kind of Zoroastrianism after Achaemenid times. This is revealed by the fire temples at Dedoplis Mindori and by the discovery of a Zoroastrian family chapel in the palace at Dedoplis Gora. Apart from this, Iberian kings and representatives of the aristocracy bore Iranian-Zoroastrian theophoric names. Finally, the early medieval altars at Dedoplis Gora show that the spreading of Christianity in Iberia was a slow and complicated process: in spite of the proclamation of Christianity as a state religion in Kartli in the first third of the 4th cent., nonetheless only about 50 km from the capital of Mtskheta, and not even in the highlands, the common inhabitants still worshipped pagan gods just as their ancestors had done.⁵ Also, in the early medieval archaeological material excavated at Dedoplis Gora there is no sign of Christianity except for a seal-ring of the 5th or 6th cent., on which a kind of cross is depicted with some Old Georgian letters between its arms.

The Palace

The palace occupied the whole surface of Dedoplis Gora, so that its original size must have been far more than 3000 m²; after the destruction of the palace the ero-

sion of the south slope of Gora cut off at least a 5-10 m wide and 50-60 m long area including the south part of the palace (Fig. 2).

During the excavations of 1985-1993, about a quarter of the complex was unearthed: the western part of the pillar-enclosed court, the western (small) and northern gates, and twelve rooms. Eight of the doors of these rooms opened to the porticoes of the courtyard. These rooms have no windows and are not connected to each other by doors. Their 3 metres wide outer wall constitutes at the same time the outer wall of the palace and must have had a defensive function, too. The inner walls are about 1 metre thick except for room N1, whose four walls are of equal thickness. This room is different in other ways as well: its outer wall juts out from the outer wall of the palace, constituting what seems to be a tower.

Also the inner door of the hall of the Northern Gates (N12) is open to the roofed gallery of the court, but the two rooms flanking it (N11 and N13) open only to the hall. It was mentioned above that the plan of the palace follows the shape of the hill, but since the top of the hill declines from north-east to south-west, the floors of the rooms are on different levels. In the rooms excavated so far the highest level (-172 cm) is in room N12 (hall) and it is 323 cm higher than the floor of room N1 (tower). Floors are of course more or less level, and separate parts of the portico in front of the rooms have been levelled as much as possible; that is the reason why two wooden staircases have been necessary at two places in the gallery. In the south-western part of the yard, a separate building was excavated – a bakery with four ovens, while in the portico in front of room N9 we found a wine cellar, with four large *pithoi* dug into the ground, with a total capacity of 3500 litres.

The building technique is typical of Hellenistic Iberia.⁶ Supporting constructions are made of beams. The lower part of the walls and pylons constitutes a network of lengthwise and transversely

placed beams, which is filled with pebble and adobe up to a height of 1.5–2 metres (this type of masonry is known as “Opus Gallicum”⁷). Above this socle, the walls were of mud-brick with an armature of beams placed every 90 cm both lengthwise and transversely and connected to each other with joints.⁸ The side length of the square mud-bricks is 48–52 cm (with a 60 x 60 cm size of brick in one case), the thickness is always 16 cm. Of course, half bricks are also used in the masonry.

Outside and sometimes even inside, the wall is faced with blocks of hewn sandstone, connected to each other and to the wooden armature of the wall with arrow-head-shaped wooden clamps.⁹ The walls, in some places surviving up to a height of 2–3 metres, are plastered above the ashlar.

Before the construction of this facing was begun, a foundation trench 50–60 cm wide and 50 cm deep was dug at the exterior of the wall. The bottom of this trench was covered with a layer of pebbles and plastered with clay, and thereon the first course of the ashlar facing joined by wooden clamps was placed. Originally the facing stones of this first course were partly visible, but gradually they were covered with soil and at the time of destruction even the second course had partly disappeared underground. In this area outside the wall, we managed to clean the surface of the destruction layer and to estimate the building periods. It became clear that during the palace’s two centuries of existence, the ground outside had risen c. 20 cm. The surface of the destruction layer was covered with cinders and ash, while the surface constituting the building period was covered with the crushed stone chips created during the hewing of the facing stones.

The Function

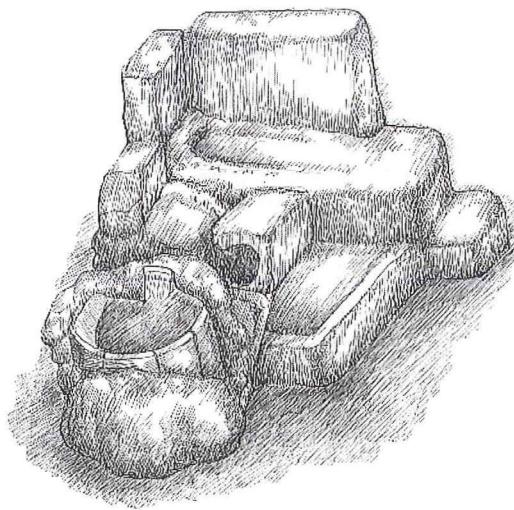
On the basis of the archaeological material excavated in the rooms and in the courtyard we suppose that this part of the palace had mainly a household function. In the yard, as we mentioned, there was a bakery, and grain was ground nearby; a

wine cellar was installed in the portico. Rooms on the ground floor in the western part of the palace (rooms NN1, 2, 5, 6, 7) obviously served for storing the harvest. The excavation of implements, particularly an iron plough and a spade in room N8, shows that the palace at Dedoplis Gora was not only a place where surplus products gathered from the residents as tax was kept, but that it ran its own farming as well, probably using royal slaves.¹⁰

As an example I shall in the following describe the material from the room near the porch (room N1, ground floor of the “tower”). It is quite probable that the storekeeper who was in charge of accepting, listing, preserving and giving out the products kept in the palace lived in this room, too. In the centre of the room stood a three-legged table of iron and an iron chandelier was suspended from the ceiling. To the right of the door was a wooden couch, which had protected four big glass bottles kept in a box under it, when the roof fell down. We found a small ivory box nearby in which there were golden bracelets with garnet (almandine), a golden necklace, and blue glass beads. Nearby, many other items were found, among them iron armour, a handle from a bronze amphora, engraved and inscribed bone plaques, and pig’s *phalangae*.

In the rear right corner stood a cupboard, which had been destroyed by the fire save for the bone hinges, but the things once kept in it were still piled on the floor in the corner. It is remarkable that among the finds (various beads, pendants, knives, etc.) the implements necessary for the storekeeper were found as well: a bone *stylos*, scales with bronze plates, and an iron scoop with a cast bronze handle in the shape of hippocamp. In the left corner from the door there were sacks full of grains: wheat (*Triticum aestivum* L.), barley (*Hordeum* L.) and spelt (*Triticum dicoccum* Shrauk).¹¹ One more sack with wheat had fallen through the door. In the rear left corner there was a wooden chest full of flour: the flour survived as bluish clean ash.

Fig. 6. The palace at Dedoplis Gora. Room N10. Fire altar (by D. Gagoshidze).



It is interesting that the chest, like the sacks and cupboard, was sealed with clay *bullae*. There are several different impressions on some of the *bullae* that allow us to suppose that at least three people with their own seals took part in accepting and giving away the products. This fact points to the existence of a bureaucratic system characteristic of a royal and temple economy. It must be noticed that only one piece of pottery – a footed bowl – was found in the room, while in all other rooms there were lots of pottery.

To get a good impression of the scene, it must finally be mentioned that a fine bronze amphora and a three-legged iron candelabrum, which had obviously fallen down from the upper floor, were found. One more detail: in the depth of the western wall of the room, at about floor level, a mouse had a hole. The hole was full of burned grains and mouse's skeleton was also found nearby.

Room N9, in front of which there were wine vessels dug into the ground, is different from the other rooms, pointing to a specific function. The room lacked a door towards the portico, thus opening fully onto it with a pebbled threshold. There is a raised area at the rear (north) wall, in which there are four holes separated by barriers. 1.5 m in front of this area there are two wooden poles fitted into the ground. The floor of the room is levelled specifically: the western, sloping part is covered with mud-bricks, and two layers

of mud-brick are placed in the lowest south-west corner. The floor is thoroughly plastered. In the south end of the western wall, the upper level of mud-brick has been removed to the width of half a mud-brick (25 cm) at the length of 125 cm forming a 16 cm deep rectangular niche in the northern end of which a hollow wooden cube was fitted. In this room three bits were found. All this indicates that room N9 must have been a stable.

A special function was also assigned to room N10, where a fire altar was found (Fig. 6). This altar consists of two parts. One is an oven for keeping fire – an *atheshgah*, that is, a clay plastered cylindrical fire-pot constructed by two big *pantiles* semicircular in section, and the other one is a three-stepped altar table in mud-brick in the shape of a chair with a high back. The altar is not situated in the centre of the room, but is moved to the west wall, so that it could not be seen through the door from the outside. Also, the altar is situated in the room asymmetrically, since its longitudinal axis coincides neither with walls nor with the corners of the room nor the compass. This cannot be accidental since it was perfectly possible to place the altar symmetrically. Apparently the orientation of the altar has a specific meaning. Measurements showed that its axis is directed towards the point of the sunrise at summer solstice (June 22). The sacred ash produced in the cylindrical oven (*atheshgah*) was preserved: the ash taken from the oven was poured onto the second and the third steps of the altar table and each of the ash-layers was plastered with clay.

A set of weapons was also found in this room: a compound bow (thin bone parts with a hole for a bowstring had survived), about a hundred iron arrowheads evidently kept in a quiver; an iron spearhead, and a knife. These weapons must have hung on the wall. Apart from that there were several ceramic vessels, a bronze semi-spherical bowl, an iron bowl with a handle, etc. We also found four clay *bullae* with impressions of one and the same seal with a representation of a deer.

In our opinion, room N10 with the altar must have been a house-chapel of Zoroastrian type, where the inhabitants of the palace of Dedoplis Gora made sacrifices and prayed regularly (the most important prayers were, of course, held in the temples of Dedoplis Mindori, where rituals were performed by priests). The ribs of a piglet, which were found in the ash on the bottom of the oven, must be the remains of an animal sacrifice.¹² The weapons hung on the walls of room N10 are also necessary attributes of a Zoroastrian chapel.¹³ The presence of *bullae* with deer motif were not accidental either: thus in the south-east corridor of the “ambulatory” in the main temple of Dedoplis Mindori tens of deer heads were found, and according to the hymn to Ardvī-Sura, believers sacrificed whole herds to this deity.¹⁴

A complex of rooms connected to the north porch of the palace borders on the chapel from the east (rooms NN11, 12, 13). This over three metre wide opening in the north wall of the palace led to a hall, which did not originally have a rear (south) wall; only later was it furnished with a thin, half-brick thick wall with a door in it. Flanking the hall were two rooms, which could be only reached from there.

In the middle of the porch was a horseshoe-shaped hearth built in stone and vertically laid bricks and plastered with clay, so that on both sides of it passages were left. Those who entered the palace from the north porch were bound to pass this hearth, but when bringing in a big object, this had to be carried over the hearth. In my opinion, this hearth had the function of purifying those who entered the palace. An analogous but smaller structure was excavated in the south hall, where a stepped altar stood beside the hearth to the left, two steps of which survived near the entrance.

Approximately in the centre of the north hall but nearer to the east wall stood a cylindrical oven made from two *pantiles* plastered with clay, and in the south-west corner was a massive podium built with

big pebbles and clay and plastered with clay. The podium was built together with the wall that separates the hall from the inner portico of the castle. The surface of the podium was unfortunately damaged in the Middle Ages during the digging of a hole for a wine vessel, and only a clay-plastered groove survived along its north edge. In this detail, as well as in its construction, this podium resembles the above mentioned altars which existed from the Bronze Age into the early Medieval Epoch, and, to my mind, it must also be an altar.

Near this altar, by the wall, stood a jar full of grain, and 10 more clay vessels were excavated near the same wall, mainly jugs. There were also a small bronze and a big iron long-handled scoop. Burnt onions and lots of flowers, apparently saffron, were found near the vessels. Near the same (west) wall but closer to the centre we excavated two wooden trays, four melted greenish glass bottles and a two-handled *amphoriskos* with multi-coloured surface made in the so-called mosaic technique.

At the east wall of the hall, several clay bowls and small jugs were found in a pile of wheat. Nearby was an iron crow-bar, and in the centre of the room an iron spit with a stand – a *triobelon* was found.¹⁵ There was a big iron barrel nearby. We excavated remains of a silver box, small *cauri* and glass beads, various pendants made of rock crystal and Egyptian faience, bone pins and other small items, which obviously had fallen down from the upper floor during the destruction of the palace. In the mud-brick ruins were also engraved bone plaques used for fortune-telling or just for playing, and sheep's astragals and pig's *phalangae* connected to the plaques. Besides 12 bone dice were found here and in the N13 store-room.

A great amount of finds were made in both rooms connected to the hall and at least the eastern room must certainly have been a storeroom. There were jars full of grain at the walls and clay jugs and bowls of different sizes. In the same room we excavated a bronze *oinochoe*, iron knives

and lots of small plaques of scale armour – *lorica squamata*. Of greatest interest was a wooden cylindrical barrel-shaped quiver full of arrows. The short, about 50 cm long shaft of the arrow was made of wood, its diameter was 4–5 mm becoming thinner towards the head and ending with a three-fold arrowhead, the haft of which is needle thick. The other end of the shaft was thinned for a length of 6 cm and, apparently, was fitted in a feather. The quiver was made out of one piece of wood with a wooden board bottom.

The room to the west of the hall was also full of archaeological material. The first finds appeared on the very surface of the ruins, one metre above the floor, where we found a big bronze bell. Turquoise, white and red faience beads, which had been kept in a wooden box, were scattered on an area of one square metre when the first floor fell down. The beads had originally been strung in four rows. Also fragments of iron candlesticks with bone elements worked on a lathe were found, and different-sized plaques of iron scale armour of various sizes. Interesting was the bone ware: engraved plaques, dice, a head of a tiny sculpture, a plaque with a relief representation of Scylla, etc. (see Fig. 11). In three corners of the room were clay vessels in three groups – jars, jugs, bowls, etc. In some of them millet, wheat and barley survived. The vessels were closed with clay corks with the impressions of seals on them.

Also various iron weapons and implements were found in this room: a spear, a plough, an axe, an adze, a saw, knives of different sizes and shapes, sickles, scythes, razors, a whetstone made of sandstone, a semicircular handle of a bronze bucket, a sculpture with man's face which, probably, constituted a fragment of a handle of a vessel, a bone pin or *stylos*, and a *pyxias*, an iron ring, an iron padlock with its key. The key was apparently used to lock the door between the hall and the room, the burnt remains of which were found on the floor. An iron ring was used as a handle. Probably the room was used as a guard room and if this is so, then the gate

must have had three guards, as there are three groups of ceramic vessels full of food and clay *bullae* with impressions of three different seals connected to these groups: it seems that each guard sealed his food with his own seal.

The Finds

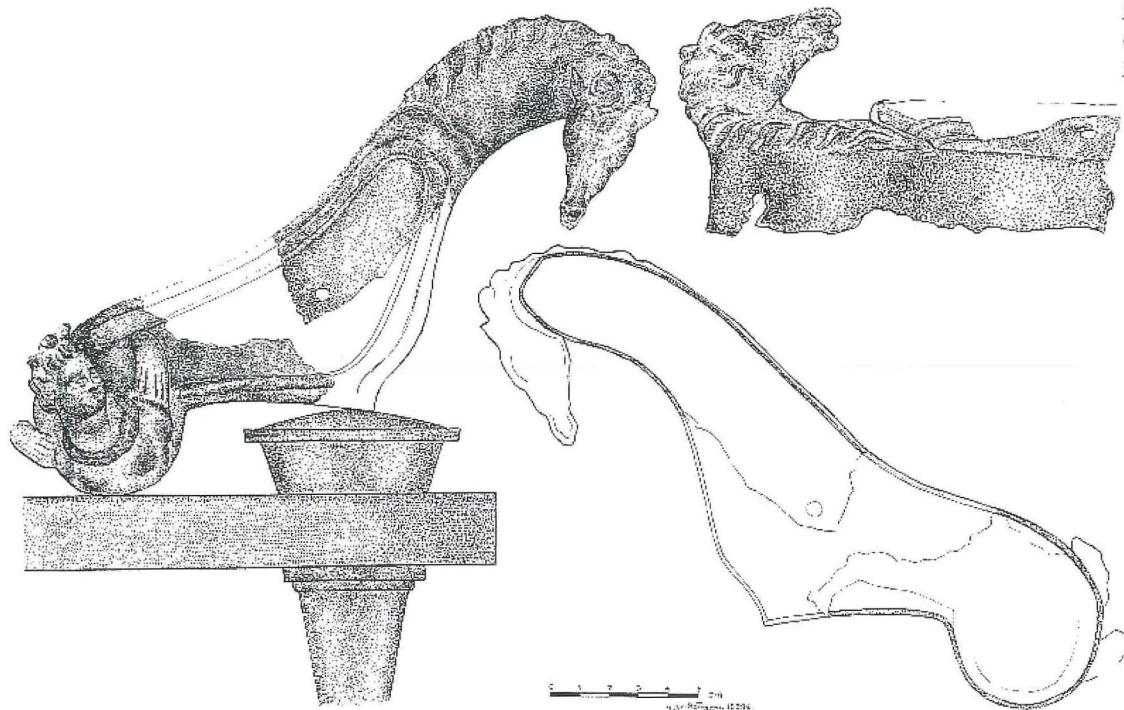
It is clear from the above that the archaeological material excavated in the palace at Dedoplis Gora is very rich and varied and reflects many aspects of the material culture of Kartli (Iberia) in the 1st cent. BC–1st cent. AD. There are pieces of furniture, arms, ornaments, coins, etc. Not only the description and review of this material, but simply its enumeration is impossible in this short report, but a little more can be added to the information given above.

The furniture of the palace was, of course, mainly made of wood, of which only charred remains survive, but there are also many pieces made of metal – iron tables and chairs and beds. Special attention must be paid to a bronze *fulcrum* with Eros' torso and horse's head on the ends. The *fulcrum* was nailed to an iron bed with bronze legs – *kline*, which was undoubtedly brought from the west.¹⁶ (Figs. 7–9). There were wooden boxes of different size and function in several rooms, from which iron hinges and locks survived, and, in room N1 stood a cupboard of which as mentioned only bone hinges are left.¹⁷

There were two kinds of illumination devices – for liquid fuel (oil) and for candlesticks. They used simple, saucer-shaped clay and iron lamps as well as candelabra of two kinds – hanging ones with chains and high, three-legged ones with several oil bowls. The iron candlesticks are of different types. The latter, as well as the three-legged oil candelabrae, stood as a rule on the upper floor, which is why they appear in the ruins of the walls.

As is normally the case at archaeological sites, most of the archaeological finds in the complex of Dedoplis Gora are ceramic (Fig. 10). It is difficult to name an

Fig. 7. The palace at Dedoplis Gora. Bronze fulcrum (by E. Gomareli).



article of pottery produced in Iberia during this time that was not found at Dedoplis Gora. As for the tiles used for construction I shall only remark that they are of the so-called Bagineti type, which is a transitional form between the oldest type known in Georgia, the so-called Samadlo type tiles of the 4th-2nd cent. BC, and the Mtskhetian tiles of the 1st-3rd cent. AD. Typologically this tile-type is a little later than the one used at Dedoplis Mindori and if the latter is dated from the 2nd cent. BC, then the tile-type at Dedoplis Gora must be dated at least from the 1st cent. BC, which coincides with the presumable date of the construction of the complex: I think the palace is a younger contemporary of the temples of Dedoplis Mindori.¹⁸

The chronological range of the pottery excavated in the castle is 100-150 years. Oldest must be the wine *pithoi*, which were probably dug into the ground just when the palace was finished. In fact, the Aramaic inscription made on the same type of vessel found at Uplistsikhe is dated by the semitologist K. Tsereteli to the 3rd -2nd cent. BC. In my opinion, the 3rd cent. BC date must certainly be excluded,

as in Iberia of this period different types of *pithoi* were common, but also the inscriptions on the vessels at Dedoplis Gora (about which we will speak later) bear some archaic signs. So the 1st cent. BC and perhaps the 2nd-1st cent. BC might be quite admissible dates for these vessels.¹⁹

Black-polished bowls with profiled lips from Dedoplis Gora must also belong to the same period.²⁰ All the rest of the pottery is well dated to the 1st cent. BC. These are red-burned footed and footless bowls with turned-in lips, oinochoes, jugs with ribbed neck of an early type, jars with and without handles of different sizes, etc. Most of them have exact analogies in the inventory of pithos-graves and early tile-graves from Mtskheta, and also among the material from the Urnisi cemetery of the 1st cent. AD. There are lots of red painted vessels at Dedoplis Gora and their comparatively simple decoration (stripes, waved lines, dots, etc.) is identical with the decoration of vessels from the Urnisi cemetery.²¹

We excavated, however, also several shapes of 1st cent. clay vessels, which had not been known before from sites of the

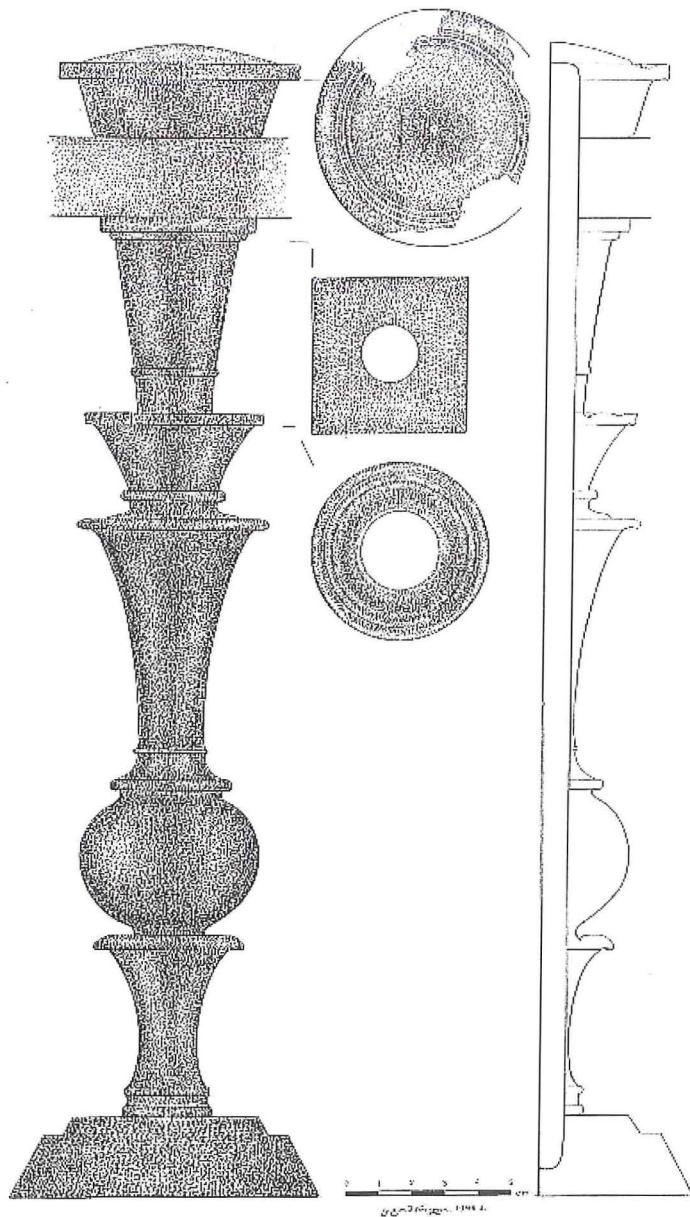


Fig. 8. The palace at Dedoplis Gora. Leg of a kline (by E. Gomareli).

same period, probably because in Georgia only cemeteries of this period have been studied so far. For example, we found a mug in the shape of a truncated cone, with a handle fixed near the narrowed bottom, a pan-like vessel with four handles, the prototypes of which are found on the Hellenistic sites,²² a jug with a funnel-like lip, etc.

Only one hand-made mug was found during the excavations of the complex (all other ceramic vessels were wheel-made) and it had had a cross engraved near the handle before burning. This suggests that at least one of the servants might have been a covert Christian, which is not unexpected in the 80s of the 1st century.

Among several hundreds of ceramic vessels excavated in the ruins of Dedoplis Gora only a few examples are imported, the rest are produced locally, at Dedoplis Mindori. This is not surprising, as the mass export-import of pottery in antiquity was possible only between countries connected by the sea. But particularly in Iberia a petrographical examination of the ceramic material from the Hellenistic and Roman period revealed that each and every more or less important centre of the country satisfied its own requirements as well as those of its environs through local production. Even inside the country, except in a few cases, a change of ceramic production did not occur.²³ The same situation was attested at Dedoplis Gora. A couple of

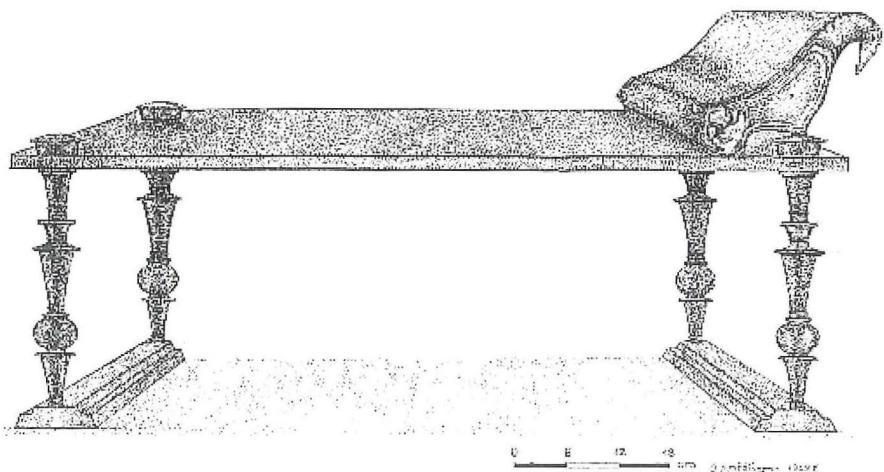


Fig. 9. Palace at Dedoplis Gora. Kline. Reconstruction (by E. Gomareli. The length of the kline is conventional).

ceramic vessels appeared to be imported from west Georgia, Zemo Imereti, where traditional pottery-making surviving till today has an uninterrupted history of 5000 years.

So far only six pieces of imported pottery have been found at Dedoplis Gora; three of them are *unguentaria*. Even during the review of *unguentaria* from Samadlo, no grey-ware *unguentaria* ornamented with white stripes, which are so characteristic of those from Hellenistic Athens and many other places, have been excavated in Georgia. On the other hand, both at Samadlo and at Vani *unguentaria* decorated with black glaze stripes appeared, which may well have been made in Asia Minor. The first fragment of an *unguentarium* excavated at Dedoplis Gora in 1985, three days after the start of the diggings, was a profiled lip with black glaze stripes. It is a well-known fact that chronological differentiation of *unguentaria* can be made according to the changes of general proportions and shapes of the body and foot, while the lip did not change at all. Therefore, this fragment from Dedoplis Gora must generally be dated to the Hellenistic period.²⁴ Two other *unguentaria* are typical of the Roman period, particularly of the end of the 1st cent. BC-1st cent. AD. One is an *unguentarium* with a pear-shape body and the other is a fragment of the bottom of a likewise pear-shaped one with a foot. Footed *unguentaria* have been found at the Urbnisi cemetery too, but the one from Dedoplis Gora is distinguished by its bright yellow colour.²⁵

Unguentaria, as is well known, were imported as containers for expensive perfume, a fact that conditioned their spreading throughout the Hellenistic world. Unique for Iberia of that period are, on the other hand, three imported ceramic vessels found at Dedoplis Gora: two of them (a bowl and a saucer) were found on the floor of room N 11, while the third one (a *laginos*) turned up in the ruins fallen down into room N13, so that the jug must have come from the first floor. This orange-red ceramic jug is rather burned, but it has maintained its shape perfectly

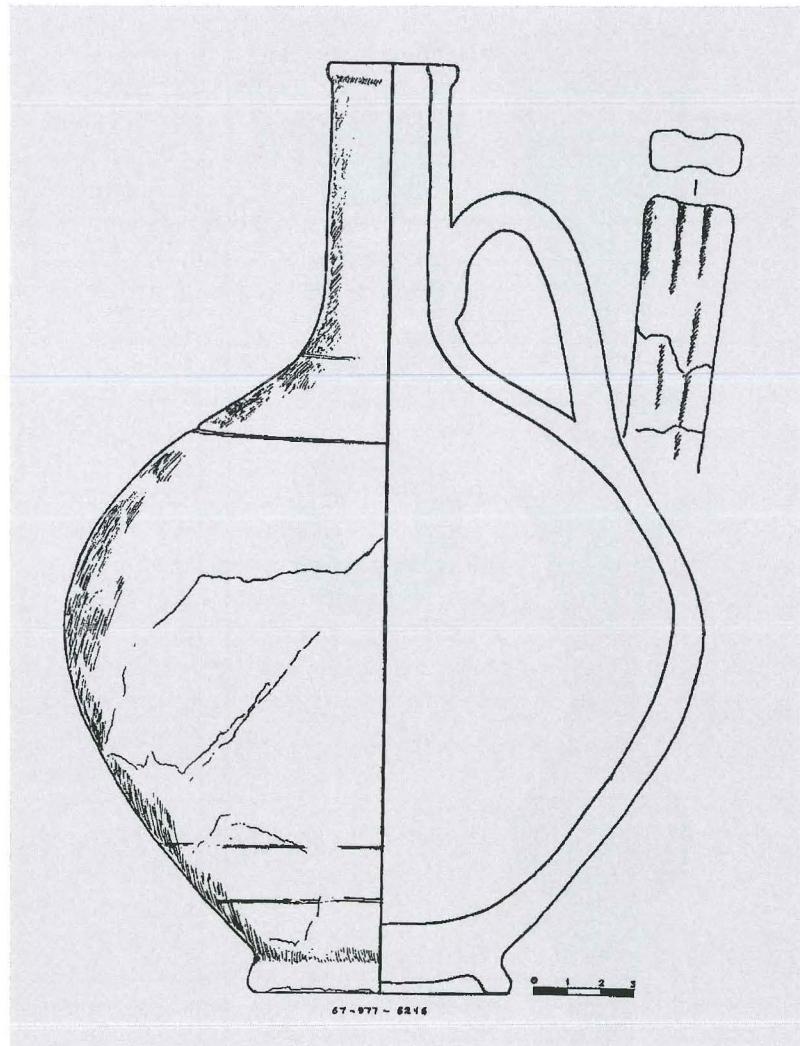


Fig. 10. The palace at Dedoplis Gora. Ceramic jug (by E. Gomareli).

(Fig. 10). The jug has a narrow, tall, cylindrical neck, flat shoulders, a foot and a high handle fitted to the neck and the shoulder. The saucer, which is also footed, has a relief stripe round the edge of the lip. Both the bowl and the saucer are painted red and it is obvious that they are the imitations of *terra sigillata*. Traces of the brush, which had been used for painting, are visible on the surface. The paint is worn on the saucer because of frequent use. While these two pieces are of high quality the *laginos* seems not to be, although this impression is probably caused by the fact that it was extremely damaged by the fire.

Exact analogies of the bowl are found at 1st cent. AD sites on the north coast of the Black Sea as well as in Asia Minor and the Balkans. There is a slight resemblance

between the jug and the material of the same and a somewhat earlier period, the 2nd-1st cent. BC (cylindrical neck, shape of the handle, flat shoulders, foot), and though I could not find exact analogies, there is no doubt that all three items were imported into Georgia and probably from the same place, most likely from Asia Minor, which was always closely connected to Georgia by roads.²⁶

Unlike the pottery every single glass vessel excavated at Dedoplis Gora was imported. Among them the most spectacular is a glass *amphoriskos* with coloured surface. It is blown and made of yellowish glass with ornaments in white, red and light blue glass laced in vertical stripes (neck) and spots (body); the handles are blue. Mosaic glass vessels made with the technique of blowing are usually found in a first half of the 1st cent. AD context and are thought to have been produced in Northern Italy.²⁷ Also the bluish, greenish and yellowish transparent pear-shaped *unguentaria* from Dedoplis Gora are supposed to have been manufactured in the North Italian centres of glass production. These *unguentaria*, as well as the multi-coloured *amphoriskos*, are unique for Georgia. All the so far excavated vessels that are more or less like these *unguentaria* are dated to around the 1st cent. AD, and it can therefore be assumed that both the polychrome and the monochrome glass *unguentaria* are the oldest examples of blown glass vessels so far excavated in Georgia.²⁸

During the excavations at Dedoplis Gora dozens of bronze vessels (jugs, bowls, trays, pateras, an amphora, etc.) were found and though many of them are extremely damaged by fire, their shapes can still be ascertained. The absolute majority of these vessels were undoubtedly manufactured in the 1st cent. AD bronze workshops in South Italy. The most conspicuous article is an amphora with a flat bottom, which is the only one of its kind in Georgia so far. Its handles, which were cast separately and then brazed, are decorated with Dionysus heads. According to the classification by A.

Radnotti, it belongs to the second type of amphoras, whereas H. Eggers unites both types in one group N129 and dates it to the 1st cent. AD. Amphoras like these are known from those centres in Italy, which perished during the Vesuvius eruption on 24 August 79 (Pompeii, Herculaneum, Boscoreale, etc.), which proves that amphoras of the second type were common in the beginning of the last quarter of the 1st cent.²⁹ I will not enumerate the parallels, as D. Shelov's above-mentioned article fully covers this question. I will use just one parallel from tumulus N7 in Chatalka, because in this closed context several items were excavated (a bronze amphora, pateras, ceramic and glass *unguentaria*, a golden ring and a golden crescent-shape pendant, etc.) which are similar to the ones from Dedoplis Gora, likewise in a closed context. The tomb is dated to the second half or the end of the 1st cent. AD.³⁰ Bowls with figured handles, several of which were found at Dedoplis Gora, are usually dated to this period, and pateras (at least two were found at Dedoplis Gora) are considered to be made a little earlier (middle of the 1st cent.), in addition, both of them are supposed to be of Italian manufacture.³¹

I will not discuss the other items made of bronze (spoons, scoops, colanders, figured handles, circular handles, legs and other parts of furniture, etc.), but only point out two massive shovel-like objects, found at Dedoplis Gora as far back as 1926. It must be a *batillum* (*batillus*) or a *vatillum* known from Latin written sources as an object used in religious ritual for burning some fragrant substance during the service. This is also the definition of a bronze "shovel" from Pompeii. Salio's definition is the same and all other publications on *batilla* rely on it.³² Some kind of connection between the *batillum* and the cult of the dead is revealed by the excavation of three *batilla* in a Punic cemetery in Tunis near Santa-Monica, and also by pictures of *batilla* on the *stelae* of Punic tombs.³³ Among the 12 *batilla* known to me from publications, 7 were found in Syria-Palestine and 3 in a Punic cemetery

and thus connected culturally to this area.³⁴ Thus, it is possible to consider batilla a Syrian production, as Pierre Lévéque does. In that case it would be easy to explain their appearance in Iberia: in the 1st cent. AD Syria was one of Iberia's most important trading partners.³⁵ A bronze batillum was also recently excavated in Mtskheta, and in 1993 we found the same kind of object in iron at Dedoplis Gora, though it is difficult to maintain that this one had rather a ritual function than an utilitarian one.

The number of iron goods at Dedoplis Gora is surprising. Of course household tools are made of iron (a plough, a spade, an axe, a saw, an adze, a sickle, a scythe, a chisel, knives of different sizes and shapes were found) as were weapons and armour (a dagger, a sword- spatha, spear- and arrowheads, a nail- *lorica hamata*, scale armour- *lorica squamata* and *lorica segmentata* were found). There are many other objects also made of iron: barrels, bowls, scoops of different sizes, furniture (tables, beds), a spit – triobelon, candlesticks, chandeliers, lamps, hooks, chains, nails, padlocks, keys, ornaments, etc, too difficult to enumerate. Iron objects are very often too damaged from corrosion and fire to be identified. I think the great majority of ironware was manufactured locally.

Ornaments from Dedoplis Gora, unlike ironware, are almost entirely imported. The great amount of beads and pendants made of Egyptian faience excavated belong to this category. The white, turquoise and dark red faience cylindrical jotas found in the ruins of room N 13 filled two 10-litre vessels. A great variety of shapes corresponds to the great number of faience ornaments.

According to E. Alekseeva's classification, the following types of Egyptian faience pendants are found at Dedoplis Gora: 7,8,9 (cylindrical beads respectively white, dark red and turquoise), 16 (a spherical bead with ribbed sides), 19 (barrel-like, bulged), 36,37 (representation of a fly), 76 (grapes), 82 (an amphora), 90 (genitalia). All of them belong to the late Hellenistic and Roman period series of

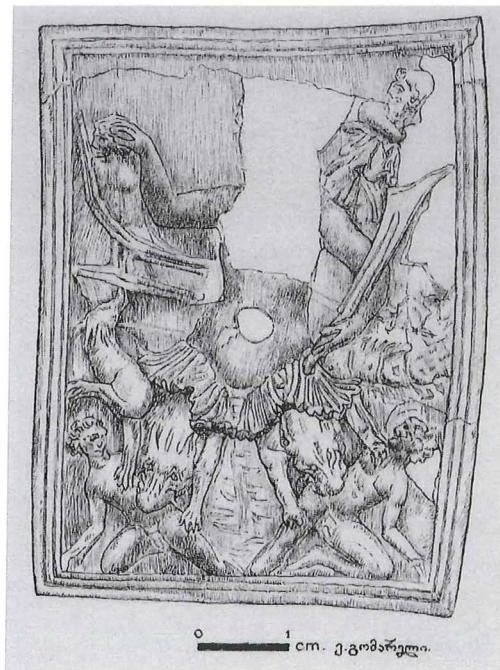
Egyptian faience, the zenith of production and spreading of which falls in the 1st cent. AD. North Black Sea complexes, which contain the above listed types of faience beads are generally dated by the 1st cent. BC (sometimes the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC) – the 2nd cent. AD (rarely the 3rd cent.). But some of the types can be dated more precisely. For example, the representation of a fly is found only in contexts dated to the end of the 1st cent. BC -1st cent. AD, while white and dark red cylindrical jotas (types 7 and 8) are found only in 1st cent. AD contexts.³⁶ I think this must be the date of the faience ornaments from Dedoplis Gora, too.

In room N1 a pair of gold bracelets was found. Each bracelet consists of three parts. Two of them are semicircular triple golden tubes brazed to each other, with cuffs in the end, and the third – a seat with a garnet (almandine). These elements are connected to each other with hinges. These bracelets have no exact analogy in Georgia. The torc of similar construction excavated in Middle Asia, on Dalverzine-Tepe is dated to the second half of the 1st cent. AD.³⁷

Several gold, silver, bronze and iron finger rings were found at Dedoplis Gora, both with jewels and bezel-rings. Among them must be singled out a silver ring with a big oval garnet gem, on which an idealized portrait of the Egyptian queen Arsinoe II is engraved. An iron bezel ring and a golden ring with a lost jewel excavated in 1926 also belong to the Hellenistic period, while most of the rings have shapes typical of the 1st cent. AD or the 1st-2nd cent. AD.³⁸

Along with the rings we must also remember the *bullae*, which were excavated at Dedoplis Gora in big quantities. In the palace at Dedoplis Gora rooms, wardrobes, boxes, ceramic vessels for food, and sacks were closed with sealed clay balls. We have also a bulla in the shape of a rugby ball, with which probably a scroll was sealed. Numerous impressions of different seals have survived on the *bullae*, which require a special study, but it can already be assumed that the impressions

Fig. 11. The palace at Dedoplis Gora. Bone plaque with a relief design of Scylla-group (by E. Gomareli).



are made by both Hellenistic, Roman and local seals. I think a detailed study of the bullae will reveal impressions of the so-called Eastern (Parthian) seals as well.

Bone-ware held a very important place in the everyday life of the residents of Dedoplis Gora. Many things were made of bone: *styloi*, ornament-pins, beads; small cylindrical *pyxides*; plain and ornamented plaques of different sizes and shapes used for applications; parts of a compound bow, elements of rich candelabrae. Small boxes are also made of bone plaques, the walls of which are sometimes ornamented with relief and engraved faces made with perfect skill. The bone used in these objects can be defined as ivory and deer horn. Ivory items are presumably all imported, while those of deer horn are obviously local.

Among the bone-ware one of the most wonderful things is an ivory plaque with a relief design of a Scylla-group, executed very skilfully (Fig. 11). In the centre of a rectangular plaque a dragon with a naked human torso is depicted with protomes of three dogs in place of the feet. In the lower corners two dogs are biting two young men in the knees. Scylla is pulling out a helmsman by his hair from the bow of the ship behind her and hands him to the

third dog, standing on its hind legs along the left edge of the plaque. In her left hand Scylla holds a skull. On the top right corner of the plaque Odysseus' helmeted head is visible. Presumably, this representation is a miniature copy of a marble Scylla-group sculpture from the Sperlonga cave.³⁹ The plaque is broken and some parts are missing.

Games of chance of different types were widespread in the ancient East and generally in the ancient world, and were according to Herodotus invented by the Lydians. These games were equally popular among the lower and upper classes and even the Roman emperors played such games.⁴⁰ Naturally, ancient Georgia could not stay outside this worldwide custom and excavations at Dedoplis Gora have provided us with evidence. Besides dozens of sheep's astragals, some of which have holes, 12 bone dice were also found here. Most of the dice are of a modern type, i.e. the number of figures of two opposite sides is seven, but one die is different. 6 is opposite to 3, 5 is opposite to 1, and 4 to 2 (so that they make 9, 6 and 6). A figurine of a dog on its rear legs made of deer horn was also found here. It is a draught and it proves that in Iberia more complicated games of chance like draughts, backgammon and chess existed around this time. In my opinion, the engraved plaques of deer bone, several sets of which were found in rooms N1, N3, N12, N13 in the palace, must have been used for gambling.⁴¹ The plaques were always accompanied by pig's *phalangae*, some of which are plain, while others are designated by holes or grooves. In room N3 a "set" of plaques (more than 20) and 156 *phalangae* were placed in a wooden box, which was sealed with four bullae. This suggests that the plaques were rated highly and treated carefully, as does the fact that one of the plaques of the set had been mended by two pairs of copper rivets (Fig. 12).

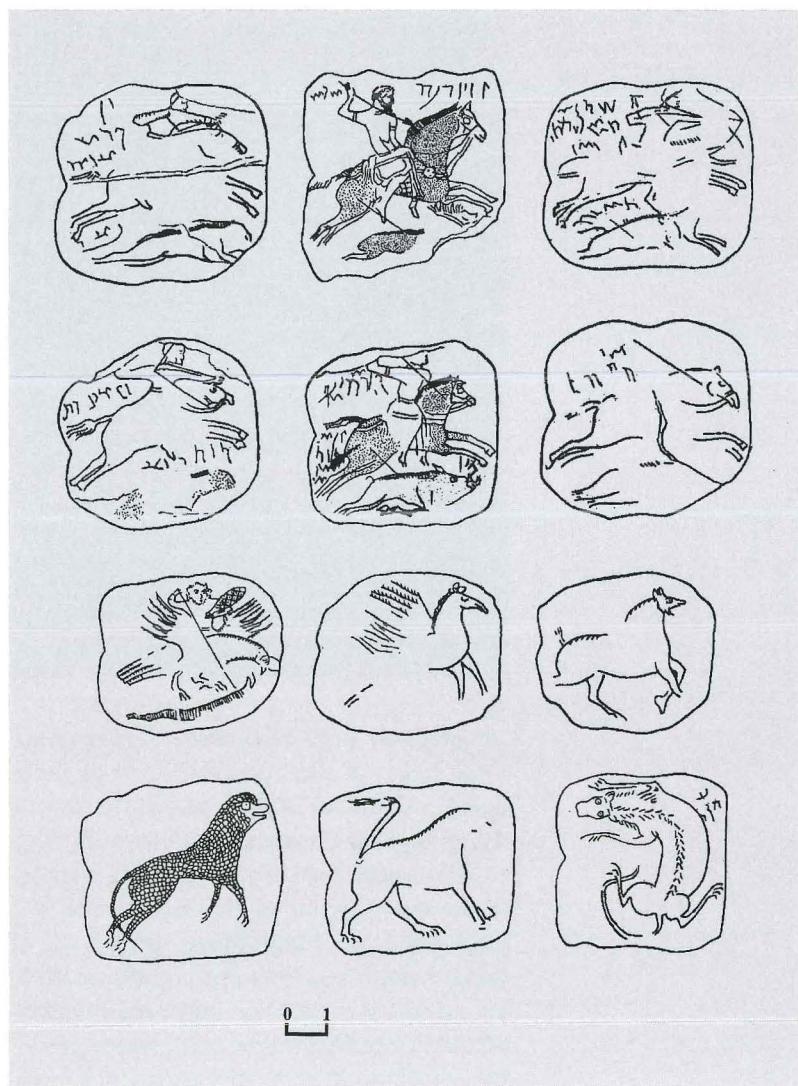
The spreading of these plaques throughout Iberia in the 1st cent. BC-1st cent. AD indicates their special importance. Apart from Dedoplis Gora they

were excavated in the tile-burial N63 of the Samtavro cemetery (6 plaques, 1st cent. AD), in tomb N10 in the Bambebi cemetery (6 plaques, 165 phalangues, 5 astragals; end of the 1st cent. BC), in tomb N2 at Nastagisi (3 plaques, 1st cent. AD).⁴²

Among the 8 plaques from room N1, 7 are engraved and only one is plain, and also among the 17 preserved plaques (the rest were melted by fire) from room N3 only two are not engraved. With the exception of a couple of plaques the motives engraved on the ones from rooms N12 and N13 at Dedoplis Gora (one plaque is engraved on both sides) are different. Some plaques apparently were left plain for some reason (one of the plain plaques had been broken and then mended) and they had some special function, like a joker in gambling.

The plaques are made of deer horn and are more or less the same in shape and size (average length is 44 mm, width – 41 mm, thickness – 3 mm). The motives are engraved on the plaques with a very thin sharp-headed tool, probably a steel needle, and as a rule, cover the entire surface of the plaque. On some of the plaques only one figure is engraved, mostly a fantastic animal (a winged horse, a griffin, an animal with hoofs on the front legs and claws on rear ones, etc.), some of them carry compositions with many figures (a knight hunting with a bow or a spear either boars, deer, ibexes, or gazelles; a spearman hunting); a fantastic scene is depicted on one of them: a demon riding an eagle with a club in his left hand killing a monster with a long spear.⁴³

Rather primitive motives engraved on some plaques from rooms N12 and N13 are attractive for the ingenuity of their perception, while the elastic, impressive line used in the plaques from rooms N1 and N3 reveals an experienced artist, who was perfectly skilled in engraving. An expressive line, a balanced composition and the lively figures prove that this professional craftsman was a talented artist, too. The knights in right profile sit on the horseback with ease, close to the neck. The feet of the slightly bent legs are



stretched under the horse's belly without stirrups. The knights have a long, straight nose, wide eyes, curly hair and short beard and moustache, they wear small hats and are dressed in long-sleeved robes and over it a short-sleeved, tight-fitting, hemmed, long garment open at the front and with a belt on the waist.

According to the types of knights and separate iconographical details, the art of the plaques from Dedoplis Gora are obviously different from contemporary art of various countries in the ancient East. For example, on an ivory plaque of the 1st cent. BC Bactrian archers are depicted with long moustache, shaved beard, with straight hair tied at the back, and without a headdress. In Parthian art, riding archers, as a rule, are depicted frontally and are

Fig. 12. The palace at Dedoplis Gora. Bone plaques with engraved designs and Aramaian (Aramaic) inscriptions (by E. Gomareli).

usually shaved. The type of horse is also different: on the plaques of Dedoplis Gora small, heavy built horses are depicted, while Bactrians and Parthians ride tall, long-legged, long-necked and smaller-headed Middle Asian horses.⁴⁴ Besides, one factor is remarkable: in the Iranian (Parthian, Sassanid) pieces of art I could not trace representations of knights with javelins, whereas this is quite common in old Georgian art.⁴⁵ One more proof of their Georgian origin must be the inscriptions on seven of the plaques, written in a type of Aramaic writing, which was widely used in ancient Georgia and which is usually called “Armazian” script.⁴⁶ (Fig. 12).

Although the inscriptions could not be interpreted satisfactorily because of their shortness and bad condition, it is at least obvious that they had fortune-telling and magic meaning.⁴⁷ This is not unexpected, as these plaques were apparently used for gambling as well as for fortune-telling: gambling is nothing but trying the chance and fortune-telling also serves foreseeing the fate.⁴⁸

A comparison of the Armazian letters engraved on the plaques with the other monuments with Aramaic script showed that they are very close to Armazian monolingua of the so-called Sharagass stele from the 70s of the 1st cent. AD. At the same time some of these letters are more archaic in type, like inscriptions from Sevan (2nd cent. BC), Uplistsikhe (2nd-1st cent. BC) and Sisian (1st cent.

BC), which allowed us to date the inscriptions on the plaques of Dedoplis Gora to the first half or the middle of the 1st cent. AD and thus make them the oldest samples of Armazian script.⁴⁹ However, recently K. Tsereteli interpreted and published three short inscriptions made on the lips of wine vessels found in the palace of Dedoplis Gora and, dating them, to my mind quite rightly, to the 1st cent. BC, considered them to be the oldest samples of Armazian inscriptions.⁵⁰

Alongside Aramaic inscriptions, several Greek graffiti appeared on ceramic vessels found at Dedoplis Gora, which was not unexpected, because, during the period between the foundation of the Iberian kingdom and the 4th cent. AD, when Christianity was declared a state religion and after which the Georgian original script was created, two scripts and two languages were used side by side in Iberia – Greek and Aramaic, being the *linguae francae* of the Near East in Hellenistic and Roman periods.⁵¹

Lastly, this short report would be incomplete if I did not mention the only two coins found at Dedoplis Gora, the emission dates of which do not contradict the chronology for the existence of the temple complex at Dedoplis Mindori and the palace at Dedoplis Gora – to the 2nd cent. BC-1st cent. AD. They are a Roman Republican *denarius* of 67 BC and a *stater* minted in the name of Lysimachos in Byzantium at the beginning of the 2nd cent. BC.⁵²

Notes

NOTE *

Performed under INTAS project 96-0054.

NOTE 1

The first minor excavations at Dedoplis Gora were carried out by a student-geologist L. Titvinidze in 1926. The finds are kept in the Georgian State Museum of Fine Arts. See Gagoshidze 1973, 77-82; Abramishvili 1977, pl.8. The Urbnisi archaeological expedition of the Janashia State Museum made observations at Dedoplis Gora several times between 1953 and 1963 (N. Berdzenishvili, G. Lomtadze, P. Zakaraia), and in 1957 – by the archaeologist O. Gambashidze. Minor excavations were performed at Gora by the Shida Kartli archaeological expedition in 1972 and 1976, and regular excavations started in 1985, but were cancelled in 1993 because of the absence of funds. We did not work there in 1991 either.

NOTE 2

Gagoshidze & Shishkin 1980, 79-81; Glonti, Nemsadze & Javakhishvili 1986, 36-44, pl. VI-IX; Gagoshidze, Koridze & Gogichaishvili 1986, 56-67.

NOTE 3

Gagoshidze 1977a, 72-83; Gagoshidze 1976-77; Gagoshidze 1977b, 102-08; Gagoshidze 1981, 102-15; Gagoshidze 1992, 27-48.

NOTE 4

In the radiocarbon laboratory of the Tbilisi State University, the age of carbonized grains from the palace was determined by A. Burchuladze (Sample TB-464) – 1910 ± 60 , which corresponds to 40 AD; as a result of the calibration according to dendrological data the age of the grains was corrected to 1867 ± 33 , which corresponds to 83 AD. Taking into account the range of error of measurement (± 60 and ± 33) these dates cover each other and are close to the date of the destruction of the palace asserted by archaeological methods (the end of the 1st cent. AD). Several types of ceramic

vessels from the palace (footed bowls with turned-in and straight lips, jars, etc.) are identical with the pottery types found in the temples of Dedoplis Mindori and in the workshops connected to these temples, and were presumably manufactured in the same workshop. Radiocarbon analysis also proves their contemporaneity. The age of the burnt beam from the palace (Sample TB - 465) is 2215 ± 60 , i. e. 265 BC (calibrated date: 2210 ± 49 i. e. 260 BC). The radiocarbon analysis of the beam from the ceiling of the main temple at Dedoplis Mindori (Sample TB - 93) showed approximately the same result: 2220 ± 40 ; i.e. 270 BC. Taking into account the fact that in important buildings, usually very old trees, sometimes even trees hundreds of years old, are used (the beam at Dedoplis Mindori was 60 cm thick!), we must state that these radiocarbon dates are close to the archaeological date of the construction of the temples and the palace: 2nd -1st cent. BC.

NOTE 5

The same situation was ascertained in the environs of Uplistsikhe: the archaeological expedition of the State Museum of Fine Arts (T. Sanikidze, L. Akhalaia) excavating the site Katlanikhevi dating to the 5th - 6th cent. AD unearthed a similar pagan altar.

NOTE 6

Gagoshidze 1979, 56-57. Zkitischwili 1995, 87, ill. 2-4.

NOTE 7

Wilsdorf 1986, 344-345. Such walls – Timber-laced ramparts – had already been used in Troy II, and in Minoan and Mycenean buildings, as well as in the Urnfield culture in central Europe (9th-8th cent. BC), in Hallstatt and La Tène; A specific type – Murus Gallicus or Gallic Wall was recorded by Caesar. There are no vertical beams in the wall. It is filled with pebble and faced with dry masonry of rock-stone or ashlar, the ends of the beams are visible in the facing. The burning of such a construction

causes vitrification of the wall (Vitrified Fort). See Bray & Trunp 1970, 233 and also Collis 1993, 102ff, ill. 78.

NOTE 8

Vitruvius also recommends placing the scorched beams in the mud-brick masonry as close to each other as possible in order to harden the wall. Vitr. *De Arch.* 1.5.3.

NOTE 9

The same kind of clamps were used in the walls of Zaden-Tsikhe (Tsitsamuri, Strabo's *Σενάδμορα* (Strabo, 11.3.5). (Strabo's quotations come from Kaukhchishvili 1957). See Apakidze 1963, 192. The same clamps are present in the earliest layer of the Shorapani castle (-*Σαραπάνι* in Strabo, 9.2.17) – I thank archaeologist V. Japaridze who showed it to me in 1987. A bullet-shaped leather clamp was found at the Samadlo site too (see Gagoshidze 1981a, N604). I do not possess any information about the use of arrow-shaped clamps outside the borders of historical Iberia.

NOTE 10

Strabo mentions (11.3.6) that “four classes reside” in Iberia (*Τέτταρα δέ καὶ γένη τῶν ἀνθρώπων οἵκει τὴν χώραν*), among which “the fourth (class) consists of people, who are royal slaves and do everything necessary for life” (*τέταρτον δὲ το τῶν λαῶν, ὃι βασιλικοὶ δοῦλοι εἰσὶ καὶ πάντα διακονοῦνται τὰ πρὸς τὸν βίον*).

NOTE 11

The grains were analysed by the head of the department of genetics of cultural flora at the Institute of Botany of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, Tiuli Berishvili, with the participation of Ineza Maisaia and Tamaz Shanshiaishvili.

NOTE 12

See Boyce 1988: each Zoroastrian believer is obliged to take part in seven universal holiday prayers and besides must pray individually five times a day and make a sacrifice to the home fire (pp. 43, 45); the fire

sacrifice consists of three elements, two of which – wood and fragrance – are of vegetable origin, while the third – fat – is of animal origin (p. 11); the same sacrifice was performed to the temple fire, too (p. 79) and this ritual has remained unchanged through the cent.-old history of Zoroastrianism (pp. 20, 64).

NOTE 13
Boyce 1988, 81.

NOTE 14
Gagoshidze 1981, 114, *Ardvisurayasht*, 21, 29, 33 etc., see Andronikashvili, 1977, 74-90.

NOTE 15
The same kind of spit, but double-pointed, was found in Kakheti, near the village Darcheti in a tomb excavated by N. Mamaiaishvili in 1974, which dates from the 1st cent. BC-1st cent. AD (the manuscript is kept in the archive of the Kakheti archaeological expedition).

NOTE 16
Similar *fulcra* with Dionysus and ass heads at the ends are found in Macedonia (Pella) and date to the 2nd cent. BC, see *Treasures of Ancient Macedonia*, p. 45, pl.17, N 74. See also Maksimova 1979, 96-98, ill. 34 (N129) and, for analogous ornaments of the Hellenistic period: Pernice 1932, Bd.5, taf.53, 54; Richter 1926, 131, fig. 312 and 57, fig. 307; Ransom 1905. Similar *fulcra* with a dog at one end and a winged woman at the other was found in Mren, near Ani, see Arakeljan 1976, 85-86, pl. CV,1. For *fulcra* in general, see Richter 1966, 105-09, ill. 306-308, 530-549; Faust 1994, 577-606, and 1989.

NOTE 17
The door of the cupboard rotated on such hinges, a gypsum copy of which was made in Boscoreale, see *Monumenti antichi pubblicati per cura della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei*, Roma, 1897, vol. 7, coll. 411, fig. 6. See also Maksimova 1979, 102, where this kind of hinge dated to the end of the 2nd cent. BC is published.

NOTE 18
For more details about Iberian tiles see: Apakidze 1959, 101-33; Tsitsishvili 1948, 519; Gagoshidze 1979, 57-62.

NOTE 19
Tsereteli 1988, 137-138; Narimanishvili 1991, tip. I - 2-4; the existence of this type of *pithos* partly coincides with the 4th

chronological group, but it mainly belongs to the 5th chronological group, i. e. dated to the 2nd-1st cent. (see pp.14,59, 88, 193). See also Gagoshidze & Tsotselia 1991, 65,76.

NOTE 20
Narimanishvili 1991, type XI-1-2-3 (4th chronological group), pp. 41,45,100; Gagoshidze 1975,100-102.

NOTE 21
Tolordava 1963. In this work the dates of the Samtavro pithos-burials are rather old and require to be moved one cent. forward: instead of the 3rd -1st cent. BC the date must be the 2nd cent. BC-1st cent. AD. The ceramic material from the Urnisi cemetery has not been published. I am following the manuscript of the excavator of the cemetery D. Koridze, which is kept in the archive of the archaeological department of the Janashia State Museum of Georgia.

NOTE 22
Narimanishvili 1991, tip. II-2-3, pp. 17, 89, 201.

NOTE 23
Morchadze 1979, 82.

NOTE 24
Gagoshidze 1979, 43-47; 108-109, with bibliography treating the problem.

NOTE 25
Maksimova 1979, 131,137, ill. 63, pl. I (M.I. Maksimova refers to Wiegand, & Schrader 1904, .427, Abb. 545). For footless unguentaria, see Arsenieva 1980, 100, burial 21 (middle of the 1st cent. AD); 102-103, burial N 34 (first half of the 1st cent. AD). For footed unguentaria (and footless unguentaria, too) see Buiukliev 1986, pl. 2, NN15,16,17, pp. 45-65 (kurgan N1 – “Roshava Dragana” – burial N1 – middle of the 1st cent. AD); pl. 25, NN 332-339, pp. 45-88 (kurgan N 7 – (second half or the end of the 1st cent. AD). Such unguentaria are also found in the 1st cent. AD burials in Urnisi (the material has not been published, I follow the manuscript work of D. Koridze).

NOTE 26
Antichnie gosudarstva Severnogo Prichernomoria (Ancient States of the north coast of the Black Sea), Moskva, 1984, Pl.CXLVIII, 15- the 1st cent. AD; Buiukliev 1986. Kurgan N 6, a bowl N 323 (middle or the end of the 1st cent. AD); Sagona 1992, 196-198,

ill. 2,2 – a bowl (late Hellenistic-early Roman period). Arsenieva, 1970, 94-95, pl.18,6 – a jug (burial N 12 – 2nd-1st cent. BC); 102-03, pl.16,1 – a red-glazed bowl (burial N 28, first half of the 1st cent. AD); Maksimova 1979, 104-08, 110, NN 97, 28, 44, 45 – bowls and a jug, plates and laginoi (end of the 3rd cent. BC). About the road connecting Asia Minor and Iberia, see Maksimova 1956, 77.

NOTE 27
On the date of the amphoriskos, see Oppenländer 1974, 140, N 392, 394; Kunina 1984, 150-151. On the origin of the amphoriskos, see Fremersdorf 1938, 120-121; Berger 1960, pl. 4, 60-62; Kunina 1970, N3. The amphoriskos from Dedoplis Gora has been studied specially by M. Sagashvili and I follow her conclusions.

NOTE 28
Isings 1957, from 16, 34 (second quarter of the 1st cent. AD-the end of the cent); Dusenberry 1967. The Corning Museum of Glass, p. 42. N22 (second quarter-middle of the 1st cent. AD), N 23 and N 24 – Tiberian period (14-37 AD)-the second quarter of the 1st cent. AD.

La Baume 1973, N13, taf. 56, 1 – first half of the 1st cent. AD. Alekseeva 1982, 20-26, ill. 11,12,13 (1st cent. AD). Buiukliev 1986, 89,129 N 355, 356, 357 (kurgan N 7 – second half or the end of the 1st cent. AD).

The technique of blown glass was apparently invented in Italy in 40-30 BC, but it started spreading in the Augustan period. This has for example been ascertained in the excavations of Livia's house and in the Regia, in the south-east corner of Forum Romanum (37-36 BC – first decade of the new era), see Grose 1977, 19, 25, 27. For unguentaria of eastern (Syrian-Phoenician) origin see Hayes 1975, 42-43, series A (NN 215-227) and series B (228-231) – western analogies are dated to the first half or the middle of the 1st cent. AD.

NOTE 29
Shelov 1983, 57-69, with an extensive bibliography.

NOTE 30
Buiukliev 1986, kurgan N7.

NOTE 31
Raev 1979, 201-211 (a bowl); Shilov 1974, 226-31.

NOTE 32

Real Museo Borbonico, X, Napoli, 1834, pl. LXIV; Daremberg and Saglio 1877, 682-83.

NOTE 33

Musée Lavigerie, I (Carthage), Paris, 1900, 213, pl. XXXI and.26, pl. IV, 3.

NOTE 34

Three *batilla* were found in the Hauran, see Richter 1915, 235-36, NN 658, 659, 660. One was found in Ascalon or Gaza: De Ridder 1905, 287, N 470 (529); one in Sidon: *Les antiquités Égyptiennes, Grecques, Étrusques, Romaines et Gallo-Romaines du Musée de Mariemont*, 1952, Bruxelles, p.102, G.105 (60), pl. 39; two in Palestine (kept in the Louvre), see *ibidem*.

NOTE 35

Syria was the main importer of perfume in glass vessels in the 1st-2nd cent. AD. See Saginashvili 1970, 44. One important group of gems excavated in Georgia is connected to Palestinian Caesarea, see Javakhishvili 1972, 6.

NOTE 36

Alekseeva 1975, 23-49.

NOTE 37

Pougatchenkova 1978, 100-102, pl. 79.

NOTE 38

For Arsinoe's portrait and the shape of the ring see Marshall 1907, NN 365-367, and also Zwierlein-Diehl 1973, N 32, inv. VII 1016, Tafel 7 (3rd cent. BC). For other rings, see Henkel 1913, pl. XLIII, N 1096, and also pl. VII, N 121 (end of the 1st cent. BC-beginning of the new era); Marshall 1907, pl. XII, NN 396-400 (Greek-Roman, 1st cent. BC-2nd cent. AD). The rings and bullae from Dedoplis Gora are being studied by K. Javakhishvili.

NOTE 39

For Scylla's iconography see Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 14. 60-70; *Mifi narodov mira*

1982,444-445; Andreeae & Conticello 1987; Säflund. 1972, 44; Andreeae 1999, 205-15.

NOTE 40

Herod. *Hist.* 1.94. Svet. *Aug.* 71, 1-4; *Dom.* 21. Cf. Peters 1991, 89.

NOTE 41

The plaques from rooms N1 and N2 are published in a special article, see Gagoshidze & Tsotselia 1991, 47-78.

NOTE 42

Ivashchenko 1980, 145; Khakhutaishvili 1970, 32-40, pl. VII, 9,11; XIV, XVI, XVII (the author dates the burial to the 4th cent. BC). The Nastakisi plaques are not published I thank A. Bokhochadze for showing them to me.

Engraved bone plaques are found outside Georgia too, for example in Uzbekistan in kurgan N2 excavated near the site of Kurgan-tepe (5 plaques), which is dated by the 1st cent. BC-1st cent. AD. See Pugachenkova 1985, 521-531. Engraved square plaques from Olbia may be considered a more remote analogy; they date from the 5th-4th cent. BC. Their engraved inscriptions with blessings and magic bring these plaques closer to our plaques. See Peters 1991, 63, ill. 38, 39, pl. XIII, 28-33.

NOTE 43

In my opinion, the creature killing a dragon engraved on this plaque is a divinity of the same type as Indian Indra, Persian Verethragna, and Armenian Vahagn, which has analogies in Georgian mythology and folklore too. See *Mifi Narodov Mira*. Entsiklopedia, t.I, Moskva, 1980, articles: Vedi-iskaia mifologija, Vakhagn, Vadzra, Verertragna, Veshapi, Vishap, Vritra, Amirani.

NOTE 44

Litvinskii & Pichikian 1985, 515; Rostovzeff, Brown & Welles 1939, pl. XV, XLIII,2; Baur & Rostovzeff 1931, Pl. 1. XLI 2; XLII 1. Seagal 1986, 79, 80. Shlumberje 1985, c. 107. Pugachenkova 1985.

NOTE 45

Gagoshidze 1979, pl.VI (coloured), XV and XVI. A short spear was apparently a traditional weapon for the Georgians: Herodotus writes that the Kolkhoi and Saspeires were armed with short spears (*Hist.* 7.79), and Plutarch mentions "spearholding Iberians" (*Luc.* 31).

NOTE 46

Tsereteli 1941, 6; Tsereteli 1982, 19,117; Tsereteli 1988, 137; Perikhanian 1964, 128; Tsereteli 1992 (Georgian; with complete bibliography); Tsereteli 1991, 60-70.

NOTE 47

For details see Gagoshidze & Tsotselia 1991, 62-71.

NOTE 48

Tacitus in his *Germania* (10) describes the custom of using wooden plaques with signs for fortune-telling by the ancient Germans. See Tatsit 1969, 357. A.S. Bobovich, the translator and editor of Tacitus' text, mentions quite rightly that similar customs were practised by other peoples too. *ibid.*, p. 435.

NOTE 49

Gagoshidze & Tsotselia 1991, 65.

NOTE 50

Tsereteli 1992, 5-8; Tsereteli 1995, 85-88.

NOTE 51

Tsereteli G. 1941; Shlumberje 1985, 109.

NOTE 52

The coins were analysed by the numismatist G.T. Dundua.

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Excavations of Communal buildings (Fourth Century BC – First Century AD) at Gabala, the Capital of Caucasian Albania

Ilyas Babayev

In the middle of the first millennium BC the territory of Southern Caucasus formed part of the Achaemenid Empire of Iran. After the fall of that Empire in connection with the eastern conquests of Alexander the Great, the new state of Albania, known as Caucasian Albania, was created in the eastern part of southern Caucasus at the end of the 4th century BC. According to the sources almost the whole territory of the present Republic of Azerbaijan and the southern Dagestan were part of this state. Caucasian Albania is the first state formation in this geographical area.

According to the information given in the written sources, the name of capital of Albania was Gabala. Gabala was first mentioned in the encyclopaedic work of Pliny the Elder in the 1st cent. AD (*NH* 6.29). He writes: “prevalent oppida Albanice Cabalaca” i.e. the main town of Albania is Cabalaca Pliny the Elder’s designation Cabalaca is equal to Gabala in Medieval Persian, Arabic and other sources.

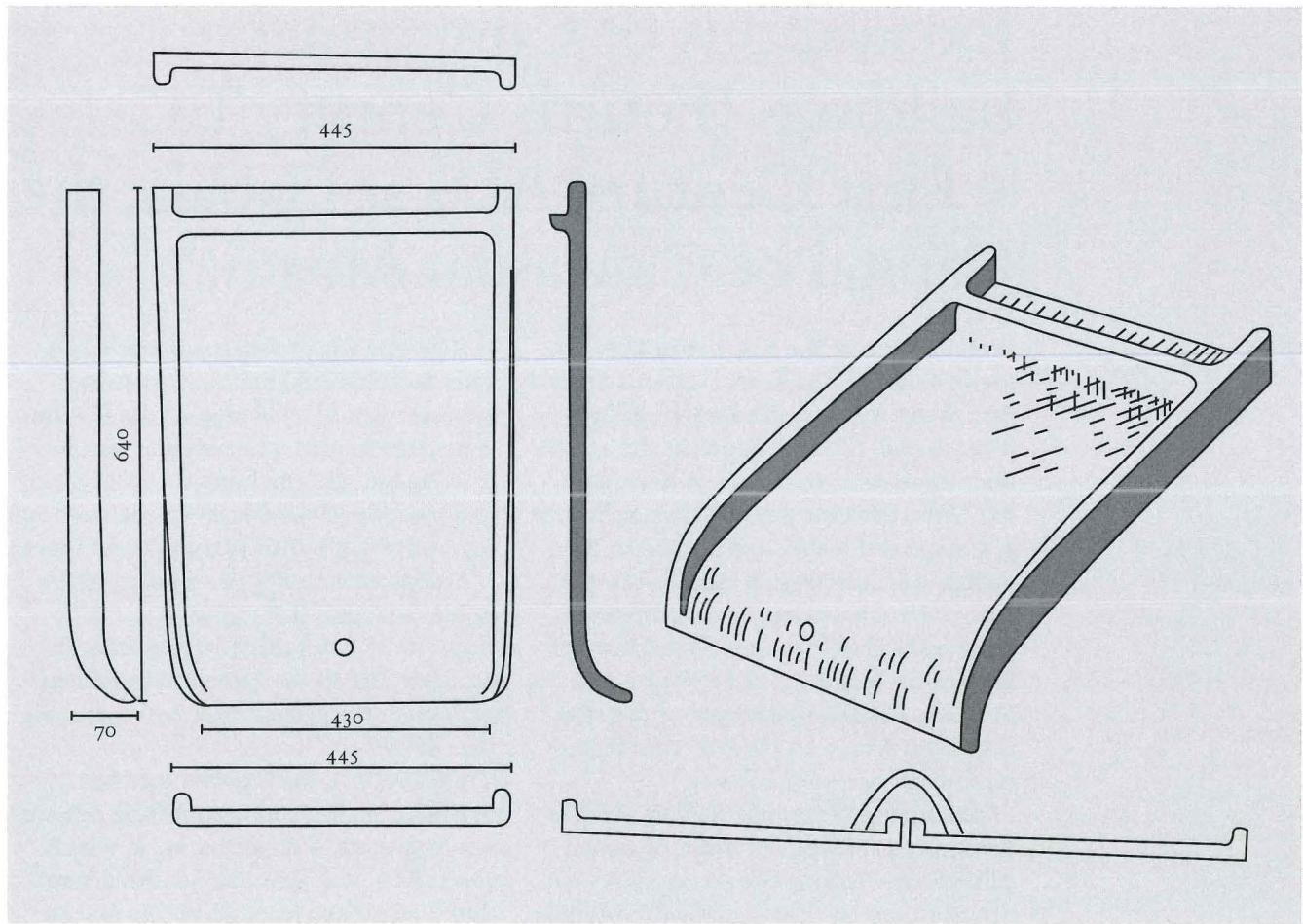
The ruins of ancient Gabala are situated at the village of Chukur – Gabala, a settlement in the modern Gabala region of the Republic of Azerbaijan. During the archeological excavations of 1959–1990 on the site of ancient Gabala it was determined that this town was founded at the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 3rd cent. BC and existed till the 18th century. From its foundation and until the end of the 1st cent. AD, the town stayed at one and the same place. Thereafter, it moved to another, strategically safer place c. 2 km away. Gabala remained the capital of Caucasian Albania till the middle of the 5th cent. AD, and was one of the administrative, economic and cultural centres of Medieval Azerbaijan.

The remains of numerous public, private, and industrial buildings and thousands of various archeological finds make it possible to trace not only the history of the city, but also the history of Azerbaijan and partially of the whole Caucasian region for more than two thousand years.

In this report only the remains of the public buildings belonging to the early stage of the city’s existence, i.e. from the 4th cent. BC to the 1st cent. AD, will be presented in a general way, without going into details.

At this time, the city was fortified by defensive constructions consisting of a one km long earth wall with a moat, which can still be seen from the southern direction. During the excavations on this site from 1967 to 1990 the remains of several public as well private and industrial buildings of considerable size were discovered.

Both mud-brick, stone, wood, burnt brick and tile were used as building materials in Gabala. As there was not enough supply of building stone, the private houses as well as the big public buildings were mainly built of mud-brick. The use of stone was limited and mostly used only for foundations. When constructing big public buildings, monolithic column bases were also used. The columns themselves were made of wood. From the beginning of the 3rd cent. BC, roof-tiles became common in the construction of public buildings in Gabala, and tiles have been discovered in large quantities and in all layers of the ancient town site. Since the buildings, including the public buildings, were mainly erected from mud-brick and very often without even a stone foundation, the architectural monuments have not been very well preserved. Remains of



the upper part of the walls have been destroyed during the ploughing and irrigation activities taking place here during the last two thousand years. But as the lower part of the mud-brick walls were often preserved to a height of 0.5 m it is all the same frequently possible to trace the complete ground plans of the buildings.

In the lower layers dated to the 4th to 1st cent. BC, the remains of the buildings had often been destroyed by the inhabitants themselves in connection with the construction of new buildings. Therefore it was not always possible to trace the designs of these buildings completely. But even in these layers it was possible to discover some remains of private, utilitarian, and public buildings.

The remains of the public buildings differ from other structures in size, in the use of expensive materials such as cut stones and tiles, and in the quality of some

of the finds. Specifically a lot of *bullae*, i.e. clay seals, have been found. Only in one case were remains of walls made of cut stones discovered on the site, namely in the layer of the 2nd cent. BC; most of the stones of this building had later been removed. In that period the building was covered with tiles. In the Hellenistic period, the walls normally had cobble foundations. Some foundations were well preserved and more than 20 m long, but in the same layer remains of buildings of considerable size, entirely constructed in mud-brick and without a stone foundation, were found as well.

In ancient Gabala other construction devices using local building materials were also introduced. In this respect, the remains of a building of the 3rd – 2nd cent. BC with mud-brick walls on a wooden framework are of considerable interest. In the construction of this building, vertical wooden pillars with a diam-

Fig. 1. Gabala. Roof-tiles belonging to a building of the Hellenistic period in Gabala.

ter of 25–30 cm were placed along its perimeter. These pillars were connected with one another, forming the framework for the wall, built in mud-brick. In this way the local architects increased the solidity of the building. The thickness of these walls was 1.5 m. The building was 17 m wide, but its length was impossible to ascertain. Since its preserved length is about 40 m, the building was rather large. The ethnographic observations show that such building technology was still used in Azerbaijan in the end of the 19th century.

To cover the roofs of some of the buildings, mainly those of public use from the Hellenistic period, roof-tiles were as mentioned widely used. The tiles of that period are flat with curved cover tiles. Some of them are marked with a seal impression (Fig. 1). The tiles are rather big and well burned.

Obviously, the buildings mentioned above, were for different public uses. This is indicated not only by their size and their building material and building technology, but also by the presence of many *bullae* here (Fig. 2) These were used to seal up the doors of store-houses and of other



Fig. 2. Examples of bullae found in a public building in Gabala.

rooms, as well as baskets and sacks filled with food, and documents as well. Not only *bullae*, but also clods of clay, a substitute, were found. On the *bullae* there were impressions both of local seals and of seals brought from Greece, on which there are impressions of characteristic topics from the glyptic of the Hellenistic period.

In Gabala, several large buildings for public use were revealed in the layer of the second half of the 1st cent. BC–1st cent. AD, including the entire layout of one building with an area more than 580 square m (Fig. 3). This building had large halls, auxiliary rooms, vestibules and corridors. The walls built of mud-brick are 2.1 m thick. When constructing this building they leveled the remains of preceding buildings, laid out the area with mud-brick and constructed the entire building in this material. The size of the bricks is 18 x 40 x 13 cm.

This building complex consists of a western and an eastern section. The western one had its entrance on the southern side. This part of the building consists of a lobby (90 sq. m), a hall (56 sq. m), a corridor (11 m long and 2 m wide) and two rooms (36 sq. m. each). The total area of this part of the building is 240 square m. The eastern part of the building is more spacious. This section consists of a lobby (115 sq. m.), two halls (118 and 87 sq. m.) and a corridor. The total area of this part of the building is 342 sq. m. The building was roofed with tiles (Fig. 4). A layer of tiles 0.5 m thick was found inside the building. The building was destroyed by fire.

There are two bases for columns in the middle of each hall. They were carved out of monolithic stones, and on them, wooden columns were placed. Their diameter may be determined on the surface of the base. The diameter of the columns in the western part of the complex was 40–45 cm, while those of the two halls of the eastern part was 52–55 cm (Figs. 5–6). These column bases were typical not only of the architecture of the Caucasian Albania; in antiquity such bases were widely used also in the architecture of Georgia,

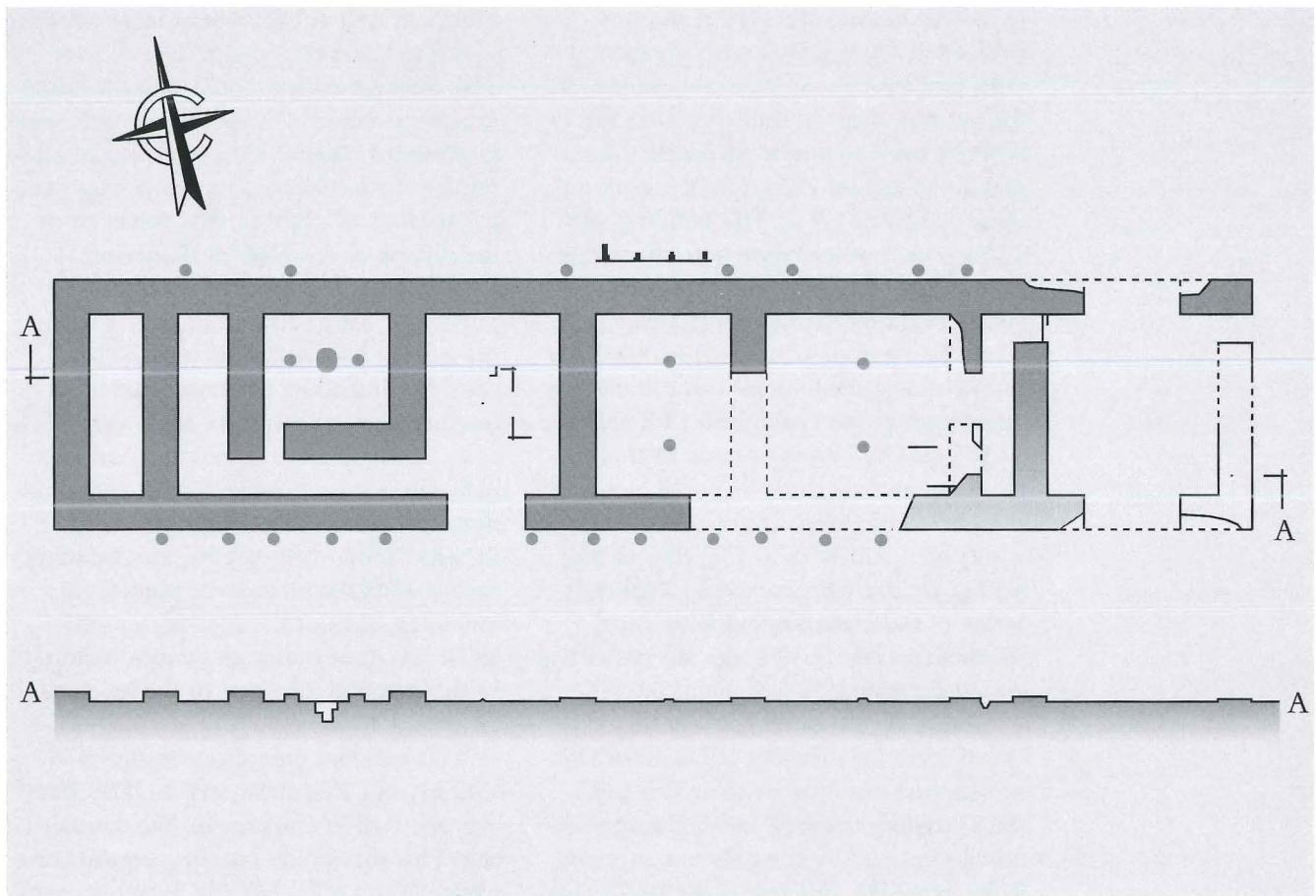


Fig. 3. Plan and section of a large building-complex dating from 1st cent. BC-1st cent. AD in Gabala.

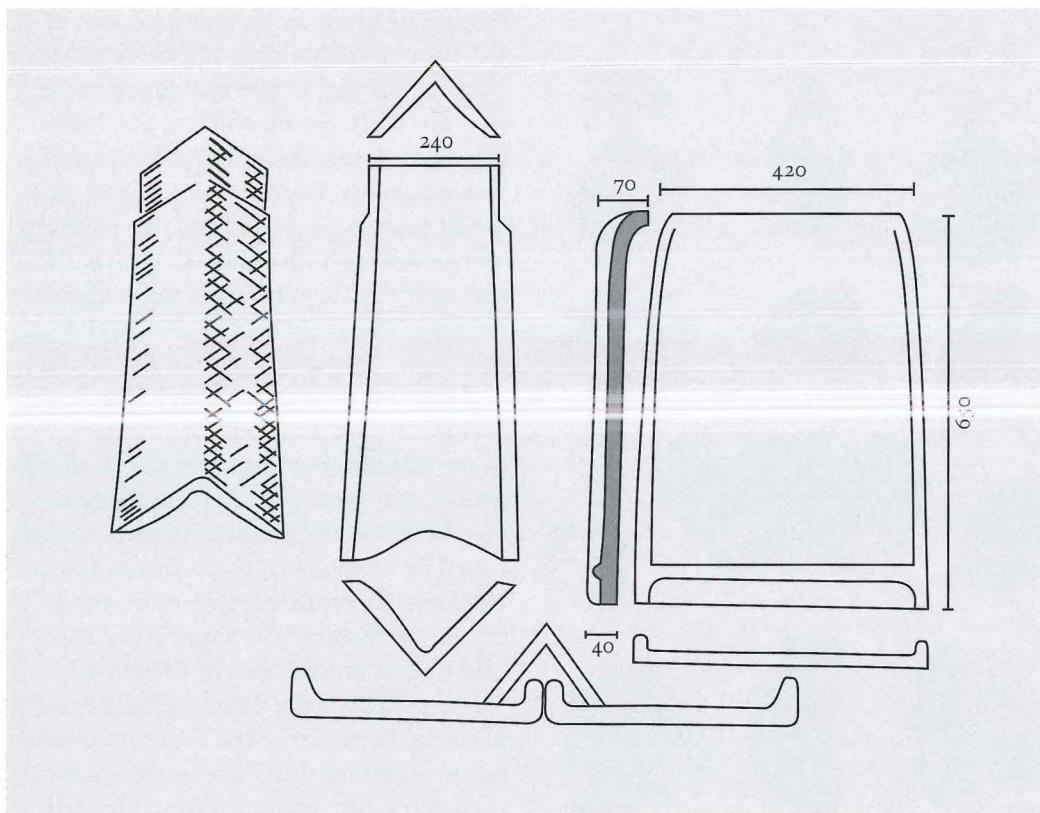
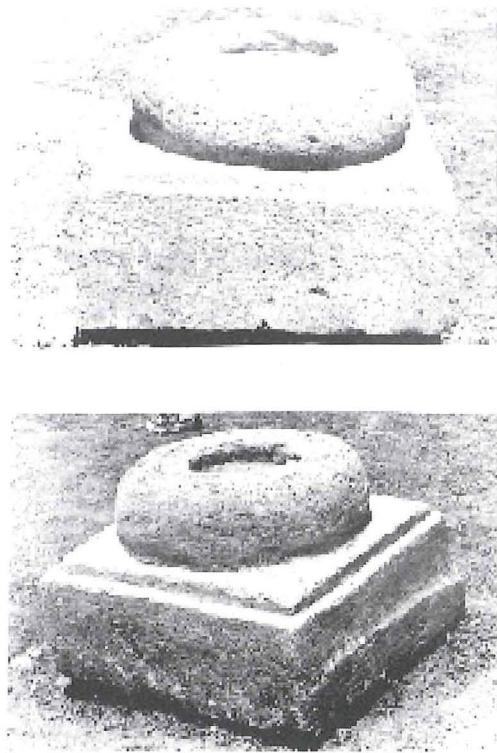


Fig. 4. Roof-tiles from the building-complex seen in Fig. 3.

Fig. 5. Column-bases from the building-complex seen in Fig. 3.



Armenia and Central Asia. Very often the columns were placed on the flat stones. The wooden pillars grow narrower towards the top.

The capitals of the wooden columns were usually made of wood as well, as is the case in Gabala and many other places. Only seldom (as seen in Georgia and Iran) were capitals made of stone placed on wooden columns.

To determine the height of the columns in Gabala, the diameter of its lowest part is taken as a determinant. Unlike in the antique world, in the East, in the architecture of Achaemenid Iran, the correlation of the diameter of the pillar to its height was 1: 10-12. If we assume the same for Gabala, the height of the columns there might have been 5-6 m.

On the external wall of the building, thin pillars or pilasters placed on flat stones were set up at a distance of 3.6 m from each other. These pillars adjoined the wall and supported the edge of the tile roofing. The building was mainly covered by a gabled roof, but some parts of it had a corbelled ceiling.

During the excavations of this building

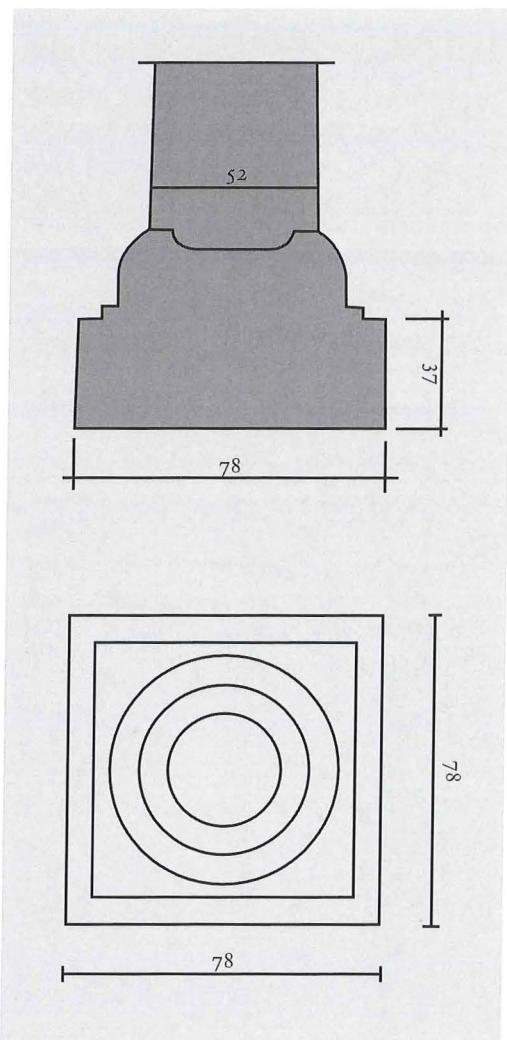


Fig. 6. Drawing of column-bases from the building-complex seen in Fig. 3.

finds were discovered only in insignificant numbers, testifying, nonetheless, that the building was used for the public purposes.

In the layer dating from the 1st cent. AD, remains of a building built of burnt bricks laid in a mortar of lime was discovered (Fig. 7-8). The building, which dates to the middle of the 1st cent. AD, was covered with a tile-roof as well. It was destroyed already at the end of the 1st cent. AD. Only traces of walls and mortar were found, revealing that the structure took up an area of 80 square m. This kind of construction did only appear in Caucasian Albania in the 1st century AD under the influence of Roman architecture.

Also remains of two big oval construc-

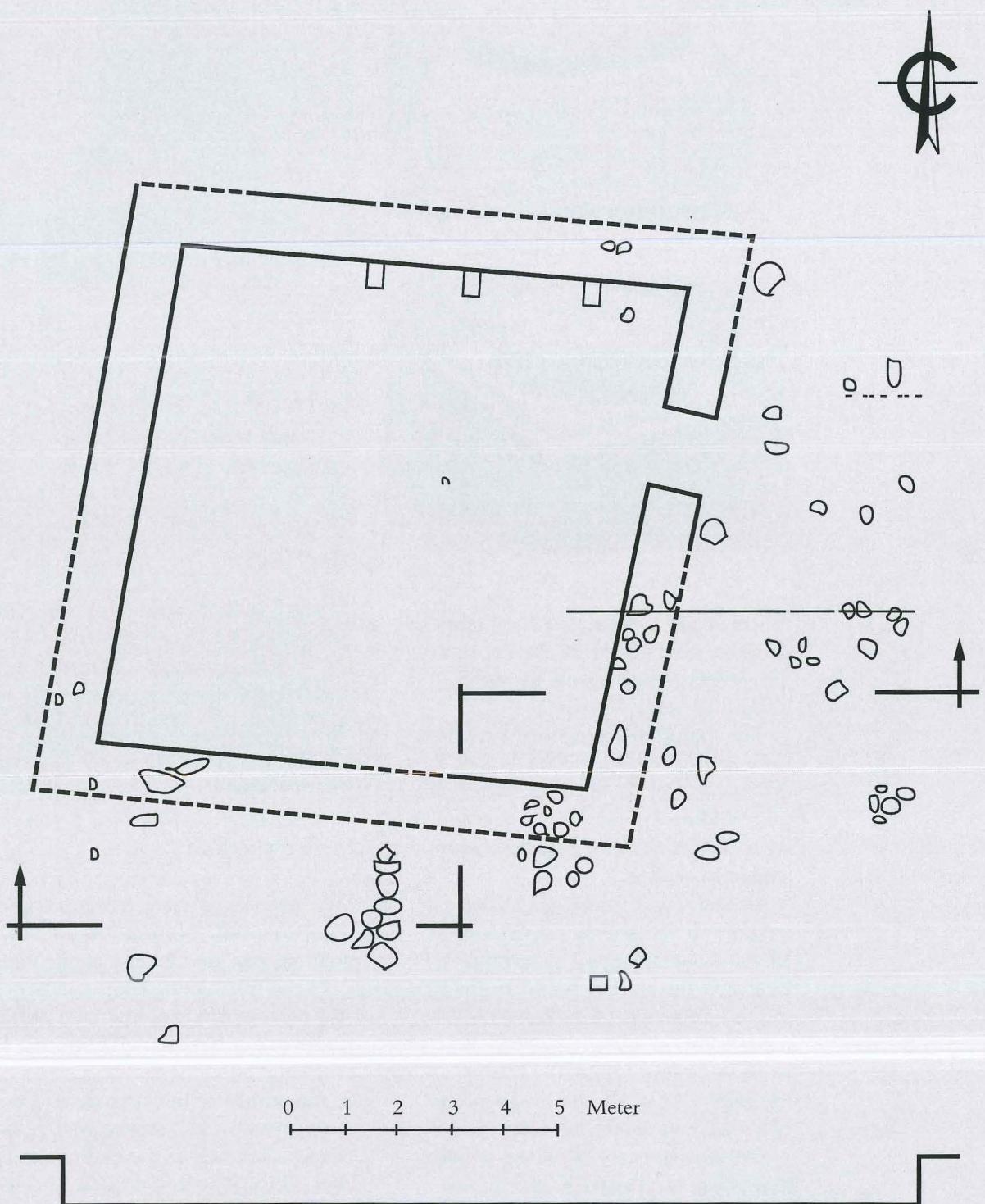
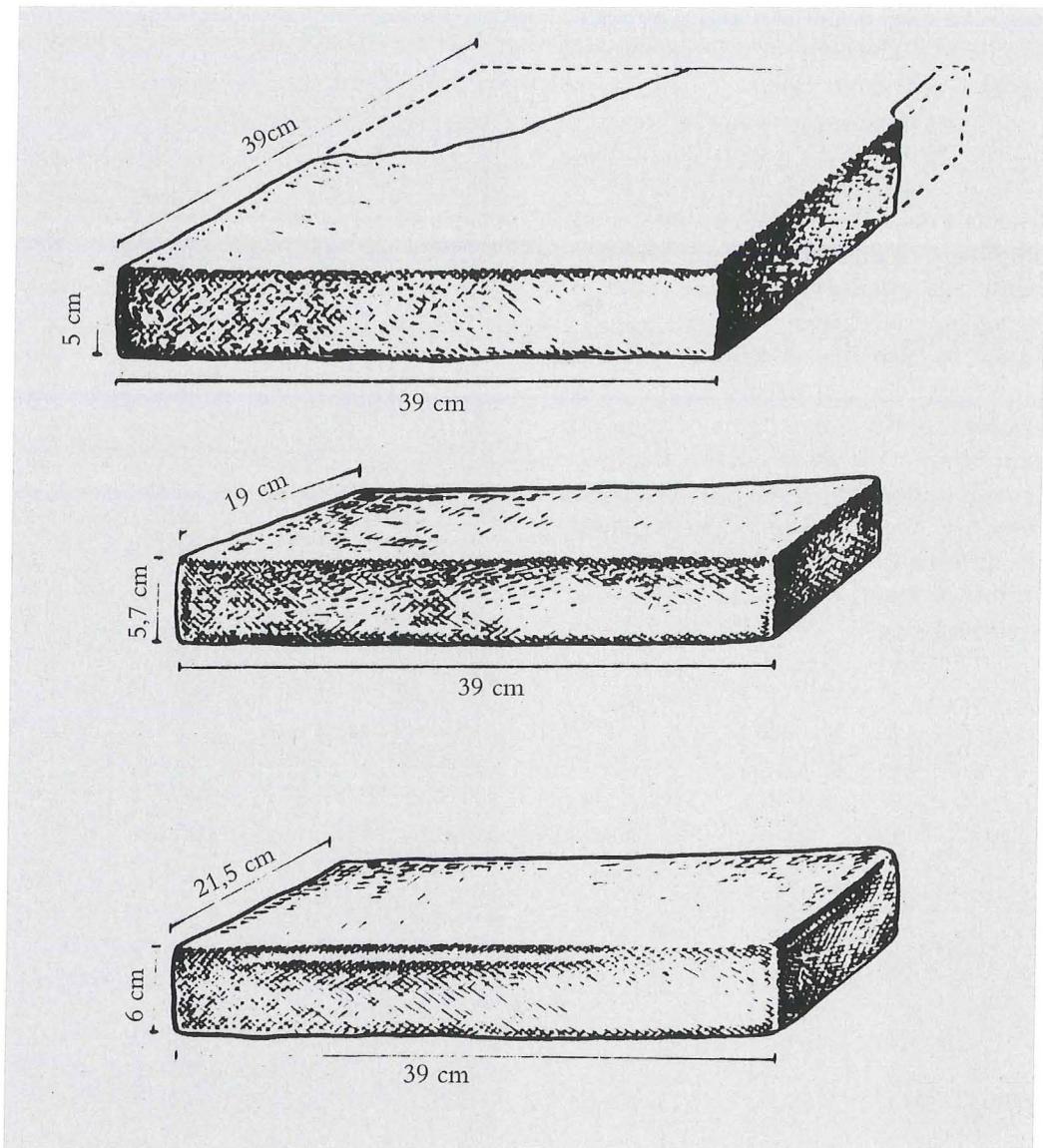


Fig. 7. Plan and section of a building of the 1st cent. AD in Gabala.

Fig. 8. Roof-tiles form the building seen in Fig. 7.



tions (1st century BC-1st century AD) have been found in Gabala – one of them (oval structure no. 1), which was oriented north-south, had a length of 74 m and a width of 23 m and consequently covers an area of 1700 square m (Fig. 9). The 1.6 m wide walls of this building were built of mud-brick on a foundation consisting of two stone layers 1.8 m wide and 0.25 m high. Only in a few places were the wall preserved to a height of 0.5 m. A stone ramp, the upper part of which was leveled by a clay layer, led up to the floor the level. This construction had 2 entrances placed at a distance of 45 m. One of these entrances had been partly destroyed and could be studied only on one side, while

the other was entirely preserved. On one side, this passage was furnished with a niche, from where a guard could control the people going into the building. At a distance of 4.1 m to the north-east of the first oval structure there is another of similar shape with a width of 12.5 m and a length of more than 40 m. The excavation of this construction is not finished yet. The two buildings are contemporary.

The purpose of these constructions is of great interest. They have got analogies neither in the Caucasus nor in neighbouring regions. During the excavations very few finds were made, showing that the buildings were used for the public purposes. Probably these constructions were

pagan temples or perhaps places of entertainments with room for several thousand people at the same time.

The archaeological excavations in Gabala show that the population of the Caucasus had close relations with Hellenistic world. These relations influenced all spheres of the life of the local inhabitants. Thus numerous imported goods including coins, glyptic, decorative elements, etc. from the Hellenistic kingdoms have been found in Gabala, and Caucasian Albania clearly took an active part in the flourishing trade characterizing the Hellenistic period. The influence from the west may also be illustrated by the locally produced roof-tiles and burnt brick, as well as by local pottery clearly imitating western types.

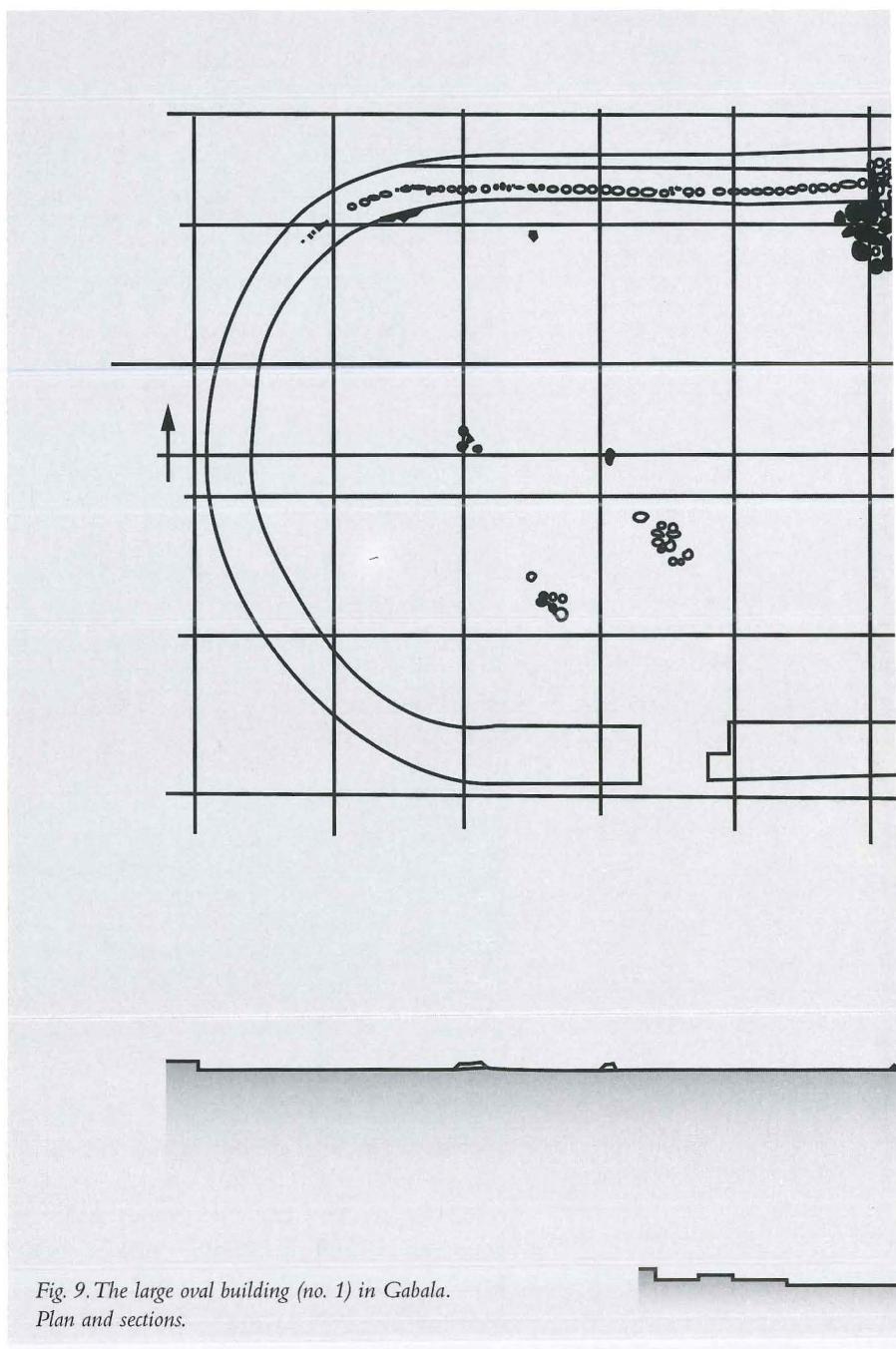
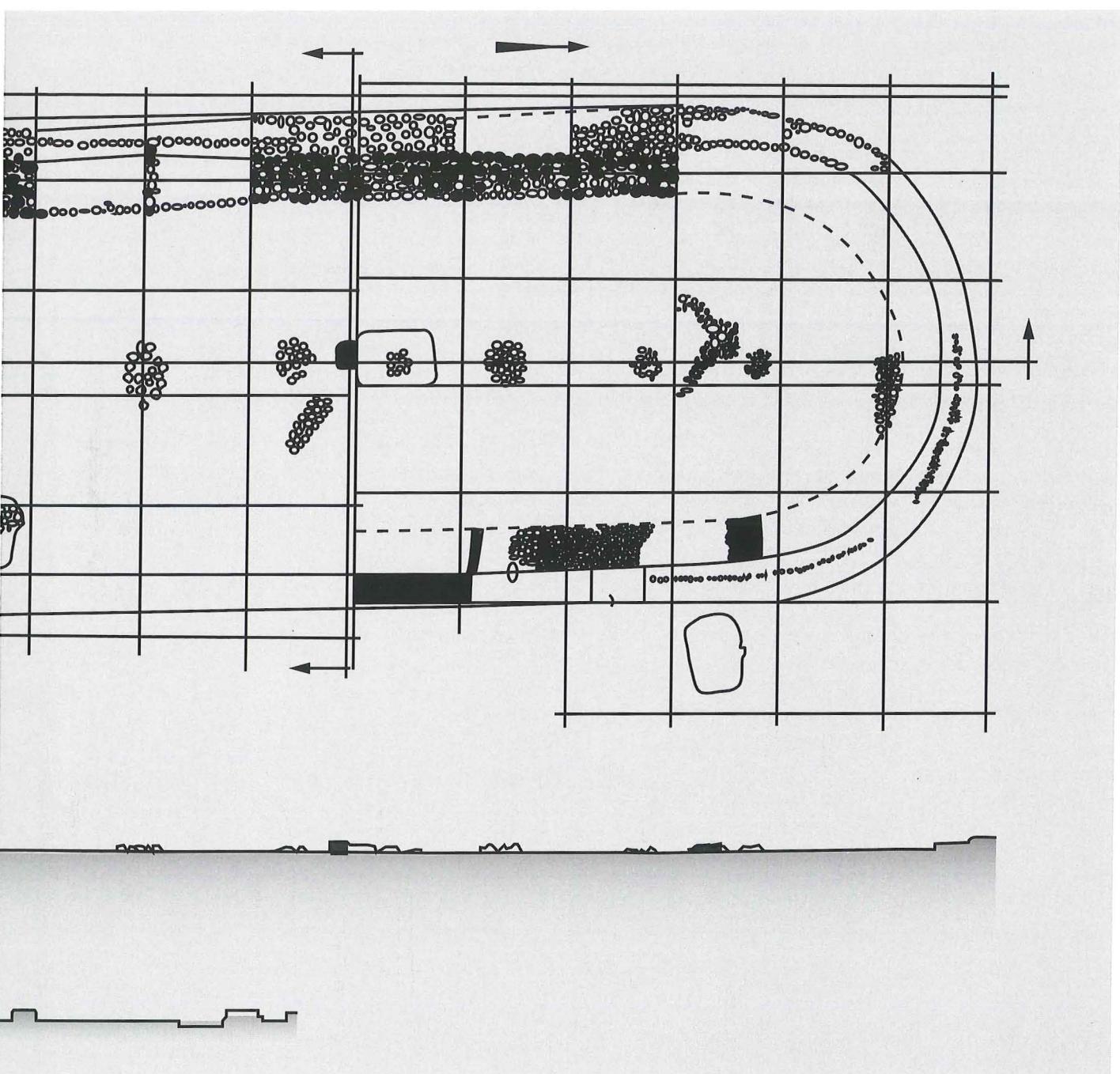


Fig. 9. The large oval building (no. 1) in Gabala.
Plan and sections.



Arsacid Palaces

Antonio
Invernizzi

The available archaeological evidence disappoints, even today, anyone who searches for confirmation of the accounts which the classical historians have left us of the wars between Rome and Parthia and the events which saw the Roman armies several times take the palace of the Arsacid kings at Ctesiphon. On these events there have been no lack of speculative studies based on the sources, though they have not been frequent, but the results of the fieldwork in the area of Seleucia and Ctesiphon – an area immense in extent and in historical importance – are for various reasons still inadequate to the importance and complexity of the subject. The progress made in the reconstruction of the historical topography of this crucial area of the ancient world still leaves many fundamental problems unsolved. In particular, it was not possible to include the specific problem of the location of Parthian Ctesiphon among the objectives of the research carried out by the Italian mission which was active at Seleucia and Ctesiphon between 1964 and 1990.¹

Indeed, Parthian Ctesiphon has again become an elusive archaeological entity, now that its traditional identification with the round city has been questioned by the fact that excavations have ascertained that these powerful round mud-brick ramparts were not built until the beginning of the Sassanid period, which is also the date of the residential and artisan areas adjacent to them.² For concrete stratigraphic and numismatic evidence³ proves that the design and construction of the ramparts are contemporary with the foundation and the habitation of the adjacent areas, which were used both for dwellings and for artisan activities, and that the life of

these buildings falls entirely within the limits of the Sassanid era.⁴

We therefore still know nothing definite about Parthian Ctesiphon beyond what we are told by the classical authors, namely that it was situated on the Tigris, opposite Seleucia, the great Hellenistic metropolis, and that it was a little village when the Arsacid kings stationed a garrison there (Streck 1917, 17–19), an act which must have had some connection with the vital needs of control of the region. Given the circumstances, there is not the slightest possibility of expressing an opinion about the location of the royal palace which is often specifically mentioned as being located in the city.

The Romans certainly had frequent occasion for contacts – both direct *de visu* and indirect – with various aspects of Arsacid court life and government, throughout the period of their historical relations with the Parthians, between the 2nd century BC and the 3rd century AD. They often had a detailed knowledge of the personages who belonged to that court, because the direct contacts between Romans and Parthians had early and amicable beginnings. These contacts usually took place, however, on neutral ground or on Roman soil.⁵ Nevertheless, the palace or the government buildings of Ctesiphon may have supplied the most immediate support for these events or have been the closest point of reference. The city and residence of Ctesiphon must, at any rate, have been designed by the Arsacids as central organs in the exercise of power in a state which had by now grown to imperial proportions. The Babylonian palace may have had such a function from the time of its original construction, and it

certainly must have been used in that way in the AD centuries, when the documentation of its importance and nature becomes explicit. We know that in 116 AD Trajan even succeeded in carrying off its royal throne (Ziegler 1964, 102), and that this symbol of Arsacid power, despite Hadrian's declared readiness to give it back, was still in Roman hands at the time of Antoninus Pius (Ziegler 1964, 109); and it seems likely that it in fact never found its way back.

Ctesiphon, and specifically the palace that was located there, are mentioned many times in the extant sources, always in dramatic circumstances, on the occasion of many of the clashes which saw the two empires confront one another.⁶ In all these cases, however, the reports are episodic and sketchy, appearing as they do in succinct narrative contexts which, though historical in nature, are short of detail and therefore very uninformative. None of the passages contains any important elements that throw light on the appearance of the Arsacid royal palace or of the life that went on in it. As far as we can tell from the surviving evidence, no classical author has taken the trouble to leave us even the briefest description, so that these mentions cannot awaken in us any concrete idea of the architectural features of the Babylonian palace of the great empire which was the rival of Rome.

All we can do is record that the Romans were particularly struck by the customs of the Parthian aristocracy, which were certainly marked by an extraordinary opulence and luxury, for in any discussion of Parthian affairs their extravagance, this quality so typical of oriental custom, seen especially in its implications of decadence and effeminacy in their mode of life, had virtually become a literary *topos*. It was these very features that determined the judgements of the classical authors. But even in this observation there is no progress of knowledge since we know nothing of the forms of court etiquette; and as far as the architecture of the royal palace, in particular, is concerned we cannot say anything at all.

Still less is it possible to talk of a relationship between the palace of Ctesiphon and other architectural traditions of the same or earlier periods, whether Babylonian, Hellenistic, Arsacid or pre-Arsacid, even though we do know a few examples of palaces in the Irano-Mesopotamian area which might provide some indications about aspects of official architecture. For these examples display features rather different from each other, from the Seleucid "palace" of Nippur,⁷ some prominent elements in whose plan are traceable to the Hellenistic tradition; to the palace of Assur, perhaps the official residence of a high-ranking functionary in the Arsacid administration;⁸ not to mention the presence in the nearby mountains of Zagros during the Parthian age of a major palace complex at Qaleh-i Yezdegerd, which is, however, known to us in too fragmentary a form for an attempt at a precise judgement of it to be possible.⁹ The presence of such a variety of features in these buildings prevents their being used to imagine the general typology or specific elements of Arsacid court architecture in Mesopotamia.

Despite the Romans' knowledge of and first-hand acquaintance with Ctesiphon, it is therefore fruitless to try and find any concrete information about the appearance of the Arsacid palace in eye-witness or at any rate contemporary reports. Events of such great historical importance as the Romano-Parthian wars must, however, have been perceived as sensational by contemporaries, so one cannot be surprised by the impression that they have made on modern readers, who, following literary reports of this tenor, are naturally inclined to locate the official residence of the Parthian kings at Ctesiphon. Indeed, in modern scholarly literature this city is considered the capital of the Parthian empire *tout court*.

If, however, we shift our attention from the literary field to the archaeological evidence of the whole empire, our perspective will widen out and we will be able to draw on far more detailed and direct

information, albeit with all the limitations of the case, for in this respect too there are many interpretative uncertainties owing to the particular nature of the evidence and, in particular, from the meagre documentary notes which accompanied its excavation. At any rate, to get closer to this objective we must leave Babylonia and move to another region of the Parthian empire, much further away from Rome. But this territory, Parthia, is the very heart of the empire, the place where in the middle of the 3rd century BC the Arsacids had established the original nucleus of their state. So the evidence is particularly important, even though we must enter a region into which the classical authors rarely ventured to gaze, for, given the westward-oriented point of view which characterizes the extant sources, they have generally restricted their consideration of the Orient essentially to the level of current politico-military relations between Rome (or, at an earlier stage, the Seleucids) and the Parthians.

Indeed, Ctesiphon was certainly not the first capital of the Parthian empire – simplifying the terminology in the conventional manner, we here identify the concept of capital with that of royal residence – for the earliest capital and residence of the Arsacids was obviously in Parthia. This region certainly continued to be visited by the sovereigns when they became emperors, though perhaps only at particular times, for the Arsacids, like the Seleucids and the Achaemenids before them, cannot have had just one palace, one sole capital, in the whole of their vast empire.¹⁰ Well, here, in Parthia, the region where Arsaces settled and founded the state which Mithradates I (171–139 BC) transformed into an empire in the mid-2nd century BC, a royal Arsacid palace has indeed been brought to light by excavations, and one which cannot have been the first in order of time, either. In the interval of time that separates the founder Arsaces from Mithradates I there must have been in Parthia a royal palace of which we have no precise evidence, just as, even earlier, there had probably existed in the region a

palace of the Seleucid rulers. And as the Arsacid dominion grew larger, the kings must have built new palaces, for example at Hekatompulos.¹¹

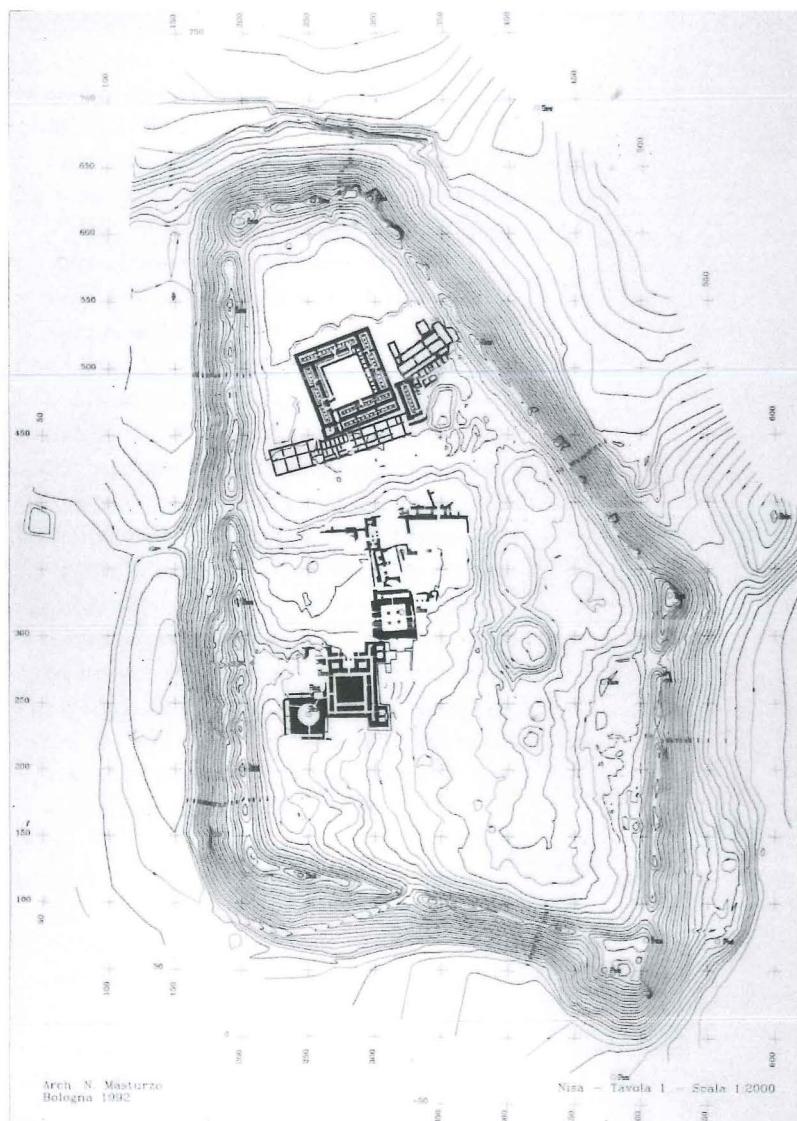
In Parthia, therefore, we have the good fortune to know of a complex of palaces of royal foundation, though it dates from a little later than the earliest years of the Arsacid state and it really has the form of a citadel. This complex was probably built by Mithradates I before or at about the same time as the great sovereign extended the borders of his state to the extent of conquering Seleucia on the Tigris. Excavations have proved the extraordinary vitality of this complex throughout the whole course of the Parthian period, because most of its monumental buildings were constantly kept in good repair until the end of the dynasty's rule; indeed, in the AD centuries one notes a remarkable growth of the complex precisely as an economic organism. This citadel is situated in northern Parthia, near the village of Bagir, and is known today as Old Nisa. It lies immediately to the east of another large walled archaeological area, known as New Nisa,¹² which corresponds to a large city, probably the one which until the Middle Ages was the main urban centre of the provinces of Parthia/Khorasan, which extended to the north of the Iranian plateau, at the foot of the Kopet Dagh. We also know the ancient name of this formidable foundation, Mithradatkert, Mithradates' Fortress, for this name has been preserved on *ostraka* found during the excavations of service buildings belonging to the royal area.¹³

Old Nisa

The royal complex of Old Nisa has been subjected to extensive research and to more or less thorough excavation at various times and by various archaeological expeditions. But although the beginning of this research dates from as long ago as the 1930s, its results have either not been published at all or have been published in a very provisional, cursory and incomplete form, so that our knowledge of the fea-

tures of the general layout and the individual constructions have progressed to a very limited degree and extremely slowly. Crucial questions concerning the general features of the citadel, the absolute and relative chronology of the various buildings of which it is composed – in short, the growth and transformation of the whole complex – are far from having been analyzed in a satisfactory manner; in particular the first great excavations,¹⁴ which were extraordinarily productive of finds, were never the object of any systematic final reports and exhaustive studies, except in a very few instances (Masson, Pugačenkova 1982). Indeed, in some cases not even detailed plans of the buildings brought to light were published. This naturally makes the definition of the nature and function of the individual buildings that have been discovered very problematic, and therefore also hinders the formulation of a clear general interpretation of the whole complex.

The palace consists of a complex of individual buildings grouped into two distinct main complexes within massive towered mud-brick ramparts (Fig. 1), into which there was probably just one entrance, which has not been excavated, but which has been reconstructed on good evidence roughly in the middle of the west side, the side facing the city of New Nisa. The area enclosed by the ramparts is roughly triangular in shape. To the north of the axis of entry, on the relatively flat land which occupies the vertex of the triangle, is the Square House, the largest building in the citadel; its original function was not defined by the excavators, but they were able to establish that at some stage it was turned into a storehouse for household furnishings and other goods, thus becoming a kind of treasure-house. It is here that the most sensational discoveries have been made, from the marble statues (Masson, Pugačenkova 1956), to the little sculptures of precious metal (now accessible in Ivernizzi 1999) to the set of large engraved ivory rhytons (Masson, Pugačenkova 1982). After this crucial event, which we



may imagine took place in the 1st century AD, some small new buildings were erected on the area round the Square House; these were used for service purposes, and in particular for the preservation of goods in large *pithoi*. It was in the filling for the preparation of the floor of one of these storehouses that most of the *ostraka* were found; these contain short texts of an economic nature which preserve valuable information about the running of the royal estates and especially on the administration of the vineyards.

The original function of the **Square House** cannot, however, have been that of a storehouse, albeit a special storehouse, a treasury of precious objects. Not only is the building the largest in the whole com-

Fig. 1. Old Nisa, the citadel of Mithradates I.

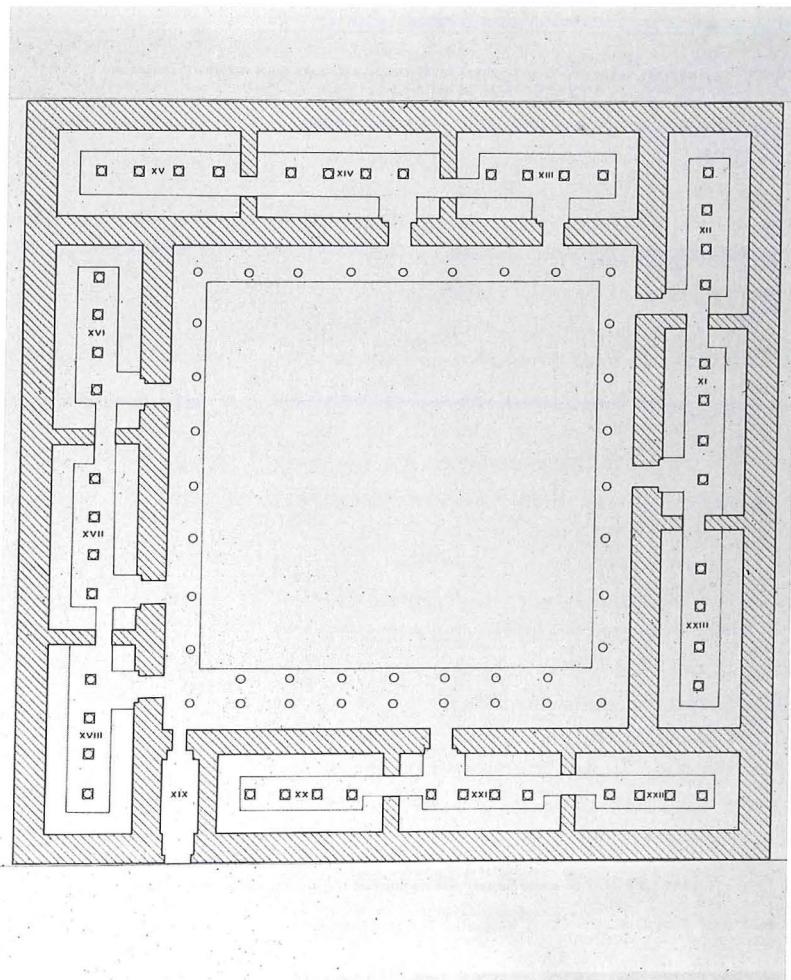


Fig. 2. Old Nisa, the Square House, original layout.

plex, for its surface area greatly exceeds that of the individual monumental buildings in the south complex; but its layout has architectural features of marked monumentality, though characterized by great simplicity in the definition of the elevation, for few concessions are made to external ornamentation; the outer facades are completely smooth, and one has to go inside to find oneself in a space arranged with more ambitious formal pretensions. One finds oneself in a large courtyard with a colonnaded portico along three sides, while the portico on the entrance side is reconstructed by the excavators with two rows of columns (Fig. 2). The salient features of the plan (a series of three rooms along each of the sides of the large central courtyard; a flat roof resting on a row of supports located on the long axis; absolute uniformity of all the rooms, which correspond to one another in every

respect) and the peculiarities of the internal arrangement of these rooms (the presence in each of the rooms, from the time of their construction, of the same tall, deep mud-brick benches all round the walls) suggest that the building was not subject to a general use, but originally had a very specific function.

In particular, one may think that it was built as a place for the meetings and banquets of the courtiers, who probably assembled according to certain rules, according to particular social criteria, for example by groups, families, clans, etc.¹⁵ The benches on which the precious ivory rhytons and other objects were later deposited may originally have been comfortable couches for the courtiers who were guests of the sovereign, places where they could recline at their ease to talk, banquet or propose toasts on special occasions or in other more ordinary circumstances. Whatever the significance of these gatherings, they may have been important occasions for consolidating relations between the royal family and the aristocratic families, between the sovereign and the grandes of the kingdom, during the delicate period of the transformation of the small state into a great empire; a period which was after all not so very distant from the time when the Dahi and Parni had led a nomadic or semi-nomadic existence, which must have been characterized by relatively egalitarian forms of social relationship and in particular by a close contact with the chief. If the banqueting-house hypothesis is correct, the existence of fundamentally straightforward social relations between the king and the aristocracy still in the time of Mithradates I – though undoubtedly they were by now subject to the strict rules of court etiquette – is suggested by the very architectural features of the building, by the lack of prominent elements in the plan and arrangement of the spaces, and by the equivalence of the rooms, the only significant difference between which is the fact that some allow direct access from the courtyard whereas others do not.

The monumental complex of the

citadel of Old Nisa would not, therefore, originally have been restricted to the southern group of buildings, but all the more significant sectors of the area would have contained ceremonial buildings. The fact that the “banqueting house” was built in the north corner, clearly apart from the other buildings, may have been connected on the one hand with the nature of the terrain within the ramparts, and on the other with the specific function which each building was intended to have; a function which differed from one case to another, the three southern buildings probably having functions which were more similar or to some extent complementary to one another, and less similar to that of the Square House. Indeed, the north corner offers a fairly flat piece of land large enough to hold a building with an area of about 60 x 60 m. The terrain in the southern part of the citadel, by contrast, is more uneven, and the individual buildings that stand there are grouped against the west side of the ramparts, because most of the centre is occupied by two wide, deep basins of roundish shape which the excavators have identified as the salient features of a garden, the palace garden, the existence of which is of course perfectly in character with Iranian palace traditions.¹⁶ Originally the difference in level must have been even more noticeable, because the building with the Square Hall was erected only at a later date on top of an earlier building (Pilipko 1996), in a period which we can affirm was later than that of the construction of the Square House.

The Square House may therefore have been one of the first buildings erected in the citadel at the time of its foundation, and may have been in most active use during the time of the “launch” of the new creation, when Mithradates and his immediate successors must systematically or very frequently have used the buildings which stood here, and which perhaps continued to be extended by the addition of new units. The chronology of the monumental and service buildings of Nisa has not yet been the subject of a thorough

and comprehensive analysis, but it is clear from various places that the buildings unearthed by the excavations are not all contemporary, apart from the fact that the characteristic building technique used in Nisa systematically emphasizes paratactic constructional links, based on the juxtaposition of the walls rather than on the interconnection of their brickwork.

The early period of the functioning of Old Nisa may have been the very time when the sovereign felt most strongly the need to celebrate the grandeur of his new empire. This may have included the necessity or advisability of periodically verifying the loyalty of the great families of the dynasty at suitable gatherings. This question of relations between the sovereign and the aristocracy was indeed a crucial one throughout the troubled history of the Parthian empire, a history characterized by changing relationships of internal perhaps even more than external forces, given the latent opposition between the central power of the king and the autonomy enjoyed *de facto* or by right by the grandees of the kingdom and the vassal princes. Meetings and banquets celebrated in Mithradates’ citadel may have helped to strengthen ties between the king and his courtiers, and the great ivory rhytons, which are not ornamental objects but vessels suitable for use and actually used in antiquity (Mkrtyčev, Treiner 2000), may have found worthy employment in those very rooms where they were later deposited when they had ceased to be used.

But even apart from any specific conditions, the celebration of banquets at court is one of the characteristic acts of the manifestation of regal power, and this is particularly the case in Iran, where the Arsacid court would certainly not have been lacking behind in this respect. Indeed, research recently carried out in the field of Persian literature (though the texts are of the Islamic period), compared with the pre-Islamic archaeological evidence, indicate that not only was there no hiatus here in the history of Iran, but, on the contrary, one notes a very strong direct continuation of customs. The theme

of the court banquet in its manifold aspects is one of the most recurrent literary themes and one of the most significant also at the ideological level, and the very form and use of the characteristic vessels used in banquets may be followed in many cases over time from antiquity to the Middle Ages, both in the texts and in the archaeological evidence. This, in particular, is possible for the *rhyton*,¹⁷ whose iconographical forms transmit from the earliest times to the Parthian, Sassanian and medieval ages the sense of its original value as a ritual vessel, a value which flows over into literary metaphors. And it will be observed that the Parthian age is one of the most richly represented in the documentation of original rhytons which have come down to us.

The hypothesis that the Square House was a place of banquets and meetings implies, of course, that at some point these ceremonies ceased, or that the relevant needs came to be met in some other way. For it is certain that at some stage the building did cease to be used for the original functions for which it had been constructed, and was turned into a storehouse. In its rooms objects of varying nature and value were stored and sealed up, and all the later building work was closely connected with this secondary use, which continued until the end of the life of the Parthian citadel. It is tempting to see this change as a consequence of a different attitude on the part of the sovereign who was ruling at the time of the change in function, and to link this new situation with the change in dynastic line that came about with the ascent to the throne of Artabanus III in the 1st century AD. Historically the circumstances would fit perfectly. In the AD centuries the sketchy and fragmentary historical accounts show the Arsacid kings chiefly preoccupied with the events that were taking place in the western regions of the state, not only in relation to the outside world – in particular the Roman empire – but also within the Parthian state and its area of influence.¹⁸

However, there is of course no direct

evidence that allows us to establish a link with precise historical events, and the new decisions may equally well have matured in the course of independent developments which saw a progressive reduction in the frequency of these meetings, through the natural course of the historical events which – but it must be stressed that this is what emerges from the classical sources – see the sovereigns increasingly active in the western regions. For the fact remains that under the new branch of the dynasty Nisa did not suffer in the slightest; on the contrary it is precisely in the AD centuries that one observes the effects of a large growth in economic production and in the wealth which has its source in the estates that the citadel administered.

At all events, if the time of the change in function of the Square House, which was built just before or just after the mid-2nd century BC, probably falls in the 1st century AD, it is interesting to note that one can presumably assign to this same period the beginning of other changes which in Nisa testify to a particularly prosperous development of economic activity and a considerable growth in the harvests of the relevant agricultural products to the detriment of formal structures. The macroscopic effect of this process of growth is above all the transformation of the great courtyard of the so-called “Palace” (Fig. 1, centre), which lies immediately to the north of the Square Hall, from a large ceremonial courtyard into – once again – a storehouse, an unusual, extraordinary, open-air storehouse. The vast size of the space; its central position in the general layout and its close relationship with the monumental complex on whose periphery it lies; and its monumental size, emphasized by the ornamentation by half-pillars of the wall that bounds it to the north; all this certainly prompts one to include the great courtyard in the original monumental spaces of the palace.

The same is probably true of the complex of surrounding rooms, which the excavators describe as a “palace” in the summary reports deposited in the offices

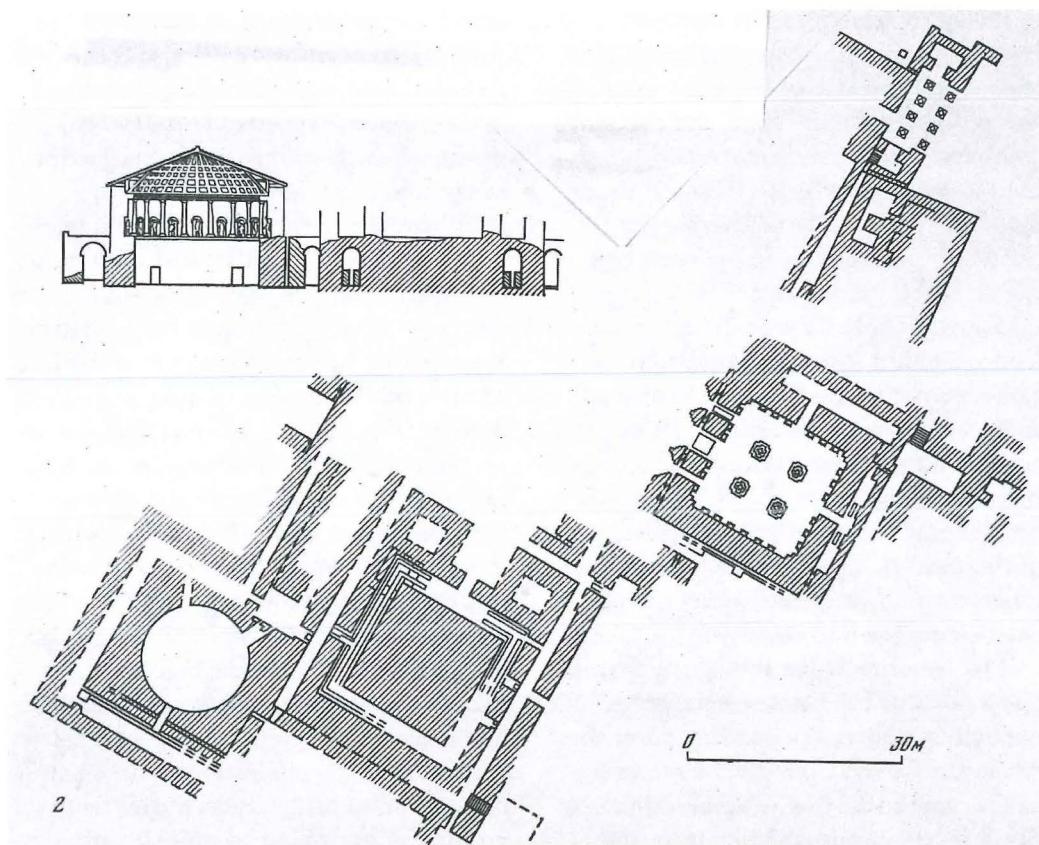


Fig. 3. Old Nisa, the southern buildings.

of the Archaeological Museum of Nisa.¹⁹ Although the rooms are generally small, they include spaces for which a specific formal treatment has been reserved, and in particular rooms with open porticoes giving on to unroofed spaces. The rooms of this wing of the palace – the first which the visitor heading north, i.e. towards the Square House, would come to and pass by, or which he would cross to reach the monumental spaces which extend to the south – may have had various functions, perhaps multiple functions, like the various kinds of function that were assigned to the enclosures divided into rooms which in the ancient Orient often adjoined the monumental complexes. But the use of these structures in the ancient Orient varied from region to region and from time to time, and in Parthian Nisa, in the absence both of specific data on the finds and of secondary information on the structure of the Arsacid palaces and the activities that went on in them, we have no evidence at all to help us define the uses to which these spaces were actually put.

The small covered spaces and the great courtyard of the “Palace” lead into the most monumental area of the citadel, its heart, where the most representative buildings are concentrated, the ones that are probably most important for an understanding of the function of the entire complex. This group consists of several independent constructions, each of which has a plan and elevation that are completely individual, and entirely different from one case to another (Fig. 3). This group includes the building nearest to the ramparts and the entrance which has only just begun to be excavated by the Italian mission (Fig. 1). This is perhaps one of the oldest buildings among those so far identified in the complex, to judge from its topographical position. It certainly seems older than the Round Hall at least, for it is against the outer plaster of its south wall that the north wall of the Round Hall lies (Gabutti 1996). This building could be a vital key in the interpretation of the complex of Old Nisa, not only because the first trenches made here, perhaps already

in the time of Maruščenko, do not seem to have reached the original floor or the lower levels, but because, if it was one of the earliest buildings to be erected, its structure – and hopefully its content – may throw new light also on the interpretation of the other buildings of the southern complex.

Of the three monumental buildings that have been completely excavated, some reveal in one way or another some trace of sacrality. The “**Tower-Temple**” is composed of a massive substructure of mud-brick on top of which were the remains of a small building with columns, and whose base on the ground floor is surrounded by corridors which open with a large *ivan* towards the north, towards the uncovered space on to which the Building with the Square Hall also opens. It is likely that this building, whose typology is difficult to place in any precise tradition of palace architecture, had a function that may be defined in some sense as sacral. It is certainly a fact that its physical features rule out an everyday use. But when one tries to define more precisely the nature of this sacrality the task becomes difficult, in the absence of a detailed plan of the small building that crowned it and of concrete information about the excavations. However, the most recent research, which was resumed here particularly in connection with the layers of surrounding external rubble which may be related to the building itself, may throw light on some of the main features of the building. For it has led to the discovery of important fragments of wall paintings, which, if they indeed belonged to the superstructures of the “**Tower-Temple**”, may provide some orientation in the interpretation of this unusual building.

These fragments of painting are unfortunately small, and no scene is reconstructable in its entirety, but they show various subjects. The purely geometrical ones belonged to ornamental cornices; others are far more significant, because they preserve parts of human figures belonging to scenes of various kinds

which are probably not contemporary, for they are executed with different pictorial techniques. A large number of these figured fragments, however, seem to belong to a single large composition, which the excavator has reconstructed as a frieze divided up in a highly original manner into geometric squares through which, as through the mesh of a net, the main figured representation unfolds, without taking the slightest account of the divisional structure of the frieze (Pilipko 2000).

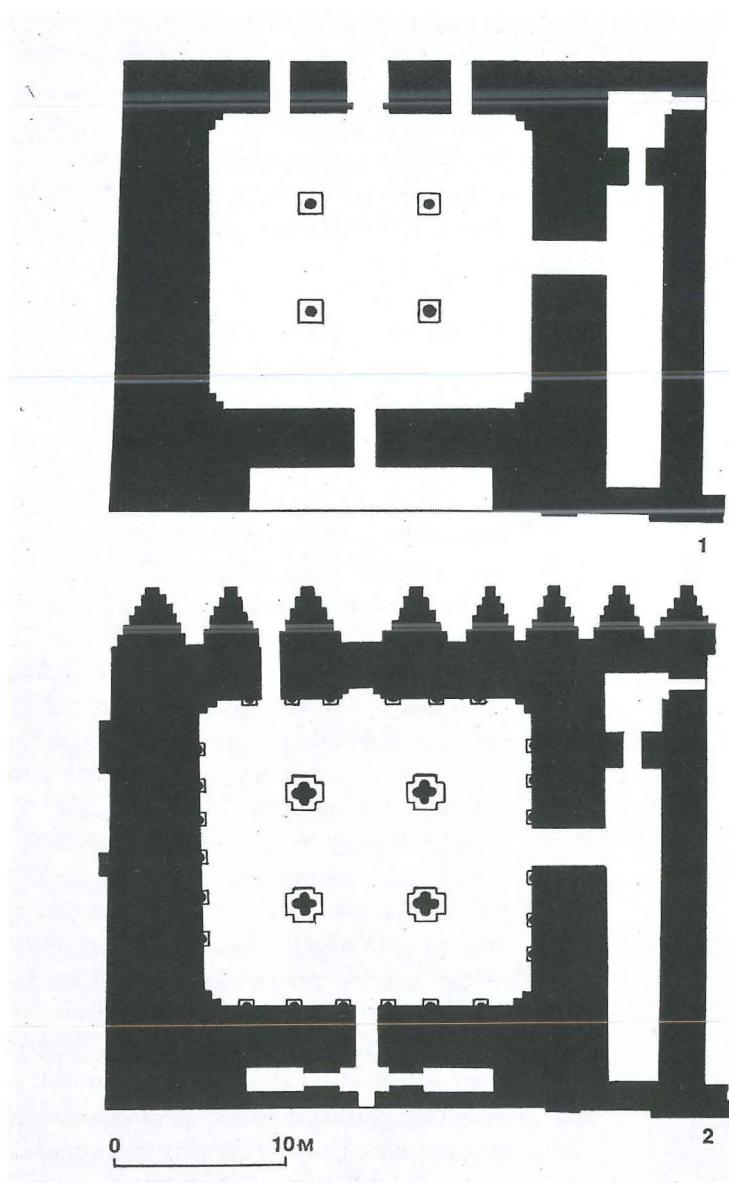
Surprisingly, the subject of the picture is not what one would expect in a building conventionally known as the “**Tower-Temple**”. For the action that runs across the grid is not a religious subject, but a battle, a clash between two fiercely fighting groups of horsemen, both in Iranian dress. It is clear that the subject was a celebratory one of particular importance, and we may attribute it to a mythological or historical context, perhaps an epic mythicized narrative of a real or imagined event which was of particular significance to the Arsacid dynasty or to one of its sovereigns. We may perhaps see it as a pictorial antecedent of those celebratory high-relief compositions which are typical of Kushan Bactria, from Kharhachayan (Pugačenkova 1971) to Dalverzin depe (Pugačenkova 1978), and which, indeed, served the aim of celebrating dynastic glories by showing scenes of illustrious figures or deeds from the past, whether recent or remote, historical or mythical, a perfectly understandable aim of courtly art, and one which in Central Asia seems to have found characteristics, genres and forms of its own.

But with decoration of this kind, the “**Tower-Temple**” obviously cannot be interpreted as a religious building in the strict sense of the word – a temple for the worship of the gods – and it may be more appropriate to reduce its name to the single word “**Tower**”. Although it is very difficult to go into detail, in the absence of adequate excavation reports, its pictorial decoration suggests that this massive building was in some way connected with a project celebratory of Arsacid kingship.

While the difficult and certainly limited access to the upper floor, and reduction to a minimum of the usable spaces, seem perfectly consistent with its hypothesized quality of sacrality, this does not seem to be connected with the performance of common religious ceremonies, to judge from the architectural design, but rather to the celebration of the dynasty, as is suggested by the subject of the paintings, which concerns historical or mythical warlike deeds – always assuming that the great battle frieze decorated a significant part of the building. It was perhaps not the world of the gods but that of the heroes and the mythicized kings that was celebrated here with suitable figurative compositions.

If the “Tower” was not a religious construction in the strict sense of the word, it therefore seems possible that the three great monumental constructions of the southern complex, despite the fact that they seem so different from one another, may all have had the same common denominator, may all have been built in the context of a celebratory plan which was organic in nature but diversified in detail – in form and probably also in time – a plan whose main general objective was the celebration of the royal family and of Arsacid regality, but naturally in a different way in each of the buildings, according to the various aspects of the ideology and the specific purpose of each building.

For these aspects also closely concern the design of the Square Hall and the Round Hall. Recent research in the **Square Hall** (Pilipko 1996) has substantially confirmed the layout and the building stages identified by the first excavators (Fig. 4) (Pugačenkova 1958, 78–95), though some significant corrections have been made, so that for its roofing we can now choose between two proposed reconstructions, that of G.A. Pugačenkova and that of V.N. Pilipko, who gives a corrected variant of the earlier one (Figs. 5–6). The function of the hall was certainly official and ceremonial, but its specific function has been variously defined – throne room, audience



room, etc. What the excavations have unearthed in the room, i.e. essentially the remains of its architectural and sculptural decoration, has been of little help in defining more clearly the nature of this official use, partly because of the lack of thorough and systematic studies.

The hall was decorated by large unbaked clay statues representing figures clothed in the Hellenistic manner²⁰ and warriors in armour.²¹ The old finds have been supplemented by others made during the recent resumption of research in the building, which has brought to light fragments of other monumental statues of exquisite Greek workmanship in the

Fig. 4. Old Nisa, the Square Hall, plan.

Fig. 5. Old Nisa, the Square Hall, reconstruction by G.A. Pugačenkova.

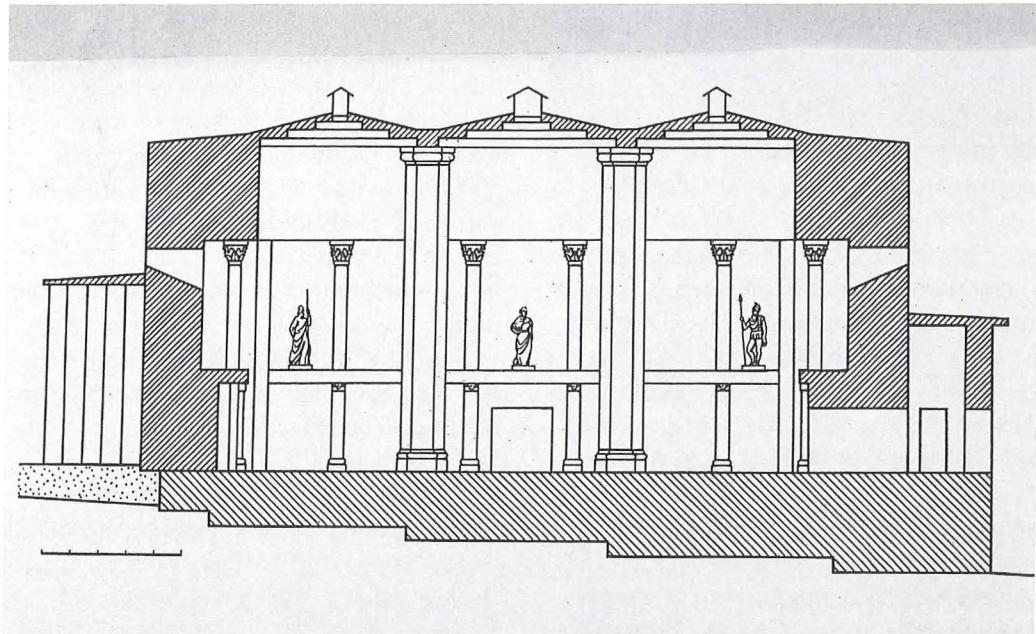
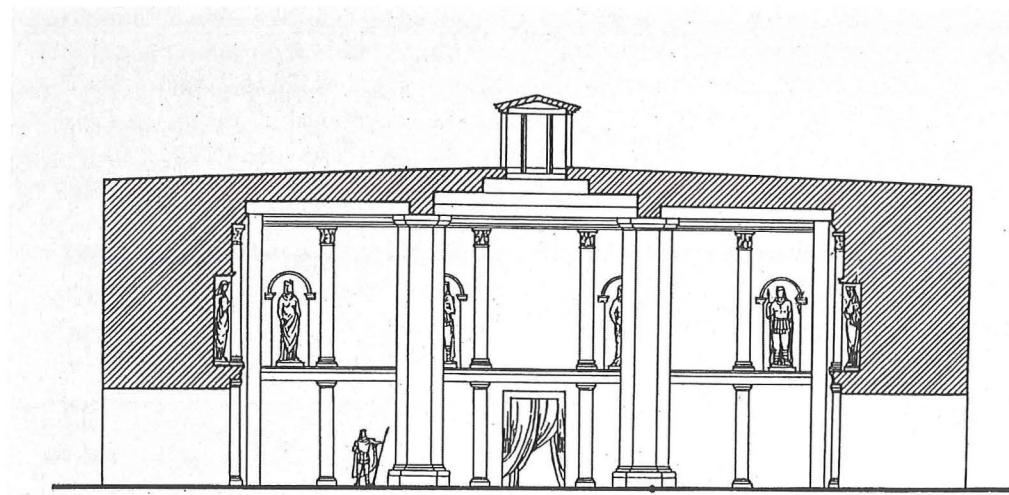


Fig. 6. Old Nisa, the Square Hall, reconstruction by V.N. Pilipko.

White Annex, a little room adjoining the north side of the hall,²² where the fragments had been stored. The special treatment accorded in antiquity to these fragments, which were not discarded but carefully preserved in a very small store-room, is proof of the importance that the personages whom they represented still had at that time in the eyes of the administrators of the citadel. For these officials, throughout the rest of the Parthian period, never neglected the maintenance of the monumental rooms of the southern complex, as

is proved by the traces of repainting or replastering which can be observed on many fragments of clay statues, whereas other spaces, from the Square House to the great courtyard of the "Palace", were not treated with the same respect.

Well, in this case too it may be affirmed with some confidence that the subject of the representations – of the individual personages and of the whole – does not reveal a religious nature, as far as the fragmentary state of the individual statues and the gaps in the general decorative pro-



Fig. 7. Old Nisa, head of a prince from the White Annex.

gramme allow one to determine. This seems above all to be indicated both by the presence of warriors of Hellenistic iconography – the warrior's torso that has been known for some time and the two heads found in the White Annex belonging to two bearded warriors in Attic helmets²³ (Fig. 7) – and the presence of some characters who are clearly Iranian, as is shown by the third head from the White Annex, which represents a male figure, possibly bareheaded, with thick, flowing locks and a moustache and with a facial expression in the heroic manner of Hellenistic art, but with physical features and a profile that link him closely with the official iconography of the Arsacid coinage, rather than connecting him with a religious iconography about which, in any case, we know absolutely nothing. It is therefore likely that the statues of the Square Hall did not represent gods but figures in some way connected with Arsacid history or legend.

Now if we examine carefully the architectural features of the Square Hall, it will

hardly seem to us like a throne room in the usual sense – the room which in the system of communication and in the illustration of the regal idea is the one par excellence which is associated with the legitimate exercise of royal power. However monumental its architectural arrangement may be, especially in the second building phase, and however rich and dense with meanings its figured decoration, it is still a space of limited size, of cramped proportions, unsuitable for containing the throng of courtiers to whom we may imagine the sovereign showed himself in the full splendour of his regal state and revealed the sense of regal majesty in the appropriate forms. It does not bear comparison with the great Achaemenid halls, or with the Babylonian ones, or even with majestic Sassanid halls like the *ivan* of the Taq-Kisra in Ctesiphon. There is not enough room to accommodate the dignitaries of a great realm such as the Parthian empire was. The reason may perhaps be very simple, and lie precisely in the fact that the Square Hall was not a real throne room – not a room, that is to say, which is used to display the pomp of the ruling sovereign.

Rather than the grand buildings of the ancient Orient, the analogies that suggest themselves are the Central Asiatic palaces like that of Khalchayan (Pugačenkova 1966), palaces which have an enormous ideological significance, because their walls are the support for a figured celebration of the dynasties in high-relief friezes; but buildings which on the architectural level are characterized by modest dimensions and seem rather conceived of as a sort of pavilion. This is clearly the result of a conscious decision, determined perhaps precisely by the desire to underline a particular sense of intimacy, an almost "family" atmosphere, despite the regal grandeur of the surroundings and despite the aim of sacral (if it was indeed sacral) dynastic celebration at which their figured decoration aims. They were perhaps monuments celebratory of memory rather than places to live in or settings for great public ceremonies; perhaps only rooms where people

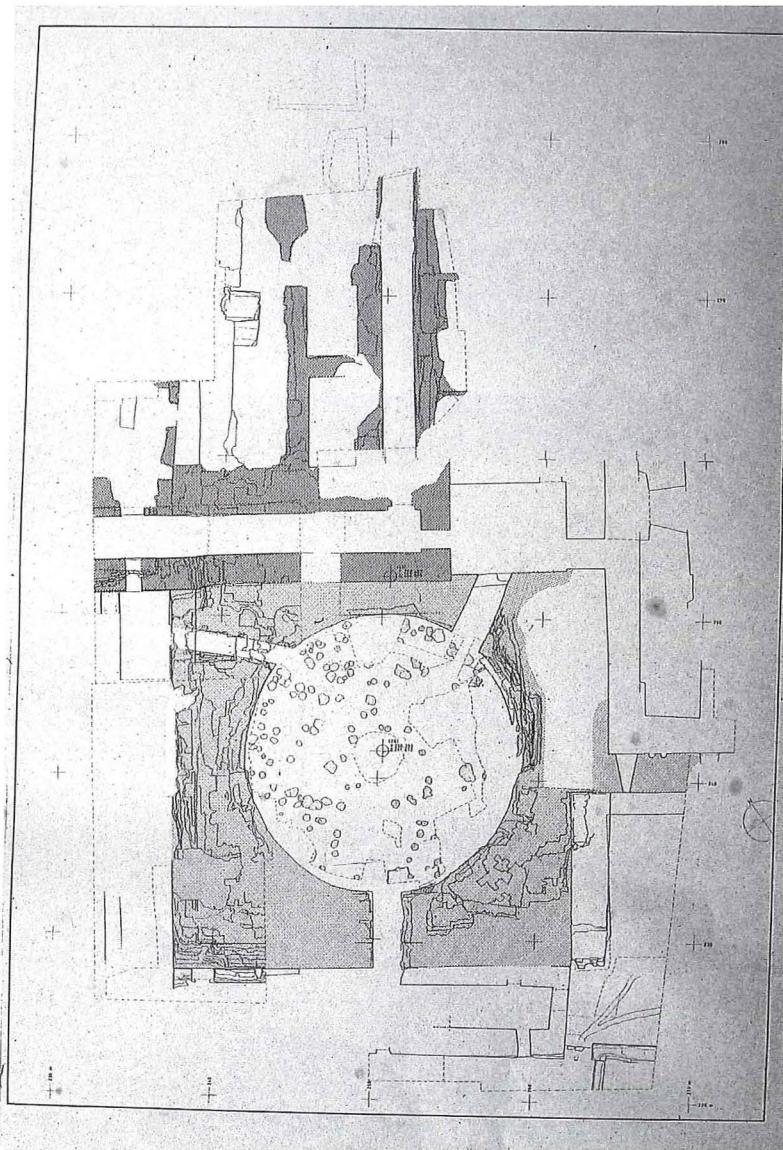


Fig. 8. Old Nisa, the Round Hall and the building to the north.

would go in specific circumstances, on occasions which implied the necessity or advisability of reaffirming the fundamental messages, themes and features of the royal Arsacid ideology. Buildings, perhaps, closer to the mausoleum – though quite devoid of funerary connotations – than to the ceremonial public building. Indeed, the characterization of the Nisa buildings as public – though they were undoubtedly official in function – is questionable, and should probably not be extended to the idea that the general public actually went into them.

So in fact the characteristics of the Square Hall, too, are not immediately addressed to the external world, and if the

gallery of personages represented in the monumental statues which decorated its walls were conceived of as a sort of gallery of ancestors, remote and/or recent, this room, too, might be an area chiefly dedicated to dynastic ceremonies and to the celebration of the royal glory of the Arsacids. On the basis of the subject of this decoration, the purpose of the hall would, then, be comparable to that of the “Tower”, but its structure, its celebratory programme, and therefore its specific function, would be expressed in a very different way.

However, of the three buildings in the monumental southern complex that have been excavated, the one which displays features most clearly and directly traceable to a celebratory interpretation of the whole complex is certainly the **Round Hall** (Fig. 8). This building, too, was initially interpreted in a religious sense, indeed its first conventional designation was “The Round Temple”, a name which remained in use for a long time in Soviet archaeological literature and which still persists even today. The interpretation seemed to be supported by the unusual form of the space, a monumental hall about seventeen metres in diameter – dimensions, it should be stressed, roughly equivalent to those of the Square Hall – and above all appeared to be confirmed by the discovery, in layers connected with the building, of some distinctive gypsum balls (Fig. 9), some of which bear the imprint of coins on the outside, while others make a rattling sound because they have little seeds inside them. The presence of these mysterious spheres, which can only be votive and/or ritual objects, certainly implies that ceremonies of some kind were held in the great hall, though neither the nature of these rites nor, above all, the specific meaning and use of the gypsum balls has ever been investigated or explained in detail. The famous reconstruction which was published at the time of the excavation very effectively gives physical shape to this idea of the sacrality of the hall, by imagining a procession

which moves towards the middle of the room, where a fire burns in a brazier.²⁴

But it then became clear that the large space could not be the cella of a temple in the ordinary sense of the term, and that the building must have been erected as a result of other aims and, above all, particular needs closely connected with the principles of dynastic celebration (Košelenko 1977). This, of course, neither contrasts with nor removes the impression of sacrality that is created by the very shape of the space, for in the Parthian East, as elsewhere, everything connected with the concept of regality may easily be coloured with a sense of sacrality in more or less strong and bright tints. The remote position of the building, too, and the considerable difficulty of access, despite the existence of no less than three entrances – one in the south, from the open space behind the complex; two, both later bricked up, from the system of corridors which surround the “Tower” and the building which has yet to be excavated to the north – all this underlines the peculiarity of its nature and purpose, especially in view of the presence not only of the aforementioned ritual gypsum balls but of the two basins which were placed in the passageways leading to the two north doors after they had been blocked off (Gabutti 1996), explicit proof that rites or ceremonies were carried out here.

Now it is indeed perfectly plausible that the Round Hall was a place consecrated to the glory of the Arsacids, indeed one of the places most sacred to it, being dedicated precisely to the memory of Mithradates I, who was not only the founder of Nisa, but the creator of the Arsacids' imperial power. For a male head which was found in the course of the most recent excavations together with other fragments of large statues of painted clay, mostly belonging to rich costumes of the Hellenistic type, can, despite its unfortunately very fragmentary state of preservation, probably be identified as a portrait of Mithradates I (Fig. 10). In this case, too, what remains of the face – majestic with its long thick beard and its moustache –



Fig. 9. Old Nisa, a votive gypsum ball.

and especially of the nose, supports an attribution not to a divine image but to a regal one. A comparison with the profiles

Fig. 10. Old Nisa, head of Mithradates I from the Round Hall.



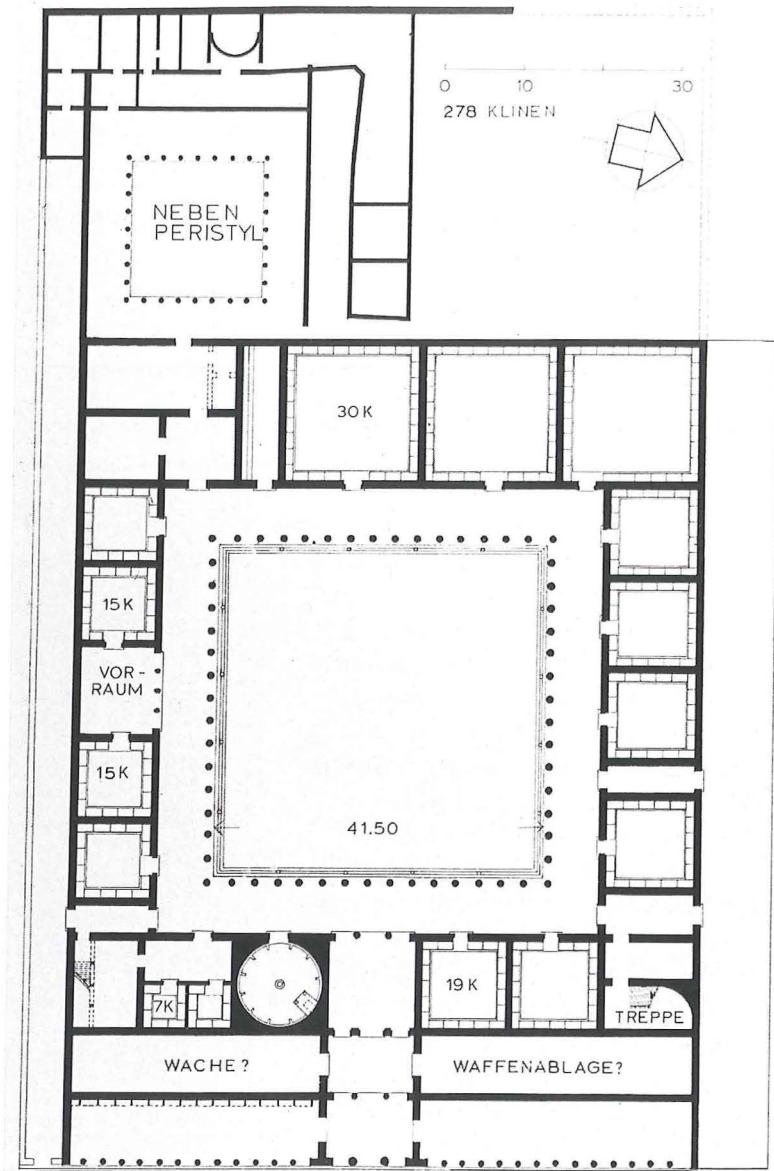


Fig. 11. Vergina, Macedonia, the palace. (After Hoepfner 1996, Abb. 5).

of Mithradates I in Hellenistic style on the coins issued in the last years of his reign is illuminating, and allows us to speak of a portrait of the great sovereign, idealized in the Hellenistic manner and presented almost as a philosopher (Zanker 1995); a portrait created as an object of devotion, perhaps after his death, during the reign of his successor Phraates II (138–127 BC) (Invernizzi forthcoming).

We know nothing, unfortunately, about the ceremonies that took place at court or elsewhere in connection with manifestations of Arsacid regality, whether of the ruling king or his ancestors. The finding

context in the hall of the fragments – which, however, have yet to be analyzed, especially as far as their positions are concerned – does not at first sight offer hopes of great advances in knowledge or of clarification. But given the influence, not only at an iconographic and stylistic level but also at an ideological one, of the kingship of the Seleucids, with whom the characteristic phenomenon of the regal cult begins²⁵ – for a continual line of development seems to have connected the Achaemenids, Alexander, the Seleucids and the Arsacids (Invernizzi 1998c) – it is possible that what we have here is a portrait of monumental size of the great sovereign dedicated in a space specially reserved for his memory.

Nothing is more likely than that the building of the Round Hall should have been decided upon in the context of a celebratory function of this sort. The Hall seems to be added to the building which stands immediately north of it, and may therefore date not from the time of the foundation of the citadel, but from a slightly later period, near the end of Mithradates' reign or, more probably, in the reign of one of his successors, who might have built it much as a heroon was built in Greece. That is to say, using terminology of the Greek language, which was widely used at the time in Parthia, the Round Hall might be precisely the heroon of Mithradates, who was thus celebrated as the founder of Nisa and the empire, an object not merely of respect and gratitude, but even – to judge from the votive stucco balls – of a worship which involved ceremonial or sacral practices. The custom of celebrating the founder of a city by the building of a heroon is well attested in the Asiatic Greek environment, in nearby Bactria, at Ai Khanum, where excavations have completely uncovered the heroon of Kineas (Bernard 1973, 85–102).

But other and perhaps even more cogent parallels on the architectural level may be found in the West, not least because of the regal setting to which they belong. The palace of Vergina (Fig. 11),

which seems to have had a special significance for Macedonian kingship and which stands not far from the royal necropolis, not only contains monumental buildings intended for the holding of banquets, which may recall the Square House of Nisa,²⁶ but also includes a round room which seems a brusque insertion in the square layout of the general plan and of the series of rooms which succeed one another on the ground floor; a hall which may recall the Round Hall of Nisa not only in its form. At Vergina, the presence of a platform and of an inscription to Heracles patroos²⁷ suggests a *sacellum* where the god was worshipped as the protector of the dynasty, and therefore a sacred structure closely connected with Macedonian kingship. The specific needs, and above all the forms, at Vergina are of course inevitably different from those of Nisa, but it is significant that in both sites – both royal foundations which had a special significance for their respective dynasties – analogous needs were felt, and that these needs were probably not only determined by the obvious need of the expression of regal glory. The similarities may be the result of precise relationships of influence in the general ideological principles of regality handed down from the Macedonians to the early Arsacids at the time of the creation of the empire, obviously through the medium of Seleucid kingship.

Another detail links Vergina and Nisa as far as a precise connection with the regal state of the rulers is concerned. The necropolis of Vergina was evidently the necropolis of the Macedonian royal family (Andronicos 1984); the problems of identifying the individual tombs are of secondary importance in this connection. Nisa, too, is closely connected with the royal necropolis, for it was precisely there – as we know from Isidorus of Charax²⁸ – that the tombs of the first Arsacid kings were situated. Indeed, in considering the problem of the name and topography of the site it has even been argued that only the discovery of the royal Arsacid tombs will make the identification of the locality of Nisa certain.²⁹ Nisa, and in particular

Mithradatkert, must therefore have had a precise connection with the Arsacid dynasty, a privileged relationship, and it is possible that the citadel was the main form of expression of the glory of their sovereigns, and the place of their celebration. But it is not easy to define more clearly this relationship, which probably concerned neither the coronation ceremonies – which we may imagine were public, and for which the spaces in the southern compound would not have been large enough to hold all the participants – nor the relationship with the sacred fire of the kings, which Isidorus says was located at Asaak in Astauene.³⁰

The excavators of the JuTAKE already to some extent linked certain aspects of the archaeological context of Nisa with the celebration of the sovereigns, in particular by considering the objects buried in the Square House as grave goods that had belonged to the dead sovereigns, following a funerary trail in connection with Isidorus' report about the tombs of the kings.³¹ But the argument has never been examined in detail, and, though not verifiable on the ground, it does not seem acceptable in these terms. The field where we may be able to define more clearly the significance and function of Mithradates' citadel seems to take us a long way from the funeral context. Nisa may have been the original fief of the royal family, or something similar, chosen by Mithradates for the celebration of the dynasty; a site where the heroon of Mithradates – whether it was already planned by the founder or decided upon at a later date – was later supplemented, probably in fairly rapid succession, by other buildings, probably also intended for the celebration of other sovereigns, earlier or later. Certainly Nisa became virtually a royal foundation, endowed with large estates and growing agricultural wealth, and if much remains to be investigated about the source of these fortunes, even more remains to be speculated about the origins and the development of this prestigious architectural complex.

Notes

NOTE 1

The preliminary reports on the excavations of Seleucia and Ctesiphon appeared in the journal *Mesopotamia* 1, 1966ff.

NOTE 2

For a general presentation of the results of the excavations, see *La terra tra i due fiumi* 1985, 97–88, 100–04. The round city whose remains are known to us has been identified as Veh-Ardashir, one of the royal Sasanian foundations which we often find cited in the sources, sometimes under the name of Kukha or New Seleucia (Gullini 1966). The identification has met with a number of objections based on the reports in the sources (von Gall 1969; Fiey 1967a, 1967b, 1967c; Hauser 1993). This suggests that a general revision of the complex problem of the topography of the metropolitan area of Seleucia and Ctesiphon is desirable.

NOTE 3

Particularly important in this connection is the discovery of a small hoard of silver coins of Ardashir I (Schinaja 1967).

NOTE 4

Within the perimeters of the round Sasanian city many tombs of the Parthian period have been excavated in various sectors both by the German mission (Hauser 1993) and by the Italian one (Carnevale Cavallero 1967, 51–56), but none of them appear to be connected with Parthian wall constructions. These tombs are certainly linked to one of the urban areas whose ancient name we know, but whose position in the region of Seleucia–Ctesiphon we do not know. This area, which the Arabs called al-Mada'in, and in which they mention seven different towns, was made up of centres of different natures, times and functions. Without a general revision of the problem based on a complete study of the literary sources relating to the topography of the territory and to the available archaeological data, there is no concrete evidence for connecting these Parthian structures with one of the urban centres whose names we know,

or specifically with the Parthian city of Ctesiphon.

NOTE 5

The beginning of diplomatic relations between the two states dates from the time of Mithradates II, whose ambassador Orobazus met Sulla on the upper course of the Euphrates in 92 BC (Ziegler 1964, 20–24). This first official contact was followed by others in the reign of Phraates III, with Lucullus in 69 and Pompey in 66 BC (Ziegler 1964, 24–28 and 28–32). Then, after the military interlude of 54, when Crassus was defeated at Carrhae, all the Romans soon had the chance to see some illustrious royal personages at close quarters and at their leisure, for Phraates IV's four sons were sent to Rome by the Arsacid king in 10/9 BC (Ziegler 1964, 51–52). There were also close contacts with the great king himself: in 1 BC Caius Caesar, the adopted son and heir of Augustus, met Phraataces on an island in the Euphrates (Ziegler 1964, 53–57). It was also on the Euphrates that L. Vitellius, the governor of Syria, later met Artabanus III (Ziegler 1964, 57–64).

NOTE 6

The royal Arsacid palace, in particular, was taken by other Roman armies after Trajan's. In 165 AD, Avidius Cassius not only sacked Seleucia but looted and destroyed the palace of Ctesiphon (Ziegler 1964, 113). Finally, in 197 AD Septimius Severus took the Parthian capital (Ziegler 1964, 131).

NOTE 7

Fischer 1904; Nielsen 1994, 121–23, fig. 64. The building has rather the characteristics of a luxury residence. Its date, too, places it in the Hellenistic age.

NOTE 8

Andrae, Lenzen 1933, pls. 9–11. Its plan is based on the typically Parthian motif of the *iwan* completely open on to a courtyard. Its date, too, goes back to the high Parthian period.

NOTE 9

Keall 1982. What is known of the plan of the monumental sector has been compared by the excavator to the palace of Assur, but the systematic use of corridors as a dividing element between sectors or individual rooms closely resembles the practices of the eastern Iranian architecture, which are well documented from the Seleucid period onwards, especially in Bactriana, but also in Parthia at Nisa. Unfortunately the limited extent of the excavated areas of the palace makes a precise classification impossible.

NOTE 10

On the Seleucid capital, see especially Marinoni 1972. For the question of the Achaemenid capitals, see Boucharlat 1997.

NOTE 11

The fieldwork carried out at Shahr-i Qumis, which has been identified as Hekatompyle, has not revealed the presence of a palace.

NOTE 12

The excavations at New Nisa have been restricted in scope owing to the poor state of preservation of the site, which has been looted by peasants, who have continued to remove its soil. However, a few important buildings have been unearthed, including some dating from the Parthian age (Pugačenkova 1958, 60–69).

NOTE 13

The texts of the *ostraka* are available in the fascicles of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum*, London.

NOTE 14

The first excavations, which were carried out by A. Maruščenko, are still unpublished. The archaeologist's papers are now preserved in Moscow, in the Institute of Archaeology of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The excavations of the JuTAKE (Complex Archaeological Expedition to South Turkmenistan) under the direction of M.E. Masson were extremely successful, but

all that has been published of the expedition's work is a few excavation reports and some brief notes in the *Trudy* of the mission and in other publications. There is no published report at all of the more recent JuTAKE excavations carried out by M.E. Masson in the 1980s. The research of V.N. Pilipko has produced a fundamental revision of the Building with the Square Hall (Pilipko 1996) and the discovery of some spectacular fragments of monumental clay sculptures and wall paintings (Pilipko 1989, 1991, 1995, 2000). The results of the excavations directed by G.A. Košelenko in the Square Hall complex are due to be published in the journal *Parthica*, 4 (2002). Several preliminary reports have been published of the Turinese excavations in the Square Hall (Invernizzi 1996, 1998a, 1998b).

NOTE 15

The hypothesis is discussed in detail in Invernizzi 2000.

NOTE 16

Compare the importance of the natural element in Cyrus' palace at Pasargadae, Stronach 1989; Stronach 1990 [1992], 174–176. Cf. Nielsen in this volume.

NOTE 17

Melikian Chirvani 1996 [1998], to whose magisterial study the reader is also referred for the bibliography of the author's research on this subject. Cf. especially Melikian-Chirvani 1992.

NOTE 18

Compare in particular – though we are now in the 2nd century – the events of Mesene, about which we are informed by the bilingual inscription on the thighs of the bronze Heracles of Seleucia (Morano 1990).

NOTE 19

No reports, or even preliminary notes, on the results of these excavations have been published. The excavations were directed by V.M. Masson.

NOTE 20

Pugačenkova 1958, fig. on p. 91–92; Pugačenkova 1967, fig. 25; Košelenko 1977, fig. 35.

NOTE 21

Pilipko 1995, fig. 2; Pilipko 1996, pl. 35: A.

NOTE 22

Pilipko 1989; Pilipko 1991, figs. 77–82; Pilipko 1995, pls. III–VI; Pilipko 1996, pls. 36–39, V–VII.

NOTE 23

The thunderbolt and the fantastic sea creature that decorate their cheekpieces are, in the specific military context, symbols of victory and glory rather than attributes of Zeus and Poseidon.

NOTE 24

Pugačenkova 1958, plate facing p. 104. The splendid water-colour reconstruction may be disputed today. The dome was not a round one on a cylindrical drum; probably it was oval in section and rested on the floor. So the columns and the statues that decorate the upper part of the drum must also be removed. The subject of the statues is based on that of the friezes with the twelve gods of the friezes of the ivory rhytons found in the Square House, and indeed the individual figures of the water-colour are copied from specific figures in the friezes. The richly decorated floor is also unlikely. The one found during the excavations was of beaten earth and could at the most have been covered with precious carpets. In the middle, the brazier

seems to be standing on a platform, but the still unpublished plan from the JuTAKE excavations gives no indication of any permanent raised area of the floor.

NOTE 25

It will be recalled that the stele found at Nihavand in Luristan, identified as the ancient Laodicea, preserves an edict of Antiochus III of 193 BC, which institutes the cult of Queen Laodice (Robert 1949; Aymard 1949).

NOTE 26

Hoepfner (1996, 8–15) even reconstructs the whole ground floor as a series of *andrones*, rooms in which banquets were held. Cf. Invernizzi 2000.

NOTE 27

Hoepfner 1996, 15, fig. 11; Kunze 1996, 120–122. Cf. Saatsoglou-Paliadeli in this volume.

NOTE 28

Schoff 1914, 8, § 12; Khlopin 1977, 119, 147.

NOTE 29

To be precise, the ancient name of Old Nisa is known for certain to have been Mithradatkert, whereas Isidorus speaks of Nisa (that is, the city, New Nisa). But clearly for Isidorus Mithradatkert might well have formed part of the metropolitan area of Nisa.

NOTE 30

Schoff 1914, 8, § 11; Khlopin 1977, 119, 145

NOTE 31

See the discussion in Invernizzi 2000.

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Abbreviations

AJA *American Journal of Archaeology*
BaM *Baghdader Mitteilungen*
Bull Asia *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*
DAFA *Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan*
RevBib *Revue biblique*
VDI *Vestnik Drevnej Istorii*

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