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Danish Institute at Athens · I

Edited by Søren Dietz



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The cover illustration depicts a Bronze Statuette
of a Horse found at the Argive Heraion. NM 13943.
Drawing by Niels Levinsen. See p. 55, Fig. 19.

Pagans in Late Roman Halikarnassos I

The interpretation of a recently excavated building

Birte Poulsen

During four campaigns from 1990-1993 the Department of Greek and Roman Studies at Odense University has been excavating part of a Roman building in ancient Halikarnassos.¹ It is situated on Coban Yildizi Street, about 200 m. west of the Maussolleion terrace (Fig. 1).² Originally, the main interest of the Danish team in the present excavation was to throw light on the town plan of Halikarnassos during the 4th century B.C.³ and since the area in question had in fact yielded the remains of a strong ashlar wall which seemed to follow the orientation of the late Classical town plan, i.e. 4 degrees north of east, we particularly welcomed the opportunity to excavate in this area (Fig. 2). When we started our investiga-

tions considerable recent building activity could be observed on the site, and a small building had been erected to the south. Large foundations trenches had been sunk in the western and in the northernmost part of the area, and strong concrete foundations recently laid to the south-east. This work was halted by the Bodrum Museum of Underwater Archaeology, because mosaic floors had turned up. A team from the Museum then undertook excavations from north to south through the central part of the area and cleared part of three rooms decorated with mosaic floors (Fig. 2, part of room F, G and H).

The site is bounded to the east by the modern Coban Yildizi Street, to the south and north by smaller private roads, and to

NOTE 1

The excavations were begun on behalf of the Bodrum Museum of Underwater Archaeology, and we are greatly indebted to the Director Oguz Alpözen, to Dr. Aykut Özet, who is co-director of the excavation, and to other members of the Museum staff for their assistance during the campaigns. Poul Pedersen, Odense University, is director of the Danish Expedition, while the present author has mainly acted as field director of the excavation in Coban Yildizi Sokak, of which the publication is in preparation. For preliminary reports, Poulsen 1994; Poulsen, forthcoming a; Poulsen, forthcoming b.

NOTE 2

The cross indicates the location of the Roman villa immediately south of the street which passes south of the Maussolleion terrace.

NOTE 3

Studies on the orthogonal town plan of Halikarnassos, Pedersen 1988 and 1988a.

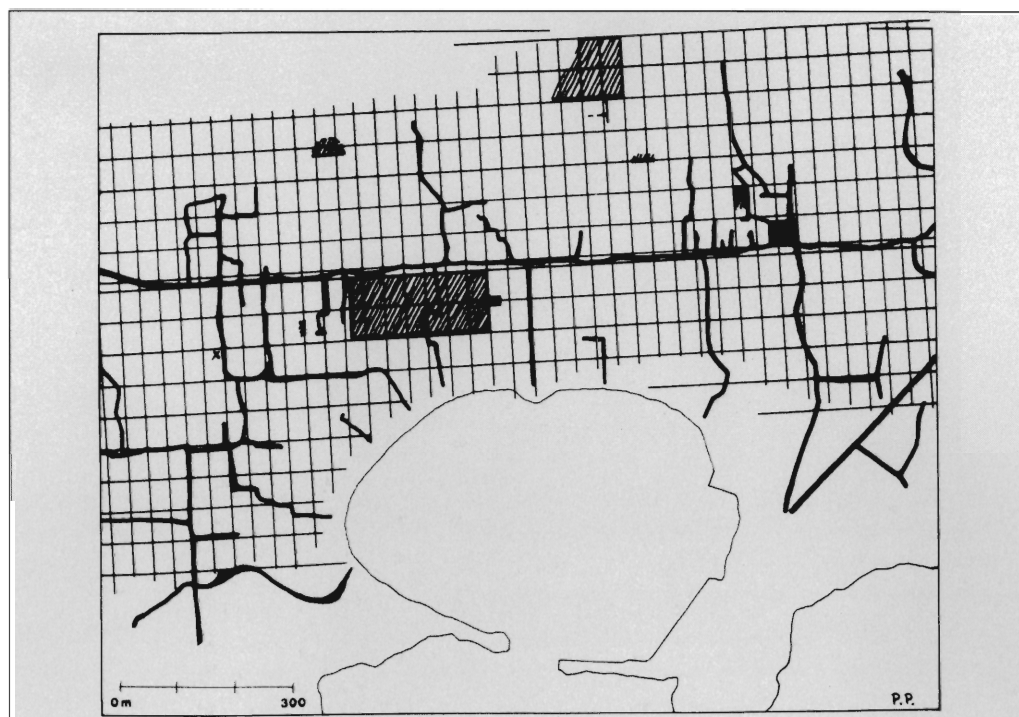


Fig. 1. Reconstructed town plan of Halikarnassos (Poul Pedersen).

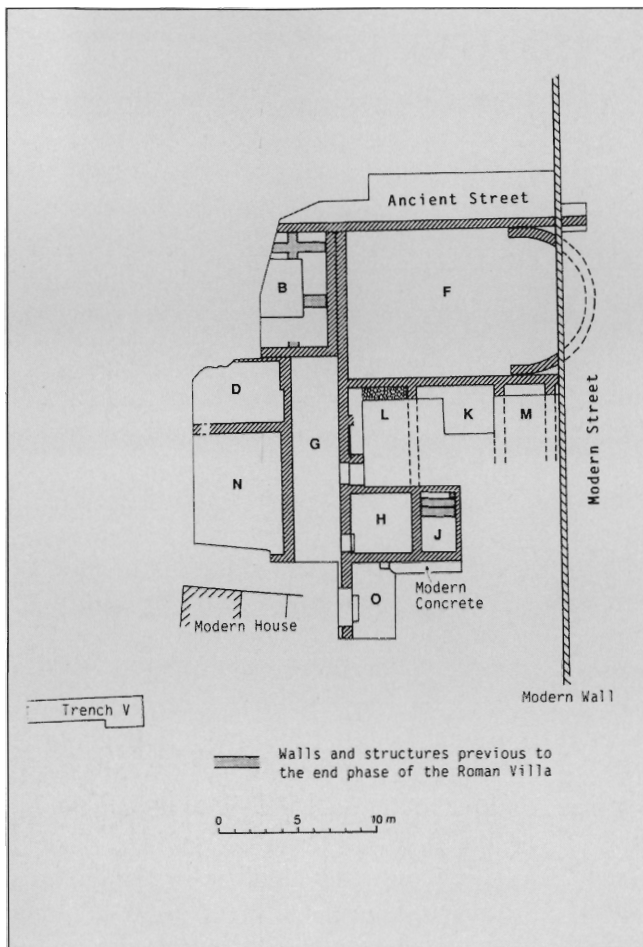


Fig. 2. Plan of the site with the excavated building (Inger Bjerg Poulsen).



Fig. 3. Room F seen from the east.



Fig. 4. Inscription in medallion seen from the west.

the west by a private property. It measures approximately 25 m. east-west and 40 m. north-south. At least four different levels of mosaic floors have been established; all evidently belong to the last phase of the villa.

The large apsidal room F has a total width of about 10 m., and a length of about 14 m. including the apse. Its mosaics, lying at a level of *c.* 10.40 m. a.s.l., are unfortunately much damaged due to burials during the 18th and 19th centuries when the whole site was evidently used as a cemetery. Marble slabs with doorsteps between them demarcated the room from the apse, which was decorated with purely geometric mosaics⁴ with a border of ivy-leaves and pomegranates. The geometric pattern consists of squares with inscribed circles, rosettes and cable-knots alternating with Maltese crosses. The colours are red, dark blue and yellow on a white ground.

The mosaic floor of the main room (F) is decorated with partly figural, partly geometric motifs. A broad band with a diagonal grid enclosing diamonds in red, white, dark blue and light blue runs along the walls and the apse, and inside this another band with a shaded multi-stranded guilloche in red, yellow, light blue and dark blue borders the figural composition at the centre. This consists of eight medallions arranged in a circle, and held together with a two strand twist. Seven of these medallions contain representations with running stags and deers, a panther, and a dog, all placed against a background of stylized trees; apparently a hunting scene (Fig. 3). The medallion in front of the entrance contained an inscription consisting of 8 lines, but unfortunately the left half was disturbed by a burial (Fig. 4).⁵ In the spandrels of the circle, personifications of

NOTE 4
Designations according to Campbell 1988, 85-100 and 1991, 36-44.

NOTE 5
The inscriptions will be published by S. Isager, University of Odense, see below.



Fig. 5. Personification of Autumn.



Fig. 6. Personification of Spring.



Fig. 7. Personification of Summer.



Fig. 8. Personification of Winter.

winged female Seasons were represented, all characterized by inscriptions and the attributes of the Seasons. The representations are various, but all are surrounded by acanthus scrolls from which they seem to emerge. The personification in the north-west spandrel is wearing a light blue dress, and holds a light blue scarf in front of her with representations of bunches of grapes and fruits. On her head she wears a green and yellow wreath. The attributes and the Greek inscription situated above her right wing “ΦΘΙΝΟΠΩΡΟΝ” identify her clearly as the personification of Autumn (Fig. 5). The corresponding personification of Spring, to the north-east, wears a yellow dress and is holding a red scarf with representations of flowers (Fig. 6). On her head she wears a wreath with flowers in different colours. The inscription, ΑΙΑΡ, is placed with two letters on either side of

her head. The remaining two Seasons are rather damaged and it cannot be determined whether they are male or female. Their identities are, however, secured through attributes and inscriptions. Thus the figure to the south-west, which grows directly from an acanthus (Fig. 7), holds in its left hand a sickle and is presumably to be identified as Summer, ΘΕΡΟΣ. Only one letter of the inscription, a theta, can be seen to the left. The remaining Season to the south-east must then be identified as Winter, ΧΕΙΜΩΝ (Fig. 8). This is also confirmed by part of the inscription, ΜΩΝ, on the left side of the head. In either hand the Season holds a bird by the legs.

An inscription in a *tabula ansata*, flanked by a dog to the right chasing a wild goat to the left, was revealed in front of the apse (Fig 9). It mentions a certain

Charidemos, who paid for the mosaic floors, and who can perhaps be identified with the owner of the building.

Although winged female Seasons appear occasionally in Roman art, they were never a common motif. Busts of winged female Seasons were also found by Newton in room B of his Roman Villa in Halikarnassos.⁶ They are, however, quite different from ours since they do not hold any scarfs with attributes, though they were likewise characterized by inscriptions. Winged female Seasons are also found in the mosaics of Roman North Africa and Syria.⁷ The closest parallels to these Seasons are in fact found in the mosaic floor of the Constantinian Villa in Antiochia.⁸ The four Seasons are shown in this case emerging from an acanthus with scrolls to either side. They are holding scarfs with their attributes, just like the Seasons of room F. The Spring thus holds a veil full of flowers and lilies, the Summer a sheaf of wheat, and the Autumn a veil with fruits (bunches of grapes and large rounded fruits). The central part of the Winter is unfortunately missing but her mantle is raised to cover her head.

From this large apsidal room (F) access was probably provided by two doors to another room situated to the west (B). This latter room was only partly excavated, since it extends under the neighbouring plot, but it has remains of a much damaged mosaic floor at the same level as that of room F, i.e. c. 10.40 m. a.s.l. Since this mosaic was no longer complete, it was possible to excavate below the floor level, and to ascertain the existence of several foundation walls predating the mosaics (Fig. 2). At least some of these foundation walls must date to the Hellenistic period, perhaps even to the 4th century B.C., since the material found between them includes a large amount of black-glazed pottery.

To the south of the apsidal room F we found remains of at least three different rooms or structures. To the west lay a small paved yard (L), adjoining a large room (K) with a tessellated floor with Maltese crosses similar to the ones in the apsidal room F, bordered by ivy-leaves spring-



Fig. 9. Inscription in tabula ansata in front of the apse.

ing from an amphora in the corner. A door led from this room to F. To the east is situated a further rather narrow room or perhaps a corridor (M), in which no floor has so far been traced. The levels of both L and K are identical with that of F.

The long narrow north-south oriented room (G), about 2.80 m. broad, could not be excavated in its entire length, but its



NOTE 6
Room B, Newton 1862, 285-286; Hinks 1933, 129-130, no. 51c-d. Only two, Spring and Summer, could be lifted and removed to the British Museum. Winter was in a bad condition and Autumn lost.

NOTE 7
E.g. mosaic from Carthage, Tunis, Bardo Mus., Parrish no. 12, 120-122, pl. 20-21, seated winged female personifications with nimbus. Mosaic from El Djem, Tunis, Bardo Mus., Parrish 1984, no. 40, 184-186, pl. 57b, and mosaic from Zliten, Tripoli, Mus. Arch., Parrish 1984, no. 68, 243-246, pl. 94-95. For Syria, cf. note 8 and Balty 1973.

NOTE 8
Levi 1947, 226-257, pls. 52-57, 143b-e, 160-162. Winged female Seasons (busts) were also found in the House of the Calendar, Levi 1947, pl. 5b.

Fig. 10. Room G seen from the south.

total length could be estimated to about 17.20 m. when the earth along its eastern wall and the threshold from O was removed (Figs. 2 and 10). The level of its mosaic floor is *c.* 9.80 m. a.s.l. The mosaics are almost all geometric in pattern, composed of rectangular compartments arranged inside a border with bead and reel. This is surrounded in turn by a diagonal grid in dark blue, while the outer edge along the walls consists of a light blue border of different width. The geometric patterns inside the bead and reel border are arranged in a row as follows: first a square with an inscribed octagon, next a pattern with interlacing circles with circles and four-leaved clovers in the centres, next lozenges alternating with squares, next a square with an inscribed circle, then a scale pattern, then triangles and squares, and finely a square with an inscribed circle with a bird perched on a branch in the centre. It is now possible, however, to establish that the mosaic floor of this narrow room continued to the west around a corner. This may be concluded on the basis of two facts: firstly, because the western wall of (G) stops at the point where an east-west oriented wall has its beginning; secondly, the light blue border along the walls does not continue further south, since it could be ascertained that at this point the diagonal grid turns at a right angle and continues around the corner.

No mosaics were found to the west of (G), the only find here being an east-west oriented wall which continues further west (D). Both on this wall and the parallel wall to the north remains were found of the marble facing *in situ*. East of the narrow room (G), walls indicate at least three different rooms, including at least one earlier building phase represented by a cistern, which apparently went out of use at a later date.

Two steps led from the corridor into an almost square room (H) to the east, measuring *c.* 3.70 x 3.90 m. (Fig. 11). The mosaics, at a level of about 9.30 m. a.s.l., comprise geometric and floral motifs arranged in semicircles; the colours are yellow, dark blue, light blue and red on a



Fig. 11. Room H seen from the south.

white ground. Room J to the east contained no surviving floor, but remains of two foundation walls earlier than the final phase of the Roman villa were found.

To the south was excavated a part of what was apparently a large room O with a huge threshold leading to the passage G to the west (Fig. 12). The mosaic floor in room O, *c.* 8.80 m. a.s.l., is well preserved with several borders surrounding a main motif in the centre: outermost a border with fish and dolphins, then a double



Fig. 12. The threshold of Room O seen from the east.



Fig. 13. Room O seen from the east.

swastika meander enclosing squares and a border with acanthus rinceaux with alternating birds and flowers in the centres (Fig. 13). Only part of the main motif in the centre of the floor has been revealed, an ichthyo-centaur playing the cithara and carrying a nereid on his back.⁹

Trench V was laid out to the south-west. Its aim was to investigate the extent of the structure, and to confirm whether the western limit of the insula was (as we had assumed) situated in this area (Fig. 2). All we found, however, was an east-west oriented wall built of smaller stones much like the inner walls of the building, and south of this a mosaic floor with a dark blue diagonal grid formed of two tesserae. As is evident from the plan, the remains of trench V do not correspond to any part of Newton's villa, but the wall and the mosaic south of it might nonetheless have belonged to the same building.

Newton's Roman Villa and the recently excavated structure

Already by the end of the 1991 campaign it had become clear that the excavated remains were only another part of the Roman Villa excavated by C.T. Newton in the Field of Hadji Captan in 1856.¹⁰ On Newton's map of Halikarnassos, his Roman Villa is placed immediately to the south of the street that ran north of the Maussolleion, the present Turgut Reis. It appears, however, that the Roman villa was wrongly located on Newton's map. It is, in fact, to be situated further south, near the street that passed the south wall of the Maussolleion.¹¹

The excavated part of Newton's villa measures approximately 37 m. east-west, 27 m. north-south (Fig. 14). Apparently Newton ascertained an outer wall to the

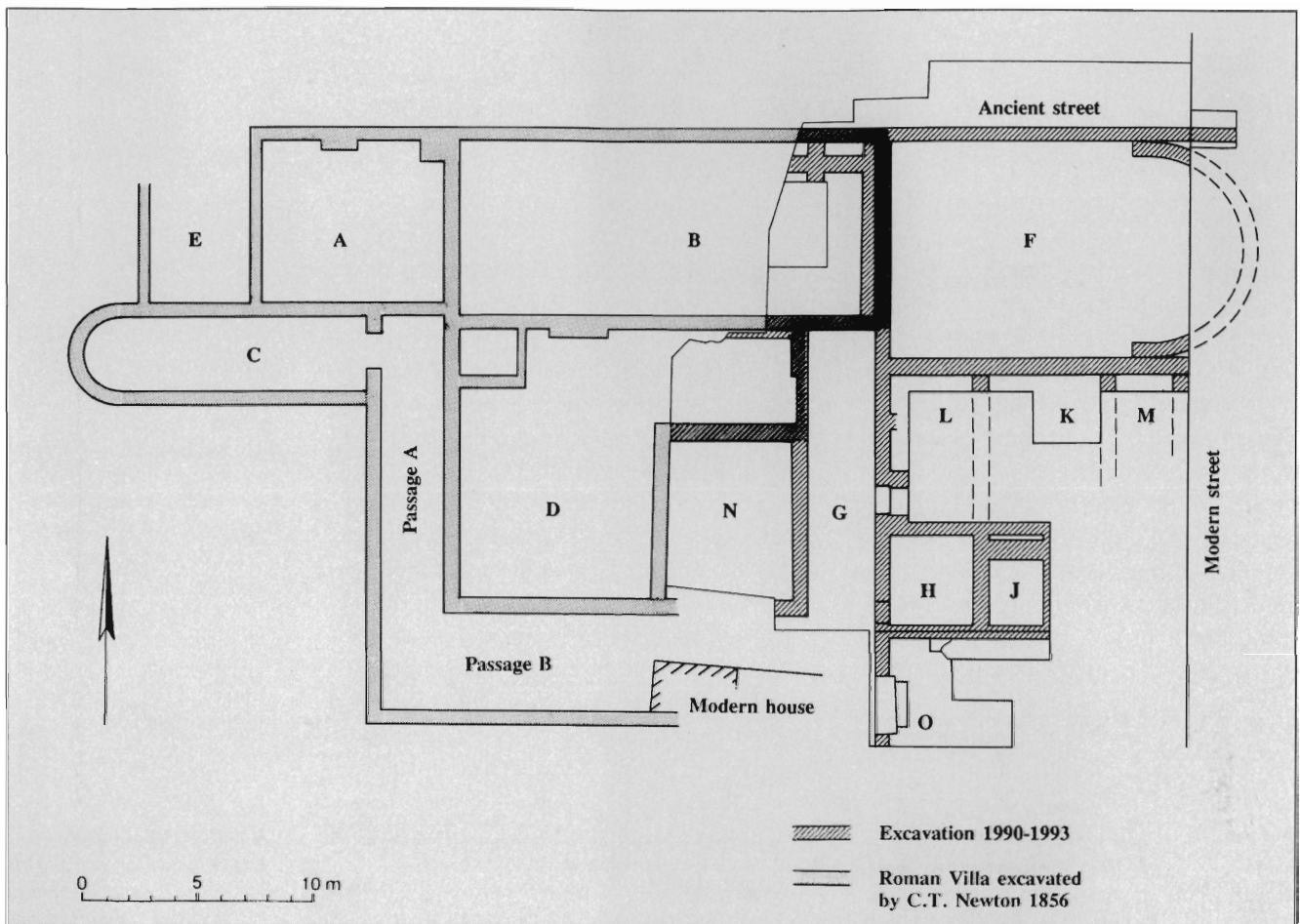
Fig. 14. Plan of the two parts of the villa juxtaposed (Inger Bjerg Poulsen).

NOTE 9
A layer of lime still covers the surface of the mosaic.

NOTE 10
Published in 1862, Newton 1862, 280-310.

NOTE 11
In discussing previous studies of the town plan of Halikarnassos, P. Pedersen advanced the hypothesis that the Roman villa was wrongly placed on Newton's map, Pedersen 1988a, fig. 3. Cf. map of Halikarnassos with the correct location, Bürchner 1912, 2257-2258.

NOTE 12
Newton 1862, 303-304.



NOTE 13
Hinks 1933, 125-143.

NOTE 14
The correspondence is preserved in the British Library, for references, Jenkins 1992, 175-176. I am greatly indebted to Dr. I. Jenkins, British Museum, for having drawn my attention to both the correspondence and the preserved photographs.

NOTE 15
The greater part of this photographic material is likewise preserved in the British Library and will appear as documentation in the forthcoming publication of the villa. For the early use of the photographic records in archaeology, Feyler 1987.

north in room A and B, and he states that the east wall of room B was built of large squared blocks. He was, however, able to extend his excavations neither further east of room B and D due to a Turkish cemetery, nor to the west and south where the property of Hadji Captan was situated. He does, however, mention a "pavement" south of room C, which continued under the yard wall of Hadji Captan's house.¹²

Newton brought about half of the best preserved mosaic floors back to the British Museum,¹³ but he left many of the mosaics with figural representations *in situ*, because he was short of the necessary plaster to remove them. This is revealed in the correspondence between Newton and his friend, the then chief librarian of the British Museum, A. Panizzi.¹⁴ Since it was impossible for him to lift all the floors, he decided to have all the mosaics photographed *in situ*,¹⁵ and with the help of this

invaluable photographic material it is now possible both to complement the mosaics removed and brought to the British Museum, and to gain an impression of the mosaics which Newton left *in situ*.

The existence of post-antique graves on the site of the recent excavations, especially evident in the floor of the large apsidal room F, confirms that the area was once used as a cemetery. That this must be identical with the cemetery that prevented Newton from extending his excavations further east seems clear. The identical floor levels and the western doorsteps of the apsidal room F also demonstrate that the newly excavated rooms were indeed part of the same building as that excavated by Newton. Furthermore, the excavated part of room B, part of the western wall of room G and the east-west oriented wall between room D and N correspond to the eastern part of Newton's villa (Fig. 14).

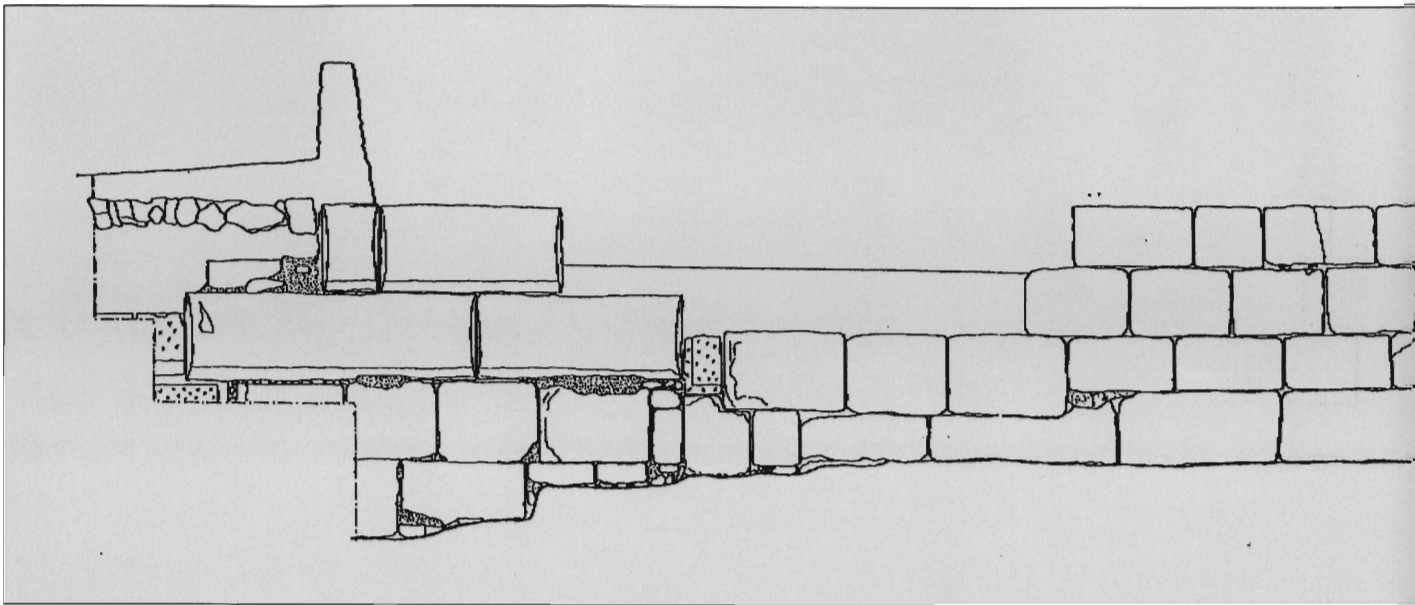


Fig. 15. Section of the ashlar wall (Ole A. Hansen).

Newton states that the mosaic floor of room B was much damaged, and he therefore left most of it in place, merely removing the figural motif, a representation of Atalanta and Meleager to the west; but he had to leave a similar representation of Aeneas and Dido to the east.¹⁶ This accords with the fact that the mosaic was much damaged in the eastern part of room B; in fact no surviving traces of the representation of Aeneas and Dido were found. The upper layers in both room B and D were characterized by many fragments of mosaics, presumably pieces which had been left by Newton. Furthermore, we found remains of marble facing in the room corresponding to Newton's room D which are presumably identical with the remains he mentioned.¹⁷ On the other hand, the excavations have not confirmed the existence of an eastern outer wall in Newton's room B, although his statement might be due to the fact that he could not investigate it properly.¹⁸

The mosaics found by Newton were situated about 60–90 cm. beneath the surface level at that time. He ascertained two different floor levels in his villa, a higher one in rooms A, B, C and E, and a lower one in room D and passages A and B; the difference in level being spanned by two steps leading from room C to passage A.

The mosaics were variously bedded on a layer of material from earlier buildings, or on earth, or directly on the rock.¹⁹ The tesserae were primarily of marble, but tesserae of red brick and green glass were also used.²⁰ With the evidence of the recent excavation, we are able to conclude that the floor level of Newton's rooms A, B, C and E was about 10.40 m. a.s.l. and that of passages A and B and room D about 9.80 m. a.s.l. The latter level corresponds to the level of the long narrow room (G) which has identical proportions, and mosaics similar to the ones of passage A.

The connexion between the two parts

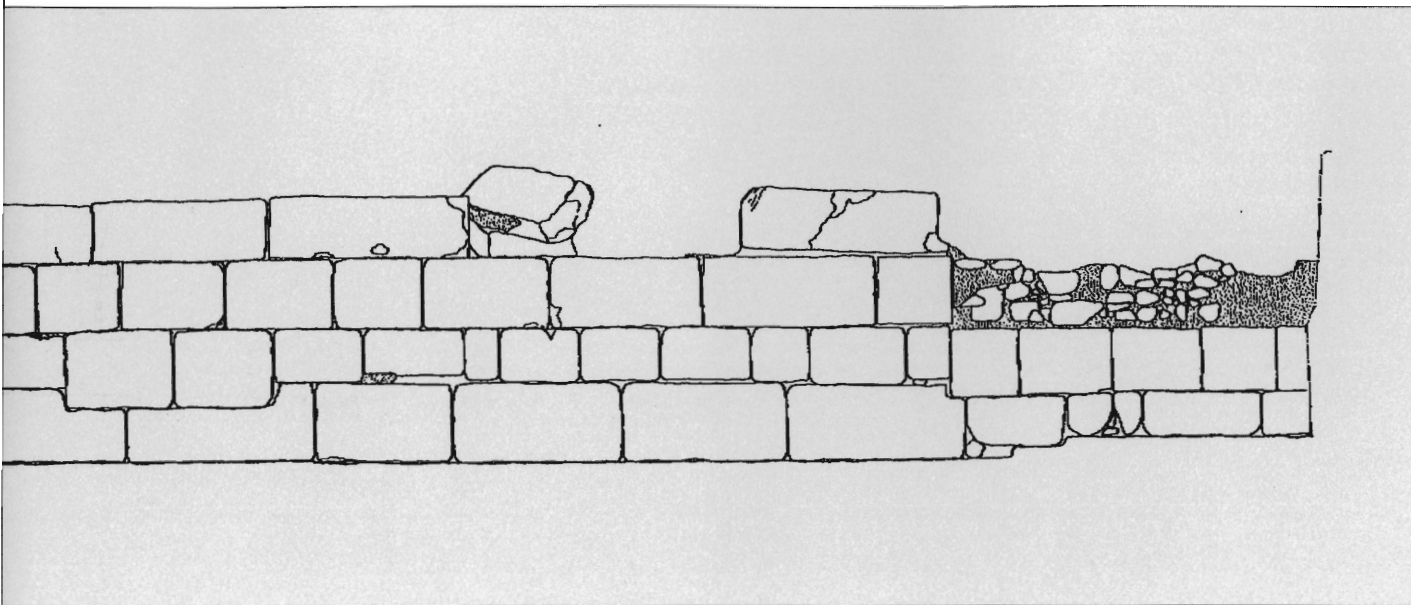
NOTE 16
Newton 1862, 283–287.

NOTE 17
The walls in rooms A and D still had remains of a marble facing, Newton 1862, 308.

NOTE 18
The walls revealed by Newton were constructed partly in large ashlars, partly in rubble and spoliated material from earlier buildings, e.g. column drums, Newton 1862, 281 and 305. A column drum with stucco was similarly reused in one of the walls of room J.

NOTE 19
Newton 1862, 308–309.

NOTE 20
Newton 1862, 309.



of the villa - the one excavated by Newton, the one by us - is also indicated by the fact that some of the geometric motifs were in fact used in both. Thus the Maltese crosses in the apse of F and in room K have an exact parallel in Newton's room C, where they were used in the central motif.²¹ The motif is here surrounded by a white border with ivy-leaves. Outside of Halikarnassos, I know of only two other examples, namely in Knidos, where the motif was used in the Byzantine basilica

dated to the 5th century A.D.,²² and in Cos, likewise in a church.²³ Some of the motifs of the mosaic in the long narrow room G, e.g. a geometric pattern with scales and a motif with squares alternating with lozenges (Fig. 10) find exact parallels in Newton's passage A.²⁴ One of the compositions in Newton's room B²⁵ closely resembles the one in the apsidal room F, where eight medallions are placed in a circle held together by a two strand twist. Parallels to the personifications of the Seasons are also found in room B, where winged female personifications are characterized by the usual attributes and Greek inscriptions.²⁶

With the addition of the Roman villa excavated by Newton, the excavated part of the building measures *c.* 53 m. east-west and 28 m. north-south, thus covering an area of more than 1400 m². The only ascertained outer delimitation of the building still remains the ashlar wall to the north, visible for about 17 m. in the recent excavated part (Fig. 15). The ashlar wall has a max. preserved height of *c.* 2.20 m. and proved to be quite heterogeneous in construction, built of blocks of various material and size. The wall's foundations rest directly on the natural rock, the bottom row consisting of andesite blocks. The wall compensates for the irregularities

NOTE 21

Newton 1962, 287-288, pls. XXXIX and XL; Hinks 1933, no. 52b, fig. 151.

NOTE 22

Mellink 1973, 193, pl. 73.6 (I.C. Love); Campbell 1979, 290, pl. 44, fig. 18.

NOTE 23

Campbell 1979, 290, 292, pl. 44, fig. 14. According to Campbell the mosaics in this part of Asia Minor do not have many features in common with the East, e.g. Syria.

NOTE 24

Passage A has approximately the same width, and is about 17 m. long, Newton 1862, 297-301, pl. XLI; Hinks 1933, no. 55b, fig. 160.

NOTE 25

Newton 1862, 286, pl. XL. In fact we detected part of two rather fragmented medallions in the eastern part of room B.

NOTE 26

Newton 1862, 285-286; Hinks 1933, nos. 51c-d, fig. 149.

of the rock by being partly cut into it. The blocks were apparently laid with mortar from the second row upwards. Regular blocks with a height of 58 cm could be ascertained in the western part of the wall. These are very precisely laid, without the use of mortar. Two parallel oblique walls, running south from the ashlar wall at exactly this point, may indicate a kind of dividing line of the insula, and this may explain why Newton expected the eastern outer wall to be found here. About 11 m east of this point the construction of the ashlar wall changes, with smaller irregular blocks being used in its lower, and large and well-dressed ashlars in its upper courses. The bottom row of andesite blocks also terminated at exactly this point, perhaps marking the original corner of the insula. The ashlar wall seems to have been prolonged eastwards during the construction of the building, partly with reused, beautifully dressed ashlars. The ceramic evidence suggests that the earlier foundation walls under the mosaic floor of room B date to the early Hellenistic period, as also does the lowest row of ashlars of the northern outer wall. Furthermore the ashlar wall faced onto the ancient street that passed south of the terrace wall of the Maussolleion, also indicating that the most ancient part of this building might reflect the 4th century town plan of Maussollos.

As to the date, Newton thought that nothing was earlier than the Antonine period and nothing later than the Severan.²⁷ This dating appears to be much too early. The comparative material cited by Hinks²⁸ indicates a date for the mosaics to the 4th or 5th century A.D. At the present stage of investigation, it appears, however, that the latest phase of the building belongs to the mid 5th or second half of the 5th century A.D.²⁹ No doubt future work on the excavated material will yield further information as regards different building phases, but it seems that the villa had at least four different levels during its latest period.³⁰

We have so far been unable to ascertain at what time or why the late Roman

building was abandoned. There are no traces of fire, but everywhere in the apsidal room fallen roof-tiles and bricks mixed with stucco could be observed; some blocks of bricks had in fact penetrated the mosaics in their fall.³¹ Since only a few utensils were found during the excavation, it seems that the building had already been abandoned before it collapsed.

The late Roman building and its architectural type

The building in Halikarnassos resembles most closely the late antique palaces or villas which have also been called houses,³² e.g. the late Roman house above the theatre in Ephesos³³ and the so-called palace of the bishop or governor in Aphrodisias.³⁴ These large and complex buildings were

NOTE 27
Newton 1862, 310.

NOTE 28
Hinks 1933, 125-143.

NOTE 29
Hinks 1933. Cf. mosaics with representations of animals in Newton's room A, Hinks 1933, 126-127, nos. 50a-d, fig. 142-144, and similar friezes in Didyma, Naumann 1980, pl. 78-79 (late 5th century AD). As regards the choice of motifs the mosaics from Sarrin (Osrhoene) are very similar, Balty 1990.

NOTE 30
The four levels are: rooms A, B, C, E and F: 10.40 m. a.s.l., rooms D, G and passages A and B: 9.80 m. a.s.l., room H: 9.30 m. a.s.l., and room O: 8.80 m. a.s.l.

NOTE 31
An earthquake may have been the cause, but Halikarnassos does not seem to have been exposed to earthquakes very often. Indeed, according to Tac. *Ann.* 4.55, one of the reasons why Halikarnassos was considered a safe place for the dedication of a temple to Tiberius was that no earthquake had occurred in the town for about 1200 years. For other reasons, however, the honour in this case fell to Smyrna.

NOTE 32
The designations of this type of building are rather confused, but for the present we should probably maintain the designation "house" for the building in Halikarnassos, Ellis 1985, 15, 19, 23. Rossiter 1989 applies the villa designation on the building in Apollonia. For discussions on "palatial" architecture, Downey 1993.

NOTE 33
Keil 1930, Beibl. 31-34; Keil 1932, Beibl. 7-12; Veters 1981, 142.

NOTE 34
Campbell 1991, 14-15 with references. For a similar building in Apollonia, Ellis 1985 with references.

characterized by many specialized rooms intended for certain formal functions, some of which had previously belonged to the public sector.³⁵ This applies for example to the audience room, normally a large apsidal room with a direct exit to the street through an anteroom.³⁶ The apsidal room F may perhaps be identified with such an audience room since the inscription seems to address the visitor. Another possibility is Room C, which may have had a direct exit through room E. Room E contained circular medallions with personifications of the cities of Halikarnassos, Alexandria and Berytus,³⁷ and such representations were indeed suitable for a vestibule. Some of these apsidal rooms were used as dining rooms, the semicircular couch, *stibadium*, being placed in the apse.³⁸ A door on the south side may indicate, however, that room F was probably never used as a *triclinium*, since this feature is normally not found in the apsidal dining rooms, but is on the contrary usual in

the audience rooms.³⁹ The audience rooms of the 'villas' in Ephesos and in Aphrodisias were both characterized by exceptionally beautiful floors;⁴⁰ the room in Ephesos had a fine suspended geometric mosaic bordered by ivy-leaves, whereas the floor of the room in Aphrodisias was laid with *opus sectile*, the motifs being superimposed circles in several colours.

It seems strange that no peristyle has been found in the late Roman building, since it constitutes a central feature in the other houses of similar character, size and date. It may, of course, be situated outside the excavated area. But another possibility is that it was roofed over and filled in with mosaic floors at a slightly later date. That this is the case is suggested by Room D, surrounded by Passage A, B, and G. The peristyle character of room D is shown by a number of factors. Firstly, it contains, on its northern side, an oblong frieze comparable to that of Passage B.⁴¹ Not only are the compositions of these mosaics similar, but some of the motifs used in them are identical. Moreover, the east-west oriented wall between D and N suggests that the mosaic floor of D was a later solution, and that by then only N remained an open courtyard. Contrary to the other walls of the building, this wall is founded directly in earth and its masonry is of rather poor quality. And finally the existence of a well in Room D may further indicate that this area of the building had originally been an open courtyard.

Only in very rare cases has it been possible to identify the owners of these large buildings; in most cases it can only be said with certainty that they must have belonged to the provincial aristocracy.⁴² As is the case of the late Roman building in Halikarnassos, the name of the dedicator of the decoration, especially the mosaic floors, is often known to us, but unfortunately supplementary information from other sources is rare. The choice of motifs in the mosaics and the inscriptions of Halikarnassos suggest that Charidemos belonged to the pagan provincial aristocracy.⁴³ The iconography of the mosaics is wholly pagan in character:

NOTE 35

Ellis 1988; Ellis 1991.

NOTE 36

Ellis 1988, 569; Ellis 1991, 120.

NOTE 37

Newton 1862, 288-290; Hinks 1933, 133, no. 53, fig. 153.

NOTE 38

Duval 1984, 457-464; Ellis 1988, 571.

NOTE 39

Ellis 1991, 120.

NOTE 40

The proportions of the audience halls of Ephesos and Aphrodisias are almost identical with room F in width, 9.8 m. and 9 m., but both are longer, 22.2 m. and 18.5 m. respectively.

NOTE 41

The frieze in room D is 15.54 m. long, and 4.57 m. wide. Passage B is 4.43 m. wide. The length is given to 19.51, since it includes the width of passage A (3.05 m.) and a wall (c. 0.60 m.).

NOTE 42

Also *illustres* were still residing in the provinces during the 5th and 6th centuries, Jones 1964, 554; Ellis 1985, 23.

NOTE 43

The Proiecta casket of the Esquiline treasure is an excellent example of Christian owners favouring secular and pagan motifs, Shelton 1981, 31-35.

Room A:
Hunting scenes with lions, dogs, wild goat and bull.

Room B:
Atalanta and Meleager, Dido and Aeneas, the four Seasons, birds, animals, flowers and ivy-leaves.

Room C:
Venus or Amphitrite in shell carried by two tritons, ivy-leaves.

Room D:
Phobos-heads, satyr pursuing a nymph or a maenad, Nereid seated on ichthyo-centaur, Dionysos with panther, Pan's pipe, birds, flowers, fish, cocks, head with diadem and ivy wreaths, four heads, scene in a vineyard with Pan, Eros, panther, lion, dog and birds, dolphins, Europa standing by the bull, reclining water nymph, dog and hare.

Room E:
Medallions with personifications of Halikarnassos, Berytus and Alexandria.

Room F:
The four Seasons, hunting scenes including panther, dogs, wild goat, stags and deers, inscriptions, amphora, flowers, ivy-leaves, pomegranates.

Room G: Bird.

Room H: Flowers and ivy-leaves.

Room O:
Fish, dolphins, acanthus scroll with flowers and birds, nereid riding on ichthyo-centaur.

Passage A:
Flowers, ivy-leaves, pomegranates, bird, dolphin, laurel wreath with inscription

Passage B:
Part of thyrsos, inscription, lower part of figure, lower half of goat-legged figure (Pan?), birds, heads, fishes, trees, flowers, cock, fruit, grapes.

Although this strong pagan predominance in the iconographic repertoire may seem surprising some 125 years after Constantine the Great, it does seem to conform with the general situation in the south-western part of Asia Minor during the 5th and 6th centuries. In fact it may be confirmed by an almost contemporary source relating to the situation in Caria, namely the manuscript of St. John of Ephesos.⁴⁴ During his work in Caria around the mid 6th century John of Ephesos recorded that there was still an unusually widespread pagan activity. Other late Roman sources, not least the Christian critics, emphasize the luxurious appointments, the lavish decorations, of various contemporary houses and villas. Some of these critics were naturally prone to overstatement, since their purpose in adducing these luxurious residences was precisely to use them as *exempla* of immoral conduct.

A pagan description of an earlier date, by Ammianus Marcellinus (28.4.12), may thus give a more objective impression of how to interpret decoration and furnishings of a late Roman private house.⁴⁵ Ammianus tells us that the clients and parasites who thronged such a wealthy house were so impressed by its architectural embellishment, its rows of soaring columns, its lofty facade, and the polychrome decoration of its walls, that they would flatter the aristocratic owner by comparing him to famous heroes of the past, or even to the gods. The late Roman aristocrat must therefore have attached great importance to the embellishment of his house, especially of its audience rooms, as a way of establishing his self-consequence and enhancing his prestige: the mosaics and other elements of decoration were a visible sign of his status.⁴⁶

The attribution of heroic qualities to the aristocratic owner corresponds to the growth in representations of heroes and mythological episodes during the late Roman period.⁴⁷ Room B of the building in Halikarnassos thus had representations of hunting scenes with Meleager and Atalanta in a compartment to the west (Figs. 16-18),⁴⁸ Aeneas and Dido to the east, all

NOTE 44
Bowersock 1990, 1-3;
Cameron 1993, 70.

NOTE 45
Ellis 1991, 118.

NOTE 46
Cf. Wallace-Hadrill 1988
and 1990 for discussion of
houses as status symbol of
the owner during an earlier
period.

NOTE 47
Brilliant 1979; Raeck
1992.

NOTE 48
The photos of these mosaics
were taken during Newton's
excavations, and are now
divided between the Greek
and Roman Department,
British Museum, and the
British Library. They will
all be published in the
forthcoming publication of
the late Roman building.



Fig. 16. *Atalanta* (Photo: B. Spackmann, Greek and Roman Department, British Museum).

NOTE 49

Boardman 1984, nos. 22-26; 34-39; 44-59. Among the Roman specimens only no. 47 stems from Xanthos. See also, Balty 1990, 54-57, 76; Raeck 1992, 71-98.

NOTE 50

Canciani 1981, nos. 157-161; Balty 1990, 55-56.

NOTE 51

Atalanta and Meleager are not placed in two different compartments, as stated by Raeck 1992, 82; cf. Newton 1862, 283-284, and *infra* figs. 16-18.

NOTE 52

Raeck 1992, 71-98. Cf. also Ellis 1991, 118, 125-127 and Balty 1984, 458-459.

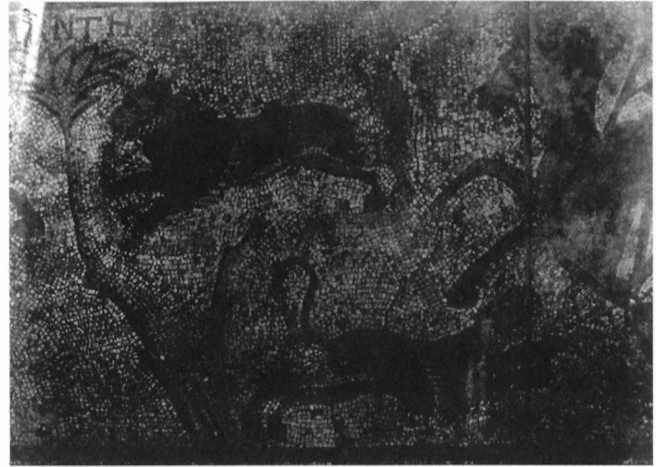


Fig. 17. The central part of the frieze (Photo: B. Spackmann, British Library).



Fig. 18. *Meleager* (Photo: B. Spackmann, Greek and Roman Department, British Museum).

identified by inscriptions. Both motifs are exceptional in Asia Minor,⁴⁹ but whereas Meleager and Atalanta appear several times in the late Roman mosaics of Syria, the representations of Aeneas and Dido are comparatively rare.⁵⁰ From the photos of the mosaics *in situ* it appears that Atalanta and Meleager are riding against each other.⁵¹ In contrast to the original version of the myth, they are not chasing a wild boar, but two felines. To the right of the tree, a lion is shown attacking Atalanta on horseback; she is holding a bow in her hands. Further to the right Meleager is thrusting his spear at a panther situated below the front legs of his horse. Accord-

ing to the recent study by W. Raeck,⁵² this feature is characteristic of the use of classical myths during Late Antiquity. The original mythological event and its significance were subordinated to the *exemplum* by which the owner, by means of a representation of a famous mythological act, raised the much favoured hunting sport of the aristocracy to a mythological sphere, and thus indirectly emphasized his *virtus*.

As to the interpretation of the excavated structure, the written sources are of little use. We know that Halikarnassos was plundered by Verres and later by pirates. From a remark by Cicero it appears that the town at that time had fallen into decay,

but was being restored by his (Cicero's) brother, Quintus.⁵³ Although Vitruvius gives a more detailed account of the town, it remains uncertain whether he actually visited Halikarnassos himself.⁵⁴ Halikarnassos was among the towns which applied for a permission to dedicate a temple to Tiberius in 26 A.D.⁵⁵ The sources to the history of the town under Roman rule are indeed extremely sparse, but the town was never forgotten as the site of one of the seven wonders of the world. During the reign of Justinian Hierokles mentioned it as the third town in Caria after Miletus and Heraclea,⁵⁶ but otherwise we only know that the bishop of the town ranked as no. 21 below Stauropolis (Aphrodisias).⁵⁷

The remains of the newly excavated building reflect the history of Halikarnassos from the 4th century B.C. to the 5th century A.D. The earliest architectural remains probably derive from Mausollos'

re-foundation of Halikarnassos during the 4th century B.C., and are important as evidence for this part of the town having also been included in the orthogonal town plan. Although Halikarnassos was seemingly a remote place during the Imperial period and Late Antiquity, there were apparently still aristocratic patrons to commission, and resources to produce, luxurious buildings like the one in question during the 5th century A.D.⁵⁸ Since our knowledge of the domestic architecture of the town is otherwise limited to Newton's mid 19th century excavations and some unpublished reports,⁵⁹ the excavated structure is extremely important for our understanding of the domestic architecture of Halikarnassos during Late Antiquity.

* The English was revised by Peter Spring. The photographs, figs. 3-13, were made by Jacob Isager.

NOTE 53
Cic. *Verr.* II.1.19.49; Cic. *QFr.* 1.1.8.

NOTE 54
Vitr. 2.8.10-15; Jeppesen 1989.

NOTE 55
Tac. Ann. 4.55. cf. note 31.

NOTE 56
Stiernon 1990, col. 141; Honigmann 1939, 32, no. 687.10.

NOTE 57
Middle of the 7th century AD, Stiernon 1990, col. 143.

NOTE 58
The inscription of the *tabula ansata* seems to indicate that the building was raised from the ground, see Isager, below 211-221.

NOTE 59
Two further houses or villas from Halikarnassos are known: one was revealed during the construction of a house in the middle of the town in 1990. The mosaics were removed and transferred to the Bodrum Museum. Another villa, likewise containing mosaic floors, is situated near the coast of the Salmacis promontory.

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