

**EXCAVATING AND
INTERPRETING THE
GOVERNOR'S PALACE,
ACROPOLIS, JEBEL KAHLID**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Excavating & Interpreting the Governor's Palace, Acropolis, Jebel Kahlid	p. 6
Figures	p. 31
Appendix	p. 46
Notes	p. 47

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Ill. 1: Bedrock plinth and column base, Room 12	p.6
Ill. 2: Foundation blocks, north wall, Room 6	p. 11
Ill. 3: Flagstone paving, Room 9	p. 13
Ill. 4: Foundation blocks, north-east corner, Room 9	p. 14
Ill. 5: Central column base and collapsed drums, Room 12	p. 15
Ill. 6: Column bases, Room 12	p. 17
Ill. 7: Lime-mortar flooring, bathroom, Room 14	p. 19
Ill. 8: Cooking hearths, Room 21	p. 21
Ill. 9: Doric capital, Room 20	p. 24
Ill. 10: Sealings, Rooms 22 and 24	p. 25

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"Excavating and Interpreting the Governor's Palace, Acropolis, Jebel Kahlid"

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EXCAVATING AND INTERPRETING THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE, ACROPOLIS, JEBEL KAHLID*

Dale Trendall, whose generous bequest has funded this annual Academy lecture, devoted his long scholarly life to the study of South Italian pottery of the Hellenistic period, pottery of the fourth and third centuries BCE. He clearly discerned its distinctions from vase-painting and productions of mainland Greece, and carefully delineated its regional characteristics and differences – Paestan pottery, Campanian pottery, Lucanian pottery, Apulian pottery, Sicilian pottery as well as various sub-genres – Phylax vases, vase-painting illustrating Greek theatre, tragedy as well as farce, fish-plates, and so on. Throughout he was aware that these were productions of colonial Greeks, showing an inventiveness and an exuberance released from the strictures of metropolitan canons of taste, and a creativity that was in part the result of the stimulus of, and interaction with, their new colonial environment. In other words, his life-time's work was devoted to the study of colonial Greeks in the setting of the Western Mediterranean.

I thought it appropriate, therefore, to offer as the theme of this Trendall Lecture a study about colonial Greeks in the same Hellenistic period – in the late fourth and third centuries BCE – but this time in the Eastern Mediterranean.

My focus is a colonial military settlement of Macedonian Greeks on the west bank of the Euphrates in North Syria, established in the wake of Alexander the Great's conquests at a control point on the great river highway of the Euphrates, and I shall be dealing specifically with one building, the governor's palace on the Acropolis of that settlement. The particular theme I would like to explore about this building, as I take you through its different rooms, is the possible function of its various components.

The method of analysis I shall be invoking is by no means fool-proof and at best signals likelihood and varying degrees of probability. You look at the contents, the floor deposits, of a room, knowing that at best this may give you indications of room function at the time of abandonment or often rather post-abandonment depositional history. You consider room-size, any fittings and fixtures it may have, its decorative scheme and its relationship to other rooms. You ask what type of building you are dealing with and the known functions of such a building type. You bear in mind the known social activities and habits of the builders and occupiers. And you look for clues from the functions of similar areas in parallel buildings elsewhere. In other words, you amass a whole lot of clues which together suggest possibilities, often rather than probabilities.

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 (figs. 1 and 2). This outcrop was



Illustration 1: Bedrock plinth and column base, Room 12

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 and 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 0.44m high above the sub floor of the room which throughout Room 12 is levelled bedrock (Ill. 1). 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.

The building was planned around a square central courtyard, "Room 26" (measurements from central point of column bases are N.17100mm, S.17100mm, E.17800mm, W.17840mm; measurements from the corners of "Room 26" are N.25.3m, S.25.1m, E.26.2m, W.26.0m). 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 lining with any impermeable mortar; it has a roughly circular mouth, one metre wide and the cistern at its currently

measurable widest is 5.580m; and its depth is undetermined but certainly well over the three metres at which depth the debris 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 waterspouts overhead may have debouched. A circular stand was found carved into the bedrock (c.5cm deep, 37~38cm in diameter) by the northern stylobate in the courtyard: it may have served to house a garden pot. There is a drain 4.9m in length, 14cm 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 stylobate 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: 0.860m x 0.680m and 0.210-0.260m deep, but there is considerable variation) with some rustication visible on the courtyard side below the courtyard floor level (fig. 4). 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. 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 0.970m from the paving level and being up to 0.820m wide. 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, it seems clear that a formal garden was installed round the inside perimeter of much of the courtyard, easily watered from the roof-water collection (soil-samples have been taken but are yet to be analysed: there is no other sign of any further courtyard planting).^[1] As such, it constitutes the earliest recorded courtyard garden in a Greek building and it helps to explain the sudden appearance of such plantings in the courtyards of South Italian houses, such as at Pompeii, in the following, second, century BCE.

By the time when the Jebel Khalid palace was constructed in the course of the third century BCE Greeks and Macedonians had been occupying for half a century not only the Royal Palaces of the Achaemenids, the Persians, but also the local palaces of their satraps, the local governors. We know from literary testimony that both the royal palaces and the local palaces boasted "paradeisoi" i.e. associated gardens for pleasure and relaxation, and it would make sense if their Greek successors and replacements adopted in the third century what they found to be one of the agreeable and relaxing amenities enjoyed by their fourth-century Persian predecessors. From here the concept passed to the Greek builders of elaborate villas as exemplified in Greek South Italy of the second century BCE.

The colonnade is Doric in order, the bases of the columns being a relatively slender 35cm 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 – 1.130m – 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 (fig. 5), 11 examples of triglyphs and (undecorated) metopes (fig. 6: showing traces of both red and blue paint), one Doric capital (abacus 0.740m square; an omicron engraved on the abacus) with triple necking rings (fig. 7), many fragments of cornice moulding, 7 examples of lion-headed waterspouts (fig. 8), as well as geison blocks. At the corners half-triglyphs met (fig. 9) and an eight-petalled rosette was crisply carved between the corner sets of guttae (a sample of these came from the north-west corner (fig. 10): 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 25cm 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 are not the archaeological remains to establish that this may have been a double-level colonnade (fig. 11), though the evidence for an upper story makes this highly likely.

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. 12]) along with the wooden roof-beams, with dropped and broken tiles and fallen nails left behind. Two decayed lengths of beams, 2m and 2.065m in length, were

however recovered lying side by side in Room 19 and one (even more decayed) in Room 17 (4m long) – no doubt left ready for a collection which was never made (the final results of dendrochronological analysis are pending: the timber is all of *Pinus* sp.).^[2]

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 1495mm (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 likelihood have been carried out when the wall was to be reused after being damaged in the demolition process: see on Room 2, discussed 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. 35cm) 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 stairway 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 staircase have here disappeared, but there is, fortunately, firm evidence elsewhere of an upper storey in the building (see discussion of Rooms 12 and 18 below). 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 certainly 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".

The major feature of Room 3 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 0.630m, at top 0.605m, height 0.670m) (fig. 13).³¹ There was much charcoal and ashy black soil in the vicinity of the altar as well as an unusually heavy deposit of bone. Some 3,000 highly fragmented, small, burnt, bone fragments were recovered that could not be identified, but butchered (and usually juvenile) diagnostic fragments of ovi-caprids (51 examples), equids (5), galliform birds (11), pig (12) and bos (13) were also recovered. Are we to imagine here official ceremonies of blood-sacrifice in the Greek cultic manner honoring the Seleucid dynastic gods and/or the tutelary gods of the household? Unlike all other areas of the building only a couple 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 28cms and then it was replaced by a horizontal band of black (plaster survives in places to a height of 36cms). 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 which certainly had access 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, 2 amphora stands, 2 pithoi, and a large number of



Illustration 2: Foundation blocks, north wall, Room 6

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, 0.46m 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 do not fit in this area and are much more likely to have fallen in from an upper storey and have elaborately decorated an upstairs doorway (fig.14). 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, 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 (Ill. 2). 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 0.75m 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 slab (190mm x 110mm x 10mm) in mottled brown, blue, buff and green, carefully 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 or wall decoration from a lavishly decorated upstairs room. 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 (Ill. 3) (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

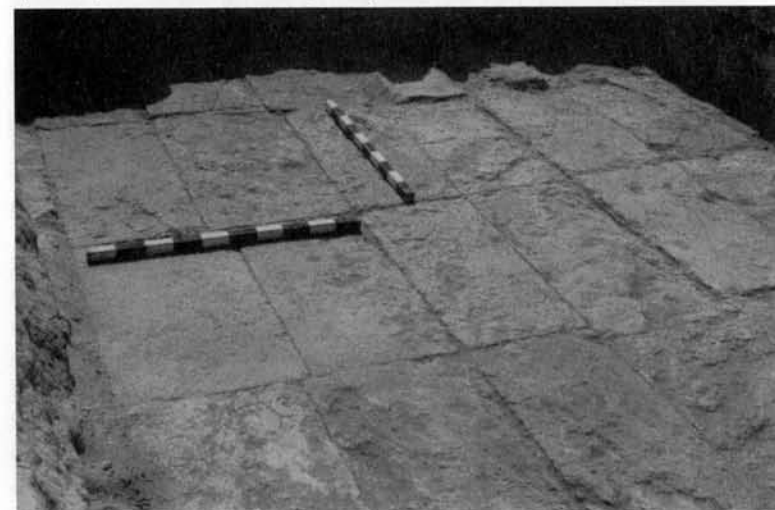


Illustration 3: Flagstone paving, Room 9

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 0.650m x 0.550m, 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 3.55m were built up from bedrock to reach floor level, and there are ashlar blocks beneath the floor to support the flagstones (Ill. 4). 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.170cm in diameter, 110cm 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).



Illustration 4: Foundation blocks, north-east corner, Room 9

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 (in this case the doorway is 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 flagstone 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.



Illustration 5: Central column base and collapsed drums, Room 12

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 (1040mm in length x 995mm in width x 340mm in height) covered with layers of baked dark grey mud. This coating was also found on 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 (1100mm wide) with a fine threshold block, 740mm x 400mm, gave access into room 1 on

the south side. This area had been the subject of robber digging and coins JK inv.90.127 (Constantius II), JK inv.90.192 (Ummayyad), and JK inv.90.119 (Ummayyad) 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 (7.390m x 11.340m) 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).^[4] The original flooring having been robbed away (consisting perhaps of ashlar blocks) only the subfloor remains, clearly below the threshold level and composed of crumbed limestone over levelled bedrock.

Room 12 was entered from Room 1 down a step through a generous doorway (1.660m x 0.835m) fitted for a bi-valve door with elaborate keying holes and flanked by two adorsed columns (both 0.670m 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 adjacent (base 0.810m 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, jugged 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 0.75m of wind-blown fill, indicating that this room stood open to the air for very many years before this column eventually collapsed (Ill. 5). 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 (fig. 15): evidently some vandalism had occurred at or shortly after abandonment.

The matching base of a second column was found lying nearby, undamaged,



Illustration 6: Column bases, Room 12

close to but not on the floor (Ill.6), 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 and marked with a mason's mark (alpha, beta, gamma, delta, epsilon, zeta, eta) to indicate their order in the tapered column (ranging from 0.770m down to 0.660m in diameter, each c. 0.500m 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 pillaging of the building. One column capital only was found, with square abacus (0.827m, diameter of 0.669m at base of capital), and simple raised echinus with one necking ring only, also fully plastered in white.^[5] The second column base and drums are clearly out of context: the only available explanation is that they have fallen in from an upper storey, and this in turn explains why the elaborate bedrock plinth was provided for the central column in Room 12 – to bear the load of the upper-storey room.

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.^[6] 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 1.5m before further wall and roof elements eventually collapsed on the accumulation).

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 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.

Considering that this lavishly decorated 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)?

Given the fact that a great deal of the plaster was located floating in the *débris* level throughout this room, some plaster may well have flaked off from the walls of the decoration in the upper story "oikos". The houses of the wealthy Hellenistic residents in Delos regularly had upper "oikoi" like this arrangement – the lower one usually in more sombre plastering and the upper one (perhaps reserved for family and more intimate entertainment of guests) more elaborate and decorative.^[7] Some of the vegetal and floral decoration could well have come from a frieze or friezes in the plaster decoration from the upper storey. It is worth noting that upper storey rooms would have enjoyed more light and been sunny in the wintertime whereas the ground-floor rooms would have been dark – but remained pleasantly cool and shady in the height of summer.

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



Illustration 7: Lime-mortar flooring, bathroom, Room 14

was recovered here.) Both rooms are fitted with neat rubble sub-dividing walls (plastered in adobe – full height preserved of 1265mm in Room 13 and 680mm in Room 14 – the partition in Room 14 has a short return towards the east (possibly 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 (Ill. 7). This is a washroom with the fireplaces serving no doubt to heat water and/or the room (there is no evidence for bath-tubs or underfloor heating).^[6] The water used in washing (possibly 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] This constitutes a very early example of a Greek communal multi-seated latrine. The latrine channel emptied into a large circular stone-cut drain which runs down at the northern end outside the building (doubtless to a sump, which is 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, 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 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, elsewhere only sub-floor packing remains. 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 tanour (circle of c.2.5m 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 V1.

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.0.670m), without base, in the centre: 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 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 (1.4m 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.4m 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. 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,



Illustration 8: Cooking hearths, Room 21

whilst highly probable, firm evidence for this is lacking: 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 - 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: 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 11, was constructed against the west wall in the south of the room, plastered in hard baked clay, and a large circular tanour (1.47m in diameter, average depth of 15cm) 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 (eg. 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 (8mm), a white lime deposit (3mm) and then 80mm of hard brown deposit and ash. Two wooden beams, in advanced stages of decomposition, were found lying parallel on the floor, measuring 2m and 2.065m 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 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, 1.32m wide and 0.78m 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 (Ill. 8), and

cut into the excellently preserved floor, 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 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 (13.7m x 9.4m)^[10] had an open-entry from Room 23, decorated with two massive columns on a stylobate consisting of ten squared blocks regular in size (1.14m x 1.14m x 0.30m deep) raised a little (by 15cm) above the floor level of Room 23: the columns stood separated by two blocks of the stylobate (2.30m apart). The order is Doric: two capitals were found (one in several fragments), with triple necking rings and deep flutings on the column (Ill. 9). Several other column fragments, however, show only strap flutings, which should indicate that the lower portions of these columns were strap-fluted. 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, an internal one of rougher lime and external one of fine white, evidently applied to the lower strap fluting. The stylobate blocks supporting the columns are set slightly down in relation to neighbouring blocks. Given the dimension of the columns at their base (1.10m in diameter) they must have soared to a grand height (approaching 8m).

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 ante-chamber 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 greeny blue (possibly the Macedonian composition of cobalt and copper) with a fine lower moulding in white, up to 48cm at its greatest height in the north east corner and diminishing to 23cm at its lowest point where it terminates, 2.3m 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 fireplaces 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 subfloor (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.

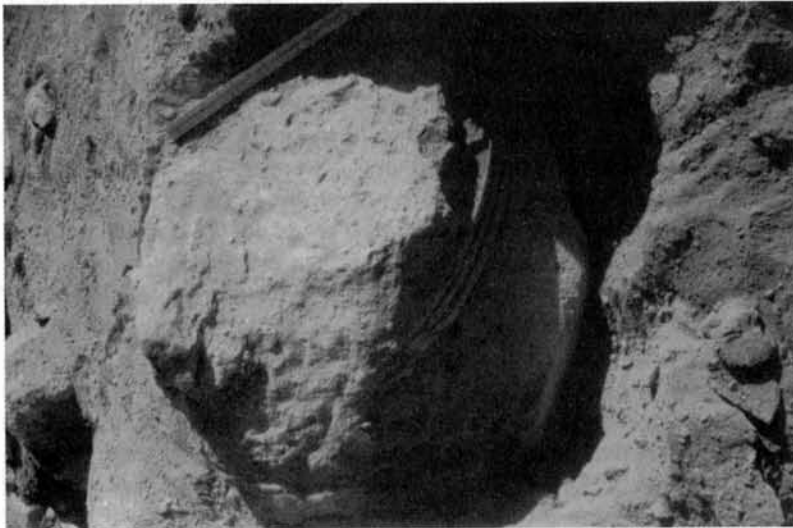


Illustration 9: Doric capital, Room 20



Illustration 10: Sealings, Rooms 22 and 24

Only a small amount of plaster was collected (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 21.650m long) it is unlikely to have been designed for use as 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 for an armoury and treasury (Ill. 10). At this level a coin of Seleucos II (JK inv.93.232) was recovered. (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 in which gaps were left for doorways.)¹¹¹

Generally speaking, the corridor-room, 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 reoccupation of the whole complex. Room 24 was entered by a doorway (later blocked) in its north east corner directly off the colonnade and protected by a low retaining wall to the west. This created 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 40cm 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 (possibly 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 V111), 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.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 eg. JK inv.93.171 (Antiochus III), JK inv.93.009 (Antiochus III – Demetrius 11), and JK inv.95.208 (a Roman Republican sextans of ?80s 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 (11.3m x 4.25m) 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 (Ill. 10). Or, were these rooms (22 and 24) the women's quarters – or residential suites for guests?

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* (there are no water features).

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 (possibly Rooms 7 to 9 served this purpose) – hence the particularly large cistern also. This leaves few rooms available for administration, archives, treasury, armoury etc. (perhaps Rooms 22 and 24), let alone any servants' quarters or residential area for family or guests. Given the archaeological evidence for an upper storey, 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 residence 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: the 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 *epistates* 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, and Room 20 with Rooms 19 and 21) is replicated in the citadel palace in the southern large pillared hall (9.48m x 6.8m) 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 (17.10m x 12.10m) by two ante-chambers, each entered via two columns *in antis* (Doric, 0.708m in diameter at ground level), the reception room on the south measuring 10.47m x 6.57m, that on the west 11.33m x 6.45m.^[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 camaraderie
- domestic: with a presumed upper storey for domestic, servant and guest quarters
- recreational: equipped both with a peristylar court and a sheltered, walled, back open courtyard as well as with panoramic views to enjoy
- imperial: raised on its eminence, rising to the height of a modern five-storey building, this palace must be read also in its landscape setting. The Jebel Khalid palace was not just a residence, it was not just an office block. With its unmistakable Greek architecture, visible for all to see from miles around, impregnable within its double defensive walls and towers, it was meant to impress. This Jebel Khalid palace is also an imperial assertion of Greek power and Greek authority and Greek governance over newly conquered territory: it is proclaiming the might and the permanence of the Hellenistic presence.

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, four of Seleucos II, one of Seleucos III, 12 of Antiochus III, one of Seleucos IV, four 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, four of Demetrius II, seven of Antiochus VIII, three of Alexander II Zebina, 13 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 (eg. lamps) certainly fits within this range as does that of the stamped amphora handles, with some handles dating to before mid-third century or thereabouts. 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 (eg. 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. A date in the course of the third century is therefore a reasonable deduction for the construction period. Given the very disturbed floor deposits – with paving stones robbed in most areas and sub-floor construction-period material consequently confused with abandonment deposit – attempts at greater precision would not be valid.

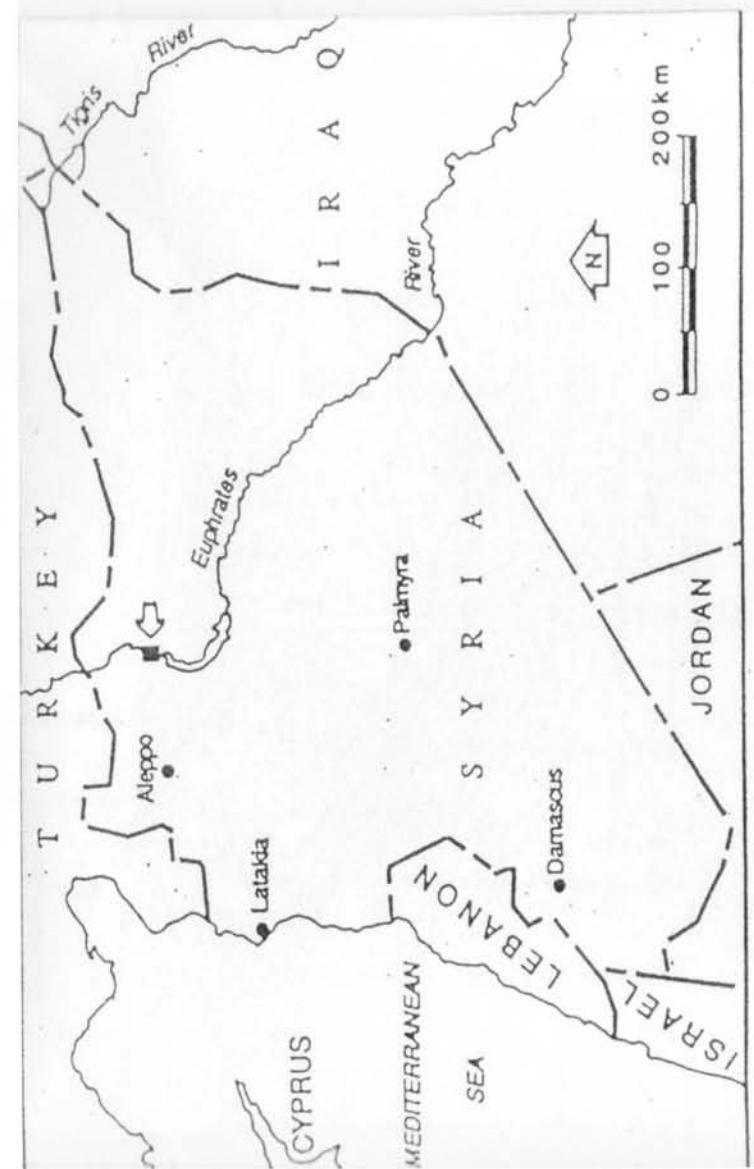
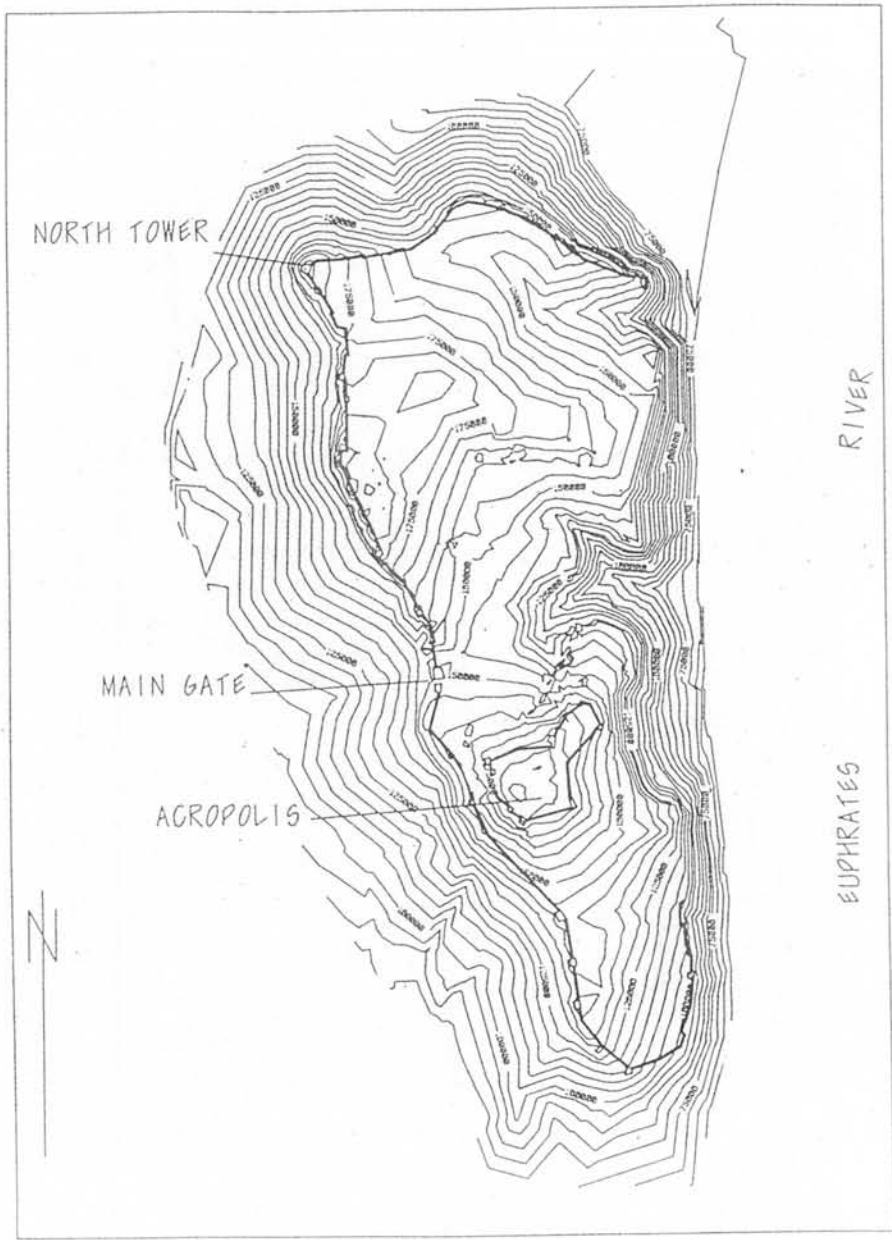
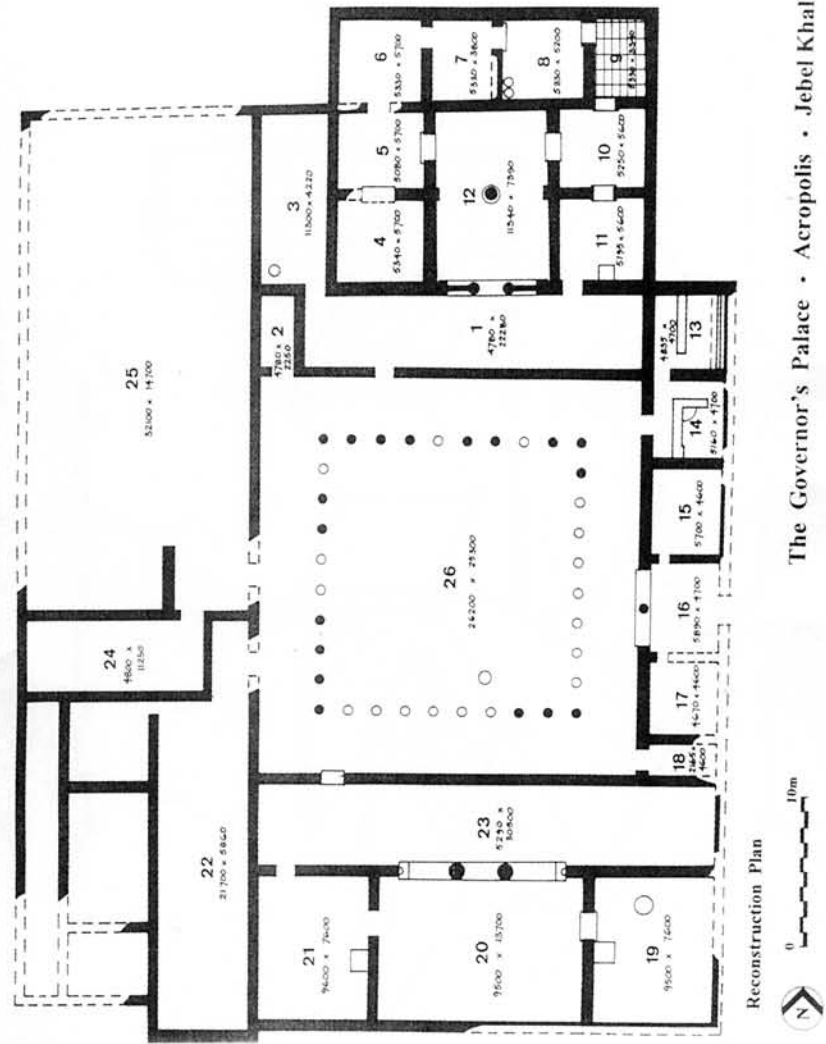


Figure 1. Sketch map showing location of Jebel Khalid on the Euphrates.

Figure One



Two: Jebel Khalid (c. 1:10 000).



The Governor's Palace • Acropolis • Jebel Khalid

Figure Three

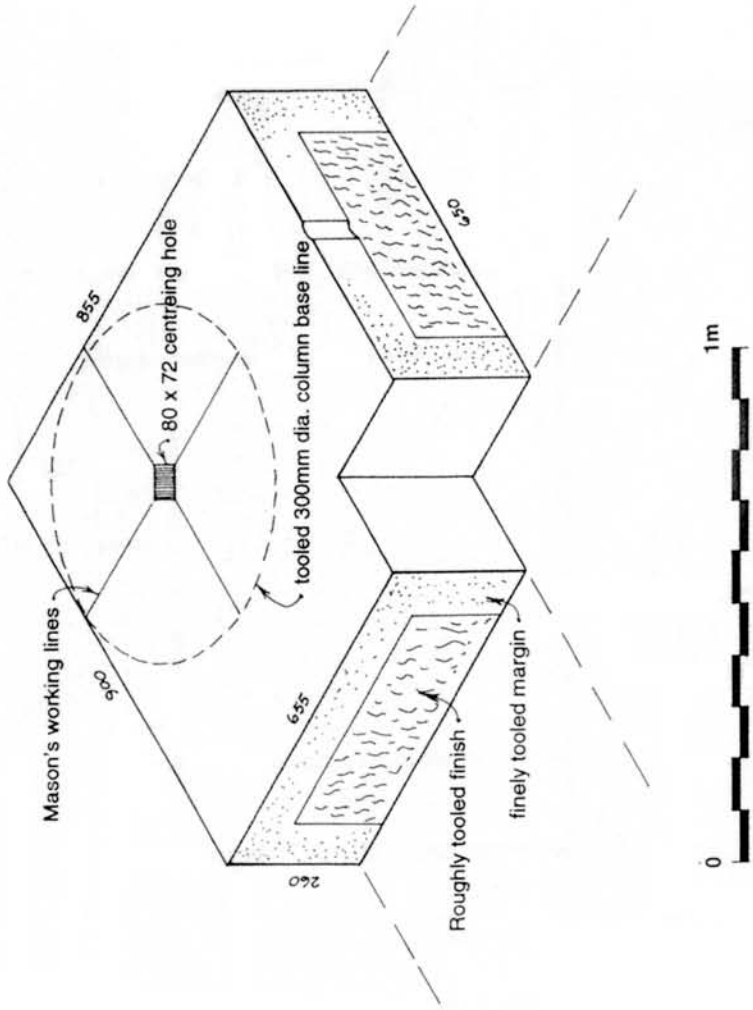


Figure Four: Stylobate (Peristyle)

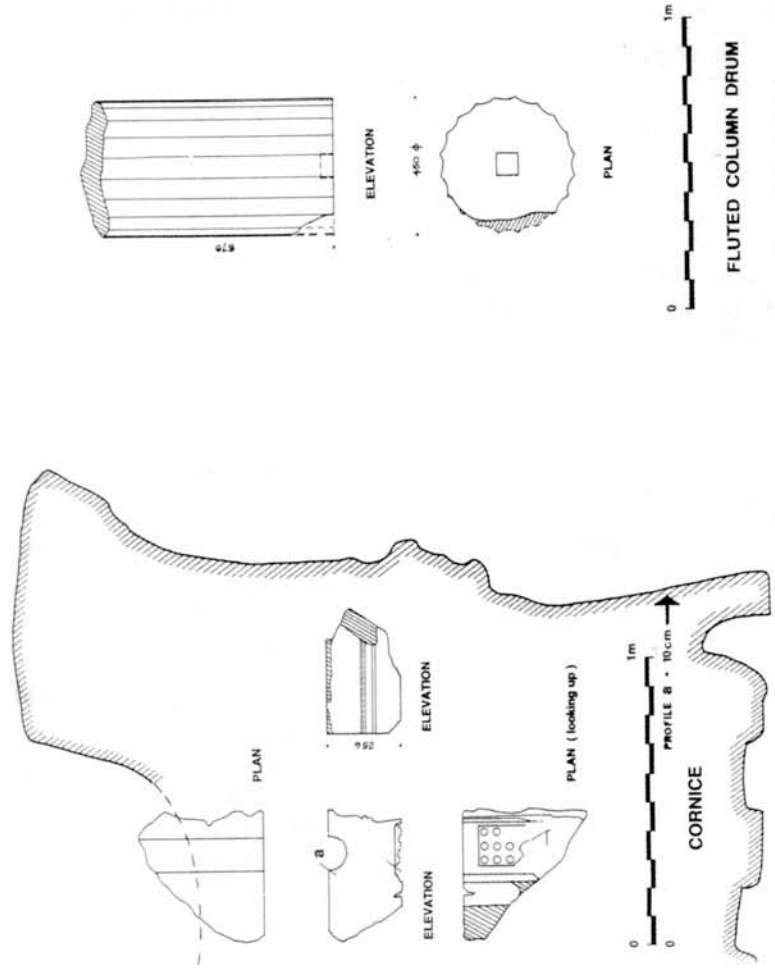
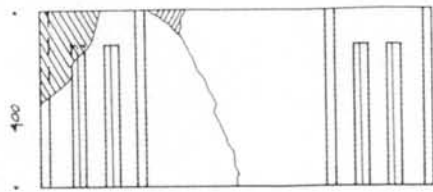
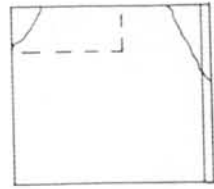


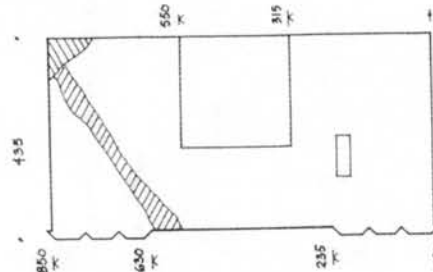
Figure Five



ELEVATION



ELEVATION



PLAN



TRIGLYPH

ISOMETRIC

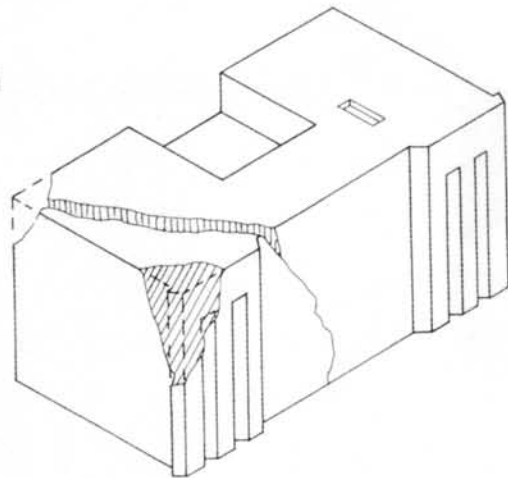
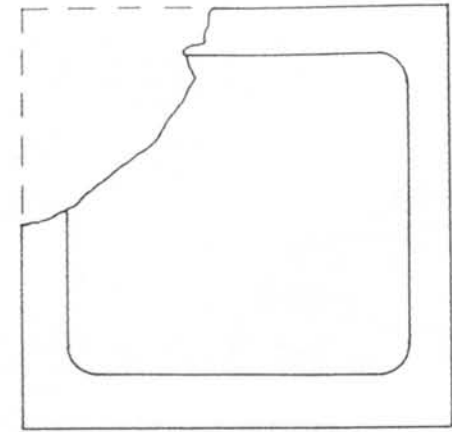
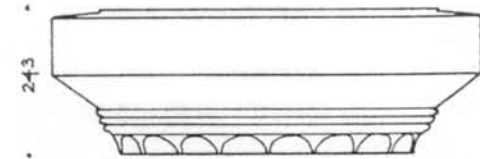


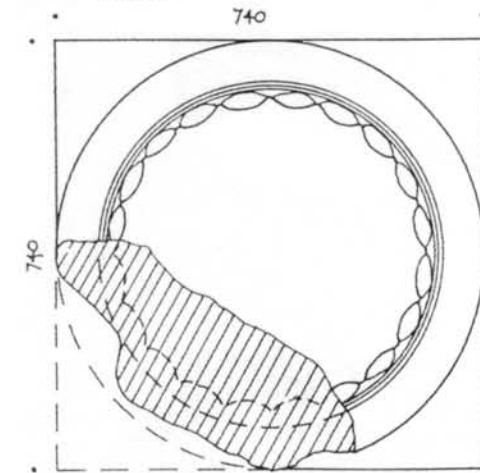
Figure Six



PLAN



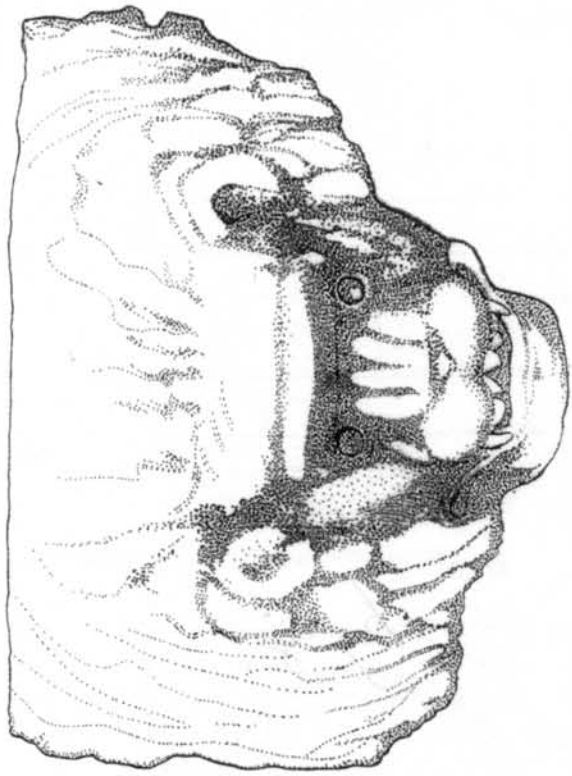
ELEVATION



PLAN (looking up)



Figure Seven: Doric Capital




96-494
AK JK T64  1.10.96

Figure Eight

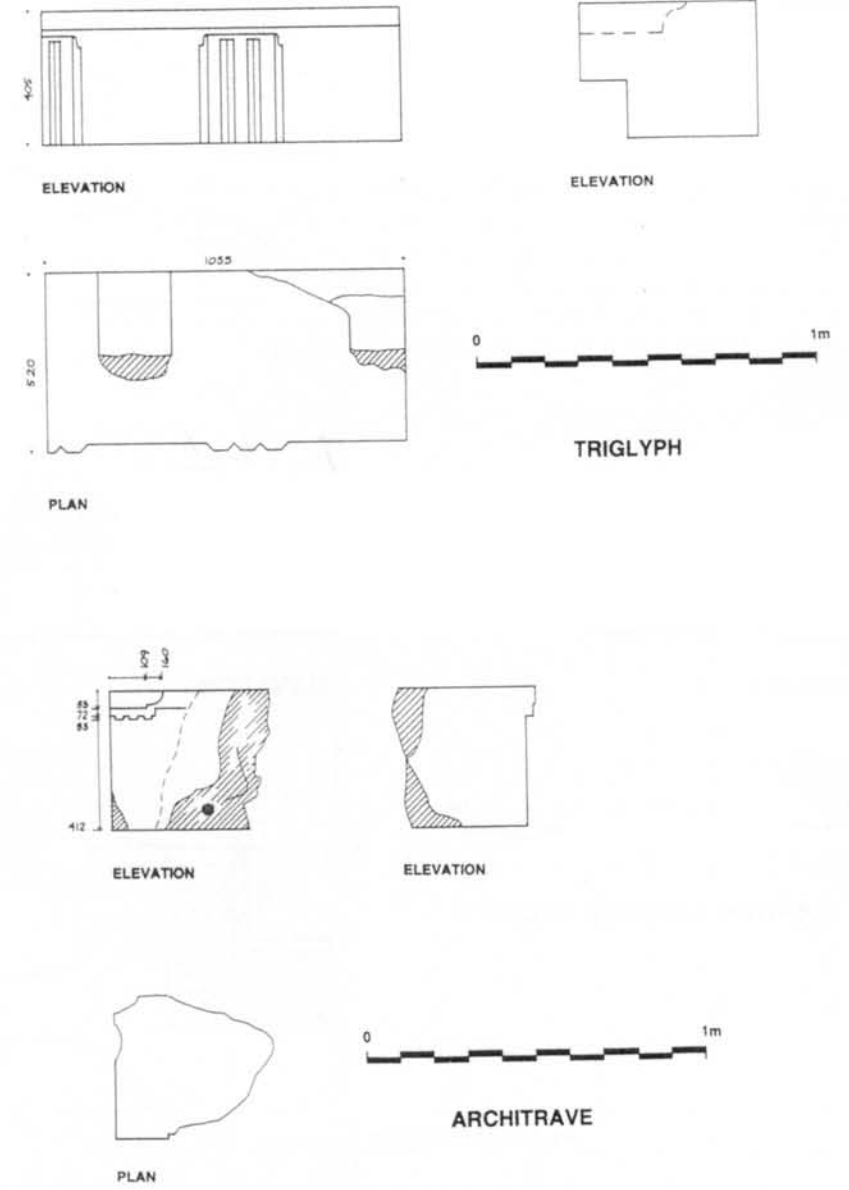


Figure Nine

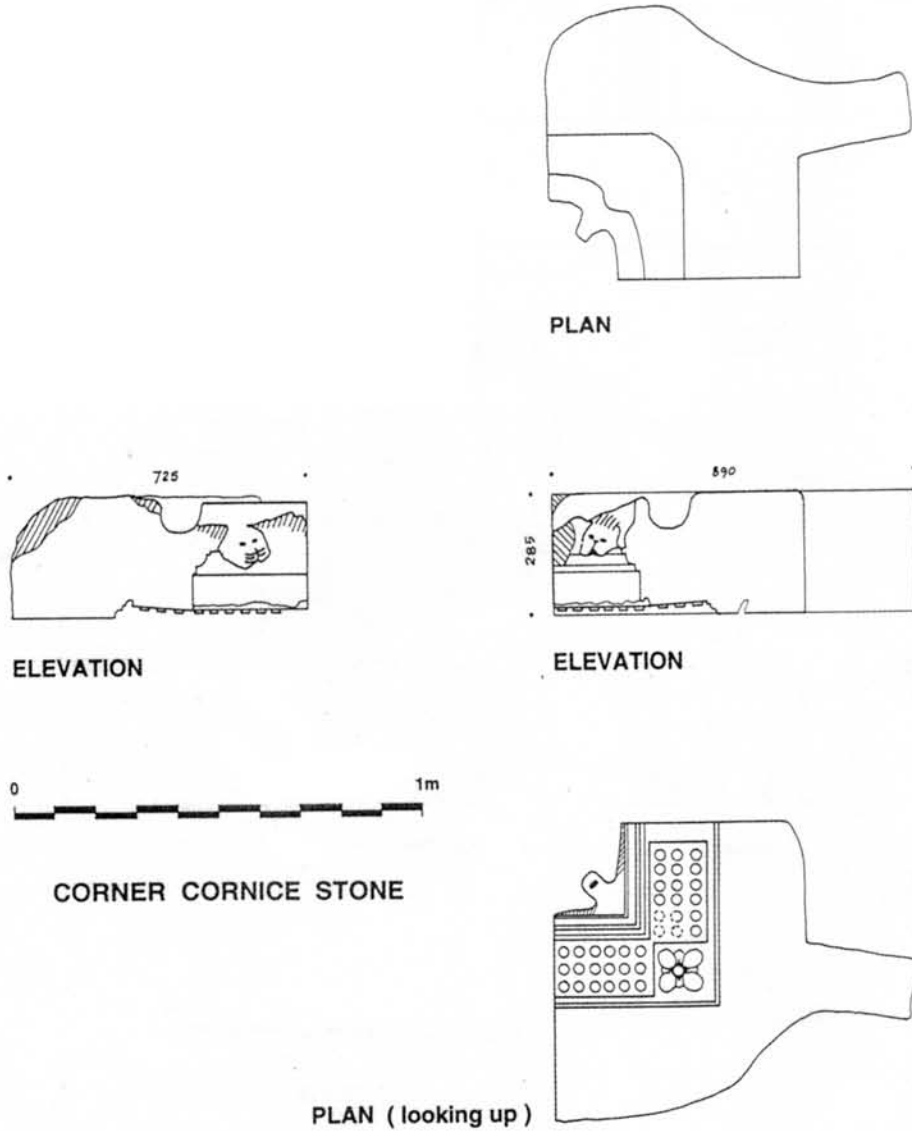


Figure Ten

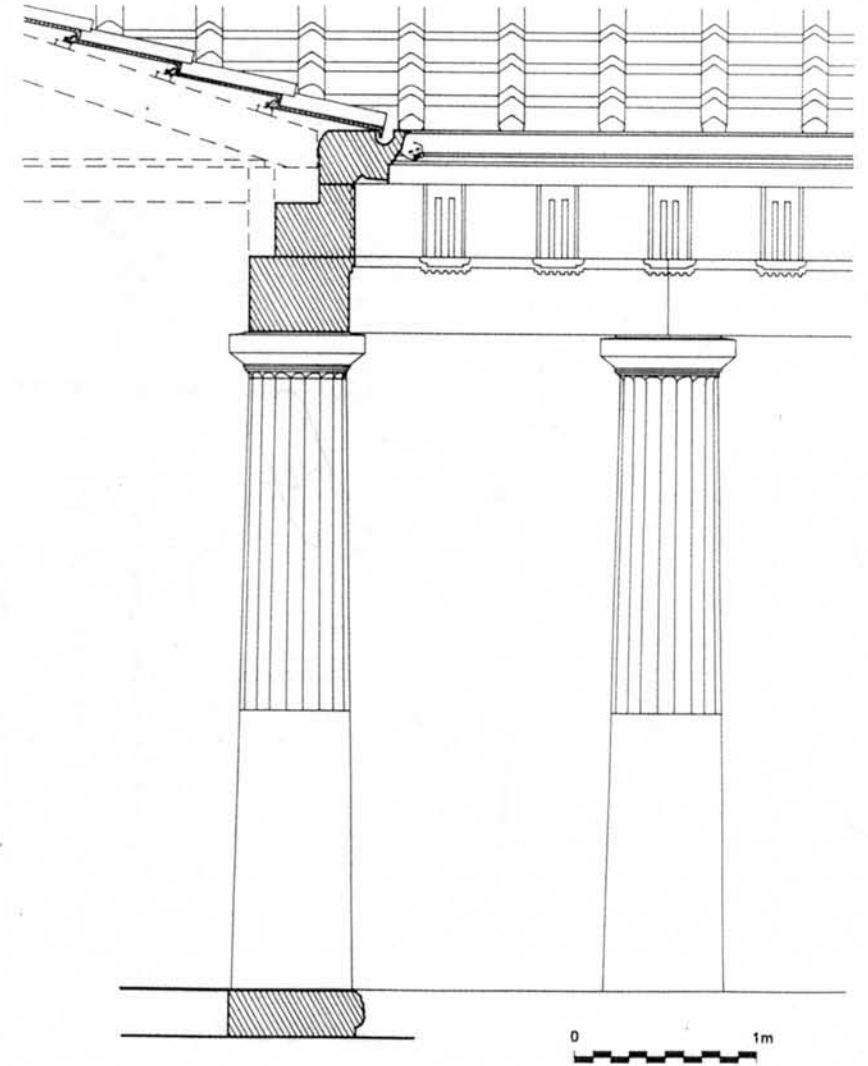


Figure Eleven: Reconstruction of Doric Colonnade

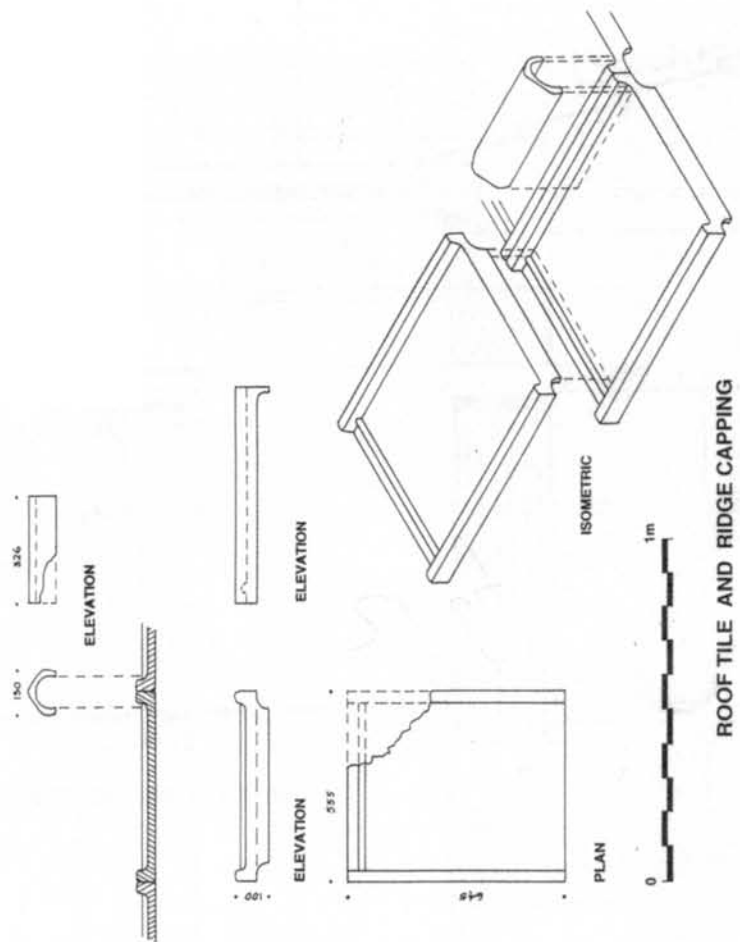
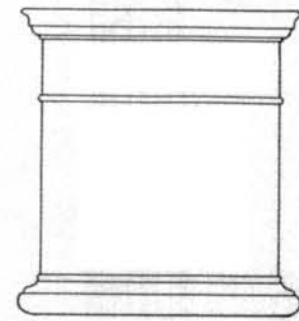


Figure Twelve

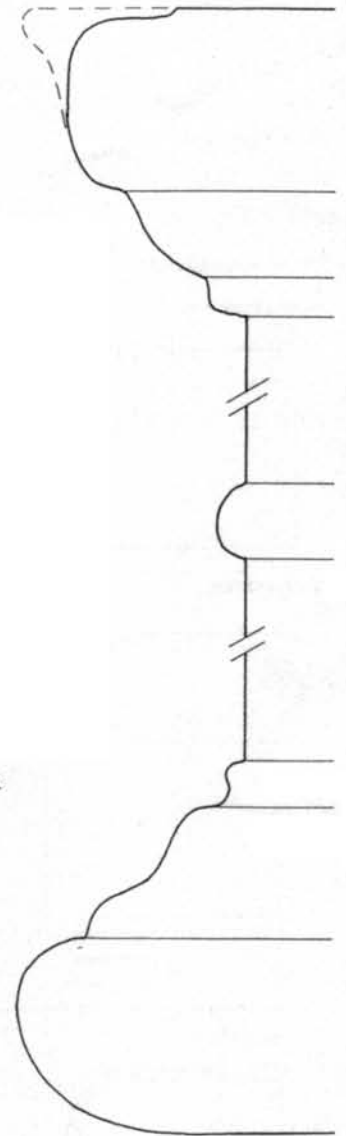


0 50cm

ELEVATION

ROOM 3 • DRUM ALTAR

The Governor's Palace
Acropolis • Jebel Khalid



PROFILE

0 10cm

Figure Thirteen

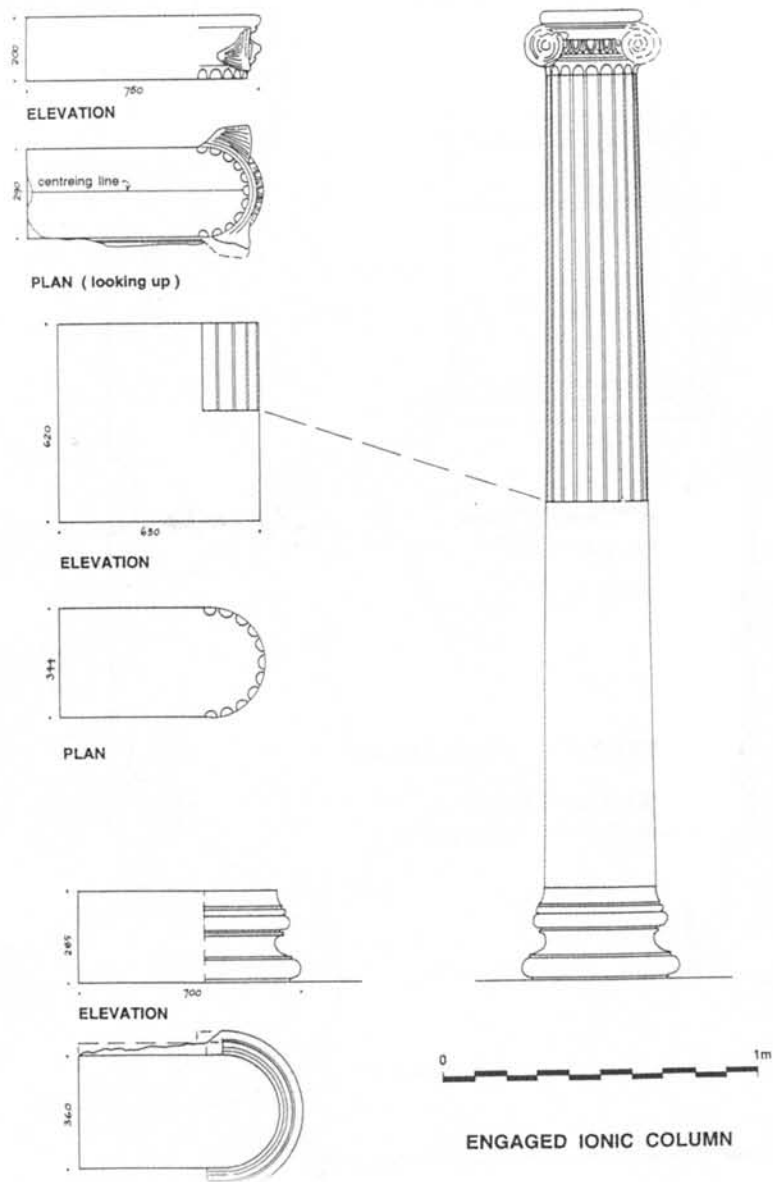


Figure Fourteen

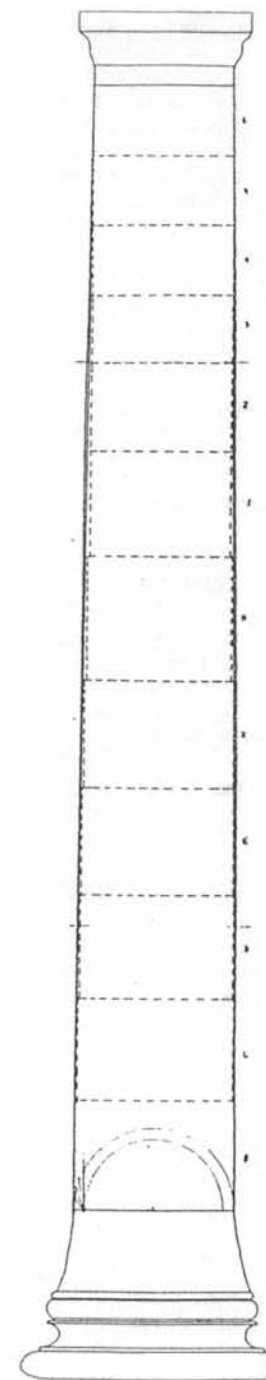


Figure Fifteen: Reconstruction of tapering column, Room 12

APPENDIX

Dates of Kings/Emperors referred to in the text

	BCE
Antiochus 1	281-261
Antiochus 11	261-246
Seleucos 11	246-225
Seleucos 111	225-223
Antiochus 111	223-187
Seleucos 1V	187-175
Antiochus 1V	175-164
Demetrius 1	162-150
Alexander Balas	150-145
Demetrius 11	145-140
Antiochus V1	145-142
Antiochus V11	138-129
Demetrius 11 [restored]	129-125
Alexander 11 Zebina	129-123
Antiochus V111	121-114
Antiochus 1X	114-112
Antiochus X11	c.88-84
	CE
Nerva	97
Constantius 11	337-61
Valentinian	364-78
Arcadius	395-408
Justinian 1	527-65
Maurice	582-602
Constans 11	641-68

NOTES

*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. 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 Department of Antiquities and Museums, Damascus, (especially to Dr Sultan Muhesen and Dr Adnan Bounni) my sincere thanks are due.

- 1) Wolfgang Sonne, *Hellenistische Herrschaftsgaerten*, in (ed.) W. Hoepfner and G. Brands, *Die Palaeste der Hellenistischen Koenige*, Mainz am Rhein, 1996, 136ff. for an analysis of the typology of Hellenistic gardens and 141f. on peristyle gardens, with full bibliographical references.
- 2) 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.
- 3) On cylindrical altars see especially P.M. Fraser, *Rhodian Funerary Monuments*, Oxford, 1977, 25-33 (with rich annotation) and Plates 58(a) – 91(h).
- 4) On Hellenistic dining couches, their various dimensions and arrangements, see (ed.) O. Murray, *Symptica. A symposium on the symposion*, Oxford, 1990, esp. Section 11 (symptotic space) and Section 111 (symptotic furniture), Inge Nielsen, *Royal Banquets: The development of royal banquets and banquetting halls from Alexander to the Tetrarchs*, in (eds.) I. Nielsen and H.S. Nielsen, *Meals in Social Context*, Aarhus, 1998, 102ff. and K.M.D. Dunbabin, *Ut Graeco More Biberetur: Greeks and Romans on the Dining Couch*, *ibid.*, 81ff.; S.I. Rotroff, *The Missing Krater and the Hellenistic Symposium: Drinking in the Age of Alexander the Great*, Christchurch, 1996.
- 5) It might seem improbable that a column base would have fallen from such a height undamaged: by good fortune it fell on accumulated wind-blown soil after the flooring of the lower room had been robbed away. An upper storey would have provided accommodation for the governor's family (and/or servants) and would have been expected in a building of this scale.
- 6) G.W. Clarke, *Greek Graffiti from North Syria*, *Meditarch* 5/6 (1992/3), 117ff.
- 7) R.C. Westgate, *Space and Decoration in Hellenistic Delos*, *Annual of the British School at Athens* 95(2000), 391ff.; M. Trümper, *Wohnen in Delos: Eine baugeschichtliche Untersuchung zum Wandel der Wohnkultur in hellenistischer Zeit*, Rahden, 1998.
- 8) On Greek bathing see R. Ginouvès, *Balaneutiké. Recherches sur le bain dans l'antiquité grecque*, Paris, 1962, *passim* and I. Nielsen, *Thermae et Balnea*, Aarhus, 2 vols., 1990, 1.6ff.
- 9) On the use of over-flow water, waste-water and drainage systems generally to flush out latrines in bathing complexes, see I. Nielsen, *op. cit.* in n.8, 163.
- 10) For the use of the tie-beam truss for spanning lengths much over 11m see J.J. Coulton, *Greek Architects at Work*, London, 1997, 157f. and *CAH* V11.1(2nd ed., 1984), 374 and n.120 with further references (F.E. Winter).
- 11) Compare the planned extensions to the north of the palace of Vergina/Aigai, never completed: I. Nielsen, *Hellenistic Palaces. Tradition and Renewal*, Aarhus, 1994, 82.
- 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.
- 13) S.B. Downey, Two buildings at Dura-Europos and the early history of the Iwan, *Mesopotamia* 20 (1985), 111-119 and especially *eadem*, The citadel palace at Dura-Europos, *Syria* 63 (1986), 27-37; I. Nielsen, *op.cit* in n.11, 44ff. and *passim*, and *eadem*, Oriental models for Hellenistic Palaces?, in Hoepfner and Brands, *op. cit.* in n.1, 209ff.
 - 14) The Pergamon complex has a residential building adjacent to the Palace, Nielsen, *op. cit.* in n.11, 105ff. (Palace 1V – residential – plus Palace V).
 - 15) *The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Second Season Preliminary Report*, New Haven, 1931, 12-15, 20-22, 53-57 and Pl.1V. 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, A. Allara, Les maisons de Doura-Europos. Questions de Typologie, *Syria* 63 (1986), 39ff. at 45ff.
 - 16) To put it comparatively, the audience halls at Dura measure 69 sq.m [Redoubt] and 65 sq.m [Citadel] whilst the two at Jebel Khalid measure 84 sq.m and 130 sq.m: see the table in Nielsen, *op. cit.* in n.11, 210. 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 E. Netzer, The Hasmonaean Palaces in Palestina, in Hoepfner and Brands, *op. cit.* in n.1, 203ff. at 207, D.W. Roller, *The Building Program of Herod the Great*, Berkeley and London, 1998, 171ff.
 - 17) *The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Fourth Season Preliminary Report*, New Haven, 1933, 21-27 and Pl.111, W. Hoepfner and E.-L. Schwander, *Haus und Stadt im klassischen Griechenland*, Munich, 1986, 220ff., P. Leriche, M. Gelin, M. Gharbi and J.-B. Yon. Le palais du stratège à Doura-Europos, in (eds.) P. Leriche and M. Gelin, *Doura-Europos. Etudes 1V: 1991-1993*, Beirut, 1997, 55-80.