

THE INTERNATIONAL AŞLAḤ PROJECT (IAP) 2010: PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE FIRST SEASON

Laurent Gorgerat and Robert Wenning

Introduction and Acknowledgments

The first field season of the International AşlaḤ Project (IAP) lasted from 18th of March to 8th of April 2010. The IAP was initiated and organized by Prof. Dr Stephan G. Schmid, Co-director of the French-German research project 'Early Petra', which is sponsored by the German Research Association (DFG), the Excellence Cluster TOPOI at the Humboldt University Berlin, and the Association for the Understanding of Ancient Cultures (AUAC). IAP 2010 was directed by Prof. Dr Robert Wenning on behalf of Muenster University. Laurent Gorgerat of the Antikenmuseum Basel was field director.

We would like to thank the Director General of the Department of Antiquities, Dr Fawwaz al-Khraysheh, for his support and for granting the working permit (Permit No. 2010/12). We would also like to thank IFPO 'Amman, especially its director Dr Jacques Seigne, and GPI 'Amman, especially its director Dr Jutta Haeser for accommodating the team during its stay in 'Amman. In Petra we were kindly supported by Dr Emad Hijazeen, Commissioner of the Petra Archaeological Park & Cultural Heritage and Tahani Salhi, Director of Cultural Resources.

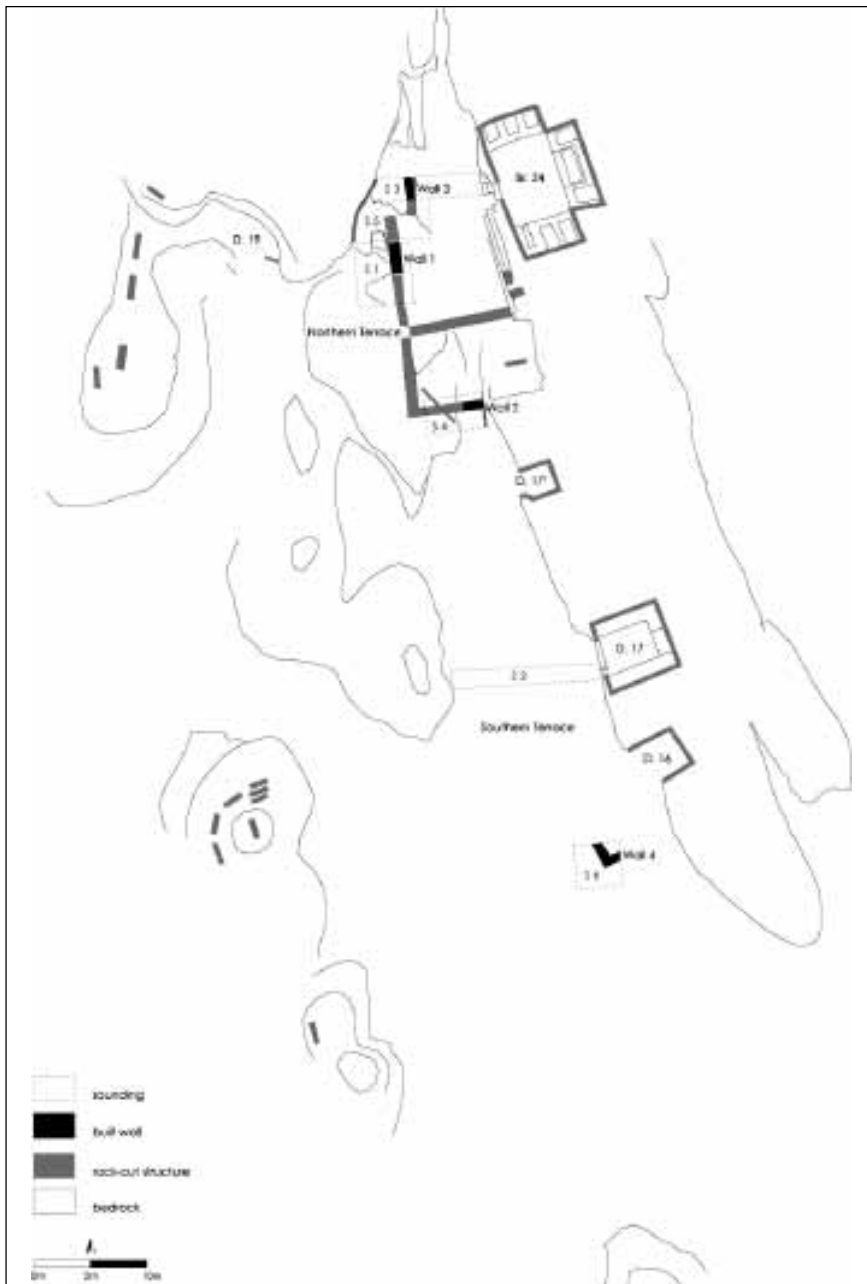
The team from Germany consisted of the following archaeologists and students: Karin Petrovsky, Marco Dehner, Thomas Kabs (all from Berlin), and Wiltrud Wenning (Muenster). Up to nine Bdool workmen were employed. The Department of Antiquities representative was Mohammad Abdel Aziz al-Marahleh, whose help and advice was most welcomed. During the team's sojourn at Nazzal's Camp, Ali Khalaf al-Bdool was our camp manager and Suleiman Mohammad al-Bdool and his wife Aziza were our cooks.

The Geographical Situation

The AşlaḤ-triclinium-complex is situated on a rocky plateau of the Bāb as-Siq area directly opposite of the entrance into the Siq lying high above the path along the Wādī Mūsā, which leads into the Siq (**Fig. 1**). A small, but long stretched rock oriented north-south formed the boundary of the complex to the east and a much higher rock closed the area in the north (**Fig. 2**). Between the two rocks a path leads to the large rocky area of ar-Ramla in the north. The southern part of the long stretched rock looks more or less semicircular in shape if seen from the west (Wenning 2004: 44-45), which could have been of some significance. We defined the area in front of the triclinium as the Southern Terrace, while the area in front of the tomb Br. 24 was called the Northern Terrace.

At the Southern Terrace, the triclinium of AşlaḤ (D. 17), two small lateral chambers (D. 16, 17') and a row of niches (D. 15) are cut into the rock, while the eastern face and the top of the rock remained without installations. The façade faces the large plateau in front of the rock and is orientated towards the entrance of the Siq. From the Siq entrance itself only the upper part of the rock is visible. Nevertheless, this orientation seems to be intended. The rock façade itself is divided into irregular layers, which are either curved in shape or drop down diagonally. No artificial smoothing of the rock nor channels protect the façade or the triclinium against rainwater, but it probably did not cause as much damage as on steeper rock cliffs.

The rocks and the plateaus of the AşlaḤ-triclinium-complex are part of the massive and white weathered Disi sandstone of the Lower Ordovician with the rounded hillocks, typical for the eastern parts of Petra (Rababeh 2005: 33-



1. Bāb as-Siq. General plan of the Aşlah triclinium-complex (M. Dehner, L. Gorgerat).



2. Bāb as-Siq. The Aşlah-triclinium-complex from the west (L. Gorgerat).

39). The smoothed surface seems to be dense in material and is of a greyish white colour. Below the hard surface, however, the stone can be quite friable.

In the northern part of the rock Tomb Br. 24 is cut. On the rock face in front of the tomb traces of an architectural structure are still visible. The structure occupied the larger part of the plateau on the Northern Terrace and its construction was facilitated by deep right-angles cut into the rock. In a shallow rocky depression to the west of the plateau a cistern (D. 19) is situated.

The western border of the Aşlah-triclinium-complex is formed by several low hillocks with a total of 53 rock-cut pit graves and shaft graves (D. 21). They are orientated towards the path running along the Wādī Mūsā into the Siq and are clearly visible from the road. It is also possible that they had a relationship with the triclinium-complex. The plateau slopes to the south towards the path, where two aqueducts from the 'Ayn Mūsā can be seen somewhat higher at the slope.

Southern Terrace (The Triclinium of Aşlah D. 17)

Previous Analysis

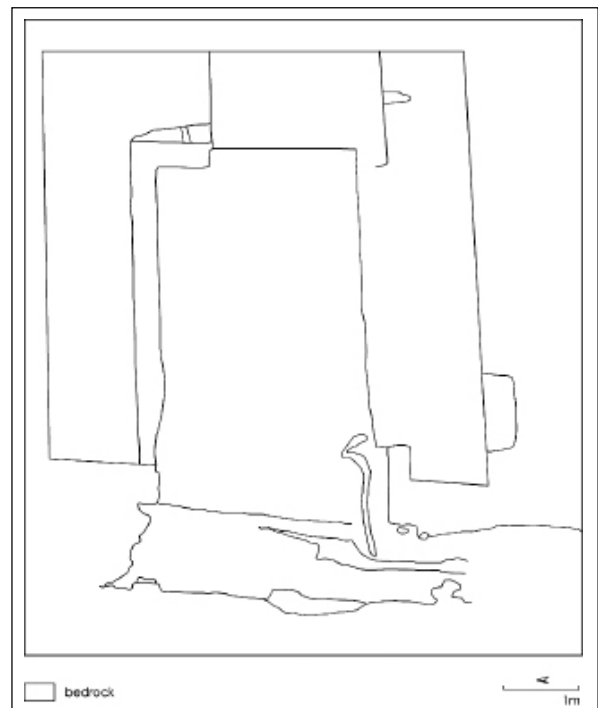
Brünnow-von Domaszewski were the first to list the monuments of the Aşlah-triclinium-complex in 1904 (Brünnow-von Domaszewski 1904: 199, 203 nos. 19-28 with map pl. III; cf. Markoe 2003: fig. 142 for a more precise map from 1999), followed by Dalman in 1908 (Dalman 1908: 107 nos. 15-21 and 1912: 40). In 1990/91 Zayadine and Farajat cleaned the triclinium and studied the complex (Zayadine-Farajat 1991: 275). Furthermore, Merklein attempted some interpretation of the area in 1995 (Merklein 1995: 109-115, but cf. Kühn 2005: 70-73). In 1997, Merklein and Wenning studied the complex again as part of their "Petra Niches Project (PNP)" (cf. the sketch in Kühn 2005: fig. 8). The first thorough study of the Aşlah-triclinium-complex, however, is currently done by the IAP. Wenning (forthcoming) gave a paper on the historiography of the complex at the 11th International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan in Paris 2010.

After the cleaning of the triclinium by Fawzi Zayadine and Suleiman Farajat in 1990/91, it took not much effort to clean the room once

again. We measured and documented the room in full detail including ancient and more recent alterations, due to intense secondary use by the B'dool in the past and present (Fig. 3). None of the older plans of the triclinium proved to be correct (Dalman 1912: fig. 34; McKenzie 1990: pl. 167d; Zayadine and Farajat 1991: 277, fig. 2).

The Aşlah-Inscription

The triclinium constitutes the most important structure of the Southern Terrace as can be deduced from the Nabataean inscription cut high into the back wall (Fig. 4). We are dealing with at least two inscriptions as line 1 is to be separated from lines 2-4. The latter is a dedicatory inscription: "Aşlah, the son of Aşlah, made this rock-cut chamber for Dušara, the god of MNBTW (or MNKTW), for the life of Obodas, king of the Nabaṭū, the son of Aretas, king of the Nabaṭū, year 1." Following palaeographic analysis the Obodas mentioned in the text is in fact king Obodas I. He became king after about 96/100 BC and before 93/95. Therefore the inscription is often dated into the year 96/95 BC. It is stated that this is the oldest Nabataean inscription found in Petra so far. This was the main reason



3. Southern Terrace. Triclinium of Aşlah (Th. Kabs, L. Gorgerat).



4. Southern Terrace. Triclinium of Aşlah (D. 17). Nabataean inscription on the eastern wall (L. Gorgerat).

for us to chose the Aşlah-triclinium-complex in the framework of the “Early Petra Project”.

We studied the inscription carefully and noticed a few more damages since its last inspection ten years ago. The reading of MNBTW (Dalman) or MNKTW/Malikatu (Milik) is much debated. While the suggested interpretation of MNKTW by Savignac in 1913 (Savigny 1913: 442) seemed coherent according to his facsimile, a closer study revealed that the shapes of some letters in the published facsimiles (Dalman 1912: 172; Savignac 1913 441; Cantineau 1932: 2) do not fit with our photographs of the letters. Among them is the third letter of MNBTW. As the scholarly discussion is based mainly on the facsimiles, we decided to study the whole inscription once again. At the moment we cannot exclude the one or the other reading, since we have arguments for both. If the reading MNKTW is accepted, however, it might be rather associated with a PN than with the king Malichus.

In the first line we are told that Aşlah made rock-cut chambers and a cistern. They are not specifically dedicated to Duşara. The chambers can be identified with the two lateral rooms (D. 16 and D. 17’ and possible D. 17 too) and the cistern D. 19. Line 1 used an older form of the demonstrative pronoun than in line 2. From this it was speculated that line 1 was older or younger than lines 2-4 and that the construction of the Aşlah-triclinium-complex could go back to the

middle of the 2nd century B.C. However, such a large span between the two inscriptions seems doubtful. The lateral rooms as well as the cistern must have been added to the complex after the triclinium was cut. We therefore deny any dating of the complex before the early 1st century BC.

At the southern lateral wall we discovered another Nabataean inscription, which is not so well preserved and is difficult to read (**Fig. 5**). In 1904 Brünnow-von Domaszewski mentioned multiple Nabataean inscriptions (Brünnow-von Domaszewski 1904: 199 no. 21), but up to now the second inscription was completely ignored. L. Nehmé kindly informed us that Milik discovered the inscription as well and has included it into the supplement to the CIS II (currently in the editing process). As the inscription is indeed difficult to read, but its content possibly being of great importance, we invited L. Nehmé to share her expertise with us. She agreed to study the inscription and to publish it in the Second Preliminary Report of the IAP. We are very thankful for her cooperation.

The Entrance

It has been often emphasized that the façade of the triclinium is without any decoration. However, the broad and high entrance had lateral simple flat frames. The frame can be measured at the northern door post, while the frame at the southern door post is broken off. There



5. *Southern Terrace. Triclinium of Aşlah (D.17). Nabataean inscription on the southern wall (L. Gorgerat).*

seems to be no upper frame. The original width of the entrance can be measured only in the upper part since the lower parts are either disturbed or completely destroyed. The thickness of the northern entrance wall measures 43cm.

The entrance measures 2.98m in width. A large rock-cut threshold protrudes slightly outwards (**Fig. 6**). The width measures 59-60cm. The threshold is framed by an outer edge which continues for 27cm to the north and 30cm to the south beyond the entrance. In front of it a groove of 13.5cm width is cut. At the southern end of the groove a hollow of 12 x 13cm dimensions with a depth of 4.5-12.5cm can be seen, possibly

the rest of a door-hinge. It seems that originally the triclinium could be closed by a wooden door from the outside. It cannot be excluded that the lateral frames correspond with this door mechanism.

A round hole of 12 x 14 x 9.5cm is cut into the threshold close to the front edge situated 1.15m from the southern door post, which is about a third of the width of the entrance. It is not yet clear, if this hole belongs to the original or the secondary entrance situation. A shallow 20-27cm broad channel joins the inner side of the threshold at a level slightly deeper than the floor of the triclinium. The channel is roughly



6. *Southern Terrace. Triclinium of Aşlah (D. 17). Threshold (L. Gorgerat).*

pecked. A narrow channel crosses the threshold about 33cm from the southern door post. This channel is 6cm broad and 5.5cm deep. It starts from the southern corner of the flat broad channel and could have carried water out from the interior, although today the poor state of preservation leads to the opposite. The channel continues a bit beyond the outer edge of the threshold. Whether a crack (FK 14) in the rock directly in front of the southern part of the entrance or the stepped edge towards trench 2 was used to direct water to the south remains uncertain. FK 14 was excavated at a length of 2.05m.

Three holes of different sizes with no particular alignment are cut into the broad channel running along the inner side of the threshold. They are clearly secondary in date. At least the middle one (15 x 13 x 9cm) could have been part of the door mechanism, which itself seems to be secondary, enabling the door to close from the inside. A fourth deep hole (16 x 16 x 15cm) was discovered in the floor of the triclinium to the east of the southern hole. It is as well secondary, but the function of it is also uncertain.

The Floor

Remains of the probably original floor can be seen in full width only in the back but other small fragmentary bits survive near the benches. The floor is damaged and irregularly splintered with large pieces broken out, especially towards the entrance as a result of the long secondary use

as a shelter for animals as it is still used today.

The Benches

Both lateral sides show benches (clinia). An irregular arrangement was chosen for the bench at the back (**Fig. 7**). Two steps once lead up to the lateral benches directly beyond the entrance wall. Only traces of the steps survive. The steps to the northern bench are 59 and 36cm broad, and the steps to the southern bench are 40 and 41cm broad. The upper step in the south is 32cm deep and about 21cm high.

The original width of the northern bench is preserved in the back and measures 1.17m. A recessed ledge, 34cm broad and 14cm deeper than the surface of the bench runs along the front and was used to deposit food and drinks. The height of the bench is 50cm. The original surface is preserved only at the eastern third of the bench. Other parts of the bench, specifically the front, are damaged.

The southern bench measures 1.12m in width in the back. Only here the original surface remains. A small part of the ledge can be seen where the bench abuts the lower part of the eastern one. The southern bench is even more damaged than the northern one of the front. Both benches show two large notches, but the southern bench has two circular holes as well as a funnel of 21cm diameter and 19cm in depth. They belong to the secondary installations of the Bdool.



7. Southern Terrace. Triclinium of Aşlağ (L. Gorgerat).

The eastern bench in the back is of normal shape where it abuts the northern bench measuring 1.17m in width. The ledge narrows from 29 to 36cm. 8cm above this ledge another one is cut widening diagonally from 11 to 24cm. It seems to be secondary, but is older than another notch which cuts into it. If it was carved in order to broaden the ledge, it remained unfinished.

In a distance of 2.20m from the northern lateral wall the eastern bench is deepened 27cm and built on a lower platform of 2.25 width in the back, 2.32 in the front and 1.29m in depth. The platform rises 24-26cm above the floor of the triclinium. The front of the platform is 21cm behind the front of the eastern bench in the north-east. In the southeast there is no continuation of the eastern bench and the platform is cutting 17-19cm into the lateral side of the southern bench and a small strip even protrudes 29cm inwards before the higher ledge itself begins. The original surface of the platform is flaked off in the centre, but can partly be seen in the corners of the lateral sides. It seems to be that the platform is not a secondary cutting. Neither the irregular arrangement nor the cutting of the platform (perhaps to set up a particular cline or tables?) can be explained (but cf. Br. 235, 704).

The Walls

The walls and the ceiling were constructed with fine pecking techniques (cf. Rababeh 2005: 93). Pointed chisel and mallet markings can be seen everywhere. Concerning the early date of the triclinium the quality of the masonry needs to be emphasized. There is no separate strip where the walls and the ceiling meet each other, and there is no indication for former stucco decoration or the use of plaster. The original surface survives only on the upper parts of the walls and the ceiling and is scorched black. Especially the lower parts of the walls are heavily damaged with its surface flaking off.

The Aşlah-inscription is cut very high on a smoothed part of the back wall. The other Nabataean inscription of the southern wall is incised without any smoothing. Especially the end of that inscription is badly preserved.

An aedicula (D. 17b) measuring 36 x 37.5cm is incised in the back wall, 1.07m above the platform. The aedicula shows pilasters with bases and capitals, an architrave and a triangular pedi-

ment. A secondary hollow with a so-called sand-glass hole to tie a rope, other objects or even animals is roughly cut into it. Contrary to Dalman and Merklein's assumptions (Dalman 1912: 40 fig. 35; Merklein 1995: 110; cf. also Wenning 2003: fig. 1a-c) this cutting is not a betyl and does not represent Dušara (Wenning 2003: 152-153). It rather was cut in the context of the secondary use of the chamber by the B'dool. There are a few identical cuttings in the triclinium, in room D. 17' as well as in some other chambers in the area. On the other hand, the aedicula symbolizes sanctity and corresponds with the inscription and the dedication to Dušara. The presence of the deity might be symbolized with the second incision, 41cm to the right of the aedicula. It shows a rectangular betyl (D. 17c) of 14.5 x 21cm.

An arched niche basin is cut into the southern lateral wall 50 cm from the entrance wall (**Fig. 8**). Such niche basins are common in the Petra triclinia and are found in 29 of 44 known examples (Brockes 1994: 12). Dalman connected these basins with ritual purification (Dalman 1908: 94). The frontal wall of the basin is lost. The width measures 1.01m in the front and 95 cm in the back. The height of the front measures approximately 1.20m. Also, the front part of the arch is broken off and does not allow exact measurements. But the original height of 66cm survives in the back. Contrary to McKenzie the back wall is not semicircular but straight (McKenzie 1990: pl. 167d). The flat bottom of the basin measures 43-52cm from the front to the back. In its centre an eroded hollow of 12-24 cm diameter and a remaining depth of 8-11 cm is cut. Parts of the original surface can be found at the bottom, the back wall and the western side of the arch. It is more roughly pecked with a pick axe.

All other installations and cuttings in the walls are secondary. Two hollows at both parts of the entrance wall could have been cut in the context of the secondary entrance situation. Both hollows, 55cm from the lateral walls, show sand-glass holes, which could be later in date. The one at the northern part is 1.54m above the bench and measures 21 x 18-21cm, the one at the southern part is 1.63cm above the bench and measures 19 x 13 x 14cm.

A total of 19 sand-glass holes were counted. There is no indication that any of these belong



8. Southern Terrace. Triclinium of Aşlah (D.17). Southern bench with step and the niche basin (L. Gorgerat).

to the Nabataean period, although such holes are known from Nabataean contexts elsewhere. In terms of position, however, an intact sand-glass hole 2.47m above the eastern bench of the back wall (and the upper aeroplane graffiti) might constitute an exemption, since all others are cut no higher than about 1.5m above the benches. Apart from these sand-glass holes other smaller and larger holes as well as small damages were noticed.

More striking than these holes and cuttings, however, are the incised graffiti of camels, horses, donkeys and even two aeroplanes. These graffiti and some Arabic names have scratched and damaged almost the complete original surface of the lower half of the wall and entirely changed the character of the whole chamber. This must be one reason why no pictures of the Aşlah-triclinium can be found. There are different styles and techniques. Some of the drawings and names are recent, but also the “older” fit with Bedouin drawings. The most prominent depictions are those of dromedaries, followed by horses and donkeys, each of them with riders as well. Many are oriented to the right, but some also to the left. Apart from caravan-like rows of dromedaries there are no further contextualised scenes.

The Niches

On the rock face outside the triclinium and room D. 16 a row of eighteen votive niches (D. 15a-t) continues to the southern tip of the rock (Fig. 9). Contrary to Dalman not twenty, but

eighteen niches can be counted. D. 15n is another niche basin, while D. 15r is not a niche at all. These niches are studied in the “Petra Niches Project” by Wenning. Niche D. 15c is conspicuous in size and strikes the viewer with its aedicula, and a pedestal (*mtwb*). Not only D. 15l, but also D. 15i and D. 15m show a *betyl* in the recessed form in the niche (cf. Wenning 2001: 85).

Sounding S 2

As we do know from several sites in Petra (Schmid 2009b: 139-170), mainly from the Wādī Farasa (Schmid 2009a: 95-105, Schmid 2001: 159-197), the Nabataeans planned their funerary structures as multifunctional complexes. According to this knowledge, one of the aim of the IAP 2010 was to check if any architectural structure

could be linked to the rock-cut structures. Therefore, we opened a 1.5m broad trench from the entrance of the triclinium (D. 17) to the visible bedrock about 10 m ahead. This sounding S 2 (Fig. 10) unfortunately yielded no architectural structures in front of the triclinium, but demonstrated how the rock was damaged by intruding water. While we expected such water damages near to the foot of the rock due to natural and artificial channels leading the water down as well as cracks in the rock itself, we discovered that the rock was affected by water also in the open area and in a depth up to 1.5m. From this trench, we got the so far earliest pottery found on this

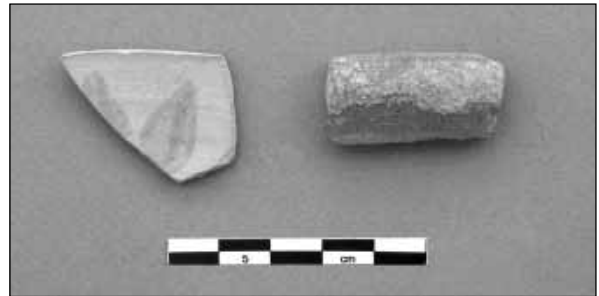


9. Southern Terrace. Votive niches D. 15c-m (L. Gorgerat).

site (**Fig. 11**). These Nabataean fine ware sherds can be attributed to Schmid's phase 1 (100-50 BC) and 2a (50-25 BC), which fits nicely with the dated inscription (Schmid 2000: 37). After



10. Southern Terrace. Sounding S 2 in front of the triclinium of Aşlah (L. Gorgerat).



11. Nabataean fine ware from sounding S 2 (L. Gorgerat).

the completion of the documentation, sounding S 2 was refilled and closed again.

Sounding S 6

The only visible structure on the surface of the Southern Terrace was a wall fragment in front of the small lateral chamber D. 16 (**Fig. 1**) which was checked in sounding S 6 (**Fig. 12**).



12. Southern Terrace. Sounding S 6 with wall 4 (L. Gorgerat).

Since the visible stones are not so well built, it was not clear in the beginning how to classify and to date this wall. One evidence for the dating was given by the construction technique of the wall itself. Below the upper row of large stones we excavated a layer of medium sized stones, under which a layer of small stones, pebbles and earth were found. The wall is founded on bed-rock with a thin layer of earth and small stones and pebbles between the rock and its lowest layer (**Fig. 13**).

Medieval pottery finds and the presence of *ballistae* (**Fig. 14**), however, supported the thesis that wall 4 was built in the Middle Ages by the Crusaders. The limestone blocs used to build this wall were possibly taken from the Nabataean building at the Northern Terrace. The bed-rock slopes to the west and can be reached from both side of the wall. The southeast corner lies on bedrock, which is weaker and partly miss-



13. Southern Terrace. Sounding S 6. Detail of wall 4 (L. Gorgerat).



14. Medieval pottery and ballista from sounding S 6 (L. Gorgerat).

ing beyond this point. In accordance with other archaeological finds from the Crusader's presence in Petra, the wall could belong to a post or a watchtower controlling the access to the city.

Northern Terrace

Sounding S 1

Concerning the presence of architectural remains, the Northern Terrace was much more promising (**Fig. 15**). Following Dalman 1908 the niches (D. 18) on the outer rock face of Tomb Br. 24 have merely been referred to as niches or have even been misinterpreted as votive niches (**Fig. 16**). However, they have never been discussed in the context of the few traces of building activities visible on the bedrock or the remaining rock-cut walls and the cemented niche basin (D. 18a). The first who recognized



15. Bāb as-Siq. Panoramic view of the Northern Terrace from the east (L. Gorgerat).



16. Northern Terrace. Entrance of tomb Br. 24 with abutments of arches (L. Gorgerat).

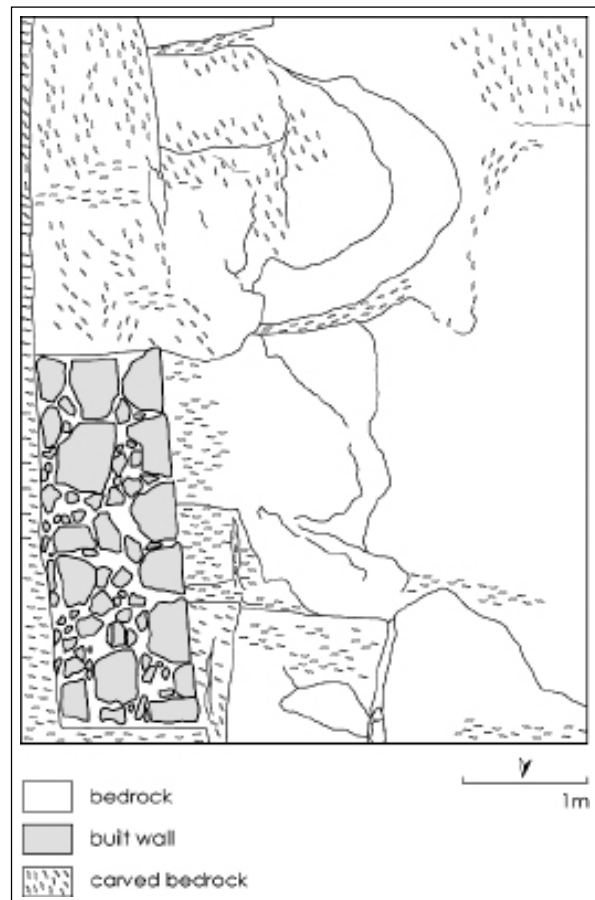
these buildings and classified the eight (not 6 as Dalman and others) niches as abutments of arches was Wenning in the context of his Petra Niches Project (PNP).

To confirm the use of these niches as abutments, sounding S 1 (Figs. 17 and 18) was opened in the northeast of the rocky plateau in some distance to the rock-cut face. In the north, we discovered a huge built wall (90cm) of limestone blocs close to the surface (Fig. 19). This wall 1 continued to the south in a visible rock-cut foundation (Fig. 18). The pottery found in the foundation level of wall 1 belongs to Schmid's phase 2c (Figs. 19, 20) and therefore indicates that this structure has to be dated in the 1st quarter of the 1st century AD (Schmid 2000: 42). Although wall 1 is running in parallel to the facades, the distance of 9m between both seems to be too wide for being covered by arches. We therefore presume that there was a second

built structure between the facade and wall 1 for which unfortunately no traces have been discovered yet. A further cleaning between the facade and S 1 is planned for a future campaign.



17. Northern Terrace. Sounding S 1 with wall 1 and rock-cut foundation (L. Gorgerat).



18. Northern Terrace. Sounding S 1 with wall 1 (K. Petrovsky, L. Gorgerat).



19. Northern Terrace. Sounding S 1. Wall 1 (L. Gorgerat).



20. Nabataean painted fine ware from sounding S 1 (L. Gorgerat).

Soundings S 3 and S 5

We laid the sounding S 3 from the northern half of the entrance of Tomb Br. 24 towards the opposite rock (**Fig. 1**). At the foot of that rock a small, partly plastered, channel comes down from the north leading the rain water and possibly the overflowing water from the reservoir Br. 24 to the cistern D. 19 as suggested by Zayadine and Farajat (Zayadine and Farajat 1991: 275). This cistern is situated a little bit to the west at a lower level of the bedrock in a kind of a small depression. While Dalman called it a pear shaped cistern and even some years ago it was only half filled, the cistern is now completely filled by debris and washed-in material. The western rock of this depression shows on its southern face a very well built niche with a *betyl* (D. 20). This niche is probably related to the channels and the cistern carrying the so called 'living water', for which the Nabataeans thanked their deity.

About in the middle of the trench we discovered wall 3 running north to south (**Fig. 21**). This wall is thinner (60cm) than wall 1 and originally also belongs to some built structures in front of Tomb Br. 24. There most probably was a architectural relation between wall 3 and the abutments of arches located on the northern side of the entrance to the tomb, similar to the structures described in sounding S 1.

Sounding S 3 also provides us with information concerning the entrance of Tomb Br. 24. First, it has to be mentioned, that at the threshold the bedrock was carefully cut out (**Fig. 22**). A few fragments of pavement stones, which were also found in that area, formed a step leading into Tomb Br. 24. The presence of an attic moulding (**Fig. 23**) found in front of the entrance is probably evidence of the rich decoration of the tomb's entrance. The pottery associated with this building mainly belongs to Schmid's phase 2c (1st Quarter of the 1st century AD) and ends towards the end of the 2nd century AD.

In order to gather some further information



21. Northern Terrace. Sounding S 3 with wall 3 (L. Gorgerat).



22. Northern Terrace. Threshold of Tomb Br. 24 (L. Gorgerat).



23. Molding from sounding S 3 (L. Gorgerat).

on the structures of the Northern Terrace we opened sounding S 5 (**Fig. 24**) which constitutes the junction of S 1 and S 3 (**Fig. 1**). Unfortunately the continuation of wall 3 was missing. A further structure in shape of a rock-cut block was discovered in the southern half of S 5. It seems that it was originally intended to cut this sandstone boulder out of the bedrock. For some unknown reasons this project was abandoned.

Sounding S 4

At the corner where the rock of the Aşlah-

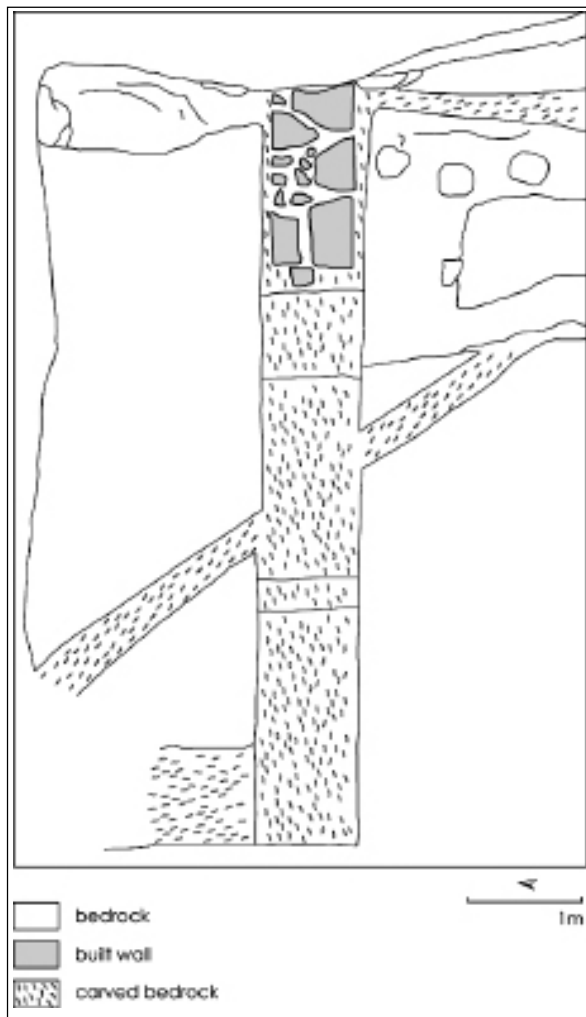


24. Northern Terrace. Sounding S 5 (L. Gorgerat).

triclinium is cut away for the building between the triclinium chambers and Tomb Br. 24, another part of a rock-cut wall foundation was partly visible in the surface (**Fig. 15**). This line constitutes a right angle with the continuation of Wall 1. We therefore opened sounding S 4 to clarify this foundation trench (**Figs. 25** and **26**). The foundation trench continues down from the west to the east in four large steps. On the lowest platform, wall 2 was built by large limestone blocs. The outer face of this built wall was nicely done by three limestone ashlar, the inner face was constructed by less large limestone blocs. Between the outer and the inner face and the rock-cut foundation trench, there was a small gap filled with pebbles and earth on both sides. It seems that a natural channel follows the foot of the rock and is led through under Wall 2. To the south of Wall 2 this channel formed a kind of a small split in the rock. Wall 1 and Wall 2 must have been part of a huge building. The question of the inner walls and the supports of the roof is still to be resolved. The rock-cut foundation to



25. Northern terrace. Sounding S 4 with wall 2 and rock-cut foundation (L. Gorgerat).



26. Northern Terrace. Sounding S 4 with wall 2, rock-cut foundation and channel (L. Gorgerat).

the west of Wall 2 cuts a channel running north to south. It may therefore be assumed, that this installation, which is a part of the water-management system of the Northern Terrace, belongs to an earlier phase of construction.

We did not yet excavate the cistern (D. 19), the reservoir (Br. 26), the 53 graves in the hill-ocks closer to the Wādī Mūsā and have not yet cleaned Tomb Br. 24, but we like to continue the research of the site and will consider these features and other installations, such as niches, in our further interpretations.

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