

## THE EXCAVATION OF BYZANTINE BATHS IN UMM QEIS

by

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A report on the proceedings of the Danish excavations in Umm Qeis over the years 1977-83 ought to have appeared yearly in this annual. Regrettably, however, this has been neglected, and the following will therefore be a summary of the whole campaign and its results. A final detailed account of the excavations will be published in the series *Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palastinaverains*.

The excavations were organized thanks to an agreement with Dr. Ute Lux, who was then the leader of the German Archaeological Institute in Jerusalem (Deutsches Evangelisches Institut für Altertumswissenschaft des Heiligen Landes) and her much esteemed colleague, the late architect Ernst Krüger. In 1976 Ute Lux had, after several preliminary surveys, commenced a proper excavation campaign in the ruins of a Byzantine church (*ADAJ* XXIV/1980, p.157ff). The campaign was to be continued in 1977, and a Danish team was invited to join it. This Danish campaign and all the ensuing ones have been financed by the Foundation for Danish Research in Palestine in Memory of H.P. Hjerl-Hansen. In 1977 the excavation team consisted of Flemming Gorn Andersen, the architect Jorgen Levinsen and Professor Svend Holm-Nielsen, the leader of the team. These three have been chiefs of staff in all four campaigns, but other Danes have taken part for shorter or longer periods, among them John Strange and Per Lyk-Jensen. During the 1983 campaign Inge Nielsen was the technical leader, and the responsibility for the final report rests upon her.

In 1977 the Danish and the German teams worked together and shared the housekeeping. The Department of Antiquities had approved the Danish participation in the excavations and has continued to do so from year to year. In various cases the Department has offered its help, as e.g. in 1981 when a bulldozer was placed at our

disposal as a relief to our own insufficient physical strength. The workers needed for the digging were recruited from the nearby village: in the course of four campaigns we have employed between 12 and 25 men. The co-operation with these men and with the village has always been exemplary. In 1977 and 1978 the Department had involved 'Omar Resheidat and Sultan Shraideh in the diggings. 'Omar Resheidat also participated in the 1981 and 1983 campaigns, but instead of Sultan Shraideh we were assisted by Tayseer 'Atayat in 1981 and by Muhamed Hatamleh in 1983.

The 1977 campaign started on the 9th of May and finished on the 23rd of June. The co-operation with the Germans was to have been continued in 1978, but Ute Lux being otherwise engaged, we were allowed to resume the diggings on our own, and the excavation of the Bath thus became a purely Danish project. The 1981 campaign lasted from May 1st till June 28th, and the 1983 campaign from Sept. 30th till Nov. 27th. In 1978 Mrs Karen Holm-Nielsen was in charge of the housekeeping, in the years 1981 and 1983 she was assisted by Mrs Lone Lyk-Jensen.

When we started digging in an area about 100 metres west of the Byzantine church we were completely ignorant as to what we would find. The only visible signs were a few large building stones protruding above ground and the upper part of a grey granite column. A few weeks of digging made it clear that what we were uncovering was a Bath, chimneys being found hewn into a wall. We dug in what were later-on called rooms III and I in the southern part of the area where the ground starts dipping abruptly towards the south.

In 1978 and 1981 the digging in these two rooms was continued, but an extension was made towards the west, and in 1983 we included an area north of the rooms first excavated. In that way we have succeeded in determining the extreme limits

of the Bath and identifying the various rooms with some degree of certainty. Although large areas are still left unexposed, it is possible to get an impression of the lay-out of the Bath, its history and its function as a public Bath.

### The Lay-out

The Bath has been built on a steep slope west of the Acropolis of the town and near the western Theatre (Pl. XXXVIII, 1). The southern part has been built on an artificial terrace whilst the northern part has been hewn into the rock. On its northern side the building is skirted by the *Decumanus Maximus*, the main street, which runs east-west through the entire length of the city. Another street runs along the southern facade, and from here there was access to two vaulted rooms in the terrace foundation. North-south going streets, probably laid out as steps, must have run along the east and west facades of the Bath; presumably one entered the Bath from one of these streets, maybe it could be entered from both. The whole edifice occupied a land register (an *insula*).

Three main periods are discernible in the building. In the two first periods it functioned as a bath. The latter period, the Umayyad, includes several phases of habitation (Figs. 1-3).

According to the finds the first Bath Period should be dated to the beginning of the 4th century A.D. This period was terminated by a destruction, probably caused by an earthquake. Exactly when this took place, and when the second Bath Period started is uncertain. We know of earthquakes both in A.D. 365 and 447. The termination of the second Bath Period which was also the end of the Bath as such is marked by the beginning of the Moslem era in the first half of the 7th century A.D. The building was ultimately destroyed by the great earthquake in A.D. 746 at the end of the Umayyad period.

There were ten rooms in the building, two of which were auxiliary rooms. The other eight rooms all had some kind of a bath function. The rooms are distinguished with Roman numerals, and on the follow-

ing pages a brief description will be given of each with regard to their appearance, their state of preservation and their functions in the various phases.

### Room III

This room measures approx. 14.50 m. by 9 m. Added to this there is a recess in the eastern part of the room, measuring 8 m. by 4.50 m. which makes a total length of 19 metres. The room was originally barrel-vaulted, the vault spanning the north and south walls. This vault was found lying intact on a layer of accumulated soil on the floor (Pl. XXXVIII, 2). The recess held a hot bath *alveus* (III A) (Pl. XXXIX, 1), and in the south wall there was, in the first Bath Period, an arched opening of great dimensions leading into another hot bath *alveus* in room I. In the second Bath Period an apsidal hot bath (room II) was built up to the opening from the south (Pl. XXXIX, 2), incorporating it and thus disconnecting room I from room III. The north wall had, in the first Period, an arched opening of even bigger dimensions connecting room III with room IV. This opening was made smaller in the second Period, and then blocked up in the Umayyad Period (Pl. XL, 1). In the western part of the room a door opened southward on to room V, and there may also have been a passage to the West to room IX. Below the floor was found a *hypocaust* with basalt pillars, and the walls had tubulation.

The room must have served as a main *caldarium* in both Bath Periods. Under the Umayyads the western part was adapted for habitation, and a former stove room converted into a storage room. The apsidal bath (room II) was in a later phase used as a stable.

### Room I

This imposing room was originally the most luxurious room and measures 9.50 metres by 10.40 metres. In each corner it had a grey granite column, standing 4.70 metres high, with a Corinthian capital in white marble. Only the column in the north-east corner is still in position.

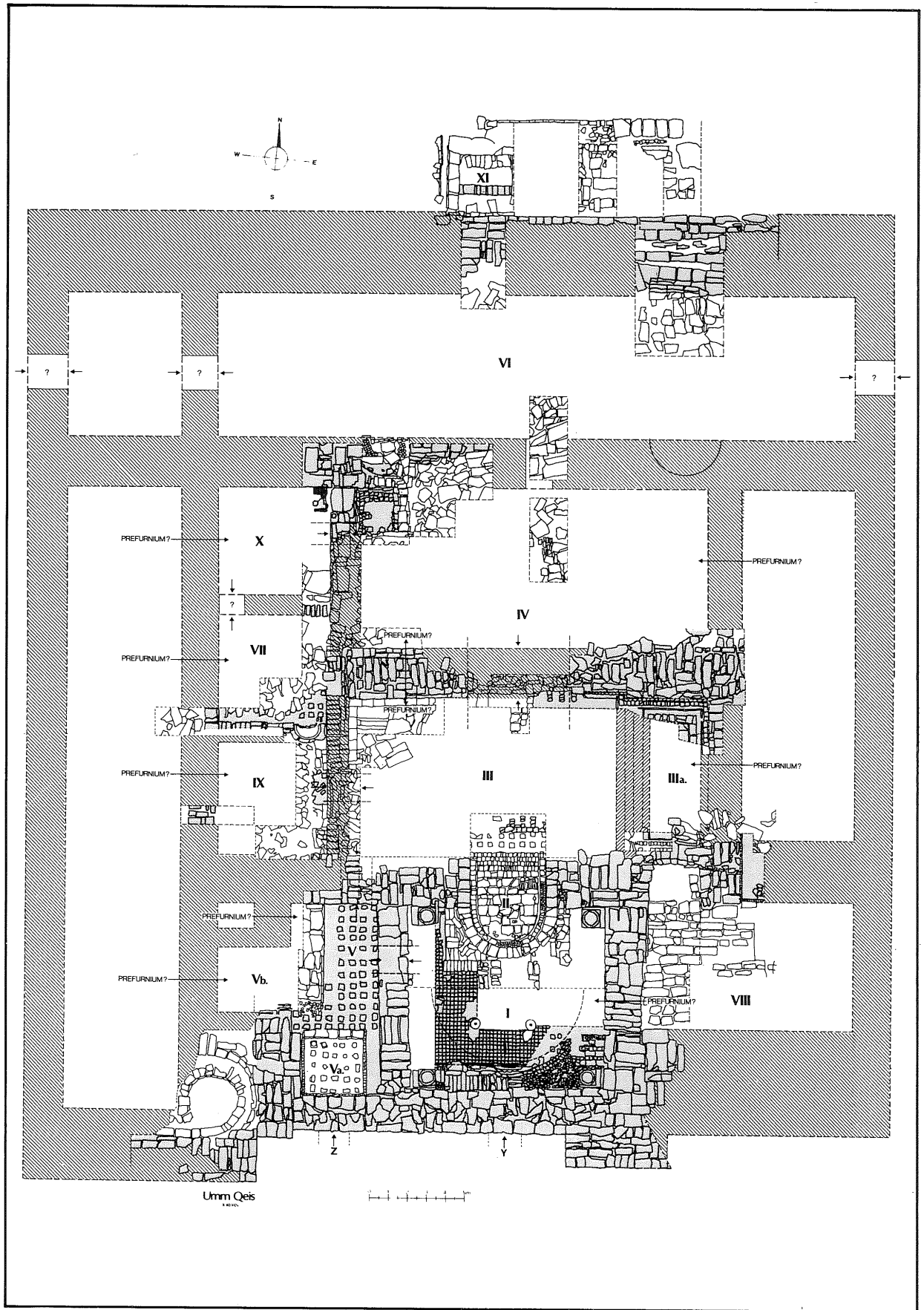


Fig. 1 The first Bath-Period. Drawing: J. Levinsen.

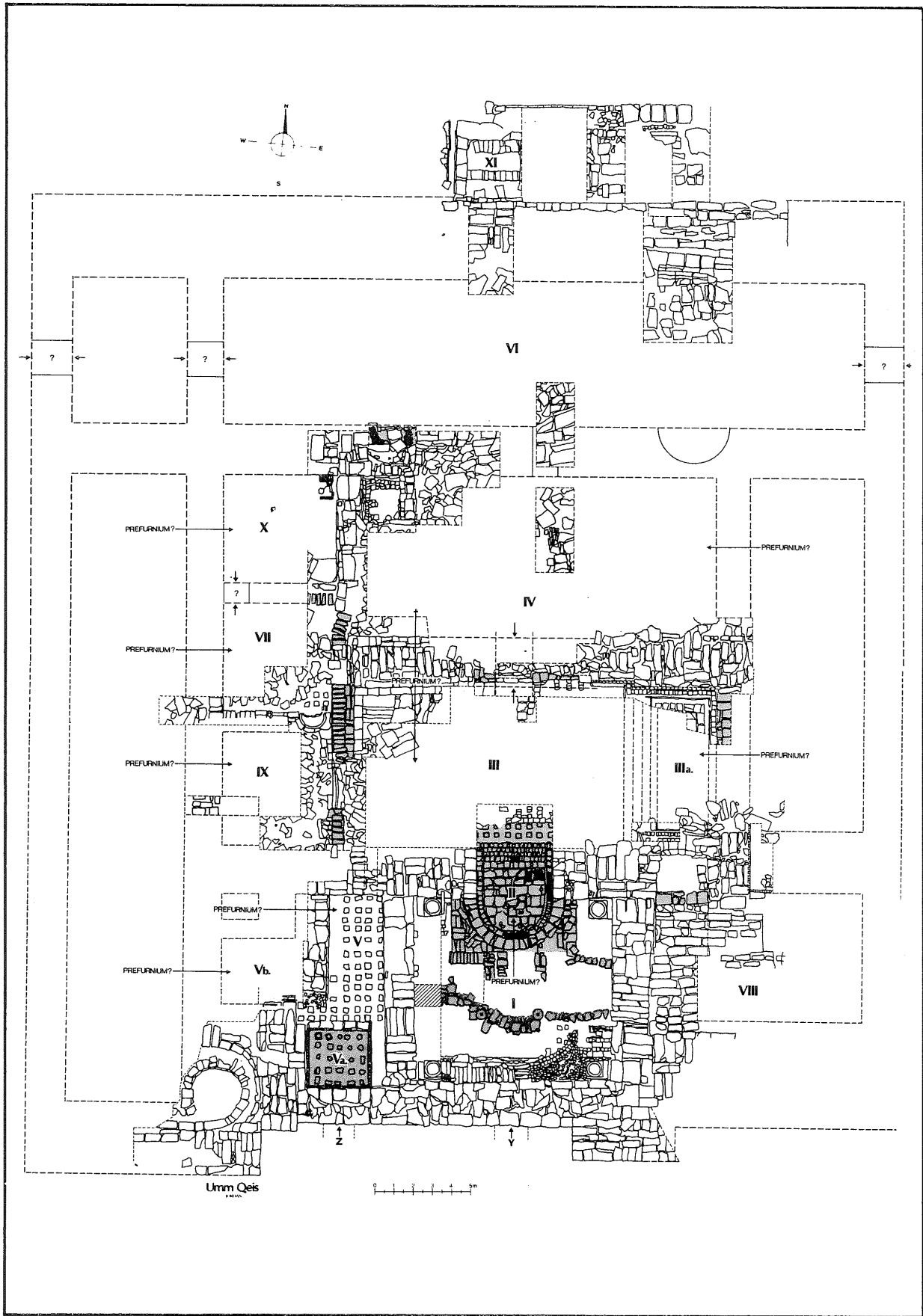


Fig. 2 The Second Bath-Period. Drawing: J. Levinsen.

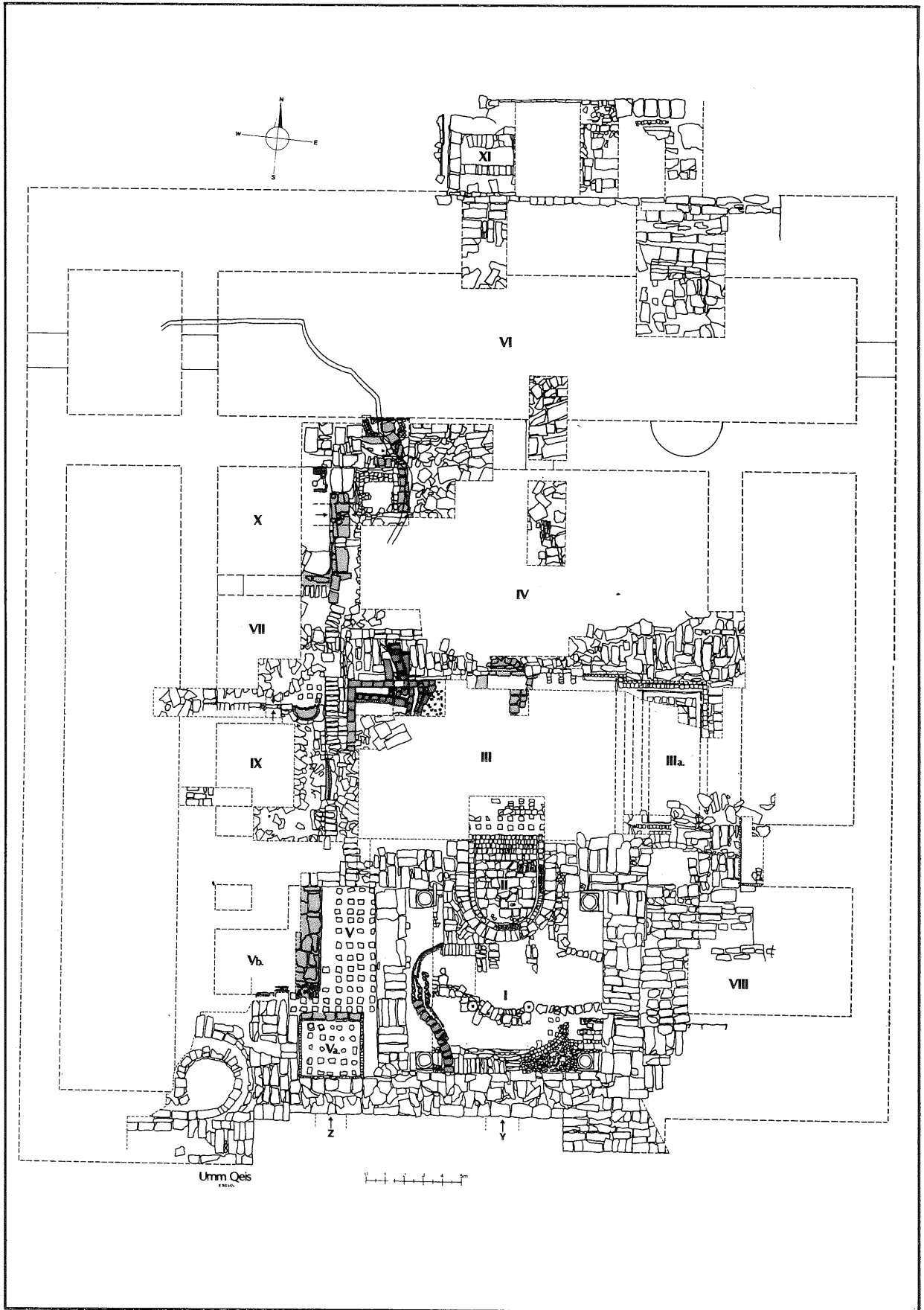


Fig. 3 The Umayyad Periods. Drawing: J. Levinsen.

Another lies fallen within the walls, whereas the others have probably disappeared down the southern slope. Only their bases are still left in their respective corners.

In the first Bath Period the room was indubitably a bath room, the southern part of it holding a large semi-circular *alveus* (Pl. XL, 2). Both the *alveus* and the room itself were heated by *hypocausts*. Several chimneys had been set into the walls, but there were no *tubuli*. The room was heated by means of a furnace (*praefurnium*) in the auxiliary room to the east (room VIII).

Originally room I was connected with room III through the above mentioned arch, and the rooms were organically one entity, because room I served as an *alveus* for the main *caldarium*. From room I there was also access to room V via a door in the west wall. This door was blocked up in the second Bath Period when room I ceased to function as a bath room. Its *alveus* was replaced by the newly built apsidal *alveus* (room II), and room I was degraded into an auxiliary room, a stoke-hole for the *hypocaust* below room II being built into the south side of the apse (Pl. XLI, 1).

No remnants of the roofing have been found. It must have been utterly destroyed at the end of the first Bath Period, a contributory factor to the room's falling into disuse as a bath room. The fallen roof must have been removed when the room was converted into an auxiliary room. In the Umayyad Period the room was not used at all, and gradually it filled up with soil and debris.

#### Room V

This room is located in the south west corner, the hottest part of the building complex. It comprises two distinguishable parts, a main part which today measures 6.80 metres by 3 metres (room V) and a recess to the south (VA) measuring 3.50 metres by 3.50 metres (Pl. XLI, 2). The main section was originally bigger and measured 4.70 metres across, but in the Umayyad Period an edifice of unknown purpose was built into it, the end of which now forms the west wall. Both room V and

the recess (VA) are equipped with *hypocausts* with basalt pillars, but *tubuli* are missing. A chimney has been found cut into the east wall. In the first period this room was accessible from room I through a door in its east wall, but this door was blocked up in the second Bath Period when room I was converted into an auxiliary room. For as long as the building existed, a door in the north wall led from room V to room III. The roofing has not been preserved, but it may be supposed that it was barrel-vaulted. The room was probably a *caldarium* in both Bath Periods, but in the second Period, the *alveus* in the recess (VA) was converted into a heated recess. The *alveus* in the west part of the room (VB) was probably still in existence at that time, but, as mentioned above, a new structure interfered with this part of the bath under the Umayyads, and rooms V and VA were then, like the rest of the building, used for housing people.

#### Room IV

Only about one third of this room, the western part, has been completely excavated (NTIII). Some test trenches (NTI and NTII) in the middle of the room had to be abandoned because of a massive blockade of fallen building stones right below the top soil.

The room seems to have been of approximately the same dimensions as the adjacent room south of it (room III), i.e. 19 metres by 10.5 metres. In the excavated area was found a *hypocaust* with basalt pillars and the walls had tubulation. A door in the west wall led to room X. In the Bath Periods there was access to room III via the arched opening mentioned above. This broad opening was later reduced in size, before it was eventually obliterated by the Umayyads. It must be supposed that there was a door in the north wall leading to room VI, but this door belongs to the part of the room not as yet unearthed and has not been located.

The room was probably roofed by a barrel vault spanning the north and south walls; contrary to that of room III it did not survive intact when it fell in. In the wes-

tern part of the north wall a vaulted room appears to have been built into the wall. Actually it is an apsidal cold bath belonging to the adjacent room (VI), but the Umayyads made an opening in its south wall, presumably with the intention to use it as a storage room (Pl. XLII, 1). With certain reservations for the part of the room left unexcavated, it seems that originally room IV held no baths at all. The room must have functioned as the main *tepidarium*.

Under the Umayyads the room was converted into living quarters.

#### *Room VI*

This room, the most northerly of the proper bath rooms, has only been excavated in its north end, where we have come into contact with the north wall in two places (NT IV and NT V). From the excavations in room IV we know of the apsidal bath in the south west part of the room which, in the Bath Periods, was available from room VI (Pl. XLII, 1). It was a cold water bath and was still functioning as such in the second Period although it had been reduced in size. Room VI was not hypocausted and was probably a *frigidarium*. It must, however, also have functioned as an *apodyterium* since the entrance to the Bath from one of the bystreets — maybe from both — was via this room. A door must have opened on to room IV to the south, and there may also have been a doorway in the south west corner leading directly to room X. In the north wall a door led to an auxiliary room (XI), but this door was later sealed off, thus disconnecting the auxiliary room from the Bath.

Room VI was probably covered by a barrel vault spanning the north and south walls.

#### *Room X*

This room is the most northerly of a small bath-suite comprising room IX, VII and X. The rooms were of almost similar size, and together they made up the west wing. They were probably all heated by furnaces, which were placed in the auxiliary corridor running along the west side of the Bath. Room X measures 5.80 metres by 6

metres, provided its west wall follows the same line as the other rooms in this wing. Only the eastern part of the room has been dug out in connection with the excavations in room IV. There was a door connecting the two rooms, and there may also have been a door between room X and room VI north of it. Presumably there was a third door in the south wall giving access to the adjoining room (VII). Room X had a *hypocaust* with basalt pillars, but there were no signs of *tubuli* in the walls. The room functioned as a *tepidarium* in the Bath Periods. A niche in the south west corner, probably a *mihrab*, indicates that the room may have been used as a prayer room in the Umayyad Period. The door opening on to room IV was maintained also in this period. The roofing has disappeared; probably it was barrel-vaulted and spanned the east and west walls. Similar constructions would have been found in the other west wing rooms.

#### *Room VII*

This room measures approx. 5.80 metres by 5.80 metres. It has been in use during all periods, although it has been altered more than once. As yet only the eastern and southern parts of the room have been excavated, but the extension of its walls has been ascertained (VTI). A narrow doorway leads to room IX to the south of it (Pl. XLII, 2), and there must also have originally been a passage in the north wall opening on to room X.

The room was heated by means of a *hypocaust* with basalt pillars and the walls probably had tubulation. Because of its being so close to the furnace which provided heat for it, the room was probably a *sudatorium* in the Bath Periods. Beside the doorway to room IX a small semicircular cold water basin has been built in (*labrum*). This was in use in both Bath Periods. The Umayyads seem to have exploited it as a *mihrab*, cf. room X (Pl. XLII, 2).

#### *Room IX*

Although only the eastern part of this room has been uncovered, the extension of its four walls has been ascertained. The room measured 5.80 metres by 5.80 me-

tres. It was the most southerly of the suite. It was hypocausted and may have had *tubuli* in the walls. There is little doubt that this room functioned as a *sudatorium* as well. It has always had access to room VII to the north of it, but the passage opening on to the main *caldarium* to the east (room III), was converted by the Umayyads into a small bath with a curved wall. This bath may have served some ritual purpose in connection with the two prayer rooms.

#### *The Auxiliary Rooms*

Only two auxiliary rooms have been unearthed. One of these is room VIII at the south east corner of the building, measuring 6.75 metres across. Its length has not yet been ascertained, but it must have exceeded 8.50 metres. In the north-east corner of the room a small room with a sloping barrel vault (VIII A) has been built into the north wall. This may have served as a staircase. East of it there was a water tank constructed of brick, measuring 3.60 metres by 1.10 metres. In the first Bath Period the auxiliary room contained a *praefurnium* for room I, in the second Period it was given over to other uses, and in the Umayyad Period it was left unused. The roofing was a barrel vault spanning the north and south walls. It was found undamaged on a layer of accumulated debris, *cf.* the roofing of room III. The room was probably connected to the auxiliary corridor running alongside the east range.

Another auxiliary room was room XI in the north wall, which has already been mentioned in connection with room VI. It has been carved out of the rock beneath the *Decumanus* and was located right below the pavement of this street (NT IV G). It is 3 m by 2.75 m in size and was reached from room VI by a flight of steps in the wall. The room was probably used as a storage room for fragrant oils and other articles needed for the bathing. In the second Bath Period the entrance from room VI was blocked by bricks, and the room now became a storage room accessible from the street.

#### **The Function of the Bath (Fig. 1)**

The way in which the Bath in Umm

Qeis is planned indicates that there were two ways of using it. The quicker sequence followed by a bather was to go into the main *tepidarium* (IV) after he had undressed in room VI. From the *tepidarium* the bather passed into the big *caldarium* (III) to have a hot bath in one of the two *alvei* (I and IIIA). He then retraced his steps via the *tepidarium* (IV), where he anointed himself with fragrant oil before entering the *frigidarium* (VI) for a cold plunge and massage.

The more prolonged bathing sequence started in the *apodyterium* (VI). From there the bather passed into the small *tepidarium* (room X — either directly, provided there was a door connecting rooms VI and X, or via the main *tepidarium* (IV). From room X the bather went on to the first *sudatorium* (VII) for a damp steam bath and then to room IX, which was a dry air *sudatorium*. From here the bather went either to room III to immerse himself in one of the big hot-water *alvei* in that room (III A, 1), or he might prefer the small *caldarium* (V), which had two small hot water baths (VA, VB). The route was then retraced via the *tepidarium* (IV) as described above.

The water needed for the bath must have been transported via the aqueduct, the existence of which is ascertained in the eastern part of the town, although it is no longer visible. The water was then distributed to various cisterns or water tanks and, via water conduits, on to the *alvei* or to boilers above the furnaces (*praefurnia*), where it was heated. In the first Bath Period there were four large hot water *alvei* and at least two cold water baths (*piscinae*). This arrangement called for great supplies of water. Both the water and the air in the bath were heated by means of several *praefurnii*, which were fired from the auxiliary rooms. A safe guess is that there were about ten *praefurnii*, and the need for fuel must have been great. The necessary supplies came from the woods in the neighbourhood. Olive trees predominated, which may be seen from the thousands of olive seeds found in the ashes.

The Bath of ancient Gadara was in the



first Period a magnificent building covering about 2300 square metres. Its highly developed and efficient heating and water systems were of a high technical standard and well able to satisfy a fastidious taste. The town must have been especially prosperous to be able to build and maintain a Bath of that standard.

#### *The Second Period (Fig. 2)*

The transition between the first and the second Bath Period is marked by a destruction, probably brought about by an earthquake; maybe it was the great earthquake of A.D. 447, the effects of which were felt from Asia Minor to Egypt. We do not know this for certain, though, there being several earthquakes about that time. The large bathing room with the columns (I) was in particular ravaged. The south wall collapsed and the roof fell in. The room fell into disuse. The monumental arched doorway opening on to room III was incorporated in an apse, which became the new *alveus* (Pl. XLI, 1). The door in the west wall was bricked up, and the former luxurious bathroom was reduced to being a stoke room for the new *alveus*. Only one column is still standing as a token of lost splendour.

As a result of the re-building of room I into an auxiliary room and the construction of the new *alveus*, the most easterly of the vaults in the basement below the *alveus* was filled up with boulders to be able to sustain the weight of the new *alveus*, which rested on a massive podium built of large stone blocks.

Also room III seems to have been ravaged although the barrel-vaulted roofing was not destroyed, but the west wall and part of the east wall seem to have collapsed. They were re-built in the second Period, although in a somewhat different technique, which used lesser stones, and, to a greater extent, re-used materials.

The northern end of the Bath apparently suffered the least, probably due to the underlying rock, which has stabilized this part of the building.

Even though the Bath was still functioning, the second Bath Period is charac-

terized by a number of lesser reductions and by its re-use of materials. Monumental doorways between the rooms have been reduced in size, (Pl. XL, 1) the baths made smaller (Pl. XLII, 1), presumably to lessen the need for fuel and maybe also for water. The repairs done to the floors of the *alvei* in rooms II and III are evidence of the re-use of materials (Pl. XXXIX, 1). The original floors were paved with big, finely-cut limestone slabs. Now they were being mended with fragments of those marble slabs which once covered either walls or floors.

Still, in spite of minor reductions, the Bath served its purpose as it had done in the first Period. The prosperity of the town may have been slightly declining, but there are no signs of a depopulation or impoverishment. Gadara was still a thriving town, sufficiently wealthy to be able, in the 6th century, to build a big church a little further east.

#### *The use of the building after the Bath Periods (Fig. 3)*

The excavations have made it reasonably clear which parts of the whole complex were still used after it had ceased to function as a Bath. The Umayyads apparently only used the western part, and the rooms to the north (VI) and to the south (I) seem to have been abandoned. Only immediately after the discontinuation of the Bath were these rooms accessible. Traces of water channels have been found in both, dug into the soil, presumably these were drains (sewers). But very soon the rooms were left to decay, and they gradually filled up with soil and debris.

It seems quite natural that the continued use of the building should be confined to its western parts. For one thing the eastern parts may have been generally more ruined than the western wing, but the rooms belonging to the west wing also were clearly more attractive to live in than the large bath rooms. The western parts of room III and IV were, however, adapted for habitation, and north-south going retaining walls were erected to confine the masses of earth and building stones to the

eastern parts of the rooms. The possibility remains, though, that the eastern parts were indeed put to some use right after the bath function had been discontinued, and if this surmise is correct, the retaining walls are a somewhat later construction. It is quite easy to distinguish between the Byzantine and the Umayyad periods, but it is next to impossible to say exactly when the Bath stopped functioning as such. It may have been utilized as a bath in the early Moslem period, and the further cutbacks will then have been effected gradually in the course of the well over a century of Umayyad control.

There is nothing to indicate that the discontinuation of the Bath was due to a destruction, such as an earthquake. More likely it was due to a general decline structurally and economically. A Bath of that size was simply no longer needed, and the maintenance costs were too high. The much smaller bath building further west met the needs quite adequately (*cf. Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästinavereins* 82 (1966), pp. 64-70).

The one certain thing is that the west wing was used for habitation in the century before the building was eventually abandoned. There have been between two and three habitation phases corresponding to the levels in the habitation layers. It may be safely assumed that the roofings of the inhabited area were still intact at this time, maybe except for the vault in room V, and that they remained so until the final catastrophe in A. D. 746.

#### *First Umayyad Period*

Only with difficulty it is possible to separate the two first Umayyad Periods from each other, and they probably overlapped. There is, however, a slight dissimilarity in their building activity.

It may be assumed that the first period started shortly after the bath function had been brought to an end. The extensive network of drains discharging into or running along the bottoms of the former *hypocausts* is datable to this time. In the *hypocausts* the basalt pillars were removed. They were found thrown aside or piled up among the

debris in the east part. The openings in the walls deriving from the heating system were now utilized for the drains, which are all very solidly built of big re-used building stones, quite evidently fetched from the disused baths. They are dressed on the inside, and the cover stones are laid in mortar. The re-utilization of a rather big opening through the east-west wall between rooms III and IV is also datable to this period. The opening was originally part of the heating system, but after one of the said drains had been led through it, it was enlarged into a storage room. The coverstones of the drain served as flooring. In this room was found an abundance of broken glass.

Another relic from this period is the massive wall in the western part of room V dividing it in two. It had no doors, presumably it was part of a building which was oriented westward, and thus outside the limits drawn for our activities. The dimensions of the wall seem to suggest a building of major importance, but we know nothing of its actual size or to what purpose it was built.

At the south west corner of the former Bath a peculiar circular structure had been built into the wall, which seemed to be in no way connected to the original building. It was hollow and had a built-in cornice on the inside. Apart from ascertaining the location, we have not paid much attention to it. It lies outside our scope, and we do not know whether it belongs to the early or the late Umayyad Period.

The building technique of the first Umayyad phase is quite advanced. The big limestone blocks, re-used from earlier periods, have been carefully laid in mortar with regular joints.

#### *Second Umayyad Period*

The difference in time between the first and the second Periods must have been minimal, according to the general standard. What distinguishes the second Period is its prosperity and the way the building is now being extensively inhabited. The living quarters may have been included in a large housing complex, or

they may have been divided up in small separate units. Building materials were still being re-used, particularly limestone. It was then that the thin wall between room IV and the apsidal bath in room VI was pierced by a door, and the bath itself rebuilt into a small storage room partitioned from room VI by a wall following the northern facade of the existing wall (Pl. XLII, 1). The discovery of a number of spindle whorls in room IV makes it seem possible that it was inhabited in this period. The *mihrabs* of rooms X and VII (Pl. XLII, 2) and maybe also the small bath of room IX, belong to this phase. The west range may somehow have been connected to the above mentioned Umayyad building built into room V, but this is only a hypothesis.

#### *Third Umayyad Period*

The transition from the second to the third period is equally indistinct, perhaps it is only the way of building that altered. It seems reasonable, though, to relate to this period the rather peculiar exploitation of the former apsidal *alveus* dating from the second Bath Period (room II). After the eastern part of room III had gradually been filled up with eroded soil deposited there by wind and weathering from the more hilly country to the east, the room has evidently been used as a cattle pen, probably also housing sheep and goats. Re-used stones have been set on edge to form a trough, and the room was sheltered off from the north by a kind of wall, or rather a fence, made of re-used stones, among them some basalt pillars from the *hypocausts*. Two water conduits, one from the north, the other from the east, led to this room on the same level. One of them was covered. An outlet from the room ended in the long abandoned room I, which is levelled with the floor. The outlet passes through one of the two openings in the southern apse wall, through which formerly water flowed to the bath. It cannot be said for certain how long these conditions lasted, but presumably the west wing was still inhabited when the vaults collapsed, the remnants of them having been found at floor level, not on accumulated debris as in the east rooms.

#### *The period after the fall of the vaults*

It can be fairly safely judged that the great earthquake, which occurred in A.D. 746, caused the downfall of the vaults. After this date there are only faint signs of any habitation. Gadara probably ceased to exist, or, at least, it decayed into an insignificant village. There are traces of human activity but none of their dwellings. Probably they were shepherds, who found temporary shelter in the ruins. Here and there they seem to have piled up stones as a kind of shelter, and in the eastern part of room III an open fire-place used for breadmaking (*furn ḥaṣawi*) was found. Some Mamluk sherds also speak of a sporadic habitation in rooms III and V.

After the roofs had fallen in, and the buildings given up, soil has continued to accumulate from the north and — in particular — from the east, and gradually it spread over the remnants of the former building complex so that in 1977, when the excavations started, it looked like a natural slope in the landscape, maybe not so very much unlike its original natural appearance.

#### **The Finds** (Fig. 4-5) by F.G. Anderson

There are two discernible levels in the fillings in and around the Bath. The older level is datable to the rebuilding phase after the first Bath Period, the later level, which is mostly composed of topsoil and debris, has accumulated along with the gradual abandonment of the Bath. Both levels are mixed up with building materials, but it may be assumed that the majority of the proper finds, predominantly fragments of pottery, originate in the surrounding town area.

Those finds related to the building itself are mainly fragments of the technical installations, particularly the drains which were made of clay (Fig. 4.1-3). There is an abundance of window glass and of the plaster used for fitting the glass in the frames. Some plaster fragments even showed imprints of wooden frames. In the southern part of the Bath were found fragments of marble slabs and profiled cornices which once covered the walls. In room IV and in the west wing suite were found

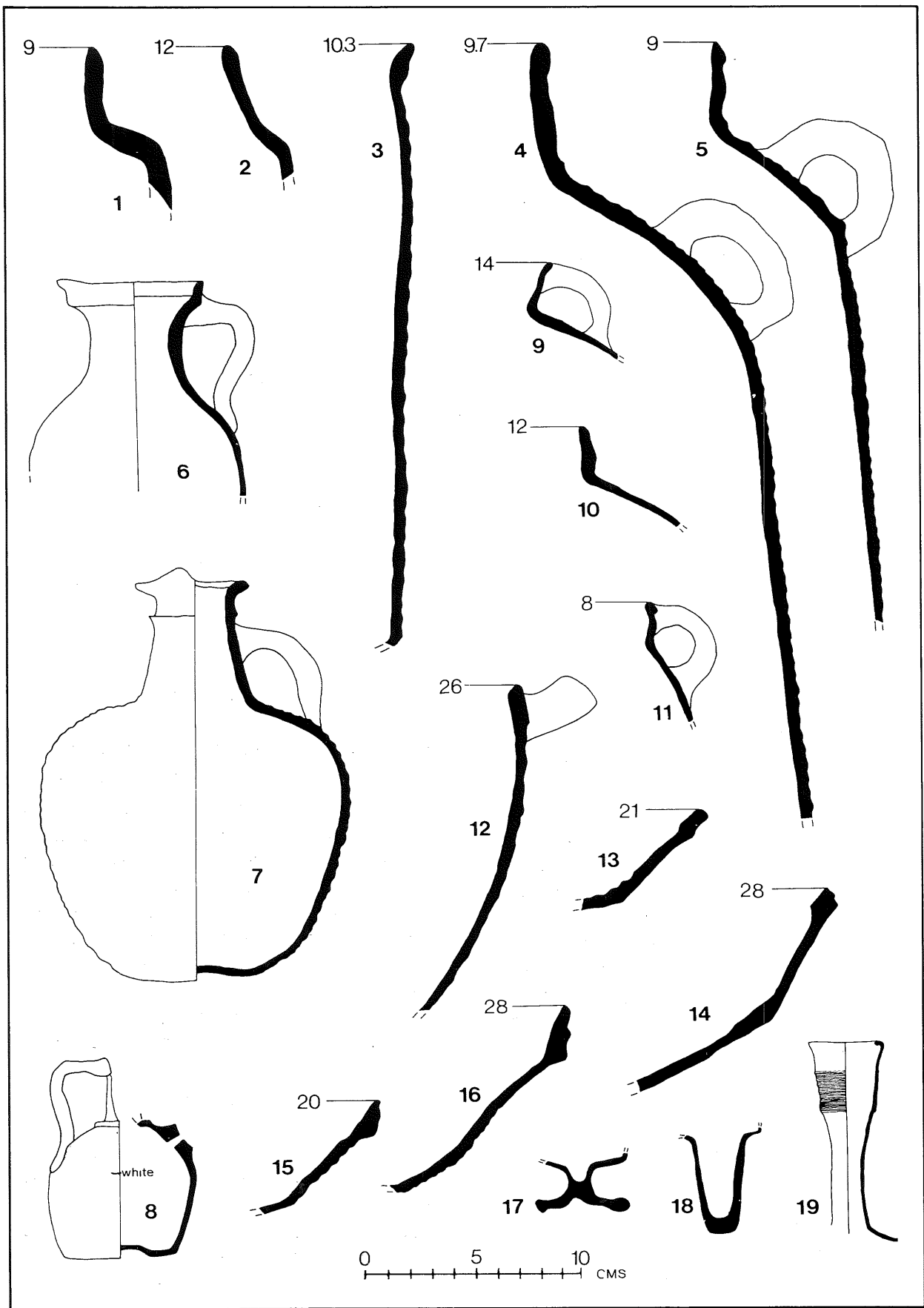


Fig. 4 Typical examples of pottery, glass and drains from the excavation of the building complex.

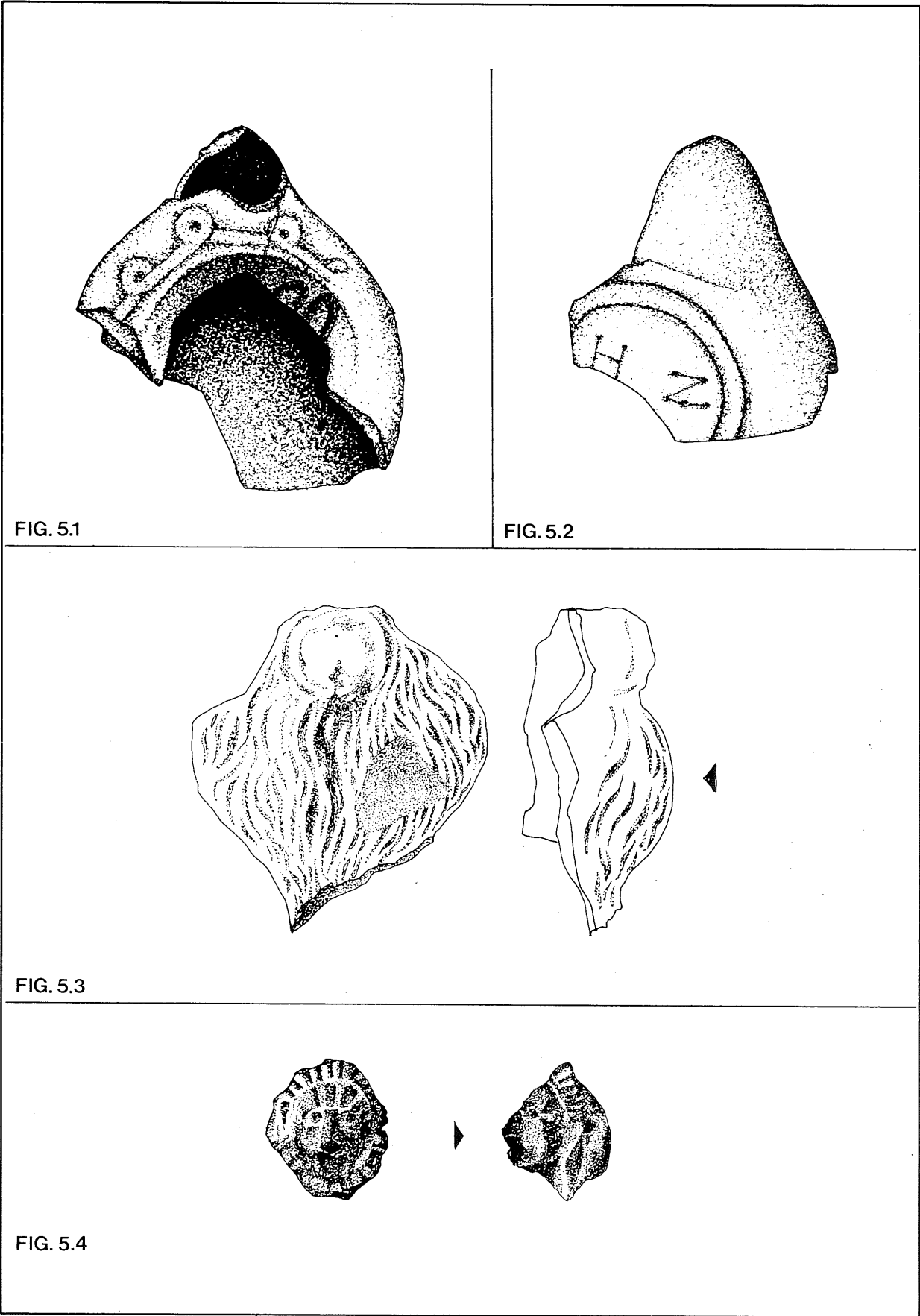


Fig. 5 Fragments of lamps and miscellanea. Drawing: J. Levinsen.

traces of painted wall plaster. That of room IV could be dated to the Bath Periods, whilst the west suite must have been redecorated in its latest phase under the Umayyads.

The pottery shows some marked differences between the two levels. The older level only yields jars of Roman-Byzantine types, grey or buff-coloured (Fig. 4.4), whereas the black, white-painted ware dominates the later level (Fig. 4.5). Jugs offer a greater variety of shapes (Figs. 4.6-8; the latter is in black, white-painted ware). Cooking vessels are mostly of closed shapes (Figs. 4.9-11); open vessels appear in connection with the late habitation (Fig. 4.12). Bowls in fine wares are infrequent. In the older level Galilean bowls predominate (Figs. 4.13-14) whereas bowls with an embossed rim are typical of the younger level (Figs. 4.15-16).

Glass finds are rare. Yet, there was such an abundance of glass of all kinds and for all purposes in the successive layers in room III belonging to the Umayyad phases that it made one think of the dumps of a glass dealer (Fig. 4.17-19).

In room VIIIA, which was sealed off in the course of the first Bath Period, some lamp fragments were found (Fig. 5.1-2).

The coins found in the Bath are very worn, but the debris deposited north of the Bath yielded a number of much corroded Roman coins, most of which were minted locally.

The miscellanea include fragments of terracotta figurines (Fig. 5.3), two cosmetic bronze ladles, remnants of bone needles and a glass cover knob, shaped after a lion's head (Fig. 5.4).

A complete catalogue of the finds is being prepared for publication in the *Abhandlungen*.

### Soundings at the Western Outskirts of Umm Qeis

While surveying the area west of the present village in the middle of the seventies, Dr. Ute Lux found so many Iron Age sherds that she considered it worthwhile,

given the opportunity, to make soundings to investigate whether there had been any settlement before the Roman-Byzantine-Umayyad periods, so amply represented to the east (cf. *ZDPV* 1978, pp.135-44 and 1980, pp.48-58). Not having found the opportunity, however, to make such a sounding, she suggested that we should make the attempt during our campaign in 1983.

Dr. John Strange, who had worked as a site supervisor in the Bath in the years 1978 and 1981, accepted the job. During six weeks in October-November three test trenches were dug just north of the *Decumanus Maximus*, about 400 metres west of the Bath. A final report on these soundings will be published by John Strange in *ZDPV*.

The surface finds and the pottery found in the soundings seem to suggest that the area in question was settled in some form for a short period during the Iron Age, possibly also in the Persian period and again in the Roman period. However, no building remains from these periods were found. The test trenches may of course have inadvertently avoided any such remains, but the general impression is that the area was not permanently settled.

The building remains actually found date from the Byzantine period, but these are also sparse. The pottery does, however, indicate a settlement up to and during the Mamluk period, perhaps with some breaks.

Generally the soundings gave the impression that the settlement in the Byzantine and Umayyad periods was concentrated further to the east, but that the remaining settlers, after the destruction of the city in the 8th century A.D., moved further west, where the soil was more fertile. The area where the soundings were made was later used as a cemetery, and then a refuse dump in the Mamluk period.

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