

A MOSQUE, SHOPS AND BATH IN CENTRAL JARASH: THE 2007 SEASON OF THE ISLAMIC JARASH PROJECT

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Introduction (AW)

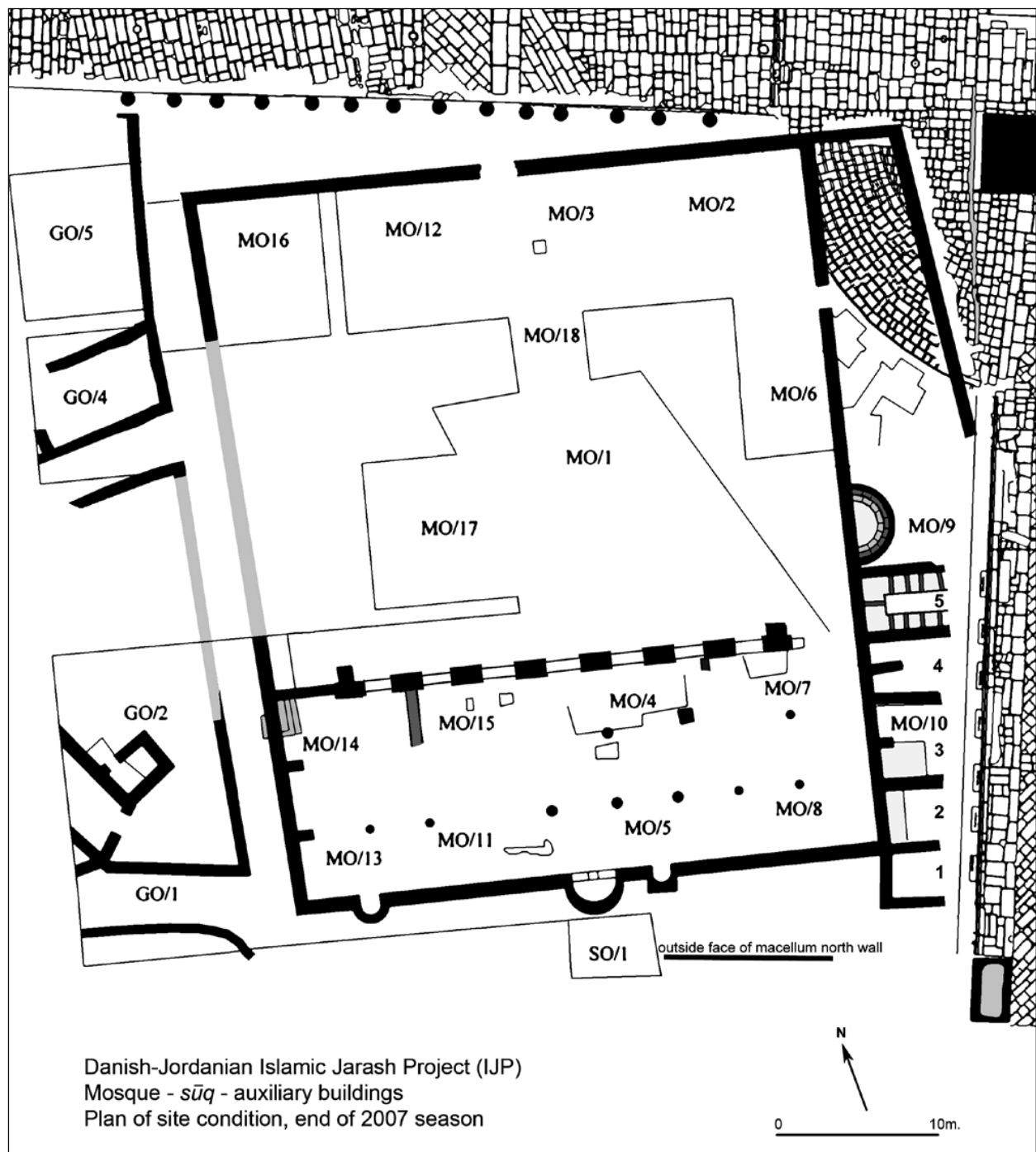
The Summer 2007 season of the Danish-Jordanian Islamic Jarash Project had as its primary objective the continued excavation and recording of the mosque, the underlying bathhouse, a line of shops flanking it on the east, and adjacent buildings of still uncertain function to the west (**Fig. 1**). In 2007, the full extent of the mosque was finally exposed, except for the retention of an access point on the west side. Accordingly, the full length of the *qibla* (prayer) hall is now uncovered. Notable is the architectural evidence for a central axial transept (nave) in front of the original main *mihrāb*, as evidenced by the higher disposition of the column foundations and the greater space between the column bases. Similarities with the Great Mosque of Damascus are very apparent. Also resolved is the later insertion of two further niches in the *qibla* wall and the partial blocking of the original main *mihrāb*. This rather unusual change seems to have resulted from the subdivision of the *qibla* hall into two uneven parts: a larger area to the east and a smaller area to the west. A wall was built perpendicular to the *qibla* wall to effect this division. The two added *mihrāb* are positioned at equal distance between the original outer walls to the east and west and the dividing wall, indicating that the division of the *qibla* hall and the insertion of the new *mihrāb* were related and perhaps simultaneous events. Also possibly dating to this time was the blocking wall construction of the archways between the *qibla* hall and the courtyard before it. However, the reasons for these changes are not clear.

To the west of the mosque, further investigations were undertaken into the buildings located there and a street that separates the mosque from them. A hard packed yellow clay surface was iden-

tified for the street at its north end. At the south end a substantial foundation trench for the west mosque wall was uncovered, indicating that the buildings to the mosque's west predate it. New areas were opened up over these western structures, with important results. A new alley, heading westwards away from the mosque, separates two major building, one of which had arched rooms and evidence for pottery making. Much further work is required here to illuminate the nature and function of the buildings in this area.

Undoubtedly, however, our most exciting find during a season of major discoveries came from the line of shops that lay east of the mosque, butting against it, and which faced out on the old Roman-period *cardo*. Excavation in 2006 had revealed the back rooms of these shops, each subdivided by low bins (Blanke *et al.* 2007). Five whole vessels of the eighth century AD were found late in the 2006 season, but even more exhilarating was the discovery this season of two marble tablets, reused, with Arabic writing in a charcoal pen, on which further below. Initial reading of the clearer of the two tablets suggests merchants' records, listing names of customers and amounts owing. These historically important documents reveal not only the sophistication of commerce in the eighth century, but also the common use of Arabic – written in a neat, careful and confident hand – by this time in the market place. Just to reinforce the prominent role of Arabic in the town, a small ostrakon was found in the northwest corner of the mosque. The text is faint but should be readable in due course.

In the sections of this report that follow, the different authors offer preliminary accounts of the field areas for which they held special responsibility: the mosque, the buildings to the



1. General plan of the excavations in central Jarash, to end of 2007 season (Barnes mod. Walmsley).

west, the shops, and the bathhouse. A progress report on the ceramics is also offered.

The Mosque Qibla Hall, West Half: Continued Investigation of Architecture and Occupation Record (IS and AM)

Excavations in 2007 continued in the west

end of the *qibla* hall of the mosque, revealing the complete architectural plan of the hall area and shedding more light on the occupation record of the building. The main objective was to examine the architectural plan of the west end of the mosque hall as a coherent whole by excavating to floor-level a number of baulk walls which had

been restricting an overview of the full width of the hall. This involved excavation recording in excavation units MO/4, MO/5, MO/11, MO/13, MO/14 and MO/15 (**Fig. 2**).

The upper layers of the baulks consisted mostly of topsoil and mixed deposits, then a level with some remains of roof collapse in the form of tile fragments. Baulk excavations completed the exposure of two fallen column drums in the centre of the hall, between units MO/4 and MO/15, which belonged to the double colonnade that supported the roof of the hall. One of the columns features a lipped end and was found lying at subfloor level where a column base is expected, according to the floor plan. The other fallen column was found resting on top of broken roof tiles lying over stone paving slabs of the mosque hall floor. Rather than preserving a picture of a possible collapse of the building, the situation described is that left after salvaging activities had taken place in the mosque hall. Altogether, there remain only six lengths of fallen column shafts and a fragment of column standing *in situ* on a column base in the mosque qibla hall, the rest of the columns having been taken during salvaging, as have most other architectural elements. Notably, all the columns excavated so far in the mosque are smooth round cylinders of limestone. This indicates a consistent program in the columns of the mosque's colonnades, although it is not surprising since architectural elements were re-

used from older buildings and these are the most common type of column in Jarash.

With the newly revealed patch of paved floor mentioned above there is a total of eight small groups of floor paving stones preserved in the hall, while the rest of the paved floor was removed in antiquity for re-use elsewhere. The newly exposed pavers are similar to the other isolated patches of mosque hall paving, made up of flagstones of different quality. This is further evidence of matching together re-used dressed stones in laying the hall floor. A single building stone was found standing on top of the newly exposed paving slabs, aligned with the paving. This initially suggested it was part of a larger architectural feature or wall, but no further stones were found and the single stone shows no signs of mortar and may have simply collapsed in this position.

Excavation also brought to light another pier base in the mosque hall entrances and exposed the extent of a wall belonging to the bath house. The old wall was incorporated in the pier base as a foundation on which to build the entrance piers to the mosque hall, showing the extensive planning that went in to constructing the mosque. This type of planned reuse requiring careful preservation of previous structures to specified levels for the construction plan of the mosque has been observed repeatedly in excavations of the building's foundations (**Fig. 3**).

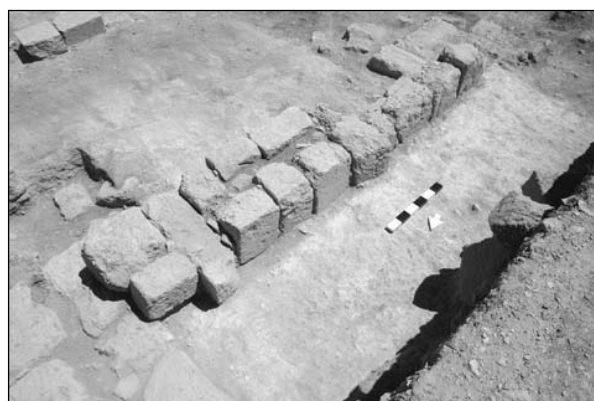
Excavation of the west baulk in square MO/15



2. A panorama of the full width of the mosque hall, after completing excavations to floor level (1 September 2007). The remains of the late antique bath house integrated in part of the mosque hall entrance foundations can also be seen in the foreground.



3. A fallen column shaft resting on stone paving of the floor in the mosque hall, with roof tile fragments crushed between the column and paving.



4. The west side of the dividing wall in the mosque hall, showing a darker brown foundation trench cut through the lighter coloured floor packing.

found substantial layers of stone tumble above floor level of the mosque hall, mostly inside the hall but also some in the courtyard area just outside the hall entrances. In the courtyard no stone or stamped clay floor surface and no evidence of a portico was found in front of the entrances to the hall. The tumble excavated in MO/14 and MO/15 forms one contiguous area of collapsed stones in the northwest part of the mosque hall, located west of a dividing wall reported in 2007 (Barnes *et al.* 2006). Ignacio Arce has identified the incised markings previously reported on a number of the tumble stones as grooves used to hold bonding material, probably inserted as a liquid metal (lead) or mortar, to help fix building stones, often voussoirs, together in place. In the mosque no evidence has been found that this bonding function was reused.

Finds recovered in 2007 mostly comprise ceramics, including roof tile fragments, and some bone material and glass beads. The dividing wall was excavated further, revealing on its west side a thick layer of compact, light yellow, clayey material, constituting a floor or subfloor packing (Fig. 4). Narrow foundation trenches of darker soil run along both sides of the double-row wall and confirm that it is a later addition built by cutting a trench through the floor bedding inside the hall. Moreover, the substantial foundation coursing of the wall, which visibly continues below floor level, suggests the wall was not simply a retaining strip for a raised area of paving but more likely a dividing wall inside the hall.

West of the dividing wall, the distinctive yellowish clay packing material continues to the

west wall at the end of the hall and has a southern limit that is in line with the south end of the wall and the north colonnade in the prayer hall, perhaps laid as a bed for a raised floor area, or laid simply as a later unpaved, stamped clay floor. There is evidence of more than one layer of this clay material, which covered the two lower steps of the stairs to the entrance in the northwest corner of the hall in square MO/14. Perhaps this represents more than one bedding layer or floor surface. Its southern limit might be associated with later disturbance or other activity, possibly a cutting or a pit, from which Middle Islamic wares were recovered at floor level in 2007, including sherds of Hand-Made Geometric Painted Ware in the north baulk of MO/13. Middle Islamic pottery has only been recovered from the west end of the hall demarcated by the dividing wall, but does not seem to be related to construction of the wall (Fig. 5). The division of space by the wall, with the stepped west entrance and the west *mihrāb*, appears to be due to an occupation phase corresponding to the use of the raised area of hard yellowish packing. The dividing wall does not meet the qibla wall, so the division does not appear to have separated the west *mihrāb* in an enclosed area. However, placement of the west *mihrāb* is equidistant (within 10cm) to the line of the dividing wall and the west wall of the mosque, so it is tempting to associate the walled division and west *mihrāb*, in plan at least. Alan Walmsley suggests the placement of the west *mihrāb* and the similarly sized easternmost *mihrāb*, which is precisely



5. View of the construction technique for the western wall foundations of the mosque.

equidistant to the line of the dividing wall and the east mosque wall, is a related matter. In this interpretation, the original, large central *mihrāb* was blocked up and replaced by the two others, positioned symmetrically within their respective divisions in the *qibla* hall. This fits well the modified hall plan if it was partitioned as indicated. On the other hand, the short dividing wall does not appear to create a well-demarcated modification of space along the *qibla* wall itself, and the two small *mihrāb* differ significantly in form and building technique, which is perhaps surprising if they were both planned as part of altering the use of the *qibla* hall. Future excavation of the *qibla* wall outside (south of) the mosque will hopefully help to shed more light on this building history.

In the laneway on the west side of the mosque (see: Blanke *et al.* 2007), where a stamped-earth street surface had already been traced, work in 2007 continued investigating the relationship between the mosque, the street, and the adjacent GO structures. A section previously excavated through the walking surface had not shown any layering, indicating a uniform fill material, but the excavation had been limited to upper deposit levels. In 2007 a difference in soil colours was traced in the street, with a clay terra rossa soil visible along the mosque wall indicating filling of a foundation trench. Excavation of the trench, which included terra rossa and pebbles, shows the street deposits at this level had already been laid down and were then cut through to construct the western wall of the mosque. This is significant in terms of urban planning and renewal at the scale of city zones because it may indicate

that the laneway alignment, which differs considerably to the orientation of late antique period building orientations in this quarter, predates the foundation of the mosque. The mosque foundation wall here is constructed to a high standard, consisting of several courses below mosque floor level: two courses of dressed stones well jointed with mortar, the lower course widening slightly for stability, below which is a levelling course of fist-sized irregular stones sitting on large undressed foundation stones (Fig. 6).

Excavation of the GO outer enclosure wall in the street produced evidence of a 2.5 metre wide entrance in the form of two door jams separated by four flat stones. Interestingly, the threshold is elevated about a metre above the level of the west entrance to the mosque hall, but the entrance was blocked at some point and no evidence for stairs to this higher level were found. Until the foundation construction of the GO enclosure wall is better understood and excavations continue along the laneway, it is difficult to determine whether the GO and mosque entrances near to each other were also used at the same time.

The GO Complexes (KD)

The GO area consists of a substantial plateau, presumably created by an accumulation of material culture, located immediately west of the mosque. The area is arbitrarily defined by the mosque on the east, the *decumanus* to the north, a surmised street leading south from the south *decumanus* on the west (represented by a widening in the colonnade opposite the so-called ‘Umayyad House’), and the macellum area to the south.



6. View of the “wash room” and associated courtyard and portico in GO/2.

This part of the site was surveyed in 2004, and excavation units have so far been placed in the easternmost end (i.e. closest to the mosque). Research strategies in the GO area have mainly focused on illuminating the relationship between the mosque and any contemporary buildings located to the west. Traditionally, mosques are not only religious focal points of Islamic urban settlements, but also judicial and administrative hubs, as well as areas of significant social and commercial activity. In order for a town to be bestowed with a congregational mosque such as the one in Jarash, an executive caliphal order had to be issued first (Pedersen 1991). Any large buildings in the immediate vicinity could thus have been conceived and commissioned by a centralised Muslim authority as well, and may reflect a more general policy of urban refurbishment in Islamic Jarash. If that is the case, excavating the structures may yield decisive information on the way in which the Muslim authorities governed and interacted with local populations in the provincial centres of Bilād ash-Shām.

The 2007 campaign saw a significant enlargement of the GO excavation area (For background information on the areas of GO/1 and GO/2 that were excavated prior to the 2007 season see Barnes *et al.* 2006: 307-10; Blanke *et al.* 2007). Two entirely new 10 by 10 metre excavation units, GO/4 and GO/5, were laid out in line with, but 10 meters (i.e. one excavation unit) north of GO/1 and GO/2 (**Fig. 1**). In addition to these new squares, the halved excavation unit termed GO/2 was extended to a full excavation unit. The work yielded various new insights regarding the GO area immediately, and has prompted us to rethink many of our initial ideas. The following presents the results of the 2007 season and suggests an initial interpretation.

GO/2

GO/2 is situated over a sizable building complex immediately west of the mosque's prayer hall. The actual excavation unit is placed directly west of the mosque's north-western corner (MO/14). The two buildings are separated only by a laneway that runs the full length of the mosque's west wall. The excavation unit was originally defined in 2005, and excavation was continued in 2006. However, in order to achieve as comprehensive a stratigraphic profile as pos-

sible, it was only the southern half of the 10 by 10 metre square that was subjected to actual excavation. The overall goal of the 2007 season was, therefore, to excavate the northern half of the unit to a level consistent with the southern half. Some excavation was, nonetheless, also continued in the southern part of the unit, and before presenting the new area, a few notes should be made on this work.

Focus was on the small building unit that is presumed to have a water related function, and on which we have reported in previous publications. For the sake of communication, this structure will here be referred to as the "wash room", though no such specific function has been irrefutably confirmed yet. Internally, a sondage was placed in the area of makeshift marble paving, effectively halving it. The aim of this sondage was to resolve the exact function of the building and why such a diminutive building, placed within the confines of a larger enclosure, was constructed with such robusticity. What were the intentions of its builders? Externally, work was continued in a pre-established sondage butting the 'wash room' at a perpendicular angle on its northeastern side. Here, the aim was to re-investigate the possible presence of a foundation trench and, as a minimum, retrieve material that could help date the building's insertion within the overall complex. Regrettably, both sondages yielded disappointingly little, and we are no closer to unequivocally resolving the meaning and function of the 'wash room'.

In the northern half of GO/2, the desired level was reached by the end of the season. Excavation indicated that most of this area had been used as an open courtyard for an extended period of time, as little more than a number of hard-stamped earthen floor layers were identified. The paucity of architecture in this half of the excavation unit further corroborated the notion that a courtyard was located here. The only architectural elements identified in the courtyard area were two *in situ* column bases; one of which remains almost completely hidden in the north baulk (**Fig. 6**). The column bases are aligned with the northernmost corner of the 'wash room' and run parallel to the substantial wall against which that room is built. Both wall and columns extend from the entrance of the 'wash room' in a northwest direction, and are

likely to constitute the remains of a colonnaded portico that originally surrounded the courtyard. However, excavation northwest of GO/2 is required to confirm this.

Access to the courtyard was seemingly granted from the laneway between GO and the mosque. Excavation of an area of tumble along the interior of the GO complex revealed a doorway that had once opened into the alley, but which at some stage had been blocked. The doorway was quite wide and set into the wall at a rather high level compared to the internal and external surface levels. Whether auxiliary features such as steps once existed could not be ascertained.

Upon reaching the courtyard surface associated with the 'wash room' entrance and columned portico, excavation was halted for the season. In the process of cleaning this surface for final photography, a big non-diagnostic sherd of a thick coarse ware, coated with a turquoise alkaline-based glaze, was discovered on the courtyard floor. Although only a single piece was found, the surrounding context indicates an early to mid eighth century date. This is rather early for glazed wares in Bilād ash-Shām, and, since the style and production methods are reminiscent of late Sasanid wares, it is quite likely to constitute an import from Iraq. Considering that the nature and function of this complex still cannot be unequivocally associated with Muslim elite in Jarash, it is certainly promising to note that similar sherds have been found in other Early Islamic elite contexts.

A good example is from the Umayyad complexes at Umm al-Walid (Bujard and Jögin 1995: 142, 147, fig. 5.29, 30). At first glance, these appear to be various standardised types of *quṣūr*, however, all three have unusual subdivisions of their central, and traditionally open courtyards (Bujard *et al.* 2001). The eastern *qaṣr* is particularly interesting for within each subdivision of courtyard, a single row of columns once bore the colonnade of a sheltering portico. Whether something similar happened in Jarash is still not clear and will be investigated in coming seasons.

GO/4

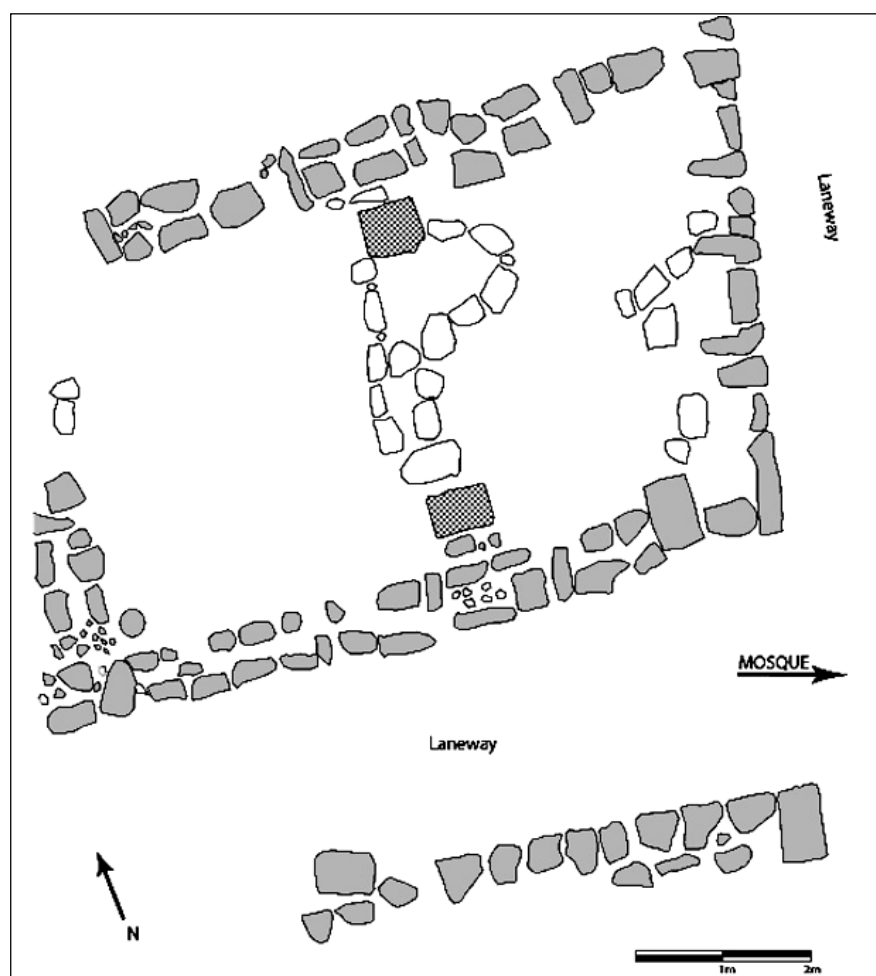
GO/4 is the first of the two new excavation units. It was laid out north of GO/2, but at a dis-

tance of one unit (i.e. 10 meters) in order to maintain full access to the other excavation areas (i.e. bathhouse, mosque and shops). Both GO/4 and GO/5 are on the plateau west of the mosque's north-western quadrant, and the buildings they inhabit remain physically separated from the mosque by the interceding laneway. The presence of structures here, belonging to roughly the same period as the mosque, was recognized during a survey of the GO area in 2004, although no excavation had taken place in the north-eastern corner of the GO area prior to 2007.

The eastern perimeter wall of a large structure flanking the mosque's west side was identified, cleared and recorded as part of the work conducted in MO/16 over the last few seasons. However, once the GO/4 unit had been defined and excavation begun, it quickly became clear that we were, in fact, dealing with multiple buildings. In GO/4 alone, at least two substantial building units were identified, and although these clearly seem related (e.g. by alignment and association with the mosque) to the architecture in GO/1 and GO/2, they may well be independent structures. This would mean that perhaps as many as three large complexes flanked the west side of the mosque; a scenario which is mirrored in the so-called Umayyad palaces in Jerusalem, though there on a larger scale (Ben-Dov 1985: 292-321).

Prior to excavation, the presence of a considerable amount of stone tumble was visible in the ground. Once excavation commenced, it became clear that in spite of some clearance work in 2004, the topsoil still consisted of ubiquitous modern disturbances interspersed with a high density of ancient tumble. Work therefore proceeded slowly, and the debris layers were the only strata to be fully excavated this season. Nevertheless, removing the modern fills and upper tumble layers revealed a range of architectural features, which in alignment, building techniques and initial artefact yield seem to correspond chronologically to the early phases of the mosque (Fig. 7).

Based on the architecture, GO/4 is interpreted as containing elements of two major structures, as well as an east-west running alley that intersects at a perpendicular angle with the laneway running parallel to the mosque. The remains of the northern building are the most substantial in



7. Preliminary surface plan of the architectural features of GO/4.

this excavation unit. These constitute a square room that appears once to have had a vaulted ceiling borne by a sizeable arch. Only the foundation springers of this arch were found *in situ*, placed centrally in room and spanning its full width, but these were complimented by a few voussoirs retrieved from the tumble. A line of stones ran between the springers, but excavation this season did not penetrate deeply enough to ascertain whether these are, in fact, part of the collapsed arch, or a later makeshift wall and bin subdividing the room. Of the second building unit only the northernmost wall was discovered, and because the area designated to become GO/3 remains unexcavated, we are so far unable to confirm or deny this building's direct relationship with the courtyard structure in GO/2.

Between the two buildings was an open band, 2.70 meters wide and spanning the full east-west length of the excavation unit (**Fig. 8**). In the few areas where the tumble and modern infilling

was removed, it seemed that the band consists mostly of hard stamped earthen strata, which at present display no signs of having contained any type of architectural compartmentalisation. The empty band joins with the pre-established north-south laneway at a 90 degree angle, and it has therefore initially been interpreted as a similar passage or laneway. Further excavation is required to uncover the full extent of this feature, but it is worth noting that as infrastructural organisation goes, the orthogonality of its planning corresponds to general urban trends in the Early Islamic period (Foote 2000).

It would be premature to consider chronological aspects of the excavated remains in GO/4. First of all, they have not been fully exposed and we did not identify any clear occupational surfaces with an associated ceramic profile. Furthermore, there were some indications of later reuse of this area, and distinguishing between the phases requires a localised stratigraphic pro-



8. Oblique aerial view of excavation units GO/4 and GO/5 (both to left) including the two building unit and interceding street or laneway. To right: MO/16 (1 September 2007).

filing in order to be reliable. A limited amount of artefacts were discovered in the excavation of this unit, the most interesting being two Umayyad oil lamps within what seems to be a poorly constructed stone bin. However, as only clearly disturbed layers were removed, further excavation is necessary in order to determine whether they come from a primary archaeological context or from somewhere else in Jarash and then simply were dumped here at a much later stage.

GO/5

The GO/5 unit is located immediately west of the southwest corner of the mosque (MO/16), in direct northern extension of GO/4 (Fig. 8). It is the northernmost excavation unit in the GO area and borders the south *decumanus*. The eastern edge of the excavation unit is demarcated by a substantial perimeter wall belonging to what we now know is the northernmost of the GO complexes. The accommodation of the excavation unit to fit within the architectural features (i.e. the perimeter wall) means that even though it is in accordance with the overall grid, this unit was slightly reduced in size to accommodate it to the available space. The area was surveyed and preliminarily cleared in 2004, but no actual excavation has been conducted here prior to this season.

As excavation commenced, it was evident that in spite of the 2004 clearance work (which included a significant modern deposit of fine red

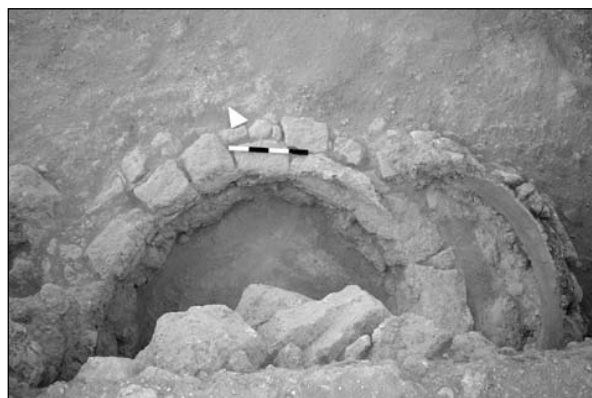
Şuwayliḥ sand), there was still a high degree of contamination in the upper strata. Nevertheless, following the removal of a spit of roughly 30cm, the first individually identifiable loci appeared. Most dominant was a large feature, which we termed a platform for lack of a better characteristic. Although the feature was completely excavated, it remains unclear exactly what it was intended or used for. The installation consisted of approximately 45 large limestone ashlar of varying dimensions placed against each other in a rectangular shape; as if constructed to constitute a small paved area. Both the eastern and southern edges of the platform were defined by stone blocks that were raised between 10 and 30cm from the general level of the platform, suggesting that at least these edges were undisturbed. The western and northern edges of the feature did not have similar demarcations, but nor were there any indications that it had been cut back here.

The platform had been set in a whitish clay packing that contained an extremely high density of ceramic sherds, which, based on preliminary in-field readings, appeared to be mostly late sixth to early ninth century material. The clay packing surrounding the platform had a similar high density of ceramic material. At first, this led us to deem the area a late antique ceramic dump, but upon closer inspection of the material, it became clear, that despite the density and

chronological limitations of the material, the deposit was practically void of wasters or other purposefully discarded vessels. The level below the platform revealed a more substantial yellowish clay packing, still full of ceramics.

In the southeastern corner of the unit, a dark discolouration of the soil prompted the definition of an independent locus. The presence of what at first seemed to be a large ceramic sherd was soon redefined as some sort of oven. Further fragments were retrieved, but none *in situ* and they appeared to have been dumped here as part of the fill. Excavation below the ash deposit was temporarily halted when the density of ceramics diminished drastically and the soil colour changed from yellow to a very dark brown. The appearance of an actual surface (upon which the ceramics seem to have been dumped) was confirmed by the discovery of an *in situ* *ṭābūn* cut into this surface. More than half of it was missing, and the standing *ṭābūn* wall was extremely porous. The wall was roughly 3cm thick and packed on the outside with coarse clay. The same clay was used for its foundation. The contents of the *ṭābūn* yielded only a few ceramic sherds and some faunal remains.

Once the fill was removed, a series of ashlar appeared upon which the *ṭābūn* had been partially built. The blocks formed a semi-circular shape, and still had the visible remains of what once was the brick superstructure (mostly visible as profiles, but also including a few standing bricks of the lowest course). Further excavation showed the feature to be the foundation of a substantial ceramic kiln; the brick superstructure being the remains of the kiln wall (**Fig. 9**). Although smaller than most of its presumed counterparts, this installation is similar to many of the Byzantine and Early Islamic kilns identified throughout the site, for example in front of the Artemis Temple and in the North Theatre (Pierobon 1986; Schaefer and Falkner 1986; Uscatescu and Martin-Bueno 1997). The kiln had a base diameter of just less than two meters (198cm) and the coursing consisted of a double row of dressed limestone blocks. Approximately half of this feature remains hidden in the southern baulk, and because of time constraints the kiln and its contents were not fully excavated this season. Both features were, therefore, backfilled in anticipation of further investigation in 2008.



9. Vertical shot of kiln foundation and the *in situ* remains of the *ṭābūn*.

Concluding remarks

The work conducted in the GO area in 2007 has given cause to a considerable reevaluation of this area and its relationship to the mosque. We now know that at least two and possibly three substantial buildings were located to the east of the mosque on the other side of a laneway, and there is some evidence to suggest an elite presence in these structures. This conclusion widens the central role of the mosque in a much larger urban refurbishment plan focusing on the area around the south *tetrakoinion* during the eighth century AD.

The Shops at the Eastern Enclosure Wall (LR)

The aim of the 2007 season was to finish the excavation of the row of shops situated between the eastern enclosure wall of the mosque, against which they are butting, and the *cardo* (excavation units MO/9 and MO/10; see **Fig. 1**). The area investigated was the northern part of the shop complex, closest to the east entrance of the mosque, where a semi-circular staircase was found in 2005. A detailed description of the staircase and eastern entrance can be found in the report on the 2005-2006 seasons (Blanke *et al.* 2007).

All the shops in the area had, in previous seasons, been assigned letters to differentiate one from the other. These allocated letters ranged from A to H. The shops have now been assigned a numeric sequence from 1 to 5 starting from the southern shop. Accordingly, the focus of work in 2007 was on shops 4 and 5 (previously F, G and H). This change in numbering resulted

from a difficulty in differentiating separation walls between the shops from walls used for the internal division of space within the single shop unit.

The shops in the southern part of the complex (shops 1-3) had been deemed fully excavated in previous seasons and the level where excavation was stopped had been interpreted as the primary occupation-level. A similar level was reached in shop 4 and 5 by the end of 2006, but the finding of five Umayyad-period ceramic vessels in one of the storage bins in Shop 5 made it clear that the primary Umayyad occupation-level was still to be reached in the rest of the shop (**Fig. 10**, initial report in Blanke *et al.* 2007).

The Hearth in Shop 5

In the course of this work it was established that a fireplace, first found in 2006 in a bin in the south-western corner of Shop 5 and interpreted as a dug-in fire installation, actually belonged to a lower, and thus earlier, occupation level. When layers previous thought to be the floor level were removed, we encountered deposits of ash located outside of the hearth. These deposits were traceable all the way down to the base of the hearth where, still on the outside, they continued horizontally on a hard packed floor level of reddish soil. The hearth itself was made of a mixture of mud and terra rossa clay, strengthened by applying large sherds of ceramics, tiles and pavers to the outside (**Figs. 11, 12**). The rim of the hearth was rounded off by applying sherds from the rim of a broken storage jar, this being excavated in 2006.



10. In situ view of the group of ceramic vessels found in 2006 in Shop 5.

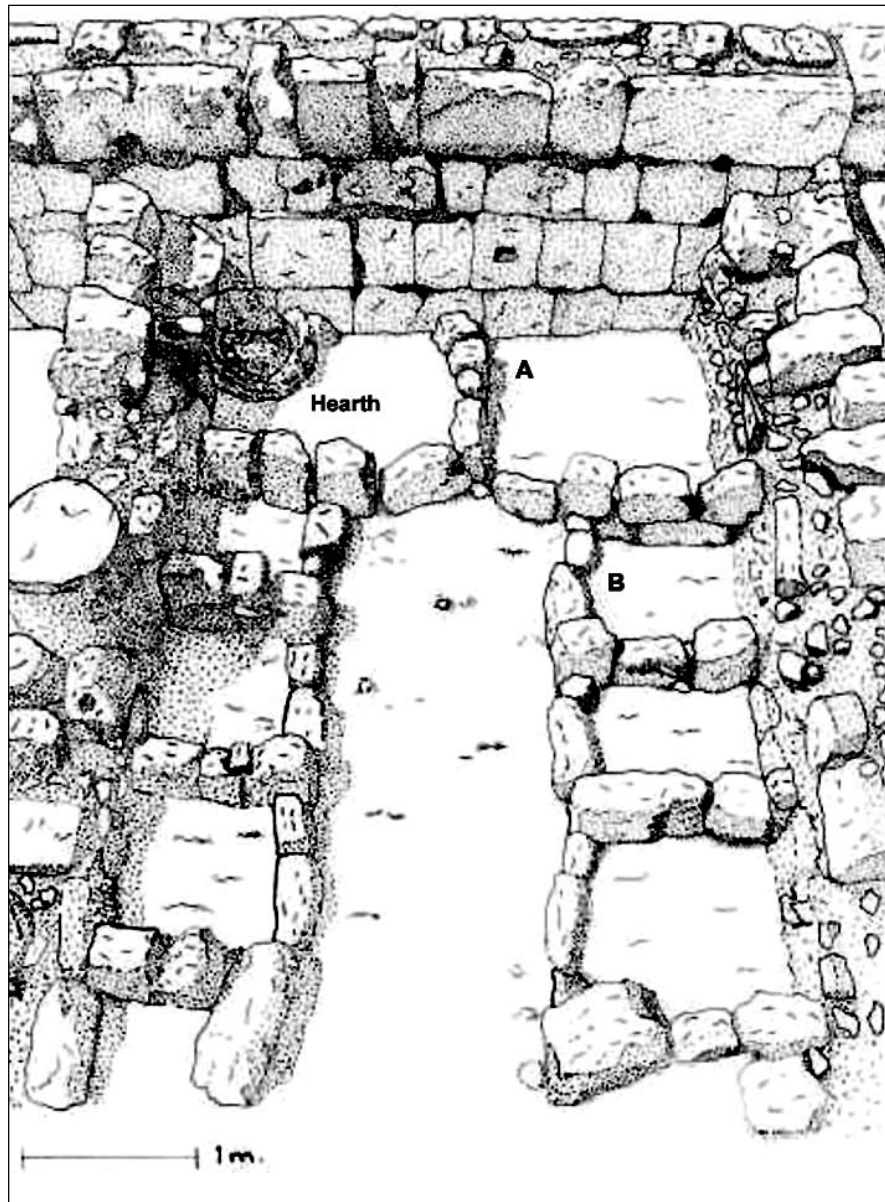
The Inscribed Marble Tablets

To the north of the hearth bin, and sharing a separation wall, another bin of just about the same size and layout had been defined in 2006, but left unexcavated. This bin was excavated in the same manner as the rest of the loci in the shop, horizontally in spits of 2 to 3 cm at a time, sieving (sifting) all of the soil removed. Except for signs of rodent activity, no finds of particular interest were found in this bin to begin with. In due course, however, in the southwest corner of the bin, the top of a marble tablet was exposed that seemed to be standing almost upright, tilting slightly to the west. Careful excavation resulted in the exposure of a light grey marble tablet sitting 16 centimetres above the base of the bin, and on which clear black writing in Arabic could be seen over much of the surface (**Figs. 11, 13**). From a preliminary in-field translation the inscription consisted of a list of names and amounts owing to the shopkeeper (see the report of F. Bessard, below).

A second inscribed marble slab was found later in the season in the adjacent Shop 4 (**Figs. 14, 15**). Unlike the first tablet, this slab was lying horizontally on the floor level. As can be seen in **Fig. 15**, the writing on the second slab was considerably more indistinct than that on the first, and the fine layer of dirt and mud covering it made it very hard for us to be sure if the slab actually had any writing on it at all. Only a few letters were visible in the upper left corner.

The Storage Bins

The remaining bins in Shop 5 were excavated in the hope that these would shed further light on other commodities originally sold there (**Fig. 11**). In that sense our efforts turned out to be fruitless. As the excavation of the four remaining storage bins progressed, no other significant finds were found. Instead, their excavation recovered small pieces of ceramics, glass, bone and the odd piece of corroded metal, mostly nails. One rather large chunk of melted lead was found in one of the bins, but we were unable to determine whether it was placed there as part of the sub surface packing, kept in the bin for later use, or was the leftover from another kind of activity. Similarly, two other bins in Shop 4 showed the same lack of any finds which could be related to the commercial activity of the shop.



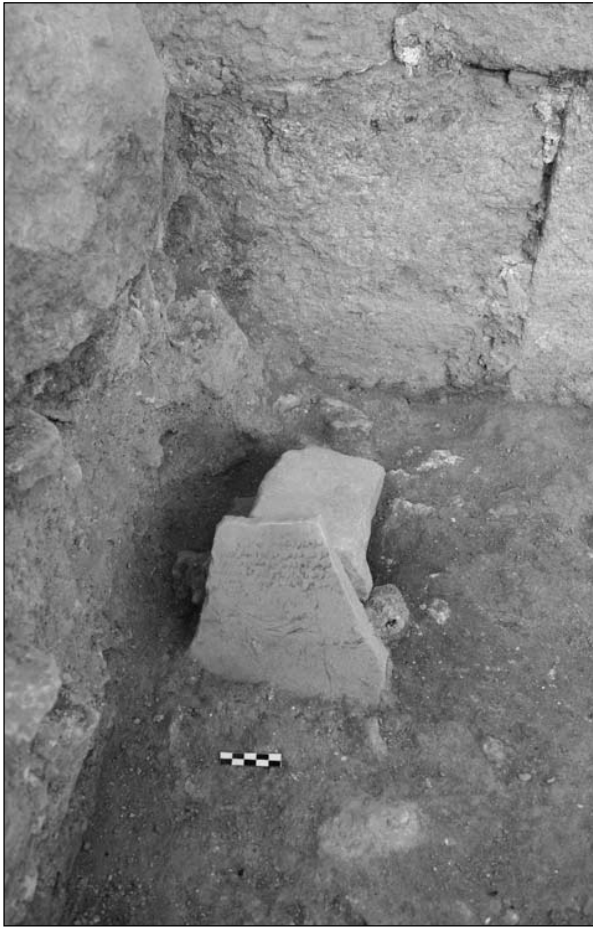
11. An overview of Shop 5. 'A' shows the find spot of the marble tablet with an Arabic text, while 'B' indicates where the ceramic vessels were found in 2006. The bin containing a hearth can be seen in the upper left hand corner of the image.



12. Hearth in the southwest corner bin of Shop 5, looking southwest.

The Fragmented Mosaic Floor

At the bottom of two bins situated in the southeast of Shop 5 the first of several pieces of fragmented mosaic floor were uncovered. It was thought that a similar piece of mosaic might be revealed in the bin located immediately to the north of these two, in that they were only separated by the central walkway, but any mosaic that might have been there was destroyed by the construction of Shop 5 and wall 2. The only surviving mosaic found in the northern part of Shop 5 was the scarce remains running underneath Wall 2. Better results were obtained further to the south where it was possible to trace the mo-



13. View of the excavated tablet resting in an upright position before lifting.

saic first revealed in Shop 5, underneath Wall 3 and into Shop 4 where we found the largest and best preserved parts (see **Fig. 14** for location).

The motif and design of the mosaic is a relative simple one, consisting of a repeating pattern of squares with an alternating decoration of either a smaller square with a central point, or a cross (**Fig. 16**). The tesserae used are of a rather rough quality, cut from off-white and red stone. Similar pieces of mosaic were found in a sondage made in 2004 (Barnes *et al.* 2006: 296-97).

Unquestionably, the mosaic predates the shop complex as separation walls, bins, and floor levels are all superimposed on the mosaic. Its function is not clear, but may relate to a large area of mosaic found in front of the macellum by Dr Asem Barghouti between 1975 and 1978 (Barghouti 1982: 224-25). As the present state of the IJP mosaic is fragile it was reburied and covered with sandbags at the end of the season.

Construction Sequence of the Shop-Complex

Although the construction sequence of the shops in relation to the mosaic was a relatively straightforward matter, the sequence for the whole complex still presents a few questions.

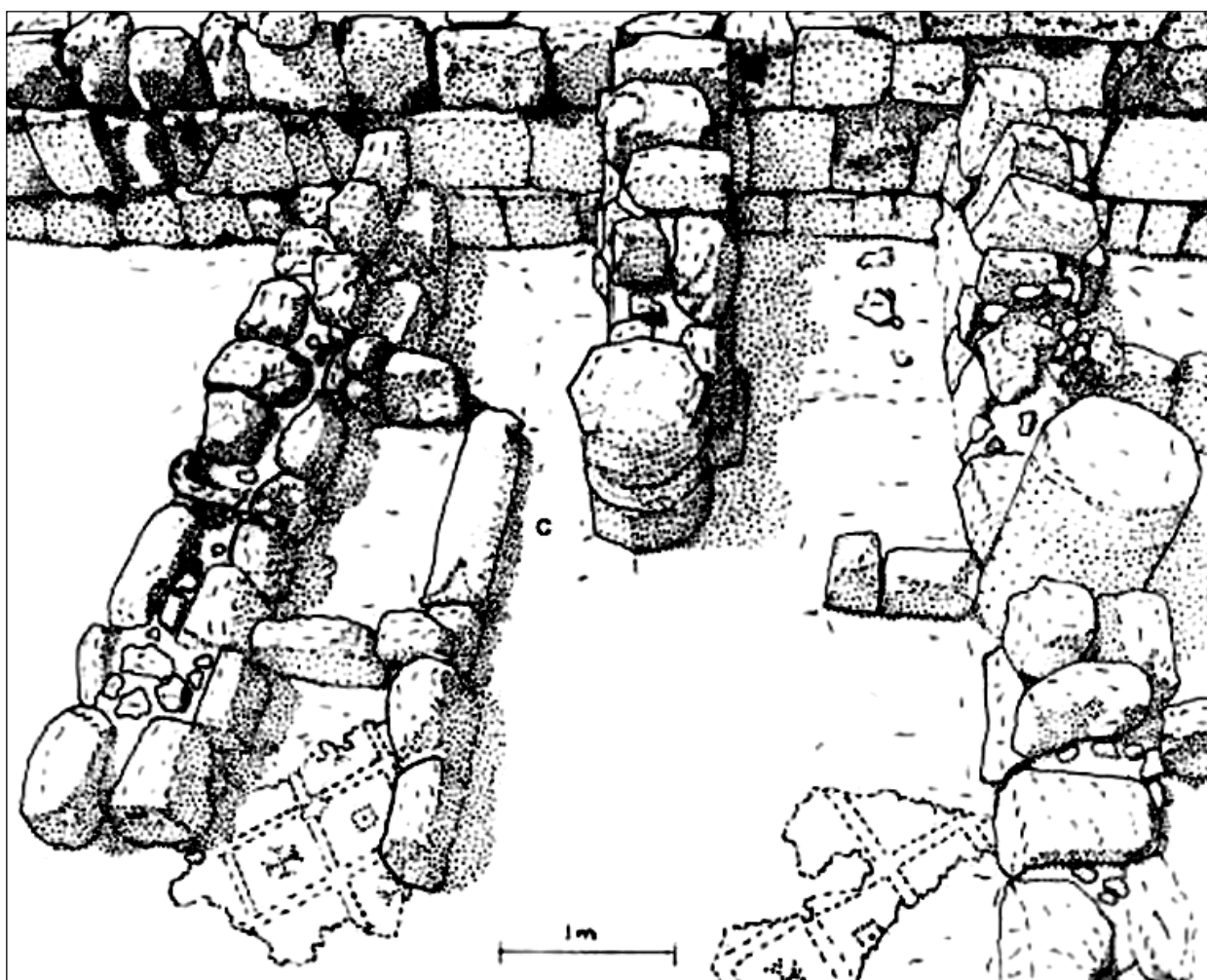
It was shown last season that the ramp, leading up to the staircase and the eastern entrance of the mosque, was constructed prior to Wall 2 (the northern wall of Shop 5 in the line of shops), as the foundation trench of that wall was dug into the ramp, and that the semi-circular staircase was built subsequently as the lower course of the stairs is superimposed on the foundation trench of Wall 2. The time span for this sequence is not clear as of yet. It should be noted though that the stairs are founded directly on top of the foundation trench with no additional build-up of archaeological layers between them. This could, of course, easily be due to the removal of an earlier staircase and the subsequent clearing and levelling of a foundation area for the new one and is, therefore, a circumstantial indication at best.

What would be interesting to establish is the construction sequence of the shop-complex as a whole. Is the current layout the result of more than one sequence of building activity, or does the intrusion of the foundation trench of Wall 2 into the ramp represent the starting point of the entire row of shops?

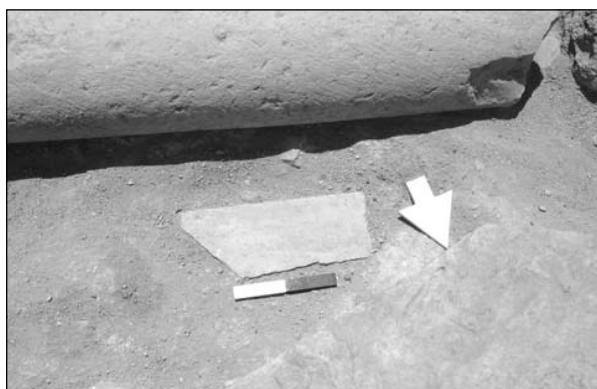
Shop 5 in its current state is the best preserved in regards to layout and surviving bins. The remaining shops exhibit (in their present state of excavation) a more advanced state of decay especially in regards to their internal features and layout. Yet due to the fact that the whole complex has been built using reused material from older buildings, we are unable to see the decay of the masonry as any certain indicator of construction sequence. Or in other words; the relative age of the building-stones does not necessarily relate to the sequence in which they were brought to, and used in, their current location.

Plans for the Next Season

A re-evaluation of all the separation walls in the complex in regard to building technique, masonry, packing and foundation level will be carried out in the coming season. A detailed assessment of differences, if any, will help shed new light on the question of construction se-



14. An overview of Shop 4. 'C' indicates the find spot of the second, but indistinct, marble tablet with an Arabic text.



15. Discovery of a second, but less clear, inscribed marble tablet in Shop 4.

quence. Completing the excavation of the three southern shops will, hopefully, also contribute to answering this question, as well as giving

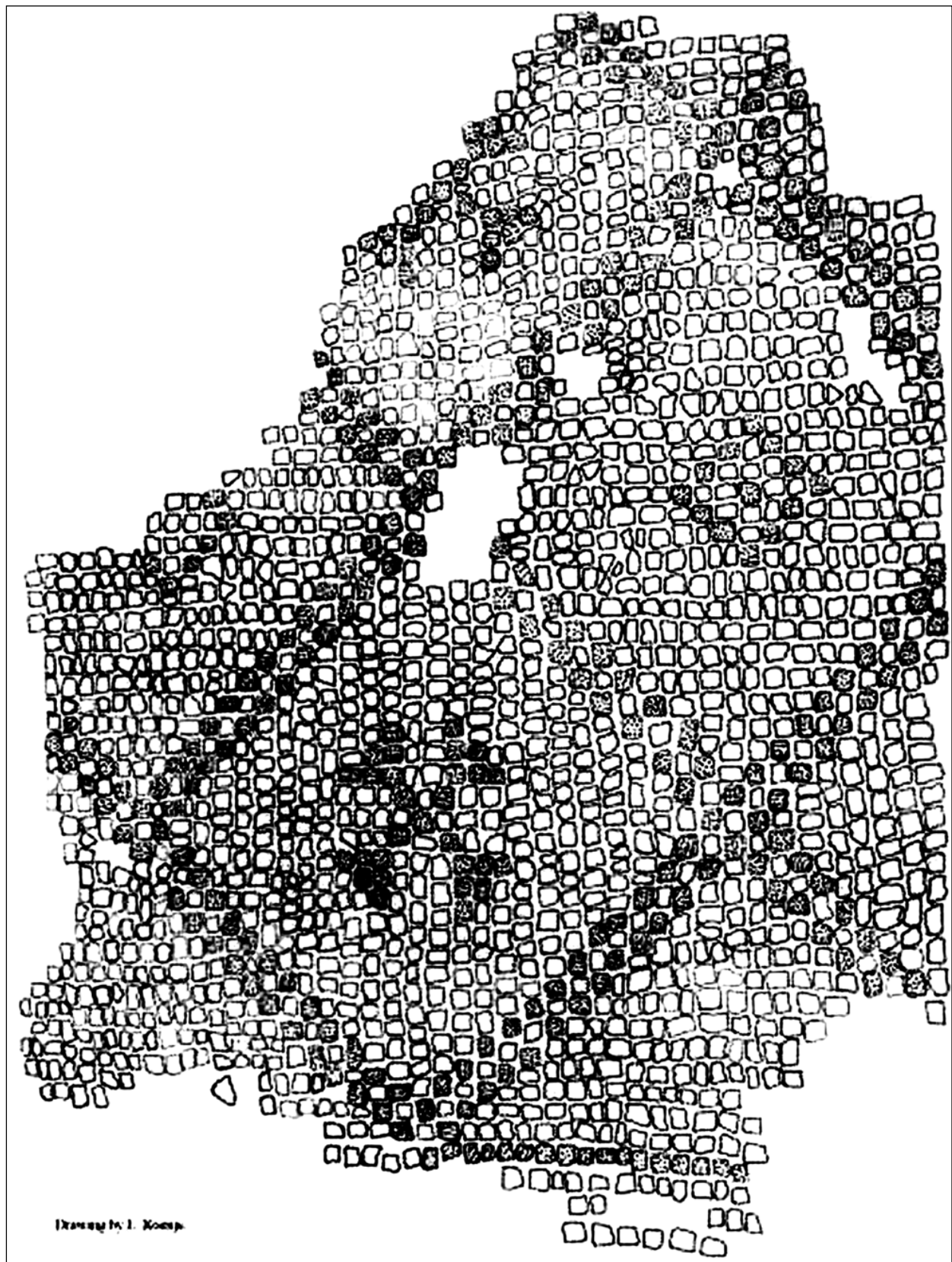
more clues to the nature of activity within them. While the pottery in Shop 5 should be seen as representative of the commodities sold there, little information yet exists as to the goods sold, or services provided, in the rest of the complex, but further work may shed new light on this matter.

Arabic Shopkeepers' Accounts from Early Islamic Shops of Jarash¹ (FB)

As reported above, two marble tablets with Arabic inscriptions on one face were discovered at the floor level of shops adjoining the Early Islamic congregational mosque of Jarash (Walmsley and Damgaard 2005: 362-378). A similar marble tablet with an Arabic inscription, now held in Jordan Archaeological Museum, was found by the Yale excavations in 1931 in

1. I wish to thank Fred Donner (Oriental Institute, Chicago)

for his help during the Translation of the Marble slabs.



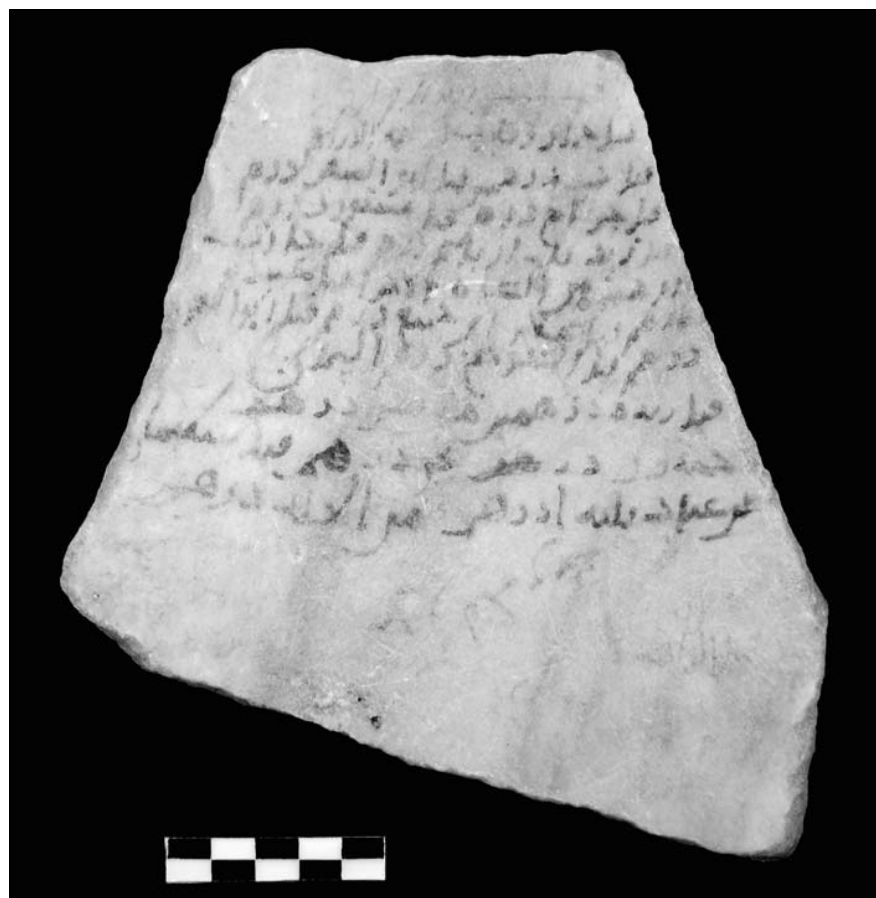
16. Drawing of the fragmentary mosaic surface exposed below Shop 4.

nearby shops located in the northeast part of the Tetrakionion area, but was not published at the time (Kraeling 1938: 109-14; Simpson forthcoming).

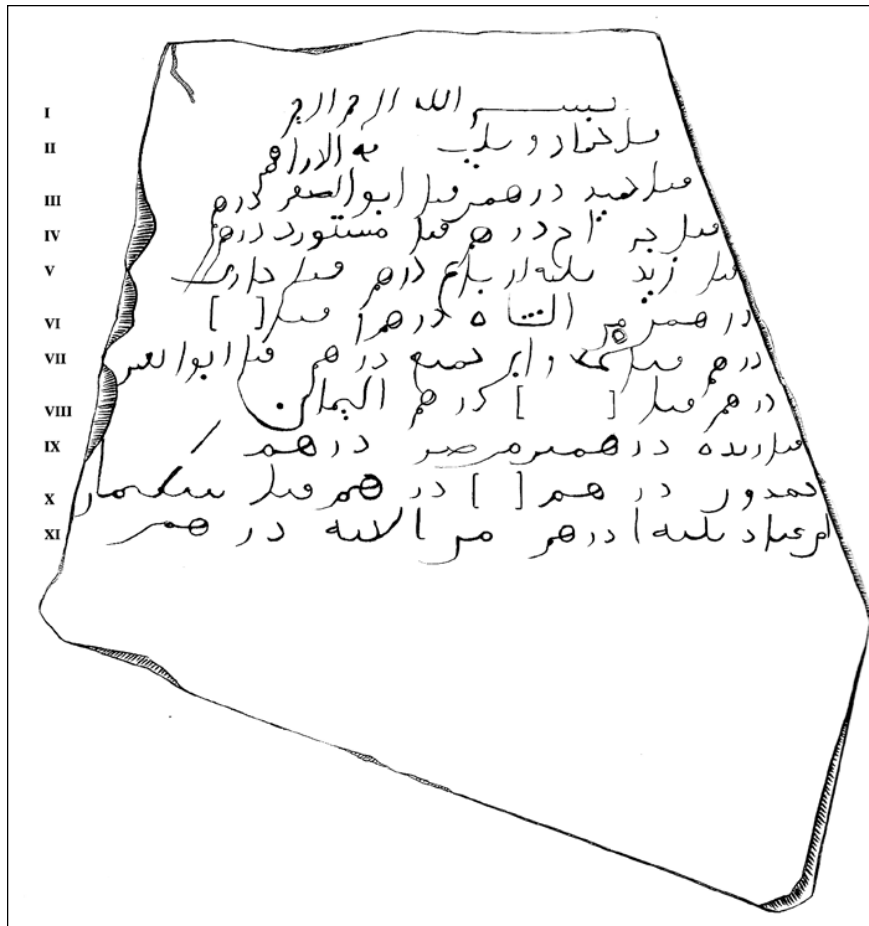
All three ostraca consist of irregularly shaped marble pieces reused from older buildings, probably wall cladding. The practice of reusing marble slabs for writing on was common in the Early Islamic period and is known, for example, from 'Asqalan (Sharon 1997: 147-48) and Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbī (Schlumberger 1986). On the Jarash tablets the obverse (polished) side was used to write on, while the reverse was left blank. The inscriptions appear to be written using a charcoal-based medium or ink and were executed in a cursive script closely related to the *naskhī* form of Arabic. Both in appearance and formulation the texts are informal and are written as formulaic lists. The writer did not use diacritical marks systematically, which makes the inscriptions difficult to read. None of the inscriptions is dated explicitly in the text, but palaeographic indications (Abbott 1941: 65-104),

in addition to archaeological context, suggest they date to the first or second century of the *Hijrah*.

Each inscribed tablet consists of a list of individual debt transactions. On the best preserved tablet (Figs. 17, 18), the text begins with the standard phrase *bism Allah al-rahman al-rahim*. This is followed by the transactions, each recorded according to a set formula giving the type of transaction, name of person and monetary sum. To introduce each debt record, inscriptions use the preposition *min* or the fixed phrase *qibala*, which means in this context 'payable from' (Ibn Mansur, *Lisan al-Arab*, ed. Dar Sader, Beyrouth 1990, T. 12 p. 14), or the verb *sharaṭa*, conjugated in the past tense in the third person plural, which means 'to agree to pay' (Dozy, *Dictionnaire*, T. 1, ed. Maisonneuve, 1967: 145). The shopkeeper then notes the names or the *kunya* of his customers, which are encountered frequently in literary sources of the early Islamic period, and then the small debts outstanding, all expressed in dirham values. Most likely the



17. Tablet 1, discovered in August 2007, eleven lines in *naskhī* script (IJP-FCN5782). Length 18cm; width 17.5cm.



18. Drawing of Tablet 1 (Bessard).

debts were paid in silver coin, dirham or dirham fractions, although Alan Walmsley proposes that copper *fulūs* could have been used to meet the value of dirham fractions, probably at a set rate of 24 *fulūs* to a dirham (Walmsley forthcoming). One may also propose that clients cut the silver coins to get fragments, as similar examples in Umayyad Spain suggest. Once the customers had paid their debts the shopkeeper probably then rubbed out their names and transactions. This practice is suggested by marks showing several older layers of writing on the tablet, which can be seen clearly with the aid of a microscope. The inscriptions were unsigned, which means that they were private documents, not to be considered as contracts.

A transcription and translation of the best preserved tablet from Shop 5 follows (Fig. 19). The reading of the inscriptions were made from photographs taken by Ian Simpson following inspection and recording of the physical properties of the tablets and the writing on them with conser-

- 1- بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
- 2- قبل حماد وقبل (?) الدراهم
- 3- قبل حميد درهمين قبل أبو صقر درهم
- 4- قبل جراح درهم قبل مستورد درهم
- 5- قبل زيد ثلاثة أرباع درهم قبل حارث
- 6- درهمين من الشاه درهم وقبل (?)
- 7- درهم قبل علا وابن جميع درهم قبل أبو العيص
- 8- درهم قبل (?) درهم اليماني...
- 9- قبل رنده درهمين (?) درهم
- 10- حمدون درهم كر درهم قبل سليمان...
- 11- أم عباد ثلاثة ادريم من (?) درهم

19. Transcription of Tablet 1 (Bessard).

vator Margit Petersen. The transcription system employed is based on the Leiden convention.

Transcription

The transcription system used here is based on the Leiden convention.

- < > Angle brackets enclose letters and words that are not present in the inscription but which should be.
- (?) Round brackets with question mark inside is used for words which are unclear because they are hardly visible.
- ... Three dots indicate the text continues but the tablet surface is chipped or erased.

Translation

1. In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate
2. (payable) from Ḥammād and from (?) darāhim
3. from Ḥamad dirhamayn, from Abū aṣ-Ṣaḡar one dirham
4. from Jarrah² one dirham, from Mustawrid one dirham
5. from Zaid three quarters of a dirham, from Ḥārith
6. dirhamayn, from ash-Shāh one dirham and from (?)
7. one dirham, from ‘Alā and Ibn Jamya’ one dirham, from Abū al-‘Īṣ
8. one dirham, from (?) one dirham, al-Yamānī...
9. from Randa dirhamayn (?) one dirham
10. Ḥamdūn one dirham plus another dirham, from Sulaymān...
11. Umm ‘Abbād three darāhim, from (?) one dirham

A Note on the Continuing Exploration of the Central Baths (LB)

Following on from previous reports on the Central Baths at Jarash (Barnes *et al.* 2006; Blanke and Damgaard 2005; Blanke *et al.* 2007; Damgaard and Blanke 2004), this section gives an account of the continuing exploration of the

bathhouse conducted in 2007. The preceding excavations of the bathing facility included a full uncovering of the *hypocaust*, *piscine* in the *frigidarium*, *tepidarium*, selected parts of the service area, hereunder the *praefurnia* as well as a secondary entrance to the *hypocaust*; constructed for the purpose of maintenance. A deep sounding conducted in 2006 below the *piscine* led to results that suggested a construction of the bathhouse within the late third or early fourth century, and a thorough examination of the finds in strata that relates to the demise of the building has provided a tentative date for the disuse of the baths in the early eighth century (Blanke *et al.* 2007). Also, a strip trench stretching westwards from unit MO/1 into unit MO/17 was begun in order to establish the westernmost extent of the building (see **Fig. 1**).

Unit MO/17

The objectives in MO/17 during the 2007 season were based on questions that arose out of the work undertaken in the previous year. Firstly, the excavation of a three-metre wide trench in unit MO/17 had resulted in several unanswered questions. These questions involved the previous uncovering of the remains of a mosaic floor that was constructed against a substantial wall running north-northwest to south-southeast. It was, however, not possible to either establish the purpose of the wall or to define the position of the mosaic within the functional layout of the bathhouse. Nonetheless, based on the considerable width of the wall it was interpreted as the outer wall in the western part of the bathhouse and the area that contained the mosaic was interpreted as the remains of an *apodyterium* based on its position within the bathhouse plan, as well as the remains of a small basin, which would have been a common feature in *apodyteria* and was designed for washing hands and face before entering the baths. During the 2007 season, an attempt was made to solve these issues by extending the excavation to include the entire unit. The excavation uncovered a continuation of the

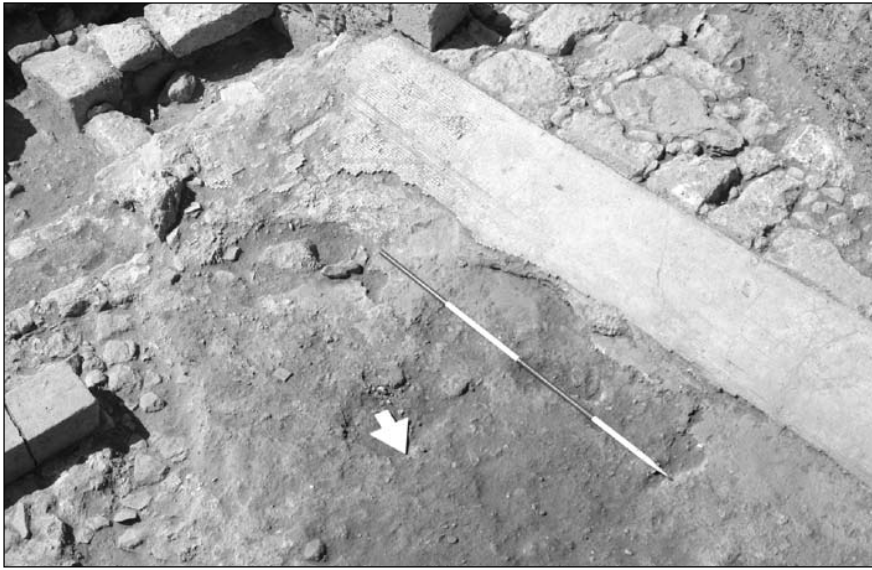
2. To translate the names of the customers I used the *Kitāb al-Ansāb* of Ibn Sallām (154-224/776-846), ed. Dar al-Fikr, Damascus, 1989. But, some of the names are still subject of controversy. (Lign 4) the name Jarrah lacks the definite article, according to Ibn Sallām, *Ibidem*, p. 319-321. (Lign 4), the name Mustawrid is also missing the definite article, Ibn Sallām, *Ibidem*, p. 236. (Lign

5), the name Ḥārith is rare, but attested by Ibn Sallām, *Ibidem*, p. 257. The names Ḥārith and al-Ḥāritha are however more common. (Lign 6), the translation of the name ash-Shāh is uncertain and needs more detailed research. (Lign 7), finally, the names ‘Alā, Ibn Jamya’ and Abū al-‘Īṣ are rare, but are attested by Ibn Sallām, *Ibidem*, p. 199, 350.

wall throughout the entire length of the unit as well as a continuation of the mosaic floor north of the major east west running sewer (Figs. 20, 21). The remains of the mosaic floor were 75cm wide and were found preserved along the entire northern section of the wall. However, a larger area of cement that originally served as a foundation for the mosaic witnessed that the mosaic floor originally occupied a much larger area. The cement showed evidence of cut marks indicating that the majority of the mosaic floor was removed in a quick manner with a pickaxe

like tool. This process must be assumed to have taken place as part of the overall dismantling of the bathhouse, and the associated harvest for valuable and useful building materials, just before the construction of the mosque.

A second important discovery came with what is currently interpreted as a large basin that was accessed from the *caldarium* (Fig. 21) However, the basin was not heated by the hypocaust, but appears to either have been fed with hot water from the boilers, or have been filled with cold water. The basin consisted of a rectangular



20. Mosaic floor in Unit MO/17 running parallel to westernmost outer wall in Central Baths, looking south.



21. Overview of basin in Unit MO/17 looking southwest.

shape that measure approximately 4 by 3 meters and a small niche in the northern end of the west wall; thereby, the basin is large enough to have served as a plunge pool. This is a highly unusual feature and more consideration is needed in relation to how this installation functioned within its context of the heated part of the bathhouse. A small section of the basin was excavated, which revealed that the sides and bottom of the feature were covered in a thick layer of plaster, which would have been sufficient to hold water. At a later, currently undated, phase in the history of the bathhouse, the basin went out of use and was filled up with soil, and a surface was constructed from three layers of fist sized stones coated with a layer of plaster. The surface could possibly have facilitated the continuous use of water in this area.

Unit MO/18

A 4.5 meter wide trench was excavated through unit MO/18, which enabled an analysis of the relationship of the bathhouse, excavated in unit MO/1 and the Roman Period shops below the level of the mosque in unit MO/3 (**Fig. 22**). This trench was designed to deal with a longstanding issue regarding the entrance to the bathhouse and the relationship between the baths and the shops. However, establishing the relationship between the two appeared more complicated than firstly assumed, primarily as a result of the intense harvest for building materials that provided a situation where almost nothing has remained of the floor paving nor of the general superstructure. However, it was pos-



22. Overview of excavated area between bathing suite and shop in Unit MO/3 looking north.

sible to establish that the bathing section and the one shop that has been excavated in Unit MO/3 were only separated by a single row wall, which clearly suggests that the two were constructed as part of one building. Furthermore, it can be suggested that the entrance to the complex was situated between two shops on the *decumanus*. Further excavation is however required before this suggestion can be confirmed.

Future Work on the Central Baths

Following the seasons of excavations of the bathhouse conducted hitherto, it has been possible to establish a general plan of the building, as well as excavating important rooms and features that has enabled a good understanding of the history and use of the bathing facility. In a building as substantial in size as the Central Baths there will always be remaining questions regarding the understanding and interpretation of the facility; however, in the case of this bathhouse, it is currently believed that such issues will not alter the general perspective and understanding of the building. Therefore, further work will include only minor examinations in order to clarify chronological issues and explicate matters that currently must be perceived as tentative. These further examinations include a sounding through the subsequent paving in the assumed basin described above, which will be carried out in order to fully establish the function of the room. Further excavation is also required in order to determine the exact nature of the entrance to the baths. Based on the archaeological data presented above it is most reasonably to suggest that the uncovered shop in unit MO/3 was part of the actual bath building, and that the entrance to the bathing facility was situated next to, or between two such shops. However, this suggestion needs to be fully ascertained by excavating directly west of the shop in unit MO/3 as well as west of unit MO/18. The latter will most likely provide the continuation of the western outer bathhouse wall as well as clarify the physical relationship between the shops, the bathing suite, and the *apodyterium*. Lastly, further excavation is required in order to fully establish the relationship between the Central Baths and the surrounding buildings as well as the general history of development in this particular part of the city.

Continuity in Material Culture from the Sixth to Ninth Centuries AD: Pottery from the Bathhouse, Mosque and Market in Jarash (SMcP)

This report presents an overview of the principal ceramic classes identified in study seasons in 2006 and 2007 of ceramics from the excavations of the Islamic Jarash Project. It concentrates on pottery from selected archaeological contexts within the Byzantine bathhouse over which the Umayyad mosque was built in the eighth century (Blanke *et al.* 2007; Walmsley and Damgaard 2005). Reference is also made to ceramics from the adjacent commercial precinct, which provide evidence of eighth and ninth century occupation, and to material from pits cut into the prayer hall of the mosque, attesting to a Middle Islamic presence in this part of the site.

Archaeological deposits antedating the bathhouse were identified by L. Blanke in 2006 beneath the paving of the *frigidarium* pool, giving a *terminus post quem* for its initial construction of 218-222AD (Blanke *et al.* 2007). Pottery from this location is Late Roman in date, while a few earlier fragmentary sherds are from the Hellenistic period.

A Sixth Century Use of the Baths

A small group of vessels excavated in an enclosed cistern represents an intermediate phase during which, it is likely, the bathhouse was still functioning in its entirety (Blanke, pers. com.). They are squat, fine-walled biansulate cooking pots in an oxidised well-levigated ware containing small amounts of white and grey mineral tempers (Fig. 23). At Jarash, as elsewhere, this type of jar is part of a long running ceramic tradition of terracotta or “brittle” wares first ap-



23. Two cooking jars from late sixth century bathhouse.

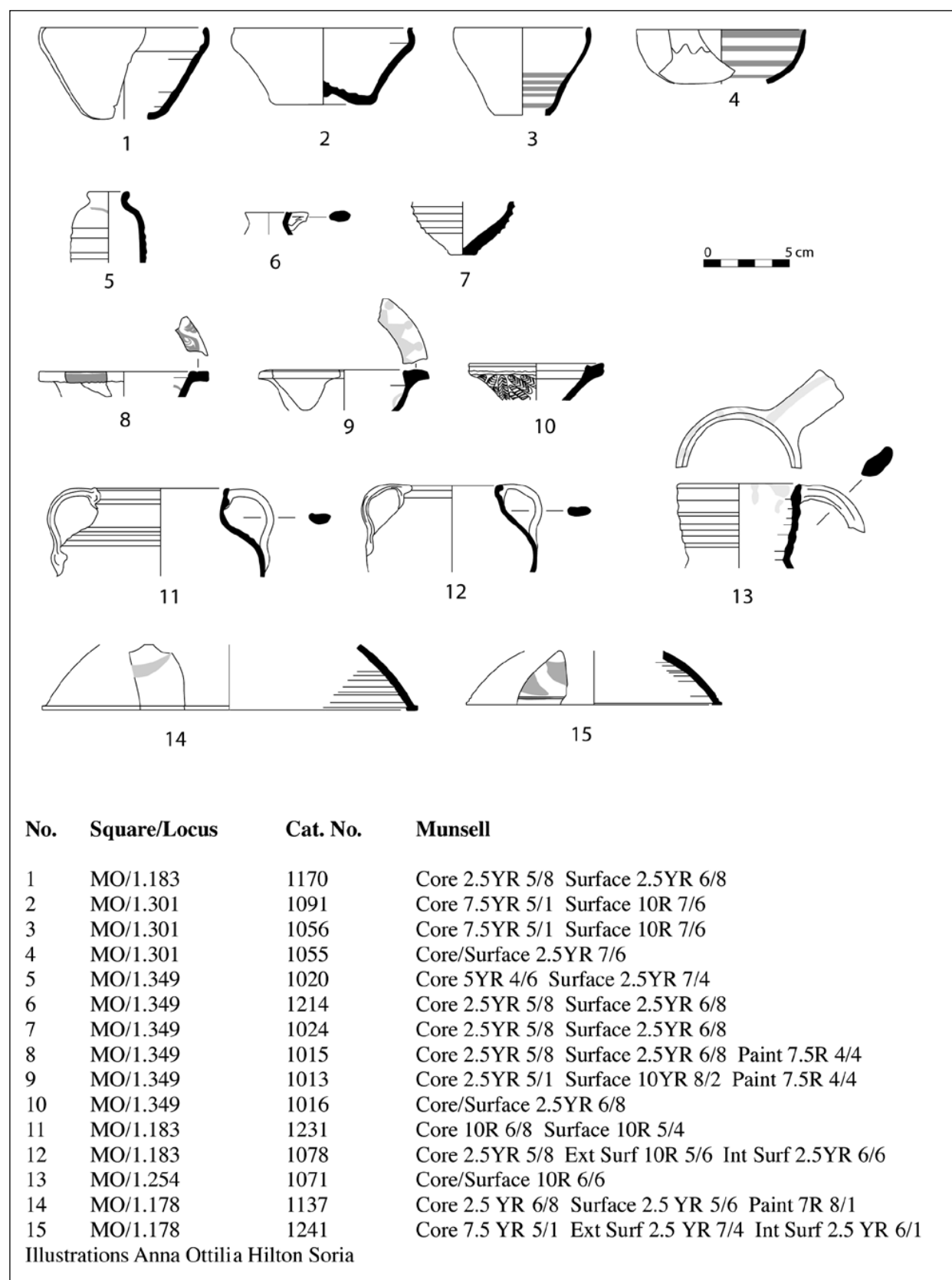
pearing in the second and third centuries and running into the ninth century. A development of a similar squat jar with an out folded rim has been charted from late sixth through to the beginning of the eighth centuries at Pella (Watson 1992: 236), while in the Jerusalem region a range of cooking jars with different rim shapes, but closely paralleling the Jarash group, dates from the fifth to sixth century through to the late seventh or early eighth century (Magness 1993: 219-20).

Late Sixth Through Seventh Century Bathhouse

Later in the Byzantine period, the northern part of the bathhouse underwent significant transformation. The hypocaust system in this area went out of use and the water evacuation channels were subsequently filled in (Blanke *et al.* 2007). Coin dates include a mid-sixth century *folles* of Justinian I (527-38), but also a pre-reform Islamic *fihs* dated 660-680AD in locus 183 (Walmsley 2007). The ceramics from these drain deposits are consistent with a late sixth through seventh century dating based on initial parallels, principally from Pella, ‘Ammān and Jerusalem, with the presence of some rubbish survivals from the fourth and fifth centuries. The majority of the material is in a medium fine terracotta ware in a uniform oxidised fabric with very fine white and great grits.

Fine terracotta cups. A series of small shallow cups with a tulip shaped profile and an omphalos base was found in great numbers in the drain fill (Fig. 24.1-4), some examples with concentric bands of red painted decoration (Fig. 24.3). One similar form is published from the excavations at the North Tetrapylon of Jarash and dated from the late sixth through the seventh century (Watson 1986: fig. 6.3), while a similar group of cups from Pella is from the sixth to eighth centuries, with this form being amongst the later variants seen at the site (Watson 1992: 241 no. 93). A related form from Jerusalem has a wavy incised line similar to (Fig. 24.4) with a date range from the mid sixth to eighth century (Magness 1993: 193-94).

Small terracotta flasks. These have prominent ribbing and string cut bases, and are concentrated in the infill of the *frigidarium* (Locus 349), possibly indicating that a specific artisanal activity occurred in this area (Fig. 24.5-7). No clear



24. Selection of pottery from the mosque and bathhouse (1-15). Drawings by Anna Ottilia Hilton Soria.

parallels have been found for this type from the seventh century, but an apparently similar flask from the 'Ammān Citadel has been dated to early in the Byzantine period (Northedge 1992: fig. 123.5).

Conical ledge-rimmed terracotta bowls. This series of white slipped and red painted conical ledge-rimmed bowls is in a fine terracotta fabric (Fig. 24.8-10). The sculpted bowl closely resembles a bowl dated to the last quarter of the sixth century at Pella (Watson 1992: fig. 11.89). *Small cooking jars.* A more evenly distributed fine terracotta form from the bathhouse is a squat biansulate cooking jar type with an everted and outfolded rim and *omphalos* base (Fig. 24.11-12). It does not differ appreciably from the sixth century variant (Fig. 23). This pot develops into a more varied range of forms in the seventh century which have a longer neck and slightly everted rim (Fig. 24.13), and by the eighth century are frequently decorated with white painted decoration and are thrown in a grittier fabric, which is often fired dark grey. Similar pots are published from Jarash and have dates that correspond to the bathhouse material (Watson 1986: fig. 6.2).

Cooking pot lids. The two lids with distinctive knife cut rims and white and red painted decoration illustrated here (Fig. 24.14-15) would have belonged to the casserole forms found more frequently in eighth century levels in this part of Jarash (Fig. 25). A similar painted lid is published from the North Theatre kilns and dated to the early eighth century (Walmsley 1995: fig. 2.5). These were not present in the bathhouse loci, presumably because of their domestic and not industrial function, but both the lid and casserole forms have a long life in southern Bilād ash-Shām, beginning in the third century and lasting through to at least the ninth century (see, for example, Magness 1993: 211-13).

Arched rim basins. These basins in a fine terracotta fabric appear frequently in the bathhouse but are uncommon in eighth and ninth century levels (Fig. 25.16). At Jerusalem a related basin appears from the late third to early fourth, through to sixth and seventh centuries, and as at Jarash combed decoration is more common on the later examples (Magness 1993: 13-15).

Reduction fired handmade basins. Handmade grey wares are present in lower quantities in

bathhouse deposits than in those associated with the mosque and shops (Fig. 25.17). These wares were produced in kilns excavated in several locations in Jarash, notably in the area in front of the Artemis Temple (Pierobon 1983-1984: 94) and in the North Theatre (Schaefer & Falkner 1986).

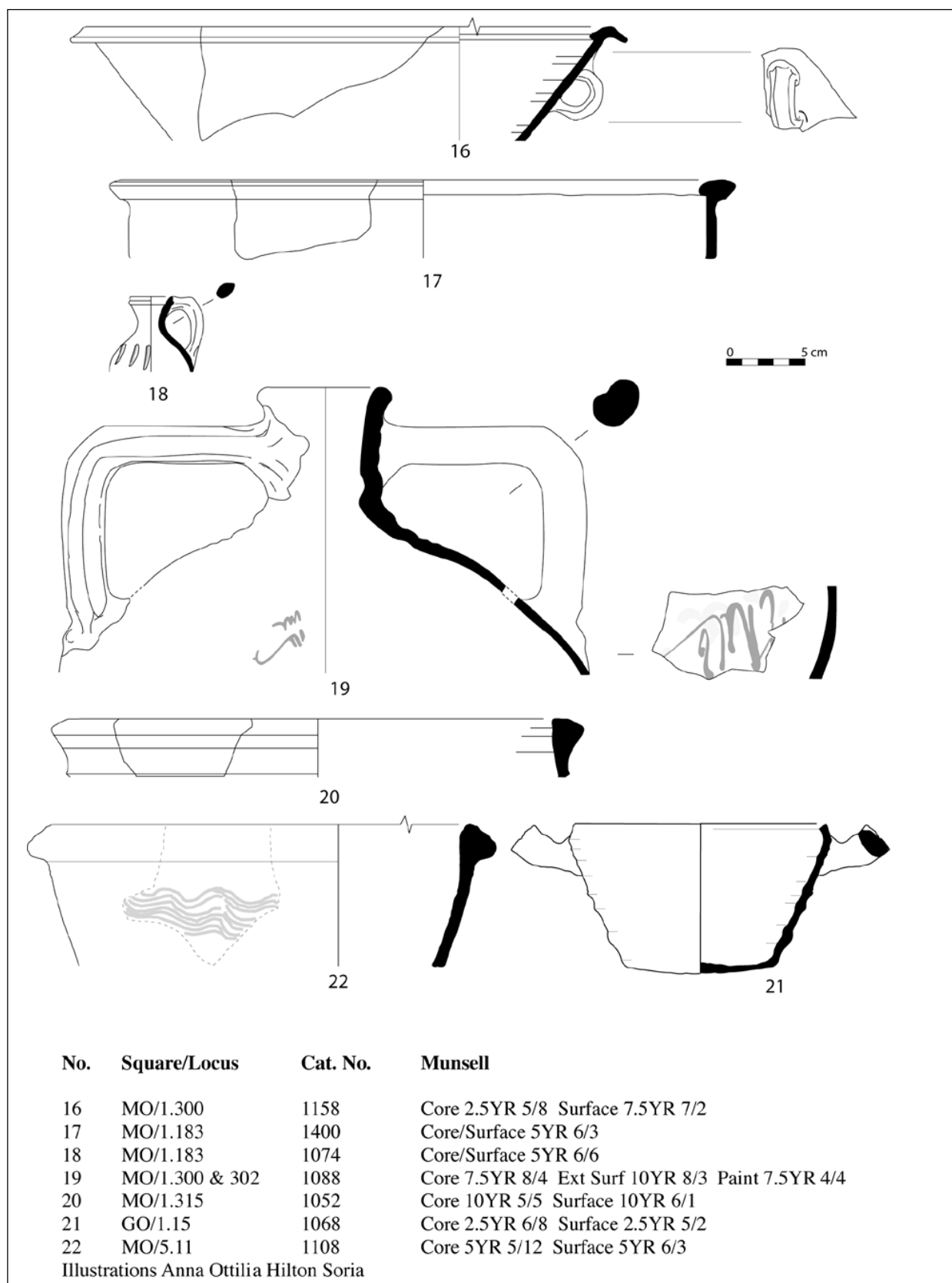
"Nicked" ware. Several examples were recovered of this distinctive group consisting of small collared juglets (Fig. 25.18). The fabric is a fine, orange coloured terracotta with white grits; the surface is highly burnished and decorated with small oblong "nicks". This ware is known from north Jordan and dated at Pella and Jerusalem from the late sixth through to the early eighth century (Magness 1993: 239-40; Watson 1992: 241).

Amphorae. There is a small presence of imported amphorae in the bathhouse excavations. Several examples were found of an amphora type with a wide Eastern Mediterranean distribution that was probably produced in Cyprus or Cilicia and finds parallels at Pella and Baysan, suggesting a late sixth to early seventh century date (Watson 1992: 78-79, fig. 10:75). These have *dipinti* inscriptions in demotic Greek on the shoulder of the vessels in a watery red paint (Fig. 25.19). A single example of a Gaza amphora used for the export of wine from that city (Riley 1975: 27-31), was also excavated in the bathhouse. These are commonly dated between the fourth and seventh centuries (Fabian and Goren 2001; Majcherek 1995; Reynolds 2005).

Jarash bowls. Several fragments of the distinctive Jarash bowls were found in the bathhouse loci. These painted bowls appear first at Jarash in the sixth century, with production continuing through the seventh century (Watson 1986; 1989).

Ceramics from the Eight Century Bathhouse

The southern area of the bathhouse, including the furnace and adjacent hall, functioned until the structure went out of use prior to the construction of the mosque, with the discovery of two post-reform Umayyad coins in sealed loci providing a *terminus post quem* for this event (Walmsley 2007). Less pottery and few diagnostic forms were found in this sector, but it is significant for the evidence of some change in the character of the assemblage, notably an



25. Selection of pottery from the mosque and bathhouse (16-22). Drawings by Anna Ottilia Hilton Soria.

increased presence of a more thickly potted terracotta ware with white painted decoration (see **Fig. 26** for examples of this ware). This group continues through to the eighth and probably ninth centuries, undergoing morphological and decorative changes in the process. Hand made reduction fired wares are also more prevalent, this large basin with a thickened rim (**Fig. 25.20**) being an example consistent with an early eighth century date.

Ceramics from the Mosque

Changes are apparent in the make up of the ceramic assemblage from contexts in the early to mid eighth century Umayyad mosque in relation to that of the bathhouse. There is a marked increase in the quantity of grey hand made wares, mostly basins but some jars, often with incised wavy lines or impressed decoration, roof tiles found in large quantities in the excavation of the mosque collapse sharing the same technical characteristics and were presumably a part of the same production. Although oxidised and reduction fired terracotta wares continue to be present in large quantities, they become noticeably thicker walled, and more frequently feature white painted decoration in multiple strokes or wavy lines. Red painted white slipped wares that are well known from elsewhere at Jarash are uncommon, surprising given that production has been attested in the eighth century town (Gawlikowski 1986: 117, fn. 14), and fragments found in the North theatre excavations (Walmsley 1986: 335). Illustrated here is a cooking pot with an intact profile excavated in the area to the west of the mosque, corresponding to the lids from seventh century contexts discussed above (**Fig. 25.21**). Early eighth century parallels for this are published from 'Ammān (Harding 1950; Northedge 1992: fig. 133.3-4).

Ceramics from the Shop Complex

The shop complex contemporary with the mosque (Area MO/9 and MO/10; see above) produced a limited amount of pottery, all of it consistent with the corpus from the mosque. Most notable were the group of four casseroles and a jug found in situ in Shop 5 (Blanke *et al.* 2007: fig. 13). Coarser than sixth and early seventh century cooking wares, and with white painted decoration in curving parallel lines (**Fig. 26**),



26. Casseroles and jug from Shop 5 (MO/9).

they have the gritty terracotta fabric common to the cooking pots made in kilns of the first half of the eighth century in the North Theatre and terrace of the Sanctuary of Artemis (Piazza 1983-1984; Pierobon 1983-1984; Walmsley 1986). A close parallel for the jug is published from early eighth century deposits adjacent to the Sanctuary of Artemis (Piazza 1983-1984: 123, fig. G.35). Surprisingly, the casserole lids had not been cut from, and then reattached, to bottom part of the vessels prior to firing, although in all other ways they appear functional, steam vents even being punctured beside the handles when the clay was leather hard. It is possible that the vessels were made to be sold whole and prised open at a later date by the customer themselves in accordance with religious ritual, an interpretation suggested in explanation of the discovery of several similar examples from the Byzantine period near Nessana in Southern Palestine and in the Iskandil Burnu shipwreck in Turkey (Wolff 1997). A handmade, reduction fired basin with combed incised decoration was found in a secondary usage in the shops, containing ashes and inverted, it was missing its lower part and had clearly been used as a fire pit (**Fig. 25.22**).

Abbasid Occupation at Jarash

Later eighth and ninth century wares were excavated in the northern part of the shop complex where a poorly defined stone structure was excavated in 2006. The archaeological strata corresponding to these periods were heavily disturbed in the twentieth century, and as a result this pottery was found only in small quantities. Red terracotta wares in the Byzantine and Umayyad tradition are still in evidence, but they

are joined by a pale yellowish brown thicker walled variant, several fragments of thin walled fine cream wares, and the “Palace Ware” found at other sites in the region (Walmsley 1995). Reduction fired grey ware basins are likewise attested here, although these have a thicker browner and crumbly fabric and pinched inverted rim profile in comparison to seventh and early eighth century predecessors at Jarash. At ‘Ammān and Jerusalem a similar form is dated to the Abbasid period (Northedge 1992; Magness 1993: 210-11). Several fragments of lead glazed splashed and incised pottery of ninth to tenth century date have been found in architectural tumble in areas of later disturbance in the mosque, but not in this area of the site.

Middle Islamic Pottery

A range of ceramic material found in pit disturbance in the area in front of the *qibla* wall of the mosque indicates the presence of occupation from the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods in this central part of Jarash. These include sherds of Hand Made Geometric Painted Ware (Fig. 27) along with examples of burnished hand made cooking vessels, and monochrome and slip painted lead glazed earthenware (Fig. 28) typical of sites with twelfth to fifteenth century occupation in the region. Middle Islamic painted wheel turned wares, the medieval descendent of Early Islamic painted wares, were found in small quantities in the pit contexts (Fig. 29).



27. Hand Made Geometric Painted Ware sherd from eastern mihrāb.



28. Middle Islamic Slip Painted Ware.



29. Middle Islamic Painted Ware.

Concluding Remarks

The Danish Islamic Jarash excavations provide new ceramic data which have the potential to both confirm and question existing archaeological interpretations of the site in an area of the Late Antique and Early Islamic city where a varied range of activities took place. This data supports the hypothesis that there is strong continuity in material culture from the Late Byzantine to Abbasid Jarash. Pottery traditions evolved gradually from the later sixth to the eighth centuries, and by the later eighth and ninth centuries we observe indications of the shift taking place in material culture reflecting altered socio-economic patterns across Bilād ash-Shām at this time. Our material adds to the evidence of continued occupation at Jarash in the Abbasid period, and enlarges the picture of Middle Islamic occupation at the site previously known only from fill excavated in a cistern in the Temple of Zeus complex (Tholbecq 1997).

The tenth and eleventh centuries and the Ottoman period are not at present identified in the ceramic repertoire from Jarash, but it is hoped that further work in refining typologies will also enable us to ascertain their presence or absence at the site.

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