

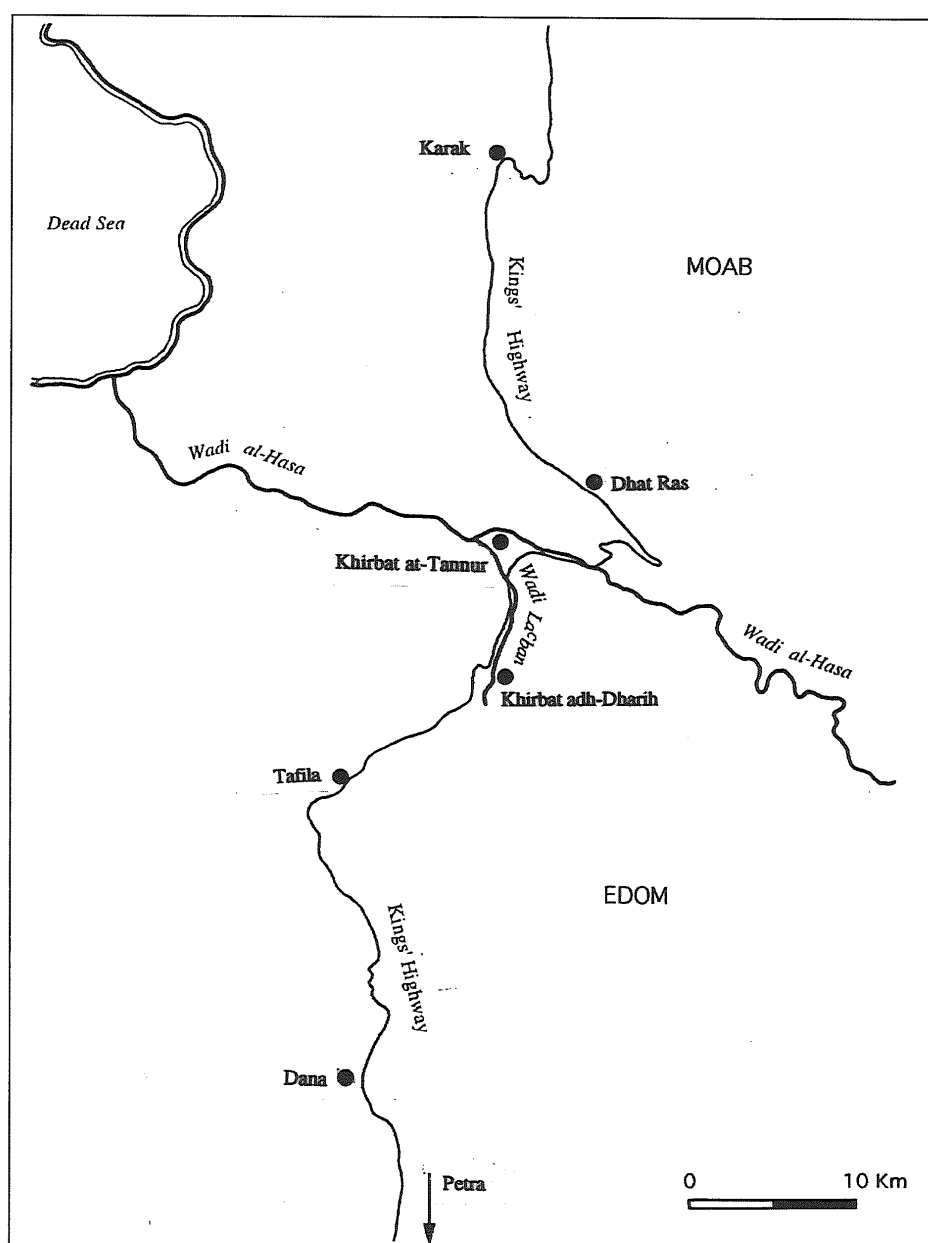
KHIRBAT AT-TANNŪR IN THE ASOR NELSON GLUECK ARCHIVE AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE

Judith McKenzie, Andres Reyes and †Sheila Gibson

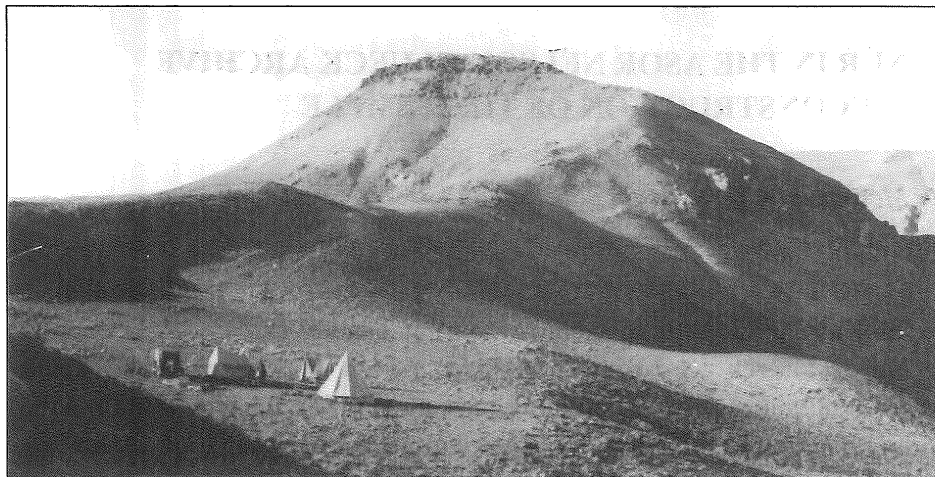
The Nabataean temple complex of Khirbat at-Tannūr (خربة التنور) was excavated by Nelson Glueck in conjunction with the Department of Antiquities of Transjordan in 1937, after attention was drawn to it by ‘Abdullah Rihani Bey, the aṭ-Ṭafīla district police officer.

Khirbat (ruins of) at-Tannūr is located at the top

of Jabal (Mount) at-Tannūr (جبل التنور) beside the Kings’ Highway, south of al-Karak, and about 70km north of Petra (Fig. 1). Jabal at-Tannūr is the isolated mountain at the confluence of Wādī al-La‘bān (وادي اللعبان) to the south and Wādī al-Ḥasā (وادي الحسا) to the north (Fig. 2). Wādī al-Ḥasā is the biblical Zered (Num. 21.12), the gorge which



1. Map showing location of Khirbat at-Tannūr.



2. *Jabal at-Tannūr, at the top of which is Khirbat at-Tannūr, 1937.*

divides Moab to the north from Edom, the territory of the Edomites who were the predecessors of the Nabataeans. The name La'bān is preserved in one of the inscriptions at Khirbat at-Tannūr (Glueck 1965: 512-513). The ancient name of Jabal at-Tannūr was possibly Hurawa, mentioned in another inscription there (Healey 2001: 60-61).

This location suggests a sanctuary of some importance. The ruins consist only of the temple complex on the mountain top and, further down the mountain, a cistern. There are no associated remains of a village, indicating that it was solely a religious site. This contrasts with Khirbat adh-Dharīḥ (خربة الذريح) 7km to the south on the Wādī al-La'bān (Fig. 1) where there was a settlement with houses beside the Nabataean temple.

Deities and Dolphins, by Nelson Glueck, which functioned as the final report on the excavation of Khirbat at-Tannūr, was not published until nearly three decades after the excavation, in 1965. There were problems with some aspects of the reconstructions of the building presented in it, previously noted by Starcky (1968) and McKenzie (1988: 81-85). Consequently, the aim of the first stage of our project was to establish a more accurate reconstruction of the temple complex, with more plausible positions for its sculptural decoration, correcting the inconsistencies apparent in *Deities and Dolphins*. This was based on a detailed re-examination of the published evidence, including Glueck's earlier reports (Glueck 1937a; 1937b; 1937c; 1938; 1945), and the first hand examination in March 2001 of the fragments in the Jordan Archaeological Museum in 'Ammān, and the evidence still at the site. For comparative purposes the other main Nabataean temples in Jordan were also visited.

This resulted in the completion of new elevations, as well as axonometric drawings of the temple complex, and a detailed discussion of the evidence on which they are based (McKenzie *et al.*

2002). This work was essential before the design of the complex can be further explored in relation to other Nabataean temples, or aspects of Nabataean religious practice.

After our study on the reconstructions was submitted, we discovered that the records of the excavation were in the ASOR Nelson Glueck Archive at the Semitic Museum, Harvard University. Consequently, references to these, where relevant to the reconstructions, were added to the text of our report, but not any of the unpublished photographs from the archive. For those interested in the finer details of the reconstruction and the chronology, that report should be consulted in conjunction with this paper.

The main purpose of this paper is to publish those photographs from the archive which provide important evidence concerning the reconstruction of the building. They were taken before and during the excavation, sixty-five years ago. In *Deities and Dolphins* Glueck generally blocked out any background in the photographs of the sculptures. This had the effect of depriving many of them of the context in which they were found. This was unfortunate because some were found where they had fallen in the final collapse of the building, especially those from the façade of the Inner Temenos Enclosure. Thus, the find-spots of some of them provide essential information about their original locations, including, notably, that of the cult statue.

Beside these photographs, the archive includes photographs of some unpublished blocks and fragments, Glueck's dig journal (hereafter GJ), the registration book, the field-notes of the architect Clarence Fisher who drew the plans and elevations (FFN) published in *Deities and Dolphins*, Fisher's notes on the architecture (FAN) and its reconstruction (FRN), the field-notes of Carl Pape who measured the profiles of the mouldings (PFN), the final drawings of the moulding profiles, the organic re-

mains, and nearly 6,000 pottery sherds. The publication of the pottery, sherds, lamps and organic remains will form the subject of a separate publication, as will the drawings of the mouldings. This evidence provides more additional information about the temple than might be expected, including aspects of its chronology and cult practice. These records also give a sense of how the excavation proceeded, taking a total of seven weeks.

The temple of Khirbat at-Tannūr is best known for its sculpture because Glueck focused on this in *Deities and Dolphins* (hereafter *DD*). Half of it is in the Jordan Archaeological Museum, including the famous “Atargatis panel”, illustrated here with the main members of Glueck’s team, except the local workmen (Fig. 3). The other half went to the Cincinnati Art Museum in Ohio, where Glueck was president of the Hebrew Union College.

In this paper, firstly, we will work through the reconstruction of the building, which is discussed in more detail in McKenzie et al. 2002, concentrating here on the additional information about the reconstruction provided by the unpublished photographs. Secondly, we will consider some aspects of the interpretation of the sculpture at Khirbat at-Tannūr. We need to begin with the reconstruction of the temple complex itself to provide a spatial and chronological context for the sculpture.

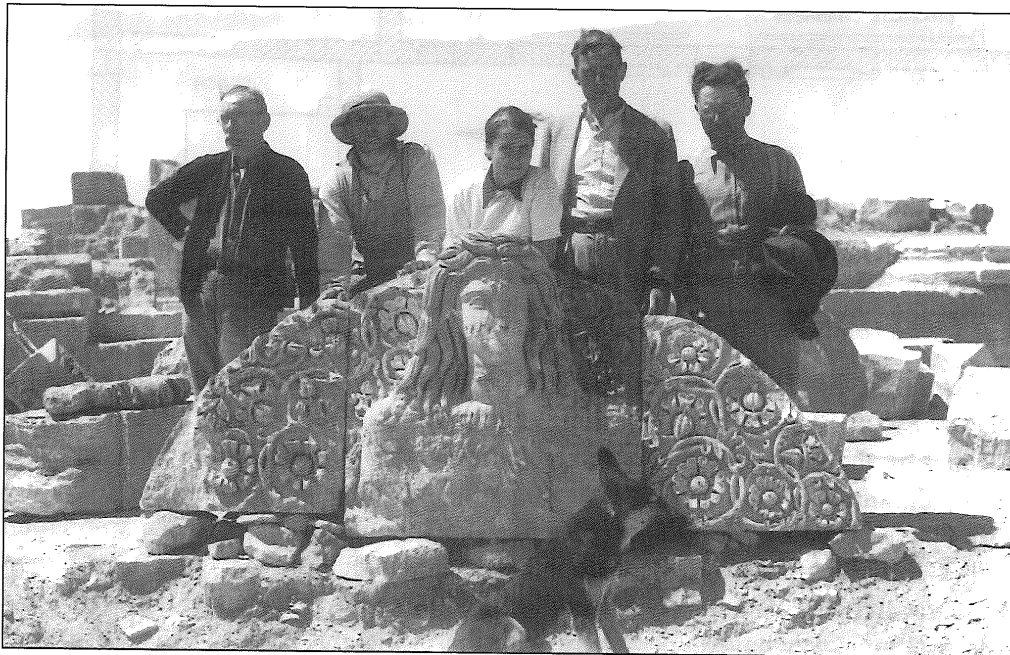
When Glueck excavated it, the plan of the complex was fairly clear, with a monumental altar inside a walled enclosure (the Inner Temenos Enclosure) (Fig. 4). There was a walled court in front (the Forecourt) with rooms along both sides of it, some with benches for dining. The first phase of

the building included an altar, and Glueck considered the basic design of the sanctuary went back to that period (*DD* 89, 179-180). The earliest coin found at the site dates to the late third century BC (*DD* 12, pl. 57e-h), and the first phase seems to date before 8/7 BC, when there are two dedicatory inscriptions, although not found *in situ* (*DD* 101-102, 138, 512-514, pl. 194d-195). The plan and reconstruction of the whole temple complex presented here were largely built in the main period, Period II, ca. AD 50-150 (for discussion of chronology see McKenzie et al. 2002).

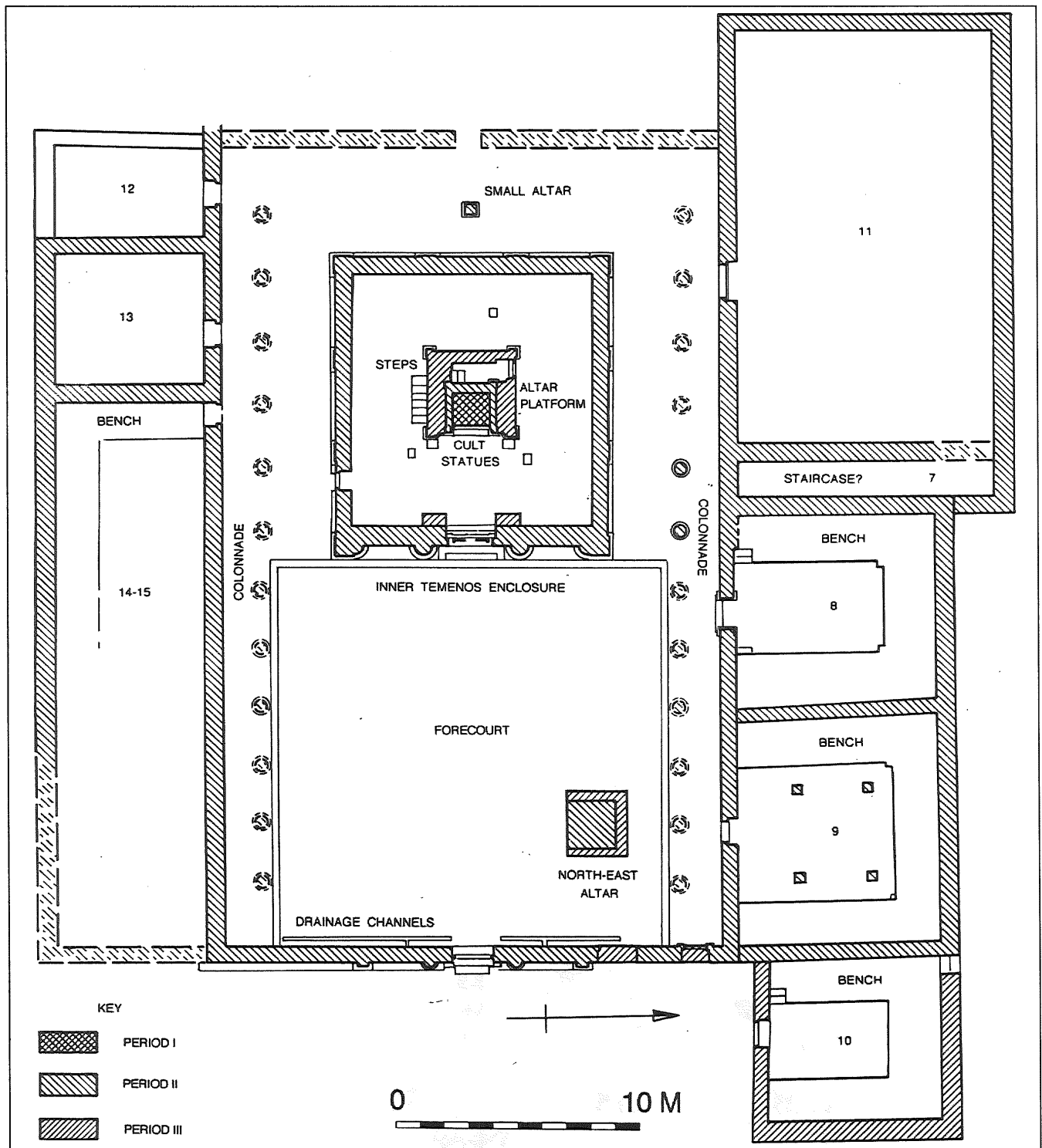
Reconstructing a building is like doing a jigsaw in three dimensions. You have the foundations already in position, then you have a pile of pieces. Most pieces can only go in one place, i.e. where they fit correctly. This means if you have a column base (or a series of them), the only capital which can have gone on it is one the correct size for it. If you have one this size amongst the remains, then you almost certainly have the correct one. If the capital is too large or too small for the column, then it definitely did not belong to it. The reconstruction can also be helped by other details, such as the style of the carving, with pieces of the same style belonging to the same period. When we prepared the reconstructions we largely had only this method. However, our results are confirmed by the additional evidence of the photographs, as will be shown below.

Reconstruction of the Altar

The focal point of the complex is the main altar platform. This was built in three clear phases with shells like a Russian doll (Fig. 4). The lower parts



3. Some blocks of “Atargatis Panel” with the team, 1937: Clarence Fisher, Carl Pape, Helen Glueck, Nelson Glueck, S.J. Schweig and Atarah.

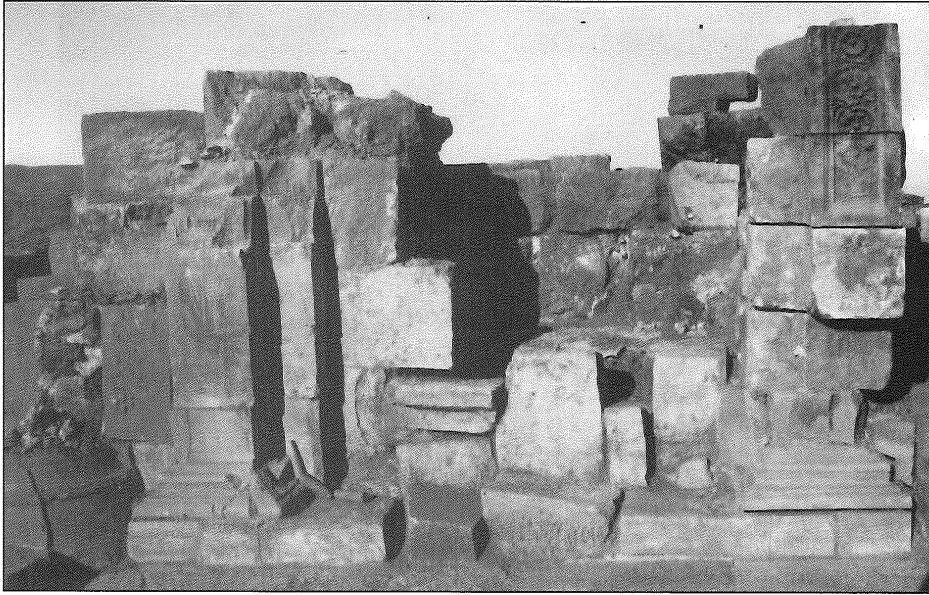


4. Khirbat at-Tannūr temple complex: plan, based on DD plan A with additions.

of each phase were found *in situ* (Fig. 5). The first phase of the altar was plain (DD 89-90, plans D-E). That it was an altar is indicated by the remains of burnt offerings of grain and small animals found in it. These were mentioned by Glueck (DD 87, 90), and noted in his dig journal (GJ 10 March 1937). Some of them are preserved in the archive.

After the area around the first altar was paved,

the Period II altar was built around the sides and back of it (DD 92, 138, pl. 111-2) (Fig. 4). The lower parts of the Period II altar pilasters were found *in situ*, including some with floral decoration (Fig. 5). The joining pieces of these were found around the site, including the lintel above them, forming the frame of a niche which is depicted here with the pieces put back together (Fig. 6). It

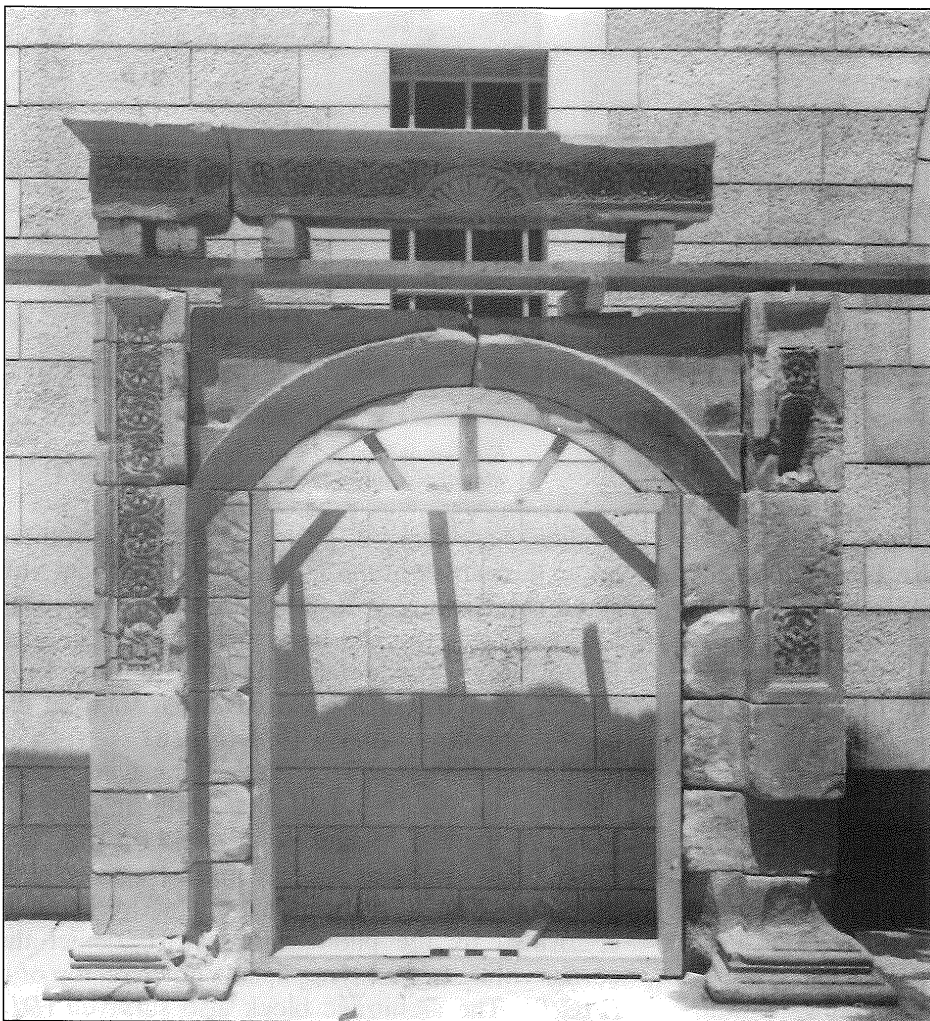


5. Khirbat at-Tannūr, altar platform after excavation, 1937, with three phases in situ. The broken sceptre is visible to the right of the left-hand pilaster base.

was later shipped to the Cincinnati Art Museum. Note the identical flowers on the lintel and pilasters. This altar had steps across the back to provide access to it (DD 103).

In the third phase the altar was enlarged again

around the sides and back to form an altar platform (DD 120-122, pl. 110b-113a, c) (Fig. 4). The bases of the pilasters and engaged quarter columns of this Period III altar platform were found *in situ* (the base of one visible on the far left of Fig. 5), so we



6. Khirbat at-Tannūr, Period II niche frame, now in Cincinnati Art Museum.



7a. Khirbat at-Tannūr, “Grain Goddess” re-identified as Virgo, from Period III altar platform. Cincinnati Art Museum



7b. Khirbat at-Tannūr, “Fish Goddess” re-identified as personification of Pisces, from Period III altar platform, 2001. Jordan Archaeological Museum.



7c. Khirbat at-Tannūr, block from Period III altar platform. Cincinnati Art Museum.

can reconstruct them with the joining blocks, the way you build up a jigsaw. These blocks include (above some plain blocks) the “Grain Goddess” which goes on the lower left, along with the decorated blocks joining it (Fig. 7a). The “Fish Goddess” went in the same position on the lower right (Fig. 7b).

The quarter columns beside them were decorated with vines rising out of a basket of acanthus leaves (McKenzie *et al.* 2002: fig. 7a, c) (see Fig. 10). To the side of these quarter columns were panels with an alternating pattern of five-lobed leaves (Fig. 7a) or serrated leaves (Fig. 7c) (DD pl. 29; McKenzie *et al.* 2002: fig. 7b). The busts which went above the “Fish Goddess” and the “Grain

Goddess” are defaced (DD pl. 27-8). Some of these are in the garden of the Jordan Archaeological Museum (McKenzie *et al.* 2002: fig. 7a). The “Fish Goddess” was rescued from the site by ‘Abdullah Rihani Bey. The defaced busts had also been moved prior to Glueck’s excavation, such as the one here photographed in 1936 (Fig. 8).

One of the pilaster capitals which went above the busts on the Period III altar platform is in the Museum garden (McKenzie *et al.* 2002: fig. 9a). Glueck had identified it as a cornice fragment (DD pl. 175c). The identification of it as a capital is confirmed by the photographs which depict the corner volute from it lying upside down on top of it (Fig. 9). The architrave block also survived (DD



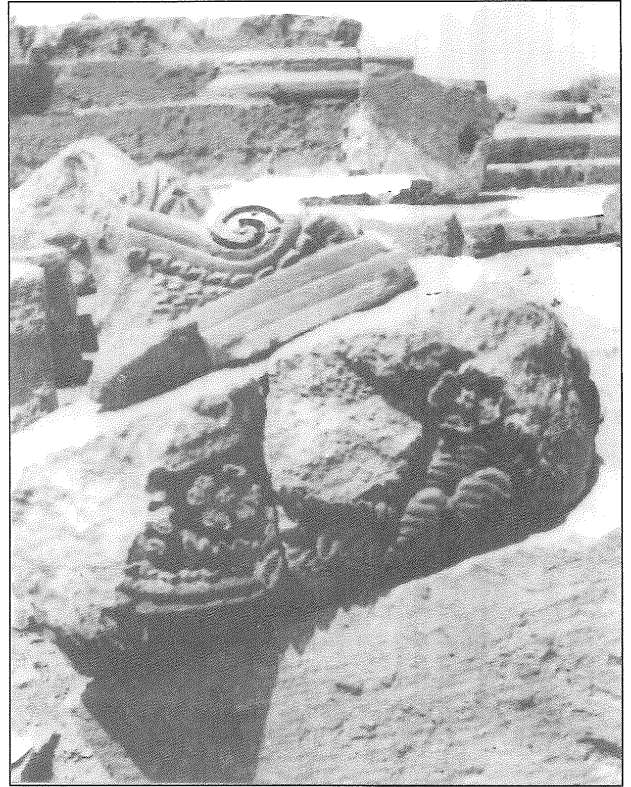
8. Khirbat at-Tannūr, defaced bust from Period III altar platform, 1936.

pl. 86b, 178b), and there is a fragment from a vine frieze (DD pl. 30a) which is the correct size and style to have come from the frieze above it. There was probably a cornice above this which has not been identified (Fig. 10).

Steps were built along the sides and back of this phase to provide access to the top where a small altar would have been erected (DD 121-122). This is hinted in the reconstruction in order to make clear the function of this phase as an altar platform, rather than leaving the top empty (Fig. 10). We will discuss the contents of the niche below, but first we will establish the reconstruction of the Inner Temenos Enclosure which surrounded the altar platform, so that we complete the reconstruction of the architectural context before discussing the cult statues.

Reconstruction of the Inner Temenos Enclosure

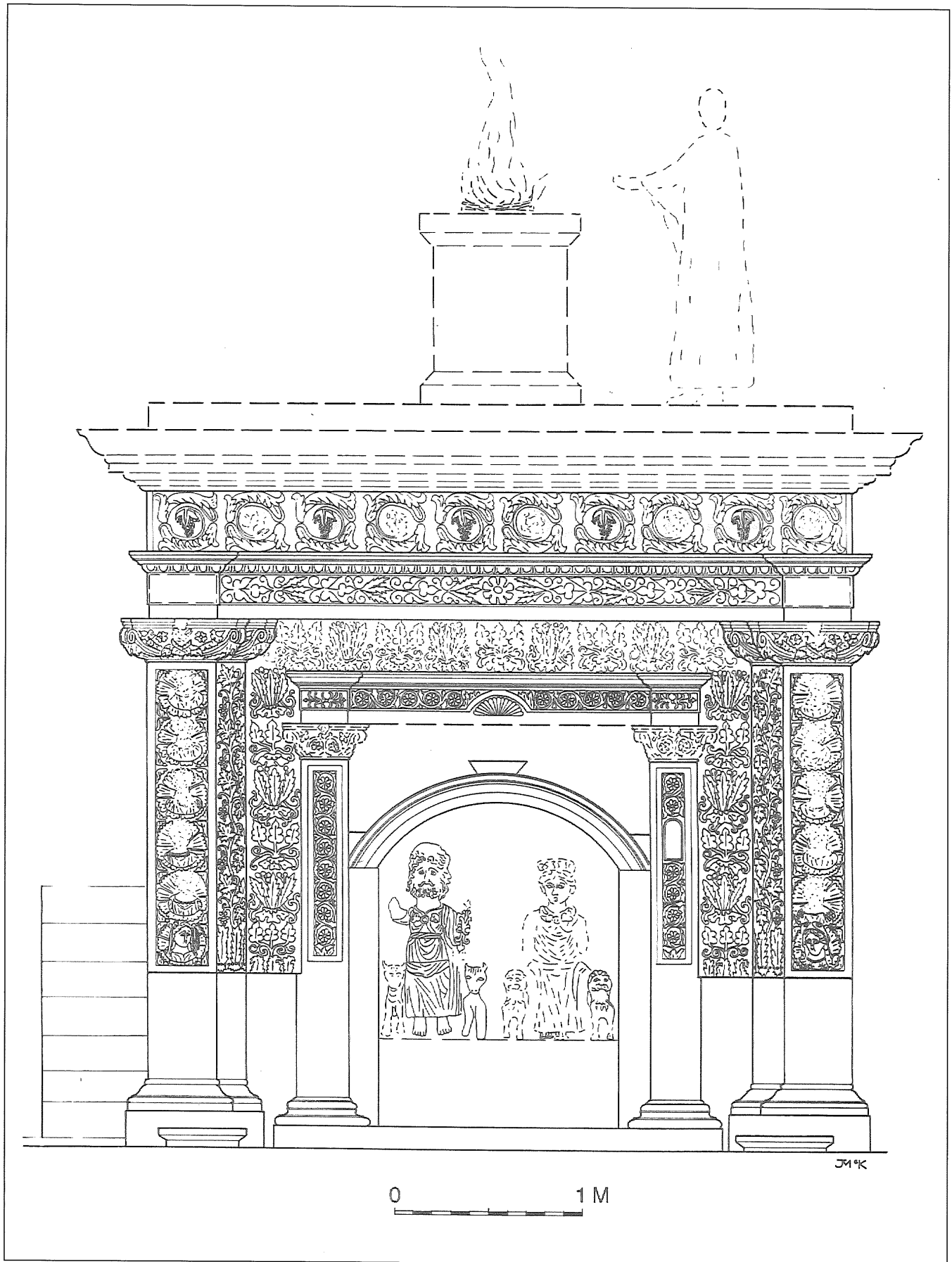
A tall wall, forming the so-called Inner Temenos Enclosure, 9.72 x 10.38m, was built around the altar platform (Fig. 4). Glueck found the blocks from the façade of it largely where they had fallen



9. Khirbat at-Tannūr, pilaster capital and corner volute (upside-down) from Period III altar platform, 1937.

forward into the Forecourt in the final collapse, which was apparently accompanied by a fire (DD 142-143) (Fig. 11a-b). Despite this, there are problems with the reconstruction of the façade published by him (DD plan B). He suggested it had two phases, one (Period II) with plain Nabataean capitals, before one (Period III) with floral capitals and the “Atargatis panel” (reasons of Glueck and Fisher from FAN, FRN and GNAN summarized in McKenzie et al. 2002).

The blocks of the floral capitals from the façade of the Inner Temenos Enclosure were found on the pavement in front of it, where they had fallen to the ground in its final collapse (Fig. 12a-b). These include an upper drum with floral decoration (Fig. 12a). The lower drum with acanthus leaves from a half column (Fig. 12b) was published by Glueck, but with the base of the façade of the Inner Temenos Enclosure (identifiable by the steps to its doorway) cropped out of the top of the photograph, thus removing the indication of where it was found (DD pl. 176a). There was also the upper drum from a quarter column engaged to a pilaster (Fig. 13). The photographs include the scrolled end of an unpublished corner volute, such as would have broken off the capital block beside it (Fig. 12a-b). This volute has a flower at the centre of it. From these pieces it will be possible to reconstruct on paper a complete one of these floral capitals. These blocks



10. Khirbat at-Tannūr, Period III altar platform: elevation (J. McKenzie).



11a. Khirbat at-Tannūr, fallen blocks from façade of Inner Temenos Enclosure in front of steps to it, 1937.



11b. Khirbat at-Tannūr, fallen blocks from façade of Inner Temenos Enclosure in front of it, 1937.

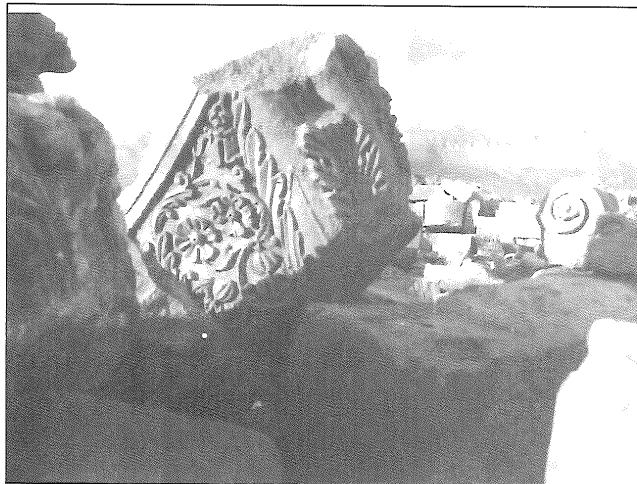
were largely preserved from weathering as they were covered by soil, unlike one which had remained exposed (Fig. 14).

Blocks survive at the site of Type 1 Nabataean capitals, which are the correct size for the pilasters on the side and back walls of the Inner Temenos Enclosure (McKenzie *et al.* 2002: fig. 14a). This means that they did not go on the front of it in a phase before the floral capitals, contrary to the suggestion of Glueck and Fisher.

Some of the attic bases on which these capitals fitted were *in situ* in 1937 (DD pl. 98), but have since been moved (McKenzie *et al.* 2002: figs. 5b, 10b). Fisher (FAN p. 11) considered they found evidence of acanthus bases, which Glueck rejected (DD 142). However, we can now suggest them in the reconstruction (see Fig. 19) as they have since

been found at Petra (Will and Larché 1991: pl. B20.2).

The frieze of the main entablature above the floral capitals had a series of busts along it. The blocks with busts from the corners of the façade are in the garden of the Jordan Archaeological Museum (McKenzie *et al.* 2002: fig. 14a). As these blocks are decorated on two adjacent sides, it is only possible to know which one went on which corner because they were found where they fell in the final collapse of the façade, one (DD pl. 53a-b) near its north end, and the other near its south end with Zeus on the front face and a bust with a cornucopia on the side at right-angles to it (DD pl. 55-56). Their find-spots are recorded in the photographs, and the latter block is mentioned in the dig journal (GJ 1 December 1937). It is shown here be-



12a. Khirbat at-Tannūr, fallen floral capital from façade of Inner Temenos Enclosure, 1937.



12b. Khirbat at-Tannūr, fallen lower drum of floral capital of half column from façade of Inner Temenos Enclosure, 1937.



13. Khirbat at-Tannūr, upper drum of floral capital of quarter column engaged to pilaster from façade of Inner Temenos Enclosure, 1937.



14. Khirbat at-Tannūr, weathered floral capital block, 1936.

side the steps along the south side of the Forecourt, after it had been moved slightly to expose it fully (Fig. 15). This photograph was taken lined up with the block and its context was lost when the background was cropped out (DD pl. 55). Although at an angle, this image also provides a glimpse of the local work force.

There were also busts on panels which were the same height as the corner blocks. "A number of these lay in the debris in the court" [Forecourt] (FAN p. 11). Those without frames include the bust of Helios now in the Cincinnati Art Museum (DD pl. 136), and the damaged bust of Kronos-Saturn, with the lower part broken off, which is in the Jordan Archaeological Museum (Fig. 16a). A head of Zeus-Jupiter, also in the Museum, is the correct size and style to have come from one of these busts (McKenzie *et al.* 2002) (Fig. 16b). There are also two damaged busts which were not published by Glueck. These include one still at the site (McKenzie *et al.* 2002: fig. 15a), and one photographed in 1937 (Fig. 16c). Although badly damaged, it is reproduced here as it could help with identifying the busts at a later date if more evidence comes to light at other sites. The spacing suggests there were probably a total of seven unframed busts across the front of the façade, but there is no means for ascertaining the order in which they went between the framed busts above the half columns and pilasters (McKenzie *et al.* 2002).

A series of Nikes or winged victories were also found on panels the same height (0.55m) as these bust panels (FAN p. 14). Before the excavation, some were visible where they had fallen (Fig. 17a), near the weathered capital block from the façade of the Inner Temenos Enclosure in Fig. 14. The Nikes include one which was not published in *Deities and Dolphins*, but in one of his earlier reports (Glueck 1937c: fig. 8) (Fig. 17b). Although



15. Khirbat at-Tannūr, corner block from south-east corner of frieze of Inner Temenos Enclosure, 1937.

Fisher mentions seven Nike panels being found (FAN p. 14), this means eight are recorded in the photographs. The similarity in their sizes (not obvious from the scales on them when published in *Deities and Dolphins*, pl. 179-82) was clear when they were lined up at the site during the excavations (Fig. 17c).

Glueck and Fisher were uncertain of the original location of these Nikes (details in McKenzie *et al.* 2002). It now appears that they went between the busts on the frieze of the main entablature, because this is the arrangement which has been found on the recently excavated temple at Khirbat adh-Dharīḥ (al-Muheisen and Villeneuve 1999: fig. on p. 46), which was decorated by the same sculptors (Dentzer-Feydy 1990).

The blocks from the cornice which went above this frieze are obvious from their size and where they were found, in front of the façade of the Inner Temenos Enclosure (FAN p. 11; DD 143, pl. 172). They have carved details on them including egg and tongue, dentils, and a form of lesbian cymation (McKenzie *et al.* 2002: fig. 11a-b, d) (Fig. 18a). Their corona is decorated with flat modillions with rosettes between them, and there is a vine pattern along the base of the sima, which has palmettes on it (Fig. 18b).

At the site we found the broken block from the apex of a pediment with these same mouldings (Fig. 18c), indicating that the main order of the Inner Temenos Enclosure had a pediment, like the temple at Khirbat adh-Dharīḥ (al-Muheisen and Villeneuve 1999: fig. on p. 46). Their notes show that Glueck and Fisher noticed this block but, as they did not measure or photograph it, they used it to suggest a pediment over the doorway of the In-

ner Temenos Enclosure (details in McKenzie *et al.* 2002). This pediment above the entablature of the Inner Temenos Enclosure did not form the front of a pitched roof. Rather, it was built into a wall crowned by a cavetto cornice, of which blocks remain at the site (McKenzie *et al.* 2002: fig. 12) (Fig. 18d).

Nearly all the pieces of the famous “Atargatis panel”, now in the Jordan Archaeological Museum (Fig. 3), were found in collapse at the foot of the steps of the façade with the acroterion with an eagle on it which went at the top of it (FAN p. 12; DD 142-145, 289, plan B) (Fig. 11a-b). The florals on it are similar to those on the floral capitals of the façade (McKenzie 1988: 83, fig. 3b-c), and the eyes (with indented irises) and hair of the bust are like those on the busts from the main frieze (McKenzie 1988: 83, fig. 4). Fisher and Glueck placed this semi-circular panel above the main entablature of the Inner Temenos Enclosure because Fisher thought it would not fit above the doorway (FRN p. 4). However, it does fit, although flush with the columns (Fig. 19). The two blocks of the curved cornice which framed this panel, and were found with it (FAN p. 12), are in the Jordan Archaeological Museum. The “horns” on these, which Glueck thought were an eastern motif to represent the sun’s rays, are in fact traditional classical acroteria (details in McKenzie *et al.* 2002: fig. 16).

Glueck and Fisher were perplexed by the fallen remains of a colonnade on either side of the Inner Temenos Enclosure, and did not indicate it in their reconstruction. Two of the bases were still *in situ*. They also did not notice the stylobate which indicates the colonnade continued along the Forecourt (McKenzie *et al.* 2002: fig. 20) (Fig. 4). Column



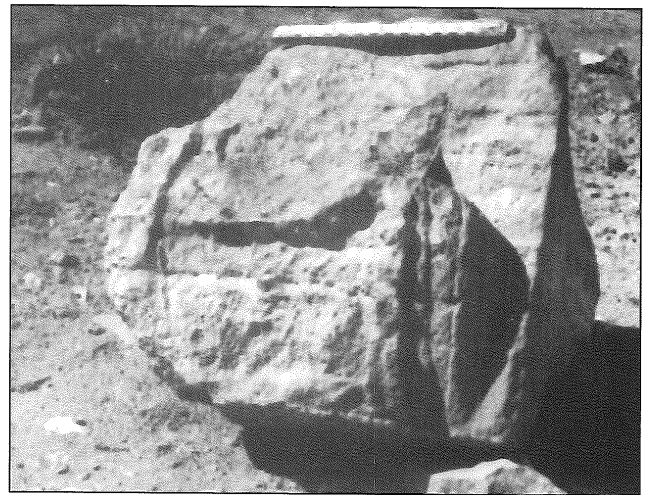
16a. Khirbat at-Tannūr, bust of Kronos-Saturn from frieze of Inner Temenos Enclosure. Jordan Archaeological Museum.



16b. Khirbat at-Tannūr, head of Zeus-Jupiter from bust of frieze of Inner Temenos Enclosure. Jordan Archaeological Museum.

drums, bases and capitals from these colonnades still survive at the site beside the Inner Temenos Enclosure (McKenzie *et al.* 2002: fig. 19a, b, d) (Fig. 20). In the dig journal Glueck repeatedly uses the term “balatah” for the unpaved floors of the colonnades. This was a hard-packed floor with inclusions in it, such as flint, for added hardness. The term is now used for the composite tiles of concrete and stone-chips, used on the floors of most modern buildings in Jordan.

It is easier to visualize the plan if presented in three-dimensions, as in Sheila Gibson’s drawing (Fig. 21). We have already mentioned the basis for



16c. Khirbat at-Tannūr, damaged bust from frieze of Inner Temenos Enclosure, 1937.

the reconstruction of the altar platform, the Inner Temenos Enclosure, and the colonnades. Other details also survive, not mentioned here, such as the fragments of the façade of the Forecourt with plain Nabataean capitals and plain mouldings (details in McKenzie *et al.* 2002: fig. 17-18), and the triclinia with benches around three sides for dining (evidence summarized in McKenzie *et al.* 2002). This drawing provides a minimal indication of what the temple complex would have looked like, with details only added if there is evidence for where they went.

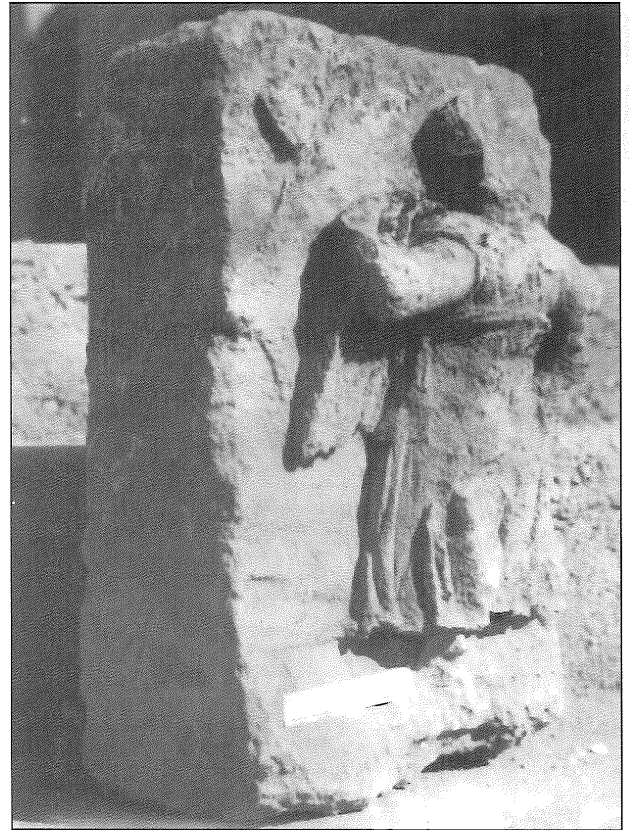
There are other blocks at the site which could be added to it if we had more indication of where they went (McKenzie *et al.* 2002: fig. 22a-b). The photographs include a floral pilaster capital of the type without a collar of acanthus leaves, not otherwise recorded at Khirbat at-Tannūr. It is visible in the background at the edge of a damaged photograph (Fig. 22).

There are also some blocks in the same style as the Period III altar platform, but it has not so far been possible to ascertain with certainty their original positions. These include two small blocks, with a Doric frieze and busts at either end, which were found with other fallen blocks of the façade of the Inner Temenos Enclosure (DD 142, pl. 12a-b) (Fig. 11a). Glueck and Fisher used them as the basis for two niches in the façade (DD 145-146, plan B). This would only be possible if they were inserted into the Period II façade in Period III, as the style of carving of Period III is distinctly different of that of Period II (details in McKenzie *et al.* 2002).

The other Period III blocks are the capitals and floral pilasters from either side of two niches (DD pl. 133a, 134; McKenzie *et al.* 2002: fig. 9b-c). Glueck suggested they came from an altar, Altar



17a. Khirbat at-Tannūr, Nike panels from frieze of Inner Temenos Enclosure before excavation, 1936.



17b. Khirbat at-Tannūr, Nike with raised right hand (?holding wreath) on panel from frieze of Inner Temenos Enclosure, 1937.



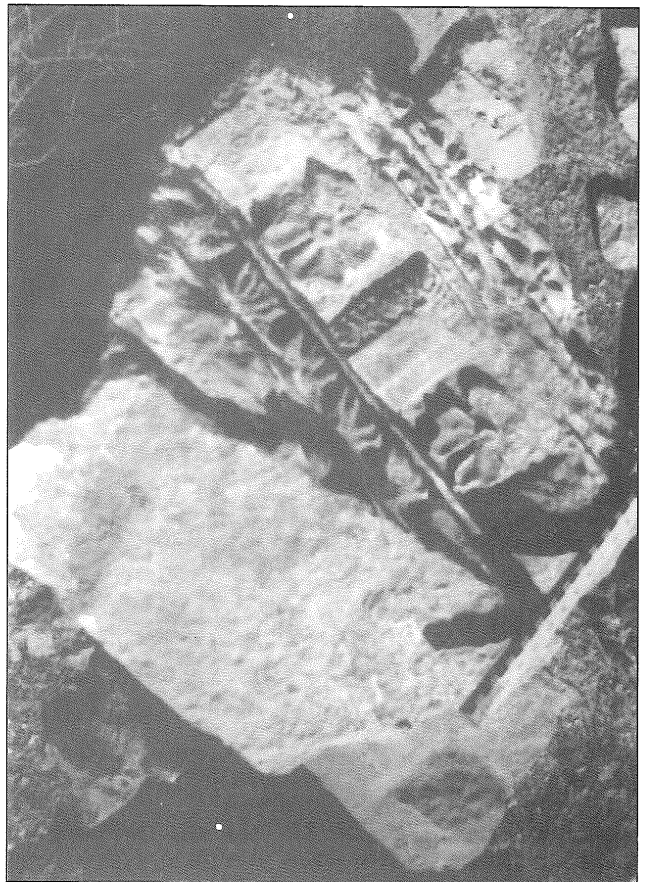
17c. Khirbat at-Tannūr, Nike panels from frieze of Inner Temenos Enclosure, with larger figure on far left, 1937.

III, on top of the Period III altar platform (DD 124-126, plan C), but they would equally fit on the altar in the northeast of the Forecourt (Fig. 4). Unfortunately, the excavation records do not clarify the

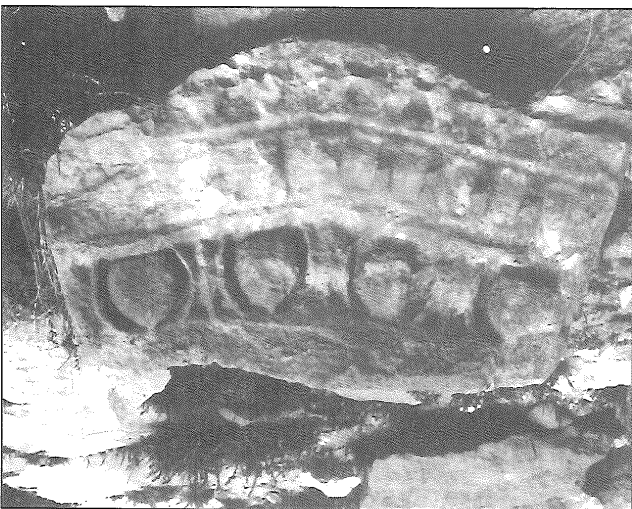
problem of their original location. The capitals from them, with a small head on the boss, were found in front of the Inner Temenos Enclosure, one near the south wall of the Forecourt and the other,



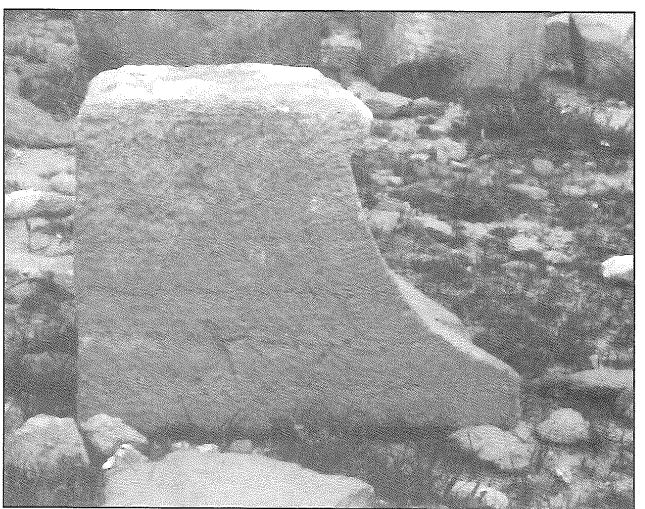
18a. Khirbat at-Tannūr, cornice fragment from main entablature of Inner Temenos Enclosure, 1936.



18b. Khirbat at-Tannūr, cornice fragment with modillions from main entablature of Inner Temenos Enclosure, 1937.



18c. Khirbat at-Tannūr, cornice fragment from apex of main pediment of Inner Temenos Enclosure, 2001.



18d. Khirbat at-Tannūr, cavetto cornice block, 2001.

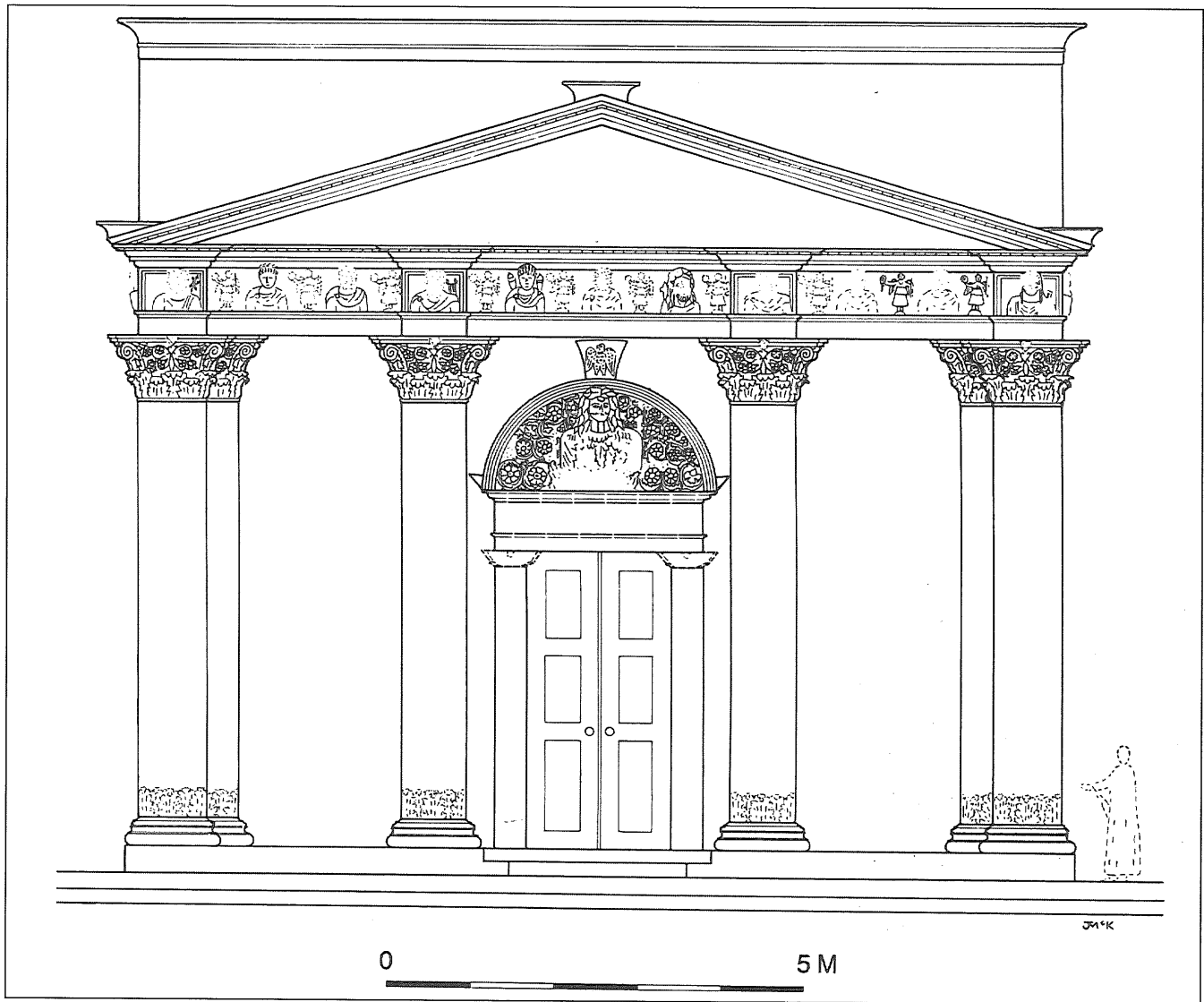
near the north end of the façade (GJ 6 March 1937; Registration Book, no. 48). The blocks are depicted in the excavation photographs lined up on the south side of the Forecourt, after they had been moved.

Date of Period II Complex

The details of the florals on the “Atargatis panel” are identical with those on the Period II altar platform (DD 32, pl. 104a, 175a; McKenzie 1988:

82-3, fig. 3a-c), indicating that the Inner Temenos Enclosure was built at the same time as this phase of the altar. The site is very windy so it is highly likely this enclosure was built to prevent the fire on the altar from blowing away.

These florals are identical with those at Khirbat adh-Dharīh, as are the details of the carving on the heads, such as the indented irises. Both were decorated by the same workmen (Dentzer-Feydy 1990),



19. Khirbat at-Tannūr, elevation of façade of Inner Temenos Enclosure (J. McKenzie).



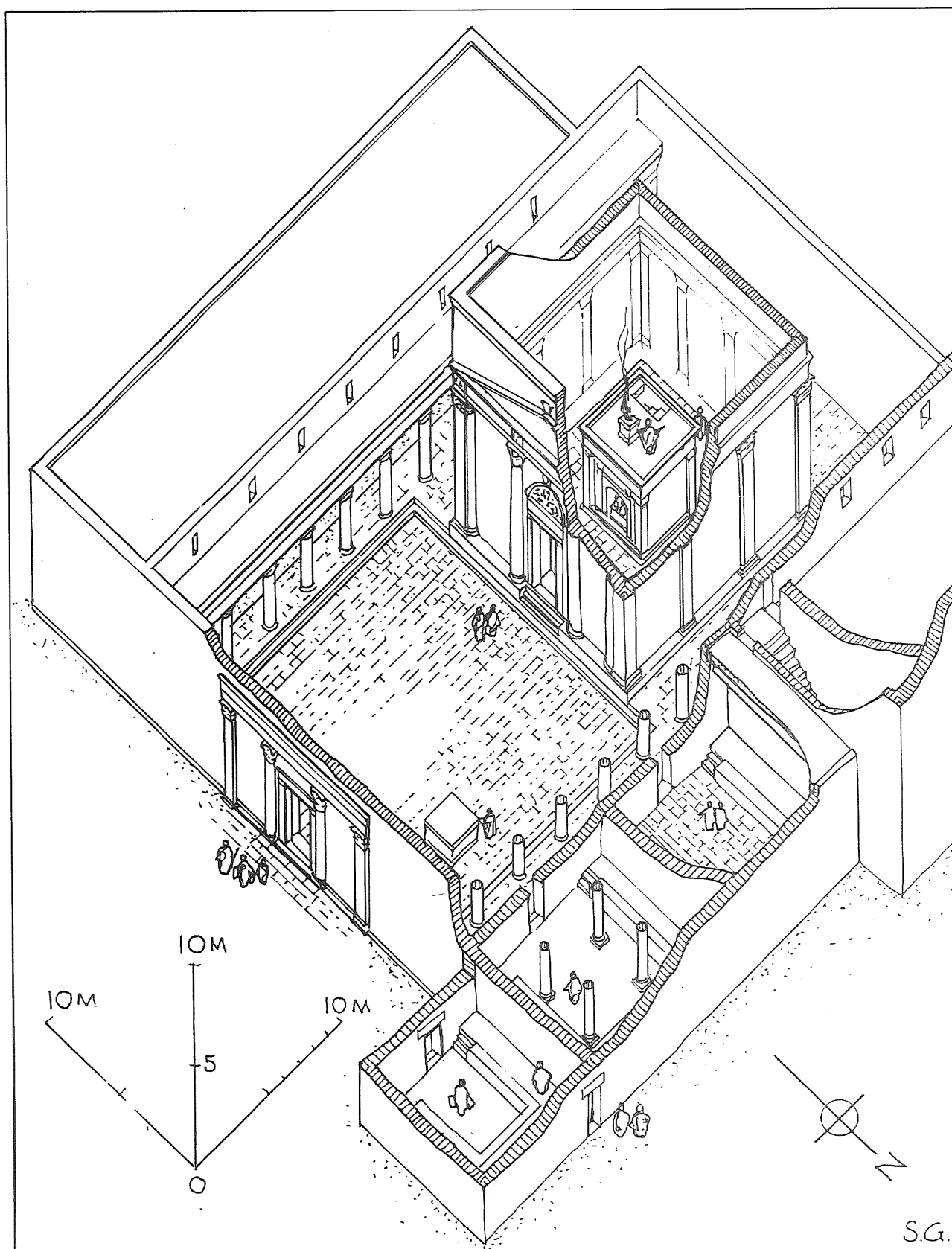
20. Khirbat at-Tannūr, blocks of colonnade bases and capitals on south side of Temenos, beside Inner Temenos Enclosure, 2001.

and so will have a similar date (discussed in McKenzie *et al.* 2002). Hopefully, a more precise date for Period II at Khirbat at-Tannūr will be provided by the excavations at Khirbat adh-Dharīh

than the current date of the second half of the first or the first half of the second century AD (al-Muheisen and Villeneuve 1994: 739; 1999: 43). It is possible that the examination of the sherds from Khirbat at-Tannūr by Stephan Schmid might help clarify this chronology, as the comparative material from Petra is now more reliably dated than it was in 1937 (Schmid 2000). It would be useful to know if the Period II version of the temple complex were built before or after the Roman conquest of the Nabataean kingdom of Arabia in AD 106, because there are serious implications if a sanctuary of such size were built under Roman rule, as the third phase of the altar (Fig. 10) must have been (McKenzie *et al.* 2002).

Figured Sculpture

Having reconstructed the building, we can now consider the Nabataean use of the representation of gods in figured form, i.e. anthropomorphic repre-



21. Khirbat at-Tannūr temple complex, axonometric reconstruction (S. Gibson).

sentations.

In *The Formation of Nabataean Art, Prohibition of a Graven Image Among the Nabataeans*, pub-

lished in 1990, Joseph Patrich discusses the innumerable examples of Nabataean gods depicted as rectangular blocks. These blocks, known as betyls,



22. Khirbat at-Tannūr, floral pilaster capital, 1937.

range from plain rectangular blocks to those with geometric eyes and a rectangular nose, called “eye-idols”. The typology of the betyls, established by Dalman (1908: 70-74; Patrich 1990a: 75-95), has recently been summarized and rigorously analysed by Wenning (2001). The main point is that these blocks avoid the representation of the deity in human form, using the plain block instead of an anthropomorphic cult statue. That they represent deities is indicated by the inscriptions below some of them, such as the block from the Temple of the Winged Lions in Petra with eyebrows and a nose, identified as “the goddess” (Hammond 1980: 137, fig. 1), and those of al-‘Uzza and al-Kutba carved in the rock together in Wādī Ramm (وادي رم) (Patrich 1990a: 61, ill. 9).

Patrich argues that the Nabataeans had a prohibition against the use of anthropomorphic representations, despite their use of figured sculpture (Patrich 1990a: 191). By contrast, Mettinger considers that the Nabataean preference for aniconism also allowed for the acceptance of anthropomorphic representations of deities (Mettinger 1995: 57-68; Healey 2001: 185-189).

The amount of figured sculpture at Petra is clear



23. Khirbat at-Tannūr, “Zeus-Hadad” statue showing depth of the soil which completely covered it.

to the visitor there who sees about one hundred blocks with figured sculpture (pieces found up to 1986 listed in McKenzie 1988: 89-95). These include free-standing representations of classical gods and heroes, such as the marble statues of Heracles from the theatre and Venus (Hübner and Weber 1997: figs. 132, 133a). Blocks from buildings include panels with busts in high relief of readily recognisable classical gods on them, such as Athena and Hermes (McKenzie 1990: pl. 60a-b). Mortals are also represented, such as a man in a Roman toga carved in the round (Hübner and Weber 1997: fig. 137), the soldier on the Tomb of the Roman Soldier (McKenzie 1990: pl. 102a), and the figures leading camels recently uncovered in as-Sīq (السيق) (Nehmé and Villeneuve 1999: fig. 74). Figured representations on more everyday objects include those on the coins and terracottas.

How can the evidence from Khirbat at-Tannūr elucidate how figured sculpture was used in and on religious buildings by the Nabataeans?

Cult Statues at Khirbat at-Tannūr

One of the major discoveries of the temple at Khirbat at-Tannūr is the cult statue because this is the only Nabataean temple in which the largely



24a. Khirbat at-Tannūr, “Zeus-Ḥadad” statue while being excavated, 1937.



24b. Khirbat at-Tannūr, “Zeus-Ḥadad” statue in front of altar platform, before removal of soil at base of it, 1937.

complete cult statue has been found. It is a seated male statue carved in high relief on a sandstone stele (h. 1.15m, maximum w. 0.63m) (see Fig. 25).

Glueck records in his dig journal that it was found “just in front” of the altar platform (GJ 10 March 1937), and notes it was not in its original position when excavated (GJ 1 March 1937). However, as complete grains of wheat were found behind it (GJ 3 March 1937), it could not have been moved very far as these were also found behind it in the altar platform. The sides of it had remains of plaster on them indicating it had been inset (GJ 9 March 1937). The archive includes unpublished photographs of it while it was being uncovered (Figs. 23, 24). These record the exact position of it when it was uncovered, indicating it had not been moved when Glueck photographed it after removing the surrounding soil (Fig. 25). As Glueck did

not publish these photographs, but only the cult statue by itself (DD pl. 42), the context of exactly where it was found was lost.

As would be expected from its find-spot, Glueck considered the cult statue had originally stood in the niche of the altar platform in front of which it was found (Glueck 1937b: 11-12; DD 269). It is the correct size to have stood in this niche, probably on a pedestal so the worshipper looked the god in the eye rather than down on him (Fig. 26). The record in the archive of the find-spot of the statue is important because it greatly increases the likelihood that the cult statue originally stood in this niche. This has implications concerning the function of this altar structure which will be discussed below.

A sceptre of hard limestone (Fig. 27a) was found behind the cult statue (GJ 9 March 1937 an-



25. Khirbat at-Tannūr, “Zeus-Hadad” statue in front of altar platform, after excavation, 1937.

notations on typed copy; *DD* 288, 186a). This was photographed while it was being excavated (Fig. 27b), confirming that the pieces of it had not been moved when it appeared in the photograph of the altar platform (*DD* pl. 112b) (Fig. 5).

The statue’s attributes of the thunderbolt, and the throne decorated with bulls, are associated with the Syrian storm god Ḥadad. In his raised right hand, which is damaged, he probably held the sceptre found behind him. His clothes and hair reflect classical influences. Consequently, Glueck called him “Zeus-Hadad” to reflect this combination of eastern and western features (detailed discussion: *DD* 86, 195-199, 203-209). That name will be retained here to avoid confusion.

This statue is carved from sandstone, whereas the architecture of the temple complex is limestone. Sandstone fragments were also found of part of a lion throne and a foot of similar size to his (*DD* pl. 160-161b). The details of the indented irises on the eyes of the lion and bull on the thrones are identical, indicating they are contemporary (McKenzie et al. 2002). Thus, the fragments come from the cult statue of his consort Atargatis, for whom there is space in the niche beside him (Glueck 1937b: 12; *DD* 248, 269-270, 283). The details on the cult statue and the lion throne, such as the indented irises on the animals, indicate that they belong to Period II (McKenzie et al. 2002). As the small limestone

sculpture of Atargatis from Khirbat at-Tannūr in the Jordan Archaeological Museum (*DD* pl. 44) also belongs to Period II, based on details such as her eyes and hair (McKenzie et al. 2002: fig. 23a-c), she can be used to provide an indication of how the missing parts of the cult statue of Atargatis might have looked (Fig. 26).

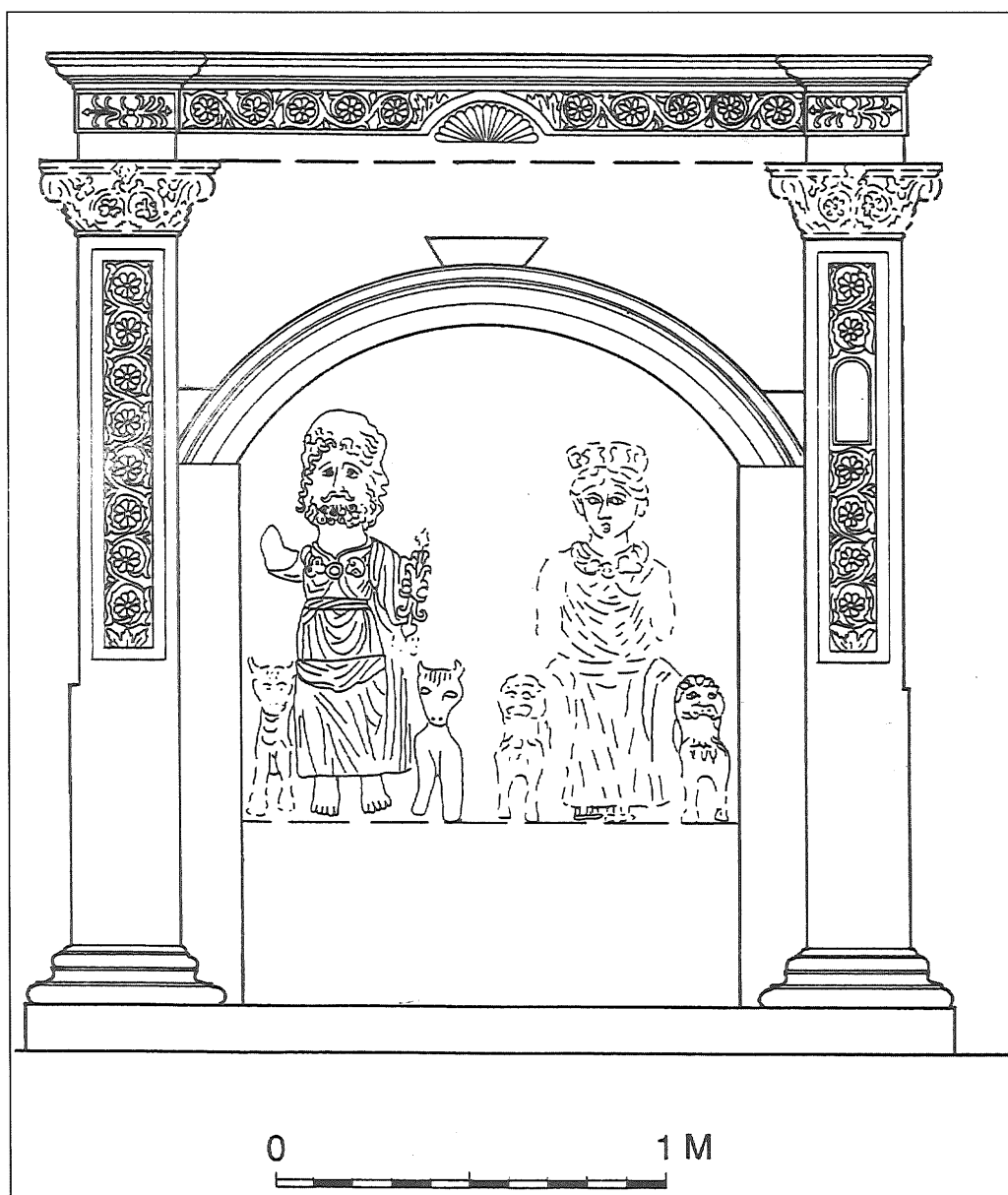
As these cult statues from Khirbat at-Tannūr have the form of Zeus-Ḥadad and his consort Atargatis, we need to consider whether the Nabataeans were worshipping these Syrian gods, or gods of their own, but represented in this form.

The only inscription at Khirbat at-Tannūr which mentions a deity refers to the Edomite god Qos, although it is written in Nabataean (*DD* 514-515, pl. 196-7; Healey 2001: 61). It is on a stone slab with an unusual shape, sometimes interpreted as a stele (Patrich 1990a: 63). Qos was the equivalent of the Arab Quzaḥ, god of the sky (Starcky 1968: 209), so he could have been worshipped in the form of Zeus-Ḥadad. The main Nabataean god Dushara was sometimes connected with Zeus (Healey 2001: 85-97, 101). Thus, the male cult statue at Khirbat at-Tannūr could represent the god of the sanctuary dedicated to a version of Qos-Dushara, in the form of Zeus-Ḥadad.

According to John Healey, it is not entirely certain which goddess was Dushara’s spouse, but he considers al-‘Uzza seems most likely at Petra, with Allāt who was worshipped elsewhere by the Nabataeans, being equivalent to her (Healey 2001: 44, 105, 116). Both al-‘Uzza and Allāt acquired characteristics of other supreme goddesses of the Roman world, especially Isis and Atargatis (Healey 2001: 107, 182).

Who was the goddess represented at Khirbat at-Tannūr in the form of Atargatis? Atargatis of Hierapolis-Mambij (the centre of Atargatis worship) is attested at Petra where she is represented in the form of a rock-cut “eye-idol”, identified by the accompanying inscription (Healey 2001: 140-1, pl. 7b). However, Healey considers there is now a consensus “that Atargatis, as such, was not worshipped as one of the main deities of the Nabataeans”. This would mean that, at Khirbat at-Tannūr, the form of “this best known international goddess of the Semitic world”, as he describes her, would appear to be used to represent the main Nabataean goddess (Healey 2001: 140).

Healey observes from his discussion of Dushara and Allāt/al-‘Uzza there emerges “a distinct feature of Nabataean religion of a tendency to restrict the pantheon to a principal god and his partner, even if this tendency was not fully developed” (Healey 2001: 189). The representation of the main male and female Nabataean deities at Khirbat at-Tannūr



26. Khirbat at-Tannūr, Period II altar: elevation (J. McKenzie).

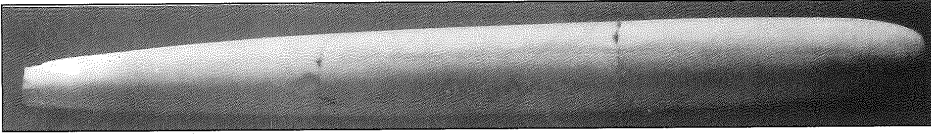
would accord with this.

The use of the cult statues at Khirbat at-Tannūr has a further feature of note, arising from the fact that the evidence in the archive and our reconstruction has given them both a firmer chronological and an architectural context. As mentioned, the cult statues are contemporary with the Period II altar with the niche in the front for them (Fig. 26). This means that this structure was designed to function as both a compressed cella and an altar. In Period III this arrangement continued with the altar enlarged to form an altar platform with the altar on top of it (Figs. 10, 28).

Starcky (1968: 212-221) discussed this at length because he assumed it could only be either an altar or a cella, not both. The arrangement of a compressed cella, with the cult statues in it, combined

with an altar, is not as surprising as it at first seems. There are written sources from Syria from the first to second centuries AD which indicate that the altar was sometimes equated with the deity, such as “to the Great Zeus-Altar, hearer of prayers”, and Porphyry mentions “the altar which they used as an idol” at Dūmah (*De Abstinētia* ii, 56, 6) (Mettinger 1995: 63; Healey 2001: 159 with references). The iconography of an altar is not so far removed from the rectangular blocks sometimes used by the Nabataeans to represent the deity.

A similar blurring of forms occurs with the cult statue at Khirbat at-Tannūr. It is not completely carved in the round, but rather in very high relief still attached to the stele behind it (Fig. 25). This god and his consort are notably not carved from the



27a. Khirbat at-Tannūr, sceptre of hard limestone. Cincinnati Art Museum.



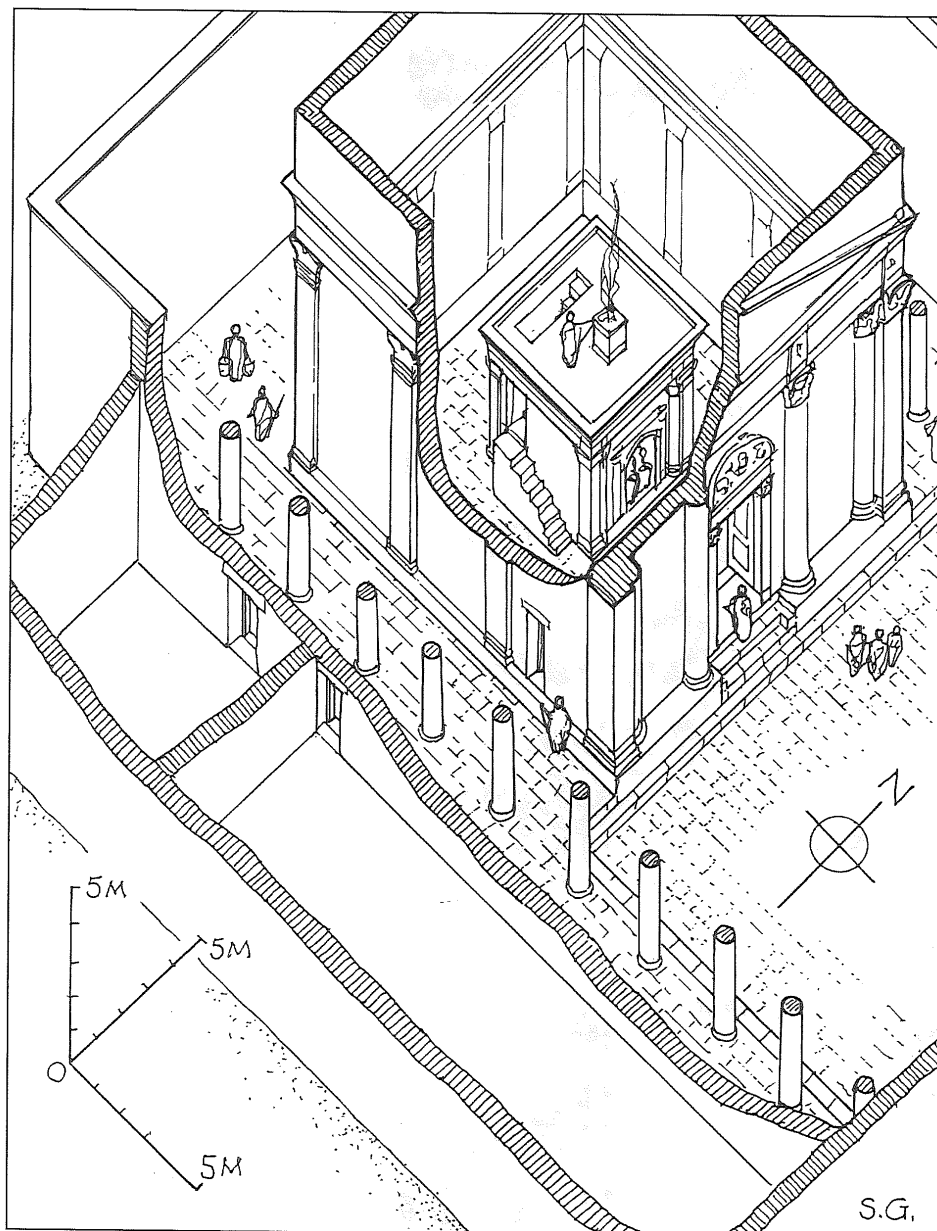
27b. Khirbat at-Tannūr, discovery of pieces of sceptre behind "Zeus-Ḥadad" statue, 1937.

local limestone, but of sandstone which must have been deliberately brought to the mountain-top site, with some difficulty. The questions arise as to whether this stone was transported from Petra, and if so, what was its significance.

Thus, at Khirbat at-Tannūr we have the cult statues of the main Nabataean god and goddess represented in figured form. That this was a major sanctuary is indicated by its location, and the energy and expense which would have been necessary to construct it. In the light of this, it would not be so surprising if other major Nabataean temples had an anthropomorphic cult statues. With this in mind, we will briefly examine the evidence from Petra

and Wādī Ramm, before returning to Khirbat at-Tannūr.

A fragment was found apparently from the cult statue of Qaṣr al-Bint (قصر البنت) at Petra. This fragment is from a marble hand which is about four times life size and would have come from a statue six to seven metres high, or slightly less if seated. It was found near the northeastern corner of the podium of Qaṣr al-Bint (Parr 1967-8: 18-19, pl. 8.14). The size of it indicates it belonged to the cult statue of a temple and its find spot suggests this temple was probably Qaṣr al-Bint (so also Healey 2001: 41). This would mean that the god of one of the main temples in Petra was represented



28. *Khirbat at-Tannūr, Inner Temenos Enclosure and altar platform from south-east: axonometric reconstruction (S. Gibson).*

in anthropomorphic form.

There are also rock-cut anthropomorphic cult statues at Petra. Isis is represented in Wādī as-Šiyyagh (وادي الصيغ) in figured form seated on a throne (Merklein and Wenning 1998: pl. 8a). The associated inscription mentioning Isis is dated to 25 BC (Merklein and Wenning 1998: 166-169, pl. 7; Healey 2001: 138). The position of this inscription, on either side of the relief (Milik and Starky 1975: 120-123, pl. 44.1), indicates it was carved after the statue. Thus, anthropomorphic cult statues were made by the Nabataeans by that date.

Another rock-carving of a seated Isis in anthropomorphic form occurs at a site near the foot of Jabal Hārūn (جبل هارون), identified by the Isis-knot in her drapery (Parr 1962: 21-23, pl. 11.7). Isis is also represented as an “eye-idol”, identified by her

crown with the solar disc and horns (Lindner 1988: fig. 5, pl. 10). Thus, both the rectangular stone block and figured form were used by the Nabataeans for the same deity.

In the temple at Wādī Ramm a broken block, 0.32m high, was found which is the lower half of a seated deity (Savignac and Horsfield 1935: 261-263, pl. 9; *DD* pl. 52c). This draped figure was carved from very fine limestone, with a serpent entwined around the lower part, and apparently with a small figure which is damaged standing between the legs. Although found in the temple, it was not in its original position. Savignac and Horsfield (1935: 262) considered it a statue of one of the deities worshipped in the temple, possibly Allāt. Patrich (1990a: 111) considers “there is no doubt the fragment is from the cult statue around which wor-



29. Khirbat at-Tannūr, zodiac-Tyche. Jordan Archaeological Museum and Cincinnati Art Museum.

ship centred", but without clarification of its identity and original location it cannot be certain that it was the sole cult statue. It is carved in the round, unlike the one from Khirbat at-Tannūr, and came from a statue which would have been only slightly smaller.

Thus, the statues of "Zeus-Ḥadad" and his consort at Khirbat at-Tannūr are not the only examples of anthropomorphic cult statues in a major Nabataean sanctuary. There also appear to have been anthropomorphic cult statues in some other Nabataean temples, as suggested by the evidence from Wādī Ramm and Qaṣr al-Bint, although this is not confirmed for them the way it is at Khirbat at-Tannūr by the fact that the statue is nearly com-

plete, and was found not far from where it originally stood.

Figured Busts of Deities

The other representations of gods and goddesses in figured form at Khirbat at-Tannūr take the form of busts used as decoration. As mentioned, there was a series of male and female busts on the main frieze at Khirbat at-Tannūr depicting various deities (Fig. 19), such as Helios, Kronos-Saturn, and Zeus-Jupiter (Fig. 16a-b). Insufficient of them survive to indicate their exact order, nor the reasons for the choice of them (McKenzie *et al.* 2002). At Khirbat adh-Dharīḥ the busts on the main frieze represent male personifications of the symbols of the zodiac, such as the crab and the twins (al-Muheisen and Villeneuve in press). Thus, these busts do not individually reflect the worship of a specific deity in the temple. Similarly, the bust of Helios from a metope on the frieze of Qaṣr al-Bint at Petra (McKenzie 1990: pl. 67b), is just one of a decorative series, of which others were defaced.

As mentioned, there were twelve busts decorating the Period III altar platform at Khirbat at-Tannūr including the "Grain Goddess" and the "Fish Goddess" (Figs. 7a-b, 10). Glueck considered they represent different aspects of Atargatis. This led him to associate the "Fish Goddess" with the mermaid version of Atargatis, Derketo of Ascalon (DD 282-283). Although the creatures in her hair are fish, Glueck also referred to her as the "Dolphin Goddess" (DD 315-319).

On the altar platform, the "Grain Goddess" was located on the lower left and the "Fish Goddess" on the lower right, as mentioned (Fig. 10). Their position, at the bottom of the series on each side, is indicated by the plain band across the bottom of them (Fig. 7a-b).

The key to the identity of these two busts is provided by the zodiac-Tyche from Khirbat at-Tannūr (Fig. 29). The details on it, such as the eyes on the Nike, indicate it belongs to Period II. We do not know where in the temple it went, except that it was built into a wall. The top block of it was found in the west part of the Inner Temenos Enclosure (Registration book 1 March 1937, no. 6).

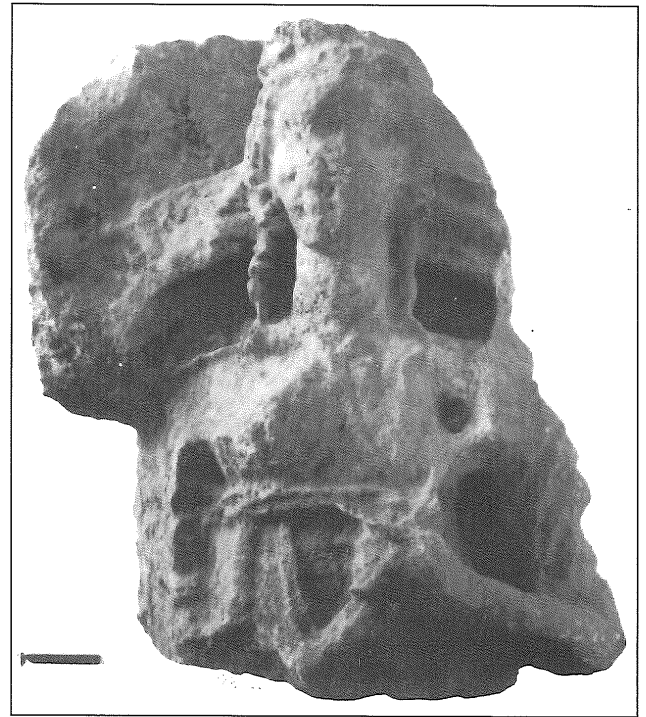
Normally, the symbols on a zodiac run in a single direction, either clockwise or anti-clockwise, although the symbol positioned at the top varies. On the Khirbat at-Tannūr zodiac half the symbols, Aries to Virgo run anti-clockwise from the top, and the other half, Libra to Pisces, run clockwise from the top (Fig. 29). Consequently, Virgo is on the lower left and Pisces on the lower right. This is



30a. Khirbat at-Tannūr, relief sculpture of female figure, 1937.

precisely the position of the “Grain Goddess” and the “Fish Goddess” on the altar platform, indicating that these busts are Virgo, and the female personification of Pisces. This is discussed in detail elsewhere, with additional evidence (McKenzie 2001: 108-109). If the “Fish Goddess” is the personification of Pisces, and not Atargatis, then there is no longer any evidence to connect her with Atargatis-Derketo.

In the archive there are photographs of an unpublished female figure carved in relief at Khirbat at-Tannūr (Fig. 30a) which is larger than the Nikes belonging to the series (on far left of Fig. 17c). Part of her lower skirt and feet are either damaged or unfinished. In her left hand she is holding something, which is possibly a cornucopia. Her head has been defaced, but behind it there is the shadow of a



30b. Khirbat at-Tannūr, top part of female figure.

curved shape with the top of the curve behind her head. This is similar to the arrangement on another female figure of similar size published by Glueck (DD pl. 45a) and reproduced here at about the same scale (Fig. 30b). Both of these figures are wearing a peplos and have a single curled lock of hair hanging down on either side their neck. Even though we at present do not know their original location on the building, these figures and the zodiac-Tyche suggest that the Nikes on the frieze of the Inner Temenos enclosure were not the only series of decorative figures carved in relief on the temple complex.

To conclude, we have seen the use of the anthropomorphic form for cult statues by the Nabataeans. Figured sculpture was also used for busts of deities in decorative contexts. The use of busts as personifications of the symbols of the zodiac displays a sophisticated understanding of the use of the anthropomorphic form by the Nabataeans. The accurate reconstruction of the temple complex at Khirbat at-Tannūr was necessary before these observations could be made. Future stages of the project involve the publication of other material in the archive, including the pottery and cult offerings, consideration of how the design of temple complex relates to other Nabataean temples, and what these tell us about Nabataean religious practice.

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Abbreviations

- DD Glueck, N., 1965. *Deities and Dolphins* (New York).
- FAN Clarence Fisher’s architecture notes in GA.
- FFN Clarence Fisher’s fieldnotes in GA.
- FRN Clarence Fisher’s reconstruction notes in GA.
- GA ASOR Nelson Glueck Archive in the Semitic Museum, Harvard University.
- GJ Nelson Glueck’s dig journal (a handwritten copy and two typed copies with annotations) in GA.
- GNAN Nelson Glueck’s notes on FAN in GA.
- PFN Carl Pape’s fieldnotes in GA.

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