

# Henryk Meyza

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## Nea Paphos Season 2002

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# NEA PAPHOS

## SEASON 2002

Henryk Meyza

*Members of the Polish Mission directed by Prof. W.A. Daszewski were dispatched to Cyprus twice in 2002. In September, a study of the pottery was carried out in view of preparing the final publication of finds from the area of the so-called Villa of Theseus.<sup>1)</sup> In December, at the request of the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus, salvage excavations were undertaken in preparation for a roofing project intended to cover an extensive part of the Polish excavations in the so-called Villa of Theseus and the House of Aion.<sup>2)</sup>*

*The study campaign concentrated on verifying the documentation made in previous years and reorganising the pottery collection.*

1) The Mission included Prof. Eudoksja Papuci-Władyka and Mr. Henryk Meyza, archaeologists.

2) The salvage excavations supervised by Mr. H. Meyza (Research Center for Mediterranean Archaeology, Polish Academy of Sciences) with support from a technician from the Department of Antiquities, were conducted for a fortnight with resources supplied by the Department. The author also benefited from Department hospitality, being able to lodge at the Paphos Dig House. This report was consulted by Prof. W.A. Daszewski.

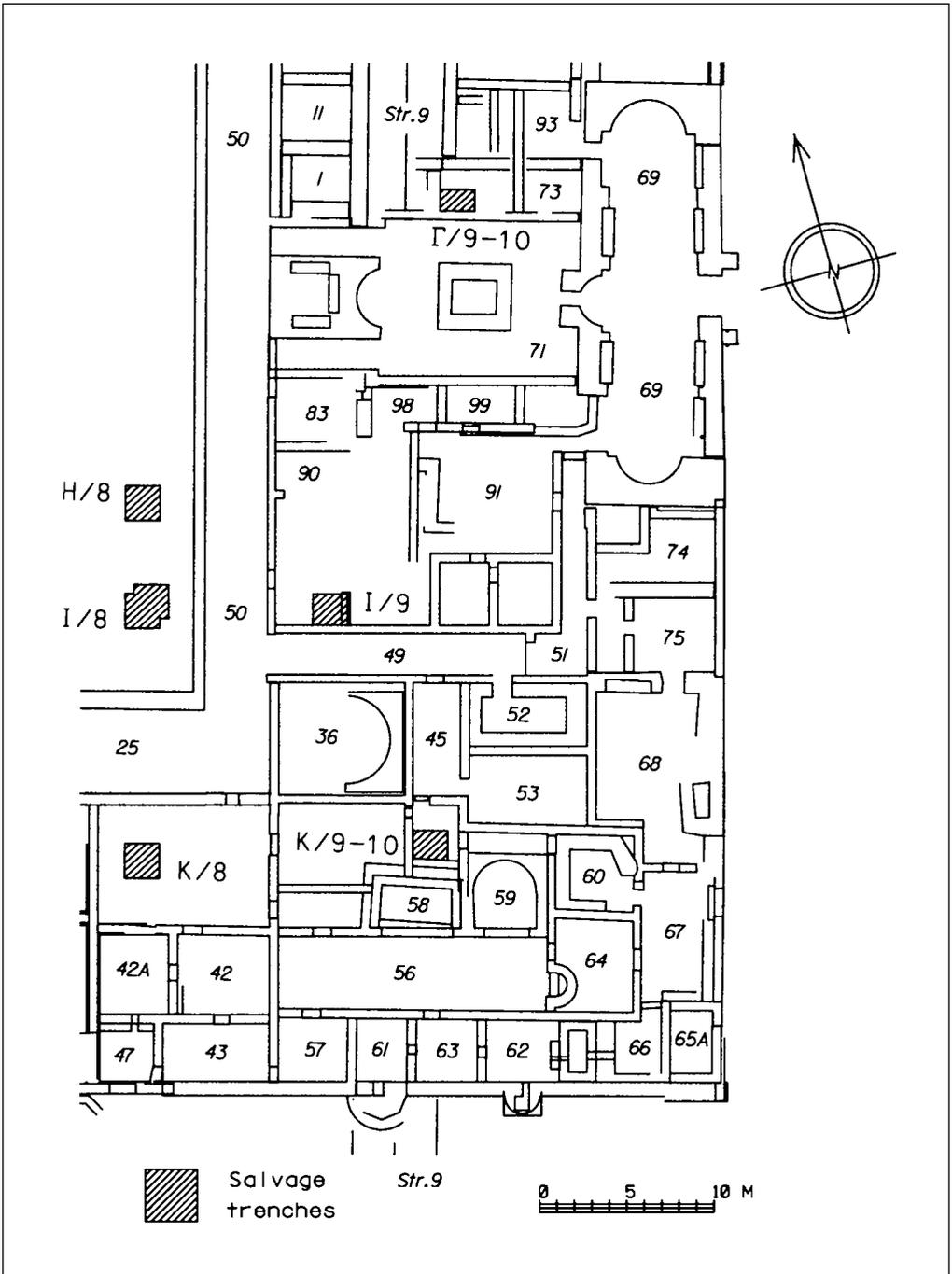


Fig. 1. Plan of the southeastern part of the so-called Villa of Theseus with salvage excavation trenches marked (Drawing H. Meyza)

## SALVAGE EXCAVATIONS

Salvage excavations were executed on a sample of roof support locations. The trenches were 2 by 2 m in principle. All were dug in the eastern part of the Villa of Theseus (*Fig. 1*). A trench dug to base rock, K/9-10 (according to the project grid), will be discussed first.

## TRENCH K/9-10

The floor of Room 46 of the Villa was built of large slabs of calcarenite. Six of the slabs were removed to excavate a trench extending 1.60 m north from the thickened south wall, and 2.00 m wide E-W. The slabs were c. 10 cm thick, and underneath a substratum was found, overlying in the west a highly carbonized westward sloping layer. The substratum contained material characteristic of the leveling in the southeastern part of the Villa, executed under the building of the final bath complex. This included pottery dating to the 2nd/3rd century AD<sup>3)</sup> and construction elements, such as separators of wall terracotta slabs, terracotta and marble facing slabs. The carbonized layer also contained small fragments of Early Roman pottery. In its western part, it cut two hardened surfaces, both belonging probably to the NS street no. 9. These were made of crushed limestone and plaster. Already between the two topmost surfaces the material was exclusively Hellenistic. The eastern side of the trench was occupied by a large threshold block with door post holes

(*Fig. 2*). The door was 0.70 m wide and opening eastward. The block is what remains of dismantled structures. The same fill as that over the carbonized stratum went down to the top of the threshold and along its western face, separating it from the street surfaces. As door jamb holes in the threshold block were placed at its very west edge, it seems that another block belonging to the doorway must have existed there, probably forming a threshold offset, the space of which was filled with substratum soil. Below the earliest layer of the street contemporary with the threshold block, the latest pottery belongs to Early Hellenistic times, with numerous pieces classifiable as Cypro-Classical. The surfaces under that layer were profiled differently, their southern part differing from the northern one, and the pottery found was transitional from Classical to Hellenistic.

## TRENCH K-8

Some 14 m to the west, trench K-8 was situated at the center of Room 41. The mosaic floor of this room was partly damaged, but the plaster bedding has been preserved intact, sealing the underlying layers. A leveling stratum of earth contained Late Roman pottery of 4th/5th century date.<sup>4)</sup> Below this the top of a N-S wall appeared. Its western face was in line with the opening in the foundation of the south wall of Room 42A. In the fill west of it numerous voids appeared, resulting from

3) Amphorae: Kapitän II (=P-W 47); small pieces of large micaceous jars (=P-W 45); House of Dionysus Roman type II, Tripolitanian (=P-W 37): D.P.S. Peacock and D.F. Williams, *Amphorae and the Roman Economy* (London 1986), 169f (37) 193-195 (47), 188-190 (45); J.W. Hayes, *Paphos III: The Hellenistic and Roman Pottery* (Nicosia 1991) (=Paphos III), 91 (no 19), 204 (21), *Fig. 70:12*, Pl. 24:2.

4) African Red Slip Ware (=ARS) Hayes' form 50 rim and a collar rim of a Buff Ware jug/amphora known from the destruction layers of the House of Aion: J.W. Hayes, *Late Roman Pottery* (London 1972) (=LRP), 69-73; B. Lichočka, H. Meyza, "Seismic Events and the Evidence of Coins and Pottery. The Case of Destruction of the House of Aion in Paphos", *EtTrav* 19 (2001), 174, *Fig. 11: 6*.



*Fig. 2. Threshold of a door under R. 46 (trench K/9-10)  
(Photo H. Meyza)*



*Fig. 3. Settling tank under Room 73W (trench Γ/9-10)  
(Photo H. Meyza)*

the hurried filling of that space with defunct elements of the wall heating system, as well as its marble facing. This loose, but homogeneous fill continued 0.55 m below the preserved top of the N-S wall, reaching a floor at 0.89 m below the mosaic level. A single rim of a Late Roman vessel<sup>5)</sup> was presumably intrusive due to the fill's loose structure; pieces dating to the Late Hellenistic period and to the 1st or the beginning of the 2nd century AD at the latest were actually prevalent. Numerous variants of plain/buff ware jugs with square rim and ribbed body on a concave incurved base, evidently used as bathing equipment, were found together with many fragmentary separators featuring dovetail external ends, as well as terracotta wall and floor tiles of various shape.

#### TRENCH I-9

Around 16 m to the southeast, trench I-9 started to be excavated at the level of a Late Roman floor in Room 81, and accordingly the latest pottery finds were of Late Roman date.<sup>6)</sup> These finds appeared above the level of the foundation leveling course of the wall separating Rooms 81 and 82, uncovered at a depth of 0.15 m under the extant surface. The most numerous finds below that level belonged to the 1st/2nd century AD horizon, a period in which the N-S wall occupying the eastern part of the trench appears to have been built. The layer

corresponded to the thickness of the foundation leveling course and reached a depth of 0.49 m below the surface. The stratum below this contained exclusively Hellenistic or earlier finds. The latest pottery belonged to the Late Hellenistic period.<sup>7)</sup> The excavation was discontinued at a level of 0.78 cm below the surface.

#### TRENCH Γ/9-10

On the other side of the atrium complex, trench Γ/9-10 (1.23 m N-S by 2.00 m E-W) was situated in Room 73W. The present surface was probably contaminated during the reconstruction of the north wall of Room 72. Just below the extant, uneven surface, two superimposed layers of floors were found, the upper one with pottery dating to the 4th century AD at the earliest. Similar material occurred in the fill of trenches: one along the wall of the atrium, another formed by the robbing of the wall that had constituted the eastern curb of the Hellenistic and Early Roman street (no. 9). The lower floor surface can be dated with confidence to the 1st century BC by finds in the floor<sup>8)</sup> and below it, in a fill with ashes.<sup>9)</sup> At a depth of 0.40 m below the surface, south of the floor and occupying a central position in the trench, a deep basin appeared, probably a settling tank (*Fig. 3*). Its southern side had been destroyed by the foundation trench of the atrium wall. The

5) ARS form 62B: LRP, 108f.

6) Rim of Cypriot Red Slip Ware Form 1B: LRP, 372f, *Fig. 80*; H. Meyza, *Cypriot Red Slip. Development of the Ware (An Attempt at Refinement)*, [in:] *Acts of the Third International Congress of Cypriot Studies* (Nicosia, 16-20 April 1996), vol. I (Nicosia 2000), *Fig. 10*.

7) Color Coated in-turned rim bowl: E. Papuci-Władyka, *Nea Pafos. Studia nad ceramiką hellenistyczną z polskich wykopalisk* (1965-1991), Uniwersytet Jagielloński, *Rozprawy habilitacyjne* 288 (Kraków 1995) (=Cer. Hell), 51f.

8) ESA form 2 and Color Coated in-turned rim bowls: J.W. Hayes, *Sigillate orientali* [in:] *Atlante delle forme ceramiche II: Ceramica fine romana nel bacino mediterraneo (tardo ellenismo e primo impero)*, *EAA* (Roma 1985) (=Atl.), 14, Pl. I.3-4.

9) Handle with rim of Rhodian amphora with a stamp bearing an inscription in 3 lines: ΕΠΙ ΑΝΑΞΑΝ/ΔΡΟΥ/ΚΑΡΝΕΙΟΥ, dating from the VIth period, i.e., c. 100-80 BC, cf. Z. Szczytło, *Nea Paphos I. Les timbres céramiques* (1965-1973) (Warsaw 1976), 35, nos. 41(?), 42; id., *Nea Paphos IV. Pottery Stamps* (1975-1989) (Warsaw 1991), 10, 244, nos. 15, 73, 75 note 435; id., *Tell Atrib I*, 56, 72 nos. 10, 103 note 385 and a plate of ESA form 2/3, Atl. 14.

tank belonged to the water installations that led to a channel running on the axis of street no. 9. The tank was filled in the 1st or early 2nd century AD.<sup>10</sup> It seems therefore that the 1st century BC deposit with ashes under the floors must be related to the construction of the basin, and not to its use. The floors which followed belonged to the time of its use. The bottom of the basin, 0.90 m below the surface, was made deeper and a new

bottom was constructed at 1.05 m. The basin was cut into a sequence of three floors.<sup>11</sup> These floors were separated by a thick clayey fill from another, lower sequence of two floors, the material between which belongs to at least the 3rd century BC.<sup>12</sup> The lower of these is separated from the upper by a layer of burnt organic matter containing relatively large quantities of little broken pottery. A corresponding floor was uncovered just



Fig. 4. *Fluted pedestal incorporated into an early Hellenistic floor (trench I/8)*  
(Photo H. Meyza)

10) Dating pottery (Cypriot Sigillata form 4B rim and a basin rim with frilled handle) cannot be earlier than the middle of the 1st century AD: Atl, 81; Paphos III, 66f, Fig. 24:7, Pl. 13:12.

11) Dated by skyphoi of Ware A (classified by Slane as ESA): Paphos III, 23f; Cer. Hell, 44-46; K.W. Slane, *The Fine Wares* [in:] *Tel Anafa II.1: The Hellenistic and Roman Pottery*, *JRA Supplement 10* (ed. S.C. Herbert) (Ann Arbor, Michigan 1997), 280f, Pl. 4: TA type 9.

12) Pottery includes so-called Persian bowls and early Color Coated in-turned rim bowls: J.-F. Salles, *Kition-Bamboula. II. Les égouts de la ville classique* (Paris 1983), 72, nos. 236-238, 96, Table X, Figs. 28, 30.

below the level of the later, lower basin bottom at 1.05 m from the surface, with material dating to the 3rd century BC.<sup>13)</sup>

#### TRENCHES I-8 AND H-8

The last two trenches were sunk in the courtyard of the Villa of Theseus. In trench I-8, two walls were uncovered, one along the north side of the trench, already 0.4 m below the present surface, the other, much deeper, at c. 1 m along its western side, cutting three successive floors. The pottery from its filled-in foundation belonged to the Late Hellenistic period.<sup>14)</sup> A sequence of floors, all dating to the Hellenistic period, was also found. The deeper wall was contemporary with the upper series of floors. Below these floors, the pottery was exclusively early Hellenistic.<sup>15)</sup> Under this succession of floors

other structures were found: an E-W wall along the southern edge of the trench at a depth of 1.48 m from the surface, and another sequence of floors, with a fragmentary fluted pedestal incorporated into the penultimate of these at a depth of 1.62 m (*Fig. 4*). Pottery finds were scarce, precluding a precise dating of this feature. Below it, another burnt layer and a floor were found at c. 1.80 m from the surface. Excavation into still lower layers was not continued.

The other trench in the courtyard of the Villa of Theseus, H-8, was sunk only to a depth of 1 m below surface and its exploration was left unfinished. At a depth of 0.46 m from the surface a stony structure appeared, irregular on its eastern side. The material has been found to belong to Late Hellenistic times.

13) E.g. an intact wheel-made biconical lamp: D. Bailey, *BMC Lamps I*, Q 382; Th. Oziol, *Les lampes [in:] Kition-Bamboula IV, Les niveaux hellénistiques* (Paris 1993), 302, no. 690.

14) The latest piece is a fragment of mottled Color Coated Ware: Cer. hell, 47-48.

15) Imported Attic wares with residual Cypro-Classical wares, Plain Wares and early 3rd century BC lamps: BG skyphos – S.L. Rotroff, *Hellenistic Pottery: Athenian and imported wheelmade table ware and related material, The Athenian Agora XXIX* (Princeton 1997), 94, 258, Fig. 12: 153; Oziol, *op.cit.*, 298, no. 632.