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Nea Paphos: Season 2007

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NEA PAPHOS

SEASON 2007

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The season was unusual for it had two phases: from 26 March until 15 August 2007 the Polish Mission took part in rescue work connected with the building of a shelter over the ancient remains uncovered in the course of forty years of digging. These excavations were conducted on behalf of the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus. Polish archaeologists supervised excavation in the field and documented the stratigraphy and finds.¹ The work covered the Hellenistic House south of the Villa of Theseus (VT), the western wing of the Villa of Theseus and the street south of the House of Aion (HA). In the Hellenistic House, rooms 20, 21, 22 and 23 were explored. South of this building and its successor, the Roman House, street A' was excavated. In the western wing of VT, the following were dug: rooms 2W, 1W, 1WS, 16NW in the northern part, room 17 in the center and a pit west of room 76 in the south. In another trench, a long stretch of street B south of HA was also uncovered.

Fieldwork lasted from 1 September to 16 October.² Salvage work on behalf of the Department of Antiquities was continued. Regular excavations started on 16 September. The preceding two weeks were devoted to transferring the field storeroom to what was once the Dig House. Two main areas were excavated: the northern part of the House of Aion and the northeastern part of the so-called Early Roman House (ERH). The excavation in HA continued work from 2005–2006 in the northern part of the building. Rooms 35 and 37, as well as courtyard 36 were excavated and a trial pit was dug in the northern part of rooms 31 and 32. A small trench was also executed east of room 19. The area north of rooms 1 and 6, and a stretch east of the SE–NW wall of a Late Roman enclosure were excavated in the Roman House (RH). A trench was also sunk south of room 19, already in the Hellenistic House (HH).

The following report covers work done this year, presented in topographical order.

- 1 The Mission, directed by Prof. Wiktor Andrzej Daszewski, was represented in the field by Dr. Henryk Meyza, Dr. Wojciech Machowski, Joanna Rądkowska and Olga Wasilewska, archaeologists.
- 2 The Mission, directed by Prof. Wiktor Andrzej Daszewski, included Prof. Ewdoksia Papuci-Władyka, Dr. Henryk Meyza, Dr. Wojciech Machowski, archaeologists and Aleksandra Brzozowska, architect, as well as Dr. Meike Droste, archaeologist and documentalist, and Waldemar Jerke, photographer. The project provided training in excavation and documentation techniques for a group of 15 students from the University of Warsaw and the Jagiellonian University in Kraków.

STREET SOUTH OF THE HOUSE OF AION

The large trench, sunk in this area stretched along the south wall of HA, following for 38 m the northern side of a latitudinal street (which was 3.60 m wide). It is one of the principal streets, 5.30 m wide, codenamed B on the reconstructed urban grid (Daszewski 1978: 174; Młynarczyk 1985: 317–325; 1990: 161–175). Rescue excavation in this area required bulldozing away the top layers left over from building a rest area for tourists inside the Archaeological Park and the dismantling of a modern retaining wall that had separated an old trench, excavated south of HA in 1985, from the tourist walkway. Most of the area proved to have been disturbed during the construction of the pavilion sheltering the mosaics of the House of Aion and the retaining wall.

East of this modern structure, some remains of street surfaces and superimposed rubble remained undisturbed from ancient times. The only structures found between the central drain running in the street and HA were drains branching off from the house to the main street sewage. The remains to the east of the entrance to HA included a terracotta pipe, part of which was already found during earlier excavations, running 0.80 m south of the south wall of HA. This pipe lay just below the latest street surfaces. Deeper, at about 0.50 m, flat slabs were found covering the stone drain, identified already in 1965 further to the west. The top part of this drain was preserved for approximately 28 m. Further east, deep robber trenches had been dug to get at the slabs and walls of the drain, yet there is no doubt that the street and drain continued further east to the port of Paphos. Two trial pits dug in this area have shown that the drain must have been removed

already in antiquity and its function taken over by the terracotta pipe.

Among the finds in this heavily disturbed area there is a small marble head possibly representing one of the young members of the Ptolemaic family. The head is shown wearing a diadem and the ram horn of Zeus Ammon on the left side of the head. It is well modeled and typically Hellenistic in style. The right side differs stylistically from the left and shows features of Cypriot sculpture with flat representation of eyes and generally cruder workmanship [Fig. 1].

An intact molded clay lamp with pierced handle and symmetrical cornucopias on the discus, made of reddish unslipped clay (1st century or beginning of 2nd century AD), was also found between fragmentary walls preserved in the eastern part of the trench.

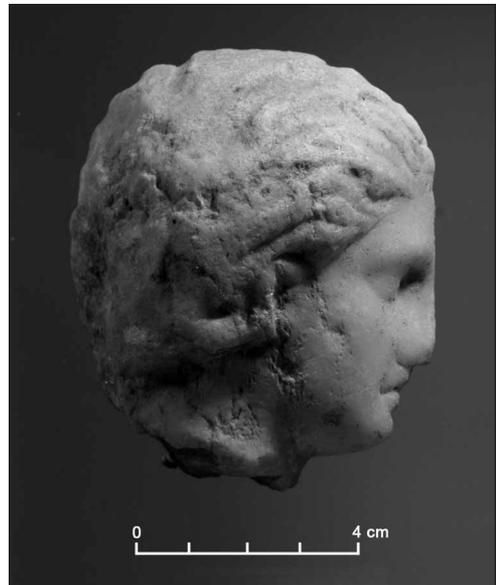


Fig. 1. Marble head with horn of Zeus Ammon (Photo W. Jerke)

NORTHERN PART OF THE HOUSE OF AION

This year's regular trench extended from a section excavated in the previous year in rooms 31 and 29 to an old trench excavated in 1982 in the street dividing VT and HA. Much of the excavated area was occupied by a metaled road with massive stone curbs, built by the British army for the RAF meteorological station, situated just north. The construction of the modern road had disturbed the top 0.70–0.80 m of deposits over the northern part of HA. Remains of Late Roman walls were found just below that in the western part of the excavated area. Floors were recorded at a depth of about 1.30 m below the surface and the rubble layer

above them yielded loose masonry blocks of large size. The northern parts of rooms in the east (32, 31) were deeply disturbed by a huge modern trench, but below it Early Roman structures were uncovered [Fig. 2].

The Late Roman street dividing HA and VT is between 5.74 and 5.25 m wide and narrows slightly toward the north. Its construction resulted in the leveling of earlier walls, the foundations of which (sometimes with their levelling courses) were left immediately below the street surface.

The remains of a rubble stratum were removed starting from the southwest, in room 4 excavated already partly in 1984.

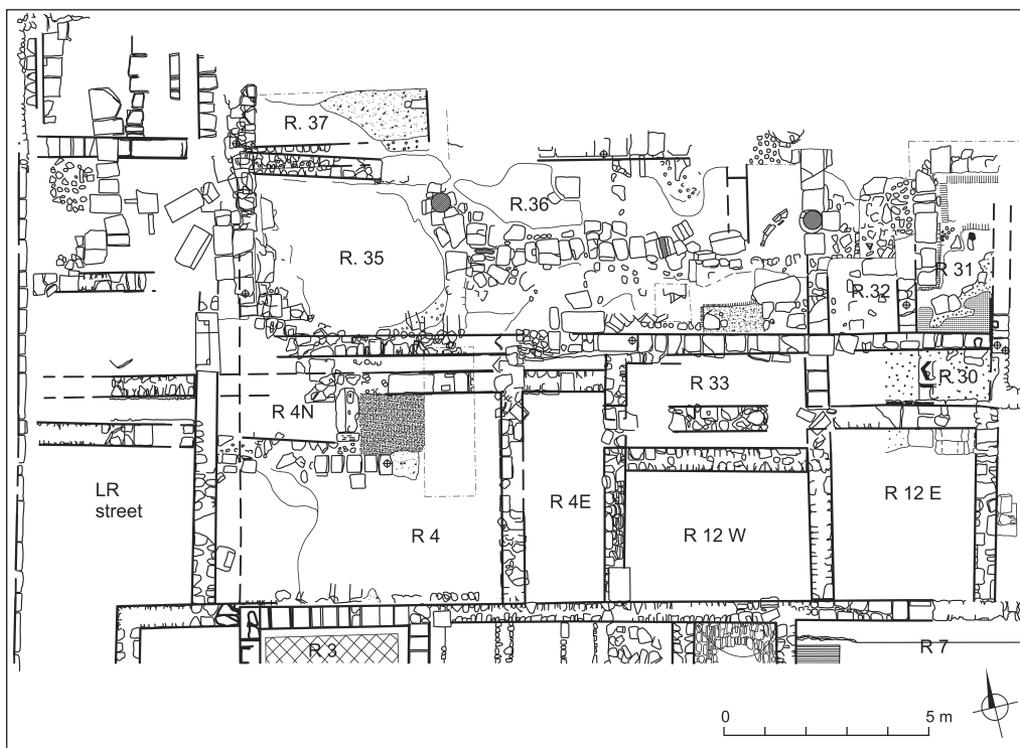


Fig. 2. Northwestern part of the House of Aion
(Plan S. Medeksza, A. Brzozowska)

Finds directly on the floor included an African Red Slip lid with blackened rim. The width of Room 4 was ascertained at 3.24 m (N–S). North of it three other rooms were traced, designated as 4N, 35 and 37 starting from the south. The west wall of rooms 4 and 4N was completely destroyed, but must have almost certainly followed the line of the west wall of rooms 3 and 35. Rooms 4N and 35 were of the same length as room 4, that is, 6.50 m (E–W).

To the east of room 35 a large courtyard was found, extending over 9 m E–W [36, cf. *Fig. 2*]. Its north wall is largely damaged and it is not clear how the remaining section, presently seen in the north side of the trench, related to the wall dividing rooms 37 and 35; the eastern end in turn has been damaged by various trenches. In the line of this wall, further east, remains of an oven were uncovered, cut by the north side of the trench. All in all, the width of the courtyard is uncertain (except for the part where the

north wall is preserved giving a measurement of 3.35 m N–S) and the full plan remains to be determined.

A small bead of gold foil was found by the north wall of the court along with fragments of a basalt mortarium or press basin with a spout.

By the west wall there is a cistern head, rectangular in the upper part, with an earlier circular opening below. A channel, 0.40 m wide and running E–W probably along the entire length of the courtyard, connected with the cistern on the southern side. Emptying into this channel were two smaller drains running from the north and south walls of the court.

An oblong slab situated against the south wall near the eastern end of the court may have been a step leading southward to room 33. The east wall of the court is not well defined and, indeed, it is possible for the area designated as room 32 to be part of it.

The leveling foundation courses of the earlier structures razed by the construction of the Late Roman street between the VT and HA were built of large masonry blocks, of which some examples were found scattered in the disturbed rubble layer covering the wall remains. In the area of rooms 4 and 4N, an earlier N–S wall was noted one meter west of the line of the destroyed west wall of late date. It was found to have a threshold in the northern end and doors opening westward. This is interpreted as suggesting that whatever lay to the east, whether a courtyard or vestibule, led already outside the building.

One of the finds by this earlier wall is a terracotta bust of Eros [*Fig. 4*]. A prismatic lead weight was also found on a floor connected with the earlier walls [*Fig. 3*].

The identification of this open space was apparently confirmed by another doorway with doors opening to the east, found in a N–S wall 3.30 m further to the east.



*Fig. 3. Prismatic lead weight
(Photo W. Jerke)*

A continuation of the east wall with more doors was found under the north wall of room 3 of HA [cf. *Fig. 2*]. At the northern end, the wall runs into an E–W wall with a corner 0.50 m to the west and turning north. The E–W wall is situated 1 m south of the north wall of room 4N. The eastern part of the earlier room was damaged by a pit. An earlier stone-paved floor appears to have been reused in Late Roman times north of these remains, under the southwestern corner of room 35. The pottery evidence indicates that this vestibule or small courtyard and two adjoining rooms to its west and east, preceding the Late Roman rooms 4, 4N and 35, were abandoned in the 1st/2nd century AD. The building, to which these rooms belonged, was clearly quite important, considering the quality of the stonework. They may have belonged to structures recognized also further east.

The other area where earlier structures were uncovered is the eastern part of courtyard 36 and the northern parts of rooms 32 and 31 [cf. *Fig. 2*]. The wall identified as the west wall of room 32 may have belonged to an earlier phase. In its

central part, another wellhead was found, this time with remains of a large limestone round tray or table top reused as paving around it on the west. This wall continued south as the east wall of room 33 and then possibly turned east as the south wall of room 30. There are also earlier walls just east of the wall dividing rooms 31 and 32, situated under the Late Roman mosaic of room 31. Below the foundations of the south wall of these rooms, the early N–S wall continues under the central part of room 30 and joins the south wall of that room. The early N–S walls were connected also under rooms 31 and 32 by a wall running under the wall dividing these rooms. Both N–S walls continue also northward and in case of the eastern one forming a corner with an E–W wall under room 31, already below a huge modern pit in the northern part.



*Fig. 4. Terracotta bust of Eros
(Photo W. Jerke)*



*Fig. 5. Terracotta base with relief decoration
(Photo W. Jerke)*

The fill below the mosaic floor in room 31 yielded a fragmentary terracotta base with a relief representing girls and boys dancing and playing castanets [Fig. 5].

Traces of floors related to these structures are visible in the north section of

the trench. The earliest finds originating from undisturbed layers in this spot belong to the Late Hellenistic period; hence, at least two of the presently uncovered rooms belonged to a well-built Hellenistic structure.

EARLY ROMAN HOUSE

Excavations of the so-called Early Roman House continued just south of rooms 44, 47 and 43 of the Villa of Theseus, in a trench measuring 4 m in width (N-S) [Fig. 6]. A late enclosure wall had been joined to the back of the south walls of VT rooms 44 and 48B, continuing the walls already known to

exist behind rooms 39 and 38 and running further to the southeast. The southern edge was delimited by the north wall of rooms 1 and 6 of ERH. The fill reached approx. 0.50 m below the level of floors in rooms 1 and 6. Here, part of a collapsed E-W wall was found lying in order, flush with the

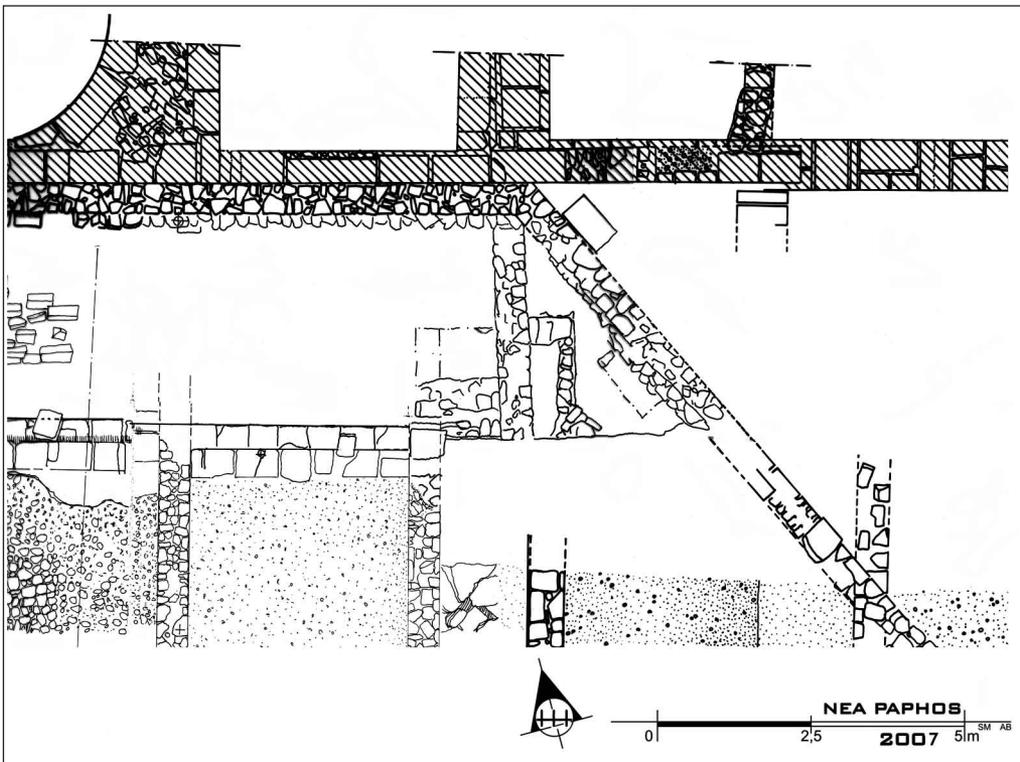


Fig. 6. Courtyard between the Villa of Theseus and the Early Roman House with Late Roman enclosure (Drawing S. Medeksza, A. Brzozowska)

foundation leveling course of the late wall mentioned above. The northeastern corner of room 1, large blocks of which were bonded with gypsum mortar, had collapsed northwards. A N–S wall situated about a meter to the east seems to have been two-phased. The upper phase corresponded to the E–W wall and the lower one to the foundation leveling course uncovered 0.80 m below. The earlier phase therefore must have belonged to a Hellenistic structure.

Between this wall and the northeastern corner of room 1 there is a blocked passage.

HELLENISTIC HOUSE

A residual part of a N–S baulk at the very east end of this building, dividing the Early Roman House from the Hellenistic House, was now partly removed. The southern part of HH room 19 and, south of it, room 19A were cleared. It has been established that the wall dividing ERH and HH was built in two phases, the first corresponding to the west wall of 19A which was built of large blocks set with gypsum mortar and having a southward-going extension constructed of small, irregular stones filling a framework of vertical piers. All that remains of the wall dividing room 19 and its porch, if it ever existed, is the foundation leveling course. This wall continues the line dividing rooms 17 and 8E. It is probable that it belongs to an earlier, perhaps Hellenistic phase.

The rubble filling of these structures yielded a well-preserved marble head representing an old Dionysus [Fig. 7]. This herm sculpture is made in archaizing style with a cylindrical support on top of the head and traces of an iron clamp suggesting that the herm had been part of a bigger group.

At the western end of the Hellenistic House, north of its main hall (no. 10) and its western courtyard (no. 13) with room 11 in

The blocking is different from the surrounding walls in that there are potsherds between the stones. A fragmentary cobbled surface, made of fist-sized stones, on the eastern side of this N–S wall corresponds in level to the floor in room 1. To the east, a trench made for the NW–SE Late Roman wall obliterated anything of earlier date. Further east the entire trench was filled with loose soil. No architectural remains were found there, apart from a single displaced column drum bearing a mason's mark.

between, a series of rooms: 20–23 with floors at a level corresponding to the surface of courtyard 13 was excavated [Fig. 8]. The westernmost of the uncovered spaces, unit

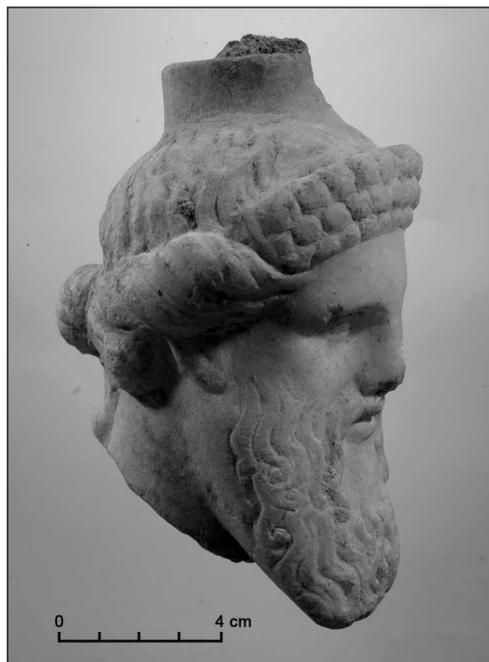


Fig. 7. Marble head of a herm
(Photo W. Jerke)

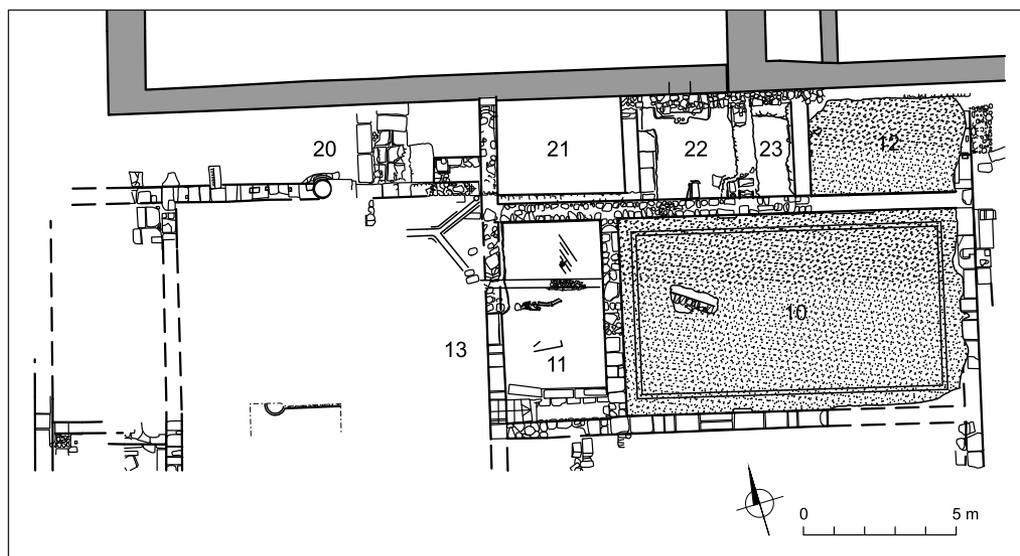


Fig. 8. *Plan of the northwestern part of the Hellenistic House*
(Drawing S. Medeksza, A. Brzozowska)



Fig. 9. *Gabled corridor leading to a cistern under the western courtyard of the Hellenistic House*
(Photo W. Machowski)

20, initially formed the northern colonnaded portico of courtyard 13. Only the east and south walls are known, while the northern side of this room is covered by the south wall of VT and damaged by its foundation trench. The western side remains unexcavated.

The columns in courtyard 13, their drums equaling 0.55 m in diameter, were larger than most of those around the main courtyard of HH in area 1. One of them was found on the northern wall (possible stylobate) on the southern side of room 20, another on the southern side between area 26 and courtyard 13. They were probably made to be higher to compensate for the difference of floor levels between the western and eastern parts of the house. At a later date, the colonnade in room 20 was blocked with a wall built between the columns; the column now uncovered proved to be recut as a door jamb, appropriate holes cut in the stylobate acting as jamb and door sockets. A bench at least 0.50 m wide and 0.40 m high made of reddish consolidated sand with gravel flanked the doorway. A rectangular compartment was built at a later date against the plastered walls in the southeastern corner of room 20. Finds from the floor level, below the collapsed wall plaster and blocks, included pottery from the end of the 1st/beginning of the 2nd century AD.

In the eastern part of the portico floor, a well-constructed line of blocks, situated 3 m to the west of the east wall, divided it into two parts. East of it, a sunken corridor running N–S was found under the floor. It was vaulted with a gabled roof below floor level. The corridor led to a huge cistern situated under the still unexcavated part of the western courtyard 13 [Fig. 9]. Its northern end is blocked by a wall, which is situated south of the south wall of the later VT western enclosure. It slopes to the south ending in a staircase of five steps leading down into the northern end of the cistern.

The staircase is also vaulted with a gabled slab roof. Partly filled with soil and rock fallen from the roof, the cistern could still be measured at 9.00 m N–S by 3.50 m E–W. The unfilled part is about 2.00 m high. In the center there is the vertical shaft of the wellhead, the opening still closed by a slab at approx. 2.50 m above the roof.

Room 21 was situated east of portico 20 and north of room 11. The entire room was 3.80 m long (E–W) and its known width (N–S) is 2.50 m. It was excavated partly during earlier preparatory works for the shelter in 2003, in trial pit Λ3 (Daszewski *et alii* 2004: 289) and the pit was refilled. After removing this fill, a sequence of two floors at 1.00 m and 1.20 m respective depth below the surface was found. Large amounts of pottery were recovered from the fill above the upper floor. To the south, room 21 was separated from room 11 by two parallel and contacting walls. The wall situated to the north had two leveling courses built of regular masonry, at a level corresponding to the lower floor. This wall continued west on the line of the stylobate in portico 20. The southern wall continued east on the line of the wall dividing rooms 12, 23, and 22, and on the other side, rooms 10 and 11. In room 11 this wall was covered with painted plaster (Daszewski 1991: 73).

Room 22 was 3.00 m long (N–S) and 3.10 m wide (E–W), and was separated from room 21 by buttresses in its north and south walls. Only one level of floor was encountered here at a depth of 1.45 m. Two large rectangular blocks, 0.50 m high, were set upright against the south wall, most probably as table supports. Between them a deposit of kitchen vessels and amphorae was found with three cooking pots, jugs of various types, inturned-rim bowls and two early 1st century lamps. A blocked door entered up a step was situated in the north wall. Below it, another N–S wall belonging

to an earlier building. Room 23 was situated further east and its east wall divided it from room 12, situated on a higher level. The lower part of this wall is built of large

masonry blocks dating to the Hellenistic period. Complete cooking pots set into the floor may have acted as containers for rubbish swept from the floor.

STREET A' SOUTH OF THE INSULA OF THE HELLENISTIC HOUSE

A long stretch of the street (27.20 m) was excavated, uncovering a terracotta pipe drain as the principal feature. The drain runs to the west at 0.40 m depth below the surface in most of the excavated area. The only higher ground occurred at the east end, where the

pipe was placed 1.50 m below the surface. A late wall, built of reused architectural members, was uncovered, superimposed over the pipe. Small sections of the southern curb wall were also uncovered, in front of rooms 1 and 3 of the Roman House.

WESTERN WING OF THE VILLA OF THESEUS

WEST OF ROOM 76

A small trench (2 x 4 m) was sunk west of rooms 76 and 78 of the Villa of Theseus. Two perpendicular walls were found. The N-S wall continues the line of the wall found in trench 6/76, in the southwestern corner of the Villa (Daszewski *et alii* 1984: 297, Fig. 1). All these structures belong to a late phase of the Villa, probably contemporary with small rooms built north of room 76.

surface was encountered, including a curb situated just north of the channel. On its northern side a structure, probably of hydraulic character (possibly a sedimentation tank), was found. Around 20 cm above that floor level another hardened street surface was uncovered which partly overlapped the northern curb. This was in turn cut by another well-built wall, which may have belonged to the southern edge of the latest phase of the street.

ROOM 17

The western part of room 17, 4.00 m long (E-W), was excavated and several layers of the main street B were uncovered. Two small trial pits were sunk in the two western corners of this room in 1984 (Daszewski 1985: 952, Fig. 117). The street varied in width over time. The earliest structure found was a great drain covered with large slabs at a depth of 1.70 m below the floor of room 17. The drain was only partly excavated as it was reached through an inspection hole. At this early stage the street was approximately 5 m wide and the drain ran down the middle. About 0.50 m higher up, another street

ROOMS 16NW, 1WS, 1W, 2W

Remains of an earlier building (Northwest House) were excavated under the floor of these rooms of the Villa of Theseus [Fig. 10]. The uncovered structures belong to buildings exposed already during earlier work in rooms 16 and 16N (Daszewski 1968: 43, 50–51, Pl. XIII: 5; 1989: 896; 1996: 99). It seems that they were related to the building with mosaic floor of the 2nd–3rd century found below the northwestern corner of the Villa. There is a difference of levels, the mosaic of NWH lying approximately 0.30 m below the floors

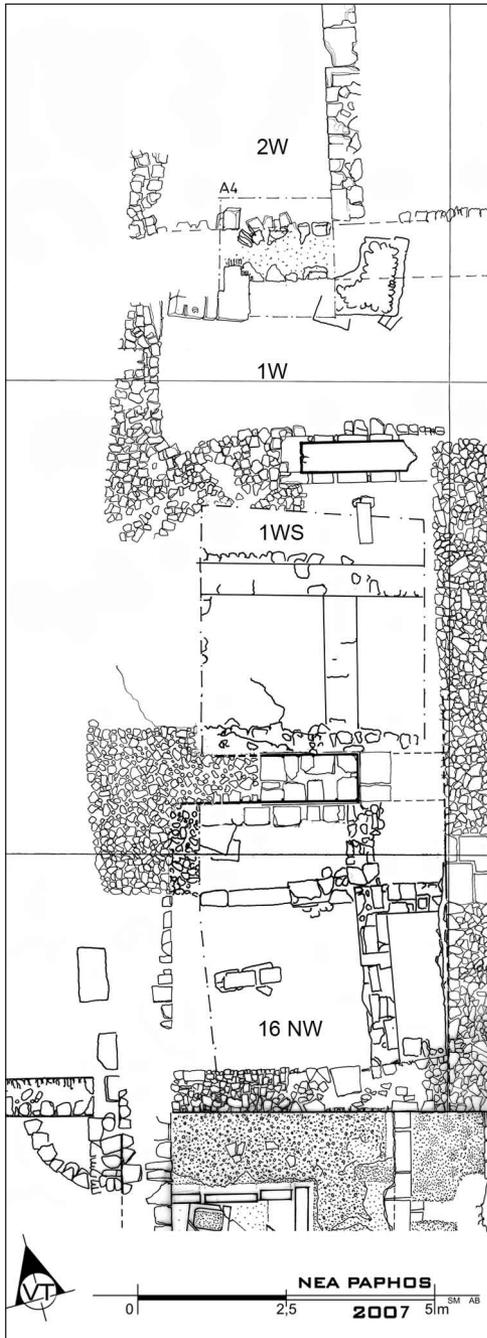


Fig. 10. Western part of the Northwest House under the Villa of Theseus (Plan S. Medeksza, A. Brzozowska)

of the Villa of Theseus and the remains of the last floors further to the west another 0.40 m below that. The excavated walls were reconstructed at least once, doors being blocked at this time and new doorways pierced. Walls of the later phase were constructed on top of the earlier ones using them as foundations. The alignment was not precise with walls following only approximately the same direction. Three main sets of such roughly aligned walls were uncovered. One set continues N–S through rooms 16NW, 1WS and possibly 2W; the other runs E–W through rooms 16NW and 16N, and the third in 1WS is in line with the southern wall of the room with mosaic. In the small compartments placed west of the main N–S wall, a large deposit of broken, but mostly complete transport amphorae, cooking vessels, jugs and a large tableware jar [Fig. 11] were found. The pottery can be dated to the end of the 1st and the beginning of the 2nd century AD. This group of finds suggests a household function for these rooms.



Fig. 11. Large tableware jar from the Northwest House (Photo W. Jerke)

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