EXCAVATIONS NEAR THE TRIPLE GATE OF THE TEMPLE MOUNT, JERUSALEM

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INTRODUCTION

Salvage excavations in the vicinity of the southern wall of the Temple Mount (Fig. 1) were carried out in two seasons (December, 1997 to August, 1998; May to December, 1999), as a prelude to the Israel Antiquities Authority's projected reconstruction of the portion of the monumental Second Temple period staircase leading to the blocked Triple Gate (Fig. 2).¹

Identity of the Triple Gate

The Mishna (Middot 1:3) mentions two gates called the Hulda Gates in the southern wall of the Temple Mount. It seems that in that particular period, the area was associated with the prophetess Hulda, who had lived in Jerusalem during the late Iron Age II. The Tosefta (Bava Batra 1:11) mentions that Hulda's tomb was known in Jerusalem. Although it is not explicitly stated, her tomb or monument may have been identified in the vicinity, thus giving its name to the gates.

The question arises as to which gates the name refers. It should be remembered that the Temple Mount was considerably enlarged southward during the renovation initiated by King Herod. One possibility is that the gates, which were part of the southern Temple Mount wall from before the time of Herod, also moved southward at this time. The historical record sheds no light as whether the name Hulda Gates refers only to the pair of gates that were part of the old Temple Mount (which is described in *Middot*) or whether the name of the old gates was transferred to the new ones. Although it



Fig. 1. Aerial view of the Temple Mount, showing the extensive excavations to its south; May 1995.

is quite possible that during Herod's time, the three-entry gate was called the Hulda Gate (and indeed, in archaeological literature it is sometimes referred to as the 'eastern Hulda Gate'), for the sake of clarity, we have chosen here to use the neutral name 'Triple Gate.' Likewise, we shall refer to the twin gates to the west of our excavation area as the 'Double Gate,' rather than the 'Hulda Double Gate' or 'western Hulda Gate.' For further details about the Triple Gate, see Gibson and Jacobson 1996:259–268.

History of Research

The area adjacent to the southeastern part of the Temple Mount, where our excavation is located (map ref. 22243–57/63137–47; Fig. 3), has been excavated and studied several times over



Fig. 2. The Triple Gate.



Fig. 3. Aerial view of the excavated area after reconstruction; July 2000.

the last 150 years. A full list of references can be found in the extensive bibliography on the archaeology of Jerusalem by Bieberstein and Bloedhorn (1994, III:143–152, and especially pp. 151–152 for the area of the Triple Gate). Below, in chronological order, are the main excavations carried out in this area.

Warren excavated a series of shafts around the Temple Mount to gain access to the Herodian walls from underground (Warren 1884: Pls. 5; 10: bottom; 20; 25; 26: bottom), revealing invaluable information on the topography of the rock surface in the area south of the Temple Mount. He also conducted a more extensive excavation on the southeastern fringe of the area, where he exposed parts of the Ophel Tower (Warren 1884: Pl. 40).

In the area south of the Double Gate, Bliss and Dickie (1898:233–238, Pl. XXIII), who were looking for a theater, had to content themselves with a few rock-cut rooms. Much later, B. Mazar's and Ben-Dov's excavations here (see below) demonstrated that these rooms belonged to the basements of private dwellings of the late Second Temple period.

On the southeastern edge of the area, Kenyon (1974:115–116, Pls. 38, 107) excavated a small area (S II), which is located intramurally relative to Warren's Ophel Tower. She dated the lower wall to the eighth century BCE, pointing out that it had reused older stones of the type identified as Phoenician at Samaria.

B. Mazar and Ben-Dov exposed almost the entire area adjacent to the Temple Mount from the south (1968–1978), and published their main discoveries in popular books (Mazar 1975; Ben-Dov 1985). Other articles (Ben-Dov 1975) discussed the Umayyad edifices, whose walls abutted our excavation. E. Mazar (2003) studied and published this area, including a well-preserved house from the Byzantine period.

Later, E. Mazar extended her excavations in the southeastern part of this area, near Warren's and Kenyon's excavations. The main discovery here was a large Iron Age II building identified as a city gate (E. Mazar and B. Mazar 1989; E. Mazar 2011).

Topography

The excavation area is located on the southeastern slope that descends from the Temple Mount to the Kidron Valley and the City of David. The fairly steep gradient of this slope is shown here by two cross-sections. Section I (Plan 1) descends from the Triple Gate southward to the so-called Ophel Wall, originally excavated by Warren (Wilson and Warren 1871:287-293; Warren 1884: Pls. V, XL). Section II (Plan 2) descends from the Double Gate to the southeast and the Ophel Wall. Sections I and II show that along a 95 m stretch, the surface of the bedrock falls 25 m, from 725.50 m asl to 700.00 m asl. Obviously, construction in various periods took the topography into consideration; some structures were built in stepped terraces directly on the rock surface, like the buildings from the late Iron Age II uncovered farther to the south by E. Mazar (E. Mazar and B. Mazar 1989). Others overcame the gradient by raising floors to a considerable height and supporting them with massive walls, as in the case of the Herodian constructions of the Temple Mount or the Umayyad buildings. Still others were cut deeply into the rock, such as the monumental staircase leading to the Double Gate. Also noteworthy are drainage channels, particularly those cut into the rock, which took advantage of the slope southward to provide drainage for the Temple Mount in that direction.

The Present Excavation

It must be stressed that most of the area covered by the present salvage excavation had previously been dug by B. Mazar and Ben-Dov, usually down to bedrock, and this was followed by conservation work. Thus, only a few undisturbed locations were left for us to excavate. We also dismantled some walls to facilitate reconstruction. In the case of some architectural elements, the previous expedition left no dating material, and we had to accept their conclusions without being able to recheck them. Among these elements are the easternmost of the series of large Umayyad buildings and the large Byzantine building on the southeastern side of the excavation area. These structures are not described in this report although they appear on our plans and sections. Likewise, we have no data on post-Umayyad buildings or deposits in the area of our excavation.²

Our excavation $(30 \times 21 \text{ m})$ is bounded on the north by the southern wall of the Herodian Temple Mount (Figs. 1, 2), next to the blocked Triple Gate. It includes four areas, extending from north to south (Plan 3). Area A, directly in front of the Triple Gate, includes a large *miqwe* (ritual bath). Area B contains three rockcut, vaulted rooms supporting the monumental staircase to the Triple Gate. In Area C, south of the vaulted rooms, we dismantled two reconstructed walls, excavated the fills and exposed the entire rock-cut surface on which the walls stood. In Area D we cleaned a previously excavated rock-cut room, dubbed the 'Secco Room.'

We shall first present the architecture and stratigraphy of Areas A–D, followed by a description of some of the artifacts and architectural fragments we uncovered, many of which originated in Herod's Royal Stoa. Some of these fragments have bearing on the reconstruction of the Royal Stoa and so we shall conclude with a brief, new evaluation of this building.

ARCHITECTURE AND STRATIGRAPHY (Plan 4)

AREAA (Plans 4, 5; Figs. 4-12)

Area A comprises a narrow paved piazza in front of the Triple Gate of the Temple Mount, consisting partly of original flagstones and



Plan 3. Schematic plan showing the excavation areas.

partly of new paving stones over modern fills, installed by the previous expedition. This paving extends westward to the area in front of the Double Gate. Although most of this area was excavated in the past, some original and undisturbed deposits survived. We dismantled all new paving stones and excavated the entire area in front of the western doorjamb of the blocked openings of the Triple Gate. Four stratigraphic phases were observed.

Phase 1

This phase includes large *Miqwe* 6049 (L13053 in previous excavations) (Plans 4, 5; Figs. 4, 5). The *miqwe* is cut entirely into the bedrock on a northwest–southeast axis, clearly different



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Plan 5. Miqwe 6049, plan and section.



Fig. 4. Miqwe 6049, the steps and double entrance from within, looking south.



Fig. 5. Miqwe 6049, the eastern corner.

from the north-south axis of the Herodian Temple Mount. Most of the *miqwe* and the vestibule (L6048) leading into it is under the above-mentioned piazza in front of the Triple Gate; its northern corner even extends under the southern wall of the Temple Mount (Reich 2013:105–106, Fig. 80:19).

The vestibule (L6048) consists of a stepped corridor $(1.9 \times 2.2 \text{ m})$, with three rock-cut steps leading into the installation. The southwestern side of the corridor was completed by the stone-built W622, which probably continued to the rock-cut face of the *miqwe*'s entrance (Plan 5). The *miqwe* is of the double-entrance type (Reich 1980), featuring a rock-cut pier (0.5 m wide, 1.55 m high, 0.6 m thick) dividing the space at the top of the staircase in two (Plan 5; Fig. 4). This pier served as a doorjamb between the two roughly rectangular openings (the southern, 0.70×1.65 m; the northern, 0.85×1.65 m).

The *miqwe* is almost square $(4.5 \times 4.6 \text{ m}, 3.9 \text{ m} \text{ max}. \text{height})$. Its capacity, up to the level of the thresholds of the double entrance, was approximately 22 cu m. Seven broad rock-cut stairs, spanning much of its width, descend to a deep immersion basin. In the center of this basin is a rectangular rock-cut shaft (L6032; $0.75 \times 1.00 \text{ m}$), which is connected to a drainage channel cut into the bedrock under the *miqwe* (Channel 3; Plan 4: Section 9–9; see below). This

shaft was found with a fill that had accumulated in the 30 years since the Mazar dig.

A rectangular courtyard $(3.10 \times 3.35 \text{ m})$, with a flat rock-cut floor slanting moderately toward the entrance, was cut in front of the *miqwe* (Plan 4). Two rock-cut channels (L6046—0.85 m long, up to 0.3 m wide; L6045—0.7 m long, up to 0.3 m wide) drained from the southeastern side of this surface into the *miqwe*, via the vestibule. Scant remains of additional channels were found (e.g., L6044, see below).

Several changes were made in the *miqwe* in a post-Phase 1 reuse of the installation (a more precise assignment to a specific phase or date cannot be established). The northeastern part of the staircase was cut away and the entrances were blocked with masonry (W621). It seems that at this stage the *miqwe* was transformed into a cistern.

Phase 2

After removing the reconstructed flagstones of the piazza in front of the gate, a series of fills came to light. This layer, which was found intact only under the eastern part of the paved piazza, in front of the two eastern openings of the Triple Gate (L6036), served as the make-up for the pavement in front of the gate (L6035; Figs. 6, 7). On the western side of the piazza, these fills were not as well preserved (L6027,



Fig. 6. The piazza (L6035) in front of the gate, showing Flagstone 4, looking east.



Fig. 7. Eastern end of the piazza (L6035) in front of the gate, showing Flagstones 1–3 and the underlying make-up fill (L6036).

L6028). When excavated, they revealed the remains of a staircase, partially rock-cut (L6031) and partially built (L6029; Plan 4: Sections 8–8, 11–11; Fig. 8). This staircase was bound on the west by a low, rock-cut vertical wall (L6031) running at an angle to the axis of the staircase (Fig. 9).

Upon clearing the fills at the meeting point (L6030) between the southern wall of the Temple Mount and L6031, the low rock-cut wall was found to continue under the stones of the threshold of the western opening of the Triple Gate (Fig. 9). Hence, it and the adjacent staircase predate the gate (Plan 4: Section 8–8).

Each rock-cut step of the staircase is joined at an obtuse angle to a corresponding constructed part to the east (Fig. 8). The three steps that have survived are built of irregular, roughly worked rectangular flagstones with relatively wide joints (up to 5 cm) that were filled with earth and small stones. Some of the flagstones were laid on W621, and others, over bedrock on a thin layer of grayish earth and rubble. The staircase and the rock-cut wall to its west (L6031) were cut just above the *miqwe* (the thickness of the rock here is 0.2-0.4 m; Plan 5: Section 1–1). It seems that this factor required the builders to cut relatively shallow steps in order to avoid damaging the space below. The stone-built side of Staircase 6029 is directly above the stepped corridor and the entrance to the *miqwe* (Plan 4: Section 8–8; Fig. 10). As stated above, the stairs are partially supported by W621, which is the wall that blocks the entrance to the *miqwe*.

Wall 621 was excavated completely to a length of 1.8 m, and a total height of 1.3 m (the earlier excavation dismantled part of it to gain access to the *miqwe*). Built of fieldstones, rubble and gray cement, its purpose seems to have been to close off the entrance to the *miqwe* when it was transformed into a cistern. A few pottery fragments were found below the flagstones, none of which were of diagnostic value. The stones were removed during conservation work, following which, two stones were replaced.



Fig. 8. Staircase 6029, showing join between the rock-cut portion on the left and the built portion on the right, looking northeast.



Fig. 9. Rock-cut wall (L6031) west of Staircase 6029.

Phase 3

The cuttings in the rock surface above the *miqwe*, in the area of the staircase and to its west, can be attributed to this phase. A rectangular trough (L6031; 0.8×1.0 m, 0.35 m deep), the use of which is unclear, was hewn into the diagonal rock-cutting that marks the axis of the staircase of Phase 2 (see Fig. 9). A cup mark (diam. 0.2 m) was found next to the rectangular trough (see Plan 4). Similar cup marks are found in various locations southwest of the entrance to the *miqwe*; however, their stratigraphic attribution is not clear.

Phase 4

This phase reveals evidence of the extension southward of the Herodian-era Temple Mount. A gate was installed at this particular point in the enclosure wall, at the same location as today's Triple Gate (Plan 4: Section 5–5). Only the lower stone of the western doorjamb of the original gate has survived *in situ* (Fig. 11, and see Fig. 47), as have part of the threshold and some of the flagstones in front of the gate (L6035; Fig. 12). The whole plan and shape of the Herodian Gate are therefore unknown.



Fig. 10. Staircase 6029 above the entrance to *Miqwe* 6049, supported by W621; in the background—the Gate's facade.



Fig. 11. Original Herodian doorjamb; pavement is modern.



Fig. 12. Make-up fill (L6036) under the Herodian pavement (L6035); Flagstones 3 and 4 indicated.

The Herodian construction work on the Temple Mount required the lowering of the rock surface at this location. This reached a level quite close to the *miqwe*'s ceiling and to the rock-cut staircase, creating a 'step' in the rock at the point where it passes beneath the threshold of the gate.

The large flagstones of the piazza in front of the gate, which were exposed by our predecessors, also belong to this phase. Four severely cracked stones survived here (L6035; Figs. 6, 7, 12). They measure from east to west: Flagstone 1: 1.0×1.5 m, c. 0.1 m thick; Flagstone 2: 2.0×2.5 m, c. 0.2 m thick (the southern side is not straight, with a protrusion of c. 0.15 m); Flagstone 3: 1.20 × 2.85 m, c. 0.12 m thick; Flagstone 4: 2.25×5.35 m, c. 0.3 m thick. The margins of Flagstone 4 are broken and its western side is 5 cm lower than the rest of the stone (Fig. 6). An empty space, c. 0.2 m wide, found full of debris, was discovered between Flagstone 4 and the face of the southern Temple Mount wall.

After the reconstructed pavement was dismantled, the original flagstones were found

to rest on two layers of broken stone fragments topped by a thin layer of gray plaster (Fig. 12, and see Fig. 7). This fill (L6036), which is up to 2.2 m thick, was found partially preserved to the south and east of the flagstones. Unfortunately, a probe retrieved no potsherds or other dating material.

It is possible, although not certain, that the fill was supported on the south by W623, which was built 5.2–5.8 m south of the Herodian wall (Plan 4: Section 3–3). The wall, of which two courses have survived, is built of rough stones without binding material, directly on bedrock. Only its southern face was excavated.

While dismantling recently reconstructed walls, a segment of Channel 6044 (1.8 m long, 0.6 m wide) was discovered, sloping southward. The channel is constructed of small fieldstones and reused broken stone fragments set in gray mortar and covered by flat stone slabs. Its southern part is built over W621, but no stratigraphic relation was established to the fill below the paved area in front of the gate.

AREA B (Plans 4, 6; Figs. 13-22)

Three large, entirely rock-cut vaulted rooms, located 7.2–7.5 m south of the Triple Gate, supported the monumental staircase leading up to the Temple Mount. Vaulted Rooms I (on the east) and II (on the west) run parallel to the southern Temple Mount wall. There are more such spaces west of them, whose relation to Vaulted Rooms I and II is unknown. These two adjoining rooms are rectangular in shape and similar in size. They are defined by rock-cut walls: W666 on the north, W667 on the south, and W665 separating the two spaces (Plan 4: Section 5–5). Vaulted Room II opens to the south onto the irregularly shaped Vaulted Room III.

For the most part, these rooms were excavated and exposed by the earlier expedition. We cleared the spaces and dismantled several walls and channels that had been built into them at some point after they were hewn. We also excavated fills that were sealed below the dismantled walls, and obtained new architectural data unknown to our predecessors. Several phases of rock-cutting and construction could be distinguished, and these will be discussed within the context of the rooms in which they were found.

Vaulted Room I

Vaulted Room I (4.8×6.7 m at floor level) is bounded by straight rock walls on the north (W666) and the south (W667). Five rock-cut steps descend from the eastern side of the room (Plan 4: Section 5–5; Figs. 13, 14, and see Figs. 16, 19). The staircase spans the entire width and almost half of the floor space of the room. The rise of the steps varies (Plan 4: Section 3–3; Fig. 13). Three quarried but undetached blocks of stone were left in the floor next to W667 (Fig. 14).

A hewn partition (W665) divides Rooms I and II (c. 0.7 m thick, preserved to a height



Fig. 13. Rock-cut staircase in Vaulted Room I.

of 3.35 m; Figs. 14, 15). In the middle of the partition is an opening 1.1 m wide. A recess was cut on top of the partition, perhaps to hold a stone lintel that once rested over the opening (Fig. 15).

Wall 666 is the highest preserved rock-cut wall (c. 5.2 m high) of Vaulted Rooms I and II (Plan 4: Section 5–5; Figs. 15, 16). Near its eastern end, this wall veers slightly to the north before continuing eastward. Along its



Fig. 14. Rock-cut Vaulted Room I, looking south; note Channel 1 and steps on left, and W665 on right.



Fig. 15. Hewn partition wall (W665) between Vaulted Rooms I and II, looking west; behind is W615, and in the background is W616.



Fig. 16. Wall 666 of rock-cut Vaulted Room I, showing inward curve of the spring of the vault, looking north; note steps next to Channel 1 on right.

entire length, the top of the wall curves inward, forming a flat edge that served as a spring upon which the large vaults over Rooms I and II were constructed (Plan 4: Sections 3–3, 10–10). Three parts of differing thickness can be distinguished in the spring. Described from east to west they are (1) a segment 1.9 m long and 1.1 m thick, which deviates slightly to the north from the east–west line of Vaulted Room I; (2) a segment 5.2 m long and 0.85 m thick extending over both rooms; and (3) a segment 5.5 m long and 0.3–0.9 m thick in Vaulted Room II.

Small niches were cut into the upper part of W666. Traces of grayish hydraulic plaster survived on the upper portion of that wall, on either side of W665 (Figs. 16, 17).

A shallow recess (2 m high, 1 m wide) was hewn into the center of the lower part of W666 (Plan 4: Section 5–5; Fig. 16). This may have been a trial cut for another drainage channel, as the top of the niche (at 720.30 m asl) is at more-or-less the same level as Channel 2, which passes through W666 in Vaulted Room II.



Fig. 17. Hydraulic plaster on W666, next to W665.

Wall 667 survived to a height of 1.9 m above the room's floor, 2.2 m lower than W666 on the north (Plan 4: Sections 3–3, 6–6; Fig. 14). The eastern part of W667, along the stairs that descend into Vaulted Room I, survived to a height of only 0.9 m. It seems that W667 was partially destroyed in a later phase of use, most likely during the construction of the large drainage channel (Channel 1), which emerges from beneath the Triple Gate and crosses the area from north to south (Figs. 14, 16, 18, 19). It is likely that W667 supported a vault, similar



Fig. 18. Channel 1at point where it meets W667 and W603, looking south.



Fig. 19. Wall 600 above Channel 1, looking east.

to W666, but unfortunately, its truncated remnants reveal little or no evidence of curving inward.

At a later stage, a stone wall (W603) was built along the rock-cut face of W667 (Figs. 18, 19). It extends westward over Channel 1, which crosses the room from northeast to southwest (Plan 4: Section 6–6). Wall 603 was dismantled where it meets the Byzantine building, on the southeastern boundary of the excavation, and also above drainage Channel 1 (L6020; Fig. 18). The wall is constructed of a leveling layer made of small stone fragments and rubble, and above it a layer of medium-sized stones (0.45– 0.50 m) set in brown clay as binding material. The latest potsherds embedded in this cement date W603 to the Byzantine period (Fig. 39:4, 7).

The northern part of Channel 1 was dismantled and the rest of it underwent conservation. It was found that at the point where W603 abuts the channel, the wall was built upon a deposit of earlier debris (L6002; Plan 4: Section 6–6). The deposit is c. 0.5 m thick; it is brown and contains a considerable quantity of small stone fragments. Similar deposits were also found below the western face of the channel (L6023; Plan 4: Section 6–6). The excavation of these deposits, which covered the floor of Vaulted Room I prior the construction of the channel and the other walls inside that room, produced numerous potsherds, mostly dating to the Early Roman period. A stone with incisions was also retrieved (Fig. 40:3), as well as a fragment of a molded cornice made of soft limestone (Fig. 45:13) and a fragment of a limestone basin (B60213, not illustrated). These items were also dated, by their stratigraphic context, to the Early Roman period.

A segment of W600, abutting W666, was also dismantled (Plan 4: Section 5–5; Figs. 19, 20). The continuation of W600 bounds the northern side of the exterior courtyard of the Byzantine building. The southern face of W600 was constructed of fragments of stones in secondary use, among them, blocks up to 0.8 m wide from the Herodian walls. The wall was not well built, as can be seen by the fact that no apparent attempt had been made to maintain straight courses, as well as by the insertion of smaller stones between the larger ones (Fig. 20). The northern face of the wall is constructed



Fig. 20. Wall 600, with entrance to the "latrine," looking north; the black line marks the seam between phases.

differently, consisting of a lower, wider part (up to 1 m thick) and an upper narrower part (0.7 m), both made of small stones (c. 0.1 m; Plan 4: Section 4–4; Fig. 20). The lower portion of the northern face of W600 bears remains of gray plaster.

The removal of portions of W600 exposed the eastern part of W666, the northern rock wall of Vaulted Rooms I and II. At that point, W666 veers northward almost at a right angle, toward the area below the stone-paved open space in front of the Triple Gate. It also became evident that the segment of W600 that was thought to have been built over Channel 1 was in fact incorporated into it, and therefore these two elements might be contemporaneous.

The dismantling of W600 also exposed the outer face of the western wall of what seems to be a small latrine (Fig. 4: Section 7–7), which had been excavated in its entirety by B. Mazar. We removed the latrine's roof and documented the construction of the cell (Plan 6). The segment



Plan 6. Byzantine "latrine," plan and sections.

of W600 that was dismantled abutted the wall of the latrine, as far as the point where the entrance leads into the rock-cut rooms. It was constructed similarly to the northern face of W600 and coated with the same type of plaster. The entrance to the toilet cell was also incorporated into W600 and therefore is contemporaneous with it. It is unclear whether the cement on the northern face of W600, as well as that on the western face of the toilet wall, indicate the existence of another small room or cell west of the toilet. This space may have been related to the construction of W600 and the latrine where it is built over the channel. A few Byzantine-period sherds (B60202; not illustrated, see Fig. 39:8) and two sixth-century CE coins (see Ariel, this volume) were retrieved when the wall was dismantled, as well as a fragment of a reused Herodian Doric frieze decorated with a carved rosette (B60203, not illustrated).

Vaulted Room II

The floor of this room is 0.9 m higher than that of Vaulted Room I to its east. The cutting of Cistern 6050 on the western side of the room probably demolished the walls on that side (Plan 4: Section 6–6). Channel 2 (floor at 717.04 m asl), a so-called *mesibah* (B. Mazar 1975:127–128), is cut into the rock floor from north to south, and Channel 3 was built abutting it on the west, at a higher level (floor at 718.95 m asl; Plan 4: Section 5–5). Channel 3 starts as a rock-cut shaft (L6032) at the bottom of *Miqwe* 6049 (see above) and drains into Cistern 6050 (Plan 4: Section 9–9).

The salient features of Walls 665, 666 and 667 are described above, under Vaulted Room I. The western delimitation of Vaulted Room II is now in effect W616, which rises to more than 6.5 m. It is part of Umayyad Building V, also known as the Pilaster Building (Plan 4: Sections 5–5, 9–9, 12–12; Fig. 15). Wall 616 was built into the cistern, thus postdating it, and over W666, the northern rock wall of Vaulted Room II (Plan 4: Sections 6–6, 9–9, 12–12). Wall 615 (see below), the eastern delimitation of Umayyad Building V, cuts through Vaulted Room II and continues



Fig. 21. Rock-cut Vaulted Room II and W615 at right, looking north; note hewn opening for Channel 2 in W666.

over W666 (Plan 4: Sections 10–10, 11–11; Fig. 21). The wall at this point is c. 4 m high. The fact that both W615 and W616 cross over the rock impost of the vault shows that when they were built, there was no vault here and no staircase that might have led to the Triple Gate.

Vaulted Room III

When a portion of W615 was dismantled (see below), it was found to have blocked an opening in the southern rock wall of Vaulted Room II, which led to an additional space—Vaulted Room III (Plan 4: Sections 10–10, 11–11). The debris that filled the room on both sides of the wall was only partially excavated and cleared.

The rock-cut walls of Vaulted Room III are irregular. The western side (W668) is c. 5.8 m long; the eastern (W669), c. 3.2 m long; and the southern side (W670), c. 4.3 m long. An irregular rock-cutting (L6051; 0.3–1.3 m deep; 1.2 m wide) extends along almost the entire top of rock-cut W669. A narrow cut in the bedrock, connecting to it from the north, was partially destroyed, possibly when Vaulted Room III was hewn.

Channel 1 was built above the top of the southern rock wall (W670). The northern wall of the channel, which was exposed when W615 was dismantled (see below), is constructed of medium-sized fieldstones and smaller fragments in secondary use set in gray mortar. Some of the original cover stones were found in situ; they are up to 0.2 m thick and 0.6 m wide. Channel 1 remained intact even after W615 was built over it (Plan 4: Sections 10-10, 11-11); it thus seems that the channel and the wall were in use at the same time. Pottery unearthed when Channel 1 was dismantled in Vaulted Rooms II and III points to a Byzantine date for its construction. In addition, a few sherds dating to the Early Islamic period (B60267) were retrieved while cleaning the channel, a clear indication that Channel 1 continued in use in Umavvad times. Such sherds also came to light when dismantling W615.

Wall 615

The easternmost wall of Umayyad Building V (Plan 4: Sections 10–10, 11–11) measures c. 81 m long. It is 1.9 m thick at its base; its upper part narrowing to 1.6 m thick. At its northern end it is preserved to 723.37 m asl, i.e., to a height of more than 6 m. In some spots its upper part was reconstructed by our predecessors. Farther to the south, the construction of W615 blocked Channel 2, at the point where it turns eastward. Unfortunately, as the excavation of Vaulted Room III could not be completed, the exact course of Channel 2 along that room was not established.

Upon dismantling a 25 m segment of W615, we discovered that this portion was built over and to the south of Vaulted Rooms II and III. We also found that W615 has two parts: the lower, wider foundation and the upper structure. At several points along W615, where the rock level was high, the wall was constructed directly on bedrock. At other points, there is a roughly finished foundation made of small and medium-sized stones set in gray cement. The upper structure can be further divided into two types of construction. The lower section was built over the foundation to create a level surface. It is faced on both sides with medium and large building stones in secondary use, with no additional treatment. These stones are set in gray cement, and there is a fill of stone and cement between the two faces. Above this leveling layer, the top courses were also built of reused stones, only in this case they were cut and adapted for this purpose. The workmanship is good, leaving narrow joints between the stones that were filled with the gray cement.

Many of the stones used in W615 originated from the destroyed southern wall of the Herodian Temple Mount and other Herodian edifices. Indeed, when the wall was dismantled, several architectural fragments in Herodian style were found embedded in its construction (Fig. 22). Additional fragments (see below) were exposed even when walls were merely cleaned without being dismantled.



Fig. 22. Reused Herodian cornice in W615, looking northwest.

When we dismantled the foundation of W615 at the point where it was built into rock-cut Vaulted Room III, we discovered depressions for the insertion of wooden poles. In one such depression, we found traces of wood (B60272)—perhaps remains of scaffolding used in constructing the wall. The use of wooden poles and planks in the construction of the Umayyad buildings is known from adjacent buildings (Ben-Dov 1973:83–85); however, in our excavation we found traces of only a single pole, and its use cannot be established with certainty.

AREA C (Plan 4; Figs. 23-28)

Area C is a rock surface (c. 100 sq m) that was cut into the bedrock south of the vaulted rooms. It is delineated on the west by W615, on the north by Channel 1 and W624, on the east by W610 of the Byzantine building and on the south by rock-cut room L6024 (the 'Secco Room' in Area D, see below).

As in the other areas, we cleaned the previously excavated surface. We also dismantled two walls that had been reconstructed by the earlier expedition and, in certain spots, excavated below existing features. In clearing some previously excavated earthen deposits south of W624, it was revealed that Channel 6054 (Fig. 23; see below) crosses the rock surface from west to east for 10 m, dividing it in two-a northern surface (L6052) and a southern surface. A thin layer of crushed limestone survived in several places on the northern surface, resting directly on the rock. The southern surface, which was poorly preserved, slopes gently from north to south (Plan 4: Sections 7-7, 10-10).

Channel 6054 was preserved to a depth of 0.7 m on its eastern side, where it was found filled with earth and broken stones resulting from the construction of W610 (see below) over it. No dating material was found in Channel 6054; however, the fact that W610 was built over it, blocking it, clearly indicates that the channel predates the Byzantine wall.



Fig. 23. Channel 6054, looking east.

Our predecessors excavated a rectangular rock-cut recess (L6053; 1.9×2.5 m, c. 0.5 m deep) in the center of the northern rock surface, just south of Channel 1. Remains of a rock-cut step were exposed on the eastern side of the recess. The step appears to be the lowermost in a staircase descending into a mique of the Late Second Temple period. The orientation of L6053, from southwest to northeast, is similar to that of Miqwe 6049 under the Triple Gate, and both predate the Herodian enlargement of the Temple Mount. The upper part of this installation was demolished by later construction. Channel 1, which is dated to the Byzantine period, was built above the northern part of this installation.

In the middle of the southern rock surface are two installations, Cistern 6057 and *Miqwe* 6056, that had been previously excavated and therefore will not be described here. Three cup marks were found near Channel 6054; two north of the channel, and one to the south of it. No clues emerged that permitted the dating of these features.

We dismantled two walls that had been reconstructed by our predecessors in the southwestern corner of Area C. One is W625, on a north–south axis, which belongs to a building of unknown plan. The other is W606, part of Channel 6059, which leads from west to east. The surviving segment of Channel 6059, only 1.4 m long (0.36 m wide, 0.5 m deep), did not extend westward beyond the point where it crosses W625. A well-dressed Herodian stone was incorporated in secondary use in the northern wall of Channel 6059. The exact continuation of this channel to the west could not be traced, apparently because it was demolished when W615 was constructed.

The inside of Channel 6059 is coated with gray plaster, which was also applied to W625. On the bottom of the channel, the plaster was applied atop a layer of small fieldstones that in turn were laid on a 0.6 m thick bedding of earthen fill and stones. As the area cleared was quite limited in size, we could not at first ascertain whether Channel 6059 and W625 are contemporaneous, or whether the channel postdates, but utilizes the wall. However, the answer came to light when a small segment at the western end of Channel 6059 was dismantled and the fills below it were excavated. In the upper level of these fills (L6015), which serves as the base of the channel, we found sherds dating as late as the Byzantine period; these sherds date both W625 and Channel 6059, showing that they are indeed contemporaneous. Below L6015, a layer of reddish brown fill (L6016), which was deposited directly on bedrock, contained pottery dating to the Early Roman period.

After excavating the fill below the channel, we continued on to remove the earthen fill in a narrow strip along the eastern side of W615, exposing the foundation of the wall (see below). The excavation of these fills completed the exposure of the entire rock surface along the eastern side of W615, an area 5.3 m long and 1.3 m wide.

Three rock steps were cut into the surface (Plan 4: Section 10–10). The lowest step (L6060), at 716.90 m asl, is 2.3 m deep. The middle step (L6016), at 717.73 asl, has a rise of c. 0.8 m; at its center is an irregular rock-cutting (0.58 \times 0.44 m, 0.15 m deep). The uppermost step (L6021), at 718.66 asl, also rises c. 0.8 m (Fig. 24). Three cup marks are cut into the top step (No. 1: diam. 20 cm, 10 cm deep; No. 2: diam. 21 cm, 34 cm deep; No. 3: diam. 9 cm, 5 cm deep).

On its western side, the lowest step (L6060) is bounded by a perpendicular rock wall (1 m high), upon which the foundation of W615 was built. Prior to the construction of W615, a trench was dug down to bedrock. The foundation of the wall, consisting of fieldstones and stone fragments, all set in gray cement, was then built into this trench, filling it entirely. This construction method resulted in the fusing of the foundation of W615 to the Early Roman fills deposited on bedrock.

Near the northeastern corner of Area C, our predecessors exposed a large rectangular wall, or more likely a pier (W624), built of mediumsized stones and stone fragments in secondary use (Plan 4: Section 6-6; Figs. 25, 26). The wall $(1.90 \times 3.55 \text{ m})$ was preserved to the considerable height of 14 courses (c. 4.5 m). The architectural relation between W624 and the neighboring buildings is not clear. On the north, it abuts, and therefore postdates W603 (Fig. 27), which dates to the Byzantine period. Moreover, the northwestern corner of W624 is constructed over the wall of Channel 1, which also dates to the Byzantine period. In short, while we can say that W624 seems to postdate the Byzantine period, its exact date, as well as its function are not known.

The excavations and subsequent conservation work have shown that W624 was built without a foundation, directly on a layer of brown earth and rubble (L6062; c. 0.3 m thick), containing pottery sherds dating to the Early Roman period (Fig. 28). This layer resembles other layers (Loci 6002, 6003, 6023) that were excavated on the northern side of W603, inside rock-cut



Fig. 24. Locus 6021: uppermost rock-cut step with cup marks in rock surface east of W615 (Cup Mark No. 1 not yet exposed).



Fig. 25. Walls 624 and 603, looking south.



Fig. 26. Wall 624, looking north.



Fig. 27. Wall 603 abutting W624, looking southwest.



Fig. 28. Fill 6062 under W624.

Vaulted Room I. It seems, therefore, that during the Byzantine period, or perhaps even earlier, in the Late Roman period, the rock surface (Area C) and the cavities north of it were covered with a thick and homogenous earthen fill containing Early Roman pottery.

AREA D (Plan 4; Figs. 29, 30)

Area D, south of the rock surface of Area C, is delimited by later Byzantine walls—W610 on the east and W620, which bounds the western access corridor of the Byzantine building, on the south. Wall 620 was revealed after the removal of W619, which appeared to have been mostly reconstructed by the previous excavators. The area consists of a rock-cut room (Loci 6024, 6024a), dubbed the 'Secco Room,' so called because its plastered walls were decorated in the *secco* method, i.e., the paint was applied after the plaster had dried.

In addition to cleaning the previously excavated Secco Room, we also excavated the undisturbed debris under the meeting point of W610 and W620. In order to obtain information about the construction of these walls, we scraped off the pointing-up of the joints in the lower part of W610, done by the conservators of the previous expedition.

The rock-cut room is oriented on a northeastsouthwest axis, but for convenience, will be described here in terms of the cardinal points. We were unable to ascertain the room's



Fig. 29. Plaster on W628, looking north.

complete plan because of disturbance by the later Walls 610 and 620. Nonetheless, W628 on the north and W627 on the west, both preserved to a height of c. 2.2 m, are the original walls. Another rock-cut wall (W629) paralleled W628 on the south, and probably served as an inner partition wall.

Wall 629 divides the room in two: a long, narrow space (L6024) on the north (2.3×7.5 m), and another space (L6024a), which was only partly exposed and whose exact nature cannot be established, on the south. The northern space can be further divided into a western portion, 2.3 m wide, and a smaller eastern portion, 1.3 m wide. An opening, c. 1.5 m wide, was hewn in the middle of W629. Square recesses, one on either side of the upper part of this opening, perhaps served as sockets for inserting building stones of a constructed continuation to the height of the wall.

Wall 628 curves slightly southward at its top, indicating that it supported a vault, the other side of which would have rested on W629 (Plan 4: Section 7–7). However, the easternmost part of W628 is cut straight rather than curved. At the top of this part is a flat rock shelf that might have held wooden beams for a flat ceiling. These two different methods of roofing might belong to two different periods in the life of this space—first vaulted, then flat-roofed.



Fig. 30. Plaster on W628, close-up showing painted decoration.

Some of the modern plaster came off during conservation work on W628, revealing two layers of painted plaster beneath it, one on top of the other (Figs. 29, 30). These layers, fragmentary and quite faded, were probably created using the secco method. The first ancient layer, made of small stones set in gray plaster, was applied in order to flatten and smooth the rock face. A second layer, of gray lime plaster with stone splinters, overlay the first one. Traces of paint, over a coating or wash of white lime plaster, are an indication of the finish that was applied to the plaster base (Fig. 30). The decoration motif imitated marble slabs. The surface was first divided into rectangles by incising straight lines into the

wet plaster. These incisions were later filled with paint that colored the rectangles in brown, reddish brown, yellowish brown and black. The addition of painted veins provided the effect of marble.

After cleaning the space and excavating under the meeting point between W610 and W620, we found that W620 was built over a layer of brown earth (L6033, L6034) that in turn covered the opening of a cistern, which was not excavated (Plan 4: Section 7–7). The fill contained charred wood and Byzantine-era pottery, including roof tiles and bricks similar to those used in the bathhouse next to Robinson's Arch (Baruch 2002). A fragment of a decorated frieze made of soft limestone (B60259) and a fragment of a conic mortar made of hard limestone (B60260) were also found.

In the northeastern corner of the rock-cut Secco Room is a breach in the lower part of W628, opening onto Channel 2 that crosses here from northwest to southeast (marked on Plan 4 as a broken line on the seam between W628 and W610). The possible continuation of the channel is blocked by W610, which was built into it where it crosses the room (Fig. 36). Upon examining the stratigraphic relation between the channel, the Secco Room and W610, we could not determine whether the room or the channel was hewn first. However, it is clear that the earlier phase of W610 postdates both of them, as the construction of W610 put the channel out of use and created a slight change in the plan of the room. If, therefore, the conclusions of the former expedition are correct-that Channel 2 was created in the latter part of the Second Temple period-then W610 clearly postdates this period.

WALL 610 (Plan 4: Sections 1–1, 7–7; Figs. 31–37)

Wall 610 is the western wall of the Byzantine building that is located southeast of the Triple Gate. As no diagnostic evidence came to light in our excavation, we do not challenge the Byzantine date that our predecessors gave for its construction (B. Mazar 1975:248–254; Ben-Dov 1985:267–271; E. Mazar 1998).

Along the course of W610, from north to south, we distinguished three segments that differ from one another in their construction. Segments A and B are constructed along the rock surface, while Segment C is built over the rock-cut Secco Room. The inner, eastern face of the wall was exposed by the previous expedition, and will not be described here. Although the different parts of the wall join to form one line, they indicate the incorporation of earlier walls into Byzantine construction. Segments predating the Byzantine period are also incorporated into other walls of the building. It seems that the use of ancient walls in the Byzantine building preserved parts of the plan of the original structure. Unfortunately, our investigation did not include any earlier walls. Nevertheless, it seems that W610 represents the history of the entire building, from its beginning through the Byzantine period. The various segments of W610 will be described from north to south.

Segment A.— This 3 m segment, which starts at the northwestern corner of the Byzantine building, is constructed of two large, reused stones of grayish meleke limestone (Plan 4: Section 1-1; Fig. 31). These stones, were smoothed and set on a thin leveling layer of small stones. The interval between the large stones (0.25 m wide) was filled with small stones set in light gravish lime cement. On the western face of the wall, the flat margins of the northern stones are typical of Herodian-style dressing. However, unlike the stones used in the Temple Mount walls, which have slightly set-back margins, here the margins are flat and dressed in a different direction than that of the boss. It seems that these stones were reworked to be reused in W610. On the eastern face, the second stone from the north has a 0.47 m wide band that protrudes 0.3 m (Fig. 32).

Segment B.— This 5.4 m long segment of W610 was built on a leveling layer of small and



Fig. 31. Western face of W610, looking south from the northwestern corner.



Fig. 32. Wall 610, Segment A, showing the eastern face of the second stone from the corner, looking west.

medium-sized stones set directly on bedrock (Plan 4: Section 7–7; Figs. 33–35). Laid along this leveling layer, six steps (0.3 m thick) in secondary use provided an even base for the

wall and blocked Channel 6054 (Fig. 34). Above the course of steps, the northern part of this segment was constructed of medium-sized ashlars in dry masonry, while the southern part



Fig. 33. Western face of W610, Segment B, looking northeast.



Fig. 34. Eastern face of W610, showing reused large steps and Channel 6054, looking west.



Fig. 35. Detail of western face of W610, Segment B, showing the blocked entrance between ashlar construction on the left and the upright, reused step on the right, looking east.

incorporated a large reused step $(2.00 \times 0.72 \times 0.35 \text{ m})$, set on its side (Fig. 35). Between them is a small opening (0.84 m wide), which was found blocked with stone fragments. A row of ashlars of softer *nari* stone, of medium size (0.4 × 0.3 m on the average), covers the blocked opening; hence, they seems to be a later addition to the wall. The upper half of the outer (western) face of these stones was deliberately broken in antiquity for unknown reasons.

The reused steps shared certain features of interest. The upper, western face of the upright step is smooth, revealing it as the tread, worn over the years by pedestrian feet. We observed the same wear on all the other steps incorporated in the wall. Along the underside of all the steps a recess (up to 10×15 cm deep) was cut, which enabled each to be properly joined to the one below it.

Segment C.— This part of W610 is constructed across the Secco Room (Area D) and consists of roughly hewn and trimmed stones, some of them reused (Plan 4: Section 7–7; Figs. 36, 37). The joints were filled with small stones set



Fig. 36. Wall 610, Segment C, showing the large Herodian stone at base of the wall, blocking an opening between the Secco Room and Channel 2, looking northeast.



Fig. 37. Southern part of W610, showing the incorporated stump of an earlier wall (L6033) and W619, after the dismantling of the modern reconstruction, looking northeast.

in grayish cement. As noted, W610 blocked Channel 2, hence it postdates it. This part of the wall is 4.15 m high and 1.4 m thick. Its thickness was created by thickening the wall on its inner side, within the Byzantine building. The upper part of this segment was reconstructed by the earlier expedition, which also pointed up the joints between the stones with Portland cement.

One stone, at the base of this segment of the wall, is of considerable size $(1.5 \times 0.6 \times 0.3 \text{ m};$ Fig. 36) and was deliberately placed where the rock-cut room opens into Channel 2 (L6019). This is a *meleke* stone, dressed with narrow (up to 3 cm), flat margins. The boss was finely finished with a comb chisel, typical of Herodian flat dressing. It rests on bedrock except for the part that protrudes into the channel, at which point the stone rests on a fill of small stones.

This stone differs from the rest of W610, and may have been part of an earlier wall.

As noted above, we dismantled part of the east-west W620, which abuts the southwestern corner of the Byzantine house. In so doing, we exposed the last 2.5 m of the southern end of W610, up to the corner of the building, revealing a wall stump of a totally different nature than the rest of the wall, which was, in part, constructed over it (Fig. 37). It consists of three dry-built courses (1.5 m high) of large, meticulously dressed *mizzi ahmar* ashlars, the dimensions of the largest stone being 1.40×0.45 m. The dressing is in *taltish* style, i.e., with no distinct margins. This foundation layer was set directly on bedrock except for places where the rock is uneven and a fill of stones was used to level it.

Date of W610

We have shown that W610 contains segments constructed in differing styles. Unfortunately, we retrieved no stratigraphic data that might assist in dating the various segments of this wall. As opposed to the inner part of the building, which was entirely exposed by the previous expedition, our dig revealed only parts of its outer face, with no associated floor or occupation level containing pottery or other dating material. The following attempt at dating is therefore of tentative nature.

The construction of Segments A and B of W610 on the same leveling layer, made of small stone fragments, indicates that both segments are in fact one continuous wall. The two Herodian stones at the northern end of the wall may have originated in the collapse of the Temple Mount wall. As noted, they seem to have been redressed in preparation for incorporation into W610. Thus, it seems that Segment A postdates Herod's days and even the Second Temple period.

An important element of Segment B is the reuse of steps in the leveling course and in the wall itself. The type of stone of which the steps are made, and their measurements, resemble the steps in front of the Double Gate, as well as those uncovered near Robinson's Arch (Reich and Billig 2000:350–352). The steps must therefore have originated in a monumental staircase leading up to the Triple Gate, and their reuse must be attributed to the post-Roman destruction of the Temple Mount.

Along the entire length of Segments A and B, the uppermost preserved course is of ashlars, all broken off on their western side (that is, the outer side of the house). This layer of stones postdates the part of the wall constructed of the Herodian ashlars and steps. The same wall from the eastern side (the inner part of the house) was found plastered with a thick white plaster, which covers the ashlars and steps, as well as the blocked opening in the center of Segment B (mentioned above). The lower part of the inner side of the wall was lined with two rows of square terra-cotta bricks and tiles. Both the tile lining and the plastering represent the final phase of the building. From this we conclude that Segments A and B of W610 were built after the destruction of the Temple Mount and before the very last phase of the Byzantine building.

The dating of the wall stump incorporated in Segment C is more difficult to establish. Nonetheless, because both it and the Herodiantype stone that was found at the base of W610 seem quite out of place in terms of the general appearance of W610, they may well be remnants of an earlier, (pre-?) Herodian wall.

THE ARTIFACTS

As most of the area under discussion had already been extensively excavated, there were very few undisturbed ancient deposits. This accounts for the paucity of pottery, coins and other small finds presented here, relative to the size of the area. Indeed, the very nature of the dig, which was mainly concerned with dismantling walls and clearing re-fills, precluded the finding of stratigraphically significant loci.

Nonetheless, the fills excavated in Vaulted Room I (Loci 6002, 6003, 6023) were an exception. Considerable quantities of Early Roman potsherds were found in these fills, which—in places that had not been excavated in the past—covered the floor to a thickness of c. 0.6 m. We believe that these fills, like that excavated under W624 (L6062), represent the post-destruction phase of the Temple Mount, when debris had begun to accumulate after the abandonment of the area.

In the southwestern corner of Area C we excavated fills dating to the Byzantine period that had been sealed by Channel 6059 (L6015). These fills sealed earthen layers that were deposited on bedrock (Loci 6016, 6021), which contained pottery from the late Iron Age II to the late Second Temple period.

Also chronologically significant were sherds found within the cement exposed in some of the dismantled walls in Area B, particularly in W600 and W603, and in the walls and roof of the latrine located off the northern courtyard of the Byzantine building. The sherds retrieved when these walls were dismantled dated from the late Iron Age to the late Byzantine period. Two sixth-century coins from within W600 provide a *terminus post quem* for that wall (see ariel, this volume)

Sherds dating to the Early Islamic period were found within W620, indicating continued use from the Byzantine period into the Early Islamic period, when the wall was augmented and repaired. It is also important to note that when dismantling W615, which undoubtedly belongs to the large Umayyad Building V, no such sherds were found.

The following account presents artifacts only from loci with chronological significance, focusing mainly on the latest fragments. Four periods are represented: Iron Age II and the late Second Temple, Byzantine and Early Islamic periods. The artifacts discussed are not intended to represent the history of the area, especially with regard to Umayyad-period construction, which was entirely exposed by the previous expedition. The Late Roman period is also under-represented. The sherds from both of these periods were retrieved only from re-fillings or other unstratified deposits and are therefore not included here.

POTTERY³

Iron Age II (Fig. 38:1, 2)

Potsherds pointing to the first period of occupation at the site came to light in several loci. In Loci 6016 and 6021, Iron Age sherds, mostly non-diagnostic, were found on the rock surface, mixed with sherds of the late Second Temple period. Illustrated here are two examples from L6021: a burnished plate (Fig. 38:1) and a high-footed oil lamp (Fig. 38:2), both dated to the latest part of Iron Age II.

Late Second Temple Period (Fig. 38:3–13)

These sherds originated in the fills excavated in Vaulted Room I (Loci 6002, 6003, 6023), and above the bedrock steps near W615 (L6016 and L6021). The fragments are typical of the first century BCE and the first century CE, and have been found elsewhere in Jerusalem in enormous quantities.

Cooking Pots.— Both the carinated type (Fig. 38:3) and the globular type (Fig. 38:4–6) can be seen (for dated parallels, see Ben-Arieh and Coen-Uzzielli 1996: Fig. 4.3:1–10; Bar-Nathan 1981:60–61).

Jars.— The jars are all typical of the period, most having a collar at the base of the neck. The rims are either rounded (Fig. 38:8) or flattened (Fig. 38:7, 9, 10).

Jugs and Flasks.— Necks of an Eastern Sigillata jug (Fig. 38:11) and a flask (Fig. 38:12) are typical of the first century BCE.

Oil Lamp.— This lamp (Fig. 38:13) is of the so-called 'Herodian' type, which dates to the first century CE.

Byzantine Period (Fig. 39:1-10)

Sherds from this period originated mainly from the dismantling of walls, and from the fill above L6021. They include fragments of types well known in Jerusalem. Of the deep bowls (Fig. 39:1, 2), No. 1 has a combed decoration outside, attested throughout the Byzantine period, with parallels from Ras Abu Ma'aruf, just north of Jerusalem (Rapuano 1999:176, Fig. 5). Bowls 3–5 are hemispherical, typical of the late Byzantine period in Jerusalem (Magness 1993:189–192; Late Roman C Ware). The storage jar (No. 6), with its thick wall and elaborate rim, also has Byzantine parallels at Ras Abu Ma'aruf (Rapuano 1999: Figs. 109, 110). The amphora (No. 7), juglet (No. 8) and oil lamps (Nos. 9, 10) all date to the late Byzantine period.

The Early Islamic Period (Fig. 39:11, 12)

This period is represented by two bowls, which were discovered while dismantling W620 (L6033). Other, similar bowls were also retrieved, but not in a clear stratigraphic context. Bowl 12 has parallels in Kh. Abu Suwwane (Cohen Finkelstein 1997: Fig. 1:4).

STONE OBJECTS

Stone Vessels (Fig. 40:1, 2).— Several vessel fragments were found, including pieces of two large basins identified as a *qalal* type, a form dated to the late Second Temple period. Large numbers of these were found by the previous expedition, as well as in the nearby excavations in the City of David (Cahill 1992: Fig. 18, 19).

Stone Object with Incisions (Fig. 40:3).— This item was discovered in a fill covering the rock floor of Vaulted Room I (L6023), along with pottery of the late Second Temple period. The object is shaped roughly like a truncated cone, 5.2 cm high, with a diameter of 1.2 cm at the top and 2.5 cm at the bottom. It was carved by hand in soft limestone, using a technique similar to that of other contemporary stone objects. On one side is a shallow groove, perhaps to facilitate its connection to a handle; elsewhere around the sides are incisions that cannot be deciphered or understood (abbreviations?). On the wider base are incisions that might resemble a depiction of palm trees.



Fig. 38. Pottery from the Iron Age (1, 2) and the late Second Temple period (3–13).

No.	Туре	Locus	Reg. No.	Description
1	Bowl	6021	60207/8	Reddish ware, red slip, wheel burnish inside
2	Oil lamp	6021	60207/2	Dark brown ware, white and gray grits
3	Cooking pot	6011	60174/9	Dark brown ware, gray core, few white grits
4	Cooking pot	6002	60217/4	Dark brown ware, few white grits
5	Cooking pot	6002	60127/9	Brown ware, gray core, white grits
6	Cooking pot	6002	60104/9	Brown ware, white grits
7	Jar	6002	60212/9	Light brown ware, gray core, white grits
8	Jar	6002	60104/8	Dark ware, gray core, white grits
9	Jar	6002	60232/1	Light brown ware, gray core, white grits
10	Jar	6023	60278/3	Light brown ware, gray core, white grits
11	Jug	6002	60217/6	Yellowish ware, red slip, Eastern Sigillata type
12	Flask	6002	60217/7	Brown/beige ware, reddish brown core, white grits
13	Oil lamp	6021	60208/2	Light brown ware, 'Herodian' nozzle



Fig. 39. Pottery from the Byzantine (1–10) and Early Islamic (11, 12) periods.

No.	Туре	Locus	Reg. No.	Description
1	Bowl	6010 (on roof of latrine)	60178/5	Light brown ware, gray core
2	Bowl	6021	60207/3	Light brown ware, white grits
3	Bowl	6021	60207/9	Light brown ware, gray core
4	Bowl	6011 (W603)	60174/9	Light brown ware, reddish brown core, white grits
5	Bowl	6010 (on roof of latrine)	60178/11	Reddish buff ware
6	Jar	6009 (on roof of latrine)	60145/4	Brown ware, gray core, white grits
7	Amphora	6011 (W603)	60174/4	Light brown ware, sandy
8	Juglet	6022 (W600)	60208/6	Reddish brown ware, few white grits, burnished
9	Oil lamp	6033	60230/1	Light brown ware, sandy
10	Oil lamp	6006	60132/8	Light brown ware
11	Bowl	6033 (W620)	60253	Light brown ware, sandy, many white and gray grits, wavy decoration along rim
12	Bowl	6033 (W620)	60253/7	Brown ware, gray core, white grits

Fig. 39

Limestone Figurine(?) (Fig. 40:4).— This fragmentary object (height 11 cm), roughly worked out of hard limestone, seems to be a torso, missing head and limbs. It was found covered with a thick, yellowish brown incrustation.

Marble Slab with Inscription (Fig. 40:5).— A fragment of gray marble $(18 \times 12 \text{ cm})$ was found on the surface, west of the Triple Gate. It bears traces of four incomplete letters in Greek or Latin.

ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

Column Fragments

Column Drums and a Base (Figs. 41; 42:4– 6).— Five column drums and one base, which includes the lowest part of the column shaft, were found in secondary use in W615. All are made from the same type of stone, and all are approximately the same height (Nos. 1–4). The diameter varies slightly from item to item, as is to be expected, since the drums probably originate from various positions along the height of the columns. Since these items have the same height, they seem to have belonged to the same series. The fact that the diameter of the shaft on the column base (No. 1) is slightly narrower than some of the drums may indicate that the diameter of the shaft varied slightly from column to column. Additional fragments of this size were unearthed by our predecessors in various locations south of the Temple Mount, and drums and bases have also been found in other parts of the city. We hope to deal with these in the future.

Stylized Palm Capital (Fig. 42:7).— A circular fragment, belonging to a large architectural element with an estimated diameter of c. 1.4 m, features a low (height 9 cm), molded base and above it, the remains of two flat leaves. This fragment seems to be the lower part of a capital carved in the form of either a stylized palm or smooth, stylized acanthus leaves.

Monumental columns bearing palm capitals are still found *in situ* within the subterranean pathway from the Double Gate (Gibson and Jacobson 1996: Figs. 105, 107:B, 108, 111, 114, and 117, which is a photograph taken by Wilson in 1902).

Stylized acanthus leaves remind us of other capitals in the Corinthian order, of which several pieces are known in Jerusalem. The finest example was found in the Jewish Quarter



Fig. 40. Stone objects.

No.	Туре	Locus	Reg. No.
1	Stone vessel	6009	60149
2	Stone vessel	6016	60195
3	Limestone object with incisions	6023	60211
4	Limestone figurine		60214(a)
5	Inscribed marble slab	Surface	



Fig. 41. Column base and drums.

No.	Element	Locus	Reg. No.	Description	Measurements (m)
1	Column base and drum	W615	60233	Hard limestone (<i>mizzi hilu</i>), slightly reddish; upper side with rough comb-chiseling; no central socket; original face of column severely obliterated and weathered, only small part of profile of base surviving	H 0.91 (base 0.28, shaft 0.63) Diam. 0.97 (above apophysis)
2	Column drum	W615	60246	Hard limestone (<i>mizzi hilu</i>), slightly reddish; c. a third of circumference survived; curved face polished, flat side comb-chiseled; socket on flat side not precisely in center	H 0.86 Diam. 1.07–1.08 Socket: 0.8 × 0.9, 0.2 deep
3	Column drum	W615	60245	Hard limestone (<i>mizzi hilu</i>), slightly reddish; rounded face polished with slight traces of comb-chiseling; c. 60% of the circumference extant	H 0.97 Diam. 0.98



Fig. 42. Column drums and capital.

No.	Element	Locus	Reg. No.	Description	Measurements (m)
4	Column drum	W615	60244	Hard limestone (<i>mizzi hilu</i>), slightly reddish; irregular square socket on flat side; traces of two square protrusion on the curved polished face, almost opposite one another, both obliterated but not polished away	H at least 0.96 Diam. 1.015 Socket: 0.7×0.7 , 0.2 deep Protrusions: 0.6×0.7 , 0.1×0.1
5	Column drum	W615	60257	Hard limestone (<i>mizzi hilu</i>), slightly reddish; fragment of curved polished face; c. 20% of circumference extant	H at least 1.1
6	Column drum	W615	60247	Rounded face almost totally cut away	H at least 0.96 Diam. at least 0.96
7	Capital	W615	60271	Fragmentary; originally monumental in size	

(Avigad 1983:151, Fig. 157). The other known items of this variant of capital come from the Tombs of the Kings (Kon 1947: Pl. XIV:b).

Fragment No. 7 also resembles a flowershaped *acroterion* atop the *tholos* of the Tomb of Absalom in the nearby Kidron Valley (Avigad 1954:106–107, Figs. 52; 56:4, 5). Like the element on the Tomb of Absalom, our piece has a short molded base, a feature not usually found on Corinthian capitals, neither generally nor of the local stylized type.

As these column fragments are similar in type and size to other such items found in the area of the Ophel, we cannot but associate them with the columns of the Herodian Stoa Basileia, which, according to Flavius Josephus (Jewish Antiquities 15:11, 5 [411-416]) occupied the southern flank of the Herodian Temple Mount. However, the dimensions of the fragments somewhat contradict Josephus' claim that it required three individuals holding hands to surround a column (Jewish Antiquities 15:11, 5 [413]), as the diameter of the column shafts discovered in our excavation require only two people to encircle them. On the other hand, the same passage in Josephus describes the height of a column as 27 feet (c. 8.5 m), and this figure perfectly matches the c. 1 m diameter of the column drums under discussion. In other words, a column enclosed by three people would have had an approximate diameter of 1.3-1.5 m, and certainly would have been higher than 27 feet.

It is possible that Josephus' image of three individuals holding hands around a column refers to columns of a type not retrieved from our excavation. The thickest columns on the Herodian Temple Mount—c. 1.4 m in diameter—were probably those supporting the domes at the southern end of the passages leading to the Double Gate (Gibson and Jacobson 1996:235–259). As these columns were situated in a passage directly under the Royal Stoa, Josephus may well have confused the columns when describing this setting later. It is worth noting that the damaged capital (No. 7) is similar, both in decoration and probable diameter, to the columns in the underground passage.

The physical condition of the column drum and base (No. 1) and the capital (No. 7) is noteworthy. These items are not simply damaged, as they would have been following impact with the ground during the collapse of the building in which they were incorporated. Nor was the damage caused by preparing the stones for reuse in a later building. Rather, these items were deliberately mutilated, in the process of which most of their rounded face was disfigured, leaving only a small part of the original profile. Architectural fragments bearing traces of similar treatment were discovered in Reich's and Billig's excavation at the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount (unpublished).

Entablature Fragments

Decorated Cornice (Fig. 43:8).— The dismantling of W615 also yielded a decorated cornice, the prize find of this excavation. It was fashioned out of hard *mizzi hilu* stone, c. 0.61 m thick, and was found damaged on the sides and the rear. The rounded edges of the lowest *cyma reversa* profile were deliberately damaged, probably when the stone was reused.

The outer, profiled part includes a series of bands, half a cavetto, and half a torus and cyma reversa, separated by flat bands. The soffit is entirely decorated in high relief. The external panel features an alternating series of rosettes (Fig. 44:a) and an interwoven meander resembling a swastika (Fig. 44:b). The broken-off inner panel contains one modillion decorated with an elongated palmette-like branch (Fig. 44:c). The modillion protrudes only 3 cm downward, which is unusually shallow, giving the soffit a very flat appearance. Next to the modillion on this panel is a small rosette in a rectangular frame (Fig. 44:d). The motifs discernible in the extant portions of the two outer frames of this panel seem to be a rosette (Fig. 44:e) and an angular geometric design (Fig. 44:f). A motif that is probably similar to the latter was found on a fragment of



Fig. 43. Decorated cornice (W615; Reg. No. B60212). Color Photograph: Meidad Suchowolski, courtesy and copyright of the ©Israel Museum Jerusalem.

a decorated stone from the Upper City (Avigad 1983: Fig. 184).

The dimensions of this fragment clearly indicate that it came from the same building as the abovementioned column drums and base.

Rosettes are perhaps the most common motifs adorning carved stones found in Jerusalem of the late Second Temple period in general, and in the various excavations near the southern parts of the Temple Mount in particular (see below, Figs. 45:9; 46:14; 48:18–23 and Mazar and Ben-Dov 1973:23–25). Also common in the area of the Ophel was the swastika pattern, in both stone (Mazar and Ben-Dov 1973:24–25) and mosaic (Avigad 1983: Fig. 165).

Fragment of a Doric Frieze (Fig. 45:9).— A metope containing a 16-petal rosette in high relief, set between triglyphs, was found. The extant *guttae*, which are connected beneath the triglyph to a thin *taenia*, indicate that there

were fewer in the complete stone than the customary six. A deep recess in the stone, c. 10 cm deep, below the frieze, was probably cut so as to match the architrave.

Fragment of a Doric Architrave and Frieze (Fig. 45:10).— This fragment bears an almost complete triglyph and part of the adjacent metope. The piece is still *in situ*, incorporated in secondary use as a simple construction stone in the southern edge of W615 at the southeastern corner of the Umayyad building. It is the product of a master craftsman, well-acquainted with the Classical forms, as opposed to the rather provincial style in which the facade of the Tomb of the Sons of Hezir is made (Avigad 1954: Figs. 30, 31). As the metope is c. 0.57 m high, one can imagine a column of c. 0.55–0.60 m in upper diameter, and c. 4.5–5.0 m high.

This piece is a welcome addition to examples of the Doric order, which are rather rare in Jerusalem. Two monumental, very finely



Fig. 44. Detail: motifs of the decorated cornice (see Fig. 43).

executed Doric fragments of entabulature were found by Avigad in the Upper City and are on display in the Wohl Museum in the Jewish Quarter (Avigad 1989:38).

Fragments of Molded Cornices (Fig. 45:11–13).— These are fragments of roughly carved,

coarse stone, probably beloging to engaged pilasters.

Doorframe Fragments

Fragment of Lintel(?) (Fig. 46:14).— This fragment is decorated with a rosette and lozenge in relief; probably not part of an entablature.



Fig. 45. Entablature fragments.

✓ Fig. 45

No.	Element	Locus	Reg. No.	Description
9	Doric frieze	L6022	60209	Metope decorated with rosette carved in relief, set between two triglyphs
10	Doric architrave and frieze	W615		Triglyph and metope
11	Molded cornice			Straight cyma and two fillets
12	Molded cornice	L6003	60259	
13	Molded cornice	L6023	60212	



Fig. 46. Doorframe fragments.

No.	Element	Locus	Reg. No.	Description
14	Lintel(?)	W600	60229	Carved in relief, decorated with rosette and lozenge-shaped motif
15	doorjamb	W600	60225	Molded
16	doorjamb			Molded
17	doorjamb			Molded

Molded Doorjambs (Fig. 46:15-17).- The edges of these jambs, which came from monumental openings or gates, are molded lengthwise with a series of flat bands and a cyma reversa profile. Number 15 is larger than the other two, and the series of moldings on its facade is identical to that which is still in situ on the western side of the Triple Gate (Fig. 47; Gibson and Jacobson 1996:259, Fig. 121). The inner edge of this doorjamb is flat, and it is very likely that this particular stone was part of a gate facade. Similar stones were found in the excavations near the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount (Reich and Billig 2000:347), most probably part of the Temple Mount gate to which the monumental staircase





Fig. 47. Original *in situ* doorjamb on the western side of the Triple Gate.

of Robinson's Arch ascended. Numbers 16 and 17 have a simpler series of moldings on their facade, as well as a series of moldings on their inner side. These clearly belonged to other, smaller gates, or even windows.

Decorated Fragments

Rosettes (Fig. 48:18–22).— A number of small fragments feature rosettes of various kinds. Some show evidence of frames in high relief surrounding the rosettes (Nos. 20–22). The frames are rhomboid or lozenge-shaped (No. 20), triangular (No. 21), or polygonal (No. 22). They may have been part of decorated panels, which adorned the sunken parts of coffered ceilings (for other usages, cf. the square frames of Figs. 43, 45:9, and the partial frame of Fig. 46:14). Similar patterns, albeit simpler and executed in white stucco rather than in stone, were discovered in the contemporaneous houses of the Upper City (Avigad 1983: Figs. 89, 91).

The rosettes are simple or compound and the number of petals varies. Number 18 features two rows of what was most likely eight petals and buds on stems, while No. 19 shows the center of a four-petal rosette. Both are carved in high relief. A six(?)-petal rosette (No. 20) is set in a lozenge created of several molded stripes. Similar stones were found by Mazar and Ben-Dov (1973:23, upper right).

A fragment of a carved rosette set in a triangular molded panel (No. 21) probably served as a filler in a frieze in which the main motifs, perhaps also rosettes, were set in hexagonal or octagonal panels (Mazar 1971: Fig. 4; Avigad 1983: Fig. 91). Traces of two carved rosettes in No. 22 may be an example of such panels. This motif of octagonal molded panels, with or without rosettes, is common during the Second Temple period in stucco decorations (Avigad 1983: Fig. 91). For another possible rossette, see Fig. 48:23.

hyy (Fig. 48:23).— A very damaged fragment shows four stems bearing ivy leaves bound together with a ribbon, between two twisted ropes. On one side there appear to be remains of



Fig. 48. Small decorated fragments carved in relief.

No.	Locus	Reg. No.	Description
18	W615	60274	Fragment of rosette
19	W615	60268	Fragment of four-petaled rosette
20	W615	60269	Fragment with rosette set within a lozenge-motif frame
21	W615	60275	Fragment of frieze; rosette set within a lozenge motif
22	W615	60270	Fragment with rosettes set within polygonal frames
23	W615	60273	Fragment with parallel bands of rope pattern between vegetal motifs: a bunch of ivy tied with ribbons and a rosette(?)
24	L6006	60128	Acroterion-like piece with acanthus leaf motif
25	W615	60276	Fragment of Corinthian capital, upper part of one acanthus leaf

✓ Fig. 48

a carved rosette. While the rosette seems to be the most common motif, ivy leaves are also quite popular. The best contemporary parallel carved in relief is that on the sarcophagus of the Nazirite Family Tomb (Avigad 1971: Pls. 38, 39).

Acanthus Foliage (Fig. 48:24, 25).— Fragment No. 24 features an acanthus leaf protruding from a much flatter strip. Although it looks like the edge of a gable to which an *acroterium* is attached, the inclination of the straight band is too steep for that purpose.

A remnant of acanthus decoration from a Corinthian capital (No. 25) is the only fragment of a capital of this order that seems to be monumental in size. Following Flavius Josephus' description of the Royal Stoa (Jewish Antiquities 15:11, 5 [414]), we would have expected to find Corinthian capitals used in this colonnaded building. It should be noted, however, that the archaeological record from the various excavations near the Temple Mount, as from anywhere else in the city, has not produced spolia of the monumental Corinthian order. Our predecessors encountered only small fragments-mainly the edges of the acanthus leaves, which have not yet been published. The small size of these fragments (unlike the preserved size of the column bases and drums) leaves a discrepancy between the archaeological record and Josephus' description. Until decisive proof appears—a complete capital or at least a sizable, well-preserved fragment thereof-we

must question whether Josephus' "Corinthian order" really refers to that order.

Staircase Elements

Double Step (Fig. 49:26).— This double step is made of hard *mizzi hilu* stone. The treads are clearly recognizable, having been worn smooth by pedestrians. The tread of the lower step is 0.36 m deep and the riser of the upper step is 0.25 m high. The discovery of steps of this type in this particular area is significant in providing additional evidence of the presence of a monumental staircase in this area.

Handrail(?) Slab (Fig. 49:27).- This slab (height 1 m, depth at middle 0.35 m) is rectangular at the bottom and rounded at the top. It has parallels in the excavations conducted by Reich and Billig near the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount (unpublished), where it was established that such slabs were part of handrails built on either side of the monumental staircase borne by Robinson's Arch. Therefore, this stone might also have been part of a handrail, built in conjunction with the monumental staircase to the Triple Gate or the platform in front of the gate. The fact that the upper edge of the rounded part of the slab is parallel to the bottom indicates that it was installed along a level area, and not at the side of the staircase proper, as opposed to the rounded tops of the slabs found in the area of Robinson's Arch, which were inclined relative to the bottom (Reich and Billig 2003:244, Fig. 1).

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Fig. 49. Stairway elements (26, 27) and post-Second Temple period finds (28-31).

No.	Element	Locus	Reg. No.
26	Double step	W600	60226
27	Handrail segment	W600	60227
28	Column base on pedestal with incised Greek inscription	W615	60248
29	Corinthian capital	Above 6023	60206
30	Threshold fragment	W600	
31	Circular basin	W615	60251

Fig. 49

An important detail on this slab is a protruding ridge, c. 2 cm deep and 20 cm high, at the base of its long, flat side. This protrusion was most likely for the purpose of fixing the slab in place or inserting it in the ground. The distance from its top ledge to the edge of the rounded part is 0.8 m, which seems to be the height of the handrail from the ground.

Post-Second Temple Architectural Elements Inscribed Column Base on Pedestal (Fig. 49:28).— The profile of this column and its roughly worked, 0.5 m high pedestal is typical of the Late Roman or the Byzantine period.

On the upper edge of the pedestal is incised a Greek inscription, $\Pi A \wedge A \Delta IO \Pi \Pi$, followed by a rough sketch of a palm branch. The proper name *Palladios* was in use in the Late Roman and Byzantine periods. The best known parallel is that which appeared in the inscription found on the main street of Scythopolis (Bet She'an), dated to the fourth century CE (Mazor 1988– 1989:27–28, Fig. 27).

Small Corinthian Capital (Fig. 49:29).— From the style of the carving it seems that this small capital most probably postdates the Second Temple period.

Fragment of Threshold (Fig. 49:30).— This piece, found on top of W600, joins with another part of the same threshold discovered by our predecessors. The complete threshold measured c. 1.66 m long, 0.70–0.72 m wide and 0.41 m thick, indicating that it belonged to a large doorway. The raised edge is 0.31 m wide

and 0.95 m high. The upper, flat part contains two sockets for the door axles, somewhat less than 1.5 m apart, thus providing the total width of the two-winged door, including the four bolt sockets near the center. It is impossible to determine an exact date for this element it may have originated in the Second Temple period or thereafter.

Circular Basin (Fig. 49:31).— This basin, on a low pedestal, with an inner diameter of c. 0.5 m was probably carved out of an old column drum. Once again, it could be dated to the Second Temple period or later.

REMARKS ON THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE ROYAL STOA—THE HERODIAN *STOA BASILEIA*

As some of the architectural fragments have bearing on the reconstruction of the Herodian *Stoa Basileia*, or Royal Stoa, from which they probably originate, a brief new evaluation of this building is presented here (for previous studies about the Royal Stoa in Jerusalem, see Mazar 1984). Our conclusions formed the basis for the Virtual Reality Reconstruction prepared for the Davidson Center, which was erected adjacent to the excavation site.⁴

The Royal Stoa was constructed along the southern side of the Temple Mount. Flavius Josephus treated this edifice, which he called the "Royal Portico," in detail (*Jewish Antiquities* 15:11, 5 [410–417]), and rightfully, he described it in the superlative. In retrospect, it was one of the largest roofed buildings ever to be built in this country. It is essential to cite

the entire passage in order to understand the considerations behind our reconstruction of various aspects of the building:

... The fourth front of this (court), facing south, also had gates in the middle, and had over it the Royal Portico, which had three aisles, extending in length from the eastern to the western ravine. It was not possible for it to extend farther. And it was a structure more noteworthy than any under the sun. For while the depth of the ravine was great, and no one who bent over to look into it from above could bear to look down to the bottom, the height of the portico standing over it was so very great that if anyone looked down from its rooftop, combining the two elevations, he would become dizzy and his vision would be unable to reach the end of so measureless a depth. Now the columns (of the portico) stood in four rows, one opposite the other all along-the fourth row was attached to a wall built of stone—and the thickness of each column was such that it would take three men with outstretched arms touching one another to envelop it; its height was twenty-seven feet, and there was a double molding running round its base. The

number of all the columns was a hundred and sixty-two, and their capitals were ornamented in the Corinthian style of carving, which caused amazement by the magnificence of its whole effect. Since there were four rows, they made three aisles among them, under the porticoes. Of these the two side ones corresponded and were made in the same way, each being thirty feet in width, a stade in length, and over fifty feet in height. But the middle aisle was one and a half times as wide and twice as high, and thus it greatly towered over those on either side. The ceilings (of the porticoes) were ornamented with deeply cut wood-carvings representing all sorts of different figures. The ceiling of the middle aisle was raised to a greater height, and the front wall was cut at either end into architraves with columns built into it, and all of it was polished, so that these structures seemed incredible to those who had not seen them, and were beheld with amazement by those who set eyes on them... (Marcus and Wikgren 1943).

Length (Fig. 50)

Josephus twice mentions the length of the building. Once (Jewish Antiquities 15:11, 5



Fig. 50. Reconstruction of the southern wall of the Temple Mount platform and the Royal Stoa, looking northeast.

[411]) he states that it extends from one side of the Temple Mount to the other; that is, that it spans the entire width of the Temple Mount, c. 280 m. However, later in the passage (*Jewish Antiquities* 15:11, 5 [415]) he states that it is one *stade* long, a *stade* being c. 185 m. Although it is quite possible that he did not measure the building's length, the difference is considerable.

Another datum that relates indirectly to the building's length is the number of columns incorporated in it. The text mentions 162 columns. These were arranged in four parallel rows, each containing 40 columns. We placed the two 'excess' columns at the western entrance to the building, which was used by the public ascending the monumental staircase resting on Robinson's Arch and entering the Temple Mount at its southwestern corner.

As opposed to Josephus' measurement of the length of the building, which was probably estimated rather than measured, we assume that the number of columns is accurate and was actually counted by the historian himself. A simple calculation will show that for a building that is 280 m long, the intercolumnar space would be c. 7 m (a portico of 40 columns has 39 spaces), while on a building c. 185 m long, that space would be 4.7 m. There is no doubt that the first figure is clearly impossible, as it requires a huge space between two adjacent columns. We should therefore consider that the smaller figure, a length of c. 185 m, is the correct one. (We will return to the question of the intercolumnar space below.)

Height and Width (Figs. 51, 52)

The passage in Josephus describes a high central nave and two lower side aisles, and supplies measurements: the side aisles are 30 feet (c. 9 m) in width and 50 feet (c. 15 m) in height; the central nave is 45 feet (c. 13.5 m) in width and 100 feet (c. 30 m) in height. But are these measurements realistic? We have opted for a different and smaller version, as we will elucidate in the following discussion.

The Columns (Fig. 53)

Josephus has bequeathed us information that might assist in resolving the above issue the measurements of a column, of which 162 specimens were incorporated in the building. The historian provides two dimensions: he says that a column was 27 feet (c. 8 m) high, and that it required three men holding hands to encircle it. These columns were arranged in a $40 \times 4 + 2$ arrangement (the extra 2 columns



Fig. 51. Isometric reconstruction of the Royal Stoa with a flat roof.



Fig. 52. Isometric reconstruction of the Royal Stoa with a gabled roof.



Fig. 53. Reconstruction of the Royal Stoa colonnade from within the platform, looking south.

were probably placed at the main entrance to the building from the west).

We now come to the picture that emerges from the archaeological finds: not a single stone survived in situ from the Royal Stoa. However, the archaeological excavations carried out along the Temple Mount walls by Mazar and Ben-Dov (1968–1978), Reich and Billig (1994–1996) and Reich and Baruch (1998-2000) did reveal a number of stones, some fallen and others reused in the Umayyad walls (spolia). Among these, more than 20 column drums and bases were retrieved, all belonging to a single series. There is no doubt that these column drums and bases were part of the Royal Stoa, as no other series of columns, large or small, was found in this area. As noted above, the diameter of these columns near the base is 0.99-1.02 m, a measurement that does not correspond to Josephus' estimate that it takes three men to encircle them; in fact, two people with outstretched arms would suffice. Nevertheless, this discrepancy is not enough to disqualify these columns as deriving from the Royal Stoa.

It should also be noted that there are indeed columns in the vicinity of the type that might match Josephus' description. They divided the tunnel-like passageway leading from the Double Gate into the Temple Mount, right below the Royal Stoa. The diameter of one of these columns was measured at 1.45 m (Gibson and Jacobson 1996:235–259); therefore, it might have been these more massive supports that caught Josephus' attention.

In Late Hellenistic and Early Roman architecture, columns were fashioned with a diameter/height proportion ranging from 1:10 to 1:8. According to the Roman architect Vitruvius, the recommended proportions were 1:9.5, which he called *Eustylos* (*On Architecture* III.3.1, 6, 7). According to these standards, the c. 1 m diameter columns that presumably came from the Royal Stoa would have been of a height close to that given by Josephus.

On such a column rested an entablature, 7–8 feet (just over 2 m) high, bringing the total height of column and entablature to approximately 35 feet (c. 10.75 m). The height of the aisle, 50 feet (c. 150 m), as given by Josephus, is therefore considerably exaggerated. The same is true of the central nave, which according to Josephus was 100 feet high. Moreover, in the architectural tradition of Hellenistic buildings of this kind it was inconceivable for a central nave to be double the height of the aisles. On a two-story stoa Vitruvius recommends that the upper floor be lower by a quarter than that of the lower floor (*On Architecture* V.1.3). A similar proportion can be seen on the Stoa of Attalos in the Athenian Agora (Coulton 1976:219).

Elsewhere in his writings Josephus mentions the columns of the other porticoes, which surrounded the inner part of the Temple Mount (Jewish War 5:5, 2 [190-192]). He cites two facts that are unsupported by the archaeological record: that the columns were monoliths, and that they were made of white marble. The archaeological finds clearly show that in this period columns were made of drums of stone, c. 1 m high on the average, e.g., Samaria (Crowfoot, Kenvon and Sukenik 1942: Pl. LXIX); Masada (Netzer 1991: Figs. 213, 250); Caesarea (Kahn 1996:138); Jericho (Netzer 2001: Fig. 127; Peleg-Barkat 2013: Figs. 10.4, 10.5, 10.8, and passim); Sartaba (Tsafrir and Magen 1984); Cypros (Netzer 1975:58); and Herodium (Corbo 1989: DF104). The construction material for the columns, as for all other monumental stone elements, was the local, semi-hard limestone of the meleke or mizzi yahudi formations. Josephus does say that Herod imported various expensive types of stone for construction, but so far, no marble has been found in any Herodian building project anywhere in this country.

Josephus might have written his description under the direct influence of the architectural activity that he saw in Rome about half a century after the construction of the building in question; by that time, the use of marble had become popular.

In contrast, in the Upper City (today's Jewish Quarter) were found several monumental capitals of similar magnitude that are of the Ionic order. It seems reasonable that in this detail the historian also erred under the influence of Rome, where the Corinthian capital had reached peak popularity. Nevertheless, we left the Corinthian capitals in our model, since no monumental Ionic capitals have yet been found near the Temple Mount.

The height of the columns brings us back to the problem of intercolumnar space. The design of building facades was an important issue in Classical architecture. The proportion between a column's thickness and the space between it and its adjacent columns was of particular importance. Vitruvius (On Architecture III.3.1) enumerates five types of such spaces. The narrowest space is 1.5 times the column's diameter, and the widest is over 3 times the diameter. The Roman architect warns against wider intercolumniations, which could lead to cracking and breakage of the stone architraves that were borne by the columns and upon which the rest of the entablature rested. As the architrave is also related proportionally to the column's thickness, it cannot be made thicker to overcome the problem. For this reason, the Roman architect recommended the use of wooden architraves. In short, a building one stade long (c. 185 m), with rows of 40 one-meter-thick columns, would result in a c. 3.7 m space between the columns. Such a space could not be bridged by a stone architrave.

No examples of suitable stone architraves with one or more faciae on the front were found in the area of the Ophel. We did retrieve two fragments of a monumental frieze and architrave of the Doric order (containing triglyph and metope, Fig. 45:9, 10); however, such an element would not usually have been incorporated in Corinthian porticoes. Therefore, for the time being, we have to assume the use of wooden architraves, since the stone friezes and cornices that were found clearly must have rested on some sort of architrave. We realize that this is a problem that awaits a definitive solution.

Decoration of the Entablature (Fig. 54)

Many stone fragments decorated in relief were found in the various excavations along



Fig. 54. Reconstruction of the Royal Stoa entablature.

the Temple Mount walls. We used two such pieces to reconstruct the part of the entablature that rested above the reconstructed wooden architrave in the virtual model (Fig. 54). One is a fragment of a stone frieze, found near Robinson's Arch (Reich and Billig 2000:347), depicting a continuous winding grapevine with alternating leaves and clusters of grapes (Fig. 55); the other is our fragment No. 8 (Fig. 43), the stone cornice, featuring low modillions decorated with rosettes and an intricate meander design resembling a swastika. All these motifs prevailed in the late Second Temple period, in keeping with the ban by Jewish law on figures and faces.

The Upper Part of the Central Nave

Josephus' description of the upper part of the central nave of the building, above the roofs of



Fig. 55. Segment of stone frieze found near Robinson's Arch.

the lateral aisles, is not totally clear. It states that above the architraves in this area, was a "front wall" with "columns" built into it. The presence of small columns at such a high location seems problematic. No fragments of such a small series of columns (diam. 0.4–0.5 m) was found, and in our opinion there were no smaller free-standing columns at this location.

While the English term 'front wall' seems appropriate, the Greek term for columns might also be translated here as pilasters built of square ashlars. Indeed, Josephus' account alludes to the element in these terms. Windows are not mentioned in the account. However, it seems that windows would have been an essential element in a central nave built higher than the lateral aisles—a clerestory to admit light from above into the central part of the building. These "columns," then, which should better be defined as pilasters, are the narrow built parts between the windows (see Figs. 50, 51).

The Ceiling (Fig. 56)

In the virtual model, we reconstructed a coffer ceiling, with large panels between wooden ribs. We have no data concerning the material with which these panels were covered, but since the historic account speaks of carvings in various shapes, we made use, by analogy, of the fragments of decorated ceiling stucco that once covered the ceiling in the hall of the large mansion found by Avigad in the Upper City (Avigad 1983: Figs. 90, 91). Here, too, in keeping with Jewish law, the decoration incorporated only simple geometric shapes (triangles, hexagons, octagons, lozenges, etc.).

The Roof (Figs. 56, 57)

Josephus' description in *Jewish Antiquities* gives no clue concerning the roof. After all, following installation, no members of the public, including Josephus, would have been able to see the roof closely, due to the height of the building. Avi-Yonah reconstructed a roof of terra-cotta tiles on the Royal Stoa at the Second Temple Model, now at the Israel Museum, painted in a red-brick hue (Amit 2009:46–47). The roofs of that model's private homes, especially in the Upper City, and the roofs of all other public buildings were similarly reconstructed.

However, no terra-cotta roof tiles were found in the strata attributed to the late Second Temple period, excavated along the Temple Mount and in contemporaneous private homes excavated in the Upper City. In fact, terra-cotta tiles were introduced in Jerusalem by the Romans, only after the city's destruction in 70 CE. Excavations show that roofs at the time were constructed of spaced wooden beams, tightly packed in between with fills of reeds and twigs,



Fig. 56. Reconstruction of the wooden ceiling of the Royal Stoa.



Fig. 57. The southern wall of the Temple Mount and the Royal Stoa, looking north.

all coated above and below with lime plaster (termed in rabbinic writings *ma'azeva*).

Interior (Fig. 58)

The building type known as a stoa was imported from the Hellenistic world (Coulton 1976). It continued to be used, with some architectural modifications, in the Roman period, when it became known as a basilica. These types of large public buildings were usually devoid of furniture. As they were used, inter alia, as a court of law (with other activities possibly simultaneously underway in another part), at one of the short ends would be a platform, or a tribune, where a judge presided over the presentation of lawsuits. B. Mazar was of the opinion that the Jerusalem edifice could have served as a venue for the meetings of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish 'Supreme Court' (Mazar 1984:143), and that it would have had a raised platform at the eastern short end of the building, such as the one discovered in Pompeii.

CONCLUSIONS

We conclude with a synopsis of the history and character of the area south of the Temple Mount from the pre-Herodian period through the Umayyad period, as revealed by our excavation.

Pre-Herodian Second Temple Period

As the topography of the hill (the traditional Mount Moriah) at this point slopes down from northwest to southeast toward the Kidron Valley, the various pre-Herodian buildings were built or hewn along the same orientation. However, in the extensive building program of the Herodian period, the orientation changed dramatically, thus assisting us in distinguishing one period of construction from the other, in addition to stratigraphic considerations.

The rock-cut elements are a particular hallmark of this period especially the *miqwa'ot*. Of these, *Miqwe* 6049 is preserved almost



Fig. 58. Interior view of the Temple Mount platform and the Royal Stoa.

completely, while only the bottom of Migwe 6053 survived. Additional migwa'ot, complete or partially-preserved, were found in this area in considerable numbers by our predecessors. It should be remembered that the southern wall of the pre-Herodian Temple Mount was located somewhat to the north of the present line of the wall. From that conjectured wall southward (or from a certain distance south of that wall), private dwellings were built, interspersed with open spaces. Staircase 6029, next to Miqwe 6049 in Area A, should be understood as a means of facilitating traffic among the houses, and ascent toward the pre-Herodian Hulda Gates to the Temple Mount. Several other such staircases most probably existed in this area between the houses. Staircase 6029 seems likely to have been privately built and owned, rather than constructed by the authorities for public use.

Herodian Period

The Temple Mount was considerably enlarged southward during this period, as attested by the wall along which we excavated. It seems that this extension influenced all other building activities south of the wall. All were constructed on a north–south orientation, as opposed to the previous northwest–southeast orientation.

This major construction activity seems to have involved the clearing of a large area of its previous inhabitants and the demolishing of their homes. The dwellings were leveled southward up to a specific line, parallel to the new Herodian wall. Approximately 50 m south of the Double Gate (under the Ottoman city wall and the eastern wall of Umayyad Building II), the northwest–southeast axis of a well-preserved private dwelling excavated by B. Mazar's expedition indicates that it survived because it was beyond the limits of the Herodian expansion.

Previous excavations in this area exposed the paved street along the southern wall and the monumental staircase leading up to the Double Gate, as well as the edge of a paved plaza at the bottom of the staircase. Several *miqwa'ot*, some complete and some partially preserved, all indicate that this area contained buildings in which these baths were located—all in an orientation similar to that of the Temple Mount, i.e., north–south. No steps of the monumental staircase in front of the Triple Gate were found *in situ*, as opposed to the western staircase, of which considerable parts—some rock-cut, some constructed survived. For this reason, we briefly enumerate below the archaeological and architectural arguments for the existence of that staircase.

Vaulted Room I, most of which was discovered by our predecessors, must have supported a staircase. The northern wall of this vault (W666) is rock-cut at a distance of 7.2-7.5 m south of the Herodian wall, close enough to indicate that the vault was planned to be parallel to the Herodian Temple Mount. The curved upper edge of rock-cut W666 was flattened to receive the vault, which was certainly made of limestone ashlars (none of which survived, neither *in situ* nor as debris). The southern rock wall (W667) is much lower, in keeping with the overall slope of the hill southward, but even there, the beginning of a slight curvature toward the northern rock wall can possibly be discerned.

The large rock-cut space covered by the vault was probably used as a basement under the staircase. The western side of this space is aligned with the western doorjamb of the Triple Gate, which is the only verified Herodian element still in situ. The western rock wall of the vaulted space remains concealed by the Umayyad W616, but the rock wall is clearly directly behind it. This line creates a clear linkage between the course of the gate and the side of the staircase. However, the eastern edge of the northern rock wall terminates before reaching a point opposite the eastern edge of the gate. This might support a suggestion that the Herodian gate was narrower than the width of the current Triple Gate. If we assume that the length of the rock-cut vaulted space and the width of the original gate were similar, then the width of the original gate must have been around 14.5 m.

Although, as noted, no stairs of the staircase in front of the Triple Gate were found *in situ*, some steps were found in secondary use in post-Herodian walls. Wall 610 contained several such steps, which must have originated in a monumental staircase. Steps in secondary use were also documented in the excavations near Robinson's Arch at the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount (Reich and Billig 2000:350–352). The height of the risers is the same, as is the smooth surface of the upper tread of some steps and the lower groove cut into them for a better fit with the step below.

A staircase in front of the Triple Gate would also have been necessary in terms of architectural logic, since such a monumental gate would have required a suitable approach. If there were no staircase, people would have had to reach the gate only via the narrow paved street along the southern Temple Mount wall. Such access would have contradicted the architectural concept of moving the crowds around the large sacred precinct, a concept demonstrated by the presence of other gates (the four in the western wall, and especially the Double Gate).

A staircase ascending to the Triple Gate would have had to be flanked, from a certain level and upward, by handrails. However, such railings, like the staircase itself, were not found, other than one worked stone found in secondary use, which probably served this purpose (see Fig. 49:27).

No clues have yet been found that might point to the precise nature of the supposed monumental staircase. Did it serve for ascent, that is, for entering the Temple Mount, as might be deduced from the mishnaic text, Middot 2:2? Was it used for both ascent and descent, as can be understood from the passage in Middot referring to both southern gates, each serving for entrance and exit? What is striking is the fact that the staircases leading up to the gates have very different widths. The one accessing the Double Gate is considerably wider than the one reconstructed in front of the Triple Gate. No additional evidence was found that might shed light on this question. It has been suggested that the wide staircase was for public use and the narrow staircase for the exclusive use of the priests, but this has found no archaeological support.

The Roman Destruction of 70 CE

The position of the pile of collapsed stones exposed to the west of the Temple Mount clearly shows that the destruction of the Herodian walls was done for its own sake, to satisfy the desire to totally demolish the Herodian edifice. Were that not the case, and had the Romans merely wanted to utilize the stones, such large heaps of stone would not have been left behind. Although we have no chronological evidence (such as Late Roman coins retrieved from the heaps) it is reasonable that the Herodian stones were dismantled by the soldiers of the Tenth Roman Legion stationed in Jerusalem.

On the other hand, no fallen stones were found from the Herodian wall in this area, adjacent to the southern Temple Mount wall. Such stones should have been expected here, similar to the large quantities found by Mazar and Ben-Dov (for example, Mazar 1975) and by Reich and Billig (2000), because the Romans thoroughly dismantled the Herodian wall, in places (between the gates) down to the first course of stones. We must deduce that the dismantled stones were taken elsewhere: some hauled northward into the Temple Mount compound, probably for the construction of the edifice known as 'Solomon's Stables' and other nearby buildings. Stones might also have been taken from here to other locations in the city.

Indeed, most of the Herodian stones that can be identified as having originated in the southern wall of the Temple Mount are found in the reconstruction of that wall, as well as in the walls of the Umayyad buildings. In the Byzantine houses they occur less frequently. Reused stones that were not square blocks (like column shafts, decorated pieces of architectural fragments, etc.), and that originated in the Herodian Royal Portico, are also found much more frequently in Umayyad walls than in Byzantine houses.

Post-Roman Destruction Remains

In our excavations only meager remains indicate building activity following the Roman destruction but prior to the Byzantine period. Wall 610 probably belongs to this phase, as it incorporated reused Herodian stones and it differs in nature from the Byzantine-period walls that were added to it later.

Byzantine Period

By this period—in fact, as early as the Late Roman period—Jerusalem's civic center had moved to the western side of the city and our area now found itself on the city's outskirts. Several residential buildings were built here, including the one at the edge of our dig, excavated by the previous expedition, which E. Mazar dubbed 'the Monastery of the Virgins' (Mazar 1998).

What was the nature of this area at that time? What was its appearance in this period, if most of the Herodian stone blocks that had been dismantled by the Romans were reused only in the Umayyad period? What was their fate in the Late Roman and Byzantine periods?

In the Late Roman and Byzantine periods only a small portion of the stones from the heaps was reused, probably only the smaller of the stones, such as those in W610 (see above). It seems that the builders of the Byzantine structure southeast of the 'Triple Gate' were unable to remove the large stones from the nearby heap—perhaps the reason the Byzantine dwellings do not abutt the Herodian walls, but are built some distance away. In the Byzantine period, pedestrians in this area would have had to climb over the stones, although some may have been pushed aside to create a path, or even covered with a thin layer of debris.

Channel 1, which emerges from beneath the threshold of the Triple Gate, was constructed west of the Byzantine building. The size of the channel shows that some activity was underway on the Temple Mount in the Byzantine period, the nature and magnitude of which is unknown.

Umayyad Period

The area underwent extensive changes at this time. The Byzantine building apparently continued in use practically unchanged, as it was discovered in a good state of preservation. Moreover, in light of the proximity of W615 of Umayyad Building V to W610 of the Byzantine building, it seems that the latter must have served the Umayyad authorities. Otherwise, it would have been dismantled for the use of its stones. Channel 1 also continued in use in the Umayyad period.

The Umayyads almost completely cleared the heaps of collapsed Herodian stones to make way for their new, monumental construction within and south of the Temple Mount precinct. Wall 615 of Umayyad Building V clearly obviated the Herodian monumental staircase which had led to the Triple Gate, changing the approach to the gate or more probably putting part of it out of commission. As the Umayyad period lasted for about a century (660/661–750 CE), we suggest the sequence of events may have been as follows: First, the southern wall of the Temple Mount and the Triple Gate were reconstructed, usually utilizing two rows of smaller stones to replace one Herodian course. Then the so-called 'Solomon's Stables' were built inside the Temple Mount. Later, with the construction of Umayyad Building V (to which W616 and W615 belonged) outside the Temple Mount area, the approach to the Triple Gate was drastically changed, with the only remaining access being from the west, along the southern Temple Mount wall.

NOTES

¹ The excavation, on behalf of the IAA (Permit Nos. A-2597, A-2996), was directed by Yuval Baruch and Ronny Reich, with the assistance of Genadi Kotovski (area supervision); Vadim Essman and Israel Vatkin (surveying); Mark Konin and Tania Kornfeld (drafting); Clara Amit (photography); Donald T. Ariel (numismatics); Abdullah Abu Gharbiya (administration); Reuven Elberger and Louis Boser-Nizan (conservation and preservation); and Giora Solar and Mike Turner (architecture and reconstruction planning). The reconstruction work was undertaken on behalf of the East Jerusalem Development Company. For preliminary publications, see Baruch and Reich 2000; 2002.

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² In the summer of 2000 we excavated another area near the southeastern corner of the Temple Mount, which will be published in the future. For preliminary mention, see Baruch and Reich 2002.

³ It should be noted that our report on the pottery finds was last updated prior to the publication of several important recent studies.

⁴ The reconstruction was prepared by Ronny Reich and Gideon Avni on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority and by Lisa M. Snyder from the Urban Simulation Team at UCLA. Helpful assistance was extended by Jacob Fisch from the IAA. The reconstruction is run on a Silicon Graphics Onyx2 InfiniteReality 3 computer. The entire project was created and realized thanks to a generous donation by William Davidson, Detroit, Michigan. For additional information, see www.archpark.org.il. All the illustrations of this section were kindly produced from the virtual model by Lisa M. Snyder.

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Plan 1. Section I: topographical section from the Triple Gate to the Ophel.



Plan 2. Section II: topographical section from the Double Gate to the Ophel.



Plan 4. The excavation, plan and sections.













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