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THE INNER LIVES *of* ANCIENT HOUSES

An Archaeology of Dura-Europos

J. A. BAIRD

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OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP,
United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
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First Edition published in 2014

Impression: 1

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Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Data available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2013956026

ISBN 978–0–19–968765–7

As printed and bound by
CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY

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For my grandmother, Gladys Baird, and in memory of her husband, the real J. A. Baird

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book would never have been completed without the support and guidance of many friends and colleagues to whom I am immensely grateful. Simon James was my supervisor at the University of Leicester, and it was him that suggested that I have a look in the Dura archive—for that and much since I am very grateful. Susan Matheson, Molly and Walter Bareiss Curator of Ancient Art at the Yale University Art Gallery, was incredibly generous with access to the archive held there and with her time, as have been Lisa Brody and Megan Doyon. Pierre Leriche allowed me to become a member of what is now known as the *Mission Franco-Syrienne d'Europos-Doura*, and he, as well as Gaëlle Coqueugniot, Justine Gaborit, and Ségolène de Pontbriand, together with many other members of the expedition, made my time at Dura a pleasure, as well as being productive. I first travelled to Syria with Lisa Cooper and Michel Fortin, and I remain grateful to them as well.

The time to write this book was largely provided by a Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship, and research leave permitted by the Department of History, Classics and Archaeology at Birkbeck College. The Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies also assisted in funding travel to Dura, and, with the British Academy, funded the geophysical survey. Further research was conducted in the wonderful setting of the Burnham Library at the University of Cincinnati, while I was a Margo Tytus Research fellow, for which I am particularly grateful to Getzel Cohen.

I couldn't ask for better colleagues than I have at Birkbeck—Lesley McFadyen, Serafina Cuomo, Christy Constantakopolou, Jessica Reinisch, Catharine Edwards and Caspar Meyer in particular have listened to more about Dura than they probably cared to. At the University of Leicester, Lin Foxhall, first as a supervisor and later a colleague, has also been supportive and generous with her time. David Mattingly, more than anyone else, has changed how I think about the Romans, and his input to this project has been invaluable, as has been his support. This book started life as a PhD thesis at the University of Leicester, and I was lucky to have Judith Rosten, Laura Cripps, Andy Merrills, Dave Edwards, and others as colleagues and friends. I've also been lucky to have been able to have many discussions with scholars with rich knowledge on all things Durene, including Steve Dyson, Susan Downey, Ian Haynes, and Ted Kaizer. Simon James, Claire Taylor, and Dan Stewart all read full drafts of this work and saved me from many blunders—they are not to blame for those that

remain. The new plans in this book were made with help from Dan Stewart, Ben Gourley, and Simon James.

My parents have been supportive throughout this project, and my sisters endured long, hot days at Apamea, Palmyra, and other Syrian sites while I explored the housing there. My husband, Dan, has lived with this project for far too long. He and our daughter Laurel make it all worth the bother.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

F. R. 3.1.1	Downey, S. B. 1969. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Arts and Letters. Final Report 3*, Part 1, *Fascicle 1. The Heracles Sculpture.* Ed. C. B. Welles. New Haven: Dura-Europos Publications.
F. R. 3.1.2	Downey, S. B. 1977. *Excavations at Dura-Europos, Final Report Volume 3, Part 1, Fascicle 2. The Stone and Plaster Sculpture.* Los Angeles: Institute of Archaeology, University of California.
F. R. 4.1.1	Toll, N. 1943. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Final Report 4, Part 1, Fascicle 1. The Green Glazed Pottery.* Ed. M. I. Rostovtzeff, A. R. Bellinger, F. E. Brown, and C. B. Welles. New Haven: Yale University Press.
F. R. 4.1.2	Cox, D. H. 1949. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Final Report 4, Part 1, Fascicle 2. The Greek and Roman Pottery.* Ed. M. I. Rostovtzeff, A. R. Bellinger, F. E. Brown, and C. B. Welles. New Haven: Yale University Press.
F. R. 4.1.3	Dyson, S. L. 1968. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Final Report 4, Part 1, Fascicle 3. The Commonware Pottery, The Brittle Ware.* Ed. C. B. Welles. New Haven: Yale University Press.
F. R. 4.2	Pfister, R., and L. Bellinger. 1945. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Final Report 4, Part 2. The Textiles.* Ed. M. I. Rostovtzeff, A. R. Bellinger, F. E. Brown, Nicholas Toll, and C. B. Welles. New Haven: Yale University Press.
F. R. 4.3	Baur, P. V. C. 1947. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Final Report 4, Part 3. The Lamps.* Ed. M. I. Rostovtzeff, A. R. Bellinger, F. E. Brown, Nicholas Toll, and C. B. Welles. New Haven: Yale University Press.
F. R. 4.4.1	Frisch, T., and N. Toll. 1949. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos. Final Report Volume 4, Part 4, The Bronze Objects. Fascicle 1: Pierced Bronzes, Enameled Bronzes, and Fibulae.* New Haven: Yale University Press.
F. R. 4.5	Clairmont, C. W. 1963. *The Excavations at Dura Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Final Report 4, Part 5. The Glass Vessels.* Ed. Ann Perkins. New Haven: Dura-Europos Publications.

F. R. 5.1	Welles, C. B., R. O. Fink, and J. F. Gilliam. 1959. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters, Final Report V, Part I, The Parchments and Papyri*. Ed. Ann Perkins. New Haven: Yale University Press.
F. R. 6	Bellinger, A. R. 1949. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos. Final Report 6. The Coins*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
F. R. 7	James, S. 2004. *The Excavations at Dura Europos Final Report 7. Arms and Armour and Other Military Equipment*. London: British Museum.
F. R. 8.1	Kraeling, C. H. 1956. *The Excavations at Dura Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters, Final Report 8, Part 1. The Synagogue*. Ed. A. R. Bellinger, F. E. Brown, Ann Perkins, and C. B. Welles. New Haven: Yale University Press.
F. R. 8.2	Kraeling, C. H. 1967. *The Excavations at Dura Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters, Final Report 8, Part 2. The Christian Building*. Ed. C. Bradford Welles. New Haven: Yale University Press.
MFSED	*Mission Franco-Syrienne d'Europos-Doura*
PDura	Papyri or Parchment from Dura, following numbering in: Welles, C. B., R. O. Fink, and J. F. Gilliam, eds. 1959. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters, Final Report V, Part I, The Parchments and Papyri*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
P. R. 1	Baur, P. V. C., and M. I. Rostovtzeff, eds. 1929. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Preliminary Report of First Season of Work, Spring 1928*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
P. R. 2	Baur, P. V. C., and M. I. Rostovtzeff, eds. 1931. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Preliminary Report of Second Season on Work, October 1928–April 1929*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
P. R. 3	Baur, P. V. C., M. I. Rostovtzeff, and A. R. Bellinger, eds. 1932. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Preliminary Report of Third Season of Work, November 1929–March 1930*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
P. R. 4	Baur, P. V. C., M. I. Rostovtzeff, and A. R. Bellinger, eds. 1933. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Preliminary Report of Fourth Season of Work October 1930–March 1931*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
P. R. 5	Rostovtzeff, M. I., ed. 1934. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Preliminary Report of Fifth Season of Work, October 1931–March 1932*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
P. R. 6	Rostovtzeff, M. I., A. R. Bellinger, F. E. Brown, and C. B. Welles, eds. 1944. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University*

	and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Preliminary Report on the Ninth Season of Work, 1935–1936. Part 1, The Agora and Bazaar. New Haven: Yale University Press.
P. R. 7/8	Rostovtzeff, M. I., F. E. Brown, and C. B. Welles, eds. 1936. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Preliminary Report of the Seventh and Eighth Seasons of Work, 1933–1934 and 1934–1935*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
P. R. 9.1	Rostovtzeff, M. I., A. R. Bellinger, F. E. Brown, and C. B. Welles, eds. 1944. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Preliminary Report on the Ninth Season of Work, 1935-1936. Part 1, The Agora and Bazaar.* New Haven: Yale University Press.
P. R. 9.2	Toll, N. P. 1946. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Preliminary Report on the Ninth Season of Work, 1935–1936. Part 2, The Necropolis.* Ed. M. I. Rostovtzeff, A. R. Bellinger, F. E. Brown, and C. B. Welles. New Haven: Yale University Press.
P. R. 9.3	Rostovtzeff, M. I., A. R. Bellinger, F. E. Brown, and C. B. Welles, eds. 1952. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters, Preliminary Report of the Ninth Season of Work 1935–1936. Part 3: The Palace of the Dux Ripae and the Dolicheneum.* New Haven: Yale University Press.
YUAG	Yale University Art Gallery

ONE

Excavating Dura-Europos: From Field to Archive

The site now recognized as Dura-Europos was all but unknown until the 1920s. An early modern route passed through the site, perched on a cliff over the Euphrates with a view into Mesopotamia beyond, but no substantial settlement had been made there since the third century CE. Receiving scant, incidental, mention in ancient sources, no one had sought out the place of which Isidore of Charax had written, in his *Parthian Stations*, 'Dura, the city of Nikanor, a Macedonian foundation, which the Greeks call Europos.'[1] By the time of Ammianus, the site had already been abandoned, and while the toponym was evidently still known in 363 CE, the emperor Julian was able to hunt deer amongst its ruins.[2]

By the outbreak of the Second World War, more than a decade of large-scale excavations made Dura one of the most extensively excavated urban environments of the Greco-Roman world. The results of these excavations were partially published in a series of preliminary and final reports, and, crucially, its legacy was lodged in an extensive archaeological archive which was held, for the most part, at the Yale University Art Gallery. This archive, together with the re-examination of archaeological remains in the field, and in some cases, re-excavation, forms the basis for the present volume. Houses made up the great majority of the excavated area at Dura, but they have never been the topic of a full-length study, with the important exception of Anny Allara's posthumously published doctoral study of one of the city blocks, undertaken in the early 1990s.[3] A survey of the city's houses was also begun in the 1980s by Allara and Catherine Saliou, but this was neither completed nor fully published.[4] The present study seeks to rectify the lack of

[1] Isidore of Charax, *Mansiones Parthicae* 1.3-4. Isidore's work, probably compiled in the first century CE, consisted of lists of way-stations on routes through the Parthian empire. Nodelman 1960; Millar 1982, 16; Dilke 1987, 238.

[2] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Rerum Gestarum* 24.1.5. Deer among the abandoned city also figure in Zosimus' brief mention of Dura, Zosimus 3.14. Polybius mentions a town called Dura, which might also be this Dura: 5.48.16, and the Ravenna Geographer refers to a 'Dura Nicanoris', 2.13.

[3] Allara 1992a, 2002.

[4] Preliminary investigations were published in Allara and Saliou 1997. The database complied by Allara and Saliou includes information on the state of preservation of the remains, construction technique, phasing not appreciated by the early excavations, and other visible features. Leriche and Mahmoud 1991, 738.

publication of Dura's houses, but it is hoped that this work does more than fill a gap: it seeks to use the houses of Dura and their contents, in context, to illuminate the daily lives of the inhabitants of the site, and look at what it meant to be living under the Parthian and Roman empires on the Syrian Euphrates in the second and third centuries CE.

These issues contribute to current debates on identity in the ancient world, to our understanding of daily life and cultural interaction. With more than one hundred excavated houses, and thousands of artefacts found within them, Dura offers a rich data set. This volume also challenges the traditional understanding of the nature of Dura as an archaeological site, arguing that by the time it was abandoned it had effectively become a Roman military site.

More broadly, this study is a contribution to contemporary debates on ancient housing, and demonstrates the potential of legacy data. 'Big digs' on the scale which were once the norm in classical archaeology are no longer undertaken, as their motives and methods are now generally seen as irresponsible. Initially such excavations were little more than clearances, but over time they were conducted with growing attention to context and, eventually, with at least notionally scientific objectives.[5] These excavations produced a vast amount of evidence, much of which has never been published. The archives of such excavations have been increasingly realized to hold a wealth of information, which we have a responsibility to study.[6]

This book uses the houses of Dura-Europos and their context as a means to explore the experiences of living at Dura in the second and third centuries CE. During this time, Dura passed from Parthian to Roman hands and back again, before being held by the Roman Empire once more with a substantial urban military garrison installed within its walls. One of the themes of this book is how Dura's place under these shifting imperial controls affected its inhabitants, and how imperial and colonial identities related to other personal and community identities at the site.

The excavation and intellectual history of Dura is explored in this first chapter, which also provides a historical background of the site and its abandonment in the third century. The second chapter then goes on to describe the urban development of the site and the architecture of the houses in detail. It builds a case for the use of the archaeologically defined house as a meaningful unit of analysis from which the urban life of Dura can be explored. It takes as a starting point the notion that the space of houses is the product of social interrelations, and thus that biographies or life-histories of the remains of houses are revealing of those social relations over time.[7]

[5] Dyson 2006. [6] On 'legacy data' generally, see Allison 2008.

[7] On space as 'the product of interrelations', Massey 2005, 9.

Dura's people and the urban form of the site were dramatically affected by the installation of thousands of Roman military personnel in the northern part of the city, and the third chapter looks at the nature of this occupation. Many houses were converted for military personnel into a type of barracks structure, and others have been argued to be used for billeting. By looking at the precise form of architectural modifications and the artefact records from houses across the site, this chapter demonstrates that by its demise, Dura was almost entirely a military site, with few areas not bearing the imprint of direct occupation.

Examination of the activities that took place in houses is the subject of the fourth chapter. This builds a picture of everyday life across the site based on the assemblages excavated within the houses, in their architectural and urban context. 'Daily life' is something which may be seen, almost by definition, as mundane or unimportant, but it can also be considered to transcend problems of scale: the everyday, for instance in patterns of consumption, can help reveal macro-level relationships to imperial networks, or micro-level relationships between individuals recorded in graffiti. Within the house, these relationships and scales coincide.

The fifth chapter builds further on these data, using them to approach identities at the site, including civic and religious identities but also those of gender, age, status, language, and origin as well as the communities which are related to these. Dura-Europos has been described in scholarship as a polyglot and 'multicultural' place, yet many aspects of the houses are homogeneous across the site.[8] This chapter draws out the elements of personal and community identities that might be explored despite the problematic legacy data of Dura-Europos.

The final, sixth, chapter brings together the material presented and the analyses with an overall biographical approach to the houses. It studies the houses in relation to social memory, worldview, and kinship patterns. It shows that the houses preserve, in their form, a history of their adaptation and development, and that this is linked to social practices including marriage, divorce, death, and descent. Rather than looking at the houses as a snapshot of third-century life, this chapter argues that we can read the biographies of houses in these changes and by doing so build a more cohesive picture of social relations over many generations at the site.[9]

[8] For a historiography of approaches to Dura see Wharton 1995, 15–63; Olin 2011.

[9] In a biographical approach to houses, I have taken inspiration from Waterson's work on architecture, and that of Kopytoff, Gosden and Marshall, and more recently Joy, on objects. Kopytoff 1986; Waterson 1997; Gosden and Marshall 1999; Waterson 2000; Joy 2009.

EXCAVATING DURA-EUROPOS

Early travellers from the West had noted the conspicuous site, and remarked on it with the name of the nearby modern village, Salhiyeh.[10] With fortifications constructed of dressed stone, the perimeter wall of the site rose up from the flat plateau on the west, and from the eastern, Mesopotamian, side, the citadel was visible teetering over the Euphrates (see Figure 1.1).[11]

It was only by chance that Dura was identified as a potentially important archaeological site. It was found by an Indian battalion serving under the British Captain Murphy in 1920, serving in the British occupation of Mesopotamia after the withdrawal of Ottoman rule. Wall paintings accidentally uncovered in the northwest corner of the site by the soldiers roused immediate interest among archaeologists and the public alike. James Henry Breasted, then director of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, published the paintings after spending a single day recording them, having been summoned from Baghdad for the task as the British forces were about to withdraw from the region.[12] In the wake of Sykes-Picot and the partitioning of the Ottoman Empire, Syria came under the French Mandate (Figure 1.2).

The impressive paintings published by Breasted led to the interest of the French Academy of Arts and Letters, and as a consequence no less a scholar than the Belgian Franz Cumont, now known primarily for his work on mystery religions, undertook investigations on behalf of the Academy in 1922 and 1923. The French Foreign Legion were the means of excavation, and the results were published in 1926.[13] When Cumont's work could not continue, it was Michael Rostovtzeff who took up the position as scientific director of the excavations. In 1928 excavations began under the joint auspices of the French Academy and Rostovtzeff's institution at the time, Yale University.[14] These excavations were to continue until the lack of finances and political problems forced the end of the expedition in 1936, to Rostovtzeff's deep dismay.[15] By the end of the Yale–French Academy

[10] The site was also apparently known as Kahn Kalessi: Geere 1904, 298–9. Gertrude Bell, too, was on the lookout for the site mentioned by Ammianus; see her diaries for 9 March 1909 and letters 6 March 1909 (opposite Abu Kemal, where she discusses the tower tombs, probably those of Baghuz). Available at http://www.gerty.ncl.ac.uk/.

[11] Initial investigations by Sarre were made as part of his survey work: Sarre and Herzfeld 1911, vol. II, 386–95. For a summary of early travellers and preliminary investigations, Breasted 1924a, 52–3; Perkins 1973, 1–2.

[12] Breasted 1922, 1924a.

[13] Cumont 1926.

[14] This work was partially published in a series of preliminary and final reports, here noted as P. R. and F. R. Public notices of the work were published in a number of popular press outlets, including *L'Illustration* in France and London's *Illustrated London News* and *The Times*. In the USA, *Science News Letter* had several short articles on the excavations.

[15] Rostovtzeff 1937, 195; 1938, 1.

Figure 1.1 Aerial photograph of Dura-Europos, from the north, taken by French Air Force. The white structure on the far left is the excavation house. Detail of YUAG Yale-2184.

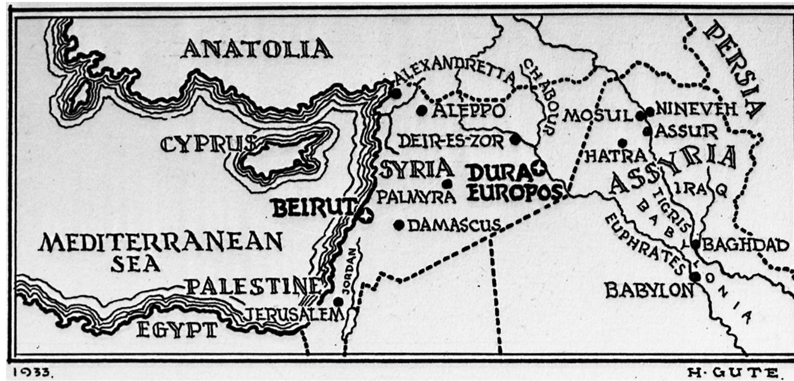


FIGURE 1.2 Map of Dura in its 1933 regional context by H. Gute. YUAG y4.

excavations, almost forty per cent of the city had been revealed. In the years between these first two expeditions to Dura, no systematic excavation took place—but there were sporadic digs. These might be better described as looting, apparently undertaken by soldiers stationed at Salhiyeh, who had been assigned the duty of protecting the site after Cumont's excavation.[16]

While Rostovtzeff was (nominally with Cumont) the scientific director of the excavation, and largely responsible for securing the funding through Yale, he spent very little time at the site.[17] A series of field directors were responsible for the excavations, although decisions about priorities were made in consultation with Rostovtzeff and others at Yale. Rostovtzeff secured the financing for the work, and drew up the budgets.[18] The first field director was Maurice Pillet, who ran the excavations for the first four seasons of the expedition. Under Pillet, contextual recording was at a minimum, particularly when it came to small finds, and even Rostovtzeff himself complained in the late 1920s of Pillet's shortcomings, as evidenced in correspondence between the émigré scholar and the President of Yale at the time, James Rowland Angell.[19] Clark Hopkins succeeded

[16] Hopkins 1979, 183; P. R. 4, 155 n. 109, 157, 221; P. R. 9.1, 2.

[17] P. R. 1, 2. The correspondence held at YUAG shows that Cumont's position became largely honorary, although he was consulted on major issues, such as the employment of the field director.

[18] The budgets were made in consultation with Yale colleagues, and with Hopkins when he was field director. See, for instance, a letter from Rostovtzeff to Hopkins on 16 April 1932. YUAG Archive.

[19] Letter dated 31 May 1928 addressed to Rostovtzeff from the office of the President states that 'It may prove that we have made a mistake in giving M. Pillet so much authority without a more adequate knowledge of his capacities . . . [i]f it proves that he is really gravely defective in the administrative qualities that you mention, I should be prepared to take whatever action seemed necessary.' For an even more personal account of Pillet's shortcomings, see the letters of Susan Hopkins published in Goldman and Goldman 2011. On Rostovtzeff and his legacy much has been recently written; see especially the work of Bongard-Levin, and for a review of work on Rostovtzeff, Shaw 1992a. On Rostovtzeff and Cumont, Bongard-Levin et al. 2007.

Pillet in the fifth season, which began in 1931, and from this time onwards more systematic records were kept. In the final two seasons, the position of field director fell to Frank Brown, Hopkins having moved to Michigan to take up a new post at that university and take charge of excavations at Seleucia on the Tigris.[20] Brown later went on to direct the American Academy excavations at Cosa and had a distinguished career in Roman archaeology.[21]

As was the case with many of the excavations operating in the Middle East at the time, the Yale–French Academy expedition at Dura had an arrangement for the *partage* of the finds between the excavating institutions and Damascus.[22] This extended even to the demolition of complete buildings so that their wall paintings could be removed. The famed Synagogue could until recently be seen reconstructed in the National Museum in Damascus, and the Christian Baptistery and Mithraeum paintings went to the collections of Yale. By various mechanisms, objects from Dura also went to museums elsewhere in America, France, Syria, and Canada. Dura material moved from Yale to the Royal Ontario Museum,[23] while some found its way to the Museum of the University of Chicago,[24] and the Museum at Beirut.[25] Other artefacts are known to have found their way to Beirut via the collection of the Comte du Mesnil du Buisson, who had worked at the site under Pillet and Hopkins.[26] Still more material, including objects excavated by Cumont and some by Pillet, are now in the Louvre,[27] while other artefacts, considered too large to move or not worth moving, were left on the site, either *in situ* in the case of large items (particularly large ceramic vessels) or in the excavation's house on the east side of the site.[28] Some of these have long since disappeared while others including large ceramic objects remain there. Conservation issues have meant that little of the Dura collection has been on regular display at Yale until recent refurbishments to the galleries allowed exhibition of a selection of the objects, which started in 2012.[29]

[20] A popular account of the excavations at Dura was written by Hopkins: Hopkins 1979. On his work at Seleucia, Hopkins 1972. See also Dyson 1998, 207–9; 2006.

[21] Scott 1988. [22] Velud 1988. [23] F. R. 7, 26.

[24] Gelin 1997, 299 n. 292. [25] P. R. 4, 107 n. 40.

[26] Noted by Ann Perkins in an unpublished list of Dura material, YUAG Archive.

[27] For instance, the ceiling tiles and plaster cornices from D5, excavated by Pillet, are now on display in the Louvre, and the paintings from M7-W, and an Artemis statue excavated by Cumont AO 17310; AO 16630; AI 20122.

[28] For instance, the plain textiles were left at Dura: F. R. 4.2, vii, as were many of the stamped pottery sherds (in the case of these sherds drawings were made and returned to Yale, and it is noted on those drawings that the objects were left at Dura). The site, excavation house, and museum, have all suffered heavy damage during recent civil unrest in Syria.

[29] Material was previously displayed, see Matheson 1982; Matheson and Kiefer 1982. For the new exhibition of the material, it was shown at Boston in the first instance: Hoffman and Brody 2011; and then New York: Chi and Heath 2011.

Formal excavations ceased at the site with the close of the Yale–French Academy team in 1936, until 1986, when the *Mission Franco-Syrienne d'Europos-Doura* (hereafter MFSED) was established, led by Pierre Leriche. This expedition was launched with an aim to re-examine the remains, consolidate them, and continue excavations at the site. This expedition continued annually until 2011 when civil unrest in Syria forced the suspension of all foreign archaeological expeditions.[30] All new material being excavated at Dura was stored at the site temporarily, and then deposited in the Syrian state museum at Deir ez-Zor, with some objects, particularly those with special conservation needs, going to the National Museum in Damascus.[31] Several substantial archives of the Dura material exist, including some in personal collections of the descendants of the excavators.[32] The central archive of the Yale–French Academy excavations is preserved in the Yale University Art Gallery. Beyond the paintings and objects, the archive includes field records including notebooks, object registers, plans, reports, and a substantial photographic archive. It is this Yale Archive which forms the basis of the present study.

Site nomenclature

From the fifth season of excavation at Dura in 1931, a system of naming conventions for the site was established. Dura was subdivided by the Yale–French Academy team into a number of sectors, each designated alphabetically. Confusingly, these are often referred to in the original reports as *insula*. Within these sectors, each containing about eight city blocks, each block was numbered. So, for each block there is a two-character code, such as C7 or J4 (see Figures 1.3 and 1.4). The logic behind this scheme is made evident by a sketch in one of the field notebooks of Clark Hopkins (see Figure 1.5).[33] Within this scheme, each house was identified within the block by a letter code, and rooms within this by a number, e.g. room 4 of House F in block C7 would be designated C7-F4.[34] Within the houses the rooms were numbered according to a scheme whereby the courtyard was usually given the number 1 (so the courtyard in house B of block C7 is 'C7-B1'), with the other room numbers being assigned clockwise around it, as illustrated in the notebook of Clark Hopkins from 1931 (Figure 1.6).

In some parts of Dura a provisional sequence was used, such as in the *agora* area, in which block G3 had a sequence which was used in the field, and to describe

[30] The results of these excavations have been published in the *Doura-Europos Études* series, now re-named *Europos-Doura Varia*. A summary of the expeditions' work has been published in Leriche et al. 2011.

[31] Bonatz et al. 1998.

[32] e.g. Susan Hopkins' correspondence remains largely in private hands: Goldman and Goldman 2011.

[33] See also the plan of Dura with east at the top in P. R. 6, plate 1.

[34] P. R. 4, 79 n. 2.

FIGURE 1.3 Plan of Dura-Europos. Plan adapted by the author. MFSED.

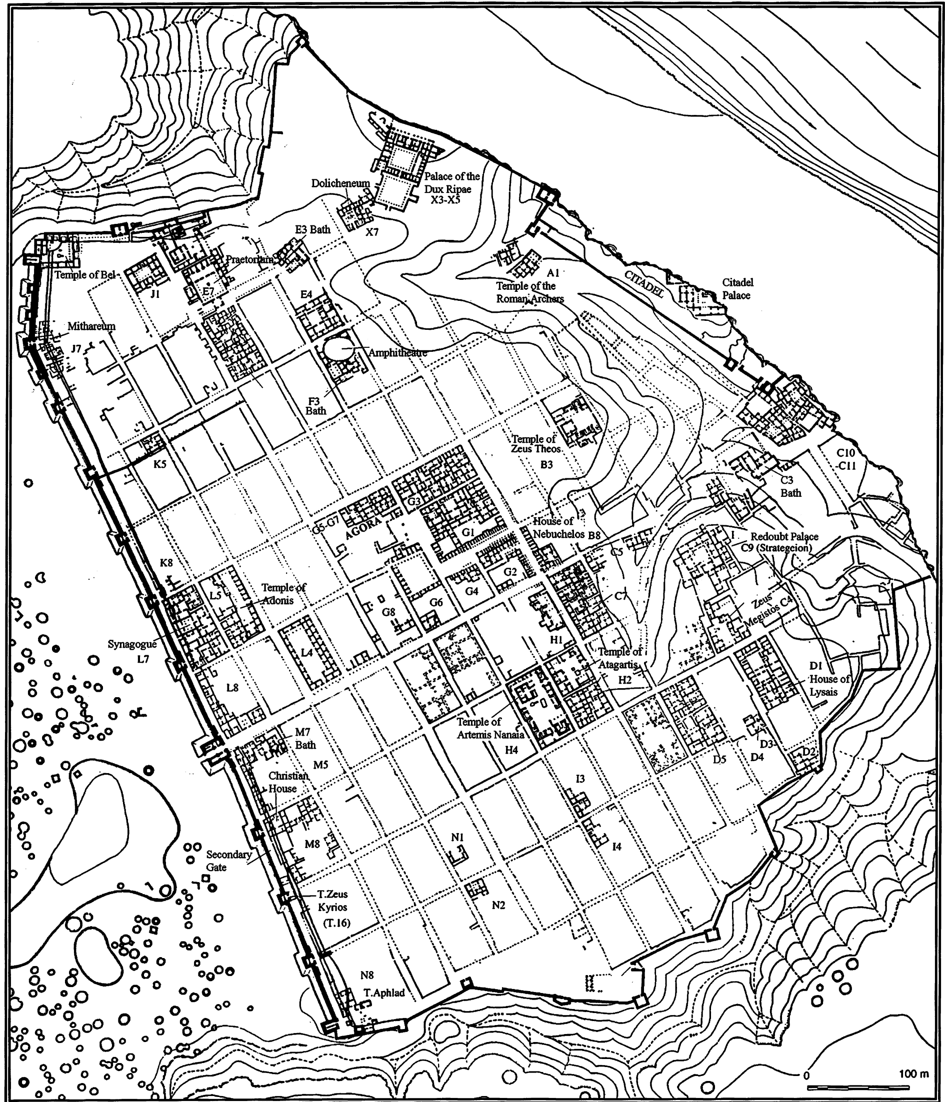


FIGURE 1.4 Plan of Dura-Europos, drawn by A. H. Detweiler. YUAG.

the finding place of objects, and a later one for publication, for which a concordance exists in the Yale Archives; block M8 was also renumbered in the final published plan. Other blocks, such as G5 and G7, or E5 and E7, shared a numbering sequence across the blocks, while some buildings, like the baths, were renumbered after their initial plans were made.[35] Some areas of the city are particularly problematic; for instance, the numbering scheme is especially

[35] Brown renumbered the baths in P. R. 6.

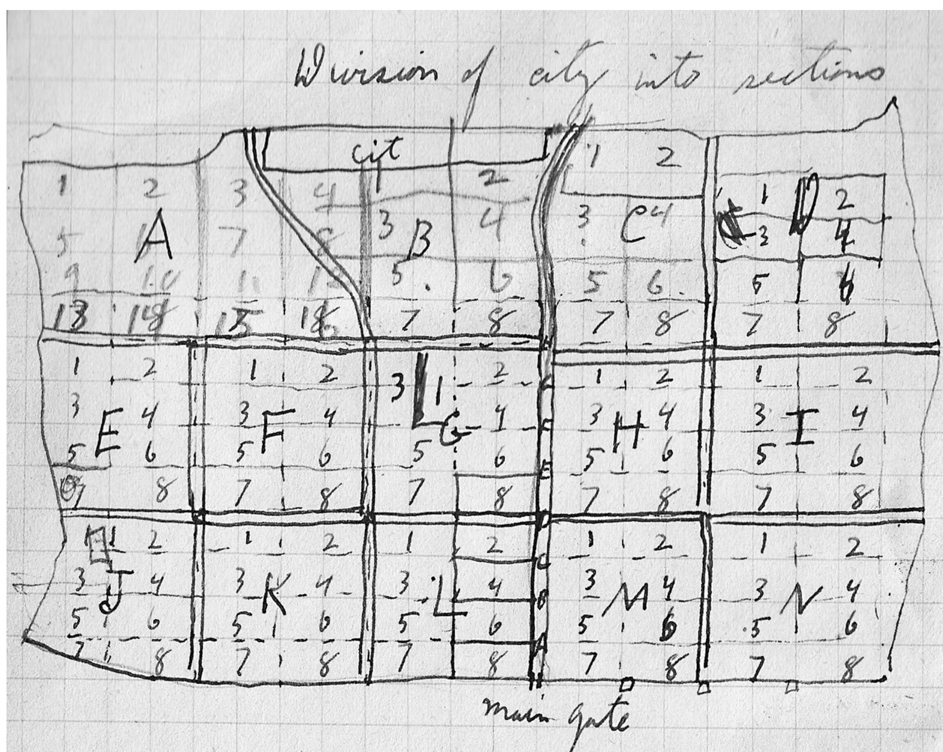


FIGURE 1.5 System of dividing the city into sections, as shown in a drawing from Clark Hopkins' 1931–2 notebook. YUAG.

confused and inconsistent along the Wall Street (one of the most important contexts in terms of preservation) where a deep embankment created to shore up the city's defences provided ideal conditions for organic preservation.[36] However, unpublished notes and sketches in the Yale Archive go some way towards clarification.

The naming of the houses was also sometimes problematic. Some houses were referred to by name, such as the 'House of the Atrium', 'Cumont's House', and the 'House of Nebuchelus', with certain houses even having multiple names. For example the House of Nebuchelus, B8-H by the usual scheme, was also recorded as the 'House of the Clothes Merchant' and the 'House of the Archives'. Similarly, house F in block D5 was known as the 'House of the Great Atrium' and the 'House of the Cistern', and these epithets were also sometimes used to refer to the entire block. To avoid confusion, herein I follow the alphanumerical system implemented by the Yale team. Houses excavated by Cumont, though not originally part of this scheme, do fit within it so I refer to the house name within

[36] On this problem see F. R. 7, 27.

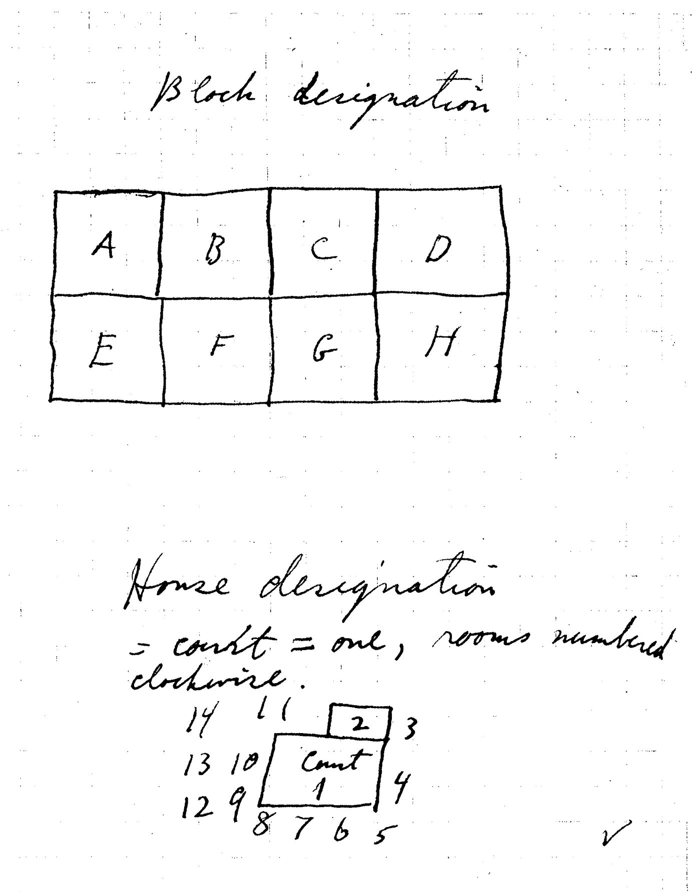


FIGURE 1.6 Sketch from Clark Hopkins' 1931–2 notebook showing system of naming houses and rooms. YUAG.

the Yale scheme and the name of the structure given by Cumont (i.e. the structure referred to by the Yale team as 'Cumont's house' is here G6-D). For a few houses, the only designation for rooms within a house given in published reports was that of Allara and Saliou in the *Doura Études* series, in which case I follow their numbering—however, if they gave new numbers to houses which already had numbers according to the Yale scheme, I follow the original Yale designations and not the new numbers assigned by Allara and Saliou, as the Yale numbering is that which can be most easily corresponded with the objects and texts.[37] In the instances where houses were excavated but not assigned numbers (as is the case of a number of fully excavated but previously unpublished houses in block H2)

[37] Allara and Saliou 1997. Allara and Saliou gave new numbers to structures when those on the published plans were illegible; however, there are often unpublished plans in the archive on which the numbers can be seen, e.g. for the block C7. All numbering on plans herein is that of the Yale Archive unless otherwise noted.

I have extended the Yale sequence, and as no objects are known from these structures, this presents no conflict with the archival material.

The name of the site itself is also worthy of comment. In this book, I use the hyphenated 'Dura-Europos', or Dura for short, simply to follow the terminology used by the original excavations and most modern scholarship, and for ease of citation. Dura-Europos, however, is a modern amalgam. The site of Dura, as Isidore tells us, was called Europos 'by the Greeks'. Dura is a Semitic word (meaning fortress), and was perhaps the name for the site preceding the implantation of the Hellenistic colony. The documents give a mixed picture of the two names being used for the site or its occupants at different times and in different contexts. For example, some of the people were referred to as *Europaioi* until 180 CE, and *Douranoi* was employed soon after 200.[38] The city is known as Europos in a number of documents of the mid-second century CE.[39] It seems the Roman military at the site used the name Dura, but in a divorce document from the late date of 254 CE the city is *colonia Europos.*[40] There is no clear reason for this shifting, or perhaps contextual, use of names for the city and its inhabitants. In documents found within the city itself, the place is named as Europos in documents dating to 121–254 CE, but Dura survives at the site only in documents of the third century.[41] The name Dura is not used exclusively in the third century, however. Indeed *PDura* 32, the divorce document just mentioned, gives the city's name in Greek as *colonia Europeorum* but the wife, Aurelia Amimma, is said to be *of Dura*. Our evidence comes for the most part from civil texts, so it is not entirely clear whether there was use of both terms, Dura and Europos, at the same time by different people within the city. It has been suggested by the editors of the Dura parchments and papyri that the change was perhaps a deliberate move by the Romans away from the Hellenistic Macedonian past of the city.[42] It is possible this was a deliberate attempt to control the population by means of circumventing the established elite who played on their nominal Greek heritage to affirm their control of the site (as will be discussed further later). There are, however, Severan-period inscriptions which continue to use the name Europos which would appear to contradict this view.[43] A possible explanation for these

[38] *Europaioi*: *PDura* 15, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25. *Douranoi*: 27, 29, 32, 38. Welles believed *Europaioi* designated citizens, differentiating them from non-citizen residents of the city; citizens were *Εὐρωπαῖοι*, whereas the residents were *οἱ ἀπ᾽ Εὐρωποῦ*. Welles 1951. For discussion of this issue, see Chapter 5, pp. 244–6.

[39] 121 and 133 CE, in *PDura* 20 and 23, respectively.

[40] *PDura* 46, 60, 129, and possibly 29. Divorce document is *PDura* 32.

[41] Europos: *PDura* 20, 23, and 32. Dura: *PDura* 29, 46, 60, and 129.

[42] F. R. 5.1, 5.

[43] Both the dedication to Julia Domna in the Temple of Artemis (P. R. 3, 51, no. 149) and the inscription in the '*praetorium*' (P. R. 5, 223-4, no. 559), which refers to the garrison as '*Antonine Europaioi*'. See also Speidel 1984.

contradictions is that no one name was ever the only official name or popular one; the use of the different names for the city and its people was situational, depending on who was using it and in what context (as, for example, Palmyra/Tadmor). Following the order in which these names appeared in antiquity, assuming the Greek name was that of the colony and that the name Dura was not already in use at that time, the current Franco-Syrian expedition now refers to the site in some publications as Europos-Dura.[44]

THE EXCAVATION OF THE HOUSES

Excavation of the houses of Dura was not a priority to its investigators in the first half of the twentieth century. Cumont, predictably given his interests in ancient religions, was concerned with religious structures, and while he excavated extensively, he directed little work on the houses, publishing a single house plan which the later expedition referred to as 'Cumont's house' (G6-D).[45] Several houses were also cleared by the soldiers stationed at the site in 1922 before the arrival of Cumont, largely in the C7 and C8 areas.[46]

The situation under the Yale–French Academy excavators was more complex. A great number of houses were excavated, but this had little to do with an interest in housing per se; the houses were instead excavated in the hope that they would yield museum-quality artefacts, and in particular paintings, inscriptions, parchments, and papyri. Other houses, like those in block D5, were excavated because a collapsed cistern created a circular depression in the plateau that the excavators hoped might be a *tholos* or a theatre.[47] Material recovered from the excavations was for the most part divided between the National Museum in Damascus and Yale University Art Gallery, with the bulk of the small finds going to Yale and the paintings and sculpture being shared out relatively equally between the two. The drive to find important *objets d'art*, paintings, and parchments or papyri is apparent in the publications and the unpublished correspondence. In a letter, one of the archaeologists, Henry Rowell, while at Dura under the directorship of Pillet, went as far as to write that he worried some of the work, in particular that in the towers where there was known to be good preservation of material, was 'more treasure hunting than legitimate archaeology'.[48] It is another of Rowell's letters to

[44] e.g. Leriche et al. 2011. [45] Cumont 1926, 241–9, plate 289. [46] Cumont 1926, 241.

[47] Unpublished letter from Alan Little (at Dura) to Rostovtzeff (at Yale) dated 15 November 1930 describes this method, and mentions Pillet believed the structure was a theatre.

[48] Letter from Rowell (at Dura) to Bellinger (at Yale), dated December 28th (probably 1930), in YUAG Archive. Rowell, excavating under Pillet, strongly criticizes the methodology of excavating the city towers in a search for papyri (found in these locations because of the depth of fill, permitting organic preservation). The same letter reports to Bellinger the death of three workers during the excavation of a tower.

Rostovtzeff which reveals the motives for excavating the houses, at least in part: 'In sha Allah, the houses will yield us some good pottery and perhaps papyri.'[49] Of course, the excavators had different motivations and priorities, and these shifted throughout the ten seasons of the expedition. For some seasons they were clear. For example, Rostovtzeff outlined in 1932 what he saw as the priorities for the coming year, and these included finishing the excavation of the Roman camp and excavations between the citadel and redoubt 'in order to find the remains of the Hellenistic city'; in the event, both of these areas yielded, mostly, houses.[50] Perhaps the clearest evidence for the priorities is in annual reports made by the field directors to the President of Yale, James Rowland Angell. It was he who had ultimate control of the budget and thus needed to be satisfied with the level of work being conducted, particularly as this related to material to be returned to New Haven. Indeed, it was Angell who was responsible (after extensive consultation with Rostovtzeff) for the firing of Pillet and the installation of Hopkins as field director, and it was Angell who formally was in charge of the decisions relating to the division of finds with the French mandate then overseeing the antiquities service in Syria and Lebanon.[51] The reports to Angell were thus, predictably, accounts which consisted of long descriptions of the art and inscriptions recovered.[52] The excavators had an obvious interest in presenting the most alluring aspects of their work to Angell because of his position, but the correspondence between the field directors and Rostovtzeff shows that their own motives were similar.[53]

The expedition at Dura focussed on several areas in each season. Each area had a member of staff, usually Yale or French Academy personnel or a graduate student, who would supervise a team of local men and boys who carried out the actual excavations, as was common practice at the time. The methods, for both excavation and recording, employed by the excavators have affected the nature of both contemporary interpretation and what it is possible to extract from the archival records. Excavation generally proceeded with a field director from Yale, several American and French archaeologists, an Armenian foreman, and local Syrian work crews composed of men and boys from the surrounding villages.[54] The vast majority of the excavation was done by these local crews working in large teams, excavating with picks and shovels. Backdirt was evacuated with either wheelbarrows and baskets or railcars, which were filled and emptied into the interior *wadi*

[49] Letter written at Dura-Europos, dated 21 February 1930. YUAG Archive.

[50] Letter from Rostovtzeff to Hopkins on 16 April 1932. YUAG Archive.

[51] Letters between Rostovtzeff, Angell, and Pillet, 1931; Accord between *haut Commissariat de la Republic Francaise en Syrie et au Liban* and Dura expedition, YUAG Archive.

[52] Reports of Pillet and Hopkins to Angell, YUAG Archive.

[53] On Rostovtzeff's correspondence with Angell, see also Bongard-Levin et al. 2007.

[54] On the number of workmen and the pay they received, see Yon 1997.

of the site, over the city wall to the west, or over the cliffs to the site's north, south, and east (see Figure 1.7). The aim was to clear as many buildings as possible quickly, because the interest was primarily in architecture and paintings, so recording of finds was largely incidental, especially in the early seasons of excavation.

While we have no detailed accounts of the working conditions of the local labourers, the photographic evidence attests to hard labour, which even directly brought about the deaths of some of the men.[55] It is no surprise that these conditions do not make for an ideal situation for archaeological recording, and indeed the expedition was taking on additional workers as a means of famine relief, which resulted in very large teams.[56] As noted already, the level of recording was particularly problematic in the first four seasons of work under Pillet, during which time finds seem to have been collected using a system of *baksheesh* (tips/bribes) with the workers being paid for particularly fine objects (though it should be noted that this system was reported by Pillet's successor with whom he had considerable antagonisms).[57] The buildings were cleared ruthlessly, in his words, 'without leaving a single pile of dirt on the spot.'[58] The conditions were indeed harsh (see Figure 1.8), and not only for the workmen—travel to Syria was arduous, the region often dangerous for foreigners—but it should be noted that elsewhere at the time, for example in the Danish excavations at Hama, systematic stratigraphic excavation *was* being undertaken.[59] The excavations at Dura were not sophisticated for their time, but nor were they atypical.

Recording conditions improved markedly when Clark Hopkins became field director in the fifth season. Field notebooks were more systematically written, and the field object register was kept. This is perhaps the most important record for the present study.[60] While the contextual information for the objects found in the houses was relatively meagre as it appeared in the final publications, from the fifth season of work onwards (1931–7), detailed registers were kept of where objects

[55] Baird 2011a and note 48 earlier in this chapter.

[56] On the manipulation of this relief work in the publications, see Baird 2011a, 438.

[57] Hopkins 1979, 50. Hopkins' reservations about Pillet were a repeated topic of his letters to Rostovetzeff; in one written on 5 May 1929, from the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, Hopkins reports 'Then in the matter of finds. He [Pillet] likes to take what he can to his own tent and hold them till it comes time to pack. The workmen like to keep things to bring to Pillet when he makes his rounds for he is the first arbiter of backshish.' Conversely, a letter to Pillet in 1932 from the Dura Yale office apologizes that he feels unrecognized in the publications; Rostovtzeff's and Rowell's reservations about Pillet are noted above—Pillet's time at Dura was clearly fraught.

[58] P. R. 4, 2.

[59] Ploug 1985. The Danish excavations, of course, had their own problems. See Rathje and Lund 1991. For other contemporary excavations with systematic stratigraphic approach, see e.g. Andrae and Lenzen 1933. On the recording at Assur, Hauser 1996, 57–8.

[60] F. R. 4.1.3, vii.

Figure 1.7 View from the east over the Euphrates to Dura, with citadel walls visible near the centre of the image, showing spoil-heaps of excavated earth accumulated on the banks of the river. YUAG k658.

FIGURE 1.8 Photo of workers excavating in the 'Wall Street' on western side of the site. YUAG negative FXIII93, 1932-1933 season.

were found. These recorded from which room in which structure objects came, but not the level or depth at which they were found. The task of compiling the register fell largely to the wife of the field director, Susan Hopkins, who had, with her husband Clark, visited the American-led expedition at Olynthus and seen the detailed record-keeping happening at that site.[61] These detailed field object registers remain in the Dura excavation archive held at the Yale University Art Gallery.[62] The records are the most complete record of the objects that exists, as they were made before the *partage* of the collection between New Haven and

[61] Rostovtzeff 1934, xvii; Hopkins 1979, 36, 50–3. On housing at Olynthus, Robinson and Graham 1938; Cahill 2002. Susan Hopkins' correspondence including letters concerning Olynthus have now been published: Goldman and Goldman 2011. Among these is a letter in which she notes, to her sister, that she is involved in cataloguing at Olynthus, Goldman and Goldman 2011, 58–60. Both Hopkins 1979 and the letters in Goldman and Goldman 2011 attest to artefact record-keeping earlier, in the 1928–9 season, but no systematic records from this season are preserved in the archive.

[62] For a detailed discussion of the field object registers and the associated problems, Baird 2012a.

Damascus. Information included in the registers comprised the field number for each object, its provenance which can be correlated with the numbered plans of the Yale expedition, and other information, such as a description, and whether it was drawn or photographed.

I have used the field number assigned by the excavators on-site as the primary component of the database of the artefacts, and not the Yale University Art Gallery accession number most commonly used to describe the artefacts in the current literature, although when these can be correlated I give both;[63] This is for several reasons. Many objects which have field numbers are now only known from notes, having been discarded in the field or otherwise misplaced with the various movements, and as they are no longer held in collections these do not have a Yale number. Field numbers include a letter code for the excavation season, whereas Yale numbers were given *en masse* after excavations ended so the year code does not necessarily correspond to the actual excavation year. Some objects have more than one Yale number while others share numbers, and the field numbers were assigned in the field, by their nature (recorded in field object registers) they have had the least opportunity to accumulate errors (in re-numbering process, transcriptions, later descriptions, cataloguing, cross-mends, distribution among different museums, etc.). Objects from the excavation which remained in Syria, usually at the Damascus museum, were never given Yale numbers but did have field numbers, and many Yale artefacts do have known field numbers so it is possible to trace the provenence backwards for those that are at Yale. And finally, field numbers were mostly given for individual artefacts, whereas Yale numbers for 'insignificant' or fragmentary remains are often given to groups of artefacts, often of diverse material and function, making meaningful quantification using Yale numbers near impossible.[64] No information on the artefacts excavated by Cumont is included here, because of the ephemeral artefact information recorded. He did not usually specify which house he is referring to of those excavated during his tenure, and his descriptions are frequently vague and ambiguous, e.g.: 'on trouva . . . morceaux de corniche, tessons de poterie, débris de verre et de bronze.'[65]

Other records which were made by the expedition include some notebooks of the directors, which are useful but often surprisingly perfunctory. Yale also holds

[63] On the problem with the historical Yale numbering, see Matheson 1992, 140. Matheson notes the problems with Yale numbers: 'More than six thousand objects were given 1938 accession numbers, although this group clearly included more than the objects from the tenth season, which number closer to one thousand. The archives show that, for whatever reason, some objects that had been registered in previous seasons were given new numbers in 1938. Unregistered objects from previous seasons were also given 1938 numbers, a practice that has generally continued to the present time.'

[64] I have digitized the field object registers so that they can be searched, sorted, and analysed. A functioning copy of this database has been deposited in the YUAG Archive.

[65] Cumont 1926, 244.

the notebooks of the archaeologists responsible for particular areas, although these were not systematically made or retained by the expedition. Nor are all of these extant in the Yale Archive, but in some cases, for example with Frank Brown's notebooks and cards on block E8, they are among the only records which exist for particular structures. Many notebooks seem, unfortunately, to have been retained by the individual archaeologists and are not in accessible collections if they survive anywhere.

Architectural plans, made by the archaeologists, or more often by architects, were frequently made at a date much later than the excavation took place in those areas. Many of the plans were never published, or published in illegible form.[66] There are also many photographs, and while these were not systematically taken, they are among the most useful records in the Archive, and a recent digitization project makes these accessible.[67]

One of the main problems with the data which exists on Dura is its uneven character, and the lack of a systematic recording system for the houses means that the level of detail in recording is extremely variable. It was therefore necessary to collate all surviving archival records including notebooks, photographs, all versions of plans and sketches, etc., to recreate as best as possible what is known about each structure. The competencies of the various excavators and the size of their crew also shaped what was recorded and how, and this developed over the course of the ten field seasons. The appendix contains a catalogue of each recorded house.

THE HISTORY OF DURA-EUROPOS

The foundation of Europos

The initial colony was situated in a naturally defensive position overlooking the edge of Mesopotamia: to its east a cliff dropped to the Euphrates plain, and to the north and south were steep *wadi*s. Earlier habitation in the vicinity is evidenced by an Old Babylonian cuneiform tablet found there, and Assyrian or neo-Assyrian ceramics recovered by the MFSED.[68] A Hellenistic foundation called Europos

[66] See, for instance, the plan of block C7 which was published in P. R. 4, which was both too small to be read and very dark.

[67] Many of the objects held by Yale can be found in the gallery's database: http://ecatalogue.art.yale.edu/search.htm; the photographs of Dura (including the site and archival photographs of objects) can now be found on ArtStor.

[68] A single cuneiform tablet was recovered, dating to *c.*1900 BCE but found in a much later context at Dura: Stephens 1937. Potsherds identified as Assyrian or neo-Assyrian were found during work on the Strategion, which Leriche and Mahmoud identify as being amongst relatively ample evidence for earlier, pre-Hellenistic, occupation on the site, Leriche and Mahmoud 1988, 278–9.

was settled on and around the natural citadel of the site, likely by the Seleucid general Nikanor in the late fourth century BCE.[69] Little evidence from secure archaeological contexts of the earliest Hellenistic settlement at Dura has been recorded, but in the third century, Dura seems to have been minting its own coins.[70] Greek documents attest to a functioning Hellenistic administrative and legal infrastructure in the second century BCE.[71] Probably in the mid-second century BCE, the citadel and the rest of the city was enclosed in fortifications, including the long wall closing off Dura's western side from the steppe. While Dura is among the most extensively excavated urban sites of the Greco-Roman east, the pre-Roman periods are not well attested archaeologically. Even structures which are securely dated to the Hellenistic period, such as the fortifications, have problematic chronologies arising from poor (or non-existent) stratigraphic controls.[72] Much of what is known of these periods comes from the rich textual sources of the site, the hundreds of parchments and papyri that were recovered there.[73]

From Arsacid Dura to Roman colonia

The city was controlled by the Parthians from the late second century BCE, during which time it was capital of the Parthian territory of *Mesopotamia kai Parapotamia*.[74] Parthian suzerainty was interrupted by an apparently brief Roman occupation under Trajan *c.*115–17 CE, of which a triumphal arch outside the city is one of the only traces.[75] After this, Dura came again under Parthian control, but by this time the Arsacid grip on the middle Euphrates was faltering.[76] Dura enjoyed

[69] On Hellenistic Dura, Leriche 1991, 13–15; Leriche 2003, 171–91; Leriche 2010. On Seleucus Nikanor and the founding of Dura, Grainger 1990, 96–7; on Seleucus Nikator and Syria, Hannestad 2004. On Hellenistic foundations, Sherwin-White and Kuhrt 1993, 170–180; Shipley 2000, 302–7. On the candidates for Dura's founder Nikanor and a reassessment of Dura's initial settlement, Kosmin 2011 and Edwell 2008, 97–8. Sources from within Dura name the city's founder as King Seleukos I Nicator (e.g. the relief from the Temple of the Gadde, 159 CE, P. R. 7/8, 258-66/YUAG 1938.5314; *PDura* 25 and *PDura* 32; and inscription from the Artemis Temple recorded P.R. 5, 54, no. D151).

[70] F. R. 6, 195; Bellinger and Newell 1940; Holt and Wright 2010.

[71] *PDura* 15, a registry roll of copies found by Cumont in the Tower of the Archers, and, from 116 BCE, a fragment of a contract, *PDura* 34 found in a tower of the Palmyrene Gate.

[72] Securely dating the fortifications has been one of the goals of the MFSED. See e.g. Leriche 1996a.

[73] The chief publication of Dura's parchments and papyri remains Welles et al. 1959.

[74] For a recent study of the history of Parthian and Roman Dura, Edwell 2008. Bellinger dated Parthian control of the site *c.*113 BCE. *PDura* 34 (dated to 116 BCE) does not include a date 'in the former [i.e. Seleucid] reckoning, so Dura seems still to have been in Seleucid control at that date. Bellinger: F. R. 6, 200–1.

[75] P. R. 1, 6-7; P. R. 3, 17; P. R. 4, 3-4, 55-68; Rostovtzeff 1935a, 285–90. On Trajan's Mesopotamian expedition, Dio, 68.17ff. An inscription from within the city also notes the replacement of shrine doors taken by the Romans upon their withdrawal: P R. 7/8, 129, no. 868.

[76] For a recent summary of the historical chronology of Dura, see Sommer 2004, esp. 166.

relative prosperity under Parthian control, but there is actually very little direct evidence of Parthian rule from the site.[77] 'Parthian' Dura is a difficult concept, as while the city was under Parthian jurisdiction, this rule was not direct and many of the features of civic life continued from the Seleucid era: we are in the position of having a Parthian period without many Parthians.[78] Very little has been found in the way of the Parthian language, nor is there a large group of surviving Parthian coins, nor representations of Parthian cult or kings (save those on the few coins that were found).[79] Nor are building techniques particular to Parthian structures, like brick vaulting or the use of the *iwan*, found at Dura.[80] From the parchments we know of an *arkapet* under whose domain the city fell and to whom taxes were paid, so Dura was certainly under Arsacid dominion, but the language of daily life and administration remained Greek, at least as far as is attested in texts, as is the case at other Greek *poleis* which came under Arsacid rule.[81]

However, in the material and visual culture there is much evidence of strong ties to the Arsacid realm at Dura. This includes the profusion of 'Parthian' green-glazed pottery, and representations of Parthians, if correctly understood from their clothing and tripartite hairstyles, which proliferate in paintings and graffiti alike.[82] There is a problem of circularity in attributions of 'Parthian art' at Dura, however, because its defining aspects, including frontality, were delimited by Rostovtzeff from the Dura material itself.[83] In this period, already, Dura seems

[77] Millar 1998a, 476–7; for Dura's place in the Arsacid power structure, Shayegan 2011, 213–21.

[78] Indeed, while 'Parthian' was an ethnic label used by Roman sources, Hauser notes that 'there are no indications that ethnic "Parthians" ever settled throughout or controlled the empire'. Hauser 2012, 1001.

[79] On the Parthian documents, Frye 1968. Bellinger counted just over 100 identifiable Parthian coins in a corpus of over 14 000, Dura F. R. 6, 7-9, 114–18. On this problem, Millar 1998a.

[80] Brick vaulting: Kawami 1982; Lancaster 2010; nor has the *iwan*, a barrel vaulted room off a courtyard considered characteristic of Parthian architecture, been found at Dura (except in Frank Brown's contentious reconstruction of the Citadel Palace, on which Downey 1985a, 1992). Temple forms at Dura, though, might relate to Babylonian styles in use under the Arsacids in southern Mesopotamia.

[81] *PDura* 20, as discussed in Millar 1998a, 477–8. On Parthian Dura, see also Edwell 2008, 101–15.

[82] Green-glazed 'Parthian' ceramics of Dura were published in F. R. 4.1.1; see pp. 167–9. Graffiti with 'Parthian' figures, and hunting scenes: e.g. Goldman 1999, B.3 from house L7–A. In painting, e.g. those from C7-F, Rostovtzeff and Little 1933. Sculpture, Downey in F. R. 3.1.2. Terracottas depicting Parthian warriors were also found at Dura, as was a mold for making them, Downey 2003, 67–77. Slipper-shaped coffins are sometimes described as diagnostic of the Parthian period: an apparently re-used unglazed slipper coffin was recorded at Dura, P. R. 9.2, 96–7; and two glazed sarcophagi (not slipper shaped but with decoration including columns and a face/mask), P. R. 9.3, 97–9; Cumont 1926, 277, 472. Glazed Parthian slipper coffins, Simpson 1997, 78–9. The treatment of the dead was more usually, at Dura, interment in loculus of a tomb in a shroud or wooden coffin; the ceramic coffins, including the unglazed commonware versions, were relatively rare and thought to have been late (second and third centuries CE), P. R. 9.3, 95–7.

[83] Rostovtzeff 1935b, 1938. Even more recent studies, e.g. of Parthian sculpture, tend to consider the evidence not on its own terms, but in relation to the Classical world as 'the art of an Oriental periphery of the Greco-Roman world' Mathiesen 1992, 13; we must ask, I think, whether those living under the Arsacids would have thought of themselves as an 'Oriental periphery'. While the features noted by Rostovtzeff were

to have owed much of its prosperity to links with the Roman Near East.[84] There is no clear archaeological horizon between the Arsacid and Roman periods at Dura and much continuity in the material culture over this time. The hazy definition of Parthian material culture generally, and at Dura specifically, is in part an artefact of scholarship and a marginalization of the period by comparison to the Seleucid or Roman material.[85] For instance, at sites such as Susa and Seleucia on the Tigris a number of 'Hellenic' features are typical of the Parthian era, including plaster moldings, terracotta architectural features including antefixes, Greek inscriptions, and 'Greek' sculpture, which attest to the Arsacid reign as one which incorporated elements from its Seleucid predecessors as its own Hellenistic past.[86] Parthia can be understood as a regime rather than a culture, but the Parthian period nevertheless was one in which the interaction between different cultural groups resulted in the creation of hybrid material culture.

After an earthquake in 160 CE, Dura was taken again by Rome *c.*165 CE and attached to the province of Syria.[87] When Syria was divided by Severus in 194, Dura fell within the province of Syria Coele.[88] The actual sequence of the military installations at Dura is rather obscure, and will be discussed further in the third chapter, but by the early third century there was a substantial garrison of Roman troops at the site.[89] The date at which Dura received *colonia* status is also unclear; a recently discovered inscription shows the city still had a *boule* as late as 212, and there is no firm evidence of the term *colonia* at Dura before 254.[90] Despite the varied powers that controlled it, Dura is generally reported to have retained its 'Greek' character throughout its lifespan,[91] and had strong links with the cities

common within the Arsacid realm it was neither the official art form of the regime nor, *contra* Rostovtzeff, an 'ethnic' Parthian form, as noted by Hauser 2012, 1018–19.

[84] Edwell 2008, 113. Because of Dura's extensive excavation, however, it is often given as an example of a Parthian site, including its Roman remains. See for example Colledge 1967, 1977.

[85] On this problem generally Hauser 2012; and as it relates specifically to pottery, Hauser 1996.

[86] Debevoise 1941; Hopkins 1972, 127–48; Hauser 2012, 1008–9, 1019. On the problematic ceramic sequence of Hellenistic and Arsacid Susa, Boucharlat 1993.

[87] The earthquake is attested by an inscription found in the 'Temple of Bel', in which the *polis* dedicates an altar to Zeus Megistos. P. R. 2, 86–7. Other evidence for the earthquake is slim; while there is much evidence of rebuilding in the excavated areas of the city, such rebuilding is rarely dated absolutely. Possible evidence was proposed by Toll, who saw a large deposit of debris over part of the Necropolis outside the city as possibly having been a result of clearing the town after the earthquake: P. R. 9.2, 4. On the problems with the name given to this Temple (inscriptions record only Zeus and Zeus Megistos), Millar 1998a, 482.

[88] For an overview of the problems with 'hollow' Syria, extending long before the Roman period, see Cohen 2006, 37–43. On Severus' province, Millar 1993, 121–2. As noted by Millar, the use of the name *Syria Coele* to designate the northern half of Syria was despite its earlier usage which referred to the southern region.

[89] F. R. 7, 16-20.

[90] Leriche and El'Ajji 1999. As Millar has pointed out, there are a number of documents from the site which may refer to the *colonia* title: Cumont 1926 nos. 35 and 50; P. R. 3, no. 149; P. R. 5, no. 396; Millar 1990, 55.

[91] Lukonin 1983, 716; Millar 1993, 438–42; 1998a, 477–8.

within the Roman sphere, but also those outside it such as Hatra.[92] Just how Dura's geographical position between east and west, its Hellenistic legacy, and its place under Parthia and Rome was negotiated by its inhabitants is one of the issues that will be examined herein.

The understanding of Dura's economic function as an urban centre has changed drastically since it was first discovered. Rostovtzeff famously included it among his 'caravan cities', centres which developed along the trade routes of the Near East at which caravans could stop and which functioned as trading centres.[93] The concept of such cities, if influential, has since gone out of use, and Dura is now thought to have functioned from at least the Parthian period onward as a regional capital much more than a trading stop, a central node in a line of villages stretching along the Euphrates' banks which relied on agriculture.[94] Dura did, however, have strong links with Palmyra's caravan trade, even if it was not central to its eastern routes.[95] The relationship of Dura to the surrounding region shifted again once a Roman garrison was installed within it, though its function as a central place in the region's landscape of agricultural production remained.[96] Despite any regional significance, Dura was not an important town in antiquity, as can be seen from its almost complete absence from contemporary written sources outside the site itself. Rather, its importance now comes from the rich available record it affords, both textually and archaeologically, and from the window that this record provides onto life in the third century in the Roman East.[97]

We know painfully little about Dura's immediate territory. Outside the city, a Roman dump, a sanctuary (the so-called Necropolis Temple), and the necropolis were partially excavated, but the haphazard nature of these excavations, and the poor preservation on the wind-whipped steppe means that we cannot be certain of the absence of extra-mural settlement.[98] The massive Sasanian camp outside the city, apparently about three times its size, has only relatively recently been recognized from the early aerial photographs and unpublished excavations.[99] Similarly, the shifting course of the Euphrates, heavy silt deposits, seasonal flooding, and modern agriculture all conspire against any understanding of the ancient river

[92] Bertolino 1997; Leriche and Bertolino 1997.

[93] Rostovtzeff 1932. For a useful overview of Dura's history and economy, see Dirven 1999, 1–19. On Rostovteff and the concept of caravan cities, Millar 1998b; Leriche 2008; on the broader problems with caravan cities, Alston 2007.

[94] Millar 1993, 448–50; Leriche 1996b; Millar 1998a, b. On the regional economic importance of Dura, Ruffing 2007.

[95] Palmyra's main route east is now thought to have been via Hit. On the relationship between Palmyra and Dura, Dirven 1999.

[96] *PDura* 25, 26.

[97] However, on Dura's relative size and importance serving different scholarly arguments, see Olin 2011.

[98] P. R. 9.2.

[99] P. Leriche, pers. comm.; Kennedy and Riley 1990, 109–14.

port, and the organization of Dura's closest arable land, that below the city on the plain and adjacent to the river.

Despite the number of religious structures excavated at Dura, which include its famed Synagogue and house-church in addition to a number of temples such as those dedicated to Zeus Megistos and Artemis Azzanathkona, no synthetic report on the religions of Dura has yet been written.[100] The large number of divinities worshipped at Dura is one of its most striking aspects. The religious life of the city as it is manifested within houses, and the place of households in wider religious communities, will be explored in this study. The plurality of religions evidenced at Dura is mirrored in the number of languages. In addition to Greek and Latin, Aramaic, Hebrew, Palmyrene, Middle Persian, Syriac, and Safaitic are all attested at the site. The interplay between the use of written languages and the extent to which linguistic identities are coterminous with other forms of identity is another topic which will be examined in later chapters. At Dura, the corpus of written Greek has been equated with *being* Greek, despite Dura's distinctive art, architecture, cults, and ceramic profile, all of which reveal a more complicated picture.[101]

Dura was in a region of shifting control, from Seleucid, to Parthian, then Roman, again Parthian, again Roman and finally (for present purposes) Sasanian. The frontier crossed Dura many times, and its place in a zone of contestation between empires impacted greatly upon it. The Roman period at the site was ended by its capture by the Sasanians in about 256 CE, after which the city is generally thought to have been largely abandoned.[102] By the year 363 CE, the site was deserted.[103] Dura's failure as a city was its success archaeologically: the lack of significant subsequent occupation is what rendered it accessible to archaeology in a way that many Roman period sites of the East are not, as it lacks later levels and any modern settlement. The focus of the present study will be this final period, that best archaeologically attested of Dura.

THE ABANDONMENT SEQUENCE OF DURA-EUROPOS

Key to any reading of the occupation of Dura and its houses is an understanding of the sequence of abandonment, as this sequence shaped the archaeological record

[100] The most comprehensive treatment remains Welles 1970. Susan Downey has made the most important contributions to the understanding of the temples of Dura: Downey 1976; 1983; 1988a, 76–86; 1997a; 1997b; 2004a. For a recent appraisal of religious life at Dura, Kaizer 2009a. On the Palmyrene community and their temples at Dura, Dirven 1999; 2004; 2011. The synagogue of Dura is a discipline in its own right; for recent well-contextualised studies of Dura's Jewish community and the historiography of the synagogue, see e.g. Noy 2007; Fine 2011.

[101] Millar 1993, 469–70; Elsner 2001, 275.

[102] James 1985; Baird 2012b.

[103] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Rerum Gestarum* 24.1.5 and Zosimus 3.14.

and our ability to interpret it. The Roman military occupation of Dura fundamentally altered the character of the site, changing the use of many houses in their final period, and creating a complex depositional sequence which differs in different parts of the site.

Rostovtzeff's nickname for Dura, the 'Pompeii of the Syrian Desert', was useful for publicity purposes but profoundly misleading.[104] While it is true that the site was never substantially re-occupied, its death at the hands of Shapur's forces was neither simple nor instantaneous. As has been pointed out, even Pompeii does not have a straightforward archaeological record in which it is perfectly sealed by the eruption of Vesuvius, but is complicated by a number of factors including pre-eruption abandonment of the site, as well as looting in antiquity.[105]

Dura, as an urban settlement, fell in the mid-250s. The precise dating is problematic, and hinges on just a few coin finds at the site. Most authoritative accounts use this evidence to place the end of the site in 256/257 CE.[106] Specifically, this evidence consists of coins that were found on the person of soldiers thought to have fallen in the city's last stand, and there is an absence of any coin issues at Dura dated to later than 257.[107]

Numismatic and other evidence points towards a differential abandonment of parts of the city by the civilian and military population, possibly over the course of more than two decades. Rostovtzeff himself proposed two possible Sasanian incursions at Dura.[108] This was based in part on his reading of the so-called *Res Gestae Divi Saporis.*[109] More conclusive perhaps is the evidence of the hoards of Dura, which clearly fall into two groups, one probably deposited *c.*253 and

[104] Rostovtzeff 1938, 2.

[105] Allison 1992. On the 'Pompeii premise' generally, Binford 1981; Schiffer 1985; Murray 1999.

[106] James 1985; Millar 1993, 163; Sartre 2005, 349.

[107] A group of *antoniniani* were found with the remains of Roman soldiers excavated inside the countermine near tower 19 (F. R. 6, 187). On the mining operations, see also James 2011. These coins included 37 coins of Valerian (253–60). The very latest Roman coins found at Dura were those Bellinger, who penned the final report on Dura's coins, dated to a second emission from the mint of Antioch in 256, and it is these coins which were used to date the fall of the city. The group of coins from which this came were classed as a hoard (hoard XVII) but were found on the person of a 'hastily buried soldier' (F. R. 6, 181). Unfortunately, the interpretation of the coin sequence made by Bellinger was circular in its reasoning: Dura fell in 256 according to Bellinger's interpretation of the numismatic evidence, but the coins in question were found on soldiers and in 'hoards' I and X, under the embankment built to reinforce the western city wall from inside during the siege. This context, within the city's reinforcing embankment, is what gave Bellinger dates on which to postulate the year of the emissions of coins from Antioch F. R. 6, 70. That is to say, the coins which date the embankment are dated by the embankment. The coins therefore are not conclusive. And while it was claimed that the latest Roman coins at Dura probably left Antioch's mint in early 256 (F. R. 6, 71), this has since been overtaken by James 1985; MacDonald 1986. For a fuller account of this argument, see Baird 2012b.

[108] Rostovtzeff 1943, 349; Rey-Coquais 1978, 58; Sartre 2005.

[109] Edwell 2008, 87–91.

another *c*.256.[110] It is possible that these clusters of hoards may reflect not one but two Sasanian incursions. Painted Iranian texts and graffiti on the Synagogue paintings have been argued to be evidence of a Sasanian presence at the site *c*.253,[111] and what appears to be a Sasanian administrative document, *PDura* 154, was found within the city's internal defences.[112] Circumstantial evidence from the coins, *dipinti*, and parchments all indicate an initial Sasanian incursion in *c*.253 and renewed Roman control of Dura between 254 and 256, and a presence of a strong threat in the preceding decades.

The evidence from the houses and other excavated contexts at the site reveals an even more complicated picture. Even outside of the actual military base, artefact evidence shows that in their final periods many houses had been taken over, apparently in their entirety, for military use. For instance, in block G1 in the agora, many items of military equipment testify to the occupation of these houses by members of the Roman military.[113] The possibility of two Sasanian incursions is important not only from the perspective of historical chronology, but also for our understanding of what Dura's archaeological evidence represents: the final phase of the site was not a Roman military garrison within an urban settlement but an urban settlement that had become a military garrison. For the same reason the third chapter, on the military of Dura, must precede the chapter on daily life at the site.

We might, within a biographical approach, think of the end of the houses' use as their 'death'. Although many houses in the blocks adjacent to the western wall of the city had been razed by the army at the time of the construction of the interior rampart, no uniform physical devastation of structures marked the end of the city. Particular buildings, including the *principia*, which was undoubtedly symbolic, were burned down. Many houses, though, seem to have slowly collapsed: this is evident in the domestic areas excavated by modern methods by the Franco-Syrian expedition. Preliminary analysis in block C11 indicates the presence of owls (in the form of disarticulated rodent skeletons covering the floor surface, likely from owl pellets) in the vacant structures before they collapsed. A ceramic lamp and an iron dagger were found placed in a niche, a basket and a number of ceramics carefully stacked in a corner of the room. In the same house, a small room apparently used for storage was excavated, and almost a hundred complete ceramic vessels found,

[110] *c*.253: hoards II, VI, VII, XII, XVIII, and XX. *c*.256: hoards I, V, and XVII. Of course, these dates are not conclusive as the hoards are dated only by the latest coin they contain, so that the earlier hoards may have been deposited later than 254.

[111] Grenet 1988; on the careful painting of these *dipinti* and their interaction with the images, Noy and Bloedhorn 2004, 133–209.

[112] The readings of the Parthian and middle Persian texts from the site are problematic and have produced wildly different interpretations Harmatta 1957, 1958; Harmatta-Pékáry 1971; Yarshater 1983, 723–4.

[113] Baird 2012c.

many stacked inside each other. These ceramics, comprising commonwares including many cooking pots, seem to have been left *in situ* in their storage locations when the house was abandoned. We cannot know whether such assemblages represent those things left behind by the household because they were too unwieldy or if they represent those things not desired by the city's conquerors (or both). In either event there seems to have been a choice that such items were to remain. There is some evidence for limited fighting between military forces within the city, including iron bolt heads found in a city street during recent excavations, and a number of bodies found directly on the floors of military structures, including one still wearing Roman armour in E8.[114] In such blocks there is clear evidence for a rapid, unplanned abandonment of structures, and the presence of human remains still wearing their valuable military equipment indicate such buildings were not re-inhabited. In some structures, however, there is evidence for planned abandonment, for instance in the deliberate deconsecration of sanctuaries, with altars deliberately broken but left *in situ*, or sacred reliefs reversed in their niches to face the wall.[115] In others, such as in C7 and D5, there is evidence of hoarding and caching of precious items.

Close attention to the individual houses of Dura shows that different houses have varying patterns of abandonment, as will be discussed in particular case studies in later chapters. Overall, the picture from the houses is that much of the 'civil' community of Dura seem no longer to have been inhabiting their homes in the final phase of the city, and it is possible that by the mid-250s the population of Dura consisted almost entirely of the Roman military garrison and the extended military community. Dura's later history was complicated by years of attacks, the presence of an intra-mural Roman garrison and accompanying population, and an abandonment sequence which will likely remain at least partially obscure due to the lack of more finely excavated stratigraphy. There is also limited evidence for later occupation of the site, as a small trench in the courtyard of the expedition's house revealed burials tentatively associated with a Sasanian era use of the site.[116]

[114] Iron bolt heads: James 2007. Bodies in E8: Frank Brown's field notes. Dura-Europos Collection, YUAG.

[115] Coqueugniot 2012a; the deconsecration was not limited to those sanctuaries covered by the embankment inside the city (including the Christian house and Synagogue) but extended to others including the 'M5' sanctuary.

[116] Saliou and Dandrau 1997, 95. A prolonged post-capture period of Sasanian occupation at Dura has been asserted by some but is not generally accepted: Yarshater 1983, 723–4. Among the evidence for post-abandonment use of the city are human remains. In the courtyard of the expedition house, and in the street outside D5, were excavated human remains which were redeposited (in D5, for instance, bones of a single individual had been gathered up and left in a ceramic vessel which was reportedly too small to have accommodated an articulated and fleshed body): P. R. 4, 30–1; Saliou and Dandrau 1997, 95. On these and other late burials at Dura, Baird 2012b, 320–2. Human remains found in houses in block C11 have also recently been excavated and seem to post-date the use of the structure: Buchet 2012, 196–7.

This occupation seems to have not been longstanding, however, as the only definitively Sasanian portable material culture from the site was found within one of the siege mines.[117] It is of course possible that Sasanian material in the Dura corpus has gone unrecognized, but overall there is no sign of a significant or prolonged Sasanian presence at Dura.[118] While there are traces of ephemeral occupation at Dura well into Late Antiquity, Dura's history as an urban environment ended in the mid-250s.[119]

CURRENT KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOUSES

Houses comprise the bulk of the excavated area at Dura. Despite this, apart from those converted for use as religious structures, no final report ever appeared on the domestic architecture of Dura, although a volume on the architecture and town planning was originally intended. The houses are therefore known from sections in the Dura *Preliminary Reports* series and other scattered publications and resources, which vary in their quality and focus, and no synthetic study has been undertaken despite the decades that have passed since the information was gathered.

Some of the best-known houses at Dura are those of the agora, excavated as 'section G', primarily under the direction of Frank Brown.[120] Henry Pearson, for many years the architect of the Yale expedition, made what is referred to in the published reports as 'a study of the houses' but this seems to consist only of a study of architectural details, published reduced in size as an all but illegible plate in the report of the fifth season.[121] Pearson's plans and field notes are amongst the most invaluable material on the houses, and show that though trained as an architect, he had a keen eye for archaeology as well as for architecture (see Figure 1.9).[122] Similarly, whatever might be said of Clark Hopkins' archaeological proficiency, his plans, some of which appeared in the *Preliminary Reports*, are among the most difficult to read and are often inaccurate, if not as problematic as those of Pillet.[123]

117 F. R. 4.3, 80.

118 Wall paintings found in one of the houses have been proposed to be of Sasanian date, but the case is not strong: De Waele 2004.

119 For details of 'squatter' occupation at Dura and the presence of the 'hermit' attested in a Syriac chronicle, see Baird 2012b.

120 P. R. 9.1.

121 P. R. 5, Pl. 6. Correspondence of Hopkins held at YUAG suggests this study included a written report but there is no trace of this report in the Dura Archive at Yale.

122 See, for example, the differing plans of Pearson and Pillet of D5 (Pillet, P. R 4. Plate 4; Pearson, in YUAG Archive, erroneously labelled D7).

123 See, for instance, the plan of A1 in Dura P. R. 2, plate 8.

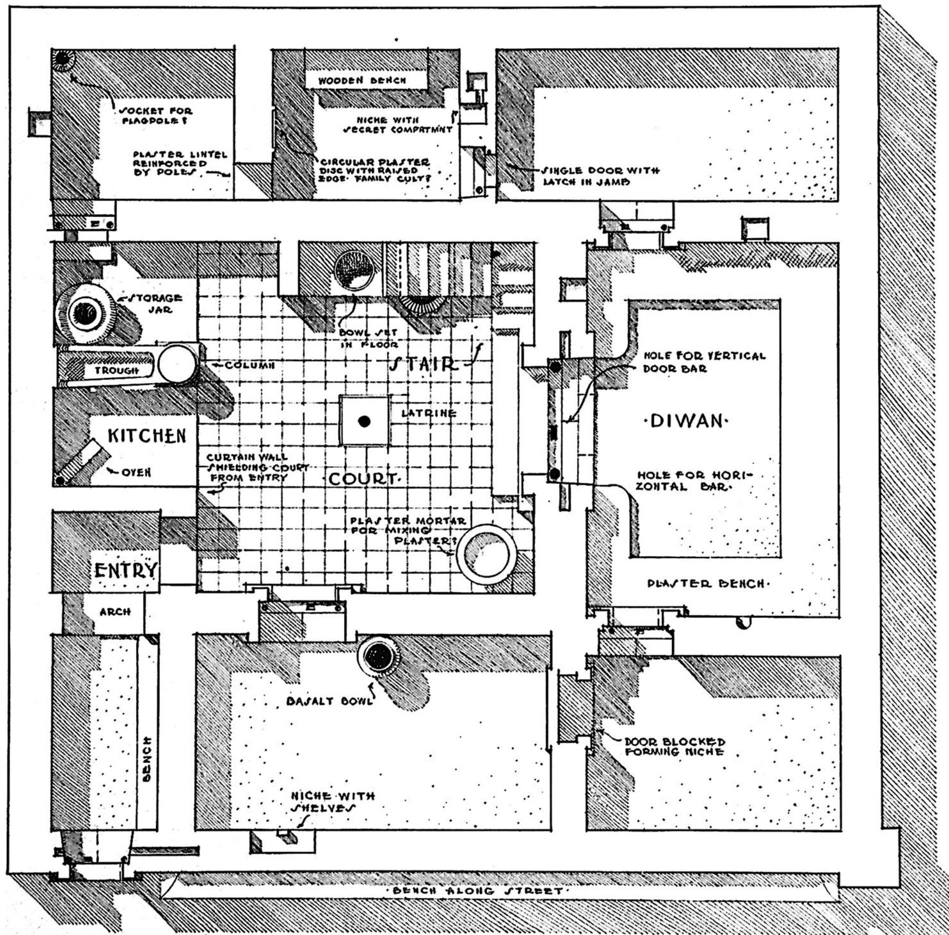


FIGURE 1.9 Idealized Durene house, detail from Henry Pearson's study of the houses. Labels including 'latrine', '*diwan*', and 'kitchen' were used throughout the *Preliminary Reports* to refer to features and rooms within Durene houses. Some of the features depicted here occur in only one house; in no house do they all appear together. YUAG.

A. H. Detweiler, another of the Yale expedition's architects, also produced valuable material in the archive and the publications, the plan of Dura included in Dura P. R. 9 being chief among them. This plan (shown earlier in Figure 1.4) is the main and most accurate large-scale plan of Dura, made after a 1935 survey of the site.[124] The detailed preparatory drawings Detweiler made in advance of drawing the overall plan are, for some houses and structures, the only archival record that survives of them. It was Detweiler, with Brown, who was to have

[124] On the mapping of Dura, de Pontbriand 2012a.

produced the Final Report on the architecture of Dura which never appeared.[125] Despite the problems which arise with the plans of Pillet and Brown in particular, those of Detweiler and Pearson have been shown, through comparison with new plans, to be reasonably accurate.[126]

Short reports on the houses were made in the *Preliminary Reports*, and the houses of the agora were treated in some detail in the preliminary report on the *agora*.[127] Some of the more 'important' houses were the subjects of articles, though more often than not these were art-historical in focus. The 'House of the Frescoes' (C7-F), for example, was published by Rostovtzeff in the 1930s, but his plan is little more than a sketch and the article is primarily concerned with the paintings and not the house itself.[128] Some houses were more fortunate, receiving substantial publication within both the *Preliminary Reports* and elsewhere, such as the B8-H, the 'House of Nebuchelus', which was a focus of study because of the many texts which were found scratched into its plaster walls.[129] Other houses were the subject of later reports by Yale graduate students, which were not published, but manuscripts of which are held at the Yale University Art Gallery, such as the study made of the House of Lysias in block D1 in the 1960s.[130]

When the houses did appear in the preliminary publications, their interpretations were generally perfunctory. Some houses were published in the *Preliminary Reports* of different seasons—for instance, the houses of the agora were excavated mostly in the fifth season, and mentioned in the fifth *Preliminary Report*, but received a more thorough treatment in the ninth. More problematic, perhaps, than the brevity of most of the reports on the houses was the way in which they were treated. The excavators interpreted the houses from Orientalist perspectives, and often using a pseudo-ethnographic approach. As a result, the Durene houses of the Roman period were published as having *diwan*s, *salemlik*s, and *haremlik*s, which had ramifications for how the houses were subsequently understood and studied.[131] These interpretations were based on the architectural form of the rooms within an Orientalist framework, and are, at minimum, anachronistic and misleading. This framework extended to the hygiene habits of the houses' inhabitants: for example, because they were in the residences of 'unclean' Orientals, the

[125] Extensive efforts were made as late as 1967 to ensure this report was written, but the correspondence between Welles and Detweiler (then at Yale and Cornell, respectively) indicates that Brown was delaying or blocking this (one letter mentions even his 'defection'); all were of the opinion that the report could not be completed without Brown, especially as by this time many of the site notebooks for the later seasons had gone missing. See 1976 correspondence in YUAG Archive, and an application made by Welles to the American Council of Learned Societies for a grant to Xerox the Dura material so the originals could be sent to Brown, who was by then at the American Academy at Rome.

[126] Allara 2002, 62–4. [127] P. R. 9.1. [128] Rostovtzeff and Little 1933.

[129] P. R. 4, 79-81; P. R. 5, 47–9; Rostovtzeff and Welles 1931. [130] Gunn 1965.

[131] The identification of the '*diwan*', for instance, has been taken up by later scholars' discussion of Durene houses, including, for example, Balty 1989; Downey 2003.

cisterns of Dura, found in the middle of the houses courtyards, were interpreted as latrines and given as examples of the primitive character of Dura's people.[132]

Perhaps because of these problems—the confused and brief reports in the published accounts, the troublesome nature of some of the interpretations—the houses of Dura have not been the topic of study the way in which we might expect such a large corpus of houses to be. They are, of course, also from the edge of the Roman empire, and thus not typically Roman in the way that the houses of the Bay of Naples have led scholars to believe Roman houses *should* look. The houses of Dura do not fit neatly into existing typologies of ancient Greco-Roman housing. Nor did the houses of Dura produce elaborate mosaics, which was the focus of study for urban houses elsewhere in Syria, for example at Antioch, Apamea, and Palmyra.[133] The houses of Dura do not feature, either, in the studies of Greek and Roman houses which have proliferated in the past decades, and indeed in a recent survey of domestic architecture in the Roman Near East the houses of Dura have been relegated to a category of 'random discoveries'.[134]

The houses of Dura, of course, *were* mentioned in books on Dura itself. Ann Perkins, who was responsible in the 1970s for the Dura Archive at the Yale University Art Gallery, published a short description of Dura's houses in a chapter on the architecture of the site in her book *The Art of Dura-Europos*.[135] Illustrating the description was a figure of a 'typical' house plan (see Figure 1.10).[136] This was actually a tracing of Henry Pearson's interpretation of the house plan of M7-A in the phase before it became the Christian house-church, which included a number of features which were not typical at Dura, including a portico on one side of the courtyard, stairs to a subterranean level, and an off-centre cistern.[137] Tellingly, one of the features noted by Perkins was something that in her view was missing: the lack of a peristyle, and the lack of resemblance to what is seen as the archetypal Greek house.[138] This may be seen as a larger trend in scholarship in this region, 'to search the middle east microscopically for any evidence of something

[132] Baird 2007a.

[133] On Roman urban housing in Syria, Balty 1989. Antioch: Stillwell 1961; Levi 1971; Lassus 1984; Dobbins 2001; Russell 2001; Hales 2003; Morvillez 2007. Palmyra: Gabriel 1926, 84–7; Frézouls 1976; Gawlikowski 1997, 2007. Apamea: Balty 1984. Fragments of a plain mosaic were found in the E4 house at Dura, which was converted for use by the military. On contemporary housing in Palestine, Hirschfeld 1995, 1997; Galor 2000; Meyers 2002; Weiss 2007; Galor 2010.

[134] No mention of Dura, for instance, is made in Ellis 2000; Ault and Nevett 2005; Nevett 2010b. On Durene houses as 'random discoveries', Sartre 2007, 27.

[135] Perkins 1973.

[136] Because of its supposed typicality, this house has been picked up by subsequent studies. See, for example, Jackson 2001, Figure 5.32, after Allara 1987, Figure B.

[137] This plan was published in F. R. 8.2; Pearson's original is in YUAG Archive. Lassus 1969.

[138] Perkins 1973, 22.

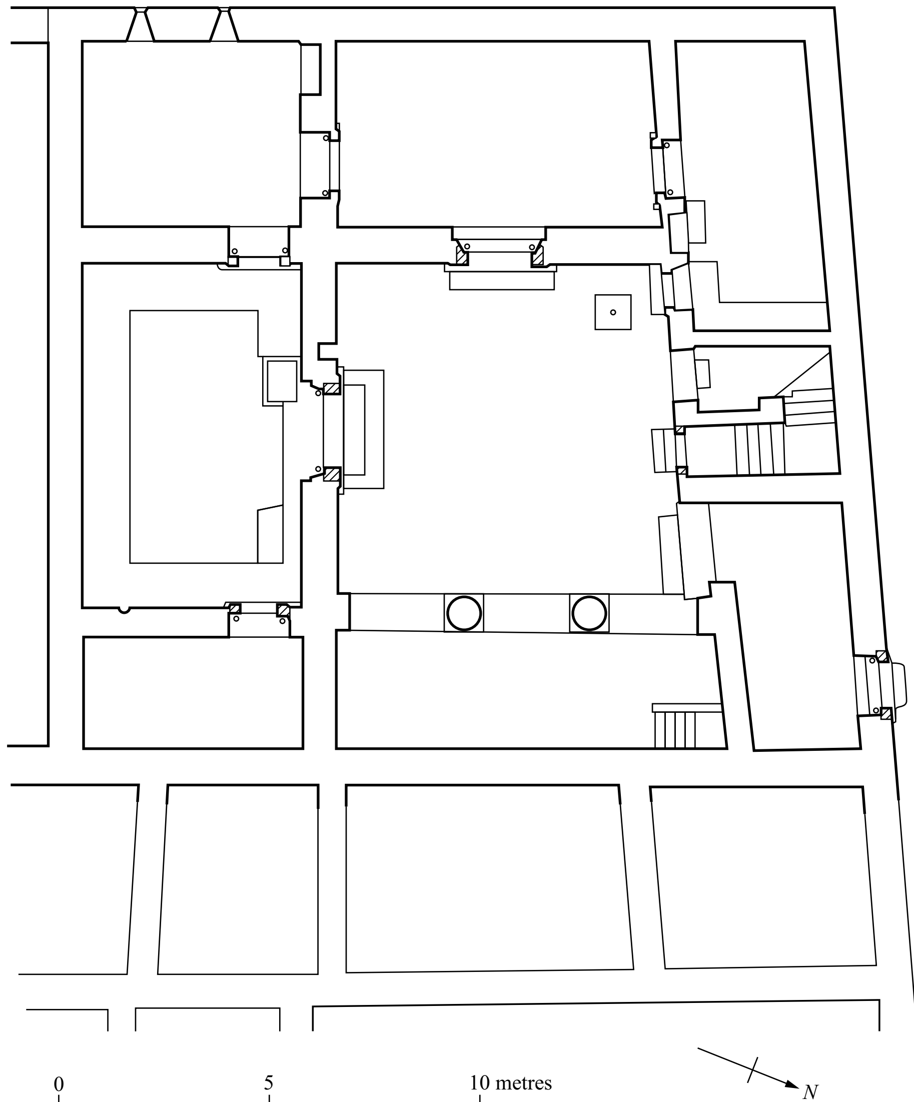


FIGURE 1.10 'Typical' Durene house, from Ann Perkins' overview of Dura. YUAG.

Greek—almost to the exclusion of other cultures'.[139] The lack of a peristyle or other definitively Greek features was taken, at Dura, to be a deficiency.

After a period of silence on the topic of the houses at Dura, Anny Allara began studying them in the 1980s, first using the published accounts as the basis of a dissertation on the Roman period houses at the site, and then using the archives at Yale in addition to the publications and re-excavation, producing a doctoral thesis

[139] Sherwin-White and Kuhrt 1993, 141.

on block B2.[140] Allara also published a series of articles on the Dura houses before her untimely death.[141] Saliou, who was responsible for the co-publication of some of the housing with Allara, has also published on the textual evidence relating to housing, and the development of the city as it related to subdivision and consolidation of housing plots as a result of inheritance and sales.[142]

One of the benefits of the archaeology of Dura is that the site was not substantially re-occupied after its third-century fall to the Sasanians; this was one of the reasons that Rostovtzeff called Dura the 'Pompeii of the Syrian desert'.[143] This, however, did not leave an uncomplicated archaeology. Instead, Dura's abandonment can be shown to have been long and complicated, with different parts of the population leaving the site at different stages, as argued above.[144] By the mid-third century when the death blow was dealt by Shapur's forces, it seems likely that Dura was a military site in its entirety, with the population being the Roman garrison and attendant civilian population. It is because of this that the study of the houses, particularly in their final phase, is intimately tied up with the Roman military occupation of the site. The next two chapters present the houses and the military at Dura in order to make their entanglements more clear.

What can be seen is that much of what we thought we knew about Dura were hypotheses proposed in the preliminary publications which have become fossilized in scholarly narratives. This is the case, for instance, with the naming of many houses: the identification of the so-called 'Palace of the Dux' (and indeed, the existence of a 'Dux Ripae') built on fragmentary *dipinti*, that of the 'House of the Scribes' on what was thought to be an ink splash on a wall.[145] A single graffito from a non-residential building became evidence for billeting of soldiers throughout Dura's houses. Room names attributed, too, have been surprisingly resilient despite the obvious problems with labels such as '*diwan*'. The doors which open between different 'houses' was taken to be evidence of hypothetical early houses which were later knocked together, rather than, as will be argued, evidence of larger houses with multiple courtyards (which, after all, is what is actually preserved), perhaps indicating co-residence of extended family units typical of the region. By returning to the field and the archive it is possible to unpick many of these problems.

[140] Allara 1985, 1992a.

[141] Allara 1986, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992a, 1992b, 1997; Allara and Saliou 1997.

[142] Saliou 1992. [143] Rostovtzeff 1938, 2. [144] Baird 2012b.

[145] On the problem of the Dux: Edwell 2008, 128–35; the ink splash of the 'House of the Scribes' (L7-A), P. R. 6, 271.

TOWARDS A BIOGRAPHY OF DURA'S HOUSES

The complex and problematic nature of the archaeological material and archive at Dura necessitates an approach that recognizes these challenges. In anthropology and archaeology, the relationships between people and things have been explored using biographical methods. This draws on Kopytoff's notion that social and economic values of 'things' need to be understood as processes over time.[146] Drawing strength from work on materiality, biographical approaches to particular objects have allowed a consideration of the way that objects accumulate meanings, and the way that the relationships between objects and people can transform and change.[147] To me, this work is compelling but, despite its rich contextual analysis, sometimes troubling in the use of single objects as the point of reference.[148] At sites like Dura, there are indeed some singular, important, finds that would be interestingly scrutinized, but this would be to the detriment of the assemblages as a whole, which are fragmentary, problematic, and perhaps 'unimpressive' in some ways, but meaningful nonetheless.

A biographical approach, scrutinizing both the architectural modifications of houses which physically hold aspects of the life history of the building and the assemblages as an active component of social action within those houses, gives access to both the spatial and temporal qualities of the data, problematizing the idea of 'the house' as a fixed entity.[149] This approach, being both spatially and temporally contingent, was discussed by Tringham in terms of the 'life-histories' of houses: 'It [the concept of the life-history of the house] concerns the time aspect—the duration of the house, the continuity of its next generation (its replacement), its ancestors and descendants, the memories of it that are held by its actors, the ghosts that are held within its walls and under its foundations.'[150]

Dura's houses also benefit from the presence of texts at the site, not just those that provide historical context, but those that refer explicitly to houses, or those that were scratched and painted on house walls. The presence of both archaeological and textual records of houses is not unique to Dura: at sites such as Karanis in Egypt, the rich textual record and archaeological preservation allowed a very

[146] Kopytoff 1986.

[147] Gosden and Marshall 1999, and other papers in the same volume.

[148] For instance, Gosden and Marshall 1999 examine a Fijian necklace; Joy 2009 a mirror; although for biographies on broader categories, Saunders 1999 on pearls and Swift 2012a on bracelets, and on landscapes Roymans 1995; Roymans et al. 2009. Outside archaeology, object biography has been fruitful but focused on particular objects, e.g. Daston 2000; on a group of objects, Edwards and Hart 2004.

[149] Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995a, 39, discusses, from an anthropological viewpoint, the way the architectural processes of the house are linked to kinship processes and the life course of the occupants.

[150] Tringham 1995, 98. On the use-lives of houses see also Tringham 1994.

close, micro-level examination of particular houses.[151] Elsewhere in Egypt, too, papyri are tied to particular structures, as at Hawara.[152] Dura's record is different, with short texts like graffiti in particular houses and many parchments and papyri from the site that are not linked to specific, archaeologically attested structures. However, it may be argued that one of the things lacking from studies such as those conducted at Karanis is *duration*. A biographical approach to the houses at Dura attempts to overcome this problem, with both the structural and object evidence providing a temporal depth.[153] Micro-scale specificity concerning occupants allowed by the combination of papyri and structure in the Egyptian samples is not something generally possible at Dura, but the broader structures which underpin domestic occupation across the site are. Cultural biographies of houses have shown to be revealing of the relationships between houses and their inhabitants, and this approach highlights the temporal qualities of houses.[154]

For prehistoric Greece, Nanoglou has used a biographical approach to interrogate the place of houses in people's lives and their constructions of identities.[155] Late prehistoric houses in the Netherlands have also been approached biographically, examining the relationship between domestic architecture and the people who occupied it.[156] In an anthropological context, Bloch has shown that Zafiminiary houses embody the life course of the monogamous couple which occupies them, with the structure starting as a relatively flimsy, ephemeral, and permeable structure of bamboo. As wood planks replace the woven bamboo, the house, like its couple and their family, becomes a more robust and solid structure, 'with bones'.[157] Similarly, Waterson, working among the Sa'dan Toraja, has shown the house is 'both a material structure and a group of people' which played an important role in the fluid kinship system of the people she studied.[158]

A biographical approach is useful for a number of reasons. First, structures, like people, may have multiple 'biographies', attesting to different aspects of their lives, and similarly biographical approaches to objects may focus on certain aspects of their value (e.g. cultural, technological, or economic). This approach allows a discussion of the longevity of the Durene houses without necessitating putting the 'original' or unmodified house—a scholarly invention, in any case—as the central object of study. A general description of the houses of Dura as they are known textually, historiographically, and archaeologically is the topic of the next chapter.

Second, as Joy has recently pointed out, biographies are relational, and need not be restricted to narratives of birth, life, and death, but considered in terms of the

[151] Van Minnen 1994; Stephan and Verhoogt 2005. [152] Muhs 2008.

[153] On the need for diachronic approaches to houses and settlements ('settlement biography'), Herbich and Dietler 2009, 12–13.

[154] e.g. Gerritsen 1999 on late prehistoric houses in the Netherlands.

[155] Nanoglu 2008. [156] Gerritsen 1999.

[157] Bloch 1995. [158] Waterson 1995, 197.

sum of relationships.[159] Relationships are what makes up a *household*; while the physical *house* is usually considered as a separate conceptual entity, a biographical approach allows a discussion of the entanglements between the physical structure and the human relationships within. This situates the house in context as a socially constructed *place*.

A third useful aspect of the biographical metaphor is the recognition of the afterlife of objects, beyond their use, and even their 'death' or deposition, to their status as archaeological objects or museum collections. The third chapter thus addresses the final period of Dura's life, in which the military occupied many of the houses and transformed their use. At Dura, the recognition of the assemblages from the houses as archaeological constructions themselves is key to their interpretation, including the acknowledgment of 'gaps' in our knowledge as being a by-product of archaeology's own methods. A biographical approach to objects in context, the assemblages themselves historicized as an archaeological creation, allows a consideration of issues of materiality and identity.

A biographical approach to houses also allows for a concern with *habitus*, by considering social structures as they are embodied and enacted in and through houses. Bourdieu called attention to the active relationship between structure of the house and social structure, rather than a unidirectional relationship in which one shaped the other.[160] *Habitus* recognizes the physical object or building as being entangled in the active construction and communication of culture. Daily interactions within and between households were themselves part of the creation and maintenance of local communities, and at Dura, this is visible not only in a shared language of domestic architectural forms across the site, but in the use of common material culture.[161] The arrival of the Roman garrison at Dura ruptured some of these, for example introducing new building materials, techniques, and types, but not others: while the Roman period sees the arrival of the use of fired brick in the superstructure of buildings, the limited use of mosaic, and buildings including baths, there is no break, for example, in the ceramic tradition at the site, nor in many civic institutions. Such aspects of daily life are the topic of the fourth chapter.

I consider the house as a living entity, a form of material culture which could have an active role in human lives, not only reflecting social structure and practice but generating them.[162] Houses were not just the spaces in which lives were lived, but *places*: places that were in a discursive relationship with those lives, not just framing human action but constraining and constituting it.[163] Material culture

[159] Joy 2009.

[160] On the value of Bourdieu to social archaeology, Bailey 1990, 19–20.

[161] Canuto and Yaeger 2000, 129.

[162] Bourdieu 1973; Bailey 1990, 25.

[163] While I have issues with the implementation of 'space syntax' approaches in archaeology, this point (the mutual constitution of people and their homes) is made well by Hanson 1998.

(including the material form of the house) can be active, as has been demonstrated by Latour.[164]

Houses are not only places into which people are born and live out their lives, but the means by which they live: in the simple form of providing shelter, but also structuring and being structured by social relationships and interactions with other people, whether members of the household or visitors. Houses were then key in the formation and maintenance of personal and community identities. Membership in the household itself is one aspect of social identity, and the objects found within houses allow access to some other aspects, such as age, gender, status, religion, and ethnicity; these are considered in the fifth chapter.

Despite the general lack of attention paid to the Dura houses, they have much to contribute to our understanding of ancient housing, and more generally to our knowledge of ancient daily life, Roman frontiers, and the Roman military. The houses of Dura were, in some cases, occupied over several generations, so we have not only the evidence of their final form, but also of their use and adaptation over a long period. The houses were living structures, being constantly maintained and modified, and parts of their biographies can be traced in these changes. Such changes are important not only to our understanding of the houses themselves, but the people who occupied them—the houses were not merely a 'backdrop' for social activity and daily life, or something that passively reflected identities or social structures, as they are often presented.[165] Houses instead can be considered as living entities whose biographies can be written.[166] The building and maintenance of houses, their modification, their use for day-to-day activities, the graffiti scratched into their walls, presenting doors closed to the street but with interior courtyards where the Syrian sun could stream in from above, were one way in which their inhabitants formed and articulated the relationships within the house, and negotiated their place in their communities, their city, and their world.

[164] I find Latour 2000 an interesting discussion of this; for broader studies of materiality including implicit and explicit responses to Latour, see e.g. essays in Miller 2005; Meskell 2008.

[165] On houses as backdrop in classical archaeology, see for example Nevett 2010b, 7.

[166] For houses as active participants in social action, Bailey 1990.

TWO

The Houses of Dura-Europos

Compared to the fine mosaics excavated at Antioch or the colonnaded thoroughfares of Palmyra, Dura has always seemed a humble site. Early reviews of the publications stressed this—John Crowfoot, reviewing some of the *Preliminary Reports* of the Dura excavations for the journal *Antiquity* in 1945, wrote that 'Unlike Pompeii, Dura is a grim looking site: its most striking features are the west wall on the desert side and the citadel above the Euphrates, both built of dull grey gypsum blocks: between them stretches a waste of mud brick walls.'[1] This mudbrick wasteland was largely made up of houses. The crumbling mudbrick, beaten earth floors, and 'Oriental' character of the houses conspired against much scholarly notice of the structures, together with the attention paid to the paintings and texts found elsewhere at the site. As noted already, there were other problems including incomplete publication, publication of illegible plans, and the larger issues surrounding the end of the excavation and the upheaval of wartime.

The present chapter provides an introduction to the houses of Dura, based on fieldwork conducted from 2004 to 2008 and a study of the Dura collection of the Yale University Art Gallery. The chapter begins by surveying what is known of urbanism at the site, starting with the Hellenistic period and moving forward in time to the Parthian and Roman phases. Next, it describes the physical form of the houses: how they were built, the materials that were used, the rooms that they were divided into, and how those rooms were used. This includes not only the archaeological but also the textual evidence of Dura's houses. The last section of the chapter explores how a biographical approach to the houses of Dura, incorporating thick description of their features, helps us relate the architecture and use of the houses to the people and society of the city.

[1] Crowfoot 1945, 113. Crowfoot had been director of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem and had excavated extensively in the Middle East, including at Jerash. Comparisons were perhaps inevitable; Rostovzeff's opening letter to President Angell of Yale wrote that, as Jerash had been taken up by British archaeologists, 'It seems appropriate to substitute Dura for Jerash'. Letter dated 21 October 1926. Bongard-Levin et al. 2007, 295. On the BSAJ, Crowfoot, and the archaeological networks in the Middle East at the time, Thornton 2011; 2012. On the 'aesthetically modest' character of Dura and the lack of attention in scholarship, Wharton 1995, 24.

URBANISM AND DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE AT DURA

Hellenistic Europos

The history of Dura's urban development is a complicated one. The chief problems with our attempts to understand it have already been outlined: early excavations minimally concerned with stratigraphy and the destruction of earlier levels by later building conspire, so that much of our knowledge of early Dura must be inferred from the later plan and buildings of the town and from comparison with other Hellenistic colonies.

The phasing of the town into Hellenistic, Parthian, and Roman Dura is in some senses an artificial construct, which both obscures the site's chronology and promotes the division of the site's inhabitants into 'ethnic' descriptors which themselves encourage a search for indicators of 'Greek' (or Roman or Parthian) presence. There are no clear archaeological or historical horizons for these periods at the site itself. The historical phasing is poorly known and early problems have become received knowledge: for instance, as has recently been pointed out, even the oft-quoted date of 113 BCE for Dura's occupation by the Parthians is a hypothesis-turned-factoid, built on a very tenuous reading of numismatic evidence.[2]

Nevertheless, based on the archaeological remains and the documents that survive, we are able to piece together a rough idea of Dura's urban development, and that begins in the Hellenistic period. The initial settlement of Europos was a small garrison, a *phrourion* 'ambiguously situated between a simple fortress and a full polis', lacking a gymnasium, theatre, or epigraphic habit, amongst other registers of Hellenism, but including others such as an administrative centre, royal cult, and state officials.[3] Archaeologically, relatively little Greek material culture from Dura's Hellenistic period has been recovered, and even this small amount is probably over-represented, particularly in the ceramic record, for the simple reason that the excavators knew how to recognize Greek pottery and had a specific interest in it. Unfortunately, this came at the detriment of other material, particularly local ceramic forms.[4] For Hellenistic architecture, we are on stronger footing (quite literally), as the later Hellenistic fortifications remained in use for the life of the city and have survived the centuries relatively intact.[5] These include a circuit wall which enclosed the parts of the city that did not give directly onto the cliff over the Euphrates. These walls were built mostly of large dressed ashlars carved from local gypsum that was apparently mined directly out of the

[2] Edwell 2008, 101.
[3] Kosmin 2011, 102; on the term *phrourion* and the differences between it and the *polis*, Nielsen 2002.
[4] Baird 2012d.
[5] On Dura's fortifications, Leriche 1986; 1987; Bessac 1988; Leriche 1989; 1993; 1996a.

FIGURE 2.1 Photograph taken from south side of city, showing excavation method of chasing walls along streets to expose exterior of blocks and street lines. YUAG d382.

*wadi*s north and south of the site, and in quarries within the city, although portions are in mudbrick.[6]

The date of the city walls, however, cannot be known with certainty from present evidence. The recovery of the plan of the streets of the city was of importance to the excavators, who chased the walls along the exterior of many of the blocks to expose the town plan (Figure 2.1). The orthogonal plan now visible was 'Hippodamian', assumed to have been laid out at the foundation of the city; this included a number of blocks put aside for the agora.[7] The grid plan has had profound implications for the interpretation of Dura, in particular because the regularly sized blocks are sometimes thought to be evidence for egalitarianism amongst the original colonists.[8] The current Franco-Syrian expedition's excavations have argued that the first settlement was mostly likely a garrison in the citadel area, and that the orthogonal plan, of blocks measuring 35 × 70 m, dates from later than the initial Hellenistic settlement of the site in the second half of the second century BCE.[9] The Hellenistic period at Dura has now been divided

[6] Leriche 2004, 151–4. On working the gypsum, Bessac et al. 1997. On the mudbrick portions of the city walls as evidence for a hasty construction in reaction to an imminent Parthian attack, Leriche 1997a, 195–6.

[7] P. R. 7/8, 4ff; P. R. 9.1, 4ff, 19–20.

[8] Hoepfner and Schwandner 1994, 257–92.

[9] Leriche and Al Mahmoud 1994; Leriche 1996c, 158–69; Downey 2000; Leriche 2000a; 2003. Kosmin has noted the topographical separation between the citadel as seat of the leader and the houses of garrison settlement clustered on lower ground beneath it in such colonies as Jebel Khalid, and it is likely that Dura had a similar topography of power, Kosmin 2011, 99–100. Leriche's re-dating of the urban plan has not been

archaeologically into two phases, with the initial settlement around the citadel and then a later mid-second century BCE urban expansion (or 'Hippodamian' phase) during which the streets were laid out and the fortification walls were constructed.[10]

The layout of the city, with a north–south axis for the longer sides of the blocks (see Figure 1.4), is seen in other Hellenistic town-plans in Syria: at Apamea, Damascus, Beroia, and Lattakia, though none of these have been excavated to the same extent as Dura.[11] Dura's plan is significantly off true north, being north northwest–south southeast in orientation, adapted to the topography of the site on the Euphrates, and taking an orientation which compromises the exposure of particular roads or properties to extremes of light and heat throughout the year.[12] Following the orthogonal plan and site conventions, this volume uses the 'site north' (that is, grid north rather than true north) as an easy means of orientation.

Of the earliest town we know very little and, as Downey has pointed out, no clear evidence survives of even the temples from this time.[13] The same, unfortunately, holds true for Dura's houses. While there are almost certainly legacies of the earliest inhabitants of the city preserved within the forms of later houses, there is not a single house of the Hellenistic era at Dura whose plan can be convincingly restored in its entirety. In part this is due to the later houses which built over these earliest structures, as they seem to have levelled earlier houses as a matter of course.[14] There are, however, Hellenistic elements in some houses. For instance, in block D3-D4 and in block G3 in the agora, Hellenistic walls recognizable from their large cut-stone blocks were re-used as external house walls.[15] The irregular

accepted by all: e.g. Hannestad 2012, 991–3, who notes it is possible the grid was laid out, but not entirely inhabited, from an early date. Further, from the historical context of the reigns of Antiochus I and Seleucus II and the coin evidence, she proposes the layout of the city and building of the walls should date to the late third and early second centuries BCE. On the context of such problems, see also Yon 2003.

[10] Leriche 1991, 1996c, 1997a, 2003.

[11] On Apamea, Balty and Balty 1977. For comparisons of Greco-Roman city plans in Syria, Sauvaget 1934; Peters 1983. Such an orientation is perhaps to exploit the maximum possible daylight within the courts of houses. The main reception rooms at Dura, for example, are chiefly north-facing. Passages in the ancient texts concerning the orientation of houses agree that a southern orientation allows winter sun into the rooms north of the court but gives shade in the summer; Xen. *Oec.* IX.4; Arist. [*Oec*] I.vi.7; Vitr. *De Arch.* VI.7.

[12] This orientation is known from earlier Mesopotamian cities, perhaps because of the relationship to managing heat and light: Shepperson 2009, 366–7.

[13] Downey 2000, 160.

[14] The excavators did sometimes excavate below the level of house floors of the later period houses, but no earlier phases were generally recognized; more careful recent excavations have recovered the foundation trenches, and sometimes the wall bases, of earlier levels in very limited parts of the site (for instance, in C11), but no Hellenistic house plan can be restored from present evidence. It is possible that some houses preserve evidence for Hellenistic house plots (in property boundaries); see discussion in Saliou 2004.

[15] The excavated part of D3-D4 also straddles the line of road 7; block D2, south of the House of Lysias in D1 which it abuts, also appears to not have a break for this road. The irregularities in the street grid in this part of the city probably relate to its early inhabitation.

plan of block B2 is probably connected to the earliest settlement of the site at the base of the citadel, pre-dating the laying out of the city grid.

We might expect one of the legacies of the early houses of Dura, within the orthogonal plan of the second century, to be the house plots. At other Hellenistic sites, the division of blocks into evenly sized house plots has been noted, although the link between the even division of space for housing and political ideology has been strongly questioned.[16] At Dura, the surviving houses as they were excavated are a range of sizes, from two simple rooms to an entire city block. In many parts of the city, wall abutments show that the houses agglomerated over time, one being built against the other. This can be seen, for instance, in many of the houses in the agora, and in block L5, the eastern side of which is occupied by the 'Temple of Adonis' (see Figure 2.2). In this block the plan shows that houses were built up against each other, filling in what were most likely empty spaces (this block is near the city wall). It seems that it is not equal size plots which are the deciding factor in building these houses, but following the line of the street. From this block, it does not seem that there were equal house plots which were used as the basis for domestic architecture. A number of blocks are irregular in shape, following the topography (such as B2 or C3, both terraced along slopes) or city walls (such as M7 or M8, which are trapezoidal following the southern half of the western city wall), and over time some buildings in the agora seem to have encroached on public space.[17] Nevertheless, the respect for the Hellenistic street grid is maintained throughout Dura's later period until the Roman military transformed the circulation of the northern side of the city in the third century.[18]

There are notable differences in blocks and their divisions in different parts of the city. The irregular plan of B2 has already been mentioned, and elsewhere in the city there is evidence for a more systematic division of plots within blocks. For example, Saliou has argued, on the basis of re-excavation, that in block C7 a long north–south wall divided the block and provided the basis for the organization of space (see Figure 2.3).[19] It is difficult to confirm this hypothesis, however, because the walls themselves are much later than the vestigial plans they are thought to preserve. Indeed, such longitudinal walls dividing the block are not a feature of excavated housing blocks elsewhere in the city. The houses of the town have many

[16] Hoepfner and Schwandner 1994. For a critical reading of 'Hippodamian' planning, Shipley 2005. For critique of Hoepfner and Schwandner, e.g. Haagsma 1995, 52.

[17] This development was taken to be a degradation into an 'oriental' city from a planned Greek one, and so the agora was called a 'bazaar' by the excavators. Baird 2007a. Organic development is generally taken to characterize Mesopotamian cities, although elements of them were sometimes 'planned' or orthogonal, and the imperial cities of the neo-Assyrian and neo-Babylonian periods have evidence of systematic planning. Frankfort 1950; Stone 1987; van de Mieroop 1997, 79; McMahon 2013, 168.

[18] James 2007. [19] Hopkins noted the median wall in his study of the block, P. R. 5, 34–5.

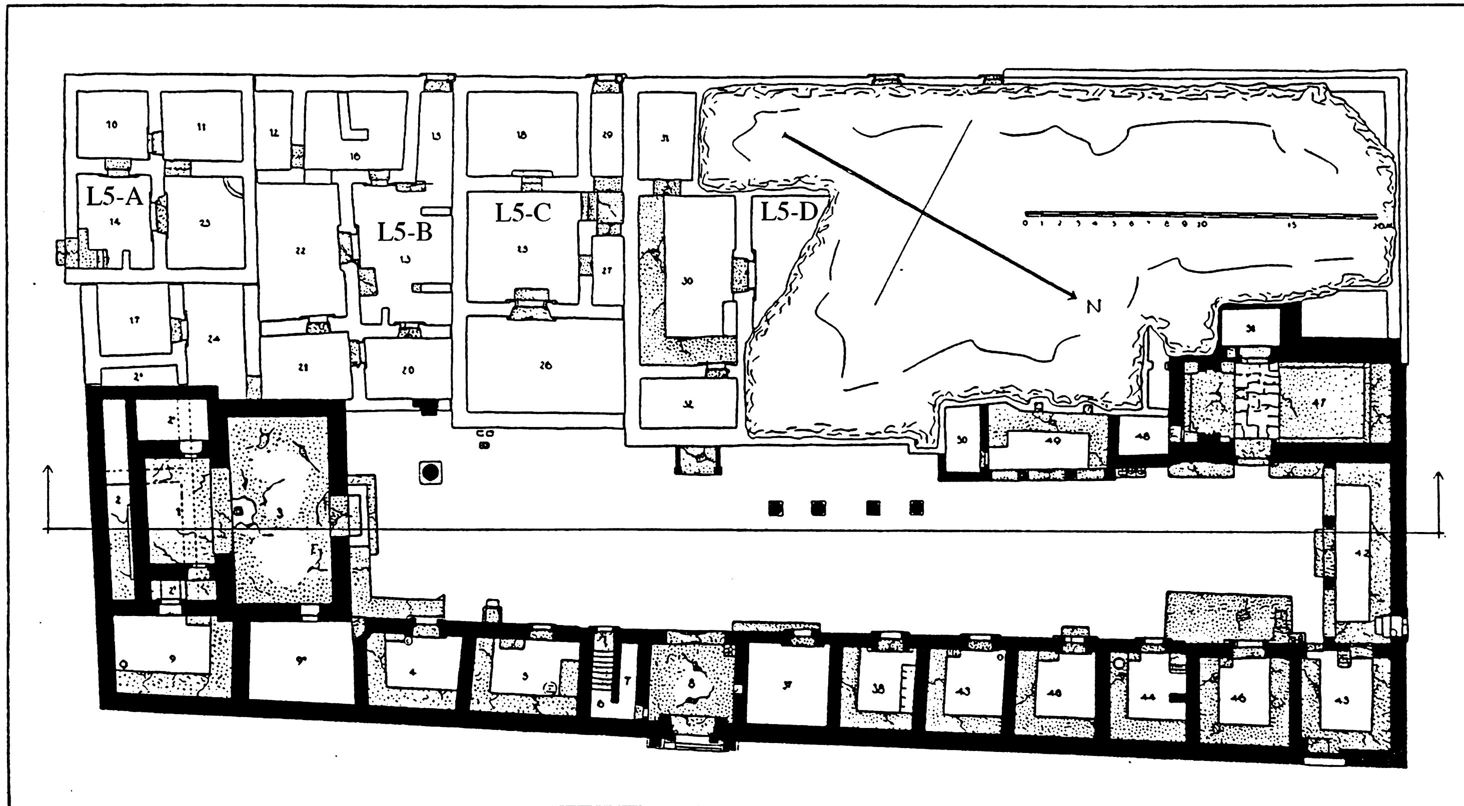


FIGURE 2.2 Plan of block L5 by Frank Brown with house names added; houses at top left of plan, with the 'Temple of Adonis' occupying the remainder of the excavated portion of the block. YUAG.

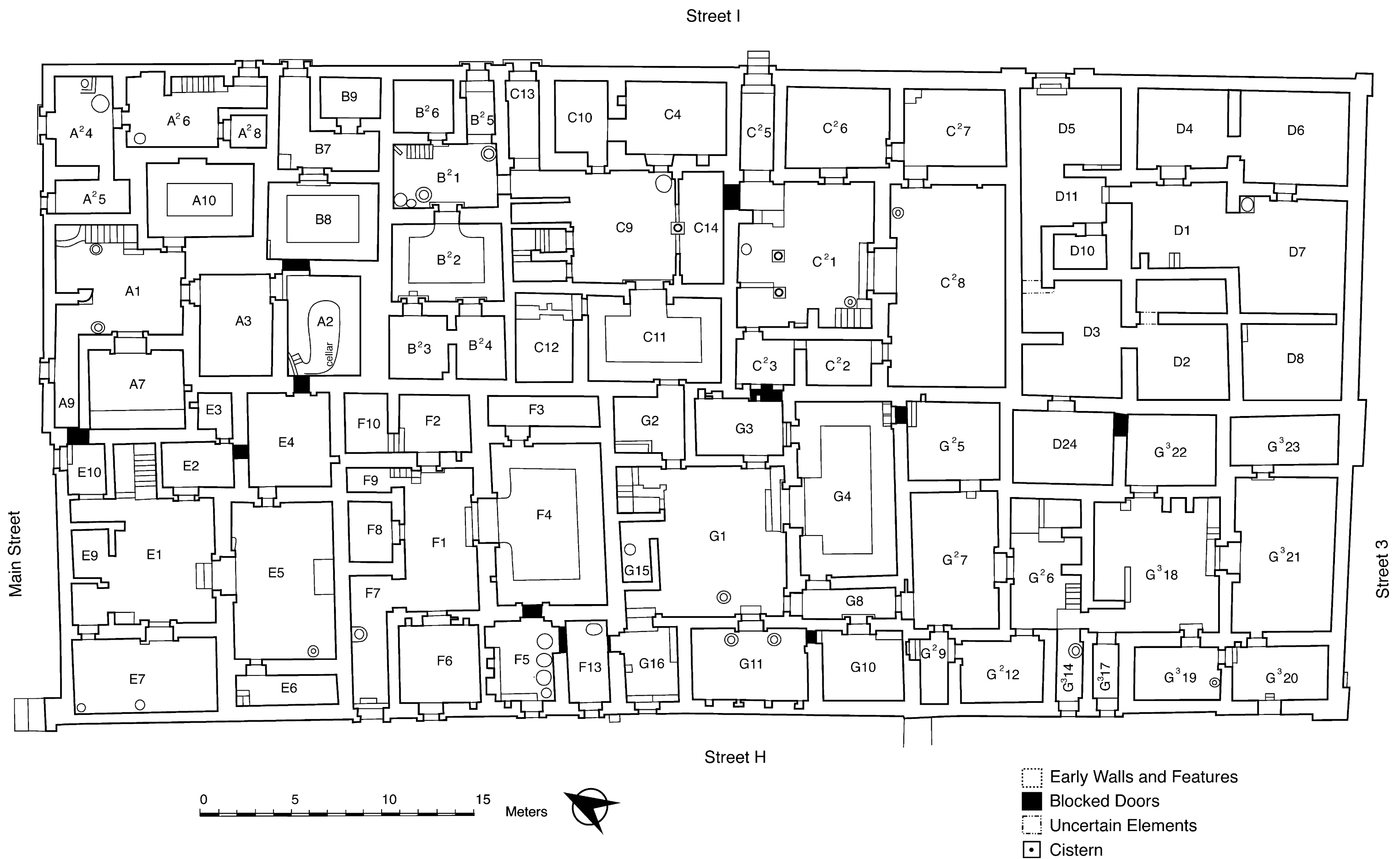


FIGURE 2.3 Plan of C7, adapted by the author from original by Henry Pearson in the YUAG Archive.

features in common, but there is no clear evidence of the division of blocks as a starting point for domestic architecture on a city-wide basis, and while the houses of Dura share many architectural features, a wide variety of configurations are known. Geophysical maps of unexcavated parts of the southern part of the site do give some impression that some blocks were divided into roughly eight units, or at least had eight courtyards, and that blocks of six units occurred where blocks had to be shorter, against the southern city wall.[20] Block H2 is, unusually, divided in half transversely by an alleyway; and the blocks along the city wall are wider in the southern part of the city, filling up the gap left by different alignment of the city wall, which does not conform precisely to the orientation of the blocks (compare the size and shape, for instance, of blocks L7 and M8).

While there is variety in both the number and form of houses within each block, there are certain recurring features in house plans and in the organization of the blocks. The street layout itself was certainly a result of a central civic authority, but it could be that the repetition of certain features in houses (that is, within the blocks formed by the street grid) across the site relates to a common social structure which necessitated and reproduced that form rather than being a centrally imposed design.[21]

The surviving textual remains from Dura are not much help with regard to Hellenistic Dura's spatial organization or appearance, although fragments of land sales from the second century BCE (*PDura* 15) imply that property holdings from this period continued to be recorded and enforced.[22] Allotments of agricultural land were initially distributed to the settlers with the perceived value of the *kleroi* being matched to the military rank of the recipient.[23]

For a hint of what the Hellenistic houses might have looked like at Dura, we might compare it with sites of similar date and circumstances of origin relatively nearby, for instance those at Jebel Khalid (ancient name unknown) upstream on

[20] Benech 2010, 8.

[21] Others, of course, argue that repetition of particular forms is 'evidence that some form of design was followed'; quote from the discussion in Sewell 2010, 95–7. On the problem of projecting the idea of 'design' onto ancient architecture, McFadyen 2012. On other Seleucid colonies, Cohen 1978; Cohen 2006.

[22] *PDura* 15 was found by Cumont's teams in a secondary deposit in one of the city's towers as well as a number of other civil documents including some of third-century CE date. Dura F. R. 5.1, 84–91. The property referred to in the document, however, includes fruit trees and farm buildings, and is hence most likely outside the city. *PDura* 34, of 116 BCE, also probably concerned land, but is very fragmentary. Unfortunately, the precise circumstances of the discovery of these documents were not recorded. Cumont 1926, 281–337. The third-century Dura 'shield map' was also recovered from this context: Rebuffat 1986; Arnaud 1988; 1989.

[23] *PDura* 12, an inheritance law also recovered by Cumont, stipulates land must return to the crown if a suitable heir could not be established (and hence Dura's territory was considered royal land); Sherwin-White and Kuhrt 1993, 57; Kosmin 2011, 100.

the Euphrates from Dura and Seleucia on the Tigris.[24] Jebel Khalid has been the subject of excavations conducted by an Australian team since the 1980s.[25] While not as extensively excavated as Dura, the site has the archaeological benefit of not having apparently survived beyond the Hellenistic period. Like Dura, Jebel Khalid is a walled settlement directly overlooking the Euphrates. There, a block of houses which is Hellenistic in date has been excavated. The block is 35 × 90 m and seems to have originally been divided by a median east–west alleyway (as E7 and H2 at Dura are similarly divided). Painted friezes and stuccowork from one of the houses have been shown to be comparable to examples from Delos and indicate these were elite houses which are perhaps unrepresentative of the site as a whole.[26] The houses at Jebel Khalid had pitched, tiled roofs akin to Hellenistic houses on the Greek mainland, whereas at Dura only a few ceramic tiles are known from the Hellenistic remains of the early agora.[27] Given the survivability of ceramic tile and their recognizability to the excavators, the lack of residual material at Dura suggests most Durene houses never had ceramic tile roofs. At Jebel Khalid, the known houses were entered indirectly from the street, via a vestibule, and based around courtyards, some having a similarity to 'pastas' style Greek houses, with a portico fronting a range of rooms.[28] They probably comprised a single storey, and a principal room opened to the north of the courtyard; rooms with ovens were identified as kitchens.[29]

The central mound at Seleucia on the Tigris, Tell Umar, was excavated by the University of Michigan, and the site was the subject of excavation by Clark Hopkins, after he left Dura-Europos and Yale University.[30] There, several levels of housing were recovered and have not been properly studied in an area of the town called 'block G6'. This block, at 140 × 70 m, is four times the size of the regular block at Dura, and Hopkins believed the typical house plot at Seleucia was

[24] A partial Hellenistic house is known from Beirut, Aubert and Eristov 2001, and rooms of a Hellenistic house were recovered in the excavations at Hama, Ploug 1985, 18–19. Hellenistic town plans have been partially recovered at Zeugma, Abadie-Reynal and Gaborit 2003. At Palmyra, geophysics has partially revealed what might be the Hellenistic town plan—Schmidt-Colinet and Plattner 2001; Schmidt-Colinet 2003—although excavated material from this area is early Roman in date, Gawlikowski 2007, 82. Hellenistic and Parthian-era houses are also known, in fragmentary form, at Babylon: Koldewey 1914, 300ff; Reuther 1926, Figure 65 for Seleucid period phase of 'house 1' with peristyle; Sherwin-White 1987, 20–1.

[25] On the houses at Jebel Khalid, Jackson 2001; Clarke and Jackson 2002, 202–3; Jackson 2009. Preliminary reports on the site have been published in *Mediterranean Archaeology*. The first two volumes have also appeared, Clarke 2002; Jackson 2006. Dura and Jebel Khalid are similarly situated above the Euphrates, and with stone quarries at both sites.

[26] Jackson 2009, 247–9.

[27] Dura P. R. 9.1, 10-11; Jackson 2001, 11–12.

[28] On use of 'pastas' and 'prostas' as typological terms for Greek houses, Nevett 1999, 22–3.

[29] Jackson 2001, 257–60.

[30] On initial excavations, Waterman 1931. For Michigan excavations, Hopkins 1972. See also Valtz 1984; 1991.

also four times the size of the average Durene one.[31] In level three (*c.*144 BCE–43 CE) a series of so-called megaron houses have been identified, later replaced in level two (43–116 CE) by a series of houses with '*liwan*s', vaulted rooms opening off the courtyard. The earlier houses are characterized by the presence of two columns opening off the central court into the main room, which disappear in the later phase when the vaulted *liwan* is the characteristic room off the courtyard. Hopkins thought the evolution of the housing at the site was from the 'Hellenic' to the 'oriental', but unfortunately the structures are poorly documented in the published accounts, and not certainly of domestic character; further, Seleucia was under Parthian rule during this time.[32] While Hopkins repeatedly compares these structures to the Dura houses of his earlier excavations, their plan and their materials, with extensive use of fired brick, were very different. Evidence from Hellenistic Bactria at Ai Khanoum is also of a very different character, with large courtyards and isolating corridors being primary in the plans of the buildings.[33]

There is a dearth of published data on the local houses of Mesopotamia, particularly for the time period relevant to Dura from the third century BCE to third century CE.[34] The Hellenistic structures at Dura with a domestic component which have partially survived archaeologically are the palaces.[35] The Citadel Palace, for instance, has been analysed as containing both Hellenic and Achaemenid elements, combining a peristyle hall with narrow corridors adjacent to its open spaces.[36] The 'Strategeion' or 'Redoubt' Palace, too, has features of Hellenic architecture, with its partially columned courtyard, and the fortified nature of a

[31] Hopkins' idea of the Durene house plot size was 1/8 of a block, which he thought represented the 'original' houses, rather than the space occupied by the final period houses which were generally either larger or smaller than this.

[32] Hopkins 1972, 28, 30, 67.

[33] Lecuyot 1993 argues this reception hall and corridors enabled a rigidly hierarchical social structure to be maintained, with this Eastern tradition having been adopted by settlers, and that such structures are the predecessors of a similar type of house found in Mesopotamia at Abu Qubur, having been brought there by the Parthians. On the houses of Ai Khanoum, see Bernard 1970, 310–16; Bernard 1973.

[34] On the earlier houses of the region, see Margueron 1996 and other essays in Veenhof 1996, as well as Miglus 1999 on Babylonian and Assyrian houses. On the use of space in Mesopotamian houses from the Uruk to Old Babylonian periods, Krafeld-Daugherty 1994, and on Babylonian houses of neo-Babylonian to Achaemenid periods, Baker 2010. On excavation of Parthian domestic material at Tell Barri in Syria, Palermo 2012. For a survey of Hellenistic and Roman houses of the Levantine coast, Richardson 2004. For the prehistoric houses of the region, Aurenche 1981. On Mesopotamian houses from early Dynastic to the Isin-Larsa period, Delougaz et al. 1967.

[35] On the Citadel Palace, P.R. 2, 12–15, 53–7. Downey 1985a; 1986; 1988b; 1992. On the *Strategeion* (also referred to in the publications as 'the redoubt', 'the palace', and the 'inner redoubt'): P. R. 1, 23–4; P. R. 4, 21–7.

[36] Kopsacheili 2011. Kopsacheili compares the Citadel Palace at Dura to the Governor's Palace at Jebel Khalid, which has a similar hybrid character. See further discussion of the Citadel Palace and 'Strategeion' in Chapter 5, pp. 248–51.

more Eastern type.[37] The hybrid character of Dura's elite Hellenistic architecture is a vital and telling feature, in that even in this early phase Dura was already not simply a Macedonian colony but a place where power was demonstrated in architecture using forms which were both Hellenic and Achaemenid. The expression of power by the rulers of Dura in the Hellenistic period, as it was manifested in the Citadel Palace and the *Strategeion* at Dura, was an architectural language which used specific elements of both East and West.

Parthian and Roman Dura

As discussed earlier, it is difficult to date with certainty the start of Parthian control of Dura, and there is little trace of a physical administrative Parthian presence at Dura. This period was, however, a formative one for Dura, during which many of the surviving temples were built (including, probably, the Temple of Zeus Megistos and the Temple of Artemis), houses constructed, and the fortifications and civic structures and roads maintained.[38] Much of the chronology of Dura in this period is deduced from building inscriptions in Greek or Palmyrene of the dedication of temples. The Parthian period of Dura, up to the late second century, saw the building of many of Dura's temples and most of Dura's houses that survived until the fall of the city, although with many modifications. It was probably in this period that the city expanded to fill the entire area within the walls, as can be seen from the excavations and recent geophysics which go a considerable way toward filling in the gaps in our knowledge with regard to Dura's plan (see Figure 2.4).[39]

While many of Dura's excavated houses were likely built in the Parthian period, none of these survive in sealed contexts; many of the same structures (although modified to varying degrees over time) remained in use in the Roman period.[40] We do not possess a purely 'Parthian-era' house from Dura, except for those recorded in texts recovered at the site.[41] The 'House of Lysias' in D1, however, was certainly built in the Parthian period, as a graffito dated to 159 CE gives a *terminus ante quem* for its construction.[42]

[37] Kopsacheili 2011, 28.

[38] On the dating of the temple of Artemis and Zeus Megistos, Downey 1993a; 1995; 2004a.

[39] Benech 2003; James et al. 2012.

[40] However, some earlier remains were excavated beneath later buildings, and some of these were Parthian in date and may have been houses. These include the remains beneath the Mithraeum (J7), those under the courtyard of the Temple of Zeus Theos (B3), the *naos* of the Temple of Adonis (L5), beneath the Christian house (M8) and beneath the Temple of Artemis (H4).

[41] For comparanda of Parthian houses, see the Parthian 'domestic' material at Tell Barri, Palermo 2012; Parthian levels at Assur, Andrae and Lenzen 1933.

[42] Frye et al. 1955, 147–51.

FIGURE 2.4 Geophysical results superimposed on excavated city plan. This image (by Ben Gourley, Kristian Strutt, Simon James, and the author) combines the result of James, Baird, and Strutt 2012 with those of Benech 2003.

Houses in text: *PDura* 19

A crucial text for our understanding of Dura's houses in the Parthian period is *PDura* 19. Dated to 88/89 CE, the Greek text forms the upper part of a 'double document', a type of document that repeats the text on the lower half of the parchment, which is then sealed for verification purposes. Along with many other documents, *PDura* 19 was found in the earth used to fill tower 22 when the city's

walls were being reinforced against the Sasanians.[43] The document was relatively well preserved but fragmentary, and so the text is partially restored.

> In the reign of the king of kings Arsaces, benefactor, just, manifest god, and friend of Greeks, in the year 336 as the king [of kings reckons, but 400 of the former era, on the ? day of the month ?, in Europos] in Parapotamia. There have made a voluntary distribution among themselves Demetrius so-called Nabusamaus, Seleucus so-called [– – – – – –] so-called Zabduas, the sons of Polemocrates, son of Demetrius and grandson of Polemocrates, of Europos; (they have distributed) the [houses] belonging [to them in – – – – of which they have stated that the one was] allotted to Polemocrates, [their father,] just named, in [a division] made by him with his brother Apollophanes [through the local court in the] year 364 of the former reckoning, on the [?] of the month Audinaeus, while the other was bought by him from Nicanor, son of Alexander and grandson of Mnesippus [– – – in a transaction effected] through the same court [in the year ? of the former reckoning,] on the second of the month Dystrus, and they have acquired by allotment as follows: Demetrius [the *andron* – – Nicanor – – – – the] storeroom in – [– Antiochus the house in – –] and the upper rooms over it and over the common entrance and exit passageway [– – – Seleucus the house toward the] north and the upper room over it and [another] room which is partly collapsed – – *erasure* – – [– – – – and they will have] in common the court and the entrance and exit passageway and the balcony, which they will use in common. Nicanor shall block up the door of [the house which] fell to him—[that opening into the] *andron* which fell to Demetrius, and he shall take to himself the doors and the trim and open for himself from the above storeroom another door [into the house allotted to him,] and Antiochus shall plaster up the door of his upper room opening into the upper room of Nicanor and he shall open for himself another door [on to the balcony (?),] and Seleucus [shall open] from his house a door into the common court; and all shall construct anew the [party wall] between this court and another court [– – – – – –;] and they shall furnish to each other access to this party wall and to the wall of the house which fell to Seleucus, placing upon the party wall [a flight of steps (?) – – – – – –] of the stoa through which they will ascend from his [?; and Demetrius shall give in addition to Seleucus toward the equalization of their shares [? drachmae] of silver [– – – – – – with the trim (?)] and doors and all other belongings and appurtenances; and each of them shall be the owner of the household goods, in his own part. And all have agreed [– – – not to] bring a charge against each other now or in the future either concerning this division or concerning those things which each of them, separately, has acquired or may acquire or concerning [– – – – – – – but if anyone does not] abide by this agreement but raises such a charge, he will pay to those who abide by the agreement without argument or court decision a penalty of 1000 drachmae of silver, with the same amount going to the royal treasury, and [this distribution shall be valid even so; it is

[43] Published in Dura F. R. 5.1, 104–9. A new commentary and translation into French was made by Saliou 1992.

> executed] in double copy. Witness: Seleucus, Adaeus, and Danymus, royal judges and members of the order of first and chiefly-honoured friends and bodyguards; [Pausanias, bailiff and collector,] member of the order of bodyguards; Damonicus son of Marius, Democrates son of Damonicus, and Apollogenes son of Ptolemaeus.[44]
>
> *PDura* 19, amended translation from F. R. 5.1, 108

The document details the distribution of property amongst the sons of a man named Polemocrates.[45] The property being divided consisted of what had been two houses, one of which Polemocrates had purchased, the other of which he had acquired when it was divided with his own brother, Apollophanes. The two houses thus became the property of the four brothers, the sons of Polemocrates, most likely through inheritance at the time of his death, although this is not specifically laid out in the document. This text reveals much about Durene houses in the Parthian period, including their transmission across generations, the means by which they might be subdivided or connected, the names used for particular rooms, and that they could have a monetary value, as a cash payment is used to satisfy the difference between unequal shares.[46]

Whilst this refers to the property of one multiple family unit, it does throw some light on the houses of Dura in general, since (from another more fragmentary document also of the first century, *PDura* 16), we know that the situation was not unique to Polemocrates' family. *PDura* 16 preserves some text that mentions the bequeathing of a house, itself acquired by division of an earlier inheritance. In that document, too, 'rights of entrance and exit' are mentioned. No such document is preserved in the Roman period, but in *PDura* 12, of the third century CE, it seems Seleucid inheritance law was still part of the legal system, and in *PDura* 126, in 235 CE, a Roman tribune upheld an earlier oral agreement concerning the division of

[44] Problems with the original translation include the use of 'room' rather than 'house' or 'dwelling' for each brother's share (*oikos* is used in the Greek; in the French translation, Saliou used *appartement*). The editors restored ἐνδομεήσεως (translated by the editors as 'domicile', and followed by Saliou who used the French *construction*, but paralleled only in the biblical contexts) where ἐνδομενια is more appropriate (here, 'household goods'), as the term occurs in other papyri, particularly wills; e.g. *PGiss* 35.2, *PLips* 28.15. *LSJ* 1996, 561, s.v. ἐνδομενια. The translation of *oikos* as 'room' was also given in the original publications for part of the sanctuary of Azzanathkona (P. R. 5, 142, no. 453), and in that context it seems to relate to a chapel within the temple. I am very grateful to Dr Christy Constantakopoulou for her assistance with the translation of this document.

[45] On Durene succession, *PDura* 12, a third-century document, delineates Durene inheritance law, which lists the next of kin of a deceased without children or an adopted son as the father, the mother (if she has not remarried), then brothers (no age-rank is given), followed by sisters. Otherwise, the paternal grandparents may inherit, or a paternal male cousin. Failing that, the property is that of the king (the formulation probably following a Seleucid precedent). Other documents (e.g. *PDura* 18) detail mortgaging and gifting of property including slaves but do not specify houses.

[46] Although because this transaction occurs within the family, this price does not necessarily represent true 'market' value of the building.

property about which a dispute had arisen. None of the documents make clear whether it was male and female children or only sons who might inherit, although in *PDura* 18 a man and woman jointly own a property, and in *PDura* 12, female children are not explicitly excluded from inheriting, and other female relatives are included in the list of those who might inherit, although after males.

Each of the four brothers of *PDura* 19, Nicanor, Antiochus, Seleucus, and Demetrius (who have Greek names but also Semitic ones: Demetrius is known also as Nabusamaus, and another of the brothers is known as Zabduas), are apportioned by lot a part of the house around a courtyard. Each brother is given common rights of access via the entrance, and of the courtyard, and the *ikria*, which can be translated as balcony or mezzanine in this context. When the rooms of the houses are apportioned to the respective brothers, space is divided vertically, so that each brother gets a space on the ground floor and the space immediately above that room on the upper storey, and the divided space is then called each brother's *oikos*: house, or dwelling. Along with a portion of the house, each brother also receives a share of the household goods.

For example, Seleucus receives a room on the north side and the rooms above it. Seleucus also received a room which is described as having become dilapidated, showing one the problems facing our understanding of the excavated houses: even within a house there could be parts that have gone out of use at different times.[47] His brother Antiochus received a part of the house adjacent to the entrance/exit, and the rooms above them. Nicanor, for his part, is given the right to use a doorway between his part of the house and that of Demetrius, and the side of the house including a *tameion* (storeroom). Demetrius gets a room called an *andron*.

Although no excavated house at Dura corresponds precisely to the description from the papyri, the general layout is recognizable, and some of the room types identifiable. The terms used for particular architectural features or spaces include stoa and *ikria*. Stoa is probably the portico created by columns in the courtyard, supporting a balcony which allowed circulation between the upstairs rooms. *Ikria* is probably a wooden balcony (as the word is also used for wooden structures in naval contexts). Saliou has proposed a reconstruction in which this *ikria* is a wooden balcony which allows external circulation between the rooms of the upper floor (see Figure 2.5).[48]

The responsibilities accompanying the physical division of the houses were also given in the document: Nicanor is required to block the door of the room he is given which opens into the *andron* which Demetrius has been allotted. Nicanor

[47] Archaeologically this is attested, for example, in house B8-H in which some of the rooms seem to have been abandoned following a fire, though the remainder of the house remained in use.

[48] Saliou 1992, 88, 98–9.

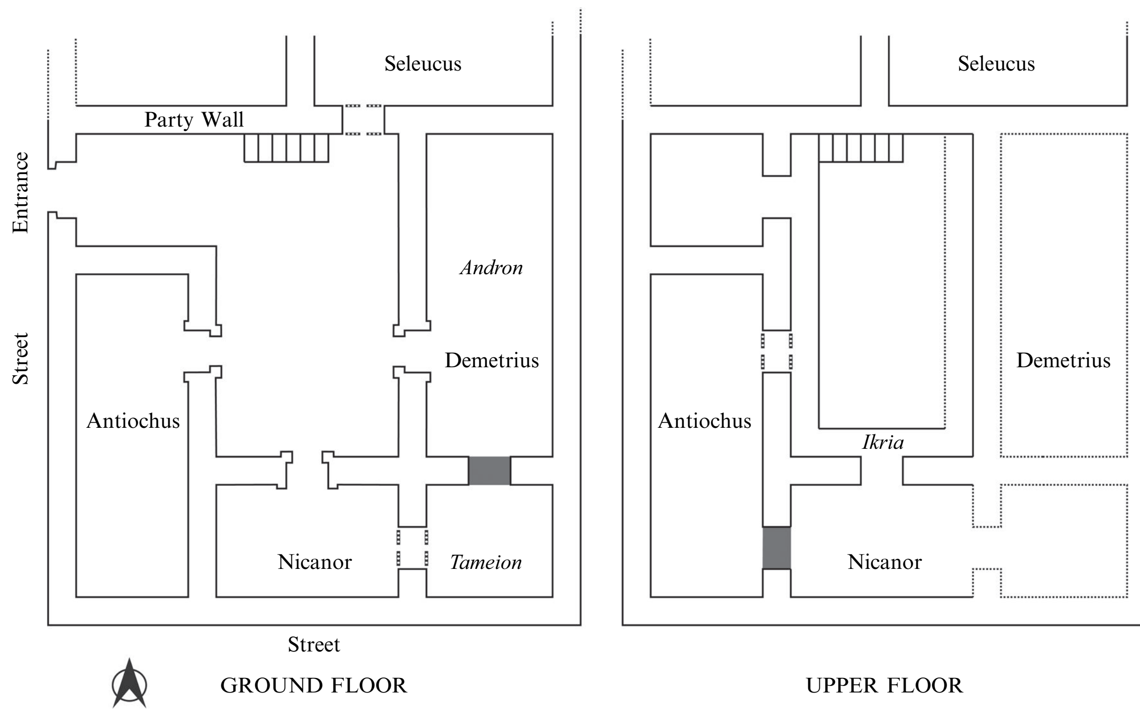


FIGURE 2.5 Reconstruction of the house of the sons of Polemocrates described in *PDura* 19. Drawing by the author, adapted from original in Saliou 1992.

must use the doors and trim to open a new doorway for himself above the *tameion* which he has been given. Antiochus, for his part, must plaster over the door of his upstairs room which opens into the upstairs room of Nicanor and create a new door for himself. Seleucus must open a door leading from his room into the courtyard which is common between them. In addition to the common access areas, they are all to build and maintain jointly the party wall which divides the courtyard of their house with that of the neighbouring one, and so must give each other access to this wall. The use of *oikos* to refer to each part of Polemocrates' house which was divided amongst his sons shows that, despite common use of the entrance, courtyard, and balcony (and, implicitly, the stairs) the structure was legally delineated as a number of dwellings. The physical unit of the combined house shared by the brothers persists despite its reconfiguration, but conceptually it is now four houses, as each son has his own *oikos*. This use of the term *oikos* to refer to rooms within a structure with a common courtyard and common entrance questions strongly the archaeological definition of the house that has been applied at Dura by the original excavators, in which a courtyard was taken to be the centre of a single house unit.[49] The word o*ikos* is also used in an inscription from the sanctuary of Aphlad at Dura, in which the dedicant erects the sanctuary as his vow for the safety of his children and his house, here, presumably also used to mean his lineage, or the physical *oikos* as signifier for those that occupy it.[50]

Assuming the sons of Polemocrates used their shares as their primary homes, which is not certain, this arrangement seems to imply the cohabitation of conjugal units, with a multiple family unit, or 'joint' family living within adjoining spaces, but spaces that were nevertheless legally delineated (and, indeed, physically reconfigured on that basis): this shows just how complicated the reading of social structures from archaeological house plans at Dura is. It also shows that the changes to house plans which are visible in the archaeological record may in many cases be directly related to kinship structures in the city. The walls of the houses and their configuration are much more than a backdrop to daily life: they are intimately tied up with family structures and inheritance patterns, and physically record the family's transformation. In this case, modifications to the house were made as a direct result of its transformation at a significant time: the death of the head of the household.[51] The document is dated to the year 400 of 'the former reckoning', that is, the Seleucid era: 88/89 CE, and the document notes that Polemocrates himself acquired part of the house upon division with his brother, presumably on the death of their father, thirty-six years earlier (in year 364 of the Seleucid era). The architectural integrity of Polemocrates' house, in

[49] Saliou 1992, 72. [50] P. R. 5, 112–13, no. 416.

[51] On the link between textually documented household transformation and archaeologically recorded houses in earlier Mesopotamian contexts, Baker 2010.

particular the openings between rooms surrounding the courtyard, was linked to his tenure as the head of his household. Houses and people are in a relationship which is 'mutually constituting', with the fabric of the houses changing and adapting following changes in the lives of the occupants, but with houses also constraining some behaviours, for instance in dictating the form of and access to communal spaces, and mutual responsibilities such as party walls.[52] Houses, of course, did not solely move between families, and *PDura* 19 demonstrates this in recording that Polemocrates had purchased in cash part of what became his sons' property—this did not occur at the same time as the division of property with his brother. Nevertheless, even in a cash purchase, the house is embodying the changing fortunes of its occupants.

The use of Greek terms to describe particular rooms within the house is also notable. *Ikria* and stoa have been mentioned already, as has *tameion*, which is most likely a storeroom, but could also be a vault or chest. The entrance/exit passageway, '*eisodos kai exodos*', and the courtyard, *aule*, also appear. The use of specific terms for architectural spaces means that to some degree there was a relationship between architectural space and the understood function of particular rooms. One of the most problematic of these is the *andron*.

The use of the term *andron* at Dura raises many questions. The word was equated by the editors of the excavations and texts with the term *diwan* and used to label rooms in the excavated houses, in particular the central room opening off the courtyard and which often has a plaster bench around its perimeter. *Diwan* can be put aside as inappropriate, an anachronism of the excavators who interpreted the houses of Parthian Syria within an Orientalist framework.[53]

In earlier Greek houses, an *andron* is generally associated with the room used for symposia, although the exact use of these spaces is much debated.[54] The name and the use is, of course, also gendered: literally translated *andron* means 'men's room' and the symposium was a male-centred activity.[55] Unfortunately, *PDura* 19 gives no more detail on where in the house this room appears or how it is used. As will be discussed later, a range of activities probably took place in the room labelled *andron*, at least in the later periods, for which there are artefacts to help interpret the spaces. Based on *PDura* 19 and on extant house plans at Dura, Saliou suggests that *andron* refers to the central room off the court and its adjoining smaller rooms, thus forming a suite rather than a single room.[56] The

[52] Birdwell-Pheasant and Lawrence-Züniga 1999, 4.

[53] See Baird 2007a for a fuller discussion of this point.

[54] Nevett 2010b, 43–62.

[55] The nature of the symposium, even in Classical Greece, is a topic of great debate. See, for example, the essays in Murray 1990. On the symposium in Greco-Roman and early Christian literature, Konig 2012. For a review of the term *andron* in the Classical material, Morgan 2011; Morgan argues the term is 'descriptive' rather than architectural (i.e., the *andron* is where the men are).

[56] Saliou 1992, 94.

archaeological evidence for the *andron* will be discussed further later. Elements of the excavated houses of Dura, which were all in use in the Roman period, can be correlated with the houses in the document to a certain extent, as they do contain many of the features of the Parthian-era houses described in *PDura* 19 including the entrance/exit passage, the courtyard, in some cases the use of columns, and probably the so-called *andron*.

The document also demonstrates the hybrid nature of Durene life under the Arsacids. The brothers have names which recall the Macedonian heritage of the colony of Europos: Nicanor, Antiochus, Seleucus, and Demetrius. Yet Demetrius was also known, as it states in this document, as Nabusamaus, and his brothers, too, have Semitic names. The document is framed within the legal system of the Parthian empire, beginning 'In the reign of the king of kings Arscaces', and it is written, as are other Parthian-era documents at Dura, in Greek. The date is given both in the Parthian era and in the 'former' era, the Seleucid calendar. The brothers were designated by the ethnic *Europaioi*, and their father, Polemocrates, his brother Apollophanes and their father, Demetrius, and indeed his father, another Polemocrates, all bore Greek names as well, and used Greek naming patterns of naming grandson after grandfather.[57] The document, while dating from Dura's Parthian era, is relevant to the later houses of Dura, not only because many of Dura's Roman houses were constructed in the Arsacid era, but because many of the Hellenistic institutions in use in Parthian Dura seem to have continued under Roman rule.[58]

Few other ancient sites have the combination of textual and archaeological information that allow a comparison of this situation.[59] Exceptions, as ever, can be found in excavated houses and texts from some sites in Egypt. At Karanis, documents were excavated within houses, but while the texts provided detailed information, the people described in the documents were not necessarily linked to

[57] On the use of *Europaioi* as an ethnic and its assumed relationship to citizenship at Dura, Welles 1951; Pollard 2007; and see Chapter 5.

[58] e.g. *PDura 12* records Seleucid inheritance law which was being copied in the third century. On this and the continuity of local legal practices under Roman rule, Humfress 2013. *PDura* 126, also in the third century, records the decision of a tribune with regards to the division of property (a potter's shop), which had been made at an earlier time but not recorded in a document—the tribune upholds the earlier oral agreement, again showing the continued functioning, and indeed, enforcement of, existing local practices. The Seleucid empire did not, in any case, have a uniform legal system: van der Spek 1995, 175, who notes that Hellenistic settlements including Dura should be considered independently as there was no uniform concept of 'Greek law'. In Parthian Dura, documents (e.g. *PDura* 20) open with Parthian royal titles and give evidence of Parthian royal officials—penalties due to the royal treasury similarly attest to Arsacid legal institutions being in force. Millar 1998a, 477.

[59] On *communio pro diviso,* Taubenschlag 1955, 239–40; for comparison with Egyptian papyri, Taubenschlag 1946, 117; Taubenschlag 1949, 56–7. Similarities between the Durene documents and the Egyptian ones should perhaps be seen as a result of their shared basis in Hellenistic legal institutions rather than a common cultural tradition.

the particular structures in which they were excavated.[60] As Nevett has suggested, examinations at the level of the community are more likely to help articulate the interaction between text and archaeology than individual household-based enquiries.[61] From Ptolemaic period Hawara a contrasting situation to that at Dura indicates that the relationship between legal division of houses and physical structures at Dura is both local and meaningful. At Huwara papyri attest to fractions of houses which are transferred through sale and inheritance, but in that case the houses were generally not *physically* divided.[62] Archaeological evidence elsewhere in the Fayyum similarly does not indicate physically divided houses.[63] Rather, 'virtual' shares of houses, as attested in legal documents, were more common, in which individuals held a stake in the property, owning a share or fraction of the total property rather than a specific physical part of the dwelling.[64] The difference between the practice at Dura and that in Hellenistic Egypt is perhaps surprising and the implications are substantial. Separate but connected physical courtyard units were relatively common at Dura, and *PDura* 19 implies the occupation density within houses is even higher than is generally assumed, with the brothers of *PDura* 19 sharing access to a single courtyard. The lack of physical divisions within houses in the Egyptian evidence has been interpreted as a lack of desire for privacy between groups. In light of the Dura evidence, however, the lack of a recognized physical division might be an issue of scale and what kind of activities could be shared between different occupants of the house.[65] The broader ramifications of this reading of *PDura* 19 is that interpretations of archaeological houses should perhaps focus less on functional interpretations of architectural spaces and consider also the subdivision of houses as related to social structures.

[60] On the relationship between texts and houses at Karanis, van Minnen 1994; Stephan and Verhoogt 2005. Like Dura, Karanis was investigated in the 1920s and 1930s by American excavators. For popular overview, Gazda 1983. A summary of the excavations was published in Husselman and Peterson 1979. Original excavation publications, Boak and Peterson 1931; Boak 1933. On the houses of Karanis including access plans, Alston 2002, 52–7.

[61] Such data, of course, are not extant from Dura in any case. Nevett 2010a, 30.

[62] Muhs 2008, 188.

[63] Muhs 2008, 190–1.

[64] Muhs 2008. On these 'spatially unlocated' shares of houses in Egypt, see also Nevett 2010a, 26–7.

[65] Nevett points out that no physical boundaries seem to have been needed in the Egyptian context at Karanis to separate co-resident groups, 'indicating that there may not have been a perceived need for any kind of "privacy" between them.' Nevett 2010a, 29. But, if conjugal units were inhabiting living rooms around a courtyard as seems to be the case at Dura, then they might have been physically separated for some activities and not for others. One of the economic and social benefits of living in a house with 'joined' families would have been the ability to share tasks, including childcare, or the preparation of food. Therefore there would be no reason to expect the duplication of e.g. cooking facilities as evidence of multiple 'households' inhabiting a single house (contra Nevett 2010a, 23, although she is certainly correct to note that current archaeological evidence is not sufficient to prove either case).

There are also parallels in the textually recorded division of Mesopotamian houses.[66] Property transactions involving houses in much earlier, Old Babylonian, Nippur are interpreted as for the purposes of division between heirs. Here, houses were viewed as 'linear or circular strings of rooms' rather than the vertical spaces which seem to dictate the division at Dura.[67] However, as at Dura, archaeologically attested architectural modifications were made to the houses and at Nippur specific inheritance texts can be correlated with particular houses. These attest to extended family units being jointly resident in some houses, and nuclear units in others.[68] The extended family units manifested on the ground as 'square' houses and the nuclear units as 'linear', the shapes referring to the arrangements of the rooms in relation to each other.[69] For all of the texts under discussion, there is also a problem in determining when ownership can be correlated with residence.[70] Blocking doorways and subdivision of rooms, both of which are well attested at Dura, are known phenomena in mudbrick architecture of Western Asia over millennia, and this has been linked to patterns of property inheritance.[71]

The Parthian period was a time of continued expansion of the residential area within the city's walls. Of course, little is known about any inhabitation outside the city walls as limited excavation has been done on the surrounding steppe, and that which has taken place has shown that the mudbrick has not survived well in that area. No evidence of houses was recorded in the excavation of the necropolis. Dura undoubtedly had a relationship with surrounding villages, however, and it is likely that many of Dura's inhabitants worked land adjacent to the Euphrates just below and to the south of the site, and on the other side of the river, which remains today a fertile agricultural zone. Geophysical attempts at recovering traces of settlement at the level of the river have been unsuccessful, however, probably due to deep sediment accumulations or erosion.[72] Dura itself functioned as a regional capital in this period, as Greek documents from the site itself attest.[73]

[66] Stone 1981; 1987; Baker 2010; Feuerherm 2007.

[67] Stone 1981, 24. At Nippur the eldest son was given a preferential share. In Mesopotamia there was a long history of property being transformed through inheritance and sale, between kin and non-kin, resulting in mudbrick architecture being modified with the blocking of doorways and subdivision of rooms, and it is worth considering Dura within that tradition. Potts 1997, 216–17.

[68] Stone 1981, 26. [69] Stone 1981, 26–7.

[70] Baker 2010, 184. Baker, for the Babylonian material, raises the question of whether house modifications can be linked to social status; e.g. that high status households are less susceptible to the pressures which result in the division of property. Baker 2010, 187–9.

[71] Potts 1997, 217. On extended families and joint ownership of property at Old Babylonian Ur, Diakonoff 1985; further on Old Babylonian Ur and the link between inheritance and property organization, Brusasco 2004.

[72] Pierre Leriche, pers. comm.

[73] Leriche 1996b. Vineyards and irrigation as far away as the Khabur river in *PDura* 23, 25, and 26. Dura F. R. 5.1, 8. On the status of Parthian Dura, Sommer 2004.

Only a few houses can be said to have been certainly constructed in the Parthian period, although it is likely this was the phase of greatest expansion of the urban habitations; this data is obscured by the lack of stratigraphic excavation.[74] Those that are Parthian period are dated by the *terminus ante quem* of the structures constructed above them, and as such they are poorly preserved. These include the remains beneath the Mithraeum which is dated to 168 CE,[75] the remains under the Temple of Zeus Theos, itself dated to 113–23 CE,[76] and perhaps those beneath the extension made to the Temple of Artemis in H4.[77] Also attributable to this period are the fragmentary remains beneath the south end of the Temple of Adonis[78] and an earlier phase of the Christian house in M8, where excavations in the courtyard of the house which existed in the final period revealed several rubble walls, likely part of a court of an earlier house including the base of a staircase to its roof. Interestingly, this structure is on an alignment different to that of the later remains in M8 and to the grid of the city in its final phase.[79] A graffito places the palatial 'House of Lysias' in block D1 within the Parthian period, giving a *terminus ante quem* for its construction of 159 CE.[80] The house in block E4 has elements which go back to the Parthian period,[81] as do elements of houses in H1,[82] which preceded the Temple of Gadde, and in L7, preceding the synagogue.[83] Parthian period houses also existed in the agora but as noted by Allara, these are very fragmentary and Brown's reports are sometimes misleading.[84]

The excavated houses, while many of them would have been built and maintained in the Parthian period, were last occupied in the third century CE, when Dura was under Roman control. However, neither in the houses specifically nor the site generally is there an observable archaeological horizon which distinguishes the start of the Roman period. The marked change seems not to come with the arrival of Roman control, *c.*165 CE, but in the early third century, when a Roman garrison expanded within the city's walls.[85]

In the early third century, a number of purpose-built structures were erected for use by the army, including an amphitheatre and bath buildings, and the 'Palace of

[74] Allara 2002, 45–8. [75] P. R. 7/8, 63–4. [76] P. R. 7/8, 180, 190, 195.

[77] P. R. 6, 397–411. The apparent pattern of earlier house walls beneath religious structures is due to several reasons. It was the case that private property of houses became religious space (the synagogue and Christian building, too, show this), but this is also a feature of excavation patterns, in which temples were more carefully and completely excavated than other buildings, so earlier remains were more likely to be reached and recorded. In addition, in the case of the Mithraeum, the earlier walls were planned when the structure was demolished so that the paintings could be removed.

[78] P. R. 7/8, 135, Figure 42. [79] F. R. 8.2, 32–4. [80] Frye et al. 1955, no. 16.

[81] P. R. 6, 4-32. [82] P. R. 7/8, 218–83. [83] P. R. 6, 224–7. [84] Allara 2002, 48.

[85] For a recent reappraisal of the garrison, James 2007.

the Dux', all on the northern side of the site.[86] A number of city blocks in this north side of the city were converted to be used as soldiers' accommodation, and a mudbrick wall separated this military quarter, at least in part, from the civilian southern side of the site.[87] The Roman military presence was not, however, confined to the northern side of the site, and evidence for the presence and occupation of Roman soldiers is found throughout Dura. This extends from the presence of the military at the city gates and along the city walls into many of the city's 'civilian' buildings, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

Downey has argued that Dura, unlike some other Roman urban conquests, was never intended to be redeveloped into a 'Roman' city. For this reason, it was without public buildings found elsewhere—rather, the only typically Roman installations at Dura, such as the amphitheatre, were intended for use by the army and not the broader population,[88] and Dura was never endowed with the colonnaded streets as elsewhere in the Roman East.[89] There are several likely contributing factors to this; the late incorporation of Dura into the Roman sphere,[90] the lack of time available for transformation, and the lack of availability of suitable stone for such monumental works. It has also been suggested that the lack of monumentalization might also be related to the social structure at Dura, with private strategies overtaking public ones.[91] It should be noted, however, that Dura does in fact have many streets which were effectively colonnaded, but the columns in most cases were composed of rubble set in a *djuss* mortar—meaning that they crumble over time and cannot be re-erected to have the same visual effect as at other excavated cities in the Roman East. This does not mean that at one time they did not have just such an effect, particularly when they were freshly plastered. For example, many parts of the agora had colonnaded frontages, as did parts of the Main Street of Dura. Leriche has recently argued that Dura was, in fact, at the start of what would have been a process of erecting colonnades

[86] The early third century date comes from architectural studies (including Gelin 2000), but also an inscription from block E8 (a block converted for military housing) which dates to 217 CE and may relate to the mudbrick wall which runs along part of the southern perimeter of the garrison encampment, no. 59 in Frye et al. 1955, 161–2.

[87] The mudbrick wall is an interesting feature, as it does not entirely bound the camp area. See James 2007, 200.

[88] Downey 2000, 156–7.

[89] Downey 2000, 170. For instance, Palmyra and Apamea have long colonnaded avenues as a central part of their design. On colonnaded streets, see Saliou 1996; Ball 2000, 261–72.

[90] This late incorporation, however, did coincide with the peak of monumentalization and colonnaded streets elsewhere in Syria, with most of the colonnaded streets of the Roman East dating to the second and third centuries. The *cardo* at Jerash is late first century, but that of Apamea is second century (if preceded by an earlier, Seleucid, version), as are Palmyra's colonnaded thoroughfares. Colonnaded streets persisted in the East into late antiquity, for example at Madaba and Anjar. Butcher 2003, 244.

[91] Butcher 2003, 261. Further on this, e.g. on the private (or 'family') nature of some of Dura's cults, Dirven 2004.

along the Main Street and elsewhere in the city, that this process had started later at Dura than elsewhere in the Roman East, and was stopped by the Sasanian incursion.[92] An interesting difference with other cities of the Roman East, however, is that there is very little evidence at Dura for euergetism, in stark contrast to other contemporary urban environments.

The houses of Roman period Dura were a continuation and evolution of those of the Parthian period: many continued to be inhabited, maintained, and modified. There is no evidence of new types of domestic architecture in the Roman period, with the important exception of houses built or adapted for Roman military occupation, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

BUILDING DURA'S HOUSES

The Rooms

The named spaces of Durene houses in the original publications are problematic in their identifications as assigned by the Yale excavators. These were a combination of Greek, Roman, and modern 'Oriental' room names, which have little relationship either to Durene terminology in texts or to their function as far as this can be discerned from architecture, installations, and objects. This is the case, for instance, in the use of terms for gendered spaces like *selamlik* and *harim*, which appear in the *Preliminary Reports*.[93] More broadly, it is difficult to ever assign ancient architectural terminology directly to archaeologically known spaces.[94] Despite these problems of terminology, there are several architectural room types which are identifiable in virtually every house at Dura: the entrance passage, the courtyard, and the 'living room' (or, perhaps, *andron*).[95] It is useful to study these, and other types of spaces within the houses in turn not only so that we can adequately describe and understand the house plans, but because shared room types in houses across the site demonstrates a shared spatial grammar.

The houses of Dura presented a blank façade, it seems, to passers-by.[96] Windows did not usually open onto streets, and entrance passageways ensured that

[92] Leriche 2004, 157–8. [93] P. R. 6, 12–14.

[94] Wallace-Hadrill 1988, 48; Riggsby 1997; Winsor Leach 1997; Allison 2001. On the problems of assigning room functions, Meskell 1998, 218.

[95] The application of architectural vocabulary used in ancient texts to archaeological contexts is a vexed question, perhaps best resolved by close attention to sites where there is both textual and archaeological documentation. For example, on Delos, see Hellmann 1992, or Egypt, Husson 1983. In specific instances spaces from the ancient world *are* 'labelled', for example on a papyri from Oxyrhynchus which has a house plan labelled with an *atrium* (Alston 1997) or a mosaic from a house in Spain with an inscription which tells the viewer that the room about to be entered is the *cubiculum* (Carucci 2012).

[96] On façades in the Olynthus, Halieis, and early Roman Delos, Nevett 2009.

even an opened wooden door from the street did not allow a view directly into the courtyard of the house, implying concerns with privacy and security. Exceptional preservation in some parts of the city, though, indicates that there might have been other aspects of house exteriors which are not usually preserved. For instance, in block L7, where the embankment used to shore up the inside of the city's walls preserved the houses to a greater height, several features were visible. Plaster coated the entire exterior wall, protecting the mudbrick and foundations from water. Houses with exterior corner walls were, in some cases, reinforced, perhaps to protect against the knocking of cart traffic.[97] Outside the door to L7-A were found several sockets in the plaster, perhaps for the display of a document of some type; the evidence is tantalizing, but we cannot say what might have been displayed, only that something was affixed to the exterior of the house.[98] Above the entrance, a green-glazed dish was set into the wall, the meaning or purpose of which is not clear, although similar features at Nippur have been interpreted as serving an apotropaic function.[99] No painting is preserved on house exteriors, nor can we reconstruct with certainty the upper storey, so it is impossible to have a full picture of what a Durene house looked like from the street, or indeed, if there was intervisibility between houses from the upper storey or roof. The only external elaboration on most houses seems to have been the carved or moulded jambs and lintels of the doorway.[100]

No houses had any evidence of external decoration or elaboration, with the exception of the grand House of Lysias in D1, which had an engaged column on either side of the door. House exteriors are a primary way in which messages about the house and its occupants can be communicated even to those to whom the house door would never open.[101] Creating and maintaining a barrier between those admitted to the house and those outside it seems to have been the chief concern, rather than communicating wealth or status via elaboration or

[97] Although it has been proposed the entirety of the city was closed to wheeled traffic, as the Palmyrene Gate was accessed by stairs: Gelin et al. 1997.

[98] Display of mortgage inscriptions is attested from the Greek world, although no such inscriptions were recovered at Dura. For an example of an inscription securing an Athenian house against a mortgage which was found *in situ* in a house wall, see *IG* II^2 2761, discussed by Fine 1951, 45. On Greek 'real estate' and mortgage inscriptions from Olynthus, Nevett 2000.

[99] P. R. 6, 265. A similar feature was found above an interior door, M8-A4, in the house which would become the Christian chapel. On Greek and Roman sources relating to superstition concerning house doors, Ogle 1911. On exterior features of houses in Roman Delos, Nevett 2009, 124–8.

[100] While no painting of external house elements is found, this may be an issue of survival (and no modern studies using infrared fluorescent or ultraviolet light, nor microscopy, have been done). Architectural elements (probably of a sanctuary) form the background to the painting of Conon and his family found in the 'Temple of Bel' at Dura, and this exterior includes carved/moulded and painted elements.

[101] On the meanings of house exteriors, and a cross-cultural comparison of external decorative elements, Blanton 1993, 117–47.

decoration. This is found with relative uniformity across the site, perhaps indicating the importance of the house as a social unit. Dura's houses not only presented a blank exterior, but their integration into a block of houses and the use of party walls would have meant their perimeter and size could not be discerned externally, except from being guessed from the number of external doors on the block as a whole. Blanton has argued that the lack of decoration on house exteriors, as a site of social boundaries, might be related to a community that is not strongly segmented.[102]

The entrance passage

The means by which the houses were accessed was through a door opening directly from the street. The street door usually opened into a vestibule which was an entrance/exit passageway (or '*eisodos kai exodos*' in *PDura* 19). The external house door presented a blank façade to the passers-by. Even when the door was open the L-shaped passageway ensured privacy for those inside by making the courtyard and inner rooms invisible from the street.[103] The passageway also acted as a transitional space from the public area of the street outside the house to the restricted space of the private home. Doors from the street were wooden and do not generally survive, but from the stone thresholds and jambs it is possible to tell both that these doors generally opened inwards and that they could be locked via a mechanism on the doors which bolted into the threshold or jamb, and that many exterior doors locked both vertically and horizontally. There was evidently a strong concern not only with privacy and visibility, but also physical security.

These entrance passages were usually the only access into a house, with the exception of those houses with attached shops which often could also be accessed via the rear of the shop. The entrance, controlling access to the house and denying visibility into the house interior, is one of the first of several features which demonstrate a strong concern for isolating and securing the interior of houses (and, indeed, put stress on the *interiority* of the houses). The stress on the interior of the house, and the blank exterior, is common in much earlier houses of Classical Greece,[104] as well as in Mesopotamia (as at Ur) and later ethnographic examples (e.g. of historic Baghdad townhouses) are also found.[105] Rather than looking for

[102] Blanton 1993, 125–7.

[103] Some houses, e.g. C7-B, have a vestibule but were apparently so small that this did not shield much of the courtyard from view. In one house, $C7\text{-}C^2$, an arched opening in a courtyard wall similarly allowed a view deeper into the house than was the norm (or, indeed, a view to the entrance from the interior; interestingly this same house has a plaster bench in the entrance vestibule ($C7\text{-}C^2 5$), so the opening would have allowed someone inside the house a view of anyone waiting there).

[104] On screened street entrances in the Greek world, Nevett 1999, 72–3; Nevett 2009, 119.

[105] For comparison between houses of Ur and those of Baghdad, Brusasco 2004, 152. For Baghdad houses, Al-Azzawi 1969, and those of Ur, Woolley and Mallowan 1976.

the origin or cultural affiliation of this feature, we may also consider its social function. It serves to regulate access to the house, securing it and creating a division between the inhabitants of the house and the world outside.

Finds from these rooms were not always recorded separately from those of the courtyard, but there is an indication of the transitional nature of this space in the artefacts. For instance, statuettes were found in two entrance passages, including two female statuettes,[106] a plaster bull's head,[107] and one male figure with a ram.[108] We might expect such finds in a liminal area such as this which marks the boundary of the private space of the home and public areas.[109] Features known as 'coolers' (discussed later) and benches were also found in entranceways of some houses, the latter perhaps indicating that the space might have been a transitory room for waiting guests before they were received into the house itself.[110]

Further evidence that people may have waited in this area comes from the clusters of graffiti which are found in the vestibules of some houses. For instance, in the vestibules of the House of Lysias (D1-13) and the House of Nebuchelus (B8-H7), groups of texts were recorded.[111] Single examples are known from the entrance vestibules of other houses, such as in the House of the Scribes (L7-A).[112] In all of these places were recovered *mnesthe* graffiti, which are of the formula 'may [named individual] be remembered'.[113] These remembrance formulae cluster elsewhere around the doors, including in sanctuaries such as Dura's synagogue, particularly in 'areas of greatest sanctity . . . around altars and cultic niches'.[114] That we see the same pattern in houses of these texts clustering around entranceways is unlikely to be a coincidence. In sanctuaries, graffiti 'frequently and appropriately appeared in places of intensified holiness', and there is no

[106] G246 (1935.53), from G3-K1, and E1262 (1932.1217) from G1-E81, which Downey describes as a 'draped female figure, probably divine' Downey 1977, no. 86.

[107] Downey 1977, no. 159, from G3-H1, G165, 1938.5358.

[108] Downey 1969; 1977; 2002; 2008. Statuette of a man and ram, E95 was found in an entranceway, C7-G^{2}14. The sculpture was allocated to the Damascus Museum and appears in Yale University Art Gallery's negative Dam–113; Downey notes it might be a Hermes in Downey 1969, no. 42. Published in P. R. 5, 45. On the religious sculptures in C7, see also Baird 2011b. A small stone altar was also found in the entrance G3-K, but altars were not found in other entrances of houses at Dura. The lack of altars in entranceways may be due to the abandonment process of the houses, but as they are found in other rooms of the houses, this is unlikely. G3-K1 altar is G245.

[109] On transitional spaces between house and street in other cultures, see particularly Robben 1989, 575.

[110] At least ten houses had a 'cooler' in the entrance passageway. Benches were excavated in the entrances of houses C7-C^2 and D1. A bitumen-lined jar was found sunken into the floor near the entrance of house M7-W.

[111] Graffiti from the vestibule of Lysias were published in Frye et al. 1955, 148–51, nos 18–26. Those from Nebuchelus were published in P. R. 4, 81–145, nos 183–93.

[112] P. R. 6, 304, no. 795, a *mnesthe* text found in L7-A33, the south side of the entry passage, for a man whose name was incompletely preserved but ended in –nos.

[113] On the frequency of this type of graffiti throughout Dura, Baird 2011c.

[114] Stern 2012, 181.

reason to assume that when the same formulations occurred in houses they were off-hand.[115] These scripts were likely made by visitors to the house—and would have been so unremarkable in both presence and formulation that the guest had no doubt that their actions would not be considered a defacement. The physical presence of the text would seem to be an important part of its usefulness: the graffito was a means by which a text could speak for itself long after the writer has gone. The bodily act of writing enacted a dedication. The notion that graffiti-writing is an act of subversion is belied by the many such graffiti which include the name of the author, although we have no way of knowing whether the person whose name was to be remembered was the same as whoever wrote the text. Pictorial and verbal graffiti are frequent in many of the houses of Dura, and far from being hidden away or something subversive, graffiti were found in all types of rooms, including courtyards and reception rooms. Graffiti were found in houses ranging from some of the smallest to the largest.[116]

The entrance passage of the house mediated between the exterior space of the street, from which the wooden door to the house opened, and the interior space of the house into which it led. This was a liminal area in all houses, and in the largest houses of Dura we can, perhaps, see evidence of visitors waiting in this halfway area not only in the clusters of graffiti but also in the presence of benches.[117] The desire to separate the interior and exterior of the house using such a space can be contrasted with Roman period houses elsewhere, for instance those on Delos, where the layout of the house makes a feature of the view from the street into the house.[118] For example, at Seleucia Pieria, Antioch's port on Syria's Levantine coast, the third-century 'House of the drinking contest', an elaborate structure with several mosaics, seems to have had a entrance which offered unrestricted views deep into the house.[119] We might also compare the later houses of Syria, such as the '*Maison aux consoles*' at Apamea, which is a much larger and elaborate type than generally occurs at Dura, although which has a peristyle

[115] Stern 2012, 183.

[116] Some of Dura's graffiti were published in the *Preliminary Reports*, beginning with Baur and Rostovtzeff 1929. Others later appeared in Frye et al. 1955. Some were included in SEG and AE, and the *Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum*. Pictorial graffiti were later collated by Goldman 1999, and included in the comprehensive Langner 2001; further on the pictorial graffiti of Dura is Goldman 1990. Graffiti on vessels are included in Buisson 1959. On Iranian graffiti in the synagogue, Grenet 1988. On other graffiti in the synagogue, see now Stern 2012.

[117] Benches were not a frequent feature in this room, but do occur in the largest houses, e.g. the entrance passageway of the House of Lysias, D1-13, but also others, e.g. C7-C^{2}5, E4-5.

[118] As discussed e.g. by Nevett 2010b, 83. Such a layout, in houses without elaborate decorations which were being displayed, may indicate, as Nevett argues, that 'members of these households ... interacted relatively freely with outsiders', in contrast to the earlier Greek house, which deliberately shielded the interior of the house from view.

[119] Dobbins 2001.

courtyard entered via an offset vestibule, but the vestibule itself was much more elaborate with paved floors and a columned entrance.[120] Some of the few excavated houses at Palmyra, too, offered the possibility of a view directly into the columned courtyard from the exterior of the house.[121] Durene houses placed a higher premium on the seclusion of the house interior from external views, which may have emphasized the social value of admittance into the house.

The courtyard

The entrance passage led into the courtyard—there is a courtyard at the core of every Durene house, for which the Greek term in the Durene texts is *aule*. The uncovered courtyard is generally placed near the centre of the house, surrounded by rooms on all sides. It was a central activity area and was used to bring light and air to other rooms while maintaining privacy.[122] In some houses at Dura, columns stood on one or two sides of the courtyard, to create a small portico and perhaps support a wooden balcony between rooms of the upper storey (the *ikria* of the texts). The columns were built of plastered rubble, so generally only the bases survive *in situ*.[123] The courtyard often contained a staircase, either against one wall or enclosed in a small room on one side of the court (see Figure 2.6). Other elements in courtyards included underground cisterns, niches, 'coolers' (discussed later), and more rarely preserved, braziers, altars, and counters. Courtyards generally had packed earth floors, although occasionally large houses had courtyards of fired clay tiles, for example house G1-A, L7-A, and the House of Lysias in D1.

The word stoa appears in the Greek documents from the site, but the nature of porticoes and stoa at the site is problematic. Though Dura is generally said to be missing the columns that would characterize the typical 'Greek' house, in fact many houses do contain between one and three columns which would have supported a porch within the courtyard. Part of the problem with the identification of these features is that, as mentioned already, the columns at Dura are typically constructed in rubble and plaster and hence are not well preserved. Seventeen house courtyards at Dura contain columns.[124] Of those, most have only one or two columns which would have supported porches, providing shade on one side of the courtyard and emphasizing one or two sides of the space. D5-F, the 'House of the Atrium', is unique at Dura in having had columns on three sides

[120] Balty 1984. [121] See, for example, 'House F', Gawlikowski 2007, Figure 6.

[122] On the thermal properties of courtyard houses, Dunham 1960.

[123] Partial surviving examples are built of rubble, but they might also have occurred in wood.

[124] B2-A1, B2-C3, B2-G20, B8-H1, C7-C9, C7-C^{2}1, D5-D1, D5-F1, D5-G1, G1-B18, G1-C9, G1-103, G2-B38, B3-B7, G3-L1, G4-A57, and G5-C1.

FIGURE 2.6 View from west over south half of block C7. Redoubt Palace remains visible in the background, and the Euphrates beyond. Courtyard of house C7-G^3 visible just to right of centre, with an overturned 'cooler' lying in the grass which has grown in the excavated area. YUAG k359.

at one point in its history, although the intercolumnations were later blocked off (see Figure 6.3 in Chapter 6).[125]

In the courtyard there is both built and movable equipment related to food processing and preparation, including ceramics. The term 'oven' is used inconsistently in the *Preliminary Reports* and site notebooks. In some instances only the corner supports for an oven remain, indicating a plaster oven with several compartments as in B8-H, and in other houses such as C7-C2 there is a more traditional Near Eastern form of a *tanur* with a beehive shape.[126] Elsewhere a 'terracotta oven' of unspecified form is fitted beneath a flight of stairs, as in houses G1-F, G3-B, and G2-C.[127] In addition to the built ovens portable braziers were

[125] Excepting the J1 structure in the Roman garrison, which had two and a half sides surrounded by columns. Some houses, for instance, D5-$F^1$5, have columns (or column bases) in rooms other than the court, but these all appear to be in rooms which were modified from courtyards into covered rooms.

[126] P. R. 5, 47 (B8-H); P. R. 5, 40 (C7-C^2). See also house H2D for an oven with associated 'kneading trough', P. R. 3, 26.

[127] P. R. 9.1, 133 (G1-F); P. R. 9.1, 94 (G3-B); P. R. 9.1, 150 (G2-C).

found. All known examples of ovens and braziers from the houses of the site come from the courtyards of the houses, with some of those being in arches beneath the staircase immediately off the courtyard.[128] Given that these would have both involved fire, and hence smoke, it should not be surprising they were located in well-ventilated parts of the house.[129] There is also from the houses evidence of grain processing in the form of mills and mortars.[130]

The religious life of the house, too, focused on the courtyard: several altars,[131] as well as an incense burner, were found in this part of the buildings.[132] Sculpture of deities is known from the house courtyards, including depictions of both Aphrodite and Hadad.[133] Of course, 'religious' objects are notoriously difficult to classify, and it has been noted, for example, that many of the terracotta figurines from Dura might have had a religious purpose, but it is equally possible some are children's toys or decorative objects, or had multiple uses.[134]

Courtyards provided access to other parts of the house, as well as light and ventilation, and they also acted as a hub: other activities of daily life in addition to those given earlier are also evidenced in the artefacts from the courtyards, including whetstones for sharpening, needles for sewing, weights for measuring, and indeed a stylus for writing.[135] Many lamps were recovered from the courtyards of houses, perhaps indicating the use of the space after dark, or the storage of the lamps in the courtyard space; a niche in the courtyard of G5-C had its plaster blackened by soot.[136] Physically demanding activities in courtyards may have been undertaken in the evening, as the sun would have made the courtyard, particularly those without the shelter of a small porch of columns, very hot during summer days, although the house itself would have provided some shade.[137] Beyond being an activity area, the courtyard regulated access to the rest of the house. The entrance passage generally led directly

[128] These ovens are from houses C7-C^{2}, C7-G, G1-F, G2-C, G3-B, G3-K, G3-L, L5-A, L5-B, G5-B, G5-C, G5-E, G5-F, G6-C, G7-H, C3-D, C3-B, D5-E, H2-D, M7-W, M7-A, and E4. For braziers, house G5-E is one verifiable example.

[129] On braziers and ovens from Greek houses, Tsakirgis 2007.

[130] Handmill from C7-G (E41); a mill in G2-C, a mortar in B2-F (F1205) and in C7-A (E343).

[131] G1-C (E178); G3-L (K61); G1-B (E414); G3-L (K522); B2-B (F231).

[132] C7-A (E295).

[133] Aphrodite: G1-B (E415, E406); Hadad: C7-G (E2/E60). Further on religious activity in Durene houses, Baird 2012a.

[134] Downey 2003, 15. A number of fragmentary and complete terracotta figurines were found in house courtyards: a horse-and-rider in C7-A1, (E583/1932.1258, Downey 2003, no. 92); a cow from C7-A^{2}6 (E297/1932.1254, Downey 2003, no. 139); a draped female figure (E887/1932.1255, Downey 2003, no. 49); and horse figurines from C3-B7 (F1792) and B2-C3 (F79).

[135] For example, a whetstone from C7-A^{2} (E298), needle from G1-C (E163), copper alloy weight from B2-B (F158), and stylus from B2-C (F72b).

[136] P. R. 9.1, 117.

[137] On sunlight in Mesopotamian cities and its impacts on architectural forms, McMahon 2013, 172–73.

into the courtyard, and one had to pass through the space to gain access to suites of rooms on either side of the courtyard or to access the upstairs space via the stairs.

The courtyard should be seen as the fundamental core of the house; no house is without one. But, as *PDura* 19 demonstrated, the *oikoi* of the brothers shared this space. Adjacent properties at Dura frequently had an internal door to the neighbouring property, so that one could move between the courtyard units without going out into the street. It is not clear on present evidence whether these intercommunicating doors were added over time (by purchase or other means) or whether they were original, although the largest of Dura's houses seem to have been planned with multiple courtyards, within which there is a hierarchy of size.

At Palmyra, multiple courtyard units in houses have been interpreted as accommodating extended families. There, the peristyle courtyard offered a façade of Classicism with an organization that reflected 'the values of a traditional Oriental society', in the separation of public and private areas of the house.[138] In broad terms, we might read Dura's courtyards similarly, with the occasional Hellenic form in a small peristyle or *pastas*, but with an organization of the house which reflects local social organization and cultural norms. Dura's houses are even more inwardly focused than those of Palmyra, whose interior courtyards were visible from the street doors.

The principal room? *Diwan* and *andron*

The *diwan* was the name given by the Yale excavators at Dura to the third type of room which they identified by size, position, and features in most of Dura's houses. It is a large central room off the courtyard, often with a centred monumentalized entranceway which once held double doors identifiable from the thresholds.[139] The room was rectangular in shape with the entrance on one of its long sides, usually entered via a few steps up from the court, with splayed jambs opening inwards, and it sometimes had low plaster benches around its perimeter (see Figure 2.7). The room usually faced northward, was located south of the courtyard, and so shaded from the sun, and was often flanked by one or two secondary rooms, which perhaps formed a suite.[140] In some of the earlier *Preliminary Reports* the terms *liwan* or *iwan* are used interchangeably for this room

[138] Gawlikowski 2007, 79.

[139] Notably, as this room has long been considered a dining or reception room, it is without the off-centre door that characterizes dining rooms in the Greek world, to allow dining couches around the periphery of the room. Dining rooms with off-centre doors to accommodate seven or eleven couches are known from civic and ritual contexts in the Greek world; on these types of rooms Bergquist 1990.

[140] Forty-eight per cent of such rooms had plaster benches. Seventy per cent face north.

FIGURE 2.7 Low plaster bench around perimeter of principal room C3-D9, from north. YUAG fxi48.

(a *liwan* is an arched room opening off a court of a Parthian structure—no such rooms have been excavated at Dura).[141] *Iwan* is the term used for rooms in houses, such as those that are found at Hatra and Assur, where a room opens into a court along an entirety of its short side.[142] Such rooms are considered typical of Parthian-era structures, but are also not found at Dura.[143] *Diwan* is a word of Iranian origin generally used to describe Islamic architecture, to denote a reception hall in a house or palace.[144] Use of the Greek term *andron* in the texts from the site is presumed to refer to the same room as the *diwan*.[145] The supposed relationship is because of the description of the *andron* in *PDura* 19; but, as noted earlier in the discussion of this document, the term *andron* there might refer to a suite of rooms.[146]

[141] P. R. 4, 80.

[142] For Hatra, e.g. 'building A' in Venco Ricciardi 1992; Venco Ricciardi 1996, 311, Figure 3: Venco Ricciardi does not give other instances at Hatra of this form but notes that 'nearly all' excavated houses are like this. At Parthian Assur, building H10, Andrae and Lenzen 1933, Plate 8.

[143] Allara 2002, 52–3.

[144] Hoag 1977, 405; Petersen 1996, 66.

[145] Allara 2002, 43–4, 52.

[146] Saliou discusses the term *andron* in relation to its appearance in *PDura* 19 as well as in an inscription from the Temple of Aphlad on the site and mentions its likely function as a reception area. As for evidence

Despite the problems attaching the label *diwan* or *andron* to particular rooms, the room type—a central room off the court often with a raised platform around its sides—is still a vital one. Such rooms are identifiable in many houses, and they have recurring features such as the centred monumental doorway and plaster platforms.[147] The rooms identified as such were typically located on the side of the house opposite the entrance. The status of this space as a special room was also indicated by the level of decoration, which included elaborate moulded plaster cornices in some examples (see Figures 2.8 and 2.9).[148] These elements, together with the decoration of some examples in the form of painted murals, all indicate some aspects of the use of the space: the room seems to have been used to show in some way the wealth and status of the house's owners to visitors, and was perhaps even the site of formal entertainment.

The correlation of the *andron* of the texts with the house plans on the ground is, however, problematic. Further, the attachment of such labels to rooms is often taken to be explanatory of their purpose as gendered reception rooms. While many houses contain rooms that would seem to fit the typified description used by the excavators (e.g. C7-F), many do not. *PDura* 19 gives no detail as to the nature of the *andron*. Most houses do have a large 'living' room, directly off the courtyard, entered on its long side via steps, and some of these rooms have benches. Many of the rooms meeting the other criteria do not have benches, however (e.g. C7-E). Other houses have a number of rooms which meet the criteria; indeed, in the example of C7-E, while room C7-E5 is larger and has a more elaborate doorway, room C7-E7 also fits most of the same criteria.

That this general room type occurs in houses of all sizes throughout the site indicates they were used for a specific activity or group of activities that was recognized as important throughout the civic community. Nevertheless, in the houses divided in *PDura* 19, only one *andron* is mentioned, so a room with this label was not integral to the *oikos* of each brother, although each possessed a

for the *andron* as a number of rooms, Saliou notes that in *PDura* 19, one brother, Demetrius, receives only the *andron*, whereas the other brothers get a number of rooms. Another reason for this distribution could be that the *andron* is a more valuable room and hence of equal value to a number of lesser rooms. Saliou 1992, 92–5. On the term in an inscription from the Temple of Aphlad at Dura, there referring to a room in a religious structure, P.R. 5, 114–15, no. 418. As noted by Millar, the meaning of *andron* in this context is unclear: Millar 1993, 449.

[147] Forty-four raised plaster platforms around the perimeter of house rooms are recorded (NB: some houses have more than one, and for some houses this information was not recorded or excavated; see Appendix for list).

[148] The mouldings of Dura were studied by Shoe 1943. Many houses had doors with architectural moulding, but only a few had plaster wall cornices (according to Shoe this latter group was, G5-A, D5-F, C7-C^2, C3-B), and only E4, L7-A, and D5-F had plaster wall cornices with moulded relief decoration (see Figure 6.5 in Chapter 6); Shoe 1943, Plate 8. Shoe's list was not, however, exhaustive, and other mouldings are recorded in the publications and field notes.

FIGURE 2.8 Southwest corner of Room L7-A31, showing moulded plaster cornice *in situ* and external house window. YUAG g817a.

ground-floor room which may have fulfilled the same function. The use of the term *andron* in texts from the site related to houses seems to justify its use at Dura, but it may be argued a more generic term for the architectural type, such as *principal room*, should be adopted.[149]

More complicated is the issue of what members of the household used these rooms, and for what purposes. The raised border and elaborated decoration of many of these rooms seem to indicate that formal dining was the most important use.[150] Not all houses had a room with benches, but a room entered directly off the

[149] Baird 2007a.
[150] Thirty-eight rooms had raised borders of this type (see Appendix).

FIGURE 2.9 Example of moulded plaster cornice *in situ* in a house in block B2. YUAG fa10.

courtyard with monumentalized doorway up several steps is present in virtually every house, with a total of ninety-three rooms meeting these architectural criteria across the site.[151] Forty-seven per cent of these rooms had raised benches around their perimeter, and fifty-four per cent of the total number of room type were located to the south of the courtyard.[152] A number of these rooms have hearths or 'fire-boxes', usually built into one end of the platform adjacent to the door.[153] Some houses had more than one room which fit the profile of such a reception room, perhaps indicating that multiple family units each had their own such room within a house.[154]

Paintings were discovered on the plastered walls of several principal rooms, and one of which was found in a house near the city's main gate, M7-W, suggests ritualized dining or reception.[155] The painting consists of several panels, made *c.*194 CE which were preserved on the west and south walls of the room, by the

[151] This number is not equated to 93 houses containing such rooms, as some houses have more than one room which meet the criteria, as do structures which were made to interconnect by the final period.

[152] Twenty-one per cent on the west, sixteen per cent on the north, and the remaining nine per cent on the east.

[153] C3-B6; G3-K8; G3-L2; G5-A2; G5-E3; L7-I77; M7-W6.

[154] e.g. house L7-A, which had a room with a low bench to the south of the courtyard, L7-A40, and a room with plaster blocks, perhaps to support a wooden bench, in a room to the north of its courtyard, entered via a monumental door, L7-A36.

[155] P. R. 6, 146–67, pl. 42.2. Poor photographs preserve images of the paintings *in situ* (YUAG fi180-82, FV79-88), and painted reproductions are the only publication-quality images. House M7-W has a number of unusual features which may indicate that it served a commercial function, including an *amphora* in its

FIGURE 2.10 Painted reproduction of painting with banquet scenes from M7-W6. YUAG.

embankment along the Wall Street (see Figures 2.10 and 2.11). One panel shows three men (named Barathe, Obean, and Malchus) resting on couches on which are placed cushions and attended by servants (one of whom is named Beelaeus).[156] Two of the men and one of the servants hold vessels, presumably of wine, and one of the servants also holds a ladle. To the south more paintings were found, which in a single register included a banqueting scene depicting men and (separately) women, a figure of Eros (which Rostovtzeff used to explain the scenes as funerary), and a hunting scene. The figures on these paintings are named in Palmyrene and Greek. Apart from the question of the funerary or other nature of the banqueting depicted, it might be argued that at least the reclining pose of the banqueters would have been a familiar one in this context. The decorative elaboration of the room, the raised band indicative of formalized dining practices, and the architectural form of the space, as an elongated room raised slightly above the level of the courtyard, with a view over it, demonstrate the importance of the room within the house, and hint at the central role it played. Occupants of the room could look into the courtyard or close the double doors to it. The room type often controlled access to a number of rooms that could only be accessed through it, and the room could be considered to form a suite with these. The rooms accessed via the principal room tend to be those farthest from the entry of the house, in terms of permeability.

The banquettes or benches which surround many of the rooms identified as *andrones* are often only 10–20 cm in height, and the paintings indicate that couches were probably used on these (although no identifiable fragments or fittings for these were preserved archaeologically).[157] These raised surfaces

courtyard. It is positioned immediately inside the city gate. A hunting mural found on the west wall of M7-W6 is now in the Louvre, AO 17310.

[156] The paintings are at the Yale University Art Gallery but are not well preserved; the best surviving published record of the paintings were copies made by Van Knox, Rostovtzeff 1935b, 273–9; Rostovtzeff 1938, 94–5; Perkins 1973, 65–7 and Plates 25, 26. For a more recent discussion of the painting and accompanying texts, Dirven 1999, 281–93.

[157] These couches in the paintings appear only as raised areas, and no furniture legs are visible, although cushions are discernable. On the use of *kline* as symposium furniture in the Greek world, see Boardman 1990.

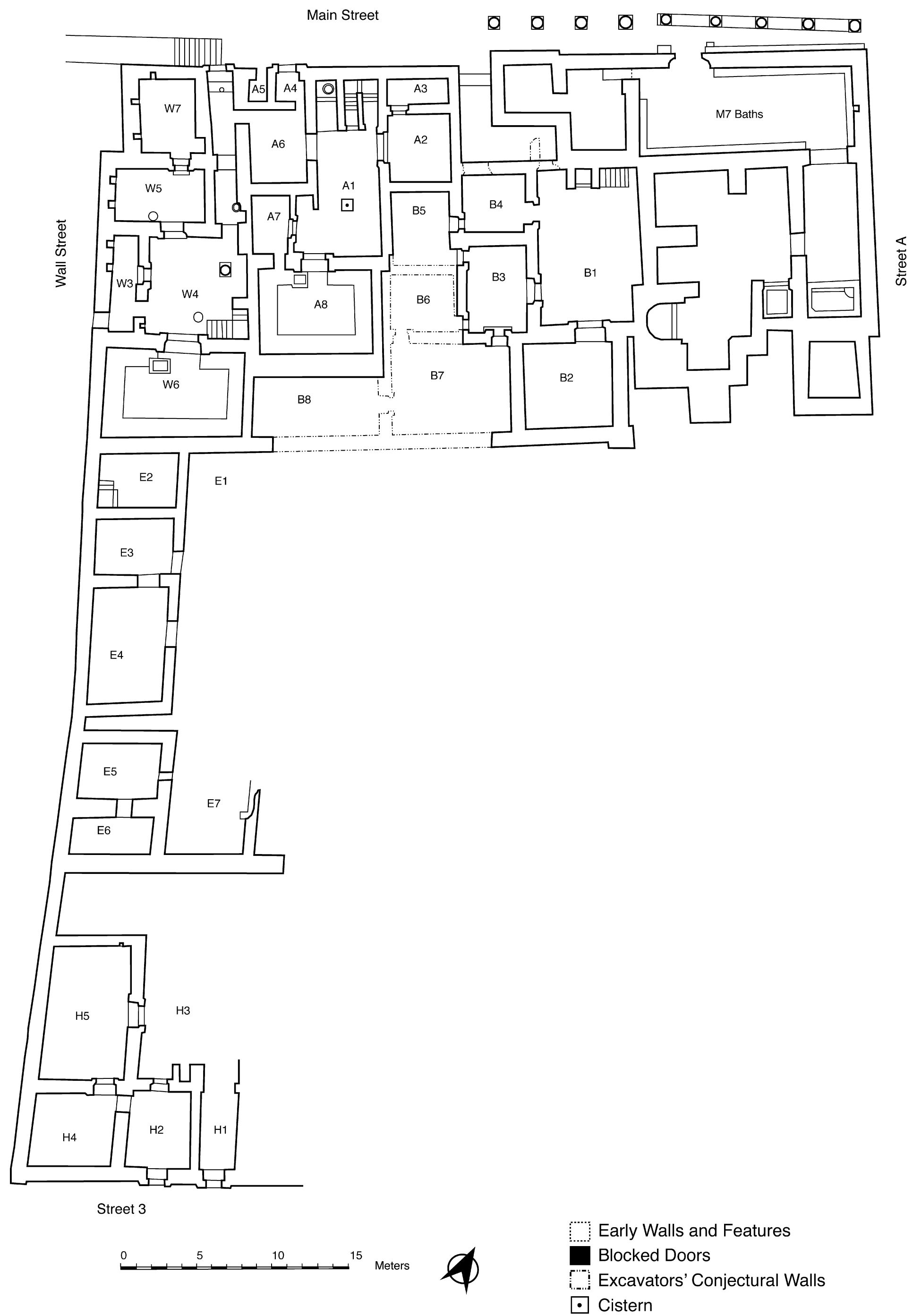


FIGURE 2.11 M7 Plan. Empty area was unexcavated, where preservation was poor due to destruction for Wall Street embankment. Plan by the author after originals by van W. Knox and A. H. Detweiler in the YUAG Archive.

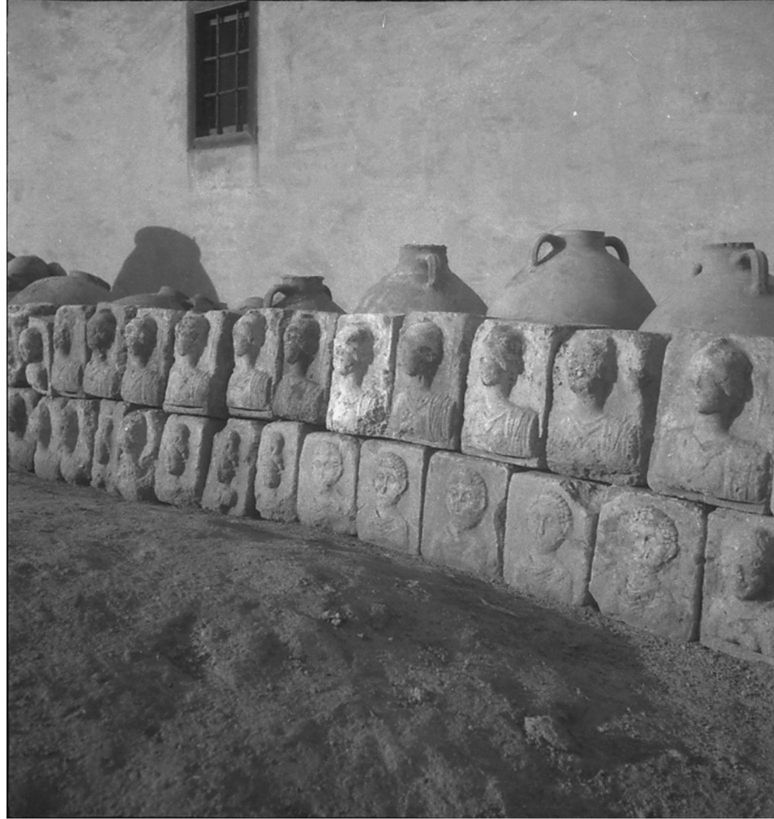


FIGURE 2.12 Photo of plaster blocks with busts stacked outside excavation house. YUAG fvi87.

resemble the *kline*-band for couches found in Greek and Hellenistic dining rooms in houses elsewhere.[158] The rooms are very different, however, from roughly contemporary houses in and around Antioch, which had elaborate mosaics and *triclinia*.[159] While these Antiochene examples likely hosted ritualized dining banquets, their dispositions, the sight lines between rooms, and mosaic decoration with Classical mythological scenes are all in a different milieu than those in the houses of Dura.[160]

Another feature in some such rooms at Dura are plaster blocks (Figure 2.12). The excavators proposed these might have been used to support wooden benches, particularly in the larger houses which did not have plaster benches.[161] A number

[158] On these bands, Dunbabin 1998, 82–3; on difference between Greek and Roman dining patterns in domestic contexts, Dunbabin 1998, 90ff.

[159] Dobbins 2001. On the presence of *triclinia* and lack of evidence for the *andron* at Antioch, Hales 2003, 174–5.

[160] Although, on the Classical mosaics of the Near East having Eastern themes, Balty 1977; 1981.

[161] P. R. 6, 271, with regard to a room in the 'House of the Roman Scribes', L7-A36.

of these blocks were found throughout the site, in both houses and temples, many of them with carved busts in relief on one side. As argued by Downey in her study of the stone and plaster sculpture from the site, they are more likely to have been wall decorations, a conclusion supported by the fact that they are not usually found in multiples in individual rooms. However, their precise purpose remains enigmatic in part due to poor contextual information.[162]

While deposition cannot always be correlated with usage of artefacts or room function, some broad patterns can be ascertained from the evidence of the artefacts found in these rooms. An analysis of objects from within principal rooms strongly suggests that, at least in the final period of their use, these rooms were being used for more than simply 'reception'. The range of activities which apparently occurred in these rooms was extensive. There is evidence for religious activity, in the form of altars and religious statuary, and production activity, attested by mortars and grinders for grain processing.[163] So, while it is possible that the use of these rooms changed on a seasonal, or even daily, basis, their use certainly can be said to extend beyond simply the reception of guests. No specialized ceramics related to these dining practices specifically for use in these rooms have been recognized at Dura, but this is likely in part at least due to the nature of the ceramic record, in which only complete vessels, and few others, were recorded. That very few complete vessels were recovered in these rooms generally probably indicates only that ceramics were not stored there. But that we cannot recognize symposium-like drinking vessels which mediated social hierarchies within houses does not mean that we cannot recognize such mediation in the spaces. Any reading from the artefacts, however, is complicated by the presence of the Roman military throughout the site in the final period, who were present in many of the houses and probably used the spaces in different ways than had their local inhabitants.[164]

Another reason to perhaps avoid the use of the term *andron* is its gendered connotation. It has been argued that the houses of Dura were built with separate areas for the women and men from the earliest period of the city, with men in the *andron* on the south side of the house and women and men on the north side, but there is nothing to support this in the texts or archaeology.[165] The *andron* as a gendered space is not unproblematic even in the core of the Greek world, e.g. at

[162] Downey 1977, 116–30. The plaster blocks with relief busts were catalogued by Downey, which unfortunately do not include this one (although she does mention it, 116), were approx. 25–32 cm wide and 19–23 cm thick. The exact number is uncertain because photographic records and a catalogue made by Hopkins seem to duplicate some entries. Downey counted thirty-six of known provenance; many depict Athena. One example from M7-W was recorded as found above floor level.

[163] e.g. altar E661, G1C-15; mortar E92, G1-A3; statue of young god, F2216, C3-B6.

[164] On the military inhabitation of block G1 in the agora, see Baird 2012c.

[165] Hoepfner and Schwandner 1994, 275.

Athens, as it has been shown that perhaps the concept of the *andron* as host to symposia or other reception activities was not linked to a particular space.[166] It might have applied to an area within a structure only at the time when related activities were taking place—this is demonstrated not only by archaeological evidence but also in the movement of such areas shown by the activities described by the fourth-century BCE orator Lysias in the Athenian Eratosthenes' house.[167] At Olynthus, the *andron* takes a different form, and Cahill applies the term to a specific type of room found in many, but not all, of the houses there, which was primarily used for sympotic activity.[168] *Andrones* at Olynthus and elsewhere in the Greek world were typically square rooms, entered via an anteroom, with an off-centre door to accommodate couches, while those at Dura generally opened directly off the courtyard and have a centred door.[169] The rectangular form of the Durene type, with an entrance on the long side, is reminiscent of Hellenistic forms including those of 'Broad room' type from Delos,[170] but this shape is also found in earlier Mesopotamian houses such as those at Babylonian Ur.[171] The *andrones* of Dura lack the mosaics of Hellenistic houses elsewhere, although the mouldings and paintings of the rooms might still be seen to mark them out in a decorative hierarchy as a more important room in the house.[172]

While specialized reception or dining activity in rooms such as *andrones* or *triclinia* is associated with Greek and Roman practices, it has been shown that dining on couches was actually a practice which originated in the Near East and was taken up later in the Greek world and Etruscan Italy in the seventh and sixth centuries BCE.[173] It is therefore very difficult to ascertain securely if the nature of dining at Dura would have been a local inheritance, or a Hellenistic or Roman import, or even a hybrid form of all of these. More important, perhaps, is the question of the social role these rooms fulfilled. If the *andron* of the Classical world was a place for the solidification of civic identity, and the Roman *triclinium*

[166] On the *andron* and its problems in Greek contexts, see Cahill 2002, 180–90; Nevett 2005; Lynch 2007; Nevett 2010b, 43ff.

[167] Lysias I, *On the Murder of Eratosthenes*. On the flexibility of space in Greek housing and issues surrounding 'gendered' activity areas, Goldberg 1999, and on the use of gendered space in Greek textual sources, Davidson 2011.

[168] Cahill 2002, 180–90.

[169] Cahill 2002, 80. The *andron* off the largest courtyard in the palatial residence of Lysias in D1 had an anteroom, as does that of the large house D5-F. On the form of the *andron* in the Greek world and its 'remarkable homogeneity', Dunbabin 1998, 82.

[170] Dunbabin 1998, 84.

[171] Brusasco 2004.

[172] Westgate 2000. Fragments of mosaic flooring were recovered in the C3 baths and from the presumed upper floor of the E4 house—both of these uses of mosaic seem to have been Roman in date, and there is no earlier use of mosaic at Dura. This is probably due to a number of factors, including the accessibility of material and the place of painting in the local tradition as a means of decoration.

[173] Dentzer 1971; 1982.

a place where hierarchy could be enacted, what social function did the rooms fulfil at Dura?[174] The scale of the room within the house and the ubiquity of the type in houses throughout the site would seem to have more in common with the Hellenic form, as it would be a domestic practice common at a civic scale. This room may well have been the domain of men within the house, at least at certain times, but the visibility between this room and the courtyard may indicate that women were not segregated within the house. The need for privacy from the world outside the house is much more strongly enacted in the architecture than is a need for gendered division of space within it. The elaboration given to this room, both architecturally and decoratively, implies the reception of guests within it, but the way in which it is also reached via the courtyard, bringing guests to the centre of the home, could suggest that the reception of guests was an important activity within the house, but that this needed to be balanced with the need to control relations between these guests and some members of the household.[175]

Block C7 is a useful example for examining some of the problems in identifying room types, as this block demonstrates some of the common features of the principal room but also the fact that there is still considerable variability. In this block, there were twelve courtyards, and each of these courtyards had its own entrance from the street via a vestibule. A number of rooms directly off courtyards have elaborations such as plaster benches (e.g. C7-A10, C7-B2, C7-F4, C7-C11, and C7-G4). In C7-F4 paintings were also found. However, in other houses, rooms such as C7-$C^2$8 and C7-E5, there are rooms with double doors, entered via stairs from the courtyard, which do not have benches, and in some houses, as C7-A, there is one room with double doors and a separate room with benches (C7-A7 and C7-A10, respectively).

Further to the already heterogeneous picture this block presents is the fact that many courtyard units (which likely delimit an earlier phase of the occupation of the structures) were combined into multiple-courtyard units by the final phase of occupation (see Figure 2.13).[176] By this time, houses C7-B, C7-C, C7-G, C7-G^2, and C7-G^3 all interconnected, and it would have been possible for the occupants of these houses to move between them without venturing out into the street. This configuration completely changes the understanding of the permeability of the houses and the relative accessibility of the rooms from the exterior, although the benches and other features were retained. It is possible that these interconnections were not actually late additions, but instead that multiple-courtyard units were frequent, with multiple 'joint' families perhaps living in adjacent and intercommunicating houses.

[174] On the social contexts of *andrones* and *triclinia*, Dunbabin 1998.

[175] As argued by Nevett with regard to the *andrones* of Olynthus: Nevett 1999, 155.

[176] Block C7 is also studied in detail in Baird 2011b.

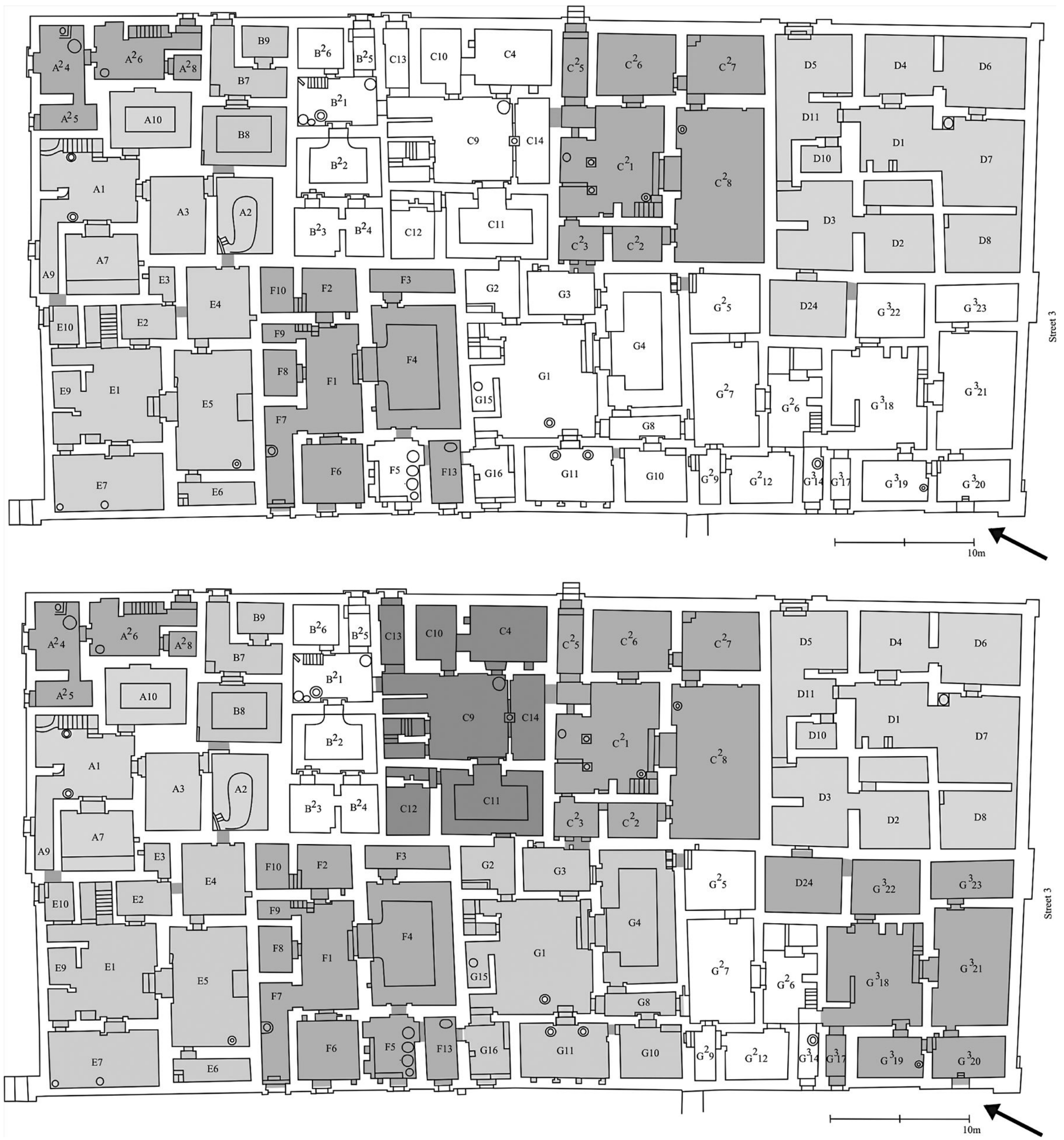


FIGURE 2.13 Plan of C7, adapted by the author from original by Henry Pearson. In top plan, greyscale denotes extent of different units (adjacent units which interconnect are of the same greyscale), compared with the lower plan, in which each of the courtyard units was treated independently by the original excavators.

PDura 19 complicates the picture further: one room is designated as the *andron* of the house as it has been inherited from the father, Polemocrates, but once the father's property is divided amongst the brothers, the rooms held by each of the brothers is referred to as his *oikos*, despite the shared use of the courtyard and entrance. They also each received a room on the ground floor and the corresponding rooms on the upper floor. This document could thus imply that each of the rooms off the court could be the focus for a separate family: so, in this case, each of the sons of Polemocrates and their families. Demetrius was named for his grandfather and was thus the oldest son (this tradition is well attested at Dura), and it is perhaps not a coincidence that he receives the room that is called the *andron*. Regardless of what the rooms are called, the basis for the *oikos* of each of the sons is a ground-floor room directly off the courtyard and the room or rooms above that on the upper floor. Perhaps the series of *principal rooms* surrounding many Durene house courtyards, in fact, reflect the living rooms that are the basis of each of the conjugal units within the household. This might explain why many houses have more than one room that has been interpreted as an *andron*, and why each of these usually controls access to dependent rooms. The term *andron* might have been used for the room occupied by the oldest son and his family, and this is perhaps reflected in the hierarchy of ground-floor living rooms surrounding Durene courtyards.

As mentioned, ethnographic comparanda points to the use of living rooms around a court as the foci for conjugal units.[177] The pattern of living rooms around a courtyard, each being inhabited by conjugal units, is also known from the earlier evidence of houses in Old Babylonian Ur.[178] One interpretation of the Durene house plans, then, is that the number of ground-floor rooms (which have raised plaster platforms or were large rooms entered on a long side via several steps) off the courtyard corresponds to the number of conjugal units (in this case, the sons of Polemocrates and their wives and children) inhabiting the structure, with the central or most elaborate of these being a marker of the oldest son or head of the household.[179] This would explain why such living rooms, opening off the courtyard, tended to control an independent range of rooms which were further from the courtyard. Each of Polemocrates' sons had to block the doors that had existed between the rooms that were allotted to his brothers: this would imply that a principal room with independent access off the courtyard and each range of rooms accessed via that room represents this son's *oikos*. This ground-floor layout may have been replicated in the upper storey.

[177] Cutting 2006, 238, 241. [178] Brusasco 2004, 143.

[179] In this reading, the population density of Dura is significantly higher than has previously been assumed.

Extrapolated to the archaeological house plans, the conclusions drawn from the living arrangements documented in *PDura* 19 have important implications for their interpretation. In the plan shown in Figure 2.13, House C7-E might be interpreted as housing three conjugal units: the eldest male heir having taken the largest and most elaborate room, C7-E5, and its dependencies to which it controls access, C7-E4 and C7-E6. The other rooms accessed off the court, C7-E2 and C7-E7, could have housed separate conjugal units and controlled their own, smaller, suites of dependent rooms. The need for each heir to have their own ground-floor room accessed directly off the court could also explain some oddities, such as C7-F8, a room which seems to be a late addition to the house, built within the existing courtyard. Further, this reading would mean that in houses like C7-C^2, only one conjugal unit was present, as all of the living rooms which open off the courtyard have doors which allow them to intercommunicate with the main one, C7-$C^2$8. A door that had opened between C7-$C^2$3 and C7-G3 had been blocked, so while house C7-C^2 was an independent unit in the final period, it had an earlier relationship to the adjacent house (and, in turn, to the houses which were opened into it).

Of course, projecting kinship structures directly onto house plans does not account for the messiness that inevitably occurs in real-life families and architectures. A close reading of the Dura documents together with careful attention to the architecture and assemblages, however, together imply a very different interpretation of the houses than was made by the original excavators. In this interpretation, the houses were much more densely occupied, and the form of the house was more directly related to kinship and descent than it was a need for gender segregation.

Storage rooms

The term *tameion* appears in the *PDura* 19, and may be translated as 'storage room'. There are many rooms in the houses which may have been used for storage, but there is little evidence that these were architecturally distinguishable from other rooms. Rather, they were storage rooms because things were stored in them, and they are sometimes identifiable from the artefacts found within them. For instance, in one of the rooms excavated by the Franco-Syrian expedition, C11-*Maison Sud* 10b, a very small room (4 × 1 m) was found to contain hundreds of broken but complete vessels, many stacked within each other, which were stored in niches and on wooden shelves which had long since rotted away, but were indicated by the surviving sockets in the plaster walls of the room.[180]

[180] Excavated by the author; publication forthcoming *in Europos-Doura Varia* by Justine Gaborit.

Such ceramic assemblages were not generally noticed, or at least noted, by the original excavators.

In rooms excavated by the Yale–French academy expedition, many were found which contained a number of *pithoi* or large *dolia*.[181] Some storerooms were identified by the excavators based on the presence of magazines of large jars—even if these installations were outside the house itself.[182] Storage was sometimes postulated as a use for features which the excavators could not easily explain—for instance, in house B8-H, a shallow concrete basin which is described as perhaps a storage place for standing large vessels of wine or water;[183] elsewhere, as in house G1-F, a plaster bin makes a room a storeroom.[184] Even houses without an identified 'storage room', of course, could have had some part of the house used for the storage of goods.

Cellars found beneath houses were often labelled as storage rooms, but only a handful of examples were excavated, and these are, with one exception, now inaccessible because of collapse. Some had a narrow bench, leading Cumont to believe these were used for respite from the heat, though the Yale excavators thought they were more likely for storage, and indeed some, like that beneath house A1-A, are not tall enough to stand in.[185] House C7-A has a 'small cellar' beneath one of its rooms, the entrance to which was covered with a gypsum lid, again interpreted as being 'so small they would be suitable only for store-rooms.'[186] In house G1-G, a cellar extends from within a house to beneath an adjacent shop, perhaps indicating both were under the same ownership (at least at some point during its existence). The cellar in this case was cut into bedrock, with a more formal entrance onto the stairs fitted with double doors.[187] In house G3-G a cellar was installed late in the life of the house, dug into the bedrock and of significant size, with ceilings almost 2 m in height and with a number of vaults (the unusual features of this cellar were made possible in part because of the rising street levels in the surrounding agora).[188]

Other rooms

Beyond the rooms noted already, it is interesting that some spaces in the house were not delineated architecturally. For instance, there are no 'kitchens' (spaces labelled as such in the original reports cannot be substantiated).[189] Food

[181] G6-C is an example of a house with an identified storage room based on the *amphorae* and *dolia* found in it. P. R. 9.1, 156.

[182] For instance, in A1, a house west of the citadel. Dura P. R. 2, 59.

[183] P. R. 4, 80. [184] P. R. 9.1, 134. [185] P. R. 2, 59.

[186] P. R. 5, 36. [187] P. R. 9.1, 135.

[188] P. R. 9.1, 92–3, 98. A cellar was misidentified in G6-D by Cumont; the adjacent areas were not excavated at the time so the difference in ground level was not recognized. Cumont 1926, 244. P. R. 9.1, 156 n. 52.

[189] In house B8-H a plaster trough is said to be indicative of a kitchen: P. R. 5, 47.

preparation happened in different spaces, including in courtyards, and in small spaces beneath staircases.[190]

Lack of other textually named rooms in Dura documents may simply be down to the number of preserved documents and record-keeping practices. There were several other room types at Dura which have been identified by their architectural features. Many houses had single-room shops attached to them, as will be discussed in Chapter 4. Another specialized space which has been identified in the houses of Dura are stables.[191] Stables were labelled by the original excavators within some of the larger houses using the presence of various features, including 'hitching posts' and 'horse troughs'. Problematically, long shallow basins were variously interpreted in the *Preliminary Reports* as horse troughs or bread-kneading basins, while in other cases, in areas where they coincide with cobbled pavement, they were reasonably interpreted as an area of keeping animals.[192]

A number of other rooms made up a Durene house. The average number of rooms per house is nine when the divisions used by the original excavators are used. The notion of 'average' houses is heavily skewed by some very large houses (over fifty rooms) and some very small (at only two or three rooms). If the House of Lysias, as an exceptionally large house, is excluded, the average number of rooms per house is 8.5. Or, if the interconnecting houses of the final period are considered as single units rather than separate courtyard houses, the average number of rooms is 10.3 per house. As for house size, the ground-floor area of the average house is approximately 254 m^2, if the original house boundaries proposed by Yale are used; if the interconnecting houses are combined the average is 330. The range is from 70 to 2356 m^2.[193] The many doorways within houses and

[190] See also Baird 2012a.

[191] 'Stables' occur, according to the *Preliminary Reports*, in houses G1-A, room 14 (P. R. 9.1, 141, describing a manger and trough); there is a kneading trough in the courtyard (18) of house G1-B (according to P. R. 4, 53), but P. R. 9.1, 143–4 notes that this same area (in the southeast corner of the courtyard) was a stable, and that '[i]t would comfortably accommodate one horse.' House M7-W, room 3 (P. R. 6, 141) is narrow and opens onto the Wall Street so 'was used possibly as a stable to shelter animals in bad weather. Such a theory is supported by the fact that the hole bored diagonally through the south jamb of the north door was undoubtedly intended for hitching horses'. In block E4 provision is made for animals (P. R. 6, 28) and rooms 13, 24, and 30 are said to have once been used for stables, based on stone paving, bins interpreted as mangers, a trough, and graffiti of horses (P. R. 6, 23–4) 13, 24, though these rooms are said to lose this use in the structure's last phase (P. R. 6, 30). In the unpublished material, Gunn lists Room 11 of the House of Lysias as a stable due to the 'horse tank' on its south wall, its place just off the courtyard, and its cobbled floor. Gunn 1965, 23.

[192] See, for example, house G5-E (P. R. 9.1, 112 on 'a cobbled area large enough for a single donkey'). In Allara and Saliou's re-examination of the houses on the ground they listed only three houses as having features which could be interpreted as mangers. These were D1, G3-M, and possibly G1-A. Allara and Saliou 1997, 153.

[193] Sizes of individual houses are given in the Appendix. Average size excludes block E8 as divisions between houses are uncertain. Numbers here do not include sizes for houses which were not completely excavated, nor the ground area of shops attached to houses, even when they open directly into the house.

the subdivision of houses into rooms meant the circulation within a house could be subject to manipulation. Parts of the house could be sealed off and locked, or particular routes to rooms closed temporarily or more permanently.

House building and materials

Building materials

Sun-baked mudbrick was the most widely used construction material in Dura, as in much of the Near East, not only in the houses but also the public structures.[194] The most common method of house building was the construction of plaster- and stone-rubble wall bases, consolidated with a clay mortar and built in shallow trenches. These wall bases were then covered with a waterproof plaster which is extensively used throughout the site on civic, religious, and private structures.[195] A superstructure of mudbrick was built on top of these bases, which would have served not only as a strong foundation but also to keep the mudbrick off the ground and out of the immediate threat of water damage. The mudbrick itself was probably prepared outside the city, as it would have required large quantities of water and the space to dry, both of which were more accessible adjacent to the river below the site itself. Once the mudbricks were transported into the city and used to build walls (using a variety of mortars), the mudbrick was then itself plastered.[196] Subsequent layers of plaster sometimes sealed graffiti and allow the relative chronology of some house modifications to be discerned.

Some houses which post-date the active use of the quarries in blocks A1, B2, and C3 are built into the voids left where stone was removed, in some cases using the living rock as house walls. Coarse, crystalline gypsum occurs at the site and its immediate environs, and substantial quarries inside the city made use of this stone.[197] In the houses it was not usually used for the construction of walls, except sometimes as rubble, but carved gypsum blocks were regularly used for doorways, including the thresholds, jambs, and lintels, where it was sometimes carved into elaborate mouldings and plastered.

The ability to determine the composition of walls is related to the state of their decay, with the most deteriorated walls being more visible in the legibility of their inner construction.[198] What can be said is that the variability of techniques, between rubblework, rubblework with courses, and different mortars (of clays and plasters) varies so frequently (within blocks, houses, and even rooms),[199]

[194] On the use of mudbrick in the Roman East, see Dodge 1990, 115.
[195] On the plaster, Dandrau 1997.
[196] On the mudbricks of Dura and the mortars used to bind them, Gelin 2000.
[197] Geyer 1988; Bessac 2004a. [198] Allara and Saliou 1997, 148.
[199] Allara and Saliou 1997, 149–50.

that it is difficult to argue that certain techniques of composition of the walls themselves could relate to any particular chronology or other correlate. It does show that a variety of building methods were used to achieve superficially similar results. Where plaster has fallen from the faces of the walls, re-use of structural elements can be seen, as in block D5, where 'coolers', column drums, and ashlar masonry was re-used inside walls and plastered over. Some building materials are used only in houses adapted for use by the Roman military, as will be discussed in the next chapter. These included the extensive use of fired bricks in the superstructure, as well as mosaic floors and perhaps window glass.

Wood beams were used as the basis of the roofing material, but also for the creation of floors and upper storeys, as well as shelving and for doors.[200] Woven mats made of reeds were also used as roofing material. The typical method of building roofs on structures was a construction of wooden beams, overlaid with reed matting which could then be plastered. This method has been recorded from early Mesopotamia and into modern times in the region. Archaeologically, the material which survives is the reed-impressed plaster which is found in abundance at Dura, broken into fragments with the collapse and decay of the houses. Unfortunately, the Yale expedition did not count, weigh, or retain this material for any of the houses, which might have allowed us to further reconstruct the roofed areas and help understand the nature of the second storey of the houses. The matting and the reed bundles used to produce it were also found 'in quantity' in the wall embankments of the city, which were probably the remains of demolished buildings (see Figures 2.14 and 2.15). The wooden beams produced, in effect, coffers, into which painted ceramic and plaster tiles were in some cases placed.[201]

As mentioned earlier, it is likely most houses had flat roofs, and some certainly had second storeys, for example, the House of Lysias, the E4 house, and that divided in *PDura* 19; most house courtyards contained staircases which would have allowed access to a second storey. Some ceramic roof tiles were found in the agora, but these need not have belonged to domestic structures.[202] Indeed, the use of flat roofs throughout the city for at least the final centuries of the site is one indicator of cultural affiliations—upstream of Dura at Jebel Khalid, the Hellenistic houses had pitched roofs with ceramic tiles, which, it has been argued, were an explicitly 'Greek' choice.[203]

[200] Saliou 1992, 81–4; Allara and Saliou 1997, 150.

[201] Undecorated plaster tiles were found in C3; decorated ones in L7 and D5.

[202] It would be expected that if fired clay tiles, which survive as well as any other ceramic, were in common use in the Hellenistic period, they would have been found on the site in much greater quantity—as it stands there are only a few isolated finds, all from the agora. These tiles were found sealed in an early floor level. P. R. 9.1, 10–11.

[203] Jackson 2001, 11–12.

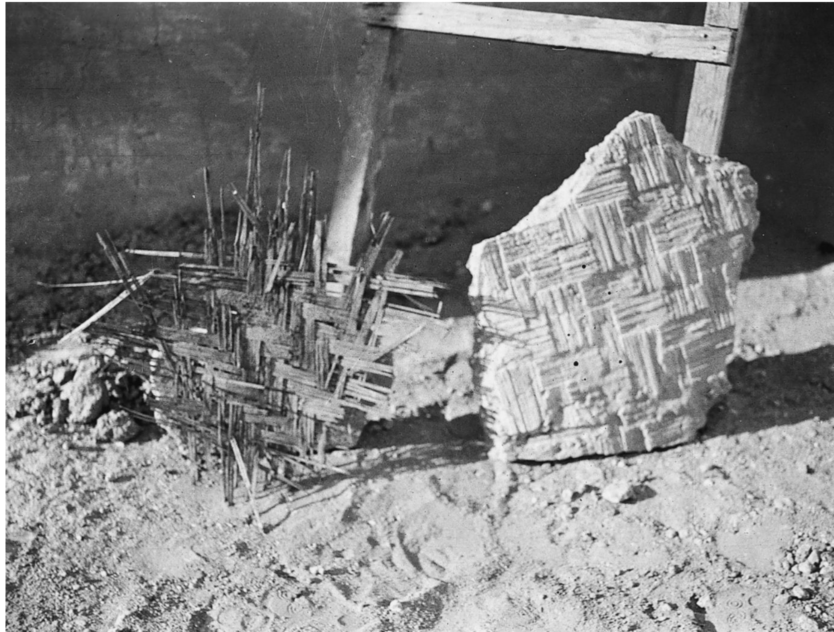


FIGURE 2.14 Fragments of reed matting and reed-impressed plaster excavated in the Wall Street. YUAG fiii82.

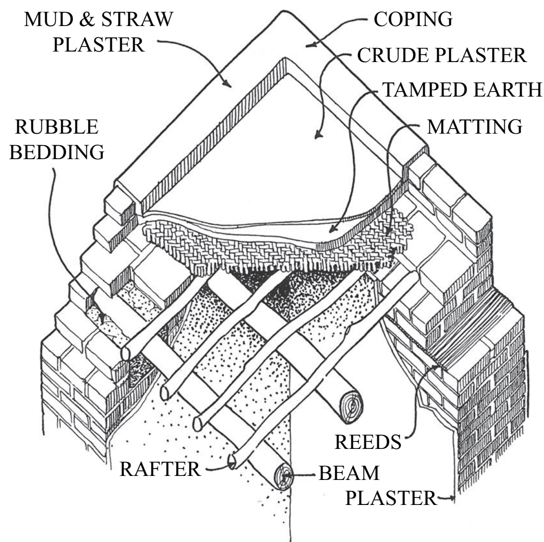


FIGURE 2.15 Drawing from Yale Archive showing roof construction method. YUAG Yale-2240.

The most common flooring method at Dura was simply packed earth floors, referred to in the publications as 'rammed earth'. Archaeologically such floors can be difficult to recognize and it seems that in some cases the Yale excavators dug through them. In some cases, it is noticed that earth floors are of a particular type,

for instance red earth;[204] and occasionally, this red-earth floor is laid over a plaster floor.[205] Some rooms at Dura received floors of plaster. This plaster, the same as that used on the walls, varies in thickness. Though this treatment of the floor was more common in 'principal rooms', it also occurs in storage rooms and other 'low-status' areas, so it is likely its purpose was utilitarian in some places. Floors with cobbled pavements of rubble or broken plaster were excavated in some areas, and such a floor was also sometimes installed in areas taken to be 'stables' or areas for animals. Floors laid with fired-brick tiles were rare, and limited to the courtyards of particularly large and presumably wealthy houses, including D1 and G1-A, and these were smaller than the *bipedales* used in Roman military structures.

The only known mosaic from a residential building at Dura comes from the upper floor of the house in E4 in the Roman period, in a building converted for use by the Roman army, and then only fragments were found, presumed to have come from an upper storey. There are no examples of mosaic floors from any of the more typical Durene houses; this is perhaps due to the lack of a local mosaic tradition or a lack of appropriate local stone, although mosaics are known from the baths of Dura.[206] Wooden floors were also occasionally used, as is evidenced by beam sockets in the walls of some houses, where the ground level necessitated raising floors.[207] Given the techniques of the Yale excavators it is unlikely that any remains of wooden floorboards would have been identified even if they had survived—but in some cases (as in house G7-H) it is clear from the level of the cistern and columns in the courtyard of the house, as well as a series of sockets at the same height in the walls of the room, that a series of beams once crossed the area. Wooden floors seem to have been used when there was also an opportunity or need to access spaces below them because of topography or street level rise.[208]

One element of the Durene buildings not evident from the Yale excavators' plans is their height. The level of preservation varies throughout the site, but the rooms of Dura seem to have been relatively tall. For instance, along the Wall Street, where the preservation is the deepest, rooms are more than 5.5 m in height from the floor to the turn of the ceiling.[209] The amount of enclosed space which made up the rooms of houses is thus larger than a glance at the plans of the

[204] P. R. 6, 217 (house L7-I). [205] For example, in room 40 of house L7-A.

[206] The mosaic inscription from the C3 bath is published in P. R. 6, Plate 29.

[207] The sockets for wooden beams in the entranceway of house L7A are discussed in P. R. 6, 266. Street level rises in the agora also seem to have necessitated raising entrance levels, sometimes with wooden flooring.

[208] This was apparently the case in L7-A38, where a wooden floor was used for the entranceway, and in C3-B4, where the houses built into the side of the plateau necessitated a wooden floor for the house entrance, creating a space beneath it accessible from stairs which descended from the courtyard, C3-B7. Only the sockets for the wooden beams were preserved in these cases, not the beams themselves.

[209] P. R. 6, 273.

rooms might suggest. The depth of preservation is uneven across the site. The Wall Street rampart sealed deep deposits, as did fill within the city towers, and across the site there is a trend towards shallower preservation towards the north. For instance, in block J1, walls are preserved to a height of less than half a metre or less, compared to those in D1 where they stand to several metres. This differential is due to a number of factors, including prevailing winds and protection from storms allowed by the topography and city walls, as well as the placement of a road that has run through the site for at least the past several centuries.[210]

Paintings and architectural decoration in houses

Gypsum and plaster served both functionally and decoratively. Gypsum was often carved into elaborate profiles and used for the jambs, jamb capitals, and lintels of doors. The profiles of these carvings were recorded by the excavators and a study of them was published by Lucy Shoe.[211] Plaster mouldings were also used, less frequently, to decorate rooms at Dura, and plaster cornices, sometimes including figured decorations, were excavated affixed to the walls of rooms within houses as noted earlier. No traces of paint have been found on these, but modern methods of testing for these have not been applied, and it is worth noting that polychrome stuccowork is known from Parthian houses in southern Mesopotamia.[212] By comparing the profiles of mouldings of Dura with those she had studied elsewhere, Shoe demonstrated that the mouldings very much belonged in the Hellenistic tradition, and were directly comparable with examples from sites such as Pergamon. While these mouldings, comparable to those at other Hellenistic sites, persisted well into the Parthian and Roman periods at Dura, there was found to be very little Roman influence on mouldings at Dura.[213] The persistence of this Hellenistic style in the mouldings is notable, although probably not down to the 'unparalleled effectiveness of Greek mouldings' as argued by Shoe.[214] It is more likely that, in the first instance, the mouldings were an architectural element which was achievable in local materials. Dura's colonists and the early generations at the site would have replicated to some extent the elements of the built environment with which they were familiar. Over time, the mouldings became part of the

[210] Allara and Saliou give an overview of the relative preservation of different blocks in Allara and Saliou 1997.

[211] A study of the mouldings was made by Lucy Shoe (later Shoe Meritt, the name under which her later studies on mouldings were published): Shoe 1943.The legacy of her work is discussed in Edlund-Berry 2005. While Shoe's dating was built on a problematic chronology constructed by Frank Brown, overall her study is useful for the comparisons she makes with other sites. See also Allara and Saliou 1997, 149–50.

[212] Simpson et al. 2012.

[213] Roman types of mouldings were limited to inscriptions, the triumphal arch of Trajan, and moulded cornices. Shoe 1943–4.

[214] Shoe 1943, 4.

vernacular of the site, and rather than necessarily having an explicit 'Greek' resonance, they simply became part of the local *habitus*.

Dura is perhaps known better for its wall paintings than any other find. While these are frequently called frescos, they are in fact not true fresco, in wet plaster, but rather were painted on dry plaster.[215] Both the synagogue and the Christian church had wall paintings, but these were made after the buildings became primarily sacred rather than domestic in character. Elsewhere on the site, in the living rooms with raised platforms in houses M7-W and C7-F, paintings were found. The 'banquet painting' from M7-W has been discussed (pp. 74–5). Among the unpublished paintings are geometric designs from the House of Lysias in D1, which also had much painted plaster among its architectural decoration, some of which is still *in situ*, if badly degraded.[216] Fragments of paintings associated with the Roman military were found in houses L7-A and E4. These are discussed in the next chapter. House C7-F is the so-called 'House of the Frescoes': paintings were found on the south and west walls of room 4 (see Figure 2. 3, and Figure 2.16). The hunting scenes preserved have been taken as evidence, variously, of Parthian or Sasanian cultural presence.[217] Neither can be proven conclusively, but hunting scenes are a frequent motif in pictorial graffiti at Dura as well.[218] Paintings influenced by Parthian decorative motifs (and the related Pehlevi or Parsik inscriptions found on the paintings) are not out of place at Dura, and the paintings in house M7-W also include a hunting scene.[219] In house C7-F, Greek and Latin graffiti were also found, the latter recording the presence of the *Legio III Cyrenaica*.[220] The plasterwork and paintings of the houses, like other elements, do not fall neatly into cultural categories but were a hybrid form that had Hellenic, Mesopotamian, and Parthian affiliations.[221]

[215] For an overview of wall paintings at Dura, see Perkins 1973, 33–69.

[216] Also as yet unpublished is a fragment of a painting showing a man's face found by the MFSED in C11.

[217] Rostovtzeff and Little 1933; Hopkins 1979, 70–1, 188; Goldman and Little 1980; De Waele 2004. NB: Rostovtzeff and Little 1933 use a different system of lettering for the rooms. Goldman and Little 1980 use a different system as well and as a result wrongly place the context of some of the graffiti, repeated in De Waele 2004. On the Parthian/Sasanian influence on Antiochene mosaics, Lavin 1963; Huskinson 2003.

[218] Mounted archers and hunting scenes are found in graffiti throughout the site; Goldman 1999, nos A.1–15 and B.1–7. Hunting scenes are frequent in pictorial graffiti throughout the Mediterranean: Langner 2001, Plates 60–9.

[219] Readings of the painted inscriptions were contested. See P. R. 4, 199–206; Bertolino 2004. As noted in Chapter 1, this is also evidence of Persian texts in the synagogue: Grenet 1988; Noy and Bloedhorn 2004, 177–209.

[220] P. R. 4, nos 294–9.

[221] For instance, we might compare the several painted hunting scenes from Durene houses, a typical motif of Parthian art, with the masonry-style paintings of Jebel Khalid, which more readily fall into Hellenistic Mediterranean groups, and indeed which have been compared with paintings from houses on Delos. On painting in Hellenistic houses, Westgate 2000. On paintings at Jebel Khalid, Jackson 2009.

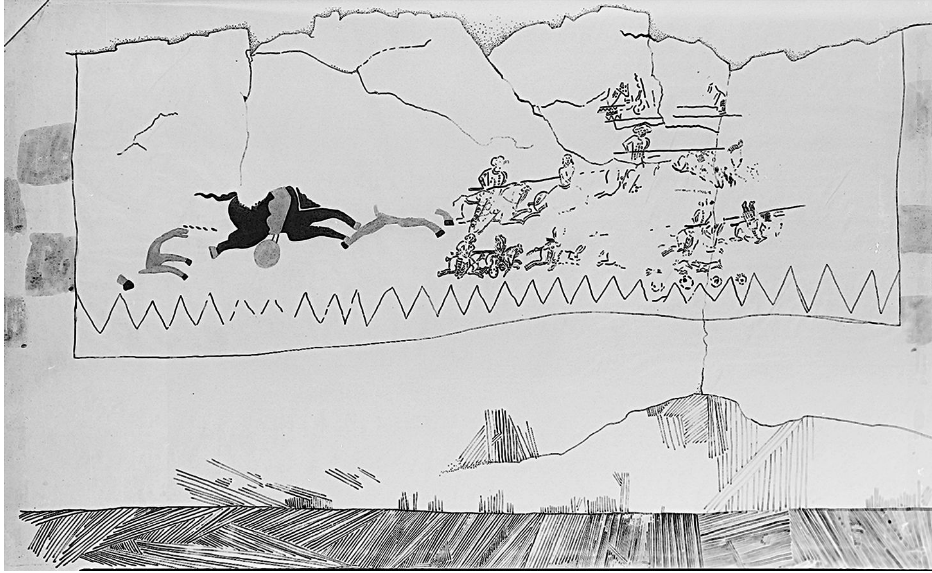


FIGURE 2.16 Copy of paintings depicting hunting scenes found in house C7-F. YUAG Yale-1723.2.

Features and house fittings

Platforms and benches

Low, plaster or plastered rubble platforms sometimes ran around the perimeter of the principal room, and were diagnostic of that room type in the original reports. The platforms were typically between 10 and 20 cm high, so they were probably used as a support for cushions or wooden furniture (niches just above the level of these platforms indicate built furniture was not always, if at all, present). The paintings from M7 (pp. 74–5) show diners apparently reclining on some sort of couch or built furniture. Higher benches (about 40 cm off the ground) probably intended for sitting, rather than reclining, were also found occasionally in the entranceways of houses (see Figure 2.17).

Coolers

A 'cooler' is the name given by the Yale excavators, and used by the current Franco-Syrian mission for want of a better term, for the large containers constructed of plaster or gypsum which are commonly found in the houses at Dura, usually in the courtyard (see Figure 2.18).[222] They often stand more than a metre

[222] Shoe 1943, 39. Coolers occur in over seventy per cent of the houses at Dura—and the houses that do not have coolers are all those which are poorly preserved or only partially excavated. Allara 1988, 338; Dandrau 1997; Allara 2002, 53; Allara and Saliou 1997, 152. Coolers were usually recorded on the house plans, as two concentric circles.

FIGURE 2.17 Raised bench in early entrance of D5-F13/14, after cleaning in 2006. Photo by the author, scale is 50 cm.

tall, close to the entrance or in the courtyard of houses, usually against one of the walls. They vary greatly in size, both in height, outer and inner diameters, and depth, with seemingly no correlation between these (outer diameters average about 75 cm, and inner diameters between 25 and 50 cm). The openings narrow towards the base; the depth of this depression ranges from 8 cm to half a metre. The range in these features are poorly understood but they are thought to be for cooling containers of water or mixing plaster for re-plastering houses, or a type of mortar,[223] or even both for mixing plaster and for cooling water or holding water jars.[224] Other suggestions include industrial equipment and planters for vines.[225] Hoepfner and Schwandner suggest also that the coolers are for water; however, they believe they are either for water to serve guests or for hand- and foot-washing.[226] The so-called coolers are not exclusive to houses, and are also occasionally found in streets and public buildings, for example, in the street north of block G1, where several of these features remain *in situ*, and also in shops.[227]

[223] P. R. 6, 141 n. 118; Jackson 2001, 11–12. [224] P. R. 6, 269.

[225] I am grateful to Lin Foxhall for this suggestion, though it could not apply to the many coolers found in interior rooms which were poor in natural light (as opposed to courtyards).

[226] Hoepfner and Schwandner 1994, 280.

[227] For instance, shops G3-S3 and G3-S4 have coolers; P. R. 9.1, 79. It is also evident that the coolers now in the streets at Dura were not simply moved there by the excavators; in Henry Pearson's unpublished report on D5, probably written in the fifth season and now in the Yale Archive, he mentions these features as being frequent: 'Many such found, at least one in every house. Some in streets and public buildings.'

FIGURE 2.18 Remains of 'cooler' adjacent to C7-A1 door. Photo by the author, 2005.

While there are few published comparanda, similar features are visible at the site of Jebel Khalid and at Assur, where it was described as a stone mortar with examples coming from several houses on that site.[228] Unfortunately neither the contexts at Assur or those at Jebel Khalid add much to the understanding of these features, although it is notable that they occur both at Jebel Khalid where the structures are much more Hellenistic and at those of Assur, which are Parthian. The polished interior of the coolers does seem to indicate they were used as a type of mortar, though for what material is unclear. It is possible that they were used for the preparation of plaster for use in the houses, and that the depth of the inner depression relates to the length of time they were in use.

Staircases and upper floors

Staircases were usually found in the courtyards of most houses, giving access to upper floors or to the roof space of houses. There is little certain archaeological evidence for upper floors in the Durene houses, because of the height of preservation of the houses, but as has already been noted, upstairs rooms are mentioned in some texts.[229] It is possible for some houses that these staircases provided access

[228] Andrae and Lenzen 1933, 10, 12–13.

[229] In block E4 where fragments of a collapsed mosaic floor and painted mural fragments were noted. P. R. 6, 15; one room of L7-A, the so-called House of the Roman Scribes, P. R. 6, 267; in the Christian House church in block M8 adjacent to the Wall Street an upper storey was partially preserved, F. R. 8.2, 24–5. On the upper floors of Dura from the perspective of the texts, Saliou 1992, 81–4. 'Enclosed' staircases, which

to flat roofs which were used for activities but not inhabited *per se* with permanent rooms, but rather used in ways which changed seasonally.[230] The use of semi-permanent or temporary means for covering and/or subdividing the roof space cannot be ruled out.[231] Some houses, however, including a few particularly large ones including the House of Lysias, the E4 house, and L7-A, had partially preserved upper storeys which were roofed. *PDura* 19 implies that in some cases, at least, the layout of the upper floor repeats the organization of the ground floor.

Staircases were constructed in a variety of material and styles. The staircases were often constructed of plastered mudbrick at the base, with the upper stairs of wood when there was more than one flight. As the structures were exposed by the Yale expedition, the mudbrick has dissolved, and many now are preserved only as ramps of mud held in place by the partition walls on the sides of the stair. In some cases they are better preserved, and in a few cases the walls adjacent survive to sufficient height to preserve the beam sockets which would have carried the wooden stairs, as in house G1-F—occasionally the wooden timbers were preserved at the time of excavation.[232] Less frequently, the staircases were carved from gypsum, as in D5-E, or out of living rock as was possible due to the topography in certain parts of the city, as in C3-B. There are three main types of staircase in the houses: the enclosed stair, sometimes with a small room beneath the return of the first flight and accessed directly from the courtyard; the stair which rises straight, placed against a wall of the courtyard and sometimes with plastered arches beneath; and a stair which is built into the corner of the courtyard, using the corner as the two side walls, sometimes with arches beneath.

Windows

Windows were not a commonly preserved feature of Durene houses, and were only found where the preserved wall height was substantial, particularly along the Wall Street (see Figure 2.19). They were occasionally excavated, though, and were situated so as to ensure not only privacy but heat control.[233] They were placed high in the walls, and frequently they slope upwards from inside, thus lighting rooms but not allowing visibility between rooms or from outside. This need for privacy is shown, for example by the windows in M7 which, when the street level outside rose,

are effectively built in a room on one side of the court, are called 'monumental' by Allara, who discusses the staircases and upper floors of Dura: Allara 1986, 58. On the debate over the existence of courtyards and second storeys in Mesopotamian houses, Stone 1996, 231. On upper floors in neo-Babylonian Merkes at Babylon, Baker 2007, 71.

[230] The Yale mission to Dura restored the city's houses with flat roofs. On the use of roofs in ancient Mesopotamian houses, Allara and Saliou 1997, 146 n.111.

[231] Saliou 1992, 84. [232] P. R. 9.1, 144.

[233] Small, high windows are the best type for temperature control. On this, Callaway 1980, 93.

FIGURE 2.19 Window in external north wall of M7-W7 from interior of house, with plaster visible to left of man posed as scale. YUAG fc25.

were blocked up.[234] Window glass has been identified in a few structures, and elsewhere large translucent pieces of mica are thought to have served the same purpose, though the 'mica' is more likely sheets of gypsum (which occurs naturally on the site and is used frequently in many forms).[235] Light was also brought into houses by means of the central courtyard of the house and with the use of portable lighting equipment, and ceramic lamps were found throughout the site.[236]

[234] P. R. 6, 142.

[235] Glass, for example in E4, and L7-A, P. R. 6, 11, on window glass and terracotta window frame; mica and gypsum, P. R. 5, 41 and P. R. 6, 273. On glass from Dura, Grossman 2011.

[236] For an overview of Dura's lamps, see F.R. 4.3. On the significance of light in Roman houses, and for a reconstruction of lighting within them, Ellis 1994; 2007.

FIGURE 2.20 Image of doorway, B8-H3. YUAG e57.

Doorways

Dura has many well-preserved doorways, with jambs of gypsum or plaster (or plastered gypsum or rubble), with evidence of locking mechanisms and some with elaborate profiles as noted earlier. Others had arched openings, constructed of plastered rubble. The interior doorways were tall and wide, and when open could have allowed substantial light from the courtyard into interior rooms (see Figure 2.20). Unlike the walls of mudbrick exposed by the Yale excavators, which disintegrate quickly when uncovered to the elements, the doors with their heavy lintels and threshold blocks tend to remain *in situ*, preserving with them much information on the layout of the houses and other structures. Jambs, jamb capitals, and lintels of the doorways, frequently in gypsum and with profiled

FIGURE 2.21 Wooden doors excavated in tower fill. YUAG z32.

cornices, are some of the only ostensibly 'Greek' architectural elements of the Durene houses, along with the moulded cornices of some of the rooms.[237] The doors themselves, made of wood, were not preserved in the houses, but some examples were found in the Wall Street and in the towers, preserved beneath the great mass of earth (see Figure 2.21).[238]

Niches

Most niches seem to be relatively simple and rectangular, but arched niches are also common, often being built into the area beneath the staircase.[239] Niches that once had shelves (the supports for which survive) are also known, as are more elaborate examples (see Figures 2.22 and 2.23). More rare are 'secret' or 'elbow' niches, which occur several times in small rooms (L7-C27, G1-B11),[240] which, as

[237] Allara, DEE 1, 56; Shoe 1943. The dates given by Shoe are sometimes problematic, and many of the lintels and jambs are re-used.

[238] No wooden doors were found *in situ* due to preservation conditions; wood does not survive well at Dura other than beneath the protection of the glacis.

[239] Allara and Saliou 1997, 153.

[240] P. R. 6, 272; P. R. 9.1, 146. Room G1-B11 seems in fact to be a 'secret' chamber, as the entrance is very small and low, with the door jambs preserving sockets for not one but several locking mechanisms. The door itself may have been concealed with a textile hanging. C7-E3 was similar, a small room containing a niche at the periphery of the house entered via a very low doorway.

FIGURE 2.22 Niches in B8-H12. YUAG d120.

the name suggests, conceal a right-hand turn into the wall which is not visible from normal viewing angles.[241]

Water in the houses

The issue of the water supply at Dura is problematic.[242] There is no overall city water supply known, though this was undoubtedly a problem as the Euphrates is

[241] Chambers which could be sealed, where expensive or precious goods could be kept, are known from Babylonian houses.

[242] Although see Koloski-Ostrow 2011.

FIGURE 2.23 Niches in blocked door on east side of room C7-G3. Note also empty sockets in wall to right of door. YUAG H41a.

at some distance to many of the houses.[243] There is some evidence in the form of graffiti noting water-carriers who supplied the city.[244] Vessels near house entranceways and sunk into the floor have been interpreted as water receptacles, but this cannot be confirmed.[245] An aqueduct on the north side of the city has not been thoroughly investigated, but is linked to other structures installed by the Roman

[243] The prevalence of Eastern practices and choices in the Roman Near East (for instance, not using lead pipes in public or private contexts at Dura), perhaps reflects 'a form of material *habitus* that was resistant to alternative, 'modern', ideas from Rome.' Kamash 2012, 85. The use of 'Roman' water-management features at Dura is limited to structures associated with the Roman military (including the 'private' context noted by Kamash, which is the 'Palace of the Dux').

[244] Several graffiti mention the purchase of water, perhaps attesting to the use of water-carriers for the water supply. For instance see 'banquet inscription', no. 862, Allara 1988, 338; Allara and Saliou 1997, 152.

[245] See house M7-W for instance.

military. Terracotta water pipes were installed in the north part of the city, and were used by the military to supply the E3 baths as well as those in C3; it was postulated that all of these structures were fed by water machines which lifted water from the river level to that of the plateau to feed the baths.[246]

In houses, cistern-covers cut from large blocks of gypsum are often visible on the ground at Dura, as are many visible openings for cisterns or large depressions where cisterns have collapsed. These underground chambers were generally described by the Yale excavators as 'cesspools' but as these are often in the middle of the central courtyard, the identification is hardly plausible.[247] Though these cesspools cannot be wells, as the water table is far too deep,[248] their identification as cisterns for the collection and storage of rain water was confirmed by Allara and Saliou, who showed that many of these structures were waterproofed on the inside.[249] Many houses had cisterns, with fifty-three examples recorded in the excavated houses.[250]

Little evidence survives of the ways households managed their access and use of water. In some cases, for example in house G3-D, where the walls stand quite high, pipes were uncovered which appear to have brought captured water from the roof down to the court.[251] In two houses associated with the military, houses A1-A and E4, terracotta drainage pipes were found emptying into the courtyard. It is possible that the most likely answer to Dura's water issues is that different water sources were for different uses: the cisterns within the houses which collected rain and waste water could have provided water for washing, plants, and other domestic uses, but drinking water might have been collected by hand and come via the water-carriers of the city.[252] Despite being immediately above the Euphrates, water at Dura seems to have been at a premium, and there are none of the elaborate private fountains found in the wealthy houses of other Roman cities of the period in the

[246] P. R. 6, 100–2.

[247] For instance, cesspools are in the middle of the court of house G1A, P. R. 5, 49. On the use of identification of cesspools as a means of Othering by the excavators, Baird 2007a.

[248] Allara 1988, 336.

[249] Cistern as used here as defined by Crouch: 'A cistern is a water-holder carved or constructed below the ground surface and waterproofed.' Allara and Saliou 1997, 151–2. On the water supply at Dura, Koloski-Ostrow 2011. On water in the Roman Near East, Kamash 2010.

[250] See the Appendix for details of which houses have cisterns. Four are found in the House of Lysias, but houses generally had one, in the courtyard. Topography was undoubtedly a factor in which houses could have cisterns; none of the houses in C7 on the edge of the plateau, for example, have a cistern, whereas most of the agora houses do. The depth of these features (most are at a minimum several metres deep), and their narrow opening, usually broadening into a bell shape under the surface, are unlike the rectilinear and comparatively shallow features identified as *koprones* at Halieis and elsewhere, for the collection of refuse and compost. Owens 1983; Ault 1999.

[251] P. R. 5, 67.

[252] For the use of different water sources in urban contexts see Crouch 1993, 33–6.

Near East, whether because of this issue of supply or because it was not considered desirable.[253]

Latrines were also identified at Dura, but the most securely identified examples occur in connection with military installations, such as that in E4.[254] In some cases, only the stone block, or 'toilet seat' was found, while elsewhere descriptions are not complete and list any one of a number of descriptive terms, not applied consistently in the archival notes or published *Preliminary Reports*.[255] The lack of actual 'toilets' or 'cesspits' in the houses is not necessarily a problem, as human waste could be collected in ceramics and disposed of, or more likely, reused: liquid waste for tanning, fulling, and dying, and solid waste for fertilizer or fuel.[256]

Only the most elaborate houses had any permanent installation which might relate to bathing. In the house of Lysias, room D1-46 had installations which might be identified for this purpose, in the form of shallow tubs. Similar features were found beneath the latest houses in the agora, for instance beneath G3-M2 where a terracotta tub was set in plaster, which perhaps indicates that these features may have occurred more frequently in the earlier houses of Dura.[257] Baths were not otherwise found in the private houses of Dura.

FROM HOUSE TO SOCIETY AT DURA-EUROPOS

Part of what makes Dura's houses such an interesting case study is that these chronologically Roman structures bear so little resemblance to any 'archetypal'

253 There was, however, a private bath in the 'Palace of the Dux'. On water and display in elite Roman houses, Jones and Robinson 2005.

254 P. R. 6, 10, 11, 22. E428, E413. There also seem to have been latrines, whose function necessitated the use of stone conical jars, in the palace on the redoubt (P. R. 4, 26, Pl. 13, 3). In some instances in the *Preliminary Reports*, 'latrine' is used for any single underground chamber thought to be used as a cesspool, for example see P. R. 5, 49 and 53, a cesspit or cesspool being defined as any underground tank or pit where liquid waste or sewage is stored or disposed of, whereas in current formal usage 'latrine' refers to two or more toilets. In other cases the *Preliminary Report* uses 'latrine' to refer to any toilet installation above or below ground, single or multiple, leading to some confusion; the 'latrine' against the stair in house M7-A for instance is of unclear form, as its description is simply 'latrines stand against a staircase' (P. R. 4, 32).

255 Only the stone block, or 'toilet seat' was found, in likely association with the house adjacent to the Roman military temple in A1, P. R. 2, 5–60.

256 On the production of leather and the use of excrement, see Hodges 1964, 148–50. On the use of urine and faeces in ancient industry (and the accompanying odours) see Bartosiewicz 2003. On the modern exaggeration of the uses of human excrement for industrial purposes, Flohr 2011, 90. Koloski-Ostrow notes 'it is very likely that most private houses had at least one cesspit latrine' but unfortunately gives no evidence for this: Koloski-Ostrow 2011, 256.

257 P. R. 5, 67–8; P. R 9.1, 32–6, 75–8. Image published in P. R. 9.1, Plate 81.

Roman house.[258] Rather, the structures at Dura are within a milieu for which there is little comparanda—an urban expression of building forms and techniques known in Syria and Mesopotamia which at Dura occur in a hybrid localized form. This hybridity defies categorization as Mesopotamian, Greek, or Roman, and instead at Dura the structures materially manifest and form part of the complicated cultural, social, and political background of the city.

From the building materials, for instance, the use of gypsum, river reeds, mudbrick, and plaster exploits locally available materials, and the form of courtyard houses might be linked with those from earlier in Mesopotamian history. Other elements, such as the moulded cornices, lintels, and jambs, or the use of columns in courtyards attest to the Hellenic origins of the site. Fired brick, mosaic floors, and window glass appear at Dura, but only in structures directly associated with the Roman army, and do not seem to have been taken up more broadly, unlike some portable Roman material culture, as will be discussed in Chapter 4. Downey has shown that the temples of Dura were a distinctive local type which drew on some elements of earlier Babylonian structures.[259] In a similar way, the houses of Dura are a distinctive, local type. While drawing on local vernacular building traditions, they also incorporated some elements of Hellenic precedent. This 'local' character of houses in urban contexts is in fact relatively normal in Roman provincial contexts, a fact masked by the ubiquity of the study of Pompeian houses as representative of Roman dwellings.[260]

Space, in this case the interior space of houses, is always under construction, and always the product of interrelations.[261] Architectural space is formed by, and then constrains, social life and interactions between members of a household, as well as between those members and people visiting the house. The house exterior, too, is the household's interface with the broader communities outside. Houses, in this way, are both a product of micro-scale personal relations (for instance, there is a need to seal the door between the living room of Demetrius and his brother Nicanor when the house is divided upon their father's death), but also of community norms at a *polis* level (for example, in regulating what is expected when one visits a house, what type of reception activities happen, how property is transferred across

[258] Houses generally assumed to be typically Roman have tended to be those of Pompeii and described in the ancient sources. The problems with this have long been recognized; see, for instance, Allison 1997; 2001. As has been pointed out, 'the Pompeian evidence rarely comes close to the supposed normative model derived from study of the literary sources.' Mattingly 1996, 215. For a current use of 'Campanian' houses as normative (used to measure 'cultural influence' on Delian houses), see Chapter 4 in Nevett 2010b.

[259] Downey 1988a, 124–8. For recent work on first-millennium Babylonian houses, Miglus 1999; Baker 2007; 2010.

[260] For example, on North African Roman houses, Thébert 1987; Daniels 1995; Carucci 2007; Nevett 2010b, 119ff; on Cisalpine Gaul, Coralini 2010; on Britain, Perring 1987; 2002; 2005. In each of these 'Roman' settings particular, selected, Greco-Roman architectural traits are found in houses.

[261] Massey 2005, 9.

generations, or how a house should appear on the street). Cultural preconceptions about the use and nature of space and ownership (the form of particular rooms, or the need for vertical ownership within a jointly owned structure) are also evident. Houses, too, can transcend micro- or community scales, or as Massey puts it, 'we recognize space as the product of interrelations; as constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny'.[262]

The term 'household' is not one that is straightforward to define, particularly as it relates to archaeology, as it is a social rather than material occurrence.[263] The articulation between the concept of 'household' and the physical house is a difficult one.[264] The household has been called 'the next bigger thing on the social map after an individual',[265] and for this reason the household is a useful term and unit of study, as it is comparable on a small scale (intra-site) and on a very large one (cross-culturally).[266] Archaeologists, as has been pointed out, 'do not dig up households', but just the structural and artefactual remains of them.[267] The household in its most basic sense refers to a social group at a moment in time, but people's roles within the household change over their life course, and the isolation of a single generation's archaeological deposits is all but impossible; it has thus been argued that what the archaeologist should be examining is the 'household series' as an analytical unit, that is, 'the sequence of households that successively inhabit a given structure or house over a span of more than one generation'.[268]

The house as an analytical unit, in some senses, transcends that of household; beyond a co-resident group. As a heuristic device we can look to Lévi-Strauss's 'house societies' for a way to think about the way in which a house can be a corporate organism, in which shared residence is only one way in which the house might be seen as the material embodiment of the social group within it—others might be the productive capacity of the house, or its ritual and symbolic elements.[269] Houses are material, bounded units, which it is possible to identify archaeologically and which have a direct (if not always known) relationship to

[262] Massey 2005, 9. [263] Bender 1967; Brandon and Barile 2004.

[264] The relationship between the concepts of household and house has been widely discussed. Wilk and Rathje 1982 was formative, and see e.g. the recent review of 'household archaeology' in Foster and Parker 2012, 4.

[265] Hammell 1984, 40–1. [266] Netting et al. 1984, xix ff.

[267] Wilk and Rathje 1982, 618; Allison 1999, 2.

[268] Smith 1992, 30. Though an attempt has been made to isolate the household life cycle for ancient Greek households, it relies on Athenian law, and is not applicable to all Greek households: Gallant 1991, 11–34.

[269] Lévi-Strauss 1983. For applications and responses (including the lack of attention given to the physical structure of the house by Lévi-Strauss, see especially Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995b; Joyce and Gillespie 2000. On the house society model and its utility for Classical houses, Nevett 2007, 366.

social groups.[270] The gulf between Lévi-Strauss's houses and the Durene examples is large, but from his and other anthropological studies we can raise interesting questions, particularly, in Greco-Roman antiquity, by attempting to bridge textually attested social units and the physical remains of architectural units, and examining the role of houses in the formation and maintenance of social identities. The use of the terms *oikos* and *domus* in Greek and Roman antiquity for both a physical structure and a social group parallels the recognition in anthropological contexts of the use of the term 'house' in different societies for both a dwelling and the group of people.[271] This usage is also found in documents from Dura. Similarly, the recognition of the house as a symbolically meaningful place, in such work as Bourdieu's on the Kabyle house, draws our attention to the ways houses can bridge the mundane, everyday world of the house and the broader one of society, social change, and the symbolically meaningful.[272] The relevance of these concepts to Dura's houses will be explored further in the following chapters.[273]

The textual evidence that survives from Dura is fragmentary, and of such a small number that they cannot be certainly asserted as being representative. What it does show, however, in documents like *PDura* 19, is that houses at Dura were not just a backdrop to daily life, and not just pragmatic shelter on the Syrian steppe. The houses of Dura, to the sons of Polemocrates at least, were inextricably part of the social relations of their family, and the reconfiguration of the houses in this document shows how the material preserved in the imperfect archaeological record and the architecture of the houses could be an active part of the social practices of the site. Houses were not just a passive reflection of household dynamics, but a way those relations were constituted and lived out, and a way they could be communicated to others. The social relations thus formed in the household went with the members of the household into the community on a broader scale.

Further, while archaeologists naturally rely heavily on house plans, it is important to recognize that a plan view of a house is not necessarily a natural way of understanding or interpreting it. Plans of architectural remains are for good reason a central form of archaeological data, but they have several problems which must be accounted for as we read them. First, they compress time; this is particularly a problem on older plans such as those made at Dura, in which the 'final' state plans made of houses incorporate many earlier modifications of the

[270] Gillespie 2000a, 468; 2000b, 22. [271] Gillespie 2000c, 6.

[272] Bourdieu 1990.

[273] What both the archaeological and anthropological work largely skirts, of course, is the issue of *home*, although the invocation of both structure and *place* in the term may be a compelling way forward. On the home in (prehistoric) archaeology, Tringham 1995.

house and often elide features from earlier periods which were visible to the 1930s architects, even if these were not part of the structure in the final period.[274] Second, they tend to obscure fragmentation and uncertainty, with drawn lines making a wall where on the ground there are only a few fragments of mudbrick; this is particularly a problem with older excavations such as Dura. Third, they provoke in the modern viewer a notion of 'design': that is, when we look at plans we tend to think that they are a template for construction on the ground, a design that is followed, built, and then completed.[275] This obscures the complex building histories of houses such as those at Dura, which were regularly modified in small and major ways over the course of very long histories of occupation, sometimes spanning generations.

One way to begin to account for the problems in reading both the archaeological and textual data is to use them in tandem. For example, in *PDura* 19 households such as that formed by the sons of Polemocrates are bounded by kinship relationships, and these are enmeshed with the physical unit of the house. From *PDura* 19, it appears that it was the male line that provided the basis for the co-residence of a multiple family unit within a physical structure, and that communal areas of shared access were held in common between the extended family units which might become a multiple family unit, as also noted in *PDura* 16. Yet it is also clear that in the case of the sons of Polemocrates, at least, that architectural reconfiguration was also necessary to meet the needs of each son (and presumably his family) within the parameters of each son's inheritance. All of this raises a fundamental question for the current study: what should we recognize or define as a house? In the final period of Dura's occupation, many of the houses interconnected internally, with doors opening between party walls. Indeed, such polycentric structures, with multiple courtyards are frequent at Dura. Should each courtyard unit be considered a house? Each series of interconnected rooms with a single entrance? In *PDura* 19, each of the brothers is said to own his *oikos*, the rooms allotted to him off the courtyard and the corresponding room on the upper floor, but they share access to the entrance, courtyard, and balcony.

While the original excavators delimited each house as a courtyard unit, including naming them in this way, for the purposes of this study, the house will be considered as each architectural unit with an entrance from the street, rather than counting each courtyard or suite of rooms (see Figure 2.13). This is because the control of access to the dwelling is one element which arises in the textual evidence *and* is observable in the preserved archaeological remains of the

[274] For instance, this is a frequent problem in the courtyards of houses at Dura, when the excavations went below the last floor level of the courtyard to expose earlier features of the house. These features were included on the plans but, as levels were not usually marked, appear to be features of the later house.

[275] McFadyen 2012.

house.[276] Unlike looking at courtyard units, or suites of rooms, defining a house by its entry/exits should allow, if not access to the precise number of people within, or even to exact shape of an extended family like that of the brothers of *PDura* 19, then at least to a social unit of a house, whatever that might entail. The text shows that while brothers might each occupy discrete and defined parts of the house, access and common areas are shared within this group. By using as a starting point the house form and observing those houses which interconnect in the final period, we are also able to examine the modifications made to the structure and their relative chronology where possible, to work backwards and extrapolate the biography of the structures.

This approach allows a measure of temporal control, by examining the house unit of the final period (which is, after all, what exists archaeologically) and tracing earlier modifications where possible, rather than attempting to deal with the houses as palimpsests of changes over centuries, or imagining 'original' structures corrupted by time and the Roman occupation (as was the habit of the original excavators). Indeed, the assumption that each courtyard unit delimits an 'original' house plan which was later corrupted by modifications is just that—an assumption—and this is a problem at other sites as well. It is possible houses with multiple courtyards, perhaps for a number of family units (or a multiple family unit),[277] were, in fact, normal in this region, and that these have been overlooked because of preconceived notions of what courtyard houses *should* look like.[278] Rather than looking for an explanation as to why many urban houses in

[276] Benech has taken a different approach, in part due to the nature of his data—the geophysical results give impressions of spaces, but doors between rooms are often difficult to identify. Benech therefore used courtyards to identify 'dwelling units', and extrapolated the size of the house from the size of the courtyard (Benech 2010, 9–10), assuming a correlation between these, based on the use of the house divisions proposed by Yale (Benech 2007), which do not take into account the relationships between houses. Despite this issue, Benech's results are valuable in many ways, including measuring courtyard sizes throughout the unexcavated part of the site, and hypothesizing the division of the houses in the geophysical plans. Benech considers the doors which open between the different 'dwelling units' (i.e., houses as defined by courtyards) as 'entrances', and treats them the same way as external entrances from the street: Benech 2007, 99. As he applies the definition systematically it is perfectly useful as a means of discussing spaces, but is difficult to reconcile with the understandings gleaned from the textual evidence.

[277] Laslett 1972, 30–2. A 'multiple family household' is a domestic group which includes 'two or more conjugal family units connected by kinship or by marriage'. If the sons of Polemocrates lived in the residences described in *PDura* 19 with their families, this multiple family household might also be described as a 'fraternal joint family' or 'joint family'.

[278] As argued by Gawlikowski 2007, although I disagree with that author's assertion that the underlying social norm which is the cause of the multiple courtyard house in the East is one of an unchanging 'Oriental' or 'tribal' type which stretches from Old Babylonian Mesopotamia to the modern Middle East. For other sites where series of intercommunicating courtyard units are taken to mean earlier, single-courtyard houses which are later modified, see Palmyra (Gawlikowski 2007) or Jebel Khalid (Jackson 2001). Other readings interpret the evidence differently; e.g. Smith sees the Palmyrene houses as being within the Mediterranean milieu and asserts that at Palmyra 'every nuclear family comprised a household' but it is unclear what he

Hellenistic and Roman Syria interconnect (not only at Dura, but also at Jebel Khalid and at Palmyra), perhaps we should be looking at the interconnection as an explanation for the houses. That is, these were likely to have been residences for a multiple family or 'joined' unit, in which different parts of the family could be resident in contiguous structures but with their own rooms: that is, they are compound houses.

Separate street entrances would have allowed different groups within the family to have control of the route which admitted visitors, and internal access between the family units, centred around courtyards, would have permitted movement between houses without the need to exit into the public area of the street. *PDura* 19 shows us that in some cases at least common rights of access to the entrance and courtyard were held between co-resident brothers. The use of party walls for houses throughout the site and the joint maintenance of them described in the document would have constrained house modifications and embodied relationships between households.[279] Because the text makes clear that each brother receives a ground-floor room and the rooms above it, for the identification of multiple family units we should perhaps turn our attention to the presence of multiple ground-floor living rooms. Indeed, ethnographic parallels have shown the presence of a number of living rooms can sometimes be equated with a number of conjugal units.[280] The smallest houses of Dura (e.g. C7-B) consist of an entrance passage, a courtyard, and a central room off the court, which might be interpreted as the house of a single conjugal unit, perhaps with children who would eventually inherit the house or move to that of their husband or his family, depending on their gender. However, houses with multiple living rooms, and indeed adjoining houses with multiple courtyards each with a series of living rooms, occur frequently. The same three basic elements of the smallest of Dura's houses are also apportioned to each of the sons of Polemocrates (entrance, courtyard, living room), the former two as spaces of shared access and use. The size and shape of the house seems related to the size and shape of the household.

The scale of the house, then, as an analytical unit, is of clear utility for examining changes over time, including changes within and between households. If we consider the household to be a social institution, the physical house embodies that, and changes are not simply of architectural interest, but rather are integral to our understanding of the household and the individuals that make it up.[281] This will be discussed more fully in Chapter 6. The complexity of shifting ownership

means by this, as he also notes that 'the sheer size of some of these houses may suggest that extended family units resided within them' Smith 2013, 86–7.

[279] Elsewhere, the lack of party walls has been taken to indicate the expression of the autonomy of the house: Love 2013, 274.

[280] Cutting 2006, 238, 241.

[281] Hendon 2004, 277–9.

and joint access attested in the papyri are reasons why the 'ideal house' plans that are often reproduced, at Dura and elsewhere, are misleading: houses are not static entities, nor do they conform to rigid typologies. Like people and households, houses change over the course of their lifetime, and like the human relationships they embody, this gets messy. A biographical approach helps to take these problems into account.

The temporal grasp of a biographical approach also allows a consideration of details of houses and their contents that permits a study of hybridity at the site, as far as it is manifested in material culture. As discussed earlier, the textual and monumental remains of Dura attest to the linguistic and religious variety of the site, and it is useful to consider the hybrid nature of the houses, and how this attests to a population which is not easily described or summed up by linguistic or 'ethnic' terms such as Greek.[282] The houses of Dura do not sit easily within established typologies of Greco-Roman houses, despite their inclusion as such in synthetic studies.[283] Some elements, such as the mouldings and use of columns, have clear parallels in the Greek world. Other elements, such as the internal decoration and house plan, do not conform to other known Greek or Roman types. For instance, even in large houses, house form and decoration does not tap into Roman Empire-wide elite trends, like those evidenced in the mosaics of Antioch, with the exception of the Roman military palace at Dura (the 'Palace of the Dux Ripae').[284] The layout of the Dura houses has more in common with earlier houses found in Mesopotamia. Durene houses, like those of neo-Babylonian Mesopotamia, were entered via a single door of an unembellished façade.[285] They too were centred around courtyards, which were surrounded on all sides by rooms.[286] The roof construction, with reed mats and mud laid over wooden beams, is also paralleled in neo-Babylonian houses, as is the construction using largely mudbrick.[287] Materials and the act of constructing the house, as much as its form, are an integral part of how architecture can be active in building, maintaining, and communicating the identities of the people inhabiting it.[288]

The architectural form of the house at Dura was a hybrid one, a consequence of Dura's place as a regional centre and its Hellenistic origins, its Syrian and Mesopotamian population, and Parthian and Roman rulers. It was a specific, local Durene type, which was closed to the outside, presenting a closed façade to the

[282] For archaeological applications of Homi Bhaba's concept of hybridity, see especially van Dommelen 2005; 2006. On hybridity in the Hellenistic East, see the essays in Chandrasekaran et al. 2011.

[283] e.g. Hoepfner and Schwandner 1994. Perhaps because they do not conform to such types, they have been marginalized; for instance, Sartre contrasts the 'scientific' discoveries at Apamea or Palmyra, with the 'random' houses of Dura: Sartre 2007, 26–7.

[284] Huskinson 2003, 147.

[285] Baker 2012, 926.

[286] Baker 2007, 70; 2012, 926. For e.g. Babylon, Koldewey 1914; van der Spek 1987; Baker 2010.

[287] Baker 2007, 70–1; 2012, 926.

[288] Love 2013.

street, organized around a courtyard, and with at least one large, broad-sided living room entered via steps, indicating shared domestic practice at a civic scale. This shared practice was one way in which the houses, in their construction, adaptation, and use, were part of the local *habitus.* Multiple courtyard units seem to imply, by the third century, that patrilocal units composed of multiple families were living in intercommunicating houses. Despite common features there was immense variation in the precise arrangement of houses, most likely linked to the variety of shapes of households, and transformed as property was transmitted by sale, inheritance, and other means. The inward-oriented nature of the house-form indicates the primacy of the household unit as an organizing principle of the houses, with the house separating those inside it from others in the community.

THREE

The Roman Military Presence in the Houses of Dura-Europos

INSTALLATION OF THE ROMAN GARRISON

Dura-Europos was incorporated into the Roman sphere, not for the first time but for the last, probably sometime after 165 CE. This date comes not from any direct evidence from the site, but from the historical understanding of the Roman campaigns in the region at this time. Less certain is the chronology of what followed. From the parchments, papyri, and inscriptions we have some dates.[1] Archaeologically, a relative sequence of adaptation and building can be identified in some parts of the site.

PDura 17, a parchment redeposited in the 'Temple of Bel' includes a number of court documents which show that Parthian legal frameworks were still operating, at least to some measure, in 180 CE, but subsequent documents show that a Roman civic structure was in use in the city, with penalties paid to a *fiscus* (*PDura* 31), oaths sworn to the emperor (*PDura* 29), contracts witnessed by *decurions* (*PDura* 27, 32, and 38), and justice administered by a tribune (*PDura* 125, 126, and 127).[2] *PDura* 32 is a divorce document, between a Roman soldier and his Durene wife, of 254 CE, and shows that the town was a Roman *colonia* by that date, but precisely when Dura received its *colonia* status is not clear.[3] Civic documents continued to be written in Greek, with Roman military communications and records alone being in Latin. The conferment of the title, however, is just one of the many types of intervention by the Roman state into provincial social structures, and as has been pointed out in the past, there was little to gain from the title in terms of citizenship rights after 212 CE in any case.[4]

[1] On the period in this region generally, see Millar 1993; Sartre 2005; Edwell 2008.

[2] See F. R. 5.1, 6 for discussion of these documents.

[3] As Millar has pointed out, there are a number of documents from the site which may refer to the *colonia* title: Cumont 1926, nos 35 and 50; P. R. 3, no. 149; P. R. 5, no. 396; Millar 1990, 55. Leriche and El'Ajji most recently argued that with present evidence the title does not allow for the *colonia* title with certainty before the late date of 254 CE. Leriche and El'Ajji 1999, 1335.

[4] Millar 1990, 7, 39–40.

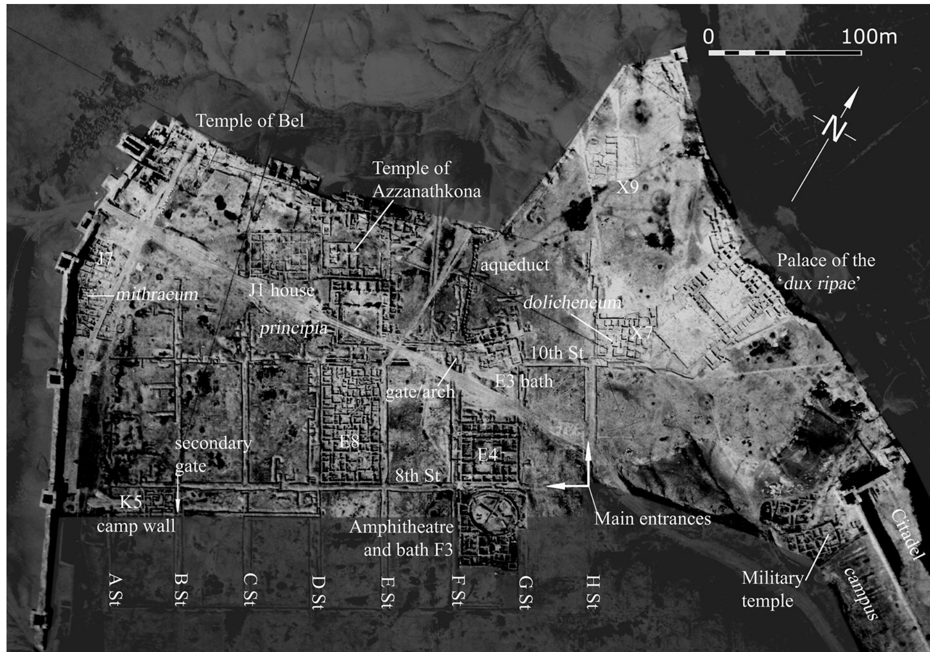


FIGURE 3.1 Aerial photograph taken in 1936 of north part of city including military base, adapted by and courtesy of Simon James.

The famed *feriale duranum*, a document detailing the official religious calendar of the army (*PDura* 54), was in Latin and arguably did not have much relevance to the civic population.[5] Dating by consul and emperor was first seen on the triumphal arch of the brief Trajanic occupation of Dura in 116 CE, and reappears from 180 CE alongside, not replacing, the Seleucid calendar on civil documents.[6] Time reckoning, including that of *PDura* 32, used Roman dating systems and that 'of the former era' in the Seleucid calendar, which is likely the one that was understood by the civilian population.[7]

The Palmyrene archers of Dura seem to have been the first military unit at Dura after its second conquest by the Romans, in the late 160s CE.[8] By the time of Commodus, the *Cohors II Ulpia Equitata* was stationed at the site.[9] The *Cohors XX Palmyrenorum* may have been present from this time but is not certainly

[5] Nock 1952; Gilliam 1954; Fishwick 1988; Reeves 2005.

[6] On the Trajanic occupation of Dura and the arch, p. 21 and P. R. 4, 56-68; P. R. 6, 480–2.

[7] Timekeeping at Dura is discussed further in Chapter 4.

[8] The earliest dated evidence is of 168 CE, a Palmyrene inscription in the Mithraeum. P. R. 7/8 83, no. 845, in which names one 'Ethpeni the *strategos*, son of Zabdě'a, who is in command of the archers who are in Dura'. Palmyrenes were present at Dura earlier, perhaps due to the trade connections between the cities, as the evidence of the 'Necropolis Temple' attests. P.R. 7/8, 319–20; Dirven 1999, 199–202.

[9] F. R. 5.1, 24–5; P. R. 1, 42 (inscription, altar no. 1).

attested until 208 CE.[10] The Roman military presence at Dura, in the form of a garrison within the city's walls, seems to have been in place by the reign of Commodus in the early third century. A series of Roman military structures including houses were converted for use as military accommodation, and bath buildings and an amphitheatre were constructed or modified from existing buildings (see Figure 3.1). A fragmentary inscription from block E8, in this northern quadrant of the city, is tentatively dated to 217 CE, and might record the building of a wall, or another linear feature, such as an aqueduct.[11] The precise dating of the building and modification of military structures is complicated by the same factors as those which affect the housing: the excavators paid little attention to stratigraphy, coins and other finds were not always properly recorded, and priorities for attention, in terms of both recording and publishing, lay elsewhere on the site. Recent work both in the archive and in the field has clarified many issues relating to the Roman military presence at Dura.

One of the features of Dura's garrison which is not fully understood is the extent to which it was physically segregated from the urban population. A mudbrick wall which seems to run along the western side of the garrison's south perimeter does not fully enclose the garrison—recent excavations to examine its extent found that the wall probably did not continue, and proposed that property boundaries between buildings were used for the purpose of delimiting the garrison after the wall finished.[12] A new study of the military contingents at Dura suggests that the garrison was of substantial size in the 190s CE, with initial military buildings being erected shortly thereafter—the earliest of these were likely the baths in E3 and F3, with various structures being adapted and built in the early third century and continuing to expand substantially by the Severan period.[13] By the second decade of the third century, most of the structures seem to have been in place. These include the *principia* in E7 (known as the *praetorium* in the *Preliminary Reports*), the amphitheatre and baths in F3, and the so-called 'Palace of the Dux Ripae'.[14] Military occupation took over other parts of the northern side of the site, including many sanctuaries (notably the Temple of Azzanathkona, part of which was taken over by soldiers, and the so-called Temple of Bel). The military was also responsible for new sanctuaries, including the Mithraeum in block J7, the temple identified as that of Jupiter Dolichenus in X7, and the 'Military Temple' in A1. Pre-existing houses in blocks E4, E8, K5, and X7 were also within this area and were used by the military, as will be discussed later.

[10] On the XX Palmyrenes, Kennedy 1983; 1994.

[11] Inscription no. 59 in Frye et al. 1955; the possibility of the aqueduct was raised by Simon James, pers comm.

[12] James 2007, 37ff. [13] James Forthcoming.

[14] Gelin, on the basis of a study of the mudbricks, dates the major building programme of the camp to 211–12 CE, as the bricks are similar in the *principia*, the camp wall, and the palace. Gelin 2000, 308–11.

The interactions between the Roman military and urban civilian communities at Dura have long been the topic of debate. These interactions have been characterized by some as cursory: '[f]or many of the locals, the existence of a Roman garrison meant no more than an economic opportunity, though it was best to be polite to the soldiers.'[15] This underplays the scale of the local economic impact of a garrison being installed within an urban environment, as well as obscuring the economic factors from a tangled web of other issues including local politics, civilian and military identities, religious practices, language, hegemony, and power politics.

Another approach has been that which envisages the army as a 'total institution' essentially cut off from the civilian community despite its proximity and mutual cultural traits.[16] A more nuanced reading is that of Haynes and James which recognizes the strong corporate identity of Roman military personnel, but also studies the groups within that body, and the complex network of relationships with non-military communities.[17] Amongst these communities was a diverse body of military personnel, as well as a broader military community that included slaves, grooms, wives, children, and locally settled veterans.[18] Civic and cultural identities cross-cut these groups: for instance, Dura's garrison included the *Cohors XX Palmyrenorum*, with its dromedary element, and other Palmyrenes had long preceded this group in their presence at Dura.[19]

While some rosters are preserved amongst the parchments of Dura, the precise shape, composition, and command structure of the garrison is not clear nor indeed is the relationship between the garrison and the control of the Middle Euphrates more generally. A large palatial building in the northeast side of the site (X3–X5), the so-called Palace of the Dux Ripae was used to postulate a previously unknown office of 'commander of the river bank'. The office of the Dux Ripae was based on a *dipinto* found in the building, and has recently been called into doubt.[20]

The original excavators believed that several buildings had been converted for use as residences for soldiers—the southern half of E4[21] and E8.[22] It has also been argued that J7 functioned in this way, and the forms of K5 and X7 also suggest this

[15] Elton 1996, 76. [16] Pollard 1996; 2000, 110, 166. [17] James 2001; Haynes 2013.

[18] James 1999.

[19] On the Palmyrenes of Dura, Dirven 1999, and see Chapter 5, pp. 258–9. Perhaps related is a terracotta mould from the military residences in E8-15, H151/1938.59999.1861/Downey 2003, no. 38, a mould for a medallion with a camel rider, perhaps related to the camel-riding god Arsu, which Downey has noted as evidence of relationships between Dura and Palmyra. Downey 1993b, 136–8; Downey 1996, 254.

[20] Dura P. R. 9.3 was on the Palace of the Dux and the Dolicheneum. The *dipinto* in question is therein, no. 946, and lists one Domitius Pompeianus as a commander of the river bank. For a reassessment of this evidence, see Edwell 2008, 128–35.

[21] P. R. 6, 28, 31.

[22] This block was not published in the *Preliminary Reports* but was discussed in Frye et al. 1955, 161–5.

function.[23] All of these blocks are within the 'Roman camp' on the northern side of the city, save block K5, which is only partially within this area, since it was cut by the mudbrick wall thought to delimit the southern side of the camp. This chapter will examine both the houses inside the area of the Roman camp which were converted for military use and the houses outside the area of the Roman camp in which there is evidence for military occupation. The military presence throughout the city, as known from artefacts, graffiti, and other remains, will also be assessed. Beyond those structures transformed for use as military accommodation, other houses in the city were postulated by the excavators to have been requisitioned for use by the military, and, for instance, in block L7-A, where, it was originally believed, non-commissioned officers of the army were resident and structural changes were made to adapt the house for use. Elsewhere, for instance in houses in C7, graffiti indicate that soldiers might have been 'billeted'.[24] In many other houses artefacts attest to the presence of soldiers.[25] Precisely what constitutes a military presence or even a military artefact is sometimes problematic,[26] and the nature of the evidence for this occupation (both architectural and artefactual) must be explored for each block at Dura. The biggest problem is distinguishing between military *presence* in an area, the military *control* of the town, and military *occupation* of that area; the latter denotes the residence of military personnel, the former simple presence of an individual, perhaps visiting or walking through a region of the city. The artefact assemblages from within houses seems to indicate that by the time of its demise Dura was not a city in which a military garrison had been installed, but a city that had become, effectively, a military garrison. The Roman military presence at Dura might be separated into a number of stages, with the main building activity and garrison from Commodus until the later 230s CE, followed by a time of more chaotic activity culminating in the end of the city.

THE ROMAN MILITARY AT DURA AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF HOUSES

Houses converted to military accommodation inside the Roman camp

The substantial number of military personnel, as well as their accompanying slaves, grooms, concubines, wives, and children, and the extended military community including entertainers and tradesmen, all needed some form of accommodation.[27]

[23] J7: Pollard 2000, 54–6; K5: James 2007; X7: P. R. 9.3, 97–9.
[24] On C7, Baird 2011b.
[25] For example, artefacts attest to a military presence in G1: see Baird 2012c.
[26] Allison et al. 2005.
[27] On the families of soldiers in this period, Phang 2001; 2002.

At Dura, as elsewhere in the East, this was found not in a purpose-built fort but by installing themselves within the urban environment and adapting what existed there.[28] While other sites were similarly used, none has been extensively excavated with the exception of the Tetrarchic camp at Palmyra. Problems arise in the search for comparanda; though many barracks have been excavated, little is known of urban military accommodation in the East archaeologically, even when they are historically attested in certain cities.[29]

There is a fairly recognizable form of accommodation from forts elsewhere in the empire in part because it is efficient to build new structures systematically. However, in the case of urban accommodation, it is in fact more expedient to take over pre-existing structures and adapt them for use. The evidence for stables, another type of structure which would be expected in or around the military zone at Dura, is unclear. Paved areas that were initially thought to be for 'mucking out' by original excavators may indeed relate to keeping animals in the houses, with (paved areas being useful to keep the horses' hooves dry).[30] A number of plaster basins at Dura were interpreted as horse troughs (those in J1, J7, and X7).[31] There is no archaeologically known provision of granaries in the camp at Dura, although the storage capacity of the converted houses was increased by means of *dolia*, and *horrea* are known in the papyri.[32]

The E8 military accommodation

Block E8, an excavated block of houses on the northern side of the site within the presumed military camp, can be shown to have been converted entirely into military accommodation (Figure 3.2). This block was excavated by a team under Frank Brown starting in December 1934 but never published, and while few notes and artefact records are preserved, those documents and an archival plan do serve to shine light on the structures.[33] The block was not one of the better preserved areas of the site even at the time of the excavation, and particularly on its northern side the evidence is fragmentary. Despite these problems, a number of modifications made by the military are evident, and the same pattern is repeated elsewhere.

[28] On other fortress cities, see Pollard 2000, 69ff.

[29] Davison 1989; 1996. On the camp at Jerusalem, Geva 1984; Arubas and Goldfus 1995; Arubas and Goldfus 2005. At Palmyra, Gawlikowski 1984; Baranski 1994; Pollard 2000, 298–300; as noted by Pollard, at Palmyra the *castra* may have not been only the 'Camp of Diocletian' but the whole city, as a fortress, perhaps paralleling the earlier situation at Dura.

[30] Davison 1989, 139.

[31] J1, in the courtyard outside rooms 18 and 19; J7, feature 29 on Pearson's plan (Figure 3.6); X7-12, P. R. 9.3, 99.

[32] *Horrea*: *PDura* 106 and 108; on the problem of calculating grain provision for urban garrisons, A. Richardson 2004. On Dura's grain provision, see also Haynes 2013, 178.

[33] On excavation, Frye et al. 1955, 161–5.

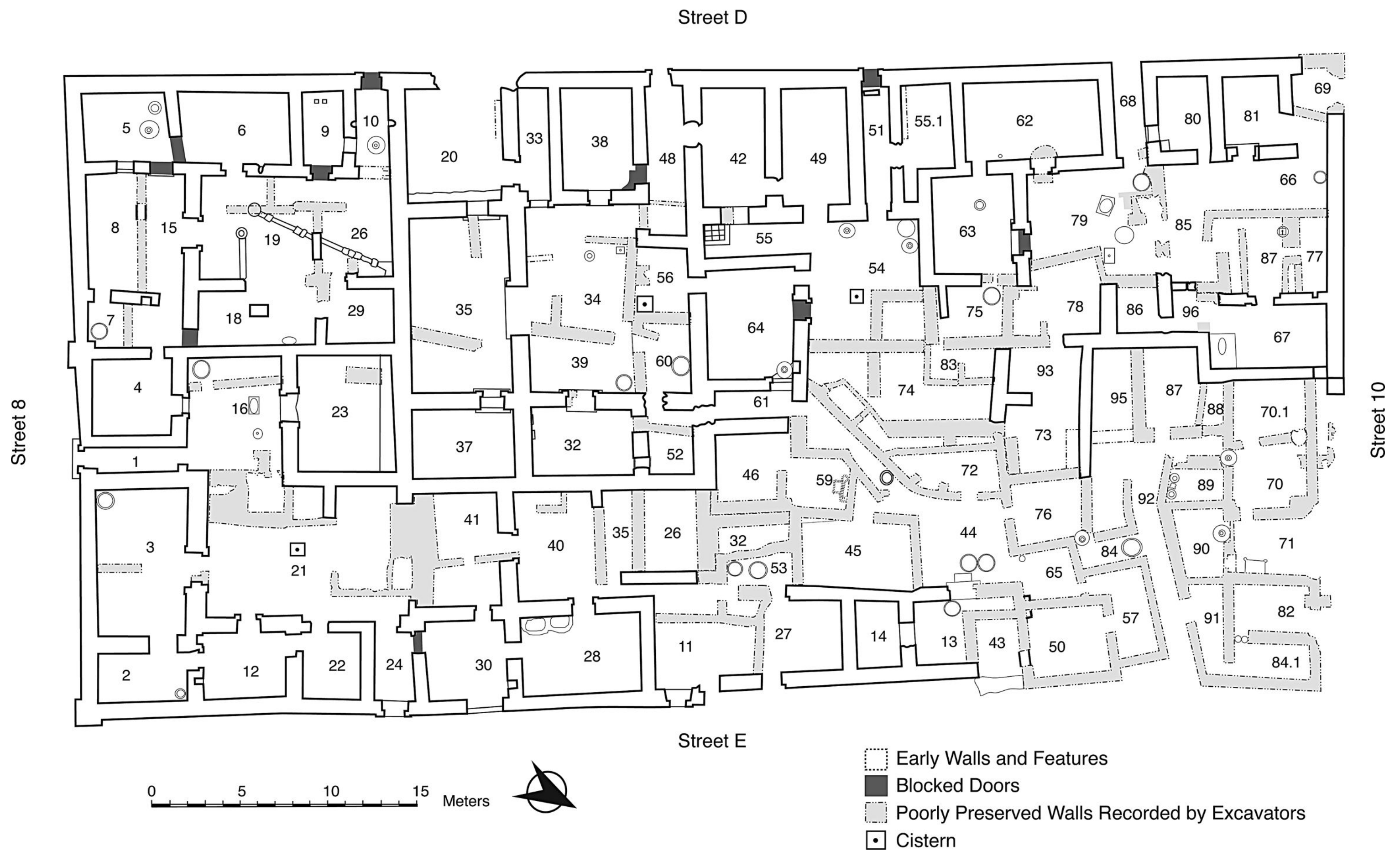


FIGURE 3.2 Plan of E8 by the author, after archival plans by Frank Brown and A. H. Detweiler in the YUAG Archive.

The first main change is in organization. In E8, like in other Durene houses, most rooms were accessed off the court, and each door off the court controlled access to a suite of rooms. This pattern seems to have been modified, with more intercommunications made between rooms, presumably when the block was reconfigured for use by the military. This meant enhancing communication between some rooms by opening doors, and isolating some suites into independent units of rooms by blocking doors. Some of the subdivisions that were made, unlike those which were made regularly elsewhere at the site within houses when new walls were added, were extremely ephemeral in their construction. For example, a number of walls in courtyard 12 on the southeast side of E8 were built of re-used rubble, but not mortared together nor plastered as would be typical (these now appear as dry-stone but it is possible mud mortar has washed out since their excavation). In E8 and elsewhere in the military camp, non-orthogonal walls were built, as can be seen particularly near the centre of the block. Courtyards were subdivided with partitions. A number of doorways were narrowed (E8-3/21, E8-32/39, E8-42/55). Many of the modifications made were of the type which would normally be associated with 'squatter' activity in late antiquity, but the artefacts from the block demonstrate clearly that its last occupation was in the mid-third century.

While no one barrack layout can be considered typical elsewhere in the empire, they are generally strip buildings fronted by verandas. At Dura, courtyards of houses used by the military could have served the purpose of verandas, providing outside, partially communal space for those resident in the building. In E8, the courtyards of the houses were all subdivided with partition walls (E8-19, E8-16, E8-21, E8-40, E8-34, E8-54, etc.), partially encroaching upon the available communal space, and perhaps providing separate parts of the courtyard for different *contubernia*. The southern end of the block was better preserved and hence more easily understood. There, what had probably been three houses (centred around courtyards E8-21, E8-16, and E8-19) were combined into one larger unit which takes up the southern third of the block. The doorway from E8-10 onto Street D was closed, so that the building could be entered only via Street 8, into E8-1, or through Street E, via E8-24.

Other architectural adaptations include a number of doorways which were made narrower (E8-42/55, E8-21/3). A number of exterior doors were blocked up to limit access into the buildings from particular points (e.g. the exterior doors of E8-10 and E8-51). Unusually, there is no evidence of any stairways in this block. This could be a function of preservation, particularly if they were mudbrick examples which degraded, but it is striking that even in the better preserved southern half of the block in which much of the wall plaster is preserved, there is no trace of a staircase in any of the courtyards. The pattern of access through the building was also drastically altered, with room E8-4 controlling access to the

western side of the structure. A number of blocked doors and partition walls were used to rearrange the space, making room E8-9 into the most remote and difficult to access room on this side of the block. The activities which took place in this room are not known, but two features described in the field notes as 'rubble cubes' 20 cm^2 were excavated.[34]

In the less well-preserved northern end of the block, many fired bricks are now visible in the rubble—this building material was not used in civilian Dura and is found only in buildings built or converted by the military. A number of installations in E8 also differ from houses in the civilian part of the site. These include a number of round '*tanur*'-style ovens (in E8-3, E8-7, E8-13, E8-16, E8-44, E8-54, E8-60, and E8-84).[35] This density of ovens within a block of houses is not known in other blocks at the site. Storage capacity seems to have been enhanced as compared to houses in the southern side of the site, with *pithoi* being found in rooms including E8-5, E8-10, E8-54, E8-64, E8-70, E8-84, and E8-90. Basins also seem to have been late additions to E8. Rectilinear basins were built of plaster and tile, and were recorded in E8-28, E8-16, E8-55, and E8-71, although most of these did not survive from the time of the excavation and cannot be verified. There were also a larger than average number of paved areas in this block, possibly for animals (to assist 'mucking out'), as partially paved/flagged floors were recorded in E8-30, E8-18, E8-49, E8-55[1], E8-50, E8-57, and E8-65. Together, a number of architectural modifications and features seem to relate to the military adaptation of this block: the division of courtyards, reorganization of relationships between rooms, installations of ovens and storage facilities, as well as areas for keeping animals, and the use of different building materials and techniques including the use of fired brick.

Decorations to interior rooms of the house are also in line with its adaptation for military use. 'Classicizing' paintings unlike those found elsewhere within the site were found in room E8-12. These were reported in Du Mesnil's publication on the eighth season and, in Frank Brown's field notes, sketches were made of mythological figures (Figure 3.3).[36] In the same room (a courtyard) graffiti of altars were scratched into another wall, and a *dipinto* of a dog chasing a hare was made in red on the wall of room 29, with a green tree completing the scene.

Finds within block E8 are also indicative of its military use, and it is unfortunate that better records were not kept as this block seems to have been particularly rapidly abandoned: two human bodies, one still wearing his armour (in E8-80;

[34] The finds from this room recorded under the field number H80 included two coins, two bronze fragments, a bronze ring, an iron lance head, and a terracotta figurine (1938.4933, Downey 2003 no. 69, a 'torso of a human figure (rider?)').

[35] Circular features of unknown character were recorded in rooms E8-39, E8-53, E8-75, and E8-79.

[36] Du Mesnil du Buisson 1935, 277.

FIGURE 3.3 Record card of painting excavated in E8-12, by Frank Brown (his notes continue on the reverse). YUAG.

the other was in E8-18), were found lying directly on the floor in this block.[37] Similarly, two examples of three-bladed tanged iron arrowheads were found in rooms E8-23 and E8-62,[38] and a number of other arrowheads were recorded in the field object registers.[39] A total of six coin hoards were found in this block, and are

[37] In Frank Brown's sketchbook the body in E8-18 was recorded as 'skeleton of youth or girl with skull [illegible]-mouth open wide'. Further on the abandonment of Dura and the problems with the 'hoard' coin groups, Baird 2012b.

[38] F. R. 7, nos 681 and 684/H113d and H311f.

[39] H243s from E8-41, H315c from E8-54, and H454 from E8-94.

thought to represent soldiers' pay.[40] While 'hoard' is used for any group of coins found together at Dura, Bellinger's report lists a total of twenty-two from the entire site, so the proportion from this block is significant. Of these, three of the hoards were dated to the 240s and 250s CE.[41] Given the rapid abandonment of this block, we might well imagine that at least part of it was still inhabited in Dura's final days.

Military equipment included copper alloy armour scales found throughout the block, as well as a number of other fragments such as a copper alloy snaffle bit cheek-piece in E8-23,[42] a copper alloy brow guard in E8-63,[43] the iron cheek-piece of a helmet in E8-68,[44] and fragments of an iron mail shirt which were found in association with the human remains in E8-80.[45] Aside from fragments of armour, items of dress were found, including at least eleven fibulae; most are recorded only in the field registers and thus we do not know their form.[46] Three, including a crossbow fibula and an eagle fibulae, were included in the published catalogue of brooches.[47] Other items related to personal appearance found in E8 included a number of bone spatulae,[48] iron combs,[49] and bracelets, including one with a face of Sol/Helios on its bezel.[50] Hobnails were found in E8-84 and E8-94.[51]

Repeating clusters of artefact groups are also present within this block, perhaps attesting to the presence of soldiers' kit bags. Given the nature of the recording, the picture is not complete, as the context is only recorded within the room, rather

[40] Hoards from Bellinger in his *Final Report* on the coins include his nos 13, 14, 15, and 16. The first of these was found in a ceramic vessel beneath the floor of E8-11 and is early, dating to 150-130 BCE. See also P. R. 7/8 424 and F. R. 6, 178–9. The other three reported by Bellinger belong to the late 240s or early 250s CE. Nos. 13 and 14 were found in E8-56 and 16 in E8-64: see P. R. 7/8 424–5 and F. R. 6, 179–81. In the field notes and object registers, two additional hoards were found, in rooms E8-20 and E8-3. The former was found in a commonware jug beneath the floor, the latter was twenty-six coins found in a cloth purse and were reportedly Trajanic Antiochene issues. E8-3 hoard: H81; E8-20 hoard: H112.

[41] F. R. 6, 179–81 nos. 14 (*terminus post quem c.*253 CE, 202 coins, E8-56), 15 (*terminus post quem c.*249 CE, 159 coins, E8-56), and 16 (*terminus post quem c.*249 CE, 74 coins, E8-64). P. R. 7/8, 424–5; Frye et al. 1955, 161-5.

[42] F. R. 7, no. 335/H121a. [43] F. R. 7, no. 376/H326. [44] F. R. 7, no. 372/H371.

[45] F. R. 7, no. 385/H403.

[46] H93, E8-13; H196e, E8-25; H147b, E8-28; H152i, E8-28; H104d, E8-3; H303, E8-54 (appears in photo H48a in YUAG Archive, a crossbow fibula); H440 and H451, E8-96.

[47] H176b, F. R. 4.1, eagle fibula no. 165, E8-28; H381b, 1938.2141, rhomboid fibula, F. R. 4.1, enamelled bronze no. 25, E8-74; H222f, F. R. 4.1, crossbow fibula no. 155, E8-39.

[48] Fourteen bone spatulae were found in the block: H179 (E8-21), H231n (E8-42), H241g (E8-44), H304g (E8-58), H305f (E8-57), H307j (E8-44), H312g (E8-60), H315d (E8-54), H340f (E8-66), H363f (E8-64), H354l (E8-65), H385k (E8-77), H409 (E8-74), and H83 (E8-6). Three further spatula were recorded but the material was not given: H27j (E8-1/3/6), H27k (E8-1/3/6), and H93 (E8-13).

[49] H187 (E8-35) and H339 (E8-62).

[50] Helios bracelet, silver: H303, from E8-54, appears in YUAG photos Dam-46 and Dam-47. Another silver bracelet of the twisted silver type, H118, was found in E8-18, and is recorded in YUAG Photo H110a. Three others were recorded in the object registers without details of type or material: H209k (E8-36), H233l (E8, locus unknown), and H351l (E8-70).

[51] H421 and H432.

than objects occurring together within a room, but it is tantalizing.[52] These clusters, of which there are approximately seven in the block,[53] included an iron blade (variously recorded as a knife or dagger in the object records),[54] a hook,[55] a needle,[56] a spoon,[57] copper ally tacks, 'buttons' of stone and copper alloy (perhaps a whorl or equipment fitting),[58] bone pins,[59] and a lamp.[60] No group contains all items, and other objects occurring in the same rooms less frequently include copper alloy rings (either finger rings or equipment fittings), bells, and knuckle bones.[61]

[52] The 1934 field object registers which contain the artefact lists from this block are detailed, however, and over 800 individual objects were recorded from E8.

[53] Rooms with such groups: E8-20, E8-23, E8-18, E8-21, E8-28, E8-35, E8-11.

[54] Of the twelve iron knives recorded as being excavated in this block, only one photograph can be located, and none has a known Yale accession number. YUAG H65a includes an iron lance head, a knife blade, and iron armor from E8, although it is not certain which of the excavated examples is pictured. Iron knives recorded from E8 and their findspots were H82 (E8-11), H112c (E8-20), H120b (E8-25/28), H224m (E8-41), H232l (E8-21), H241e (E8-44), H306j (E8-54), H337g (E8-59), H340e (E8-66), H362b (E8-63), H379h (E8-66), and H383 (E8-75).

[55] Seventeen items recorded as fishhooks were excavated in the block: H111e (E8-15), H111f (E8-15), H113c (E8-23), H121c (E8-23), H152h (E8-28), H196d (E8-25), H223o (E8-41), H243q (E8-41), H225i (E8-45), H256j (E8-49), H273i (E8-34), H281 (E8-27), H307f (E8-44), H311 (E8-62), H316g (E8-64), H338j (E8-61), and H352s (E8-67). Barbed fishhooks are found at Dura, but as none of the objects from E8 can be checked to ascertain the type, these are best regarded simply as 'hooks' of some type.

[56] Ten needles were found in E8, but the material for only one was specified (bone needle H152k from E8-28). The others were H112b (E8-20), H113e (E8-23), H167c (E8-19), H179c (E8-21), H208m (E8-32), H208n (E8-32), H243t (E8-41), H280j (E8-34), and H431 (E8-79).

[57] Nineteen spoons were recorded, including copper alloy and iron examples. Spoons of unknown material: H113h (E8-23), H121E (E8-23), H152d (E8-28), H197h (E8-35), H197i (E8-35), H69a and H69b (E8-11), and H232j (E8-21). Copper alloy examples were H120c (E8-25/28), H168c (E8-28), H307g (E8-44), H316h (E8-34), H352p and H352q (E8-67), H385i and H385j (E8-77). H312f (E8-60) was iron.

[58] Items recorded as stone buttons include H112d (E8-20), H218o (E8-40), H256i (E8-49), H305g (E8-57), H338i (E8-61), H408c (E8-68) and H93h (E8-13/9). 'Cuff buttons' H176d (E8-28) and H411 (E8-83). Bone button H388i (E8-57). Glass button H271e (E8-49). Copper alloy buttons H3 (E8-Street east of block), H313a (E8-59), H313i (E8-59), H38d (E8-3/8), H389i (E8-74), H83c and H82d (E8-11). It is likely the different materials represent different types of object, as 'button' tended to describe any perforated disc, but as no photographs or other records are known of the specific objects, it is not possible to discuss these further.

[59] Sixty-five bone pins or pin fragments were found, including two with gold heads, H207 (E8-32), and H178 (E8-28).

[60] One copper alloy lamp, H202 (E8-35), which went to Damascus (Photos H10a, H11a, Damascus 1034), was a lamp with a cover and ivy-leaf handle. Catalogued in F. R. 4.3, no. 434. The others were of unrecorded material, but as bronze was exceptional, the others were certainly ceramic: H110 (E8-18), H131, H144, and H145 (all from E8-28), H182 (E8-26), H195 (E8-20), H217o (E8-38), H228 (E8-42), H271i (E8-49), H279k (E8-51), H292 (E8-50), H309 (E8-54), H327 (E8-56), H34 (E8-4), H343 (E8-56, in the cistern), H349 (E8-73), E368/1938.4711 (E8-67), H369 (E8-62), H38e (E8-3/8), H451 (E8-96), H72 (E8-13), and H8 (E8-10), in addition to a number of lamps found in the adjacent streets and from unrecorded locations within E8.

[61] Knuckle bones H49k and H82, from E8-11. A group of 32 knuckle bones from E8-28 were recorded in field notes.

There are no recognized or recorded gaming boards at Dura as have been found elsewhere in the empire, but both knuckle bones (*astragaloi* of cattle used for games involving throwing) and dice have been found.[62] All of the provenanced examples of dice come from areas closely associated with the Roman military occupation, including the C3 baths, the converted barracks in E8, and J7 around the Mithraeum, and none from the residential areas of the city outside the Roman camp. These dice are all made of bone, of a type which occurs commonly in Greek and Roman contexts, being cubic with one and six, two and five, and three and four on opposite sides. Similarly, all the recorded knuckle bones come from the two blocks within the Roman camp used as residences for members of the Roman military, E4 and E8.[63]

Some objects found in this block are unusual for Dura, and may represent the personal belongings of soldiers, which travelled with them to the site. For instance, in room E8-28 were found a fragment of two figurines, a face of a 'negroid' type (shown among objects in Figure 3.4),[64] and a beardless male head wearing a Phyrgian cap,[65] which are each of a Hellenistic/Roman type in fine red clay, neither of which normally appears at Dura.[66] From E8-30 came a statuette head, probably of Aphrodite, again of an unusually Classical appearance for Dura, but in gypsum of the local type.[67] An alabaster statuette head, probably of a gladiator or boxer, was found in the cistern of E8-56.[68] These small, portable material culture items more characteristic of Mediterranean sites are not found widely at Dura, and might represent personal belongings brought with members of the military. Another object, found in E8-74, which is unusual for Dura but not

[62] Mulvin and Sidebotham 2004. On a Roman game involving knuckle bones, Purcell 1995. *Astralagoi* have been found, more broadly, to serve a number of purposes aside from that of gaming pieces: see Gilmour 1997.

[63] Knuckle bones H49k, H82, H84, H89, and H39i, in addition to those mentioned above; dice F819p, H112f, H233j. Dice-pots may also have been used in gaming, although these are indistinguishable from other small vessels, and nothing of the right approximate size occurs in the same context with dice at Dura.

[64] H168/1938.4925. Downey 2003, no. 82. YUAG Photograph H129, left. Unlike other figurines from Dura, as noted by Downey, this figurine is of a Hellenistic/Roman type.

[65] H169/1938.4932. Downey 2003, no. 81.

[66] Downey 2003, 127–8. In the same room was found H151/1938.5999.1861, Downey 2003, no. 38, a mould of a medallion depicting a camel with rider (possibly the god Arsu). Another probably depiction of Arsu, leading a camel, comes from a fragmentary relief from the Temple of Zeus Megistos, Downey 2008, 423.

[67] H194/1938.5337. F. R. 3.1.2, no. 28.

[68] The field register (H342/1938.5335) lists this item as 'head of a statuette', so the catalogue item F. R. 3.1.2, no. 77 is very likely correct. Downey, however, lists the same field number and provenance for a terracotta plaque with a bust of Athena, Downey 2003, no. 19, 1938.4906. Another sculpture from E8 was a torso found of a plaster sculpture, a draped male figure, H170/1938.5324 (E8-28).

FIGURE 3.4 Objects from Dura, including figurine at bottom left from E8-28, h168/1938.4925/Downey 2003, no. 82. Remaining items, clockwise, are copper alloy fragment h451 (E8-96), figurine h453/1938.4892/Downey 2003, no. 78 (F5-Street 6), figurine H638/1938.4896/Downey 2003, no. 83 (D4), and decorated glass h644 from N8-W8. YUAG h129a.

FIGURE 3.5 Copper alloy eagle's head fitting, excavated in E8-74, and copper alloy mace head from L7. Eagle H387/Damascus 8734, mace Damascus 10349, F. R. 7, no. 647. YUAG Dam-42.

surprising in a military building such as this is a fitting, perhaps for furniture, in the shape of a copper alloy eagle's head (Figure 3.5).[69]

The military also had its own culture of literacy and administration as is well attested in the military documents preserved at the site, and in graffiti.[70] Several

[69] H387, Damascus 8734, photo Dam-42.
[70] On military graffiti at Dura, Baird 2011c, 56–61.

'lockets' were recorded in the field register but no drawings exist; these were probably seal boxes, and several examples are known from the site.[71] *Dipinti* and graffiti were also recovered from throughout E8 and published with the inscriptions.[72] These were clustered in rooms where plaster was preserved, either adhered to the walls or as fallen fragments, and include a number following the pattern of *mnesthe* graffiti acclamations like those found elsewhere on the site, where a named individual is remembered (rooms E8-12 and E8-42).[73] In room E8-42, graffiti in Greek and Latin records personal names including Antonius and Aurelius,[74] and consular dating in Greek was recorded in the fragment of another text, from room E8-12.[75] *Dipinti* found on fallen plaster in rooms E8-82 and E8-84 includes titles of the *Legio IV Scythia*, which are also known from parchments.[76] Evidence for military bureaucracy may also be seen in measurement devices, and in this block were found a fragmentary copper alloy set of scales.[77] Finally, a Latin lapidary inscription was found in E8-3, already mentioned.[78]

Interestingly, artefacts from E8 also include those which might have been used by children and by women. Amongst possible evidence for children include handmade terracotta figurines,[79] a 'nursing bottle',[80] and an artefact recorded in the field registers as a 'plaster doll', which is no longer extant, in E8-16. The gendering of artefacts is a difficult issue which will be discussed further in Chapter 5, but some items from E8 which might be associated with women include dress items such as bone hairpins, and indeed, at Dura, decorated bone hairpins cluster in military buildings, perhaps indicating that their use was particular to women who had an association with the garrison.[81]

Other blocks in the north side of the city in the zone of heavy architectural modifications for military use were four further blocks in which civilian housing

[71] H93 (E8-13), H271f (E8-49), and H409 (E8-74). Some 'lockets', which are seal boxes, were published in the catalogue of the bronzes: Dura F. R. 4.4.1, 37-39. On seal boxes, Furger et al. 2009, in which it is argued that seal boxes are not necessarily military items.

[72] Frye et al. 1955, 161–5, 189, nos 159–65 (inscription, graffiti, and *dipinti*) and 198 (jar marking).

[73] On these graffiti see Baird 2011c. This formula in E8 found in Frye et al. 1955, nos 60a, 60c, and 63. All were in Greek. No. 60a includes the name Sabinos, which is also attested in the Latin rosters, e.g. *PDura* 101.

[74] Frye et al. 1955, no. 60b.

[75] Frye et al. 1955, no. 62.

[76] Frye et al. 1955, no. 61. *PDura* 95 and *PDura* 100.

[77] Balance from E8-54 (H300, photo H52a).

[78] Frye et al. 1955, no. 59. A stone cut into a *tabella ansata*, the inscription was heavily restored in the publication, mentioning the dedication to Caracalla and Geta of something one hundred feet in length with the date 217 CE. The inscription has been related to the wall that bounds the southwestern side of the military camp, but there is no clear relationship between these.

[79] Terracottas H80/1938.4933, Downey 2003, no. 69 from E8-9, and H229/1938.4901, Downey 2003, no. 60, from E8-35.

[80] Found in E8-10 according to Frank Brown's field notes, in which the bottle is sketched. On the problem of identifying children's objects and nursing bottles, see p. 231.

[81] On gendering of objects from Roman military contexts, Allison 2006a; Allison et al. 2008.

seems to have been converted for use as military accommodation with modifications: J7, K5, X7, and E4.

J7

In J7, houses on the location that came to be used for the Mithraeum and to the immediate north and south of this, seem to have been adapted for military use before their later conversion to a sanctuary (Figure 3.6).[82] Because the Mithraeum was completely removed by the excavators so that it could be transported with its paintings to America, the depth of excavation in this block was deeper than in many others. In this block, the earliest foundations, perhaps of houses, align with the orthogonal grid of the city (walls numbered with a small 27 on Pearson's plan), but this alignment seems to be ignored by later military adaptations, some of which take their alignment from the city wall. The structures along the wall were partially razed (on the east) and partially enclosed (on the west) by the embankment that was used to secure the city walls from the inside in the final phase of the city (the base of the embankment is marked by a dotted line on the plan). Many small finds were recorded from J7, including objects of military dress and equipment, but the locus information recorded in the field registers cannot be correlated with any extant plan, and the depth of excavations means that there is a considerable problem of finds from different levels not being separated stratigraphically.

K5

Block K5 was one which appeared, partially excavated, on Detweiler's final plan of the city, but which was otherwise unrecorded. It appears neither in the publications nor the Yale Archive, so it is unclear at what point the excavations here occurred.[83] More recent investigations by James (Figure 3.7) have shown that the camp wall cut through this house, so that its northern side was inside the garrison area. Military architectural modifications probably include a rubble wall in the courtyard, a blocked door in the southeast corner, and the modification of the layout caused by the insertion of the mudbrick camp wall.[84] The military had control of this property, and the construction of the mudbrick camp wall

[82] An unpublished key to the plan of J7 that appeared in P. R. 7/8, Figure 29 is in the YUAG Archive, by Henry Pearson, made in 1935–6. For original publication, see P. R. 7/8, 62–72. A brief mention of them is also made by Francis 1975, 427. On the building techniques and mortar used, Allara 1988, 334. On terracottas from this block, Downey 2003, 31–2. This block is also discussed in Pollard 2000, 55; Leriche 2001.

[83] Mathilde Gelin cleared part of one of the southern rooms to examine the camp wall that cuts through the structure, and found that the mudbricks of this wall were likely made in the same season as those used in the *principia*, on the evidence of the inclusions in the mud used to fabricate the bricks. Gelin, pers. comm., April 2005.

[84] James 2007, 37.

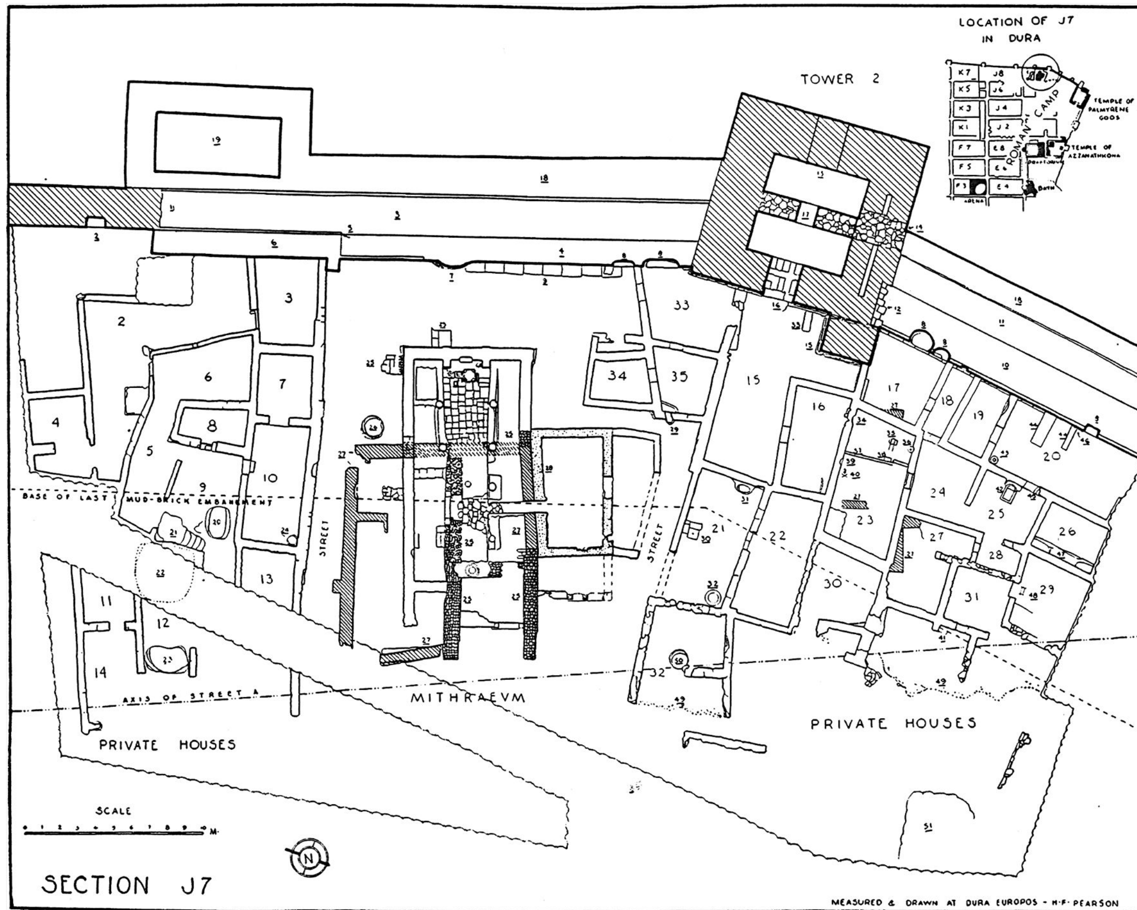


FIGURE 3.6 Plan of excavated remains in J7 by Henry Pearson. YUAG.

completely disregarded existing property boundaries and the house layout, cutting through the middle of rooms.

X7

Block X7 is another area of civil housing thought to have been taken over for military accommodation in an area between structures identified as the 'Dolicheneum' and the 'Palace of the Dux Ripae' (Figure 3.8).[85] Walls of the structure were modified and removed to allow room for the adjacent palace, and some of the modifications, being rather ephemeral, and including the construction of walls in the courtyard, are similar to those made in E8 (Figure 3.9).[86] Storage capacity for grain or water was increased, as in E8, with a number of *dolia* which were found *in situ* throughout the structure.[87] A number of *dipinti* from this building, clustered on the west wall of room X7-10, included an image of an eagle with a thunderbolt, and acclamations in Greek commemorating men with names including Aurelius are perhaps further hints of military occupation, although not necessarily of a domestic character.[88] Room X7-12 was identified as a stable, likely because of a small corner installation that might have served as a trough, and a possible bridle mount was found in X7-30.[89] Eagle figurines and a 'medusa' ornament were excavated in X7-5, as were items of military dress and two small alabaster altars (Figure 3.10).[90]

Items again included those probably belonging to women; for instance, four bone hairpins, including one decorated with an Eros figurine and another of Aphrodite (Figure 3.11), were found.[91] These items were found in X7-28 and X7-29, however, which was not directly connected to the rooms on the south side of the structure containing military equipment.

[85] The structures were excavated in 1935 and 1936 by F. W. Comstock. P. R. 9.3, 97. Both of these identifications have now been disputed: see Hörig 1984, 2147 and Edwell 2008. The earliest walls were attributed to a 'priest's house' apparently on the basis of it being adjacent to the Dolicheneum.

[86] Unfortunately, it was not possible to verify the published plan without re-excavation, as very little survives of these walls.

[87] These were found in X7-5, X7-12, two in X7-2, X7-18, X7-B, and X7-30.

[88] P. R. 9.3, nos 983–5.

[89] I664, F. R. 7, no. 346.

[90] Eagles: I745/Damascus 8394 (copper alloy); I744/1938.5318 (stone), photo i216a. Two further eagle figurines were found in the vicinity but precise locus was not recorded (although one of these, the copper alloy eagle 1938.2337, was attributed in the report to this room as well: P. R. 9.3, 128). Medusa copper alloy ornament, I763. Military dress: Copper alloy snaffle bit cheek-piece, I741/1938.2415/ F. R. 7, no. 332; fragments of a copper alloy scale cuirass, I741/1938.4110/F. R. 7, no. 419; fragment of lamellar-like copper alloy scale garment, I741/1938.4110/ F. R. 7, no. 461. Altars: I742/1938.5323 with a ram's head, and I743, P. R. 9.3, 126-7 and plate XXIII.2.

[91] I816/1938.862-4 (three pins, X7-29), I801/Photo Dam 147 (X7-28). On hairpins from Roman female graves and a representation of a Roman hairpin in Roman sculpture, Bartman 2001, 13–14, and on the ambiguity of such pins, and the problem of directly equating them with the presence of females, Allason-Jones 1995, 28.

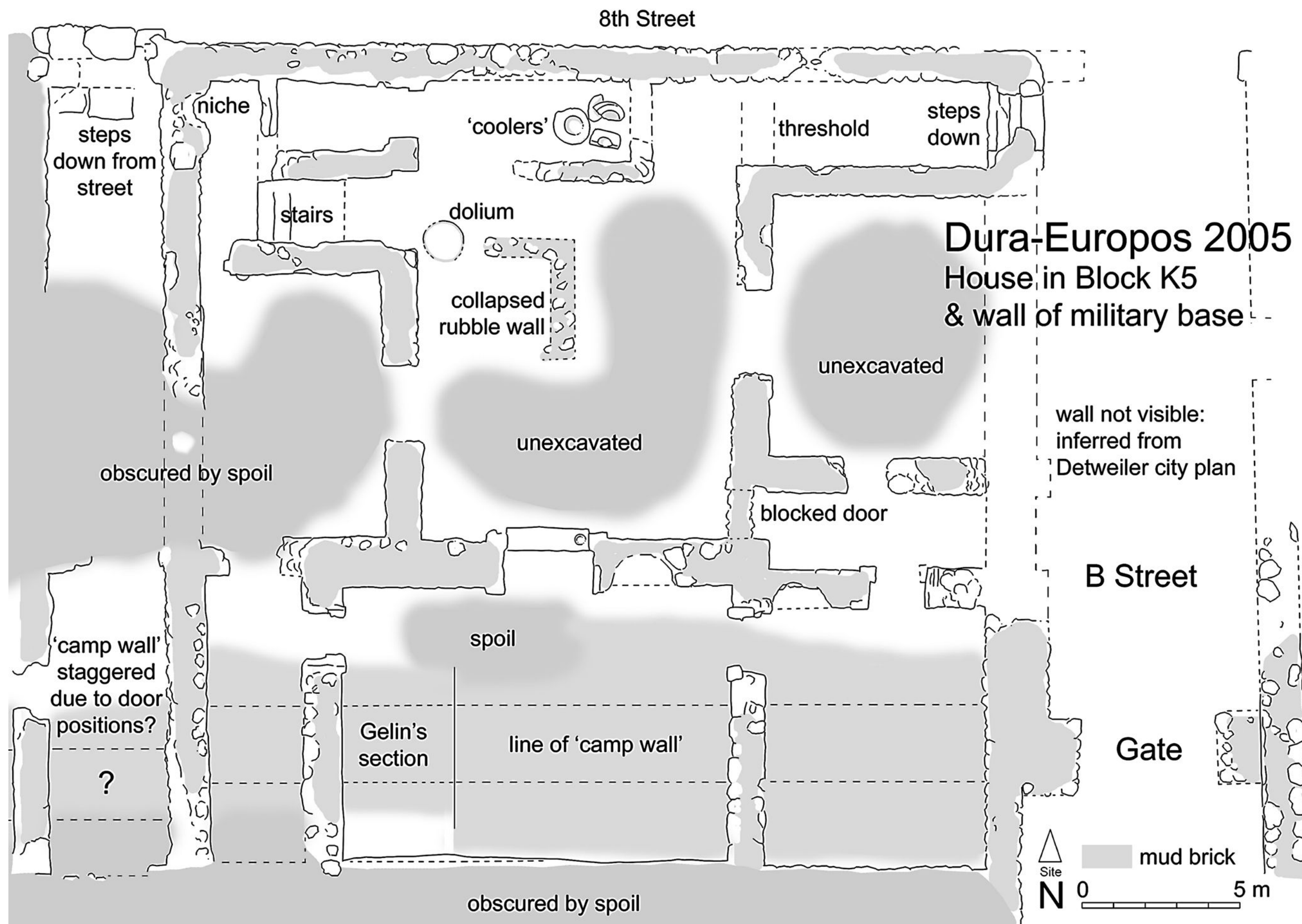


FIGURE 3.7 Plan of K5 by Simon James following cleaning and excavation in 2005. Image courtesy of Simon James.

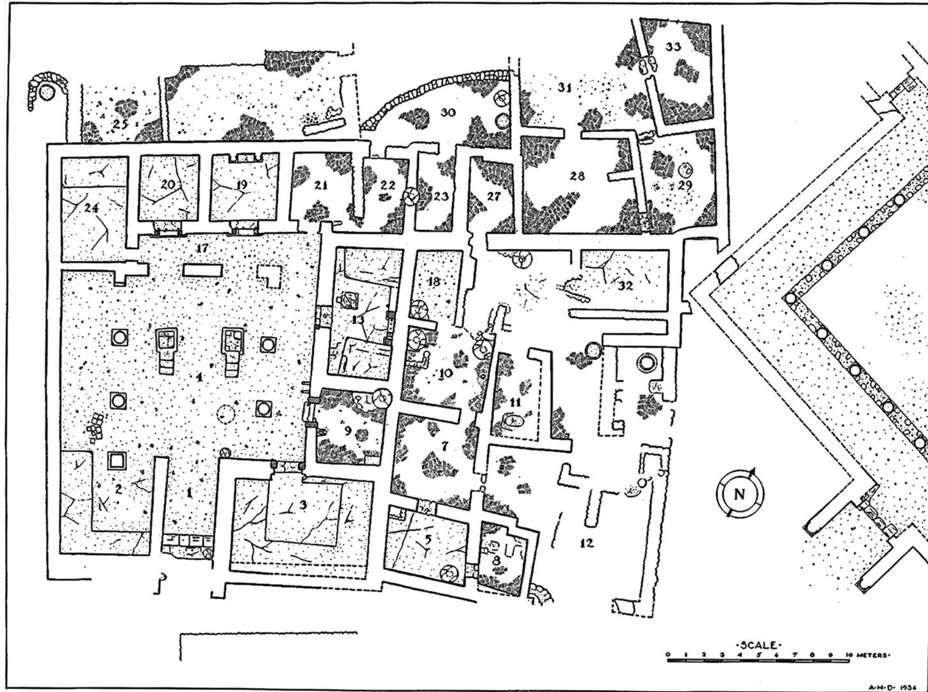


FIGURE 3.8 Plan of excavated portion of block X7 by A. H. Detweiler, including 'Dolicheneum' (sanctuary with courtyard marked '4'), and partially reconstructed corner of Roman Palace visible at right (restored walls in dotted lines). YUAG i400.

FIGURE 3.9 Photograph during excavation of X7. YUAG i354.

FIGURE 3.10 Side and front views of eagles, one each in copper alloy and stone (both from X7-5). 1745/Damascus 8394; 1744/1938.5318. YUAG i216a.

E4

The final excavated structure on the north side of the city which was converted from civil habitation to military use is the house which took up the southern half of block E4 (Figure 3.12). The house in E4 was discovered and excavated in the sixth season at Dura, 1932–3, by Frank Brown during his first season at Dura. The thorough description in the *Preliminary Report* of the excavation in E4 was

FIGURE 3.11 Selection of decorated bone hairpins and other bone objects found in or near buildings adjacent to the Roman Palace and 'Dolicheneum' in the Roman camp. From left, nude female sitting on pedestal (front broken away) i801 (X7-28), Eros pin I816/1938.862 (X7-29), hand pin i816/1938.863 (X7-29), pin with round knob terminal I816/1938.864 (X7-29), bone figurine or doll head fragment i815/1938.652 (X7-street), bone flute fragment i448/1938.4746 (X3-30). YUAG i227a.

undertaken by Margaret Crosby.[92] House E4 was also known, in the early reports, as the 'House of the Parthian' because its earliest phase was believed to be

[92] P. R. 6, 4-49. Extensive notes of Frank Brown in YUAG Archive which appear to have formed the basis of Margaret Crosby's published account, including a report entitled 'Excavations in the Roman Quarter' which notes the excavation of E4 took one month, and the reason for its excavation: 'Its location threw it well within the particularly Roman section and its masses suggested a large building of unified plan. For these reasons it was determined to dig it.' Pictorial graffiti from this block also discussed in Goldman 1999, 50, 77. On the excavation, Hopkins 1979, 124.

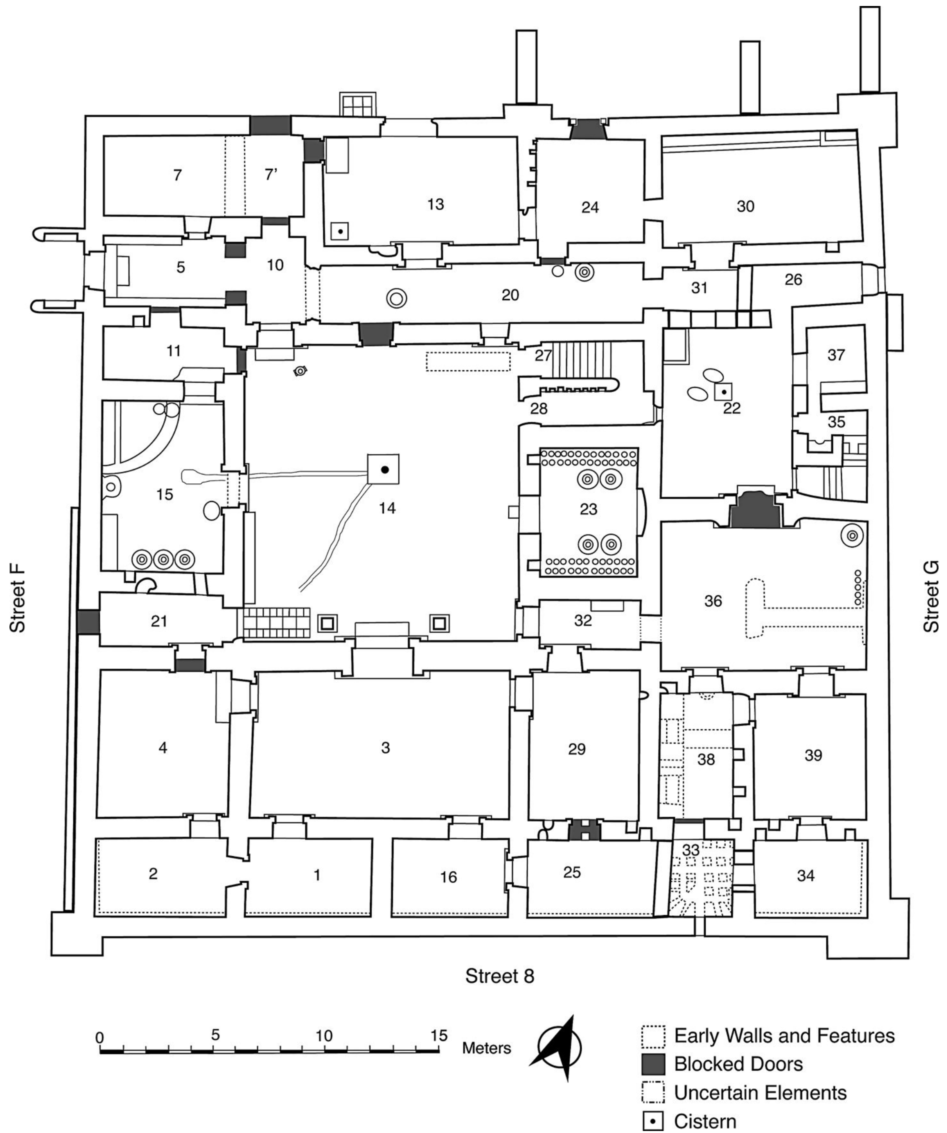


FIGURE 3.12 House in south half of block E4 (E4 house, 'House of the Parthian'). Plan by the author, adapted from original by van Knox. YUAG.

Parthian in date. It is a large structure which occupies the entire southern half of a block. By the time of Dura's demise, this house had been entirely taken over for Roman military use, and had undergone several phases of adaptation.[93]

[93] Pollard 2000, 54–6; 2004, although NB this chapter misunderstands the stratigraphic and architectural relationships in this block. See also overview in Haynes 2013, 166–9.

The house was square in plan, measuring 36.5 m on each side. It was based around two courtyards, E4-14 and E4-22. In the final period, it had entrances on the west and east sides, E4-5 and E4-26, respectively, and an unusual wide opening on the north side directly into E4-13. The stone flagging on the floor of E4-13, and its plaster basin, taken with the wide doorway, perhaps indicate that this room was adapted for use as stables. As can be seen on the plan, there was an earlier structure in this area which had been razed.[94] Many doorways were blocked, and while the date of most of these modifications is not certain, some, including the E4-22/36 doorway were blocked with fired bipedal bricks, so most likely date to the military use of this structure in the late second or early third century CE.

There were two main phases to this military use of the building which are archaeologically visible. In the first, the house seems to have served as a commander's house or included a similar function. In E4-23, lavish paintings survive in fragments, including one probably of a Roman officer making a sacrifice (Figure 3.13)[95] and an elaborate calendar was scratched into a wall in the same room.[96] The house was also equipped with a heated room, with E4-33 receiving a hypocaust, fed by a furnace in the street to the south. A number of other installations, including drains from E4-15 to the courtyard and E4-26 to the street, and an installation in E4-28, which might have been an oil press, indicate a more industrial function. The adjacent courtyard, E4-22, had a stone bin and two tubs built into the courtyard, one on the level of the floor and one sunk into it.

While it is not clear what the precise chronological relationship is between the paintings of E4-33 and these other modifications, it is evident that the reception function of E4-23 perhaps indicated by the paintings, the use of the heated room, and some of the brick-lined drains elsewhere in the house, all ceased to be used for those purposes by the final period. The room with the hypocaust went out of use, the drains in E4-14 were filled in, as was the press in E4-28, and E4-23 was used for storage: four *dolia* and fifty-two *amphorae* were found complete and *in situ* by the excavators. A further storage area was attested in E4-36, where five *amphorae* and a *pithos* were found complete. In addition to this storage capacity in the final period, room E4-15, which seems to have had ovens in earlier periods as well, had installed a large cooking facility, with a bread oven, a mudbrick platform with traces of burning which perhaps served as a base for a brazier, and a large semi-circular installation with flues and traces of burning throughout. This was probably a large oven. In the courtyard, E4-14, two basalt mills were found.

Aside from paintings, cooking installation, storage facility, stables, and perhaps industrial production, other materials are indicative of the conversion of this structure from a house of Parthian Dura into one used by the Roman military.

[94] Excavators found remnants below the floors in E4-7, E4-16, E4-25, E4-34, and E4-36.

[95] On character of E4 painting, F. R. 7, 40.

[96] Lehoux 2007, 170–1; Baird 2011c, 63.

FIGURE 3.13 Fragment of painted plaster in room E4-23. YUAG fi175.

Some of the doors which were blocked as the building was adapted were filled in with fired *bipedales*: fired bricks, as opposed to mudbrick, were not normally used in Durene domestic architecture. Window glass, apparently fallen from an upper storey was found in E4-13 and E4-22.[97] A fragment of pebble mosaic, also apparently from an upper storey and not otherwise known in Durene houses, was also found (E4-24). Indeed, the upper storey itself may have been an addition, and a buttress added on the east exterior wall of the block and a long addition which thickened the west exterior wall may speak to the stabilization of the structure which was needed when an upper storey was added or substantially modified.

Many of the main features of the final use of E4 have commonalities with those in E8: the structure was reconfigured, with some doors blocked and others

[97] F121/1933.586 and F347/1933.586 (the glass fragments share a YUAG number as these fragments were recorded in batches).

opened, changing the circulation of the space. Room E4-15 is adapted to apparently be able to cook large amounts of food. E4-23 became an area of increased storage, and food production is also evidenced by the basalt mills in E4-14. Facilities for animals were also made in E4-13 and E4-30 where there were plaster bins and flagged floors; the jamb of E4-30 also had a graffito of horses.[98]

Furthermore, there is the evidence of the finds, which are also of a similar profile to those found in E8. While only a handful of objects were reported in the published account, more than 300 objects were recorded in the field registers. The unpublished report of Frank Brown also makes some remarks on the finds, including that scales of copper alloy armour were found in virtually every room of E4.[99] Other military equipment included a copper alloy plate from a dagger scabbard and three missiles in E4-27.[100] A die and knuckle bones were excavated,[101] as were hooks, needles, and a variety of other small implements (Figure 3.14).[102] Two seal boxes were found in E4-15 and just outside the door to E4-26.[103] Among items of personal dress or those which might have been for grooming were bone pins,[104] as well as a fibula,[105] bracelets of glass and copper alloy,[106] two copper alloy finger rings with settings,[107] a silver earring,[108] and spatula.[109] Overall the picture from the finds is hazy, but broadly indicative of a military occupation of the building, and perhaps of a less rapid abandonment than the assemblage in E8 would seem to imply, with its human remains and hoards.

There is also the evidence of the graffiti from E4. Aside from the *parapegma* of E4-23, a further sixteen graffiti were found in this structure, all but one in Greek. In E4-11, adjacent to the room E4-15 in which food was prepared, was found an

[98] P. R. 6, 23–4.

[99] 'It is notable the scraps of bronze scale pierced for sewing on cloth or leather some with the stuff still adhering were found in almost every room.' Brown, 'Excavations in the Roman Quarter', YUAG Dura Archive. Scale catalogued by James included F. R. 7, no. 472 (F324/1938.4116) from E4-20/24 doorway.

[100] F. R. 7, no. 585 (F209/F. R. 4.4.1, pierced bronze no. 67) from E4-3. A domed copper alloy stud was found in E4-34: F492/1938.3084/F. R. 7, no. 288. On the missiles, P. R. 6, 28.

[101] Die from E4-15, F819/1933.402c, Russell 1976, 51. Six knuckle bones were excavated in E4-3, H89, and one in E4-13, H84.

[102] Hook from E4-15, F205/1938.3174, copper alloy needles from E4-22, F406g, E4-34, F427, and E4-26, F445d.

[103] Outside E4-26: F284b/1938.2117, P. R. 6, 33, and seal box E4-15: F819q/1933.613. They were recorded as a 'tiny box' and 'locket' respectively.

[104] Bone pins: two in E4-29 (F351), two in E4-13 (H84), and one in E4-31 (F364f), as well as a number from uncertain contexts in this block (H335/1938.940, a gold-headed pin, and H39e, from one of the surrounding streets).

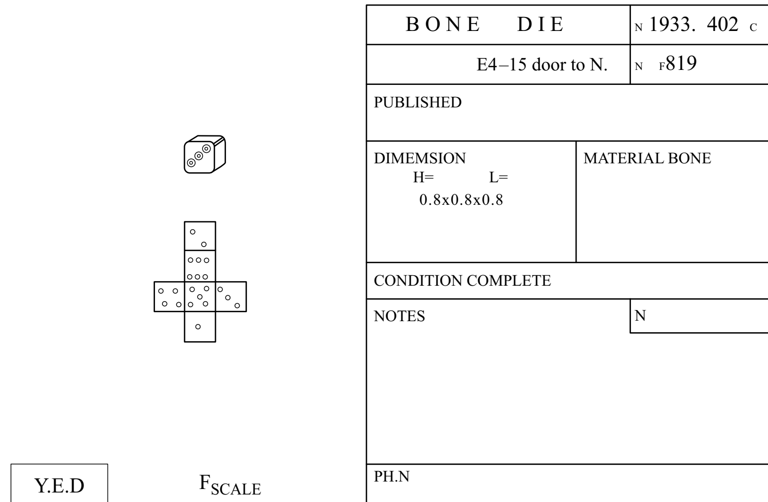
[105] Fibula from E4-27 F286/1938.1978/F.R. 4.4.1 Enamelled bronze no. 24, a rhomboid fibula.

[106] Glass bracelet from E4-22 (F404b/1933.624), copper alloy bracelet fragments from E4-13, F126/1938.2293.

[107] E4-30, F487c/1938.2523 and E4-2, F52/1938.2352.

[108] E4-22, F406f.

[109] E4-29, F366c/1938.2832 and from E4-14, F193b.



BONE DIE	N 1933. 402 C
E4–15 door to N.	N F819

PUBLISHED

DIMEMSION H= L= 0.8x0.8x0.8	MATERIAL BONE

CONDITION COMPLETE

NOTES	N

PH.N

Y.E.D

FSCALE

FIGURE 3.14 Bone die excavated in E4-15 as recorded on accession card at Yale. YUAG Dura card catalogue 1933.402c.

account of a cook or programme of sacred meals.[110] On the south wall of E4-20 were two texts, one of which was legible, a scratched text honouring the commanding officer of a soldier.[111] Persian and Semitic personal names were found on the west side of the door jamb of room E4-21, and on the south wall of the same room were scratched a list of Roman citizens, all with the *gentilicum* Aurelius.[112] On the same wall was a good luck text, an account of one Germanus having paid 76 denarii for some unrecorded good, and a longer but only partially legible text perhaps mentioning a feast.[113] In E4-23, an acclamation to Serapis was found.[114] Two further texts were found in E4-25, one recording the name Paulus and the other with a small scratched ship drawn, with Greek letters beneath which were legible but not interpretable.[115] In E4-33 two graffiti were found, including a number of names and a partial *abecedarium*.[116] Finally, the one Latin text from the structure was the word *conticuere* scratched into the south wall of E4-39. This is probably a partial quote from *Aeneid* (book 2); a Vergilian graffito was also found in the Roman Palace.[117]

[110] P. R. 6, 35, no. 612.
[111] P. R. 6, 35–6, no. 613; no. 614 was not legible, an apparent mix of Greek and Latin letters.
[112] Persian and Semitic names: P. R. 6, 36–8, nos 616 and 617. Roman citizens, P. R. 6, 38–9, no. 618.
[113] P. R. 6, 39-40, nos. 619, 620, and 621 respectively. [114] P. R. 6, 45–6, no. 623.
[115] P. R. 6, 46–7, nos 624 and 625. [116] P. R. 6, 47–8, nos 626 and 627.
[117] P. R. 6, 48. no. 628. The opening lines of the *Aeneid* were recognized by Rostovtzeff in the Palace of the Dux: P. R. 9.3, 55, no. 960. For further discussion of Latin at Dura, Baird 2011c, 59.

A house converted to military accommodation outside the Roman camp: L7-A, The 'House of the Scribes'

Outside the bounded area of the Roman garrison on the north side of the site, house L7-A is one in which evidence thought to show the residence of members of the military was found (Figure 3.15).[118] The house was relatively well preserved, having been partially encased in the embankment built on the inside of the city walls before its fall to the Sasanians (the same block preserved the synagogue). The compelling reconstruction by Pearson (Figure 3.16) has meant this house has sometimes been used as a type house for Dura.[119] The house had been inhabited over a relatively long period of time, as demonstrated by the need to raise floor levels to accommodate the street level rise along the Wall Street. The walls of the house abutted those of L7-B, its neighbour to the north, showing L7-B's relatively earlier date. A number of modifications were made to the building, including, by the final period, the blocking of the street entrance in L7-33a on the west side of the building.[120]

The structure was described as 'the headquarters or meeting place of certain non-commissioned officers of the Roman army', based on the recovery of painted plaster blocks in L7-A31, which included portraits of named individuals such as Masimus, *oikodomos*, Ulpius Silvanus, *Tessarius*, and Heliodorus, *actuarius*.[121] The name of the structure, the 'House of the Scribes', was based—imaginatively—on a splash of ink on the wall at the back of a niche in L7-A40 (Figure 3.17), and the painted blocks which actually came (it seems) from another building.[122] In fact, there is no unambiguous evidence for the presence of non-commissioned officers in this house, although unfortunately artefact records were not kept. The blocks were probably re-used in this context, as evidenced by the fact that they all appear to have been cut down (Figure 3.18).[123] That these blocks, with the portraits of identified non-commissioned officers on them, seem not to have been in their primary context here problematizes the identification of this house as their residence or office.[124] The plaster blocks from L7-A31 were of a

[118] Original publications: P. R. 6, 265-308 and Du Mesnil du Buisson 1933, 194. On the presence of military, Pollard 2000, 55; on the 'stoa', Saliou 1992, 89. The publication in P. R. 6 was written by Pearson, Baur, Crosby, and Rostovtzeff, but the work was carried out by a team commanded by Du Mesnil du Buisson (as noted in P. R. 6, 1-2); if he kept detailed notebooks, they do not survive in the Dura Archive.

[119] e.g. in Sartre 2007.

[120] Only three items were recorded in the field registers as being found in this house. This is unusual, and it is probably a result of attention being diverted to the synagogue excavations in the same season.

[121] P. R. 6, 265. [122] P. R. 6, 271.

[123] The original publication wrote that the designs were cut down from standard patterns to fit the blocks, but the working on the blocks, as far as is visible on the photographs, suggests the blocks were worked after the paintings were applied.

[124] Painted plaster blocks were also found beneath the floor level of L7-A36.

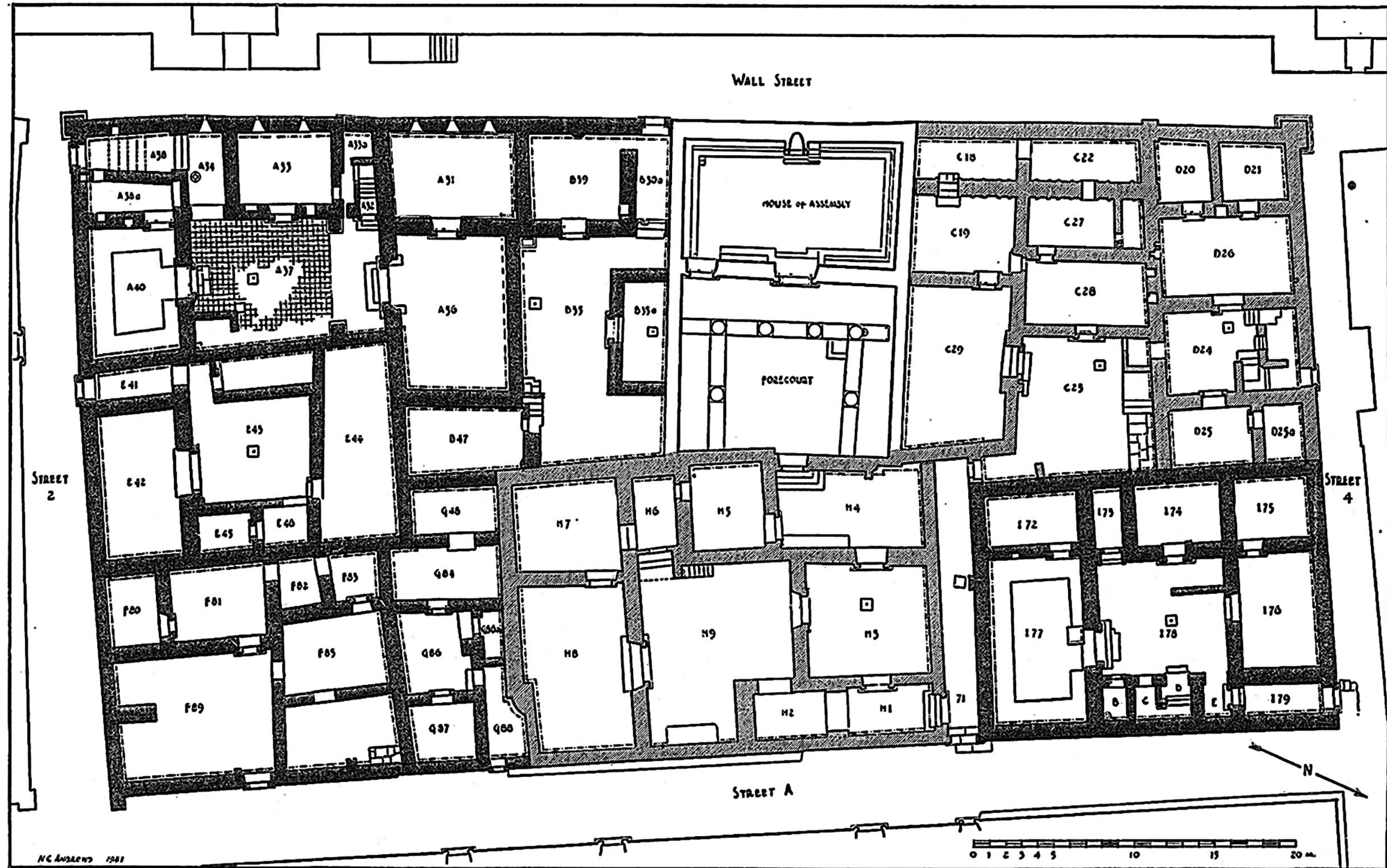


FIGURE 3.15 Plan of block L7 by N. C. Andrews. YUAG.

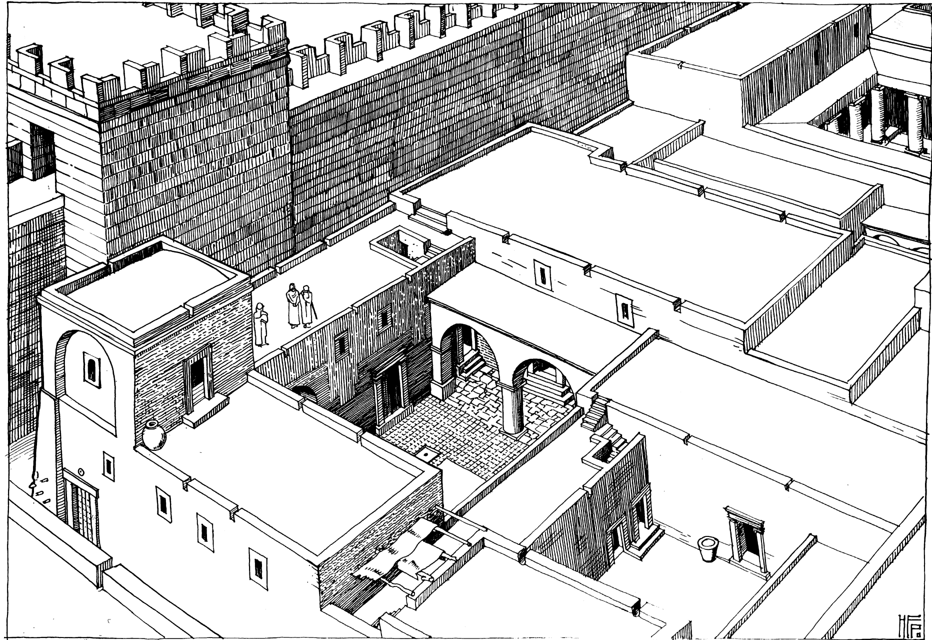


FIGURE 3.16 Restored isometric view of L7-A. Columns of synagogue forecourt in the same block at top right. Drawing by Henry Pearson. YUAG y675.

smaller size than the painted tiles of the synagogue and elsewhere on the site, and the non-portrait tiles included decorations also seen there, including images of Flora, gazelles, flowers, and various fruits including grapes and pomegranates.[125] It would appear that they were originally used in a building with more broadly spaced ceiling beams. Other images with painted inscriptions found in this house included one Demeas son of Barginnaechus, Salamanus, Chariton, Hermes, Iuthus, Barginnaeas, Thaamare (a female name) in addition to some fragmentary names. When these names are considered in addition to Heliodorus, Masimus, and Ulpius Silvanus, the identification of the structure as the residence of non-commissioned officers is even less compelling.[126]

[125] P. R. 6, 274. On the synagogue ceiling, Stern 2010, including her Table 1 which compares the subjects from ceiling tiles between the synagogue and other structures; 490–1 for a discussion of the ceiling tiles from L7-A.

[126] A brick mould was mentioned as being found in L7-A31, but no size for this was given in the publication; the field report said it was actually 'a piece of the edge of the mould' which was found. The excavators took this as evidence the room was being redecorated, but if indeed the mould was for mudbricks, it is unlikely it was actually in use in this room, as opposed to being stored there. It is possible that what was found was a fragment of plaster with a negative impression of one of the blocks, which had been used to secure the blocks to the ceiling. For the extended discussion of the supposed residents of the house by the excavators, P. R. 6, 299–304.

FIGURE 3.17 West wall of L7-A40 showing niche (including 'ink splash'), door to L7-A38 (unexcavated), with raised plaster border of room visible in foreground. YUAG g818.

Aside from the vaulted upper storey chamber, the house was a fairly typical example of Durene domestic architecture. The courtyard was paved with tiles, and a room with benches was found to its south; on its north side was another broad room with a more monumental entrance in which were found plaster blocks with sculpted busts in relief, which were perhaps supports for wooden benches.[127] Fragments of paintings were found on the fallen remains of a fired-brick vault above L7-A38 and L7-A38a. As in E4, it seems a partial upper storey was one of the late additions to this house (above L7-A38), although, despite the reconstruction drawings, the form of this was less than certain. The paintings included a painting of Aphrodite and Eros (Figure 3.19). Although it is poorly preserved, the style is out of keeping with Durene painting, instead reflective of a more Classicizing milieu comparable to the fragmentary painting in E4. In room L7-A31, the same room in which the painted plaster blocks were recovered, was a moulded plaster frieze with Bacchic decoration (see Figure 2.9, in previous chapter).

While there is no firm evidence for the presence of *immunes* of the Roman military using this structure, the use of fired brick in late adaptations, and the painting of Aphrodite which is more Classicizing than other Durene paintings would seem to suggest that there was a military use of this building in its final stage; similarly, the partition in the courtyard is similar to that which appeared in the

[127] On these blocks, see above p. 77.

FIGURE 3.18 Selection of the cut-down plaster blocks, painted with portraits, found in L7-A. YUAG fII56.

secondary court of E4 and throughout E8. Graffiti, too, included a scratched image of a mounted archer from the south wall of the courtyard and a hunting scene.[128]

BILLETING AT DURA?

'Billeting' of soldiers in private houses was the explanation used by excavators to explain the military presence, demonstrated by armour and other military

[128] P. R. 6, 305–8; the hunting scene was found (variously identified as a lion or boar hunt) in L7-A31. Cataphract is Goldman 1999 no. A.3, and the hunting scene no. B.3. Both mounted archers appear to have tripartite headgear associated with depictions of Parthians.

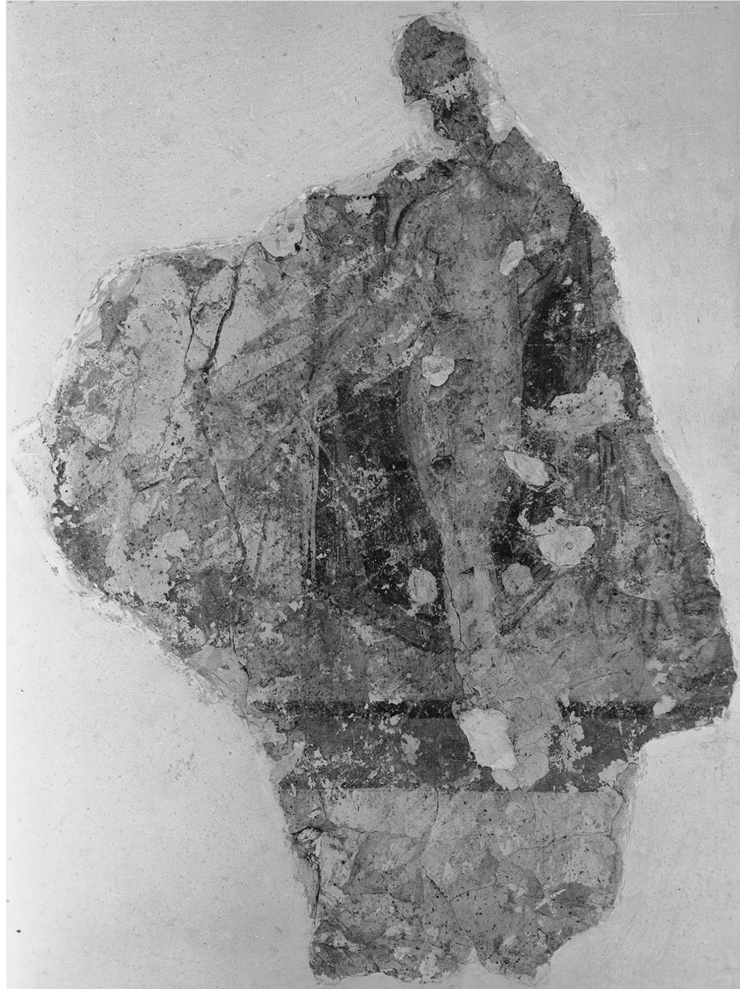


FIGURE 3.19 Painted plaster fragment depicting Aphrodite from L7-A. YUAG Dam-32.

artefacts, as well as graffiti, in houses outside the garrison area on the north side of the city.[129] This explanation was accepted by subsequent scholars and has become part of the received wisdom for the operation of urban garrisons in the east.[130] As shown by the 'House of the Scribes', L7-A, the evidence is actually more ambiguous than it might seem.

Welles' assertion of billeting was based on graffiti from M8, and the painted inscriptions of the blocks of L7-A: 'houses were used for billeting. South of this gate [the Palmyrene gate] Rufinianus and Basilianus were lodged with Demias and his brother, while to the north a variety of clerical personnel, Heliodorus the

[129] e.g. F. R. 7, 18. [130] e.g. Dirven 1999, 14; Pollard 2000, 55.

actuarius, Ulpius Silvanus the *tesserarius*, and Masimus the *oikodomos*, and others found space in the largest house of the district, the owners of which were the couple Barginnaeas and his wife Thaamare.'[131] In fact, the painted inscription recording the name of Ulpius Silvanus was found beneath a floor level, and as noted earlier, the other painted blocks seem not to have been in their primary context. This makes it difficult to establish a direct link between a painted depiction of an individual, which is possibly a commemoration, and the occupation of a structure by that person. The supposed couple named by Welles are simply two further names found on separate painted inscriptions on blocks in the same house; their relationship and ownership of the house is conjecture.

The graffiti Welles cites from block M8 did not, in fact, come from a house, but were painted inscriptions from an open courtyard adjacent to the Wall Street and found on 'fragments of plaster on the north side of the court, probably fallen from the wall between K2 and J1'.[132] One of these texts is the name of the fourth Syrian legion, but the others were fragmentary; the two, one in Greek and another in Latin, from which Welles drew his conclusions about billeting include a word restored as *stathmouxoi*, which may mean 'landlord' or someone upon whom a soldier was billeted. It is indeed possible that these texts commemorate two soldiers, Basilianus and Rufinianus billeted with the house belonging to two brothers, one of whom was Demias. Furthermore, it is likely that soldiers were, at some point, billeted in Durene households. However, there is very little to demonstrate this specific circumstance in the archaeology.

While the evidence for billeting of soldiers is problematic, the military presence outside the garrison area within houses is actually pervasive, particularly when there are object records for the structures: the more complete the recording for a house, the more likely we are to find evidence of the military in it. Indeed, beyond billeting, it may be the case that the military presence in the houses of Dura is actually evidence of a military phase to the city's occupation; it is possible that by the 250s CE, after an initial Sasanian incursion (or in anticipation of one), that a portion of the civil population able to flee had done so, and the remaining inhabitants were the members of the military, their families and servants, and military dependents.[133] This, for instance, seems to be the case in block G1 in the agora, where military finds throughout the structures, and a number of haphazard architectural modifications very late in the houses' history, strongly suggests the buildings had been wholly taken over for military use.[134]

[131] Welles 1951, 259.

[132] P. R. 6, 176–8, inscription nos 695–8. This may have been an area for keeping animals; a possible similar feature appears on geophysical plots near the southern gate: Benech 2010, 8.

[133] Baird 2012b. [134] Baird 2012c.

There is a similar situation in block C7. This block sits at a main intersection in the city, the junction of the Main Street and H Street, and the site of a monumental arch.[135] This block is near the centre of the city, well outside the garrison proper. In this block were twelve courtyard units, which, by the final period, interconnected to form a total of seven different units (Figure 2.3). In this block, both graffiti and finds attest to a military presence, which would be undetectable from architectural evidence, as there are no recorded modifications to the structures which are certainly Roman or 'military' like those found in E4 or E8.

The graffiti in question is both textual and pictorial. In room C7-C4, a number of graffiti were found scratched into the walls of the room. One of these shows a structure, perhaps a temple with a pediment, in which stand two gladiators, one with a trident and net, the other with a sword and shield; two eagles were scratched beside the temple (Figure 3.20).[136] Another, Greek, graffito from the same room, C7-C4, asks for the remembrance of two *contubernales*, or 'tentmates'.[137] The gladiators, of course, may be linked to the presence of the amphitheatre at Dura, built for the use of the Roman military.[138] Elsewhere in the block in C7-F4, a Latin graffito reads LEG(IO) III CYR(ENAICA) and is further evidence of Roman military presence in this block, perhaps giving the name of the legion to which the men stationed here belonged.[139]

House C7-C interconnected with several others including C7-G. A number of artefacts from these houses might also allude to a military presence here, including possible Roman military equipment,[140] and items of personal dress recovered including a number of fibulae, several of which were the crossbow type thought to be associated with the Roman military.[141] Crossbow brooches were found elsewhere in the block in C7-A10 and C7-A^{2}6.[142] Aucissa type brooches were also recovered from houses in this block (C7-C^2 and C7-G^{3}19).[143] This type is

[135] Baird 2011b.

[136] P. R. 5, 38-40; Goldman 1999, no. F.5 (although NB, there, ascribed to the wrong block of houses).

[137] P. R. 5, 39-40, no. F401. [138] P. R. 6, 68-77. [139] No. 294.

[140] A 'bronze rosette', field number E429, was recorded from this house; other artefacts with this description are interpreted as copper alloy *phalera*, from military dress and horse equipment. This field number is no longer associated with an artefact, however, so it is not possible to confirm this identification. An iron dagger, E174, from this house, is not of a Roman military pattern (Simon James, pers. comm.). Other pieces of military dress were found in this block: a copper alloy buckle, E321c (1932.1621a) was found in house C7-A^2, and from an unknown place in C7 was found a pierced bronze (1938.2095), identified by James as a copper alloy strap junction, a Roman military equestrian fitting, F. R. 4.4.1, pierced bronze no. 3/ F. R. 7, no. 339.

[141] The crossbow brooch is the most common type found at Dura, accounting for almost half of the known examples; Baird Forthcoming (a). From C7, fibulae E436, E320b, E3202, E390, E99e, E168a, and E200. On the crossbow brooch type and the (perhaps problematic) link with the Roman military, Swift 2000, 73.

[142] Brooches E436 (1932.1427/1938.2042 and E320b (1938.2039), respectively, F. R. 4.4.1, nos 80 and 87.

[143] E320a (1932.1426?) and E168a (1932.1580), respectively. The latter is F. R. 4.4.1, no. 19.

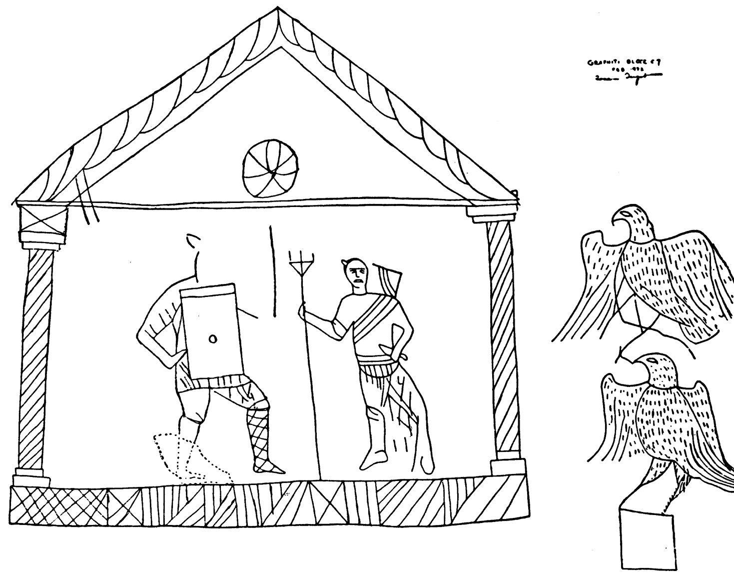


FIGURE 3.20 Tracing of gladiator graffito from C7-C4. YUAG y481.

generally dated much earlier than the third century, so it is unclear how we should interpret these items: were they an artefact that had a long use-life, and was associated with the Roman military? Perhaps these could be associated with Palmyrene mercenaries at the site in an earlier period, as has been suggested,[144] although they might then be difficult to understand in supposedly domestic contexts. It is also possible these items were obtained and worn by civilians at Dura. Our lack of stratigraphic information leaves this question open.

This evidence problematizes a number of assumptions about the military and civilian occupations at Dura. First, the evidence for 'billeting' is not unambiguous. One graffito might mention it, and this is not from a house; the artefacts, architecture, and graffiti from houses attest to military presence but not necessarily the co-residence with civil inhabitants (nor, however, does the evidence exclude this possibility). Second, such evidence makes clear the problems with dividing Dura into 'military' and 'civilian' areas. By the time Dura fell to the Sasanians, and possibly for a considerable number of years before that, the military was present throughout the site; not just in the camp, in the *principia* and other military buildings, the bathhouses, or in the streets, on the city walls and stationed at its gates, but living in the houses which had once been, but perhaps were no longer, private houses of Dura's inhabitants.

[144] F. R. 7, 55, 240.

Despite the problems interpreting the evidence at Dura, there are a number of broad modifications to houses which were made by the Roman military which can be seen. For example, in the houses converted for use as military accommodation and the E4 house, there are a number of recurrent features. These include increased cooking capacity, storage capacity, specialized military objects, architectural features, decorative features, and particular texts and particular languages being used. Some of the patterns visible in these converted houses, including the high density of ovens, most likely related to the high demand for food production in the military, were likely to have been present throughout this part of the site. This is perhaps represented in the magnetometry of the unexcavated areas.[145] For instance, in E4 and E8 there is evidence of increased storage capacity needed in the final period of the city, in the large number of *in situ* storage vessels found in E4 and E8.[146] Grinders and mills were also found in quantity in these structures, in larger numbers than the typical houses of the city. Taken together, these features apparently represent increased capacity for the production of food, with storage, milling, and ovens for the production of bread on a scale necessitated by the military.[147] This is not to imply that there was necessarily centralized production of foodstuffs; indeed, the presence of such equipment in the various blocks perhaps indicates that the soldiers were responsible for the preparation of their own food. Or that they (or their *familiae*) may well have been ordered to bake ration biscuit on a large scale for campaigns.

Arms, armour, and items of military dress including brooches and hobnails for boots were also found in great number in E4 and E8, as were objects related to activities such as gaming, seal boxes relating to communications or securing of packages, and a range of imported material culture that might represent personal items belonging to members of the military. Objects relating to women's adornment, including carved bone pins, perhaps indicate that the women associated with the garrison were presenting themselves in more Mediterranean styles than the other women of Dura (from *PDura* 32 we know that some local women were married to Roman soldiers, so being affiliated with the Roman military is not mutually exclusive with local). Graffiti made by soldiers was predominately in Greek, even though their names were often those of Roman citizens.

Building materials including fired brick, window glass, and mosaic were apparently introduced with the Roman military presence. Particular building techniques, architectural changes, and building materials were used by the Roman military at Dura, including in the amphitheatre, bath buildings, and the Roman

[145] James et al. 2012, 116. See also Figure 2.4. Food production within soldiers' quarters is known from elsewhere in the empire; see Haynes 2013, 179 on typescript.

[146] In K5 there are several coolers, perhaps used as mortars for grinding, as well as a storage *dolia*, all of which are still visible in this undocumented block.

[147] Texts from E4 also allude to the increased need for food production, for festivals carried out by the military. Graffito no. 612, P. R. 6, 35.

Palace. Building techniques and materials specific to structures built by and for the military at Dura are also used to adapt houses. Stables with flagged floors, too, are found regularly in buildings converted for use by the military, although these are occasionally found in structures where there is no clear evidence for military inhabitation.[148] The small heated room with a hypocaust in E4-33, too, is unique in a residence at the site. Other architectural adaptations seen in houses converted for military use included subdivision of courtyards and reduction of the width of doors. The provision of piped water is also apparently a military adaptation.[149] Decorative elements in houses used by the military also differ from those elsewhere in the site, for instance the Classical style of paintings in L7-A and E4.

THE ROMAN PALACE

The 'Palace of the Dux Ripae' in blocks X3/X5 was built by the Roman military, probably early in the third century (Figure 3.21).[150] Unlike the structures discussed earlier in this chapter, it was not adapted from a pre-existing building, and the differences from Durene architecture, in both form and the use of materials, are illuminating.[151] The identification of the structure rested on *dipinti* which record the name of Domitianus Pompeianus, Dux Ripae (commander of the river bank), which has been called into question.[152] Given the doubts of the title, it is perhaps best simply known as the 'Roman Palace'.[153]

[148] For instance, the 'stable' in D1, p. 286.

[149] Terracotta pipes, otherwise not recorded in Durene houses, were recorded in the E4 house and house A1-A.

[150] Aside from its place in the general scheme of military building on the north side of Dura, a *dipinto* mentioning Elagalabus gives a date before which the structure must have been constructed. F. R. 9.3, 27-30, no. 944.

[151] The building was excavated by the Comte R. du Mesnil du Buisson and F. W. Comstock, during the 1935–6 season at the site. As with other areas excavated by du Mesnil (e.g. L7-A), there are few recorded artefacts from this structure. Subsequent work on the texts and the plan, respectively, was done by Frank Brown and Henry Detweiler. The outbreak of war and other obstacles meant that the report was not published until 1952, having had a succession of editors (see P. R. 9.3, v, for the circumstances of publication). The architecture of the building was written by Detweiler, one of the site architects (there is no record he participated in the actual excavations), and the published finds were written up by Ann Perkins at Yale after the close of the excavation. For the initial study of the office of the 'Dux Ripae', Gilliam 1941. The Palace of the Dux is the singular palatial structure which received full publication, having been the subject of the third fascicle of the ninth *Preliminary Report*. Further work was conducted on the palace in 1988 by Susan Downey under the auspices of the MFSED, which resulted in amendments to the reconstructed plan of the building: Downey 1991; 1993c. Downey has shown that Detweiler's plan omitted some remains which were visible even on aerial photographs taken in the 1930s, but that Rostovtzeff's comparisons with the villa architecture of the western provinces made in the P. R. 9.3 remain valid.

[152] P. R. 9.3, 30–5, 93–6, nos. 945, 946, and 947. Edwell 2008, 128–35.

[153] The 'Roman Palace', as adopted by Simon James in his forthcoming work on the Dura military base, on account of the problems of naming this structure.

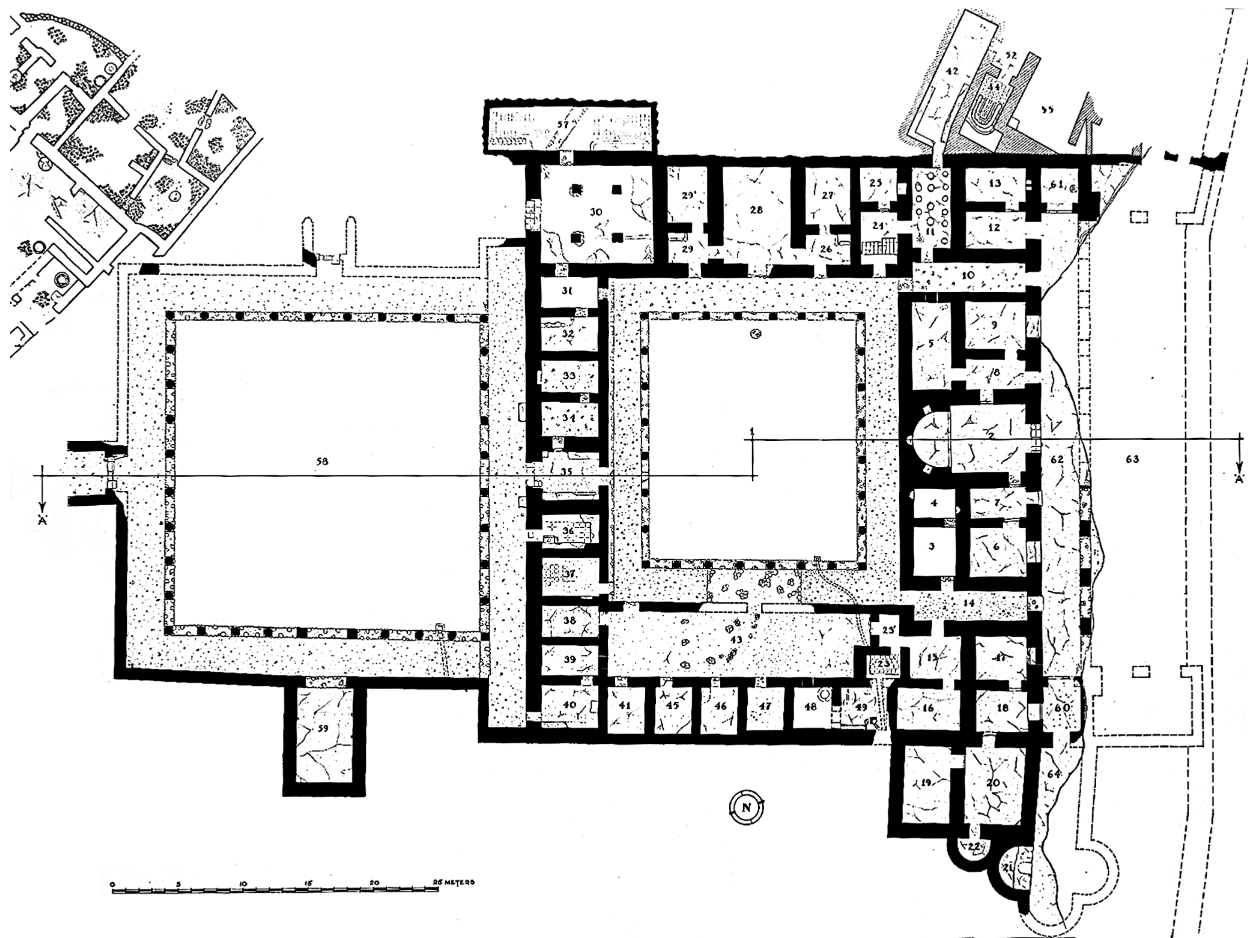


Figure 3.21 Plan of the 'Roman Palace' (the so-called 'Palace of the Dux Ripae') by A. H. Detweiler. YUAG.

Despite the problems of the eponymous inhabitant, and more generally identifying the rank and role of the building's occupants, it appears to have been a building with both public and residential roles, and was focused around two large peristyle courtyards. It covers a larger area of ground than any of Dura's other buildings. The building took its orientation from the city walls on the cliff over the Euphrates against which it sits, rather than the street grid of the city; in order for it to be installed, some earlier buildings in X7 were destroyed.[154] Adjacent excavated structures include the probable military accommodation in X7 and the 'Dolicheneum', the small military temple.

Throughout the structure and plan of the Roman Palace differences with the Durene vernacular can be seen. The Roman foot used in the layout of the building was 0.296 m (the *Pes Monetalis* or *p.M.*), in contrast with the 0.35 m foot used for the layout of city blocks.[155] The palace was primarily mudbrick, with the mudbricks being one Roman foot square.[156] This would seem to imply, as would the plan and form of the building, that it was built by the military, and that the military produced their own materials (or, at least controlled brick production). The materials themselves, however, mostly mudbrick with plaster mortar or plastered rubble walls, were those used throughout the site. The plan of the building, around two peristyle courtyards, is unique at the site, differing not only from houses but from the other palatial residences (on the citadel, redoubt, and in D1). The apse of room 2, a feature which also appears on a smaller scale in rooms 21 and 22, is also unique to this building within Dura. Painted plaster adorned ceilings and walls of a number of rooms.[157] Doorways were without the splayed openings and mouldings seen throughout the rest of the site in private, civic, and religious structures alike.[158] As in other buildings constructed by and for the Roman military at Dura, including the J1 house and the amphitheatre, 'Roman' forms were executed in 'local' materials and techniques, with decoration (in as much as it was preserved) also conforming to more recognizably 'Roman' conventions.

The hydraulic arrangements in this building were also unique at Dura, with a system of stone-lined drains and a basin in the main courtyard (X3-1) for drainage.[159] Rooms X3-23, 48, and 49 were a small latrine and bath complex. A small bath, including another latrine, which was incompletely excavated and lay outside

[154] The precise relationship of the palace to the city wall cannot, however, be determined, due to the condition of the remains, which have eroded off the edge of the cliff. See Downey 1993c, 184–7.

[155] On the different Roman foot measurements used in surveying for town planning (particularly in Britain) Duncan-Jones 1980; on the use of standard measurements in Roman military planning, Walthew 1981; on problems with such units, Millett 1982. For Xanten, Bridger 1984. On the foot of 0.35 m characterizing Hellenistic Dura, P. R. 7/8, 4; P. R. 9.1, 4, 24–6; Downey 1986, 27.

[156] P. R. 9.3, 2. [157] P. R. 9.3, 6.

[158] A typology of the doors of the structure is given in P. R. 9.3, 6-7 and Figure 3.

[159] P. R. 9.3, 12.

to the north of the palace, connected to it via X3-11. Piped water in an elite residential context such as this was one part of the display of luxury and wealth;[160] the true water display from the palace, however, was the Euphrates itself, and views of the river likely account for the orientation of the main reception chamber, the apsidal room X3-2, which faces towards the river rather than opening onto the peristyle.

The finds recorded from the structure were so few that they cannot be said to be representative.[161] One exceptional item, a large gold fibula with an intaglio, alludes to the presence of a high-ranking official, but it was found 'just outside' the building, to its south (see Figure 5.17).[162] Other finds included a copper alloy scalpel handle from X3-46,[163] and copper alloy edging from iron mail from X3-11.[164] In X3-37, six storage jars were found upside down in a corner.[165] In X3-30, a room with a plan similar to the small temples elsewhere at Dura (e.g. A1, L8, and the Dolicheneum), a bone flute fragment was found.[166] The measurement system, architectural features including apses and peristyles, the form of the dooorways, and the use of false vaults, hydraulic arrangements such as baths and drains, and the relatively extensive painted decoration of the Roman Palace all set it apart from other residences at Dura, both civil and palatial.

THE 'HOUSE OF THE PREFECT', BLOCK J1

The comparable excavated elite military structure is the smaller and less well-preserved structure in block J1, labelled the 'House of the Prefect' by the excavators (Figure 3.22).[167] Thought to be house of military commander, J1 lies in the ground between the Temple of Azzanathkona and the Praetorium and the Temple of Bel. The primary reason for the attribution of ownership to this structure is its location in the midst of the military quarter, with its entrance

[160] Kamash 2010, 121.

[161] Nine artefacts were published as the objects from the palace in P. R. 9.3, 58–66, but these included items found in the adjacent street.

[162] I692/Damascus museum no. 3250. P. R. 9.3, 58-62. Guiraud 1992, no. 22, with the carving identified there as Narcissus.

[163] I469/1938.2530. P. R. 9.3, 62. Similar examples are found throughout the empire; see, for example, Jackson 1990, Figure 1; Jackson 2005, Figure 12.9; Jackson 2011, Figure 17b. On 'non-functional' uses for Roman medical instruments, Baker 2004.

[164] I406/1938.656, P. R. 9.3, 63/F.R. 7, no. 407.

[165] P. R. 9.3, 63.

[166] I448/1938.623.

[167] Main publication was P. R. 5, 235–7. The excavator in charge of the area of the Temple of Azzanathkona and the Praetorium was David Clark, and it is likely that J1 also fell within his responsibilities: P. R. 5, xvii. A modern track, still in use at present, cuts across this block. Partly as a result of this, some parts of this block have exceptionally poor preservation, but the northern half of the block is slightly better preserved. Allara and Saliou 1997, 148 n 31.

vestibule (J1-21 on the plan) just opposite the alley behind the *Praetorium*. The courtyard of the structure is large; bases were all that remained of the colonnade which surrounded two and a half sides of the court. Recorded finds were minimal, perhaps due to the shallow deposits in this part of the site, but included a copper alloy buckle plate and a glass finger ring.[168] One relief was found, however, of a hand holding a thunderbolt, which had plaster perhaps indicating it was mounted on a wall as an apotropaic device; a graffito of a thunderbolt was also found in X7.[169] Terracotta water pipes, which bypass J1, found in the road to the north of the building are further evidence of hydraulic arrangements which were added by the Roman military.[170] The plan of the building is similar to houses of officers and senior centurions excavated in other military bases, for example the tribune's house at Inchtuthil.[171]

The last stages of Dura's existence thus saw the transformation of urban living. First, an entire quarter of the city on its northern side was taken over for military use. In it, houses were architecturally adapted for use as military accommodation. A palatial Roman residence was built overlooking the Euphrates. By the fall of the city, there is evidence for a military presence not only inside houses within the garrison area, but also throughout the rest of the city.

The presence of the Roman military would have had huge impact on civil life at Dura, introducing a new bureaucracy, new calendar (alongside other methods of timekeeping), and displacing many residents from the northern side of the city. The military also monitored and controlled movement within the site for both civilians and military personnel.[172] The military was omnipresent, along city walls from where they could see into houses, stationed at the gates, in houses, and in streets. This presence was not just spatial, in the distribution of military throughout the site, and not limited to the north side where the garrison was based, but also temporal, not only over the decades of their presence but throughout the day, controlling the city gates and hence when people could come and go to their fields or elsewhere.[173]

[168] Copper alloy buckle E1371/ 1932.1484/ F. R. 7, no. 76/F. R. 4.4.1 pierced bronze no. 51. Finger ring E1390/1932.1438. In court (J1-A1) just outside rooms 18 and 19 were two low plaster basins, one semi-circular, the other rectangular, probably horse troughs. These do not appear on the plan but are noted in the *Preliminary Report*. The same applies to a basalt mill found in room J1-A16.

[169] E1404/Damascus Museum no. 4489/F. R. 3.1.2 no. 179; P.R. 5, plate 18.3. Downey in F. R. 3.1.2, 147, further notes that this is perhaps the abstract symbol of Hadad or Baalshamin. A lightning bolt is also one of the attributes of Jupiter Dolichenus, whose veneration is known from inscriptions at Dura (if not attached, necessarily to the building traditionally called the 'Dolicheneum' in X7; P.R. 9.3). On the questionable attribution of the temple, Hörig 1984, 2147. On the X7 *dipinto*, see earlier p. 128.

[170] P. R. 5, 237.

[171] James Forthcoming; Inchtuthil: Pitts and Joseph 1985; Shirley 1996. Centurion's residences: Hoffmann 1995.

[172] Baird 2012d.

[173] As also noted by Simon James, pers comm.

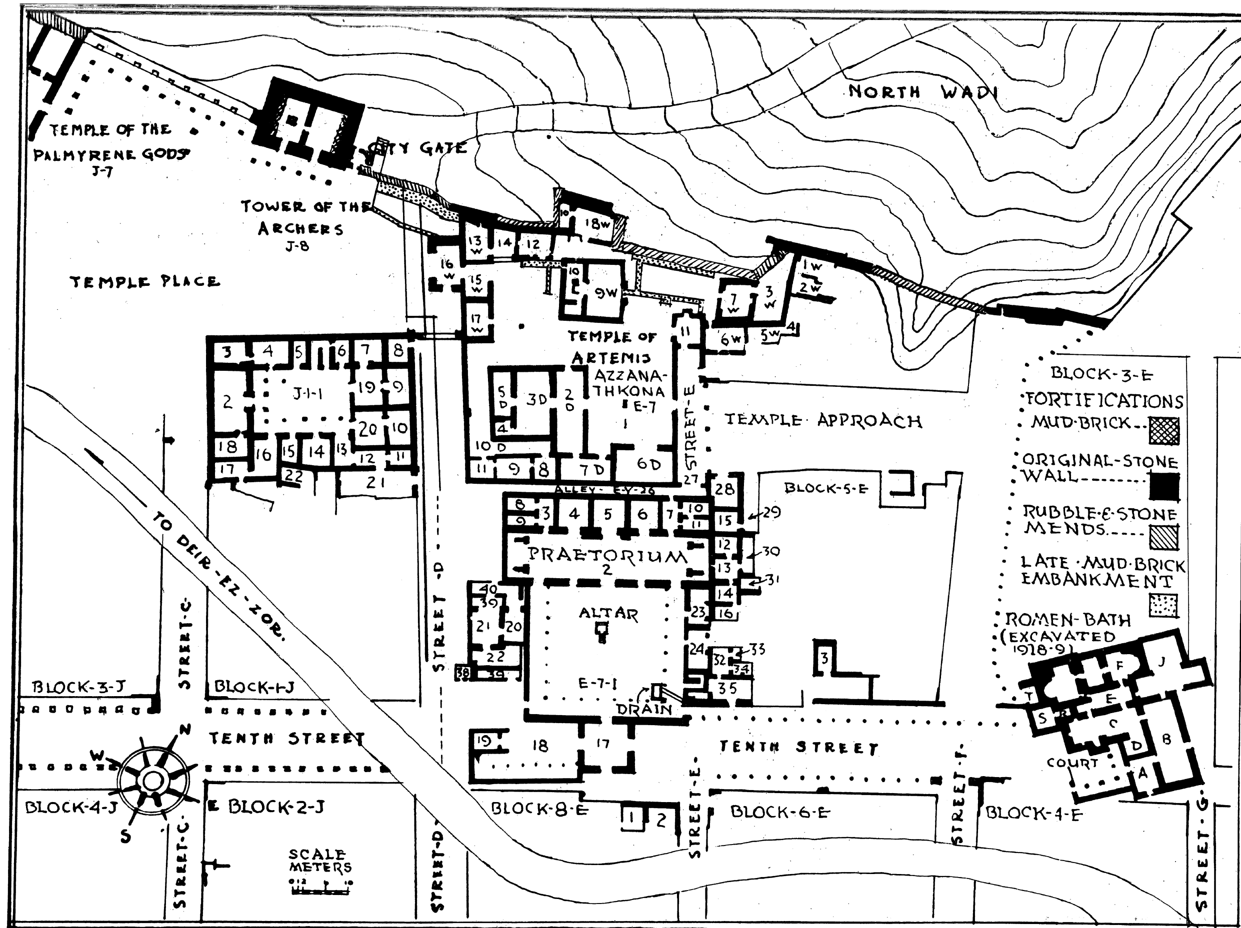


FIGURE 3.22 Central area of military base, including the 'House of the Prefect' (J1-A), by Henry Pearson. YUAG.

Aspects of this pervasive presence will be discussed in the next chapter. Economically, the impact of the military can be seen in a range of ways. In houses, this is likely reflected in a number of structures initially identified as houses which actually seem to have been used by the mid-third century as inns and bars, as will be discussed in the next chapter.[174] Soldiers' pay introduced large amounts of cash; assuming 905 *milites cohortis* (in *Coh XX* alone, in addition to *II Ulpia* and/or legionaries) at the site, based on the staff reports of the military preserved at the site (*PDura* 82), and an annual pay of 3000 HS. Ruffing calculates that 'they alone will have brought an annual amount of 2715000 HS or 678750 denars to Dura'.[175] Indeed, several of the hoards have been identified as likely accumulations of a soldier's pay on the basis that 'The wide variety of mints represented by the tetradrachms of Caracalla, Macrinus, and Diadumenian is only explicable on the theory that these issues were intended to pay the army.'[176] Specific amounts are, of course, debatable, but nevertheless the scale of the military occupation at Dura would have represented a sizable potential market and an influx of *specie* as well.

The presence of the military within Dura's walls was not just one with a monetary or administrative impact, however: their power was over homes, livelihoods, and bodies. The house of entertainers in G5-C is but one facet of an undoubted sexual implication of the garrison's presence, as prostitutes were amongst their members.[177] An understanding of everyday life in Roman Dura-Europos must be built upon an awareness of the pervasive military presence at the site.

[174] Baird 2007b.

[175] Ruffing 2007, 407. On army pay scales, Speidel 1992; Alston 1994. On the Dura rosters (focusing on *PDura* 100 and *PDura* 101), Gilliam 1965.

[176] Hoards 1 and 10. F. R. 6, 165–6, 175–6.

[177] On the role of sexual power in Roman imperialism, Mattingly 2010, 94–121.

FOUR

Everyday Life in Roman Dura-Europos: Household Activities

The previous chapter discussed some of the ways in which the Roman military occupation of Dura-Europos transformed the site and its houses. By the mid-third century CE, the military were inhabiting not only houses converted for their use and purpose-built structures, but can be shown to be present throughout the site. This late military occupation transformed the already complicated assemblages. Nevertheless, the volume of evidence allows some access to the type of activities that occurred at Dura.

This chapter will use the architectural evidence in tandem with the evidence of the assemblages to build a picture of the urban activities within the houses of Dura. The incorporation of finds evidence allows investigation of past activities that were not necessarily architecturally defined by rooms. In addition to examining the evidence for activities within houses, this chapter looks at residences which incorporated shops and structures previously identified as houses which seem to have served also, or instead, as food and drink establishments. Because of the problematic nature of the assemblages outlined in Chapter 1, finds are discussed in the context of the city broadly. Evidence from the necropolis of Dura is also incorporated.

Everyday life, of course, was not confined to houses. Houses were, however, the locus for many activities, and were a location in which virtually all members of society spent time during the course of a day. The study of ancient 'everyday life' (at least in those terms) has tended to be the topic of more popular works than scholarly ones, with the result often being abstracted from the geographically or chronologically specific.[1] In some ways, everyday life resists traditional scholarly prose (being, instead, the stuff of museum exhibits), and is perhaps more effectively conveyed by narrative such as has been attempted at Pompeii by Laurence and Butterworth, or, in American archaeology by such works as Spector.[2] For

[1] e.g. for Roman daily life, Carcopino 1943 has had a strong legacy.

[2] Spector 1993; Butterworth and Laurence 2006. On (fictionalized) 'biographical' writing as a means of presenting archaeology, Mytum 2010a; 2010b. On archaeological writing, Joyce 2002.

Lefebvre, everyday life was 'defined by "what is left over" after all distinct, superior, specialized, structured activities have been singled out.... Everyday life is profoundly related to *all* activities, and encompasses them with all their differences and conflicts; it is their meeting place, their bond, their common ground. And it is in everyday life that the sum total relations which make the human—and every human being—a whole takes its shape and its form.'[3]

The contrast between, on the one hand, the mundane routines of 'domestic' life that make up what has usually been thought of as 'the everyday' and, on the other hand, historical events or major change is perhaps a false one. The everyday is the level at which many changes happen—or don't—whether those changes involve taking up a different style of clothing (say, a new type of brooch, hairstyle, or cloak), or the retention of an old method of time-keeping, house-building methods, or type of food in the face of new options. Daily life can be the site of resistance, contestation, and adoption of new practices or material culture which are the individual building blocks of something, when writ large, we might call cultural interaction. But, as has been pointed out in theories of the everyday, 'its contours might be so vague as to encompass almost everything (or certain aspects of everything).'[4] The everyday in this chapter is bounded by the available evidence, which at Dura lends itself towards generalization across the site rather than within specific houses. Despite the problems with the assemblages there is evidence for particular practices and activities and for selectivity in the use of material culture which can elucidate much about Durene daily life and the relationship between aspects of those lived experiences and the larger power structures of which they were a part.[5]

Further, focusing on archaeologically visible activities bridges the particular evidence of the artefacts and *habitus*, that is, the way in which social structures were created and reproduced. Bourdieu's notion of *habitus* can be difficult to pin down—'*habitus*, systems of durable, transposable *dispositions*, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations'[6]—but practice theory and *habitus*, in questioning the routine, mundane, and everyday structures that underpin society, have much to lend to readings of ancient houses. Domestic space, in Bourdieu's writing on the Berber house, was a cluster of habits (activities repeated over time) as much as a physical structure.[7] The resolution of the data at

[3] Lefebvre 1991, 97. Italics in original. [4] Highmore 2002, 4.

[5] For a survey of modern historians' attention to everyday life, which points out the problem with studying the quotidian as something apart from 'macro' systems: Trentmann 2012, 546–7. On discrepant experience in the Roman world, see especially Mattingly 2010.

[6] Bourdieu 1977, 72. Italics original to translation. On *habitus* and the Kabyle house see also Bourdieu 1977, 90–1.

[7] Bourdieu 1990. The Kabyle house was a topic Bourdieu returned to and revised over time.

Dura is hazier than that of the anthropological context discussed by Bourdieu, but nonetheless it is useful in a number of ways.[8] Key is the way in which *habitus* can help us question the relationship between space and practice, and the way in which symbolic meaning can be embodied in the house. The current chapter focuses on the activities that happened within houses, as far as is possible to tell from the artefact evidence, and situates these in the context of activities in the city more broadly. In some ways, 'everyday life' is a catch-all for mundane but important evidence. Within the house these include eating and drinking practices, reception, activities such as reading, writing, sleeping, and household manufacture. Connected to houses are commercial activities as evidenced by shops, and other houses were used as bars, inns, and possibly brothels. Chapter 5 takes a different approach to some of the same activities, examining personal and group identities and communities at the site.

THE ASSEMBLAGES

While the deep deposits along the city wall preserved some of Dura's more well-known and spectacular finds, such as wood artefacts and leather, papyri and parchments, or basketry and textiles, elsewhere on the site the more shallow stratigraphy did not produce an anaerobic environment. The range of materials found in most houses was therefore limited to those preserved in the less exceptional deposits of the rest of the city. Within the houses, these were formed not only by use but by storage, caching, abandonment, and the collapse of building roofs and superstructures and subsequent formation processes.[9] The range of preserved materials in most houses was relatively small: ceramics (including terracotta figurines and, rarely, tile), metal (iron and copper alloy, and less frequently precious metals), bone artefacts (unworked faunal remains are plentiful at the site but were not recorded), glass, plaster, and stone (usually local gypsum, but also imported basalt and other types). Because ceramics and faunal remains were only selectively recorded, the most frequently recorded objects were coins. For example, in block C7, 381 objects were recorded in the field object registers. Of these, 219 were coins; unfortunately, the records which note the find-spot of each coin cannot be correlated with the coin inventory as this relationship was not recognized as pertinent by Bellinger.

C7 can be used as an example to indicate the general character and scale of the house assemblages. Here, sixty-eight items were recorded as ceramic or faience

[8] Although, as discussed in the critique by Silverstein, the Kabyle house of Bourdieu's time was already something in the past, and itself an object of nostalgia: Silverstein 2004.

[9] Further, Baird 2012b.

(the term used for the green-glazed ceramics). This includes seven terracotta figurines, thirteen lamps, and a green-glazed incense burner in the shape of a camel. The remainder were complete or otherwise exceptional ceramic vessels. The green-glazed forms were small pitchers, jugs, and a stopper: nine in all from C7. The remainder of the ceramic items were mostly commonware, with a few pieces of brittle ware. Among the commonware, the most frequent form was the pitcher, but bowls were also recorded. The brittle ware was sometimes noted to be blackened, in line with its function as a cooking vessel. The commonware and green-glazed forms were largely serving vessels, found in courtyards, reception rooms, and elsewhere in the houses. Of the lamps from this block, five were found in shops. Of the eight from houses, four were found in courtyards, and three were found in one room, C7-G^{3}18.

Sixty-eight items recorded as 'bronze' or iron were recorded in the field object registers from C7. Most were copper alloy, with only one, a dagger from C7-G^{3}18 recorded as iron. The copper alloy objects included a range of fittings, items of personal adornment, and other artefacts. Fibulae, hooks, keys, bracelets, spoons, and needles, in addition to miscellaneous 'rings' or even more ambiguous 'bronze fragments', were recorded. A copper alloy lamp from C7-C^{2}5 can be added to the number of ceramic lamps mentioned earlier. The identification of stone type used in particular objects is not always reliably recorded in the field object registers. Of the 11 stone items from C7, four were sculptures or fragments thereof. The others were mortars, a stone vessel fragment, an inkwell, and a stone bead. Only two bone items were recorded, a bone stylus and a bone spindle, and the recorded glass was a single decorated fragment of a glass vessel. The objects of C7 show the fragmentary character of the assemblages; while other blocks had much higher 'recovery rates' of objects, none is unproblematic.

DURENE TIME

Many aspects of daily life are elided by the resolution of archaeological data. While archaeology is sometimes good at picking up the material traces of repeated actions, much is lost, unrecognized, or grouped together, such as activities occurring at different times of the day, or even seasonally.[10] Even in a site with a relatively rapid abandonment, objects are often found where they were stored, discarded, or hidden, rather than where they were used, and complex depositional

[10] At sites excavated more recently than Dura, microstratigraphy and microartifact analyses have allowed a more detailed examination of household activities; e.g. Matthews et al. 1997; Foster 2012; Tringham 2012, 96–7; Ullah 2012.

forces were at play.[11] Further, there is also an increasingly recognized disjuncture between historical concepts of chronology, archaeological evidence for chronology and duration, and concepts of time in use by the ancient people being studied.[12]

At Dura, it is possible to draw together different strands of evidence, including the use of calendric times and routines and activities with a temporal dimension found in the architectural and artefactual remains. The house is the location of much of the life course, and the rhythms of daily life played out against the longer scale inhabitation of houses over generations.[13] The houses held the history of their occupants not only in their duration but also their transformation, with architectural changes punctuating changes in the fortune of the household, whether that was increasing in size when economic circumstances allowed it, or the reconfiguration upon the death of the head of household. Social and cultural rules become embedded in people's lives through the performance of mundane routines, and among those were the routines that formed the house, as both a physical and a social unit.

Formal dating systems used in texts had been in use at Dura long before the Roman period. The Seleucid era, reckoning the date from 312 BCE, continued to be employed into the Parthian period, when it was used together with the Parthian era which used 248 BCE as its beginning.[14] These honorific dating systems continued to be used simultaneously and with others. In the Roman period several documents give the date by the consuls within an emperor's reign, in the normal Roman fashion, but also give the Seleucid year (referred to as 'of the former reckoning').[15] The use of a calendar was not only a means of organizing time but one aspect of state control and bureaucratic practices. The Seleucid era's imposition onto official practices and everyday life was tenacious, long outlasting Seleucid control of the site.[16] This use of dating in documentary practice is one aspect of life in which we might recognize the continuity of concepts that had

[11] On short spans of time in archaeology, Foxhall 2000. On the abandonment of Dura, Baird 2012b. On short and long term in Pompeiian houses, Nevett 2010b, 115–16. On formation processes, Schiffer 1987; Lamotta and Schiffer 1999.

[12] Bradley 1991; Dietler and Herbich 1993; Karlsson 2001; Olivier 2001; Lucas 2005; Bailey 2007.

[13] On the 'household series' as an analytical unit, Smith 1992, 30. On the life cycle of ancient Greek households, Gallant 1991, 11–34. On the Roman household as location of the life course, Harlow and Laurence 2002, 20–33.

[14] The Dura editors used 247 BCE, F. R. 5.1, 6; the Parthian calendar itself was based on the Macedonian lunar calendar, and Parthian coinage used the Seleucid era dates when one was given. The Parthian capital at Seleucia used the Babylonian intercalary scheme. Assar 2003.

[15] For instance, *PDura* 25, 28, and 31. For discussion see F. R. 5.1, 6.

[16] The tenacity of the Seleucid era, including after the Arab conquest, and the simultaneous use of different systems of dating, is discussed by Feeney 2007, 139–40.

become locally embedded.[17] These practices included the continuity of reckoning time by eponymous priesthoods.[18]

Alongside other imperial calendars were religious ones, including the military *feriale* found at Dura.[19] Dating to *c.*225 CE, the *feriale* is a list of festivals, essentially a religious calendar, and has figured largely in the study of military religion all over the empire.[20] The document had been mended before it was discarded, which may indicate it was active in its military context. The Roman festivals listed here would have been of concern to the corporate body of the troops, which could exist alongside other religious practices of the soldiers.[21]

Through dating on official documents and the presence of a military calendar of festivals, local people at Dura became connected to the institutional time frames of the Roman Empire.[22] Military time would have dominated everyday life in third-century Dura in a multitude of ways. Beyond eras and systems of dating or religious calendars, the military would have controlled the opening and closing of the city gates, regulating not only the space of the city but its temporal rhythms and access points: when people could move into and out of the city was controlled by soldiers, and other checkpoints within the city probably also existed, not least those which allowed access to the Roman camp. Military 'morning report' rosters and monthly summaries preserved at Dura give us a hint of the soldiers' working routines, detailing tasks given to individuals and detachments as well as the movement over a broad region from the garrison at Dura (including daily orders and passwords).[23] These documents reveal not only the military control over Dura and its region, their provisions, and the roles of its members, but also control over its members, in both their duties and their allegiances. *PDura* 82, for example, lists the number of soldiers sent out on a particular day to procure barley, and the

[17] Swift 2002.

[18] e.g. *PDura* 25, of 180 CE, which in addition to Roman consular dating and the Seleucid calendar gives the year by the priests of Zeus, Apollo, and the priest of the cult of King Seleucus Nicator.

[19] Also referred to as *PDura* 54, it was recovered amongst the documents of the *Cohors XX Palmyrenorum* in the Temple of Azzanathkona in the 1931–2 season of excavations.

[20] Nock 1952; Gilliam 1954. Indeed, Feeney notes that the use of local calendars in the East was the norm: Feeney 2007, 209–10.

[21] The document's editors took the view that 'it is doubtful how much the civil population was concerned with the official religious calendar of the Roman army' not least because Latin is limited to military contexts at Dura: F. R. 5.1, 6. On the state of the papyrus when discovered, F. R. 5.1, 191. Commentary in Fink et al. 1940. On the epigraphic evidence supporting the *feriale* as a canonical festival list observed by Roman military throughout the empire, and the festivals of the *feriale* being those of the corporate troops, Fishwick 1988. See Haynes 2013, 200–6 on the problems interpreting the *feriale* and its possible role in 'inventing tradition' amongst the *auxilia*.

[22] On provincial populations becoming part of imperial time frames via the coinage, Gardner 2012, 156.

[23] Morning reports, *PDura* 82–90. Rosters, *PDura* 100 and 101, which include stations at some distance to Dura. Discussion in Fink 1971, 179–82; Haynes 1999, 12. Translations of some documents can be found in Fink 1971, 183ff; Dodgeon and Lieu 1994, 278ff.

number returning from the governor's headquarters with a letter, with the same document noting four soldiers who were absent without leave.

Alongside these formal calendars and controls, as always, were other tempos and temporalities: the seasonal cycles of agricultural time, the births and deaths that frame generational time. Agricultural time and the seasons determined not only work for those in the city who went out to tend fields, but what food was available.[24] Architecture, too, was governed in part by the seasons, as the dry summer heat was necessary for both the temper and drying of mudbricks.[25] Weather, including the availability of light, temperatures, wind, and rain, also had an impact on urban life that was cyclical. The Euphrates swelled and shrank depending on the season.

A number of horoscopes scratched into the walls of houses show people's interest in divination and places the individual and their life span in relation to the cosmos, as horoscopes generally are made using the birth date of the person for whom they forecast.[26] An astrological *parapegma* found scratched on a wall in the E4 house used by the Roman military included peg-holes for tracking the phases of the fixed stars.[27] A sundial was found at the site, but is only recorded in a photograph (Figure 4.1), and while no other device for measuring the day was found, there was an awareness of the hours demonstrated in epigraphic evidence.[28] Occasionally, a moment in time was so notable as to merit recording: for instance, in the fourth hour of the day of the month of Dios (about 10 am on October 26/27, 160 CE), an earthquake struck the region as recorded in an inscription to Zeus Megistos set up by the *polis* in response to the disaster.[29] A specialized time-keeping device was not a prerequisite to understanding the times of the day; the biological needs of people to eat and sleep formed a rudimentary marker, and

[24] On agricultural time, see Stewart 2013.

[25] Oates 1990, 389–90; Shepperson 2009, 365. On Durene mudbricks, Gelin 2000; mudbricks in Hellenistic and later Mesopotamia (including ethnoarchaeological study of mudbrick production at Dura), Leriche 2000b.

[26] Horoscopes were found in B8-H (nos 232, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239), and C8-F (no. 302). The two houses in which horoscopes were found were quite close together, near the centre of the city. Neugebauer and van Hoesen interpreted the horoscopes as having probably been cast when the child was five months old: Neugebauer and van Hoesen 1959, 54. On the C8 horoscope, P. R. 2, 161–4; Johnson 1932, 1–15. On the B8 horoscopes, P. R. 4, 95–6, 105–10; Welles 1956, 472. The Dura horoscopes are discussed in detail in Neugebauer and van Hoesen 1959, 49, 54–6, 58. On ancient astrology, Barton 1994; on horoscopes (in papyri), Evans 1999, 286–7; Mesopotamian horoscopes, Rochberg 2004.

[27] P. R. 6, 42; Snyder 1936; Lehoux 2007, 170–1. As pointed out by Haynes, the calendar from the E4 house is interesting as it shows the officer resident there was structuring his work and that of the men under him according to a seven-day week which itself had origins outside the Roman world, and which may have been spread within the empire by the army itself. Haynes 2013, 166ff.

[28] The sundial seems to have been found in block B2; negative i25. It is not in the catalogue of Greek and Roman sundials published by Gibbs 1972.

[29] P. R. 2, 86–7.

FIGURE 4.1 Sundial, probably from block B2. Photograph taken in 1935–6 season, in courtyard of excavation house, but otherwise unrecorded. YUAG i25.

people would have also become familiar with knowing the part of the day from the height of the sun or the shadows on particular monuments of the city or within parts of their houses.[30]

The social and material entity of the house cut across different time scales. The structure itself could span multiple generations, but archaeological objects might give us evidence for shorter-term activities that took place only at a certain time of day. It has been said that 'duration is the physical expression of memory',[31] and in the inhabitation and modification of the houses, the structure held the memory and traces of the shape of its resident group over time. The physical form of the house was also related to rootedness and generational scales in its ability to

[30] Hannah 2009, 83–4. [31] Olivier 2001, 61.

'anchor' time.[32] Houses recorded generational time, as we have seen in the case of *PDura* 19, in their modification following the death of the head of the household, necessitated by inheritance.

More ephemeral were household routines—the way that food was made and consumed, water collected, the way spaces were used, the places things were stored, the way the structure was maintained—are all part of the seemingly mundane processes that create and maintain meaning.[33] The creation and maintenance of meaning at a seemingly 'low' level within the house ties into large-scale processes, in the apparent resilience of food practices or the transformation of the type of clothing that some people wore, from the continued practice of building in a 'vernacular' style or writing in Greek; all are tied to Dura's changing place in its world.

There are some fragments of evidence for the rhythms of the Durene day, too. Take, for instance, the use of artificial lighting. Lamps, usually in ceramic but occasionally in copper alloy or iron, were frequently found in the houses of Dura.[34] These would have allowed certain tasks to be carried out after dark, or in rooms which were poorly lit due to their remote position relative to the courtyard of the house. The burning time of lamps could measure units of time.[35]

EATING AND DRINKING PRACTICES

The biological necessity of eating and drinking puts these activities amongst the most mundane of everyday practices, but also amongst the most important. Beyond being a biological requirement, the preparation and consumption of food can be deeply meaningful, linked to memory, reflective of cultural interactions, part of rituals and belief systems, and key to identities.[36] Food is evinced at Dura in several ways. One is in archaeological features, such as cooking installations within houses, and spaces for banqueting or formalized meals. Paintings such as those mentioned already also depict such ritualized dining including serving vessels. Food storage and preparation is also mentioned in texts, including some graffiti found within houses, in addition to parchments

[32] Tuan 1977, 187; Dietler and Herbich 1993, 252–3.

[33] Martin 1984. That is, as per Lightfoot et al. 1998, 201: 'people repeatedly enact and reproduce their underlying structural principles and belief systems in the performance of ordering their daily lives.'

[34] Published in F. R. 4.3.

[35] Hannah 2009, 96–7; on lamps at Pompeii and timescales in the houses there, Nevett 2010b, 115–16.

[36] On the history of the study of food in anthropology, Mintz and Bois 2002. Food and memory, e.g. Holtzman 2006; on foodways and cultural interactions between Philistines and neighbors, e.g. Ben-Shlomo et al. 2008. Food and identity, e.g. Livarda 2013's study of date fruit.

recovered at Dura which relate to food production, trade, and consumption. Among these is evidence for viticulture, fruit growing, crops such as barley and olives, foods such as vegetables, cabbage, and lentils, as well as sheep or goat milk.[37] Ceramics are among the most plentiful evidence, although the problematic ceramic record at Dura has already been mentioned—there is also a dearth of paleobotanical or faunal evidence from the site, due to the nature of the excavation.[38]

Ovens were sometimes found in the space beneath the stairs in houses, leading to the identification of such spaces as 'kitchens'. Yet ovens do not necessarily indicate 'kitchens' but only where bread was baked, as ethnoarchaeological evidence has shown.[39] As mentioned earlier, though the excavators labelled certain areas kitchens, this term is anachronistic. At Dura, there was no evidence for a fixed architectural space which was used exclusively for food preparation.[40] The evidence at Dura for preparation of food is that of cooking fixtures such as clay ovens, movable cooking equipment such as braziers, and cooking vessels.[41] Other features, such as the fire boxes discussed earlier, may have been used for cooking but this is not certain, particularly as they occasionally occur in the same room as ovens,[42] and some rooms have a tannur, a fireplace, and a firepit,[43] which would seem to indicate each had a disparate function, although this may relate to capacity. This theory is reinforced by the fact that many of the fireboxes/fireplaces are built in interior rooms, and hence apparently did not need much ventilation, perhaps holding only hot coals rather than acting as ovens. The clay ovens then were likely the site of food preparation, and every known example comes from the courtyards of the houses, with some of those being in arched niches supporting

[37] See discussion in Ruffing 2007, 401–3. Viticulture: *PDura* 17, *PDura* 25 (both 180 CE, and the latter of which mentions both a vineyard and wine vat), and *PDura* 26 (227 CE). Wine is also mentioned in graffiti from houses, including P. R. 4, nos 200, 213, and 245. Fruit growing: *PDura*, 25 and *PDura* 15, second century CE. Grain, barley, and olives: graffiti from B8-H, P. R. 5, nos 200, 202, 204, 253, 258, 264. A graffito from house C7-F was probably an inventory and mentions a number of foodstuffs, including leaf vegetables, lentils, and cabbage, as well as sheep or goat milk: P. R. 4, no. 295, on the east wall of room 4.

[38] Unfortunately for the material at Dura, virtually no data on these botanical or faunal remains were collected by the Yale excavators, as was normal at the time. Plant remains sometimes appear in the field notes, if charred and obvious or particularly large, but even then information like 'seeds found here' is not of great utility. Similarly, faunal material was not collected unless it was modified, so only worked bone appears in the object registers. This too was standard practice at the time as the value of such data was not yet recognized; in fact the collection, quantification, and study of animal remains in the Near East, where faunal remains are second in number only to ceramics, is still under-utilized. Hesse 1995.

[39] Hill, quoted in Gnivecki 1987, 226.

[40] Unlike elsewhere: for a survey of 'kitchens' at Pompeii, Foss 1994.

[41] The categories of evidence for food preparation are largely taken from Allison 2004, 125.

[42] For instance, G5-C. Circular features recorded on original plans were not always clear or verifiable and in some cases might denote a cooler, oven, or storage vessel.

[43] For instance, G5-B.

the staircase but immediately off the courtyard.[44] The only recorded exception to the courtyard placement is the oven in a shop connected to house B8-H. The known braziers from the houses also come from the courtyards, and as most houses have no built cooking installation it is likely that portable equipment was the norm.[45] Fixed cooking installations are the exception, rather than the norm, at Dura, and when they exist may in fact be linked to non-domestic or 'supra-domestic' activities: that is, the need to prepare food beyond the normal needs of a house.[46] An architecturally defined space for food preparation was apparently not deemed to be a necessary part of the house. In addition to private production of bread from the tannurs in some houses, there is a reference to a baker in a graffito and a bread stamp found in the Palmyrene gate.[47]

While quantification of ceramics is problematic for reasons already mentioned, the ceramic profile of Dura can give some clues as to the food traditions. Perhaps surprisingly the earliest and smallest numerical sample, that of the Hellenistic phase of Dura's ceramics, are the best studied. The recognizability of imported forms coupled with an interest in Greek material (at the expense of the local) led to an over-emphasis in both collection and study.[48] The general ceramic profile of the material, including Megarian bowls, Attic and eastern black-glazed wares, and West Slope ware, is similar to other Mesopotamian urban centres with a Hellenistic phase.[49] While the use of imported wares in the early phases of the Hellenistic colony would not be surprising, it should be pointed out that the collection bias towards this material was very strong and they are certainly over-represented in the sample of published ceramics.[50] Nevertheless, the shapes were tablewares,

[44] These are from houses C7-C2, C7-G, G1-F, G2-C, G3-B, G3-K, G3-L, L5-A, L5-B, G5-B, G5-C, G5-E, G5-F, G6-C, G7-H, C3-D, C3-B, D5-E, H2-D, M7-W, M7-A, and E4.

[45] House G5-E is one verifiable example of a brazier, although it is possible this house was a food establishment, as it has multiple facilities for cooking and two rooms with benches. Allara and Saliou 1997, 152. If portable braziers were used regularly, it seems also likely that any flat roof space was one place where they might have been used, aside from the courtyard.

[46] On the topic of non- or supra-domestic cooking in the houses of Halieis with fixed hearths, Foxhall 2007, 240, which also gives a critique of archaeological approaches to Greek 'kitchens'.

[47] An *artokopos* from the Temple of Bel, Cumont 1926, no. 22; P. R. 2, 147, SEG VII 378. Swastika-shaped bread stamp, P. R. 2, 146–8/1929.364.

[48] F. R. 4.1.2 covered the Greek and Roman pottery of Dura. Written by Dorothy Cox, the volume was not a catalogue but a selection, as the number and quality of sherds were not of 'exceptional interest or beauty', and were 'disappointing', according to Cox's introduction in F.R. 4.1.2, 1.

[49] On the Hellenistic ceramic profile of Dura being similar to other sites: Hannestad 1983, 95. On the Greek imports including Gnathian, West Slope ware, etc., F. R. 4.1.2, 2-6. Seleucid Uruk (in Babylonia) might be compared, where there are extensive 'Greek-inspired' ceramic types but a lack of other evidence for a Greek community (very little in the way of Greek texts, no evidence for Hellenic buildings such as a palace, gymnasium, or theatre, etc.): Finkbeiner 1991; 1992; Petrie 2002.

[50] This situation is exacerbated by the relatively poor dating of the other wares; for example, all brittle wares in the publications were dated to the third century CE because of their context in the houses and buildings of the final phase of the city, but the same wares were found in sealed Hellenistic and Parthian

plates and bowls including fishplates, so despite caveats there is a general indication of food consumption following Hellenistic patterns. There is no evidence, however, of drinking or mixing vessels which might be associated directly with the symposium.[51]

By contrast, commonwares are vastly under-represented in the published ceramic reports of Dura. Just over 400 vessels were catalogued, but field notes record (impressionistically) that ninety-five per cent of the pottery recovered was commonware.[52] Further compounding the problem with the study of Durene pottery is that Dura became a type site for Syria and Mesopotamia, and thus the basis for dating ceramics elsewhere, which often makes chronological comparisons with other sites in the region circular.[53] The Durene commonware encompassed a range of colours of clay and forms of vessel. These tended to be cream or yellowish, slipped, and varied greatly in quality. Local production is likely: nearby clay beds were noted, a number of kilns were excavated, and ceramic tripods together with misfired and mis-shapen vessels all demonstrate ceramic production at the site.[54] Most of the commonwares were dated to the third century CE, with the final phase of the city, but some were excavated from sealed contexts in the necropolis and should be attributed to the Parthian period, so the exclusive third-century dating for the wares inside the city is very probably misleading. The commonwares from within the city which were attributed to the third century largely comprise storage vessels, including *amphorae* and *dolia*, which were sometimes bitumen-lined, and serving vessels or table wares, as well as those used for food preparation including bowls, jugs, and pitchers, as well as 'feeding bottles', pilgrim flasks (probably for carrying water on one's person), and lanterns.[55] Of course, the funerary assemblages have a distribution of forms which

contexts. The true proportions of locally produced and imported wares cannot be seen from current data. The Hellenistic ceramics of Dura continue to be the focus of study: Alabe 1990; 2004; 2013, which do, however, indicate that locally produced common and semi-fine wares were predominant, and misfires among these indicate that some were produced at Dura itself. Alabe notes also a fine local eggshell ware: Alabe 1990, 51.

[51] On *kylikes* and the symposium at Athens, Lynch 2007. On symposium furniture at Olynthos, Cahill 2002, 180–8.

[52] F. R. 4. 1. 3, 1.

[53] On the reliance of northern Mesopotamian ceramics on Dura, e.g. Hauser 1996, 56, who also notes that the general understanding of 'Parthian' ceramics, too, comes from Dura and the pottery published from Seleucia (Debevoise 1934), despite extensive excavations at other sites, which have yielded ceramics but not published catalogues.

[54] F. R. 4.1.3, 2. Further evidence of stands and ceramic stamps: F. R. 4.1.3, 43.

[55] Dyson noted that many of the commonware forms seem to be related to glass vessel forms also excavated at the site. Some of the commonware was stamped or otherwise decorated, often with motifs similar to those found more commonly on the green-glazed ware. F. R. 4.1.3, 49–57.

differ to those which were excavated in the city, including piriform bottles, miniature vessels, and juglets.[56]

After commonware, the most frequently found ware at Dura was 'green-glazed'. The green-glazed ware was found extensively at Dura in both the settlement and the necropolis. It is also known as 'Parthian' pottery owing to its earlier excavation at Nippur, and it is often taken to be diagnostic of the Parthian period.[57] At Dura it occurs in contexts both earlier and later than the Parthian control of the site, showing the problem with equating the ceramic with a particular cultural group, and emphasizing Dura's links with Mesopotamia throughout its existence.[58] Green-glazed vessels were made of the same or similar clay as the commonware, glazed before firing with a substance which vitrified to cover the ceramic in a glaze which usually ranged from blue to green. Moulded and other applied decoration such as busts were also commonly used; these included those wearing mural crowns (Tyche or Atargtis) and many with the tripartite hairstyle of Parthian warriors and kings.[59] Many vessels were glazed on the interior as well as the exterior, and some exclusively on the interior.[60] Like the commonware, there is evidence that the green glazed pottery was produced within Dura, as glazed firing tripods were found.[61] This ware, too, has a problem with the published chronology: the ware is dated mostly to the third century CE, despite the fact Brown found sherds beneath the Temple of Artagatis and beneath the *Chreophylakeion*, which would mean the ware was also produced earlier, in the Hellenistic period, and beneath the floor of the House of Lysias, which would be Parthian era at the latest.[62] 'Vases' (table *amphorae*), jugs, and pitchers were the most frequent shapes, although there is great variety in their size, form, and decoration, and bowls, pilgrim flasks, craters and jars were also recorded

[56] F. R. 4.1.3, 3. These were the contexts beneath the debris thought to be the result of cleanup after the 160 CE earthquake. Commonware from the necropolis enumerated in F. R. 4.1.3, 7–18.

[57] Nicholas Toll, F. R. 4.1.1. Punnett Peters 1897. Green-glaze was also recorded extensively at Seleucia on the Tigris, where it was second in abundance only to commonware. There, the proportion of vases is smaller and more open shapes are found. Debevoise 1934; Valtz 1984; 1991; 2002.

[58] Green-glaze was not new in the Parthian period, and has southern Mesopotamian antecedents, with the tradition of alkaline glazes as early as the Bronze Age. Simpson 1997, 75. Further, Parthian ceramics could themselves be considered a Hellenistic form, incorporating a number of 'Greek' features, so the equation of the ware with a particular cultural group is problematic, as the Dura evidence shows.

[59] F. R. 4.1.1, 9.

[60] F. R. 4.1.1, 2. The glazing substance, as analysed from a glazed sarcophagus, was reported as a sodium-lime-silicate glass, coloured with cupric oxide.

[61] F. R. 4.1.1, 6. The importation of early vessels of this type was not excluded. Again, it is regrettable the kilns were not more carefully recorded.

[62] For examples of 'early' green-glazed vessels were found under the floor of the Temple of Adonis. F. R. 4.1.1, 5. The green-glazed pottery from the necropolis was also found beneath the debris thought to date from the 160 CE earthquake.

FIGURE 4.2 Green-glazed vases with two handles (table *amphorae*). F2214/1933.336/F. R. 4.1.1, no. I-B-7.9 (M7-W5) on left, 28.8 cm high. On right, G276/935.520 (L5). YUAG Yale-1273.

(Figure 4.2).[63] The ubiquity and continued use of green-glazed wares for shapes like table *amphorae*, jugs, bowls, and pitchers indicates that much of the material culture associated with drinking and eating practices was in a local tradition of Hellenistic and Parthian Mesopotamia.[64] In Hellenistic Jebel Khalid, the relatively small amount of imported green-glazed ware seemed to show that the open shapes, like bowls, more common there, were made 'for the Greek colonist or Hellenized local Syrian market'.[65] In contrast, the closed shapes like jars, of which no complete profiles were recovered at Jebel Khalid (but which were much more common at later Dura), retained their 'Mesopotamian' character. The later corpus

[63] While many vessels do not have recorded contexts, the range of shapes is different in the necropolis than within the city. The necropolis green-glazed items are limited mostly to vases, small pitchers, and small cylindrical and globular jars which might have been used for cosmetics, but the entire range of shapes, including bowls and dishes, is found in the city. The proportion of vases found in the necropolis is probably over-represented as compared to the city, as complete vessels were more likely to be found there, and it was usual only to keep complete examples. The published catalogue also included green-glazed pottery from the tower tombs at Baghuz, further south on the Euphrates, which were also investigated by Toll. The object registers recorded this pottery as 'faience'; these records demonstrate the ubiquity of green-glaze throughout the site, with over 450 recorded items, 356 of which are from inside the city walls. The published catalogue of green-glaze over-represented the necropolis, because that is where the most complete vessels were found.

[64] Green-glazed wares at Jebel Khalid, of Hellenistic date, occurred in much smaller proportion (one per cent of total pottery count). Jackson and Tidmarsh 2011, 431. The occurrence of green-glazed there shows the problem with identifying this as an (implicitly ethnic) 'Parthian' ceramic.

[65] Jackson and Tidmarsh 2011, 480. Compare the Seleucid and Parthian ceramics from Susa in Iran (although lacking stratigraphic context), Boucharlat 1993.

FIGURE 4.3 Brittle ware cooking pot (left) and commonware jar from X7-24. Brittle ware with blackened exterior, 1792/F. R. 3.1.3 no. 429, 12 cm tall; on right, commonware 1802, with slashed decoration of class X in Dyson's typology. YUAG 1191a.

of green-glazed ware from Dura would seem to indicate the Mesopotamian forms were more desirable there, at least by the third century CE, and that they were in continuous demand from the Parthian through Roman periods, primarily as serving vessels.[66] Both the ware and forms tell of strong cultural ties to Mesopotamia from at least the Arsacid period.[67] The (probable) local production and continuity into the Roman period shows that this was not a simple matter of imports or access, but that green-glazed serving vessels were *de rigeur* within Durene households. As the local fineware, they were likely used in the reception activities.

Dura's 'brittle ware' were thin-walled vessels made of brick-red clay (Figure 4.3).[68] It has been called a 'typical Syrian product', and a cooking set consisting of a cooking pot, a 'casserole', and jug is known from contemporary sites in the region, including Zeugma, Ain Sinu, and Tell Barri, but it is also broadly similar to cooking wares found throughout the Eastern Mediterranean.[69] At Dura, the brittle ware was often seen to

[66] Exceptional preservation in the Wall Street preserved green-glazed vases in a basketry carrier, demonstrating that there are elements of ceramic use that are not accessible from ware and form alone. 1938. 4545. YUAG negative yale-1280.

[67] Similar glazed vessels were also found in Hellenistic Nimrud: Oates and Oates 1958, 129–30.

[68] The brittle ware was published by Stephen Dyson in 1968, in F. R. 4.1.3; Dyson named the ware which is now widely recognized in the region. Dyson believed the brittle ware to be a relatively expensive ware, and an import to Dura. F. R. 4.1.3, 58. Brittle ware was being used for cooking in the Parthian period and traded as far as Hatra; Simpson 1997, 77.

[69] Vokaer 2010a, 116–17. The same points were made by Dyson, F. R. 4.1.3, 58–9. Brittle ware was found in kilns at Palmyra, although of different shapes from those at Dura: Krogulska 1985; 1996; Daszkiewicz et al. 2000. The production of brittle ware in Syria was extensive and long-lasting: Vokaer 2009. Study of the fabrics of brittle wares from Beirut, Apamea, and Palmyra has shown ninety per cent of the tested samples came from only six workshops, although these were not located: Schneider, Gerwulf et al. 2007; similar clustering of

be blackened on the exterior, indicating its use over a fire for the preparation of food.[70] The lack of systematic recording or collection means that most known examples were from third-century contexts, although earlier deposits of brittle ware were recorded in contexts thought to be Hellenistic and Parthian, beneath the *Chreophylakeion* and the Temple of the Gaddé, respectively.[71] Despite the very large amount of this ware recovered at the site, because only complete (or nearly so) examples were retained and sent to Yale, just over thirty examples were included in Dyson's catalogue.[72] These are likely to have all been mid-third century in date, owing simply to the short use-life of such wares; vessels were unlikely to be in use over an extended period as repeated heating weakened them, and the collection of complete examples would have therefore inherently reduced the sample to those not in use for long.[73] The brittle ware of Dura was an import, probably from elsewhere in Syria, which seems to imply that cooking practices at Dura was related to contemporary practices in Syria.[74] Food preparation within the houses is evident not only from the cooking pots but also from mortars and grinders for the processing of grain.[75]

While glossy red tablewares are common throughout the Roman Empire in the third century CE, this is not true of Dura. Very little imported African red slip was found at Dura, and while its presence does indicate access to long-distance trade networks after Dura's incorporation into the Roman sphere, the scale of recovery, of only a few sherds despite the recognizability, is almost negligible considered alongside the commonware and green-glazed ware.[76] More salient perhaps are the ceramics identified as local imitations of imports, including a locally made red

samples from northeastern Syria also pointed to a small number of (unlocated) production centres: Bartl et al. 1995. On the typicality of brittle ware, Vokaer 2010a, 116–17; Vokaer 2010b, 606. On its presence at Ain Sinu, Oates and Oates 1959, 226–27.

[70] F. R. 4.1.3, 58–9.

[71] P. R. 9.1, 67, 168ff; P. R. 7/8, 256; F. R. 4.1.3, 59.

[72] Many thousands of sherds of the brittle ware are easily visible in Yale's backdirt at the site. Few of those catalogued had a recorded context, but those that were, included the houses in C7 (no. 435 from C7-F and no. 426 from C7-D6) and from areas used as military accommodation, including E8 and X7 (nos 439 and 429, respectively).

[73] Peña suggests a short use-life for cookwares, of less than a year, owing to the thermal stress of their use: Peña 2007, 57.

[74] The ware identified as 'cooking pot ware' at Jebel Khalid, there also an import and present in the Hellenistic phase, seems to fit the same description, with a 'bricky red/brown colour . . . coarse gritty inclusions, dominated by large white and smaller black grits.' Jackson and Tidmarsh 2011, 8.

[75] G1-A, G2-C, G7-H, B8-H, and C7-G had recorded millstones; the type is not always recorded, and at least one of these was a saddle quern, and another a rotary quern. Re-examination has shown (as these objects are very robust and heavy, so often remain in place from the original excavations to the present day) that a number of these went unrecorded in the original excavations.

[76] F. R. 4.1.2, 14-16; Pollard 2004, 124–5.

burnished ware which, according to Cox, marked the first locally made imitations of imported ceramics at Dura after the Hellenistic period.[77]

The imported tablewares of the Hellenistic period gave way, for the most part, to locally or regionally produced wares, such as green-glazed serving and drinking vessels (cups, pitchers, and table *amphorae*). The brittle ware cooking pots seem to be a Syrian product and part of that milieu.[78] The ceramic profile of Roman Dura thus shows affinities with both Syria and Mesopotamia, the former for cooking vessels and the latter for serving vessels, and perhaps thus also eating practices more broadly. However, the vast majority of the ceramics in use were the local commonware. The ceramics testify not only to the connections of Dura both Syria to the west and Mesopotamia to the east, but were also one of the material means by which these connections could exist and be maintained. The use of green-glazed vessels, which were essentially the fineware of Dura, as serving vessels for pouring wine or water, could be used to serve the household or guests, connected these practices to those long known in Mesopotamia. The ability to also procure Syrian-produced pottery indicates this was not simply a question of access to particular wares, but of cultural preference or choice, and the ceramics record a material connectivity to both east and west.

There is a lack of kraters or other large mixing vessels from the houses, and thus no evidence for 'sympotic' activity in the houses from the ceramics, although wine was known to have been locally produced and traded.[79] There is also a lack of marked change in the ceramic profile of the city with the advent of Roman rule, so that it seems while the density of ovens in the military accommodation shows the military had different food preparation needs and practices (perhaps not only for garrison needs but related to campaign logistics), they were apparently content to use the locally available vessels for serving, rather than importing 'Roman' fine-wares.[80] However, this is not to say that they *used* the vessels in the same way as

[77] F. R. 4.1.2, 16–24. The red wash ware was not quantified but was apparently found in great quantity, but less than the common, brittle, and green-glazed wares, with shapes following those of black glaze, but was not dated to the latest periods: F. R. 4.1.2, 18–21. On the local imitations of Roman wares (after local production for three centuries), F. R. 4.1.2, 26.

[78] Schneider, Gerwulf et al. 2007; Vokaer 2010a.

[79] Kraters were found in the houses of Jebel Khalid in the Hellenistic phase, where Jackson believes that 'we may assume dining parties took place in the Housing insula, but not with large groups of people.' Jackson and Tidmarsh 2011, 499. Of course, drinking parties do not necessitate specialized drinking equipment, but its absence is nonetheless telling, as, if these events happened and were socially important, we would expect to find emphasis on the related equipment.

[80] It has, however, been argued that the Roman army might not have needed ceramics, initially, in occupation situations, as they would use metal vessels ('mess tins'): e.g. Eiland 1998, 56. At Ain Sinu, a Roman military 'frontier post' in northern Iraq, the ceramic profile is similarly 'completely Parthian in character', that is, like that of Hatra, and including the cooking pot wares used at Dura, but with a number of types not found at Dura (including painted and diamond-stamped vessels); there, too, the Roman military seems to have taken up use of locally available ceramics. Oates and Oates 1959, 221–2.

the local population, and the cooking installation in E4-15 points perhaps to not only a higher density but different ways of preparing food.

Glass vessels were also used for storage and serving, but the published catalogue focused on the complete vessels recovered in the necropolis. Nevertheless, from the houses came large quantities of glass, including 'cut' glass pieces, as well as imported painted and gilded vessels of very high quality.[81] The collection and recording strategies of the excavators compounded by the high fragmentation of glass meant that glass vessels are under-represented in the domestic assemblages, but they were probably used frequently in the houses for storage and serving of food, in addition to the use of small vessels for cosmetics and scented oils.[82]

SLEEPING

As eating and drinking are biological necessities but ones whose patterns are culturally embedded, so is sleeping—we need only to think of the significance in the modern West of where we sleep: 'where you lay your head' is part of what defines where a person lives, and we accord sleeping its own room. Patterns of 'napping', too, demarcate age groups or cultural affiliations.[83]

The archaeological identification of spaces used for sleeping is difficult, particularly as this was not an activity that necessitated a specialized space (which is not to say the space chosen did not matter).[84] The archaeological record at Dura did not preserve any artefact which is certainly part of a bed, although there are many objects which are ambiguous furniture fixings. It is entirely possible that there was no fixed sleeping places akin to the modern Western bedroom—the extremes of temperature experienced would make it likely that the place for sleeping changed depending on the time of year, perhaps utilizing the roof or courtyard in the summer months and one of the interior rooms during the winter, as is common in the region today.[85] Possible evidence for movable bedsteads is found in *PDura* 33, a third-century CE document which records an inventory of personal property included a *kline*, perhaps a bedstead, perhaps as part of a marriage

[81] As discussed by Grossman 2011. From C7-F came the 'Thetis' vase fragment (1931.588.a), with painted and gilded decoration including an inscription to the eponymous sea-nymph of Greek mythology, probably imported from Antioch.

[82] Grossman 2011, 279.

[83] e.g. discussion and references in Worthman and Melby 2002. On sleep in antiquity, Wiedemann and Dowden 2003.

[84] On the *cubiculum* in Roman houses (and the flexibility of the term) Riggsby 1997.

[85] Although, on the correspondence between Roman elite notions of privacy in the bedroom and modern ones, Nissinen 2013.

contract.[86] In the same parchment, found by Cumont in the early excavations of the site and without a known find-spot, were listed two *tuleia*, probably cushions or mattresses. We cannot know whether either of these terms in this context refers to items certainly used for sleeping, as opposed to reclining more generally. The lack of a specialized room for sleeping itself may be indicative of the flexibility of architecturally defined spaces.

READING AND WRITING

The extensive distribution of graffiti scratched into the walls of houses, in addition to more rare painted and lapidary inscriptions, and the portable material culture associated with writing, indicate the practice of writing was relatively widespread at Dura. The extent of literacy in the ancient world remains a much debated topic, but as Bagnall has convincingly shown, ancient 'writing was everywhere, and a very wide range of people participated in the use of writing in some fashion'; it was not restricted to a few elites.[87]

Distribution of graffiti within the houses includes pictorial examples, and also wide use of Greek, occasional Latin (notably, always in houses with other evidence of military occupation), and more rarely, Hatrean and Palmyrene.[88] Houses were possibly also a place where reading and writing were learned, and several *abecedaria* are known from the houses, for example from H1-A,[89] D5-A,[90] E4,[91] C3-D,[92] and M8-A.[93] A range of types of texts were found in the houses. Graffiti included many acclamations, inventories, and personal names. Inscriptions on stone were not frequent, but are known from the houses, found on a number of altars and incense burners.

Writing equipment found at Dura included styli, waxed wooden tablets, and inkwells. Seal boxes, sealings, and seal rings were also found throughout

[86] F. R. 5.1, 170–1; a parallel for a marriage contract with a list of items is *PDura* 30. While the editors translated the term as 'bedsteads' it might also be a couch. On beds and other furniture in the Greek world, Andrianou 2006a; 2006b; 2009, and on Roman furniture Croom 2007.

[87] Bagnall 2011, 142. For 'low' rate of literacy in antiquity, the key work is Harris 1989, and on literacy see now Baird and Taylor 2011 and the essays in Johnson and Parker 2009.

[88] Just over 300 graffiti were recorded from houses, with about a quarter of houses having some form. On graffiti at Dura, Baird 2011c.

[89] No. 316 in P. R. 4, 160.

[90] No. 308 in P. R. 4, 158–9.

[91] P. R. 6, 48, no. 627.

[92] Fragments of plaster with partial alphabets were found in several rooms of this house. Graffiti nos 649, 650, and 651; P. R. 6, 130–2.

[93] The House of the Christian Building, in which no less than five alphabets were found, four in Greek and one in Syriac. F. R. 8.2, 90–2, nos 1, 3, 4, 5, and 11. The concentration in the church may indicate the alphabets were apotropaic devices. Kaizer 2009b, 236–7.

the site.[94] A number of waxed wooden tablets were recovered, but none are known from the houses—all extant examples were found in the deep deposits of the towers and along the Wall Street, so the lack of tablets elsewhere in the site is probably an issue of preservation.[95] Those objects recorded in the object registers as 'pins' in copper alloy or bone with a marked shoulder have been argued to represent styli.[96] Bone objects with a sharpened tip are also probable styli, although in some cases these might have been used as awls or similar tools. Many bone and bronze handles may have been those of styli, but when they are broken, as so many are at Dura, attribution is difficult. The most certain examples of styli from Dura are those, in both bronze and bone, with a pointed end for writing and a blunt/flattened end for erasing on wax. Bone styli in particular from the site are numerous, including many from blocks F3 and B2. In house C7-G, both a stylus and an inkwell were found.[97] The limited provenanced examples of such equipment and its easy portability make it impossible to suggest that this activity took place in any particular part of the house. Using the graffiti and writing implements we might not be able to ascertain the degree of literacy at Dura, but we can observe the practice of writing as something that happened all over the city, and this might be taken as indicative of an ability to write, and to read what has been written, which was not restricted to a particular part of the population.[98] Also interesting is the fact that house walls were apparently considered a perfectly appropriate surface on which to write.[99]

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

Religious beliefs permeated all facets of ancient daily life, and houses were no exception.[100] Religious communities and identities will be discussed in the next chapter, but in this consideration of activities within houses, it is appropriate to

[94] On the intaglios from Dura, Baird Forthcoming (a); Guiraud 1992.

[95] At least eleven wooden tablets were recorded, with known find-spots; several at Yale also show the preserved indentations of markings. Field numbers, with accession numbers following a slash where these are at Yale: F1013, F1020/1933.439, F1475/1933.441c, F1897, F2161a/1933.441a, F2161b, G1341a, G1386, G1441, G957, H503. An interesting recent study has examined writing equipment in still lifes of Pompeian paintings: Meyer 2009.

[96] Allison et al. 2005, 8.2.2b.

[97] Bone stylus, E157/1932.1696 and stone inkwell (small stone vessel) E13/1932.1238 from C7-G3 and C7-G2 respectively.

[98] Illiteracy of course, did exist, and is itself attested in documents: e.g. third-century papyrus deed of sale *PDura* 26 (found at Dura but attesting to a sale of land near the Khabur River), in which a veteran, Aurelius Salmanes, writes on behalf of one Otarnaeus, son of Abadabus, who is illiterate.

[99] On which, Baird Forthcoming (b).

[100] Baird 2013; on the modern division between 'secular' and 'religious' life, Insoll 2004, 110–28.

discuss 'domestic' religion.[101] There were undoubtedly places in the houses which served a ritual focus, but which are not obvious in the archaeological record. Similarly, objects are not always conclusively of religious significance. It has been noted, for example, that many of the terracotta figurines from Dura might have had a religious purpose, but it is equally possible some are children's toys or decorative objects.[102] It is also impossible, for many objects, to ascribe a singular use, be it religious or otherwise. There are, however, some archaeological materials which relate more directly to religious life than others including altars, religious sculpture, and certain graffiti.

Altars occur regularly in the houses of Dura. They are made of a variety of materials including terracotta, stone (generally, local gypsum), copper alloy, plaster, and ceramic (mostly of the green-glazed ceramic also used to produce vessels). They were produced in a variety of forms, and were sometimes inscribed, and some have signs of burning at their top, likely for the burning of incense.[103] The ceramic altars were frequently of the four-columned type. The altars indicate that the courtyards of the houses were indeed the foci of domestic religious practices, although they are not infrequent in other rooms, for example principal rooms.[104] One inscribed example of small altar with a bowl for incense, from the courtyard G1-B18, had an inscription, picked out in red paint, which wrapped around its four sides: 'Good fortune to Kurilla with god throughout her life' (Figure 4.4).[105] A camel-shaped incense burner was also found in a house courtyard.[106] Overall, however, altars were found in relatively few houses; perhaps due to their portability and importance, they may have been amongst the items people took with them when leaving the city.[107]

Religious concerns are also depicted on the walls of houses in graffiti. A number of pictorial graffiti relate to the act of sacrifice, one possibly depicting a priest before an altar, and another a bird and bullock before an altar.[108] Others seem to show a deity and suppliant,[109] and a deity, perhaps Atargatis, before an aedicule

[101] On Mesopotamian and Roman 'domestic religion', Orr 1978; van der Toorn 1996; Bodel 2009.

[102] Downey 2003, 15.

[103] Unfortunately, though there are several inscribed altars in the object registers, there is generally no note of what the inscription said or depicted.

[104] Altars in courtyards, e.g. in G1-C (E178); G3-L (K61); G1-B (E414); G3-L (K522). Altars found in other rooms, including the entrance vestibule: G245, a stone altar from G3-K1. Other rooms: e.g. E474/1932.226 from G1-A28, a room immediately off a courtyard.

[105] E414/1932.1228. P. R. 5, 54, no. 404. This house was apparently occupied by the Roman military in its last phase: see Baird 2012c.

[106] C7-A (E295/1932.1266); such items were sometimes recorded under the Greek term *thymiaterion*.

[107] On the desanctification of Durene sanctuaries, Coqueugniot 2012a. On the abandonment of Dura, Baird 2012b.

[108] Priest before altar: from C3-D1, P. R. 6, 124; Goldman 1999, C.23; Bullock, bird, and altar, from C7-C4, P. R. 5, 38-40; Goldman 1999, E.10.

[109] From C7-C4, P. R. 6, 125; Goldman 1999, D.11.

FIGURE 4.4 Altar from courtyard of house G1-B, 67 cm tall. Inscription continues around other sides of altar, wishing for happiness through the aid of a god for Kurilla. Altar E414/1932.1228. YUAG e59.

(Figure 4.5).[110] Horoscopes were mentioned earlier, and their presence in houses is one more piece of evidence for belief systems, in the use of divination and the presence of astrology and daily life, although preserved examples at Dura do not tell us what questions were asked of them.[111] Many remembrance graffiti were also found in the houses of Dura, using the *mnesthe* formula to ask that the writer, or a named individual, be remembered (perhaps, to the gods).[112]

[110] House H2-DA, Goldman 1999, D.20 (though Goldman gives wrong context). P. R. 4, 210–11.

[111] Barton 1994, 172–8.

[112] On this formula, Rehm 1940. On its use at Dura, Baird Forthcoming (b); 2011c; Stern 2012.

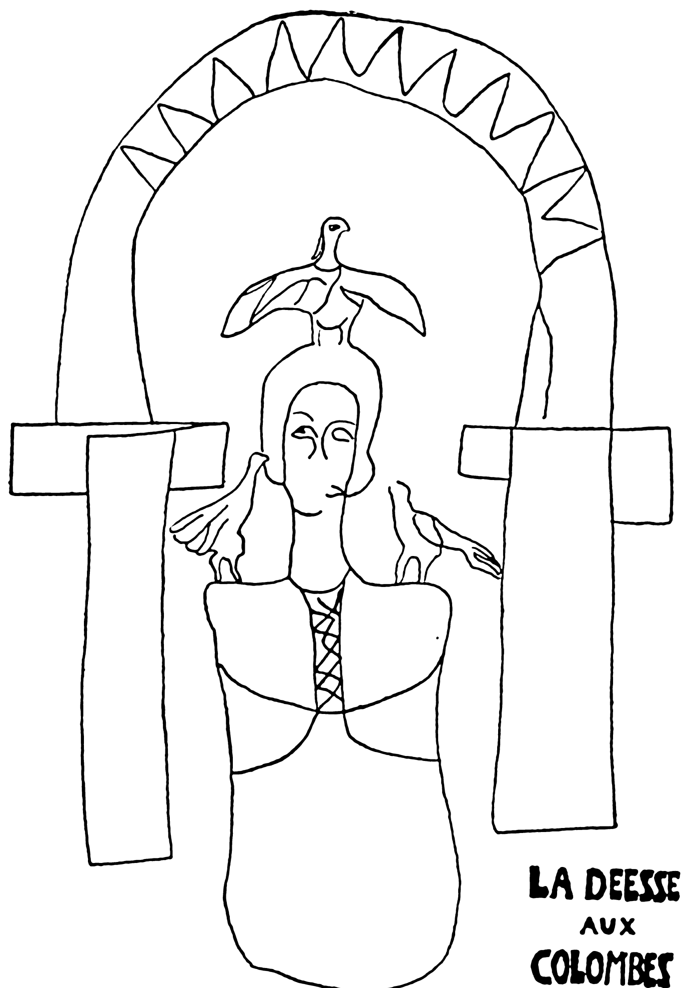


FIGURE 4.5 Tracing of graffito, a depiction of a deity (Atargatis?) in an aedicula from house in block H2, the 'House of the Priests'. Goldman 1999, no. D20. YUAG.

'Religious' sculpture, that is, sculpture depicting deities, was also found in houses. In fact, almost all of the sculpture from the houses, chiefly in stone and plaster, is religious in subject.[113] This included, most frequently, relief sculptural representations of a divine figure with the attributes of Heracles, found a total of thirteen times within houses (Figure 4.6).[114] None, however, were found *in situ*

[113] F. R. 3.1.2, 1.

[114] On Heracles at Dura, F. R. 3.1.1. Four of the Heracles sculptures were from courtyards, the rest were from a mix of other room types. Heracles sculpture numbers: E900, F. R. 3.1.1, no.1 (G3-G1); F449, F. R. 3.1.1, no. 2 (M7-W1); Dam 3432, F. R. 3.1.1, no. 3 (C7-E); E406 (G1-B18); F560, F. R. 3.1.1, no. 10 (M8-G1); 1931.420, F. R. 3.1.1, no.17 (C7-E); G701, F. R. 3.1.1, no. 19 (L8-B2); 1938.5359, F. R. 3.1.1, no. 22 (G7-H7); E1186, F. R. 3.1.1, no. 21 (G4-B55); K54, F. R. 3.1.1, no. 29 (G3-M2); G1212/1935.50, F. R. 3.1.1, no. 33 (G5-C10); 1931.416, F. R. 3.1.1,

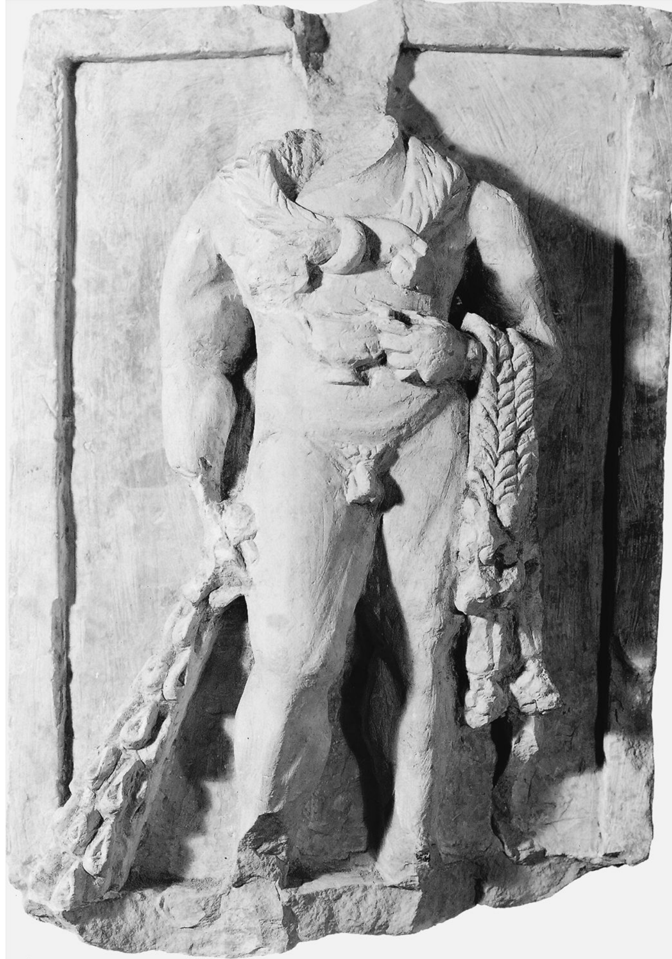


FIGURE 4.6 Relief of Heracles from G3-M4. K57/1938.5321/F. R. 3.1.1, no. 39. YUAG Yale-1451.

on a wall. Heracles may have functioned in an apotropaic role as protector of the house, or as the centre of the family cult, as other instances of Heracles in these roles are known.[115] This nude male figure, with a lion-skin and club, may in fact

no. 38 (C7-F); and K57, F. R. 3.1.1, no. 39 (G3-M4). E94 was listed as Heracles initially but attribution is doubted by Downey, who lists it as 'man with ram', F. R. 3.1.1, no. 42 (C7-G^{2}14). Note two examples from house G3-M. Some reliefs had plaster on the reverse, indicating they were set into walls. Heracles was also found in other contexts, including a fragmentary imported bronze sculpture from shop G2-S24, E913, F. R. 3.1.1, nos 27, and 9 found in streets including the Wall Street fill. Of those from sanctuaries, a number from Zeus Megistos and the one from the Necropolis Temple seem to relate to the use of the structure, whereas those from a cistern in the Temple of Atargatis and the Synagogue fill were secondary contexts. For a full list, F. R. 3.1.1, 37.

[115] F. R. 3.1.1, 57–9, 82–3. At Seleucia on the Tigris, a greater proportion of the Heracles figurines were also from the excavated houses of the Hellenistic and Parthian periods: van Ingen 1939.

be the Mesopotamian deity Nergal, and indeed this dual identity is attested at Palmyra, Hatra, and Seleucia on the Tigris, all within Dura's orbit.[116] As has been shown by Downey, this figure at Dura was not only the Classical hero but a continuation of the nude hero of the Near East, and at Dura he sometimes appeared with a 'Parthian' hairstyle.[117] Whether he was known as Heracles, Nergal, both names, or another one, the presence of this nude male figure with the attributes of the Greek Heracles but also Mesopotamian ones, carved in local stone in a regional style and protecting the houses of Dura, once again shows the way the material form of objects was a way of negotiating a complex and changing cultural milieu.[118]

Heracles was not the only divine figure depicted in sculpture from the houses. A single example of a sculpture of the Aramaean storm god Hadad is also known,[119] and a number of unidentified male and female deities were also depicted.[120] Thirteen depictions of Aphrodite from within houses were also known, including one from the house used by 'entertainers' in the agora, two from the military residences of E8, and one from house C7-C where graffiti shows the presence of soldiers.[121] Indeed, there is a degree of correlation between reliefs

[116] When the nude hero with a lion-skin and club appears without an inscribed Greek name (as known also at Palmyra and Hatra), Kaizer prefers the term 'Heracles figure', as the attributes can be argued to be Nergal, of the Mesopotamian divine world, Kaizer 2000, 219. The identification of Heracles-Nergal at Palmyra, Seyrig 1944. At Hatra, Al-Salihi 1971; 1973; Christides 1982; at Seleucia, Invernizzi 1989.

[117] Downey wrote the final report on the Heracles sculpture, published in 1969 as F. R. 3.1.1. Other hybrid elements include the 'Parthian' *aureole* hairstyle found on one of the Heracles reliefs, K54, F. R. 3.1.1, no. 29 (G3-M2). On a Heracles from another site in the region, Tell Sheikh Hamad on the Khabur, Downey 2002.

[118] At Hatra, a figure with a lion skin and club is identified in an inscription in one instance as a *Gad*, the personification of good fortune also known at Dura, in the form of the Tyche of the city. Kaizer 2000, 230–1. As noted by Kaizer, none of the unidirectional models of cultural transfer (Hellenization, Babylonization, etc.) adequately account for this interaction. Downey thought he might have been Heracles to the Greeks, Hercules to the Romans, a Near Eastern hero to the Semites (F.R. 3.1.1, 83), but other evidence at Dura points to the fact that people there didn't fit neatly into these categories any more than the sculpture does.

[119] E2 and E60/Dam 4489/F. R. 3.1.2, no. 46 from C7-G1. Lipiński 2000, 633–6. The depiction of Hadad was found broken, and this house was excavated beneath the levels of its floors, so the 'domestic' context of this Hadad relief is not secure.

[120] Unknown males: E367/F. R. 3.1.2, no. 59 (G1-A14); H170/F. R. 3.1.2, no. 61 (E8-28); I322/Dam 8387/F. R. 3.1.2, no. 62 (D1-30); F2216/1933.302a,b/F. R. 3.1.2, no.69 (C3-B6). Unknown females: E1262/1932.1217/F. R. 3.1.2, no. 86 (G1-81); G1417/1935.52/F. R. 3.1.2, no. 88 (G5-F4); F322/F. R. 3.1.2, no. 90 (M7-W6); G168/F. R. 3.1.2, no.92 (G3-H5), and F876/F. R. 3.1.2, no. 91 (J7-11).

[121] Aphrodite from houses: F1502/1933.303, F. R. 3.1.2, no. 12 (B2-C1); 1931.417, F. R. 3.1.2, no. 11 (D5); H263/1938.5338, F. R. 3.1.2, no. 18 (E8-45); G246, F. R. 3.1.2, no. 20 (G3-J1); G2022, F. R. 3.1.2, no. 21 (G5-C2); E415, F. R. 3.1.2, no. 23 (G1-B18); G1221, F. R. 3.1.2, no. 25 (G5-B3); H194, F. R. 3.1.2, no. 28 (E8-30); E447, F. R. 3.1.2, no. 29 (C7-C11); G1876, F. R. 3.1.2, no. 30 (G7-H); K139 (G3-H10); E1115, F. R. 3.1.2, no. 15 (G2-C40); 1931.411, F. R. 3.1.2, no. 22 (H2). G2202, 1931.411, and E415, together with a fourth plaque found by Cumont, were all made from the same mould; see F. R. 3.12, 162–4. They show 'Aphrodite Anadyomene', with Aphrodite holding a mirror, in an aedicula.

of Aphrodite and military presence in houses, and in some cases, e.g. in G2-C40 and G5-C, Aphrodite reliefs occur with other features which seem to indicate a non- or supra-domestic function for the structure (on which, see later discussion).

The high number of sculptures of Heracles and Aphrodite has been shown by Downey to be due to these forms continuing aspects of earlier Near Eastern types, the nude hero and the nude goddess, and hence perhaps having a popularity amongst the local population.[122] Given the propensity for painted depictions in sanctuaries at Dura and the relatively poor survival of that medium in many houses, the sculpture does not necessarily give an accurate reflection of the proportion of different divinities worshipped within the houses at Dura. The use of Aphrodite in some contexts with a military presence may show that the Eastern Aphrodite already known at the site was readily picked up or recognized by members of the Roman military. Other possible evidence of domestic religion within houses comes from plaster shrines, such as that from house G3-J, adorned with painted dots, as were plaster discs.[123]

Terracotta figurines were also found in many houses, including some handmade ones which may be toys. Mould-made terracotta plaques found in houses also depicted divinities including Artemis, 'Parthian' men including a warrior, and female musicians.[124] It is possible that these and others had a religious or magical significance.[125] For instance, from the courtyard of G3-G1 was excavated a partial terracotta figurine. This was handmade, with bare breasts indicating her sex, although the head and most of the arms and lower body are missing.[126] Covering the figurine were rows of roughly round chips which seem to have been deliberately made, post-firing, perhaps as part of a spell.[127] The evidence is ambiguous but folk religion very probably existed alongside others that are more easily identified from religious structures and inscriptions.[128] Figurines generally have

[122] F. R. 3.1.2, 3, 153–7.

[123] P. R. 9.1, 162–3. Plaster shrines are also known from C7-F1 (Dura P. R. 4, 35), C3-D8 where there are two (Dura P. R. 6, 118), and plaster discs with similar decoration are known from C7-E2 (P. R. 5, 41) and C7-A^{2}2 and C7-A^{2}3 (P. R. 5, 36).

[124] Artemis, F1480/1933.5432, Downey 2003, no.1 (C3-B). Parthian warrior, 1930.538/ Downey 2003, no. 26 (H2-K). Male figure in Parthian dress, F2210/Downey 2003, no.34 (C3-D10). Female musician, 1934.609b/Downey 2003, no.42 (C3-D10); graffiti of musicians from the Temple of Aphlad (Goldman 1999, no. C.8a,b) show that such musicians could perhaps be related to the performance of music as part of cult practices. The Dura mould-made figurines are generally made in 'double' (two-part) moulds, which appear to have been introduced in the Hellenistic period, unlike earlier Mesopotamian examples which were generally made in 'single' moulds. Downey 1993b, 130; Karvonen-Kannas 1995, 32.

[125] On figurines and magic (in a neo-Assyrian context), Nakamura 2005, although no deliberate deposits such as these were found at Dura; and on figurines and magic in the Roman world, Wilburn 2012, 74ff.

[126] E887/1932.1255/Downey 2003, no.49.

[127] Figurines from much earlier domestic contexts in the Euphrates valley are generally interpreted as 'magical'. See discussion in Cooper 2006, 121; figurines in curses, Faraone 1991; Bailliot 2010, 104–9.

[128] Bailliot 2010.

long been assumed to be 'religious', but for Hellenistic and later examples there is little discussion of what, precisely, this entailed.[129] At Dura, Downey ruled out a religious function because few figurines were found within sanctuaries, but I would argue there is no 'secular' context in antiquity, and the lack of such objects in sanctuaries does not implicitly rule out a religious meaning.[130] While no spells or other magical texts were excavated at Dura, a number of the graffiti and *dipinti* were presumed to have had 'magical' significance.[131] An 'evil eye' appears on a painting in M7-W, being attacked by a snake, bird, cock, and scorpion.[132] The green-glazed vessel set into the wall above the door in L7-A is perhaps evidence of domestic apotropaia, and similarly, graffiti, including *mnesthe* texts, cluster around doorways in both houses and temples and may have served an apotropaic function.[133]

Of the known monotheistic cults at Dura, there is no evidence from the houses. For instance, *miqva'ot*, Jewish ritual baths, have at other sites been taken to be an indicator of residences inhabited by Jews,[134] while at Dura there was certainly a Jewish population there is as yet no evidence for *miqva'ot*.[135] Other types of evidence which would be useful, such as zooarchaeological material (to examine the presence or absence of pig bones), is sadly lacking.[136] Similarly, there is very little other than the Christian house-church to indicate that Christianity was practiced at the site. We need not read the presence of other deities in houses as being mutually exclusive with monotheistic cults in this period, although further excavation may disprove such assumptions based on negative evidence.

Complicating the picture of religion in the house is the existence of 'family' cults outside the context of the house, inside Durene sanctuaries. For instance, Dirven has suggested that the Konon paintings from the sanctuary known as the 'Temple of Bel' (in the northwest corner of the city) were votive and indicate the temples such as this and the Temple of Zeus Theos (in block B3) were family sanctuaries, closed to all but a small group of people, and therefore indicative of

[129] Van Buren 1930, xl. More recently, Langin-Hooper 2007 has discussed Hellenistic Babylonian figurines as evidence of cross-cultural interaction, particularly with reference to the interaction between different technologies of production of the figurines, but does not discuss their use to a great extent.

[130] Downey 1993b, 145; 2003, 140.

[131] e.g. 'unintelligible' painted markings in the Temple of Azzanathkona, P. R. 6, 496–9.

[132] P. R. 6, 155, plate 42.3. On the symbolism of the evil eye, Bailliot 2010, Chapter 2.

[133] Baird Forthcoming (b); Stern 2012.

[134] Reich 1987; 1988; 1993; Meyers 2002.

[135] Dirven, citing the use of the apotropaic eye in the synagogue, notes that Judaism at Dura was not necessarily mutually exclusive with other local beliefs: Dirven 2004. Supply of water may also have been an issue. Further on Jewish daily life in the period, see Hezser 2010.

[136] I.e., such evidence was not collected or recorded by the original excavators. Crabtree 1990; Hesse 1995. The Dura liturgical parchment does, however, raise the issue of different food practices amongst Dura's Jews: Fine 2005, 174–7.

'family religion' of particular elite families at Dura.[137] The practice of an inherited cult of a patron family god is known from elsewhere in the earlier Near East.[138] Even if the evidence is read more broadly, that the paintings and inscriptions of the family of Konon indicate their patronage of the sanctuary, the depictions of three generations of the family show the importance of the family line in religious practice. Other sanctuaries, of course, were related to communities that were not focused on lineage but on place: that of Azzanathkona seems to have been based on a common origin at the village Anath, downstream of Dura,[139] as was that of Aphlad,[140] and Palmyrenes resident at Dura, too, worshipped the gods of Palmyra (on these communities, see the next chapter).[141] Inscriptions from a number of sanctuaries also indicate participation in many cults was not mutually exclusive with others. Indeed, while the sanctuaries of Dura in some ways reflect diverse ethnic, professional, and religious communities,[142] the origins of a cult within a particular group need not preclude a broader participation, and many of Dura's sanctuaries (despite their naming conventions in scholarship) contain a variety of deities, as Kaizer has shown.[143]

Foundation deposits were not recorded in most houses, but in E4 and E8, both military contexts, sub-floor deposits including bird bones were found.[144] One further piece of evidence may be considered. In the largest domestic residence at Dura, the House of Lysias, two human inhumations were excavated beneath the house floors.[145] This practice is not otherwise attested at Dura, although levels beneath house floors were regularly excavated (often because they were earth floors and went unrecognized). Only a few notes and photographs attest to these bodies, so it is difficult to be conclusive, but their presence is suggestive of an ancestor cult in this house, which also happens to belong to a family of community leaders who claimed descent from the city's founders. The practice of interring bodies beneath house floors may be related to the same occurrence at earlier Mesopotamian sites.[146] Nonetheless, this hints at a practice of ancestor veneration or cult in which the ancestors are physically present in the house by virtue of being

[137] Dirven 2004, 11–12. [138] Van der Toorn 1996. [139] P. R. 5, 106–13.
[140] P. R. 5, 98–130. [141] Dirven 1999. [142] Leriche 1997b, 904. [143] Kaizer 2009a.
[144] In E4, this was found in the southwest corner of the court, near the door to E4-21 according to Frank Brown's field notes. In E8, his notes record a deposit in the northeast corner of E8-2, which he identified as 'pigeon' bones in a ceramic vessel. P. R. 6, 7-8. Also, terracotta medallion with a female bust was found *inside* a mudbrick used in the Wall Street fill; this might have been accidental during the production of the bricks, but it is also possible that such an item would be deliberately included in building materials, and as the houses were generally left *in situ*, such items would not generally be discovered. Downey 2003, no. 14. It is not possible to tell whether the foundation deposits relate to the military phase of use of these buildings.
[145] P. R. 9.2, 6. Other burials found within houses were above floors and post-date the Sasanian incursion.
[146] e.g. Old Babylonian Ur. van der Toorn 2008, 26–7.

buried there, which could have also strengthen the perceived legitimacy of ruling families.

Altars, graffiti, sculptures, and terracottas, as well as plaster shrines and foundation deposits, all attest to the 'religious' activity within houses. There is no excavated evidence from the houses for Christianity or Judiasm, and relatively little overlap with other cults, although Heracles appears both in domestic contexts and within sanctuaries. While the city is not completely excavated, there is a wide sample of houses, and despite that, no evidence exists at present to identify households or neighbourhoods with allegiances to particular cults. This seems to indicate that 'private' or domestic religious practices, including magic, happened concurrently with other community religious practices.

HOUSEHOLD MANUFACTURE

The house, in addition to being a social unit, was an economic one, and one which was related to agricultural production and the ownership of agricultural land outside the city's walls. Some items were also produced or processed within the houses, including agricultural products, textiles, terracottas, ceramics, and glass. Dura follows the pattern of many ancient cities, including those of the Roman period, in which 'low status' houses, workshops, and commercial premises are interspersed within the urban environment.[147] From within houses there is also evidence for exchange relating to various commodities; foodstuffs have been mentioned already, and the extensive graffiti from the house B8-H also documents extensive involvement in the production of and trade in garments of clothing.

The deep deposits of the Wall Street rampart preserved textiles at Dura, but virtually none are known from primary contexts.[148] From within houses, however, there is some evidence of textile production and maintenance. Loom weights are surprisingly infrequent, particularly given that these ceramic or stone objects generally preserve very well archaeologically. This may be a reflection of the technology, as un-weighted looms are more frequent by Dura's Roman period.[149] In only one case from a domestic context were a spindle and whorl found together in place, in house C7-G,[150] and raw wool is mentioned in graffiti from the adjacent block, B8.[151] Both of these fragments of evidence have implications for the

[147] On this pattern in North Africa, Wilson 2002, 258–9.
[148] The textiles were published by Pfister and Bellinger in 1945: F. R. 4.2.
[149] Carroll 1985; Wild 1987; Peskowitz 2004.
[150] E121. A set was also found in the necropolis, 1938.1011.
[151] P. R. 4, 79–145; SEG VII 1934, 381–430.

participation of households in animal husbandry. There are many bone and stone discs which were likely spindle whorls, but most of which were classed as buttons, and not all were retained in the Yale collection.[152] Evidence for sewing comes in the form of needles. These were found in many rooms of the houses, as they would have been easily lost, particularly in the beaten earth floors. There are examples from Dura of both bronze and bone needles, and they are found not only in houses but also shops and the baths, as well as many examples coming from military structures including E8.[153]

Installations which may be associated with textile production were also found in houses. For example, in room 37 of house G1-B a low rubble parapet with a U-shaped depression in front of it was interpreted as the equipment for the loom and wool-dyeing on a small scale.[154] There is also much textual evidence for the presence of textiles, particularly the graffiti from one house, the House of Nebuchelus (B8-H).[155] There, lists of business transactions carried out by the eponymous owner records the sale of wool in raw form as well as that dyed in purple, as well as finished garments and their prices. From these graffiti it is possible to say that some houses were indeed the foci for business activity which is not necessarily attested materially therein.

These various forms of production demonstrate that it is impossible to separate ancient Dura into separate civic/domestic and industrial zones; houses were the site of many types of production, and some houses, for example in the recently excavated C11,[156] as well as in B2 with its many kilns, seem to have been organized around such industry.[157] In block B2 (Figure 4.7), the kilns of the last phase may have been the site of production for the fired bricks used in the erection of the adjacent C3 baths.[158] It is interesting that production and manufacture are not confined to houses with attached shops or to elite households, as has been seen elsewhere.[159]

Moulds indicate a repetition of production, and these were found for a number of objects including terracotta figurines, lamps, jewellery, and metal vessels in the

[152] Many of these can no longer be verified. Weaving combs are also found in number at Dura, but most were found along the Wall Street in the secondary deposits of the glacis and not in houses. In the object registers there are also many objects which were classified as 'weaver's tools' but unfortunately no other information was kept.

[153] Just over 100 bone and copper alloy needles were recovered from the site. The bone examples at Yale are catalogued in Russell 1976, 76–9; none of those are from the houses. A textile 'book' of needles was found at Dura, but the find-spot was not recorded. 1938.5690, F. R. 4.2, 60, no. 293, Kleiner and Matheson 1996, 157–8, no. 104. Needles could also be used for female hairstyling: see Chapter 5.

[154] P. R. 5, 53; P. R. 9.1, 146.

[155] P. R. 4, 79-145; F. R. 4.2, 12-13.

[156] Leriche, pers comm. In C11-nord, a house recently excavated by the MFSED, a ceramic kiln was excavated in the house courtyard.

[157] For a detailed study of B2, Allara 1992b; 2002; Allara 1992b, 111 n 41 and n 42 gives Near Eastern and Roman comparanda for the kilns of B2.

[158] Allara 1992b, 112.

[159] Robinson 2005.

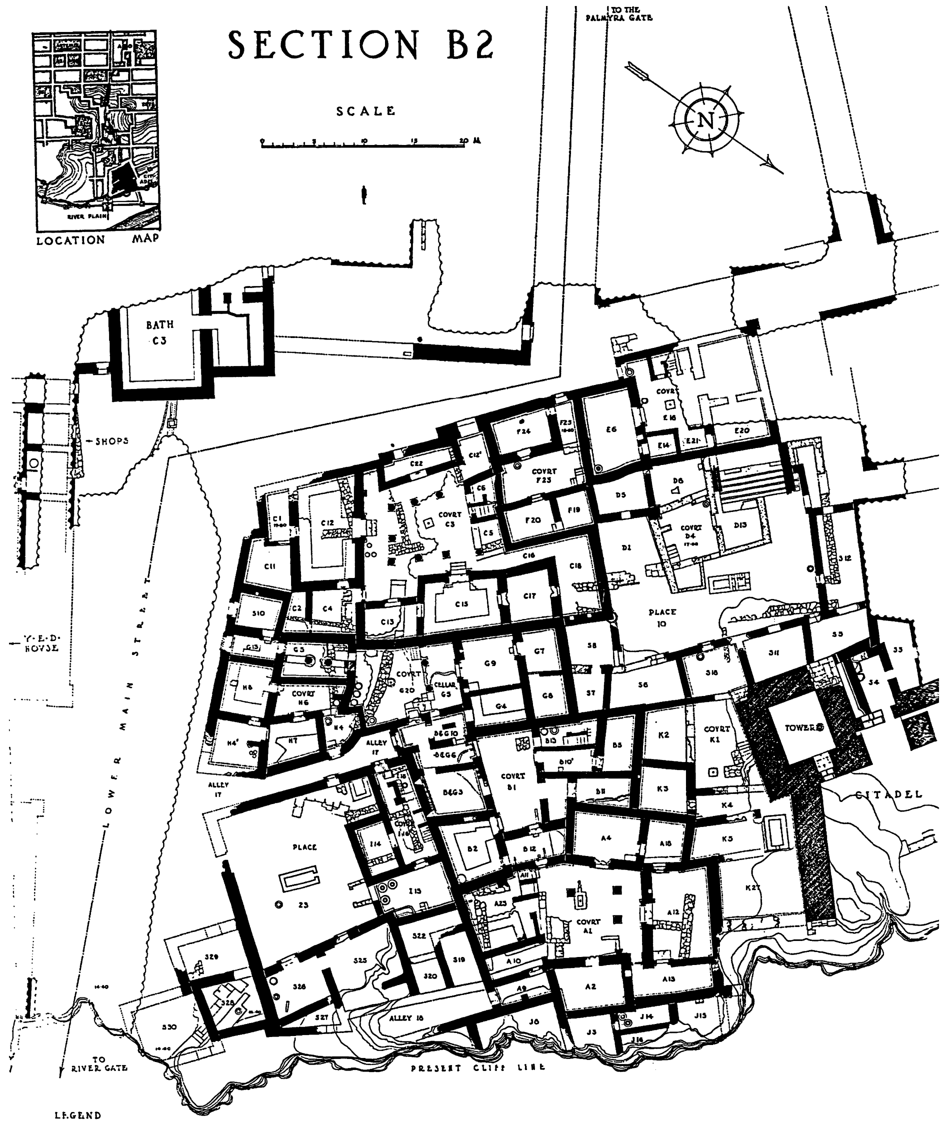


FIGURE 4.7 Plan of block B2 by Henry Pearson. YUAG.

houses. There is no evidence that these moulds were used in any particular part of the house, although it is notable that they do occur most often in the houses of one sector of the city: the agora, possibly because of a relationship between the places of their production and sale.[160] A steatite mould from the 'House of the Priests' in H2 and a lead *patera* from a similar mould found in a nearby temple

[160] E1129, a plaster mould from house G2-C, K105, a stone mould from house G3-H, and K455, a stone mould from house G1-F. Three further moulds were excavated by Cumont 1926, 256–7.

indicate that such objects were being produced locally, although there is no evidence of slag to indicate metalworking occurred within houses.[161] The lamp moulds indicate that some lamps were being produced locally, although many were also imported, and still others were of built construction rather than moulded.[162] The presence of moulds for ceramic lamps and terracotta figurines in houses without immediate access to a kiln seems to show that the use of kilns may have been hired as needed by people making relatively small numbers of items. Handmade ceramic items, too, may have been a by-product of this, using up excess clay or kiln space. This has implications for the organization of 'household' industries. While there is archaeological and textual evidence for the specialization of shops in ceramic objects, and pottery seems also to have been produced by professionals, they were probably not the only group producing ceramic items.

Evidence for the production of glass was also found, in the form of glass foam and frit in block B2, suggesting some of the kilns in that block might have been for the production of glass vessels, although there is no evidence of primary glass production.[163] A number of wasters from the site, and an unfinished faceted bowl are also known, but of these a single example is from a known find-spot, in block B2.[164] Because of the occurrence of glass waste and other evidence of manufacture at Dura and the presence of similar vessels at Zeugma, Grossman has suggested that Dura may even have served 'as a regional centre for the production of "cut" glass vessels', meeting the needs of the city but also exporting.[165] Architectural installations such as vats are also frequent, again particularly in the houses of the agora, but where there are no associated finds it is difficult to determine the use of these, save to say that they were likely used in the production or processing of goods.[166]

COMMERCE: SHOPS, BARS, AND THE BROTHEL OF DURA

The line between commercial and domestic premises, as demonstrated by the presence of household production, is not always a strict one. Many houses had shops attached, and many structures identified as houses seem to have had uses which were not primarily (or exclusively) domestic. These included a house with

[161] P. R. 4, 236–40.

[162] F. R. 4.3, 3. On the lamp moulds, see F. R. 4.3, 72, nos 414–16. The lamp moulds come from outside the agora, in M7 and K1, both probably from domestic contexts.

[163] F. R. 4.5, 149. On the glass at Dura, Grossman 2002, 18; Grossman 2011.

[164] F. R. 4.5, no. 583, F340.

[165] Grossman 2011, 278.

[166] Houses G6-C, G1-B, G3-B, G3-C, and G3-6. None of the basins are of the type used by fullers elsewhere, although this use cannot be excluded: on fulleries, e.g. Flohr 2009; 2011.

extensive *dipinti* which show it was the base for a group of entertainers including prostitutes (Dura's 'brothel'), as well as structures which seem to have served as food and drink establishments.

The number of shops alone is indicative of a broad artisanal and service economy at Dura. The pattern seen in the excavated portion of Dura, with relatively modest housing intermingled with workshops and commercial activity, is one found at other urban sites in the Roman world.[167] Many locations at Dura were doubtless used for conducting business, including within houses, as the graffiti of B8-H show. More readily identified are shops.[168] Single room shops were frequently attached to Durene houses; shops opened directly onto the street, and sometimes had a door at the rear of the shop which opened into the house. Other shops abut houses, sharing party walls, but did not have a direct opening between them. In the latter case it is not possible to discern the relationship between house and shop. For example, it is not clear whether the shop was owned by the inhabitants of the house, or if it was a separate property, or rented out. Party walls were often shared between houses and shops, however, so there was no perceived need for a separation of the physical fabrics of the structures. When shops had a rear door which opened into a house, it is possible to postulate a direct relationship between the house and commercial activity. For instance, B8-H (already mentioned for its proliferation of graffiti related to commercial activities) had two shops, B8-H8 and B8-H9, which had doors at the back of the shop which opened directly into the house's courtyard, as did a number of shops elsewhere in the city (Figures 4.8 and 4.9).[169] Concentrated in the agora sector but with some shops in other parts of the city, a number of houses seem to have earned at least part of their livelihood from trading.

While shops were labelled on the plans produced of the site, no justification was given for this identification. While apparently broadly correct, the identification was based on an architectural typology never made explicit: virtually any room which opens directly on the street was identified as a 'shop' by the original excavators. Among the rooms designated 'shops' were those likely to have been both spaces exclusively for retail and workshops in which goods were also sold.[170] The shops of Dura occasionally had plaster benches, shelves, niches, or storage

[167] As discussed by Wilson 2002, 258–9.

[168] For a detailed examination of Dura's shops including a list of identified structures, Baird 2007b.

[169] Other shops which had internal doors, generally at the rear of the shop, which opened directly into the house (or 'probable houses', in the case of those incompletely excavated or of supra-domestic function): those opening into houses B2-A, B2-C, C7-A, C7-F, C7-G, C7-G[3], D5-F, D5-F[1], G1-G, G1-D, G2-C, G3-J, G3-A, G3-C, G5-E, G6-D, and H2-G.

[170] There is a possibility that many of these single- or double-room structures classed as shops were store-rooms, or workshops, but given the paucity of evidence for most, this is uncertain.

FIGURE 4.8 Shop fittings in B8-H9, showing steps from shop into house B8-H. The boy used as scale is one of many who worked on the excavations. YUAG d118.

such as *dolia* built into the floor, but do not have the masonry counters and fittings familiar from other Roman period sites.[171]

A further question is the extent to which people lived in their shops. It is likely that some did, but direct evidence for this has not been recognized. Two small shop rooms, C7-A^{2}4 and C7-A^{2}5, were connected to a very small house of the final period, C7-A^2 (see Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2). It is interesting to note that even in this very small house, which essentially consists only of one room, the structure still has a recognizable entrance vestibule, courtyard, and a principal room (Figure 4.10).[172] Elsewhere in the same block, it is possible to see a changing relationship between a house and adjacent shop, as between C7-F5 and house

[171] Harris 2004; Ellis 2011; Mac Mahon 2005. For an overview of Roman *tabernae*, Holleran 2012, 99–158.

[172] At least seven other houses have shops which open directly into them. B8-H has two (B8-H8 and B8-H9 are both shops on the Main Street which have doors in the rear of the shop room which open directly into the courtyard of the house). Others: C7-F6; C7-G13 and C7-G^{3}20, two shops that open into a large interconnected house unit; G1-S76, which opens into house G1-D; G3-J8; G4-S20, which opens into the incompletely excavated G4-B; and H2-G7. Others are possible but uncertain, for instance in C5 where there is incomplete excavation (this block was partially rebuilt by the current expedition as a small site museum); the two rooms which open directly off the street appear to be shops. Others are uncertain: B2-C22 opens directly to the street but its longitudinal form and poor preservation mean that this is uncertain. B2-S10 opens into B2-G, but that structure is not of a clear domestic character. For an analysis and description of these parts of B2, Allara 2002, 73ff.

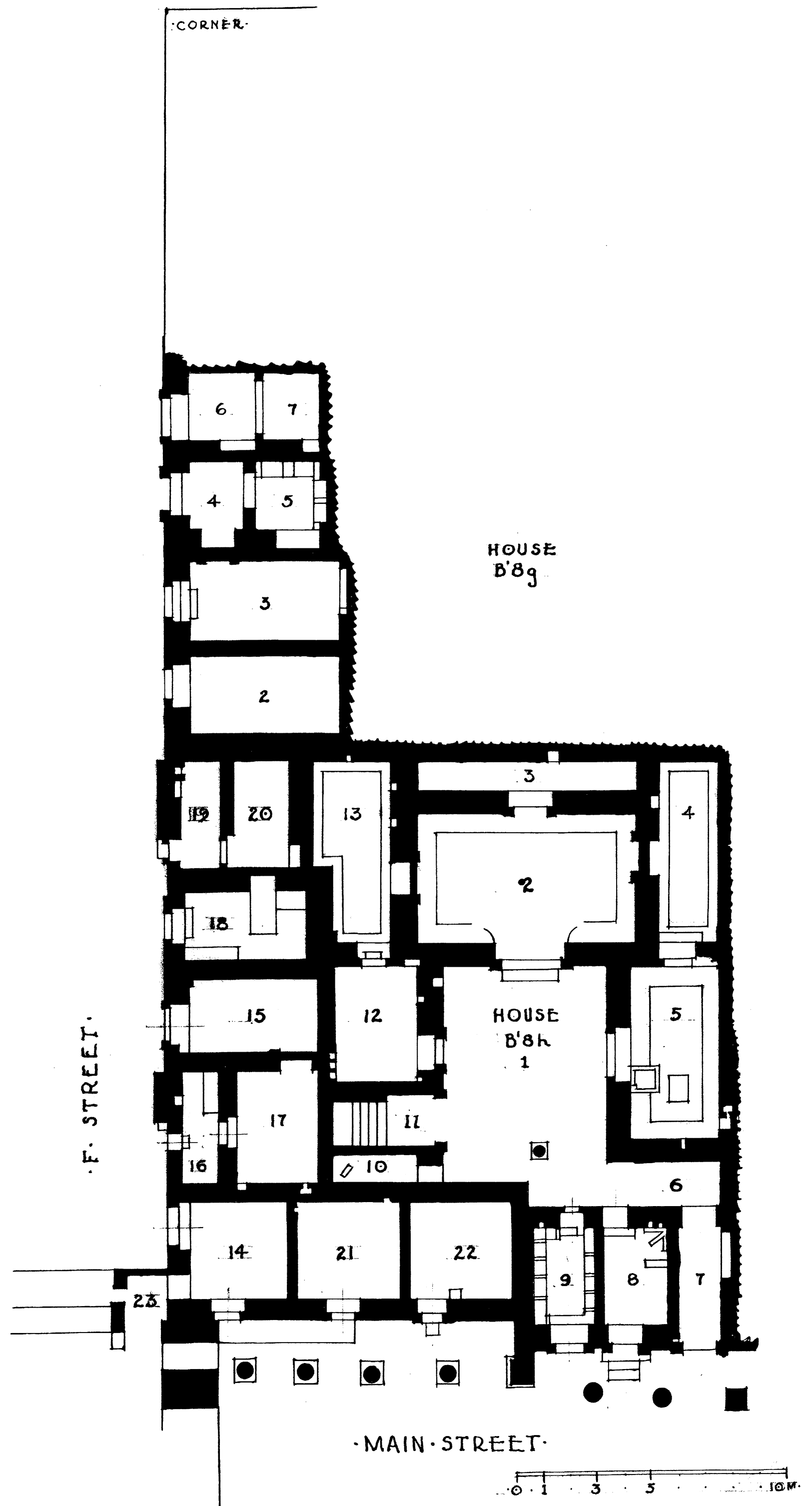


FIGURE 4.9 Plan of excavated portion of block B8 by Henry Pearson, showing 'House of Nebuchelus' and adjacent shops, including shops 8 and 9, which are directly connected to the house. YUAG.

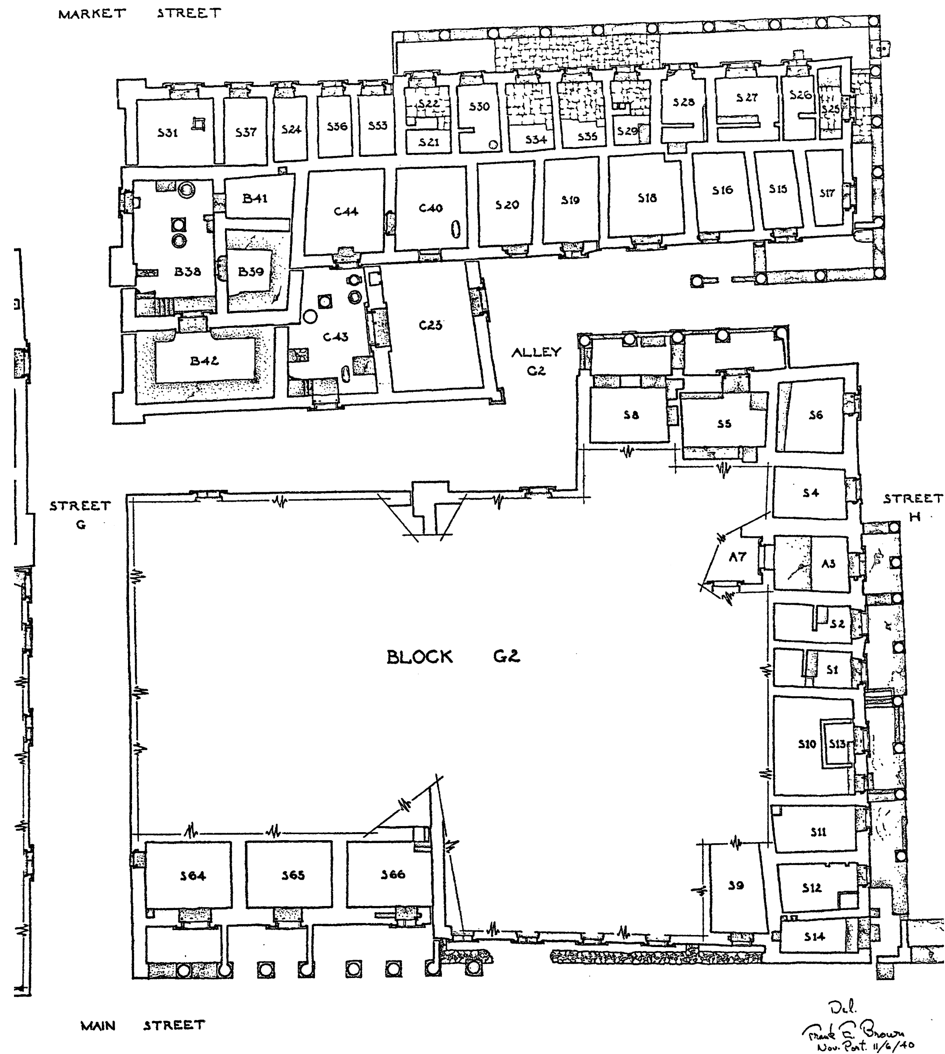


FIGURE 4.10 Plan of block G2 by Frank Brown. YUAG.

C7-F; the door which had opened from the shop into the house's principal room/*andron* was, at some point, blocked, although it is possible that this happened at the time this room became a shop, as it may previously have just been a room of the house.[173] A lack of finds information means it is difficult to say precisely what the shops were engaged in trading in most cases.[174] In block B2, there were a large

[173] It is not clear whether the exterior door from C7-F5 to Street H was contemporary or earlier than the blocking event.

[174] A brief mention of a potter's shop in *PDura* 126 informs us that there were some specialized shops, and alludes to the work of the potter and the selling of the pots happening at the same location. There is

number of workshops and shops which did not communicate directly with houses. Ceramics were likely both fabricated and sold in this part of the city. This was indicated not only by the number of shops but also the presence of several kilns, and the proximity of this block to the river would have also provided access to both water and clay.[175]

In the agora, the line between residence and commercial establishment blurs to the point where it is not possible to say definitively whether a structure was a house, a bar or tavern, or indeed both. Some buildings in the agora which were classified as houses by the original excavators seem not to have served primarily as private residences, as they have a number of features which are different from the typical Durene profile. These buildings do not have the distinctive counters with barrel-vaulted basins of Ostia,[176] but nonetheless have features suggestive of their use as eating and drinking establishments of some kind. In addition to being situated in the area which excavators named the *agora* on account of the number of shops and the presence of public buildings including the *Chreophylakeion*, some of the 'houses' had a number of cooking or heating installations, or more than one principal room or room with benches, as well as entrances directly off the street and decoration including moulded plaster Bacchic friezes.[177]

Houses G2-B and G2-C each have a number of features which are indicative of some non- or supra-domestic functions (Figure 4.10). G2-B has an entrance directly in its courtyard, G2-B38, with nothing to block the view from the exterior. It is a fairly average size house, but it has two rooms with benches, G2-39 and G2-42.[178] The courtyard also had unusual fittings, including two coolers and a table against the north wall, and a single column supporting a roofed area or perhaps mezzanine.[179] The adjacent house, G2-C, also had an exterior door directly into the court (G2-C43), unshielded from view, in addition to another exterior entrance into G2-C23, which has no bench but otherwise is the shape and placement of a principal room. The courtyard here, too, had a column, and an oven was tucked beneath the corner staircase. A cooler and a mill were also excavated in the courtyard, as were a firepit (the oblong feature on the plan near the exterior door), and adjacent to that, a table. In room G2-C40 there was another firepit. In G2-C44 a graffito comprised a list of names and numerals

evidence for other specialized shops: for instance, shop B8-G2 appears to have been selling lamps, and G1-114/118 ceramic objects: Baird 2007b, 419.

[175] F. R. 4.5, 149. On the relationship between workshops and private spaces in Pompeii, e.g. Flohr 2013.

[176] A survey of Ostian taverns, Hermansen 1981, 125–83.

[177] Further on earlier phases in block G3 and the *Chreophylakeion* (structure G3-A), Coqueugniot 2012b.

[178] Unfortunately, only a few finds were recorded: three coins, a copper alloy finger ring (E1022/1932.1441), copper alloy armour plates (E1110/1932.1526), and a large green-glazed pitcher (E1133/1932.1288).

[179] Published description in P. R. 5, 65–6 and P. R. 9.1, 128–50.

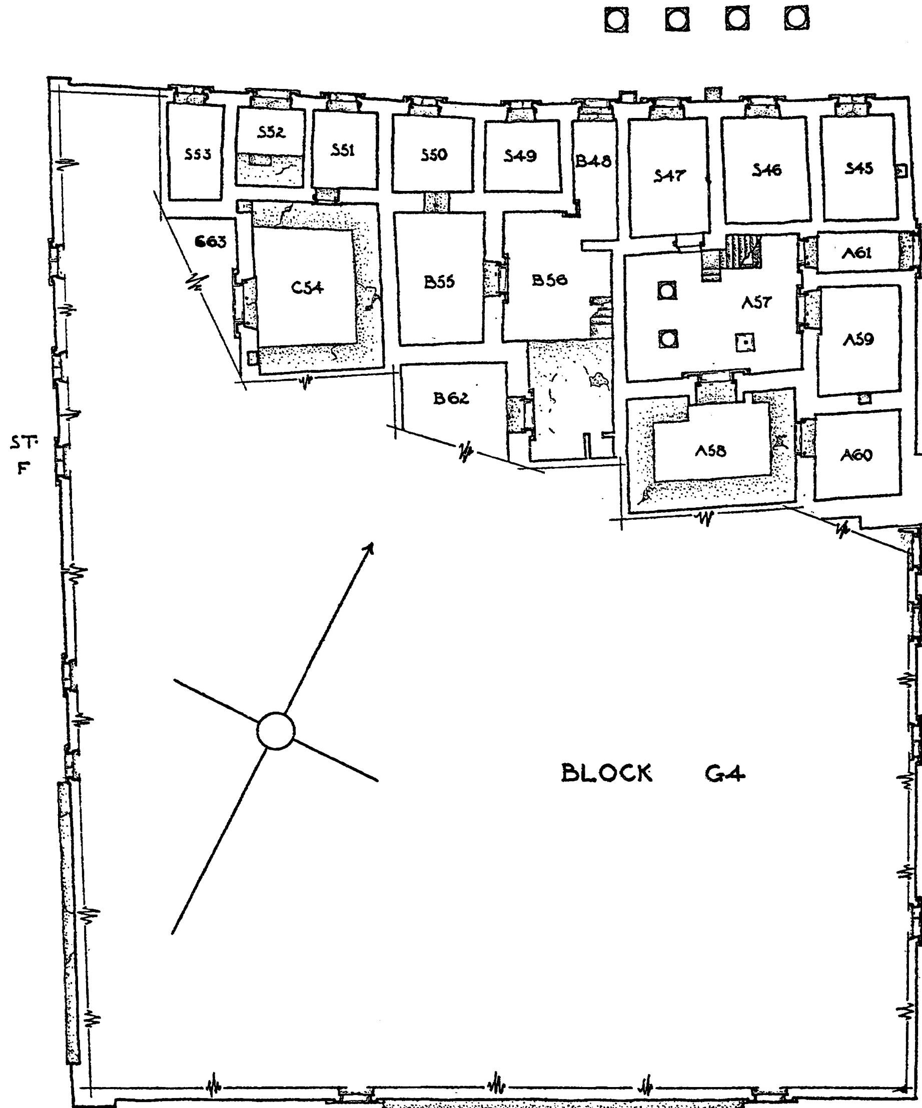


FIGURE 4.11 Plan of block G4 by Frank Brown. YUAG.

(between 301 and 307).[180] Amongst the finds in this house were a number of items of military dress, several serving vessels, and in G2-C40, a small statuette of Aphrodite.[181] This combination of architectural features, of multiple reception

[180] P. R. 5, 66, no. 405.

[181] Military items: Copper alloy belt plate, E1371/1932.1420, F. R. 7, no. 94; a copper alloy chape, E1127/1932.1524/F. R. 7, no. 578; and a knee brooch E1137/1932.1419/F. R. 4.4.1, fibula no. 24. Aphrodite (now lost, although a drawing is preserved in the YUAG card catalogue): P. R. 5, 66; F. R. 3.1.2, no. 15, E1115. Other objects excavated in this house include three commonware pitchers from G2-40 (E1130/1932.1236,

rooms, an entrance directly from the street, and installations for cooking or heating far surpasses what was normally found in the Durene houses. Together, this implies that these houses were used as food or drink establishments. Whether this was in addition to or instead of other domestic activities, it is not possible to say. The number of military finds is perhaps indicative of the clientele.

A similar pattern is found throughout the agora sector of the city. House G6-C was believed by the excavators to be 'an excellent example of a house connected with the shop, perhaps two shops' (Figure 4.12).[182] G6-C4 was identified as a wine shop on the basis of the number of storage vessels found there (six huge *dolia* and two pointed *amphorae* sunken into floor), and G6-C8, as a shop, on account of its opening into the street.[183] In addition to the storage in G6-C4, a number of other features suggest supra-domestic functions: in the brick-paved courtyard, G6-C10, were a fireplace, bins, and a vat sunken into a table. In the vestibule G6-C3, three terracotta tubs were sunken into the floor. G6-C11, the *andron* or principal room, was decorated with a Bacchic mask plaster frieze, and graffiti included both Greek and Latin. G6-C, in addition to being within the agora more generally, was immediately north of the '*macellum*', and in fact the entrance into G6-C4 was directly from the covered, colonnaded space of this structure. Its position as part of a larger structure, probably of a commercial character (it was surrounded by rooms which seem to be shops, but access was controlled via entrances off Streets F and E), in addition to its fireplace, storage vessels, Bacchic decoration, and entrances, are all broadly indicative of a building used as a commercial establishment, possibly for the serving of food or drink.[184]

The houses of block G5 are similarly equipped, with features that imply functions beyond the domestic (Figure 4.13). G5-C was used by 'entertainers' according to a *dipinti*, and has been identified as a brothel (on which, see next section), and adjacent houses also had features indicative of use as food and drink establishments, or other commercial uses. For instance, G5-E had two entrances, one of which opened into one of two rooms, each with perimeter benches.[185] One of

E1099/1932.1313, and E1132/1932.1312), a green-glazed table *amphora* (E1116/1932.1283) and a small glass vial and copper alloy bell from the same room, in addition to a number of coins.

[182] P. R. 5, 70. The final form of the house also contains traces of the structure's previous shape and relation to shops; a door between G6-C5 and G6-S7 was closed at some earlier point, as was the door that had opened into G6-C4 from the north, which was probably sealed when shops G6-S1/S2/S3 were built.

[183] On this house, P. R, 5, 70–1; P. R. 9.1, 153–6.

[184] Very few finds were recorded from this building; twelve coins from the structure, and a few small finds from G6-C4, including a copper alloy horse-head handle (E1379), copper alloy needle (E1366), and a copper alloy fitting in the shape of a leaf (E1378/1932.1392), similar to those found on some Roman copper alloy lamps, although at 10.5 cm rather large for that purpose.

[185] On G5-E, P. R. 9.1, 109–12.

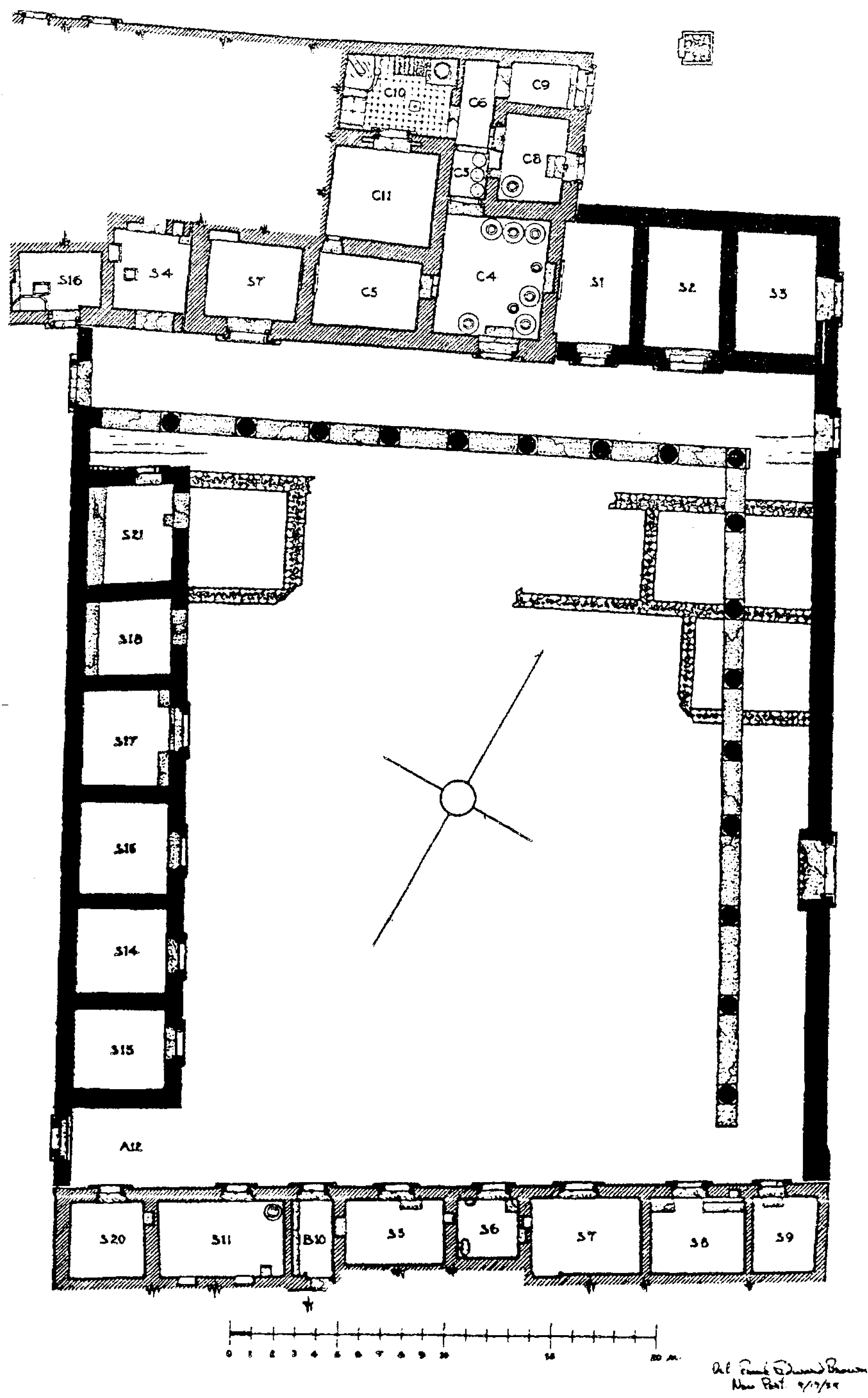


FIGURE 4.12 Plan of G6 by Frank Brown. Structure G6-C is at the top of the plan. YUAG.

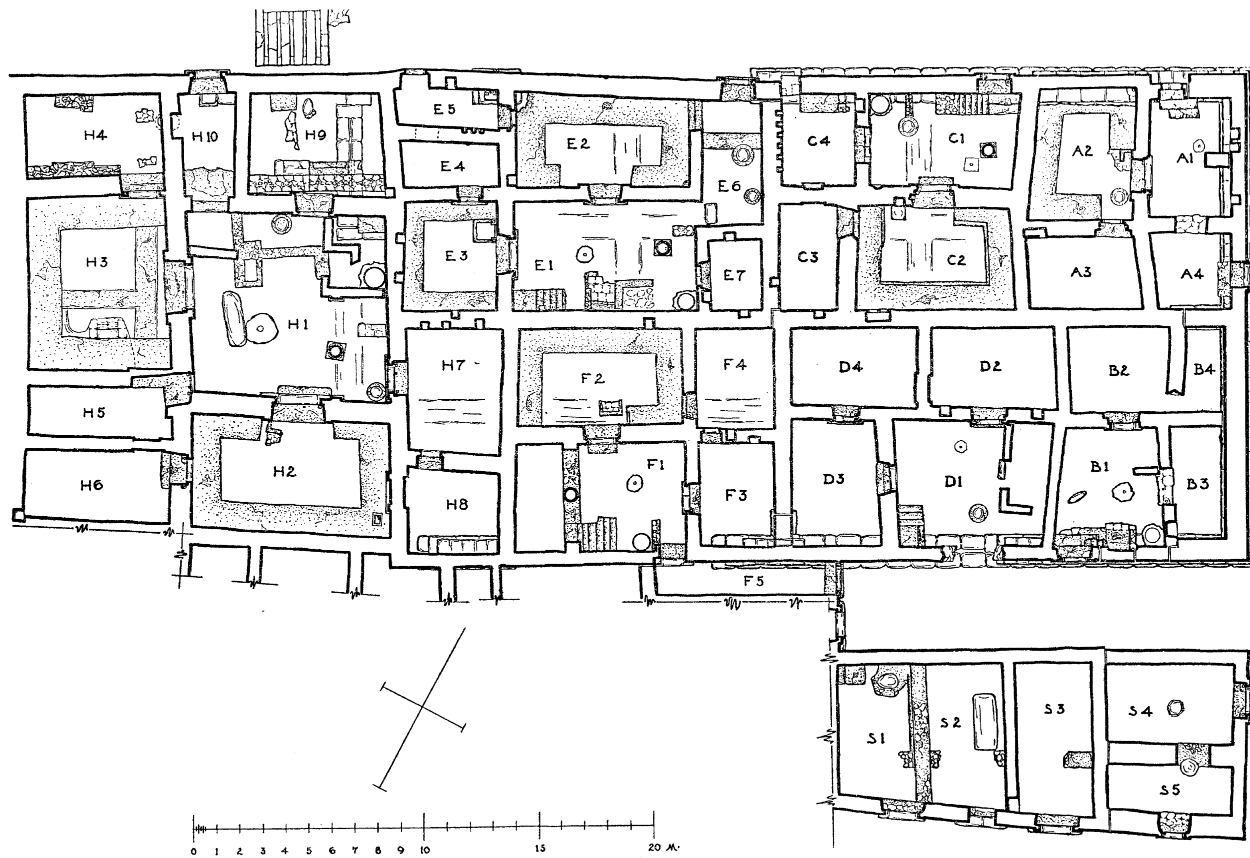


FIGURE 4.13 Plan of excavated extent of blocks G5 and G7 by Frank Brown. Feature in street to north of block is a kiln. YUAG.

those, G5-E3, had a hearth, and a series of niches.[186] In the courtyard, G5-E1, there was also an oven, and a table was built beneath the area that would have been sheltered by the small porch supported by the courtyard's lone column. A fireplace with a pot-ledge was built into an arch beneath the staircase, and a small area beneath the staircase's supporting wall was partially paved, interpreted as a stable. House G5-A similarly had multiple entrances which did not shield the view into the house, as did G5-D, and G5-B, the latter of which had three fire installations (two fireplaces and an oven) in its courtyard, and a nude goddess relief in room G5-B3.[187] Overall, many of the 'houses' of the agora sector can be shown to have characteristics not found elsewhere in the site, which are broadly indicative of food and drink establishments and other commercial premises frequented by Roman military personnel. These non- or supra-domestic functions indicate the agora area preserved many aspects of its public functioning into the Roman period.[188]

Dura's 'brothel'

Also in G5 is the house G5-C, which has come to be known as Dura's 'brothel'.[189] There, an architecturally fairly typical house had been used for alternative purposes, the evidence for which is largely textual: *dipinti* attest to entertainers, some of whom were likely to have been prostitutes. The brothel at Dura shares few architectural characteristics with structures of similar function at Pompeii or Athens.[190] Instead, textual and other evidence points to its use as a brothel, or 'house of entertainers'.[191] Finds included a relief of Aphrodite, and *dipinti*

[186] These niches, together with the fireplace which they believed might have held an incense burner, were taken by the original excavators to have been indicative of a private cult room; it was reported that between the two niches on the west wall was 'half a crudely daubed icon for private worship'. This was not reproduced or recorded but was reported as similar to that found in G3-J6. P. R. 9.1, 112; for G3-J6 shrine, P. R. 9.1, 162 and Fig 87. Excavators noted the same painting was repeated on at least four successive coats of plaster, indicating continuity of use over some time.

[187] G5-B: P. R. 9.1, 119–22 and 167 on the sculpture. G1221/1935.54, identified by Downey as a possible Aphrodite or Tyche in F. R. 3.1.2, no. 25. On G5-D, P. R. 9.1, 119–21, and on the hoard, which is connected to Zeugma, as were the entertainers of the brothel, P. R. 7/8, 422ff and P. R. 9.1, 259–60.

[188] Contra, e.g. Downey 2000, 155.

[189] Baird 2007b; P. R. 9. 1, 115–18, 166–7, 203–65; Pollard 2000, 53–4, 188; McGinn 2004, 223–5, who notes that this building meets the criteria used at Pompeii for identification of brothels, if in a 'weak' form, with its design, erotic art, and graffiti.

[190] For the *porneion* excavated by the German Institute at Athens and also initially identified as a house, see Ault 2005, 147–50. The *Maison du lac* at Delos has also been identified as a brothel based on the design of its courtyard and the privacy of the rooms: Rauh 1993, 212–14. One potential problem for the identification of such structures comes from the cultural context of the original excavations; Bernard Goldman believed that 'salacious drawings' are missing from the corpus of Durene pictorial graffiti due to the 'censorious American climate of the 1920s and 1930s.' Goldman 1999.

[191] P. R. 9.1, 203-65.

specifying aspects of its use and occupants; both the relief and the texts were found in G5-C2.[192] The texts concern a group of prostitutes and entertainers, listing the members of the group in a carefully painted inscription. The fragments list entertainers, the acts they could perform, notices of travel to and from Zeugma, as well as information regarding the house itself and its landlord. Zeugma is mentioned as the place from where some of the people have come, perhaps with part of the Roman army, which undoubtedly partook of the services provided. It has been suggested that these entertainers could have even been owned by the army,[193] or at least under their supervision, as there is a reference to a military official, *optio*.[194] A painted plaster relief plaque depicting Aphrodite from G5-C2 (Figure 4.14) may also be related to the occupations of the residents of the house, although depictions of Aphrodite are known in numerous other contexts at the site.[195]

There are a total of sixty-three names listed in the texts, far more people than could be accommodated in one house even uncomfortably. It is likely other members of the group were located nearby—indeed, a hoard of coins including many from Zeugma was found in the adjacent house, G5-D, and it is tempting to see the group not only taking over these two houses but perhaps even most of the houses in the block.[196] There are several groups attested in the *dipinti*, the first and longest naming thirty-three women and fourteen men, apparently an official register of those in the organization. Another list records arrivals and departures, and a third which is a list of the slaves, though many of the group were themselves classified as slaves, and a fourth group of texts which is a series of warnings referring to the earlier texts. From these lists we know of tragedians, a dice-player, dancers, and performers of mime. While most of the finds from this block do not have precise find-spots,[197] items associated with the military included a

[192] The texts are nos 940 and 941, painted on the plaster found fallen throughout room 2 of the house. No. 940 is composed of five fragments, apparently all in the same hand; no. 941 was by a different hand.

[193] Pollard 2000, 53–4, 188.

[194] P. R. 9.1, 245, 252, 261.

[195] G2022/1935.43. P. R. 9.1, 166–7, plate XIX. F. R. 3.1.2, no. 21. The same mould was used to produce other reliefs at the site. On the mould, F. R. 3.1.2, 40. The other reliefs from the same mold were 1931.411, from H2, E415, from G1-B18, and an unprovenanced example found by Cumont. F. R. 3.1.2, nos 21–4. Paintings of Aphrodite, e.g. in L7-A, and terracottas, see pp. 143, 179.

[196] F. R. 6, 177.

[197] One of the problems with block G5 is that the finds were recorded in the object registers with a system akin to that used in G1, with a sequence of numbers being shared for the whole block, but the final plan has a sequence of numbers for each house. Almost 700 objects were recorded from G5. There was likely a conversion chart made for this block (as there was for G3) for the two systems, but this is not in any YUAG file nor any of the publications. It is not possible therefore to locate any of the finds within the context of the houses in this block, other than those exceptional finds which were recorded in notebooks or publications. On this problem, Downey 2003, 26.

FIGURE 4.14 Painted plaster relief of Aphrodite with mirror from G5-C2. G2022/1935.43/F. R. 3.1.2, no. 21. YUAG Yale-2029.

swastika fibula,[198] seal boxes,[199] scale armour,[200] and a range of military fastenings and equipment fragments.[201]

198 G1608a/1934.665, F. R. 4.4.1, fibula no. 140.

199 Recorded as 'lockets': G1013a, G1015.

200 G1064.

201 These included a copper alloy shield-shaped baldric fastener: G1532/ F. R. 7, no. 11; a pierced copper alloy plate, K5/F. R. 7, no. 109; a copper alloy hinged strap terminal, K15/F. R. 7, no. 135; a copper alloy lunate pendant G1550/1934.706/F. R. 7, no. 195; a copper alloy leaf-shaped pendant G1229, F. R. 7, no. 200; a possible copper alloy strap mount, G1766/1938.3118, F. R. 7, no. 323; an iron and copper alloy snaffle bit,

It is possible that this and other adjacent houses, perhaps all the houses of blocks G5 and G7, which by the final period were contiguous, were used to house associates such as those recorded in the *dipinti*, or other members of the extended military community. Indeed, a number of features of houses in this block may be indicative of a more commercial function, as discussed earlier. Late modifications throughout this block are, in some cases, in keeping with those made in the blocks used for military accommodation, for instance, in the subdivision of the courtyard G5-D1. The necessity of the 'sexual servicing' of the army was one element of Roman military presence in the provinces, and Dura would not have been an exception.[202] The number of potential prostitutes in the inscription alone hints at the scale of this enterprise. The sexual *mores* of Dura are largely obscure, but in addition to the evidence of the 'brothel', erotic scenes of varieties well known elsewhere in the Roman world are also known on lamps found at the site.[203] There is, however, an absence of sexual graffiti, despite the preservation of hundreds of examples across the site.[204]

Another aspect of commerce is currency. Problems with the numismatic records, specifically—the lack of surviving context records—have already been noted. Nevertheless, it is notable that Dura's coins, from the Seleucid period onward, have tended to come from the west.[205] Seleucid coins at Dura are mostly from Antioch, but do also include Mesopotamian sources like Seleucia on the Tigris. The relatively small number of Parthian coins includes examples from Ecbatana, Bactria, and Edessa but also, again, Seleucia. In the Roman period, coins from Antioch make up the bulk of the catalogue.[206] Clark's analysis of the coins showed Dura's strong ties not only with Mesopotamian cities and sources inside Syria and the Levant, but also sources in Pontus, and that across the periods surveyed (27 BCE–256 CE), 'the consistent feature . . . is the importance of northern Syria as a supplier of coins to Dura.'[207] For the late second and third centuries, with the presence of the Roman army at the site, the pay of the army was obviously a key factor, and the sources of the coins relate to the supply of military pay more than

J5/1934.708a&1934.708b/ F. R. 7. no. 327; possibly (provenance problematic) a copper alloy snaffle bit cheek-piece, G1640/1934.707, F. R. 7, no. 331; a copper alloy bridle mount, E1306/1932.1615/F. R. 7, no. 340; a copper alloy harness pendant 1934.706, F. R. 7,. no. 358; fragments of iron mail shirt, 1935.557, F. R. 7, nos 390 and 413; a copper alloy chape, F. R. 7, no. 53.

202 Mattingly 2010, 114.

203 Erotic scenes on Durene lamps: F. R. 4.3, nos 313-21; on sexuality in Roman art, Clarke 1998.

204 Baird 2011c, 67 n 2.

205 A small number of Seleucid coins were thought to have been minted at Dura itself, largely because most of the types did not appear elsewhere, but also because the 'crude workmanship and . . . poor quality in the metal used' were taken to indicate an emergency production by inexperienced workers. Newell 1941, 79–82, 402–6, the latter part of which, an appendix on the Seleucid mint at Dura, was co-authored with Bellinger.

206 F. R. 6.

207 Clark 1978, 262.

any necessary relationship with the city of the mint. However, even in the Parthian period, Eastern Greek mints and coins minted at Rome make up Dura's coin supply, with Seleucia-on-the-Tigris being the source of most of Dura's small change (as opposed to the larger bronzes Antioch was producing).[208] Further, Clark's analysis demonstrated that in the period between 180 and 235 CE, the highest number of cities is evident in the coin corpus (fifty-five), compared to twenty-one cities in the preceding period, 97–180 CE, or seventeen cities in the later period 235–56.[209] Pollard has further scrutinized the coinage of Parthian Dura, and proposed that it is possible that much of the Roman coinage of Dura, even that dating to before 165 CE, could have arrived with the Roman army at the site at a much later date.[210] Indeed the hoards of Dura and countermarks on some coins show that many coins remained in circulation over extended periods.[211] The trouble is that if we accept that most Roman provincial coinage of Dura arrived only with the appearance of the army in the late second or early third century, a difficult question is raised of precisely what currency *was* in use at Dura in the period during which it was under Arsacid control.[212] In any case, by the Roman period, Roman provincial coinage was in use within the city, testifying to the regional networks of which Dura was a part.

SENSING DURA

From the discussions so far in this chapter, we have a sense of how time was structured, what people ate and drank, and other activities that were carried out in the city, including trading, shopping, and perhaps frequenting food and drink establishments. Many houses were attached to shops, or had workshops in them or nearby. Others houses had alternate or additional functions as commercial premises. Together, this starts to build a picture of how the site was experienced. Of course, there was no one 'experience' of Dura: age, gender, status, and myriad other factors contribute to sensory awareness and the values placed on different

[208] Clark 1978, 260–1, Table 3.

[209] Clark 1978, Table 1. In part this distribution is itself an artefact of the period division chosen, but it nevertheless shows, if crudely, the greater amount of interaction with a greater number of cities to the west in the Roman period. For useful discussion of possible mechanisms for arrival of Roman coinage at Dura, Pollard 2004, 130–1.

[210] Pollard 2004, 126.

[211] Pollard 2004, 126–7. Unfortunately, Bellinger did not systematically record weight or wear of coins.

[212] Pollard suggests the under-representation of Parthian coins at Dura may be due to taphonomic factors, that they were melted down, or that they 'because they were deposited earlier, merely failed to survive in numbers equivalent to their Roman counterparts'. Pollard 2004, 128. However, given the substantial presence of earlier, Seleucid coinage at Dura, it is difficult to see why such a lacuna would apply exclusively to Parthian coins.

sensory experiences.[213] Recent work has shown the value in moving away from projecting the essentialism of the five Aristotelian senses of the Western experience onto archaeological material.[214]

Nevertheless, a consideration of senses other than sight is relevant to a study of ancient experience.[215] Much of what has been discussed is implicitly related to the senses, from the burning of incense at a small altar within the house or the preparation of food, to the noises of the Roman military garrison moving around the city, wearing the metal scale armour that now peppers the site. These and other sounds can be reconstructed from the material remains. For instance, the movement of a Roman soldier in copper alloy armour would have broadcasted the sound of the masculinity of the army, and the chink of hobnail boots and double-belt ends would have been ubiquitous at Dura in the mid-third century.[216] Smaller in scale were many bells found at the site, probably worn by women and children (as discussed in the next chapter), which further attested to gendered noises of daily life. Other fragments are both more direct and more allusive; we can't hear the sounds of ancient Dura, but there are representations, from fragments of musician figurines, and moulded plaster cornices depicting instruments.[217] Fragments of flutes were also excavated.[218] The houses themselves doubtless had their own soundscapes, contrasting with the road outside.

Visibility around the city would have also had a profound impact on the experience of daily life. The closed nature of Durene houses has already been noted, at least as far as we can understand the plan at ground level. The military, occupying the city walls and gates, would have had a pervasive view into the site and outward, along the steppe and over the Euphrates valley. The sanctuaries of Dura incorporated towers, and these too may have provided a point from which the city could be overlooked—but also points to which could be seen from elsewhere within the city.[219] Sightlines were also undoubtedly part of the reason for the placement of elite residences of the earlier periods of Dura, with the Citadel Palace and that on the redoubt holding the highest points literally and

[213] Classen 1993. [214] Fahlander and Kjellström 2010; Skeates 2010.

[215] Archaeology, of course, is a very visual discipline, presenting and reproducing itself through words and images, despite its grounding in the physical, tactile, noisy stuff of excavation. Houston and Taube 2000; Witmore 2006; Hurcombe 2007.

[216] James Forthcoming.

[217] Several terracotta figurines of musicians are known: G1546 and G1547 (Downey 2003, terracotta no. 40), G1575 (Downey 2003, no. 39), with *trigonons*, and I516 from the Temple of the Gadde, (Downey 2003, no. 41). Although Downey states there are no pairs of musicians, there are in fact a pair, but in metal, not terracotta, K62, from a house in the agora. On musicians as related to religion, see note 124 in this chapter. On the plaster cornices with instruments, see for instance the moulded plaster of the houses in D5.

[218] F62, a flute fragment from near the Mithraeum, I168 from the necropolis, and F916 from the Wall Street adjacent to L7.

[219] Downey 1976.

symbolically; the Roman Palace replicated this in a different location, and gave a view of the Euphrates, perhaps hinting at a gaze that had turned outward.

The use of particular lighting equipment is not only a technological capability but a cultural choice.[220] For instance, the two stone lamps recorded at Dura, both from the sap under Tower 14, are probably Sassanian.[221] The lamps of Dura are also an interesting example of problems of the original taxonomies and the multivariate nature of Durene material culture: even within the third century, locally produced lamps were in use alongside 'Mesopotamian' or Parthian examples and those made in Syria, which are known as 'Roman provincial' types. While the excavators focused on the 'Greek' and 'Roman' forms (which generally meant, to them, imported) the established typologies of museum interest, these actually form a minority of the assemblage.[222] The earliest forms, presumed to date from the foundation of the city *c.*300 BCE, were indeed imported Attic lamps, but of these only a few were recorded.[223] The few other Hellenistic lamps were thought to have been produced in Syria.[224] Those categorized as 'late Hellenistic and Hellenistic influence' were represented by less than twenty total examples. Similar examples are known from the Mediterranean and Mesopotamia, and while such types are linked to 'Greek' settlers and their descendants, there is some evidence of local production near the Euphrates.[225]

Inside the city, 'Mesopotamian' lamps were regularly found in houses. These included both glazed and unglazed examples of wheel-turned ceramic lamps without a *discus*, with a deep bowl-shaped reservoir (Figure 4.15).[226] The same type was previously among those known as 'Parthian', from the excavations at Seleucia on the Tigris.[227] These lamps, with parallels in Mesopotamia, were

[220] Eckardt 2000, 9; 2002.

[221] F. R. 4.3, nos 458 and 459; drawing in P. R. 6, Figure 19.

[222] On problems with Baur's typology and other processes affecting the publication, including the sale of some examples on the antiquities market, Baird 2012d.

[223] Baur's type 1. The only known example of this type with a find-spot was from the Citadel (1929.315/ F. R. 4.3, no. 1). Indeed, there are more examples of the lamps that post-date Dura's destruction (a cluster of type 10 found in the main gate) than there are 'Hellenistic' forms.

[224] Baur's type 2, which he compared to similar examples found in pre-Mummian destruction Corinth: Broneer 1930, type 18, 61–6. See also the Hellenistic lamps from Antioch, Waagé 1934, 59–61, where the dating was also almost entirely based on style and development rather than context (save a few lamps found beneath a house floor).

[225] Baur's type 3 was 'late Hellenistic and Hellenistic influence'. Recently discovered examples show some lamps compared to Baur's type 3 were made perhaps also in the Khabur region in the Hellenistic period, Römer 1999, 379.

[226] F. R. 4.3, type 8.

[227] Debevoise 1934, 23–7, 124–9. The 'Parthian' lamps from Seleucia included those which Baur classified as 'Mesopotamian', as well as unglazed types with figural decoration. Hellenistic imports were also found (e.g. Debevoise no. 387), as were Roman provincial types thought to be of local manufacture (Debevoise nos 368 and 369).

FIGURE 4.15 Unglazed 'Mesopotamian' lamps from Dura (Baur type 8). Lamps 1938.46.0, 1930.95, 1932.1380 (from C7-D7), and 1938.4632. YUAG Yale-1060.

recovered in Hellenistic contexts at Dura, but varieties were in use until the fall of the city. This continuity was noted in the report on the lamps, but derided: 'once established, they maintained themselves without interruption down to the destruction of Dura, the shape becoming progressively clumsy and barbaric but showing no sign of influence from the western tradition which flourished simultaneously'.[228] The perceived clumsiness and barbarity was apparently the means by which they were dated, making the conclusions doubly suspect. While the 'Mesopotamian' label is more appropriate than the implicitly ethnic label 'Parthian', dates and style do link these types to other sites occupied by the Parthians,

[228] F. R. 4.3, 83.

particularly in Mesopotamia including Seleucia itself. Like the 'Parthian pottery', these lamps have roots in Mesopotamia predating the Arsacids, probably deriving from Assyrian and Babylonian 'pipe lamps' with their tubular nozzles.[229]

Mould-made forms believed to be local—indeed, moulds were recovered at Dura—were the most prevalent at the site, and while many come from third-century contexts, their early limit is insecure (Figure 4.16).[230] Among these were lamps with erotic scenes (although none from the houses), well known on Roman lamps, and those depicting Aeneas fleeing Troy, as well as scenes of camels, and depictions of heroes and gods of the Classical Pantheon.[231] Such 'Roman provincial' lamps, modelled on Roman types, have parallels at Palmyra and Antioch, and may have been made there, with imports supplementing Durene production.[232] While these other cities of Roman Syria had similar Roman provincial types, probably produced in Syria, at Antioch the contemporary Mesopotamian forms were not found.[233]

The houses of Roman Dura thus were lit by a range of lamps which had affinities with Mediterranean, Romano-Syrian, and Mesopotamian counterparts, many of which were probably produced locally, either at Dura specifically or in the surrounding region. These 'local' types of lamps predominated not only in the houses, but in structures used by the Roman military including the E4 house.[234] While the archival data do not usually record location within the room, there is some evidence of this from new excavations. For example, in C11, an unadorned mould-made type of lamp, a 'Roman provincial' example perhaps of local manufacture was found in C11-P10, at the back of a niche in a living room, probably indicating where it was stored during the day.[235] While artificial lighting allowed activities necessitating light after dark, the daytime itself was structured

[229] Oates and Oates 1959, 224.

[230] F. R. 4.3, types 4–6. Moulds, F. R. 4.3, 72, nos 414–16/1931.496; 1933.364; 1938.4761. Types 4 and 5 were thought to have been locally produced, and type 6 was thought to be a Syrian 'imitation' of Roman types. A shop which seems to have specialized in lamps has been identified in the agora, in B8-G2: Baird 2007b, 419.

[231] Erotic scenes: F. R. 4.3, nos 313–21; Aeneas: no. 326; camels, nos 329–31; Heracles, no. 322; Hermes no. 328; Aphrodite and erotes, no. 332; Athena no. 333; Helios no. 334.

[232] Dobbins 1977, 72ff; Bailey 1988, 283. Baur's types 4, 5, and 6. Type 6 is a 'Roman provincial' type, which Baur believed to have been a Syrian (perhaps Antiochene) production. Similar example from the Mesopotamian Roman site of Ain Sinu: Oates and Oates 1959, 222.

[233] The 'Mesopotamian' types found at Dura were entirely absent at Antioch. Waagé 1934, 62–7.

[234] e.g. three examples of type 4 from E4: F211/1933.363/F. R. 4.3, no. 72; F544/F. R. 4.3, no. 70; and F939/1938.4653/F. R. 4.3, no. 50. Also from E4 came two examples of type 5: F78/1933.352/F. R. 4.3, no. 278; F793/F. R. 4.3, no. 197, and one of type 6: F391/F. R. 4.3, no. 291. At Antioch were many similar Roman provincial lamp types (as well as an example of the 'factory' lamps/*firmalampen* known in the West but absent at Dura, Waagé 1934, no. 127; on the *firmalampen* industry, Harris 1980.

[235] Baur's type 6. In the same niche an iron blade was found, near the front. Excavated 18 April 2004 by the author.

FIGURE 4.16 'Local' lamps from Dura (Baur type 5) from a variety of contexts; Lamps E810/1932.1355/F. R. 4.3, no. 133, 1929.322, 1938.4677, 1938.4679, 1938.486, 1931.485. YUAG Yale-1082.

around when it was too hot or cold to go outside; in early Mesopotamian houses it is thought that household activity might be concentrated during the morning, when the courtyard would be in shade.[236] Indeed, the courtyard house is a form

[236] Shepperson 2009, 369–70, 377.

of architecture adapted to the heat.[237] Colour, too, was part of the house, not only in the objects already mentioned, or in the paintings (and, indeed, elaborate painted decoration was found in the Roman Palace and D1), but in the ageing of the plaster which covered the interior and exterior of all the houses. White at the time it is made, it becomes darker over time, turning brown from exposure to the elements, and thus visibly showing the time that had passed since the plaster was applied.

Lamps would have produced smell and smoke from their fuel, and hygiene and sanitation were also issues throughout the site. Disposal of human excrement was probably through a variety of means, including manuring, used for tanning, etc., and there is no evidence of a centralized system of disposal; it was probably stored locally in houses before being disposed of. The new bath buildings in the third century would have meant more burning of fuel, and hence more urban pollution. Any build-up of rubbish within the city was not noticed by the excavators, but they did note the rising street levels of the agora over time, which would have been composed of this. A rubbish dump, thought to be associated with the clearing of debris after the second-century earthquake, was partially excavated just outside the city walls.[238]

There was no centralized water supply or drainage system for the city. Houses at Dura, with the exception of palatial structures, did not have bathing facilities, although there is some evidence of bathtubs in the Hellenistic period.[239] As noted in Chapter 2, there was not, generally, piped water available. Bath buildings at the site, in M8, F3, and C3, were an introduction of the Roman period, and seem to be directly related, at least in their initial construction, to the Roman military. The buildings used materials and techniques familiar to them, for the purposes of carrying out the practice of bathing.[240] The inhabitants of Dura's houses used other means to attend to any bodily maintenance they saw to be necessary, and while there is evidence in the small finds of both men and women in the bath buildings, it is difficult to say whether Dura's households had, or desired, access to the baths, or whether those that used them were part of the military community. Even religious practice had a smell, of which we have proxy evidence in the form of altars (at least, those with traces of burning) and incense burners (Figure 4.17).[241] Personal smells, in the Roman period as now, could also be

[237] Dunham 1960; Callaway 1980; Imamoglu 1980; Toulan 1980; Golany 1983.

[238] On the concept of hygiene and Dura, Koloski-Ostrow 2011.

[239] e.g. in the early bath beneath the house G3-M.

[240] On the F3 'Parthian' baths being Roman in date, Pollard 2000.

[241] e.g. copper alloy 'Thymiaterion' from G1-A36, E562/1932.139; a green-glazed incense burner from C7-A^{2}6 in the form of a camel, E295/1932.1266. On Near Eastern incense burners, Invernizzi 1997.

FIGURE 4.17 Green-glaze incense stand from C7-A6, E295/1932.1266. YUAG e114.

related to status, and there is evidence from graffiti of particular, expensive, substances including myrrh.[242] Glass perfume jars were also found.[243]

This chapter has discussed a range of activities that happened in houses and within the urban environment of Dura. While the legacy data of Dura are problematic—for instance, while the room that objects came from is often recorded, there is generally no record of their stratigraphic position or location within the room—many activities can nevertheless be discerned.

Within the city, the heterogeneity of houses is striking—large and small structures coexist within the same city block, as did religious structures and houses (as in block L7, which contained both the synagogue and L7-A, the 'House of the Scribes'). Shops and workshops clustered in the agora and in B2, but were also scattered throughout the city. There was perhaps an elite neighbourhood on the redoubt, associated with the 'Strategeion', where there was also the Temple of Zeus Megistos and the large D1 house of Lysias, but there is no

[242] P. R. 4, 128, no. 256.

[243] On the glass *balsamaria*, F. R. 4.5, 130–40 (many were from tombs but a number were also excavated within the city).

evidence that houses were clustered in 'religious' neighbourhoods associated with particular cults.

These everyday practices and the material culture associated with them were part of how people related to the world around them. Objects were not just evidence of trade networks and economic associations, or reflective of particular religions, they were how those things were enacted. Thus, rather than a debased material culture (such as that implicit in the label 'Roman provincial' for coins, lamps, and ceramics), in which the bright light of the city of Rome dimmed the further one moved from the centre, or a material culture with 'influences' from the West or East, we should think of the Durene forms of material culture as ones which were created by its position, not only between East and West, but within local and regional networks, with relationships to a number of polities, in a process over centuries. Some aspects of 'Roman' material culture (for instance, some ceramics and coins) taken to be an indication of the integration of Dura into the Roman sphere, preceded Dura's actual conquest.

If we accept that the relationships between material culture and people are just as much a part of culture and society as the relationship between people, then the objects of Dura are not only fragments of bone, glass, ceramic, and bronze, but fragments of lives. No singular object or class of objects can be taken as indicative of Dura's character. Indeed, in a single block of houses we might find a relief of an Aramean storm god and another of Heracles, Greek and Latin graffiti, 'Roman' discus lamps and 'Parthian' green-glazed ones, imported Syrian cooking pots, and locally made ceramic pitchers and bowls.[244] The assemblage as a whole provides a body of material culture which transcends monolithic cultural ascriptions. Some elements had affinities in Mesopotamia, others in the Mediterranean, but in aggregate Durene material culture was hybrid, with particular affiliations showing a particular local use and adaptation to fit local circumstances. While for us Dura lies at a crossroads between cultures, for Durenes, it was normal and familiar and lived out through the city and house walls they inhabited, through the vessels they drank from, and the lamps that lit the dark recesses of their homes.

[244] These objects can all be found in C7; see Chapter 6 and Baird 2011b.

FIVE

Assembling Identities at Dura-Europos

One of the most important question we can perhaps ask of archaeological evidence is what it can tell us about people in the past and who they considered themselves to be. This question, or versions of it, has taken on many forms, with many methodological and theoretical approaches being implemented. Within Roman archaeology, a desire to examine the range of people and the mosaic of responses to and interactions with Roman rule has led us beyond the concept of Romanization, with its implications of unidirectional and top-down change, towards attention to the variety of ways of 'being Roman' (or not) that were possible.[1] This chapter examines these issues using the evidence at Dura.

Within Classical archaeology, studies of identities and communities have replaced, to some extent, former models. Mattingly, for example, drawing on his reading of Said, has used a model of 'discrepant identity' to examine personal identities and experiences under Roman rule.[2] A range of kindred approaches in archaeology might be considered part of the broader discourse on identity, including debates around ethnicity and processes of creolization.[3] Our question remains: who were the people of Dura-Europos, as far as we can tell from the material mediation of identities? We have seen that the property and shape of the physical house could be intimately tied up in kinship, that objects including terracottas had local hybrid forms drawing on Classical and Mesopotamian traditions, and the ceramics of Dura included local, Syrian, and Mesopotamian types. Further, we have seen that the site and many houses were transformed by Roman occupation. This chapter further investigates this material, using house plans and

[1] The scholarship on Romanization and its discontents is vast. For me, the death knell was Mattingly 2002.

[2] Mattingly 2004; 2010. Such approaches, too, have a broader context (one might argue a concern with identity is a condition of a globalized twenty-first century), and a specific critique, including that material culture was being 'read' too directly 'as text': Pitts 2007. Further critique of Mattingly's approach, e.g. Millett 2012. For archaeologies of identity more broadly, Díaz-Andreu et al. 2005.

[3] The central work on the archaeology of ethnicity remains Jones 1997. For ethnicity in Roman archaeology, the work of Derks and Roymans on the Batavians is perhaps the most illuminating: Derks 2009; Derks and Roymans 2009; Roymans 2009. On creolization, Webster 2001.

assemblages to build a picture of the role of buildings and objects in the fashioning of identities at Dura.

One of the issues with implementing an approach such as that outlined by Mattingly is that his most powerful example relies on textually attested categories for its explanatory power.[4] Further, there is an issue in disentangling the different categories, such as age, gender, or status, as Mattingly himself well recognizes. One conundrum is, as Meskell has pointed out, using modern categories such as these as a starting point for examining archaeological evidence.[5] An alternative to seeking the material correlates of such aspects of identity might be in using archaeological categories. Object taxonomies have their own problems, of course, and are an archaeological construct.[6] Nevertheless, a particular range of objects was found within the houses of Dura. While their recognition, recovery, and recording was embedded in the practices of early-twentieth-century archaeology, as outlined in Chapter 1, as an *assemblage* (problematic in some ways as it may be) they speak to some aspects of the use of the houses, and were part of social relationships within them.[7]

While fragmenting personal identities into modern categories of 'gender' or 'status' as outlined by Mattingly may be essentialist, a reading of fragments of the material expression of some aspects of identity is precisely what the character of the evidence allows. Such categories were also ones that had currency in the ancient world. The use of groupings including gender, age, and status also allows for the comparison of how these things were materially mediated in different places and times.[8] The assemblages are themselves a material archive, a biography of the site comprising objects which are complex and relational just as human identities can be. This chapter attempts to read across this archive, to access some aspects of personal and community identity that are suggested by these objects, including gender and status, which are themselves entangled and multivariate, and which transform over the life course. They are made and maintained through social practices of which objects are a part.[9] The fragments of objects that remain are fragments of the lives of the occupants of Dura's houses.

[4] The example being the funerary stele of Regina found at South Shields near Hadrian's Wall, a woman of the Catuvellauni tribe of Britain, who ended up married to a Roman solider, Barates, himself a Palmyrene from Syria. While Regina is depicted as a Roman matron in a carved relief, the information regarding her status and the background of herself and her husband comes from the inscription.

[5] On essentialism of identity categories, Meskell 2001.

[6] For a critique of some of the Durene typologies, Baird 2012d.

[7] On problems of taxonomizing identity, Meskell and Preucel 2004, 122–4.

[8] Further on the use of these categories in Roman archaeology, Mattingly 2010, 217–18.

[9] Social practice: Bourdieu 1977; objects as part of human social practice: Latour 2000. On the materiality of social identities, e.g. contributions in Casella and Fowler 2005.

ASPECTS OF IDENTITY

Gender

Many complexities arise in the archaeological study of gender.[10] At Dura, a discussion of gender can be made using the evidence of gendered space, dress practices, and other artefacts including keys and ceramics. Further complicating the evidence at Dura is the differential constructions of gender in different communities: for example, a specific form of masculinity was part of the corporate identity of the Roman military.[11] Documents found on the site indicate that some women of Dura had a relative legal freedom compared to Greek or Roman norms, perhaps in a Mesopotamian tradition.[12] Property generally moved along the male line (*PDura* 19, which gives no clear indication of a larger share to the oldest brother). Women could, however, own property including slaves (*PDura* 17B), act as legal agents (e.g. *PDura* 30, in which a woman gives herself out of widowhood into marriage), be jointly liable for debt, and hence property, with their husbands (*PDura* 18), and perhaps control their dowries (*PDura* 30, in which the wife's appraised belongings and dowry were to be returned in the event of a divorce).[13] Items recorded as being part of dowries represent a material link between a woman and her family that remained even after she moved to the household of her husband's family.

Gendered space

Broadly speaking, the gendered organization of the world has been shown to be reflected and perpetuated through the gendered organization of the house.[14] Drawing on Bourdieu's seminal work on the Kabyle house, Nevett has argued using ethnographic parallels of Islamic houses that, in the Greek world, a concern with privacy was one of the reasons for the 'inward-looking' courtyard houses of the Greek world.[15] Nevett's work has also shown that gender was only one of the

[10] On gender in archaeology, see especially Sørensen 2000; 2007. Problems of assessing gender using artefacts and assemblages, particularly the issues surrounding the 'assigning' of gender to particular classes of artefacts, have been outlined: Allason-Jones 1995; van Driel-Murray 1995; Allison et al. 2005; Allison 2006a; James 2006; Sørensen 2006.

[11] Alston 1998; James 1999, 16.

[12] F. R. 5.1, 12. On *PDura* 31, recording the divorce of villagers with Aramaic names, as reflecting a degree of legal freedom relating to ancient Aramaean practice, Lipiński 2000, 555–6.

[13] *PDura* 30 is the only surviving marriage contract from the site (it records the marriage of a solider and a widow, outside Dura at Qatna); two divorces were recorded, *PDura* 31 (the divorce of a couple at Ossa, outside Dura) and *PDura* 32. As *PDura* 30 concerns a member of the military, it is perhaps not typical of local practice, but nevertheless the economic character of the marriage contract is clear, as it is concerned with property. F. R. 5.1, 17, gives an overview of the textual evidence.

[14] On the engendering of space, Sørensen 2000, 144–67.

[15] Nevett 1994.

social and cultural organizing principles of Greek houses.[16] One of the questions raised is the relationship between the interiority of the house, which is certainly a concern at Dura, with the lack of external windows, the blank façade, and courtyard protected from visual penetration, and the seclusion of women. A concern with maintaining privacy is evident in the arrangement of houses, but whether this is related to a desire for the seclusion or separation of women within the domestic sphere is not clear. Within some houses (e.g. the E4 house, before its conversion for military use, see Figure 3.12, or house G1-A), the original excavators identified secondary courtyards as being the women's domain (Figures 5.1 and 5.2), but there is nothing to substantiate these labels.[17]

Inasmuch as the property of the Durene house was transmitted along the male line, the house as a legal entity could be argued to be a male sphere, with its form (or at least its outer boundary) embodying patrilinearity. Another question concerns the internal organization of the house; Nevett has discussed the way in which a radial plan, necessitating movement through the courtyard, could allow occupants to monitor movement within the house (with the implication particular members of the household were monitored, be they slaves, visitors, or people of particular ages, genders, etc.).[18] This control of space via the courtyard is complicated, at Dura, by the interconnections between courtyard units, and the ability to manipulate the permeability or penetrability of space by securing doors or different routes through the house. If the reading of *PDura* 19 is correct, and a house might contain multiple conjugal units, the courtyard was also a jointly held space which allowed the units to interact, allowing the maintenance of hierarchy between these different groups—gender was only one part of this.

One of the issues of gendered space within the house is the role of the *andron* identified in texts, and as has already been discussed (pp. 70–83), the term is used in texts found at Dura with reference to a room within a house, probably used at least sometimes as a reception room.[19] While there is certainly evidence for the presence of women in houses, as discussed in the next paragraph, the assemblages are not of sufficient resolution to identify women's activity areas within the

[16] Nevett 1999. On Syro-Palestinian houses, Meyers 2007 has argued that the evidence of houses in Jewish Galilee does not demonstrate the seclusion of women.

[17] Described as the *harem* court or women's court, E4: P. R. 6, 12-13; G1-A: P. R. 9.1, 140–1 and Fig. 62. Secondary courtyards, rather than being evidence of gender segregation, might relate to hierarchies of co-resident family groups.

[18] Nevett 2010b, 54.

[19] Jameson argued that aside from the *andron* 'the architecture of the Greek houses does not reflect the powerful social and symbolic distinctions between the two genders'. Jameson 1990, 104. This does seem to be the case on present evidence, but it is an argument built on evidence of texts and on house plans—and much less on assemblages or analysis of activity areas. It could be the case, in the Greek world (see Lysias 1, *On the Murder of Eratosthenes*), that there were gendered areas within houses but that these were not architecturally fixed.

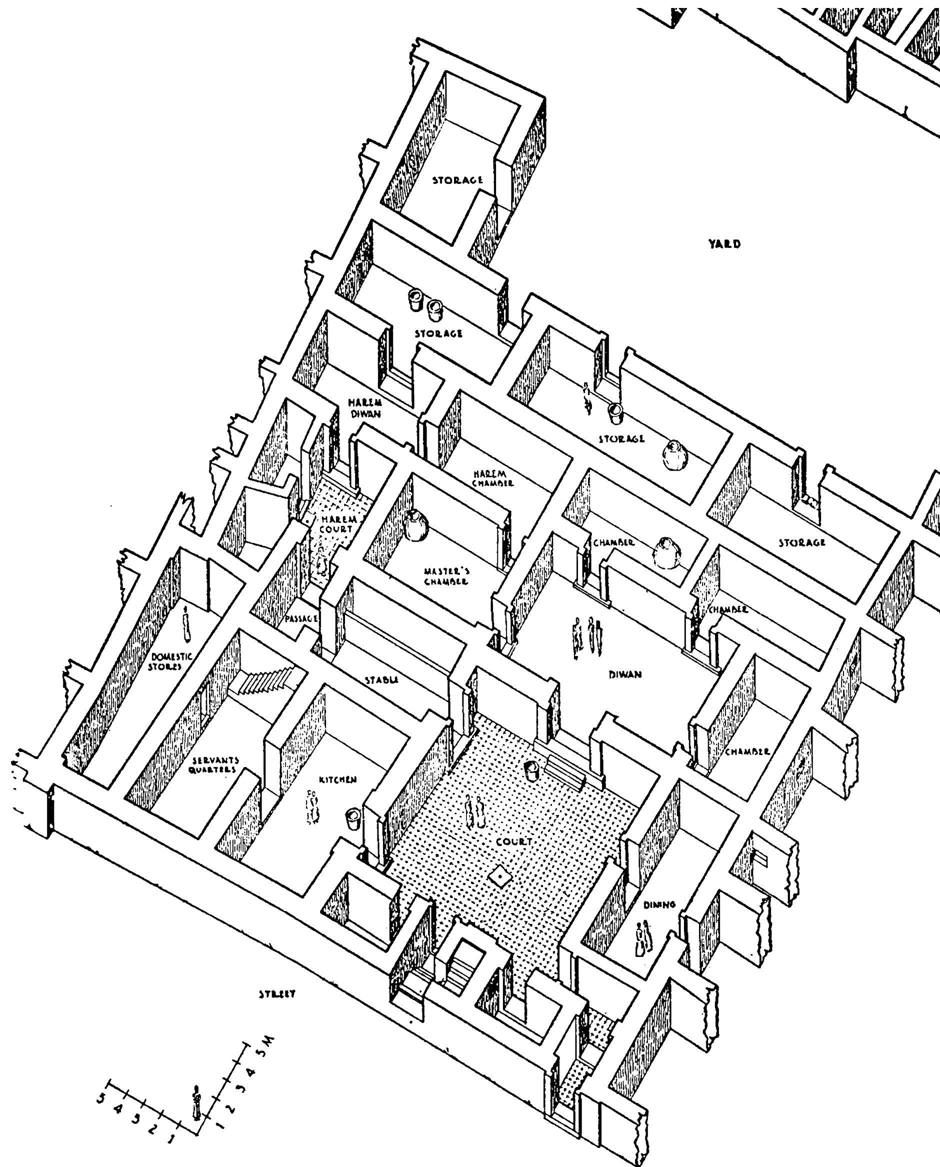


FIGURE 5.1 Reconstruction of House G1-A with labels assigned by excavators. N. C. Andrews. YUAG.

houses in the artefact evidence. So, there seems to be a part of the house that was, at some times at least, the male domain (the *andron*), but current evidence does not allow a clear identification of further gendered spaces. This is not to say that other gendered spaces at Dura did not exist, only that the current evidence does not allow for architectural spaces to be convincingly interpreted as gendered. For example, elsewhere in the site, the masculine domain of military personnel

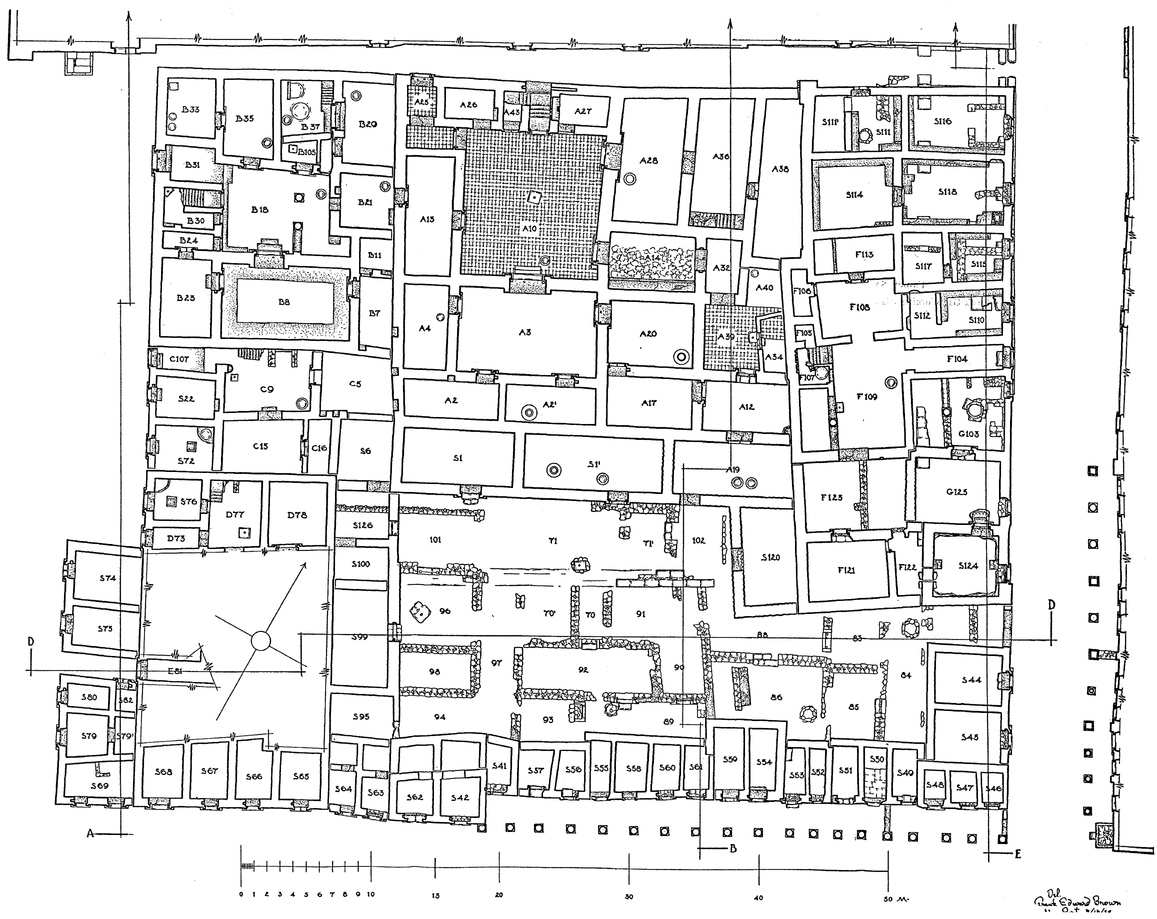


FIGURE 5.2 Plan of block G1 by Frank Brown. YUAG.

included the city walls and gates, while the temple of Artemis Azzanathkona, before it was overtaken for use by the military, seems to have been the focus of a woman's cult with exclusively female names found inscribed into the steps of the *salle aux gradins*, although male dedicants are also recorded within the sanctuary.[20]

The interaccessibility of many rooms at Dura seems to indicate that there was no distinct gendered separation of space, at least on a permanent basis. Rather, it is quite possible that space was functionally flexible, used on a seasonal or even more short-term basis. The manipulation of space could also have been easily controlled within a house, as most houses had doors on all the rooms; simply opening or closing these could dramatically effect the nature of the space. While the high, narrow windows, both in exterior walls and within interior rooms of the houses, might partially indicate a need for privacy (they also contribute to temperature regulation), there is no reason to assume that this privacy was primarily to keep women from view. Similarly, it is not possible with the current data to be certain of the use of the flat roofs of the houses, which might have contributed towards much intervisibility (and potential for other interaction) between houses. Nevertheless, the segmentation of space into rooms does allow for the possibility that this segmentation was one way that social relations could be structured. All but the smallest house would have allowed for women to be segregated from visitors if this was desired. For these reasons, with the current evidence, it isn't possible to postulate the gendering of specific parts of the architectural plan of the Durene houses, despite the naming of parts of the house as the *harem* and *selamlik* by Frank Brown. Indeed, in earlier Mesopotamian houses at Ur which also housed extended families, it has been argued that the plan embodies the hierarchy of the dominant family over the junior branches (and hence, the power of women of the dominant branch over the other women within the house).[21] However, the houses of Dura, in their transmission along the male line when they passed within the family, do represent patriarchy as both properties and structures.

Dress practices

The use of objects to make differences in a person's appearance is one way archaeology can access the construction and maintenance of gender identities.[22] A range of relevant evidence was found at Dura, including textual references to

[20] On military spaces at Dura, F. R. 7; James 2007. On the presence of women in Roman military sites, see e.g. Allison 2006a; Allison et al. 2008. Inscriptions in the *salle aux gradins* have first- and second-century CE dates. Azzanathkona Temple published initially in P. R. 5, 131-200. See also discussion in Downey 1988a, 99–101.

[21] Brusasco 2004, 153.

[22] Sørensen 2000, 124–43; 2007, 76. On the broader relevance of studying clothing, Küchler and Miller 2005; see in particular Woodward's essay on clothing as the 'site where the self is constituted through both

clothing and appearance, pictorial representations, and objects themselves, including textiles, clothing fasteners, shoes, jewellery, and grooming implements.

Textiles survive at Dura, largely from secondary contexts along the Wall Street; these were mostly of wool, but fragments of cotton, linen, and silk were also recovered.[23] Garments are also attested with graffiti enumerating types including the mantle, trousers, robes (the *dalmatic*, *pallium*, and *kolobion*), tunics, veils, and girl's tunics.[24] Pictorial evidence showed decorated mantles and some textile fragments were thought to be evidence of these.[25]

There is some evidence for the veiling of women at Dura. Two textile fragments were identified as possible veils or scarves, because of the edge fringing, but these are uncertain.[26] In paintings of Dura, women are sometimes shown veiled, with a mantle or cloak which could be pulled over the head and across the face.[27] In the Conon painting for example, the woman identified as Bithnanaia is shown in a veil (Figure 5.3). From the same 'sanctuary of Bel' in which the Conon painting was found a *dipinto* of a veiled woman was recorded.[28] It is not clear whether the veiling of women was routine at Dura, or if it was particularly appropriate in a religious context (the painting is from a religious context and depicts a sacrifice), but women depicted in paintings from other contexts are also shown with headcoverings.[29] The headcoverings worn by women in Durene paintings, the use of the Greek term for the article of clothing perhaps referring to a veil in texts, and the contemporary use of headcoverings attested in Palmyrene portraits, together with the earlier attested practice of headcoverings for women in the ancient Near East,

its internal and external relationships': Woodward 2005, 22. On dress and identity in the Roman empire, Rothe 2012.

[23] On the textiles, F. R. 4.2. Texts from the houses mentioning clothing include a range of articles of clothing and prices found in B8-H, P. R. 4, 93–4, no. 219, and a graffito no. 300 from C7-G3, P. R. 4, 153–7, as well as *PDura* 30. The textiles were mostly woven (sometimes in combination), and fragments of knitting were also preserved. F. R. 4.2, 54–6.

[24] F. R. 4.2, 12. Textiles listed in graffiti included *anabolaion* (mantle), *aniklion* (trousers), *balanarion* (bathrobe), dalmatics, *pallion* and *kolobions* (robes), *padikon* and *stikarion* (tunics), *mapharion* (veil), *paragaudion* (tunic with clavus), *parthenike* (girl's tunic). Tunic and mantle fragments, as well as two wool felt caps, were preserved. Mantles were so identified not on the basis of their structure, but from the decoration. F. R. 4.2, 17–22. Felt caps, nos 289–90, 1938.5673 and 1938.5674, respectively. There is a problem with lack of comparanda; for example, many works on costume and dress in the 'Roman Levant' rely heavily on the Dura synagogue paintings; e.g. Roussin 2001; Shlezinger-Katsman 2010.

[25] F. R. 4.2, 14–15.

[26] F. R. 4.2, nos 37–8, 1938.5462 and 1933.510 respectively. On women with veils or scarves over their heads at Dura from the evidence of the paintings, F. R. 4.2, 11, 15.

[27] On this use of the term 'veil', Llewellyn-Jones 2003, 8; 2007, 251. On veils at Dura, F. R. 4.2, 11. A robe and veil are among the dowry items listed in a marriage contract of 232 CE (*PDura* 30), together with other textiles, ceramics, and gold jewellery, in addition to cash.

[28] Goldman 1999, 40, graffito CI.

[29] On the veiling of women in Greek contexts, Llewellyn-Jones 2003; 2007; in the Near East, van der Toorn 1995. On the relationship of hair and hair-covering to gender, Levine 1995.

FIGURE 5.3 Late-second-century CE painting of Conon and his family making a sacrifice, from the Temple of Bel. Courtesy Pierre Leriche/MFSED.

suggest that it is likely that the 'respectable' women of Dura did wear one, at least in certain circumstances.[30] The veiling of women enacted the subordination of women, but also could allow for freedom of movement, and at Dura, display of social status.[31] Elaborate headcoverings could both conceal and be conspicuous.

The painting also gives a sense of hierarchy within the family in the placement of the figures, with Conon on the left, then the priests, then Conon's wife, then children, with his grandchildren below.[32] The veiled females (including those depicted as children, although it may be that their stature was to mark

[30] On the 'widespread use of headdresses concealing part of the face' in the ancient Near East, and the link of this covering to status (i.e., prohibitions against wearing veils for prostitutes and slaves, and veils as a marker of chastity and social standing), van der Toorn 1995, 328–9. A processional relief from the Temple of Bel at Palmyra depicts fully veiled women whose entire face is obscured with fabric, but on present evidence it is not possible to say if all women were entirely covered in all public contexts, or certain groups of women, or if the covering was particular to the religious context, etc. Seyrig et al. 1975, 89–90; Dirven 1999, 82–4. The paintings of M7-W at Dura also depict women with headcoverings, as do those of the Synagogue in L7. Jewish women of Babylonia were also veiled: van der Toorn 1995, 330.

[31] On the functions of veils in Greece, see discussion in Llewellyn-Jones 2003, 14.

[32] Elsner 2001, 276. On the current state of the paintings, Leriche 2012.

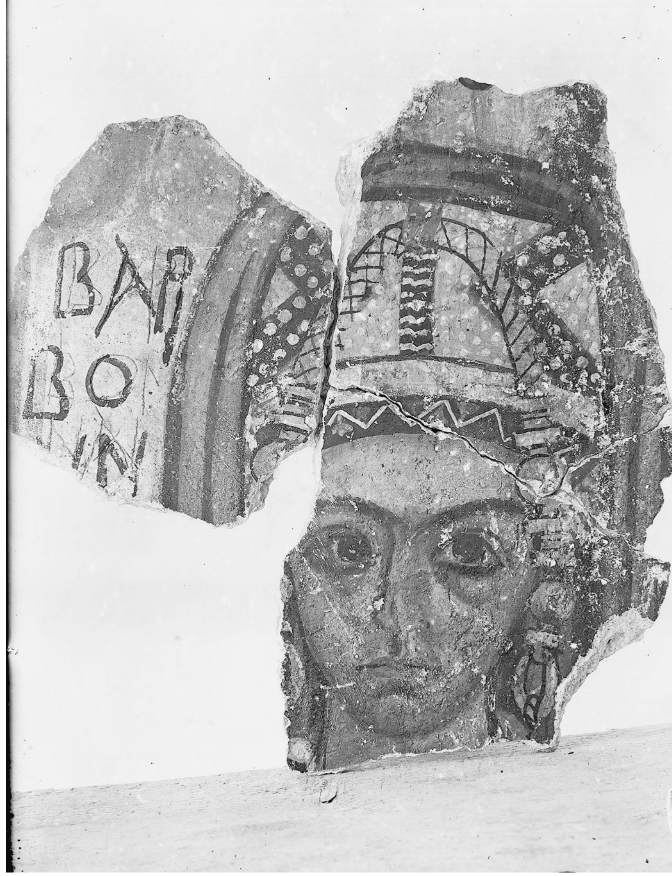


FIGURE 5.4 Painted plaster fragments from the Temple of Zeus Theos depicting Baribonnaea. YUAG 1938.4807a.

their status as grandchildren) of the Conon paintings also wear jewellery, including what appear to be the 'twisted' bracelets which have been found at the site (on which see discussion later in chapter).[33] At least in artistic representations at Dura, women are differentiated from men by means of their dress: in the Conon painting, women are shown wearing floor-length clothes, headdresses with veils, and jewellery.[34] One of the best preserved fragments from the paintings of Zeus Theos is that depicting a 'young woman' named Baribonnaea (Figure 5.4), who wears a headdress similar to that of the woman in the Conon painting, with a purple veil over it which falls to her shoulders. Her headdress is heavily ornamented with jewellery or embroidery, and she wears at least five necklaces,

[33] Breasted's description of Bithnanaia (whom he made the eponymous figure of the painting in his publication): Breasted 1924b, 82–3.

[34] F. R. 3.1.2, 281.

including those that appear to be silver, and others beaded; another female in the same mural is similarly dressed, and her headdress included small gold leaves which may be analogous to those found in many female burials in the Dura necropolis.[35]

The ornate headdress and jewellery is not dissimilar to that found on third-century Palmyrene funerary portraits, and like the Palmyrene women, elite women at Dura, in representations at least, seem to have worn jewellery and headdresses, providing ornate modesty in line with regional customs.[36] In representations from funerary contexts at Palmyra and sacred contexts at Dura, elite female identity is constructed, in part, through elaborate jewellery; men in the same paintings and sculptures do not usually wear any.[37] Similarly, funerary contexts at Dura, though not as well recorded as would be ideal, seem to indicate that in death, female identity was also negotiated by means of jewellery including earrings, bracelets, bells, and necklaces.[38] The ability to own and wear such items, in life and in death, was of course closely tied to status (as with all of the above, gender is inextricable from status, ethnicity, and other elements of identity).

There is also a difference in the colour of the clothes worn by the women and men; the white robes of women in paintings stand out against the white and red worn by most of the men. A range of colours is found in the surviving textiles, from the natural colour of the wool to a range of reds, purple, and blue,[39] with some being given woven decoration,[40] although of those which survive most seem not to be garments. It is not surprising, then, given the red, blues, and purples of Durene textiles, that in the sculpture, blue and 'pink' were apparently favourite colours for the drapery, where traces of paint on the sculpture survive.[41] In a painting from house M7-W, a banquet scene depicts a seated woman wearing a red *himation* with a veil, and a black and white *chiton*.[42]

Given the relative scarcity of archaeological textiles from the site, jewellery and other metal dress accessories, including fasteners, are a useful form of evidence. Comparing the evidence of the necropolis and that of the city raises interesting questions. While there are myriad problems comparing the use of objects in death and in life,[43] and indeed sex with gender, this information has the potential to lend itself to analysing activity within the city. In the necropolis, specific objects are

[35] P. R. 7/8, 205–6. Toll compared the beads of the tombs to those depicted in this painting, P. R. 9.2, 125.

[36] Bartman 2001, 17.

[37] Further on the construction of Roman female identity in dress and dress accessories, Swift 2009, 139–41. On continuity in female headdresses over millennia in the Middle East (including Palmyra), Gansell 2007.

[38] Baird Forthcoming (a). [39] F. R. 4.2, 4-6. [40] F. R. 4.2, 6ff.

[41] F. R. 3.1.2, 5. Colours are also attested in texts from Dura, including red kermes dye (P. R. 4, 132, no. 64), and purple garments (P. R. 4, 93, 97, nos 19 and 222).

[42] P. R. 6, 154 and Plate 42.1. [43] Dark 1995, 92; Pearce 2000, 4–6.

associated with burials sexed as female. While equating any one artefact with the presence of a person or gender is problematic, there are broader patterns which can be seen in the assemblages which indicate the pattern is likely a genuine one.

Bracelets were, in the necropolis, found to belong exclusively to the remains of women and children.[44] The most common ornament in women's burials was a small silver ring, or less often, a copper alloy one; these rings seem to have been used in the hair, or perhaps as earrings.[45] Without careful archaeological recording, it is often difficult to ascertain which rings were worn on the body or had other purposes, and even certain finger rings may have belonged to males or females, with size being a poor indicator of a gendered wearing.[46] Bronze bells, found near the waist of undisturbed inhumations, were found exclusively in women's and children's tombs (Figure 5.5). Within the settlement both bells and rings worn in the hair would probably have been more prone to loss than expensive bracelets.

The bracelets found in the necropolis were made of silver or copper alloy, sometimes with iron or copper included in a twisting pattern (Figure 5.6). There are also a variety of forms, most with overlapping ends, including those decorated with animal heads, as well as some with hinges.[47] Within the city, these bracelets occur frequently in a variety of contexts, including within houses,[48] and also, within one of the buildings used as accommodation for the Roman military, E8.[49] The most common material for bracelets was copper alloy, but silver examples are also known. A number of types were excavated including a simple wire type with coiled ends, those of twisted metal wire (or metal decorated to look as though it is twisting, also called 'spiral' bracelets, and sometimes with coiled ends).[50] The twisted type of bracelet is also known at Dura from representations in painting and sculpture, for example on the raised right hands of both the females in the Conon painting (Figure 5.3).[51] 'Serpent' or snake bracelets were recorded, which have snake-head terminals, and those with other animals' heads. Snakes had symbolic significance in the Hellenistic and Roman worlds, and such bracelets are known from elsewhere in the empire.[52] Snakes may be taken to have a number of meanings, and

[44] P. R. 9.2, 116. The children may have been exclusive female but this information was not recorded.

[45] P. R. 9.2, 118. [46] Allason-Jones 1995. [47] P. R. 9.2, 116–17.

[48] E185. F1415, F1512b, G75, I367, K112, K134, K185. Fifty-four complete bracelets are recorded from known contexts. Further fragments and those from unknown provenance within the town are held by Yale and Damascus.

[49] H209k, H233l, H303, H351l.

[50] Such twisted bracelets have both Greek and 'Celtic' antecedents. Glass examples are also known, see e.g. Grossman 2011, 277, Figure 16.3 (1938.59999.1804).

[51] As noted by Johnson, P. R. 2, 78ff. Twisted type of bracelet can be seen on Bithnannia in the paintings from the sanctuary of Bel, and on a statuette of Artemis published by Cumont (1926), Pl. LXXXIII.

[52] The significance of snake jewellery (as part of deposits which might be characterized as votive) in Roman Britain is discussed in Cool 2000. On snake jewellery more broadly, Johns 1996, 44–5, 109–11. The Dura rings are types B-i and B-ii in Johns' typology of snake-rings and bracelets.

FIGURE 5.5 Selection of copper alloy bells from unrecorded contexts at Dura. YUAG Yale-719.

FIGURE 5.6 Copper alloy bracelets of various types including 'snake' bracelet on left and 'twisting' bracelets on right. YUAG Yale-794.

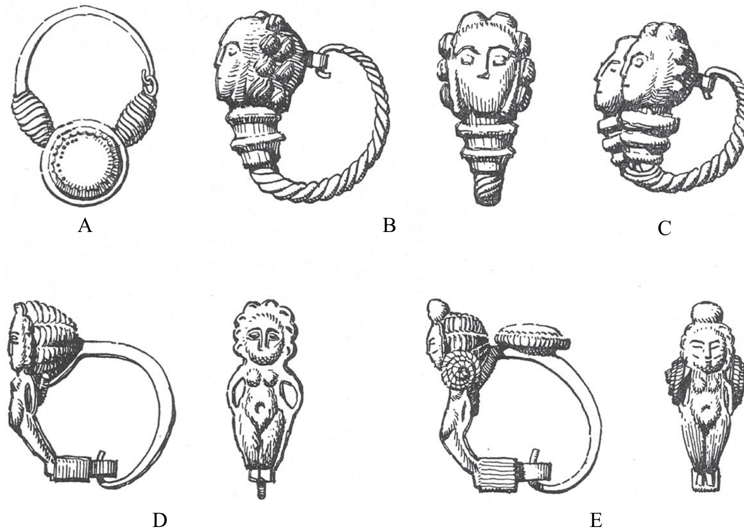


FIGURE 5.7 Earring types which occur in Dura's necropolis. YUAG Yale-1715.

such bracelets may have had an apotropaic significance, or have been associated with healing, given the Asclepian connection.[53] The bracelets that were excavated in the necropolis occur only in the burials of women and children.[54] There are various forms from the necropolis, in a number of materials, including silver and copper alloy, sometimes with iron or copper included in a twisting pattern. There are also a variety of forms, most with overlapping ends (including those decorated with animal heads) and some with hinges.[55] From the necropolis, it is apparent that bracelets might have been worn not only on the wrists but also on the ankles, as a pair was found near the ankles of a body identified as female.[56]

Earrings were another item which occurred primarily in women's burials; the most frequent type within the city is the plain type, although those with female heads or nude females are also common (Figure 5.7).[57] Within the city, earrings are found in a number of houses[58] as well as in the military structure in E4.[59] There is some evidence that Syrian men wore earrings as a sign of age, and that among Persians, earrings could be a sign of wealth.[60] They are not, then, definitive

[53] Johns 1996, 111.

[54] P. R. 9.2, 116. Some of the bodies identified as those of women and of children had pairs of bracelets associated with them, including the silver bracelets found near the wrists of the child in Tomb 40, Loc XVI. No sex is recorded for the remains identified as those of children.

[55] P. R. 9.3, 116. [56] Tomb 22, Loc IX.

[57] P. R. 9.2, 118–21. [58] E363, E75, E78, F1859, F1898c, F2222.

[59] E75/1932.1474 (C7-G2), E78 (C7-G^{2}5), F1859 (B2-D5), F1898c/1933.607a (M7-H), F2222 (C3-D), and F406f (E4-22).

[60] Stout 2001, 96; Allason-Jones 1995, 25.

FIGURE 5.8 Bone hairpins found at Dura, including those with knob and hand terminals. Contexts not recorded; those marked with numbers are (from left) 1938.910, 138.916, 1938.902, 1938.875, and 1938.900. YUAG Yale-70a.

women's objects. At Dura, however, earrings, like bracelets, were an item which occurred exclusively in women's burials, and those of children. The most frequent type within the city is the plain type, although those with female heads or nude females were also common, as were those with glass insets. Earrings are usually found in pairs in the necropolis (where sets of pairs frequently occur),[61] though for obvious reasons, not in the city.[62]

Hairpins are generally assumed to be women's objects, whether these were actually used in the hair, for styling the hair, or for applying cosmetics.[63] It is interesting that such a large proportion of the bone hairpins from Dura that have a known context come from within the so-called Roman camp (Figure 5.8, and see

[61] Rings thought by the excavators to have been used in the hair, or on something worn over the hair, as six silver rings were found each side of the skull of a body identified as female in the necropolis. It is possible, however, that multiple earrings were worn in each ear (as paralleled on various Palmyrene funerary stele); Tomb 6, Loc 4; P. R. 9.2, 30, Pl. XXXV. Three silver rings were found on each side of a child's skull in Tomb 33, Loc XI; P. R. 9.2, 66.

[62] P. R. 9.2, 118-21.

[63] On hairpins from Roman female graves and a representation of a Roman hairpin in Roman sculpture, Bartman 2001, 13–14. On the ambiguity of such pins, and the problem of directly equating them with the presence of females, Allason-Jones 1995, 28.

Figure 3.11). If these pins can indeed be said to belong to women then this could be a meaningful spatial distribution. It would indicate the women wearing their hair in a style requiring these objects were those associated with the part of the city where the Roman military presence was concentrated. This may in fact be evidence that some of the women affiliated with the Roman soldiers arrived with the military community or adapted their appearance as they became affiliated with them, and they were wearing their hair in a different manner from the local women of Dura. Not only does this indicate that women were present within the camp, but it hints at the possibility that women associated with the Roman military were presenting themselves differently than those in the rest of the city.[64] Different hairstyles and dress practices are important, visible markers in terms of cultural and community affiliations, but they are also easy to manipulate, and could allow individuals to display their knowledge of and access to items considered to be fashionable.[65]

The identification of the bone pins as possible women's items is strengthened by the subject of those with figural decorative heads. One type ends in a terminal in the shape of a hand.[66] Those are often broken, so it is not clear what, if anything, these hands once grasped, but one still holds a small round object.[67] Elsewhere, such pins have hands shown holding what are thought to be fruit or eggs, and these are believed to be symbols of rebirth, fertility, and generally good omens.[68] Empty hands have been interpreted as an apotropaic gesture, or connected to the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus.[69] Like many other portable dress items found at Dura, this type of bone pin is well known throughout the Roman Empire.[70] Of the pins with figural heads, two have been identified as Venus figures, and one as Eros, and a further as a draped female figure which is probably Venus. The Eros and female figure were found together in X7, with another pin

[64] The women's hairstyles in the wall paintings of Dura are all relatively simple by comparison with imperial hairstyles evident from portraiture; it has been remarked that the Palmyrene women shown on funerary sculpture 'typically wore their hair waved in a simple centre-part style that could have easily been achieved with their own locks', unlike with wigs and other equipment necessary to make the hairstyles of imperial portraits. Bartman 2001, 17.

[65] On 'fashion' in Roman dress practices, see the critical discussion in Rothe 2013.

[66] For a typology of Roman hairpins with human hands, Bartus 2012, which includes the one published Dura example, I816b/1938.863. For discussion of the iconography of these pins and their possible meanings, Swift 2012b, 53–5.

[67] Bone 'hand' pins 1938.863/I816b (X7-29), right hand holding a round object, wearing a bracelet; 1933.400, right hand with damage, indicating it once held an object, now missing; 1938.906, broken fingers so unclear if it once held something; 1938.905, also broken fingers so unclear if it once held something; 1938.910, a hand broken at the wrist, but bracelet remains. The first of these was published in P. R. 9.3, 125. See also Kleiner and Matheson 1996, 162, no. 114, which catalogues 1933.400. 'Empty' hands are not uncommon at other sites (Bartus 2012, Type 1), and small round objects in hands, as I816b, are often unidentified, but in other examples they hold a pomegranate. Russell 1976, nos 12–16.

[68] Johns 1996, 142. [69] Bartus 2012, 210. [70] Bartus 2012, 210.

with a carved hand and one with a plain knob, in rooms which seem to have been used as military accommodation adjacent to the so-called Dolicheneum.[71] Of the two likely to be Venus, one was found in the courtyard of a house in the agora, and another in the Wall Street, in block J8.[72] Venus and Eros both relate, of course, to female beauty and would be appropriate figures for items which relate to female personal adornment. Venus is not only the pinnacle of female beauty, but is related to the act of adornment, as can be seen in the representations of the goddess with her mirror or otherwise at her toilet.[73] While we can be reasonably confident such bone pins were used by women at Dura, the relationship to Roman ideas of female beauty and the elite is not necessarily clear—were these items used because they linked the wearer to the idealized Roman elite woman, or because of a link to Roman culture more broadly, or for some other reason?[74] The concentration of these decorated bone pins in buildings strongly associated with the Roman military presence at Dura perhaps gives us a clue, as women associated with the military were those most likely to be exposed to and susceptible to Roman ideas of femininity. Further, the large number of items of jewellery and other items of personal adornment at Dura which have strong parallels in the Roman world, compared to, for instance, the strong local and regional characteristics of other types of finds, such as pottery, indicates awareness of and participation in selected elements of Mediterranean elite culture.[75] Nude female figures also occur on earrings found in the Dura necropolis.[76] Bone needles, which also occur at Dura, have been interpreted as objects which can relate to female hairstyling, with a threaded needle being used to secure hairstyles.[77] The discovery

[71] These pins were published in P. R. 9.3, 125–6, Pl. 22.1. I816a (1938.864) is the pin with a plain knob, I816c/1938.862 is that of Eros, and the hand pin I816b/1938.863. On the Eros pin, Kleiner and Matheson 1996, 162, no. 113.

[72] G185a/1934.516a, a female head and face on bone pin terminal, from G3-J1. Venus is the attribution given by Russell, who notes that the headdress and pink colour applied to the pin have parallels in Mesopotamia and Parthian art. Russell 1976, 21. The other Venus figure was on a bone pin found in J8-W7, H541 (1938.920). For parallels of the headdress on female figurines in bone, see those from Seleucia: van Ingen 1939, esp. nos 1592c, 1594, 1595, 1596; on use of colour on those, van Ingen 1939, 17.

[73] On the depiction of Venus on hair-pins and the relationship to ideals of female beauty in the Roman world, Swift 2009, 150–4; on decorated objects associated with adornment including bone pins like those found at Dura, Swift 2012b, 53–4. Bronze mirrors were found in a burial identified as females at Dura, along with other items of adornment and grave goods, e.g. 1938.5225 and 1938.5157, Tomb 6, Loc 4 and Loc 8. P. R. 9.2, 30, 31. Bronze spatulas were sometimes found in the same loculi as mirrors, for instance Tomb 23, Loc 15 (P. R. 9.2, 49), perhaps indicating a broad concern with appearance and adornment relating to femininity, and the continuation of such concerns in the afterlife, although NB the same loculi includes a phallus pendant.

[74] Swift 2012b, 55.

[75] Other readings are, of course, possible, and it is possible the depictions of 'Venus' could have been interpreted locally as Atargatis.

[76] P. R. 9.3, 120 (type D in Figure 5.17).

[77] Stephens 2008.

FIGURE 5.9 Selection of copper alloy finger rings excavated at Dura, including (bottom row) 'ring-keys'. YUAG Yale-809.

of several in the bath buildings at Dura, in contexts with other small and easily lost items of personal adornment, supports this interpretation.[78]

Other items of dress which may relate to gender are more ambiguous. For example, a group of finger rings had key attachments. These ring-keys, in copper alloy or iron, are also known from elsewhere in the Roman world (Figure 5.9).[79] The examples from Dura come from a number of contexts, including one found in the necropolis, where it was associated with human remains identified as female.[80] The small keys which protrude from the rings are generally thought to have been for locks such as those on small caskets.[81] The ring keys imply the existence of the

[78] Only thirteen bone needles at Dura came from secure contexts, including from E8-23 (used by the Roman military), H152; the F3 baths, H818/1933.427; and others from the Wall Street, a street in the agora, and from the necropolis trench: F1531, F514, F684, F818, G1999, G453, G554, G836, H665, I26, K376, and K647. Other than that found in E8, none are from a 'domestic' context. Russell catalogued eighteen bone needles from Dura, three of which are included in the list just given; the remaining fifteen are from unknown contexts. Russell 1976, 76–9.

[79] See e.g. those from Britain, Gaul, and Pompeii: Guiraud 1989, 191–3; Johns 1996, 55–7; Allison 2006b, 106, no. 560. The example from Pompeii was found on the finger of a skeleton, but the skeletons were not sexed (although in some cases gender was inferred from jewellery); Lazer 2011.

[80] Only ten of the finger rings with keys at Dura come from known *loci*: E263, F2154a, F2198c, F844b, G1859, H22b, H197e, H391, H407, and I599. Another ten are known from photographs in the YUAG Archive but seem to have been excavated in the seasons before object records were systematically kept (these appear in YUAG Archive photographs yale-807, yale-809, and yale-810). Necropolis ring: I599 from Tomb 3, Loc 13. Toll, in P. R. 9.2, 68. The criteria used for the sexing of the skeletal remains was not recorded, and the material was not retained, so the identifications should be treated with caution.

[81] Johns 1996, 55.

corresponding lockable item, which itself is indicative of contents which were of value. These rings then are not only significant for their own value, or for what they opened, but because those wearing them were actively signalling that they were in possession of something of sufficient value to be worth locking up. Such rings might be understood as a visible proxy for concealed wealth (or, indeed, the pretence of such).[82] Keys which were not on rings were also found at Dura, generally also of copper alloy, but occasionally iron, and occasionally decorated.[83] It is possible these, too, were worn on the body and displayed. Jewellery at Palmyra is known primarily from the funerary portraiture rather than from small finds, but on female funerary portraits there, keys are shown suspended from fibulae, or held in the hand.[84] That keys are depicted on portraits such as these shows that these objects could have a symbolic as well as a practical value, perhaps linked to the symbolic female control of the domestic sphere.[85]

Cosmetic and perfume containers allude to other forms of bodily adornment.[86] Several vessels of a type suitable for such materials were found at Dura, but unfortunately any trace evidence recovered was not analysed.[87] Bronze spatulas, perhaps for the use in preparation or application of cosmetics, as well as mirrors, were also found in women's tombs.[88]

In Durene paintings men generally wore tunics and no jewelry except finger rings. Men in paintings from civilian contexts were clean-shaven or bearded and sometimes with slightly 'bushy' hair (e.g. the Conon paintings, the paintings from M7), while those depicted in military paintings such as that of the Terentius painting uniformly wore beards with close-cropped haircuts (Figure 5.10).[89] In the

[82] Crummy's seminal study classifies ring-keys as 'furniture fragments and fittings', although other lock and keys are separately classified; neither is considered items of adornment. Crummy 1983, 84.

[83] Eleven other keys were recovered from known contexts, both copper alloy and iron examples. A decorated example comes from a large house in the agora, a key with a dog's head handle: E559d.

[84] MacKay 1949. Suspended from fibulae, see MacKay 1949, Pl. LV.2, Segel, daughter of Atenuri, son of Moqimu (Museum of Antiquities, Istanbul). For a portrait in which a distaff and spindle are held in one hand, and a key in another, MacKay 1949, Pl. LVII.1, Bathanna, daughter of Moqimu (Ny Carlsberg). In another portrait thought to be that of a slave due to the lack of adornment, three keys are held in the hand, MacKay 1949, Pl. LII.1 (Ny Carlsberg). For a key worn suspended, see the funerary relief of Haggat; Dentzer-Feydy, and Teixidor 1993, 164–5, no. 168. On the status of Palmyrene women from epigraphic evidence, Cussini 2005. A study of dress at Palmyra was also made by Seyrig 1937.

[85] A key hangs from a fibula on a Palmyrene female funerary portrait, which Heyn notes may indicate control of the domestic sphere, or, in a funerary context, access to the afterlife: Heyn 2012, 439. Keys were also apparently symbolic in some form at Dura; for instance, a recently discovered graffiti by the author in house C11-P10, now published in Allag 2012, Figure 5.

[86] On Roman cosmetics and for relevant bibliography, Olson 2009.

[87] Graeco-Roman cosmetics have been recently investigated, e.g. by Welcomme et al. 2006.

[88] P. R. 9.2, 123.

[89] A fragmentary male figure from the paintings of Zeus Theos seems to have worn a beard and 'Parthian' hairstyle; P. R. 7/8, 204–5. On the house identified as that of Julius Terentius, see house G7-H; Welles 1941; Nilsson 1942.

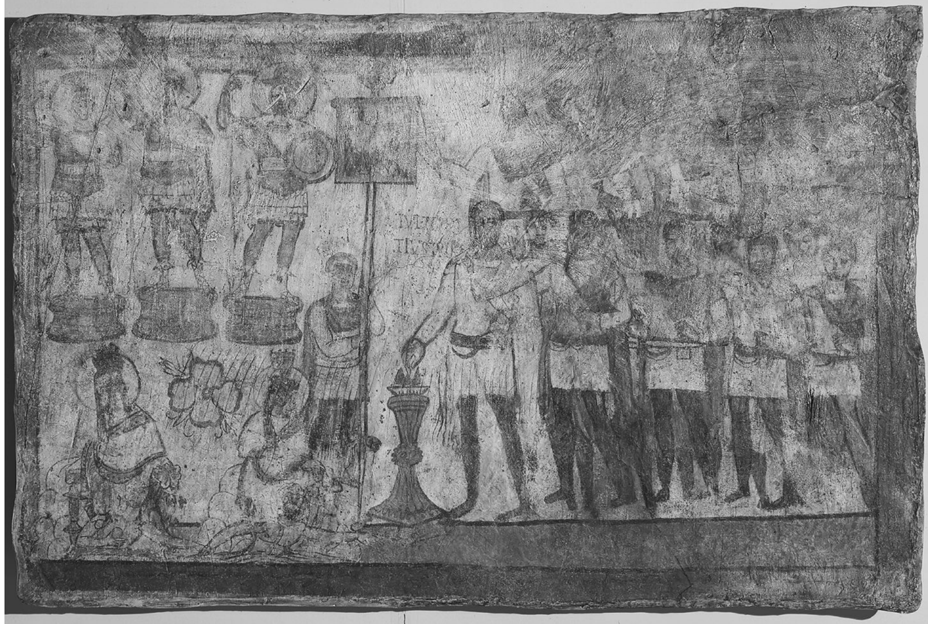


FIGURE 5.10 Painting of Tribune of the XX Palmyrene cohort, Julius Terentius, and his soldiers making a sacrifice to figures representing Roman emperors or Palmyrene deities. YUAG.

necropolis, remains identified as male included some items of dress, including an iron ring worn on the index finger.[90] So, while male personal appearance was undoubtedly important both to masculine identities and in differentiation from female dress, there is less recoverable material culture. However, as discussed in the section 'Military' later in this chapter, brooches, belt-sets, razors, and combs can all be associated with the construction of the male military persona at Dura.

Many of the items of personal dress found at Dura could have been used to contrive an appearance which was in line with male and female ideals within the Roman world more broadly. Identification with broader elite culture was one way in which being Roman was, to many people, a status marker. The presence of veils and the painted depictions of people at Dura complicates the picture, however. While the military men of the Terentius painting are recognizable in their tunics and trousers within Roman military dress known from across the empire (further, see the section 'Military' later in this chapter), depictions of families in sacred contexts such as the Conon paintings shows that other aspects of dress were certainly of a more Eastern

[90] Tomb 6, Loc. 3. P. R. 9.2, 29. Iron finger rings were also found in loculi containing female remains. On the different distribution of metals in the jewelry found in the city compared to that in the necropolis, see Baird Forthcoming (a).

and local milieu, at least in their idealized form in a sanctuary painting. While individual pieces of jewelry were those that may have been worn elsewhere in the Roman world, they were being worn in a particular local way. Venus-decorated hairpins and other items are in keeping with Roman ideals of female beauty but some women also seem to have worn their hair covered, at least in the idealized representations of paintings. Gender is only one facet of the construction of identities through personal appearance, and the same items were used to denote status, as well as, perhaps, kinship ties. Other items may also have served an apotropaic function or magical purpose.

Artefacts which have been used to examine the presence of women elsewhere, such as objects related to spinning and weaving, are rarely found at Dura (p. 83). Still others are probably known to us but not clearly recognizable; for instance, ceramic sets are included among women's possessions in the documents, and it is possible (for example) that such vessels could display a woman's kinship links within her husband's home.[91]

The documents also preserve relationships which apparently cut across class or status. For instance, the third century *PDura* 29 records a deposit of money, in which a woman named Amaththabeile deposits 100 denarii with another woman, named Aurelia Gaia, in what seems to be a private transaction without male guardians, although it does have a male witness. Their respective names do seem to indicate a difference in social standing, with Aurelia, in 250s Dura, being a rather conscious marker of Roman affiliation. Such relationships might have developed in sanctuaries or within households (Amaththabeile might have been a former slave of Aurelia Gaia's, as proposed by the document's editors).[92] Irrespective of the conclusions drawn about the relative standing of women from the evidence of their names, the document nonetheless implies an asymmetrical relationship inasmuch as Aurelia has the means by which to keep the money safe, and Amaththabeile, for whatever reason, does not. If Aurelia is gaining in monetary terms from the transaction, this is not stipulated in the document. Whatever bond existed between these women, it was not so strong that it transcended the need for a legal document recording the deposit.

[91] The resolution of the data at Dura is not clear enough to discuss this, but on women's objects and kinship ties, see e.g. Foxhall's work on female networks through objects, including loom weights: Foxhall Forthcoming. Among the bride's items in *PDura* 30 are vessels and bronze utensils worth twenty-five denarii (other items included textiles and jewelry).

[92] F. R. 5.1, 149–53, suggests Amaththabeile is possibly a freedwoman of Aurelia Gaia. Aurelia Gaia is illiterate and Aurelius Theodorus, son of Bernicianus, of Zeugma, writes for her; the three witnesses are Antonius Polycrates, Flavius Valerius, and Aurelius Oniaces. The connection with Zeugma of Aurelius Theodorus led the editors to suggest further a connection with the 'entertainers' from Zeugma in block G5 (see the section 'Dura's "brothel"' in Chapter 4, p. 196). On women's private letters, Cribiore and Bagnall 2006.

Age

Another aspect of identity, closely linked to gender, difficult to examine archaeologically is that of age.[93] Though from textual evidence some aspects of Greek and Roman life-courses are understood, the legal and historical texts which form the basis of this understanding are much more relevant to Athens and Rome than necessarily applying to hybrid frontier sites such as Dura. Moreover, the recognition within assemblages of evidence relating specifically to individuals within that life-course is fraught with difficulty, though people of different ages including children doubtless contributed toward the archaeological record whether or not we can recognize that contribution.[94] Dura-Europos was undoubtedly full of infants, children, and people throughout the life course. The remains of children were found inhumed in the necropolis, and evidence from the city also attests to their presence and treatment of individuals within the community.

Even seemingly simple attribution, such as the presence of toys equating with the presence of children, and the identification of certain artefacts as toys, has been shown to be far from conclusive.[95] Though children have been overlooked in past archaeological studies, recent work is moving towards an understanding of childhood and children in the past, including associated material culture.[96] Baxter suggests two potential methods for the identification of children's artefacts from other small or miniature items of material culture: the method of manufacture, in that children's objects being prone to breakage will be easily manufactured or cost little (in labour or monetary terms) to replace, and secondly the spatial distribution of children's objects over sites will be regularly patterned in ways which allow the separation of children's objects from other classes of artefacts.[97] Though such research is limited by the nature of the data being studied (Baxter refers to better-preserved and excavated contexts of historical North American archaeology), importantly this represents a move away from the limited identification of age-class from mortuary contexts. Another central problem which affects the study of any age group archaeologically, including children, is the very notion of the age group, which tends to be defined biologically with set ages at which people are considered children (usually by analogy with modern Western societies) rather

[93] Laurence 2000. For a useful overview of archaeological approaches to age, Gilchrist 2004. On the importance of the study of age and ageing in past societies, Laslett 1995.

[94] For the identification of children in the archaeological record for instance, see Schiffer 1987, 75; Lillehammer 1989; Lillehammer 2000; Baxter 2005; Schwartzman 2005; Lillehammer 2010.

[95] Sofaer Derevenski 1994, 10; Baxter 2005, 46–50.

[96] See, for instance, the papers in Sofaer Derevenski 2000a. An overview of approaches to children in archaeological scholarship can be found in Lillehammer 2010, 19–22.

[97] Baxter 2005, 49. For an earlier example of the recognition of such patterning, Hammond and Hammond 1981.

than as a cultural condition.[98] Childhood in the Roman world should perhaps be understood as a social category rather than a biological or developmental one.[99] While it is necessary to be aware of the nature of age as a dimension of identity, the practical reality of identifying such groups archaeologically is far from ideal. Many objects used by children may be indistinguishable from, or the same as, those used by adults; while there may be a difference in how they are using them, it is not possible, given the problematic nature of the data from Dura, to assess this issue.

The house was a setting for the socialization of children.[100] The spatial organization of the house was one means by which children learn of their place within the family and society, a knowledge which is in part 'read with the body' in the way they interact with the space of the house.[101] Within the house, children inculcate social rules and cues, observe gender norms and performance, and generally learn what is acceptable in their society.[102] Houses can be thought of as 'places of children' as much as places of adults.[103] Archaeologically, the care and socialization of children may be traceable in certain material forms, including objects for learning or play, as well as graffiti, and specialized items for the caretaking of infants. In addition, evidence from Dura includes representations of children in painting and mentions in texts.

Infants in the ancient world have only recently become the topic of serious study, and much work focuses, for obvious reasons, on funerary contexts.[104] One of the items which may be related to the care of infants is ceramic containers which are sometimes called 'feeding bottles'.[105] These vessels, with a small nozzle, have been interpreted by some as for use in feeding small infants, and possibly for the collection of breastmilk, using the nozzle for suction to act as a crude pump. Among such vessels at Dura were three examples shaped like animals (one, a camel, and the others indeterminate quadraped).[106]

[98] Sofaer Derevenski 1994, 9; 1996, 193–4. On the problems of using biological age for the archaeological study of children, Sofaer Derevenski 2000b, 8; Kamp 2001; Halcrow and Tayles 2008. The age categories such as 'baby', 'infant', and 'toddler' were absent from Greek and Latin vocabulary: Laes 2011, 77–99.

[99] Laes 2011.

[100] As considered for much earlier houses in Hodder and Cessford 2004.

[101] Bourdieu 1977, 89–90.

[102] 'Through habit and inhabiting, each person builds up a practical mastery of the fundamental schemes of their culture.' Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995a, 2.

[103] De Lucia 2010.

[104] On infants in the Roman world, Carroll and Graham 2014; e.g. on infants in funerary contexts, Carroll 2011.

[105] On the problems with the identification of these vessels as for the nursing of infants, see Eckardt 1999, 70. On the 'feeding bottles' from Dura, see F. R. 4.1.3, 26–7 (does not include the animal-shaped bottles). Dyson believed that these vessels were more likely to be for filling lamps with oil; Eckardt also finds this interpretation more convincing.

[106] The animal-shaped bottles were F183 from J7 in the military zone and E555/1932.1322 from house G1-A36, and the camel-shaped bottle G153 from M8-W3.

Using Baxter's criteria, it is possible to tentatively associate some objects found at Dura with children. The handmade nature and domestic context of some animal and horse-and-rider figurines may indicate their use by children.[107] Downey has noted that some of the terracotta figurines of horses or horse-and-riders might have been toys, and where these have recorded find-spots they are most frequently from houses.[108] For example, Downey's catalogue shows that of the handmade horse figurines, all from recorded find-spots came from either houses or the Wall Street (the latter being a secondary fill).[109] Of those from houses, a number were found in courtyards. Other types of handmade figurines, including riders without their horses as well as cows, were also found mostly in domestic contexts (Figure 5.11).[110] Other items which may have functioned as 'toys' for children include small handmade clay carts with working wheels which turned on small axles, and one of which had a perforation on the front so that it could be pulled or attached to something.[111] These might have instead been votives, but as both examples from known find-spots came from the Wall Street fill; nothing can be said of their context of use at Dura.[112]

At Dura, fourteen items recorded as carved bone 'dolls' were found (Figures 5.12 and 5.13). They were classed as dolls rather than figurines because of their articulated arms, which could have been attached using string or wire to holes in the bodies, and were carved from the leg bones of sheep or goats.[113] The

[107] No textile figurines were recorded at Dura, but those at Karanis have been proposed to have possible roles as toys, or amulets for the protection of children: Johnson 2003.

[108] On the possibility that some of the Durene equine terracottas are toys, Downey 1993b, 144; 2003, 15, 140–1. In addition to the method of manufacture, the handmade horse-and-rider figurines do not follow the convention, in pictorial art, of the rider's head at a 90 degree angle to the horse, as is found in mould-made figurines of the same horse-and-rider type. Downey 2003, 134–5; on handmade animals and horse-and-riders, 139–45. On clay carts as votives rather than toys, and the 'chariot' model discovered by Cumont, Downey 2003, 185–6. Handmade figurines from Seleucid and Parthian Babylon belong to 'traditional Mesopotamian' types including animals and riders, and this continuity is attributed to the persistence of Babylon as a religious centre in these later periods Karvonen-Kannas 1995, 22, 31.

[109] Downey 2003, 139. Indeed, the proportion from houses is even higher than that noted by Downey, as one of those listed as from an unknown finding place (Downey no. 95, E252) is recorded in the object register as being from C7-D.

[110] Downey 2003, 140. As no handmade figurines were found in sanctuaries, Downey largely ruled out a religious function. On animal toys in the Roman world, Rawson 2003, 129. Handmade mount-and-rider figurines are also known from Babylon (where most other types are mould-made): Karvonen-Kannas 1995, 96, nos 480–94, and from Parthian Nippur, where they were apparently found throughout the site and in graves; Van Buren 1930, 165.

[111] On clay carts as votives, and the more elaborate 'chariot' model discovered by Cumont, Downey 2003, 185–6; Downey also discusses terracotta animals which could have been hitched to a small cart.

[112] F2162, from L7-W50 and F2165, from L8-W.

[113] Only two bone doll arms were found at Dura. The joint of the animal bones from which the dolls were made, at the bottom of the dolls, was left unworked (Russell 1976, 7), but would have been covered when the doll was inserted into its pedestal. The first study which described the type of jointed bone dolls was Elderkin 1930; more recently, the archaeological evidence has been surveyed in Manson 1978; 1987; 1991; and Degen 1997; Dolansky 2012 includes a review of the bibliography. Two bone dolls and two doll arms

FIGURE 5.11 Handmade horse and rider figurine, E583/1932.1258/Downey 2003 no. 92, from C7-A1. 10.5 cm long. Detail from YUAG Yale-1323.

Dura dolls had similarly carved faces and hairstyles or headdresses, with breasts usually indicated by incised lines or deep notches rather than fully modelled, belly buttons marked, and on some of the more complete examples the pudendum was indicated with incised lines. These could be slotted into 'pedestals' which were also carved from bone, some of which had carvings indicating clothing and feet (Figure 5.14).[114] It is unknown whether the dolls would have been further adorned with textile clothing. While most of these came from the Wall Street fill, two came from house contexts.[115] As with the terracottas, it is very difficult to tell the difference between a figurine, for example, for apotropaic or ritual purposes, from a doll intended for child's play; and indeed, an object could have a dual purpose.[116] Such dolls have been long argued to be associated specifically with female children

from Dura were included in the catalogue of the *I, Claudia* exhibit, Kleiner and Matheson 1996, no. 82. Terracotta jointed dolls are known from sanctuary contexts, e.g. Corinth: Merker 2000, 48–50.

[114] Russell catalogued five such bone objects from Dura, Russell 1976, 12, nos 20–4; none came from a secure context.

[115] F2138, from C3-D4, and E142 from B8-H20.

[116] Those from known find-spots come from a range of contexts, in addition to houses, including military buildings: e.g. 1932.397 (C3-D4); 1932.1703 (G1-2); 1932.1700 (B8H-20); 1938.697 (J8). A fragment of a bone 'figurine', a broken female head on which traces of paint were preserved was probably also a doll, I815/1938.652, from the street adjacent to X7, P. R. 9.3, 126.

FIGURE 5.12 Bone doll fragments, showing traces of painted decoration, and drilled holes for attachment of arms just visible on right side of largest examples. Clockwise from top left, G870/1934.508 (N8-W1), 1938.698, H77/1938.699 (J7-W5), 1934.510a, 1938.396, F967b/1933.398 (L7), F58/1933.399 (M7-W1), 1934.510b, 1934.509b, and head near centre of image: G666a/1934.509c (L8-W107). YUAG Yale-705.

in the Roman world; textual and mortuary remains suggest an age range of between five and fifteen years old.[117] Dolls could prepare young girls for their roles as adult women, in preparing them for motherhood through role-playing games.[118]

[117] Dolansky 2012, 257 n 4.

[118] Rawson 2003, 128; although it should be noted that the dolls do not represent infants but mature women and that the existence of large extended and joint families would have meant opportunities for young girls to care for infants were probably common.

FIGURE 5.13 Bone doll fragments, showing traces of painted decoration, and arms with drilled holes for attachment. The tallest is 14.9 cm. From left: E142/1938.1700 (B8-H20), F2138/1933.397 (C3-D4), 1938.711, 1938.712. YUAG, undated print.

Further, they emphasized the adornment of women. With their breasts and genitalia marked on the bone bodies, they were meant to represent adult women and could socialize girls into their role as mothers, and even as sexual partners, as well as their duty to present themselves in a particular physical way, including attention to hairstyling and perhaps makeup.[119] The tall ornate headdresses of the dolls may relate to the formal presentation of women in such headdresses in Durene paintings,

[119] Dolansky 2012, 270, 272.

FIGURE 5.14 Bone 'doll pedestals' into which bone dolls slot and stand, with incised decoration demarcating feet. From left, 1933.407, 1933.408, 1938.737, G538/1934.507 (found 'near tower 20'), unknown bone item, 1938.710. YUAG Yale-709.

and are unlike the flatter, waving 'helmet' coiffure of Roman imperial female portraits of the third century, for instance in the representations of Julia Domna or Julia Mamaea.[120] Comparable headdresses are known on bone figurines from Parthian Susa, where jointed bone dolls are also found.[121] As Dolansky has recently argued, dolls were not trifling playthings but 'incarnations of certain ideals regarding gender and status that girls and young women, particularly of the upper classes, were subjected to as they prepared to assume their prescribed adult roles.'[122] We might, however, also consider children as potentially active in the construction of

[120] Baharal 1992; Kleiner 1992, 326, 378. Julia Domna was herself, of course, Syrian, but her hairstyle conformed to Roman elite norms: Bartman 2001, 17.

[121] Susa: Boucharlat and Haernick 1994; jointed bone doll no. 13 was found interred with the burial of a child. Seleucia: van Ingen 1939, 1596–1615 are nude female figurines made of bone with articulated arms; at Seleucia there are also terracotta and stone female figurines with articulated arms, and bone figurines including men, other nude females, and squatting boys. The 'conventionalized nude women' in bone at Seleucia are the most similar to the Dura dolls, which also have holes for the attachment of arms and were made from animal leg bones: van Ingen 1939, nos 1616–35. Terracotta figurines with attachments for articulated arms are also known at Hellenistic Babylon: Karvonen-Kannas 1995, e.g. no. 51. Due to their delicate, thin construction, they have been interpreted as being for 'display' perhaps in domestic shrines: Langin-Hooper 2007, 150–1. On the magical significance of figurines with movable limbs, van Ingen 1939, 31–3. Several comparable but unprovenanced examples of bone dolls can be found in Andres 2000, nos 129, 133–4.

[122] Dolansky 2012, 268.

their gender, learning through emulation, and participating in creation and maintenance of their gender roles as well as being 'subjected' to those roles. The jointed dolls, with their movable limbs, could be used to enact a range of activities, beyond being only passive items to be dressed and groomed.[123] And while dolls may have been a common way in which young girls learned gender norms and played in the Roman period, the dolls at Dura, with their elaborate headdresses, show that ideals of female presentation were also locally conditioned. The idealized role of the woman as caretaker for children is also shown in a terracotta from Dura, in which a woman is depicted with two children: a woman wearing a *himation* holds an infant in one arm, and a small child beside her holds her hand (Figure 5.15).[124] Based on inscriptions recording the elite women of Dura, Johnson posited an average age at marriage for women of about 15 years old.[125]

Just as 'play' with dolls is a way of inculcating gender norms, learning and socialization more broadly would have been important for social reproduction.[126] For this we might also look to the evidence of graffiti, and the many *abecedaria* from the houses of Dura. Alphabets were found scratched into the walls of a number of houses, and while they have been argued to have been for apotropaic purposes, it is also possible they were for teaching (and subsequently displaying such activity had taken place).[127] Eleven *abecedaria* were found in houses, although these come from only three houses: in house C3-D, three were found, including both Latin and Greek alphabets; in D5-A6, a Greek example; E4-33, another in Greek; and from M8-A, four Greek and a Syriac.[128] The idea that these could have been for learning (by children or adults) is reinforced by the coexistence of multiple alphabets from different languages in the same contexts. Other graffiti which may document children's presence are the pictorial forms, which may be recognizable from the height above the floor at which they were made (at a level easily reached by children), and the type of image which, in developmental

[123] Dolanksy herself notes the 'active' potential of jointed dolls: Dolansky 2012, 276, 278.

[124] G1513/1935.57/Downey 2003, no. 43, from the Wall Street, L8-W1. Downey notes that similar figurines are known from Seleucia, Babylon, and Nimrud; e.g. van Ingen 1939, nos 42–73; Oates and Oates 1958, 121–2, Plate 19a/f; Karvonen-Kannas 1995, 57–8, nos 131–41. The figurine was mould-made so while this is the only recorded example from the site there were surely others. Oates and Oates' discussion of the Hellenistic mother and child figurines from Nimrud (from a rubbish pit and the AB palace) described the mother with a child on her left hip as a 'distinctively oriental' pose, but these later versions are clothed. Karvonen-Kannas 1995, nos 136–7 are two examples from Hellenistic Babylon with very similar drapery to the Durene example, but they hold only one child.

[125] Johnson 1932, 32–3.

[126] D'Ambra 2000, 62; Kamp 2001, 12–20; Sánchez Romero 2008.

[127] Kraeling on apotropaic alphabet: F. R. 8.2, 89-90; on the religious significance of Latin alphabets in the 'Bel' sanctuary, Heyn 2011, 224–5; Kaizer (citing Kraeling) also interprets Durene alphabets as apotropaic, Kaizer 2009b, 236–7.

[128] House C3-D, text nos 649–51; D5-A6, no. 308; E4-33, no. 627; M8-A, nos 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, and 11. See Dura P. R. 9.3, 40 n 42 for a list of the alphabets from all contexts at Dura.

FIGURE 5.15 Terracotta figurine of woman with children excavated in the Wall Street fill L8-W1. G1513/1935.57/Downey 2003, no. 43. 16 cm high, 7 cm wide, mould-made. YUAG y258.

terms, they were capable of producing.[129] No graffiti meeting these criteria was recorded from the houses, but a number, previously assumed to be 'magical' were found in the Temple of Azzanathkona, room 14.[130]

[129] An approach developed by Huntley 2010.

[130] P. R. 6, Figures 34, 35, and 36.

For a fuller understanding of children at Dura, we might also look to the available mortuary evidence. Nine skeletons of children were found interred in loculi, within tombs of the necropolis.[131] While the date range for these is large and generally uncertain, from the Hellenistic period into the second century CE, some generalizations about the treatment of interred children can be made. Children were interred in the same tombs as adults, and a number were within the same loculi as women, possibly their mothers.[132] Some were found in the remains of small wooden coffins made specifically for children, and others were simply wrapped in cloth.[133] Certain items which were found in women's burials were also found in those of children. These included bracelets; for example in tomb 40, loculus 16, a silver bracelet was found on each of the child's wrists.[134] Beads were found in most children's burials, in some cases still *in situ* around the neck, as in tomb 33, loculus 11.[135] Copper alloy bells were sometimes found near the pelvis, and might have been worn by children in addition to women.[136] Others wore silver rings (finger rings, as well as ear or hair rings found near the head) and pendants, including large chalcedony pendants in two separate tombs.[137]

Clothing is one way that children can observe and learn accepted gender roles.[138] While the interments of the necropolis are generally earlier than the excavated contexts of the city, it is worth noting the presence of small copper alloy bells as items perhaps worn by children, and items such as beads which, as easily lost items were also found throughout the city, may also be related to the presence of children (if not exclusively). The importance of children to their family and of the particular relationship of children to their mother is also attested in their place within tombs, the wealthy items lavished on them, and their position within the tombs in relation to other remains. Some of the children's burials, for example tomb 54, loculus 3, included a silver earring, a copper alloy mirror, and a copper

[131] P. R. 9.2, Loculi containing children: tomb 6, loc. 5 (probably first century CE or later); tomb 29 (date uncertain, probably Hellenistic); tomb 33, loc. 2, 4, and 11 (probably between 150 and 250 CE); tomb 36, loc. 11 and 12 (probably before 150 CE); tomb 40, loc. 16 (probably Trajanic or later); and tomb 54, loc. 3 (probably first century BCE–first CE). None of the children's remains included dolls or toys, although some contained degraded and unidentified wooden objects. Only fifty-eight tombs were excavated of the hundreds whose existence was recorded, and many of the excavated examples had been plundered in antiquity.

[132] Adult and child skeleton in same loculi were found in tomb 33, loc. 4 and 11.

[133] e.g. tomb 6, loc. 5, in which the wooden coffin is 1.10 m long. P. R. 9.2, 31, 99. In later necropolis fill, children were interred in *amphora* used as sarcophagi, but these were not inventoried; see P. R. 9.2, 104.

[134] P. R. 9.2, 81.

[135] P. R. 9.2, 66.

[136] Tomb 33, loc. 11, two copper alloy bells near the pelvis of a child's skeleton; tomb 40, loc. 16, four copper alloy bells.

[137] Both tomb 6, loc. 5 and tomb 40, loc. 16 contained chalcedony pendants; the former is 1938.5169.

[138] Sørensen 2000, 128–9.

alloy spatula, and while the skeletal remains were not sexed, in the trappings of femininity we might guess that these were the remains of a girl who did not survive to use these things in life, but might have the chance in death. Another item which might have memorialized a child, or childhood, was found in House C3-D, a 'clay mould of a child's foot'.[139]

Children also appear in the texts of Dura, and while the necropolis perhaps gives evidence of children from wealthier families of Dura, in the parchments we also have evidence of a twelve-year-old slave, appearing in a document which records the payment of a loan.[140] Ages were not usually mentioned for people recorded in documents of, for example, inheritance (in which names and kinship relations were the relevant identifiers), but it did arise in the case of slaves presumably because their age was considered relevant to their productive capacity and hence their value, and also as a means of identifying them.[141]

Age was also considered relevant in the representation of children in paintings at Dura in which they appear with their families. The painting of Conon has already been noted, depicting (and identified by painted inscription) Conon's adult children and his grandchildren. In the painting, the female grandchildren are dressed much as the adult females, as the male grandchildren are dressed like smaller versions of the adult men, although they wear shorter tunics (see Figure 5.3). In the paintings of Zeus Theos, a fragmentary painting of a young boy (his name is only partially preserved, but he was the son of one Bargates), with short black cropped hair has a gold earring in each ear.[142] If young men wore earrings this further problematizes the gender assignations of jewellery.

I have used the term 'children' here as a broad catch-all for pre-adults. In the necropolis, they were identified purely on size (that is, presumed height determined from skeletal remains or the size of the coffin), and in paintings by conventions such as small stature and different dress than the adults. Aside from nursing infants perhaps attested by the feeding bottles, the toys, if they are indeed toys, cannot be associated with certainty to a particular biological age, although if female age at marriage was in the teenage years, the dolls were likely to be used before this time. The rest of the age range at Dura, from adults to the elderly, is difficult to find archaeological evidence of. However, an awareness of the human

[139] P. R. 6, 119. F1787, from C3-D8.

[140] *PDura* 17B, second century CE. The gender and name of the twelve-year-old slave was not preserved, but another slave in the same transaction was Barbaizabadate.

[141] *PDura* 25 and 28 mention slaves of twenty and twenty-eight years old, respectively. *PDura* 25 was a Greek second-century CE document regarding agricultural land outside Dura, and *PDura* 28 was a third-century document from Edessa. On the latter, see also Bellinger and Welles 1935.

[142] P. R. 7/8, 203. Other figures in the same register were fragmentary and lacking inscriptions, although overall the dress seems to have been much like that of the Conon painting.

life cycle and generational time is built into houses, because of the way that architecture was linked to the body, with, for example, the reconfiguration of a property upon death. The house was also a location of the life-course. The population size of Dura has been the topic of a number of studies, but in the absence of census data, this is largely calculated on the amount of built space and the presumed level of occupancy within that space, which probably underestimates the density.[143]

Status

People of different statuses are known from a number of forms of evidence at Dura. The existence of slaves is well attested in documents. Professions of different ranks, from prostitutes to potters, are also known. A (perhaps nominally) hereditary elite seems to have dominated civic life, and different ranks organized the army. As always, it is the 'higher' statuses for which we have the best evidence for reasons related both to ancient realities and historiographic issues: the ancient elite were more likely to leave documentary or representational evidence (in the form of parchments, papyri, paintings, and inscriptions, all of which are of high value to archaeologists), were more likely to possess material goods (and to partake of a material culture of an elite Mediterranean koine that was more likely to be recognized by archaeologists), had larger (and hence often more thoroughly excavated and recorded) houses, and were more likely to be able to afford funerary items (and hence more likely to have excavated burials and grave goods).

Slaves had no legal autonomy, and the evidence at Dura suggest that, as elsewhere in the Roman world, they were considered possessions: indeed, transactions relating to slaves are recorded just as the sale of houses or land, or as items of personal property (e.g. *PDura* 17B, 18, 25, 28, and 31).[144] We do not generally know how each of these recorded slaves became servile, although *PDura* 17D and 23, both of the second century CE, record someone becoming a slave through debt. In the case of *PDura* 23, Aththaeus became an agricultural slave, and in *PDura* 20, Barlass became a servile personal attendant through debt.[145] This is evidence of the impact of poverty and the survival strategies necessitated by it. Some of the slaves had Semitic names common in the region. A first-century

[143] Welles 1951; Will 1988; Hoepfner and Schwandner 1994; e.g. Hoepfner and Schwandner estimated a population of six thousand based on ten people per dwelling; Will estimated between five and six thousand. Will's estimation is based on an average family consisting of two parents, two children, and two slaves per dwelling (this, however, is a very nuclear view of a family, and the documents attest to larger and extended family units. In any case the average size of house units varies widely and coming up with 'average' families is problematic.

[144] It could, of course, be argued that children had a similar lack of ability to make decisions for themselves.

[145] *PDura* 20 and 23, found at Dura, relate to legal matters elsewhere, in the villages of Paliga and the Ossa, respectively.

Greek text, *PDura* 18, lists a number of slaves attached to a particular property; the same document lists slaves with 'local' (Semitic) names, which was interpreted by the editors as people, or ancestors of people, who had become slaves because of economic circumstances.[146] As noted earlier, their ages are sometimes given, presumably as this related to their value. A female slave, twenty-eight years old, recorded in *PDura* 28 (a third-century Syriac document from Edessa found at Dura) was sold for 700 denarii; in the second century, *PDura* 25 records a male slave named Achabus, about twenty years old, who was sold within a family (citizens of Europos but resident in a village outside it), along with a half share of a vineyard for 500 drachmae. A Latin inscription on an altar to Jupiter Optimus Maximus Dolichenus dated to 211 CE tells us that it was dedicated by Agatocles the freedman of the centurion Marcus Antonius Valentinus, and is evidence of the presence of freedmen associated with the army, perhaps dedicated on the event of his emancipation.[147] This indicates that Roman military households such as that of Valentinus would have been composed not only of free members of his family but also slaves and freedmen.[148] Further, from the formulaic use of epigraphic conventions and the worship of Dolichenus, it is evident that slaves and former slaves do not fall neatly into other categories easily identified onomastically (that is, not all slaves have Semitic names) nor culturally (that is, 'Romans' at Dura ran the spectrum of statuses from slave to tribune).

The archaeological invisibility of slaves (save their shackles, collars, and *bullae*) has been discussed for the Greek and Roman worlds.[149] While there are chains in the object records from Dura, none are definitively a restraint for humans, and a material culture of restraint is not visible. This is not a surprise, as we wouldn't expect this of urban, household slaves in any case.[150] Nor would we necessarily expect specialized spaces for slaves. But the lack of articulated architectural space is itself telling: the slaves must have been somewhere and if that place is not set apart it must have been amongst everyone else. Studies of the everyday, including housing, implicitly set up a situation which excludes the urban poor and homeless. The Yale excavators did label spaces in some large houses as servants' quarters, although this seems to be usually on the basis that these are adjacent to rooms they labelled as kitchens (and as these supposed kitchens had no cooking installations, the premise is flawed from the start).[151] Another aspect of housing, though, where we might see slave activity is in household production. In some houses,

[146] F. R. 5.1, 103. [147] P. R. 9.3, no. 970. [148] P. R. 9.3, 109.

[149] Morris 1998; Thompson 2003; Webster 2005. For an overview of the material culture of Roman slavery, George 2011.

[150] Thompson 2003; Webster 2005, 163.

[151] G1-A36: P. R. 9.1, 141 and Figure 62. There is no reason for the identification of this room, save for its place off the kitchen, which actually has no cooking installations (only a cooler): Baird 2012c. On the broader problem of using architectural remains to identify slavery in Roman houses, George 1997.

implements related to agricultural processing, such as large grinders for grain have been found. Some particularly wealthy houses also have considerable storage areas, numerous storage vessels for agricultural surplus or other goods. While neither of these things evidences slaves directly as individuals, we might see their work and production in these spaces, for example in the storage facilities of a large house, G1-A (see Figure 5.1).[152]

Other evidence comes from painting and material culture. The 'banquet' paintings from M7-W appear to depict servants attending to the reclining male participants: they are the standing figures on either end of the scene—the one on the right appears smaller than all the other figures and he wears a short tunic, both perhaps indicative of his status, as perhaps does the fact that he is standing (see Figure 2.10). He is also distinguished from the diners, who are bearded, by being clean-shaven (perhaps indicative of youth). He is named in Greek as Beelaeus and Palmyrene as Ba'alai, given in an accompanying *dipinto*, a name that is also attested at Palmyra and while we cannot be certain of his servile status, it is possible he was a household slave, although inasmuch as he is named, he is recognized as an individual.[153] To the left of the scene another man, also standing and wearing a short green tunic, holds a ladle and a bowl, named in a partial Greek text and in Palmyrene as Gadda. The adjacent scene of reclining female diners is also flanked by figures that appear to be female servants.[154] A *dipinto* accompanying the standing veiled figure on the right of the scene also names her, in Greek as Bith'e(?), with a Palmyrene text which is uncertain but which may mean 'daughter' or 'servant'.[155] While these banqueting paintings appeared in a house, they are the only examples of their type at Dura. Nevertheless, we might take from this a few fragments concerning servants: first, in this context at least, it is appropriate for men to be served by male servants and women by female ones, and second, that servants are visually demarcated: the shortness of the figures is probably a visual convention for communicating their status, but the shorter tunics of the male servants may relate to clothing use in practice. Similarly, if the standing female figures are indeed servants, they too are veiled, as were the elite women themselves.

George has argued that the depiction, on portable material culture, of people racialized-as-black is related to Roman attitudes towards people whose features were thought to be exotic, and related to their value as slaves and as having apotropaic significance. As such, domestic items might 'represent the aspiration

[152] Baird 2012c, 160.

[153] Scenes of domestic work in Roman art, George 2011, 403–8, and depictions of the 'waiting servant' in late Roman art, into which group these figures might be classed, Dunbabin 2003. On the paintings and *dipinti*, P. R. 6, 146–72. For Beelaeus, P. R. 6, no. 685; Dirven 1999, 290.

[154] Dirven 1999, 287–8, 292.

[155] P. R. 6, no. 687; Dirven 1999, 288.

to ownership of black slaves themselves, here adapted and reduced to the possession of household objects in place of a real slave. The use of black facial features on these objects enabled a direct association with real black slaves whose possession was beyond reach.'[156] Two bronze lamps from Dura depict figures racialized-as-black.[157] It is uncertain whether the associations made by George would have been made at Dura, or if they are more simply functional, forms of lamps, associated more generally with elite Roman material culture.

Power dynamics were not, of course, limited to those between genders or between a slave and master. Durene houses give evidence of a range of economic and social statuses, as discussed later. Further asymmetries were introduced with the arrival of the Roman garrison within the site, and the resulting transformations, including the planned architectural ones (like the camp wall or the Roman Palace). The prevalence of a military occupation throughout the site was also an issue in the last moments, but other impacts of the military included the unofficial ones, from the new demands for goods to the extended military community and entertainers found in the brothel, which perhaps give some evidence of the broader need for the sexual servicing made necessary by the military presence.[158]

Within Dura, there was undoubtedly a spectrum of status related to rank, profession, and a number of other social markers. Not all of these can be examined with our existing evidence, although a number might be. First is the presence of the ruling elite of the site, known from sanctuary paintings, inscriptions, documents, and palaces or houses. Second, and not linked to known families, is the range of housing, which demonstrate a broad range of sizes and degrees of ornamentation, relating to economic, social, and other markers. Next are individual markers of status, for instance that which might be demonstrated with a name, title, rank, or item of clothing or jewellery.

A Greco-Macedonian aristocracy at Dura was thought, by the original team, to have held power at the site from the Hellenistic period. In a widely cited study of 'The Population of Dura-Europos', C. Bradford Welles proposed a continuity of civic administration and ruling class from the Seleucid era.[159] His study was based mostly on the study of personal names, focused on the final century of Dura's existence, and proposed a tenacious Greek aristocracy and prevalent Greek culture at the site, an ethnic Greek population called *Europaioi* which disappeared in the final decades of the city's existence.[160] The Greek citizen aristocracy was

[156] George 2011, 407.

[157] F1795/Dam 10338/F. R. 4.3, no. 439 from B2-A24 and 1938.4506, F. R. 4.3, no. 438, of unknown provenance. See also a figurine of a 'negroid' face found in E8-28, shown earlier in Figure 3.4.

[158] Mattingly 2010, 114–18.

[159] Welles 1951. Welles also wrote the general discussion of the history of the city and its population in F. R. 5.1.

[160] Welles 1951, 253, 262.

contrasted with those he thought of as 'natives' (the quotes are Welles' own) bearing Iranian or Semitic names, and his confusion over *PDura* 13, in which such 'natives' were also designated *Europaioi* is palpable.[161] Welles linked the onomastics to what he thought were 'racial groups in the city in the first and second centuries of our era'.[162] Those with Aramaic names, he presumed, were 'natives' to be contrasted with the Greco-Macedonian elite. Those with 'mixed' Hellenic and Aramaic names were 'half breeds', and the use of aliases, in which individuals had both Greek and Semitic names such as in *PDura* 19 with the sons of Polemocrates, were explained as exceptional.[163] This reduced a very diverse linguistic and onomastic profile to a series of bounded 'racial' groups existing within the city, which in the Roman period became 'a mixture containing some Iranian, some Greek, some Latin, many Semitic elements'.[164] Names of the Roman military were so mixed that, Welles thought, they had lost 'any racial senses of the nomenclature'.[165] Thus, he lamented, 'Dura experienced in the short space of a half century the whole tragedy of the Roman empire, which, while endeavouring to combine civilization with security, succeeded in losing both.'[166] The fabled loss of a perhaps imagined Greek ruling class at Dura was equated with a loss of civilization, and the fragments of Hellenic culture that remained he thought were grasping and 'pathetic'.[167]

Many of the documents referring to the hereditary office of *strategos* and *epistates* are in fact Parthian and later in date. Rather than being a 'pure' ethnic Macedonian population, eventually forced to intermarry, and finally displaced by Roman rule (as in Welles' picture), the situation seems to have been more varied and complicated throughout Dura's history.[168] Durene houses are notable in their hybrid features, but it is interesting that among the largest, such as the House of Lysias, there are some (at least notionally) 'Greek' elements, including baths, paintings, and the use of plaster mouldings. This cannot be equated with any 'racial' Greekness along the line proposed by Welles. Rather, by this time, such features were part of the regional architectural language of the post-

[161] Welles 1951, 255.

[162] Welles 1951, 264. On the pitfalls of relying on onomastic data and the problems of equating names with ethnic identities, Macdonald 1998, 183–4; 1999, 254–6.

[163] Welles 1951, 264–5. Such 'exceptions' were explained away: for instance an inscription, no. 868 of P. R. 8/8, 129–30, a double name was said to be necessary because a hereditary position in which one Alexander is also called Ammaois, as 'herald of the city' would have been necessarily fluent in Aramaic.

[164] Welles 1951, 270. [165] Welles 1951, 272.

[166] Welles 1951, 274. In a later article, Welles gives a slightly revised view: Welles 1959.

[167] Welles 1951, 274.

[168] For critique of Welles, Pollard 2007. Another view comes from Sommer 2004, 164, in which a dynasty 'undoubtedly of Macedonian origin' is interrupted by the Iranian-named Manesos in *PDura* 20 because of the 'particular historical situation of the year 121' in which the Romans had withdrawn from the Middle Euphrates—for Sommer, Manesos was a temporary replacement from the 'realm's [Parthia's] core'.

Hellenistic Euphrates, perhaps legimating membership in an elite which claimed descent from original settlers, but which would have been unrecognizable to (for instance) a contemporary Athenian. In any case, whether the Hellenic identity of the names of the city elite was 'real' or not is immaterial; what matters is that elements, which might be thought of as communicating 'Greekness', were used among the high status families of the city. The gods of Dura had backgrounds that were Greek, Babylonian, Aramaic, Phoenician, Arab, Iranian, and Roman (or combinations thereof), and there is no reason that the population itself wasn't similarly cosmopolitan or multivalent, with multiple and/or contextual religious, linguistic, social, and cultural affiliations.

While the documents do not give a clear sense of a biological hereditary elite along the lines of Welles, the presentation of a hereditary line was important at Dura, even if this was an invented one. A genealogy based on inscriptions found in sanctuaries, by Cumont and added to by Johnson, demonstrates that the position of *strategos* was apparently hereditary in the Parthian period and into the time of the Roman occupation.[169] To this can be added the (probably) third-century inscription excavated by the MFSED in the Temple of Artemis.[170] By this time, the ruling family seems to have hedged their bets with the Roman occupation, and after a long line of men named Lysias and Seleucus appears one Septimius Aurelius Lysias, *strategos* and *epistates* of the *polis*. He is named in the Greek inscription from the Temple of Artemis, and is probably the same person long known from a painted inscription on a wooden *tabella ansata* found in the Palmyrene gate, in Latin, as Septimius Lusias Strategos of Dura.[171] The Latin inscription also lists his wife, Nathis, and their children, probably in order of birth: Lysianias, Mecannaea, Apollofanes, and Thiridates. The names Lysias *strategos* and Lysianus *epistates* are both recorded in the house in block D1, the eponymous House of Lysias, and the repeated acclamations to men named Lysias in this house bears out the connection with this family, known already to Cumont from the earliest excavations at the site.[172] Continuance of a physical and conceptual House of Lysias into the third century and the lack of Roman military finds or graffiti within the block D1 would seem, together, to indicate that its inhabitants were able to hold onto some semblance of power, if only at the very least in terms of property and titles, until the end of the city. The occurrence of a man, in the inscription from the Temple of Artemis, named Lysias, taking on Roman names in the third century, is unlikely to be a coincidence.

[169] Cumont 1926, 424; Johnson 1932, 17–34 and (esp.) plate II.

[170] Leriche and El'Ajji 1999, which also gives a list of the inscriptions recording the title *strategos kai epistates*, but has not consulted Johnson 1932.

[171] P. R. 2, 148–9.

[172] Inscriptions from the House of Lysias were among the only published elements from the structure: Frye et al. 1955, 147–51, nos 16–28.

Inscriptions are not the only evidence from sanctuaries which point towards a small number of ruling families which persisted from the Parthian period into the Roman one at Dura. Dirven has argued that, before the Roman period, religion at Dura was 'still very much embedded in the city and the family,' with 'competition' or the availability of 'choice' between cults a development of the Roman period.[173] In the Conon painting from the 'Bel' Temple already discussed, the fact that there are children at all is interesting: the depiction of Conon's children and grandchildren displays not only those particular named individuals but the existence of a strong lineage to persist into the future. Dirven interpreted the painting, and the more fragmentary ones of the Temple of Zeus Theos, to be indicative of the cults 'belonging' to two large Durene families, with the sanctuaries being their exclusive places of worship.[174] Further, she argues that the temples were dedicated to the worship of specific, inherited, patron gods of those families and were not open to the wider population.[175] Even if we instead interpret the presence of the families as that of patrons, their close relationship to these important cults, their ability to fund such buildings, paintings, and inscriptions is clear, as is the importance of a collective family identity. The paintings of the Temple of Bel, like the inscriptions and the family of Lysias, show there was a ruling and (at least nominally) hereditary class at Dura before the Roman period. While Welles' concern with the purity of Greek blood was obviously misplaced, the family of the House of Lysias was endogamous, with a number of recorded brother–sister marriages and other marriages between close kin.[176] Such unions between close kin would have been one strategy to control the fragmentation of property, and indeed the House of Lysias in D1 was not subdivided, but retained intact as a large house until the fall of the city. Whether such marriages were actually between people related by blood or between those who had been 'adopted' is not the issue that should concern us (even if this were knowable)—the issue is the economic and social strategies employed by elite families to try and maintain their status and property holdings.[177] The family was also, apparently, simultaneously exogamous

[173] Dirven 2004, 4.

[174] Dirven 2004, 11. A second-century inscription from the Temple of Bel also records the dedication of a chapel in the temple by the grandson of Conon, Lysias, the son of Conon, the son of Patroklos: Cumont 1926, 359–61. I use the 'Temple of Bel' to avoid confusion, as that is the name most frequently given to it (along with the 'Temple of the Palmyrene Gods'), but the texts including the inscription just noted refer, in fact, to Zeus Megistos, and to Zeus Soter. Another temple to Zeus Megistos (and the temple known as such at the site) is on the other side of the city in block C4.

[175] Dirven 2004, 12. [176] Johnson 1932, 31.

[177] On endogamy (in this case, often marriage between cousins) amongst the Palmyrene elite, Smith 2013, 93–5, which he attributes to 'the continuation of pastoral customs' *unless* (in what seems to me a double standard) it was amongst the elite families, when it is explained as cementing kinship ties and property holdings. On brother–sister marriage in Roman Egypt, where it was also of economic importance, Hopkins 1980; Shaw 1992b; Huebner 2007; Remijsen and Clarysse 2008; Rowlandson and Takahashi 2009.

(as far as it is possible to say without knowing the full lineage of every recorded individual), which would have also improved access to new properties or wealth.[178]

The House of Lysias, taking up an entire city block, is evidence of the elite of Dura. It was exceptional, however, and other houses range greatly in sizes. The smallest comprises only two rooms. The broad range of sizes of house, with ground floor space ranging between seventy and more than 2000 m^2, need not indicate a broad range of economic circumstances (although there was probably some correlation), but rather the size and shape of households: a large house might be that of a joined family of several brothers and their respective families, whereas a small one might be that of an heir whose property had fragmented over preceding generations.[179] Even the smallest houses have the three fundamental features, which indicates that whatever social need was fulfilled by rooms such as a principal room/*andron* it was not one limited to the upper echelons of Durene society. There were some common elements in the house plan, but heterogeneity shows that there were many different forms of families, and the range of sizes may be read as a high degree of social inequality.[180]

Two other structures that must be noted in the context of a discussion of Dura's ruling families are the 'Citadel Palace' of Dura and the 'Redoubt Palace', also known as the 'Strategeion'. The remains known as the Citadel Palace, much of which has eroded off the citadel into the Euphrates below, have been interpreted as Hellenistic in date.[181] The structure is only partially preserved, so early reconstructions were highly conjectural, and Downey's reappraisal of the work has shown that the building was divided into north and south sections, the south being organized around a Doric peristyle courtyard, residential in character, and the north around a large open courtyard.[182] The palace, perhaps typically of such

[178] Lévi-Strauss 1983, 167–83.

[179] For ethnographic studies in which house size reflected household size, rather than wealth, Kramer 1979, 154–5; Watson 1979, 133–7.

[180] Allara used house dimensions (in which each house was a courtyard unit, rather than counting intercommunicating houses), together with structural elements like paintings or architectural elaborations like mouldings and the presence of valuable items to discuss the range of wealth in the houses at Dura, and found a general correlation between house size, house form (how many sides of the courtyard were surrounded by rooms), and the presence of architectural elaboration—the largest houses tended to be the most elaborate. Allara 1987; 2002, 52.

[181] The extant palace overlies earlier Hellenistic material (on a different orientation), so does not represent the earliest phase of Hellenistic structure on the citadel—hence Downey's sometime description as the 'second citadel palace': Downey 1985b, 112; 1986, 27. Original publication: P. R. 2, 13–15, 53–7; see also Rostovtzeff 1938, 46ff; Perkins 1973, 14ff. Excavations were conducted by Pillet, and later investigations by Brown.

[182] Downey 1986, 29, 32–3; 1992. The separation of public and private parts of the palace was compared by Downey to that at Ai Khanoum in Afghanistan; on this see also Downey 1985b. Further on the indirect access to the preserved part of the building as indicative of its residential character, Downey 1988b, 347. The very narrow corridor with interior pilasters, on the east side of the Citadel Palace, has parallels in Babylonian

structures in the Hellenistic east, combines Hellenic and Near Eastern features, although full comparisons based on architectural plans are limited by the fragmentary nature of the structure.[183] The scale is small by comparison with the palaces of either Hellenic or Near Eastern traditions. Parts of the palace, including the peristyle, have parallels with Hellenic precedents, as does the use of headers and stretchers for construction, and the possible presence of rooms for bathing.[184] The position relative to the settlement, overlooking the Euphrates and the site are indicative of its place as a military stronghold, and offered a view of a blank wall to the city below.[185] It is not clear when this structure went out of use, but it is possible that the collapse of part of the building into the ravine occurred in antiquity.

The relationship of the Citadel Palace to the Redoubt at Dura is unclear; it is possible that the latter replaced the former, but the lack of good excavation records for either means the dating will remain problematic.[186] Like the palace within the fortified citadel, the 'Redoubt Palace' or 'Strategeion' in block C9 also has a strong defensive character in its structure, and is situated on a high point within the settlement with a view over part of the city and the Euphrates (Figure 5.16). The buildings also have their limestone masonry walls in common, and the display of a tall blank fortification wall to the rest of the settlement.[187] The *Strategeion*

temples, as noted in Downey 1985b, 116. Downey postulated that the hybrid features of the palaces and temples such as that of Zeus Megistos at Dura were a deliberate and conscious attempt at creating a new architectural form which could accommodate both Greek and non-Greek elements: Downey 1985b, 128; 1986, 37.

[183] Kopsacheili 2011, 20–2. Kopsacheili argues the Citadel Palace combines 'Macedonian' and 'Achaeminid' features. On the combination of Near Eastern and Hellenic elements we can now compare, e.g. the 'Acropolis Palace' at Jebel Khalid, which shares its disposition on the citadel and elements of its organization with that at Dura, including its Doric peristyle, which had not been excavated at the time Downey was writing her studies of Durene palaces. At Jebel Khalid, the building was interpreted by the excavators to be administrative in function; evidence for domestic activities was largely interpreted as being remnants of a later Hellenistic re-occupation of the building: Clarke 1994; Clarke and Connor 1995; Clarke et al. 1999; 2002, 25–48. Downey argued both the Ai Khanoum temples and the Dura palace had precedents in Mesopotamia: Downey 1986, 37.

[184] e.g. Macedonian palaces at Vergina or Pella, Andronikos 1964; Drougou 2011; Kottaridi 2011. For cultural affiliations of ashlar building techniques, Sharon 1987 (the header-stretcher pattern used in both Greek and Phoenician architecture). On the reservoir and rooms for bathing in the palace, Brown's field notes, as interpreted by Downey: Downey 1992, 146, 151.

[185] The earlier structure beneath the palace, thought to be an earlier palace, produced fragments of painted plaster. P. R. 2, 54. On the blank wall of the Citadel Palace, Downey 1992, 142.

[186] Coins from a sondage beneath room T in the Redoubt recovered Parthian and Roman era coins and Brittle ware dated to the second century CE: Leriche et al. 1997, 68.

[187] Both structures seem to have had a mudbrick superstructure on wall bases which were courses of large cut-stone blocks typical of the monumental Hellenistic architecture at Dura. The Redoubt was first published as 'The Inner Redoubt' by Pillet in P. R. 1, 23–4; then P. R. 4, 21–7. More recent studies, related to the conservation and consolidation of the exterior wall of the redoubt: Mouton 1992; Leriche et al. 1997; Bessac 2004b. Downey says the *Strategeion* 'belongs to the Hellenistic Greek peristyle type', but it does not have a peristyle: Downey 1986, 33.

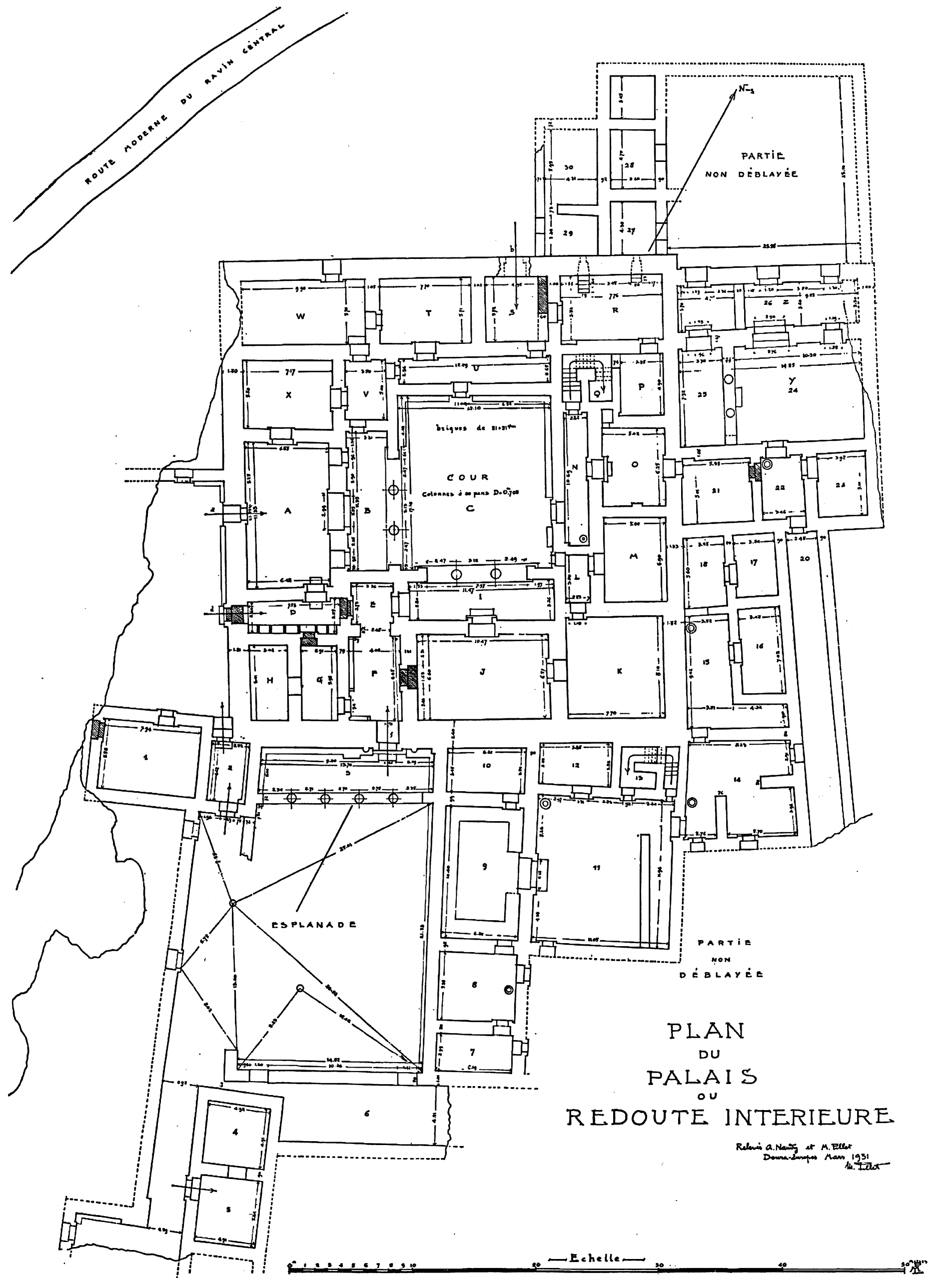


FIGURE 5.16 Plan of Redoubt Palace/'Strategeion' by M. Pillet. YUAG.

was not completely excavated, but its layout shares some elements of Durene domestic architecture, including its central courtyard.[188] The broad rooms A and J off the courtyard and axial to it, entered via long anterooms, might be compared to the arrangement in the House of Lysias or D5-F (although the former does not have columns, and in both of those there is one main room, rather than two). It is unlike other residential buildings at the site, however, in the number of different exterior entrances and in the design of its courtyard. While the publication says the structure was completely excavated and a perfect square, it is neither, as doors to structures with which this central part of the palace communicate open on several sides, and these structures were incompletely excavated.[189] The 'residential' part of the palace on the east side and the 'Esplanade' on the south ('the annexes') were treated as a separate structures.

The use of the building over a relatively long period is attested by the modification of its circulation, with the blocking of some doors, and the addition of other features. Indeed, the name of the building used in the original publications and by the MFSED, the Palace of the *Strategos/Strategeion*, is speculative; while the building certainly has palatial characteristics, there is nothing aside from its position that relates it to the known position of *strategos* at Dura (for that, we must look to the graffiti in the House of Lysias). Graffiti found in the building list, among other things, a range of personal names, partial accounts, and lists of items including foodstuffs.[190] Indeed, while this building is a monumental structure of the Hellenistic period, it might be useful to question why this building has been given its name, and has not been considered as having some other civic function. Even if the building is interpreted as a 'Strategeion', or official residence and office of the *strategos* of Dura, there is also solid evidence to indicate that the person holding the position and his family resided in the nearby house occupying the block D1, known as the 'House of Lysias'. Both the Citadel and Redoubt Palaces have similarities to the Hellenistic Palace at Nippur, with public and private sections, courtyards with columns, and a 'bent' entrance.[191] The palaces of Dura show that even in Dura's Hellenistic phase, the architecture, like that of other Seleucid palaces, was already a hybrid incorporating Hellenic features, mostly decorative aspects, while the layout and functioning incorporate Mesopotamian and Achaemenid features.[192]

While size alone is a crude indication of the relative wealth of a house's inhabitants, scale was an element which was emphasized in the larger elite houses of Dura. The largest houses had large courtyards, axially arranged rooms leading

[188] Nielson compares the 'forecourt' to those of Achaemenid architecture. Nielsen 1994, 117–19, but sees the closest comparison to the 'Strategeion' as the Palace of Lachish in Palestine.

[189] P. R. 4, 21. Some of the buildings had partially eroded into the ravine below.

[190] P. R. 4, 145–50. [191] Nielsen 1994, 122. [192] Nielsen 1994, 129.

to the principal room (as in D1 and D5-F) which not only elaborated the access and views to them but also making access mediated via anterooms. The reception rooms in both of these houses were broad rooms on the south of the courtyard, the same width as the courtyard itself and with three doors, a double door in the centre and single doorways flanking it. These houses did not have plaster platforms in their reception rooms; this feature might have been considered unnecessary if the residence had expensive furniture instead, or the space may have been multifunctional. This central room in the House of Lysias (D1-2), however, and that in D5 (D5-F4), both also had doorways at the back of the room and at one side, which would have made benches around the perimeter of the room inconvenient. The subsidiary courtyards of the House of Lysias also had broad rooms to their south, but had a single entrance off the court. The House of Lysias does not use columns in its large courtyard, and D5-F1 had walled up its peristyle by the final period, suggesting that this markedly Hellenic feature was not considered desirable by the wealthiest families by the Roman period.[193]

Social coding of Roman houses has long been a topic of interest, relying heavily on the contemporary literary sources to interpret Italian houses.[194] From these studies, and the comparanda they relied on (for example, that of early modern houses), it was argued that the form of houses controlled the way people move around within them, regulating behaviour and social interaction. Durene houses controlled access via their entrance, and secluded the courtyard from view from the outside. Inclusion and exclusion from the house seems to have been important, and even the largest houses did not do much externally to broadcast this status, with the one exception of the north entrance to the House of Lysias, which had a column on each side of the door, but which, like most other houses at the site, did not allow any visibility into the house courtyard from outside.

Power relations being played out within houses was not something restricted to the wealthy citizen elite.[195] While the wealthy had the means to articulate these things on a grander architectural scale, houses of ordinary people, too, articulated aspects of power relations. Social differentiation can be seen in the differences in scale and elaboration between large elite houses and smaller ones, but the houses

[193] Only a small number of houses with raised plaster platforms for couches also use columns in their courtyards. Six structures had both plaster benches in at least one room and columns in their courtyard: B8-H had several rooms with benches and a single column in its courtyard; G1-B (which communicated with G1-A by the final period) had two columns, one engaged with a spur wall, in its courtyard, and a bench in G1-B8; G2-B had two rooms with benches and a single column in its courtyard; G3-L had a single column in its courtyard and a plaster bench in G3-L2; G4-A had two columns in its courtyard and a bench in G4-A58; and G5-C, the house that became the 'brothel', had a column in its courtyard and a bench in G5-C2. This last structure, like a number of the houses of the agora, had supra-domestic functions.

[194] Wallace Hadrill's classic study meant 'the Roman house' 'in its cultural not geographical sense'. Wallace-Hadrill 1988, 43 n 1.

[195] On power relations within ordinary early modern houses, Johnson 2006.

of the elite and those of the ordinary population shared an architectural grammar. Across the site in every scale of houses there are indications that control of physical and visual access to the interior of the houses (whether for receiving guests or controlling the household is not clear) was integral to the functioning of the household and the community. For instance, one of the smallest houses, house C7-B, comprising only three rooms at ground level and no staircase to indicate an upper one, still contains a room, entered via several steps up from the court via double doors, with a bench around its perimeter, and a moulded plaster frieze with leaves and acorns.[196]

The common architectural articulation of space using rooms, the same basic types of which occur in houses from the smallest to the largest, provided one locale for the forging of community-wide identities. This is one reason why they appear in every house and the reason there are not sub-groups or enclaves visible architecturally within the city (except, of course, the military). Possessing (and presumably, using) particular forms of rooms was integral to integration in the community, and not restricted to a narrow elite. Even though the houses of Dura were 'closed' in the sense of visual accessibility from the street and tended to have restricted access via a single entrance, the many shared features hint at community practices. Elsewhere, houses which were 'open', in the sense of having interiors which are visible from the street, have been interpreted as enabling its household members to have 'interacted relatively freely with outsiders'.[197] If the opposite is true at Dura, it seems that the restrictions on interaction between people within and outside the house applied to particular members. Whether this restriction was related to gender is unclear. If Dura's principal rooms/*andrones* did serve as reception rooms (amongst other functions), then it would seem that hospitality and the reception of guests was key to the functioning of the community.

Commensality, or gatherings of people which aimed 'to accomplish in a collective way some material tasks and symbolic obligations linked to the satisfaction of a biological individual need', has been recognized as a means of defining and maintaining identity, and seems also to have been a feature of the sanctuaries at Dura.[198] The occasions allowed not only for redistribution of food and drink and the worshipping of a common cult, but a time for display and reinforcement of hierarchy and difference within groups.[199] The Temple of Aphlad, for example, contained an *andron* dedicated to the god, as attested by an inscription, which was dedicated by members of an association (*hetaireia*).[200] Within houses, too,

[196] Room C7-B8; P. R. 5, 37.

[197] Nevett 2010b, 83, discussing the houses of Hellenistic Delos.

[198] Grignon 2001, 24, 31. [199] van Nijf 1997, 152–3; Kaizer 2002, 221.

[200] P. R. 5, 114, no. 418. The inscription is dated to the Parthian period, 54 CE. On banquets as function of the communal life of Greco-Roman associations, Donahue 2003; Ascough 2008.

commensality would have allowed for the articulation of social groups within and between households, and if the paintings of M7-W are any indication, these activities *were* gendered, at least sometimes, with groups of men and women dining separately. The membership of such gatherings is not evident, but it is possible that they would have brought together extended family groups of men or women, perhaps in the *andron* of the head of household, and these provided an occasion for cementing the family group and its hierarchy.

Class and status were enacted within and between houses, but individuals could also display status overtly. The visible signs of hierarchy worn by the military have already been mentioned, as have elements of elite self-presentation, including the gendered wearing of certain garments and jewellery. Further items which might be considered include items such as seal rings and intaglios. For instance, the tribune Julius Terentius wears a seal ring in his eponymous painting; a number of these were found at Dura.[201] A large intaglio depicting Narcissus set in a heavily decorated gold fibula which was excavated just outside the Roman Palace exemplifies an extreme of this spectrum of display and ostentation (Figure 5.17).[202]

Such items were not only status objects in and of themselves, but related to further activities, such as sealing documents or goods. Most of the identifiable engravings were divinities or mythological figures from the Classical repertoire.[203] While the form of such objects would have been recognized throughout the Roman Empire (and, indeed, they were probably imports—many of the stones were, at least), some were used for sealing documents within local Hellenistic-Mesopotamian practices of record keeping. Sealings were, of course, long known in the Levant and Near East. For instance, a number of seals were found on documents at Dura (e.g. first-century CE document *PDura* 18 had five seals, perhaps indicating that many of the elite had seals which they could use), and other documents attest to the former presence of seals (*PDura* 22), although most had witness names, sometimes with a signature or monogram.[204] That the use of seals on documents was not out of use completely in the third century is attested, for example, by the four sealings on the fragmentary *PDura* 44, which also preserves a partial signature.[205]

[201] Cumont 1926, 93. For a catalogue of the intaglios held at Yale, Guiraud 1992. Intaglios were also found on bracelets at Dura, and many were found loose from their settings. Rings with seals were not limited to engraved stones but also included those with engraved metal bezels.

[202] I692/Damascus 3250, from X3-50 (outside the building, adjacent to rooms 45-49). P. R. 93, 58-62; Guiraud 1992, no. 22.

[203] These include Diana, Athena-Minerva, Victory, Fortuna-Tyche, Bonus-Eventus, Mercury, Narcissus, and a Satyr. Others have unidentified male or female figures, and there are several animals and insects including eagles, goats, and an ant. See also discussion of intaglios in Baird Forthcoming (a).

[204] In *PDura* 18, the five seals were taken to be those of the two people, a man and a woman (named Diocles and Timnoessa) involved in the transaction (a deed of gift) and three witnesses. *PDura* 5 and 99.

[205] Although other third-century documents are signed by witnesses, not sealed, e.g. *PDura* 26.

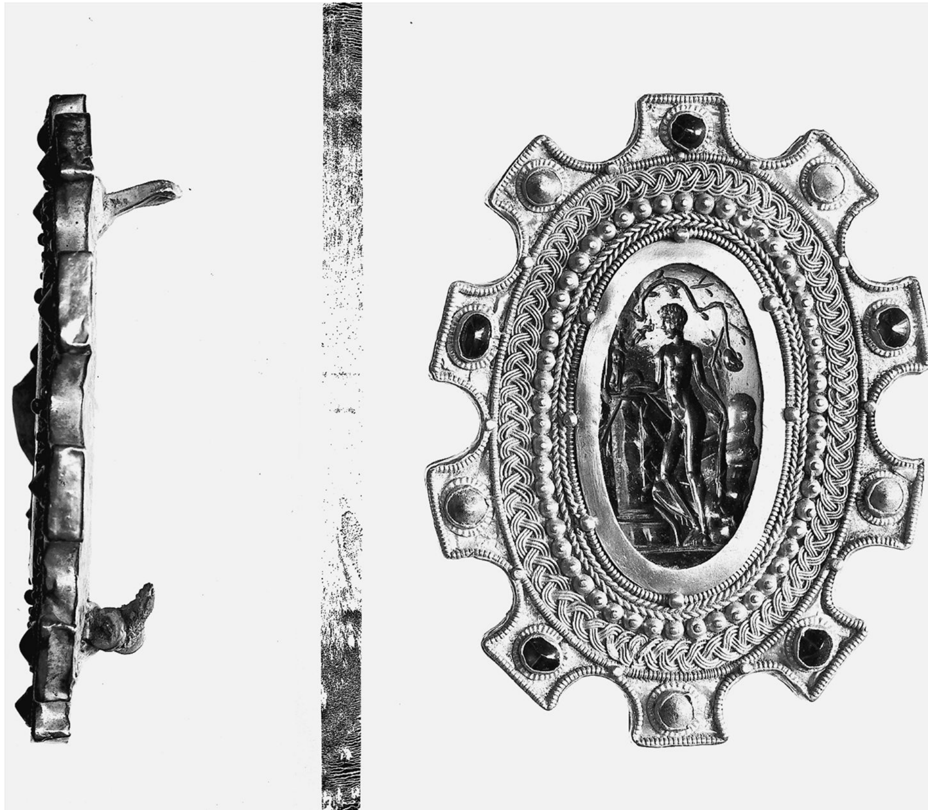


FIGURE 5.17 Intaglio of Narcissus, cut from green stone, and set in gold fibula. Found adjacent to the Roman Palace. I692/National Museum of Damascus 3250/Guiraud 1992 no. 22. YUAG i153a.

The intaglios of signet rings were an item of personal adornment which conveyed a range of meanings: accessibility of empire-wide networks (and the display of this); wealth sufficient to enable access to precious metals and stones; the ability to seal a document and, inherently, the link to such documents, the legal system, literacy, and positions in civic administration; the possibility of understanding Classical mythology as represented in the iconography, and the differentiation of the wearers of the intaglios in all of these respects from the rest of the population.[206] While such seal rings were a status item in the Roman world, their presence at Dura is not necessarily within that milieu; as dated documents such as *PDura* 18 attest, they had been in use at Dura since at least the first century CE, and probably long before.

[206] Two much earlier seal stones were also found and classed among the beads at Dura; these were thought to have been Babylonian; unfortunately, these were not from a recorded context so it is difficult to say whether these were being reused as jewellery or if they came from deposits of early material at Dura (there is evidence of much earlier, pre-Hellenistic, settlement, both on the site and in the necropolis, in the form of a cuneiform tablet and other remains). P. R. 4, 258–9.

Elite status, then, was something that could be communicated by one's personal appearance, or within a house by particular architectural forms or ornamentation. The importance of these forms at Dura is underscored by the difference in the forms of elite civic expression between Dura and other sites. For instance, at Dura there is little surviving evidence for the civic euergetism that characterizes other cities of the Roman East. Epigraphy records a certain number of dedications within sanctuaries, but there is no record of the dedication by elite members of society of, for instance, public monuments. There is little evidence for public honorific portrait sculpture (for instance, an inscribed statue base in the *bouleuterion*), and no funerary statuary representing or commemorating private individuals, a strong contrast with Palmyra.[207]

Religious, ethnic, and linguistic identities

The evidence of written languages, personal names, and place of origin recorded in text have been used to examine the identities at Dura.[208] Language is perhaps one of the most contentious and problematic avenues for the assessment of identity, as assessments of ethnicity of soldiers based at Dura has shown.[209] At Dura, texts appeared on a variety of media; in lapidary inscriptions, on papyri and parchments, as graffiti, *dipinti*, and on ostraca.[210] The languages and scripts used include Greek, Latin, Palmyrene, Hatrean, Aramaic, Safaitic, Syriac, and Middle Persian.[211] Though language has been argued in the past to have a one-to-one correlation with ethnicity or culture, or between script and

[207] An exception may have been the arch across the Main Street between C7 and B8; an inscription which may be associated with this was dedicated in the 230s or 240s CE by Antigonos son of Marion, a high priest. P. R. 4, 73, no. 169; P. R. 9.1, 61. Sculpture in the round was not a large part of the Durene sculptural tradition, nor was it introduced, it seems, under the Romans. This may, in part, relate to the poor, friable, quality of the local gypsum, but given Dura's trade connections stone *was* available, and indeed relief sculpture in sanctuaries is known throughout Dura's history; Downey 1977. Butcher explains the lack of monumental public architecture at Dura because it was 'perhaps a city in which private strategies overcame the public': Butcher 2003, 261. I would generally agree, but perhaps reframe this: Dura was perhaps a city where strategies that were public elsewhere took place in the private or religious spheres (e.g. the *boule* meeting in the Odeon of the Temple of Artemis). On the 'lack' of civic organization noted by Butcher we might add the lack of water supply, but there was nonetheless a structure of civic and legal administration.

[208] On the 'Greek' character of Dura persisting throughout its history, Millar 1993, 469–70. On the relationship between religion and language at Dura, Kaizer 2009b. On the onomastic profile of Dura, Sommer 2004.

[209] For the earlier Mesopotamian evidence, Bahrani argues that language use was never used as part of the means by which people ascribed 'racial' categories. Bahrani 2006, 52. Soldiers at Dura: Pollard 2000, 125ff.

[210] F. R. 5.1 and Frye et al. 1955; Kilpatrick 1964; Frye 1968; Harmatta-Pékáry 1971; Brunner 1972.

[211] Millar 1993, 445. On the problems with the term 'Safaitic' and the extension of its use as an *ethnikon*, see Macdonald 1993.

language, this has been shown not to be the case.[212] This is obvious for a place such as Dura where it often occurs that some languages are written in a different script—Greek in Latin script and vice versa, in addition to bilingual texts in various permutations, Semitic names in Greek script, and even instances of 'Semiticized Greek' and Palmyrene in single inscriptions.[213] Part of the problem archaeologically is that it cannot be assumed that writing a language equates, for any individual, with speaking it, or at least speaking it as a day-to-day tongue as opposed to one used only in particular situations. For instance, it is highly likely that, though Latin was in formal use at Dura by the army, it is improbable that individual members of the army would have used Latin in private contexts, and indeed graffiti by the soldiers is usually in Greek.[214]

It has been argued that 'Greek remained the normal language of daily use in Dura throughout the Parthian period,' that in Dura's Roman period 'Greek remains standard', and personal names have been used as evidence to establish identities at Dura, generally into 'Hellenic' or 'Semitic' categories.[215] What the evidence more convincingly shows is that Greek was the language of public business and formal literacy, and Latin was used in formal documents of the Roman military; what language was most frequently spoken at Dura cannot be proven, but it is possible that this language was a form of Aramaic. indeed, Bagnall has recently argued that the appearance of some contracts in Syriac in Dura and its region means that it was the 'underlying native language' of the people involved.[216] Noy, however, has argued that the concentration of Aramaic in the synagogue might have set the Jewish Durenes apart, as 'the linguistic situation of the Jews was different from the rest of the city.'[217] One of the problems with the previous scholarly emphasis on the predominance of the use of Greek at Dura is that this has been taken as proxy for Greek cultural dominance and continuity as well, when the public or official dominance of Greek does not contradict the demotic presence of Aramaic.[218]

Personal names have also been equated with ethnic origin on many occasions by various scholars, but these too have problems and limitations, made obvious by

[212] Macdonald 1998, 183–4. *Contra* in part an argument by Sommer, using onomastic data from Dura, Sommer 2004.

[213] For instance, see a dedicatory inscription from the Mithraeum, no. 845: Millar 1993, 448. P. R. 7/8, 83-4.

[214] Pollard 2000, 135–6; Healey 2001, 167–8; Butcher 2003, 399; Baird 2011c, 56–61.

[215] Millar 1993, 448, 467.

[216] 'Latin was used by the military and high officials, Greek the standard language of public life and legal documentation, as well as of letters, and Syriac in use for some legal transactions and clearly the written representation of the underlying native language of many if not all parties to these agreements.' Bagnall 2011, 104.

[217] Noy 2007, 65.

[218] Bagnall 2011, 116; Baird 2012d.

such inscriptions as those at Dura in Greek but with Semitic personal names.[219] Though personal names are problematic for the examination of ethnicity, that is not to say that they are not extremely useful for examining other facets of identity, such as family and community identities,[220] which for example has been done to an extent already at Dura relating the lineage of Lysias, of the family which held the hereditary position of *epistates* at Dura.[221] Similarly, the appearance of people self-identifying as Palmyrene in Palmyrene script at Dura does give indication of that person's affiliations.

For studying individual 'foreigners' at Dura we are entirely reliant on texts in which people identify themselves as such. Palmyrenes, Hatrenes, and people from the village of Anath are all recorded at Dura.[222] Such texts are largely found in religious contexts, and were dedications made to gods, frequently a deity or deities of the place from which they have come, in which the dedicants may or may not identify themselves explicitly as being from that place. Other inscriptions contain personal names written in Palmyrene or Hatrene, including those on paintings made as *dipinti*. People were not simply moving from place to place for the sake of travel, and the Palmyrenes at Dura seem to have been there largely as merchants or as members of the military.[223] Initially, the military was perhaps protecting the caravan or regional trade between Dura and Palmyra. Evidence for the presence of Palmyrenes at Dura is in the form of Palmyrene script and names, and/or Palmyrene deities, who also appear in relief sculpture at Dura.[224] They are attested from the Parthian period onwards in a number of contexts, with the evidence including names painted in Palmyrene on house M7-W, and in a number of sanctuaries.

The sanctuary known as the 'Necropolis Temple' because of its location outside the city walls was founded in the first century BCE by two Palmyrenes and dedicated to the Palmyrene gods Bel and Iarhibol.[225] In mentioning these two deities together, and in the dedication being offered by members of two different Palmyrene tribes, it is different from anything that occurs at Palmyra itself.[226] The coming together of people who, at 'home' in Palmyra would have given distinctive offerings, shows that their identity as Palmyrenes was a commonality around which their religious identities could coalesce. An 'expatriate' community

[219] Macdonald 1993, 377–82; 1998; 1999, 254–7; 2003, 306. For instance, see P. R. 5, 112, no. 416; 142, no. 453.

[220] Pomeroy 1997, 72–5.

[221] Johnson 1932.

[222] On the Palmyrenes of Dura, Dirven 1999, and on the Palmyrenes, Hatrenes, and people of Anath, Dirven 2011. On personal names and ethnicity in Roman Syria, Clarke 1995, 129.

[223] Dirven 1999; Edwell 2008, 111–12; Kaizer 2009b, 241–4; Dirven 2011, 203.

[224] There is also a long-running debate on whether three figures on the Terentius painting represent Palmyrene deities or Roman emperors.

[225] P. R. 7/8, 319–20; Dirven 1999, 199–202.

[226] Dirven 2011, 208.

of Palmyrenes at Dura cut across groupings that would occur in Palmyra itself, such as temple and tribe, to create a community based on common geographic origin and common language.

Inside Dura, the sanctuary in block H1 known as the 'Temple of the Gadde'; the main cult statue does not survive but two reliefs from the sanctuary were dedicated in the second century CE by a Palmyrene man, represented on the reliefs as a Palmyrene priest, and depict the 'Gad' (Tyche) of Dura and that of Palmyra, respectively.[227] The presence of civic gods of Palmyra within Dura show the desire to preserve that civic identity within a 'foreign' civic context. However, Palmyrene deities at Dura were worshipped within sanctuaries that were of the same basic form as other Durene temples, so there was 'compatibility' between the needs of the cults.[228] Palmyrene soldiers were also involved in establishing the Mithraeum, a Tyche of Palmyra appears in the 'Temple of Bel', and earlier, in Parthian Dura, in the Temple of 'Zeus Kyrios' the deity is also identified as Baalshamin in the Greek/Palmyrene bilingual inscription on the cult relief.[229] Aside from the Palmyrene text in M7-W, no evidence from houses is definitive of a Palmyrene connection.

People who saw their origin as the village of Anath, 120 km downstream from Dura are also known at the site. Evidence comes from the Temple of Azzanathkona and that of Aphlad, in which one inscription records the foundation of the sanctuary of Aphlad, accompanying the cult statue and explicitly noted as being the god of the village of Anath.[230] The relief of the Temple of Aphlad is identified in the inscription as having been dedicated by Hadadiabos son of Zabdibolos son of Silloi, as a gift for the well-being of himself and his children and his entire house, thus displaying the lineage of the dedicant and his place as the head of household as well as his relationship to the god and the village of Anath.[231] Individuals who made these probably came from Anath itself, and Dirven interprets the inscription accompanying the sculpture of the deity as implying the existence of an 'original' cult icon in Anath itself, thus 'a clear indication that the social and religious identity of this

[227] P. R. 7/8, 218ff; Dirven 1999, 222–60; 2004, 13; Edwell 2008, 107–12. Palmyrene inscription on an altar to the Gad of Dura, P. R. 1, 61; a third-century CE bilingual inscription in Palmyrene and Greek to Nemesis, P. R. 1, 62–3.

[228] Kaizer 2009a, 157. Other evidence for Palmyrene trade or presence at Dura includes a Palmyrene inscription on a commonware pot found in a tomb: P. R. 9.2, 39. Edwell counts fifty-six inscriptions which provide evidence for Palmyrenes at Dura: Edwell 2008, 111, most of which have been published in Hillers and Cussini 1996.

[229] Mithraeum, P. R. 7/8, no. 845; first-century CE temple of Zeus Kyrios/Baalshamin, P. R. 7/8, 307 no. 915c. See also appendix of archaeological evidence of Palmyrenes at Dura in Dirven 1999.

[230] Nos 416 and 418, respectively, in P. R. 5, 112–16; Millar 1993, 449. The inscription recording the foundation of the sanctuary is dated to 53/54 CE. Further on the formula used in the dedication of the *andron*, Moralee 2004, 98–9.

[231] P. R. 5, 112–13, no. 416; Dijkstra 1995, 267–8.

group was based on their common origin rather than family ties.' At the same time, an *andron* in the same temple was dedicated to the well-being of the *strategos* of Dura so these dedicants were also participants in the civic setting, themselves a brotherhood drawn from multiple families.[232] The multiple Greek spellings of 'Aphlad' within the sanctuary give further evidence that Greek was not Aphlad's native tongue.[233] Further, as noted by Kaizer, the language of the inscription identifying Aphlad as the cult of Anath (the relief was set up 'as a vow, for his own salvation and that of his children and of his whole house') was itself of the standard Graeco-Roman formula, but the dedicant had a name that was 'non classical': Hadadiabos son of Zabdibolos son of Sillos.[234] The depiction of Aphlad himself shows the god with a beard like that of Baal-Shamin, a *kalathos* like Bel, and in the stance of Jupiter Dolichenus, but standing on griffons rather than a bull.[235] These complex entanglements of Semitic names, village identities and gods from Anath, the god Aphlad himself depicted using elements of a number of different gods known in the region, the inscription giving respect to local Durene notables, use of Greek language in epigraphy, and the use of a Greco-Roman formula in the text together reveal the complex, hybrid, situation at Dura in the Parthian period and beyond. The combination of Babylonian temple forms, probably Aramaic spoken names for gods and their Greek written counterparts, Greco-Roman formulae, Semitic personal names, Durene civic notables, and the presence of cults of gods from other localities certainly gives the impression of a creolized milieu, in which different aspects of social, linguistic, and religious life might draw on different backgrounds or contexts.

The presence of the Hatrene script and the names of Hatrene deities might attest to the presence of people from Hatra at Dura. Hatra, in northern Mesopotamia, was a major religious site.[236] At Dura a dedication to Hatrene god Shamash in the Temple of Atargatis plus three other graffiti were found.[237] Two of the texts are only a name, in Hatrene. A graffito from an (otherwise typical) house has names of Hatrene deities, and like that from the Temple of Atargatis, also has a Greek text accompanying it, 'in order to make one of the most important deities of Hatra accessible to the inhabitants of Dura-Europos', perhaps in part because unlike the Palmyrenes, there was no substantial number of people from Hatra at Dura.[238] Like people who had come from Anath, it seems there was a Hatrean presence from the

[232] P. R. 5, 114–16, no. 418; Dijkstra 1995, 265–6; Dirven 2004, 12; Kaizer 2009a, 163.

[233] Kaizer 2009a, 162; 2009b, 241.

[234] P. R. 5, 112–13, no. 416. Kaizer 2009a, 162–3; Kaizer 2009b, 240–1. On the formula, Moralee 2004.

[235] Kaizer 2013, 80–2.

[236] Hatra has been the subject of large-scale archaeological investigation since the 1950s: Safar and Mustafa 1974; Ibrahim 1986; Venco Ricciardi 1988; 1990; 1992; 1996; Sommer 2003.

[237] Bertolino 1997; Leriche and Bertolino 1997; Bertolino 2004.

[238] Kaizer 2009b, 245–6.

time of the Parthian period at Dura, and the graffito from a house was visible (if not necessarily made) in the third century. Palmyrenes, who had also been present from at least the Parthian era, increased in numbers with the arrival of the *Cohors XX Palmyrenorum* with the Roman garrison.[239]

The gods of other places were, then, well attested at Dura, and some seem to have accompanied people from those places. Only small traces of languages—Hatrene and Palmyrene—from houses attest to the presence of those people in them. The local house type, like the temples, was 'compatible' with the needs of these people. While there has been argument over whether the cults of Dura were family-based, exclusive, or competitive, it is worth noting that in Dura's houses the religious situation is relatively homogeneous.[240] The question of neighbourhoods remains open; for instance, there is a group of wealthy houses with Hellenic elements clustered near the Redoubt in D1 and D5, but elsewhere in the city very small and large houses coexist within the same city block. Just as the houses of the city do not appear to have been organized by size or status, neither are they organized along religious lines, as far as evidence is recognizable archaeologically: for instance, the houses immediately adjacent to the Christian building or the synagogue do not contain any Christian or Jewish symbols, nor other material culture which suggests the sanctuaries were the focal points of particular religious neighbourhoods in the city. Given that these structures evolved from private houses, and that houses within the same city block often seem to have had strong ties, this is perhaps surprising, and may be a function of the partial character of the evidence.

This is not to say that the cults of Dura were not resistant to each other or even competitive (although in the polytheistic world of the third century they need not have been either); only that in domestic life the religious affiliation was not clearly a factor which seems to have affected where in the city one lived, nor in the form of one's house, and that despite religious differences the community was relatively integrated, at least in terms of housing. Houses also shared blocks within urban space with sanctuaries, baths, and shops. In several cases, houses were deemed to be associated with the sanctuaries (e.g. the 'House of the Priests' adjacent to the Temple of Artemis, or the house which shares walls with that of Zeus Megistos), but there is no firm evidence of a relationship between specific houses and sanctuaries, aside from proximity.[241] While analysis at this scale is limited by the areas that were excavated, with present evidence it does seem as though religious and civic identities did not play a part in the location of households within the city, with perhaps the exception of the large houses near the Redoubt, an area apparently long under the control of elite families.

[239] Dirven 2011, 207. [240] Elsner 2001; Dirven 2004.

[241] On the lack of an identified Jewish neighbourhood at Dura, Dirven 2004, 8.

As noted already, there is no evidence in the current data from Dura that the Christian or Jewish communities lived in a particular zone of the city. The same may be said of the Palmyrene community at Dura. With so many religious groups we might expect that their members might also align outside of religious practice, in the form of enclaves or other discernable groupings within the city. Despite this, the very presence of so many diverse cults in a localized area, such as along the Wall Street, would argue to the contrary, as would the relative homogeneity of the religious items from the houses of the city.[242] The peripheral placement of these sanctuaries within the city, and their adaptation from house structures, could also be a result of their late establishment. Domestic religion, as far as it is evident in the houses, was apparently not incompatible with other religious practices. Even within particular groups identities and affiliations were complex. Fine, for instance, has recently shown the hybrid nature of the Durene Jewish community, within whose synagogue Persian, Aramaic, Greek, and Hebrew were known, and which had strong ties to Jewish communities in Babylonia.[243] Similarly, Rajak has shown that Dura's synagogue was integrated within local norms as well as those of the wider diaspora, and Stern that graffiti from the synagogue shows that elements of devotional practice are shared amongst different religious communities at Dura, including the synagogue and the temples of Aphlad, Azzanathkona, and even the Mithraeum and Christian building.[244]

Military

Roman soldierly identity was multivariate, comprised of gender, status, and professional and political identities. Documents hint at the complexities of identity, naming patterns evidence, language use, and ethnicity even within the corporate group of the Roman military. For instance, *PDura* 46 is a fragmentary private letter found at Dura, written in Greek from a soldier, dating to the early third century: the author, with an Aramaic name, seems to have left the army under dishonourable conditions, and addresses a centurion at Dura who himself has a Greek name but an Iranian patronymic. Many of the Roman soldiers were themselves Syrians or from the eastern (and formerly Seleucid) empire; official communication was in Latin but other correspondence in Greek. Names allude to

[242] Elsner has explored the complex interaction of the Durene cults, their resistance and parallels to each other. Elsner 2001, especially 303–4, and now Rajak 2011.

[243] Fine 2011. As noted in Chapter 4, evidence such as *miqva'ot* has not been discovered in the excavated houses. On the identification of Jewish houses, Baker 2002; Hirschfeld 2007; Galor 2010. Noy, while suggesting the use of Aramaic may have differentiated Dura's Jewish community, situates that community as a product of its local environment: Noy 2007.

[244] Rajak 2011; Stern 2012, 183, 191.

a range of backgrounds and letters such as this show that perhaps not all soldiers were willing or enthusiastic participants.

Excavations at Dura recorded many items of military dress and equipment that allow an examination of the appearance of soldiers, in addition to their presence in the area of the military camp and throughout the city as discussed in Chapter 3. There was no 'standard issue' military kit but nevertheless a strong corporate identity was forged in part by grooming and dressing in compliance with an accepted set of norms.[245] This fostered not only group cohesion, but could be one means of intimidating local communities. The painting of the tribune Julius Terentius found in the Temple of Bel is perhaps a good general indication (Figure 5.10).[246] The soldiers wore breeches which appear a dark grey, a long-sleeved white tunic with coloured bands (some decorated with swastikas in the painting), a waist-belt, with a sword and baldric, and a heavy cloak which hung to mid-calf and was secured with a brooch on the right shoulder. A soldier from the Tower 19 mine wore an iron ring, and other finger-rings were probably worn by members of the military.[247]

Brooches and belt-sets are well attested at Dura. The most common type of brooch found at Dura is the crossbow, at forty-six per cent of the total of known types from known contexts.[248] This fits with what we would expect of a third-century military site assemblage, and '[i]t may be suggested that the Dura material constitutes a fairly typical middle imperial military site assemblage, i.e. consisting mostly of types common across the empire with a few exotica.'[249] If the crossbow brooches can be (as they generally are) taken to be military,[250] then it is notable that they are not only found in the area of the military camp (in blocks E7, E8, F3, and J8), but also in the citadel bounding the east side of the site, in houses (C7-A, C7-A^2, G3-F, G3-L, M7-H), shops, and public areas, and many from the fill in the

[245] James 1999.

[246] For a discussion of the military dress, including the representational evidence of the Terentius painting, F. R. 7, 39 and 57-66.

[247] F. R. 7, 63.

[248] The brooches of Dura were published in Frisch and Toll (1949): F. R. 4.4.1. Over 200 brooches from known contexts were recorded at Dura; 206 were recorded in the object registers, but not all of these were recorded in detail and accessioned by YUAG. Of those without context in the final report on the bronze objects, some are likely those recorded in the object registers, but have lost their association with the field number and context, and still others were excavated before contextual information was routinely recorded. Two further brooches, set with stones, were not included in the fibulae catalogue of Frisch and Toll, but were published in P. R. 2, 78 and P. R. 4, 256. Crossbow brooches make up forty-nine per cent of those in Frisch and Toll, not all of which are from known contexts. The final report on the bronze objects catalogues a total of 181 brooches (if we combine the numbers of the enamelled fibulae, catalogued separately from the rest of the fibulae), but as these include those from the first four seasons, not all come from known *loci*.

[249] F. R. 7, 56.

[250] See e.g. Swift 2000, 73; 2006; Wild 1985, 386. Crossbow brooches have occasionally been found in funerary contexts associated with women and children, however.

Wall Street.[251] These brooches, for supporting a heavy cloak, are again suggestive of a military presence which permeated the site and was not limited to the area of the camp. The 'Aucissa' brooches, by contrast, generally dated much earlier than the third century, are the next most common type after the crossbow brooch, but with a much smaller proportion: nine per cent of known types from known contexts.[252] Several of these come from secondary contexts (in the Wall Street and a trench made in the rubbish fill overlaying the necropolis), but the remainder come from domestic contexts (houses C3-B, C7-C^2, and C7-G^3), and none from within the military camp. This perhaps indicates that these were already in use at Dura before 165 CE or that they were left by the brief Trajanic occupation.[253] Other of the military openwork bronzes had elements from 'Celtic' metalwork and have even been argued to belie a direct connection between Dura and Britain, although it is more likely that such metalwork represents the hybridity of Roman military equipment generally.[254]

The creation of a certain bodily appearance related to military culture was not limited to what people wore, but also grooming habits. For example, body hair was another aspect of male and female personal presentation which could be manipulated.[255] In the Dura paintings there is a uniformity of short hairstyles and close-cut beards among the military men.[256] Evidence for grooming found at Dura included razors, combs, and tweezers. Tweezers, of course, could also be medical instruments and be used for a variety of purposes, but an association with grooming of some sort seems confirmed by the recovery of copper alloy tweezers from the C3 baths.[257] Tweezers were also found in domestic and military contexts.[258] Wooden combs have also been shown to be related to

[251] Public areas: including in block B2, the C3 baths, a street in the agora adjacent to block G1, and shops B8- H17 and G2-24.

[252] S-shaped plate fibulae are the third most common, at almost six per cent. A number of swastika plate fibulae, dolphin fibulae, and pierced fibulae types were also excavated; for the full range see F. R. 4.4.1.

[253] F. R. 7, 55. There is nothing else from these contexts to suggest that the Aucissa brooches might be associated with the Palmyrene mercenaries at Dura, as proposed by James in F. R. 7, 240.

[254] Netzer 2011 argues the openwork bronzes from Dura are perhaps indicative of a more direct Dura–Britain connection. James has argued such copper alloy metalwork is evidence of the 'Celticization' of Roman military kit (James, pers. comm.).

[255] Bartman 2001, 3.

[256] F. R. 7, 58; such hair and beard styles are evident both in the Terentius painting and in the Heliodorus painted tile from L7.

[257] F2120a/1938.3008. Tweezers might have been carried by individuals, perhaps evidenced from a pair of tweezers from the sap beneath the city walls made during the siege, F1961.

[258] Domestic contexts include house C7A, tweezers E582/1932.1661; house N8A, tweezers G911x and G1034b; and house D1, tweezers H743, as well as in a shop adjoining a block of houses, C7G2: E79. Military contexts include E8, tweezers H432. Tweezers were also found in the necropolis, I 710/1938.2999, but came from a trench rather than a tomb.

the creation and maintenance of military appearance at other Roman sites.[259] These combs could be for styling hair and for removing lice.[260] Of the combs at Dura, most came from the secondary deposits of the Wall Street and towers.[261] Nevertheless, seventeen Dura examples are similar to the type of boxwood combs recorded at the Roman fort at Vechten in the Netherlands and known from elsewhere in the region: double-sided wood rectangular combs, with rows of teeth on the long sides (one side more fine than the other), and a lentoid profile, referred to as 'H-combs' due to this shape.[262] Implements for the removal of lice were probably a necessity for the tightly occupied soldiers' quarters of E4 and E8, although the find-spots of such combs at Dura are limited to places where conditions were favourable to the preservation of wood, so the association remains an open question. Three copper alloy razor handles were found, including one from the E4 house.[263] Such razors, with a form and decoration similar to those in the Western Empire, perhaps attest to the participation of Durene soldiers in a much wider practice of grooming in a particular style, and as Haynes has argued, one way that soldiers' bodies were bound into imperial military culture.[264] The neat beards worn by the Roman soldiers in Durene paintings would have required careful maintenance, and was as much a part of their image as their tunics or robes. Clothing could also be used to denote status within the military, creating differences not only between the military and civilian populations but within the military as well.[265]

Appearance was only one facet of military identity, and at Dura the amphitheatre and bath buildings attest to other cultural practices linked specifically with the military presence at the site. Objects relating to grooming were part of soldierly identity construction. More mundane was the preparation of food and

[259] Derks and Vos 2010; although, as the authors note, in funerary contexts they were associated with female grooming practices and appearance. At Dura, in tomb 24, loc. 14, a wooden comb was found with other women's objects, P. R. 9.2, 131.

[260] Pugsley 2003, 23–5.

[261] Twenty-one combs were recorded from known contexts.

[262] Pugsley 2003, 14–19; Derks and Vos 2010. Eight of the Durene examples are from known contexts: F1126d/1933450j from L7-W10; F1542/1933.450b, from L7-W; F335/1933.450h from B2-SB6; F409/1933.450a from M7-W1; F724/193.450i from L7-W1; F995d/1933.450c from L7-D31; F995e/1933.450d from L7-D31; and G1848/1934.495b, from N8-W8. Similar wooden combs in the YUAG Dura collection without secure find-spots: 1929.425, 1934.495a, 1938.5999.3872, 1938.5999.3873, 1938.5999.3874, 1938.5999.3875, 1938.5999.3876, and 1938.5999.3877. Weaving combs were also found at Dura. A number of other combs from known contexts were not retained or photographed and are of unknown type.

[263] F226g/1938.2138, F. R. 4.4.1, pierced bronze no. 93, from E4-15. Two others did not have recorded find-spots: F. R. 4.4.1, pierced bronze nos 94 and 95, 1938.2139 and 1938.2140, respectively. Both were copper alloy animal-shaped razor handles.

[264] Haynes 2013, 169–70.

[265] As discussed well by James, F. R. 7, 65. The hierarchies of military personnel are well attested in the working rosters of the *Cohors XX Palmyrenorum* stationed at Dura, published in F. R. 5.1 and Fink 1971, 18ff.

storage of provisions in the buildings discussed in Chapter 3. It is interesting, though, that the material culture through which identity might be expressed was specific and selective: for example, it was apparently important to have a comb or a razor which was like that used by a member of the military throughout the empire. Having a cooking pot or serving vessel that looked like those used elsewhere was apparently unimportant or undesirable, or in any case unattainable at Dura. Languages could also be situational, and while using Latin was important in formal contexts, military graffiti were more frequently in Greek.[266] The dress items of the Dura Roman military and their arms and armour have been expertly analysed by James, but their spatial distribution has not previously been much discussed.[267] As noted in Chapter 3, items of dress, including the many small and easily lost copper alloy fittings for belts and baldrics and scale armour, are found throughout the site, including, very frequently, in household contexts.

BEING DURENE, BEING ROMAN

> Before the Romans Dura was a curious [*sic*], perhaps, for the eastern Greek cities, a typical mosaic of local and inherited Graeco-Macedonian elements; after the Roman occupation it became an undistinguished part of the Roman Levantine world, sharing that uniformity toward which the Empire led.[268]

Welles' influential assessment of Dura appraised the city as one which became part of a homogeneous empire once it fell under Roman control. The intervening decades since Welles have witnessed a wealth of excavations in Roman provincial and frontier contexts, which together with post-colonial and kindred approaches have seen a shift towards understanding the Roman Empire less as a bringer of uniformity, and more as a broad range of interactions between Rome and those people over whom it held power.[269] At Dura, it could be argued that even approaching the site with the framework of the Roman world in mind is an error, because so much of what existed in Roman-period Dura originated under Parthian or Seleucid rule, and because it was not for long part of the Roman sphere. Dura could also be examined for its Jewish community,[270] as a Parthian site,[271] or a Mesopotamian one, as a multicultural site, caravan city, or provincial backwater. The perspective of the examiner is always evident in the determination of what

[266] Baird 2011c, 59–60. [267] F. R. 7. [268] Welles 1951, 274.

[269] As exemplified, e.g. by Webster 2001; Terrenato 2005; Derks and Roymans 2009; Revell 2009; Mattingly 2010; Haynes 2013.

[270] On the reception of the Synagogue paintings, Olin 2000; 2002; 2011; Fine 2011.

[271] Dura's art (including that of the Roman period) is generally treated as 'Parthian': Rostovtzeff 1935b; Colledge 1977; Mathiesen 1992.

'kind' of site Dura is.[272] Nonetheless, Dura did spend generations under Roman control—and importantly, it was transformed by the presence of the Roman military garrison within it. My starting point for considering 'Roman' Dura is chronological and administrative, not cultural, beginning with the period during which Dura was under Roman rule. It must be noted again that the built environment of Roman Dura includes many houses and religious buildings which were erected while the city was under Arsacid rule (and palaces and fortifications that were even earlier), so it is not possible to completely disentangle 'Parthian' from 'Roman' Dura.

By 254 CE, shortly before Dura's demise, a document recording the divorce of a Roman soldier of the fourth Scythian legion from a local woman 'of Dura' records the place as *coloniae Europeaorum*.[273] The titles held by the city changed, as did the names of some of its people, under Roman control, with men including those of some of Dura's elite families taking up the Roman name Aurelius after the Antonine Constitution, as for example did one Septimius Aurelius Lysias.[274] Roman rule may have further disrupted Dura's social structure in the extension of citizenship to many who had previously been excluded from the hereditary body of *Europaioi*. Roman consular dating was used on some official documents, including those in Greek relating to the civil population, and the official religious calendar of the Roman army was present, although its enactment is not well testified.[275] And, of course, in the third century much of the city was taken over by a Roman military presence. By some measures, then, Dura was part of the Roman world.

By other measures, the picture is more complicated. Seleucid dating and the cult of the city founder continued (the latter may have even been re-introduced), and local legal traditions were enforced.[276] There is no secure trace of the imperial cult being practiced in the 'civil' town.[277] That people in Dura were not, perhaps, desperate to broadcast their Roman status may be shown in the adoption of the *tria nomina* which, from surviving urban documents, is relatively low compared with the appearance in rural contracts, with predictably higher uptake amongst the military and veterans.[278] To men like Lysias, taking on such names could perhaps be seen as part of a status game in which being Roman was one way they could attempt to preserve their property and status within the community, and indeed his name was displayed within the context of the Temple of Artemis.

[272] On the Orientalist approaches to Dura, see especially Wharton 1995, 15–63.

[273] *PDura* 32.

[274] Leriche and El'Ajji 1999, 1325–8.

[275] On the *feriale*, see the section 'Durene time' in Chapter 4.

[276] *PDura* 12, 25, and 37.

[277] A dedication to Lucius Versus was found in the Temple of Artemis, as was an inscription to Julia Domna, probably from a statue base. Cumont 1926, 410, no. 53; P. R. 3, 51, no. D149.

[278] Sommer 2004, 171.

Within the House of the Lysiads in D1, however, there is little sign of any attempt to play this out materially, with Dura's most elite residence sharing a spatial grammar with its most humble. This may have been due to Dura's late incorporation into the Roman world, or its peripheral place in the empire. However, in terms of elite material culture some of the Durene jewellery would have looked at home as far afield as Roman Britain (which is not to say that it was *worn* in the same ways), and indeed costume is a change that can be quickly made. Overall, much of Dura's material culture was hybrid, with affiliations with Mediterranean, Mesopotamian, and other regions which evolved and adapted within Dura's local milieu. Arguably, all Roman provincial cultures (and indeed Roman metropolitan culture) were hybrid, but the extent and particularities of Durene hybridity are exceptional.

Amongst the members of the military community, it was a different story: the clothing, arms, and armour they wore and used was part of how they subscribed to the corporate identity of the Roman military. This corporate identity was itself a self-consciously hybridized form, but one which was convergent on Romanness.[279] Latin, though, was rarely used outside formal military contexts—even military graffiti tended to be in Greek. Aside from members of the military, some women did use Roman-style dress accessories, like bone hairpins, although whether these were local women adapting their appearance or women who arrived with the army is not known, although from *PDura* 32 we know that some soldiers did marry local women. Such selective adoption of certain material culture worked both ways, with the Roman military (while undoubtedly introducing new cooking practices including those evidenced by the density of ovens built in Roman military structures) using locally available ceramic forms and wares.

Houses throughout Dura, despite the fact many were the residences of Roman citizens in the third century, have virtually no architectural or decorative attribute which would normally be classified as 'Roman'. Across the site, there is no marked break in the ceramic signature with the advent of Roman rule, nor in house plan or construction (save those buildings built or modified specifically for military use). The material evidence of the pottery, terracotta figurines, lamps, all have evidence of the occasional import, and some 'imitations' of Roman items, but the vast majority of the material culture of the site was locally produced and a product of the regional environment, or part of long-standing networks that looked both to Mesopotamia to the East and to Syria to the West. All of which begs the question of whether Dura was 'really' Roman (and if not, what was it?), or, conversely, could 'being Roman' look very different from how it is generally conceived? The ruling elite, at least, in some cases take up Roman naming practices within Roman

[279] James Forthcoming.

documentary and epigraphic traditions, but their houses demonstrate that their home life and their relationships to others, in terms of their reception activities, perhaps, continued as they had before. For elites and others, there was undoubtedly a real shift in power. This seems to have been in part negotiated via a perceived Greek heritage, for instance in the continuation or re-introduction of Seleucid civic institutions.

At Dura, being Roman encompassed a range of experiences. Julius Terentius, tribune of the twentieth Palmyrene cohort, wore the accoutrements of a Roman soldier (many elements of which were, themselves, hybrid items, showing connections with 'barbarian' peoples), visited the amphitheatre and baths, worshipped his emperors, and eventually, died in or near Dura and was memorialized in a Greek inscription.[280] The inhabitants of the house of Lysias, perhaps, struggled to maintain some form of power under Roman rule, relying not only on old patterns of property ownership and lineage but by taking on Roman names in public venues, if not in private ones; the painting of his newly Roman-sounding name not only in Latin but in a *tabella ansata* demonstrates this was not only an onomastic and textual issue but one that was grounded in Roman conventions of visual culture.

Others, like the former residents of blocks E4 and E8, probably had their homes requisitioned for use by the Roman military; even if people were paid for their properties, the level of urban displacement from the north side of the city in the early third century would have been severe. Still others seem to have adapted to the presence of the military by exploiting new economic opportunities, as the range of establishments in the agora attest. Local women married to Roman soldiers may have adorned their hair with bone pins depicting Venus that wouldn't have seemed out of place in Rome itself, but the jugs from which their wine was poured were the green-glazed table *amphora*, like their grandmothers had used, a hybrid Hellenistic and Mesopotamian form.

In the Western provinces, three aspects of urban life deemed to be mechanisms for the negotiation of Romanness are the authority of the emperor, urban ideology, and religion.[281] None of these criteria fit Dura very well: the authority of the emperor was certainly an issue within the Roman military stationed there, but urban leadership still resided, it seems, largely in the continuity of local authorities. The Roman interventions in the urban fabric were limited to buildings needed for the military itself, including an amphitheatre, baths (and an aqueduct for the supply of this), but the programme was largely concerned with creating the

[280] On the painting of Terentius, see especially discussion in F. R. 7, 39. On the hybrid nature of Roman military equipment, James Forthcoming. An epitaph, which seems to have been unfinished, was found in the courtyard of house G7-H in the agora, P. R. 9.1, 176–85, no. 939.

[281] Revell 2009.

necessities for the Roman garrison and not an attempt to transform Dura into a Roman city.[282] A multiplicity of local religions persisted despite the presence (and perhaps, the practice) of the *feriale*, and there is no evidence for the imperial cult.

The material record of Dura is not only a site of encounter between different cultures in its series of rulers, but one where many cultures had long been entangled. Particular aspects of identity were grounded in this hybrid context, and it is impossible to account for this in terms of monolithic identities. Being Roman at Dura (as elsewhere) was contextual as well as chronological. Perhaps the most distinctive 'Roman' aspect of civilian Dura was its firm grounding in local and regional traditions and networks.

[282] James 2007.

SIX

The Houses of Dura-Europos: A Biographical Approach

Biographies trace the histories of objects over time, and a collective biography of Dura's houses suggests a material history that does not fit neatly into historical periodization or archaeological phasing. The duration and life histories of Dura's houses as material and social entities are held in their use and modification over generations. The material form of Dura's houses and assemblages is at odds with neat cultural and historical categories that would define Dura as 'Macedonian', 'Greek', 'Parthian', or 'Roman', instead revealing hybrid forms. Dura's death as a city, while abrupt by most archaeological standards, with an end in the mid-250s CE, can be seen as more protracted in the evidence of the houses, which show a military presence across most parts of the site, probably associated with Dura's final years. Previous chapters have explored the character of the houses, the Roman military presence at Dura, and the activities and identities evidenced by the houses and the assemblages. This final chapter draws together some of these threads, to examine the relationships between the structure of houses and the structures of the social groups within them. Using several blocks of houses as examples, it argues that the form and transformation of houses—their life histories—is inextricable from those of the people within them, and that houses were not only a backdrop to life but integral to it, enacting and enabling dynamics within the family, and allowing for the material negotiation of different cultural affiliations.

THE STRUCTURES OF THE HOUSES AND HOUSEHOLDS

Houses, like the social groups inhabiting them, can be messy and come in many configurations.[1] In third-century CE Dura, while many houses had elements of configuration and decoration in common, no two were identical in plan. The great variety of configurations of houses relates to the variety of family forms.

[1] On the 'house' being useful because it is a 'heuristic model based on pragmatic actions rather than . . . an ideal classificatory type determined by kinship rules', Gillespie 2000a, 468.

So, while the houses of Dura were linked to the shape of families and lineages, houses embody the realities of daily lived practice, rather than the ideal form of kinship rules.[2] *PDura* 19 demonstrated the way in which house form might be related to kinship, in the transmission and reconfiguration of property mirroring the reconfiguration of the household over time. The link between property, lineage, and household, however, might encourage a consideration of whether, in some ways, the house *was* the social form, enabling and constraining social relations within the structure.[3] The material form of the house enacted major changes which occurred in the social group which inhabited it (and constrained them, for example, because physical property cannot always be divided evenly, and in the necessity of common shared spaces). The material boundaries of the house, or its connections to other houses, can be understood to relate not only to the social unit but also to the economic and political one.[4] This is not to say we should ignore kinship relations as attested in documentary sources, but rather that houses provide a means of examining how these are physically enacted on the ground: houses are a material manifestation of interrelations between people, part of a complex web of social, economic, and religious ties.[5] The relationship between people and houses is then discursive and reciprocal, and the long lives of Dura's houses—many used and adapted over generations—is related to the long lives of the household groups inhabiting them.

The internal world of the house, seen in opposition to the external world, was one element stressed by Bourdieu, and the specific dynamics of this opposition are culturally and socially delimited.[6] At Dura, the accessibility of houses emphasized their interiority, and thus the importance of delimiting the social group within it. Entranceways controlled access to the house and were the interface between the household and the outside world.[7] Single wooden doors directly on the street

[2] Bourdieu 1977, 33ff; Gillespie 2000a, 476.

[3] The house is an institution, 'a corporate body holding an estate made up of both material and immaterial wealth, which perpetuates itself through the transmission of its name, its goods, and its titles down a real or imaginary line, considered legitimate as long as this continuity can express itself in the language of kinship or of affinity and, most often, of both.' Lévi-Strauss 1983, 174. The concept of 'house', Lévi-Strauss 1987, 151–2.

[4] Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995a; Gillespie 2000d.

[5] Another Arsacid-era document helps substantiate this. *PDura* 18 is a deed of gift, and refers to a mortgaged property (not necessarily a house), in which citizens of *Europos* are involved. From it, we learn that Nicanor had loaned money to Diocles and his wife Timonessa, and then taken possession of the property, probably after the death of Diocles; this document records Nicanor returning as a free gift to Timonessa the property (excepting slaves), *who is now his mother-in-law*. The document attests to marriage between citizen families, and the fact that such marriages had direct monetary/property consequences.

[6] Bourdieu 1990.

[7] The opposition between the internal world of the house and the external world of the public domain is known from many cultures, as is the need for transitional spaces which allows people to move between these physical and conceptual worlds: Robben 1989, 575.

were the portal into the house, which otherwise presented a blank façade to the passer-by. This blank exterior façade visually echoes the exterior of the palaces of Dura, its sanctuaries, and the city walls themselves. From the exterior not even the boundaries of the house would have been clear as the perimeter of the house was the exterior of the block or a party wall. Even when the street door was open, the entrance vestibule usually obfuscated any view into or out of the courtyard. The stress on the interiority of course, is, in part, a message to the outside world. Access to a house was a privilege for some, while for others it might have been a constraint, not only something one could be included in or excluded from but also held within. The physical house policed the integrity of the household unit, which was relevant not only for the protection of the lineage (in which parentage was the key to inheritance) and thus property, but also, probably, citizenship amongst the *Europaioi* or elite of Dura, whose power may well have been under threat with the enfranchisement of a broader group by Roman authority in the early third century.

The entrance passageway was a transitional and isolating space, a liminal zone between house and street. Its transitional nature is further attested by the clustering of graffiti in these spaces, and the presence of reliefs and statuettes of deities.[8] The need to police the relationships between those within the house and those outside it may also relate to the way that houses intercommunicate. That is, units around courtyards and with their own street entrances sometimes connect internally to other courtyard units, thus combining multiple courtyard units into polycentric houses. This would have allowed members of multiple families within these structures to move between them without having to go into the public world of the street. The 'bent-access' approach, like that seen in the entrances to Dura's houses, has in modern Middle Eastern courtyard houses been linked to the seclusion and separation of women within the house, with the separation of public and private areas necessitated by and enabling restrictions of contact between women of the house and guests.[9] The permeability and control of space within houses are therefore revealing of some social aspects.[10]

The courtyard around which houses were focussed also put shared activities at the core of the house. The courtyard was not only the source of light but the focal point of the house through which anyone entering or leaving would have to move. Like the entrance passage, the courtyard in *PDura* 19 was a shared space after the

[8] Graffiti in these spaces, Baird Forthcoming (b). From entrance spaces, a male figure (possibly Heracles) with a ram from C7-G^{2}14: E95/F. R. 3.1.1, no. 42. A plaster bull's head from G3-H2: G165/1938.5358/F. R. 3.1.2, no. 159. A statuette of Aphrodite from G3-K1, G246/1935.53/F. R. 3.1.1, no. 20 (NB object register find-spot conflicts with published version, in which the statuette was said to come from the courtyard). A further statuette of a draped female from G1-81: E1262/1932.1217/F. R. 3.1.2, no. 86.

[9] Zako 2006. [10] Brusasco 1999, 9.

division of the structure between heirs.[11] Extended families could have also shared the burden of necessary tasks which took place there, be those related to the economic function of the household (such as the processing of grains or textiles), or its reproduction (including the care of infants), to securing its place in relation to the sacred (in the domestic cult). The treatment of communal areas relates to the relationships between the groups that share them.

Hierarchies of space within the house may be seen in the presence of a principal room off the courtyard. Such a space, perhaps sometimes known as the *andron*, is present in every house, a rectangular room entered directly from the courtyard on a long side via several steps, usually via double doors, and sometimes possessing a raised platform, probably for couches. One of the functions of such rooms, perhaps indicated by the raised perimeter, the term *andron*, and paintings found at Dura, may have been for reception activities, which were apparently gendered gatherings at which shared eating and drinking were one locale for the creation of affiliations and fostering of particular community identities. Such gatherings involving commensality were also a part of Dura's religious life, as rooms with plastered perimeters for couches also occur regularly around the perimeter of sanctuaries.[12] The frequency of such rooms demonstrates the importance of commensality in private, civic, and religious life at Dura, and their number, the fragmentation of Durene society into smaller units. Some houses had more than one such space, for example house B2-C, which had two broad rooms with raised plaster perimeters, both entered via a few steps up from the courtyard, and each controlling access to a further range of rooms. Such a layout perhaps indicates the co-residence of more than one conjugal unit within the house, or even their gendered use.[13] In the agora, the presence of multiple such rooms together with other features such as cooking installations seems to indicate that these houses, as discussed in Chapter 4, had a non- or supra-domestic function.

In addition to the division of space into suites of rooms controlled via a central room off the court, the cohabitation of large joined families may also explain the interconnections between courtyard houses themselves. For example, in the south half of block H2 (Figure 6.1), each of the courtyards H2-D1, H2-G1, H2-F1, and H2-D^{1}5 were interpreted by the excavators to be the cores of their respective houses, for a total of four houses in the south side of this block.[14] However, by the

[11] Babylonian houses at Nippur also retained shared courtyards and entrances when houses were modified to create relatively independent suites: Baker 2010, 192.

[12] e.g. in the 'Temple of Artemis-Nanaia' (block H4) and the 'Temple of Adonis' (block L5).

[13] For the houses of Old Babylonian Ur, it has been argued that the spatial hierarchies represent not gendered asymmetry (as in Greek houses), but the dominant family over its more junior branches: Brusasco 2004, 153.

[14] The houses in H2 are divided by a narrow alleyway from the Temple of Atargatis, which occupies the north half of the block.

final period, only house H2-F was an independent unit with its own access (it had had an earlier connection to the adjacent house, but a door that once opened between H2-F2 and H2-$D^1$6 was blocked up). The other three courtyards had by this time become part of one large interconnecting structure, with openings between H2-D9/G2, and H2-D11/$D^1$5. Entrances via H2-G7 and H2-D6 gave two separate external access points to the space, perhaps indicating that while the inhabitants had relationships which made the connections between the houses desirable, it was also desirable for different parts of the household to maintain independent access to their own portion of the house—which probably would not have been necessary if the link between the houses was simply a reflection of houses expanding by acquiring property.

The need or ability to physically reconfigure a house would have varied depending on wealth and status, as the wealthiest families may have been able to distribute complete houses (or courtyard suites with independent access) on the occasion of inheritance, and resources to make renovations would have been necessary for any modifications.[15] Indeed, the largest house, D1, as will be discussed later, has less evidence for reconfiguration than other, much smaller, houses at Dura. The variety of configurations at Dura was linked to wealth and status, but also social structure and to the type of household, be they simple (or 'nuclear') family households, extended family households (conjugal units as well as relatives other than children), or multiple family households (more than one conjugal unit), with the houses transforming as the households did.[16] Parts of houses could go out of use, as attested by the ruined room mentioned in *PDura* 19 or the room destroyed by fire excavated in B8-H.[17] Further changes in houses were a result of transformation of use by the Roman military, as the subdivisions of space and installation of different facilities attest of a different character, as seen in E4 and E8.

CHANGING HOUSES: BLOCKS C7 AND D5

Houses, both as physical and social entities, were not static, but transformed over time.[18] The modification, reconfiguration, fission, and fusion of houses at Dura was limited in most cases by certain parameters, for instance, the size of the city block: by the third century there was usually no open space between houses and

[15] As noted by Baker 2010, 187, in her discussion of earlier Mesopotamian houses; in her example, houses could be divided into 'virtual' shares and not necessarily physically divided.

[16] Definitions follow Laslett 1972, 28–31.

[17] B8-H4 and B8-H5.

[18] On the domestic cycle, Goody 1971 or the notion of the household series, Smith 1992, 30.

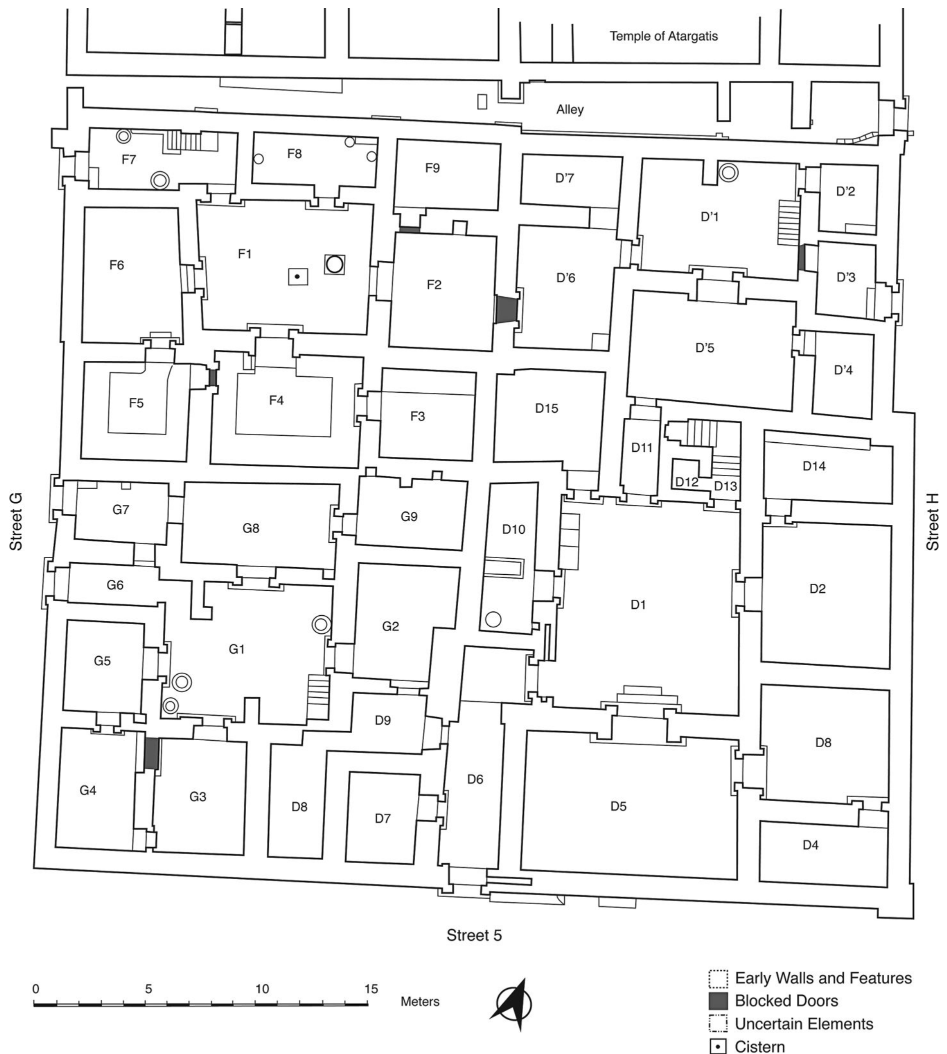


FIGURE 6.1 South side of block H2. North side, not pictured, is the Temple of Atargatis. Plan by the author, adapted from original by Henry Pearson. YUAG.

hence no room for expansion of houses horizontally by building new structures—of vertical expansion, we usually have no trace, except the occasional buttressing of walls (as on the east side of E4) which may indicate the addition of an upper storey, or that occasioned by street level rise as in the agora. The public space of the street was not usually encroached upon, even in the agora sector. The houses in blocks C7 and D5, two poorly published but completely excavated blocks, make interesting examples of the way houses could change over time. Both blocks were made up almost exclusively of houses, and while the lack of stratigraphy is problematic, something of the relative sequence of modifications can be identified.

C7

Block C7 has been mentioned already in the second chapter. As a block comprised entirely of houses (except for a few shops), it is notable because it was completely excavated and relatively well recorded, and object records were made for much of its excavation.[19] There were twelve courtyards in the block and these courtyards were the basis for the numbering system imposed on the houses by the original excavators (C7-A, C7-B, etc), although for reasons that are not clear some houses were given subsidiary identifications, such as C7-A^2 and C7-G^2 (Figure 6.2). By the final period of the houses' occupation, a number of changes are visible to have been made, although these cannot be dated in absolute terms. The most evident of these is the blocking of doorways to reconfigure spaces. By the final period, eight separate units can be seen within the block, all comprising a single courtyard and a single entrance (C7-A, C7-A^2, C7-B, C7-E, C7-F, C7-C^2, and C7-D), except for a large unit which has five courtyards and five entrances (comprising C7-B^2, C7-C, C7-G, C7-G^2, and C7-G^3). This configuration is not simply the result of one house accumulating wealth and gradually expanding, for instance, by buying out neighbours. The blocked doors indicate a more complicated picture, showing that a number of the houses which had single courtyards in the final period of occupation had once interconnected with adjacent units. Indeed, none of the courtyard units is without evidence of this. So, while houses themselves seem to have been relatively long-lived, their boundaries were, to a degree, flexible, probably changing with the changing configuration of families, at times like the distribution of property following the death of the head of the household.[20]

Blocked doors show, for instance, that while C7-D was an independent unit in the final phase of its existence, it had once been possible to move internally to the adjacent house C7-G^3, via C7-D24. Houses C7-E and C7-A had also once had an

[19] Targeted excavations were also undertaken and published in Saliou 2004, with a particular focus on the early chronology of the block and the existence of original parcels of land into which the block was divided. Saliou postulated a long median north–south wall which divided the block, vestiges of which were preserved in the plan (e.g. the wall which makes up the east side of house C7-F), although the houses themselves seem to have filled the space gradually. The numbering here is taken from the original plans so that it can be correlated with artefact records. Saliou imposes a different numbering system (as does Benech 2007), although the letters for each house are the same, as the plan of C7 in P. R. 4, Pl. 5 (labelled as 'Plan of houses E and F' but depicting the whole block) was largely illegible. The version here is based on the original plan from the YUAG Archive. Saliou demonstrated also that virgin soil had been reached in several places by the original excavators (i.e., they dug through the house floors), as is also indicated by the long sequence of coins excavated in this block and published in P. R. 4, 262, which range from Seleucus III (third century BCE) to Valerian (third century CE). Excavations were also conducted by people unconnected to the Yale team, and H. Rowell's letter to Bellinger dated 14 December 1930 refers to the houses of this block being 'rummaged in by god knows who', as well as by the French military: Cumont 1926, 240; Rostovtzeff and Welles 1931, 182; Gelin 1997, 238; P. R. 6, 33.

[20] Gerritsen 1999, 81.

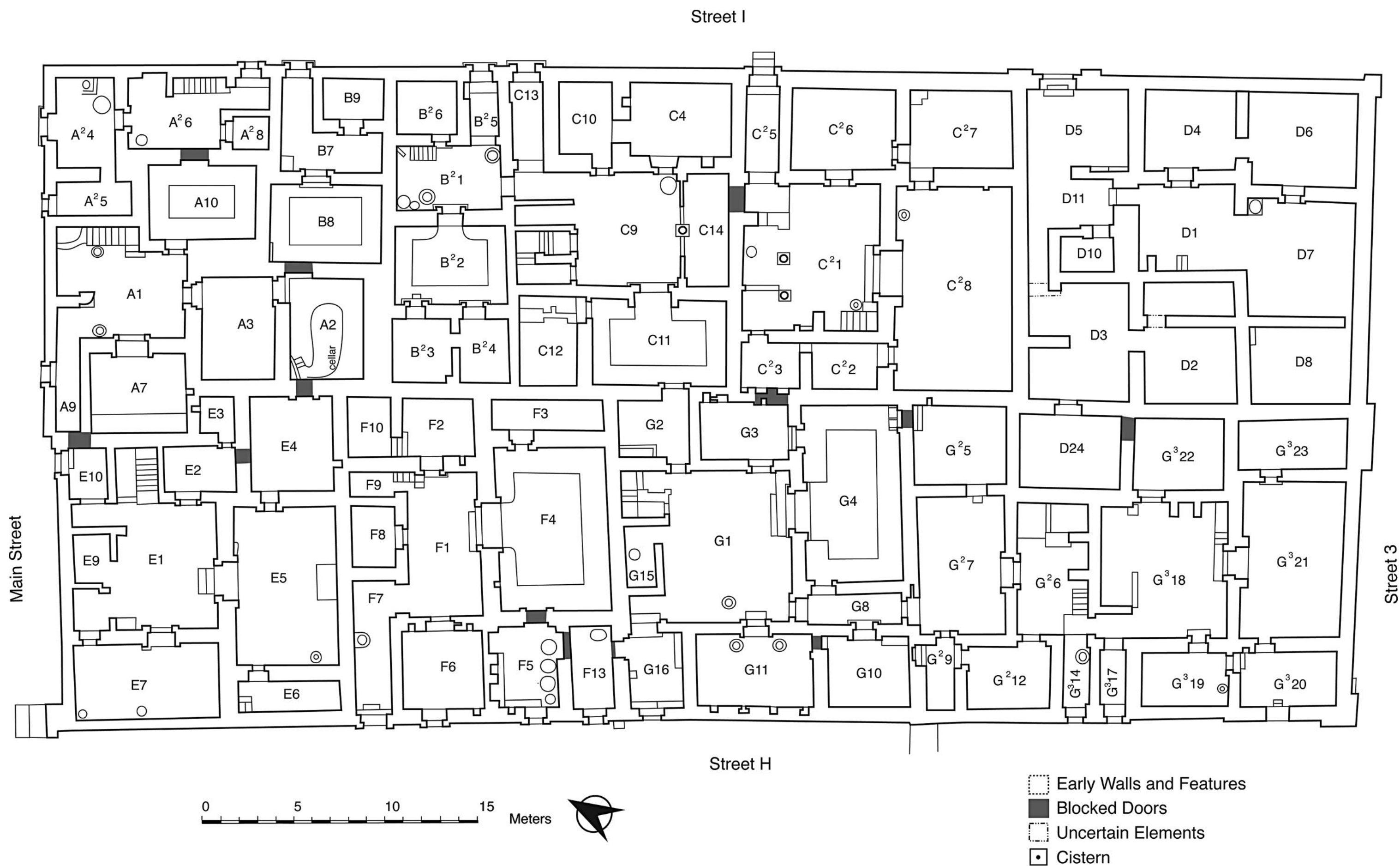


FIGURE 6.2 Plan of C7 by the author, adapted from original by Henry Pearson in the YUAG Archive.

internal shared door (C7-A2), and C7-C^2 had earlier opened into C7-C (via C7-C^{2}1) and C7-G (via C7-C^{2}3), although these openings were not necessarily contemporary. A blocked door also closed the opening between C7-A10 and C7-A^{2}6. The reasons for such blocked doors, which reconfigured access patterns and occur mostly in walls between courtyard units, is obscure in specific instances, but overall the pattern indicates that there were relationships between the houses over time.

It is possible some of these relationships were purely economic—for instance, C7-D24 might have been a room purchased by C7-D from the house C7-G^3. In this case, the blocked door of that room does not necessarily mean that people once moved between these two houses, but that the door was blocked to maintain the integrity of the two separate units when the room was purchased and a new opening from C7-D3 into C7-D24 was made. For C7-B^2, C7-C, C7-G, C7-G^2, and C7-G^3, the retention of courtyard units with principal rooms and independent entrances in each of these structures, even though they were combined into a single structure internally, perhaps indicates each was for (at least one) separate conjugal unit, and the entire polycentric structure was itself home to a multiple family. It is interesting to note that when the openings between these separate units which make up the large combined house are placed in courtyards (as between C7-B^{2}1 and C7-C9, or between C7-G^{2}6 and C7-G^{3}18), there are openings without doorframes and thresholds, and no evidence for hung doors, but when the openings are between interior rooms (as between C7-C11 and C7-G2, or C7-G8 and C8-G^{2}7), there were stone thresholds and jambs, as well as locking mechanisms. So, while the courtyards, being the more 'open' of the internal spaces, could be moved between perhaps without obstruction, the more private internal rooms had doors and locks permitting movement between them to be monitored and controlled, perhaps allowing each of the families to maintain a measure of independence over certain aspects of domestic life. Courtyards which were connected, as opposed to those courtyard units connected by internal rooms, may indicate a closer relationship between their residents and more shared activities. If we project the case of *PDura* 19 onto the plan, then any living room off the courtyard which controls an independent suite of rooms may represent a conjugal unit jointly residing in the structure. In addition to the family itself, other forms of dependents including slaves, freedmen/women, and even guests would have been present.

Graffiti made by members of the Roman military, including that attesting *contubernales* in C7-C10, depicting gladiators in C7-C4, and that noting *Legio III Cyrenaica* in C7-F4 perhaps attest to the latest inhabitation of the block, which may well have been after most of civil Dura had fled the site.[21] A coin of Valerian found in the block indicates that it was probably occupied until Dura's last

[21] Greek *contubernales* graffito, P. R. 5, 39–40, no. 401; gladiators in temple pictorial graffito, P. R. 5, Plate 33.3; Goldman 1999, no. F. 5; and the Latin *LEG III CYR* from P. R. 4, no. 294.

stand.[22] From the same house where the Latin graffito of the third Legion Cyrenaica was found, in C7-F4, paintings with Middle Persian inscriptions were excavated (see Figure 2.16). These paintings have sometimes been interpreted as Sasanian, although they are in keeping with the usual Durene style.[23] A cache of metal and other precious objects was found in C7-F, from which came fragments of a glass vessel painted with mythological figures, a fragment of a Heracles statue and torsos of two other statuettes, and a number of bronze and iron objects, including a bronze vase in the form of a bust.[24] This may indeed represent caching or looting activities in the last days of Dura.

D5

Like block C7, block D5 was completely excavated and composed entirely of houses (Figure 6.3). However, only occasional artefacts were recorded from this block as it was excavated before systematic records were kept.[25] Very little was published of these houses, and the entire block was referred to variously as 'The House of the Atrium', 'The House of the Cistern', or 'The House of the Court'. There, the original excavators posited seven courtyard-based houses, but by the final period these courtyard units interconnected, with only four separate units having their own external entrances (D5-A and D5-E were linked, D5-F and D5-F[1] were linked, as were D5-C and D5-D). The excavators believed the block was initially one large house, but this is perhaps belied by its staggered outer perimeter. The names initially applied to house D5-F, the House of the Cistern or the House of the Atrium, stood in for the entire block in publications. D5-F has the largest courtyard, which was once a peristyle, the intercolumniations of which were later walled up. As in block C7, blocked doors, for instance that between D5-E5 and D5-F15, show that even the larger intercommunicating units did not necessarily

[22] P. R. 4, 262, from the 'house next to the house of the Frescoes' (probably C7-E).

[23] Rostovtzeff 1935b; Goldman and Little 1980; MacDonald 1986, 54–8; De Waele 2004. Persian inscriptions from the synagogue have been shown to be contemporary with its use p. 27, n.11 and the paintings themselves are consistent with other such hunting scenes in graffiti and *dipinti* elsewhere at the site. The painted inscriptions could not be read definitively, Frye 1968, Plates 16–20; Brunner 1972, 497; MacDonald 1986, 55.

[24] P. R. 4, 38, 232–5, 240–1.

[25] Published in P. R. 4, 27–32. More detailed records in archival correspondence, in particular a letter from Alan Little (at Dura) to Rostovtzeff (at Yale) dated 15 Nov. 1930, and one from Henry Pearson (at Dura) to Little (then at Yale), which is later, but undated. The block is sometimes misidentified as D7, as in P. R. 4, 158–60, which copy a mistake on some of the plans. Plans published by Pillet and Saliou use different numbering systems, in P. R. 4, Plate 4 and Saliou 1992, Figure 10. I conducted cleaning of elements of D5 with MFSED in 2006 to clarify elements of the plan. Only a handful of finds were recorded from this block, although many objects of unknown provenance in the collection are probably from the block. Some were published in P. R. 4, 30–2, 229–35, and 245–6. The texts published in P. R. 4, 158–60 match the unpublished plan of Pearson (followed here) and not that of Pillet included in the same volume.

represent the house at its greatest extent. Units such as D5-G seem to have been carved out of larger houses (D5-F, in this case), but others seem to have had changing affiliations; at one time it had been possible to move internally between D5-D6 and D5-F4, but this door was blocked, as was one between D5-F3 and D5-C5 (it is not possible to say whether these doors were blocked at the same time). Nor is it possible to say whether D5-D and D5-C always had means of moving between them as they did in the final period, but by this time the spaces had been reconfigured, blocking the doors between D5-C3 and D5-D11, and between D5-C5 and D5-D6, although other openings between D5-C and D5-D remained. What is clear is a long standing relationship between houses (and occupants) that necessitated physical reconfiguration of their interaccessibility. It could be that most of the block consisted of families related in some way. For instance, both houses D5-C and D5-D had once had doorways into D5-F, and while these were blocked, a door opened between D5-C5 and D5-D7, so a relationship was created or maintained between these units.

By the final period, house D5-F was accessed via a narrow alleyway off Street J (D5-F19). The reorganization of this house, the original entrance of which seems to have been via the vestibule with high benches in D5-F13 (36 cm high and 40 cm deep), may have been connected with the access to Street I in this area, as all of the entrances via the west side of the block were sealed, and at the north end of Street I on this block, there seems to have been a gate. This may have related to something in the adjacent block, D7, but that is mostly unexcavated. D5-F and D5-F^1 together formed the largest house in the block, and courtyard D5-F1 was the core of this large house. This house was palatial in scale and similar to that in D1 (except for its columns, which are absent in D1). There was a monumental staircase on the west side and a triple entrance on the south side into D5-F4, a large principal room, which included tall niches in its south wall which were stepped to hold shelves (Figure 6.4). The view through the centre door from the court, through the opening in the middle of the south colonnade, into D5-F4 would have been directly onto a niche with stepped shelves; unfortunately no finds were recovered from this room that might elucidate what was stored on them. The importance of room D5-F4 is further indicated by its large size and the thickness of the walls, with those bordering on the courtyard being more than twice the usual depth, giving the doorways a monumental character.

Decorative elements from this block included painted terracotta tiles and moulded plaster cornices (Figure 6.5).[26] The plaster cornice included part of the name of Orthonobazus, thought to be the maker of the cornice, which was also found on plasterwork excavated by Cumont, as well as satyr masks, dolphins,

[26] P. R. 4, 30–1, 42–53. The painted tiles were probably from D5-F9 and F10. Most of these tiles are now held in the Louvre.

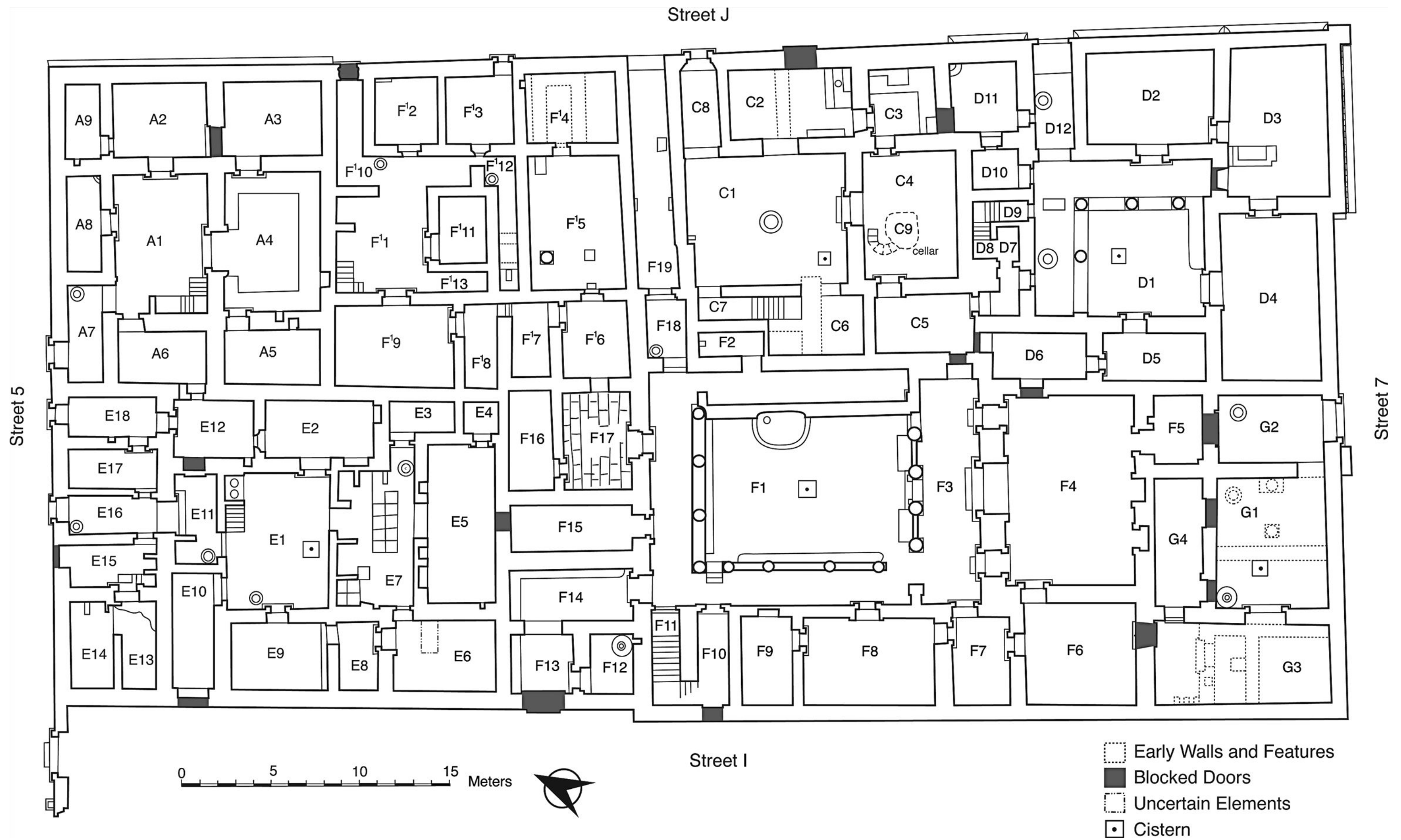


FIGURE 6.3 Plan of block D5. Plan by the author, adapted from original by Henry Pearson. YUAG.

FIGURE 6.4 One of two sets of niches in the south wall of D5-F4. YUAG i320a.

instruments, and a number of other motifs.[27] Indeed, the cornices excavated by Cumont in a house and in the Temple of Artemis seem to have come from the same mould as those in D5. The Orthonobazus cornice had a Dionysiac theme, including reclining figures.[28] Painted terracotta tiles included those depicting human heads, flowers, and fruits, and perhaps symbols of the zodiac, like those also found in the synagogue. The plasterwork and its scenes of reclining, drinking, figures may have related to activities carried out in particular rooms, but unfortunately their precise find-spot was not recorded.

[27] Cumont 1926, 226–37, Plates 86–7; Rostovtzeff 1932, 191; Shoe 1943, 20–3. The plaster cornices are now at Yale, 1931.392a-e, 1930.545, and 1931.392.

[28] Shoe believed that the moulds for these cornices, or their predecessors, had been imported, as they had profiles like those elsewhere in the Roman world. Shoe 1943, 23.

FIGURE 6.5 Moulded plaster cornice from block D5, 1931.392c. YUAG y762.

An inscribed silver libation bowl was also found in this block.[29] Its Greek inscription recorded the Seleucid year 544 (232/3 CE), when it was dedicated by Settabus the son of Adadiabus, of Adatha, dwelling in Bethzena, and hence not a Durene. A silver vase decorated with *repoussé* floral and Bacchic garlands was also found in this block.[30] These are unusual objects for a Durene house, and may relate to caching activity after the initial abandonment of the site by civilians, perhaps having been removed from a sanctuary.

Earlier features in this block, visible in walls predating the houses of the final period excavated beneath the floors in D5-G1, D5-G3, and D5-F^{1}4 are of uncertain character, but they are on the same orientation as the later houses. In block D5, as in C7, there is evidence for a Roman military presence in this block, probably relating to its final phases, in the form of scales of armour.[31] Lack of finds records and stratigraphic controls make further conclusions tenuous, but the subdivision within the courtyard as in D5-F^{1} also occurs in block E8, converted for use by the Roman military.

Both blocks D5 and C7 show the complexities of the Durene evidence with both having some trace of a Roman military presence and of caching activity perhaps relating to the final stages of the houses' abandonment. The configuration and modifications of the houses hold their histories over the longer term, and these seem to relate to the configuration and modifications of the households within them. Changes included the fission of houses (for example, in which D5-C/D and D5-G became separate from D5-F), and the fusion of others as is

[29] P. R. 4, 231–5; P. R. 5, 307–10; Welles 1970, 61; Downey 2004b, 128. Downey believes the dedicators of the bowl were unrelated to the sanctuary of Zeus Theos (in block B3), which in her opinion had a membership restricted to the Macedonian aristocracy.

[30] P. R. 4, 30–2, 229–31. Pillet's report is ambiguous as to whether they came from the same find-spot or even the same house, because he referred to the entire block as a house.

[31] Found during cleaning in 2006 in D5-E6 and D5-E7: DE06.403.01 and DE06.404.01.

perhaps the case in C7 in which multiple families could have inhabited a range of interconnecting houses, each with their own core suite of rooms (houses C7-B^2/C/C^2/G/G^2/G^3). This is not to say that each courtyard necessarily represents the domain of a single conjugal pair and their family, as *PDura* 19 may indicate that the density of inhabitation was even higher. Each ground floor principal room off the court, either as a single room or controlling singular access to a suite of rooms, could represent the part of the house controlled by discrete conjugal groups within a multiple family house (as may be the case, for instance, in C7-G, which has two broad rooms accessed via a few steps up from the courtyard, C7-G4 and C7-G11). The hierarchies of such rooms off a single courtyard, and the different features of connecting houses, rather than being a feature of primarily gendered division, may reflect the internal hierarchy of the multiple family unit. Further, different types of connections between houses could reflect different levels of relationships between houses, with those having an opening between courtyards, without doors (such as C7-B^2 and C7-C), being more likely to have had shared activities, and those with locking doors between more peripheral rooms (such as that between C7-G and C7-G^2) with less pressing or regular need for access.

KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY: BLOCK D1 AND THE ELITE OF DURA

The notionally hereditary Macedonian elite at Dura were noted in the previous chapter. Based on a genealogy created using epigraphic evidence, the position of *strategos* of the city was shown to move within one family, from the Arsacid into the Roman period.[32] To this family belonged, for instance, Septimius Aurelius Lysias, the *strategos kai epistates* of Dura, known from several inscriptions at the site dating to its Roman period.[33] Thus, a grand house occupying an entire city block in D1, and which had graffiti referring to men named Lysias, was given by the excavators the name the House of Lysias (Figures 6.6 and 6.7).[34] Information about this house, excavated in the final seasons of work at Dura in 1935 and 1936, was never published, save the graffiti, although a study of it was made by a Yale student, and more recently, new investigations under the auspices of the Franco-Syrian expedition have cleaned the structure.[35] Archival records, including photographs and object records, were also preserved at Yale. Unlike other blocks of

[32] Cumont 1926, 424; Johnson 1932, 17–34 and (esp.) Plate II.

[33] P. R. 2, 148–9; Leriche and El'Ajji 1999, which also gives a list of the inscriptions recording the title *strategos kai epistates*.

[34] Frye et al. 1955, nos 16–28.

[35] P. R. 6, 420 n 8; Gunn 1965; de Pontbriand 2012b.

housing at the site, the House of Lysias was entirely one structure, centred around one main courtyard, with a number of subsidiary courtyards. As was suggested in the previous chapter, the coherence of this structure, which did not fission as did other large houses, such as D5-F, is probably related to kinship strategies which allowed the elite family which resided in the house to maintain property and power over the long term.

In addition to covering a large space—the largest of any single structure except the Redoubt Palace (depending on how the boundaries of the palace are defined, it was probably smaller) and the later Roman Palace—the House of Lysias was in an important part of the city. It was situated opposite the Temple of Zeus Megistos and on Street 5, one of the predominant axes of circulation within the city (a street which permits access to the farthest point of the network, and which intersects with all other streets).[36] The street also might have been a processional way associated with the 'Temple of Zeus Kyrios' at its other end, against the desert wall, whose relief, high on the tower, would have been 'a visible beacon' elsewhere in the city.[37] The visual mass (and probably, height) was not the only indicator of the importance of the house, as D1 is the only excavated house in the city with an elaborated entranceway in the form of double doors on the street with an engaged column to either side (Figure 6.8).

The house of the final period, in use at least from Parthian times, was not the earliest structure in the block, as earlier walls were revealed beneath the floors of room D1-2, D1-3, and others (see Figure 6.6).[38] Over time, the property seems to have expanded southwards, as the abutting walls of the north sides of rooms D1-49, D1-39, D1 43 (etc.) show. With the exception of two blocked external doors (D1-4 and D1-44) and three internal doors (D1-51/55, D1-38/45a, and D1-23/31) the House of Lysias is without the evidence for reorganization and fragmentation that is normal in other blocks of the city. None of the internal blocked doors closed off an internal suite within the block. Rather, these blocked doors reconfigured the internal circulation pattern, for instance, making room D1-55 more remote, accessible only via room D1-52.

The house, because of its size and the wealth of its occupants, had more specialized rooms or installations than did most, including rooms which seem to be for housing animals (D1-11 and D1-8 both included cobbled floors and plaster installations assumed to be for animal feeding), food preparation or processing (perhaps the purpose of the counter and fire installation in D1-5, and cooking

[36] The other street with this level of visual connectivity was Street E. Benech 2010, Figure 5.

[37] Downey 1998, 204.

[38] The *terminus ante quem* for the construction of the house come from a graffito dated to 159 CE found in the house, Frye et al. 1955, no. 16. Earlier walls were exposed only in some rooms, as the excvations did not proceed beneath the floors of all spaces.

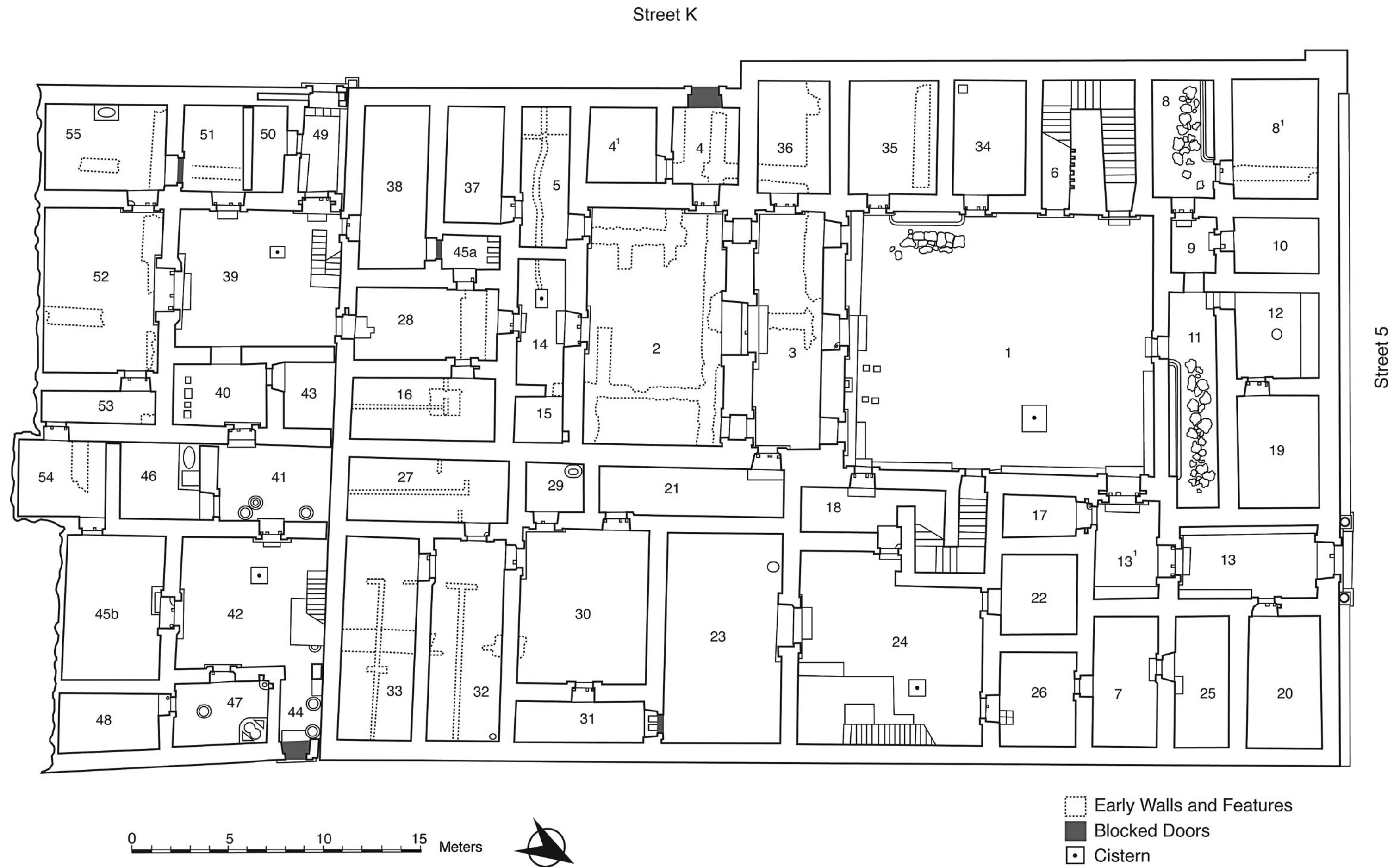


FIGURE 6.6 Block D1, the 'House of Lysias'. Plan by the author after plans by N. C. Andrews in the YUAG Archive.

FIGURE 6.7 Overview of house in D1 from northeast. YUAG k327a.

installations and a basin in D1-55), storage (the plaster features in D1-16, D1-27, D1-32, and D1-33 were thought to support storage jars, and some torpedo jars were reportedly found *in situ* against these), and even bathing equipment (plaster basins found in D1-46). While there is no evidence for a piped water supply even in this elaborate house, there were drains; for instance, one leads from the counter in D1-5 to the cistern in D1-14. Other rooms had specialized installations, but for what purposes is not clear; for example, D1-29 had a plaster basin, which is partially obscured in photographs but looks like a press, and the lower part of the walls were coated in bitumen. D1-31 and D1-45a both contained small plastered features which are enigmatic and were perhaps bases for something.[39] D1-47 had plaster installations in its corner which are not clear in the photographs.[40]

Courtyards D1-1, D1-24, and D1-39 were all paved with fired tiles, and other architectural elaborations included mouldings, cornices, some of which preserved coloured painted decoration in red, blue, and yellow (Figure 6.9). Fragments of figured painted plaster were also found, fallen, within the house (Figure 6.10).[41]

[39] Photo I633b, shows these features, built against the walls. There were two in D1-30, three in D1-45a).

[40] I371a.

[41] The association of this fragment with house D1 is not certain; it was made by Anne Perkins based on a description given by Hopkins and reported by Gunn 1965, 97.

FIGURE 6.8 North entrance to D1, into D1-13, showing engaged columns either side of the external door and plaster benches in the entrance vestibule. YUAG i89a.

Due to the walls being preserved to several metres in some parts of the house, internal arched windows and transoms were also recorded (Figure 6.11). The arched opening in the wall between the courtyard and the room above D1-9 was, based on fallen fragments, one in a series that once ran along the north wall of the courtyard.[42] Remains of columns found fallen in the courtyard were thought to have supported a loggia above the courtyard on its south side (no column bases were found in the courtyard), enclosing a corridor giving onto rooms of the upper storey, and the thick walls of room 3 support this interpretation, but this superstructure is conjectural (Figure 6.12).[43] The largest central courtyard was further equipped with a number of altars, low shallow plaster benches around three sides of its perimeter, and a plaster basin against the west wall, probably for feeding or watering animals, with reinforced flagging in front of it, perhaps where animals wore away the tile. The House of Lysias is very different in such ways from other elite residences in Roman Syria, for instance, not using fountains or mosaics as at Antioch, nor peristyles as at Palmyra or Apamea.[44] With its tiled courtyard and other elaborate features including the exterior columns, three openings into the reception room and its anteroom (D1-2 and D1-3, respectively), and a number of

[42] Gunn 1965, 5. [43] Note the similarly thick walls of the parallel room in D5-F.

[44] On the use of water in elite houses of Roman Syria, Kamash 2010, 121–3. There was, however, a private bath structure associated with the Roman Palace at Dura (the 'Palace of the Dux').

FIGURE 6.9 View to south side of courtyard D1-1. YUAG i85a.

altars, the south side of the courtyard would nonetheless have been impressive. The evidence of the north and south elevation of the courtyard, as well as the number of staircases throughout the house, all attest to an upper storey which would have greatly increased the size of the house; the preserved ground plan is only part of what would have existed.

The partitive inheritance that may have been partially responsible for the breakup and reorganization of Dura's houses, however, is at odds with the continued power of some of the larger families, and indeed larger houses, of Dura. It has long been argued that Dura was ruled, from the Hellenistic period through into Roman times, in part by members of an aristocracy of Macedonian origins, a family which held the hereditary office of *strategos kai epistates*, most bearing the name Seleucus or Lysias.[45] While, of course, we can now strongly question any racial element to this perceived lineage, it is clear that 'Greek' heritage was a complicated issue at Dura, as we have already encountered with the sons of Polemocrates, who have Greek names but Semitic aliases.[46] Johnson,

[45] Arnaud 1986, Johnson 1932.

[46] For a critique of Welles, Pollard 2007. Pollard seems unaware of Johnson 1932, which builds on Cumont's genealogy of the family; Johnson already in 1932 argues there would have been local intermarriage and that the notion of a 'pure' Greek lineage is a construction (although his terms, within which the non-Greeks are barbarous sheikhs, are obviously of their own time). Welles had already revised his views of 1951 by the publication of the parchments and papyri in 1959.

FIGURE 6.10 Painted plaster, probably from block D1. YUAG h149a.

building on the work of Cumont, was able to propose a reconstruction of the genealogy of the house of the holders of the office based on the occurrence of the title and names in inscriptions recovered at Dura, which showed a number of close kin marriages, including between brother and sister, uncle and niece, and cousins.[47]

From the house itself, a number of graffiti mention men named Lysias; those that are dated indicate that some of these were different men, as there is more than a century between them. A number of remembrance graffiti, perhaps made to honour the master of the house by those awaiting admittance, were found scratched into the plaster in D1-13.[48] In the same room, a graffito recorded a Lysias who acted as an ambassador on behalf of the Durenes.[49] Another pair of graffiti from D1-9, dated to 159 CE also include the name Lysias, and were interpreted as recording the journey of Lysias, *epistates*, to a place called Beth-ilaha.[50] The word *strategos* does not occur in these texts within the house. While the graffiti which

[47] Cumont 1926, esp 424, Johnson 1932, 14-34. On the strategy of brother–sister marriage in Roman Egypt, which argues it was morally acceptable and a useful strategy, Rowlandson and Takahashi 2009.

[48] Frye et al. 1955, no. 20 from D1-13 gives the name Lysias, and no. 26 from the same room is a *mnēsthē* text to Lysias, as is no. 27, which was found in courtyard D1-1. No. 23 notes the death of one Lysias in the first century CE. These texts are discussed further in Baird Forthcoming (b).

[49] Frye et al. 1955, no. 18.

[50] Frye et al. 1955, no. 16. Kaizer proposes this place was a transliteration of Aramaic for 'House of the gods' and evidence of a journey to a Mesopotamian cult centre, Kaizer 2009b, 239.

FIGURE 6.11 Northwest corner of courtyard D1-1, showing arched internal window. Pilaster and capital leaning against wall is not, apparently, *in situ*, but seems to have been re-erected by the excavators. YUAG i639b.

first linked the Lysiads to this structure is perhaps a tenuous reason for making its identification, the appearance of this family in texts throughout the town and the high status of this house, together, indicate that the link is probably valid.

The Lysiads occurrence in inscriptions throughout the town provides further evidence of this prominent family, often as benefactors of cults. Across the street from D1 was the Temple of Zeus Megistos, and in the street itself just outside the temple was found an inscription, dated to 169/170 CE, which records a dedication to Zeus Megistos by one Seleucus, a *strategos* and *epistates* of the *polis*. This was one of a dozen mentions of men named Selekos, Lysias, or Lysianus, with such titles.[51]

[51] On the titles, Johnson 1932, 17–34, and for a list of men with these titles occurring in inscriptions at Dura, Frye et al. 1955, 140–1.

FIGURE 6.12 Fanciful reconstruction of south side of courtyard D1-1 by Herbert Gute, showing location of altars and horse troughs. Column fragments were excavated but position within upper storey is conjectural. YUAG y-715.

These include an example dated to the first century BCE in the Temple of Artemis, recording a Seleucus son of Lysais a *strategos* and *genearch* of the *polis*;[52] one from the first century CE a Seleucus, son of Lysias, grandson of Seleucus, *strategos* and *epistates* of the *polis* from the 'Temple of Bel' a dedication to Zeus Soter;[53] and just a few years later in 54 CE, a *strategos* named Seleucus was prominent in the city when an *andron* was dedicated by members of an association to the god Aphlad.[54] In 61/2 CE, Seleucus was still *strategos*,[55] and by 135/6 CE a Lysias, son of Lysanias, grandson of Seleucus was *strategos* and *epistates*, and also had Parthian court titles.[56] One Aurelius Heliodorus held the title *epistates c.*165 CE and made a dedication to Lucius Verus,[57] but by 169/170 Seleucus erected the above-mentioned text outside the Temple of Zeus Megistos bearing both *strategos* and

[52] Cumont 1926, no. 52, although Johnson dates it much later. P. R. 5, 116; P. R. 6, 411.

[53] P. R. 2, 90–1, no. H4.

[54] P. R. 5, 113–16, no. 418.

[55] Cumont 1926, 429 and 441, nos 91 and 118.

[56] Cumont, 1926, 450–2, no. 134; Johnson 1932, 23. Other branches of the family are recorded, as in the 92 CE inscription of a Lysanias who is descended from a Seleucus, whose father was Ammonios, whose father was Apollophanes. Johnson 1932, 23–4; P. R. 3, no. D157, a dedication in the Temple of Atargatis. A number of other documents record men named Lysias and Lysianus without titles.

[57] Presumably linked to the first Roman occupation of Dura. Cumont 1926, 410, no. 53. Cumont assumed this dedication included a statue—this does not survive.

epistates.[58] By the third century the family seems to be regularly taking Roman names, hence the Septimius Lysias, *strategos*, whose son was named Lysanias, in a painted inscription written in Latin on a *tabella ensata* in the Palmyrene gate,[59] and from the Temple of Artemis, the Greek inscription recording Septimius Aurelius Lysias, *strategos* and *epistates* of the *polis*.[60] A scratched graffito text from the House of Lysias gives the death of a Lysias who is *epistates*, who is then succeeded by Lysanias as *epistates*, but the rules of succession and typical length of office, whether a year or longer, are not clear, and nor are the reasons for the use of the titles of *genearch*, *strategos*, and *epistates* singly or in combination.[61] Descent of the title *strategos* moved along the male line.[62] In the Latin *tabella ensata* inscription, Septimius Lysias is *strategos of Dura*, rather than of 'the *polis*', perhaps reflecting a changing role under Roman rule.[63]

If the 'House of Lysias' should indeed be linked to the family of the men named in the inscriptions, and graffito from within the house does mention a Lysias *epistates*, this might explain why the house was not subdivided.[64] The endogamy of the family of Lysias ensured both a hold on the titles of *strategos kai epistates* and the continued maintenance of the house as a residence for the family group, one where marriage largely within the family meant that subdivision of property was not necessary.[65] The House of Lysias then is not only *evidence of* the strategies the elites used to maintain themselves but a way that they made those strategies material and concrete.[66] Endogamy among the elite, which serves

[58] Frye et al. 1955, no. 6.

[59] P. R. 2, 148–51. The inscription records a dedication to Septimius Lysias Strategos of Dura from the *Beneficiarii* and *Decurions* of the Cohort. It would seem the Roman military had a relationship with the family which was mutually beneficial.

[60] Leriche and El'Ajji 1999, which also gives a list of the inscriptions recording the title *strategos kai epistates* but which has not consulted Johnson 1932. *PDura* 23 and 25 both give men of the name Lysias involved in commercial transactions.

[61] Frye et al. 1955, no.16. The position of *strategos* was probably a lifetime tenure, based on the inscriptions several years apart (P. R. 2, no. H4, of 51/2 and P. R. 5, no. 418 of 54), both giving one Seleucus, son of Lysias, as *strategos* of the *polis*.

[62] Johnson 1932, 26–7.

[63] On the 'Iranianization' of the family over time, Arnaud 1986, 147, and critique by Yon 2003, 200–2. Further on the question of the hereditary office of *strategos* and the relationship of the office to the Arsacids, Teixidor 1987, 191; Dijkstra 1995, 259.

[64] Frye et al., 1955, no.16.

[65] 'The symbolic and political interests attached to the unity of land ownership . . . to the material and symbolic power of the agnatic group, and to the values of honour and prestige which make a great house . . . militate in favour of the strengthening of corporate bonds.' Bourdieu 1977, 63. Elite Babylonian houses were also less likely than others to be subdivided. Baker posits that lack of subdivision was because they 'were less subject to the kinds of pressures that might have led to divided or shared occupancy'; Baker 2010, 189.

[66] Yon 2003, 202 notes that dynastic continuity would have also helped relationships with other dynasties outside the city.

to secure property and stop it from breaking up, is known in other cultures.[67] The property which would have been maintained within the family would not have been limited to that of the house, and would have included landholding outside the city which moved through the same lineage, although there is no archaeological evidence for land divisions outside the city.[68] Endogamy would have also allowed the family to retain control of dowries. This is not to say the strategies were simply economic or mercenary, as property and landholding, as well as kinship, related to cultural norms and larger issues including status and religion. Nor were such practices limited to this family at Dura, as close kin marriages also occur, for example, in other elite families such as that of Athenodorus and his descendants recorded in the inscriptions of the Temple of Azzanathkona.[69]

This house, belonging to a family of community leaders whose lineage is central to their authority, where we would expect to see ancestor veneration, as ancestors can be used to illustrate the legitimacy and authority of such claims of descent. Human inhumations beneath house floors are not found in the houses of Dura, despite many houses in which the excavators went beneath floor levels in their investigations, with one exception: the House of Lysias. In this house, two skeletons were found, interred beneath the floor, in D1-33 (Figure 6.13).[70] While the lineage of this family is nominally Greco-Macedonian, the practice of interring human remains beneath house floors is not one found in the Greek world, but in the Mesopotamian.[71] Unfortunately, there is little documentation of these remains, only a single card of field notes and a photograph.[72] In any case, in the habitation and maintenance of the house over generations, the structure of the house itself held the memory of ancestors, sometimes literally, scratched into its walls.[73]

[67] Gillespie 2000a, 476.

[68] Link between household size and land holdings: Wilk 1988, 144.

[69] e.g. from the genealogy reconstructed based on the inscriptions one Theodora marries her uncle, Diogenes. P. R. 5, 185.

[70] P. R. 9.2, 6. Other burials found within houses were above floors and post-date the Sasanian incursion, either immediately (as the bodies, still wearing armour, in E8), or later (as in the disarticulated skeletons found in ceramics in D5 and C10). Remains of two human fingers were deposited beneath the Synagogue: F. R. 8.1, 19. Frank Brown's field notes record the D1 remains as the skeletons of a woman (the skeleton was wearing a bronze bracelet) and child, who he guessed was six or seven; he believed these were probably the bodies of slaves, and that the burials had been slightly disturbed by later building activity, and leg bones were then removed. Remains of an *amphora* which once covered them were also found.

[71] Intermural burials are also argued to represent traditional Mesopotamian practices at Seleucia on the Tigris; Hauser 2012, 1009.

[72] The presence of ancestor cults at Dura is problematized by the necropolis evidence, in which early occupants of tombs were often 'heaped up' in a corner when later bodies are interred, which might belie an ancestor cult or continuity of tomb use amongst particular families. These two skeletons—perhaps particularly in their pairing—represent murder victims, but lack of osteological examination precludes further conclusions.

[73] Gillespie 2000b, 9 on Levi-Strauss' definition of the house is relevant here, as she elucidates the relationship between the language of kinship relating to both the legitimate transfer of the 'estate' between generations and the 'place' created by this maintenance and family identity.

FIGURE 6.13 Human remains beneath floor of room D1-33 in the House of Lysias. YUAG i667b.

The continuation of the House of Lysias both as a physical entity and a dynasty into the third century, together, indicates that the structure's inhabitants were able to hold onto some semblance of power, if only at the very least in terms of property and titles, until the end of the city. This was in part negotiated by integration into Roman naming conventions and was another strategy for retaining some form of local power or status under Roman rule. The re-introduction of Seleucid cults may have been another aspect of this.[74] The form of the house of Lysias, too, was related to the structure of the family and their status was demonstrated not just in the size of the property but its integrity as a single unit, as well as its position in the city. Internally, the specialization of space and decoration were

[74] On the institution of the cult of the city founder, for instance, see *PDura* 25 and 37. On the re-emphasis on the Seleucid eponymous priesthoods (as opposed to re-introduction), Kaizer 2009a, 165–6.

virtually unique at the site, but the spatial grammar of an offset entrance, central courtyard, and broad reception room to the south of the court was the same as that throughout the city, even if it was on a grand scale here.

Courtyards 1 and 39 controlled all access to the house. D1-1 might have been the main courtyard of the head of the family and D1-39 that of the eldest heir and his family; both have external entrances and suites of rooms including storage facilities. Both of the entrances had plaster benches for sitting, and perhaps awaiting admittance. Each of the entrances also had a small chamber adjacent to the entrance which was otherwise not accessible to the house, perhaps a room for a guard (D1-50,[75] D1-20, and D1-17), and the internal doors onto the courtyards ($D1\text{-}13^1$/1 and D1-49/39) also both had locking mechanisms for horizontal bolts. The massive bolt across D1-49 perhaps indicates that this was the 'private' entrance to the entire house, whereas D1-13, despite its relative grandeur, was without this (perhaps because as the more 'public' entrance, it was always attended—perhaps the reason for room D1-20 immediately inside the main door). The main entrance, via D1-13, had perhaps two stages of admittance or waiting for access to the house, as both D1-13 and $D1\text{-}13^1$ had benches, a 'guard' room, and doors between them.

The central courtyard, D1-1, was also apparently a religious focal point within the house. Four horned altars were found in front of the access to the principal room on the south side of the court, as marked on the plan, in front of a central altar on the bench on which was found traces of burning (Figure 6.14).[76] Another set of four altars was found in D1-40, off the courtyard D1-39, which was the courtyard inside the houses' only other entrance.[77] The occurrence of two sets of four altars is no doubt relevant to their meaning but it is difficult to say precisely what this might have been. Their presence just outside the door into the main room of the house (D1-2, via the anteroom D1-3), with its monumental entrance may indicate a link to the status of the household. More mundane activities that would have occurred in the courtyards of most houses were likely relegated to the subsidiary courtyards within D1, although D1-1 did contain provisions for animals and a cistern, as well as controlling much of the houses' internal movement (including that on the upper storey, if the reconstruction of the north and south elevations of the courtyard is correct).

It is not clear whether the absence of raised plaster borders in the reception rooms of this house, in particular D1-2 (as is also the case in other large houses,

[75] D1-50 in its final form was not original to the structure, as it was a later addition; the partition separating it from D1-51 abuts the earlier walls.

[76] The stone altars were probably for incense. The type is known from much earlier sites on the Middle Euphrates but also in the Levant and broader Mediterranean; Hitchcock 2002. Traces of burning are recorded in Frank Brown's field notes for D1-1, which also record several coats of plaster on each of the stone altars, which bore no inscriptions.

[77] Photo YUAG I325a.

FIGURE 6.14 Altars on south side of D1-1. Five horned altars in foreground not *in situ* (see plan for original locations of the four on the left); altar on right from unknown location within the house. YUAG i640b.

e.g. D5-F4 and E4-3, as well as some smaller ones) relates to the use of movable furniture instead, as the excavators presumed, or to a different practice being conducted. The admittance of people who were not part of the household into the house is probably indicated by the benches mentioned earlier, which emphasizes the role of such vestibules as buffers between the exterior world of the street and the inner world of the house, not only visually and spatially but temporally.[78] Despite the offset entrance in D1, axiality did matter within the courtyard, and in particular the access to D1-2 via D1-3 (as, on a smaller scale, in D5-F). This was emphasized by the three openings, repeated in both D1-3 and D1-2. Further emphasis on the south side of the courtyard was made by the use of columns above it, which, while recalling public architecture generally, in this case seem to have been deployed in a distinctive local way. The scale, proportions, axiality, and materials including the tiled courtyard would have together created an impressive social demarcation of wealth and status, and formed a social barrier even to those allowed admittance. Such features, together with the waiting areas created with

[78] Street-side benches are also known outside E4, and E4-5 also had an interior bench in its vestibule, as did the earlier entrance to D5-F, F5-F13 and 14. On street-side benches at Pompeii, Hartnett 2008.

the benches and the lack of visual permeability into the house from the street, together, show the desire to control the exposure of the central rooms, and, thus, to the head of the household.

Such display of hierarchy was not only that between the household and those outside it, but within the house itself. The multiple courtyards probably served not only to move some activities out of the grand space of D1-1, but also as the foci of the other parts of the family, likely the heirs and their own families. That there is only one secondary entrance, at D1-49, further emphasizes that these parts of the house were under the control of its head. More peripheral rooms tend to be smaller and less elaborate, or with storage or cooking features, so the ability to penetrate deep into the house seems to have been the privileged access of members of the house. The ability to have so many rooms that were so effectively inaccessible even to visitors was a privilege of the elite.

Artefacts were recorded from this block, but these comprised mostly coins and other small and perhaps 'residual' items, including beads, pins, rings, and door fittings, as well as objects, such as a set of thirty-two amber counters, which were recovered from the cistern in D1-1.[79] Among these finds were scales of armour.[80] So, in D1 there is a hint of military presence—although the military titles of its occupants mean this was not necessarily a Roman military one—and, in the lack of many ceramics or other items, perhaps an indication of planned abandonment. Indeed, the wealthy occupants of D1 would have been in a better position than most of the people of Dura to be able to flee. A small relief of a reclining figure, perhaps an aquatic deity and maybe even the Euphrates itself, from D1-30 was amongst the only other finds from the house; along with gold leaf fragments found in the same room they perhaps hint at the room's importance (Figure 6.15).[81]

PLACING DURA'S HOUSES

> For our house is our corner of the world.
> As has often been said, it is our first universe,
> a real cosmos in every sense of the word.
>
> Gaston Bachelard[82]

[79] Amber counters: I297, I353.

[80] From D1-13, H734/1938.4138/F. R. 7, no. 455, fragments of lamellar-like copper alloy scale garment. Objects recorded as armour scales were also found in D1-7 (H674). Two dagger scabbard plates were found in the street adjacent to the block, I904/1938.2100/F. R. 4.4.1, pierced bronzes nos 70 and 80/F. R. 7, nos 587 and 588.

[81] Relief: i322/DM8387/F. R. 3.1.2, no. 62; gold leaf fragments: I323.

[82] Bachelard 1958, 4.

FIGURE 6.15 Relief of reclining figure (Euphrates personified?) from House of Lysias, field no. 1322, found in D1-30. YUAG Dam-55.

It has been said that 'a key function of houses is to anchor people in space and to link them in time', and at Dura the use and transformation of houses over time is inextricably bound to the transformations of the groups inhabiting them.[83] These groups were social and economic units, and the structure of the house is both evidence of this and symbolic of it. From their role as a place of the socialization and habituation of children into their family and culture, as a place of production and storage, to that of a structure that embodied patriarchy in the transmission of property, Dura's houses are key to understanding the nature of the site, and more broadly, in understanding the range of experiences of ancient lives.

At the site, the structure of houses can be situated into that of other local architecture. For instance, the sanctuaries at Dura are 'introverted' in much the same way the houses were, with high surrounding walls and offset entrances, meaning the *naos* or cult relief was hidden from direct view from the street. These entrances led into courtyards, off which was a *pronaos* and *naos*, and around which were ranges of rooms (also known as assembly rooms, 'chapels', or *andrones*), some of these equipped with low plaster benches. While the walls and exterior seem inward-looking in plan, many of the temples also incorporated towers, platforms, and terraces into their design.[84] Overall this plan is usually called a

[83] Gillespie 2000c, 3. [84] Downey 1988a, 125.

'Babylonian' type.[85] But, in their Mesopotamian layout and materials, their similar-ities to Hellenistic temples in Iran and elsewhere, the space slotted into a Hellenistic street grid, their use of Greek epigraphy for dedications, the worshipping of Aramean or Palmyrene or local deities sometimes identified with Greek ones who were depicted in paintings and reliefs in a distinctive local style, together they present something more hybrid than any monolithic cultural label can accommodate. Indeed, even among a sanctuary's worshippers there might have been considerable diversity, as the number of assembly rooms within the sanctuaries may itself be linked to the diverse number of groups that used them, organized along lines of religion, ethnicity, family, or other associations.[86]

The conversion of houses into places of worship, as was the case in both the synagogue in L7 and the Christian house church in M8 (without, particularly in the case of the Christian building, a substantial modification to the plan), shows that domestic space could also serve the purposes of religious space.[87] The houses shared with religious space a spatial metaphor concerning both the relationship between those allowed entrance and the outside world, and the hierarchies of power within, as well as controlling access beyond physical space to the social sphere of kin or a religious domain. These buildings also shared elements of their decorative schemes with houses, with the synagogue employing ceiling tiles, some with motifs identical to those found in the D5 and L7-A houses, even if the occurrence of particular motifs was specific and meaningful to certain contexts.[88] The religious life of Dura, like the houses, was a distinctive set of local phenomena which arose in a region of rich cultural and religious diversity and connectivity which was also economic in its basis.[89] That Dura was apparently without a great public cult which transcended these groups within the city (unlike, for instance, Palmyra[90]) is perhaps related to the lack of large-scale civic euergertism, and the lack of funerary or public portrait statuary (as far as been excavated, at least). That is, there does seem to be a difference between the public lives of elite citizens of Dura and those elsewhere in the region. No theatre has been excavated at Dura, and while there were gathering spaces, for example the Odeon of the Temple of Artemis, the lack of central communal civic space be it a theatre or temple is

[85] Downey 1988a, 88–129; Kaizer 2009a, 156. Shenkar 2011 relates the temples of Artemis and Zeus Megistos at Dura to a Mesopotamian type known via Iranian temples of the Hellenistic period.

[86] Dirven 2011, 204. On ritual dining in Dura's temples, Downey 1988a, 127–8.

[87] Dirven 2004, 4. A number of other sanctuaries were built on or within spaces previously used as housing, including the 'Temple of the Gadde', the 'Temple of Atargatis', the 'Temple of Zeus Theos', and the Mithraeum.

[88] F. R. 8.1, 41; Noy 2007, 75; Stern 2010, 490–1, 502. Stern demonstrates that 'Durene Jews transformed local practices of ceiling decoration to circumscribe their sacred space in particular ways.'

[89] Kaizer 2009a, 163–4.

[90] Kaizer 2009a, 170. The temples of Artemis and Zeus Megistos did perform civic functions, though, e.g. Downey 1988a, 90.

probably related in some way to the form of Dura's houses. Perhaps at Dura, where houses could provide space for reception and hospitality, the lack of civic spaces could reflect different expectations of citizen activity in political and religious spheres (admittedly, it is possible such venues are as yet unexcavated, or that the citizenry was so narrow as to be accommodated in known structures such as the Temple of Artemis). The form of houses and sanctuaries alike allowed for the boundaries of all communities and for access to them to be tightly monitored. Relationships between houses, and smaller associations and communities, may have fulfilled the same needs that public space did elsewhere.

Just as houses shared elements of their spatial grammar with sanctuaries, the elite houses of Dura shared a spatial grammar with the smallest houses, which indicates that while there were some things, including wealth and status, which set these groups apart, their fundamental domestic needs, essential for the function of the house as a unit, were the same. The elite of Dura seem *not* to be a separate cultural group fundamentally disconnected from the rest of the city by virtue of perceived Greekness or anything else. This is true not just of architecture, but of material cultural more broadly, which shows similarities in daily life across the site.[91] The houses, like the site itself, show differences across the population that are profound, but also much that is shared. The houses, too, shared (if not uniformly) their transformation in Dura's final moments, with the Roman military leaving a trace in virtually every structure, perhaps after the civil population had largely abandoned the city.

Dura was a city with two names, with more than a dozen temples, with no fewer than seven written languages, with material culture that was entangled with that of Mesopotamia and Persia, of the Levant and the Mediterranean. Labels like 'Greek' or 'Parthian' or 'Roman' highlight the problem of characterizing such a site. Real situations are always hybrid, and even the earliest material from Dura shows that the Hellenistic material was already itself not a simple matter of transplanted Hellenic material culture but already itself an eastern phenomenon. Under Seleucid, Arsacid, and Roman rule, Dura was resilient, falling only when the site itself became a battleground between the Romans and the Sasanians.

EPILOGUE

The lives of Dura's houses continue today. As I'm writing this in July 2013, Syria is in the third year of civil war, the death toll of which, by some estimates, exceeds 100 000 people. Many times that number has been displaced.

[91] Yaeger 2000, 129.

Antiquities and ancient sites have been but one of the battlefields between the many factions, and the site of Dura itself has been a target, with the museum and excavation house having been stripped, vandalized, and looted in 2012. Photographs and videos of illegal excavations at the site have made their way onto social media sites, and the damage is extensive, both within previously excavated structures and in previously unexplored parts of the site. The House of Lysias has been reported among the most heavily damaged structures. This situation is sad for the state of knowledge on Dura, and even more tragic in terms of Syria's heritage at a broader scale.[92] While archaeological heritage is a small part of a much larger, heartbreaking, story in Syria as I write this, the polyglot and multicultural site of Dura-Europos, with its many sanctuaries and cultures coexisting for so long, its history as a pivot between East and West, and its eventual fall, caught between empires, provides an interesting place for reflection on Syria's long history.

[92] The damage to antiquities has already become one facet of the regime's war on its enemies, and in June 2013 the Direction Générale des Antiquités de Syrie issued a release in English 'Updating [*sic*] the Report on the Status of Syrian Antiquities and their Protection Measures (since the beginning of the crisis until June 15, 2013' which includes reports on Dura and its Museum. See also Cunliffe and Global Heritage Fund 2012.

APPENDIX

NB Adjacent grey house labels indicate internally connecting houses. Several fragmentary remains which may be those of houses are not included here. These include B2-D (very fragmentary, and taken over by public space in final period), walls in B3 under the Temple of Zeus Theos, walls in H1 under the Temple of the Gaddé, fragmentary walls in J7 around and beneath the Mithraeum, and exposed walls in K8 and G8-A.

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
A1-A; House West of Citadel; the 'Roman House' in P. R. 2	228	9		None recorded	No	No	Figural wall paintings recorded in room C	None recorded	Drains, use of window glass, plastered cellar entered via steps in room D.	P. R. 2, 13, 35, 57–61
B2-A	341	10	B2-A9, via alley 18	None recorded	No	Yes	None recorded	Frye et al. 1955, nos 30–3	3 columns in courtyard	Allara 2002
B2-B	236	10	B2-B and B2-G6 via alley 17	Yes	B2-B2	No	None recorded	Frye et al. 1955, nos 34–8		Allara 2002
B2-C	444 + 13.5 (shop? B2-C22)	14	B2-C12.1	Yes	B2-C12 and B2-C15	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	7 columns in courtyard	Allara 2002
B2-E	172	4+	B2-E vestibule formed by exterior of stairwell	Yes	No	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Incompletely excavated	Allara 2002
B2-F	102	5	B2-F23	Yes	No	No	None recorded	None recorded		Allara 2002
B2-G	239.5	7	B2-G13	Yes	No	Yes	None recorded	Frye et al. 1955, no. 29, inscription on *thymiaterium*.	Cellar, 2 columns in courtyard and (uniquely) 2 columns in vestibule. Perhaps not a house in	Allara 2002

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m²	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
									final period as secondary entrance directly into courtyard from alley 17, connecting this house to B2-B.	
B2-H	111.5	5	B2-H4, via alley 17	Yes	B2-H8	No	None recorded	None recorded		Allara 2002
B2-I	89.5	5	B2-I8, accessed via Alley 17	Yes	No	No	None recorded	None recorded	B2-I15, at the back of this house, also accessible via open square, B2-23, perhaps a shop.	Allara 2002
B8-H; House of Nebuchelus; House of the Archive; House of the Clothes Merchant	238 + 21 (2 shops)	10 + 2 shops	B2-H7	Yes	B8-H2 (primary), as well as B8-H13, B8-H4 and B8-H5.	No	Goldman 1999, nos. D.3 and G.11.	P. R. 4, nos 181–275; P. R. 5, no. 402	Single column in courtyard. Perhaps not a house (see pp. 183–7). Some rooms destroyed by fire (B8-H4 and 5) and not in use in final period. Hoard of jewellery and coins in B8-H2.	P. R. 4, 39, 79-145, 222; P. R. 5, 47–9, 90–7; Ruffing 2000
C3-B	428 (incomplete)	13	C3-B4	Yes	No	No	Graffiti of hunting scene and other figures	P. R. 6, nos 632–40	Terraced into slope, normal plan adapted to several levels. Living rock walls in room B9 etc. Moulded plaster cornice of satyrs in C3-B6, and in C3-B8 an Orthonobazus cornice. Drain in C3-B10, and plaster fire installation in C3-B6.	P. R. 6, 104–14

C3-C	53 (incomplete)	3+	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	None recorded	P. R. 6, nos 641–2	Presumed to be a house by excavators, but its bitumen-lined walls parallel to the adjacent bath structures may indicate this structure is part of the bath complex.	P. R. 6, 114–15
C3-D	350 (incomplete)	14+	Unknown	Yes	Yes in C3-D9	Unknown	Number of pictorial graffiti, many religious in character Goldman 199, nos C.13, C. 14, C.15, C.23, C.24, D.11, D.22, E.7, E.9, E.13, F.8, G.16, and G.17	P. R. 6, nos 643–83	Terraced over several levels, this structure includes the paved courtyard C3-D6 and the unusually narrow courtyard C3-D3, below which was a cave in the hillside which was used as a room. The edges of excavation are the extent of preservation on the north and east sides, as the hillside has eroded.	P. R. 6, 115–39
C4-A	97	3	C4-A28	No	No	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Three rooms immediately adjacent to the Temple of Zeus Megistos (rooms 22, 27, 28), thought to be a house but excavated in the tenth season so not well recorded. No vestibule or screening for courtyard.	Downey 1997b, 108

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
C5-E; House at the Edge of the Ravine	223 (incomplete)	8+	C5-E5	None recorded but stone staircase fragments found in this house	No	No	Pictorial graffiti of camel caravan and a boat	Cumont 1926, nos 129–33	Three adjacent exterior entrances, perhaps because C5-E4 functioned as a shop. Single column in courtyard. Among the graffiti are those in Hatrean, probably from this house. 'House of the Ravine' in YUAG Archive sometimes mistakenly applied to photographs of lower part of C5, where buildings which appear to have been shops were rebuilt by the MFSED. Unexcavated extent has eroded from hillside.	Cumont, 1926, 241, 447–9; Goldman 1999, nos G.15 and G.23; P. R. 4, 39–40 and 221–2
C5-F	Incomplete	2+	C5-F2	Unknown	Unknown	unknown	None recorded	None recorded	Only entrance and one corner of courtyard excavated; known only from Pearson's C5 plan, confirmed on ground.	None
C7-A	177.5	6 + cellar	C7-A9	Yes	C7-A10	No	None recorded	P. R. 5, no. 400	Blocked doors between C7-A2 and C7-B8, between C7-A9 and C7-E10, and between	P. R. 5, 34–6; Saliou 2004, 78–9

									C7-A2 and C7-E4, showing earlier relationships with both of these houses.	
C7-A^2	35.5 (+ 29, shops)	4, including 2 shops	C7-A24	Yes	No	No	None recorded	None recorded	House consists of only a courtyard and a single room (C7-A^{2}8 within it, the exterior wall of which served to form the vestibule. C7-A4 and C7-A5 were shops with independent entrances but which opened directly into each other and into the house courtyard.	P. R. 5, 36–7
C7-B	75	3	C7-B7	None recorded	C7-B8	No	None recorded	None recorded	Blocked door from C7-B8 to C8-A2. Moulded plaster cornice with leaf and acorn design in C7-B8. Column drums in courtyard of uncertain provenance.	P. R. 5, 37
C7-B^2	119	6	C7-B25	Yes	C7-B^{2}2	No	None recorded	None recorded	Opening between courtyard C7-B21 and C7-C9. C7-B^{2}2 had plaster cornice with leaf and acorn design.	P. R. 5, 37–8
C7-C	201.5	8	C7-C13	Yes	C7-C11	No	Pictorial graffiti included a number of animals and gladiator scene	P. R. 5, no. 401	Door between C7-C11 and C7-G2, and opening between C7-C9 and adjacent courtyard C7-B^{2}1. Feature in C7-C6 apparently an earlier wall exposed below the	P. R. 5, 38-40; Goldman 1999 nos G.13, E.10, F.5

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
									floor level. Roman military presence attested in graffiti. A single column formed the opening into a part of the courtyard which also has a partition.	
C7-G	265	10	C7-G16	Yes	C7-G4	No	Traces of blue and black paint	None recorded	Door between C7-G2 and C7-C11, as well as one between C7-G8 and C7-G^{2}7. Blocked doors from C7-G3 into C7-C^{2}3, and from C7-G4 to C7-G^{2}5. Two column bases recorded in notebook of courtyard but not on plan or *in situ*.	P. R. 5, 41–5
C7-G^2	132	6	C7-G**2**14	Yes	No	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Door between C7-G^{2}5 and C7-G4 blocked but door between C7-G^{2}7 and C7-G8 allowed circulation between these houses.	P. R. 5, 45–6
C7-G^3	214.5	7	C7-G**3**17	Yes	No	No	None recorded	P. R. 5, nos 300–1	Opening between courtyard C7-G^{3}18 and C7-G^{2}6. C7-G20 had independent entrance, apparently a shop. Door between C7-G^{3}22 and C7-D24 blocked.	P. R. 4, 153–7; P. R. 5, 46

C7-C^2	260.5	7	C7-C**2**5	Yes	No	No	Pictorial graffito of boat, horse, human head discovered by Saliou: Allag 2012, 131–2	None recorded	Raised bench for seating in C7-C^{2}5, and arched window in partition wall of courtyard, allowing view from vestibule into the courtyard beyond. Two columns in courtyard cover an area under which was built an oven. Doors were blocked between C7-C^{2}2 and C7-C14, as well as between C7-C^{2}3 and C7-G3.The opening between C7-C^{2}2 and C7-C^{2}3 was perhaps a very late addition, as it consists of a hole punched through mudbrick and unfinished, without jambs, threshold or lintel, and low in height.	P. R. 5, 40; Saliou 2004, 26
C7-D	332	12	C7-D5	Yes	No	No	None recorded	None recorded	Poor preservation here compared to the rest of the block. Where thresholds are shown on plan circulation is clear, otherwise walls are fragmentary. Blocked door between C7-D24 and C7-G^{3}22.	P. R. 5. 40–1

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
C7-E; House next to House of the Frescoes	255	11	C7-E10	Yes	No	No	Red-painted *dipinti* of stele in C7-E11	Pehlevi inscription on ostraca; glass fragment with Thetis inscription	Door between C7-E10 and C7-A1 blocked, as was a doorway between C7-E4 and C7-B2. Internally, a door between C7-E2 and C7-E4 was also blocked.	P. R. 4, 34–5, 206, 253, 262
C7-F; House of the Frescoes	187+21 (shop)	8+1 (shop)	C7-F7	Yes	Yes	No	Paintings, including hunting scene and fragmentary banquet scene, in C7-F4 initially thought to be Sasanian but more convincingly products of local painting traditions.	P. R. 4, nos 1–5; 294–9; Frye et al. 1955, nos 16–20	Blocked doors sealed from C7-F4 to C7-F5 shop, and between shop C7-F6 (with independent entrance) and C7-F5 shop. Texts included Parthian and Middle Persian, as well as Greek and Latin, the latter of which attests to presence of Roman military.	P. R. 4, 199–206; Rostovtzeff and Little 1933; Goldman and Little 1980; MacDonald 1986.
C8-F; House of the horoscopes; House of the graffiti	Incomplete	Incomplete		Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Horoscope and several pictorial graffiti	P. R. 2. 161-164; P. R. 4, no. 302.	Late second-century date from the horoscope, this house and the remainder of the block were only partially excavated by Cumont and later by soldiers stationed at the	P. R. 2, 161–4; P. R. 4, 157; Goldman 1999, nos A.5, A.10, and C.3

									site. It is not clear precisely where the graffiti were found. The block has 9 external entrances, at least two of which are unlikely to be houses as they have axial alignments with internal doors or open directly into a courtyard.	
C8-G	Incomplete	Incomplete		Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	P. R. 4, 157.	P. R. 4, nos. 303–6	As house C8-G, the references in this publication were to graffiti found in a house which was not completely excavated, in a block which was only partially explored.	P. R. 4, 157–8
C11-N	299	9	Entrée est	No	No	Yes	Wall paintings and pictorial graffiti. Allag 2012, 124–6	None recorded	Excavated by MFSED; kiln in courtyard. Block irregular in plan, probably due to topography and early settlement in this area, close to base of citadel. Within this block there were also found human remains which post-date the abandonment of the site (Buchet 2012, 196–7).	Forthcoming, MFSED

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
C11-S	193.5	7	Entrée ouest	No	Yes, in C11-P7	Yes	Allag 2012, 125–7	None recorded	Excavated by MFSED. Two columns in courtyard.	Forthcoming, MFSED
D1; House of Lysias	2356	54	D1-13 and D1-49	Yes, D1-1 x 2, D1-24, D1-42, and D1-39	No	D1-1, D1-24, D1-14, D1-39, and D1-42	Yes (Figure 6.10)	Frye et al. 1955, nos 16–28	Large house filling block D1; see Chapter 6.	Gunn 1965; du Pontbriand 2012
D2-A	300.5 (incomplete)	8+	Yes, but not numbered on original plan	Yes	No	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	Incompletely excavated, and recorded only on Detweiler's general plan. Probably excavated with clearance of city walls. House plan of the normal type, including vestibule and central courtyard surrounded by living rooms, but an opening in the southeast corner directly into rooms accessing a city tower denotes a relationship between these structures. Block small and irregular due to position against city wall.	None

D3/4	251.5 (incomplete)	5+	Yes, but not numbered on original plan	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	Two columns on opposite sides of courtyard support. External house walls re-used walls of large ashlars, usually indicative of the Hellenistic period. Possibly two houses but incompletely excavated. This structure covers the eastern line of Street 7, the line of which is also disrupted in the adjacent block D1 and its southern extension, D2, although these blocks are all aligned with the street grid so unlikely to pre-date it.	P. R. 5, 71–2
D5-A; Pillet's House F	247.5	9	D5-A7	Yes	D5-A4	No	None recorded	P. R. 4, nos 308–9	Door in D5-A6 opens into D5-E12 in adjacent structure.	P. R. 4, 27–32, 42-53, 158–9
D5-E; Pillet's House G	374 + 12	17 + 1 (shop)	D5-E16 and D5-E18 (probably a shop)	Yes, in E1 (main) and E15	No	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Door in D5-E12 connected this structure to D5-A6. The number of small rooms along north side of this building seem to have been shops, with D5-E10 as an earlier entrance which was closed off at some point (note all entrances from west side of this	P. R. 4, 27–32, 42–53

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m²	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
									block were sealed by the final period, and entrance from north to this part of Street I entered via a gate). D5-E7 was a secondary courtyard and was partially paved. Two ovens beneath stairwell in D5-E1. A door between D5-E11 and D5-E12 was blocked, as was one which previously connected D5-E5 and D5-F15 to the south. D5-E13/14/15 was a somewhat independent unit, sharing the entrance at D5-E16 but otherwise comprising its own courtyard with staircase and two small subsidiary rooms.	
D5-C; Pillet's House D	235	8	D5-C8	Yes	No	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Cellar beneath D5-C4, earlier exterior entrance (to shop?) in D5-C2. A Door opened between D5-C5 and D5-D7, although an	P. R. 4, 27–32, 42-53

									opening between these structures between D5-C3 and D5-D11 was blocked, as was one between D5-C5 and D5-D6. D5-C5 also previously had opened into D5-F3 but this door was also blocked. D5-C2 was accessed by a large plastered opening (not a door, no threshold, step, jambs or lintel block).	
D5-D; Pillet's House C	357.5	12	D5-D12	Yes	No	Yes	None recorded	P. R. 4, nos. 310–11	Five columns in courtyard. Internal door from D5-D1 to D5-D3 was blocked, as were doors from D5-D6 into D5-F4 and D5-C5, although from D5-D7 this structure opened into D5-C5.	P. R. 4, 27–32, 42-53
D5-G	149	4	D5-G2	No	No	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Excavations went far below final floor levels to reveal earlier walls and thresholds in this small house that once opened into D5-F via doors that were later blocked between D5-G2 and D5-F5 and D5-G3 and D5-F6.Two other blocked doors within the house, between D5-G1 and	P. R. 4, 27–32, 42-53

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
									D5-G4, are perhaps indications of the reconfiguration of space necessary when this house became an independent unit from D5-F.	
D5-F; House of the Atrium; House of the Cistern; House of the Court; Pillet's House A	705	17	D5-F19	Yes	No	Yes	P. R. 4, 159 noted horsemen	P. R. 4, nos 312–13; P. R. 5, 307–10 (silver bowl with inscription)	An opening between D5-F17 and D5-F[1]6 linked. Western entrances to this house were sealed along Street I, with blocked doors in D5-F10 and D5-F13 (in which there were high benches for sitting, like those in D1-13). Intercolumniations in D5-F1 were sealed at some point. Plaster basin in courtyard. Tall stepped niches with shelves in D5-F4. Doors which opened into a number of adjacent structures were sealed: those between D5-E5 and D5-F15, D5-F6, and D5-G3, D5-F4 and D5-D6, and D5-F3 and D5-C5.	P. R. 4, 27–32, 42-53, 159–60; P. R. 5, 307–10

D5-F^1; Pillet's House E	280	12	D5-$F^1$3	Yes	No	No	None recorded	None recorded	Connected to D5-F17 via opening in D5-$F^1$6. Earlier entrance via D5-$F^1$10 had been sealed. Earlier walls in $F^1$4. Wall built within courtyard ($F^1$11) is unusual.	P. R. 4, 27–32, 42–53
E4; House of the Parthian	1190	36	E4-5 and E4-26	Yes, in E4-14 and E4-22	No	Yes	Paintings and pictorial graffiti including *parapegma*. P. R. 6, 20–2, 25–6, 46	P. R. 6, nos. 612–28	House occupies the entire south half of block E4, and its entire excavated extent. Benches in main entrance E4-5, but by final period another entrance had been installed in E4-26; walls were added to screen internal corridor at this time, and this provided independent access to E4-22 courtyard, although this courtyard was still connected to the main part of the house via a number of routes. An external door out of E4-24 was blocked, and E4-13 also had a wide external entrance into a room that seems to have been used as a stable, with flagged floors. A number of cooking installations were built	P. R. 6, 4–48

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
									in E4-15 p. 134, a room with a hypocaust in E4-33 (which also had paintings in a more Mediterranean style than others at the site), and a number of other modifications made apparently when house was taken over by Roman military, including calendar in E4-23, which latterly became a store-room. The late blocking of doors such as that E4-36 is evident in the use of fired *bipedale* tiles in the blocking (stacked in rows and consolidated with mortar). Fragments of mosaic thought to indicate upper floor, which may have been a late addition given external buttressing added on both east and west sides of the building.	

E8	2380 (entire block)	95	E8-1, E8-24, E8-11, E8-48, E8-68, E8-92, perhaps others but external walls not completely preserved	None recorded	None recorded	E8-12	Mythological paintings in Brown's field notes (Figure 3.3)	Frye et al. 1955, nos 59–198	This block was not well preserved, particularly on its northern side. Within the Roman military camp, it seems to have been taken over entirely for use as military housing (see pp. 116–26). The precise number of independent units is difficult to determine as not all wall lines are certain. Stone flagging on parts of floors of a number of rooms (E8-30, E8-18, E8-49, E8-50, E8-65, E8-57, E8-55.1) perhaps indicates provision for animals. A number of notable features including the subdivision of courtyards, the use of poor walls built of rubble, and not plastered or mortared. The divisions between different houses that once made up this block are no longer clear due to its modification and poor preservation.	du Mesnil du Buisson 1933, 194; du Mesnil du Buisson 1935, 277; Frye et al. 1955, 161–5

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
G1-A	775.5	21	G1-A25	Yes	No	Yes, in both G1-A10 and G1-39	None recorded	None recorded	Secondary entrance into house via G1-A19, perhaps a storage area or shop. Doorway from G1-A13 into G1-B21 connected these two houses by the final period. G1-A itself had two courtyards, both with fired brick floors, G1-A10 and G1-A39. The latter courtyard was subdivided, which is perhaps comparable to the subdivision of courtyards in other properties taken over by Roman military (e.g. in E8). The main living room, G1-A3, had a plastered floor. The cobbled floor and trough in G1-A14 likely indicate the room's use for stabling animals. The stairwell on the north side of G1-A10 had an opening in the external wall which probably allowed items to be passed in from the	Baird 2012c; P. R. 5, 49-52; P. R. 9.1, 136–42

									street to the north; this opening was closed with a long bolt. Internal staircase in G1-A36 is also unusual (but also occurs in block C11).	
G1-B	359	14	G1-B31	Yes	Yes	No	None recorded	F. R. 5.1, nos 403–4	Walls of this house abut those of G1-A, hence built later. Door in G1-B21 opens into G1-A13. Internal staircase in G1-B37 in addition to that in courtyard. G1-B37 also has equipment perhaps related to textile manufacture. Courtyard G1-B18 has two columns, one of which is engaged to a partition wall.	Baird 2012c; P. R. 5, 53–5; P. R. 9.1, 142–6
G1-C	111	5	G1-C107	Yes	No	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Walls of this house abut those of both G1-A and G1-B, as well as G1-D, so this house appears to have utilized the remaining space between these structures. Sockets to support beams of upper floor visible in G1-C5.	P. R. 5, 55–8; P. R. 9.1, 147–8
G1-D	50.5 (incomplete) + 11.5 (shop)	3 + shop, incompletely excavated	G1-D73	Yes	Unknown	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Only the northern portion of this house was excavated, and doorways in south walls of G1-D77 and G1-D78	P. R. 5, 58; P. R. 9.1, 135–6

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
									show it extended farther. Doorway opens between G1-D77 and shop G1-S76.	
G1-F	246	11	G1-F104	Yes	No	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	A single Doric column supported a small porch over the southwest corner of the courtyard. Walls of earlier structures exposed beneath floor of the house. Oven excavated in G1-F107.	P. R. 5, 58-65; P. R. 9.1, 124–32, 133–4
G1-G	112.5	3	Courtyard G1-G103	Yes	No	No	None recorded	None recorded	Second street entrance into G1-G125 perhaps indicates this room was a shop.	P. R. 5, 58-65; P. R. 9.1, 124–32, 134–5
G2-B	93	4	Courtyard G1-B38, no vestibule	Yes	Yes	No	None recorded	None recorded	G1-B39 and G1-B42 both have raised plaster borders. A single column in the courtyard supported a roofed area, and a plaster table was excavated on the north side of the courtyard. Perhaps used not only as a house (see p. 191).	Baird 2007b; P. R. 5, 65–6; P. R. 9.1, 148–50
G2-C	109	4	Courtyard G1-C43, no vestibule	Yes	No	No	None recorded	P. R. 5, no. 405.	A single column supported a roofed part of the courtyard, which	Baird 2007b; P. R. 5, 65–6; P. R. 9.1, 150–1

								also had a plaster table, firepit, oven, and mill. A firepit was also excavated in G1-C40. As with G1-B, the number of installations and the entrance directly into the court yard is perhaps indicative of a supra-domestic function (see pp. 191–2). This house also had an entrance directly from street into G1-C23.	
G3-B	290	11	G3-B1	Two: G3-B2 and G3-B7	No	Yes, in both G3-B2 and G3-B7	None recorded	None recorded	The final-period structure entered from the south into G3-B1 had two courtyards (G3-B2 and G3-B7), the northern of which was probably once the centre of an independent unit, and entered via a door that was later blocked in G3-B9, with the opening between G3-B6 and G3-B5 connecting these two units. A blocked door in the south wall of G3-B10 seems to indicate that this room was once a shop with its own external entrance,	P. R. 5, 67–8; P. R. 9.1, 90–4, 94–5; Coqueugniot 2012b

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
									before G3-C was constructed. G3-B had a further relationship with G3-C, as a window opens between rooms G3-B5 and G3-C6. In courtyard G3-B2 were found 2 ovens, and courtyard G3-B7 had a table with an inset basin, as well as a column supporting a roofed area.	
G3-C	144	6	G3-C1	Yes	No	No	None recorded	None recorded	Sockets in south wall of G3-C3 for wooden beams supporting a roof or upper floor are preserved. A plaster basin was recorded in the courtyard. A window between G3-C6 and G3-B5 is an unusual feature. A door from G3-C2 to G3-B10 had also been sealed.	P. R. 5, 67–8; P. R. 9.1, 90–4, 95–7; Coqueugniot 2012b
G3-D	202	8	G3-D1	Yes	Yes, in G3-D6	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Fired ceramic tiles lined the courtyard of the house, entered via a doorway which only partially concealed it from the outside.	P. R. 5, 67–8; P. R. 9.1, 89–90; Coqueugniot 2012b

									Room G3-D8 had apparently been acquired from the neighbouring house to the north, and the door between that room and G3-H8 was blocked.	
G3-F	116.5	4	G3-F4	Yes	Yes, in G3-F3	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	The entrance directly from the street to the north of this house (Street 4) was partially screened by a vestibule created by the staircase. G3-F2 had once had its own external entrance to the street, which was later blocked, and was thus perhaps a shop.	P. R. 5, 67–8; P. R. 9.1, 3 n 1, 99–102; Coqueugniot 2012b
G3-G	187.5	7 + cellar rooms	G3-G1	Yes	Yes, in G3-G2	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	The courtyard of this house had a relief of Heracles set into one wall, and a column supported a roof on the north side. Considerable street level rise allowed for vaulted plaster 'cellars' to be constructed, beneath the room labelled G3-G2.	P. R. 5, 67–8, 75; P. R. 9.1, 3 n 1, 90–4, 98–9; Coqueugniot 2012b
G3-H	213	11	G3-H1	Yes	Yes, in G3-H7	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	The unusual layout of this house, which only has external walls around its entrance, and is otherwise completely surrounded	P. R. 5, 67–8, 75; P. R. 9.1, 80–6, 87–9, 163–4, 187–202; Coqueugniot 2012b

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
									by other houses, is evidence of the gradual building and modification of this block after its Hellenistic use as shops as proposed by Brown. Two reliefs were also found in this house.	
G3-J	165 + 15 (shop G3-J8)	7 + shop	G3-J2	Yes	Yes, in G3-J6	Yes	Scratched image on altar, Goldman 1999 no. C.20	P. R. 9.1, nos 934–5	G3-J8 had an independent street entrance, and was probably a shop. Sockets to support a floor and the depth of this room show the space beneath the level of the entrance was used as a 'cellar'. An earlier entrance directly from the street to the north into the courtyard G3-J1 was blocked, as was an earlier door directly from G3-J3 to G3-J4.	P. R. 5, 67–8, 75; P. R. 9.1, 86–7, 161–3, 168; Coqueugniot 2012b
G3-L	107	4	G3-L1	Yes	Yes, in G3-L2	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Fire installation in G3-L2. Second staircase and terracotta basin in G3-L4.	P. R. 5, 67–8, 75; P. R. 9.1, 69-75, 79-80, 160–1; Coqueugniot 2012b

G3-K	266	8	G3-K1	Yes	Yes, in G3-K3 and G3-K8	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	By the final period, a door between G3-K6 and G3-M3 connected these two structures. Excavations beneath floor level of final period reveal a number of earlier constructions. G3-K8 contained a fire installation, similar to that found in G3-L1. G3-K6 contained a terracotta tub in a plaster frame.	P. R. 5, 67–8, 75; P. R. 9.1, 69-70, 78–9; Coqueugniot 2012b
G3-M	162	4	G3-M1	No	No	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	By the final period, a door between G3-K6 and G3-M3 connected these two structures. A bath structure in G3-M2 was taken to be Hellenistic and not contemporary with the later use of the structure.	P. R. 5, 67–8, 75; P. R. 9.1, 32–6, 75–8, 159–60; Coqueugniot 2012b
G4-A	117 + 15 (shop)	6 + shop	G4-A61	Yes	Yes, in G4-A58	Yes	None recorded	P. R. 5, no. 406	Two columns in the courtyard of this house. Shop G4-S47, which had its own external entrance, opened into the courtyard as well.	P. R. 5, 69; P. R. 9.1, 151–3
G4-B	88.5 + 10 (shop) incomplete	4 + 1 shop (incomplete)	G3-B48	Yes	No	No	None recorded	P. R. 5, no. 406	This structure was incompletely excavated (the restored plan of Brown reconstructs the	P. R. 5, 69; P. R. 9.1, 151, 153

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
									complete south wall of B-G2, but this was unexcavated and the building may continue in that direction). The southern part of the courtyard had a plastered floor and a rubblework bin in its southeast corner. Shop B4-S50 opened directly into room G3-B55.	
G4-C	36 + 8.5(shop) incomplete	2+ (incomplete)	Unexcavated	Unexcavated	Yes, G4-C54	Unknown	None recorded	None recorded	Incompletely excavated. G3-S51 opens into this room, but the main entrance to the (apparent) house was probably via the northernmost exterior door of this block on Street F; G3-C63 was probably the courtyard.	P. R. 5, 69
G5-A	87	4	G5-A4 and G3-A1	No	Yes, in G3-A2	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Two entrances, one directly into the courtyard. G5-A3 had a bent-access niche. A fire installation was excavated adjacent to the plaster platform in G5-A2.	Pearson's earlier unpublished plans preserves alternate numbering system which allows objects to be correlated to

										find-spots (YUAG h35c). P. R. 9.1, 115–16, 118–19
G5-B	67.5	4	G5-B1	Yes	No	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	G5-B, like G5-A, was also entered directly into the courtyard. In the courtyard, a fire pit and an oven were found beneath the arches of the staircase, and a fire pit was found near the centre of the courtyard.	Pearson's earlier unpublished plans preserves alternate numbering system which allows objects to be correlated to find-spots (YUAG h35c). P. R. 9.1, 119–22, 167
G5-C	98.5	4 + cellar	G5-C1	Yes	Yes, in G5-C2	Yes	None recorded	P. R. 9.1, 203–65	G5-C4, perhaps a shop, with an independent entrance, had a cellar beneath. A fireplace and an oven were excavated in the courtyard of this house. *Dipinti* recording entertainers have led to the interpretation of this structure as a brothel (see pp. 196–99). A door that once opened between G5-C3 and G5-C4 was blocked.	Pearson's earlier unpublished plans preserves alternate numbering system which allows objects to be correlated to find-spots (YUAG h35c). P. R. 9.1, 115–18, 166–7, 203–65; McGinn 2004, 223–5

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
G5-D	112	5	G5-D1	Yes	No	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Entrance directly into courtyard G5-D1 via alleyway to south of house. Mudbrick partition inside courtyard, and finds included a mid-third-century CE coin hoard.	Pearson's earlier unpublished plans preserves alternate numbering system which allows objects to be correlated to find-spots (YUAG h35c). P. R. 7/8, 422ff; P. R. 9.1, 119–21, 259–60
G5-E	162	7	G5-E6	Yes	Yes, G5-E2	Yes	P. R. 9.1, 112 records a painted 'icon for private worship' in G5-E3	None recorded	Secondary entrance via probable shop G5-E5, which opened into G5-E2. Oven in southeast corner of courtyard, and fire installation beneath staircase. Column on eastern side of courtyard. The paved area of the courtyard may have been for accommodation of animals.	Pearson's earlier unpublished plans preserves alternate numbering system which allows objects to be correlated to find-spots (YUAG h35c). P. R. 9.1, 109–12

G5-F	116	6	G5-F5	Yes	Yes, in G5-F2	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Fireplace and oven found in courtyard, and a brick hearth in G5-F2. West side of courtyard had a porch supported by a single column. Entrance door was in alley (via G5-F5), with the opening between F5-F1 being an arched opening without doors.	Pearson's earlier unpublished plans preserves alternate numbering system which allows objects to be correlated to find-spots (YUAG h35c). P. R. 9.1, 113–15, 165–6
G6-C	119.5	8	G6-C9, G6-C8, and C6-C4	Yes	No	Yes	None recorded	P. R. 5, nos. 407–9	G6-C3 had three terracotta tubs sunken into the floor, and courtyard G6-C10 was paved in brick, and had a ceramic vat in a plastered table. Beneath the staircase was a double plaster bin. G6-C11 had a plaster cornice of Bacchic masks, and could be closed from the court with double doors and bolts (the sockets for which were preserved). G6-C4 contained a number of *dolia* and *amphora*, set into the floor.	P. R. 5, 70–1; P. R. 9.1, 153–6

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
G6-D; Cumont's House	209.5	9	G6-D7(A)	Yes	Yes, in G6-D2 (H)	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Letters in parentheses are those used by Cumont. Orthonobazus cornice found in this house (Shoe 1943, 22). G6-S22(C) apparently a shop, with an independent entrance directly from the street.	Cumont 1926, 242, 250; P. R. 9.1, 156–8
G7-H; House of Julius Terentius	376	10	G7-H10	Yes	Yes, in G7-H2 and G7-H3	Yes	None recorded	P. R. 9.1, no. 939	House so named as incompletely carved epitaph of the tribune of the 20th Palmyrenes, Julius Terentius, known also from the painting in the Temple of Bel, was excavated in this house. It seems unlikely that the inscription can be used to situate the tribune in this structure (rather, it may be that it is near its place of fabrication, as it was unfinished, with the later part of the inscription only painted and not carved). The house had been re-organized, with the door between G7-H5 and G7-H6 being blocked and both	P. R. 9.1, 2, 103–9, 164–5, 176–85; Welles 1941; Nilsson 1942

									rooms gaining alternate entrances, including that from the courtyard into G7-H5 which awkwardly cuts through a corner wall. In that room a number of basalt hand mills were found. The door which had opened from G7-H2 into G7-H8 was blocked. A rubble-built table was found in G7-H9, and an oven in the courtyard.	
G8-B	Incomplete	8+	Unexcavated	Unknown	Yes, in G8-B2	Unknown	None recorded	None recorded	Incompletely excavated structure; G8-B6 probably a courtyard.	P. R. 9.1-2
H2-D; Priest's House	440.5	15	H2-D6	Yes	No	No	Pictorial graffiti, Goldman 1999 nos A.29, C. 20, C.26, and G.9. P. R. 3, 25	P. R. 4, nos. 322–39	This house opened via H2-D11 into H2-D15, and via H2-D6 into H2-D9, combining three courtyard units into one structure. Named the 'Priest's house' due to proximity of temples of Atargatis and Artemis. A trough and oven in room H2-D10 led to the identification of the room as a 'bakery'. Carved relief busts were recorded from	Cumont 1926, 115; P. R. 3, 3, 25–7, 33–5; P. R. 4, 2, 19–20, 53–5, 162–8, 210–11, 214–15

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
									this house as ‘voussoirs’.	
H2-G; House West of the Priest’s House	211+12 (shop?)	8 + 1 (shop?)	H2-G6	Yes	No	No	None recorded	P. R. 4, no. 340	This house had independent entrances at H2-G7 (perhaps a shop) and H2-G6, but could also be accessed via H2-D6, to rooms H2-D9 and H2-D8, which opened into H2-G2.	P. R. 3, 33–5; P. R. 4, 148
H2-D'	155.5	6	H2-D6	Yes	No	No	None recorded	None recorded	While the building marked as H2-D' seems to have once had its own entrance via H2-D'3, the doorway between that room and D'1 was blocked, so by the final period the structure was accessible only via the attached structures H2-H and H2-D, via a door from H2-D'5 to H2-D11. An earlier door which connected H2-D'6 to the adjacent house was blocked. ‘D'’ label that of the excavators.	Cumont 1926, 115; P. R. 3, 3, 25–7, 33–5; P. R. 4, 2, 19–20, 53–5, 162–8, 210–11, 214–15

H2-F	259	9	H2-F	No, staircase in vestibule H2-F7	Yes, in H2-F4 and H2-F5	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	This house was completely excavated, but recorded only on Detweiler's unpublished plan of H2: published plans show an unexcavated area. No other notes survive. H2 was divided by an alleyway which separates the houses in the south half from the Temple of Atargatis in the northern half. The numbers on the plan (Figure 6.1) are those of Detweiler. A blocked door between H2-F2 and H2-D16 attests to an earlier relationship between these structures. An internal door between H2-F5 and H2-F4 was also blocked, as was one between H2-F9 and H2-F2. A single column stands in the courtyard. A staircase is, unusually, placed in the entrance vestibule; it has an arched opening beneath it.	None
I3-A	231.5 (incomplete)	8+ (incompletely excavated)	Door on road F	Yes	Unknown	Unknown	None recorded	None recorded	Portions of one house and several adjacent rooms, perhaps also of houses. No records of	None

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
									excavations, possibly cleared by soldiers stationed at the site between the expeditions of Cumont and Yale. Only record in archive is the appearance on Detweiler's plan (and his preparatory drawings). Enclosed staircase to north of courtyard, principal room to south.	
I4-A	321.5 (incomplete)	10+ (incomplete)	Door on road F	Yes	Unknown	Unknown	None recorded	None recorded	Portions of one house and several adjacent rooms, perhaps also of houses. No records of excavations, possibly cleared by soldiers stationed at the site between the expeditions of Cumont and Yale. Only record in archive is the appearance on Detweiler's plan (and his preparatory drawings). Enclosed staircase to west of courtyard, principal room to south.	None

J1-A; House of the Prefect	933 (incomplete)	20+ (incomplete)	J1-21	Yes	No	No	None recorded	None recorded	Preservation in this part of city was rather shallow, and the southern part of this block was disturbed by a modern road. Thought by the excavators to be the house of the military commander, this large courtyard structure with columns around three sides of its courtyard lay within the Roman camp. Two plaster basins were excavated in J1-1, just outside rooms J1-18 and J1-19.	P. R. 5, 235–7
K5-A	306.5 (incomplete)	9+ (incomplete)	Vestibule off B Street	Yes	Unknown	Unknown	None recorded	None recorded	Cleaning work by Simon James in 2005 exposed a house which had been partially excavated but appeared only on Detweiler's city plan, and was otherwise unrecorded. The camp wall along the southern side of the Roman military garrison ran through rooms of this house, which occupied the northeast corner of block K5.	James 2007
L5-A	107.5	4	L5-A14	Yes	No	No	None recorded	None recorded	Entrance directly from the street into the courtyard of this house,	P. R. 7/8, 175

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
									which seems to have preceded the adjacent house L5-B, whose walls abut the exterior walls of L5-A. L5-A23 had a fire installation in one corner.	
L5-B	251	9	L5-B15	Yes	No	Yes	None recorded	P. R. 7/8, no. 885	L5-B's walls abut those of houses L5-A and L5-C to its north and south, and it seems to have filled in a previously open space, perhaps accounting for its irregular shape. The rectangular feature in the courtyard on the plan is a hearth. A blocked door in L5-B20 once opened into the area that was the courtyard of the Temple of Adonis.	P. R. 7/8, 175–6, 177
L5-C	153.5	5	L5-C29	Yes	No	No	None recorded	None recorded	Abutting walls show this structure preceded the construction of L5-B, but post-dated that of L5-D. Room L5-C27 was recorded as a stairwell – an unusual form and one that could not be confirmed in the field (the room	P. R. 7/8, 176

									survives, but stairs do not).	
L5-D	109 (incomplete)	4+ (incomplete)	Probably door on Street A north of L5-C entrance	Unexcavated	Yes, in L5-D30	Unknown	Goldman 1999, nos. D.16a, D.16b, E.14, E.16; P. R. 7/8, 177–9	None recorded	Partially excavated structure, probably rooms of a house given the entrance exposed on Street A, but possibly part of the Temple of Adonis complex.	P. R. 7/8, 176, 177–9
L7-A; House of the Roman Scribes	363	10	L7-A38	Yes	L7-A40	Yes	Painted ceiling tiles and pictorial graffiti. Goldman 1999, no. B.3; du Mesnil du Buisson 1933, 194, 196	P. R. 6, nos 782–97	See discussion in main text pp. 138–42.	P. R. 6, 265-308
L7-B	221.5	5	L7-B30a	No	No	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Street level rise seems to have necessitated a higher entrance, and thus the creation of a ‘cellar’ beneath the vestibule. Rooms L7-A31 and L7-A36 were believed to have been originally part of this house, but their walls rebuilt when acquired by L7-A.	P. R. 6, 224–7
L7-C	311.5	9	L7-C23	Yes	No	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	This house opened via a door in L7-C23 into the courtyard of L7-D24. Alleyway 71 allowed access to this building as well as to the synagogue precinct.	P. R. 6, 213–16

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
L7-D	168.5	7	Vestibule off Street 4	Yes	No	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Opening from the courtyard of L7-D24 into adjacent house, L7-C, but the structure also had an independent entrance, off Street 4 (vestibule not numbered on plan). The niche in the west wall of L7-D26 was arched and aligned with the door opposite.	P. R 6, 218–20
L7-E	222	7	L7-E41	Yes	No	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Plan partially restored by excavators, poor preservation in this part of the block due to demolition associated with building of interior rampart.	P. R. 6, 227
L7-F	221.5	7	L7-F89	Unknown	Unknown	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	Plan partially restored by excavators, poor preservation in this part of the block due to demolition associated with building of interior rampart.	P. R. 6, 227–8
L7-G	109	6	L7-G85	Unknown	Unknown	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	Plan partially restored by excavators, poor preservation in this part of the block due to demolition associated with building of	P. R. 6, 227

									interior rampart. L7-G84 had a plastered floor.	
L7-H	438.5	10	L7-H1		No	Yes			House which was adapted to become part of synagogue precinct.	P. R. 6, 220–3; F. R. 8.1
L7-I	294	12	L7-I79	Yes	Yes, in L7-I77	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	L7-I takes up the northeast corner of the block. L7-I77 had a plaster bench, red-earth floor, and a plaster fire installation.	P. R. 6, 216–18
L8-A	177	6	Entrance off Street 4	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	Low preservation on this side of the block; the house plan is known but little else recorded.	Known only from Detweiler's general plan of the city
L8-B	194.5 (incomplete)	5 +(incomplete)	Entrance off Street 2	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	Structure incompletely excavated.	Known only from Detweiler's general plan of the city
L8-C; House of the Jewellery	194	3	Entrance off Main Street	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	House in southwest corner of L8, but does not include corner room of the block which had its own entrance. House recorded incidentally due to the discovery of a hoard of jewellery found within it.	P. R. 2, 780–2; P. R. 3, 141
L8-D	116.5 (incomplete)	5+ (incomplete)	Entrance off Wall Street	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	The more southern of two entrances to L7 from the Wall Street, this structure, with its	Known only from Detweiler's

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
									external entrance into a broad room, may not have been a house.	general plan of the city
L8-E	222 (incomplete)	7 + (incomplete)	Unknown	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	Entrance not known, possibly part of adjacent house, L8-D.	Known only from Detweiler's general plan of the city
L8-F	87 (incomplete)	6+ (incomplete)	Entrance off Wall Street	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	With an entrance just north of that to L8-D, the structure was incompletely excavated.	Known only from Detweiler's general plan of the city
M7-A; House southeast of Palmyrene Gate	171	8	M7-A4	Yes	Yes, in M7-A8	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	An opening between M7-A6 and the entrance vestibule of M7-W connected these two houses. Fire installation in M7-A8.	P. R. 4, 32–3; P. R. 6, 140–72
M7-W; House of the Banquet	187	6	M7-WI	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Banquet scenes	Inscriptions on paintings, P. R. 6, nos. 681–6, 688, and 691	An opening between M7-W's entrance vestibule and that of M7-A connected these two houses. Bitumen-lined jar sunken into floor of entrance vestibule, and a number in courtyard. Courtyard had a single column. M7-W6 contained paintings (see pp. 74–5, 243), as well as carved plaster bust-relief sculptures. Plaster fire installation in M7-W6.	P. R. 6, 140–7, 167–72; Dirven 1999, 281–93; Perkins 173, 65–8

M7-B; House of the Bath Man	173.5 (incomplete)	8+ (incomplete)	Vestibule off Main Street	Yes	No	Unknown	None recorded	None recorded	One of the channels for heating the adjacent M7 baths extended into the court of this structure, hence its name.	P. R. 6, 140–72
M7-E	127.5 (incomplete)	5+ (incomplete)	Unknown	Yes	Unknown	Unknown	None recorded	P. R. 6, no. 680	Rooms in M7 along Wall Street given label M7-E but these do not clearly comprise a house.	P. R. 6, 146
M7-H	112 (incomplete)	4+ (incomplete)	M7-H1	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Winged figure below text no. 31	Frye et al. 1955, nos 31 and 227	M7-H was entered from Street 3 to the south of block. A door which had opened into M7-H2 from Street 3 was blocked.	P. R. 6, 143. plate
M8-A; House of the Christian Building	229	9	M8-A8	Yes	Yes, M8-A4B	Yes	Goldman 1999, nos A.13, A.14, and later Christian paintings	F. R. 8.2, nos 1–20	House M8-A became the Christian house-church in the third century.	F. R. 8.2, esp. 32–34 on house before its transformation into Christian building; P. R. 4, 11-13, 215–21; P. R. 6, 172–9; Lassus 1969; Wharton 1995, 26–33

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
M8-B	231 (incomplete?)	8?	Uncertain, possibly from M8-B3	None recorded	None recorded	Unknown	None recorded	Frye et al. 1955, no. 165	M8-B was poorly preserved, and excavated incidentally in clearance of Christian building. An opening in M7-B7 connects this structure with M7-H.	P. R. 6, 172–9, 186; F. R. 7.2, 5
M8-H	86 (incomplete)	5+ (incomplete)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Yes	None recorded	Frye et al. 1955, no. 165	M8-H4 opened into M8-B7, so linked to that structure. A column was found in the excavated part of the courtyard.	P. R. 6, 172–9
M8-F	101.5	7	M7-F3	Yes	Yes, in M8-F2	Unknown	None recorded	None recorded	Blocked door once opened directly from courtyard into Street A. In M8-F4 a pipe was excavated, encased in plaster, possibly a drain from the roof.	P. R. 6, 172–9
M8-G	100.5 (incomplete)	4+ (incomplete)	M8-G1	Yes	Yes, in M8-G2	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	Incompletely excavated but fairly average house plan preserved; part of block razed when internal rampart built.	P. R. 6, 172–9
M8-L	244 (incomplete)	8+ (incomplete)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	None recorded	P. R. 6, no. 698	Little is known of this incompletely excavated structure. M8-L1 seems to be the courtyard.	P. R. 6, 172–9

N1-A	250 (incomplete)	7 + (incomplete)	Entrance off Street C	Unexcavated	Unknown	Unknown	None recorded	None recorded	A single excavated house on the west side of block N1 appeared on Detweiler's general city plan was otherwise unrecorded. The entrance vestibule is quite long, and several of the rooms have openings between them, without door frames.	None
N2-A	273 (incomplete)	7 + (incomplete)	Entrance off Street 7	Yes	Yes	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	This structure, and two other partially excavated rooms to the south belonging to other buildings, were recorded only on Detweiler's general plan of the city. The courtyard had three columns, and the entrance was directly into the courtyard.	None
N8-A	251	8	N8-A4	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	Pictorial graffito of lion associated with texts	P. R. 7/8, nod. 927–30; Frye et al. no. 205	This structure was excavated incidentally, as it was initially thought to be part of the sanctuary of Aphlad to its south. Surviving plans lack detail, particularly on the north side.	P. R. 7/8, 372–6
X7-A	117.5 (incomplete)	4+ (incomplete)	Unknown	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	Poorly preserved and incompletely excavated, the walls between the	P. R. 9.3, 97–9

House Designation/ other names	Approx. size in m^2	No. of grnd fl. rooms	Exterior entrance via room no.	Courtyard Staircase	Raised plaster room border	Cistern	Wall paintings/ pictorial graffiti	Graffiti or inscriptions	Other notable features	Main Bibliography
X7-B; Priest's House	279.5 (incomplete)	5+ (incomplete)	Unknown	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	P. R. 9.3, nos 983–6	'Dolicheneum' and the Palace of the Dux seem to have been houses converted for use by the military p. 128. X7-A consists of rooms 28, 29, 31, and 33. Poorly preserved and incompletely excavated, the walls between the 'Dolicheneum' and the Palace of the Dux seem to have been houses converted for use by the military (see p. 128).	P. R. 9.3, 97–9

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