

BRILL'S COMPANION TO
ANCIENT
MACEDON

*Studies in the Archaeology and History
of Macedon, 650 BC–300 AD*



Edited by
Robin J. Lane Fox

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Cover illustration: The hunt frieze on Philip's tomb (336 BC) [Reconstruction G. Miltsakakis].
See also 282ff (Ch. 14 and fig. 25) in this volume.

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THE PALACE OF AEGAE

A. Kottaridi

Under the hill of the acropolis, on a raised terrace that dominates the area, survive the impressive ruins of the palace whose imposing presence marks even now the image of the archaeological site of Aegae.

After its discovery and its first presentation by Heuzey – Daumet, the excavations by K. Rhomaios, Ch. Makaronas, G. Bakalakis and M. Andronikos lasted for several years and were completed in the beginnings of the seventies, leading to a full revelation of the monument. However, the palace of Palatitsia-Vergina, or more correctly, the palace of Aegae, has been from the nineteenth century until today a big paradox in archaeological research, familiar but also unfamiliar and unknown.¹

Covering an area of ca. 12,500 m² the impressive edifice is bigger than the later buildings at Demetrias and Pergamon that are considered as palaces by many scholars. Its preservation is much better and its form much clearer and more readable than that of the “basileia” of Pella, which

I want to thank warmly Robin Lane Fox and New College for the opportunity that they gave me in 2008 as a Visiting Fellow to study without any interruptions in the libraries of Oxford. As a result I could not only write the text that follows, but also confront more efficiently the questions posed by the great project of the conservation-restoration of the palace of Aegae.

¹ See L. A. Heuzey and H. Daumet, *Mission archéologique de Macédoine* (Paris, 1876); K. Rhomaios, “Το ανάκτορον της Παλατίτσας,” *AEphem* (1953–1954), pp. 141–150; M. Andronikos, G. Bakalakis, Ch. Makaronas, and N. Moutsopoulos, eds., *Το ανάκτορο της Βεργίνας* (Athens, 1961); M. Andronikos, *Vergina. The Prehistoric Necropolis and the Hellenistic Palace*. Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology 13 (Lund, 1964); D. Pantermalis, “Beobachtungen zur Fassadenarchitektur und Aussichtsveranda in hellenistischen Makedonien,” in *Hellenism in Mittelitalien* (Göttingen, 1976), pp. 387–95; M. Andronikos, *Βεργίνα. Οι μακεδονικοί τάφοι και άλλες αρχαιότητες* (Thessaloniki, 1984), pp. 38–49; V. Heermann, *Studien zur makedonischen Palastarchitektur* (Diss. Erlangen-Nürnberg, 1986); D. Pantermalis, “Η κεράμωση του ανακτόρου της Βεργίνας,” *Ametos* (1987), pp. 579–614, I. Nielsen, *Hellenistic Palaces Tradition and Renewal*. Studies in Hellenistic Civilization V (Aarhus, 1999), 19 f; W. Hoepfner and G. Brands eds, *Basileia. Die Paläste der Hellenistischen Könige* (Mainz, 1996); G. Velenis, “Τεχνικές στο ανάκτορο της Βεργίνας, Μνήμη Μανόλη Ανδρόνικου,” *Μακεδονικά* 6 (1997), pp. 25–37, I. Nilsen, ed., *The Royal Palace Institution in the First Millennium BC* (Athens, 2001). See also A. W. Lawrence, *Greek Architecture*, (London, 1957); H. Lauter, *Die Architektur des Hellenismus* (Darmstadt, 1986).

underwent so many extensions and alterations during Hellenistic times. As a result, although previous presentation of the finds from the excavations of the twentieth century has been very brief,²—with the exception of the roof tiling³—the palace of Aegae has formed a point of reference in scholarly discussion of Hellenistic architecture for many years now. Its importance, however, has not been fully recognised, since up to now three main questions have remained open: its date, the possible building phases, and its precise form.

Thanks to the great work of restoration and anastylosis of the palace that started in the spring of 2007, we have had the chance to excavate systematically older and newer fills, to reveal again and systematically study the whole monument, and to explore in depth areas that had remained unexplored during earlier excavations (figs. 32A and 32B).⁴ At the same time the hundreds of architectural members that were strewn about the site were systematically documented, so that the restoration-anastylosis of parts of the building could begin, including the work of restoring the floors that are covered with marble and mosaics and survive to an extent of ca. 1,450 m².

During this process many extremely important new finds have come to light and others have been identified for the first time. All these give answers to many of the previously open questions, reveal new horizons for research and show incontestably the huge importance of the monument. As everything shows, it was not only the biggest but, together with the Parthenon, one of the most important buildings of classical antiquity.

² See M. Andronikos, G. Bakalakis, Ch. Makaronas, and N. Moutsopoulos, *To ανάκτορο της Βεργίνας* (Athens, 1961); M. Andronikos, *Βεργίνα. Οι μακεδονικοί τάφοι και άλλες αρχαιότητες* (Thessaloniki, 1984), pp. 38–49; G. Velenis, “Τεχνικές στο ανάκτορο της Βεργίνας, Μνήμη Μανόλη Ανδρόνικου,” *Μακεδονικά* 6 (1997), pp. 25–37; Ch. Saatsoglou-Paliadeli, ‘The Palace of Vergina-Aegae and its Surroundings,’ in I. Nilsen ed., *The Royal Palace Institution in the First Millennium BC* (Athens, 2001), pp. 201–213.

³ D. Pantermalis, “Η κεράμωση του ανακτόρου της Βεργίνας,” *Ametos* (1987), 579–614.

⁴ The first serious problem that had to be resolved when the new excavation began was the complete absence of excavation diaries and of any photographs from the earlier excavations. Having to rely only on the reports of the *Chronicles of the Archaeologikon Deltion* and on the synoptic first publication, we decided to handle the cleaning and the digging out that had to take place for the project as a primary/original excavation despite the cost in money and time. A huge excavation canvas was placed on the whole of the monument and its direct environment and the revelation-“excavation” started with great care. It has been combined with detailed documentation of the remains and of all the, truly unexpected, new finds.

The Urban Surroundings of the Palace

The mountain range of Pieria, the “Macedonian mountain”⁵ to the south, the river Haliakmon to the west and north and the river Askordos to the east demarcate the area of Aegae, the first city of the Macedonians.⁶ Surveys and rescue excavations⁷ in this vast area of more than 6,500 hectares have shown that Aegae, as the plural of the name shows, was an “open” urban formation with small and larger settlements, strewn around a central core, the “*asty*” [town/city]. As the centre of a state with ancient social structures, Aegae remained until its end a city formed as a collection of villages, “*kata komas*.” Its urban complex developed organically, without a strictly predefined plan, and its space reflects a society founded on the aristocratic structures of clans for which the royal presence and power were the cohesive element.

The walled⁸ city was built in the centre of the land of Aegae at the meeting point of the age-old route that crossed the mountains⁹ and connected

⁵ Hdt. 7.131.

⁶ N. G. L. Hammond was the first who accurately identified the location of the city, see “The Archaeological Background to the Macedonian Kingdom,” *Ancient Macedonia* 1 (Thessaloniki, 1970), 53–67; id., *A History of Macedonia*, 1 (Oxford, 1972), 177–78, p. 185, p. 216, p. 329, p. 447, and p. 475 ff; id., “The Location of Aegae,” *JHS* 117 (1997), 177–79. See also R. Lane Fox, *Alexander the Great* (London, 1973), p. 19 and p. 504, independently of Hammond; M. B. Hatzopoulos, “Strepsa: A Reconsideration, or New Evidence on the Road System of Lower Macedonia,” (Thessaloniki, 1987), p. 40 ff; id., “Aigeai: la localisation de la premiere capitale macedonienne,” *REG* 109 (1996), 264 ff with extended bibliography; Ch. Saatsoglou-Paliadeli, “Βεργίνα 1938–1998: Ζητήματα ερμηνείας και χρονολόγησης,” in *Αλέξανδρος ο Μέγας από τη Μακεδονία στην Οικουμένη, Πρακτικά Συμποσίου Βέροια 27–31/5/1998* (Beroia, 1999), pp. 37–48; W. Greenwalt, “Why Pella?,” *Historia* 48 (1999), 158–83; M. Mari, *Al di la dell’ Olimpo* (Thessaloniki, 2002), p. 19 ff; A. Kottaridi, “Discovering Aegae, The Old Macedonian Capital,” in M. Stamatopoulou, M. Geroulanou, eds., *Excavating Classical Culture* (Oxford, 2001); id., “Αιγαί, η πρώτη πόλη των Μακεδόνων,” in *Γνωριμία με την γη του Μεγαλέξανδρου. Η περίπτωση του νομού Ημαθίας* (Thessaloniki, 2004), pp. 81–102; and “Aegae, The Macedonian Metropolis” in *Hercules to Alexander: Treasures from the Ancient Capital of Macedon, A Hellenic Kingdom in the Age of Democracy* (Oxford, 2011).

⁷ The investigation through excavations of the satellite settlements that takes place in the framework of small rescue excavations is merely at its beginning. However, a determination to maintain the same locations from at least the beginning of the early fourth century BC can already be observed. See A. Kottaridi, “Η Έρευνα στις Αιγές, μια πόλη κατά κόμας,” *AErgMak* 20 (2006), 773–780.

⁸ Aegae was definitely a walled city from the time of Perdikkas (454–413 BC). See A. Kottaridi, “Η ανασκαφή της ΙΖ’ ΕΠΚΑ στην πόλη και στη νεκρόπολη των Αιγών το 2003–4: νέα στοιχεία για τη βασιλική ταφική συστάδα της Ευρυδικής και το τείχος της αρχαίας πόλης,” in *AErgMak* 18 (2004), 527–542.

⁹ See A. Kottaridi and Ch. Brekoulaki, “Αρχαιολογικές έρευνες στα ημαθιώτικα Πιέρια,” *AErgMak* 11 (1997), 109–114; A. Kottaridi, “Από τη νεκρόπολη των Αιγών στο νεολιθικό οικισμό των Πιερίων,” *AErgMak* 14 (2000), 543–550.

the Macedonian basin with Thessaly, and the road that led from the west coast of the Thermaic gulf to the interior of the kingdom. Here, on the slope between the modern-day villages Vergina and Palatitsia, were the palaces and tombs of the kings, as well as the fortified acropolis and the sanctuaries.

The palace was built on a raised outcrop of the slope, almost midway between the acropolis and the north-west gate outside which the group of the tombs of the queens was discovered¹⁰ next to the western wall of the city. It was oriented towards the east, where the city was spread out, and it faces the impressive east gate of the wall at which the carriage-road from Pydna and Methone ended (fig. 31). Nestled in the mountain slope that was the cradle of the Macedonians, the huge building—three times the size of the Parthenon—was visible from the whole Macedon basin. It was a landmark of power and beauty, whose memory remained alive many centuries after its destruction and inspired the name of the medieval village Palatitsia which succeeded the ancient Macedonian metropolis.

To the north of the palace, in direct contact with it, lies the theatre,¹¹ and just below, the sanctuary of Eukleia¹² with the dedications of queen Eurydice. The absolutely identical orientation of these buildings is very striking, especially in a town without organized urban planning. Their dating and the inter-connections of their construction show that they all form part of one and the same planning programme. They were constructed in the framework of a great building programme whose aim was to modernise and improve the entire image of the ancient city.

¹⁰ For the group of the tombs of the queens see M. Andronikos, *AErgMak* 1 (1987) and *AErgMak* 2 (1988); A. Kottaridi, *AErgMak* 3 (1989), 1–11 and *AErgMak* 4 (1990); *AErgMak* 18 (2004), 527–542. See also A. Kottaridi, “The Lady of Aigai,” in the Exhibition Catalogue *Alexander the Great. Treasures from an epic era of Hellenism* (New York Onassis Cultural Centre, 2004–2005); id., “Η νεκρόπολη των Αιγών στα αρχαϊκά χρόνια και οι βασιλικές συστάδες,” in *20 Χρόνια Το Αρχαιολογικό Έργο στη Μακεδονία και στη Θράκη. Επετειακός Τόμος*, (Thessaloniki, 2009), pp. 143–153 and also ‘Couleur et sens: l’emploi de la couleur dans la tombe de la reine Eurydice’, in A.-M. Guimier-Sorbes, M. B. Hatzopoulos and Y. Morizot, eds., *Rois, cites, nécropoles: institutions, rites et monuments en Macédoine*, Meletemata 45 (Athens 2006), pp. 155–168; “L’épiphanie des dieux des Enfers dans la nécropole royale d’ Aigai,” in *Peinture et couleur dans le monde antique* (Louvre, 2007).

¹¹ S. Drougou, “Το αρχαίο θέατρο της Βεργίνας και ο περιβάλλον χώρος του,” *AErgMak* 3 (1989), 13–20.

¹² Ch. Saatsoglou-Paliadeli, “Το ιερό της Εύκλειας στη Βεργίνα,” *AErgMak* 10A (1996), 55–68.

Dating

The date of the palace of Aegae is a specific example of the problems which pre-existing bias can cause for the identification and evaluation of data. The thoughtless acceptance of the identification of Aegae with Edessa was founded on a mistake by a far from reliable source,¹³ and it led the excavators *ad absurdum*. In order to explain the presence of this extraordinary monument in the supposed “middle of nowhere,” it was considered to be the summer residence of the Macedonian king and dated to the time of Antigonus Gonatus.

A Lysimachos coin¹⁴ that was found in area B, in a pit next to the south wall, was considered proof for this dating. However, recent excavations have shown that this irregular pit continued much deeper than the area which the old excavation had exposed and also that it contained various materials—from ivory decorative pieces to late Hellenistic pottery and fragments of roof tiles—because of a disturbance that happened after the destruction of the palace. It is in no way connected to the foundation of the monument. On the contrary, the foundation trench,¹⁵ as well as the post holes of the cranes for raising and placing the stones, did not contain almost any other finds except for breccia of porous stone. The same holds true for the floor supports of the areas D, M₁, M₂, and M₃. However, a few sherds were found in the ancient fills that were investigated in the NE corner of the monument and the area of room P. Of these few sherds, the latest, giving a *terminus post quem*,¹⁶ are dated to the beginnings of the second half of the fourth century BC. The monument, however, speaks for itself as long as one has the will to listen to it.

The Doric column capitals, the columns, and the Doric entablature find parallels and connections in the limestone temple of Athena Pronaia at Delphi, the Tholos of Epidauros, and in the temple of Athena Alea at Tegea.¹⁷

¹³ Just.7.1.7. Cf. L. Heuzey – H. Daumet, *Mission archéologique de Macédoine* (1876) 179 ff., 457 ff. K. A. Romaios, *Ο μακεδονικός τάφος της Βεργίνας* (1951) 12 ff.

¹⁴ M. Andronikos, G. Bakalakis, Ch. Makaronas, and N. Moutsopoulos, *Το ανάκτορο της Βεργίνας* (Athens, 1961).

¹⁵ The foundation trenches were investigated in almost the whole of the palace and in a small segment of the west peristyle, where the excavation work is still in progress.

¹⁶ A fragment from a red-figure crater, a fragment from a red-figure small lekythos, and a fragment from a black-glazed skyphos. This material, as well as the whole of the pottery from the recent investigation of the palace is under study by Dr Anna Alexandropoulou.

¹⁷ Cf. W. Hoepfner “Zum Typus der Basileia und der königlichen Andrones,” in *Basileia. Die Paläste der Hellenistischen Könige* (Mainz, 1996), p. 17.

The ionic column capitals of the great double-sided pilaster-columns of the ground floor polystyles present an obvious affinity to the column capitals of the Mausoleum. The great ionic corner capitals of the double-sided pilaster-columns from the propylon area are forerunners of the corresponding ones in the temple of Athena Polias at Priene. The small ionic capitals of the double-sided pilaster-columns of the upper floor, even though lacking the final coating of a thickness of several millimetres, correspond completely, and probably not just in terms of dating, with those of the tomb of Eurydice, a monument that can be precisely dated by pottery inside it to 343 BC.¹⁸ These capitals are significantly different from the capitals of the neighbouring Ionic tomb¹⁹ that is dated to around 300 BC and probably belonged to queen Thessalonice.

The palace shares another characteristic peculiarity with the tomb of Eurydice: the height of the ionic three-band architrave, as well as the height of the frieze above, is not equal to the lower diameter of the column, according to the classical canon. In the tomb, just as in the crowning of the ionic polystyles of the palace, the frieze and the three-band architrave are compressed so that the two together are of a height that is equal to the lower diameter of the column.

Similar observations can be made about the mosaic in the palace's room E (fig. 36).²⁰ Its complicated meander repeats exactly the pattern of the meander on the gold-and-ivory shield of Philip II. The flowers and the

¹⁸ Fragments from at least three panathenaic amphorae were found in the funeral pyre of the deceased, in two of which the name of Lykiskos, eponymous archon for the year 344/3 BC survives, while inside the tomb two large red-figure squat lekythoi of exceptional quality were found, the work of the "Painter of the Initiates", whose activity is placed in the middle of the fourth century BC, a dating that is corroborated by the rest of the pottery. For the tomb of queen Eurice see M. Andronikos, *AErgMak* 1 (1987) and A. Kottaridi, *AErgMak* 18 (2004), 527–542, also A. Kottaridi 'Η νεκρόπολη των Αιγών στα αρχαϊκά χρόνια και οι βασιλικές συστάδες', in *20 Χρόνια Το Αρχαιολογικό Έργο στη Μακεδονία και στη Θράκη. Επετειακός Τόμος* (Thessaloniki, 2009), pp. 143–153; "Couleur et sens: l'emploi de la couleur dans la tombe de la reine Eurydice," in A.-M. Guimier-Sorbes, M. B. Hatzopoulos and Y. Morizot, eds., *Rois, cites, nécropoles: institutions, rites et monuments en Macédoine*, Meletemata 45 (Athens, 2006), pp. 155–168; and "L'épiphanie des dieux des Enfers dans la nécropole royale d' Aigai," in *Peinture et couleur dans le monde antique* (Louvre, 2007).

¹⁹ The so called "Romainos's tomb" see K. Rhomaios, *Ο Μακεδονικός τάφος της Βεργίνας* (Athens, 1951).

²⁰ In the general framework of the tendency for lowering the dates in Macedonia, D. Saltzmann, "Untersuchungen zu den antiken Kieselmosaiken von den Anfängen bis zum Beginn der Tesseratechnik," *AF* 10 (1982), Nr. 130f. have suggested its dating in the years of Kassander despite the obvious differences in style and conception in the treatment of the same subjects (floral motifs) between the mosaic of Aegae and those of Pella, while the identity of other elements (composite maeander, flower-maidens) with decorative themes from completely different objects (shield, gold-and-ivory kline), something

female figures that spring from the flower calyxes are themes particularly popular in south-Italian pottery of the third quarter of the fourth century, but we do not have to go that far to find parallels. The polos-wearing fairies—half women, half acanthi—find their exact sisters in the gold leaves of the gold-and-ivory *kline* which was found in the antechamber of king Philip's tomb. The strict geometry of the palace mosaic's symmetry, which governs its succulent mosaic's vegetal branches, conforms to the symmetry that fills the floral composition of the golden larnax in Philip's tomb with the same intensity. This aspect has faded away in the floral motifs of the Pella mosaics, all of a later date.

The more one proceeds with the analysis of the particular components, the more obvious the conclusion becomes: this magnificent, huge, and costly building, as well as the theatre, the main phase of the Eukleia sanctuary, but also the final phase of the imposing fortification²¹ and the whole great building project that aimed to beautify and improve Aegae cannot have had any other instigator and financial patron than Philip II (360–336 BC).²²

The decision of the elected ruler of the Greeks to celebrate his omnipotence at Aegae²³ shows that in the summer of 336 BC the new palace had already been completed. There, he could play host to his guests, impressing them with a unique building never seen before, a tangible symbol of the new era that his power heralded.

that reveals not only the chronological proximity but also the origin from the same artistic circle-centre, is not highlighted.

²¹ In the excavation that took place in 2003–2004 by the seventeenth Ephorate of Pre-historic and Classical Antiquities, segments of the city wall of the fourth century BC were revealed, as well as remains of earlier phases, as the pottery and the coin finds show. See A. Kottaridi, *AErgMak* 18 (2004), 527–542.

²² It is obvious that behind these constructions lies a particular planning inspired by a clear ideological position: the centre of political and religious power that comes together in the person of the king is connected to the theatre, the centre of art and culture. By continuing what his ancestor Archelaos started, Philip II becomes a king-Maecenas, an “illuminated ruler” according to the platonic ideal, and starts a tradition at Aegae that will mark the image of the royal cities of the Hellenistic era, of Pergamon, Antiocheia, Seleukeia, and will reach its apogee in Alexandria with the foundation of the legendary Library and the museum, the first university that the world ever knew. Την χρονολόγηση στα χρόνια του Φιλίππου Β' προτείνει και ο W. Hoepfner, “Zum Typus der Basileia und der königlichen Andrones,” in *Basileia. Die Paläste der Hellenistischen Könige* (Mainz, 1996), pp. 1–43, especially p. 17 with lit. V. Heermann (1986), D. Panderimalis (1976) and (1987) and I. Touratsoglou, “Die Baupolitik Kassanders,” in *Basileia. Die Paläste der Hellenistischen Könige* (Mainz, 1996), pp. 176–181 proposed a dating in Kassander's time.

²³ Diodor 16,92.

Taking into account the massive work load that the construction, but also the furnishings of the building demanded, we can conclude that the palace was designed and started a little after the middle of the century. This fact makes the monument even more important. It stands at the beginning of a series of developments that will seal the course of architecture in the Hellenistic period, and beyond.

Building Phases

As everything shows, the massive edifice started being built a little after the middle of the fourth century and had been constructed by 336 BC. Contrary to what is generally believed, the west peristyle also belongs in the same building phase. The way that its south wall is adjusted to the main building, obviously before the final structuring of the latter's facades, leaves no doubt that the two are contemporary. This is also obvious in the way that the foundation of the south wall of the companion building continues to the west, extending the planned grid with two courses of stones of equal height, like those of the main building. This foundation continues under the Hellenistic floor of the south-west room and meets the external west wall of the building.

The smaller width of the wall of this wing shows that the west building complex had a smaller height than the main building, while the use of disparate materials in its sub-foundation to the west, where it deepens to a great degree, is not an indication of its construction in a different period but rather of its lesser importance in the general plan.

The foundation of the portico's supports rests on virgin soil and also testifies that this is an original construction on the same level that resulted from the initial removal of soil in order to create the horizontal terrace for the palace. In other words: the secondary peristyle that had a rectangular courtyard with 9x9 supports was built together with the main palace. The spaces in the west side were restructured in the Hellenistic period, but by origin they belong together with the external west wall in the first phase of the palace's building. It is not certain if the same happened with the rooms at the north. They survive only to the level of the lowest stratum of the sub-foundation, or in places, at the level of the preparation for the sub-foundation.

The fact that the external dimensions of the west peristyle, 41.40 × 41.40 m, or 126 × 126 feet, correspond precisely to those of the courtyard of the great peristyle make me believe that they too belong to the original

phase. The use of these ratios and the very well-planned design of the main building reinforce the view that the whole was planned as a unity.

It seems certain that in the north of the ancillary peristyle where the ground is fairly irregular and problematic,²⁴ the area remained free of buildings. Most probably it was covered, as in the present day, by vegetation and trees which hid the west peristyle, that was almost leaning against the city wall, from the north.

In the Hellenistic period, probably at the beginning of the third century,²⁵ the covered, wide corridor that spreads along the whole length of the building was constructed at the south of the palace. In conjunction with that corridor, a door was opened which led from area C to the south together with a second door that allows direct contact between the areas B and C. At that time the area L was divided, and a kind of narrow antechamber was constructed to the north and two doors were opened ensuring direct contact with the corridor and the west peristyle, where the areas to the west were restructured. Most probably at the same time, the round bath house was set in the north-west of the west peristyle and the wooden supports of its stoa were replaced with stone pillars.²⁶

After the battle of Pydna (168 BC) the palace, as well as the whole city, was destroyed by fire. Traces of the conflagration are still visible, particularly in the north-east side of the building. The city continued to exist in poor condition for about three more centuries, but the palace, symbol of the power of the Macedonian kings, stopped completely.²⁷ Pottery

²⁴ See also the very deep foundation of the NW corner of the retaining wall of the main building.

²⁵ As these lines are being written the investigation in this area as well as in the west peristyle continues and we hope to have soon all the elements that will allow us to date with certainty the time of this fairly significant intervention to the building.

²⁶ Small interventions like the opening and the closing of a door on the south wall of the corridor show that there were more than one adjustment in the area of the west peristyle and it is not unlikely that some of them continued to be used, hastily repaired, even after the destruction of the building. Remains of structures built with material in re-use that were constructed after the destruction of the palace were observed to the west of the area M1.

²⁷ Ch. Saatsoglou-Paliadeli, 'The Palace of Vergina-Aegae and its Surroundings', in I. Nilsen ed., *The Royal Palace Institution in the First Millennium BC* (Athens, 2001), p. 204 thinks that a construction made of re-used material that was revealed in 1998 inside the tholos is identified with the foundation of the 'exedra' that Heuzey discovered in the same area. Therefore, especially since this construction is founded on a filling that was disturbed by human activities, it is believed to testify to the continuity of the cultic use of the particular area in the late Hellenistic times after the destruction of the palace. But, (a) the part of the construction that was revealed in the recent excavation is at the southeast of the exedra, as the exedra is shown in Daumet's drawing, and (b) as it was observed, the

workshops were established in its area, a matter-of-fact statement of the final dissolution of the old hierarchy. Its ruins become a quarry that for centuries was to provide building material of excellent quality to the whole of the region.

It seems that the quarrying of stone started from the northwest side and continued to the south and east. In the first century AD the dismantling of the toichobate of the south wing had already started, when suddenly a dreadful landslide happened. The slope of the Pieria mountain moved and huge volumes of soil broke off and covered the ruins of the monument. That explains the fact that material from the destruction layer of the palace was found under virgin layers of soil from the south slope, whose height was over 3–4 m.²⁸

In late antiquity and the Middle Ages the palace was the most important quarry of the region. However, the memory of the space's sacredness remained in the small monastery of Agia Triada ('Holy Trinity'), whose church, built on the propylon, was painted in 1495. It is also worth noting that its inscription was read by Heuzey, who found the monastery half-abandoned; in it the church is mentioned as "sacred propylaon" ("ιερόν πρωπύλεον").²⁹ Stones continued to be taken from the monument even after the excavation by the French, when the village of Vergina was built in 1922.

stone part of the construction that survived *in situ* after the excavation of 1998 is founded on the filling of a deep pit that is shaped as a regular rectangular trench. Consequently, the "non-canonical construction" that was revealed in 1998 must be the result of later activity that could even be connected to the clearing of the space that were undertaken by the Ephorate of Antiquities during the seventies, when the fragments of the base with the inscription "Ἡρώκλει Πάτρῳ" (to the Ancestral Herakles) were discovered.

²⁸ The great pressure that was exercised moved the south wing for some centimetres as well as the south stylobate of the central peristyle, while the north-west corner of the west peristyle slid towards the neighbouring river of Paliopanagia, where the part of the city wall that was there collapsed. A result of the landslide is the general disorder of the plan that appears at the north-west corner of the west peristyle. It was most likely then that the ending cornices fell from the east part of the north retaining wall, were covered by soil and so escaped being taken as building material, as well as the whole south side of the building as well as the east to the propylon that survived to a considerable height until Heuzey's times. The frightening natural phenomenon that shook the ruins of the extremely strong and well-founded palace seems to have left the city of Aegae in ruins. This explains the sudden abandonment of the houses by their inhabitants who sought refuge to the valley, where a settlement of the imperial and early Christian period can be found.

²⁹ "Νειστορήστῳ (ανιστορίσθη) το ἱερόν πρωπύλεον εἰς μνημόσυνον τοῦ αἰμνήστου δούλου τοῦ Θεοῦ Ἰωάννου καὶ διὰ συνδρομῆς τοῦ τιμιωτάτου ἐν μοναχοῖς κυρ Κοσμά, ἔτει 7003 ἰνδικτιῶνος 13^{ης} (1495)" ["The holy propyleon was painted in memory of the ever-memorable servant of God John and with the help of the most honourable among monks mister Kosmas, in the year 7003 13th Indiction (1495)"].

Structuring Works—Foundations (fig. 33)

A relatively high and dominating position was chosen for the construction of the huge building on the west side of the city, where probably no buildings existed, or at least there was nothing of importance. The slope here went gently down towards the east, where the city was, with a slightly greater inclination that was used for the construction of the theatre to the north, and fell suddenly towards the west creating a ridge whose edge was followed by the city wall.

The subsurface of the area consists mainly of clay marl and layers of turf, with the result that it was unstable, holding water that comes down from the mountain slope. This problem was obviously known to the ancient architect. So, in order to deal with the danger of landslides, but also to create the safe horizontal terrace that was necessary for the foundation of the building, whose area covered more than 15,000 m², the architect went ahead with an enormous technical work. Despite the destructions that followed one another and the later systematic extraction of the building's stones, it has proved extremely effective until the present day.

The mountain slope was dug out to the depth of the floor level and was levelled. At the south where the height of the soil that was removed was over 4–5 m, an area of ca. 25 m. in width was left uncovered. After that, the slope was structured as a stepped terrace so that it would not overhang threateningly, “overwhelming” the building.³⁰

In the north the terrace was supported with an extremely strong retaining wall whose thickness is over 2 m. Its length reaches 104.50 m and its height at the east 7.35 m (14 courses of stone) and in the west 13 m (25 courses of stone).

Constructed by perfectly lined porous stones the isodomic retaining wall was reinforced on its interior with buttresses for dividing the pressure exercised on the building, while its whole bulk was visible to the north, where the theatre is, forming the impressive podium of the palace.

To the east and west, the retaining wall turns at a right angle in order to be incorporated into the foundation of the building. In its whole width this wall is crowned by *katalepteres* in the form of a simple Ionic geison, whose upper surface has a slight inclination in order to facilitate the

³⁰ It is obvious that the south wall of the south corridor is not a retaining wall, but the external wall of the building in its Hellenistic phase and the pillars on its façade are not buttresses but architectural elements that vary its façade.

draining of water from the terrace. The upper faces of the cornices and their antithemata survive to a total length of ca. 30 m but there are no signs of the placement of columns³¹ or parapets and so the existence of a stoa or even a simple parapet can be excluded. The terrace created at the north side of the building by the retaining wall was completely open and was covered³² probably with a stucco and pebble mosaic floor, like the rooms and the stoas of the palace.

The foundation of the main building reaches in thickness 1.80 m. It is constructed out of perfectly carved porous stones which fit exactly with the help of *anathyrosis* in the joining surfaces and are organized in alternating and criss-crossing systems so as to achieve the maximum possible stability. All the stones of the foundation course have a height of 0.524 m, the same as those of the stones of the retaining wall. This height is 1.6 (the φ of the golden ratio) of a Doric foot. As has been observed from the height of the marble thresholds and the stylobates—elements that had never been covered with stucco—the foot that was used as a measuring unit in the Aegae palace equals 0.328 m, the palm/*spithame* 0.082 m and the digit 0.0205 m. These exact measures have been verified in hundreds of measurements and are the basis for all attempts to understand the design of the building.

In the south wall the foundation consists of 2–3 courses, in the north wall of 7–8. The foundations of the eastern stylobate and the west wall of the palace, as well as of the dividing walls of the spaces of the north wing, descend in a stepped fashion, until they meet those of the north wall. With these they merge, creating a second, extremely powerful system of support for the terrace.

In the north-east corner the natural terrace had to be completed with an artificial fill made from compressed layers of porous breccia, gravel and materials from the removal of soil for the terrace. They were compressed very well and are still in place, even though the foundations of the rooms that enclosed them have been robbed of their stones.³³ In this area the fill supported the floors of the rooms, but in most of the palace the floors of

³¹ As Travlos in his drawings suggests, as well as certain other scholars who follow him. In the lower surface of the drum-bases of the Doric columns of the stoas of the peristyle and the façade of the palace there are in the centre small holes for their firm placement in the stylobate, where obviously corresponding holes for the dowels would have existed.

³² As the treatment of the back vertical faces of the cornice antithemata shows.

³³ The deep, round foundation in the area Q is another attempt to reinforce the problematic north-east corner. The floors of its area were placed on the artificial terrace and of

the spaces were founded directly on the virgin soil that had been revealed after the levelling of the slope and also formed the surface of the courtyard of the central and the west peristyle. Consequently, with the exception of a very few remains of the early iron age which were discovered under the fill in the north-east side of the building, there are no man-made fills and remains of earlier phases in the rest of the area and the foundations go straight into virgin soil.

A strong support of porous stones, a kind of linkage, connects the foundation of the south-west corner of the peristyle with the foundation of the opposite wall and reinforces it, while two great underground pipes made of extremely carefully carved porous stones run under the floors of area C³⁴ and the great west corridor. These pipes drained the underground waters from the substratum of the palace to the south and west. Covered with slabs, most probably both of them were accessible to workmen. A small masterpiece of constructional perfection was the open drainage pipe that runs around the sides of the great peristyle and gathered the rain waters to the north-east corner in an underground pipe identical to the other two. It then drained them to the north by crossing beneath the space O and the terrace.

Careful study of the foundation has been carried out, and especially of its final upper surface that formed the "*euthynteria*," that is, the level zero for the calculation of the building, most of which survives and retains many original elements. It supports relatively safe conclusions about the form of the superstructure, even in areas where it no longer survives. It can be observed that in the *euthynteria* of the walls of the peristyle stoas and the facade there is a characteristic narrow undercut, a rudimentary "step" as tall as a palm/*spithame*, on which the *toichobate* is founded and aligned. This element is interrupted at the points where there are thresholds³⁵ and *stylobates*³⁶ and allows us to calculate with precision the position of the openings (doors or *polystyles*).

course the wooden staircase that would have been 3 m and more higher than that cannot be connected with this area.

³⁴ The clay pipe that was found here is later in date than the palace and in order for it to pass through, the threshold and the foundation of the monument were cut.

³⁵ Areas A, C, D, H, where the thresholds survive *in situ*.

³⁶ *Polystylon* of the antechamber F.

Construction Material and Techniques

More than 20,000 m³ of porous stone had to be transported to Aegae from the Vermion quarries,³⁷ a distance of 10–15 km, in order to construct the foundations, the underground pipes, the toichobates and all the column-drums, the double-sided pillar-columns, and the antae. Elements with a particular usage and which required carving, such as the capitals, Doric and Ionic, the bases of the Ionic double-sided pillar-columns, the pillar capitals and bases, the architraves, the friezes, the cornices, the elements of the pediment, the false windows, the crowning of the toichobate, the parapets, all the stylobates, the rain drainage-pipe of the great peristyle, were constructed in better quality off-white travertine that resembles white marble. Only the 35 monumental thresholds of the main building were made from actual marble.

The care with which the carved elements (grooves, spirals, cymae) are worked on the stone is remarkable, even though everything was covered with marble stucco of a thickness of several millimetres. Remarkable, too, is the precision of the carving of the stones of the toichobate even though it was hidden under stucco. From the careful way in which the foundations were constructed to the meticulous grooves of the capitals, the intention to be precise and to elaborate hidden details is obvious and dominant. This element characterises the classical perception, but it was to fade in the Hellenistic period. It argues, too, for a dating of the building to the time of Philip II.

Foundations, stylobates and toichobates are constructed without dowels and with stone plinths whose horizontal surfaces are cut precisely so that they fit to each other, while at the vertical joining surfaces *anathyrosis* is used. Metal dowels but also *poloi*-pins and *empolia*-holes connected the drums of the columns, the double-sided pillar-columns and the stones of the pillars. Π-shaped clamps were used for the connection of the ele-

³⁷ According to Mrs. A. Koukouvou who studies the topic, a quarry provided c. 1000 cubic metres of usable porous stone on average. Therefore we have to imagine that just for the construction of the palace at least 20 quarries were used, a fact that reveals not only the extremely intense activity that could be observed in the area, but also the massive expanse of the works that obviously only an extremely powerful politically and economically central authority could have carried out. The problem concerning the transportation of the stones was not just the great distance but also the passage of the Haliakmon, which was and is one of the largest rivers of the Greek peninsula.

ments of the upper structures. Dovetail clamps were used for the connection of the slabs for the crowning of the toichobate.

With a width of 14 and a height of 20 palms the very strong stone toichobate consisted of two equal-sized courses and had a stone crowning with a system of cymae. This element reveals the special luxury of the construction and its high aesthetic standards, but it also had a practical function. By it, the zone of porous stone was isolated from that of the sun-dried bricks and the width of the toichobate was decreased, so that it could continue as a wall consisting of courses of two sun-dried bricks.³⁸ This building material had proven qualities and belonged to a great tradition, used for the ascending wall structures of the building, just as in the palace of Mausolus.

Marble stucco of extraordinary quality gave a smooth and fine surface finish that had the impression of marble. It recalls Vitruvius³⁹ description of the stuccoes of Mausolus' palace which shone as if they were made of glass. Such marble stucco covered all the architectural members. Stucco of a similar quality covered all the walls as well. Fragments with bright colours (red, ochres, grey-blue) and relief cymae give us a faint impression of a rich decoration, an echo of what we know better in the Macedonian tombs and the stucco-wall from Pella. The stucco fragments that survive in the toichobates of room D show that similar relief-structures mimicking an isodomic building system existed here at Aegae too, but that they did not correspond to the underlying system of masonry.

The three corridors from which the underground draining pipes passed could very well have been lined with slabs. Otherwise, all the rest of the palace area, the rooms and stoas, even the terrace, seem to have had floors with mosaics made with pebbles or with tesserae. With a thickness of 5–15 cm the mortars that formed the substructures of these floors testify to an extremely advanced technology. They follow an ideal curve for mixing the inactive ingredients and contain pozzolana, an element that makes them not only particularly resilient, but also waterproof, thus solving the problem of humidity rising from the clay substratum. Indicative of the luxury of the construction is the fact that the red colour that dominates

³⁸ Macedonian bricks are square with a width of 5 and height of one palm. The same type of bricks seems to have been used in the kingdom of the Seleucids as the finds from Failaka show. A wall of two bricks means a wall with a thickness slightly more than 10 palms (0.82 m) if the connecting stucco is also calculated/taken into consideration.

³⁹ Vitr.2.8.10

the floors is the result of covering the stucco surface with pure red dye⁴⁰ in such a thick layer that it fills the gaps between the pebbles and creates a smooth and shiny surface.

The cuts and the joints in the thresholds testify to the presence of solid wooden casings with a thickness of at least one foot, and double-leaf doors of monumental dimensions that must have been richly decorated with bronze elements, while the small bronze nails that were found imply that apart from the stone false windows of the facade there were real windows with wooden window sills. A particularly important element of the building must have been the use of wood for the roofs, with dimensions⁴¹ that went beyond anything previously seen. The king was the owner of the Macedonian forests and had at his disposal plentiful timber of excellent quality.

The roof tiling of Corinthian tiles belongs in a long tradition, and together with the hundreds of relief palmette antefixes and the painted cornices is another tangible testimony to the luxury and also the care for final details⁴² which characterise this huge work.

The Building. Old and New Data (figs. 34A and 34B)

The great rectangular peristyle is without doubt the heart of the building. Together with the areas that surround it harmoniously along its four sides, and the impressive propylon with the long, narrow surrounds which make up its façade, it makes the building highly innovative for its time.

The façade is turned towards the east, and dominated the view of the city from the slope. It would have focused the attention of the visitor who arrived to the city from the magnificent east gate of Aegae. Preserved in a fragmentary state, it has been until now one of the most problematic points for research into the monument.

⁴⁰ And not from adding tile dust in the mortar. Red pigment, mineral iron oxide, was and still is a very expensive colour, especially in the vast quantities needed for the hundreds of square metres of the floors.

⁴¹ Cf. the achievement of joining and covering the huge halls M₁, M₂, M₃ without intermediate supports, even though the distance that had to be covered/bridged with the wooden beams is more than 18 m. Cf. W. Hoepfner, "Zum Typus der Basileia und der königlichen Andrones," in *Basileia. Die Paläste der Hellenistischen Könige* (Mainz, 1996), p. 43.

⁴² Cf. D. Pantermalis, "Η κεράμωση του ανακτόρου της Βεργίνας," *Ametos* (1987), 579–614.

In all reconstructions hitherto, the propylon, with one storey,⁴³ or usually with two storeys,⁴⁴ dominates—sometimes out of proportion⁴⁵—and is completed with elements of the Doric order (columns, epistyle, frieze) on the ground floor and stone false windows⁴⁶ or simple openings⁴⁷ in the storey above. Every scholar has suggested Doric colonnades and Doric elements in the stoas that either continue or are slightly differentiated from those of the propylon. With one exception,⁴⁸ the stoas of the façade have been proposed to be of a single storey and usually⁴⁹ open-air along their whole length. All scholars consider the areas that are behind the stoas (spaces V, T) as closed, long, narrow rooms which communicate only with the propylon. There, every reconstruction has placed three door-openings through which one moves towards the interior of the palace.

Unfortunately, after their discovery by L. Heusey in the nineteenth century, the east side of the palace was robbed of its stones and important parts of the architectural remains were removed. However, most of the foundations still survive, up to the level of the euthynteria in many places, a small part of the toichobate (north-east corner of the space Y), and the great threshold of the propylon. All the foundation trenches have now been researched and systematically documented, thus completing the picture at the level of the floor plan. At the same time new fragments of the building have been found in areas from which the stones had been removed. Hundreds of pieces and fragments were strewn about the area of the propylon and the south stoa and obviously come from this part of the monument. They, too, have been documented systematically for the

⁴³ L. Heusey, H. Daumet (1876) and W. Hoepfner (1996).

⁴⁴ G. Brands, "Halle, Propylon und Peristyl. Elemente hellenistischer Palastfassaden in Makedonien" in *Basileia. Die Paläste der Hellenistischen Könige* (Mainz, 1996), pp. 65; M. Pfrommer, "Fassade und Heiligtum. Betrachtungen zur architektonische Repräsentation des vierten Ptolemäers," in *Basileia. Die Paläste der Hellenistischen Könige* (Mainz, 1996), p. 102.

⁴⁵ D. Pantermalis "Η κεράμωση του ανακτόρου της Βεργίνιας," *Ametos* (1987), 579–614.

⁴⁶ D. Pantermalis, "Beobachtungen zur Fassadenarchitektur und Aussichtsveranda in hellenistischen Makedonien," in *Hellenismus in Mittelitalien* (Göttingen, 1976), pp. 387–95; G. Brands, "Halle, Propylon und Peristyl. Elemente hellenistischer Palastfassaden in Makedonien," in *Basileia. Die Paläste der Hellenistischen Könige* (Mainz, 1996), pp. 65; M. Pfrommer, "Fassade und Heiligtum. Betrachtungen zur architektonische Repräsentation des vierten Ptolemäers" in *Basileia. Die Paläste der Hellenistischen Könige* (Mainz, 1996), p. 102; V. Heermann, *Studien zur makedonischen Palastarchitektur* (Diss. Erlangen-Nürnberg, 1986).

⁴⁷ D. Pantermalis, "Η κεράμωση του ανακτόρου της Βεργίνιας," *Ametos* (1987), 579–614.

⁴⁸ V. Heermann, *Studien zur makedonischen Palastarchitektur* (Diss. Erlangen-Nürnberg, 1986).

⁴⁹ Except for Travlos, who places walls and staircases at the ends of the stoas.

first time, and studied with the remains that are still *in situ*. As a result significant clarification of this part of the palace is now possible.

The foundation of the back (west) wall of the south stoa (X) survives to a large extent up to the *euthynteria*. The characteristic basic step, one palm high, exists here, just as in the stoas of the peristyle. It confirms that this is indeed a stoa, open towards the opposite side (east), while the absence of the step in the north side of the wall to a length of more than 2 m shows that a threshold existed at that point. In the corresponding place to the south, the *euthynteria* has been completely removed and the position of the threshold cannot be discerned, but in the robber trenches many fragments of marble were found that obviously had belonged to the threshold. It is therefore almost certain that space Y communicated directly with the stoa thanks to two great doors, whose axes cut in half the corresponding half of the wall. Small rectangular fittings on the level of the *euthynteria* show that upright wooden supports were placed at a distance of three feet from each other and were nailed to the surface of the back wall of the stoa. Here, they probably supported wooden painted images or, most likely, wooden plaques or tablets on which laws and decrees were inscribed.

In front of the west wall of stoa X there is a second foundation of porous stone that consists of one single course. It partly sits on a narrow, corresponding fitting which rests on the foundation of the wall. This second foundation has a different height and structure from the corresponding course of the wall's foundation, but is disrupted due to later stone-quarrying before the south end of the stoa. However, its foundation trench continues to the south-west corner, and follows the narrow south wall closely. It then turns following the east foundation wall for a length of ca. 2.70 m, and even preserves the last two stone plinths in their original position. On this it seems that rectangular plaques were placed⁵⁰ made of travertine of excellent quality, and formed the base for a stone or wooden bench that ran across the west and south walls of the stoa. The foundation of the bench, entrenched as it is in the foundation of the wall, contributes to the reinforcement of the building. Obviously for this reason it is not interrupted in front of the door openings. Its presence in the south-east corner of the stoa reveals that there was a wall there at least 4.10 m long.

A little longer than the south stoa, the north stoa (spaces U, T) continues the grid of the latter, and one would expect that it would have exactly

⁵⁰ At least two have been identified with certainty.

the same form. But that does not happen. Part of the euthynteria of the west foundation of space U survives *in situ*, and there, the characteristic narrow step, one palm high, is missing. Its height and its form reveal that it supported a stylobate ca. 1.30 m wide.⁵¹ The west wall of the analogous space T has been robbed of stones almost entirely, but inside the robber trench a stone plinth with the characteristic narrow step was found. Obviously it comes from the euthynteria, while along its length runs the characteristic foundation of the bench, of which the foundation trench and also an important part survives *in situ*.⁵² All these discoveries show that the north stoa was not a single stoa with a closed room at the back, but a double stoa whose two parts were divided along its length with a series of supports which had the shape of Ionic double-sided pillar-columns, as the great width of the stylobate shows.⁵³ The bench that exists here as well at the back of the stoa reveals care for the presence of a large number of visitors⁵⁴ and emphasises the extroverted nature of the building.

Among the dozens of Doric column drums that are strewn across the area at least one base from the stoas has been recognised with certainty⁵⁵ together with some drums from the Doric columns of the façade. With a diameter of exactly 10 palms (0.82 m) these columns are clearly distinguished from the far larger columns of the peristyle.⁵⁶ The peculiar Doric half-columns with an anta are of similar scale, corresponding to the columns of the façade,⁵⁷ and make up together an extremely well-preserved part of a Doric frieze with triglyphs and metopes. With these data and the help of the abundant elements that survive from the great Doric peristyle, we can proceed to a fairly safe reconstruction of the Doric stoas of the façade.

⁵¹ Cf. the comparable view of the foundation of the surviving stylobate of the antechamber F, that even has the same width.

⁵² It is remarkable that not even the earlier excavators and not even Travlos had remarked its existence and so this element does not appear in any of the drawings known so far.

⁵³ Like those whose bases are in their original location in the antechamber F.

⁵⁴ The benches of the two stoas in the façade of the palace are calculated that they could fit more than 130 seated people.

⁵⁵ The lower drum, the "base" of the Doric columns of the peristyle, but also of the stoa are more easily recognised because in the surface on which they were set upon the stylobate they do not have the characteristic large rectangular fitting for the polos and the empolion, but a small hole for the metal fitting dowel.

⁵⁶ Lower diameter from 0.98 to 0.92 m.

⁵⁷ Three drums of this type have been recognised, two of which are bases with diameter 0.82 m. L. Heuzey had found one more and had transported it to France, where it still is kept in the Louvre museum.

There were 11 interaxial spacings in the south stoa and 12 in the north. With two triglyphs over each interaxial spacing,⁵⁸ the Doric order here, as in the peristyle, loses its gravity, but retains the precision, severity and mathematical consistency of ratios. The interaxial spacing (2.46 m = 30 palms) proves to be a particularly important measuring unit, a modulus which articulates not only the whole⁵⁹ of the façade and incorporates organically the measurements of the propylon in the spacing of the stoas' columns, but also matches the polystyles of the antechambers of the tripartite rooms. The ratio of the interaxial spacing to the lower diameter of the column is exactly 1:3 (0.82:2.46 m or 10:30 palms). The lower diameter of the column is equal to the addition of the width of a triglyph (0.31 m) and a metope (0.51 m). The ratio of the lower diameter to the width of a metope is equal to that of the width of a metope to a triglyph, and is 1.6, that is the number φ , the golden ratio.

The presence of the bench shows that the colonnade of the south stoa stopped before the south corner and that the space was closed off with a narrow wall. The same must have happened in the north stoa, by analogy. The transition from the walls of the edges and the walls of the propylon was marked by the anta with the attached half-column. This is a particularly *recherché* solution that echoes the general innovative spirit of the whole building. The transition from the greater thickness of the wall to that of the smaller column is achieved organically,⁶⁰ and at the same time the propylon, a foot further away from the front of the stoa, is set apart, as are the concluding walls which frame the stoas and delineate the edges of the building.

The very simple 'Ionizing' geison that crowns the Doric frieze echoes the general trend towards alleviating⁶¹ the Doric severity. It protrudes subtly, without cymae, bands, or any other decorative element, but with the same height as that of the stylobate (1 foot). This particular element,⁶² geison and stylobate in one, underlines the passage to the upper storey of the stoa by the *chiaroscuro* effect provided by its bulk. Many pieces of

⁵⁸ Corresponding to the category of *diastyloi* temples, like the stoa of Brauron. Cf Ch. Bouras, *Η αναστήλωση της στοάς της Βραυρώνος* (Athens, 1967).

⁵⁹ The complete width of the façade (and the whole building) is 240 feet = 960 palms = 32 interaxial spacings.

⁶⁰ The thickness of the *toichobate* in its base including the stuccoes reached 1.15 m = 14 palms, so was exactly equal to the lower diameter of the column (0.82m) + 1 foot (0.328 m), that is, 10 + 4 palms.

⁶¹ A cornice of Ionic type is used, for example, in the stoa of Brauron as well.

⁶² Fragments of at least six blocks of this type survive, all found in the area of the south stoa.

ionic double-sided pillar-columns of middle size (base diameter 0.41 m), more than 12 capitals, and more than 16 running metres of an ionic three-band epistyle of a corresponding size were found in this area, and establish that the south stoa of the façade of the palace definitely had a storey with Ionic double-sided pillar-columns. For reasons of symmetry the same must have been true in the north stoa.⁶³

In the double-sided pillar-columns of this storey, the ratio of the lower diameter to the lower diameter of the Doric columns of the lower storey are 1:2 (0.41:0.82 m, that is 5:10 palms). The pillar-columns had bases⁶⁴ of attic type with two toruses and one scotia and a regular three-band epistyle crowned by an ionic cyma. The surviving ionic geison of the façade of the palace does not have dentils but two fasciae/bands, so a frieze must have also existed. However, no fragment has been recognised so far. The ratio of the height of the epistyle to that of the lower diameter of the half-column is 1:1, the classic ratio of the Ionic order, a fact that allows us to hypothesize the same height for the ionic frieze above. From the stoa storey probably come the parapets which show an imitation of horizontal wooden beams in relief.

Fragments from the stone tympanum and the slanting cornice can be matched with a fragment of the geison of the south corner of the upper storey of the north stoa, which was met by the horizontal cornice of the pediment at a corner. Together, they offer important elements for the reconstruction of the propylon and confirm the observation that its bulk protruded from the front of the façade by one foot.⁶⁵

Careful cleaning and systematic excavation in the area of the propylon show that in the four corners of its internal space (Pr2), in the north and south side of which doors lead to the corresponding spaces of the façade stoas (Y and T), there are foundations of benches,⁶⁶ just like those of the stoas X and U. The foundation of a bench⁶⁷ runs also along the length of

⁶³ That had unfortunately been quarried for stone ruthlessly before Heuzey's excavation, but in the quarrying stone trench pieces of an Ionic double-sided pillar-column of the type of the storey were found retaining even the marble stucco of exceptional quality which had covered it.

⁶⁴ In the recent excavation a part of these was found and helped us fill the research gap at this point.

⁶⁵ The maximum allowed size from the existing foundation.

⁶⁶ In the three corners the stone plinths survive, in the fourth only the foundation trench.

⁶⁷ Its foundation trench was revealed but also some stone plinths that are still in their original location. It is worth noting that none of these foundations had been noticed and so they are not marked in the existing older drawings.

the two sides of the great antechamber-waiting room (Pr₃) to which visitors arrived after passing the palace entrance.

The existence of benches left and right and in both sides of the wall with the door and the large central threshold, 3.50 m long, leave no space for the two side doors which have been generally proposed. They derive from a misunderstanding.⁶⁸ As a result we must accept that the entrance to the building was only through a double door of monumental dimensions. As the fittings on the threshold show, it had heavy wooden doors and wooden casings that were at least one foot thick.

The benches at the side of the entrance (Pr₂) require the existence in the east side of very narrow walls. Such walling is very probable in the antechamber too (Pr₁), and coincides with the walling that Heuzey found and describes in the southwest corner of the great antechamber (Pr₃). These walls limited the opening to a distance that corresponds exactly to three interaxial spacings of 30 palms. Daumet reconstructed the ionic anta⁶⁹ that was at the side front of the narrow wall and correlated it correctly to the great Ionic double-sided pillar-columns and the ionic epistyle found nearby.

The great width (ca. 1.60 m) of the east foundation of the spaces Pr₁ and Pr₂ shows a stylobate of a width of at least 4 feet (1.31 m).⁷⁰ It almost certainly required great Ionic double-sided pillar-columns in this area, and of course it is not a coincidence that four complete, massive bases of just such elements were found in the propylon area. From the same area come two⁷¹ corner Ionic capitals of double-sided pillar-columns of the same scale. I believe that these capitals come from the four double-sided pillar-columns that are found in the façade and the antechamber of the propylon: corner ionic capitals with this raised side view are particularly convenient for a space which emphasises the passage. For the same reason I believe that the corresponding antae were crowned with

⁶⁸ The misunderstanding starts from Heuzey's observation that there was a threshold made of a single block of marble length of 8 m. However, exactly at the crucial point lay the ruins of the church and obviously the excavator had not had the opportunity to reveal the ancient entrance in its entirety, and as a consequence he was led to a conclusion that is not supported by the archaeological data. See L. A. Heuzey and H. Daumet, *Mission archéologique de Macédoine* (Paris, 1876), 186ff.

⁶⁹ Of which we only found a few fragments.

⁷⁰ Like that of the stylobate of the area F where the bases of the double-sided pillar-columns are still *in situ*.

⁷¹ One of these, together with a base and some other fragments was transferred by L. Heuzey at the Louvre, and is still there.

sofa-capitals,⁷² whose upper corners form spirals at the edges. Probably decorated with painted floral and vegetal motifs on the wide surface of the capital, these antae capitals foreshadow the ones on the temple of Apollo at Didyma.⁷³

Corresponding to the upper storey's colonnade of the stoas, the ionic double-sided pillar-columns of the propylon's façade were crowned, in all probability, with a regular,⁷⁴ three-band ionic epistyle and frieze. On the storey of the propylon, the openings that must have existed for structural reasons over the intercolumniations probably closed with stone false windows, from which at least two large pieces have been identified. They too show a ratio of height to width 1.6. Between the windows there were probably ionic half-columns, arranged similarly to the frieze of windows on the façade of the "Judgement Tomb" at neighbouring Mieza.

Important for the aesthetic and general perception of the building is the way that it was adjusted to its immediate surroundings. With the exception of the north side, where for structural reasons the strong retaining wall was created, the building is not raised in any other way. For the façade, but also for the south and west side, its euthynteria is at exactly the same level (level zero) as the surface of the ground that surrounds it.

At the lower part of the external side of the toichobate a band was formed with a height of one foot. Protruding slightly,⁷⁵ it runs along the whole building and continues with the stylobates of the stoas of the façade and the propylon equal to it in height. As the foundations and the threshold of the entrance of the palace show, in the east—"external" spaces (X, U) of the stoas and the propylon (Pr₁, Pr₂)—the floor was at the level of the euthynteria (level zero), while in the west—"internal" (V, T, Pr₃) spaces—it was slightly raised.⁷⁶

⁷² A large fragment from such an anta capital was found, whose scale corresponds to the large double-sided pillar-columns.

⁷³ As also in the Tholos of Arsinoe on Samothrace. See also H. P. Isler, "Einflüsse der makedonischen Palastarchitektur in Sizilien?," in *Basileia*, p. 252ff (see above, note 1).

⁷⁴ That is, a fully developed epistyle with a height equal to the lower diameter of the column.

⁷⁵ Circa 0.02 m, that is one digit.

⁷⁶ 2.5 palms. The transition from one space to the other is delineated by the presence of a threshold or stylobate that both have a height equal to 1 foot, that is 4 palms. In the interior of the different spaces this height is reduced to 2.5 palms. That is $4:2.5 = 1.6$, the golden ratio φ . It is indicative of the mathematical consistency of the planning that even the two very low steps that are formed between the upper surface of the thresholds, the surface covered by the door leaves and the surface of the corresponding floor in the interior of the raised space have a ratio of $0.8:0.5 = 1.6$ (φ).

The floor of the peristyle was also at the level of the euthynteria. As in the exterior, at the lower part of the toichobate, a characteristic band, one foot high, ran along the whole perimeter incorporating the stylobates of the polystyles of the antechambers, but also the thresholds of the spaces which corresponded directly to the peristyle. The upper surface of the stylobate of the peristyle was at the same level as the floor of its stoa, while the floor of the courtyard was a foot lower.⁷⁷

Incorporated into the complex of spaces that surrounded the peristyle was the great rectangular hall, (Pr₃) entered through the central gate. It is the main antechamber of the building, a waiting room in which up to forty people could sit on benches along the side walls.

The south anta which Daumet saw *in situ* completes a simple anta capital very similar to the one of the attached pillar of the double-sided pillar-columns. If this correspondence is correct, I believe that here, as well as in all the double-sided pillar-columns of the polystyles of the tripartite complexes, there would have been simple⁷⁸ and not corner Ionic capitals.

Of particular interest are the architraves,⁷⁹ which obviously have been used here and also in the other polystyles. By decreasing the width of the bands it incorporates the frieze, to a total height of two feet, equal to the lower diameter of the column. It is as big as a fully developed architrave of this scale should normally have been on its own.⁸⁰ The ratio of the heights of the three bands to that of the frieze is, once again, 1.6 (ϕ).

A similar desire to compress the typical ratios of the Ionic order is also observable at the base. Instead of two we have only one scotia and one torus. I believe that this differentiation arises from the need to align the upper level of the Ionic architrave of the polystyles and the upper level of the Doric architrave of the peristyle, so that the beams of the stoa's roof can be placed horizontally. It shows the freedom and the innovative spirit with which the architect of the palace handled traditional elements in his new composition.

Even more radical, fruitful, and ingenious is the invention of joining the pillar with the ionic column, cutting the latter in half and placing it at the

⁷⁷ Like the height of the stylobate.

⁷⁸ Two simple Ionic capitals of this scale are known from the earlier excavations, while some fragments were located in the quarrying stone trenches of the east side of the palace.

⁷⁹ H. Daumet saw it surviving and drew it, while during recent works some fragments from it were found and identified, and guarantee its form.

⁸⁰ Cf. the epistyle of the stoa storeys. A similar conception is present in the epistyle of the Ionic facade in the interior of the Tomb of Eurydice.

front of the former. As far as we know, this is fully developed⁸¹ here for the first time. By increasing and decreasing the thickness of the pillar, gaps of great thickness are bridged, while the column, and the final impression it makes, are preserved in the due proportional ratios (fig. 35). By securing structural stability with an intervening pillar, one can freely use the charm of the column to create extremely elegant and lithe compositions. The architects' hands are free and from the palaces of Pella and Demetrias to the stoa of Attalos and early Christian basilicas, from Byzantine windows and Islamic shrines to the cathedrals of the west, architects continued to repeat, enrich, and perfect this innovative solution.

In the palace of Aegae there are two types of Ionic double-sided pillar-columns whose thickness is equal to that of the wall. The large ones⁸² have a lower diameter of column of 0.656 m (8 palms) and the middle ones⁸³ a lower diameter of column of 0.41 m (5 palms). There were also supports⁸⁴ in the form of an ionic column attached to a pillar, with a lower diameter of column of 0.25 m (3 palms). Even smaller Ionic pillar-columns,⁸⁵ with a column diameter of 0.15 m, were also used. Nonetheless, the ratio of the height to the lower diameter remains stable, while the ratio between the columns even of such different sizes follows a descending curve with a ratio of 1.6, again the golden ratio φ .

From the propylon one passes directly to the huge peristyle. The square of the wall of the surrounding stoa is inscribed in the circle within which in turn the square of the stylobate is inscribed. There are sixteen (the mathematical square of the number 4) columns on each side. As a result, this construction is a monumental formulation in space of the concept of the square. The area of the whole peristyle is exactly double that of the courtyard, which was over 1,600 m². More than three thousand people could sit there.

The stylobate⁸⁶ that is founded on the wide rim of the kerb of the flawlessly carved rainwater drain pipe has a stepped undercut in its lower

⁸¹ More complete than the solution of Kallikrates at the temple of Athena Nike and Iktinos at the temple of Epikoureios Apollo.

⁸² Used in the propylon, probably in the interior of the north stoa and the polystyles of the antechambers of the tripartite complexes.

⁸³ Used in the storey of the stoas.

⁸⁴ One was found at the south-east of the palace in the excavation of the fills outside the monument. These elements obviously come from sets of storey openings.

⁸⁵ Also from sets of openings—probably windows—one such piece was found leaning in the area of the west peristyle.

⁸⁶ Only the larger part of its foundation survives *in situ*. The slabs of the actual stylobate that were made of very good quality cohesive travertine were robbed systematically but we still managed to locate and identify some fragments that confirm its reconstruction.

part.⁸⁷ So, thanks to the play of light and shadow, the presence of the joist is underlined, and the colonnade is separated from the courtyard floor.

Sixty Doric columns, the characteristic architrave, the frieze crowned by the heavy Doric geison and the floral antefixes suggest a sense of stern and serene majesty, but the totality avoids the traditional weight and the density of the Doric order. Here, as in the façade, there are two triglyphs per interaxial spacing and the height, is increased, giving an overall effect which is lighter and has a greater elegance and simplicity.

The lower diameter of the columns ranges from 0.98 (3 feet) to 0.92 m. The interaxial spacing reaches 2.83m,⁸⁸ the height of the architrave 0.615m (30 digits), of the frieze 0.675m (33 digits) and of the geison the 0.328m (16 digits). The ratio of the lower diameter to the interaxial spacing is 1:3, while the height of the column is calculated to 6.4 of the lower diameters, a ratio that creates extremely slender columns, compared to those from temples of the period.⁸⁹ But here we are dealing with a stoa, a structure that traditionally⁹⁰ presents a different type of ratios from those of temples.

The number 1.6 (the golden ratio φ) appears here again in the relation of the height of the entablature to the lower diameter of the column, of the lower diameter of the column to that of the width of the metope, but also in the relation of the width of the triglyph to that of the floral antefix. As in the stoa of the facade, the sum of the width of the triglyph and the metope is equal to the lower diameter of the column (0.377 + 0.568 = 0.945m.).

At the corners there were half-triglyphs and the problem of the narrowing⁹¹ of the elements of the frieze was solved by increasing the length of the interaxial spacings. Most probably this adjustment affected the slight differentiation of the column's lower diameter,⁹² so that optical refinement could be achieved.

The floor of the peristyle stoa was, it seems, covered with a mosaic like those in spaces A or H. In order to avoid the huge problem of the mud

⁸⁷ Comparable to that of the stylobate of the Philippeion.

⁸⁸ It was measured in the two architraves of the south side which survive in their entirety.

⁸⁹ Cf. temple of Zeus at Straton 6,3.

⁹⁰ Cf. the Brauron stoa.

⁹¹ This is exactly the opposite of what occurs in temples, for instance, in the stoa at Brauron.

⁹² The fact that the column base with the largest lower diameter (0.98μ.) was found next to one of the corners of the peristyle is indicative of that.

that the marl of the substratum would have created, the courtyard would probably also have been covered with compressed pebbles, as was the passage way to the south of the palace and also small square before its entrance. It is also possible that mortar was used, as in the north terrace, because it would have ensured greater dryness for the foundation and would have facilitated the circulation of people meeting in this space. In any case there are no indications of trees and plants here in the form of a park or a garden.⁹³

The peristyle is the reference point for the planning of the areas that surround it. The north and east wing have an equal width (an internal width of 32 feet), and their external limit follow exactly the square that is circumscribed in the circle⁹⁴ into which the peristyle is inserted. The south wing narrows slightly (an internal width of 28 feet) so that, together with a small shift of the axis of the propylon to the south, an extra interaxial spacing can be given to the north stoa of the facade. The west wing is significantly wider⁹⁵ (an internal width of 50 feet), conforming to the functional needs of the spaces there.

An important element in the organization of the functions of the building turns out to be the creation of tripartite complexes of two types: Type A: a smaller, inward-looking complex, inscribed in a square, comprises a rectangular antechamber and two relatively small, square rooms, but of equal size. Type B:⁹⁶ great, monumental outward-looking complexes with three large, paratactically arranged square, or almost square, spaces of equal, or almost equal, size, the middle one of which is open and communicates directly with the peristyle through a polystyle of three or five double-sided pillar-columns, forming the antechamber for the other two spaces. These are easily recognised⁹⁷ as banqueting rooms (androns).

⁹³ Assumed by some scholars, for example I. Nielsen, "The gardens of the Hellenistic Palaces," in *The Royal Palace Institution in the First Millennium BC* (Athens, 2001), pp. 165–188. Besides, Aegae was never a large city and the thick forest of the Pieria began next to the city wall, a few metres away from the palace.

⁹⁴ The surfaces of the three squares that are inscribed with the point where the diagonals of the peristyle intersect at their centre have a ratio 1:2:4.

⁹⁵ It is worth noting that, if the external walls are also taken into account, the width that is added to the peristyle in order to create the west wing (57 feet) to that that is added to create the north and east wing (35 feet) has a ratio of 1.6, so again the golden ratio number ϕ !

⁹⁶ V. Heermann already noticed the importance of the "Dreiraumfliegelgruppe", in V. Heermann, *Studien zur makedonischen Palastarchitektur* (Diss. Erlangen-Nürnberg, 1986).

⁹⁷ Where the floors survive the androns are recognisable with certainty because there is a characteristic slightly raised wide step made of pebbled mortar around the mosaic floor,

It seems that there were three Type B tripartite complexes. Best known is the smallest one,⁹⁸ that of the south side (E, F, G), where the stylobate with the bases of the three double-sided pillar-columns of antechamber F survives *in situ*, as does the mosaic of room E with its famous floral motif and flower-maidens. In the andron G the floor mosaic has now been discovered and recognised:⁹⁹ an impressive meander and consecutive spirals like white waves delineate a sea of grey-blue pebbles. In the four corners Erotes ride on dolphins and sea monsters and in the centre a huge bull is galloping. The hind legs of the animal are preserved perfectly, and the characteristic cloven shape of the foot is clearly recognisable. In this context it can be none other but the transformed Zeus who has seized Europe.

The selection of this subject for the only mosaic of the palace with a mythological representation cannot be coincidental. The title “general of Europe,” given to Philip’s officers, the name “Europe” that was given to Philip’s last child, and also the tribute by Theopompus in the opening sentence of his *Philippica*,¹⁰⁰ “Europe never gave birth to such a man as Philip, son of Amyntas,” testify to the same. It seems that the leader of the Greeks and ruler of the Balkans, on the eve of the great campaign into Asia, may have understood and projected himself as lord of Europe.

The rooms of complex B of the north side (N₁, N₂, N₃) are a little bigger,¹⁰¹ and much bigger are the three spaces of equal size in the west

on which the couches of the banqueters were placed. In fact, it is possible to calculate with precision the number and the arrangement of the couches, the form and the splendid artistic value of which we know from the magnificent examples in the chamber and the antechamber of the tomb of Philip II. In both types of tripartite complexes the floors of the rooms are slightly raised in relation to that of the corresponding antechamber.

⁹⁸ Room dimensions 28 × 28 feet, area of approx. 84 m².

⁹⁹ This mosaic that is destroyed in the centre had been discovered in the earlier excavation without however its topic to be recognised in its entirety, while it was considered that it had been deliberately destroyed by the Christians, something that is probably not true. M. Andronikos, G. Bakalakis, Ch. Makaronas, and N. Moutsopoulos, *Το ανάκτορο της Βεργίνας* (Athens, 1961). The destruction at the centre is due to the violent shifting of the ground during and after the landslide and the processes that followed it. At the systematic cleaning that took place during the recent excavation all the traces of missing tesserae that were at the mortar that survived *in situ* at large parts of the floor were revealed and systematically documented with a 3-D laser scan.

¹⁰⁰ FGrH 115 F27.

¹⁰¹ 32 × 32 feet, area of approx. 110 m². Here no floors survived, but the subfoundations and the foundation trenches verify the position and the dimensions of the spaces, whose arrangement shows that it is obviously a Type B tripartite complex. In fact the side of the central space N₂ to the peristyle has exactly the same dimension with hall F, so here three double-sided pillar-columns must also have existed. With the exception of

tripartite complex M₁, M₂, M₃. Just like at the tripartite complex of the south side (E, F, G) here as well as the floor of the central space (M₂) is set lower from that of the side rooms M₁ and M₂.¹⁰² The marble revetment of the floor survives in all three spaces, but only in the two side rooms are there bases for couches that testify that these were symposium spaces. In the central room the floor with the shiny red mortar with the white marble (tesserae) is surrounded by a simple, not at all raised wide border with black pebbles. This shows that room M₂ was the antechamber of the tripartite complex and the traces of the marble thresholds together with the fragments from at least two surviving bases of double-sided-pillar-columns help reconstruct accurately the extremely impressive complex with the five-column entrance.¹⁰³

Covering a surface¹⁰⁴ of around 267 m² each, these three spaces are perhaps the largest roofed rooms without internal supports in all classical architecture. In each of the two androns, at least 30 couches could fit, holding up to 60 banqueters, and in the antechamber 500 men could sit. The total height of the complex must have been equal to that of the two-storeyed facade (a little taller than 11 m). The morning light¹⁰⁵ would have come in through the openings that would have been on the upper part of the pentastyle, and lit the room. More than any other this deserves the characterisation “throne room.”¹⁰⁶

V. Heermann all the other scholars place here three autonomous rooms that lead directly to the peristyle.

¹⁰² Only the floors with the marble inlays and part of the lower course of the sub-foundation of the walls survive. M. Andronikos, G. Bakalakis, Ch. Makaronas, and N. Moutsopoulos, *Το ανάκτορο της Βεργίνας* (Athens, 1961) observed the difference of levels that exists between the floors and hypothesised that perhaps here also a tripartite complex analogous to that of the south side existed, but in the end they show three rooms communicating with the peristyle in the drawing, as do Travlos, Pandermalis and Hoepfner. A different Herrmann who recognised the importance of the tripartite complexes in this building. The difference of floor level between the antechamber M₂ and the andrones M₁ and M₃, following the known type that was mentioned above, reaches 2.5 palms.

¹⁰³ By cleaning extremely carefully the remains of the podium of the couches in the room M₁ the position of the door opening, with a width of 3 m, was located. In the position where, by analogy, the door was calculated to be on the south side of M₃, a part from the marble threshold was found in the robber trench.

¹⁰⁴ Internal dimensions are 50 × 50 feet. The thickness of the walls was larger by at least two palms. Also the double-sided pillar-columns that had the same column diameter as in the tristyles of hall F and N₂, in order to keep the height steady, must have had a thicker pillar in order to cover the greater width of the opening.

¹⁰⁵ For attestations of the morning audience, I. Nielsen, *Hellenistic Palaces Tradition and Renewal*. Studies in Hellenistic Civilization V (Aarhus, 1999), 19 f.

¹⁰⁶ Turned towards the east and across the propylon this hall is placed in a privileged position. With the help of the stucco wall from Pella we can imagine the openings that

Especially imposing and representative, the great Type B tripartite complexes are yet another innovative invention of the architect of Aegae. It seems that the type responded to essential functional needs because it found imitators immediately in the period of the Successors and became fashionable not only in the palaces and houses of neighbouring Pella, but in the whole of the Hellenistic world.¹⁰⁷ It set a point of reference for “civilised behaviour” in a public but also a private context.

Diagonally across the great polystyle, right next to the propylon, there is another very important item: the tholos, or the shrine of the complex, as the presence of the base with dedicatory inscriptions to Herakles Patroos testifies. There are also fragments of the relief frieze, even if these elements were placed there later in the years of Philip V.¹⁰⁸ Supports, probably in the shape of Corinthian¹⁰⁹ half-columns, were attached to the circumference of the tholos and articulated the cylindrical surface of its wall according to the pattern of a regular dodecahedron inscribed in a circle.

These half-columns most probably stood on the bases which were incorporated into the toichobate. Their size of the bases¹¹⁰ indicates half-columns equal to that of the Ionic half-columns of the storey of the stoa. The marble inlays of the floor, the architrave and the decorated frieze that crowned the half-columns, together with the ceiling coffers, completed the image of the sacred space of the “basileion” of Aegae. It has parallels with the tholoi of the sanctuaries of Delphi and Epidaurors, but also in the Philippeion. It presaged the tholos of Samothrace.

must have existed over the pentastyle: on the interior pillars with parapets at the lower part that corresponds to the roof of the peristyle, with most probably attached Ionic half-columns on the facade in the free-standing part over the stoa roof.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Pergamon Baugruppe V, B, C, D. in W. Hoepfner, “Zum Typus der Basileia und der königlichen Andrones,” in *Basileia. Die Paläste der Hellenistischen Könige* (Mainz, 1996), f.16. See also Ptolemais, palazzo delle Colonne, Jebel Khalid’s Governor’s palace and so forth, and also the Dreiraumgruppen in Sicily and south Italy, as suggested in H. P. Isler, “Einflüsse der makedonischen Palastarchitektur in Sizilien?” in W. Hoepfner and G. Brandts, eds., *Die Paläste der Hellenistischen Könige* (Mainz, 1996), 252ff.

¹⁰⁸ As it is apparent from the style of the sculptures, see M. Hamiaux, *Les sculptures grecques II. La période hellénistique III^e-^{ier} siècles avant J.C.* (Musée du Louvre, Paris, 1998), pp. 180–82, nos. 199–201, figs. 199–201.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. the part of a Corinthian capital that Heuzey found, now held in the Louvre.

¹¹⁰ In the site plan of Heuzey–Daumet they seem to have a width of 40 cm. These podia, as well as the marble inlays of the floor, the great marble base, the marble threshold, and also the toichobates of the tholos were revealed by the nineteenth-century excavation but unfortunately no longer survive. Before the excavation of K. Rhomaios, this area was destroyed and robbed of stones greatly that, to a large part, reached down to the subfoundations.

Next to the tholos (spaces A, A₁, A₂), there is a type A tripartite complex that, with places for 14 couches in all, it was obviously meant for the banquets of a smaller group. The antechamber of this gave access to the most closed and isolated area of the palace, space B. It is very likely that the archive was there.¹¹¹ The three supports that exist there were probably connected with four identical niches with shelves, similar to those that existed in later libraries in antiquity. As the dimensions and the arrangement of the foundations imply,¹¹² two more type A tripartite complexes must have existed in the north-east corner, one in the space N₅ and the other in the spaces P and Q to which a common corridor–antechamber led, space O.

Four great androns with direct access to the peristyle, two (D and H) at the south and two (R and S) at the east, complete the palace and raise the total number of places for couches to 230. All these rooms, as well as the complex A, A₁, A₂ still retain their floors. They are simple mosaics with white and black pebbles and mortars of red or ochre.

There are also three corridors. One in the north side (N₄) leads to the terrace from where one looks not only over the theatre but to the whole Macedonian basin. Another to the west connects the central with the west peristyle. Another lies to the south (space C) and initially had no exit to the south. The only logical explanation for its presence is that here was a wooden staircase that led to the storey above spaces B and A, the stoas of the facade and the propylon, but also to spaces Q–N₄. The tripartite complexes (N₁, N₂, N₃ and E, F, G), the great androns, the tholos and the waiting room must have preserved a uniform height for the level of the roof. Presumably it was the same in the south, the north and the east¹¹³ wing.

¹¹¹ M. Andronikos, G. Bakalakis, Ch. Makaronas, and N. Moutsopoulos, *Το ανάκτορο της Βεργίνας* (Athens, 1961). They consider that the staircase was to be found here.

¹¹² The floors of these spaces did not exist even at the period of L. Heuzey's excavation, and from its walls only fragmentary sub-foundations survived. After the later stone robbing, the stone plinths of the revealed foundations were removed to a great extent, with the result that only the two lower courses of the sub-foundation of the long walls survive. The traverse walls (with an east-west orientation), like those of the rooms A₁ and A₂, would have had a thickness of 0.50 m and apparently did not need deep sub-foundations, but have left no traces in the much lower level from the floors that Heuzey, and of course the recent excavation, found.

¹¹³ Apart from the stoas of the facade where, like the west wing, the roof must have been a little higher, so that the pedimental structure could be formed in the south. There is evidence for it from the roof tilings that were found there, see D. Pantermalis, "Η κεράμωση του ανακτόρου της Βεργίνας," *Ametos* (1987), 607 and consequentially also in the north.

The great type A tripartite complex (spaces I, K, L) has a particular character: it is at the north-west corner of the building and has access only¹¹⁴ from the corridor that connects the main to the ancillary peristyle, giving the impression that it is mostly aimed at “servants” use and circulation. Closed and fairly protected, the two spacious rooms are ideally placed for serving as storage rooms of the many precious objects that were necessary for fulfilling the needs of the court and its visitors. In the great antechamber L, was also a staircase that led to the upper storey which existed over this complex.

With an independent entrance to the south, most probably to the north as well, and with a surface of 1714 m², the west peristyle was obviously much humbler than the main complex. However, it surpassed by far the usual houses of the period. It housed storage rooms, kitchens, sanitation facilities,¹¹⁵ living areas for the staff and of course the royal stables. Indicative for the intentions of the architect is the construction of a second peristyle. Hidden between the city-wall and the main building, and thus in effect invisible, it aimed to include all those functions necessary for the support of the palace, which would otherwise have reduced the magnificence and the public character of the main building.

One fact is absolutely crucial for the proper understanding of this building. There are no spaces that reflect the traditional privacy and introverted nature of the usual Greek house. There is no space for family life beside the public life and political action which were the palace’s proper sphere.

Conclusions

In the heart of democracy itself, in an Athens that had known defeat in the Peloponnesian war, discussion of the role and ethos of the ruler had started even before the execution of Socrates. In the years of his disciples it grew and Plato tried to form the enlightened ruler, while Xenophon¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Traces in the euthynteria of the north wall of the great antechamber L show that here probably was the entrance threshold. On the contrary the presence of the characteristic narrow step in the euthynteria of space K on the wall to the peristyle shows that it is impossible that a door opening existed here, so the space is not an andron open to the peristyle as is generally believed.

¹¹⁵ As the circular bath that was created there in the Hellenistic period shows.

¹¹⁶ Xenoph. Hieron II, cf. D. Braund, “Palace and Polis: Dionysus, Scythia and Plutarch’s Alexander” in *The Royal Palace Institution in the First Millennium BC* (2001) 15–32.

made the poet Simonides tell the tyrant Hieron: “and first, the palace: do you imagine that a building decorated in every way and most expensively would have offered you greater glory and honour than a whole city surrounded by walls and buttresses, decked with temples, stoas with colonnades, harbours and markets?”

Philip grew up in the house of Epameinondas, and according to at least to Diodorus’ source, was initiated into Pythagoras’ philosophy.¹¹⁷ Through his father’s guest Euphraios he was aware of Plato’s ideas,¹¹⁸ and knew the views and tendencies in his intellectual circle. Himself,¹¹⁹ he took care to organise the cities of his kingdom, by bestowing responsibilities and introducing institutions, but he also built new cities, establishing new networks of urban civilisation.¹²⁰ Most probably it is Philip who started the ambitious planning of a bigger Pella that was to make it the new, illustrious capital of the Macedonians. Most of all, he took care of the ancestral birth-place of the kingdom, Aegae, the city whose inhabitants’ faith and loyalty had first secured him the throne.¹²¹

The old city was embellished with walls and buttresses, sanctuaries and temples and a brand new theatre, the place of collective gathering and spiritual catharsis for the citizens. Next to it rose the architectural manifesto of a new era . . . a building without precedent¹²² that would become the archetype of an endless series of descendants.

Its location is raised, but not isolated, accessible from everywhere and not walled in. It is the reference point of the city, a landmark and an epicentre of public space. Its stoas were wide open to a public which needed to climb only one step to get inside. The “royal palace” of Philip II at Aegae was definitely not planned to house the private family life of the king.¹²³

¹¹⁷ Diod. 16,2.

¹¹⁸ As the nephew of Plato Speusippos testifies in his letter to Philip II. See Speusippus, Socratic Letters 30,12 (R. Herscher, *Epistologr. Graeci*). Cf. also Pl. Gorg. 471 a–d; Griffith in N. G. L. Hammond and G. T. Griffith, *A History of Macedonia II*, 1979, 203, 205–7.

¹¹⁹ So M. B. Hatzopoulos *Macedonian Institutions under the Kings I–II* (Athens, 1996).

¹²⁰ In Greek, the word for civilization ‘πολιτισμός’ derives ultimately from the word ‘city’ ‘πόλις’.

¹²¹ By expelling the rival to the throne Argaios, Diod. 16,3.

¹²² The building was designed at the beginning of the second half of the fourth century and is earlier than the Leonidaion, and also the “katagogeion” of Epidauros. As for the Pella palace, which is far from the city of Philip’s time, it is possible that it started to be built during the expansion of the city, but obviously it was not finished before 336 BC.

¹²³ Besides, in the city there were the houses of the former kings of the dynasty and the famous palace of Archelaos built almost half a century ago, also at Aegae. See M. B. Hatzopoulos, “Strepsa: A Reconsideration or New Evidence on the Road System of Lower Macedonia”, *Meletemata* 3, 1987, 42 ff.

In democratic Athens the laws were “made public” in the “royal stoa,” the seat of the *archon basileus* [the ‘king magistrate’] who maintained power in matters of religion and related laws.¹²⁴ Philip lived on in the memory of the Macedonians as easily approachable—“*koinos*”),¹²⁵ a wise, ruler who accepted, heard and took care of the affairs of his subjects.¹²⁶ It seems that the stoas with tablets and benches in the facade of the Aegae palace were the location where the Macedonian king exercised his ancestral judicial power. The analogy is obvious, but the impressive and innovative¹²⁷ two-storeyed stoas of Aegae are much bigger than their Attic forerunner. They were to become the ancestors of the impressive stoa buildings with which rulers of the Hellenistic world marked their “beneficial” presence both in the cities of their kingdoms and in the traditional centres of old Greece.¹²⁸

The impressive stoas and monumental propylon of the palace suggest immediately the type of a Sanctuary, but on moving into the interior of the building, the visitor found the idea of a temple reversed. The *pteron* becomes a peristyle, and the temple where the cult statue of the god resides gives way to the meeting place where the living carrier of the divine blessing, the “Zeus-born/descended” king, takes the lead.¹²⁹ The free, unstructured space of the open gathering place, the agora is subject to the rule of *Logos*, the flawless geometry of form.

The first peristyle in the history of Hellenic architecture was thus born. Thousands would follow, but rarely do they reach the clarity, the fullness and the purity of the prototype. The idea of the peristyle becomes an inseparable and vital element of the “*basileia*” of the Hellenistic world, and beyond. The agora, meeting place of the citizens of the democratic city, becomes a courtyard and the word “court”¹³⁰ acquires a new meaning, synonymous with the concept of kingship itself.

¹²⁴ Socrates was tried and sentenced for irreverence in the royal stoa.

¹²⁵ Cf. M. B. Hatzopoulos, “Macedonian Palaces: Where King and City Meet,” in I. Nielsen, ed., *The Royal Palace Institution in the First Millennium BC* (Athens, 2001), pp. 189–200.

¹²⁶ Perhaps it is no simple coincidence that precisely the slightly later “Judgement Tomb” in neighbouring Mieza, in whose facade the king-judges of Hades were represented at work, recalls, as everything points out, the double-storied facade of the Aegae palace.

¹²⁷ The only precedents were the double colonnades in the interior of large temples.

¹²⁸ Cf. the stoas of the Attalids and so forth.

¹²⁹ For the question of the heroisation-divinisation of the Macedonian king see. W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great II*, 1948, 347–374; E. Badian, “The Deification of Alexander the Great”, in *Ancient Macedonian Studies in Honor of Charles F. Edson*, 1981, 27–71; A. B. Bosworth, *Conquest and Empire. The Reign of Alexander the Great*, 1988, 278–290; A. Stewart, *Faces of Power. Alexander’s Image and Hellenistic Politics*, 1993, 95–102 with bibliography.

¹³⁰ For early use of the word “court” see B. Funck, “Beobachtungen zum Begriff des Herrscherpalastes und seiner machtpolitischen Funktion im hellenistischen Raum. Prole-

Next to the propylon, the sacred tholos and the closed complex with its small andrones and archive recall the civic idea of a Prytaneion, but here, the place of the Mother of Gods is taken by Herakles Patroos, the Father of kings, the mortal son of a god who changed his destiny and triumphed over death through his virtue. In the peristyle and the andrones of the royal palace of Aegae, in a unique historical conjunction, gathered the elite of a society that was soon to change the world.

By combining traditional elements and ground-breaking inventions in such an original way, the brilliant architect of the palace created a building that was clear shaped and functional but also monumental and impressive. The geometric clarity of its forms was combined with the joy of detail and makes up a whole which has an unsurpassed calmness and harmony. Everything is subjected to the "charm of measure." Its geometry of structure the quintessence of "good living" is concentrated.

The obvious choice would have been a somewhat simplistic principle of absolute symmetry. However, it would have "frozen" the image of the building and therefore it was systematically avoided. On the contrary, organic correspondences, micro-shifts in the axes, refinements and optical corrections give life and movement and bring the volumes alive, wholly in the spirit of classical dialectic.¹³¹

According to the classical canon, the geometry and the functionality of a building's load-bearing elements and structures effectively specify its form. However, in the palace a new tendency makes its presence felt. With the addition of half-columns to their facades, the heavy supports become lighter. The volume of the propylon, actually a square, gains height with the vertical elements of its facade, and, protruding slightly, plays with light and shadow, creating the illusion of an independent unit. The stone courses of the toichobate, perfectly carved, are lost behind the stuccoes, but on their facades another order appears. Surfaces are beginning shyly to acquire their own life and a degree of autonomy which recalls tricks from the theatrical world of scenography.

Even more significant are the results of our attempts to decode the relation of the parts of the building: they point to the intelligence of its design and the accuracy of its execution. The golden Pythagorean triangle 3:4:5 is

gomena zur Typologie der hellenistischen Herrschaftssprache", in *Basileia. Die Paläste der hellenistischen Könige*, (Mainz am Rhein, 1996, 54–55.

¹³¹ See, for example, the correlations of the door openings of the complexes, the axes of the peristyle columns and those of the polystyles, the extension of the north stoa by an interaxial spacing so that optical correction can be achieved.

incorporated in the plan. 4 as a number is either multiplied by itself and its multiples, but is also present as a regular geometric shape (a square). It plays a central role in the architect's calculations. Starting at the centre of the peristyle the enigmatic sequence of "Platonic"¹³² numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 8, 27, corresponding¹³³ to a sequence of inscribed and circumscribed canonical shapes—squares and dodecagon concentric circles—seems to define the planning of the building. Then, the ratio 1.6 defines the relation of the height of the storeys and the arrangement of the spaces and also of all other elements, from the heights of the different columns to the triglyphs and the metopes and the undercuts of the thresholds.

The number ϕ , the ratio of beauty or the "divine proportion," is the "common denominator" that runs through this fascinating building, designed for its enlightened ruler. In it nothing is left to chance. Even the smallest detail obeys the harmony from the world of Pythagoras and conforms to the golden rule that marks the presence of God¹³⁴ in the Platonic universe.

The architect was an ingenious mathematician but at the same time a daring artist and innovative theorist. The man who designed and created this edifice, the greatest building in classical Greece, was definitely a genius. Using the means which the king set at his disposal, he opened new paths for future architecture.

In the second half of the fourth century the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus had just been finished and the famous artists who worked there were free to seek their fortune elsewhere. One of them, Leochares, certainly put his chisel at the service of the Macedonian king, a patron who was engaged in the struggle for political dominance, but simply sought to be intellectually and artistically pre-eminent too. Not long after the Mausoleum Philip started his great building programmes and certainly needed a recognised architect and urban planner in order to bring them to fruition. It is probable then, that he collaborated with Pytheos who had already been proved in his great innovative work for Mausolus. This appealing hypothesis is worth further study.

¹³² Plato, *Timaios* 35 b4–c2.

¹³³ They are/we are talking about four squares with area 1, 2, 4, 8 and three dodekahedra with area 3, 9, 27 inscribed in a series of concentric circles. I. Demakopoulos showed this correspondence convincingly in "*Scripta Minora*" έρευνες στην αρχιτεκτονική και έργα για τη συντήρηση των μνημείων, Υπουργείο Πολιτισμού, Δημοσιεύματα του Αρχαιολογικού Δελτίου (Athens, 2005), pp. 97, 101–104. See also I. Demakopoulos, *Ο Πλάτων, ο Φίλιππος Β΄ και ο θάλαμος των Μακεδονικών τάφων* (Athens 2009) 18 ff.

¹³⁴ Compare the teachings about God in the *Timaios*.

What is certain is that the court of Philip II was a fertile atmosphere both for thinkers and artists. Not only was the realistic portrait born there. It was also the setting for the archetypal building, designed to be the intellectual manifesto of the "ideal state," a tangible expression of enlightened leadership. At the culminating point of ancient Aegae it was realised in all its beauty in solid stone.



Fig. 31. Palace of Aegae, East side.

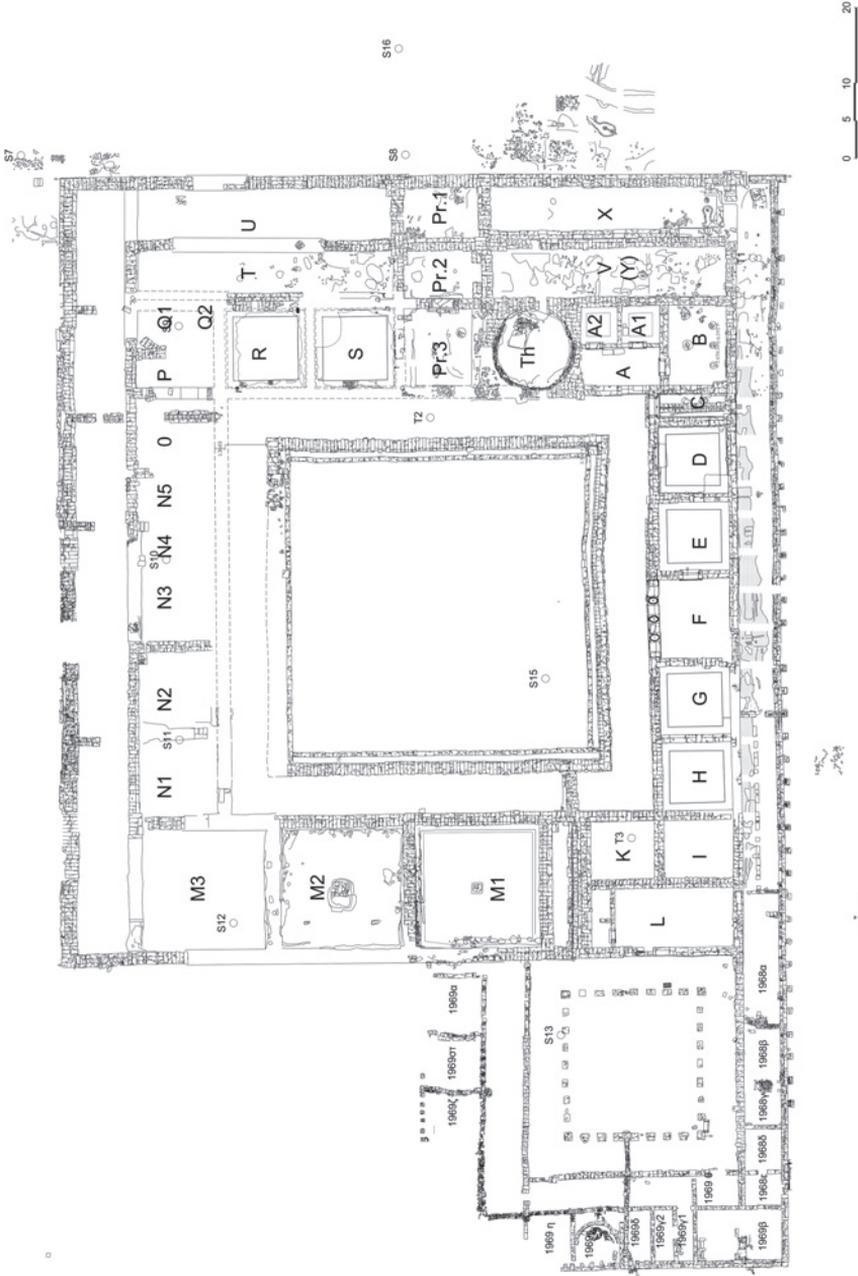


Fig. 32a. Floor plan of the current excavation of the palace.



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Fig. 32b. Reconstructed floor plan of the palace.

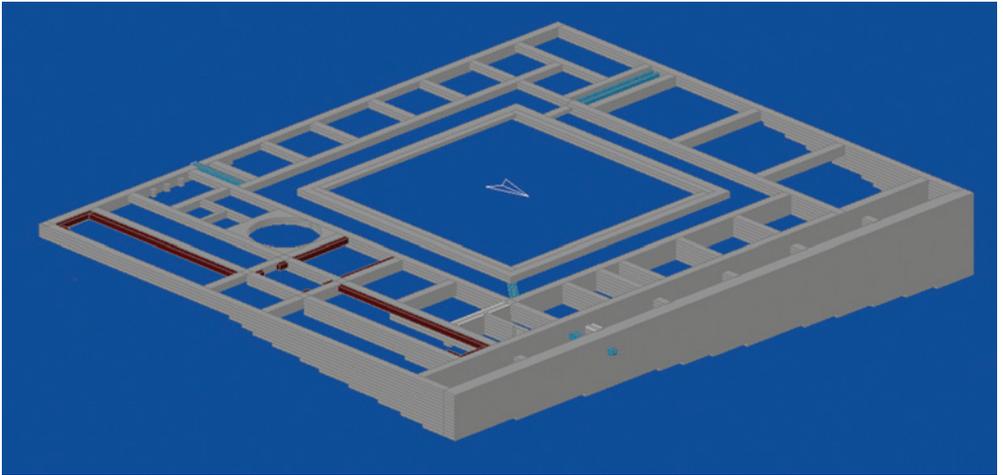


Fig. 33. Ground plan showing the foundations of the palace, Aegae.

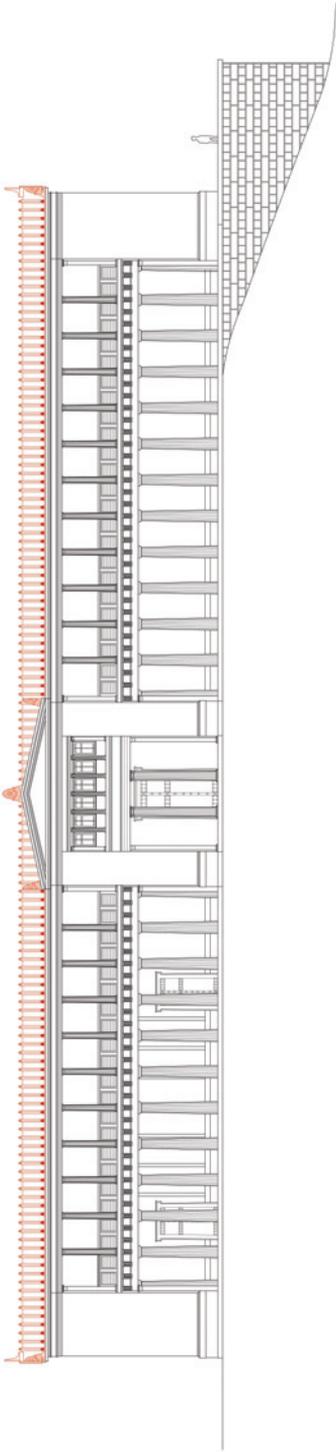


Fig. 34a. New reconstruction of the monumental entrance and facade, palace at Aegae.

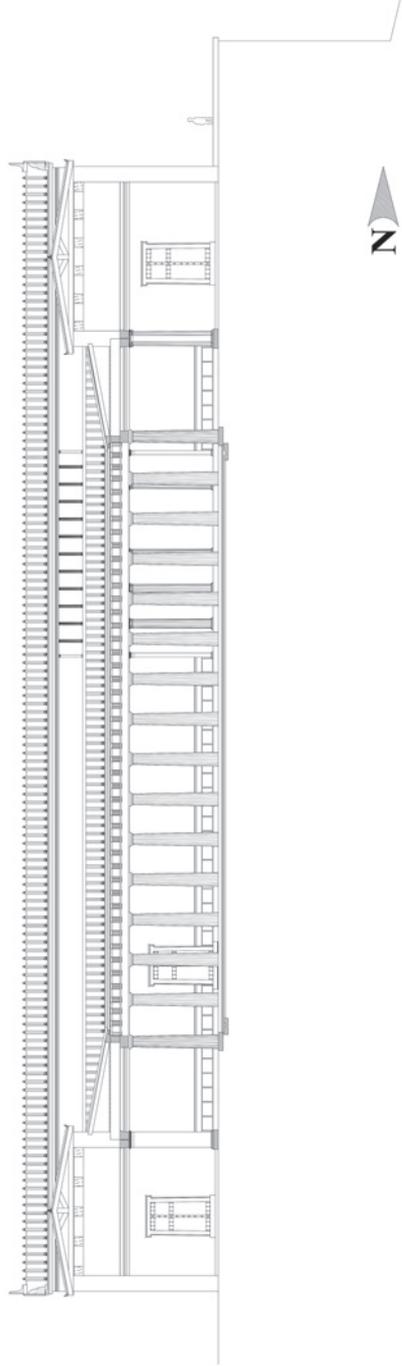


Fig. 34b. Reconstruction of the east side of the west section of the peristyle, palace at Aegae.



Fig. 35. Capital of a pillar with double-sided Ionic semi-columns from the facade of the portico's upper storey.



Fig. 36. Palace Room E, floral mosaic after the latest restoration in 2009.