

EPHORATE OF ANTIQUITIES OF PELLA

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ABSTRACTS

The palace of Demetrias: location, organisation and role

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This paper aims at presenting an overview of the available evidence on the location, organisation and role of the *basileion* of Demetrias. It is widely known that the city of Demetrias was founded by Demetrios Poliorketes in the early 3rd century BC and served as center of a synoecism incorporating the communities of the Pagasetic Gulf and the Magnesians peninsula respectively, and a naval base for the Macedonian fleet.

Demetrios configured the main features of the city's built environment by authorising the construction of strong fortification walls that reached a circumference of 11 km. and the acropolis. The habitation grid in the eastern sector of the city made use of blocks of 51x101m. and followed the Hippodamian plan, while also the arrangement of the most important buildings was made along an east-west axis. The latter integrated the palatial complex built on a hill, the theater at the foot of another hill on the west and above it the 'Heroon', an unfinished monument/mausoleum which was allegedly identified with the burial ground of the city's founder and a seat of the Hellenistic cult of the 'archegetai kai ktistai'; finally, the same axis incorporated the agora, which was located in the immediate south vicinity of the palace and hosted the sanctuary of the old local cult of Artemis Iolkia. The initial selection of the specific locations and the subsequent disposition of the aforementioned built structures and spaces ensured the proper control of the area and a fine tuning of old and new socio-political and religious elements. These factors enabled the development of Demetrias into a major Hellenistic city and a robust cosmopolitan harbour.

The location of the *basileion* in the heart of the Hellenistic city in particular entrusted the Macedonian kings with the overlook and symbolic control over the most important points of geopolitical and religious interest of the region: the city's large natural harbour in the inlet of the Pagasetic Gulf and the fortified city of the Goritsa hill located towards the eastern shores of the inlet, the sanctuary of Zeus Akraios at the summit of Mount Pelion in the northeast, the sanctuary/oracle of Apollo in Korope further along the northeastern small coastal plains of the gulf, the mouth and the south coast of the Pagasetic Gulf to the south, and northern Euboea in the background. In addition, the specific location of the *basileion* of Demetrias ensured visual contact with the fortified hills and the acropolis of the city to the west, as well as control over the road that connects the port of Demetrias with the Thessalian inland.

The results of the excavations carried out during 1996-2004 in the Macedonian palace of Demetrias - more specifically the depiction and recording of changes in the architectural form of the buildings as well as a preliminary study of the pottery and other important finds - have clarified to some extent several issues concerning the date of the palatial complex; they also led to a first interpretation of the outline and operation of the individual built structures and open spaces. In addition, epigraphic evidence from the area of Demetrias has provided a significant contribution to the understanding of the available archaeological data. The study and publication of epigraphic material that took place during the last decades offered new and important information highlighting the role of the Macedonian kings in the local affairs, and the political and religious organization of the city

Basileia and phrouria in the Seleucid Empire: untangling the 'palace network'

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Overviews of Seleucid palaces have traditionally focused on east-west dichotomies and a 'quest' for architectural models. Recent scholarship has started to apply more contextual approaches by examining the role of the royal residence as an institution in the Seleucid administration and its relationship with the city. The concept of a 'network of palaces' was discussed by L. Capdetrey (2007) and expanded by P. Kosmin (2014): palaces were found on principal cities and secondary sites located respectively on key arteries of movement and peripheral routes. They served the distribution of imperial control and their complexity of form and function corresponded to the importance of each site. The royal palace complex (*basileion*) was typically separated from the city by artificial canals and walls. The mini-palace, conventionally designated as '*phrourion*' or 'citadel-palace' was located above the city on a fortified outcrop.

This paper discusses selected examples to explain in what ways the 'palace network' model can be developed further and refined. It focuses on Mesopotamia and West Iran starting from the early centres of Seleucid control, Babylon and Seleukeia-on-the-Tigris. These cases draw attention to the contrast between reused pre-Hellenistic palatial space (possibly also seen at Susa), and the newly-designed *basileion* as an integral element of urban design. They also attest to the development of hierarchies and bond relations between royal agents at the local level. These are reinforced by the spatiality of the palace whether it conforms to the binary distinction *basileion* or *phrourion*-palace as defined above, or falls in between these categories. The excavated strongholds at Dura Europos and Jebel Khalid offer more secure evidence for chronology. The modifications in the layout of these compounds from construction to abandonment act as a reminder that any segment of the 'network' can be transformed and operate in different ways over time.

"Pellae, in vetere regia Macedonum, hoc consilium erat" (Plinius XLII 51.1-2, 181 BC)

Pavlos Chrysostomou, *Honorary Director of Antiquities*

The Palace of Pella, the old Macedonian *Basileia* (*regia* in latin) was built on the middle hill between two others that overlooked the city from the north, on an excellent site with an ideal southern exposure and a splendid view of the plain, Lake Loudias and the surrounding mountains. It stood in solitude at a distance of some 1.250 m. from the north wall of classical Pella, and when the city was extended northward, its last blocs of houses were still about 370 m. from the Palace, with woods and gardens in between. On the north was protected by a moat and a strong defensive wall (3.30 m. thick) punctuated by towers 33 m. apart. Seventy metres east of the central S-N axis of the Palace, a monumental gate-tower (Royal-Gate) has been brought to light with three successive entrances -in the middle one there was a large two-panel wooden door 3 m. wide. Inside, to the right and left of the gate, there were stairways leading to the ramparts.

This enormous Palace complex, with an area of 7 hectares, i.e. five times larger than that of the old capital at Aegae, was built on the most eminent side of the new Macedonian capital, as the seat of royal authority and of its political, diplomatic, military, administrative and financial machinery. It is structured on the east and west around a central S-N axis (which is the western wall of the entrance gateway) into five groups of structures, each of which comprised two or more building erected on the hill from north to south and from the centre eastward and westward on stepped terraces owing to differences in elevation. These complexes shared common axis walls E-W and S-N, they communicate and are joined together by gates, corridors, porticos and stairs. The organization of different areas into units testifies to the specialized functions required for the life of the royal household. Its initial core consisted of four large buildings (I, II, IV and V), inside each of which was one

large courtyard (and/or smaller ones) with peristyles in Doric or Ionic order. On building V (*Palaestra*) the peristyle was wooden.

Building I and II, the focal point of political and social life in the Macedonian kingdom, have a common façade (length 160 m.) and a common entranceway, flanked on the right and left by two structures of similar size. The architect used a grid consisting of vertical and horizontal strips 100 feet long in a S-N direction and alternating strips of 50 and 200 feet in an E-W direction. The common S-N axis wall divides the total area into two equal parts 65 m. wide. Building I on the east and Building II on the west. The length of both buildings is 97.5 m. and together they cover a total area of 13.000 m.²). The façade of the Palace is punctuated asymmetrically on the east by a two-storey *propylon* that is impressive in terms of both size (width 16 m., depth 2.5 m.) and design, having four Doric columns with pilasters *in antis* at the ends on the ground floor, and windows flanked by four Ionic double-sided pillar-colonettes on the upper storey. The *propylon* was crowned with a pediment. To the right and left of it there were Doric porticos, the colonnades of which stood on a high *podium*. Access to the interior of building I and II was through the step-like sequence of three levels (width 15 m.) of the common porch with entrances leading to the porticos and the enormous courtyards. Building I has a large rectangular courtyard (28×32 m.=896 m.²) surrounded by a Doric peristyle of 11×13 columns. The foundation of an altar was found in the centre of the courtyard. In front of the *stylobate* of the porticos, apart from the northern one, *exedrae* were also unearthed. The peristyle functioned as a traffic corridor serving all areas, since there was a row of rooms on the north, east, west, and south. In a construction of the building in the early reign of Antigonos Gonatas before mid-3rd cent. BC, the north portico was widened by 3 m. and inscribed apses were created at each side end to serve the religious-cult needs of the royal authority. Also, along the northern portico, a monumental podium (30.5×1.30 m.) was built, on which rested grey limestone bases that supported the bronze tripods and statues of the Antigonid forebears, their ancestral gods and heroes, as well as the statues of previous kings who had been proclaimed heroes. On the northwest corner of the building I there is a small courtyard with Doric *peristyle* that facilitated communication and provided lighting and airing for the four buildings at the core of the Palace. At the back the north colonnade of the peristyle around the main courtyard was an open vestibule (4.5×22 m.) with eight Ionic double-sided columns that lead to the official apartment (12×22 m.), the large men's quarters (*andron*) that housed the banqueting hall, containing 26 symposium couches. To the right and left of the main banqueting hall were smaller ones with 15 couches, and an open antechamber supported by four Ionic double-sided pillar columns.

Building II is demarcated on the west by a long retaining wall and on the north by a thick wall. The enormous square courtyard (50×50 m.) as surrounded by porticos with 16 Doric columns on each side. Behind three of the porticos, except for the west one, there were rooms and other functional areas. In particular, behind the east portico, a monumental *exedra* (*dais*) was incorporated, built at a later stage in the life of the building, with re-used architectural material. In the foundation of the north portico wall a depository was discovered with stone and clay Corinthian palmette antefixae, as well as a marble lions' head rainwater spout from a gutter. Stout foundations were found in the north part of the building supporting the walls demarcating spacious halls. Building I and II, with their enormous peristyles and large halls on the north side, were intended for symposia, assemblies and audiences, in which the king would receive diplomats and official visitors, convene council meetings and hold court. It is likely that the accounts office, archives and library were also housed in these buildings.

Building IV was found north of Building I and on a higher 2.5 m. level, with a large courtyard with Ionic peristyle on its south section and rooms of every side except of the south. Various rooms, corridors etc. have been also found in the west section of the building. Northwest of the building a hypostyle bath chamber has come to light, north of which is the tank that supplied water to the pool in the *Palaestra*. Building IV was designed as the private apartments of the king and its family, and is reminiscent of *the innermost kingdom with the varied accommodation of the Ptolemies* in Alexandria (Polybius, 15.31.1). The mint of the Macedonian kingdom was accommodated in this building, as

attested by pieces of bronze rods and unstruck bronze coin blanks that were found there as well as in the adjacent buildings.

Building V was the Palace's monumental *Palaestra* (70×63.5 m.=4.445 m.²) dimensions similar to those of the *Palaestra* in Olympia. Bases of honorary or votive monuments were found in the courtyard (50×38 m.=1.900 m.²). Areas suitable for the exercise, recreation, training and bodily treatment of the king, his official and quests, as well as the royal children and the young squires around the court-the king promising young lodgers, scions of the Macedonian aristocracy- were located behind the courtyard's north porticos. A second interior portico (6.10 m. wide) was revealed behind the north one, the purpose of which was to provide shelter for those engaged in athletic activities under inclement weather conditions. At the back of this portico was a row of eight rooms which, with the assistance of the excavation data and of information provided by the Roman architect Vitruvius (V.11), were identified as follows: In the middle was the *ephebeion* (52 m.²), the gymnastics teacher's room (with the dimension defined by Vitruvius, i.e. the length should be about 1/3 larger than the width), for young men who had reached puberty, in which there would have been a wooden platform on three sides on which the theoretical education of the royal children and the young squires around the court would take place. It was open to the south side supported by columns and pilasters with Corinthian capitals at the corners. To its right, in this order, were areas for putting dust on the body (*konisterion*), for training with panching bags (*korykeion*) and a swimming-bath (piscine) in the north-east corner. To the left of the *ephebeion* was the subervisor's room (*epistasion*) with a mosaic floor, the place for the oil's keeping (*elaiothesion*), the *aleipterion*, the place where athletes oiled their bodies, the undressing and dressing room (*apodyterion*) and in the northwest corner the baths, with inlaid marble floor, and another auxiliary room north of it.

In the early third century B.C., construction began on a huge Π-Shape building with Doric colonnades west of Building II and *Palaestra*. The stylobate (85.5 m. long) of its east portico, which is best preserved on north section, has a three-stepped base (*crepis*) on which can be seen the marks from the final stages of its construction. Also, test sections confirmed that preliminary work had been done on the foundation of the building's north and south portico. This building, which was never completed, was buried in the early reign of Antigonos Gonatas, and Building III was erected on top of it, using material from the unfinished building below.

West of building II and V, about 2 m. lower, a covered corridor 115×5,5 m. was found with a stone stairway at the north end that communicated with buildings V (*Palaestra*) and VIa. In this long corridor (*xystos*), which was constructed in the early reign of Antigonos Gonatas, athletes exercised running under inclement weather conditions. Also was used as promenade and traffic corridor mainly for the *royal children and young squires around the court*.

The building III was unearthed, consisting of separate structures with courtyards (with or without porticos and peristyles), corridors, rooms etc. The complex likewise contained workshops and auxiliary areas for technical and other service staff. In particular, the long narrow east-west building IIIb with a yard on the north side and its wooden portico on the south side has been interpreted as a stable.

Building V communicated with building VIa through a monumental entrance with a stone threshold and a two-leaf wooden gate. This building comprised a square courtyard (9×9 m.) with a Doric peristyle and rows of rooms behinds three porticos, with the exception of the east one. In particular, four large rooms have been discovered behind the northern portico; they are covered by disaster debris layers consisting of roofs tiles of the Laconian type and plaster (white, yellow and red) that has fallen from the walls. Between building VIa and VIb was an unroofed corridor with a S-N orientation. Building VIb consisted of three separate units; the east one with a row of rooms, the north one with rooms, corridors and the "Small Baths", and the south one with a square courtyard surrounded by a wooden peristyle (11×11 m.) with rows of rooms behind it. Buildings VIa and VIb, together with the other neighbouring building, have been interpreted as the accommodation (dormitories, dining halls, kitchens, etc.) of the *royal children* (14-18 years old) *and young squires* (18-

20 years old) *around the court*, as well as the officials, the fencing-masters and others teachers responsible for their athletic and military training.

Other composite buildings were found on both the east (Building VIII) and west (Building VII) side of the hill, which, according to their position on the hill and indicative finds (lead weights, amphoras, pithos jars, etc.) must have been workshops, storerooms, barracks, arsenals, stables etc. Very carefully created in these workshops were the wonderful vessel of cold, silver, bronze and ivory that the triumphant Aemilius Paulus brought to Rome as booty after the Romans defeated the Macedonians at the battle of Pydna (Livy 45.33.5-6).

The main architectural phase of the palace core has been dated to the reign of Philip II (c. mid-4th cent. B.C.) on the basis of coins, pottery, the earliest stamps of Laconian tiles, the clay Corinthian *palmette antefixae* in the type already known from the Tholos at Epidaurus (after 360 BC), the clay rain gutters, the marble lion's head rainspouts and the Doric capitals, on both the common façade of the Buildings I and II, and the peristyle around the latter's courtyard. The capital in particular is later than the Macedonian portico of the Sanctuary of Amphiaraios at Oropos (before 360 BC), and before the temples of Athena Alea at Tegea and Zeus at Nemea as indicated by the proportions of their individual sections and especially the curvature, with is sharp curved, in contrast to the echinus of the capitals on the Palace of Pella, which has a slight curvature, with a sharp curve formed between the echinus and abacus. They are also older than the Doric capital on the columns of the Palace at Aegae, the Doric capital of Macedonian tomb D's façade and of the monumental houses with the known mosaics at Pella on which the echinus is straight with a rudimentary hollow under the abacus. The Palace of Pella, the Old Macedonian *Basileia* was the archetype of palaces in the Hellenistic world; it was likewise the place in which Philip II planned and directed the destiny of Greece.

Public Building Complexes in Pella

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I.M. Akamatis, *Honorary Professor of Classical Archaeology Department of History & Archaeology, AUn*

The best examples of well excavated public buildings of Pella, emphasizing on their morphological and functional characteristics, are presented in this paper in order to better understand public life in the Macedonian capital. In these buildings clear functions are traced similar with those of the palace and especially functions related with production and trade, administration, cult activities and body hygiene.

Productive and trade activities are traced at the Agora, at workshop establishments in city blocks, as well as in facilities of the region of Phacus. Administration activities are attested in parts of the Agora (north stoa, public archive at the southwest corner of the complex), as well as in part of a building located close to the center of the city (sector I, block 3). Of religious character were the building complexes of the Thesmophorion, the sanctuary of the Mother of the Gods and Aphrodite, and the sanctuary of Darron, while the need for personal hygiene was taken care for in a public bath.

The public buildings that came to light in the Pella, incorporated in the city grid, were found in central locations and were accessible from the streets. They have common morphological and structural elements, except for two circular buildings, the Thesmophorion and another one in the area of the sanctuary of Darron that are related with chthonic and heroic cults. Public buildings do not have a monumental façade, but they cover a large area and have multiple spaces properly equipped for their functions. The building materials are not different from those of daily use in Pella (local limestone, mudbricks, wood). The roof tiles, some stamped, are mostly of Laconian type and the walls are coated white. The floors of most rooms were earthen, while more lavish rooms had floors made of pebbles or small pieces of marble; the floors of courtyards were made of stones or parts of roof tiles.

The stone architectural remains are mostly Doric; the Ionic order is attested mostly on the second story of some buildings.

In all the buildings exist open spaces, stoas, water supply facilities, dining rooms, storerooms, hygiene rooms, and cult and workshop facilities, even in religious complexes. Several building phases are attested in most buildings that were built on earlier remains or graveyards.

In several public buildings works of preservation and enhancement took place from 2002 until 2015, funded by European programs. The uniform treatment of the restoration projects of the public buildings of the city and the palace contributes to the protection and enhancement of the perishable architectural remains of Pella; this way the morphology and functions of the buildings is better understood.

Palace of ancient Pella: New Archaeological Evidence and Interpretive Aspects of the Monumental entrance and Building I

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Alexandra Skitsa, *MPh, Archaeologist of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Pella*
Dr Stauroula Oikonomou, *Archaeologist*

The presentation focuses on the new excavation data and fresh remarks on Pella's Palace Monumental Entrance and Building I that were both conserved and restored with funds from the NSRF 2014-2020 Program. The project titled "*Restoration, conservation and enhancement of Building I and monumental entrance of the palace of ancient Pella - Construction of a new entrance at the eastern side of the hill of the palace and visitors' itinerary*" was approved in 2017 and was completed on March 2021.

The monumental, tripartite entrance (Propylon) to the palace is placed on its southern side, roughly in the middle of a large continuous front, 160 m long, facing south. The entrance led to Buildings I and II, that were founded on a higher terrace. The whole southern front of the palace consists of a central part flanked by a portico with Doric columns on either side.

The plan of Building I recalls that of private houses found in Macedonian cities. It covers an area of 7500 square meters and comprises a large central courtyard surrounded by four porticoes with columns in the Doric order that form a *peristyle*. The rooms of the porticoes were used for a variety of activities. The building is built on a terrace, at a higher level than the Propylon, because of the natural slope of the hill from North-East to South-West.

The Monumental Entrance and Building I were constructed as part of the palatial complex around the middle of the 4th century BC by Philip II. During the reign of Cassander and especially that of Antigonos Gonatas it was heavily and extensively modified. There were certainly minor modifications during its period of use that are impossible to trace any more. In many instances, understanding the different phases and distinguishing the earlier walls (middle of the 4th century BC) from the later ones (first half of the 3rd century BC) was based on the observation of the construction of the foundations of the walls and other details, rather than excavation data, because the latter are largely absent.

The main objectives of the enhancement project were: the restoration and protection of the archaeological remains, the organisation of access to the site, the establishment of adequate conditions for smooth and unimpeded movement of any group of visitors around the site, the production of comprehensible information panels and the creation of the adequate visitor infrastructure. To this end, the project put together studies for the conservation and public presentation of both buildings, the monumental Entrance (Propylon) and Building I, aiming for the best possible protection of and attentiveness to the original construction material and highlighting the specific characteristics of the site and its buildings, like their extraordinary size, their internal structure, the use of consecutive terraces and the invocation of a certain theatricality, a trait which became dominant in Hellenistic architecture.

Recent results of the architectural survey of the palace at Pella, Building I (2018-2021)

Ryuichi Yoshitake, *Assistant Professor, University of Kumamoto, Japan-History of Western Architecture Laboratory*

The presentation aims to report the architectural remains of building I, and to estimate part of the original form of the Hellenistic Palace at Pella. The Palace had been excavated from the 1960s to the 1980s by local archaeologists; however, its architectural details have not been sufficiently studied. Dr. Elisabet Tsigarida began to reinvestigate the Palace in 2017, and the author and the architectural team of Kumamoto University joined this project and conducted an architectural survey from 2018 to 2021. The present paper reports detailed data, including drawings, photos, and descriptions, from the architectural records uncovered by the historical excavations. Based on these records, the original form of the Palace, especially that of building I, which was thought to be established probably during the time of Philip II (reigned 360/59–336 BC) as a main formal building among others, is estimated.

As a result of our fieldwork, the followings are confirmed. The building I is consisted of an open-air peristyle courtyard (32.5 × 27.8 m, as an estimation) in the middle, surrounded by Doric colonnade from four sides. Each portico has a single colonnade and back rooms, except for the west. The north wing seems to have been the official functions of the Hellenistic kings. It was occupied by three individual andrones (banquet rooms), a wide central (12.2 × 21.5 m) and two narrow rooms (12.2 × 8.9 m), that opened to the antechambers along the north portico. Behind of the eastern narrow andron, a corridor to communicate with outside is confirmed. The two-opposing apsidal excedrae were located on both ends of the north portico in a symmetrical plan. In the middle of the north portico, a longitudinal foundation, possibly for a series of statues is observed. The east portico had three back rooms and the south portico had five rooms respectively. It is assumed that a huge corridor (14.7 m in width) was at the back of the west portico. A small peristyle courtyard was in the northwest part of building I.

Through the analysis, the part of original form of building I was confirmed: The Doric colonnades had 11 spans in the east and west porticos, and 13 spans in the north and south porticos. It is estimated that the re-entrant angles of the four peristyle colonnades were adjusted to emphasize either metope–metope or triglyph–triglyph. The back rooms of the porticos were often accompanied by various half-columns in the front. Especially three andrones had a suit of antechambers, each with pillars with Ionic half-columns on opposite faces of pier. Both the east and west excedrae were installed two Ionic half-columns attached to a pier in each, and the interior pilasters of the east were luxuriously ornamented with sofa-capitals. The ensemble of the north wing, including the tripartite groups of andrones, the longitudinal statues foundation, and the apsidal excedrae, testifies the development of the early stage of the Hellenistic palace architecture.

Restoration and conservation of Building I and the Monumental Entrance of the Palace of Ancient Pella

Evaggelos Chrysostomou, *Dep. Head of the Conservation Department of EFA Pellas*
Panagiota Balafa, *Conservator of Antiquities, Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki*

The conservation of Building I and the monumental entrance of the Palace of Ancient Pella were a challenge for the conservation department. This paper analyzes the problems that had to be addressed during this project and the provided solutions for its completion. The environmental and other decaying factors are presented that are responsible for the bad condition of the stone and an

overall presentation of all work (cleaning, fixations, supplements and other work) that the department participated to complete the restoration work.

Towards a Re-examination of the Relationship between Palatial and Residential Buildings in the Late Classical and Hellenistic Greek World

Lisa Nevett, *Professor of Classical Archaeology, Department of Classical Studies at the University of Michigan-Director of the Interdepartmental Program in Classical Art and Archaeology.*

Alongside its massive scale, one of the most striking features of the palace at Pella is its spatial organisation, focused around a series of courtyards which seem to create functionally-specialised areas to be used for different purposes. At first sight, this arrangement seems to set the building apart from most of the residential structures of the classical Greek world. My paper suggests, however, that on closer inspection, there are unexpected parallels between the palace and some relatively small-scale domestic buildings, both conceptually and in terms of the roles they played. I argue that the three-dimensional properties of houses should be considered, as well as their plans. At the same time I highlight the benefits of closer examination of artefact assemblages and other forms of spatial information in order to gain a clearer, more detailed understanding of the range and organisation of activities through space. Ultimate, I suggest, these strategies may help to clarify the relationship between palatial and domestic buildings.