

The Decapolis: History and Archaeology

4 The Early Roman revival

ROCCA, S. 2008: *Herod's Judaea: A Mediterranean State in the Classical World*. Tübingen.

Restoration

Pompey

- 64/3 BCE (Pompeian era)

Gabinus

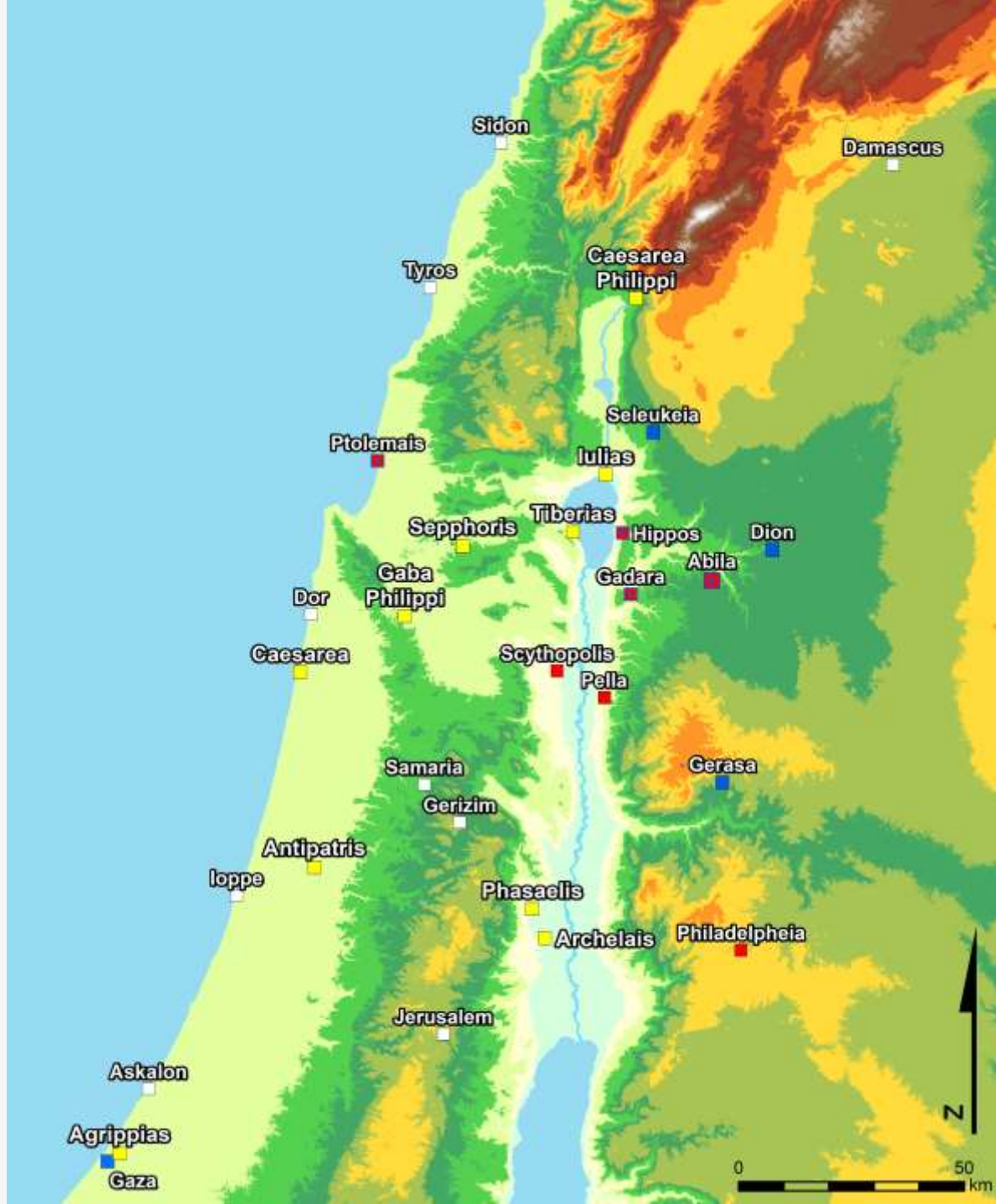
- 57/5 BCE
- Some cities less affected

Herodian building activity

- Jerusalem
- Caesarea
- Samaria
- Desert palaces...

"...he (Herod) showed the greatness of his soul to no small number of foreign cities. He built places for exercise (*gymnasia*) at **Tripoli, and Damascus, and Ptolemais**; he built a wall about **Byblus**, as also large rooms (*exedrai*), and cloisters (*stoai*), and temples, and market-places at **Berytus** and **Tyre**, with theatres at **Sidon** and **Damascus**. He also built aqueducts for those **Laodiceans** who lived by the sea-side; and for those of **Ascalon** he built baths and costly fountains, as also cloisters round a court...And as for that large open place belonging to **Antioch** in Syria, did not he pave it with polished marble, though it were twenty furlongs long?"

BJ 1.422-425



Destruction

Great Revolt

- 66-72 CE
- Jerusalem
- Gamla...

Bar Kochba

- 132-135 CE
- Mainly rural sites in Judaea alone



Siege camp F, Masada



Siege camp and a ramp, Machaerous

Destruction

Great Revolt

- Gamla, siege 67 CE

“As this city was naturally hard to be taken, so had Josephus, by building a wall about it, made it still stronger, as also by ditches and mines under ground.” BJ 4.9



Destruction

Great Revolt

- Gamla, siege 67 CE

“...then did the Romans **bring battering rams to three several places, and made the wall shake [and fall]**. They then poured in over the parts of the wall that were thrown down, with a mighty sound of trumpets and noise of armor, and with a shout of the soldiers, and brake in by force upon those that were in the city.” BJ 4.19



Destruction

Great Revolt

- Jerusalem, siege 72 CE

“And now the Romans, judging that it was in vain to spare what was round about the holy house, **burnt all those places, as also the remains of the cloisters and the gates.**”

BJ 6.281

“Now as soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be the objects of their fury...Caesar (=Titus) gave orders that **they should now demolish the entire city and temple**, but should leave as many of the towers standing as were of the greatest eminency; that is, Phasaelus, and Hippicus, and Mariamne; and so much of the wall as enclosed the city on the west side. **This wall was spared, in order to afford a camp for such as were to lie in garrison...**”

BJ 7.1-3

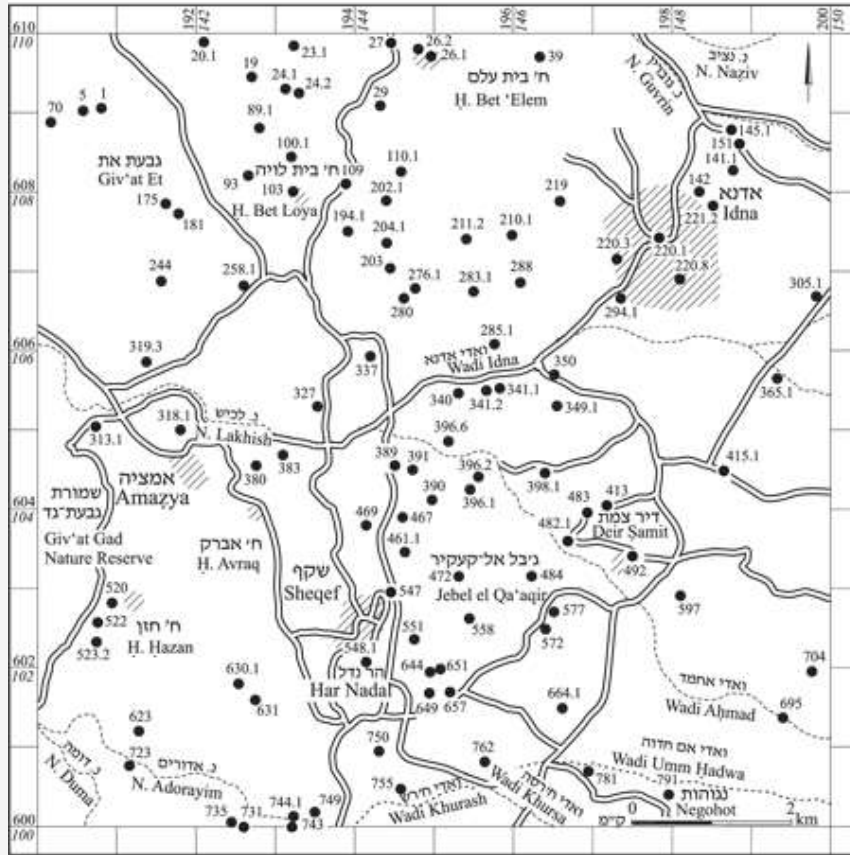


Herodian street at the south-western corner of the Temple Mount with the rubble from the destruction of 72 CE.

Impact?

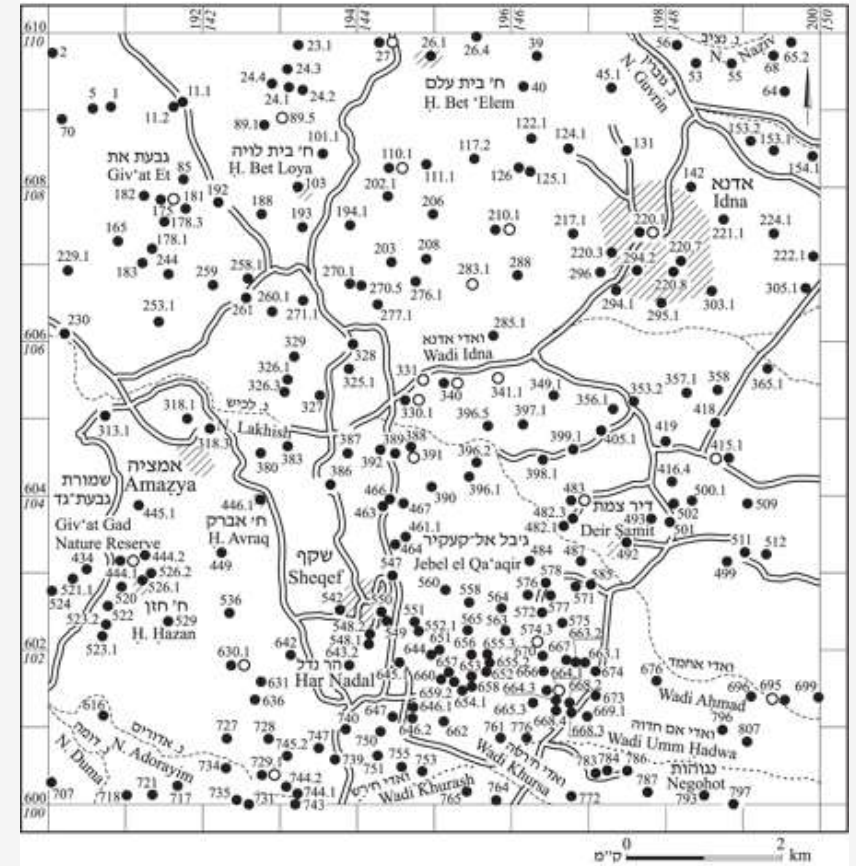
Map 5 מפה 5

Hellenistic ● התקופה ההלניסטית



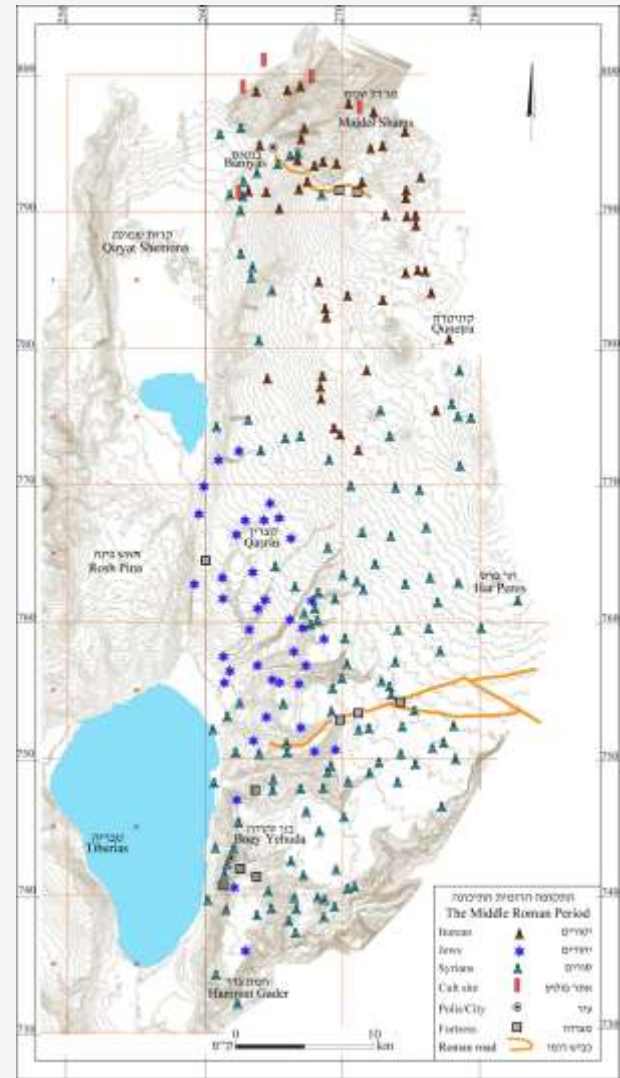
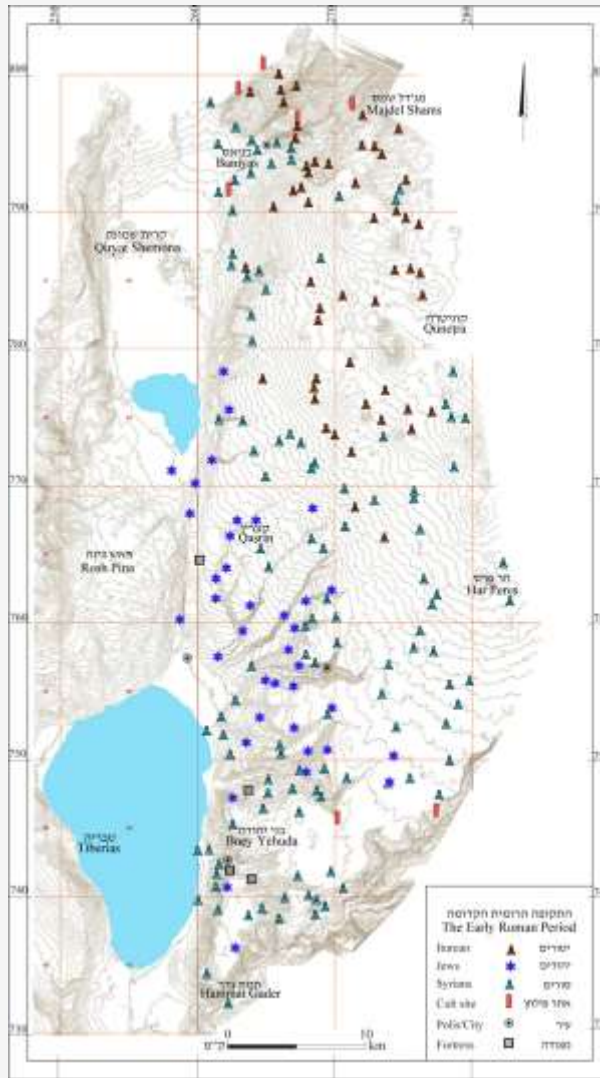
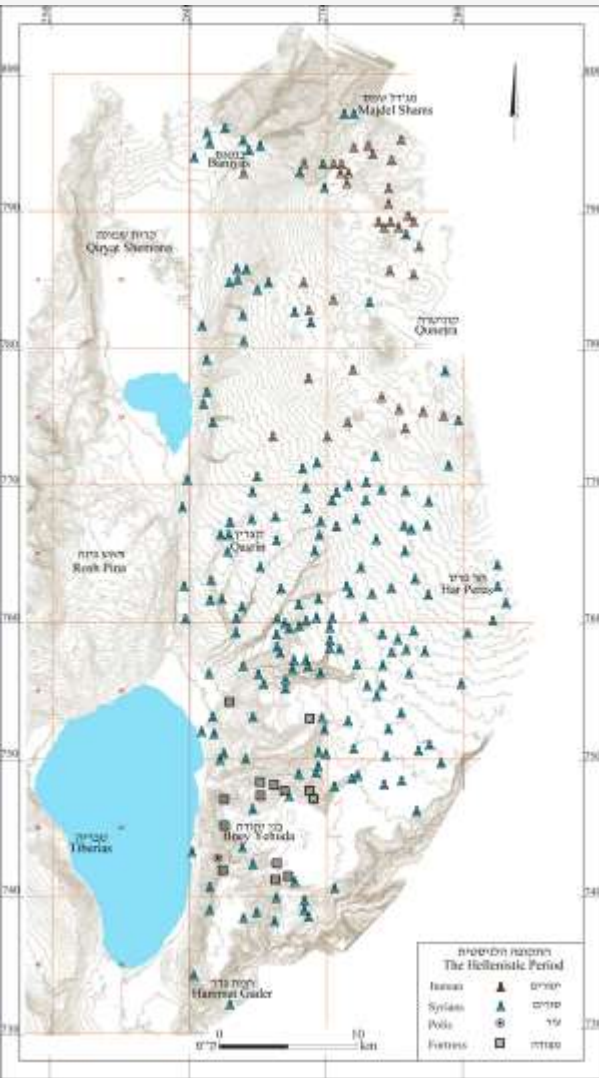
Map 6 מפה 6

Early Roman ○ התקופה הרומית הקדומה
Late Roman ● התקופה הרומית המאוחרת



Map of Amasya (106) – Judean Shephelah, west of Jerusalem. 106 Hellenistic sites, 256 Roman, no identifiable break

Impact?

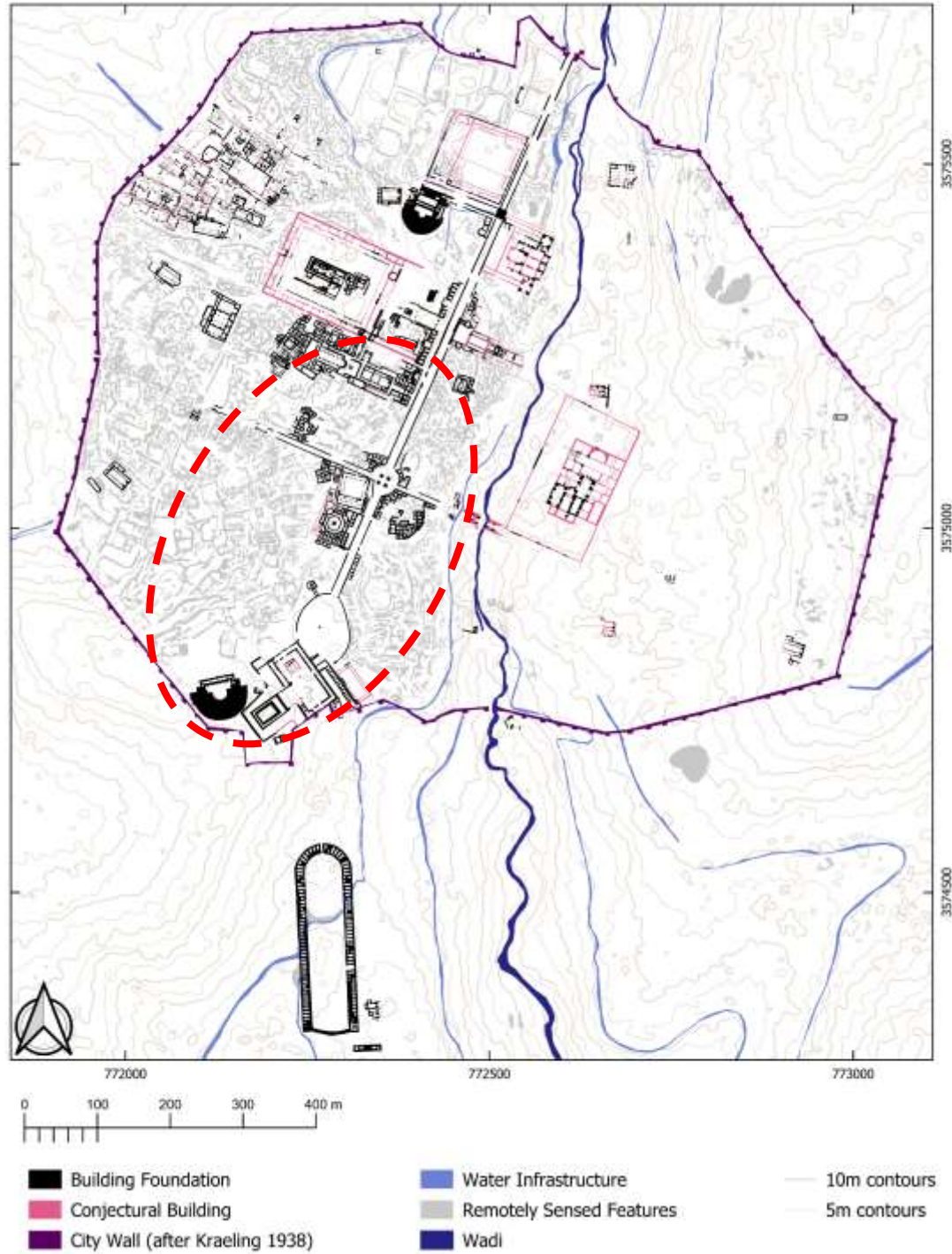
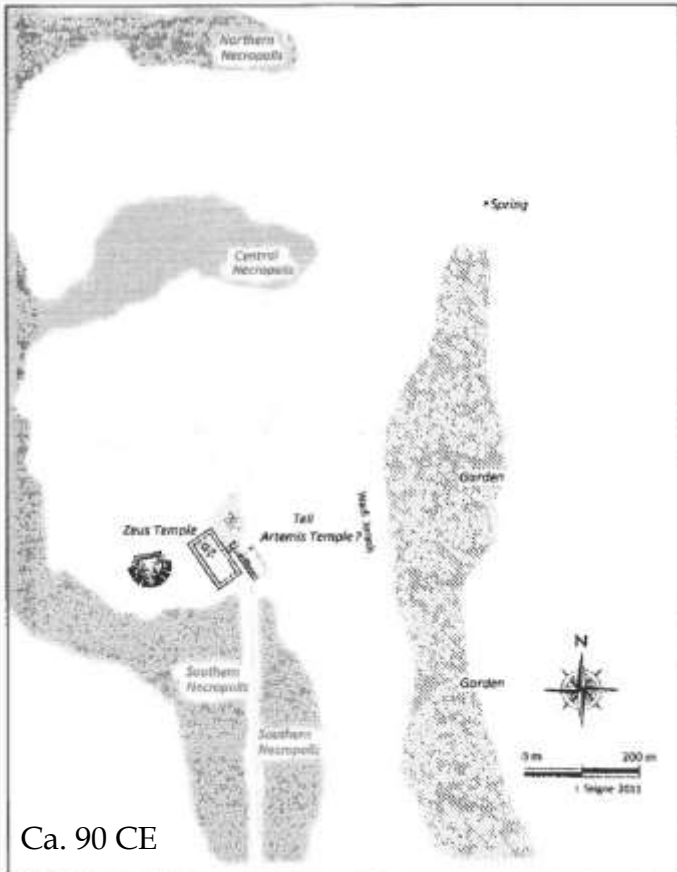


Golan: 205 Hellenistic, 195 Early Roman, 207 Middle Roman sites

Cities of Decapolis

Gerasa

- Slow expansion to the north
- Cardo laid out? First phase of Oval plaza
- Theater
- Reconstruction of the "Naos" of Zeus and enlargement of its temenos
- First fortifications



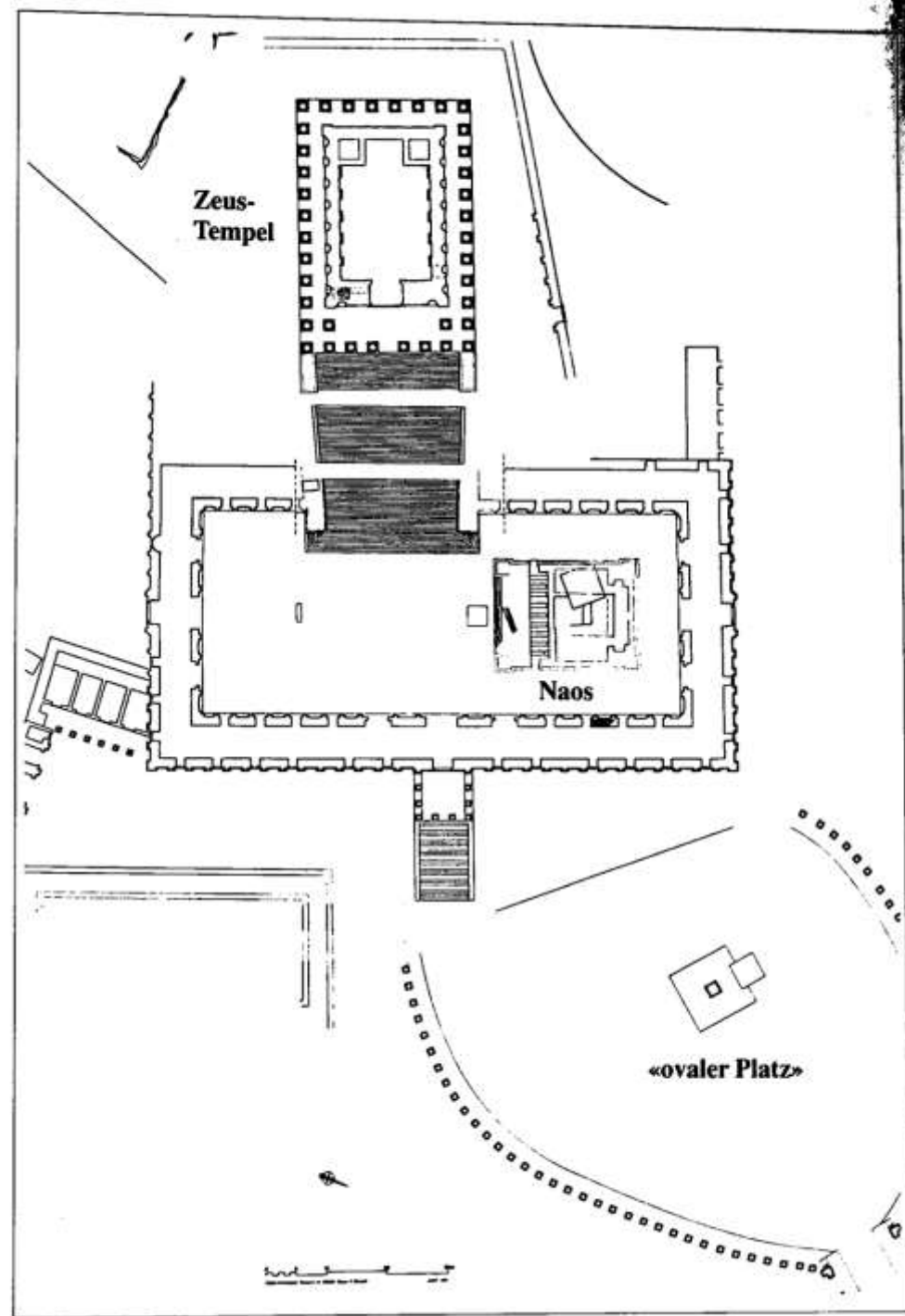
Cities of Decapolis

Gerasa

The "Naos" of Zeus

- Temenos built in 27/28 CE
- "Naos" rebuilt 60/70 CE and again 135/140 CE

- Ca. 100x50 m
- Cryptoporticus





Cities of Decapolis

Gerasa

The "Naos" of Zeus

- Ca. 100x50 m
- Cryptoporticus
- Half columns with Ionic capitals
- Doric frieze
- Decorated metopes

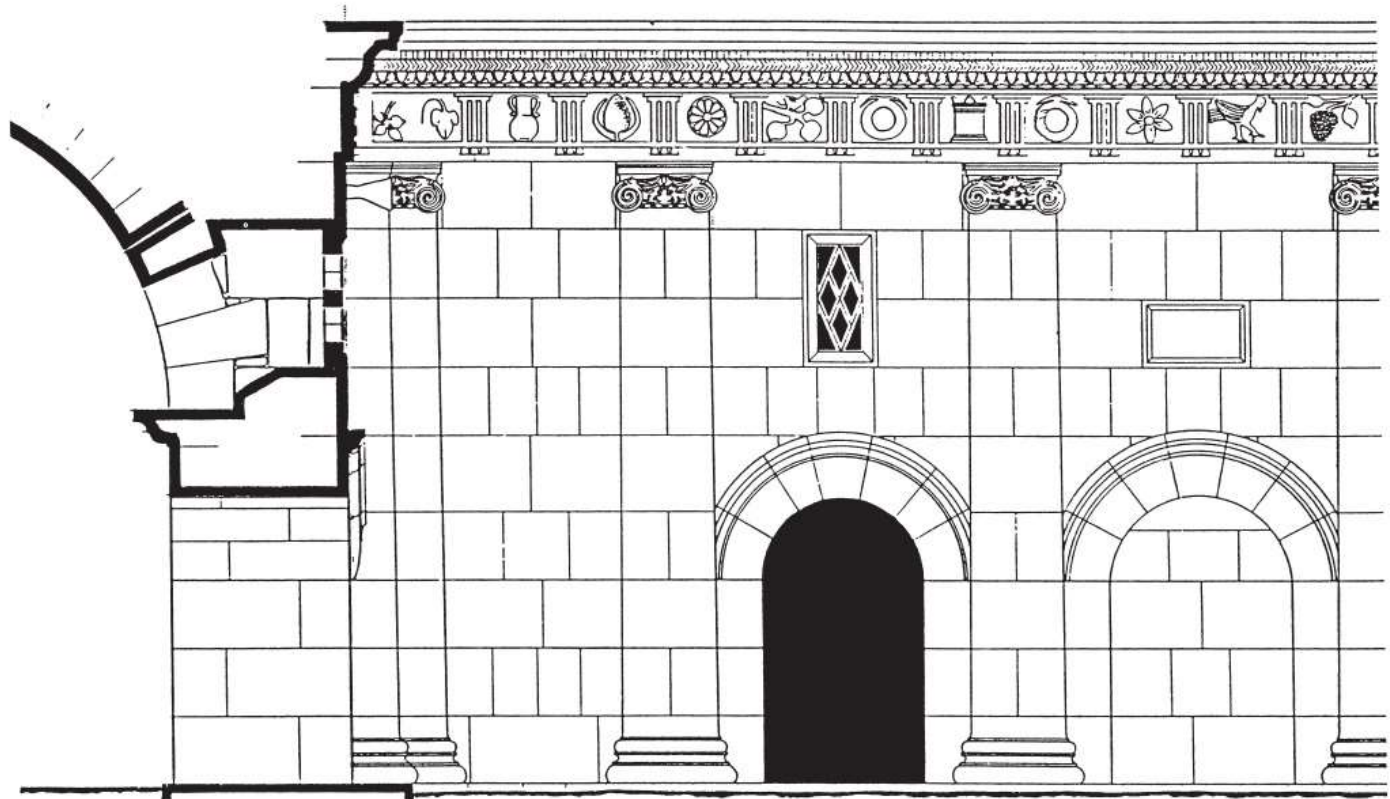


Cities of Decapolis

Gerasa

The "Naos" of Zeus

- Ca. 100x50 m
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Cities of Decapolis

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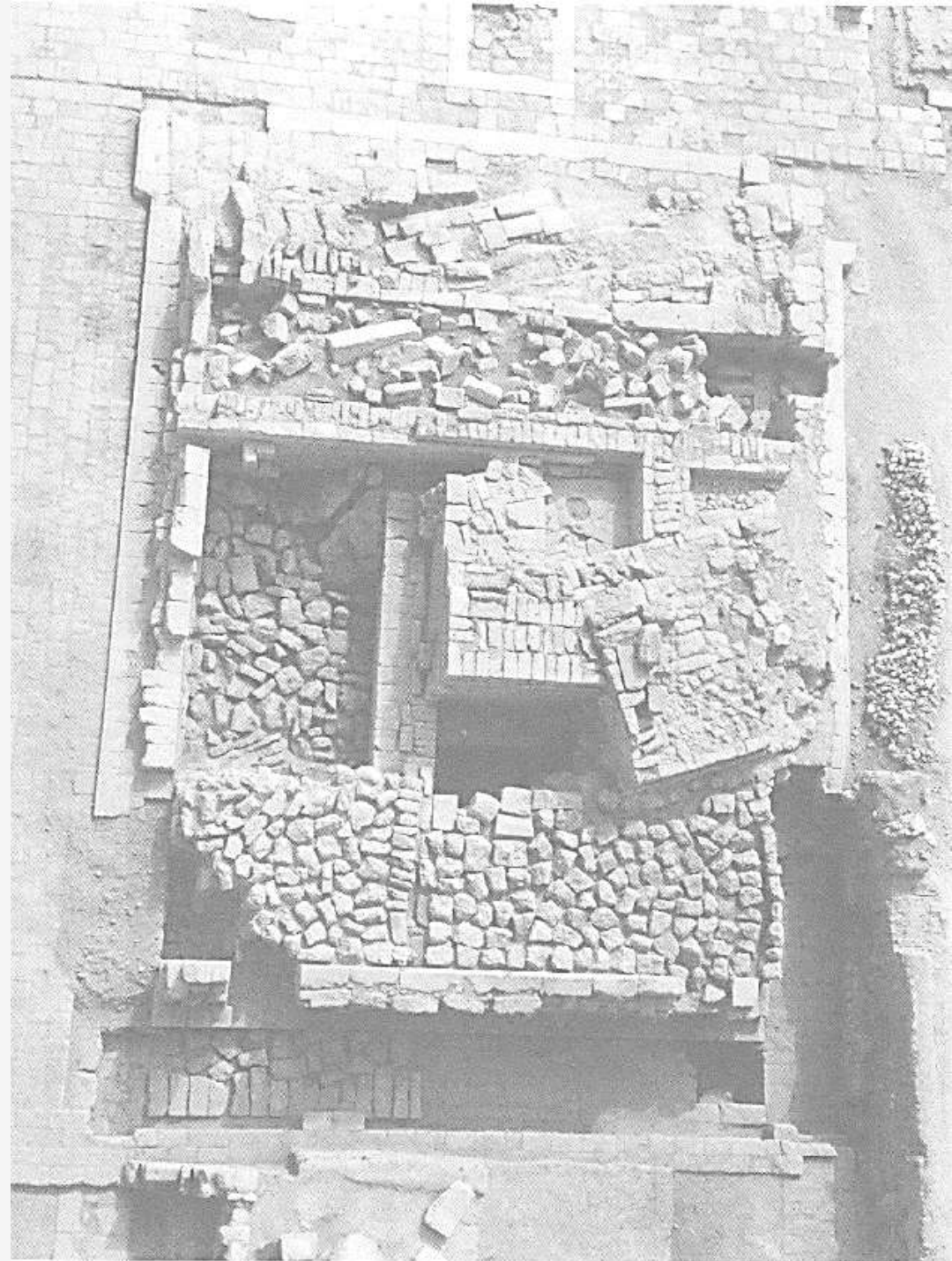


Cities of Decapolis

Gerasa

The "Naos" of Zeus

- Podium temple with a hypogaeum
- Corinthian

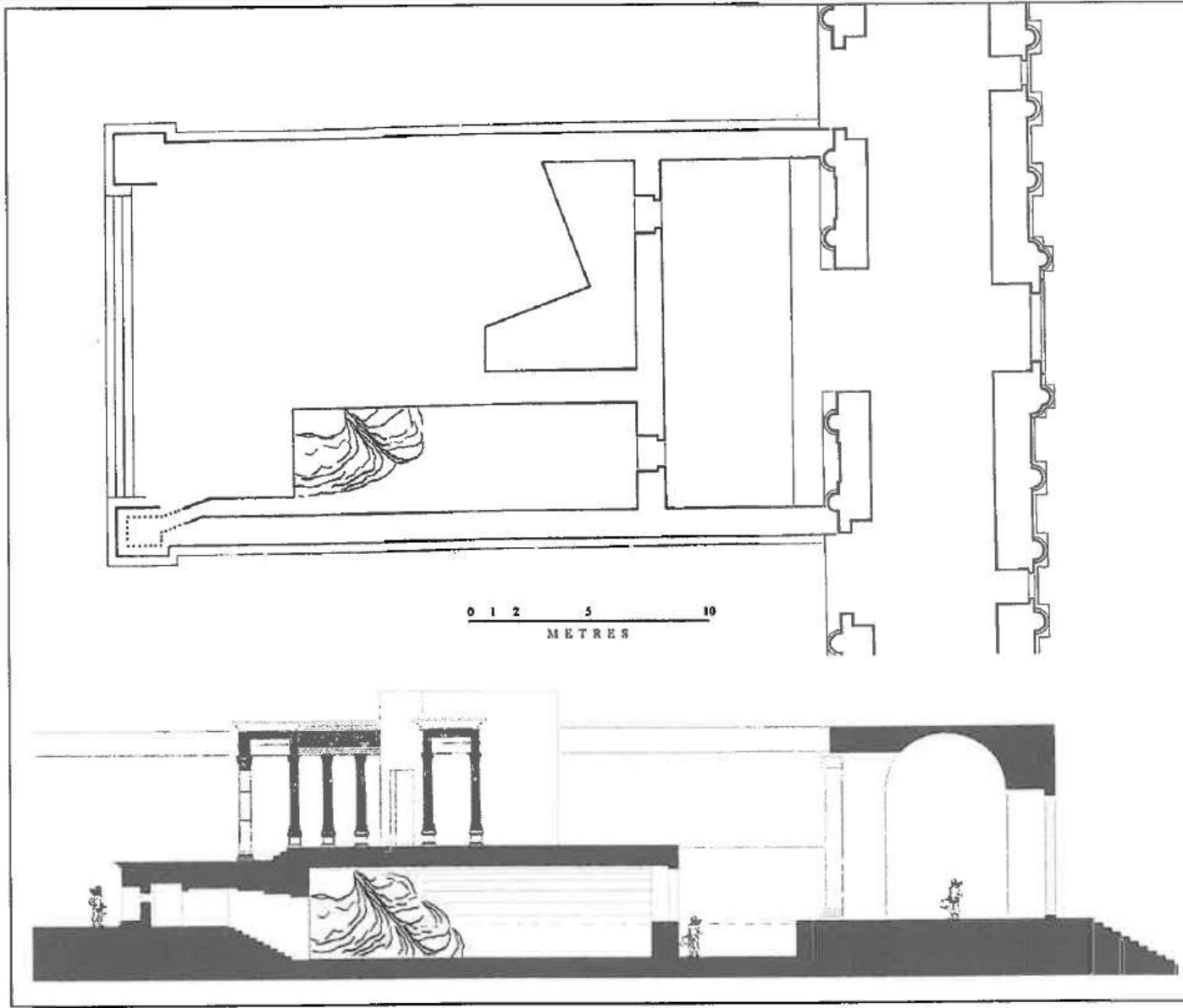


Cities of Decapolis

Gerasa

The "Naos" of Zeus

- Podium temple with a hypogaeum
- Corinthian





Cities of Decapolis

Gerasa

Southern theater

- Around 90 CE

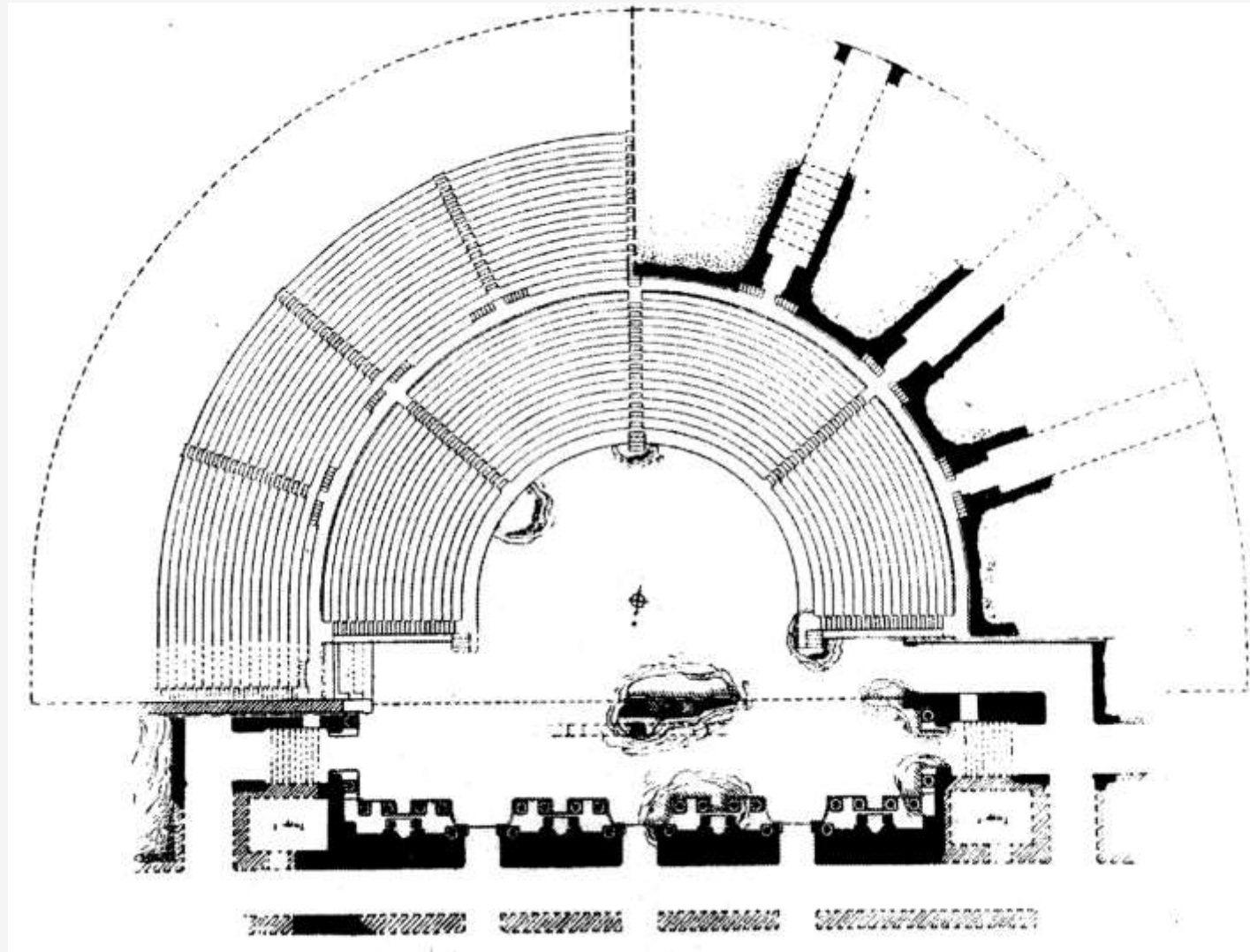


Cities of Decapolis

Gerasa

Southern theater

- Around 90 CE
- 60 m
- Ca. 5,000 seatings

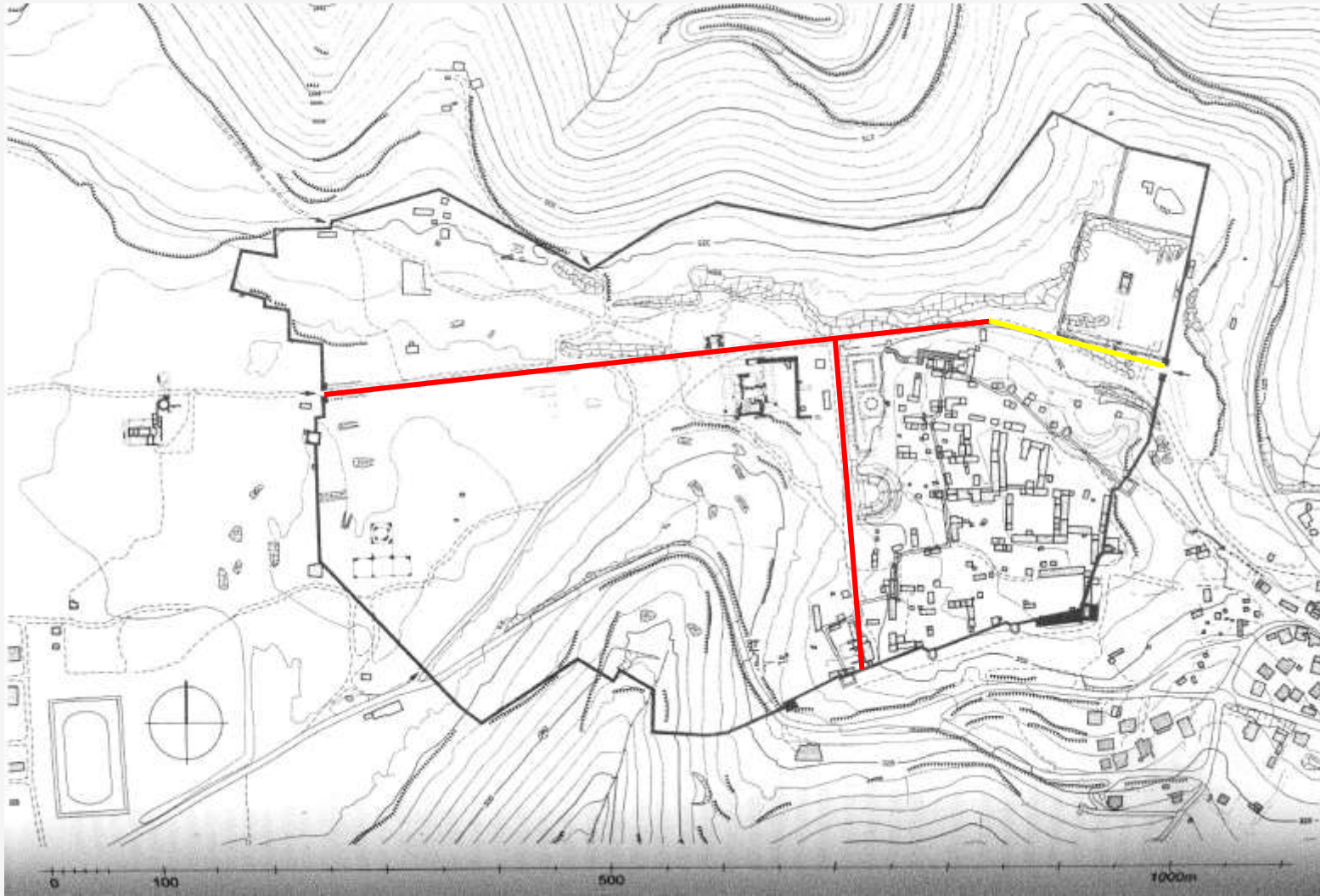




Cities of Decapolis

Gadara

- Expansion of the city to the north and west
- Decumanus laid out in the 1st c. CE?
- Expanded fortifications – second half of the 1st c. CE (32 ha)

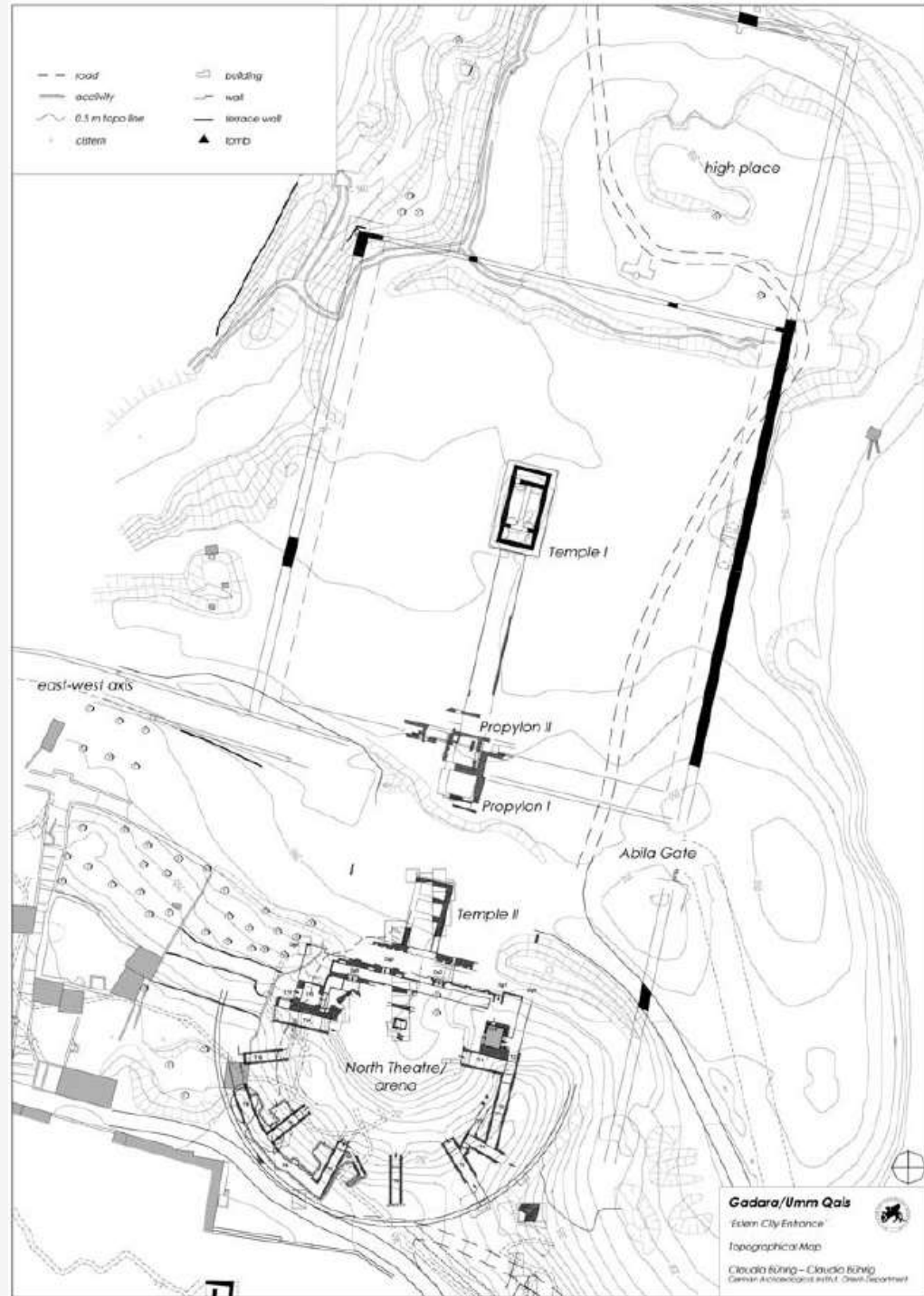




Cities of Decapolis

Gadara

- "Eastern city area"
- Northern theater - oriented to the Hellenistic temple
- Hellenistic temple standing until the second half of the 1st c. CE

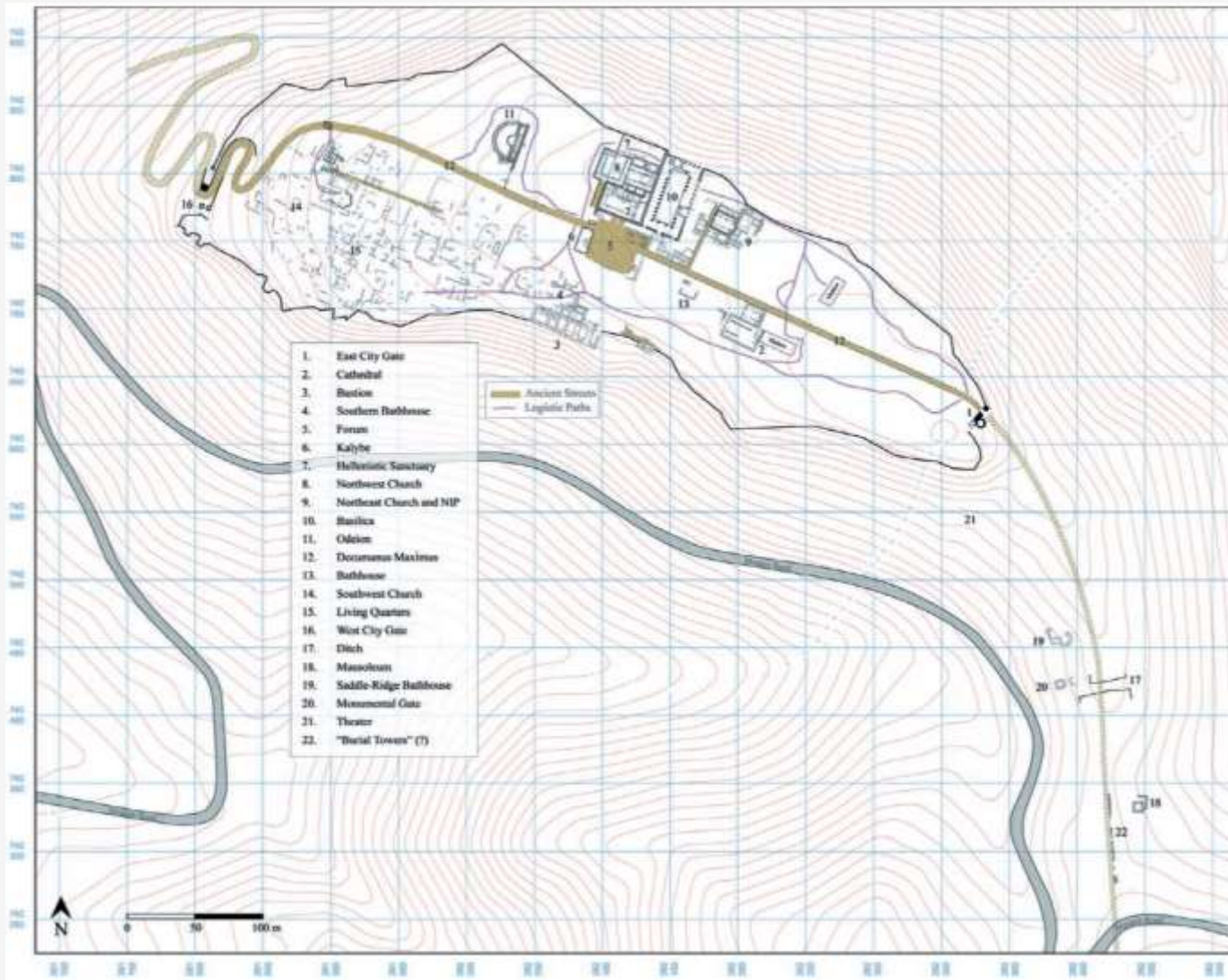




Cities of Decapolis

Hippos

- Renewed building activity ca. 50 BCE
- Decumanus and agora/forum laid out (first half of the 1st c. CE, paved at the end of the 1st/beginning of the 2nd c. CE)



Cities of Decapolis

Hippos

- Renewed building activity ca. 50 BCE
- Decumanus and agora/forum laid out (first half of the 1st c. CE, paved at the end of the 1st/beginning of the 2nd c. CE)



Cities of Decapolis

Hippos

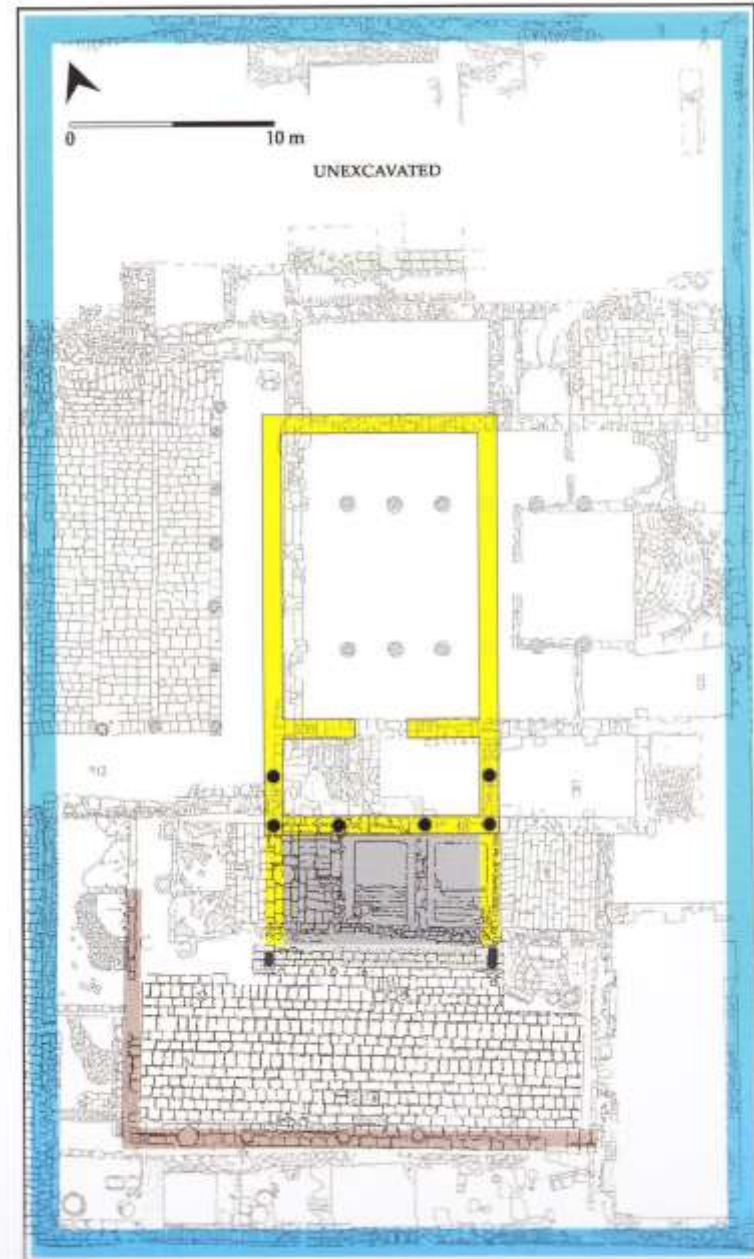
- Renewed building activity ca. 50 BCE
- Decumanus and agora/forum laid out (first half of the 1st c. CE, paved at the end of the 1st/beginning of the 2nd c. CE)



Cities of Decapolis

Hippos

- Temple re-built at the end of the 1st c. BCE/beginning of the 1st c. CE
- Corinthian?



Cities of Decapolis

Hippos

- Temple re-built at the end of the 1st c. BCE/beginning of the 1st c. CE
- Corinthian?

Remaining two flights of stairs of the temple podium



Cities of Decapolis

Hippos

- Temple re-built at the end of the 1st c. BCE/beginning of the 1st c. CE
- Corinthian?

Balustrade flanking the stairs to the temple podium



Cities of Decapolis

Hippos

- Temple re-built at the end of the 1st c. BCE/beginning of the 1st c. CE
- Corinthian?

Foundations of the altar



Cities of Decapolis

Hippos

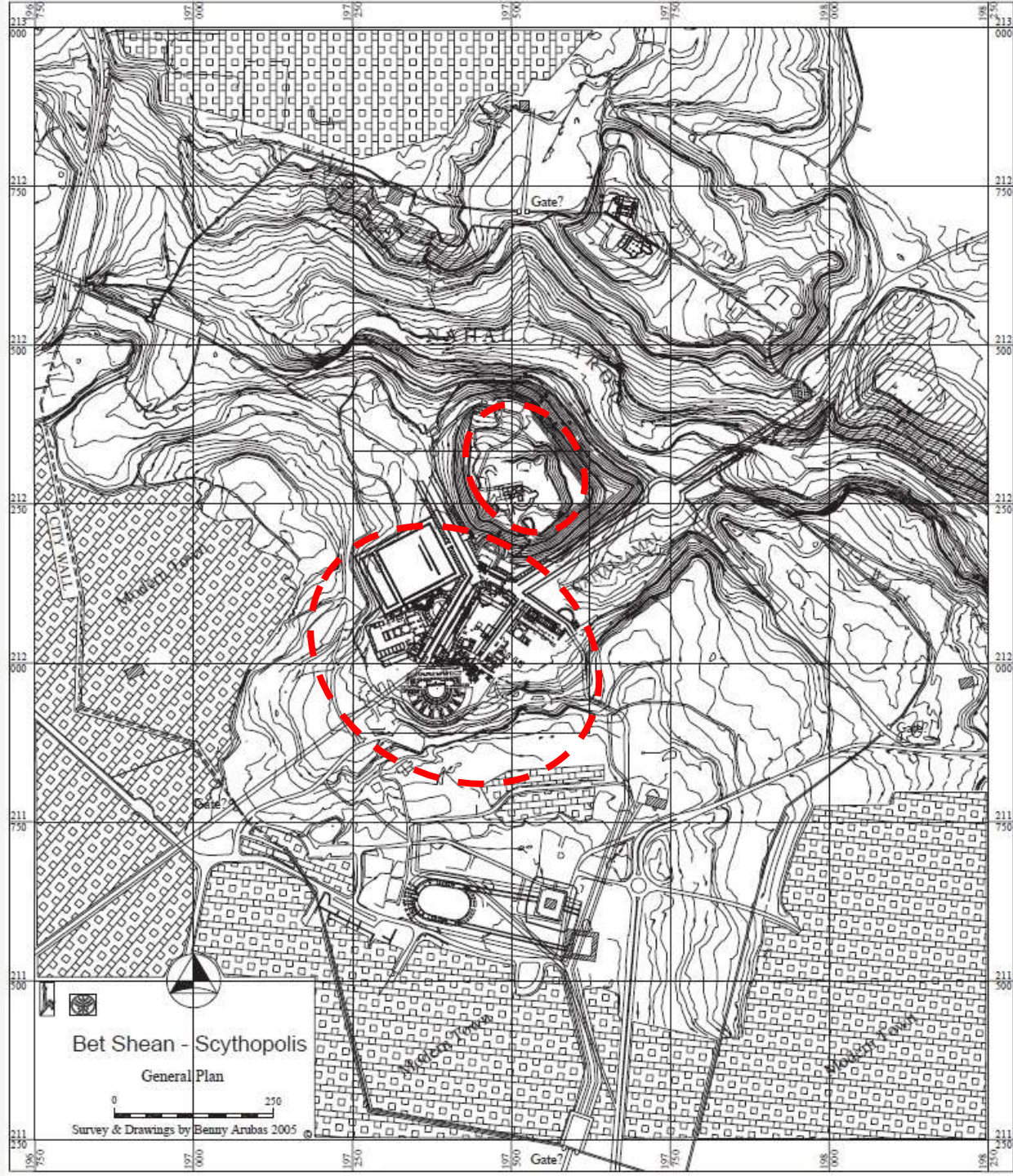
- Basilica, odeion, theater, fortifications – end of the 1st/beginning of the 2nd c. CE
- Precursors of basilica and fortifications in the early 1st c. CE



Cities of Decapolis

Scythopolis

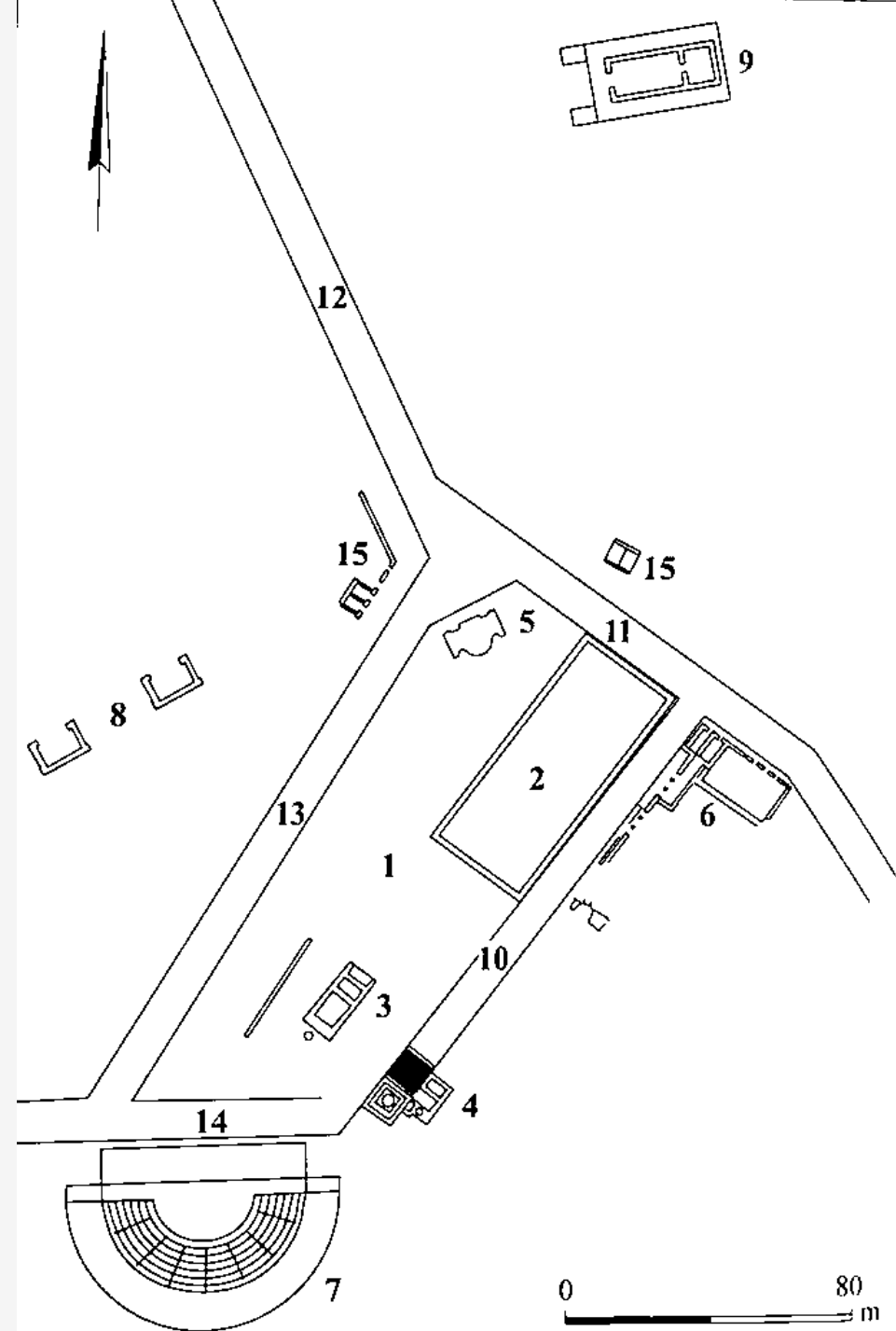
- Expands to the lower city
- Tel Iztabbah abandoned until the Byzantine period
- Tel Beth Shean - temenos (Temple of Zeus), no settlement
- Renewed building activity ca. 50 BCE - no clear architecture



Cities of Decapolis

Scythopolis

- 1st c. CE "civic center"
- Temple of Zeus
- Agora
 - Agora temples
 - Basilica
- Bathhouse
- "Public halls"
- Two phases of the southern theater



Cities of Decapolis

Scythopolis

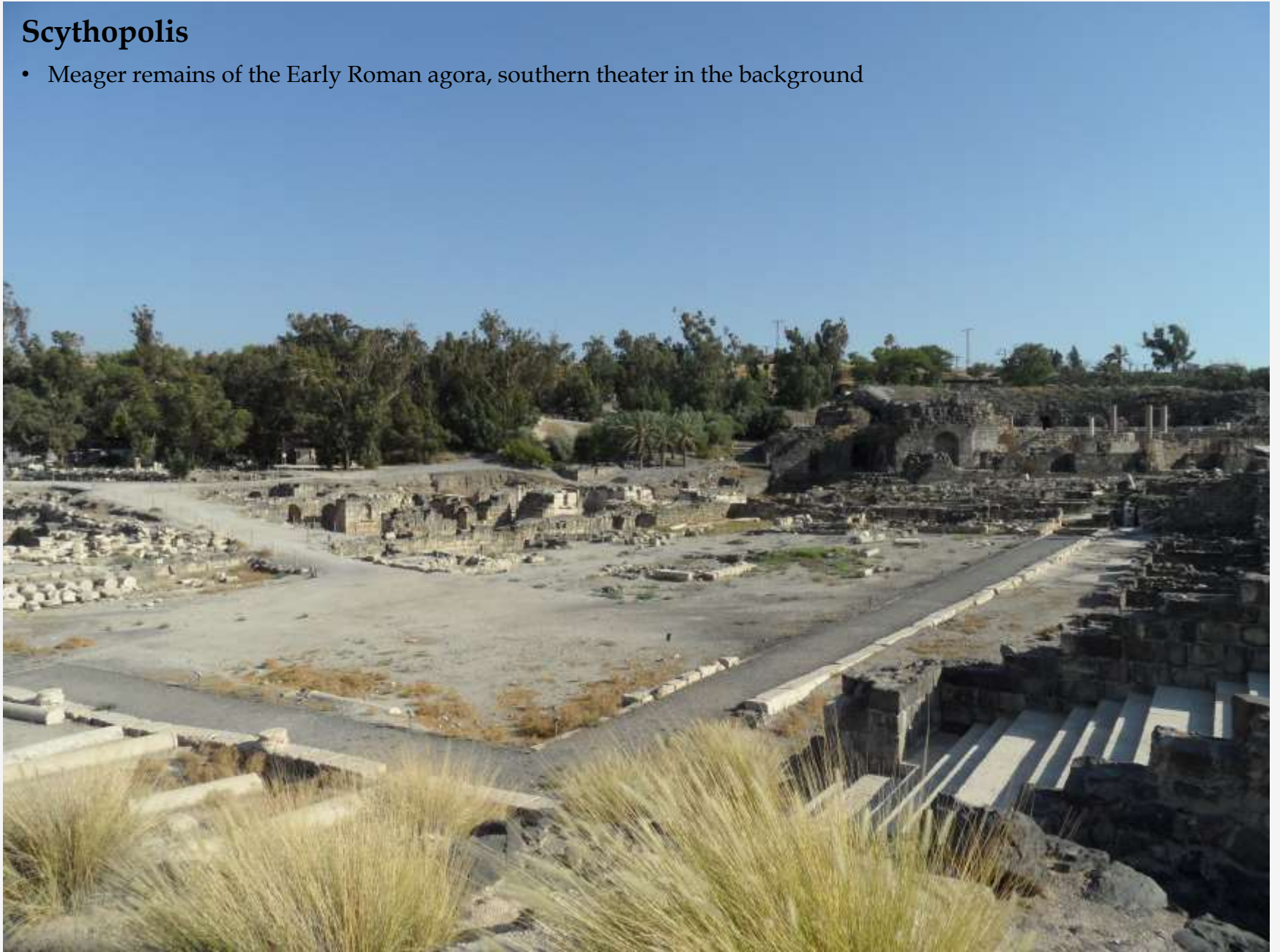
- View from the southern theater towards the main tell, civic centre to the right of the colonnaded street



Cities of Decapolis

Scythopolis

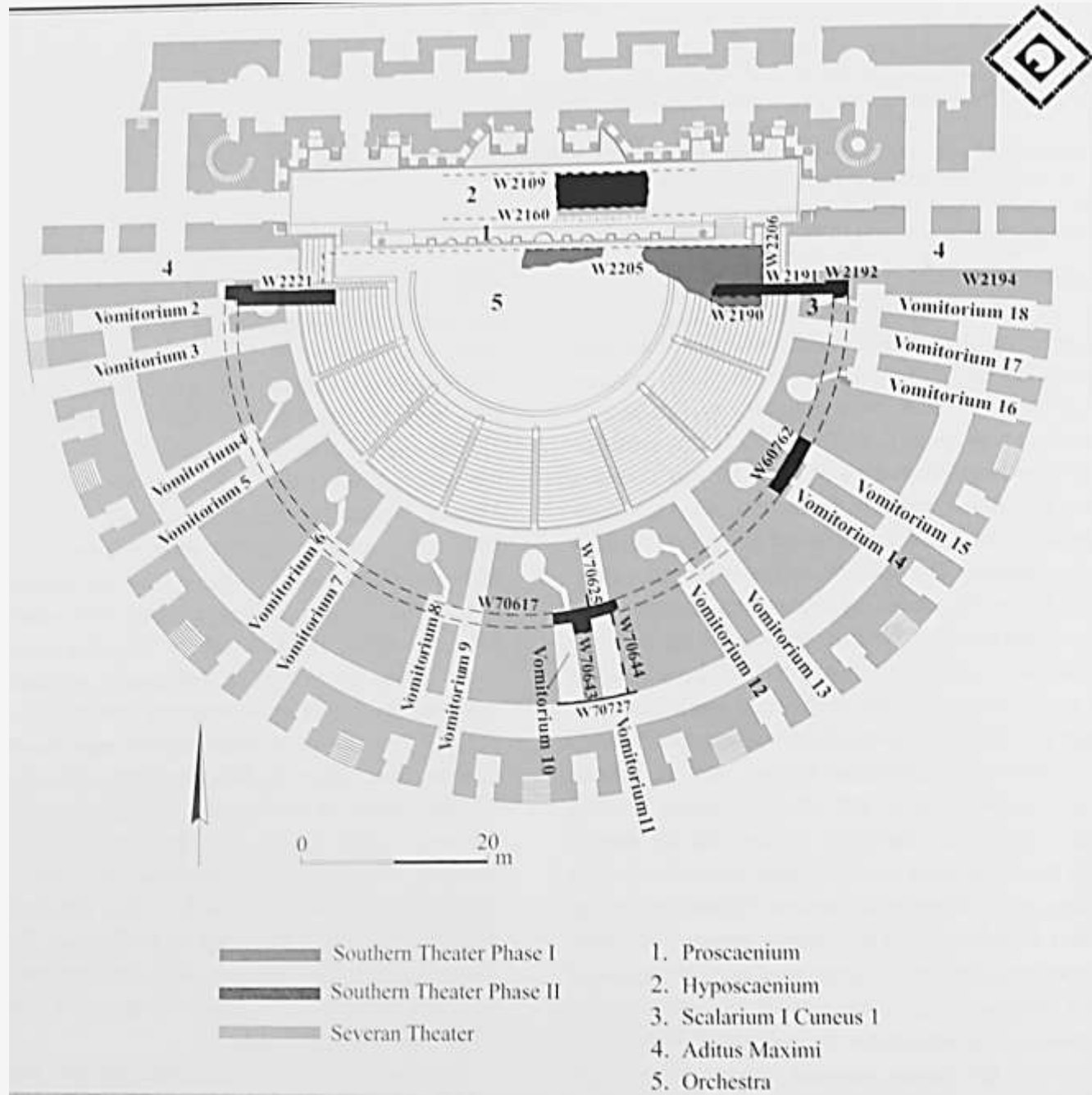
- Meager remains of the Early Roman agora, southern theater in the background



Cities of Decapolis

Scythopolis

- Theater
- Phase I Tiberian
- Phase II Flavian
- Overlaid by Severan theater
- Ca. 50 m

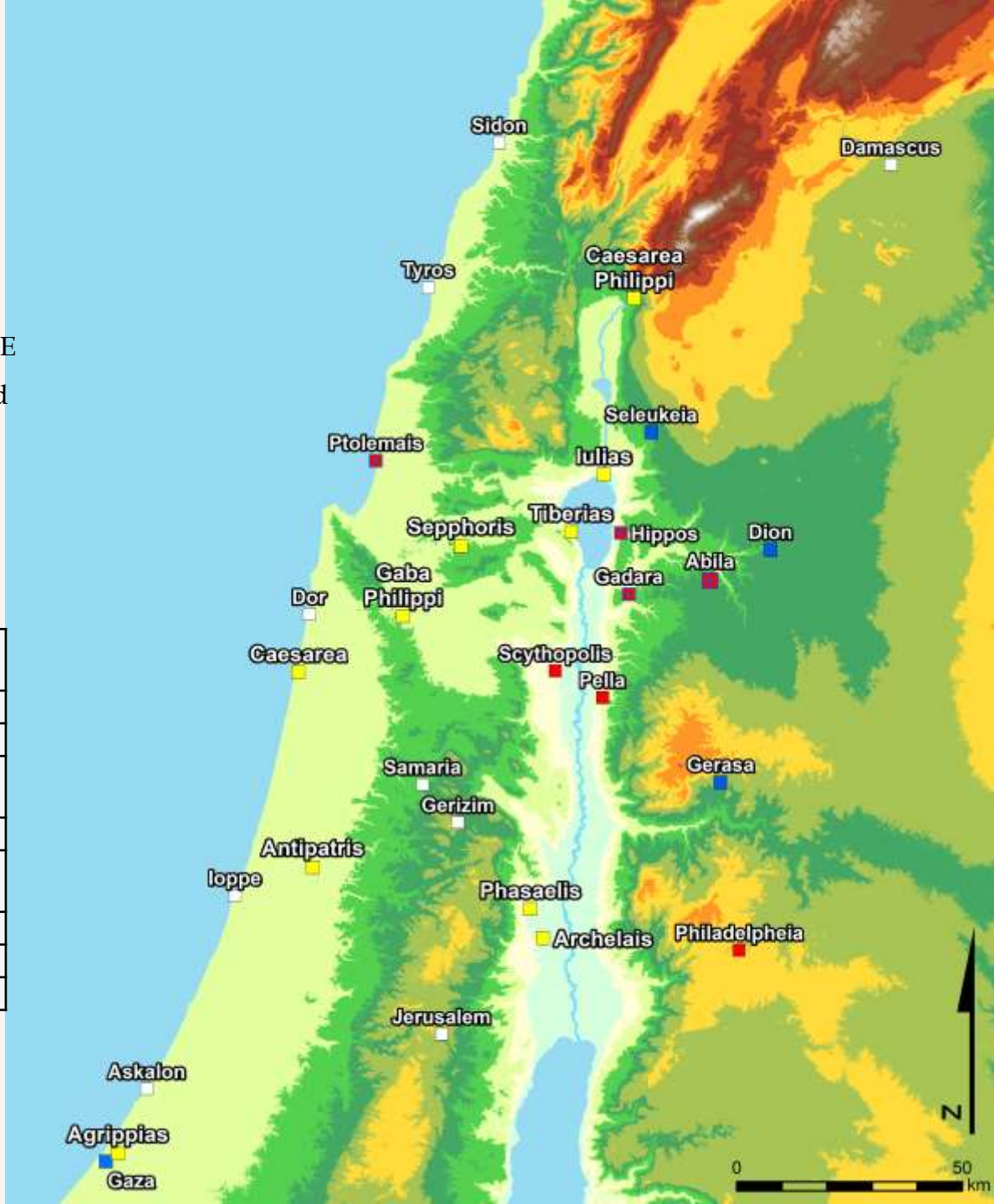


Cities of Decapolis

Other cities

- Pella, Philadelphia, Abila
- Similar development
- Revival in the second half of the 1st c. BCE
- Increasing building activity in the second half of the 1st c. CE

	Coinage 1 st c. BCE	Coinage 1 st c. CE
Abila	-	-
Dion	-	-
Gadara	64/3-31/30 BCE	3/4; 28/9; 37/8; 40/1- CE
Gerasa	-	67/8- CE
Hippos	40/1; 38/7 BCE	67/8- CE
Scythopolis	57-54 BCE	39/40- CE
Pella	-	82/3- CE
Philadelphia	-	78/9- CE

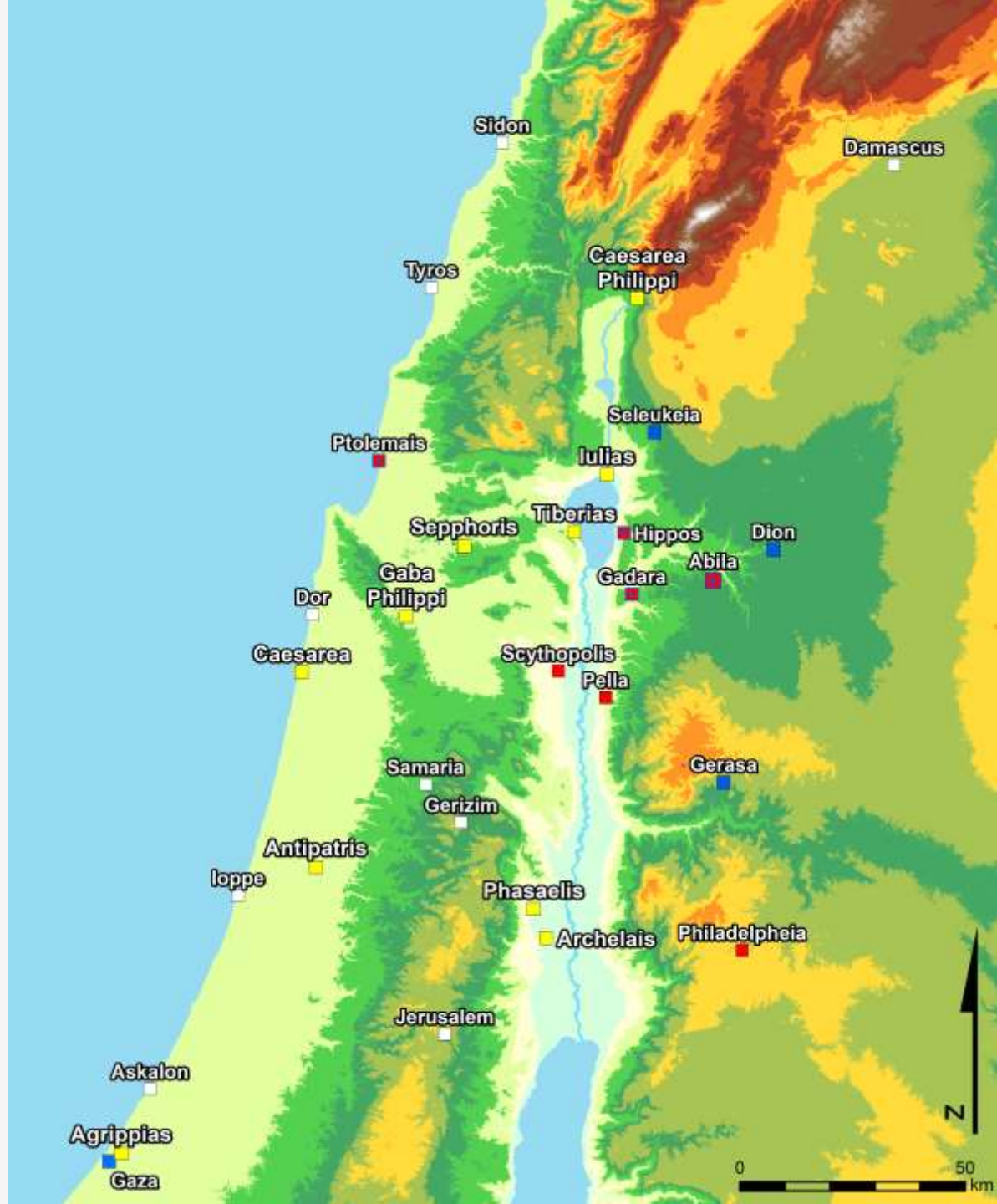


Neighbouring regions

Herodian kingdom/tetrarchies

- Samaria-Sebaste
- Caesarea Maritima
- Gaba
- Antipatris
- Agrippias
- Phasaelis
- Archelais
- Tiberias
- Sepphoris
- Caesarea Philippi
- Julias
- Winter palaces
- Augustaean temples

NETZER, E. 2006: *Architecture of Herod, the Great Builder*. Tübingen.

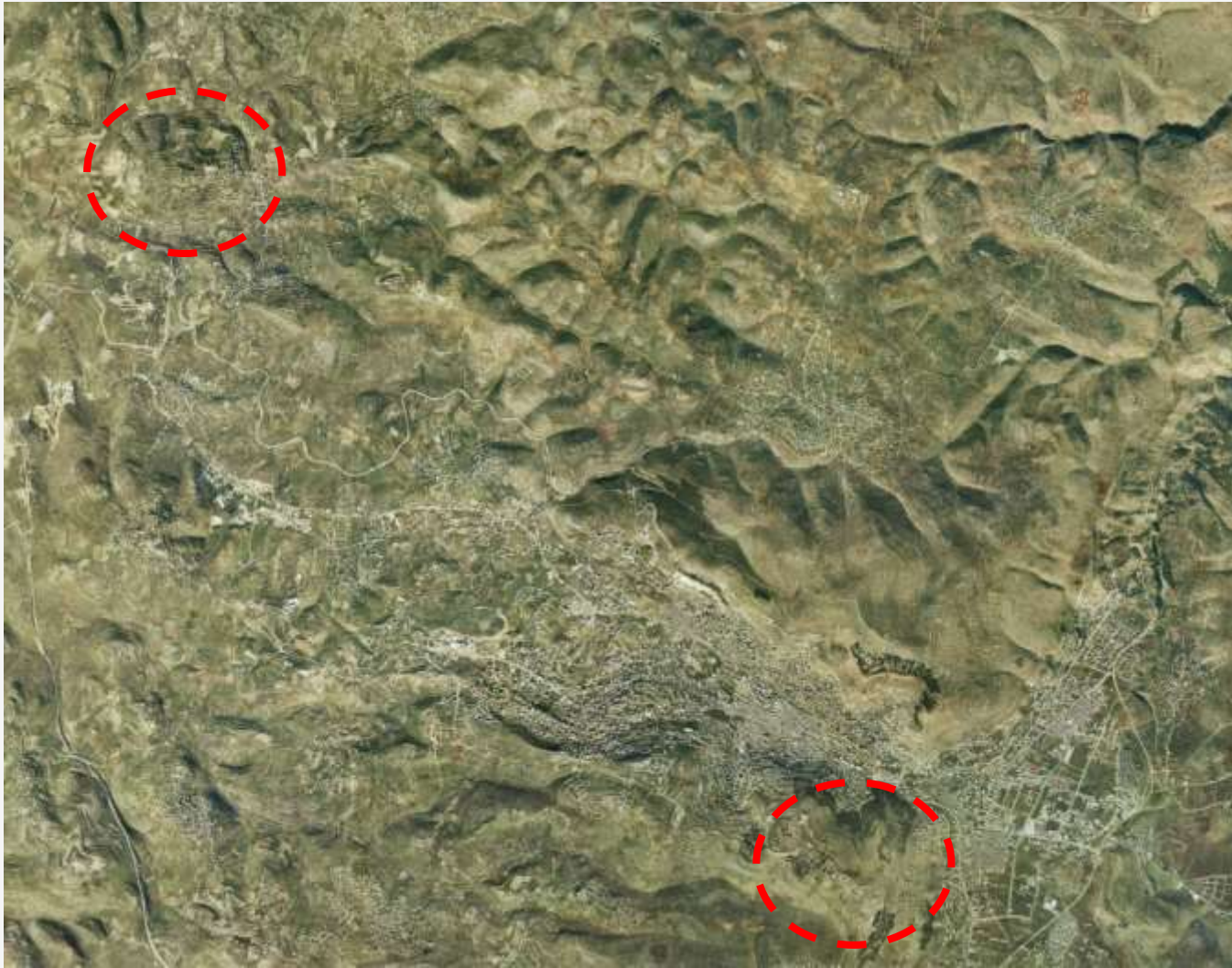


Neighbouring regions

Samaria-Sebaste

- Alexander's settlement ca. 331 BCE
- Pompeian/Gabinian resettlement
- Re-founded by Herod 30 BCE

Samaria-Sebaste in the upper left corner, in relation to the Samaritan settlement on Mt. Gerizim (lower right)



Neighbouring regions

Samaria-Sebaste

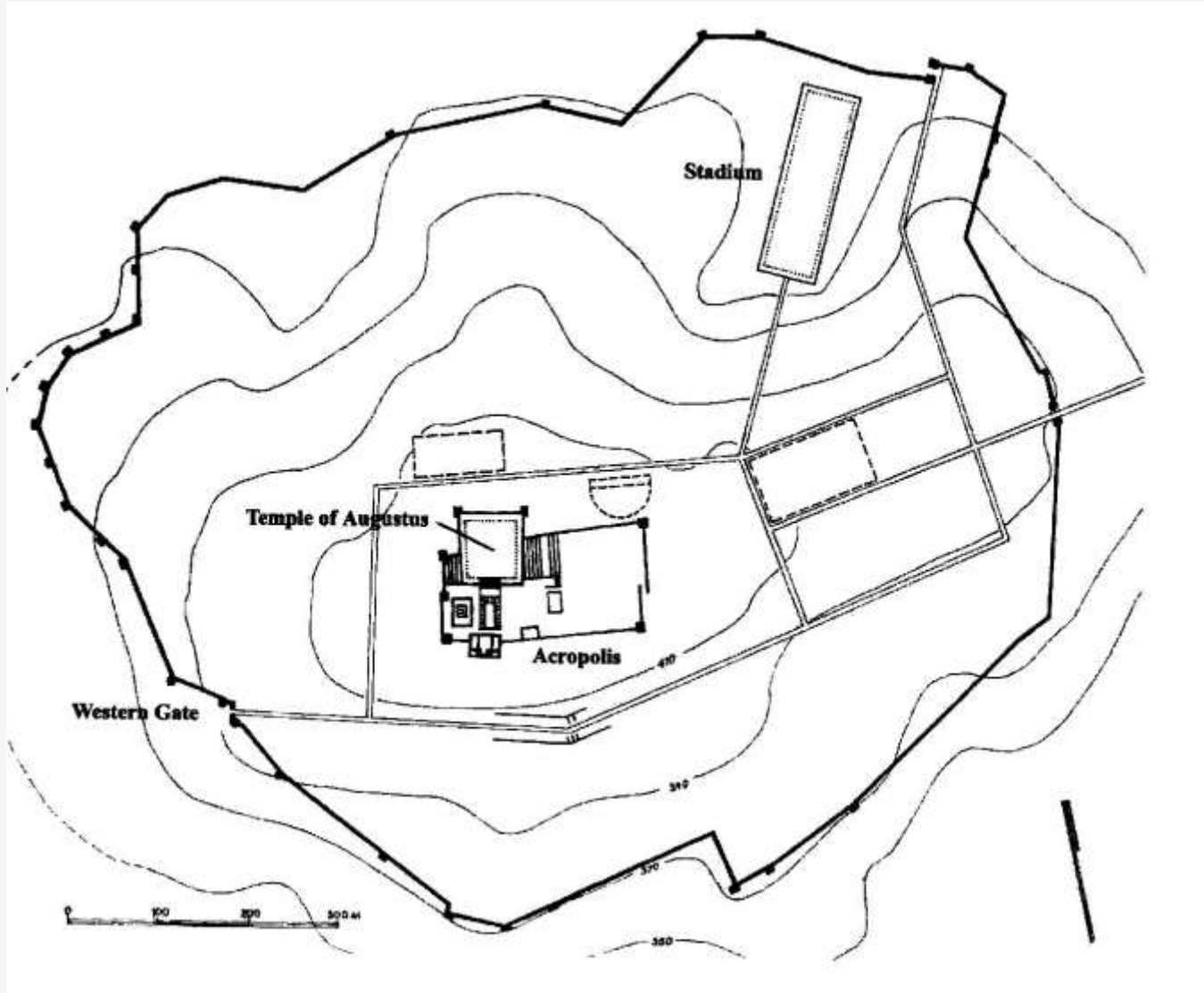
- Alexander's settlement ca. 331 BCE
- Pompeian/Gabinian resettlement
- Re-founded by Herod 30 BCE (Sebastos = Augustus)



Neighbouring regions

Samaria-Sebaste

- Early Roman street grid, fortifications, public structures
- Herodian acropolis

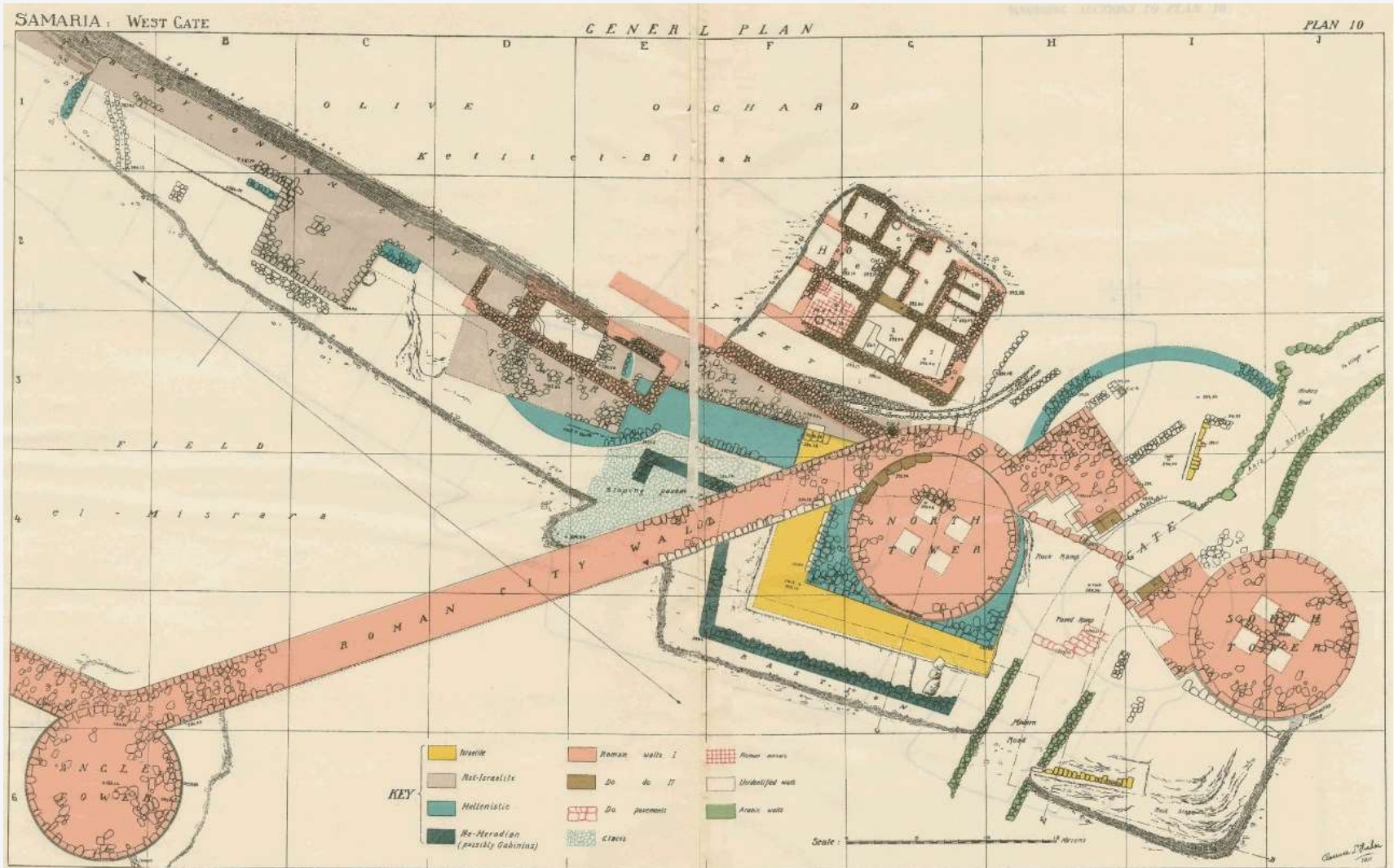


Neighbouring regions

Samaria-Sebaste

- Fortifications, urban layout
- Herodian temple of Augustus

Herodian city wall in pink



Neighbouring regions

Samaria-Sebaste

- Fortifications, urban layout
- Herodian temple of Augustus

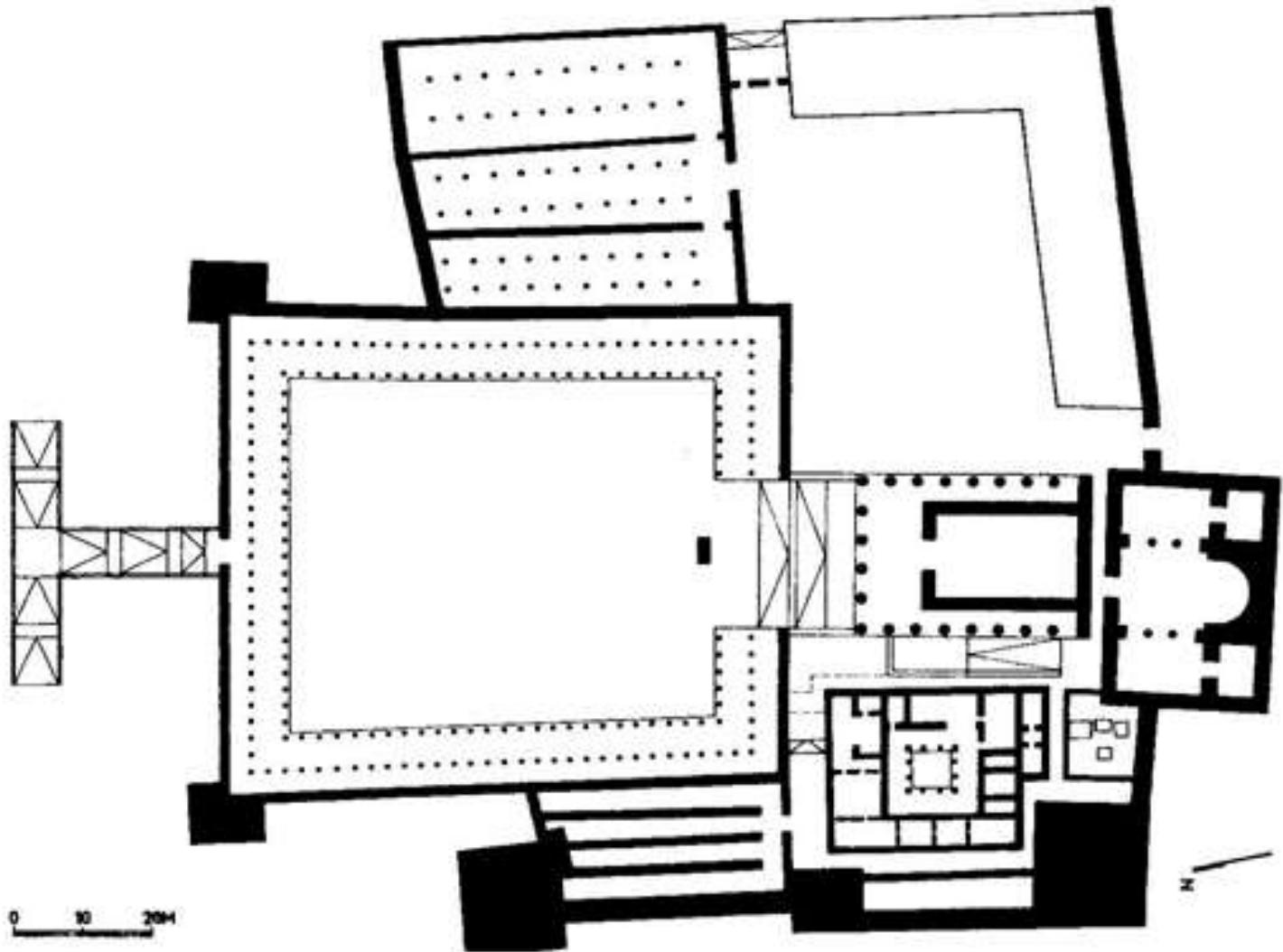
Round tower flanking the gate, built of headers



Neighbouring regions

Samaria-Sebaste

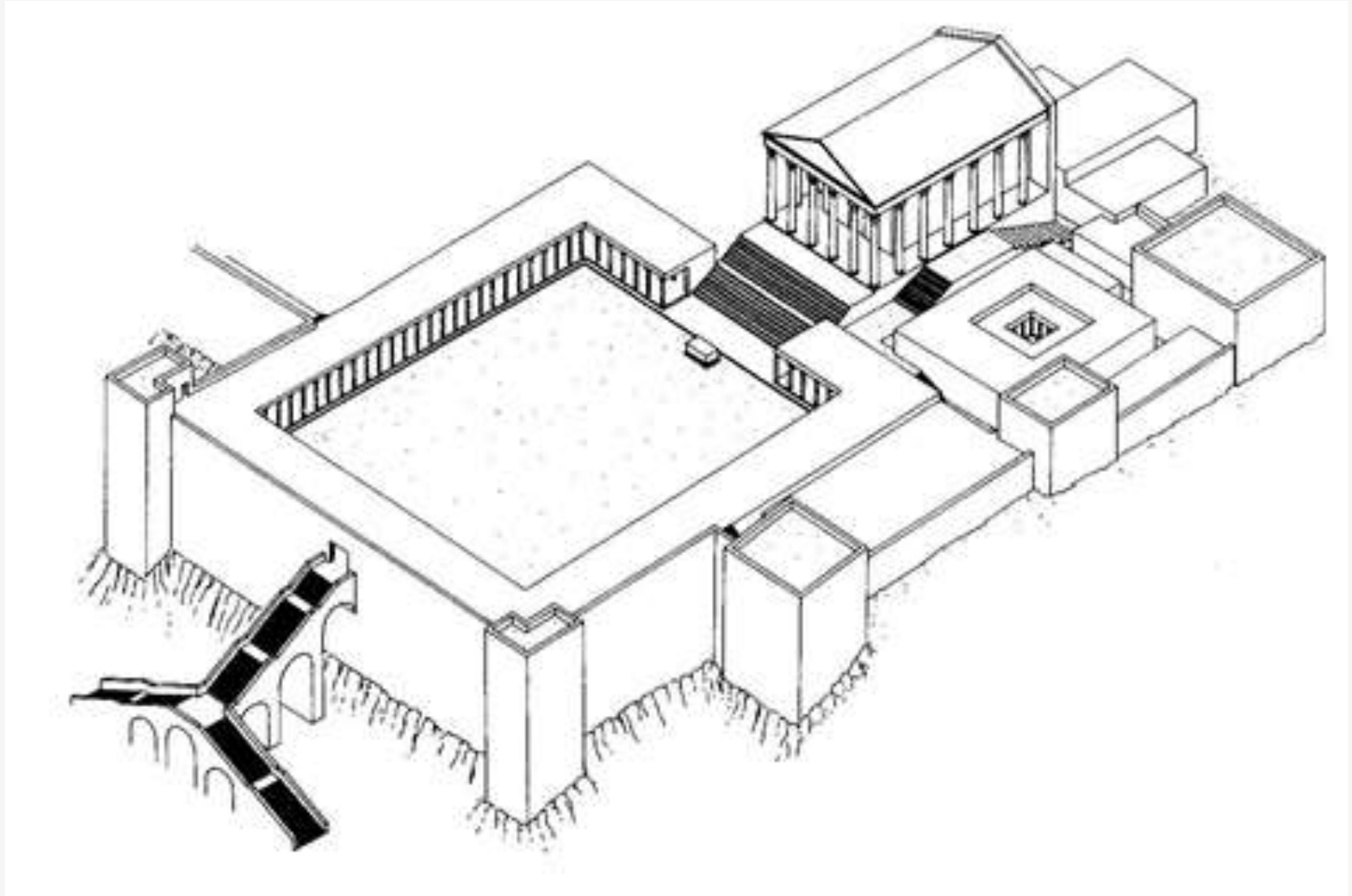
- Herodian temple of Augustus – acropolis compound 83x72 m, artificial (raised) platform
- Corinthian podium temple *peripteros sine postico*, palatial compound – peristyle house, basilical hall



Neighbouring regions

Samaria-Sebaste

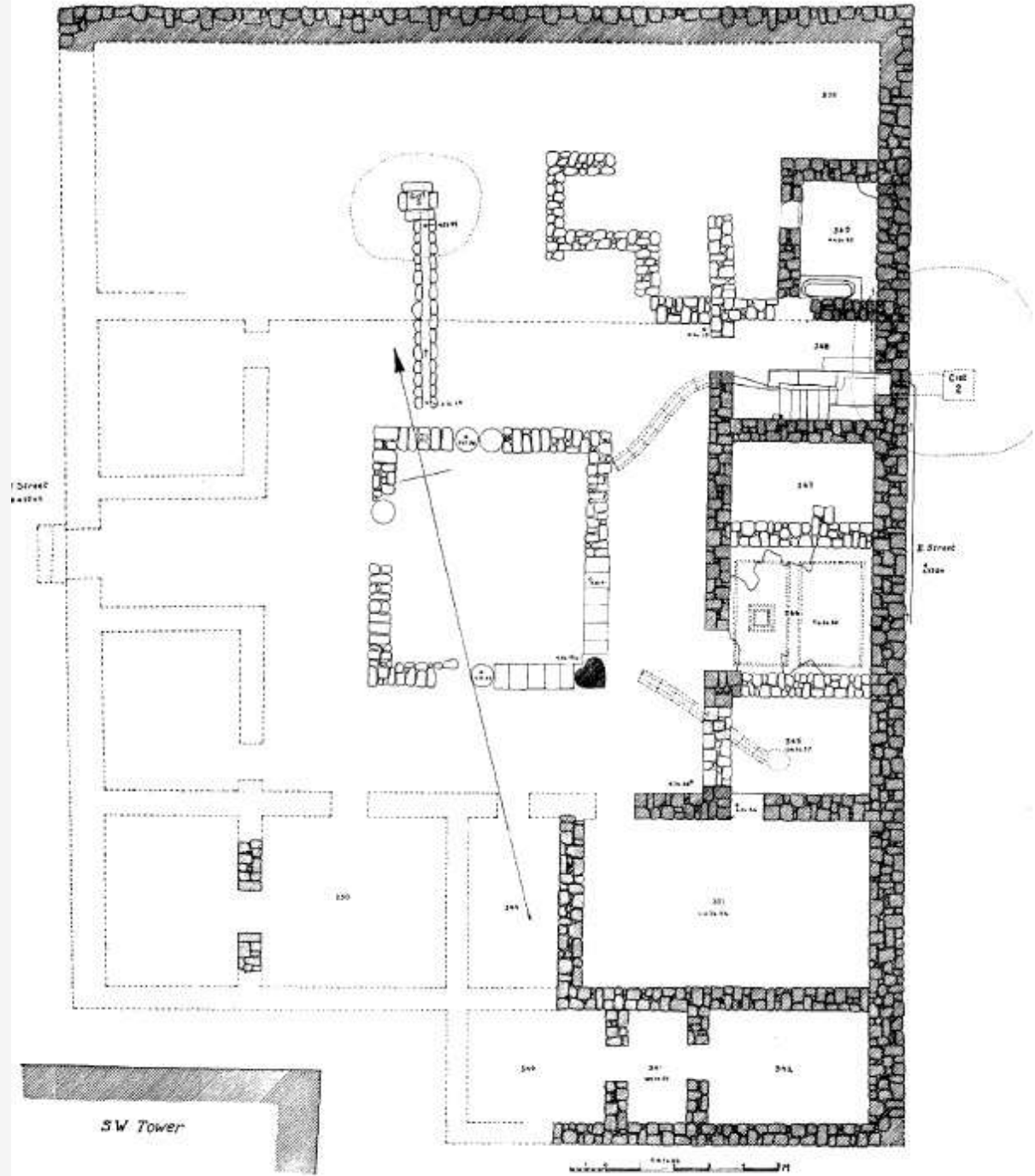
- Herodian temple of Augustus – acropolis compound 83x72 m
- Corinthian podium temple *peripteros sine postico*



Neighbouring regions

Samaria-Sebaste

- "Atrium" house
- First style fresco decoration



97. Plan of Atrium House. Scale, 1:150.

Neighbouring regions

Caesarea

- Originally Strato's tower
- Re-founded by Herod ca. 23 BCE

- Urban layout, fortifications
- Harbour
- Temple of Augustus
- Hippodrome
- Theater
- Palace

“But then this magnificent temper of his, and that submissive behavior and liberality which he exercised towards Caesar, and the most powerful men of Rome...by building cities after an extravagant manner, and erecting temples...”

AJ 15.328



Neighbouring regions

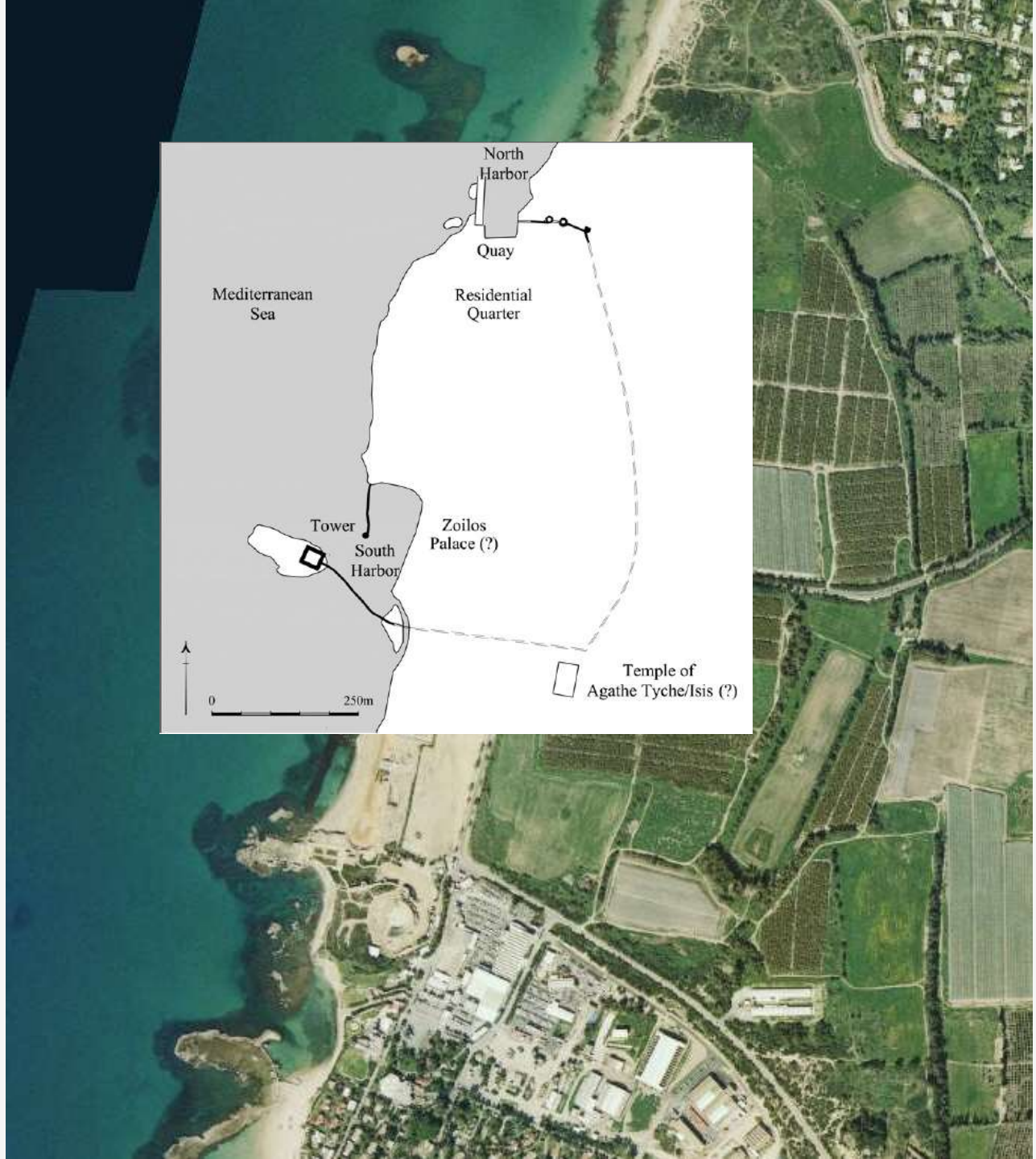
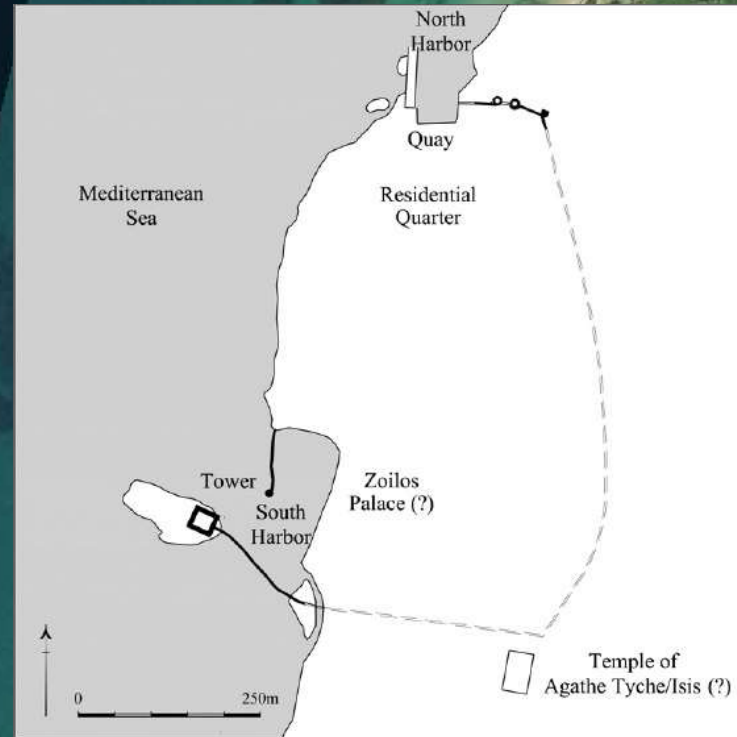
Caesarea

- Originally Strato's tower
- Re-founded by Herod ca. 23 BCE

- Urban layout, fortifications
- Harbour
- Temple of Augustus
- Hippodrome
- Theater
- Palace

“Now upon his observation of a place near the sea, which was very proper for containing a city, and **was before called Strato's Tower**, he set about getting a plan for a magnificent city there, and **erected many edifices** with great diligence all over it, and this of white stone. He also **adorned it with most sumptuous palaces and large edifices for containing the people**; and what was the greatest and most laborious work of all, he adorned it with a haven, that was always free from the waves of the sea...It was of excellent workmanship...was to be brought to perfection by materials from other places, and at very great expenses.”

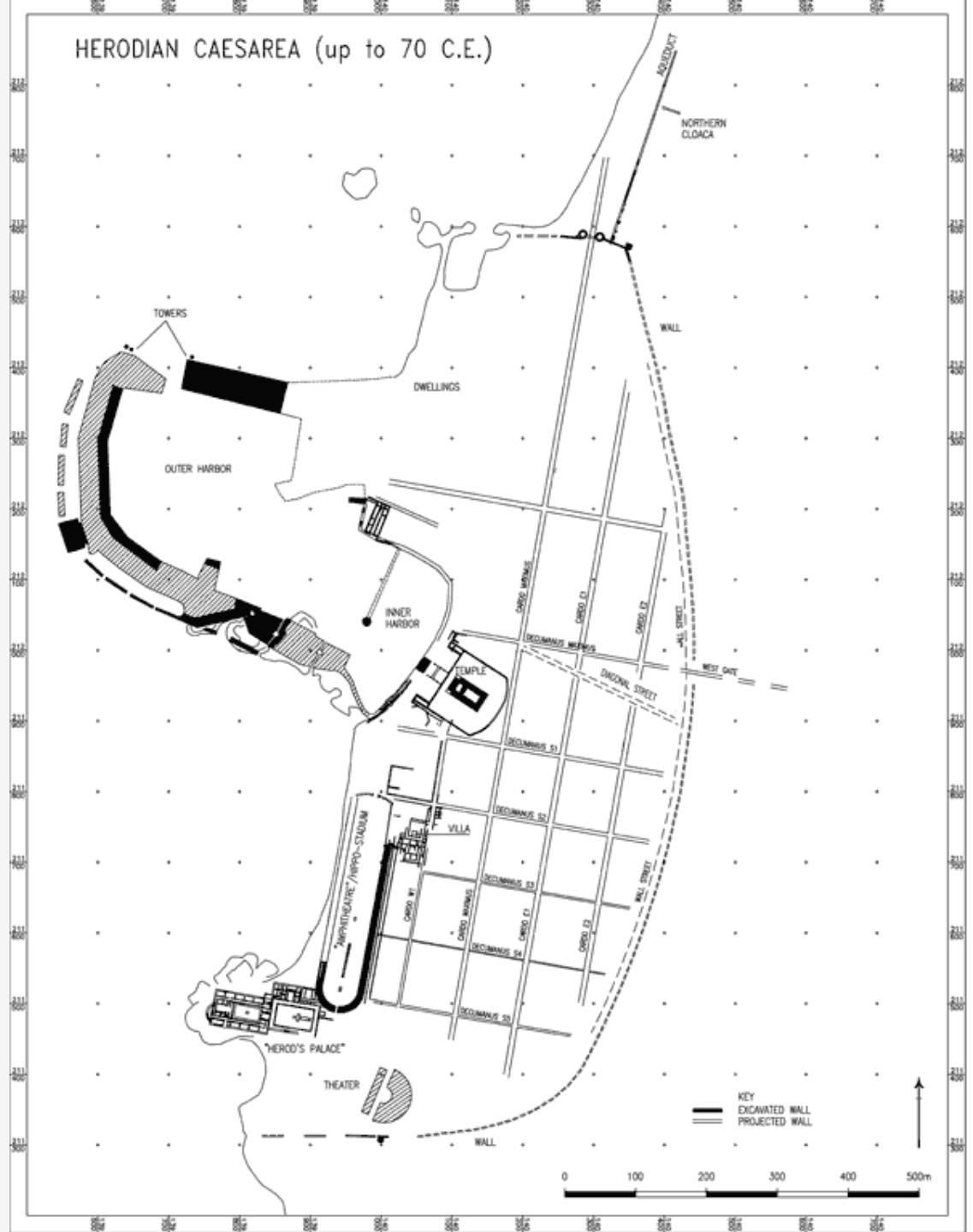
AJ 15.331-333



Neighbouring regions

Caesarea

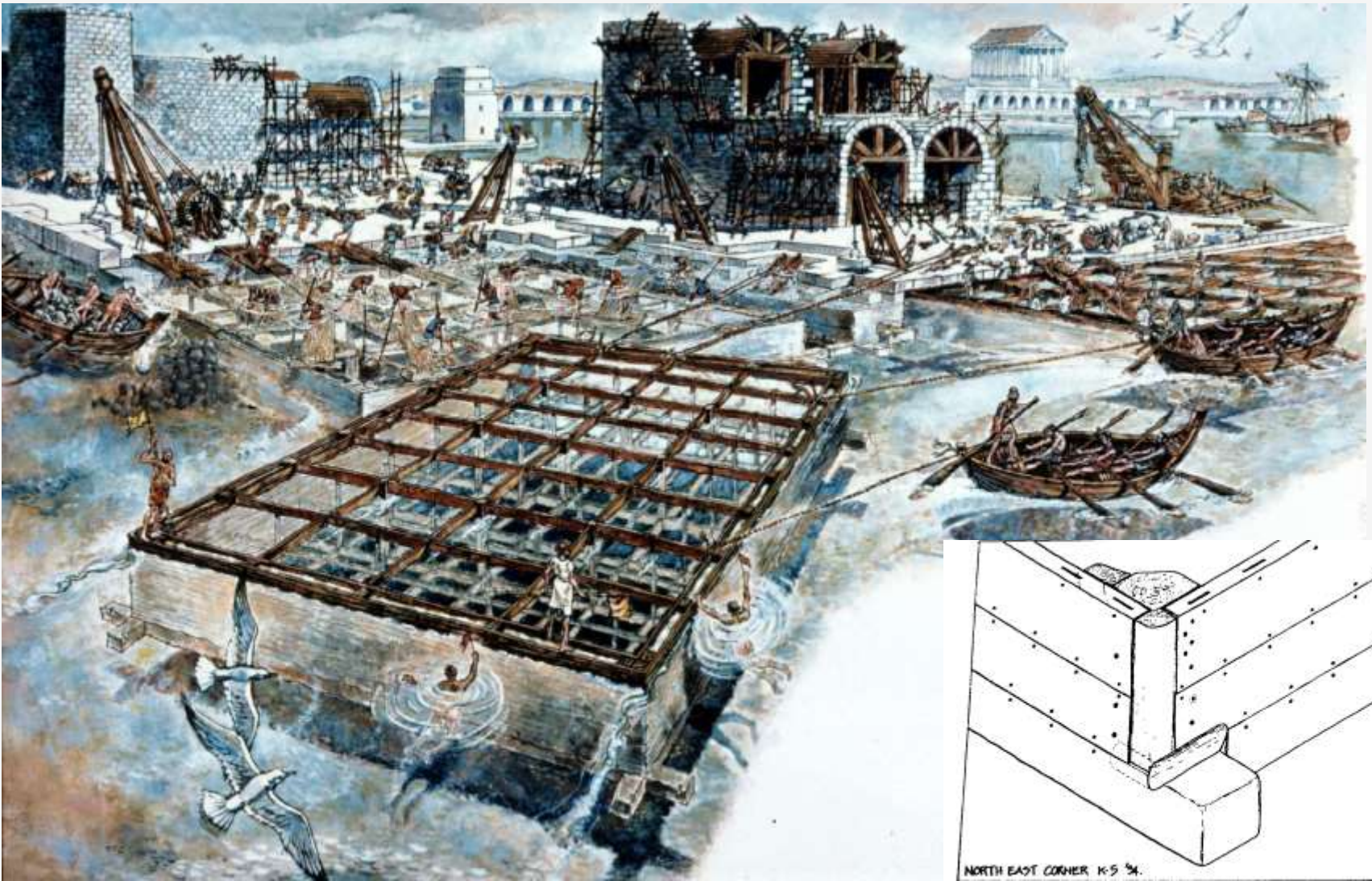
- Originally Strato's tower
- Re-founded by Herod ca. 23 BCE
- Urban layout, fortifications
- Harbour
- Temple of Augustus
- Hippodrome
- Theater
- Palace
- Insulae 120x80/80x90/65x90 m



Neighbouring regions

Caesarea

- Artificial harbour
- Use of Roman concrete technology – pozzolana (volcanic ash from the Vesuvius region in Campania, Italy)



Neighbouring regions

Caesarea

- Artificial harbour
- Lighthouse, platforms for statues at the entrance to the harbour

“This mole which he built by the sea-side was two hundred feet wide, the half of which was opposed to the current of the waves, so as to keep off those waves which were to break upon them, and so was called Procymatia, or the first breaker of the waves; but the other half had upon it a wall, **with several towers, the largest of which was named Drusus**, and was a work of very great excellence, and **had its name from Drusus, the son-in-law of Caesar**, who died young.”
AJ 15.331-333



Neighbouring regions

Caesarea

- Temple of Augustus
- Corinthian peripteros? On krepis? (ca. 46x28 m)

The former quay, temple platform on the left



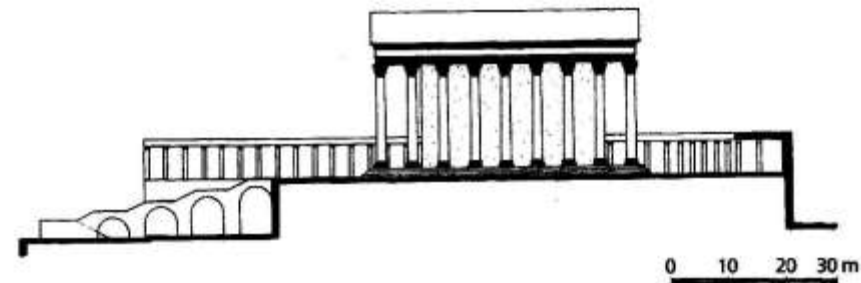
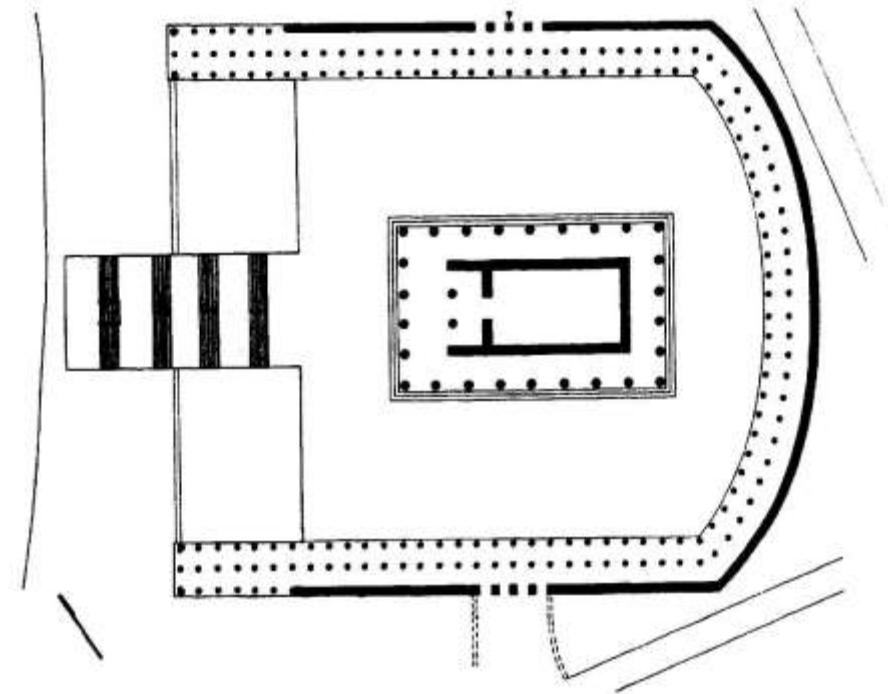
Neighbouring regions

Caesarea

- Temple of Augustus
- Corinthian peripteros? On krepis? (ca. 46x28 m)

“Now there were edifices all along the circular haven, made of the politest stone, with a certain elevation, whereon was erected a **temple, that was seen a great way off by those that were sailing for that haven, and had in it two statues, the one of Rome, the other of Caesar.**”

AJ 15.339



Neighbouring regions

Caesarea

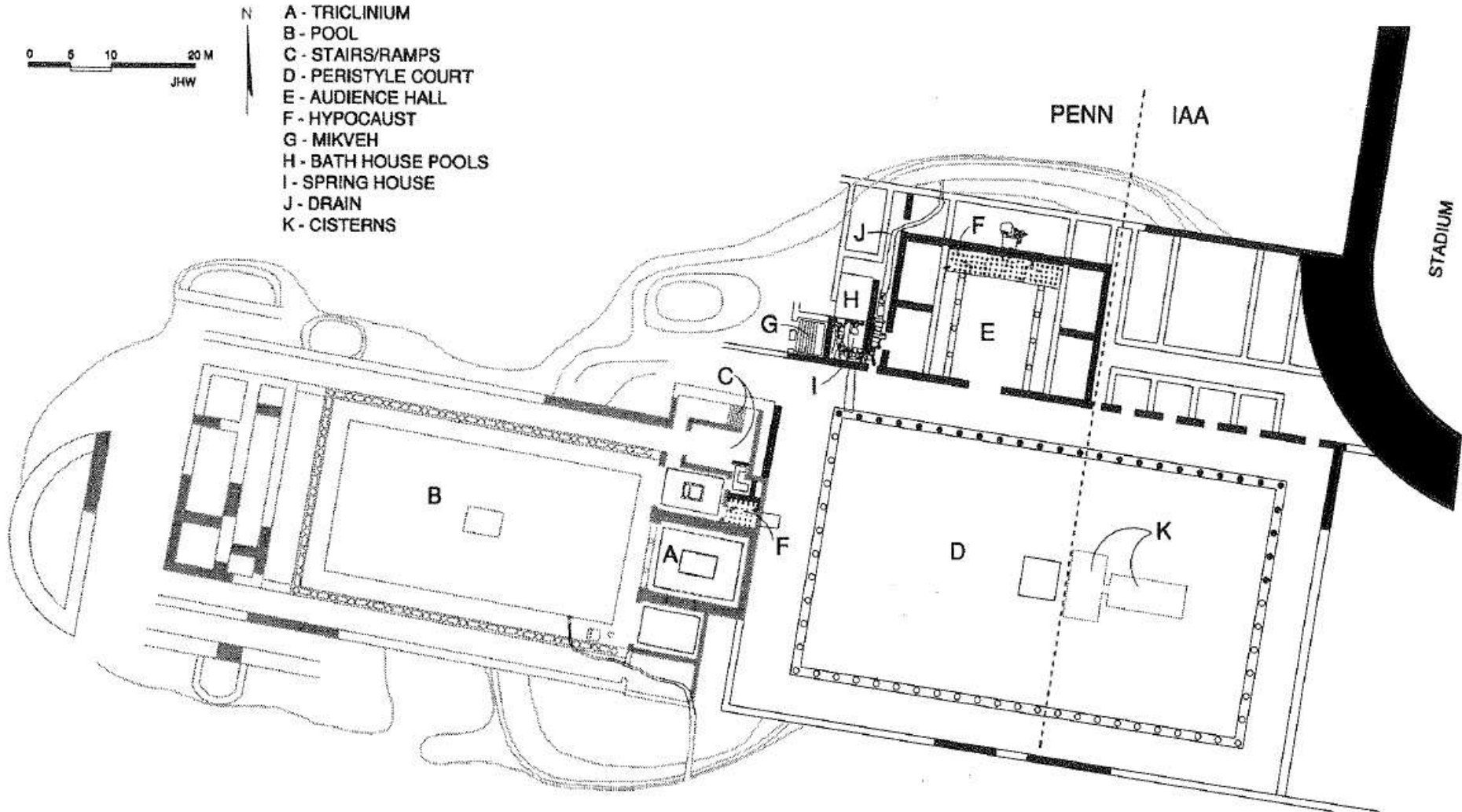
- Herod's palace compound (Promontory palace)
- "Villa maritima" + hippodrome



Neighbouring regions

Caesarea

- Herod's palace compound (Promontory palace)
- B - Courtyard building with a pool fed by seawater, A - triclinium; semi-circular veranda/balcony towards the sea → private part; D - peristyle courtyard with E - audience hall with heating (hypocaustum) → public part



Neighbouring regions

Caesarea

- Herod's palace compound (Promontory palace)

Remains of triclinium pavement in the private part



Neighbouring regions

Winter palaces in Jericho

- Three phases (I: ca. 35 BCE; II; 30/25 BCE; III: 20-15 BCE)
- Progression from conservative Hellenized/Oriental to more "Roman" style



Neighbouring regions

Winter palaces in Jericho

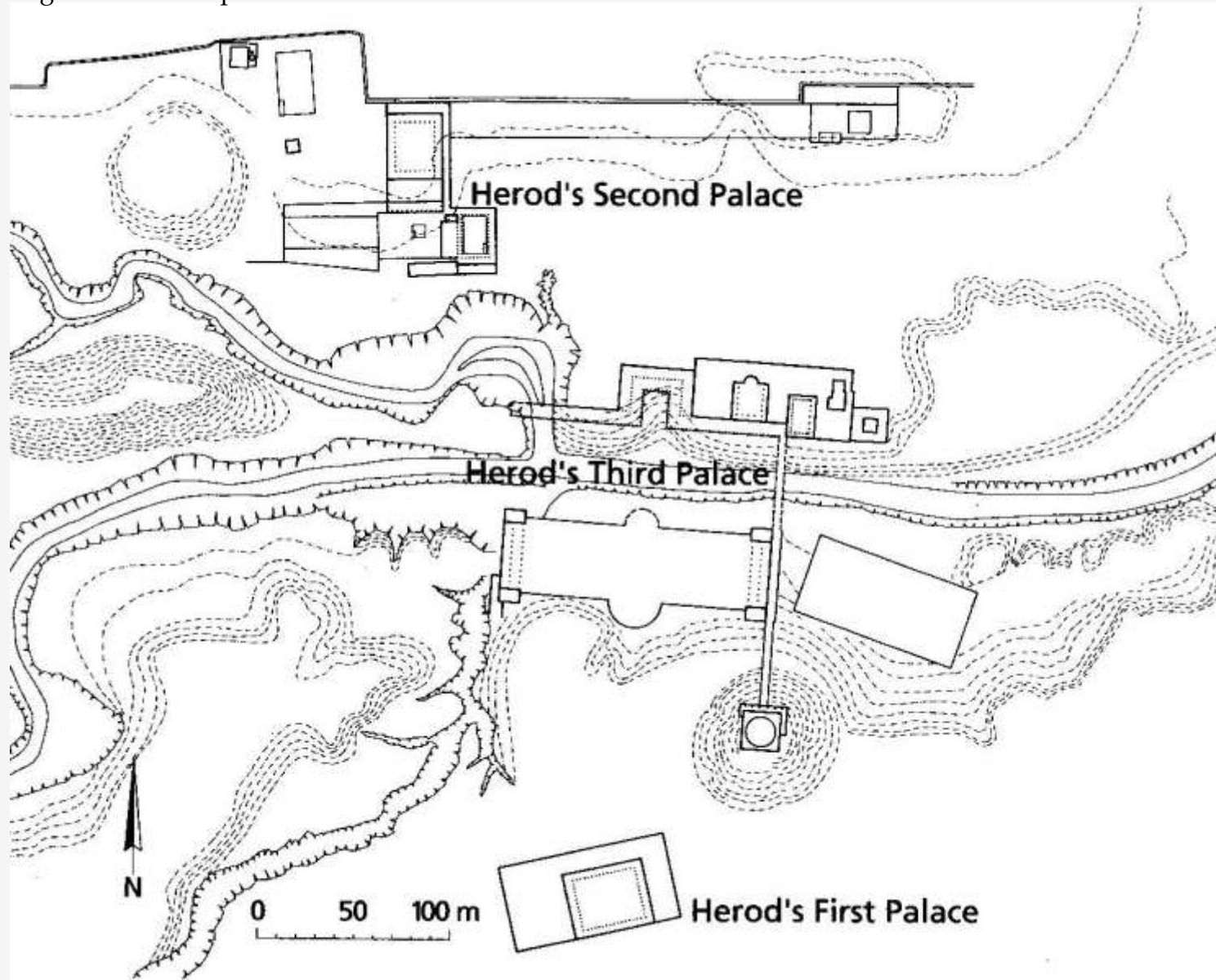
- Three phases (I: ca. 35 BCE; II; 30/25 BCE; III: 20-15 BCE)
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Neighbouring regions

Winter palaces in Jericho

- Replacing Hasmonaean palaces



Neighbouring regions

Winter palaces in Jericho

- “Landscaping” – using natural features in the palace design

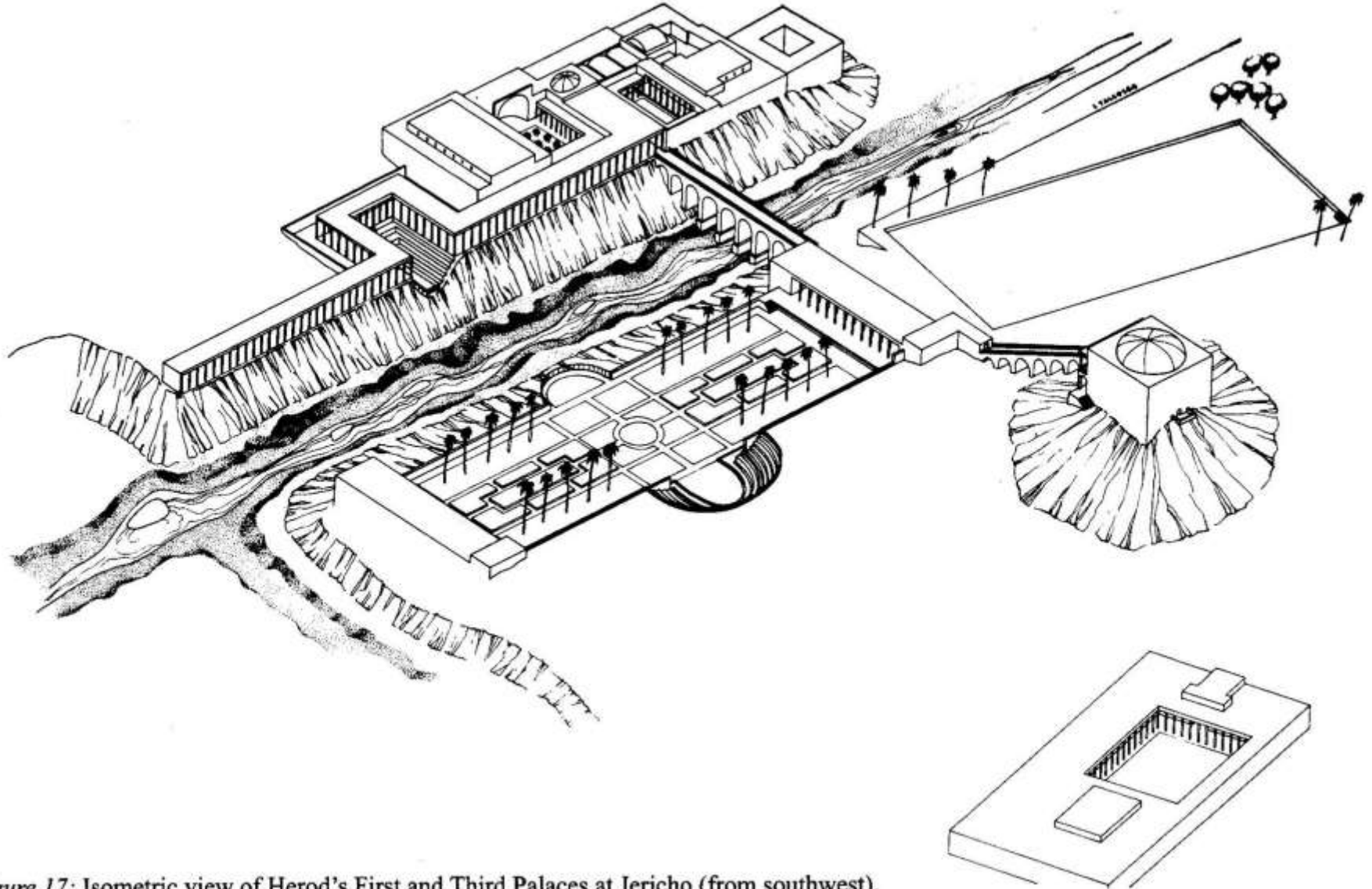
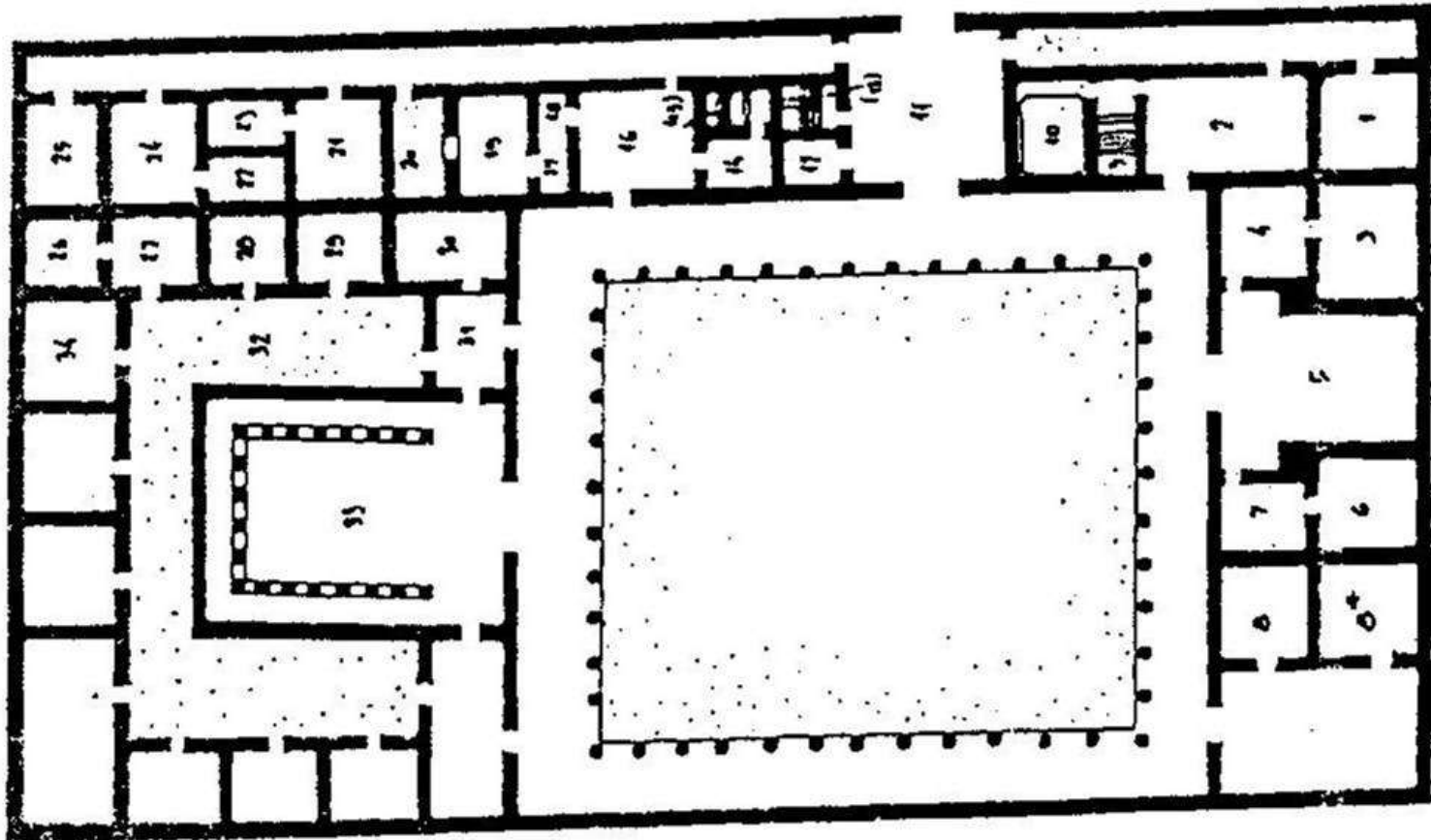


Figure 17: Isometric view of Herod's First and Third Palaces at Jericho (from southwest).

Neighbouring regions

Winter palaces in Jericho

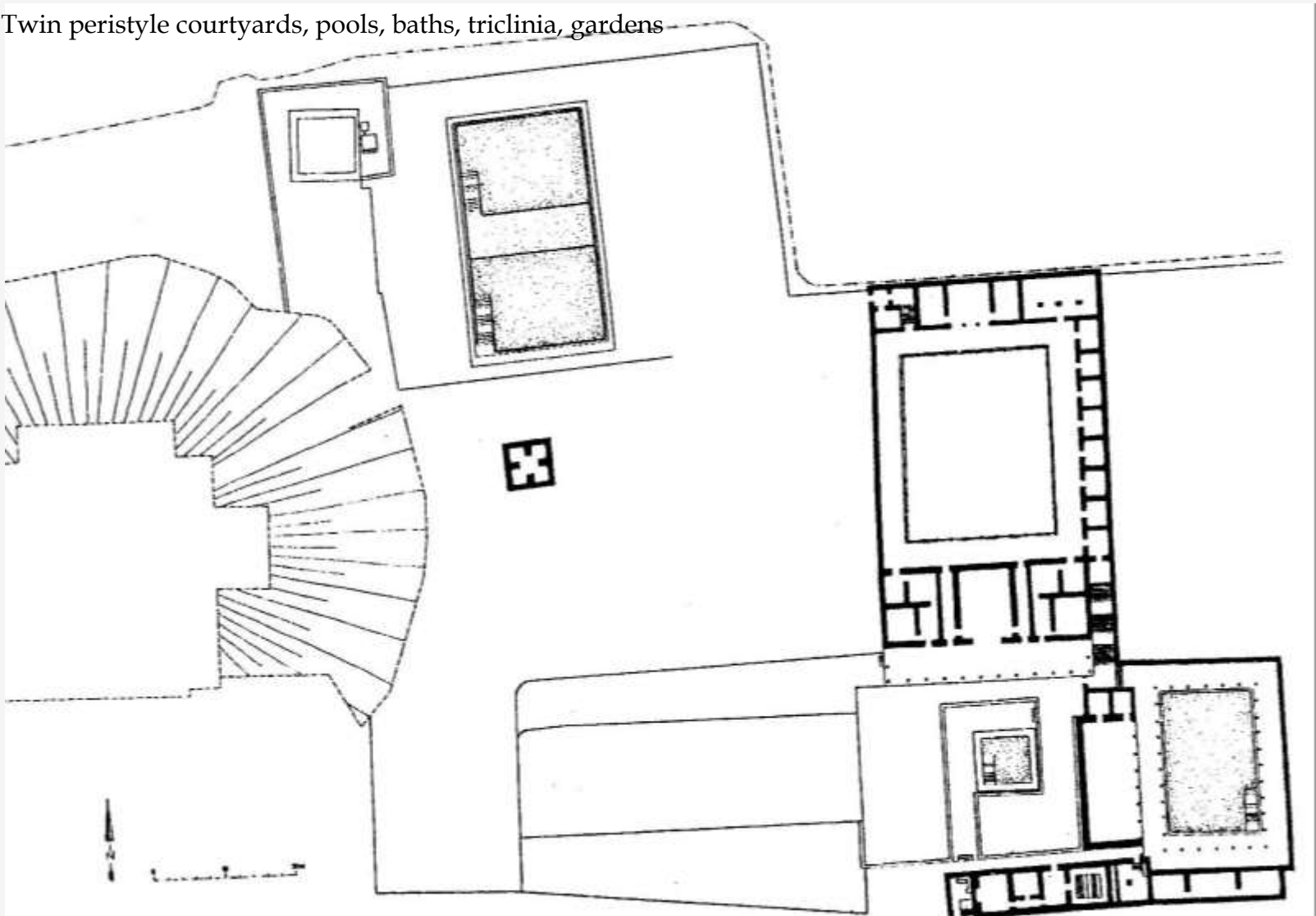
- First palace
- Roman and "Judaean-Hellenistic" / "Greek-Jewish" bath
- Peristyle courtyard, two triclinia (*triclinium cum procoetone*)



Neighbouring regions

Winter palaces in Jericho

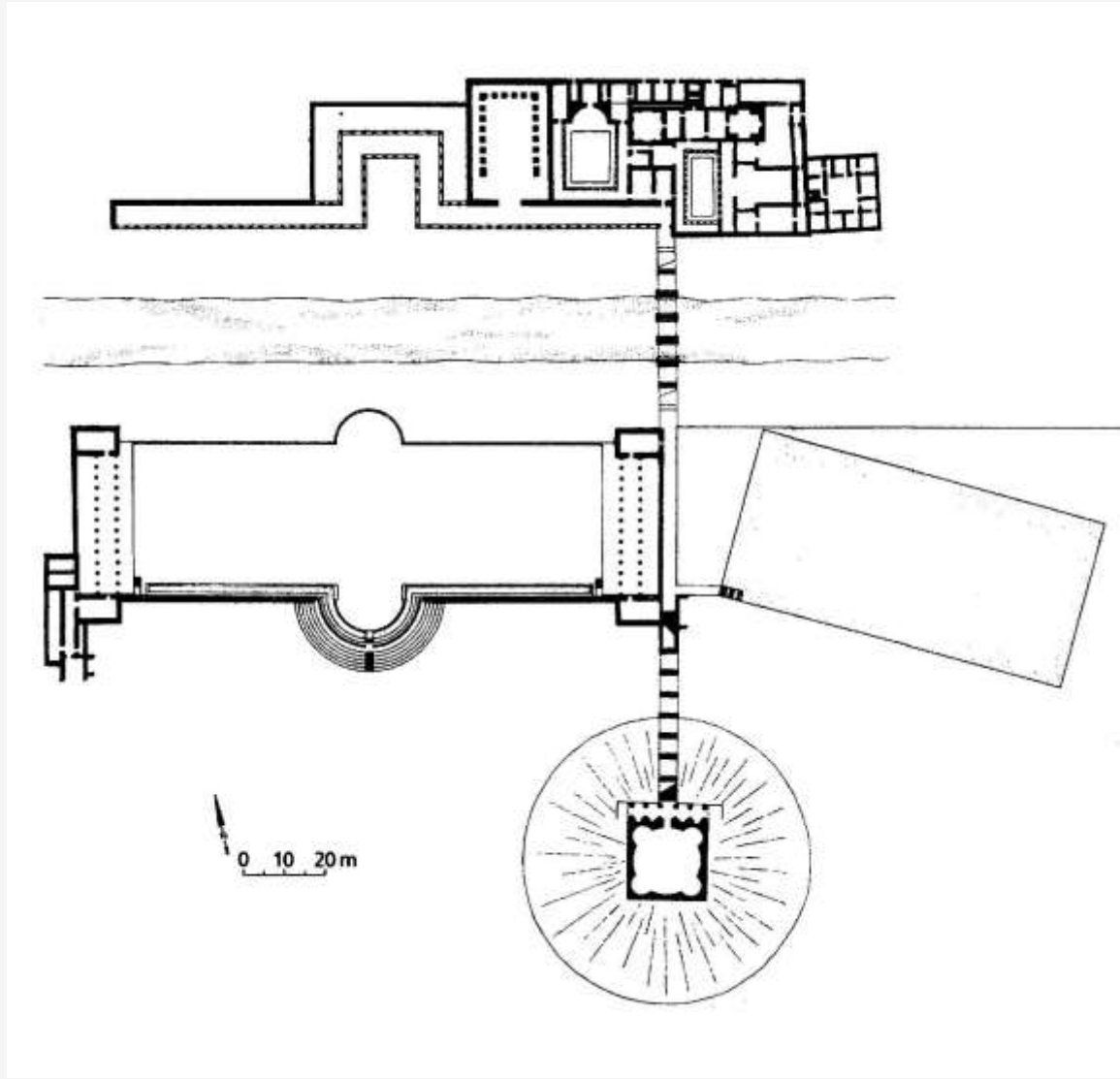
- Second palace - overlaying the second and third Hasmonaean palace
- Twin peristyle courtyards, pools, baths, triclinia, gardens



Neighbouring regions

Winter palaces in Jericho

- Third palace, Roman baths, gardens, monumental triclinia, audience halls
- Roman building methods



Neighbouring regions

Winter palaces in Jericho

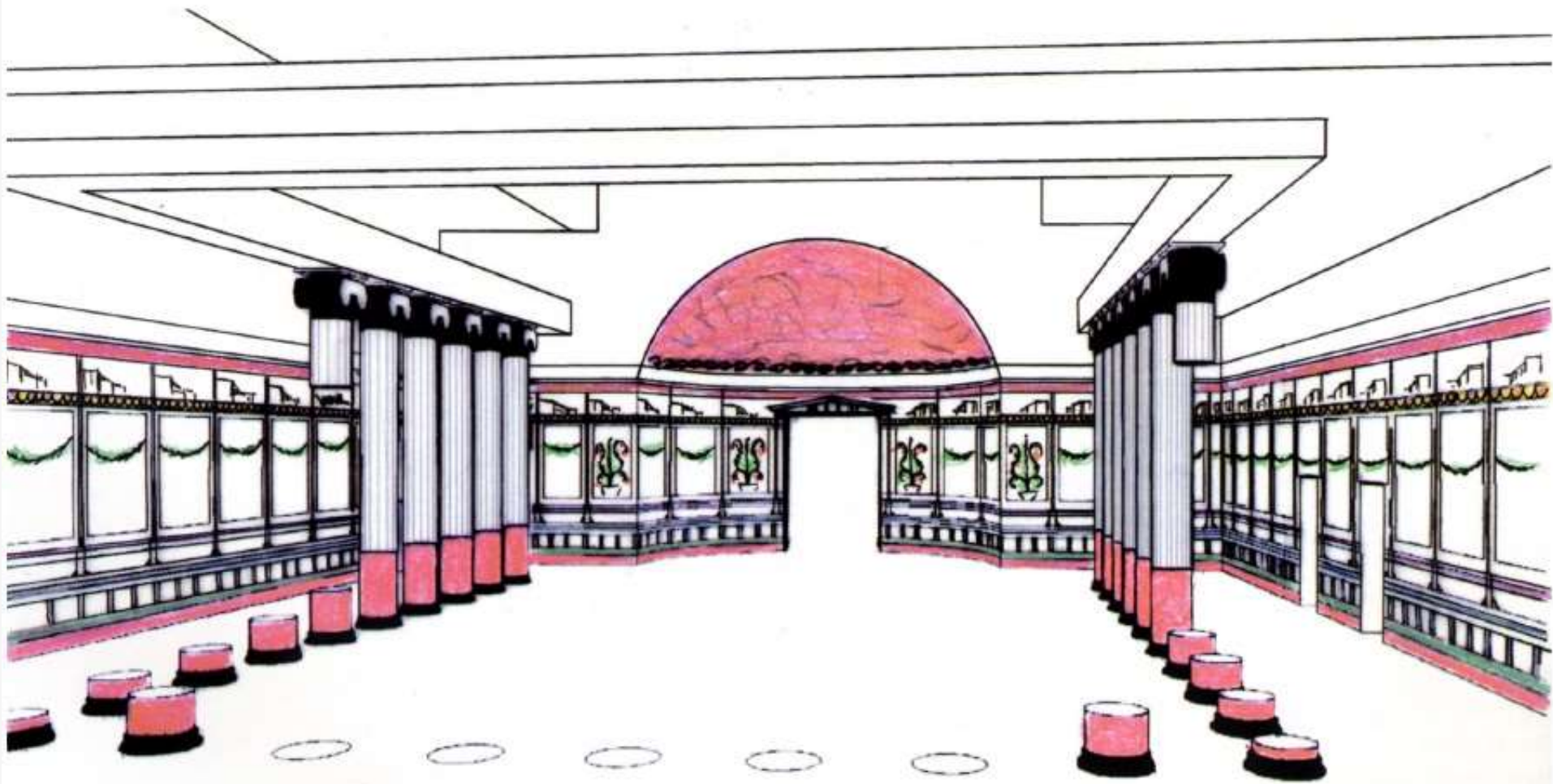
- *Sudarium* in the Roman style bath
- Roman building methods – *opus incertum* (bricks set in concrete)



Neighbouring regions

Winter palaces in Jericho

- Third palace
- Audience hall with a “throne room” entered through semi-dome portal (made of concrete!)
- Combination of Eastern *iwan* architecture, Western architectural forms (peristyle courtyard) and decoration (Corinthian order, frescoes), and Roman building methods (concrete)



Neighbouring regions

Winter palaces in Jericho

- Third palace
- Third style fresco decoration



Iwan

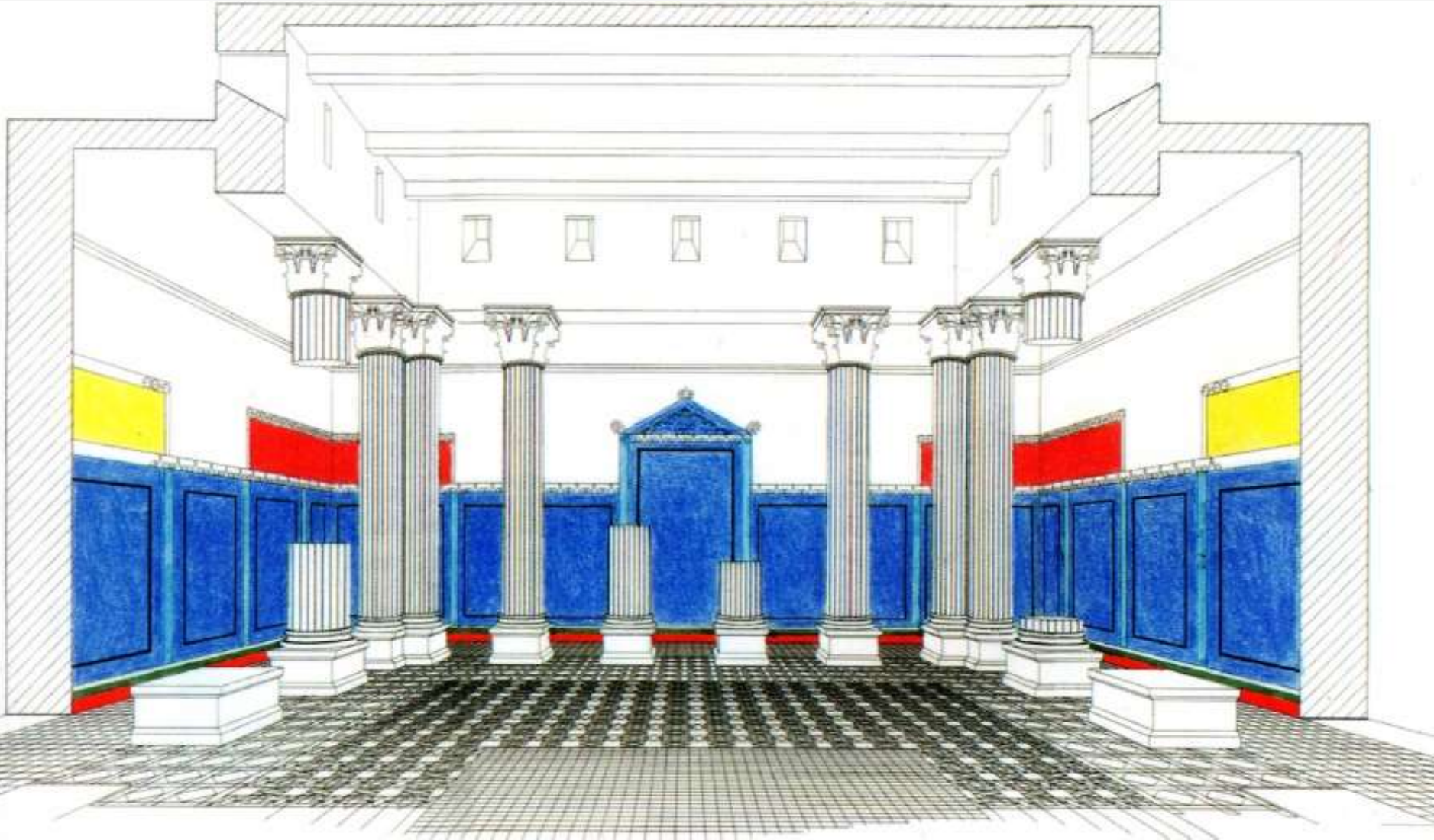
- el-ʿAzm palace, Damascus, 18th c.



Neighbouring regions

Winter palaces in Jericho

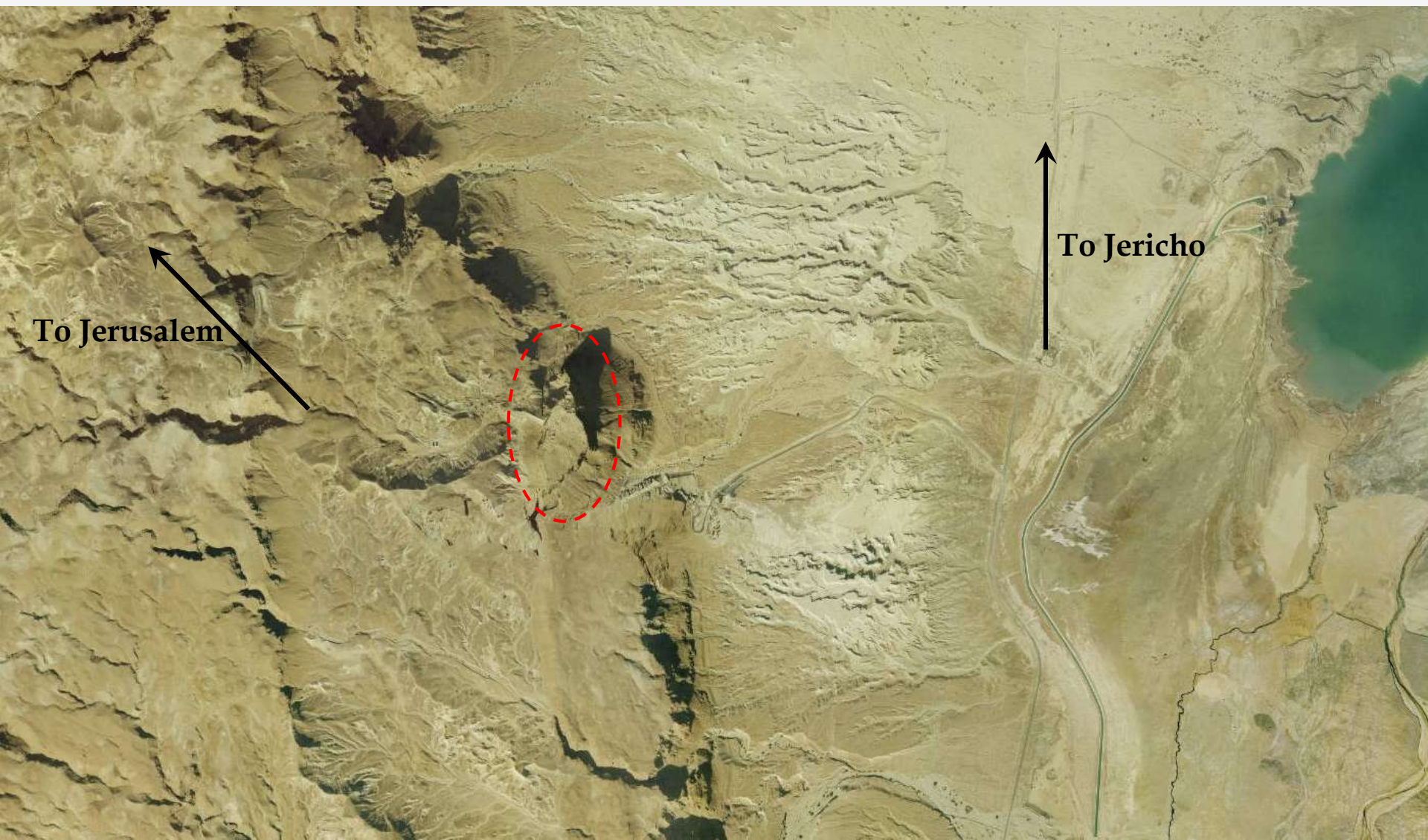
- Third palace
- *Corinthian oecus*, Second style fresco decoration



Neighbouring regions

Masada

- Fortified desert palace



Neighbouring regions

Masada

“There was **a rock, not small in circumference, and very high**. It was encompassed with valleys of such vast depth downward, that the eye could not reach their bottoms...**Upon this top of the hill, Jonathan the high priest first of all built a fortress, and called it Masada**: after which the rebuilding of this place employed the care of **king Herod** to a great degree; he also **built a wall round about the entire top** of the hill, seven furlongs long...there were also erected upon that wall thirty-eight towers, each of them fifty cubits high; out of which you might pass into lesser edifices, which were built on the inside, round the entire wall; for the king reserved the top of the hill, which was of a fat soil, and better mould than any valley for agriculture, that such as committed themselves to this fortress for their preservation might not even there be quite destitute of food, in case they should ever be in want of it from abroad. Moreover, **he built a palace therein at the western ascent; it was within and beneath the walls of the citadel, but inclined to its north side**...The furniture also of the edifices, and of the cloisters, and of the baths, was of great variety, and very costly; and these buildings were supported by pillars of single stones on every side; the walls and also the floors of the edifices were paved with stones of several colours. **He also had cut many and great pits, as reservoirs for water**...and after such a manner was this citadel fortified, both by nature and by the hands of men, in order to frustrate the attacks of enemies.”

BJ 7.280-294

Neighbouring regions

Masada

- Fortified desert palace

Phase I

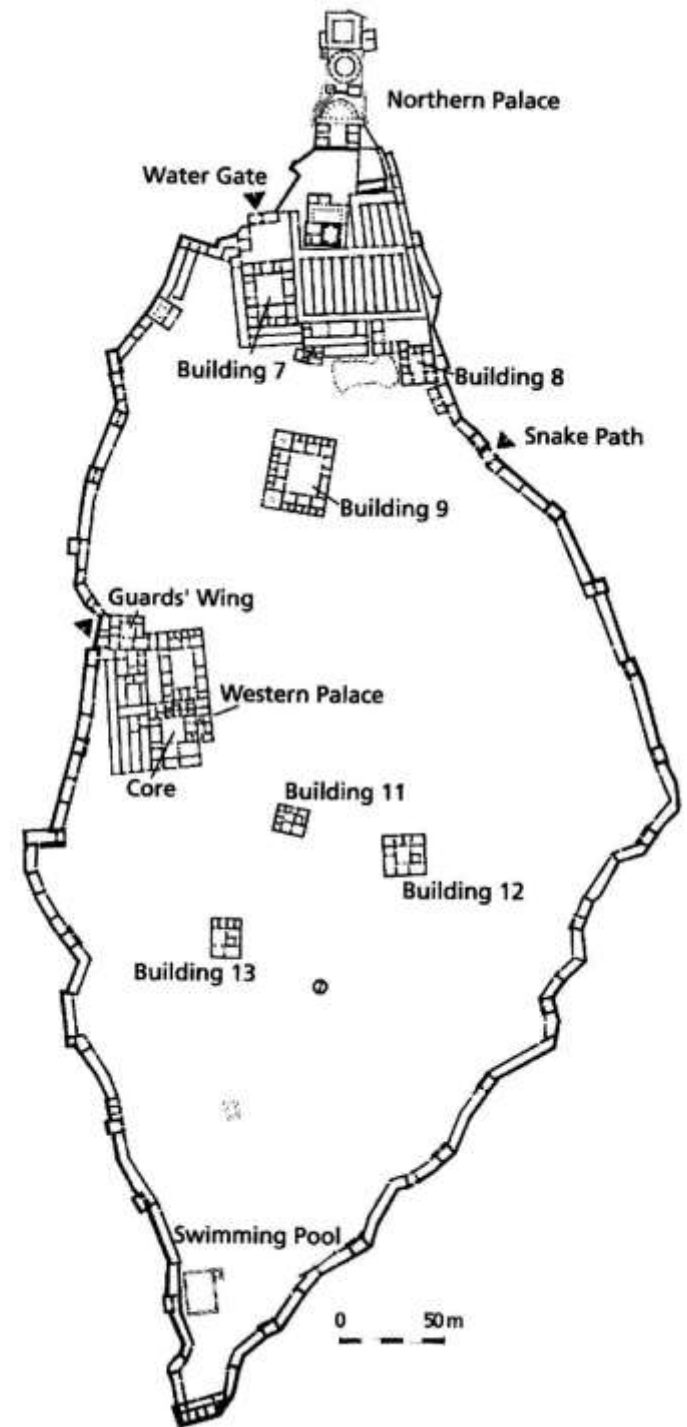
- Core of the western palace
- Buildings no. 7, 9, 11, 12, 13
- Columbaria, cisterns, small baths

Phase II

- Northern palace
- Expansion of Western palace
- NW water system

Phase III

- Casemate wall
- Last construction phases of the Northern and Western palaces



Neighbouring regions

Masada

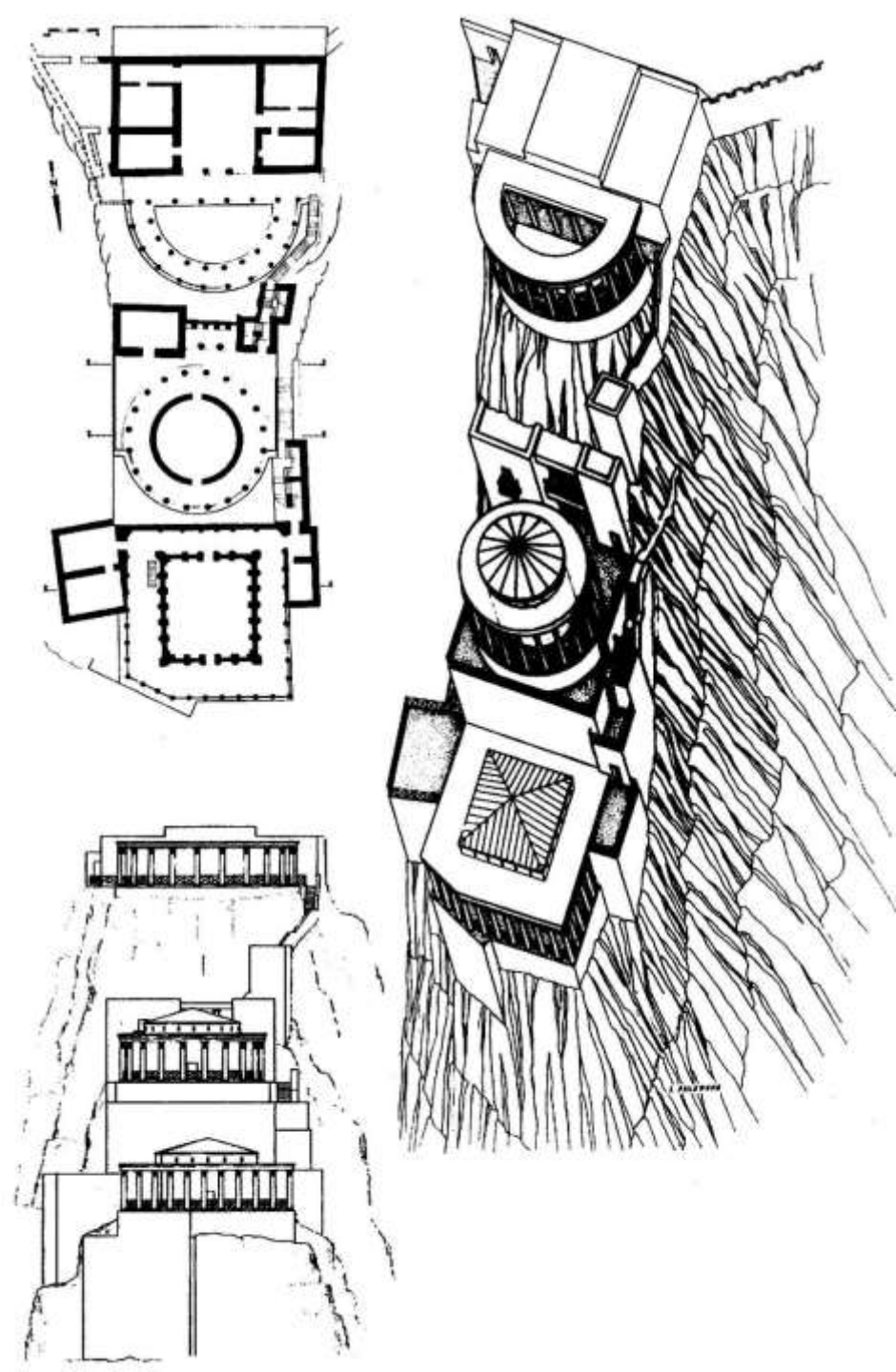
- Western palace – courtyard building, *distylos in antis*, Greek-Jewish baths – like Hasmonaean palaces



Neighbouring regions

Masada

- Northern palace - *triclinia* + baths
- Landscaping
- Semi-circular peristyle veranda/balcony
- Round tholos
- Rectangular pavillion with a covered *ambulatio* (walkway)



Neighbouring regions

Masada

- Engaged Corinthian half-columns



Neighbouring regions

Masada

- Fresco decoration – imitation of stonework



Neighbouring regions

Masada

- Fresco decoration – imitation of stonework



Neighbouring regions

Herodium

- A monument to himself – Herod as a hero-founder (city, palace, tomb)

“And in this very place where he overcame the Jews

(i.e. fleeing Jerusalem after Parthian invasion 40 BCE) it was that he some time afterward **build a most excellent palace, and a city round about it, and called it Herodium.**“

AJ 15.331-333



Neighbouring regions

Herodium

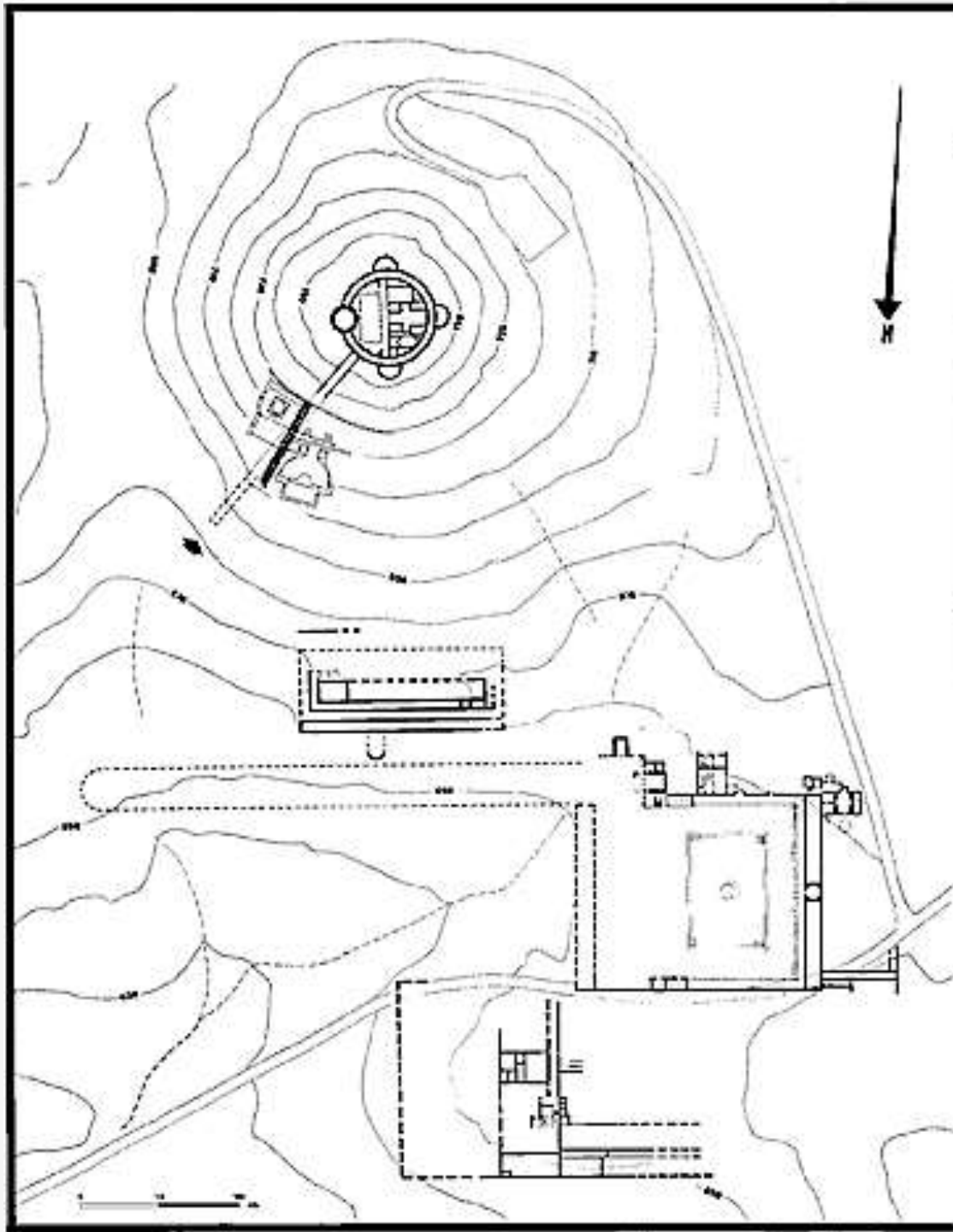
- Upper palace-fort
- Lower palace compound (“town”)

Upper Herodium

- Theater-like building
- Monumental tomb

Lower Herodium

- Pools, gardens, triclinia, service wing



Neighbouring regions

Herodium

Upper Herodium

- Artificially raised hill - landscaping

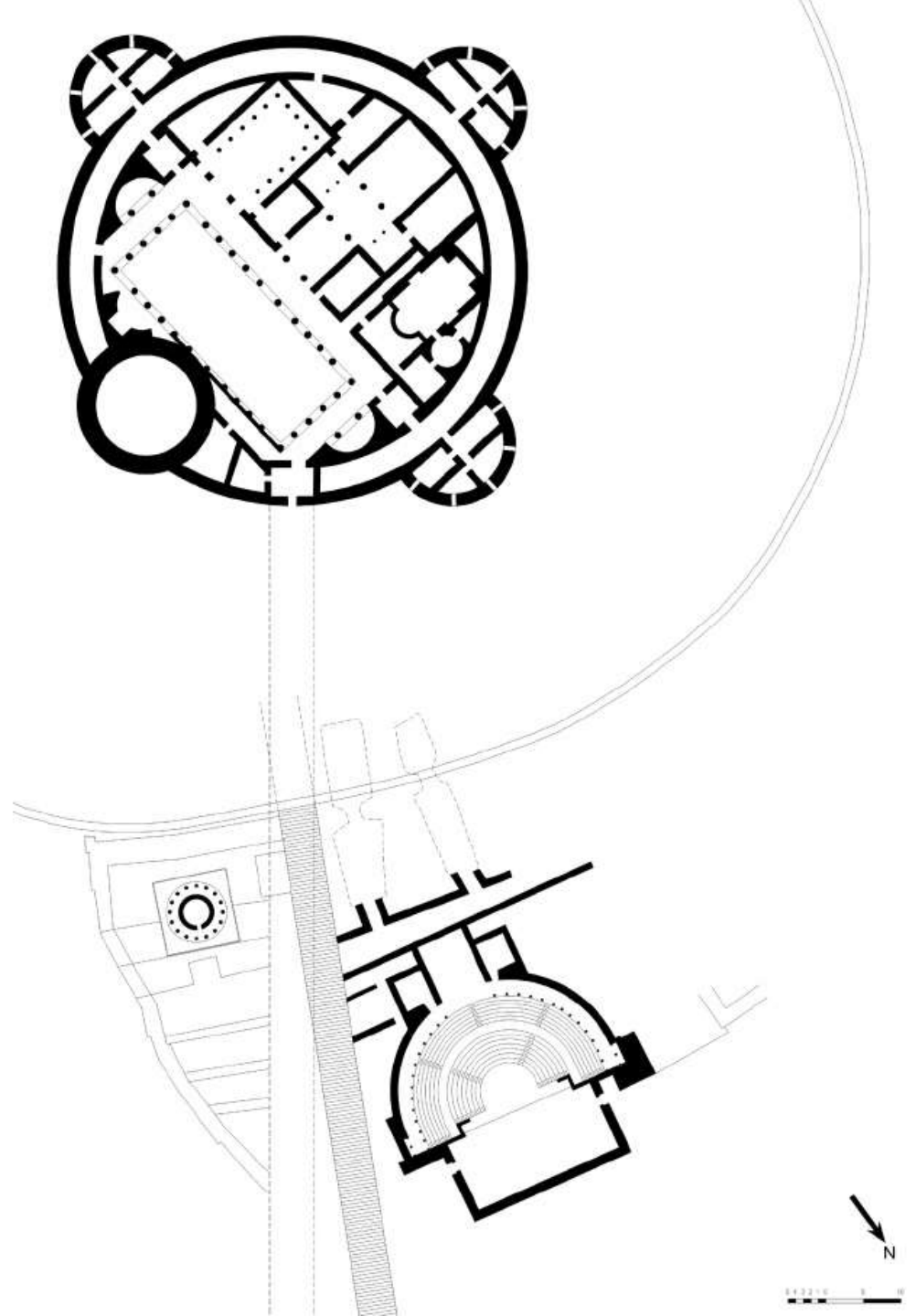


Neighbouring regions

Herodium

Upper Herodium

- Artificially raised hill - landscaping
- Palace fort - peristyle courtyard, triclinia, audience halls, Roman baths
- Theater - "royal box"



Neighbouring regions

Herodium

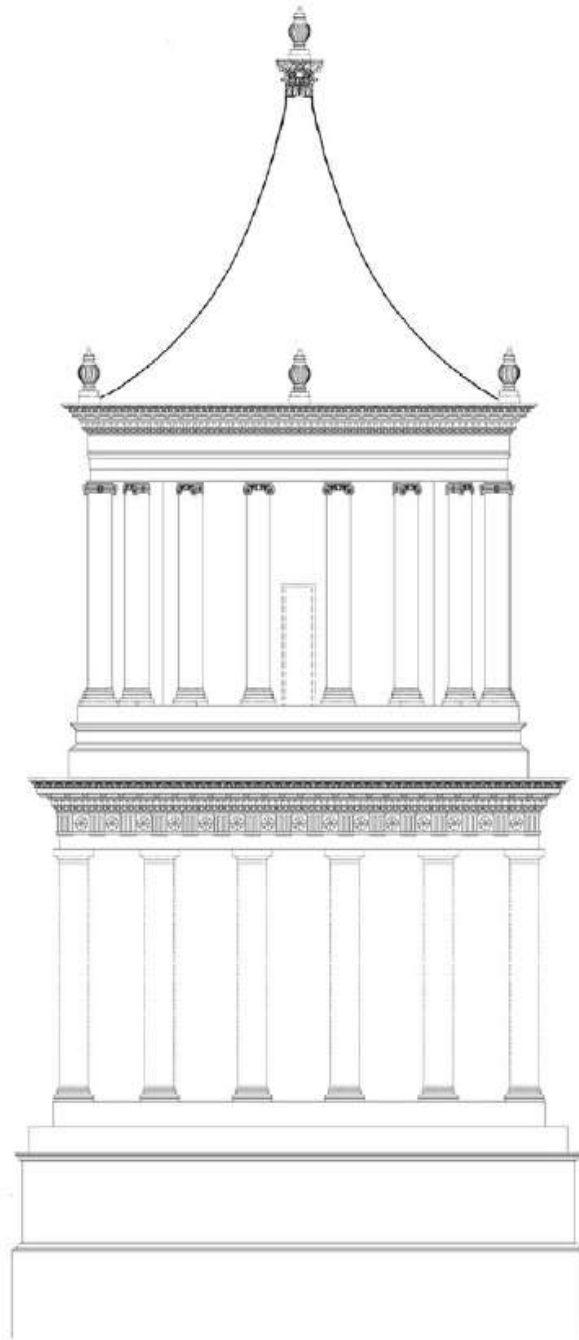
- “Royal box” – third style fresco decoration, stucco



Neighbouring

Herodium

- Mausoleum
- Lower floor Doric rectangular
- Upper floor Ionic tholos



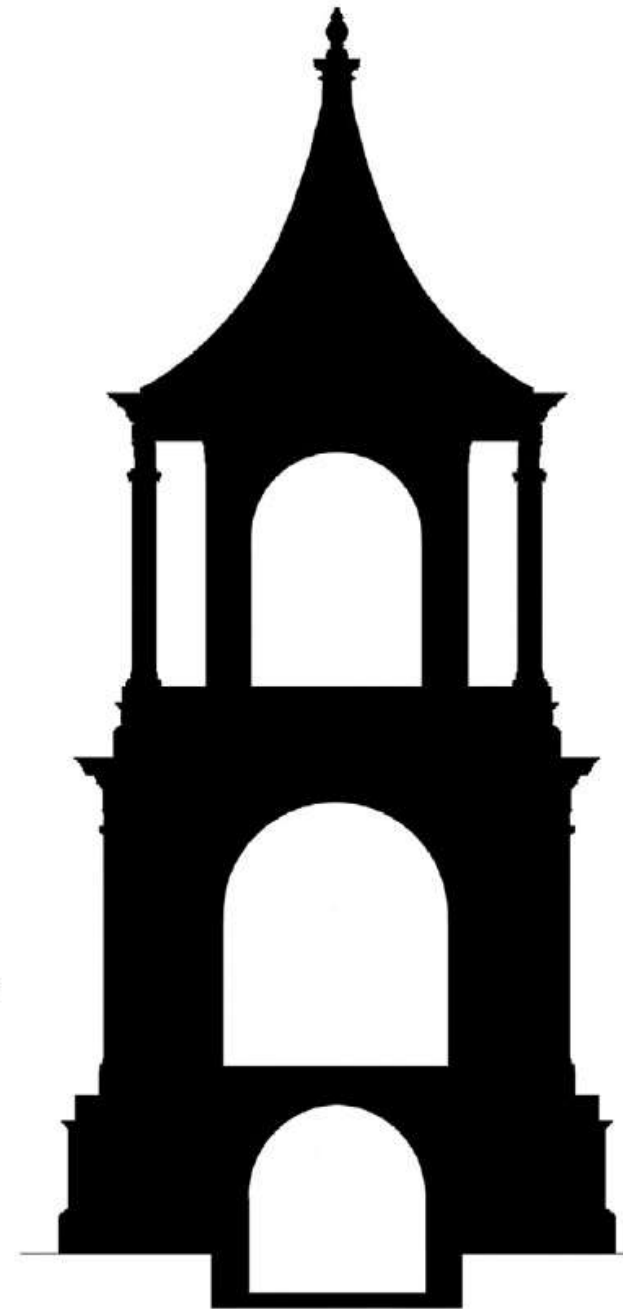
conical roof

round tholos

square middle storey

podium

0 2m



Neighbouring regions

Herodium

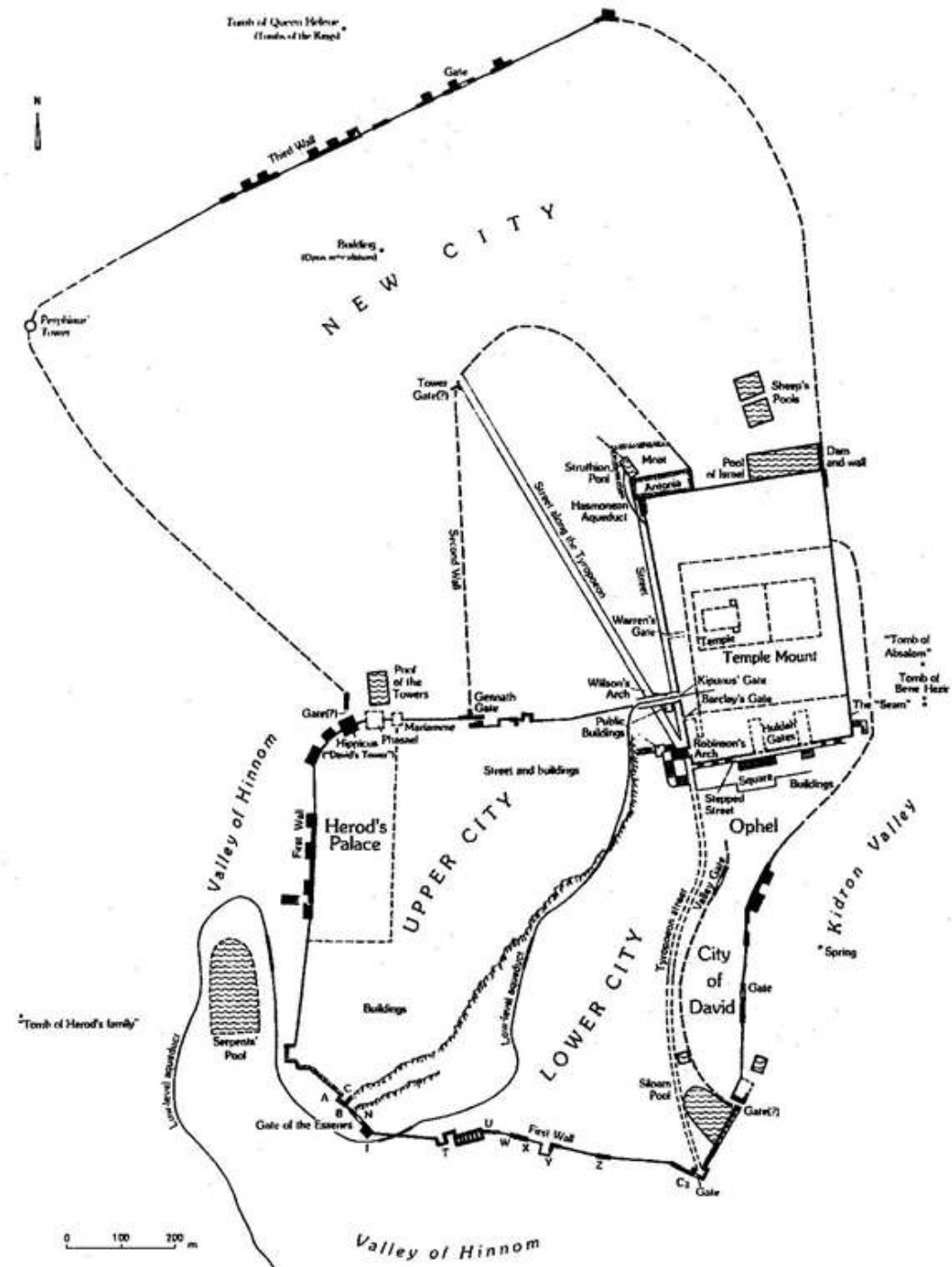
- Mausoleum



Neighbouring regions

Jerusalem

- Temple Mount
- Segments of fortifications
- Palace
- Quarter to the south and west of the Temple – new street plan
- Water facilities



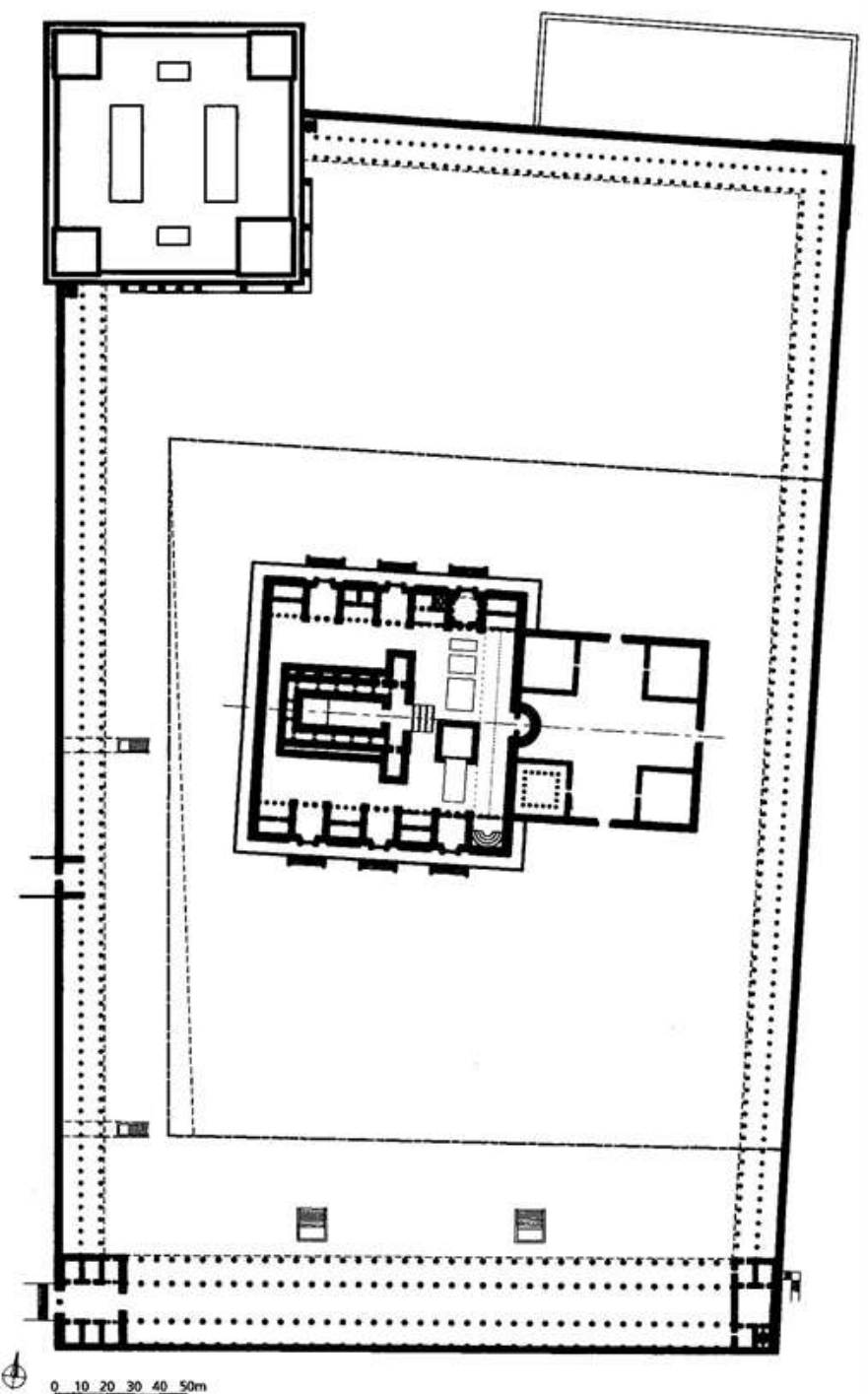
Neighbouring regions

Jerusalem

- Temple Mount

“So Herod took away the old foundations, and laid others, and erected the temple upon them, being in length a hundred cubits, and in height twenty additional cubits...Now the temple was built of stones that were white and strong, and each of their length was twenty-five cubits, their height was eight, and their breadth about twelve; and the whole structure, as also the structure of the **royal cloister** (*stoa basilike*), was on each side much lower, but the middle was much higher...He also **encompassed the entire temple with very large cloisters**, contriving them to be in a due proportion thereto; and he laid out larger sums of money upon them than had been done before him, till it seemed that no one else had so greatly adorned the temple as he had done. There was a large wall to both the cloisters, which wall was itself the most prodigious work that was ever heard of by man. The hill was a rocky ascent, that declined by degrees towards the east parts of the city, till it came to an elevated level. This hill it was which Solomon, who was the first of our kings, by Divine revelation, encompassed with a wall; it was of excellent workmanship upwards, and round the top of it. He also built a wall below, beginning at the bottom, which was encompassed by a deep valley...”

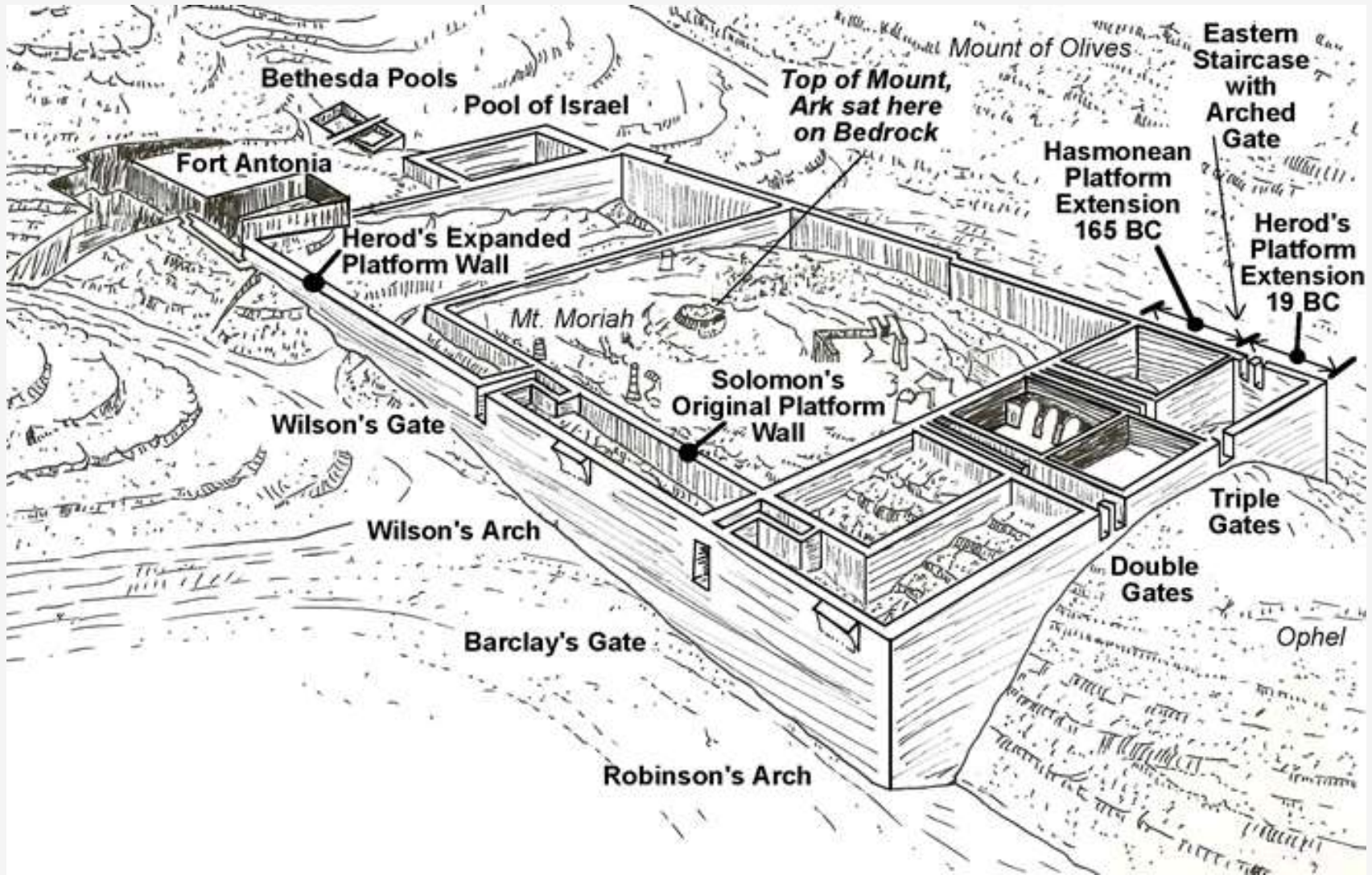
AJ 15.391-400



Neighbouring regions

Jerusalem

- Temple Mount
- Phases of the Temple Mount expansion



Neighbouring regions

Jerusalem

- Temple Mount
- The Seam - Hasmonaean masonry on the right, Herodian on the left



Neighbouring regions

Jerusalem

- Temple Mount
- Wilson's arch – bridge connecting western hill of Jerusalem with the Temple Mount



Neighbouring regions

Jerusalem

- Temple Mount

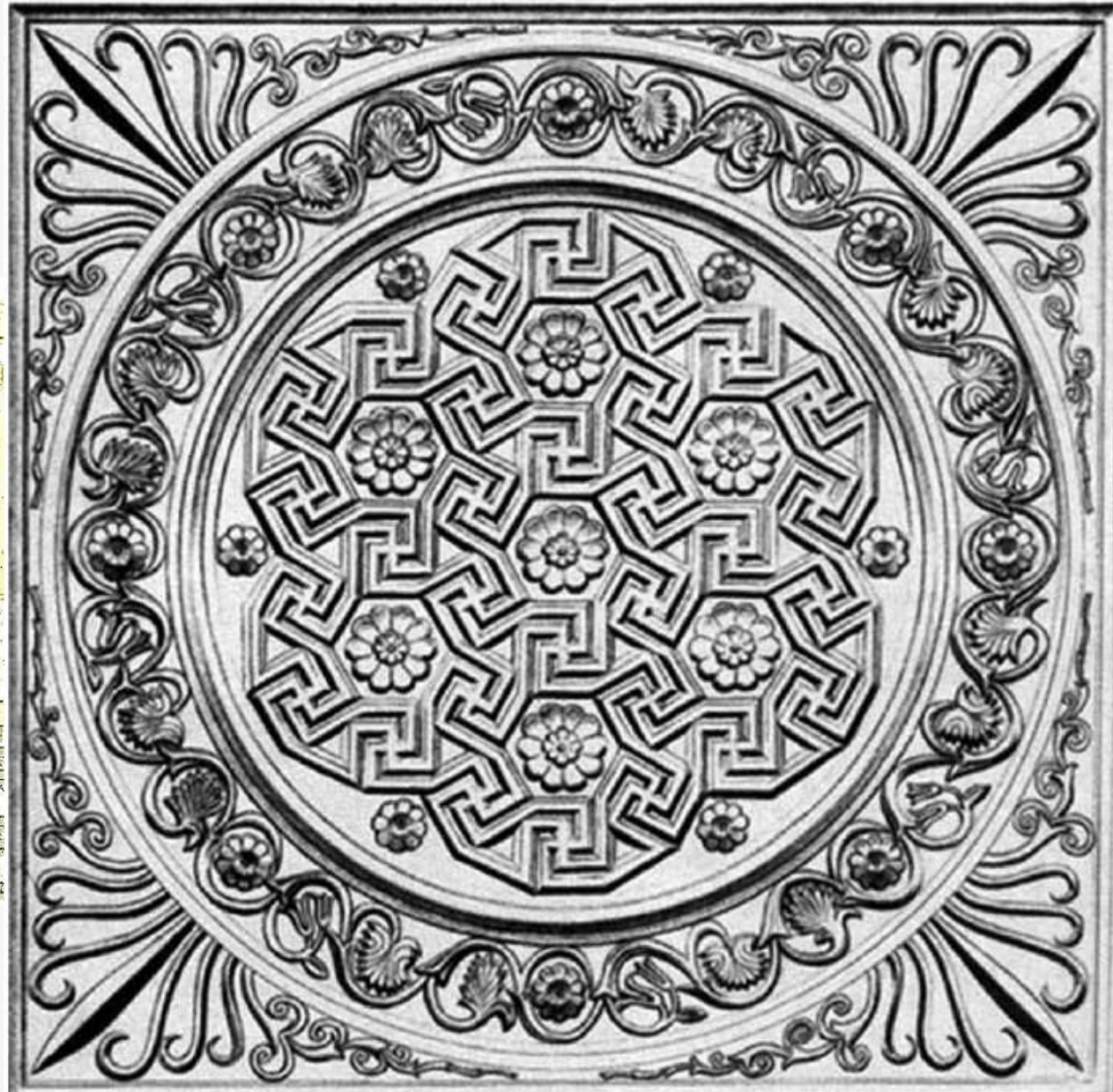
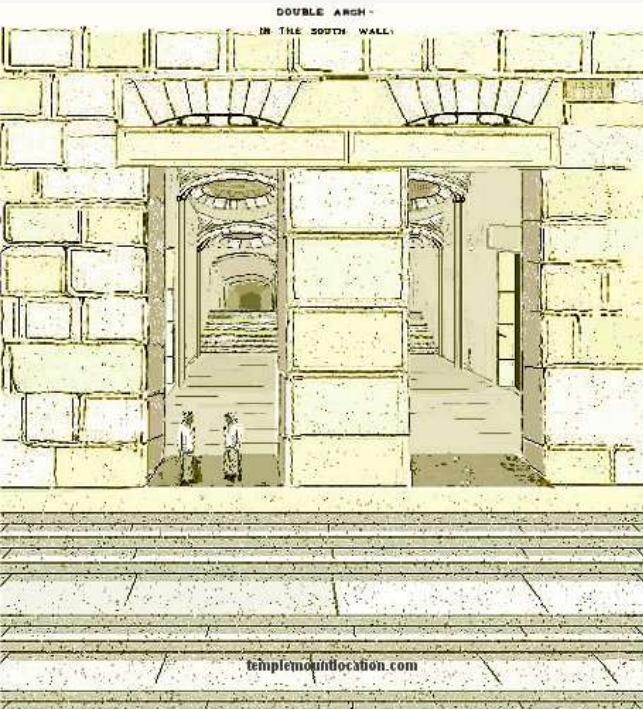
Double gate (with later Byzantine lintel) and original staircase leading to it



Neighbouring regions

Jerusalem

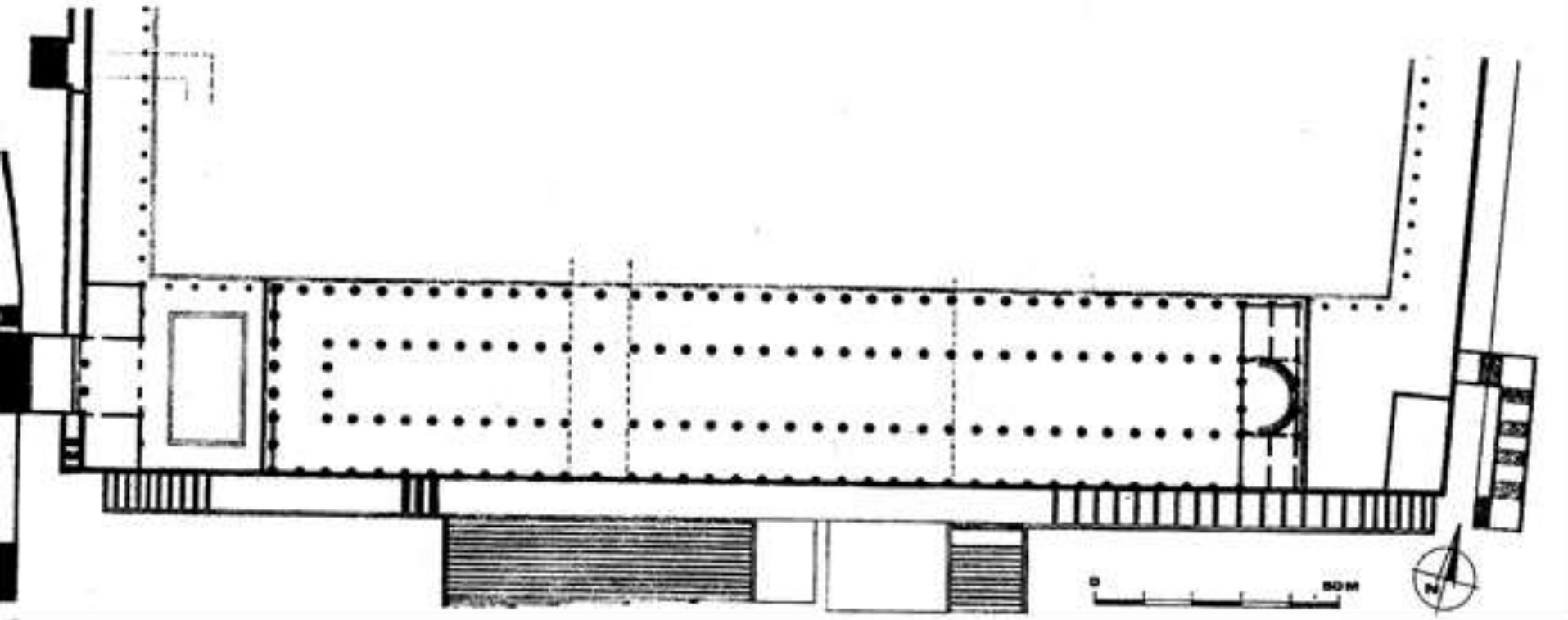
- Temple Mount
- Double gate passage ceiling decoration



Neighbouring regions

Jerusalem

- *Stoa basilike/basilica*



Neighbouring regions

Jerusalem

- *Stoa basilike/basilica*

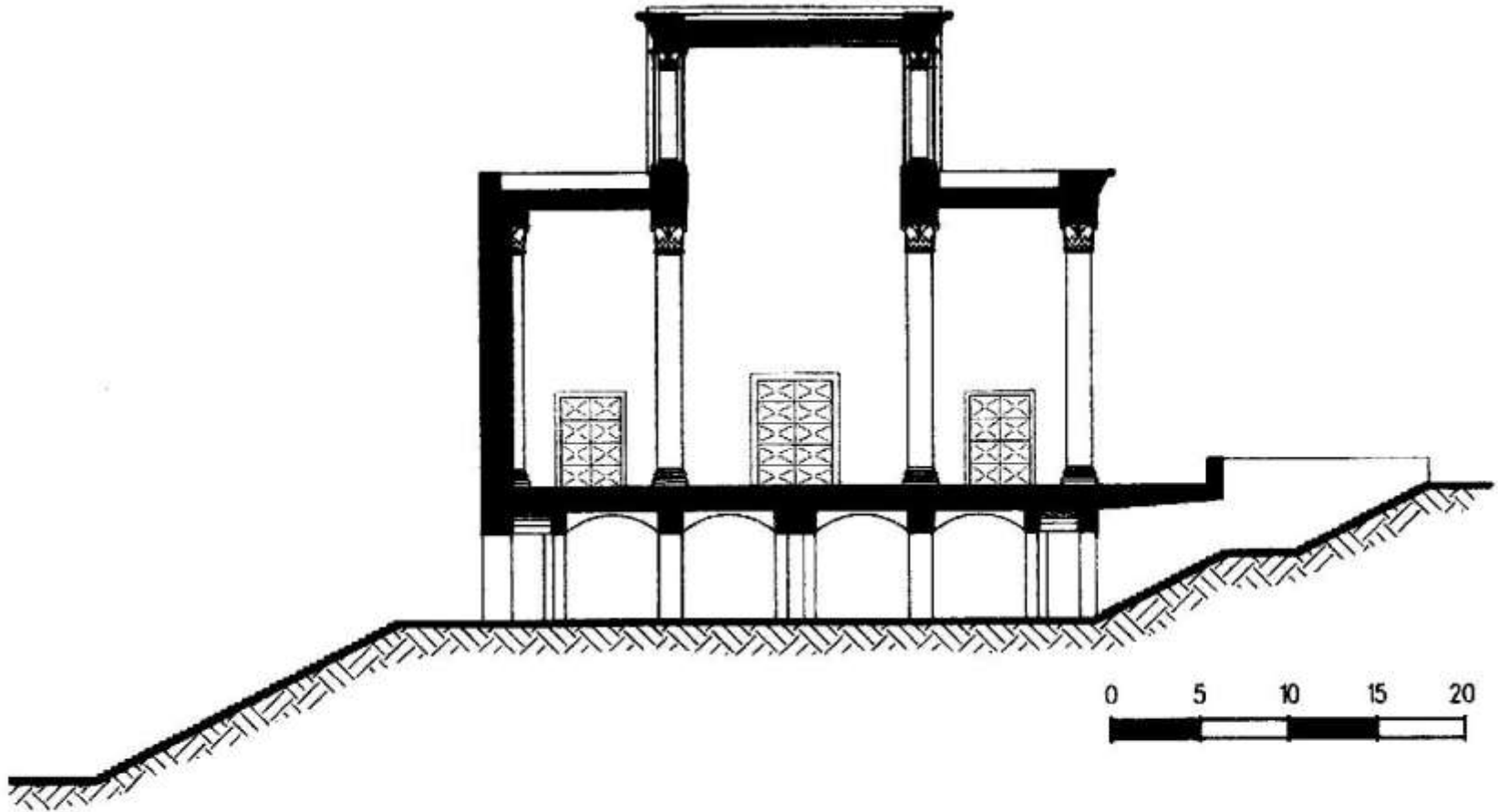
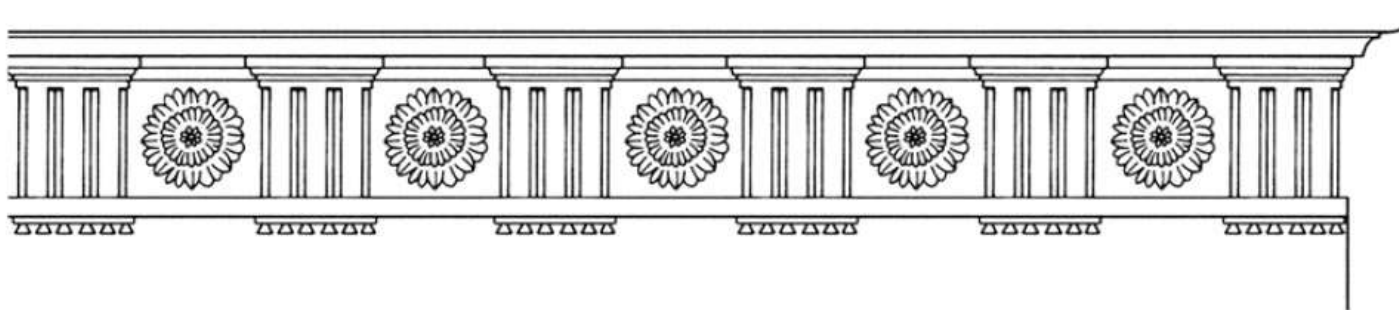


Figure 38: Reconstructed section of the stoa basilica.

Neighbouring regions

Jerusalem

- *Stoa basileia/basilica*
- Corinthian capitals, doric frieze, attic bases



Brief summary

Hellenistic foundations and other cities

- Revival of urban life, *polis* political organization, and growth of settlement
- Cities adapt Hippodamian grid layout (cardo-decumanus, insulae)
- Large public structures are limited mostly to temples (handful of cities can afford more building projects in this period)
- Few cities are fortified before the Great Revolt
- Increasing building activity since the second half of the 1st c. CE

Herod and Herodians

- Large and complex building project (including whole cities) are undertaken only by kings
- Continuing blending of local (Eastern) with Greek and Roman architecture and decoration (temple, domestic, palatial)
 - creation of particular local style
- Herod introduces Roman construction methods
- Herod's lasting influence on architectural decoration – introduction of Roman style decoration (architectural, fresco, stucco)

- Increasing use of Corinthian and Ionic order, Doric frieze with decorated metopes
- Combination of orders
- Roman construction methods did not take hold until late 1st/early 2nd c. CE – Herodian period is exceptional in all the Levant!
- Early adoption of *basilica*

Brief summary

Re-establishment of cities, urban growth and adoption of Roman architectural forms and decoration shows

1. Attractivity of urban forms as preferred political organization – local autonomy under Roman suzerainty
2. Increasing integration into the Mediterranean (Roman) political, cultural and economic world

Herod is acting as a:

1. Jewish king – reconstruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, using inherited Hasmonaean coin types, avoiding images of living creatures in the public
2. Hellenistic king – bestowing benefactions on various cities, constructing new cities, monumental palaces and tombs fitting Hellenistic king
3. Roman aristocrat, client to the Emperor – adopting Roman fashion, construction methods, honouring his patron Augustus (temples, statues, games, names of foundations)