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The Civil Basilica: urban context, design, and significance

Philip Stinson

Located in the heart of the town (see fig. 9 on p. 15 above), the civil basilica at Aphrodisias interests art historians because of its remarkable sculptural decoration, and historians because of the Diocletianic edicts inscribed across its N façade in the early 4th c. A.D.¹ Less attention has been paid to the building itself. Constructed in the late 1st c. A.D., it is one of the best preserved examples of its type in the Roman empire.² Much of the surrounding town center has been recovered through excavation, which provides the opportunity to evaluate the basilica both as an independent monument and as a piece of the urban fabric. The basilica was significant as the town's first fully-enclosed public space on a scale — twice as wide and tall as any earlier building here — that could compete with larger neighbors such as Ephesus.

The basilica seems to combine a Roman basilica with a Hellenistic stoa and meeting hall (figs. 1-2). At least 8 basilicas with similar characteristics are now known in Asia Minor, most built within the 2nd c. A.D.;³ they can be found in relatively isolated inland towns, such as Aphrodisias or Cremna in Pisidia, and in the largest cities on the Aegean coast, such as Ephesus and Smyrna. Distinguishing them from Roman basilicas in other regions of the empire are their extremely elongated floor plans and the broad rectangular halls at one or both short ends

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- 1 For the Diocletianic edicts, see J. Reynolds, "The regulations of Diocletian," in Roueché, *ALA* 252-318. On the basilica reliefs, B. Yıldırım, "Identities and empire: local mythology and the self-representation of Aphrodisias," in B. Borg (ed.), *Paideia: the world of the Second Sophistic* (New York 2004) 23-52; B. Yıldırım, *The reliefs from the Roman civil basilica at Aphrodisias in Caria* (Ph.D. diss., New York Univ. 2001).
 - 2 Other notably well-preserved basilicas include those at Pompeii and Lepcis Magna. For important discussions of other basilical halls in the Roman East, see J. B. Ward-Perkins and M. Ballance, "The Caesareum at Cyrene and the basilica at Cremna," *PBSR* 26 (1958) 137-94; W. Alzinger, *Augusteische Architektur in Ephesos* (Vienna 1974) 26-37; J. J. Coulton, *The architectural development of the Greek stoa* (Cambridge 1976) 182-83; J. Balty, *Curia ordinis. Recherches d'architecture et d'urbanisme antiques sur les curies provinciales du monde romain* (Brussels 1983) 286-92; P. Gros, *L'architecture romaine: du début du IIIe siècle av. J.-C. à la fin du Haut-Empire* (Paris 1996) 245-60; P. Gros, A. Corso and E. Romano, *Vitruvio De Architectura I* (Turin 1997) 627 ff. For a re-assessment of the origins of the western Roman basilica, see K. Welch, "A new view of the origins of the basilica: the Atrium Regium, Graecostasis, and Roman diplomacy," *JRA* 16 (2003) 5-33.
 - 3 In chronological order: Ephesus I: Alzinger (supra n.2) 26-37, 49-51; E. Fossel-Peschl, *Die Basilika am Staatsmarkt in Ephesos* (Graz 1982); H. von Hesberg, "Die Basilika von Ephesos — die kulturelle Kompetenz der neuen Stifter," in C. Berns et al. (edd.), *Patris und Imperium* (Leuven 2002) 149-58. Aphrodisias: see n.4. Cremna: S. Mitchell, *Cremna in Pisidia* (London 1995) 56-69. Magnesia: O. Bingöl, *Magnesia ad Maeandrum* (Ankara 1998) 64-71. Hierapolis: F. D'Andria, *Hierapolis in Phrygien (Pamukkale): Ein archäologischer Führer* (Rome 2003) 98-109; id., "Hierapolis of Phrygia: its evolution in Hellenistic and Roman times," in Parrish, *Urbanism* 104-8; D. De Bernardi Ferrero, "Architettura e decorazione di età flavia a Hierapolis di Frigia," in id. (ed.), *Saggi in onore di Paolo Verzone. Hierapolis scavi e ricerche IV* (Rome 2002) 156-60. Smyrna: R. Naumann and S. Kantar, "Die Agora von Smyrna," in *Kleinasiens und Byzanz* (Berlin 1950) 69-114; Gros (supra n.2) 244-48; J. B. Ward-Perkins, *Roman imperial architecture* (New Haven, CT 1981) 287-88; see also the recent excavation reports in *Anatolia Antiqua*. Ephesus II: S. Karwiese, *Erster vorläufiger Gesamtbericht über die Wiederaufnahme der archäologischen Untersuchung der Marienkirche in Ephesos* (DenkschrWien 200; 1989) 9-27; id., "The church of Mary and the temple of Hadrian Olympios," in H. Koester (ed.), *Ephesos metropolis of Asia: an interdisciplinary approach to its archaeology, religion, and culture* (= *HThS* 41 [1995]) 311-12. Xanthos: L. Cavalier, *Architecture romaine d'Asie Mineure. Les monuments de Xanthos et leur ornementation* (Bordeaux 2005) 67-87, and excavation reports in *Anatolia Antiqua*. Aspendos: K. G. Lanckoronski, *Städte Pamphyliens und Pisidiens I* (Vienna 1890) 85-124; H. Lauter, "Die hellenistische Agora von Aspendos," *BjB* 170 (1970) 77-101. A structure at Nysa has recently been identified as a civil basilica, but it has not been verified by this author: V. Idil, *Nysa ve Akharaka. Nysa and Acharaca* (Istanbul 1999) 51-52, 118-19.

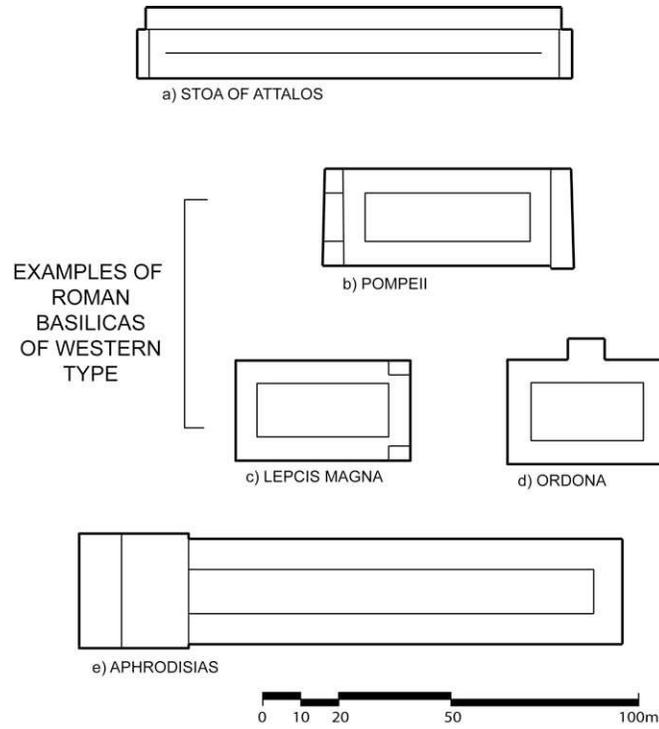


Fig. 1. a) Stoa of Attalos, Athens b) Basilica of Pompeii; c) Basilica of the Old Forum, Lepcis Magna; d) Basilica of Ortona; e) Basilica of Aphrodisias (P. Stinson).

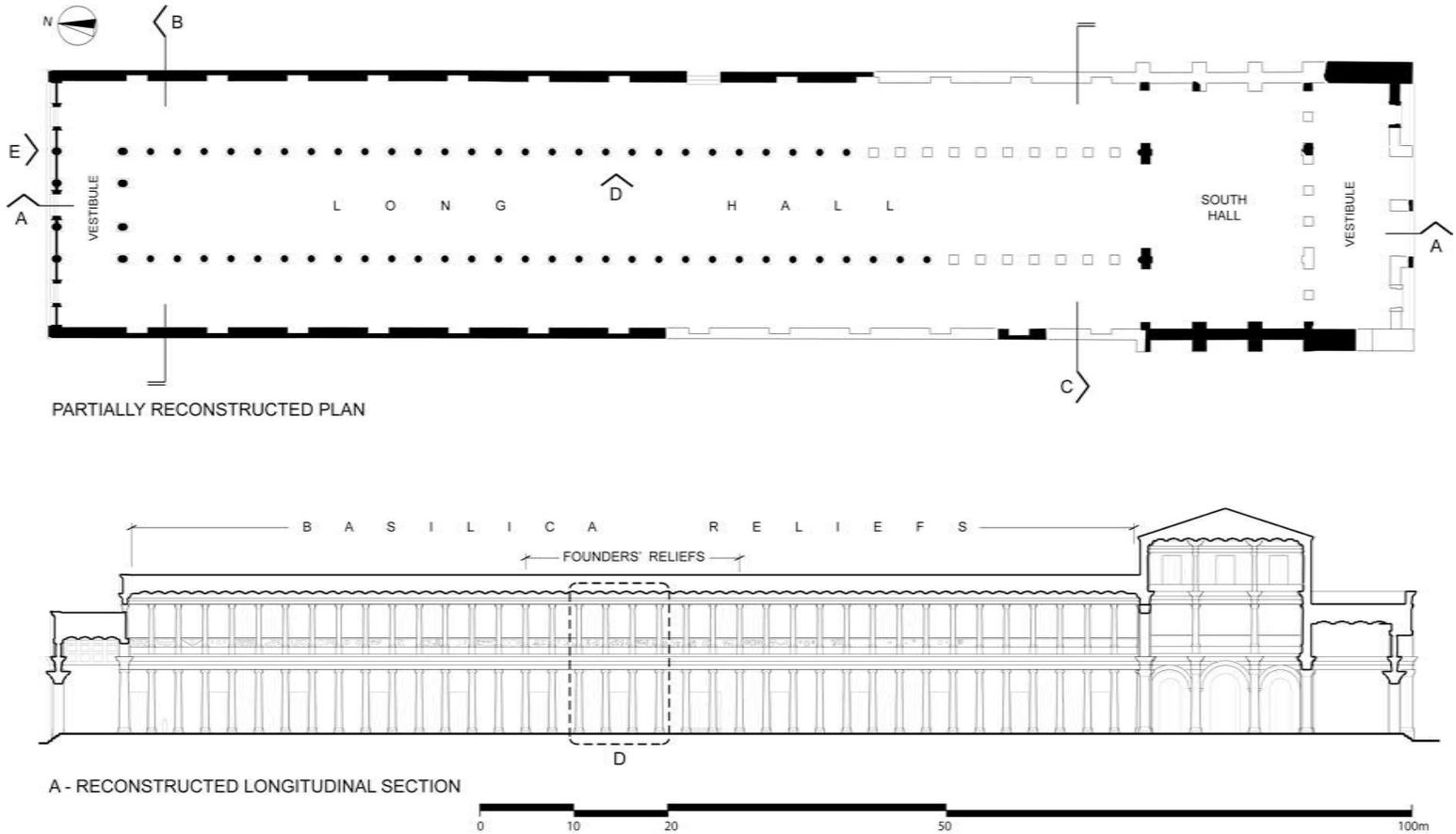


Fig. 2. Basilica of Aphrodisias: partially restored plan and longitudinal section (P. Stinson).

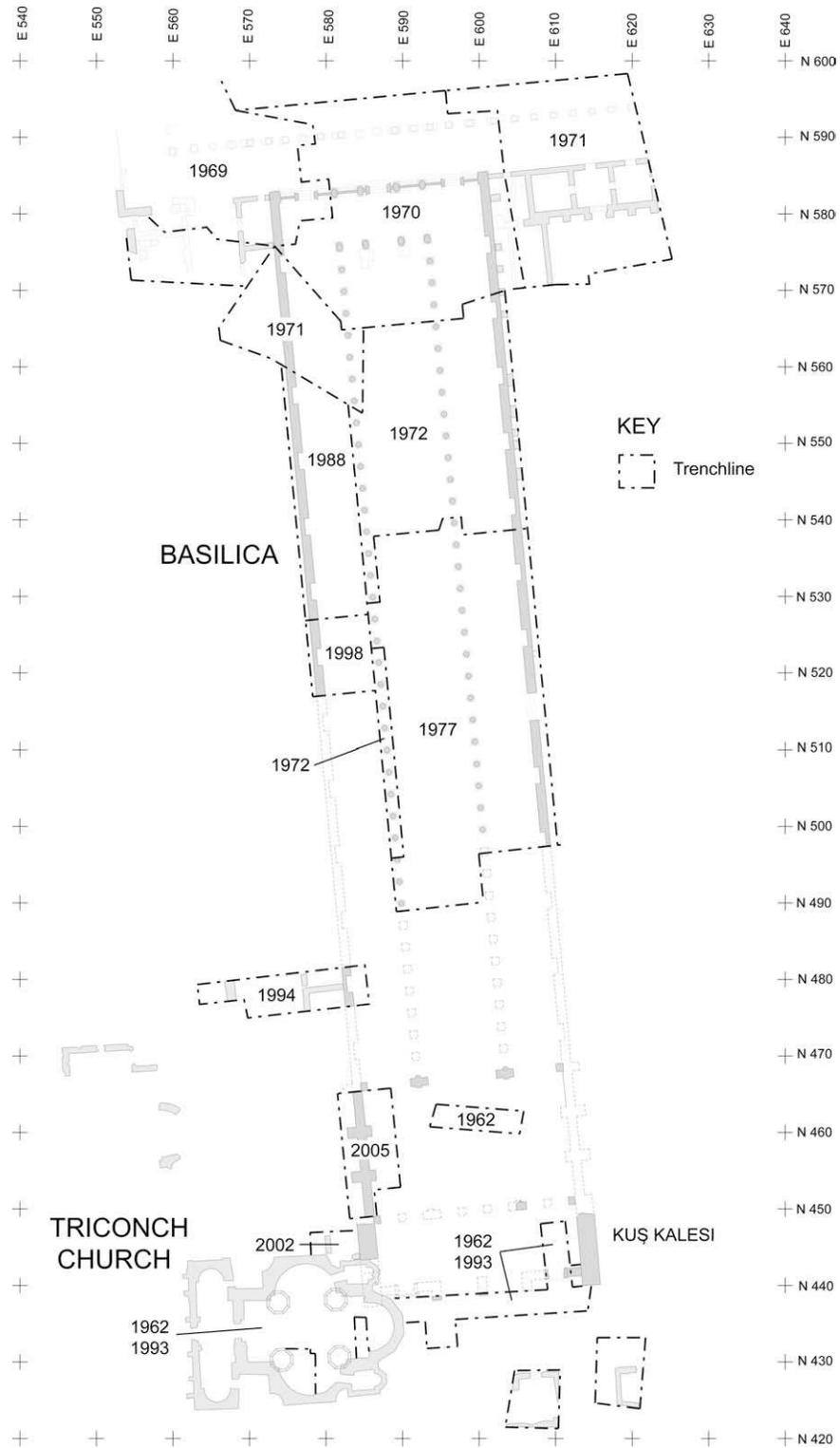


Fig. 3. Excavation plan (P. Stinson, B. Yıldırım).

(figs. 1 and 26). They may be seen as an eastern regional type of the Roman basilica. The Aphrodisian basilica's sequence of interior spaces also alluded to the connective architecture of colonnaded avenues characteristic of cities in the Roman East.

The basilica

Excavations in the basilica began in 1962 under K. T. Erim, although exploration was limited to the S end of the building (fig. 3). Initially, the basilica was identified as a temple, but



Fig. 4. Excavation of the long hall in 1977, looking south.

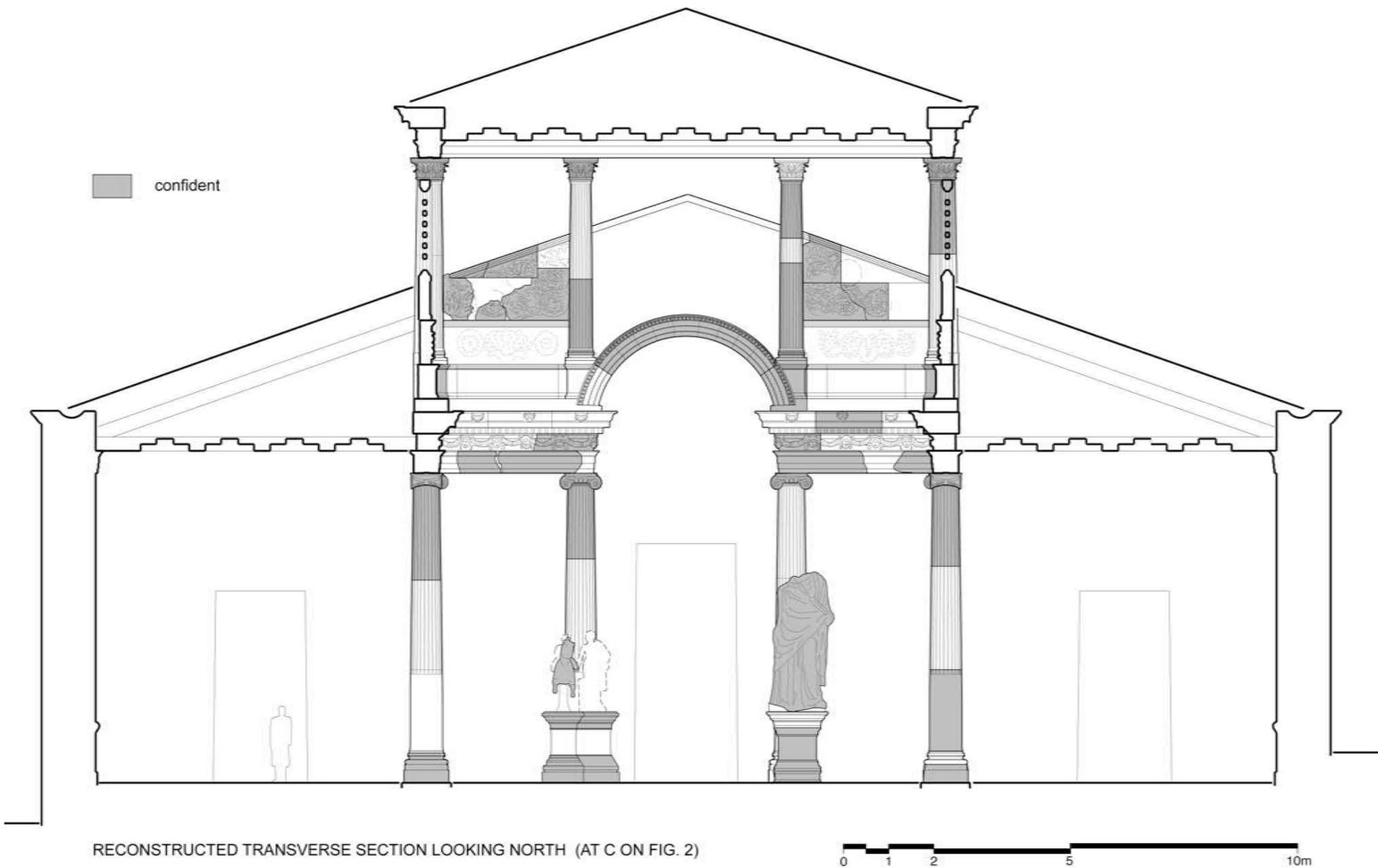


Fig. 5. Reconstructed transverse building section looking north towards South Agora, showing extant architectural blocks (P. Stinson).

after large-scale systematic excavation in the 1970s features of the plan showed it to be an elongated basilical hall. Two-thirds of the basilica were cleared during 5 excavation seasons (1969 to 1972 and 1977) (figs. 3-4) and further excavations occurred in 1988, 1993-94, 1998, 2002 and 2005.⁴ The S end of the basilica remains mostly unexcavated. The mortared rubble outer walls and marble piers of the building stand 1.0-7.5 m above ancient ground level. The excavated remains include over 1500 marble architectural blocks, a series of relief sculptures, and hundreds of panel fragments inscribed with the Price and Currency Edicts of Diocletian.⁵

The immense footprint (29 x 146 m) of the basilica occupies three city blocks at the W edge of the theater hill (Ratté above, fig. 9).⁶ Its unusual orientation, perpendicular to rather than parallel with the longitudinal axis of the S Agora, was forced upon the builders by the presence of the theater hill. This led to the development of a bi-directional plan, whereby main entrances were located at both of the building's short ends (fig. 2), an unusual arrangement for a building of this kind. The construction of the basilica followed developments already underway in the early 1st c. A.D. to create a second large public square immediately south of the N agora.⁷ Although the intended purpose of the S agora is debated, it unified the town center by connecting the N agora and sanctuary of Aphrodite with the theater hill.⁸

The basilica's construction date is estimated from the letter-forms of the dedicatory inscription on the architrave of the W interior colonnade, which suggest that it was built in the late 1st c. A.D. The dedicatory inscription may include the name of Titus and a title of Domitian, but this is uncertain.⁹ The architectural evidence also supports a late 1st-c. A.D. date; close parallels for the architectural decoration come from monuments dated to the Flavian period at Ephesus, Miletus, and Pergamon (see below).¹⁰

Structural components

The basilica consists of 4 main parts arranged as a sequence (fig. 2):

1. the N vestibule (29 x 7 m), with 8 double half-columns and a highly-articulated wall with three doors leading to the S agora;
2. the long hall (29 x 108 m), a triple-aisled covered hall consisting of a two-storeyed center flanked by lower side aisles;

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- 4 For early accounts: K. T. Erim, "Aphrodisias in Caria, results of the 1970 campaign," *TürkArkDerg* 19.1 (1972) 58-59; id., "1971 excavations at Aphrodisias in Caria," *TürkArkDerg* 20.1 (1973) 65-66; id., "Aphrodisias in Caria, the 1972 campaign of excavations," *TürkArkDerg* 21.1 (1974) 40-41; id., "Recent discoveries at Aphrodisias," in *Proc. 10th Int. Congress Class. Arch.* II (Ankara 1978) 1071-73; id., "Aphrodisias, the 1977 campaign," *TürkArkDerg* 25 (1981) 58-60; Erim, *Aphrodisias* 98-101; id., "Recent work at Aphrodisias, 1986-1988," in *Aphrodisias papers* 1, 27. For recent work: "Aphrodisias 1993," 46-48, 51-52; "Aphrodisias 1994," 16-17; "Aphrodisias 1995," 16; "Aphrodisias 1997-98," 231-33; "Aphrodisias 1999-2001," 166-67; P. T. Stinson, *The Civil Basilica of Aphrodisias in its local and wider settings* (Ph.D. diss., New York Univ. 2007).
 - 5 L. Bier produced the first stone-for-stone plan of the basilica in 1993. C. Ratté, C. Norman, and B. Yıldırım collaborated to produce the first reconstruction drawings of the basilica's superstructure: "Aphrodisias 1994," 14, fig. 7; "Aphrodisias 1997-98," 231, fig. 10.
 - 6 Ratté, "Hellenistic & Early Imperial" 23.
 - 7 For the topographical development of the S agora, see Ratté, "Hellenistic & Early Imperial" 15-17 and 22-23; R. R. R. Smith, "Archaeological research at Aphrodisias, 1989-92," in *Aphrodisias papers* 3, 45-49; N. de Chaisemartin and A. Lemaire, "Le Portique de Tibère: son architecture et sa fonction," in *Aphrodisias papers* 3, 149-72; M. Waelkens, "Notes d'architecture sur l'agora et le portique de Tibère à Aphrodisias de Carie," in *Aphrodisias de Carie* 123-34. L. Crema, "I monumenti architettonici Afrodisiensi," *MonAnt* 38 (1939-40) cols. 233-312, offers an early account.
 - 8 De Chaisemartin and Lemaire (supra n.7) 149 ff. propose that the S agora was designed originally as the 'gymnasium of Diogenes' mentioned in an inscription found in the theater. For discussion, see Ratté, "Hellenistic & Early Imperial" 15-16, and Smith, *Aphrodisias papers* 3, 45 and 49.
 - 9 See Reynolds, below pp. 130-36, no. 1; ead., "The inscriptions" in *Aphrodisias de Carie* 83; Chaniotis, "New inscriptions" 378 and 395, doc. 14, fig. 12.
 - 10 For two inscriptions that might indicate that Aphrodisias had a basilical hall in the Imperial period, see Chaniotis, above p. 70, no. 5.

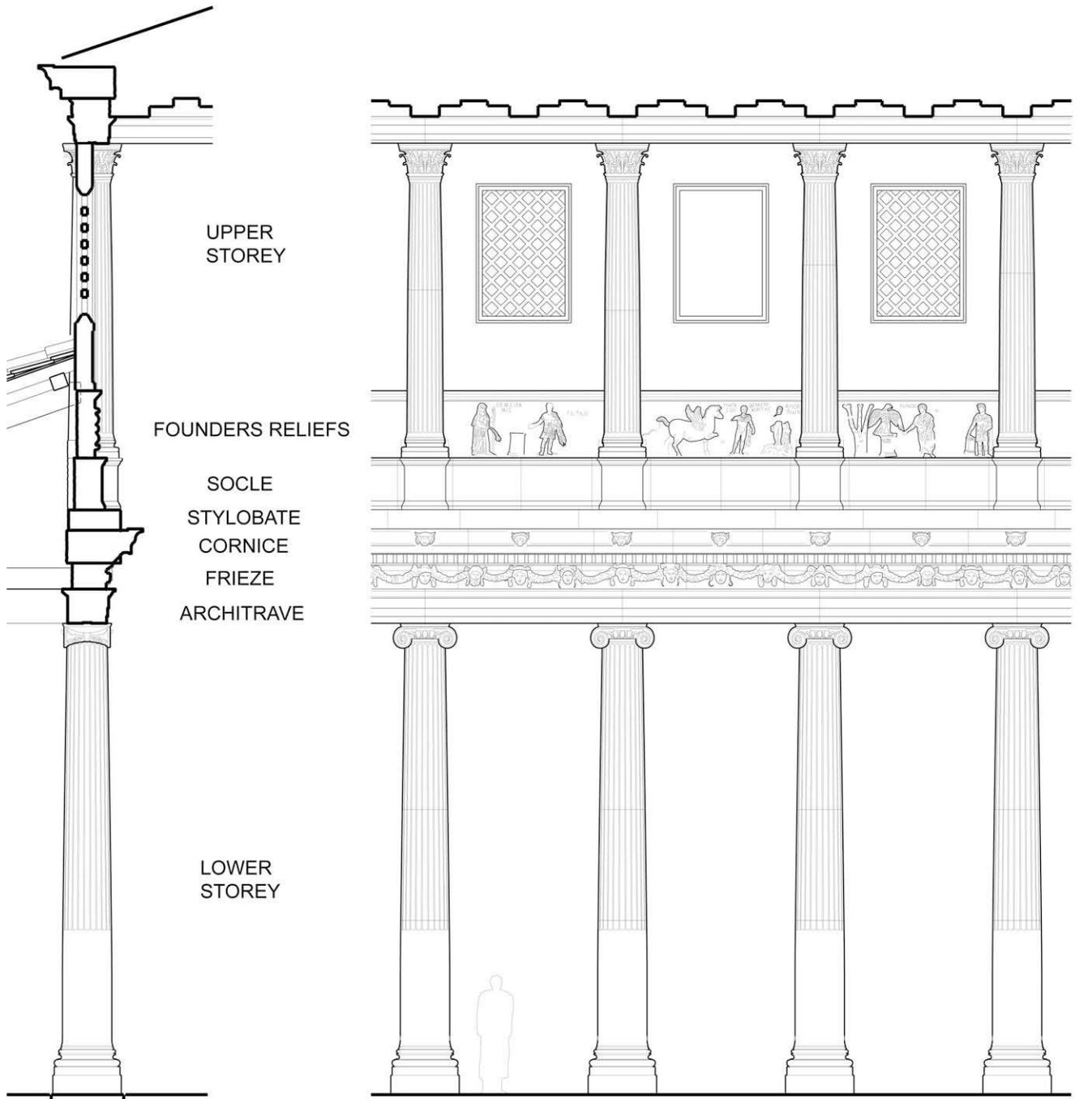


Fig. 6. Reconstructed middle portion of the long hall's E elevation, showing Founders' reliefs (P. Stinson).

3. the S hall (29 x 16.5 m), a broad rectangular hall near the S end of the building; and
4. the S vestibule (29 x 9 m), with doorways leading to an E-W street.

Long hall

The long hall will be discussed first because it is the main space and aspects of its architectural design carry through to other parts of the basilica. The long hall was found in the 1970s reduced to a deposit of débris (c.1 m deep) consisting primarily of marble blocks from

the interior colonnades, fragments of relief sculpture, and mortared rubble from the side walls (fig. 4).¹¹ The degree of preservation varies along the 108-m length of the long hall, but in general the E colonnade is better preserved than the W.

The central two-storeyed space or nave of the long hall is 11.57 m wide, and the side aisles vary in width from 7.35 to 7.50 m (fig. 5).¹² The colonnades have 39 columns on each level (fig. 2). The interaxial column-spacing varies slightly from 2.87 to 2.88 m. The side walls (th. 1.16-1.20 m) are constructed of heavily-mortared rubble faced with small, squared-off marble blocks ('petit appareil') and revetted in a local gray-and-white variegated marble.¹³ Large floor niches, each 2.2 x 0.65 m, positioned at regular intervals along the side walls probably held sculptures. The extant Late Roman floor consists of white marble paving slabs in the central nave with geometric mosaics in the side aisles. The long hall of the basilica was entirely roofed. Large cuttings (25 x 25 x 30 cm) on the interior faces of upper-storey architrave-frieze blocks are best interpreted as sockets for roof beams that spanned the central nave. Beam sockets on the reverse of the upper-storey engaged piers indicate that the side aisles too were roofed, and that there were no galleries over them (fig. 5).

Each storey had its own columnar order with distinct columns, bases and capitals (fig. 6). The lower Ionic order was similar to the façade order on the Portico of Tiberius in the S agora (fig. 7), and has nearly the same column diameter (0.72 m *versus* 0.725 m), interaxial spacing (2.87-2.88 m *versus* 2.90 m), and entablature format and decoration, including the mask-and-garland frieze.¹⁴ The columns of the basilica were taller (c.6.88 m) when their plinth is included. The Ionic capitals of the long hall are dated to the late 1st or early 2nd c. A.D. on the basis of the dart heads of the intermediate leaves between the eggs of the echinus, the lesbien cyma of the abacus, and the acanthus decoration of the pulvini (fig. 8).¹⁵ Several Corinthian capitals were probably used in the middle of the colonnades (fig. 9a). They offer corroborating evidence for a Flavian date, as they are similar to those from the re-built Pollio monument and fountain of Domitian at Ephesus (A.D. 92/93; fig. 9b).¹⁶

The columnar order of the upper storey comprised a square pier with an engaged half-column crowned by a flute-and-acanthus capital raised on a stylobate and a socle course with projecting pedestals (figs. 6, 10b; h. c.4.60 m; h. c.5.64 m including the pedestal and the stylobate).¹⁷ The entablature consisted of an architrave-frieze with an Ionic cornice (figs. 6, 10c). The linear

11 For early reports, see Erim 1972 (supra n.4) 58, figs. 7-9; id. 1973 (supra n.4) 65-66; id. 1974 (supra n.4) 40-41; id. 1981 (supra n.4) 58-59.

12 As measured from the centerlines of the columns.

13 One securely dated early usage of 'petit appareil' in Asia Minor is the Pollio aqueduct at Ephesus, A.D. 4-14; see Ward-Perkins (supra n.3) 273-74, fig. 173. However, the 'petit appareil' in the back wall of the N stoa of the N agora probably dates to the 30s or 20s B.C.: Reynolds (supra n.9) 83. For construction techniques in Asia Minor during the Roman period, see H. Dodge, "The architectural impact of Rome in the East," in M. Henig (ed.), *Architecture and architectural sculpture in the Roman empire* (Oxford 1990) 108-20; M. Waelkens, "The Hellenistic influence in the imperial architecture of Asia Minor," in S. Walker and A. Cameron (edd.), *The Greek renaissance in the Roman empire* (London 1989) 77-88.

14 For the mask-and-garland friezes of Aphrodisias, see N. de Chaisemartin, "Les modèles grecs classiques des têtes de la frise du Portique de Tibère," in *Aphrodisias papers* 1, 110-32; for further discussion, see Ratté, "Hellenistic & Early Imperial" 16.

15 Waelkens (supra n.7) 124; Vandeput, *Architectural decoration* 121, 307, pl. 74.1. The arrow-shaped darthead that first appears at Aphrodisias under Nero or earlier can be seen in the S portico of the Sebasteion.

16 I thank H. Thür of the Ephesus excavations for permission to publish the capital here as fig. 11. For the architectural decoration and date of the re-built Pollio Monument and Fountain of Domitian at Ephesus, see A. Bammer, "Elemente flavisch-trajanischer Architekturfassaden aus Ephesos," *ÖJh* 52 (1979-80) 67-68; Vandeput, *Architectural decoration* 135, pl. 84.1; G. Plattner, "Beobachtungen zu drei Bauten in Ephesos," in B. Brandt, S. Ladstätter and V. Gassner (edd.), *Synergia. Festschrift F. Krinzinger* (Vienna 2005) 246-50.

17 Vandeput *ibid.* 134-35, dates the flute-and-acanthus capitals of the long hall to the Flavian period. Also: Coulton (supra n.2) 121-24; P. Liljenstolpe, "The Roman Blattkelch capital: typology, origin, and aspects of employment," *OpusRom* 22-23 (1997-98) 91-126.

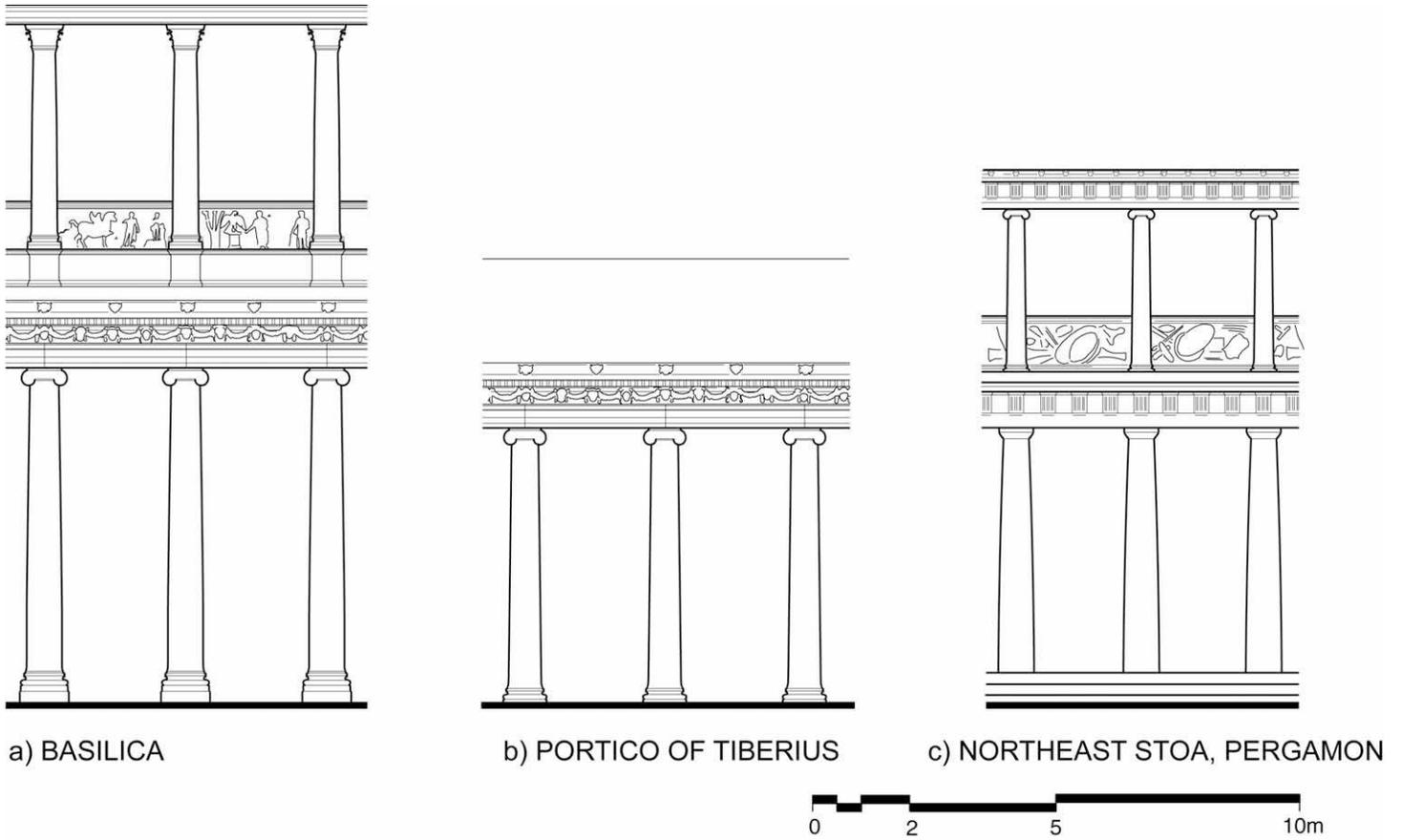


Fig. 7. Colonnade elevations: a) Basilica of Aphrodisias, late 1st c. A.D.; b) Portico of Tiberius, first quarter of 1st c. A.D.; c) NE stoa, Sanctuary of Athena, Pergamon, mid-2nd c. B.C. (P. Stinson).



Fig. 8. Ionic capitals from a) long hall and b) N vestibule (P. Stinson).



Fig. 9. a) Corinthian capital from long hall; b) Corinthian capital from Fountain of Domitian, Ephesus. (author; published with permission).

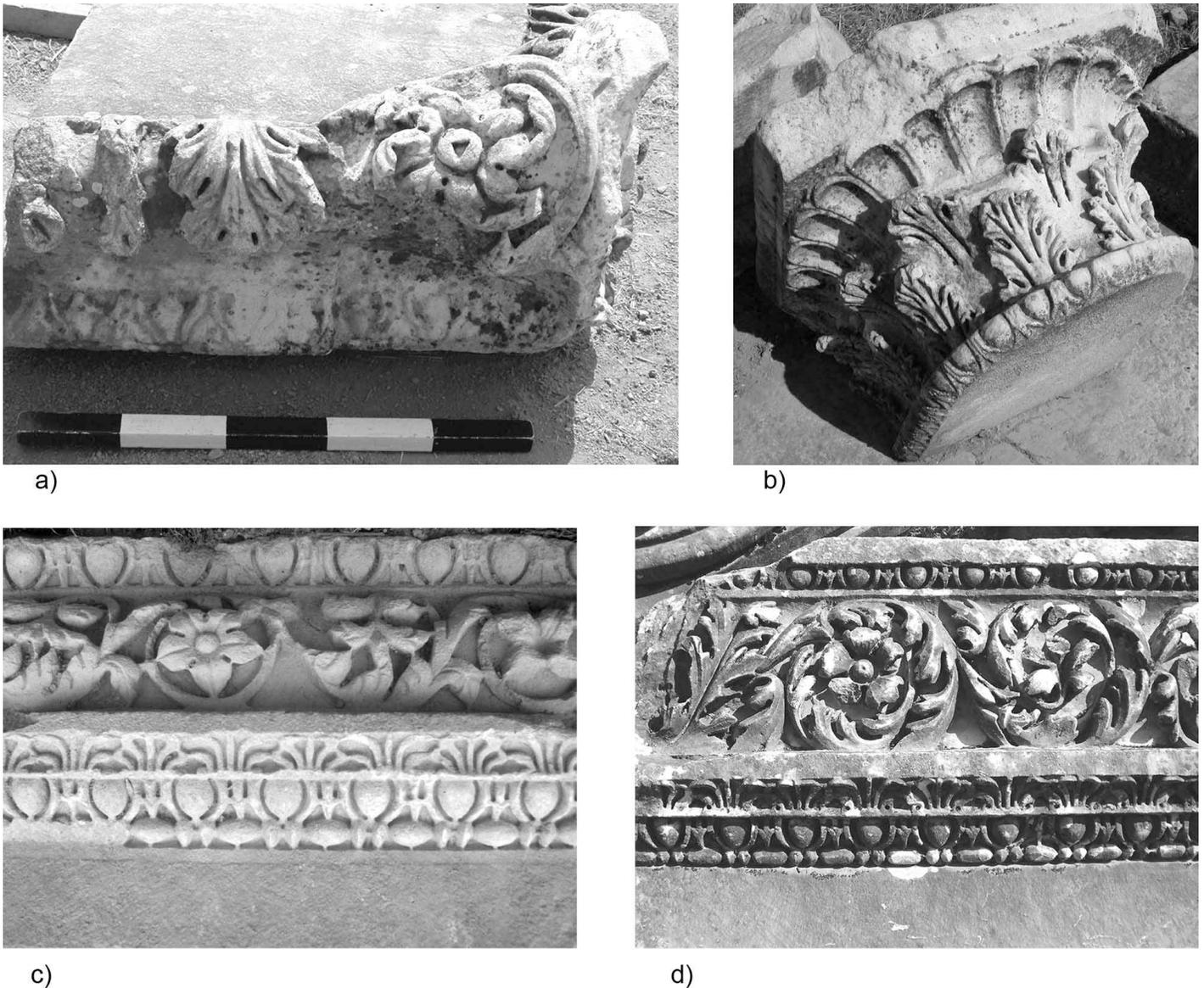


Fig. 10. a) Pulvillus of an Ionic capital from the N vestibule; b) flute-and-acanthus capital from the upper story of the long hall; c) architrave-frieze from the upper storey of the long hall; d) architrave-frieze from the court of the Hadrianic Baths.

style of the acanthus scroll on the frieze — unlike the more florid late Trajanic and Hadrianic scrolls in Asia Minor (fig. 10d) — suggests a date in the mid- to late 1st c. A.D.; parallels include the friezes on the Nymphaeum at Miletus (A.D. 79/80).¹⁸

Mounted between each of the engaged piers of the upper storey, balustrade-like panels fitted at the bottom into small beveled slots on the sides of the Ionic bases (figs. 6, 11). Iron clamps fastened the top of each balustrade panel to the piers. The 76 balustrade panels were carved with a combination of figural and ornamental relief sculpture at the same time as the

18 For friezes of the Nymphaeum at Miletus: J. Hülsen, *Milet. Das Nymphaeum* I, 5 (Berlin 1920) pls. 22-23, 37; R. Köster, *Die Bauornamentik von Milet. 1. Die Bauornamentik der frühen und mittleren Kaiserzeit* (Milet Bd. 7, Berlin 2004) 72-74, pls. 35-42; on a new dating of c.A.D. 80, see V. Strocka, *Das Markttor von Milet* (Winckelmannsprogramm der Archäologischen Gesellschaft 128, 1981) 22; Köster *ibid.* 65-67. The florid, later acanthus-scroll frieze is exemplified by those from the Hadrianic bath complex at Aphrodisias, probably built in the 120s (fig. 10d). For a recent re-assessment of architectural ornament in Asia Minor, see G. Plattner, "Transfer von Architekturkonzepten und Ornamentformen zwischen Kleinasien und Rom in der Kaiserzeit," *Römische historische Mitteilungen* 46 (2004) 17-35.

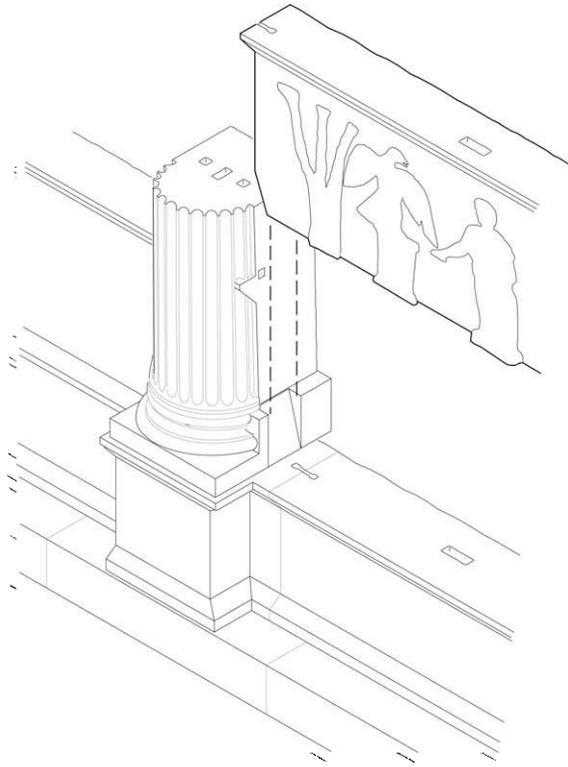


Fig. 11. Construction diagram for the installation of the Founders' reliefs (P. Stinson, C. Norman).

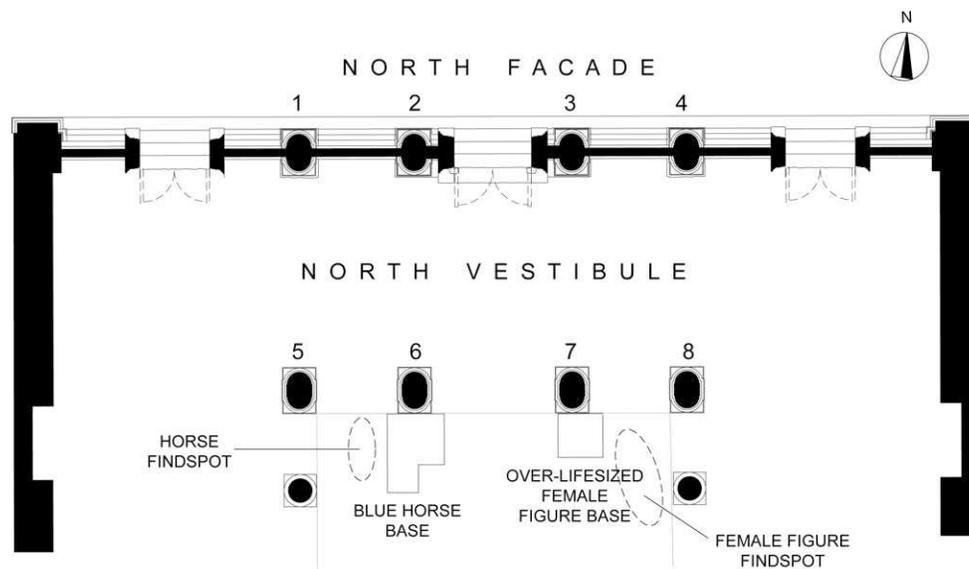


Fig. 12. Partially restored plan of N façade and N vestibule (P. Stinson).

construction of the building, while the carving of the Ionic bases and column flutes was finished only after each balustrade panel was in place.¹⁹ Although the majority of the panels were decorated only with acanthus and floral motifs, the figural reliefs depicted familiar deities and mythological figures such as Aphrodite, Dionysus, Zeus, erotes, satyr heads, and aquatic creatures related to the origins of Aphrodite.²⁰ Several remarkable figures appear in the mid-

¹⁹ See Yıldırım below, pp. 110-17.

²⁰ Vandeput, *Architectural decoration* 134-35, argues for a Flavian date for the acanthus decoration of the panels. For more discussion, see Yıldırım below pp. 118-28.

dle of the long hall, including Ninos and his wife Semiramis, Apollo, Pegasus and Bellerophon, and Gordios (fig. 6). These reliefs, known today as the Founders' reliefs, provide important information for the foundation myths of Aphrodisias, as Stephanus of Byzantium (s.v. Ninoe) identified Ninos as the founder of Ninoë, or Aphrodisias. The reliefs therefore proclaimed the town's great antiquity as well as its mythological and historical connections.²¹

North vestibule

The N end of the long hall and the adjoining N vestibule have a special architectural character (figs. 5, 12-13).²² On the interior, the pedestals and sculpted balustrades of the upper storey continue around the N end of the building, but an extraordinary arch-and-pediment motif interrupted their rhythm at the entrance to the N vestibule.²³ All the arch's voussoirs were found as they had fallen between the center columns of the N vestibule (near column nos. 6 and 7 in fig. 12), and a block that combines one side of the arch's springing point with a column pedestal and base (shaded in fig. 5) has been recovered. The architraves and friezes which terminated under the arch also provide important information for the reconstruction. Evidence for the pediment comes from 12 large fragments of the tympanum sculpted with dense, intertwined acanthus scrolls (figs. 5, 14).²⁴ These blocks were mounted between the columns of the upper storey. Though the central zone of the pediment is poorly preserved, three blocks with a raking top moulding confirm the pediment's dimensions. Beyond and beneath the arch and pediment, the ceiling of the N vestibule was probably a coffered barrel-vault of wood and stucco, connecting to a second arch over the main entrance on the N façade (fig. 13). The mid- to late 2nd-c. A.D. gateway to the Sanctuary of Aphrodite at Aphrodisias hints at the original appearance of the N vestibule (fig. 15).²⁵

The N vestibule had a variety of architectural embellishments distinguishing it from the long hall. Aside from the arch-and-pediment motif, 8 double half-columns defined the vestibule's central area (fig. 12). At the N end of the building, the columns (nos. 1-4) had Corinthian capitals and reeding on the lower portion of the shafts. To the south, those columns adjoining the long hall (nos. 5-8) had elongated Ionic capitals with upright acanthus leaves and acanthus scroll decoration on the pulvini (fig. 10a).²⁶ Unlike the Ionic capitals of the long hall, the Ionic capitals at the corner positions (nos. 5 and 8) were configured as corner capitals. The upper-storey colonnade was even more involved, with two double half-columns in the middle, and piers engaged with unusual quarter-columns and flute-and-acanthus capitals at the corners (fig. 13). The column capitals of the N vestibule thus came in three different styles — Corinthian, Ionic, and flute-and-acanthus — and accommodated 5 architectural configurations.

Two remarkable free-standing sculptures completed the decoration of the long hall and N vestibule, both discovered in 1970 (figs. 5, 12-13): a spectacular statue of a life-sized running horse in local grayish-blue marble (the "Blue Horse"), and a colossal (h. 3.5 m) statue of a draped female figure. Bases for each figure indicate that they stood in the long hall, just in front of the central columns of the N vestibule (nos. 6-7).²⁷ These sculptures were not original

21 Yıldıırım 2004 (supra n.1); Erım, *Aphrodisias* 25-27.

22 The N vestibule was called the antechamber of a temple in early reports: Erım 1971 (supra n.4) 58.

23 A similar arch-and-pediment motif, or 'Syrian gable', of uncertain date may have been built near the basilica in the center of the W colonnade of the S agora. It is mentioned in G. Mendel, "Seconde note sur les fouilles exécutées à Aphrodisias par M. Paul Gaudin," in *CRAI* ser. 5, vol. 7 (1906) 164; N. de Chaisemartin, "Recherches sur la frise de l'Agora de Tibère," in *Aphrodisias de Carie* 137-38 and 149, fig. 5.

24 A close parallel comes from the decorated piers of the Fountain of Domitian at Ephesus: Bammer (supra n.16) 74-76; figs. 7-9; Plattner (supra n.16) 249-50, figs. 9-10.

25 G. Paul, "Die Anastylose des Teträpylons in Aphrodisias," in *Aphrodisias papers* 3, 203, fig. 2 and 206, fig. 5.

26 Dated to the Flavian period by Vandeput, *Architectural decoration* 121, 307 pl. 74.2.

27 Colossal female figure inv. 70-619. Erım 1971 (supra n.4) 59 and 79, figs. 39-40; id., *Aphrodisias* 99-100 and photographs. The "Blue Horse" (inv. 70-569) is now being studied by R. R. R. Smith and prepared by T. Proudfoot and his team for re-installation in the Aphrodisias museum.

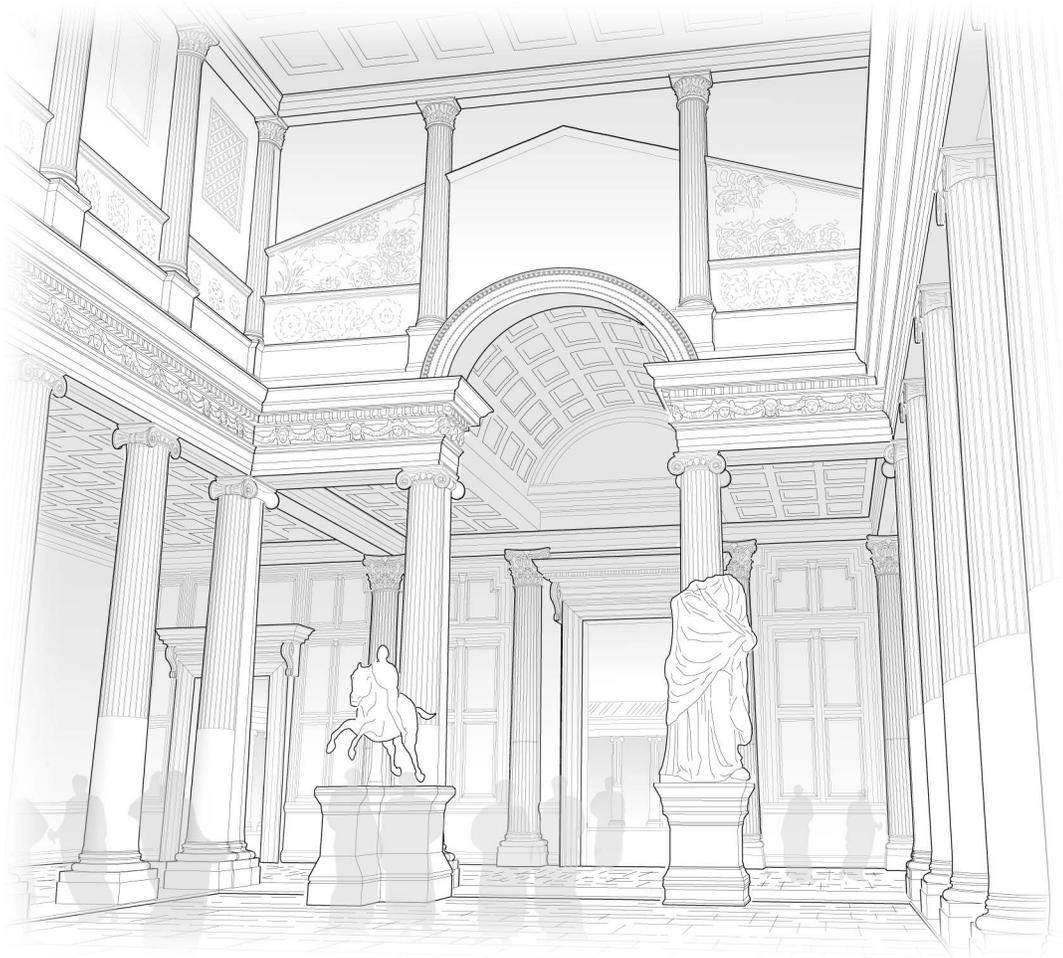


Fig. 13. Perspective reconstruction with N vestibule and interior side of N façade, looking north (P. Stinson).



a)



b)

Fig. 14. Panel fragments from the sculpted pediment at the N end of the long hall: a) panel with raking cornice; b) panel with densely-entwined acanthus scrolls.



Fig. 15. Tetrapylon, Sanctuary of Aphrodite (after modern anastylosis).

features of the basilica and may have been added in the 4th c. A.D. by Flavius Constantius, a Roman governor (see below).

North Façade

The N façade was also elaborate (figs. 16-17).²⁸ The *in situ* remains consist of three doorways framed by piers, with 4 double half-columns between the doors (the same double half-

28 First described in Erim 1971 (supra n.4) 59.



Fig. 16. Excavations of the N façade in 1970, looking southeast.

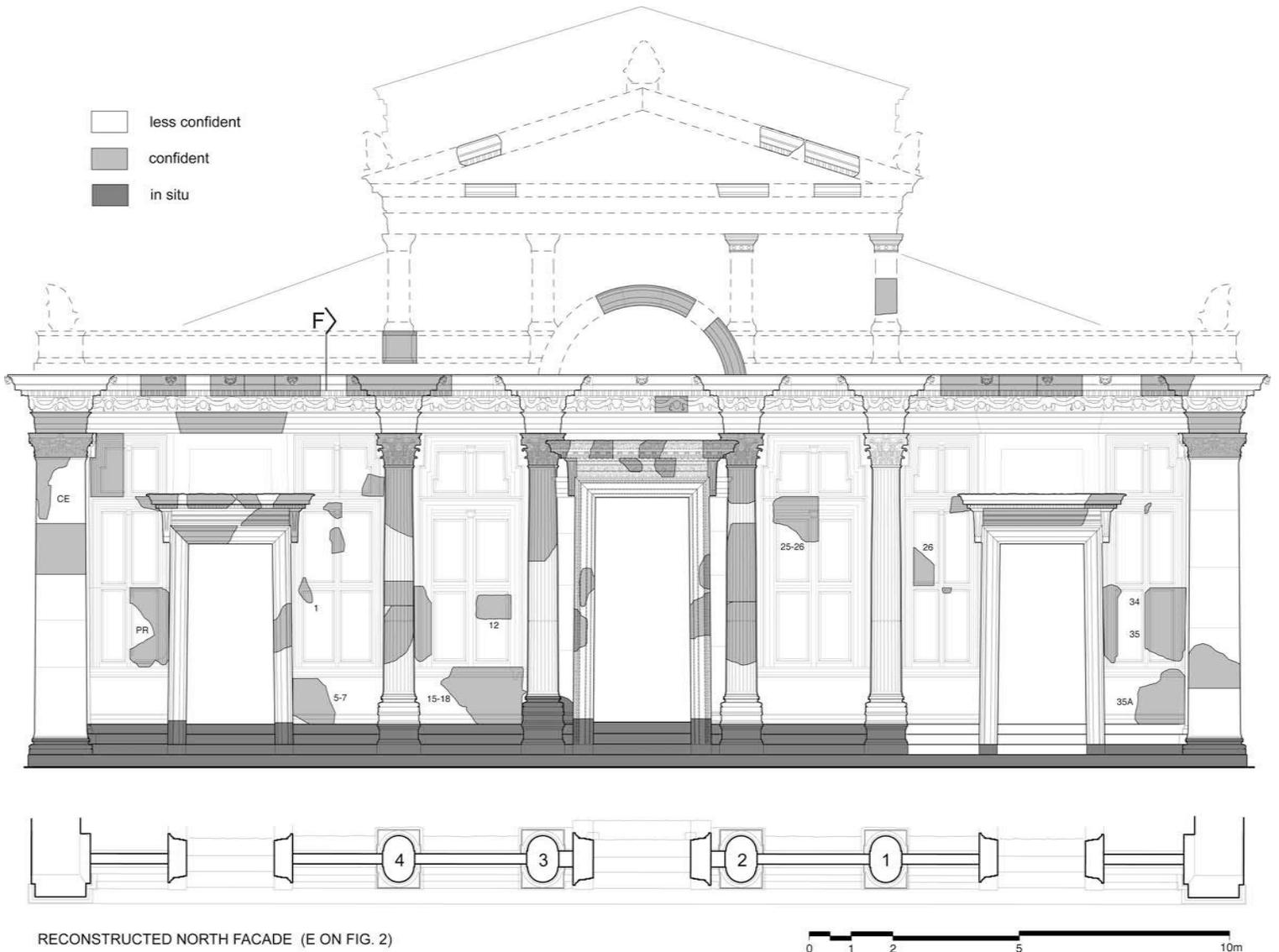
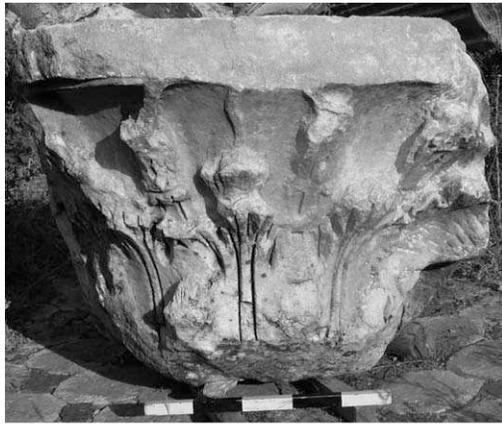


Fig. 17. Reconstructed elevation of the N façade showing extant blocks and fragments of moulded panels from the screen wall (at E on fig. 2). Below: plan of N façade (P. Stinson).



a)



b)



Fig. 18. a) Corinthian capital from the middle section of the N façade; b) Corinthian pier capital from the W corner of the N façade.

Fig. 19. Fragment of the lintel moulding from the central door of the N façade.



a)

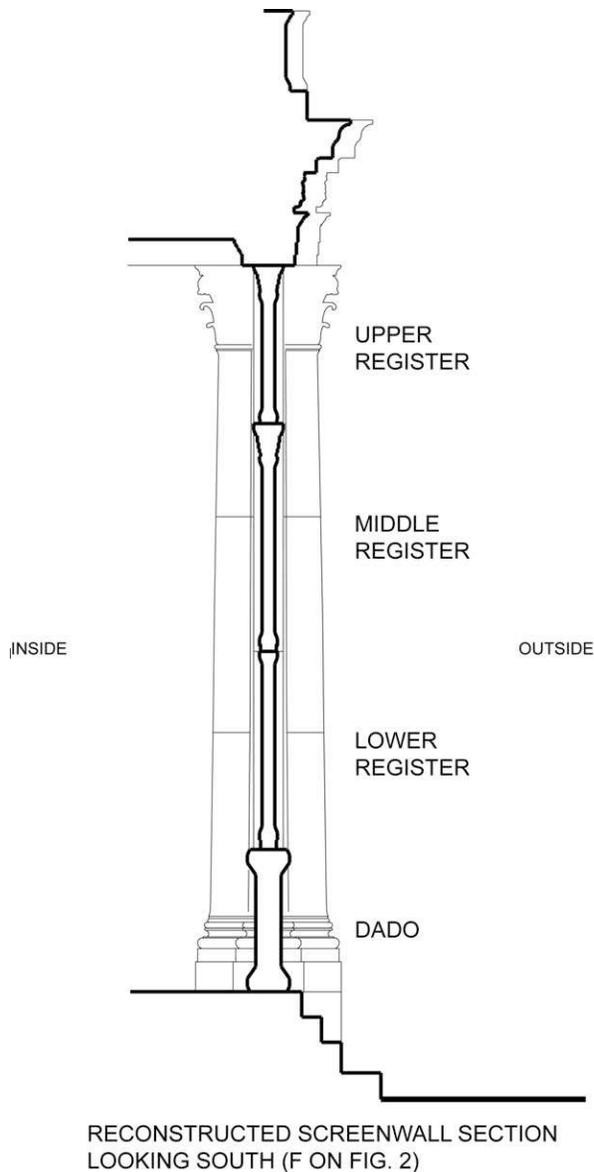


b)

Fig. 20. a) Cornice moulding and b) console from the central door of the N façade.

columns that define the N side of the N vestibule) in the center, and square piers at the corners. A flight of 4 steps (h. 1 m) led to each of the entrances. The central door was larger and more richly decorated than the two side doors. It was crowned by a lintel heavily encrusted with layers of decorative mouldings and a cornice with small modillions (fig. 19). Acanthus decoration covered the cyma of the cornice and the sides of the central console brackets (fig. 19, 20a). By comparison, the side doors were plain.

As already noted, the double half-columns at the N end of the building (fig. 17, nos. 1-4) were distinguished from the corresponding interior columns of the N vestibule (fig. 12, nos. 5-8) by reeded fluting. The columns are of the same diameter and height as those of the long hall's lower storey, but their overall height was increased to c.7.60 m by the addition of a pedestal.



RECONSTRUCTED SCREENWALL SECTION
LOOKING SOUTH (F ON FIG. 2)

Fig. 21. Reconstructed section of N façade screen-wall, looking west (P. Stinson).

screen wall composed of thin marble panels arranged in three registers above a dado or socle course (figs. 17, 21). Crucial to reconstructing the arrangement of the screen wall's panels are the two Diocletianic edicts carved onto the N façade in the early 4th c.³³ The Currency Edict, the shorter of the two documents, occupied the E corner pier; the much longer Price Edict, over 4000

Of the 6 columns and piers on the N façade, Corinthian capitals for 5 were recovered (fig. 18). Incised setting lines atop the Corinthian capitals and preserved sections of the cornice indicate that the entablature projected forward by 20 cm, while at each corner of the façade it projected 50 cm. The mask-and-garland frieze of the entablature was similar to those of the long hall and the Portico of Tiberius.²⁹

The reconstruction of an attic over the N façade's main entrance (fig. 17) is speculative. I have restored a second storey over the central door on the theory that the sculpted pediment of the N vestibule should have had a corresponding expression on the N façade; several different solutions to this problem have been explored.³⁰ The limited physical evidence allows for an attic wall articulated by 4 pilasters crowned by simple Ionic capitals with small shields in relief.³¹ The pilasters may have rested on a socle with projecting pedestals, in a configuration similar to that of the upper storey of the long hall. Preserved segments of a raking cornice and arch voussoirs suggest that the pilasters were incorporated into an arch-and-pediment motif.³² Behind this, a hidden gable roof rose over the coffered barrel-vault of the N vestibule.

Nearly all of the space below the main entablature between the columns and the door frames of the N façade was filled by an elaborately-moulded

29 Mask-and-garland frieze blocks found in the area of the N façade were removed from the site after excavation and relocated to the museum courtyard, where they remain. Some appear in de Chaisemartin (supra n.23) 150, fig. 7.

30 For a previous reconstruction of the N façade by this author, see "Aphrodisias, 1999-2001," 166-67, fig. 20.

31 This type of capital was associated with the Ionic order in Asia Minor in the Hellenistic period. See F. Rumscheid, *Untersuchungen zur kleinasiatischen Bauornamentik des Hellenismus* (Mainz 1994) pls. 10.4, 58.5, 59.1, 99.4, 102.2, 114.3.

32 First conjectured by Erim 1971 (supra n.4) 59.

33 For the Price Edict, Reynolds (supra n.1) 252-318, doc. 231. For the Currency Edict, *ibid.* 254-64, doc. 230. These edicts were carved onto the façade of the basilica itself and not onto an independent, freestanding monument, as had been suggested previously [e.g., ALA 252].



Fig. 22. Elevation of N façade, showing areas inscribed with imperial edicts in the early 4th c. (P. Stinson).

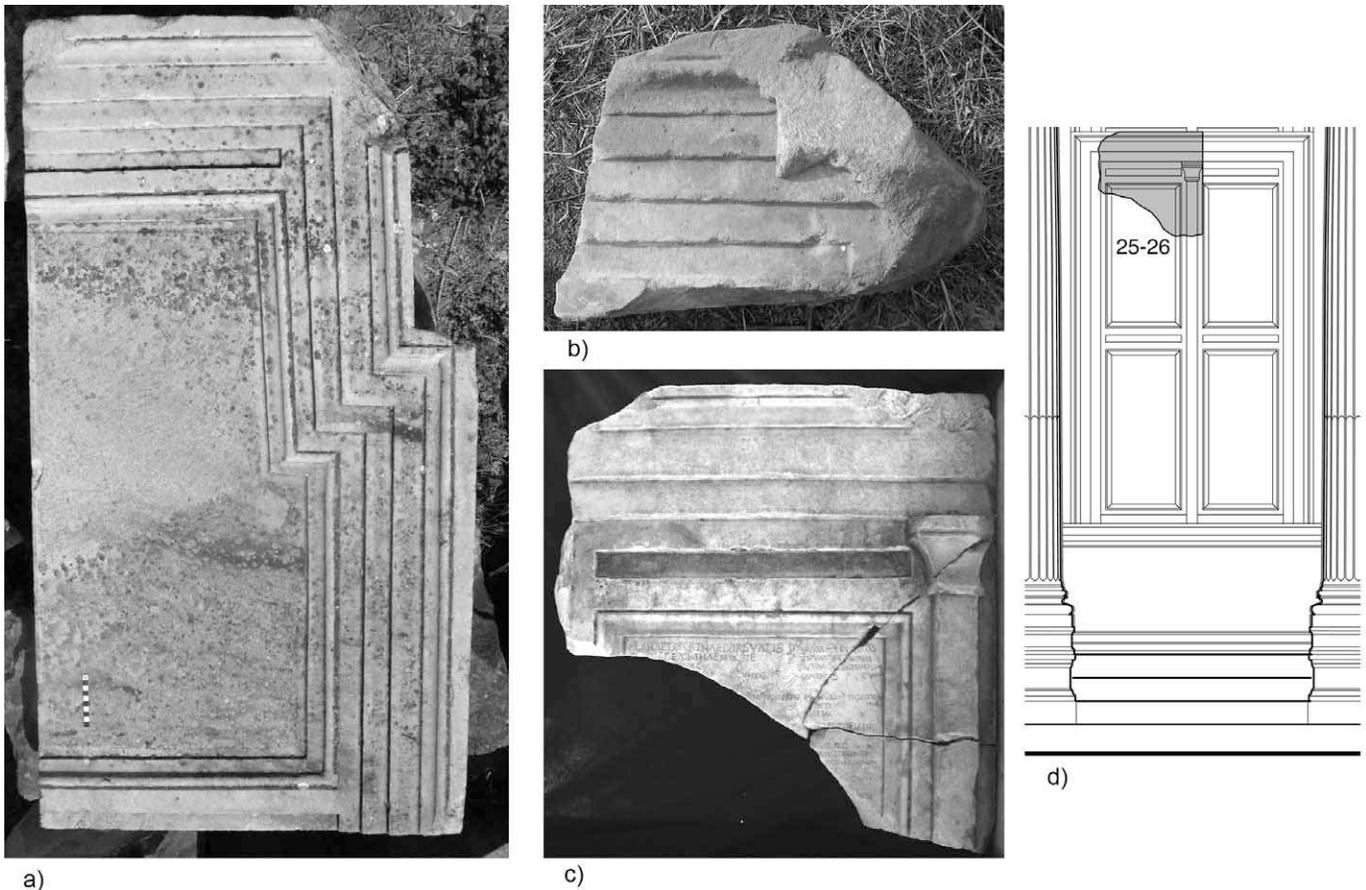


Fig. 23. Moulded panel fragments from the screen wall of the N façade: a) panel from upper register (inside face); b) fragment from middle register showing edge of side door cornice; c) inscribed fragment from middle register with vertical bar and cap mimicking a door or window locking mechanism; d) detail of fig. 17 showing fragment c.

lines, began at the lower left-hand corner of the façade and unfolded to the right, ending at the lower right-hand corner (figs. 22; 23c for an inscribed panel).

The general locations of many panel fragments were established by M. Crawford on the evidence of the text of the Price Edict as known from other copies.³⁴ A more precise placement of the inscribed panel fragments can be determined from their architectural mouldings and thicknesses. The mouldings from the middle of the Price Edict are wider than those from the beginning and end of the inscription, indicating that the mouldings framing the central door were wider than those flanking the side doors. In other words, the A-B-A size relationship of the three doors is also found in the moulded panels that flanked them (fig. 17).

Three well-preserved panels fix the height of the dado and of the lower and upper registers (h. 1.35; h. 1.88, h. 1.50 m, respectively), leaving only the height of the middle register unknown (the most complete of the three panels is shown in fig. 23a). Crawford estimated the height of the middle register on the basis of his restoration of the missing lines of text in that part of the list.³⁵ The screen wall is discussed further below.

Several details of the N façade's architectural decoration deserve special attention. The fluted caulis with a turned-over top lip on the N façade's Corinthian capitals (fig. 18a) does not appear elsewhere in the basilica; for instance, the caules of the Corinthian capitals from the middle of the long hall (fig. 9a) are smaller and not fluted. Indeed, the pronounced caulis, fluted or not, rarely appears on Corinthian capitals in Asia Minor after the Julio-Claudian period. But rather than indicating a pre-Flavian date for the N façade, the fluted caules are among a number of special architectural details designed to emphasize the main entrance to the basilica from the S agora. Other acanthus decoration on the N façade is also of higher quality than elsewhere in the building. The acanthus scrolls on the consoles and cornice of the central door and the acanthus leaves and spirals on the corner pier capitals (figs. 18b, 20) vary in style but are generally more florid and carefully carved than the acanthus decoration of the long hall (figs. 9a, 10c). Typological comparanda for the acanthus decoration from the N façade range in date from the late 1st c. B.C. to the early 2nd c. A.D.³⁶

South hall

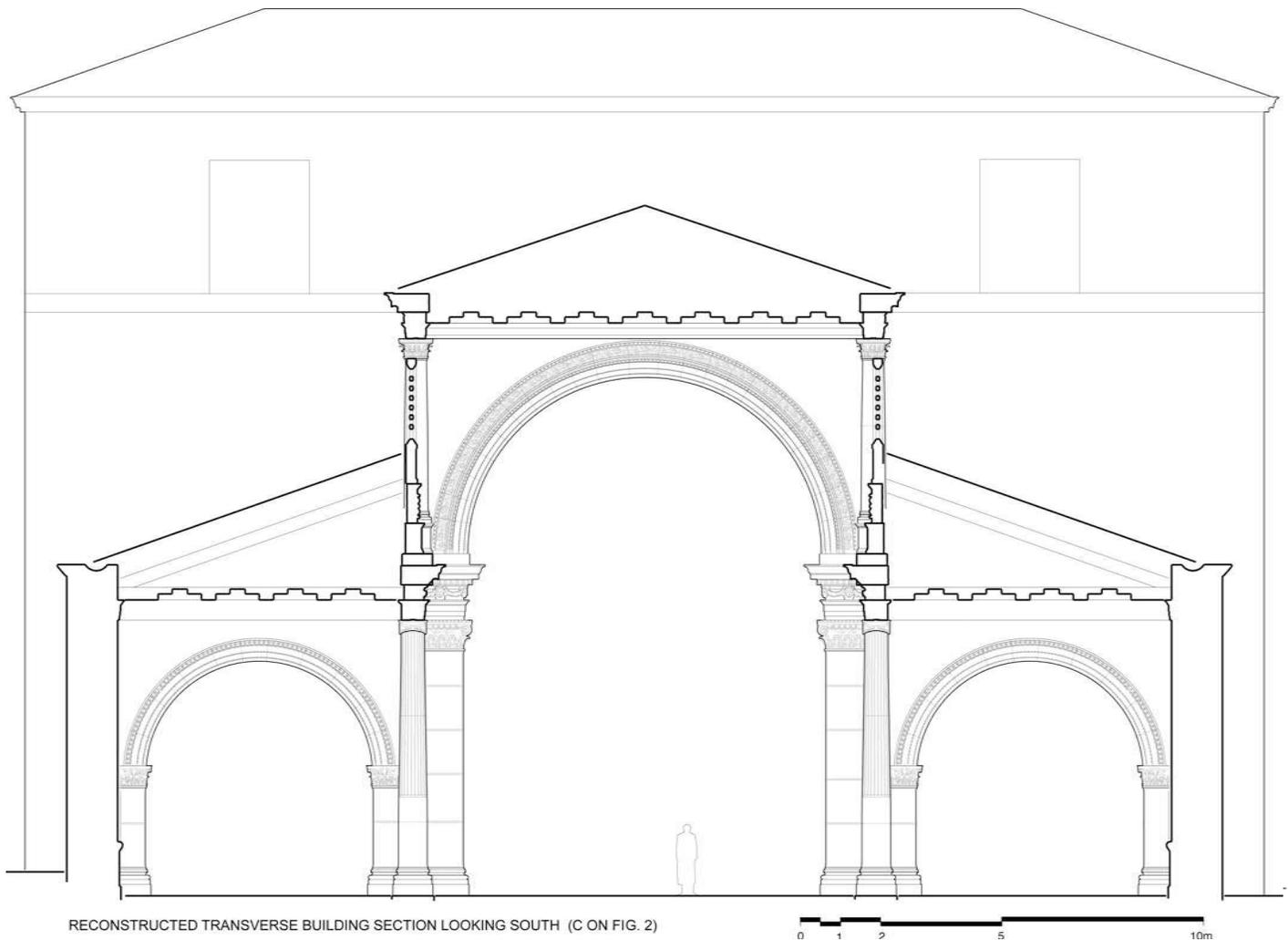
Although the S hall is largely unexcavated, numerous architectural blocks and the results of the 2005 excavations permit a tentative reconstruction. The presence of three distinct friezes, together with buttresses along the side walls, suggests that the S hall was significantly taller than the long hall, probably c.20 m high (fig. 2). It was entered from the long hall through a triple-archway (fig. 24); remains of this archway include fallen voussoirs and two massive blocks from the spring points of the central opening.³⁷ All three arches were decorated on both sides, and the central arch included an acanthus scroll frieze.

34 M. Crawford, "Discovery, autopsy, and progress: Diocletian's jigsaw puzzles," in T. P. Wiseman (ed.), *Classics in progress: essays on ancient Greece and Rome* (Oxford 2002) 145-64.

35 The intact panel from the upper register has a unique indentation on one side, which must originally have accommodated a corner pier capital. The mouldings do not show which corner it belonged to, since they are the same on both sides of the panel (the inside and outside surfaces of the screen wall were identical), but the findspot suggests that it was located at the NE corner. Two other small fragments of moulded panels preserve places where the cornices of the side doors met the top of the middle register (fig. 23b).

36 Acanthus scrolls: compare the cyma of the cornice in fig. 20 with D. Theodorescu, "La *frons scaenae* du théâtre: innovations et particularités à l'époque de Zoilos," in *Aphrodisias papers* 3, 140, fig. 9; compare the scrolls in figs. 18 and 20 with Bammer (supra n.16) 70, fig. 2; cf. Plattner (supra n.16) figs. 5-6. Corinthian capitals: for Early Imperial Corinthian capitals with pronounced caules from Aphrodisias: U. Outschar, "Betrachtungen zur kunstgeschichtlichen Stellung des Sebasteions in Aphrodisias," in *Aphrodisias de Carie* 110-11 and 122, figs. 14-15; N. de Chaisemartin and D. Theodorescu, "Recherches préliminaires sur la *frons scaenae* du théâtre," in *Aphrodisias papers* 2, 64, fig. 15E; W. Heilmeyer, *Korinthische Normalkapitelle. Studien zur Geschichte der römischen Architekturdekoration* (RömMitt Erg. 16, 1970) pl. 22.1. Cf. also the comments of Plattner (supra n.16) 246-50 on the co-existence of stylistic contrasts on the Fountain of Domitian at Ephesus.

37 For views of the S hall and fallen blocks from the springing of the arch: "Aphrodisias, 1993," 47-48, figs. 20-21.



RECONSTRUCTED TRANSVERSE BUILDING SECTION LOOKING SOUTH (C ON FIG. 2)

0 1 2 5 10m

Fig. 24. Reconstructed transverse section, looking south toward South hall (P. Stinson).

The 4 corner piers of the S hall, preserved to 3 m above the ancient floor level, are built of finely-dressed marble ashlar (fig. 2). The side walls were constructed of mortared rubble with 'petit appareil' facing and were buttressed by additional marble piers. The side wall buttresses correspond to divisions between large arched niches (w. 3.0-4.0 m), which presumably held sculpture.³⁸ The S hall's combination of 'Hellenistic' ashlar masonry with 'Roman' mortared-rubble construction was common throughout W Asia Minor in the Early Imperial period. At Aphrodisias, it is found in earlier buildings such as the theater, N Agora, and Sebasteion.

The interior decoration included new details as well as elements of the long hall's decorative program repeated on a larger scale. The S hall exhibited three entablature friezes: a mask-and-garland frieze, an architrave-frieze with an acanthus scroll, and a fluted frieze (fig. 25b).³⁹ Other distinctive elements included composite capitals (fig. 25a) and a large Corinthian cornice with modillions.⁴⁰

South vestibule

The S vestibule was not recognized as part of the basilica until recently (fig. 2). Its limits are

38 For a spectacular life-sized portrait head excavated along the W wall of the S hall in 2005, see Smith *et al.*, *Aphrodisias II*, 297-99, pls. 161-63 (inv. no. 05-25).

39 Contemporary comparanda: Strocka (supra n.18) pl. 42.5; De Bernardi Ferrero (supra n.3) 23, fig. 37; H. Thür, *Das Hadrianstor in Ephesos (FiE 11.1, Vienna 1989)* fig. 161.

40 For other Flavian and Trajanic composite capitals in Asia Minor: Hülsen (supra n.18) pl. 35; Bammer (supra n.16) 88, figs. 20-22; Strocka (supra n.18) pls. 40.2, 45.3; Koster (supra n.18) 68, n.454, pls. 33.1-2.



a)



b)

Fig. 25. a) Composite capital and b) fluted frieze block from South hall.

larily striking are the doorframes which began below the level of the thresholds, a device perhaps intended to make the doors themselves appear taller and more slender (fig. 17). Other subtle embellishments include the 'colonnets' behind the corner piers, the helicoidal acanthus on the capitals of the corner piers, the fluted caules on the Corinthian capitals, and the additional ornament around the central door (figs. 18-20).

The virtuoso flourish of the N façade was the screen wall, where layered mouldings worked in concert with the projecting and receding elements of the façade (fig. 17). The mouldings represented in marble the appearance of wooden window-frames set between the columns of the façade. The tiny capitals and vertical bars in the center of each bay even depicted the sheath and cap that covered the locking mechanism of the two overlapping leaves of a real window (or door) (fig. 23c-d). Parallels can be found in the local 'symbolic door' motifs of sarcophagi and tomb markers, or in the false windows on the façade of the bath-gymnasium at Termessos, but in their particulars the N façade's 'windows' are unique.⁴²

With this level of decoration, the N façade was a forerunner of the kind of façade architecture that would become popular in Asia Minor and throughout E Mediterranean lands in the 2nd c. A.D.⁴³ At Aphrodisias, the *scaenae frons* of the theater and the porticoes and propylon of the Sebasteion provide some of the earliest examples of this type of façade architecture in Asia Minor.⁴⁴

defined by the E side wall (known locally as the Kuş Kalesi, or 'bird castle'), which stands over 7.5 m high, and the W side wall, which was partially exposed during recent excavations at the Triconch Church (fig. 3). Excavation in 1962 revealed the doorjambs and threshold of a large doorway which was part of the basilica's S façade, as well as an E-W street with marble paving. A wide set of steps (h. c.0.60 m) led from this street to the S façade.⁴¹ These features recall aspects of the architectural design of the N façade (fig. 17) and suggest that the S vestibule was an original part of the basilica. Without further excavation, however, it is not possible to reconstruct the original appearance of the S façade in detail.

Design aspects of the basilica

The N façade of the basilica was one of its most striking features, providing early examples of architectural motifs that would become widely popular in the 2nd c. A.D. Those included alternating projecting and receding elements, which gave the wall the illusion of depth, and additional details that created the impression of increased height. Particu-

41 The steps were revealed during cleaning operations in 1993: "Aphrodisias, 1993," 46-48.

42 M. Waelkens, "Hausähnliche Gräber in Anatolia von 3 Jht. v.Chr. bis in die Römerzeit," in *Palast und Hutte* (Mainz 1982) 434 fig. 16, 438-39 figs. 19-20. For the bath-gymnasium at Termessos, see Lanckoronski (supra n.3) II, pls. 15-16. The other notable characteristic of the screen wall is its thinness.

43 Ward-Perkins (supra n.3) 296-97, 305-6, 324-25 and 391; W. MacDonald, *The architecture of the Roman empire II: an urban appraisal* (New Haven, CT 1986) chaps. 7-9.

44 For the *scaenae frons*: Theodorescu, *Aphrodisias papers* 3, 127-48; de Chaisemartin and Theodorescu,

The N façade of the basilica posed a special challenge to the architect to create an impressive entrance from the S agora along one of the short ends of the building. Typically, the main entrances to Roman basilicas or Greek stoas were located on one of the long sides of the building facing directly onto the forum or agora. The architect could have continued the side aisles of the long hall of the basilica around the front of the building, as in the narthex of a Christian church, but instead he chose to superimpose a propylon-like structure onto the N end of the building. This solution is in keeping with the tradition of Greek propylon architecture. Examples of monumental gateways at the entrances to peristyle courts or sanctuaries in Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor include the gymnasium at Miletus, the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias, and the tetrapylon in the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Aphrodisias (fig. 15). The vaulted ceiling of the N vestibule gave the entry added height and prominence.

The long and narrow proportions of the long hall of the basilica stand in striking contrast to Roman basilicas elsewhere in the empire, with their shorter, broader proportions.⁴⁵ The long hall seems to combine features of a Roman basilica with those of a Greek stoa of the Hellenistic period, its colonnades essentially adapting the architecture of a stoa to a basilical configuration. In elevation they resemble the façade of the stoa of the sanctuary of Athena at Pergamon, which deployed architectural sculpture (the weapons reliefs) in a manner similar to the Founders' reliefs (fig. 7).⁴⁶ The late Augustan basilica at Ephesus (discussed below) provides the most direct and secure precedent for the overall design of the long hall's colonnades, as well as many other features of the basilica (figs. 26-27).⁴⁷

While the long hall combined a Roman basilica with a Hellenistic stoa, the sum of the basilica's parts alluded to broader urban and civic themes. The basilica's colonnades and its extended sequence of interior spaces evoked a hallmark of cities of the Roman East — the colonnaded avenue.⁴⁸ Underlying the basilica's design seems to have been the idea of continuing the colonnades of the S agora inside a covered hall, with archways and vestibules to articulate the transitions between exterior and interior. A useful comparison can be made to the Sebasteion, which had a similar linear plan and was also accessible from both short ends (see Ratté above, fig. 9). The Sebasteion, however, was a true exterior space and the resemblance of its courtyard to a street would have been more obvious and less surprising.⁴⁹

Visitors would have seen a long architectural vista opening up before them. On walking down the long hall past the Founders' reliefs, they would have encountered a crescendo of increased height and spatial volume as they approached and entered into the S hall (fig. 2). From the opposite direction, the basilica's interior would have served as an elaborate entrance

Aphrodisias papers 2, 29-65. For the architecture of the porticoes and propylon of the Sebasteion: R. R. Smith, "The imperial reliefs from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias," *JRS* 77 (1987) 89-95; Outschar, *Aphrodisias de Carie* 107-22, esp. 108, 115, fig. 2; more recently, Ratté, "Hellenistic and Early Imperial" 17-18; M. Ortaç, "Zur Veränderung der kleinasiatischen Propyla in der frühen Kaiserzeit in Bauform und Bedeutung," in Berns *et al.* (supra n.3) 175-85, figs. 5-6.

45 Vitruvius 5.1-5.6. K. Ohr, *Die Basilika in Pompeji* (Karlsruhe 1991) 74 ff.; Gros *et al.* (supra n.2) 624 ff.

46 Basilicas in other parts of the Roman empire may have displayed pictorial or sculpted scenes of a city's legendary history in this way, but they are rarely preserved. The closest parallel is the Basilica Aemilia in the Forum Romanum, which had a sculpted frieze depicting scenes of Rome's legendary history. For discussion see Welch (supra n.2) 31. The Sebasteion of Aphrodisias provides the other obvious parallel for the manner in which the basilica reliefs were displayed, and for some aspects of their content.

47 For more discussion, see P. Stinson, "Imitation and adaptation in architectural design: two Roman basilicas at Ephesus and Aphrodisias," in M. Meyer (ed.), *Neue Zeiten — neue Sitten: zu Rezeption und Integration römischer und italischer Kulturgüter in Kleinasien* (Vienna 2007) 91-100.

48 For example, compare fig. 13 with I. Browning, *Palmyra* (Park Ridge, NJ 1979) 176, fig. 117, or the cross-wall of the S hall (fig. 24) with *ibid.* 130, fig. 69. For colonnaded streets, see Coulton (supra n.2) 177-80; MacDonald (supra n.41) chaps. 2-4.

49 R. R. Smith, "Myth and allegory in the Sebasteion," in *Aphrodisias papers* 1, 93; Outschar, *Aphrodisias de Carie* 111, describes it as a "Kultstrasse".

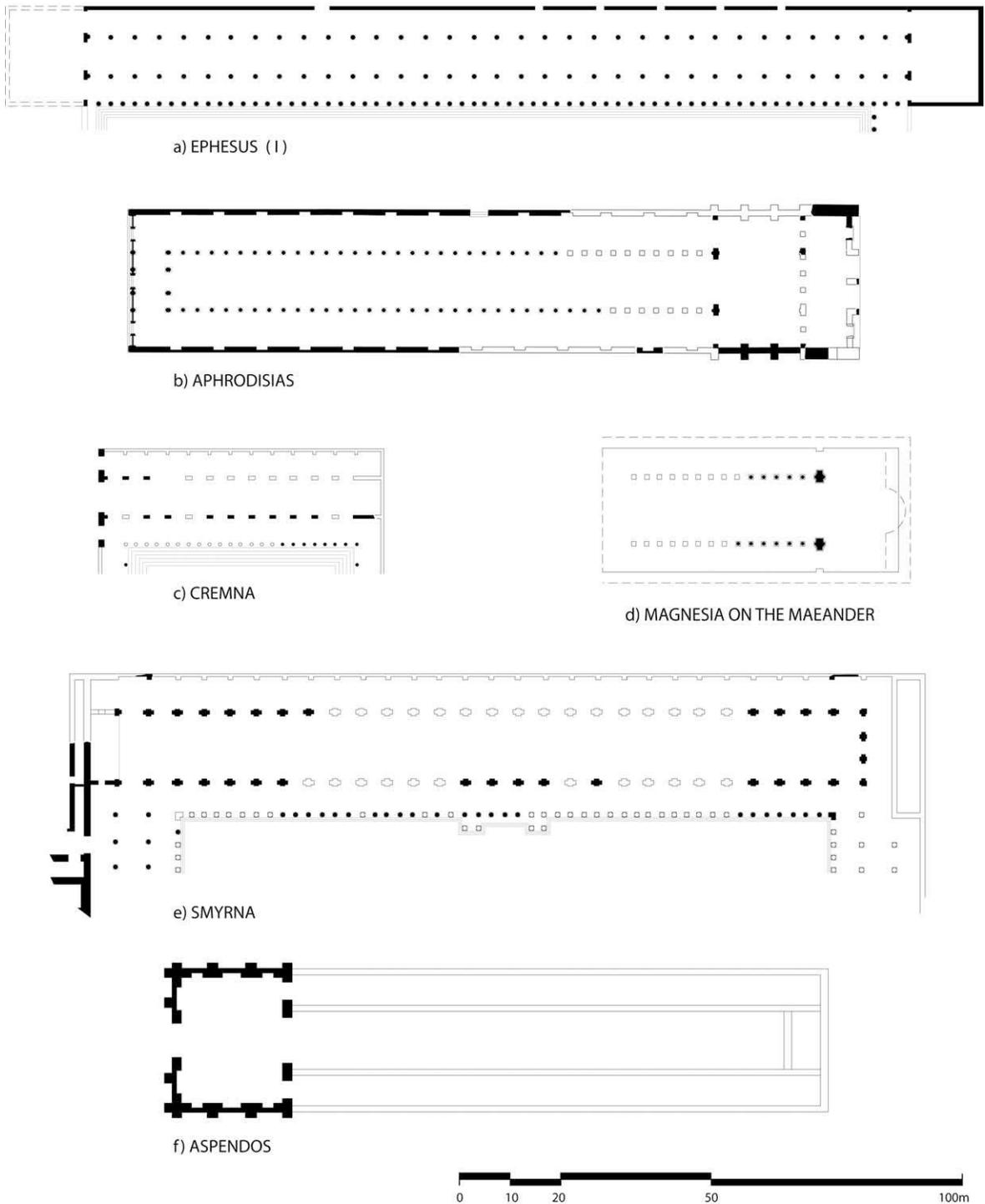


Fig. 26. Asiatic basilicas: a) Ephesus (I); b) Aphrodisias; c) Cremna; d) Magnesia on the Maeander; e) Smyrna; f) Aspendos (P. Stinson).

sequence to the agora from the southwest. People simply passing through the basilica would not have precluded other activities and events from occurring inside, adding yet another layer of activity to a bustling indoor gathering-place.

Function and building history

In use from *c.*A.D. 100 to 600, the basilica enjoyed a long life. Unfortunately, there is little direct archaeological evidence for the kinds of activities that took place inside. Like Roman

basilicas in the West, the basilica at Aphrodisias would have been a multi-purpose public building. Its function may also have changed over time. After its completion, some activities housed under the partially covered stoas of the agora must have moved into the protected interior spaces of the long and S halls, especially during inclement weather. They would have included banking, money changing, writing (the work of scribes and secretaries), letting of contracts, legal counseling, and occasional legal proceedings. These civil or municipal activities are associated with Roman basilicas, but Greek stoas were also the scenes of such business.⁵⁰

The basilica also functioned, like an exterior public space, as a site for the display of sculpture and important inscriptions. The basilica reliefs and the niches for statuary along the side walls of the long hall indicate its rôle as a sculpture 'gallery'. The S hall may have served, in part, as an honorific hall for images of the Flavian emperors and local dignitaries, in a manner analogous to the Sebasteion as a picture-gallery for the Julio-Claudians, and to the E gate of the S agora for the Antonines.⁵¹ In the early 4th c. A.D., the N façade was inscribed with the Diocletianic edicts. Adding the inscriptions did not require structural changes to the façade, only the removal of a few mouldings to make room for them. While the edicts may indicate a legal or administrative function for the building in the early 4th c., the N façade might have been used to display the edicts simply because of its prominent location in the S agora.⁵²

A mosaic *tabula ansata* on the floor of the central niche in the W aisle of the long hall states that a Roman governor, Flavius Constantius, sponsored renovations, presumably to the basilica.⁵³ The same governor is known to have financed the construction of the city wall in the mid-4th c. A.D. A block with another inscription honoring Flavius Constantius, probably part of a statue base, was discovered in 2004.⁵⁴ Perhaps the basilica served an official function under the Roman government in the 3rd or 4th c. A.D. after Aphrodisias became a provincial capital.⁵⁵ Indeed, the S hall would have made a grand reception space for a governor presiding over law courts or other kinds of official business, with the long hall acting as his 'atrium'.⁵⁶

Flavius Constantius's renovations may have included the installation of an equestrian statue group and a colossal female figure at the N end of the long hall (figs. 5, 12-13).⁵⁷ Rendered in local grayish-blue marble, the life-size statue of a running horse had a male rider of white marble (now poorly preserved). The crown moulding of its L-shaped base preserves an oval-shaped setting for a now-missing companion statue, and the horse's body shows several ancient repairs; these details suggest that the horse might have been damaged before its re-

50 On the functions of Greek stoas, see R. Martin, *Recherches sur l'agora grecque: études d'histoire et d'architecture urbaines* (BÉFAR 174, 1951) 495-502; Coulton (supra n.2) 10.

51 On the use of Greek stoas for the display of art and sculpture, see Martin (supra n.50) 497. Regarding the possibility that the S hall displayed images of the Flavian dynasty, see J. Reynolds, "Ruler-cult at Aphrodisias in the Late Republic and under the Julio-Claudian emperors," in A. M. Small (ed.), *Subject and ruler* (JRA Suppl. 17, 1996) 47.

52 A parallel is the so-called 'Octagon' at Ephesus, where the marble podium was covered in 4th c. inscriptions simply to take advantage of available space in a highly visible location. See P. Scherrer, *Ephesus, the new guide* (Istanbul 2000) 124-25.

53 The inscription was found during excavations in 1988 to uncover geometric mosaics in the W aisle of the long hall. Erim, *Aphrodisias papers* 1, fig. 27; S. Campbell, "Signs of prosperity in the decoration of some 4th to 5th century buildings at Aphrodisias," in *Aphrodisias papers* 3, 1, figs. 1-2.

54 The inscribed block was found lying in a field east of the basilica. The inscription will be published by A. Chaniotis.

55 Roueché, *ALA* xxiv, 1-4, 252; Ratté, "Late antiquity" 124-25.

56 This is speculation as there is little evidence to work with. Since Roman governors also paid for renovations to the Hadrianic baths and other public buildings at Aphrodisias, the import of Flavius Constantius's presence at the basilica may be overstated. On governors paying for building renovations, see Roueché, *ALA* 32-33, docs. 17-18; Ratté, "Late antiquity" 125.

57 Supra n.27. In Late Roman and Early Byzantine Aphrodisias, statues were frequently re-configured and re-installed in front of major public buildings, often under the patronage of governors. For comparison, see the 'Julian-Theodosius' in R. R. Smith, "Late antique portraits" 161-63, fig. 2 and the Roman governor Alexander's statue monument, *ibid.* 165-67, fig. 5.

installation in the basilica, and that it may have been relocated without all its original components. The colossal female statue also has a history of adaptive re-use since the *in situ* base was not originally designed for a statue of this size (figs. 5, 13). The statue's head, originally made as a separate piece, is lost; in an earlier context this statue may have represented a deity or possibly an imperial family member. In their new contexts, both the equestrian group and the colossal female figure served to accentuate the entrance from the N vestibule into the long hall.

Structural renovations and additions to the basilica were relatively superficial, though some were expensive, such as the installation of mosaic and *opus sectile* paving. The physical remains of the excavated parts of the building show no signs of major additions or renovations, only repairs to a few marble blocks. Substantial alterations in the 3rd or 4th c. A.D. were once thought to have been part of the basilica's history when the basilica reliefs were dated on stylistic grounds to the mid-3rd c. A.D.⁵⁸ But as B. Yıldırım demonstrates, the style of the basilica reliefs is contemporary with the construction of the building in the late 1st c. A.D.,⁵⁹ and from an architectural standpoint it is clear that the balustrade panels and their sculpted reliefs were part of the basilica's original design.

In the late 5th or early 6th c. A.D., a portico was built along the S side of the S agora, which may have required modification of the upper areas of the N façade. There is no convincing evidence for an earlier phase of this portico; its construction material was made up entirely of spolia.⁶⁰ An inscribed architrave credits a local citizen, Philip, with building part of it, perhaps in conjunction with the rebuilding of the W colonnade of the S agora in the 6th c. by another benefactor named Albinus.⁶¹

This is the latest documentary evidence for the use of the basilica. By the early to mid-7th c., the building had probably been abandoned. The latest coins found in the débris on the floor of the long hall (and in the excavation of a row of shops west of the basilica) date to the reign of Heraclius, and this is consistent with the evidence from many other parts of the site.⁶² There is little to suggest that the basilica was ever adapted for use as a church, but since the S hall remains unexcavated that possibility cannot be excluded. Latin and Greek crosses are carved into column shafts and on doorjambs, but these are typical indications of a Christian presence from the 9th to the 15th c. By the time that the Triconch Church was built over the SW corner of the S vestibule in the Middle Byzantine period, it is certain that the basilica lay largely in ruins (fig. 3).

Thus the basilica followed a pattern observable in other civic structures at Aphrodisias of renovation and adaptive re-use in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine periods. The Hadriatic bath-gymnasium complex, Agora Gate, N Agora, Bouleuterion, Tetrapiylon, Stadium, Theater, and Basilica were all restored or renovated between the 4th and early 6th c. A.D.⁶³ These civic landmarks continued to function largely because Aphrodisias had gained new status as a provincial capital. In contrast, many towns in the provincial hinterland (e.g., Aizanoi in Phrygia) suffered during the strife of the 3rd c. and did not recover after Diocletian's reorganization of the provinces.⁶⁴

The Roman basilica in Asia Minor

The basilica of Aphrodisias was not without precedent in Asia Minor, and it was not without successors. Until recently, few Roman basilicas were known in this region, but now at least 9

58 Erim, *Aphrodisias* 26-27 and 100-1.

59 See Yıldırım below, pp. 128-29.

60 Cf. de Chaisemartin and Lemaire (supra n.7) 157. However, the architrave cited as evidence for an earlier portico is re-used; for this portico see also Crema (supra n.7) 282-303, fig. 60.

61 Roueché, *ALA* 108-9, doc. 66; 125-36, doc. 82; Ratté, "Late antiquity" 135.

62 "Aphrodisias, 1995," 16; inv. no. C94-12. On the abandonment of other public buildings at Aphrodisias, see Ratté, "Late antiquity" 138-40.

63 Ibid. 124-40.

64 S. Mitchell, *Anatolia: land, men, and gods in Asia Minor I* (Oxford 1993) 257-59.

can be identified both at inland towns and in large coastal cities: Ephesus (I), Aphrodisias, Hierapolis, Magnesia on the Meander, Cremna, Smyrna, Ephesos (II), Xanthos, and Aspendos.⁶⁵ Others are likely to have been misidentified as colonnades or streets. It is not surprising that the Roman basilica appeared first in Augustan Ephesus, a cosmopolitan port and the leading city of the province of Asia. Many Italians resided and did business there, including C. Sextilius Pollio,⁶⁶ who financed an arcaded aqueduct as well as a basilica.⁶⁷ Pollio's basilica was built during the late Augustan period in the so-called 'upper agora' or 'state agora' to replace an earlier structure on the same site, probably a stoa.⁶⁸ It was part of a large project to transform an existing Hellenistic square into the new political and municipal center.⁶⁹

Both in its architecture and in its dedicatory inscription Pollio's basilica reflects the architectural traditions of both Hellenistic Greece and Republican Rome. Like the long hall of the later basilica at Aphrodisias, which may have been modeled after it, the three-aisled plan and two-storeyed elevation of its central hall evoke a Roman basilica, while its elongated proportions resemble those of a Hellenistic stoa (fig. 26). In its restored dedicatory inscription, it is called a *basilica* in Latin and a *basilike stoa* in Greek.⁷⁰ Although the Latin word doubtless referred to the Roman building type, the meaning of *basilike stoa* is debated. To Greek audiences, the term may have signified simply a magnificent stoa.⁷¹ Underscoring the association between this prominent civic building and the central ruling power were enthroned statues of Augustus and Livia in its E hall, which probably served as a gallery for honorific dedications to the imperial family and to private citizens such as Pollio.⁷²

It was another 50 years before basilical architecture became popular in Asia Minor: the basilicas of Aphrodisias, Hierapolis, Magnesia on the Meander, Cremna, Smyrna, Ephesus (II), Xanthos, and Aspendos were all built between the late 1st and the early 3rd c. Although variations existed, most shared the same distinctive elongated proportions and broad rectangular halls located at one or both ends of the long hall, as first seen at Ephesus (fig. 26). The main innovation was a dramatic increase in scale (fig. 27). For instance, the mid-2nd c. basilica

65 For bibliography, supra n.3.

66 On building patronage by Italians at Ephesus in the Early Imperial period, see H. Halfmann, *Städtebau und Bauherren im römischen Kleinasien* (IstMitt. Suppl. 43, 2001) 21-35.

67 For the Pollio aqueduct, Alzinger (supra n.2) 21 ff.; Scherrer (supra n.52) 228-29, figs. 1-2. For the gate of Mazaeus and Mithridates, Alzinger (supra n.2) 9-16, figs. 1-5.

68 For bibliography, supra n.3.

69 On the earlier stoa, see W. Alzinger, "Die Lokalisierung des hellenistischen Rathauses von Ephesos," in *Bathron: Beiträge zur Architektur und verwandten Künsten* (Saarbrücken 1988) 27, fig. 10; on the topography of the upper agora, see P. Scherrer, "The historical topography of Ephesos," in Parrish, *Urbanism* 69-72.

70 D. Knibbe, H. Engelmann and B. Iplikçioğlu, "Neue Inschriften aus Ephesos VII," *ÖJh* 62 (1993) 148-49; Alzinger (supra n.2) 26-28; R. Kearsley (ed.), *Greeks and Romans in imperial Asia* (IGSK 59, 2001) 127-29.

71 Coulton (supra n.2) 180 warns against interpreting 'basilike stoa' as a reference to a building type, such as the Greek version of what the Romans would have called a basilica or a combination of basilica and stoa, citing evidence that 'basilike', or variations on 'royal' or 'kingly', as well as stoa could be loosely employed in Greek usage, even after the Roman development of a building type called *basilica*. See also G. Downey, "The architectural significance of the use of the words stoa and basilike in classical literature," *AJA* 41 (1937) 194-211; for related analyses, see Balty (supra n.2) 281-93; Welch (supra n.2) 8 ff.

72 Alzinger (supra n.2) 32; B. Rose, *Dynastic commemoration and imperial portraiture in the Julio-Claudian period* (London 1997) 175, pls. 214-15. For the possible association of the upper agora with an Augusteum-Sebasteion, see P. Scherrer, "Augustus, die Mission des Vedius Pollio und die Artemisia Ephesia," *ÖJh* 60 (1990) 99-101; S. Price, *Rituals and power: the Roman imperial cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge 1986) 133-69. On the relevance of this and comparable buildings to ongoing debates about the Romanization of Asia Minor, see Stinson (supra n.47); H. Thür, "Wie römisch ist der sog. Staatsmarkt in Ephesos?" in Meyer (supra n.47) 77-90; cf. Ratté, "Hellenistic & Early Imperial" 12 and 26-27; P. Gros, "Les nouveaux espaces civiques du début de l'Empire en Asie Mineure: les exemples d'Ephèse, Iasos et Aphrodisias," *Aphrodisias papers* 3, 113-16; Alzinger (supra n.2) 32.

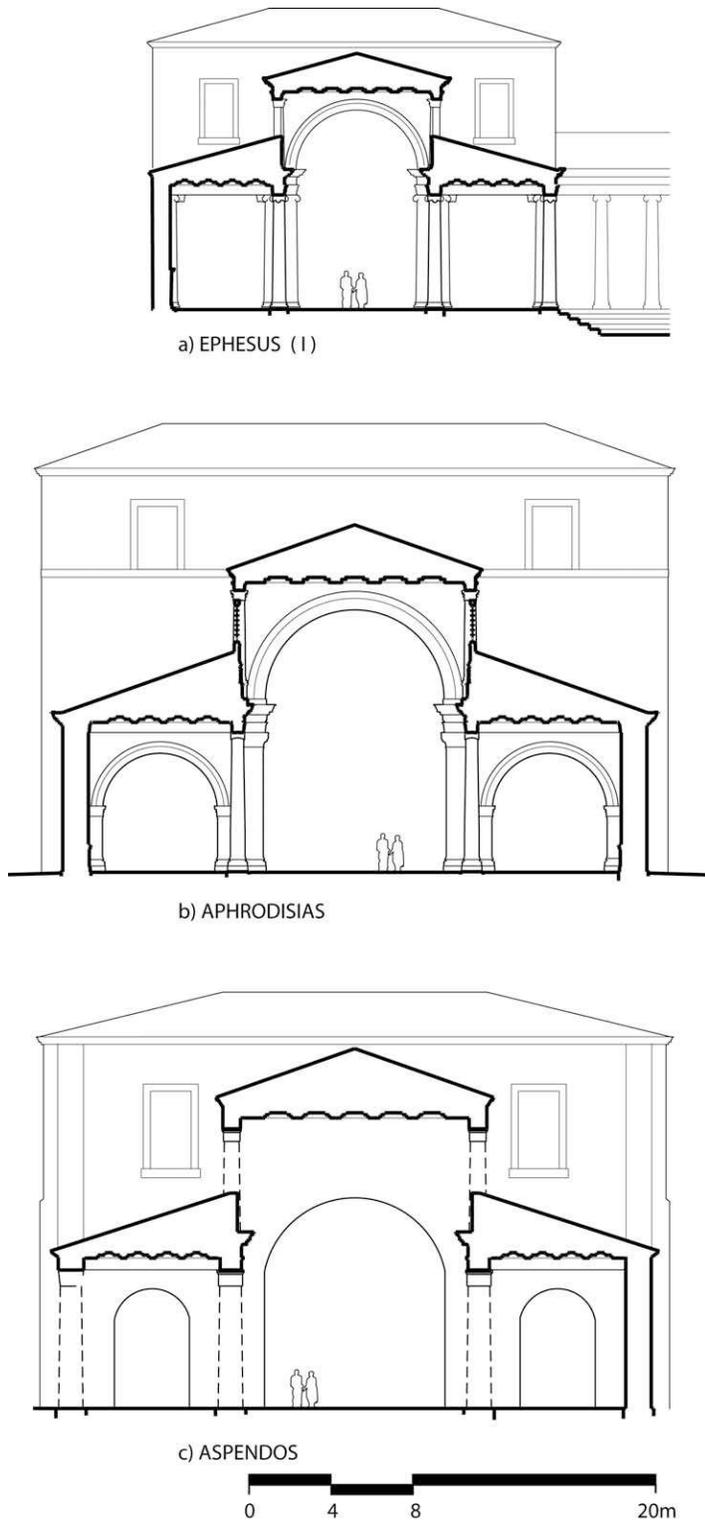


Fig. 27. Sections of selected Asiatic basilicas: a) Ephesus (I); b) Aphrodisias; c) Aspendos (P. Stinson).

at Hierapolis is a hall only *c.*20 m wide but over 250 m long.⁷³ The contemporary basilica at Magnesia on the Meander was wider and shorter than that of Hierapolis; it resembles the Aphrodisian basilica, albeit in truncated form. The basilica dedicated to Hadrian at Cremna was smaller than the others in the group, but its cross-section, narrow proportions, ambulatories missing from the short ends, and large archway at one end of the long hall recall their key features.⁷⁴

The large, lavishly-decorated basilica at Smyrna was built during the last quarter of the 2nd c. A.D. (fig. 26).⁷⁵ Its design is traditionally attributed to the influence of Rome's Basilica Ulpia. I would argue, however, that its basic architectural design and scale owe less to Rome than to local precedents in Asia Minor. Its elongated plan resembles earlier basilicas at Ephesus, Aphrodisias, Hierapolis, and Cremna (the first two of which predate the Forum of Trajan). Particular details, such as the propylon in the center of the façade and the long hall's arcades and cruciform piers, seem to recall similar features of the basilical halls at Hierapolis and Magnesia on the Meander, or even the N façade and N vestibule at Aphrodisias. Possibly the latest pre-Christian basilica known in Asia Minor was built at Aspendos to replace a Hellenistic stoa. It probably falls between the mid-2nd and early 3rd c.⁷⁶ Its design is very similar to that at Aphrodisias; no two others are so alike (figs. 26-27). Their plans, dimensions, and proportions are nearly identical, and their cross-sections are similar.⁷⁷

⁷³ The architecture of the basilica at Hierapolis is outlined by D'Andria (*supra* n.3) 98-109 and De Bernardi Ferrero (*supra* n.3) 156-60.

⁷⁴ As noted by Mitchell (*supra* n.3) 68. The new survey indicates that the basilica did not have a broad hall attached to the short end of the long hall in the original phase, as previously thought (*ibid.* 58 fig.

The advantages of basilical architecture

How can the success of basilical architecture in Asia Minor during the 2nd c. A.D. be explained? The most significant reason is its formal flexibility: like the Greek stoa, the basilica could assume a variety of forms which adapted to different urban contexts and uses. In addition to their standard location on public squares, for example, basilical halls could be incorporated into bath-gymnasium complexes, as in the Theater Baths at Aphrodisias (see Ratté above, fig. 9) or the Baths of Faustina at Miletus.⁷⁸ The uses of a basilica were similarly flexible. At Aphrodisias and Ephesus, the basilicas may have housed business activities and public offices, and served as sculpture galleries. At Smyrna, a raised platform in a rectangular exedra could have been used as a speaker's platform or tribunal (fig. 27), and two dedications to Nemesis, a deity often associated with the administration of justice, were carved on the architraves of the adjacent W stoa.⁷⁹ Vaulted substructures at Smyrna and Aspendos may have served both as structural supports for the basilica and as magazines to store wares or grain.⁸⁰

In other respects, the workaday functions of basilicas in Asia Minor were probably not very different from those of Greek stoas. Basilicas also offered larger and more sheltered interior spaces. Another important factor was the prestige of their architectural design. At Ephesus and Aspendos, basilicas were built to replace existing stoas. Tearing down an existing building to rebuild on a larger, more lavish scale is an under-appreciated practice in Roman Asia Minor. Complementing the physical evidence are Dio Chrysostom's comments on his stoa, a controversial new building project for Prusa. He praised the structure for the shade and shelter it would provide, as well as for its height which was worthy of a great city.⁸¹

The sheer size of the Aphrodisian basilica must have made it a source of awe at the time of its inauguration. The scale of its fully-enclosed interior was unprecedented. The basilica was twice as wide and twice as tall as any previous building at Aphrodisias. Architecture and sculpture complemented one another: the scale of the basilica expressed the city's metropolitan pretensions,⁸² and the Founders' reliefs made claims to a legendary history, a common practice in older cities such as Ephesus, where such claims had been made for centuries.

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- 12, 60, fig. 13). Earlier assessments: Ward-Perkins and Balance (supra n.2) 175-86; Ward-Perkins (supra n.3) 302 and 366.
- 75 Naumann and Kantar (supra n.3) 106-11.
- 76 For the date, Lauter (supra n.3) 84-85; Ward-Perkins (supra n.3) 276 dated it later because of the brick vaults under the basilica. Now it is clear that brick vaulting made its debut in Asia Minor much earlier: Dodge (supra n.13) 116.
- 77 Other basilicas in Asia Minor, such as those at Magnesia on the Meander and Smyrna, are c.29 m wide. The cross-section of the basilica at Aspendos has been known because of scars the entablature and roof-beams left on the standing cross-wall that divides the long hall from the broad hall: Lanckoronski (supra n.3) I, 103, fig. 75.
- 78 For the long basilical hall or *ambulacrum/apodyterium* in the Baths of Faustina, see F. Yegül, *Baths and bathing in classical antiquity* (Cambridge 1992) 291-92, figs. 373 and 375. For a discussion of long halls in bath complexes in general, *ibid.* 414-16, fig. 501.
- 79 Naumann and Kantar (supra n.3) 78, 86-87 and 112, pls. 46 and 48. See also the rectangular niche at the end of the long hall of the basilica at Cremna: Mitchell (supra n.3) 58, fig. 12; 60, fig. 13; 63. For Nemesis, see Naumann and Kantar (supra n.3) 88, 55 doc. 2, 57 doc. 8.
- 80 Aspendos: H. Cüppers, "Getreidemagazin am Forum in Aspendos," *BjB* 161 (1961) 25-35; Lauter (supra n.3) 85. Smyrna: Naumann and Kantar (supra n.3) 79 state that the substructures raised the level of the basilica to provide an even surface for the agora; the vaults could have served both to elevate the building as well as provide storage space for wares. See also R. Staccioli, "Gli edifici sotterranei dell'agora di Smirne e, ancora, sui criptoportici forensi," *Latomus* 26 (1957) 275-92, esp. 279.
- 81 Dio Chrys., *Or.* 40.5 ff.; 47.15 ff. Cf. J. Delaine, "The temple of Hadrian at Cyzicus and Roman attitudes to exceptional construction," *PBSR* 70 (2002) 205-30, who emphasizes the positive attributes of grandiose scale.
- 82 On competition among élites for public building patronage, see C. P. Jones, *The Roman world of Dio Chrysostom* (Cambridge 1978) 110 ff.; Ratté, "Hellenistic & Early Imperial" 19-20; cf. Price (supra n.72) 126-32, esp. n.140.

The unusually long proportions of the Asiatic basilicas, their most distinctive feature, may also help to account for their popularity. In effect, these buildings served as covered, colonnaded streets, complete in many cases with arched portals articulating major architectural transitions.⁸³ The scale and extraordinary length of Asiatic basilicas enhanced their utility as public buildings, gave them communal meaning, and contributed to their success. The great length of an Asiatic basilica might also serve other practical functions. The excavators at Hierapolis posit that the high flight of steps in front of the basilica was originally designed to serve as stadium-like seating for both Greek and Roman spectacles that took place in the agora.⁸⁴ The length of that basilica equals that of a large stadium, while small images of gladiators, identified by their inscribed names, decorated the entablature of its façade.⁸⁵

Conclusions

Recent investigation has clarified both the architecture and the building history of the basilica. New epigraphic evidence together with stylistic analysis of the architectural decoration confirm the Flavian construction date proposed by earlier scholars. Among new discoveries, the most important have been the reconstruction of the appearance of the building's remarkable N façade — one of the architecturally most complex and innovative structures in the city — and a better understanding of the colonnades of the nave of the long hall. It is now clear that the mask-and-garland frieze of the Portico of Tiberius continued inside the long hall. This architectural device, combined with the unusual setting of the basilica, perpendicular to, rather than parallel with, the main axis of the South Agora, helped to give the long hall, the largest interior space in the city, something of the character of a colonnaded street. Study of the balustrade panels of the upper storey of the long hall has shown that they were integral to the building's original design and not later replacements, as formerly suggested. Examination of the N end of the long hall has revealed the bases of two of the remarkable statues found in the excavations: a colossal female figure, and the "blue horse"; both appear to be statues originally made for other locations, set up in the basilica in the Late Roman period. Finally, it is now clear that the Diocletianic price and currency edicts were inscribed on the façade, rather than on panels set up in front.

Closely modeled after the basilica at Ephesus, the building combined features of a Greek stoa and a Roman basilica, expressing both this provincial city's metropolitan ambitions and its local pride, lent a visual narrative by the Founder's reliefs. The basilica served in turn as a model for similar buildings in other cities, such as Aspendos. It is one of the best preserved of a number of eastern Roman basilicas in Asia Minor, which are distinguished from western models by their elongated plans, and which as a group shed new light on the complex cultural identity of this region in the Roman period.

83 G. Rogers, *The sacred identity of Ephesos: foundation myths of a Roman city* (New York 1991) 113, fig. 3, postulates that civic and religious processions passed through the late Augustan basilica at Ephesus. Cf. H. von Hesberg, "Platzanlagen und Hallenbauten in der Zeit des frühen Hellenismus," in *Akten XIII. Int. Kongresses für Klassische Archäologie* (Berlin 1990) 231-41, who argues that the extraordinary length of some early Hellenistic stoas may have been inspired by processional celebrations.

84 The Republican basilicas in the Forum Romanum served the same function: K. Welch, *The Roman amphitheatre* (Cambridge 2007) 30-71.

85 D'Andria (supra n.3) 98-109, fig. 86. Stadia were used as sites for Roman spectacles in Asia Minor as an alternative to Roman-style amphitheatres (rarely built in Asia Minor and the Greek East): Welch, "Stadium" 563-69.