

**Annette HAUG – Dirk STEUERNAGEL, Das Haus XV B (Maison 49,19) von Megara Hyblaia. Zur architektonischen und funktionalen Gliederung von Zweihofhäusern im hellenistischen Sizilien. Studien zur antiken Stadt Bd. 14. Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag 2014, 93 S.**

This book is dedicated to a single house in Megara Hyblaea, albeit the most prominent one that plays a major role in scholarship on Greek domestic architecture: Maison 49,19 or now House XV B, which has a surface area of about 850 m<sup>2</sup> and includes two courtyards. While the house has been frequently referred to since its excavation in the 1960s, particularly in research on double-courtyard houses, no detailed examination and publication has been provided. With their study, Annette Haug and Dirk Steuernagel (in the following H. & S.) successfully fill this gap. Their research is mainly based on an exhaustive survey and documentation of the architecture, carried out in two campaigns (2010, 2011). Stratigraphical excavations, which might have provided important information about the absolute chronology, could not be carried out (13). Furthermore, none of the finds that are stored in the magazines on site can be safely attributed to this building (16). Thus, conditions are somewhat dire and clearly restrict avenues of research, but it must be emphasized from the outset that H. & S. made the best out of this situation and provide a maximum close reading of the available evidence.

In the foreword, H. & S. briefly state what motivated their research (13) and list four major questions that guided their fieldwork (17). Their aim is to discuss the chronological development and functional differentiation of double-courtyard houses in Hellenistic-Roman Sicily; for House XV B in Megara Hyblaea, they seek to reconstruct the original design (with one or two courtyards, with full or truncated peristyle), circulation patterns, and functional differentiation. For the first two thirds of the book the reader is guided through a meticulous, well-written and excellently illustrated description and analysis (chap. I, 15-56: introduction discussing the history of research, the nomenclature, and problems of investigation; chap. II-III, 23-60: description and analysis of the remains) before proceeding to three brief synthetic chapters (chap. IV, 61-64: summary of building phases; chap. V, 65-85: function of rooms and functional differentiation; chap. VI, 87-93: house XV B in context, including the historical context and the context of Hellenistic domestic architecture in Sicily). A brief overview of the structure of this volume at the very beginning would have been helpful for readers to know what to expect, when and why.

The monographic publication of fieldwork is probably not the place to reflect upon the state of research regarding Greek (or even broader: ancient) domestic architecture in general. Thus, H. & S. cannot be blamed for not contextualizing their study within a much wider perspective of research, even if they clearly started their project with a concise research agenda and thorough knowledge of the literature. The topic of Greek domestic architecture has been “en vogue” since the publication of the groundbreaking, highly influential and stimulating study by Wolfram Hoepfner and Ernst-Ludwig Schwandner in 1986.<sup>1</sup> Since then, a vast array of studies have appeared, including: broad synthetic studies incorporating different sites and comprising monographs as well as handbook chapters; synthetic studies of specific sites (e.g., Agrigento, Delos, Eretria, Halieis, Himera, Leukas, Olynthus, Pergamon, Priene, Solunto); investigations of household assemblages (e.g., Delos, Halieis, Himera, Leukas, Olynthus, Priene), and of different categories of the decoration and furniture; studies of specific aspects such as household economy and domestic religion. Furthermore, excavations with modern methods, techniques, and questions were (and continuously are being) performed at sites that have seen little study, as well as at sites whose domestic architecture had been previously explored and is well-known (e.g., Delos, Eretria, Halieis, Leukas, Monte Iato, Morgantina, Olynthus, Pergamon, Priene); their differing aims, however, range from small test trenches for specific purposes (mostly clarification of the chronology) to large-scale open area excavations of complete houses (e.g. most recently, Monte Iato, Morgantina, Olynthus, Priene). Modern theories and approaches have been applied to Greek houses, among them most prominently gender theory and space syntax. Finally, several conferences were dedicated to the topic of Greek domestic architecture (Cottbus 2001, Cardiff 2001, San Diego 2001, Wien 2007, Kiel 2013).<sup>2</sup>

Hence, after about 30 years of intensive research one might take stock and attempt to define current standards and achievements, and more crucially, assess what remains to be done and where is potential for future innovative research. While the status quo can be evaluated by someone who has been investigating the topic for almost 25 years, new areas of research should critically be explored and developed by young scholars. The following gaps can be identified; if these are filled, new data for innovative approaches and questions may be generated.

<sup>1</sup> W. Hoepfner/E.-L. Schwandner, *Haus und Stadt im klassischen Griechenland. Wohnen in der klassischen Polis 1*, Munich (1986); second edition (1994).

<sup>2</sup> This enumeration is by no means complete, and includes only examples from the Classical and Hellenistic periods studies, published after 1986; with view to the purpose and limited space of a review, no detailed references are given for the examples cited here. Furthermore, royal palaces are excluded. Similar observations may apply to Roman, Punic, Etruscan etc. domestic architecture, but a comprehensive assessment of domestic architecture across the entire ancient Mediterranean cannot be provided here.

- There is a need for detailed studies of many houses and even entire sites, which provide a thorough treatment and reading of all available evidence.
- Systematic programs of soundings at major sites would provide a secure chronological framework for the development of domestic architecture. This is particularly important for sites with major changes in their cultural, historical, and political setting, most notably the much debated question of the influence of Roman rule on domestic architecture (e.g., Delos, Monte Iato, Morgantina, Pergamon, Solunto). Similarly debated is the relationship between known foundation dates of cities and the development of surviving houses (e.g., Morgantina, Priene, Solunto). Finally, the question of when and how houses were abandoned is often neglected.
- Comprehensive up-to-date investigations of major categories of decoration, notably pavements and stucco, are missing.<sup>3</sup> Systematic assessments of syntax, semantics, and chronologies might allow for a much more refined establishment of local, regional and superregional hierarchies in decoration patterns, as well as for aesthetic approaches and a re-evaluation of the ornamental value of decoration.
- Since many old excavations do not meet modern standards in terms of methods, documentation, and recording systems and thus often do not allow for an in-depth investigation of current research questions, targeted new area excavations offer excellent potential, particularly at well explored sites where they could complement and allow for a critical reassessment of published evidence (e.g., Delos, Megara Hyblaia, Morgantina, Olynthus, Priene, Solunto). This would provide a much more solid basis for the application of modern theories and the reconstruction of households and their differentiated use of domestic space.

In sum, this reviewer pleads for fundamental new fieldwork ('Grundlagenforschung') with a meticulous close reading, rigorous analysis, and sophisticated interpretation of the material. To return to the book under review, this is exactly what H. & S. provide for barely studied evidence. While the Archaic period of Megara Hyblaia has long attracted interest and yielded many publications, the Hellenistic and Roman periods have received very little attention. This is about to change, as a French team under the direction of Henry Tréziny has recently embarked upon a major research program dedicated to this phase of the city.<sup>4</sup> H. & S.'s work is part of this project and is complemented by a PhD dis-

---

<sup>3</sup> Long awaited synthetic studies with catalogs on Greek-Hellenistic mosaics (R. Westgate) and on the important stucco decorations of Delos (F. Alabe and U. Bezerra de Meneses) have not yet been published; the study by V. Vassal, *Les pavements d'*opus signinum*. Technique, décor, fonction architecturale*, Oxford (2006) 5-9 unfortunately is published without the complete catalog on which it is based (only 557 of 1092 entries appear in the catalog, 107-212). There is no recent synthetic study on so-called masonry style in the Eastern Mediterranean; for the Western Mediterranean see T. Lappi, *Hellenistische Wanddekorationen. Syntax, Semantik und Chronologie des Ersten Stils im zentralen und westlichen Mittelmeerraum*, unpublished PhD dissertation, Tübingen 2016.

<sup>4</sup> The results of this project will soon be published as volume VII in the excavations series of Megara Hyblaia.

sertation on the domestic architecture of Hellenistic-Roman Megara Hyblaea by Frederic Mège.<sup>5</sup>

H. & S.'s study is also remarkable for another reason: monographs on individual Greek houses are still rare, and the few known examples are dedicated to large, important, and particularly lavishly decorated houses that also include several courtyards.<sup>6</sup> While House XV B in Megara Hyblaea shares with these houses an impressive size and the presence of two courtyards, it has little to offer in terms of decoration. This makes its interpretation much more challenging and renders it far less obvious for monographic treatment overall. H. & S. deserve particular recognition for having tackled this challenge, and this in an amazingly timely manner following the completion of their fieldwork.<sup>7</sup>

The major results of this study include the following:

1. The provision of two courtyards goes back to the initial concept and construction of House XV B and is not, as repeatedly argued in previous scholarship, the result of a later enlargement. Thus, the larger southern peristyle courtyard was always complemented by the smaller simple northern courtyard.
2. H. & S. identify four phases on the terrain of House XV B: 1. some structures that pre-date the large double-courtyard house but cannot be classified in more detail; 2. the construction of the double-courtyard house, which included a three-sided peristyle in the south and a simple courtyard in the north; 3. the remodeling of the double-courtyard house, which entailed the creation of additional rooms, the re-decoration of some rooms, and changes in the eastern *porticus* of the peristyle; 4. a phase when the double-courtyard house was largely abandoned and to which only a coherent group of rooms in the south-east and some isolated walls in the northern part are assigned; the south-eastern rooms included a staircase that may have led to a newly built upper story.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> F. Mège, *Habitat et urbanisme en Sicile orientale à l'époque hellénistique (IVe-IIe siècle av. J.-C.): l'exemple de Mégara Hyblaea*, unpublished PhD dissertation Aix-en-Provence/Marseille 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Eretria, House of Mosaics: P. Ducrey/I. Metzger/K. Reber, *Le Quartier de la Maison aux Mosaïques*. Eretria 8, Lausanne (1993); Monte Iato, Peristyle House 1: K. Dalcher, *Das Peristylhaus 1 von Iaitas*. Studi Ietina VI, Zurich (1994); H. Brem, *Das Peristylhaus 1 von Iaitas: Wand- und Bodendekorationen*. Studi Ietina VII, Zurich (2000); Pella, House of the Abduction of Helena and House of Dionysos (strictly speaking two houses): Ch. Makarona/E. Giure, *Hoi oikies harpages tes Helenes kai Dionysou tes Pellias*, Athens (1989); Solunto, 'Ginnasio': M. Wolf, *Die Häuser von Solunt und die hellenistische Wohnarchitektur*, Mainz (2003).

<sup>7</sup> For reasons unknown to me, I was only asked to review this book in February of 2016. – One should add that, in addition, H. & S. organized a conference in 2013, which was also published in 2014: A. Haug/D. Steuernagel (eds.), *Hellenistische Häuser und ihre Funktionen*. Internationale Tagung Kiel, 4. bis 6. April 2013, Bonn (2014).

<sup>8</sup> H. & S. keep referring to this house as a peristyle house, which is somewhat misleading, as this does not clearly denote the existence of a second courtyard. In contrast, the subtitle of the book specifically refers to "Zweihofhäuser" (double-courtyard houses), and the very existence of two courtyards is expressively identified as the starting point of their project (13, 17).

3. Despite the absence of absolute chronological data, H. & S. cautiously date the first structures on the lot of House XV B to the 4<sup>th</sup> c BC; the first phase of the double-courtyard house to the 3<sup>rd</sup> c BC, more precisely the Hieronian period, when Megara Hyblaea most likely experienced a major urban boom; the second phase of the double-courtyard house to the period of Roman rule after 213 BC; and the last occupation to the 1<sup>st</sup> c BC. While the intent and character of the second phase of the double-courtyard house are not clearly identified and assessed, the use of permanent pavements<sup>9</sup> is, in accordance with French research, assigned specifically to the Roman phase of Megara Hyblaea (43, 63).
4. H. & S. are extremely cautious in assigning specific functions to rooms and in identifying a particular differentiation of the two courtyard sections along popular opposites, such as male – female, public – private, representation / reception of guests – everyday use / family, representation – service. They still recognize, however, a clear hierarchy in the design, decoration, and possible function and use of the two courtyard sections which is maintained in both phases: the southern section was unquestionably better appointed, including the peristyle and the only rooms with permanent pavements that may preferably have been used for the reception of guests; in contrast, the few installations that H. & S. ingeniously identify as related to production and processing of agricultural goods, are concentrated in the northern section. According to H. & S., similar caution is indicated in interpreting other double-courtyard houses in Sicily, even if these commonly provide many more elements of decoration and thus significantly more clues for establishing hierarchies of rooms and room suites. They convincingly argue that these houses also had been conceived, from the beginning, as double-courtyard houses.<sup>10</sup>

These results are important and overall very convincing. As mentioned above, the book is clearly written, well-argued, almost free of mistakes,<sup>11</sup> and amply

<sup>9</sup> For the two surviving pavements in rooms B 15 and B 17 H. & S. use the terms "Kalkestrich" and "Terrazzo" (43), both of which are much debated in scholarship. A reference to Vassal 2006 (op. cit. note 3), esp. 2, 24-27, would have been useful here, as would a closer assessment of how common these "Kalkestrich" pavements were in Sicily and how they rank in a hierarchy of pavements: the reference to Morgantina, p. 44, note 70, is not quite appropriate because B. Tsakirgis, The Domestic Architecture of Morgantina in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods, unpublished PhD dissertation, Princeton 1984, 328-329 uses a different definition of terrazzo (p. 328: "pieces of marble or limestone chips in a matrix of white cement"), and the examples in Morgantina seem to rank higher than decorated *opus signinum* pavements. In contrast, the examples in House XV B, of which no sufficiently detailed and legible photo is provided (cf. figs. 43-44), seem to compare with simple "Gussmörtelböden", which are not very common in Sicily.

<sup>10</sup> This concerns particularly Peristyle House 1 in Monte Iato, and the House of the Doric Capital in Morgantina; for the latter, cf. already M. Trümper, Bathing Culture in Hellenistic Domestic Architecture, in: S. Ladstätter/V. Scheiblerreiter (eds.), Städtisches Wohnen im östlichen Mittelmeer. 4. Jh. v. Chr. – 1. Jh. n. Chr. Akten des Internationalen Kolloquiums vom 24.-27. Oktober 2007 an der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vienna (2010) 540 note 42; M. Trümper, Sanitary Installations in Hellenistic Houses of Sicily: A Critical Reassessment, in: A. Haug/D. Steuernagel (eds.), Hellenistische Häuser und ihre Funktionen. Internationale Tagung Kiel, 4. bis 6. April 2013, Bonn (2014) 89-90 note 14.

<sup>11</sup> The only real mistake that needs to be mentioned is on p. 74, note 182: the "Flügeldreiraumgruppe" in Peristyle House 2 of Monte Iato is located to the west of the peristyle courtyard, and not to its east.

illustrated with excellent photos, stone by stone plans, section drawings, and colored phase plans. However, some aspects of the documentation and, more crucially of the argumentation still provoke critical remarks – or rather reopen and stimulate the debate on the analysis of domestic architecture.

### **Documentation:**

Not all photos do consistently include a scale. The stone-by-stone plan (plan 1) is somewhat ascetic: it lacks a legend, which would allow for clearly identifying the material of stones and the types of pavements; furthermore, it does not include any elevations and room numbers, which hampers its use. While the section drawings (plans 2-5) partially substitute for the missing elevations, they cannot provide all desired information; in addition, they are printed too small to be fully legible. Lacking information concerns particularly the thresholds that play a key role in the distinction of building phases (see below): it would have been helpful to have elevations for all of these, and even separate detailed larger drawings for easier comparison of their type and material. Plan 6, which includes room numbers and a very helpful systematic labeling of all walls and features, lacks a north arrow. Various plans (figs. 11, 17, 18) lack scales. Room numbers of the houses in Morgantina are referred to in the text, but are missing in the plans (figs. 75-80).

### **Argumentation:**

The argument that permanent pavements became popular in Roman Megara Hyblaea only after 213 BC is questionable, or at best only tenable for domestic architecture. The well-appointed Greek public bath building at the agora, whose construction is commonly dated to the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> c BC, includes a variety of high quality decorated *opus signinum* pavements, which certainly go back to the original design of the building. While this building shows some signs of remodeling and may even have been used after 213 BC typological comparisons with better-known baths in Morgantina clearly suggest an early date for its pavements.<sup>12</sup> A full assessment of the pavements in House XV B would require a

---

<sup>12</sup> The bath building is only summarily published in G. Vallet/F. Villard/P. Auberson, Guide de fouilles. Introduction à l'histoire d'une cité coloniale d'occident, Mégara Hyblaea 3, Rome (1983) 49-60 where the date of its abandonment is not discussed. For the baths in Morgantina: S. Lucore, Bathing in Hieronian Sicily, in: S. Lucore/M. Trümper (eds.), Greek Baths and Bathing Culture: New Discoveries and Approaches. BABESCH Suppl. 23, Leuven (2013) 151-179; S. Lucore, Le terme sud di Morgantina: impianti idrico e di riscaldamento, in: L. Maniscalco (ed.), Morgantina Due milaequindici. La ricerca archeologica a sessant'anni dall'avvio degli scavi, Palermo (2015) 92-101; M. Trümper, South Baths at

more comprehensive study within the context of local public and private architecture, which was certainly beyond the scope of H. & S.'s book. This also concerns, far beyond pavements, other central aspects of House XV B (location, size, overall design, accessibility and circulation pattern, room types, water management etc.). A comprehensive study of domestic architecture of Megara Hyblaea, including reference to House XV B, will most likely be provided by the above-mentioned forthcoming French publications. This division of tasks is somewhat unfortunate for a comprehensive contextualization of House XV B within its monographic publication, but most likely unavoidable in view of the logistics and manifold requirements of such a large project as the investigation of Hellenistic and Roman Megara Hyblaea.

In their analytical description of the remains, H. & S. provide an interesting approach to reconstructing the development of the entire insula XV (23-31) but they do not fully explore the implications. They discuss the relative chronology of some houses but not the sequence of all lots with a view to the conception and development of the entire insula. If all available information is combined,<sup>13</sup> the following picture emerges: lots E and B, which are not contiguous, were developed first; lots D, C, and F followed; and the double-courtyard house was constructed last, probably at the expense of two earlier lots (cf. fig. 11). While there must have been a master plan for the original subdivision of this insula into six (or more) lots, these were obviously not developed systematically from north to south or vice versa, but probably at least from west to east, the eastern lots being smaller than the western equivalents and probably not consistently aligned in their north-south extension with the western lots (cf. figs. 11, 17). Since the houses share communal walls, construction and roofing must have been coordinated and cost sharing must have been discussed. One could have compared the sizes of the different lots, discussed the possible house types that the lots could have accommodated, and compared these in the local, regional and superregional context. For example, lot C has a surface area of about 190 m<sup>2</sup> (13.80 x 13.80 m excluding the walls) and D a surface area of about 145 m<sup>2</sup> (9.80 x 14.80 m excluding the walls); these sizes are by far outstripped by the double-courtyard house with its 850 m<sup>2</sup>, but compare well with, for example, average house sizes in Late Hellenistic Delos. Hypotheses for the roofing system of the entire insula, or at least of houses B, C, and D should have been developed, if not for the collection and drainage of rainwater from roofs into cis-

---

Morgantina: Comparative Assessment of the Heating System, in: L. Maniscalco (ed.), *Morgantina Due milaequindici. La ricerca archeologica a sessant'anni dall'avvio degli scavi*, Palermo (2015) 102-114.

<sup>13</sup> Lot E was developed before lots F, C, and D; the double-courtyard house B was built later than D; D is later or contemporary with C; C, in turn, is later than the first complex in the area of B.

terns,<sup>14</sup> then at least with a view to drainage of rainwater from roofs and with regard to the question of ventilation and illumination.<sup>15</sup>

The distinction and reconstruction of phases cannot be followed in all aspects. While the first phase of the double-courtyard house (fig. 70)<sup>16</sup> seems overall convincing, the lack of a northern colonnade and *porticus* in the peristyle courtyard remains strange, particularly in view of the considerable size of the peristyle (5 x 8 columns). If wall 49,63 originally had served as a stylobate and not as the foundation of a wall, a northern *porticus* could be reconstructed, for example with a back wall in alignment and continuation of walls 49,35 and 50,30.<sup>17</sup>

More importantly, phase 3 is highly questionable and is nowhere fully explained: how would a separate suite of large rooms with well-made thresholds and a latrine (fig. 72, rooms B 18, B 19, D 2, D 3, C 5, C6) have functioned, without any visible connection to a courtyard or any access from the street? It seems much easier and more logical (a *lectio facilior*) to combine phases 2 and 3 into one large phase of use ('Nutzungsphase') with a clearly identifiable intent, notably an enlarging, embellishing, and improving remodeling process ('Nobilitierung'):

- first, the building was enlarged and significantly more and larger rooms were gained by either subdividing existing rooms (B 17 from B 16, B 19 from B 18,<sup>18</sup> B 9 from B 2, B 13 a and b); by enlarging existing rooms (B 4 and B 5); by gaining rooms from the neighboring houses (D 2, D 3, C 5, C 6);
- second, this provided more options for a differentiated use of the house, even if the forms and axes of differentiation cannot be reconstructed;<sup>19</sup>
- third, rooms were embellished (B 15, B 17, B 18, with permanent pavements; the new thresholds of the striking Melilli limestone were probably also considered an embellishment);

---

<sup>14</sup> Water management is only briefly discussed on p. 75, and two manholes in the peristyle courtyard are interpreted as wells rather than cisterns.

<sup>15</sup> As well as the potential prestige linked to a visibly increased height of rooms and buildings.

<sup>16</sup> Phase plans (figs. 70-72) illustrate only the phases 2-4 in the area of XV B and are labeled "Plan Peristylphase 1", "Plan Peristylphase 2", "Plan Nachperistylphase", thus in the following phase 1, 2, and 3.

<sup>17</sup> Of which nothing remains; but this is also true of the hypothetically reconstructed original western walls of rooms B 4 and B 5 (fig. 70), for which there is no evidence.

<sup>18</sup> The partitioning of room B 17 from B 16 and B 19 from B 18 is so remarkably similar that it is highly questionable to ascribe this process to two different phases (phase 2 for the first, and phase 3 for the second group), a similar process may have occurred in room B 7.

<sup>19</sup> This tendency would have been increased if an upper story was really added to the house, as proposed by H. & S. (57); the platform in front of room C 5 certainly provided convenient access to and may have visually emphasized the large, and probably important room C 5, but it will hardly have accommodated an additional staircase that also did not lead to any possible upper story rooms in H. & S.'s reconstruction (fig. 72).

- fourth, the accessibility and visibility from the eastern street D 1 was improved (the new main entrance B 3 had two thresholds; the large new double entrance of B 6 provided differentiated access for carts and pedestrians);
- and fifth, the sanitary equipment was improved by providing a separate purpose-built latrine (B 18), which was by no means standard in Hellenistic houses in Sicily but instead rather a luxury feature.<sup>20</sup>

The only argument that H. & S. provide for differentiating phases 2 and 3 is the elevation of thresholds: while they concede, that the level of some rooms and thresholds must already have been raised in phase 2, the thresholds of phase 3 would have been laid out on an even higher level, thus suggesting a separate phase. If levels and materials of thresholds are compared, however, a different picture emerges. Almost all of the new thresholds of phases 2 and 3 were made of the strikingly white Melilli limestone which is hardly a coincidence but speaks for a concerted program. The following elevations are given for thresholds:

- B 6 entrance, phase 2: 19,50 m NN (43)<sup>21</sup>
- B 15 to B 16, phase 2: 19,65 m (44)
- Pavement of B 15 and B 17, phase 2: 19,40 m (44)
- B 3 entrance from street, phase 2: 19,65 m (41)
- B 18, B 19, D 2, D 3, C 5, C 6, phase 3: from 19,60 (between the peristyle courtyard and B 18) to 20,1 m (between C 5 und C 6, p. 59)
- Cess pit in the street in front of B 18, upper border, phase 3: 19,70 (41)

These levels show that the eastern street D 1 sloped slightly from south to north (as acknowledged by H. & S., 41); that the entrance thresholds were raised in phase 2, most likely in accordance with the street level; that a difference of 25 cm between the threshold and pavement of B 15 was not a problem, and that the same should therefore hold true for the difference between the floor of the eastern *porticus* (19,35 m) and the threshold to B 18 (19,60 m); and that the thresholds of rooms B 3 and B 15, both remodeled in phase 2, were laid out at the same level as that of B 18 in phase 3. Therefore, the southeastern rooms of H. & S.'s phase 3 could easily have belonged to phase 2; they were obviously conceived with a gradual increase of elevations between rooms B 18 and C 6 that could easily have been achieved with slightly ascending earth floors and would hardly have been noticeable for users walking through these rooms.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Trümper 2014 (op. cit. note 10).

<sup>21</sup> These are not absolute heights above sea level, but heights within a local grid with a freely established reference point of 20 m elevation at the West Gate (17).

<sup>22</sup> The isolated walls of phase 3 in the northern part of House XV B have a different orientation than those of the suite of rooms in the southeast, and they are not visibly connected

From a historical point of view, the two phases of the double-courtyard house could well be assigned to the Hieronian and Roman phases of the city, respectively. The second phase, as reconstructed and characterized here, would confirm that the Roman rule did not entail a rapid distinct decline of the city but instead granted continuous, and even increased wealth and an affluent lifestyle to at least some inhabitants.

In sum, critical remarks notwithstanding, this is an important and stimulating book. Studies such as this monograph on House XV B in Megara Hyblaea are much needed for advancing research on Greek domestic architecture and one hopes that this book finds many followers in the near future, published in a similarly comprehensive, rigorous, and timely manner.

---

with that group. They may have belonged to a post-double-courtyard house occupation whose nature cannot be determined in any closer detail.

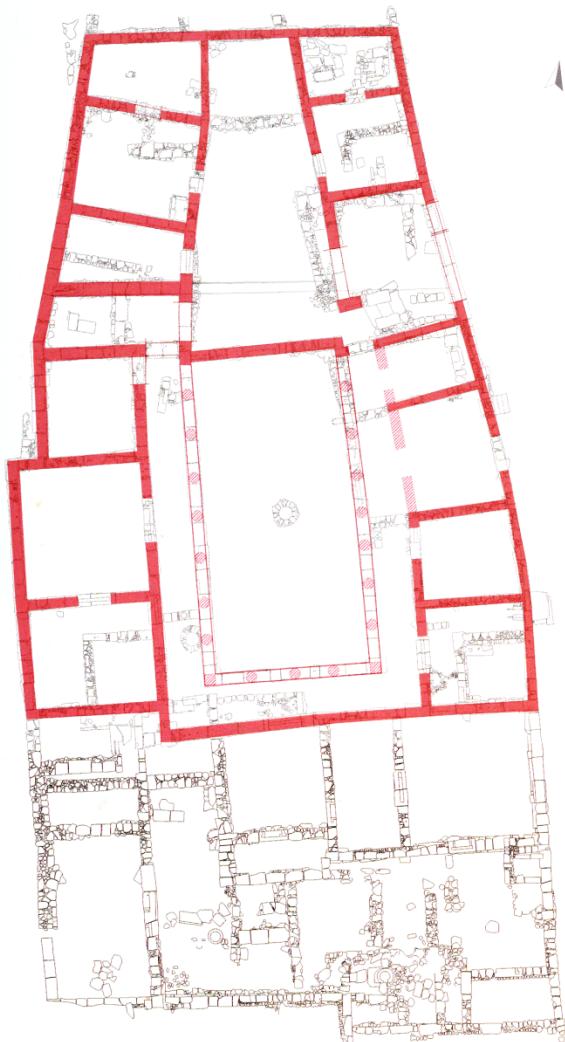


Abb. 70 Plan Peristylphase 1

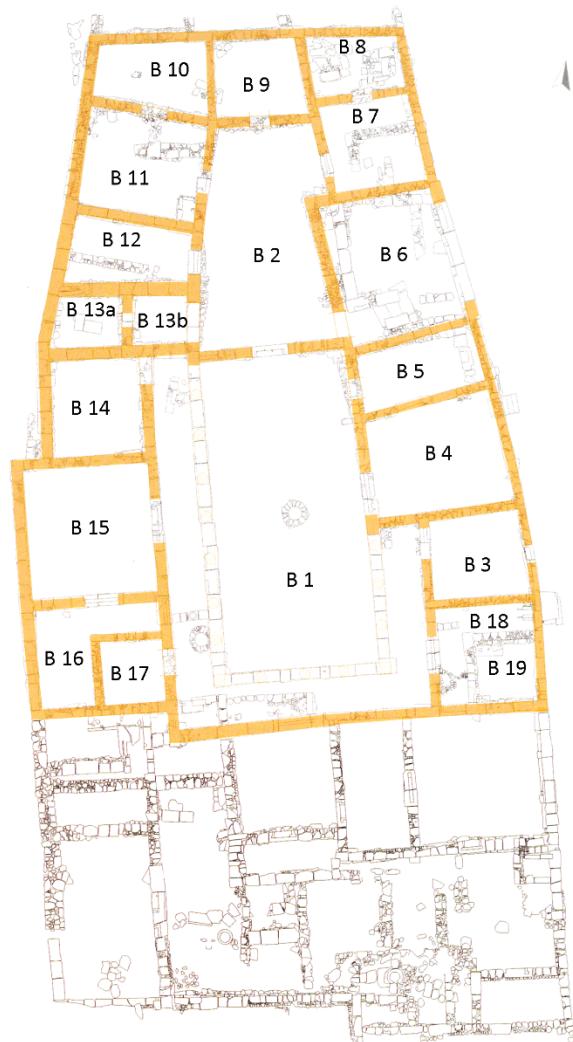


Abb. 71 Plan Peristylphase 2

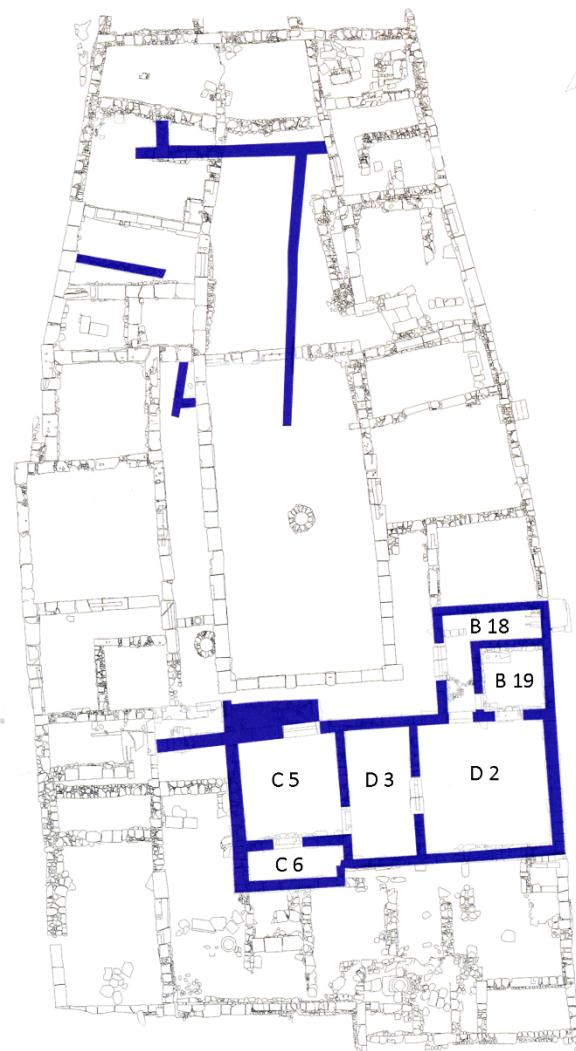


Abb. 72 Plan Nachperistylphase

Prof. Dr. Monika Trümper  
Institut für Klassische Archäologie  
Freie Universität Berlin  
Fabeckstr. 23-25  
D-14195 Berlin  
E-Mail: monika.truemper@fu-berlin.de