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The Roman Bath at Emmaus: Excavations in 1977

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Baths were first built in Judea in the Herodian period. The initial impetus to their quick spread all over Judea seems to have been given by that great builder-king himself, who had no less than ten spacious bathing establishments in his various palaces and fortresses [1].

Commencing with Herod and up to the Moslem conquest, three types of baths, both private and public, have so far been discovered in Roman Palestine: (a) the mono-axial type, (b) the circular type and (c) the retraces-circle type [2]. The bath at Emmaus, excavated by the Department of Classical Studies of Tel Aviv University in 1977 [3], clearly belongs to the first kind; it was an elongated, mono-axial structure, in which the bather proceeded from one room to the next to undergo the various ablutions, exercises, sweatings, etc., of which the process of bathing consisted [4]. At the end, he returned along the same axis to the only entrance, which gave out onto the forecourt *(palaestra)* and probably to the road.

The special peculiarity of the Emmaus bath is that it has been preserved, at least partly, up to and including the original roof, or to a Byzantine roof repair. Moreover, this is the first bathing establishment to be discovered at Emmaus, a site named after its hot springs and famous as a spa. In some rabbinical sources, the place is called 'Demosion', short for the Greek Δημόσιον λουτρόν, 'public bath'. Emmaus itself is, of course, a Hellenized version of the Hebrew *Ḥammat* or Aramaic *Ḥamta,* meaning 'hot springs' [5].

To date, hot springs have not been discovered in or around ancient Emmaus, which was overbuilt by the former Arab village Imwas which, in turn, was destroyed during the 1967 war. However, the excavations in 1977 did furnish tangible proof of seismic activities in Emmaus, which, together with written evidence, suggests that the hot springs might have been blocked during an earthquake, possibly as late as 1546 C. E., when, according to Islamic sources, Ramle was severely damaged. Nor can a date in the eleventh or thirteenth centuries be ruled out, since the Ramle area was devastated several times between 1033 and 1293 [6].

The actual remains of the *thermae* (Fig. 1) cover an area of about 14 × 7.5 m. The north side, probably facing the former *palaestra,* has been found standing at a height of 3 m., while the south façade was almost completely buried by erosion and landslides from the hill at the foot of which the *thermae* were erected. The original interior height from the lower floor in the *caldarium* to the springing of the barrel vault was about 3.50 m., and to its apex, 5.10 m. The exterior height of the façades was no less than 5.50 m. The walls, of *opus quadratum* from local limestone *(misi),* are of excellent workmanship inside, much weathered outside and with many inferior repairs. In its present state, the building comprises four rooms. The three eastern ones (Rooms 2–4) form a structural unit, while Room 1 was a later addition. How much later, we shall attempt to determine during the next season of excavation.

Access to Room 4 was gained by means of a square door in its north-east corner (Pl. 12:C). The room served, at least in its later stage, as the cold room *(frigidarium);* the dimensions were 5.10 × 2.80 m. A central cupola spanned the room, rising to 6.50 m. above the floor (Pl. 12:A). This cupola was constructed of four equal, tapering segments, each terminating beneath its apex, so as to form a square aperture, 1 m. long on each side. An Islamic lantern seems to have replaced a similar earlier structure. On two sides, the cupola rests upon the walls of the room, and on the north and south, upon two hemispherical transverse arches. These arches form rectangular alcoves 2.90 m. wide.

The *frigidarium* was built on bedrock. Irregularities in the natural surface were filled in with gravel from the vicinity, upon which a cement-like make-up for the flooring was

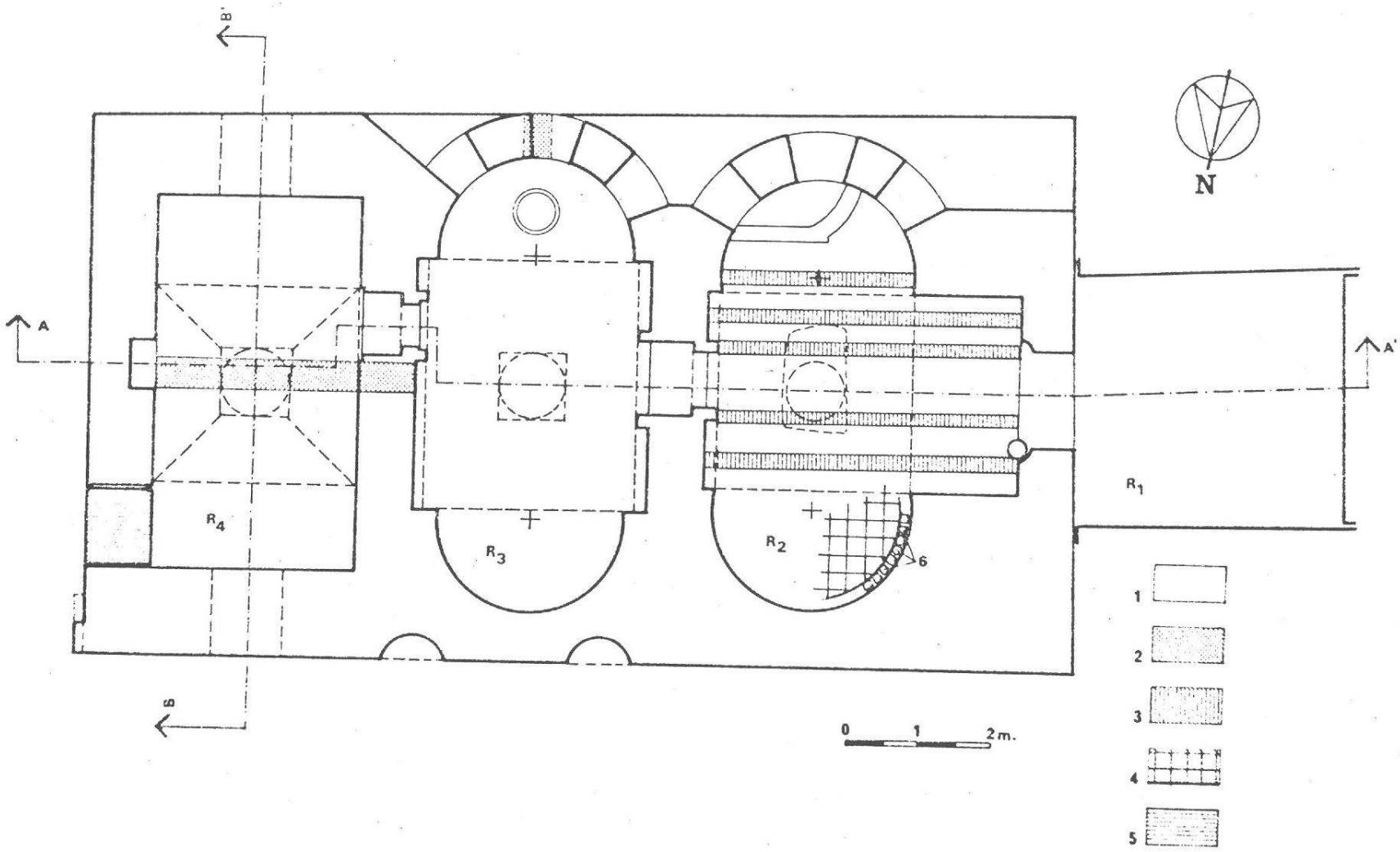

Fig. 1 Emmaus. Ground plan of the *thermae:* (1) Original walls with Islamic-period additions; (2) Channel; (3) *Suspensurae;* (4) Floor of pottery tiles; (5) Blocked doorway; (6) *Tubi.*

spread. Into this bedding, marble tiles, possibly with a design in *opus sectile,* were set. All the floor tiles were removed at the end of the Crusader period at the latest. Faint imprints in the cement, as well as small broken tile fragments, are all that remain. The walls have slight traces of plaster, in one section over a coating of potsherds, so as to better withstand moisture. Traces of plaster mouldings may indicate that the walls were divided into variously shaped areas of different hues.

The two rectangular recesses under the transverse arches could well have contained an *alveus* (basin) and a *labrum* (tub). The identification of Room 4 as the *frigidarium* seems nearly certain, the more so since the *frigidarium* is usually located near the entrance into *thermae.* Moreover, round and conical cupolas are typical of *frigidaria;* the *frigidaria* in both private and public baths at Pompeii, for example, have openings in the centres of their cupolas [7], just as at Emmaus.

There is, however, one feature which mars the identification of Room 4 as the cold room: a channel, 40 cm. wide and 70 cm. deep, runs through the middle of the room from east to west (Figs. 1:2, 2–3; Pl. 13:D). It is cut into the rock and its sides are covered with tiles 22 cm. wide, which were also used to construct an arched covering. The absence of any plaster coating on the sides and bottom makes this channel a hot-air conduit, unless it contained clay pipes, of which no traces remain. This channel ends in a funnel cut into the east wall, which leads up to a square recess, 1.70 m. above the floor. At the western end, the channel was blocked off under the partition wall between Rooms 4 and 3.

Whatever the function of this channel, a matter to be investigated during the next season, there is every reason to believe that it had to do only with heating, or at least with conducting hot air. Even the latter was avoided in cold rooms by ancient architects, who did their best to isolate the hot and the cold parts of the *thermae* from one another in order to maintain the appropriate atmosphere. At the stage when the channel was blocked, there is no reason not to identify Room 4 as the *frigidarium.* However, during the earlier phases, when the hot-air channel was still functioning, it could not have served as the cold room.

From the *frigidarium,* a door leads into Room 3, the warm room *(tepidarium),* measuring 3.20 × 3.50 m., which has two apsidal recesses terminating overhead in quarter-spheres (Pl. 12:B). These are constructed in smooth and closely fitting ashlar, with a typical keystone in the shape of a truncated disc. The southern apse was broken by three square windows (Fig. 2) which, according to their size, may have not only let in light, but also af-

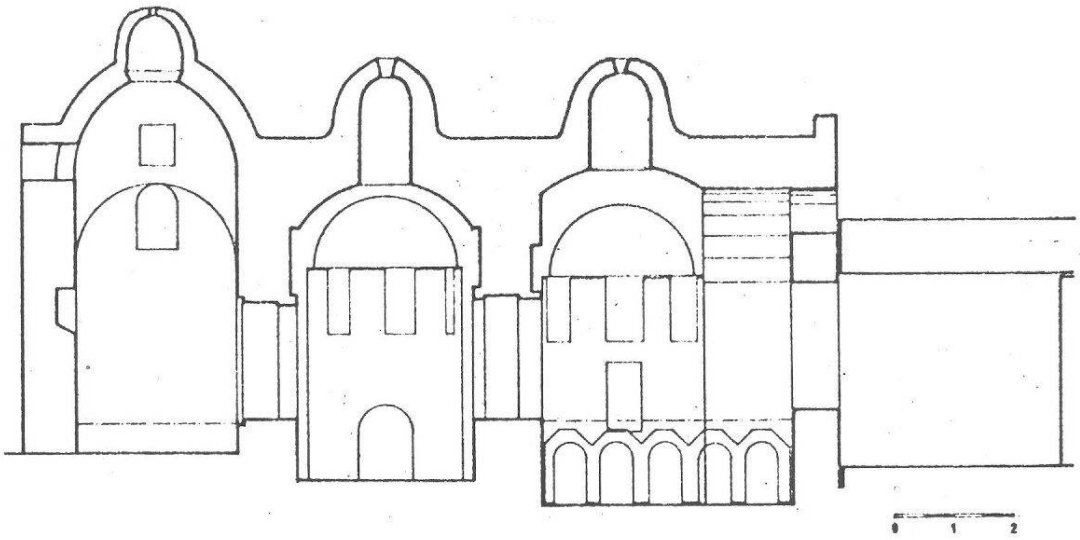

Fig. 2 Emmaus. Longitudinal section A–A'.

forded a view over the sprawling wooded hills – if we are correct in assuming that the *thermae* were situated at the edge of town [8].

A large stone basin was placed on the floor in the same apse. Digging below this floor, which was 80 cm. lower than that of the *frigidarium,* demonstrated that beneath a post-medieval and medieval level, there was a fill which consisted largely of great ashlar blocks. Some of these blocks may have belonged to the caved-in barrel vault which had been replaced, either before, during or after the Crusader period, by another barrel vault constructed of Roman or Byzantine roof tiles in secondary use.

The cave-in, most probably caused by the same earthquake that left its mark in the form of clefts in various walls of the building [9], smashed through and destroyed any medieval flooring that may have been laid above the original floor. The latter proved to be constructed of kiln-baked tiles, one indication that Room 3 had originally been furnished with a hypocaust, since the lower floors of hypocausts are always paved in this fashion. Moreover, the blocked-up channel from Room 4 originally opened up into the space above the tile floor. In addition, the walls of Room 3 were recessed 20 cm. beneath the springing of the barrel vault, and beside the door jambs (Pl. 12:B). This arrangement indicates that space was created for the insertion of parallel rows of perpendicular clay pipes *(tubi, tubuli)* for wall heating; these pipes drew their heat from the hypocaust. As a matter of fact, some broken *tubi* were found low in the caved-in layer, and more ample proof for the association of the recessed walls with rows of heating pipes is afforded by their discovery *in situ* in similar recesses in Room 2 (Pl. 13:B).

Final proof is provided by the discovery of a vaulted tunnel (Fig. 2) which terminates at the centre of the southern apse, and opens up just above the present floor (the lower floor of the disused hypocaust). The tunnel contains a brick-built hot-air conduit, similar to the channel in Room 4. The tunnel and conduit most probably led to a necessarily low-built furnace entrance *(praefurnium).* No vestiges of rooms were discovered south of the apse on the outside down to about a half-metre above the vaulting of the tunnel, but a *praefurnium* may well have commenced below that point. Although further research must furnish the conclusive evidence, we assume the existence of an early *praefurnium* behind this tunnel with confidence.

Our evidence, therefore, points to the fact that Room 3 was originally a hot room, either for sweating *(sudatorium, laconicum)* or for bathing, or both. It underwent a change of a similar nature and at the same time as Room 4. The original *suspensurae,* the arched, supporting passages of the hypocaust, lacking in Room 3 but preserved in Room 2, were pulled out together with the upper floor; the channel from (or to) Room 4 and other channels were blocked off; and the lower hypocaust floor was turned into the only floor. To bridge the great differential in height between the latter and the floor levels of Rooms 4 and 2, steps were installed. The assumed *suspensurae* in Room 3 may have been damaged by seismic action, not to be confused with the tremor which, at a much later date, brought about the cave-in of the vault. This assumption is strengthened by the evidence of Room 2 (see below). The damage to these *suspensurae* may have been so extensive that the owners of the *thermae* decided to pull them out completely, especially since the general layout was being altered.

In this final stage, Room 3 served as the *tepidarium. Tepidaria* can have *suspensurae,* but they almost never have wall heating. Frequently they occur without any permanent heating devices at all. Among the twelve or so *tepidaria* found in Israel, six or seven are without any fixed heating apparatuses [10]. Room 3 was thus a *tepidarium,* heated by portable braziers or the like.

Like Room 3, Room 2 has a barrel vault that replaced an earlier ashlar construction. However, the vault in Room 3 is composed of rubble set in cement rather than of tiles. In form, Room 2 resembles Room 3 except for the presence of a deep rectangular recess in the west wall (Figs. 1, 2). One may well imagine that all three recesses, the rounded apses

and the rectangular alcove, contained bathtubs or basins – if Room 1 did not belong to the original design. In this case, the rectangular alcove would have served, as today, as a passage to Room 1; most probably, the actual doorway would not have been wider than the connecting doors between Rooms 4 and 3, and 3 and 2, so that there still would have been space for benches or a tub on either side of the alcove.

It is probable that Room 2 was the *caldarium* from the beginning. Much of the system of *suspensurae* has been preserved (Fig. 1:3), and in the not yet excavated northern portion, parts of the upper hypocaust floor, as well as the wall heating up to a certain height, are visible (Fig. 1:4,6; Pl. 13:B). The upper floor did not rest upon either round or square pillars, but upon parallel rows of continuous arches, constructed of kiln-baked tiles (Pl. 13:A). Out of over 20 known hypocaust remains from Roman Palestine, only two others have been constructed in this fashion [11], which probably was intended to add greater strength to the hypocaust in this earthquake-infested region [12]. However, earthquakes seem to have shaken this construction too. Most of the *suspensura* arches have some kind of added support, such as a retaining wall or a pillar.

These repairs must have been contemporary with the removal of the double flooring from Room 3. What was a radical remedy for a *tepidarium* would, of course, not do for a *caldarium* – here the *suspensurae* had to be kept up at any price. One can imagine the workmen creeping in under the arches to make the rather slipshod repairs. Some surplus tiles were left lying upon the lower floor, possibly for future use. The earthquake of 498 C. E. is the one most likely to have caused the damage to both Rooms 2 and 3 [13].

Room 1 has not been excavated sufficiently to permit a proposal for its use. Its barrel-vaulted ceiling is lower than the others (Fig. 2) and its fine ashlar walls show many traces of rough, later, repairs.

Discussion of the piping and channeling systems for water, steam and air must be left for the final report which will follow the next season of excavation. But it can be said confidently that the present arrangement of the rooms in the bath is not the original one. A small sounding at the outer, north-east corner of the building revealed the existence of a door jamb (Fig. 1:5; Pl. 12:C), proving that the door in Room 4 led into another room, which in turn may have given out onto the court. A court or street must have run all along the northern façade of the building, as indicated by the apsidal niches (Fig. 1), which could have been intended for statues or other decorations. If the still-buried room east of Room 4 existed during the later phase of the *thermae,* it may well have been the dressing room *(apodyterium).* In the original layout, when Room 4 was moderately heated, its function most probably was different.

The continued use of the original floors of Rooms 4 and 2 and the removal of the upper floor during the second phase in Room 3 were among the reasons that made stratigraphic observations for the Roman and Byzantine periods practically impossible. Hampered by a strict prohibition against excavating outside the building [14], we had to rely for dating purposes on the following facts: Small pieces of clearly Eastern Sigillata pottery of indistinguishable shape were collected under the *suspensurae* of Room 2, as well as from behind a low retaining wall and/or bench constructed all along the walls of Room 3 (Pl. 12:B). From the latter place came a gem, which was dated definitely to the third century C. E. by Dr. M. Henig [15]. Flat parts of the original roof were mended with potsherds of fourth-century date [16]. Pottery picked up from the surface outside and around the bath includes, among the clearly Roman pieces, a lamp fragment of the Beit Nattīf type [17].

On the strength of all the above, our preliminary dating of the original *thermae* takes the turn of the second century C. E. as the *terminus post quem* and the beginning of the fourth century as the *terminus ante quem.* It is tempting to assign the building of the bath to the period of intensive construction which preceded and immediately followed the granting of the municipal charter to Emmaus-Nicopolis in 220–221 C. E. and to assign the rebuilding to the time after the earthquake of 498 C. E.

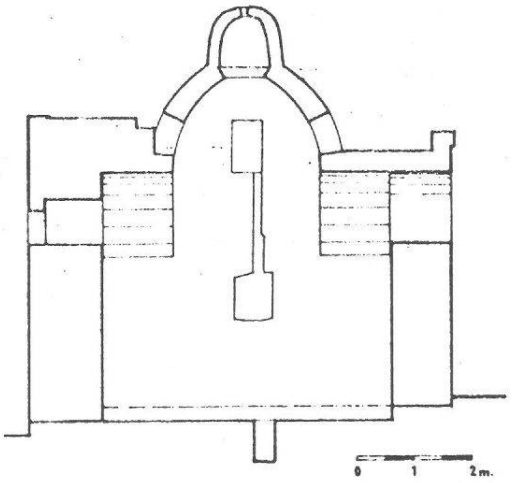

Fig. 3 Emmaus. Cross-section B–B' through Room 4.

The structure owes its preservation in subsequent periods to the fact that it became associated with the memory of Abu 'Ubaida, the supreme commander of the Moslem armies that conquered the Holy Land in the days of Caliph Omar (629–638 C. E.). Soon after the conquest, Abu 'Ubaida succumbed to the plague at Emmaus-Nicopolis, which the conquerors had chosen as their army headquarters.

Let us now briefly consider the fate of the *thermae* in later times. A wooden ceiling was inserted into Room 4, 2.80 m. above the floor. For this purpose, square sockets were cut into the walls at 20 cm. intervals to hold the beams on which the floor boards rested (Pls. 12:C, 13:D). All woodwork has since disappeared, but some of the cement which was smeared around the beam end has been preserved. In this way, an upper storey was created, the entrance to which was gained from the outside by enlarging a window high up in the south wall of Room 4. The arrangement of sockets enables us to reconstruct a wooden staircase or ladder communicating between the two floors. The strength of the construction is explained by the use of the building as a storehouse for wine, oil und foodstuffs (grain?) stocked in a variety of vessels, the broken fragments of which have been dug up in great quantities together with other pottery of the Crusader period [18].

At some time following the Moslem reconquest, the wooden second floor was removed. The sockets then served as receptacles for oil lamps, which were lighted by worshippers who came to what had become the shrine of Abu 'Ubaida, or Sheikh 'Ubeid as he was called locally [19]. Most of the oil lamps found in the *thermae* date from the period after its conversion into a shrine. The majority belong to a known, but seldom stratigraphically recorded type (Pl. 13:C) [20], whose shape exactly continues the form of the Iron II open lamp. During this period (Mamlūk or Ottoman?), possibly at the time the *thermae* became a holy place, the entrance to Room 4 was blocked, and a new entrance was opened through the northern apse of Room 2.

Room 2 saw one other change. At the level of the new floor of beaten earth and plaster, above the debris of the roof cave-in, a new doorway was constructed into Room 1. It was flanked by two engaged columns of marble, most probably in secondary use. The threshold of this doorway was on the same level as the latest of the four floors of Room 1; the lower ones must, therefore, be anterior to the 'shrine-phase', since no traces of steps for a passage have been discovered.

When the writer visited the site for the first time, very soon after the war in 1967, it was in a state of much dilapidation and neglect. However, a tradition of holiness still clung to

it, as voiced by some elders of the surrounding destrict. Although prior to our dig, the building had been used for some time as a shelter for shepherds and their flocks, the excavations have already done much to restore the *thermae* and to prove the dictum that balneal architecture is among the best of the creations of Roman and provincial Roman architects.

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Two further campaigns of excavation proved inter alia that under room 1 there existed definitely a *praefurnium* that at first coexisted with the *praefurnium* adjacent to room 3 and later continued functioning as the only (?) source of heating for all of the bathing establishment. Room 1 includes a recess for a vat of tepid water which was connected with piping to the great vat of cold water, the emplacement of which was discovered to have been built outside against the South Wall. A third vat may have been emplaced in room 1 above the *praefurnium,* thus following exactly the Vitruvian arrangement: «*Aenea supra hypocausim tria sunt componenda, unum caldarium, alterum tepidarium, tertium frigidarium... etc.*» De Arch. V,X,1) M.G.

[1] M. Gichon: Roman Bath-Houses in Eretz-Israel, *Qadmoniot* 11 (1978), pp. 37–53 (Hebrew), and bibliography, Z. Shaham, *ibid.*, p. 53.

[2] For Types (a) and (b), see C. Krause: *Lexikon der Alten Welt,* Zürich and Stuttgart, 1968, cols. 3060–3064, s. v. Thermen. Type (c) is similar to Type (b), inasmuch as the bathers perform a circular movement upon passing from one room to the other. It has, however, only one entrance, which compels the bather to retrace his steps in order to leave the establishment; see Gichon (above, n. 1), p. 39.

[3] Besides the writer, the 1977 team comprised: Dr. G. Tampone and M. Cenzatti – architects, both from the Istituto di Storia dell'Architettura e Restauro dei Monumenti, Cattedra di Restauro, Università degli Studi di Firenze; M. Fisher – chief field assistant; Z. Shaham – assistant and administrator; Z. Ben Nahum, E. Gichon, B. Jaskov, R. Linden, C. Meredith, H. Perlman, E. Shenhav, W. Schnitzlein – supervisors; Dr. N. Cohen, Dr. D. Jesselson, S. Potasher – recorders; M. Hirschauge – restorer; E. Sheffer – photographer; H. Heimann – photographic advisor; primary plans were drawn by D. Chen. A preliminary survey of the Emmaus *thermae* (map ref. 149 138) was carried out by us in 1969 and ... sequently. In 1976, soundings were conducted in and around the site by Y. Hirschfeld, who most kindly provided us with his notes and log. I wish to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Mr. Lippel, Director General of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, to Mr. Hamburger of the same Ministry and to E. Damati, Archaeological Staff Officer of the area, for their assistance in securing the excavation permit. The excavation was carried out simultaneously with that at Kh. Masad (map ref. 1553 1360) and of the Roman road from Nicopolis to Jerusalem, for which separate reports are in preparation. These enterprises were made possible by the generous help of the Children of Montreal through the good offices of Mr. Granek, Director, UJA Canada in Israel; the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung of Cologne, Germany; and the Jewish National Fund, through I. Ephron, head of the J. N. F. Education, Culture and Youth Department. Valuable assistance was rendered by M. Ruach, R. Jephet, M. Malka of the J. N. F. an Y. Feldman of the Ministry of Education. Among the volunteers who helped in the digging, we mention groups from the Bnei Akiva Youth Movement and a group from Meklar, Germany, led by Pfarrer A. Kunze. Last, but not least, I wish to express my appreciation to Gianni Lachina, Paola Santi and Margherita Martina of the Istituto di Storia dell'Architettura e Restauro dei Monumenti, Cattedra di Restauro – Corso C, University of Firenze, who prepared the final drawings of the original plans and elevations drawn by our architects.

[4] For a concise description of Roman bathing procedure and customs, see Ch. Daremberg and E. Saglio: *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines,* I, Paris, 1877, pp. 651–664, s. v. balneum; Krause (above, n. 2).

[5] Emmaus was a flourishing Jewish community during the Second Temple period until after the Bar Kokhba war. Later its population was mixed, and included Samaritans and Christians. The head of the latter community, Sextus Iulius Africanus, received from Elagabalus the charter giving Emmaus municipal status as a *polis* under the name of Nicopolis. Emmaus is mentioned as a spa by *Ecclesiastes Rabbah,* 7,15 and *Aboth de Rabbi Nathan A,* chap. 14 end, ed. Schechter, P. 30a. There it is called Demosit (*BT, Sabbath* 147b). On the name and identification, see A. Neubauer: *La Géographie du Talmud,* Paris, 1868, pp. 100–102; M. Avi-Yonah: *Gazetteer of Roman Palestine (Qedem 5),* Jerusalem, 1976, p. 55, with a list of sources and relevant bibliography.

[6] D. H. Kallner-Amiran: A Revised Earthquake-Catologue of Palestine, *IEJ* 1 (1950–1951), pp. 223–246; *IEJ* 2 (1952), pp. 48–62.

[7] Daremberg and Saglio (above, n. 4), p. 659, Figs. 751, 763, 764. Although cupolas are typical in *frigidaria,* in themselves they cannot serve as a decisive criterion. Cupolas are known to have covered other parts of baths. From Israel comes the example of Herodium, where the cupola room has been identified by its excavator, although challenged on this score, as the *tepidarium;* see V. Corbo: *Bible et Terre Sainte* 60 (Dec. 1963), pp. 10–20; Gichon (above, n. 1), p. 43.

[8] Plinius, *Epistulae* XVII, 11, and Sidonius, *Epistulate,* II,2, (To Domitius), 5 stress the importance of the large windows in the baths of their villas.

[9] Dr. G. Tampone, our architect, who specializes in the effects of seismic action on buildings, is preparing an exhausive study of this matter for the final report.

[10] Gichon (above, n. 1), p. 39. *Tepidaria* without hypocausts existed at Masada (two?), Kypros (two), Ramat Raḥel, 'Avdat and Mampsis.

[11] At 'Avdat and west of the Western Wall in the Old City of Jerusalem, dug by A. Negev and B. Mazar respectively. Neither system of *suspensurae* has been published in detail sufficient for discussion.

[12] Kallner-Amiran (above, n. 6) mentions seven recorded earthquakes, and possibly more, from the third to the nineteenth centuries in our immediate area. Six more are reported for the twentieth century. This leads to the assumption that many more tremors have not been recorded. In the Moslem period, the reports concentrate on only a few centres, such as Jerusalem, for which 55 earthquakes are explicitly mentioned for the period between the Moslem conquest and the termination of Turkish rule in 1917.

[13] *Ibid.,* p. 225 – unless an unrecorded earthquake that struck in the fifth-sixth centuries was responsible.

[14] The bath is located at the southern edge of the Moslem cemetery of the former village Imwas, which comes under the jurisdiction of the Israeli Ministry of Religious Affairs. Since the date the cemetery went out of use is doubtful, permission to dig outside the buildings was not granted. The excavators were, however, able to examine limited existing trenches along the outer façades.

[15] The excavators wish to express their gratitude to Dr. Henig. His full report will be incorporated in the final publication.

[16] Similar jars: H. S. Robinson: *The Athenian Agora V, Pottery of the Roman Period,* Princeton, N. J., 1959, Pl. 8:G.199; V. Karageorghis: *Excavations in the Necropolis of Salamis,* I, Nicosia, 1967, Pl. CVII:102;'En Boqeq, Phase I (not yet published).

[17] The Beit Nattīf lamps: D. C. Batamki: Two Roman Cisterns at Beit Nattīf, *QDAP 5* (1936), pp. 3–10. Our example belongs to the type represented on Pl. VII.

[18] Related vessels are recorded from 'Atlit, cf. C. N. Johns: Excavations at Pilgrims' Castle, 'Atlīt (1932–33); Stables at the South-west of the Suburb, *QDAP 5* (1936), p. 49, Fig. 14 (jars), Pl. XXVII (glazed vessels), Pl. XXVIII (unglazed slipware). See also R. de Vaux and A. M. Steve: *Fouilles à Qaryet el-'Enab, Abū Gôsh,* Paris, 1950, Pl. F.

[19] How the tradition about the identification of the *thermae* with Abu 'Ubaida was created in the first place has not yet been established. The death of Abu 'Ubaida from plague at Emmaus is explicitly mentioned only from the time of Yāqūt, c. 1225 C. E., onwards: Yāqūt: *Mu'jam al-Buldān,* III, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, Leipzig, 1868, p. 729; Marmadji: *Textes géographiques arabes sur la Palestine,* Paris, 1951, pp. 150–151. Yet Yāqūt himself (*ibid.,* p. 722; Marmadji, s. v. 'Amta) and the author of the Marashid, who wrote about 1300 C. E., explicitly name the village of 'Amta in the Ghor (Jordan Valley) as the burial place of Abu 'Ubaida, and as an alternative, Tiberias. This tradition is very much alive today. King Abdullah of Jordan had the tomb at 'Amta rebuilt in the 1940's (J. B. Glubb: *The Great Arab Conquest,* London, 1963, p. 214). Yāqūt's contradictory statements might be reconciled if we accept the first one only for the place of his illness, or even death, and the second one, 'Amta, for that of his burial. 'Amta and Imwas, as well as the great spa near Tiberias, all initially bore the names Ḥamat and Ḥamta (above, p. 102). The similarity in name could have been the root of the initial errors and later rival traditions. The fostering of the identification of Imwas-Emmaus with Abu 'Ubaida's burial site in the late Middle Ages may have been spurred by the Mumlūk endeavours to outweigh the sanctity to Christianity of this strategic crossroad, with its beautiful Crusader basilica, by the installation of a Moslem shrine. According to one Jewish traveller, R. Isaac Ḥilo, there existed at Emmaus in 1333 a venerated shrine, in which a Christian hero of the 'Persian wars' was buried. Assuming the veracity of Ḥilo's statement, there is no way of knowing whether this was a case of a former Moslem saint assuming a new identity in Crusader times or vice versa. The date of Ḥilo's account makes the latter more feasible (D. Eisenstein: *Oṣar Massa'ōt,* New York, 1926, p. 74 [Hebrew]).

[20] De Vaux and Steve (above, n. 18), p. 146, Fig. 34; 'Lampe byzantine (?)'. S. J. Saller: *Excavations at Bethany,* Jerusalem, 1957, p. 189, No. 490 (glazed); p. 190, 'unglazed open lamps', with relevant bibliography.