

Preliminary Report on the 2016 Field Season of the American Excavations at Morgantina: Contrada Agnese Project (CAP)

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In its fourth season, the American Excavations at Morgantina: Contrada Agnese Project (CAP) continued archaeological investigations inside a modest house of Hellenistic date located near the western edge of the ancient urban center at Morgantina. Previous CAP excavations, conducted between 2013 and 2015, had verified the presence of an adaptive urban grid in this portion of the ancient city and, moreover, revealed much of the northern part of the building that occupied Lot 1 of insula W13/14S. Following the 2015 excavations, we came to identify this building as a modestly-appointed house that had been occupied for roughly 50 to 75 years, beginning in the second quarter of the third century BCE. The 2016 CAP season represented a significant expansion of the excavation, as four large trenches were set across the entirety of the lot, with the twin goals of resolving stratigraphic questions that remained from previous seasons and exploring the lesser-known southern area of the building. In this report we describe newly excavated evidence for the construction and use of the building as a whole, proceeding phase by phase and trench by trench.

Introduction

The fourth season of the American Excavations at Morgantina: Contrada Agnese Project (CAP) took place between 8 June and 20 July 2016. CAP is a multiyear research and excavation project designed to investigate developments in the Contrada Agnese, a neighborhood located at some remove from the civic center of Morgantina, between the third and first centuries BCE. Excavations were carried out with the permission of the Co-Directors of the American Excavations at Morgantina (AEM), Prof. Malcolm Bell III and Prof. Carla Antonaccio, and in cooperation with Dott.ssa Laura Maniscalco, Director of the Parco Archeologico Regionale di Morgantina, and the Soprintendenza ai Beni Culturali e Ambientali di Enna¹. Alex Walthall is the project director; Randall

¹ We would like to thank Prof. Malcolm Bell III and Prof. Carla Antonaccio for their permission and their constant encouragement as we pursue this project. Our thanks also go to Dott.ssa Laura Maniscalco, Director of the Parco Archeologico Regionale di Morgantina, for her assistance and support. We are extremely grateful to the Comune and residents of Aidone for their generosity and hospitality. Our work was made possible by generous financial support from the Department of Art & Archaeology at Princeton University, the Loeb Classical Library Foundation, and the American Philosophical Society, as well as from the generosity of private donors. We thank Dr. Elizabeth Fentress for helping us to secure the micromorphological analysis of samples collected from the rammed-earth wall in Trench 42. It goes without saying that this work would not be possible without the many volunteers who gave their time, energy, and goodwill to the project. Thanks to Wilhemina Becker (UT Austin), Emma Buckingham (Duke), August Burman (Uppsala University), Karishma Charitar (UVictoria), Laura Corless, Mary-Evelyn Farrior (Columbia), Sophia Feist (Princeton), Neyat Fiseha (Princeton), Steve Gavel, Alexandra Noël Grisanti (Amherst), Charles Hill (UNebraska Lincoln), Katharine Potts-Dupre Huemoeller (UBC), Kiersten King (Bryn Mawr), Charlotte McMeekin (Princeton), Steven Mooney (UVictoria), Alex Moskowitz (UMichigan), Jeremy Nicot-Carlsonis (UT Austin), William Pedrick (UPenn), Max Peers (Brown), Paul Pickering (Archimedes Digital), Troy Samuels (UMichigan), Andrea Samz-Pustol (Bryn Mawr), Catherine Schenck (UMichigan), Tim Shea (Duke), Matthew Sibley (USydney), Jarein Sky (Archimedes Digital), Regan Talley (UT Austin), Ed Triplett (Duke), Emilia Trovato (Università di Catania), Beth Wang (Princeton), Erika Weiberg (FSU), Jessica Williams (Harvard), and Mallory Willett (UT Austin). Mali Skotheim (Princeton) and Nicole Berlin (Johns Hopkins) processed and documented finds in the museum. Robert Gorham (UVirginia) and Kevin Ennis

Souza and Jared Benton served as field directors. Trench supervisors were Andrew Tharler in Trench 42, Elizabeth Wueste in Trench 43, Benjamin Crowther in Trench 44, and Christy Schirmer in Trench 45. James Huemoeller directed the project's architectural documentation. Also serving as part of the CAP directorate are Leigh Anne Lieberman and Annie Truetzel, who took charge of the project's database operations and the work conducted in the museum, respectively.

Summary of Previous Work and 2016 Objectives

Over the course of three previous seasons of excavation in the Contrada Agnese, we had verified the presence of an adaptive urban grid in the area and exposed most of the northern part of Lot 1 in insula W13/14S². Work carried out in 2014 and, especially, in 2015 indicated that occupation of the lot probably began by the second quarter of the third century BCE, diminished substantially around 200 BCE, and effectively ended sometime in the first half of the second century. The architectural and stratigraphic relationships we found indicated that there were several distinct construction phases for the building or buildings on the lot. Because our earliest datable material came from the northernmost rooms, we had hypothesized that the area was filled in from the north as the building grew to take on the dimensions of the entire lot. Because the structures in all phases used domestic architectural forms attested elsewhere in Morgantina, and because of the array of strata and objects linked to consumption, trade, craft production, storage and ritual, we identified the building as a house. Our work in 2016 supports this identification of the building as a domestic space, characterized by a distinct austerity of valuables, construction, and decoration. Until the completion of our excavations and for the sake of continuity with previous preliminary reports, we shall continue to refer to this house as the Southeast Building.

The 2016 season represented an expansion of our efforts at all levels of the project. Additional staff, a larger group of volunteers, and a longer season (six weeks) allowed us to aim for a more complete exposure of the house. We estimate that approximately 60% of the lot had been excavated by the end of the 2016 season. With Trench 38 (in 2014) and Trench 41 (in 2015) we had attempted to locate the southern boundary of the lot, but without success. In 2016 we removed topsoil over a wider area to the south of our earlier trenches, which finally exposed stretches of a wall (Walls W, W1, W2, W3, and W4) that defined the lot from its neighbor to the south. We then placed four trenches across the lot with the twin goals of pursuing stratigraphic questions that remained from previous seasons and exploring the lesser-known southern area of the lot (fig. 1). In this report we describe newly excavated evidence for the construction and use of the building as a whole, proceeding phase by phase and trench by trench.

Each trench opened in 2016 had specific objectives related to further elucidating the building's chronology and the nature of activities taking place therein; circumstances occasionally placed limitations both on the scope of our excavations and on the conclusions we could draw from the available data. Trench 42, sited along the northern edge of the building, aimed to clarify the central northern area of the house that had not yet been explored to any depth. The two large rooms we encountered in that trench contained a large amount of debris embedded in extremely compact soil, which slowed progress. Trench 43 was positioned in the eastern interior of the building in order to produce clearer evidence for the stratigraphy of the putative portico or peristyle. Here, especially, a sequence of modifications in antiquity made it difficult to confidently associate walls with floor surfaces. In the western part of the building, the goal of Trench 44 was to complete excavation of a room only partially exposed in 2014 (Room 5), which had contained a brick platform of uncertain function, and to link this stratigraphy with that uncovered in 2015. Room 5 turned out to be quite large, so it quickly became the sole focus

(UPenn) were responsible for the collection of geospatial data. Ceramics processing and analysis was accomplished by Catherine Baker (UCincinnati) and Sabina Ion (UCincinnati), assisted by Jeremy Turner (FSU). Caroline Cheung (Princeton) consulted on pithoi/dolia. China Shelton (ACOR) supervised the collection and analysis of paleobotanical evidence, assisted by Jane Millar (UT Austin) and Maggie Craven (UT Austin). Aislinn Smalling (UCL) and Raffaella Greca returned as project conservators. Federica Barbarino joined the project as assistant conservator. Giancarlo Filantropi served as the project's draftsman. Flavia Giacoppo (Pàropos Società Cooperativa) served as the project's supervisor of site safety.

² WALTHALL *et al.* 2014; 2016; 2018; BENTON *et al.* 2015.

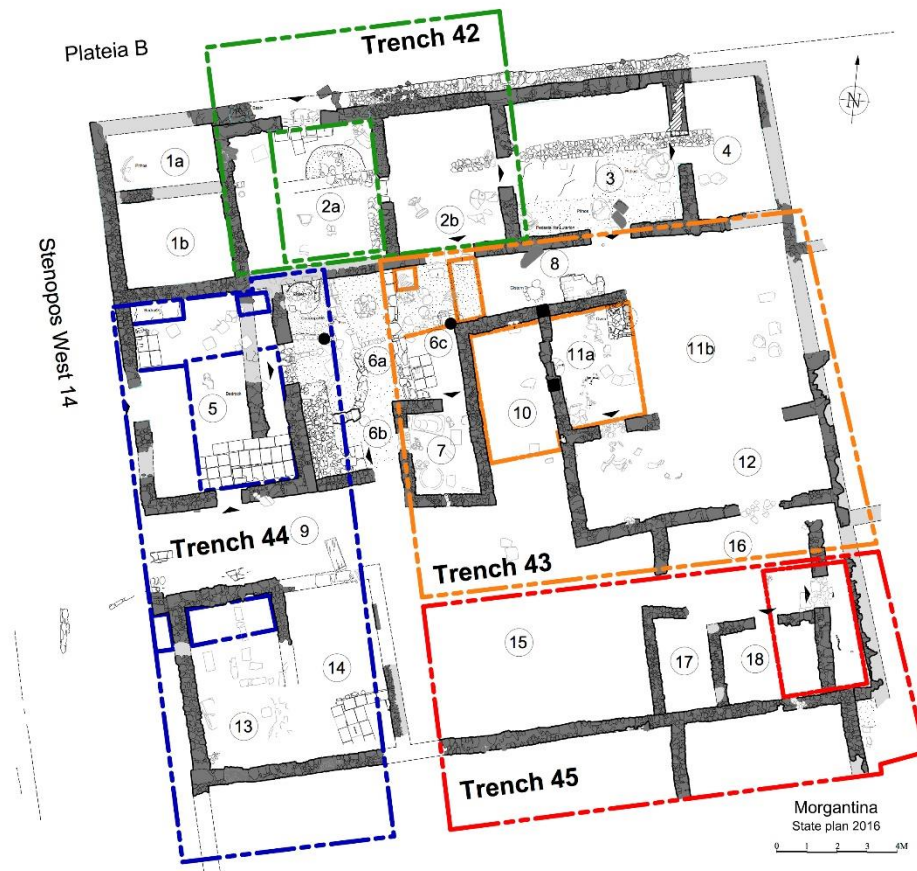


Fig. 1. State plan of the Southeast Building at the conclusion of the 2016 season, showing trench locations. Drawing by Giancarlo Filantropi.

of the trench. Finally, we placed Trench 45 in the southeast corner of the lot in order to understand how this building interacted with structures on the neighboring lots to the east and south. The soil stratigraphy here had been disturbed by post-depositional processes and was therefore not helpful in defining architectural phases, while the complicated series of walls and wall segments we excavated defied straightforward interpretation.

Chronological overview

The results of the 2016 season generally support the chronological scheme for the building laid out in previous reports³. With more than half the building now excavated, we can offer for the first time a cohesive reconstruction of the building's phases of construction, occupation, and abandonment. Gaps remain (particularly in the southern part of the building), but there is sufficient correspondence across trenches to create a building-wide chronology. We have also condensed our previous phasing scheme by placing the few sporadic cleaning and construction activities in a single Phase 5:

³ One example of corroborating evidence to emerge in 2016 is an early wall (Wall C3) in the middle of Room 5 which predates the room's eastern wall (Wall J in Phase 2): while we lack strong datable material associated with its construction, Wall C3 was constructed directly on natural bedrock and should therefore belong to Phase 1. Additional evidence from 2016 that confirms our earlier presuppositions comes from Room 2, where a fill to raise the floor level adds to the list of minor modifications begun after 240 BCE (Phase 3), and from Room 6, where a collapse of column drums above the main layer of fallen roof tiles adds weight to our hypothesis that the roof collapsed before walls and other load-bearing elements did (Phase 4).

Phase	Dates (BCE)	Defining activities
1	ca. 260–250 ⁴	Initial construction of major walls and architectural features
2a 2b	ca. 250–240 ⁵ ca. 240–230 ⁶	Major modifications of building footprint and architectural features
3	ca. 230–208 ⁷	Occupation with minor modifications of existing spaces
4	ca. 208–200 ⁸	Abandonment of building and collapse of roof with spoliation of materials
5	ca. 200–100 ⁹	Post-abandonment; Sporadic occupation of the area

In 2016 we modified our recording system for the walls and rooms of our building (fig. 2). Walls are still identified by a capital letter on the organizing principle that each wall thus identified represents an abstract architectural line, though not necessarily a unified construction. We still mark sections of each wall as differentiated during excavation, but instead of using primes (e.g. D, D', D'') we now assign a serial numeral (e.g. D, D1, D2). These nominal wall sections remain to be verified by a rigorous survey of wall relationships across the building as a whole. We have also revised the numbers assigned to the rooms of our building, and these changes are noted in our text. Finally, to aid understanding of the multiple occupation phases, in this report we include our internal identifiers for all floors and surfaces, in the form of a seven digit numeral beginning with 6 (indicating that we are in Area 6 of the site).

Phase 1: Initial construction

Phase 1 consists of the earliest construction in the area of the Southeast Building. In previous seasons we had been able to identify a few walls and fills that could be associated with this phase¹⁰. New evidence for Phase 1 was found in Trenches 42, 43, and 44, in the northern and northeastern parts of the building. In Trench 45, the southern boundary wall of the lot appears to have been the earliest construction and so can be tentatively

⁴ This is the date range we proposed for the initial construction of Room 3 and its walls (H3, H6, I, I1, K, K1, L3, L4) on the basis of a black gloss sherd found in a construction trench and datable to the first half of the third century BCE: WALTHALL *et al.* 2018: 3-4. The *terminus post quem* for this construction trench is 300 BCE, but we proposed that a first phase in the second quarter of the third century better aligns with the construction narrative of neighboring buildings in the Contrada Agnese, namely the North Baths and the South Baths. The 260 date is thus a tentative one, though the 2016 season did not produce evidence to challenge or refine it.

⁵ This is the date range we proposed for the Phase 2 floor (6040055) in Room 3, partly on the basis of a bronze coin of Neapolis dated 275-250 BCE found within the floor surface: WALTHALL *et al.* 2018: 5. The resulting *terminus post quem* of 275 is too early to be directly helpful, but we reasoned that a first phase ending around 250 ought to have been followed by a second phase beginning around that year. Bronze *litrai* of Hieron II (Inv. 16-376 and 16-728) dated 269-241 BCE were found below the first floor surface (6044054) associated with the construction of Room 5 in Phase 2, and are consistent with the floor being added around 250 BCE.

⁶ This is the date range we propose for the new subphase, based on material recovered from the floor surface (6043084) associated with the addition of the column with its base in Room 6c in Phase 2b (see below, "Phase 2"). A black gloss skyphos base is dated to the second half of the third century, and a bronze *litra* of Hieron II datable to 240-215 BCE pushes the *terminus post quem* for this floor, and this phase, to 240 BCE.

⁷ This date range replaces the broad "second half of the third century BCE" dating proposed in previous publications in order to account for the expansion of Phase 2. The beginning of the phase must by definition postdate Phase 2b, but we lack a secure *terminus post quem*. The end of the phase is somewhat more secure. A number of coins minted by the Romans in Sicily in the years 211-208 BCE have been found in previous seasons in soils that accumulated over floor surfaces and were sealed by tiles collapsed from the building's roof, attesting to the use of the building in this phase through at least 208 BCE and possibly later.

⁸ The beginning of this date range follows the end of Phase 3, and the end of the range reflects the absence of any material datable to the second century BCE, found in either tile collapse layers or the soil accumulations immediately below these layers.

⁹ This date range is based on the discovery of sporadic material datable to the second century BCE, which we have found in topsoil and other unsealed soil deposits above tile collapse layers. Such datable material cannot be stratigraphically linked with the few architectural modifications of this phase, but given the end date of Phase 4 proposed above, these objects and modifications should be dated some time in the second century.

¹⁰ WALTHALL *et al.* 2018: 3-4, 11.

Fig. 2. Plan of Southeast Building with wall and room labels. Drawing by Giancarlo Filantropi and James Huemoeller.

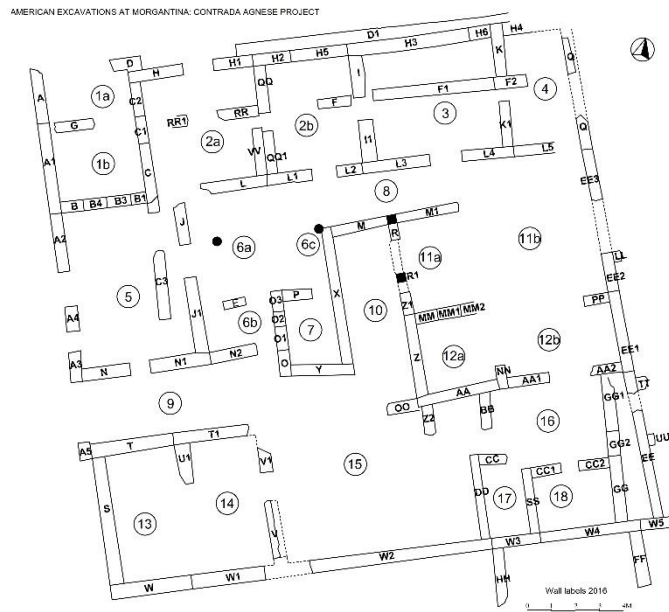
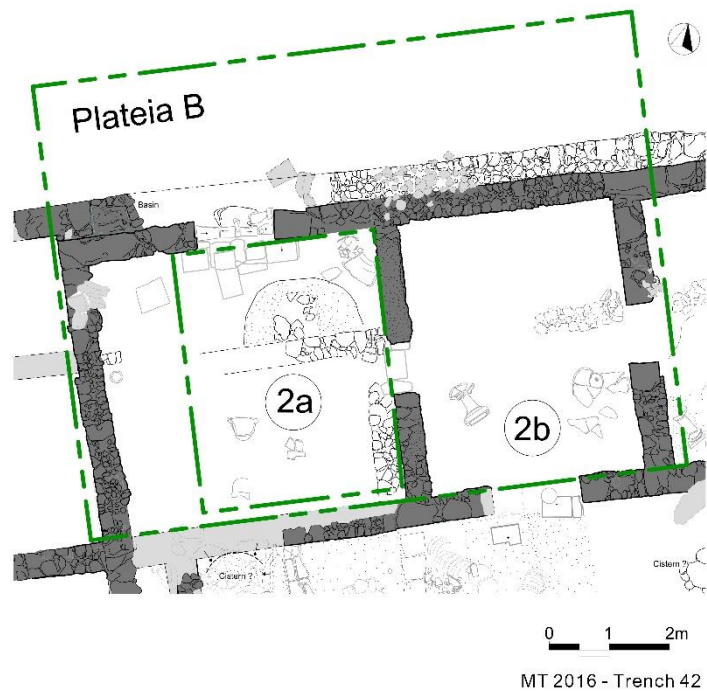


Fig. 3. State plan detail for Trench 42. Drawing by Giancarlo Filantropi.



assigned to this phase, but further excavation will be required to confirm this assignment with stratigraphic linkages and well-dated contexts.

Trench 42 preserved Phase 1 stratigraphy better than that of any of the later phases (fig. 3). Excavation fully revealed Walls QQ, of which traces were found in 2014, and QQ1. These walls bisected Room 2, creating two unequal spaces: Rooms 2a and 2b. Most significantly, the upper elevation of both walls was executed in rammed earth and faced with plaster, which was preserved to a height of 5.5cm-12.5cm above its stone socle on Wall QQ. (fig. 4). These are the first rammed-earth walls discovered at Morgantina. The consistency of the



Fig. 4. East face of Wall QQ showing *pisé* and plaster (detail).



Fig. 5. Excavated construction trench of Wall H, looking west.

earthen wall itself was quite sandy, unusual in rammed-earth construction, but the preservation of the plaster facing and the contrast with the brown, silty soil surrounding the wall makes it abundantly clear that the upper elevation of the wall was executed in rammed earth¹¹.

Rooms 2a and 2b communicated through a doorway ca. 80cm wide between Walls QQ and QQ1. The elevation of the lowest stone course of Wall QQ corresponds with the bottom course of Wall H2, but does not bond with it; Wall QQ1 does not bond with Wall L, which marks the southern extent of Rooms 2 and 3. Nevertheless, it would make sense to construct a socle for *pisé* construction separately from a full-height wall of stone and mud mortar, and the elevation relationship with Wall H suggests that both QQ and QQ1 belong to Phase 1. In that case, Rooms 2a and 2b would have been created and articulated together with Room 3 in the earliest phase of the building, rather than being separated in a later subdivision of space. The rammed-earth construction must then be recognized as an architectural element of the building's initial construction phase.

Also in Trench 42, we discovered a foundation trench for Wall H, cut into the unconsolidated bedrock of the Contrada Agnese, which presents as a highly compact, sandy yellow layer overlying solid sandstone below. The foundation trench ran the length of Walls H and H1 in Room 2a, and was filled by a soft, brown-yellow soil that had few inclusions. It did not contain datable material aside from a single fragment of black gloss ware, possibly a skyphos, which can be attributed broadly to the third century BCE (figs. 5-6). Despite the lack of diagnostic material recovered within the fill, we can confidently assign this foundation trench to Phase 1 since it was cut to accommodate the construction of Wall H, the northern lot wall of our building. Unfortunately, this discovery does not help us refine our chronology or phasing.

¹¹ A micromorphological analysis of a sample from the interior of the rammed earth wall was conducted by Dr. Cristiano Nicosia (Dipartimento dei Beni Culturali, Università di Padova). Due to bioturbation, the analysis was inconclusive as to internal structure, and we ourselves found no indication that the wall was constructed of mud brick as is attested at other locations in Sicily, such as at Licata/Phintias (LA TORRE, MOLLO 2013) and Solunto/Soluntum (GRECO 1997: 898). The lack of any binder, such as straw, would be strange in mud brick, but given the relatively high quantity of gypsum found in the local soils, a binder may not have been required for *pisé*. In fact, EDXRF analysis of the composition of plaster utilized in construction at Hellenistic Morgantina (see JOHNSON, MORGENSTEIN 2014) indicated that much of the local plaster contained gypsum and limestone aggregates quarried in the immediate vicinity of the ancient settlement. The discovery of the *pisé* component of Wall QQ has led us to reconsider the origins of the soils filling many of the building's rooms. As we first speculated in our 2015 report, with respect to the largely sterile soil layer encountered in Room 3, much of the post-abandonment fill inside the building may be collapsed *pisé* from other walls whose higher elevations were executed in rammed earth as well.

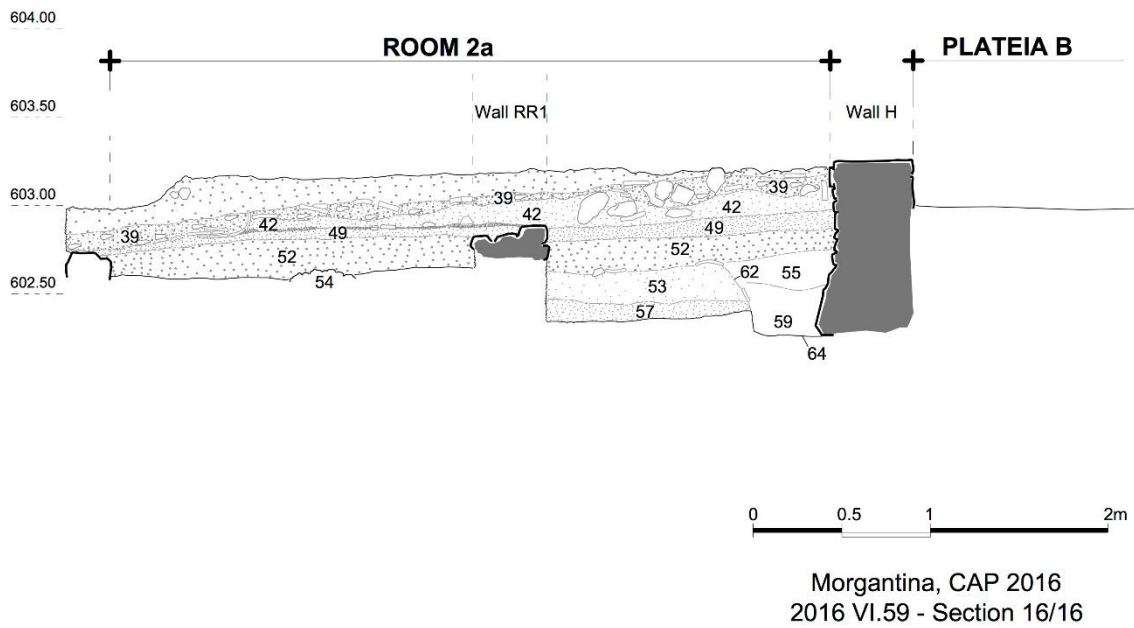


Fig. 6. Section through Trench 42 (Room 2a), looking west. Drawing by Giancarlo Filantropi.

A surface formed by an aggregate of yellow crushed bedrock (6042053 and 6042054) was the lowest and earliest floor in the area of Room 2a, and we place it in Phase 1 along with the construction of the walls that defined the room. After the walls were built, a sandy fill was deposited over the exposed bedrock surfaces on which Wall H and Wall QQ were laid, and then the floor surface itself accumulated through use. Embedded in the floor we found ceramic material consistent with the previously established third-century date for the building's earliest occupation: black gloss fineware from the middle of the third century BCE at the latest. This surface corresponds in both its construction technique and elevation to surfaces found to the south in Trench 43 (see below) as well as to the lowest surface in Room 3, discovered in 2015¹². Notable finds from the floor in Room 2a included an undecorated lead seal 16-672, a circular worked bone button 16-697, and an iron plate hinge likely for a door 16-536 (fig. 7).

Nearby, in Trench 43, several cuts and deposits belong to the earliest building phase.



Fig. 7. Objects recovered from the Phase 1 floor in Room 2a.

¹² WALTHALL *et al.* 2018: 5.



Fig. 8. Crushed bedrock surface in Trench 43 (Room 8), looking west.



Fig. 9. Wall C3 in Trench 44 (Room 5), looking east.

In the transition area between Room 6c and Room 8, a small *saggio* revealed a poorly-preserved surface composed of the characteristic yellow, crushed bedrock aggregate (6043128) (fig. 8). The relationship of this surface to Wall L was difficult to interpret, in part because the surface was cut twice in antiquity. While both cuts did touch the southern face of Wall L, neither was regular enough to be considered a foundation trench, and in one area untouched by these cuts the crushed bedrock surface reached nearly to the edge of Wall L. Both cuts were filled while the surface was in use, although neither fill deposit produced any datable material beyond the presence of non-diagnostic black gloss sherds. As noted above, the elevation of this floor surface matches that of the earliest floor level found in Room 3 in 2015 (6040055). It is also only 20 cm below the Phase 1 floor surface in Room 2a (6042053 and 6042054), which would suggest that either the floor level of Room 2b matched that of Room 3, and the threshold between 2a and 2b mediated the change in elevation, or the floor level of Room 2b matched that of 2a, and the threshold between 2b and 6c/8 mediated the elevation change.

Since we did not reach the Phase 1 floor surface in Room 2b this season, the relationship between these surfaces will need to be investigated in future field seasons.

Trench 44 produced the most significant discovery for the building's earliest phase: evidence for an early phase of construction that predated the creation of Room 5. This stretch of wall, C3, survives only in its lowest foundation course, but aligns perfectly with sections of Walls C, C1, and C2 documented in previous field seasons (fig. 9). C3 is bedded on sterile sandy soil, directly overlying bedrock, and it was covered and put out of use in Phase 2. The discovery of this abandoned section of Wall C3 strengthens an earlier hypothesis that in the building's initial construction, Walls C, C1, C2, and C3 defined the western extent of the Southeast Building, while Wall A extended the property boundary to the west in a later phase (fig. 10). Further support for this hypothesis came in the form of a partially preserved Phase 1 floor surface of crushed bedrock aggregate encountered to the east of Wall C3 (6044071). This surface was cut to build Wall J1 in Phase 2 but could have originally extended into Room 6 (fig. 11). This surface is the lowest one so far encountered in the building, roughly 35 cm below the Phase 1 floor at the column in Rooms 6c/8 (6043128). Thus there must have been another inflection point between the area of the column and the area of Room 5. To the west of Wall C3, there is little evidence for an early surface aside from the natural bedrock, which slopes sharply downward to the west. The area west of Wall C3 may have been an exterior space with no constructed surface until activities in Phase 2 began.

In the southeast corner of the lot, Trench 45 revealed the southern lot boundary and a complex sequence of wall construction (fig. 12). The lot's southern wall (Walls W, W1, W2, W3, and W4) appears to have been constructed in a single event. It seems to bond with Walls S and V of Rooms 13 and 14 respectively, but not with Walls DD, GG, and SS in Rooms 17 and 18 (on which see below, Phase 3). In the southwest corner of the lot,

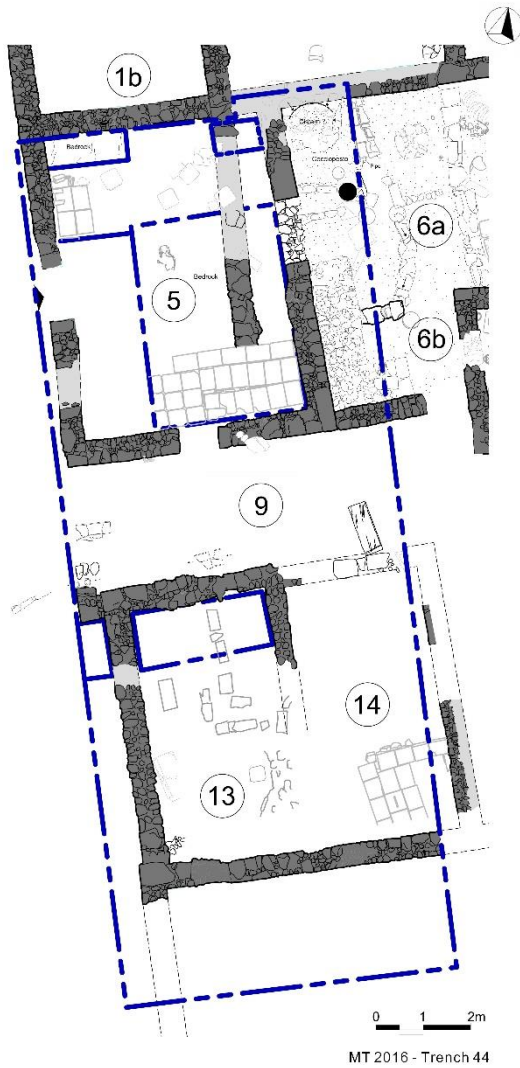


Fig. 10. State plan detail for Trench 44. Drawing by Giancarlo Filantropi.



Fig. 11. Phase 1 surface in Trench 44 preserved in the section east (left) of Wall C3, with Phase 2b brick paving of Room 5 and doorway in Wall N, looking south.

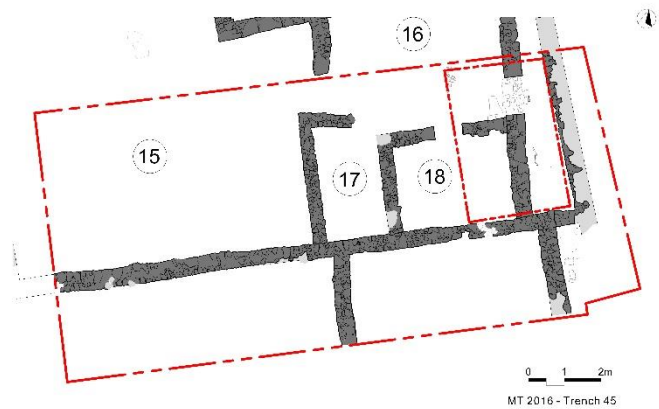


Fig. 12. State plan detail for Trench 45. Drawing by Giancarlo Filantropi.

we hypothesize that Rooms 13 and 14 were built in Phase 1, both because of the apparent wall joins with the southern lot wall and the alignment of Walls U and U1 with Walls C, C1, C2, and C3 (which was out of use in Phase 2). The 1970-1 excavations, which first exposed Rooms 13 and 14, do not appear to have produced evidence of packed-earth floor surfaces, and our partial re-excavation of those rooms in 2014 and 2015 did not uncover architectural or sealed stratigraphic evidence that would allow us to confidently place them in one of our phases. We are planning further work in this area of the building with the goal of conclusively linking these rooms to the overall phasing scheme.

In summary, we can confidently propose that the Phase 1 building consisted of the northern rooms 2a, 2b, and 3, with an open court to the south bounded to the west by Walls C, C1, C2, and C3 and extending over the area that would later be divided into Rooms 6, 8 and 11 (fig. 13). Thresholds led from Room 8 to Rooms 2b and 3. Rooms 2a, 2b, and 3 communicated directly and composed the building's main suite of rooms. The relationship between Room 11 and the court was still unclear after the 2016 season. An interesting characteristic of this first construction phase is that the floor levels in the structure seem to have varied by up to 35cm, perhaps because



Fig. 13. Hypothetical plan of construction phases in the Southeast Building. Drawing by Jared Benton.

these early walls and floors were built without thick levelling-fill layers and thus rest close to the level of the bedrock, which undulates considerably in this area. In general, floors were raised by the same amount in different rooms during later phases of construction, so that multiple floor levels continued to co-exist within the building.

Phase 2: Major modifications

Phase 2 included the most significant alterations to—and elaboration of—the building, although these changes took different forms in different places. While the Phase 1 building was characterized by a plan arranged around an open court, construction in Phase 2 both expanded the footprint of the building and sub-divided its interior arrangement by creating smaller spaces. There is also clear evidence for modest monumentalization in the building, as attested by the addition of columns along the northern side of the interior courtyard. With this columned portico adjacent to smaller and more functional spaces, the Southeast Building began to increasingly resemble a *pastas* house like those elsewhere in Morgantina, leading us to propose that at least one of the building's primary functions in Phase 2 was domestic. It may well have been a house also in Phase 1, but the incomplete nature of the evidence from that phase prevents us from forming confident hypotheses for the building's earliest function. We speculate that some amount of time must have passed between the initial construction in the Contrada Agnese and the decision to subdivide the rooms and raise certain floor levels.

Fig. 14. Brick column with stone foundation (Phase 2b) at the intersection of Walls M and X in Trench 43 with earlier floor surfaces (Phase 2a) below, looking south.



Accordingly we have tentatively assigned the beginning of Phase 2 to the middle of the third century (ca. 250 BCE), a date supported by the ceramics and numismatic material recovered from subfloor fills.

Trench 42 encountered evidence for only minor changes in this phase. In Room 2a, Walls RR and RR1 were built on top of the Phase 1 floor surface (6042053 and 6042054), in a position that partially blocked the doorway between Walls QQ and QQ1. These walls were not bedded on a foundation or in a foundation trench, and were preserved only in one course. Given this uncertainty about the walls' ability to bear loads, it seems likely that they together served as a half-height divider that created two distinct spaces Room 2a. The aperture between the walls is also relatively wide, some 1.34 m, so the northern and southern halves of Room 2a would not have been entirely closed off from one another, and even greater communication would have been possible if Walls RR and RR1 were in fact built at half height. A small rubble feature (VV) running along the west side of QQ1, possibly a low bench, should also be associated with Phase 2. These relatively light interventions would not have changed the floor level here.

Work in Trench 43 revealed that the open court of Phase 1, possibly unroofed, was turned into a complex series of rooms and architectural features over the course of several renovations beginning in Phase 2. Tile collapse layers (Phase 4, below) found throughout this area indicated that nearly the entire northern half of the building was roofed in the final occupation phase (Phase 3). However, the evidence of the tile falls alone does not establish which spaces were roofed in Phase 2.

The most crucial area of Trench 43 for the building's architectural phasing is a brick column resting on a stone foundation that was dug into a floor at the corner where Walls M and X meet (fig. 14). The relationship of these different architectural components as explained below provides strong evidence for construction sequencing between Phases 2 and 3, and we have therefore split Phase 2 into two parts (Phases 2a and 2b) in order to reflect this sequence. The resolution of the datable material recovered does not yet allow us to establish a precise chronology for the two sub-phases, though Trench 44 also revealed construction activity that suggests Phase 2 should be subdivided (see below). Further excavation may provide sufficient evidence from elsewhere in the building to promote these sub-phases to true phases in their own right, but for now we maintain them as part of a building-wide Phase 2.

A new floor, composed of a pebble base and crushed bedrock surface (6043097), was laid down in Phase 2a. This surface continued at least as far west as the boundary between Rooms 6a and 6c (although we note that this division of space was only marked by a step later in Phase 3), and it also matches in elevation and composition a packed earth surface (6044058) found in the doorway that led from Room 6a into Room 5 (see below: the stepped threshold in that doorway was added later, in Phase 2b) (fig. 15)¹³. How far south this crushed bedrock surface extended in Phase 2a is still unclear because even down to an elevation 30cm below it,

¹³ For the stepped boundary between Rooms 6a and 6c, see WALTHALL *et al.* 2018: 17.

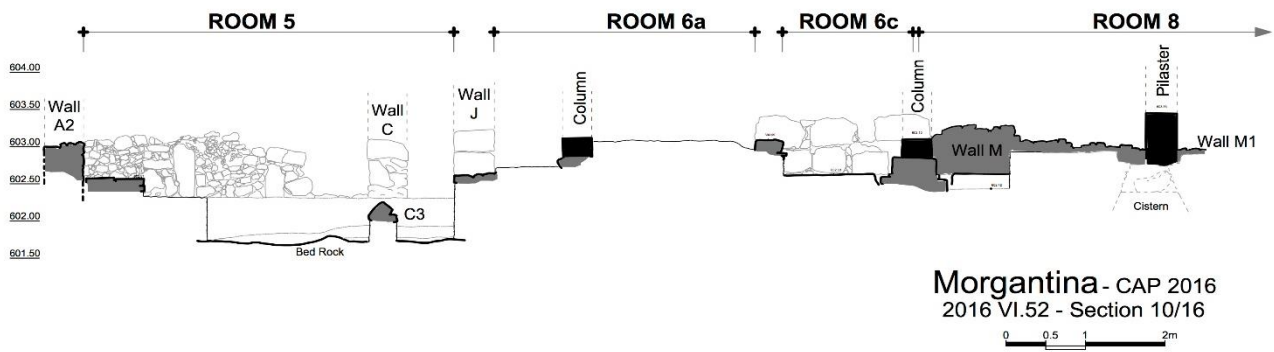


Fig. 15. Section through Trenches 43 and 44 (Rooms 5, 6a, and 6c), looking north. Drawing by Giancarlo Filantropi.

excavations in the southern part of Room 6c and in Room 7 encountered only surfaces belonging to Phase 3¹⁴. If the higher, crushed bedrock surface was, in fact, laid only in the northern part of the court along Wall L, it is possible that it formed a raised walkway that ran around a covered portico that was executed in wood or other perishable material, leaving the central part of the court with another surface at a significantly lower elevation, perhaps to drain water away from the building. This remains speculation, however, as we have no definitive evidence for a portico before the second part of Phase 2¹⁵.

In this second part, Phase 2b, the Phase 2a floor (6043097) was cut to form a hole that was filled with small stones and tile fragments, on which a foundation of two rectangular cut stones was laid to support a column consisting of terracotta drums (diameter 35 cm), of which three were found *in situ* (see fig. 14). At the moment when this column was installed, the surrounding floor was raised to the height of the top of the foundation stones with a levelling fill capped by another crushed bedrock surface (6043084) (fig. 16). The leveling fill below this surface was generally devoid of inclusions but we did recover some fragments of black gloss pottery, including the base of a skyphos datable to the second half of the third century BCE, as well as a Syracusan bronze *litra* dated 240-215 (inv. 17-22; fig. 17)¹⁶. We can thus propose 240 BCE as a *terminus post quem* for this intervention and for Phase 2b itself.



Fig. 16. Phase 2b crushed bedrock surface in Trench 43 (Room 6c), looking west.

¹⁴ Phase 2 surfaces were found in the central area of the building during the 2017 season, for which a preliminary report is in preparation.

¹⁵ We had previously (WALTHALL *et al.* 2018: 4) assigned the square pier with beveled corners discovered in 2015 to Phase 1, but a single pier is unlikely to have stood on its own, and its relative depth (bottom elevation still not reached) does not require that it belong to the first construction phase. As we argue below, two columns in line with the pier were added in the second part of Phase 2, and since Wall M was built to fill in the space between the pier and the column, we hypothesize that the pier may also have been added in Phase 2b.

¹⁶ Inv. 17-22: AE, 2.79 g, 18.6 mm, 6 h. Obv. Head of Poseidon I. / Rev. Ornamental trident, [IEPQ-NOΣ]. Syracuse; *litra*, small-flan series; halved; ca. 240-215 BCE. Reference: *MS II*, no. 368. The object was found in soil collected for flotation and processed in 2017.

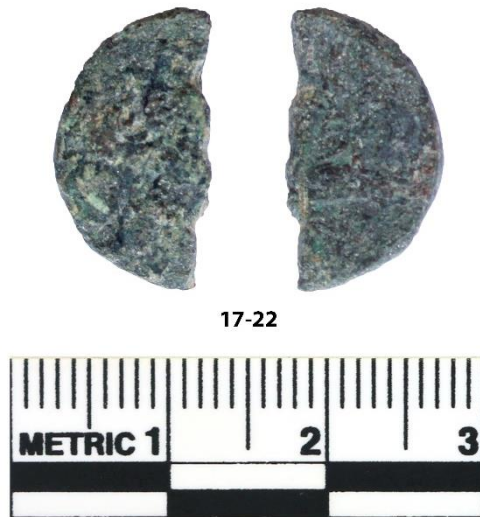


Fig. 17. Inv. 17-22. Syracusan litra from Room 6c.

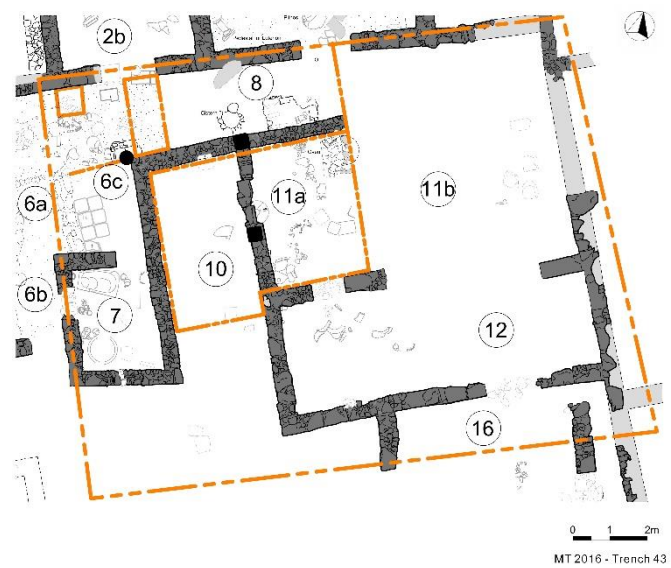


Fig. 18. State plan detail for Trench 43, showing the central and eastern column bases of the Phase 2b portico. Drawing by Giancarlo Filantropi.

The floor surface continued from Room 8 into Room 6c, although corresponding floor levels have not been found in other rooms in the building. Taking into account the installation of the column, we can reconstruct a portico south of and parallel to Walls L, L1, L2, and L3: the center of the column is ca. 1.87m from Wall L1; the center of the square stone pier is ca. 1.85m from Wall L3, and the center of the column discovered in 2015 near the northwest corner of Room 6a is ca. 1.76m from Wall L (fig. 18; also, see fig. 1). The western and central bases had round columns and the eastern base had a square column, all of which supported a roof across the northern side of the court to create a covered walkway. The intercolumniations and spacings are irregular, however. From the center of the eastern pier to the center of the central column is 2.89m, from the center of the central column to the center of the western column is 3.90m, and from the center of the western column to the face of Wall J (Phase 2, see below) is 1.01m.

In Trench 44, the most significant Phase 2 activity was the creation of Room 5 via the construction of Walls J, J1, N, and N1 in Phase 2a. Evidence for the timing of Room 5's construction comes from two clear stratigraphic relationships: first, a construction trench for Wall J1 was found cutting the original Phase 1 floor (6044076) east of Wall C3; second, the floor level raised over Wall C3 in the center of the room. The construction trench allowed Wall J1 to be laid down on bedrock, and unfortunately its fill did not contain material useful for refining our chronology. This Phase 2a floor (6044058), laid over the remnants of Wall C3, was preserved only in traces, and may have been disturbed by the creation of a new floor in Phase 2b. It is attested as well as by a subtle horizon in the scarp where we left a small section of the room unexcavated this year. The plaster facing on the west side of Wall J1 also continued down to precisely the level of this floor surface, well below the level of Phase 2b paving bricks.

We place Walls A2, A3, A4, B, B1, and B3 in Phase 2 as well because they are needed to complete the definition of Room 5; however, we must wait for future excavation to produce positive stratigraphic evidence of this assignment. There is at least one door, possibly two, leading to *Stenopos* W14 from Room 5, and in this phase there was a passageway between Rooms 1 and 5, which was later blocked up in Phase 2b. The creation of Room 5 extended the whole building to the west by several meters, and it is likely that Room 1 was also added in this phase. This extension brought the building's west wall into alignment with the west wall of the North Baths just across *Plataea* B and the west wall of Room 13 in the building's southern half. The Southeast Building thus came to define *Stenopos* W14 in accordance with the street grid that was operative in the middle of the third century.



Fig. 19. Inv. 16-289. Bronze ladle handle in the shape of a dog's head from Room 5.

In Phase 2b, the floor level was raised in Room 5 by some 20cm, just as it was found to be the case in Rooms 6c and 8. This floor took the form of a paved brick surface (6044052) over a rectangular area in the southeast portion of the room (see fig. 11). This paved surface (EL 602.53 masl) corresponds roughly in elevation with a section of brick paving, or possibly a small platform, found in the same room in 2014 (EL 602.63 masl). At the level of the paving, and extending throughout the room, was a hard packed soil (6044054) that raised the room's floor level from the Phase 2a level and served as a bedding for brick paving that was later robbed out, or possibly constituted the room's principal floor north of an intentionally partial brick pavement. From this packed-earth surface came the handle of a bronze ladle (*simpulum*) in the shape of a dog's head (inv. 16-289; fig. 19). Handles of this type have been found elsewhere at Morgantina; they are generally dated to the

middle decades of the third century BCE¹⁷. A new set of steps was added in the passageway between Walls J and J1, in correspondence with the level of the brick pavers. It consists of medium sized stones and creates a step of ca. 18cm from the higher level of Room 6a down into Room 5. The threshold in the passageway between Walls N and N1 likewise corresponds to the pavers and so we place it in Phase 2b as well. There are two layers of wall plaster on the north face of Wall N, which we take to indicate that the walls were plastered once in Phase 2a (the inner layer) and again in Phase 2b (the outer layer) when the brick flooring was installed.

In Trench 45, the addition of certain walls can be placed in our Phase 2 based on architectural relationships. Wall W5 abutted the rest of the southern property wall of Lot 1, and extended it to the east; Wall EE abutted the face of Wall W5 and ran northwest, while Wall GG abutted the face of Wall W4 and with Walls GG1 and GG2 ran roughly north; both walls abutted Wall AA2 and thereby enclosed a narrow trapezoidal space at the southeast corner of the lot. Wall W5 has a foundation bedded on soil significantly higher than the foundation level of Wall W4 and the rest of the southern property wall, suggesting that it postdates Phase 1. Thus in Phase 2, this area at the intersection of the insula's four northernmost lots was further defined.

Phase 3: Occupation with minor modifications

A third construction phase consisted of activity primarily in the central part of the building, where the interior courtyard was divided into smaller rooms and roofed completely. The level of the floor was significantly raised across multiple rooms (up to 50 cm above Phase 1 floor levels in some places), although it is unclear both why this was done and whether ceilings and roofs were also raised as a consequence. At the same time the court was filled in with a number of small rooms, installations for channeling water were introduced, and additional paving surfaces or platforms were added. Many of these architectural modifications incorporated repurposed building materials, broken ceramic vessels, and fragmentary storage vessels in the construction of walls and floor surfaces¹⁸. This bricolage certainly gives the impression that the occupants of the house were opportunistically

¹⁷ For dog-head shaped *simpula* handles, see GUZZO 2003: 56-57, 80 who publishes a silver specimen belonging to the hoard of Hellenistic silver from Morgantina.

¹⁸ For example, see WALTHALL *et al.* 2018: 14-15 for the reuse of tiles and pithos fragments in the Phase 3 floor (6039049) in Room 6a.



Fig. 20. Inv. 16-668. Syracusean *litra* from Room 2a.

Fig. 21. Bronze (Inv. 16-670) and lead (Inv. 16-671, 16-669) mercantile seals from Room 2a.

gathering construction materials from points throughout the city. We hypothesize that the building remained a house in this phase, and since this was the final occupation phase before the roof collapsed, it is also the phase with which we associate most of the material found in previous seasons on the floors we encountered.

In Trench 42, a packed-earth floor surface (6042049) extended across the entirety of Room 2a over Wall RR and the bench VV, demonstrating that those features were out of use in this phase. The levelling fill under this floor can be dated post 240 BCE by a bronze *litra* of Hieron II (inv. 16-668; fig. 20)¹⁹. Also mixed into the fill were two lead mercantile seals with illegible stamps (inv. 16-670; inv. 16-671) and one bronze mercantile seal with a lion's face stamped on one side and a boar stamped on the other (inv. 16-669; fig. 21). In Room 2b the floor level was ca 10cm lower (6042048), and the elevation difference was mediated by a brick threshold serving as a step. Although this threshold was constructed of brick fragments and is otherwise fairly rudimentary, one of the fragments next to the door jamb does preserve a small depression that may be a pivot hole for a door hinge (fig. 22). In Room 2b, we found on the floor a nearly complete terracotta figurine in fragments (inv. 16-656), and a kiln spacer (inv. 16-679; fig. 23)²⁰. The Phase 3 surface contained a concentration of 47 bronze coins in the southeast corner of the room, which we interpret as a dispersed hoard. While most of the coins were Syracusean issues of the mid-third century, among them were two Roman *unciae* (inv. 16-453 and 16-458) that yield a *terminus post quem* for the final activity on this surface of 214 BCE (fig. 24)²¹.

These floor surfaces were reached from the north through a modified doorway between Walls H and H1, which added a brick threshold and brick steps down into Room 16 (fig. 25). This doorway, which opens onto

¹⁹ Inv. 16-668: AE, 5.83 g, 18.42 mm, 3h. Obv. Head of Poseidon I. / Rev. Ornamental trident, IEPΩ-NO[Σ]. Syracuse; *litra*, small-flan series; ca. 240-215 BCE. Reference: MS II, no. 368.

²⁰ For this type of terracotta figurine, see MS I, no. 374a ("Standing woman type A"). GIUNTA 2008: 161 publishes more than two dozen kiln spaces of similar form that were found in the dump of Hellenistic kiln at Gela.

²¹ (1) Inv. 16-453: AE, 6.20 g, 21.07 mm, 3h. Obv. Head of Roma r. / Rev. Prow r.; above, ROMA and grain ear. Sicily (Roman mint); post-semilibral *uncia*; 214-212 BCE. Reference: MS II, no. 503; RRC 42/4. (2) Inv. 16-458: AE, 5.63 g, 20.95 mm, 3h. Obv. Head of Roma r. / Rev. Prow r.; above, ROMA and grain ear. Sicily (Roman mint); post-semilibral *uncia*; 214-212 BCE. Reference: MS II, no. 503; RRC 42/4.



Fig. 22. Brick threshold between Walls QQ and QQ1, looking east.



inv. 16-656

Fig. 23. Inv. 16-656. Terracotta figurine from Room 2b.



inv. 16-453



inv. 16-458



Plateia B, also contains a brick with a circular depression next to the door jamb (like that mentioned for the doorway between Rooms 2a and 2b), indicating that this opening was secured with a swinging door. A brick threshold was also added between Room 2b and Room 6b, though it did not preserve any evidence for the operation of a door. The Phase 3 floor level in both 2a and 2b is consistent with that of newly formed Rooms 6c, 6a, & 8 (see below). We note that here no floor surface was found between the earliest floor (Phase 1) and the installation of the final floor (Phase 3) before abandonment.

In Trench 43 evidence of activity in Phase 3 was plentiful. A series of walls (P, O, O1, O2, O3, Y, X, M, and M1) were all constructed during this phase to divide the court into a series of small roofed spaces: Rooms 7, 8, 10 (labeled Room 7 in previous publications), and 11a (labeled Room 9 in previous publications)²².

Fig. 24. Inv. 16-453 and 16-458. Roman unciae from Room 2b.

²² WALTHALL *et al.* 2014; 2016; 2018.



Fig. 25. Doorway between Walls H and H1 leading from Plateia B into Room 2a, looking north.



Fig. 26. Step between Rooms 10 and 11a with bricks embedded in Wall R1, and stone pier at far left, looking south.

A series of stones laid in a line between Rooms 10 and 11a and at the level of the Room 10 floor surface marked the transition from one room to the other (fig. 26). These stones created a step that negotiated the small difference in floor elevations from Room 10 (6043075 at EL 602.69-602.85 masl) down into Room 11a (6043090 at EL 602.44-602.67 masl). The boundary between those rooms was further defined by the short spur wall (Wall R) which extended 0.54m south from the stone pier, and by the placement farther south of a column formed by square brick drums, two of which were preserved in situ with their plaster facing (2.17m from the center of the pier to the center of the new column base). Neither Room 10 nor Room 11a were excavated below the Phase 3 surfaces, and both will be further investigated in future seasons. Lying on the packed-earth surface in Room 10 (6043075) we recovered a Roman silver *quinarius* (inv. 16-712), which exhibits almost no sign of wear from circulation. Since this coin was found below a well-preserved tile fall layer, it provides a *terminus post quem* of 211 BCE for the last occupation-related activity here before the collapse of the roof (fig. 27)²³.



Fig. 27. Inv. 16-712. Roman *quinarius* from Room 10.

In the rest of the former court, located north of Wall N2, Rooms 6, 7, 8, and 10 (formerly Room 7) all had packed-earth floors installed at the same level. Patches of flat-laid bricks in Rooms 6c (6043101) and 8 (6043065) may represent the remnants of a brick paving that once covered the entire space, in which case the hard packed-earth surface (6043055) on which they rest would have been a preparation for brick paving as hypothesized for Room 5. Alternatively, these collections of terracotta bricks may have been platforms intentionally laid over the earth floor. This latter interpretation may be preferred, at least in the case of the feature in Room 8, where traces of burning clearly indicate that these bricks were used as a base for a fire, mostly likely as a cooking platform (fig. 28). In Room 6c, the surface created by the bricks shows no signs of burning and may have served instead

²³ Inv. 16-712: AR, 2.14 g, 15.46 mm, 7h. Obv. V: Helmeted head of Roma, right; behind, denominational mark. Border of dots. / Rev. ROMA: Dioscuri galloping, right; below, mark; in linear frame, inscription. Line border. Sicily (Roman mint); *quinarius*; 211-208 BCE. Reference: *RRC* 68/2b.



Fig. 28. Brick platform with burned soil and ash in Room 8, looking south.



Fig. 29. Room 7 with early Phase 3 surface showing the empty basin and bathtub, looking north.

as a simple platform. We note that the elevation of this platform corresponds precisely to the level of the step that was installed in this phase to mediate a change of elevation from Room 6c down into 6a (see above).

Rooms 7 and 11a are of particular interest in Phase 3. The walls of Room 7 (Walls O, O1, O2, O3, P, X, and Y) were built in what had been open courtyard, creating a roughly rectangular space near the center of the building. Excavations inside Room 7 came down on a packed earth surface (6043091) at the bottom of the walls, which is the earliest floor so far encountered in the room. A large terracotta basin of the “bacino a campana” type



Fig. 30. Room 7 with later Phase 3 resurfacing showing the tops of the basin and bathtub, with the drain in Wall Y visible at far left, looking west.

was subsequently placed in the southwest corner of the room, as well as a terracotta bathtub in the northwest corner, during this phase of occupation and possibly in preparation for the modification that followed (fig. 29)²⁴. Later in the phase, a levelling fill raised the floor level, capped by a packed earth surface (6043056) level with the top rim of the basin and, presumably, the rim of the bathtub (fig. 30). The bathtub was found sitting at an oblique angle, which we suspect is the result of eventual subsidence in the soil. It too likely sat on the older floor (6043091) when the levelling fill was added around it and the rammed-earth floor surface was laid down at the level of its rim, as was certainly the case with the basin. A re-used section of terracotta pipe was found in Wall Y just south of the basin at this Phase 3 floor level,

where it would have served to divert any liquid that overflowed the basin from the earthen floor out into the southern part of the lot, which even in Phase 3 seems to have remained a mostly open space. The remains of three coarse ware vessels, a Greco-Italic amphora, and a ceramic *mortarium* were found broken in place on this higher surface (fig. 31).

²⁴ A nearly identical *bacino a campana* was discovered in the third-century Hellenistic baths at Gela, also associated with bathtubs. ORLANDINI, ADAMESTEANU 1960: 197, fig. 22. While raising the floor must have changed the nature of Room 7, we are refraining from formally differentiating two subphases in Phase 3 because we do not have evidence for multiple Phase 3 surfaces anywhere else in the building.



Fig. 31. Vessels in situ on the Phase 3 surface in Room 7, looking west.



Fig. 32. Cluster of finds in situ in Trench 43 (Room 11a), looking west.

The Phase 3 floor (6043090) in Room 11a (formerly Room 9) preserved a remarkable assemblage of small objects. The intended functions of the room as a whole are as yet unclear, but the concentration of some 67 objects scattered narrowly in the center of the room leads us to hypothesize that they were gathered in this space during a period of cleaning or spoliation of the building at the end of Phase 3, or alternatively that these various and sundry items were contained in a box or bag left on the floor (figs. 32-33). Among these were a solid lead U-shaped handle, possibly for a vessel (inv. 16-584), an iron arrowhead of “Cretan” type (inv. 16-597), and a fragment of an iron key (inv. 16-595)²⁵. The deposit also contained two small terracotta medicine pots (inv. 16-575 and inv. 16-576) of the same shape as the lead medicine pot found in 2015, though unfortunately without inscriptions²⁶. Twelve astragaloi, with holes drilled through their centers, may have been held together with wire, as one of the examples (inv. 17-84) preserves a piece of bronze wire through its central hole. The lone coin recovered among this assemblage was a bronze *litra* of Hieron II, cut in half, (inv. 16-563)²⁷. Thirty-one iron nails and nail fragments, three river pebbles, and a handful of fragmentary metal pieces completed the assemblage.

In Trench 44, we encountered very little evidence for Phase 3 activity. Room 5 appears to have been largely unchanged in this phase, and the most significant transformation was the blocking up of the passageway from this room north to Room 1 (see, above, fig. 15). Otherwise, the

room apparently continued in use as previously without major renovation. We attribute the scattered ceramics, including a well-preserved Greco-Italic amphora neck, found on the paved bricks to this phase since they were found just under the tile collapse of Phase 4.

Additional activity attributable to this last construction phase was identified in the southeastern corner of the building in trench 45. Several rubble stone walls (CC, CC1, CC2, DD, and SS) of narrow width were installed to form the spaces designated as Rooms 17 and 18. We discovered no remains of a tile collapse in Room 17, suggesting that it was left open to the air or, possibly, covered by a shed roof made of light, organic materials. In the eastern part of Room 18, a scattered collection of broken tiles may constitute the remains of a roof in that room that collapsed and was later disturbed, or they may have fallen into an originally unroofed Room 18 from roofs over adjacent spaces. Walls DD and SS abut the southern property wall and since we only uncovered the tops of these walls, we place them in Phase 3 pending future excavation that could clarify their stratigraphic relationships. Wall GG2 appears to have been modified in this phase with a feature that may be a passageway

²⁵ For the arrowhead, see HAGERMAN 2014: 87, no. 92.

²⁶ See WALTHALL *et al.* 2018: 5.

²⁷ Inv. 16-563: AE, 3.12 g, 18.89 mm, 2h. Obv. Head of Poseidon I. / Rev. Ornamental trident, at I. A. Syracuse, *litra*, small-flan series, ca. 240-215 BCE. Reference: MS II, no. 368.



Fig. 33. A selection of objects recovered from the cluster of finds in Trench 43 (Room 11a).



Fig. 34. Possible door in Wall GG2 (Trench 45), looking south.

with a step from the narrow trapezoidal space in the southeast corner of the building into Room 16 (fig. 34). The large smooth blocks just inside Room 16 appear to rest on a pavement of hand-sized cobblestones (of which a small patch was also found further away from the wall), and they do not appear to have been displaced from the wall; rather, they may be the remains of steps down into Room 16 (fig. 35).

We also note that the Phase 3 modifications discussed above should be associated with certain features excavated in previous years. The cocchiopesto feature in the northwest corner of Room 6a and the improvised drain of upturned tiles covered by pithos fragments, found during the 2015 campaign, belong to this phase, as do the possible stair platform and the short Wall N2 in Room 6c.

Phase 4: Abandonment and collapse

Phase 4 represents the abandonment of the building and eventual collapse of the roof and its tiles, all of which were found resting on the Phase 3 floor surfaces. Our 2016 excavations discovered tile collapse layers in Rooms 2a, 2b, 5, 6c, 7, 8, 10 (formerly Room 7), Room 11a (formerly Room 9), and possibly Room 18 (fig. 36). All of these rooms were likely covered by tile roofs in Phase 3, with the possible exceptions of Rooms 10 and 18, which may have stood open and into which tiles from adjacent roofed spaces could have fallen when their roofs collapsed. Analysis of the deposits sealed by these collapses indicate a *terminus post quem* around the end of

Fig. 35. Room 16 (Trench 45) with cobblestone paving remnants visible underneath the stone step and at bottom left, looking east.



Fig. 36. Composite photo of tile falls. Clockwise from upper left: Room 2a, looking east; Room 2b, looking west; Room 5, looking north; Rooms 10 and 11a, looking west; Room 7, looking south; Rooms 6c (background) and 8 (foreground), looking west.

the third century BCE. This dating conforms to the dominant narrative for Morgantina as a whole, in which a Roman takeover of the city in 211 BCE led to the abandonment and collapse of buildings outside the vicinity of the agora.

In Trench 42, the tile collapse filling Room 2a contained a large number of terracotta figurine fragments. 17 identifiable fragments were recovered, and some joins were found among them, representing a minimum of five mostly complete figurines (fig. 37)²⁸. These join an already large number of terracotta figurines (and fragments thereof) recovered from the northernmost rooms of the Southeast Building during excavations of previous seasons. It is also possible that the deposition of the nearly complete figurine (inv. 16-656) on the floor in Room 2b (6042048), discussed above as evidence of Phase 3 occupation, may represent a period of abandonment in Phase 4.

²⁸ Both figurines illustrated here are of common types found in Hellenistic contexts at Morgantina; see *MSI*, 134, no. 68 and 134, no. 78.



Fig. 37. Inv. 16-204/207/210/215 and 16-218. Terracotta figurines from Room 2a.

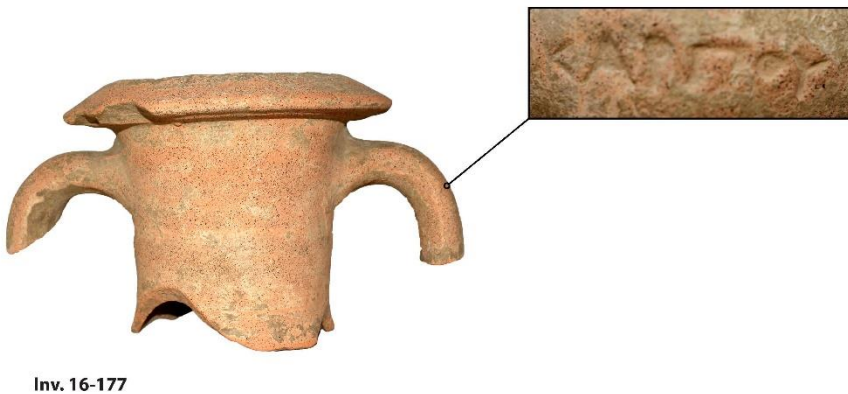


Fig. 39. Inv. 16-177. Greco-Italic amphora handle with stamped inscription.

inscription has been found at Morgantina²⁹.

Trench 45 produced no new information about the destruction of the building or subsequent activities (Phases 4-5) in the southeastern part of the building. In fact, features such as tile falls, wall collapses, and other



Fig. 38. Collapsed column drums in situ over tile collapse in Room 6c, looking south.

One interesting aspect of the building's collapse became clear in the area of Trench 43, where a number of brick column drums still attached to each other with mortar were found fallen over the tile collapse in Room 6c near the Phase 2b column base discussed above (fig. 38). This situation suggests that the roof collapsed before the column did, which is not unexpected, but is nevertheless a clear illustration of a formation process that is not always visible in the archaeological record. The preservation of

the toppled column also attests to a relative lack of later disturbance in this part of the building after its destruction. One notable find from the tile collapse in Room 6c was the rim and neck of a Greco-Italic amphora preserving the inscription ΚΑΡΠΟΥ ("produce"?) stamped in negative relief on one of the partially intact handles (fig. 39). Further study of this inscription and its comparanda in the western Mediterranean is ongoing, but we note here that at least one other Greco-Italic handle bearing this same stamped

²⁹ Excavations of a Hellenistic house on a hill to the east of the Contrada Agnese (Papa Hill) recovered two joining fragments of a Greco-Italic amphora handle (Inv. 04-89 and 04-133) bearing the inscription ΚΑΡΠΟΥ stamped in the same manner as our handle.



Fig. 40. Oven built over clean fill in Room 11a, looking east.

indications of destruction or abandonment were scarce. It is possible that these materials were cleaned up, collected, or removed for other reasons. Elsewhere in the building, there are concentrated areas where a generally consistent tile collapse layer becomes sparse and fragmentary, and we have interpreted these locations with thinner coverage as places where people disturbed the ruins of the building³⁰. However, the near total absence of architectural debris in these southern rooms of the Southeast Building may add weight to the hypothesis that this part of the building was not roofed and that Walls CC, DD, and SS were constructed in stone only at the foundation level.

Phase 5: Post-abandonment

Following the collapse of the roof, the building saw periodic occupation and activity as represented by limited 2nd and 1st century finds. One significant architectural feature that rests on a soil fill over the roof tile collapse in Room 11a (formerly Room 9) is an oven, portions of which were first exposed in 2015. This year, further excavations in the room showed that the oven, formed by a dome of brick and pithos fragments built over a base of two flat pan tiles, sits on a deposit of clean fill ca. 20-35cm thick, which then appears to rest on the tile collapse from Phase 4 (fig. 40). The fill layer was found only below the oven itself, and on the basis of this relationship we suggest that after the collapsed building was largely abandoned, the soil was laid down to create a flat and stable base for the oven. However, we plan to fully excavate the oven itself in future seasons to test this hypothesis. Wall F, first discovered in 2014 and built over the tile collapse in Room 3, remains the only potential piece of architecture in this late phase. No other new information about the final occupation and post-abandonment of the house was discovered in 2016. This is likely due to the fact that our trenches in the northern part of the building were located largely in areas where the most recent deposits had already been excavated in previous seasons.

Conclusions

The 2016 excavation season led to significant individual discoveries and produced the most complete picture of our building's evolution to date (fig. 41). Work in Trenches 42, 43, and 44 allowed us to link construction phases and major activities and events across rooms. One interesting pattern that emerged from these trenches is that the floor surfaces created in the later construction phases appear to have been more consistent in elevation across the structure than the earliest floors, where we see much greater variation in elevation from room to room. Work in Trench 45, meanwhile, exposed walls belonging to a number of rooms in the southern half of the building. Moreover, excavations in Trench 45 brought to light the complicated series of walls at the building's southeast corner, where the four lots of *Insula* W13/14S met.

We can now propose, in a preliminary fashion, that the building grew to the west and south over the course of its 50-75 years of intensive use. It likely contained an open courtyard in the center that was progressively

³⁰ WALTHALL *et al.* 2016: 17.



Fig. 41. Aerial orthophoto of the Southeast Building at the conclusion of the 2016 season.

encroached upon, while the south-central area was unroofed from beginning to end. The number of sealed floors and deposits remains fairly low, but we hope that both future excavation and our ongoing study of the assemblages we do possess will allow us to support arguments about how different parts of the building functioned. The Southeast Building promises much more evidence for a variety of activities in the Contrada Agnese, and CAP will continue to probe what the building can tell us about life in this outlying neighborhood of Hellenistic Morgantina.

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ABBREVIATIONS

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