

EXCAVATIONS AT ANEMURIUM (ESKİ ANAMUR)¹, 1972

By: James RUSSELL

A four-week season of excavation was conducted commencing 23 May and concluding 17 June with a maximum of forty-four men employed at any one time. The work was directed by Professor James Russell, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, with Professor E. H. Williams of the same university as assistant and photographer. Bay Yalçın Karalar, archaeologist and assistant at the Gaziantep Museum, served as government representative, and we record our appreciation of his sympathetic and continuing interest in the affairs of the excavation. To his superiors at the Eski Eserler ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü at Ankara and especially the Director, Bay Hikmet Gürçay, we owe a deep debt of gratitude for granting the permit to enable work to continue at Anemurium, and to H. E. The Hon. G. F. G. Hughes, the Canadian Ambassador to Turkey, for his considerable efforts in support of our application. Lastly, as in previous seasons, the work was made possible only by generous grant from the Canada Council.

Several projects of excavation were undertaken, a summary of which follows:

¹ The staff also included as archaeologists Professor C. W. J. Eliot, the American School of Classical Studies, Athens, and Dr. Erika von Conta, the Canada Council; as pottery expert Mrs. Carole Williams, the University of Toronto; as conservator Miss Frances Halahan, the British Museum. In addition, Mr. Tom Boyd, University of Indiana, though unable to be present, continues to serve as architect.

A. *The Baths* (III 2B)² - (Fig. 1). Excavation of this large building began with Room D, situated in the northeast corner of the complex immediately behind the high facade wall that overlooks the palaestra to the east. The walls stand virtually to full height (8. m. approx.) on all sides, but little trace of a roof survives. A preliminary trench cut diagonally through the building from S. E. to N. W. provided a clear picture of the original plan (Figs. 2 and 3). This was supplemented by clearing the whole of the mosaic floor at the south end of the chamber. The hall (measuring internally 10.20 m. E-W by 17.70 m. N-S) is divided into two distinct areas. At the north end is a rectangular bathing tank or piscina (10.35 m. N-S x 7.85 m.), with a depth of 1.40 m., paved by a floor of plain white mosaic consisting of very large tesserae. A passage (1. 10 m.) surrounds the piscina on three sides E, N and W) with access to the pool by means of a narrow staircase of four steps located at each corner (only those at the N. W., S. W. and S. E. corners were actually exposed).

Separated from the piscina by a slightly raised wall at its south end is an area extending 5.65 m. to the south wall, and occupying the full width of the hall (10.20 m.). It connects with the palaestra to the east through the central door in the facade

² This and all other references are to the plan of the city in E. Rosenbaum, G. Huber and S. Onurkan. *A Survey of Coastal Cities in Western Cilicia* (Ankara, 1967) plan 1.

wall and with Rooms G and C of the baths through doorways in the south and west walls respectively. The floor of this area was paved in mosaic of polychrome geometric design, well preserved around much of its border (Fig. 4), but its central panel, composed of elaborate guilloche circles, is lost for the most part. Traces of the original facing of the walls survives in fragments of marble revetment still adhering to the base of the wall at various points.

B. *The Palaestra* (E III 2 B).

The main part of this extensive complex extending to the east of the baths (III 2 B) was exposed in 1970 and 1971, but several areas remained to be completely cleared or investigated more thoroughly (Figs. 5 and 6).

1. Previous explorations in the south wing, the southernmost of the three halls that form a suite adjacent to the facade of the baths, had failed to produce any trace of the mosaic floors or marble revetment found in the two halls to the north. As a result of several new sondages opened at strategic points it is now certain that a floor contemporary with the original palaestra was never laid, though preliminary steps had been taken for its construction. Unlike the north wing, which originally constituted one single hall, the south wing seems to have been divided by a large wall running from north to south, with further divisions added subsequently. The history of these developments and the crude floors associated with them is confused and not fully understood. The most interesting feature was a carefully constructed water-channel running from west to east at the rear of the massive wall (II 14F), dividing the south wing from the exedra structure (II 12 E) to the south (Fig. 7). Encased within thick mortar walls and roofed by stone cover slabs, this channel was first identified as the main source of water for the nymphaeum believed to have existed in the exedra. But eventually the channel was shown to continue eastwards bypassing the exed-

ra, and following a course and inclination that would link with a channel discovered in 1971 that follows the base of the same wall eastwards across the limestone paved court and beyond. At a later date, to be sure, a small diversionary leet was opened to supply water to the central niche of the exedra, but this was certainly not part of the original plan of either structure.

2. In the limestone paved court the unexcavated earth was removed from the northeast and southwest corners respectively. Little evidence of the original pavement survived in the former, but several well-preserved slabs of pavement came to light in the latter as well as further traces of the narrow drain, already mentioned, running alongside the south boundary wall.

3. The cistern (0.74 m. in diam.) cut into the limestone paved court near its southeast corner had been discovered in 1970 but had never been excavated. This was now accomplished to a depth of nearly nine meters, at which point the water-table was encountered. Only the first 7.5 metres, however, yielded any artifacts. A vast abundance of pottery was recovered, for the most part coarse ware, some of which promises to provide substantial profiles and even whole pots. Datable finds from varying levels, including two coins of the reign of Heraclius, suggest that we have a homogeneous deposit belonging to the first half of the seventh century that confidently may be expected to yield important information on the coarse ware of that era in the eastern Mediterranean.

4. As in previous seasons, further probes were conducted beneath the mortar base of the "coarse" mosaic at points where the mosaic itself was broken but the underlying mortar had remained intact. Much pottery was again recovered, including lamp fragments datable to the third century after Christ, but no coins were found to supplement the well-worn coin of Alexander Severus discovered in a similar sondage in 1970. This remains the most precise document for the *terminus post quem*

for the laying of the mosaic pavement, and probably for the palaestra in general, in the mid-third century.

5. The great barrel-vaulted drain that runs under the northern edge of the "coarse" mosaic of the palaestra from west to east was examined in closer detail than in previous seasons. A trench was dug at its eastern extremity where it was apparently closed by the east wall of the palaestra. Digging continued for a depth of over 6 metres to reveal: a) the continuation eastwards of the drain in a similar barrel-vaulted tunnel 2.40 m. beneath the centre of the roof of the first; b) a lateral aperture adjacent to the south springing of the lower vault; and c) a low north-south wall across the entrance lying 2.25 m. below the centre of the lower arch, both devices doubtless serving in their differing ways to regulate the flow through the drain. The lower drain was traced for a further 10.32 m. eastwards.

C. Peripheral Areas of E III 2B :

Two areas considered to lie outside the confines of the palaestra proper but felt to be closely associated with it were investigated.

1. *The East Area* lies north of the palaestra staircase between the eastern boundary wall of the palaestra proper and the large wall, III 7, that clearly marks off the raised ground of the palaestra zone from the lower ground to the east. A series of four diagonal trenches (NW - SW) was dug, exposing a mortar floor in all but the S. E. corner. There mosaic in fragile condition appeared in a narrow area extending between two walls running in an east-west direction and probably coinciding with the side walls of the lower vault of the great drain which runs below this part of the building. There is no indication as yet of the purpose of this area, but the absence of any staircase or doorway communicating through the east wall of the palaestra seems to rule out any close relationship with that building.

2. *The Northeast Area.* The original intention was to establish beyond doubt the precise limits of the palaestra at its northeast corner where walls continuing northwards beyond the area excavated in 1971 seem to indicate a considerable extension of the building in that direction. The investigation of these structures produced totally unexpected results.

Three distinct areas may be identified:

a) The first, lying immediately to the north of the northeast corner of the open palaestra square measures 6.05 m. E-W x 3.23 m. N-S and constitutes the third room (Fig. 8) of a Byzantine structure (the 'Northeast Corner House' of previous seasons). Paved with irregular slabs of the local dark-blue quarried stone, it lies at approximately the same level as the "fine" mosaic of the palaestra upon which the other two rooms were built. The most unusual feature of this third chamber, however, is a pair of crudely constructed 'troughs' sunk into the floor against the north and south walls of the room respectively.

b) The second is likewise situated north of the north wall of the palaestra square. It has similar N-S dimensions (3.59 m.) as the Byzantine room to the east but on the west it continues for more than 2.30 m. into the unexcavated scarp. The floor is composed of fine, carefully laid, terracotta tiles at a level approximately 0.6 m. below that of the Byzantine House or the palaestra mosaic. Two tiles were lifted and the underlying packing sifted. This produced pottery dated no later than the third century after Christ and two third-century coins, one a coin of Claudius Gothicus (268-270 A. D.) in good condition. It is tempting to suppose that this floor belongs to the same building programme as the palaestra.

c) North of the wall that forms the northern limit of the first two areas lay the third revealed by the latest trenches, a complex of two chambers divided by a north-south wall. Each of these rooms was

paved in "fine" mosaic of geometric design (33-42) tesserae per 100 cm²) and remains of marble revetment in varying colours still adhere to the base of the walls. The eastern room contains at least two different mosaic designs. Only a fragment of one survives, a delicate rose of very fine design (42-56 tesserae per 100 cm²), closely resembling one of similar design found in the vicinity of the Odeon in 1968. At the south end, however, the mosaic panel survives in virtually perfect state of preservation (Fig. 9), measuring 3.35 m. east-west x 3.32 m. north-south. The design, in 6 different colours of tesserae, consists of a centre-piece composed of a series of interlocking squares and diamonds, surrounded by a series of rectangular and square panels each enclosing a dark lozenge with light circle set at its centre. In its details this pattern resembles closely certain of the panels of the "fine" mosaic of the palaestra area, with which it must be contemporary. The mosaic floor of the room to the west appears only in its southeast corner where a guilloche border flanked by stepped pyramids of familiar design survives. Its continuation westward may be assumed from the heavy mortar base found in a trench opened northwest of the area exposed.

The location of these rooms at a lower level than that of the palaestra and the absence of any doorway providing access towards it seem to suggest that we are now dealing with an entirely new complex, running parallel to the palaestra and opening to the north.

D. *The Exedra Building* (II 12 E):

Excavations in the area south of the palaestra-bath complex concentrated on further exposing the main facade area of the building (Fig. 10), including the two rooms east and west of the apsed exedra, and in exploring the southern limit of the perimeter wall, which was exposed for its entire length and, in places, excavated to its full depth.

The building continues to be a puzzle for, as mentioned, excavation in the south

wing of the palaestra revealed that the provision for a spout of water through the back wall of the apse, a feature that had led to the original identification as a nymphaeum, was in fact a late addition to an existing structure. Moreover complete excavation of the two side chambers led to the discovery of mosaic floors at two levels (Fig. 11), the lower just before a doorway. Both these doorways to the south were blocked, probably in the late 4th century A. D., and the floors covered over and brought to a uniform level. Apparently the whole area was turned to industrial purposes, for a well preserved kiln had been found in the west door of the east chamber in the 1971 season, and some iron slag appeared this year.

Immediately to the south of the facade excavation revealed staircases in front of the doors to the east and west side chambers and considerable quantities of marble revetment, both fallen and *in situ* (Fig. 12); in one case the original bronze peg still retained the marble sheathing. Elsewhere along the facade wall a number of other similar pegs were found still *in situ*. Equally interesting was the discovery of what seems to be a stylobate about 0.95 m. thick running directly south from the west side of the apse; only part of this was cleared this year but it will likely be matched by a similar foundation in unexcavated area to the east where, running into the scarp, a large column drum broken into two sections was found this year.

Work continued along the wall marking the south limit of the area aimed at finding if there ever was a floor level; to this end the southeast and south-west corners were exposed to sterile levels (in the former in fact to groundwater) and no floor appeared. However a large broken threshold block found in the centre of the south wall leads one to expect that a floor of some description must have existed at that point.

E. *Small Finds and Pottery*:

In all, 192 small finds were recorded but twelve of these were stray finds of

unknown provenance. There were 132 coins, the majority falling into two groups. The first belongs to the second half of the fourth century A. D., coins of Theodosius I, Arcadius and Honorius being most frequent. The second falls in the first half of the seventh century, with the reigns of Heraclius and Constans II being by far the most frequently represented. Only one other group is worthy of special note, viz. six third-century coins minted at Anemurium, including at least one type not hitherto recorded.

The remaining 60 finds form a heterogeneous collection of small bronze, lead and iron objects (tools, hooks, buckles, fragments of furniture, weights etc.), and terracotta lamps, for the most part of early Byzantine date. Of special note are a fragment of a lamp mould of a type represented in the hoard found in 1968 (Fig. 13), a handsome bronze plumb-bob, two joining fragments of a "shale" inscribed medallion, a small silver cross, and the base of a middle Byzantine cup of Pontic origin in yellow glaze ware, depicting a crouching rabbit (Fig. 14).

All pottery discovered in the latest season and the remaining backlog from the

1971 season were completely sorted and recorded by Mrs. Williams. As in previous seasons considerable quantities of sherds were produced in all areas. That found in the palaestra area supplied further evidence for its late occupation. Great quantities of African Red Slip and Cypriot Red Slip and a smaller amount of Late Roman C, furnished the best evidence for dating. For the most part, on the basis of forms and of styles of decoration, the pottery from this area falls within the period ca. 550-700 A. D. Only a small number of sherds can be assigned to the fifth century A. D. and most of these tend to belong to the later years.

From the sondages beneath the mosaic of the palaestra mixed fill containing sherds of extremely fragmentary nature was recovered. Identifiable material spans a period of approximately 150 to 200 years. Among the sherds were Cypriot Sigillata and Eastern Sigillata A forms common in the second half of the first century A. D. and the second century A. D. The Eastern Sigillata A plate forms may be as late as the early years of the third century A. D.

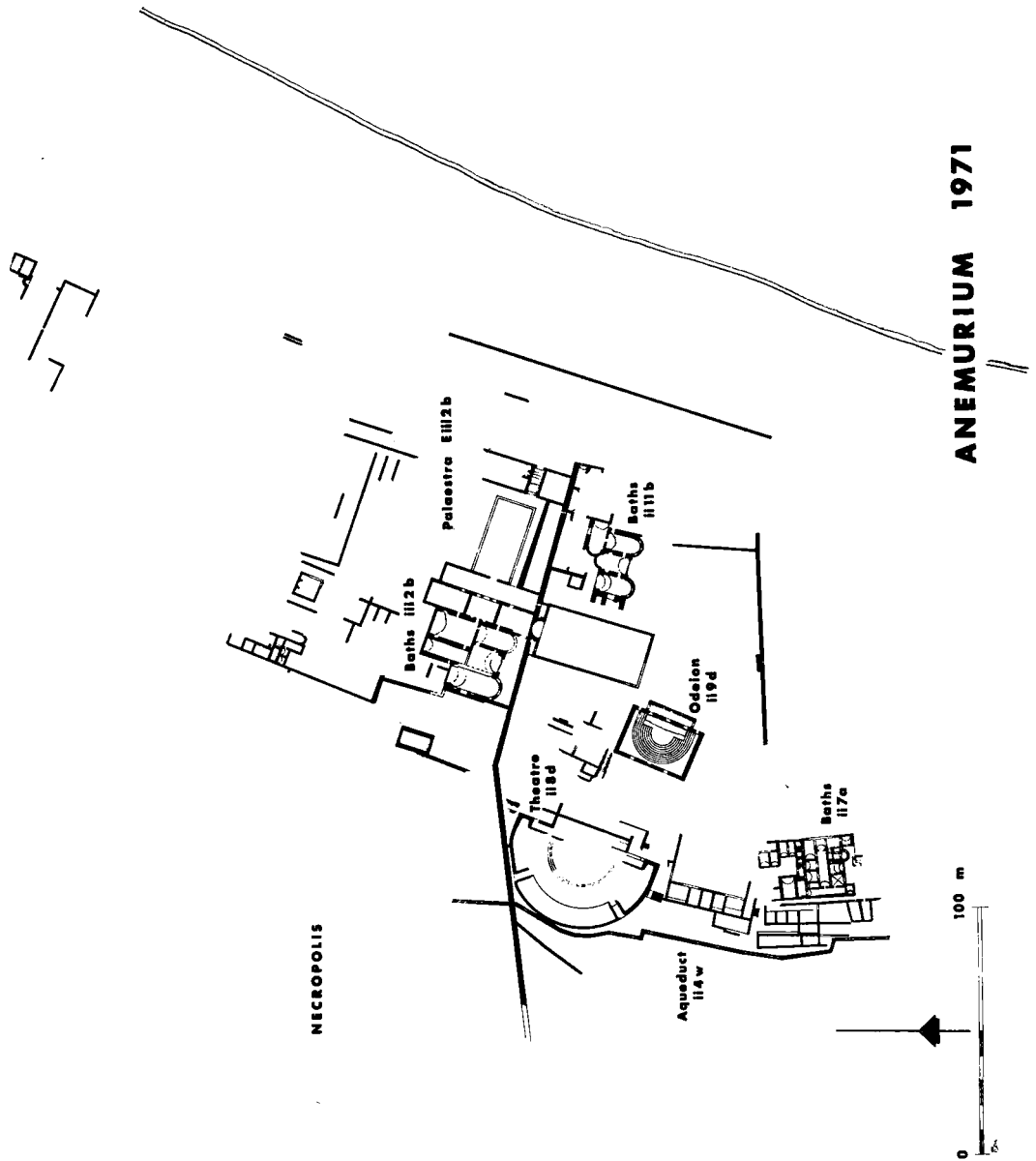


Fig. 1 — Anemurium: General plan of the central area of the city.

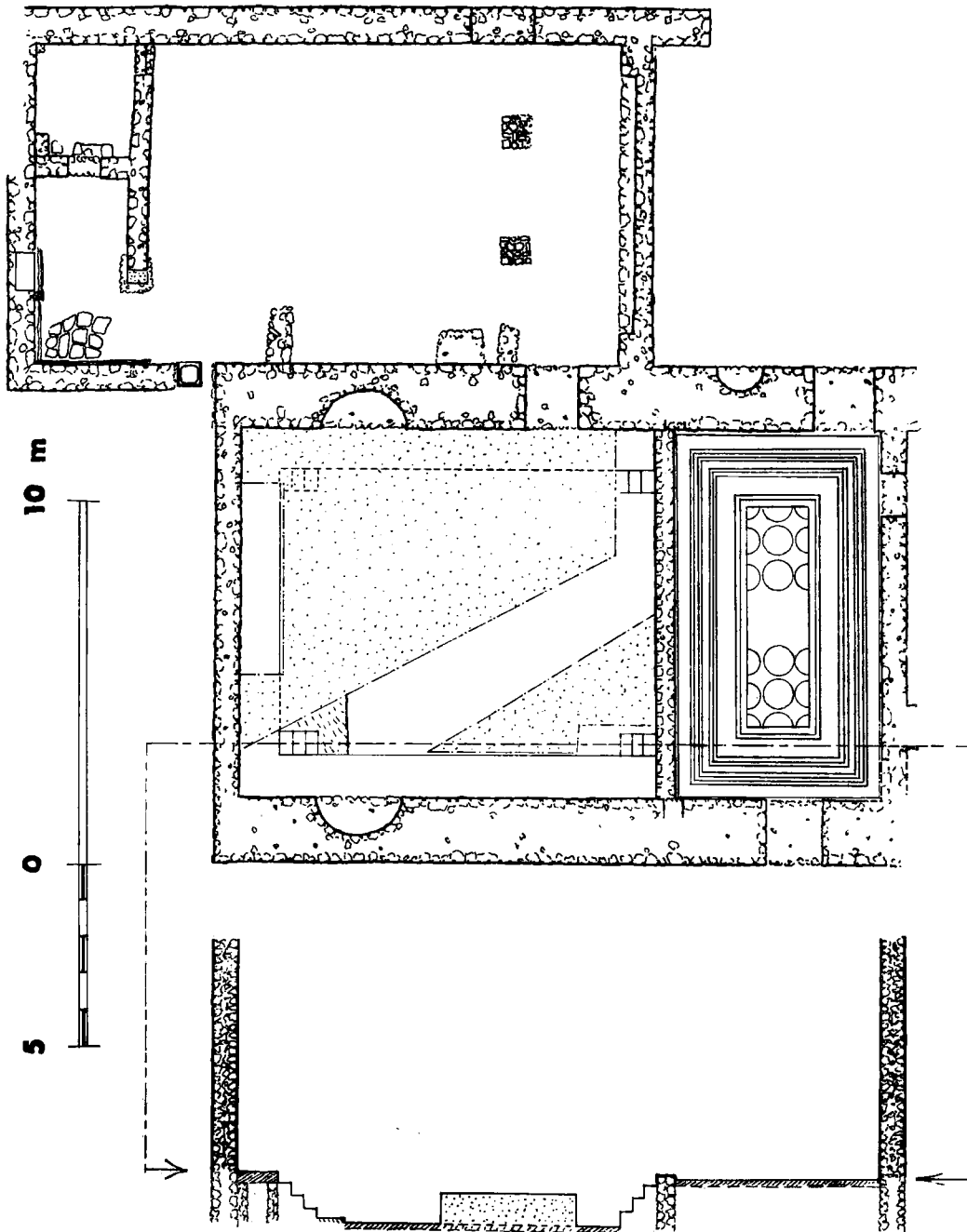


Fig. 2 — Anemurium: Baths III 2B - Room D, plan,
as excavated and cross - section through piscina.



Fig. 3 — Anemurium: Baths III 2B - Room D, general view from southeast corner.



Fig. 4 — Anemurium: Baths III 2B - Room D, west end of mosaic floor, seen from north.

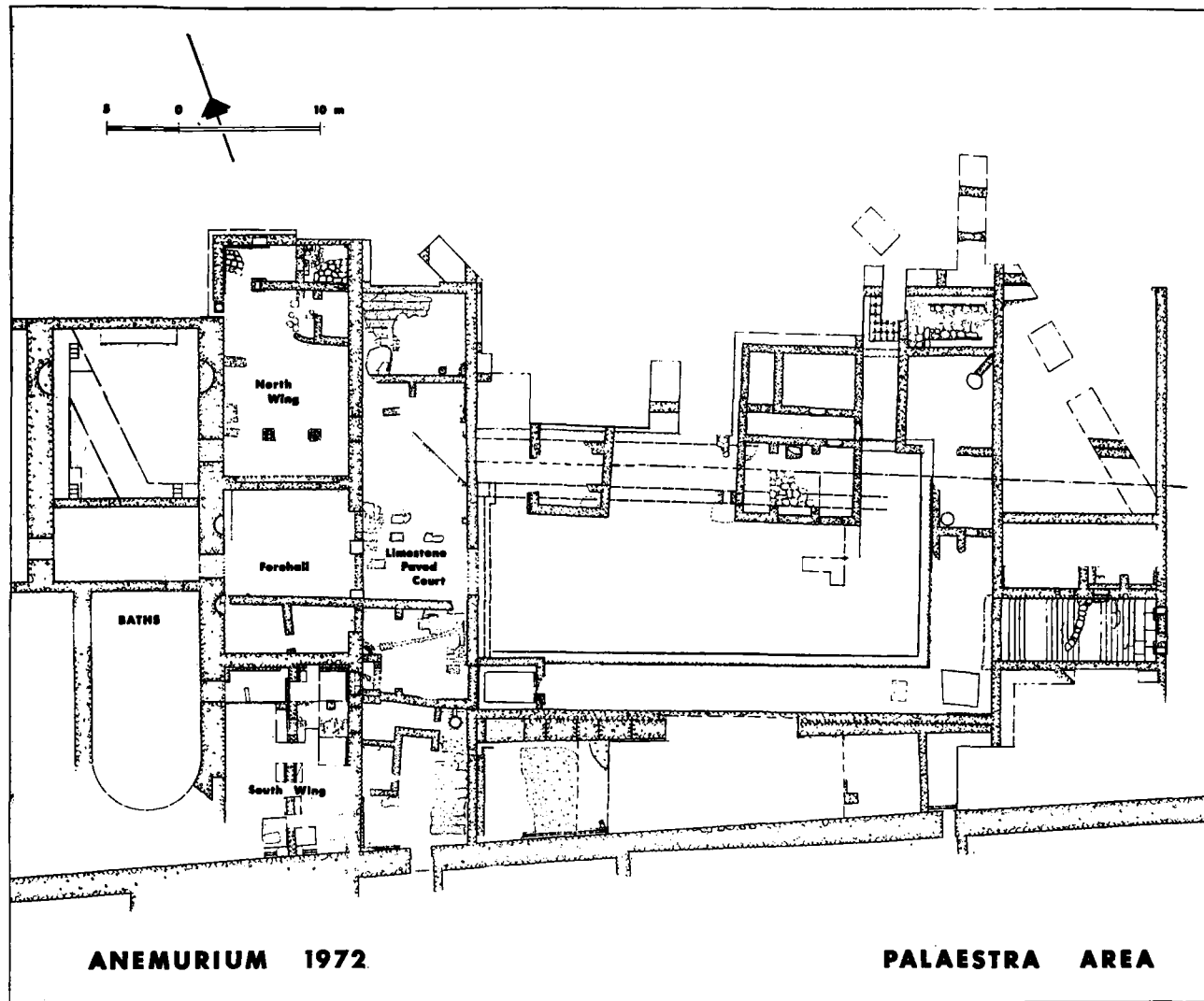


Fig. 5 — Anemurium: The Area E III 2B, the palaestra including buildings of later date as excavated.

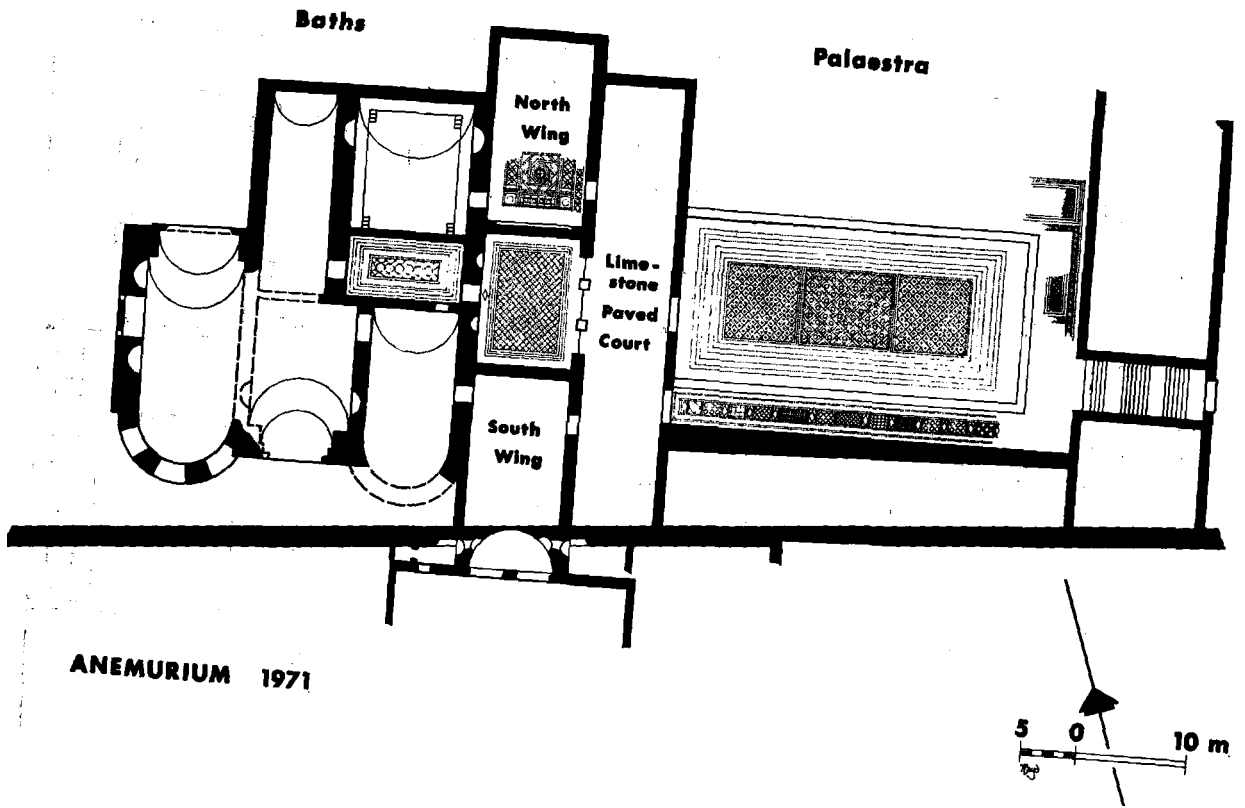


Fig. 6 — Anemurium: The Area E III 2B, restored plan of original palaestra and baths.

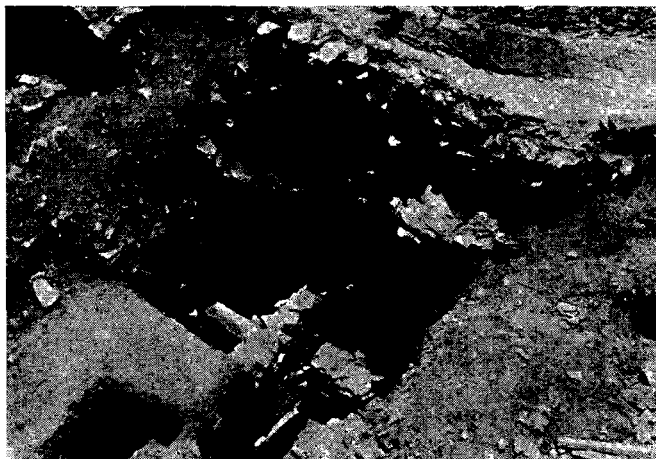


Fig. 7 — Anemurium: The Area E III 2B, south wing. Water-channel (centre) running behind the wall of the exedra complex (II 12 E), visible at top right.

Fig. 8 — Anemurium: In centre, paved floor of room of early Byzantine house at northeast corner of the palaestra: to left mosaic floor of unidentified room of earlier building.

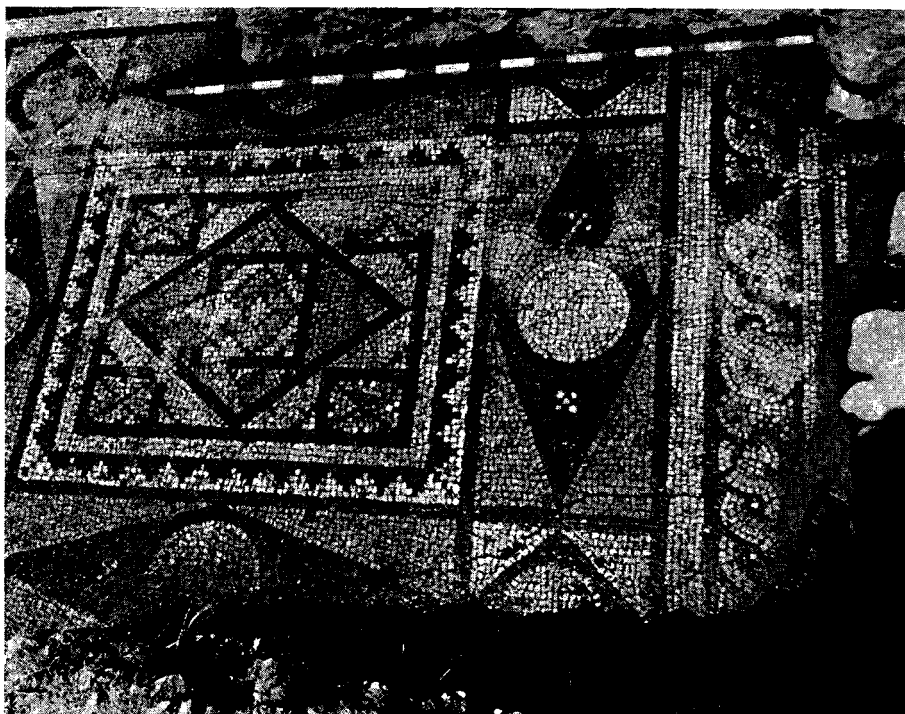


Fig. 9 — Anemurium: detail of mosaic floor of room in unidentified building northeast of palaestra.



Fig. 10 — Anemurium: Exedra building (II 12 E):
general view of facade from west.



Fig. 11 — Anemurium: Exedra building
(II 12 E), east wing viewed from north,
mosaic pavement at two levels.



Fig. 12 — Anemurium: Exedra building
(II 12 E), detail of facade wall, stylobate,
and steps to west wing, seen from east.



Fig. 13 — Anemurium: lamp mould and cast of lamp of early Byzantine type.



Fig. 14 — Anemurium: decorated base of Byzantine plate.