



In Centro

Collected Papers
Volume III

Time

Editors:

Guy D. Stiebel

Ido Koch

Avner Ecker

Amir Gorzalczany

Yotam Tepper

Amit Shadman

Salome Dan-Goor

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Central Region



The Sonia and Marco Nadler Institute of Archaeology
The Jacob M. Alkow Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures
The Chaim Rosenberg School of Jewish Studies and Archaeology
The Lester and Sally Entin Faculty of Humanities



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Yotam Tepper, Amit Shadman and Salome Dan-Goor

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Between Caesarea Maritima and Qaysariya: The City between 640/641 and 750 CE

Peter Gendelman and Uzi 'Ad

This article deals with a somewhat short episode in the history of Caesarea Maritima—a period of a little over a century from 640/641, when Caesarea was conquered by Muslims, to 750 CE, when Marwan II, the last Umayyad caliph, was defeated in battle and later killed. Several papers based on both written sources and available archaeological data already addressed this period, most noticeably those written by Kenneth G. Holum (2011a; 2011b), Gideon Avni (2011), Donald Whitcomb (2011) and Joseph Patrich (2006; 2011). Since 2014, however, several excavations conducted by the Israel Antiquities Authority at Caesarea (Fig. 1) have contributed additional data regarding occupation of the site during the Umayyad period. We present this data here, in addition to previously unpublished and highly relevant materials from Yosef Porath's excavations in the 1990s on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority in the South-West Zone (SWZ) of the city in Insula W2S3 (Area I).

Archaeological Evidence

Harbor Horrea (Area LL)

This large complex, which includes two elongated side-by-side warehouses, is located on the northern quay roughly on the point of connection between the median and western basins of the Caesarea's harbor (Fig. 1:1). The *horreum* was

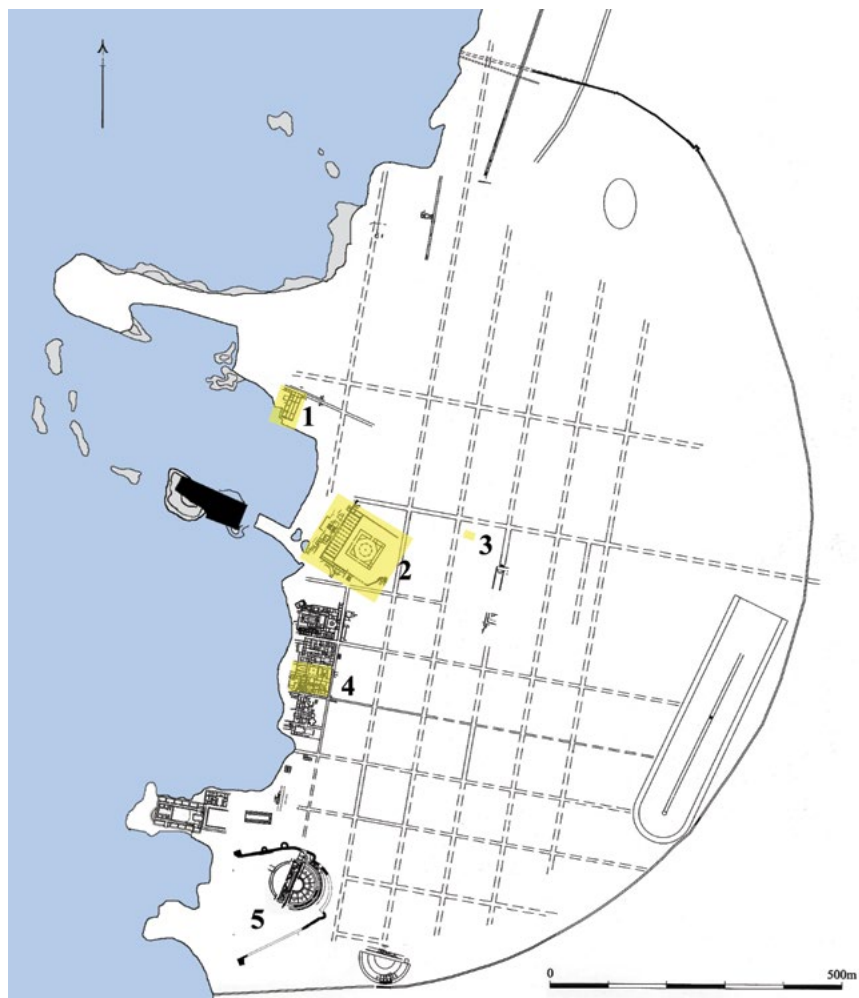


Fig. 1: Map of Late Antiquity Caesarea Maritima showing areas under discussion: 1) Harbor *Horrea* (Area LL); 2) temple platform; 3) salvage excavations in eastern neighborhoods of the city; 4) semi-public complex on Insula W2S3; 5) *fortezza* (Anna Iamini and Peter Gendelman)

built during the second half of the 4th or the beginning of the 5th century CE upon remains of earlier constructions, and it remained in use with minor changes until the end of the Umayyad period. Some parts of the complex were previously exposed by the expeditions of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, under the direction of L.I. Levine and E. Netzer (1986) and later by the Combined Caesarea Expedition under the direction of K.G. Holum and A. Raban (Stabler and Holum 2008). The southern and western parts of the complex were severely damaged by the sea and by the construction of harbor fortifications during the Crusader period. During the 2013–2017 excavations conducted on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority, the entire complex was exposed ('Ad, Arbel and Gendelman 2018).

The Byzantine Period/Late Antiquity

During Late Antiquity the large storage complex (over 30 × 47 m) included two *horrea* (eastern and western) (Fig. 2) located on the south of a southeast–northwest street flanked by shops that led into the inner part of the city. The *horrea* share a common wall, which is a remnant of an earlier, Roman period, building. There is no passage between the two *horrea*.

The eastern *horreum* includes an antechamber (R4) entered from the street and flanked by two administrative rooms (R5 and R6). The antechamber terminates with a wide gate leading to the central corridor (R2), which was paved with a mosaic floor (Fig. 3a). This corridor passes between two wings of sizeable storerooms, four on each side (R1, 15–17 in the eastern wing, and R3, R12/13, R14 and R18 in the western wing). The storerooms were built upon series of east–west oriented subterranean vaults (Fig. 3b), and its plaster floors were placed on top of an isolated layer of terracotta tiles (Fig. 3c). This flooring arrangement of the *horreum* indicates that it was used as a granary. The remains of supporting columns made of local sandstone (*kurkar*), set in the center of at least four storerooms (Fig. 3d), indicate that the western *horreum* was at least two storeys high. This conclusion is also supported by its massive ashlar walls.

The western *horreum* (Fig. 2a), less well preserved than the eastern one, includes an antechamber (R20) entered from the street and two rows of storerooms probably accompanied by a corridor on the west. Of the western row only two relatively small rooms, paved with plaster floors, survive (R21 and R22). The eastern row includes four storerooms, paved with plaster and mosaic floors and separated from each other by a relatively narrow wall. Four massive piers stand in the corners of the larger, northern, room, indicating that it had been roofed by arches.



Fig. 2: Harbor *Horrea* (Area LL): a) plan (by Rivka Mishaev); b) aerial photo (Griffin Aerial Imaging)

The Umayyad Period

In the period following the Islamic conquest, possibly a short time gap following 640/641CE, both *horrea* continued in use at least partially as a storage facility. However, several alternations were carried out during the second half of the 7th century CE. The large storerooms of the eastern *horreum* were subdivided by partitions into two or more smaller compartments, similarly to R1, R3, R12/13, R15 and R16 (Figs. 2a, 4a–c). The western administrative room R6 was connected to its adjacent room (R3) by breaching their common wall. The newly created compartments were interconnected and paved with simple plaster, flagstones, or earthen floors. The new floor level was raised by an average of 0.5 m in the western wing and even up to 1 m in eastern wing. Consequently, the height of entrances was shortened and the level of thresholds raised. Some of the new rooms preserved remains of fine white plaster on their walls. Accordingly, a new plaster floor in the central corridor was laid 0.15–0.2 m above the earlier mosaic (Fig. 3a). Rooms R12 and R13 had no changes and probably continued to use floors from the Byzantine period. In room R12 a concentration of dozens of imported and local amphorae was exposed above the floor, some discovered almost intact and the rest broken but repairable (Fig. 4d–e). The imported amphorae originated from the Aegean region and from Egypt and are dated to the second half of the 7th century. Many of the amphorae bear Greek graffiti and dipinti, including monograms and crosses, and at least one vessel was incised with an Arabic inscription.

The western *horreum* was also altered (Fig. 2a): the eastern row was mostly repaved with a new plaster floor that rose up to 0.6 m above the previous pavement; the main changes, however, were in the large northeastern room of the complex (R8). The arch-bearing piers were reinforced, and an additional arch was installed roughly equidistant between them (Fig. 5a). An additional pier constructed of a core of reused *kurkar* column drums and faced by ashlar was set against the northern wall (Fig. 5b). One of two openings in the western wall of the storeroom was blocked, and a new floor of high-quality gray plaster was installed, sloping toward the center of the room. The room's walls of the room



Fig. 3: Eastern *horreum*: a) mosaic pavement on central corridor; b) subterranean vault; c) pavement of terracotta tiles on storeroom R3; d) supported column on storeroom R15

and the arches were coated with a thick layer of grayish-white plaster, which was preserved to a height of up to 1.5 m above the floor. All the piers preserve a tie hole on one of the corners, 1–1.2 m above floor level, probably for the tying of a beast of burden.

The alterations made to the badly-preserved western row of storerooms were more significant. The previous storerooms were replaced by two new



Fig. 4: Eastern *horreum*: a–b) smaller compartments on R15; c) smaller compartments on R1; d) storeroom R12 with amphorae deposit; e) one of the amphorae from R12

compartments (R21 and R22), separated by a newly constructed wall with an opening. The rooms were paved with plaster floors, 0.2–0.4 m higher than those of the previous period. The walls in both rooms were coated with gray plaster. Near the northeastern corner of the northern room (R21), a *tabun* was incorporated within the new floor and a new opening was breached to connect it with the antechamber (R20) of the previous period's *horreum* (see Fig. 5c).



Fig. 5: Western *horreum*: a) fallen arch on R8; b) pier made of reused *kurkar* column drums on R8; c) *tabun* and blocked door on R21

The End of the Complex

The complex was abandoned for unknown reasons toward the end of the 7th or in the beginning of the 8th century CE. Except for empty amphorae in room R12 of the eastern building (as deduced by the absence of stoppers), there were no intact or repairable pottery vessels or personal or household items left on the floors of either the eastern or the western buildings. This suggests that the buildings were vacated by their inhabitants voluntarily, rather than due to any disastrous event.

A layer of ash and chunks of coal, including remains of charred wooden beams, was discovered above the floor of the central corridor of the eastern building. This indicates that this wing of the building was burned soon after its abandonment. The ashlar walls of the corridor and some of the rooms from the eastern (R1, R15) and western (R3, R12 and R13) wings bear marks of exposure to a fierce conflagration (Fig. 6a).

A 0.1–0.4 m thick layer of brown soil accumulated above the burnt layer and the floors, and a thick layer of clean sand (1.2–2.6 m high), mixed with stones from the collapsed walls and arches, covered the entire complex (Fig. 6b–c).

The Vaults of the Temple Platform and Adjoining Areas

The Temple of Augustus and the Goddess Rome was constructed as part of Herod the Great's founding project of Caesarea Maritima and its port Sebastos. The temenos occupied an artificial platform with a curvilinear eastern back-wall, covering a total area of roughly 13 dunams (Figs. 1:2, 7). The platform is surrounded by retaining walls, each almost 3 m wide, containing an inner fill composed of layers of hard-packed sand and crushed sandstone. The western façade consists of a set of six vaults flanked by two large halls (25 × 25 m each) open to the harbor, the roofs of which were supported by arcades. During the last decade of the 5th or the first decade of the 6th century CE, a magnificent octagonal church was built over the site of the demolished Herodian temple and a new staircase connected the temenos with the eastern quay of the inner harbor. The new staircase was smaller than the previous one. In the early 6th century CE, the vaults on both sides of the new propylaea were converted



Fig. 6: Western *horreum*: a) marks of fire on R2; b) deposit of sand on R2; c) deposit of sand on R8

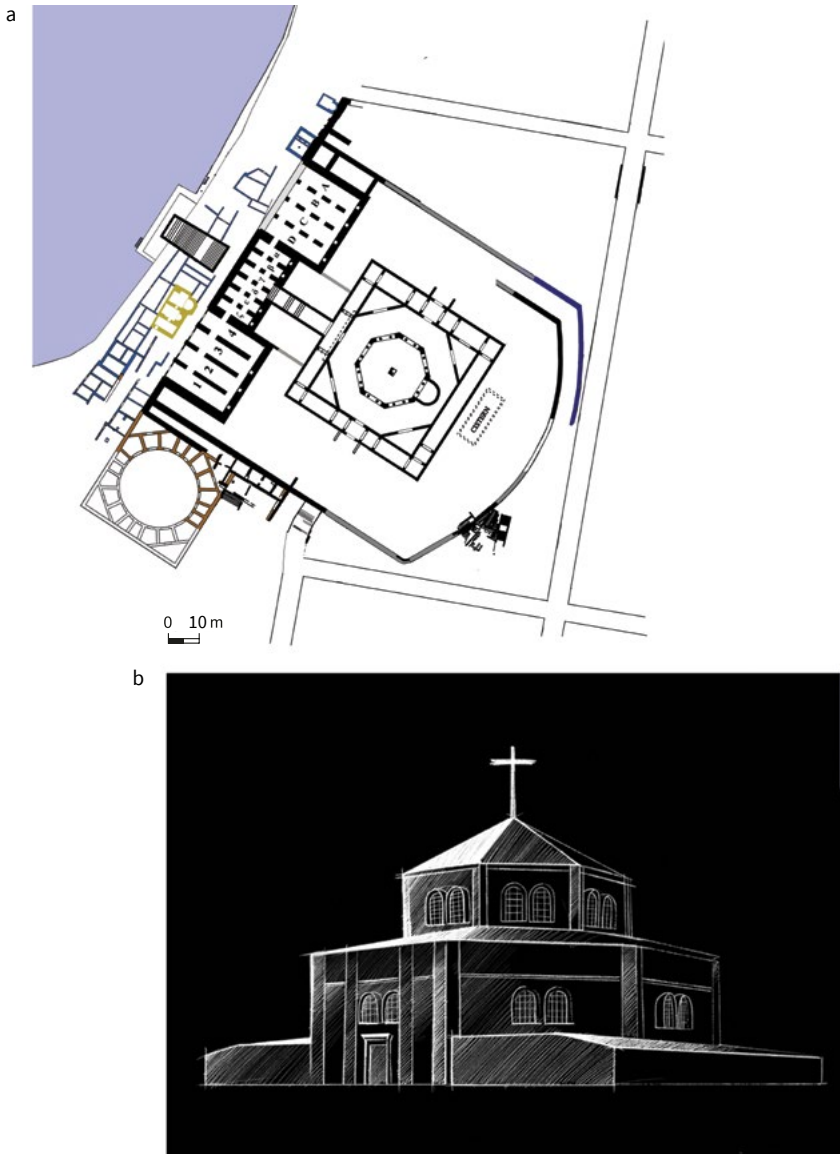


Fig. 7: Temple platform: a) ground plan of the temple platform area in the Byzantine period; b) proposed reconstruction of octagonal church (Breeze Creative Ltd and Peter Gendelman)

into a warehouse with a storage space of ca. 1,300 m². The vaults were paved with plaster (Vaults 1–4 and A, D) and/or plain tessellate mosaic floors, some equipped with underfloor dolia jars, a practice familiar from other late antique *horrea* in Caesarea (Patrich 1996: 163). By the middle of the century the *horreum* had been enlarged to cover the entire western mole of the inner harbor.

At the same time the Roman octagonal *macellum* located next to the southern revetment wall of the temple platform was rebuilt. The vaulted radial cells and the central court were paved with plain tessellated mosaics. The reconstructed cells were given a second storey of shops and stores, and a sizeable complex of shops, called the Upper Market, was built on a high ground area to the east of the octagonal *macellum*.

The Umayyad Period

During the second half of the 7th century CE most of the area was abandoned, with only a few indications of human activity. The only clear marks of occupation from the Umayyad period were uncovered within three remaining vaults (B–D) of the northern cluster (Fig. 8a). All three were repaved with a floor of yellowish crushed chalk, and a circular lime kiln was constructed within the southernmost vault (D). The cone-shaped lime kiln, up to 2.7 m in diameter, was constructed of reused ashlar and had a stokehole opening located on the west. It was operated from a small *praefornium* defined by the walls and used a mosaic floor from a previous period as a working surface (Fig. 8b–c). Several marble architectural elements found in the vicinity clearly indicate that the lime-kiln operation was based on abundant marble elements taken from previous constructions and especially from the Octagonal Church.

This lime-kiln operation ceased during the late 7th or early 8th century CE as a result of the collapse of the remaining vaults of the northern group (Vaults B–D). It is not clear whether they collapsed due to some structural failure during their construction almost 800 years earlier or because of natural disasters, such



Fig. 8: Temple platform: a) Vaults A–D, general view; b) Vaults C–D, view to the east; c) lime kiln on Vault D

as one of the earthquakes of 710, 749m or 756 CE (Amiran, ArieH and Turcotte 1994: 266–267).

The Eastern Neighborhoods of the City

Remains from the Umayyad period were uncovered in a small salvage excavation conducted by the authors in the area located to the east of the eastern gate of the Crusader-period fortification (Fig. 1:3). On the whole, this area yielded diverse finds from the Roman to the Fatimid periods (Gendelman and 'Ad 2023). During the Byzantine period this area was occupied by a large (and probably public) building, which was partially exposed. Among its several rooms it also contained a large hall paved with a polychrome mosaic floor (8.37 × more than 7 m) (Fig. 9a).

During the Umayyad period the building underwent significant alterations. The hall was subdivided into at least four smaller rooms (ca. 2–4 × 2 m) (Fig. 9b). Similarly, additional rooms to the west of the hall were subdivided. The newly constructed walls were made of reused ashlar and spolia laid directly upon the mosaic floors of the previous period. With the exception of one of the constructed rooms, which was paved with a plaster floor, the rooms retained the previous mosaics as their floors. The building was abandoned most probably during the first half of 8th century CE; later, in the 9th century CE, industrial installations were constructed over it. Pottery dating between the mid- or late 7th century to the mid-8th century (Gendelman, forthcoming) and post-reform *fals* of 90 H (707 CE) (Bijovsky, forthcoming) were discovered on the floors of the Umayyad building.

The Southwestern Zone Insula W2S3

Between 1992 and 1998 the Israel Antiquities Authority Expedition to Caesarea Maritima, directed by Yosef Porath, excavated an enigmatic complex found within Insula W2S3 (Figs. 1:4, 10a). The complex was first built in the 5th century CE and continued to function until the Persian invasion (614 CE) or the Arab conquest (640/641 CE) (Porath 1998: 42–43; 2008: 1660; Gersht and Gendelman 2021: 97; Gendelman and Porath, forthcoming). The complex is divided by



Fig. 9: 2014 excavation in eastern neighborhoods of the city; a) general view; b) Umayyad-period rooms upon mosaic floor from the Byzantine period

entrances and a passageway into two almost equal parts, and it includes two adjoining baths accompanied by administrative and service units on the southern half (Fig. 10b). The northern part consisted of a two-storey basilica facing the peristyle courtyard and several small rooms adjoining it from the east (Fig. 10c–d). Most of the complex was luxuriously decorated with a variety of floor and wall mosaics (tesserae and opus sectile), wall revetments, wall paintings and sculptures, and so on. The insula W2S3 complex seems to have functioned as a semi-public facility and could have been the property of one of the corpora of Late Antique Caesarea (Gersht and Gendelman 2021: 142).

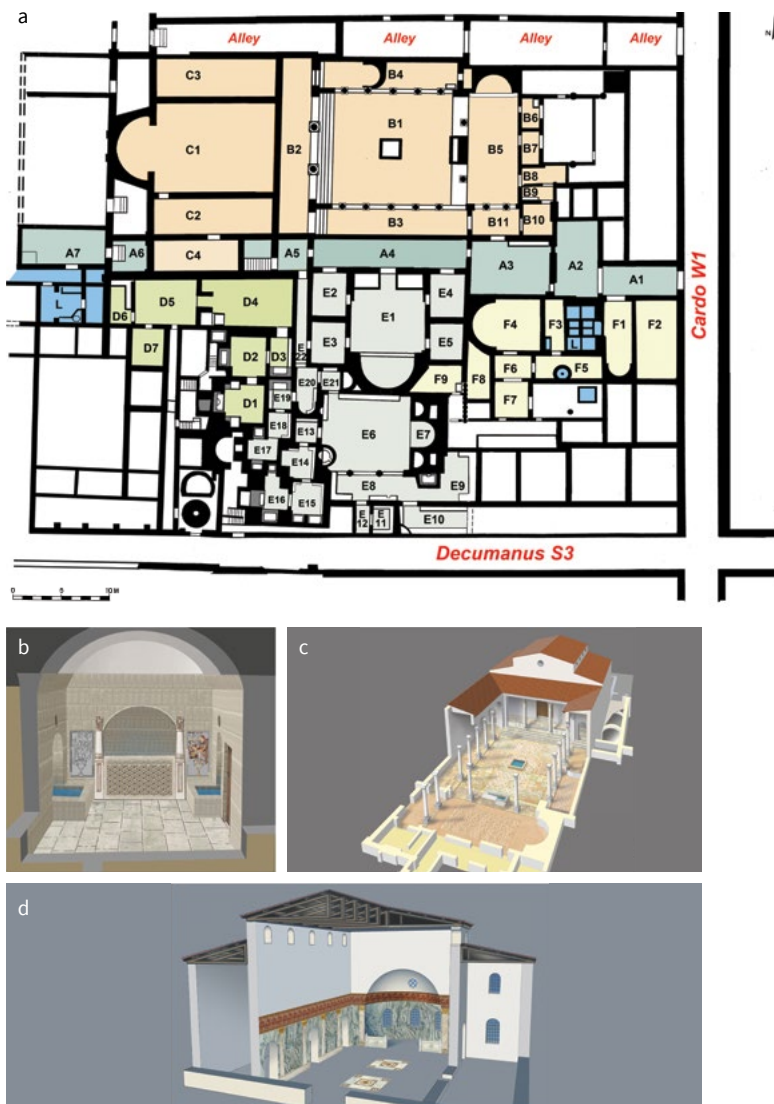


Fig. 10: Semi-public complex on Insula W2S3; a) ground plan from Byzantine period; b) reconstruction of one of large bath *caldaria*; c) reconstruction of peristyle court; d) reconstruction of basilica

The Post-Byzantine Occupation

The semi-public complex of insula W2S3 was abandoned in the mid-7th century CE. Since then its materials were plundered for recycling and reuse. Its disintegration can be divided into two stages:

- Primary recycling of precious materials and covering by irrigation channels and agricultural plots (Stratum 4)
- Stone robbery for construction and for the lime industry (Stratum 3)

The first stage began with the dismantling of timber roofs that mainly covered the northern part of the complex and the dismantling of the upper floor of the two-storey basilica. Timber, roof tiles and probably of some of the metal implements were recycled, whereas ashlar, marbles and stone slabs of veneer or flooring were piled up in the complex's expanses. The cleared areas within the basilica's ground floor and the open court to its west were converted into agricultural plots (Fig. 11a). The plots occupied the rooms and courtyards of the semi-public complex while their walls still stood up to 3–6 m high. These walls were intentionally left erect to protect the plots from the western winds and salt spray from the sea (Porath 2008: 1663).

Three such plots have been recorded: The largest, Plot I, covered the area of the former courtyard west of the two-storey basilica (ca. 8 × 17 m; ca. 136 m²); Plot II covered the ground floor of the basilica's main hall (ca. 8.7 × 13 m; ca. 100 m²); and Plot III, the smallest, covered the ground floor of the basilica's northern aisle (3–5 × 15.5 m; ca. 58 m²). As preparation for the construction of the plots, a thick layer of soil, mixed with city garbage rich in organic material, was spread within each one. In addition, a water well and a system of superficial channels were installed. The channels, 0.1 m wide and approximately 0.1 m deep, were curved and made of reused ashlar that were laid in line. Openings intersected the channels every 0.5–1 m. Each channel started from a basin located next to the well's mouth. Plot II was irrigated with a rather elaborate system of four main channels and two secondary channels that distributed water from a circular well, located roughly



Fig. 11: Semi-public complex on Insula W2S3: a) ground plan of irrigated agricultural plots; b) Plot II; c) Plot I; d) unfinished well on peristyle court of previous period

in the middle, to each part of the plot (as shown in Fig. 11b). The narrow Plot III was irrigated by a single channel from a square well, while on Plot I, only a circular well and a segment of a secondary channel remain (as shown in Fig. 11c). Similarly irrigated plots were excavated by the Caesarea Combined Expedition team on the northern part of insula W2S3 and on the Late Antique *praetorium* on insula W2S2 (Patrich 1999: 81–82, 94, Fig. 12; Lehman 1999: 138–139, 148).

An attempt to create an additional irrigated plot on the higher elevated peristyle court east of the basilica was unsuccessful. During the effort, a significant amount of marble architectural elements was partially moved aside to the northwestern and southeastern corners of the previous peristyle court. As a result, the portico columns fell from their bases. Later, a layer of soil mixed with city garbage, ranging in thickness from 0.5 to 0.9 m, was spread over the area. The workers dug a water well within the previous *stratum apsis*, but abandoned its shaft before reaching the water table, and the project was never completed (Fig. 11d).

The exact type of plants cultivated in these plots is still unknown. The small size of the plots and the nature of the irrigation system point towards a crop that requires frequent irrigation and quite small areas, such as vegetables or herbs. We are informed, however, by 10th- and 11th-century CE sources, that the inhabitants of Early Islamic Caesarea had cultivated date palms, oranges and citron trees, wheat and black pepper (Nāṣer-e Khusraw 1986: 19; al-Muqaddasī 1886: 55).

The finds indicate that the area of the semi-public complex was used for agriculture only during a short period within the second half of the 7th century CE (Gendelman and Porath, forthcoming). The second stage, pertaining to the lime industry, began already in the first half of the 8th century CE (Gendelman and Porath, forthcoming). The agricultural plots were replaced by lime-production kilns and the remains of the building were further dismantled for their stones. During this stage the semi-public complex lost much of its marble architectural members and decoration, except for those that were covered beneath the agriculture plots. Some of these were burned to lime, but other were taken for reuse. Evidence of this activity is a deposit of marble slabs found in one of the

rooms next to Decumanus S3. The slabs were prepared for transportation but for some reason were left in place (Fig. 12a).

Two lime kilns were constructed one next to the other in the area. The larger kiln, which was more than 2 m in diameter at its bottom but less well preserved, occupied one of the service rooms of the large bath's frigidarium. The smaller kiln, 1.5 m in diameter, was constructed within the apse of the large bath's apodyterium (Fig. 12b). The kilns were constructed using reused *kurkar* ashlar and were lined inside with fragments of basalt mortars. Not far east from the larger kiln, a large oval pit (ca. 6 × 6 m and over 1 m in depth) was discovered. The bottom of the pit was covered with ten consecutive layers of white lime, each layer approximately 3 cm thick. The pit most probably functioned as a slaking pit for the production of quicklime from lime kilns. The water required for lime slaking came from a nearby well that originated in the Byzantine period but continued to be used later, as indicated by the pottery found in a fill that sealed it up, dated from the mid-late 8th to the beginning of the 9th century CE.

Evidence of prolonged lime production in the area is shown by the large deposit of lime kiln waste that was deposited over the agricultural lots from the previous stage. The accumulation of lime waste ranges from approximately 3.2 m deep above Plots II and III to approximately 1 m above Plot I (Fig. 12c-d). It is unlikely that such a large amount of lime waste (more than 200 m³) came only from the two lime kilns mentioned above. It is very possible that the waste from two additional contemporary lime kilns located in the neighborhood of insula W2S4 (Gendelman and Porath 2022: 190) and probably one or more additional lime kilns located in adjacent, not yet excavated, areas, contributed to this waste deposit.

The remains of the lime industry and stone robbery were covered with a sand dune that reached a height of 5–6 m on the southern half of the complex, and with a layer of sandy soil containing numerous marine faunal remains and potshards eroded by the sea. Similar layers were found on the northern half of the insula, as described by Patrich (1999; 2011: 51–52). Within these layers, simple pit or cist burials were discovered, with the skeletons laid on their sides and their skulls facing southeast in a characteristic position for Muslim



Fig. 12: Semi-public complex on Insula W2S3: a) deposit of marble slabs; b) lime kiln on the large bath's apodyterium; c-d) lime waste accumulation above agricultural plots

populations. The few finds associated with these burials, including Arabic epitaphs, permit dating from the 9th century CE onwards (Sharon 1996: 409–411, Nos. 1–2; *CIAP* II: 264–270, Figs. 72–74).

Discussion

Short Summary of Written and Epigraphic Sources

Caesarea Maritima, the capital of the Late Antique province Palaestina Prima, was captured by the Muslim army under Mu'awiyah's command in 640/641

after a siege that lasted either seven months or years (*CIAP* II: 252–253; Avni 2011: 317, n.77). The sources not only dispute the length of the siege but also the way in which Caesarea was captured. In the 8th century CE chronicle by John, Bishop of Nikiu, he mentions: “... the horrors committed in the city of Caesarea in Palestine...” by Mu‘awiyah’s troops during the conquest (John of Nikiu 1916: CXVIII.10). The 13th-century CE Syriac chronist Bar Hebraeus describes in his *Tarikh Mukhtasar Ad-Duwal*, written in Arabic, that the city capitulated by agreement (*CIAP* II: 253), and in his *Chronography*, written in Syriac, that Mu‘awiyah “captured the riches that were in it, and he laid the inhabitants thereof under tribute” (Bar Hebraeus 1932: 104). The Arabic sources, which date from the 9th–11th centuries CE, state that the city was stormed and some 4,000 captives were taken (for a list of sources, see *CIAP* II: 253; Patrich 2011: 52–58).

The information from written sources about the city of Caesarea during the second half of the 7th century and the beginning of the 8th century CE is meager. According to al-Balādhurī, during the revolt of ‘Abdallah b. az-Zubayr (683–693), the city was recaptured or “damaged” by the Byzantines. According to al-Ṭabarī’s chronicle, in 690 CE, ‘Abd al-Malik took the city back from the hands of the Byzantines, then rebuilt and fortified it (*CIAP* II: 253; Elad 1996: 150–151, n. 29; Whitcomb 2011: 73).

Recently, rather unexpected and very interesting evidence of Caesarea’s status during the early stages of the Early Islamic period was published. The lead bulla found at Apollonia/Arsuf bears the following Arabic inscription (Amitai-Preiss and Tal 2015: 194–195):

Obverse: *khātim kūrat Qaysāriyah*

Reverse: *madīnah Arsūf*

Obverse: Sealing [bulla] of the urban center of Qaysāriyah

Reverse: Town [of] Arsūf)

The authors dated the bulla no later than the 9th century CE most “possibly during (or after) the reign of Mu‘āwiyah I as either governor of Syria (640–661 CE) or caliph (661–680 CE), or otherwise shortly after that” (Amitai-Preiss and Tal 2015: 196). The authors state that the bulla signifies a time in which Caesarea still held its previous administrative functions to some degree under Umayyad rule until Ramleh, the new capital of *Jund Filastīn*, was established around 714 CE.

Archaeological Data

The archaeological data concerning the character and expansion of the Umayyad-period occupation at Caesarea, from both newly excavated and already published areas, coheres quite well.

The Temple Platform and Adjoining Areas

The data from the areas located near and around the temple platform, located at the core of the Roman and Late Antique city, is quite uniform. It seems that the octagonal church, on top of the platform, survived, but gradually lost its marble furniture and decoration (Holum 2004: 196). The northern parts of the *horreum* on the western front of the temple platform were mainly abandoned and partially reused for lime production and probably for other purposes, such as storage for recycling materials taken from the abandoned buildings in the area and from elsewhere in Caesarea. The location of the area on the harbor’s quay is suitable for uploading these materials onto boats and ships and transporting them to any destination, near or far, more easily and less costly than by land. In contrast, the southern parts of the *horreum*, the Octagonal Macellum and the Upper Market do not show any signs of occupation of any sort.

Harbor Horrea (Area LL)

The remains of the Umayyad-period occupation on the LL *horrea* undoubtedly show that the facilities were transformed from public warehouses to what looks more like a dwelling. The division of larger storerooms into smaller rooms suitable for habitat, some incorporating cooking devices, indicates

this process. The nature of this occupation, however, is not entirely clear. It is unlikely that the deposit of Aegean and Egyptian amphorae alongside locally produced transport containers from R12 was for private consumption. We would like to propose that the *horrea* were turned into barracks for a garrison or for guards that were protecting the harbor. This assumption well explains the amphorae stored on the R12 as part of centralized supply for the guards staying there. There were several episodes during the events of the second half of the 7th century CE at Caesarea when a garrison may have been stationed:

- The first is ‘Umar’s order to Mu‘awiya, which governed Syria and Palestine, to repair the coastal fortification and set watch guards along the coast to prevent Byzantine attacks by sea (Elad 1996: 146–147). Although Caesarea is not mentioned in al-Muqaddasī’s list of established *ribāṭat* (Khalilieh 1999: 213–214), a watchtower with permanent guard may have been stationed there (cf. Elad 1996: 147).
- The second is the recapture of Caesarea by Byzantines sometime between 683 and 690 CE (see above).
- The third episode is the reconquest of Caesarea by ‘Abd al-Malik, who rebuilt and fortified it (see above).

The evidence from the graffiti and dipinti inscriptions on amphorae from the deposit on R12 seems to be in keeping with the first option, as most of it was written in Greek and bore crosses and Christograms. The appearance of the amphorae from Egypt with graffiti in Arabic, if that is the case, may be a part of trophies or evidence of ongoing marine trade with Egypt, although it still was in the hands of Muslims. This proposition, however, requires further confirmation and will be discussed in the final report (currently in preparation).

The Eastern Neighborhoods of the City

Over the course of 80 years or more, archaeological fieldwork and research have only explored limited parts of the city, mainly in the vicinity of the port and along the Mediterranean coast. As a result, information about the eastern parts of the city is scattered in various publications, and large unexplored areas of the city remain unknown. However, the data from the small excavated area eastward of the temple platform has shown that during the Umayyad period there was a break from the type of settlement known in Late Antiquity in Caesarea. In this particular case, a large, probably public, complex was entirely or partially converted to a private dwelling. Unfortunately, we lack information regarding the ethnic or religious identity of the new inhabitants. The building may have been inhabited by newcomers resettled by Muslim authorities within deserted public or private properties, or by local people who improved their living conditions at the expense of deserted properties.

Southwestern Zone Insula W2S3

The post-640/641 CE activity on Insula W2S3, as well as neighboring areas, is agricultural and industrial in nature. There is no evidence of permanent habitation. The irrigated plots on the formerly public and semi-public buildings are undoubtedly part of the process de-urbanization and depopulation of previous metropolitan city. Yet the agricultural usage was quite a short episode that was followed by the establishment of an extensive lime industry.

Patrich (2011: 48) suggested that the lime-kiln industry related to the construction of the fortification of the Early Islamic town during the Abbasid period. In fact, the date and stratum of this fortification does not concur with those of the lime industry on Insula W2S3.

It is, however, more likely that it was established during construction of the so-called Fortezza on the southwest corner of the Roman and Byzantine city of Caesarea. This fortified area in the southwestern part of Roman–Late Antique Caesarea included an extensive area surrounded by a curtain wall with semi-circular towers, as shown in Fig. 13. The Fortezza fortification incorporated the

Roman theater, and, according to the excavators, no significant contemporary buildings were found within the large area it encompassed (Frova 1965: 159–164). The date of the Fortezza is still in dispute, but a small probe conducted by Y. Porath in 1999 showed with a high degree of possibility that it was established during the late 7th century CE (Porath 2008: 1663). Porath also proposed that the Fortezza was established by ‘Abd al-Malik as part of his efforts to fortify the city after it was recaptured from the Byzantines in 690 CE (see above).

Conclusion

We do not know precisely what population changes occurred at Caesarea Maritima, the largest and most populated city of the province Palaestina Prima, since it was captured by Mu‘awiyah. The chronicles, such as those of Pseudo-Dionysios of Tel Maḥre (after 775 CE), give a wide range of death tolls during the 640/641 conquest, from the entire population to about 7,000 in Theophanis’ *Cronographia* (ca. 810–815) and some 4,000 captives who were exiled by Mu‘awiyah (see account of literature sources in Patrīch 2011: 55–56). Some scholars assume that the city of Caesarea, along with other coastal cities and towns, was left virtually empty of its original inhabitants and later repopulated by emigrants (e.g., Levy-Rubin 2011: 157). It is likely that some significant parts of Caesarea’s population immigrated to the territories held by the Byzantines, as evidenced by the 14th-century CE Samaritan chronicle of Abu’l-Fath, who states that some Samaritans of Caesarea left the country (Levy-Rubin 2011: 164). However, since in this testimony the people of Caesarea appear in the same line with their counterparts from other cities of the Palaestina Prima, including the city of Gaza, which was already captured in 637 CE, it most probably refers to the early wave of immigration, most likely prior to or shortly after the Battle of Yarmuk (August 16–20, 636 CE).

The available data from archaeological excavations, although fragmentary, reveal that most of the public buildings and wealthy mansions in Caesarea were abandoned following the 640/641 event, as indicated by Porath,

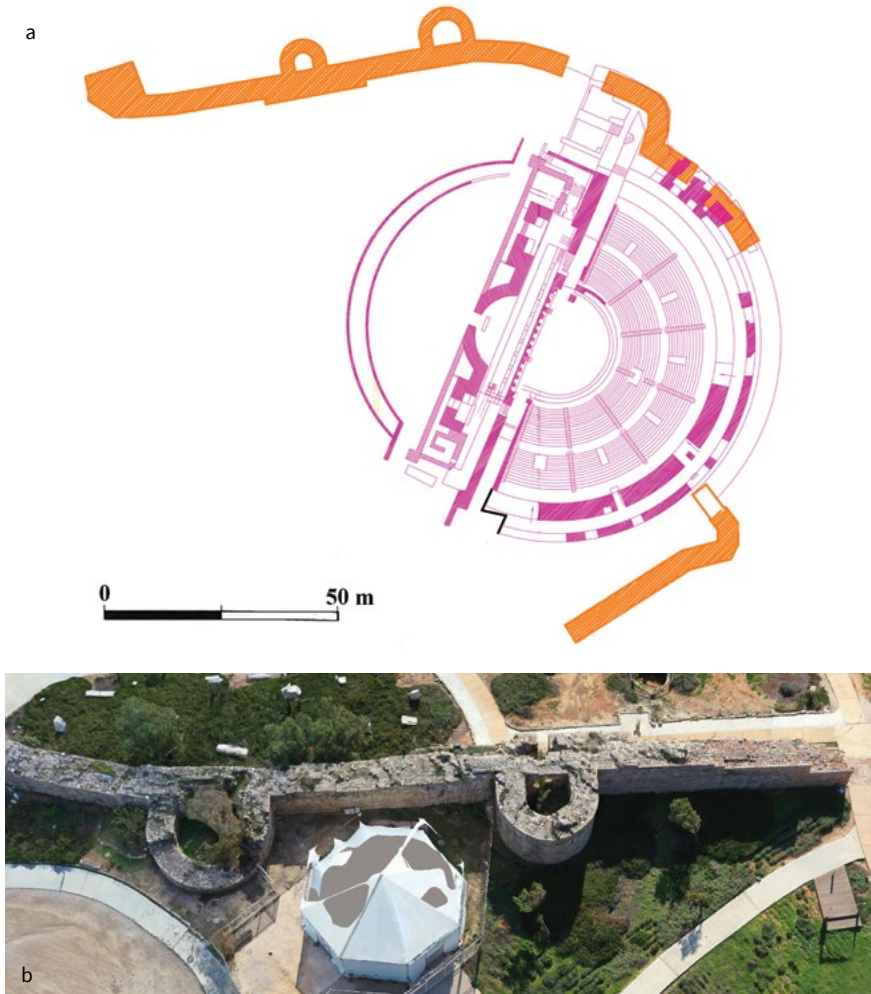


Fig. 13: Fortezza: a) ground plan (Anna lamin and Peter Gendelman); b) aerial view of northern curtain wall with towers

Gendelman and Gorin-Rosen (2006) and Gendelman and Porath (2022: 190). These areas were either resettled by new inhabitants or used for agriculture, stone and material recycling and lime production during the Umayyad period. Archaeological and written sources indicate a process of extensive

de-urbanization and depopulation of Caesarea following the 640/641 event. The city became a mere shadow of its former self during the Umayyad period. Although the date of Apollonia's bulla is controversial, the information it provides suggests that Caesarea maintained its role as an administrative center and was still considered a provincial or district capital city during the second half of the 7th century CE. However, the establishment of Ramle in 714 CE as the new capital of *Jund Filasṭīn* brought this to an end. The Early Islamic town of Qaysariyya, established most probably during the early 9th century CE, bears little resemblance to the previous metropolis of Palaestina.

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