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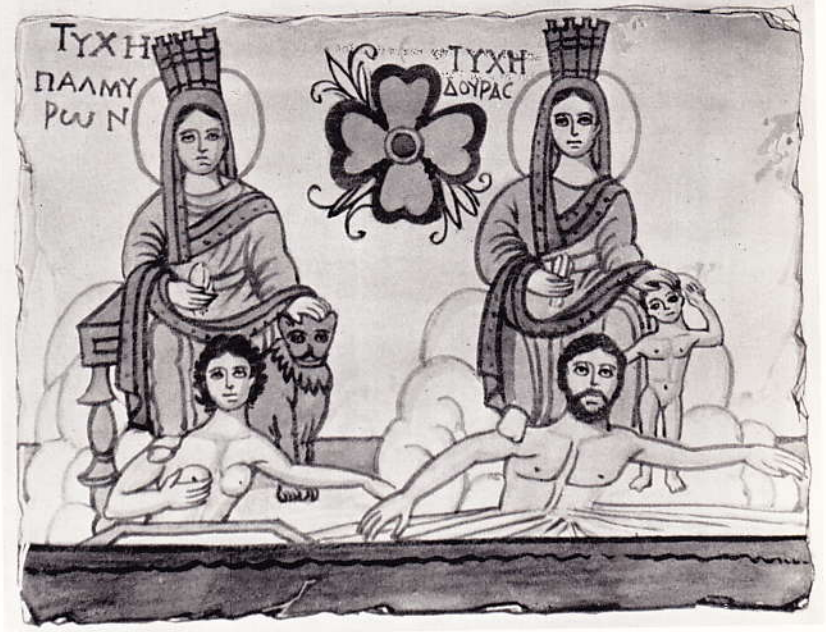

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I. 1. One of the cult bas-reliefs of the temple of the Gaddé, showing the Gad of Dura (Zeus–Baalshamin), the dedicant, and Seleucus Nicator. 2. Part of the painting of the tribune Terentius in the temple of Bel, showing the Tychae of Palmyra and Dura. (Drawing by H. Gute, partly restored)

DURA-EUROPOS
AND ITS ART

BY

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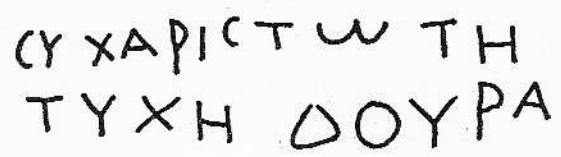
To

THE MEMBERS OF

YALE DURA EXPEDITION

PAST AND PRESENT



'I pray to (or I thank) the Fortune of Dura'

One of the inscriptions on the main gate of Dura. The first inscription discovered at Dura by the Yale Expedition.

PREFACE

THE following sketch of the history and topography of Dura-Europos and of its art was submitted to distinguished audiences in May 1937 at University College, London, and in June at the Collège de France, Paris. These public lectures are printed here with slight changes and in a somewhat expanded form.

It may be thought premature to summarize at this moment the knowledge that we possess of Dura-Europos. Though the work of excavation has been suspended by the Yale Expedition for an indefinite time, not all the Preliminary Reports have yet been published (*Rep.* vii–viii is in print—and *Rep.* ix and x, the last Preliminary Reports, are in preparation), and the publication of the Final Report has not been even begun. Nevertheless, students of ancient history and archaeology and those general readers who are interested in these subjects may find it useful to have a short summary of this kind, prepared by one who has followed the progress of the excavations from the outset. Our Preliminary Reports are not accessible to everybody and are not easy to handle, and it will be some time before the Final Report is ready.

I do not regard the summary that I here present to the reader as my personal work. The structure is mine and I am responsible for it, but the stones composing it have been prepared by the efforts of all the members of the Yale Dura Expedition. It seems appropriate, therefore, to dedicate this booklet to them as the expression of my indebtedness and gratitude.

To the text as delivered to my audiences in London and Paris I have added a few notes, in order to make it easier for the readers to find supplementary information on the various questions touched upon in this opusculum, and to discriminate between more or less ascertained facts and controversial points.

In illustrating my book I have endeavoured to reproduce in the main such monuments as have not been previously published in Cumont's work and in our Preliminary Reports. As regards the maps, the first sketch-map showing the general

topography of Dura has been drawn by Professor C. Hopkins, the second by Mr. F. Brown, and the last has been prepared for the use of Yale Dura Expedition by the Geographical Service of the French Army. The manuscript has been read by Mr. F. Brown, to whom I owe many interesting suggestions. For the Index I am indebted to my wife. It is a pleasant duty to offer my sincerest thanks to all who have helped me.*

M. R.

NEW HAVEN, CONN.
October 1937.

* I have not as a rule inserted references to the illustrations in the text of my book. On pp. xi–xiv the reader will find a list of illustrations with references to the pages on which each is discussed and in some cases with additional information which could not be included in the text or in the short titles of the illustrations.

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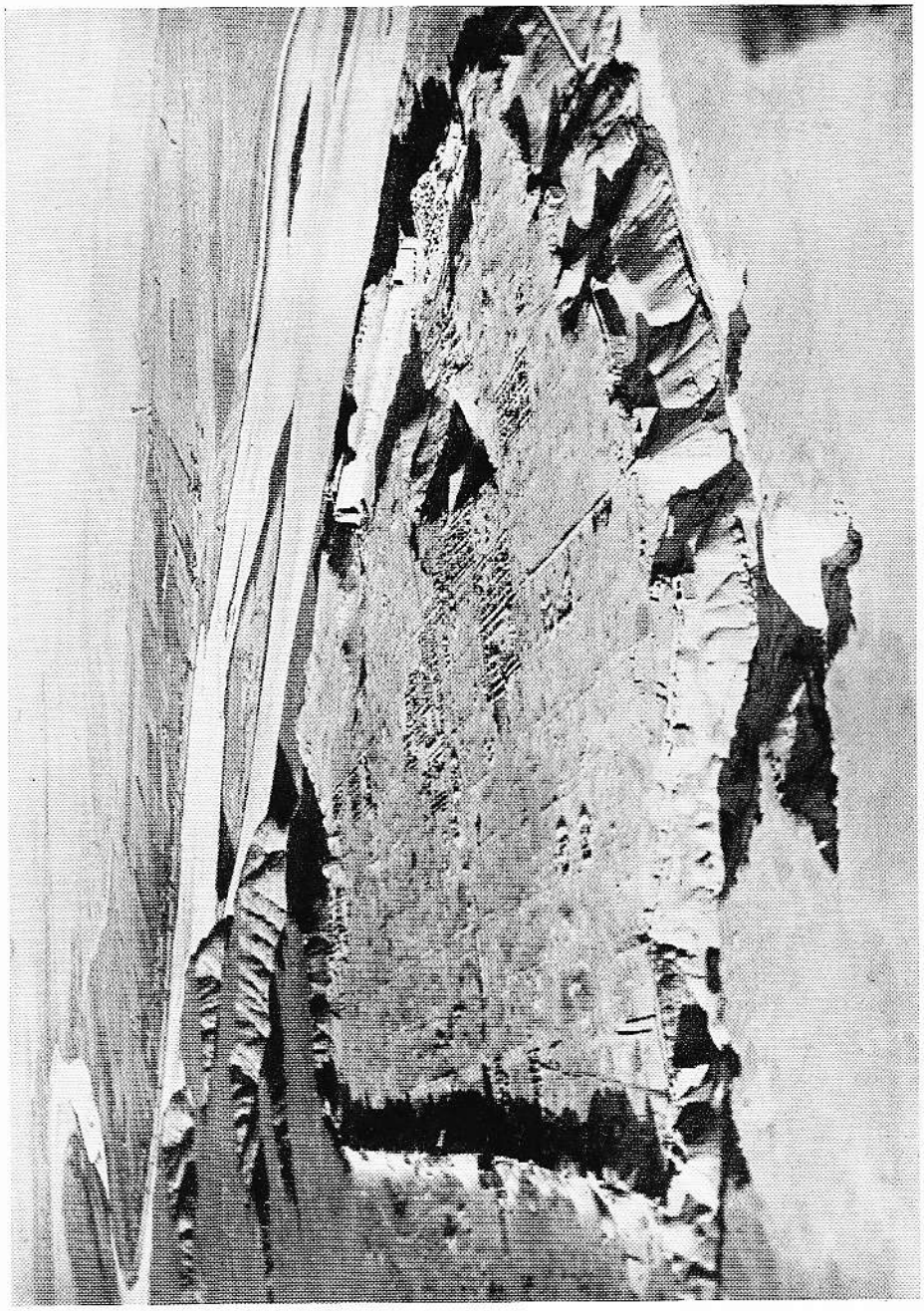


Air view of Dura (1932)

Air view of Dura (1932)

I

IMPORTANCE AND HISTORY OF DURA-EUROPOS

LET me transport you for the few hours of my lectures to the Syrian desert, where, on the middle Euphrates, midway between Baghdad and Aleppo, stand the ruins of Dura-Europos. Situated as they are on the road that from time immemorial has followed the Euphrates, these ruins were certainly visited by many travellers, some of whom had archaeological interests. But they were seldom mentioned and never identified. It was not until 1921 that the attention of the learned world was drawn to them. In that year, in the course of operations against the Arabs, Captain Murphy of the British Army, while digging some trenches in the ruins, discovered by chance the now famous paintings of what is known as the temple of the Palmyrene gods. They were photographed, recorded, and subsequently published by the late Professor Breasted. Two years of systematic excavations by F. Cumont led to the publication of his masterly book on Dura-Europos. Then in 1928, after an interval of two years, Yale University with the collaboration of the French Academy of Inscriptions undertook the systematic exploration of Dura. Ten campaigns have been conducted from 1928 to 1937, and six preliminary reports have been published (the seventh and eighth are in preparation). The work has been carried out, under my general supervision, by three successive field-directors—M. Pillet, Professor C. Hopkins, and Mr. F. Brown, with the valuable support of the Service of Antiquities of Syria and of its directors, first M. Virolleaud and later M. Seyrig, and the assistance of the civil and military departments of the Government of Syria. To my deep regret the work at Dura is now suspended, not because of lack of interest either on my part or on that of Yale University, but because of lack of funds. Dura is as inspiring and as full of promise as ever.

Dura-Europos as we now know it, after excavating and studying it for twelve years, was never an important centre of ancient life. First a Seleucid fortress, then a Parthian caravan-city, and finally a stronghold on the Euphrates frontier or *limes*

of the Roman Empire, Dura-Europos played no momentous part in the history of its time; nor was it ever distinguished for independent creative activity. Why, then, one may naturally ask, have the Academy of Inscriptions and Yale University

FIG. 1. General map of the Near East

spent large sums of money on its excavation, and on the examination and publication of the results? Why should a number of scholars and artists have devoted their time and energy to exploring and studying its remains? The reason lies not in its historical importance as a city, but in the scientific value of the material that its ruins yield. Dura-Europos is like Pompeii in this respect. Pompeii as a city played no important part in the history of the world. Nevertheless the excavation of its ruins has been of immense scientific value. Competent scholars have in recent times ventured to call Dura the Pompeii of the Syrian desert. And they were right. Let me pursue the comparison a little further. It will help us to understand the scientific value of the excavations of Dura-Europos.

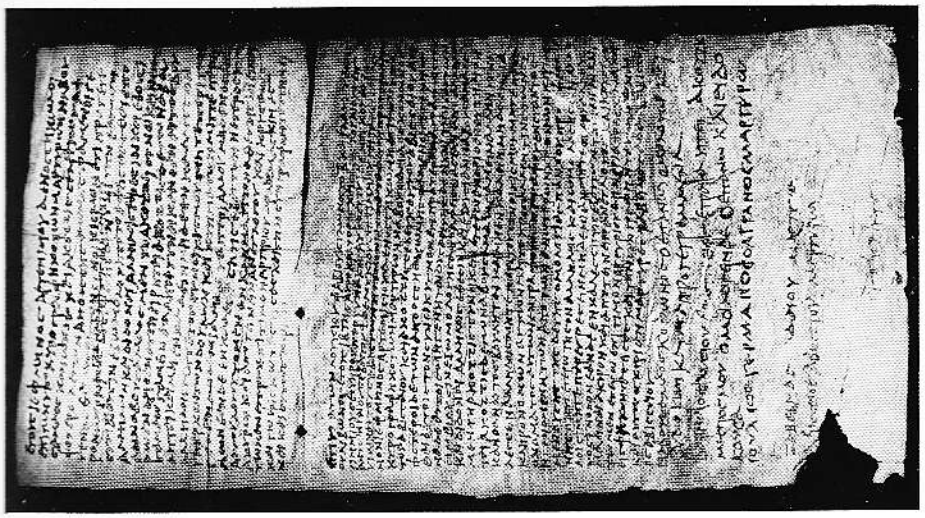
First and foremost, Dura rivals Pompeii in the beautiful state of preservation of its ruins, and in the quantity, quality, variety, and state of preservation of the objects found in them.

The city, so far as excavated, lies almost intact before us. It requires little effort for a trained eye to restore in imagination the buildings that have been brought to light. Indeed, some of these need very little material restoration to bring them back to their original state. Such are the fortifications of the city and the public and private buildings erected along that part of the city wall which faced the desert. These buildings were discovered in an almost perfect condition, for a sloping embankment built by the garrison before the last siege of the city had buried them under a thick and well drained layer of sand and rubbish.

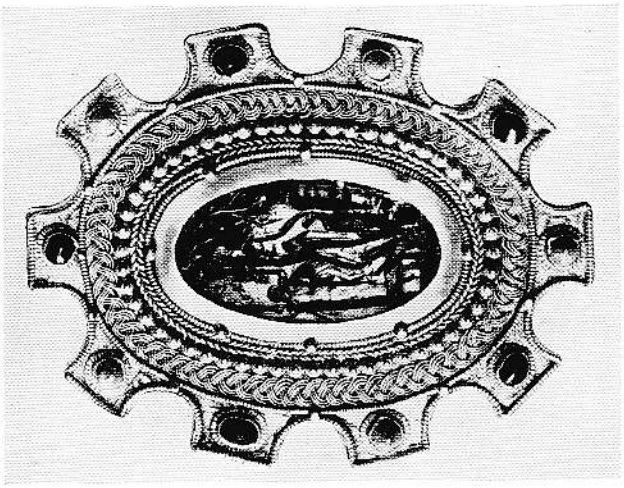
Furthermore, Dura, like Pompeii, is a veritable museum of decorative wall-painting. The walls of many of the public buildings of Dura, both religious and secular, and also of many private buildings, were ornamented with paintings of various kinds. Some of these wall-paintings were found almost intact, others in substantial fragments which allow of a more or less easy reconstruction. Some of these paintings are purely decorative, and have an important bearing on the history of wall-painting in the East; others—especially in the temples—are ambitious figural compositions of great interest in connexion with the history of religious and secular painting in the first three centuries after Christ. We may say without exaggeration that in the light it throws on the history of painting Dura is for the Near East what Pompeii is for the West. Its only rivals in this respect in the Near East are Egypt and south Russia.

In this connexion I may add that at Dura, as at Pompeii, the walls of public and private buildings, whether painted or not, are literally covered with inscriptions and drawings scratched or traced upon them. No excavated city, except once more Pompeii, has yielded these in such numbers and variety. As at Pompeii, these graffiti and dipinti illustrate all sides of the life of the inhabitants. A comparison between the two cities in this respect would be very instructive; but this point requires a good deal of study, and I cannot dwell further on it in these short lectures. I will only observe that no other material better reflects the mentality and the mood of the two cities, especially in the last years of their existence.

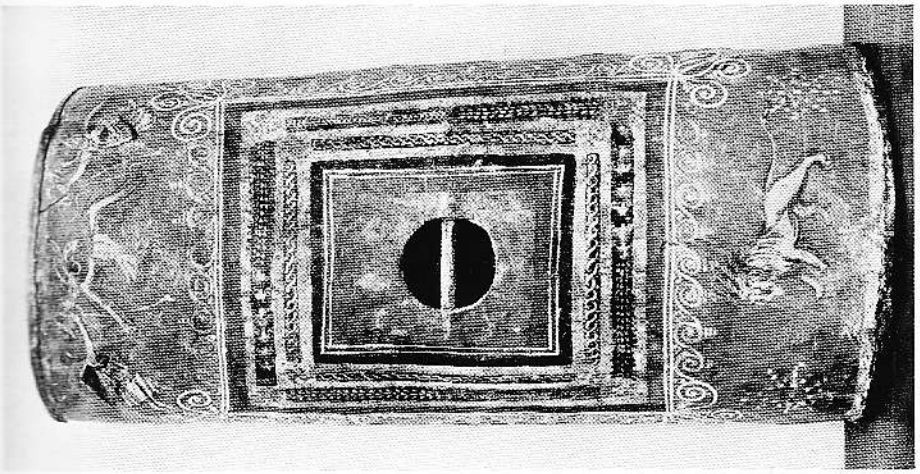
I need hardly say that the ruins of Dura, thanks to their admirable preservation, have produced a large quantity of what are known as minor finds. Objects made of durable materials are common to all the excavations of larger and smaller cities. Dura is no exception, and we have found in it a large, indeed an unusually large, number of objects made of stone (sculptures, intaglios, and inscriptions), of metal (gold, silver, and bronze, such as vases, jewels, arms and weapons, house implements, domestic utensils, toilet articles, &c., not to speak of thousands of coins, some of these in large hoards), and of glass and clay. But the glory of Dura lies in the fact that, like Pompeii, Herculaneum, and the cities and graves of Eygpt, it has bequeathed to us a remarkable series of finds of unusual character and great rarity; I mean of objects made of perishable material. All sorts of wooden articles have proved common in Dura. Beams and other pieces of wood used in the construction of houses and public buildings (e.g. excellently preserved doors) are abundant there. More important than these is the unique series of textiles. Except as regards Egypt and south Russia, little has hitherto been known of the evolution of the textile craft in the ancient world of Hellenistic and Roman times. Dura, and with it Palmyra, have (at least partly) filled this gap. Next come leather and paper. There have been found at Dura, in great numbers, shields made of leather and wood, which belonged to soldiers of the Roman garrison. Some of these are adorned with painting. The fragment of a shield showing part of a geographical map has been published by Cumont and is well known. The *scutum* of a legionary soldier has been found intact, another notable discovery. Somewhat similar are three oval shields of auxiliaries, made of wood and covered with a thin layer of plaster with painted decoration. On one of these is depicted the battle between the Greeks and the Amazons, on another the capture and massacre of Troy, and on the third the standing figure of a local god, probably Arsu. Like other articles of Roman equipment found at Dura in large numbers, they may be partly of local make and partly products of Roman military factories in Syria. The painted shields show in their style many similarities with the recently discovered mosaics of Daphne. But all these



3. Dura Parchment 22: divorce of A.D. 204



2. Gold brooch with inset stones, in the centre an intaglio showing Heracles in the garden of the Hesperides



1. Painted Roman *scutum*

OBJECTS FOUND IN DURA

finds are surpassed in importance by the unique set of parchments and papyri recovered from the ruins. A few of them are fragments of literary and religious texts, e.g. a fragment of the Diatessaron of Tatian and another of a prayer in Hebrew. The bulk of the parchments and papyri consists of official and business documents. Most of the official documents formed part of the military archives abandoned by the garrison after the capture of the city by the Sasanians; the business documents belonged to the record offices of Dura. The former are written mostly in Latin, the second mostly in Greek, but occasionally in Aramaic, Syriac, or Pehlevi. I need not insist on their importance. Their contribution to palaeography, to the history of languages, to our knowledge of the administration, of the social and economic life, of the religion of the Roman East, and of Greco-Roman jurisprudence, cannot be overestimated (Pl. III).[1]

Dura thus rivals Pompeii in the number, importance, and state of preservation of the antiquities discovered there. But this is only one side of the picture. There is a deeper and more momentous resemblance between the two cities, viz. in their contribution to our understanding of some of the cardinal phenomena in the history of the Hellenistic and Roman period.

We know fairly well how in this period an original and peculiar civilization was developed in Italy, and subsequently spread over all the western provinces of the Roman Empire. It was the product of Roman and Italian genius and became later the civilization of the western European world. Pompeii is one, and the best preserved, of the sites that illustrate for us one part of this process, that by which in early and late Hellenistic times the Greco-Samnitic part of Italy became latinized. And it is Pompeii again that gives us a detailed and almost complete picture of the new civilization as it existed in the second half of the first century A.D., a civilization in which Greek and Italian elements met and coalesced.

A similar process, of no less importance in the history of mankind, took place in the Near and in part of the Middle East. Here, as a result of the conquest of the Persian Empire by Alexander, several great civilizations of the past were brought into closer contact than under the Persian rule. I refer to the

Greek civilization of the conquerors, the Iranian civilization, the civilization of India, that of Babylonia and Mesopotamia, and those of the Western Semites and Arabs and of the Anatolians (I do not include that of Egypt, which had a destiny apart). The uniting link between these was the Greek civilization, spread by Alexander and his successors, especially the Seleucids, over the whole of the former Persian Empire and part of India.

Thus, for longer or shorter periods, various peoples and nationalities of the East, each possessed of a famous civilization of its own, lived together as constituent parts of an empire administered by a Greek government and based on a large Greek ruling class. Parts of this empire gradually asserted their political liberty. But they continued to live in close contact with the great Hellenistic empire of the Seleucids, and in all of them there remained large and well-organized groups of Greek inhabitants.

The result of this intermixture of Greeks and orientals in the same States over a long period and of a close contact among the orientals themselves was not to produce a single civilization similar to the Latin civilization of the West. No doubt Greek civilization in its new Hellenistic form, with its various aspects typical of the various parts of the Hellenistic world, was in a certain sense and may be called an oecumenical civilization. It had a long life. It was active in the times of the Roman Empire in the eastern provinces of Rome and formed the cultural background of the Byzantine Empire. But this Hellenistic Greek civilization was from the very beginning and remained in the most important parts of the Near East the civilization of minorities, of the ruling class only, and never completely absorbed the ancient civilizations of the various parts of the Near East.

While in the West we see behind the great Latin culture very few traces of the former civilizations of the West—the Celtic, the Iberian, the Thracian, the Illyrian; in the East, on the contrary, in the Hellenistic world, that is to say in the former empire of Alexander, Greek civilization was no more than a kind of veneer. Beneath it the long-established civilizations of the past acquired new force and began to grow and to take

firm root. They were not Greek and not Hellenistic; in fact they were reactions against the Greek civilization, new versions of the great civilizations of the past, developed in their respective areas under the elemental and stimulating influence of the Greek Hellenistic civilization.

In India we see the revival of the ancient Indian civilization and its splendid evolution in the new civilization of Sandragupta and Asoka, strongly imbued with Greco-Iranian elements imported into India probably from Bactria; a civilization primarily directed to the service of Buddhism, the new religion of India. A variety of the same civilization, containing a larger admixture of Greek elements, and again used to exalt the new Buddhist faith, is known from many monuments found in north India, none earlier than the first century A.D. We are ignorant of its origin and its early development. It is known by the name of the Gandhara civilization.

More spectacular and more important in its influence on the destinies of the Near East was the striking development of the many aspects of a new Greco-Iranian civilization in which Greek and Iranian elements coalesced. We are familiar with the Scythian civilization in south Russia, which of course was pre-Hellenistic; we know less of the Sakian civilization both in south Russia and in north India, where it was first recognized and studied by Sir John Marshall in his wonderful *Taxila*; of the civilization of the Sarmatians both in Asia and in Europe; of that of Bactria, where Greek prevailed over Iranian elements; and of that of Parthia, which took different forms in the various constituent parts of the Iranian kernel of the Parthian Empire.

The same process of formation of new civilizations certainly took place in the Semitic world, though our information about it is meagre. We know of its occurrence in Palestine and in Nabataean Arabia, which had the caravan city of Petra for its capital. We may conjecture its occurrence in Syria and Phoenicia in the late Hellenistic period. Here, no doubt, the process was arrested by the hellenizing policy of Rome, the new mistress of these countries. Palmyra, another great caravan city, presents certain features of a peculiar culture. And there are many Hellenistic elements in the interesting civilization of southern Arabia. Finally, outside the Semitic world we

observe the same phenomenon in the eastern regions of Anatolia—Commagene, Pontus, and Cappadocia.

It is not surprising to find the same evolution in Parthian Mesopotamia, though it has never drawn the attention of modern scholars. It is this evolution that I shall now discuss.

The early stages of development of all these civilizations are very little known. Our material is scanty. We know India comparatively well, less well the evolution of the Gandhara civilization, practically nothing of that of Bactria except for coins and some products of Bactrian art in India and reflections of it in the art of India and perhaps of Gandhara and of Seistan. The various types of Greco-Iranian civilization of the Hellenistic and early Roman period remain obscure, illuminated only here and there by documents of various kinds and dates. Most important is the problem of Parthian civilization and art, which, strange to say, is perhaps even less easy of solution than that of the Greco-Sakian and Sarmatian civilizations. The same is true of the Greco-Semitic civilization in its various aspects. The very existence of Greco-Babylonian and Greco-Mesopotamian civilizations, in spite of several easily recognizable features and well-defined characteristics, remained for a long time unnoticed or ignored by modern historians of the Near East.

It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of the growth of these various civilizations, and of their gradual emancipation from Greek influence, as a phase in the history of oriental and European culture. In all of them, in late Roman and early Byzantine times, a brilliant revival took place, but a revival founded, so to speak, on the achievements of the past. Such were the spectacular Gupta renascence in India with all it meant for that country, and the Sasanian renascence of the Parthian and Sakian Greco-Iranian civilization, a synthesis, as it were, of the various Greco-Iranian civilizations; and such, I believe, was the brilliant growth of a peculiar civilization and art in Mesopotamia and Syria. This last development was not, as in India and Persia, a concomitant of the rise of a powerful national State, full of energy and initiative. It took place partly within the confines of the late Roman Empire, partly in the Sasanian dominions. The force that unified the civiliza-

tions of these two countries (Mesopotamia and Syria) was not political but religious: it was Christianity and the Christian Church. Meanwhile, the time was gradually approaching when in the Semitic world, as previously in India and Persia, political and religious influences were to combine to give birth to a new form of culture, the powerful Greco-Semitic civilization of the Omayads and Islam.

All these revivals have one feature in common: they are revivals not of Greek influences, which would find their expression in imitation, but of the Greek spirit, elemental and dynamic in their character. My meaning will be clear to any one who will glance at the products of Indian art of the Gupta period, for example at the frescoes of Ajanta; at the rock-carvings, silver dishes, jewels, intaglios, cameos, and textiles of the Sasanian artists; and finally at such creations of the pre-Omayad and Omayad art as Mshatta, the mosaics of the great mosque of Damascus, and the recently discovered wall and floor decorations of the Kasr-el-Heir al Qarbi.

As I have already observed, the historical evolution that I have outlined is in fact very imperfectly known. Archaeology first enabled us to understand some aspects of it so far as India and some parts of the Greco-Iranian world are concerned. But as regards Mesopotamia, the meeting-place of three great new civilizations—the Greco-Iranian of the Parthians, the Greco-Semitic of Babylonia, Syria, and Phoenicia, and the Greco-Anatolian of Asia Minor—archaeology was for a long time almost silent.

When I began the systematic excavation of Dura it was in the hope that its remains might throw light on the problem of the origin and growth of the Greco-Semitic civilization of Mesopotamia, which was unquestionably from its early beginnings closely connected with the equally enigmatic Greco-Iranian civilization of Parthia. And Dura has not disappointed me. Dura has the same importance in relation to Mesopotamia as Pompeii has in relation to Italy. While at Pompeii we see reflected the formation of the great Latin civilization, Dura reflects a similar process in the East. Through a close study of Dura we can discern the early aspect of Greek civilization in a Semitic country, then the dim outlines of the great Parthian

civilization in its contact with the Greek and Semitic world, and finally the curious mixture of Greek, Semitic, Anatolian, and Parthian elements that constituted the civilization of Dura and Mesopotamia in general. In this we may, in turn, distinguish the rudiments of the later brilliant culture of the Christian Near East, which had so deep an influence on the Byzantine civilization and through it on that of western Europe. In this sense again Dura may well be described as the Syrian Pompeii.

Such, in its main features, is the historical importance of Dura. What has been done at Dura is pioneer work. It may be hoped that the results obtained will induce others to explore fresh sites and thus broaden and deepen the knowledge derived from this relatively unimportant city.

No complete picture of Dura can be given in a few short lectures, nor can all the problems connected with it be discussed or even mentioned. I must confine myself to a few aspects of the subject. But in order to understand these aspects we must know the history of Dura, as revealed by the buildings, by the many inscriptions, by the parchments and papyri, by the coins and other minor objects found within its walls. Before our excavations very little was known of Dura. A few facts, contained in a couple of literary texts, was all that we knew of its history. Now our knowledge is greater and more detailed. Let me summarize the conclusions that may be drawn from the extant material.[2]

The Macedonian colony of Europos was founded (as is shown by its Babylonian name Dura and some scattered finds made in the ruins)[3] on the site of a much earlier settlement. We now know that its citizens regarded Seleucus Nicator as the founder of the colony (Pl. I). In this capacity, as the *ctistes* of the city, Seleucus was still worshipped at Europos even in Parthian and in Roman times. The name Europos was given to Dura because Europos in Macedon was the native city of Seleucus and perhaps of some of the colonists.[4]

The actual founder of Europos was a certain Nicanor. His identity is a matter of dispute. In all probability he was a relative of Seleucus and one of the two governors-general of the East in the early part of his reign. Europos would thus appear to have been founded about 300 B.C.[5]

Since the foundation of Europos appears to have been contemporary with the foundation (attributed with probability to the same Nicanor) of the great Macedonian strongholds of Edessa and Nisibin in northern Mesopotamia, we may infer that the fortress of Europos was a link in a chain of important military positions designed to support the Seleucid control of certain strategic roads. These connected the western part of the Seleucid Empire with the eastern, i.e. with the Babylonian section (including the second capital of the empire, the great city of Seleuceia) and with the Iranian section. Europos was probably regarded as, and in fact was and still is, the best site from which the Euphrates road could be watched, held under control, and made safe for traffic.

The importance of the Hellenistic city of Europos is attested not only by literary evidence, meagre though it is, but also by the history of the city's fortifications.[6] This history is a matter of controversy, of which I cannot here give a detailed critical survey. Suffice it to say that a careful study, carried out first by Colonel Renard and F. Cumont and then by A. von Gerkan in 1934 and by the members of our expedition in the last season of our exploration, has convinced me that the fortifications were all simultaneously laid out in early Hellenistic times. They comprised the city wall, especially strong on the desert front, with numerous towers and a powerful oblong citadel on the rock that overhangs the Euphrates. In their early form they consisted, both as regards the wall and the towers, of a powerful well-built socle of cut stones, to which was added, except in the citadel (built entirely of stone from the very beginning), a superstructure of mud bricks. The superstructure was gradually replaced in Hellenistic and perhaps in very early Parthian times by one of stone. This work proceeded slowly and was never finished. One part of the desert wall—the northern—remained until the Roman epoch in its original state—a stone socle with a mud-brick superstructure. But the greater part of the walls, all the towers, as well as the citadel, by the end of the Hellenistic period were all built entirely of cut stone. Three gates gave admission to the city: one on the desert side, another on the river-front; a third gate on the south side led out into the south ravine and thence

to the Euphrates road. A subsidiary temporary gate was made in the desert wall while the main gate on the desert side was under construction (Pl. IV and fig. 5).

The history of the citadel is of great interest. It was planned as an imposing stronghold, with powerful stone walls and three

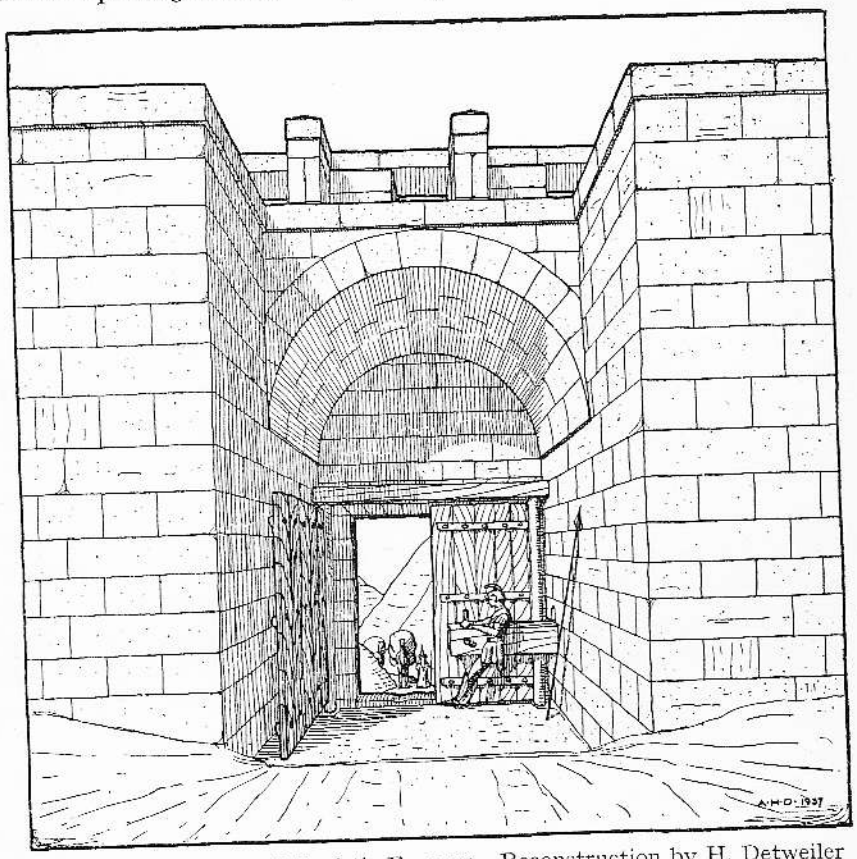


FIG. 2. Side-gate of Hellenistic Europos. Reconstruction by H. Detweiler

gates in the side which faced the city. All the gates were protected by towers. Inside the citadel a palatial house was erected and the foundations were laid of spacious barracks for the garrison. But the citadel, like the desert wall, was never finished. Neither the north and central gates nor the barracks were ever completed. The south gate alone connected the citadel and its palace with the city.

The history and character of the Hellenistic fortifications of

1. Main gate of Dura

2. Citadel of Dura. North tower and gate

Europos as sketched above, their strength and height, the powerful citadel, the strong and beautiful gates, corroborate the impression derived from the study of the few literary texts, that Europos in early Hellenistic times was designed as a strong fortress and important military centre of the Seleucid Empire. Since we know that its official name in the Parthian and Roman period was Εὐρωπὸς ἐν Παραποταμίᾳ or Εὐρωπὸς πρὸς Ἀραβίᾳ, we may suggest that Europos—the strongest Seleucid city on the Middle Euphrates—was the capital of the Parapotamian satrapy and was intended to secure the political control of the Seleucids over the neighbouring Arab tribes. For this purpose not only were Macedonian soldiers settled in the city, but a strong garrison was also provided, a section of the Seleucid army under the command of the governor of the satrapy—the *strategos*, whose residence was probably the citadel.

Within Europos the civil population, including the Macedonian colony, was organized as a regular Greek city. We have hardly any contemporary evidence, but it is probable that the conditions in this respect that existed in Parthian and Roman times were inherited from the Macedonian period.

Such was probably Europos as planned and laid out by Nicanor. But the plan of Seleucus and Nicanor was never fully carried out, probably in consequence of the political events that followed the death of Seleucus. War with Egypt and complications in the East which led to the secession of Bactria and the foundation of the Parthian Empire prevented Antiochus I and his immediate successors from carrying on the work. The citadel, as stated above, was never finished, which suggests that the Seleucid garrison was withdrawn. The stone superstructure of the walls proceeded slowly and, like the citadel, was never completed. It is reasonable to conjecture that in the second half of the third century B.C. the city was entrusted to the sole care of the Macedonian settlers, and that the work of construction was left entirely in their hands, without help from the central government.

There is evidence, however, that at the time of the renascence of the Seleucid Empire under Antiochus III and especially under the famous Antiochus Epiphanes, Europos, which was then decaying and slowly assuming a Semitic

character, became the object of renewed attention. Efforts appear to have been made to speed up the work on the desert

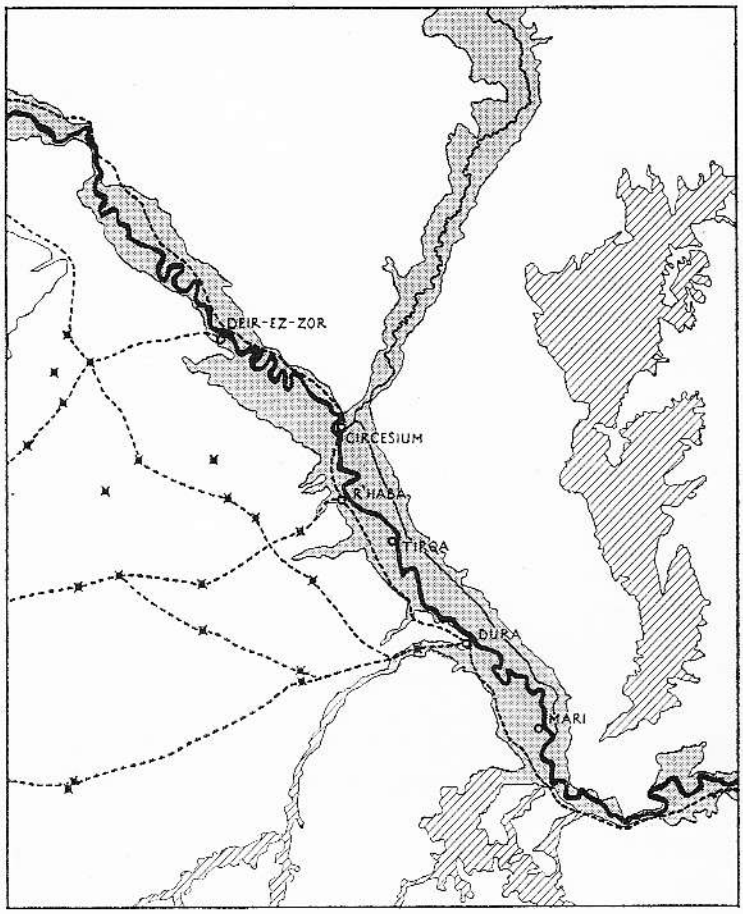


FIG. 3. Map of the Middle Euphrates region, showing the alluvial tract on the two banks of the Euphrates. Drawn by Mr. F. Brown

wall and to embellish the city with new buildings. I shall return to this in my second lecture.

But this revival of Europos was of short duration. It is well known that with the death of Epiphanes the rapid decline of the Seleucid Empire began. The Romans in the West and the Parthians in the East undermined its strength. The Macedonians and Greeks of Europos shared the fate of the other

Macedonian settlers in Mesopotamia and soon became the easy prey of the Parthians.

We know very little of the life of Europos in the Hellenistic period. It is certain that the early population consisted of a nucleus of Macedonians, of some Greek civil settlers, and of natives who, attracted by its growing prosperity, took up their abode in the city. We have no means of ascertaining the size of this early population. The Macedonians formed without doubt the ruling class. It is difficult to estimate their numbers. Documents of Parthian date allow us to trace several Macedonian families (probably all that existed at that time) back to the late Hellenistic period. These families are not numerous. Not more than a score of them are known. Though they evidently do not represent all the early settlers, their paucity shows that the Macedonian colony of Europos was never very large.

Still less do we know of the Greeks and natives. Their numbers must have gradually increased. It is probable that from the very beginning a large 'territory' studded with native villages was assigned to the city. This territory—the fertile alluvial land along the Euphrates—had been well cultivated and prosperous from time immemorial. Part of this land was assigned to the Macedonians as their *cleroi* and was cultivated by them. The rest remained in the hands of natives and from them some of it may have passed into the hands of Greek immigrants. Europos—the administrative and commercial centre of this fertile territory—certainly became a prosperous agricultural and commercial town. Moreover, it was situated on the great military and commercial road which ran from Seleuceia on the Tigris up the Euphrates. All this offered good prospects to the Greeks and natives, who doubtless were eager to settle in the city.

Nevertheless the Macedonians remained the ruling and probably the most prosperous part of the population. They alone were citizens of Europos—Εὐρωπαῖοι. To the end they were proud of their Macedonian origin and tried to resist the complete semitization of their families. Their sons were generally given Macedonian names, traditional in some families. Their children received a Greek education. Greek remained their language.

As a Macedonian colony, as a city of Macedonian landowners, Europos survived for about a century and a half. Its prosperous and probably peaceful existence came to an end with the gradual advance of the Parthians. We know very little of this advance. Babylonia became Parthian in 141 B.C. and all the efforts of the Seleucids to restore it to their empire failed. How long Europos remained a Seleucid city after the seizure of Seleuceia and Babylon by the Parthians we cannot say. The numismatic evidence suggests that Seleucid domination at Europos ended at about the same time as their domination in Babylonia.[7] The history of the southern gate in the fortifications of Europos, the traces of fire by which this Hellenistic gate was irreparably damaged, probably in late Hellenistic times, and of another fire which destroyed the Hellenistic temple of Artemis, suggest the possibility of a Parthian siege and capture of the city.

In any case it is certain that in one way or another Europos became in the second half of the second century B.C. a Parthian city. The careful study of the citadel carried out by Mr. F. Brown has shown that the Hellenistic palace in the citadel was replaced, some time in the second half of the second century, by a later one, Parthian in its main features and similar to the palaces of Assur and Hatra and probably larger and more ambitious than its Hellenistic predecessor. This suggests that after the Parthian occupation Europos became once more what it had been in the early Seleucid period—an important military stronghold. The only differences were that the military governor was now a Parthian instead of a Greek, though he retained the Greek title (*strategos*), and that the Seleucid garrison was replaced by a Parthian force.

We know almost nothing of the history of Europos in late Hellenistic times. Europos as a Parthian fortress may have played an important role in the last struggles between the Arsacids and the Seleucids and in the first conflicts between Parthia and Rome after the annexation of Syria by Pompey. It may have formed an important link in the chain of fortified towns, most of them of Hellenistic origin, which formed the Parthian *limes* described by Isidorus of Charax, a *limes* which was probably intended to form a barrier against the Roman

invaders of Parthia: Crassus, Caesar, and Antony. The history of the buildings of the city offers some evidence in support of this view. Though the Parthians added nothing to the fortifications, they appear not to have neglected them. I have already indicated that they used the citadel as their military base and they may have carried on the replacement of the mud-brick superstructure of the city walls by one of cut stone.

The Parthian policy of utilizing the former Seleucid strongholds of Parapotamia and Mesopotamia as defences against Roman attacks, illustrated by the history of the citadel of Europos, found its complement in the treatment of the Greek and Macedonian population of the Seleucid cities. In the first years of their domination the Arsacid kings were ignorant of the general feeling of this population and uncertain of its attitude towards the new rulers. They preferred, therefore, to play for safety and to occupy the cities with their own garrisons. Nevertheless, they were anxious to secure the loyalty and support of the inhabitants. They adopted, therefore, a well-defined philhellenic attitude in their relations with the Greeks and Macedonians of their kingdom, and left them in their own cities as much freedom and autonomy as was possible. In particular, they never interfered with their constitution and their social, economic, cultural, and religious life.

This general policy of the Parthians is well illustrated by the history of the buildings of the city, notably by that of the temple of Artemis, the most important temple of Seleucid Europos and the centre of its religious life since the foundation of the city, as carefully studied by Mr. Brown.[8]

The early temple of Artemis, or rather her *temenos* with her altar in the centre of it, was destroyed by fire in the late Hellenistic period, i.e. in the early days of the Parthian domination. We do not know whether this fire was accidental or a consequence of the capture of the city by the Parthians. Some time after the fire, in the first century B.C., the citizens began the construction of a new temple on the site of the ancient one. The remains of this temple show that it was intended to be a small peripteral shrine of the usual Greek form. This fact is significant and shows that in the early Parthian period Europos still retained Greek traditions in its religious architecture.

But this phase of its life did not last very long. It is noteworthy, as bearing on the evolution of the city in this period, that the Greek temple of Artemis was never finished. It is still more significant that soon after the building of the new temple had been started, the first oriental temple of Europos—that of Atargatis—rose in its close vicinity. A little later the shrine of Artemis, recently begun, was destroyed and was replaced by a larger and more ambitious temple of a purely oriental type. We know almost exactly the time of this reconstruction. One of the columns of the new oriental sanctuary was the gift of the chief magistrate of the city, the *strategos* and *genearches* Seleucus, son of Lysias. This fact is recorded in his inscription on the column, with a date corresponding to 33/32 B.C.

These two events in the history of the buildings of the city mark a new period in its life, a period of its rapid orientalization, coinciding with a new period in the life of Parthia in general.

Soon after the expeditions of Crassus and Antony the relations between Parthia and the Roman Empire assumed a completely new aspect, as a result of the policy of Augustus. It is well known that Augustus substituted a policy of peace for the policy of conquest followed by Crassus, Caesar, and Antony. The main objects of the Roman government, to be pursued by diplomacy, not war, were the stabilization of existing frontiers and the extension of trade relations. For the latter purpose it paid particular attention to the development of the caravan trade between Parthia and Rome.

In this trade the Euphrates route played the leading part, and one of the important problems of Partho-Roman relations was the organization of this trade route and its pacification by a mutual accord between Parthia and Rome. Careful study of the material yielded by Palmyra and Europos, of the buildings of these cities and of the caravan roads, the last carried out by Father Poidebard, suggests that the agreement may have taken the following form. Trade, the Euphrates route, and the exchange of goods may have been neutralized. For this purpose Palmyra, which was already in early Parthian times an important centre of caravan trade, may have been organized by the Parthians and Romans, as a clearing-house for Partho-Roman commerce, and as a buffer state politically

probably dependent on Rome. The caravan road, which followed the Euphrates up to Zeugma, with branches thence to Asia Minor and Syria respectively, having become unsafe in its northern half owing to the political conditions of the time, now ran from the Middle Euphrates across the desert to Palmyra and thence to the Syrian and Phoenician cities on the coast of the Mediterranean. Its starting points on the Middle Euphrates may have been many. In any case one of them was Europos, the strongest Greco-Parthian city on that river. The desert road between Europos and Palmyra is still traceable. It was provided with wells and easily guarded. We know, moreover, that as early as 32 B.C. a temple dedicated by Palmyrenes to the Palmyrene gods Bel and Arsu was built in the necropolis of Europos.

The reorganized Euphrates road was neutralized. It was guarded by archers, mostly mercenaries of Palmyra mounted on horses or camels. Detachments of these troops were stationed in all the important cities of the Middle Euphrates, among them probably Europos and certainly Anath, its neighbour on the Euphrates. The Middle Euphrates cities in general were probably no longer occupied by Parthian garrisons. At Europos, for example, we have found no indication of a Parthian garrison, and we know that in the first and second centuries A.D. the fortifications of Europos were utterly neglected by the Parthian government and by the Macedonian population. When in the second half of the first century B.C. part of the citadel rock with the front of the Parthian palace tumbled into the Euphrates, no attempts were made to rebuild either citadel or palace. Moreover, some private and religious buildings were built against the desert wall and obstructed the free circulation along the wall.

Parthian Europos probably reverted in the first and second centuries A.D. to the state in which we saw it after the reign of Seleucus—a city left entirely to the care of its own citizens and especially of the Macedonian settlers, who never lost some measure of control of the city's affairs. One of the noble Macedonians—the civil governor or *strategos* and at the same time *epistates* or military commander—was the real master of the city and responsible for its safety.

Thus Europos, a Parthian city and part of a Parthian satrapy, became a caravan-city, an emporium, closely connected with Palmyra and through Palmyra with Rome. No wonder that Parthian coins should be rare in Europos, while Roman coins of the first century A.D. are common[9]; or that we found in the heart of the city the remains of a comparatively early (first century A.D.) temple of the Palmyrene gods, a religious centre of the Palmyrenes who resided in the city. The part taken by Europos in the Partho-Roman trade was considerable. According to Isidorus of Charax, Europos was the last important Parthian city on the right bank of the Euphrates and therefore, we may add, a necessary stopping-place for the caravans. At a later period we hear of customs officers having their residence in the main gate. Besides customs officers, a post of gendarmes was stationed there in Roman times. I have no doubt that the same conditions, *mutatis mutandis*, prevailed in the first and second centuries A.D.

Europos, whose Semitic name Dura makes its reappearance in Parthian times, remained part of the Parapotamian Parthian satrapy, probably the capital (as it probably had already been in early Hellenistic times) for more than 200 years. Its official name continued to be what it was in the time of the Seleucids —Εὐρωπὸς ἐν Παραποταμίᾳ or Εὐρωπὸς πρὸς Ἀραβίᾳ. The period of its subjection to Parthia and association with Palmyra was the most brilliant, peaceful, and prosperous in the history of the city. A feverish building activity reigned there in the late first and early second centuries A.D. The buildings of Dura that can be dated with the greatest certainty are the temples. The earliest known of its oriental temples, that of Atargatis, Hadad, and Adonis, was built about the middle of the first century B.C. Next come the reconstruction and orientalization of the most important Greek temples of Dura—those of Apollo and Artemis in the heart of the city and of Zeus Olympius on the acropolis, and the construction of a temple of Bel in the necropolis. At about the same time or a little later was built the temple of Artemis Azzanathcona. The first half of the first century A.D. added the curious temple of Zeus Kyrios; this was built round his cult image, which was inserted in the wall of one of the towers of the desert wall. Shortly after, about the

middle of the first century A.D., there rose at the two corners of the desert wall, and closely connected with the corner towers, two large and splendid temples—that known as the temple of the Palmyrene gods and the temple of Aphlad. Later again (in the early second century A.D.) was built the temple of Zeus Theos, and finally that of Adonis and Atargatis. About the same time the temple of the gods protectors of Palmyra and Dura, in the heart of the city, to which I have previously referred, was rebuilt on a larger scale.[10]

If we add to these temples the rebuilding of the palace of the citadel (see above, p. 16), the reconstruction and enlargement of the Hellenistic *strategion* on the acropolis (Pl. V, and p. 46), several palatial private houses in the city, at least one private bath, and the imposing street or streets of shops near the Hellenistic agora, the oriental sukh (see below p. 47), we arrive at a record of Parthian constructions worthy of respect.

The *bourgeoisie* of Dura in the Parthian period was certainly very rich. It consisted as before of the early settlers—the Macedonians who retained their leading part in the political, economic, and social life of the city, of an ever increasing number of Greek families, and of many rich and influential families of Semitic origin, some of them local people, some probably immigrants from other parts of the Semitic world, especially from Palmyra. The Semites freely intermarried with both Macedonians and Greeks. A close study of the hundreds of Semitic names recorded in the inscriptions and parchments of Dura will certainly help us to trace the original homes of these Semitic families. We must also include a few Iranians, mostly officers and officials of the Parthian government.

All the richer members of the Durene aristocracy and *bourgeoisie* contributed liberally to the construction and adornment of the various oriental temples of this period and to the large gifts of gold and silver that were bestowed on them, as recorded in divers inscriptions. It may therefore be inferred that the conditions at this time afforded opportunities for Macedonians, Greeks, and Semites to enrich themselves.

It is probable that the Macedonians remained what they were before, comparatively rich landowners, and that a number of Greeks and many natives were among the other owners of

land. In the atmosphere of Partho-Roman peace agriculture was without doubt a very profitable occupation. As before, Dura-Europos was the market centre of a large agricultural and cattle-breeding territory. The area of this territory certainly increased rapidly. The situation resembled that of modern Deir-ez-Zor, which made such rapid progress during the few years of the French protectorate over the Middle Euphrates. The shopkeepers of Dura-Europos, most of them Semites, must also have prospered. And finally the caravans must have brought wealth to the city. They needed food for themselves and their animals, they spent a good deal of money in the sukhs of Dura, and they no doubt sold to the shopkeepers of the city many of their goods—incense, perfumes, precious stones, spices, pigments, &c.

The prosperity and happiness of Dura were jeopardized by the events of the end of the first century A.D. Trajan abruptly changed the policy of Augustus and his successors, and resumed the policy of conquest followed by Crassus, Caesar, and Antony. This is not the place to review the scanty and controversial evidence regarding Trajan's conquest. Suffice it to say that Dura has added a good deal to it. We found on the desert road in the neighbourhood of Dura a ruined triumphal arch built and dedicated, according to its Latin inscription, by the IIIrd Cyrenaean legion to the safety of Trajan. Triumphal arches were not built by Roman legions in a haphazard way. The construction of an arch during the war by a part of Trajan's army implies an important event in its history. This event was certainly the capture of Dura-Europos and probably a battle won by the IIIrd Cyrenaean legion before the occupation, but not recorded in our literary evidence. The Durene arch—an interesting monument from the point of view of architecture—is therefore a historical monument of great interest. It shows the importance of Dura to the conquerors of Parthia, doubtless as a key to the Euphrates road, which Trajan made use of in conjunction with the Tigris road. I may add that we had no previous knowledge of the participation of the IIIrd Cyrenaean legion (stationed in Egypt) in the conquest, and that this had never been suggested by modern scholars.[11]

Dura did not long remain in the hands of the Romans. We

know this from a group of three curious inscriptions of A.D. 117 and 118, the first being the year of Trajan's untimely death. These make it more than probable that the order of evacuation of Dura-Europos was given not by Hadrian, but by Trajan.[12]

Hadrian's policy, which in the main was a renewal of the Parthian policy of Augustus, bestowed on Dura another fifty years of prosperity. It remained a Parthian city, though Rome enjoyed in it a high prestige. This is borne out by several facts. Roman coins remained the principal currency. Trajan's triumphal arch in the vicinity of the city, built in commemoration of a great Roman victory over the Parthians, was never destroyed by the Parthians nor damaged by them. It stood intact as built until it fell as the result of an earthquake or in the natural process of time, long after the end of the city. All this testifies to the great political influence of Rome in northwestern Parthia; and there are other facts of a similar kind that bear witness to the same effect. We know, for example, from a Palmyrene inscription that in the time of Antoninus Pius a sanctuary of the Roman emperors was erected by Palmyrene merchants at Vologesias in the heart of western Parthia. A late but reliable text tells us that there were statues of the Emperor Trajan standing near Ctesiphon in Parthia as late as A.D. 572. They still inspired a superstitious terror in the natives.

Even stronger than the influence of Rome was that of Palmyra, a city which was losing its connexion with Parthia and now became ever more dependent on Rome. It should be noticed that Palmyra, probably from the time of Hadrian, was occupied by a strong Roman garrison. This Palmyrene influence, therefore, meant indirectly Roman influence. We have evidence that it existed in the fact mentioned above that the flourishing Palmyrene funduq was reconstructed on a large scale, as also was the sanctuary of the gods protectors of Palmyra and Dura; and in the important role which the Palmyrene desert police played in the life of Dura and of its territory.[13]

The end of Parthian overlordship in Dura came with the campaign of Lucius Verus and Avidius Cassius, a renewal, as

it were, of the campaign of Trajan. The war was started by the Parthian king and was a necessity. It was carried out after the pattern of the Parthian campaign of Trajan. As in Trajan's war Dura was taken by the Romans at an early date. This time, however, it was not restored to the Parthians. It became and remained until the end one of the fortresses of the Syrian *limes*. It was never incorporated in the new province of Mesopotamia, but was made part of the province of Syria.

Of Dura-Europos as a Roman fortress practically nothing was known until recently. It is not mentioned, for instance, in Chapot's valuable book dealing with the Euphrates frontier of the empire. Our excavations have yielded abundant material bearing on its military history in Roman times. We can now trace the main outlines of this, and show the growing importance of Dura in the Roman system of defence.

During the rule of Marcus Aurelius and of Commodus Dura apparently played no important part in the history of what we call the Euphrates *limes* of the Roman Empire. Our scanty evidence for this period shows that the Roman garrison of Dura was not very large. It consisted in all probability of one auxiliary cohort of mounted archers—the *cohors II Ulpia equitata*, probably a *cohors quingenaria*. We have several mentions of this detachment in certain inscriptions found at Dura. Alongside of the Roman garrison, the Palmyrene mounted police corps was still stationed at Dura. We know that two successive commanders of this force built about A.D. 168–70 the early sanctuary of Mithras near the desert wall of the city. It is possible that some buildings in the northern part of the city were used for the needs of the Roman garrison and that the main gate of the city was guarded by a detachment of the garrison.

A great change came with Septimius Severus and Caracalla. The garrison of Dura was reinforced by several new detachments (below, p. 26). For the needs of the enlarged garrison the northern part of the city was transformed into a regular military camp. A monumental *praetorium* closely connected with the temple of Artemis Azzanathcona formed its centre. Several rooms in the court of this temple which had been used for military purposes in the preceding period remained in the hands of the Roman garrison. One of these rooms was probably

the head office of the XXth Palmyrene cohort, which probably took the place of or was added to the IInd Ulpia. Of this new unit in the garrison of Dura more will be said presently. In the room adjoining the aforesaid office were found the remains of the archives probably of the XXth Palmyrene cohort, a mine of information regarding the military history of the Roman Empire.[14]

Near the *praetorium* a palatial private house was transformed into the residence of one of the higher military officers of the Roman garrison. Several other houses were used—after remodelling—as barracks for the soldiers. Two monumental baths were built near the *praetorium* for the use of the garrison. An earlier Parthian bath was reconstructed and served as a third bath for the garrison. In its vicinity a modest *amphitheatrum castrense* was built and several graffiti indicate that it was frequently used for gladiatorial shows. And finally several military temples were constructed by the soldiers, sanctuaries dedicated to the most important gods of the Roman army. The modest sanctuary of Mithras near the desert wall, built by the two commanders of the Palmyrene archers in A.D. 168 and 170, was rebuilt by the *vexillationes* of two Roman legions about A.D. 211, and a sanctuary of Jupiter Dolichenus and Mithras rose about the same time not far from the citadel.

Unfortunately we had no time to excavate the whole of the Roman camp. Some buildings remain unexplored, among them probably several temples. It is, however, fairly certain that about one-fourth of the city of Dura was taken from its inhabitants and became a Roman camp, separated from the rest of the city by a brick wall. The Roman soldiers were in complete possession of this area, and no civilians remained in the houses that had formerly belonged to them and were now confiscated by the Roman military administration. Various graffiti on the walls of the houses outside the camp suggest, however, that the camp was not large enough to house the whole force. A number of non-commissioned officers and men were billeted in private houses outside the camp. Moreover, the main gate of the city and the neighbouring area formed a small subsidiary Roman camp. Many dedications on the walls of the gate, painted and chiselled, indicate that the main gate was occupied by a strong detachment of Roman soldiers—

gendarmes under the command of a *beneficiarius*. The office of this detachment was perhaps located in a beautifully preserved house near the main gate. The painted ceiling coffers of one room of this house display portraits of various non-commissioned officers, one of them an *actuarius* (keeper of military records), another a *tesserarius* (in charge of the transmission of orders), and a third an architect (Pl. XI, 1).

Some inscriptions show that the main camp dates from the very last years of Severus and the early years of Caracalla. The garrison of the city at that time was reinforced by new detachments. We know no details, but several monumental inscriptions and graffiti and dipinti show that at this time there were at Dura (permanently or temporarily) several *vexillationes* of legions (of the IVth Scythica, XVIth Flavia, IIIrd Cyrenaica, and perhaps IIIrd Gallica) and that about this time a *cohors miliaria equitata*, the XXth Palmyrenorum, replaced or was added to the cohort IInd Ulpia. It consisted, as is shown by the *acta diurna* of the cohort found among the papyri of the temple of Azzanathcona, of a body of about 800 foot, 220 horse, and more than 30 *dromedarii*. This cohort was certainly raised in the Palmyrene territory, Palmyra having now become almost a regular Roman provincial city. It is probable that Septimius Severus put an end to the military autonomy of Palmyra, and replaced the Palmyrene detachments of mounted guards in the former Parthian cities of the Euphrates *limes*, now Roman military *castella*, by regular Roman formations raised in part in the large territory of Palmyra, which was studded with villages and had a very large population. In some of these villages (a group of them was recently excavated by M. D. Schlumberger) horse-breeding may have been a flourishing industry. To return to Dura, another significant piece of evidence regarding its garrison is the rebuilding of the Palmyrene Mithraeum by legionary soldiers. It shows that in all probability Palmyrene archers under Palmyrene commanders disappeared from Dura. Equally significant is the fact that in the Palmyrene funduq and sanctuary mentioned above a statue was dedicated by the XXth Palmyrene cohort.

The reason for the radical changes effected by Septimius Severus and Caracalla probably lies in their decision to make

Dura one of the starting-points of the great expeditions that they projected against Parthia. It is more than likely that Severus, after his not very successful campaigns against that power, never gave up the idea of renewing the war as soon as his hands were free. Caracalla took up his father's plan and embarked on the ill-fated expedition that cost him his life.

With the reign of Alexander Severus a critical period in the life of Dura began; it ended with the destruction and death of the city. It is well known that during Alexander's reign a new dynasty took up the reins of government in the Parthian Empire. The Arsacids were replaced by the descendants of Sasan, the Sasanian kings. The defensive policy of Parthia was radically changed by the first Sasanian kings. Aware of the weakness of the Roman Empire and of the growing political anarchy within it, they took the offensive and repeatedly invaded its territory. Very little is known of these invasions, and the evidence is meagre. The two routes by which a Persian attack was possible were those along the Euphrates and the Tigris. Both were used. On the Euphrates route the first important Roman stronghold was Dura, a stronghold organized by Septimius Severus and Caracalla and further developed by Severus Alexander. It was a thorn in the flesh to the Sasanians. No wonder that as early as A.D. 238 they nearly captured it. A graffito in the house of a business man of Dura, Nebuchelos by name, reflects the terror that this invasion spread in the city, and perhaps the not very cordial feelings of the population towards the Romans. The writer says laconically: 'In the year so and so the Persian descended upon you' (does he mean on the Romans, or is *hymas* a mis-spelling for *hemas*—not 'you', but 'us'?).

The part played by the Middle Euphrates *limes* in the struggle between Rome and Persia led to some important reforms in the Roman administration of it. At some date in or shortly after the reign of Alexander a special military command was created on the bank (*ripa*) of the Euphrates, a *ducatus*. A *dux* (military commander independent of the governor of Syria) was appointed to co-ordinate the operations of the Roman detachments stationed in the many fortified posts of this *limes*. We know little of this reform. Similar military commanders

appeared at the same time on the other *limites* of the Roman Empire. As regards Syria, before the discoveries at Dura, the fact of the existence of a *dux ripae* was completely unknown. Several holders of this command are referred to in the military papyri and inscriptions that have been brought to light. In one of our last campaigns we learned that the head-quarters of the *dux* were at Dura and that an imposing building was erected to house his staff and offices. This building, as excavated in 1935–6, consists of a large colonnaded court, of a second court with various rooms round it, probably *scholae* for the non-commissioned officers of the staff, rooms for the body-guard of the *dux* (*equites singulares*), *armamentaria*, stables for donkeys, horses, camels, &c., and, in the forefront, of a suite of richly decorated reception and living rooms for the *dux* himself. Adjoining this suite stood a fine bath of earlier construction. The reception and living rooms of the *dux* were detached from the offices and opened on a terrace overlooking the Euphrates with a fine view of its valley. It is curious to note that in a small room next to the central absidal reception room several τραγῳδοί—pantomime dancers of the ducal staff—have recorded their devotion to their master, the *dux* (Pl. X, 1).

At the same time the garrison of Dura was again reinforced. Several new auxiliary corps are mentioned in inscriptions found near the ducal *praetorium*. It is evident that the Romans made feverish preparations for the defence of Dura in case of a Persian siege. It was in vain. The siege came soon after A.D. 256, unrecorded in our literary evidence, and Dura fell. We derive our knowledge of the history of the siege exclusively from archaeological evidence.[15] In order to heighten the wall of the city, sloping embankments were built against it both on the inside and on the outside (Ctesiphon offers examples of similar embankments). The inner embankment was found (perhaps during the siege) to be insufficiently strong and was reinforced, i.e. made wider. In the course of our thorough exploration of the desert wall we came upon several Sasanian mines and some Roman countermines. In one of the Roman countermines we found the grim remains of a tragic episode. About a score of Roman skeletons lay there with their arms by their side (there were also coins in their belts), and opposite them the skeleton

of a single soldier, possibly Sasanian, with his sword lying near him and his right arm lifted. It is evident that the Sasanians did not believe that they could take Dura by assault. The wall, reinforced by the sloping embankments, was too high and too strong for their siege machines. Their only hope was to sap the wall, to demolish some essential part of the fortifications, and finally to penetrate into the city by means of their mines. Attempts directed against the central part of the wall failed. The attack on the southern corner of the city was more successful. Here the Sasanians first undermined the strong corner tower and put it out of service. The platform of this tower had been used by the Romans for their artillery, the *ballistae*. No longer molested on their right flank (the side which was not protected by their shields) the Sasanians built a sloping ramp to the top of the wall in the vicinity of the southern corner so as to bring up their siege machines. At the same time the Romans dug a mine and endeavoured to undermine the sloping ramp. Their efforts were successful. However, in a final assault the city, under circumstances not revealed by our excavations, was captured and sacked.

The exact date of the capture of Dura is unknown. No coins bearing a date later than A.D. 256 have been found in its ruins. On the other hand, Professor A. Bellinger and Mr. F. Brown have shown that the embankments above referred to were not begun before A.D. 256. Some dipinti on the synagogue which was buried under the embankment bear a date equivalent to A.D. 256, and a hoard of coins including some of A.D. 256 was found in one of the buried houses. The embankments outside and inside the city, which are contemporary with one another, were therefore not begun before 256; nor could they have been built during the siege. Therefore the siege must have been posterior to 256; it must have been, that is to say, one of the episodes in the great raid of Shapur into Syria, which culminated in the capture of Antioch and the great battle of Edessa where the emperor Valerian was taken prisoner (exact date unknown, between A.D. 258 and 260). The raid probably began before 256, and by 256 the communications of Dura with the great minting centres of the Syrian provinces had been cut. This accounts for our failure to find at Dura any coins of later

date than 256. Was the siege laid before or after the battle of Edessa? A picture (of which more will be said in my third lecture) found in one of the private houses, showing a pitched battle between Sasanians (including the king) and Romans, probably represents the battle of Edessa and may have been drawn by some one who saw the battle. The existence of such a picture at Dura suggests that Dura was captured after the battle of Edessa.[16]

We know the fate of a captured city. The soldiers and civilians who were unable to escape were massacred or sold into slavery. Dura was probably occupied for a short time by the Persians and then abandoned. Thereafter the city reverted to the desert. The emperor Julian describes in one of his letters how, during his ill-fated expedition against the Persians, he hunted lions among its ruins. It was reserved for us to rescue it from oblivion.

The Roman period in the life of Dura was not a happy and a prosperous one. For this there were several reasons. Dura was no longer a caravan city. The Roman-Parthian frontier ran at some distance south of Dura. Moreover, in the second and third centuries the Euphrates route was less used by caravans than in earlier times. The Syrian desert was pacified by the Romans and as a consequence the main caravan road no longer ran along the Euphrates, but straight from Palmyra to Babylonia across the desert. This route was shorter than that along the Euphrates and no less safe. It was provided with wells and carefully guarded[17]. On the other hand, though the region round Dura continued to thrive and local trade was brisk, the Roman occupation bore heavily on the population. We know what a calamity it was for a city to be chosen as winter quarters by a detachment of the Roman army, especially in the brutal and anarchic third century A.D. We can readily imagine what a permanent camp of Roman soldiers must have meant. Requisitions of foodstuffs, of draft animals and men, the *angariae*, soldiers and officers billeted in private houses, confiscation of part of the city for the Roman camp. All this spelt ruin for the more prosperous classes in Dura. No wonder that no new temples or palatial houses were now built there. Some temples were kept in repair, others were not. The only

new sanctuaries erected were those of the new religious sects established in the city: the Jewish synagogue and the Christian church. The great houses of earlier times were as a rule divided into small and humble tenements, evidence of the ruin that had overtaken their owners and of the congestion in the city after the creation of the Roman camp. It is significant of the economic decay of Dura that, though honoured by the titles first of a Roman *municipium* and then of a Roman *colonia*, the city never coined its own money, as did so many of its sister-colonies in Mesopotamia. The business life of the city is illustrated by the archives of a typical business man of Dura of the third century A.D.—Nebuchelos. Instead of using costly papyrus, he recorded his transactions on the walls of his office.

ERRATUM

P. 30, ll. 13–15. *For* The Emperor Julian . . . its ruins. *read* Emperor Julian, according to Ammianus Marcellinus, during his ill-fated expedition against the Persians, hunted lions among its ruins.

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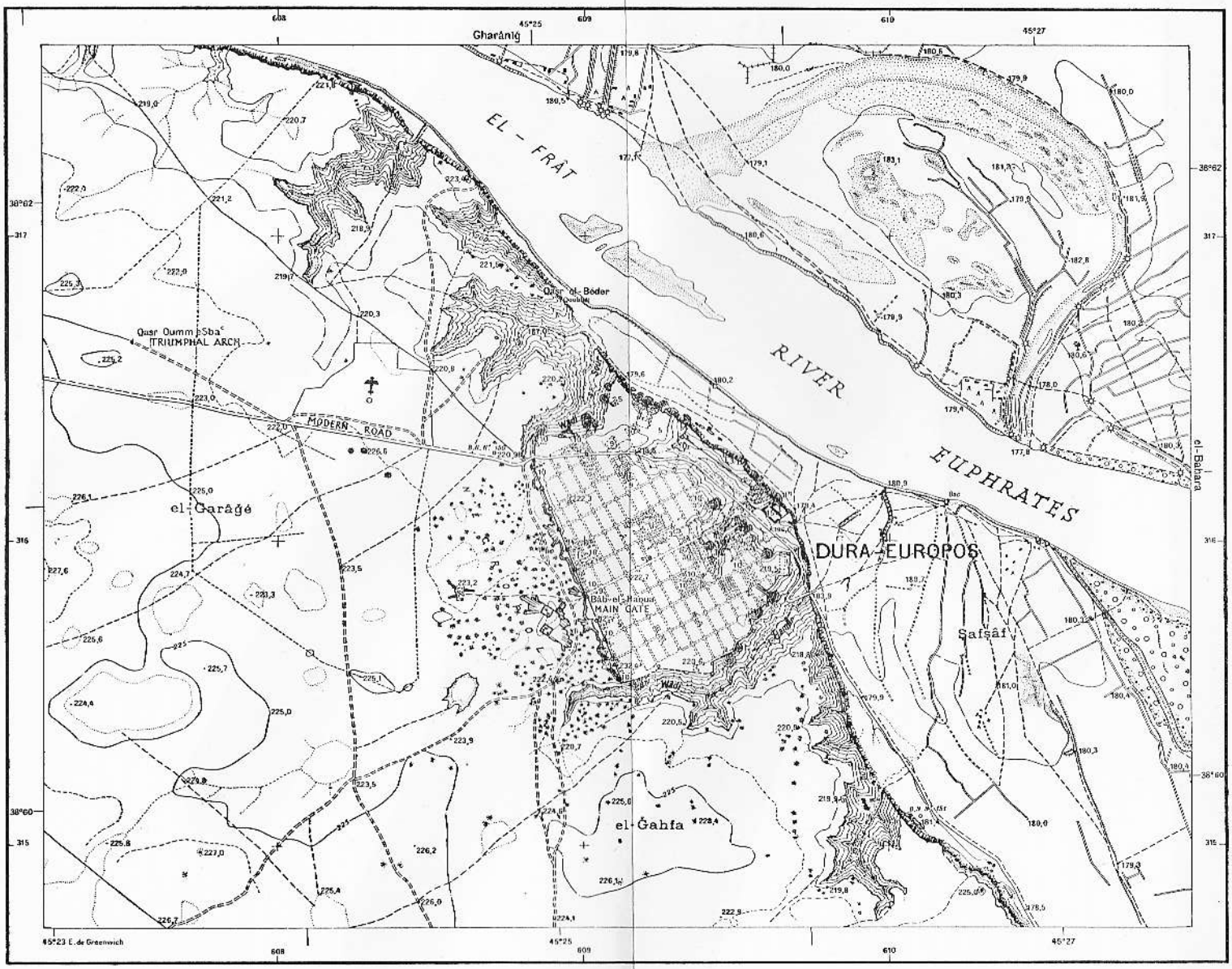


FIG. 4. MAP OF THE SURROUNDINGS OF DURA

Made by the Geographical Service of the French Army

II

DURA-EUROPOS, ITS TOPOGRAPHY AND BUILDINGS

In the preceding lecture I have given a brief sketch of the history of Dura, and mentioned some features of its topography and some of its more prominent buildings. Let me in this lecture give you glimpses of Dura in the three periods of its existence and describe more fully some of its typical buildings.

Dura was predestined by its situation to be a military stronghold of the first importance. The city was built on the south-eastern extremity of a rocky plateau—a part of the Syrian desert overhanging the Euphrates, which runs in a general direction from north-west to south-east. The alluvial land along the right bank of the river is here interrupted by the cliffs, so that no space is left between the plateau and the Euphrates. In consequence, the great commercial and military road that ran along this bank of the Euphrates was forced at this point to leave it, ascend to the plateau, and then descend again to the river. The only way, on the south-eastern side of the plateau, by which those travelling northwards could ascend to the plateau, and those travelling southwards could descend from it, was along a deep wadi or ravine which runs almost parallel to the Euphrates and is separated from it by an oblong cliff. I shall refer to this wadi hereafter as the principal wadi. The modern Euphrates road still follows it.

It is obvious that any one in possession of the fertile land along the Euphrates, above and below the plateau, which probably formed the Seleucid satrapy of Parapotamia, would necessarily endeavour to hold the plateau and to control the wadi, lest communication between the two parts of Parapotamia should be cut off by enemies.

It was natural that Nicanor in his endeavour to dominate the two main routes of the Seleucid kingdom, those along the Euphrates and the Tigris, and to fortify the key points of these roads, should build his Europos on the rocky plateau, and include in it the wadi above referred to and the cliff overlooking the Euphrates. The place was well chosen. Protected

on the side of the Euphrates and dominating the Euphrates road, the city was, moreover, enclosed between two deep ravines which run from west to east towards the Euphrates, parallel to each other at a distance of about one kilometre. We will call them the south and the north ravines.

I have already described how Nicanor fortified the city: his citadel on the cliff east of the main wadi, his desert wall, his gates. Within the walls the city was laid out as a regular Hellenistic city, on what is known as the Hippodamian plan, a plan extensively adopted by the Hellenistic rulers for their new foundations, and for the rebuilding of pre-existing cities. It was followed, for example, in the time of Alexander at Priene and a little earlier at Miletus in Asia Minor, probably at Antioch on the Orontes and Seleuceia on the Tigris, and certainly (as is shown by the recent researches of Sauvaget) at Hellenistic Damascus, Aleppo, and Latakieh in Syria. The leading features of the Hippodamian plan were to drive a main street through the city from gate to gate (called in later times πλατεῖα) with, on one side of it, a spacious market-place—the agora, the political and business centre of the city—and to divide the city into regular rectangular blocks by streets which ran some parallel and some perpendicular to the main street. In these rectangular blocks were erected temples, public buildings, and private houses.

Our recent excavations and a detailed study of the city and its most important buildings have shown how rigorously the Hippodamian plan was applied, in spite of the difficulties that the site presented.

It was easy to deal with the main part of the city—the almost flat rocky plateau west of the principal wadi. The main street ran across the plateau from west to east. It started from the great gate in the desert wall by which the military road entered the city and ended at the opposite side of the city near the river, passing again through a powerful gate.

North of the main street, in the centre of the city, stood the spacious agora, bordered on its northern side by several buildings of the time of Antiochus III and Antiochus IV.[18] The rest of the plateau was divided into regular blocks which were occupied by various religious and secular buildings. A couple

of blocks on the south side of the main street were devoted to the early temple of the dynastic gods of Seleucus—Artemis and Apollo, a religious counterpart, as it were, of the agora.

The south-eastern part of the aforesaid plateau had a peculiar

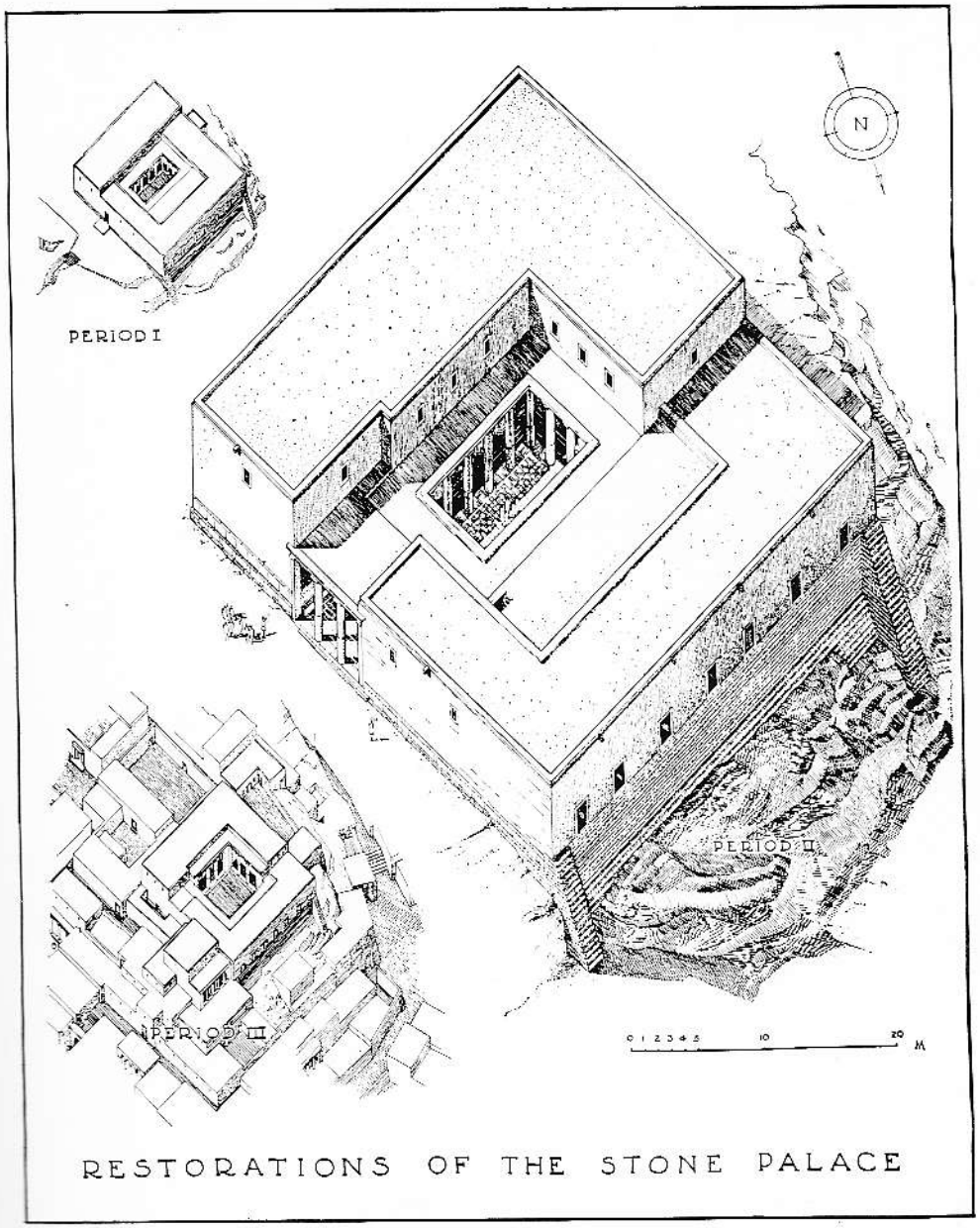
FIG. 5. Sketch-plan of Hellenistic Dura. Drawn by H. Pearson

formation. On its eastern side it overhung the principal wadi, and on its northern and western was cut off from the rest of the plateau by a lateral wadi, a branch of the principal wadi. It protruded, therefore, like a bastion between the two ravines. This spur—called by Cumont the redoubt—was an ideal site for an acropolis and was used for this purpose by the builders of the city. The northern slope of the rocky spur was reinforced by a beautiful sustaining wall of cut stone, and on the summit was erected a fine and spacious building, square in plan, a peristyle-house, perhaps the *strategion*, the official residence of the chief magistrate of the city—the *strategos*. This civil centre of the city faced its military centre—the citadel and its palace, which may have been the residence of the Seleucid governor of Parapotamia. It must be noted, however, that the plan of the house is unlike the few known

strategia of Greek *poleis*, especially that of Cyrene.[19] During the temporary renaissance of the Seleucid Empire in the reigns of Antiochus the Great and of Epiphanes, or perhaps in the first years of Parthian domination, i.e. at the time of the reconstruction of the palace of the citadel, this house was rebuilt on a larger scale and more luxuriously, but on purely Greek lines. Probably contemporaneous with this or a little earlier was the construction behind the *strategion* of a temple, which was repeatedly rebuilt and enlarged in later times and dedicated to Zeus Megistos. There is reason to think that this temple, recently excavated and studied by Mr. F. Brown, was originally dedicated to the great god protector of the Seleucids in general and of Epiphanes in particular—Zeus Olympius. The role played by Zeus Olympius in the policy of Epiphanes is well known.[20]

Nicanor's architects were faced with greater difficulties when, in laying out the city, they reached the side of the principal wadi. The main street could not be extended down its steep slope. It was therefore continued as a flight of steps, which descended the incline and could be used by pedestrians only. Two side streets were available for beasts of burden and carriages. These diverged from the end of the main street and ran south and north from it, and by means of two branch wadis descended gently from the plateau to the principal wadi. All the three continuations of the main street finally reached the river gate opposite the desert gate. Outside this gate the street descended the cliff towards the river and continued on alluvial land as the Euphrates road.

Such was in general the aspect of Hellenistic Europos and of its most important buildings. We know little of the plan and the superstructures of these buildings. There remains little of them beyond parts of their foundations. The temple of Artemis, built probably in the early third century, was in its earliest form not a regular temple, but a plain *temenos* with the altar of Artemis in its centre.[21] The later temple on the acropolis, which was probably dedicated to Zeus Olympius and was first built perhaps at the time of Epiphanes, was more ambitious. According to Mr. Brown, who excavated and studied its ruins, it shows many features characteristic of the



Acropolis. Palace of the Acropolis (*Strategion*?)
(Restoration by H. Pearson)

south Syrian temples of the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods (see note 20).

The *strategion* of the acropolis is better known. It has been carefully excavated and studied by Mr. H. Pearson. Built in the early third century and rebuilt, as I have already stated, on the same lines but on a larger scale in the middle of the second century, probably almost contemporaneously with the second palace of the citadel, it follows a Greco-Macedonian plan and is a splendid specimen of early Hellenistic architecture. Its plan is in fact that of a palatial Macedonian peristyle-house. It must be compared with the earliest peristyle-houses of Macedon and Greece—those of Olynthus of the middle of the fourth century and the much later houses of this type at Pompeii, Olbia, and Delos (see note 19 and Pl. V).

Of the buildings of the agora we know practically nothing. No remains of columns were found when it was excavated. This indicates that there were no porticoes in front of the square buildings that surrounded its northern part. Of the buildings themselves we were unable to trace more than the foundations. It is certain that they consisted of shops only (see note 18).

Finally, it may be interesting to note that no remains of a theatre, of gymnasia, of a stadium, or of a hippodrome were found at Dura. However, remains of a spacious palaestra found beside the Parthian bath suggest that this may be due to our only having excavated thoroughly a little less than one-third of the area of the city. Until the excavations are finished it is idle to offer considerations which may account for the absence of these buildings.

The little we know of Hellenistic Europos shows that the city was laid out by its builders as a regular brand-new Greek city. It was by no means the reconstruction or modification of a pre-existing oriental city. We must all the more regret that so little remains of it.

Thus Europos was intended by its founder to be and to remain a Greek *polis*. And so were the many other Greek city-states disseminated all over the Near East by Alexander, his successors, and the Seleucids. This is not the place to discuss the policy that dictated these foundations. It was not merely a

question of urbanizing what were previously rural districts. Cities had existed in large numbers all over this region from time immemorial. The creation of new cities of Greek type alongside of the ancient oriental cities and the superimposing of Greek *poleis* on some of the last had a different purpose. This, briefly stated, was to build up over the oriental substratum a Greek superstructure, consisting of Greek cities with all their peculiarities and traditions. With the Greek cities the new rulers of the Near East intended to import into their kingdoms certain long-established Greek institutions: the citizen's spirit of devotion to his city, his willingness to sacrifice his life for it, and his special training for this purpose—in the main a military training. With this ancient Greek spirit the Hellenistic rulers hoped to combine a new trait—the personal devotion of the citizens of the new cities to their founders and the descendants of those founders, symbolized by the cult of the king and his dynasty. This dynastic spirit they expected that the new citizens would bring with them, as a consequence of the military training which they had received in the royal army. This was one of the reasons for settling soldiers in most of the newly founded cities. Cities in which the roles of citizen and soldier were combined appeared to the kings a suitable foundation for their power in the Near East.

While we know little of the Hellenistic city of Europos, our knowledge of the Parthian city is much more complete. In fact the city that we have excavated is practically the city of the time of the Parthian domination. To that part of the city which was not transformed into a Roman camp the Romans during the century of their domination added very little. I shall speak of it later in this lecture.

The Parthian city of Dura-Europos is very interesting and unique of its kind. As I have already pointed out, we must distinguish in dealing with the Parthian times between two periods: an earlier period covering the late second and the early first centuries B.C., and a later period beginning roughly about 50 B.C., and ending with the conquest of Dura by the Romans about A.D. 165. In the first period of Parthian domination Dura-Europos remained in the main what it had been before—a Greek city. Except the palace of the citadel, which was

rebuilt on Iranian lines by the Parthian government, the buildings of Dura that may be assigned to this period and were erected by the citizens of Dura are mainly of Greek character. Such was the small unfinished temple of Artemis and Apollo which was intended to replace the early temple of Artemis, and such was the second *strategion*, if we are right in assigning it to the early Parthian and not to the late Seleucid times. As regards the private houses our information is scanty. The little we know has not yet revealed the existence at Dura of any private houses of a purely Greek character.

I have also stated that the aspect of the city was completely altered in the second half of the first century. When in the middle of the first century B.C. the change in the political situation brought abundant prosperity to Europos and great building activity set in, this activity filled the city with oriental, not Greek, buildings. Greek Europos was gradually transformed by it into oriental Dura, into the semblance of a late Babylonian or an Assyrian city rather than of such Hellenistic cities as Priene or Miletus.

The reader will remember that it was about the middle of the first century that the Greek temple of Artemis and Apollo was utterly destroyed, and rebuilt as a large and splendid oriental temple. At the same time the private houses occupying the adjoining block were pulled down and over their foundations was erected a fine oriental temple dedicated to the great north Semitic and Anatolian triad—Hadad, Adonis, and Atargatis.

And so it went on. After 50 B.C. no Greek buildings were erected at Dura-Europos. Temples, public and private buildings, were all of the oriental, not of the Greek type.

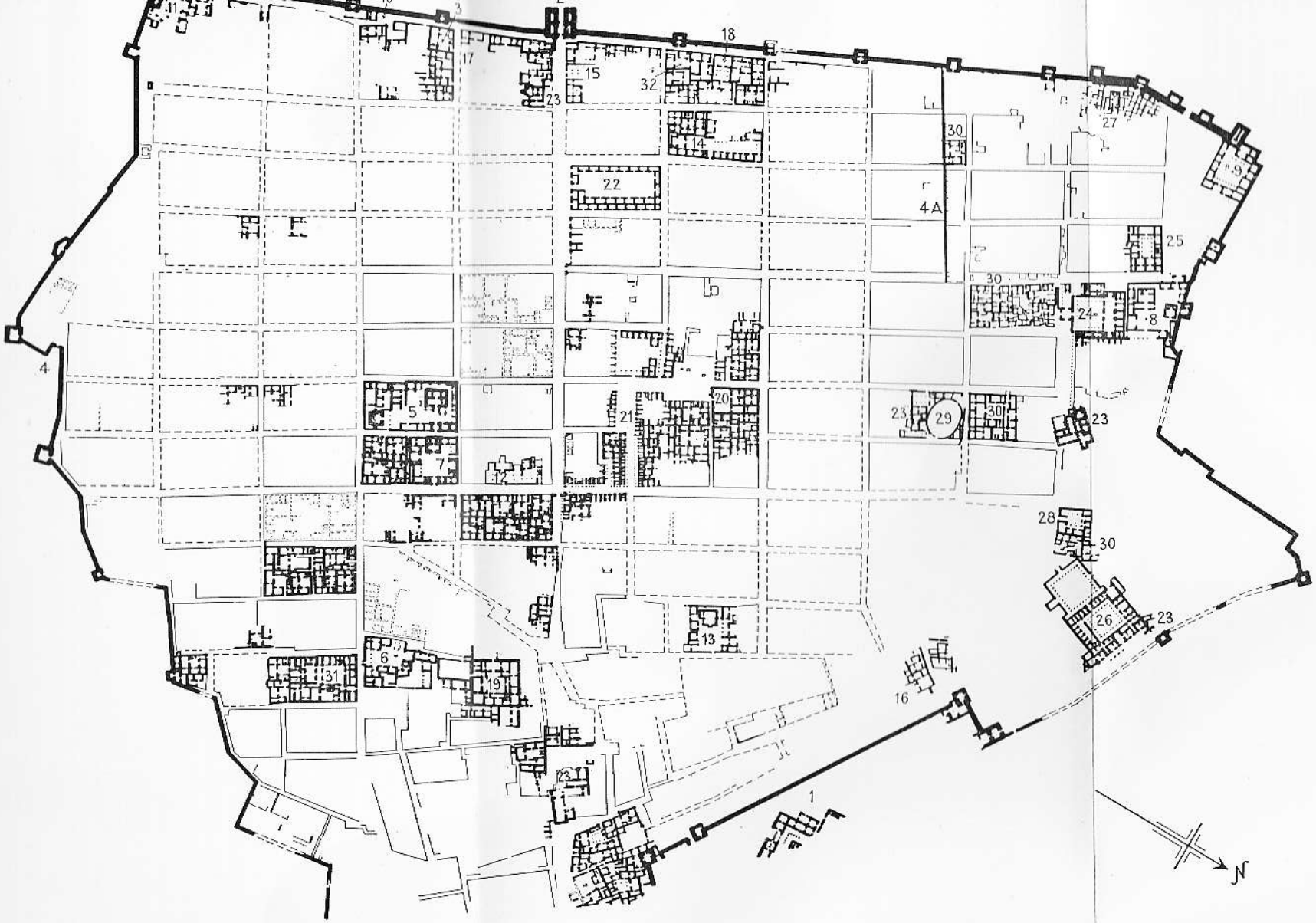
It should be noted, however, that this change did not correspond to any change in the constitution, in the official religion, or in the social life of Dura-Europos. The constitution remained exactly what it had been. As in Seleucid times the head of the city was the *strategos*, a member of the Macedonian aristocracy, who—and this exceptionally may have been a Parthian innovation—was at the same time military governor of the city, *epistates*, the representative, as it were, of the king. The leading role in the life of the city continued to be played

by the Macedonian aristocracy. Civil and criminal law remained in their essence Greek. Greek was the official language of the city, the language of the inscriptions, and of the business documents written on parchment. Many citizens and especially the descendants of the Macedonian colonists bore Greek names and generally wore Greek dress.

Nor was the official religion changed. Even the cult of Seleucus and of the Seleucid dynasty remained unaltered, and the eponymous priests of the city were still the priests of Seleucus and of his *πρόγονοι* and of the dynastic gods of the Seleucid dynasty—Zeus, Apollo, Artemis. Though rebuilt on oriental lines, the early temple of Artemis was still consecrated to her. In A.D. 2 a Semitic inhabitant of Dura dedicated an altar to Artemis and Apollo *ἀρχηγοί*. Note that the chief magistrate of the city, the *strategos*, took an active part in the reconstruction of the temple. He erected one of the columns of the *pronaos* of the new temple, as is recorded in the inscription engraved on the column in 33/32 B.C. For the Semitic worshippers the chief goddess of the temple may have been Nanaia, but for the Macedonians and the Greeks she was still their *πάτριος θεά*—the great Artemis. And so it remained even in the Roman times.[22]

Nevertheless, little by little the city was completely orientalized. The only features of the city that remained unaltered from Hellenistic times were the general lay-out and the fortifications. In all other respects the city was profoundly modified.

This transformation was not the outcome of the deliberate policy of the Arsacids. I have already stated that their policy at Europos and in their other Greek and Macedonian cities was one of philhellenism, of *laisser faire*, of non-interference in the domestic concerns of the Greek cities. This policy remained unchanged so long as the Parthian domination over Mesopotamia and Parapotamia continued. The Arsacids knew well enough, after some years' experience, that the Macedonians and Greeks were perfectly loyal to them and willingly accepted their rule, as a continuation of the rule of the Seleucids to whom they were profoundly devoted. They probably preferred—and the Arsacids were aware of it—the liberal and easy-going rule



FORTIFICATIONS

1. Citadel and its palace.
2. Main gate.
3. Subsidiary gate on the desert front.
4. South gate.
4*a*. Brick wall of the Roman Milita Camp.

TEMPLES

5. Temple of Artemis-Nanaia.
6. Zeus Megistos.
7. Atargatis.
8. Azzanathcona.
9. Bel (?) NW. corner.
10. Zeus Kyrios.
11. Aphlad.
12. Gaddé.
13. Zeus Theos.
14. Adonis.
15. Tyche.
16. Military chapel.
17. Christian church.
18. Synagogue.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

19. Acropolis Strategion.
20. Agora.
21. Sukhs.
22. Khan.
23. Baths.

MILITARY BUILDINGS

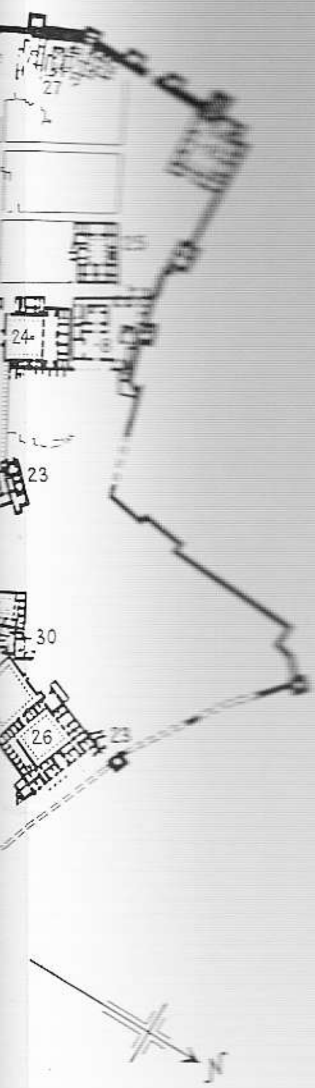
24. Praetorium.
25. House of a Higher Officer.
26. Palace of the *dux*.
27. Mithraeum.
28. Dolicheneum.
29. Amphitheatre.
30. Barracks.

PRIVATE HOUSES

31. House of Lysias.
32. House of the Scribes.

Note: The excavated buildings are shown in plan.
The excavated streets are shown with s outlines.
The unexcavated streets are shown with do lines.

FIG. 6. PLAN OF THE CITY OF DURA IN PARTHIAN AND ROMAN TIMES



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of the Parthians to Roman domination, the régime to which their compatriots were subjected in Syria.

If the aspect of the city was orientalized, this was not due to any pressure or orientalizing policy on the part of the Parthian government. Europos was orientalized by its own citizens, by the proud Macedonian and Greek aristocracy first and foremost. I have pointed out that the temple of Artemis was rebuilt on oriental lines with the active collaboration of the chief magistrate of the city. Numerous inscriptions found in the early oriental temples of Europos bear witness to the same phenomenon. Macedonians, Greeks, and Semites alike take an active part in building shrines (*ναοί*), *oikoi*, and other constituent parts of the temples, and in dedicating altars, statues, &c., to oriental gods. In three large temples of early date dedicated to oriental goddesses were found curious *pronaoi* in the form of little theatres (a similar *pronaos* may be noticed in the shrine of Atargatis in the temple of Adonis). The seats of these *pronaoi* were reserved for women only. We found two of them intact and almost all the stones of the third. The seats were owned by rich members of the community and their ownership was recorded in inscriptions engraved on the seats, inscriptions which give the full name of the owner and the date; a sort of 'court guide' to Duran society in the first century A.D. Now almost all the women who bought seats in the temples of Atargatis, of Artemis Azzanathcona, and in the oriental temple of the Seleucid Artemis (probably identified by the residents of Dura with Nanaia), were members of the richest and the most respectable Macedonian families of Europos.[23]

This shows that if Dura became an oriental city it was by the will of its own population, not as the result of outside pressure. The orientalization of the city appears to have corresponded to a similar and profound change in the mentality and religion of the citizens.

After these preliminary remarks I may proceed to give some account of Parthian Dura. We discovered several temples at Dura. Some of them go back to Hellenistic times, a few were built by Roman soldiers, and others by groups of followers of foreign religions during the Roman domination. These last, however, were insignificant. All the rest—the Hellenistic

temples rebuilt in Parthian times and the many beautiful temples first built in that period, in short, all the prominent religious buildings of the city, were oriental temples, not Greek temples, and were dedicated to oriental gods with oriental, Greek, or hellenized names. I have already enumerated these gods (p. 20). They form a strange mixture of deities of Babylonia, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Palmyra, north Syria, Phoenicia. There is no Greek god or goddess among them.

All these temples follow the same general plan, with certain modifications and variations. They are all of them temples of the oriental type, of which a court is a prominent feature. It would be premature to discuss at length their plan and architecture. A special study of these is required in order to discover their prototypes and their ultimate origin. This will probably reveal a curious medley of oriental elements, while Greek influence will appear almost negligible, but stronger in the later than in the earlier period of Parthian Dura.

The best-known example of these oriental court temples is the earliest of them, the beautifully preserved temple of Atargatis, of her son and husband Adonis, and of the great sky and thunder god Hadad. It was first excavated by Cumont, then by M. Pillet, and thoroughly studied by Mr. Pearson during the last season of our excavations. It was never rebuilt in Roman times and shows hardly any traces of Greek influence.[24]

The principal features of this temple are the court, the monumental entrance with the two *phalloi* (as in the temple of Atargatis at Bambyce described by Lucian), its lofty and majestic step-altar, and the tripartite *naos* of the goddess; the side-chambers of the latter were probably used as a treasury and a depot for sacred utensils. The tripartite *naos* is preceded by a *pronaos*, the little theatre-like building described above, which was no doubt used for sacred rites to which women only were admitted.

Round the court were alined various *oikoi*, built from time to time by individual donors and by religious associations. Some of them were shrines of *synnaoi theoi*. One of them is shaped like a theatre with step-benches on its side walls and three bases for a triad of deities on the back wall. I venture to suggest that this shrine was dedicated to Atargatis as member

of a triad of gods with Adonis and Hadad as her *synnaoi theoi*. In a painted inscription recording the work done by a local artist—probably the decoration of the exterior wall of the *pronaos* with images of the gods of the temple—Atargatis

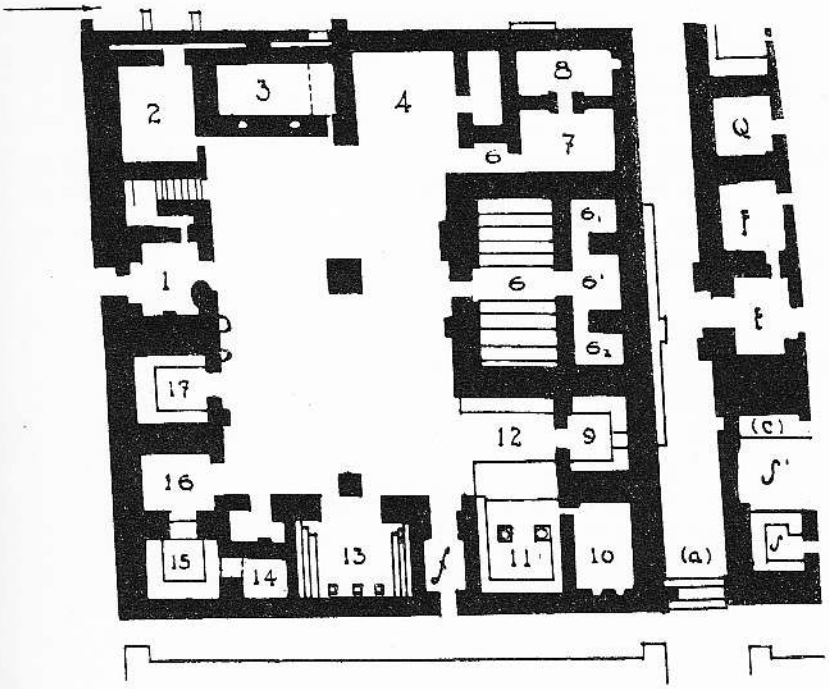


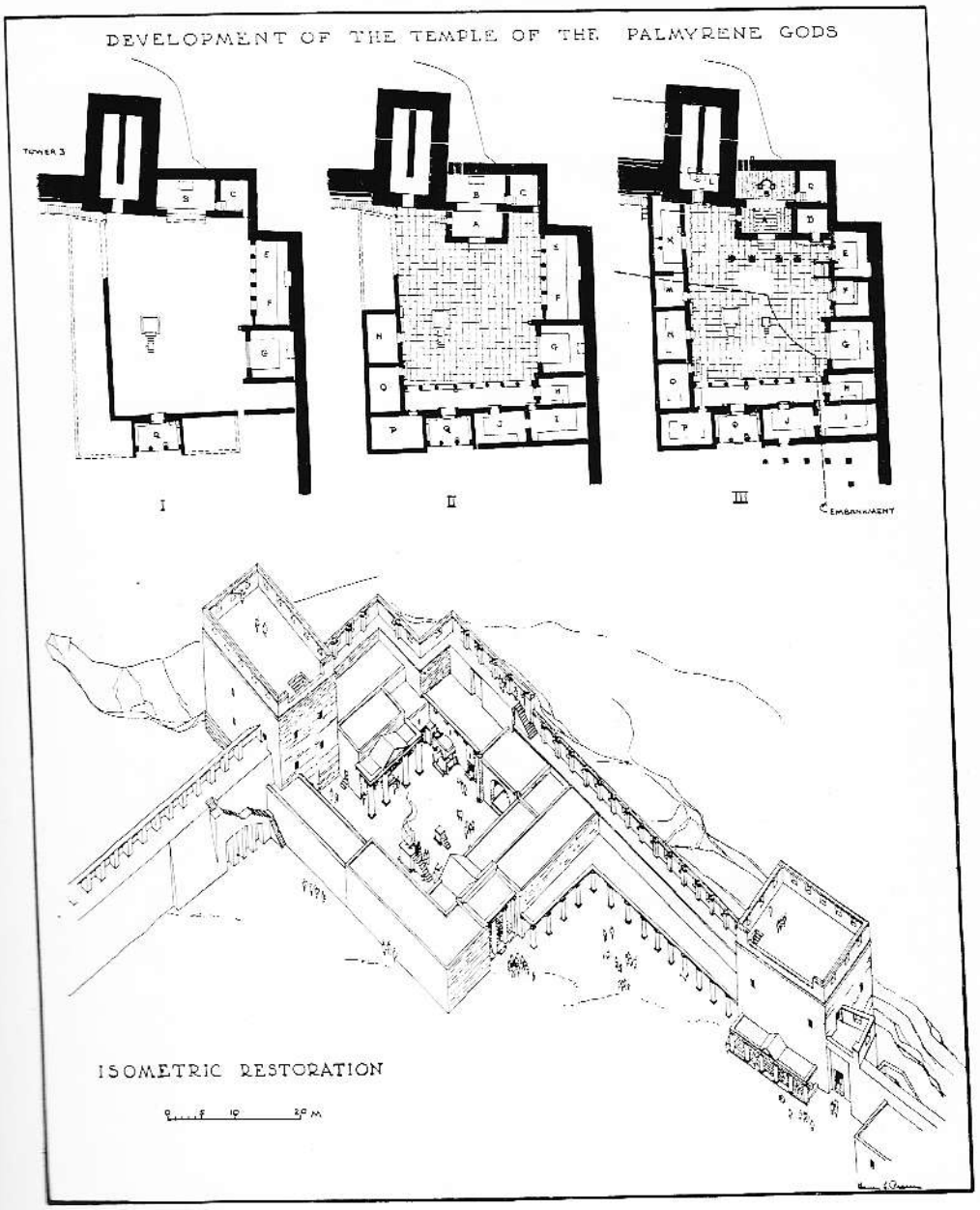
FIG. 7. Plan of the temple of Atargatis

appears alongside of Adonis and perhaps of a third god Saddoudan. The inscription unfortunately is fragmentary and cannot be restored with certainty; and the identity of Saddoudan (a dedication to him in the temple is all that we know of him) and the etymology of his name are a riddle. Moreover, Atargatis and Hadad appear on a bas-relief found in the temple.[25] Certain other *oikoi* were rooms used by priests and religious associations for various purposes, e.g. for sacred meals, reunions, incubations, or as offices, &c. The court was thickly set with smaller altars and votive *stelae*. Behind the temple a group of rooms probably served as residences of the priests. The walls of these were covered with drawings and inscriptions, mostly of a religious character.

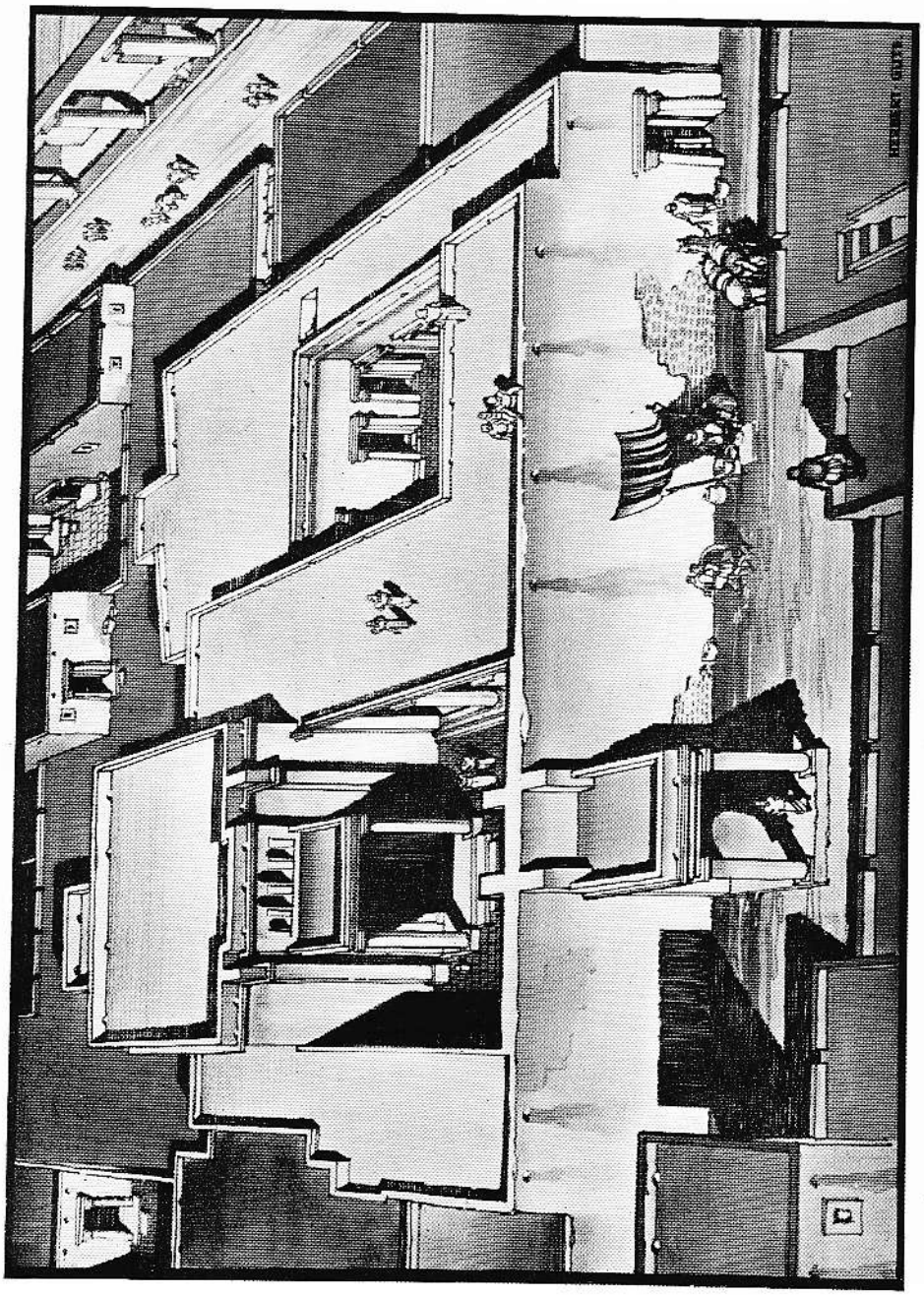
We find almost the same plan and distribution of rooms in the other early Parthian temples of Dura: those of Artemis (Nanaia) and of Artemis Azzanathcona, the temple of Bel in the north-western corner of the fortifications (Pl. VI), and that of Aphlad in the south-western corner. A curious temple is that of Zeus Kyrios—Baalshamin, built against one of the towers of the desert wall in the early first century A.D. Here the object of worship and a substitute for the cella was a small cult bas-relief of Zeus inserted high in the wall of the tower and dedicated by a private citizen, as recorded in the bilingual inscription (in Greek and Palmyrene) on the bas-relief. The temple in its earlier and later forms (it was twice rebuilt) consisted only of an open court and a modest altar. There was probably a special reason for building such a temple, perhaps a miracle effected by the god and connected with some incident in the life of the city or of the dedicant (Pl. XI, 1).

Temples of later date, i.e. of the second century A.D., are much larger, much higher, more lavishly decorated, and show in their architecture various Greek features. But they all were built according to the same general scheme and all reflect the same religious ideas. Such were the impressive temple of Zeus Theos, richly decorated with sculptures and paintings, with its monumental court and a majestic *naos*; the above-mentioned temple in the north-western corner of the fortifications as enlarged and adorned in a grand style in the second century A.D.; the temple of Zeus Megistos on the acropolis in the later stages of its existence; and especially the somewhat bizarre temple of the gods protectors of Palmyra and Dura, first built by Palmyrene merchants in the first century A.D. in the heart of the city as a modest shrine and rebuilt by them on a much larger scale and in a much more ambitious way in the middle of the second century A.D. It was richly adorned with statues, altars, *aediculae*, and paintings. Nor was the temple of Bel in the necropolis very different (Pl. VII).

The latest of the great temples of Parthian Dura, that of Adonis and Atargatis, is very curious. It is the first temple of the great Phoenician god ever discovered. Many of its features are unusual and probably reflect the peculiar rites that were performed in the temple. I refer to the long corridor-like



Temple of Bel (generally called Temple of the Palmyrene gods)
(Plan and restoration by H. Pearson)



Temple of the Gaddé (last period). (Restoration by H. Gute)

Temple of the Gaddé (last period). (Restoration by H. Gute)

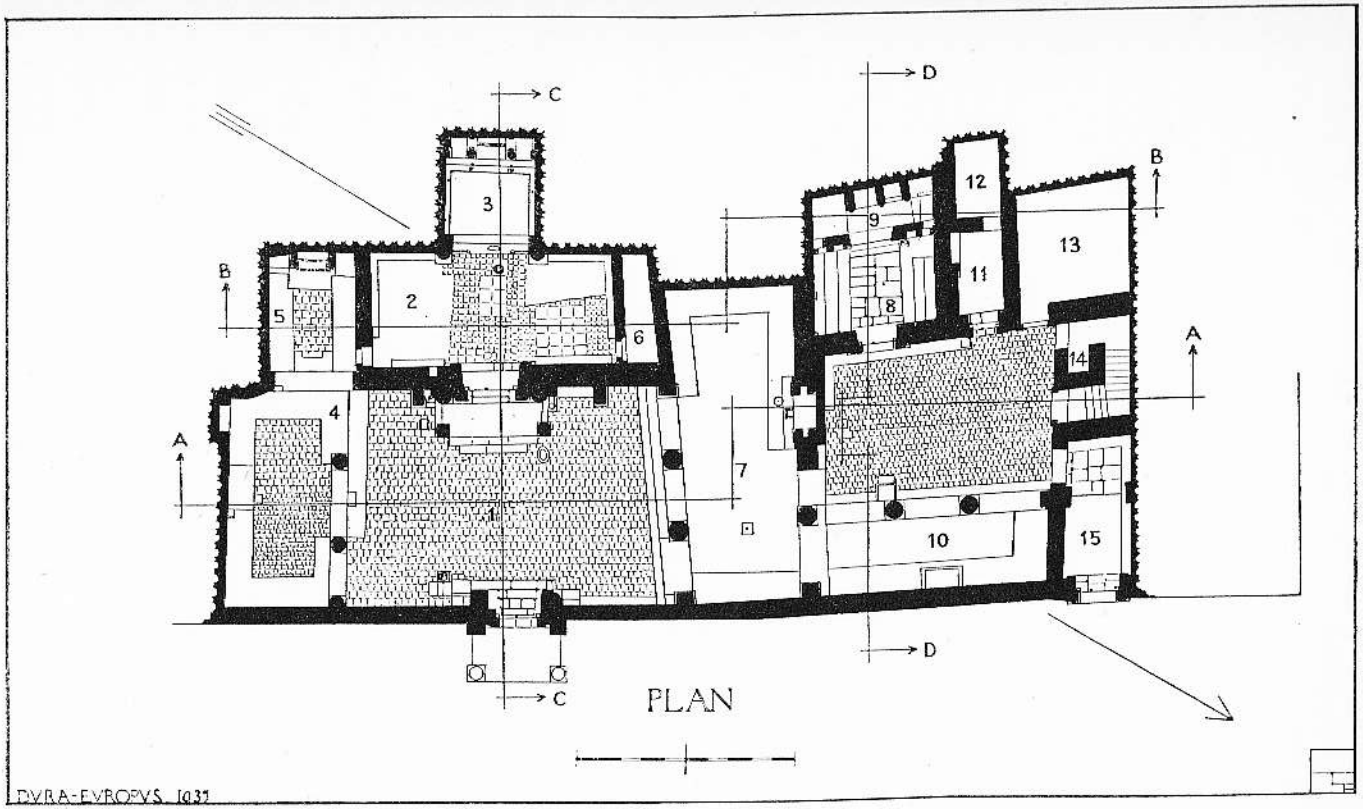


FIG. 8. Plan of the temple of the Gaddé

court with a row of *oikoi* on one side only, the absence of the usual central monumental step-altar, the disposition in this court of the two great *naoi*—that of Adonis and that of Atargatis, and some other features. Several inscriptions refer in all probability to the cult of Adonis. Substantial fragments of the cult painting of the main *naos* and a fragment of a bas-relief which shows the head of Atargatis (first century A.D.) were found in the temple.[26]

In these oriental temples of Parthian and Roman times the cult was purely oriental. Though the gods to whom they were dedicated bore Greek names, the oriental character of the cult is revealed by a glance at the paintings and the cult and votive bas-reliefs that adorned them. These represent scenes of sacrifice with minute oriental realism; and the impression that they give is confirmed if they are compared with the cult implements enumerated in temple inventories and found in temples and private houses. Among such sacred utensils I may mention, for example, the beautiful glazed *lychnophorion* or *thymiaterion* (or both) discovered during the last campaign in the temple of Atargatis, adorned with figures of her sacred animal—the deer. Similar utensils were found in various (mostly private) buildings (Pl. VIII).

An oriental city, in contrast to a Greek city, contains hardly any public buildings other than temples and royal palaces; and Parthian Dura was no exception. Hellenistic Europos had had an agora and probably various buildings of a public character in other parts of the city. Some of these public buildings of the Hellenistic epoch may still have been in use in the Parthian period. But they were overshadowed in Parthian Dura by the temples and the palaces: one on the summit of the citadel, another on the summit of the acropolis replacing the Hellenistic or early Parthian *strategion*. Unfortunately the ruins of the palace of the citadel are not complete. More than half of them have fallen into the Euphrates and cannot be recovered. What remains is a Greek colonnaded entrance court with side-chambers and a cistern in its centre and a few walls of the main part of the palace. The entrance court reminds one of the Parthian palace at Nippur excavated by the American expedition. The remains of the main part of the palace, carefully studied by

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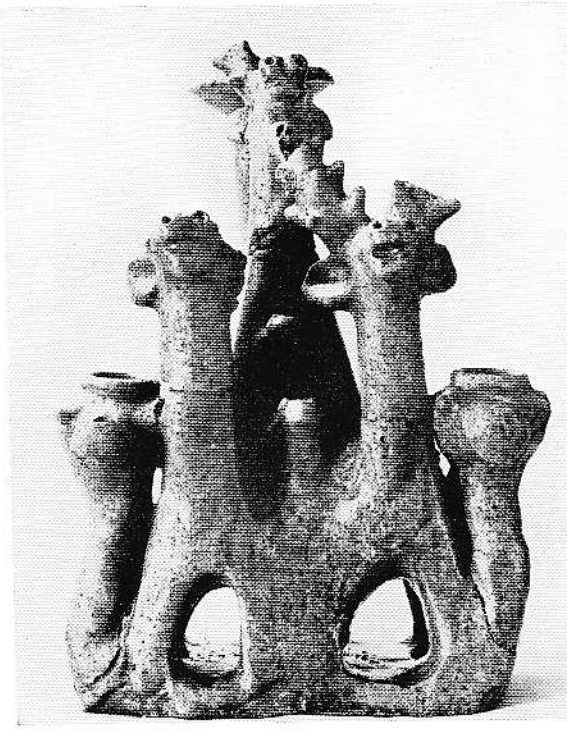
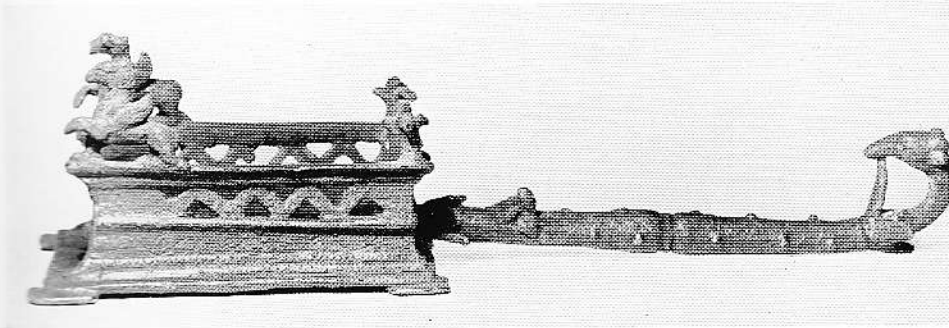
1. Glazed clay *thymiaterion* (blue-green glaze)



2. Glazed clay *lychnophorion* and *thymiaterion* (blue-green glaze)



3. Bronze brazier

Mr. Brown, show that this was not like the palace of Nippur. It consisted, according to Mr. Brown, of three majestic oblong vaulted liwans (halls for receptions and banquets), similar to those of Hatra and Ctesiphon. They were probably preceded

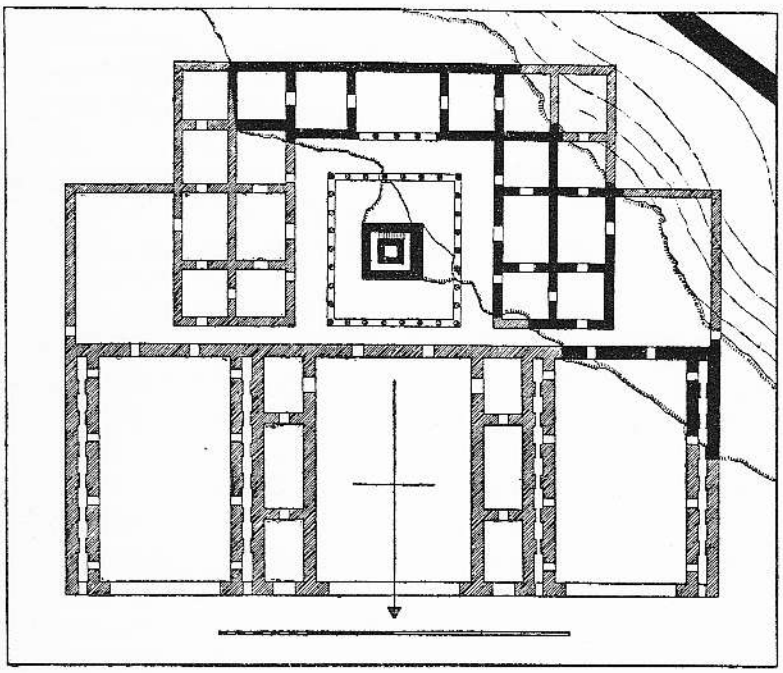


FIG. 9. Tentative reconstruction of the plan of the Parthian palace of the Citadel by F. Brown

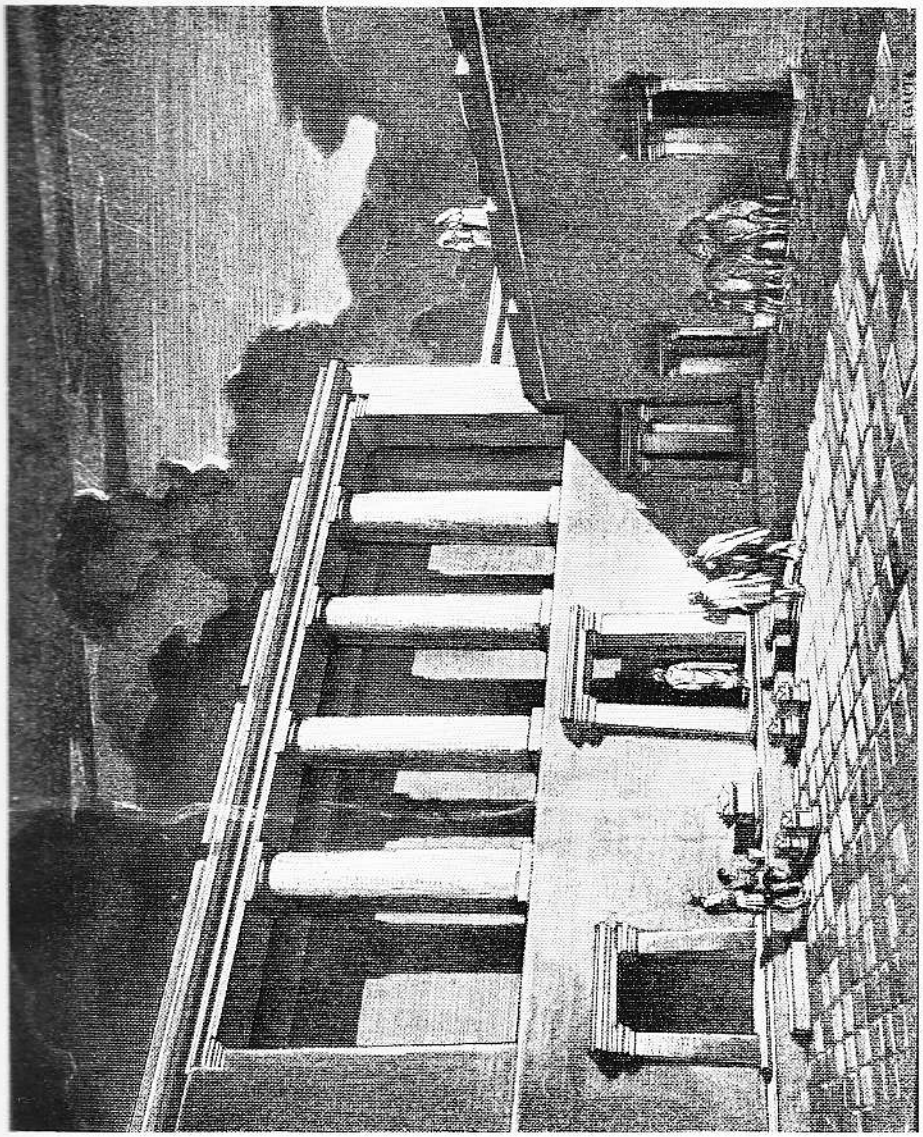
by an open court or terrace which faced the Euphrates. The Parthian palace on the acropolis is better known. It was in all respects an imposing palatial house of local type; more will be said of it presently. In front of it was a large open court with a monumental entrance—the Sublime Porte of the city of Dura. It was probably the official residence of the Parthian *strategos-epistates*.[27]

We may regard as semi-public buildings the sukhs and bazaars which occupied part of the Hellenistic agora. The regular shape of the main sukh street of Dura, with its shops of various sizes, suggests a planned construction rather than a gradual spontaneous development. The sukhs of Dura are unique for their period. Parallels exist in early Babylonian

cities, but no other sukhs of the Hellenistic and Roman period have ever been excavated in the Near East. Even ancient Egypt presents nothing similar to them. The nearest parallel to the sukhs of Dura are the sukhs of modern middle-sized cities in Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, and the Far East. The sukhs, bazaars, and khans of the larger modern oriental cities, e.g. the famous bazaars of Damascus, Aleppo, Smyrna, Constantinople, &c., are more ambitious. Their origin has never been carefully studied. I suggest that in their main features these large and picturesque constructions go back to the modest sukhs of Dura and their earlier prototypes.[28]

A large number of private houses of the Parthian period have been excavated at Dura. In fact, very few new houses were built in the Roman period, and, as I have already stated, no Hellenistic house has yet been found there. The houses vary in size, in architectural details, and in the distribution of rooms. Some of them are of the palatial type—large and impressive buildings. The best preserved of these, which was still in use in its original form under the Romans, belonged to one of the leading families of Dura, a family in which the office of the president of the city was hereditary. Two successive owners of the house—Lysias and Lysanias by name—are mentioned in two very interesting graffiti of A.D. 159 scratched on one of the walls of the house. The Lysias palace is situated on the plateau of the acropolis behind the temple of Zeus Olympius, and presents some noteworthy features. It has two courts, one for men, another for women, several large and remarkable storerooms, stables for donkeys, horses, and camels (with their mangers of different heights), and even 'modern' lavatories and bathrooms. Certain other houses are of medium size, well built and carefully maintained. The best preserved are those in the blocks along the wall street, which have been preserved by the sloping embankment (see p. 28) of A.D. 256. There are, finally, scores of small and modest houses scattered all over the city (Pl. IX).

The private houses, though varying in size and decoration, are nevertheless all of the same character. They belong to the widely spread type of the oriental house built about a court. Very similar houses are still in use all over Mesopotamia. The



House of Lysias. Court. (Restoration by H. Gute)

Dura house consists of an open court accessible from the street, generally by a side entrance. Into the central court open one or more reception-rooms (in palatial houses two or three), very often with side-rooms to right and left of each, and benches along the walls. In one corner of the court will be found the kitchen and the staircase leading to the traditional flat roof, very much used at night in summer-time and during the day in winter. Pavilion-like buildings were sometimes erected on this roof. Into the same court opened the stables and store-rooms. The cesspools in most of the houses were of the most primitive character: a pit in the centre of the court. In larger palatial houses the lavatories are of a more 'modern' character, connected sometimes with private baths. The larger houses had one part—the haremlik—reserved for the womenfolk. The influence of Greek architecture is scarcely perceptible in the smaller houses. It is much stronger in the palatial houses. The house of Lysias above mentioned, on the plateau of the acropolis, certainly reproduced in the construction of its main sitting-room (double storied) certain features of the larger palatial houses and public buildings of the Hellenistic period, of which we know so little.

A careful comparative study is required to enable us to trace the evolution of the Durene type of house. It certainly shows great similarities with the earlier and later Babylonian houses and may go back to them. No Parthian features are to be seen in it. The diwans (reception-rooms with benches) of Dura are quite different from the vaulted oblong liwans of Hatra and Assur. The governor's house in the citadel, dating from the early Parthian period, had no successors at Dura and remains an isolated phenomenon in the architectural history of the city.[29]

The wall decoration of the private houses of Dura has nothing in common with the Hellenistic and Italian type of wall decoration. We found in no house in Dura anything resembling the wall paintings of Priene, Delos, Pompeii, and the western provinces of the Roman Empire, though in this respect Dura and Roman Egypt have certain features in common. The carpet and floral style of decoration is found—differently treated—both at Dura and in Egypt. It is interesting to note that in

the later houses of Dura the incrustation style—a decoration imitating inlaid slabs of coloured marble mostly in geometric patterns—is as common at Dura as it was both in the East, the place of origin of this style, and in the West.[30]

Great changes in the general aspect of Dura-Europos took place during the Roman domination. For the Romans Dura had, as a city, very little importance. Some of the emperors tried to compensate it for the heavy losses that the Roman conquest had brought in its train, by the grant of honorific distinctions—first the title of *municipium*, perhaps under Caracalla, and later, probably under Severus Alexander, that of *colonia*. But their attitude towards it remained essentially unchanged. For them Dura-Europos was first and foremost a Roman frontier post, one of their *limes* fortresses. For the first time in its life Dura-Europos ceased to be a body politic, a more or less autonomous part of the State to which it belonged and whose interests were its own interests, a community of soldier-citizens, to become instead a mere garrison town, whose main duty was to house and feed the Roman soldiers.

This new situation found its expression in the changed aspect of the city. From the time of Septimius Severus and Caracalla the city consisted of two parts: the old city and the brand-new Roman camp with its population of Roman officers and soldiers. These were mostly natives of the Syrian provinces of Rome. Nevertheless, they were a foreign body in the city. They were a detachment of the Roman imperial army, to-day stationed in Dura-Europos and liable to be transferred to-morrow to Africa, Britain, the Rhine, or the Danube. They were the masters, who had no consideration for the population of the city and who lived their own peculiar life, the life of the military camp.

Roman camp life is well known to students of Roman imperial history. Most of these Roman camps were situated on the frontiers of the empire and were special settlements of a purely military character, unconnected with any pre-existing city or village. Cities and villages (*canabae*) developed later round many of these permanent camps, but this was a peculiar phenomenon and a slow process. No doubt military camps established in pre-existing cities were not uncommon in the

urbanized parts of the Roman Empire. We know of their existence in the great capitals of the Roman Empire—Rome, Carthage, Lyons, probably Alexandria and Antioch. But, except as regards Rome, we have very little information about them. In most of these instances they were probably built on the outskirts of the city, not within it. That was the case, for instance, at Alexandria and Palmyra. But at certain places of minor importance the Roman garrison was probably quartered in the city itself. The best-known instance is Chersonese in the Crimea. Such camps also existed in some of the cities along the southern shore of the Black Sea. In Syria, fully urbanized as that region was, they appear from our literary sources to have been a common phenomenon, but detrimental to the morale of the army.

None of these camps, however, that were situated within a city, in Syria or elsewhere, have been excavated and studied. The only exception that I am aware of is Chersonese, but there the buildings of the Roman camp were found in a very poor state of preservation. Dura in this respect is unique. It is a pity that time did not permit of the complete excavation of the camp. Substantial parts of it, however, have been brought to light, and it is now possible to trace the general features of a Roman camp when established in the heart of a city. Let me say a few words on the subject.

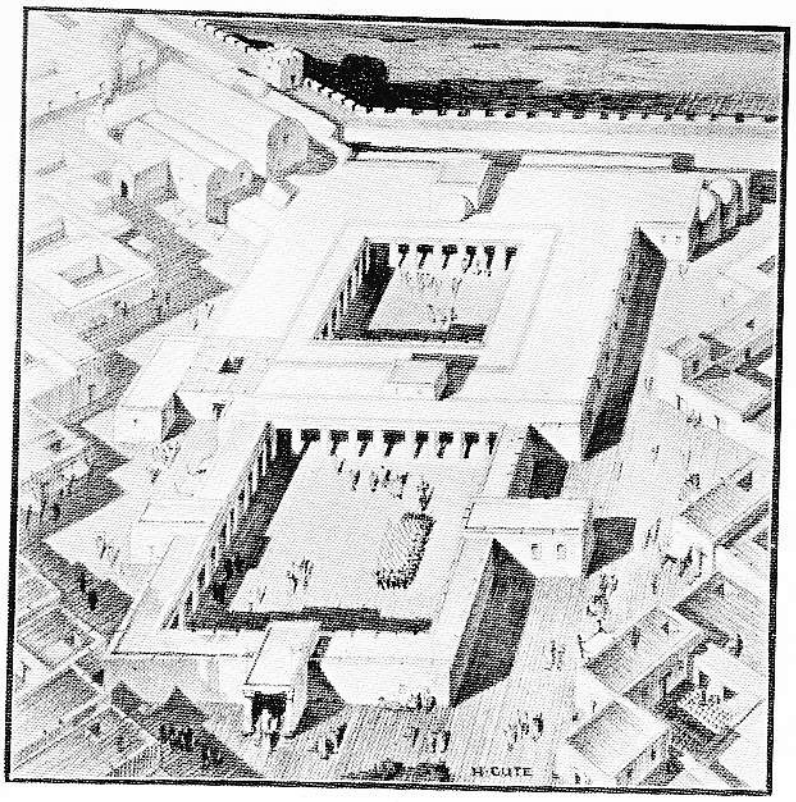
At the time of Septimius Severus and Caracalla a large part of Dura—about a fourth of the city—was in all probability expropriated by the government, separated from the rest of the city by a brick wall, and transformed into a camp. In the northern part of this expropriated area the pre-existing buildings were razed to the ground. The only exceptions were the venerable temples of Artemis Azzanathcona and of Zeus-Bel in the north-western corner of the city. Even so, several rooms round the court of the temple of Artemis were occupied by military offices, while the temple of Bel was probably spared only because Bel was the military protector of Dura and a deity much revered by the Palmyrenes and the Syrians in general. I must remind the reader that it was probably under Severus that the XXth Palmyrene cohort became part of the garrison of Dura and that in the temple of Bel this Palmyrene

contingent as well as the civil population worshipped the great military gods of Palmyra. Another exception was the shrine of Mithras, first built by commanders of the Palmyrene archers stationed at Dura (see above, pp. 20 and 25). In the time of Severus it was enlarged and rebuilt by legionary soldiers stationed at Dura and transformed into one of the sanctuaries of the camp, such as are found in almost all the camps of the Roman army. But the other temples in this part of Dura were not so fortunate. We know from inscriptions of at least one that suffered the fate of the private houses, i.e. was razed to the ground.

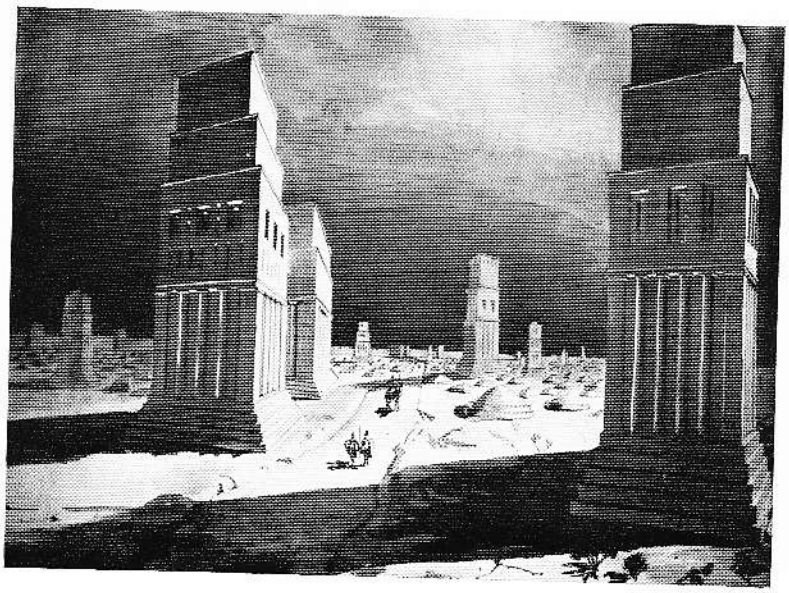
On the levelled area expropriated by the Romans sprang up the usual buildings of a Roman camp. The majestic *praetorium* stood in the centre. Across the front of it ran a colonnaded street with a triumphal arch. West of the *praetorium* stood the house of one of the high officers of the garrison, a palatial building previously the property of one of the rich citizens. Beyond this officer's house, between it and the temple of Bel, extended the *campus exercitatorius* or Campus Martius. On the other side of the *praetorium* a bath was erected, a fine and spacious building, excellently preserved. To the east the camp extended probably as far as the citadel. Only part of this area has been excavated. We found there a fine bath, the aforementioned temple of Jupiter Dolichenus and Mithras, the surrounding barracks, and the impressive official residence of the *dux ripae* (see Pl. X, 1, and p. 27 f.).

The southern part of the area excavated by us had been treated in a different way. Here the private houses had not been destroyed but transformed into barracks; and, for the use of the soldiers housed in them, a bath of the Parthian period had been modernized and reconstructed, and a small *amphitheatrum castrense* had been built.

I cannot deal with the individual buildings of the camp at length. They do not differ very much from similar buildings in other parts of the Roman Empire. The *praetorium*, if compared with other excavated *praetoria*, presents some special features, but whether these represent a variation of the *praetoria* peculiar to the Syrian region can only be determined by comparative study. The same may be said of the head-quarters



1. Palace of the *dux*. (Restoration by H. Gute)



2. Necropolis. (Restoration by N. Toll and H. Pearson)

of the *dux*, a building which resembles in some respects the well-known house of the legate of Xanten, but is otherwise unique.

In the rest of the city the Romans made very little change. I have already pointed out that the Roman period was a time of impoverishment and decay for the city. Very few new buildings of importance were added during this period. I may mention a large bath near the citadel[31] and a market on the main street, and the two prayer-houses of the Jews and Christians. Some of the old buildings naturally needed repair or reconstruction. Among them the most notable was the great temple of Artemis, perhaps identified by her Semitic worshippers with the Elamitic and Babylonian Nanaia. I have mentioned that this temple, though rebuilt on oriental lines in the later Parthian period, remained during the whole of the Parthian domination the centre of the official cult of Macedonian Dura-Europos. Its status did not change under the Roman rule. It was still the official centre of the city cult. This is indicated by documents found in the temple. Soon after the occupation of Dura by the Romans (or perhaps as early as the time of Trajan?), Gemellus, the legate in command of one of the legions, dedicated in the temple an altar to Artemis. The same legate made a similar dedication to Atargatis in her adjoining temple. About the same time Aurelius Heliodorus, the *epistates* of Dura, dedicated in the temple of Artemis a statue to the conqueror of Dura—Lucius Verus. This shows the importance of the temple, and it is not surprising that it was now enlarged and a new court added to it.

The temple acquired even greater importance in the time of Caracalla and Severus Alexander. It would seem that the enlarged temple, in addition to being the centre of the official religion of Dura, became at the same time the civil centre of the *municipium* and subsequently *colonia* of Dura. This suggestion of mine is based on the following documentary evidence. A statue of Julia Domna was dedicated in the temple by the *bule* of the Aurelii Antoniniani Europaei, i.e. by the senate of the Roman *municipium*. Later, or at the same time, a theatre-like building was erected in the second court of the temple, a building which in my opinion served as a *buleuterion* and *ecclesiasterion*. It should be noticed that a *buleutes* of Dura has

recorded his presence on one of its seats. After Dura had become a *colonia*, a shrine to Artemis was built in the second court of the temple; it was called ναὸς [τῶν] σομμακολ(ώνων), i.e. the shrine of the upper layer of the new colony (cf. the name *summarudis* applied to a higher class of gladiators, and the *decaproti* and *eikosaproti* of the Syrian cities of the Roman times). The work was carried out by a group of Aurelii: Goras, the keeper of the treasury of the temple (*gazophylax*); Orthonobasus, Zebiadad, and another, sons of Goras and also probably temple officers; and a fifth person, son of [Abin]neus, [Bon]neus or a similar name (the name is not fully preserved). All of them are described in the inscription as *coloni*, *buleutai*, and priests of Artemis. In view of all this evidence there is little doubt that the temple of Artemis not only remained under the Romans the chief temple of the city of Dura, but that its annex, the second court with the surrounding rooms, added to it in the Roman period, served as the *forum* of the new Roman city.[32]

The temple of Artemis, however, was an exception. In general the Roman epoch was a time of reconstruction and restoration, but not of great building activity.

The general aspect of the city in the Parthian and Roman period was not like that of one of the Greco-Roman cities even of Syria. A view of Dura from the air would have shown great similarities with modern Mesopotamian cities, large and small. As in modern Mesopotamian cities, courts and flat roofs would be the most prominent features, except for the mosques. No vegetation, no gardens, no lawns. Dura, however, presented a more regular and tidier aspect than the modern cities of Mesopotamia. Her houses were higher, the house-fronts better plastered; some of them were painted and adorned with inset faience vases. The main street had fine colonnades on both sides, not unlike those of other Hellenistic and Roman cities of Syria. These colonnades, like those in most of the cities of Syria, were erected by the house-owners.

One more remark on the city of Dura. Any one who knows the rapid development of almost all the cities of the Roman Empire in the first three centuries after Christ and sees how the original fortified city (or it may be military camp) becomes gradually surrounded by ever-growing groups of private houses

is struck by the fact that no houses were built at Dura outside the walls. The only direction in which Dura could spread was towards the desert. But immediately beyond the desert gate begins the city of the dead, the necropolis; and this extends far into the desert along the main roads which connected Dura with Palmyra and Antioch. While there were no private houses, there were temples outside the city, and probably temples not connected with the funeral cult. One of these has been fully excavated.

The absence of houses may perhaps be explained as follows. Dura never spread beyond its gates into the desert because this desert was sterile and because it was unsafe. It is more than probable that the adjoining territory of Arabia was never fully pacified and that before the Roman occupation the militia of Dura under the command of the *strategos* from time to time made expeditions into it in order to protect the fertile land along the Euphrates and the many villages scattered about it. It appears, moreover, that Macedonian Europos was larger than its original population required. The size of the Hellenistic agora, for instance, is evidence of this. The city grew rapidly during the Parthian domination. And yet there appear to have still been plenty of unoccupied building sites. With the Roman domination, especially with the establishment of the Roman camp, the situation changed for the worse. The city became crowded. But at this time the city lived in constant fear of Parthian and later of Persian invasions, and its population, though perhaps increasing in numbers, preferred to remain within the city walls.

No less remarkable was the city of the dead; it was probably as large as the city of the living and crowded in one place—the rocky plateau of the desert. A careful investigation of the necropolis by Mr. N. P. Toll has shown how varied were the graves built for the inhabitants. Two forms predominated: the subterranean *loculus* family grave and the tower grave. It was this last which gave the necropolis its singular aspect. The tower grave is not peculiar to Dura. The towers of the necropolis of Palmyra are well known, and so are the funeral towers of Halibyeh (Zenobia) and of Irzi. I cannot enter here into the much debated questions of the different types of funeral

towers found in Mesopotamia and of their origin. No exhaustive historical study has ever been made of this problem. We are expecting such a study from Mr. Toll, who has explored all the aforementioned necropoleis. Suffice it to say that the towers of Dura, Halibyeh, and Irzi are very different from those of Palmyra, and represent probably an earlier, more archaic, more massive, and less refined type. Most of the towers of Dura are, of course, in ruins. However, thanks to luck and the methodical exploration of the necropolis by Mr. Toll, and especially to the discovery of a tower which was found lying almost intact on one of its sides, we have been able to reconstruct this and similar towers in all their details. Unlike the towers of Palmyra, those of Dura had their *loculi* for the mummified bodies not inside the tower but outside. The inside was occupied by a staircase which apparently led to the summit, probably flat and crenellated, of the tower. This fact suggests that the towers were in fact great altars, on the top of which were performed the funeral ceremonies connected with the worship of the gods of sky and light; or perhaps on which bodies were exposed in accordance with Iranian tradition. Let me remind my readers of the Iranian method of disposing of the dead. Clay or stone *ostothekai* (receptacles for the bones of the deceased) have been found all over the Iranian world (the Iranian name for these receptacles is *astodan*). It may be mentioned, incidentally, that in their sculptural decoration these strikingly resemble the Syrian and Phoenician lead sarcophagi. Now these astodans were kept, after the bones had been deposited in them, in special buildings called *naus* (derived from Greek *naos*). The *naus* was a kind of mausoleum in which the astodans were kept in niches. Some of these mausoleums are still extant, the largest being that on one of the Bahrein Islands in the Persian Gulf. I would suggest a careful study of these *naus* in connexion with the Mesopotamian towers. Is it not, moreover, possible to trace back to them the still existing Parsi 'towers of silence' at Bombay? In any case the origin of the Mesopotamian funeral towers must be sought in the East and the Iranian East, not in the West (Pl. X, 2).[33]

III

RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR ART IN DURA

I HAVE endeavoured, in my previous lectures, to give a brief account of the history of Dura and of the appearance it presented in the three periods of its life—the Hellenistic, the Parthian, and the Roman. In the following two lectures I propose to trace the artistic development of the city in its various aspects, a subject both difficult and complicated.[34]

It is evident that Dura never was and never could be a great centre of artistic creative activity. Nevertheless, the inhabitants of Dura took great pleasure in art. The walls of their sanctuaries were decorated with impressive paintings; cult statues and cult bas-reliefs stood in the *naoi* and *pronaoi* of their temples; votive statues and votive *stelae* and altars, the last decorated with bas-reliefs, adorned the courts and shrines. The dwelling-houses of the well-to-do inhabitants had their peculiar pictorial decoration and were not lacking in statues and bas-reliefs. Even the ceilings of many buildings, religious and private, were coffered and gaudily painted. The local painters and sculptors were proud of their profession and often signed their paintings. Amateurs frequently vied with professional artists. The walls of several buildings were covered with their work: there were scratched or painted on them copies of mural pictures and representations of statues, religious or secular, also sketches of every-day life.

As in other centres of the ancient world, art at Dura was principally devoted to the service of religion. In order better to understand it, we must therefore have an idea of the form that religious life took at Dura in the various periods of the city's existence.

I have already touched more than once upon this subject, but it requires somewhat fuller treatment, though these short lectures do not afford scope for an exhaustive study. This would require many pages and a detailed discussion for which, not being a specialist in the history of religion, I am not qualified. It will be sufficient if I trace the mere outlines of the religious development.

There is no lack of relevant material. The ruins of about a score of temples have been excavated. We found in them abundance of evidence bearing on their history and on the religious ceremonies performed in them: such as building inscriptions, sculptures, wall-paintings, dedications, votive *stelae* and altars with their sculptures and inscriptions, fragments of the temple furniture, and various sacred utensils. Moreover, there are hundreds if not thousands of inscriptions of a religious character scratched or painted on the walls of temples, public buildings, and private houses, to the effect that the writer prays to be remembered by some god or goddess. Many mentions of religious institutions may be found in the parchments and papyri. And finally, hundreds of theophoric names when carefully studied will show which were the gods that played the most important part in the devotions of private families.

We are poorly informed about the religion of Dura in Hellenistic times. But some survivals among the institutions of the city in the later period and occasional finds of the Hellenistic period show that the official religion of Macedonian Europos was Greek in its essence, the same religion in all probability that we find in other Macedonian colonies. The leading part belonged to the dynastic gods of the Seleucid monarchy, Apollo and Artemis on one hand, and Zeus Olympius on the other. Next to them stood the deified founder of the dynasty—Seleucus, the deceased kings and queens, and the ruling king and his family (or at least his consort). We do not know whether, alongside of these official gods, other Macedonian and Greek gods and goddesses were worshipped at Europos. This in itself is probable, but we found no trace of such cults. It must be noticed, however, that hardly any inscriptions or sculptures from the Hellenistic city have been discovered, though there certainly must have been some. Their rarity may be a mere accident, and further excavations may fill this gap. It is even more difficult to ascertain to what extent the Macedonian settlers adopted the worship of local gods. In Egypt they did this very early, in compliance with the policy of the kings. As Seleucus and his successors showed much reverence for the great gods of their satrapies, we may suppose that their officers and soldiers did the same. But we have no positive evidence.

The situation as regards Parthian and Roman Dura-Europos is different, especially in respect of the late first century B.C. and the three first centuries after Christ. Here our material is abundant and our information satisfactory. The first impression produced by the evidence is that of a bewildering religious chaos: a multitude of heterogeneous religions appear to mingle at Dura as in a cauldron, and a host of gods and goddesses of various origin found worshippers in the city.

The Seleucid gods and the dynastic cult above referred to still survived at Dura and played a prominent part in its religious life. I may mention the fact that the eponymous priests, by whom documents were dated, were still in the Parthian and Roman periods the priests of the afore-mentioned gods. Moreover, in the second century A.D. the god protector of Dura, the city's Τύχη, its Gad, was still the great god of Alexander, Seleucus, and Epiphanes—Zeus Olympius. He appears in this character, crowned by the deified founder of Europos—Seleucus—in one of the three cult bas-reliefs of the temple that was built by and for the Palmyrene inhabitants of Dura, and was dedicated to the great sky god of Syria and two Gaddé, that of Dura and that of Palmyra, the Gad of the last being Atargatis (Pl. I, 1).

Finally, Greek religion left its imprint on the religious life of Dura in that many of the oriental gods worshipped there in the Parthian and Roman periods officially bore Greek names. Zeus and Artemis were especially popular.

The majority of the gods worshipped at Dura were, however, of Semitic origin. They had come from various places and were of various types. We find among them deities of Babylonian origin (Bel, Shamash) and Babylonian and Elamitic origin (Nanaia), gods and goddesses of Mesopotamia (Aphlad, Artemis Azzanathcona), of northern Syria and Anatolia (Hadad, Atargatis), of Phoenicia (Adonis), of Palmyra (Baalshamin, Malakhbel, Jahribol, Aglibol), and of Arabia (Arsu). I mention only deities who were worshipped at Dura either as chief gods or as *synnaoi theoi*. Had we excavated the whole of the city instead of only one-third, their number would certainly be still larger.

To our great surprise we found but little evidence relating

to Iranian cults, I mean Mazdaism and Zoroastrianism. Not one temple of fire was found at Dura, not one mention of Ahuramazda. This may be an accident, and further excavations may lead to the discovery of a true fire temple. Negative evidence is always untrustworthy. Let us therefore deal exclusively with positive evidence. Figures in Parthian military dress and persons with Iranian names appear frequently in scenes of sacrifice and worship, carved and painted. Some of them may be worshippers, some may be interpreted as divine beings, though it is difficult to find a place for them in the Iranian pantheon. It is interesting to note that those figures in Parthian dress which certainly represent worshippers are shown adoring not only Iranian gods and goddesses, but also and mostly deities of foreign origin—Babylonian, Mesopotamian, Arabian, north Syrian, who sometimes bear Greek names. I may mention the Iranian Anaitis, Hercules—a god who was very popular at Dura and probably must be identified with some oriental god; Aphlad, who was a kind of Mesopotamian Hadad; and the afore-mentioned Palmyrene gods. The religion of an average Parthian appears to have been not purely Iranian but a composite religion. He worshipped both Iranian and foreign gods, some of whom—the supreme sky god, for example—he identified with his own Iranian pre-Zoroastrian gods.

In addition to Greek, Semitic, and Iranian gods there were the gods and goddesses worshipped by the Roman soldiers in their camp. The *Feriale Duranum*—the official religious calendar of the Roman army found at Dura—shows that the official pantheon of the Roman soldiers was the same at Dura as at Rome and all over the Roman Empire: it comprised the gods and goddesses of Rome and the deified emperors and members of the imperial family.[35] In addition, the soldiers at Dura had a special devotion for certain oriental gods who became semi-official protectors of the Roman army—Mithras and Jupiter Dolichenus, and along with them the great solar gods of Syrian and Palmyrene religion—especially the Palmyrene Jahribol, the *Sol Invictus* of Aurelian.

The worship of these various gods was accompanied by a general belief in astrology and magic, shared at Dura by Greeks, Semites, and Roman soldiers. Horoscopes were frequently

scratched on the walls of the houses and magic figures and texts are as common as horoscopes, both in the houses of the civil population and in the military buildings.[36]

Finally, to complete the bewildering chaos, came the two proselytizing religions of the Near East—Judaism and Christianity.

We must, however, not exaggerate. A closer study of the cults of Dura shows much simpler outlines than a mere enumeration of the gods and goddesses worshipped there would suggest.

Greek religion had been for a time predominant at Dura. But, as I have already stated, in the Parthian and Roman periods it was a mere survival, no longer a living religion with worshippers devoted to it. There was, I may remind the reader, no temple dedicated to Greek gods, I mean no temple Greek in architecture and cult, at Dura in these periods. It is, therefore, certain that Greek religion played no important part in the religious life of Parthian and Roman Dura even among its Greek-speaking population.

In Parthian Dura one would expect to find Iranian religion as prominent as Greek religion had been in Macedonian times. We have seen that the evidence points to something quite different. The few Parthians who resided at Dura had probably no temples of their own, and Mazdaism and Zoroastrianism exerted no great influence there.

The Roman religion was even less important in the life of the Europaei and Durani, the civil population of the city. It was from the very beginning the religion of a group of foreign residents, the Roman garrison of the city. On great occasions the magistrates of the city may have taken part in the religious ceremonies celebrated in the camp in honour of the Roman emperors and Roman gods, and the civil population of Dura may have looked on. But that was all.

Finally, Judaism and Christianity were new-comers in Dura. The building that served as a Christian church was not applied to this purpose before the middle of the third century and was very small. The first Jewish synagogue was established a little earlier (about the end of the second century A.D.). This likewise was a very small building, the later synagogue a little

larger. It could not accommodate on its benches more than ninety worshippers (men and women; women had separate seats in the later synagogue of Dura). Neither Christians nor Jews had had sufficient time to make many converts or to exert any influence on the religious life of the city.

The real religion of Dura, that of the large majority of the population, was the Semitic religion, or rather the traditional religion of the predominantly Semitic part of the Near East.

This is not the place to discuss at length the form that this religion assumed in late Hellenistic and early Roman times. If we may judge from what we find at Dura, there was strange confusion even within the traditional Semitic religion: scores of major and minor gods, all with different names, all worshipped in different ways, all having their own traditional images, and all connected more or less closely with one or other region of the Semitic Near East.

But this impression is certainly misleading. In the late Hellenistic and early Roman epochs the Semitic world manifested a strong tendency towards unification and simplification of its religion. It is a well-known fact that in this period solar henotheism was growing and becoming ever more firmly rooted throughout the Semitic world. Syncretistic tendencies were at work. Solar henotheism was ready to open its doors to foreign gods whether Greek or Iranian, whether their names were Zeus or Ahuramazda, Apollo and Artemis, or Mithras and Anaitis.[37]

Let us, however, confine ourselves to Dura. The Greek inhabitants were certainly aware of this tendency towards unification. They understood that behind the variety of gods and goddesses, most of them Semitic, worshipped at Dura there was a unity. They knew that in fact it was one and the same god who was worshipped under different names in most of the large temples of Dura—the great sky god of solar henotheism, and they showed their knowledge by giving this god one and the same name—Zeus. So it was with the great goddess worshipped in many temples of Dura. For the Greeks she was one and the same goddess of procreation and fertility and they knew her by one name—Artemis. Nor did they see any marked difference between the great gods of the Semitic and Iranian

cults. For them both groups were identical with their own Zeus and Artemis. The only differentiation they admitted was through the various epithets that they gave to Zeus and Artemis. To Zeus, for example, they applied the titles κύριος, the Lord; θεός, the Supreme God; μέγιστος, the Greatest God; κεραύνιος, the Thunder God, &c.

The largest, the richest, the most beautifully adorned temples of Dura were dedicated either to the Supreme Sky God or to the Supreme Goddess. Of these the two finest, as well as the best preserved, that known as the temple of the Palmyrene gods and the temple of Zeus Theos, were both dedicated to the same god—the great sky god of the Mesopotamian pantheon.* Now it is interesting to note that both Zeus Theos and the Zeus of the corner temple of the fortifications, as represented in their cult paintings, were as much Iranian as they were Semitic. Their dress, for instance, is Iranian. Note especially their Iranian breeches and gorgeously embroidered and brightly coloured shoes. Still more important is the fact that they are shown, probably both of them, in association with a chariot drawn by horses (Pl. XIII).

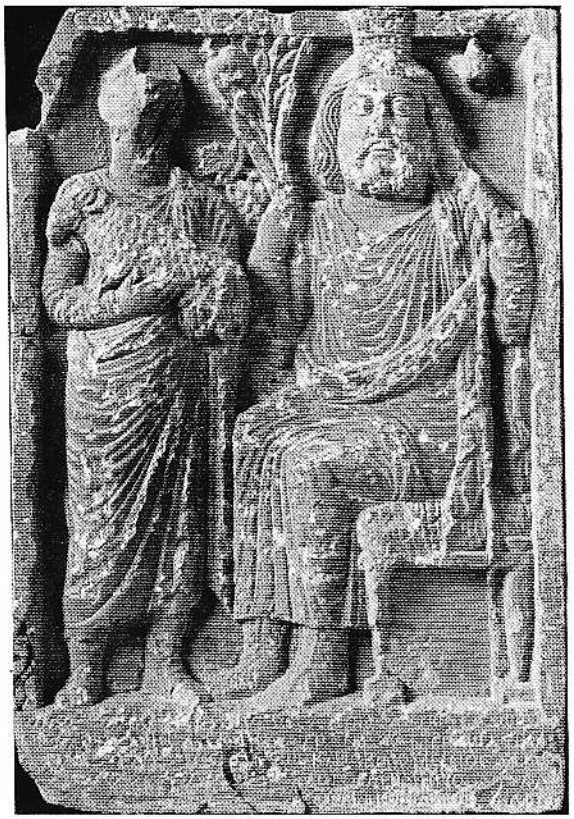
I cannot here restate the evidence relating to the early adoption by the Iranians of the Greek representation of the solar god in a chariot, the peculiar treatment of it by them, and the acceptance of it as an established figure in the Iranian pantheon. I have dealt with this topic elsewhere. It will suffice to point out a few facts. The worship of the chariot god in the Hellenistic and Roman period in Mesopotamia and elsewhere in the Near East, whether as the supreme god or one of his manifestations, goes back to Iran and to the earliest times of its history. It should be noted that Mithras appears in the Vedas not on horseback but in a chariot. In artistic tradition the god appears for the first time in his chariot on the ritual head-dress of a Scythian or Sakian queen, the metallic parts of which were found in one of the royal graves of the tumulus of Karagodeuashch in south Russia. The figure of the sun god on this plaque goes back to a Greek original, which, however,

* This is obvious as regards the temple of Zeus Theos and more than probable as regards the temple of the Palmyrene gods, as has been shown by Professor C. Hopkins and myself (see my *Dura and Parthian Art*, p. 273).

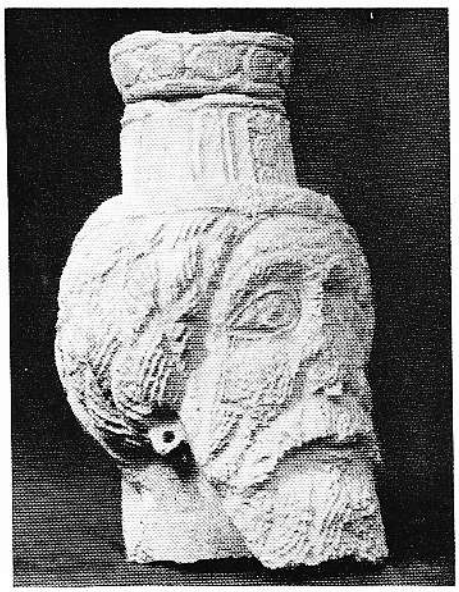
was substantially modified by a Greco-Iranian artist. It must be assigned to the third century B.C. A similar figure of the sky or sun god—a Greco-Iranian version of the Greek Helios—was the prototype of the well-known bas-relief of Bodh Gaya, of the first century B.C., representing the Iranian god Surya. It is probable, therefore, that the prototype both of the south Russian plaque and of the bas-relief of Bodh Gaya was a creation of Greco-Iranian art and artists, very likely those of Bactria. The Iranian Surya, it should be observed, was very popular in India: two *stelae* (of the first century A.D.) bearing his image were found in the region of Mathura alone. On one of these the god appears as a colossal figure in comparison with the diminutive horses of his chariot.

Now it is the same god and a similar representation of him that appear at Dura in the two temples mentioned above. It is very probable that in front of the colossal standing figure of the god in the temple of the Palmyrene gods a diminutive horse chariot was depicted. In the temple of Zeus Theos his painted cult figure, as restored from substantial fragments by Mr. Brown, shows the god standing and at his side a beautiful horse chariot. It is interesting to note that the main endeavour of the Greco-Iranian artists was to represent the god in full size. This purpose was achieved by them in various ways. The Iranian artists divided the horses in two pairs and shifted them aside in order to show the whole figure of the god standing in the chariot. Some of them with the same object made the chariot of reduced size. The artist who depicted the chariot god in the temple of Zeus Theos at Dura solved the problem in his own way. He painted a large and beautiful chariot with fierce horses, but moved the chariot away from the figure of the god in order to show the latter in all his majestic splendour.

It is well known that the various tentative handlings of the motif by Greco-Iranian and Mesopotamian artists—such as the interesting figure of a god in a leopard chariot found near Palmyra and published and discussed recently by M. Seyrig—finally crystallized in the traditional and highly schematic image of the sun and moon god of Sasanian times. The earliest examples of this Sasanian treatment found at Bamiyan (paint-



1. Bas-relief of Zeus Kyrios



2. Head of a cult statue of Zeus

God Arsu on camel-back

ing) and at Khair Kheneh (sculpture) were recently discussed at length by M. Hackin.[38]

Next in importance and much more ancient than the two temples mentioned above is the temple of Zeus Megistos on the acropolis of Dura. Zeus Megistos was probably the *interpretatio graeca* of one of the local Semitic names of the great sky god. He succeeded in all probability in this temple to the great Greco-Macedonian god Zeus Olympius. His *synnaos theos* in this temple and his acolyte was the Arabian light and caravan god Arsu.

The Zeus Kyrios of the small temple of the desert wall was Baalshamin, the chief god of Palmyra. He was worshipped at Dura as the god of fertility and prosperity. To Bel was dedicated an early temple outside the city, later enlarged and reconstructed.

Finally, the great north Syrian and Anatolian Hadad, who was worshipped with his two children Atargatis and Adonis in the temple of Atargatis, was not essentially different from the other manifestations of the Supreme God; nor was his son, the Mesopotamian Aphlad, the sun god of Anath on the Euphrates, whose temple stood in the south-west corner of the fortifications of Dura.

We have manifestations of the same supreme deity in the other gods of light—the Sun, the Moon, the Morning and Evening Stars—Jahribol, Aglibol, Arsu, Azizu, and other local variations of the same gods. Their identity with the Supreme God was emphasized by the worship at Palmyra and elsewhere of the triad of Bel (or Malakhbel), Aglibol, and Jahribol, sometimes with the addition of other deities, for example, the Arabian Allat.

Some of the manifestations of the Supreme God of Syria and Mesopotamia were represented in cult paintings and basreliefs with one of their functions strongly emphasized. Aphlad, the son of Hadad, protector and genius of the large townlike village of Anath, appears as a military god, dressed in the uniform of a Partho-Hellenistic officer. The group of solar gods worshipped at Palmyra are shown wearing Parthian and Roman military uniforms. Among the most popular deities was the patron of the swift Syrian, Arabian, and Mesopotamian

God Arsu on camel-back

horsemen, mostly archers; also the patron of the famous camel-riders (*dromedarii*), the god protector of the caravans. These gods on horseback and camel-back often appear at Dura, at Palmyra, and elsewhere on stone bas-reliefs and as terra-cotta figurines, and sometimes have quite a Parthian aspect.

The female deities were similarly treated. Here again the *interpretatio graeca* tended to give to the various goddesses of the Durene pantheon one and the same Greek name—that of Artemis: Artemis Nanaia, Artemis Azzanathcona. Was this a local tendency or was it due to the general influence of Asia Minor? At any rate, for the Greek or hellenized Semitic women the counterpart of the Zeus of their fathers, husbands, and sons was the great ubiquitous, international goddess of procreation and fertility, in her various manifestations and with her local names. Artemis Nanaia, Atargatis, and Artemis Azzanathcona all had the same female worshippers at Dura. Three large and beautiful temples were built for this goddess: those dedicated to Artemis Nanaia, to Artemis Azzanathcona, and to Atargatis. A large shrine was built for her as Atargatis in the temple of her husband and brother Adonis. Like the great sky god of the men, the Dea Syria—*interpretatio Romana* of the various aspects of the Great Goddess—did not remain confined to the Syrian lands. The Sol Invictus of Syria and the Dea Syria spread far and wide over almost the whole of the Roman Empire and for a while the Sol Invictus became its supreme god, at least the god of its emperors and of a part of their army.[39]

In the light of these facts the main religion of Dura appears in its monuments as the ancestral, traditional religion of the Near East in its late phase, when the local gods and goddesses still existed, but when, alongside of the gods worshipped locally, there is found a kind of religious κοινή, familiar to all the Semites and to the semitized Greeks and Iranians throughout Babylonia, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Arabia. This κοινή was probably evolved in the Hellenistic epoch and accepted both by the Parthians and the Romans. The greatest creation of this κοινή was solar henotheism, which in this period became more and more accentuated. A counterpart to it was the creation of the dominant figure of the Great Goddess, whose

worship became the religion of women not only in Syria but all over the Roman Empire.

There is nothing surprising in the emergence of this religious κοινή. The Hellenistic and Roman period was a time when new religions were of common occurrence. Some of them were modifications of pre-existing traditional religions, others were new. To the first class belong Hellenistic Judaism, the religion of Sarapis and Isis, that of Astarte and Adonis, and those of Magna Mater, of Mithras, of Jupiter Dolichenus, of Sabazius. It is customary to give them all the rather inadequate name of mystery religions.[40] Others were brand-new religions, religions of conversion, like Christianity and Buddhism, which first started their proselytizing mission in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Each of these religions strove to create for itself its own theology, its own cosmology, its own mythography, i.e. the history of the life of its central figure. A concomitant was the creation of an elaborate iconography and of a peculiar art. The mission of this art was to convey to the worshippers the leading ideas of the new religion and of its mythography. It gradually became stereotyped and traditional. The arts applied to the service of these various religions are very little known, though they deserve close and attentive study. Those which are best known and have been most carefully studied are the art connected with Buddhism in India and early Christian art. Much less attention has been paid to the arts of the so-called mystery religions, not excepting the most richly documented of these, the religion of Mithras.

The excavations of Dura have shown for the first time that the revival of Semitic religions in the Near East, the creation there of a Semitic religious κοινή, the concentration of the religious thought and feeling on one leading god and one leading goddess, found among other modes of expression that of a new religious art. This sprang up in the various parts of the Semitic Near East and soon crystallized into a number of traditional religious compositions and a traditional iconography. I cannot discuss this art in all its manifestations, especially its iconography. The monuments that bear on the iconography are very numerous. They are scattered all over Syria and

Mesopotamia. Many of them have been published and illustrated in periodicals and in certain museum catalogues. But no attempt has ever been made to assemble the whole of the material. There is urgent need of a well-designed catalogue similar in character to Esperandieu's catalogue of the sculptures found in Gaul. In such a catalogue Dura will undoubtedly occupy the place of honour.[41] I may, however, offer some preliminary remarks on certain aspects of this art as manifested at Dura, especially in the painted and carved decoration of the temples. The subject is a difficult one and I do not regard my conclusions as certain. They are mere suggestions. More abundant material, deeper and more careful study, may prove them to be wrong or inadequate.

I have already referred to the large number of sculptures discovered at Dura which once adorned the temples. Not a single cult statue was found intact. But many fragments of such statues, especially heads, were found in some of the temples. It is not impossible that some of the cult statues were acrolythic, i.e. with the head alone carved in stone, the body being made of perishable material—wood or plaster. In addition, we possess a number of cult bas-reliefs, some intact and some fragmentary, reproductions or reductions of cult statues or cult groups.

But the real glory of Dura lies in its religious paintings. In one of the temples—that of the north-west corner of the fortifications, generally called the temple of the Palmyrene gods—the painted decoration was found in substantial fragments still adorning the walls. In almost all the other excavated temples fragments of their decoration, of considerable size, were found, some adhering to the walls, but most of them in the rubbish. This was the case in the temple of Zeus Theos (its wall decoration has been restored in its main outlines by Mr. Brown, from hundreds of pieces either still adhering to the walls or found in the rubbish), in the temple of Aphlad, and in those of Atargatis, of Adonis, and of the Gaddé. We have restored, so far as we could, the wall decorations from the fragments, but much remains to be done.

The mural decoration of the temple of the Palmyrene gods has been detached from the walls and transported partly (the

Conon painting, the single figure of a priest, and the paintings of the south wall of the *pronaos*) to Damascus, partly (the paintings of the north wall of the *pronaos*, including the picture of Terentius the tribune and his sacrifice, and the two mythological scenes) to Yale. The much damaged remains of the main cult painting on the back wall have been left on the spot. It is unfortunate that means and space did not allow either Yale or Damascus to reconstruct in their respective museums the *naos* and *pronaos* of the temple; such a reconstruction would certainly make a profound impression on students of ancient art. Most of the fragments of paintings discovered in other temples of Dura are either exhibited or stored in the Museum of Fine Arts at Yale. Less important fragments are still at Dura.

Restored *in natura* or on paper, the *naoi* and *pronaoi* of most of the temples of Dura, with their walls covered with bright paintings and their niches for cult statues and cult bas-reliefs, look very much like Christian churches—Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic—of any period. Their system of pictorial decoration shows astonishing uniformity, as well as a striking resemblance to that of the Christian churches. In almost all the temples the same scheme was repeated with hardly any variation.

Let me, *exempli causa*, describe the scheme of mural decoration in the best preserved temple of Dura—the temple of the Palmyrene gods (or rather repeat in abbreviated form the masterly description of Cumont).[42] I will begin with the *naos* of this temple. Its back wall, above the little shrine built in the centre of the *naos*, a shrine which probably contained a carved cult image, was occupied by an imposing painting in bright colours. Only fragments of this painting were found still adhering to the wall. Small as they are, the remains of the painting allow of a probable restoration of the whole. It was probably the cult painting of the temple. In the centre stood a colossal figure in Iranian dress. It certainly represented the god worshipped in the temple. A comparison of this figure with the similar figure of Zeus Theos discussed above and the fact that we can see remains of the representation of a horse and perhaps of a wheel support Mr. Brown's suggestion that

in front of the figure of the god was depicted on a reduced scale a chariot drawn by horses. The cult figure is shown standing on a mountain range. The highly stylized mountains are represented in the manner adopted all over the Sumero-Babylonian Orient from the second millennium B.C.: by rows, one above another, of half-ovals with indications of vegetation. Such a stylization of mountains was first used by the Sumerians, and from Sumeria migrated to the north, to the east, and to the west, as far as Phoenicia and the Caucasus in the west and north, and in the east as far as China, where we find it used in the Han period and later. To the left of the central figure are seen remains of two standing armed male figures in Iranian dress. They may be figures of worshippers or of divine acolytes of the god. Similar figures may have been painted to the right of the central figure. I have dealt above with the identity of the god represented in the central figure.

The side walls of the *naos*, of which the south wall only is preserved, were divided into two zones or registers and each of these zones was painted. On the lower zone of this wall was depicted the scene, now well known, of the sacrifice offered to the principal god of the temple by Conon, son of Nicostratos, a member of the Macedonian aristocracy of Dura, and by his family, with the assistance of two priests. The names of Conon and of the members of his family, as well as those of the priests, were painted near their heads. One of the priests, it should be noted, bore a Greek name. One or more similar scenes were painted on the plaster of the upper zone of the wall. Only scanty remains of these paintings survive. It is probable that the north wall (not extant) was decorated in the same manner. Finally, the solitary figure of a priest appears on the front of the pillar of the monumental entrance into the *naos*.

The *pronaos* was painted in a similar manner. The plaster of the south wall was divided into three zones. The lowest was left blank, the two others were covered with paintings. On the lower of these painted zones, when first discovered, were seen several standing male figures engaged in sacrifice. The lower parts of these figures alone are now in existence, the upper part of the plaster coating of the wall having since fallen down.

The names of the persons represented were written below the figures. The two men to the left appear from their names to have been hellenized Semites. The third man, represented with his nephew, was a pure-blooded Macedonian. His name (Apollophanes) and the name of his nephew (Zenodotos) appear in a finely painted inscription below their figures. The inscription says that the portraits were painted by Ilasamsos, a pure Semite. Similar scenes were represented on the upper painted zone. The lower limbs of several standing male figures were still to be seen when the wall was first excavated. It should be noticed that the figures on this upper zone were represented wearing Iranian breeches and shoes (with the exception, perhaps, of the fourth figure from the left). Less distinguishable is the dress of those on the lower zone. They wore, probably, like the men in the Conon painting, a Greco-Syrian dress.

The painted decoration of the north side-wall of the *pronaos* was of a different character. The coat of plaster on the left-hand or western part of this wall was again divided originally into three zones, as is shown by what remains, in a poor state of preservation, of the paintings on it. The narrow lowest zone is occupied by single human figures or groups of figures or by figures of animals, each represented as standing between two columns. I have no doubt that the human figures represent not mortals but gods, *synnaoi theoi* of the principal god of the temple, as it were, while the animals are either sacrificial animals or animals sacred to the gods represented. Similar figures in similar shrines have recently been found at Uruk, in Babylonia. The broader zone above this shows a scene of sacrifice offered to a reclining goddess represented in the right-hand part of the picture. We have no idea who this goddess was, or in what relation she stood to the principal god of the temple. In any case she was apparently a *synnaos thea* of the principal god. The third and uppermost zone may have contained similar paintings or may have been left blank. The paintings described above were found literally covered with a multitude of scratched inscriptions and drawings.

On the right-hand or eastern part of the plaster coating of the same wall was found a well-preserved picture unspoilt by graffiti. The picture fills the whole space of the wall between

the figure of the reclining goddess and the entrance wall of the *pronaos* and between the low dado and the uppermost zone. This uppermost zone was found blank when excavated. The picture, now well known, represents the scene of the sacrifice performed by Terentius the tribune with the assistance of the priest Themes (both identified by painted inscriptions); the sacrifice is being offered on behalf of a group of non-commissioned officers and men to the golden statues of the three Palmyrene military gods and to the statues of two Τύχαι whose names were written near their heads: Τύχη Παλμύρων and Τύχη Δούρας. We now know from the metrical funeral inscription found in the ruins of a private house that Terentius the tribune was in command of the XXth Palmyrene cohort and fell in battle, valiantly fighting. It is evident that the Palmyrene gods and the two Fortunes were not the divinities to whom the temple was dedicated, but, like the other gods represented on this wall, *synnaoi theoi* of the principal god.

The same Palmyrene gods were worshipped in the sanctuary K (see Pl. VI) which opened into the court of the temple. This sanctuary was built later in the history of the temple. It was an oblong room. Leaning against the centre of the back wall stood an *aedicula*, a little shrine with two columns in front of it. It probably contained the cult statue. The surface of the wall above this *aedicula* was covered by a large painted composition. Five Palmyrene gods were shown receiving worship from a number of prominent citizens. The figures of two of the citizens only were extant when the sanctuary was excavated by Cumont. These were Otes the eunuch, who had built the sanctuary (called *exedra*), with his boy-attendant Gorsac, and Jabsymsos, the *buleutes* (of Dura or Palmyra?), with his son. Several other figures of sacrificants were represented on the same wall. A few fragments of their portraits were found in the rubbish. Unfortunately, soon after the discovery such portions of the plaster as still adhered to the wall fell and became a heap of dust.

On the inside surface of the north pillar of the entrance which connected the *naos* and the *pronaos* were painted a group of weapons of a mounted archer and a reclining figure of a river-god (Euphrates?), and on the inside surface of the front wall

of the *pronaos* near the painting of the sacrifice of Terentius there were two representations, one above the other, of a mythological scene.

The decorative scheme of the temple of Zeus was therefore as follows. The cult image of the god occupied the whole of the back wall. The side walls of both the *naos* and the *pronaos* were divided into two or more zones on which were depicted scenes of sacrifice: some of sacrifice offered to the principal god, others of sacrifice to the *synnaoi theoi*. Votive paintings and mythological scenes were not excluded, but played a secondary part.

An important problem arises. Were all the paintings carried out simultaneously and on a definite plan or not? The temple was more than once reconstructed. The careful investigation of Mr. Pearson has proved that, small in its original form, it was twice enlarged. In the first period it possessed a *naos* but no *pronaos*. The *pronaos* was added to the *naos* in the second period. In the third no substantial changes were made in the *naos* and the *pronaos*.

The paintings of the *naos* were contemporary with its construction. The earliest of them was certainly that of the cult figure. It is not dated, but its style and the choice of colours show that it was the work of a painter who was not the painter of the Conon scene. It is obvious that it is earlier than the Conon painting; how much earlier we do not know. Next came the scenes or scene of the upper and lower zones of the *naos*. The scene of Conon's sacrifice is likewise not dated. But it appears probable that the Conon who dedicated this painting flourished about A.D. 61 or a little earlier. His features, as shown in the painting, are not those of an old man.

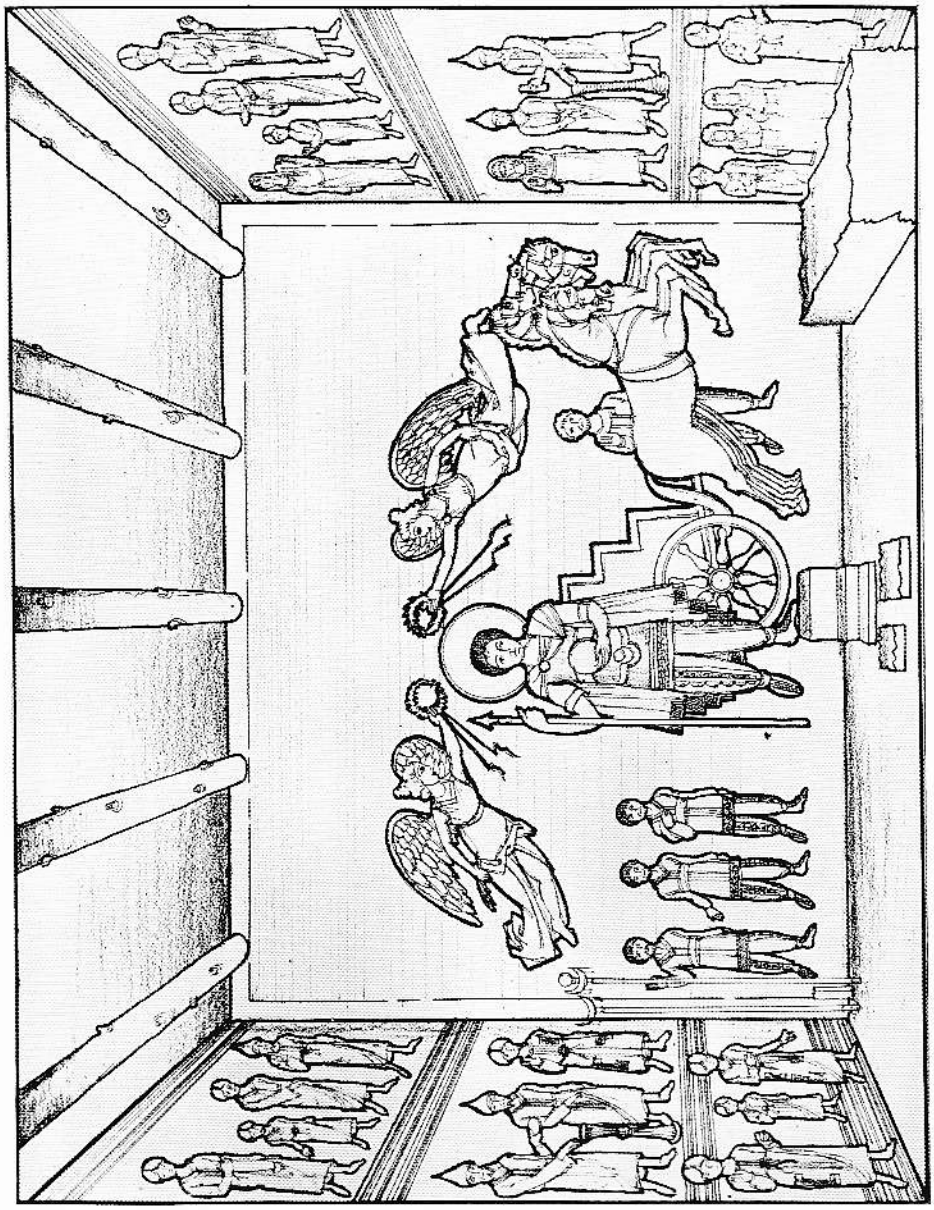
Later, in the second period of the existence of the temple, a *pronaos* was added to the *naos*. Its walls were painted soon after its construction. The painter who executed the paintings of the middle zone of the south wall of the *pronaos* was not the painter of the Conon fresco; his manner is quite different. We know his name; his date is unknown. But it is certain that the *pronaos* was painted later than the *naos*. The style, moreover, suggests a later date. It was yet another painter who carried out the decoration of the north wall of the *pronaos*. Some dated

graffiti on this wall show that the original paintings there were executed some time before A.D. 100, i.e. that they were almost contemporary with or a little later than the Conon painting.

The sacrifice of Terentius is a much later work. It is probable that this picture was painted over the right-hand portion of the original painting on this wall, though it may have been painted on a part of the plaster which had remained blank for many years. Its date is known. Terentius was the commander of the XXth Palmyrene cohort, which came to Dura not before the end of the reign of Septimius Severus. This painting was not disfigured by scratched inscriptions, from which it may be inferred that it was painted shortly before the fall of Dura. It must accordingly be dated in the first half of the third century A.D. The mythological scenes must be of the same or perhaps a still later date.

It is evident therefore that we must assume three main periods in the history of the wall decoration of the temple. In the first period, soon after the construction of the temple, the work of decoration began. The cult scene was painted first. Then several members of the community volunteered to adorn with paintings the side walls of the *naos*. After this had been done and the *pronaos* had been added to the *naos*, others did the same for the *pronaos*. But the whole of the walls were not painted in these two early periods, which probably did not exceed some thirty years—from about A.D. 70 to 100. Many parts of them remained blank, e.g. the lower zone of the south wall of the *pronaos*, the upper zone of the north wall of the same *pronaos*, and perhaps the right-hand part of the same wall.

When after the Roman occupation the temple was reconstructed, two prominent citizens of Dura or Palmyra dedicated a sanctuary in it to the Palmyrene gods (in all probability about the middle of the second century A.D.). And finally, still later, in the third century, Terentius, the commander of the XXth Palmyrene cohort, was allowed to associate with the gods worshipped in the temple his own and his cohort's gods—the triad of Palmyra and the Tychae of Palmyra and Dura. At this time the temple was to a certain extent neglected and some of its paintings were already obliterated and disfigured by graffiti and dipinti.



Painted decoration of the *cella* of the temple of Zeus Theos. (Restoration by F. Brown)

It is striking to see the similarity between the scheme of decoration and the history of the religious paintings of the temple above described and those of the *naos* of the temple of Zeus Theos. The back wall of the *naos* displayed the cult figure of the god standing near his chariot and being crowned by two Victories. I have shown above that this figure must be regarded as derived from Greco-Iranian originals. The Victories, incidentally, are more like Iranian angels than Greek Nikae. The side walls were divided into three zones and their decoration was carried out within a short time by painters supervised by the administration of the temple and paid by the donors, prominent citizens of Dura. The paintings showed portraits of the donors and of their families, who are represented offering sacrifice to the god with or without the assistance of priests. The portraits were identified by painted inscriptions.

Fragments of wall decorations found in other temples of Dura had once formed parts of similar compositions, depicting, that is, the cult figure and worshippers sacrificing to the principal god. It was certainly so in the temple of Adonis and in the earlier temple of the gods protectors of Palmyra and Dura. There were similar compositions probably in the temple of Aphlad, in that of Atargatis, and in the decoration of the south wall of the main gate sanctuary.[43] In the later temple of the Gaddé the walls of the *pronaos* were also adorned with painting. But here the many fragments found suggest rather one or several mythological compositions. I may note in passing that the first fragments of painting found at Dura by Sarre and Herzfeld (now in Berlin)—portrait heads—belonged probably to compositions of the former kind. But since the habit of decorating rooms with figures of gods and men was not confined to temples (we found, for instance, a series of painted heads in one of the baths of Dura), the heads commonly found in various parts of the city may have belonged either to temples or to other buildings, public or private.[44]

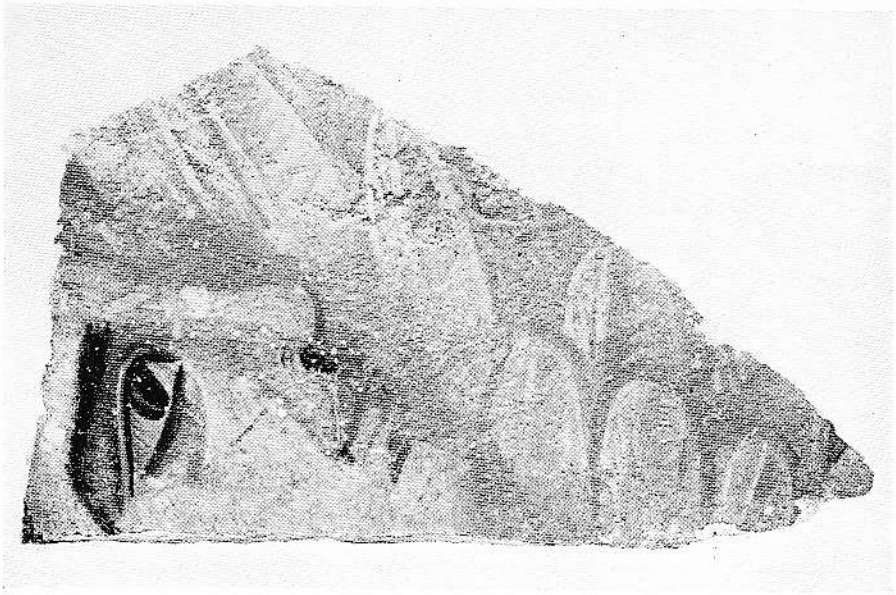
The above evidence shows that there existed at Dura as early as the first century A.D. a traditional manner of decorating temples, a comparatively rigid scheme which was followed in all the temples. Cult figures, scenes of sacrifice, and occasional mythological pictures illustrating some episode in the

story of the god were the constituent parts of this traditional scheme. Some scattered monuments show that in all probability this scheme was not confined to Dura, but was in use in the Hellenistic period throughout Mesopotamia and the regions adjoining it on the east and probably on the west as far as Palmyra.

It is true that no painted decorations of temples have been found in any place other than Dura. But it is interesting to note in the first place the striking similarity between the painted decoration of the Dura temples and the sculptural decoration of the great temple of Palmyra. At Palmyra no traces are left of painted or carved decoration on the walls of the court or of the *naoi*. What we have are fragments of the painted bas-reliefs of the heavy stone beams that supported the roof of the external portico of the temple. The side surfaces of these almost triangular beams, not unlike half-pediments of a Greek temple, presented ideal spaces for decorative bas-reliefs and were extensively used for this purpose. One glance at this carved and painted decoration reveals points of great resemblance to the painted decoration of the temples of Dura.

In the second place, in studying the bas-reliefs of Palmyra we notice that not all the beams were adorned with bas-reliefs. Many, perhaps the majority of them, remained undecorated. Moreover, it is obvious that the decoration of the beams was not planned beforehand. We are unable to recognize any deliberate scheme in the distribution of the bas-reliefs: scenes of sacrifice, an occasional mythological scene, and the reproduction of a cultual scene other than sacrifice, appear on the beams in haphazard sequence. It is therefore almost certain that the decoration of the beams was carried out in the same manner as the painted decoration of the temples of Dura. Single donors had spaces assigned to them by the priests and filled them with such bas-reliefs as they chose. It was done gradually. But the majority of them were carved soon after the construction of the temple, exactly as happened in the temples of Dura.

Thirdly, the composition of the single scenes, especially of the scenes of sacrifice, is almost exactly the same as that found



2. Head of one of the Nikae (temple of Zeus Theos)

1. Head of Baribonnaia (temple of Zeus Theos)

at Dura: figures of the gods and of donors offering them sacrifice. Moreover, the bas-reliefs on the beams resemble pictures rather than sculptures. They are, in fact, reproductions of pictures, and, painted as they were with bright colours, they had the appearance of pictures for the spectator who stood below on the floor of the portico.[45]

Except at Palmyra and Dura, remains of painted or carved decoration of temples are extremely rare. But scenes of sacrifice similar to those of Dura and Palmyra, and contemporary with them, appear on bas-reliefs here and there all over the Near East: e.g. in the region near Palmyra in the west and in Parthian Assur (I draw special attention to the drawings that adorn a large jar found at Assur), on the rocks of eastern Mesopotamia, and finally in the Gandhara region on stupas* of the Kushan period in the east. Note that the Kushans replaced the Parthians in north India and were in close relations with the Parthian kingdom.

Scenes of sacrifice are, of course, common in all countries and at all times. But the fact that scenes of sacrifice of the same style and composition are found at about the same time scattered over large and far distant areas of the Near East, all connected with the Parthian Empire, is highly significant. To my mind it may be interpreted as pointing to the existence at this time of a tradition of religious art diffused over the whole of Parthia and its sphere of influence.[46]

I have mentioned that cult statues and cult bas-reliefs were as popular at Dura as were the painted cult figures.[47] In some temples cult statues existed alongside of the painted cult figures, and this may also be true of cult bas-reliefs. In certain other temples cult statues or cult bas-reliefs may have taken the place of painted cult figures. Cult bas-reliefs were found, for example, in the shrine of Aphlad, in the temple of the Gaddé, in the theatre-like room dedicated to Artemis Azzanathcona, perhaps in the temple of Atargatis. The composition of the cult bas-reliefs does not differ from that of the painted cult figures. Some of the cult bas-reliefs show only the deities that were worshipped. As a rule, however, in the cult bas-reliefs we have a combination of the cult statue and of the scene of

* Artificial tumuli containing relics of Buddha.

sacrifice or worship. The god is represented seated or standing, and near him a priest or a layman offering him a sacrifice. Very often a standing figure is crowning the god or the goddess, or the same function is being performed by one or two genii in the shape of Greek Nikae. On one of the bas-reliefs of the temple of the Gaddé the figure that is crowning the god (Zeus Olympius) is identified by an inscription as the founder of Dura—Seleucus Nicator. This shows that similar figures on other bas-reliefs both at Dura and at Palmyra are not mortals —priests or worshippers—but either gods or divine *genii*, sometimes heroized men.

I may mention in passing that the deeply rooted traditions of Durene religious art influenced even the foreign religions that penetrated into Dura with the Roman garrison. The larger cult bas-relief of the Mithraeum of Dura, for example, was adapted to the Durene tradition: to the group of Mithras killing the bull were added the images of the donor and his family, who are sacrificing in the same manner as the donors in the paintings and the cult bas-reliefs of other temples.[48]

The style of the religious paintings must now be considered. The first question to be answered is this: are we justified in speaking of a style in connexion with the mediocre products of a local provincial art, the work of painters who, though proud of their craft (as is shown by their signatures), were no more than plain artisans? It is true that the painters of Dura were not creative artists. They certainly repeated to the best of their ability traditional motifs. At the same time, they were not mere copyists. Their paintings are too individual and too local to be mere copies of foreign originals.

In their endeavours at artistic achievement they produced paintings peculiar both in composition and style, utterly unlike anything that we are familiar with. Their paintings therefore are not merely mediocre provincial works, they are at the same time reflections of a peculiar art which may have had men of greater ability and talent for its exponents.

It is surprising, almost amazing, to see how at Dura at a certain moment, probably in the late Hellenistic period, the new art suddenly appears completely developed with all its peculiar features, of which I shall speak presently. A striking

example is seen in the Conon paintings (see above, p. 70). This new art replaced and almost entirely eliminated the art that had previously been dominant at Dura. That art was no doubt Greek. It is certain that Greco-Macedonian Europos in its early life adopted Greek, not oriental, art in the construction of its temples and other public buildings, of its houses and markets; just in the same way as its inhabitants made use of imported black and later red varnished pottery, imported Megarian bowls, imported Thasian and Rhodian jars, Greek intaglios and Greek coins. Their early temples had had Greek cult statues and Greek votive *stelae*, and some of the temples may have been adorned with pictures by Greek artists. In the houses Greek furniture, Greek terra-cottas, and small bronzes were to be found. The dress and jewels of the residents were certainly also Greek. The Macedonian settlers were not poor and they certainly did what they could to embellish their temples, their public buildings, and their houses. This was not difficult. The Syrian market in the Hellenistic period was full of products of Greek art and industry, and Greek painters could easily be hired. It is true that we found few objects of Greek workmanship at Dura: a charming marble statuette of Aphrodite with her tortoise, some terra-cottas, some intaglios, some fragments of pottery. But this is due to chance and to the short duration of the Macedonian period in the history of Dura.

These products of Greek art and industry disappeared almost completely in the Parthian period and were replaced by local products, utterly different from and showing very little connexion with Greek art. I cannot deal with this topic at length. But it is interesting to note Greek pottery disappearing from the Durene market in the first century B.C. and being replaced either by common local products or by the fine glazed pottery of Mesopotamian workmanship. This last has been little studied and its origin and evolution are but little known. It is certainly connected—in form and decoration—with the Greek pottery of Hellenistic times, but is utterly different from it both in technique and spirit. Dura has yielded large amounts of this pottery and it is probable that much of it was made in local kilns. Some of the glazed vases, especially those found in the tombs, are dated.

The same mixture of Greek and oriental elements may be noticed in the dress of the richer inhabitants of Dura. The priests in the Conon paintings wear a purely Semitic dress. Conon himself appears in a garb which is partly Greco-Syrian, partly Iranian (the turban), and so do the members of his family, and the same or similar dress is worn by the other donors in the Conon temple.

Still more characteristic of the changed aspect of Durene civilization in the first century A.D. are the jewels worn by the rich ladies of the city. These require special study, but a mere glance at the jewels worn by Bithnanaia and Baribonaia, and at the heavy silver jewels of local make found at Dura, shows how utterly un-Greek they were. On the other hand, they find no exact parallels either in Babylonia or in Syria. Some of the jewels worn by the Bodhisattvas of the Gandhara art of the Kushan period show a certain resemblance. But the Greco-Iranian jewels of the earlier period of the history of north India—those of Taxila of the Sakian and Pahlav period—are different in character and go back to quite different prototypes. It is easy to find parallels for them in south Russia, but not in Mesopotamia and Syria. Thus again Dura and Mesopotamia in general on the one hand, and Palmyra, which presents many similarities with Dura in this respect, on the other, appear to form a region in which a special type of jewellery was developed for the use of its inhabitants, heavy, resplendent in various colours, possessing a peculiar charm, but not primitive and archaic. Look at the ponderous and complicated head-dress of the female members of Durene aristocracy—a combination of repoussé work in gold and silver with a profusion of inset cabochons—a head-dress that was borrowed from Mesopotamia by the late Roman Empire and reappears in some of its typical features in the gorgeous head-dress of the Byzantine period. Look at the heavy square or circular brooches and *fibulae*. Look at the fine massive pectorals and necklaces, with their large medallions inset with cabochons and long silver and gold chains of refined technique. Look at the heavy armlets and anklets. They are all of the same style and show forms some of which may go back to Greek prototypes, but give quite a new version of them.[49]

The same is true of the style of the paintings of Dura. Those painters whom we know, i.e. those who signed their pictures, were not Greeks. They were all Semites. But they lived in a Greek city and in a Hellenistic atmosphere. They worked partly for Greek employers. They certainly were well acquainted with products of Hellenistic art. Some of them may have worked as apprentices of Hellenistic Greco-Syrian painters and sculptors. It is not surprising that their own creations show a far-reaching dependence on the Greco-Syrian art of the late Hellenistic period. There is no need to insist on this point. Every one who is familiar with the late Hellenistic art will see at the first glance the Hellenistic elements in their creations. However, in borrowing from Greek painters some of their technical devices and motifs they utterly modified them.

They gave, for example, sometimes an architectural background to the figures of their compositions. But in doing so they completely changed the character and the meaning of the Greek architectural background. The columns and pillars of the background of the Conon paintings are mere dividing lines, mere ornaments, not organic parts of a building. Their connexion with the figures is in no way natural and convincing.

I may note in this connexion that the Gandhara art shows a general similarity in this respect. I may refer, for example, to the numerous bas-reliefs divided into square pictures, one above another, each in an architectural frame of pillars. The idea is the same as that which underlies the pictures of the temple of the Palmyrene gods. The Gandhara pillars, however, still represent real pillars supporting a real roof, while the pillars and columns of the pictures of the temple of the Palmyrene gods are only shadows of architecture, mere dividing lines.[50]

The same holds good for the drapery. The folds of the dress of such Durene figures as are Greek in origin are schematized, they are linear in their very essence, they show no organic connexion with the body, they have no depth or relief.

The attitudes of many of the Durene figures are certainly inspired by Greek originals and borrowed from Greek art. No such attitudes were depicted by the oriental artists of the pre-Hellenistic period. Note especially the arms and the feet. But

these attitudes again are mere survivals, mere shadows. They do not convey the impression of free movement, they are not connected with the body as a whole, and are not in harmony with its general attitude.

In general the Greek element in the pictorial art of Dura is intrusive. Durene pictorial style in itself is not Greek. Let me point out its dominant features.

The religious paintings of Dura are rigid and ritual in their composition. The figures do not suggest movement, and there is no real cohesion between them, only juxtaposition. All the figures, both bodies and heads, are shown in strict ritual frontality. They are mere outlines, mere 'memory pictures', two-dimensional, linear. They are not, and make no effort to be, plastic. The body is not felt behind the garments in these figures. It was not with the body that the artists of Dura were concerned. Their emphasis lay on the accessories, on the dress, the jewels, the sacrificial implements. In this respect they were strict and accurate. Oriental verismus was their special preoccupation.

The figures of the donors and of the priests of the Durene paintings were intended to be portraits. This is emphasized by inscriptions which sometimes tell us the name of the person represented. And yet they are not portraits, portraits as we understand them, portraits in the Greek and Roman sense. They are not realistic and naturalistic; nor are they illusionistic or impressionistic. They confine themselves to conveying a general idea of an individual, male or female.

Some of them, especially those which appear in painted compositions of the older style, above all in those of the temples of the Palmyrene gods and of Zeus Theos, are fine pictures of men, women, and girls, for example the figures of Conon himself, of the priests, of Bithnanaia in the temple of the Palmyrene gods, and those of some male donors and Baribonaia in the temple of Zeus Theos. The faces are expressive and some of them full of spiritual life. They recall to a certain extent the Fayum portraits and show several Hellenistic traits. And yet we cannot call them portraits.

Still less individualized are the faces of men and women in the paintings of the later period, in those of the temples

1. Heliodorus the *actuarius* (House of the Scribes)

2. Upper part of the figure of a priest (temple of Bel)

of Adonis, of the Gaddé, of Mithras, in that of the sacrifice of Terentius the tribune, and in those of some secular buildings, especially of the Palmyrene house and the house of the Scribes. Look, for instance, at the soldiers in the picture of Terentius. They all show the same face, much like the face of the tribune himself. The finest specimen of a portrait of the later period is the portrait of Heliodorus the *actuarius* in the house of the Scribes. However, even this portrait is without life and individuality, much inferior in this respect to the portraits of the early period and not comparable even distantly to the vigorous portraits of the Fayum or of Pompeii.

There is thus very little life in the figures of the religious compositions found at Dura. What is true of the human beings represented is equally true of the gods. Their figures are differentiated by their dress, their attributes, their sacred animals, but their faces are typical, not individual faces. Some are majestic faces of bearded divinities, sometimes stern, sometimes benevolent; others are faces of youthful deities, aerial and celestial figures. The goddesses are similarly represented. Their faces are not individualized; they are stereotyped.

And yet the figures both of gods and human beings are not entirely devoid of life. This finds its expression in their eyes, large, deep-set, penetrating, eyes that give to the figure an animation almost unknown to Greek statues and paintings. It is a spiritual life, an inward life, a deep religious enthusiasm, sometimes nearing fanaticism. Look at the heads of some of the cult statues or at those of the priests in the Conon pictures. In certain other figures—those of the young deities and their attendants—the faces reflect their aerial, luminous, celestial essence, their close association with heaven, not with earth.

In the larger compositions in which the painters tried to give the impression of a crowd, of a large assemblage of men, their procedure was childish and primitive. They show two or three rows of figures one above the other with no attempt at any kind of perspective. And all these figures are shown in strict frontality.

I may note finally that the figures are represented mostly against a neutral background. If architecture is represented it is highly stylized and conventionalized (e.g. in the scenes of

sacrifice in the temple of the Palmyrene gods), and the same is true of landscape (see the cult image of the same temple).

We meet with the same style in the sculptures, especially in the bas-reliefs. Some of the sculptures, no doubt, were imported. I have mentioned the few Greek sculptures. Many more were probably brought from Palmyra (for example the three bas-reliefs of the temple of the Gaddé), some perhaps from Babylonia. In many sculptures produced at Dura the influence of various foreign schools is strongly felt. The heads of certain cult statues show unmistakable traces of east Anatolian and north Syrian art and may be compared with products of what is known as the late post-Hittite style. They are of great interest to the students of early Byzantine sculpture. Certain others reflect features of Palmyrene art and represent in all probability the great anonymous god, merciful and benevolent, of the Palmyrene pantheon. Some bas-reliefs, for example that of Aphlad, are closely related to the creations of Greco-Iranian art, as we find them on the early coins of the Arsacids and in the sculptures of Nimrud-Dagh in Commagene. Late Babylonian art was not unknown at Dura. Some features in votive bas-reliefs recall the south Arabian sculptures (e.g. the god on camel-back). Finally, in their statues of Roman emperors the sculptors of Dura clumsily imitated Roman work, and certain bas-reliefs (e.g. the *stela* of Azzanathcona) show in a marked degree the influence of Greco-Syrian art.

And yet the general character of the sculptures of Dura is local. The sculptors of Dura strictly followed the same principles that we found prevalent in the work of the painters: presentation of the figure full face, in two dimensions, in outline, effacement of the body, low relief, verismus, primitive grouping, lack of life and movement, spirituality. Most of these traits we already find in the earlier products of Palmyrene art, before their subjection to Hellenic and Roman influence.

Thus the sculptures of Dura confirm the impression that students of art will derive from the study of Durene painting. They are, however, invaluable, since, unlike the paintings in this respect, they can be traced back to their originals. They show that the style of Dura was a composite style in which

characteristic features of various schools and traditions of oriental art met and coalesced.[51]

It is accordingly certain that the artists of Dura of the Parthian and Roman periods were trained in schools that possessed their own traditions, their own well-defined and easily recognizable style. This style is not confined to Dura. We meet it again in the early art of Palmyra, especially in the sculptures of the great temple of Bel. Examples of the same style have occasionally been found in eastern Mesopotamia and in northern Syria. A closer study of the many coarse and clumsy bas-reliefs and statues of Syria, of which no complete collection or careful examination has ever been made, may add to the number of sculptures of the Dura-Palmyra style.

This style as reflected in the religious art of Dura and Palmyra impresses one as being archaic, clumsy, static, naive, and primitive, if compared with the contemporary Greek art of Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor on the one hand, and on the other with the much earlier products of the great oriental arts: Babylonian, Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Hittite and post-Hittite, Phoenician, Median, and Persian. In its clumsiness, primitiveness, and hieratic quality, it stands quite alone in the Near East. It cannot be compared, for example, with the Egyptian art of the same period, so refined, so effeminate, so sensuous, so utterly sophisticated, an art in which archaism is deliberate and has nothing of the hieratic clumsiness of the art of Dura.[52]

The art of Dura, a branch, as it were, of the Near Eastern art of the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods, is difficult to understand and to explain. It was certainly a simplification and a kind of barbarization of a more elaborate and more refined art. The leading features of it are not Greek. It is not, as I have already said, a simplification and barbarization of the Greek art of the Hellenistic period. There are no essentially Greek elements in it. In fact, it is a negation of the leading principles of Greek art, a reaction and probably a conscious, not instinctive, reaction against it. A simplified and barbarized Greek art would have presented a quite different aspect. The Near Eastern artists of the period in question knew the principles, the technique, and the products of Greek art very well. They

borrowed from Greek art some devices and motifs. But as a whole they rejected or utterly modified it. Greek art was not adapted to their main objects, and they had no desire to imitate it.

Thus in all probability the religious art of Dura of the late Hellenistic and early Roman epoch was a return to the principles of oriental art, a return to a simpler, more elementary, and if one likes to apply to it what is to my mind an inadequate term, a more barbaric form of art. Some of the basic principles of this art are common to all oriental arts, e.g. verismus, effacement of the body, primitiveness of grouping, lack of depth and perspective. Certain other principles, however, it does not share with oriental art, e.g. the frontality that never was one of the leading principles of oriental art in general, and was in its very essence not the revival of an archaic manner (profile views are as common in primitive art as are frontal views), but a ritual convention.

If we endeavour, however, to trace back the Mesopotamian style of religious painting and sculpture to one of the styles that prevailed in the East before Alexander's conquest, we are at a loss to find this prototype. Our information no doubt is scanty. We have no paintings or important sculptures of this period, except a few sculptures and gems of the Iranian and Greco-Iranian style. The art of Babylonia, Mesopotamia, and north Syria, so far as this period is concerned, is practically unknown. We are somewhat better informed as regards Phoenician art. But its hellenized products have nothing in common with the products of Mesopotamian art that I have been discussing.

Cumont, when he published the paintings of the temple of the Palmyrene gods, defined their style, tentatively, as Greco-Syrian. We have seen how small is the claim they possess, they and other religious works of Durene art, to be called Hellenistic. The Greek element is present, but it is not dominant or directive.

More prominent are Semitic elements, especially in the ethnographical aspect of the human and divine beings as reproduced by the artists of Dura and Palmyra. Cumont has dealt with them and has shown for example that the dress of the priests

and the sacred utensils in Conon's sacrifice are Semitic in all their details. However, as I have pointed out, the dress of Conon himself and of the ladies of his house, and that of the donors in other religious paintings, is not Semitic. It contains some Iranian accessories combined with what we may call the civil dress of Greeks both in Syria and Mesopotamia. The same remark holds good for the military dress of some of the gods. Aphlad, as represented in the bas-relief found in the *naos* dedicated to him, wears a Hellenistic military dress with some Iranian features, and the triad of Palmyrene military gods as reproduced both at Palmyra and Dura shows a similar combination in the military uniform of the gods—a Roman foundation with some Parthian adjuncts.

Nor is the jewellery, as worn by the Durene ladies and described above, Semitic. I have already pointed out that exact parallels to it are not found either in Babylonia or (except at Palmyra) in Syria and Palestine. The jewellery of Dura and Palmyra is a product *sui generis*, a creation of local artists. It shows certain features common to the jewellery of all the countries that composed the ancient world in late Hellenistic and early Roman times: for instance, the extensive use of precious stones and a predilection for polychromy; but at the same time the forms, the technique, and the combination of stones with silver and gold are original and peculiar, quite different from what we find in this period, for instance, in Egypt and Syria and, on the other hand, in India and the Iranian world. The resemblances to Indian and Iranian work appear to me closer than those to Syrian and Babylonian work. Durene jewellery, therefore, cannot be called Syrian, any more than can Durene dress.

It is style, however, which, when we are studying the art of a given period, most clearly reveals its peculiarities and determines its place both in the history of art and among other contemporary schools. Is the style that we find in the sculpture and painting of Dura and of Palmyra, as described above, Semitic or Syrian in its main features? The question is a difficult one and I cannot satisfactorily answer it in this form. For our knowledge of the contemporary painting and sculpture of the Semitic world in general and of its several

component parts (Syria and Phoenicia in particular) is very inadequate.

Some conclusions may nevertheless be drawn. A comparison, for example, with the beautiful set of mosaics found at Daphne, near Antioch,[53] which partly belongs to the period we are dealing with (the first three centuries after Christ), shows the great difference between these products of Syrian art and the paintings of Dura and Palmyra. The mosaics of Daphne are Hellenistic in their essence, and are closely connected with certain earlier and contemporary works produced at Alexandria. Some oriental features may be detected, but these are negligible in comparison with those derived from Greek art. The Daphne mosaics are a continuation of Greek art in its Syrian development. We may observe some parallels to them in the painted shields found at Dura. But these shields, in my opinion, are imported from elsewhere and are not the work of Durene artists. Like various articles found at Dura forming part of the equipment of soldiers of the garrison, they were in all probability made in the military factories of Syria which were working for the Roman army. They are almost identical with corresponding articles of Roman military equipment which are found in large quantities in all parts of the Roman world: in Germany, on the Danube, in Britain, in Gaul, in Spain, in Africa, in Italy, and even in the Crimea. Their origin, for example that of the champlevé enamel which is typical of them, must be sought in Celtic art and its revival in the times of the early Roman Empire.

I may mention in this connexion that examples of decorative painting have been found in graves at Sidon in Phoenicia and in Palestine. Some of these graves are early Hellenistic, some late Hellenistic, others early Roman. The style of these paintings is Hellenistic and occasionally shows in a marked degree the influence of Hellenistic Egypt.

It is true that neither the Daphne mosaics nor the grave paintings of Phoenicia and Palestine can be classed as religious paintings. We shall, however, see later that at Dura secular painting shows the same leading characteristics as religious painting. We are therefore justified in comparing Syrian, Phoenician, and Palestinian painting of the Hellenistic and

early Roman times with Durene religious painting. They are strikingly different. Religious painting at Dura, as I have said, is essentially oriental and not Hellenistic. Its chief features, as described above, are entirely absent in the creations of the Antiochene painters and mosaicists. It is the product of an evolution quite different from that which is so evident at Antioch. It is not a slightly orientalized Greek painting; it is oriental painting with a slight admixture of Greek elements.

A comparison is more difficult between the religious sculpture of Dura and Palmyra and that of Syria. The excavations at Antioch have so far yielded very few sculptures, particularly sculptures of a religious character. What little has been found there is Greek. The same is true of the sculptures found at Baalbek and in the Phoenician cities. Certain bas-reliefs found in Syria, especially in minor cities and villages, present a different and more oriental aspect, and show some similarities with those found at Palmyra and Dura. But they have never been completely collected and analysed.

Finally, the sculptures from Nimrud Dagh in Commagene, though similar in certain respects to some of the sculptures found at Dura, especially to the cult bas-relief of Aphlad, reflect different connexions. They go back to the Greco-Iranian sculptures of Asia Minor and have very little in common with similar religious sculptures from Syria of about the same and a little later date.

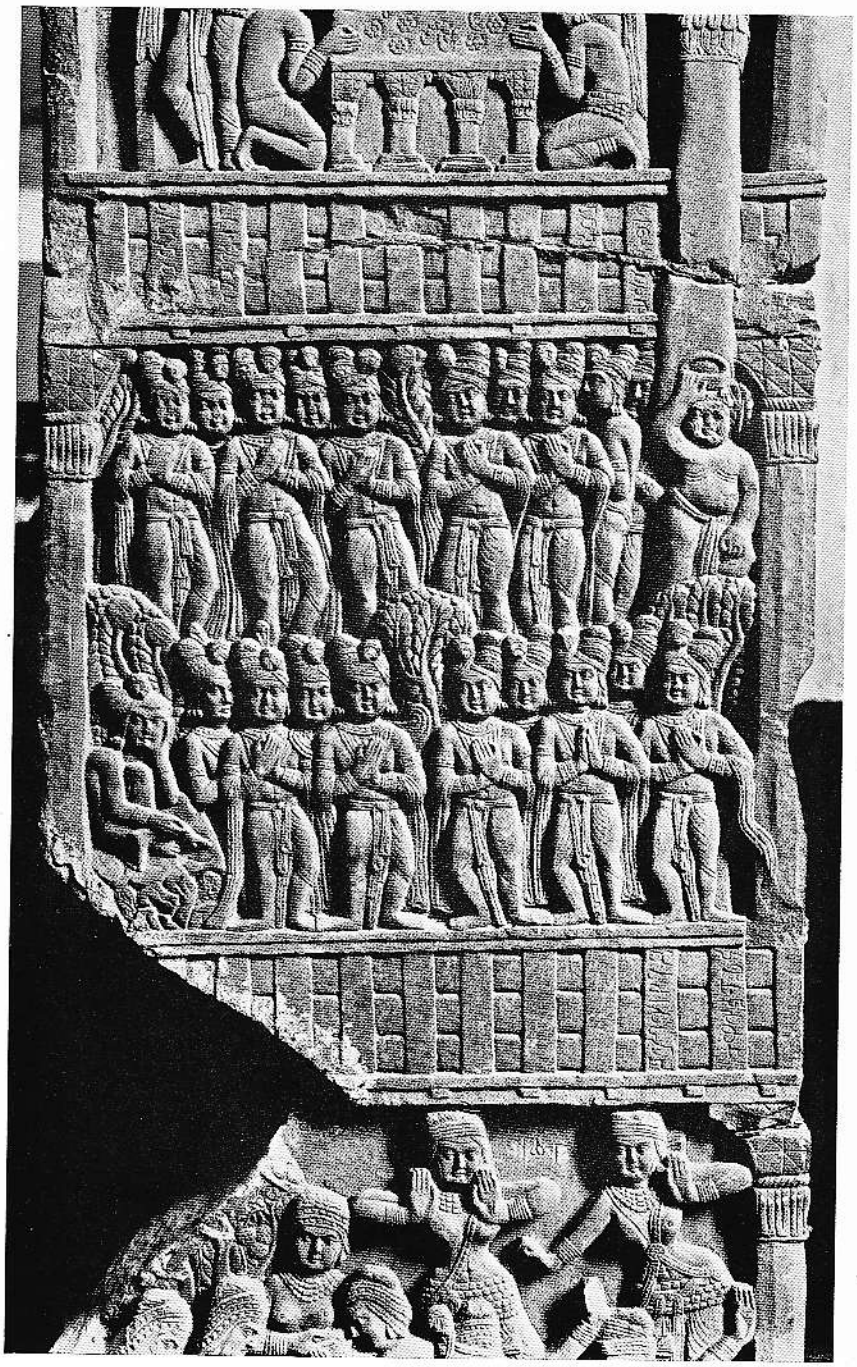
Everything considered, I should prefer to call the art of Dura, not Greco-Syrian or Greco-Semitic, but Mesopotamian, in order to emphasize its striking peculiarities and the main centre of its diffusion. Various influences, as shown in the few lines which I have devoted to the religious sculpture of Dura and Palmyra, were at work in creating this peculiar Durene style: Greek, north Syrian, Iranian, Babylonian. The style of Dura is a kind of synthesis or syncretism of all these elements. We may say that it was a new edition of various branches of late oriental art, not a simplification and barbarization of one of the branches.

Mesopotamian art, as characterized above, was a true expression of the mentality of the time, one of the principal illustrations of a process little known and little studied, yet

of great importance in connexion with the history and civilization of the Near East. I refer to the vigorous revival of the oriental spirit which took place throughout the Hellenistic world in the late Hellenistic and early Roman epoch, as a reaction against the intensive hellenization carried out by the early Seleucids in the East and by the early Ptolemies in Egypt. One aspect of this re-orientalization of the Near East is seen in the character of the art that we are studying.

We have no knowledge of the origin and early evolution of this art. We find it already well developed at Dura and Palmyra in the first century B.C. and the first to the third centuries A.D. It may have originated in Mesopotamia or farther to the east. At Dura its appearance coincides with the Parthian domination. We find traces of it not only at Dura and Palmyra, but also farther east, as far as northern India. We have tentatively given it the name of Mesopotamian art, though we might as well call it the artistic κοινή of the Parthian Empire. 'Parthian art' would be a misleading description, for Iranian elements are secondary in the religious art of Mesopotamia. We know, however, very little of the religion of the common people in the Iranian parts of the Parthian Empire and of the Parthians who lived outside these parts. I have ventured to suggest that this religion, not improbably, was not Mazdaism or Zoroastrianism, but a kind of syncretistic religion nearer to Semitic henotheism than to Mazdaism. If so, the art in the service of this religion may, as I have remarked, be regarded as the religious art of the Parthian Empire in general.

A phase somewhat similar to that seen in the development of art in the Parthian Empire may be noticed in the history of Indian art.[54] In early Hellenistic times Hindu art entered into the service of the reformed Buddhist religion, which became at the time of Asoka the leading religion of India. A vast number of religious buildings—temples, convents, stupas—were built at that time and were richly adorned with ornamental and figural compositions carved in stone. We still possess fragments of these works of early Hindu artists, the earliest being those which adorned the stupas of Bharhut (late second century B.C.) and Sanchi (first century B.C.) and the railing around the sacred tree of Bodh Gaya.



Pillar of Bharhut showing the Enlightenment of Sakyamuni

Now the art which in the earliest of these monuments—the stupa of Bharhut—endeavours on the one hand to depict the story of Gautama Buddha and of his earlier incarnations, and on the other to represent scenes of worship, shows in the treatment of its figural compositions exactly the same characteristics that we find in similar compositions of the religious art of Dura and Palmyra. According to some leading specialists in this field, the early Indian figural art as found in Bharhut shows a highly archaic aspect; it is stiff and ritual. The scenes are 'memory pictures', two-dimensional, linear. They are primitive and rigid. There is no movement, no real life. The body is neglected, the paraphernalia—dress, jewellery, arms and weapons, architectural background—are emphasized and reproduced in minute detail. The composition of the scenes is primitive, there is no cohesion between the individual figures, the grouping of masses is childish. The faces are uniform. No portraits are carved or even attempted. Relief work is lacking in depth; it is not sculptural, but pictorial. Some of these 'archaic' traits still persist in Sanchi with its great and much more advanced artistic achievements and even in the sculptures of the much later stupas of south India—Amaravati and Goli with their animated, passionate, and nervous art, so similar to our own baroque.

The present writer, who does not pretend to be a specialist in the history of Hindu art, may confine himself to noting the above striking coincidences, without attempting to explain them. It is, however, highly interesting to observe that phenomena so similar should have arisen at about the same time in countries far distant from and unconnected with each other, in conditions which seem to have been quite different. In Mesopotamia we certainly meet with a simplification and new stylization of an ancient art which received a notable admixture of some foreign, i.e. Greek elements; in India with the genesis of a new art under the impulse of a new religion, an art which is supposed to have had no precedents in India but certainly in its early stages, at the time of Asoka and later, was strongly influenced by Iranian and Greco-Iranian art. It is even more remarkable that while for example in Greece the early development of figural sculpture in stone shows many

essential features that are quite different from those which appear in dim outline in the evolution of figural art in India, the similarities between the evolution of Indian and Mesopotamian art are so far-reaching. Should we not in explaining, for example, the striking difference between Indian figural and Indian ornamental art, which last appears, fully and beautifully developed, in the earliest monuments of Indian art, ascribe a certain importance not to the ineffectualness of the figural art, but to the persistence in it of certain traditions and conventions which stood in the way of its free development and which even the later brilliant development of plastic arts in India was not able entirely to eliminate? However this may be, it must be reserved for specialists to draw conclusions from these coincidences between the Hindu and Mesopotamian art of the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

Among the relics of the ancient world in general the remains of secular art[55] are far less numerous than those of religious art. And so it is at Dura. We possess very few pictures and hardly any sculptures (except for a few terra-cottas) which we may class as works of secular art. The products of applied arts are of course much more numerous. These merit careful study, so peculiar and interesting are they, especially the jewellery and the toreutics. I have already touched upon the jewellery. The remainder must await the attention of some scholar other than myself. I must confine myself in these lectures to the works of monumental secular art.

As regards monumental painting, we possess two important compositions of a secular character, both of them on the walls of private houses. One shows a battle-scene, the combatants being on one side Roman and on the other Parthian or Sasanian horsemen. The other reproduces a hunting-scene and several banquet-scenes.

In connexion with these we may mention two religious paintings, those on the side walls of the *naos* of the Mithraeum of Dura. They show Mithras as a hunter shooting at some wild animals. The composition and style of these two scenes are exactly like those of similar secular compositions and were certainly derived from them.

Finally, we see reflections of monumental secular pictures in

some of the scratched or painted drawings by amateurs found in large numbers on the walls of private and public buildings. Most of them are rapid sketches of scenes of daily life. They depict various buildings such as the fortifications, the siege and destruction of a city, detached figures of men and women, gladiators, boats large and small, loaded camels passing through the city, and so forth. Some, however, are not drawn from life, but are reflections of monumental art. Such are certain scratchings and drawings of a religious character and those which show hunting-scenes and detached figures of fighting horsemen. In style and composition these last closely resemble monumental paintings of the same type and are without doubt reflections of them.

We may infer from this short inventory that the secular art of Dura treated exactly the same subjects that were traditional in secular oriental art in general: battles, hunting-scenes, banquets. Let me now give a more detailed account and analysis of these secular paintings.

The battle-scene, painted or rather drawn in colours on the wall of the diwan of one of the private houses of Dura, has been described and illustrated by Dr. A. Little and myself in special memoirs. The picture was never finished and was found in a very poor state of preservation. It is a typical product of late Iranian art, very similar to certain rock bas-reliefs of early Sasanian art. A great battle between Romans and Iranian soldiers is represented. At the top of the picture or perhaps in the centre of it we see a group of gods or men on a couch watching the progress of the battle. The left-hand side of the picture is occupied with the representation of a duel between two horsemen, both of them drawn on a larger scale than the other figures. They are probably the king and his royal adversary. To the right are represented single scenes of combat between Roman and Iranian horsemen in rows one above the other. The names of the Iranians are written near their heads (in Pehlevi). The Iranians are always the victors, the Romans the vanquished: the last are represented in a most childish and conventional manner, as falling headlong from their horses mortally wounded.

I will not repeat here what I have said in my memoir above

referred to with regard to the meaning of the scene. I still believe that the scene was painted not by one of the regular inhabitants of Dura but by some one who belonged to the victorious army, that is, by an Iranian artist. The painting is late and cannot belong to the Parthian period in the life of Dura. It was probably executed during the short occupation of Dura by the Sasanian army after the great siege and capture of the city. The painting was therefore a picture drawn from memory of one of the great early battles between the Sasanians and the Romans. It is certainly a product of late Parthian or early Sasanian Iranian art, and clearly illustrates the leading characteristics of monumental Iranian secular art and of Iranian mentality of the late Parthian and early Sasanian times. It is very similar in treatment and composition to some of the rock-carved sculptures of the early Sasanian period.

The pictures in the second house mentioned above are local, not Iranian, and were made for some Palmyrenes resident in Dura. According to an inscription the pictures were painted in the year 194 A.D., by two painters, a Palmyrene and a Jew according to M. Du Mesnil. The interpretation of the pictures is obscure. Along the upper portion of the wall of a reception- or dining-room in a spacious but not palatial house, on a kind of wide frieze, are painted scenes of a banquet in which men and women are taking part, each designated by his or her name. All the names are Palmyrene. Part of the frieze is occupied by a hunting-scene: Bolazeos on his horse (the name of the horse is also recorded) is shooting arrows at a group of onagers. Was the room the banqueting-room of a Palmyrene *thiasos* (religious association) and did the frieze record outstanding incidents in the life of the deceased and heroized founder of the *thiasos*? The figure of a funeral Eros with a lowered torch in his hand, so typical a feature of the sarcophagi and funeral *stelae* of Roman times, which separates the banquet-scenes from the hunting-scene, supports this interpretation. Or should we suppose that the house belonged to Bolazeos and that the paintings represent the funeral banquet held in his memory and his heroized figure, such as we find so often in the painted and carved tombs and on funeral monuments of Asia Minor

Scene of banquet and hunting-scene. Painting in a private house at Dura
(Copy by Van Knox)

and south Russia? The paintings certainly show a pronounced funeral character.

However this may be, the pictures are an interesting product of oriental art. The hunting-scene recalls, or rather is very similar to, certain hunting-scenes on early Sasanian silver dishes. The group of onagers looks as if it were taken from Iranian copies of late Assyrian bas-reliefs. Style and composition in both the hunting- and banquet-scenes are in their chief characteristics exactly those of Durene religious art. The banquet-scenes are stiff and ritual. The figures are shown strictly full face. The heads are intended to be portraits but are exactly like each other. The figures are mere outlines. All the details of dress, furniture, &c., are represented in minute detail. The same characteristics will be found in the hunting-scene. The hunter is represented fronting the spectator as regards his face and the upper part of his body. There is an attempt at showing swift movement. But the figures of the horse and onagers are not really running: the movement is arrested, exactly as we find it in the battle painting and on some Sasanian silver dishes.

I may note in addition that the horses both in the battle-scene and in the hunting-scene under review are represented in the attitude of flying gallop. I have more than once dealt with this motif. In Hellenistic and Roman times the motif was confined exclusively to Iranian art and was one of its distinctive features. From Iran it spread to the east, north, and west: to China and India, and to the region with which I am dealing in these lectures. The picture under review is therefore a true product of Mesopotamian art, with some elements typical of late Iranian art, a secular counterpart to the religious art of Dura previously dealt with.

The hunting- and battle-scenes of the graffiti and dipinti of Dura have exactly the same characteristics. Some of them might easily be regarded as prototypes of Sasanian silver dishes which treated the same subjects. They are not naturalistic or realistic. Their style is highly conventional and traditional. The hunting-scenes always show the hunter, with the exception of his legs, frontwise, while the horse and the animals in flight are seen in profile. The movement is arrested. Running horses and animals are represented in the attitude of flying gallop.

In battle-scenes we observe the same features. Note the minutely detailed rendering of armour and weapons, a striking instance of oriental verismus. The splendid figures of *clibanarii*, *cataphractarii*, and *sagittarii* are unique in their realism and correspond exactly to what we know about them from literary sources.

The interpretation of the figures of armed horsemen as they appear in the graffiti of Dura raises some difficulties. The hunters may have been members of the Durene aristocracy who had adopted the Iranian dress and the Iranian mode of hunting. But who are the *clibanarii*, *cataphractarii*, and *sagittarii*? They may be horsemen of the Palmyrene gendarmerie or of the XXth Palmyrene cohort. As regards the last, however, its infantry, as represented in the picture of the sacrifice of their commander Terentius, are wearing Roman, not Parthian or oriental, uniform, and have their hair dressed in Roman fashion. Was the equipment of the horsemen different? Were they armed and dressed in the Parthian fashion? Did they dress their hair exactly like the Parthians? Were there among them *clibanarii* who as regards their arms, defensive and offensive, exactly resembled the Parthian and Sasanian *clibanarii*? There were detachments of *clibanarii* in the late Roman imperial army. Did such formations already exist in the third century A.D.? Or are we to think that the sketches of Iranian horsemen were drawn from recollections of the dreaded enemies of Rome and Roman Dura? That these had struck the imagination of the inhabitants of Dura, who drew them as they had seen them, in pictures and in life, galloping in the desert? Note that very few figures of Roman horse- or foot-soldiers have been found among the drawings scratched on the walls of Dura. Was it because they were so common that they did not strike the imagination of the Durene amateur draughtsman? It is impossible to say.

The motifs of the secular art of Dura penetrated into its religious art. I may remind the reader in this connexion of the pictures on the side walls of the *naos* of the Mithraeum of Dura. Mithras is twice represented as an Iranian or Irano-Palmyrene mounted archer shooting arrows at wild animals flying before him in a thick wood.

1. Mithras on horseback. Painting in the Mithraeum of Dura

2. Cult bas-relief in the Mithraeum of Dura. Mithras slaying the bull, and the dedicants

I may add that the figures of the two prophets of Mithraism —probably Zoroaster and Osthanes—painted on the jambs of the arch of the same *naos* in the Mithraeum give the impression of being likewise a product of Durene art under strong Iranian influences. They are of great interest, for they may be regarded as prototypes of the figures of the Magi in Christian art.

FIG. 10. Figure of one of the two prophets painted on the jamb of the arch of the *naos* in the Mithraeum

To sum up. The secular art of Dura, oriental in its essence, and devoid of Greek elements, is in its style and leading features exactly like the religious art of Dura. But whereas the religious art of Mesopotamia or of the Parthian Empire had hardly any influence on the later development of Iranian art, the secular art of this region found its continuation in the later Sasanian art both as regards style and principal motifs. The explanation may be that this secular art was not only the art of the masses of the population of the Parthian Empire, but also the art of the Parthian dynasty, the imperial art, as it were, and was naturally taken over by the Sasanian dynasty that succeeded the Arsacids.

This remark does not solve, however, the problem of the origin of the Parthian and Sasanian secular art. Some of its motifs may be found in the few extant works of the secular Achaemenid art. But its style is quite different. It cannot be compared with the highly refined style of that majestic art, and it is not a simplification of it.

The Achaemenid art, however, had had its continuation in the Greco-Persian art of the period both before and after Alexander. We find this art first and foremost in Asia Minor, then in south Russia, and later, after Alexander, in Bactria. The favourite subjects treated by the secular branch of this art are those continually found in oriental secular art in general: hunting- and battle-scenes and banquets. The treatment of these subjects in the Greco-Persian art is of course much freer, much more elegant, much more dynamic, than that of the same subjects found at Dura. Nevertheless, in many respects the Greco-Persian art is the precursor of the Durene secular art, just as it is the precursor of the later art of the Bosporan kingdom and of the city of Panticapaeum. We may note that the monuments of this last art are contemporaneous with those of the Durene secular art. Such standard features of the Greco-Iranian art as the horse in flying gallop, the stiff banquet-scenes, the special manner of treating hunting- and battle-scenes, are found both at Panticapaeum and at Dura in the first centuries after Christ. Note that the flying gallop was a motif used exclusively by Iranian artists and is never met with at the time in question in other parts of the civilized world.

The above considerations justify the hypothesis that the secular art of Dura was a simplification, a standardization, and a barbarization of the Greco-Iranian secular art. This last apparently was taken over by Bactrian and Parthian artists and was treated by them in the ancient way and style. No monuments which represent this art in Bactria have survived. We may have reflections of this Bactrian art in some products of early Hindu art and in the few remains of the later Sakian art, such as certain silver drinking-cups which I have discussed in a special memoir. In Parthia we may regard as true illustrations of this art the badly preserved Gotarzes bas-reliefs and perhaps some paintings from Kuh-i-Kwadja found many years ago by E. Herzfeld and recently discussed by him, but never published. It is probable that the Mesopotamian artists inherited this art from their Bactrian and Parthian predecessors and subjected it to the simplification that characterized their religious art. For example, they introduced into it frontal

presentation, eliminated real movement and replaced it by arrested movement, exaggerated its linear and two-dimensional aspects. How far they found this simplification already existing in their models, in the artistic products of the Parthian kingdom, we are unable to say. Naïve, primitive, and conventional as the works of the Durene artists are, they have an important bearing on the history of art. The great Parthian art is lost to us. The paintings of Dura are almost the only monuments that help us to trace the history of Iranian secular art from the Greco-Persian period down to the beautiful creations of Sasanian art.

Dura perished soon after A.D. 256, while Palmyra survived for a few more decades. After Dura and Palmyra we have no monuments of the art and style to which we have tentatively given the name of Mesopotamian. But this is an accident. Both the religious and the secular art of Dura and Palmyra survived the two cities. It has had a long existence. We may trace the influence of the religious art of Dura in many compositions of the late Imperial and early Byzantine religious art. On the other hand, the secular art had a brilliant revival in the Sasanian art, which in turn had so strong an influence on later developments both in the Near and Far East and in the West.

IV

THE SYNAGOGUE AND THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

It is a well-known fact that Babylonia was in the late Assyrian, Persian, and Hellenistic periods an important centre of Judaism, almost as important as Palestine and more important than Egypt. It remained so in the Parthian period, in the tolerant and liberal atmosphere of the religious policy of the Arsacids. From Babylonia Judaism spread far and wide up the Euphrates and the Tigris. The rule of the Ptolemies in Palestine gave the Jews an excellent opportunity of settling in the other Syrian dominions of that dynasty. And finally, Titus's conquest of Palestine and the renewal there by the Roman emperors of the second century A.D. of the policy of Epiphanes, *mutatis mutandis*, contributed a good deal to making the Jewish settlements in Syria and Mesopotamia ever stronger and more numerous. It was probably at this time that the Jewish colony in Palmyra became an important factor in the life of that city. We know the part played by the Jews at Palmyra in the days of the great queen Zenobia. Judaism in the Hellenistic and early Roman period had shown a strong tendency to become a proselytizing religion. We know likewise how rapidly Christianity, the new and essentially proselytizing religion, progressed among the populations of Syria and Mesopotamia and how strong was its appeal to them. There is no need to remind the reader of Edessa and Abgarus, of Adiabene, &c. Christian communities had ceased to be a novelty in the life of the cities of Mesopotamia in the late Parthian and Roman times.

And yet it was many years before any relic of Judaism and Christianity was unearthed at Dura. Some of us, basing a conclusion on this negative evidence, tried to find an explanation for it. But the progress of excavation showed how misleading arguments *ex silentio* can be.

In 1931–2 we found under the sloping embankment of the desert wall to the south of the main gate a private house, part of it in excellent preservation, which had been built in the early third century and was transformed very soon, probably about