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Preliminary Report on the 2018 Field Season of the American Excavations at Morgantina: Contrada Agnese Project (CAP)

Christy Schirmer

D. Alex Walthall

Andrew Tharler

Elizabeth Wueste

Benjamin Crowther

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

Christy Schirmer, D. Alex Walthall, Andrew Tharler, Elizabeth Wueste, Benjamin Crowther, Randall Souza, Jared Benton, and Jane Millar

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Christy Schirmer – D. Alex Walthall – Andrew Tharler – Elizabeth Wueste – Benjamin Crowther – Randall Souza – Jared Benton – Jane Millar

In its sixth season, the American Excavations at Morgantina: Contrada Agnese Project (CAP) continued archaeological investigations inside the House of the Two Mills, a modestly-appointed house of Hellenistic date located near the western edge of the ancient city of Morgantina. This report gives a phase-by-phase summary of the significant discoveries from the 2018 excavation season, highlighting the architectural development of the building as well as evidence for the various activities that took place there over the course of its occupation.

Introduction

The sixth season of the American Excavations at Morgantina: Contrada Agnese Project (CAP) took place between 25 June and 27 July 2018¹. Since 2014, the focus of the CAP excavations has been the House of the

¹ Our work was carried out under the auspices of the American Excavations at Morgantina (AEM) and in cooperation with authorities from the Soprintendenza per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali and Parco Archeologico Regionale di Morgantina. We would like to thank Prof. Malcolm Bell III and Prof. Carla Antonaccio, Directors of the American Excavations at Morgantina, for their permission and constant encouragement as we pursue this project. Our thanks also go to Dott. Rosario Patanè, Arch. Giovanna Susan, and Arch. Concetto Greco of the Soprintendenza per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali and Parco Archeologico Regionale di Morgantina for their assistance and support. We are extremely grateful to the Comune and residents of Aidone for their generosity and hospitality. Our work was made possible by generous financial support from the Department of Art & Archaeology at Princeton University, the Archaeological Institute of America, and the Loeb Classical Library Foundation, as well as from private donors. It goes without saying that this work would not be possible without the many volunteers who gave their time, energy, and goodwill to the project; our thanks go to Charles Bell (UVA), Paolo Coniglione (Università di Pisa), Braden Cordivari (UPenn), Laura Corless (Penguin Books), Susan Crane (UT Austin), Kevin Ennis (Stanford), Alexandra Noël Grisanti (Amherst), Elizabeth Heintges (Columbia), Luke Hewitt (UBC), Hannah Hoover (UMichigan), Madeline Jones (ODU), Charlotte McMeekin (Princeton), Steven Mooney (Queen's University), Alex Moskowitz (UMichigan), William Pedrick (UVA), Max Peers (Brown University), Henry Rincavage (Cardiff University), Thomas Rover (UT Austin), Andrea Samz-Pustol (Bryn Mawr), Catherine Schenck (UMichigan), Joacim Seger (Uppsala University), Matt Sibley (University of Sydney), Emily Stegner (Kenyon), Phoebe Thompson (Pomona), Jennifer Townzen (UT Austin), Beth Wang (Princeton), Tara Wells (Oberlin), Martha Wendell (Cincinnati), Elliot Wilson (Princeton), George Zaras (Hogan Lovells).

Alex Walthall is the project's director; Jared Benton and Randall Souza served as field directors. Trench supervisors for the 2018 season were Christy Schirmer in Trench 52, Andrew Tharler in Trench 53, and Elizabeth Wueste in Trench 54. Jane Millar supervised the excavations in the agora. Ben Crowther supervised the architectural survey of the House of the Two Mills. Anne Truetzel directed the project's museum teams with Mali Skotheim serving as Supervisor of the Finds Team and Nicole Berlin as Assistant Supervisor. James Huemoeller directed the project's architectural documentation. Leigh Anne Lieberman directed database operations. Ben Gorham served as Supervisor of the Geospatial Team and was responsible for producing the orthorectified aerial photographs used in this report. We were joined in 2018 by Prof. Sheryl Luzzadder-Beach (UT Austin), Prof. Tim Beach (UT Austin), Leila Donn (UT Austin), and Prof. Jonathan Flood (Frostburg State), who carried out a series of investigations related to the hydrogeologic setting of Morgantina and the surrounding region. Prof.ssa Anna Maria Mercuri and Dott.ssa Paola Torri of the Laboratorio di Palinologia e Paleobotanica at the Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia, also joined us for several days in order to collect palynological samples from the deep trench in the agora. The results of these scientific investigations will be shared in a subsequent publication. Last but not least, we wish to thank Dr. Hal Sharp, Dott.ssa Teresa Arena, Dott.ssa Cristina Restivo, and

Two Mills, occupying Lot 1 of insula W13/14S. Formerly known as the Southeast Building, the building received its current moniker following the discovery of parts belonging to two rotary millstones inside the house during the 2017 season.

Work continued in and around the building in 2018, as we sought to resolve outstanding questions about the house's earliest phases of construction and occupation. Major discoveries in 2018 included the identification of Room 1, located at the northwest corner of the building, as a small shop that opened onto *Plateia B*. Additionally, the discovery of two hydraulic features (a settling basin and a possible cistern) sheds light on the efforts taken by the household to collect and manage water resources.

This account of the 2018 excavation follows the same system of room numbers and wall designations used in the report of the 2017 season (fig. 1). To aid in understanding the multiple occupation phases, we continue to include our internal seven-digit designations for stratigraphic units corresponding to floors².

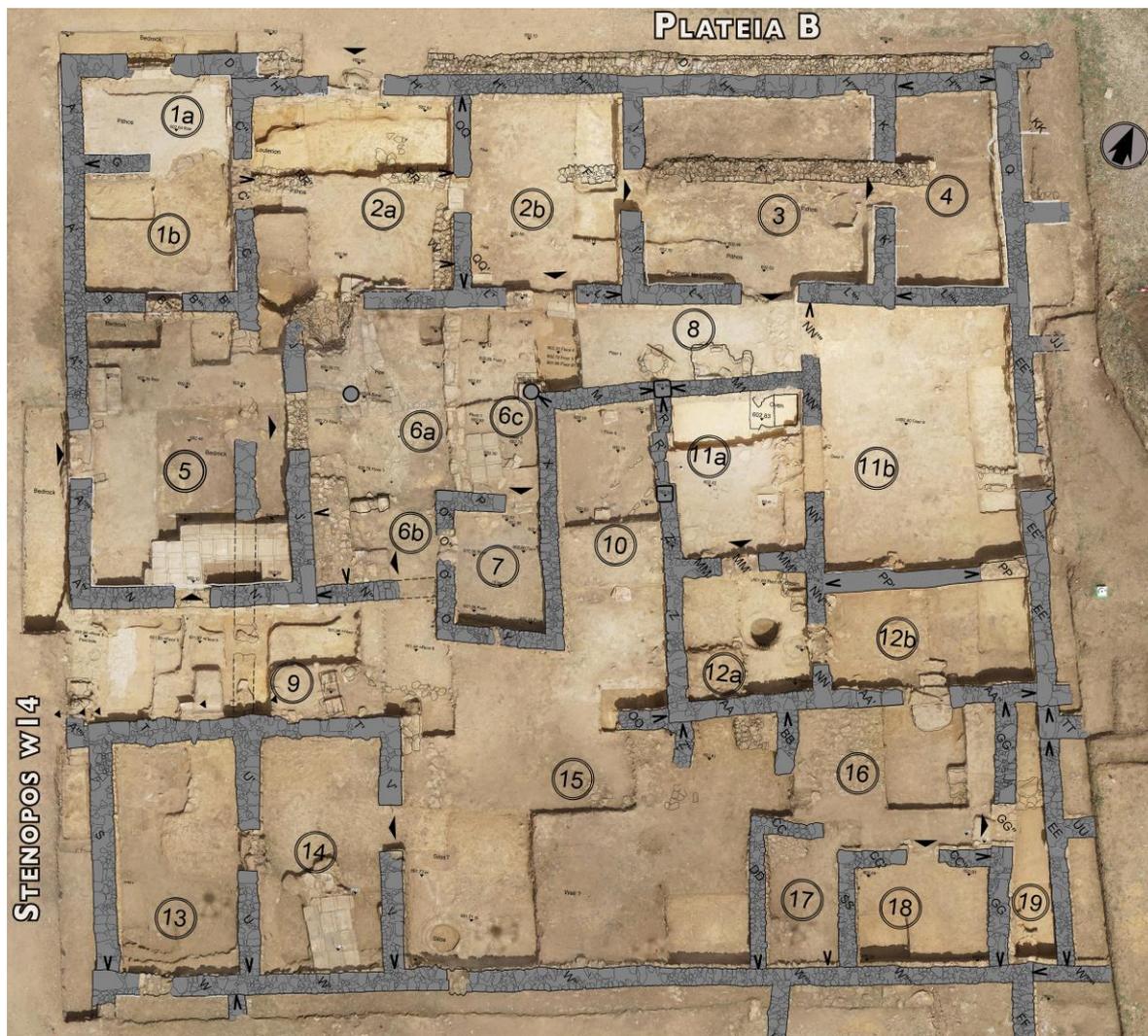


Fig. 1. Orthorectified aerial photo of the House of the Two Mills, with overlaid state plan, indicating room numbers and wall names. Drawing by G. Filantropi. Orthorectified photo by R. Gorham.

Dott. Mattia Mapelli for their assistance with the excavation of the settling basin in Room 15, which due to its late discovery required excavation in the postseason.

² Stratigraphic units from each trench are designated by seven-digit identification numbers following the convention used in previous reports: site area number for the Contrada Agnese (6), trench number (e.g. 053), stratigraphic unit ID number (e.g. 001).

Summary of Previous Work and 2018 Objectives

The full extent of the property was exposed over the course of the four previous seasons (2014-2017), which allowed us to identify several distinct construction phases. Major construction on the lot began around the second quarter of the 3rd century BCE. From its earliest construction, the plan included suites of rooms along the northern, eastern, and western sides, with a large courtyard occupying the center and southern portions of the building. Regular occupation and activity severely diminished around the time of the Roman assault on the city in 211 BCE and appear to have essentially ceased by ca. 190 BCE³. The building's layout and strata, as well as the organic material and artifacts recovered, accords with other domestic structures at Morgantina. The artifacts of daily life representing consumption, craft production, trade, and storage support its identification as a house.

In 2018, our investigations extended over three broad areas of the building. These were selected with the aim of answering persistent questions about the stratigraphy, phasing, and architectural relationships between the rooms. Because the building's architectural footprint was already exposed at the start of the 2018 season and since most rooms had undergone some excavation in previous seasons, our work this season generally took the form of smaller, targeted *saggi* rather than large, open area trenches as in years past (fig. 2).

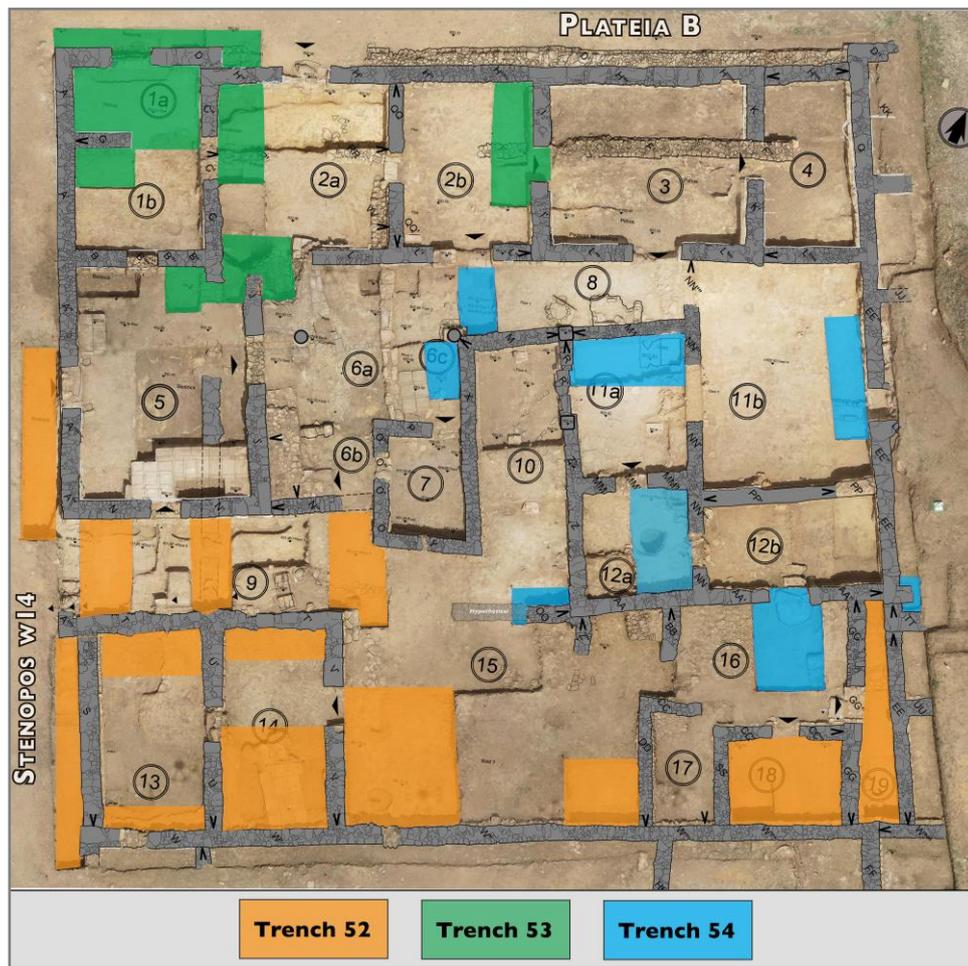


Fig. 2. Figure 1 modified to show locations of the 2018 trenches.

³ For discussion of the archaeological evidence related to the Roman siege of the city during the Second Punic War, see BUTTREY 1965, 1979; BELL 2000; STONE's comments on the ceramic deposits in *MS VI*; TRÜMPER 2019; WALTHALL and TRUETZEL 2020. For the evidence from the house itself, see SOUZA *et al.* 2019: 2; THARLER *et al.* 2020: 3.

- Trench 52 comprised work in portions of *Stenopos* 14W, Rooms 9 and 15 in the center of the building, Rooms 13 and 14 in the southwest, and Rooms 17, 18, and 19 in the south-eastern corner of the building. The goal was to confirm when the western boundary wall (Wall A) of the building came into existence and to solidify our understanding of the phasing for Rooms 9 and 15 (tentatively identified as a corridor and courtyard, respectively). The investigations in the southeast corner were aimed at clarifying the construction sequence of party walls shared by the house and the buildings on the neighboring lots.
- Trench 53 targeted the northernmost rooms of the building, with boundaries drawn widely to encompass Rooms 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, and parts of *Plateia* B. The main objective of the trench was to investigate Room 1, which had remained largely unexcavated to this point. Additionally, we sought to clarify the dating and sequence of the walls in Rooms 2a and 2b. A large rubble-filled pit, located at the intersection of Rooms 1b, 2a, 6a, and 5, had been partially excavated in previous seasons and was further explored this year. In Room 1b, which had been substantially disturbed and contaminated by looting events in 2014 and 2015, the goal was to salvage some sense of the phasing by excavating a small *saggio* in an undisturbed corner of the room.
- Trench 54 concentrated on the eastern part of the building, including Rooms 6c, 8, 11a, 11b, 12a, and 16. In Room 11b, our aim was to expose the standing architecture of Wall EE in order to clarify the house's relationship with the unexcavated property to the east. In Room 11a, the goal was to complete the excavation of the floor sequence and to examine a small masonry oven that was first uncovered at the end of the 2015 season and only partially excavated in intervening years. A well or rock-cut cistern discovered in the center of Room 12a early in the season was also partially excavated, although resources did not permit completing the work this year. Finally, probes made in the area of Rooms 6c, 7, and 8 revealed the stratigraphic sequence of successive floors and fills connected with the construction of these small rooms in the center of the building.

The 2018 excavations reached contexts associated with the initial phases of occupation and construction on the lot, adding to our understanding of the early activity in the House of the Two Mills. In addition to excavations in and around the house, we also completed an in-depth survey of the building's walls, which involved identifying discrete construction units and elucidating their relative sequence independent of the phasing schema derived from our stratigraphic excavations. This work employed a methodology based primarily on the architectural survey methods of the Pompeii Quadriporticus Project (PQP) and Pompeii Archaeological Research Project: Porta Stabia (PARP:PS)⁴. This method begins by isolating the wall faces, two-dimensional flat surfaces of a wall, which make up the total surface of the exposed architecture. Members of the survey team documented and analyzed these wall faces in detail to determine different construction events based on the relationship between individual faces (bonding, abutting, overlying, etc.). The wall survey conducted in 2018 distinguished construction phases for the building that can be compared to the phasing suggested by excavation alone. The results of this survey will ultimately be incorporated into the final publication of the House of the Two Mills, which will devote greater attention to the building's architectural chronology.

Finally, circumstances brought us back to the area of Morgantina's agora, where we had excavated a deep trench in 2013 (Trench I.150)⁵. During the 2018 season, we re-exposed our 2013 trench and continued the excavation from its deepest level at 3.17m below the modern surface down to a point roughly 4.30m below the surface where bedrock layers were reached. This work was carried out as part of a new scientific collaboration between the University of Texas at Austin and the Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia, which conducted a series of scientific investigations designed to elucidate factors related to ancient climate and anthropogenic impacts on the landscape. A brief summary of this work is provided at the end of this report.

⁴ See ELLIS *et al.* 2008; POEHLER and ELLIS 2011.

⁵ See WALTHALL *et al.* 2014: 2-9.

PHASE	DATES (BCE)	DEFINING ACTIVITIES	DIAGNOSTIC FINDS
①	ca. 260–250	Initial construction of major walls and architectural features.	- AE Coin, Syracuse (Hieron II); ca. 276–269 BCE; ref. <i>MS II</i> , no. 324. Head of Persephone / Butting bull. 1. Inv. 18-451. Stenopos W14; construction of Wall A 2. Inv. 16-689. Room 2a. - AE Coin, Punic (West Sicily); ca. 310–270 BCE; ref. <i>MS II</i> , no. 436a. Head of Persephone l. / Rev. Horse standing r. before palm. 1. Inv. 18-13. Room 11b. - Black-gloss outturned rim plate. First half of 3rd BCE. Ref. <i>MS VI</i> , 85–86, nos. 9–10; Walthall et al. (2018: 3). 1. P16-10. Room 3.
②a	ca. 250–240	Major modifications of building footprint and architectural features.	- AE Coin, Syracuse (Hieron II). Ca. 269–240 BCE; ref. <i>MS II</i> , no. 367. Head of Poseidon / Trident; IEP-QNOΣ. Large-flan series. 1. Inv. 16-376. Room 5. 2. Inv. 16-728. Room 5. - AE Coin, Neapolis. Ca. 275–250 BCE; ref. <i>MS II</i> , no. 14d; <i>HN Italy</i> , no. 589. Head of Apollo l. / Man-headed bull r.; above, Nike; below, ΙΣ. 1. Inv. 15-373. Room 3.
②b	ca. 240–230	Major modifications of building footprint and architectural features.	- AE Coin, Syracuse (Hieron II); ca. 240–215 BCE; ref. <i>MS II</i> , no. 368. Head of Poseidon / Trident; IEPQ-NOΣ. Small-flan series. 1. Inv. 17-22. Room 6c.
③	ca. 230–208	Occupation with major modifications of existing spaces.	- AE Coin, Syracuse (Hieron II); ca. 240–215 BCE; ref. <i>MS II</i> , no. 368. Head of Poseidon / Trident; IEPQ-NOΣ. Small-flan series. 1. Inv. 16-668. Room 2a. 2. Inv. 18-169. Room 2b.
④	ca. 208–200	Abandonment and spoliation of house, terminating with collapse of the roof.	- AE Coin, Sicily (Roman Mint; Katane?); ca. 211–208 BCE; ref. <i>RRC</i> 69/6. Head of Mercury r. / Prow r.; above, grain ear; at right, KA. 1. Inv. 18-171. Room 1a. 2. Inv. 18-235. Room 1a. 3. Inv. 18-423. Room 1a. 4. Inv. 17-728. Room 11b. 5. Inv. 17-730. Room 11b. 6. Inv. 17-733. Room 11b. - BI Coin, Carthage. ca. 210–205 BCE; ref. <i>SNG Cop</i> , no. 190 (var.). Wreathed head of Tanit l. / Rev. Horse standing r.; palm tree behind. 1. Inv. 18-298. Room 12a.
⑤	ca. 200–100	Post-abandonment. Sporadic occupation of Contrada Agnese.	

Fig. 3. Provisional phasing arrangement for the House of the Two Mills.

Chronological overview

The 2018 excavations further strengthened and refined the chronological sequence of phases proposed in our reports from previous seasons (fig. 3)⁶. As we have done in our previous reports, we offer here a phase-by-phase summary of the most significant discoveries from the 2018 season⁷.

⁶ Most recently, see THARLER *et al.* 2020.

⁷ The phasing table shown here offers a provisional chronology for the phases of the building, alongside a sampling of the diagnostic material used in determining the dates assigned to each phase. We note that the date ranges given for each phase take into account both diagnostic finds found in associated contexts and the relative sequence of stratigraphic units; they are, however, preliminary and thus subject to further refinement and correction; for further discussion, see SOUZA *et al.* 2019: 4.

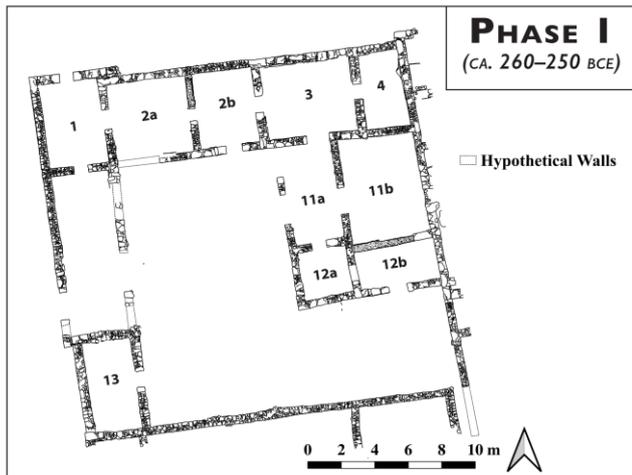


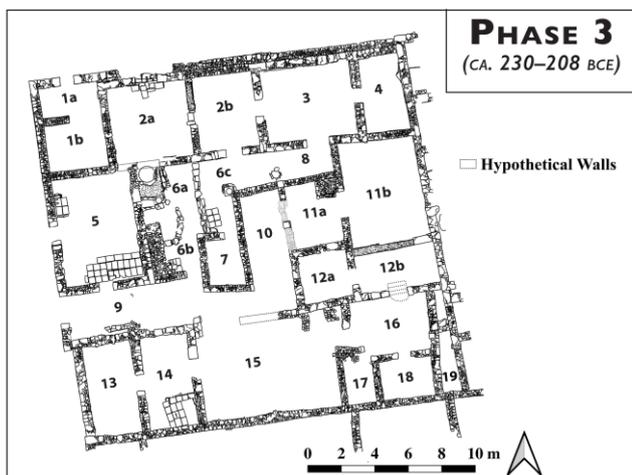
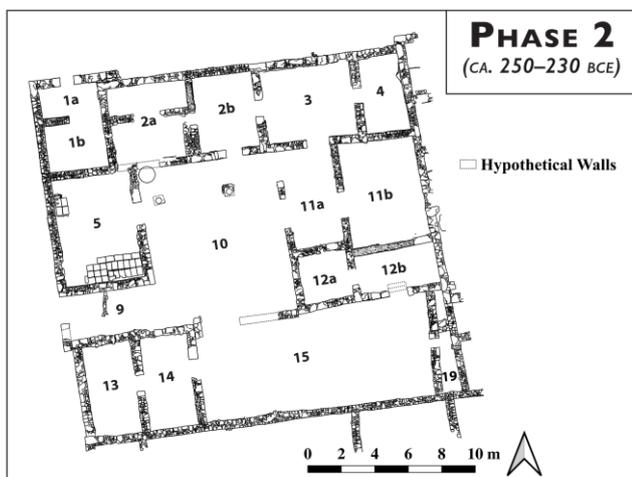
Fig. 4. State plans showing construction phases (1-3) in the House of the Two Mills. Drawing by G. Filantropi & J. Benton.

Phase 1: Initial Construction (ca. 260-250 BCE)

Phase 1 represents the earliest construction activity in the House of the Two Mills, during which time the lot at the northwest corner of Insula W13/14S (Lot 1) was filled in with rooms arranged around three sides of a large courtyard (fig. 4). Previous seasons allowed us to determine that the house’s footprint spanned the entire lot since the building’s inception, extending from *Stenopos* W14 at the west to an unexcavated property at the east (Lot 2); the building was bounded by *Plateia* B to the north and by an unexcavated property (Lot 3) to the south. Most evidence for this earliest period of activity takes the form of standing architectural remains. We also discovered several hydraulic installations during the 2018 season (discussed below) that point to efforts on the part of the occupants to supply the house with water from its earliest occupation.

The rooms along the north side of the building (Rooms 1, 2a, 2b, 3, and 4) were laid out during this initial phase of construction, which can be dated to approximately 260-250 BCE on the basis of ceramic material found in the fill of construction trenches⁸. In 2018, at the northwest corner of the building, we finally carried out a complete excavation of Room 1⁹. Little was known of this space aside from the fact that its northern wall (Wall D) jugged out into the *plateia* slightly farther than that of the other rooms along the north side of the building. We confirmed that Wall D was founded directly on the underlying bedrock, as was the building’s western lot wall (Wall A).

The earliest surface associated with Room 1 was a crushed yellow bedrock aggregate (6053051), a composite material that was used for surfaces throughout the building in every phase. This floor was best-preserved in the southern half of the room. The diagnostic material recovered from the fill below the floor—including several bronze coins and part of a deep hemispherical cup with molded feet in the form of theatrical masks (fig. 5, A–B)—fits the proposed mid-



⁸ For one illustrated example, see WALTHALL *et al.* 2018: 3-4.

⁹ The southeast portion of the room had been damaged by clandestine looting in 2014, prompting us to step away from its excavation until we had come to a better understanding of the building and its chronology; see WALTHALL *et al.* 2016: 20-21.



Fig. 5. A: Inv. 18-402. Fragment of a hemispherical bowl with molded feet from the fill below the Phase 1 floor in Room 1 and a profile of a similar vessel (drawing by S. Stone; see MS VI, pl. 4, 24B); B: Inv. 18-410. Bronze coin of Tauromenium also from the fill below Phase 1 floor in Room 1; C: Inv. 18-449. Bronze coin of Agathokles from matrix of Phase 1 floor surface in Room 2a.

third-century date for Phase 1¹⁰. Lying immediately above the Phase 1 surface was most of a ceramic mortarium (P19-22), also datable to the mid-3rd century BCE (fig. 6). Additional evidence for Phase 1 construction activity was encountered in Room 2a, where excavations reached the foundations of Wall H, the northern boundary of the property. A portion of the construction trench associated with Wall H was excavated, revealing that the foundations were set directly on cuts made into the bedrock (as observed in the abutting Wall D). Wall H was also bonded with the north-south wall that separated Rooms 1 and 2a (Wall C). A beaten-earth surface of hard-packed yellow brown soil (6053041) was laid down in Room 2a at this time; a Syracusan bronze *litra* of Agathoklean date (see Fig. 5, C; inv. 18-449; struck ca. 304-290 BCE) found embedded in the matrix of the surface supplies a *terminus post quem* of approximately 290 BCE¹¹. A contemporary surface, composed of the same hard-packed material as that used for the floor in Room 2a, was observed in Room 2b (6053016).

During this first Phase of occupation, Room 2a communicated with Room 1 via a doorway in Wall C and also with Room 2b via a doorway in Wall QQ. In its original arrangement, Room 2a did not open onto either the *plateia* to the north (as it would in a later phase), nor onto the courtyard to the south. We suspect that a doorway in the southern wall of Room 2b provided access to the courtyard. A small *saggio* excavated in what would later become Room 8 revealed a portion of a flat rectilinear stone that probably served as the threshold between Room 2b and the open courtyard in this earliest phase. A later threshold, formed by a large terracotta brick, existed in the exact same place at a higher elevation, further supporting our hypothesis. Another surface of yellow bedrock aggregate (6054078), at approximately the same elevation as the floors in Rooms 2a and 2b,

¹⁰ Three coins came from this fill, including two halved Syracusan bronzes of the “large-flan” Poseidon/Trident series (ca. 269-240 BCE; inv. 18-406 and 18-408; ref. MS II, no. 367) and one bronze of Tauromenium that was struck ca. 336-317 BCE (inv. 18-410. AE. 5.85g, 19.81mm, 2h; *Obv.* Head of Apollo l., laureate; at l. APXAGETA / *Rev.* [TAYPOM-ENITAN]; Tripod. Date: ca. 337-317 BCE. Ref. MS II, no. 401. Illustrated above.). The deep hemispherical cup with molded feet (inv. 18-402) is of a type well-represented at Morgantina (see MS VI, cat. no. 24E-F) and was also locally produced at the site; for the date of these vessels, see Stone’s discussion in MS VI 91-92.

¹¹ Inv. 18-449. AE. 8.34g, 20.78mm, 2h. Syracuse (under Agathokles). *Obv.* [ΣΩ]TEIPA, Bust of Artemis r. / *Rev.* [BAΣΙΛΕΟΣ] ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΟΣ, winged thunderbolt. Date: ca. 304-290 BCE. Ref.: MS II, no. 328.



Fig. 6. Ceramic mortarium (P19-22) lying on the Phase 1 floor in Room 1.

linked these northern rooms to the house's open courtyard. No work was done in Rooms 3 or 4 during the 2018 season.

Along the east side of the building, Room 11b was defined in Phase 1 by Walls NN, Wall PP, and Wall EE, a preexisting party wall shared with the building that occupied the lot to the east. The interface between this room and the neighboring property was explored in 2018; that excavation uncovered the remains of what was perhaps the earliest intervention on the lot: a narrow stone-lined channel that ran in the direction of the neighboring lot to the east. This feature, formed of two roughly parallel lines of small rubble pieces, was covered by a packed-earth surface of yellow bedrock aggregate (6054001), which we have identified as the Phase 1 surface¹². The large squared foundation stones of Wall EE were placed directly on top of this surface. Within the matrix of the surface in Room 11b excavators found an early Punic bronze coin (inv. 18-13) dating to 310-270 BCE¹³. In Phase 1, Room 11b was accessible only through a large doorway in Wall NN that led into Room 11a, an exedra-like space that opened onto the house's interior courtyard. Extending across this space, excavators identified a floor of degraded yellow bedrock aggregate (6054066) that roughly corresponds in elevation to the Phase 1 surface in Room 11b. Immediately to the south, Room 12a and Room 12b were also created during this initial flurry of construction. Excavations carried out in Room 12a revealed a beaten-earth surface (6054033) associated with this earliest phase of construction. Near the center of the room, excavators found the mouth of a cistern or well, which cut through this early floor surface and into the underlying bedrock below. Due to concerns for time and safety, excavation of this feature was halted before reaching the bottom, so the total depth and volume are not yet known. Future excavation will help determine the extent and nature of this feature.

In Phase 1, most rooms in the house were arranged around a large L-shaped courtyard (Room 15), where a floor (6052074) of bedrock aggregate, hardened with the addition of hydraulic lime plaster, was laid down. Excavators isolated remnants of this surface at various points around the southwestern part of the courtyard, but could not determine its full extent because of its patchy preservation and degraded condition, alt-

¹² For previous excavations in Room 11b, which terminated at this early surface, see THARLER *et al.* 2020: 6.

¹³ Inv. 18-13. AE. 2.22g, 16.13mm, 6h. Punic mint (West Sicily). *Obv.* Head of Persephone I. / *Rev.* Horse standing r. before palm; at right, three dots. Date: ca. 310-270 BCE. Ref.: *MS II*, no. 436a. The pottery from this context also included a horizontal brimmed lid that can be dated to the late 4th or early 3rd century.

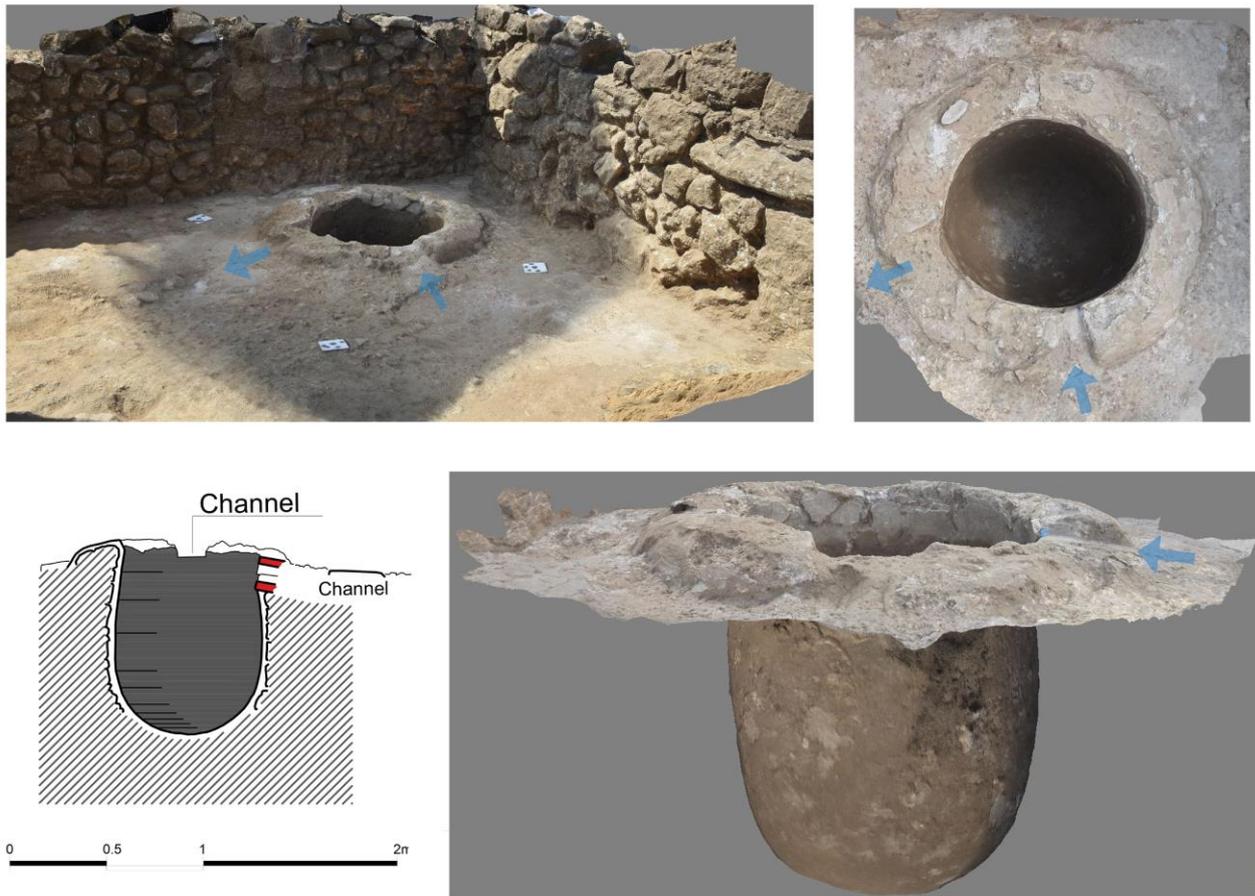


Fig. 7. 3D photogrammetric model (multiple views) and section drawing of the settling basin in the courtyard (Room 15). Blue arrows indicate the channels leading to and from the basin. Section drawing by G. Filantropi; models by R. Gorham.

though a portion (6052031) was visible in the northwestern part of the courtyard nearer to the building's entrance. In the southern part of the courtyard, where the pavement was most preserved, excavators discovered a plaster-lined settling basin, contemporary with the surface (fig. 7)¹⁴. The molded lip of the basin was raised several centimeters above the surrounding pavement, with a notch at the north forming a shallow channel. On the eastern face of the interior surface of the basin, several centimeters below the rim, the mouth of a terracotta tube is visible. This was very likely an outflow channel which ran eastward toward a very large circular cut (ca. 2m in diameter) excavated in 2017, which we believe was created by an unfinished modern well that destroyed whatever ancient feature was once there¹⁵. Our current interpretation holds that rainwater falling onto the house's tile roof and open-air courtyard was channeled into this settling basin before being led away to a larger cistern located a few meters to the east, which was later destroyed by the modern well. The harvesting of rainwater from rooftops and courtyards into cisterns was a common strategy at Morgantina; numerous cisterns have been found in other houses at the site, where they are commonly located in unroofed courtyards¹⁶. Taken together with the rock-cut cistern found in Room 12a, it is clear that the occupants were devoting attention to water-collection strategies during this initial period of construction and habitation.

¹⁴ The basin measures roughly 0.65m in diameter and .96m in depth with a depth of 0.88m below the lower lip of the outlet channel that ran off to the east.

¹⁵ See THARLER *et al.* 2020: 3 n.10.

¹⁶ For the use of cisterns in domestic contexts at Morgantina, see TSAKIRGIS 1984: 334-341; BRUNO and NICOSIA 1998; BRUNO and RENNA 2000: 74-76; CROUCH 2004: 68-69. For examples from Olynthos, see e.g., ROBINSON and GRAHAM 1938: 308.



Fig. 8. Left: Aerial photo of Room 1 in Phase 2, when the room was divided into north (1a) and south (1b) spaces. The cocciopesto floor and remains of the pithos found in situ are visible. Right: Photo of Room 1 after we removed the remains of the pithos, looking south.

During the 2018 season, we extended our excavations several meters into *Stenopos* W14, the street that ran along the west side of the building, in order to address several questions about the building's earliest phases. We confirmed that the suite of rooms that formed the west side of the building were indeed part of its original construction. Wall A itself was built directly on natural bedrock and was abutted by a series of fills that brought the street up to the level of the threshold platform at the house's principal entrance just north of Room 13 (defined as Room 9 from Phase 2)¹⁷. These fills contained ceramic and iron slag, rocks, and fragments of ceramic building material throughout, in addition to numerous small finds and river stones. The presence of an early Hieronian coin (dated ca. 276-269 BCE) within the matrix of one of the lowest fill contexts adds further support to our current interpretation about the chronology of Phase 1¹⁸.

Phase 2: Major Modifications (ca. 250-230 BCE)

Within about twenty years, the building witnessed a series of major architectural modifications to its interior layout. We have divided this period into two sub-phases (Phases 2a/2b); the phase as a whole is characterized by the gradual infilling of the central courtyard as new rooms were added and modifications were made to existing ones. These modifications reshaped access and movement between areas of the house and adjusted the functions of water storage and drainage features.

Our work in 2018 suggests that Room 1 was converted into a dedicated commercial space during this phase (fig. 8). The room itself was divided into two spaces by the addition of a short partition wall, which abutted the east face of Wall A¹⁹. A *cocciopesto* surface (6053040) was laid down in the room's northern half, which we now refer to as Room 1a. This durable floor was never updated and remained in use until the building was abandoned. At the same time, the doorways leading to the adjoining rooms (Room 2a to the east and Room 5

¹⁷ The threshold, a platform of composite pavement (6052071), is flush with the earliest surface in the interior space, a floor of crushed yellow bedrock aggregate (6046040, 6046082) interspersed with deposits of blue kiln dust (see THARLER *et al.* 2020: 7-8). Our work in the street also clarified that the small threshold in Wall A, which led from Room 5 onto the street and is at a significantly higher elevation than this Phase 1 surface, was added during one of the building's later phases.

¹⁸ Inv. 18-451. AE. 3.55g, 16.36mm, 11h. Syracuse (under Hieron II). *Obv.* Head of Persephone I. / *Rev.* Bull Butting I., above IE and club. Date: ca. 276-269 BCE. Ref. *MS II*, no. 324. This coin was recovered from one of the earliest fills (6052048) in the street next to Wall A.

¹⁹ There may have been a companion wall on the other side of the room, which would have further limited visibility to the shop's back room and accord with the layout of the other rooms in this northern suite. Unfortunately the area where it would have been located was damaged by looters in 2014 and 2015 before the room was excavated, and no traces remain.

to the south) were walled up and plastered over, leaving only the entrance in the north side that opened onto the *plateia*. The room's newly-enclosed interior layout and reorientation toward the main street resembles the arrangement of shops found in a handful of contemporary houses at Morgantina, as well as at other Hellenistic sites in the Greek world, including those on Delos²⁰. The entrance onto *Plateia* B appears to have been widened as well with the addition of a larger threshold stone, providing greater visibility and access to the outside.

Because the room remained in use until the collapse of the building's roof in Phase 4, we were not able to associate the artifacts found resting on the surfaces of Room 1a/1b with occupation in Phase 2. However, objects belonging to later occupation phases (see Phase 3, below) further support its identification as a commercial space. A large pithos, which survives almost completely, sat on the *cocciopesto* surface in the southwest corner of Room 1a. In its immediate vicinity, excavators also found fragments of a nearly complete terracotta measuring vessel and a scattering of small-denomination bronze coins, possible indications that grain, or even flour milled by the household, was sold here. Also of note are the traces of blue plaster found on the walls of Room 1a. To date, our excavations have produced copious amounts of wall plaster painted white and red, but this is the first time blue plaster was encountered inside the House of the Two Mills. Its use in this public-facing room may have differentiated dedicated commercial space from the rest of the residence and drawn the attention of pedestrians to the shop and its goods.

Changes were also made to the interior layout of Room 2a during Phase 2. Two short east-west partition walls (Wall RR), one on each side of the room, were built directly on the beaten-earth surface (6053041) from Phase 1, effectively subdividing Room 2a into two spaces (fig. 9). This was a short-lived modification that seems to have been abandoned by the start of Phase 3. In Room 2b, the addition of a new beaten-earth surface (6053014) covered the earlier Phase 1 floor. Accompanying this new surface, a fragment of a flat basalt millstone of hopper-rubber type was repurposed for use as a threshold in the doorway that led between Room 2b and Room 3.

This season's excavations also refined our understanding of developments in the center of the lot, as the house's open-air courtyard was gradually filled in by new construction. In Phase 2a, a new pavement was added over the northern area of the courtyard²¹. This floor (6054063) rested on a substantial fill that raised the courtyard's surface by about 30cm over the earlier Phase 1 levels. Our work in previous seasons had exposed the remains of a small portico that we believed was built along the north side of the courtyard in Phase 2b. The sequence of construction is visible in the section of a small *saggio*, centered on one of the portico's columns, that was first begun in 2016 and completed this season. We determined that a cut was indeed made in the Phase 2a floor to make space for the stone base on which the terracotta column drums were set; the cavity was then refilled with a rubble packing around its base. Finally, a new pavement of crushed bedrock aggregate (6043084) was added to bring the elevation of the floor surface flush with the top of the stone column base (fig. 10)²².



Fig. 9. Room 2a, looking south. The foundations of the two partition walls added in Phase 2 are visible in foreground on either side of the meter scale.

²⁰ For shops in houses at Morgantina, see TSAKIRGIS 1984: 396-397. TRÜMPER (2007) cites examples from Delos. TREZINY (2018) identifies a pair of possible shops in House XN at Megara Hyblaea, based on the orientation of the rooms, which fronted along Rue B.

²¹ The site of this modification would become Room 6c and Room 8 during Phase 3.

²² We note that this stratigraphic unit was excavated in 2016; see SOUZA *et al.* 2019: 12.



Fig. 10. Photograph of the section under Wall M exposed by Trench 54 saggio in Room 8, showing floor surfaces and column base construction, looking south.

The southern portion of the courtyard (Room 15) was partially distinguished from the northern portion (Room 10) during Phase 2 by the addition of Wall OO²³. Here too, a substantial amount of fill was added over the earlier Phase 1 surface and a new pavement of crushed yellow bedrock aggregate was laid down²⁴. Once installed, the new Phase 2 surface completely covered over the settling basin in the southern courtyard. The basin itself was deliberately filled with large pieces of debris and was capped with rubble before the Phase 2 levelling fill and surface were added (figs. 11-12). Among the objects recovered from the basin were an intact unguentarium (inv. 19-9), half of a burned spindle whorl (inv. 19-48), several discoid loom weights (inv. 19-4, inv. 19-5, inv. 19-7, inv. 19-55), a fragment of a molded-lip kantharos (P19-38), a bronze coin struck at Syracuse during the reign of Agathokles (inv. 19-2), and an intact terracotta figurine in the form of a comic actor (inv. 19-6)²⁵. In addition, a large quantity of animal bone and deer antlers had been tossed inside (fig. 13).



Fig. 11. Settling basin in the courtyard (Room 15) showing rubble packing inside, looking south.



Fig. 12. Settling basin in the courtyard (Room 15), showing the Phase 2 floor effectively sealing off the feature, looking east.

²³ THARLER *et al.* 2020: 10.

²⁴ Portions of the surface were excavated separately as stratigraphic units 6052042, 6052050, 6052056, 6052065, and 6052078. In the fill below the surface, we discovered a small terracotta ball, inscribed with what is likely a personal name (inv. 18-242). This object is the focus of a dedicated forthcoming study.

²⁵ The coin (inv. 19-2) is heavily corroded, but appears to belong to a series struck during the time of Agathokles (ca. 217-289 BCE) with types *Obv.* Head of Apollo I. / *Rev.* Dog reclining I. (ref. *MS II*, no. 320) The coin's diameter and weight accord with this identification.



Fig. 13. Clockwise from upper left: fragmentary spindle whorl (inv. 19-48), terracotta figurine (inv. 19-6), and selection of deer antlers and bone, all recovered from the fill of the basin.

In Room 12a, Phase 2 was characterized by the addition of a new beaten-earth floor (6054042, 6054023), which appears to have effectively covered over the cistern or well located in the center of the room. At this point in our excavations, we cannot yet determine whether the fill inside the cistern was deposited when this new floor was installed or if the feature had been backfilled long before the construction of the Phase 2 surface. In either case, the new floor permanently sealed off the feature. In 2018, our excavations inside the cistern stopped at a point roughly 130cm below its opening in the floor surface due to concerns for safety and timing. The fill inside the cut contained an array of artifacts, including a nearly-intact terracotta altar (inv. 18-448), a



Fig. 14. Upper portion of a Greco-Italic amphora and the base of a Centuripe-ware lekanis resting in situ within the fill inside the rock-cut cistern or well in Room 12a.



Fig. 15. Photos of the Doric column capital (AF54-5) found in Room 12a.

disc-shaped lead weight (inv. 18-466), an intact miniature terracotta bowl (inv. 18-537), and a Syracusan bronze coin that was struck during the time of Hiketas (ca. 287-278 BCE; inv. 18-509)²⁶. The fill also contained a fair amount of building material (principally roof tiles) and ceramics, including two nearly complete Greco-Italic amphorae and the better part of a Centuripe-ware *lekanis* or *krater* (fig. 14)²⁷. The good condition of the terracotta altar, the amphorae, and other ceramic materials suggests that, like the fill of the settling basin in the courtyard, this material was purposefully deposited in order to close up the open cavity.

Certainly, the most striking discovery associated with the Phase 2 renovations in Room 12a was a large Doric column capital carved of a light fine-grained limestone. The capital was found upside down and embedded in the soil that formed the new floor surface of the room (fig. 15). With a shaft diameter of 42.5 cm, the capital might have originally sat atop one of the columns formed of terracotta discs found inside the house. Those found toppled in Room 6, for instance, have a diameter of 35 cm²⁸. A plaster casing for the terracotta drums that was molded in the form of fluting—fragments of which were found inside the house—might easily have made up for the difference in diameter. Why this capital had been seemingly tucked away inside one of the smaller, interior rooms of the House of the Two Mills is an open question. Perhaps the occupants of the house planned for another round of renovations and so removed this large capital block to keep it safe, or perhaps they acquired it solely for its bulk. One hint of the capital's potential function within the house is the visible pattern of wear along the upper edge of the abacus, which suggests that it had been used as a stepping stone

or threshold block for some period of time. Its location in the room may further corroborate this hypothesis, since it was found in close alignment with what we believe to have been a doorway added in this phase between Rooms 12a and 12b. The doorway between Rooms 12a and 11a appears to have been filled in during this period, closing off access between the two spaces.

In the southeast corner of the building, a narrow trapezoidal space (Room 19) was created by the construction of Wall GG. Results of the 2018 excavations allow us to tentatively place the room in Phase 2, based on the elevation of Wall GG's foundations and the lack of any interface between the wall and any early floor surface. We believe the space may have served as an *ambitus* shared with the neighboring lot. This interpreta-

²⁶ Inv. 18-509. AE. 8.62g, 22.73mm, 7h. Syracuse (under Hiketas). *Obv.* [ΔΙΟΣ ΕΛΛΑΝΙΟΥ], head of unbearded Zeus I. / *Rev.* [ΣΥΡΑΚΟΣΙΩΝ], eagle standing on thunderbolt I.; star in field I. Date: ca. 287-278 BCE. Ref.: MS II, no. 341.

²⁷ See MS VI, no. 153 for similar form; the vessel from the fill bears no traces of paint or decoration.

²⁸ See, for instance, SOUZA *et al.* 2019: 22, fig. 38.



Fig. 16. Aerial photograph of Room 9 showing cuts through Phase 1 floor (indicated by arrows) for the demolition of Wall C, the remains of which are highlighted in purple, and for the construction of Wall N.

tion is strengthened by the presence of two drainage features that seem to have emptied into this narrow space from the neighboring property to the east. A large terracotta tube set in the middle of Wall EE and, just a few meters to the north, a narrow vertical slit in the rubble masonry of Wall EE both appear to be connected to efforts aimed at managing wastewater²⁹. A narrow gap between the walls in the southeast corner of the *ambitus* may have served as an outlet for drainage to the south. It seems likely that Wall GG was constructed in order to contain the outflow of waste coming from the property on the neighboring lot. Room 19 was reached from the courtyard by means of a small doorway in Wall GG, the threshold of which presumably sat above the level of any standing wastewater in the room.

The western and southwestern areas of the House of the Two Mills also underwent a major reconfiguration in this phase. The creation of a new southern room (Room 14) and the eastward expansion of Room 5 further encroached on the open space of the central courtyard and defined the boundaries of a new entry corridor (Room 9) on the west side of the building. Our work in 2017 had already revealed that the foundation trench for Wall N, which articulated the shape of Room 5 and the new corridor, was created by cutting through the Phase 1 surface. Excavations in 2018 exposed an original segment of Wall C, around which the ancient builders created a second cut through the surface to fully re-expose the foundation of the wall (fig. 16). The cut was presumably made to dismantle this stretch of the wall and repurpose its stone for new construction during Phase 2. Afterward, this cut was filled in with the same material as that used to fill the construction trench for Wall N. These renovations replaced the simple doorway of Phase 1 with a much better-defined entrance corridor

²⁹ For similar cuts that accommodated drains at Morgantina, see CROUCH 1984: 360.



Fig. 17. Gold finger ring with a cabochon cut gemstone (inv. 18-330).

gio was opened in Room 5 in order to reveal a section of Wall B by removing an undisturbed portion of the pavement's subsurface fill. In this stratum we discovered a gold ring with a cabochon cut gemstone of deep red hue, probably garnet, in the bezel (fig. 17; inv. 18-330). This is without a doubt the most valuable artifact recovered from the House of the Two Mills, where the objects are typically of poorer materials and workmanship than artifacts discovered in the more elite houses at Morgantina. In fact, a very similar ring was found inside the so-called House of Ganymede, one of the better-appointed houses on the East Hill, during excavations in 1959³¹. We can only speculate as to why an object of such great value was buried in Room 5. While accidental loss cannot be ruled out, it may be that the ring was buried for safe keeping around the time of the Roman assault on the city in 211 BCE and simply never recovered by its owner. In such a scenario, the ring's owner would have pried up one of the bricks in the pavement, which we believe extended across the entirety of Room 5 in Phases 2 and 3, and then buried the ring in a shallow cut, replacing the brick after stashing the precious object. It would certainly not be the first such object of value seemingly hoarded prior to the Roman assault of 211 BCE³². Moreover, such a scenario would account for how the ring ended up near the top of the subfloor fill, not necessarily where one might expect to find such a valuable object.

Phase 3: Occupation with major modifications (ca. 230-208 BCE)

Phase 3 represents the final phase of occupation in the House of the Two Mills. During this period, the building saw further modifications to its interior, characterized by the additional infilling of the northern and southern courtyard.

Along the north side of the building, Room 1 continued to function as an independent shop, separated from the rest of the house. It is possible that Room 2a was also converted into a shop in this phase. A number of modifications were made to it, including the creation of a doorway in Wall H that established a new entrance into the building from *Plateia* B. The two spur walls that once subdivided the room were reduced to their foundations and buried under a new floor surface (6053031) that stretched across the entire room; a corresponding surface (6042017) was previously recorded in the neighboring Room 2b³³. These renovations were first documented in our report on the 2017 season, but in light of this year's discovery about Room 1's Phase 2 transfor-

³⁰ SOUZA *et al.* 2019: 14; WALTHALL *et al.* 2016: 13-15.

³¹ The other ring was published by SJÖQVIST 1960: 132, pl. 28, fig. 28. For a color picture of the ring from the House of Ganymede and further reference to a comprandum from Taranto, see MANENTI 2015: 170.

³² In addition to the gold ring from the House of Ganymede mentioned above, several coin hoards have been associated with the capture of the city in 211; see BUTTREY 1965; 1979. Notable as well is the collection of silver vessels and objects found in the 1980s by looters inside the so-called House of Eupolemos; GUZZO 2003. A series of controlled excavations conducted in the 1990s by the American Excavations at Morgantina, in collaboration with authorities from the Soprintendenza BB.CC.AA, revealed evidence that the silver vessels had been concealed in hastily dug pits in the house's beaten-earth floor; BELL 1997; 2010.

³³ A Syracusan *litra* of Hieron II (ca. 240-215 BCE; inv. 18-169), sealed by the Phase 3 surface, was recovered from the soil that had accumulated on the Phase 2 surface in Room 2b (6053014).

mation, we now consider the possibility that Room 2a also became a commercial space, in Phase 3. This new perspective invites closer examination of some of the finds recovered from Room 2a in previous excavation seasons, including a dense cluster of 47 bronze coins (possibly the remnants of a dispersed hoard) discovered on the Phase 3 floor surface in the southeast corner of the room in 2017³⁴. Excavations carried out in the northwest quadrant of Room 2a in 2018 brought to light numerous joining fragments of a large pithos (although not nearly as well preserved as that in Room 1) resting on the Phase 3 floor surface, as well as pieces of a standardized measuring vessel, a number of small-denomination bronze coins, and a lead trade weight (inv. 18-180). This assemblage of artifacts along with the room's street-facing entrance, while not conclusive, is certainly consistent with the interpretation that Room 2a was transformed into a shop during this final occupation period.

While no significant changes were evident in Room 11b in this phase, the character of the smaller Room 11a was altered in several respects. For the first time, the room was enclosed to the north, following the creation of Wall M. A new beaten-earth surface (6054050) went in with the construction of Wall M. Additionally, an oven was built in the northeast corner of Room 11a. This feature was investigated in previous seasons but only in 2018 was it completely excavated, which allowed us to fully understand its construction. The platform consisted of two large pan tiles set side by side and lined on the southern side with small pithos fragments, all carefully fitted together to form a nearly square platform that was raised about 50cm above the floor (fig. 18). The oven dome was constructed using a mixture of terracotta bricks, which formed the lower courses, and pithos fragments, which were gradually stacked to create the curved ceiling of the dome itself.

The southeastern portion of the building underwent significant modification in this phase. The construction of Wall BB added Room 17 to the cluster of small rooms in this corner of the building. Furthermore, Room 19 was sealed off from the rest of the house when the doorway in Wall GG was filled in with rubble. The building's southwest and west rooms (Rooms 14, 13, 9, and 5) were repaved using various methods in this period, as discussed in our previous annual reports³⁵.



Fig. 18. Photos of the oven in Room 11a taken in progressive stages of excavation to show details of its construction.

³⁴ SOUZA *et al.* 2019: 15.

³⁵ See, SOUZA *et al.* 2019: 14-20 and THARLER *et al.* 2020: 11-18.

Phase 4: Abandonment and Collapse (ca. 208-200 BCE)



Fig. 19. Terracotta altar base (inv. 18-130) standing on cocciopesto pavement, mid-excavation, in Room 1a.

After the final phase of regular occupation, the building experienced a period of abandonment. Our findings from 2018 correspond to what was found in previous seasons: this phase was characterized by gradual accumulation of both natural and anthropogenic deposits and occasional spoliation, the eventual collapse of the building's tile roof and walls, and a general disintegration of the house's architectural features. Numismatic evidence confirms a *terminus post quem* in the period of 211-208 BCE.

Room 1a was subject to spoliation in this period. The original threshold stone(s) in the doorway leading to *Plateia* B were apparently removed, exposing the interface between the edge of the *cocciopesto* floor and the entrance to Room 1a (see fig. 8, above). The soil that later accumulated above the *cocciopesto* surface contained a variety of material, including a stamped lead seal (inv. 18-261) and an intact miniature two-handle cup (inv. 18-252)³⁶. A nearly complete miniature terracotta altar (inv. 18-130) was also found standing directly on the *cocciopesto* floor (fig. 19). Excavators also recovered several coins lying on or immediately above the *cocciopesto* pavement, including three Roman bronze coins (inv. 18-171, inv. 18-235, and inv. 18-423) struck in the years 211-208 BCE³⁷. A bronze struck during the short reign (ca. 215-214 BCE) of the Syracusan monarch Hieronymos (inv. 18-236; fig. 20) also came from this stratigraphic unit³⁸. Room 2a also fell into disrepair as the building was gradually abandoned. Excavations there produced further evidence that this space became a convenient dumping area for discarded materials, including a terracotta louterion stand (the third found inside the house), which was deposited almost directly on top of some fragments of a mended pithos.

Signs of gradual decay were encountered throughout the rest of the building. In Room 12a, the beaten-earth floor (6054042) was covered with a layer of debris containing a mixture of small, irregular rubble pieces



Fig. 20. Coins found on and in the soil immediately above *cocciopesto* pavement in Room 1a (from top: inv. 18-171, inv. 18-235, inv. 18-236).

³⁶ For lead seals of similar form found in the house during previous seasons, see SOUZA *et al.* 2019: 15.

³⁷ All three of the Roman coins are *sextantes* (RRC 69/6) bearing the types, *Obv.* Head of Mercury r. / *Rev.* Prow r.; above, corner; below, ROMA; at right, KA or IC or C. At least two of these coins (inv. 18-171 and inv. 18-423), possibly all three, appear to be overstruck on Poseidon/Trident coins issued by Hieron II.

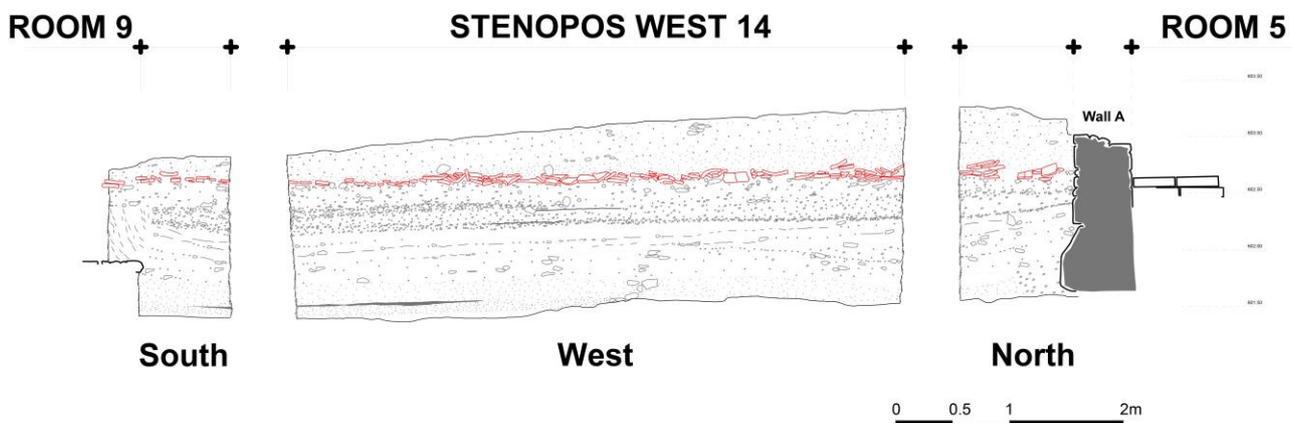
³⁸ Inv. 18-236. AE. 8.35g, 21.14mm, 9h. *Obv.* Head of Hieronymos I., wearing diadem. / *Rev.* ΒΑΣΙΛΕΟΣ [Ι]ΕΡΩΝΥΜΟ[Υ]; Winged thunderbolt; above ΑΠ or ΑΓ. Date: 215-214 BCE. Ref. MS II 370 and, for further discussion, see HOLLOWAY 1969.



Fig. 21. Billon coin struck by a Carthaginian mint during the Second Punic War (inv. 18-298).



Fig. 22. Miniature ivory figurine of a goddess carved in an Egyptian or Egyptianizing style (inv. 18-117).



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Fig. 23. Section drawing through Stenopos W14 from the Trench 52 saggio, with tile fall layer in red. Drawing by G. Filantropi.

and large pot sherds, including some semi-intact vessels. Nearly a dozen bronze coins were also recovered from this context; these were mostly large bronzes of Hieron II of the Hieron/Horseman series. One coin, however, that stands out from this group is a silver-and-copper billon tridrachm that was struck at Carthage during the Second Punic War (inv. 18-298; fig. 21)³⁹. As far as we can tell, this is the first such coin discovered in Sicily through controlled archaeological excavation. Among the other noteworthy finds from this debris layer in Room 12a was a miniature ivory figurine of apparently Egyptian or Egyptianizing style (fig. 22). The subject of this tiny object appears to be a deity with a crown on their head, whose identity remains uncertain⁴⁰.

In *Stenopos* 14W, the gradual abandonment of the house created a layer of small rubble pieces with a high concentration of ceramic sherds, fragments of degraded plaster, animal bones, slag, and iron nails. This was capped by a well-defined layer of roof tiles, which fell from the building onto the surface of the street (fig. 23). In this layer of roof tiles and rubble we found a loose pile of four bricks with beveled corners, matching

³⁹ Inv. 18-298. Bl. 11.04g, 26.33mm, 12h. Carthage. *Obv.* Wreathed head of Tanit I. / *Rev.* Horse standing r.; palm tree in central background, pellet below horse. Date: ca. 210-205 BCE. Ref.: SNG Cop, no. 190 (variation); and, for the date of these coins, see LORBER 2002.

⁴⁰ For terracotta figurines with similar attributes, see BARRETT 2011.



Fig. 24. Views of Stenopos W14. Left: layer of roof tiles and debris covering the surface of the street, looking south; upper right: same layer, looking east; lower right: bricks resting on the Phase 3 surface of Stenopos W14, looking east.

those used for pavements in the house (fig. 24). The presence of these bricks scattered in the street immediately outside of the building accords with our hypothesis that architectural materials from the house were being spoliated during this abandonment period. These may have come from Room 5, on the other side of the wall immediately to the east, where identical bricks formed the Phase 2 pavement⁴¹.

The collapse of the building's roof left behind a layer of terracotta tiles covering most of the rooms and marks the effective end to activity inside the house. In the north, the broken tiles accumulated densely in Room 1b, as well as Room 2a, where the upper courses of the walls were reduced to piles of rubble that tumbled onto the layer of fallen tiles. In Room 11a, the oven's dome caved in on itself around the same time the roof collapsed over the top of the structure.

Phase 5: Post-abandonment (ca. 200-100 BCE)

Previous seasons already established that the years following the house's abandonment were marked by ongoing trash discarding and continued scavenging for architectural material. Our efforts in 2018 focused on strata from the building's earlier phases, and did not alter this interpretation nor add any significant new details.

⁴¹ Based on the distribution of bricks found in Room 5 as well as the number scattered throughout the house—particularly in contexts associated with Phase 4—we have hypothesized previously that Room 5 might have once been completely paved with brick during Phases 2 and 3; see THARLER *et al.* 2020: 17.

Conclusions

Our 2018 excavation season helped us further refine our understanding of the occupation and construction sequences in the House of the Two Mills. Additionally, it has provided important evidence for the use of space within the house and suggested how the priorities of the occupants may have shifted over the course of the building's use. We see this, for instance, with the demarcation of Room 1 as a commercial space, separated from the rest of the house by walling up doors to neighboring rooms. This focus on commercial activity in Phase 2 might also have been accompanied by investment in milling technologies, represented by the two large rotary millstones found inside the house during the 2017 season and presumably in use in Phases 2 and 3. It is possible that the occupants of the house sold flour they milled or bread they baked from the small shop or shops that fronted onto the avenue. The busy street intersection next to two large bath complexes (the well-preserved North Baths and the less well-preserved South Baths) would have been an advantageous spot for maximizing visibility and foot traffic. The renovations that isolated Room 1 from the rest of the house also raise the possibility that the owners of the house rented out the shop space to someone outside the family. The 2018 excavations also brought to light evidence of a serious concern for supplying the household with clean water. While a complete excavation of the rock-cut feature in Room 12a would be required to establish its function (possibly a well or cistern), we know at this point that it ceased to function by the start of Phase 2, as did the settling basin in the courtyard. Why these water-collecting installations were seemingly abandoned within a matter of decades is a question that we hope to address in future fieldwork seasons.

Appendix: 2018 Excavations in the Agora

In 2018, we complemented our excavations in Contrada Agnese with a deep trench in Morgantina's agora that opened a vertical window onto the full occupation history of the site from prehistory to the present day. Originally opened in 2013 to ground-truth a possible feature detected through geophysical survey, Trench I.150 was re-exposed this season so that excavations could continue from our stopping point in 2013 at ca. 3.17m below surface level. The trench would eventually reach down to a point roughly 4.30m below surface level, in layers of unconsolidated bedrock⁴². We collected environmental and micromorphological samples from newly exposed soil deposits spanning the site's chronology in order to address questions of long-term environmental change, land use, and abandonment at the site.

Researchers from the University of Texas at Austin and the Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia participated in this multidisciplinary research effort, collecting samples from the 4.3-meter profile. Soil samples underwent analysis for phosphates, total organic carbon, and grain size at UT's Soils and Geoarchaeology Lab, under the direction of Dr. Tim Beach and Dr. Sherryl Luzzadder-Beach. Prof.ssa Anna Maria Mercuri and Dott.ssa Paola Torri of the Laboratorio di Palinologia e Paleobotanica at the Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia collected thirty pollen samples from a column in the southwest corner of the trench. CAP's Environmental Team processed nineteen flotation samples of ca. 20 L each, and an additional twenty-nine phytolith samples and five micromorphology samples are undergoing analysis back at the University of Texas.

The bedrock underlying the agora valley belongs to the Plio-Pleistocene Upper Sands formation, sandstone interbedded with sandy lenses. This porous bedrock is conducive to the flow of water, forming springs where it contacts the impermeable clays of the Geracello formation (upper Plio-Pleistocene) below⁴³. The abundant manganese nodules within the sandy bedrock exposed in Trench 150 were identified as redoximorphic features, which indicate stability and periodic saturation over several millennia after deposition. Above bedrock, the dark brown, clay-rich stratum known locally as *cioccolato* has been identified as the surface of the premonumentalized agora. A few lithic artifacts, signs of Neolithic or Chalcolithic occupation, were found in the top 20 cm of this layer. The next strata deposited were finely laminated sandy fills dated ca. 550-300 BCE. The most prominent stratum is the thick yellow sand fill of the third century BCE, identified as an intentional levelling fill associated with the nearby monumental steps constructed during the Hieronian period. Phosphates and

⁴² For summary and findings from our initial excavations here, see WALTHALL *et al.* 2014: 2-9.

⁴³ On Morgantina geology and hydrology see BRUNO & NICOSIA 1998; CROUCH 2004: 51-7; BRUNO 2017.

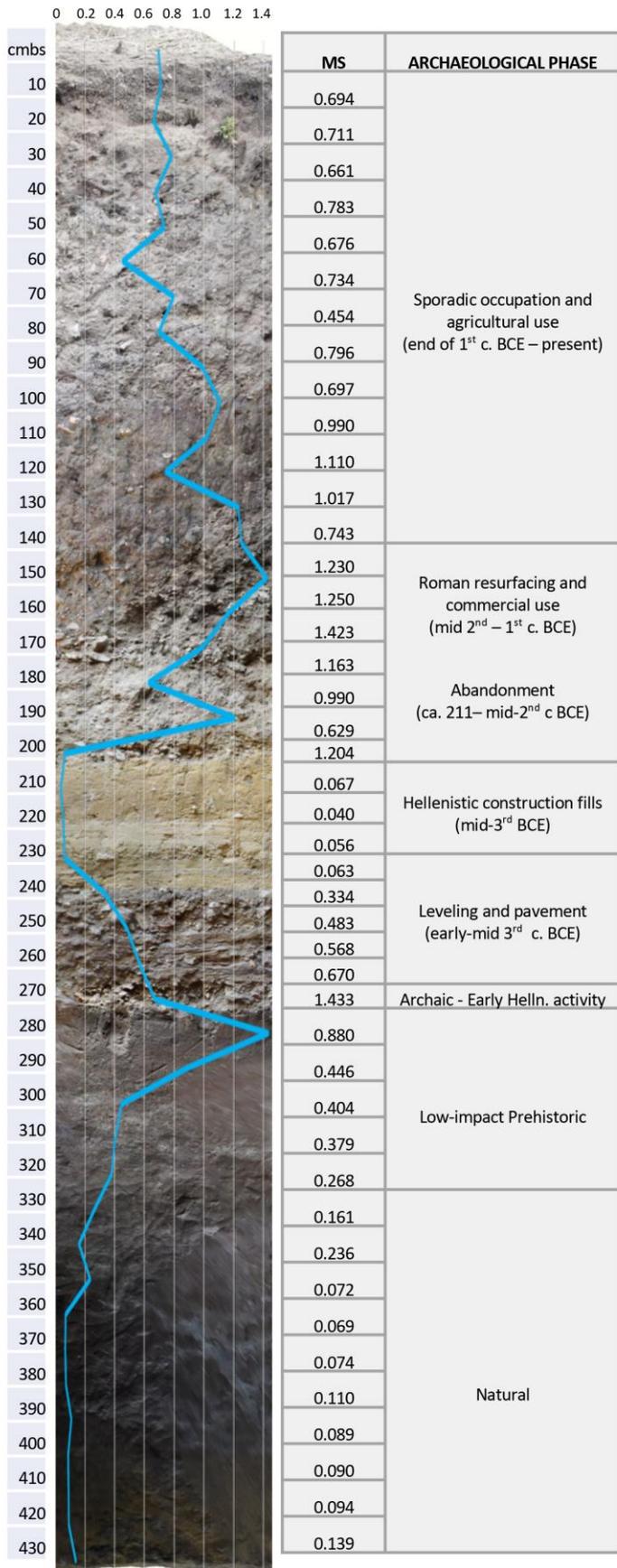


Fig. 25. Magnetic susceptibility readings taken in 2018 projected over the east profile of Trench I.151.

magnetic susceptibility readings peaked in later strata that we have linked with activity in the Roman-era *macellum* (fig. 25). Allowing for natural variations across soil and sediment types, elevated phosphates are indicative of intentional (e.g., manuring) or unintentional (e.g., waste disposal) human interventions, while relatively higher magnetic susceptibility functions are a general index of anthropogenic disturbance through burning, industrial activities, and other forms of land-use. Both remained high in the dark matrix above, a buried soil that corresponds to the use of the agora valley for agriculture from late antiquity through the early modern period⁴⁴. Measuring phosphates and magnetic susceptibility has a long history of use in archaeological fieldwork as a quick and inexpensive means of assessing human impacts to sediments. At Morgantina, they confirm that human activity in the agora valley continued long after the abandonment of the ancient city.

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Christy Schirmer

University of Texas at Austin
E-mail: schirmerc@utexas.edu

D. Alex Walthall

University of Texas at Austin
E-mail: dwalthall@austin.utexas.edu

Andrew Tharler

Duke University
E-mail: andrew.tharler@duke.edu

Elizabeth Wueste

American University of Rome
E-mail: e.wueste@aur.edu

Benjamin Crowther

University of Texas at Austin
E-mail: bcrowther@utexas.edu

Randall Souza

Seattle University
E-mail: souzara@seattleu.edu

Jared Benton

Old Dominion University
E-mail: jtbenton@odu.edu

Jane Millar

University of Texas at Austin
E-mail: jane.millar@utexas.edu

⁴⁴ Magnetic susceptibility readings ranged from 3.65 at 105 cmbs to .037 at 370 cmbs.

ABBREVIATIONS

HN Italy	RUTTER K., BURNETT A., 2001, <i>Historia Nummorum: Italy</i> , London.
MS I	BELL III M., 1981, <i>Morgantina Studies, vol. I, The Terracottas</i> , Princeton.
MS II	BUTTREY T.V., ERIM K., GROVES T., HOLLOWAY R.R., 1989, <i>Morgantina Studies, vol. II, The Coins</i> , Princeton.
MS VI	STONE S.C., 2014, <i>Morgantina Studies, vol. VI, The Hellenistic and Roman Fine Wares</i> , Princeton.
RRC	CRAWFORD M.H., 1974, <i>Roman Republican Coinage</i> , London.

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