

FROM APOLLO AND ASCLEPIUS TO CHRIST

Pilgrimage and Healing at the Temple and Episcopal Basilica of Dor

C. Dauphin

Thirty kilometres south of Haifa on the Mediterranean coast of Israel, the massive mound or *tell* of Dor juts out into the Mediterranean Sea, encapsulating layers of human occupation since the 15th century BC.

Byzantine Dora in the *Onomastikon* and as revealed by archaeology

In St Jerome's Latin translation of the *Onomastikon* – a descriptive list of sites in Palestine compiled in Greek by Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea –, 4th century Dora is described as “a city now deserted”, and in *Epistle* 108, dated to 404, in connection with the pilgrim Paula's first journey round the sites of Palestine in 385, Jerome wrote: “She marvelled in the ruins of Dor, a city once very powerful”¹. Yet, already at that date, an impressive Christian basilica rose above a grid-patterned lower city at the south-eastern foot of the *tell*².

The semi-circular eastward-oriented apse of the central nave of this basilica, as well as part of the mosaic pavement of a northern aisle were discovered in the course of a rescue excavation, conducted in February 1952 by Dr J. Leibovitch on behalf of the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums³. Soon after, Leibovitch fell ill and died, the excavations were discontinued, and the site was abandoned. Some members of the newly-established Kibbutz Nahsholim whose houses were built close to the

1. *Onomastikon* 250: 56 (ed. E. Klostermann, *Eusebius. Das Onomastikon der biblischen Ortsnamen*, Leipzig - Berlin 1904); *Epistula* 108: 8,2 (ed. I.A. Hilberg, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, Wien 1910-1918, Vol. 55, 313; ed. J. Labourt, *Saint Jérôme Lettres*, Paris 1949-1961, T. 5, 166; J. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims Before the Crusades*, Jerusalem 1977, 47).

2. C. Dauphin - S. Gibson, “The Byzantine City at Dor/Dora Discovered”, *Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society* 14 (1994-95) 9-38.

3. J. Leibovitch, “The Reliquary Column of Dor”, *Christian News From Israel* V, 1-2 (1953) 22-23.

church, gradually took it over in defiance of the Antiquities Law and planted palm trees in the nave and rose-bushes in the central apse, thus transforming the area into a shrubbery. The mosaics, overgrown and everywhere penetrated by roots, were threatened with total disappearance. At the instigation of the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums, the excavations of the Church at Dor⁴ were reinitiated by us in 1979 and pursued in 1980, 1983 and 1994.

4. C. Dauphin, "Dor, ancient church", *HA* 73 (1980), 17 (Hebrew); "Dor, Byzantine Church", *IEJ* 29 (1979) 235-236; "Dor, Church", *HA* 74 (1980) 15-16 (Hebrew); "Dor, Byzantine church, 1980", *IEJ* 31 (1981) 117-119; "Dor, 1979", *RB* 88 (1981) 591-592; "Sur la route du Pèlerinage en Terre Sainte: La Basilique de Dor", *Archéologia*, Nos 180-181 (juillet-août 1983) 68-75; "On the Pilgrim's Way to the Holy City", *Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society* (1982-3) 25-31; "Dora-Dor: On the Pilgrim's Way to Jerusalem in the Byzantine Period", *Cathedra* 15 (1983) 29-44 (Hebrew); "Dor, Eglise byzantine (1980)", *RB* 91 (1984) 256-258; "Dor, Byzantine Church, 1983", *IEJ* 34 (1984) 271-274; "Dor Church", *HA* 84 (1984) 25-26 (Hebrew); "Dor, Byzantine Church", *ESI* 3 (1984) 24-25; "Temple grec, église byzantine et cimetière musulman: la basilique de Dor en Israël", *Proche-Orient Chrétien* 36 (1986) 14-22; "Dor, Eglise Byzantine (1983)", *RB* 93 (1986) 269-270; "La Basilique de Dor (Israël)", *Fondation Européenne de la Science. Activité Byzantine. Rapport des Missions effectuées en 1983*, vol. II, Paris 1987, 500-515; "Greek Temple, Byzantine Church and Moslem Cemetery: The Basilica of Dor in Israel", *The 17th International Byzantine Congress Abstracts of Short Papers*, Washington D.C., August 1986, 88-89; "Dora-Dor: A Station for Pilgrims in the Byzantine Period on Their Way to Jerusalem", in Y. Tsafir (ed.), *Ancient Churches Revealed*, Jerusalem 1993, 90-97; "Sur la route des pèlerinages byzantins: la basilique de Dor", *La Terre Sainte*, No. 72 (mars-avril 1996) 84-93; "On the Pilgrim's Way to the Holy City of Jerusalem: the Basilica of Dor", in J.R. Bartlett (ed.), *Archaeology and Biblical Interpretation*, London 1997, 145-165; "Dor Church", *HA* 156 (1997) 56-57 (Hebrew); "Dor, Byzantine Church, 1994", *IEJ* 47 (1997) 121-127. Also, Dauphin - Gibson, "The Byzantine City at Dor/Dora".

The excavation of the church was directed by Claudine Dauphin with the assistance of Mr J. Averbuch (Nahariya), Father A. Axe, OP (EBAF, Jérusalem), Mr M. Hawari (SOAS, London), the Rev. R. Middleton (Anglican Diocese of Liverpool) and Dr J.-C. Poutiers (Paris). The 1979 and 1980 seasons of excavations were conducted solely on behalf of the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums (IDAM); the 1983 and 1994 seasons jointly on behalf of both the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) and the French Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS). The 1983 and 1994 seasons were also both funded by the Russell Trust, Scotland and by Somerville College, University of Oxford (Katherine and Leonard Woolley Fellowship Fund), the 1983 season by the European Science Foundation, and the 1994 season by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Centre de Recherche Français de Jérusalem (CRFJ) and the Dominican EBAF de Jérusalem. Cost of post-excavation study was covered by the IAA, the Russell Trust, Scotland, the Katherine and Leonard Woolley Fellowship Fund of Somerville College, Oxford, the CRFJ, the Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance (CNRS-Collège de France), Paris, as well as by Mrs B.D. Craig, former Principal of Somerville College who funded in particular the ceramic analysis undertaken by Mr S.A. Kingsley (Somerville College, Oxford). To them all we are heavily indebted for providing excavation permits, financial and technical support. Thanks are also due to Mr K. Raveh, formerly Director of the Center of Nautical and Regional

The Byzantine church complex at Dor is huge, covering at least 1,000m² (Fig. 1 and Photo 1). It is thus one of the largest ecclesiastical complexes excavated in Israel outside of Jerusalem. The core of the structure consisted of a three-aisled basilica, 18.50 m long and 14 m wide (Photo 1). The central nave (No. 11), which terminated in the east in a semi-circular apse (No. 12), was flanked by side-aisles (Nos 10 and 13). The walls were built of ashlar occasionally laid as headers and stretchers and internally plastered. Both the nave and the side-aisles were paved with polychrome mosaics of which only small patches have been found.

Outside each side-aisle, there was an “external aisle” along the entire length of the building. The External Northern Aisle was laterally subdivided into various segments. At its western end was a room (No. 3) paved with crude white mosaics. In its south-eastern corner the base of a staircase (No. 4) was uncovered. This staircase supported also by two walls in the northern half of the room, probably enabled access to an upper storey, a terrace or a gallery. This constituted a small tower from which the sexton called the faithful to prayer by banging on the *simandron* – a wooden board still in use in Greek Orthodox monasteries. An atrium (No. 5) paved with stone slabs led into an antechamber (No. 6) originally paved with marble slabs, which gave access to a shallow, plaster-lined, stepped, rectangular baptismal *piscina* (No. 7). To the east were two further rooms. The mosaic

Archaeology, Dor (CONRAD) for his invaluable help since he first introduced us to the site of the Dor basilica in the winter of 1979. Photos 2, 3, 5 and 6 by Z. Radovan, the photographic montage of Photo 1 by S. Mendrea, Photo 4 by Tsila Sagiv and Photos 7 and 8 by C. Dauphin are reproduced by courtesy of the IAA. The photograph of the *pilos* helmet (Photo 9) by S.A. Kingsley is reproduced here by kind permission of S.A. Kingsley and K. Raveh. The plan of the Dor Church complex (Fig. 1) was drawn in 1995 by Dr S. Gibson (then, Palestine Exploration Fund, London) on the basis of excavations plans by Mr I. Vatkin (IAA) and Mr D. Ladiray (CRFJ), and those of the Dor temple complex in the Archaic (Fig. 2) and Classical (Fig. 3) periods by D. Ladiray. The pottery of Figs 4 and 5 was drawn by S.A. Kingsley. We wish to thank Mr Amir Drori, Director of the IAA for permission to publish here hypotheses first aired in a paper delivered on 23 November 1997 at the kind invitation of the Organizing Committee of the Annual Meeting 1997 in San Francisco of the American Academy of Religion and of the Society of Biblical Literature. We are grateful to Prof. R.C. Gregg (Departments of Religious Studies and Classics, University of Stanford) for sparking our fascination with Asclepius and his healing rites long before our discovery of the temple at Dor; to Prof. G.W. Bowersock (Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton), Miss N. Dunbar (Emeritus Fellow in Classics, Somerville College, Oxford), and Dr M.A. Lloyd (Department of Classics, University College Dublin) for their comments and bibliographical leads. Research for the present article was pursued in the Summers of 1997 and 1998 in the Bodleian and Ashmolean Libraries, Oxford, at the kind invitation of the Principal and Fellows of Somerville College for whose warm hospitality we are most thankful.

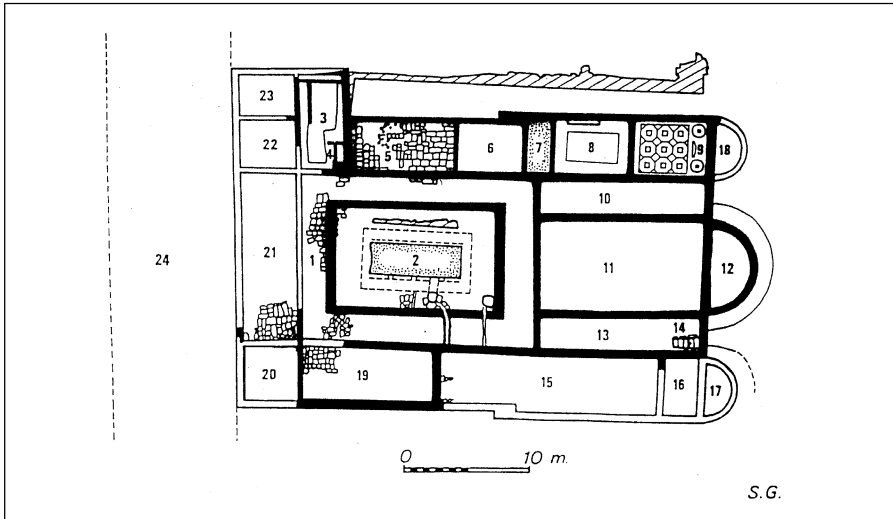


Fig. 1 Plan of Dor Church. 1: Peristyle Court; 2: Cistern; 3: Tower; 4: Staircase; 5: Northern Vestibule; 6: Antechamber; 7: Baptismal Piscina; 8: Anointing Room; 9: Room for celebration of the Eucharist; 10: Northern Aisle; 11: Nave; 12: Central Apse; 13: Southern Aisle; 14: Saints' Tomb; 15: External Southern Aisle; 16: Room where Reliquary Column may have stood; 17: Southern Apse; 18: Northern Apse; 19: Southern Vestibule; 20-23: Portico; 24: Street. The northern wall (north of the cistern) of the Archaic sanctuary and the remains of the portico/abaton belonging to the Temenos of Apollo and Asclepius are hatched (Drawing S. Gibson).

of Room 8 was decorated with sixty red-ochre rose buds on a white ground, while the pavement of Room 9 combined octogons, squares and stepped lozenges, at the eastern end of which a stone step gave access to a raised area encased by marble screens (Photo 2).

The apsed External Southern Aisle was almost entirely destroyed by the construction of kibbutz houses. Rectangular Hall No. 15 was originally paved with a polychrome mosaic, and trapezoidal Hall No. 19 with stone slabs.

To the west, the church was preceded by stone-paved portico (Nos 20-23) fronting the *cardo* (No. 24), the main north-south street of Byzantine Dora. This is strikingly reminiscent of the *propylea* of the Holy Sepulchre opening onto the Jerusalem *cardo maximus*⁵. The entrance portico of the

5. S. Gibson - J.E. Taylor, *Beneath the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem. The Archaeology and Early History of Traditional Golgotha* (PEF Monograph Series Maior 1), London 1994, 74-75 and Fig. 45.

Dor basilica gave access to a rectangular peristyle court paved with stone slabs (No. 1). Along the east-west axis of the apse and occupying most of the width of the atrium, the floor slabs covered the collapsed vault of a large cistern (No. 2) which was entirely plaster-lined, including its pavement of crude white *tesserae* (Photo 3). Three pairs of corbels or projections protruded from the internal northern and southern faces of the cistern. Water entered through three plaster-lined channels which led from the wall south of the cistern down which gutters probably directed water from the roof. A shaft was cut in the solid rock beside the cistern, plaster-lined and with seven footholds cut into its eastern and western sides. It was linked to the cistern by a doorway cut into the southern wall of the cistern.

Besides 3rd and 4th century coins found in the sandy fill supporting the church, a bronze *tremessis* coin of Emperor Constantius II (337-361) minted at Cyzicus in Asia Minor was found on a mosaic pavement with a geometric design, 38 cm below the rose-bud mosaic. The complex was therefore founded at the earliest in the mid-4th century. The lower pavement of Room 8 was burnt at its northern end. Similarly, a fire destroyed the slab-and pebble floor of the antechamber. The church was rebuilt on the same plan in the 5th century.

Does the above archaeological evidence not fly in the face of St Jerome's sweeping statements about Dor? Judged in the light of the Church Father's interest in sites as fossilized embodiments of Biblical events (for his *Onomastikon* aimed not at describing contemporary cities, but merely indicated to pilgrims Biblical archaeological remains worth visiting), both his comments appear in fact as direct references to the ancient ruins on the Biblical *tell* which by then had been largely abandoned. They have no bearing on the state of the flourishing Byzantine lower city of Dora, episcopal see and first suffragant of adjacent Caesarea, metropolis of the arch-episcopal see of *Palaestina Prima*. Dora is mentioned in Byzantine geographical treatises and in the minutes of Church Councils which its bishops attended throughout the sixth and seventh centuries⁶. Proof that the church which we have excavated *was* the episcopal basilica of Byzantine Dora had already been provided in 1952 by Leibovitch's discovery of an episcopal ivory sceptre lacking its rod. It is shaped like a hand, the three middle fingers extended in a characteristic episcopal blessing symbolizing the Holy Trinity (Photo 4).

6. Dauphin - Gibson, "The Byzantine City at Dor/Dora", 32-34.

In date and plan, the original basilica of Dor is comparable to the Constantinian foundations of Jerusalem and Bethlehem: the Holy Sepulchre and the Church of the Nativity⁷. At Dor, however, the church itself appears insignificant in relation to the disproportionately large peripheral zone which bounds it on the north, west and south, each side with its own internal focus.

The Baptismal Liturgy in the external northern aisle

Central to the External Northern Aisle was the *piscina*, next to the atrium as recommended by the *Testamentum Domini Nostri Jesus Christi*, a canonical law text of the second half of the 5th century which lay down the rules concerning the plans of churches⁸. The location of the baptistery inside, not outside the ecclesiastical complex as was usual, illustrates archaeologically the description by the rhetor Choricus of Gaza in the *Laudatio Marciani* of a long northern portico which included the baptistery at the western end of the 6th century Church of St Sergius at Gaza, now destroyed⁹.

The tripartite plan of the External Northern Aisle of the basilica at Dor corresponds to the first three stages of the early baptismal liturgy as described in the mid-4th century *Mystagogical Catecheses* of St Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem¹⁰. Candidates for baptism stood in a vestibule (Room 5) called “the external room” at the western end of the church complex – region of Darkness – and renounced Satan. They then proceeded eastward, towards the divine Light, into “the internal room” (Room 6). There, they undressed, were anointed by deacons with holy oil, and they stepped one by one into the *piscina*. They recited the Act of Faith and were

7. On the Holy Sepulchre, *supra* n. 5; on the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem: A. Ovadiah, *Corpus of the Byzantine Churches in the Holy Land*, Bonn 1970, 33-37, No. 22a/b - both, with full bibliography.

8. *Testamentum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi* I, 19 (eds J. Cooper - A.J. MacLean, *The Testament of Our Lord*, Edinburgh 1902, 63).

9. *Laudatio Marciani* 1, 24 (eds R. Foerster - E. Richsteig, *Choricii Gazaei Opera*, Lipsiae 1929, 8-9). See also, R.W. Hamilton, “Two churches at Gaza, as described by Choricus of Gaza”, *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement* (1930) 179; and, F.-M. Abel, “Gaza au VI^e siècle d’après le rhéteur Chorikios”, *RB* 40 (1931) 16.

10. *PG* 33, cols 1065-1094; A. Piédagnel - P. Paris, *Cyrille de Jérusalem: Cathéchèses Mystagogiques* (SC 126), Paris 1966.

totally immersed three times in memory of the three nights spent by the crucified Christ in his sepulchre. Immediately after being baptized they were anointed by the bishop and put on white robes, but remained bare-foot. The third *Catechesis* does not mention a room specially connected with the anointing ceremony, but it is probable that this took place in Room 8 at the eastern end of the northern portico where the newly-baptized would have attended for the first time the celebration of the Eucharist and taken communion. The steps leading up to an elevated apse or chancel in Room 9 indicate that this room was used for the enactment of the Holy Mysteries.

Faith healing in the peristyle court

At the western end of the basilica, the large peristyle court (No. 1) sheltered the sick who sought healing by undergoing a period of *incubatio* – a time of prayer, fasting and often deprivation of sleep which could last from one day and one night to several consecutive years. This practice is well attested by 6th and 7th century narratives of Miracles performed by healing saints, notably SS Cosmas and Damian in their Church of the Cosmidion at Constantinople, St Artemios in the Church of St John the Baptist also in the capital of the Byzantine Empire, and SS Cyrus and John in the Church of the Evangelists at Menouthis, east of Alexandria in Egypt¹¹. The saint or saints appeared to the sick as they slept in the porticoes of the church's western courtyard, and either healed them on the spot or prescribed them a treatment. At Dor, after incubating, the sick gathered round the remains of two unnamed saints at the eastern end of the southern aisle (No. 14). Their tomb was closed by five slabs of which the eastern-most had been pierced by a small hole, 16-18 cm in diameter, lined with an earthenware pipe (Photo 5). Oil would have been poured through it into the tomb in order to be sanctified by contact with the remains of the saints. Once it had drained through a hole (and tap) at the bottom of the tomb into

11. The *Miracula* of SS Cosmas and Damian were edited by L. Deubner, *Kosmas und Damian*, Lipsiae 1907; those of St Artemios by A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Diegesis ton Thaumaton tou Agiou Megalomartyriou Artemiou*, St Petersburg 1905; and those of SS Cyrus and John by Patriarch Sophronius of Jerusalem (ca. 560-638) in *PG* 87.3, cols 3424-3676, and by N.F. Marcos, *Los Thaumata de Sofronio. Contribucion al estudio de la incubatio cristiana*, Madrid 1975. See also, A.-J. Festugière, *Sainte Thècle, Saints Côme et Damien, Saints Cyr et Jean (Extraits)*, Saint Georges, Paris 1971.

a plaster-lined basin (2 x 1.40 m), the oil was collected and used for healing the sick. The reliquary-tomb of Dor is the first of its kind to have been found in Palestine¹².

Towards the reliquary column

The episcopal basilica of Dor was not only a healing sanctuary, but also a pilgrim church which could pride itself on possessing a memorial of Christ's death. In the 1952 excavations, about 100 m east of the basilica, a grey marble column was found lying on the surface. A three-line Greek inscription ("A stone of the Holy Golgotha") had been carved 92 cm above its base. Beneath the inscription there was a hollow cross. A small cross had been carved at each of the four ends of the central cross. The hollow probably contained a fragment of the Golgotha, the rock of Calvary, enclosed in a cross-shaped metal reliquary rivetted into the column¹³. Such a prized relic must have exercised tremendous magnetism over pilgrims travelling from the north along the *Via Maris*, or disembarking at the port of Dora¹⁴, whence they could ascend directly to the church by a stone-paved path.

Entering the church through the western portico and, aiming for the reliquary column at the eastern end of the External Southern Aisle, they would have walked through the stone-paved Southern Vestibule and then thronged the mosaic-paved hall, waiting to be admitted in the presence of the awe-inspiring stone relic of the Holy Golgotha in Room No. 16. In fact, Vestibule No. 19 served a function similar to that of the Northern Vestibule to which it was symmetrical – that of processing worshippers. Room No. 16 and apse No. 17 may have formed originally a single apsed

12. In Syria, the bones of saints were generally held in stone reliquaries, coffers in the shape of small sarcophagi. Oil was poured into a hole pierced in the cover slab and, once sanctified by contact with the relics, drained out through another hole at the bottom of the coffer. See notably, J. Lassus, *Sanctuaires Chrétiens de Syrie*, Paris 1947, 163-167; and, M.-T. Canivet, "Le Reliquaire à huile de la Grande Eglise de Huarte (Syrie)", *SYRIA* 55 (1978) 153-162.

13. *Supra*, n. 3.

14. K. Raveh - S.A. Kingsley, "The Status of Dor in Late Antiquity: A Maritime Perspective", *BA* (December 1991), 198-207; S.A. Kingsley - K. Raveh, "Stone Anchors from Byzantine contexts in Dor Harbour, Israel", *The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* (hereafter abridged as *IJNA*) 23.1 [1994] 1-12; and, *The Ancient Harbour and Anchorage at Dor, Israel. Results of the Underwater Surveys, 1976-1991* (BAR International Series S626), Oxford 1996.

chapel from which an opening perhaps permitted access or at least view of the saints' tomb.

Thus, the External Northern Aisle was devoted to the rites of "Birth" in becoming a Christian while that to the south was devoted to a spiritual "Rebirth" through the veneration of a relic of Christ's death. This was compounded with a "physical" rebirth or "Revival" when the sick whose only future before undergoing the *incubatio* lay in Death induced by their diseases, were healed after being anointed with oil sanctified by contact with the bones of the saints, "athletes of Christ", encased in the reliquary-tomb.

From Apollo to Christ

About 2 m to the north of the church and oriented slightly further to the south-east, the southern edge of a monumental edifice was uncovered in 1979. Judging from the masonry, pottery, glass, coins and the leg fragments of a white marble statue, its latest period of use spanned the Hellenistic to the Late Roman period. It consisted of one course of stones laid lengthwise in a single thickness, with one row of a floor of slabs placed crosswise to the north (Photo 6). To the north of the surviving row, the floor slabs appeared to have been removed, leaving only a rocky foundation layer resting on clean sand. Parallel to this building, an east-west wall was located in 1983 immediately to the north of the cistern in the peristyle court. The exciting discovery made in November 1994 that the western end of the ecclesiastical complex rested directly on the south-western extremity of that building (Photo 7) confirmed our ten-year old hunch that the basilica of Dor had been erected over a pagan temple. Its antechamber or *pronaos*, and the central hall or *cella* which contained the statue of the god, had become the nave and side-aisles of the Byzantine church; its *adyton* – the "holy of holies" – had been remodelled into a cistern; the back-porch or *opisthodomos* of the temple, which was symmetrical to the *pronaos* but did not communicate with the *cella*, had been replaced by the church's entrance portico; and the *stoa*, paved with terracotta slabs as in the 457 BC temple of Zeus at Olympia¹⁵, had become the external aisles. Thus, the traditional east-west orientation of Graeco-Roman temples was inverted in the process of Christianization. The temple was much longer than the Byzan-

15. W. Dörpfeld, "Der Zeustempel", in E. Curtius - F. Adler (eds), *Olympia. Die Ergebnisse der von dem Deutschen Reich Veranstatleten Ausgrabung. II. Die Baudenkmäler von Olympia*, Berlin 1892, 4-27.

tine complex, as suggested by a small stretch of the northern edge of the northern *stoa* which runs eastwards beyond the north-eastern corner of the church's External Northern Aisle. The pagan sanctuary was destroyed in a great fire: much ash overlay the remains of the pavement of the Hellenistic building and that of the temple precinct which had both been cut through and of which the stone slabs had been removed and reused to build the northern wall of the basilica and to pave the entrance portico. The burning and looting by Christians of the pagan temples of Byzantine Palestine is historically attested, notably by Mark the Deacon's colourful narrative of the destruction in May 402 of the Marneion of Gaza at the instigation of Porphyry, first bishop of Gaza¹⁶. The hagiographic source is vividly illustrated archaeologically for the first time by the razing to the ground of the temple of Dor.

As for the temple at Gaza of Marnas, Cretan Zeus and chief god of the Pantheon, the fanatical zeal and destructive hatred of the Christians bent on eradicating the pagan shrine of Dor, hint at the importance of its tutelary god whose cult had been perpetuated well into the Christian centuries. Who was this god?

The overall plan of the Dor temple would have resembled that of the Great Temple of Nemesis at Rhamnous, or that of the Temple of Hera in the Heraion of Argos in mainland Greece, both dating to the 5th century BC¹⁷. Focussing on details, it is clear that the most striking feature of the Dor Byzantine ecclesiastical complex was the peristyle court centred on a large cistern which replaced the partly rock-cut *adyton* of the original Greek sanctuary. This calls to mind the subterranean *adyta* of Apollo's oracular shrines at Didyma and Claros in Western Turkey, which included two fundamental characteristics present at Dor: a cave (*antron*) or cleft in the rock (*chasma*, *stomion*) through which the god blew his inspiration (*pneuma*); and water (preferably from a spring, but also sometimes from a

16. H. Grégoire - M.-A. Kugener (eds), *Marc le Diacre, Vie de Porphyre Evêque de Gaza*, Paris 1930, 69, pp. 55-56. See also, F.R. Trombley, *Hellenic Religion and Christianization c. 370-529*, Leiden - New York - Köln 1993, Vol. 1, 189-190 on the cult of Zeus Marnas at Gaza, 213-217 on the destruction of the Marneion, and 219-222 on the building of the Eudoxiana Church on the ruins of the Marneion.

17. On the Great Temple of Nemesis at Rhamnous: E. Melas (ed.), *Temples and Sanctuaries of Ancient Greece*, London 1973, 39-47; R.V. Schoder, *Ancient Greece from the Air*, London 1974, 180-181; and V. Petrakos, *Rhamnous*, Athens 1991, 23-29. On the Temple of Hera in the Argos Heraion: Melas (ed.), *Temples and Sanctuaries of Ancient Greece*, 125-131; and S.E. Iakovidis, *Mycènes - Epidaure - Argos - Tirynthe - Nauplie. Un guide complet des musées et des sites archéologiques de l'Argolide*, Athènes 1995, 74, 76-79.

well or reservoir fed by water channels), the absorption of which, at Claros, transmitted the power of divination from the god to his prophet¹⁸.

The Archaic shrine and temple of Apollo at Dor

The Archaic shrine

Collating stratigraphy and ceramic finds¹⁹ with an aerial photograph taken in 1950 before Leibovitch's first excavation of the Byzantine church, against the background of ancient Greek religion, has enabled us to reconstruct the history of Apollo's cult at Dor. A shrine of Apollo would have first been established at Dor in the Archaic period, in the 7th or 6th century BC on analogy with the original nucleus of the shrine of Apollo Maleatas at Epidaurus, and of the sanctuaries of Apollo at Didyma and Claros²⁰. It consisted of a rock-cut grotto, which was larger than the Byzantine cistern and extended on the north to the wall uncovered in 1983 and presumably to a symmetrical wall on the south. Remnants of the western wall of this shrine are detectible under the western edge of the Byzantine peristyle court. These walls indicate a superstructure at ground level measuring at least 14 x 6 m – a simple *oikos* containing the cult statue of the god and the sacred table (*trapeza*) as in the

18. On the oracular shrines of Apollo at Didyma and Claros: H.W. Parke, *The Oracles of Apollo in Asia Minor*, London - Sydney - Dover, New Hampshire 1985. In the Temple of Apollo at Delphi in Greece, the *adyton* (where his prophetess, the Pythia, officiated) was an independent structure, a chapel to the south of the *cella*. Nearby, steps led down to a crypt which was no more than 2.20 m below the level of the *cella*'s pavement (M.F. Courby, *Fouilles de Delphes*. T. II. *Topographie et Architecture. La Terrasse du Temple d'Apollon*, Paris 1927, 59-69). On water used in cult for purification, libations and sacrifice: A.Schachter, "Springs", and, R.A. Tomlinson, "Water", in S. Hornblower - A. Spawforth (eds), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford - New York 1996, respectively 1436 and 1619-1620. On the role played by a rock-cut cave (or cleft) and water in oracular divination: R. Martin - H. Metzger, *La religion grecque*, Paris 1976, 34-40.

19. On the range of pre-Byzantine pottery from the excavations of the Church at Dor, see the *Appendix* (Figs 4 and 5; Table 1) by S.A. Kingsley.

20. On the shrine of Apollo Maleatas at Epidaurus: J. Papadimitriou, "Le Sanctuaire d'Apollon Maléatas à Epidaure (Fouilles de 1948)", *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* (hereafter abridged as *BCH*) 73 (1949) 361-383; "Epidaure", in "Chronique des Fouilles en 1949", *BCH* 74 (1950) 303-304; and, Iakovidis, *Argolide*, 144-145. On the Archaic shrines at Didyma: G. Gruben, "Das Archaische Didymaion", *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 78 (1963) 78-182; Martin - Metzger, *La religion grecque*, 43-49; and, Parke, *The Oracles of Apollo*, 1-8, 23-32; at Claros: Martin - Metzger, *La religion grecque*, 53-55; and, Parke, *The Oracles of Apollo*, 112-117.

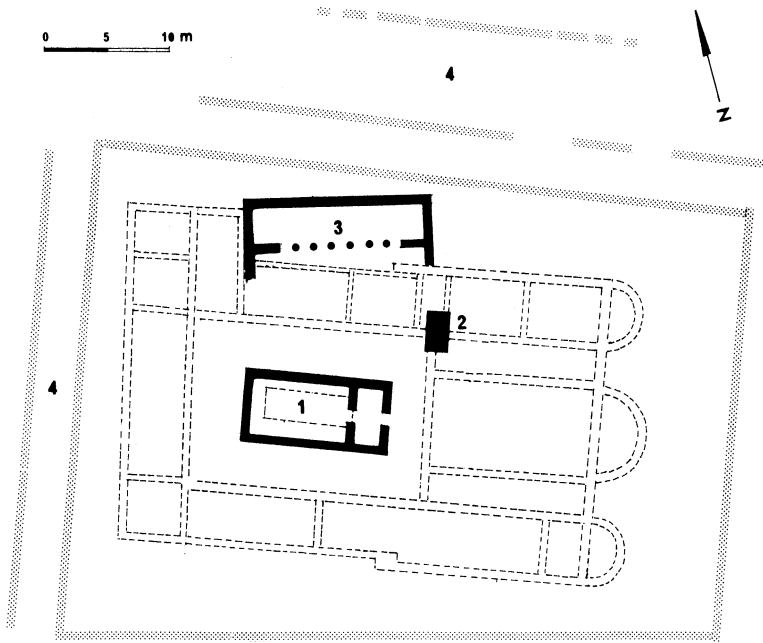


Fig. 2 Plan of the Archaic shrine of Apollo at Dor: 1: Oikos; 2: Altar; 3: Portico; 4: Hiera Odos (Sacred Way) - Drawing D. Ladiray.

6th century BC Amphiareion of Rhamnous in Attica, or a small temple similar to the early 5th century BC Little Temple of Rhamnous. North of the shrine, a long and narrow south-facing portico afforded worshippers rest and protection from the elements (Fig. 2). The roof of a similar portico associated with the Little Temple at Rhamnous was supported by wooden columns. Votive offerings and relief carvings would have been deposited around the altar outside and east of the *oikos*-temple, between it and the portico, as in the Rhamnous Amphiareion²¹.

The Classical temple

The increasing fame of Apollo's shrine at Dor required its transformation, probably in the late 5th or early 4th century BC. The small *oikos*-

21. On the 6th century BC Amphiareion at Rhamnous: Petrakos, *Rhamnous*, 52-53. On the early 5th century BC Little Temple, altar and portico at Rhamnous: Petrakos, *Rhamnous*, 20-23, 37.

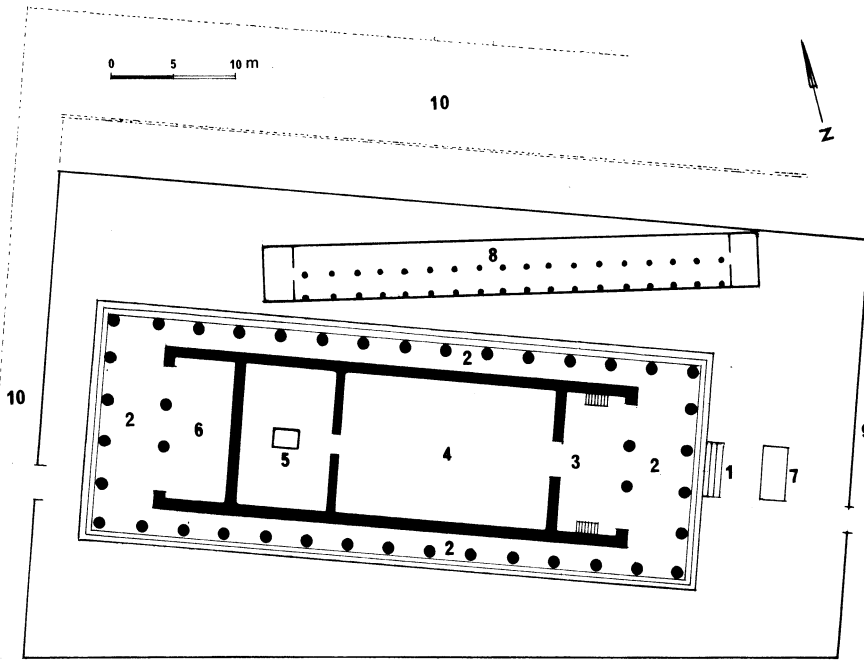


Fig. 3 The Temenos of Apollo and Asclepius at Dor. 1: Stairs/ramp; 2: Podium of temple with stoa forming peristyle; 3: Pronaos (front porch); 4: Cella/Naos; 5: Statue of god above Adyton; 6: Opisthodomos (rear porch); 7: Altar; 8: Abaton/Enkoimeterion; 9: Peribolos (Temenos wall); 10: Hieria Odos (Sacred Way) - Drawing D. Ladiray.

temple was either pulled down or incorporated as *cella* into a colonnaded Doric temple on two levels similar to the oracular temple of Apollo at Claros²². On the upper level, at Dor as at Claros, the *pronaos* in the east would have led through a monumental doorway into the *cella* housing a colossal statue of Apollo, whereas the crypt-like *adyton* extending under the *cella* and consisting of two successive subterranean rooms where the oracle was consulted at night, would have been reached

22. On the fully-fledged Temple of Apollo at Claros, built in the late 4th century BC but transformed in the late 1st century BC after the destructions inflicted upon it by the wars of Sulla, see Martin - Metzger, *La religion grecque*, 56-60; Parke, *The Oracles of Apollo*, 128-129; and, "Claros", *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 335. At Didyma, the *adyton* was an unroofed, sunken courtyard, enclosed by high walls, at the western end of which the god's statue stood in a chapel or *naiskos* (H. Knackfuss, *Didyma. I. Die Baubeschreibung*, Vols I-III, Berlin 1941; R. Martin - H. Stierlin, *Monde grec*, Office du Livre 1964, 97, 99-100 [Plan], 114-121 [Photographs]; Martin - Metzger, *La religion grecque*, 52-53; and, Parke, *The Oracles of Apollo*, 48-53).

from the *pronaos* by two staircases leading down to one or two corridors running east-west towards the original oracular cave beneath the god's image.

At Dor, the temple on a raised podium reached by two staircases (of which the eastern and western edges are visible on the aerial photograph), the sacrificial altar which must have stood east of the *pronaos*, and the Northern portico formed a sacred precinct or *temenos* (2,000m²) edged by a *peribolos* wall (Fig. 3), resembling the *temenos* of Apollo at Delphi²³. A road, 6-6,50 m wide, ran north of and parallel to the northern stretch of the *peribolos*. Outside the north-western corner of the precinct, it joined up with the paved street (at least 3 m wide excluding the kerbstones) by which the Byzantine pilgrims were later to ascend to the church from the South Bay of Dor, turning southwards into the Byzantine *cardo* in order to reach the western entrance of the basilica. At the summit of the ascent from the sandy bay, the paved street divides itself into two branches, one descending north-east and then east towards the church, the other ascending further towards the *tell*²⁴. This was presumably the Sacred Way (originally paved and lined with votive sculptures and inscriptions, as at Delphi), which was followed by processions made by the citizens of ancient Dora for various rituals at their local oracular temple located, like most Greek oracular and healing sanctuaries, outside the city walls and at the foot of the acropolis²⁵. At Festival time as well as on a regular basis, pilgrims travelling to Dor by sea, walked up to the temple from the South Bay along the Sacred Way (Photo 8). Likewise, a Sacred Way linked Apollo's shrine at Didyma with the harbour of Panormos as well as with the city of Miletus, and the Pergamenes followed the *Via Tecta* from the city gates to the sanctuary of Asclepius, which in its last 120 m before

23. On the *temenos* of Apollo at Delphi: Courby, *La Terrasse du Temple d'Apollon*, 156-201; F. Chamoux, *La Civilisation grecque à l'époque archaïque et classique*, Paris 1965, 244-247; and, Schoder, *Ancient Greece*, 47-49.

24. Dauphin - Gibson, "The Byzantine City at Dor/Dora", 11 (Fig. 1) and 18-19.

25. Examples abound. Notably, the Amphiareion of Oropos on the border of Attica and Boetia which was founded in the last quarter of the 5th century BC (B.Chr. Petracos, *The Amphiareion of Oropos*, Athens 1995), the Asclepieion of Epidaurus founded in 419 BC (Iakovidis, *Argolide*, 127, 137-144), and that of Gortys in Arcadia originally dating to the 4th century BC (R. Martin - H. Metzger, "Gortys [Arcadie]", in "Chronique des Fouilles et Découvertes Archéologiques en Grèce en 1940 et 1941", *BCH* 64-65 [1940-1941] 274-286; and, "Gortys d'Arcadie", in "Chronique des Fouilles et Découvertes Archéologiques en Grèce en 1942", *BCH* 66-67 [1942-1943] 334-336; R. Ginouvès, *L'Etablissement Thermal de Gortys d'Arcadie*, Paris 1959; Martin - Metzger, *La religion grecque*, 72-76).

the temple precinct widened into a fine road flanked by porticoes²⁶. At Dor, having entered the *temenos* of the sanctuary of Apollo through a gate in the eastern *peribolos*, they reached an esplanade focussed on an altar to which they brought their sacrificial offerings. Having deposited their votive offerings in thanksgiving in the *opisdothomos*, they would have left the sacred precinct by exiting through a gate in the western *peribolos* (visible in the aerial photograph), from which they would have seen the walled city of Dora straight ahead.

Allegedly founded by Doros, son of the Sea God Poseidon, Dora was well-known to the ancient Greeks. It is mentioned in the geography of Hecateus of Miletus²⁷ in about 500 BC, and may even have been a member of the Attic Sea League in the 5th century BC²⁸. Despite the submission of Palestine to the Persian Kingdom in 536 BC and the granting of Dora by the Persians to Eshmunazar II, King of Sidon, the Greek colony in Dora prospered: large quantities of imported Attic red-figured painted vessels, black glazed ware, East Greek and Corinthian pottery have been found in the Hebrew University's excavations of the *tell* since 1980²⁹.

26. On Sacred Ways: M. Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, London - New York 1997, 34-36, 212. On the Sacred Way linking Miletus, Didyma and Panormos: Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage*, 91. On the *Via Tecta* at Pergamum: G. De Luca, "Le Sanctuaire d'Asklépios à Pergame", *Le Monde de la Bible* No. 76 (mai-juin 1992) 12-14 and Fig. 13.

27. G. Dahl, *The Materials for the History of Dor*, New Haven 1915, 62; G. Vermes - F. Millar - M. Black (eds), *Emil Schürer, History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, Vol. II, Edinburgh 1979, 119.

28. Against Dahl (*The Materials for the History of Dor*, 62) and V. Tcherikover (*Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*, transl. by S. Applebaum, Philadelphia 1958, 92) who rejected outright the suggestion made by U. Köhler ("Urkunden und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des delisch-attischen Bundes", *Abhandlungen der königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaft zu Berlin 1869* [1870] 121, n. 3) that the Δῶρος mentioned in the third book of Craterus' *Collection of Decrees* (B.D. Meritt - H.T. Wade-Gery - M.F. McGregor, *The Athenian Tribute Lists*, Vol. I, Cambridge, Mass. 1939, 154, 483) was Phoenician Doros at the foot of Mount Carmel, R. Meiggs (*The Athenian Empire*, Oxford 1972, 420-421) argues convincingly in support of that identification. In the context of Athens' success in Egypt and probably also on Cyprus during the early fifties of the 5th century BC, it is "credible that she [Athens] should have added Greek cities in the eastern Mediterranean to her League". Thus Doros would have rightly been included in the Assessment Decree of 454-453 BC which recorded the one sixtieth part annually paid into the Treasury of the goddess Athena from the amount actually collected by the *hellenotamiai*. Meiggs even suggests that had "records been preserved in Delos Doros would probably have been found among the tribute payers in 458 and 457".

29. E. Stern, "Dor", in E. Stern (ed.), *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, Jerusalem 1993 (hereafter abridged as *NEAEHL*), Vol. 1, 361 (with full bibliography).

Caught in a storm, ships attempting to enter the South Bay to unload both trade-goods and passengers, frequently grounded on the shifting sand-banks or shattered against the rocky islets dotting the bay. The foundering of at least two 5th century BC ships has been revealed by underwater archaeology surveys³⁰. A particularly remarkable find was a Greek ovoid-shaped bronze *pilos* war-helmet as worn by hoplites on late 5th century and early 4th century BC Attic gravestones and reliefs, to which had been attached two Thracian cheek-pieces of the mid-5th century serving to protect the front of the face (Photo 9)³¹. A shallow, oblique dent above the brim implies that the *pilos* had been damaged in combat. *Piloi* have so far been discovered only as votive offerings, both in the oracular shrine of Zeus at Dodona in north-western Greece and at Olympia³². Even if this can never be proven, it may be conjectured that when the ship on which he was travelling was wrecked, the owner of the Dor *pilos* (perhaps a mercenary and member of the Greek colony of Dora), had had his life saved in battle by the divine intervention of Apollo, and was returning to his native city in order to deposit in thanksgiving his *pilos* at the god's shrine. Let us not forget that Apollo, who in Homer's *Illiad* inflicted a plague by shooting arrows³³ like the Phoenician Resheph (who was worshipped at neighbouring Apollonia, and further down the Pales-

30. K. Raveh - S.A. Kingsley, "Underwater Surveys", under "Dor", *NEAEHL*, 371 (concentration of flat-shouldered *amphorae* on the seabed of the South Bay indicating a cargo); Kingsley - Raveh, *Harbour and Anchorage at Dor*, 59-60 (Dor Wreck 11 - Dor K). See also, S. Wachsmann - Y. Kahanov, "The 1995 INA/CMS Joint Expedition to Tantura Lagoon, Israel", *Institute of Nautical Archaeology Quarterly* 24 (1997) 11 (Float 2) and 16.

31. K. Raveh - S.A. Kingsley, "The wreck complex at the entrance to Dor harbour, Israel: preliminary details", *IJNA* 21 (1992) 313-314; and, "Underwater Surveys", under "Dor", *NEAEHL*, 371; S.A. Kingsley - K. Raveh, "The Ships' Graveyard off Israel's Coast", *Minerva* 4.4 (1994) 9-10; and Kingsley - Raveh, *Harbour and Anchorage at Dor*, 59-60.

32. On the oracular shrine of Zeus at Dodona: S.I. Dakaris, *Archaeological Guide to Dodona*, Ioannina 1971. On the 1,800 offerings in bronze dedicated to Zeus at Dodona in the Geometric, Archaic and Classical periods: H.W. Parke, *The Oracles of Zeus. Dodona - Olympia - Ammon*, Oxford 1967, 98-99; and, more specifically on helmets similar to the Dor Bay *pilos*, C. Carapanos, *Dodone et Ses Ruines*, Paris 1878, Pl. LV, 4. On similar *piloi* amongst the votive offerings to Zeus at Olympia (Parke, *Oracles of Zeus*, Ch. VIII), see J.Vokotopoulou, "Phrygische Helme", *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 3 (1982) 511.

33. *Iliad* I,44-54 (ed. A.T. Murray, *Homer. The Iliad. I. Books I-XII* [The Loeb Classical Library], Cambridge, Mass. - London 1960, 6-7). On Apollo, le "Bel Homicide", "Archer de la mort venant lui-même «faire mourir», *apollúnai* en grec, qui fait si bien écho à son propre nom, Apollon": M. Detienne, *Apollon le couteau à la main*, Paris 1998, 10, 227-229, and 271, n. 139.

tinian coast at Ascalon, Gaza and Raphia)³⁴, was also Paieon, Apollo the Saviour (*Sôter*) and Healer (*Iatros*)³⁵, Father of Asclepius, the Hero-Physician who ultimately became the God of Medicine to whom votive offerings would be made. According to Pausanias (VIII,xxviii.1), Alexander the Great dedicated his breastplate and spear to Asclepius at his shrine of Gortys in Arcadia, this inducing R. Martin and H. Metzger to wonder: “L’Asclépieion gortynien s’était-il fait une spécialité de la guérison des blessures?”³⁶.

From oracular to healing shrine

One trait particular to the Byzantine ecclesiastical complex at Dor was intimately connected with sickness and the recovery of health. This was the practice of incubation, adopted by Christianity from the rites of divine healing as practised in the temples of Asclepius³⁷. The Graeco-Roman God of Medicine thus provides the missing link at Dor between the cult of his father Apollo and that of his own rival and successor, Christ.

Following Hesiod’s fragmentary *Catalogue* (600 BC)³⁸, the Greek poet Pindar (520-440 BC) described in his third *Pythian Ode* the birth of Ascle-

34. On the similarities between Apollo and Resheph: J. Teixidor, *The Pagan God. Popular Religion in the Greco-Roman Near East*, Princeton 1977, 91 and n. 73; L.E. Stager, “Why were Hundreds of Gods Buried at Ashkelon?”, *BAR* XVII, No. 3 (May/June 1991) 34-35; and, F. Graf, “Apollo”, *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 123. On the cult of Resheph-Apollo at Apollonia, Ascalon, Gaza and Raphia, see Teixidor, *The Pagan God*, 96-98; Vermes - Millar - Black (eds), *Emil Schürer, History of the Jewish People*, Vol. II, 30-37; and, J. Magness, “Roman Temple at Kedesh”, *IEJ* 40 (1990) 179-180.

35. An independent healing-god in the *Iliad* (V,400-401; ed. Murray, *Homer. Iliad*, 224-225), Paieon later became an *epiclesis* of Apollo the Healer and was amalgamated with the Ionian Apollo Ἴατρος (“Healer”) who was venerated in most Black Sea cities (Graf, “Apollo”, 122).

36. Martin - Metzger, *La religion grecque*, 74. Alexander’s breastplate and the head of his spear were still on view in the Temple of Asclepius at Gortys in Pausanias’ lifetime (ed. W.H.S. Jones, *Pausanias, Description of Greece*. Vol. IV. *Books VIII [XXII]-X* [The Loeb Classical Library], London - New York 1935, 42-45). On the Gortys Asclepieion, *supra*, n. 25.

37. On Asclepian incubation: O. Temkin, *Hippocrates in a World of Pagans and Christians*, Baltimore - London 1991, 80. On Pagan and Christian incubation: L. Deubner, *De Incubatione Capita Quattuor*, Lipsiae 1900.

38. R. Merkelbach - M.L. West (eds), *Fragmenta Hesiodica*, Oxford 1967, 38-39, Frag. No. 59 (wrongly called Fr. 122 by E.J. Edelstein - L. Edelstein, *Asclepius. A Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies*, Baltimore 1945, Vol. I. *Collection of the Testimonies*, T.21, p. 20), and, 39, Frag. No. 60 (wrongly called Fr. 123 by Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. I, T. 22, pp. 20-21).

pius as resulting from the love-affair of Apollo with a human, Coronis, daughter of Phlegyas of Thessaly³⁹. Despite being with child by Apollo, Coronis married a mortal, her kinsman Ischys. A raven denounced her unfaithfulness to Apollo, who, enraged, sent his sister Artemis to kill Coronis. Apollo, however, snatched the baby from its mother's womb as she lay burning on the funerary pyre and entrusted it to Chiron. Educated by the Centaur from whom he learnt the art of surgery, the preparations of drugs and the potencies of herbs, true son of his father Apollo, "originator and discoverer of the art of medicine"⁴⁰, from whom he had learnt "many things pertaining to medicine"⁴¹, Asclepius became a great physician. Yielding to the lure of gold, he who was but a semi-god had the audacity to bring back to life a dead man and incurred the implacable wrath of Zeus, who punished this crime of *lèse majesté* and *hubris* by slewing Asclepius with his thunderbolt⁴². Several different versions of this myth circulated in 6th and 5th century BC Greece, the name and origin of Asclepius' mother being changed from Coronis the Thessalian to Arsinoë the Messenian⁴³. Around 300 BC, the poet Isyllus turned Asclepius' mother (Coronis or Aigle) and maternal grandfather into natives of Epidaurus in the Peloponnese, and spun an edulcorated Epidaurian saga⁴⁴, which was repeated in the 2nd century AD by Pausanias⁴⁵, whereby the baby had been born in the sacred temple of Epidaurus (despite the prohibition for mortals of giving birth within the precincts of a sanctuary). He had been exposed, nurtured by a goat and protected by a dog. Throughout the variations of the myth, Asclepius remained consistently and unquestionably the son of Apollo,

39. Pindar, *Pythiae* III,5-55 (ed. W.H. Race, *Pindar. Olympian Odes. Pythian Odes* [The Loeb Classical Library], Cambridge, Mass. - London 1997, 245-251).

40. Isidorus Hispalensis, *Etymologiae* IV,iii,1-2 (ed. W.M. Lindsay, *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX. T. I. Libri I-X*, Oxford 1911; repr. 1966).

41. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica* V,74,6 (ed. C.H. Oldfather, *Diodorus of Sicily. The Library of History. Vol. III. Books IV.59-VIII* [The Loeb Classical Library], London - Cambridge, Mass. 1939, 298-301).

42. Pindar, *Pythiae* III,55-60 (ed. Race, *Pindar. Pythian Odes*, 251). On the various versions of the saga of Asclepius' death: Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius. Vol. II. Interpretation of the Testimonies*, 46-52.

43. Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. II, 24-34.

44. *Inscriptiones Graecae* IV2, 1, No. 128.iii.32 - iv.56 (ed. F.H. Gaertringen, *Inscriptiones Graecae. Vol. IV. Fasc. 1. Inscriptiones Epidauri*, Berolini 1929 [hereafter abridged as *IG* IV2, 1], 82); transl. by Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. I, T. 594, pp. 330-331. The Epidaurian saga is fully analyzed by Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. II, 69-74.

45. Pausanias II,xxvi.3-10 (ed. W.H.S. Jones, *Pausanias. Description of Greece. Vol. I. Books I and II* [The Loeb Classical Library], London - New York 1918, 384-391).

from whom he derived his name which is a compound, the second half *epios* (ἤπιος – “mild”) being the surname of Apollo the physician⁴⁶. This filiation was expressed in cultic association at the shrine in Epidaurus of Apollo Maleatas who healed the sick in their dreams as they incubated in a long portico built *ca.* 330 BC adjoining an early 4th century small temple⁴⁷. Likewise, the sacred *temenos* to the north of the city of Corinth, which had been Apollo’s domain since the late 7th century BC, included an *oikos* from the mid-5th century BC. This may already have been the *joint* abode of Apollo and Asclepius. Although the cult of Apollo is attested by a dedication scratched on the rim of a small Late Corinthian I krater (575-550 BC), the terracotta votive offerings dated to between 450 and 350 BC are in the shape of heads, eyes, ears, legs, arms, fingers, busts and male sexual organs, some of them inscribed as dedicated to Asclepius. In 330-324 BC, the original complex was razed and an Asclepieion erected which comprised a temple, an altar and porticoes for incubation⁴⁸. The inscriptions found at Epidaurus are entitled “Cures of Apollo and of Asclepius”⁴⁹, and the Hippocratic oath associated Asclepius and his daughters Hygeia and Panacea to Apollo the Physician⁵⁰.

As the Delphic cult developed, Apollo gradually lost his personal function as healer of diseases and finally renounced it in favour of his son, demi-god (*daimon*) and patron of doctors, who acted as his co-adjutor and associate whilst Apollo remained the titular head of his sanctuaries. By the late 5th century BC, Asclepius had eclipsed his father. He owed his supremacy to his personal deep interest in the well-being of the individual which contrasted with Apollo’s lofty indifference to men whom he regarded as “pitiful creatures”⁵¹, and which was particularly sought after

46. Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. II, 80-82. From the end of the 5th century BC, Asclepius’ wife Epione, “a mere double of the god”, personified Mildness (Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. II, 86-87).

47. *Supra*, n. 20.

48. C. Roebuck, *Corinth*. Vol. XIV. *The Asklepieion and Lerna*, Princeton 1951, 8-22 on the Archaic Temenos (15-19 more specifically on the votive offerings), 23-64 on the Asclepieion, and 152-159 on the cult of Asclepius in Corinth. Also, Martin - Metzger, *La religion grecque*, 77-81.

49. *IG IV2*, 1, Nos 121-122, dated to the second half of the 4th century BC, transl. by Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. I, T. 423, pp. 221-237.

50. *Jusjurandum* I,1-3 (ed. W.H.S. Jones, *Hippocrates*. Vol. I [The Loeb Classical Library], London - Cambridge, Mass. 1972, 289).

51. Homer, *Iliad* XXI,461-467 (ed. A.T. Murray, *Homer. The Iliad*. II. *Books XIII-XXIV* [The Loeb Classical Library], London - Cambridge, Mass. 1963, 440-443). Detienne (*Apollon*, 229) notes that unlike Asclepius whose vocation was to heal the bodily diseases

during the most famous epidemic of Antiquity, the plague which struck Athens in 430-426 BC at the time of the Peloponnesian War and impelled men to focuss religiously on healing. From Epidaurus, the cult of Asclepius spread rapidly, reaching Aegina in 422 BC, Piraeus and Athens in 420-419, Cos *ca.* 350, Pergamum and Ephesus in the third quarter of the 4th century BC. Following ancient sea-routes, the cult progressed in the 4th and 3rd centuries BC across the Aegean and the Mediterranean, both eastwards and westwards, and took root in harbours and coastal towns⁵². From Homeric hero-physician to local healing deity and subsequently Panhellenic healer and helper in the Archaic period, Asclepius ultimately became the Hellenistic and Roman “god who regulates and rules the universe, Saviour of all things, Saviour of what is and what shall be” in the words of the 2nd century AD sophist Aelius Aristides, described by G.W. Bowersock as “the eloquent hypochondriac” whose repeated bouts of illness had driven him from the age of 26 to spend much of his time as a patient at the Pergamum Asclepieion⁵³. This evolution was in accord with new trends in Greek religion, which tended to bring down the gods from their Olympian heights so that they may serve a useful purpose to Man in his world⁵⁴.

When did the cult of Asclepius reach Dor? That Apollo was still worshipped as the main deity of Dora in the early Hellenistic period (332-200 BC), is suggested by a garbled fable quoted by Flavius Josephus from the Alexandrian grammarian Apion, who had himself lifted it from the *Geography* of Mnaseas active in the late 3rd and early 2nd century BC⁵⁵. Apollo

of *individuals*, Apollo, as “physician by divination” (*iatromantis*), rid *entire cities* of plague or civil war through oracles, “en révélant à ceux qui prennent la route de Delphes d’où vient la souillure et comment s’en délivrer”.

52. On the dissemination of the cult of Asclepius: Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. II, 245-250; and, Graf, “Asclepius”, 88.

53. G.W. Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire*, Oxford 1969, 36. Aelius Aristides’ health problems and attempts to be healed are described in great detail in his *Ἱεροὶ λόγοι* (C.A. Behr, *Aelius Aristides and the Sacred Tales*, Amsterdam 1968). On the Pergamum Asclepieion: O. Deubner, *Das Asklepieion von Pergamon*, Berlin 1938; O. Ziegenhaus - G. De Luca, *Die Altertümer von Pergamon*. XI, 1. *Das Asklepieion*, Berlin 1968; Martin - Metzger, *La religion grecque*, 84-91; and, De Luca, “Le Sanctuaire d’Asklépios à Pergame”, 12-20.

54. Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. II, 106-111; and, R. Parker, *Athenian Religion. A History*, Oxford 1996, 183-185.

55. Flavius Josephus, *Contra Apionem* II,9 (ed. H.St.J. Thackeray, *Josephus*. Vol. I. *The Life. Against Apion*, London - Cambridge, Mass. 1961, 336-341).

is described as the god of the citizens of Dora (*Apollinem deum Doriensium*). The story is set, however, “a long time ago” (*longo quodam tempore*) when the Jews and Idumeans were at war, and Dora is dubbed a “city of the Idumeans” (*in aliqua civitate Idumaeorum*). Josephus who based his demonstration of Apion’s foolishness on the location of Dora in Phoenicia near Mount Carmel and not in Idumea south of Hebron, was himself first taken to task by Schürer, according to whom the city in question was not Dora, but Adora in Idumea⁵⁶. The worship of Apollo by the Idumeans in the Hellenistic period is derived from an early 2nd century BC inscription in Memphis in Egypt, which stated that the Idumeans held their assembly ἐν τῷ ἄνω Ἀπολλωνεῖῳ⁵⁷. Since this term designates an “assembly” in Doric, the claimed “temple of Apollo” at Adora (which has not been otherwise substantiated by literary or archaeological evidence) may be nothing more, in our opinion, than a scholarly extrapolation for the more pedestrian “assembly hall”⁵⁸. The discovery of a sanctuary of Apollo in Phoenician Dora renews the discussion. Could it be that the confusion between Adora and Dora stemmed from the fact that Mnaseas had access to two separate sources which he conflated – one, which concerned the Jewish-Idumean conflict, and the other which mentioned the cult of Apollo in the coastal city of Dora which would have been well known to him as a Greek from Lycian Patara and student of Eratosthenes? If valid, Mnaseas’ testimony would furnish the proof that in the early 3rd century BC, Apollo still dominated the religious life of Dora. This does not exclude the possibility that an altar to his son Asclepius might already have been erected within the sacred precinct, as in the grove of Apollo Cyparissus at Cos ca.350 BC prior to a temple being built specifically for Asclepius at the beginning of the 3rd century BC⁵⁹.

56. Vermes - Millar - Black (eds), *Emil Schürer, History of the Jewish People*, Vol. II, 5-6, 35; Vol. III.1, 597-598. Also, Dahl, *The Materials for the History of Dor*, 83-84; and, Th.Reinach - L. Blum (eds), *Flavius Josèphe. Contre Apion*, Paris 1972, xxxviii.

57. Vermes - Millar - Black (eds), *Emil Schürer, History of the Jewish People*, Vol. II, 5-6, n. 9. See also, Graf, “Apollo”, 122 on the ἀπέλλα, the annual reunion of adult tribesmen who introduced the young to the community, Apollo being thus fundamentally an initiation-god.

58. The connection between Apollo, the *Apellai* Feasts in his honour, and the gathering of assemblies (ἀπελλάζειν) is magnificently traced by Detienne (*Apollon*, 128-131).

59. Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. II, 254-255; Martin - Metzger, *La religion grecque*, 91-92; Graf, “Asclepius”, 88; and, “Cos”, *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 403-404.

A mid-to-late 3rd century BC date for the supplanting of Apollo by Asclepius at Dor would coincide with the building towards the end of the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 BC) of a new fortification system for the city, in Greek style (large, thick, rectangular sandstone blocks being laid as headers) as opposed to the Phoenician tradition of ashlar pillars with a field-stone fill which characterized the former mid-4th century BC ramparts. Hellenistic Dora was a well-planned orthogonal city with lengthwise streets running parallel to the city walls and right-angle intersections⁶⁰. Within the sacred precinct which by then was presumably in the sole ownership of Asclepius, Hellenistic pottery and glass have been found in abundance, particularly in the Northern portico⁶¹. The transformation of an oracular shrine into an Asclepieion focussed on incubation rites, necessarily entailed some structural alterations. The configuration of the eastern end of the Northern portico suggests that, on analogy with the 4th century BC Large Stoa in the sanctuary of the healing hero and seer Amphiaraus at Oropos on the border of Attica and Beotia, a section up to 5.50 m long was separated from the original portico at Dor by the insertion of two columns between which the gaps were filled by a stone parapet, thus forming an isolated room with a walled façade, paved with stone slabs like the rest of the portico⁶². Incubation (ἐγκοίμησις – *enkoimesis*) would have taken place in this room and in a similar, symmetrical room at the western end of the portico, the main hall being used for daytime shelter. Alternatively, the Northern portico could have been lengthened eastwards and, by being made to reach up to the *peribolos* wall, widened to 8 m. In this case, as at Epidaurus, the entire portico would have been used for incubation and thus turned into an *enkoimeterion* or *abaton*⁶³.

60. Stern, "Dor", *NEAEHL*, 362-363 on the Hellenistic city-plan; 366-367 on the differences between the 4th century BC fortifications and the 3rd century BC ramparts.

61. Salient examples of the Hellenistic pottery are described by S.A. Kingsley in the *Appendix*. Hellenistic glass, which was identified by Y. Gourin-Rosen and N. Katzenelson (IAA), is predominantly represented by cast bluish and colourless bowls. Numismatic evidence, which was studied by A. Berman (IAA), includes both the Seleucids, notably Antiochus IV (174-164 BC), and the Ptolemies, especially Ptolemy IV (181-145BC).

62. Petracos, *The Amphiareion*, 24-27, 28 Fig. 18, 35 Fig. 25.

63. R. Martin - H. Metzger, "Epidaure. I. L'Abaton et ses annexes", in "Chronique des Fouilles et Découvertes Archéologiques en Grèce en 1942", *BCH* 66-67 (1942-1943) 327-332; and, Iakovidis, *Argolide*, 131 (No. 14 on Plan), 138-139.

The Asclepian rites of healing

From his father Apollo, Asclepius had inherited not only his healing charisma but also his oracular power in which water played a fundamental role over and above its purificatory significance. A deep well had been integrated into the *cella* of the 3rd century BC temple of Asclepius Sôter at Pergamum. In “the earliest and most famous temple of Asclepius” at Tricca in Thessaly⁶⁴, it was forbidden, according to the poet Isyllus, to descend into the *adyton* of Asclepius before making a preliminary sacrifice to Apollo⁶⁵. Such a *katabasis* associated with the oracular shrines of Apollo, would doubtlessly have been practised in the temple of Dor which Asclepius had taken over from Apollo wholesale with its original water-source or receptacle.

The maxim inscribed over the entrance to the temple of Asclepius at Epidaurus read: “Pure must be who enters the fragrant temple; purity means to think holy thoughts”⁶⁶, thus disposing of elaborate rites of purification. Nevertheless, before entering the *temenos* at Dor, suppliants would have bathed in the sea. In *The Plutus* of Aristophanes, first performed in 388 BC, the god of Wealth, Plutus, who is blind (resulting in undeserving men being rich and the righteous suffering from need or poverty) seeks the restoration of his sight by incubating for a whole night at the sanctuary of Asclepius at Zea in Piraeus, before which he was plunged into “the cold sea” nearby⁶⁷. In addition to cleansing in the sea, in a river, spring or in individual bathtubs, the sick in search of a cure were required, at Pergamum, to abstain from sex as well as from goat’s meat and cheese for a full day⁶⁸. Barefoot, having removed all rings, girdles and belts, dressed in white and an olive wreath in their flowing hair, they brought honey-

64. Strabo, *Geography* 9.5.17 (ed. H.L. Jones, *The Geography of Strabo*. Vol. IV. Books VIII and IX [The Loeb Classical Library], London - New York 1927, 428-431).

65. *IG* IV2, 1, No. 128.III.29-31 (ed. De Gaertingen, 82).

66. Porphyrius, *De Abstinencia* II,19: ἐν γούν Ἐπιδαύρῳ προεγγραπτο ἄγνὸν χρῆ νοῖο θυώδεος ἐντος ἰόντα ἔμμεναν ἄγνεῖα δ’ ἐστὶ φρονεῖν ὄσια. Transl. by Edelstein and Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. I, T. 318, pp. 163-164: “In Epidaurus, at any rate, there was the inscription: ‘Pure must be he who enters the fragrant temple; purity means to think nothing but holy thoughts’”. Also quoted by Clement of Alexandria in *Stromata* V,i,13 (*PG* 9, cols 27-30; transl. by Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. I, T. 336, pp. 177-178).

67. Aristophanes, *Plutus*, 655-657 (ed. B. Bickley Rogers, *Aristophanes. The Plutus* [The Loeb Classical Library], Cambridge, Mass. - London 1979, 424-425).

68. C. Habicht, *Altertümer von Pergamon*. Band VIII 3. *Die Inschriften des Asklepieions*, Berlin 1969 (hereafter abridged as *Alt. Perg.* VIII 3), No. 161.13, p. 168.

cakes decorated with olive sprigs, cheese-cakes, bakemeats and figs to the altar before the temple *pronaos*, where these were burnt. An animal was then sacrificed – “ox or stuffed pig of much fatness”, according to Herondas’ fourth *Mimiambi* which is set in the mid-3rd century BC at the shrine of Asclepius in Cos⁶⁹. The prohibition of goat sacrifice in all sanctuaries of Asclepius, except in Libyan Cyrene but particularly at Epidaurus, is related to the myth of the child Asclepius being reared by a goat. The protection afforded to the infant by a dog in the same myth and his discovery by a group of hunters with dogs, also partly explains the role of companion vested in the dog which often accompanied Asclepius in statues, carvings and on Epidaurian coins. Sacred dogs roamed the god’s sanctuary at Epidaurus, occasionally healing the sick by licking their sick organs or wounds⁷⁰. Interestingly, the faunal remains collected in the fill from the destroyed Graeco-Roman sanctuary at Dor on which rested the Byzantine ecclesiastical complex, included bones of dogs as well as of pigs and cattle which were presumably the left-overs from sacrifices⁷¹. The bones of one goat and of numerous ovicaprines may be attributed to the Archaic temple of Apollo to whom it was customary, at Delphi, to sacrifice goats⁷². After the animal-sacrifice, the suppliants placed three obols into the treasury (*thesauros*). At Pergamum, an additional equivalent offering was made to Apollo⁷³. Sacrifice was followed by a compulsory ritual meal in a banqueting hall or in a tent within the sacred precinct, during which the meat of the sacrifices was consumed by the temple personnel and the worshippers.

Once the preliminary rites had been performed, the patients entered the *abaton* at night, sexes being strictly segregated, and laid down on the floor on a makeshift “natural” bed of twigs (*stibas*) which symbolized an ordeal as a prelude to an initiation rite in the form of a sojourn in the “wilds”⁷⁴,

69. Herondas, *Mimiambi* IV,14-16 (eds W. Headlam - A.D. Knox, *Herodas. The Mimes and Fragments*, Cambridge 1922, 166-167; and, ed. I.C. Cunningham, *Herodas. Mimiambi*, Oxford 1971, 37).

70. On the dog as one of Asclepius’ attributes: Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. II, 227; Parker, *Athenian Religion*, 182-183.

71. The faunal remains from our excavations at Dor were identified by Dr L. Kolska Horowitz (Zoology Department, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem).

72. H.W. Parke - D.E.W. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle*. Vol. I. *The History*, Oxford 1956, 32; H. Lloyd-Jones, “The Delphic Oracle”, *Greece and Rome* 23 (1976) 66; and, Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage*, 82, 84, 154-155.

73. *Alt. Perg.* VIII 3, No. 161.2-14, p. 168.

74. J.-M. Verpoorten, “La «stibas» ou l’image de la brousse dans la société grecque”, *Revue de l’Histoire des Religions* 161-162 (1962) 147-160.

the allusion being reinforced by the location of the healing shrine removed from the walled city. The temple servitor put out the lights and recommended those “sick with every form of ailment” to sleep⁷⁵. During the night, Asclepius revealed “himself in person to men”⁷⁶, either in “divinely inspired dreams”⁷⁷ or in a state described by Aelius Aristides as “halfway between sleep and waking”⁷⁸. Dressed in a white chiton and wearing sandals, bearded (or exceptionally in the guise of a handsome youth⁷⁹), with a crown of laurel sacred to Apollo wound around his head, holding in one hand a staff (which like Hermes’ sceptre brought sleep to men and woke them up again), and in the other a cone of the cultivated pine which, by its moisture, symbolized the sap of life, Asclepius “went round, with calm and quiet tread/To every patient scanning each disease”⁸⁰. He was often assisted by his daughter Hygeia (“Health”) and occasionally summoned the help of

75. Aristophanes, *Plutus*, 667-668: ἕτεροι τε πολλὰ παντοδαπὰ νοσήματα ἔχοντες (ed. Bickley Rogers, *Aristophanes. Plutus*, 424-425).

76. Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii Tyanae* I,7: καὶ ὁ Ἀσκληπιὸς αὐτὸς ἐπίδηλος τοῖς ἀνθρώποις (ed. F.C. Conybear, *Philostratus. The Life of Apollonius of Tyana* [The Loeb Classical Library], London - New York 1912, Vol. I, 16-17).

77. Jamblichus, *De Mysteriis* III,3: Οὕτως ἐν Ἀσκληπιῷ μὲν τὰ νοσήματα τοῖς θείοις ὄνειροις παύεται διὰ δὲ τὴν τάξιν τῶν νύκτων ἐπιφανειῶν ἢ ἰατρικὴ τέχνη συνέστη ἀπὸ τῶν ἱερῶν ὄνειράτων - “C’est ainsi que, dans les sanctuaires d’Asclépios, les maladies sont arrêtées par les songes divins; grâce à l’ordre des apparitions nocturnes, la science médicale s’est constituée à partir des songes sacrés” (ed. E. Des Places, *Jamblique. Les Mystères d’Egypte*, Paris 1966, 103).

78. Aelius Aristides, *Oratio* XLVIII,31-35: Ἐδηλώθη δὲ ὡς ἐναργέστατα, ὥσπερ οὖν καὶ μυρία ἕτερα ἐναργῆ τὴν παρουσίαν εἶχε τοῦθεοῦ. καὶ γὰρ οἷον ἀπτεσθαι δοκεῖν ἦν καὶ διαισθάνεσθαι ὅτι αὐτὸς ἦκοι, καὶ μέσως ἔχειν ὕπνου καὶ ἐγρηγόρσεως, καὶ βούλεσθαι ἐκβλέπειν καὶ ἀγωνιᾶν μὴ προαπαλλαγεῖν, καὶ ὅτα παραβεληκέναι καὶ ἀκούειν, τὰ μὲν ὡς ὄναρ, τὰ δὲ ὡς ὕπαρ, καὶ τρίχες ὄρθαι καὶ δάκρυα σὺν χαρᾷ καὶ γνώμης ὄγκος ἀνεπαχθῆς, καὶ τίς ἀνθρώπων ταῦτά γ’ ἐνδείξασθαι λόγῳ δυνατός; εἰ δὲ τις τῶν τετελεσμένων ἐστίν, σύνοιδέν τε καὶ γνωρίζει. - “It [the remedy] was revealed in the clearest way possible, just as countless other things also made the presence of the god manifest. For I seemed almost to touch him and to perceive that he himself was coming, and to be halfway between sleep and waking and to want to get the power of vision and to be anxious lest he depart beforehand, and to have turned my ears to listen, sometimes as in a dream, sometimes as in a waking vision, and my hair was standing on end and tears of joy (came forth), and the weight of knowledge was no burden - what man could even set these things forth in words? But if he is one of the initiates, the he knows and understands” (Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. I, T. 417, pp. 210-211).

79. As in the temple of Asclepius at Gortys in Arcadia, according to Pausanias (VIII, xxviii.1; ed. Jones, *Pausanias. Description of Greece*. Vol. IV, 42-45).

80. Aristophanes, *Plutus*, 707-709: ἐκεῖνος δ’ ἐν κύκλῳ τὰ νοσήματα σκοπῶν περιήει πάντα κοσμίως πάνυ (ed. Bickley Rogers, *Aristophanes. Plutus*, 428-429).

his serpents (whose shedding of skins symbolized rejuvenation) which licked wounds or sick limbs⁸¹. With a knife he performed surgery, with a pestle and mortar he ground herbs and mixed them with vinegar into salves, removed diseases by touching patients, by stretching forth his hand towards them in a gesture of blessing or by kissing them, or advised natural remedies such as applying ashes from his altar, riding or swimming.

Lest Asclepius bear a grudge for lack of gratitude and retaliate by behaving vindictively, the suppliants never failed to say a prayer to the god and to offer him a thanksgiving sacrifice, generally of a cock (cheaper than an ox or pig) which had been vowed in return for cures. The almost complete skeleton of a piglet under twelve months old was found *in situ* in the *opisdothomos* of the Dor temple, where animals were parked together with thanksgiving offerings awaiting to be sacrificed on the altar or, in the case of objects, to be deposited in the *cella*. Forgotten in the chaos of the destruction of the sanctuary in the mid or late 4th century AD, the piglet being tied and thus unable to escape, must have ultimately laid down to die. Soil fill which was later dumped in the area and over the piglet's skeleton, sealed in the last witness of the cult of Asclepius at Dor. Clay cocks found in the Asclepieia of Corinth and Athens acted as substitutes for the sacrificial victims. Dedications took also the form of anatomical ex-votos – body parts in metal –, votive plaques (*typoi*) depicting the dedicants, crowns, jewellery, medical instruments, coins, and tablets inscribed with a record of the cures. The temple priests compiled for the sanctuary inventories list of cures (*iamata*)⁸². The smaller votives were periodically melted and recast into more impressive cult furnishings. The offerings of thousands of pilgrims over several centuries must have cluttered the *cella* of the temple

81. Besides Asclepius' physician sons Machaon and Podalirius, his other iatric children, Aceso, Iaso, Panacea, Hygieia and Aegle, were personifications of medical functions and represented the healing power itself (Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. II, 86-90; H.A. Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art: The Representation of Abstract Concepts 600-400 B.C.*, Zürich 1993, 125-131; F. Graf, "Hygieia" and "Panacea", *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, respectively 734-735 and 1103). Ultimately, Hygieia preceded all her brothers and sisters (H. Sobel, *Hygieia: Die Göttinder der Gesumheit*, Darmstadt 1990). On the Asclepian serpent: Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. II, 229-230; Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage*, 78-79, 190-191.

82. W.H.D. Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings: An Essay in the History of Greek Religion*, Cambridge 1902, repr. New York 1975; S.B. Aleshire, *The Athenian Asklepieion. The People, their Dedications and the Inventories*, Amsterdam 1989, Part I, 37-48 on the dedications; Part II on the Inventories of the Athenian Asklepieion which was founded in 420-419 BC by a private citizen, Telemachos; came under State control between ca. 360 and 340 BC; and functioned as an active Pagan shrine until shortly before AD 485.

of Dor at the western end of which presumably stood, as at Epidaurus, the statue of Asclepius on which were hung the wreaths worn by the incubants and left on their pellets on the instruction of the priests who gathered and consecrated them⁸³. The worshippers finally departed, taking home with them as prophylaxy against Evil, their share of the *eugeia*, a “holy bread” made of flour kneaded with olive wine and oil. After the thanksgiving sacrifice had been enacted, the priests took their share of the *eugeia* and distributed the remainder amongst those who had brought offerings⁸⁴.

Asclepius and Christ

The *iamata* which recorded healing from paralysis, blindness, infestation by worms, sterility and abnormally long pregnancies, herald the Byzantine *Miracula*, in the same way that Asclepius appears as a precursor of Christ. The Church Fathers were acutely aware of the traits which Asclepius and Christ shared, rendering their rivalry particularly bitter. In the eyes of common worshippers who, unlike the Church Fathers, were not versed in the casuistry of dogma which asserted that “Jesus Christ, our teacher, was produced without sexual union”⁸⁵, both Asclepius and Christ were the sons of a god and of a mortal woman. Both had devoted a blameless life, primarily as physicians, in assisting those in need of physical and mental succour, Asclepius acting in the name of his father Apollo, and Christ in that of God the Father. Moreover, the system of filiation in the Christian Trinity was dangerously similar to the line of descent from Zeus through Apollo to Asclepius. Both Asclepius and Christ had died the death of mortals, and both had resurrected. Various stories circulated in Late Antiquity, whereby Asclepius had returned from the nether world with the permission of the Fates, or had been rendered immortal by the intervention of the gods⁸⁶. Like

83. Chamoux (*Civilisation grecque*, 246-247) describes vividly the sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi “encombré d’offrandes”. Iakovidis (*Argolide*, 139, Fig. 95) offers a visual reconstruction of the chryselephantine statue of Asclepius by Thrasymedes of Paros in the Temple of Asclepius (built ca. 490 BC) at Epidaurus. Incubants had to wear wreaths during the sacrifice preliminary to the *incubatio* and to leave them on their incubatory beds (Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage*, 161, 172).

84. Herondas, *Mimiambi* IV,83-95 (eds Headlam - Knox, *Herodas. Mimes*, 172-173; ed. Cunningham, *Herodas. Mimiambi*, 40).

85. Justin Martyr, *Apologia* I,21: 1-2 (*PG* 6, cols 359-360).

86. Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. II, 50-52, 75-76.

Christ, Asclepius was ever-present in his shrines. However, although Asclepius saved men from death by healing them and thus “revived” them, he operated solely on Earth, and could not give his patients the assurance of immortality of the soul and resurrection of the body which Christ promised his adherents would gain in the Other World, in the True Life. For Christ’s divinity had provided him with the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Moreover, even if Asclepius was indifferent to financial gain, he expected purity of thoughts as a prerequisite for healing, whereas Christ attached no strings to his generous help which he extended to all, including “the sinners and the publicans”. As emphasized by Clement of Alexandria, God had set up in his sanctuary three foundation stones: “Faith, Hope and Charity”⁸⁷.

Despite the institutionalization of Christianity as the State religion of the Byzantine Empire, the popularity of the pagan cult of Asclepius was unshaken. Christianity’s inability to triumph provoked resentment on the part of the Church Fathers, which they released in demonizing Asclepius who, according to Lactantius⁸⁸ and the *Acta Pilati*⁸⁹ cast out devils in the name of the Devil, and in ostracizing Asclepius’ medical disciples – the doctors. The vindictiveness unleashed in the destruction by Christians of Asclepius’ shrines, notably at Dor, was the popular expression and outlet of the same frustration. As Asclepius persisted in attracting followers, the Church changed its tactics⁹⁰. It absorbed physically the sacredness inherent in Asclepian sanctuaries by building churches over them, as at Dor, as well as appropriated and Christianized the healing rites of Christ’s main rival. This enabled the Church to lure Asclepius’ followers to newer (but in fact very old) pastures, made greener by the impressive novelty of heavily ornate basilicas. By fusing together several rites (baptism – *rite de passage par excellence* –, the Eucharist, incubation and healing at the tomb of saints, and reverence to a holy relic) and by integrating them into a processional system, all within one building – the abode of God the Father and of

87. *Stromata* V,i,13 (PG 9, cols 27-30): Ἐνταῦθα γὰρ ὁ νεὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ τρισὶν ἡδρασμένοις θεμελίοις, πίστει, ἐλπίδι, ἀγάπῃ, φαίνεται. Transl. by Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. I, T. 336, pp. 177-178: “For there is the sanctuary of God, set up over the three foundation-stones, Faith, Hope, Charity”.

88. Lactantius, *Divinae Institutionis* IV,xxvii,12 (PG 6, cols 533-534).

89. *Acta Pilati*, A, I, p. 216 (Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. I, T. 334, p. 176).

90. On the various tactics adopted by the Early Byzantine Church in order to eradicate Paganism, in particular in Palestine: C. Dauphin, *La Palestine byzantine: Peuplement et Populations*, Oxford 1998, Vol. I, Ch. VI.

God the Son – (as opposed to the previous Asclepian rites which meandered between various spots in a large precinct), the first bishop-builder of the Byzantine ecclesiastical complex at Dor aimed at capturing the undivided attention of the new Christian worshippers, who were awed and fascinated, and thus fully communed with their Lord, as had not been possible in a pagan shrine. However, since dogma did not allow for repeated epiphanies of Christ himself (as had been the habit of Asclepius), saints to whom Christ delegated his authority, were endowed with His healing power. At Dor, as in other healing centres which involved two male saints, such as SS Cosmas and Damian, or SS Cyrus and John, the parallelism between Asclepius and Christ was taken to its logical conclusion. For who were the two saints buried at Dor in the reliquary-tomb at the feet of the relic of their spiritual father's death on Golgotha, if not in Byzantine garb the sons of Asclepius, the Homeric healing heroes Machaon and Podalirius⁹¹, whose grave in Daunia was also an oracular shrine?

Claudine Dauphin
CNRS, Paris

91. Edelstein - Edelstein, *Asclepius*, Vol. II, 2-17; H. Jennings Rose - F. Graf, "Machaon and Podalirius", *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 906.

APPENDIX

A Sample of Persian period, Ancient Greek and Hellenistic Pottery from the *Temenos* of Apollo and Asclepius at Dor

by *Sean A. Kingsley* (Somerville College, Oxford)

Coarse Wares

– Flat-Shouldered jars with a low rim (Fig. 4, 1-3) are typical of later Persian production (cf. Stern, 1995: 62). Found in most Persian deposits of the 5th to 4th century BC along the coastline: Ashqelon (Golani, 1996: Fig.4, No. 1), Tell El-Hesi, first half of 5th to early 4th century BC (Bennett and Blakely, 1989: Fig. 137, No. 3), Tell Es-Sumeiriya (Messika, 1996: 35, Nos 1-4), Tel Michal Stratum IX of *ca.* 450-430 BC and the variant with angular shoulder (Dor, Fig. 4, 3) in Stratum VI of *ca.* 350-300 BC (Herzog, 1989: 113; Singer-Avitz, 1989: Fig. 9.3, Fig. 9.10).

– Basket Handle Jar (Fig. 4, 5-9). Probable origin East Greece (Stern, 1995: 63), but imitated locally in Palestine, as proven by petrographic analysis at Tel Michal (Goldberg *et alii*, 1989: 264-6). Without rim profiles it is complicated to determine whether the Dor material comprises early or late variants. For a detailed discussion of this jar, see Kingsley and Raveh (1996: 58-59). Probably later forms of 5th to 4th centuries BC (cf. Stern, 1982: 114). See also Tell El-Hesi Substratum Vd of first half of 5th to early 4th century BC (Bennett and Blakely, 1989: Fig. 145, No. 18).

– Miscellaneous Jar (Fig. 4, 4). First half of the 5th to early 4th century BC at Tell El-Hesi (Bennett and Blakely, 1989: Fig. 149, No. 13).

– Semi Fine Baggy Jar (not illustrated). Hellenistic container known from Tel Anafa in contexts of *ca.* 125 BC (Berlin, 1997: 152, 155).

– Mortarium (Fig. 4, 10). Persian period product of the 5th to 4th century BC (Stern, 1982: 98). See also: Tell El-Hesi, first half of 5th to early 4th century BC (Bennett and Blakely, 1989: Fig. 163, No. 26), Tell Es-Sumeiriya, 5th to 4th century BC (Messika, 1996: Fig. 3, Nos 8-9), Tel Michal Stratum X, *ca.* 490-450 BC (Herzog, 1989: 113; Singer-Avitz, 1989: Fig. 9.1, No. 16).

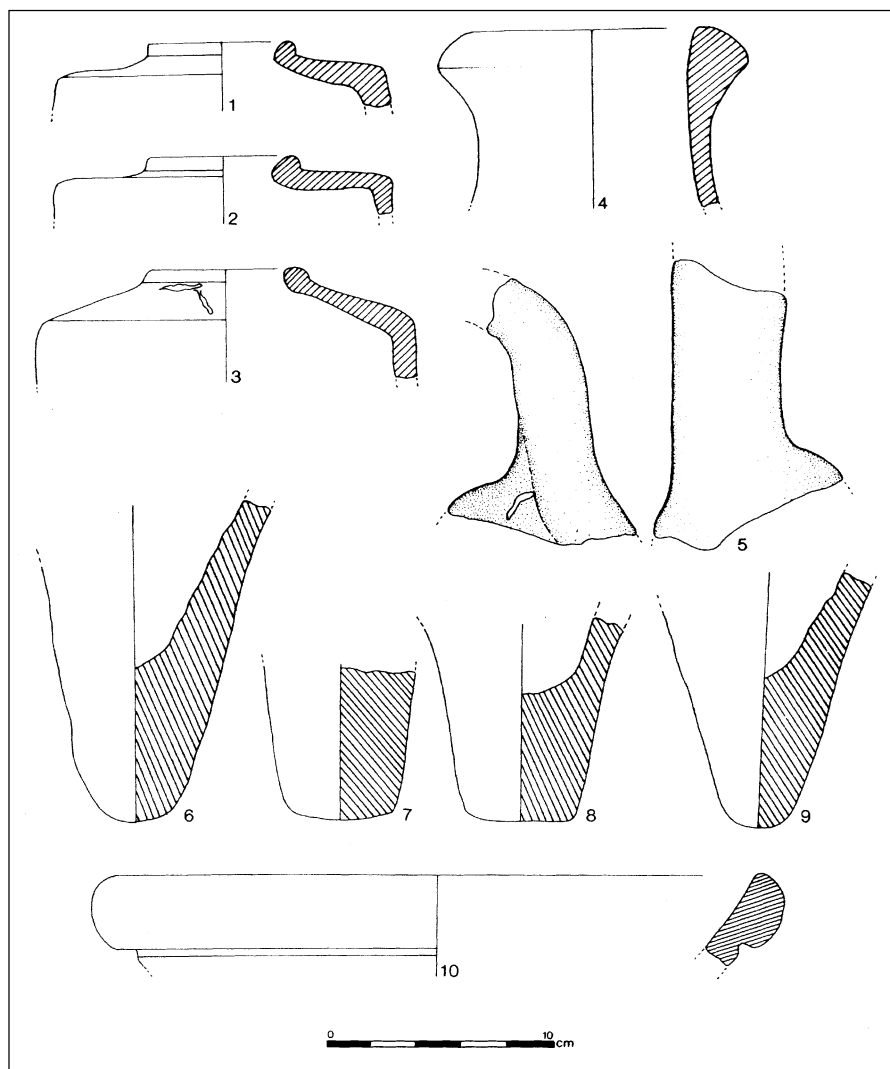


Fig. 4 Sample of Persian period, Ancient Greek and Hellenistic coarse wares from the Temenos of Apollo and Asclepius at Dor (Drawing S.A. Kingsley).

Fine Wares

– Attic Red-Figure Bell Krater rim (not illustrated). With laurel leaf pattern. Date: Tel Dor, second half of 5th century BC (Marchese, 1995: 167, 169), Tell El-Hesi, *ca.* 430-410 BC (Risser and Blakely, 1989: 76, 99).

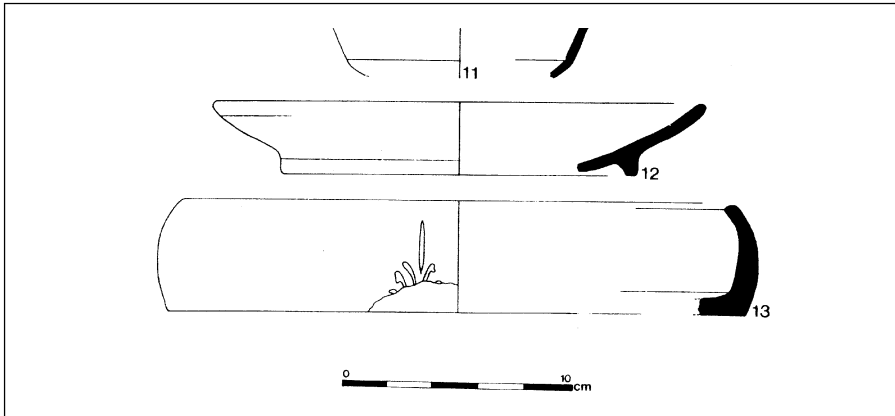


Fig. 5 Sample of Classical Greek and Hellenistic fine wares from the *Temenos of Apollo and Asclepius at Dor* (Drawing S.A. Kingsley).

- Outcurved Carinated Bowl (Fig. 5, 11). Appeared at the end of the 5th century BC and increased in popularity through the 4th century BC. During the 3rd century, the lustrous black slip remained similar to the Attic prototype, but with a more metallic shine. Our Dor example probably dates to the 2nd century BC (Guz-Silberstein, 1995: 290-291, Fig. 6.2, No. 17).
- Bowl with incurving rim (Fig. 5, 12). For this shape, see an example from the Athenian Agora of *ca.* 400 BC (Sparkes and Talcott, 1970: 298, Pl. 33).
- Shallow bowl with palmette painted decoration (Fig. 5, 13). Hellenistic product.
- Incurved bowls and finger bowls (not illustrated). Represent about 50% of the Persian period, Ancient Greek and Hellenistic fine wares from the *Temenos of Apollo and Asclepius at Dor*. Hellenistic products of the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC (cf. Kee, 1971: 44, 53; Rosenthal, 1978: Fig. 3.11).

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TABLE 1

**Sample of Persian period, Ancient Greek and Hellenistic Pottery
from the *Temenos* of Apollo and Asclepius at Dor**

Ill.	Reg. N°	Form	Munsell	Colour
Fig.4, 1	G-68/122	Amphora	2.5YR 6/8	Light Red
Fig. 4, 2	G-68/86	Amphora	2.5YR 6/8	Light Red
Fig. 4, 3	1250/100	Amphora	10R 5/8	Red
Fig. 4, 4	836/159	Amphora	10R 5/4	Weak Red
Fig. 4, 5	836/84	Amphora	2.5YR 5/8	Red
Fig. 4, 6	-	Amphora	2.5YR 6/8	Light Red
Fig. 4, 7	836/103/95	Amphora	2.5YR 6/8	Light Red
Fig. 4, 8	836/84	Amphora	10YR 8/4	Very Pale Brown
Fig. 4, 9	-	Amphora	10R 6/4	Pale Red
Fig. 4, 10	836/117	Mortarium	2.5YR 5/6	Red
Fig. 5, 11	836/79	Bowl	2.5YR N4	Dark Grey / Black Glaze
Fig. 5, 12	836/110	Bowl	5YR 7/4	Pink / Black Glaze
Fig. 5, 13	836/151/35	Bowl	10R 6/6	Light Red / Black Burnished