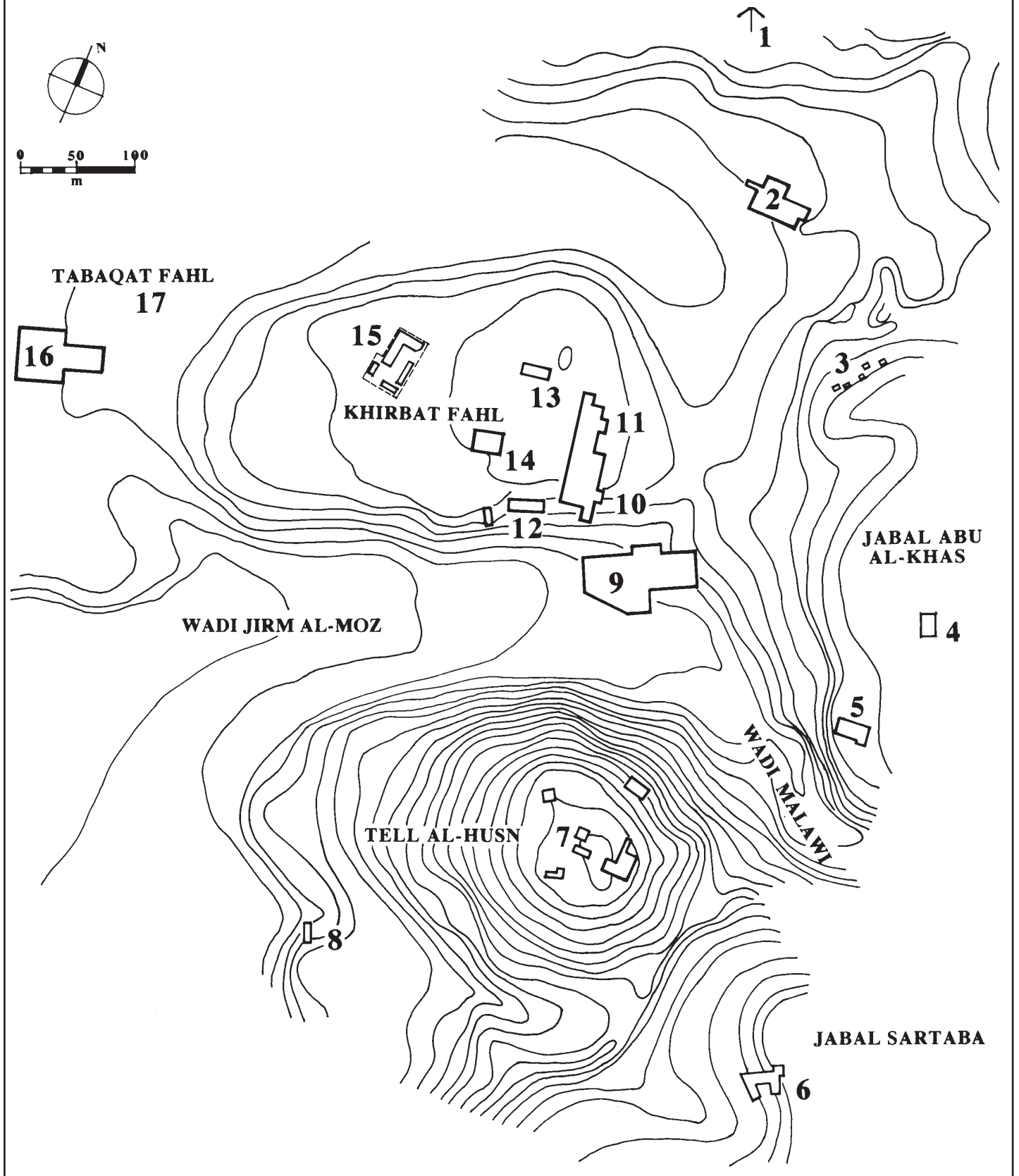


PELLA IN JORDAN CONTOUR PLAN



1 WADI HAMMEH

3kms to the north of the main site of Pella, Wadi Hammeh is a sequence of rich deposits dating from 100,000 years before present to 12,000 years before present. Excavated over 10 years, these deposits have revealed an unbroken history of occupation culminating in a Natufian village (12,000 years before present).

2 CARAVANSERAI

After the destruction of the Umayyad settlement (11) in 747 AD, the centre of Pella relocated to this area. The excavated area reveals a caravanserai (complex for the stabling of travelling caravans) with a central court, access streets and adjoining rooms.

3 TOMBS

On the slope of Jebal Abu Al-Khas a cluster of chamber tombs have been dug into the hillside. Little remains to be seen today, but these tombs included a very rich Middle/Late Bronze Age tomb complex (ca. 1600 BC) and several well appointed Byzantine tombs (ca. 500 AD).

4 PELLA REST-HOUSE

Built in 1993 and designed by Ammar Khammash, the rest-house is modelled on the traditional Ottoman (16th–20th century AD) dwellings of Jordan.

5 EAST CHURCH

Built around 575 AD and out of use by 850 AD, the east church is one of three Byzantine churches excavated at Pella. Excavated by the Australian team, the columns have been re-erected and the full floor plan has been revealed with the entrance facing the Jordan valley. At the rear of the church in the centre of the main apse, a reliquary was discovered containing several bone fragments. The stone work of this church is particularly interesting.

6 INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

Excavated in 1982/3 and now largely overgrown, this area revealed a series of rooms devoted to the processing of olive oil from the Chalcolithic period (ca. 3500 BC). This is a very early example of specialisation in human society and has contributed to a new understanding of the economy of the Chalcolithic period. Here the natural stone underlying the site has been used for conduits for the oil and for storage pits.

7 TELL HUSN

Extensive excavations since 1988 have revealed a large late Roman/Byzantine (ca. 300–600 AD) complex. Although conclusive proof is lacking, this large building was probably a fortress. The ground floor walls of stone are remarkably well preserved while the upper storey of mud-brick and timber have disappeared.

To the east of the Byzantine complex, on the very edge of Tell Husn, is an area of large, level stone platforms dating to the Early Bronze Age (ca. 3000 BC). Against the southern face of these platforms is a gateway suggesting that these platforms were the foundation of a fortification wall. These platforms make Pella one of the earliest fortified cities in Jordan.

Elsewhere on Tell Husn trenches are uncovering Hellenistic (ca. 300 BC) deposits indicating that Tell Husn has an occupational history similar to the main mound of Pella.

8 TOMBS

In the valley to the south of Tell Husn ran the ancient road to Jerash. On either side of this road, Chamber Tombs of the Roman period (64 BC–400 AD) have been carved into the hillside. Many of these tombs preserve the Roman tomb plan of several niches for the deceased surrounding a central lobby. The stone sarcophagi used by the Romans remain in many of these tombs.

9 CIVIC COMPLEX

The central feature of the site of Pella is the impressive Byzantine church at the head of the spring. Excavated by the American team between 1979 and 1983, this church was built around 400 AD and was destroyed in the severe earthquake of 747 AD. The columns have been re-erected and the central area of the church has not yet been excavated although work is again underway to expose the entire floor plan. This church was the main focus for the Christian community at Pella during the Byzantine period and continued, on a lesser scale, to be used as a church after the Islamic conquest of Pella in 635 AD.

To the south of the church are the remains of a Roman Odeon or covered theatre. Only scant remains survive although the seating area and back-room corridors are easy to discern. The marble seating of the Odeon, turned upsidedown, was used for the monumental steps of the Byzantine church.

To the west of the steps of the church survive the remains of a Roman bathhouse. Excavation of this complex has been partial as the high water table of today has made full excavation impossible. These remains, along with the Odeon, indicate that the valley was once covered with public buildings during the Roman period - most of which have unfortunately disappeared.

10. EAST CUT

This area has been the main focus for the Australian excavations for over sixteen years. Over this time, many of the higher deposits dating to the Mamluke (14th century AD), Byzantine and Iron (ca. 1000–300 BC) periods have been removed revealing an extensive area of archaeological deposits spanning the entire Bronze Age and representing one of the most vigorous periods of Pella's history.

In the west of this area is the well preserved ground plan of a Late Bronze Age (ca. 1300 BC) residence. To the very west, is a courtyard area with a stone lined pit, then moving east, a dividing street and the residence proper. The residence seen today has a large central room with plaster floors, a series of rooms to the south - one containing a stone lined toilet — and several large pits which were cut down from higher levels.

Further to the east of the residence and at lower levels, are the remains of the city walls of Pella at various times during the Bronze Age. The best preserved is the wall of the Middle Bronze Age (ca. 2000 BC). While this wall looks just like the edge of excavation at the very east of this area, this seven metre high mud-brick wall can be discerned by looking carefully for the outlines of the thousands of mud-bricks used in its construction.

Just to the west of this wall and only surviving to a height of one metre are the remains of the Early Bronze Age (ca. 3000 BC) city wall. This wall has a stone base and a thin layer of surviving mud-brick. These walls indicate that the city of Pella had developed into an urban centre at this remote time with a centralised authority which could marshal the resources necessary for such an undertaking.

11 RESIDENTIAL AREA

On the very top of the main mound are the well preserved remains of the Byzantine/Umayyad residential quarter of Pella. When Pella fell to the Islamic armies in 635 AD the governing body changed from that of the Byzantine Empire to that of the Umayyads, but the people of Pella, as one would expect, did not change so dramatically. This residential quarter reflects this well. The early Islamic inhabitants of Pella continued to use the houses they had during the Byzantine period although with time, alterations were made, streets were blocked off, house plans changed and buildings went out of use.

This area continued to be used until destroyed by a severe earthquake in 747 AD. In the ruins of these houses the archaeologists found several human skeletons, one with gold coins in a pouch by its side giving archaeologists an accurate date for the destruction. Even the skeletons of cats were found — an indication of the swiftness of the destruction.

This area preserves the ground floor plan very well although an upper storey of mud-brick and timber — now disappeared — must be imagined.

12 RESIDENTIAL AREA

The most interesting remains in this area survive in the very west of the excavations here. At the western extremity, are the remains of a massive Iron Age (ca. 1000—300 BC) building of which only a corner has been exposed. The massive stones of the Bronze Age Canaanite temple (in use 1650—850 BC) can be seen here.

Below this, not easily discernible to a viewer, are important early deposits. In this area are the only Neolithic (ca. 8000—4000 BC) deposits excavated on the main mound. These are the earliest deposits uncovered to date on the mound and indicate the first permanent occupation of Pella.

13 CENTRAL CUT

This trench was placed here to gain a full understanding of the entire sequence of deposits at Pella. In one corner of this trench, an exploratory trench has been excavated to a depth of fifteen metres — without yet reaching the bottom of the deposits. While there is little to interest the casual visitor, the central cut is very important to the archaeologists at the site because it is plumbing the depths of the mound at a place where the deposits should be at their deepest.

14 MOSQUE

This partly restored mosque dates to the Mamluke period (14—15th century AD) and is evidence of the continued occupation of Pella during the Medieval period. The mosque is of a traditional design with the *mihrab* facing Mecca. Surrounding this mosque is a cemetery used by the inhabitants of Tabaqat Fahl until recently.

15 THE DIG HOUSE

This is the central command post of the excavations at Pella. Built in 1979, and added to over the years, this complex contains kitchens, storerooms, bedrooms, communal areas, and workrooms. Adorning the courtyard are many of the classical architectural pieces excavated at Pella over the years.

16 THE WEST CHURCH

The third of the three Byzantine churches excavated at Pella, the West Church is now surrounded by the village of Tabaqat Fahl. The distance between this church and the East Church indicates the size of Pella during the Byzantine period. Excavated by the American team in 1967 and again in 1979—1983, this church preserves the entire ground plan of the original construction and in places, sections of mosaic floors survive.

17 TABAQAT FAHL

The modern village of Tabaqat Fahl represents the latest phase of occupation in the long history of the site of Pella.

Until the 1970s, this village was located on top of the main mound until it was moved to its present location and the mound devoted to archaeology. The village, reflecting changes throughout Jordan, is undergoing a transformation with sealed roads, electricity, piped water and a school all being put in place over the past ten years.
