

New Research at Notion

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Abstract

Notion is a port city on the west coast of Asia Minor, 15 km northwest of Ephesus. The site was identified in the late 19th century, but has remained largely unexplored until now. An archaeological survey begun in 2014 combines modern mapping technologies with detailed recording of individual monuments, extensive collection of surface finds, and examination of the local environment. The results have important implications for the study of major trends in Greek and Roman urbanism, such as Hellenistic synoikism, and the effects of the growth of the Roman Empire on provincial towns in Asia Minor. Of particular interest is the short lifespan of the surviving city, which was only intensively occupied between the early Hellenistic and the early imperial periods.

Özet

Notion, Efes'in 15 km kuzeybatısında, Anadolu'nun batı kıyısında bir liman kentidir. Burası 19. yüzyılın sonlarında tespit edilmiş, ancak bugüne kadar büyük ölçüde araştırılmadan kalmıştır. 2014 yılında başlayan bir arkeolojik yüzey araştırması, modern haritalama teknolojilerini, münferit anıtların ayrıntılı bir şekilde belgelenmesi, yüzey buluntularının yoğun biçimde toplanması ve yerel çevrenin incelenmesi ile birleştirilerek bir arada kullanılmaktadır. Sonuçlar, Yunan ve Roma şehirciliğindeki Hellenistik synoikismos gibi önemli eğilimlerin incelenmesi ve Roma İmparatorluğu'ndaki büyümenin Küçük Asya eyaletindeki kentler üzerindeki etkileri gibi konular hakkında önemli açılımlar sağlayacaktır. Özellikle ilgi çekici olan, kentin ömrünün kısıtlıdır; kent yalnızca Erken Hellenistik ile Erken İmparatorluk dönemleri arasında yoğun bir şekilde iskân edilmiştir.

Notion is a largely unexplored ancient city on the west coast of Asia Minor, 15 km northwest of Ephesus (*Fig. 1*). Situated on two promontories jutting into the Aegean Sea, its isolated location has ensured that the site is only lightly buried, making it an ideal candidate for archaeological survey. We know from textual sources that Notion had a long life, extending from the Archaic to the late Roman period. Of particular interest is its relationship with two neighboring locations: the sanctuary of Apollo at Claros, 1,5 km to the north, and the city of Colophon, 15 km to the northwest. Together, these three sites and the enclosing valley form a classic Mediterranean microenvironment, with Notion providing crucial access to the sea.

In many ways Notion thus conforms to widespread patterns of ancient Mediterranean urbanism, but the preliminary results of a new archaeological survey, started by the University of Michigan and Brown University in 2014, suggest that its history was more complicated than at first appears. Most intriguing is evidence indicating that the site identified as Notion was intensively

occupied for only a few centuries, between the third century B.C. and the first century A.D. The relatively short lifespan of the city raises many questions. Was Notion originally situated elsewhere? If so, why was it relocated to this site? Why was the new city apparently so short-lived? And what happened to the population afterward? These are questions that touch on many of the subjects of this volume, and underscore the tumultuous changes experienced by communities across Asia Minor in the centuries between the conquest of Alexander and the rise of Rome.

Notion lies on the east side of the mouth of the Hales River, near the modern village of Ahmetbeyli. Its two promontories are joined by a narrow ridge, and the more or less level area on top, approximately 35 ha, is enclosed by 3,5 km long fortifications. Within the fortifications, the layout of the city is remarkably clear. The bedrock is exposed in many places, including two large artificially leveled terraces, and the foundations of hundreds of walls are visible. The locations of numerous streets are readily apparent, showing that the city is a grid-planned town, organized around a large central square, presumably the Agora. Other monuments recorded by the earliest visitors to the site and still visible today include two small temples on the western edge of the city, the Bouleuterion on the eastern edge of the Agora, the Theater farther to the east, and a second large square on the eastern side of the city.

The identification of the site rests on its location. Among other considerations, all the literary sources agree that Notion was the port of Colophon, and the Hales River valley provides the closest and most direct connection between Colophon and the sea. Indeed, the name Notion – τὸ Νότιον, »the southern (place)«, as in English Southbury or Southwick – seems to refer to its location with respect to Colophon. The earliest literary references to Notion date to the late sixth and subsequent centuries B.C. Hecataeus includes Notion among a list of the cities of Ionia¹. Thucydides describes it as »a city of the Colophonians«², and Aristotle cites the combination of Notion and Colophon as an example of a community that is susceptible to civil unrest for topographical reasons³. During the Peloponnesian war, an important sea battle fought off the coast of Notion in 406 B.C. led to the downfall of the Athenian general Alcibiades⁴.

Inscriptions show that in the late fourth century B.C., Notion and Colophon formed a sympolity, after which the twin cities shared laws and a calendar⁵. According to Pausanias, when the early Hellenistic warlord Lysimachus captured Colophon in 294 B.C., part of the city's population was

¹ FrGrHist 1A, 1, F fr. 233. In listing the cities of ancient Aeolis, Herodotus (Hdt. 2, 149, 3) also mentions a city called Notion: presumably a different community from Ionian Notion.

² Thuk. 3, 34.

³ Aristot. pol. 1303 b.

⁴ Xen. hell. 1, 5, 11–14; Diod. 13, 71.

⁵ Étienne – Migeotte 1998 with references.

resettled to nearby Ephesus⁶. Not long thereafter, some of the displaced Colophonians may have moved to Notion. The port city was subsequently renamed Colophon-by-the-Sea, and the inland city, now known as Old Colophon, lost its importance and prestige. The strategic importance of the port is underscored by its siege in 190 B.C. by Antiochus the Great during the Roman-Seleucid war⁷. The conflict ended with the Peace of Apamea (188 B.C.), which marks the beginning of major Roman involvement in Asia Minor. Historical sources for the Roman period are meager, but we know that a bishop of Colophon – presumably Colophon-by-the-Sea or Notion – took part in the First Council of Ephesus in A.D. 431⁸.

Earlier archaeological research at Notion has been limited. The site was identified by the German archaeologist Carl Schuchhardt in 1886, and small-scale excavations were carried out by a French team in 1921 and by Turkish teams in 1985–86 and again in 1994⁹. Five seasons of the new program of investigation have now been completed. Work to date has focused on surveying the area within the city walls and has included the following components: photogrammetric mapping and geophysical prospection; documentation and study of specific aspects of the architecture and infrastructure of the city, including the city plan, Agora, civic and sacred buildings, fortifications, and water supply; study of the local geology and evidence for quarrying; and collection of surface finds.

Mapping and Geophysical Prospection

We began the examination of the urban area by making a detailed topographic map and site plan using a combination of approaches including aerial photogrammetry and geophysical prospection¹⁰. These methods enable us to identify features which we then examine on the ground and record in a GIS and database (identifying specific architectural blocks, for example, or specifying whether wall joints are bonded or unbonded). In this way, we have made a detailed architectural plan of the site, recording over 1,500 discrete architectural features (*Fig. 2*).

⁶ Paus. 1, 9, 7; 7, 3, 4.

⁷ Liv. 37, 26.

⁸ See Price – Gaddis 2007, I 298. 336. Colophon was also represented by the bishop of Pitane at the Council of Chalcedon in 451, Price – Gaddis 2007, II 232.

⁹ Schuchhardt 1886; Demangel – Laumonier 1923; Demangel – Laumonier 1925; Atalay 1986; Atalay 1987; Büyükkolancı 1996.

¹⁰ The aerial survey was undertaken by A. Gribovskiy and C. Serrano of Drone Adventures; the geophysical survey was supervised by G. Tucker.

Architectural Documentation

The geophysical survey, study of aerial imagery, and examination of visible remains have clarified essential aspects of the **city plan**. On the west side of the city, the distance between the centerlines of east-west streets ranges from 64,0 to 64,8 m. North-south streets are more closely spaced, at 33,35 m between centerlines. The proportions of the unusually large city blocks are thus close to 1 : 2, or 110 × 220 Ionic feet (0,295 m). The grid on the east side of the city seems to be slightly different, with blocks closer to 1 : 1 in proportions. In both areas, the closest parallels are provided by late Classical and Hellenistic cities such as Priene and Heracleia under Latmos¹¹. The existence of two different grid systems in the west and east portions of the city may reflect different periods of development, or social differences in the composition of the citizen body.

We have not yet begun thoroughgoing study of the **houses** that occupied the residential housing blocks, but it is worth noting that we have documented over 100 in-situ threshold blocks, and the domestic architecture of Notion is a subject of great potential interest. Our vision of ›typical‹ late classical and Hellenistic house forms in Asia Minor is dominated by the evidence from Priene, but the limited excavations undertaken at Colophon in the 1920s would seem to indicate that there was greater variability in regional house forms than Priene alone would suggest¹², and Notion offers a potentially much larger sample set for comparison. In a few places it is possible to make out the outlines of substantial peristyle houses, ranging in area from 225 to 400 sq. m. One important point of interest is the almost total lack of mortared rubble or brick construction. Estimates of the urban population at Notion based on the area of the city range from 3,500 (at 100 persons per hectare) to 8,750 (at 250 persons per hectare), while estimates based on the presumed number of houses hover around 4,000 (as many as 100 residential blocks, each consisting of 8 houses, each with 5 inhabitants)¹³. Epigraphic evidence suggests that Notion had a citizen body of at least 2,000 people in the third century B.C. – thus a total population of ca. 10,000 (assuming a minimum of 5 persons per household on average) – but that may have included many people who lived outside the city walls¹⁴.

Embedded in the city grid, the **Agora** is an oblong area enclosed by porticos on all four sides (*Fig. 3*). On the south is a split-level double colonnaded stoa. The upper level opens onto the Agora, the lower level onto an east-west street running south of the Agora at an elevation ca. 2.5

¹¹ Rumscheid 1999, 26–35; Peschlow-Bindokat 2005, 109–121.

¹² Holland 1994, 123–158.

¹³ The estimate of 5.3 persons for the average urban household in Roman Egypt is proposed in Bagnall – Frier 1994, 68.

¹⁴ The relevant inscription is published by Gauthier 2003, 84.

m below the Agora level. Behind the east stoa at the northeast corner of the Agora lies the Bouleuterion, a rectangular structure opening on to the east. The exterior dimensions of the Agora are 130×97 m, similar to the size of the Agora at Heracleia, which is 135×90 m in area, much larger than the Agora at Priene, at 92×95 m. Its proportions are 3 : 4, or 330×440 Ionic feet¹⁵.

In addition to the general study of the city plan and Agora, we have begun more detailed architectural recording of the monumental buildings, including the temples of Athena and Apollo, the Bouleuterion, the Theater, and the Fortifications. The sanctuary and **Temple of Athena** were excavated by Robert Demangel and Alfred Laumonier in 1921. The sanctuary, $28,8 \times 48,2$ m, is enclosed by colonnaded porticoes. The facades of the porticos are Doric, with both columns and entablature built out of conglomerate. The main entrance to the sanctuary, with a monumental marble doorway, is on the northeast. While the sanctuary is oriented according to the street grid, both the temple and the altar within the sanctuary have slightly different orientations, possibly reflecting the orientations of earlier buildings predating the city plan. The altar, $6,36 \times 8,10$ m, survives only in its foundations built out of conglomerate. The dimensions of the temple are $9,39 \times 16,04$ m at the level of the euthynteria; the foundations are built out of conglomerate and the superstructure entirely of marble. The plan of the temple was distyle in antis; on the basis of fragments of the capitals, Demangel and Laumonier reconstructed the order as Corinthian. Interesting details of the front façade are its bucranium frieze and the presence of a recessed niche, not previously noted, in the tympanum of the pediment. The carving of one surviving fragmentary anta capital and of the bucranium frieze indicate a date in the Augustan era.

The structure alternatively identified as a Heroon or as a **Temple of Apollo** was excavated by Mustafa Büyükkolancı in 1994 (*Fig. 4*). Like the Temple of Athena, this building lies within a well-defined precinct, $36,4 \times 57,3$ m in area. Both precinct and temple were aligned with the city grid. No altar has been found. The temple is only slightly smaller than the Temple of Athena, at $9,89 \times 14,93$ m at euthynteria-level. Like the Temple of Athena, its foundations were built out of conglomerate and its superstructure out of marble. Büyükkolancı suggested that the temple was in antis in plan, but the foundations of the temple front are not well preserved, and no fragments of the façade have been identified. In plan, the temple is divided by a crosswall into front and rear chambers; its most interesting feature is a subfloor space or crypt in the rear chamber, $1,98$ (N–S) \times $2,15$ (E–W) m in dimensions and at least 1,6 m deep. Büyükkolancı identified the

¹⁵ Dimensions for the *agorai* of Priene and Heracleia taken from Martin 1951, table 1.

building as a temple or, on the evidence of the crypt, a Heroon. The crypt might also be appropriate to Apollo, as in the nearby temple at Claros¹⁶.

The **Bouleuterion**, also partially excavated by Büyükkolancı, is of particular interest. Its rectangular outline and seating arrangement are typical of the Classical and Hellenistic periods, and it is larger in plan (24,2 × 30,5 m) than any other comparable building – considerably larger than the Bouleuteria of Priene (20 × 21 m) and Heracleia (20 × 26 m), and larger also than both the Old and the New Bouleuteria at Athens (23 m square and 16 × 22 m, respectively), which it resembles in the presence of columns supporting the roof at the base of the seating area¹⁷. The material of the seats of the Bouleuterion is conglomerate, as is that of the one surviving interior column. Marble was used, however, for the uppermost seats, which feature finely carved backs and armrests.

The **Theater** is relatively well preserved and was partially excavated by Erol Atalay¹⁸. The auditorium is slightly greater than semicircular in plan, with an estimated diameter of 70 m. It has a total of at least 22 rows of seats, separated by a single diazoma corridor (13 rows in the upper cavea, 9 of at least 10, but likely more in the lower cavea,). We estimate its capacity to be ca. 3,500-4,000. Portions of the south *analemma* wall survive in situ, as do several of the piers of the stage-building (the proscenium is not visible). The seating of the Theater and the surviving analemma wall are built predominantly of conglomerate with a few marble blocks used in the analemma wall. The cavea was built into the schist bedrock. The outer wall, where it is exposed to the North, is built predominantly of blue-gray marble. On the south, the upper part of the auditorium is supported by a vaulted substructure. A single vomitorium in the south leads to the diazoma. Scattered and very fragmentary marble blocks with architectural decoration suggest that there may have been a monument atop the cavea.

The **Fortifications** of Notion are the city's best-preserved monument, conspicuous both by land and by sea (*Fig. 5*). The material of the original fortifications was predominantly blue-gray marble. Purple limestone and conglomerate are also frequent, especially in the north and south respectively. The masonry was unmortared, predominantly quarry-faced, and generally isodomic, with some roughly smoothed and trapezoidal blocks. The original fortification walls had exterior and interior ashlar faces with an earth-and-rubble core; occasional partition walls

¹⁶ As suggested by Lafli – Cumalıoğlu 2011, 271–277.

¹⁷ Gneisz 1990.

¹⁸ Atalay 1987.

run through the thickness of the wall as in the *emplekton* technique¹⁹. The walls vary in thickness from 2,3 m to 3,7 m and rise, in some stretches, to at least 5 m in height.

The trace of the fortifications generally follows the topographic contours, but not at the NW, where a salient runs downslope to the Hales River and, presumably, the harbor. This may have been one of the main entrances to the city. The trace also cuts conspicuously across the contours in the NW. The high ground east of the Theater was probably included in the circuit because it would have offered a dangerous vantage point to an attacker, and because it commanded a good view over the road to Claros and the (hypothetical) road to Ephesus, and indeed over Ephesus itself. The south (seaward) section of the fortifications is indented, with few towers but occasional platforms and frequent jogs. Many of these jogs, like the towers, have drafted corners.

A total of 28 certain rectangular towers (or platforms) have been recorded. Their spacing is variable, and as is frequently the case, they are more numerous on the landward than on the seaward side. The towers generally project out at varying angles from the line of the fortification. Their walls vary in thickness from 1,05 m to 1,3 m, and they are almost always shallowly bonded to the curtain walls. Where extant, the towers have drafted projecting corners. There are no traces of slits or windows and no way to determine with certainty the full height of the towers or whether they were single or multistoried, though almost surely the latter.

Historical context and stylistic details make it very likely that the original fortifications are more or less contemporaneous with those of other nearby sites in Ionia including Priene, Colophon, Heracleia under Latmus and Ephesus, all of which are dated between the mid-fourth and the early third centuries B.C.²⁰. Continued detailed documentation and analysis may help to narrow down this date and to determine whether the wall was financed and constructed at local initiative, or by Lysimachus or a comparable figure. It seems likely that the construction of the fortifications began at the same time as the creation of the city plan, and the successful resistance to the siege of the city by Antiochus the Great in 190 B.C. suggests that they were operable by this time.

At least three kinds of repairs are attested (*Fig. 6*):

- 1) One kind involves dry-laid fieldstones and roughly squared blocks set directly on top of the fortifications; these repairs are sometimes associated with modest probably post-classical stone structures built up against the fortifications.

¹⁹ Vit. 2, 8, 7.

²⁰ McNicoll 1997, 48–53 (Priene), 67–70 (Colophon), 75–81 (Heracleia), and 94–101 (Ephesus). For Priene, see also Ruppe 2016.

2) A second kind, especially conspicuous in the W, involves marble spolia often combined with red conglomerate set in mortar over the foundations of the original circuit.

3) The third kind is attested only in the N, where there are long stretches of wall made mostly of roughly isodomic, point-dressed, purple limestone, often chamfered, and sometimes pulvinated. These blocks are different from those used in the original fabric of most of the fortifications, but whether they are a repair or simply the product of a different group of masons is unclear.

Similar repairs in other wall circuits are often associated with the late Roman period, but there is no reason why these could not be earlier. The west side of the wall occupies the steepest and most precarious slope, so it might have started to fail and require repair relatively soon after it was built. Repairs may also be associated with the siege of the city by Antiochus the Great. Some repairs include mortar and tile, and thus are surely later than the original construction.

The **water supply** of ancient Notion seems to have relied primarily on cisterns. A total of 21 certain cisterns and eight possible cisterns have been identified on the site. Laser scans have been made of 12 of these, producing detailed three-dimensional models (*Fig. 7*). The cisterns were cut into bedrock, in some places schist, in others marble, in still others, banded schist and marble. The cisterns are flask- or bottle-shaped, with narrow openings, widening out as they descend. In several cases, the upper parts of the shafts are built out of rubble masonry, supporting schist or marble cover slabs, or in one case a stone vault. Although most of the known cisterns are located on the central ridge of the site, there must have been many more in what we interpret to be residential areas to the north and south, which are now covered by eroded soil and debris. At other Hellenistic cities such as Pergamon and Morgantina, most excavated houses had at least one cistern, located in the peristyle or courtyard²¹. If the same pattern held true at Notion, there originally could have been hundreds of cisterns, one for each household. As discussed above, even a low estimate of the urban population at Notion (3,500–4,000 people) corresponds to 700–800 households, but some households could have shared a cistern or relied on water from communal cisterns, such as those associated with public areas or buildings (e. g., in the Agora and next to the Bouleuterion).

Most of the cisterns at Notion have an estimated capacity of 30–50 cubic meters (infill makes it difficult to reconstruct the original capacity). Assuming that average annual rainfall in antiquity was close to 700 mm per year²², a one-time filling of such a cistern would require a roof area of 43–72 sq. m. The identifiable remains of houses at Notion indicate that they ranged from 225 to

²¹ Garbrecht 2001, 16–40; Wulf 1999, 20 f.; Tsakirgis 1984, 334–341; Crouch 1984, 355.

²² Average annual rainfall in Izmir for the years 1938–2010 was 695.9 mm:

<<https://www.mgm.gov.tr/veridegerlendirme/il-ve-ilceler-istatistik.aspx?m=IZMIR>> (31.07.2017).

400 sq. m, including unroofed courtyards. Such a house would offer between 195 and 375 sq. m of roof surface for the collection of rainfall, providing between 136 and 262.5 cubic meters of water per year, enough to fill a cistern of this size multiple times in a year. A single filling of 30–50 cubic meters of water per cistern could supply 8–14 persons per year, assuming one person requires 10 liters of water a day; a higher rate of consumption would have been possible if the cistern was filled more than once a year, which was likely the case.

One question that remains is whether Notion was ever supplied by one or more aqueducts, for which no evidence has been found. Given the multiplicity of methods for water supply at comparable Hellenistic towns such as Priene²³, it is certainly possible that at Notion, too, additional and higher-quality water was brought into town via at least one aqueduct – or at least that such an aqueduct was envisioned. However, it is also possible that Notion, like Pergamon until the mid-third century B.C.²⁴, relied solely on cisterns.

Collection of Surface Finds

We began the collection of surface finds in 2015 and have completed four seasons of work: in 2015 we carried out systematic collection in 10 × 10 m grid squares subdivided from the 30 × 30 m grids laid out for the geophysical survey; in 2016–2017 we experimented with a program that targeted areas of high visibility; and in 2018 we overlaid a grid of 30 × 30 m squares across the site and sampled them in a checkerboard pattern, selecting in each a 6 × 6 m area for collection corresponding to the area of highest visibility. Because Notion has been a protected archaeological site for decades, there is no agricultural plowing or other cultivation and therefore no conventional plow zone. Our flexible program allowed us to collect in varied locations distributed widely and uniformly across the site, including both inside and outside the fortification walls. Our primary goal was to determine the chronology of occupation of the site, in particular the period of its most intensive occupation and the timing of its abandonment.

Though we have surveyed only a small percentage of the site (1.4 ha in full coverage), we recorded 17,000 fragments of tile and over 55,700 sherds, including 6,800 diagnostics (about 12%); >diagnostic< materials include rim, handle and foot fragments as well as body fragments of recognizable surface treatment and/or fabric (e. g., mold-made bowls, thin-walled ware, lead glaze ware, red-gloss wares). Although the collected material includes some chronological outliers, the overwhelming majority of identifiable pottery dates to between the third century

²³ Fahlbusch 2003; Crouch 1996.

²⁴ Garbrecht 2001, 41.

B.C. and the first century A.D. This material includes typical Hellenistic and early Roman table wares commonly found in Asia Minor, such as Hellenistic mold-made bowls, Eastern Sigillata A, Eastern Sigillata B and Italian Sigillata, along with regionally and locally produced table wares from western Asia Minor and transport amphorae, primarily from Rhodes, Kos, and the Black Sea and Adriatic (*Fig. 8*). Remarkable is the almost total absence of recognizable later Roman fine wares, such as African Red Slip ware, or of late Roman amphora types.

Of interest was the difference in the character of the finds from inside and outside the fortification wall on the north side of the city. The date range was largely the same, but the pottery collected in the fields outside the wall consisted almost exclusively of storage and transport vessels, with much less table ware than that found inside the city. Of the rare examples of table ware that were found, almost all were table in form but plain in fabric. It must be noted that part of the reason for the lack of fine table wares may be low visibility. Also notable is the richness of surface material from the survey units located west and downslope of the Temple of Athena. These areas yielded the highest sherd densities and the most varied assemblages, including not only pottery in table, plain, and cooking wares, but also tile, pipe, lamps, coins, metal objects, tesserae, glass, painted wall plaster, shell, and bone. Another observation is the frequency of sherds that obviously come from broken vessels but have been smoothed on all sides, as though used for scraping. They have been found in every collection area except by the Temple of Athena, but were recovered in the greatest numbers on the east promontory. These artifacts are similar to the ›potters' rib (scraper) tools‹ from the Roman-period ceramic workshops at Sagalassos²⁵ and provide evidence for the production at Notion of pottery or some other item requiring the use of a scraping tool.

Geological Investigations

The bedrock of Notion consists mostly of marble, overlain in places by schist and conglomerate. All three stones are used in the architecture of the site and were presumably, at least to a significant extent, quarried locally. A number of large marble quarry cuttings are visible, especially on the east and west promontories. In addition, as noted above, the civic and sacred areas on the crown of the ridge that runs through the center of the city rest on broad, level terraces hewn out of the native rock – they were thus in effect large open-area quarries. One uncertainty is the source of the conglomerate rock used for building at Notion (in the construction of seats of the Bouleuterion and Theater and in the foundations of the temples). The

²⁵ Murphy – Poblome 2012, 200–202. 205 f. We thank Jeroen Poblome for calling these tools to our attention.

local outcroppings are not very extensive, and it is possible that this stone was transported from other sources to the north or east; alternatively, local sources may have been completely exhausted.

Discussion

Although Notion existed as a city at least as early as the time of Hecataeus in the later sixth or early fifth century B.C., the earliest evidence for substantial occupation of the planned town overlooking the mouth of the Hales River dates to the Hellenistic period. That is the era of the closest parallels for the city plan and major monuments, and it is supported by the evidence of extensive collection of surface finds. The development of the current site and city plan must have been the result of a radical expansion or relocation of the original settlement. It is possible that habitation was much more restricted before this period, or indeed that Notion was originally situated elsewhere, perhaps closer to the harbor and the Hales River, in which case it is now likely buried beneath river-borne silt. In this respect, Notion seems to resemble Priene not only in its fortifications and city plan, but also, not surprisingly, in specific details of its urban history.

Whatever the precise circumstances of the ›re-founding‹ of the city, many other communities of western Asia Minor shared similar experiences in this period, as local populations and foreign warlords engaged in complicated and shifting maneuvers in pursuit of their sometimes conflicting, sometimes mutual interests. In the case of Notion, the development of the area on top of the promontories next to the harbor may be related to one of the known historical events in the surrounding region, such as the resettlement attributed to Lysimachus of portions of the population of Colophon at Ephesus in 294 B.C. Of great interest is the evidence for the ultimately successful resistance of the population of Colophon to the resettlement²⁶. Within five years of the event, some or all of the Colophonians had been allowed to return home. Robert Étienne and Léopold Migeotte have proposed that a significant portion of the population of Colophon may have chosen on this occasion to move from Ephesus to Notion rather than back to Colophon (if indeed they had not eluded the synoikism by fleeing from Colophon to Notion in the first place)²⁷.

The archaeologically documented establishment of a new city plan at Notion may therefore plausibly be associated with the chain of events set in motion by Lysimachus's attack of Colophon. In later decades, as Philippe Gauthier has suggested, the struggle between the

²⁶ Robert – Robert 1989, 77–83.

²⁷ Étienne – Migeotte 1998, 149 f.

Seleucids and the Ptolemies for control over Asia Minor in the mid-third century created opportunities for cities to act with greater independence than before²⁸. This is the period when even the Seleucid stronghold of Sardis, to cite just one significant example, seems to have begun to issue its own civic coinage and perhaps to have obtained polis status for the first time²⁹. Another interesting aspect of relations between Colophon and Notion is the fact that the sympolity established in the late fourth century B.C. actually seems to mark a separation as much as a union; earlier in the same century, if Aristotle is correct, the two communities formed a single polis. The creation of the sympolity, by definition a union of two distinct poleis, thus marks or acknowledges a definitive division, underscored a few decades later by the dissolution of that same sympolity. The apparent eclipse of Colophon by Notion, on the other hand, reestablishes a kind of unity. These kinds of complications must have been common to synoikisms and sympolities, and the examples of Colophon and Notion provide an unusually illuminating combination of textual and archaeological evidence.

The most intriguing result of our work so far is the almost total absence of pottery later than the first century A.D., although this is as noted consistent with many aspects of the architecture of the site, including the rarity of mortared rubble construction and the absence of typical Roman building types such as baths. This narrow window of occupation is remarkable for a people whose sense of the lifespan of cities certainly extended over many centuries, but here again, Notion is like Priene, which was also largest in the Hellenistic period. Much of the western side of that city was destroyed by earthquake, landslide, and fire in the late second century B.C., and never reoccupied³⁰.

The eclipse of Notion was probably less dramatic and more gradual. Perhaps fewer of the inhabitants of Colophon and other nearby communities than had been expected were willing to relocate to the new town, or resources for the development of the town were inadequate. After all, the great urbanizing phenomenon that we call by the general name of Hellenistic colonization – and of which the refounding of Notion is just one example – must have resulted in the creation of many ultimately unsustainable new towns.

Notion may also have fallen victim to more specific circumstances. Much of Notion's importance was military; the site provides a good harbor with a clear view of Ephesus, and both the battle of Notion in the Peloponnesian war and the siege of the city by Antiochus the Great had to do with using or securing this valuable position against opposing fleets at Ephesus;

²⁸ Gauthier 2003, 70.

²⁹ Evans 15-25.

³⁰ Rumscheid 1999, 86 with references.

through the third century B.C., moreover, pirates remained a significant menace off the coast of Asia Minor, as dramatically attested by the experience of nearby Teos³¹. Under these circumstances, the defensibility of the promontory site may have outweighed its disadvantages, such as the absence of fresh-water sources. By the first century A.D., however, the reverse may have been true. In the era of the Roman Peace, there were no more pirates or hostile navies cruising the waters of the Aegean, and as bathing culture became a more and more important aspect of city life, a shortage of water was a greater and greater disadvantage. In addition, siltation of the harbor may have greatly reduced its utility.

The proximity to Ephesus that gave Notion some of its prior military importance may also have contributed to its decline in the Roman period. While Lysimachus's attempt in the early third century B.C. to concentrate the regional population at Ephesus was apparently unsuccessful, the Roman administration fostered the growth of metropolitan centers at the expense of smaller towns through administrative structures such as the *conventus* system and through the promotion of infrastructure facilities such as roads and aqueducts that compensated for some of the disadvantages of large urban conglomerations. The long-term effects of this transformation are especially visible in the late Roman period, when habits of urban life were largely reduced to provincial capitals. Research at Notion and similar partially or wholly abandoned sites from the first century A.D. may indicate that this transformation had much deeper roots, going back to the formative eras of the Roman imperial system.

We should emphasize, however, that Notion was not completely abandoned in the Roman era. In the first place, habitation clearly extended beyond the city walls, as is shown by the presence of structures attested by geophysical prospection in the low lying area to the north of the city and by cisterns on the slopes just above the modern road, and it is possible that (in addition to the original harbor community) Notion had a ›lower town‹ in the area between the promontory site and the sanctuary at Claros that was more prosperous in the Roman period than the fortified ›acropolis‹. In the second place, the promontory site certainly continued to be visited and at least partly inhabited, but it must have been a ghostly place, with large tracts of abandoned housing – and this was surely a more common experience of Roman urban life in Asia Minor than we often recognize. Priene only looked like it did in Johann Adam Zippelius's famous reconstruction drawing for a short time (if ever). Throughout the Roman period, visitors entering that city from the west must have been struck by the abandoned neighborhoods they passed through on their way to the Sanctuary of Athena and the Agora. Modern Europeans are familiar with images of urban devastation following the Second World War – but those bombed out cities were quickly

³¹ Şahin 1994.

rebuilt. The eerily comparable urban reality of contemporary Detroit, 60 km from the University of Michigan, has different causes and effects, and forces us to reconsider commonly accepted paradigms of the modern city. Historians of late antiquity are accustomed to the idea of life among the ruins. The examples of towns like Notion and Priene suggest that this was a reality for many town dwellers of the earlier Roman period as well.

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Illustrations

Fig. 1 Map of region around Notion (Notion Archaeological Survey)

Fig. 2 Plan of Notion (Notion Archaeological Survey)

Fig. 3 Orthorectified aerial photograph of Agora (Notion Archaeological Survey, image prepared by Alexey Grobovskiy of Drone Adventures)

Fig. 4 Plan and section of Temple of Apollo (Notion Archaeological Survey, drawn by K. Toomasian)

Fig. 5 Tower on east side of fortifications (Notion Archaeological Survey)

Fig. 6 Repair of south fortification wall (Notion Archaeological Survey)

Fig. 7 Laser scans of cisterns (Notion Archaeological Survey, image prepared by Christian Kurtze)

Fig. 8 Selection of pottery from area west of Temple of Athena (Notion Archaeological Survey)

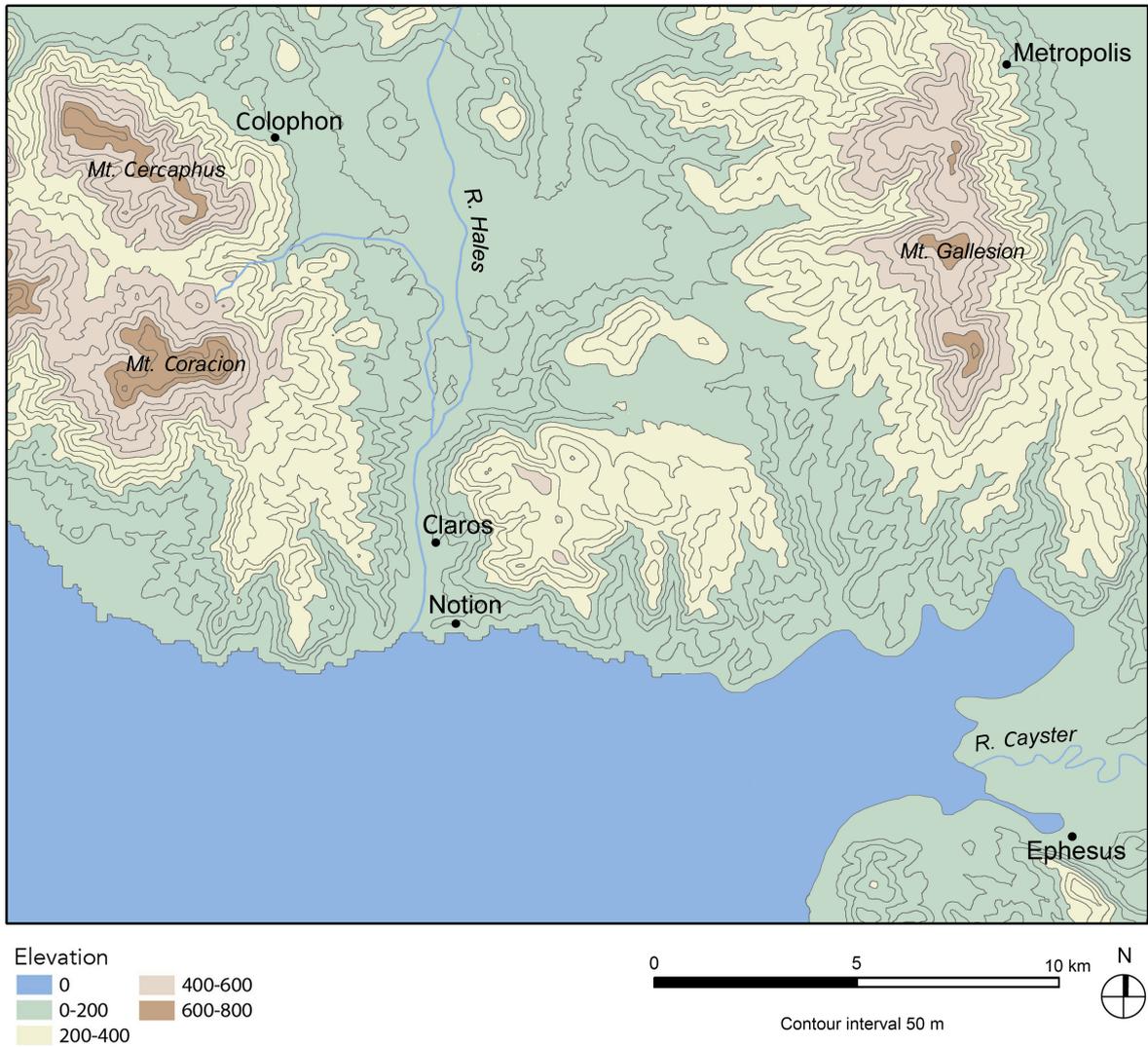


Fig. 1. Map of region around Notion (Notion Archaeological Survey)

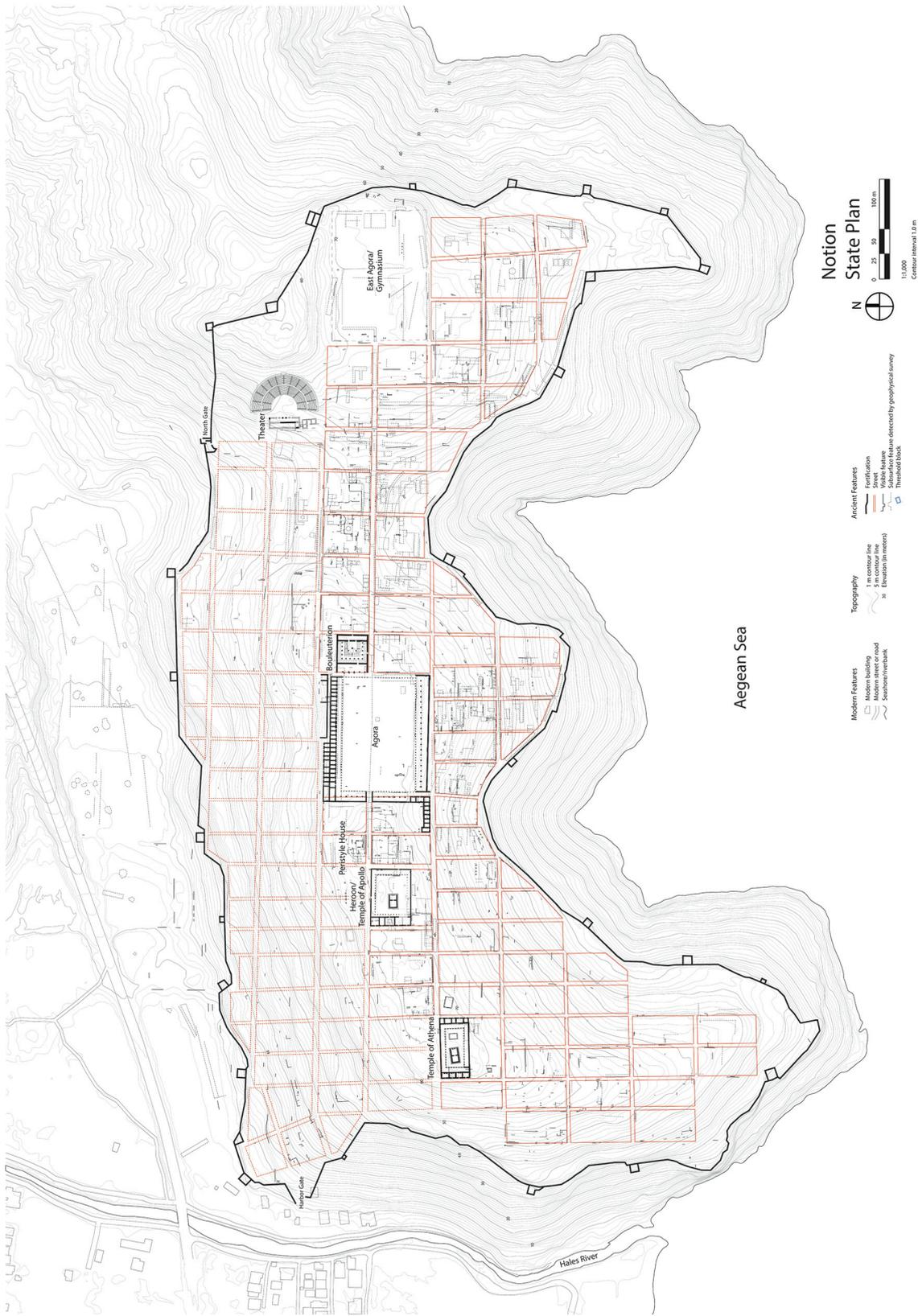


Fig. 2. Plan of Notion (Notion Archaeological Survey)



Fig. 3. Orthorectified aerial photograph of Agora
(Notion Archaeological Survey, image prepared by A. Gribovskiy of Drone Adventures)

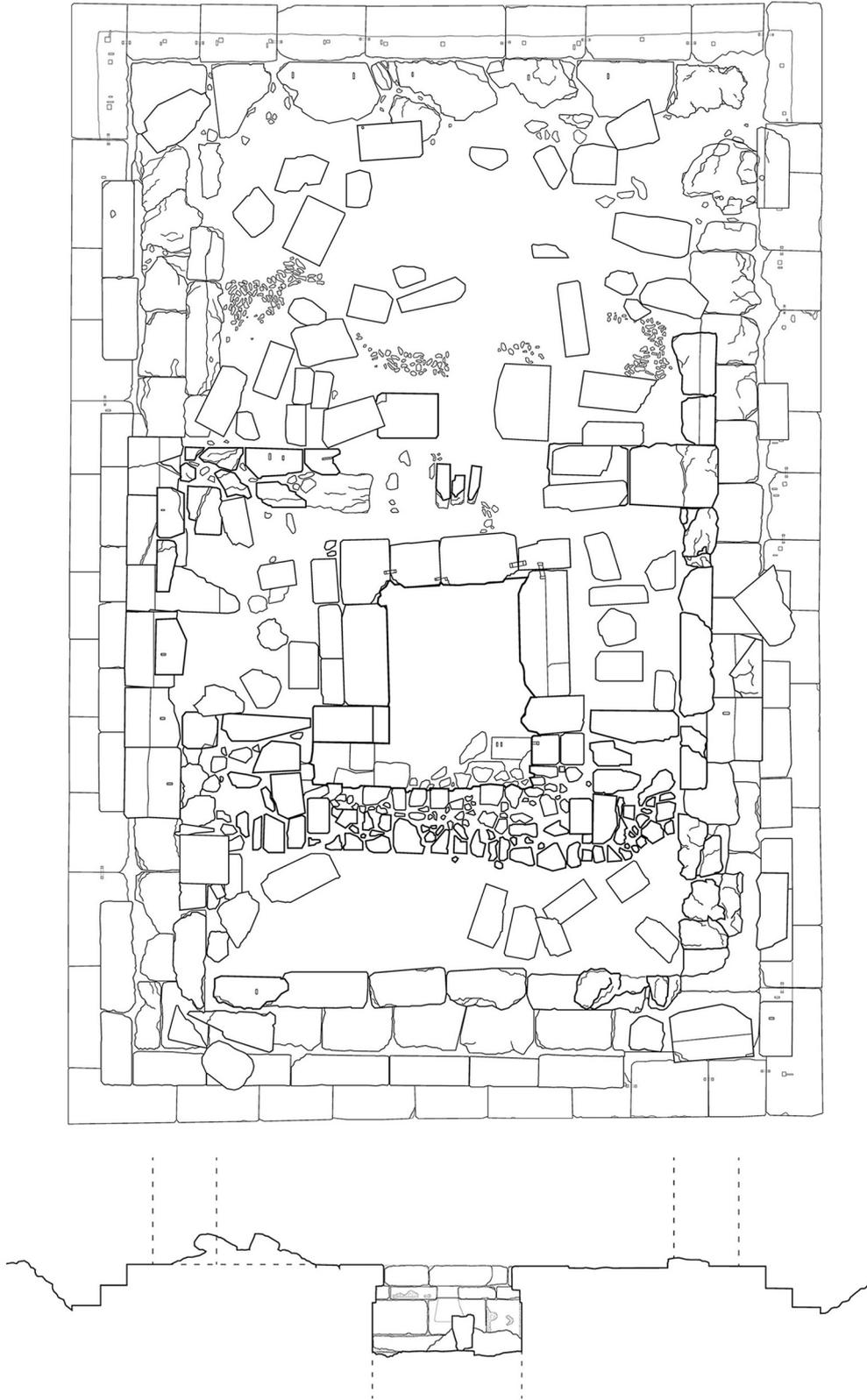


Fig. 4. Plan and section of Heroon or Temple of Apollo (Notion Archaeological Survey, drawn by K. Toomasian)



Fig. 5. Tower on east side of fortifications (Notion Archaeological Survey)



Fig. 6. Repair of south fortification wall (Notion Archaeological Survey)

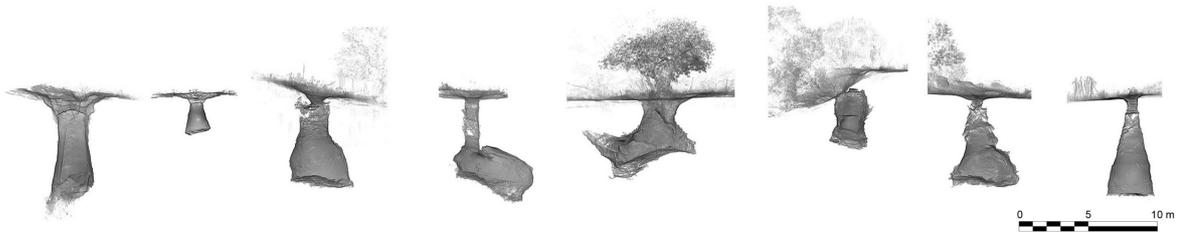


Fig. 7. Laser scans of cisterns (Notion Archaeological Survey, image prepared by Christian Kurtze)



Fig. 8. Selection of pottery from area west of Temple of Athena (Notion Archaeological Survey)