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In 1998, the Nordic institutes in Rome launched a five-year excavation project, the subject of which is a Roman villa by Lake Nemi in a locality by the name of S. Maria (Fig. 1).\footnote{The project is directed by a steering committee consisting of the directors of the four Nordic institutes involved: the Danish Institute: Jan Zahle (1998-2000), Gunver Skytte (2000–); the Finnish Institute: Christer Bruun (1998-2000), Christian Krötzl (2000–); the Norwegian Institute: Rasmus Brandt (1998–); the Swedish Institute: Anne Marie Leander Touati (1998-2001), Barbro Frizell (2001–) and the field director, Pia Guldager Bilde, and its logistic base is at the Danish Institute (Karen Ascani).}

The field work is carried out in close collaboration with the Soprintendenza archeologica per il Lazio,\footnote{We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the soprintendente, Anna Maria Reggiani and to our local collaborator, the director of the Museo delle Navi at Nemi, Giuseppina Ghini for their openness, their confidence in, and wholehearted support for the excavation project.}

Fig. 1. Overview of the site. The large numbers identify the plots. Harri Kiiskinen & Pia Guldager Bilde (April 2002).
and the excavation is sponsored by the Carlsberg Foundation and the Joint Committee of the Nordic Research Councils for the Humanities (NOS-H) with other contributions primarily from the Raising Family Foundation. During the first four excavation campaigns, each of which has lasted for two months every summer, more than 100 Nordic scholars and students have participated.

In 2001, an American team of experts in garden excavations has, moreover, participated in the excavation. Their work is financed by the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Philadelphia. Further, a more widely focussed Norwegian project aiming at studying the cultural landscape and the monitoring of the ancient remains in the Nemi crater was also initiated in 2001 as an extension of the research programme launched by the Nordic institutes. In 2001 this project

3. It is a great pleasure to extend our sincere gratitude to the foundations for their generous economic support. The following foundations also contributed for which we are grateful: the Norwegian Institute’s old donator-families: gift in occasion of its 40th anniversary and the Stiftelsen Thomas Fearnley, Heddy og Nils Astrup.


Chief architect: Kjell Aage Nilson, SV (2000–).


5. Employees at NIKU, Lars Erikstad, Anne Cathrine Flyen, Jørgen Solstad, Per Storemyr, Wenche Heliksen directed by Birgitte Skar. Their participation will continue in 2002.
was financed by the Norwegian Foundation for Cultural Heritage Research (NIKU). Provided it obtains the necessary economic funding, the project will continue in the coming years.

Lake Nemi is the smaller of the two crater lakes gracing the Alban Hills, an extinct volcano situated no more than ca. 25 km southeast of Rome (Fig. 2). The Alban Hills were a famed villa resort area being close to Rome, of great natural beauty and of a pleasant climate. The best known villa zones of the Alban Hills were the hills around modern Frascati and the crater surrounding Lake Albano. Lake Nemi is chiefly important because of Diana's sacred groove, the Nemus Aricinum, and her sanctuary, which was situated by the northern shore of the lake. At least four or five villas, possibly even six dotted the rim of the crater: one or two villas in loc. le Piagge, one under the Convent of the Cappuccini at Genzano, one under the cemetery of Genzano, one in loc. Pratoni by Nemi and probably one in the locality Vigna Grande midway between Nemi and Genzano at the eastern side of the crater. As far as we know, the villa in the locality S. Maria is the only one on the shore of the lake.

Topographers and local people long ago baptised the S. Maria ruins la villa di Cesare. The actual idea of this being Caesar's villa is based on a few literary sources mentioning that C. Julius Caesar constructed a palatial villa in nemore or in nemorensi, that is in Diana's sacred wood. If one is to believe Cicero (Att. 6.1.25) the villa was still no further than the planning stage in 50 BC, and, according to Suetonius, Caesar had it torn down when it was finished as "it did not meet his expectations" (Jul. 46). There are no further references to an Imperial villa by Lake Nemi, but finds and ancient sources wholly confirm the Julio-Claudian dynasty's interest in the area in general, and Imperial ownership of an estate in the sacred wood apparently prevailed as late as the Constantinian era, when Constantine the Great donated the Massa Nemus to the Basilica of John the Baptist in Albano, a church Constantine himself had had built in 314. The Massa Nemus estate producing a yearly revenue of no less than 280 gold solidi was the wealthiest estate donated to the Alban church by the emperor.

Apart from the attractive idea that the villa may have belonged first to C. Julius Caesar and later to the Roman emperors, the site was chosen by us for two main reasons. Firstly, because previous research had been done in the area by Danish scholars in the context of the rich finds from the late 19th century excavations in the Sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis acquired for the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen soon after their discovery. Secondly, because of the evidently very interesting overall ensemble within the small Nemi crater basin consisting of several monuments of primary importance: the already mentioned Sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis, the two float-


8. On the opposite side of the lake, by the shore, in the locality S. Nicola there are some more ruins that have been interpreted as a bath, e.g. Lenzi 2000, 162-165, n. 13. They have never been investigated, so their true function, date and relation to the Sanctuary of Diana and the S. Maria villa remain unknown.


10. See Sacred Grove 1997 with references.
ing palaces of C. Caligula and the extended group of ruins by the southwestern shore of the lake judged to be the remains of a Roman villa. The presence of these three monuments visually and spatially connected by the lake with its emissary and its embankment and situated within this confined area generated the idea of trying to understand these structures as a possible entity inside this closed landscape room.

The Sanctuary has been the focus of much previous research and since 1989, excavation has taken place under the auspices of the Soprintendenza archaeologica per il Lazio directed by Giuseppina Ghini. The sanctuary is presently being restored and the site may be opened to the public in the foreseeable future. The ships raised from the bottom of the lake between 1928 and 1932 were mainly documented at the time of their discovery, and there is considerable literature on them, to a certain extent of a speculative nature. The ships had been plundered thoroughly, lastly in 1895 by Prince Orsini in collaboration with the art dealer, E. Borghi. The equipment and decoration still remaining onboard, when the ships were raised, is a valuable supplement to the objects removed in the late 19th century, and together the finds provide an insight into the once luxurious furnishing of the vessels. The boats themselves were destroyed by fire in 1944; however, the finds had already been moved to safe custody at the beginning of the war, and today, they are divided between the Roman National Museum in Palazzo Massimo and the Museo delle Navi at Nemi. In both museums the beautifully restored finds have recently been put on excellent display and can thus be seen by the public. The ruins of the villa have never been subjected to proper scientific excavation or research. The ruins were first represented in P. Rosa’s topographical map of Latium compiled between 1850 and 1870 on a scale of 1:20,000. On Rosa’s map, buildings on several oblong artificial terraces can be noted. However, though correct in the broad outline, some details are misjudged, so it remains an open question, how much Rosa actually did see in the terrain. A few pages in the Notizie degli Scavi mention digging in the zone and also in the files of the Archivio dello Stato there are reports referring to activities in the area in the 1880s: in the fall of 1886, private landowners made some soundings, and during November-December 1887 and January-April 1888, the Roman art dealer, L. Boccanera, who also excavated in the Sanctuary of Diana, dug at the villa site. Before the

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13. Mariani 1941 (full bibliography); Ucelli 1980.


Nordic excavations were launched in 1998, the villa was briefly referred to in general publications on the antiquities by Lake Nemi. As the villa site extends over a large area covering ca. 45,000 m², it is evidently beyond our means to excavate more than fractions of the site. It was, thus, viewed as a major challenge for the Nordic institutes in Rome to undertake the excavation of the villa, and the excavation and research strategy pursued from the outset has been to establish an overall understanding of the general lines of layout and development of the villa in terms of its architecture and chronology. Only when a well-founded basis for the interpretation of the villa’s architecture and chronology has been achieved, can the interpretation of the villa within the Nemi crater context, as mentioned above, be addressed.

The first four years of fieldwork have been concentrated primarily in the northern half of the villa, whereas the final excavation campaign in 2002 will concentrate on the villa’s southern half. Before initiating work in this new area and before starting to process the data in order to prepare the final publication, we take this opportunity to present the status quo of the excavation and the preliminary results of the research in the northern half of the S. Maria villa.

To date, 10 campaigns have been undertaken: four major excavation campaigns (June and July 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001), and six minor campaigns, of these three measurement campaigns (February 1999, May 2000 [electric resistivity], and May 2001 [magnetometry]) and three campaigns with the processing of the finds (January 2000, 2001, 2002).

An overall gridnet covers the site. The trenches cut this net at an angle of ca. 30°. Within the net are a number of datum points used for the general levelling. They are fixed with GPS, Global Positioning System, and accordingly, we are able to operate with absolute geographical positions and absolute heights above the sea level. 48 trenches have been opened to date (Fig. 1); in 1998 11 trenches (AA to AL), in 1999 14 trenches (AM, AN, AP, AQ, AR, AS, AT, AV, AX, AZ, BA, BB, BC) and three trenches opened in 1998 were reopened and finished (A, D, K). In 2000 11 trenches were opened (CA, CB, CC, CD, CE, CF, CG, CH, CI, CM), and trench BB opened in 1999 was reopened and finished. Finally, in 2001 12 trenches were opened (DA, DB, DC, DD, DE, DF, DG, DH, DI, DK, DL, DM), and CI opened in 2000 was reopened and finished. During all campaigns, visible walls have been cleaned and measured. Particularly noteworthy was the work on the cistern in 1998, on the exedra in 1999 and in 2000 the partial cleaning and measurement of the terrecce wall and the fornix in the villa’s northwestern corner.

We can follow Man’s presence at the villa site for at least 3,500 years. The earliest evidence is...
stray finds of impasto from the Appenine Bronze Age.\textsuperscript{22} In the northern part of the villa close by the lake’s ancient level, strata have been found with abundant Final Bronze Age or Early Iron Age material attesting to a slightly more permanent occupation by a small community on the shore of the lake in the aforementioned period.

For almost 1,000 years until the 1st century BC we only have, again, a few stray finds. Life in this part of the crater was apparently not much affected by the presence of the Sanctuary of Diana, which flourished from ca. 300 BC till the second half of the 2nd century AD. However, for two centuries, from the mid-1st century BC to the mid-2nd century AD, the locality of S. Maria constituted the backdrop for luxurious villa life.

Four main phases have been distinguished in the villa:\textsuperscript{23}
\begin{itemize}
  \item Phase 1, Late Republican, (mid?) 1st century BC (Caesar?)
  \item Phase 2, Early Imperial, ca. 20-40 AD (Caligula?)
  \item Phase 3, Late Neronian-Early Flavian, 60-80 AD
  \item Phase 4, Hadrianic, 120s AD
\end{itemize}

\textbf{General layout of the villa}

The villa is as already mentioned situated by the southwestern shore of Lake Nemi. The backbone of the villa is an artificial, oblong terrace measuring ca. 260x60 m (Fig. 3). The villa platform consists partly of levelled rock, and is partly built in Roman mortar. Towards the lake, the wall is ca. 9 m high (Figs. 4-5). In its final phase the area covered by the villa measured ca. 100x450 m.

The main terrace of the villa is oriented roughly north-northeast to south-southwest. The eastern aspect of the villa’s position provided coolness in summer. The general orientation of the view is towards east-southeast and accordingly towards the lake. The presence of the lake probably dictated the position of the villa. The villa’s long side is parallel to the lake, and as the orientation of the wings at either end of the villa changed in respect to the general orientation of the villa, its overall layout follows the curvature of the lake. This feature was already established during the first phase of the villa.

Access to the villa was, at least in the later phases, twofold: either by boat or via a paved road. The paved road entered the villa plateau from the north (Fig. 6). This road intersected the road (Via Virbia?)\textsuperscript{24} connecting the Via Appia with the Sanctuary of Diana. At least from the second phase, coming from the lake, the villa plateau could be accessed via a tunnel cut through the terrace wall and leading to the part of the building at the villa’s axis (Fig. 7).

The area north of the villa plateau consists of two parts (Fig. 3). Towards the north is an open space apparently without buildings framed by a terrace wall (SU 301) carrying the access road towards the west, and towards the east a long wall SU 18. The open space between these two walls may have been a walled(?) garden. Immediately south of the proposed garden is a building block with a structure in two storeys being, at least in the final villa phase 4, a bath house (Fig. 11).

On the villa plateau were the living quarters and the receptional rooms (Fig. 8). Furthest to the north was a long II-shaped portico open towards the lake (Fig. 10). The portico had mortar floors, and behind the portico were small cubicula with black and white mosaics and whitewashed walls. Further south there was, in the phases 2-4, a closed garden peristyle probably substituting for the atrium of the first phase. The peristyle had opus sectile floors and an impressive water channel in front of the columns. Opening into the peristyle were several rooms again with opus sectile floors, and in its northeastern corner, opening into the long facade portico, there was a sizeable triclinium also with an opus sectile floor. This part of the building characterised by its rich opus sectile floors and coloured stucco walls contrasts with the previously mentioned part of the building further north.

\textsuperscript{22} Concerning a survey of the finds, I refer to the article by Birte Poulsen in this volume.
\textsuperscript{23} See also Poulsen, this volume.
\textsuperscript{24} Lenzi 2000, 171-172, n. 24.
Fig. 4. Terrace wall with support added in phase 3 (2000).

Fig. 5. Terrace wall, detail. Beneath the iron tubes the facing of the first phase of the terrace wall can be seen (2000).
Fig. 6. Trench CM, access road on terrace wall (2000).

Fig. 7. Vaulted passage (2000).

Fig. 8. Overview of the northern half of the villa plateau. Harri Kiiskinen & Pia Guldager Bilde (April 2002).
South of the peristyle is another building block situated at the axis of the villa. This block had either two storeys or a change of level, as we can see from the presence of a staircase leading from the peristyle to the rooms in the central block. Towards west at the villa's highest point and almost at its axis is the villa's cistern.

The layout of the southern half of the villa plateau will be investigated in 2002. The results are, accordingly, not included in this article. However, we know that south of the villa plateau, another wing had been added at a later date, probably in phase 3 (Fig. 1). This wing contained a huge horseshoe-shaped exedra, and it is in this part of the villa we also find the opening of the emissary. With above remarks of a more general character, we will turn to the structures of the villa in more detail, presented phase by phase.

Phase 1
The villa plateau
The first villa was, as already mentioned, constructed on a huge artificial terrace made by levelling the rock and building a ca. 260 m long and ca. 9 m high retaining wall. Behind this oblong platform measuring ca. 60 m in depth, the crater rises steeply. The terrace wall remained the main feature of the villa. It was constructed in opus caementicium. Its upper facade from the level ca. 335 m a.s.l. corresponding to ca. 1 m below the level of the terrace's horizontal plane, was finished with a facing of opus quasi reticulatum made of basalt cubilia (Fig. 5).

The villa probably had an extension more or less similar to that of the later phases. At least in the northern half of the villa, in the area of the later bath, several structures (SU 92, 1146)
incorporated as supportive elements under later floors, point to this conclusion. SU 92 (probably a fornix) and SU 1146 are both well constructed structures of a hard, dark grey mortar with peperino and grey tufa cubilic and corner reinforcements consisting of small peperino blochetti. These structures share the same orientation northeast-southwest, which differs from the orientation of the main terrace, and from later orientations in the later bath area (Fig. 11). They may have functioned as substructions extending the villa north of the main villa plateau. However, we have no means of determining the character or use of this part of the villa in its first phase.

The villa was seemingly provided with a long facade portico (Fig. 3). This portico stood on part of the terrace edge. In trench AV, a peperino block (SU 511) embedded in the mortar of the terrace wall (SU 509), may have been the base on which one of the columns of the facade portico rested. In the nearby trench CD a monumental Doric capital was found in 2000 (Fig. 12). It is made of peperino, with a maximum width of 0.91 m and with a diameter of 0.715 m. It is of a particular type with a tall, plain neck in common use in Central Italian architecture of the second half of 2nd century BC to ca. 75 BC. To mention but a few examples, it was used in the ramp porticoes of the Sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia at Praeneste dated to the late 2nd century BC, and in the Forum facade of the Tabularium in Rome dated to 79/78 BC. But more importantly, in the Sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis, it was intensively used for the large and small porticoes all dated to the last quarter of 2nd century BC. The size and type of the capital supports the hypothesis that it belonged to the facade portico.

A few remains in trench AV show that the floor of the first portico was of opus signinum combined with mosaic (SU 512).

On the villa plateau, the remains of the first villa are very badly preserved due to the fact that the walls of the first villa were torn down to socle height or to the very level of their foundation. However, it is certain that the long portico had its origin in this phase, even though we do not know whether it had side wings already by then. The facade wall facing north was investigated in trench AP (SU 125) (Fig. 13). This wall was furnished with a finish of opus quasi reticulatum made of basalt.

Of the long portico, the foundation made of oblong, squared peperino blocks (SU 107, 194) and the gutter in front of portico also cut in long peperino blocks (SU 108, 195) are preserved (Fig. 10). The front wall of the later portico (SU 161) is constructed directly on top of a phase 1 wall. This early wall (SU 206) was investigated in trench CB and DD, and it was
shown that it was furnished with a 2nd style wall painting (SU 173) very little of which is preserved (Fig. 14). The painting shows a Doric half-column without a base, finely articulated in paint in nuances of cream, yellow and ochre on a dark bluish grey background. The aforementioned wall has been investigated to a length of ca. 6 m. In the later phases, this stretch of wall contained entrances to three rooms, but there is no evidence of any entrance in the early wall. It therefore remains unknown, whether there were rooms behind the portico in the first phase. There probably were, but then the rooms must have been larger and their entrances spaced further apart than was the case in the later phases.

Whereas the building block of the H-shaped portico was basically unaltered in the later periods, the early structures south of this block were in later phases completely overbuilt with structures of a new layout. The understanding of this part of the building remains, therefore, fragmentary. Exploring the garden of the closed peristyle in 2001 revealed, much to our surprise, a sizeable rectangular structure measuring ca. 5x4 m and with ca. 0.9 m wide walls (SU 547, 548, 549) (Fig. 15). The walls were razed to the very foundation. In the middle of the structure’s eastern side was found a drain (SU 551). This in all probability connected with the old drain (SU 418) situated inside the terrace, which preceded the vaulted passage cut into the terrace in phase 2. It is an attractive idea that the rectangular structure is indeed the remains of the impluvium of the first villa. The presence of the access to the reception rooms via the vaulted passage situated immediately south of the ?atrium may well mirror the location of the ?atrium in the 1st phase (Fig. 3). In the Villa Adriana at Tivoli, we find the same replacement of a late Republican atrium by a closed peristyle.27 The floor of the atrium was probably covered with opus signinum. At least in the western part of the trench, west of the impluvium, an extended area with a preparation floor of mortar with a high content of tile splits was found. However, later activities in the area of the later garden had destroyed all evidence of a floor surface.

North of the atrium and under the later walls and floors of the triclinium in trench CE were found the remains of an, again, obliterated but wide foundation wall oriented perpendicularly to the terrace wall (SU 218). South of it were traces of two rooms connected with a door opening (SU 211). In the rooms was evidence of two different types of opus sectile floor (SU 186 and 191) (Fig. 9). SU 191 consisted of a pattern with a square-in-a-square, the larger squares being separated with a narrow fillet.

27 G. Lugli, “Studi topografici intorno alle antiche ville sub-urbane VI. Villa Adriana. A. Una villa di età repubbli-

cana inclusa nelle costruzioni imperiali”, BullCom 55, 1927, 175-179, pl. 3.E.
No traces of the actual stone slabs are preserved, only the imprints in the mortar floor. The pattern of the floor in the second room (SU 186) consisted of one or more rows of small squares separated by multiple fillets, and of larger rhombs surrounded again by thin multiple fillets and intersected by a square-in-a-square (Fig. 16). Some of the fillets made of black slate are preserved in situ, as they were probably considered unfit for reuse.

The square-in-square pattern was as such very popular over a long period of time. However, the use of the fillets framing the squares is an early trait, and it is found almost identical in the only opus sectile floor of the villa dei Volusii from 60-50 BC. The pattern with large oblong rhombs bordered by multiple fillets and combined with squares was particularly in vogue in the mid-1st century BC, but only preserved in the form of the more common mosaic floors. However, the technique of the flooring also points to this early date. It is characteristic that the back of the slabs is convex and very thick in the middle leaving a deep central impression. A number of slabs with these characteristics have been found in later fill, particularly in trench CI, mainly consisting of hexagons but also of smaller rhombs both made of palombino.

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28. Moretti & Sgubini Moretti 1977, pl. XLV.
30. Poulsen in this volume p. 50.
None of them can stem from the two aforementioned floors, as they are of diverging sizes and shapes. However, they attest to the apparently widely spread use of precious stone floors even in the first phase.

There is, as described above, no doubt about the fact that the first villa was torn down. When exactly, this took place, and why, still remains an open question. It may have happened as late as the early Augustan period. Building elements from the first phase were widely reused in the villa of the second phase, e.g. as caementa in the walls and for brick columns (Fig. 40).

Phase 2
The villa plateau
In the early Imperial period, the villa was rebuilt more or less from the ground, even though features such as the terrace wall itself remained standing. The facade portico was probably reconstructed reusing the old capitals.

As found in trench CM, at the latest by this period, a ca. 3 m wide road paved with trapezoid blocks of basalt (SU 300) in parts supported on an artificial terrace (SU 301) was constructed with a facing of opus reticulatum made of mixed stones (Fig. 6). The road continued in a straight line from trench CM to the villa plateau where it was also found in trench CI (Fig. 29).

There is no doubt that it was during this phase that a vaulted passage was built by cutting through the main terrace wall (Fig. 7). This provided access from the lower (garden?) terrace to the central part of the villa, and it probably served visitors and others coming to the villa by boat and mooring at the villa’s quay. The passage measuring ca. 3.5 m in height and 1.9-2 m in width was provided with very crude reticulate walls of basalt and with an irregular segment vault. In its present state, it is completely filled with soil ca. 8 m from the entrance. However, a hole cut in recent times by illicit diggers through the mortar foundation of the stair case found in trench DA, which was constructed in phase 3, reveals that the passage stops 26.6 m inside the terrace turning sharply southwards at an angle of 90° towards the central building block. We do not know where the vaulted passage surfaced.

At the villa plateau, the general level was raised ca. 30 cm. As the portico, which was probably at least from this period II-shaped, was reconstructed on top of the old walls, the level of the foundation on which the columns of the portico stood, was raised by one block (SU 139, 220), and a new mortar floor (SU 252) was laid in the corridor (Fig. 10). At least by this period, behind the portico a series of rooms were built with a common back wall (SU 103) and (reused) peperino thresholds. The technique of the walls is a rather sloppy opus reticulatum with coarse, large and irregular cubilia of mixed materials and at the corners blocchetti of which only the facade(s) are cut at right angles (Fig. 17). The room size was significantly larger than in the later phases, and apparently with more than one entrance per room. At the same time a new series of small rooms, approximately 3x3 m was added to the northern facade of the portico with thresholds added on top of the old facade wall, which had, as mentioned, been torn down (Fig. 8). The small rooms were decorated with geometric black-and-white style mosaics. In one room found in trench BA, the pattern consisted of hexagons outlined with black on a white ground (SU 115) (Fig. 18), and two rooms found in trench CA were both decorated with groups of rectangles outlined with black clustered around a black square (SU 133 and 134) (Fig. 19). Both types of floors are well known from late 1st century BC to at least the
The pattern of hexagons is fairly common in Italy. A variant of this type of floor is connected with 2nd Style wall painting at Pompeii (Casa del Saccio Flace, cubiculum q) from ca. 40 BC (V. Spinazzola, Pompei alla luce degli scavi nuovi di via dell'Abbondanza (Roma 1953), 548, fig. 608; Pompei pitture e mosaici I (Roma 1990), 326, fig. 80). From the Augustan period we find many specimens (Casa del Nozze d'Argento, Casa di Meleagro, Casa del Cinghiale: F.L. Bastet & M. de Vos, Proposta per una classificazione del terzo stile pompeiano (S'gravenhage 1979), 108-109, n. 13) and in the 3rd style villas in Campania, such as the Villa di Arianna (Pisapia 1989, cat. 89). In the 1st century AD this type of floor had a vast distribution not only in Italy, but throughout the Mediterranean as such (M. Donderer, Die Chronologie der römischen Mosaiken in Verenien und Istrien bis zur Zeit der Antonine (Berlin 1986), 147). It can be found as far away as in Palestine, where it was used recurrently in representative rooms of the Herodian palace at Masada of the early Augustan period (large bathhouse, courtyard 101: Netzer 1991, plan 5, figs. 128-129; Northern Palace, upper building room 78 and 87: Netzer 1991, plan 10, figs. 223-224, 228) as a sure sign of the King's Philoroman taste. It is probably originally a pattern based on terra cotta slabs, which are found perhaps as early as late 4th-early 3rd century BC at Velia (W. Johannowsky, "Osservazioni sui mosaici in tessere e sui cocciopesti con tessere più antichi", Atti del IV colloquio di AISCOM (Palermo 1996), Roma 1997, 583-584; see also the fundamental article by F. Guidobaldi & L. Gregori, "Pavimenti a commesso di mattonelle in laterizio di età romana. Indagine preliminare", Atti del III colloquio di AISCOM (Bordighera 1995), Bordighera 1996, 247-260), but it is soon manufactured in opus sectile, the earliest occurrence of which is at Ostia, Casa Repubblicana B from either late 2nd or late 1st century BC (Becatti 1961, 20, n. 27, pl. V); cf. also the numerous palombino hexagons found in the S. Maria villa mentioned p. 4. In opus sectile, its latest occurrence is probably in the Villa Adriana (Vestibulum room 6) from the 120s AD, where probably as an Archaizing trait the early combination of Palomboino with slate fillets is employed (de Franceschini 1991, 289; Guidobaldi 1994, 169, pl. LXXIV n. 102). See also Poulsen 2003, fig. 3. The pattern with the rectangles grouped around a square can be found with and without a black box inside the square; however, it is basically the same pattern. It is not entirely clear when this pattern first appears. The early Nemi floors seem to stand at the beginning of the series. A well dated specimen from the Nero- nian period (but with reversed colours) is found in the Villa di S. Marco at Stabiae between the columns of the peristyle to decus F (Pisapia 1989, 21, cat. 37). It is found at Pompei house V,1,26 (Blake 1930, 64, 81, pl. 14.2, 27.3), in several floors in the palace at Fishbourne from 75-80 AD decorated in "Italian style" (Cunliffe 1971, room N 12 (border, pl. LXXVIII) and room N 19 (entire floor, pl. LXXX)). It is in continuous use in the 2nd century, e.g. at Ostia in the Sanctuary of Bona Dea (Becatti 1961, no. 394, pl. XIII) and in the Domus delle Muse, room N from ca. 130 AD (Becatti 1961, 133, no. 267, pl. XIII, CCXXV), and at Tivoli it is found in the Villa Adriana, Hospitalia room 5 under the couches (de Franceschini 1991, 38-39) and in a coloured version in a corridor of the Canopus (de Franceschini 1991, 312, pl. 36.2). This type of pattern can also be found in opus sectile e.g. at Luni, Domus degli affreschi (Guidobaldi 1981-1983, pl. 13.5) and at Tivoli in the Latrins (TP 6-7, de Franceschini 1991, 688) and in the Piccole Terme, corridor 16 (de Franceschini 1991, 249).
structures. The same argument applies in the case of an impressive drain mirroring the position of the colonnade but built inside the terrace in *opus caementicum* with a high triangular roof. Apart from the already mentioned structures, the walls SU 147, 151, 152, 535, 542, 587 also belong to this phase. As was the case with the above mentioned structures, these walls and their internal relationship also point to a monumental layout of this part of the villa in phase 2. In the later bath area, new foundation walls with a new orientation were also constructed (SU 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 og 48), and at least the earlier wall, SU 92, was abolished in order to build the wall SU 48 (Fig. 11). Room 17 is a *fornix* showing that at least in phase 2 part of this wing also had two storeys. This upper storey is positioned ca. 1.5 m higher than the upper storey of phase 1 indicated by SU 92. Too little is preserved to verify the general function and use of this northern wing. In trench DF, which was opened in order to investigate the relationship between the villa and the lake in the hope of finding part of its quay construction a huge filling layer was encountered. This fill layer containing spolia of the first villa attests to substantial construction work in connection with the quay or embankment in phase 2. However, the actual walls were not found. It is highly probable that they are situated either beneath the modern track or under the present terrace constructed of retiform cages filled with boulders carrying the track. Neither can be demolished in order to reach the ancient remains. The dating of this phase has not yet been established with certainty. However, the general profile of the fine ware pottery, in particular of the *Terra Sigillata* pottery, suggests a date in the late Tiberian period or slightly later.

**Phase 3**

As far as our evidence goes, the layout on the villa plateau was basically established by phase 2. Phase 3, however, saw major restructurings and in the wings north and south of the main terrace, the building of new major elements.

*The terrace support*

The tall terrace wall had by this period apparently become partly instable. A support was therefore added in front of the terrace along its entire length (Fig. 4). This support consisted of 59 fornices, at an average of 2.9 m wide and more than 4.2 m deep with the outer fornix in both ends being slightly wider than the others. The fornices were furnished with a wall half way in, probably in order to mask the original