AN ANALYSIS OF THE PALACE OF SARGON II 
AT KHORSABAD: ITS ORGANISATION AND 
FUNCTION.

by

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"Palace of Sargon prefect of Enlil, priest of Assur the mighty king, king of the universe, king of Assyria... Following the prompting of my heart, at the foot of Mount Musri, I built a city and called its name Dur-Sharrukin... Palaces of ivory, maple, boxwood, mulberry, cedar and cypress, juniper, pine and pistachio-wood I built thereon and erected a bit-hilum, patterned after a Hittite palace, in front of their gates, and beams of cedar and cypress I placed over them... Whoever destroys the work of my hands, who obliterates my noble deeds, may Assur, the great lord, destroy his name and his seed from the land."

Thus does the proud voice of king Sargon II of Assyria speak out to us across the millennia. Inscribed on tablets hidden in the walls of his royal palace, on the gigantic lammasu figures guarding its entrances and on the paving stones of the city gates, similar messages promise his imprecations to those presumptuous enough to deface his monuments. Unfortunately for this mighty Assyrian king, his exhortation to later generations to preserve his palace's "of ivory and boxwood..." at his newly built capital, Dur-Sharrukin, utterly failed. Barely a year after his new city's dedication in 706 B.C.E., Sargon was killed in battle. His son and successor Sennacherib decided to abandon the not yet complete royal city and move the royal residence and Assyrian capital to the site of Nineveh, where it remained until the fall of the Empire in 612 B.C.E. Dur-Sharrukin, standing ignored and unfinished, would never again capture the attention of an Assyrian monarch. As it slowly disappeared beneath amorphous mounds of earth and stone, so too did its memory drift into myth and oblivion. However, in 1843, after spending almost two thousand years lying deserted and buried in both the earth and the minds of man, the efforts of two Frenchmen digging at the small...
village of Khorsabad in northern Iraq, brought the "Palace without a rival" of King Sargon II of Assyria into the light of day once more.

In the eyes of its creator, Sargon II, the city of Dur-Sharrukin stood, amongst other things, as an unrivalled landmark of the architectural ingenuity of the Assyrian Empire. Whilst his successor obviously disagreed, it is rather ironic that over two thousand years later archaeologists are beginning to view the site, and especially its royal palace, much in the same light as did the long dead king. The importance of the excavations at Khorsabad to the history of archaeology and archaeological methodology in the Near East is unquestionable: the two years of excavations in 1843 and 1844 conducted by the French consul at Mosul, Paul Emile Botta, earned Khorsabad, "the honour of being the first mound to yield up its secrets to the excavator" - an occasion of historic significance, especially since it also marked the birth, proper, of the systematic archaeological excavation of the "Tellis" of Mesopotamia. The work of Botta's successor at the site seven years later, architect Victor Place, whilst revealing the entirety of Sargon's "Palace without Rival", also saw the introduction of photography to archaeological excavations in Iraq; the extensive excavations conducted in the citadel by the team from the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago have revealed examples of Assyrian domestic architecture of unsurpassed quality. Now, whilst it is true that in many ways the efforts of Botta and the artist Flandin and even Place, were little more than those of novices burrowing through the earth, it is through their work and that of their successors at the site, that we have today at Khorsabad considerable documented evidence of what

3. Luckenbill, Ancient Records, p.67 §127a
4. The reports of these two years were published in the massive five volumed tomes, P.E. Botta & E. Flandin, Monuments de Ninive 5 vols., (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1849-1850).
6. See V. Place, Ninive et l'Assyrie, avec des Essais de Restauration par Felix Thomas, 3vols (Paris, 1867-70) for the reports of Place's work at Khorsabad between 1851 and 1855.
8. See H. Frankfort, Tell Asmar, pp.80-102; G. Loud, Khorsabad I, OIP 38, (Chicago 1936); G. Loud & C.B. Altman, Khorsabad II, OIP 40, (Chicago 1938), for the excavations of the Oriental Institute at Khorsabad during the years between 1929 and 1935. Henceforth to be referred to as Khorsabad I and Khorsabad II.
9. Like many of those who followed them, they employed the technique of digging till they found walls, then tunnelling along beside them.
many consider to be some of the best preserved examples of Assyrian Royal town planning yet uncovered."

"Architecture in general is frozen music" wrote Friedrich Von Schelling in his Philosophie der Kunst in 1809. This admittedly rather poetic statement can be applied almost literally as well as figuratively when viewing what remains of the magnificent but lifeless ancient buildings of Dur-Sharrukin. Lifeless, but not mute, for the richness of information which can be derived from a detailed examination of the ruined remains of the palaces, temples, and fortifications of the city, effectively reveals much about the people who built them. The hopes, desires, expectations, and needs of the inhabitants of Dur-Sharrukin, ruler and populace alike, all find expression through the planning, construction and decoration of their city. Thus, an investigation of the architecture of the city of Khorsabad can help, albeit rather obliquely, to shed light on what these particular concerns may have been. However, an examination of the architectural remains of such a city can have many levels, extending from a purely structural "bare bones" examination of the bricks and mortar and their arrangement, to a discussion of the structure's political, sociological and economic roles, to an analysis of the symbolic relevance of various decorative motifs. With the focus of scholastic attention on Dur-Sharrukin in recent years being rather more drawn to the manner and implications of its decoration, relatively little analysis has been made of the organisation, both internal and external, of its architecture. It is the aim of this paper to rectify this oversight and in doing so bring some sense of how these structures themselves influenced and reflected the daily ebb and flow of Assyrian life.

Circulation and organisation are the building blocks upon which this study will be based. Like a musical composition, where the arrangement of the notes upon the pages of the score are grouped together to form various movements, so too do the rooms of a building join together to form a coherent whole. Through an

analysis of the means by which these rooms were connected to each other, and precisely how and where they grouped themselves in the structure as a whole, it is possible to come to a greater understanding of how each building functioned. In order to understand the wider questions of the palace's usage and function it is necessary to examine individual aspects of its design, focusing on patterns of circulation within and between buildings, and on the organization of individual rooms as separate structures and as components within larger sectors of associated function. As it is beyond the capabilities of this paper to examine all of the architecture of Dur-Sharrukin in such a manner with the scrutiny it deserves, only one of the major buildings will be focused upon—the largest and most important (at least in the eyes of its inhabitant and chief architect), and certainly the recipient of the best documentation, both ancient and modern—the palace of the king.

A man's home may be his castle, following the old saying12, but in the minds of eighth century Assyrians the royal palace was so much more than just the home of their sovereign. Being the result of the combined efforts of the most skilled builders, craftsmen and artists throughout the empire13, the royal palace, with its size and richness of decoration, was a powerful political tool and generator of propaganda about the wealth and might of the empire. It also displayed, in a bold concrete form, the Assyrian notion of the role of kingship, and the power of the king himself. Sargon II's declaration "I made them (palaces) objects of astonishment"14 and his successor Sennacherib's stated intention to build a "palace without rival" to "procure the admiration of all the people"15 demonstrates that the Assyrian monarchs were not only well aware of the ability of

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12. The exact quote, partially translated from the Latin is "For a man's house is his castle, et domus sua cuique est sanctissimum refugium". The Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed. (1989), p. 74, §3.
13. Place, Name et l'Assyrie I, p. 10. See also J. Reade, "Narrative composition in Assyrian Sculpture", Baghdader Mitteilungen 10 (1979), p. 52; [hereafter Reade (1979)] and S. Parpola (ed.), State Archives of Assyria I, "Letters from Assyria and the West" (Helsinki, 1987), §56 for an account of assignments of master builders and apprentices; §164 for an account of master builders being brought in to work on a Bull Cournal, §165 for an account of master builders taken from the palace to work on the gate of Shamash. The latter will now be referred to as SM I.
15. Luckenbill, Ancient Records, p. 38 §73.
monumental architecture to inspire awe, but that they were fully prepared to utilise it to encourage those feelings. Sargon II's practice of stamping the bricks used in the construction of his city with his name, and his statement that the length of the circuit of the city walls equaled the numeral of his name shows not only his desire to impress his identity on his city, but was also his method of ensuring that the impression of his greatness, as reflected in his palaces, would continue down through the succeeding generations.

The logistics involved in the construction of a royal palace, such as, the negotiating and purchasing of the required land;

"the price of the fields of that town (Maggamubba) I paid back to their owners according to the record of the purchase documents, in silver and copper, and to avoid ill feeling, I gave to those who did not want to [take] silver for their fields, field for field in locations over against the old."18

the planning of the architecture; the bringing in, supervision, housing and feeding of 1000, s of workers19;

"As to the work of Dur-Sharrukin, we have brought out the local population by villages; they will produce the bricks."20

the importing of materials such as straw,

"700 bales of straw and 700 bundles of reeds, each bundle more than a donkey can carry, must be at hand in Dur-Sharrukin by the 1st of Chisil(XI). Should (even) one day pass by, you will die."21

18.See Luckenbill. Ancient Records, p.64 §120. For texts referring to purchasing of land see SA I, p.325 §159
19.Luckenbill. Ancient Records, p.37 §72; p.52f §59; p.59 §112; p.64 §120. For texts indicating difficulties with this see SA I, p.38-41 §89; p.40f §64; p.128 §165; G. Lanfranchi & S. Parpola, eds., Slate Archives of Assyria V "Letters from the northern and north eastern provinces" (Helsinki, 1990), p.50 §56; p.94 §118. Henceforth the latter will be referred to as SA V.
21.SA I, p.24 §27; p.115f §143; p.116 §144; SA IV, p.12 §16.
22.SA I, p.24 §26, also §27.
"All the straw in my country is reserved for Dur-Sharrukin, and my recruitment officers are now running after me (because) there is no straw for the pack animals. Now what are the king my lord's instructions";  

and timber;  

"By the gods of the king, my lord, the day that the beams came to me, the [..]official] did not leave me; (I swear) the [beams] are on the [river] bank.... but the water in the river is low, and the difficult spots of [the river are many]."

the difficulties involved in the carving and transportation of thresholds and the huge limestone bulls;  

"Assur-sun-e'il'in called me to help and loaded the bull colossi on the boats, but the boats could not carry the load (and sank). Now, although it cost me a great trouble, I have hauled them up again."  

and the proposed movement of the central economic and political bodies, certainly implies something about the considerable wealth and organisational skill of the central bureaucracy of the day. Also, the fact that Sargon II chose to build his royal palace in a completely new city, the site of which "none among the 350 ancient princes who lived before me,...... had thought of" conveys much about his own character, (he is, in fact, egotistical enough to compare himself with the "Master", Adapa, to his descendants), and the political

25. X.44, p. 94 § 119.
26.5.44, p. 94 §§ 113-17; p. 96 §§ 28-43, 29, 24, 12; 26, 7, 34, 33, 34, and timber said by Sargon to have been used in the palace see footnote 1.
27. X.44, p. 92 § 11.
28. The first season of excavations conducted by the University of Chicago team shows how much effort was used in the transportation of the bull when they transported it to Chicago. (see Khorsabad, pp. 42-55), and the texts themselves are full of discussions about the carving, transporting, and losing them (to a watery grave), as well as discussing the number of people and regions involved in the construction of Dur-Sharrukin, and the inevitable troubles that occurred. See X.44, p. 92 § 110; p. 120 § 150; p. 137 § 183, X.44, p. 140 § 297; p. 211 § 298; also Luckenbill, Ancient Records, p. 43 § 84.
29. From the display inscription of Sargon XIV, see Luckenbill, Ancient Records, p. 42.
29. The sagacious king, full of kindnes... endowed with clear understanding, sharp of eye, in all matters the equal of the Master (Adapa)... Luckenbill, Ancient Records, p. 96 § 119. He also describes himself as being, in his "all embracing wisdom", made to surpass that of the kings, my fathers..." p. 55, § 105.
climate of his reign. The construction of Dur-Sharrukin would have certainly involved the whole empire to some degree, even if it just meant a sudden dearth of certain materials in many regions. In fact the texts suggest that the governors of the various districts of Sargon's empire were actually responsible for overseeing and organising the construction of certain portions of the new city. It would certainly have affected the very fabric of life at the time, especially for those whose power base was in the soon to be transcended capital city of Nimrud.

Thus the advantages of choosing to focus this study on Sargon II's palace are obvious. However, keeping all of what has just been said in mind, there are also two other very good reasons why palaces, from the point of view of archaeology, and the royal palace at Dur-Sharrukin in particular, are ideal subjects for focus: firstly, their very size and richness of decoration makes them both better equipped to stand up to the ravages of time, and to supply a variety of small finds that aid in interpretation. Secondly, most relevant to Khorsabad, we have a site whose situation is almost unique in its ability to be specifically dated to a single period, the reign of one particular king. We are thus left with a building almost entirely lacking in one of the major factors of confusion that bedevil most of the other Assyrian Royal palaces - their renovation by successive rulers. It is important, however, not to view the site of Dur-Sharrukin as some sort of archaeological Mecca, free of any shortcomings. Ironically, most of the confusion that surrounds the palace of Sargon II comes not from the dabbling of ancient man, but from the enthusiastic work performed by modern excavators.

One of the three major problems, in archaeological terms, of studying this site, lies in its pre-eminent place in the history of

30 There has been much speculation amongst historians as to whom exactly Sargon was, for there is some obscurity surrounding his claim to the throne and his failure to mention his royal ancestors in his inscriptions has been taken to imply his usurpation of the throne. If this is in fact so, his shifting of the political centre of power away from its old strong hold is not surprising.
31 See for example the text S44 F, p.94 §199 which relates the inquiry of one of the governors as to how his city was supposed to feed its livestock as all its hay had been sent to Dur-Sharrukin for its construction.
32 S44 F, p.60 §104 §92 §110, p.125 §139, §44 F, p.41 §147, p.50f §56, p.206 §291, p.298 §298.
33 I say almost because there is evidence in various parts of the palace and the Nabu Temple of at least one later occupation level. See Khorsabad I, p.62ff. 78f. & 85f; Khorsabad II, p.4, 58, 60ff.
excavation in Mesopotamia. The early excavators, especially Botta, whilst being genuinely earnest in their desires to accurately record their findings, were "essentially amateurs who had as their main objective the recovery of statues and objects of art for their countries' museums". They also lacked the systematic methodology and technology that assists the excavators of today, and failed to recognize any signs of stratigraphy in their excavations. As is lamentably obvious from their final reports, "pottery, mud bricks and the like" had little or no interest for them, except if they contained inscriptions. Fortunately Victor Place who had trained as an architect paid much more attention to "mud bricks" than did most of his predecessors and contemporaries, who often "destroyed much whilst preserving little" as they burrowed mole-like along the ancient walls. In fact, it seems that all the excavators at Khorsabad practiced tunnelling, with even Loud admitting to using it to save time. The disadvantages of this type of excavating are not only the very obvious ones of cave-ins and lack of light and fresh air. Tunnelling also necessitates the excavation of areas very close to the ancient walls, which in itself is not unforgivable were it not for the fact that such trenches (or tunnels) by their very nature and size inhibit a thorough examination of large rooms. Thus, in the reports of Victor Place and of Botta, it is often not perfectly clear how thoroughly the rooms that they discovered were excavated. That they failed to completely excavate certain rooms is obvious from one of Botta's plates and also from the later American excavations in which evidence of secondary occupations were uncovered in rooms which Place had supposedly cleared.

Place was also not as scrupulous as could be desired in his description of the portions of the palace which did not contain sculptures, such as parts of his "Serail" and "Dependances". His remarks about these areas were meagre to say the least, and one

34 Gernet, Royal Cities, p.11
35 Gernet, Royal Cities, p.11
36 See Fradinfort, Tell Asmar, p.80f. for praise of this excavator.
37 In fact, considering their equipment and inexperience, both Botta's and Place's excavations are remarkable for their degree of accuracy. See Khorsabad II, p.9.
38 Khorsabad I, p.84f for his account of discovering one of Place's tunnels.
39 Khorsabad II, p.4.
is drawn, not unnaturally to the question of how thorough his excavation of these areas actually was. The accuracy of his floor plans are also, in some places, slightly suspect. This may in part be due to the fact that many of the plans were drawn up after his return to Paris. His outline of building F on the south-western city wall is completely incorrect\(^4\), and the provenance of many of the doors and alcoves in the "Serail" of Sargon II's palace are also questionable\(^1\). Moreover, much confusion arises from discrepancies between the site reports of Place and Botta, and what was finally, in Botta's case four and Place's twelve years later, published\(^4\). In some cases it is extremely difficult to reconcile the floor plans of all three excavations.

The second problem, is a direct result of one of the site's virtues - its extremely short history of occupation. It seems quite incredible that after all the work that was put into the construction of Dur-Sharrukin, approximately eleven years worth\(^4\), it was then abandoned after Sargon II's death. However, evidence gathered from all three excavations, and from the texts of Sargon II, Sennacherib and following monarchs, seems to predominantly suggest that this was the case. Certainly if the palace was occupied after Sargon's death it seems unlikely that it was used by members of the royal court. The expected richness of small finds left over from everyday living, and those mentioned in the texts that include vessels of gold and silver, precious stones, bronze, iron, brightly coloured (woollen and) linen garments, violet and purple cloth, antimony, elephants hides, ivory, maple and boxwood, all kinds of precious royal treasure, are quite conspicuous by their lack of proliferation. This may in part be due to the failure of early excavators to correctly identify floor levels. This theory is

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\(^{1}\) From Frankfort, Tell Asmar, p. 87.
\(^{1}\) This will be discussed in Chapter 2.
\(^{2}\) Place's original plans have been lost, along with some of the original drawings by his draftsman, Felix Thomas. This causes some problems, as in his reports, Place gave numbers and sometimes letters to newly exposed entrances and rooms which had sculptures or other noteworthy finds. These designations do not necessarily coincide with the room numbers cited in the publication, Ninen et Assyrie. Albenda, Palace of Sargon, p. 19.
supported by the discovery, by Loud, of the paved floor of the bathroom, room 12, on whose surface was scattered fragments of painted plaster, and several clay labels or seal impressions. Both Botta and Place had failed to identify this floor, as it was actually located a step level below the doorway threshold that they had used as a guide to the room's floor. In the larger rooms, the lack of objects may also be due to the rooms incomplete excavation. However, even allowing for the shortcomings of the early excavators, the relative dearth of material indicators of daily life, the 'pots and pans', is quite surprising. Also, the almost complete absence of textual material from the palace whose plan is, in comparison to other palaces that are abundantly provided with texts, very well attested to, and the meagre quantity of texts that were found in the other citadel buildings suggests that administrative activity in the city was limited.

In fact, the lack of wear on the pivot stones of city gate and on the thresholds of the royal palace and surrounding houses, the remains of worked pieces of limestone chips from the construction of the palace terrace still lying at its base, the discovery by archaeologists of unpilfered but empty deposit boxes, a bull colossi in City Gate 6 whose text had been written in ink but not yet carved, and the aforementioned scarcity of texts and small finds, seem to suggest that despite its inauguration the city was not only largely abandoned, but also left unfinished. This quite naturally leads to the suspicion that many of the goods meant for Dur-Sharrukin either never made it there because of Sargon's death, as with a beautifully preserved writing board and many ivories that were discovered at Sargon II's palace in Nimrud, or were taken instead to Nineveh by Sennacherib. Thus, when trying to ascribe functions for various rooms and sectors of the palace, we are...

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44 Place discovered one small tablet in the mud of the stairwell (22, 23): Nînîrî el E4ssyrie I, p. 56. & Nînîrî et Plûssyrie III, pl. 78: 3.
45 Franklin, Tell Ammar, p. 836.
46 Khorsabad II, p. 20.
47 Place, Nînîrî el E4ssyrie I, p. 181.
48 The issue of the history of occupation at Dur-Sharrukin will be discussed more fully in the conclusion.
50 Both Sargon and Sennacherib mention in their texts how they remove wood, reliefs and other components of the palaces of conquered peoples.
considerably hampered by the lack of information from which to draw inferences. In many cases, the only information on which we can base our conclusions consists of architectural installations such as drains, or the decorations used in individual rooms - not foolproof tools by any means!

The third problem involves time, modern man, and the very destructive nature of archaeology itself. Both Botta and Place found that the north-western, north-eastern and south-western faces of the palace mound had been severely eroded by the centuries of inclement weather. This erosion has damaged portions of the palace that had once existed in those regions. When the University of Chicago re-opened excavations in the area of the royal palace in 1931/2, some portions of the palace that had been excavated by Botta 90 years earlier were so badly decayed by exposure to the weather, that many of the reliefs had deteriorated beyond recognition. This had also occurred in most of the other areas that Place had excavated. To compound this problem, the inhabitants of the modern village had been using part of the mound, especially the area around Place's room 10, as a stone quarry. Some of the stones had been burned to provide lime, others had been used as gravestones, lintels or doorsills. In fact, the grindstone of the local agha was found to have been ingeniously cut from one of the mammoth bulls. Similar acts of vandalism were discovered in all three excavations with many no doubt occurring in antiquity, not long after the palace's abandonment. However, perhaps the most tragic factor was the loss on 21 or 23 May 1855 of approximately 155 cases of fine reliefs, sculptures, and other major finds, to the depths of the Tigris. It is because of this last accident that the sketches and notes of Botta and especially of Place are so important - they are our only record of material that is now irretrievably lost. The need for accuracy in these early reports is absolutely crucial - unfortunately, as will be seen, they are somewhat less than exemplary.

52 J. Kossak, I, p.13
53 Place, Nine et l'Asyrie I, p.48.
54 Albenda, Palace of Sargon, p.30, 31.
With the publication of the "State Archives of Assyria" series since 1987 and of the RIMA project, scholastic attention is once more focusing on the Empire that dominated much of the Near East during the first half of the first millennium. Along with the cities of Nimrud, Nineveh and Assur, Dur-Sharrukin has naturally been drawn again into the spotlight. However, most of what has been written in recent years has focused largely on the issue of the palace's artistic decoration by a range of stone reliefs and wall paintings. The rooms containing these reliefs occupy only a tiny area of the king's palace. Of the remaining areas - the Serail and the Dépendances - the record has been strangely reticent. This deficiency will be rectified in the following chapters of this paper where the architectural remains of Sargon II's palace, as has been recorded by its excavators, will be closely examined. Applying a methodology based loosely on that utilised by Jean-Claude Margueron in his article in the 1986 volume of the Italian periodical *Contribute Materiali di Archaiologia Orientale* 1, and his massive two tome 1982 work *Recherches sur les palais meopotamiens de l'age du Bronze*), the palace of Sargon II of Assyria will be analysed using all of the available textual, archaeological and artistic evidence. Chapter One will deal with both the site's orientation in the empire and then the palace's orientation on the site, including a brief examination of the palace mound and the general layout of the palace itself. Chapter Two sees the palace divided into sectors determined by the probable autonomy of various areas, either from the point of view of circulation or of function, or both. Each sector will be discussed in detail focusing first on room specifics, such as size, wall thickness, decoration and any material remains, as well as on features such as roofing, the problem of lighting and internal circulation. Chapter Two will also attempt to assign functions to each sector, relying on the available textual evidence and on comparisons with other palaces, and also on the decoration, content and location of the rooms themselves. The conclusion will then follow, summarising the present understanding of the author.

"According to the command of god and the prompting of [his] heart", I Sargon decided on "the town of Magganubba", II a city at the foot of Mount Musri, in the plain of Nineveh", III for the site of his new city. If this statement is true, and there is no real reason
to doubt its veracity, then it does not seem strictly correct to state,
as has often been done, that Khorsabad was built on virgin soil.
However, as no traces of the town of Magganubba have been
discovered in the course of excavation, IV and Sargon himself mentions
purchasing the fields of the town rather than the town itself in a
commemorative inscription, V the statement that "the city was built in
open fields" VI is probably not far from the truth. In any case,
whether one believes that Magganubba was swallowed up in the
building of Dur-Sharrukin or was situated nearby, it is definitely
certain that "none among the 350 princes who lived before [him]
...... had thought of it, nor knew they how to make it habitable". VII
The construction of a completely new Royal City, whilst naturally not
being the first of its kind in the history of the Assyrian Empire, is
nevertheless unusual enough to be of note. Today, we find the
ancient city of Sargon in the foothills of Jebel Maqlub, occupying the
large mound by the river Khoer at the site of the modern village of
Khorsabad, approximately 25 kilometres north of Nineveh. VIII A
location which, when compared with the position of other Assyrian
Royal Cities such as Nineveh, Nimrud and Assur, seems rather
deliberately off the beaten track(map).

3. Luckenbill, Ancient Records, p.56 §105.
4. Khorsabad II, p.4; Frankfort, Tell Assur, p.87f.
5. Luckenbill, Ancient Records, p.64.
8.Grayson, A. K. "The Assyrian and Babylonian Empires and other states of the Near East from the 8th to the
Archaeology of Mesopotamia, p.196.
The size of Dur-Sharrukin, as given by Sargon, "16,283 cubits I made the circuit of its wall", has been found by excavation of the city's walls to be substantially correct. With an area of roughly one square mile, and an almost rectangular plan the city is oriented roughly NW/SW, with the four corners of the walls marking the cardinal points. The royal palace rests on a platform or terrace that is set high above ground, and sits astride the north-west city wall, slightly right of centre. Thus elevated, it became an obvious focus of attention for the inhabitants of the city and its visitors, whilst also acting as an added reminder of the kings exultancy and power. It is surrounded, to the south-west, west and east, by a walled citadel enclosure which also contains other smaller residences and a temple. The north-western palace façade juts out over this wall, looking down at the plains below. The palace has roughly the same orientation as the city itself, an example of thoughtful planning which resulted in none of its façades bearing the full brunt of the sun. It measures at its widest point approximately 200 metres, and at its longest, approximately 300 metres.

Only one of the three excavation campaigns, that of Victor Place, uncovered the entire royal palace of Sargon II. Botta, whose six months of continual excavation also traced the line of the city enclosure wall, only managed to expose the complete plan of one wing of the palace and part of the enigmatic building X. After uncovering the remains of rooms 1 to 14, and portions of what Place later named courtyards I, III, IV, and VIII, he decided, rather prematurely, that he had excavated the entire extent of the palace, and proceeded to transport a small fraction of his finds to Paris. The Iraq Expedition of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, on the other hand, made no secret of

12. This also occurs at Palace I.
14. Botta called these areas, respectively, Facade L, N, m. and n.
their intention to only partially excavate the royal palace. Their aims were to uncover previously unexplored areas of the citadel and to discover what lay under the other large mound on the southern area of the south-western city wall. However, they did re-examine what remained of Place's rooms 7, 10, 11, 12, 84, 86 and courts VII and VIII, as well as excavating part of the front façade of the palace, and its platform 16(P1.3). The remaining rooms and courtyards, in total some one hundred and fifty-five, were all unearthed, recorded and sketched, sometimes rather imaginatively, by Victor Place and his team during the years of 1852-1855. It is important to note that since the publication of Place's excavations in the years between 1867 and 1870, no other examination of Sargon II's palace has encompassed its whole plan.

It is of crucial importance to understand the role that imagination has played in the drawing up of Place's final plans, especially as it affects the area of the palace protruding from the north-western and north-eastern portions of the city wall. It is here, not unexpectedly, that the palace terrace has suffered most severely from the ravages of time and weather, and it is here that both a terrace wall and a number of rooms have been artistically placed with all the semblance of authority. Whilst Place certainly did discover a portion of the platform's façade as it protruded from the north-west city wall, he certainly did not reveal its true extent nor form. He also, very creatively, placed the series of rooms 200-207 along the north-eastern boundary of courtyard VIII, even including a small doorway out onto the terrace in lieu of excavating the badly eroded area. His depiction of the ramp approaching the palace's monumental entrance is entirely fictitious, as is the one he locates running along its south-eastern terrace façade. It may not seem much at first, but when stripped of these additions, (Pl.5) the palace of Sargon II does assume a different aura, one that lacks the cast in bronze completeness of Place's plan, and much more open to query and questions.

16. They also examined the temples located on the palace mound southwest of the palace, which Place believed to be the site of the Harem. Khorsabad I, pp.81-128.
The palace platform, which sets the building high above all the others in the citadel including the Nabu temple\textsuperscript{17}, is today thought to have been cunningly constructed around a natural mound, rather than made totally of mud brick as was originally supposed by Place.\textsuperscript{18} Whilst this has yet to be proven conclusively by soundings, evidence from the texts, such as Sargon's statement that he established "its foundation platform upon the bed rock of the high mountain",\textsuperscript{19} the logic of taking advantage of the abundant naturally occurring hillocks in the district, and the findings of the American team, do seem to make this highly likely\textsuperscript{20}. Whilst examining the terrace, the American excavators found that the filling behind its limestone faced retaining wall consisted of "coarse rubble and rubbish";\textsuperscript{21} not the mud brick one would expect if the terrace was made wholly of this material. Also, after digging below the floor pavement level elsewhere on the palace mound, "only a few courses of mud brick"\textsuperscript{22} were said to have been discovered. This may seem quite difficult to reconcile with Place's assertion that the three approximately 14m sondages he made on the palace mound confirmed his suspicion that the terrace was entirely man-made.\textsuperscript{23} However, as neither team specifies precisely where they dug, it does not seem unreasonable to suggest that Place dug in areas which were man-made and that the Americans, whose focus of attention in the palace was devoted to the throne room and the projecting north-west wing, excavated that portion of the terrace that was above the natural mound.

A significant point for this argument is the fact that the surface of the platform is not at all level. It actually slopes downward from north-east to south-west,\textsuperscript{24} causing a "difference of approximately 3 meters between the level of Court VIII outside the throne room, the region of the American excavations, and the central

\textsuperscript{17} Which is likewise built upon a platform, see Khorsabad II, p.19. 56f.
\textsuperscript{18} Place, Ninive et l'Assyrie I, p.24f.
\textsuperscript{19} Luckenbill, Ancient Records, p.65 §121.
\textsuperscript{20} Khorsabad II, p.54f.
\textsuperscript{21} Khorsabad II, p 54.
\textsuperscript{22} Khorsabad II, p.54.
\textsuperscript{23} Place, Nineveh et l'Assyrie I, p.25.
\textsuperscript{24} Khorsabad II, p.55.
court (XXVII) of the (palace) temple area". Since the gradient of the ground level in the area has the same direction, and even steeper slope, this is an added reason to suspect the use of a natural mound for the palace platform. Surely, if the terrace had been constructed totally with mud brick, such a difference in floor level would not have occurred without a planned purpose, even taking into account the natural subsidence of the earth over time. It is much more likely, in view of the evidence, that advantage was taken of one of the many uneven "eminences" in the area, with the higher portion of the hillock being deliberately left and its height exploited for the added elevation of a certain part of the palace. Hence, whilst it is obvious that no firm conclusion can be made without further excavation of the terrace, it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that "a natural mound was roughly levelled horizontally, was 'trimmed' vertically by means of retaining walls, and finally levelled with mud brick for building purposes".

In fact, such a process would also adequately account for the irregular oblique or trapezoidal outline of the platform that is accepted today. In their excavation of the southern portion of the palace terrace, the American team uncovered a retaining wall that deviated in plan, elevation, section and dimensions from Place's. This rather astounding occurrence is quite difficult to explain, even taking into account Place's relatively primitive measuring instruments and the depredation of the site over time. The American excavations uncovered a retaining wall that, in the citadel, was faced with limestone slabs laid without mortar "in courses of headers and stretchers in no mathematical order", backed by a filling of "coarse rubble and rubbish". Stone chips were found pressed into the pavement below the terrace, and this combined with "a line at pavement level where the smooth surface ends" led the Americans to draw their conclusion.

25 Khorsabad II. p. 55. The result of these sloping platform and ground levels, is that no one height above ground level has been accurately assigned to the platform surface. A conservative figure of 7.50m has been offered by the Americans for the height of the platform at the approach of the main ramp, which suggests a tentative figure of around 11.0m for the vicinity of Court VIII.

26 Khorsabad II. p. 54.
27 Khorsabad II. p. 54.
28 See Khorsabad II. p. 54.
29 Khorsabad II. p. 54, 55.
30 Khorsabad II. p. 20.
to believe that the face of the wall was dressed after it was built. The corners of the terrace were strengthened by the use of dowels and topped by a crenellated parapet wall, of which profuse remains lay scattered amongst the debris along the south-east and south-western terrace faces (Pl. 10a). The portion of the terrace which extended out from the north-western city wall was not excavated by the Americans, and only partially by Place, and was thought also to have been crenellated, and possibly faced with mud brick to present "a homogenous appearance with the outer face of the town wall". Place's dimensions for the stone blocks of the retaining wall and the actual height of the terrace itself above ground level are, incredibly, approximately double those found by the American excavations in the 1930's. Even accounting for the fact that the size of the blocks themselves decreased toward the top of the wall, one wonders how Victor Place could have obtained such erroneous dimensions and is quite naturally drawn to wonder about the accuracy of his other measurements. The implications of this are important for our discussion of the palace plan, as it is highly likely that the palace itself followed the shifting axis of the platform and was thus far from the regular shaped structure illustrated by Place. In fact, from the little that the University of Chicago team has excavated, such as the irregularly shaped bathroom, room 12', it does seem probable that were a wholesale re-excavation of the palace undertaken, the regular occurrence of parallel and perpendicular walls so nicely delineated in Place's plan would no longer be quite so visible.

The means of approaching the palace were apparently via two ramps in the citadel, the main being a broad, roughly centrally placed ramp, ascending perpendicularly to the principle palace entrance in its south-eastern facade. This ramp, 25 metres in width, begins its limestone paved ascent to the palace platform approximately 20 metres out from its face, jutting into a large open area which lead directly to the citadel Gate B. This is so very different from the stairway which Place imaginatively assigned to this

31 Khorsabad II, p. 40, 55.
32 Khorsabad II, p. 55.
33 Of the five courses the Americans found in situ in the southern corner of the terrace the vertical dimensions from bottom to top were respectively 105, 95, 90, 86, 85 (Khorsabad II, p. 20.).
34 Khorsabad I, p. 20.
area. The second (Pl.10a) and much smaller ramp does not appear on Place's plans, and was probably constructed to "facilitate the approach to the palace from Citadel Gate A". It is not freestanding as is the other ramp, but forms an integral part of the southern corner of the platform. It is located sloping parallel to the face of the south corner of the palace, north-west of the bridge connecting the terraces of the Nabu temple and palace.

On the basis of the present understanding of the palace, it may be stated with confidence that there were at least four ways of entering the building. The first and most obvious one being via the triple doorway which distinguishes Place's plan of the monumental entrance on the palace's south-eastern facade, opposite the aforementioned ramp. By virtue of the size of its portals, its decoration with large winged bulls and other figures carved in relief, and its primary position in the palace plan, there is little doubt that this was intended to be the major and most frequently used of the palace's entrances (Pl.4). The second and third means of entering the palace are located in its northern portion, one in the north-west through corridor 10, and the other via three doors into Place's court IV. The fourth manner of access is located in the southern half of the south-western portion of the outer palace façade, via an ante chamber room 90, to the temple complex on the citadel mound. There may also have been a doorway from court VIII on to the south-eastern portion of the palace terrace as Place has indicated in the region east of his hypothetical room 201 (Pl.4), but as the mound in this area is very eroded, it is impossible to do more than make an educated guess. In fact it is more than possible that the palace aligned itself with the edge of the city wall here, forming an incredibly high steep fortification wall which further constricted the access to the north-western portion of the building.

The surface of the platform outside the palace has been paved in a similar fashion to the courts of the palace, that is, with "two courses of baked brick set with sand and bitumen." It apparently

35 Khorsabad II, p.55.
36 Khorsabad II, p.29.
37 Khorsabad II, p.55.
completely surrounds the palace, although it is difficult to make this assertion with any confidence with regards to the platform's north-eastern side because of its poor preservation here, as has already been mentioned. Likewise, the outer palace façade is not as well understood as could be desired, with the north-eastern and south-eastern walls being damaged, as well as the north-western ones. The walls themselves were made, as was the usual Assyrian fashion, entirely of sun-dried mud brick, laid whilst still moist so as to spare the necessity of using mortar. This method of laying the bricks before being fully dried was no doubt used both because it left an extremely solid wall, and it was a quicker method of construction - ideal for a monarch who no doubt desired his palace built as quickly as possible. This latter fact no doubt also explains, in part at least, why Sargon failed to take advantage of the abundance of stone in the region in the construction of his city - his workmen, more familiar with fashioning walls of mud-brick would certainly move faster using their traditional materials. However, rather ironically, this procedure of construction whilst making the walls stronger, also made excavating them quite difficult, as "so similar [was] the texture of the standing walls to that of the debris" that they were practically indistinguishable in some places. In fact both Loud and Place remark that without the aid of the plaster and reliefs on the exterior of the walls and plaster and other rubbish in the debris, they would have been lost.

Looking then, at the plan of the palace as a whole (Pl.4), the first thing to become obvious is that the architect followed the traditional formula used in Late Assyrian palace architecture, with the basic design made up of rooms encircling open courtyards, existing throughout. This layout, in a time long before electricity, was excellent for optimising the use of natural lighting, with each court functioning as a large light well for its surrounding rooms.

8 Khorsabad II, p.18.
9 Loud, (Khorsabad II, p.15), explains this limitation to exploit the stone in the area to either "the architect's failure to recognize its possibilities or their desire to stick fast to tradition". It is probably a combination of haste and the latter point rather than the first.
10 Khorsabad I, p.81.
12 This has been commented on by many, notably Geoffrey Turner in his article "The State Apartments of Late Assyrian Palaces", *Iraq* 32 (1970), pp.177-215. Hereafter referred to as *Turner (1970)*.
The other role these courts played in the palace plan was as pivot point, that is, they acted as a point of dispersal for circulation between the different regions of the palace. The courts, usually a rough square or rectangle in shape, did not always contain right angles and varied greatly in size, although this was not always reflected in Place's plan. They were paved, like the palace terrace, with two layers of baked bricks set with bitumen and sand in order to strengthen the surface and make it waterproof. Victor Place based his definition of what areas of the palace could be called courtyards not only on their size but on their method of flooring. This led him to assert that all the courts of the palace were paved, and all the rooms, large and small, had floors of "terre battue". Certain questions must also be raised regarding Place's designation of courts IV, V, VII, X, XII, XIII, XVI, XVII, XXI, as open areas. More recent excavations by Loud in the palace and other city buildings has indicated that this may not in fact be the case. Rather, it would be more appropriate to assume that, like all the other buildings in the citadel, the flooring of both the rooms and courts of the entire palace, unless otherwise specified, was paved with baked brick.

Whilst the north-eastern portion of court VIII is for the greater part missing, it was, as Place suggested, probably surrounded by small rooms similar to those running along the south-western side of court XV. The number of rooms around each court vary both according to the size of the room and the size of the court itself, although they are rarely found with more than one room standing between them and their main source of light. Circulation between each court and its surrounding rooms was usually simply via a doorway in one of their room's adjoining walls, although, long thin corridors were also less frequently used.

The rooms of Sargon II's palace vary greatly in size from the tiny, room 69, to the very large, room VII. They tend to adopt a

13 Khorsabad II, p.12
14 Place, Nimrud et l'Assyrie I, p.296.
15 Place, Nimrud et l'Assyrie I, p.295.
16 Khorsabad II, p.21.
17 Loud has shown that Place was in error in his definition of this area as a courtyard. See Khorsabad I, p.57.
rectangular rather than square plan, no doubt to more readily facilitate roofing. They were usually organised around each court with their long axis set parallel to the side of the court through which they opened\(^{15}\). Two interesting exceptions to this role occur in the south-eastern portion of the palace, around courts XX and XXII and in the wing (rooms 1–12) which juts out of the north-western façade. In the case of the latter example it would be rather more true to state that we have rooms surrounded by courtyards, with Place's outer courts I and III forming this wing's north-eastern and south-western boundaries. The American excavations in rooms 84, 86, 12 and 'court' VII indicate the high probability that all the rooms of Sargon II's palace were covered with a single layer baked brick floor\(^{18}\), and were roofed as Sargon himself stated, "with great beams of cedar and cypress"\(^{19}\). So, unless otherwise indicated, this will be assumed to have been the case, and the absence of paving and material indicating roofing in the areas that made up Place's Serail and Dépendances is understood as having been due to imperfect excavation techniques and to the removal of this material in antiquity.

The exterior and interior walls of the palace were without exception found to have been plastered or covered with orthostats. The plaster covering the exterior walls was made of a brittle lime substance which had a tendency to dissolve in rain\(^{20}\). The mud brick of the interior walls of the palace, of both rooms and courts, were concealed by a layer of mud plaster overlaid by a thin white wash causing them to resemble the lime coated exterior walls\(^{21}\). Where orthostats were positioned, the walls were only plastered above the level of the orthostats\(^{22}\). Loud suggests that this was due to the fact that the orthostats were set in place before the walls supporting them were built\(^{23}\), but this hypothesis does not seem likely. Many of the walls in the palace were also painted with

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18 Khorsabad I, p. 12.
19 Khorsabad I, p. 20.
20 Luckenbill, Ancient Records, p. 37 §73, p. 12 §84, p. 16 §93, p. 88 §97, p. 53 §100, p. 54 §102, p. 55 §105.
21 Khorsabad I, p. 52.
22 Khorsabad II, p. 17.
23 Place, Nimr et l'Assyrie I, p. 51.
24 Khorsabad I, p. 79.
designs and possibly scenes, and the majority of orthostats were also carved with scenes in relief. The latter fact makes the palace stand out from the buildings at the site, for whilst examples of painted decoration can be found in the majority of the citadel buildings, only the royal palace is so generously decorated with carved wall reliefs.

It is difficult to draw definite conclusions as to how each room was lit. Certainly those chambers situated closest to the courts could receive adequate lighting through their doorways. However, in times of inclement weather when doors would almost certainly have been closed, and in the case of those chambers separated from direct access to a courtyard by one or two rooms, without an alternative means of illumination, the rooms would certainly be very dark and gloomy. Since we know that the interior walls and roofs of many rooms of the palace were decorated with wall paintings and reliefs, it does not seem credible that they would have been painted only to be poorly visible. Yet the fact remains that, whilst we have walls remaining between the heights of 3 to 5 metres\(^5\), there is no architectural evidence for any type of fenestration\(^6\). However, what we do know, is that the height of the preserved walls is only a fraction of what they originally were, with conservative estimates of the heights of walls with the thickness of 3 metres being around 14 to 16 metres\(^7\). Whilst the evidence from the graphic representations on wall reliefs tends to be those of foreign cities and buildings, it is interesting that what does appear to be the windows on these buildings were in fact placed high up in the walls near the roof. It would not seem unreasonable to suggest then, that one reason why no form of fenestration has been discovered at Sargon II's palace (or indeed at any other Neo-Assyrian Palace), where some walls are around 5 metres thick and thus possibly around 18 metres high, is because the windows were located in the part of the walls that have long since collapsed. Such windows would necessitate the building of graded roof tops of different heights to insure that rooms located in the central portions of the building were able to receive such

\(^{55}\) Place: *Ninive et l'Assyrie* I, p. 308.
\(^{56}\) Place: *Ninive et l'Assyrie* I, p. 308.
\(^{57}\) Place: *Ninive et l'Assyrie* I, p. 246; Khorsabad II, p. 20.
illuminations. Thus the differing thicknesses of the walls of the palace may be partially accounted for as providing the necessary structural support to reach the heights needed to allow fenestration (Pl.14c). This issue will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

However, before it is possible to commence a more thorough examination of the palace, it is first necessary to discuss, albeit briefly, the problems involved when trying to trace the history of the palace's occupation. This issue is further complicated by its connection to the larger question of the history of occupation at the site itself. Despite the discovery of traces of secondary occupations in Sargon's palace, the Nabu temple, residences K, L and Z, and palace F., the consensus view has, up until quite recently, been that the city of Dur-Sharrukin was abandoned after the death of Sargon. The royal palace, as with the rest of the city's buildings was thought to have been left ignored by the successive rulers of the Assyrian Empire. Certain evidence even suggests the possibility that, despite the city's inauguration, neither nor the palace was ever completely built or occupied.

However, textual material which mentions the existence of a number of men holding the post of 'Governor of Dur-Sharrukin' well into the reigns of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal, and a recent article by Stephanie Dalley, brings this view into question, and implies that far from being abandoned, Dur-Sharrukin in fact continued to be occupied by these governors and their retinues until the final collapse of the Assyrian Empire. If correct, the implications of this new theory to any study of Sargon's palace are far reaching and they must be addressed if a reasonably accurate review of the palace is to be made, for, if the palace was not completely abandoned as was once thought, but continued to be

60.Khorsabad II, p.58, 60, 61.
61.Khorsabad II, p.66, 68.
63.Khorsabad II, p.76.
64.Seen Introduction p.10ff.
used by people still living at the site, then the picture of the palace becomes much more complicated, especially as regards the provenance of the few material remains that were found there.

That someone continued to live at Dur-Sharrukin after Sargon died is no longer a matter of debate as archaeological evidence of their occupation was uncovered by the Oriental Institute, sometimes only fifteen centimetres above the original, so-called Sargonid, floor levels. That someone lived in, or at least continued to use portions of Sargon’s palace has also been confirmed by these same excavations. However, questions about who these people were, and the timing and extent of their occupation of the site have still to be satisfactorily answered. The crucial question is whether the remains identified by Loud can be correlated with occupation levels appropriate for a governor and his retinue, or whether they are more representative, as Loud would have it, of peasants who moved into the deserted buildings after the site was abandoned. Unfortunately, this question is not an easy one to answer in any definite fashion, especially with regard to the palace. The lack of attention paid to a stratigraphic analysis of the remains by the early excavators at the site, Botta and Place, has meant that only in the regions excavated by the Oriental Institute are traces of these later occupations visible. Since Loud only re-excavated a tiny portion of the palace’s overall plan it is thus difficult to make definite conclusions as to their pervading presence there. Also the fact that sometime in antiquity the palace, and indeed much of the site, was stripped of building materials and valuable items makes it only a matter of assumption as to how abundant these items ever were and precisely when they were removed, confusing the issue even further.

The idea that the palace was abandoned after the death of Sargon and was only ever partially completed is not an unreasonable hypothesis, even in the light of texts referring to the presence of a governor at the city. Firstly, there are in fact two cities which went by the name Dur-Sharrukin, one in Assyria, and one in Babylonia, so there is a possibility, albeit a remote one, that the

68. Khorsabad I, p. 62, 76f.
governors referred to in the texts are those of the other city. Secondly, even if a governor did reside at Dur-Sharrukin, there is in fact no necessity that he inhabited the royal palace. Certainly, whilst the palace was being built and during the year after its inauguration there is little doubt that the man who acted as governor of the site had his own residence, probably in the citadel, and was highly unlikely to have resided in the palace with the king. There is no reason to believe that this should have changed after the death of the king. Thirdly, and more importantly, an overview of the results of the excavations in the palace do not readily suggest continual occupation by a reasonably large administrative body over a period of 100 years, and combined with evidence from elsewhere at the site suggest that the palace may not even have been completed.

Eleven years is not a very long period in which to construct a completely new city, and from the letters that remain to us there is abundant evidence that the enterprise was not completely smooth sailing due to disputes over work requirements and difficulties with workers and the supplying of materials. It would therefore not be surprising to find that the city was still in the process of final construction when Sargon celebrated the entrance of the gods into the city and finally inaugurated it. Excavation at the site has shown that this does in fact seem to have been the case - Botta, Place, and Loud all comment on the existence of apparently unpilfered but empty deposit boxes near the portals of Sargon’s palace and the palace temples.’ Place notes that one of the bull colossi in city gate 6 had the text between its legs written in ink and was not yet carved out; the excavations of the Oriental Institute revealed the lack of wear on the pivot stones of city gate 77 and also thresholds and door sockets yet to be put in place in the palace temples.” In the palace itself the presence of both carved and uncarved basalt slabs lying in one of the rooms of the palace’s entrance,” the pile of iron tools and broken and whole enamelled bricks in two of the rooms off

70 Khorsabad 1, p 111f. 119.
71 Place, Nineveh et l’Assyrie 1, p 181.
72 Franklin, Tell Asmar, p 83f.
73 Khorsabad 1, p 89, 108, 120f.
74 RAMA 96.
court XV and the incomplete state of building x only add to this assumption.

However, the extent to which the city and palace had still to be completed is confused by the apparent removal from the buildings of not only the majority of objects, but also of much of the structures themselves. In the palace, part of the baked brick paving of both large courts XV and VIII are missing, as are the original bricks paving the floor of the palace's throne room, room VII. This room also had all the reliefs lining its walls completely removed as well as its thresholds. Place's excavations indicate that a similar thing may have occurred in the rooms around court VI. Loud's excavations in rooms 84 and 86 also suggest the possibility that their paving was removed. The question must thus be asked if the absence of these materials as well as such objects that must have one existed there, such as tablets and ivories, are because they were removed at some stage, or were never actually present in the first place. In fact it is not impossible to believe that Sargon never actually lived at his new palace, as the period between the city's inauguration and his death are very short. The fact that Place found no evidence of anything resembling ovens or a kitchen area also leads one to suspect that habitation of this palace was very brief or may never have eventuated at all. Thus when all this evidence is considered together, it does seem that if a governor did remain at Dur-Sharrukin, he did not inhabit the royal palace.

However, this does not mean that the palace was not used for some other purpose. The things that have been found in Sargons palace all have one thing in common, they were all found piled into different rooms throughout the building. Room 84 was full of different sized pots and jars stacked one inside the other, room 86 was full of iron objects such as chains, grapnels, and picks, rooms 82 and 70 had enamelled bricks scattered over their floors, rooms 152-155 contained jars placed on a beaten earth bench as did rooms 139, 143, 147 and 149, though the bench in the latter rooms were of stone and lime, and finally, rooms 16, 17 and 18 were full of copper...
objects such as helmets plates and maces. The overwhelming impression of these rooms is that they served as storage areas. If Dalley and others are correct in their analysis of these objects, the question must be posed as to whether they represent those things left behind from Sargon's rather brief occupation and so accurately reflect the intended functions of the rooms in which they were found, or were they placed there by the later occupants of the palace and thus reflect their modifications. That the two functions may in fact have been identical is also possible, but where rooms contain objects which are unexpected, such as those in rooms 143 and 147, then some sort of a resolution as to which theory is the more likely is imperative if a correct understanding of the working of the palace is to be obtained. This can only be done by a thorough examination of the rooms themselves and so it is not until the palace itself is completely examined that this discussion can be furthered.

76 Place, Ninevite Excavations I, pp. 66ff.
77 For example, the double temple plan of storerooms 142 and 146 in sector G. See chapter 2 for further discussion.
A palace, modern or ancient, must be by its very nature a complex structure. Not only must it be able to cater for the public duties of the king, be they administrative or ceremonial, but it must also be able to provide him and his family with the relative privacy of a domestic dwelling even if it is only in the form of bed chamber and bathroom. It must have an area set aside for food preparation and the other mundane activities carried out in a kitchen, as well as providing the necessary storage for both food stuffs and the many possessions of a king. The palace must also be able to house certain members of the king's entourage as well as providing lodging for important visitors. It must be able to accommodate the administrative bodies that control the day to day living of the kingdom, be it in an economic, political or ceremonial capacity, and provide offices and storage for their work. It must be built large enough to not only impress the onlooker, but cleverly enough to separate public and private quarters, and it must also be decorated in a manner to not only inspire awe, but also to reflect the wealth and might of the king. Thus, it must, in many ways, become a microcosm of the city over which it presides.

Therefore when any palace is examined, a building whose plan is large and complicated enough to enable these activities to be carried out with the greatest amount of efficiency must be envisioned. An observer would expect to see, as in the palaces of the present, that the areas devised for the holding of state and ceremonial functions were separated from the actual living quarters of the royal family, as these in turn would be separated from the living quarters and offices of the royal entourage and the areas set aside for food preparation and storage. Thus, it is not unreasonable to expect that if there has been any conscious organisation and segregation in the planning of certain parts of an ancient palace, it should become very obvious from a detailed study of its plans.
The work of Jean-Claude Margueron has shown that, at least in the case of the Bronze Age palaces of Mesopotamia, this is in fact the case. By studying the means by which the circulation of people throughout the building was regulated and controlled - through the positioning of doors and their locking mechanisms, the alignment or juxtaposition of doorways and stairwells, wall thickness, clustering of rooms and the method of lighting - he found that palaces could be broken down into smaller units which could be considered to be both architecturally and functionally distinct from their neighbours, and classed as a coherent unit. He also found that a few of these units could be grouped to form larger units, which could also be analysed with regard to interior and exterior circulation until the interconnecting mesh blurs to form a whole structure - a palace. Thus confirming the suspicion that far from being a single monolithic entity, a palace should rather be seen as a conglomerate made up of these cleverly intersecting units. Margueron named these units 'sectors' and in his detailed study of the palaces of Mari, Tell Asmar, and others, he showed that through a thorough examination of how each sector was formed and interconnected with the others in the building, a deeper understanding of the dynamics and inner life of each building could be reached.

The question then arises as to how applicable this approach is to the palaces of the Neo-Assyrian Kings. Aside from the palaces and houses at Dur-Sharrukin, the remains of Neo-Assyrian palaces have been uncovered at Nimrud, Nineveh, and Assur as well as at the regional centres of Til Barsib and Arslan Tash. Unfortunately, the majority of these palaces not only contain large gaps in their plans, but the multiple layers of remains left by their many years of occupation have created a certain confusion in the minds of...
archaeologists as to how effectively and deliberately each palace was designed, and how segregated were the various activities carried out there. As is amply demonstrated at the North-west Palace at Nimrud whose changing fortunes saw it fluctuate between royal residence, storehouse, treasury and harem, the longer the history of occupation of a building, the more likely it is for the various areas to evolve different functions. However, there is a small sample of textual evidence that suggests that some kings at least, saw their palaces existing in terms of sectors or wings, evidenced in a text of Sargon II where he writes of restoring the 'Juniper wing' of his palace at Nimrud. Since Sargon II's palace at Dur-Sharrukin has such a short period of occupation, it thus has not the same complexity of remains to deal with as the royal palaces of Nimrud and Nineveh and, with its reasonably complete plan, it provides an excellent subject of study.

The work of Place and Loud and the study by Geoffrey Turner of the state apartments of Neo-Assyrian palaces, all show that it is in fact possible to break Sargon II's palace up into smaller units or sectors. Place saw the palace as having been split into two distinct regions he called the 'Serail' and the 'Dépendances'. The Dépendances occupied the south-eastern portion of the palace, comprising court XV and its adjoining rooms, and the rooms and courts occupying the region to court XV's north-east. He saw this as being the functional or domestic portion of the palace, where the kitchens, stables, storerooms offices and quarters for some staff were located. The Serail, the name he gave to the remaining rooms and courts, he designated the ceremonial and residential region of the palace, containing the throneroom and the living quarters of the king and his entourage. Unlike the Dépendances, many of the walls in the Serail were impressively decorated with large stone orthostats carved in relief. Place was not completely incorrect when he distinguished between these two areas of the palace, however, in his

designation of only two distinct regions of the palace he did not go
nearly far enough in explaining the complexity of the palace's plan.

The studies of Loud\textsuperscript{10} and Turner\textsuperscript{11} represent more extensive
analyses of Sargon's palace. Their works were based on a
consideration of other Neo-Assyrian palace plans and also included an
understanding of the large secular buildings that have been
unearthed at Khorsabad. They note that not only did Sargon II follow
Assyrian tradition in constructing his palace with mud-brick and
decorating part of it with carved orthostats\textsuperscript{12}, but that he followed
the Late Assyrian practice of arranging the interior organisation of
their palaces into distinct sectors by means of major courtyards. In
most large Neo-Assyrian civil or residential structures where enough
of the plan can be gleaned, such as all the other buildings in the
citadel, J, K, L, and M, building Z in the town\textsuperscript{13}, the North-west
palace of Assurnasirpal II at Nimrud and very probably also at
Sennacherib's South-west\textsuperscript{14} palace and Ashurbanipal's North Palace at
Nineveh\textsuperscript{15}, and the palace at Arslan Tash, this means the
arrangement of rooms and minor courtyards around two large courts
- an 'outer' and 'inner' one\textsuperscript{16}. In every case, the 'outer' court is
larger than the 'inner' one, and the latter tends, in shape, to
approximate a rough square. Between these two courts was located
the throne room of the palace\textsuperscript{17}, a large rectangular room which was
entered from the 'outer' court and lead into the 'inner' court via a
long room in the wall opposite the door to the 'outer court'. On one
of the short walls of the room the throne was located, and on the
opposite wall to this was a large door leading into a vestibule and
then a staircase. Turner aptly named this the "principal reception
suite" of the palace, and identified it in all the palaces and dwellings
at Khorsabad, as well as in three of the palaces at Ninur, two at

\textsuperscript{11} Turner as previously cited.
\textsuperscript{13} It probably also occurs at Palace F, but as yet only a small portion of the structure has been excavated. See Khorsabad II, p. 76-78 & Pl. 69. Also Pl. 70 for the other buildings.
\textsuperscript{14} Russell, Sennacherib's Palace, esp. Ch. 4 and fig. 44.
\textsuperscript{15} Barnett, Sculptures from the North Palace, p. 28ff & Pl. 28.
\textsuperscript{16} Turner (1979b, p. 177)
\textsuperscript{17} Place incorrectly assigned this room as a court. When it is referred to in this paper, it will be as 'room' VII.
Nineveh and at the regional palaces of Til-Barsib and Arslan Tash (PL.18b).

This plan of outer court, principal reception suite, and inner court is readily followed by Sargon in his royal palace at Dur-Sharrukin with court VIII acting as the 'outer court', room VII, court V and rooms 21-24 and 27 making up the reception suite, and the square court VI becoming the 'inner' court. However, unlike the smaller residences in the citadel and what is known of the palaces at Nimrud and Nineveh, the addition of the large almost square courtyard XV near the main palace entrance means that Sargon expanded on this arrangement to suit his needs. Like the 'inner' court through which one usually had to pass to reach the less accessible regions of the palace, this large square entrance court controlled access to the palace itself. Thus in his royal palace "it was necessary to pass through two outer courts (XV & VIII) before reaching the throne room and thence the central courtyard(VI)". Such an arrangement also occurred, quite interestingly, at the regional palace at Til Barsib and is also suspected at the South West palace at Nineveh.

This layout of a large outer court leading into a small square court around which other courts and rooms group themselves, is followed elsewhere in Sargon II's palace, albeit in a slightly different form. Situated in a roughly central position off the north-east side of court XV lies court XIX. Like court VI, and indeed court XV, it plays a pivotal role in controlling the circulation around the south-eastern side of the palace. As court VI allows passage from the 'inner' portion of the palace to the throne room, the outer palace terrace and the rooms and courts between it and court XV, so does court XIX allow direct access from court XV into courts XX and XXII, the inner courts of Place's Dépendances. When this is considered in conjunction with the plan of the unusual wing, rooms 1-12, which projected out of the north-western palace façade, it does

20 Thureau-Dangin, 'Til Barsib' plan II.
21 Russell, Sennacherib's Palace, pp 78ff esp. 84.
seem to suggest that Sargon was not bound totally to any one set traditional blueprint, though he used the traditional building material and general layout of the traditional units - outer court, throneroom, inner court. Thus by building something slightly different, he was able to make a concrete statement of his own originality.

Whilst Turner’s article is extremely effective in locating certain sectors that lie in Sargon II’s palace, what he terms the ‘reception suites’, there are many areas of the palace that his study fails to cover. The most important of these perhaps is the palace’s upper storey. In all of the analyses of the palace that have been undertaken so far, all have either ignored or denied the possibility of the building containing an upper level of rooms22. This is not entirely surprising as such regions are extremely difficult to detect archaeologically, even in palaces better equipped with material remains. In a palace like the one at Khorsabad, where no stairways were recovered in the course of excavation23 and which has not only apparently been stripped clean of the majority of its artefacts, but was also largely excavated in a time when the concept of stratigraphy was unknown, the means of discovering an upper level, if such a one existed, must be considered highly problematical. However, it will be argued in the following pages that sufficient evidence does exist in Sargon II’s palace at Khorsabad to suggest that a large portion of the palace was in fact covered by an upper storey of rooms. This evidence comes in the form of the existence of very thick walls, certain long narrow rooms of dubious placement and function, strangely placed niches and the definite presence of one large stairwell. Added to this is the fact that despite its size, the regions of the Sargon’s palace that were set aside as the living quarters do not seem to be enough to cater for the large amount of people that must once have lived there.

In this chapter the sixteen sectors of Sargon II’s palace will be defined and discussed. Their functions, methods of fenestration and

22 Turner (1988: p. 189, Khorsabad II, p. 27) states that the absence of stairways in the building precludes the possibility of an upper floor. Place, Niveau et Étapyre I, p. 566.
23 The almost certain designation of a stairwell by Loud to rooms 22 and 23 was on the basis of comparison with the plans of other buildings at the site, and not actually confirmed by excavation. Khorsabad II, p. 27f.
the possible presence of upper floors will all be addressed in so far as the evidence permits. Unfortunately, the nature of the early excavation reports with their cavalier treatment of the undecorated portions of the palace, such as Place's Dépendances and the south-western portion of his Serail, and the early excavators difficulty coping with the lines of the mud-brick walls, combined with the very sparse nature of the material remains, means that the assignation of these sectors can only be accepted tentatively. In the majority of the palace's rooms and courts where no door sockets are noted, we may only guess at their placement, and in rooms bare of any object we may only begin to guess at their function. However, whilst some of these sectors may need to be revised to some degree if new material comes to light, the proposed arrangement of rooms into larger bodies of associated function nevertheless provides a valid new insight into the organisation of the palace of this Assyrian King.

Sector A (Pls 8 - 12)

Sector A occupies a primary position in both this discussion and in the palace itself. In terms of surface area, it is the largest sector in the building. It is located in the palace's southernmost corner opposite the main entrance ramp, with its south-western and south-eastern borders being the outer palace façades. It is basically composed of the large open paved courtyard, XV, a monumental triple entrance portal, and a group of rooms that run along the court's south-western wall. Doorways along its north-western border, 'H, D' and 'f', allow access to Place's "Serail" (sectors H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, F). The doorways on the court's north-eastern wall open on to the south-western rooms of Place's "Dépendances" (sectors B, C, D, E, F, G). A small ante-chamber located in the sector's south-western wall, room 90, offers the palace's only direct means of access with the palace Temple Complex (Place's 'Harem').

Sector A was one of the easiest sectors to identify in the building as two of its boundaries, the north-eastern and western,
are formed by the walls of its focal point, the large court XV. All
the rooms that open off this court's south-western side, with the
exception of room 90, were only accessible via doors in its south­
western wall. On the other hand, the rooms which run along court
XV's north-western and north-eastern walls, with the exception of
rooms 73 and 71 in its western corner, not only connect court XV to
other parts of the palace, but in their orientation and organisation
are definitely to be considered to belong to these other sectors.
The three largest rooms running along Sector A's south-eastern side,
rooms 97, 98, and 99, all open on to the palace's surrounding outer
terrace and thus provide the major means of access, not only to this
sector, but to the palace itself. Of the other rooms which are
situated along court XV's south-eastern border, only the one in its
eastern corner, room 100, cannot be considered as being connected
to this sector. Victor Place is largely responsible for excavating
this portion of the palace, although Botta performed a tentative
sounding in the region of Place's entrance facade and discovered a
rather enigmatic sculptured doorway that he named Door A. The
Chicago team also made a sounding in this region of the palace, and
they re-opened rooms 84 & 86. Not unexpectedly, where they
overlap, the information derived from all three excavations is not
easily reconciled.

Visitors approaching the palace from the main entrance ramp
would, according to Place's plan, have the choice of three portals
through which they could enter the building. Originally he named
these doors I, 2, and 3\textsuperscript{1}, although in his final report they appear
as M, M', M", with door M being both the central and the largest
portal\textsuperscript{2}. According to Place, each of the doors' jambs were formed
by pairs of winged bulls, and the central one M, was made even
more magnificent by the addition of two more bulls standing back to
back either side of a figure holding a lion, on each side of the
doors' outer facade\textsuperscript{3} (PL.11). After passing between any of these
imposing figures lining the three entrances, visitors would find
themselves in one of three large rooms, 97, 98 and 99. Situated on

\textsuperscript{1} Albenda, Palace of Sargon, p.43.
\textsuperscript{2} Place, Name et Plaque 1, p.90f.
\textsuperscript{3} Place, Name et Plaque 1, p.90f.
the north-western wall of each of these rooms was a doorway, directly in line with the first and similarly decorated, which opened onto court XV.

Unfortunately, this straightforward picture becomes far less certain when compared with the results of Botta’s and the Oriental Institute’s excavations in the area. Initially, it seems virtually impossible to reconcile either team’s findings with those of Place. This dilemma is caused, firstly, by the fact that both Botta and the American team each only excavated selected regions of the palace and importantly, only made a single sounding in the area in this portion of sector A. Great emphasis must therefore be placed on the accuracy of their surveying techniques in order to accurately lay their positioning of this portal in the correct relationship with the other portions of the palace that they uncovered. The second problem is a direct result of the type of discrepancies and lack of information in Place’s reports. He rarely gives measurements, forcing an over reliance on the accuracy of his plans, whose scale is usually not adequate enough for precise readings and unfortunately, he often words his descriptions in the most general of terms.

It is this latter point which raises the first major question regarding this monumental entrance. How many portals actually existed along this façade? On the basis of their sondage in the region of Place’s entrance façade, the Americans stated, contrary to Place’s opinion, that there was only one doorway, not three. In their sounding, the Americans discovered what they termed a “niche”. It was from their measurements of this niche and how they believed it related to what they assumed to be the remainder of the palace entrance façade, that they based their assertion. However, like Place, their description of their discoveries in this sounding is extremely meagre. They seem to correlate the niche to that area located between the portal bulls of Place’s M and M' stating that their discovery of a “broader niche precludes the existence of side portals shown by Place, for excavation proves the niche unbroken, while there no longer remains space in the wall plane sufficient to

24 Kheroubo II, p.55.
permit direct entry from the terrace to room 97 and therefore to the corresponding room 99. 29

There are many difficulties associated with this assertion, not the least being the concept that Victor Place, who excavated the entire façade, could possibly mistakenly visualise three doorways where only one existed. Even less feasible, for that matter, is the idea that architect Felix Thomas, the man responsible for the sketching and drawing of the plans could be similarly afflicted with the same visual 'delusion'. Furthermore, whilst it is impossible to make comparisons with the entrances of other royal palaces as their method of entry is poorly understood 30, the practice of placing a triple portal in the position of major doorways seems to be a common practice in Sargon's palace. Both the north-eastern and south-western sides of sector P are entered in this fashion, as is the throne room (VII), so its usage in such a grand form at the palace's major portal is hardly surprising. The absence of such an entrance in the other large citadel buildings, J, K, L and M, and even in the palaces at Arslan Tash and Tú Barsíb can be explained by their smaller size and simpler manner of decoration.

As neither Place nor the Americans are very forthcoming with a detailed account of the precise distances and measurements involved in their findings it is necessary to turn to their respective plans to find a solution to their differing depictions of this entrance (Pl. 3, 4). The main disadvantage of this approach is that on both sets of plans, the scale used is too large to allow accurate readings. Nevertheless, a comparison of the measurements of both these plans does reveal something very interesting in those of the American team. Whilst the distance between the entrance façade and Place's court VII do roughly correspond, the American plans come out approximately 20m short when the length of the palace as a whole is measured. This measurement happens to correspond approximately with the breadth of walls between the outer wall of M and the south-eastern wall of Court XV. There is thus the distinct

29 Khorsabad II, p.55.
30 Due to the caprice, of nature, and the decisions of the excavators, the means by which the palaces at Nimrud and Nineveh were entered, and even their place of entry is still largely unknown.
probability that, if their plan is moved about 20m to the north-west, their "niche" is actually the north-western wall of room 97. It certainly corresponds to the dimensions of the width of this wall. But is it possible that the American team could be so wrong? There is certainly no doubt that they may have been in error in the placement of their sounding since they remark on the difficulties they encountered in locating Room 84 due to the greatly altered state of the mound surface by the placement of Place's dumps.

A major problem is that this theory fails to explain how the American team could possibly miss the large doorway Place found connecting room 97 to court XV. The jambs of the door were supposedly lined, although whether with the same figures as door M" or stone orthostats is unclear as Place does not mention the decoration of this entrance. The plans would seem to suggest the existence of stone orthostats rather than winged sphinxes as the latter tend to be drawn with their front jutting out from the wall whereas the fixtures in this door are set in line with the façade of court XV and do not appear to protrude. Nevertheless, is it likely that the Americans could have overlooked such a portal, even if during the passing decades the gap was filled with fallen brick and other debris? The answer, fortunately for this discussion, is yes! All three excavations commented on the difficulty in tracing the walls where neither plaster nor steles were obviously present. The ancient method of laying the mud bricks whilst still wet gave the walls the appearance of a fused whole which during excavation was extremely difficult to distinguish from the debris (itself made up of the collapsed upper portions of the walls). Also, when Botta excavated his door A, he stated that parts of it were already visible above the earth. This means that this region of the palace probably had a long period of exposure to the elements, and scavenging villagers looking for stone for their houses. As Place fails to make the state of this entrance's preservation clear, we do not know if the portion of the jambs which rested against the

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31 This idea was first suggested to me by Dr. Guy Bunnens.
32 Khorsabad I, p.81.
33 Botta, Monument de Nippur V, p.43; Khorsabad I, p.81.
34 Botta, Monument de Nippur V, p.5.
entrance to room 97 were in place, in the surrounding debris or missing altogether. Thus it is not unreasonable to suggest that the American team were in fact erroneous in their assignation of the position of this 'niche'.

This fact leads to the second question regarding this entrance, that is, to which of these portals does Botta’s Façade A belong to? According to its decoration, which consisted of a pair of winged bulls facing away from each other with a figure holding a lion positioned in between, it would seem logical to assign this door to portal M. 35 However, as always seems to be the case with this palace, the matter is not so simple. Firstly, relying on Flandin’s plans (PL ) Façade A, with a width of approximately 4.50m, is much narrower than the 7m span indicated in Place’s plans for door M. 36 This measurement is much more easily reconciled with either of the side portals. Its alignment, whilst at first glance placing it closer to door M, cannot in reality be relied upon as Botta’s measuring instruments cannot be considered to have been accurate enough over the distance that separated it from its nearest neighbouring room. An example of this is in his location of building ‘x’. His plan shows it being much closer to room 15 than does Place’s plan. The fact that Place, in his initial report to the Minister of the Interior, mentions that in front of both the doorways 1 and 3 of his grand façade he found indications of the same decoration that he leaves only to door M in his final report also confuses the issue. 37 Aside from being uncertain as to the relationship between portals 1-3 and doors M-M”, the fact that in his final report, and indeed in Thomas’ pictures, doors M’ and M” have been left without added exterior decoration, sheds doubt onto his initial findings. Thus whilst Botta’s Door A can in all likelihood be reconciled with portal M, the final status of this entrance must remain slightly ambiguous.

The third problem with this entrance concerns the location of the ‘bit-hilani’. On inscriptions that adorned the walls, thresholds and winged bulls of the north-western rooms of the palace, Sargon

35 Botta, Monuments de Ninive I p 55f.
36 In his description of this Façade Botta gives the measurement of the width to be 3m.
37 Albrecht, Palace of Sargon, p 43.
when describing the building of his new palaces specifically states that he placed a 'bit-hilani' portico at their entrances:

"A portico, patterned after a Hittite palace, which they call a bit-hilani in the Amorite tongue, I built in front of their (palace's) gates. Eight lions, in pairs....... four cedar columns, exceedingly high........ I placed on top of the lion-colossi, and set them up as posts to support their doors" 38

"I erected a bit-hilani, patterned after a Hittite palace, by their (palace's) gates" 39.

"A bit-hilani, a copy of a Hittite palace, I erected in front of their (palace's) doors" 40.

The major features which are thought to identify such a structure which is believed to have its origins in the plans of ninth to seventh century BC North Syrian palaces, are the presence of two long rooms whose main axis was set parallel to the entrance façade which was formed by a portico containing columns set at the top of a low flight of stairs 41 (PI. 36a &c). As there is no doubt that the triple portal entrance, M-M" forms the main palace 'gate', serious problems occur when attempting to reconcile this generally accepted definition of a bit-hilani with the plan of Place's main palace entry. Observing the manner in which the Assyrians adopted elements from neighbouring cultures and altered them to make them identifiable Assyrian12, scholars have suggested that rather than imitate the complete plan of these buildings the Assyrian monarchs only transposed certain prominent features, such as the columned portico13, into the plans of their royal palaces. Thus when Sargon writes of having a 'bit hilani' at his palace's entrances, he may in fact be merely referring to the presence of a columned portico set in front of the palace doors, which is in fact what seems to have been

38 Luckenbill. Ancient Records. §§ 73. 94. 97. 100. 102.
41 H Frankfort. "The Origin of the Bit Hilat", Iraq 14 (1952), p. 120.
inferred in the first and most detailed text given above. However, even following this line of reasoning, it is still difficult to see such a structure as being incorporated into the portals M-M". Even if the ramp up to the terrace is associated with the stairway of a bit-hilani, the absence of any sign of a columned portico along the palace's entire south-eastern façade, or even the presence of two parallel rooms, would seem to put paid to this theory.

That this 'bit-hilani' was ever actually built, was not just an imaginary structure, and did in fact contain columns, is confirmed in two letters dating to the reign of Sargon that refer to the building of Dur-Sharrukin. The first letter concerns the casting of the "gate column-bases for the portico of the hilanu palaces" and specifies that "four column-bases of bronze for two hilanu palaces" would be cast as well as "the small lions of the hilanu(s).....cast together with the big lions in the spring". The second shorter letter asks about the "gate of the bathroom [of] the big hilanu palace". The main point that these texts confirm is that the columns for the porticos not only definitely existed, but were made of materials which would be quite difficult to detect archaeologically. The bronze would most likely have been carried off and reused, and the wood also. Thus this opens the possibility that a columned portico was once set against the palace's south-eastern façade in a similar manner to those depicted on a relief from the North West Palace at Nimrud (Pl.15c) and was later removed when the building ceased to be used as a royal residence. However, there are some problems with this. The main one concerns the fact that both the letters and the texts seem to imply that four columns were used at the entrances of each palace. The arrangement of four columns in front of the three entrances on the palace's south-eastern façade would have been exceedingly awkward. Either all four were situated either side of the main entrance, which would mean that the bulls lining the buttresses of portal M would have been obscured, or one pair lined each of the side portals M' and M". Neither of these theories is

\[ \text{\textsuperscript{11}Sarson's account of how he carried away the bronze bulls of Muzainr. Luckenbill, Ancient Records, \textsuperscript{42}.}\]
\[ \text{\textsuperscript{17}Winter, 1942, p.159.}\]
very attractive. The mention of a bathroom associated with the hilani is also troubling, as none of the rooms associated with the entrance portals can readily be identified as containing bath chambers or even any drainage facilities at all. In fact the construction of a portico along this entrance façade would not seem to fit in with the general sense of fortification that this side of the building provides. The positioning of columns anywhere along the façade would also certainly detract in some manner from its defensive capabilities. Unfortunately, the main entrance of the second palace at Dur-Sharrukin, Palace F has yet to be excavated, thus making it impossible to compare the plans of the two entrances to try to find any evidence which would confirm or deny any theories of a portico along its respective façade. Thus whilst the possibility of the existence of a portico along the grand entrance of sector A must be kept in mind, it does not seem to be very probable.

Fortunately, the whole discussion of 'hilani palaces' in the two letters raises another possible interpretation of these texts and other regions of the palace where they may have been located. The fact that Assyrian kings also called certain units or wings within their royal residences by the word which translates as 'palace' has already been mentioned. It is thus possible that the texts in the two letters could be interpreted to refer to such units. Two other structures exist on the palace mound which could be suggested for the role of this unit. Both occupy space on the projecting portion of the northwestern palace terrace - sector P and building x. The problems with the identification of these structures as the bit-hilani will be dealt with at the end of the discussion of sector P.

Approaching the palace straight from the main ramp, the most direct way to enter the building is through portal M and thus into its subsidiary room 98. Room 98 was a rectangular room whose long axis was set parallel to the south-western wall of court XV. Interestingly enough, in all the other buildings in the citadel,

18 Turner, p. 74 believes the texts refer specifically to a portico in front of doorways and not in front of a wing. However, he is concentrating on texts referring to Nineveh, and there is no reason for each king to mean precisely the same thing as architectural styles continually altered and developed according to fashion.

See Russell, Sennacherib's Palace, on the originality of Sennacherib's palace.
including the Nabu temple, and also in the palace at Til Barsib, the
only outside palace where a main palace entrance is well attested, the
method of entering the building was via a doorway placed in the long
wall of a long rectangular ante-chamber (Pl. 4). As befits its central
position, room 98 is the largest of the rooms in the entrance portal
complex. Place makes few illuminating remarks about this room,
except to say that, in comparison with room 99, it contained no
reliefs, and that its walls were covered with white mud plaster\(^{49}\). No
sign of any form of paving was found in this, or any other of the
entrance portal chambers. However, since it is scarcely credible
that Sargon would pave the terrace and floor of court XV and also
the small ante-chamber leading into the palace temple complex, yet
not pave the huge chambers behind his magnificently decorated
portals, it is not unreasonable to assume that it was once paved, and
that this paving, like that of a large portion of court XV\(^{50}\) was
removed in antiquity\(^{51}\).

Room 98 led straight into court XV through another pair of
winged bulls which faced into the chamber. Clearly by its size, the
thickness of its walls and its position relative to door M, room 98
had some important role in regulating the flow of people into the
palace, however what this role actually was is not precisely clear.
That this portal may have had more to do with incoming rather than
outgoing traffic is suggested, not only by its central position, but
by the second pair of winged bulls lining the doorway on room 98's
north-west wall. These bulls, like those in M, have a SW/NW
orientation causing them to face into the room rather than out into
court XV. This creates a canalising effect, inviting the visitor to
enter. On the other hand, those approaching the door from court
XV would be presented with a view of the beasts' large behinds.
Unfortunately, since there was no mention made of the recovery of
door sockets in any of the reports of this room, indeed in any of the
rooms in the entrance portal complex, it is impossible to make any
definitive statement about the direction of the traffic flow through
98. So, whilst the meagre evidence so far recounted suggests the

\(^{49}\) Place, Nineveh et al. \(\text{p}.\) 92.
\(^{50}\) Place, Nineveh et al. \(\text{p}.\) 81.
\(^{51}\) Following Loud's assertion that the whole of the palace was paved. Khorsabad II, \(\text{p}.\) 20f.
possibility of one way circulation, until more conclusive evidence presents itself, it is almost equally possible that circulation through this room was dual. Nevertheless, the assumption that whatever activities carried out in this large chamber had something to do with regulating the access of people, and by the size of the room probably also goods, into the palace is not debatable. Whatever other activities were carried out in here must unfortunately lie firmly in the realms of speculation.

Room 97 can be entered through portal M" and is, in comparison to room 98, a much smaller square shaped room. However, with its dimensions being approximately 12m², it is by no means small. It is also identical in size to room 99 which adjoins the final portal M'. However, unlike both 98 and 99, room 97 has access to a smaller rectangular chamber via a door in its south-western wall, room 96. Whilst Place once more fails to describe rooms 96 and 97 in any detail52, it is possible, given their position, to make an educated guess as to their function. As with 98, and indeed 99, much of the role of both rooms 96 and 97 must have something to do with traffic control into and out of the building. The absence of door sockets in any of the portals in the entrance complex makes it impossible to do more than guess as to the direction of the flow of people, however, the existence of three entrances side by side does suggest that some method of dispersing the traffic flow into and out of the building may have been made. This, and the fact that the bulls only line the jambs of 97 and 99, contrasting with door M's decorated façade, further serves to emphasise the lesser importance of these two portals. However what this implies about the direction of circulation between the portals M' and M" is uncertain. It is even possible that passage through either of these portals was determined by the visitors reason for visiting the palace, or the areas he wished to go to.

Room 96 is identical in relative positioning and size to room 97, as room 100 is to room 99, with only one major exception. Room 96 is clearly connected to 97 by a centrally placed doorway in 97's

52 Place, Ninevah et l'Asyrie I, p 92.
south-western wall. Whilst room 96 no doubt aids room 97 in some way, possibly as an ante-chamber for the sentries who must have guarded the portal, there is the distinct possibility of another function for this room. The extreme thickness and height of the walls along the entire entrance façade, indicates a very high probability for the existence of an upper floor located above the façade, as does the presence of buttressed towers on the palace's outer façade. Whilst rooms 97 and 99 with their 12m² dimensions were large, they certainly were not too large to be roofed, nor to support an upper floor, and the 8m width of room 98 could also be easily spanned. The main function of this upper storey no doubt concerned the possible defence of the building in the protection of the entrances. The most logical answer to room 96's role in this gate complex's then is as a means of ascending onto the upper floor. Place categorically states that he found no evidence for the existence of stairways anywhere at Dur-Sharrukin, and accordingly leaves them out of his plan. However, stairs are not the only means of ascent into an upper level. A ladder or wooden stairwell would perform the task as efficiently and would also have the added advantage of leaving a major part of the room free for other activities or installations (Pl.9b, 14b). Although Place makes no mention of finding any remains of wood in this room or any of the others along the entrance façade, it certainly does not preclude their original presence.

Room 99 is the only one of the three rooms associated with the entrance portal complex of which Place speaks with any length. This is due to the fact that scattered in one of its back corners he found some fragments of basalt, amongst which were two pieces carved in relief and three that were blank. Unfortunately, Place does not make any precise remarks as to their actual location in the chamber except to state that they were not in place (presumably indicating that they were not lining the walls), and that the uncarved stones were laid flat on their faces as if to be carved.

55 Place, Nineveh et Assyrie, p. 92f.
56 Place, Nineveh et Assyrie, p. 92f.
57 Place, Nineveh et Assyrie, p. 99.
The positioning of these stones here is puzzling and not only because the stone discovered was basalt. The idea that the basalt reliefs may have been intended to line the wall of this chamber can seemingly be dismissed out of hand, since Place remarks that the walls of this chamber were covered in plaster. From what is known about the mechanics of the construction of rooms with reliefs, it seems that they were positioned before the walls themselves were built and thus certainly before they were covered in plaster. This makes the discovery of what Place called "waste fragments" on the floor of the room, along with the three blank stones rather perplexing, since it seems from discoveries elsewhere in the palace, that, at least in the case of the alabaster orthostats lining the walls of the "Serail", the sculptors carved the reliefs in place. No tools used for carving were discovered nor does any other room in the palace show any sign of having been lined with basalt orthostats, carved or otherwise. In fact basalt blocks do not seem to be used anywhere in the palace at all, not for thresholds, relief panels, or plain orthostats. They were, however, utilised in the rather enigmatic structure located to the south-west of sector P, Botta's building x. Yet, if these reliefs were meant for that building, why were they found at almost the opposite end of the palace mound? Place believed that either the stones were being stored in chamber 99 for transportation elsewhere, perhaps to building x, and were simply forgotten when the building was abandoned, or that chamber 99 was actually a workshop for preparing stones destined to ornament the rest of the palace. If we consider that the palace was still in the process of being finished when it was abandoned, and that there is no proof that building x, which is extremely poorly preserved, was even finished, then in fact either of Place's suggestions could be true. They may also have been left there as part of an ancient dismantling process.

The location of these entrance portals in the centre of the total palace/temple façade, has been clearly and cleverly designed to draw the attention of the visitor. Set high on the terrace they proudly

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59 Khorsabad I, p.39.
60 Place, Memoir et Planche I, p.93.
and quite blatantly face the entire city below, and would be the first part of the palace clearly visible to anyone entering the citadel from citadel gate B (Pl. 3). The entrance ramp has been positioned to lead straight to their doors. From the point of view of defence, this would seem to be an extremely incautious plan. In any attack on the city, the palace would not only become the obvious focal point, but probably also one of the final areas of retreat. Not only does the ramp permit an almost straight line of access to the palace from gate B, but combined with three very large entrances waiting at its summit, it almost provides an incentive for invaders to take this route. Once any of these entrances was breached, an invader would have easy access to court XV and thus to the rest of the palace.

However, the designers of Dur-Sharrukin have cleverly offset these undesirable features with a number of architectural protective measures. Firstly, the entire entrance façade was constructed with a thick buttressed wall, containing at least two, if not four towers. Whilst this has the added effect of drawing attention to this region, contrasting as it did with the smoothly crenellated walls of the temple complex and the remainder of the palace’s south-eastern façade, it also added a measure of protection against the walls themselves being undermined. Moreover, it meant that the walls in this region were probably very high, possibly even reaching the height of 16m easily allowing for a second or third floor where archers could stand in times of defence. A second defensive architectural feature is the terrace itself. It is a well known fact of war that those controlling the heights have the advantage. The terrace walls were vertical and were protected by a smooth limestone facing which would effectively have prevented any tunnelling and have inhibited scaling. Thus, the only real access to the terrace by a large body of people was via the ramp. The palace then had not only the height of its own walls, but also the height of the terrace to give it the advantage. Any attempt to breach these doors would not have been an easy one.

After passing through any of the three entrance portals visitors would have found themselves in the large court XV. This courtyard

61 This varies from 8m thick to 7.8m thick where the buttresses are positioned.
measures approximately 102m by 88m and, unlike any other court in the palace, had the line of its walls broken by projecting buttresses similar to those lining the palace's outer south-western wall and the entrance façade. Doorways situated in the court's north-western and north-eastern walls led into the palace's western and eastern quarters. It was possible, by proceeding in a direct line from portal M and room 99 straight across court XV, to arrive at another monumental portal, D', through which the second large open court in the palace, court VIII, could be reached. Thus this court played an important axial role with regard to the circulation around the building.

Whilst the buttresses of this court were adorned with the so-called 'niches and reeds' type decoration, it is difficult to believe that they were added to the walls of the court purely to relieve the walls of their monotony as Place has suggested. In fact, they probably had a dual function. Firstly they added reinforcement and stability to the court's walls. The court's south-western and south-eastern walls were regularly interrupted by doorways leading into side rooms and as the walls of this court no doubt also had to reach the height of the thicker uninterrupted outer palace walls and those of the entrance façade, the construction of buttresses would lend them an added measure of stability. Secondly, they carried into this most important space the sense of strength and fortification that pervades the palace's entrance façade. The lack of regularity in their placement and size also places doubt on the likelihood that the buttresses were merely a decorative addition to the court's walls. Rather, they tend to add an imposingly functional character to this court as well as providing a means of protection to the portals located along the court's north-western and north-eastern walls. All the doors along the court's north-eastern wall, leading into sectors B and C apparently open into and are thus controlled from these sectors, and not court XV. The same is true of door H in the

62 This is the measurement taken from the plans. Place however gives the measurements as being 103m by 88m.
63 Khorsabad II, p.13A-D.
64 Khorsabad II, p.282.
65 This is taken from Place's plan pl.5. In his description of these rooms he makes no more than the most vague references to door-sockets, indeed their existence here is taken from his plan.
court's north-western wall which permits ingress into the rooms and courts surrounding the palace's inner court VI. This means that if the palace was attacked and the entrance façade breached, court XV would have been the second line of the palace's defence, and by the closure of all the doors along its north-western and eastern sides it would have become an isolated unit.

The American sounding made in the region of room 84 confirms Place's statement that the court was paved with two levels of baked brick paving similar to the palace terrace. However, Place also remarked that large portions of the paving no longer existed when he excavated the court. That they were removed in antiquity seems the obvious answer to this. The American excavations also revealed another interesting thing about court XV. They discovered that the level of the paving in this region of the palace was over 3 metres below the level of that of the throne room and the north-western portion of court VIII. It is strange that Place makes no mention of this in his discussion of either court, however, considering his favoured method of excavation - tunnelling - it is hardly surprising. From the bottom of one of his burrows everywhere probably appeared equally deep. However, because of his oversight, there are no definite clues as to how such a difference in levels was organised, and to find a possible solution, we must revert to negative evidence. As there is no sign that the D-D' portal contained a stairway, the most logical means of reconciling the differing ground levels of the two courts is in the form of sloping pavements. This would also have the subtle effect of emphasising the monumental gate D-D' by forcing visitors' eyes to move upward as they approached it. A positive argument favouring this "lies in the fact that the water collected over such a large area from the heavy winter rains must be carried off to drains". It is extremely likely then that the pavement of court XV was graded according to the position of its drains. The fact that none were
discovered is not really a problem since Place himself acknowledges that he failed to completely excavate the court\textsuperscript{70}.

The south-western side of court XV was made up of a series of eleven rooms which also formed the south-western perimeter of Sector A. All of these rooms bar 90, which is better described as an antechamber, were only accessible via court XV. Whilst each room was of a different size, the majority consisted of a basic plan containing a rectangular room placed with its long side parallel to the court and at whose south-western end lay a smaller subsidiary room connected by a narrow door. Rooms 82, 84, 86, 88, 90, and 91 all contained a stone threshold made of one or more pieces of alabaster. The eastern corner of each threshold was indented in order to receive the room's door post, and in some cases, both the pivot stone and the copper door socket were still in place\textsuperscript{71}. As is the case in all the rooms of Place's Dépendances, the walls were simply covered with white plaster. The NW/SE orientation of their outer walls, combined with the projecting buttresses on either side of their entrances, meant that the doors of rooms 82, 84, 86, 88 and 91 never caught the full brunt of the sun. Thus some sort of clerestory fenestration may have been necessary to illuminate the rooms, especially if any light was to penetrate into rooms 70, 83, 85, 87 and 89.

All the rooms located to the north-west of 90 are arranged in groups of two, except those rooms connected to 82, rooms 83 and 70. Room 82 is a long rectangular room located near court XV's western corner. It is the largest of the rooms situated on this side of the court, and in addition to the small room located off its south-eastern side, room 83, also has an extra room, connected to its north-western wall, room 70. Atypically, this room also has two doors attaching it to court XV, each positioned at opposite ends of its outer wall. Opposite the door closest to room 83 and near the room's southern corner is a rather large niche, formed by an indentation in the room's exceptionally thick south-western wall. Adjacent to the southern corner of this niche lies the thin wall that separates rooms 82 and 83. A single door near this wall's western corner links the

\textsuperscript{70} O. Nasr et G. Assur 1, p. 81
\textsuperscript{71} O. Nasr et G. Assur 1, p. 82, Khorsabad 1, p. 86.
two rooms. At the opposite end of room 82, in the centre of its north-western wall lies a single doorway leading into Room 70. This room follows the orientation of the rooms lying along court XV's north-western wall with its long side lying parallel to the court. Like room 82, it is also much larger than the other rooms situated along the court's south-western side.

Lying to the south-west of room 83 are rooms 84, 86, 88 and their adjoining inner chambers 85, 87 and 89. Both rooms 84 and 86 are connected to their respective anterooms by a small portal in the western corner of their south-eastern walls. This differs from the position of the corresponding portal in room 82 and also from the location of the doorway linking rooms 88 and 89. This latter door has a roughly central position in room 88's south-western wall. All of the ante-chambers, with the exception of 85, have an identical width to that of their adjoining room. Room 85 extends much further into the sector's thick south-western wall.

In at least one of each sequence of the aforementioned rooms Place found material remains. Rooms 82 and 70 were found to be full of broken and whole enamelled bricks scattered in rough piles around both chambers72. Room 84 was discovered to be crammed full of pottery with jars stacked in order of size, small inside the large73, and inside room 86 was a wall of iron tools74. Room 88 was conspicuous for lacking the presence of such a hoard, however Place did find what he termed a reasonably large quantity of oxidised copper in the debris which suggested to him that at one time it, like the other rooms, contained objects of copper75. Whether or not Place is being over optimistic in his assessment of the contents of this last room, it does nevertheless appear that the rooms along this side of

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72 Ninive et l'Assyrie I, p.80.
73 Ninive et l'Assyrie I, p.82.
74 Ninive et l'Assyrie I, p.81-89; American excavations discovered Place confused contents of rooms 84 and 86.
the court functioned as storerooms. However, the question must be raised as to whether this was their original function or something that occurred after the palace was abandoned. The condition and arrangement of enamelled bricks in 82 and 70 is certainly suggestive not of a storage area, but of a dump. Their scattering over the floors of both chambers combined with their broken condition cannot be completely explained away as being the result of the collapse of the upper part of the room's walls even in the unlikely scenario that they once decorated these walls. Similar remarks can be made about the tangled profusion of metal in room 86, although there did seem to be some method of order in the placement of the pottery in room 84. What is extremely interesting is that none of these rooms were found to contain paving. If the Americans were correct in their assertion that the all rooms of the palace were in fact paved with a single layer of baked brick[6], then the idea that these materials were placed in the rooms after their paving was stripped must be considered. If true this would imply that these materials found their way to these rooms after the palace ceased to function as a royal residence and thus cannot be considered to act as an aid to designate their function.

However, if we abandon the unlikely hypothesis that the disorder reigning in rooms 82, 70, and 86 was caused by the removal of the paving, then there are two other possible ways of viewing these rooms. They are that these chambers were never paved, either because they had yet to be finished or because paving them was considered unnecessary. Whilst the second of these suggestions seems unlikely in view of what has been previously stated, the first suggestion certainly holds merit. Both rooms 82 (and 70) and 86 contain material which would have been utilised in the construction of the palace. Enamelled bricks may have not been discovered in the debris of many regions of the palace[7], but they have been found to lavishly adorn the palace temple area next door. The majority of the tools found in room 86, picks, sledge hammers, chains and grapnels, all would also have been used in the building process. Thus it is highly possible that these rooms functioned as the storage area for

these objects whilst the palace was being built, after which the objects would have been removed, the rooms then paved and their function changed. This process would have been completed had the palace not been abandoned. The pieces of basalt found in room 99 also add fuel to the argument, suggesting as they do that they had yet to be put in place. According to comparisons with other Neo-Assyrian palaces, rooms 70, 82-89 are in the location where the administrative offices would be expected to have been found. Whilst it is true that the existence of another 'forecourt', court VIII may have in part usurped this part of court XV's function, it is also entirely possible that it didn't, and the reason that no tablets of any kind were discovered there was because they had yet to begin functioning in that capacity. Unfortunately it is also a possibility that the tablets were stored in the rooms which probably lined court VIII's north-eastern wall and which have completely disappeared or that they were carried off to Nineveh by Sennacherib. Thus the only thing it is possible to say for certain about these rooms is that at the time the palace was finally abandoned, they were functioning as storerooms.

Of the three rooms remaining along sector A's south-western side, only one, room 91, can be considered in any way as being comparable to those already mentioned. Room 90, the only room along this side of the court which Place depicts as having been paved, is actually a small ante-chamber that connects court XV with the complex of temples situated to the south-west of the palace. The door into court XV is framed by two of the court's buttresses. Room 92, whilst having the same orientation as all the aforementioned rooms, actually belongs to the complex of chambers located around Place's rather enigmatic room 93. The entrance to the final room on this side, room 91, is situated in the southern corner of court XV and is almost masked by the large buttress that protrudes to its north-west. The existence of rooms 90 and 92 left no room for an ante-chamber to room 91. Place found no evidence of any doors connecting it to either room 92 or the ante-chamber 90. The positioning of the buttress makes it unlikely that room 91 was a

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guard chamber for room 90 and since nothing was found inside it, no objects or drains, it is impossible to know anything much about the activities carried out there.

Of the group of rooms located near the sector's southern corner, rooms 92 to 95, Place unfortunately says little beyond the fact that he sees no need for the pillars placed either side of the entrance into room 93, and the niches in 93 and 94. He incredibly found no objects of any kind anywhere in this group, which, considering the complexity of its plan relative to the other rooms on this side of the court and the number of objects found in those rooms, is very unexpected. He also failed to notice any presence of drains in either of the smaller rooms, 94 and 95, which is quite surprising considering the fact that 94 resembles a squarer version of the bathroom 135 located in sector C. Thus we find ourselves here in a frustrating position which will become only too common when the sectors located in Place's Serail are examined. There is no architectural reason for the buttresses either side of 93's door into the forecourt, and it seems extremely unlikely that they were a decorative feature. Turner suggests these buttresses may have actually been a pair of bathslabs which Place mistakenly restored in his final plans as part of the mud-brick walls of the rooms. Considering Place's confusion between rooms 86 and 84 and the inaccuracies in his report of the throneroom, this suggestion is quite plausible, especially considering the proliferation of such slabs in other Neo-Assyrian palaces and their relative rarity here. No precise description was given of the niches in rooms 93 and 94. However, if room 94 was not to be a black hole, some form of clerestory lighting must have existed, probably in the wall it shared with room 93 or in its south-eastern wall.

Considering this group of rooms' position relative to the rooms of the entrance façade, it is extremely probable that they were similarly roofed, and also had an upper floor. In fact it is entirely likely, considering the palace's extremely thick outer wall and the walls of the rooms themselves, that an upper storey ran along the

79 Naive et al., Placed 1, p.91.
80 Turner, IV, p.187 n.57.
entire south-eastern and south-western walls of this sector. The means by which access to this upper level was achieved is problematical, as apart from room 96, it is difficult to see any evidence of another stairway in the sector. None of the smaller rooms, 83, 85, 87, or 89 appear large enough or accessible enough to function as a means of accessing the upper floor, and in fact, even though no drainage facilities were found within them, in comparison with similar rooms existing around the outer court at Til Barsib\textsuperscript{11}, they probably functioned as small bath chambers.

The final rooms which can be considered as belonging to Sector A are rooms 71 and 73. Room 73 is situated to the north-east of room 70 and is similarly aligned. Like room 70, and indeed all the long rooms running along the sector's south-western side, it is set with its long axis parallel to the adjoining wall of court XV. It is connected to this court by a door in its south-eastern wall near the room's southern corner. Another doorway in its north-western wall leads into a tiny rectangular chamber, room 71. According to Place's plan, room 73's doorway into court XV is almost directly opposite that of room 93 on the other side of the court. As was the case with this latter group of rooms, Place says nothing which can reveal the function of 73 and 71, in fact he fails to mention them at all. Room 71 is one of the smallest in the palace. However, it has the same alignment and width as the strange 'niche' 72 which Place depicted in the southern corner of his 'court' XII. It will be argued in the discussion of sector K that this 'niche' was actually the space where a small staircase should have existed, leading up to the palace's upper storey, and that room 71 formed part of this staircase.

Whilst circulation between sector A and those sectors located to its north-east is controlled from these sectors and not sector A, the fact that there are four doors which lead, via an ante-chamber, into four of the six sectors located in this area indicates that the relationship between these regions was probably a close one. Only a single doorway connects sector A with the maze of rooms and courts.
that occupy the region to its north-west. This door, H, located in the small ante-chamber, room 74, had a single doorsocket positioned, in its southern corner. Although no locking mechanisms were mentioned by Place, it is clear from its position, that control of this door lay from the side of room 74, into which it opened, and not court XV.

**COURT XIX (Pl.13)**

Whilst not strictly a sector, the function of this court is important and complex enough to warrant it being considered on its own. Like court VI in the Serail, court XIX's role in the circulation throughout the north-eastern portion of the palace is an important one. Measuring approximately 20m² it acts as a pivot point around which each sector in this region of the Dépendances, B, C, D and E, may be reached, and as such, can truly be said to belong to all of these sectors and at the same time to none. Befitting its central position with regard to circulation around the south-eastern portion of the palace, the position of court XIX's doorway into court XV via the ante-chamber 119 was also centrally placed on court XV's north-eastern wall. This, the south-western wall of court XIX, is the only one of its walls to contain more than two doors, for beside the ante-chamber 119, a small square room, 120 and a rectangular room 118, are also situated here. Two doors in both its north-western and north-eastern walls lead into courts XVIII and XX. Precisely why two doorways in each wall were necessary to connect this trio of courtyards is uncertain. No doorsockets were mentioned by Place, so it is impossible to determine how circulation through them was controlled. The thickness of the wall between XIX and XX was no doubt to aid in its stability, as for a distance of approximately 20m it ran without the stabilising upper support of a roof. Two doorways were also located in the court's south-eastern wall, however, one led into sector D via room 111 and the other led into sector B via 109. Place makes no mention of finding anything in this court or rooms 120 or 118 to give a clue as to their function." Nevertheless there is no doubt that this court's role was primarily

82 Nisr and Pl.13. 1. p.95
one of circulation, aiding and abetting whatever activities were being carried out in the sectors it conjoined.

Sector B (Pl.14)

Sector B, the second sector in this discussion, encompasses a much smaller area than Sector A. It is located in the southernmost corner of the large number of rooms and courtyards which occupy the area to the north-east of court XV and is reached from court XV through the first doorway on the latter's north-eastern wall. Defined to the north-west and south-east by court XV and the outer palace wall, sector B is basically composed of Place's small square court XXIII and the surrounding rooms numbering 100 to 110. Access to it from court XV is controlled by the two small ante-chambers, 102 and 106. However, the sector may also be reached via a single doorway connecting room 109 to court XIX. Victor Place is entirely responsible for the excavation of this sector which he states had been cleared of any objects and, unfortunately for this discussion, contained no revealing installations. 83

Ante-chamber 102, the larger of the two rooms allowing access to sector B from court XV, is a rectangular chamber with two doors. The first, located on its SW wall was the one which opened onto court XV. This doorway was situated in the eastern corner of court XV, and like the one leading into room 91 on the opposite side of court XV, would have been masked from sight from certain angles by the buttresses abutting the court's walls. It is the only door running along the north-eastern wall of court XV in which Place did not depict a doorsocket. 84 The second doorway was located directly opposite the first on the room's NE wall and led into Place's court XXIII.

Court XXIII is a small square paved area, measuring approximately 11m², that forms the heart of this sector. Portals existed in its south-western, north-western, and north-eastern walls.

83. See 's report. Place does not mention finding any doorsockets at all in this sector.
and passage through this region was the only means by which room 100 and the eastern rooms, 103, 104, 105, could be reached. On its south-western wall, just above the entrance into the tiny room 101, a small buttress, similar to the pair located in room 93 can be found on the plans. As Place makes no mention of this in his report, it is difficult to decide if it actually existed or was perhaps a drafting error. Turner's suggestion that the buttresses in room 93 were baths slabs may also be applied here. However, it is interesting to note that if this pillar had existed, it would have very effectively concealed and reinforced the door situated in the court's southern corner. This door allows access to a tiny rectangular ante-chamber, 101, which forms the only connection between the rectangular room 100 and the area Place named court XXIII. Room 100 is set deep inside the thick walls that comprise the palace's entrance façade, but unlike its counterpart, room 96, room 100 can not be accessed by any of the other rooms belonging to this façade. However, there is little doubt that its function, like that of 96, was probably to provide access to the upper floor of the entrance façade and also the palace's north-eastern tower. Thus the positioning of a small buttress as a fortification measure outside the entrance to room 100 would not be inappropriate.

The designation of XXIII as an open court must be questioned. Although at first glance it seems to perfectly represent the pattern repeated continually throughout the building of rooms surrounding an open court, the situation is in fact not quite so clear cut. XXIII was certainly not too large to be roofed, as beams could easily have been found that would stretch across its width and length. Also it was surrounded to the south-west and south-east and probably also the north-east, by very thick, high walls, and thus would usually have been partially in the shadows. Therefore if it was to have functioned as a light well for its surrounding room, its effect would have often been slight. Moreover, no drains were discovered by Place in either XXIII or any of its surrounding rooms. However, as Place also failed to discover any drains in the two largest courts of the palace, XV and VIII this fact does not really allow any

conclusions to be drawn one way or the other. What must be considered is the possibility that the second storey which existed over the palace’s entrance façade also continued across the rest of the rooms that ran along the south-eastern palace wall, rooms 103-105 of sector B, and 112-115 of sector D. All of these room’s walls were both thick enough to support an upper floor, and also narrow enough to readily permit roofing, and considering the thickness of the outer palace walls would have had extraordinarily high ceilings if an upper level did not exist. As these last rooms were probably merely for storage, there was no need for high ceilings, or even a great deal of light. Thus the probability of an upper storey existing in this area is high. However, how it was organised over XXIII is another matter again.

The existence of an upper floor over the rooms which surrounded XXIII would definitely seem to preclude it functioning as an open court since, surrounded by such high walls, it would have hardly received any direct light at all. Yet the existence of a roof does not necessarily also mean that XXIII actually supported an upper floor as well. Consideration of the method by which this sector could be lit must also be taken into account. If XXIII was completely covered, without some form of clerestory fenestration it, and thus its surrounding rooms, would have been very dark. XXIII is situated two rooms away from XIX, thus even though the doorways between these two areas through rooms 109 and 107 were in alignment the amount of light reaching XXIII from court XIX would have been negligible. It would also have received very little direct light from XV. Thus, even with the suggestion that for whatever reason the activities carried out in this court did not need a great deal of light and required only supplementary artificial illumination in the form of lamps, it is much more likely that every attempt was made by the builders of the palace to ensure that natural light reached this area. There are two ways in which an upper floor over XXIII could have been arranged (Pl.14c). The first (Pl.14c:2) has an upper storey covering the whole sector. As this would have left the lower rooms in a very dark state, the second possibility (Pl.14c:3) seems much more likely. This hypothesis has XXIII roofed, but still functioning as a light well for the surrounding
rooms by virtue of the existence of windows placed high up near its roof, which was raised a level above the roofs of the surrounding rooms. This theory not only ensures that an upper storey existed in the area, but that the surrounding rooms were adequately lit.

Almost opposite the entrance to room 101 on court XXIII's NE wall lies the third of the court's four doorways. This portal is the only means of reaching the three rooms 103, 104 and 105. Room 104 is a long rectangular room whose length equals the width of court XXIII. A doorway in the upper half of its SW wall leads into the small rectangular room 105. The bent axis approach to this last room, that is, its position on the long south-west wall of 104 rather than on its short north-western wall, is unusual enough in the plan of this palace to be of note. However, whilst there were no internal installations discovered which would give any clues as to this trio of room's function, it is almost certain that they represented a variation on the theme of retiring room and bathroom located so often elsewhere in the palace and the bent axis plan was made necessary by spatial restrictions. The illumination of room 104 would have been something of a problem. Rooms 105 and 103 would have received adequate lighting from windows set high in the wall they shared with XXIII. However, unlike 103 and 105, all the walls that surrounded 104 were internal walls. It is highly probable that this room did not need a great deal of direct light and that, apart from what could be gleaned via rooms 103 and 105, it was supplemented where necessary by artificial illumination.

The final doorway of XXIII, positioned just off centre in its north-western wall, led directly into room 107. It was possible, assuming that Place's location of the doorways was correct, to pass in a direct line from this portal, through doors in the NW walls of rooms 107 and 109, into the larger square court XIX. A third door existed in the centre of room 107's SW wall, leading into the small rectangular room 108. Room 108 has the same length as the width of room 107, and joins 101, 102, 106 and 110, to form a line of small chambers which continues all the way along court XV's north-eastern wall. The plan of room 107 and its connecting chamber 108, whilst reminiscent of the rooms running along the SW wall of court XV, is
even more suggestive, considering its partial function as a passageway, of the plan of room pairs 55 and 56 and XIII and 57 in sector N.

Room 109 is a large rectangular room with doorways existing in its SE, SW, and NW walls and is the final chamber in the passage that connects courts XXIII and XIX. Like ante-chamber 102, room 106 controls passage between room 109 and court XV. However, room 106 is much smaller than its predecessor, 102, which is the largest of all the chambers to open onto the NE side of court XV. A portal near the western corner of room 109 leads into the small chamber 110.

What the precise function of this sector was is unknown. Part of its role was undoubtedly to aid in the access and protection of the entrance façade via room 100. Whether rooms 103-105 would have acted as retiring rooms for the sentries manning the entrance façade, or whether they had some other function is not clear. Likewise the function of the rooms in the upper floor over this area is also unknown.

Sector C (Pl.15, 16a-b)

Sector C completes the line of rooms that are directly accessible from the north-eastern side of court XV. It is located to the north-west of court XIX and has respectively as its south-western and north-eastern boundaries the north-west wall of court XV, and the long straight wall that runs from court VIII all the way to the outer palace wall. It consists of a long rectangular open court XVIII and its surrounding rooms, 121-130, 134, and 135. Sector C can be entered from court XV via the ante-chamber 122 which forms the final doorway located on court XV's north-eastern wall. This sector can also be entered from sector H via the long passage 134 which opens onto court VIII, and from three doorways into the pivotal court XIX. As with sector B, Victor Place is entirely responsible for the excavations undertaken in sector Cm.

86. Nimrud et l’Assyrie / p 93-98.
Two portals in the SW wall of court XVIII connect it directly to
the square court XIX. The relationship between these two courts is
not unlike that between courts XV and VIII. Both were comprised of
a square court connected to a larger rectangular one via two
doorways situated in the square courtyard's north-western wall.
Also, in both groups, the square court had an axial role, allowing
passage to many other parts of the palace. Court XVIII, measuring
approximately 34m by 15m, and its surrounding rooms form an
interesting complex. Not only do they contain some architectural
peculiarities in their plan, such as rooms 126 to 129, but unlike the
other rooms and courts in this south-western portion of Place's
"Dépendances", they are not completely empty of objects and
instalments.

When uncovering the baked-brick paving of court XVIII Place
discovered that small stone slabs with protruding stone rings had
been sealed in no regular pattern in the court's floor (Pl.4, 15b).
Many of the stone rings displayed signs, such as traces of oxidised
rust, that they may have had metal rings or chains connected to
them. These rings were also found in the floor in the centre of the
north-eastern walls of rooms 126 to 129. These rooms are unique in
their plan in the palace. Each of their south-western walls were
missing, forming 4 large portals directly in line with the outer wall
of room 130. Each room also had a small doorway situated in its
south-eastern wall which connected each of the rooms to its
neighbour. The small door in the south-western wall of room 126
connected this room to court XIX. Place speaks of this arrangement
by describing the three very short walls which separate the four
rooms as pillars. Unfortunately he says nothing more regarding the
construction of these so-called pillars but from his plan it seems they
cannot be considered as a smaller version of the colonnaded side of
court 105 in residence L.

The function of these rooms must clearly be tied with the
function of the rings in the courtyard. However, just what this was

87 Nimor et l'Asyur 1, p.95.
88 Khorsabad II, p.31, Fig.3.
precisely is something of a problem. The discovery in one of the north-western corners of court XVIII of a 4m long sculptured pillar (Pl.16b) was suggestive to Place of a pillar on a bas-relief from Nimrud (Pl.15c.). On this relief, the pillars formed a background to activities which involved the caring and stabling of horses. Thus, on the basis of this, Place concluded that this court and its surrounding rooms represented the palace stables. This suggestion is attractive for many reasons, not the least because it provides the most logical solution to the stone rings placed in the courtyard. That these rings were for tethering something is obvious. It is equally obvious from their positions that they were not meant to secure the wings of the doors, like similar rings found in front of the portals of court VI90 and at Til Barsib91.

That the king must have kept his horses somewhere conveniently close to the palace’s entrance, yet also near enough for him not to have to travel too far to reach them is a logical supposition. With its easy access into both courts XV and VIII, sector C provides these conditions admirably, and unlike sector B and even court XVIII, is of the necessary size to easily house a fair number of animals. Thus, it would have been able to provide lodging for both the horses of the king, and also for those of visitors and perhaps for some of the palace employees. The ready means of access between courts XVIII and XIX, and the doorway linking 126 with XIX also points to an extremely close relationship between the two. The two long rooms on the court’s south-western side, 121 and 124, with their very large doors, could be used equally as stables or storage rooms for fodder or riding equipment, as could 125 situated in the court’s western corner. Unfortunately, the absence of any other material which would corroborate this hypothesis, such as the remains of riding equipment or anything resembling the drinking trough in the relief, means that the function of this sector must remain in doubt.

Contrary to Place’s opinion, the presence of the pillar is little help in aiding the assignation of a function to Sector C. Firstly,
the pillar only vaguely resembles the ones depicted in the relief from Nimrud, which in fact seem to be the supports for some kind of awning. Secondly, it is not clear from Place's report exactly where it should have stood. Place admits that it was not in its original position. It was found stretched out on the floor of the court somewhere near the entrance of corridor 134, but Place does not mention precisely how it lay, so it is not even clear where it was standing before it fell, nor indeed if it was free standing or placed against a wall. Its size would seem to prohibit it from being carried from another part of the palace and dumped here, yet its solitary existence in the court and the absence of an accompanying pillar is very puzzling. In fact were it not for the fact that Place specifically mentions finding the column on the floor, it would be very tempting to assign this pillar to a later period. The square shape of this pillar is also atypical from what is known of other columns at the site. Place mentions the discovery in one of the courts of the Dépendances of a circular stone "capital." It strongly resembles three basalt drums found in room 15 of residence K. These drums, like the capital, were not in their original position, and were probably column bases like those found in room 15 in palace F. All four column bases could not be more dissimilar to Place's pillar. Thus, until further evidence is forthcoming, this pillar's provenance to this court must always be slightly suspect.

The continuity of Court XVIII's NW wall is broken by a single large portal which forms the entrance to passageway 134. This corridor connects sector C with court VIII, although the doorway into court VIII is considerably narrower than that into court XVIII. This shrinkage of the passageway at the entrance to court VIII is an ideal method of firstly not drawing attention to this doorway in the court, and secondly making it easier to guard. Whether this passage could be closed at both ends or only one is not certain as Place fails to note any sign of thresholds or doorsockets there.

91 Ninive et Assyrie I. p.97.
92 See the round column bases in residence K and palace F. Khorsabad II. pl.32. 38.
93 Ninive et Assyrie II. p.111. & Ninive et Assyrie III. pl.53 & 62
94 Khorsabad II. p.314f.
95 Khorsabad II. pl.41.
Situated near XVIII's northern corner is the entrance to room 130. This long rectangular room lies, as can be expected, with its long axis parallel to the XVIII. It has two doorways, one located in the centre of its south-western wall leading to XVIII and the second in its north-western wall giving access to the small rectangular chamber 135. In the centre of room 135's south-western wall lies a niche which at floor level is marked by a stone pierced through with a hole giving access to a drain which runs under room 134. This is a typical example of the retiring room/bathroom plan already mentioned. To the north-west of 135 lies an identical room. However, Place found no door connecting the two, and the only means of entering room 135 was via court VIII. Rooms 130 and 135 were no doubt for the use of the grooms and other stable hands who would have worked in the sector.

The method by which this sector gained illumination is very straightforward. All of the rooms except 135 opened directly off the court, and the function of this latter room does not necessitate it being well lit. Passage 134 would have gained sufficient illumination from its entrance into court XVIII, which was in all likelihood a large open portal without any door. The portal in its opposite entrance allowing ingress into court VIII would almost certainly have contained a door. However, the corridor's thick north-eastern wall is puzzling. There is certainly no need for this passage to have high walls to support any clerestory fenestration for it would have received sufficient illumination from its two portals. The only other logical possibility for the wall thickness in this region was that there was an upper floor over this corridor and its neighbouring rooms. The room size and wall thickness of all these rooms, 80, 81, 131-133, 135-137, all supports the theory of an upper storey in this region. However, this being so, there is thus the problem of access to this upper level. A solution to this may lie with the 'niche' 125, placed in the court's western corner. This niche, measuring approximately 7m by 3m, is ideally situated both in its position and size to have been the location of such a stairway. The absence of any stairs, either of wood, stone or baked brick does not preclude their original

96 Niau et Plasse 1, p.99.
existence in this space, for all these materials were readily pillaged from the palace, and Place, who probably traced the walls by exposing their white plaster covering would no doubt have confused the mud brick body of the stairway with collapse. This stairway would have allowed access, via the upper storey, from this sector to the upper floors around sectors N and O and thus the residential region of the palace. If it may be accepted that sector C functioned as the stables, then a direct link between the two regions would be desirable and would obviate the need of passing through either of the major courts in order to reach sector C from the sectors located to the north-west of court XV. This stairway would have also linked the upper storey existing over the sectors lying to the north-east with sector C.

Sector C is the last of the sectors located to the south-west of the long straight wall which runs from court VIII all the way to the outer palace wall. Its line is only interrupted three times by the doorways between XIX and XX and between III and XXII. Except for room IIII, this wall effectively splits this portion of Place's Dépendances in half, and separates sectors B and C from D, E, and F. That the function of these latter sectors probably differed from the ones already covered is suggested by both their plans and location within the building.

Sectors D & E (16c)

Sectors D and E make up a block of similar rooms and courts in the palace's easternmost corner. As the mound is quite eroded in this place, many of the rooms lying along the palace's south-eastern wall were only partially preserved. It is possibly this factor which accounts for Place's very meagre comments regarding these two sectors. In fact, considering the complete absence of any type of artefacts from these two sectors, it would not be unreasonable to suspect that he only cursorily examined this region.
Sector D is comprised of the rectangular court XXII, measuring approximately 31m by 15m and its surrounding rooms, 111-117 and 199. It can be entered from sector C via room 111 and sector E via room 117 or passage 156. Its central point of focus is courtyard XXII. This court has 10 doorways, though of these only three, those into 111, 117 and 156, can be considered crucial to circulation. The remaining doors open onto a series of rectangular chambers set with their short axis parallel to the court. These rooms run along the court's south-eastern and north-eastern walls. Of the four doors in the court's north-western wall, three lead into the strange rectangular chamber 117. This is the most direct point of access between court's XXII and XX. The fourth door on XXII's north-western wall is situated near its northern corner and leads to the long corridor 156. The remaining room associated with this sector, 111, connects courts XIX and XII. The method of access between these two courts is not precisely direct since, after passing from XXII into 111, it is necessary to make a right angled turn in order to approach the second portal located in the room's north-western wall.

Although court XXII could feasibly have been roofed, it is unlikely that if roofed it would have supported an upper floor as there would not have been enough support to prevent the floor boards from sinking in the middle. Thus considering this, as well as the existence of XXII's many doorways, most of which lead into roofed spaces, it is more probable that Place was correct in his designation of XXII as a court. Consequently the illumination of the rooms of sector D would have been simple. All of court XXII's surrounding rooms open directly off it thus enabling them to be easily lit, either through their doorways, windows or both. It seems most likely that these single rectangular rooms functioned as storerooms, so there is no necessity for them to be brilliantly lit. There is also the probability that the upper floor which existed over sector B continued around the edge of the palace's outer façade over rooms 112-115, and proceeded around the corner to join the north-eastern rooms of sector E, 158-160.
The reasoning behind the plan of room 117, placed in between courts XX and XXII, is difficult to discern. Not only do the number of doors on its south-eastern wall seem excessive, but there is no obvious reason why this wall did not directly join the north-eastern wall of court XIX. As the walls of this room are rather thick (approximately 3m thick), one possible explanation of the positioning of this room is that it provided an alternative pathway around court XXII in the sector's upper storey. Thus, because of the placement of 117, it would have been possible to travel from the rooms above sector B across room 111 to room 117 and thence to the rooms above corridor 156 and rooms 157-160. This theory of 117 functioning as a connecting unit between sectors D and E on the ground floor and sectors A, D and E on the upper level, also leads to a possible explanation of 117's extremely thick south-western wall.

In all the sectors that have been discussed, it has been possible to accept the existence of an upper storey above the ground level rooms. However, it is more difficult to identify the locations of the stairways that would have given access to the first floor. One thing that is especially noticeable in this south-eastern region of Place's Dépendances, encompassing sectors A and D, is the almost total absence of anything resembling a stairway. Room 100 located in the entrance façade's eastern tower is the only room in the region that has so far been considered to contain a means of reaching the upper storey. To suggest that this was the only room in the whole region through which the upper floor could be reached is extremely impractical. Thus another place where a stairway could feasibly have been positioned must be found. The space between 117 and XIX admirably fills this. Place could quite easily have confused the mud-brick core of the stairwell with the continuation of 117's south-eastern wall, and the baked brick or stone steps taken along with everything else that was removed from the sector. A stairway positioned here would allow movement from court XXII to the upper levels of sectors A and E (as well as its own). That this stairway was oriented towards XXII and not XX is suggested not only by the necessity for such a structure in sector D, but also because the placement of the second portal in XX's south-western wall is also where the lower steps of the stairway would be placed. On the
other hand, the doorway between 111 and XXII is situated near the southern corner of XXII leaving plenty of room for the stairs to run.

Sector E is located immediately to the north-west of sector D. It consists of the largest court in the south-eastern region of Place’s Dépendances, XX, which measured approximately 22m by 35m, the passage 156, and rooms running to the north-west of this passage 157-160 and XXI. In contrast to XXII, court XX has only five portals, one in each of the north-western, north-eastern, and south-eastern walls and two in its south-western wall connecting it to court XIX. An off centre door in XX’s north-eastern wall leads into passage 156. This passageway is not perfectly straight as the southern portion of its south-western wall is interrupted by the north-eastern wall of room 117. There is also a small niche located in its south-western wall almost opposite XXI. Directly opposite the door into XX on the passage’s north-eastern wall lies the entrance to room 158. This room is one of five rooms whose plan recalls those off the south-eastern wall of XXII. All of them open onto 156 with the exception of 157 which has two portals in its south-eastern wall linking it to the room Place called court XXI. This plan consisting of a series of unconnecting rectangular rooms placed side by side whose method of entry was via portals connecting them all to a long passageway running their entire length and connecting them to a court can also be seen represented in rooms 42-45 in Residence L in the citadel. The final door in court XX is located near its western corner and leads to the rooms of sector F. This court’s primary role is one of distributing circulation between XIX and the outer court XV, and the sectors located along the palace’s extreme north-eastern side as well as providing access to the storerooms lying along its north-eastern edge. The placement of court XX also provides a line of circulation to sectors F and G without barely having to cross court XV, nor pass through portals D and D'.

It is difficult to see any architectural necessity in designating XXI as a court. The most obvious explanation involves the illumination of 157, a room which breaks the pattern of the other

97 Khosrovad II, p. 72.
rooms that open off passage 156 by having its doorways connecting it to XXI rather than the passageway. However, as it is highly likely that an upper storey ran above all the rooms located off this passageway as well as the passage itself, this argument is not completely convincing. There is nothing in its plan which gives any indication as to why 157 should have needed to be better lit than rooms 158-160. In fact, the high probability that all these rooms, 157-169 and XXI, actually functioned as storerooms means that they would in fact have not needed a great deal of light. Windows placed in the wall of 156 in alignment with the doorways of these rooms would have provided enough light by which to see. Thus why did 157 open into room XXI rather than 156? The most conceivable answer is that something prevented it, something which probably took the form of a staircase. Whilst there is no concrete evidence for a staircase here, the absence of a doorway in the south-western wall of 157, the length of 156, and the high probability of an upper storey in this region all encourage the placement of one in this spot. Not only would this have created a means by which the rooms above 157-160 could be reached, but it would have been in an excellent position to also lead directly into the rooms above sector F.

As no objects of any kind have been found within either sectors D or E, it is difficult to comment on their function. Place saw them as functioning as more sheds and stables. The similar rooms located in residence L are no assistance as they also were found to be empty. They also opened off the palace's inner courtyard, not the outer one as is the case here. As there is nothing in their plans to suggest a bedroom/bathroom suite, it more than likely that Place was correct in assigning to these sectors the function of storage, although the items stored there must lie in the realms of speculation. The placement of all these sectors so close to the main palace entrance also makes it likely that they were used as the storage regions, as it is much more practical to have such an area positioned at quite a distance from the residential and civil regions of the palace but also where they could be easily reached from the palace's entrance. Sectors D and E, with their proximity to sector

98. Nimmo and形式, p. 97f.
99. Unlike the palace, these rooms were found off the inner court. Khorsabad, p. 71.
Sector F (Pl.17c)

Sector F is a small sector located to the north-west of sector E. Like each of the aforementioned sectors, it was entirely excavated by Victor Place. It contains ante-chambers 144 and 151, rooms 152 to 155, Place’s court XVII and corridor 150. The sector is formed by the closure of the doors located in the north-western wall of 144 and the south-eastern wall of 151 which effectively isolates it from sectors E and H. The closing of these doors would have also blocked the most direct means of access between these two sectors, that is via passage 150. Passage 150, measuring around 26m in length, is guarded at either end by the two aforementioned ante-chambers, 144 and 151. On its north-eastern wall is a doorway that permits ingress into court XVII. Three doors in the south-eastern wall of this court lead into four small rectangular rooms, 152 to 155. A portal in the south-western wall of 152 connects it to the small ante-chamber 151, thus creating another means of gaining access to court XVII when approaching it from sector E.

In each of the rooms 152, 153, 154, and 155, Place found a large number of what he termed ‘clay jars’. These were placed a metre above the floor, partly sunk into what he called “une construction en terre battue” and contained ash and fragments of charcoal. Whilst the latter is almost definitely from the roofs of the rooms, the situation is not so clear with regards to the construction made of beaten earth. It is not apparent from Place’s description as to how much of the rooms were taken up by the jars and their earthen support, nor indeed if the jars themselves were in an upright position or on their sides. Whilst the implication seems to be that they were standing upright, it is worth considering that perhaps the beaten earth construction was nothing more than the compressed remains of the room’s upper walls. There are no depictions of these jars in his report so it is impossible to know

\[100 \text{ Place’s Description, Pl.99.} \]

\[101 \text{ Place’s Description, Pl.100.} \]
their shape and size, and Place himself notes that he fails to show them on his plan\textsuperscript{104}, so it is impossible to guess their function. However, it is unlikely that they were used, as Place believed, to cook bread in. Place was misled into thinking this because of the presence of ash and fragments of charcoal inside the jars\textsuperscript{106}. This is much more likely to have come from the collapsed roof, an interesting fact in itself because it seems to suggest that in this region at least, a fire may have hastened its destruction. However, as Place failed to note any other signs of burning on the walls or the bricks of court XVII, it is difficult to embrace this idea wholeheartedly. No doubt this sector, like the two lying to its south-east, also functioned as a storage area.

As with all the other rooms in the palace, Place failed to note the presence of any brick paving in any of these rooms. Assuming that he was correct in his assertions that the beaten earth constructions were to support the jars and were not collapse from the upper portion of the walls, then it is possible to follow him in his belief that these floors were of beaten earth and not paved. It seems unlikely that such installations would have been built on a surface that had been paved, and much more practical to have them on a floor of similar material. Otherwise the only solution to their presence in the rooms is that they were the result of a later occupation. This possibility may not be excluded, especially considering this sector’s proximity to sector G whose function at some stage was almost certainly modified. There is a marked similarity between the organisation of XVII and rooms 152-155 and rooms 62, 42 - 44 in sector M and rooms 75 - 77 in sector K. In both these examples, the long rectangular room off which each of the smaller rooms opened, is precisely that, a room and there is no indication that any of the rooms ever contained storage jars. However, sector F’s proximity to sectors D and E and its location in the block of south-eastern palace rooms all suggest that its function as a storage area for perishable materials contained in jars is the most likely one.

\textsuperscript{102} Nisw and Plannce \textit{I}, p.106.
\textsuperscript{103} Nisw and Plannce \textit{I}, p.106f.
One peculiarity of this sector is its extremely thick south-eastern wall. It is approximately double the widths of the other walls in the sector and there does not seem to be any architectural necessity for the thickness of the wall here in the plan as it stands. However, if Place was incorrect in his designation of XVII as an open courtyard, then the wall may have been thickened in order to allow it to rise above the roof level of the neighbouring rooms in sectors E and G and thus allow the positioning of very high windows. Such a hypothesis is not inconceivable. With dimensions approximating 42m by 8m this space could easily have been roofed and if so must have had some means of illumination. Thus, whilst the region above rooms 151-155 no doubt contained an upper floor, it is unlikely that this continued over XVII. Rather, as with court XXIII in sector B, it is more likely that this court with its niche at one end had its roof set at a level slightly above the roofs of the upper floors of 152-155 (Pl.14c:3). This would have allowed XVII to transmit natural light not only to its adjoining rooms, but also to the south-eastern portion of corridor 150.

The function of this sector was thus a dual one. Firstly, via the long passage 150 with its two ante-chambers, it controlled the most direct means of passage between court VIII and the heart of the palace’s south-eastern wing. The failure of Place to mention any door sockets in either of the ante-chambers makes it impossible to know for certain from which direction the circulation of people was controlled. However, considering the two ante-chambers it seems probable that the passage controlled the flow of people travelling both ways. The second function of this sector was probably as a storage room or depot for some perishable substance that was stored in jars.

Sector G (Pl.17b, 18)

Sector G is a very interesting sector, both in terms of its arrangement amongst the group of sectors which lie to the north-east of court XV, and the internal organisation of its own plan. It is made up of Place’s court XVI and rooms 139-143 and 145-149. It lies along the most northerly surviving portion of the palace’s outer
eastern facade, and is set cradled between this wall and those of sector F. The positioning of sector G in the northern corner of Place's Dépendances would seem to obviously link it to the other rooms and courts which occupy this eastern portion of the palace. However, whilst it shares its south-eastern wall and part of its south-western wall with court XVII and corridor 150 in sector F, Place found no portals connecting these two sectors. In fact, the only means of entering Sector G was via a small rectangular ante-chamber, 141, which opened off the north-eastern wall of court VIII. Thus, in order to reach sector G, even from the neighbouring sector F, it was necessary to pass across a portion of court VIII in sector H.

Ante-chamber 141, like those running along the north-eastern wall of court XV - 106, 119, and 122 - was set with its short axis parallel to court VIII, its long walls following the passage of circulation in and out of the sector. It led directly into Place's court XVI. This 'court', its long axis parallel to court VIII, had two small doors in its north-western and south-eastern walls, both leading into two very long, thin rooms, 139 and 149. Both these rooms may only be entered via this court. However in room 149, a second door in its north-western wall to the south of the one leading to court XVI opens onto a small rectangular room 148. This room, which was set adjacent to the north-western wall of 149, follows the same alignment as the rooms situated to its north-west, with the exception of 141. Two extremely large portals set side by side in court XVI's north-eastern wall lead into two identical suites of rooms, 142 - 143 and 146 - 147. Rooms 142 and 146 are rectangular rooms, their long sides parallel to those of the court. A single centrally placed door on the north-eastern walls of both these rooms led into the two large chambers, 143 and 147. A final door located to the south of 141 leads into room 145, a small rectangular chamber of similar dimensions and orientation to 146.

An interesting feature of this sector is its seeming attempt at a form of symmetry in design. The two identical suites, 142, 143 and 146, 147, were set side by side off the north-eastern wall of court XVI, the sum of their widths equalling that of the length of the
court. To the north-west and north-east of this block was located the two long rooms 119 and 149. Both were entered by directly aligned doors in the opposite short walls of the court. However, the balance of this sector was thrown out by the extra length of room 149. The south-western wall of room 149, instead of being in alignment with that of 139 and the south-western wall of Court XVI, extended to the wall which formed the south-western boundary of the sector. It further upsets the established pattern by possession of an additional chamber lying adjacent to its NW wall, room 148.

Both Botta\textsuperscript{104} and Place\textsuperscript{105} are responsible for excavating in this region of the palace. Botta, in a trench he dug on the north-eastern edge of the mound (Pl.6) discovered a number of large jars standing upright and arranged in rows(Pl.17b). Place, digging later in this same region identified the area that Botta excavated as room 139. Although Botta's trench as depicted on his topographic plan does not seem to match the position of 139 on Place's plan, and his arrangement of the jars does not match that depicted by Place on his plan of the palace, it does seem best to follow Place here in the placement of these jars because when he dug in this area, Botta's trench was no doubt still identifiable. In fact Place discovered that almost all of the rooms in this sector were full of jars. In rooms 139, 143 and 144, the jars were placed in a running board of stone and lime which was about 24cm high\textsuperscript{106}. In room 139, it ran all around the walls of the chamber, leaving a 3m passage in between. This room contained the largest jars, whose average size was around 1.46m in height with a diameter of around 0.92m\textsuperscript{107}. In 143 and 147, the running board apparently lined the rear wall of the chamber. The jars in these rooms were said to be generally smaller than those in 139. The situation is not so clear in the fourth room which contained pottery, room 149. Place stated that this chamber was scattered with vases smaller than the ones in the preceding rooms. He also stated that they were arranged less symmetrically, and seem


\textsuperscript{105}Nînîwâ et l’Assyrie I, p.103.

\textsuperscript{106}Nînîwâ et l’Assyrie I, p.102.

\textsuperscript{107}Nînîwâ et l’Assyrie I, p.103. Botta, \textit{Monument de Ninive V}, p.170. Botta records finding small bones in these jars, however, they were of rodents caught when the roof collapsed and not, as he suggested, human funerary urns.
to have been shattered before burial. The evidence that led him to the latter assertion is not mentioned, and nor is it clear if the vases were placed on a running board or on the floor of the chamber. However, what is clear is that the primary role of this sector does seem to be one of storage, possibly of wine, oil and other liquids. Or was it?

The overwhelming impression gained from a glance at the interior organisation of this sector is how closely it resembles the plans of a group of rooms in the palace at Arslan Tash (Pl.18b, rooms XXXIII–XL1) which Turner has identified as resembling the plans of a series of double temples usually dedicated to Nabu and his consort Tashmetum. Examples of these temples have been found at Assur, Nimrud, Khorsabad and Tell Halaf, although in the latter two examples, the temple of Tashmetum was slightly smaller than the one of Nabu. The standard plan of these temples had a long rectangular chamber arranged with one wall adjacent to an identical pair of parallel shrines each entered from a centrally placed portal in the long room’s adjoining wall. These shrines were also both rectangular and led to a smaller room placed on their short wall opposite the entrance. This smaller room contained the cult statue which was set upon a raised podium or platform. Running parallel on either side of these rooms were a series of very long thin chambers that often led behind the shrines. Whilst the plan of the rooms in sector G more closely resemble the Arslan Tash examples in that it was necessary in both palaces to first pass through a small ante-chamber before entering the rectangular room or shrine, sector G deviates both from this plan and that of the other temples in that its podiums were set at the rear of the rectangular chambers and not inside any smaller rooms and were thus

111. Maloum, Ninnur and its Remains II, plan IV.
112. Khorsabad II, pp. 56-64, pl. 71.
114. The shrines could also often be entered via doors in their long walls, see room XXXIII in Pl. 18b.
115. See for example the plans of the temples in the palace temple complex to the southwest of the palace, called the Harem by Place (Pl. I).
much larger than these other podiums. Also, there was no sign of
any staircase leading up to the podium, and the shape of the
'shrines' themselves were much squarer in their shape in sector G
than those from Arslan Tash. It was apparently upon these podiums
that the jars were later placed, although how much later is difficult
to discern as they resemble standard Assyrian utilitarian types of
jars (PL.17a)\textsuperscript{116} Thus, the existence of the jars notwithstanding, it
is incredibly tempting on the basis of these obvious similarities to
identify sector G with these kinds of temples.

However, one obstacle to the successful argument of this latter
theory is the relative poverty of this sector's decoration. This
becomes especially obvious when sector G is compared with any of
the temples in the palace temple complex. With their stone paving,
decorated walls and doorways and inscribed thresholds, the temples
of Adad, Sin, Shamash, Ea and Ninurta contrast markedly with the
whitewashed walls and earthen floor of sector G\textsuperscript{117}. Even if Loud is
followed in viewing this entire area as being originally paved with
baked bricks that were subsequently removed, the decoration of this
room still seems to push it firmly in the status of storerooms, even if
its plan strongly suggests otherwise. In fact, the theory that any
religious or cultic installations that had once occupied the room had
been removed without leaving any trace of their former existence
must be questioned in the light of the abundance of material found
remaining in the palace's adjoining temple complex. Why this sector
had been stripped bare and not the other, is something that can
never be conclusively answered. Unless of course we assume that
the decoration never existed in sector G to remove and in fact, on
balance, this seems to be the most likely answer. What we may in
fact be viewing here is a region that was set aside either to function
in a similar fashion to the palace's adjoining temple complex and was
later superseded by the construction of these temples\textsuperscript{118} or even the
Nabu Temple itself, or else it was meant to be a private chapel for
the king and was never completed. Whatever the explanation, it is

\textsuperscript{116} delongue et Ussurie I, p.103.
\textsuperscript{117} Khorsabad II, pp.86-89. for a discussion of the temples of Sin and Adad.
\textsuperscript{118} Loud's excavations of these temples suggest they may have been added to the palace as an afterthought.
Khorsabad II, p.56.
highly unlikely that these two 'shrines' ever functioned in a cultic capacity, and their functioning as storerooms probably occurred quite early in their history.

The lighting of this sector poses an interesting conundrum. The size of rooms 143 and 147 mean that whilst they could certainly have been roofed, they would not have been able to support an upper floor without other means of support such as internal columns. Since there was no evidence whatsoever for the latter, the presence of the jars suggests that whilst 143 and 147 were probably roofed, they did not support an upper floor. It is difficult to decide if Place was correct in his designation of XVI as a court. Certainly from a comparison of the plans with those of the temples it would seem that this area should be assumed to have been roofed and not open. However, it has already been established that sector G does not follow these plans exactly. Thus it is equally likely that Place was correct and XVI was in fact a court. Thus for rooms 142, 143, 146 and 147, with their large centrally placed portals, the need for clerestory lighting would have been negligible. The thickness of the walls of these rooms can be explained as necessary to support the weight of the roof that had to span the distance between their walls. Whilst the illumination that rooms 139 and 149 would have received from the court would not have been enough to light them entirely, as storerooms this lighting can be considered adequate.

**Sector H (Pl.19, 21a, 22-24)**

Sector H, following sector A, is the second largest sector in the building. Like sector A, it too contains a monumental portal and a very large paved courtyard. However, here all similarity between the two sectors ends. In its placement in the palace, its planning, decoration and function, sector H could not be more different from its predecessor. Unfortunately, the NE portion of the sector, of which a major segment is court VIII, has been destroyed by the erosion and collapse of the NE edge of the mound. It is in this region that Place restored a line of rooms, 201-207 and a doorway 'c', allowing direct passage to the palace terrace. As this part of the mound has totally disappeared, it is possible to speculate
endlessly about the probable form of the palace's plan there without resolution. Thus, this discussion will focus only on those portions of the plan that do not lie in the realms of imagination.

Sector H stretches from the central portion of the palace's mass almost to its northern most extremity. Apart from court VIII, it encompasses on its south-eastern side the monumental entrance, D-D', the neighbouring unit, rooms 131-133, and the two small connecting chambers 136 and 137. On the sector's NE border, only the two single rooms 138 and 140 remain. The focal point of the whole sector - Turner's principle reception suite(Pl.24) - is located in a roughly central position on the south-western wall of court VIII and forms the south-western border of the sector. This suite contains the throne room VII(Pl.23b), a stairwell and ante-chamber rooms 22 - 24, and also the connecting rooms 21, 27 and Place's court V. The two small chambers located in court VIII's southern corner 51 and 52 also belong to sector H. Portions of this sector have been excavated by all three teams. Botta excavated the NW and SW walls of court VIII as far south as Place's door C, calling this area Façade n(Pl.21a, 22). The Chicago team also excavated in this same location, but they extended their trenches to the south to reach as far as door C' and also re-excavated Place's court VII(Pl.20). To their pleasure, all three teams uncovered walls decorated with huge carved limestone slabs. Thus, sector H is the first sector encountered in this study that contains any form of elaborate decoration other than the winged bulls which guarded the portals of sector A.

Unlike its predecessors, the boundaries of sector H were not easy to identify. The difficulties lie mainly with the decision to include rooms 131-133 on the sector's south-eastern border. There are a number of reasons why this unit has been placed in sector H, rather than sector A. The two most compelling concern the similarity of its alignment to the monumental entrance, D-D', and the size and placement of door F in the small chamber 132. Door F,

19 Turner, ibid, pp.181-194 pl.38.
20 Botta, Monument de Ninive IV, p.10f. Pls 29-35.
parallel to door D, is a relatively large portal which allows direct passage between rooms 131-133 and court VIII. Place fails to make any comment about this doorway and its accompanying group of rooms, however, on his plan he depicts F as being lined with some type of orthostats. Whether this is an error on his part or not, the size of this doorway does contrast sharply with that of door f', the portal connecting room 131 to court XV. This latter door located in the northern corner of court XV whilst being similar in size to most of the other doorways in court XV, would not only have been partially masked from view by the buttress of portal D', but is also cast into shade by the parallel portal D' with its winged bull jambs, and also if Place is correct, portal F. Thus, of the two doors, F does seem to be the more important. Whilst it is true that access to similar units in the palace, such as rooms 92-95 in the southern corner of court XV, is usually via a door in the long wall of the unit's largest room, it does seem more appropriate to view the main entrance of rooms 131-133 as door F rather than f'. This would thus make 132 a sort of ante-chamber to the large rectangular room 131 as occurs in rooms 103-105 in sector B. Unfortunately, no door sockets were found in any of the doorways, nor was anything found in any of the three rooms to aid in identifying the type of activities that were carried out there. Of the two niches, one in each of the rooms 131 and 133, it is impossible to know if they were for the placement of stone bathing slabs or something else entirely. Thus it is difficult to discover for certain how appropriate is the inclusion of this unit of rooms in sector H. On balance, considering the similarity of 131-133's alignment with 80 and 81 and the size and possible decoration of portal F, the solution of including these three rooms in sector H does seem to be most justifiable.

Like court XV in sector A, the major portion of sector H is made up of a large court, court VIII. Also like XV, this courtyard is paved with baked bricks and may be entered on its southeastern side via a monumental portal. However, unlike court XV,
court VIII probably acted equally as an area where circulation was concentrated, as well as dispersed. The reason for this concerns the main function of this sector, as the principal reception suite of the building. One of the main lines of circulation through the palace would have run via sector A and the portals D' and D into court VIII and thence to the throneroom VII. However, this is not the only means by which access to this sector is permitted. In fact sector H can be also entered directly from the storerooms and stables in the palace's western corner via sectors C and F and also from the maze of rooms and courts situated to the north-west of court XV via sectors K and O. A third way of reaching this sector was from the upper storey that existed over Sector I via the stairway which should be restored in rooms 22 and 23. Passage through sector H is also the only means by which sector G may be reached. What is interesting about the positioning of the doorways leading to these other areas is that all are located in the south-western quarter of the sector. This means that it was possible to cross from the sectors in the south-western region of the palace across court VIII to the sectors located in the south-eastern portion of the palace without passing anywhere near the throneroom. The long rectangular shape of this court, approximately 110m by 61m, aids in this, lengthening the distance between the south-eastern and north-western regions of the court. Of the four doorways in the north-western region of the court that have survived, three lead off the court's south-western wall into the throneroom, and one permits access to the palace terrace via corridor 10. This latter doorway is the only one on the court's north-western side to survive.

The north-western region of court VIII seems largely to be concerned with the throneroom and the ceremonial functioning of the palace, whereas the south-eastern region of the court, containing the majority of the doorways seems more concerned with circulation. The differences in the functioning of these two regions is reflected in their decoration. The walls to the north-west of the doorway into room 35 were all lined with carved orthostats depicting at least three...
review scenes leading to the king\textsuperscript{12}, whilst the walls to the southmost of this doorway, with the exception of those directly related to portal D and possibly also F, were all apparently left plain\textsuperscript{13}. An interesting feature of the decoration of north-western portion of court VIII is that it draws the onlookers attention to two specific regions. The scene on the orthostats on the wall to the north west of door C’ depicts a procession of courtiers carrying furniture, leading from the western corner of the court, to the figure of the king standing near the door C’. A similar scene no doubt balanced this at the other side of door, C’\textsuperscript{12}, thereby drawing the attention of the onlooker to the throneroom entrances. Two other review scenes line the north-western wall of the court. The first proceeding from the court’s western corner shows a scene of men bearing tribute to the king who stands next to one of the winged bulls portal of corridor 10. On the other side of this portal was another figure of the king, this time receiving timber\textsuperscript{13}. Both these scenes draw the eye from each of the corners of the court to the portal of the corridor. Whilst it is difficult to comment on how precise the correlation between the decoration on these reliefs and the functioning of the court was meant to be, it is not unreasonable to suppose that, as regards the tribute scene and the one showing men bearing furniture, they represented the activities that would have normally taken place in this region of the courtyard. Thus it is obvious that court VIII plays an important role in both directing traffic to the principal reception suite as well as keeping unnecessary traffic at bay.

When most people envisage a palace, it is the image of the throneroom that most readily springs to mind. This is the one room in the palace that most effectively illustrates a ruler’s public persona. It is here that the king sits enthroned, conducting his business affairs, be they state concerns or private, and receiving

\textsuperscript{13}Hereafter known as Reade(1980):
\textsuperscript{14}Reade(1980)p.85: Place marked the wall to the south of C” as displaying reliefs although nothing survived to give him a clue as to their precise manner of decoration. Nmne et Assyrie I. p 51.
visitors. In most Neo-Assyrian palaces and residences, this room was usually located in a position that enabled it to be directly accessible from the outer court, thus placing it in a perfect position for restricting access to the central courtyard of the palace and thus protecting the privacy of the residential sector of the building. In Sargon II's palace, the addition of the 'outer forecourt' complicates the picture somewhat, for, whilst it is possible to reach the inner court VI, and thus the residential sector, through a door in its north-western wall, door H, court XV is not directly connected to the throneroom. It is the 'inner forecourt' VIII which holds this latter honour. However, apart from this, the plan of Sargon II's throneroom suite follows the general pattern of principal reception suites both elsewhere at the site and in other Neo-Assyrian palaces. This plan in general, consists of a double range of chambers, the first being the largest room in the palace, the throneroom(VII), which opened off the forecourt. On the north-western end of this room there was access through an ante-room to a stairwell. At the opposite end of the room lay the throne base or dais set in a shallow recess. In the larger palaces and residences of the seventh and eighth centuries a bathroom opened off the throneroom close by the throne dais. Also opening off this same wall was a retiring chamber which connected the throneroom to the inner courtyard(VI). In the other buildings at Khorsabad (except residence Z), this second range of chambers continued along the length of the throneroom and its stairwell. When the Americans re-excavated the throne room they found that whilst Place was on the whole correct, certain emendations have to be made to his plan.

The throneroom follows the pattern of the majority of other rooms in the palace in that it is oriented with its long axis parallel to the side of the court off which it opened. It thus has a north-
westerly alignment, which means that its walls and doors avoid bearing the brunt of the summer sun's heat. Both these factors are also generally found in the reception suites of other palaces. As seems to be the fashion with all important entrances in Sargon's palace, three portals, C, C', C", allow access to the throneroom from court VIII. Each portal is decorated with a pair of winged bulls and the central portal, C set in a recess formed by two projecting buttresses, draws added attention to itself by its decoration - two winged bulls standing back to back in between which stood a figure holding a lion. The decoration of this latter doorway is reminiscent of that on portal M of the palace's entrance façade. However, unlike the lions in portal M which were biting the arms of the men holding them, the lions on door C faced the courtyard menacingly baring their teeth (Pl. 22). This clever touch only serves to further heighten the already imposing presence of this lavishly decorated portal. Place also found fragments of glazed brick in the debris in front of these three portals which suggests the presence of some sort of coloured decoration on the walls above the portals. Whilst the nature and pattern of this decoration has been lost, it no doubt only served to emphasise the magnificence of the throneroom entrances.

After passing through any of its portals, the interior of the throneroom is slightly disappointing. All of its wall slabs except a few small fragments had been removed in antiquity, leaving no clue as to the rooms original decoration. The paving of the room had also disappeared. That such an important room would have had a tamped mud floor seemed incongruous to Loud, especially since investigation of the other buildings of the citadel revealed that any room of importance showed some signs of having been paved. Further investigation revealed a grey layer of clay at the approximate level where a floor was indicated by the throne base and the three stone slabs running in front of it. As this layer was also found to be present in areas in which some of the pavement had

136 Nimmo et L'Assyrie I, p. 69f
137 Khorsabad 3, p. 61f
138 Khorsabad 3, p. 61f.
been removed Loud reasonably decided that Place was correct in his assertion that the floor of the room was once paved with brick paving. However, the amount of burnt wood and painted plaster fallen from the roof in the debris of the room indicated that Place was incorrect in his assignation of this room as a court.

Loud's examination of the throneroom's north-eastern wall revealed that whilst Place was correct in depicting the walls of C" and C' as being recessed, the recess was only slightly wider than that between the bulls, and the doorway of the central portal was not recessed at all. The thresholds of this room were raised, thus the floor level of the throneroom was slightly lower than that of court VIII. The stone throne dais stood in the centre of the rooms south-eastern wall, set into a large monolithic unsculptured niche. Place failed to notice both the presence of this niche and a similar one located on the room's south-western wall directly opposite portal C. The location of this latter niche suggests that on certain occasions, the throne was positioned opposite this portal and in full view of the inner forecourt VIII. However, this occasion cannot have been very often as there is no accompanying throne dais associated with this niche. Interestingly enough, there is a text which, in describing the ritual of the king's meal, specifies that he had to sit opposite the doorway. Set in its huge niche in the centre of the throneroom's south-eastern wall the massive stone throne dais is still "the most impressive feature of the entire room, just as the architect planned it should be while Sargon held court here". Although it has been badly mutilated with its horizontal surface destroyed, this monolith on which the throne would have rested measures approximately 4m in width, projects into the room from the wall surface by 4.60m and when whole would probably have

139 Khorsabad 1, p.61f.
140 Khorsabad 1, p.57; Frankfort, Tell Asmar, p.90.
141 Khorsabad 1, p.65.
142 A similar niche in the throneroom in the Northwest Palace at Nimrud was decorated with carved figures of the king and a genius standing on either side of a sacred tree. Turner (1970) p.185.
143 A similar arrangement is found in room 6 of Zimri-Lim's palace at Mari. Here the dais stood opposite the portal into court 106, on the rooms south-long wall. A.Parrot, Mission archéologique de Mari Vol II. le Palais I, p.106.
144 K.S. Müller, Das assyrische Ritual Teil 1: Texte zum Assyrischen Konigrituel (Leipig, 1937), p.60.
145 Khorsabad 1, p.65.
had its upper surface slightly more than 1m above the level of the
room's floor. Although poorly preserved, it is evident from two
remaining scenes that the dais was carved in relief. Two small
flights of steps at the front corners of the dais were the means by
which the throne could be directly approached.

Running down the centre of the room, beginning to the left of
the central portal and extending to approximately 2m from the throne
dais Loud discovered a series of 3 stone slabs each measuring
approximately 2 x 4 metres placed end to end in a straight line.
These stones were completely plain with no sign of decoration or any
other markings, and were not mentioned at all by Place. Similar
installations have been discovered in room 8 of the Burnt Palace at
Nimrud and rooms XXII and XLV of the palace at Til Barsib.

Also found at the latter palace in rooms XXIV and XLVII were more
of these stone constructions, but this time with a pair of carved
parallel grooves running down the length of their upper surfaces.
Stone installations both with and without similar grooves have been
found in the palaces at Nimrud, Assur, Arslan Tash and Nineveh.

It has been suggested that both the uncarved and carved
emplacements were intended as a reinforced path for a brazier with
wheels that could move up and down the room, providing it with
heating. Such an object may in fact have been discovered in the
palace of Kapara at Tell Halaf. No evidence of such an object was
found in room VII, but the function of these slabs probably fulfilled
a similar function to those in the other palaces.

116 Khorsabad I, p. 65.
117 Khorsabad I, p. 65f. figs. 79-80.
118 Khorsabad I, p. 60f.
120 Thureau-Dangin, Til Barsib, p. 16, 18f. & pl. B.
121 Thureau-Dangin, Til Barsib, p. 18, 21, & pl. B.
123 Turner, 1970b, p. 186. Mallowan has suggested that these stones functioned as the plinth for some heavy
   ceremonial object such as an incense burner which needed to be placed exactly before the king. Mallowan,
124 F. Langenegger, Tell Halaf II, pp. 276-278 & pl. 8. As the floor of this room was completely paved in stone,
   no special installation was necessary here. See R. Naumann, Architektur Khorsabad (Tiibingen, 1955),
Directly opposite the throne dais on the north-west wall of the
throne room a portal lined with winged bulls was located. This
portal opened onto a small ante-chamber, 24, which led through a
doorway in the northern corner of its north-western wall into a
stairwell. Whilst this does not follow the plan depicted by Place,
both Loud and Turner have convincingly argued for the
restoration of a stairwell in rooms 22 and 23 on the basis of
comparison with plans of other reception suites at Khorsabad and
other sites (Pl. 24) and a differing interpretation of Place’s evidence.
In his investigation of rooms 22 and 23, Place not only noted that
room 22 was filled with a large mass of sand but he also depicted a
shallow buttress on the south-western wall of room 23 on his plan.
Both of these constructions probably represent what was left of the
newel. Moreover, in the south-western wall of court VIII in a
position directly opposite chambers 22 and 23, he depicted an
outward jog. A similar alteration in the line of the same walls also
exists in the outer façade of the principle reception suites in
residences K, L, and Z, Sennacherib’s palace at Nineveh, and at the
palace at Arslan Tash, where the presence of stairwells have been
confirmed. An final argument for the existence of a stairwell in
these rooms is the fact that unlike all the other rooms in the
throne room suite Place found no indication that their walls had ever
been decorated with bas reliefs. Rather, the rooms were covered
with the white plaster used in the Dépendances and undecorated
portions of the Serail.

Whilst the thickness of the walls in the throne room suite,
especially in its north-western region, were all thick enough to
readily support an upper floor, there was nothing found in the
debris of this room to suggest that this was the case. The same
may be said for every other Neo-Assyrian principal reception suite,
even those in buildings which do show signs elsewhere of having an

155 Khorsabad I. p. 64
156 Khorsabad II. p. 55
157 Turner 1986b. p. 189
158 Turner 1986b. p. 189
159 Botta also discovered this in his excavation of the region, Botta, Monument de Ninive I. pl. 6, as did the
Cultural Institute Team, Khorsabad I. fig. 22
160 Except Sennacherib’s palace a stairwell has likewise been restored.
161 Ninive et l’Assyrie I. p. 51
upper storey\textsuperscript{162}. In fact high cathedral like ceilings would certainly fit the grandeur of the throneroom suite. Thus, Turner has postulated that the stairwell located to the north-west of the throneroom led up the building's flat roof and not an upper floor\textsuperscript{163}. However, just because the throneroom did not support an upper storey, it does not mean that the other rooms in this suite, 27, V and 21 followed suit. In fact it shall be argued both here and in the discussion of the adjoining sectors I and P that these latter rooms did support an upper storey, a second floor which in all probability contained the residential suite of the king.

An upper floor over rooms 27, V and 21 is implied not only by the stairwell to the north-west of the throneroom, but also by the incredibly thick walls that surrounded rooms 19-21, 27, IV V, and the palace's projecting wing (rooms 1-12), and the fact that despite its size and the number of chambers that existed in the region that Place called the 'Serail'\textsuperscript{(Pl.25)}, there does not seem to really have been enough to house the enormous body of people, servants and family, who must have inhabited the palace. The suggestion that the king's private rooms may have been placed in an upper storey in this region is hinted at not only by the fact that this was in the most secluded area in the main body of the palace and would have faced away from the city revealing fantastic views of the valley and mountains to the north-west, but it would have provided easy, direct access to the throneroom via the stairway (rooms 22-23).

To the south-west of the throne dais, two doorways permit ingress into the long hall 27. Place depicted the first portal, closest to the throne dais, as being lined with winged bulls whilst the second door only contained stone slabs\textsuperscript{164}. After investigating both these portals, Loud found that the positions of the plain and decorated doorways needed to be reversed\textsuperscript{165}, placing the winged bulls in the second portal and the slabs lining the first. Loud also suggested that a wall should be restored between these two doorways.

\textsuperscript{162} Turner(1970b), p 189.
\textsuperscript{163} Turner(1970b), p 189.
\textsuperscript{164} Nimrud and Khorsabad I, p 53.
\textsuperscript{165} Khorsabad I, p 64.
in hallway 27, thus creating two chambers and producing to the
south-east a small room with appropriate dimensions to function as a
bathroom. Whilst Place discovered no installations which would
support such an hypothesis, the unusual length of 27 as well as the
identical location of similar small chambers in the principal reception
suites in palace F and residences L, K, M suggest that such a
restoration is eminently reasonable. The winged bull decorating
the doorway into 27 and the simply lined bathroom portal also seem
to reflect this proposal.

The main function of the long narrow room or hall, 27, was to
act as a vestibule or passageway between the throneroom and the
central courtyard, VI. Movement between this courtyard and the
throneroom is not precisely direct, as the doorway between 27 and
VI is situated much further to the north-west than the door
connecting VII and 27. This further adds to the privacy of this
inner court as it was impossible to catch any sight of it from the
throneroom. A doorway situated in the north-west wall of 27
connected it to two more chambers, V and 21. These three rooms,
27, V and 21 all run in a straight line along the south-western wall
of the throneroom suite. Turner named this sequence of rooms, also
found in palace F, residences L, K, M, and J, 'retiring rooms'.
Since no evidence was found in any of these rooms in both Sargon’s
palace and the others that would shed light on their function, he
hypothesised their possible use for the storage of furniture or other
equipment. He also suggested the possibility that they may have
been used as sleeping quarters, although this does not really seem
likely considering their proximity to the throneroom. Place notes
that all three rooms were decorated with bas reliefs, although he
found their condition to be very degraded.

The reason for Place’s designation of V as a court is not
obvious from his notes. It may have been because he found the
remains of its baked brick paving, which would thus according to his

169. Turner (1970b), p. 188.
definition of rooms and courtyards automatically make it a court. Or he may have been concerned about the method by which room 21 could obtain illumination and so hypothesised the necessity of a court here. Whilst it is impossible to know if either of these suppositions is true, what does seem clear is that, from a comparison with the other buildings at the site with a similar line of room, there is no indication that this chamber was actually a court and in fact it is more appropriate to view it as another room. However, if this chamber was not an open courtyard, the question of how rooms V and 21 were illuminated must be answered. Since at least some these rooms were almost definitely covered by an upper floor, the question of which ones, and how the others were arranged around them must be answered. The thick walls around 21 and V would have easily enabled the construction of roofs of varying heights. Considering the probability that an upper floor was located over both sector's I and at least a portion of P, then the most feasible hypothesis has the small square room 21 being covered by an upper floor, whilst room V had no upper floor. Instead it had a roof raised above that of the stairway to its north-east allowing light to flood in through windows placed just below the roof (Pl. 14c:3), thus illuminating both it and 21 as well as possibly assisting the illumination of 19 and 20. However, 21, located parallel to the open court VI would have received sufficient illumination from windows placed in its south-western wall and thus would have readily supported an upper storey.

COURT VI (Pl. 25)

Court VI functions as the inner court of Sargon's palace. Like court XIX, the role of this centrally positioned court was primarily concerned with the regulation of circulation around the inner regions of the palace. Similar courts also existed in all other Neo-Assyrian palaces whose plans are reasonably complete171. The rooms which opened off this court, in comparison with those in other palaces, have been identified as functioning as "sets of self contained

171 At Khorsabad, 39 in residence J, 30 in residence K, 117 in residence L, 13 in residence Z. At Nimrud, court V in the NW palace. At Nineveh, court VI in the SW palace. Court C in the palace at Tell Bireh.
residential quarters. Whilst the insulation of these units from the more public areas of the palace, around courts VIII and XV, seem to make this hypothesis the most likely, there was nothing found in any of these rooms in Sargon II’s palace which give any definite proof as to their function. Both Botta and Place excavated court VI. Botta uncovered its north-western and north and south-eastern walls. He found them to be so poorly preserved that he was unable to trace the court’s south-western wall at all and this combined with the fact that he did not believe the walls in this area ever originally contained reliefs, discouraged him from excavating there further although he did manage to recover the plans of three doorways decorated with winged bulls (Pl.26). In his re-excavation of court VI, Place not only recovered the line of the court’s south-western wall, but he discovered enough fragments of sculptured slabs both in the debris and against the lower portion of the walls to indicate, contrary to Botta, that the both the court and the immediately surrounding rooms were in fact originally covered with bas reliefs.

As has already been emphasised, court VI plays a pivotal role in the organisation of the circulation around the western portion of the palace. Each of its four walls had a centrally placed portal through which it was possible to pass into four different sectors. Each of these portals had its jambs formed by a pair of winged bulls all facing into the court. The north-western portal, E, led into sector I, through which access was permitted out to the palace terrace via three portals in room IV. Passage through the portal in its south-eastern wall, E’, led into sector K and thus into all the rooms and courts lying between court VI and XV. The doorways in these three areas, sector I, K and court VI were all depicted on Place’s plan as forming a straight line between esplanade I and the portal in the north-western wall of chamber 46 in sector N. Whilst caution must be used in examining Place’s plan, especially with regards his tendency to depict regularly shaped right angled

173 Botta, Monument de Ninive V, p 33-43.
174 Botta, Monument de Ninive V, p 42.
175 Ninie et l’Assyrie I, p 58.
176 See the discussion of sector I for the designation of Place’s court IV as a room.
177 Ninie et l’Assyrie I, p 55.
rooms\textsuperscript{18}, the suggestion that the pathway formed by these eight doorways was a commonly used one is not unreasonable. It also provided direct and easy access from the innermost rooms of the palace out onto the north-western portion of the palace terrace.

Little can be said in any detail regarding the precise functioning of the rooms around court VI, especially those located to its south-east. The majority of these latter rooms and courts (sectors L, M, N, and O) displayed no form of decoration, and had their walls, like the rooms in Place’s Dépendances, simply covered in a white paint. They formed an interconnecting maze of rooms courts and passageways between the palace’s outer entrance courtyard XV and its inner one.

**Sector I** (Pl.28a & b)

This sector was basically made up of three interconnecting parallel rooms, 19, 20, and Place’s court IV, which formed a passageway between the inner court VI and the outer palace terrace. Room 20, which opened off court VI and was thus the first room of this sector to be entered when approaching from the interior of the palace, had four doorways in three of its walls. Two connected it to court VI, and according to Place’s plan (pl.4), both of these were in direct alignment with the two portals in the opposite wall of court VI leading into room 33. This created a straight line of passage between sectors I and K. One door in room 20’s short north-eastern wall led into room V of sector H, thereby forming an alternative pathway between these two units that avoided any passage through court VI. A single centrally placed door in its north-western wall was all that connected rooms 20 and 19. This latter room was of similar orientation and length to room 20, although on his plan, Place had it appearing with a slightly narrower width. A centrally placed portal in its north-western wall led into Place’s court IV through which the outer terrace could be reached via one of three doors.

\textsuperscript{18}See Loud’s excavation of the western corner of court VIII and rooms 12 and 11. Whilst Place’s plan is generally correct, the angles of both court and room are not as regular as he indicates. *Khorsabad*. Fig 22.
The most noticeable feature of sector G is its exceptionally thick walls which range rather incredibly from between 5m on its north-eastern side to approximately 8m in the wall separating rooms 19 and 20 from chambers 17 and 18. That this sector formed an important passageway connecting court VI, and thus the occupants of the throneroom suite, to esplanade I on the outer terrace is certain. However, this does not seem reason enough for the normal tendency in the palace of constructing 2-3m thick walls to have been abandoned here. The proximity of sector G to the throneroom suite, and thus its staircase, combined with the sector's strong supporting walls and its location on the outer extremity of the north-western palace body points overwhelmingly to the conclusion that this sector was constructed with such thick walls because it had to support a large upper floor. One method of gaining access to this upper level of rooms was of course via the staircase in the throne room suite, but this can hardly be considered to have been a main thoroughfare up to these rooms. Thus the probable position of another stairway which would have led up to these rooms must be postulated. Two rooms readily suggest themselves for this role. The first, whilst not properly located in this sector is the small square room, 21, located in the heart of the thick walls joining sectors I, H and P. Its central location makes it ideally placed to have housed a small stairwell which would have also allowed an alternative route to and from the throneroom by the occupants of the upper storey (to have been organised via room V and room 27). Unfortunately two factors combine to suggest the location of the stairway elsewhere. The first is 21's proximity to the throneroom stairs. Whilst it is not impossible that two stairways were located so close together, it is certain that the path from the stairs existing in Place's rooms 22 and 23 was already being blocked from the upper level of rooms by the upper portion of room V whose thick walls probably supported a high clerestory ceiling and not an upper floor (Pl.14c:3). Thus the arrangement of a second stairwell in a place which would have been a major pathway between these regions seems a very poor use of space. When this is combined with the fact that Place recorded finding the walls of room 21 had originally been covered with
sculptured bas-reliefs\textsuperscript{179}, then it seem we must look elsewhere for the staircase.

The other location in this sector which can be considered to have been ideally situated to provide an alternative means of reaching the sector's upper storey is in Place's court IV. Place was mistaken in his designation of this area as a court. Although IV was slightly wider than its neighbouring rooms 19 and 20, it was certainly not too wide to be roofed. Both its position relative to esplanade I, and the fact that only one room was directly connected to it, room 19, points to its roofed state. Moreover, room IV differs from 19 and 20 in one important respect. Whilst the north-eastern walls of all three rooms were in direct alignment, the south-western wall of IV had an approximate 3m difference in its location to those of rooms 19 and 20. Three explanations for this plan exist. The first concerns the results of Place's investigation of the thick wall to the west of rooms 19 and 20. Puzzled by the thickness of this wall, Place opened a trench in between rooms 19 and 20 and the rooms to their south-west, rooms 16, 17, and 18\textsuperscript{180}. Whilst he did not find any evidence of a small room or ante-chamber in this space, he did discover a number of interesting objects. Inside the walls between rooms 20 and 18 he discovered two inscribed baked clay barrels\textsuperscript{181} and in the region between rooms 17 and 19 he discovered an inscribed stone coffer in which a number of inscribed tablets made of different metals had been placed\textsuperscript{182}. These can almost certainly be reconciled with the mention of foundation deposits in the texts in which Sargon stated that "upon dedicatory tablets of gold, silver, lapis lazuli, jasper, alabaster, bronze, lead, iron"\textsuperscript{183} he laid his palaces foundations. Whilst these tablets had been placed in the walls slightly above the floor levels of rooms 19 and 20\textsuperscript{184}, their position nevertheless suggests that it was to deposits such as this that Sargon referred. This implies that the extra thickness of this

\textsuperscript{179}Ninive et l'Assyrie I, p.57.
\textsuperscript{180}Ninive et l'Assyrie I, p.61.
\textsuperscript{181}Ninive et l'Assyrie I, p.62, & Ninive et l'Assyrie III, pl.78:1.2.
\textsuperscript{182}Ninive et l'Assyrie I, p.62, & Ninive et l'Assyrie III, pl.77. For a discussion of these objects see R. Ellis, Foundation Deposits in Ancient Mesopotamia, (London, 1968), pp.101-103.
\textsuperscript{183}Luckenbill, Ancient Records, p.37.
\textsuperscript{184}Ninive et l'Assyrie I, p.64.
wall was due to their function as the repository for these tablets. However, whilst this is true the evidence may not be quite so clear cut.

Firstly, Turner has taken issue with Place's representation of the number and placement of the doors on room IV's outer façade, and has suggested that the doorway located near the western corner of its north-western wall (Pl.27, door b) is better understood to be the entrance way of a passage which connected courts VI and I. He cites the placement of such a corridor in a similarly planned group of rooms in Sennacherib's palace at Nineveh and the probable existence of one in the North-west palace at Nimrud (Pl.33d,f) as well as the fact that a corridor here would resemble corridor 10 on the opposite side of the building as evidence for his alteration of Place's plans. Whilst he is quite correct that there are such substantial differences in the measurements of Botta and Place, depictions of this façade (Pl.27, 33e) that it is hard to reconcile them without added excavation in the region, a number of things do seem certain. Firstly, the portal both Botta and Place located directly to the west of the room's central one can almost certainly be considered incorrect, as it probably was just an indentation positioned in the wall to make portal 'b' to appear slightly projected. Secondly, Turner's explanation of a corridor in this region would not only necessitate the complete alteration of the plans of the western portion of rooms IV, 19 and 20, but it would also eliminate the thick wall containing the foundation tablets. This whole theory involves too many hypothetical changes to Place's plan of the region. However, another explanation of the plan of this region exists which can explain its thick wall, room IV's extra length and the portal placed near room IV's western corner, with only one small addition to Place's plan - the addition of a staircase.

The extra length of IV's south-western wall provides a space whose size and placement would be excellently suited to contain the
stairway to the upper level of sector I that we have been searching for. A stairway placed here would have allowed easy access between the outer palace courts and the palace's upper floor. Its location at the back corner of the building would also ensure that only the people permitted in this region of the palace could easily gain direct access to this floor. As this stairway would have been the main means of reaching the upper level both over this sector and also over sector P, the decoration of the portal, which no doubt led straight up the stairs, with small colossi as depicted by Botta is not unexpected. The upper storey in this region no doubt followed the plan depicted in plate 14c:2, as the rooms of the ground floor could be lit from either court I or VI. Room 19, besides receiving illumination from its portals connecting it to rooms 20 and IV, would also have been lit by a window placed just below the roof of the upper floor in its north-eastern wall. This would have allowed light to pass into room 19 from rooms V, 20 and IV thus providing the room with a form of cross lighting.

Throughout the discussion of this sector, the close relationship between its rooms and room V and 21 has been revealed. In fact, it is probably correct to suggest that these rooms can be considered to have belonged to both sectors H and I. Whilst the location of these rooms places them squarely in the group of rooms traditionally associated with the throneroom suite, their organisation with respect to their surrounding rooms, specifically those of sector I, associates them equally strongly with this sector. In fact a glance at plate 33e shows how the architects of Dur-Sharrukin modified and internalised the plan of the projecting wing of rooms (sector P) in order to form the plan of sector I. On the basis of this comparison it is then extremely tempting to identify room 21 as a bathchamber like its corresponding rooms 9 and 12, even though no similar installation were found there.

**Sector J (Pl.28c)**

Located off the south-western wall of court VI, with its boundaries formed by this court and the thick buttressed outer
palace wall is the small sector J. This sector consists of the basic plan of two parallel connecting rectangular rooms situated off one wall of an open court, VI. Place was responsible for the excavation of this sector and his excavations confirmed that both these chambers contained sculptured orthostats on its walls, although like the rest of the rooms in this portion of the palace, they were too badly damaged to reveal what they depicted, but the thresholds were apparently preserved. Room 26 had three portals permitting passage between this room and court IV, although only the central portal was lined with winged bulls. The jambs of the other two were apparently once lined with orthostats which had been removed. A single portal placed in the centre of room 26’s south-western wall led into the identical chamber 25. Turner has made a small restoration to this latter chamber. In order to make it conform to the plan of his reception suite type A, he placed a small wall between the room’s portal into 26 and the room’s south-eastern wall. Unfortunately, Place found nothing anywhere in this chamber to suggest the presence of a drain. However, it is nevertheless probable that Turner’s restoration of the plan here is correct, as it is in the appropriate position in the palace where such reception suites could be expected. Place himself made a suggestion about how room 25 was lit by postulating that windows may have been positioned very high up on its walls.

The thick walls in this sector and the proximity of the upper level of rooms above sector I both suggest that sector J was likewise covered with an upper storey which was accessible from the stairway in sector I.

Sector K (Pl. 29a)

Like sector J, this sector, located to the south-east of court VI also falls partially into the plan of Turner’s reception suite type A. This sector consisting of rooms 33-37, 45, 60, 72 and 74 as

189 Nimrie et al., Assur I, p. 59.
190 Nimrie et al., Assur I, p. 59.
191 Turner (1970b), p. 196, pl. XXIX. For discussion on reception suite type A consisting of permutations of reception room, retiring room and bathroom see Turner (1970b), pp. 194ff
well as Place's courts XII an X was excavated by Place and partially by Botta\textsuperscript{193}, who discovered the central portal connecting 33 and VI, and also the second doorway located near room 33's western corner. Place believed that there were enough fragmentary remains of orthostats in the debris, as well as the unpainted lower portion of the walls, to suggest that at least rooms 33 and 37 contained bas-reliefs. He also points out that the close connection of these rooms with court VI also makes their original decoration more likely. Why he failed to find this decoration carried through into room 34 is unknown, however, considering this rooms connection to room 37, it was probably also once decorated with orthostats but they were too fragmentary for Place to detect. Turner also restored a wall in this room creating two small chambers. However, once again, there is no concrete evidence to support such a restoration\textsuperscript{194}. Two doorways were also found in both north-western and south-western walls of room 37 in identical positions to those in 33's north-western wall. The central portal of the south-western wall of 37 leads into Place's court X, which is the first in a line of three chambers whose portals were placed so that access to court VIII just below portal C" could be reached in a straight line. The portal located near room 37's southern corner leads into the corner room of the bent axis corridor that forms the lower portion of this sector. Two small portals in both the south-western walls of rooms 33 and 37 lead into sector L.

The second portion of this sector was formed by a series of rooms, 74, 72, XII, 60, 45, X, 36 and 35 that joined up to form a bent axis passageway connecting courts XV and VIII. This passageway separated the western and eastern group of rooms located to the south of court VI. Place discovered the jambs of X's north-eastern portal were lined with plain orthostats (Pl.4). This is an interesting fact which may suggest that the decoration of rooms 33 and 37 were once carried down into these south-eastern rooms, or at least some of their portals. Place's designation of XII and X as courts is probably incorrect. However, in order for this series of centrally placed rooms to be illuminated, it is eminently possible that the roof of certain of the rooms in this passageway, such as XII and X were raised above those of the surrounding rooms in order to

\textsuperscript{193}Nimrud et l'Asyurie I, p.66f. Botta, Monument de Nimrud I, p.126.
\textsuperscript{194}Turner (1906), p. XI.16.
allow the flow of natural light (Pl.14c:1). The noticeably thick wall that forms the south-eastern wall of rooms X, 36 and 35 suggests the possibility that the walls of this sector may have supported an upper storey in this region. This first floor probably ran over both rooms 33, and 37 as well as 34, 36 and 35. A location for the staircase which must have led up to this level may have been located on the north-west wall of room 35. This room, whose function by its position is suggestive of an ante-chamber, is rather large and contains an unusual feature. Although he makes no mention of it in his report, Place has depicted an unusual feature projecting out from the western corner of the room. It is extremely tempting to locate a staircase in this place.

Another possible location for a stairway in this sector lies in its most south-eastern rooms. Placed to the west of ante-chamber 74 which guarded the only portal connecting court XV with court VI, was a tiny niche 72. This niche could have been used for minor storage purposes, perhaps containing the personal effects of the sentries who must have guarded this sector. However, another function for this niche may be postulated. The orientation of 72 is virtually identical to that of the tiny room 71 which opens off room 73 in sector A. What Place saw here as a niche and a room, may originally have formed the path of a small staircase which ran parallel to the north-western wall of 71 and finished near the north-eastern wall of 70. That an upper storey probably existed in this region has already been suggested in the discussion of sector A. If a stairway was once located here then it would have enabled people on the upper floor of sector A to enter sector K without passing through court XV.

**Sector L** (Pl.29b).

This small sector tucked into the corner formed by the two decorated reception suites J and K and the outer palace façade, could only be entered via either of the two long rooms in sector L. It consisted of the open court IX and its surrounding rooms and was
entirely excavated by Place, who says virtually nothing about it\textsuperscript{195}. The rooms opening off court IX's north-western and south-eastern walls have the typical plan of a long room with its accompanying smaller room. In all probability these units represented different residences opening off the court although nothing was found there that could verify this supposition. A single rectangular room with a central portal lined the court's south-western wall, whilst the entrance into sector L was formed variously by a strange doorway into room 33 and by the portal into 37. A niche was positioned near this portal which may once have contained some sort of bathing slab\textsuperscript{196}.

**Sector M (Pl. 29c)**

Sector M is a similar but slightly larger unit which is located directly to the south of sector L. As with the previous sector, Place excavated it but says nothing of value about it. However, unlike the previous sector, sector M was only accessible via one portal. This portal was guarded by an ante-chamber, 68, which permitted ingress between this sector and sector L. Perhaps this sector's proximity to the public court XV was the reason for the ante-chamber. The plan of the rooms surrounding the central court of this sector, XI, were positioned in a similar fashion to those around court IX, except for those located on the court's north-western wall. Instead of a single row of chambers, a double row was situated here. The large rectangular room 62 opened directly on to the court through two door, one of which appears on the plans to be recessed. The positioning of a recessed portal here is highly unusual as in the rooms of the palace it is only located on the side doors of major entrances, and whilst the second non-recessed portal into room 62 may have been the room's main one, it hardly holds the same status as the doors in other rooms that contain a recessed portal. A niche was also positioned on the same wall. Three portals on 62's north-western wall led into 4 chambers. Some sort of clerestory fenestration may have been used to light these rooms, although if they functioned as small storerooms a great deal of light

\textsuperscript{195} Nimmo et al., *Assyria I*, p. 72.
would not have been necessary. Like sector L there was nothing concrete found in any of these chambers to give clues as to their function. However, its position in the rooms to the south-west of court VI suggest the possibility that either it or sector L must have functioned as kitchens. Nowhere in the palace did Place discover any rooms or courts containing anything, such as ovens, which could suggest their functioning as a kitchen region. Such a region must have existed somewhere, and was probably located in this region of the palace rather than in sectors B-F because its closer proximity to the residential regions of the palace. However whether it can be definitely assigned to this region cannot be stated with any certainty on the basis of the plan alone.

**Sectors N & O (Pl. 30a)**

These two sectors were located in the square formed by sector K and the walls of court XV and sector H. Place located two courtyards XIV and XIII in the heart of each sector. However, the pivotal role and square shape of room 46 suggests that it rather than XIII may have been the court. In fact it is doubtful whether either room 46 or XIII were open courts. What is much more probable is that XIV was the only open court in this region of rooms. Room 48 is the only room in this whole region which was found to contain some sort of an installation - it had a small drain slab located in its northern corner. In fact sector N seems to consist of a series of these retiring room, bathroom sequences, i.e., rooms 47 and 48, 58 and 59, XII and 57 and 55 and 56. A single portal connects sectors N and O. If this was closed, then they only means of entering sector O was via ante-chamber 53 which connected this sector to sector H. The rooms that surrounded court XIV were atypical in that they were either single rectangular chambers, 49 and 54 or very long thin rectangular rooms, 50, 78, and 79. As such long chambers were ideally planned to contain a staircase, it is not unreasonable to suggest that one of these rooms, probably 79, contained a staircase leading up to the upper storey that has already been mentioned in connection to sector C.
The method by which the various rooms in these two sectors were lit is not perfectly clear, as there could have been endless permutations as to which roofs were higher than the others. What is certain is that the roofing in this sector must have been very uneven!

Sector P (Pl. 30-37)

Sector P is the final sector in the palace. It consists of a rather unusual suite of 11 rooms and an accompanying corridor that project out from the main body of the palace onto the north-west terrace platform. Only the south-eastern boundary of this sector, made up of rooms 6, 9, 11, 12 and corridor 10, is actually enclosed in the main palace structure - the south-eastern walls of rooms 11, 12 and corridor 10, form part of the north-western wall of court VIII. The remaining rooms, 1-5, 7 and 8, extend out onto the north-western palace terrace and are surrounded to the south-west and north-east by the two 'outer' courts that Place termed esplanades I and II. The north-western boundary of the sector is formed by the outer walls of rooms 1, 3 and 4. Unfortunately, the severe degradation of the mound in that region has caused most of the north-western area of these rooms to disappear. Nevertheless, this was the easiest unit in the palace to identify as it stands architecturally distinct, none of its doorways connecting it directly to any other room or court in the main palace body. By virtue of its unusual plan and the complete decoration of its every room with three metre high orthostats, sector P, more than any other sector in the building, has drawn the attention of scholars.\(^{197}\) It was originally excavated by Botta, and most of the five volumes recording his excavation at the site are dedicated to the description of this sector and the depiction of its decoration. Place does not seem to have re-excavated the region when he returned to the site seven years later, but when the Oriental Institute of Chicago re-opened the site in 1929 they re-examined what remained of rooms 7

and 12 and most of corridor 10. Their discovery of a stone paved floor in room 12\(^{198}\) and a large charred beam and matting from the roof in the centre of room 7\(^{199}\) confirms what Botta's plans\(^{200}\) themselves suggest, that is, he only traced the walls of the rooms he discovered and did not completely excavate their interiors. Thus the meagre finds from this sector could also be as much due to its insufficient excavation as to their actual absence. Whilst the American's found Botta's plan to be generally correct, their excavations revealed that certain emendations have to be made to his plans\(^{201}\).

The most distinctive feature of this wing is the three parallel communicating chambers that projected out from the palace's main body, rooms 2, 5, and 8. The two doorways which connected these three rectangular rooms, portals E and U\(^{202}\), were placed on the same axis as the principle entrances to the suite, F and M, thereby creating a straight line of passage between esplanades I and III. The outer façades of both chambers 2 and 8 also had two smaller recessed doorways placed either side of their central entrances. This created two triple portals which acted as the main entrances into both sides of the unit in the style of that existing in the throne room. Lying obliquely to the north-west of these three rooms was room 4, another large rectangular chamber. It could be entered either directly from room 8, or via an ante-chamber from room 2 and probably also directly from the terrace itself via a doorway in its north-western wall, although the existence of this latter doorway is only fragmentary. Directly opposite what remains of this last portal on room 4's south-western wall was a small square chamber, room 7 that was only accessible from this room\(^{203}\). To the south-west of rooms 3 and 4 and in alignment with them is room 1. This room could be entered via a recessed portal off esplanade I and like rooms 3 and 4 is only partially preserved. It is unknown whether another

198 Khorsabad I. p.23.
199 Khorsabad I. p.78.
200 Botta, Monument de Ninive I, pl.4.
201 Khorsabad I. p.20.
202 Using Botta's figures to designate these doors.
203 During the secondary occupation of the building the main door into this room was apparently blocked and another roughly positioned near the south corner of the room. Khorsabad I. p.78(fig.84).
door once existed in its northern corner linking it directly to room 3, and thus directly to rooms 2 and 4 as Reade has suggested204, or if it was only accessible from esplanade I via the portal in its south­eastern wall. Further chambers also existed in this sector, opening off the south-eastern side of rooms 2, 5, and 8. These rooms were positioned with their long axis at right angles to the three projecting halls and also separated them from the main body of the terrace. They consisted of another long chamber, 6, which could be entered from either room 2 or 5. It could also be entered directly from esplanade III via room 9. An entrance in the south-eastern wall of 6 led into the final two rooms of the sector rooms 11 and 12. Whilst similar units have been discovered both at the same site, Palace F, and also in Fort Shalmeneser at Nimrud205(Pl.33) the projecting suite in Sargon II's palace stands out from the other two both in the organisation of its plan, its size and its decoration206.

Sector P may be approached from both the public and private regions of the palace. Portals in the north-western wall of room IV connected the rooms around the private court VI to esplanade I and thus the south-western rooms of sector P via room 2. On the opposite side of the wing, corridor 10 located in the north-western wall of court VIII allowed direct access from this court, and thus the principal public area of the palace, out to esplanade III where 3 doorways in room 8 also allow ingress into sector P. Unlike passageway 150 in sector F, the two entrances of corridor 10 were not supplemented by any ante-chambers. Instead, it opened directly onto both courtyards207, its portals protected by a pair of winged bulls that faced outwards at both entrances. This corridor had a width of 3 meters, a length of 24 meters208 and aside from the colossal lining both entrances, was also decorated with three meter high orthostats carved in two registers separated by a band of

205. Turner named these three units 'reception suite type F'. Turner (1970b), p.204f, pl.XCIX.
206. The wing at Fort Shalmeneser has only been partially excavated, i.e. in most of the wing only the upper portion of the walls have been traced. Whilst the plan of the wing in Palace F is complete, it contains neither the decoration nor installations of that in sector P.
207. A similar corridor connected courts B and C at 'Tell Barsib', see Thureau-Dangin, 'Tell Barsib', pl.B.
208. Botta, Monument de Ninive F', p.47.
script\textsuperscript{209}(Pl. 31). Unlike the floors of both the courts that it opened into, corridor 10 was paved with large rectangular stone slabs\textsuperscript{210}.

The scenes on both registers of the two sides of the corridor depicted processions of tributaries, easterners in the lower register and westerners in the upper\textsuperscript{211}, moving towards esplanade III, and thus sector P. Interestingly, the figure of the king was absent from both scenes, instead, the figure of a courtier stood at the end of each register with his arm raised as if beckoning the tributaries forward into the presence of the king. Since another monumentally decorated reception room, room 8, was located in the direction that the line of figures were heading, it seems the decoration of this corridor was carefully designed to reflect the flow of people through it. The monumental decoration of the north-western portion of court VIII was thereby carried through corridor 10 out into the palace's north-western wing. All these features indicate that this passage was intended to be a primary connection between the two regions of the building. Whilst the northern portion of court VIII's wall has disappeared, it is not improbable to hypothesise that corridor 10 was perhaps the only direct link to the terrace located on this wall. A doorsocket placed behind the winged bull which faces into court VIII on the north-eastern wall of corridor 10, as well as holes for the door's locking mechanism located on the corridor's opposite wall and first paving slab\textsuperscript{211}, demonstrate that it was from the inside of the corridor, and therefore the occupants of the north-western wing, that control of this doorway belonged - this confirms the corridor's association with sector P and not sector H. Considering its size, position relative to the principal reception suite, and its decoration, this corridor was probably the main public approach to the terrace.

On entering esplanade III through corridor 10, ingress to sector P was possible via two different rooms. The first was through any of the three portals in room 8 and the second through the portal

\textsuperscript{209} For a translation of the "Display Inscription" in this room see Luckenbill, \textit{Ancient Records}, §§52-75.

\textsuperscript{210} Loud's excavation of a portion of this corridor show that the shape of the stone paving was not as regularly shaped as Botta indicated. \textit{Khorsabad I}, p. 41, fig. 38. Botta, \textit{Monument de Ninive II}, pl. 122.

\textsuperscript{211} Botta (1974b), p. 83.

\textsuperscript{212} Loud, \textit{Monument de Ninive IV}, p. 38. Strangely, Loud does not note the presence of this doorsocket on his plan of corridor 10.
linking room 9 to the terrace. The decoration of room 8's outer façade dominates what remains of esplanade III and resembles that of the throneroom albeit in a slightly simpler form. As on the outer walls of room VII, two colossi formed the jambs of the central portal, M, and two more, standing back to back, lined each of the entrance's projecting buttresses, although in room 8 these latter colossi lacked any intervening figures. The two smaller portals, whilst also possessing a recessed inner face, were simply lined with orthostats depicting a two-winged genie carrying a cone and bucket and their attendant figures, instead of the colossi present in doors C' and C". Similar winged genies, either with a human or bird head also decorated other portals of the unit, however only two other portals in the sector, the central portal, F of room 2 and on the NW wall of room 4, were also definitely lined with a pair of colossi. Recessed portals were also frequently utilised in the sector, most often in the doorways of its bathrooms, but also, as occurs in room 8, in the secondary portals on walls with more than one doorway.

Set in the pavement in front and to either side of each of room 8's three portals, Botta discovered that deposit boxes had been positioned as an added measure of protection for their entrances. Thus the monumental decoration of court VIII and corridor 10 was continued into esplanade III along this wall and was no doubt the major focus of attention for those approaching esplanade III from court VIII.

The reason for such decoration becomes clear on entering room 8 which, in many ways represents a smaller version of the throneroom, room VII, whose alignment it duplicated. Like room VII, room 8 has three portals on its north-eastern wall connecting it to an open court. It also has two portals on its south-western wall leading into an adjoining ante-chamber, and a single portal in its north-western wall. Even more pertinent is the similar positioning of a throne dais against its south-eastern wall. Room 8 was also the

214.See portal X between rooms 6 and 11, door S between rooms 5 and 8, and doors B and G into room 2.
216.Roms 2, 5, 8, and room 3 the small ante-chamber between 2 and 4.
largest of the three halls which projected out onto the terrace, being approximately 1m wider than room 2218. Fortunately, unlike the throneroom, its decoration was reasonably well preserved and revealed depictions of the king punishing rebels, probably captured in 720 and 716, in single register review scenes covering its walls219. The compositions were probably both intended to intimidate and remind visitors the consequences of disloyalty to the monarch, as well as directing the eye to the south-eastern end of the room where above the square stone throne dais stood a picture of the king himself220. Unlike the throne base in room VIII, the dais in room 8 does not appear to have been decorated221, fitting in with the more modest dimensions of the room. To the right of this dais, on the wall between doors M and Q a rectangular stone slab cut with a central circular hole was set into the floor. Much discussion has arisen over the functioning of such slabs, and although the central hole does not pierce the slab completely and therefore cannot be connected to a drain, the general assumption is that it functioned as a type of ablution slab which involved the use of only small amounts of liquid222.

On the opposite wall to this slab near the throne base, a small recessed door, S, led into the central hall room 5 in a position reminiscent of a similarly placed doorway in the throneroom. This smaller entrance was clearly less important than the larger one to its north-west and was possibly built to provide easy access for the king to the throne dais from the less public areas of the sector which were connected to room 5 via portals in its south-eastern and south-western walls. However, it is interesting to note that as both the recess of the portal S and its locking mechanism was located in room 5, control over the circulation through this entrance lay in room 5 rather than room 8. The jambs of this portal were lined with orthostats depicting two genies223. These figures faced room 8, a

218 Botta, Monument de Ninive V, p. 50.
220 At least two other depictions of the king occurred in the room, one to the north of the central portal U, and the second on the wall between doors Q and M. Albenda, Palace of Sargon, p. 74f.
221 Botta, Monument de Ninive V, p. 56.
223 Albenda, Palace of Sargon, p. 54.
fact which tentatively reinforces the previously expressed view of the direction of circulation through this portal. Interestingly, no door sockets were noted on either side of the central portal connecting rooms 5 and 8, door U. This portal was also unusual in that its jambs were formed by orthostats depicting, not genies, but the king and two officials whose profiles faced towards room 5. It is surely not too unreasonable to suggest that the direction that these figures faced, that is towards room 5, reflected the most common direction in which the circulation between these two chambers flowed, or at least the direction of passage of the room's most important occupants. This suggestion is strengthened by the fact that similar figures facing the same direction also line door E connecting rooms 5 and 2. Since Botta was scrupulous in noting the positions of door sockets where he found them, their absence on either side of door U may in fact indicate that this entrance existed as an open portal. The discovery of door sockets in front of portal E in room 5 further suggests this as the easy access between rooms 8 and 5 could be easily controlled from this latter door. Unlike room 8, the walls of room 5 were decorated with two-register scenes separated by a band of inscription. The subject of these scenes was a military narrative depicting sieges that apparently occurred during Sargon's 720BC western campaigns. These scenes also lined the final doorway in room 5 which led into the sector's south-eastern suite of rooms. Interestingly, on the south-western door jamb, the king is shown receiving captives. Aptly, the direction of the narrative in the two registers moved in opposite directions, pictorially emphasising this chamber's pivotal role in the circulation between the two esplanades and the sectors south-western group of chambers.

The final doorway in room 8, portal T, is located in the centre of its north-western wall. This wide entrance whose jambs are decorated with the figure of the king and two officials, leads into another slightly less readily accessible reception hall, room 4. As

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224. Albenda, Palace of Sargon, p. 58f.
225. The inscription is an annalistic account of the king's reign, including his building account and is also found in rooms 2, 13 and 14. Luckenbill, Ancient Records, §§4-51.
227. Read, 1979b, p.82.
this latter chamber is only slightly smaller than room 8\textsuperscript{228}, it is a
pity that the north-eastern and most of the north-western wall of
this room has disappeared, especially since the walls that did still
remain were also found decorated with scenes similar to those in room
8\textsuperscript{229}. The king was depicted on the centre of room 4's short south­
western wall beside portal D, a small recessed doorway connecting
room 4 to the small ante-chamber 3, as well as either side of portal
T. Passage through room 4 provided the only means of gaining
access into room 7. The entrance to this rather enigmatic almost
square chamber\textsuperscript{230} was situated directly opposite what remained of the
ruined portal that connected room 4 directly to the palace terrace.
Like the rest of the sector, its walls were found to have been
decorated, this time with orthostats carved in two registers.
However, it had also been badly damaged by a fire in antiquity
which had also effected many of the other rooms in the sector\textsuperscript{231}, and
when Botta excavated it only a small portion of the decoration's
upper register still survived\textsuperscript{232}. The lateral walls of the doorway
had been destroyed, as had portions of the slabs forming the door
jams\textsuperscript{233}. Unusually, the upper and lower friezes seemed to depict
two different types of activities. The few slabs that did remain of
the upper register seemed to display banqueting scenes, whereas
those in lower register, which by the time Loud excavated the palace
was also very poorly preserved\textsuperscript{234}, showed scenes were of hunting in
the royal park and the procession of the king's elite military
troops\textsuperscript{235}. This picture of the king in the lower register was
situated opposite the doorway.\textsuperscript{236} Nothing was discovered in this
room to hint as to its original function. Loud and others\textsuperscript{237} have
suggested that it acted as a private entertaining chamber for
favoured guests, based on the scenes portrayed on its walls, which
contrast markedly with the review and military scenes which dominate

\textsuperscript{228}Botta, \textit{Monument de Ninive V.}, p. 50.
\textsuperscript{229}Reade (1990b), p. 81.
\textsuperscript{230}Approximately 7m square. \textit{Khorsabad I.}, p. 71.
\textsuperscript{231}Botta, \textit{Monument de Ninive V.}, p. 51f; \textit{Khorsabad I.}, p. 78.
\textsuperscript{232}Alabanda, \textit{Palace of Sargon}, p. 78, 80f.
\textsuperscript{233}Botta, \textit{Monument de Ninive II.}, pl. 107.
\textsuperscript{234}\textit{Khorsabad I.}, p. 72.
\textsuperscript{235}Botta, \textit{Monument de Ninive II.}, pl. 107-14.
\textsuperscript{236}Reade (1990b), p. 83.
\textsuperscript{237}\textit{Khorsabad I.}, p. 73f; \textit{Reade (1990b)}, p. 80.
the majority of the sector's other walls, and also the room's relatively private locale.

Very little actually remains of the narrow ante-chamber 3 which connects rooms 2 and 4\textsuperscript{238}. From the portions of the few slabs that do remain, it is evident that the sculptures in the room were decorated in a two-register format and possibly showed more scenes of warfare\textsuperscript{239}. The possibility that there may have been a third portal located in the western corner of this room linking it directly to room 1 is an intriguing one\textsuperscript{240}. If it existed it would have provided both reception rooms 4 and 2 with direct access to what was probably a bathroom, room 1. The closing mechanisms in both of room 3's existing recessed doorways were located in the interior of the small chamber, thus either room 2 or 4 could shut and lock the door into the other room and prevent ingress from that chamber. Like room 3, room 1 was only partially preserved and most of its sculptures were destroyed, but enough was preserved to reveal that like room 3, this room was decorated with two-register war scenes\textsuperscript{241}. Botta also discovered a pair 'bath slabs' that were set either side of the room's doorway\textsuperscript{242}. These stone slabs were cut with a rectangular depression rounded at the end facing the doorway. They have been variously identified as being for the emplacement of a metal bathtub\textsuperscript{243} or as a base for the bather to stand upon whilst having some liquid, oil or water poured over him\textsuperscript{244}. Similar slabs have also been found in room 9 and 12\textsuperscript{245}. However, the position of these slabs in room 1 differs in comparison to those in found in other Neo-Assyrian palaces and those located elsewhere in the sector in that the latter were usually located to "one side of a shallow recess towards which their rounded ends pointed and not towards the door"\textsuperscript{246}. As the rest of the room is unexcavated, it is

\textsuperscript{238} Botta, Monument de Ninive I, pl. 78.
\textsuperscript{239} Read\textsuperscript{e} (1970b), p. 81; Alêbênda, Palace of Sargon, p. 86f.
\textsuperscript{240} Read\textsuperscript{e} (1970b), p. 78; Alêbênda, Palace of Sargon, p. 87.
\textsuperscript{241} Botta, Monument de Ninive I, pl. 49; Reade (1970b), p. 78; Alêbênda, Palace of Sargon, p. 87.
\textsuperscript{242} Botta, Monument de Ninive I, p. 90f.
\textsuperscript{243} Naumann, Architektur Kleinasiens, p. 195f; Khorsabad I, p. 23.
\textsuperscript{244} Mallon, Ninivé and its Remains, p. 41.
\textsuperscript{245} Botta, Monument de Ninive I, p. 51; Khorsabad I, pp. 20-28.
\textsuperscript{246} Turnov\textsuperscript{e} (1966), p. 305. See for example a similar pair of slabs at Til Barsib in room XXVII in such a position. Thureau-Dangin, Til Barsib, pl. III. Also note the plan of room 12.
impossible to know if such a niche existed elsewhere in its walls. However, the large amount of epigraphic material which describes the different rites which required the cleansing of the body, suggest that the position of such bathing chambers in this sector may have been used for both practical and ritual ablutions.

Room 2, the final of the three projecting chambers, has doorways leading through to rooms 3, 5, 6 and esplanade I. It has similar dimensions to room 8, although it is slightly more narrow. Also like room 8 it has three portals connecting it to the terrace platform. However, here all similarity between the two rooms end. In the themes of both its interior and exterior decoration and its position within the sector itself, room 2 could not be more different. To enter room 2 from any of the three portals on its outer façade, it was first necessary to have departed the palace from it’s private quarter via room IV and crossed esplanade I. Compared to esplanade III, this outer court had a much more secluded position on the palace mound, and this seems to be at least partially reflected in its decoration. Like the south-western wall of court VIII, the outer façade of room 2 was decorated with orthostats depicting courtiers carrying furniture. The slabs showing the king were placed either side of the façade’s central buttressed entrance, and the door jambs of the two side entrances displayed a bird headed genie facing the court. This contrasts vividly with the colossi and genies occupying the respective façade on the opposite side of the wing. The interior decoration of room 2 also differs from that in room 8, and indeed the other two reception rooms in the sector, rooms 4 and 6. Unlike these rooms, the orthostats lining the walls of room 2 were carved in two registers not one. These depicted the scenes of sieges from Sargon’s eastern campaign of 716, and also a banquet. The king appears beside door G, on the opposite wall and also on both registers on the chamber’s short north-western wall near the door into room 3. It has been suggested that it was under these latter figures that the king would have been seated when holding court in

248 There are often discrepancies between the measurements Botta gives in his written report and those on his plans. Thus whilst he states that room 2 is only 1m narrower than room 8, on his plan (pl.6) room 8 appears to be almost 5 metres wider. Botta, Monument de Nimrud I, pl.6. Botta, Monument de Nimrud V, p.49f.
the room. If indeed this chamber once functioned as a reception room as its plan suggests, this last suggestion is eminently reasonable.

The doorway in room 2's south-western wall leads into room 6 and thus the sector's final four chambers. These south-western rooms can be identified as following the general pattern of Turner's Reception Suite type A, with room 6 the reception room, room 11 the retiring room and room 12 the bathroom. A permutation to the planning of the unit was the addition of room 9 which acted as both a bathchamber and an ante-chamber connecting room 6 directly to esplanade III. Like the other connecting chambers in this sector, i.e. rooms 3 and 5, the locking mechanisms of the two portals were located within the chamber itself. However, the position of this chamber meant it was possible to pass from esplanade 1 through rooms 2, 6 and 9, out into esplanade III, completely by-passing the room 5 and the important reception suite 8. Room 9 was decorated with a single register scene of the king and his courtiers, with the figure of the king positioned opposite the door to the outer court. A wingless genie lining the doorway between the outer court and room 9 also faced the court. However, the jambs of the portal into room 6 each depicted an Assyrian attendant facing towards that room.

Aside from room 9, room 6 could also be entered either from rooms 2 or 5. Door H was the only one of the two which contained doorsockets, thus indicating that ingress from room 2 was controlled by the occupants of room 6. The fourth portal in room 6 occupies a roughly central position on its south-eastern wall. This is the only means of gaining access to the two final rooms of the unit, rooms 11 and 12. The orthostats lining the door between 6 and 11 each depicted two genies facing towards room 6. The decoration of both rooms 6 and 11 each displayed single review scenes of the king receiving western tributaries, whilst room 12, like room 9 simply

257 Turner (1970b), p. 194
258 Khorsabad i, pp. 241 confirms this room as a bathchamber.
259 Reade (1974b), p. 83
displayed a single register scene of the king and his courtiers with the figure of the king facing the door. This last room is very interesting because it is one of the few rooms the Oriental Institute re-excavated in the palace, and the results of their work revealed much about the room that Botta failed to note. Firstly, Loud's excavations confirmed this chamber to be a bathroom by the discovery of a stone 'bath slab', like those in rooms 9 and 1, set into the stone paved floor of the room. Also in a niche discovered in the room's south-western wall, a slab pierced with a hole which was connected to a drain was placed. Lying scattered over the stone paving was evidence of the room's additional decoration with painted plaster, which probably covered both its upper walls and roof. One of the reasons Botta missed this stone floor, was that it had been set at a slightly lower level to that in room 11, so when Botta excavated room 12, he did so until the level of the raised threshold thus missing what lay below.

Botta was categorical in his statement that all the rooms of this wing lacked any sort of paving. However, he also noted that the existence of beaten earth floors in a wing so obviously well decorated in other ways, seemed slightly incongruous and that the floors were probably originally formed of baked bricks like the courts. Whilst he has been subsequently proven wrong with regard to his excavation of room 12, his discovery of bath and libation slabs in rooms 1, 8, and 9, suggest that in these rooms at least the absence of any form paving was due to its removal in antiquity and not to his failure to reach the floor level. Thus, as with the rest of the palace, the floors of sector P must be assumed to have once been covered in baked brick paving that was removed before its burial.

Whilst charred fragments of wood and matting was all that remained of the 'great beams' with which Sargon states he roofed his palace, there is no doubt that each of its eleven rooms in sector P were covered. However, the same may not be said of corridor 10.

In his excavation of both sector P and what remained of the two chambers 14 and 13, Botta discovered that the rooms of both regions had been badly damaged by a fire which seems to have destroyed them. The heat of this conflagration was so intense that it quite severely damaged many of the orthostats, especially those in the interior rooms of the sector, such as room 7259, which seemed to have been more affected by the fire than the sector's outer rooms 260. However, when he excavated corridor 10 he found no evidence of such burning, either on the relief or in the corridor's remains 261. This, combined with the stone paving, and the corridor's role as a passageway led him to assert that corridor 10 was open and not roofed 262. It is difficult to know how far to trust Botta's conclusions, certainly on the evidence to hand, whilst it is possible that the corridor was covered, it is equally likely that it was left open, especially since its stone paving would have been perfect to cover a small area open to the elements. Also the floor level of the stairway was not flat, but actually sloped downwards from its northwestern portal towards court VIII (Pl.31a). Whilst this was no doubt due to the fact that the palace's north-western wing was located on a higher portion of the palace mound, if the corridor was open, it would mean that the water would flow down this corridor into the region in front of its south-eastern portal. Interestingly, this is the one court in the palace in which a drain was discovered 263. This drain, located in front of the figure of the king, would have easily carried the water from corridor 10 off. It would certainly solve the problem as to how the corridor was lit. However, one of the arguments for the corridor being roofed is that it would have provided a sheltered path in times of inclement weather for people passing between the two courts. If the corridor's large northwestern portal was open, as the lack of doorsockets there suggests, then it would certainly have provided some lighting, at least partially down its length, but whether this would have been sufficient to light the end closest to court VIII is doubtful. Thus, whilst it is logical

260 Botta, Monument de Ninive V. p. 52.
261 Botta, Monument de Ninive V. p. 48.
262 Botta, Monument de Ninive V. p. 48.
to expect this corridor to have been roofed, the evidence at hand all points to it having been open.

Whilst much of the sector, rooms 1-4, 8 and 9, all had walls facing onto a courtyard, a few located in the centre of the sector, rooms 7, 5, 6, and 11 must have resorted either to some sort of clerestory lighting or else have been satisfied with whatever illumination could be gained from some sort of artificial sources, such as oil lamps. As all of walls of these rooms were covered with carved orthostats it is more likely that they would have utilised the method that would have enabled the maximum amount of clear smokeless lighting, thus clerestory fenestration becomes the obvious solution. The width of the walls in this sector would certainly have enabled them to be built to a reasonable height. However, it is impossible to do more than speculate as to which ones rose above the rest, and to do so involves subjective judgements about the relative importance of certain chambers usually based on little more than their plans as evidence. However, having said this, it is important to make some suggestion, no matter how tentative, on precisely how the lighting of this sector may have been organised. Thus, based on the thickness of their walls and decoration two possibilities suggest themselves. The first, concentrating on the obvious importance of the four reception rooms, 2, 4, 6, and 8, has the walls of these rooms rising above the level of the roofs of rooms 5, 7, and 11. This would make these rooms, who with the exception of 6 also open onto a court, extremely well lit as befitting their function as places where people would gather. Some of this light would penetrate into rooms 5, 7 and 11 via portals O, U, R, and X which appear to have been open, and windows or small light holes located near the roofs in the walls they shared with rooms 2 and 8 would allow more secondary light to penetrate. As chamber 5 seems to function as a passage for circulation between rooms 2, 6 and 8, it can be argued that decorated or not, it was not necessary for this room to have been as well lit as the reception rooms. As a retiring chamber, room 11 would not have wanted to be too bright, and room seven is small enough that the addition of a small amount of supplementary artificial lighting, such as lamps, could have been used if necessary. The second method of arranging clerestory
fenestration of this sector could have the walls of 7, 5 and 6 rising above the outer rooms in a T-formation. Of these two suggestions the initial one seems to be the most probable. However, the possible existence of an upper storey of rooms over this sector, implied by the same features which suggest its high clerestory fenestration points rather to the second of the two aforementioned arrangements (Pl.14c:3)

The description of this unit has necessarily been more detailed than those of the preceding units, firstly because there is more material with which to work and also because a reasonable understanding of the decoration and workings of this sector is needed if a clear understanding of its function is to be possible. Place, Botta and Loud all believed this sector to be the residence of the King. They listed their reasons for this as being due to the completeness of its plan, its secluded position at the rear of the palace mound, its lack of direct access from both the private and public regions of the palace, its magnificent views out over the river valley, the large dimensions of its rooms and its magnificent decoration. However, whilst all these examples are valid, recent work on this unit by Reade and Turner suggest that the picture is slightly more complicated. They suggest that the formal planning and decoration of at least a part of this sector had a definite ceremonial function, pointing out that at least three of the rooms, rooms 2, 4 and 8 in both their plan and decoration obviously acted as public reception rooms. The second throneroom, 8, especially stands out as having had a ceremonial rather than residential role. The interior and exterior decoration of its walls combined with the approach to it via court VIII and corridor 10 where the passage of tributaries is carried from this court through room 10 out into esplanade III all points to it being more than a private reception hall. Its close connection both in its plan and decoration, to the poorly preserved rooms 4 and 7 carries this role to these rooms also.

However, the other half of the sector comprising rooms 2, 6 and the latter's adjoining suite, based both on decoration and plan

264.Khoroshad J, p 72
265.See note 148.
suggest a slightly less prominent role. Room 2's proximity to the private region of the palace combined with its less intimidating decoration suggest its use for more informal gatherings as does the relatively tame, compared to rooms 4 and 8, tribute and court scenes in the suite of rooms connected to room 6. It has already been pointed out that this latter suite of rooms conforms in plan to Turner's typical residential suite type A, and this may imply that this portion of the sector was used as a residential block. Whilst Turner states that this residential unit not withstanding, the sector, including these rooms probably had a ceremonial function, this does not necessarily exclude the possibility that they also functioned as the king's personal rooms. The kings public and private persona must have been closely intertwined, and as the people who finally reached this sector of the palace would have been carefully screened it does not seem beyond the bounds of probability to believe that he resided reasonably close to rooms in which he could easily give a limited public audience. It is difficult to use the decoration of this sector to relate to its function, as without more material or textual evidence to support it and without adequate comparisons with other decorated regions of the palace it is difficult to draw conclusive comparisons. Whilst both the throneroom VII and the court VI and its surrounding rooms all seem to have been decorated their remains are too fragmentary to give any comparative aid regarding the arrangement and subject matter of their bas-relief decoration. However, considering the existence of an upper floor over this wing, it is more likely that this contained the residential suite of the king and Turner was correct in his designation of the function of this sector as ceremonial.

However, there is another theory which has suggested a further function of sector P. This theory involves the identification of a bit-hilani either with this sector or with the fragmentary building X located to the south-west of this sector. Originally thought to have been a temple, this latter structure has most recently been

266 Turner, p. 207
267 Botta, Monument de Ninive V, p. 53-55; Ninive et l'Assyrie II, p. 36-38, 149-151; Ninive et l'Assyrie III, pl. 376c.
268 Botta, Monument de Ninive V, pp. 53-55; Ninive et l'Assyrie II, pp. 36-38.
identified with the 'bit-hilani' which Sargon mentions in his texts.\textsuperscript{269} Certainly in many respects what remains of building \textit{x} fits in quite well with Frankfort's description of a bit-hilani. It was approached by a broad staircase, and it probably contained at least two parallel rectangular rooms of which only the chip pavement flooring remains. Its front room was also originally decorated with bas-reliefs made of black stone, which clearly recalls the decoration of Hittite buildings with basalt bas-reliefs. However, the clear statement from the inscriptions that the bit-hilani was placed in front of the palace's doors does raise problems with the identification of this unit as building \textit{x}. Whilst building \textit{x} certainly can be said to stand in front of the outer portals of room 2 - in fact it was positioned to line up almost perfectly with the central portal, \textit{F}, the question must be asked as to the likelihood that these portals were what Sargon meant when he mentioned the palace 'gates' or 'doors'. From its context in his discussion of the palace the inference does seem to be that it is to the main entrances of the palace that Sargon referred. However, the possibility that he meant entrances in general must be kept in mind. With the plan of the palace as it stands, sector \textit{P} can by no stretch of the imagination be thought of as a major means of access into the palace There is also, not unexpectedly, a complete absence of any indication of a columned portion in the front of building \textit{x}, and although it is by no means beyond the bounds of probability one that may once have existed there, especially considering the location of a column base in one of the courts of the Dépendances and in residence \textit{K}. However, it is not clear if there was enough room for four columns to have been placed in or in front of this entrance. It is unfortunate that the relevant region of the projecting portion of the terrace of palace \textit{F} has yet to be excavated, so if a similar structure to building \textit{x} existed there, it has yet to be found. However, there is one unit in this portion of palace \textit{F} which did correspond to the plan of a sector of Sargon's palace - sector \textit{P}.

Both sides of sector \textit{P} show three parallel connecting rectangular chambers. Their north-eastern and south-western

\textsuperscript{269} \textit{Reade}, \textit{J97}, p.84. \textit{Albenda, Palace of Sargon}, p.48.

\textsuperscript{270} What appears to be the remains of a column on its pedestal was found placed near the back wall of the first chamber, and thus clearly did not belong to a portico. \textit{Albenda, Palace of Sargon}, p.47.
façades both contain a triple portal monumental entrance. The problems of decorating either façade of this unit with a columned portico containing four columns are the same as those that confronted the entrance in sector A. What is particularly tantalising about this sector is the position of bath chamber 1 in the north-western wall of the sector. That this chamber would have possessed two door leaves is indicated by the doorsockets positioned on either side of its portal leading out into court I. The temptation to suggest that this was the bathroom mentioned in the text is extremely seductive. What makes the identification of this unit even more of a possibility is the suggestion by Botta, based on his excavations along the lower portion of the north-western edge of the palace mound, that a corner in the retaining wall may have indicated the existence of a ramp leading up between sector P and building x where a ravine now exists. The possibility of such a portal is not as unbelievable as it first sounds, as the probability that there was a private entrance for the king to enter this portion of the terrace without having to first by-pass the rooms and courts in the main body of the palace is a suggestion not to be taken lightly. Such an entrance would logically have to be placed in this region of the palace mound since the north-eastern half of the palace terrace was firmly placed within the citadel. The major drawback to this theory is that on his unrestored region of the palace, Place depicts this region of the mound as having once contained a straight retaining wall (Pl. 5).

With the evidence as it stands, it is virtually impossible to definitely claim either of the three regions mentioned as the location of Sargon’s bit-hilani. Only a thorough excavation of palace F and other sites where the Assyrian kings are known to have appended a bit-hilani to their plans will put this debate to rest. However, considering the location of sector P and its resemblance to a similar suite of rooms at palace F, the temptation to associate the Bit Hilani with this wing of rooms does seem the best of the examples on offer.

Rooms 13 & 14 and 15-18.

The discussion of the palace sectors will conclude with a consideration of two groups of rooms which cannot be properly said
to belong to any of the aforementioned sectors. The first group, rooms 15-18 lay literally in the western corner of the palace. All of the rooms except 15 opened off the south-west side of the palace. This latter room which was also different in its floor material, opened off the palace's north-western wall. The three rooms 16-18 are singular for other reasons besides their placement. Firstly, they were all entered by means of ramps which lead up to a raised floor level which Place stated was equal to the level of the base of building x\textsuperscript{271}. Secondly, each of their portals were flanked by buttresses, or projecting towers. Also the doorjambs of each of the chambers were decorated with unsculptured orthostats and each chamber contained stone paving. This latter feature occurs in only two other rooms of the palace - corridor 10, and bathroom 12. However, it is impossible to connect the function of rooms 16-18 with these other stone paved chambers.

The final thing that is unusual about these three rooms is that Place found them to contain items of bronze and copper\textsuperscript{272}. Room 16 and 17 contained an unnamed number of copper helmets, and in 17 some copper plates were also found as well as hundreds of copper buttons. Room 18 contained 54 bronze mace's piled in one of the room's corners\textsuperscript{273}. It difficult to believe that these rooms were originally intended to function as storerooms, yet that is how they remain to us. It does not seem feasible to associate these objects with the people who left such poor traces of their occupation in the throneroom and room 7, but nor is it completely convincing that these objects were left from Sargon's time. It seems obvious that notwithstanding the orientation of these rooms, that they were of some importance. However, whether they had any cultic role as Turner suggests\textsuperscript{274} or functioned as the storerooms of valuable items is difficult to decide. It is in fact highly likely that neither of these propositions is correct.

\textsuperscript{271} Ninive et Assyrte I, p.64-66.
\textsuperscript{272} Ninive et Assyrte I, p.65f.
\textsuperscript{273} Ninive et Assyrte I, p.66.
\textsuperscript{274} Turner (1970b), p.286.
The second pair of rooms, 13 and 14 are located on the opposite side of the palace. Only the south-western portion of these rooms remained reasonably intact, but from this it is possible to imagine a pair of connecting chambers similar in plan to that of rooms 7 and 8 in palace F. Both rooms, like all those in sector P were decorated with carved orthostats. The arrangement of these in room 14 was interesting because it displayed a mixture of single and two register scenes (Pl. 32a). That these rooms functioned as a pair of reception suites similar to the rooms 6, 9, 11 and 12 is highly probable. Whether this reception suite was used by the king or perhaps one of his high officials is difficult to tell, although the presence of the nearby room 8 seems to suggest that this room was frequented by someone other than the king. What is not in doubt is that these two rooms, like the ones in palace F probably did not contain any doorways which linked them directly to sector H. Thus in its location, orientation and decoration these two rooms probably interrelated closely with sector P.

275 Khorsabad II, pl. 75.
276 Roads: 1940, p. 86.
CONCLUSION

This concludes my analysis of Sargon II's palace at Khorsabad. It is hoped that this paper has managed to throw new light on many of the questions that relate to the organisation and function of the different regions in this palace. By examining the reports and plans of the earliest excavators as well as the more recent research of current scholars, and by utilising the methodology of architectural analysis pioneered by Jean-Claude Margueron it has been possible to derive a whole new level of understanding about this building and how it would have operated. The key to this understanding lies within the acknowledgment of the 3 different levels on which the palace can be viewed. The first level views the palace as a whole, noting its place within the city and how it functioned as a physical embodiment of the king's presence and power in his empire. The second focuses on the interpretation of the palace as a collection of self-contained but interrelating sectors within the palace body. This is the area to which this work is primarily devoted. The third and final level highlights the importance of individual rooms, both as components of each sector but also as separate entities within their own right. Unfortunately the lack of extensive material remains and the frequently inadequate archaeological records left by the early excavators means that most attempts to clearly identify the function of many rooms and sectors within Sargon II's palace have been severely restricted. However, by concentrating on the location of these sectors within the overall structure of the palace it has been possible to partially mitigate the shortcomings of the available evidence.

Discussion of the history of Assyrian settlement at Khorsabad has inevitably focused on the palace remains. By constructing a royal palace at a completely new site, Sargon was in part attempting to create a monument which would reflect his royal power and wealth. That this largely failed was due as much to the capricious desires of his heirs as to the city's rather peripheral location. The problems involved with tracing the extent to which the palace continued to be occupied after
Sargon's death are complex and do not directly relate to the major concerns of this work. However what this study has demonstrated is that regardless of the extent of later occupation at the site, the vast majority of palace remains seem to date to the period of Sargon's reign and shortly thereafter. Later textual material that seems to indicate a continuing official presence at Dur-Sharrukin may in fact refer to an identically named city located in Babylonia. Only more extensive re-excavation of the palace will reveal the correctness of this view.

The identification and analysis of the different units or sectors within the palace is clearly the most comprehensive manner of examining them. By defining and analysing where the various sectors were located within Sargon II's palace as well as studying how their internal structure was arranged, this investigation has been able to reveal the most likely function of each sector. It has also been possible to study a previously unconsidered issue - the existence of the palace's upper storey. By examining the architectural features such as methods of lighting, circulation and additional storeys, this work has successfully focused on aspects of architectural planning that have not always received the attention that they deserve. In particular the study of lighting patterns within the palace has revealed that most rooms could have been exposed to some amount of natural light. Through the strategic positioning of open courts and the use of highly placed clerestory windows, the utmost advantage was taken to exploit sunlight. Clearly, different areas of the palace would have required varying light intensities. Not surprisingly the rooms that were most probably used for storage only required limited access to natural light. However, in rooms which may seem to have received little in the way of sunlight, the Assyrian use of a staggered roofing system allowed light to penetrate through selectively located windows.

A number of devices still exist which give an indication as to how the movement of people within the palace was arranged and restricted. Certainly it is to be expected that the patterns of circulation within a royal palace would be carefully controlled. Architectural features such as aligned doorways, doorsockets and locking mechanisms all contribute
to our understanding of this process. Even the manner in which the decoration of the room was planned can be seen to reflect the patterns of movement by people within the palace. For example the procession carved in relief in corridor 10 may have served to direct the flow of visitors towards reception suite 8. A surprising aspect of the earliest excavation reports was the total absence of stairways leading from the ground to the first storey. Whilst subsequent excavation by Loud in the throne room demonstrated that a stairway probably did exist in rooms 22 and 23, the remainder of the palace continued to be considered stairless. In fact, as this paper has shown, there is evidence that a number of areas within the palace may once have contained stairways (Pl. 38). This issue of the existence of stairways in the building, is in many ways tied to that of possible additional storeys above ground level.

In the discussion of each sector an attempt has been made to address the topic of an upper storey based on the assumption that such a level must have originally existed to meet the space requirements of the palace's population. Features such as stairways and thick, clustered ground level walls both serve to support this assumption and also aid in establishing the probable location of such storeys. As has been explained, it seems likely that a first storey existed in most areas of the palace with the exception of sector G.

By examining the palace from the point of view of sectors rather than just individual rooms, it is possible to identify areas of the palace that have a special significance. One sector in which this clearly applies is the principal reception suite, which is the major focus of sector H. Another area which has been examined in some depth is sector P. It has been suggested that this sector could be identified with the Bit-Hilani of Hittite tradition that Sargon mentioned in his palace description. Hopefully the discussion of the Bit-Hilani and its location in the palace that concludes the investigation of sector P will to some extent clarify the problems that traditionally plagues this issue. Unfortunately with the evidence as it stands, it is almost impossible to unequivocally argue for any one particular explanation.
In many instances it has been necessary to produce a revised evaluation of the rooms of the palace because the original reports of Botta and Place are in many ways inaccurate or inconsistent. These problems were best represented by the differing opinions of all three excavators in their understanding and depiction of the main palace entrance. On examination it was found that, none of the plans of any of the excavations could be easily reconciled, in fact they could not even agree on the number of entrances in the main façade. Thus, clearly, it has been necessary to review all available evidence as it pertains to the contents of the palace. In many cases the conclusions that have been reached differ markedly from the initial interpretations made by Place and Botta. Unfortunately, as the excavations of Loud have revealed, it is highly likely that many of the rooms of the palace were not ever completely excavated. Until another project is undertaken at the site, the limited material recovered by the earliest archaeologists remains our only real source of information.

However, despite the limitations of the excavations of the early excavators at the site, it is their work more than any other that has answered the final plea of Sargon:

"Let some future prince restore its ruins, let him inscribe his memorial stele, and set it alongside of mine. Then Assur will hear his prayers"¹.

¹ Luckenbill, Ancient Records, p.59.
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0  2  10 m.
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