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New Results from the Jarash Cathedral Excavation[1]

1. Survey of the Cathedral Propylaeum (WB/SM)

Introduction

The propylaeum (FIGS. 1, 2 and 3), like the remainder of the cathedral and the adjacent church of St. Theodore, was originally excavated by the British-American expedition between 1928 and 1930.[2] Prior to excavation, the propylaeum appeared as "an unintelligible pile of débris" in which could be discerned two standing columns and the lintel of a monumental doorway. The columns were subsequently revealed to belong to a portico, composed of eight rather unevenly spaced columns that continued the line of the colonnade in front of the Nymphaeum to the north. The two central columns are separated by a slightly wider intercolumnation that articulates a great axial entrance marked by a monumental doorway. The lintel of this doorway was surmounted by a pediment with lateral *ancones* (found in the rubble and subsequently re-erected) supported by columns. The doorway opens onto a flight of some 32 steps that lead to a terrace in front of the eastern wall of the cathedral itself, against which is placed a small shrine dedicated to St Mary. A series of rooms belonging to various different structural phases are present on either side of the staircase and are partly terraced into the rock of the hillside. The presence of four columns on the staircase itself suggests the presence of a gallery which linked two raised porticoes on either side of the stairs (as shown in Fisher's reconstruction drawing and also that of Browning).[3]

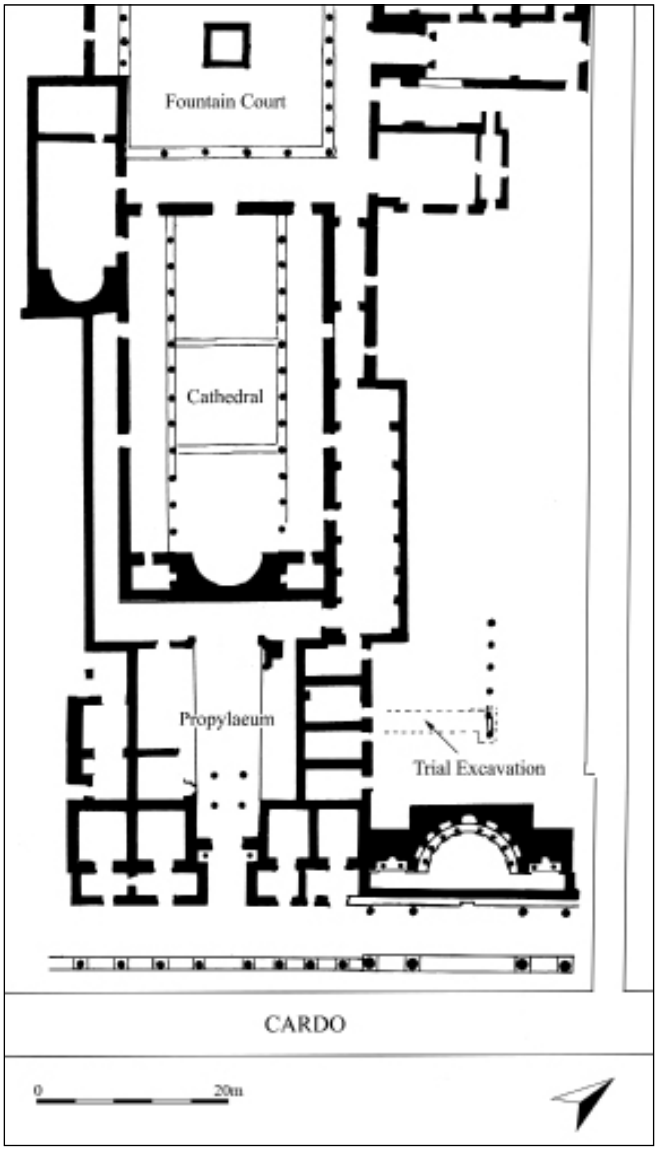
Crowfoot's excavations beneath the terrace at the top of the staircase revealed the presence of an earlier flight of stairs on the same alignment. These extended under the terrace and were consequently less steeply sloping than the present stair-

1. The propylaeum seen from the east (WB).

[1] The first part of this report is a contribution by William Bowden and Sally Martin (WB / SM). I added a brief summary of our activities during 2005 and 2006. I cordially thank my collaborators of the 2000 and 2003 seasons (WB / SM) and the 2005 and 2006 seasons (Andrea Angellini and Federico Giletti). I thank the Gerda Henkel Stiftung in Düsseldorf and the Max Geldner Stiftung in Basel for their generous financial support. The excavations were carried out with the full collaboration and warm-hearted support of the Department of Antiquities in Amman, especially its Director General, Dr Fawwaz al-Khraysheh, and the staff in Jarash who have extended the warmest hospitality to the Project.

[2] The excavation of the cathedral complex is described by J. W. Crowfoot in C. H. Kraeling (ed.), *Gerasa, City of the Decapolis* (New Haven 1938): 201-25.

[3] Kraeling, *Gerasa*: Plan XXX; I. Browning, *Jerash and the Decapolis* (London 1982: 179).



2. Plan of the Cardo, Propylaeum, Cathedral and Nymphaeum (WB).

case. Crowfoot suggested that these earlier steps formed the approach to a temple, of which other elements were recovered during the course of the earlier excavations. The existence of this structure was proved beyond doubt by the discovery of part of the temple podium during the 1996 season of the present Project.[4]

The new survey of the propylaeum was intended to identify any structural phases associated with this earlier temple complex and to determine how the monumental entrance to the temple was altered by the construction of the Christian complex on the site of the pagan structure. During the course of this work it was established that the monumental second century doorway that dominates the street frontage of the propylaeum is in fact a *spolium*, probably placed in its present position when the cathedral complex was erected in the fifth century.[5] The careful dismantling and re-erection of such a substantial doorway raises a number of issues relating to Late Antique attitudes towards the monumental remains of the past.[6]

The Temple Propylaeum

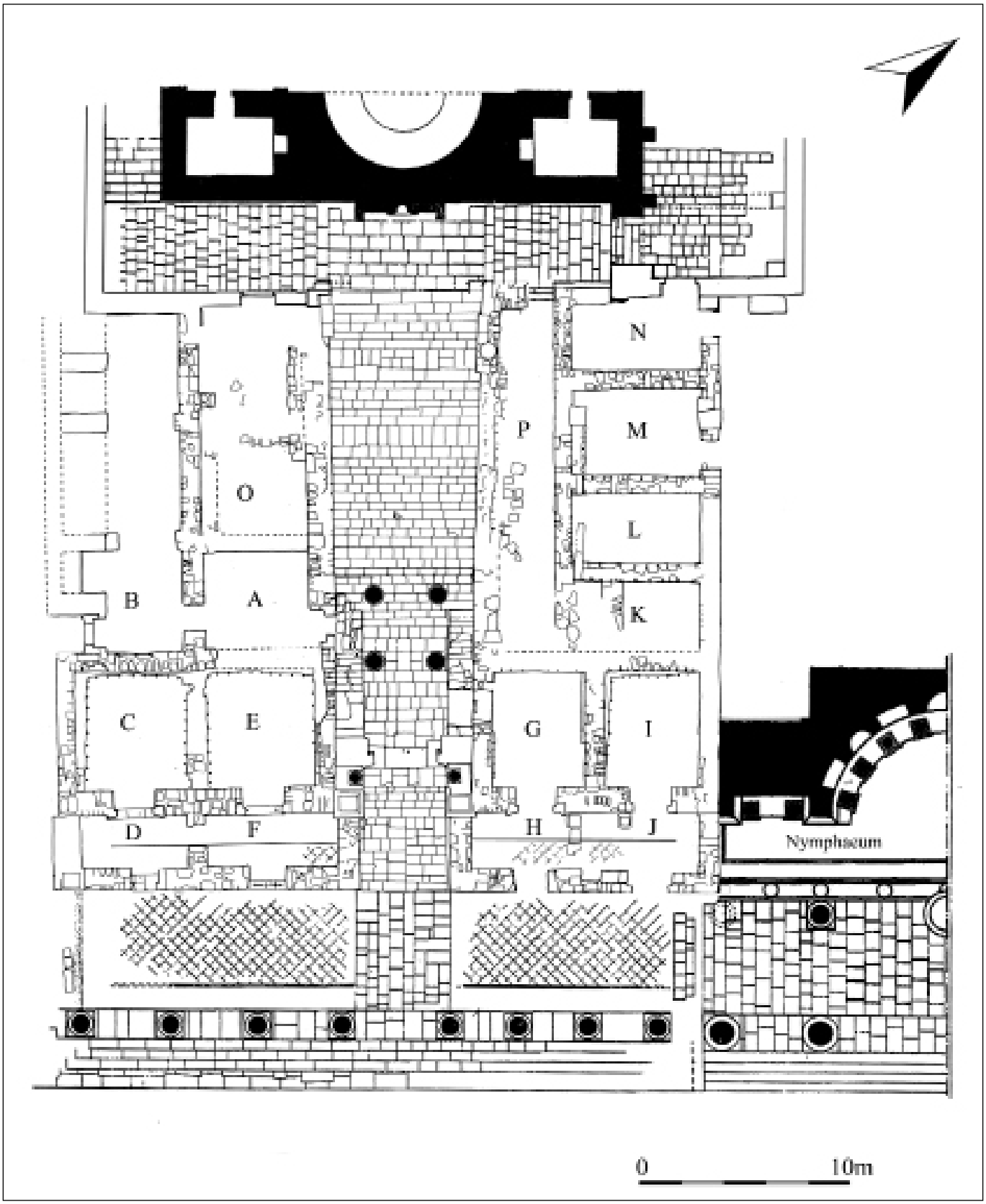
The dating evidence associated with the temple podium uncovered beneath the cathedral in 1996 indicated that the temple was earlier than the nearby temple of Artemis, and probably dated to the start of the second if not to the first century AD. The earliest elements of the propylaeum complex, however, are slightly later and probably date to the latter half of the second century. These consist of two pairs of rooms positioned on either side of the stairs (FIG. 3 rooms C, E, G and I, FIG. 4). They were terraced back into the slope of the hill with the lower sections of the walls cut back into the bare rock. It is clear that they originally supported an upper storey, for which the corbels and a recess for floor planks remain visible in rooms G and I (FIG. 4). This upper storey would have been on the same level as any buildings on the upper terrace to the west. Access to the upper storey may have been via an internal flight of stairs from the rooms below or alternatively from the level of the terrace behind.

The façade of the structure was clearly built in a manner commensurate with its position on the cardo of the city. Access to the rooms from the street was provided by four substantial doors for which the carved stone mouldings survive more or less

[4] C. Jäggi, H.R. Meier and B. Brenk, 'New data for the chronology of the Early Christian cathedral of Gerasa: the third interim report on the Jarash Cathedral Project'. *ADAJ* 41 (1997): 311-20.

[5] For the re-dating of the cathedral complex see Jäggi, Meier and B. Brenk, *ADAJ* 41 (1997).

[6] A similar reuse of a carefully carved portal and of a bronze door (both taken from a second century building) in a new architectural context of the fourth century is visible in the so-called temple of Romulus on the Forum Romanum in Rome, which is in fact a vestibulum or entrance to a hall of the Forum Pacis. This hall of the Forum Pacis was riveted with marble in the fourth century and connected with the Via Sacra. See B. Brenk, Türen als Spolien und Baureliquien: *Nova construere, sed amplius vetusta servare*, in Künstlerischer Austausch, Artistic Exchange. Akten des XXVIII. Internationalen Kongresses für Kunstgeschichte Berlin 1992 (ed. Th. W. Gaehtgens) 45 figs.1, 2, 4; B. Brenk, Zur Einführung des Kultes der heiligen Kosmas und Damian in Rom, in Theologische Zeitschrift der theologischen Fakultät der Universität Basel 62 (2006): 303-320.



3. Plan of the propylaeum incorporating data from the new survey. Details of the upper terrace and east portico are taken from the earlier plan by C.S. Fisher (WB).

intact. The remainder of the façade was articulated with a series of huge pilasters, two of which defined the entrance to the staircase and the temple beyond (FIG. 5). The pilasters were surmounted by ornate capitals of which two can now be seen on the site although they are no longer *in situ*. There were almost certainly similar pilasters at each end of the building. One is visible at the southern end of the complex, reused in a later structure (FIG. 6), while its northern equivalent can be seen reused in the Late Antique wall in the northwest corner of room J, revealed by recent work to install an electricity cable.[7] This ornate façade was slightly at odds with the interior of the building which can never have been particularly impressive, with the lower sections of several of the walls composed of roughly cut and unfaced bedrock.[8] The portico in front of the façade was paved with "red and white mosaics laid in a simple lattice pattern" although almost nothing now survives of these.[9]

The relationship between the propylaeum and the nymphaeum (completed *ca*. 191AD) is not entirely clear, although the evidence supports Crowfoot's suggestion that the propylaeum was the

4. Interior of room G, showing corbelling for upper floor and put-log hole for the second phase upper floor (*ca* 0.50m below earlier floor) (WB).

5. North side of propylaeum with the nymphaeum visible in the background. The second century pilaster can be seen on the left, clearly abutted by the Late Antique structure in the centre of the picture. The pilaster capital now sits on the corner of the later structure (WB).

[7] *Contra* Crowfoot, who suggested there was never a northern pilaster (Kraeling, *Gerasa*: 203).

[8] As also discussed by Crowfoot, who suggested that the lower rooms functioned as shops (Kraeling, *Gerasa*: 205).

[9] Kraeling, *Gerasa*: 202.

6. Southern pilaster base reused in Late Antique structure. The door of the original second century façade can be seen in the background (WB).

earlier building, the design of which was altered prior to completion in order to accommodate the nymphaeum. This theory is supported by a number of factors. In particular, rooms G and I to the north of the stairs (each measuring *ca*. 4.40m across) are slightly smaller than rooms C and E to the south (which are each around 5m across). This certainly indicates that the space available to the north of the stairs was restricted. It is perhaps most likely that the presence or construction of the nymphaeum forced the builders of the propylaeum to adopt the expedient of adapting the northern rooms to fit the space available. Crowfoot also suggested, incorrectly, that the absence of the northern pilaster discussed above indicated that the builders of the propylaeum were aware that the nymphaeum was under construction. Most importantly, as Crowfoot noted, the last column of the nymphaeum portico has a bracket placed off-centre to support the last section of the architrave of the propylaeum portico, thereby indicating that the nymphaeum columns were cut with the pre-existing structure in mind. This chronology is also supported by the narrower intercolumnations between the four northern columns of the propylaeum portico, which means that the portico is not quite symmetrical with the façade (see FIGS. 2 and 3). This suggests that the portico was rebuilt when the nymphaeum was erected. The four northern columns were moved in order to accommodate the nymphaeum portico while the architrave was left at its original length with its northern end supported by the nymphaeum portico. It seems unlikely that these anomalies will ever be entirely explained, but it is clear that by the end of the second century the temple was accessed via a flight of steps that led from a monumental street frontage that was fully in keeping with the other grandiose public buildings that dominated the hill slope on the western side of the cardo.

The Cathedral Propylaeum

The propylaeum subsequently underwent a series of major alterations associated with the remodelling of the entire area to accommodate the cathedral complex. The steps were foreshortened by at least 2.15m by the addition of a paved terrace immediately in front of the east wall of the basilica. This expedient was presumably adopted in order to maintain the monumental entrance from the cardo, which necessitated the creation of an access route around the sides of the church as the presence of the eastern chancel meant that the orientation of the complex had to be reversed from that of the earlier temple. This led to a rather awkward arrangement in which the great flight of steps led directly to the blank eastern wall of the church (FIG. 7). The size and layout of the church itself was at least partly dictated by the pre-existing temple structure.[10]

The Door

The frontage of the new propylaeum was dominated by a second century pedimented doorway that was presumably dismantled and transported from its original location before it was carefully re-erected

[10] Jäggi, Meier and Brenk, *ADAJ* 41 (1997): 316.

7. Photograph of the cathedral after excavation and before restoration, seen from north-east (Dumbarton Oaks).

as the centrepiece of the new façade (FIG. 1). This door has always been considered to be part of the original second century phase of the propylaeum and is treated as such in all studies of the city.[11] However, careful examination of the gate and its relationship with the surrounding structures reveals that it can only be a secondary addition.

First, it is immediately apparent that the relationship between the door and the second century pilasters described above is extremely awkward. The door appears to be too large for the space available, to the extent that the columns that support the lateral *ancones* would have been entirely hidden behind the pilasters. More significantly, the pilasters are clearly abutted by the blocks that support the pedestals of the lateral columns, which have been roughly cut to fit over the base moulding of the pilaster (FIG. 8). Second, the door clearly abuts the second century wall to the north, although the slightly more ragged appearance of the ashlars on the south side of the door suggest that an attempt was made to key in the door structure to the lateral wall to the south. Third, the blocks which form the door jambs themselves appear to have been re-cut to fit their new position. This is particularly apparent on the south side of the doorway, where only very short lengths of stone have been left on the door jambs in order to key them into the surrounding masonry, in a fashion that is not replicated on any of the earlier Roman doors in Jarash. Last, the door itself is not at right-angles to the stairs and is also slightly skewed in relation to the second century pilasters, with the space between the pilaster and door being some 10cm wider on the northern side.

The combination of the factors outlined above can leave little doubt that the door was originally made for a wider entrance elsewhere and appears in its current position in a secondary usage.[12] Although we have no absolute date on the insertion of the door, apart from the *terminus post quem* provided by the adjacent second century structures, it seems most likely that it was contemporary with the construction of the cathedral, which itself is wholly constructed of *spolia*. Indeed in the context of the rest of the cathedral and the fountain court

[11] E.G. Browning, *Jerash and the Decapolis*: 176-79.

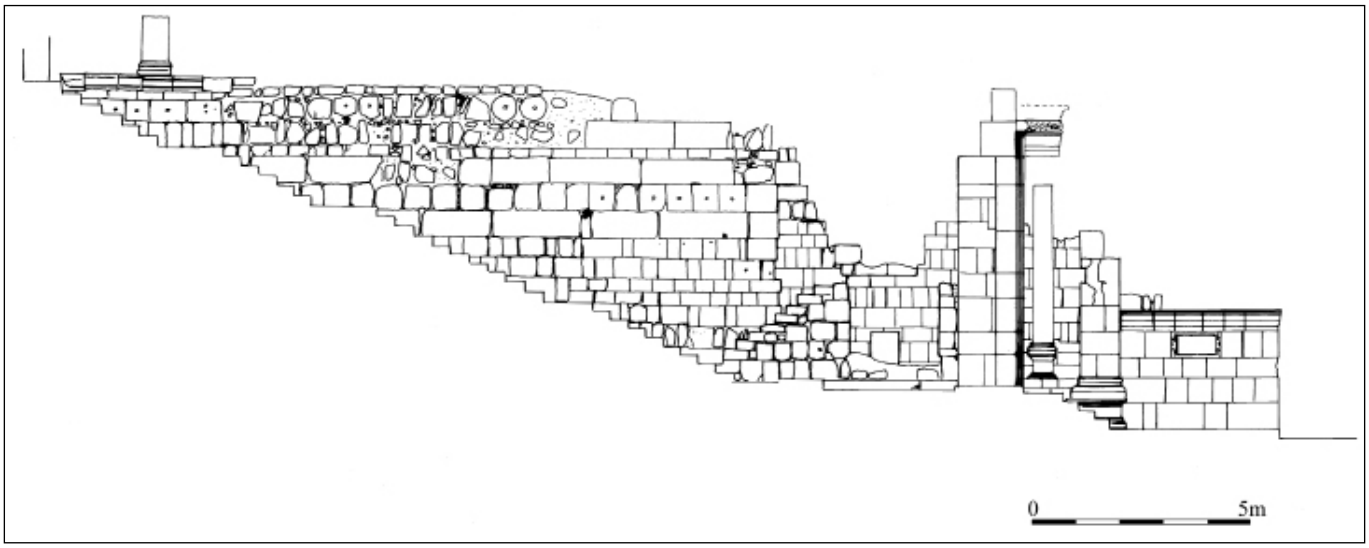
[12] This possibility was also discussed by Crowfoot, who eventually decided that the gate's awkward relationship with the surrounding structures could be explained by poor second century workmanship. He was also of the opinion that the projection of the doorsill to the outer edge of the mouldings demonstrated that it was in "the place for which it was originally made", as in "Christian doors at Gerasa the sill is always set back to the line of the wall and the mouldings of the jambs project beyond it" (Kraeling, *Gerasa*: 206). However, we would argue that the evidence presented here outweighs this factor. It may also be that changes in research agendas regarding Late Antiquity make us more willing to accept that the door is a *spolium*. Interestingly, the phases shown on the plan of the propylaeum in Crowfoot's *Early Churches in Palestine* (London 1941) suggest that the doorway is a Christian addition although this point of view was not upheld in the text.

8. Detail showing the relationship between the column pedestal of the monumental doorway and the second-century pilaster (WB).

(where the fountain itself is a *spolium*) there is little difficulty in accepting the door as a Late Antique insertion.[13]

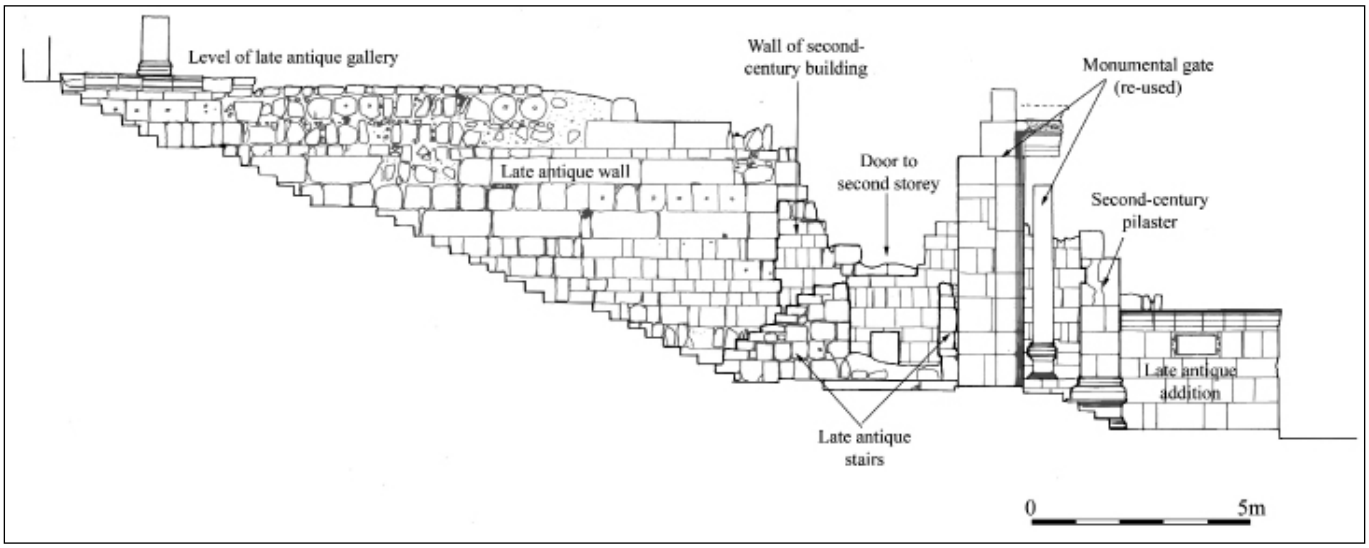
The Gallery and Associated Structures

The new and steeper flight of stairs was delineated on each side by substantial walls built entirely using *spolia*, including column drums laid horizontally and sections of squared pilasters in which the holes for iron fixing rods can be seen (FIGS. 9, 10 and 11). On both sides of the stairs, these walls can be seen to clearly abut the second century buildings described above. These walls almost certainly supported a three-sided porticoed gallery that ran above each side of the stairs before crossing behind the new monumental door. Traces of the portico remain at the western end of the north wall, where a single column base can be seen above a series of mouldings that define the top of the wall. Sections of paving stones from the portico also survive in this northern wing. The gallery crossed the stairs supported by four columns surmounted by Corinthian capitals, of which the western pair of columns was positioned rather awkwardly on the



9. Elevation of north wall of Propylaeum (WB).

[13] See B. Brenk, C. Jäggi and H.R. Meier, 'The Fountain Court at Jarash Cathedral Reconsidered: the First Report of a New Swiss Research Project', *ADAJ* 38 (1994): 351-357.



10. Interpretative elevation of north wall of Propylaeum (WB).

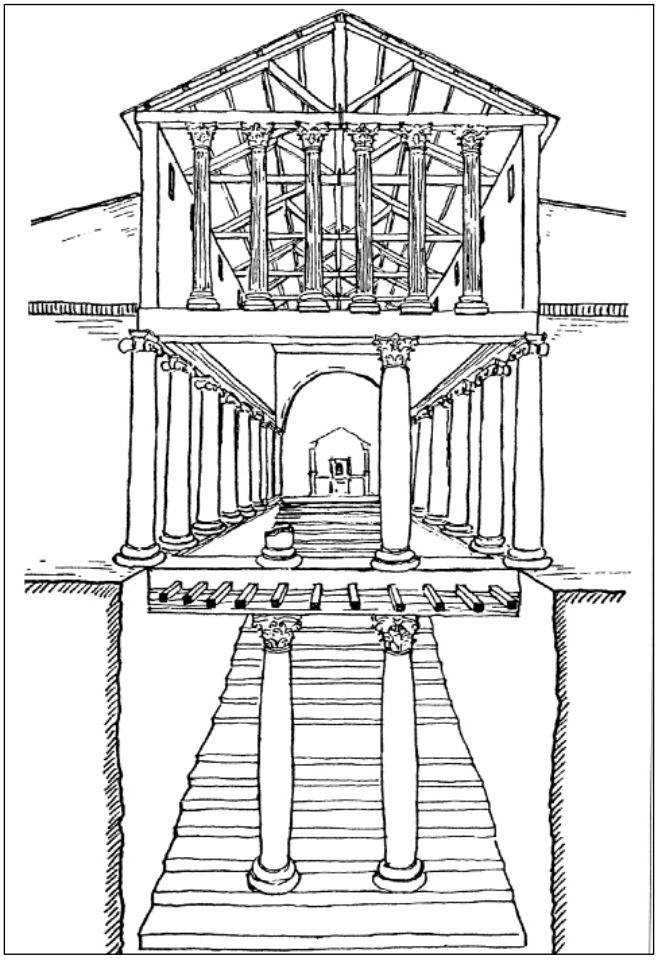
11. The lateral wall of the staircase seen from room C. The columns supported a gallery that crossed above the steps (WB).

stairs themselves, at a slightly higher level than the columns to the east. The gallery would have run behind the pediment of the door and it is possible that anyone using the gallery may have been visible to spectators on the cardo to the east, indicating that it may have served an important role in processions (FIG. 12).

The north and south wings of the colonnaded gallery were of unequal width and it is unclear as to whether the range of rooms to the north (rooms K, L, M and N) were directly accessible from the gallery. These rooms certainly post-date the wall that delineates the northern side of the complex, which may be part of the second century phase.[14] The walls of these rooms are of uneven construction showing frequent use of *spolia* and are at least partially bonded with clay. As they formed the back wall of the portico, they are presumably contemporary with the remodelling of the propylaeum associated with the construction of the cathedral.

No trace of equivalent rooms survives on the southern side of the complex, where rooms A and B represent a level that was midway between the 'street level' rooms to the east (rooms C to J) and

[14] Fisher's plan shows this wall as a later addition abutting the second century structures, although this relationship is now obscured (Kraeling, *Gerasa*: Plan XXIX).



12. Reconstruction of the gallery on the eastern section of the Propylon (Crowfoot).

the gallery level described above. As well as providing support for the gallery level above, using a series of vaults visible in room B, these were also important rooms in their own right, providing direct access from the south of the complex to the monumental staircase. Both the north and south entrances were marked by fine stone door surrounds that had presumably been removed from elsewhere, while an inscription can be seen on the left side of the exterior of the southern door.[15]

The upper storeys of the second century rooms (rooms C, E, G and I) on the east side of the propylaeum remained in use, entered directly from the steps via two small sets of stairs placed against the inside of the monumental central doorway. In the rooms to the north (rooms G and I) where the upper levels survive, it seems that a new upper floor was inserted *ca*. 0.50m lower than the original floor. This is indicated by a series of put-log holes cut into the walls below the level of the original corbelling (see FIG. 4).[16] Sections of the upper walls in these rooms also show signs of rebuilding. The date of these modifications is unclear, although the two staircases positioned behind the monumental doorway certainly post-date the other alterations to the complex and appear to be of poorer workmanship.

The Eastern Rooms

A further series of structures (rooms D, F, H and J) were added to the eastern end of the propylaeum complex, encroaching on the area of the earlier eastern portico and covering part of the portico's mosaic pavement. However, although these new structures at least partly covered the earlier façade, the monumentality of the axial entrance was retained. The additional buildings were constructed entirely of *spolia*, mainly consisting of huge ashlar blocks that had presumably been removed from other public buildings along the cardo. A series of mouldings were used to articulate the upper parts of the structure adjacent to the central steps, suggesting that the additions were only single storey buildings, which would have left the upper parts of the original façade visible at the rear. Pairs of doorways mirrored the doors of the earlier structure that lay behind, although earlier Roman door surrounds were not used in this case. Instead, door pilasters were cut into the ashlars. The original purpose of these buildings is unknown, but immediately prior to their eventual abandonment they were used for industrial purposes. According to Crowfoot, the northernmost room was used by a blacksmith who used the second century room behind (room I) for storing charcoal, while two unfinished capitals in the southern inner room (room C) may indicate the presence of a stone mason.[17]

The Propylaeum in its Context

The remodelling of the propylaeum was part of a much more wide-ranging series of modifications that accompanied the transformation of the earlier temple building into the cathedral, which started the apparent 'Christianisation' of a large section of one of the central insulae of the town. The retention

[15] C.B. Welles, 'The Inscriptions' in Kraeling, *Gerasa*: xyz.
[16] Also noted by Crowfoot (Kraeling, *Gerasa*: 204).
[17] Ibid. The 'blacksmith's shop' also contained around 70 coins, including a hoard of fifth century coins, five sixth century coins and an eighth century Umayyad coin, which Crowfoot suggested provided a date for the final abandonment of the building.

of the monumental staircase that originally led to the temple and the aggrandisement of this entrance through the addition of the great second century door are clearly important in understanding something of the complex relationship between the Church and the physical fabric of the Roman city. This relationship, which is one of the defining characteristics of Jarash as it appears today, was one that involved the demonstration of dominance over the fabric of the urban landscape whilst at the same time demonstrating an explicit lineage with the Roman city.

Control of the cityscape was evoked particularly through the overt use of *spolia*. All the Christian buildings of Jarash are entirely constructed of the reused architectural members of earlier monuments, including both the more decorative elements such as architraves, capitals and doors, and the more utilitarian ashlar blocks. While there was undoubtedly an element of pragmatism attached to this reuse, the use of entire sections of earlier buildings such as the monumental door of the propylaeum suggests that *spolia* must have worked on many different levels as part of a dialogue between the builder and his audience. It is likely that the propylaeum door was recognisable to the inhabitants of the city as a piece of earlier masonry, and was perhaps even recognisable as deriving from a familiar structure. The use of the doorway established an explicit link with the monumental Roman city, whilst at the same time demonstrating the ability of the Church to commandeer large sections of former public buildings for its own use. The significance of this practice is particularly marked in the cities of the East, which had not suffered from the loss of monumentality that became the hallmark of the Late Antique city in the West. Indeed, all the evidence indicates that cities such as Jarash were thriving urban centres, suggesting that the impact of 'Christianisation' was all the more marked.[18] The churches were not erected in a cityscape in which public areas had fallen from use (as was the case in some parts of the Balkans and the West), but instead appeared in an environment that was in many ways very similar to that of the second century.

The power to redefine the urban landscape was also demonstrated through the relationship between the new buildings and their surroundings. This included the placement of buildings above earlier monuments, which in the case of the cathedral appears to be very deliberate.[19] A similar ideological motive may also be implied by an inscription above the west atrium door of St Theodore that tells of the church being erected over "a former eyesore" where there was "the grievous stench of cast-out quadrupeds worn with toil", which some commentators have suggested implies the presence of a pagan sanctuary on the site.[20] Other Christian buildings in the city may also reflect the locations of earlier structures, although until now most of the Jarash churches have been excavated in isolation and thus little is known of their context.

The retention of the monumental steps leading from the cardo to the cathedral is particularly interesting in terms of the relationship between the cathedral and its surroundings. The builders of the cathedral went to considerable effort to not only retain this access from the cardo but also to aggrandise it with the addition of the great door and porticoed gallery that ran above it. Maintaining this eastern entrance necessitated the creation of a shorter and steeper flight of steps in order to leave sufficient space for a terrace that led to two lateral passages that allowed access to the church and the fountain court beyond. The result was a rather awkward arrangement in which anyone approaching the church from the cardo climbed the stairs to be met by the blank east wall of the church, which was only alleviated by the small shrine to the Virgin placed at the top of the steps. From the terrace at the top of the stairs, the visitor could turn either left to enter the church via the south aisle or turn right to proceed down a rather narrow passage to the north door of the church or alternatively continue through to the fountain court. This northern passage was vaulted and is likely to have been dark and rather restricted. Indeed, it could be questioned whether it was ever intended to allow general public access at all.[21] In this

[18] For a recent overview of the eastern cities in Late Antiquity see J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (Oxford 2001).

[19] The ideology of building placement in Late Antiquity is questioned by L. Lavan, "Late antique urban topography: From architecture to human space", in L. Lavan and W. Bowden (eds.), *Late Antique Archaeology: Theory and Practice*. (Leiden 2002): 170-93 at 174.

[20] Others have opted for a more literal interpretation, suggesting that the inscription implies the presence of a rubbish tip. On this inscription see also C. B. Welles, 'The Inscriptions' in Kraeling, *Gerasa*: 477.

[21] Crowfoot suggests that the south passage was intended as the mens' narthex while the wider eastern section of the north passage was intended as the womens' narthex (Kraeling, *Gerasa*: 214-215).

context we can also note the two doors that closed either end of the corridor.

2. The Area West of the Nymphaeum (BB)

The area west of the Nymphaeum (FIG. 2) has never been touched by excavators, even though six fragmented columns without capitals protrude from the ground. The irregular diameter of the columns and intercolumnia demonstrate that these columns belong to Late Antiquity. Such irregular measurements are uncommon in classical architecture. South of the Roman Nymphaeum is the propylon and the monumental stairway leading from the Via Porticata of Jarash up to the level of the former temple and 'cathedral'. Four rooms open off to the north of this stairway, i.e. on to the area with the six fragmented column shafts. Thus, the supposition that these four rooms once opened on to a portico or a court with porticoes and that they were built contemporaneously with the columns is confirmed.

The area behind the Nymphaeum was limited to the north by a 5m high wall which runs along the *vicus* (FIG. 13). This vicus separates the area of the temple of Artemis from the small temple we uncovered under the cathedral. The high wall is constructed with reused blocks[22] which include two second century inscriptions. The wall is 122cm thick and has a door (145cm wide and 258cm high) leading into a square room open to the sky. The east side of this square room is not visible because it is covered with rubble. Its western wall retains fragments of paint and stucco, and a door leading into a hitherto unexplored vaulted room to the west. This appears to have been part of an earlier building to the west of the Nymphaeum. The southern wall of the square room was added in order to create a service room accessible from the *vicus*. This service room was probably connected with the upper level, associated with the above-mentioned six columns, by a wooden staircase. It took advantage of the pre-existing walls which most probably belonged to the Nymphaeum complex.

The Christians remodelled the whole area west of the Nymphaeum in order to create a level building plot which was easily accessible from the cathedral and its eastern staircase.

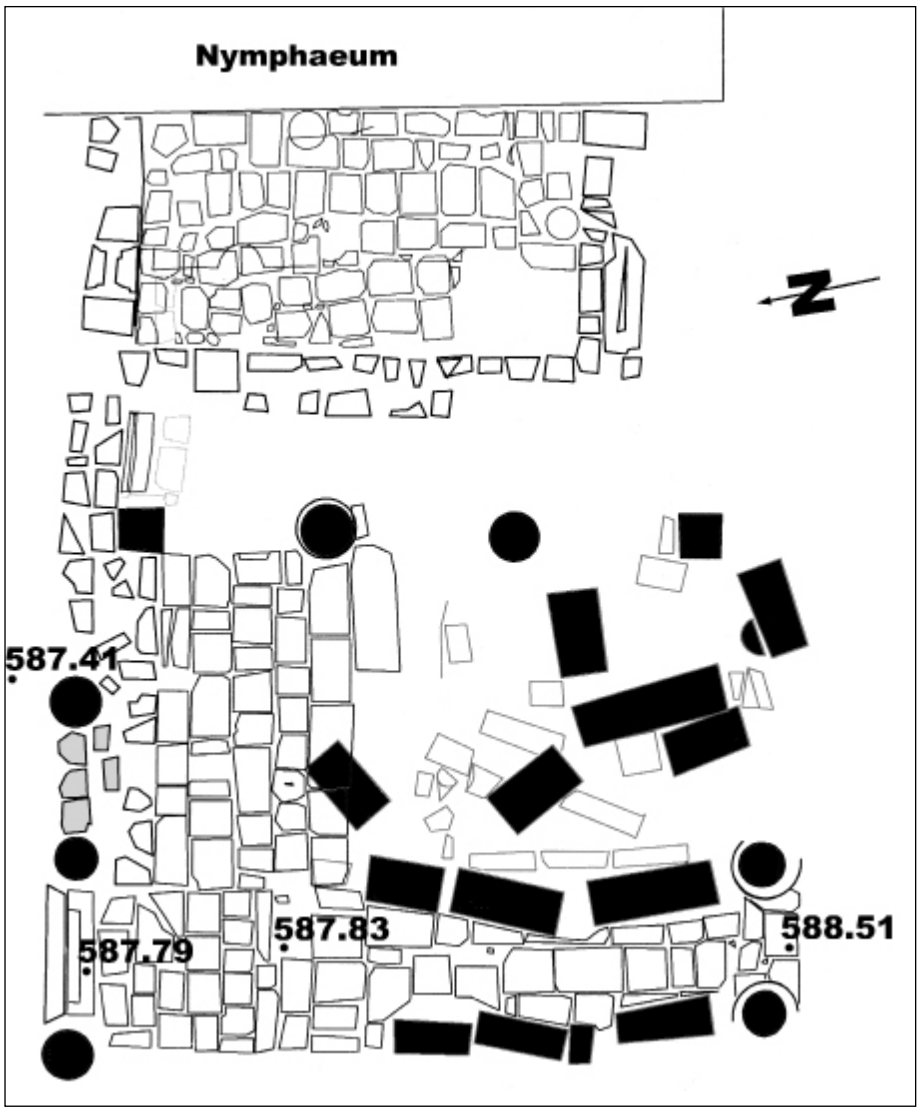
In sum, the whole area west of the Roman Nymphaeum and propylon were totally reconstructed by the Christians in the first half of the fifth century. Since this was a major undertaking which dramatically altered the appearance of 'downtown' Jarash, only a bishop, as opposed to a private patron, could have been responsible. If a bishop was indeed responsible for all this impressive building activity, the church would certainly have been the cathedral, although a baptistry has not yet been found.

I conclude with a brief description the area to the west of the Roman Nymphaeum, where we ex-

13. North wall of the quadriporticus and east wall of the nymphaeum (BB).

[22] One of the two inscriptions is mentioned by C.B. Welles, 'The Inscriptions' in Kraeling, *Gerasa*: No.70 (plate XXII.44.2).

cavated a quadriporticus (FIG. 14) with an open court in the middle. Since the problems of stratigraphy are rather complex I will summarise the most important results. The court was 8.30m wide and covered with reused flagstones. The flagstones we excavated belong to a second, late, phase. The first phase, which most probably dates to the first half of the fifth century, can be seen on the north side of the porticus where six columns stand *in situ* on a lower level. In contrast, the columns on the south side were erected at a higher level, though without fundament, which led to their fall during the earthquake of 748AD. These columns were 4.37m high. Their capitals were *spolia*. Some capitals were taken from the temple of Zeus, as Jacques Seigne pointed out. We found a remarkable early Imperial capital (FIG. 15) and also an *ex novo* sculptured capital of the fourth or fifth century (FIG. 16). The latter is particularly interesting because until now scholars have thought that production of capitals in Jarash came to an end during the third century. The porticoes around the court had a second storey which was paved with white floor mosaics. Such a floor mosaic fragment was found in a layer which preserved material from the collapse of this upper floor. The second porticus must have been rather elaborate with its variety of different capitals. Strangely enough it had no stone or marble architraves, which must have been made of wood. The whole porticus was in use until the eighth century, perhaps later. This is demonstrated by various datable coins of the seventh century. The most recent coin that we found was recovered from a room associated with the administration of the cistern and the water conduits, immediately to the west behind the nymphaeum wall. In a channel of this room we



14. Plan of the excavated quadriporticus and cortile (Angellini / Giletti).

15. Augustan capital (BB).

16. Late Antique capital (BB).

also uncovered a very nicely preserved glass flacon together with the Early Islamic coin of 706AD (FIG. 17). This coin is a clear proof of the Muslim presence at Jarash.

It was not the well-known earthquake of 748AD which marked the end of occupation within the quadriporticus.[23] A careful stratigraphic excavation revealed a 30cm thick dump immediately on top of the flagstones. This dump contained many animal bones and plenty of glass, ceramic and metal fragments, including some typical eighth century oil lamps. In other words it seems that the ecclesiasti-

17. Early Islamic coin from Damascus *ca*. 706AD (BB).

[23] D. Kalner-Amiran, A Revised Earthquake Catalogue of Palestine. *IEJ* 1 1950: 50-51; K.W. Russell, The Earthquake Chronology of Palestine and Northwest Arabia from the second through the mid-8th century AD. *BASOR* 1985: 37-59; A.A. Ostrasz, The Hippodrome of Gerasa: A Report on Excavations and Research 1982-1987, in Jerash Archaeological Project 1984-1988 II. Fouilles de Jérash. *Syria* 66 (1989): 75; Y. Tsafrir, G. Foerster, The Dating of the Earthquake of the Sabbatical Year 749 C.E. in Palestine. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London 55(2) 1992: 231-235.

cal activities conducted in the quadriporticus came to an end before the earthquake of 748AD, probably some time during the first half of the eighth century.