

JARASH, SPRING 2013

Rafe' Harahshah and Jacques Seigne

The administrative deep changes intervened at Jarash at the end of the year 2012 allowed a redeployment of the field activities on the site. From February 2013, Dr Rafe' Harahshah, representing the General Director of D.o.A. at Jarash, could manage technical and human staffs of the department and use them on the site to implement, with the help of the others competent Jordanian departments and that of the members of the French team, a policy too long impeded. In particular, from this date and during three months, it was possible to clean the different monuments from a big part of the abandoned materials and equipments which defaced them for years.

The iron broken pieces forgotten by the various festivals, the out-of-service installations for more than 20 years of former Sound and Light and, more generally, the garbage left by the tourists and the pupils were unsettled, gathered and removed from the site. Also, the out-of-service equipment of D.o.A., dating more than half a century, as broken wheelbarrows, broken pick-axes and others rusty fences, accumulated in the storerooms - or even outdoor in front of the antique monuments - were able to be finally displaced and evacuated thanks to the competent administrative committees. A noria of trucks was necessary to bring this task to a successful conclusion. Due to lack of sufficient financial support, that task was not completely led, but it is now possible to photograph *Gerasa* monuments without a group of broken loudspeakers, the oxidized iron structure of a forgotten festi-

val tent, rolls of old iron barbed wire, nor others broken dumper, Land Rover or forklift from the British mandate on Transjordan to appear on the corner of the picture.

At the same time, the crane and the workmen of the D.o.A., then in standby on the working area of the sanctuary of Zeus, were employed to arrange blocks and restore walls and structures in different points of the site:

1- The Thorough Clean-up of the Oval Plaza

The various blocks which had been stored there¹ - and forgotten - during years on the paved floor and/or in front of columns were systematically tidied up behind porticoes, after construction of a low wall of dry stones intended to retain lands at the level of the old excavation fronts. During this work, blocks were grouped by types, as much as it was possible. Several discoveries also came to reward this work of cleaning and arrangement, of which that of the second Corinthian half-capital of the Zeus sanctuary main entrance (unfortunately in a very bad state of preservation). In the main time, the fluted column and the block of frieze of the naos of Zeus, lying in the North side of the Plaza since...? decades, or, maybe, since the excavation of the entrance of the *Cardo* in 1931 by the Anglo-American mission, were transported on the sanctuary of Zeus.

2- The Center of the Oval Plaza

Was cleared of the south theater seats blocks reused in this place in Umayyad / Abbassid

1. Blocks left after former Anglo-Americans excavations done at the entrance of the *Cardo*, and the ones found during clearances led by H. Kalayan in 1980/1982 at the level of the oriental propylon of the sanctuary of Zeus. Beyond, it should be reminded that the area of the Oval Plaza served for a long time as store area for

antique blocks collected in and around Jerash by the members of the DoA. during rescue operations. This is, as example, the place where several milestones coming from the road *Gerasa / Philadelphia* were "discovered" (Seigne and Agusta-Boularot 1998, note 34, p. 275).

times. They were transported up to their monument of origin and grouped with the other seats discovered with the aim of a possible work of restoration (see under 4- the South Theater).

Conversely, the decorated blocks with molding profile, the three engraved ones with the large dedicatory inscription² (among which an unpublished one), as well as the blocks of the crowning found all around (even in the *Cardo*) but at present known as coming from the monument of the center of the Plaza designated as “the priestesses base”, were collected and grouped in the center of the paved area. With them, a partial restauration/anastylosis³ was done to allowed the protection of the inscription and the visitors a better comprehension of the structure of the Plaza.(**Fig. 1**)



1. Oval Plaza, the monument to the priestesses partially restored (before and after).

2. A block of this inscription was known for a long time (Welles 111). A second block had been found during the excavations led by Madam Iman Oweis in 1987 to the east side of the southern part of the *Cardo*, (unpublished, it was only mentioned in PL Gatier, 1988 p. 151). The third block, with the very subdued but still readable unknown text, stayed next to the foundation. Apparently it was never mentioned before. The whole reconstituted monument and the hypotheses of its destination were presented during the colloquium of Ber-

3- The 31st Column of the Oriental Portico of the Oval Plaza

Threatened ruin. The column presented a strong out of plumb (more than 25 cm) towards the Oval Plaza and thus towards the tourists but, more important, one of the architraves that it supported, was badly broken in its “*lit de pose*” and rested on the capital only by some few square centimeters. Having supported the column, and both architraves, a scaffold allowed to reach the various blocks and to notice the extreme fragility of the group as well as the impossibility to strengthen and restore elements in situ. It was thus decided to replace the broken architrave by another one, intact, kept on the ground and coming from the western destroyed extremity of the portico. This replacement being essential, it was also decided to take advantage of the imperative dismantling of architraves to proceed to the dismantling and complete reconstruction of the column. After registration of the existing state, the marking of blocks and relative positioning of each of them, both architraves were unsettled without any problem as well as the drums of the column (thanks to the usual dexterity of Raeiq Rihani, crane driver and to the technical team of DoA⁴). The removing of the base revealed that foundation blocks support accused a grave defect of horizontality and that years had pulled them to dislocation. The restoration of the column thus began with the rebuilding of the foundation support, stones of which being put back to the horizontal and reconnected together. The reconstruction of the column itself (and its return to verticality) raised no problem, nor the setting of both architraves, the original one to the East, a “new” antique, identical, healthy one on the West (**Fig. 2**).

4- The South Theater

After the Oval Plaza, it was decided to proceed to the partial arrangement of the blocks of

lin (*ICHAJ* 2013) by one of us (J.S).

3. The various blocks were simply “presented”. The anastylosis is only partial, limited to a part of the molded decorated base, the three inscribed blocks and part of the crowning molding. Due to lack of time and money, the first row of stones, over the molded base, was not restored. The monument thus has not, in its current presentation, its initial height.

4. Supervised by Dr Rafe Harahshah, and Ali Oweissi, Adnan Mujally. Najeh Abu Hamdan, Khuder Al- Absi.



2. Oval Plaza: the disassembled and anastylosis of column 31.

the South Theater and in the clearance of the area situated in to the North of the stage building. After evacuation of the numerous various modern fragments (wood, scraps, broken furniture and diverse vestiges of twenty years of festivals) for which several trucks were necessary, blocks situated in front of the current main entrance of the theater were tidied up by types (columns, capitals, architraves,...) on one of the terraces existing in the North, at the foot of the hill. During these arrangements several interesting blocks were discovered (or rediscovered):

- Many blocks richly decorated from the *scaenae frons*;
- Many seats with back⁵, coming from the 15th rank of seats of the *cavea*, row completely forgotten at the time of the former restorations. The found blocks are sufficiently numerous to ensure 70% of the restoration of this line. Moreover they carry, engraved, the indications of the number of place for those pertaining to both side *cunei*. The places, in these two lower *cunei* were well planned there for 300 people in each one⁶. All the accessible seats discovered were gathered in the north-western angle of the theatre for a possible restoration.
- A large fragment of the base of a white marble statue,
- Another fragment of white marble statue (the

5. In the theatres of the Eastern Province the seats with backs, often compared to the seats of proëdrie with good reasons in much of theatres, correspond in fact to the last higher line of seats of the *ima cavea* where they seem to have constituted a parapet along the *praecinctio*, generally very narrow. After numbering and measuring all the seats found, Lorraine Abou-Azizeh, process with a first restitution on paper for a possible project of reconstitution of this functional element of

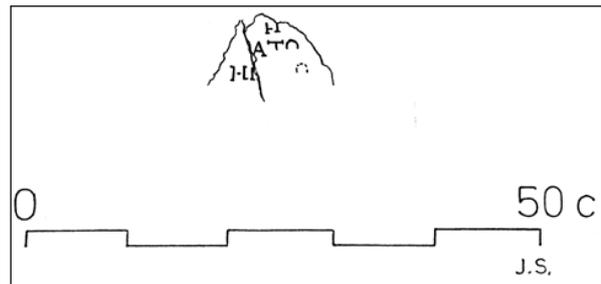
same one?) carrying some letters of an inscription in three lines at least, undoubtedly corresponding to the “signature” of the sculptor (Fig. 3).

.....H.....
ATO...
 ...HI.....

The inscription to which these few preserved letters belonged will undoubtedly remain forever incomprehensible. It is mentioned here only as a new testimony of the “signatures” of sculptor discovered on the site⁷.

These fragments of sculpture were gathered, in an especially arranged reserve, with the other marble parts found on the site. They will be studied soon by Dr. Thomas Weber, within the framework of the inventory of the ancient statues of *Gerasa*. Let us recall simply here that the inscriptions discovered reveal that several statues decorated the South Theatre, of which a representation of Justice (see for example Welles 53 in Kraeling 1938 p. 399/400). One of the statues was disengaged from the debris during the first work of consolidation and of restoration carried out there is nearly one century. It would have been transported in Jerusalem (Kraeling, 1938, p. 20, note 37).

The base of a small red hard limestone altar, very badly broken. Originally equipped with four independent feet, square sections, it carries three more or less fragmentary lines of a text written in Greek (Fig. 4) :

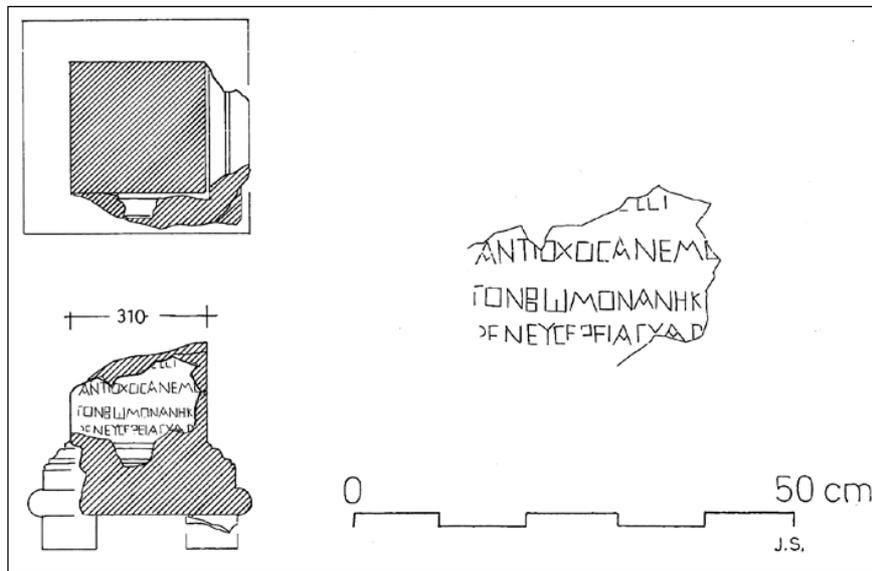


3. South Theatre area: copy of the inscription on marble discovered during cleaning. (survey and drawing J. S.).

the southern theatre. A first study shows that 70 to 80 % of the seats are preserved.

6. The characteristics raised on the various seats and raised during years will be presented soon in a note devoted to the South Theatre.

7. Several other signatures of artists, on marble statues, are known on the site. They will be published soon by Thomas Weber.



4. South Theatre area: drawing of the fragment inscribed altar found during cleaning. (survey and drawing J. S.).

ANTIOXOCANEMO....
 ΤΟΝΒΩΜΟΝΑΝΗΚ...
 ...ΕΝΕΥΣΕΒΕΙΑΣΧΑΡ..

This altar was transported to the module of the “camp of the archaeologists” that Doctor Harahshah made reserved with the fragments inscribed.

5- The Sanctuary of Artémis

The legibility of the largest sanctuary of the site was badly reduced by several parks of blocks distributed on all over the surface of the court. In particular, the tourists could not understand the organization of the Eastern side of the *téménos*, nor to even see the large water tank arranged along the southernmost face of the temple. Initially, the parks of blocks were reorganized. As possible, the majority of the architectural elements were gathered out of the court, in the back of the southern portico. As far as possible also, the bases of pilasters, columns, the drums of columns, ... were laid out so as to suggest the various structures, porticos and their annexes of the southern side. The contribution of fill made it possible to level the over excavated parts of the court, in particular on the level of the various cavities cut in the rock which presented a real danger to the public (falls). In addition, the water tank was released of the blocks which encumbered it, and cleaned on all its surface previously excavated. Lastly, the molded blocks marking its edge and found in various points of the site (see in particular Church of St Theodore), were col-

lected and then repositioned on its edges, getting back its legibility to this essential element of the Artemis courtyard installations. Among the water tank molded blocks found during the clearance, several belonged to a small hemicycle. Perhaps they formed the Western end (not excavated) of the basin and could correspond to the point of arrival of water.

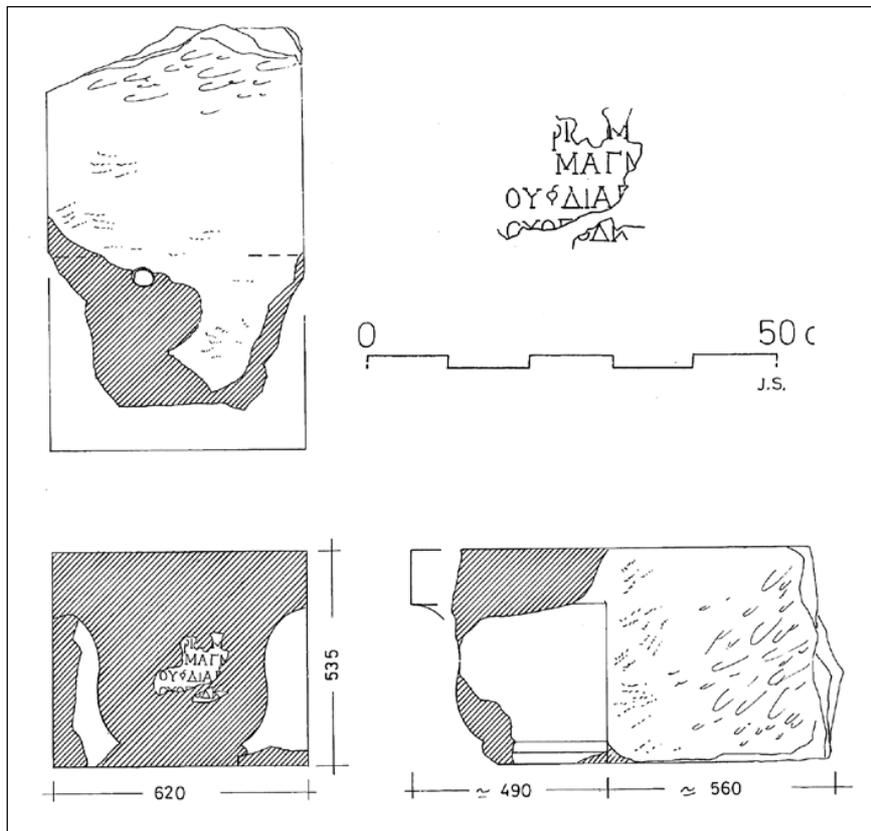
Lastly, several drums of columns were placed so as to suggest the ancient structure and organization of the Eastern portico of the court, completely disappeared today.

During this work of cleaning and arrangement, six inscribed blocks were found.

- **The first** corresponds to a white hard limestone console, of a well attested type at *Gerasa*, in particular along the western side of *Cardo*. Originally embedded in a wall it was used as support with a statue, in that case probably out of bronze. The main face suffered unfortunately a lot and the inscription is very fragmentary but seems unpublished (**Fig. 5**).

.....
ΦΙ...Μ.....
ΜΑΓΝ.....
ΟΥ*ΔΙΑ.....
ΟΥΟΠΟΔΩ..

- **The second** block, out of pink hard limestone, corresponds to a profiled base of pilaster (?) or of anta (?) of a small structure (walls of 0,29 m width). Visible on three sides, it received,



5. Sanctuary of Artemis: the inscribed console. (survey and drawing J. S.).

embedded to its principal face, a relief, in the front shape type stele, probably in marble (or of bronze?), today missing. The upper part of crowning carries an inscription in Greek, quite readable but broken on the left. The text is apparently new, unpublished (Fig. 6).

.....ΑΣΟΣΤΗΝΔΕΤΟΝ

That block was left on the site, with the console

- **The third** corresponds to the profiled crowning of a pink hard limestone pilaster (Fig. 7) and carries the simple words:

ΑΓΑΘΗΤΥΧΗ

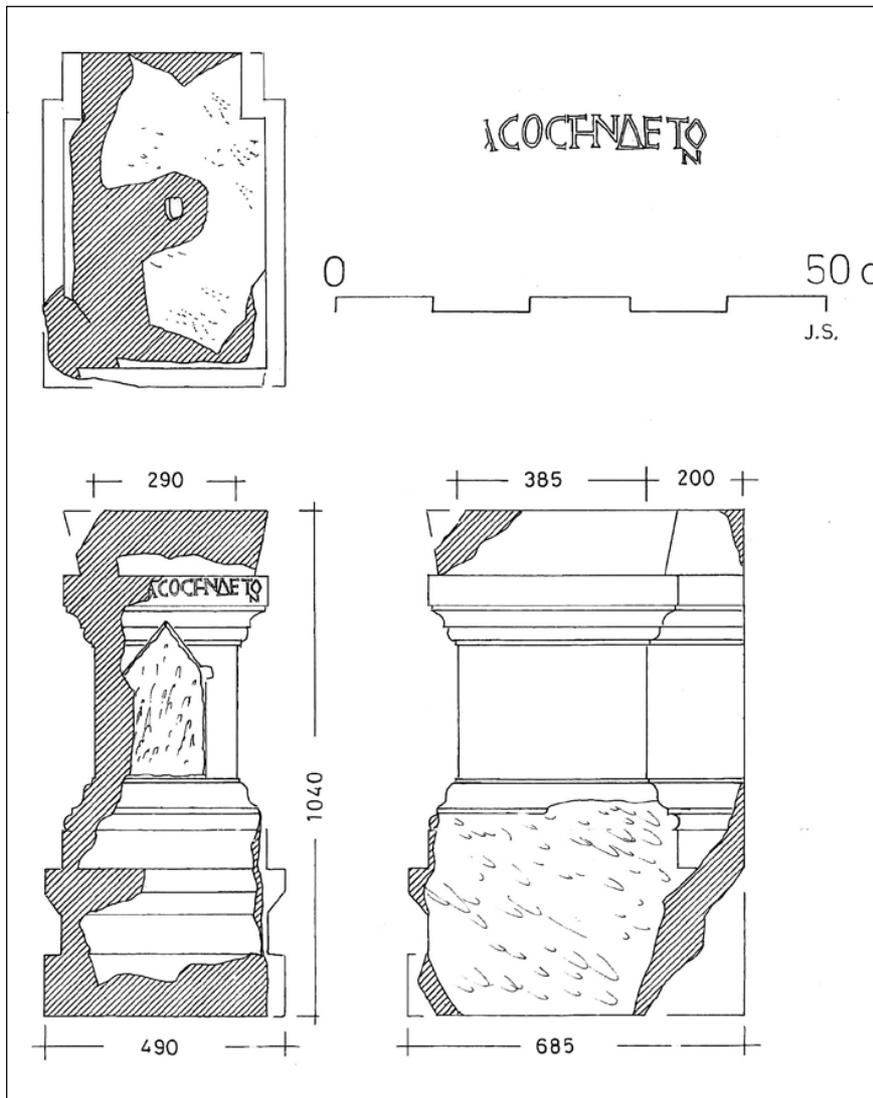
The block is partly broken on the left and the molding of crowning was chiseled and taken away (probably during its re-use in a building of Byzantine time or later. In spite of the absence of any trace of sealing on the waiting bed, this block of crowning probably corresponded to the top of a base of statue, probably made up of three blocks. It is possible to estimate at 0,65m approximately the width of the die (deep of 0,34m) on which was to be engraved the con-

tinuation of the inscription.

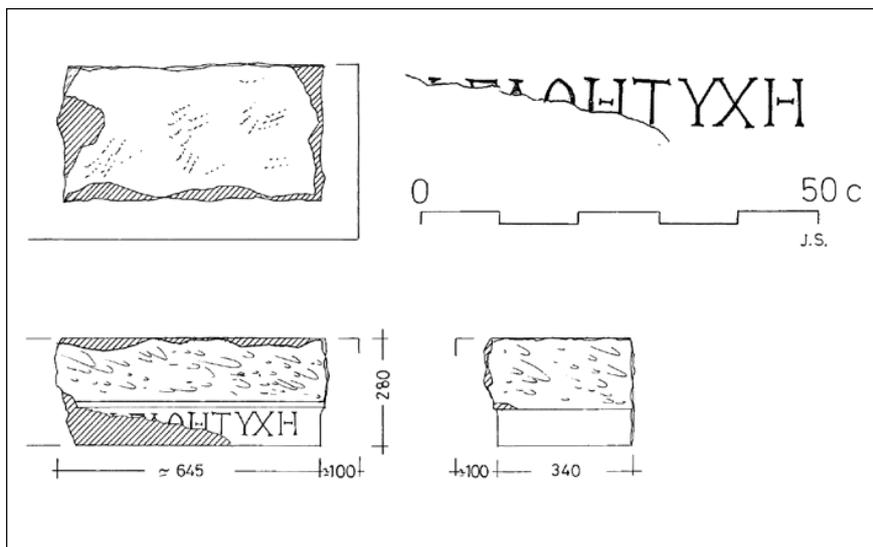
- **The fourth** is a base of column, octagonal, out of white hard limestone, probably coming from a building demolished in the modern city. It was deposited in the courtyard of the sanctuary of Artémis at the same time as other blocks recovered during modern work, the *téménos* of the goddess having been used a long time as temporary place of storage for the ancient elements recovered by the members of D.o.A. during rescue operations. This base carries an inscription, like more than ten of its similar, most of the time of funerary character (see for example Welles 86, 102, 139, 238, 239, ... in Kraeling 1938). This one is apparently new and the inscription unpublished (Fig. 8):

ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥΑΠΙΟΛ
ΛΟΦΑΝΟΥΣΒΥΛ

- **The fifth** is also another base of octagonal column, out of white hard limestone, coming, probably and like the preceding one, of the modern city. Deposited at another place that the preceding one, with other blocks (including one Tra-



6. Sanctuary of Artemis: inscribed wall anta base. (survey and drawing J. S.).



7. Sanctuary of Artemis: inscribed coronation block. (survey and drawing J. S.).



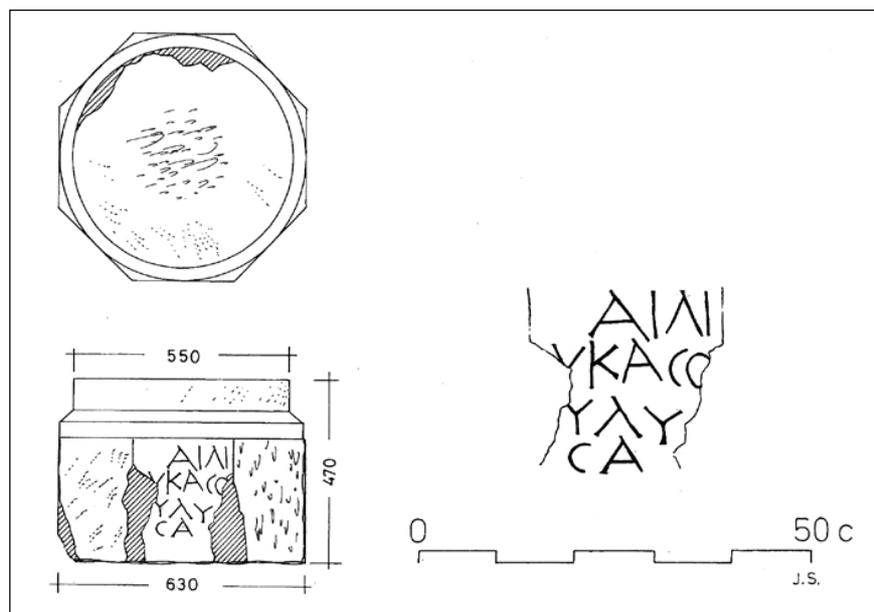
8. Sanctuary of Artemis: inscribed octagonal base. (survey and drawing J. S.).

jan milestone⁸), it was probably not found at the same place nor at the same time as the preceding one. Like the preceding one, it carries an inscription, apparently also new (Fig. 9):

ΑΙΛΙ
ΥΚΑΣΟ
ΥΛΥ
ΣΑ

- **The sixth** block corresponds to a broad fragment (right) of the lintel in soft limestone of the main door of the church of the Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs (Welles 298, inscription gone back to 464/465 AD). This block had been seen only by Wetzstein in 1863. The members of the

great Anglo-American mission of the beginning of the XX^o century mention it like “disappeared” in 1928 (Kraeling, 1938, p. 256). Its sudden rediscovery on top of the hill (the church was near Ain Karawan spring) can appear surprising but confirms the interest of the surveys carried out on the demolition sites of the Circassian houses by the members of D.o.A. It is possible to think that, at the beginning of XXth century, this fragment of lintel had been re-used in the masonry of the house that a “circassian notable, ... Ibrahim BEY “ made build about 1920 exactly on the site of the ruins of the church. The recent construction of a small market building on the same site - and thus after the demolition



9. Sanctuary of Artemis: inscribed octagonal base. (survey and drawing J. S.).

8. That milestone, as well as some others ones found recently on the site of Jerash was published in 1998 (Sei-

gne et Agusta-Boularot, 1998, miliaire 3, p.275/277

of the circassian installations, probably involve its reappearance “ (when? this block had been seen in 2008 by one of us, at the edge of the water tank of the sanctuary of Artémis, mixed with other blocks coming from the modern city).

This block corresponds to the right fragment of the lintel of the church⁹. It is broken on the left and presents a face worked on the right but which to be only the consequence of the re-employment in the modern house (Fig. 10), but it is also possible that the lintel was broken in three fragments for a very long time, the right part of the text seen by Wetzstein in 1863 being restored (see Kraeling 1938 p: 476).

...ΟΥΚΑ...ΔΙΟΥΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ.....
 ...ΤΩΝΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΩΝΜΑΡΤΥΡΩ..
 ...ΤΩΖΚΦΕΤΕΙΧΡΓΙΝΔΙΚ.....

The block is now stored in front of the entry of the museum of the site.

6- The Lane to the Bath of Placcus

After the arrangement of the various blocks which encumbered it, the south-eastern corner of the Artemis *téménos* became accessible to the D.o.A. crane. From there, it became possible to reach the street skirting the southernmost limit of the sanctuary and part of the thermal Baths of Placcus. This possibility was used to release the lane of the many blocks which encumbered it and to return it all its width and accessibility.

At the time of the great excavation of 1931¹⁰, many blocks of the sanctuary of Zeus (blocks of frieze, pediment of door, coffered ceilings, columns, architraves,...), had been found in the ruins of the Baths of Placcus. Brought in this place at the Byzantine time they had been integrated in the various buildings raised by the bishop Plac-

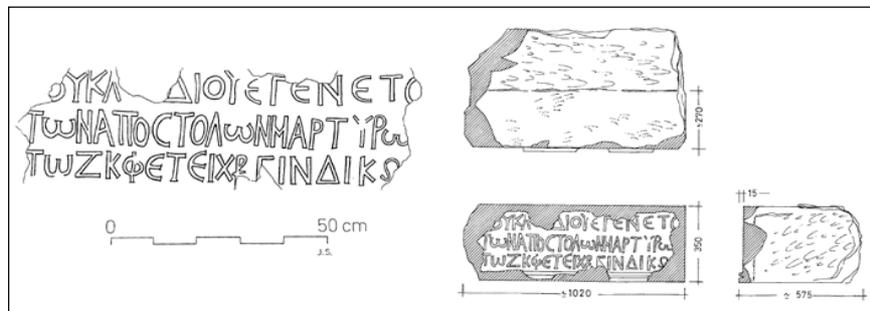
cus. After their discovery, from 1927 to 1933, they were stored “ temporarily “ in the street and its vicinities. Several of them could be recovered and transferred onto the sanctuary of Zeus, in preparation for their future partial *anastylosis*.

During these releases, a great circular base of statue (Fig. 11), out of white hard limestone, was also found, between the lane and the old museum. It carries an apparently new dedication to Geminius Marcianus. This legate of Arabia is well attested at Gerasa like on the milestones of the area¹¹. The original location of the base is unknown. It seems to be brought in the angle of the sanctuary of Artémis “ about 1980 “ (?) with other elements recovered “ in the modern city “ (possibly from the area of the Great East Baths) and would have rolled to the foot of the southern Artemis *peribolos* wall during years. It was transported and gathered with the other inscribed blocks deposited beside the Ottoman building.

The inscription, in five lines of Greek, can be read without difficulties:

ΓΕΜΙΝΙΟΝΜΑΡΚΙ
 ΑΝΟΝΥΠΙΑΤΙΚΟΝ
 ΗΠΙΟΛΙΣΑΜΟΙΡΑ
 ΑΦΗΝΙΩΝΟΥΕΠΙ
 ΜΕΛΗΤΟΥ

Lastly, the old project of partial *anastylosis* of the entry portico of the Baths of Placcus that one of us (J.S.) had proposed several years ago, was done; in 1931, the Anglo-American diggers found all the drums and capitals of the six columns having formed the entry on street of the balneal complex. They stored the columns drums at the east of the baths in the not excavated part of the lane. They were found at the same place in 1983. The six capitals ap-

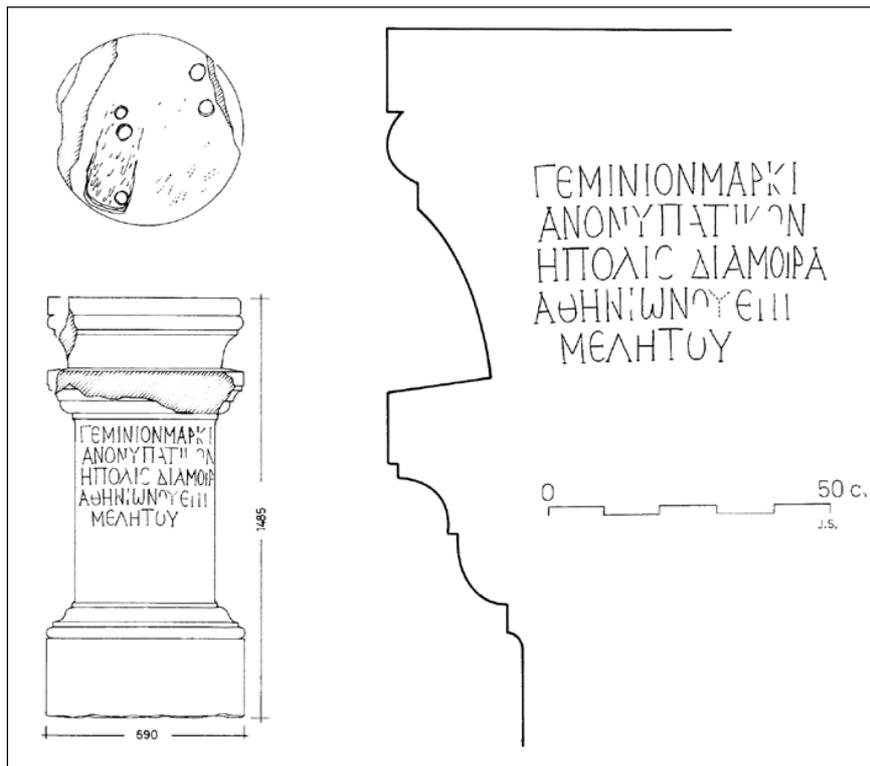


10. Sanctuary of Artemis: lintel of the Church of the Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs. (survey and drawing J. S.)

9. Welles 298, p. 476 in Kraeling 1938.

10. Kraeling 1938, C.S. Fisher C.S. The Baths of Placcus, p. 265, See also Fisher C.S. 1931.

11. See, for example, Welles 258 in Kraeling 1938, p. 463, Seigne J. et Augusta-Boularot S. 1998, p. 278 ...



11. Placcus lane: *Geminus Marcianus base* (survey and drawing J. S.).

pear gathered in the street, in front of the entry of the baths, on a series of photographs taken at the time of the excavations. The architraves and the majority of the frieze blocks, discovered in 1927/1928 during the restoration work of old Artemis south *cryptoporticus* into a museum for the site, could be seen today in the front wall of entry of the museum. All these blocks, coming from the sanctuary of Zeus, had been inventoried, drawn and photographed at the time of our researchs undertaken between 1982 and 1996. If this preliminary work, in connection with the graphic restitutions of the sanctuary of Zeus, had made it possible to find all the drums of the six columns and the two bases found in 1931, four of the six capitals found in 1931 as well as a dozen blocks of the frieze of the naos (however stored inside the museum as several 1950 photographs show it) could not be found today on the site. In 1992, thanks to the ancient marks engraved on the waiting beds and the visible faces of the various drums, the graphic reconstitution of the six columns had been carried out. Each of it was made up of a base, three drums

and a capital,. The *anastylosis* of these columns could be done without any problem and it was decided to rebuilt four of them on the entry of the baths, holding two complete supports for future restaurations/*anastylosis* of the sanctuary of Zeus. Curiously in 2013 only 15 of the 18 drums were found. A base of column also was untraceable. We thus should admit that between 1996 and 2013 a complete column disappeared from the site (unfortunately made up of drums of several different columns, “ the borrower “ not having noticed that each element carried an ancient construction marks). As the ones “lost” between 1950 and 1982, these blocks, at the present time, were not found, even in USA or in Egypt¹². Despite that situation, four columns could be rebuilt. They decorate and mark again the entry of the Baths of Placcus (**Fig. 12**)

7- Saint-Théodore Church.

The large church dedicated to St Theodore was excavated in 1928 by the members of the Anglo-Saxon teams at the time of the great excavations former to the second world war. Al-

12. Some columns from Gerasa were given, officially, to USA and Egypt, at different occasions (international

exhibition, memorial to His Majesty King Hussein,).



12. Placcus main entrance, before and after.

though partially restored in 1977¹³ the building and its atrium had remained encumbered with various vestiges (blocks and dump). Once more,

with the help of the crane of the D.o.A., the whole of the monument could be cleaned, the scattered blocks take out and store properly outside the nave. The southern wall of the church, and its various doors, partly ploughed up was restored, the jambs of the doors rebuilt (Fig. 13, a, b, c, d, e, f). The principal apse, threatening ruin, also was partially dismantled and re-built.

During this work, the blocks of the naos of Zeus, re-used like bases of the triumphal arch, were released, cleaned, photographed and drawn (from these documents modern stone copies could be done to reconstitute on the Zeus sanctuary the room where oracle was held, ... the day when financial means will make it possible). Parallel to this consolidation/restoration work, the wandering blocks pertaining either to the sanctuary of Zeus (profiled bases of the podium of the naos) or to the sanctuary of Artémis (more than ten profiled blocks of the crowning of the water tank) and found in the various stone deposits, were gathered and transferred onto the respective sanctuaries. Only the north side of the church, out of the crane reach, could only be very partially cleaned.

During these works, the block carrying the inscription Welles 136, re-used as base of the church altar¹⁴ (?), was released and drawn. It is



13a, b, c, d, e, f. St Théodore: South wall, before and after.

13. The columns of the nave and of the atrium were restored, as well as the main façade of the church in 1977/1979 under Kalayan H. supervision.

14. Welles C.B. wrote "...block re-used as the southwest base of the baldachino in the chancel..."(p.422),

which is not true. That block is *in situ*, at the center of the apse. There is a symmetric stone, without inscription, and the two stones were more probably parts of supports for the main altar of the church.

about the upper part of a square section pink hard limestone altar of Roman time, seen on its four sides, and whose crowning molding was completely cut away. The block is thus complete in width, and, in spite of the bindings, the letters of reduced sizes and the breaks, the inscription cannot seem to be restored as proposed by C.B. Welles¹⁵, unless imagining strange abbreviations (**Fig. 14**):

ΥΠΕΡΘΗΣΤΩΝΣΕΝ.....
 ΣΩΤΗΡΙΑΣΝΑΤ.....
 ΡΑΣ*ΣΑΜΣΑΙΟΝ.....
 ΦΑΝΟΝΤΟΝΑΙΘΙ.....
 ...ΥΣΕΒΩΝΑΝΕ.....

Among the blocks left in the nave by the Anglo-Saxon diggers the top of another altar of hard white limestone was found. Inscribed, it was published by C.B. Welles under number 138 (**Fig. 15**):

ΑΓΑΘΕ.....
 Υ.....

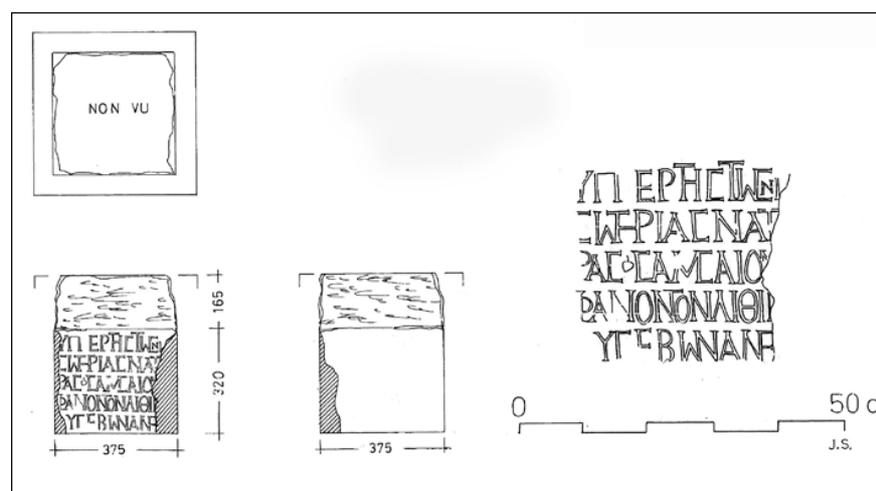
In addition, the fragment carrying the beginning of the famous inscription Welles 300¹⁶, found during cleanings, was fixed with the restored lintel.

In the east, the wall of the church annexes, south of the three church main doors, was partially rebuilt, after dismantling/rebuilding of the collapsed parts. The found blocks of the two niches framing the entrance door of the baptis-

try, were partly re-installed. The baptistry itself was completely disengaged from the fallen blocks which encumbered it, its walls cleaned and consolidated. The room located at its northern outlet, adjacent to the church, was also disengaged from the fallen blocks, its northern door threatening ruin, was dismantled and rebuilt, the two niches of the Eastern face reconstituted with their blocks of origin. Lastly, the large chapel, located at the south of the complex was entirely cleaned, the blocks of its apse repositioned, the doors jambs blocks of the north and west openings on the atrium, found among the broken elements deposits, re-installed on the thresholds of their respective bays.

The same work of cleaning/storage was undertaken in the atrium where three of the columns of the northern portico and two of the southern one were partially rebuilt (**Fig. 16**). Western side, at the edge of the street, the release of the ploughed up blocks which encumbered the main entry made it possible to clean and show to the tourists the two fountains flanking the central passage. The stairway giving on the court was restored, steps rebuilt and the passage largely embanked and leveled. A layer of gravel came to supplement the general presentation and as protection of the few remaining pieces of mosaics.

At the base of the northern jamb of the main eastern door, on the interior side, was found the

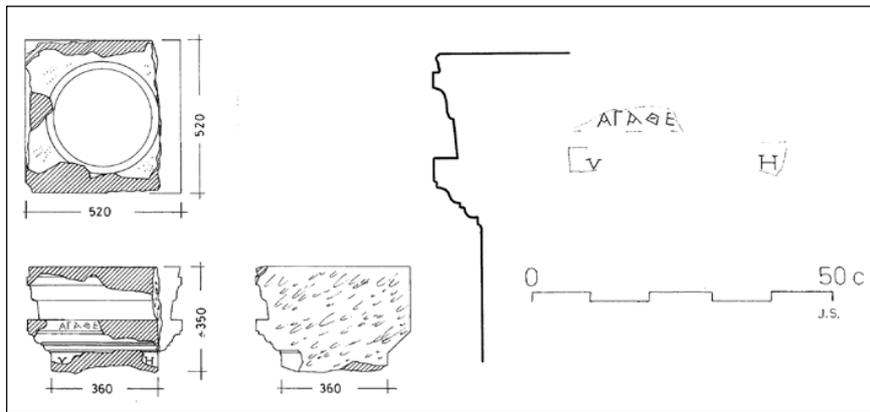


14. Block with inscription Welles 136 (survey and drawing J. S.).

15. See Welles C.B. in Kraeling C.H., 1938, p. 423.

16. The lintel, broken in three pieces, with the inscription Welles 300, was correctly re-erected on top of the main entrance of the church during the 1977/1979

restoration works, but with the inscription wrongly turned to the exterior and not to the interior of the church, as it was mentioned by all the travelers.



15. Block with inscription Welles 138 (survey and drawing J. S.).



16. St Théodore: atrium, before and after.

block carrying the Latin inscription Welles 209, considered as funerary¹⁷.

.....ΧΙΟΓΑΙΑΝΟΠΙΝΧ

In fact it is a block of crowning out of white hard limestone, of a great non monolithic (probably three pieces) base of statue - probably out of bronze as the two holes of sealing visible with its waiting bed testify -, originally leaned with a monument (or a wall) (Fig. 17). Its funerary character is not thus proven, the more so as a

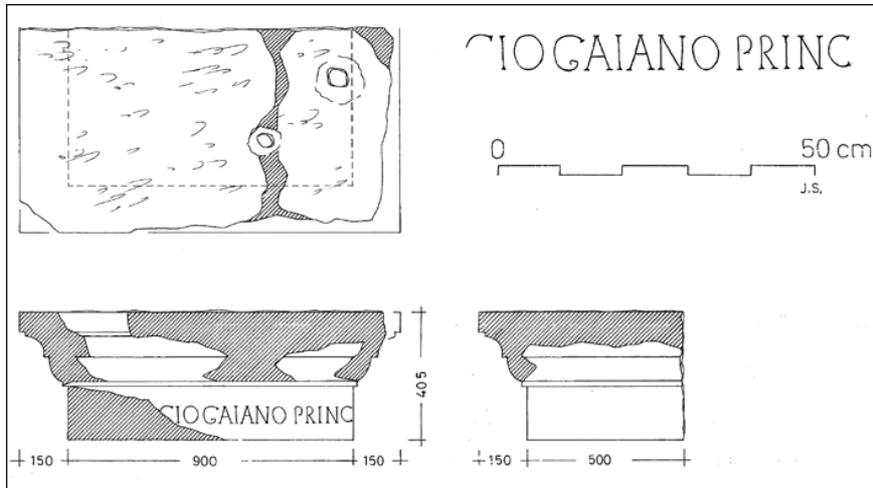
similar crowning block, having also carried a statue, was found on Northern *Decumanus*¹⁸ (we give here copy of the inscription and the drawing of the block (Fig. 18).

ΘΜΑΡΧΙΟΓΑΙΑΝΟ

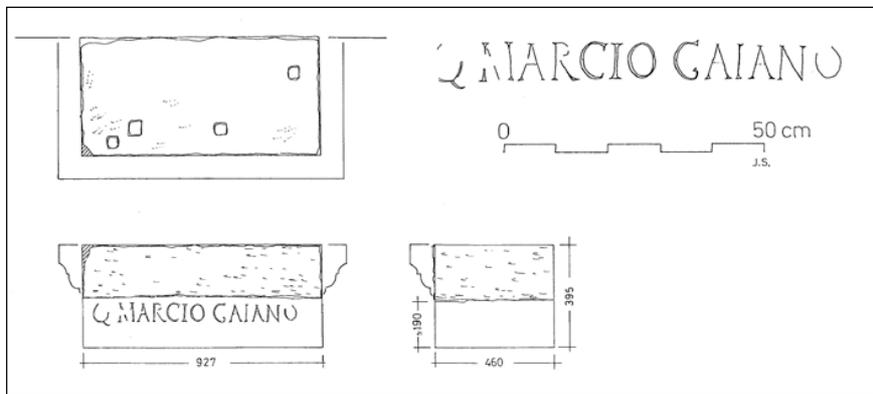
To the south of the entry, a hammered block of the great dedication of the sanctuary of Artémis (?) was found (Fig. 19), re-used like facing of a cross wall of the structures leaned with the Western limit wall. Like the majority of its simi-

17. Welles C.B. published it as a “funerary inscription”.

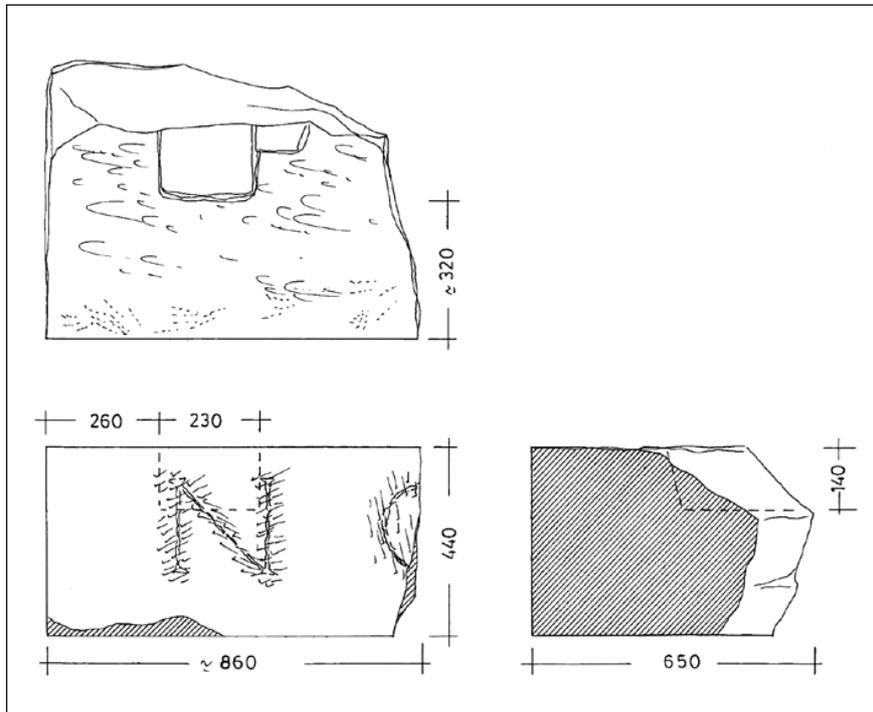
18. See Bowsher J. 1986, p. 384-385.



17. Block with inscription Welles 209 (survey and drawing J. S.).



18. Inscription from North Decumanus (survey and drawing J. S.).



19. St Theodore atrium. Inscribed block (survey and drawing J. S.).

lar¹⁹, it carries simply two letters and its waiting bed presents a housing for a beam:

.....NO.....

The two fragments of the right half of the lintel of the western main door of access to the atrium and carrying the inscription Welles 299, also found during cleanings, were presented in front of the entry, at the base of the right jamb of the door. The left fragment of the famous inscription, formerly re-used as lintel of a door of house of the circassian village, is deposited today in the garden of the museum of the site. It would be possible - and desirable - that the three pieces of this important inscription can be presented correctly close to the monument to which the lintel belonged. This operation is considered within the framework of a second phase of work on the site which could also include:

- the reconstitution on the ground, but vertically and out of reach of the tourists of the great dedicatory inscription of the Hadrian Arch (forgotten during recent work of restoration)
- the reconstitution of the 15th row of seats of the South Theatre and re-installation of the "back seats".
- adjustment of the accesses to the ottoman building with the creation of a "lapidarium" where would be gathered part of the inscribed and carved blocks of the site.... all that while

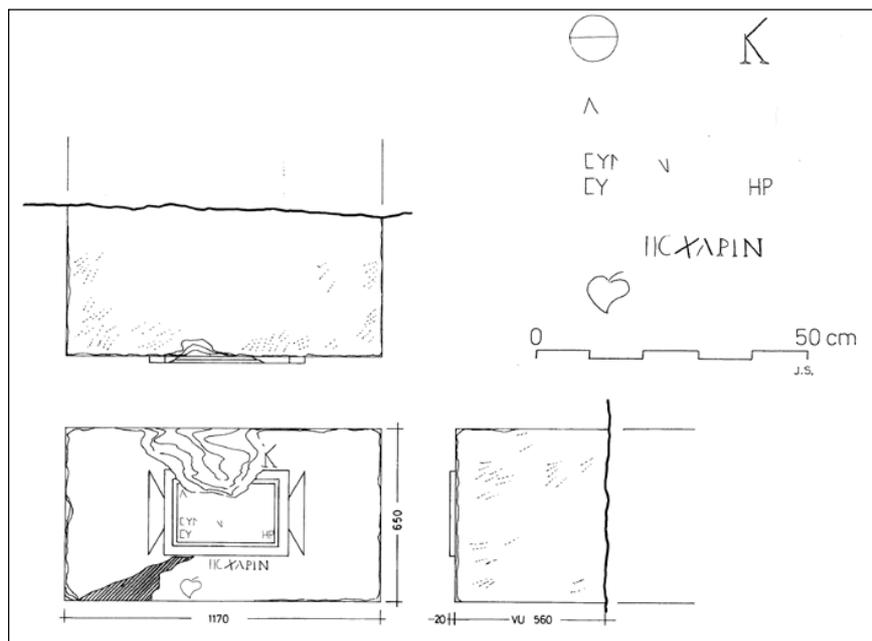
waiting for the creation of a real archaeological museum for *Gerasa*, with adapted structures for work and storage.

Jarash 12 -2013

Complement:

Work was also going on in the modern town. Near the South Gate, under the modern road Amman Irbid, the excavation done along the city wall for the construction of a new restaurant, allowed the clearance of the lower courses of the fortification. In that area, the wall was rebuilt during Byzantine time and a lot of stones coming from the hippodrome, the South necropolis, were reused in the wall. One of these stones, a hard yellowish limestone block, with an inscribed *tabula ansata* was put back to light. It was first seen by Jones 80 years ago and published by C.B. Welles under n° 237 in Gerasa, city of the Decapolis (Kraeling 1938). Unfortunately the block was partially broken by the bulldozer, but it was still possible to draw it. The text inside the tabula was quite totally cut away (**Fig. 20**).

That block is well dressed on at least three faces (the fourth one, inside the wall, is totally invisible). It belonged most probably to a funerary monument from the Southern necropolis



20. City Wall, east of South Gate: Block with inscription Welles 237 (survey and drawing J. S.).

19. See Seigne J. 2012

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