

A NEW MILESTATION FROM THE ROMAN ROAD GERASA/PHILADELPHIA

by

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In the spring of 1996 the systematic prospection of the Roman road from Jarash (Gerasa) to 'Ammān (Philadelphia)¹ enabled us to find the exact position of milestation 6 from Gerasa. The position of that milestation was expected, not only by the distances from known milestations 4 and 8, but also by the discovery, in 1995, on the slope of a hill known as "Ummamahat 'Imran", of the bulldozed possible remains of a watch-tower.² On 19 May 1996, during a re-examination of the area a milestone was found partially buried in a field planted with olive trees, at about 200 m to the north of the cistern and of the remains of the watch-tower found in 1995. During the careful examination of the area a second milestone was found completely buried near the first one. The broken pieces of one more (number 3) were discovered reused in a stone wall, 50 m to the north.

The next day, with the help of Musa Smadeh, deputy inspector of the De-

partment of Antiquities at Jarash, and some of our workmen, and, of course, the kind authorization of the owner of the land, the completely buried milestone was unearthed. That milestone (no. 2) was inscribed with three different inscriptions (see below).

- The first milestone (no.1) was moved only in July, due to the presence of plantations over it. That stone was also inscribed, but the text was badly damaged (see below).
- The fragments of the third one, badly damaged, were apparently uninscribed.
- During the month of July and under the supervision of Ali Moussa, inspector of the Department of Antiquities at Jarash, the milestones were removed to the side of the field, near the modern road, where they were re-erected.³

Milestone 1 (Fig.1)

Monolithic milestone with cubic base, in soft limestone. Circular drum with large

1. This prospection was done with the kind authorization of Dr Ghazi Bisheh, Director-General of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan after the accidental discovery of four milestones on top of Jabal al-'Ālūk in December 1994 (A.-M. Rasson-Seigne et J. Seigne, Notes préliminaires à l'étude de la voie romaine Gerasa/Philadelphia, *ADAJ* 39, 1995: 193 - 210). In 1995/1996 the whole of the Roman road was explored on foot (J. Seigne with the help of Ghazi Hidjazi, of I.F.A.P.O.). A great number of the milestones seen last century (see particularly J. Germer-Durand, *Exploration épigraphique de Gerasa*, *RB* 1895: 374 - 400, J. Germer-Durand, *Nouvelle exploration épigraphique de Gerasa*, *RB* 1899: 5 - 39, R. E. Brünnow and A. von Domaszewski, *PA* II, 1904: 228 - 233, P. Thomsen, *Die römischen Meilensteine der Provinzen Syria, Arabia und Palestina*, *ZDPV* 11, 1917: 61 - 65) and considered as lost (see Th. Bauzou, *A Finibus Syriae. Recherches sur les*

routes des frontières orientales de l'Empire Romain. Doctoral thesis, Paris 1989) were found, mostly in private houses, in the northern suburbs of 'Ammān (thanks to Mrs Afaf Al-Cha'rani Maraka and Hind Dabbas Maraka). Some others were discovered still *in situ* (milestations 2, 3, 8, 9 of Gerasa), but a lot of unknown ones were found during the systematic exploration, particularly from the milestations 6, 7, 11, 12 of Gerasa (milestations unknown by the earlier explorers except 7); 14, 12, 11, 10, 9, 6, 4 of Philadelphia.

2. See A.-M. Rasson-Seigne et J. Seigne, *op.cit.*: 199.

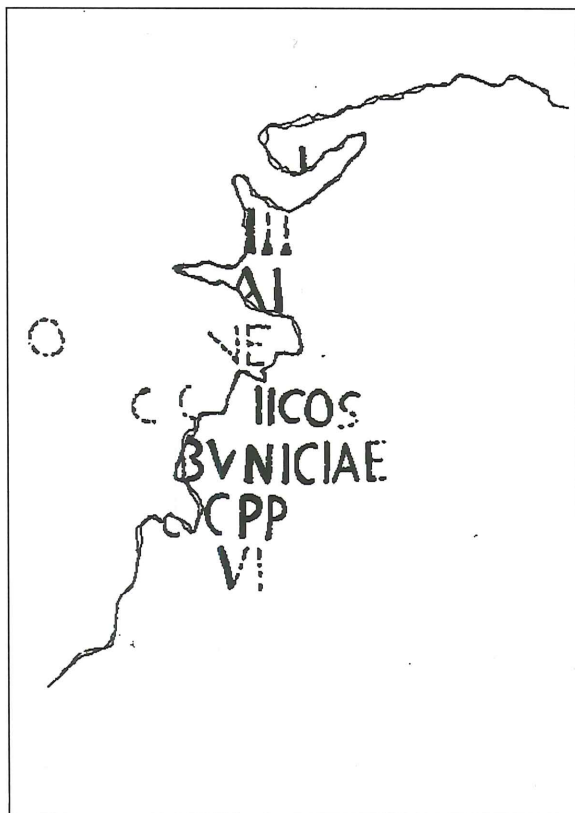
3. The re-erection of these stones was decided for different reasons: problems of storage of such stones in Jarash; possibility, in the future, to follow the Roman road by tourists; to try to interest people in the protection of their patrimony. Only milestone 1 was re-erected in July, due to some technical problems.

traces of water erosion and plough marks. Complete. Total length: 192 cm, length of the drum: 132 cm. Diameter: 58 cm.

Traces of a Latin inscription preserved on the upper part of the drum.

Inscription

1 ? [-----]
 [-----]I
 [-----]III
 [-----]AI
 5 ? [----]O[----]NE
 [-----]CC[---]IICOS
 [-----]BVNICIAE
 [-----]CPP
 [-----]VI
 10 ? [-----]



1. Milestone 1.

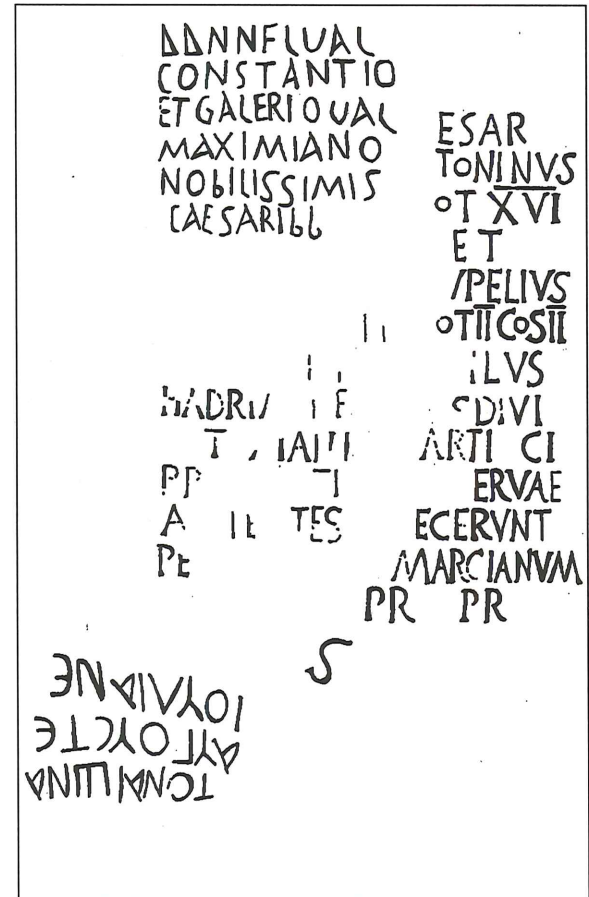
It is actually very difficult to say anything precise from these simple letters, except that this milestone was inscribed.

Milestone 2 (Fig. 2)

Column drum without base nor moulding, in white/yellowish hard limestone. Completely preserved. Independent support base not found. Traces of water erosion and of plough marks.

Height: 177 cm, diameter: 59 cm (base), 54 cm (top).

Three different inscriptions, two in Latin, the third in Greek.



2. Milestone 2.

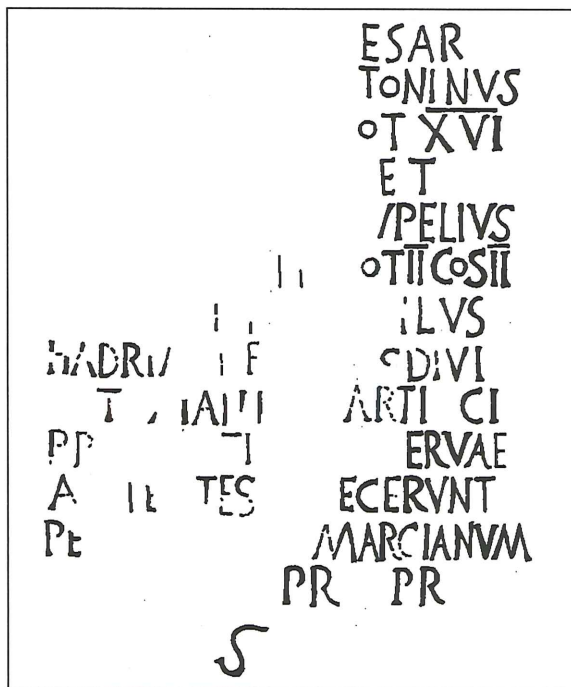
Inscription 2 A (the oldest)

Inscription in Latin and Greek. Text in Latin, minimum of 13 lines and indication of the distance in Greek. All the left part of the text had been erased for the engraving of inscription B. Only traces of letters of text A are visible on this part of the stone. The text was apparently centred.

Height of letters: 6 cm.

1 [IMP CA]ESAR
 [MAVRELAN]TONINVS
 [AVGTRIBP]OTXVI
 [COS III] ET
 5 [IMPCAESARLA]VRELIVS
 [VERVSAVGTRIBP]OTIICOSII
 [DIVIANTONINIF]ILVS
 HADRIA[NINEPOTE]SDIVI
 T[RA]IANI[P]ARTH[I]CI
 10 PR[ONEPO]TE[SDIVIN]ERVAE
 A[BNEPO]TES[REF]ECERVNT
 PE[RGEMINIVM]MARCIANVM
 [LEG] PR PR

S



Apparently there was no indication of the distance in Latin at the beginning of the text. [IMP CA]ESAR seems to be the first line.⁴

Line 7: the two last letters, VS, are sure.

Line 8: apparently DIVI had been omitted before HADRIAN.

line 14: the indication of the number of miles is in Greek with the double letter “sigma-tau” which is represented here as a deformed S. Apparently the distance was only indicated in Greek on these milestones of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus.

Reading

[Imp(erator) Ca]esar / [M(arcus) Aurel(ius) An]toninus/, [Aug(ustus), Trib(uniciae) P]ot(estatis) XVI/, [Co(n)s(ul) III] et [Imp(erator) Caesar L(ucius) A]urelius/ [Verus Aug(ustus), Trib(uniciae) P]ot(estatis) II, Co(n)s(ul) II/, [diui Antonini f]il[i]i (diui)/, Hadria[ni nepote]s/ diui T[ra]iani [P]arth[i]ci/ pr[onepo]tes, [diui N]ervae/, a [bnepo]tes, [ref]ecerunt/ pe[r Geminium] Marcianum, [leg(atum)] pr(o) pr(aetore) (Μελλια) S

Translation

The Emperor Caesar, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, Augustus, entrusted with the Tribunal Power for the sixteenth time, consul for the third time and the Emperor Caesar Lucius Aurelius Verus, Augustus, entrusted with the Tribunal Power for the second time, Consul for the second time, both sons of the Holy Antoninus, grandsons of (the Holy) Hadrian, great-grandsons of the Holy Trajan the Parthian, great-great-grandsons of the Holy Nerva, (made that road repaired) by Geminus Marcianus, legatus, propretor. Six miles.

Inscriptions of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus have been found on milestones of the same road.⁵ P. Iulius Geminus Marcianus is also well-attested on several milestones of Arabia of which he was governor from 161 to 163 AD at least, maybe until 166.⁶

4. This occurs also on a similar text, well-preserved, from milestation 1 of Gerasa on the same road. See Th. Bauzou, *op.cit.*: inscription 261. Also J. Seigne, S. Agusta-Boularot et A.-M. Rasson-Seigne, *Milliaires anciens et nouveaux de Gerasa*, (milliaire 4), forthcoming. On that stone, there is

also no indication of distance in Latin at all.
 5. See, for example mile 10 from Philadelphia (Bauzou 243), mile 8 and 1 from Gerasa (Bauzou 250 and 261), in Th. Bauzou, *op.cit.*
 6. M. Sartre, *Trois études sur l'Arabie romaine et byzantine*, *Latomus* 178, Bruxelles 1982: 83-84.

Date

162 AD

Inscription 2 B

Carved on the upper left side of inscription 2A which was partly erased for that purpose (see above). Inscription in Latin. Six lines of irregular letters. Text with justification on the left.

Height of the letters: 5 to 6 cm.

1	ddNNFLVAL CONSTANTIO ET GALERIOVAL MAXIMIANO	DDNNFLVAL CONSTANTIO ET GALERIOVAL MAXIMIANO
5	NOBILISSIMIS CAESARIBB	NOBILISSIMIS CAESARIBB

No indication of distance.⁷

Reading

D(ominis) N(ostris) Val(erio)/ Constantio/ et Galerio Val(erio)/ Maximiano/ Nobilissimis Caesarib(us)

Translation

For our Lords Valerius Constantius and Galerius Valerius Maximianus, very noble Caesars.

This inscription belongs to the joint reign of Constantius I Clore and Galerius. It is dedicated to Constantius and Galerius Caesars only. Strangely the names of the Augustus' (Diocletianus and Maximianus) are not mentioned, even though the text is complete.

7. But the indication of the earlier inscription was still perfectly visible under the new text.
 8. See for example inscriptions nos. 5, 23, 40, 54, 86, 108, 127, etc, in Th. Bauzou, *op. cit.*
 9. There are only two possibilities:
 - The column collapsed after the carving of inscription B.
 - The column was still standing and it was voluntarily turned upside down by the people who carved the inscription C. This milestone is actually the only one with such an inverse inscription, even though more than ten inscriptions of Julianus are known on the road to Philadelphia. It seems

Many other inscriptions of that period are attested in the area, mainly on the *Via Nova* milestones.⁸

Date

293/305 AD

Inscription 2 C

Inscription in Greek carved "upside down" at the base of the column. That means that the column was re-erected upside down.⁹

Three lines of irregulars large letters.
 Height of the letters: 4,5 to 9 cm.

TONAIΩNA
 AYTOYCTE
 IOYΛIANE

TONAIΩNA
 AYTOYCTE
 IOYΛIANE

Reading

Τον αιωνα,/ Αυγουστε/ Ιουλιανε.

Translation

For the Eternity, Julianus Augustus.
 This acclamation to Julianus is not an isolated case on the road Gerasa/ Philadelphia.¹⁰ It is also one of the six new texts of that kind recently discovered.¹¹

Date

360/363

Conclusion

Milestone 2 was erected in the second half of the second century, under Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. At the beginning

more probable that the column was on the ground when the third inscription had to be carved and that it has been re-erected "the wrong way up" to inscribe the dedication to Julianus. It is more probable, too, that no other column was still standing at that time.
 10. Eight acclamations to Julianus were known on that road (see inscriptions nos. 237, 241, 242, 249, 251, 254, 258 et 263 in Th. Bauzou, *op.cit.*)
 11. Six new texts dedicated to Julianus, including that one, have been discovered during our survey (Mile 1, 6, 7, 11-2 -twice- of Gerasa and 6 of Philadelphia).

of the fourth century a new inscription was engraved over the first text which was partially erased in that operation.

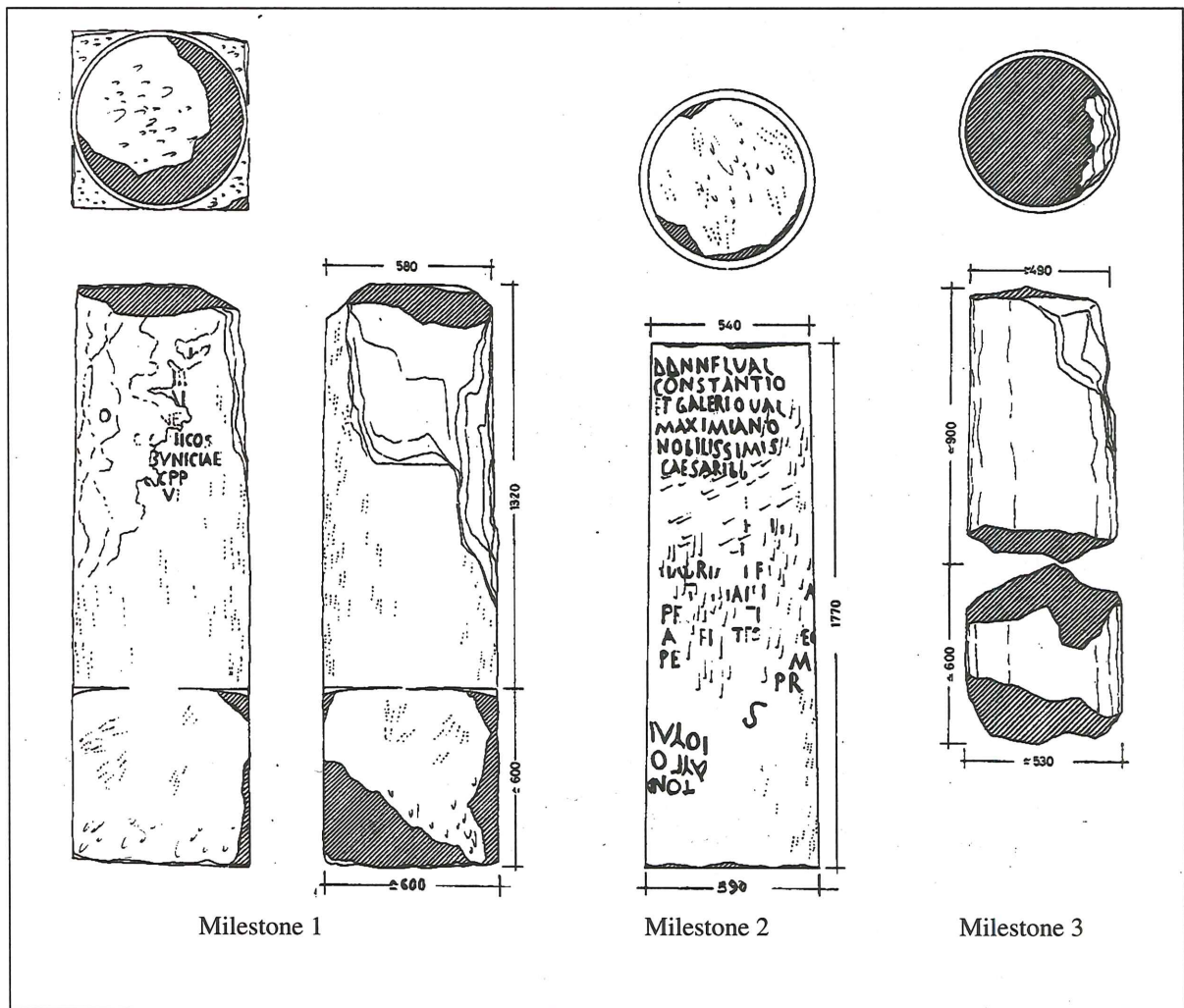
Apparently the column fell down later (by natural causes or by human action ?) and was found lying on the ground by the admirors of Julianus who re-erected it upside down to inscribe their wishes to their chief.¹²

Milestone 3 (Fig. 3)

Two pieces of a third drum, in soft limestone, were found reused in a stone wall, at

about 50 m north of milestones 1 and 2. Their diameter was about 50 cm. One piece was about 90 cm long, the other one 60 cm. Both are totally weathered and it is impossible to know if they were inscribed.

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3. Milestone 1-3.

12. As the latest inscription was inscribed upside down, this hypothesis appeared more probable. If the drum was still standing the Julianus in-

scription should be engraved over the others or on "the back" of the column, as many examples found along the road.

Inventory of the milestone inscriptions¹³ of the *Gerasa/Philadelphia* Roman road after the 1995/1996 survey

Milestation 1 from 'Ammān

Milestation 2 from 'Ammān

Milestation 3 from 'Ammān

230. (CIL 14166) Not found.

Milestation 4 from 'Ammān

One milestone found in 1996 in a private house.

- Fragment of an unknown inscription.

Milestation 5 from Ammān

231. (CIL 14167) Not found.

Milestation 6 from 'Ammān

Milestation location found in 1995. Several broken drums *in situ*.

232. (CIL 14168) Not found.

233. (CIL 14168a) Copied in 1995 in a private house.

Rereading and complements.

234. (CIL 14169) Copied in 1995 in a private house.

Rereading and important complements.

235. (CIL 14170) Copied in 1995 in a private house.

236. (CIL 14170/1) Not found.

- 3 new inscriptions found in 1995.¹⁴

Milestation 7 from 'Ammān

237. Not found.

Milestation 8 from 'Ammān

238. (CIL 14171) Not found.

Milestation 9 from 'Ammān

Milestation location found in 1995. Lot of broken drums *in situ*, reused in a stone wall.

239. (CIL 14172) Copied in 1995 on private land.

240. (CIL 14172/1) Copied in 1995 on private land.

Rereading and complements.

241. (CIL 14172/2) Copied in 1995 on private land.

242. Copied in 1995 on private land.

Rereading and complements.

- 3 new inscriptions found in 1995.¹⁵

13. Numbers of the list (230, 231, etc) from Th. Bauzou, *A Finibus Syriae. Recherches sur les routes des frontières orientales de l'Empire Romain*. Doctoral thesis, Paris 1989, in the press. It is actually the latest corpus available on milestone in-

scriptions of northern Jordan.

14. All on milestones now in a private garden. One is engraved over text 233.

15. All on milestones now in a private garden. Two are engraved on text 241 milestone.

Milestation 10 from 'Ammān

Milestation location found in 1996. Fragments of milestones *in situ*.

243. (CIL 13613) Not found.

244. (CIL 14173/1) Not found. Stone seen in 1899 by Germer-Durand in Khirbat Badrān and not on milestation 10. That milestone may have come from the road, but it is not sure, nor from which milestation, if it came from the road.

245. (CIL 13612) Not found.

246. (CIL 14175) Fragment copied in 1995 in a private house.

- 2 new texts found in 1995.¹⁶

Milestation 11 from 'Ammān

Milestation location found in 1996. Fragment of a milestone *in situ*.

Milestation 12 from 'Ammān

Milestation found in 1996. Fragment of a milestone *in situ*.

Milestation 13 from 'Ammān

Unknown.¹⁷

Milestation 14 from 'Ammān (or 14 from Gerasa).¹⁸

Milestation found in 1995. Lot of drums fragments *in situ*.

- **Fragment of an inscription found in 1995.**¹⁹

Milestation 15 from 'Ammān (or 13 from Gerasa).

Milestation found in 1995.

Milestation 12 from Gerasa

Milestation found in 1994. Four milestones *in situ*.

- **One inscription found in 1994.**²⁰

- **One fragmentary inscription found in 1996.**²¹

Milestation 11 from Gerasa

Milestation found in 1994. Fragments of two milestones *in situ*.

- **Five inscriptions found in 1995 and 1996.**²²

16. All on milestones now in private garden.

17. The position of that milestation is unknown but it was surely some 700 m south-east of Rujm al-Miswan. The survey done in 1996 allowed us to find a large portion of the ancient road on top of the hill going south-east, then south, from Rujm al-Miswan to Oum Rumman.

18. Unfortunately, that station is situated 14 miles from Amman/Philadelphia and 14 miles from Jarash/Gerasa. After the recent discovery of four Gerasa city territory land-marks around milestation 12 of Gerasa (J. Seigne, *Les limites orientale et méridionale du territoire de Gerasa, Syria* 1997, in the press), milestation 14 and the next one (15 from Philadelphia) most probably belonged to Philadelphia, but there is no proof of it.

19. *In situ*. See A.-M. Rasson-Seigne et J. Seigne,

Notes préliminaires à l'étude de la voie romaine Gerasa/Philadelphia, *ADAJ* 39, 1995: 206.

20. *In situ*. See A.-M. Rasson-Seigne et J. Seigne, *op. cit.*: 205.

21. *In situ*. That new inscription, badly preserved, which was expected in 1995 (See A.-M. Rasson-Seigne et J. Seigne, *op. cit.*: 204), has been found in 1996 after the stone was turned.

22. Four fragmentary inscriptions were discovered in 1995 (See A.-M. Rasson-Seigne et J. Seigne, *op. cit.*: 202, 203). These four texts were completed in 1996 (one can be attributed to Pertinax, a second to Constantinus, a third to Julianus) and a new text of Julianus was discovered on the lower part of the inscription of Trajan (which is now complete). All these documents will be published in detail soon, by the same authors.

Milestation 10 from Gerasa
Unknown.

Milestation 9 from Gerasa
Milestones *in situ*.

247. (CIL 14175/1) Copied *in situ* in 1995.²³

248. (CIL 14175/1) Copied *in situ* in 1995.

249. Copied *in situ* in 1995.

Milestation 8 from Gerasa
Milestones *in situ*.

250. (CIL 14175/2) Copied *in situ* in 1995.

Rereading and complements.

251. (CIL 14175/2) Copied *in situ* in 1995.

252. (CIL 14175/3) Copied *in situ* in 1995.

253. (CIL 14176) Not found.

254. (CIL 14176) Not found.

255. Not found.

Milestation 7 from Gerasa
Milestation found in 1996. Three milestones *in situ*.
- **Four inscriptions found in 1996.**²⁴

Milestation 6 from Gerasa
Milestation found in 1996. Three milestones *in situ*.
- **Four inscriptions found in 1996.**²⁵

Milestation 5 from Gerasa

Milestation 4 from Gerasa
Milestation location found in 1995.²⁶
259. (CIL 14176/1) Not found.²⁷

23. That inscription, totally erased, belongs to Trajan.

24. Three on one milestone (Trajan, third century ? and Julianus). The fourth, from a second milestone, is very fragmentary. These documents will be published later (see no.22).

25. See above.

26. A drum was found in 1995 near the remains of the watch-tower (A.-M. Rasson-Seigne et J. Seigne, *op. cit.*: 198 and 199). It is inscribed with a Greek inscription. A re-examination of the stone proved that that drum was not the upper part of a milestone but most probably a drum of a column whose Attic base was found in 1996 after the land had been ploughed. The inscription is now com-

plete. It is possible to read ΦANTOΣ/ΦANTΟΥ, ΦANTOΣ son of ΦANTOΣ.

27. That inscription, seen for the first time by J.P. Peters in 1890, is considered by all epigraphers since R. E. Brünnow and A. von Domaszewski as coming from mile 1 of Gerasa, even though the text mentioned mile IIII. From a copy of the article, Notes of eastern Travels, published by J. P. Peters in *AJA* 8, no. 3, July/September 1893: 325 to 334, which was kindly sent to me from Brussels by Prof. R. Donceel, it appears clearly that the milestone had been found just after crossing the az-Zarqā' river, four miles before Jarash (p.328). That milestone was *in situ* and not displaced as mentioned since 1901.

Milestation 3 from Gerasa

Milestation found in 1995. Many fragments of milestones *in situ*.²⁸

256. Not found.

257. Copied on the site of Jarash in 1995.

- **Two unknown fragmentary texts found *in situ*.**

Milestation 2 from Gerasa

Milestation found in 1996. Many fragments of milestones *in situ*

258. Not found

- **Unknown fragmentary text found on the site of Jarash.**²⁹

Milestation 1 from Gerasa

261. Inscription copied in 1995 on the site of Jarash.

Rereading and complements.

262. Inscription copied in 1995 on the site of Jarash.

Rereading and complements.

263. Inscription copied in 1995 on the site of Jarash.

264. Inscription copied in 1995 on the site of Jarash.

Rereading and complements.

? Welles 252. copied in 1995 in the ancient museum of Jerash.

- **Two unknown texts found on Welles 252.**³⁰

Remarks

In 1994, **34 texts were known** from milestones of the Roman road Gerasa/Philadelphia., (35 if number 244 from Khirbet Badrān is included to the list):

- **30 of the 34 texts were considered as lost** from the beginning of this century (31 with number 244),

- **15 have been found during our survey** (233 to 235, 239 to 242, 246 to 252 and 257), still *in situ* or in private houses and gardens or on the site of Jarash . From these “discoveries”, which represent about 50% of the texts, it was possible to read again the inscriptions and, for some of them, to modify and/or complete the ancient lectures.

- **29 new texts or fragmentary inscriptions** have been found, on ancient known milestones or on new milestones (30 with the new inscription found at Khirbat Badrān).

A general study of the Gerasa/Philadelphia Roman road is under preparation by the same authors. It will include a complete study of all texts found on the road.³¹

28. See A.-M. Rasson-Seigne et J. Seigne, op. cit.: 198.

29. That text, and the other inscriptions from milestones actually on the site of Jarash will be published soon: J. Seigne, S. Agusta-Boularot et A.-M. Rasson-Seigne, *Milliaires anciens et nouveaux de Gerasa*, forthcoming.

30. Inscriptions of Constantinus II /Constancius II

and of Julianus. These inscriptions will be published soon with new readings of Bauzou 257, 261, 262, 263 et 264. See n. 27.

31. It is certain that some others, known and unknown, are preserved in other private properties. The enquiry was not completed and had to be stopped in September 1996.