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Conducted by British archeologist Robert W. Hamilton, the excavations against the current North Wall of Jerusalem during the years of 1937-1938 sought to examine the collected debris around the wall with the hope of painting a clearer picture into the historical context of the North Wall. Given how certain sections of the wall clearly predate the more modern reconstruction from the sixteenth century, Hamilton constructed various soundings along the wall to excavate these earlier sections. Located near the current Damascus Gate and flanked by two towers, of which only the western tower pertains to this excavation, Sounding A contains examples of different sedimentary sections that vary depending on occupancy while also containing various archeological remains. This paper will seek to reconstruct and analyze the various discoveries made by Hamilton in Sounding A, and through these findings, this paper will strive to illuminate the history behind the wall.

Throughout his report, Hamilton describes three crucial styles of masonry which combine to help reveal the original sequence of the North Wall. The earliest style, referred to as Style A, is represented through the first stones of courses three and nine within the curtain wall and a stone found within the second course of the tower. The masonry style of Style A is signified by a deep marginal draft with a comb-pick, raised center, and a secondary border along each stone (6). Given how specific stones of Style B within the western tower are constructed in the same point dressing features of Style A, it can be concluded that the stones of Style A were reused from an unknown pre-existing structure which predated the construction of the wall and tower.

Hamilton refers to Style B as a masonry style which consists of a paneled masonry that primarily encloses the outside of the tower. Based off of the presence of the original Style A techniques prevalent within certain stones of Style B, it is believed that the stones of Style B postdate Style A and were reused from a reserve of ready-made stones which could be altered to suit the needs of the builder. In addition to encompassing the tower, Style B can also be found within courses 8-12 of the curtain wall as the masonry used is nearly congruous in size to the neighboring courses of the tower and most likely formed the foundation for the curtain wall. The latest masonry style that Hamilton describes is referred to as Style C, which is found within the curtain wall and contains stones that are different in size to Style B and lack a marginal draft. After examining the structure and location of the stones that form Style C, Hamilton concludes that the masonry of Style C would have been used as an area to plug a breach of the earlier construction along courses eight through eleven within the curtain (7).

In addition to analyzing the masonry courses of the tower and curtain wall which lined the sounding, it is also necessary to examine the accumulation of debris that can be found within different stratification levels at the base of the tower. From 9.40 meters below datum to the bottom of the shaft, Hamilton discovered fragments of wares dating to the Iron Age (ca. 1200-586 B.C.), a legionary roof tile of the second century A.D. (Late Roman Period), and a diminutive sherd from a late Roman 'A' bowl dating at least to 250 A.D. From the datum levels of 9.40-9.00 meters, excavators found various Hellenistic sherds in addition to a fragment of a sigillata plate believed to date to the first century A.D. Although fragments of Hellenistic and Iron age pottery continue to be prevalent up until the 8.0 meters below datum mark, the appearance of Late Roman or Early Byzantine sherds were more frequent from 9.00 to 8.35 meters.

Based off of the findings previously mentioned, it is apparent that the vast majority of the pottery discovered up until the 7.50 meters below datum mark originates from the Late Roman Period. This pattern of stratigraphy parallels soundings B and C as well as other structures within Jerusalem. In addition to the pottery found within these datum levels, a coin found at meter 8.10 depicting a city-goddess on the reverse side carries a date from the second century A.D. As a result of meters 7.20 through 6.50 being covered in a layer of unsteady rubble, new forms of pottery and coins have been identified in the layers above the rubble. The continuous presence of a metallic ware initially found 6.50 meters below datum level completely reflects a similar type of pottery found at the Jerusalem site of Ophel that is dated to the sixth and early seventh centuries A.D. (Late Byzantine Period). However, given the appearance of a variety of coins within the upper levels of the shaft that are dated to the seventh century, it can be concluded that the loose rubble would have had to been deposited by at least the latter stages of the seventh century.

When used together, the pairing of the accumulated debris which encompassed the shaft with the masonry characteristics of the curtain wall can provide a relative chronology for the construction of the wall. Nearly all of the masonry for the tower is constructed in Style B, in addition to the lowest courses of the curtain wall and a few isolated stones farther up the wall. This connection between masonry styles leads to the conclusion that the construction of the western tower and bottom levels of the wall were simultaneously constructed during the same time period. Given how the overwhelming majority of the debris discovered dates to the Late Roman Period (ca. 135-300), particularly in the lower datum levels which consisted of the foundation to the tower, it is reasonable to conclude that the tower and lower levels of the curtain wall was constructed during the Late Roman Period. However, since Style B is simply a

readapted form of Style A, the unknown structure for which Style A originated from must have existed prior to the existence of the tower. The builders who constructed the tower and lower levels of the curtain wall must have reused the plethora of masonry from this unknown structure and redressed them in the paneled masonry technique of Style B that was left partially incomplete. Therefore, the actual masonry of Style A antedates the construction of the tower and must be dated before the Late Roman Period.

Considering how Style B is evinced through the entirety of the western tower and courses 8-12 of the curtain wall, the remainder of the wall from courses 3-7 must have been constructed in the masonry of Style C. As noted by Hamilton, the masonry of Style C was erected due to the original area of the curtain wall falling into disrepair and being reconstructed above several meters of debris (8). Given the appearance of artifacts that date to the eighth century, including a very worn coin found 5.50 meters below datum near the beginning of course seven, Style C can be assigned to the eighth century and the Umayyad Period (683-750 A.D). This date range provides us with a *terminus post quem*, indicating the earliest time for Style C construction.

As for the beginning two courses that make up the top of the tower approximately 1.0 meters below datum, Hamilton describes a mixture of medieval pottery and modern Turkish fragments within the brown/reddish soil of the shaft, indicating a much more modern period of occupancy and medieval era courses. In the southern end of the shaft near where the curtain wall and tower meet, a cesspit filled with black soil and rubbish dating to the medieval/Turkish period were discovered (4). An intrusive deposit of white limestone chips was also found within the cesspit, similar to the white chips used in conjunction with Style C to load an excavation trench created for the repairs of the wall from the abandonment which marked the end of Style B. Therefore, it can be concluded that the cesspit also functioned as a construction trench that was

filled by the repairers with the white mason chips. This construction trench would have been dug into the soil in the shaft which had already accrued from the erection of the tower and curtain wall. Additionally, the gray soil found throughout the shaft, particularly in the areas near the cistern, can be dated to the Late Byzantine period

Based off of the correlation between the construction of the wall and the accumulated debris, it can be concluded that the west face of the west tower at the Damascus Gate was constructed in the Late Roman Period during when the people of Judea were under the rule of the Roman Empire. This also includes courses 8-12 of the curtain wall, which can be dated to the Late Roman Period. After a period of abandonment and ruin, the wall in courses 3-8 was reconstructed towards the beginning of the Umayyad period. Archeological remains such as the Late Byzantine pottery found within the gray soil of datum levels 2-6 indicates the influence that the culture of the Late Byzantine Period still had on the people of Jerusalem during the Umayyad Period. Within the builder's rubbish of the upper reddish soil are fragments of medieval and modern Turkish artifacts, signifying the modernity of this stratification level.

To help finally put this information into a context of multiple dimensions within a realistic setting, imagine that an individual is standing within sounding A with his back towards the curtain wall and his eyes are facing the cardinal direction of north and the tower to his right-hand side. Originally, before the construction of the wall directly behind the individual to the south/southwest and the tower to the east, there stood an unidentified structure made with the masonry of Style A. Later during the Late Roman Period, the stones from this structure was reused to make the foundation of the curtain wall to the south and the complete masonry of the tower to the east. After a period of disrepair, the curtain wall was rebuilt once again using a different style of masonry during the seventh to eighth century A.D. The circular cesspit located

within the stratification levels that parallel the masonry of Style C, which spanned around the corner formed through these two structures from the face of the tower on the east to the wall.