

Exploitation of Water in Religious Therapeutic Practices in Algeria during the Roman Era: The Temple of Aqua Septimiana

استغلال المياه في الممارسات العلاجية الدينية بالجزائر خلال العهد الروماني: معبد أكوا سيبتيميانا

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• Abstract:

The ruins of the AQUA SEPTIMIANA Temple are located in the archaeological site of Timgad. It dates back to the Roman period and was discovered in 1939 during excavation work were carried out in the Byzantine fort at a depth of four meters. Archaeologists confirmed after the completion of the excavations that this landmark is a hospital building due to the presence of a large water basin in one of its sections and under religious auspices due to the presence of halls of worship in it, which reflects the image of the Roman hospital practice in the region, whether for residents of the city or passers-by. In this study, questions are raised about the indications for its name, the nature of the religious structure sponsoring it, its history, and the stages of its construction. In this study, I will try to cover these issues through what was mentioned in the works of French researchers and on the data acquis in my visit of the monument to the archaeological site of Timgad.

Keywords: religion, temple, water, syncretism, Timgad

المخلص:

تقع أطلال معبد أكوا سيبتيميانا (AQUA SEPTIMIANA) في الموقع الأثري بمدينة تيمقاد، ويعود تاريخه إلى العهد الروماني. تم اكتشافه سنة 1939 أثناء أعمال التنقيب التي أجريت في الحصن البيزنطي على عمق أربعة أمتار. وقد أكد علماء الآثار، بعد انتهاء الحفريات، أن هذا المعلم يُعدّ بناءً ذا وظيفة استشفائية، نظراً لوجود حوض مائي كبير في أحد أقسامه، كما أنه كان يخضع لإشراف ديني لاحتوائه على قاعات مخصصة للعبادة، وهو ما يعكس صورة الممارسة الطبية الدينية في العصر الروماني بالمنطقة، سواء بالنسبة لسكان المدينة أو العابرين منها. يُطرح في هذه الدراسة مجموعة من التساؤلات حول دلالات اسم المعبد، وطبيعة البنية الدينية الراحية له، وتاريخه، ومراحل تشييده. وسأحاول معالجة هذه القضايا استناداً إلى ما ورد في أعمال الباحثين الفرنسيين، وإلى المعطيات التي تم الحصول عليها خلال زيارتي للموقع الأثري بتيمقاد.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الدين، المعبد، المياه، التوفيقية الدينية، تيمقاد.

• Introduction:

The use of water in religious practices for therapeutic purposes is one of the oldest social practices of man. This has been manifested in Ancient Maghreb by the sanctification of sources and valleys since the origins of history. During the Roman occupation, these practices became citadels, and left us architectural remains in many archaeological sites, With various functions, either public baths or fountains or temples requested by worshippers to seek healing with upstream water or groundwater,

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The Adventist Water Temple at the Timgad archaeological site is one of the best architectural models reflecting the image of aquatic healing practices, under a divine blessing by its unique architectural structure. This study raises questions about the building's nomenclature and functional proofs, as well as the nature of the gods who are idolized in it, its history and stages of construction. Meanwhile, I will try to study these questions by drawing on French research data from the colonial period and through a visit to the archaeological site of Timgad.

1-Presentation of Monument:

1-1-Geographical location:

The effects of the AQUA SEPTIMIANA Temple are located in the archaeological site of Timgad, specifically 378 m south of the borders of the traces of the Tarajian city¹; in an easy topographical site that can be reached on a southern road connected to two Penetration in the roman city, the first represents the continuity of the ancient Cardo Maximus, which ends at the borders of the southern bath. The second also represents the continuity of the new Cardo Maximus Road, ending at the western border of the industrial district (photo n°1).

Photo n°1: Position of the Byzantine fort in relation to the archaeological site of Timgad



Source: (satellite image (google earth) with personal modifications)

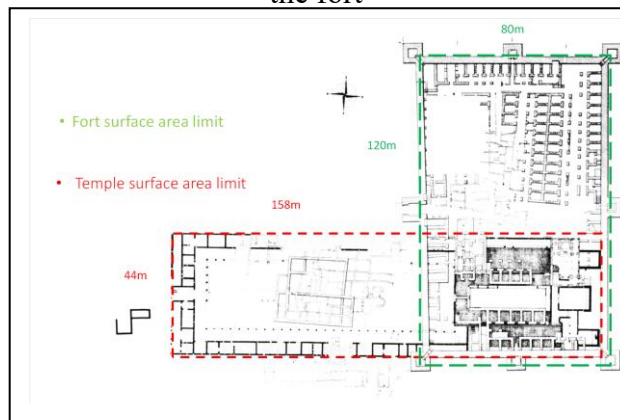
1-2- The discovery of the ruins of the monument:

The discovery of the AQUA SEPTIMIANA landmark dates back to the year 1939 AD, and that was during the excavations of the Byzantine fort, which was supervised by researchers LSHI and

¹ The Southern bath represent the southern border of the city's Tarajian ruins.

GODET (M). Despite the launch of archaeological excavations at the Timgad site in 1880 AD by French researchers², the excavation of the Byzantine fort remained far from the interests of Researchers have spent more than sixty years, and this is due to its distance from the core of the ancient city, and the excavators' preoccupation with the many archaeological artifacts extracted from the excavations of the core of the site, and despite the presence of some descriptive data. submitted by both CH. DIEHL³ and AL. BALLU⁴ as well as ST.GSELL⁵ and R.Cagnat⁶ around the Byzantine Fort, but there was unanimous consensus on their part that there was no point in exploring the place, Especially after the researcher BALLU in 1910 carried out archaeological research in various places of the fort where he confirmed the idea to abandon the excavations⁷. In 1939 and in preparation for the colloquium of Byzantine studies in Algeria to be held in October, the Researcher E.Albertini agreed with researcher L.Leshi, under the auspices of Algeria's Ancient Antiquities Directorate, to carry out new archaeological inquiries at the Byzantine fort site in Timgad under the supervision of L.LESHI and CH.GODET, these inquiries indicated significant traces of a depth of 4 m below the western part of the Byzantine fort, prompting the launch of excavations at the venue in March of the same year⁸ (plan n°1; Photo n°2).

Fig. n°1: Position of the temple in relation to the fort



Source :(LASSUS Jean, 1981, p.25.)

Photo n°2: Position of the temple in relation to the fort



Source: (satellite image (google earth) with personal modifications)

1-3- The most important holdings extracted in the excavations:

A number of archaeological collections varying from statue fragments to Latin inscriptions have been uncovered in the three temple excavations, which can be restricted to:

A-Fragments of statues: Marble piece of statue with 0.025m inscription, the text of which is PRO SALVTE AVGG, topped with a piece of metal likely used as a foot fixer on a man for a huge male

² BOESWILLWALD Émile; CAGNAT René ; BALLU Albert- Timgad- une cité africaine sous l'Empire romain- Paris-1905- p.xx.

³ DIEHL Charles - Nouvelles Archives des Missions- IV- 1893- p. 310- pl. II-IV ; L'Afrique Byzantine- p.201.

⁴ BALLU ALBERT- Les Ruines de TIMGAD- p. 236.

⁵ GSELL Stéphane - Monuments Antiques de l'ALGERIE- II- p. 370- 3- pi. XCVIII.

⁶ CAGNAT René – CARTHAGE, TIMGAD, TEBESSA- p. 139.

⁷ CAGNAT (R), SEANCE DE LA COMMISSION DE L'AFRIQUE DU NORD, In : BCTH, 1910, pp. 203-204.

⁸ LESCHI LOUIS - Découvertes Récentes à TIMGAD : AQUA SEPTIMIANA FELIX. -In: Comptes-Rendus des Séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres- 91e Année- N. 1- 1947. pp. 87-88.

statue. In addition to the head of a statue found near the temples of great dimensions with great beard and hair (up to 0.5 m, width 0.33 m), the researchers reported that the sculpture of the face was attributed to the statue of Jupiter, Aesculapius or SERAPIS, and the upper part of the head was flat and was probably placed on it.

- The head of a statue with a bearded face and thick hair in case of good preservation (above 0.52m, width 0.26m), the surface of the head is tiled showing a trace of a hole that was likely intended to receive the Kail MODIVS, which gives this statue a rough description of Saturn or Pluton.
- The head of a statue of a young child found in the eastern temple
- Statue of snake head in case of bad preservation
- The discovery of the left half of the head of a hair-style woman's statue dates back to the end of the second and the beginning of the third century.

B- Latin inscriptions: The French researchers have been able to restore a large stone base bearing Latin writing whose parts have been spread over various places of the Byzantine Fort (photo n°3), the full text of which is:

IMP{ERATORE). CAES(ARE). M(ARCO) .AVRELIO SEVERO ANTONINO PIO FELICI AVG(STO)
 PARTH(TICO) | MAX(IMO) BRITTAN(ICO) MAX(IMO) GERM(ANICO) MAX(IMO) PONTIF(ICE)
 MAX(IMO) TRIB(UNICIA) POT(ESTATE) XV[L] IMP(ERATORE) III CO(N)S{ULE)IIII P{ATRE) P{ATRIAE)
 ET IVLIA AVGVSTA PIA FELICE MATRE AVG(USTI) ET CASTRORVM ITEMQVE SENATVS ET PATRIAE
 AMBITVM FONTIS CANCELLIS AEREIS CONCLVSVM ITEMQVE PORTICVS VIRDIARI PICTVRIS
 EXORNATAS IANVIS ET PRONAS AD EASDEM PORTICVS APERTIS ITEM OPVS PLATEAE || A THERMIS
 VSQVE AD INTROIT(UM) PERFECTVM RESPVBLICA TAM[U]G(ADENSIVM) D(ECRETO)
 D(ECURIONUM)

-Latin writing on a stone base repurposed by the Byzantines in the bathroom of the Byzantine fort, there are only two lines left (photo n°4):

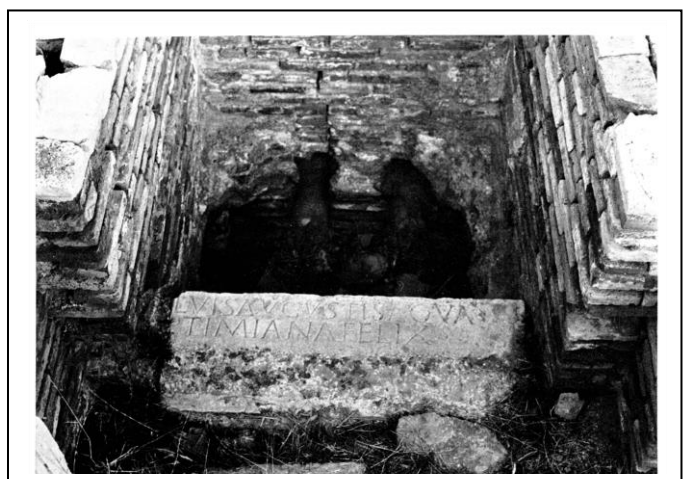
.....LVIS AVGVSTIS AQVA
PTIMIANA FLELIX

Photo n°3: Latin inscription on a base found in the Byzantine fort



Source:(photo taken by the author)

Photo n°4: Latin inscription on a base found in the Byzantine bath



Source : (LASSUS Jean, 1981, p.134.)

Other writings were mostly found in the Central Temple, the most important being:

- Latin writing besides the aforementioned rule gifted to DEA PATRIA by P.JULIUS FRONTINUS who is the centurion of the eighth fluorescent cohort "VIII VOLVNTARI"⁹; where he wrote DEAE PATRIAE SVAE (Photo n°5).
- Another writing is a gift from the group of influential Roman citizens in the city¹⁰, to the protective goddess of the people GENIVS PATRIAE SVAE PRO MEMORI PIETAT who gifted the horn of an elephant to gain its satisfaction; (Photo n°6).
- Detection of the upper part of the base of the blue cylindrical stone shape 0.26m high and 0.095m diameter topped with a crown inscribed on it the following writing¹¹:..... SIGNVM DE EBORE CVPIDINIS DEI QVOD APVTATHATVABANAS AS AS.

Researchers assume a wholesale writing supplement to PER PHIDIAM which is likely to have a copy of the Greek sculptor Vyas for a small sculpture of ivory for Heros EROS¹² that was present in the monument's exposed arena¹³.

Photo n°5: inscription found on an hexagonal base in the central temple



Source:(photo taken by the author)

Photo n°6: inscription found on an orthogonal base in the central temple



Source:(photo taken by the author)

2- Monument Description:

⁹ A "VIII VOLVNTARI" Cohort, was stable in Dalmatia between the first and third centuries AD.

¹⁰ Among them is the mother of P.FLAVIVS PUDENS POMPONIANVS mentioned above, and she was a priest, see: LESCHI LOUIS – Op.CIT. p.96.

¹¹ LESCHI LOUIS -Op.cit.-p97.

¹² The God of love in ancient Greece, see :Schmidt Joël - Dictionnaire de la mythologie grecque et romaine- Larousse- Paris, 1979, p.117.

¹³ LEGLAY MARCEL - Un Eros de PHIDIAS a TIMGAD- In: *Antiquités africaines*- 14-1979. pp. 129-133.

The SEPTIMIAN Water Temple is North Africa's largest religious complex and is regarded by researchers as the largest religious complex in the western part of the Roman Empire based on current archaeological data, With a length equal to 158 m and a width of 44 m, with an area of approximately 7,000 m², which is directed from north to south, The effects of the southern section overlap with those of the western part of the Byzantine fort. The complex consists of two main sections: VIRIDIARIUM and SACRARIUM (Photo n°7).

Photo n°7: The two parts that make up the monument



Source: (satellite image (google earth) with personal modifications)

2-1- Reception part “VIRIDIARIUM”: The reception section consists of a large square surrounded by reception rooms in all its sides, except for the southern side, which represents the entrance to the holy section. This hallway enters a series of rectangular-shaped side halls, most likely designated for the reception of worshippers and visitors to this complex. These halls were decorated with wall drawings as stipulated in the previous carve. It is a common phenomenon in Greek religious complexes, Asia Lesser temples and others in the regions of the Empire's provinces¹⁴, and according to the inscription, this recreational section of the religious complex is termed VIRIDIARIUM¹⁵ (photos n°8; n°9).

¹⁴ Mac Mullen Ramsay - Le Paganisme dans l'empire romain- Paris- 1987- p.57.

¹⁵ The reason why this section VIRIDIARIUM called its walls in that period contained murals depicting lawns and orchards, employed as visual tricks for real scenes, see in the subject : HEURGON Jacques - L'œuvre Archéologique Française en Algérie- In: BULLETIN DE L'ASSOCIATION GUILLAUME BUDE : LETTRES D'HUMANITE- Vol.15- n°4- 1956. pp.31-31.

Photo n°8: The clear space of the Viridiarium



Source:(photo taken by the author)

Photo n°9: ruins of reception rooms west side de Viridiarium

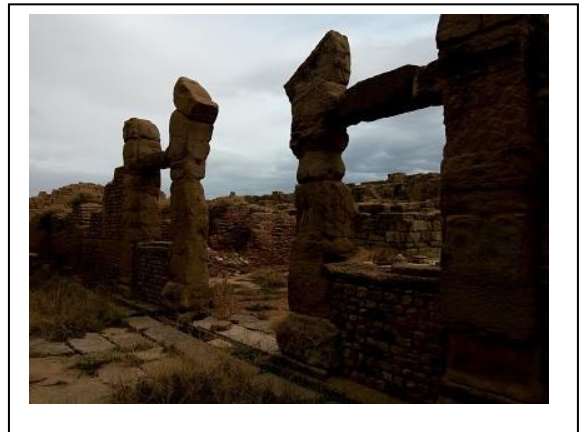


Source:(photo taken by the author)

2-2- Sacred part “SACRARIUM” : The sacred space of the septimian water complex was discovered below the western section of the Byzantine fortress and represents the southern section of the complex, preceded by a wall façade that represents the boundary between the sacred section and the recreational section Viridiarium, a wall with a height of 4.20m, It is punctuated by a door surmounted by an arch 4.70 m high and two square windows that were previously supported by a metal fence (photo n°10), which is noted in this section consisting of a religious water composition, namely the swimming pool and temples.

A. The Pool: Once you walk through the central door, we enter directly into a wide open square with a large pool of 27 m long and 7 m wide, while Faisal is 1.7 m deep, supported by an opening on the northern side of the pool that prevented water from leaking out of the pool deck(photo n°11.). He was supplied with water through a channel mediating a temple, surrounding the pool is a baptized gallery whose ground has been completed from red wages in ears shapes (photo n°12). The excavation confirms that this pool was surrounded by a series of bronze beams carried by bent pillars, parts of which were found in the place¹⁶. The baptised corridor is surrounded on the east and west sides by a second corridor built in terracotta which is located under the western part of the wall of the Byzantine fort.

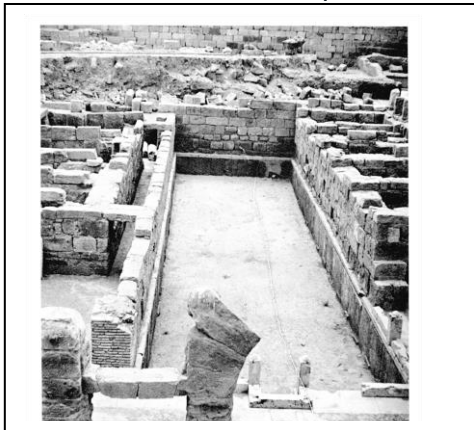
Photo n°10: door entering the sacred part



Source: (photo taken by the author)

¹⁶ LESCHI Louis- op.cit., p90.

Photo n°11: The pool



Source (L ASSUS Jean 1981

Photo n°12: Water sink of the



Source: (photo taken by the author)

B. The Temples: Three temples occupy the depth of the square. They consist of a central temple with a width of 5.5 m and a depth of 9.80 m.

The east side temple is surrounded by two byzantine temple of equal dimensions. The three temples were constructed on one podium, are architecturally independent of each other, and are characterized by the progression of the central hall facade for the two side facades in reference to the importance of the central hall for the two side rooms. Each hall is unique in its own hallway. It goes to the central temple through the entrance of its width 2.85 m and is also constructed from marble, then an entrance hall with a Sculpture on the floor of the form of two feet facing outside on a black mosaic. The depth of the central temple is characterized by a platform 1.10 m wide that rises to 1.40 m above the ground (photos n°13; n°14).

Photos n°13: State of the temples during the French excavations



Source :(LASSUS Jean, 1981, p.114.)

Photos n°14: State of the temples currently



Source: (photo taken by the author)

4-Identification of the nature of the goddess idolized in the Temple:

The identification of the three temples relied mainly on the retrieved holdings. The researchers have benefited by studying the inscriptions and sculptures found in the complex as well as in the site of the city of THAMUGADI in identifying the worship applied in this tripartite complex and the data of LESCHI fossils is not to locate the discovery of the remains of the AESCULAPIUS and SERAPIS statues in the side temples with scrutiny, This has left the issue of placing both worships in its correct building¹⁷.

4-1- Central Temple: As mentioned above, a stone base was discovered in the Central Holy Hall bearing a votive writing referring to the gifting of an elephant from ivory to the honour of the protector of the homeland GENIUS PATRIAE which is one of the special gifts of North Africa and dates back to the pre-Roman periods The elephant is mostly associated with the African integrity DEA AFRICA with distinctive hair splitters, She is often pregnant with an elephant tusk-like fertility century¹⁸. The same writing also refers to the official nature of this worship in the city of Timgad, "PUBLICA RELIGIO", which is evidence of the existence of a dedicated place of worship, the location of the discovery of this base, the central temple of the septimiana water complex¹⁹. The problem raised in the religious inscription discovered in the Central Temple relates to the nature of the DEA PATRIA goddess mentioned in the inscription²⁰. Many researchers went on to associate this inscription with the inscription on one of the pendants currently displayed in the museum and accomplished with the grilled mud where a photograph of a woman in the position of standing, holding her head over a crown (Phil's head), in her right hand mace (VEXILLVM), in her left hand fertility horn (CORNVCOPIA), and on the sidelines of the necklace writing EX OFFICINA THAMUGADENSIM which indicates its achievement in the THAMUGADI workshop²¹. Some researchers have gone on to formalize this necklace, thus formalizing this worship in THAMUGADI²². They were also identified by the same depiction that embodied a pottery discovered in the Southern Baths²³, where the female personality appears in the character of the divine and in the hands of the mace and fertility horns and receives sacrifices, which most researchers are likely to classify as an African goddess DEA AFRICA. Small statues of grilled terracotta for integrity with their distinctive hair splitter were also found in THAMUGADI City and LAMBAESIS CITY²⁴. This small statues EXVOTO) worshippers and visitors to the city and the religious complex enrich the idea of the critical and official importance of this worship in the city, which undoubtedly favours the idea of allocating the central temple of the AQUA SEPTIMIANA complex to this worship because of the importance of the central halls of the building of religious complexes since and during pre-Roman times²⁵.

¹⁷ LESCHI Louis- op.cit., pp.94-97.

¹⁸ PAVIS D'ESCURAE - LA PUBLICA RELIGIO a TIMGAD- in Atti del .CE .R.D.A.C- XI- N.S.I.1980-1981- ROME, 1984, pp. 321-337.

¹⁹ LESCHI Louis- op.cit.

²⁰ It is similar to the Roman medical complex revealed in the city of LAMBAESIS, where the monuments of the temple "DEA PATRIA" were uncovered.

²¹ CAGNAT René - Séance De La Commission De L'afrique Du Nord- in BCTH- 1924- p.81- PLXXXI

²² LESCHI LOUIS-op.cit.

²³ CAGNAT René - Musée de TIMGAD- p.23- Pl. IX- Fig.1.

²⁴ LEGLAY MARCEL - un Centre de Syncrétisme en Afrique : THAMUGADI de NUMIDIE - In : AFR.ROM.- V.18- 1990- p.74.

²⁵ According to the researchers, Timgad was singled out for the existence of an official temple of African integrity, a phenomenon for which these specialists did not find an impact in other cities of Africa, where this worship received a secondary ritual and

4-2-Side worshippers: As mentioned in the paragraph of the holdings extracted from the temple wreckage, in **Right Worship Hall** (Eastern), marble fragments of a man's statue were found, and the head of a snake twisted on a stick, these fragments were attributed to the AESCULAPIUSE statue²⁶, according to Vitruvius texts in a paragraph (DE ARH, II, 2) The latter urged Roman architects to construct a AESCULAPIUSE temple in a site with healthy characteristics and supported by hospital watersheds or basins. Where these temples attracted patients and healing seekers from everywhere to treat their waters and recover in their pure surroundings, This reveals the wisdom of choosing the location of the Religious Complex for Septimius Water in a place far from civil and industrial activity filled with environmental pollution contrary to the principle of healthy recovery while retaining an association belonging to the city by connecting this complex by a tiled road and decorated with columns to the great Southern thermal and the city as well.

The Second Side Worship Hall, two men's sculptures with thick, twisted hair and beard, which are flat above, were discovered in bits, and were likely carrying the gift pot MODVS , arm parts were also discovered and marble parts were presented with Latin writing reading "PROSALUTEAVGG". Which was attributed to SERAPIS²⁷ , and In Leglay's view, these two heads are different in size were one of a statue located in the Holy Hall, which is entered only by the priest and the other lesser size of a statue located outside the Holy Hall, Perhaps in the SACRARIUM arena, which also belongs to the foot sculpted by the aforementioned writing, This statue was prone to the consideration and blessing of worshippers, patients and visitors to the religious complex. The application of this worship of Egyptian origin in this Roman religious complex. The worship of the Egyptian goddess with Greek origins in the Romans dates back to periods prior to the second and third century. cult, especially SERAPIS ISIS²⁸, but what researchers confirm is the high status of this cult at the end of the second century AD in which Emperor Commodus granted the worship of SERAPIS the official status of the Empire on Health and Wellness CONSERVATOR IMPERII²⁹, Also in the period of the rule of Spetimus Severus Who represented himself as SERAPIS by splitting the distinctive hair and his son caracalla who himself claims the SERAPIS philosophy "PHILASORAPIS"³⁰ and is beyond doubt the confirmation of the empire writing "PROSATUTE AVGG" on the foot of the statue of this idol charged with treating patients³¹.

5- The origin of the name of this complex monument:

The monument's name was identified by the discovery of a previously mentioned stone inscription, which was reused by the Byzantines in the Junior Bathrooms of the camp:

.....LVIS AVGVSTIS AQVA

was often described as a home, except for the town of LAMBAESIS, which was likely to have also had a temple of this worship, see in this subject: LEGLAY MARCEL - Encore la Dea Africa - In : Mel.d'Arch.et d'Hist.- PARIS- 1966- p.1233-1239.

²⁶ LESCHI LOUIS-op.cit.

²⁷ LEGLAY MARCEL - Un Pied de SARAPIS à TIMGAD en NUMIDIE - In Hommages à M.J.Verm a seren- LEIDEN-1978-pp.573.589.

²⁸ LAFAY George - Histoire de Culte des Divinités d'ALEXANDRIE - PARIS- 1884- p.

²⁹ LESCHI Louis – op.cit.

³⁰The phenomenon of the reverence of the Emperor "Caracalla" to the Egyptian gods was reflected in the many temples dedicated to it during his reign, which spread in many areas of the Empire, see: LAFAY George – op.cit., p224.

³¹ On the nature of the cult of ISIS and SERAPIS, see: BECHER(I)- Antike Heilgoher die Rom. Staats religion- In : PHILOLOGUS- 114- 1970- pp.288-235.

.....PTIMIANA FLELIX

Full inscription as follows: SAL (VIS AVGVSTIS AQVA (SE) PTIMIANA FELIX)

Translation: The emperors are in good health, the septimian water is happy, or rather: "Septimian water is happy that the emperors are in good health", which is the source of the name of the septimian water pool of the religious temple, which was living with water upstream close to the site and which gave the name of the complex to the SEPTIMIAN water temple³².

The name of water was worshipped in relation to Emperor SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS in his reign or in his son's reign as a kicker. s visit to this complex during its tour of the African provinces in 203³³, This indicates the existence of the term SALVIT AVGVSTIS in the aforementioned writing, and the existence of another writing that was inscribed on the foot of the huge statue " SERAPIS ", which has already been inscribed, "PRO SALVTE AVGG" The presumption does not preclude the treatment of a member or a number of members of the Imperial Septimian family in this aquatic compound, which conferred on her the honour of naming the septimian water.

6- The Water supply for the Monument:

Some architectural elements, which were part of the pool's water supply, were detected in a water crater below the central temple, as well as a well adjacent to the eastern temple (photos n°15; n°16) , while researchers have been unable to trace the water supply channels of the religious temple and its source But sure enough, this monument was receiving water from one of the sources on the south side of the site, It is located 2 km south-east of TIMGAD archaeological site. That is, about 1.5 km from the site of the SEPTIMINIAN temple, Researchers around 200 m from this source discovered a remnant of a water basin 10.40 m long, 5.40 m wide and 2.90 m deep³⁴. Which is moderately constructed and interspersed with small pillars, is most likely part of the water-transporting structure towards the Roman city³⁵. It can be assumed that the septeminian temple was receiving water from the southern side. or south-east, and the evidence is that there is a water pool well down the east temple. This last was provide the aquarium by means of a supply channel through the hole below the central temple (photos n°17; n°18; n°19).

Photo n° 15: water pipe under the central temple



Source© photo taken by the author)

Photo n°16: water near right lateral temple



³² - Ibid.

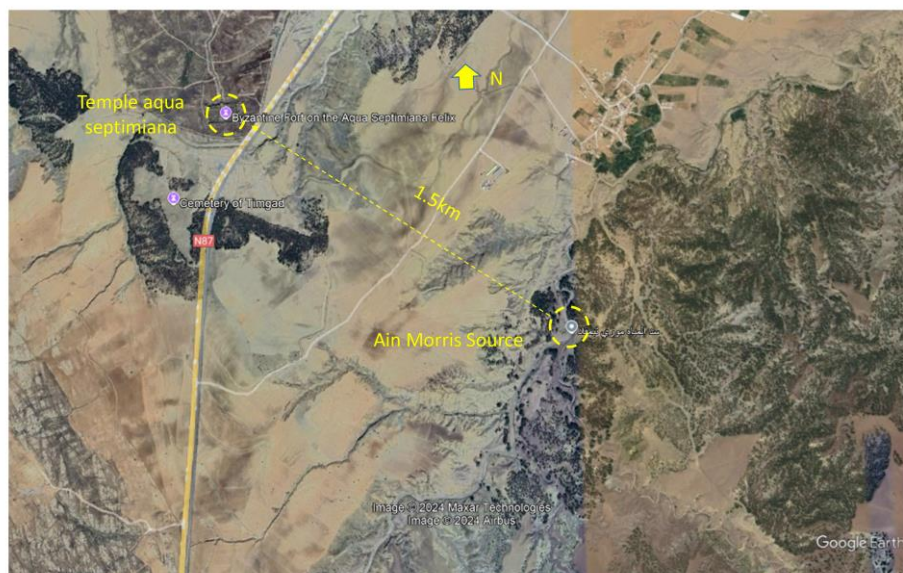
³³ LESCHI Louis – op.cit.-pp.97-98

³⁴ BAHLOUL GUERBABI Fatma. Zohra ; FARHI Abdellah - LA Gestion DE L'Eau A TIMGAD de la Source Aux Thermes Antiques - In : Larhyss Journal, 23, 2015, p.264.

³⁵ Ibid.

Source:(photo taken by the author)

Photos n°17: position of the source ain morris in relation to the temple



Source (satellite image (google earth) with personal modifications)

Photos n°18: water sensor next to the source of ain morris



Source : F.Z. Bahloul Guerbab et A. Farhi - (2015), P.265.

Photos n°19: aqueduct leading to the temple and city



Source (F.Z. Bahloul Guerbab et A. Farhi -(2015), P.266.

7- The Directory of the functional composition of this Monument:

The function of the monument is demonstrated by its architectural composition, regardless of the above-mentioned VIRIDARIUM reception yard, the observer for the sacred section of the monument sees the clarity of its composition from a rectangular aquifer, with large dimensions (27 m × 7 m) Occupies the center of the open arena, which led researchers to call it the pool³⁶, surrounded by a

³⁶ LEGLAY MARCEL –LASSUS JEAN -TORRENC

series of bronze barriers, mentioned in the inscription-mentioned carve-out, This pool seems like the nucleus of the sacred section³⁷, and it was overseen by a series of temples, This leaves no doubt that he has been granted therapeutic aquatic status under hospitalized religious care. by the Romanian devotees of Healing AESCULAPIUS and SERAPIS, and protected by spring water sponsored by them in their belief in the Dea Patria goddess of the Earth and guaranteed the continuity of its flow and confirms the idea of the monument's religious aquatic functional interdependence in the text of the previous inscription:

.....AMBITVM FONTIS CANCELLIS AEREIS CONCLVSVM ITEMQVE PORTICVS VIRDIARI PICTVRIS EXORNATAS IANVIS ET PRONAS AD EASDEM PORTICVS APERTIS ITEM OPVS PLATEAE || A THERMIS.....

Translation:

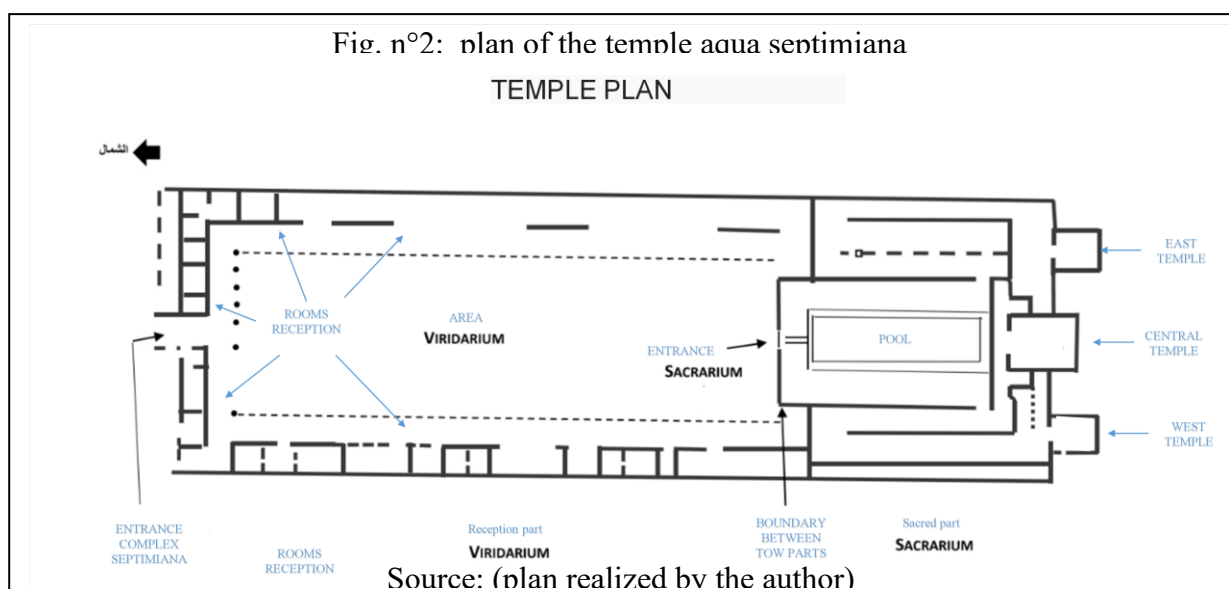
-CANCELLIS AEREIS AMBITVM FONTIS "Surround a water basin with metal fencing",

-PORTICVS VIRDIARI "Create a decorated reception hallway"

-PRONAS AD EASDEM PORTICVS APERTIS "Pagoda lobby with open yard",

-OPVS PLATEAE A THERMIS "tiling road towards the southern bath".

Notably, after mentioning the inscriptions of the "VIRIDIARIUM" and the temple vestibule, there is also a reference to the termination of certain road tiling works "OPVS PLATEAE", which is likely to relate to the road between this religious complex and the Great Southern bath³⁸, the latter dated from the Severian period in which two statues of AESCULAPIUS and his daughter HYGEIA³⁹ were found, as well as a large stone pot decorated with a prominent religious sculpture that combined Hercule Bacchus "DIE PATRI" and "DEA AFRICA", to which he gave a vow⁴⁰, this sculpture was included by researchers as evidence of a functional link between this large Southern bath and the septimian religious complex⁴¹.



³⁷ LEGLAY MARCEL-un centre Op.cit.- p.74.

³⁸ According to LEGLAY MARCEL, the term "PLATEAE", which I originate from the Greek word "PLATEIA", which means the road surrounded by columns, see: LEGLAY MARCEL - un Centre.....op.cit.- p.75.

³⁹ BALLU ALBERT ; CAGNAT René- Le Musée de TIMGAD- PARIS- 1902- p.9.

⁴⁰ BALLU ALBERT ; CAGNAT René- Op.cit- p.23- pl. VIII.

⁴¹ LEGLAY MARCEL - Op.cit.- p.74.

8-The Date of this monument:

The dating of this complex was identified by the archaeological writing given to Emperor Caracalla, which was revealed in the Byzantine Fort and mentioned earlier (see page), relying on the chronicle of the Emperor in the first lines of which⁴²:

IMP{ERATORE). CAES(ARE). M(ARCO) .AVRELIO SEVERO ANTONINO PIO FELICI AVG(STO)
 PARTH(TICO) | MAX(IMO) BRITTAN(ICO) MAX(IMO) GERM(ANICO) MAX(IMO) PONTIF(ICE)
 MAX(IMO) TRIB(UNICIA) POT(ESTATE) XV[L] IMP(ERATORE) III CO(N)S{ULE)IIII P{ATRE)
 P{ATRIAE.....

This writing has been dated based on the version of Renier's work⁴³. The order of authority of the Tribunitian Emperor is clearly apparent, and it is in the 16th degree of the Emperor Caracalla⁴⁴, conferred on him between December 10 and December 9, 213AD, The Emperor also gets in this writing on the third sale which got in October 213AD And given these two conditions, the date of this writing dates back to October 9 December 213AD, This is also confirmed by the Emperor's fourth title as Consul. It's what you get in January 213AD and also the Germanic nickname that also get in 213AD, and the absence of nickname. "ARABICVS" and "ADIABENICVS", obtained in 214AD, while researcher Corcopino tends the date of his creation to the rule of Septimius Severus, Enlarged during the reign of Caracalla⁴⁵, this researcher refers in his report on this inscription to the Emperor's attainment of 17th Tribunitian power. Unlike researchers who studied writing in a next period and who confirmed the sixteenth degree of this authority⁴⁶.

This engraving commemorates the end of the aquarium's work with a bronze fence. (CANCELLIS AEREIS CONCLUSUM), construction of a courtyard surrounded by VIRIDIARIUM hallway, decorating with wall drawings, installation of doors and construction of a PRONAOS lobby overlooking the hallway, In addition to the completion of the tiling work on the road "OPUS PLATEAE", researcher LE GLAY introduced it to the road floor between the Great Southern Bath and the entrance to the Aqua septimiana religious complex⁴⁷. Referring to the previous inscription, it is obvious that the formation of the Holy Halls is far from the rest of the architectural structure because there is no mention of it, which is likely to originate before the Siverian period. The researcher LEGLAY refers to the support of this idea with Latin words that left a trace on a mixed cement block that had a statue base discovered deep in the right Holy Hall t is: "... GERM.MAX...", meaning Greater Germanic, a characteristic attributed to Emperor Komodos, this coincides with

⁴² This inscription is 3.6m wide and 0.87m high and 0.25m thick. The letters are 0.075m to 0.09m high. The upper half was found in the early years of the 20th century, by BALLU, and published in: BALLU (A), Bulletin de Comité, 1911, p.27. The bottom half was then found in the Byzantine Fort excavations, by "LESCHI", the two halves were confirmed to be identical, and the text was published in: Leschi(L), Découverte Récente à TIMGAD....., p.91. This text is a third version of two previous texts, one found in the Byzantine bathrooms of the fort, the other reproduced by RENIER at the end of the nineteenth century, published under 1502, and then in CIL VIII, under 2369.

⁴³ RENIER, n°1501.

⁴⁴ As for "LESCHI", he classifies it in the seventeenth Tribonic Authority, see: LESCHI LOUIS - CRAI, 1942, p.315.

⁴⁵ CARCOPINO (J), Le Travail Archéologique en ALGERIE pendant la Guerre (1939-1942), In : Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 86e Année, N° 4-6, 1942, p.316.

⁴⁶ LESCHI LOUIS- op.cit.,p.92.

⁴⁷ Le GLAY Marcel- op.cit., p74.

the end of the second century AD, and adds that this writing was related to the restoration of the walls of the Holy Hall with marble clothing, which is likely the idea of establishing the three-hall temple to a certain date from the second century AD⁴⁸.

- conclusion:

The archaeological study of this religious complex showed the uniqueness of the latter in Africa's architecture, which combined the following characteristics:

The layout of the complex or temple derived from the Roman-African religious architecture, which blends height on the podium as is customary in Roman temples and occupies the depth of an open square in separate worship halls surrounded by hallways as is customary in the original African-Punic temples.

The presence of a water pool at the SACRARIUM centre for hospital purposes supported by ideological rituals, which is rare in Roman Africa.

The existence of a unique tripartite religious composition, according to researchers, it is difficult to call the worship applied in the complex tripartite worship, since the latter was distinguished in the Roman pagan faith and the ancient belief in the country of the bright country by the worship of three related gods. (God of Father, God of Mother, Father of Son or Goddess of Daughter) which is different from that of the Septimian Water Complex, which in its sacred section brought together worships of different origins:

The African goddess of the homeland "DEA PATRIA": a local idol associated with the site of the complex, on African soil, she also nurtures fertility through her fertility century pregnancy in her representations, gathers around the family, and falls within domestic beliefs.

- AESCULAPIUS: a Roman idol of Greek origin "ASKLEPIOS", the god of medicine and healing, whose worship expanded in the Roman Empire during the second century AD especially.

- SERAPIS: An Egyptian god with Greek origins as well. Alexandria is the source of the origin of his belief, and it has characteristics close to those of AESCULAPIUS in medication, recovery and healing.

The upstream water that used to live in the sacred pool in the septimian religious complex was behind the genesis of this unique triple formulation in the ancient world. uniting African local belief with the Greek Roman belief, as well as the Egyptian belief. The worship of the African homeland gods has earned the main place in sacred section "SACRARIUM", this water was a complex of many worshippers, visitors and patients who were provided with reception space in the "VIRIDIARIUM" recreational department to accommodate them and to provide them with the best living conditions. This religious complex is therefore one of the best models of multi-ethnic pagan religious coexistence. as well as one of Thamugadi's largest temples and Roman Africa with the testimony of all researchers in the light of archaeological discoveries made today.

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