

## *Saving the Stones III*

### **The Work on Two Column Bases at the ICC Building, Old Akko**



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## **Abstract**

The stone column bases were found *in situ* in the main hole of the ICC building during the repairs that began in it on 2009. The first one, made from marble, is located on top of a water cistern at the north part of the main hole of the building. It was found in tact and was covered up to half of it high with "Terazo" tile floors. It was found covered partly with Brawn and red color paint. In Cocks report that was made on the building in 2009 he claimed it was part of three architectural features that dated to the first phase of the building from its crusaders phase. The second base, probably is made of hard lime stone, was found also *in situ* on top of a well opening. It was found during a wall removal from a niche in the west side of the main hall. The niche had metal debris in its vicinity that imply that it had some kind of metal installation around and on it, as holes and rust on top of the base deduce that.

The objective of the work on the bases is to restore them to their original state, as was during their use on top of the water installations when they were first introduced there.

The documentation of the two objects, by using Cocks report, the documentation file of the ICC from the IAA and other bibliography on that kind of objects, finding equivalents in history for that type of objects and their use.

Conservation program that include:

1. Cleaning of sediments on the bases. (Concrete, mortar, paint, tar).
2. Addressing the question about the concrete adding in the radius of the North base. Keeping it or removing it.
3. Restoring the original position of the south column base, that was repositioned wrong.
4. Addressing the question of the rust sediments on the bases which was made by the metal installation on it.

The main work was done on the north column base. First because it had the most additions on it, and so will show the largest difference when finished. Second, because it had on it the most problems. The work was done by using dissolvent materials and mechanical work.

## **Table of contents**

Abstract.....	2
History of Research.....	4
Pathology.....	8
Methodology.....	12
Solution.....	15
Results.....	17
Bibliography.....	18

## **History of Research**

The ICC building is an ottoman courtyard house with a well and a water cistern in its vicinity, located in the Pisan quarter.

The crusader period- The structure has several phases of building from the crusader period to our days. The crusader phase includes three architectural features that include the arch in the two south- western rooms, a hint of an arrow slit at the north exit of the building, and an arch in the cistern. The evidence indicates the existence of a fortified crusader building facing the west. In the map of Marino sanudo a Pisan palace is mentioned and Cocks<sup>1</sup> in his report believes that the ICC building is that palace and that it was the west boundaries of the Pisan quarter.

The Ottoman period- During the 18<sup>th</sup> century the buildings in the south part of the city were built on top the crusader layout. The south of the city was a leaving quarter. Because its vicinity to st. Johns church it can be that the area was the christen quarter. The building had two phases of construction during the 18-19<sup>th</sup> century. The first is a courtyard house, the entrance hall was the yard and around it the rooms of the house were built. The second phase was the construction of the ceiling, rooms and halls were added and the building became a "main hall house".

The Mandate period- The building was a residential one<sup>2</sup>.

The building has two water installations in the main entrance hall. At its north part a water cistern, and at the south part a well. Both of the installations were covered with stone elements, "unit", that is meant to protect the installation from foreigner objects that will enter it and has probably decorative meaning. The use of that kind of stone element is widely used in water installation.

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<sup>1</sup> Cocks 2007.

<sup>2</sup>conservation report ICC.



Unit on top of a well  
in Jerusalem



Unit on top of a cistern in  
Yatir forest

From a typological research that was made by the IAA in old Akko<sup>3</sup> found that one of the types of buildings in the city is a "courtyard house". The main features of it are a courtyard in the middle of it. Some time it has a water cistern in the yard. The ICC building is an example of this kind of courtyard house. The two water installation in the ICC building is covered by two column bases that were secondary used for that purpose. As I was researching this phenomenon I discovered that it was apparently widely. I've discovered numerous equivalents in the old city.



Unit from column base, Hospitaler  
compound, Akko



Unit from column base, Hospitaler  
compound, Akko

The examples were found also in excavations<sup>4</sup>: during the excavations at the knight's parking lot in old Akko, a well and a cistern were found with column bases *in situ* as a "unit" on top of them in a secondary from marble was found also *in situ* at the excavation in Ramla, showing secondary use as a well "unit". use. A column head

<sup>3</sup> Milstien and Forman-Naaman 2002.

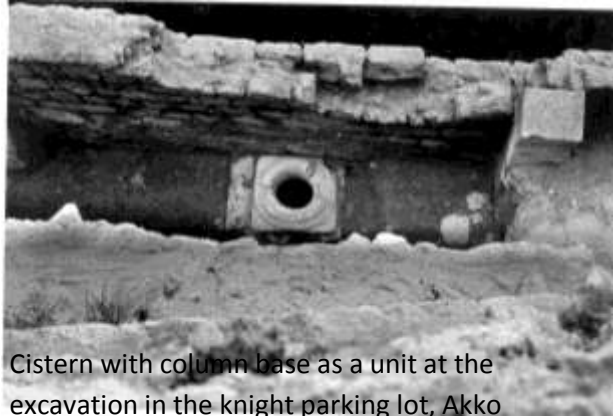
<sup>4</sup> Sion and Tacher 1997. Gorzelzani and Ad 2010.



Well with column base as a unit at the excavation in the knight parking lot, Akko



Column head piece as a Unit, Ramla excavation



Cistern with column base as a unit at the excavation in the knight parking lot, Akko

A courtyard house in old Akko with a base of a column was found during my research, house 36/11:



House 36/11 well unit

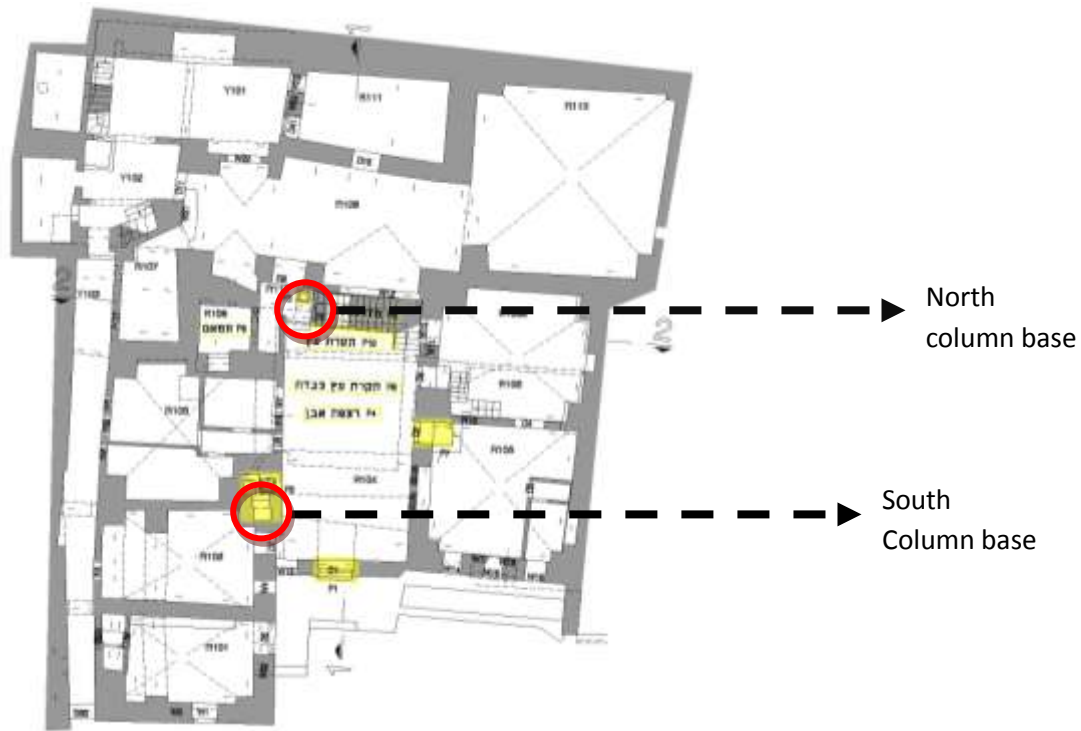
The use of oval stone elements as "unit" is found also in other places; Paul's well in Tarsos Turkey is an example:



Paul's well, Tarsos Turkey

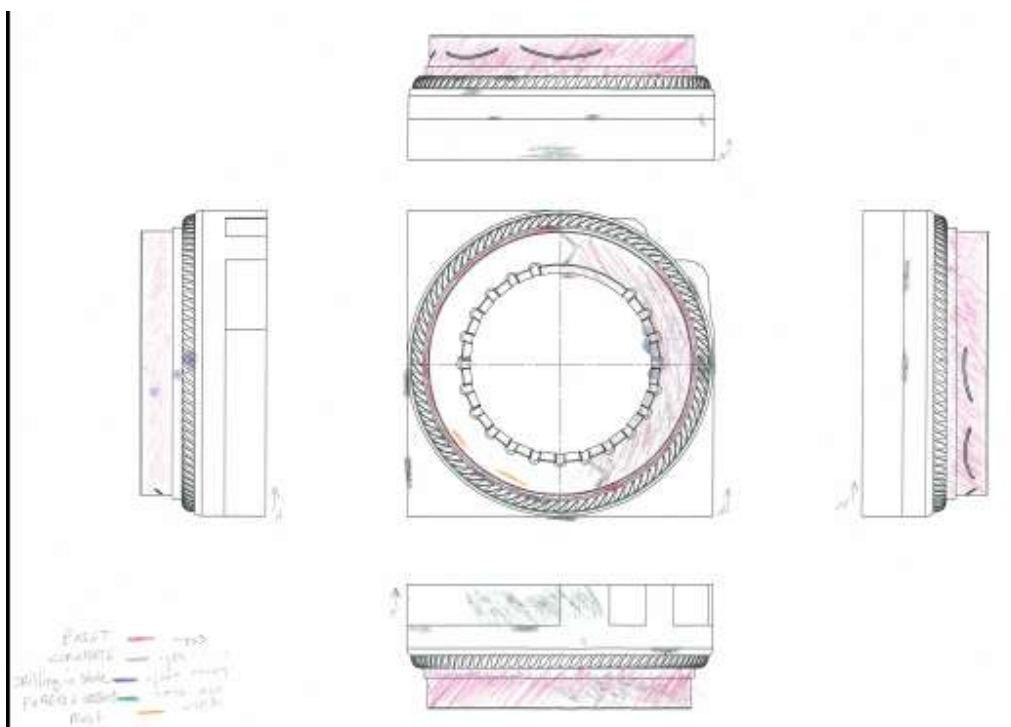
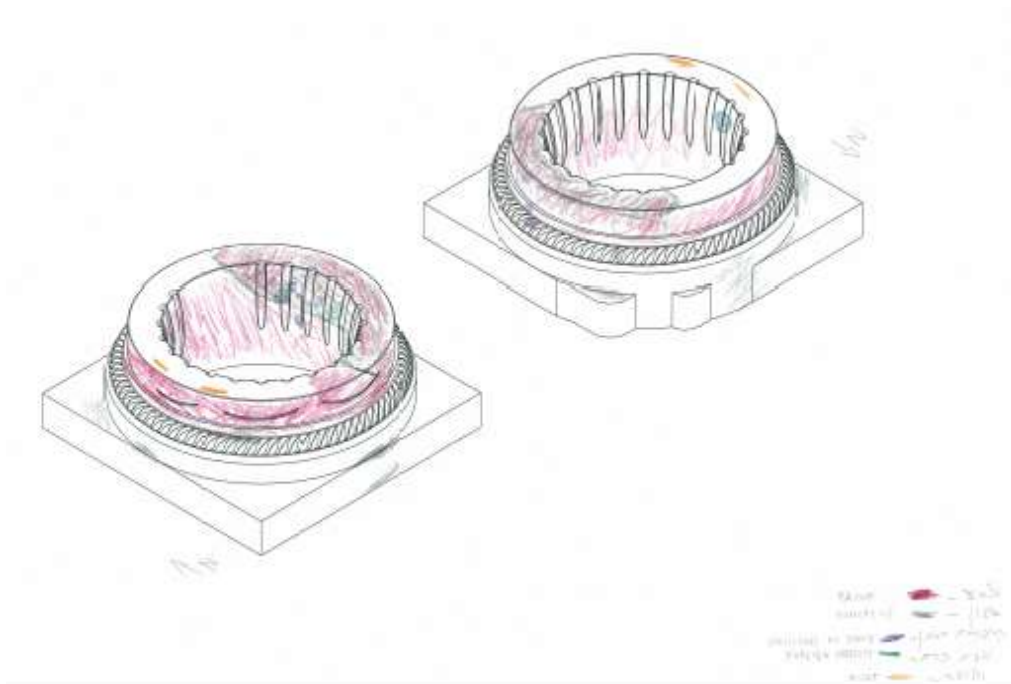
## Pathology

The two column bases that were found at the ICC building had extensive sediments on them, which include pain, concrete, tar, rust and mortar. The north base was covered in brawn and red pain, had holes drill in to it and was covered up to half of its high with "Terrazzo" tile floors. The type of this column base is not Roman for sure, but the type isn't clear.





## North base pathology plans

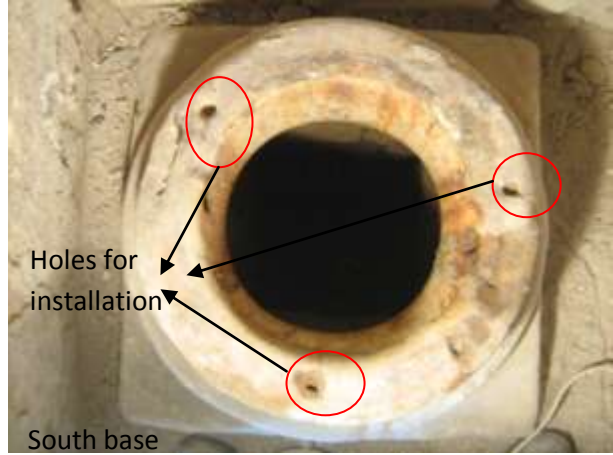


The south column base was found during the renovation work that was done in the building. The type of the column base is Byzantine. It was found when a wall in a niche was dismantled. On top of the base and around it parts of metal were found which hint for the mechanism that was

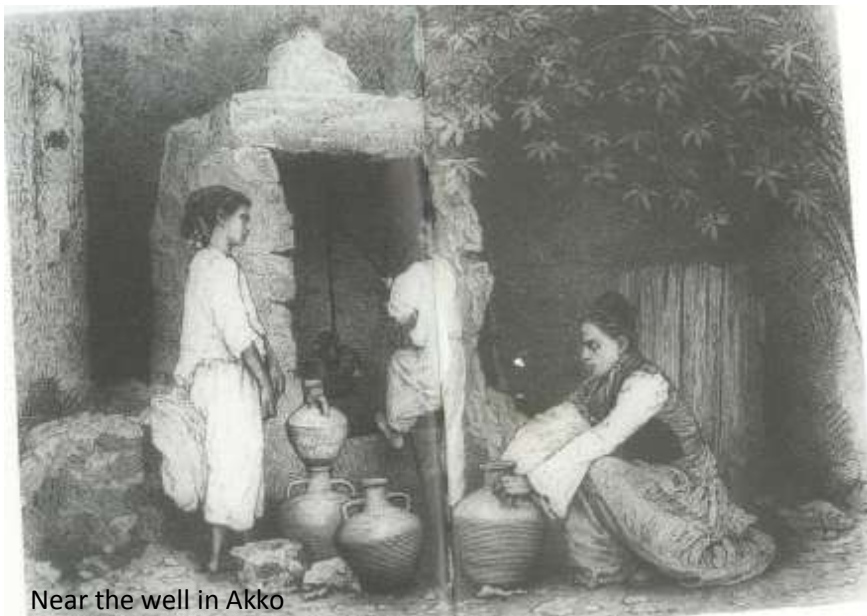
there for water extraction, holes on the base and extensive rust sediments support this.



South base



South base

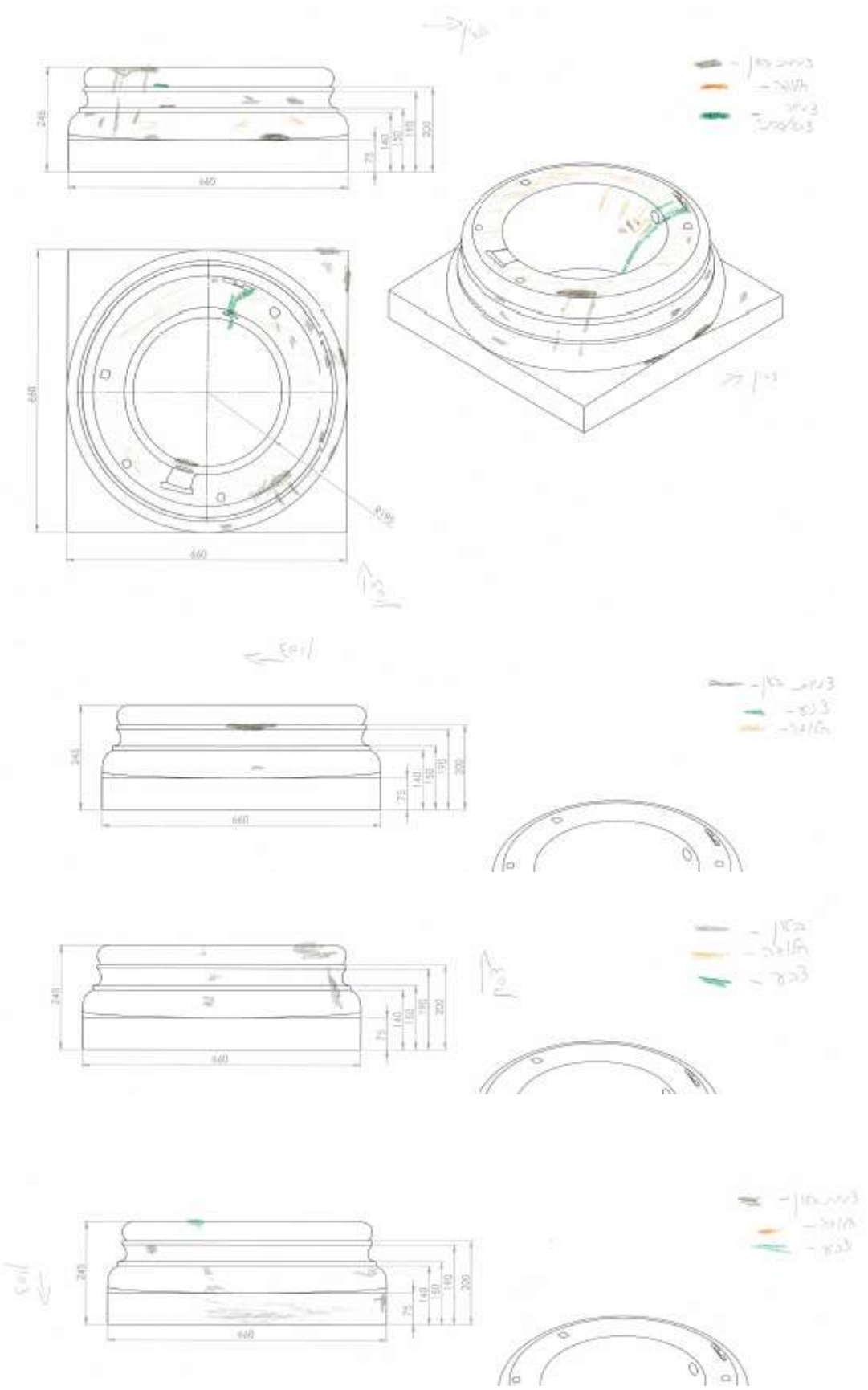


Near the well in Akko

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<sup>5</sup> Shoor 1990.

# South Base pathology plans



## Methodology

The importance of the work on the bases is first of all due to their location in the main entrance hall, and hence are the welcoming features of the ICC building.

Second, in his report Cocks writes that" The excavation, documentation and restoration of the cistern may be a potentially exciting student project for the International Conservation Center, in addition to yielding further information about the history of the quarter and the building."

The objective of the work on the bases is to restore the two column bases to their original state, as was during their use on top of the water installations.

The work began with documentation and research on the bases from the historic point of view and the practical one also. The research used the IAA documentation report of the ICC building, the historic report of the ICC building and excavation reports.

A conservation plan was made based on the pathology report and a schedule of work had been compiled:

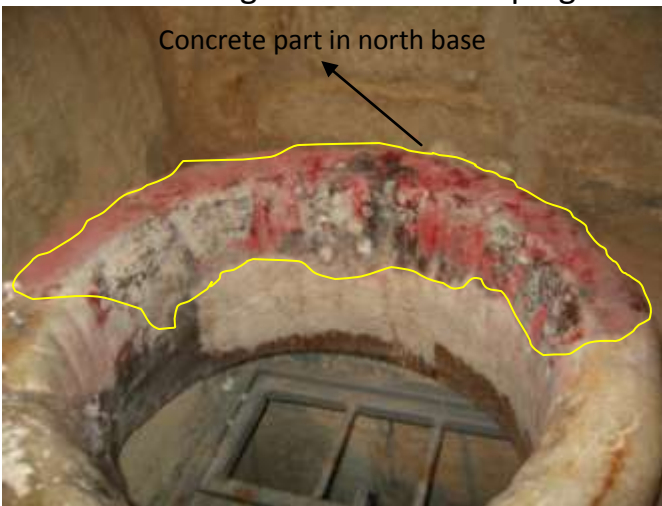
1. Cleaning of sediments on the bases. (Concrete, mortar, paint, tar).





Concrete on south base

2. Addressing the question about the concrete adding in the radius of the adding, north base. keeping it or removing it and molding a marble like



3. Restoring the original position of the south column base, that was repositioned wrong.



South base,  
before



South base,  
after

4. Addressing the question of the rust sediments on the bases which was made by the metal installation on it.



Rust on south base

5. Filling the holes that were drilled in the north base.



Drilled holes in north base

## Solutions

1. The concrete and mortar sediments will be removed by mechanical work. Use of hammer chisel and scalpel. The sediments will be hammered to the thinnest possible way and then a scalpel will be used to scrape the sediment so the stone won't be damaged.
2. Paint and tar will be removed by a compress of ethanol with the use of cellulose for dissolving it and then scraping it with scalpel.



3. The concrete addition was made after the breakage of the marble base during its use. The question is should it be removed, and if so how and what will be the solution for the molding of the replacing piece with binder and stone powder. The problem with that we don't know the date of the concrete addition and that it has rope marks that connects it to the use of the column base as part of water installation give it a connection to the function use of the base, and so is a part of it. In some places the rope marks on the marble are not correlate to those in the concrete, and by that showing that the base was used on top of a water opening before it was broken and fixed be concrete. The rope marks are at the entire radius of the base which shows that the polling of the rope

took place from all around the base, although there are walls that don't allow this kind of action on the east and north side of the base. This indicates that the column base was used as a "unit" in another place before arriving the ICC building.

4. Returning the lime base to its original position in the niche. It was moved for installation of metal bars, but was replaced wrong.
5. Leaving the rust sediments *in situ* for they are remnants of the use of the bases as part of water installations. Hence the sediments have authentic value.

### Results





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