Dr Erin Darby
University of Tennessee
515 McClung Tower
Knoxville, TN 37996-0450
United States of America
edarby1@utk.edu

Erin Darby

Allies in Arms? Jordanian Military Communities and Cultural Resource Management at the Late Roman Garrison of 'Ayn Gharandal

Introduction

Although site preservation is discussed frequently in public archaeology, efforts focus on educating local populations surrounding ancient sites. Because this type of outreach has become integral to many preservation plans, other types of challenges and methods of outreach are under-represented in discussions of archaeological preservation in Jordan. As a result, sites located outside of modern settlements are often excluded from these discussions, and archaeologists of such sites may find themselves wondering about their role in cultural resource management.

In part, the problem lies with the definition of community. While many initiatives attempt to engage citizens surrounding a site, most of this work focuses on permanent and long-established population centers adjacent to archaeological remains. In such cases, archaeologists work with family systems and civic institutions with the goal of establishing values of preservation and cultural heritage that span multiple generations. But what of communities that are diasporic rather than local, impermanent rather than territorial, and professional rather than residential?

One such community in Jordan is the modern military. Military personnel interact with archaeological remains outside their own traditional residential communities, lessening the motivation for preserving sites in such regions. The rotation of personnel also undercuts efforts to inculcate an on-going commitment to site preservation. At the same time, when acknowledged, these particularities can inform strategies for building a long-lasting commitment to the preservation of national heritage.

Moreover, understanding military communities yields benefits beyond the preservation of specific sites. The Jordanian military has played an important role in nation-state formation, having served as a locus for cross-cultural integration as well as resistance. Furthermore, because early archaeological exploration was tied to European military and political objectives, the interaction between military personnel and the Jordanian landscape creates an arena in which is played out colonial discourse, national identity and heritage preservation.

For these reasons, this paper uses the site of 'Ayn Gharandal, a Late Roman military outpost in Wādī 'Arabah, to discuss the interactions between military personnel and archaeological sites in southern Jordan. The paper outlines the military's role throughout the historical process of nation-state formation and then contextualizes current treatments of archaeological sites within this larger historical setting. Finally, the paper

proposes several ways in which archaeological projects might partner with military personnel to create preservation plans. Ultimately, as this case study shows, only by recognizing the unique factors that constitute military communities in their historical and contemporary formulations can public archaeology identify their potential dangers and possible contributions.

Traditional Approaches to Public Archaeology and 'Ayn Gharandal

It has been argued elsewhere that an oft-touted solution to preservation problems is community involvement (McManamon and Hatton 2000: 1-19; Darby and Darby 2013). In Jordan, in particular, community education has been a stated goal of cultural resource management throughout the nineties and into the present century (Davis 1993: 499-505) and has been successfully employed at sites like Umm aj-Jimāl and Ḥisbān. However, this model does not address sites without adjacent villages, such as 'Ayn Gharandal in the southern 'Arabah.

The site of 'Ayn Gharandal is located approximately 70 km north of the Gulf of 'Aqaba, *ca.* 40 km south-west of Petra and *ca.* 200 m west of the mouth of Wādī Gharandal on the eastern edge of Jordan's Wādī 'Arabah. The ruins rest alongside the modern paved road running east from the nearby Dead Sea highway. The presence of an artesian spring in the mouth of the *wadi* presumably served as the reason for human occupation at the site. As of the 2013 field season, excavation has yielded evidence of a Roman military garrison as well as later Islamic burials (Darby, Darby and Shelton 2010; Darby and Darby 2010, 2012, 2013).

Despite the deep sand dunes covering the majority of the remains, the site was looted with mechanical equipment around the middle of the last decade, as indicated by the massive hole ripped from floor to hypocaust system in the Roman bathhouse as well as objects left on the bathhouse floor. It is likely the looting occurred in conjunction with construction activities at the site, particularly the paved road and power lines leading from the Dead Sea highway to Wādī Gharandal. One of the power lines is actually inserted into the bathhouse, which might explain how looters originally located the sand-covered structure (*cf.* Reeves *et al.* 2009: 260-61).

Bedouin living in the village of ar-Risha consider the land surrounding 'Ayn Gharandal their traditional territory, but they have long been resettled *ca.* 40 km away. The closest and most constant community near the site is the military base in Wādī Gharandal.

Troops have been stationed in this area since before 1956, when aerial bombing killed *ca.* 9 people and destroyed a police station (Morris 1993: 410; Hahn 2004: 91). While this event may have caused some site damage (though none has been observed in connection with the 1956 bombing), most of the damage relates to peacetime activities rather than active warfare.

In general, military communities, though understudied, have a large impact on archaeological sites even in peacetime. Army activity areas alter archaeologists' access to sites. Military training can disturb archaeological remains; military digging, vehicle movement, artillery practice areas and fixed installations all represent very real dangers to archaeological sites (*e.g.* Canham and Chippindale 1988: 53-65). As a result, armies may be responsible for the destruction of a number of archaeological sites during both war and peace (Kletter 2005; Darby and Darby 2013).

As has been argued elsewhere (Darby and Darby 2013), 'Ayn Gharandal is particularly susceptible to military activity. Its proximity to the Israeli / Jordanian border increases the amount of military activity in the site's vicinity. Furthermore, the Jordanian army removed all local inhabitants from the area in order to construct a military base. More recently, the base was relocated further back into Wādī Gharandal, leaving the area around the site uninhabited, save for one *bedouin* farmer,

seasonal grazing of *bedouin* livestock and continual army vehicle movement from the Dead Sea highway back toward the military compound.

The road which runs through 'Ayn Gharandal and the power lines inserted in the bathhouse probably relate to these various army construction activities. Army personnel also continue to visit the site. As a result, direct interaction with the army stationed nearby is an important part of the project's preservation plan and should probably be considered a larger part of Middle Eastern cultural resource management in general.

Cultural Resource Management and Nationalized Subjects

In many cases, the positive outcomes of cultural resource management (CRM) are taken as a given. However, the importance of CRM and its relative value should not be taken for granted. It could be argued that CRM requires at least two different components: first, a bureaucratic infrastructure to manage new research, the preservation of material culture and the protection of cultural heritage sites; second, local populations who embrace CRM as a value and act in accordance with that value to protect sites and archaeological finds. While the first of these has been active in Jordan for a long time, *i.e.* the Department of Antiquities, the second component, which is normally included in public archaeology and outreach, has remained somewhat elusive. It is our contention that difficulties encountered with pubic outreach should not be attributed to the failure of bureaucratic management, nor should they be attributed to any cultural insensitivity on the part of Jordan's citizens. Rather, such difficulties result from the fact that CRM is embedded in various types of competing discourses, particularly those related to nation-state identity, and that CRM requires more than a series of administrative rules but a total formulation of Jordanian subjects as

'nationalized' entities.

To borrow language from Michel Foucault, inculcating the value of CRM such that people regulate and police their own activities is a type of disciplinary and discursive power. It requires that individuals not only comply with a set of legal obligations but that they internalize the value of those obligations as an inherent part of their identity and subjectivity. In other words, CRM requires creating a new type of subject – one who is not forced to protect archaeological sites but one who chooses to do so of one's own accord.

In order to understand the power dynamics implicit in CRM within Jordan, the conversation cannot ignore the fact that CRM initiatives in Jordan began during colonial rule. This is not to say that the preservation of heritage was unimportant prior to western colonization, but that the models used to enforce and instill CRM have sometimes been imposed in a colonialist way, largely because western powers do not always recognize their own biases as such. This is evident in two different facets of CRM – the temporal and the spatial.

First, CRM, as it is currently practiced, requires that a dividing line be drawn between 'antiquity' and 'modernity'. Without such a line, nothing really distinguishes a *bedouin* re-using Roman building materials from a Roman re-using Nabataean structures. While the latter is considered part of the complex processes of deposition within archaeological time, the former is considered looting.

The line between these examples is not objective but constructed and given authority through a complex legal apparatus, largely for the good of the state, which identifies itself with 'modernity'. By legislating and thus categorizing various measures of time, states create a curatorial discourse, where their own success is measured by how well they manage 'antiquity' at the same time that they distinguish themselves as separate from antiquity (Massad 2001: 25, 78). This complex relationship

with the temporal dimension constitutes an ambiguity that sometimes undercuts western modes of CRM discourse.

Second, current CRM discursive power requires a certain territorialization of the state. In its most obvious example, the entire UNESCO management system and Hague Convention legal apparatus presupposes the existence of nation-states with clearly demarcated national territories (Kila 2012). So, in this sense, CRM currently requires a nation-state administrative system and inculcates further the curatorial narrative, as the citizens of each state become the caretakers of the heritage found within.

At the same time, this national-heritage identity is valued at the international level over regional, tribal or local identities, requiring citizens to adopt the former identity over the latter, at least where international funding is concerned. Here, too, the state is asked to create individuals that internalize this territorial refashioning, who must see themselves as national citizens (rather than regional or local inhabitants) acting for the good of the national culture (*cf.* Smith 2004; Knapp and Antoniadou 1998: 14-16; Meyers 1992: 170-71; Meskell 2002: 564, 568-569; Greenberg 2009a: 262-281; Greenberg 2009b: 35-50; Bauman 2004: 210-225).

Even more, the territorialization also implicates western values related to private property, in the sense that land is not shared for multiple purposes but belongs to particular individuals or agencies that have legal jurisdiction over set parcels (Massad 2001: 111, 146; for the government's ownership of monuments, see Harding 1959: 187). While this move allows land to be governed by legal authority and categorized, it, once more, creates an ambiguity as the state must divide and account for the land and its ownership at the same time that individual citizens also gain a sense of personal property rights that might include the antiquities within that property (Massad 2001: 34-35).

In sum, CRM, as currently practiced, is not a simple prospect. The financial contingencies affecting departments of antiquities in the Middle East require a nation's citizens to police themselves, so to speak. This, in turn, is tantamount to recreating the state's subjects as they internalize not only the value of heritage, but a particular formulation of that value that is tied to nation-state temporality and spatiality and that might come into conflict with more traditional modes of being.

Yet a further irony is the possibility that other side-effects of a western nationalizing discourse responsible for CRM, such as private property, modernization, army infrastructure and increased sedentarization, may have contributed significantly to the damage inflicted on the sites themselves. Although Lankester Harding already noted the problems with looting in the forties and fifties (Harding 1959), in fact the greatest and most systematic damage to archaeological sites has not been *ad hoc bedouin* raiding (the Dead Sea scrolls not withstanding), but humans encroaching on territories that were previously under-settled and settling in larger numbers surrounding urban and semi-urban areas (Massad 2001: 146). Where active looting for the antiquities market does occur, the value which motivates the black market has been created by the nationalizing temporal labels that identify an object as an 'antiquity'. Thus, it might be said that at the same time nationalism imagines itself to be the savior of cultural heritage (a category nationalism itself created), it may also be its greatest threat.

The Military Community in Historical Context

One of the most vital populations that inhabit this ambiguous space between western colonial discourse, post-colonial national identity and heritage management is the military. The Jordanian armed forces have distinguished themselves throughout the Middle East and

abroad. They have played a key role both in guarding national safety and in nationalizing Jordan's population. While many authors have emphasized the significance of the military community within Jordanian society (Terrill 2008; Al Oudat and Alshboul 2010: 69; Tal 2002: 17; Massad 2001: 8, 214-15, 217), this fact has not been fully recognized in discussion about CRM.

The military has seen countless transitions, from expanding and contracting roles for British officers, to Jordanian nationalization (Blackwell 2009), to absorbing *bedouin*, West Bank and East Bank participants (Blackwell 2009; Vatikiotis 1967: 5; Massad 2001: 56-57, 206, 240). It has been home to many who support the royal family (Al Oudat and Alshboul 2010: 69-70) as well as some who did not (Blackwell 2009), but, despite some political conflicts, in the main the Jordanian armed forces have been incredibly successful at providing a home for Jordan's complex and competing populations to mix and emerge as national citizens (Massad 2001: 8).

Moreover, the military has also provided concrete benefits, like alternatives to poverty for many of Jordan's citizens (Terrill 2008: 9; Tal 2002: 17; Vatikiotis 1965: 10; Massad 2001: 219, 221). Furthermore, Jordanian officers did not traditionally come from a separate class to the rank and file, which has created a more egalitarian structure than that of the British officer corps (Vatikiotis 1965: 24, 27). Thus, the military has enriched the lives of thousands of Jordanians and provides a very real life-line for each soldier, as well as the family system he or she may support. As a corollary, the army is an incredibly influential branch of government for creating nation-state identity in the population at large (Massad 2001: 8).

That having been said, the complex power dynamics that marked the Glubb Pasha years should not be overlooked (Tal 2002: 21-30; Massad 2001: 13, 105-36). Yusif Massad has claimed that post-colonial nation-states are often characterized by adopting various discursive modes from the previous colonial power (Massad 2001: 1-2). The Jordanian military has always maintained indigenous elements, but it has also adopted a great deal from British administrative systems. Even after Glubb's removal in 1956, the British maintained a training presence in the Jordanian military and even aided with limited military intervention (Blackwell 2009). This is not to mention the many Jordanian officers who have been trained in British military academies.

At the same time, the military did not simply produce colonial subjects. Nor is it clear that the military has created the type of nation-state identity envisioned by some post-colonial nationalists or by western powers. A case could be made that, for at least the tribal contingency of the military, the alliance forged was between the tribe and the king rather than with parliament or government bureaucrats (Al Oudat and Alshboul 2010: 70; Vatikiotes 1967: 20). Even the controversies that affected the army in the fifties, sixties and seventies were overcome by the Hashemite dynasty and, in so doing, ensured future relations between the royal house and the armed forces. Such a relationship would differ significantly from a somewhat acephalous administrative nationalism, where national subjects internalize the authority of most or all government agents and pledge allegiance to an abstract 'national' idea rather than to particular personalities (Tell 2013). This begs the question of whether some of the difficulties in western CRM models derive from a fundamental misapprehension of the particular version of nation-state operative in the Jordanian military nexus.

The Military Community and Cultural Resource Management
Regional Versus National Identity

Army communities raise unique challenges for site preservation. First, presumably many of the soldiers stationed at a particular location

have no direct territorial connection to the surrounding area. In the case of the southern 'Arabah, much of this territory was *bedouin* and may still be used by *bedouin* to graze their livestock and farm, but most *bedouin* have been resettled further north. While some of the soldiers stationed at a base may be of *bedouin* descent, many come from other regions of the country and may have little connection to the land as an ancestral heritage.

These competing alliances tie into larger issues in the history of Jordanian military communities and the push and pull between national and local identities. While Jordanian national identity and concern for the country's 'national' archaeological heritage is certainly at play, it remains the case that many of Jordan's inhabitants maintain a strong local or regional connection (Massad 2001: 26; Shoup 1985: 283-285; Porter and Salazar 2005: 365; Jacobs and Porter 2009: 80, 84-84; Maffi 2002: 208-209). In contrast, when appealing to a non-local but residential military community, the archaeologist is working with a strongly nationalist impulse, but one that must interact with various regional and local identities as well.

Change in Military Personnel and Structure

Rotation of army personnel also make long-standing CRM initiatives more complicated. The changing of officers and commanders, in particular, presents considerable challenges for establishing long-term relationships between senior excavation staff and the military establishment, as well as for establishing consistency in archaeological preservation policy at a particular military outpost.

This challenge may be due, in part, to the importance of the chain of command and even the entire structure of allegiance in military communities. The relocation of military leadership could disrupt the relationship between excavation projects and the local military base. Conversely, the centrality of

these figures also warrants sincere attempts by archaeologists to forge relationships that are mutually beneficial to the project and the base (Kila 2012: 191).

Internal Competition between Branches of Government

Finally, internal disagreements and power dynamics between the various branches of government also create added challenges (*cf.* Kila 2012: 190). For example, despite the fact that an excavation permit from the Department of Antiquities in Amman is legally binding (which includes *mukhabarat* approval for all participants), excavators working in army territory may still find it expedient, or even necessary, to establish direct contacts with local military commanders and to obtain written permission for passage to and work at archaeological sites in their purview.

It is not that the Department of Antiquities and the military have nothing in common. In fact, in the same way that British administrative structures imprinted the military, so, too, the Department of Antiquities was under British control by Lancaster Harding for almost 30 years (Harding 1959: 9). Furthermore, in both cases the position of administrative control held by the British was terminated in 1956, under similar socio-political conditions. In both cases, British law was used as a prototype to form the legal dimensions of each branch under the regulatory eye of British officials (Harding 1959: 9; Adams 2008: 3; Massad 2001). Finally, the case could be made that both Glubb and Harding believed themselves to be benevolent leaders who had the best interests of Jordan at heart (Winnet 1980: 127), while at the same time underestimating or even forgetting their own affiliation with a colonizing power.

This is not to deny the differences between branches of government, either historically or in the present day. While Jordanians have played key roles in the formation and execution of the Department of Antiquities, the department

largely traces its lineage from the Ottoman period directly to the British Mandate period (whether in combination with or separation from Palestine). Even when the directorship was assumed by Jordanians, they largely adopted the framework created by Harding, including the purpose of the department, the periodical and the Jordan museum. Certainly, the department has always been a cooperative venture, with Jordanians occupying important positions even before Harding's removal (Abu Nowar 2000: 304-305), but the transition between colonial and national administration seems to have been relatively smooth and with little challenge to the previous system.

In distinction, the military traces its lineage to an organic 'nationalist' moment – the Arab Revolt during World War I. This implies that, in the armed forces, a different type of national body and administrative system was present from the outset. Moreover, even during the Mandate period and later British control, British policy – in cooperation with the royal family – for managing the military was to accommodate local custom in as much as was possible (Massad 2001: 56-75, 113). Although Massad has highlighted the degree to which the *bedouin* were 'de- *bedouin*ized' before a reconstructed version of their culture was appropriated in the military, packaged and consumed as nationalist discourse (Massad 2001: 144-45), it remains the case that this version of nationalism was not identical with that imagined by western powers.

Thus, is it possible that the military apparatus does not always respond to CRM discourse because that apparatus partakes in a different form of nationalism not accounted for in standard CRM approaches, whether expounded by foreign archaeological societies or appropriated by post-colonial nation-states? If some version of CRM is to be valued, effective management must move beyond disagreements over the various categories of administrative oversight to attempt to inculcate a sensitivity to cultural property among the actual humans who most consistently come into contact with cultural heritage at sites like 'Ayn Gharandal, namely military personnel.

Conclusion: Jordanian Military Communities and Archaeological Preservation Plans

While the challenges are many, military communities can also become an important ally in the fight against illegal excavation. Lawrence Tal has claimed that "Controlling the army was the most effective way of controlling Jordan" (Tal 2002: 17). Might it not also be said that training the army in a culturally sensitive mode of CRM might also be one of the best ways of integrating such values into Jordanian communities, whether military or otherwise?

We would like to offer three suggestions for further thought. First, throughout the existence of the military it has been affiliated with, sponsored and run many educational institutions (Vatikiotis 1965: 27; Massad 2001: 106-7). Partnerships with any such ongoing programs could be a fruitful possibility. Moreover, increasing the amount of CRM and heritage preservation components in the education of those attending university with the intention of serving in the military would be another option.

As recently as 2009, the United States held a joint military environmental conference in Amman that included discussions about increasing cultural resource education among military personnel. Laurie Rush reports that Jordanian officers were favorably disposed to continue the conversation and Jordanian archaeologists have expressed interest in developing heritage awareness educational opportunities (Rush 2010: 105; Kila 2012: 201). While western archaeologists should find ways to support any initiatives, it has long been noted that cultural preservation is most effective when led by citizens who inhabit the areas in need of protection (White-Spunner 2011: 83)

Second, while the Department of Antiquities is under-funded to police all of Jordan's archaeological and heritage sites (and this

has been true even since Harding's time), the military is frequently in contact with many of these sites, especially those in desert regions. In that sense, increased training of military personnel could benefit the department's mission. At least at Gharandal, increasing awareness of the site's importance has directly contributed to the site's protection, including – in one unfortunate case – ushering one of our staff off the site and abandoning him along the Dead Sea highway.

Third, excavation directors could be more intentional about incorporating military communities into their seasons, offering educational opportunities and fostering positive relationships with military leaders (*cf.* Reeves *et al.* 2009: 260-261). In the southern 'Arabah, the relationship between excavation and military personnel has been integral to our logistics planning and execution. The Southern Command has already taken some consistent interest in the site and the students, and we hope to expand upon this relationship as the excavations proceed. In sum, directors should continue to recognize the importance of personal relationships and authority figures, and could provide a conduit through which these communities and the Department of Antiquities partner together to create a CRM model that works in the Jordanian and, in our case, southern regional and *bedouin* traditional contexts.

Ultimately, archaeology and cultural resource management in Jordan both depend upon and transgress borders. The enterprise, from its beginning, was international in nature, although the nature of those interactions was certainly contested. Both the Department of Antiquities and the military were affected by the various re-territorializations of the nation-state, yet also continue to depend on international cooperation, some of which is contingent upon the existence of national borders and some of which transcends those borders entirely. Should CRM be effective in Jordan, it will need to

transcend administrative boundaries as well, bringing all relevant branches of government into conversation with one another, including the military. Furthermore, foreign excavators can play an important role in these efforts by recognizing the way their own notions of territory and national identity color education and outreach with Jordanian citizens, while at the same time contributing to the unbounded enthusiasm and admiration for Jordanian heritage, whether past, present or future.

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