

THE CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PROJECT IN JORDAN
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AN INTRODUCTION

by
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Cultural Resources Management (CRM) is only one of several terms used to describe a basic idea: a nation's cultural heritage must not only be protected from threats to its integrity, but must also be properly managed in order to preserve it for future generations and to present it to the wider public. The Department of Antiquities of Jordan (DAJ), with ACOR assistance, has been promoting a CRM program in its own organization in order to develop such a technique in Jordan. Since 1987 the program has been active in finding ways of cooperation between governmental development departments and the DAJ. Thanks to this effort, governmental agencies are now aware of the importance of preserving our national heritage, and of the need for coordination at the earliest stages of a construction project (see the article by Palumbo *et al.*).¹ We are in the process of having Cultural Resources Impact Assessments included in the Environmental Impact Reports of major public construction projects, and these assessments are now routinely prepared by the CRM office each time a new construction project enters the design and feasibility study phases (see article by Abu Dayyeh *et al.*).

Another achievement of the project has been the organization and preparation of a computerized inventory of Jordan's archaeological sites. The project, called Jordan Antiquities Database and Information System (JADIS) consists of the registration and recording of archaeological sites from published information and files, and in the compilation of this information in a compu-

terized database at the DAJ Registration Center. ACOR provided hardware, software, and specialized personnel to train DAJ employees in the management of the database.

Much still needs to be done, however, in order to have an efficient CRM program totally integrated into the development process of our society. The following reports show that there is still a lot of "salvage" excavations being done (Waheeb and Palumbo; Palumbo, 'Amr, Musa and Rasson-Seigne). But "salvage" should not be the common way of conducting archaeological work; rather, it should be done only in true emergencies. We are trying to have more and more projects showing the level of coordination achieved in the projects reported by Bisheh, Farajat, Palumbo and Waheeb (Aqaba- Ras an-Naqab Survey), and by Waheeb (Tafileh-Ghor Feifeh Survey). Those projects show that proper evaluation of threats to cultural heritage and possible solutions and alternatives can be suggested by the DAJ before any damage is inflicted to the sites.

After five years of CRM projects in Jordan, we can see the success of such an approach to preservation. We are sure that the CRM reports next year will present less "salvage" work and more coordinated efforts towards an effective *management* of our great national heritage.

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1. All references are to articles included in this section of *ADAJ* volume 37.

