

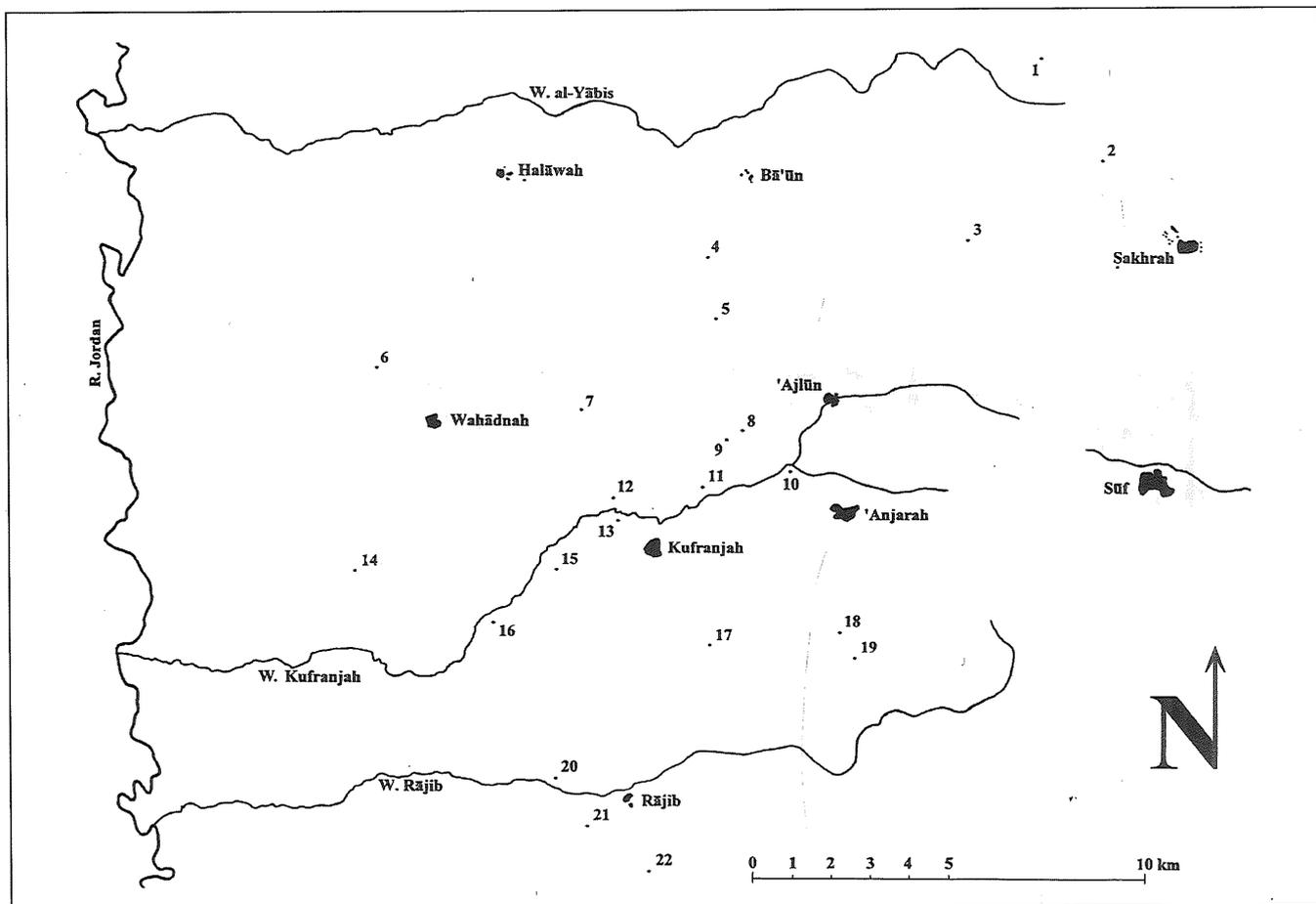
AYYUBID/MAMLUK ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE 'AJLŪN AREA A PRELIMINARY TYPOLOGY

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This project began as a survey of the water mills of Wādī Kufranjah (وادي كفرنجاه), and a study of their Ayyubid/Mamluk contexts. It was later extended to include the Ayyubid/Mamluk sites of an area centered upon 'Ajlūn castle and extending, roughly, north to Wādī al-Yābis/ar-Rayyān (وادي اليايس/الريان) and south to Wādī Rājib (وادي راجب) (Fig. 1). While not a comprehensive survey, principle archaeological sites with Ayyubid/Mamluk associations were examined, primarily for their social, economic and religious associations. Virtually all of these sites — apart from the water mills — have earlier Islamic

and pre-Islamic phases, and some have significant structures from the Ottoman period. Concentration, however, centered on those sites with significant indication of the Ayyubid period as evidenced by standing remains, sherd cover, and epigraphical and textual sources.

The survey was conducted — periodically — between January and July, 2000.¹ Many of these sites had been previously surveyed, especially by Mittmann and Greene, but not with emphasis on Islamic remains with particular reference to the provincial aspects of the Ayyubid/Mamluk period (Mittmann 1970; Greene 1995). Although some



1. Map of 'Ajlūn area showing sites described (adapted from Mittmann): 1: 'Uṣaym; 2: Sāmtā; 3: Dayr al-Luyūs; 4: Listib; 5: Kufr ad-Darrah; 6: Shaykh Rāshid; 7: Shaykh 'Alī Mashhad; 8: Qal'at ar-Rabaḍ; 9: al-Khaḍr; 10: al-Qidādī; 11: Khirbat Qarāqūsh; 12: al-Mushayrafah; 13: al-Manṣūrah; 14: Qaḥṣah; 15: Khirbat al-Ḥammām; 16: Khirbat an-Nimr; 17: Khirbat al-Badiyah; 18: al-Ḥanīsh; 19: Sarābīs; 20: Tall al-Kharābah; 21: Maqām Ḥājah Amīrah; 22: Mughārat al-Wardah.

eighty sites were examined, I shall concentrate here on those which are a) prototypes and b) those which supply the most valuable reference tools for pursuance of further study. These sites can be divided into five categories: major village/town sites; wadi hill sites; smaller sites with mosques/*maqāmāt*; standing monuments, and agricultural/industrial sites.

Major Village/Town Sites

'Ajlūn Castle and al-Khaḍr (قلعة عجلون والخضر): This area is an anomaly due to the overriding presence of Qal'at 'Ajlūn, or Qal'at ar-Rabaḍ (قلعة الريض) built in 1184-85 to oppose Crusader attacks from both the west and south. The term "ar-Rabaḍ" is questionable. An Arab word with the general meaning of 'suburb', this could apply to 1) the immediate surroundings of the castle, including Maqām al-Khaḍr (مقام الخضر); 2) the castle and its surroundings as a suburb of the town of 'Ajlūn; 3) the village of Bā'ūn (بعاون) some six kilometers to the north, which Abū al-Fidā' describes as the castle's suburb (al-Quddah 1988: 29) and, finally, a local tribe known as ar-Rabaḍiyah (Augustinovic and Bagatti 1951-2: 301-302). Whatever the case, the castle and its surroundings appear to have functioned as a separate entity from the town of 'Ajlūn, which was centered on the Ayyubid congregational mosque.

Qal'at 'Ajlūn was reputedly built on the site of a monastery, a theory enhanced by the recent discovery of a Byzantine mosaic within the castle. Major remains occupy the eastern and western slopes of the castle. Two massive cisterns — one of cut stone

and partly above ground (Fig. 2), are dug into the eastern slope. Here too are many fieldstone building foundations on successive terraces and, most importantly, a ubiquitous ground cover of slag suggesting a major iron industry, almost certainly supplied by mines at Mughārat al-Wardah (مغارة الوردية), some ten kilometers to the south. To the west of the castle, a major settlement site — generally known as al-Khaḍr — extends about a kilometer along a gentle slope above Wādī Kufranjah. This site consists of fieldstone building foundations, cisterns, a quarry, and a ruined Christian shrine, Maqām al-Khaḍr, probably associated with Saint Elias. Ceramic ground cover on both sites include Byzantine/Umayyad painted pottery and various Ayyubid/Mamluk types, including hand made painted wares, and glazed monochrome, sgraffito, and molded wares. C.M. Johns, in his seminal work on the castle during the late 1920's, excavated an Ayyubid/Mamluk housing site in what he considered the "suburb"; unfortunately its exact location is uncertain (Johns 1931: 30).

Khirbat Qidādī (خربة قداي): Khirbat Qidādī lies some 2km southwest of 'Ajlūn, immediately to the south of the 'Ajlūn-Kufranjah road. A terraced hill site, its Byzantine/Islamic remains include many stone lined pits and/or cisterns, oil presses, fieldstone foundations, and iron slag. Ceramic evidence consists of Byzantine/Umayyad and Ayyubid/Mamluk sherds. Of particular importance is a ruined mosque, 10.2x4.5m, its walls of fieldstone with lime mortar, except for cut limestone in the *mihrāb* area.



2. Cistern, eastern slope of 'Ajlūn castle.

1. This survey was funded by a NMERTP/ACOR grant. I wish to thank both ACOR and the Jordanian Department of An-

tiquities for their support, especially my inspector Zakaria al-Quddah.

The *mihrāb* itself is plastered, and ceramics (handmade painted and monochrome glazed wares) suggest an Ayyubid/Mamluk date. The mosque was barrel vaulted with a central door, and it would appear that there was a *ziyādah*, (literally: extension; here probably a platform or portico) in front of the entrance.

Sarābīs (سرابيس): About 3km south of 'Anjarah (عنجرية), this site is remarkable for its continuity. Partly exposed foundations of cut stone — of several periods — are superimposed by fieldstone foundations, possibly of Mamluk date, and by the standing ruins of an Ottoman village. The fieldstone barrel vault of an underground storage is of very similar construction to the late Mamluk/Ottoman mill houses along Wādī Kufranjah. On the eastern edge of the site lie the remains of a 10x7.7m mosque, largely destroyed. The sherd cover of the site suggests a general sequence from the Byzantine through the Ottoman period, but lower foundations might well be of an earlier date.

Al-Badiyah (البدية): About 3km west of Sarābīs, the site of al-Badiyah is currently under excavation by Yarmouk University. In addition to major Byzantine remains and a small mosque thought by the excavator to be Umayyad, this major townsite includes a sherd cover of various Ayyubid/Mamluk ceramics, including sgraffito, other monochromatic glazed, and handmade painted pottery.

Listib (الستب): Located 5km northwest of 'Ajlūn, and 1km northwest of Mār Iliās (مار الياس), Listib consists of a hill site with Byzantine remains (cisterns, graves, etc.), covered by a late Ottoman village, largely abandoned. At the foot of the hill to the southeast lies a ruined mosque, excavated by the Ministry of Awqaf. This structure, 14x9m, is built of cut limestone — possibly reused — and is divided by columns into nine bays. The partially exposed northern wall suggests that the mosque was built over a substantial earlier structure. Ceramics in and around the mosque included Byzantine/Umayyad pottery and handmade painted Ayyubid/Mamluk wares.

Qafṣah (قفصه): 5km southwest of al-Wahādnaḥ (الوهادنه), Qafṣah lies in a fertile plateau area overlooking the Jordan Valley. A major townsite, Qafṣah does not appear to have any pre-Byzantine remains, and is particularly remarkable for the large quantities of surface cover of both Byzantine/Umayyad and Ayyubid/Mamluk ceramics. The domestic building foundations — fieldstone without obvious lime mortar — do not represent the almost

ubiquitous later Ottoman structures on similar sites, and the sherd cover within the houses (mostly Ayyubid/Mamluk) suggest an earlier abandonment. Other features include millstones, cisterns, and an extensive cemetery of rock-cut tombs, some with vertical shafts. At the southern end of the site lies a ruined fieldstone mosque, 11.2x10.6m. This was built in several stages; the walls have been doubled, and the arched windows of the northern side are blocked. The ground plan is unclear, but the placement of fallen columns suggest a similarity to Listib. The mosque has a central entrance, leading out to a *ziyādah*. Adjoining the mosque to the south are the remains — in outline — of another formal building, probably a church.

Shaykh Rāshid (شيخ راشد): Somewhat similar in topography, Shaykh Rāshid lies about 5km north of Qafṣah. Also a Byzantine/Islamic site, it takes its name from a ruined *maqām* of indeterminate date; its foundations (4x5m) are on top of a ridge which descends to the north with ruined walls and rock-cut tombs. Atop the ridge itself — in addition to the *maqām* (which is surrounded by Muslim graves) — are several abandoned stone structures of relatively recent date, as well as a major compound with stone construction including barrel vaults, suggesting an Ottoman or even late Mamluk date. Ground cover includes ceramics of Byzantine/Umayyad and Ayyubid/Mamluk date. The latter consist of handmade painted pottery, as well as glazed monochromatic, splash, and sgraffito wares.

Wadi Hill Sites

The best examples of these for the Ayyubid/Mamluk period are Khirbat an-Nimr (خربة النمر), Khirbat al-Ḥammām (خربة الحمّام), Khirbat al-Mushayrfah (خربة المشيرفة), and Khirbat Qarāqūsh (خربة قراقوش), all on Wādī Kufranjah, and Tall al-Kharābah (تل الخرابه), on Wādī Rājib. These are minor village sites on small hills/ridges overlooking the wadi. Although often with surface pottery of great antiquity, the visible structural remains are generally Byzantine and early Islamic, with probable churches in several instances. Ayyubid/Mamluk ceramics, while present, are minimal, suggesting a possible squatter presence during this period.

Smaller Sites with Mosques /Maqāmāt

These sites consist of smaller mosques and/or *maqāmāt*, usually associated with Byzantine remains, but without the presence of obvious village sites, although such may have once existed.

Al-Ḥanīsh (الحنيش): Located midway between al-

Badiyah and Sarābis, al-Ḥanīsh consists of a ruined mosque of cut limestone, immediately north of a quarry with cuts suggesting unfinished Byzantine tombs. The mosque, largely destroyed, is 12x10m with a central entrance. Sherd cover of the surrounding area includes various Byzantine/ Umayyad and Ayyubid/Mamluk wares; pottery from the mosque was largely Ayyubid/Mamluk, including handmade painted and monochromatic green wares.

Dayr Luyūs (دير ليوس): Located about 1km northwest of 'Ibbīn (عَبِين), this site includes a small (6x9m) mosque, built of fieldstone and probably barrel vaulted. Two open rectangular cisterns, one stepped, lie nearby. I found no sherd cover, but Mittmann noted Byzantine through Mamluk pottery (Mittmann 1970: 73).

Sāmtā (سامتا): 3km northwest of Ṣikhrah (صِخْرَه), this site consists of a ruined mosque of probable Ayyubid/Mamluk date (Fig. 3) with nearby Roman/Byzantine rock-cut tombs. Other ruins were probably eclipsed by the modern village. This mosque, 7.1x5.5m, is built of cut limestone with entrances in the centers of its eastern and western walls. The *miḥrāb* is flanked by simulated engaged columns carved into the limestone. This mosque was cleared and partially restored by the Ministry of Awqaf, and Ayyubid/Mamluk ceramics were noted in the fill.

Uṣaym (عصيم): About 11km northeast of 'Ajlūn, 'Uṣaym boasts a barrel vaulted mosque of probable Ayyubid/Mamluk date, which was excavated and partially restored by the Ministry of Awqaf. Evidence for the dating includes both ceramics and the carved decoration of lintels, the latter very similar

to 'Ajlūn castle. The mosque abuts — and perhaps superimposes — arches of cut limestone of Byzantine appearance, possibly a cistern. Slightly to the west are abandoned stone houses of the late Ottoman period.

Shaykh 'Alī Mashhad (شيخ علي مشهد): Shaykh 'Alī Mashhad is situated about 6km west of 'Ajlūn. A hill site, this *maqām* contains the shaykh's grave as well as a few wall remnants. Schumacher noted an inscription from 1287 (Augostinovic and Bagatti 1951-2: 305). On the southern escarpment are two cisterns and evidence of quarrying, probably from the Byzantine period.

Maqām Hājah Amīrah (مقام حاجة أميرة): About one kilometer southwest of the village of Rājib, this *maqām* consists of the fieldstone walls of an 8x8m sanctuary, with a central entrance and a *miḥrāb*. This *maqām* has no pre-Islamic associations. Locally thought to be Ayyubid, surface ceramics include Ayyubid/Mamluk glazed wares, handmade painted wares, and possibly Ottoman unglazed ware. The shrine is abutted by several Muslim graves.

Major Standing Monuments

There are five standing religious buildings which may date to the Ayyubid/Mamluk period, although only two can be dated with certainty. These are the Friday mosque of 'Ajlūn, *Maqām Badr* (مقام بدر) (within 'Ajlūn), the *Raymūn* (ريمون) mosque, the central mosque of Sūf (سوف), and an abandoned mosque in the village of Ḥalāwah (حلاوة). The first three have been studied by Yusuf Ghawanmah, and for plans and inscriptions the reader is referred to his work (Ghawanmah 1986). However, certain points should be made relevant to this survey.



3. *Miḥrāb, Sāmtā mosque.*

'Ajlūn Mosque (مسجد عجلون): The focal point of both the medieval and modern town, this mosque was built by the Ayyubid al-Malik aṣ-Ṣāliḥ, with additions and renovations during the Mamluk period. A second mosque from the Bahrī Mamluk period no longer exists (al-Quddah 1988: 77). During the Mamluk period, 'Ajlūn — along with the nearby "suburbs" surrounding the castle — represents not only the hub of a major agricultural/commercial area but also a center of religious scholarship and Sufism (Ghawanmah 1986: 72). This mosque is probably the oldest standing congregational mosque in Jordan.

Maqām Badr (مقام بدر): This building, also in the center of 'Ajlūn, is without inscriptions. Ghawanmah believes that this is a Mamluk *khānqāh*, due to the plan, the architectural features, and the presence of Sufis in the 'Ajlūn area during this period (Ghawanmah 1986: 71-82). Although the building is heavily restored, his thesis is tenable.

Raymūn Mosque (مسجد ريمون): The earliest inscription from the Raymūn mosque dates the minaret to 1277, during the reign of the Mamluk sultan Baybars. The cross vaults and pillars are very similar to the 'Ajlūn mosque, and the plan (six bays) and style resemble the central mosque at Sūf and the abandoned mosque at Ḥalāwah. Both of the latter are anepigraphical. While the Sūf mosque is allegedly built over an earlier (Umayyad?) foundation, the Ḥalāwah mosque (Fig. 4), although smaller (13.4x9.6m) than that of Raymūn, resembles the latter both in plan and in the pillars and cross vaulting. There is no minaret, although an outer flight of stairs (a later addition) against the entry facade leads to the roof. The Ḥalāwah mosque is possibly of Mamluk date, but may be later, and bears further study.



4. Abandoned mosque, Ḥalāwah.

Agricultural/Industrial Sites

The most conspicuous — and ubiquitous — remnants of the late medieval agricultural activity in the 'Ajlūn area are the water powered grain mills, especially in Wādī Kufranjah (Fig. 5), but also in Wādī Rājib and Wādī al-Yābis. Although of uncertain date, some of these mills were in use, at least, until the middle of the last century. This writer examined some eighteen mills in Wādī Kufranjah, as well as comparative mills in Wādī Rājib and Wādī al-Yābis, and elsewhere in southern Jordan. Those of Wādī Kufranjah are most important to this study, as they represent a) the heart of the 'Ajlūn area and b) the most numerous sequence of mills in a relatively small area from which to make a comparative study. At a later date, I intend to pursue these mills in a separate study. However, several points can be made. The water mills of Wādī Kufranjah are similar in plan, operation, and architectural particulars. There is no sherd cover in the immediate area of the mills. However, Muhammad Malkawi, in a master's thesis for Yarmouk University, studied the technological aspects of these mills (Malkawi 1994). Part of his work included excavations in five of the mill houses to bedrock, producing pottery of the late Mamluk/Ottoman period, and I concur with his opinion that these buildings date from that time.

Iron slag, as mentioned earlier, was a common find on the eastern slope of 'Ajlūn castle, and was noted at the nearby site of al-Qidādī as well. The source for this iron, as far as is known, were the mines of Mughārat al-Wardah, about 10km to the south of 'Ajlūn.

Ceramics

The vast majority of sites examined included Byzantine-Umayyad and Ayyubid/Mamluk remains,



5. Water mill #7, Wādī Kufranjah.

and often standing Ottoman structures as well. Byzantine/Umayyad ceramics include, beside crude unglazed utility wares, fine red and cream wares, often ribbed and/or painted externally. Ayyubid/Mamluk ceramics, in addition to the ubiquitous handmade painted wares, included glazed wares: monochromatic, splash, and sgraffito. A major problem in the Islamic archaeology of northwestern Jordan is the lack of definition of ceramics during the Abbasid/Fatimid period; although Walmsley has identified pottery up to ca. AD 800 at Pella, the period 800-1150 is very murky indeed. Hopefully the current work of Stephen McPhillips at Pella, as well as controlled excavations elsewhere, will help to fill in this gap. In addition, the ceramics of the Ottoman period warrant further study.

Summary and Proposals

This, then, is a summary of the typology of sites for the 'Ajlūn area. Further work is warranted in several aspects. More Islamic sites need examining or reexamining. This is especially true of several existing villages near Wādī al-Yābis, particularly Bā'ūn, which is mentioned repeatedly in medieval chronicles concerning its relationship with 'Ajlūn. Abū al-Fidā' refers to Bā'ūn as the suburb (*rabaḍ*) of 'Ajlūn castle (al-Quddah 1988: 29); 'Ajlūn and Bā'ūn are both known as residences of religious scholars. Additional research is required on the relationship between 'Ajlūn castle, its immediate surroundings, and the town of 'Ajlūn. An apparent hiatus in both architecture and ceramics between the early Abbasid and Ayyubid/Mamluk period needs to be studied both in historical texts and by suitable excavation. The best site I have seen for this purpose is Qafṣah, for two reasons: first, the

rich ground cover of ceramics, and second, the apparent Ayyubid/Mamluk residential structures without obvious Ottoman rebuilding. Finally, a corpus of rural/village mosques and *maqāmāt* for the medieval period in the 'Ajlūn area will make a significant contribution to the history of Islamic architecture in the Levant.

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ISLAMIC SETTLEMENT IN UMM QAYS (GADARA)

Dia'eddin A. Tawalbeh

All the major cities of the Roman period in Jordan continued to flourish during the Byzantine period, and the major Byzantine sites such as 'Ammān (عمّان), Jarash (جرش), Umm al-Jimāl (أم الجمال), Umm Qays (أم قيس), Ṭabaqat Faḥl (طبقة فحل), and Umm ar-Raṣāṣ (أم الرصاص) continued to be occupied into and through the Umayyad period (Sauer 1982).

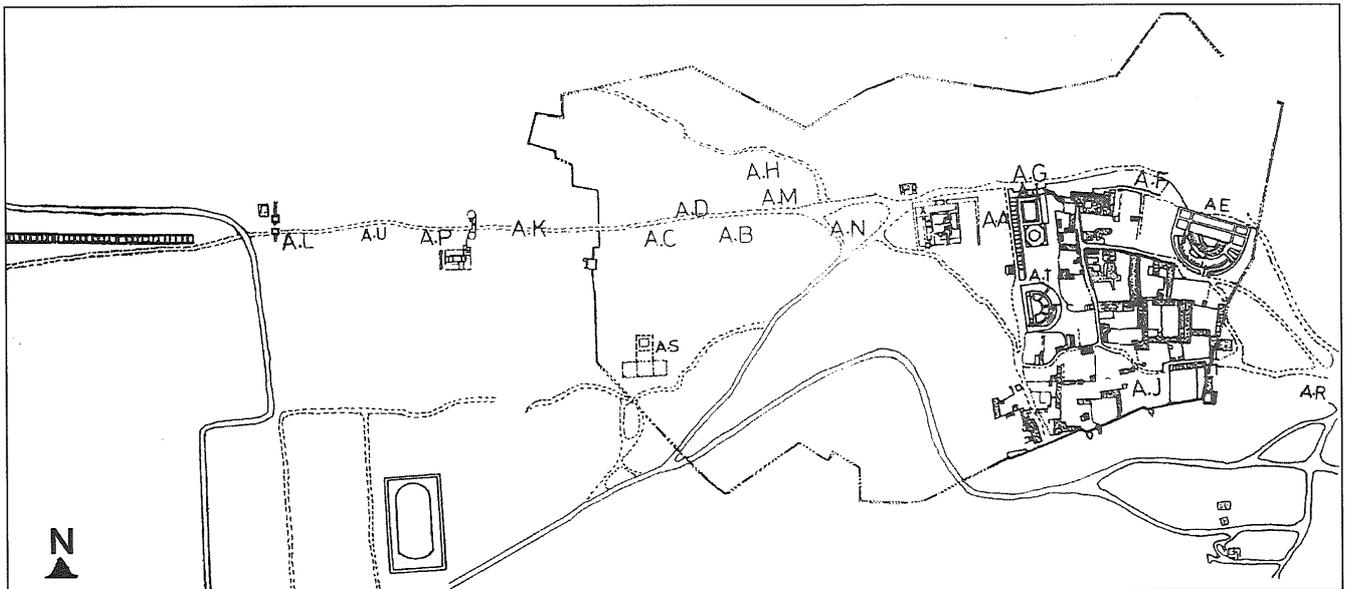
Elsewhere in the north of Jordan, four towns were mentioned by the Arab geographers as existing during the Islamic period: Umm Qays (Jadar جدر), Quwaylibah (أبيل، قويلبه), Bayt Rās (بيت راس) and Jarash. Each of these towns is better known as a Classical site with continuation into the Byzantine and Umayyad periods (Whitcomb 1992: 387).

Classical Muslim historians refer to Jordan in the seventh century as "*Jund al-Urdun*" (جند الاردن). By order of Prophet Muḥammad, two campaigns were waged against this *Jund* which was mostly inhabited by Arab tribes. Although these two campaigns failed to conquer any part of the land, they paved the way for the coming expedition at the time of the first caliph Abū Bakr, who sent an army under the leadership of Shuraḥbīl b. Ḥasna and achieved complete success (Al-Bakhit 1982: 361).

The Muslim conquests of Jordan and Palestine

lasted from AD 630 to 640, while Jordan was completely annexed in AD 636, after the Byzantine armies were defeated at the Battle of Yarmūk (معركة اليرموك). This was followed by a brief period of Arab rule prior to the establishment of the Umayyad dynasty in Damascus in AD 661. During the Umayyad period (AD 661-750), Jordan was close to the center of power, and was also positioned on the pilgrimage route to Arabia, so Jordan continued to prosper. Judging from the archaeological evidence, the Umayyad period was one of widespread activity in Jordan. Many Byzantine sites seem to have continued to be occupied or have been reoccupied during the Umayyad period, and a number of new sites were founded (Sauer 1986: 304).

At the end of the Umayyad period, Jordan was rocked by a strong earthquake in AD 749. Archaeological field surveys of different regions of Jordan show similar variations in settlement numbers throughout the Islamic centuries. The number of sites peaked in Byzantine times, and declined by more than 50% under the Umayyads. Abbasid sites are completely absent from some survey areas, and in others declined by more than 50%. In all regions, the number of Ayyubid/Mamluk sites increased. For the Ottoman period, there was considerable variation from region to region (Johns 1992: 363).



1. Umm Qays city plan.