

Guido Vannini
Ordinario di Archeologia Medievale
Direttore della Scuola di Specializzazione
in Archeologia
Università degli studi di Firenze – Dip.
SAGAS
e.mail: guido.vannini@unifi.it

Guido Vannini

The Archaeological Missions: For a New Cultural Approach, Beyond the Crisis. The ‘Future’ Experience of the European Archaeological Mission ‘Medieval Petra’ of the University of Florence

This paper is a reflection and a proposal for operational lines – setting origin, developments and perspectives – for the Mission ‘Medieval Petra. Archaeology of the Crusader-Ayyubid settlement in Transjordan’ began experimentation on how to overcome the classical structure of international archaeological missions, with their its cumbersome legacy of a colonial origin.

1. These brief considerations want to be a contribution to a necessary reflection on the social role of international archaeological activities and on the close relationship that should be maintained between an urgent, deep, structural review of the missions as a civil project and scientific program, for a renewed cultural setting. Among the many possible points of view, our intends to be placed between the challenges of historical dimension of archaeological research and the Italian and European experience. An approach that take inspiration from the Euro-

pean diffusion of a specific field of the discipline – the Public Archaeology (Schadla-Hall 1999; Bonacchi 2009; Brogiolo 2012; Vannini 2011; G. Vannini, C. Bonacchi, M. Nucciotti 2014) – and moving from the thirty-years experience of the University of Florence Mission ‘*Medieval Petra*’¹, also in terms of methodology, to propose some reflections in order to face the situation on a new basis, that needs a new cultural rethinking. Archaeology in time of ‘crisis’, then, but in the greek meaning of the word, between present difficulties and potential opportunities.

A crisis – Euro-Mediterranean and structural (not cyclical) – that demands courageous choices both cultural and ethical (do not seem arbitrary the combination); the same efficiency – if not feasibility – of this traditional form of scientific research (‘Mission’), relevant also as eminently interdisciplinary is at stake and will be even more in the coming decades. A crisis

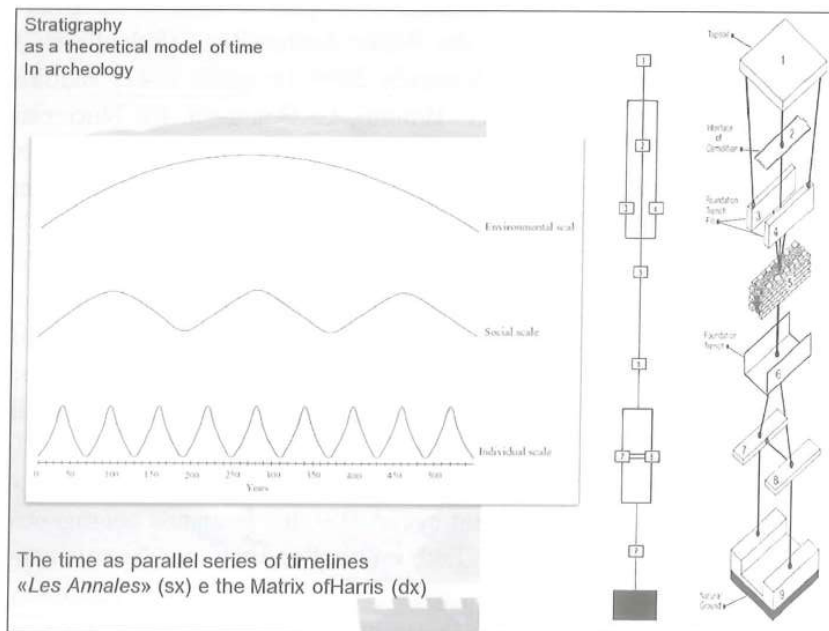
1. ‘Medieval’ Petra is the largest Italian medievalist archaeological mission operating abroad and, in collaboration with the DoA since 1986, is the oldest among international missions currently operated in Petra. Thirty years of research have brought to the attention of the international scientific community the key role played by Petra region in the Crusader-Ayyubid re-founding of Jordan, between the 12th and 13th century. Also a crucial period in the formation of today’s settlement (and geopolitical) structures. A ‘gym’ that played an im-

portant role in the formation of four generations of young archaeologists, some of whom are still the backbone of the Florentine mission; but also a crossroads for international working groups and related Institutions that have produced a ‘network’ from which they have also arisen (at least five) or new missions have been formed in the Region, among the most recent of which I can willingly mention the first Polish archaeological mission (Jagiellonian University of Krakow, 2013) operating in Jordan (Petra region), directed by Piotr Kolodziejczyk.

that precisely in its most violent outcomes (as in Syria, but not only), has highlighted the central role even of the Heritage archaeological in political struggle, showing all the relevance – in our societies do not always recognized properly – for fundamental aspects of the reference communities.

2. The recent European medieval archaeology – which represents the cultural context of our mission – it can be said that finds its scientific roots on a renewed relationship with historical research and, essentially, attempts to electively produce or reinterpret historical models, also classical ones. For example: historical structures – in ‘braudel’ sense – continuity and discontinuities of settlement dynamics, *incastellamento*, history and environment) by means of specific methodological ‘tools’: archeology of production, stratigraphic analysis of upstand-

ing buildings, landscape archaeology, archaeomatics (FIG. 1). Our ‘case-study’ presented here has been the first application – certainly in the work of an Italian mission – of this scientific point of view, in Near Eastern archeology (*i.e.*: archaeology without excavations?). It includes contributions of archaeological research, even surprising sometimes, to historiographical themes, focal, in recent years, especially for historians concerned with medieval Mediterranean settlement². In that regard, the strategic role of ‘light archeology’ was central – already ‘tested’ in the Florence University’s Strategic Plan in several Tuscan³, Tyrrhenian (Vannini *et al* 2003) and Mediterranean areas (FIG. 2), and now in Armenia (Nucciotti, Petrosyan *et al* 2015) – a system that integrates the various non-invasive archaeologies: environment, building, archeomatic and focused essays. A very effi-



1. Harris' Matrix and Temporal Model of “Les Annales”, the theoretical modeling of the relationship between space and time in archeology (time as parallel series of timelines).

2. A historicist approach that is not dissimilar – although moving, with marked traits of originality, also from an anthropological approach – characterizes methodology and practice of the mission directed by Sten La Bianca and Bethany Walker in Tall Ḥisbān (*i.e.* see the lecture given in this Congress).

3. Like experimental territorial projects between light and public archeology, recently in Amiata areas (Nucciotti 2010) and of Casentino (Molducci, Rossi 2015). On this archaeological approach, see now Vanni Desideri, Vannini 2016; Vannini, Nucciotti 2017. This approach, ‘territorial and light’, has characterized the Mission from the beginning when, for example, it was necessary to explain in detail to the DoA General Director of that period (Dr. Adnan al-Hadidi) all our operational practices to obtain the necessary permis-

sions. He seemed to be almost amused and asked me cordially what appeared to be an ‘occupation’ ever seen (Petra, ash-Shawbak, al-Karak, all and together!) because our operational practices (extensive stratigraphic surveys on territory and on the buildings) and our objectives (on historiographic themes) were requested for ‘regions’ and archaeological-monumental areas and not, as usual, for a single site. “Research” permits, I specified also, and not “digging”: the first essays were in fact included in the ‘light’ programme only in 1989, with the 4th campaign, 3rd official, after the 1986 survey. However, in the first decade of activity (1987-1996) this method was applied essentially in the area of Petra, after which it was systematized and progressively extended mainly to ash-Shawbak and more recently to al-Karak (since 2012).

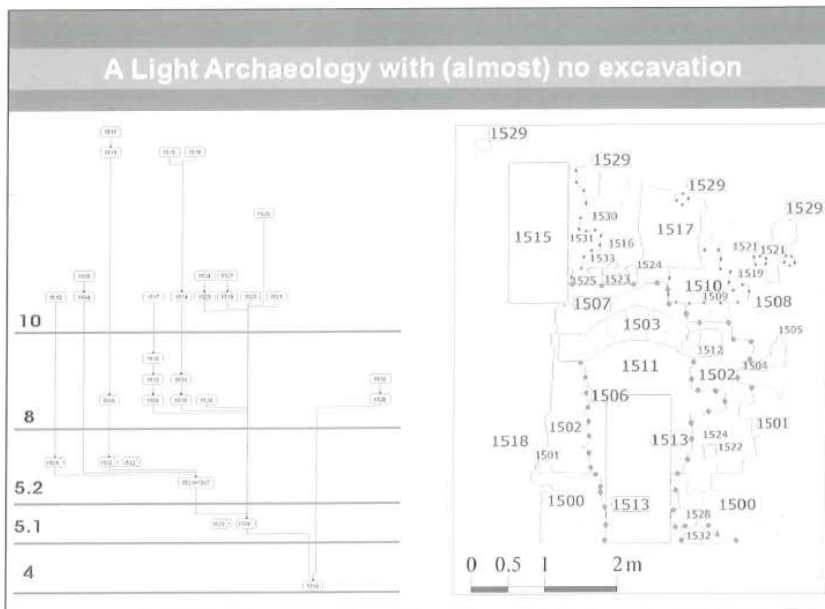


2. Strategic Research Program of Florence University for medieval archaeology. ‘The Lordship of feudal Mediterranean origin. Archaeological profiles, at the origins of modern Europe’: survey dedicated to the study of material and territorial structures for cultural comparative areas.

cient approach, when the aim is to investigate deductively historical ‘phenomena’ (and not, inductively, from the analysis of ‘episodes’, as more often happens in archaeological tradition) on a large territorial scale (FIG. 3)⁴.

So, in Transjordan, archeology can pick up some materials “caractères originaux”, struc-

tural of the first Crusader occupation in the Holy Land, where they are better stratigraphically readable, for the new situation of Ayyubid settlement established after the day of Ḥiṭṭīn (1187); essentially adopting – on subregional scale – an update, here experimental, of the classic procedures of the archeology of the ‘vil-



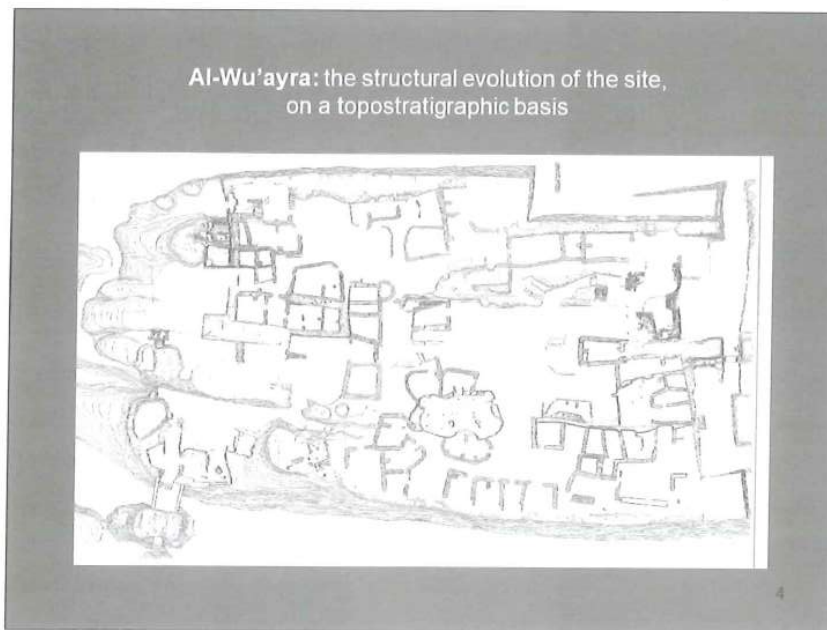
3. A Light Archaeology (analysis of upstanding buildings, in this case) without (almost) excavation (Archive of Laboratory of Medieval Archaeology of Un. Of Florence, LAM).

4. Smith 1992; Pruno, Drap 2012; Francovich (a. c.) 1987; Manacorda 2007. To represent the numerous contributions offered by the Mission in terms of methodological advancement, through often experimental archaeomatic procedures, starting from surveys to the elaboration of data in the laboratory that constitute the technological

side of this ‘light’ archaeological approach, actually oriented to pre-establish a objective documentary grid on which to support solidly founded historical interpretations, see Niccolucci 2000; Drap, Vannini 2012; Drap, Pruno, Nucciotti 2012; Drap, Vannini *et al.* 2017.

lage désertè'. The Lordship of Transjordan and its material structures as 'observatory' on the Crusader-Muslim frontier of the Holy Land⁵. In this context, the excavation is used on targets identified on different territorial scales and at variable intensity – from large scale (the Muslim-Crusader frontier between Syria and Jordan), to medium scale (the region between the Dead Sea and the Red Sea) and to the smaller scale (the valley of Petra) – qualified as 'stratigraphic observatories': al-Wu'ayra castle, tactical, in relation to Petra and its control (FIG. 4); strategic, for the control of the entire Crusader territory (the old King's Highway, between Syria and Egypt, in south Transjordan); the ash-Shawbak monumental site, about the poleogenetical function that the reactivation of the frontier in the region has produced in Crusader and Ayyubid age (FIG. 5)⁶. In addition, a specific

contribution (in progress), but which presents the typical features of the material 'structure', is constituted by the precise pottery and masonry structures (FIG. 6) series, documented with high chronostratigraphic precision, for the first time ever for the twelfth century productions in the region; this is the 'product' of the methodological choice of the project as a whole. In fact the archeology of 'lost villages', in this case an entire region and a historic season (FIG. 7)⁷. These series, in fact, made it possible the identification of the settlement on the bottom-valley in the Crusader age; the main site is Wādī Farasa, thanks to the excellent analysis of the Berliner Mission direct by Stephan Schmid (Schmidt 2006; Schmidt 2012). *Inter alia* confirming the interpretation model of the Crusader settlement proposed by us few years earlier (Vanni Desideri, Vannini 1995).



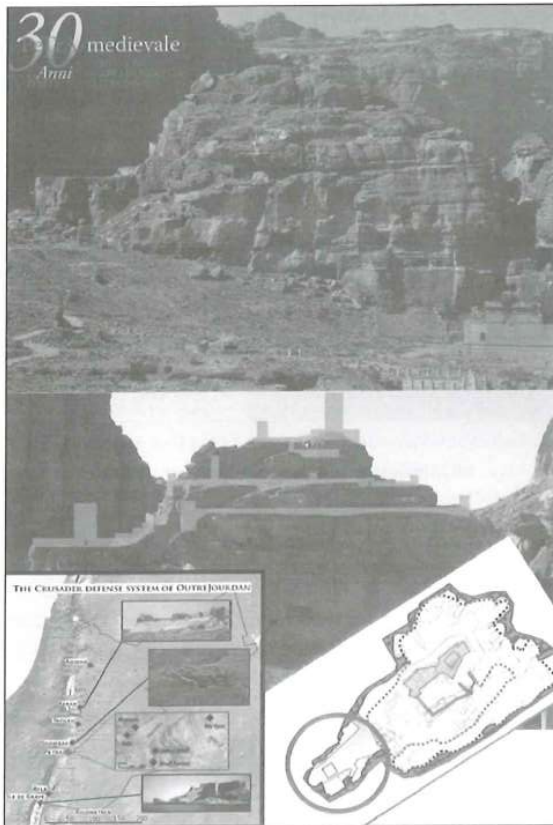
4. al-Wu'ayra . The medieval key to Petra and stratigraphic observatory on medieval settlement of the Valley. The structural evolution of the site, on a topostratigraphic basis (1994).

5. Exemplary essays of the historical results achievable with the different applications of the 'light archeology', are shown in these same proceedings in the other speeches referring to the our Mission: stratigraphic analysis of the of upstanding buildings ones in the context of the 'urban' type (and with a specific role entrusted to 'targeted' essays) see the of Michele Nucciotti and Lorenzo Fragai on the walls of ash-Shawbak and al-Karak; for a topostratigraphic analysis, see the essay by Andrea Vanni Desideri it will bring important updates on al-Wu'ayra site with targeted interventions of 'light archeology' on large areas, without building remains. About some of this topic see now Brown 2016: 543-560.

6. This territorial and light approach – which is substantially a variant of the 'global archeology' introduced by Tiziano Mannoni from

the middle of the 1970s (exemplar remains the case of the 'Zignago': Mannoni *et al* 1978: 273-374) – was applied for the first time (mid-80s) in consciously systematic terms on the historical theme of the 'conquest of the *contado*' of medieval Florence in the *Valdarno superiore* with the Poggio alla Regina as 'stratigraphic observatory' of the territories of reference (Vannini 2004; Cimarrì, Sahlin, Vannini 2010).

7. Tonghini, Vanni Desideri 1995; Pruno 2012; Pruno 2016; on this theme, in this volume Elisa Pruno and Raffaele Ranieri (Mission 'Petra Medievale') have communicated some of the latest results about the ash-Shawbak stratigraphies. About the archaeology of 'lost villages' (in the "longue durée" perspective, see Mannoni 1995).

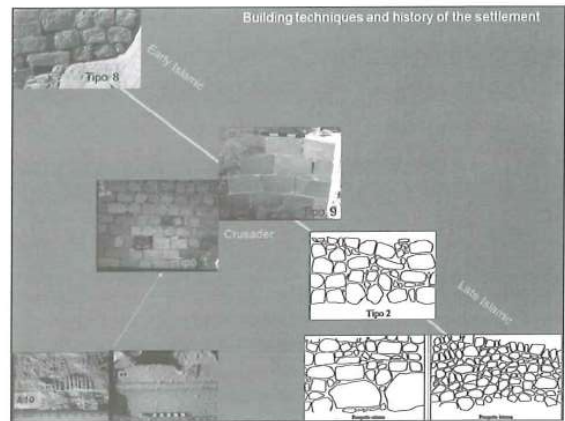


5. The regal Transjordan and the making of a Lordship (1100 – 1142). al-Ḥabīs, with al-Wu‘ayra, the fulcrum of Petra Valley Incastellamento in the Middle Ages: elevation; reconstructed medieval skyline; plan and topografic analysis. Rebirth of a frontier.

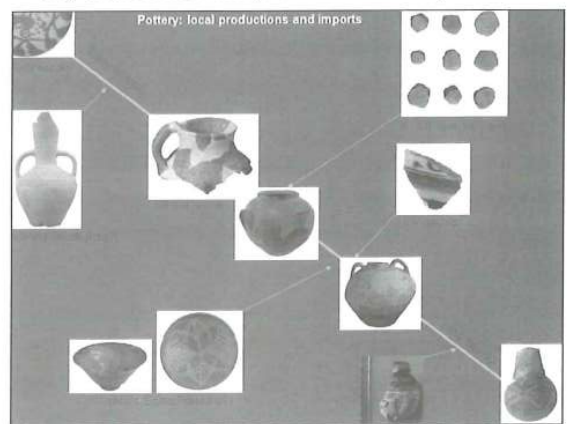
3. Among the scientific contributions to the history of the region, produced by the archaeological project so set (on a territorial basis), we could mention, to limit ourselves to historical phenomena in ‘structural’ sense (Vannini, Vanni Desideri 1991; Marino *et al.* 1991; Vannini, Nucciotti (eds.) 2012; Vannini 2011):

- the Crusader *incastellamento* (‘castle settlement’) of Petra valley as a logistics hub of Royal Transjordan and its renewed typically ‘Mediterranean border’ (FIG. 8)⁸ ;
- in ash-Shawbak, the discovery in the excavation of the ‘princely’ palace of *Crac de Montréal* and the structures of the ‘feudal capi-

8. Between break and continuity. The re-emergence in the 12th century of a historic feature of the entire region culture: the Frontier, which was significantly reinterpreted according to its medieval Mediterranean connotations; with the unsuspected role of the Valley of Petra, classically *incastellata*, that since more than five centuries, becomes again the keystone of a new (*Frankish/Latin*) settlement system (Vannini 2013; in general on the topic see Abulafia, Berend



6. Cronotipological Atlas: Building techniques and history of the settlement (A. Vanni Desideri).



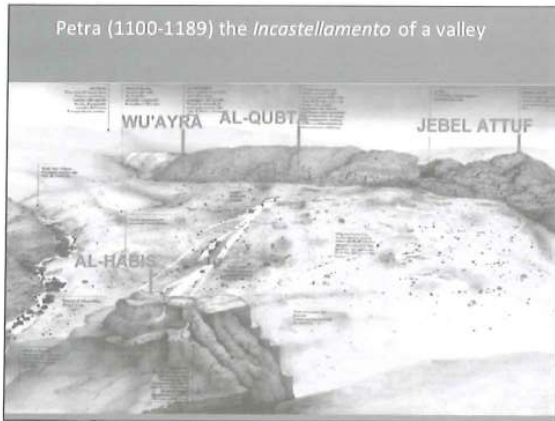
7. Pottery: local productions and imports (A. Vanni Desideri).

tal’ of the crusader Lordship of Transjordan, based on the imposing ruins of a monumental fort of the ancient Romano-Byzantine *Limes Arabicus*, so far unknown (FIG. 9)⁹;

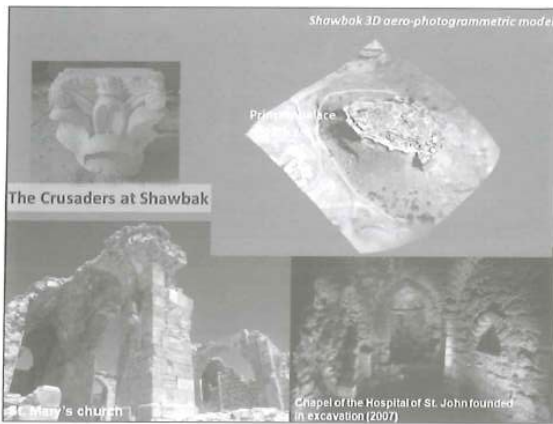
- the ‘discovery’ of a new Islamic town, ash-Shawbak (as part of the Islamic empire re-founded by Saladin), risen to the rank of regional capital in Ayyubid and early Mamluk age (between the end of 12th and of 14th centuries, at least), with the identification of a real planned urban generator axis (FIG. 10), the splendid Palace of government and a large production plant, part of a real ‘industrial’ system (Vannini 2007; Rugiadi 2012; Mar-

2002).

9. A situation that made the re-foundation of ash-Shawbak by king Baldwin 1st possible in only 18 days, like a latin chronicler – Alberto di Aix (Rhc-Hocce, III, 431) – writes; the remains identified both in the elevated and in the excavation, can be referred to the fortress mentioned by an Arab chronicler, always regarding the foundation of the *Crac de Montréal* (Marmadji 112): Vannini 2011.



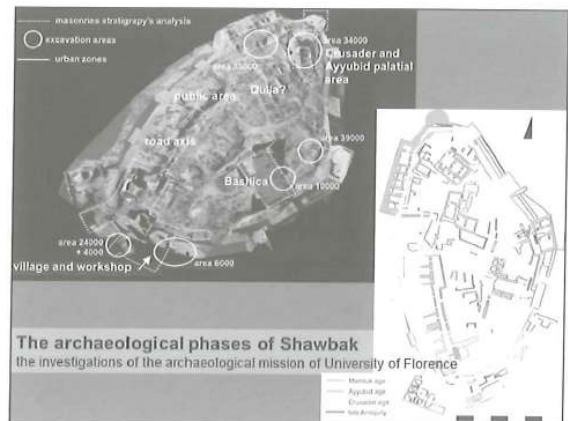
8. Petra (1100-1189) the Incastellamento of a valley. A classic feudal settlement 'system,' planned in all likelihood starting from the residence in Wādī Mūsā of the first King of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, Baldwin I – just a few months after the conquest of Jerusalem – and definitively collapsed with the fall of ash-Shawbak, followed by the outcome of the battle at the 'Horns' of Hītīn (1187) (by "Archeologia Viva", 1991).



9. Crac de Montréal: ash-Shawbak 3D aero-photogrammetric model (CNR-ITABC); St. Mary's church; Chapel of the Hospital of St. John founded in excavation (Photo M. Foli, 2007).

cotulli, Ruschi, Vannini 2013) (FIG. 11).

In particular, two essential elements of the long term, have emerged from research in the field, whose connection provides a model for interpreting an archaeological history of southern Transjordan, as part of 'Mediterranean Middle Ages'. Thus, on the basis of recent European research of medieval landscape archeology, is enlightening the mode of reactivation – as we will see historically anything but ephemeral – by the Crusaders, of the central role of the Petra valley in the land management of a vast area



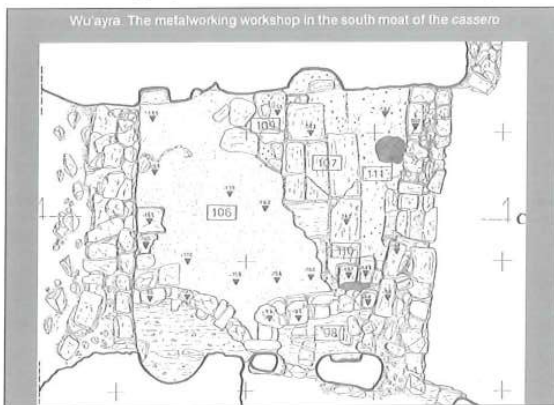
10. ash-Shawbak from a crusader castle to an Islamic city: stratigraphy of a site, reflections of a historical territory. Archaeological-monumental area and 'corpi di fabbrica' with investigated areas ('light' analysis; 'open areas' excavations); ancient (Severian-Byzantine), crusade, Ayyubids, Mamluk structures. The urbanistic road axis, documented by function, structure and chronology through 'light' analysis (topostratigraphy, both horizontal and vertical).



11. Archaeological analysis of the Mamluk laboratory. The monumental character of the plant (probably for the production of soap on a large scale) reflects an economic structure (of which there are traces of other sectors of similar importance) typical of an urban center, well corresponding to the quality of the government Palace, referred to the political-administrative dimension.

between the Dead Sea and the Red Sea, after a loss of such function of nearly half a millennium. Such a 'rural' modality – according to the typical crusader-feudal culture – which reproduced, albeit reinterpreted, the territorial and social directional function held for centuries by the ancient Nabataean-Roman-Byzantine Petra-city (Vannini, Tonghini 1997). Petra, of

course, suffered a new crisis, as a regional political center: the archaeological traces, with the de-functionalization of Petra castles, up until now, show only modest local reoccupations, as confirmed by extensive research by Patricia Bikai exposed in Florence Conference (2008) in spite of limited Mamluk settlement in Bayḍā, al-Wu‘ayra and Petra (Bikai 2012) (FIG. 12). But this time the legacy will be picked up by the founder of the new Islamic empire (here on the ruins of the Crusader political construction), Saladin and the Ayyubids, that researched continuity with the Crusader season albeit, this time with a urban key, returning a territorial function to the old *Crac de Montréal* (FIG. 13). Here it was in fact founded a new capital city, ash-Shawbak, in this authentic medieval heir of ancient Petra and of its political and administrative role, at least in southern Transjordan (Vannini 2014). This is the foundation of a new historical setting for the region and beyond, that started with the coming back of urbanism in the area south of the Dead Sea – most likely on the initiative of the same Saladin (the archaeosismic readings put the foundation of the palace

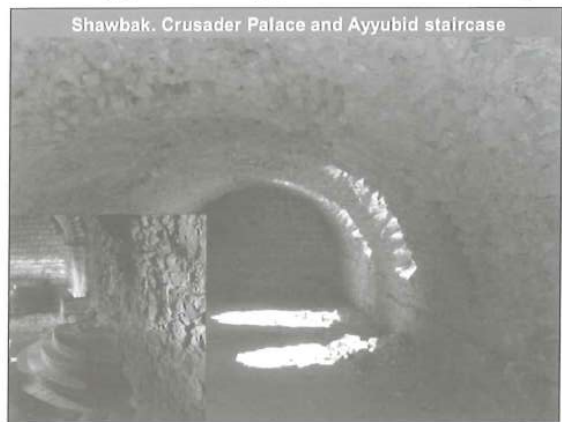


12. al-Wu‘ayra . Sondage I. The metalworking workshop in the south moat of the cassero (keep), implanted immediately after the demolition of the crusader castle, entails, with its own location in a crucial point of the defensive system, the complete de-funzionalization of the pivotal site of the system of incastellamento of crusader Petra. A changing era (S. Bertocci).

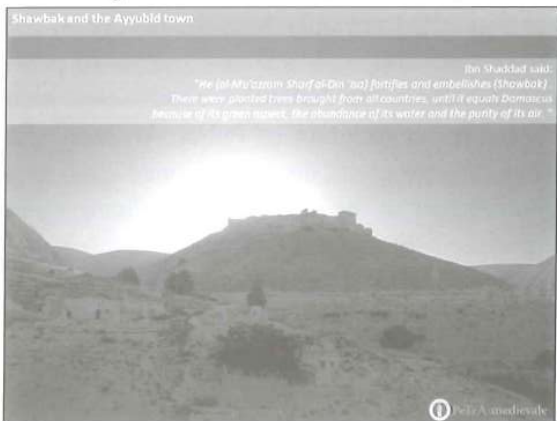
10. NUCCIOTTI In Vannini 2007: 46 and *passim*. For a specific archeosismic approach – that have a very important role in our chronological interpretation, in particular, for the walls stratigraphy in ayyubid ash-Shawbak – in view of a ‘light’ territorial reading, see Arrighetti 2015; Arrighetti 2013.

ante 1212)¹⁰ As new ‘capital’ of this region – after the ancient Roman imperial times; but this, with a suggestive synchrony with what is happening in those decades (late XII-half XIII and below) also in the ‘Christian’ Mediterranean (FIG. 14). A rediscovered regional role, after centuries, recognized as essential in political and territorial balance of the large region, as evident from the negotiations relating to the 1218-1219 ‘Damietta war’¹¹.

ash-Shawbak, then, a city that had lost its memory (lost by history and refounded by archaeology, we can say), and whose next eclipse



13. Interior of the vaulted room identified as part of the Crusader palace and monumental staircase built in the Ayyubid age as connection with the new government building. The staircase is been founded in excavation.



14. ash-Shawbak and the Ayyubid-Mamluk town (recognized as such from coeval Arab sources), view from the west side (Photo M. Foli).

11. When the Caliph of Cairo offered – and the Crusaders refused it – in exchange for the evacuation of Damietta a peace that provided for the restitution of the entire territory of the Kingdom, including Jerusalem, but not ash-Shawbak and al-Karak (Richard 2012, Cap: 9).

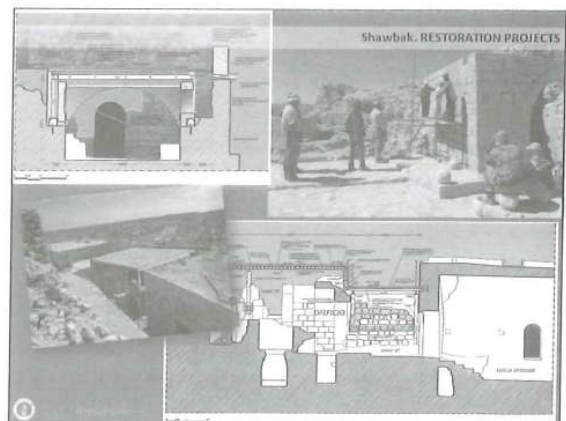
(perhaps already in the late Mamluk age: but this will be a goal of research in the coming years, with colleagues from the PAN and Jagellonic University of Krakow of our Polish team) promises to be a possible archeological paradigm of a wider crisis of Arabic Islam, until the Great Arab Revolt, also archaeologically documented in ash-Shawbak (Vannini, Nucciotti 2009) and still current. Thus in southern Transjordan it appears a Middle Ages that determines new territorial assets between mid-twelfth and mid-thirteenth century, in a period we can also define – with a look to *longue durée* historical structure – ‘Crusader-Ayyubid age’; of course beyond the contingent political intentions of its different actors, Eastern and Western ones. It is, we might comment, explicit material documentation on the continuity of function and territorial role of the site and the entire region of Transjordan, which reacquires, as ‘medieval frontier’, a role and a identity since then no more lost, until the Jordanian State of today; to the origin of an authentic identitarian element of the present community, regional and national. But also an entire region belonging to a common Mediterranean culture, among XII-XIV centuries and beyond.

4. It is therefore clear that all these points are connected not only with the history of the region, but also with relevant aspects of present identity of the Jordanian community: both basis for our program of Public Archaeology. Thus, this program, developed since 2006 as a contribution to the research and enhancement Agreement of the archaeological-monumental area of ash-Shawbak with the DoA of Jordan, through coordinated actions, including a series of executive restoration projects coordinated in different areas of the site (FIG. 15)¹², a integrated communication strategy and support for

12. The main projects concern areas and structures coordinated in an integrated conservation plan extended to the entire site; in particular a safe path that includes also a suggestive re-profiling of the south curtain of the castle, the monumental access portal to the second circle of walls, the Mamluk factory, the reception hall of the Ayyubid Palace, the basilica church of S. Maria (Ruschi In Vannini, Nucciotti 2012; Marcotulli, Ruschi, Vannini 2013); Andreini, De Falco, Giresini, Sassu 2014. While a design idea for tourism enhancement,

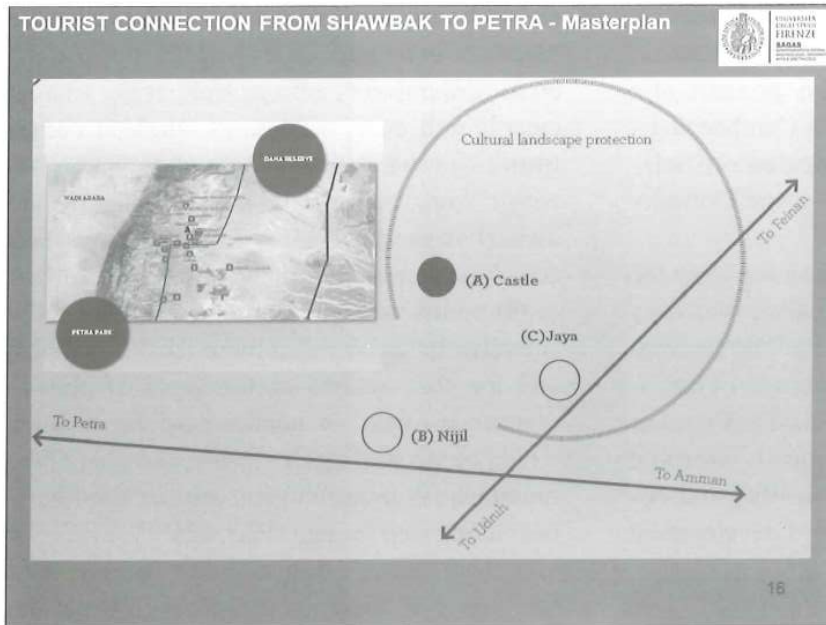
forms of development and local services, with positive results both in Italy and in Jordan; but with a basic criterion: to use selections of research products on archeological Heritage, and not simply starting from this. In summary, and only to exemplify our actions:

- a conservation program of the site and also enhancement of Cultural Heritage of the territory (including an experimental touristic master plan), also connect to Petra, (European project ENPI-CIUDAD), for a public, sustainable, shared, identitarian use of the archaeological Heritage, between communication and governance (Nucciotti, Segnini 2013; Vannini 2016) (FIG. 16);
- realization of the first exhibition in Italy with Public Archeology criteria, with relevant success of the international public, as well as economic and scientific (FIG. 17)¹³
- Impact on site of the activities of the ‘public’ program (2008-2012): tourism increase of 26%; enlargement of the local camping, for many years only accommodation provider; opening of the *Montréal Hotel*, originally built by USAID but never operated before 2011, through intense and targeted

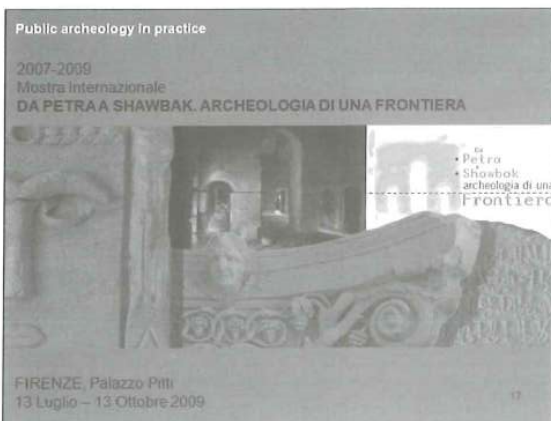


15. A program of conservative restoration of the site on an archaeological basis (P. Ruschi).

that proposes the opening of an very suggestive tourist route dedicated to the Petra valley on the traces of the Crusader settlement, was proposed by Ruschi, Vannini 2001; Vanni Desideri, Sassu 2014. 13. Florence, Pitti Palace; impact: 200,000 visitors in three months; liking measured and motivated; yield: cost € 650,000 ca; economic supply ca € 2,8 million. (Vannini, Nucciotti 2009; Bonacchi In Vannini, Nucciotti 2012).



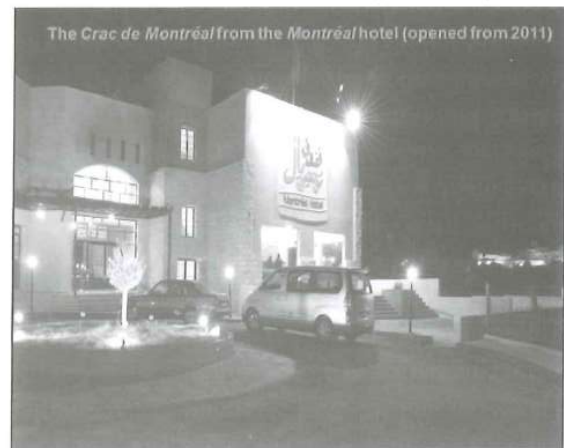
16. Masterplan : Tourist Connection from ash-Shawbak to Petra (F. Candido).



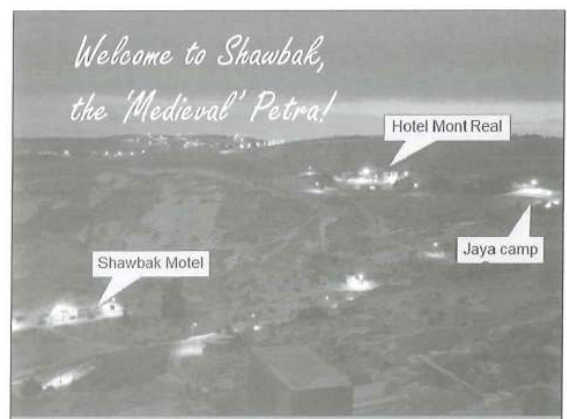
17. Public archeology in practice: The exhibition 'Archaeology of a frontier' in Florence, Pitti Palace, 2009.

networking and marketing actions (between different institutions, in ash-Shawbak and Amman), now also used as accomodation for missions (FIG. 18); opening of a second small hotel ('Motel' ...) by local investors (FIG. 19); increase of operators in the tourism sector from 4 to 52 employees under contract in 2013 (Bonacchi in Vannini 2011).

In summary, central, in our experience (in progress), is the relationship which must be made explicit and perceivable, between a research alien at each instrumentalism and a contribution to the restarting value of identitarian elements of archaeological origin of the region-



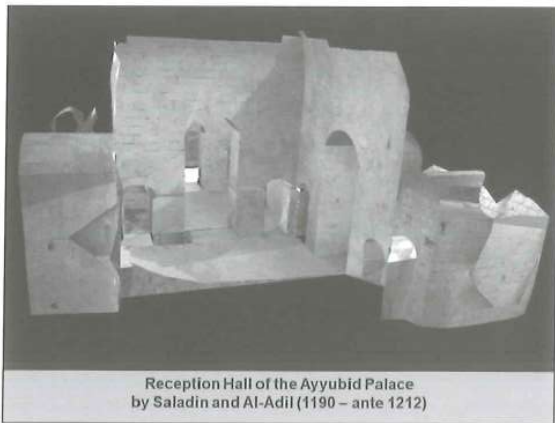
18. The Crac de Montréal from the Montréal hotel, opened from 2011 (Photo A. Marx).



19. ash-Shawbak and the new illumination of the road between village and 'castle': the dawn of a tourist reception system ... to be monitored (Photo A. Marx).

al community, as the national society, read as concrete and rooted in precise historical matrix: ash-Shawbak and the region as a 'product' of a 'mediterranean' meeting, with a ('archaeological') discovery of a important local role of Saladin on the one hand and in the same Crusader experience on site to another.

And so that, for example, in recent years the structures of the old Ayyubid palace was used (after centuries ...) as a place of public ceremonies (the first in 2008, on the occasion of Luciano Pavarotti memorial concert held in Petra) or for the first time, among the tourists appeared in considerable numbers local families and visiting schools (FIG. 20). Observed development



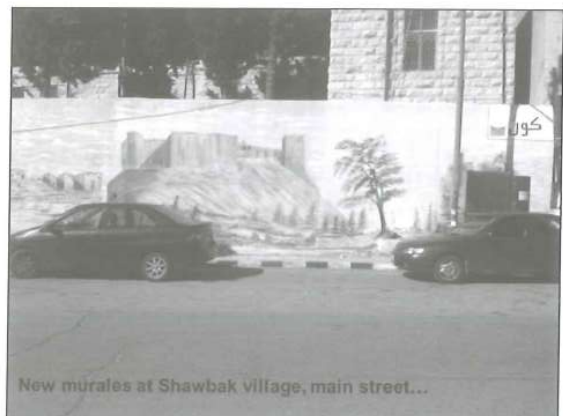
20. ash-Shawbak. Reception Hall of the Ayyubid Palace by Saladin and Al-Adil (1190 – ante 1212). Continuity and innovation of a political territorial power: now, Jordan national monument? (P. Drap).

14. An occasional element that can give an idea of how specific cultural approach and sensibility of a humanistic education can play a important role also for growth programs, of course set up with the multidisciplinary skills of the case, and it can here constitute an example for a circumstance that it has proved useful for setting up consequential practical actions. When local administrators (municipality of ash-Shawbak), in the face of our concerns about the perspective, in case of growth of the area following the planned actions, of possible building speculations that (would be) fatal for a landscape context of the nicety and fragility of the nearby area hilly, they described the multi-ownership structure of the land, typical of the Bedouin tribal tradition, which created a stratified and complex network (for relationships not only economic and material) among dozens of families on the same funds, often even of modest size. A description (deepening the question) that finally appeared familiar to a medievalist: it was something very similar to the "pro indiviso" properties usual in the documentation of the central centuries of our Middle Ages, in many areas entered into customary law, sometimes up (in case in Tuscany) to the Leopoldine reforms of the '700 Illuminist. An observation that, for example, could also played a role in the "pro indiviso meal for the customers of the Montréal hotel", realized by – a significant aspect – for the women of local families,

elements are involving local entities (ie: the Montréal hotel also offers local dishes cooked by local families¹⁴, who as well, enjoy a small income and everyone knows where it comes from ...; in order: from a cultural heritage, scientific work, attention to social context to the owner): in short, a chain linking Crusaders-Saladin-Residents and... shawarma (FIG. 21)¹⁵.

Of course now promoting actions are to be activated to support also these local initiatives; and the first action, on the basis of already planned projects (of international excellence), would be the starting of a restoration plan of the monumental-archaeological area of ash-Shawbak, albeit step by step (FIG. 22)¹⁶.

5. In a way, it's time to conceive how 'public' – or if, in this regard, we can to better de-

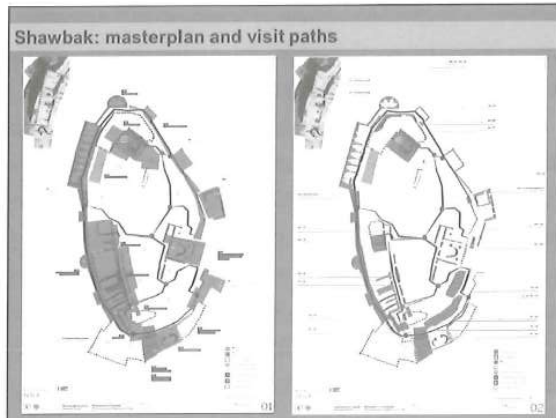


21. ash-Shawbak: The Crac de Montréal and Saladin are back!.

15. A sign of the effectiveness of public archeology actions can also be found over time. In the village of ash-Shawbak, at this point the relationship between local growth (economy), management of archaeological-monumental Heritage (the 'castle', at this point crusader but also 'of Saladin') consequent sense of belonging (identity) and work that is carried out on the archaeological site (research), is at all community evident. Well, since 2013, large murales have begun to appear on the main street of the village, representing the castle that proudly dominates the village from its steep hill ...

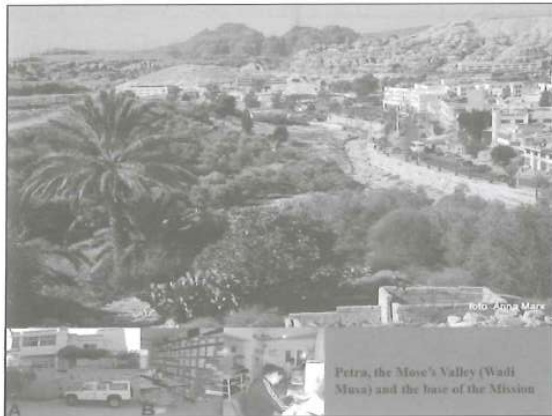
It is therefore possible to go beyond what was observed by Galanzeh Hejazeen 2007: "the development of tourism is funded and agreed upon by foreign "imagemakers/ investors" and state elites (Linton 1987, 6), and that, as a result, the local communities are not consulted and do not take part in the tourism development process or share the resulting benefits, even in the more developed tourist sites like Petra." (P. 28), also observing that "tourism began in Jordan after archaeological excavations, which highlighted the importance of the cultural heritage, not only for western societies, but also for the communities living near or around the tourist sites (Interview in Sept. 2004)." (P. 56).

16. See *supra* n. 12.



22. ash-Shawbak: masterplan and visit paths.

fine ‘civil’ – the same approach of the archaeological mission, in a more extensive, systematic and conscious of a role that, in fact original, involves all the responsibilities of a recognized form of intercultural communication (and practice). From this perspective archaeologists working in the Near East are objectively cultural mediators: mediators between the cultures of the past and those of the present and mediators between European culture (and Western), in our case, and that of their host countries (FIG. 23)¹⁷. The issue about archaeological missions is: for a new cultural approach, beyond the crisis.



23. Petra, the Mose's Valley (Wādī Mūsā), the Li Vaux Moises of frank sources: Bedouin village in 1986, now Petra's tourist 'lung'. A. outside / B. inside of the base and car of the Mission (Photo A. Marx).

17. This is how Stefano Valentini, an orientalist archaeologist co-organizer of an interesting conference held in Florence on archeology in times of crisis, recently expressed himself (Conferenza Programmatica degli Archeologi del Vicino Oriente. Iraq e Siria. 'Il Patrimonio archeologico tra rischi e prospettive', Firenze, Palagio dei Capitani di Parte Guelfa, 16-17 Dicembre 2016); but there is still

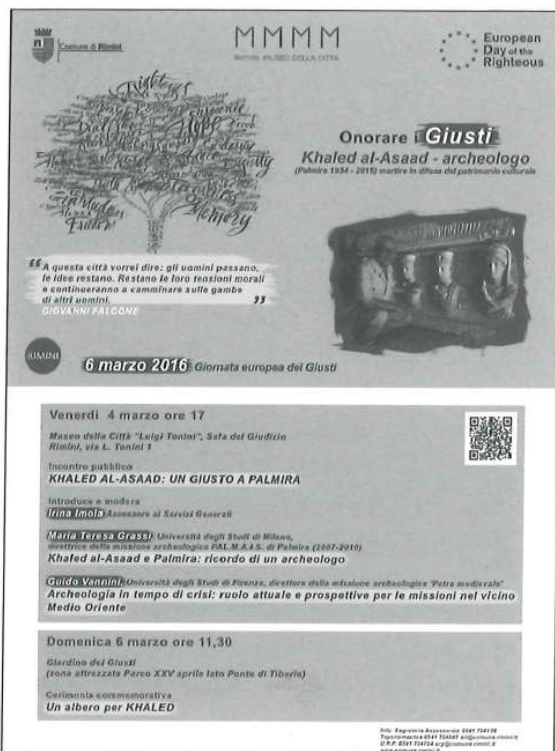
With an oxymoron, the ‘future’ experience of our project. Finally, like a new beginning for our mission (and, perhaps, not only for our...).

The recent consolidation of a structural crisis that hit the Mediterranean societies of the Near East, poses also the question of how to perform more efficiently, but also in a cultural context of higher ethics, the role of international archaeological missions. The sector of the archaeological Heritage, in particular, is today at the center of an unprecedented attack that, however, dramatically demonstrates the powerful contemporary role of archaeological science. Said Benedetto Croce: if authentic, the history of any period, is always contemporary¹⁸, and the same can be applied to archeology, as demonstrated by the martyrdom (‘Witness’, a term which here recovers its ancient dignity) of our colleague Khaled al-Asaad in Palmira for a world, not only archaeological, which it must be deeply reconsidered (FIG. 24). Given the current structural crisis, albeit with its Euro-Mediterranean specifics, to get out of it together, we need to propose better cultural models (more ethical-more efficient: between the two aspects, we believe, there is a consistent relationship) than those with which we entered such crisis and which show, however, also in different contexts, not to ‘run’ the most. In the case of archaeological missions in the Middle East (and not only), whose scientific productivity requires continuity, but in environmental conditions now critically unstable, there is the practical problem of how to redesign our activities in order to act virtuously in a new, difficult, situation, but that might reveal interesting points of view for both parties.

The same renewal of the archaeologies, started some lustrums ago, allows the planning of new programs that, in different ways, however, move the relationship between setting of

a long way to go if the activity of the archaeologists still is “focused on the elucidation of a particular time-period and the reinterpretation of that period. The culture around us was not part of our frame of reference.” (Galanzeh Hejazeen 2007: 136).

18. “... ogni vera storia è storia contemporanea...” (Croce 1938: 5).



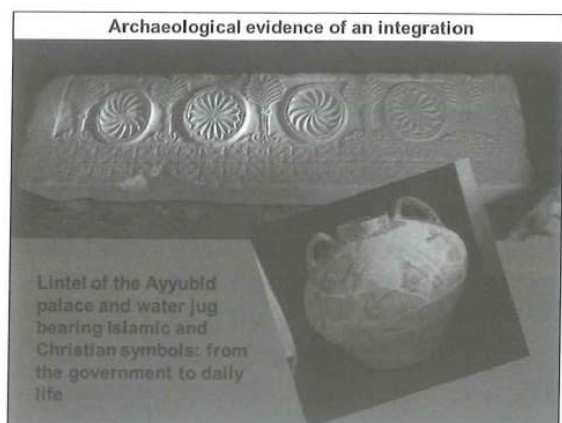
24. European day of righteous, 2016. Rimini, 'Park of the Righteous': a tree for Khaled.

the research (including historicist methodology and 'public' guidelines of the archeology) and exploitation of results. A planning practice that proposes, for the future, to deal with the current Euro-Mediterranean crisis in terms conceptually reformulated; replanning the approach and the assets of the Missions, giving new hierarchies to the goals and setting an external projectuality – attractive (cultural identity) and income (socioeconomic development) – to be shared with the different sections of local realities. The experience of our mission (its settings, developments and prospects) – Florentine and European; Territorial, Light and Public (Vannini, Nucciotti 2012) – constitutes for us an experimental basis for a new 'civil' configuration, also favored by a convergent methodological praxis: among remodeling of archaeological readings, roles reformulation and relationships with local institutional (and non institutional) components, and the establishment of programs centered on the relationship between selection of scientific results and socially shared projects:

between communication, Heritage governance, contributions to the identity of the local – and not only – communities (FIG. 25).

It comes to interpreting the current crisis in accordance with a planning that aims to overcome some conditions no longer appropriate to our times and to open perspectives, including scientific issues and 'public' subjectivity, even unexpected. So, if the collaboration will come to be truly shared with local subjectivities, also for renewed goals, also on local scientific needs (especially in the sense of locally felt), we may foresee – in the medium-long term – field research on the ground also with reversed roles, (from Jordan even in Italy, France, Poland, Spain: our partners): initiatives then on impulse also by Jordanian expertise integrated in the mission (also with interuniversity agreements and with the DoA), or alone; as it should be scientifically rational and culturally right. In other terms, the perspective of overcoming for good the classical structure of international archaeological missions, with its cumbersome legacy of a colonial origin.

Finally, what can we do, in the face of the 'politics' of Daesh on archaeological cultural heritage of the Middle East? Meanwhile this: to stay close to our local colleagues who, on this front, are courageously fighting to defend their cultural roots; which are also ours, as euro-



25. Archaeological evidence of an integration. Lintel of the Ayyubid palace and water jug bearing Islamic and Christian symbols: from the government to daily life (Photo A. Marx).

Mediterranean (at least since the time of Hector and Achilles...) and belonging to the humanity itself.

Bibliography

- Abulafia, D. and Berend, N. (eds.). 2002. *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, London: Ashgate.
- Andreini, M., De Falco, A., Giresini, L. and Sassu, M. 2014. *Preliminary Survey for the Rehabilitation and Seismic Protection Works of the Middle Age Castle of Shawbak in the UNESCO area of Petra (Jordan)*, Pp.445-451 in Proceedings 2nd Int. Conf. on Protection of Historical Constructions, Antalya (Turkey): Istanbul.
- Arrighetti, A. 2015. *L'archeosismologia in Architettura. Per un manual*: Firenze, FUP.
- IDEM. 2013, Building Archaeology and Seismic Risk in the Mugello: From the Collection of Data to the Documentaton of Historical Buildings, Proceedings of the Congreso Internacional Sobre Documentación, Conservación y Reutilización del Patrimonio Arquitectónico 'La Cultura del Restauro e della Valorizzazione. Temi e Problemi per un Percorso Internazionale di Conoscenza', (Madrid, 20-22 June 2013), Madrid, Pp. 269-276.
- Bikai, P. 2012. The Abandonment of Petra. Remains of the Invisible: Post-Byzantine Archaeology of Petra's North Ridge, Pp. 95-99 in G. Vannini, M. Nuccioti (eds.), *La Transgiordania nei secoli XII-XIII e le frontiere del Mediterraneo medievale*, BAR International Series Limina Limites 1. Oxford.
- Bonacchi, C. 2012. Dal Progetto Museologico Allo Studio Sui Visitatori. La Mostra da Petra a Shawbak, Pp. 475-482 in G. Vannini and M. Nuccioti (eds.), *un caso di archeologia pubblica*.
- 2009. Archeologia Pubblica in Italia. Origini e Prospettive di un 'nuovo' Settore Disciplinare, "Ricerche Storiche" XXXIX, 2-3: 329-350.
- Brogiolo, G., (a.c.). 2012. *Public Archaeology in Europe, "Postclassical Archaeologies" 2*: 269-360.
- Brown, R. 2016. Palaces in Middle Islamic Transjordan: Reflections of the Royal Tradition of Bilad ash-Sham. *SHAJ* 12: 543-560.
- Cimarri, V., Sahlin, A. and Vannini, G. 2010. La Lettura Archeologica del Territorio, Pp. 53-80 in L. Zangheri (ed.), *Il Parco Culturale Pratomagno-Setteponti. Progetto Pilota*. Firenze, Pacini (a cura di).
- Croce, B. 1938. *La Storia Come Pensiero e Come Azione*: Laterza, Bari.
- Drap, P., Pruno, E. and Nuccioti, M. 2012. Un Système d'Information 3D pour l'Archéologie du bâti: Showback. Le Cas de Montréal (Shawbak, Jordanie), *Archeologia e Calcolatori*, Supplemento 3: 371-384.
- Drap, P., Vannini, G., et al. 2012. Photogrammetry for Medieval Archaeology. *A Way to Represent and Analyse Stratigraphy*, Pp. 157-164 in Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Virtual Systems and Multimedia (VSMM 2012): Milano.
- 2017. Ontology-Based Photogrammetry Survey for Medieval Archaeology: Toward a 3D Geographic Information System (GIS), *Geosciences* 7, 93: 1-34.
- Eadem 2011. Dalla public archaeology all'archeologia pubblica. La mostra "Da Petra a Shawbak". Pp. 102-109 in Vannini.
- 2016. Medieval pottery in south Jordan between little and great traditions: a case-study from Shawbak castle, in IN and AROUND. *Ceramiche e comunità Secondo convegno tematico dell'AIECM3* (Faenza, Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche 17-19 aprile 2015), Pp. 237-240 in M. Ferri, C. Moine, L. Sabbionesi (a cura di): Firenze, All'Insegna del Giglio.
- Francovich, R., (a.c.). 1987. *Archeologia e storia del medioevo italiano*: Roma, NIS.
- Galanzeh Hejazeen, E. 2007. *Tourism and Local Communities in Jordan: Perception, Attitudes and Impacts A Case Study on Five Archaeological Tourist Sites*, PhD, Katholischen Universität Eichstätt: Ingolstadt.
- Manacorda, D. 2007. *Il sito archeologico: fra ricerca e valorizzazione*: Roma.
- Mannoni, T. 1995. Insediamenti abbandonati. *Archeologia medievale, Venticinque anni di archeologia globale 2*: Genova, SAGEP.
- Mannoni, T. et al. 1978. Zignago 1: Settlements and the Territory. *Medieval Archeology* V: 273-374.
- Marino, L. et al. 1991. The Crusader Settlement in Petra. *Fortress* 3: 3-13.
- Molducci, C. and Rossi, A. (a.c.). 2015. Il ponte del tempo. *Paesaggi Culturali Medievali*, A. Rossi: Prato-vecchio-Stia.
- Nicolucci, F. et al. 2000. PETRA: un sistema integrato per la gestione dei dati archeologici, in 'Archeologia computazionale'. I Workshop Nazionale (Napoli-Firenze, 1999), *Archeologia e Calcolatori* 11: 49-67.
- Nuccioti, M. (a.c.). 2010. Atlante dell'Edilizia Medievale delle comunità montane dell'Amiata grossetano e delle Colline del Fiora, S. Fiora.
- Nuccioti, M., Petrosyan, H. et al. 2015. The Making of the Silk Road in Armenia (cc. 7th-14th): Vaiots Dzor and Arates Monastery, in VII Congresso. *Nazionale di Archeologia Medievale*, Lecce, 9-12: 493-497 settembre: Firenze, All'Insegna del Giglio.
- Nuccioti, M., Segnini, C. 2013. New Districts for rural tourism. Liaisons for Growth in Italy, Jordan, Armenia. *The Parliament Magazine*, November: 15-16.
- Pruno, E. 2012. I manufatti di epoca crociato-ayyubidi a Shawbak e l'idea di frontiera: alcune considerazioni, in *La Transgiordania nei secoli XII-XIII e le 'frontiere' del Mediterraneo medievale*, Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Pp. 468-469 in G. Vannini, M. Nuccioti (a cura di), BAR. (Limina/Limites: Archaeologies, histories, islands and bor-

- ders in the Mediterranean (365-1556) 1): Oxford.
- Pruno, E., Drap, P. 2012. Dalla stratigrafia all'archeologia teorica: I matrix di Harris e l'archeologia del tempo, in *Atti del Congresso Nazionale di Archeologia Medievale*. VI: 16-18: Firenze.
- Richard, J. 2012. *La grande storia delle crociate*: Roma, Newton Compton.
- Rugiadi, M. 2012. Il complesso di ricevimento del palazzo ayyubide a Shawbak, *Vicino Oriente XVI*: 201-225.
- Ruschi, P. 2012. *The 'castle' of Shawbak, between restoration and conservation*, Pp. 313-316 in Vannini, Nucciotti.
- Ruschi, P., Vannini, G. 2001. The Fortified Crusader-Ayyubid Settlements in the Petra Valley: A Study for a Project of Restoration, *SHAJ VII*: 695-705.
- Schadla-Hall, T. 1999. Editorial: Public Archaeology. *European Journal of Archaeology* 2 (2):147-158.
- Smith, M. 1992. Braudel's Temporal Rhythms and Chronology Theory in Archaeology, Pp. 23-34 in A.B. Knapp (ed.), *Annales, Archaeology and Ethnohistory*, Cambridge University Press.
- Schmidt, S. 2006. Kreuzritteralltag in Petra. Das Beispiel des Wadi Farasa, Pp. 45-59 in U. Bellwald (ed.), *Die Kreuzzuge. Petra, Eine Spurensuche*, Ritterhausgesellschaft Bubikon.
- Tonghini, C., Vanni Desideri, A. 1995. The Material Evidence from al-Wu'ayra: A Sample of Pottery, *SHAJ VII*: 707-719.
- Vanni Desideri, A., Sassu, M. 2014. Prolegomena to the Preservation of the Site of al-Wu'ayra (Petra, Jordan) and to the Restoration of the North-East Tower. *Restauro Archeologico* 1: 95-107.
- Vanni Desideri, A., Vannini, G. 1991. La presenza crociata in Transgiordania. Una lettura archeologica. *Erba d'Arno Primavera* 44: 46-63.
- 1995. Archaeological research on Medieval Petra: a preliminary report. *ADAJ* 34: 509-4.
- 2016. *Light archaeology and historical landscape. For the global history of the site of al-Wu'ayra (Petra) in Transjordan*, in *Landscape Conference* (Krakow, 29-30 may 2016), 'Landscape as impulsion for culture: research, perception and protection', Cracow landscape monographs 2 (Landscape in the past and forgotten landscapes), Pp. 197-206. in P. Kolodziejczyk, B. Kwiatkowska-Kopka, Kraków (ed.).
- 2004. Un sigillo dei conti Guidi e il crepuscolo dell'incastellamento nel Valdarno superiore, *Archeologia Medievale* 31: 405-422.
- Vannini, G. (a c). 2007. Archeologia dell'insediamento crociato-ayyubide in Transgiordania. La valle di Petra e il castello di Shawbak Il Progetto Shawbak. *Collana di Archeologia Medievale*, vol. 21: Firenze, All'Insegna del Giglio.
- Vannini, G. et al. 2003. Archeologia dell'edilizia storica e costruzione del documento archeologico. Problemi di popolamento mediterraneo, in *Arqueologia de la Arquitectura. Definicion dicliplinar y nuevas perspectivas* (Seminario Internacional, 18-20 de febrero de 2002, Vitoria-Gasteiz), *Arqueologia de la Arquitectura* 2: 249-274.
- Vannini, G., Bonacchi, C., Nucciotti, M. 2014. Archeologia medievale e Archeologia Pubblica, in *Quarant'anni di Archeologia Medievale in Italia*. La rivista, i temi, la teoria e i metodi, a cura di S. Gelichi. *Archeologia Medievale* 60:183-196.
- Vannini, G., Nucciotti, M. (a c.). 2009. *Da Petra a Shawbak. Archeologia di una frontiera. Catalogo della Mostra*, (Firenze, Palazzo Pitti, Limonaia di Boboli, 13 luglio-11 ottobre 2009): Firenze, Giunti.
- IDEM (a c.). 2011. Atti del workshop 'Archeologia Pubblica in Toscana: un progetto e una proposta': Firenze FUP.
- IDEM. 2011. A medieval archaeology experience in Jordan. The 'medieval' Petra Mission of University of Florence. *ADAJ* 55: 295-312.
- IDEM (eds.) 2012. *La Transgiordania nei secoli XII-XIII e le frontiere del Mediterraneo medievale*, *BAR International Series*, Limina Limites 1: Oxford.
- 2011. Il 'castello' di Shawbak e la Transgiordania meridionale: una frontiera del Mediterraneo medievale, in 'Archeologia dei castelli nell'Europa angioina (secoli XIII-XV)', Atti del Convegno internazionale di Salerno (10-12 novembre 2008), Pp. 145-157 in P. Peduto, A. Santoro (a cura di): Firenze.
- 2012. From the Nabataeans to the Crusaders. The Transformation of the Wadi Farasa East at Petra, in *La Transgiordania nei secoli XII-XIII e le frontiere del Mediterraneo medievale* (Atti del Convegno di Firenze, Palazzo Vecchio-Palazzo Strozzi, 5-8 novembre 2008), *BAR, International series*, 'Limina / Limites. Archeologie, storie, isole e frontiere nel Mediterraneo (365-1556)' Pp. 81-94 in G. Vannini, M. Nucciotti (a cura di): Oxford.
- 2013. L'incastellamento della valle di Petra in Transgiordania e la frontiera crociato-musulmana come problema archeologico, in *Christ is here! Studies in Biblical and Christian Archaeology in Memory of Michele Piccirillo ofm*, Pp.381-398 in D. Chrupcala, Milano (a cura di): Terra Santa.
- 2014. Per Shawbak, erede medievale di Petra, in 'My life is like the summer rose'. Maurizio Tosi e l'archeologia come modo di vita. *Papers in honour of Maurizio Tosi for his 70th birthday*. Pp. 727-732 in C.C. Lamberg-Karlovski, B. Genito, with B. Cerasetti (ed.), *BAR, International Series* 2690:Oxford.
- 2012. *Light and Public!*, Pp. 83-85 in M. Fioravantiin and S. Mecca (eds.), *The Safeguard of Cultural Heritage. A Challenge from the Past for the Europe of Tomorrow*: Firenze.
- 2013. *Building Archaeology and seismic risk in the Mugello: from the collection of data to the docu-*

- mentaton of historical buildings*, Proceedings of the Congreso Internacional sobre Documentación, Conservación y Reutilización del Patrimonio Arquitectónico. Pp. 269-276, 'La Cultura del Restauro e della Valorizzazione. Temi e Problemi per un Percorso Internazionale di Conoscenza', (Madrid, 20-22 June 2013): Madrid.
- 2016. *Esperienze di Archeologia Pubblica in Giordania. Sulle tracce di una identità territoriale nel Mediterraneo medievale*, in *Alla ricerca di un passato complesso. Contributi in onore di Gian Pietro Brogiolo per il suo settantesimo compleanno*. Pp. 359-370 in A. Chavarría Arnau, M. Jurko (a cura di): Zagreb – Motovun.
- 2017. Light archaeology and territorial analysis: experiences and perspectives of the florentine medievalist school, "Archeologia Polona", (in press).
- Vannini, G., Ruschi, P. and Marcotulli, C. 2013. Crusaders, Ayyubids and Early Mamluk Shawbak and the History of Medieval South Jordan: The Archaeology and Restoration of the Mamluk Workshop, *SHAJ* XI: 359-380.
- Vannini, G., Tonghini, C. 1997. Medieval Petra. The stratigraphic evidence from recent archeological excavations at al-Wu'ayra. *SHAJ* VI: 371-384.
-