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The Lordship of Transjordan: Settlement Patterns, Economy, and Society in the Crusader Period

Introduction

The Lordship of Transjordan was part of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, and its territory was explored and gradually settled by the Franks in the years 1100–1189. The available documentary and archaeological sources for the lordship are very scarce, especially when compared with other areas of the kingdom itself and the other Latin states; nevertheless, many scholars have assumed that the main function of Transjordan was to serve as a frontier land located on the southeastern periphery of the kingdom. While Transjordan was certainly always on the edge of the Frankish-controlled territory, most scholarship has seen this region as a frontier in a different way: as a defensive system intended to protect lands farther west. Deschamps (1934: 16–42) and Prawer (1972: 285), for example, stated that the location of the main fortresses in Transjordan was crucial to blocking the potential access of the enemy to the core of the Latin kingdom by forming a line east of the natural borders—the Jordan Valley, the Dead Sea, and the Wādī ʿArabah (FIG. 1).

My research challenges this traditional view and argues that the function of defence, for both the lordship and its castles, was far from being the only one and fully supports, for the case study of Transjordan, Smail's definition of the function of castles. Smail argued that castles were not particularly useful for defending borders and that, in Transjordan, castles were used to establish control in strategic areas and become centres of colonization; they were therefore also administrative and residential centres, policing posts and barracks, and above all, centres of authority (Smail 1956: 60–61). In addition, I argue that the importance of the lordship for the rest of the kingdom, as well as its tight and deep connections to it, are aspects so far largely understated.

To illustrate these conclusions, this paper discusses and summarizes four key aspects arising from a study on Transjordan: settlement forms and dynamics; the structure and function of castles; the economy; the relationship between the Franks and the local population[1].

Settlement Patterns, Forms, and Dynamics

The interest of the Franks in the area beyond the Jordan River had already begun by 1100, when they started organising a series of explorations of the territory. Such interest initially focused both on the Petra region and the Sawād, around the valley of the River Yarmūk. The Sawād did not eventually become part of the lordship of *Outrejourdain* and was only partially controlled through a few fortified points, mainly the castles of Al ʿĀl (whose location is still unidentified) and Ḥabīs Jaldak, founded in AD 1105 and AD 1109, respectively, and by agreements between the Muslims and the Franks on sharing the territory's resources (Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, *RHC Or*, III: 529–530; Ibn al-Qalanisi, transl. Gibb: 71–72) (FIG. 2a–2b).

However, in the area between the Wādī Al Mūjib and Petra, which eventually became part of the actual Lordship of Transjordan and included a much higher number of Frankish sites, settlement gradually developed in much more evolved forms. Between 1100 and 1115, the Franks surveyed this area of Southern Transjordan and realized that this region offered a much better chance to achieve the goal of permanent settlement, whereas the areas north of the Wādī Al Mūjib and south of Petra were not considered as suitable, being both too exposed to potential military attacks from either Damascus or Cairo. Therefore, while north of the River Az Zarqāʾ settlement aimed mainly at collecting economic benefits and controlling the enemy from a close distance, in the south it also aimed at settling Frankish population and establishing agriculture and a trade network (FIG. 3).

A first phase of castle construction followed this exploratory phase in southern Transjordan: as outlined by Fulcher of Chartres, the foundation of the first fortress in Transjordan, Montreal (today Ash SHawbak, FIG. 4) in 1115, where lands around the castle were granted mainly for agricultural purposes, offered long-term economic benefits and advantages for Christendom (Fulcher of Chartres, II.55, ed. Hagenmeyer 1913: 592–593). The location the Franks selected for founding Ash SHawbak was safe and controlled both the surrounding fertile area and the passage of merchants and pilgrims along the King's Highway, from whom the Franks could levy taxes; finally, settlement was encouraged by the presence of a local Christian population.

A third phase, relying on a now solid understanding by the Franks of the territory of Transjordan, saw the construction of several castles in Petra around 1130/1140 (Pringle 1998: 373–377; Sinibaldi 2016b: 82–88) and Al Karak in 1142 (William of Tyre, 15.21, ed. Huygens 1986: 703–704). Al Karak (FIG. 5), now the new main centre of the lordship, was not only located in a fertile area, largely inhabited by Christians, but was also only a short distance from Jerusalem and, at the same time,

[1] This paper is a reduced and different version of the recently published article Sinibaldi 2022a. It is based on the results of a PhD thesis defended at Cardiff University, School of History, Archaeology and Religion, under the supervision of Prof. Denys Pringle, with the title: "Settlement in Crusader Transjordan (1100–1189). A Historical and Archaeological Study" and also published open access online by Cardiff University (Sinibaldi 2014).

in a position that allowed opportunities for trade with Al GHawr and the Jordan Valley and to also control both the King's Highway and the main roads to the Frankish territories in the west.

A fourth phase of settlement, from about 1160 to about 1170, was characterised by the maximum expansion and consolidation of control over the conquered territories of the lordship; the inclusion of Al ʿAqabah on the Red Sea now allowed control of the southern segment of the *Hajj* Road (Pringle 2005; Prawer 1975: 298), and, importantly, interfered with the movements of troops between Cairo and Damascus.

The process just described reveals that the Franks acquired, over time, an understanding of both the most promising areas for settlement and of its most suitable forms for their own goals. The choice of location for the main Frankish settlements was clearly mainly guided by the combined aspects of economic advantage, a strategic but safe location, the presence of a Christian community, and, often, the presence of an existing settlement.

The Castles of the Lordship of Transjordan

Five castles have so far been securely identified with their material remains: Al Karak, Ash SHawbak, Al Wuʿayrah (FIG. 6) (Pringle 1998: 373–376) and Al Ḥabīs (FIG. 7), both in Petra (Zayadine 1985: 164–167; Pringle 1997: 49, no. 97), and KHirbat As Salaʿ/Sela/al-Sila (FIG. 8), near Aṭ Ṭafīlah (Musil 1907: 318; Zayadine 1985: 164–167; Pringle 1997: 95, no. 202). The confirmation of the identification of this last site as the Crusader-period castle of Sila has been based on my observation of similarities in the building techniques with other known sites of Southern Transjordan (Sinibaldi 2014: 103–104).

It is clear that all of the castles of Transjordan had military and strategic functions and that for some of them, the military purpose was indeed the main one, which was the case also for others in the rest of the kingdom. For example, the castle on Jazīrat Firʿawn, off the shore of Al ʿAqabah and threatening the safe passage of the Muslims on the *Darb al-Hajj*, could not accommodate more than a small garrison because of its small size. Several castles of Transjordan, moreover, had the role to prevent invasions from Egypt (Mayer 1990: 206), including the castles of Petra (Al Wuʿayrah, Al Ḥabīs, and Hurmuz) (Sinibaldi 2022a 133–135 and 148–149).

However, as was also the case for many castles of the kingdom, some of them were also centres of authority and lordship; for this reason, the main castles were built in the safer areas of the region, between Al Karak and Petra. Such functions of residence and symbol of power and authority of the ruling class are clear from the structure of the castles, as well as from the archaeological evidence collected so far.

Al Karak castle (FIG. 9) was located within a naturally defended town and defended its largely Christian population (William of Tyre 22.28–29, ed. Huygens 1986:1055–1057). Ash SHawbak castle, constructed "because the king wanted to extend the boundaries of the kingdom in that area", was inhabited by "knights, sergeants and villeins". (William of Tyre, 11.26, ed. Huygens 1986: 534–535). Surveys confirmed the presence of at least two lines of walls, a Latin parish church for the ruling class, and a church in the outer ward, probably for the local Orthodox Christian population (Pringle 1997: 75–76, 1998: 304–14, 2001: 678, 2005: 35). With a similar structure, at Al Wuʿayrah, the castle included an inner and an external

defended area (Pringle 1998: 375–376).

Archaeological investigations have also contributed to determining the identity of some inhabitants of the castles. Studies on the animal bones from the castles of Ash SHawbak and Al Wu'ayrah show that at least part of the population was living on a varied diet, including products of high quality (Brown and Rielly 2010; Corbino and Mazza 2013), and was evidently able to afford owning imported ceramic objects, which were recovered from excavations at the castle (Vannini and Tonghini 1997: 382) but were overall rarely found outside castles at this time, because the vast majority of the ceramics in the region at the time were handmade (Sinibaldi 2009; Sinibaldi 2022b). These elements strongly suggest the presence at the castle of individuals who had a commanding role there. At Al Wu'ayrah, this is further supported by the presence of the children's graveyard by the entrance of the church, indicating that families of a commanding rank had a residence at the castle (Sinibaldi 2014: 135), as well as by the finely built and plastered cross-vault still standing in the southwestern tower of the castle that had a clear residential function, and probably was the castle's donjon (Kennedy 1994: 26).

It is also clear that at Al Wu'ayrah and Ash SHawbak there is a general sustained level of investment in high-quality construction, which reflects high living standards and the involvement of specialized, imported workmanship; this is particularly evident in the innermost churches, where the ashlars are worked with a very fine tooling and are bonded with a high-quality lime mortar (Sinibaldi 2014: 263–287). The central nave and aisles of the upper church at Ash SHawbak had groin vaults (Pringle 1998: 307–311), and the church at Al Karak castle was originally decorated with frescoes by specialised workmanship (Pringle 1993: 290). None of these elements is known to be used locally at this time.

One of the successful strategies adopted by the Franks was to build almost impregnable castles, which could hold out until help arrived from other locations. Although all the three main castles (Al Karak, Ash SHawbak, and Al Wu'ayrah) surrendered between 1188 and 1189, none of them was taken by military force, and all five castles analysed here are strongly protected by natural defences. At Al Karak and at the Petra castles, the Franks isolated a rock spur by cutting a moat through the connecting side, and at Al Karak castle, this system allowed the castle to resist very intense sieges, even when the town was taken (Sinibaldi 2019: 97–99, 104, 106). This system, however, was also used at several other Frankish sites outside Transjordan (Sinibaldi 2002: 372, 2014: 285).

In summary, the financial investment at the three main castles of Transjordan shows an element of representation of power, strongly suggesting that these were, at least at times, centres of lordship and authority, an aspect fully supported by the documentary sources. It is clearly documented, for example, that when Ash SHawbak was still a royal possession, a royal castellan resided there (Mayer 1990: 64). Moreover, while the planning of defence of these castles was extremely efficient, it is also true that the general defensive aspects were not particularly different from those in the rest of the kingdom.

The Economy of the Lordship

On 31 July 1161, King Baldwin III donated Ash SHawbak and its land to Philip of Nablus and his heirs, with the castles of Al Karak and Al Wu'ayrah,

ʻAmmān, and the lands previously owned by Baldwin, viscount of Nablus (Röhricht 1893: 96–97, no. 366; Strehlke 1975: 3–5). The king also introduced in this agreement some limitations to the power of the Lord of Transjordan: he kept for himself the revenues collected from the caravans passing through the country and those from the Bedouins; the aim was evidently to limit the independence of a lordship, which had an enormous strategic importance (Barber 2003: 69): the Muslims would never have accepted instability on this route (Mayer 1987: 201–202). However, a second aim was clearly to continue to take advantage of the important economic revenues of the region. For these reasons, the crown only very gradually conceded his territories to the Seigneurie and relinquished very cautiously the direct control of it. Ash SHawbak only became part of the lordship in 1130/1136, and Al Wuʻayrah only in 1161 (Mayer 1990: 159).

The control of trade was not limited to the *Hajj* Road. In addition to the Al Karak plateau's agricultural activities, Al Karak castle's position controlled the boat traffic on the Dead Sea (Delaville le Roulx 1894: I: 160, no. 207), and the region to its south and west. Zughar (today KHirbat Ash SHaykh ʻĪsā) in Al GHawr, a site with significant resources, overlooked one of the main crossings to the west, as witnessed in a map of *ca.* 1300, depicting the site as the main point of arrival to Al Karak from the other side of the Dead Sea (Rohricht 1891: 8–11, plate 1; Brown 2013: 723). Already before the 12th century, indigo, bitumen, salt, dates, and minerals were all important products from this area; dates and indigo were produced during the 12th century (Al-Muqaddasi, trans. Collins 2001: 151, 154; Le Strange 1965: 31, 65–66), and probably sugar too. At KHirbat Ash SHaykh ʻĪsā, excavations have revealed the use, in the 12th century, of imported pottery from areas of the kingdom and the Latin states arriving through the Palestinian area, to which Transjordan was therefore well connected[2].

The content of the 1161 document implies another important aspect. If the king was able to grant the land in Transjordan without also granting the tolls as an economic resource to support the costs of the lordship, including the very high ones associated with the building and maintenance of castles and their garrisons, it follows that the lords must have been able to cover these costs with other significant means, and these must have been the well-documented agricultural resources, which were flourishing in the highland areas: here, where most of the Frankish settlements were located, the nature of the soil made it possible to grow barley, wheat, and fruit trees (al-Bilbisi 2013: 44–45). We have names of several fiefs granted in Transjordan between ʻAmmān and Al Karak and more specific information on the areas of Petra and Ash SHawbak, both described as very fertile in the medieval sources, such as Al-Idrisi, writing in the 12th century (Le Strange 1965: 35) about the Ash SHarāh and Jibāl districts. Several villages depended on Ash SHawbak castle, whose agriculture was important and included the export of its fruits to Egypt, *e.g.,* Abu al Fida writing in the early 14th century (Le Strange 1965: 536; Delaville le Roulx 1894, I: 160, no. 207). Excavations in Wādī Mūsā discovered a site with a long history of occupation, including the 12th century, based on the production of olive oil (ʻAmr *et al.* 2000: 233, 241), information confirmed by the historical sources in 1144 (William of

[2] Personal observations based on my examination of the ceramic assemblage from KHirbat Ash SHaykh ʻĪsā, courtesy of Dr. Konstantino Politis, director.

Tyre, 16.6, ed. Huygens 1986: 721–722). Near the Al Mūjib (Arnon) river, north of Al Karak, a village called Hara was granted to the Hospitallers in the 1140s or 1150s (Tsurtsumia 2022). A few kilometres from Petra, excavations at the village of Al Bayḏā (FIG. 10), located in a promising agricultural area, have revealed that the village was probably occupied in the 12th century and controlled by the Franks (Sinibaldi, in progress a; in progress b).

A letter from Saladin written in 1187/1188 (Abu Shama 1898, 303) is of great interest for our understanding of the forms of Frankish settlement in Transjordan. The letter contained a list of sites conquered by the Muslims, including Hurmuz and As Sala'; all these sites were called "cities", and each of them had as its dependencies villages, fields, and territories, suggesting that also these sites, not only the main castles, were at the centre of a territory and of an administrative district.

Finally, Petra and the Jibāl Ash SHarāh present an ideal subject for a case study of a specific area; the region was intensely settled in the 12th century AD, and archaeology has recently provided new evidence from excavations and surveys. Archaeological evidence, and especially the presence both inside and outside the valley of ceramic assemblages covering a long chronological period, has led to the conclusion that the Petra Valley and region were inhabited continuously, though not intensely, throughout the Islamic period and that there was no Crusader-period revival between two long periods of abandonment, as has been previously stated. Despite the presence of several castles, Crusader-period settlement did not, therefore, have a deep impact on the population and economy of the Petra area and should be seen instead as a settlement pattern of continuity and adaptation, rather than of disruption and change (Sinibaldi 2016b, 2021). This conciliates well with the information from documentary sources, which ascribe increased population in the area, as in many other areas of Jordan, not to the Crusader period but already to the earlier Fatimid period (Walmsley 2001: 518, 554–555). Additionally, although several fragments of imported pottery originating from an international trade network were present at Al Wu'ayrah castle, a study of ceramics at other sites has clearly shown that ceramic imports were generally very limited in this period in the rest of the Petra region. In summary, in addition to showing essentially dominant patterns of continuity and adaptation to the territory the Franks found in Petra, this research showed that the core of the local economy in the Petra region was agriculture, rather than trade, as was formerly thought.

There is, therefore, solid evidence confirming that in southern Transjordan settlement and economy were largely based on a well-developed agricultural system, as it was in most of the rest of the kingdom. In summary, the main castles of the region were also the main centres of Frankish settlement, and these, as well as other smaller castles, were economically sustained mainly by the management of agricultural resources through the control of the local community. In addition, the Franks collected other important resources, including from the control of pilgrimage and trade along several routes. Transjordan was therefore not only a largely prosperous and economically independent region, but it was also tightly connected to the rest of the kingdom by providing it with important economic resources.

The Franks and the Local Population

The Franks supported their presence in Transjordan by actively shaping a relationship with the local population, including with the Bedouins (Sinibaldi 2014: 198–205). A central element of the settlement strategy in Transjordan, especially in the very first stages, was a strong reliance on the local Christian population. Since the beginning, the Franks realised that relying on the local Christians was a matter of safety and, at the same time, would also allow them to make use of an already well-established agricultural system. King Baldwin I repopulated part of Jerusalem with local Christians from Arabia beyond the Jordan, where, as it was reported by William of Tyre (11. 27 ed. Huygens 1986: 535–536) there were many of them; this information suggests both that the Franks had good hopes in the initial phase of settlement of receiving support from the local Christians and that Transjordan at the time was largely Christian. Local Christians were also regularly employed early on by the Franks as scouts (Fulcher of Chartres, II.4, ed. Hagenmeyer 1913: 374–375; Albert of Aachen 10: 28–30 ed. Edgington 2009: 745–747) and were in charge of running important castles in Transjordan, as was the case, for example, for the castle of Ḥabīs Jaldak in 1182 (William of Tyre, 22.15, ed. Huygens 1986: 1028–1030).

However, the relationship with the Christian population was far more than simply a useful tool for settlement strategies. It also corresponded to a broader aim, which was one of the declared core goals at the origin of the Crusades: the protection of Christendom. Al Karak, Ash SHawbak, and Wādī Mūsā were largely Christian areas at the time the Franks first arrived there. A garrison was placed in Ash SHawbak in the interest of the Christians, probably meaning both native Christians and Franks (Fulcher of Chartres, II.55, ed. Hagenmayer 1913: 592). In the lands north of Al Karak, near the Al Mūjib (Arnon) river and where one Georgian family lived since the 11th century, a monastery dedicated to St. Moses was administered by Saba the Georgian, King Baldwin II's steward (Tsurtsumia 2022)At Jabal Harun in Petra in 1100 and until at least 1217, some of the structures of the Byzantine monastery were still partially inhabited by monks (Fiema 2008, 2016; Sinibaldi 2016a; Pringle 2012: 121). Ibn al-Furat tells us that Frankish settlement started in Al Karak because the monks of an existing Orthodox monastery asked some Franks to move there to protect them from the Bedouins (Ibn al-Furat, ed. Lyons and Lyons 1971: 51). Additionally, an Armenian community was probably encouraged by the Franks to settle in Al Karak during the 12th century (Sinibaldi 2014: 195–198).

Furthermore, it is likely that at this early stage, the plans of the Franks included also protecting Christian pilgrims traveling in Transjordan. During one of the expeditions in 1100, King Baldwin's party reached Wādī Mūsā, which is described as a valley very rich in all fruits of the earth and in water, and the monastery of St. Aaron on the Jabal Hārūn, and rejoiced in being able to learn of and contemplate such a holy place (Fulcher of Chartres, II.5, ed. Hagenmeyer 1913: 381). This statement might therefore suggest that at the moment of the Franks' first arrival in the area, the idea of settling in places of Christian religious significance was at least contemplated. Interestingly, this hypothesis appears to be supported by a depiction of pilgrimage sites in Jordan in 12th-century pilgrims maps that includes Mount Nebo and Jabal Hārūn (Rohricht

1895: 176–78, pl. 5; Brown 2013: 718). In the 12th century and until the mid-13th century, the main route to the pilgrimage site of St. Catherine's monastery was through Transjordan (Thietmar 8–22 in Pringle 2012: 107–28). The mention by several sources that the archbishop of Petra's suffragan was the abbot of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai (FIG. 11) (John of Ibelin 1841, I: VII; Edbury 1997: 192; Mas Latrie 1871: 68) shows that the Franks had ambitions, never fulfilled in reality, of controlling this important pilgrimage site. Certainly, the aim of controlling Christian sites for the sake of managing pilgrimage in the region would have combined very well financially with that of controlling pilgrimage of Muslims and merchants along the *Hajj* Road.

In summary, supporting local Christians in Transjordan, as was the case in the rest of the kingdom, was part of a broad agreement according to which, in exchange for the advantage of controlling the territory and its resources, the Franks would protect the Christians, their settlement, and their pilgrimage activity. For this reason, as in other parts of the kingdom (Ellenblum 1998), the Franks chose to settle mainly in Christian areas such as Al Karak, Ash SHawbak, and Wādī Mūsā.

Conclusions

It has been concluded based on the evidence presented that the aims and ambitions of settling in Jordan were much broader than just establishing a southeastern frontier for the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. Furthermore, the castles of Transjordan were never intended to form a frontier to protect the region west of it, and Transjordan as a region was not a frontier in and of itself; a more detailed argument on why the traditional definition of frontier cannot be applied to Crusader Transjordan has been made elsewhere (Sinibaldi 2022a).

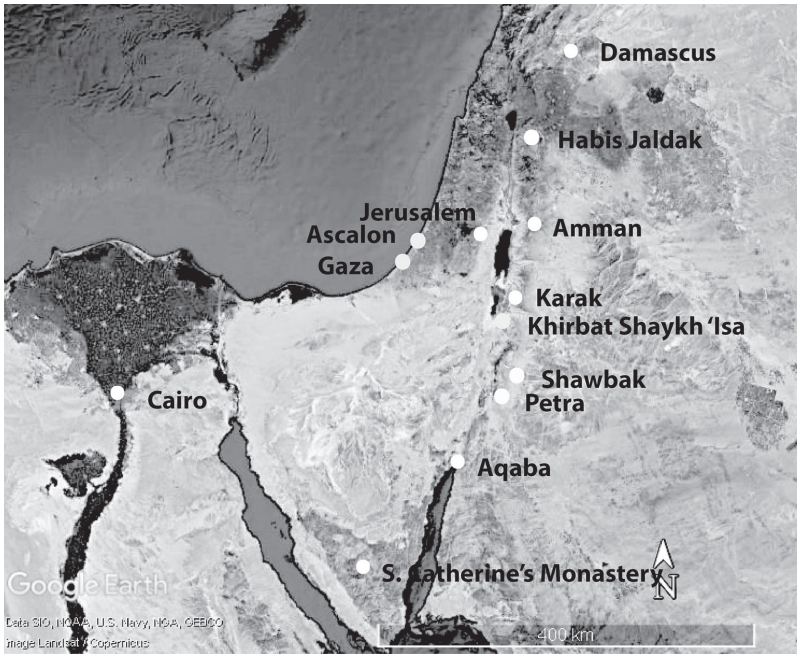
The main castles of Transjordan had a variety of functions that went well beyond the military one and were therefore not very different, including in their physical structure, from those in the rest of the kingdom. The main evidence that the castles of Transjordan did not have the function of defending a frontier, however, is the fact that the strongest castles, in particular Al Karak and Ash SHawbak, were actually built in the safest areas of the lordship, while the parts of Transjordan most exposed to attacks from the Muslims, like Al ʿAqabah and ʿAmmān, were left with very limited investment in terms of fortifications.

Transjordan as a region was never a frontier in and of itself. Besides the fact that settlement included a variety of settlement types, not just castles, there is no doubt when looking at the documentary sources that the territory controlled was always seen as an area with the potential for greater expansion, the limits of which were never meant to remain static; both the borders and the actual extension of the lordship were only defined through a process which took decades. The actual core reasons at the origin of the royal policy of giving great importance to the borders of Transjordan were evidently the goal to keep the attacks from Egypt under control and, ultimately, the long-standing ambition to conquer it, rather than, as has been thought by some scholars, the desire to protect the territories west of it. The Franks' aim of conquering Egypt was always vigorously and systematically attempted (Phillips 1995: 132), and the research discussed here has highlighted that this was attempted not only from the territories of Palestine but also from Transjordan. Part of the role

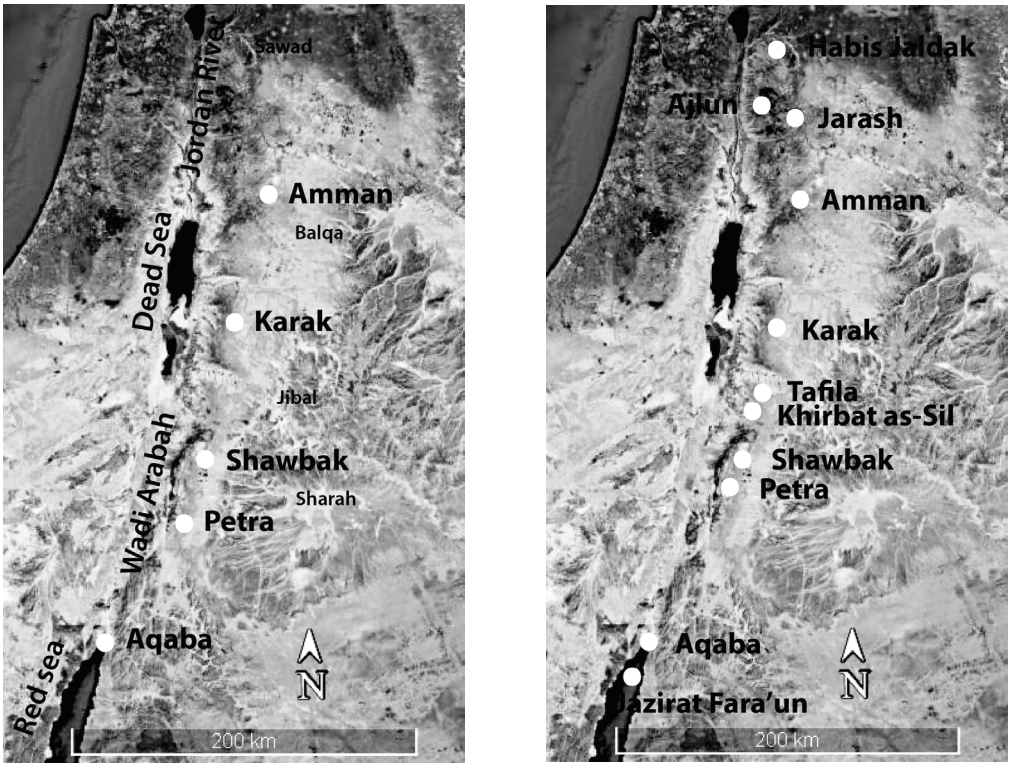
and identity of Transjordan was always based on the project of ambitious expansion, in particular during the period of maturity and confidence of the lordship (*ca*. 1130–*ca*. 1160), and specifically with a focus on the conquest of Egypt. Achieving this goal would have, among other things, expanded the control of Christendom and given the opportunity to include under this control an important pilgrimage site reached through Transjordan and the *Hajj* Road.

The significance of Transjordan to the rest of the kingdom and its important connections to it justified the enormous investment placed in the lordship, which the Franks were confident would be repaid by economic gains, stability, the maintenance of an agricultural and trade system, a relationship of mutual support with the local Christian population, and a base for further expanding the pilgrimage network and the conquered territories, especially in Egypt. The *Hajj* Road, which had an enormous political, military, and commercial value, was for the Franks the most important resource to control and played a crucial role in the economy of the whole Kingdom, although agriculture was the main basis—as in most of the rest of the Latin Kingdom—for supporting the local settlements.

It appears that the traditional view mentioned at the beginning of this paper, the association of a frontier with the Lordship of Transjordan and its castles still persists today. However, the common narrative that this was an isolated and peripheral region with a prevalent military function requires substantial modification. This image of isolation is evidently largely due to the limited amount of research conducted to date, but other contributing factors are the scarcity of historical sources on the Lordship of Transjordan, the fragmentary nature of the archaeological evidence, and the traditional concentration on the study of castles—without doubt the most impressive monuments of this period; these have often been erroneously seen in isolation from other types of sites, without which, however, they could not exist, as is always the case for castles. The role and significance of this region in relation to the kingdom have as a consequence been mainly associated with the role of its best-known sites (castles) which were seen mainly by their position on the map and their defensive function for the more important region to their west. Rather, they were in reality much more complex structures, fulfilling a variety of functions evolving over time, as originally highlighted by Smail already in the 1950s.

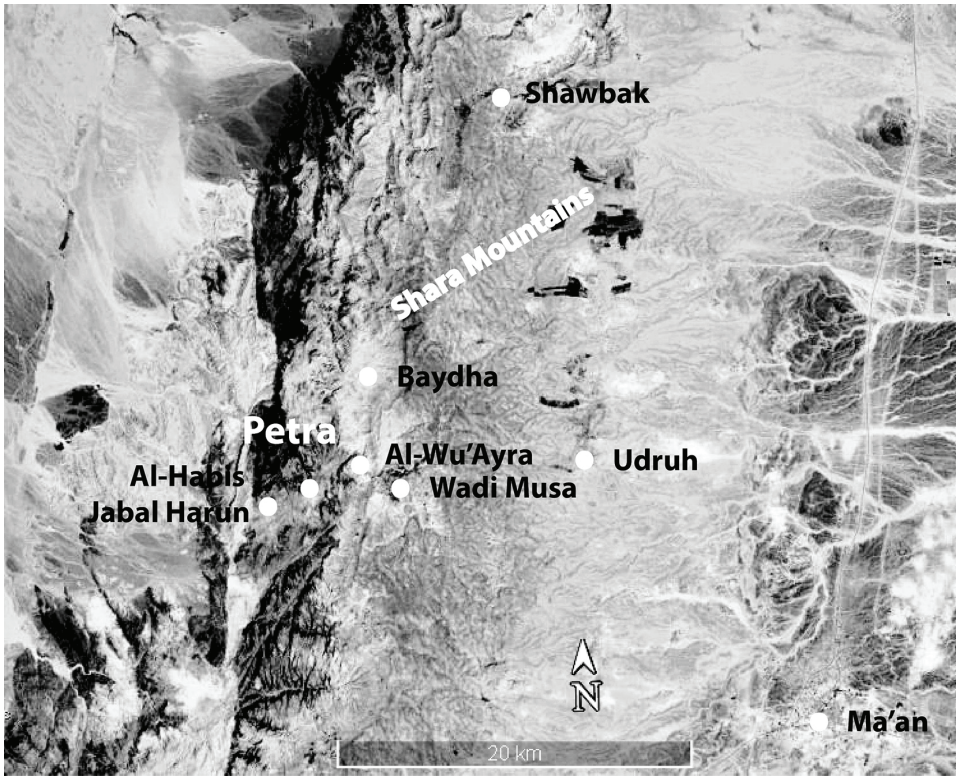


1. The Lordship of Transjordan in relation to the main sites in the region (© Google Earth).



a b

2. Physical geography and location of sites of the Lordship of Transjordan and the Sawād mentioned in the text (© Google Earth).



3. Location of sites in the Ash SHawbak and the Petra regions mentioned in the text (© Google Earth).

4. Ash SHawbak castle, aerial view from east (photo by David Kennedy, APAAME_20090930_DLK-0174; reproduced with kind permission.)

5. Al Karak castle, seen from east (photo by M. Sinibaldi).

6. Al Wu'ayrah castle: the entrance gate and moat on the eastern side of the castle (photo by M. Sinibaldi).

7. Al Ḥabīs castle, seen from its lower ward (from east) (photo by M. Sinibaldi).

8. KHirbat As Sala', structures part of the castle remains (photo by M. Sinibaldi).

9. Al Karak castle, aerial view from east (photo by R. Bewley, APAAME_20181014_RHB-0165; reproduced with kind permission).

10. Al Bayḍā region at the centre of the picture, in the foreground, seen from Ash SHarāh Mountains, with Petra in the background (photo by M. Sinibaldi).

11. St. Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai, Egypt (photo by M. Sinibaldi).

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