

DOCUMENTATION OF MOSAIC TANGIBLE HERITAGE IN JORDAN JARASH GOVERNORATE

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Introduction

In the year 2005 a project was launched to build up a data base inventory of Mosaics in Jarash governorate, study their geographical distribution, evolution through time, their conservation status which will help to plan future restoration work, distribute resources, protect the mosaics from hazards, and prepare better representation, help in future urban planning, as well as providing accurate comprehensive information for scholars.

Historical Background

Jarash city lies about 45km to the North of 'Amman the capital (Fig. 1). The ancient ruins of Jarash were first discovered in 1806 by the German traveler "Seetzen", this rapidly drew the attention of scholars and archeologists, who started in 1925 their intensive excavations that unraveled much of the history of human occupation from the Neolithic period till the Ottoman period. Amongst the beautiful ruins discovered, mosaics were the most decorative ornaments found in both religious buildings and civil architecture dating from the fifth century till the seventh century.

The resettlement of Circassian community in the 19th century in the eastern part of city, and the urban expansion of the modern city, unfortunately, led to the demolition of some of the monument. The expansion of the infrastructure led to the other part of the site becoming detached, intensive tourist interest led to the reburial of some mosaic pavements, not to mention the change in environment and the effects of pollution. The intensive excavations drew the attention of looters, whose illegal actions led to the destruction of some of the pavements.

Mosaic Documentation in Jordan

The first attempts undertaken to record the most outstanding mosaics found in Jordan were led by Father Michele Piccirillo from Studium Biblicum Franciscanum at Mount Nebo, who published in 1993, with the support of ACOR 'Ammān, a book about "The mosaics of Jordan" (Fig. 2), based on archive documents, collected information and personal discoveries and visits which documented most of the mosaics found prior to 1990, yet since then much had changed, so there was an urgent need to update the information based on field observation.

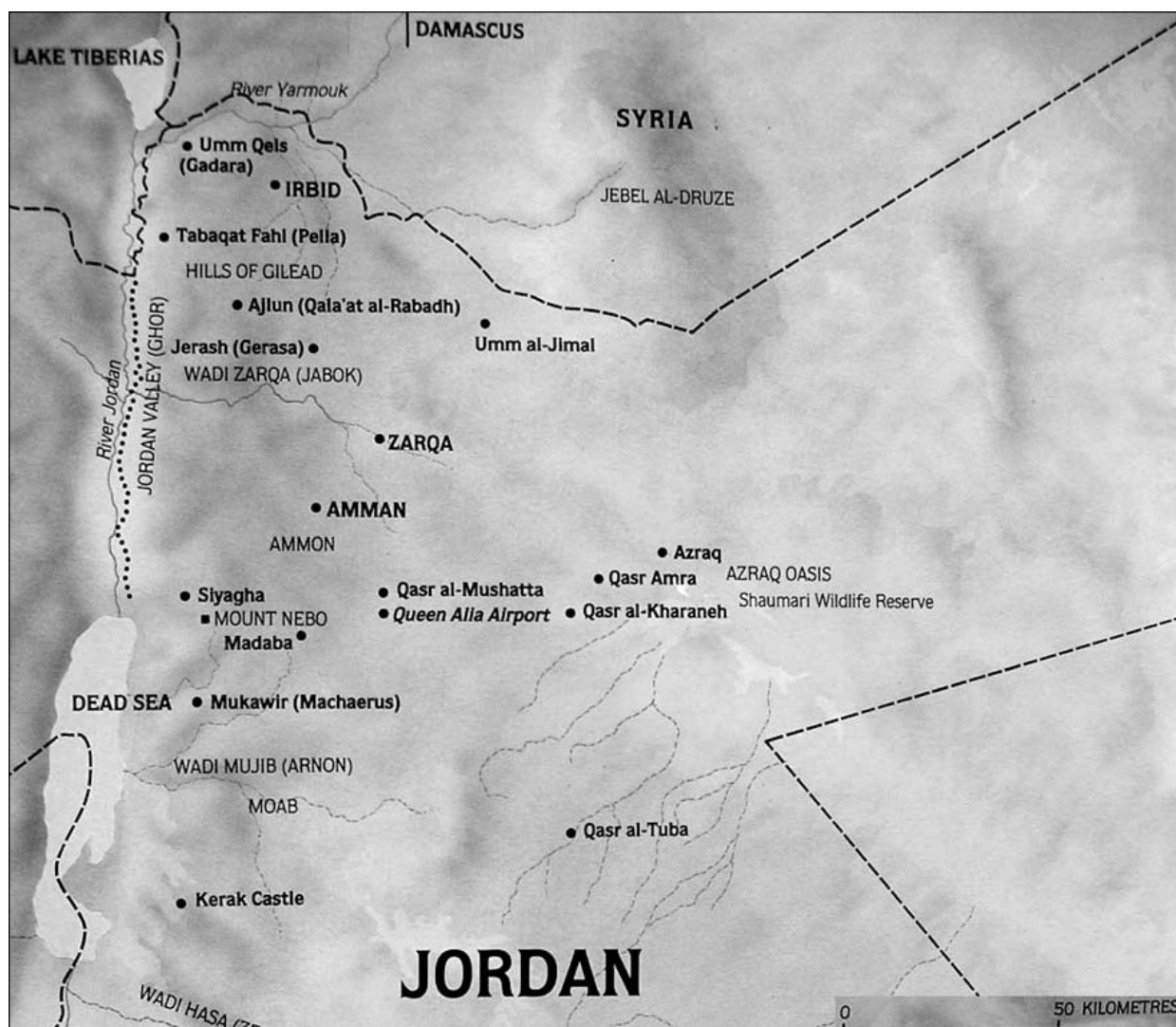
Project Objectives

In 2005 an initiative was put forward by the Department of Antiquities in order to safeguard this tangible heritage, to fulfill the following objectives:

1. Build a national database for mosaic heritage both *in situ* and detached;
2. Locate and document the mosaics both *in situ* and detached;
3. Assess the state of conservation of the mosaics, both *in situ* and detached to establish the future restoration works needed,
4. Establish the tourist potential possibility of the mosaic sites and their visit accessibility;
5. Provide full information for scholars, researchers and restorers.

Due to the acknowledgment of the large amount of mosaic pavements found in Jordan, it was important to choose a location for a pilot project testing and development prior to launching. Jarash was chosen as a prototype for the following reasons:

1. For its long span of settled civilizations.
2. Jarash has been renowned for mosaic art school/workshops since the Roman period.



1. Jarash Location.

3. The ongoing excavations are providing new information about the site.
4. The flourishing tourist management growth in the governorate, not to mention the department of Antiquities initiative to protect the site.
5. The absence of a full mosaic documentation record.

Methodology

A process was developed for the project which included several steps:

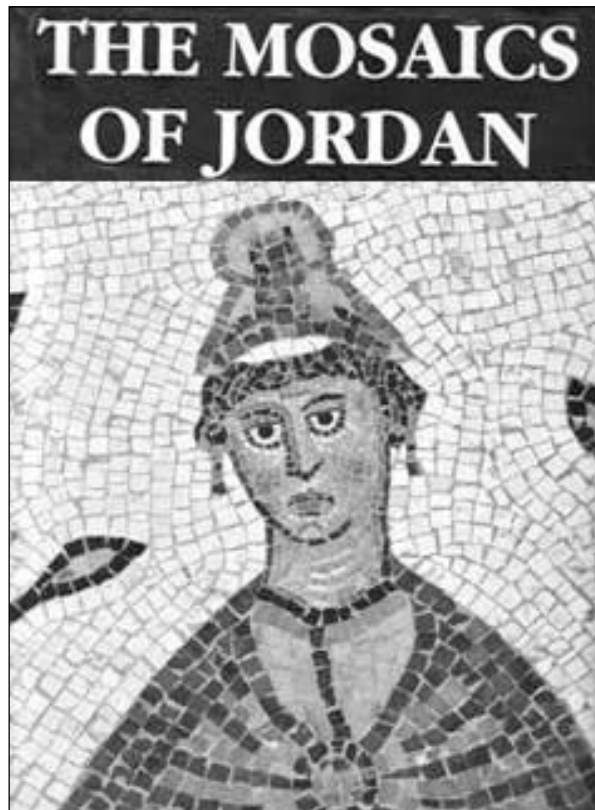
Gathering Information: In order to establish all mosaics uncovered since 1925, all documentation regarding excavations conducted in the governorate was collected and analyzed from all available publications, in addition to the study-

ing of all available documents in the Jordanian Department of Antiquities archive.

Mapping the Locations: Sites with mosaics were mapped on a (1:10,000) scale map of Jerash governorate. The routes for reaching the sites were located.

Field Visits: Sites were visited, verifying their location on the map, their current status was photographed, and the requirements needed for their uncovering and documenting were estimated and recorded.

Budget Allocating: An assessment was made for the number of workmen, vehicles, materials and equipment needed and the time span to complete the necessary work. The materials were covered by personal payment, while the Department of Antiquities covered the vehicles and workmen.



2. First Documentation efforts for the mosaics of Jordan.

The Project Implementation

Jarash governorate covers approximately: 515Km², according to the assessment done based on field observation. The governorate was divided into three zones

- Sites located within the ancient city walls / Ancient city (**Fig. 3**);

- Sites located within the ancient city walls / Modern city (**Fig. 4**);
- Sites located outside city walls (in the vicinity of Jarash) (**Fig. 5**);

Based on accessibility, all museums, stores and warehouses belonging to the archaeological departments at Jordanian Universities, archaeological centers and belonging to the Department of Antiquities were visited to locate detached mosaics from Jarash governorate.

All mosaic pavements were uncovered (**Fig. 6**), documented by: photograph, description of their state of conservation and then measured. The detached pieces from Jarash were traced, compared to original photographs or plans, and documented according to current state (**Table 1**).

Building Up the Data-Base

1. The Site Card

Due to the tremendous amount of mosaics identified, the remoteness of their location and the fact that some are located on private property, it was important to develop a site card in order to fill in as much information as possible immediately at the site and in the simplest possible way.

Several versions were made for the site card; they were tested on the ground both for detached mosaics and *in situ* before the adaptation of the final version to be used on a larger scale (**Fig. 7**).

The card (**Fig. 8**) was designed to sustain field information documentation and bibliography, both gathered at the field and from available sources by understanding the following.

Table 1: Showing the distribution of mosaic pavements in Jarash.

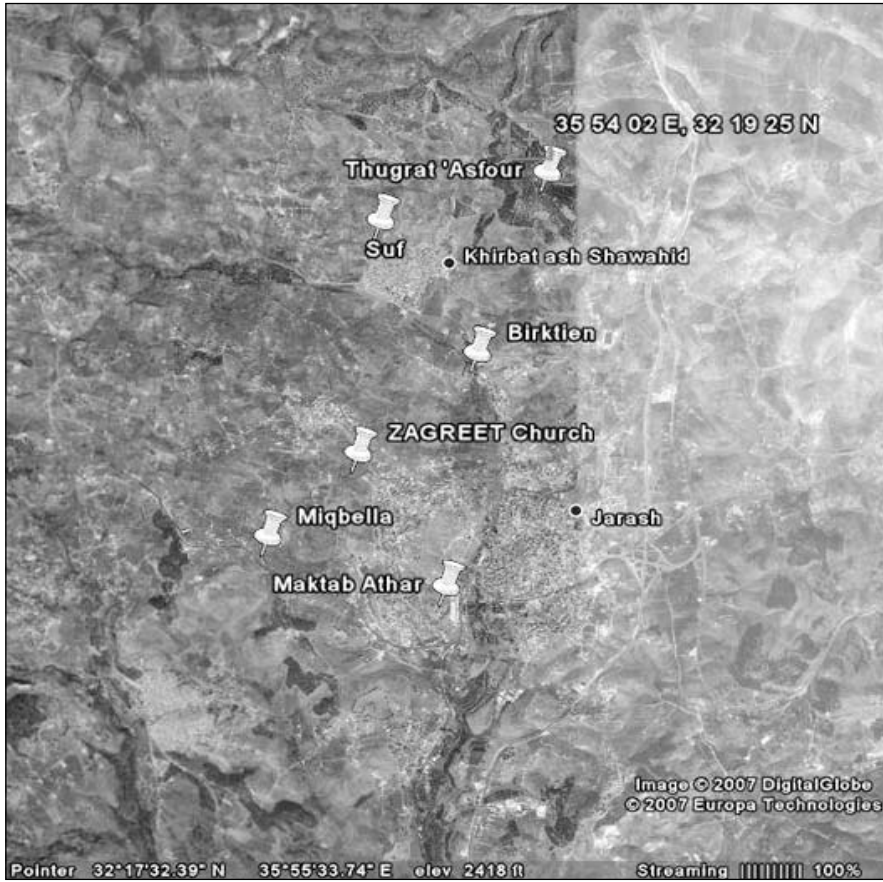
Sites With Mosaics	Within City Walls Inside the Ancient City	17
	Within City Walls Outside the Ancient City	3
	In the Vicinity of Jarash	7
Detached Mosaics	From: Prophets , Apostles and Martyrs Elia, Maria and Sorge John the Baptist Bishop George	118 fragmented pieces
Mosaics outside of Jordan	“Villa of Muses and Poets” partially in Berlin’s Pergamon Museum and partially at the Yale University Art Gallery	2



3. Sites within the City Walls (Google Earth).



4. Sites located within the ancient city walls / Modern city (Google Earth).



5. Sites located outside city walls; (After Google Earth).



6. The Process of Clearing and re-opening the buried Mosaic locations.



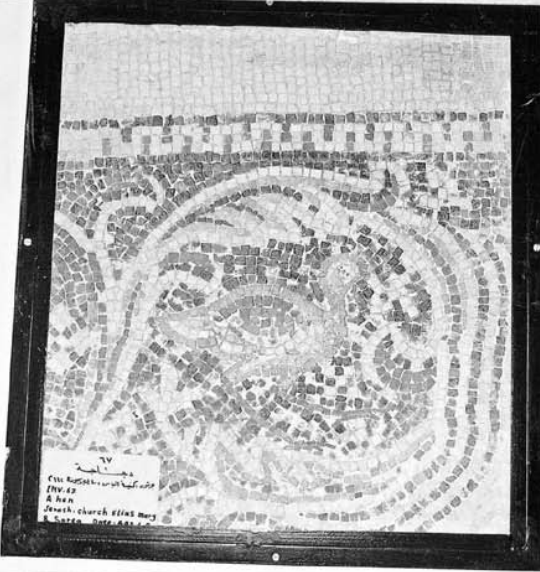
7. Gathering information on the site in order to prepare the site card.

Office Information


Location/ Previous and Current: Cadastral maps were used for reference to mosaic pavement location, due to the fact that: some locations re-lapse with each other, marking them with Similar coordinates and establishing the ownership of the land. For detached mosaics their original location was identified and current location was

mentioned by name, for example the Jordan Museum of Popular Traditions – museum number was added for further detail.

Historical and Archaeological Background: Extracted from available information about discovery date, period, architectural context, bibliography and references. In addition, pre-

بطاقة توثيقية لقطع الأثرية (الفسيفساء)	
المحافظة: <u>جرش</u>	المدينة: <u>جرش</u>
اسم الموقع: <u>الينيا ماريا وسورج</u>	اسم الحي أو الشارع: _____
رقم القطعة: _____	رقم الحوض: _____
الرقم المتسلسل: _____	
	• معلومات حول القطعة: رقم القطعة (حسب سجلات): <u>G1510 (٦٣ قديم)</u> اسم اللوحة الفسيفسائية: <u>دجاجة</u> وصف اللوحة الفسيفسائية: <u>صير (قديكون حياض)</u> محاطة بأدوات من الأثناثوس
	• معلومات تاريخية: الفترة: <input type="checkbox"/> هلنستي <input type="checkbox"/> روماني <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> بيزنطي <input type="checkbox"/> إسلامي حدد: <u>٤٤٤ م</u> مكائنها الأصلي: <input type="checkbox"/> فيلا <input type="checkbox"/> قبر (منفن) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> كنيسة <input type="checkbox"/> جامع <input type="checkbox"/> غير معروف أخرى: _____ الدراسات و المعلومات المتوفرة: _____
	كنيسته <u>الينيا ماريا وسورج / جرش</u> <u>The Mosaics of Jordan, Piccirilli</u> P. 296
	□ اللوحة في موقعها مكائنها الأصلي: _____ (مثال: الحنية ، الممن الأوسط فرقة لشمالية الخ) أبعادها: الطول: _____ العرض: _____ سنة الحفرية: _____ بإشراف: _____ المعلومات المنتشرة حول الحفرية / المتوفرة: _____
□ اللوحة مقتناة سنة الاقتلاع: <u>بحريون</u> مصادرة: _____ موقعها الحالي: <u>مجمع آثار جرش</u> بعمدة: <u>أمينة الحقيقت</u> بموجب: _____ رقم سند الإختال: <u>٥١٥١٥٧٤</u> <input type="checkbox"/> غير معارة <input type="checkbox"/> معارة : جهة الإعارة: _____ رقم سند الإخراج: _____	
أبعادها: طول: <u>٤٧٥</u> عرض: <u>٦٨</u> سماكة: <u>٥,٣</u> قطر: _____ شكل القطعة: <input type="checkbox"/> مستطيل <input type="checkbox"/> مربع <input type="checkbox"/> مثلث <input type="checkbox"/> دائري <input type="checkbox"/> أخرى _____ نوع السند: (يمكن اختيار أكثر من خيار واحد) <input type="checkbox"/> إسمنت <input type="checkbox"/> إسمنت + قضبان حديد <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> إسمنت + شبك حديد <input type="checkbox"/> خشب <input type="checkbox"/> إيرولام <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> إطار حديد <input type="checkbox"/> ملاط جديد <input type="checkbox"/> قماش مع غراء <input type="checkbox"/> أخرى _____ تحتاج إلى ترميم: <input type="checkbox"/> نعم <input type="checkbox"/> لا ملاحظات أخرى: _____	
أعمال ترميم سابقة: السنة: _____ نوعها: _____ تحتاج إلى ترميم جديدة: <input type="checkbox"/> نعم <input type="checkbox"/> لا	
حالة اللوحة: <input type="checkbox"/> وجود ترسبات سطحية ■ طبقة من الشمع (وريش) □ طحالب □ نمو نباتات □ آثار حريق □ تلفتت الحجارة □ ملاح <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> فقدان حجارة □ وجود تشققات □ فجوات □ انتفاخات □ وجود بقع □ فقدان تماسك □ هبوطات □ فقدان ملاط الحواف نوع الترميم المطلوب: <u>معالجة الحوائط وتنظيفها معاً</u>	
الهدف من الترميم: <input type="checkbox"/> فتح الموقع للزيارة □ صيانة دورية □ إعادة اللوحة للموقع ■ عرضها في متحف □ تخزينها في _____ <input type="checkbox"/> أخرى: _____	
اسم منظم البطاقة: _____ التاريخ: <u> / /</u>	

8. The Designed Site Card used in the field. (Overse, Reverse)

المحافظة:	جرش	المدينة:	جرش الحديثة	اسم الموقع:	البلد
رقم القطعة:	100	رقم الحوض:	230	اسم الحي أو الشارع:	البتراء
الرقم المتسلسل 1					
معلومات حول القطعة:					
رقم القطعة (حسب السجلات):	60	صورة للفسيفساء			
اسم اللوحة الفسيفسائية:	الصيد				
وصف اللوحة الفسيفسائية:	صيد بصطاد حيوانا محاط بأوراق الأكانتوس				
معلومات تاريخية:					
الفترة:	روماني				
مكانها الأصلي:	قيلا				
الدراسات والمعلومات المتوفرة					
متوفرة					

9. The Automated Site Card.

vious information about restoration or conservation works if they occurred and were available.

Field Observation

Photograph: Several photographs were taken, basically a general photograph for the site in addition to detailed ones for detailed information of the state of conservation and for specific details.

Description: Each mosaic depiction was described laconically, concentrating on distinguishing features present in each particular pavement.

Inventory Number: Detached mosaics stored at storehouses or displayed at the museum or in an exhibition hall which had an inventory number, registration were recorded on the card, and on the original plan their contour was marked in order to detect all pieces belonging to the same pavement and available, to distinguish them from the lost, deteriorated and degraded pieces.

Dimensions: Each mosaic was measured; two dimensions were taken for the pavements, while three dimensions (including thickness) were taken for detached pieces, in centimeters.

State of Conservation: Assessments of the current mosaic state and documenting the location of the main damage; previous restoration works and recommend future intervention.

For detached mosaics particular attention was given to the support the mosaics were laid upon.

The completed cards were catalogued according to location (Store, Museums, *in situ* ... etc) and were stored at Madaba Mosaic School.

2. Computerized Access Version

The site card developed was converted into a digitalized form using MS- Access program. This was important for protection of the gathered information, accessibility, the possibility of future modification and the ease of adding more sites in the future (Fig. 9).

All collected information was then catalogued into the computerized version of the card, for future analysis. The program was later installed on one of the Madaba Mosaic School computers.

The Results

The work was completed within three years. The basic results were:

1. Full inventory of mosaic pavements, their location, accessibility and ownership;
2. Current condition of the state of conservation for both detached mosaics and *in situ* which will help the department of Antiquities plan future conservation project;

3. Analyze the development of mosaic workshops of Jarash in time, the materials used and the common artistic trends;
4. Mark potential sites that could become major tourist attractions to prolong the stay of tourists and visitors;
5. Provide up to date information for scholars and researchers;
6. Provide information for restorers about: the history of conservation, factors affecting mosaic deterioration and the results of previous restoration works which will help to plan future projects in the area;
7. Document the lost mosaic pieces, and collect and gather the detached mosaic fragments together;
8. Choose better representation of mosaics at exhibitions and museums to provide full information;
9. Provide information for public work and urban planners to better provide infrastructure

for potential tourist sites and to help better protect archaeological sites;

The future aim is to continue the project and be able to do it for all the mosaics of Jordan, publish the results in a new book about the mosaics, exchange this experience with the other countries in the region the outcome of which will be a better understanding of mosaic production history and art in the region.

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