10,000 Years of Art and Culture from Jordan – Faces of the Orient
8 October 2004 – 9 January 2005
Altes Museum, Museumsinsel (Old Museum, Museum's Island) Berlin
8 April 2005 – 21 August 2005
Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn (Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany in Bonn)

Jordan

lies at the crossroads of the oldest civilisations of the world. There as perhaps in no other area fundamental developments in the history of humankind can be observed. The exhibition "10,000 years of art and culture from Jordan - Faces of the Orient" approaches various aspects in the daily life of different cultures, starting with the early Neolithic period and continuing into early Islamic times. For the first time an overview is presented of the results from recent archaeological research conducted by Jordanian scholars as well as German archaeologists, historians, and natural scientists. The results have contributed immensely in enlarging our picture of the cultural history of this region. Together with neighbouring regions, the modern Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has been a turntable for ideas, material goods and peoples since time immemorial. Many and diverse experiences of the past are reflected in the faces of Jordan's people throughout the ages, and it is the endeavour of the exhibition to reveal these aspects to the public.

Faces of 'Ain Ghazal

Dated to the early seventh millennium BC, the figures from 'Ain Ghazal are among the most ancient monumental statues in the world. More than thirty statues are preserved, varying in size from small busts to almost life-sized figures. These unique creations are captivating with their simplicity in form and enigmatic eyes.
The statues were discovered in two pits or "deposits" in houses that had no longer been inhabited in the Neolithic settlement 'Ain Ghazal, located near the modern capital of Jordan, 'Amman. One deposit was in a large, 1.5 x 1.0 m pit, separated by a mere 2.50 metres of earthen layers from the world of today. A second, somewhat later deposit contained similar figures.

Making the Statues of 'Ain Ghazal

The figures and fragments were retrieved together with the surrounding earth, crated and sent to conservation laboratories of the University College of London and the Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC.
The Neolithic artists made the statues by first constructing a reed framework for the separate parts of the body, then joining them with twine, and finally modelling the whole with a light, almost white mixture of burnt limestone and clay.
This indicates that from the outset the figures from 'Ain Ghazal were intended to be in public view. The reed framework of the body protrudes through the plaster covered feet, enabling the figure to be secured to some kind of platform.
The smooth facial features were modelled with great care. The large, wide-spaced eyes, the fine tilted nose and the small mouth without any accentuation of the lips render a unique physiognomy.

The Neolithic Settlement at 'Ain Ghazal

The settlement at 'Ain Ghazal was inhabited between 7300 and 5000 BC. The site covers about 15 hectares, which is unusually large for a Neolithic settlement, and nearly 3000 persons lived there. Settlement remains and other finds, such as architectural elements, graves, stone artefacts, animal bones and burnt cereals have made it possible to reconstruct the daily life of more than one hundred generations of these early farmers.
Traces of temple-like structures were found at different spots in the Neolithic settlement. One small circular structure differed distinctly from the other houses. Its floor was covered with a plaster layer, and there was presumably a large hearth or altar. In another part of the settlement and set apart by a wall were the remains of a two-room building with an altar and a hearth.

Basis of Subsistence

A vivid picture of agriculture, livestock management and use of natural resources can be reconstructed from animal and plant remains recovered in Neolithic settlements.
Ten thousand years ago inhabitants of Jordan lived from gathering wild fruits (pistachios, almonds, figs), and hunting wild animals and birds. Yet, from these early times and onwards the produce gained

from crop cultivation and stock-raising formed an increasingly vital part of subsistence.
Important cultivated plants included cereals (emmer, einkorn, naked wheat, barley), legumes (lentils, peas, bitter vetch, chickpeas) and fibre/oil plants (linseed/flax). Sheep and goats predominated as domestic livestock, while at first pigs and cattle were kept on a small scale.

Man and Environment
The fauna and flora of Jordan was manifold in prehistoric times. Different biotopes coexisted in close proximity: deer and boar lived among the trees and shrubs along wadis; aurochsen roamed the open forest; gazelles and onagers lived from herbs and bushes of the desert steppe; and the ibex and hyrax were at home in the mountains.
A wide range of nutritional and natural resources were at the disposal of humankind. As large settlements emerged hunting and gathering activities were gradually replaced by agriculture: forests were cut down and wood was used as building material and fuel; land was cleared for crops and used for pasturage. A cultural setting developed, in which the natural flora and fauna were gradually depleted.

Large Settlements
After 7600 BC there was a sudden development of large settlements up to 15 hectares in size with complex communities. This rapid growth was promoted by the beginning of animal-raising (sheep and goats), which could graze on the steppe.
After 6900 BC this culture, the so-called Pre-Pottery Neolithic B, collapsed as abruptly as it had begun. Settlements such as Basta and Ba'ja were abandoned; others like 'Ain Ghazal decreased in size. Large parts of the population became semi-nomadic shepherds. Handicrafts and technologies disappeared, and social structures simplified. From that time on the way of life in Jordan was marked by the co-existence of village and shepherd societies. The end of flourishing large settlements can be attributed to various factors: primarily, the overuse of the natural environment around the villages and, perhaps, social conflict.

Emergence of Craftsmanship
The large households in the settlements were basically self-sufficient. Yet, at the same time the first forms of handicrafts made their appearance. "Consumer goods" such as jewellery, flint supplies from Basta and sandstone rings from Ba'ja were produced to meet extra-regional demands. The first standardisation of work processes and early forms of mass production at home and in workshops emerged. The variety of produce indicates a "booming" economy, which was also fostered by the increasing number of people available for work, a result in turn of the continuous growth in population.

Typical Architecture in Ba'ja
The architecture of large settlements consisted of rectangular structures comprising several rooms, which were built like pueblos upon artificially terraced slopes. Due to their location on an incline, the structures were usually divided into levels. Some had two-storeys with up to 4.50 metre high walls. The houses did not have an entrance at the ground level; instead, the interconnected roofs apparently served as pathways as well as entry to the particular units. A house consisted of several rooms arranged around a large courtyard, which were used for storage, kitchen and various tasks. Deceased members of the family were buried beneath the floor within the domestic area. In many cases the dead were sprinkled with red pigment. A remarkable practice of deposition which was presumably connected with the supernatural could be observed in Ba'ja: the occupants hid stone bowls, hammers and axes made especially for this purpose in the walls or under the floors of the house.

Masters of Technology
The Chalcolithic period (or Copper Age) in Jordan (5500 –3600 BC), particularly the late Chalcolithic, was a time of rapid developments and many innovations. There was a notable increase in

settlements, whose size varied between one hectare (as in Abu Snesleh) and thirty hectares (Tuleilat al-Ghassul). Smaller communities consisted of few and simple structures, whereas larger settlements were subdivided into commercial, cultic and pure residential areas.
The basis of subsistence was crop cultivation and stock-raising; hunting played only a minor role.
Copper, after which this period is named, was exploited only at the end of the Copper Age.
Dated between 3800–3400 BC, the settlement Hujayrat al-Ghuzlan near 'Aqaba is noted for the extraordinary depictions of humans and animals impressed into the plaster walls of a building complex.
Next to Wadi Feinan, the major source of copper ores, Hujayrat al-Ghuzlan was an important site for copper ore processing.

The Beginning of Craft Specialisation
During the Chalcolithic period pottery was formed by hand and not made on the potter's wheel. Yet, there was a development from simple vessel forms with elaborate decoration to mostly undecorated vessels with complicated and increasingly standardised forms.
The prerequisite for this kind of specialisation is an excess of people who are not needed for procuring food and who therefore can specialise in crafts.
Specialisation is recognisable in pottery, for example, when an ”ideal” form repeatedly appears in the repertory. This applies to V-shaped bowls of the late Copper Age, which were widely traded and are almost identical in all settlements.

Cult
The accustomed differentiation today between ”daily life” and ”cult” was likely non-existent during the Copper Age. The interrelation of both spheres of life is suggested by large, unusual depictions on the walls of houses in Tuleilat al-Ghassul. The meaning and symbolism behind these frescoes is difficult for us to understand. Yet, they display some similarities with everyday Chalcolithic objects, such as basalt stands, house-shaped urns and prestige items made of metal.
The so-called ”procession of Tuleilat al-Ghassul”, a central scene like the ”star motif”, possibly represents a cultic ceremony that was conducted by humans, some of whom wore masks.
Basalt stands found in houses in northern Jordan were presumably used in cult. The hollow in the upper surface of the stand might have served for burning incense during a domestic cultic practices.

10 000 Years of Copper from Feinan
The copper ore district of Feinan is located 80 km south of the Dead Sea on the eastern rim of Wadi Araba. There copper ores were extracted since the Neolithic period. Feinan was an important source of raw material.
People began to collect the luminous green ores around 8000 BC in order to make beads and powder. These products were well-known in the southern Levant, and green became a popular colour.
Deep mine workings commenced during the Chalcolithic period (c. 4000 BC). Stone implements were used to attack the sandstone and expose the coveted copper ore. In time mining techniques gradually improved: during the Bronze Age mines were dug up to 10 m in depth with chambers and pillar work, in order to meet the great demand for copper.
During the Iron Age there was a technical revolution in mining. This is even mentioned in the Bible (Job 28: 1–11): shafts were worked to depths up to 70 m and supplied with fresh air by air shafts.
”Damnatio ad metalla”: the Romans sentenced Christian martyrs and criminals to work in the mines of Feinan. Copper was exploited during this period until
the 3rd century AD. Later the Mamluks and Ayyubids tried to revive ore exploitation, but with little success.
The copper ore deposits in Feinan are too small to supply modern demands. Therefore, the ancient mines and smelting places were not destroyed by modern mine workings. Thus, this ancient industrial monument is exceptionally well preserved.

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Copper smelting in Feinan

Copper production and trade began in the Near East in the 4th millennium BC.
In Feinan the smelting of copper ores in small crucibles took place within the safety of village communities. Using charcoal with the aid of the wind, temperatures of over 1200° C were reached. The waste products – slag – remained at the smelting site.
Excavations have revealed that 2200 BC copper ore was made into ingots and tools at Khirbet Hamra Ifdan, a small industrial settlement. From there the products were sent to trading markets in the southern Levant.
The presence of 150,000 to 200,000 tons of slag dated to the Early Bronze Age (3600–2000 BC), the Iron Age (after 1000 BC) and the Roman period (turn of the millennium until the 3rd century AD) are substantial evidence of the "industrial" activities in the copper ore district of Feinan. They indicate a production of several thousand tons of metal.
Deciphering of ancient technologies requires team work with archaeologists and natural scientists. The activities of ancient miners and metalworkers can be described by a series of steps:
copper ore ? mining ? raw copper ? further processing (alloying, casting etc.) ? finished product ? trade

The Emergence of Cities

The first urban settlements emerged in Jordan during the Early Bronze Age (c. 3600–2000 BC). They were always defended by fortification walls that enclosed domestic dwellings and public buildings such as temples and palaces. These urban settlements enjoyed the first period of prosperity at the end of the Early Bronze Age. Shortly thereafter most were abandoned in favour of village communities. Following this "non-urban interval" characteristic urban features appeared again in settlements of the Middle Bronze Age (around 2000 BC).
A metropolitan way of life predominated in Jordan until the end of the Late Bronze Age (c. 1200 BC). The architectural character of cities of the Middle and Late Bronze age was distinguished by massive fortifications and monumental buildings such as temples and palaces. Some cities were involved in international trade, as attested by imports from Egypt, Cyprus and Mycenaean Greece as well as by local imitations of such luxury goods.

Khirbet az-Zeiraqun

Khirbat az-Zeiraqun is located in the north of Jordan, 12 km east of Irbid. There, ten years of excavation brought to light a middle-sized urban settlement of the Early Bronze Age. Covering an area of eight hectares, the city was enclosed on three sides by a massive wall with at least three gates; the east side was protected by a steep cliff. A temple district with at least two temples and a circular altar platform was located at the highest part of the settlement. East of this area was a large structure that has been interpreted as a palace; it already displays a subdivision into work and representational tracts. A residential area was excavated on the southern periphery of the city with individual houses separated by streets.

Bab adh-Dhra

One of the first urban-like settlements east of the Jordan appeared in Bab adh-Dhra, which is located on the Lisan peninsula of the Dead Sea. The settlement became well-known after the discovery of an extensive Early Bronze Age cemetery. Shaft graves with multiple burials (up to one hundred persons) were revealed with manifold grave gifts. Among them are many vessels that display great similarity in manufacture; they are hand-made like the common pottery of the Early Bronze Age.
One small but extraordinary female figure with raised arms has a typical Early Bronze Age, two-handled vessel in place of a head. Consequently the figure has been interpreted as a goddess bestowing water.

Pella - Tabaqat Fahl

The expansive hill area of Tabaqat Fahl, ancient Pella, was inhabited for thousands of years. From the

Middle Bronze Age onwards Pella developed into a flourishing community. Located within a hilly region of the fertile Jordan Valley it grew into a local trading place between Syria and the Mediterranean coast during the reurbanisation of eastern Jordan.
In the Late Bronze Age western Jordan became a province of Egypt. Eastern Jordan lay at a distance, which granted it a certain autonomy.
The well-known chest from Pella decorated with Syro-Mesopotamian and Egyptianising motifs clearly reflects popular trends of the local elite during the advanced Bronze Age in the Levant.
Local pottery workshops produced fine wheel-made pottery for local as well as outside demands. The fast rotating potter's wheel offered new possibilities for the use of better qualities of clay and for surface treatment. Production centres of the superb "chocolate-on-white" wares were located in the Jordan Valley.

From City- State to Kingdom
The Iron Age in the regions east and west of the Jordan Valley corresponds to the time of the Old Testament.
The century-long domination of Egyptian pharaohs over city-state structured Palestine was overthrown by the "Sea Peoples", who invaded by land and sea from the Aegean. Afterwards in Iron Age I (1200–1000 BC) "nation" kingdoms developed east of the Jordan, such as Ammon and Moab and later Edom in the south. At the same time the kingdoms of Israel and Judah arose in the west.
An example of the diverse wars among the various nation kingdoms during Iron Age II (1000–520 BC) is provided by the "Mesha stele" or "Moabite stone". It records the victory of the Moabites over the Israelites. Like the "Bileam inscription" from Tell Deir 'Alla, this text illustrates the closely related religious concepts that predominated in Palestine at that time. In the 8th century BC the entire region came under the direct influence of the Mesopotamian empires, first the Assyrians and later the Babylonians. Jerusalem was destroyed in 587 BC, as vividly described in the Old Testament. After the end of the 6th century BC (Iron Age III) the Persians assumed power over the region.

Writing in the Iron Age
A surprisingly rich tradition in writing was brought to light in Syro-Palestine during the past hundred years. Discoveries revealed that numerous writing systems had been invented there during the second millennium BC; scripts were also borrowed from other regions, for example the cuneiform script. It was in this area that the paramount step was taken from complicated writing systems using several hundreds of signs to the most simple system imaginable: the alphabetic script with about twenty letters.
Like ancient Hebrew, the Ammonite and Moabite languages and scripts belong to one family, the west Semitic languages. Hence, some inscriptions on exhibit here, such as the Mesha stele (Moabite stone), the short inscription on the bronze flask from Tell Siran as well as the Bileam inscription are actually related.

Iron Age Ceramics
In eastern Jordan most pottery was made on the rapidly rotating or "fast" potter's wheel. Clay was exploited and processed using methods similar to those of the Middle and Late Bronze Ages. However, with regard to form, surface treatment, painting and decoration, the skill and artistic level were less progressed than that of the artistic productions of earlier epochs. Among the "highlights" of Early Iron Age ceramic manufacture are the over-sized clay sarcophagi with anthropomorphic covers. The connection with Egypt is obvious. Other exceptional objects were also produced especially for cultic and representative purposes.

Cult in the Iron Age
During the Iron Age in eastern Jordan, the inhabitants worshipped "national" deities: in the kingdom of Ammon, the god Milcom; in Moab, the god Kemosh; in Edom, the god Qos.
These deities maintained a similar position in the respective kingdoms just as the god Yahweh of the

Old Testament in Israel and Judah: they were a warrant for the ruling dynasties and their kingdoms. Deities were worshipped in temples in the royal houses and in other places, mostly open cult sites located on high points.
The Mesha stele or Moabite stone provides insight into religion of its time: the Moabites interpreted the military threat of their enemies as a sign of wrath from their god, the lessening of the threat – in turn – as his renewed clemency towards them. Armed conflicts occurred at god's command. The ban could be placed upon the slain enemies, who were offered to the victorious god: "I fought the city (Nebo) ... and slew the entire population ... as a performance for Kemosh and for Moab".
Besides the state gods, families privately worshipped other deities, such as Ashera, Astarte, Ba'al and El, in whom they entrusted their welfare. Prophets were well-known in Palestine, as documented by the inscriptions of the prophet Bileam, son of Beor. Bileam is described in the Old Testament as living in the border area between Israel and Moab (Num. 22, 1–24, 25).

The Cities of the Decapolis
Most of the cities of the so-called Decapolis (in Greek: deka = ten and polis = free city) emerged after the conquests of Alexander the Great (334-323 BC). Founded upon the site of earlier settlements, the new cities carried Greek names, for example, Philadelphia on the site of Rabbat Ammon (modern 'Amman). The culture and urban life in the Decapolis distinguished the process of Hellenisation in the region east of the Jordan river, which was for the population at that time part of Syria (koile Syria). The designation "Decapolis" came into use only later during the 1st century AD. It primarily denoted the particular city as belonging to the Greek-Roman cultural sphere with a limited amount of autonomy, not a union of free cities.
The cities of the Decapolis first progressed after the incorporation of the region into the Roman Empire and connection with the Roman trade network with larger cities. The development was enhanced by the construction of the Via Nova Traiana (111–114 AD), which extended from the Gulf of 'Aqaba to Syria.

Memorial Portraits
Despite the process of Hellenisation, a certain local element persevered in the communities of the Decapolis. Besides Greek, Roman and Macedonian emigrants, the majority of population was indigenous. Family members were still given Arabic or Aramaic names, seldom Greek names. However, the smelting of cultures is particularly recognisable in memorial portraits. These depictions were placed in underground, in many cases extensive grave complexes in commemoration of the deceased. On anniversaries families visited the graves to venerate their deceased ancestors. Some of the locally produced heads and busts clearly display Roman influence, while others are more stylised following local traditions.

A Dionysian Mosaic from Gerasa
During the construction of a house in the eastern section of present-day Jerash, a mosaic floor from the Roman period was discovered.
Some parts of the mosaic were taken to Orange, Texas (USA), the rest of the mosaic is now in the Antikensammlung (Antiquities Collection) of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.
The mosaic once adorned the floor of a banquet hall. Its central motifs deal with episodes of the Dionysos' myth and scenes from the theatre. They are surrounded by a frieze, parts of which are exhibited here. Cupids are depicted in the frieze, flanked by portraits of the muses and representatives of arts and sciences: the poet Homer, the muse Clio and the historian Thucydides. Three connecting sections of the frieze show some of the attendants of the god Dionysos with the drunken Heracles.
In view of the references to Greek mythology and culture in the mosaic, the person who contracted its production apparently wished to affirm his position within the local educated level of society marked by a Greek-Roman background.

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The Nabataeans: Wealth through Trade
The Nabataeans appeared in Greek written sources around 300 BC as a nomadic Arab tribe, which traded in frankincense from southern Arabia. In about 100 BC they began sedentary life in Petra in southern Jordan. The Nabataeans controlled an area with many overland routes leading from the Sinai Peninsula to Damascus as well as northern Saudi Arabia. On the periphery of the Mediterranean world, the Nabataean kingdom became a "client state" of the Roman Empire in 63 BC, and in 106 AD the Roman province Arabia.
Archaeological and written sources demonstrate that the Nabataeans were open to Greek and Roman culture, while maintaining their ancient Arabian traditions. In religious practices, the gods of the Nabataeans had human forms and carried Greek names, which also designated ancient Arabian deities. Local deities were worshipped in the form of a stone slab, a so-called "betyl" or "house of god". The stone was marked by a very abstract rendering of the particular god's face or it was left plain.
The Nabataeans created an individual style, a kind of "Near Eastern Hellenism" that can be observed foremost in Nabataean architecture and the extremely thin-walled pottery.

Water: Blessing and Curse
Upon every step visitors in Petra encounter the remains of well-planned canals, cisterns, aqueducts, distributor systems and dams. A system of aqueducts conducted water from four natural sources in the north, east and south, which provided Petra's 30,000 inhabitants with an extensive and for the region comparably abundant supply of water. The supply of springwater by means of aqueducts was augmented with systems for collecting rainwater, including dam barriers, collection basins hewn into the rock walls, settling basins and cisterns. Besides sudden heavy rains in the fall and winter, Petra's climate also holds the danger of flashfloods. Water engineers in Antiquity countered this threat by constructing a dam up to 8 m in height and a 90 m long tunnel that diverted the massive flow of water into neighbouring wadis, where it could be collected for further use. Essential for the survival of the Nabataean kingdom in an arid landscape, water management in Petra was extremely high level. It is indeed illustrative of the sense of responsibility and care with which the "Blue Gold" of Arabia was approached.

A Stucco Ceiling from Petra
During excavations in 2002 outside the enclosure wall of the southern entrance to the "Great Temple", a 60 cm thick layer containing fragments of stucco and frescos was discovered in an adjacent room, 3.50 x 3.80 m in size. Seen in relationship to the entire Temple complex, the room might have served as a small audience hall. In May 2004 the reconstruction of the entire ceiling, comprising over 10,000 single pieces, and remains of the original colours was completed. Following restoration, the ceiling fragments were mounted upon a framework.
In the centre of the stucco-ceiling is a circular medallion with an eight-leafed acanthus rosette and surrounded by sixteen cassettes. A frame of rectangular cassettes encircles the central motif. The cassettes are ornamented with stucco-appliques of vines with clusters of grapes.
A moulding supported by consoles leads to the walls. The colours are characteristically sparse, held in blue and red, which stand out distinctly against the white stucco background.
Comparisons with the palaces of Herod the Great in Masada and Jericho indicate that the ceiling should be dated to the last quarter of the first century BC.

Petra: Colonnaded Street
The Colonnaded Street was a central feature of the city of Petra. Entering the city from the Siq, one encountered the Nymphaeum and then the Street occupied by shops and market places.
Directly adjoining is the expansive temple area, in which the North Temple ("Winged Lion" Temple, 25/26 or 28/29 AD) and the South Temple ("Great Temple", late 1st century AD) are located. The Colonnaded Street terminates at the Temenos (sacred area) of Qasr Bint Fir'un ("Castle of the Daughter of the Pharaoh", 2nd half of the 1st century BC or beginning of 1st century AD). Entrance is through the main gateway with three arches. Little is known about the Nabataean deities worshipped

there and in other temples.
The area of the "Royal Graves" with their extraordinary rock-hewn architectural facades extends alomg the imposing mountain slope Jabal al-Khubtha, east of the city.

Legacy of the Rocks
In the basalt desert between Damascus and northern Saudi Arabia thousands of inscriptions were found on the rocks, many with engraved depictions. Numerous examples were also found in Jordan. The inscriptions date from the 2nd century BC to the 3rd century AD. Although their contents are varied, they are distinguished by a certain repetition of themes. These include identification with a tribe and its origin, tribal conflicts, and entreaties to gods for support in daily life and in hunting. Some drawings depict tribal festivities and dance scenes. Camels are a frequent theme, camels being the main animals in herds and an important means of transport on the incense trade route through desert regions.
The inscriptions are composed in a northern Arabic dialect written in Thamudian and Safaite scripts. Although similar in form, the scripts have developed their own distinct features over centuries of use. The Bedouin inscriptions and drawings are one of the few sources of information about Arabian tribes prior to the emergence of the Christian and Islamic religions.

Christianity in the Orient
The transition from the Late Roman Empire to the early medieval period (4th– 7th centuries AD) was a time of wealth and prosperity in Jordan. Never before had the country been so densely populated. Forts of the limes Arabicus guarded the country against plundering raids by the Sasanians and desert nomads.
Since the time of Constantine the Great (306–337 AD) Christianity played an increasingly important role in the area east of the Jordan Valley. This development profited from the presence of pilgrims in the Holy Land, especially following the visit of the Emperor's mother Helena in Jerusalem (326 AD). Mention is made in pilgrims' reports of c. 20 bishoprics in Jordan, whereby Christian communities were already present there before the reign of Constantine. Many places are referred to in the Bible, such as the mountain of Moses.
Numerous churches were built in bishoprics and other sites, for example, 17 churches in Jerash and 11 in Madaba. Like the previous donators of Roman bath complexes and temples in earlier times, wealthy city inhabitants now provided for churches and their furnishings. Thereby, ancient monuments were regularly exploited as a source of stone. The magnificent avenues of the Roman period were often built over and public spaces diminished. By contrast, mostly basilica-type churches developed in size, some becoming large complexes with chapels and inner courtyards, which also served as hostels for pilgrims.
While in the west the Roman Empire fought for its very existence during the Migration period, in the east Roman traditions united with Christianity were to initiate the Byzantine culture of the Orient.

The Madaba Map
Floor mosaics in Jordanian churches of the 4th–7th centuries AD carried forth Roman traditions. Prototypes from late Antiquity were used that corresponded to Christian concepts. An extraordinary example of Jordanian church mosaics is the map from Madaba, a bishop's seat in the Byzantine period.
The map, a mosaic carpet, was made in 542–570 AD. Originally it covered an area of 7 x 21 metres. The remains of the mosaic were discovered in 1884, when the church was cleared for a new church building.
The preserved mosaic map shows the Holy Land, the Dead Sea as well as the Nile delta. Some 150 cities and villages are located and named. The perspective is unusual: an aerial view towards the east of the Holy Land. The Jordan River, which flows into the Dead Sea, proceeds from left to right. Jerusalem as Biblical and Christian centre is the most prominent site. It is shown in a larger scale, allowing individual buildings such as the Church of the Sepulchre and the Colonnaded Street to be

shown in greater detail. The Madaba mosaic was commissioned by the local clergy. It was meant to provide visiting pilgrims with an impression of historical Christian sites in the Holy Land.
The mosaic-map of Madaba. Madaba, Church of St. George. 6 th cent. AD

Religious Art
Christians buried their dead with grave goods that carry Christian symbols and display a high level of craftsmanship.
Near Khirbet Yagouz east of Amman a Christian cemetery was discovered dating to the 5th–6th centuries AD. The graves were hewn into the local limestone or built with limestone blocks. They were furnished with candle holders, oil lamps, a few graves contained gold jewellery and – in addition – various glass vessels. The glass vessels of varying hues originally held fragrant essences. The vessels were made in the usual method with a glass mould or they were blown.
Archaeological finds attest the presence of glass windows in the churches in Jordan at that time. Other furnishings of the churches included book covers decorated with ivory and reliquaries that were preserved beneath the altar. Church interiors were embellished with mosaic floors and column capitals with traditional but also new motifs, for example, representations of saints.

The Muslim Masters of the Desert
The Islamic conquest of present-day Jordan occurred soon after the death of the Prophet Mohammed (632 AD). Shortly thereafter the first Islamic dynasty, the Umayyads, emerged, who made Damascus their capital and thereby shifted the centre of power to Syria, Lebanon and Jordan for the next hundred years (until 750 AD).
Christian elements continued to prevail in Jordan, also in the economy and administration. After 700 AD mosques were built as the centre of new residential and commercial areas. Work began on a new governor's palace on the citadel in <Amman. Yet, only after decades did the new empire acquire its own identity. Under the Umayyad Caliph Abd al-Malik (685–705 AD) Arabic was made the administrative language, and the empire minted its own gold and silver coins. Some coins depict the caliph still dressed in Bedouin clothing with a sword. Later Islamic iconoclasm gradually prevailed, and even coins carried only the Islamic creed and quotes from the Koran.

The "Desert Palaces"
So-called "desert palaces" of the Umayyad period, structures of different architectural types, often with a fortress-like character, are found foremost in Jordan. Their function has long been a matter of debate, yet meanwhile they are considered as representative building style of that period. "Desert palaces" served, among others, as administrative buildings, as control points on important trade routes and as residences, two examples being Qasr Mshatta and the small villa at al-Fudain (Mafraq). It is quite possible that "desert palaces" were an impressive support to the Umayyads in their diplomatic relations with the powerful Arabian Bedouin tribes.
Located east of 'Amman, Qusayr 'Amra is one of the most magnificent palaces and renowned for its wall and ceiling frescoes with bathing, hunting and dance scenes as well as scenes of work carried out in a desert palace. Built in 705–715, it is attributed to al-Walid, the architect of the Great Mosque in Damascus. According to the Arabian and Greek captions, one famous fresco in the palace depicts the enthroned caliph shown hommage by six contemporary rulers, among them Basileus of Byzantium. This scene in particular emphasises the self-esteem felt by Umayyad rulers after their decade-long conquest of lands from Spain to the Hindu Kush. As a whole the frescoes in Qusayr 'Amra generate the impression that the new rulers adopted the lifestyle and tastes as well as the desire for power from their Byzantine predecessors.

Umayyad Life in Qusayr 'Amra and al-Fudain
The bathhouse in Qusayr 'Amra was the centre of a larger complex of buildings. It was also part of the Umayyad settlement politics in the region between 'Amman and Azraq.
Byzantine and Sasanian craftsmen played a significant role in the magnificent structures of the

Umayyads. Some of their work is preserved in the vault of the audience hall (see installation). Umayyad paintings (Qusayr'Amra) and relief art (Azraq and Mshatta) are dominated by late Roman and Sasanian pictorial motifs.
Located on the route from 'Amman to Damascus, al-Fudain was the country estate of a member of the extended Umayyad family. The impressive hoard discovered there is illustrative of the objects used in an aristocratic household at that time. An elaborate brazier, originally mounted on wheels, is decorated with imitations of the arcade architecture on late Roman sarcophagi and with motifs from the Dionysos myth.

Archaeology- from Adventure to Study
"...calling forth the past into the present and pursuing diligently all traces of ancient times..."
Gustaf Dalmann
During the first half of the nineteenth century reports and descriptions by European visitors of the ruins and antiquities east of the Jordan River began to appear. In 1806 **Ulrich Jasper Seetzen** travelled through Syria to northeastern Jordan by contract to Duke Ernst of Sachsen-Gotha. At that time Seetzen was able to identify two of the ancient cities of the Decapolis, Gadara (Umm Qais) and Gerasa (Jerash). Six years later in 1812 the Swiss **Johann Ludwig Burckardt** (1784–1817), disguised as a Bedouin, was the first European to enter the Nabataean city of Petra. The lithographs and wood engravings of Count **Léon de Laborde** (published in 1830) as well as the drawings and aquarelles of the Englishman **David Roberts** (who arrived in Jordan in 1839) contributed greatly to making the Nabataean city known in Europe, befitting at that time for the romantic search for the ruins of the ancient past. Likewise in 1839 **Heinrich Kiepert**, cartographer from Berlin, produced the first topographic map of Palestine and countries bordering to the south. His later study travels through eastern Jordan in 1870 can be followed quite well with the aid of his annotated sketch book and maps.
Research on antiquities in Jordan of today received great impetus through the foundation of the Deutsche Evangelische Institut für Altertumswissenschaft des Heiligen Landes (German Protestant Institute of the Ancient History of the Holy Land) in 1900. The establishment was initiated by travels of the German Kaiser Wilhelm II, an enthusiast for archaeology and the Orient, in the Near East in 1898. In 1903 **Gustaf Dalman** was appointed as the first director of the Institute, which was then located in Jerusalem.
As early as 1886 the German engineer **Gottlieb Schumacher** had visited the ancient city Gadara, while surveying for the planned railroad route from Der'a (southern Syria) to Haifa. The results of his topographic investigations formed the basis for the presence of German research in the ancient city, a presence that still continues today.
A drastic interruption in the history of research in eastern Jordan came with the Israeli occupation of east Jerusalem and west Jordan in 1967 during the so-called "Six-Days' War". Like many other research institutions, the German Protestant Institute founded an affiliate establishment in <Amman, made possible by the generous contribution from the Volkswagen Foundation.
Among the excavations and research that have been conducted since 1967, many in cooperation with Jordanian colleagues, are recent investigations in the Early Bronze Age city Khirbet az-Zeiraqun and excavations in Hujayrat al-Ghuzlan near the coastal city of <Aqaba. These were financed to great extent by the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft). Thanks to the support from the German Foreign Office a small museum was set up in a late Ottoman complex in Umm Qais (Gadara).
Further, a German-Jordanian initiative led to the installation of a museum within the Archaeological Institute of Yarmouk University, Irbid. Through the cooperative efforts of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ, or German Society for Technical Cooperation) together with the Jordan Department of Antiquities a centre for conservation and restoration work was established in Petra in 1993–2002.