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**Heritage Resources Interpretation in the
Guide Books: Content and Context Analysis
of Jarash Travel related Guide Books**

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Abstract

This article attempted to explore the image representations and interpretation of the cultural resources of the heritage site of Jarash in guide books by analyzing the contents and heritage themes of a four guide books; information sources—lonely planet, *Guide bleu*, Jarash, and visitors' Guide - Jordan. Qualitative approach (text mining and expert judgment) was used to content-analyze the narrative, visual, images, itineraries and maps information on the sampled guide books. Qualitative thematic and quantitative pictorial analysis demonstrates that the examined guides are archeological and monumental descriptive centered guides. In addition, it is found that there is an influential relationship between local national and international guides' producers in terms of information presentation. The analysis of the themes and accompanying photographs reveal an emphasis on Jarash's golden era and limited to western sector of the site. In this regard the analysis conclude that these guide books interpret only major archeological monuments, ancient historic periods and excluding, cultural aspects, life modes of the locals in the modern city.

Key words: Guide books, interpretation, themes, Jarash

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Introduction

The city of Jarash, founded in the 4th century BC, became an important outpost of the Roman Empire and was graced with several fine buildings. Substantial remains of these buildings survive in the archaeological site, located in a fertile agricultural area (see figure 1). It was later to become one of the Decapolis cities, an important Roman league (Browning, 1982). It is one of the richest sites of this period in Jordan. The first description of the site was written by a German traveler Seetzen in 1812. Jarash is also of exceptional significance by virtue of the fact that it demonstrates the development and the interface of Roman and indigenous cultures. Today, Jarash boasts an ethnically diverse population, and the majority consists of Muslims and Arabs along with a number of Christians, and Circassians. A feature of heritage resources is that the city contains a range of cultural assets and ecosystems. However the heritage of the city is not limited to the archaeological site. It encompasses a rich legacy of widely appreciated heritage features, both natural and physical built environment. They range from dominant landscape features, like mountains and valleys, through to natural reserves, traditional buildings, traditions and life styles inherited from former generations. It is a famous Jordanian tourist attraction that thousands come to visit every year.

Since 1924, the Department of Antiquities of Jordan (DoA) has been involved with sites exploration and conservation management planning through research efforts, professional training courses, symposia, and field projects. As an extension of this commitment, and associated with a related research and publication effort on facilitating access to heritage, the DoA has led an effort with several institutions, agencies, and ministries like Ministry of Tourism (MOTA) and Jordanian tourism board (JTB), as a result, a series to produce and make available of necessary information about cultural heritage sites in Jordan. In addition, the ministry is implementing the protection and promotion of cultural heritage in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan through different joint projects with World Bank, US agency for international development (USAID), national and international travel agents. The aim is to maximize the benefit to locals from the opportunities presented by the tourism sector and contribute to sites development (see figure 2).

Jordanian cultural heritage is not valorized fully from the perspective of tourism development. The local tourism has been developed on archaeological sites like Petra and Jarash. However Jordan deserves to be a leading destination for cultural heritage tourism. Policymakers focused on the tourism revenues more than other aspects of the sites based tourism valorization. The current increase of interest in the heritage tourism has led to an increase in the number of tourists visiting heritage sites and resources all over the country. This increase should imply changes in the interpretation practice of heritage sites if sites want to be presented and communicated to the public and also developed as tourist attractions.

This paper draws on literature from the disciplines of heritage interpretation, archaeological sites management to heritage tourism. It analyzes local site's brochure (Jarash), national guide book (Jordan visitor's guide) and two selected international guide books (the *guide Bleu: Jordanie*, the guide Lonely planet: *La Jordanie*) for the city of Jarash. This study examines place portrayals and the way they are presented for visitors through an analysis of tourist guidebook contents. A content analysis of four guidebooks for Jarash shows the thematic orientation and spatial distribution of attractions and services according to their editors. A guidebook reflects the viewpoints and interests of both its author or editor, and the audience for which it is written.

Literature review

The importance of the interpretive medium has been an area of researchers' interest for more than 50 years since the beginning of the modern discipline of heritage interpretation. Printed material as brochures has received little attention of researchers (Moscardo 1999). Tourists obtain information and images about tourist destination from a wide spectrum of information sources, including Internet, guide books and brochures. Researchers demonstrate the importance of the guide books for both travelling and representing touristic resources. The role of the guide books in heritage interpretation is providing information and they are considered as souvenir of the visited site (Humphry 2006). According to Suzuki & Wakabayashi (2005) *'Tourist guidebooks are one of the most widely used media for traveling anywhere outside one's familiar place, containing multiple representational styles such as maps, photos and linguistic descriptions'*. Lew (1991) points out that guide books are a mean to *'shape the expectations, but also the destination behavior of tourists as they seek to create a restorative experience'*. Koshar (1998) describes guide books as an important element of tourism infrastructure. Guide books are essential for travelers, particularly for non organized tours. They offer up - dated information on the culture, society, environment, religion, history, and language of a destination, moreover about accommodation, where to go, where to eat and other practical information. McGregor (2000) demonstrates that guidebooks open up foreign destinations by providing information on their accessibility and attractiveness while also structuring the way we travel.

The National trust of Australia & Museums Australia (2007) describes guide books, leaflets brochures as an important part of interpretation programs for self guided tour. According to U.S.D.A., Pacific Northwest Region & Edwards (1994) interpretation is *'a form of communication that goes beyond facts to reveal what things mean, how they fit together and why they matter. Interpretive projects are the physical ways we go about interpreting; the books, brochures, signs, models, tapes, pictures - whatever works'*. Te Papa (2005) states that publication is a way of non personal interpretation *'Self-guided interpretation means non-personal delivery. Panels and displays, audio, audio-visual, multimedia, art and sculpture, and publications are used to deliver interpretation messages to visitors instead of people'*. The publications are a good and effective way to convey and practice many functions including welcoming tourists, providing messages to visitors, guiding people safely through sites, and presenting information on site features. Written material like guide books and brochures have some advantages as interpretive medium: they are available on both on - site and off - site (Aplin, 2002), and in different international languages (Dallen & Boyd, 2003), they some times include texts, photographs, maps, and graphics that can communicate a great deal of information. In addition, guide books could be available at different places (tourism offices, tourist sites, universities, post offices, municipalities, bus terminals, restaurants, malls, libraries) and distributed free with entry tickets. Guide books texts are a way to interpret history, image and experience of a destination.

However, guide books as part of the interpretation process need to be elaborated in a manner that illustrates a well understanding of the site and its values. Comprehension of sites' values includes a thorough analysis of the heritage features both tangible and intangible. Accordingly, printed materials should be a reflection of the realities of both modern and old traditions. According to the ICOMOS charter for the

interpretation and presentation of cultural heritage sites, ratified by the 16th General Assembly of ICOMOS, Québec (Canada), on 4 October 2008: *'Interpretation should explore the significance of a site in its multi - faceted historical, political, spiritual, and artistic contexts. It should consider all aspects of the site's cultural, social, and environmental significance and values'*. Research on guide books from heritage interpretation perspective in Jordan and specifically about the site of Jarash is not existent according to the knowledge of the researcher.

Reading and analysis of the written guides

We make the analysis of four tourist guide books, the intention of this analysis is to handle the various themes exposed and explained by this kind of work: history, geography, cities and region, accommodation, accessibility, practical information, routes. The method chosen will thus be to rise systematically on everything regarding the majority and generality of the guides. Our focus is on the section of the guide dedicated to the site or the city of Jarash, by enlightening places and resources of the city in the body of the text or represented by a graphic document. The choice of the French version of the international analyzed guide books (Guide Bleu, Lonely Planet guide) is determined by the existence of the researcher in France. On the other hand, the choice of the other guides is determined during the field study in Jarash. For the needs of this method we established an index card - turntable for every tourist guide book (see table 1), on this index card-table are raised several information and criteria of evaluation concerning the text, the image, the plan (map) or other techniques of presentation (display) of the site.

Reading and analysis of the *Guide bleu* (blue guide)

This guide is the edition of *Hachette* / Tourism for year 2006 printed in Italy (French version), of 320 pages includes practical information; the history of Jordan and main sites among which thirty three maps, plans and hundred illustrations. Of format 13 cms x 19 cms in blue color, the cover is with a panoramic photo of the facade of Petra's Monastery with a content based on six big chapters (discover, leave, to stay, to understand, to visit and to know more about it). Through these chapters the travel guide book presents Jordan culturally and historically and gives practical and necessary information for the tourists. The guide book proposes various routes to visit the tourist and archaeological attractions as well as the natural sites of interest.

The blue guide dedicates fifteen pages for the site of Jarash, being a part of the section Amman and the North. It adopts a system of hierarchy of star by attributing (awarding) three stars to monuments and sites of maximal interest and a star for sites and monuments of minimal interest, while the guide attributes (awards) three stars for the whole site of Jarash. The part dedicated to Jarash begins with an introduction on the site under instructions for use, after the history; it proposes the visit of the site by describing the main monuments. This part also includes the neighborhood of the site and doesn't contain any colored photo of the site but it includes a map of the north of Jordan, and some drawings in black ink. Fifteen monuments appear there as well as plan of *macelleum* and typical plan of a Roman Theater followed by a reconstruction drawing of the sanctuary of Zeus between the Forum and the south theater.

Reading and analysis of the guide lonely planet: Jordan

This guide is among collections, known as "practical", because it is conceived for those who travel by their own means (not organized individual journeys), moreover, not systematically in the range limited to the budget or the backpacker style. This guide book contains obviously most addresses and information (accommodation, transport). This Australian edition is the equivalent of the guide of French backpacker (*le guide du Routard*). This kind of guide adapts itself to the tourists fascinated by individual discoveries, curious, active, and worried of approaching basic problems, which leave in search of people and of their culture. This guide is conceived to cover all the themes of travel of Jordanian tourist resources; it offers routes for a detailed discovery of Petra, indispensable practical information to succeed treks and natural visits of the overdrifts, camps in the desert, addresses for all the envy. Pages introduces on the environment, the history, the culture and the gastronomy and detailed plans of all the sites to be visited.

It dedicates six pages for the site of Jarash; the description of the site and the practical information are limited to the western archeological sector as well as the five photos in this guide. This guide, by its tour excludes any mention of the modern city and its cultural and natural wealth. What concerns the history of the site is descriptive and chronological. Certain practical information is a source of confusion for the tourists; the guide advises the visitors to visit the site very early in the morning or late after 4:00 pm, whereas the site closes in winter at this time, another problem is the movement towards the other cities after this hour is very random (unpredictable). The advantage of this guide is its site map; this plan is the only one which is updated, but the defect of this plan is that it focused on the western sector as the other available plans in the other guide books.

Reading of the brochure of Jarash

This brochure is published by the Jordan Tourism Board, dedicated entirely to the archaeological site of Jarash, of format twelve pages broadside, very flexible. It is available at the visitor center of Jarash as well as other visitor centers in Jordan. However it is also available in several languages French, English, Spanish, Arabic and German. All language versions do not make difference of content except for the version in Arabic; this version is different in style, in shape; it does not contain the same photographic illustrations or the maps of the site. Other difference, it is also the only version which dedicates part of its content to the city of Ajloun. We believe that the reason is Jordanian-Arab visitors do not have the same cultural interests as the foreign visitors. The site of Ajloun which is near Jarash is in a green setting. This setting attracts the Arabic and Jordanian visitors to take advantage of natural landscapes. The versions in Arabic and Europeans languages are on both sides, the cover page contains the photo of the oval plaza in profile, the title of unfolding (Jarash) at the top of the page, and it contains other information as the web site and coordinates of MOTA on the English copy, but the French copy has only the web site address.

On the first side of this brochure is a fast description of the archaeological monuments of the western archaeological part of the site which follows an introduction (walk in the history). The description is centered on the date of the construction, the function and the location of monuments accompanied with an image

of the monument. Twenty eight monuments and the museum are decrypted. At the bottom of the brochure is some practical information such as the indication of opening hours and major restaurants of the city. The back page of quoted first side illustrating the site map; very simple, represents the monuments of a part of the city, the used plan is without the wall of the city. The map doesn't illustrate any kind of physical modern infrastructures and services, the historic center and the modern city does not exist on the plan, neither contained in the illustrated photographs (see figure 3).

The plan of Jarash is with a legend of twenty eight monuments. In reverse, a text which describes the history of the city with several sections like the golden age, forgotten but not disappeared, another descriptive section about the festival. We find another section which is dedicated to the accessibility to the site and the means to go there, and then we find the taxi, the car and the public transport in so much means to reach the city.

Reading of the guide Jordan; visitor's guides

This guide is Jordan Tourism Board's work. The model of the cover page presents the watermarked photo of Petra's facade, a dromedary, the name of Jordan in watermarked Arab. The cover wears another five photos of Jordan of which no photo is among them of Jarash. The date of the publication of this guide is 2005. It is a general guide addressed for all tourists and covers all attractions in Jordan, of format A 4. It has forty four pages which attempt to give a global idea of the main centers of interest of Jordan. The guide does not have a table of contents. However, it is structured in thirteen big parts, and twelve parts have description of attractions based on region, while the thirteenth part is of general information of all Jordan (culinary specialties, the language, health, distance, clothing, accommodation, telecommunication, addresses and important telephone numbers). Thirty pages are dedicated to sites and tourist areas of which Amman and its proximities take advantage of nine pages, Petra of three pages, on the other hand Jarash, Ajloun and Umm El Jimmal were a member of a region on two pages. Other pages have data on the Dead Sea, the Jordan valley, Dana, Wadi Rum, Aqaba, the Castles of the Desert, Irbid and Umm Qais.

The part dedicated to Jarash is on a page and quarter approximately, the text is providing general information, a historic description of Jarash, a brief of the festival, what it is necessary to visit and practical information about accommodation, food and beverage and how to go to it. Also it contains seven photos: three photos are for the shows (entertainments) of the festival in the south theater of the site, three photos for the monuments of the site (terraces of the south theater, the cardo maximus, the oval plaza), at the bottom of the page, is the seventh photo of a woman dressed in traditional. This part does not recognize the eastern part of the site neither the modern city nor its attractions. This guide book does not include the site map but it illustrates at the end of the guide the map of Jordan with sixteen tourist cities.

Results

Having reviewed and analyzed all of these guides by focusing essentially on the general presentation (display) of Jarash, some important points are revealed; in terms of visual order: there is a dominance of the archeological site (western sector) in these works, the oval plaza of the site is the cliché picture the most crossed (the most gone through) by these guide books. But the point the most important to underline is the cultural heritage out side the archeological site in the western sector, which is not

identified as such and thus is not presented. When we are interested more in the contents of these guides, in particular in the tourist routes which they propose (Guide Blue, Lonely planet, Brochure of the site), it is noticed that in the same way no one is specifically dedicated to the heritage of eastern sector as antique or modern part of the city, it is noticed through the plan dumped by the site which eliminates systematically the resources of this sector. This study shows a considerable focus on the partial historic, cultural and the geographic aspect of the city. Important positive points to underline are the availability and distribution of local guide books in different places in Jordan, tourist can find them at the airport and other border cross points, further more in hotels, restaurants, visitor centers and travel agencies. Jordanian brochures are introduced in different international languages, in English, French, Germany, Italian, Spanish and Arabic. The positive points are worth noting because they have a major role in facilitating the cultural accessibility of visitors.

In summary, reading these guides gave rise of synthesis summary which reports the way in which the four guides present and interpret the site in its totality. More over the analysis of this medium offer an insight concerning current approaches of conception and design of guide books about local heritage as well as highlighting the necessity to re-consider the interpretive spectrum in order to stimulate future heritage planning process. Despite the growth use of brochures at tourist sites in Jordan, there is little published information on their conception and their evaluation.

Conclusion

To support a performing interpretation, additional research is needed. This can only happen if all heritage resources, items, assets and attributes of local culture of both archeological site and modern city are recognized. However, every site faces particular challenges. If we want our site to succeed in terms of tourism and to find its place at the world heritage list of UNESCO, we also need to work on keeping the values of the city. This can be done through a concerted effort between business, community leaders, and municipal government – focusing on inward investment, growth, and development. At the end the interpretation face can be communicated through cohesive and functional guide books.

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Figure 1 *Jerash location and site's map* source: conception of the author



Figure 2 north theatre of Jarash source: author 2007



Table 1 summary of the analyzed guide books source: Author

Guide book	Le guide bleu : Jordanie	Le guide La Jordanie	Jordan visitor's center	Brochure : Jarash
Evaluation criteria				
Generalities				
Title of the guide book	Le guide bleu : Jordanie	Le guide Lonely planet : la Jordanie	Jordan visitor's center	Brochure : Jarash
Author	Collective	Bradley Mayhew	JTB/MOTA	JTB
Editor	Hachette tourisme	Lonely planete	JTB	JTB
Year of edition	2006	2006	2005	2006
Format	13 cm x 19 cm	20 cm x13 cm	A4	12 pages broadsides
Language	French	French/traduction from English	English	English /french
statut	Travel guide edited by foreign private agency	Travel guide edited by foreign private agency	Tourism guide edited by public national agencies	Sit's brochure edited by national semi private agency

List of described monuments				
Archeological monuments	15 monuments	26 monuments + museum	Different monuments	27 monuments + museum
Historic monuments	--	--	--	--
Monuments in modern city	--	--	--	--
Images – photos				
Archeological	3 sketches	5 coloured photos	3 coloured photos	33 colored photo and images
Historic	--	--	--	--
Natural	--	--	--	1 photo
cultural	--	--	3 photos of the festival	3photos of the festival
Modern city	--	--	One photo for a women in traditional	--
Plans-maps	Three maps for Jordan - site plan shows archeological monuments- theatre plan - macellum plan	Three maps; site plan, roads map for the north of Jordan, map of north Jordan	General map of Jordan locating 16 touristic attractions	Map of Jordan figuring Amman and Jarash- simplified site plan for the major monuments of the western sector of the site without the city's wall
Technical information	Accessibility, working hours, restaurants, accommodation n telephones	Accessibility, working hours, restaurants, accommodation telephones, major events	Accessibility, working hours, restaurants, accommodatio n telephones	Accessibility, working hours, restaurants, accommodatio n telephones
Texte	15 thematic pages for Jarash; introduction history, description of site, technical maps and themes,	6 pages dedicated to historic and technical information, description of the site	1 and ½ page; general description of the site	Narration of the history of the site
Portability	Portable, 320 pp.	Portable, 360 pp	Portable, 46 pp.	Portable, 12 pages broadside
Accessibility and disponibility	Travel libraries - Libraries in francophone	Travel libraries -Libraries in francophone countries- Paid	Travel Agencies- Jordan tourism Board-	Jarash visitor center- travel agencies- different

	countries- Paid		Paid /non paid	visitors centers in Jordan - Free
Public	Forieng francophone public	Forieng francophone public	All visitors of Jordan	All visitors of Jarash
Source of their information	Their team: journalists, specialists, historians, ethnologues	Their journalists team	Promotion service of Jordan tourism Board	Tourism service of Ministry of Tourism and antiquities

Figure 3 brochure of Jarash source: author

