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## The management of natural and cultural heritage: a comparative study from Jordan

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### ABSTRACT

Heritage management is employed by many countries to facilitate site development as well as to assist in the preservation of heritage. Heritage management is particularly complex because public and private, and sometimes local communities are involved. Despite the fact that some literature is devoted to the protection and management of heritage sites, little research has compared the management practices between natural and cultural heritage and detailed comparative studies that are undertaken from this perspective are rare. Thus this study can be considered as one of the few, internationally, and possibly the first, locally, that compares the management process in the two main types of heritage: cultural and natural. Specifically, this study focuses on two main aspects of the management process, namely: the administrative and heritage legal system and local community involvement, aspects that have not been investigated in any prior research in Jordan. The study selected two case studies from Jordan: Umm Qais as a cultural heritage and Ajloun Forest Reserve as a natural heritage. The researchers adopted two methods in order to collect the required data. Personal interviews and direct observation were carried out at the archaeological site of Umm Qais as a cultural heritage site and Ajloun Forest Reserve as a natural heritage site. The study reveals that while Ajloun Forest Reserve is putting a lot of effort to manage its natural heritage, the main aim at Umm Qais is to attract more tourists. The study establishes that the heritage legal and administrative system in Ajloun forest reserve is stronger than the system applied at the archaeological site of Umm Qais, and that local community involvement is more well rooted in Ajloun Forest Reserve management policies than in Umm Qais. However implementing integrated legislation and involving the local community helps heritage managers towards public action and thoughts. Thus, this study may aid heritage operators to improve their policies in regard of heritage management.

### KEYWORDS

Heritage management; administrative and legal framework; local community involvement; Ajloun; Umm Qais; Jordan

### Introduction

Heritage resources, both cultural and natural play major roles in the social, cultural and economic context of a country. There is a wide acknowledgement from academicians and

heritage practitioners<sup>1</sup> that the management of heritage sites is particularly complicated and thus may differ from cultural to natural sites and from site to site within the same type of heritage.<sup>2</sup> At the same time heritage possesses a complex array of uses as an important resource for both domestic and international tourism.<sup>3</sup> This complication may be related to bureaucratic administrative procedures and to the conflicts of interests among stakeholders of heritage management.<sup>4</sup> In practice, the government may take very different roles in heritage management and tourism development. The role of government is to establish appropriate legal systems and management policies and consider the rights and interests of local people.

In Jordan there is a variety of cultural and natural heritage resources which are of great importance at both the local and international levels including: Petra, Jerash, Wadi Rum and Dana Natural Reserve. For many years, archaeological sites in Jordan have formed the traditional attraction for tourists, while in recent years; natural reserves have emerged as a new attraction to diversify the tourism product. There is no doubt that both types of heritage resources in Jordan receive a particular attention. The cultural heritage diversity of non-traditional tourist attractions encourages continuous and growing interest in the country to attract new categories of tourists to those attractions. Heritage management is among the responsibilities of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA) and the Department of Antiquities (DoA). However, little research has been undertaken to identify and analyse major issues in managing heritage sites in Jordan. Specifically, few studies address the administrative and the legal context related to heritage management and the involvement of local community in heritage management. Thus, there is a need to embark on more detailed practical research at a greater variety of both natural and cultural sites. Consequently, this study focuses on assessing the heritage management process of both cultural and natural heritages in Jordan. It attempts to assess and compare the heritage management at the two sites based on two aspects. The first aspect emphasises on the heritage administrative and legal system in Jordan; whereas, the second stresses the involvement of the local community in the heritage management process at the selected sites (Ajloun Forest Reserve and Umm Qais).

## Methodology

There are various differences between the management practice undertaken at archaeological sites and those at natural heritage ones. It can be assumed that there are few comparative studies in this regard, as most of the literature is focused on the comparison between similar types of heritage sites. Thus, this research seeks to focus on the management of natural and archaeological heritage resources in Jordan, a topic that has been under-researched. The goals are to analyse and evaluate the heritage management context and thereby understand more clearly the current limitations facing heritage management in Jordan. Under the frame of a comparative study, this paper employed a case study approach to explore the issue of heritage management and local community involvement in national heritage sites. Two sites have been selected as case studies: the Ajloun Forest Reserve (AFR) that represents natural heritage and Umm Qais as a cultural one, the latter is currently listed on the Tentative List for World Heritage consideration.<sup>5</sup> In order to achieve the study's goal the authors adopted two data collection methods during the on-site surveying and research: interviews and the direct observation. Face-to-face interviews took place with different actors in the concerned

authorities, areas and related personnel i.e. officers and experts, or scholars concerned of heritage, members of local authorities and local people and owners working in the tourism services at both sites. The focus of those interviews was to explore the current proclaimed management situation at the sites from the viewpoint of both public sector and the local community. The respondents from the public sector offered rich information about different areas including: the legal and legislative structure of the sites and the projects undertaken to involve the local community. On the other hand, the participants from the local community expressed their views about their involvement in tourism activities at the sites. Notes were taken and the informants were encouraged to participate and speak as freely as possible.

In addition, to help to confirm, or qualify data that was collected, the observation method is used, with the researchers visiting the sites and their surroundings. The researchers have visited both selected sites (Umm Qais and the AFR). Several visits to the sites were undertaken by the three authors as part of the training courses of their students. This stage was important to contrast what was received and understood in regard to the management process, through the conducted interviews and what is already implemented on the ground. The observation took place at the visitor centre, tourism services and amenities, souvenir shops, and tourist pathways. The data collection was conducted from April 2012 till summer 2013. A further literature review was carried out to bring up-to-date information and also to make certain the originality of this research. A background analysis of each case study offered a primary understanding of their history, organisational and legal structure and extent of local community participation. The composed data was then collated and analysed both to understand various governance practices and examine patterns of local community participation. Thus, the findings from the interviews are combined with those from field observations and document analysis. In addition, the data that was collected through the above methods were presented in conjunction with the literature. This study is therefore significant because it aims at an understanding of the ongoing changes within the governance and participation at both types of heritage in Jordan. The research will consequently add important insights to the literature on heritage particularly in developing countries.

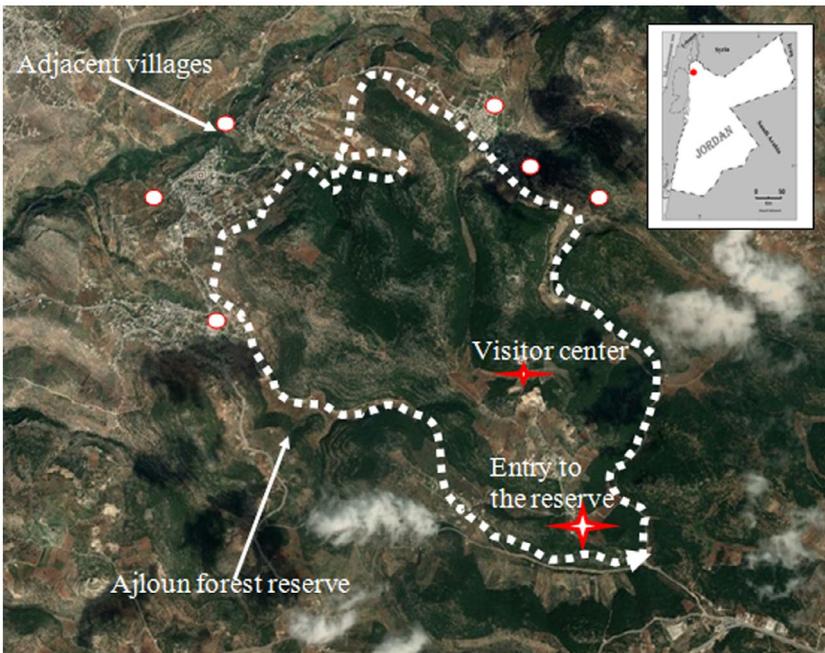
## Background to the case studies

The site of Umm Qais, ancient Gadara of the Decapolis, is located in the Governorate of Irbid in northern Jordan (see Figure 1). The site is spectacularly located above the valley of the Yarmouk with views northwards to the Golan Heights and, to the north-west, Lake Tiberias (sea of Galilee).<sup>6</sup> Umm Qais is an important site in terms of being one of the few sites in Jordan possessing a mixture of classical monuments from various civilisations including Greek, Roman and Byzantine, in addition to old Ottoman houses blended harmoniously with the extraordinary natural environment. The site encompasses very important archaeological remains ranging from prehistory to the Late Ottoman period and is one of the richest sites with a high concentration of Greco-Roman monuments.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, the heritage site and its surrounding landscape are directly linked to living traditions and current culture of the community. Since 2001, the site has been listed in the tentative list of World Heritage Sites, an indicator of the site's perceived heritage value and significance.

The AFR is situated in the governorate of Ajloun, in northern Jordanian mountain range (see Figure 2), Ajloun was created as a nature reserve in 1987 due to its rich biodiversity. It is one of the smallest reserves in Jordan covering around 13 km<sup>2</sup> and ranges in elevation from



**Figure 1.** View of old and new Umm Qais. Source: modified by Ababneh based on Google earth.



**Figure 2.** Ajloun forest reserve with the adjacent villages. Source: modified by Ababneh based on Google earth.

600 to 1100 m. Its high ecological significance derives from its unique combination of flora and fauna including endangered species such as Wild Boar, Stone Marten, Golden Jackal, Black Iris, Wild Pistachio trees, and several orchids and wild tulips.<sup>8</sup> It is a good example of native evergreen oak vegetation type and the home for reintroduced Roe Deer. The natural reserve is locally and nationally significant because its trees account for 1% of Jordan's forests. These trees have been important to local people for their wood, scenic beauty, and medicine and food.<sup>9</sup> It is worth mentioning here that the reserve only a short distance from the exceptional example of the twelfth-century Islamic castle of Ajloun. AFR is surrounded by five villages located outside the boundaries of the reserve within three different districts of Ajloun. Historically, small-scale farming based on a seasonal agricultural system in addition to livestock husbandry was the main occupation of the local people living in the adjacent villages.

In terms of tourism, the two sites attract a large number of domestic, regional and international tourists mainly from March to May and from November to September. In 2013, the overall visitor figures for Umm Qais (231,493) demonstrate that it was more popular than AFR (207,450)<sup>10</sup> the majority of tourists visiting both sites usually as an elective/addition to their prescheduled itineraries. Although a majority of tourists visit only the core areas at the sites – the archaeological site of Umm Qais and the recreational area in AFR – a significant number engage in walking in the nearby areas, particularly in Ajloun. Increased visitation by tourists and growing economic activity are important objectives for both heritage areas. Although tourism is not the AFR's primary focus, effort is put forth to promote and enhance the area.

## **The context of heritage management**

Heritage resources are recognised as the tangible and intangible products of human activities comprising, for instance, archaeological sites and natural reserves.<sup>11</sup> As an important safeguarding activity and also as an area of academic research, heritage management has experienced rapid growth internationally as a result of increased awareness of heritage resources.<sup>12</sup> Although it is difficult to come to a commonly agreed upon definition for heritage management that addresses all the concerns and ways of practice, the term heritage management is introduced in the literature in a variety of ways.<sup>13</sup> Hilary Du Cros defined heritage management as 'the process of undertaking activities to care for heritage items assets'.<sup>14</sup> In its broadest sense, heritage management means all the actions taken to prepare a site for receiving the visitors in a viable manner. The concept of heritage management is rather expansive<sup>15</sup> as it entails an amalgamation of conservation and heritage tourism components.<sup>16</sup> Different researchers explain that heritage management with respect to natural and cultural heritage refers to protection of the physical and natural features of the environment where heritage sites are located. It includes restoration, interpretation and local community involvement and is best built on relevant policies and actors.<sup>17</sup>

After introducing the main concept that this research is drawn from, what follows is a review of the literature regarding the main two aspects it investigates.

### ***Heritage management – administrative and legal system***

The administrative and legal system has been recognised as an important part of the planning and management of any assets developed for tourism.<sup>18</sup> In heritage management

research, the importance of the local administrative and legal system is acknowledged<sup>19</sup> and several studies have been dedicated to give an overview of public support in heritage management which includes practice of and obstacles to legislative and administrative practice in this domain.<sup>20</sup> Heritage management plans<sup>21</sup> mostly emphasise the importance of evaluation and assessment of several issues including administrative and organisational structure and the legislative system. Hall and McArthur<sup>22</sup> state that heritage management has dealt with many issues, including legal system and stakeholders. Among the latter are local communities, governments at different scales, heritage conservation advocacy groups, public agencies, business associations and non-governmental organisations.<sup>23</sup> Robust legislative provision is essential for the viability and effectiveness of the management of heritage sites. According to Feilden and Jokilehto's 'Guidelines for the Management of World Cultural Heritage Sites';

the legal instruments and regulations that respect the social and employment regulations of the State Party should be drafted. These include; an act to establish the site as World Cultural Heritage and setting up a Site Commission; statutes for the Site Commission and rules governing financial procedures; staff regulations and conditions of employment; empowerment of the Commission to undertake and award contracts for activities within its sphere of competence.<sup>24</sup>

Laws are considered to play a significant role in heritage development; it is a tool of durable development because it sustains the physical well-being of the heritage resources. Demas has indicated that the adequacy of the management organisation depends on its capability to meet current and future needs of the site; she highlighted the importance of the existing legal aspect and profile of the staff of the management organisation.<sup>25</sup> In response to the existing deficiencies in heritage management frameworks, some researchers and international organisations proposed recommendations to overcome them and to enhance heritage management practices. For instance, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) have set up a number of guidelines for the management of their specific categories of heritage. The World Heritage Convention (1972) recognises the importance of state parties' legislation to control all activities and development process.<sup>26</sup>

Heritage management scholars have discussed heritage management practice related to the structure and the legislative system in different contexts.<sup>27</sup> From this, it has emerged that many heritage problems lie not in resources, but in the interactions between stakeholders and the appropriateness and applicability of legal frameworks. Accordingly, coordination of local and national relationships should also be sought to address the issue. Feilden and Jokilehto's Guidelines for the Management of World Cultural Heritage Sites says that

the role of the administration and management team is to conserve the heritage resource and to serve the public interest provided this is not detrimental to the site. Responsibilities should be decentralized and individual staff members should be allowed to make their own immediate decisions within the context of the management plan and their pre-defined responsibilities; this should lead to increase efficiency and job satisfaction.<sup>28</sup>

Ndlovu, in assessing the effectiveness of heritage legislation in South Africa, claimed that the implementation of heritage legislation is negatively affected by two challenges; lack of community involvement and weak enforcement of pertinent laws. However, he added that a lack of proactive measures from within heritage management, as well as external factors,

are still major constraints to a successful implementation of heritage legislation and as a result heritage resources are still threatened.<sup>29</sup>

Considerations regarding the role of heritage administration has become increasingly important.<sup>30</sup> In their discourse on heritage management, many scholars<sup>31</sup> have argued that one approach to enhance the management of heritage sites is to involve the different stakeholders and ensure that their potential role is sustained through dynamic participation in the management of their heritage resources. In order to facilitate stakeholder partnership in heritage management and tourism, recognition of major stakeholders and their roles in management should be understood in the first place.<sup>32</sup> Regarding the role of government in heritage management, scholars have articulated diverse arguments. Dredge's study of cultural heritage tourism planning in relation to the Liangzhu culture in Zhejiang Province China, commented on the structure and roles of heritage tourism administration in a number of Chinese World Heritage Sites. She identified five levels of administration comprising: provincial; city; county; township and village. She concluded that there are overlapping roles across these levels of administration due to the lack of clearly defined responsibilities.<sup>33</sup> Faced with increasing challenges from economic growth and urbanisation, many academics have argued that in spite of its dignified aim to ensure the preservation of heritage, the concept of heritage management is not free from criticism. For instance, in some developing countries there is no single authority that takes full responsibility for managing natural and cultural heritage.<sup>34</sup> Rather, several bodies are collectively responsible for heritage management at various levels. This unwittingly encourages contradictions between the voices of management at national and local levels, which must be integrated for effective management. It is also the case that management views can be imposed by the state within rigid and strong regulations due to a lack of understanding of local and provincial administrative views.

### ***Heritage management and involvement of local community***

The significance of community involvement has won widespread acceptance among researchers and has become a focus of academic research.<sup>35</sup> Different scholars claim that the involvement of the local community should be recognised as an essential part in the planning and consultation part of heritage management.<sup>36</sup> Although there has been a growing amount of local community studies, the majority of these studies have examined the positive and the negative impacts rather than specifically looking at the role of local community in heritage management,<sup>37</sup> notwithstanding the fact that management plans for both cultural and natural resources strongly emphasise local community involvement.

The relationships between heritage management and local community involvement possess shared benefits, tensions and costs. Local community involvement has the potential to lead to dialogue, recognises the value of preservation, enhances the tourism value of an area, attracts more visitors and new residents, and ensures a special and valuable visitor experience.<sup>38</sup> Both heritage and tourism management can generate income for local communities, bringing more job opportunities, and fostering the local economy.<sup>39</sup> The involvement of the local community in heritage management is vital for a meaningful outcome in any heritage development process. Dredge considered that a top-down approach is usually adopted by consultants during projects implemented in different cultural contexts; according to her, this approach inevitably has negative impacts on local heritage as it devalues local knowledge and local heritage.<sup>40</sup> Top-down approach in heritage management is the first critical issue

that needs to be addressed. This approach involves primarily the site management office, government at different levels, experts and scholars in related fields. Local residents are seldom consulted and are generally excluded from the consultation and planning process. However, management of cultural heritage resources is not an easy task and even harder when it needs to fulfil the interests of the present local residents.<sup>41</sup> Accordingly, local community involvement in heritage management is still a critical issue for heritage tourism. Hence, one of the main challenges in the existing heritage and tourism management literature is to find a balance between resource protection, tourism enhancement and community well-being.

A central issue in community involvement is the dissatisfaction and marginalisation of locals during the different levels of planning. Though there could be quite a few reasons ascribed for their disengagement, the factors that influence participation are economic, political and social.<sup>42</sup> These generic difficulties are exacerbated in different developing countries since in such countries there is often a complex structural relationship between national, state and local governments which does not optimise the involvement of locals.<sup>43</sup> There has been a growing recognition in many tourist destinations that current management practices in protected areas may favour unwanted impacts such as displacement of locals<sup>44</sup> which, in turn, can potentially threaten right of entry of residents and enforced them off their properties with minimum or no compensation. Chirikure et al.<sup>45</sup> argue, for instance, that

The application of participatory management has had varied success in the field of heritage management depending on the context in which it has been applied, and the evidence from some heritage sites in sub-Saharan Africa reveals mixed results; some far from satisfactory.

Tosun,<sup>46</sup> based on his observation in the context of developing countries, pointing out that community involvement is not easy to attain because there are three main challenges or barriers facing community participation in heritage management and tourism planning at operational, structural and cultural levels. According to him, operational barriers are those related to the centralisation of public administration, while structural order comprises legislative and institutional impediments, and finally cultural limitations include the limited capacity of the poor communities to handle development. Heritage sites (natural and cultural) are no longer viewed as isolated entities but have been placed within a wider context that considers the communal and cultural surroundings. This recognises the varied communal values placed upon such sites. Responding to this concrete advance in developing heritage sites, site management approaches have also moved towards a more wide-ranging and participatory approach which might be called an integrated participatory approach. In such an approach, partnership and complementarity of roles and functions are among the more useful tools. To sum up, movable and immovable cultural heritage together with the natural environment and intangible heritage represent values that affect the social culture of societies. Its management also has a significant economic impact as heritage, together with the natural environment, represents basic prerequisites for a flourishing and successful tourism industry.

## Heritage management in Jordan

Thus far, there has been little research that has comprehensively investigated the issues and practices of stakeholder commitment in heritage management in Jordan. The available research that has been undertaken is focused on random issues in tourism and heritage

including documentation systems reporting spatial information of monuments,<sup>47</sup> urban regeneration of historic cities,<sup>48</sup> tourism market analysis for Jordan,<sup>49</sup> meaning-making and cultural heritage,<sup>50</sup> and barriers to sustainable tourism.<sup>51</sup> A number of these studies were developed to guide the management and conservation of heritage sites.<sup>52</sup> Case studies of heritage and tourist sites have been conducted at many sites, including Petra and Beida<sup>53</sup> Jarash,<sup>54</sup> Irbid,<sup>55</sup> and the Baptism site.<sup>56</sup> Yet, the previous literature on heritage management in Jordan has focused upon the key archaeological sites without considering more marginalised archaeological and natural heritage sites, aspects which this paper directly addresses.

Some researchers, such as Ha'obsh and Assi,<sup>57</sup> have examined the legal and institutional setting, and identified a number of inter-related barriers that led to a sort of mismanagement of the heritage resources. The overall outcome of such barriers is often linked to the lack of awareness regarding the importance and the implementation of heritage management legislation. In her study about managing tourism development through land-use planning, Ha'obsh,<sup>58</sup> recommended, in regard to her case study about the city of Jarash, that in addition to the existing management of the city, much can be achieved in any suggested zoning area through the introduction of new regulations and administrative structures related to protecting the environment and the urban and architectural heritage. Schneider and Burnett<sup>59</sup> examined Jordan's proposed and actively protected areas in three sections: (1) a review of the establishment Jordan's protected area (2) an examination of their administration and (3) an identification of institutional challenges to Jordan's land-based protected areas. They identified the challenges that the management of the protected areas in Jordan are facing, including administrative and legislative layers, departmental working relationships, and a paucity of funding. Porter and Salzar,<sup>60</sup> in their analysis concerned with the conflicts among stakeholders of heritage management, turned to an example from central Jordan (Tall Dhiban at Madaba) in order to illustrate how a public-interest approach can be applied to the analysis so as to overcome this conflict. This case study showed that the conflict between the government and local community is centred on the usage of heritage sites. The challenge demonstrated in their study was how to turn Tall Dhiban into an economic-based heritage site through a collaborative process without interfering with the current activities of the local community at the site.

Existing literature has not yet specifically measured the actual level of local community involvement in heritage management in Umm Qais and Ajloun. A symbiotic relationship between heritage sites and their immediate local community contexts has been supported in a number of studies, but there has been no focus on its heritage management aspect. Shunnaq et al.<sup>61</sup> stated that the efforts of the heritage and tourism community in Umm Qais and in the north of Jordan in general are confronted by the reality that the tourism activity is centralised in the Capital as well as in South of the country where Petra and most of the other key sites are located. In the light of this, their study suggested the creation of a tourist route that enhances the cultural heritage resources in the northern parts of Jordan. Although these studies have the merit of applying heritage management practices to heritage sites both natural and cultural, they have not focused on the potential link between cultural heritage and legal, institutional and local community conditions with respect to heritage management issues. Existing literature has not yet specifically measured the actual level of local community involvement in heritage management in Umm Qais and Ajloun. This paper seeks to address this gap and endeavours to connect the management of natural

with cultural heritage, linking them with heritage tourism management. The first stage was a comparison between the two sites.

### **Assessment of current situation**

In the light of this research, the following is the critical and the comparative context in regard to the object of the study.

#### ***Heritage management – administrative and legal system***

The MOTA is the responsible body for the administrative and legislative issues regarding the archaeological and cultural resources of the country based on the amended Law of Antiquity No. 21 for the year 2003. This law was first issued in 1934 to stipulate the responsibilities and duties of the DoA towards the archaeological heritage sites in Jordan. The DoA was founded in 1923 to become the oldest department of the government in Jordan, and administratively the DoA works under the umbrella of MOTA.<sup>62</sup> According to the DoA,<sup>63</sup> its mission is to preserve the cultural and archaeological heritage of Jordan; to protect and control the ancient monuments; and also to regulate antiquities of the country. To larger extent, DoA, generally acquires, where possible, whichever land with a high potential for heritage value in order to facilitate and permit the processes of any potential excavation and conservation works without any disruption.<sup>64</sup> Nevertheless, the antiquity law has been criticised by a number of scholars<sup>65</sup> for protecting only the resources pre-dating AD1750, which makes those after 1750 vulnerable to deterioration and negligence. Thus, the antiquity law has no protective legislation specific to historic and intangible heritage associated with archaeological sites.<sup>66</sup>

The central administrations of both MOTA and DoA are based in Amman, with other sub-offices distributed across the different governorates in the country and at each archaeological site. Those who represent the DoA (Antiquity Officers) supervise those carrying out excavation and conservation works in addition to their responsibility to curate the site museum, if applicable, while Tourism Officers are responsible for the tourism-related activities, such as ticketing, visitor management and public access. Evidently according to the Director of the Tourism Office of Umm Qais, the nature of the decision-making process is a 'top-down' management with the ministry taking the major role in determining the policies and decision-making at the site, and recruiting of the employees. Other bodies provide support and cooperate with MOTA, such as, Jordan Tourism Board and Ministry of Municipal Affairs.<sup>67</sup> As a result of this 'top down,' centralised management, only very limited projects and interventions were agreed to protect the surviving urban heritage within the historic Ottoman city in Umm Qais. All the local study participants agree that many important Ottoman houses within the historic city are left completely unprotected and in a highly vulnerable condition. An example of this is a well-known Ottoman building that incorporates a number of distinctive local Ottoman features but which currently functions as a tourist police office. This situation has arisen due to the fact that the antiquity law in Jordan does not protect the post 1750 urban architectural heritage so allowing for its inappropriate use.

In terms of natural resources, it is the responsibility of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) to issue the related regulations and administration framework. RSCN was established in 1966 under the patronage of H.M. King Hussein to take the responsibility for the establishment and management of protected areas.<sup>68</sup> The mission of RSCN is 'to

conserve the biodiversity of Jordan and integrate its conservation programs with socio-economic development, while promoting wider public support and action for the protection of the natural environment within Jordan and neighbouring countries.<sup>69</sup> The basis for the legal protection of Jordanian natural resources rests on the Natural Reserves and National Parks Regulations No. (29) for 2005. Common themes emphasised in the legal protection of natural resources are sustainable management of renewable resources; protection of biodiversity and heritage resources efficient use of resources; and promotion of natural diversity. RSCN currently runs all of the national natural reserves which represent varied natural heritage. The management tasks of the natural reserves are shared between the RSCN's head-office in Amman and the national offices at each reserve including AFR.<sup>70</sup> Thus, the local office itself has the authority of almost all the management processes within the reserve in contrast with what is applied at the site of Umm Qais. In addition, there is a society board within the RSCN, composed of eleven members of stakeholders.<sup>71</sup> In terms of consultation and development, it is worth mentioning that the AFR works in corporation with the management of other natural reserves and is also administrated under close cooperation with international agencies such as IUCN and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

### ***Involvement of the local community***

The local community adjacent to heritage sites is affected by tourism and heritage policies undertaken at these sites.<sup>72</sup> Consequently, it is important to understand how local administrations and laws consider local priorities at heritage sites and how they affect the management and tourism development of heritage resources and the local community. Traditionally, the people of Umm Qais, like all other neighbouring cities, practice economic activities such as livestock farming and agriculture. However, in the 1980s a decision was taken to open up the site to tourism and the local population was moved out of their historic Ottoman period housing overlying the ancient town and into a new village built adjacent.<sup>73</sup> In touristic terms this move has been successful, increasing the number of visitors to the site and a consequent increase in facilities and services to meet the visitors' needs and demands. As a result people at both the archaeological site and the modern city of Umm Qais are engaged in tourism retail businesses although the town and business centres are not fully developed. A variety of shops are spread along the main street of modern Umm Qais to meet the needs and interests of both local residents and tourists. It is worth mentioning here, that all shops categories benefit from the seasonal tourist traffic particularly during spring and summer time. Study participants also noted that other means of generating income include vending souvenirs in streets and investing in the only two non-classified hotels located at the village. However, as noted by the hotels' owners, the clients of these hotels are normally international individual tourists who travel without prior arrangements. The only rest house, located at the heart of the archaeological site, is operated by an investor from the city of Amman. Recently, one of the old houses has been rehabilitated as a visitor centre with the main aim to increase the public awareness and to enhance the visitors' experience. Ironically, this visitor centre is not functioning well as it lacks staff and tour guides; furthermore its location is unclear for visitors.<sup>74</sup> The management of Umm Qais has been criticised for its lack of consultation with local communities.<sup>75</sup> Most of the respondents express displeasure regarding the way in which the site is managed. Interviewees express their anger and feelings of discomfort that they are alienated following their displacement. It is noted that the process in which

the site is managed is particular criticised for the relocation of the locals and the delays in compensation payments which caused evident distrust between the community and the local authorities. Even when settled, the compensations were, according to the locals, unfair and insufficient compared to the cultural and symbolic value of their heritage houses. Due to limited financial resources and insufficient expertise to cover the evacuated houses, very few of these structures have received government's attention as priority is given to archaeological monuments. Since these buildings are less than 300 years old, they are not given any protection under antiquities legislation. As a result of their enforced abandonment and subsequent neglect, they have not been maintained and face significant degradation along with unplanned modification. The museum conservator clearly indicated<sup>76</sup> that residents, unfortunately, are not involved and have no sound voice in any decision to be taken related to the future of their heritage and the site they belong to. The local community themselves expressed their dissatisfaction in their marginalisation from most of the decisions taken in terms of the management and development of the site. In particular they point to a perceived inequality in distribution of economic benefits between them and outside investors in the site who are gaining unfair advantage as a result.<sup>77</sup>

At Ajloun reserve, in contrast, the RSCN has developed and realised tourism programmes and activities aimed at economic development and job creation. The RSCN has implemented a comprehensive local tourism development project comprising family hotels, restaurants and other tourism-related businesses to promote environmental and economic tourism growth within the six adjacent communities in Rasoon, Orjan, Bauon, Mehna, Altyarah and Umm el Yanabee which together have a population of around 15,000.<sup>78</sup> As observed during the field work, the Eco Tourism Trails program is a project starting from the reserve and connecting the neighbouring communities. According to respondents, the local residents offer small local services for the visitors such as lodging and restaurants. As a result of this project, three small projects were established between 2006 and 2010, including: the Soap House, the Arabic Calligraphy House and the Sweets and Dessert House. It is worth mentioning here that the community has almost the lion share of managing and operating these businesses. These projects have created direct and indirect job vacancies. For instance, there are 20 opportunities for the locals in these projects. According to the RSCN, the income generated by these projects has reached the equivalent of \$200,000, to the benefit of the local communities around the Reserve, a figure that is 11% higher than 2010.<sup>79</sup> The manager of the reserve in a personal communication stated that: 'In line with the reserve policy regarding the local community, we seek transparency and want to keep ordinary people informed of what is happening around their communities.'<sup>80</sup>

Since 1990 policies and programmes on the protection of degraded eco-system and biodiversity were extended while RSCN enforced its legislation on the natural environment and land management. The reserve's management plan was established in 2013. However, the challenge for AFR is to balance the conservation of the reserve's natural beauty, uniqueness, and ecological diversity with protection of local culture and economic benefits from tourism. The current partnership between the reserve's management and the local communities is viewed as an important means to deal with challenges and gain support from the local community. Hence, different forms of partnerships have been established and they can be ascribed to the management approach adopted by the reserve's management. This form of partnership has been noted through the established projects (soap, biscuit and calligraphy houses). It is recognised within AFR management that the local community has played an

important role in safeguarding the diversity of the reserve's area. Yet despite the fact that it is a home for various tourism attractions (both cultural and natural) making it one of the most popular areas especially for nature and ecotourism, Ajloun is still regarded as a poor and undeveloped district.<sup>81</sup>

Some interviewed participants from the local community also see that many of the people who live in the adjacent villages preserve the traditional lifestyle of the area and practice activity such as livestock grazing, timber harvesting, hunting that have the potential to degrade the park's diversity values. Subsequently, other sources of livelihood have been ecotourism, collection and sale of minor forest products and medicinal plants and government service. The establishment of the AFR did not exclude the local community but rather it sought to involve them in the management and tourism development. Based upon the on-site interviews and observations, the different forms of local participation in tourism at both sites are summarised in Table 1.

## Findings and discussion

From the key informant interviews in conjunction with direct observation this section explores the comparative context on which this article is based. It also introduces an analysis of the empirical data gathered throughout the research about the two sites. The findings are also compared with heritage management process currently approached in Jordan. The research tackles two main dimensions: first, heritage administrative and legal system; secondly, heritage management and the involvement of the local community. According to the first dimension, the Jordanian government has issued some national regulations

**Table 1.** Key elements of local community involvement in the two cases study.

Key elements of local community involvement	Umm Qais	Ajloun Forest reserve
Relocation	All residents were relocated	No relocation
Role of residents	Non-participation	Active participation/empowered
Commercial development	Retail business/small portion of tourism-related business	Tourism-related business/culture-related business
Communication on work progress	Occasionally informed	Mainly informed
Training local community	Lack of planning documents	Annual training courses for local community members
Local people	Planned & managed against local people, Managed without regard to local opinions	Run with, for & in some cases by local people, managed to meet the needs of local people
Management extension	Developed separately/isolated, the site is isolated and disconnected of the adjacent local community	Planned as part of national natural tourism policy
Perception of the local community	Viewed as a national concern	Viewed as a national resource
Management skills	Expert led management with less role of local community	Local knowledge led management
Management policy	Lacks a unified heritage site area policy to guide and manage areas	Relies on laws and unified plan for the management of the different issues
Economic value	Heritage resources are still undervalued by the people who depend on them.	play a major role in security, society, and economic development of the country
Public involvement	Conflict between local people and staff of the site, lack of public involvement	Public is involved in both site's management and business process
Conflict of interest	Conflicts between private and public sector	Forbidden practices by locals such as grazing and wood exploitation

including the Antiquity Law; nevertheless, there are no specific guidelines in regard to the management of heritage sites, as they are managed on an ad hoc basis. Talking about the management of the site of Umm Qais, two major direct stakeholders are involved, namely MOTA and the DoA. The focus of the latter is on the excavation and conservation while the focus of the former is to increase the number of tourist arrivals. From the observation, it has been noted that many of the management issues at the site are duplicated between both bodies. In other words, different articles within the laws such as *Tourism Law no 20-1988/article 3-A*, *Antiquities Law no 21-1988/article 3-A* allocate the same responsibilities for both bodies despite their different interests and trends, which in turn can lead to conflicts of interest. Administratively, it is still noticed that the valorisation of the site is focused on the monuments spread over the hill of the site but excluding the historical Ottoman village. As observed and experienced by the researchers, the site's tourism and antiquities offices have a very limited, if no full, authority of taking any decision before obtaining an official consent from those bodies. Based on this review and analysis, it can be assumed that decision processes by both the DoA and MOTA is heavily bureaucratic and hierarchical.

Dissimilarly, AFR is protected by the Environment Protection Law No. (1) of 2003 and regulation No. 29 for the year 2005 to protect the natural reserves and national parks, of March 2005, respectively. However, the challenge facing the regulation is to overcome the problem of private ownership inside the reserve. More importantly, it should be noted that collaboration and cooperation between national (RSCN) and site specific management of Ajloun reserve is well established. According to the manager of the reserve: 'the management programs were developed by a multi-disciplinary team of experts under the guidance of the RSCN, and the expert team of the Ajloun natural reserve.'<sup>82</sup> It has been observed that the management body at the AFR is represented in two levels where each level has its defined responsibility. Thus, the roles are not doubled as in the case of the archaeological sites.

Numerous potential tourism opportunities were documented through observation in AFR and the surrounding area. Unlike the site of Umm Qais the natural reserve interventions goes beyond the natural reserve boundary, in other words, it is noticed that projects targeting the development of the local community are found outside the nature reserve and in the core centre of the previously mentioned towns. In the case of the site of Umm Qais it is noted that the actual rest house is located inside the site and managed by a local restaurant chain based in Amman. However, the field study showed that, there was a general perception that communities living close to the AFR get more economic benefits than those living close to the site of Umm Qais. Therefore, the scale of the businesses in the AFR is larger than those available in the site of Umm Qais where the business is privately run and lacks a structural benefit-sharing approach. Bearing in mind that tourists' footfall at the site of Umm Qais is ten times greater than that of the AFR, a majority of respondents stated that a few of the local members have jobs related to the tourism industry despite the growing tourists flows to the site. However, results may be explained by the fact that there are not many opportunities for locally made products to be offered to tourists. It is observed that a large number of local community members have no direct contact with tourists and the site since visitors tend not to visit the adjacent new village but focus instead on the historic site. This has created a sort of physical, emotional and visual disconnection between the inhabitants and their usual place of residence. The table below illustrates the comparison content between the sites in terms of different dimensions, namely: history – character, location, current status, laws, management structure, site management, local community's status, and problems (Table 2).

**Table 2.** General comparison between the two sites.

Parameters	Umm Qais	Ajloun Forest reserve
History – character	The site includes a mixture of classical monuments from various civilisations including Greek, Roman and Byzantine, in addition to old Ottoman houses blended harmoniously with the extraordinary natural environment	The reserve was first established in 1987. It encompasses magnificent natural resources (endangered species of fauna and flora)
Location	District of Irbid	District of Ajloun
Current status	National archaeological site submitted to UNESCO for consideration as a future world heritage site 2001.	National natural heritage reserve
Law governed site's management	Law of Antiquity No. 21 for the year 2003.	Natural Reserves and National Parks Regulations No. (29) for the year 2005
Management structure – responsible bodies and levels	Public-led management (MOTA–DoA) including at national, provincial and municipal levels	Non-governmental management (RSCN) including national and site level
Local community involvement and benefits sought	Local community has little involvement in the management process and little benefits	Local community has more involvement in the management process and thus more benefits
Overall assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overlapped and undefined management roles</li> <li>• conflict between stakeholders' interests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More defined and clear roles</li> <li>• A balance power among stakeholders</li> </ul>

## Conclusion

Comparison of Umm Qais and the AFR has revealed a number of interesting findings. Distinctions related to the management approach and the degrees of the involvement of local community were observed. The major dissimilarities between the two sites are: firstly, although the AFR is a relatively recent established attraction in the country, it has a more consistent management approach than that applied at the archaeological site of Umm Qais. Secondly, heritage site management in Umm Qais is regulated in three distinct governmental levels (national, provincial and municipal), nevertheless, central government has more authority and a conflict between actors and local community is observed. The most influential policies for site management are not from local site level, but at national level represented by MOTA. While the AFR refers to private association this includes national and municipal levels. Therefore, administrative system approach has some balanced powers. A third finding to be highlighted here relates to the Jordanian Antiquities Law which was criticised for its inability to protect a significant part of the heritage sites in Jordan that are dated later than AD 1750. As a result, at Umm Qais only the tangible or physical elements of archaeological heritage have been conserved by the DoA, while the Ottoman Village overlying the remains, a heritage that belongs to the local community and that has significant heritage value to it, was ignored and not considered for conservation. Lastly, the study also reveals that while the AFR's management endeavours to spend a lot of effort to manage its natural heritage, the management of Umm Qais seeks to attract more tourists. In terms of the local community involvement, it has been found that there is a little concern in this regard at Umm Qais. Whereas, the management of the AFR is supported by the local community involvement and the contribution of tourism activities at the reserve develops the financial situation of neighbouring localities and makes it possible to develop other crafts.

An overall finding may shed the light on the management structure that can be characterised as loose and governmentally centralised. With some tourism development to date, both AFR and Umm Qais are facing different problems especially in the matter of identifying the potential and viable tourism products to be developed. However, to develop heritage management in Jordan, the authorities must first set up a unique management entity and legal setting in conjunction with consideration of local communities and sites' visitors. According to Hatton and MacManamon<sup>83</sup> the effectiveness of heritage management policies depend on three components:

- It must be a strong statement of national intent to protect and preserve cultural sites, structures and other resource types.
- It must have political support in its implementation.
- It must be implemented cooperatively among agencies, departments or ministries at the national level, with other levels of government, and with the public.

While AFR would appear to be a successful example of co-operation with the local population, it would seem that Umm Qais, despite its much higher tourist numbers, needs to work at building a more successful relationship with its local community, especially if its intention to become a World Heritage Site is to be realised.

## Notes

- 1 Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge, *Geography of Heritage*.
- 2 Kong and Yeoh, "Urban Conservation in Singapore"; Smith, *Uses of Heritage*; Diekmann and Gillot, "Heritage and Tourism".
- 3 Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge, *Geography of Heritage*; Nuryanti, "Introduction: Sustaining Heritage"; Aplin, *Heritage Identification*; Du Cros, "Emerging Issues".
- 4 Lisitzin, "Building Shared Perspectives"; Cleere, *Archaeological Heritage Management*; Cleere, "Management Plans for Archaeological Sites"; Howard, *Heritage: Management, Interpretation, Identity*.
- 5 UNESCO Jordan Tentative World Heritage.
- 6 Kennedy and Bewley, *Ancient Jordan from the Air*, 158–9.
- 7 Ababneh, "Managing Heritage Tourism".
- 8 Tellawi, *Conservation of Biological Diversity*; RSCN, "Ajloun Forest Reserve".
- 9 El-Harami, "Diversity of Ecology".
- 10 Ministry of Tourism and Antiquity, *Tourism Statistical Newsletter 2014*.
- 11 Kurin, "Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage"; Feilden and Jokilehto, *Management Guidelines for World Heritage*; Taylor, "Cultural Heritage Management"; Turnpenny, "Cultural Heritage, an Ill-Defined Concept?"; Chhabra et al., "Staged Authenticity and Heritage Tourism"; Schouten et al., *Managing Visitors*.
- 12 Sullivan and Mackay, *Archaeological Sites*.
- 13 Carman, "Good Citizens and Sound Economics"; Skeates, *Debating the Archaeological Heritage*.
- 14 Du Cros, "Emerging Issues".
- 15 Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge, *Geography of Heritage*.
- 16 Sullivan and Mackay, *Archaeological Sites*.
- 17 McKercher and du Cros, *Cultural Tourism*, 44; Pearson and Sullivan, *Looking after Heritage Places*; Demas, "Planning for Conservation"; Orbaşlı, "Archaeological Site Management".
- 18 Feilden and Jokilehto, *Management Guidelines for World Heritage*; Demas, "Planning for Conservation".
- 19 Ndlovu, "Legislation as an Instrument".
- 20 Sullivan, "A Planning Model"; Demas, "Planning for Conservation"; Eze-Uzomaka, "Archaeology and Heritage Legislation".

- 21 Demas, "Planning for Conservation"; Sullivan, "A Planning Model"; Feilden and Jokilehto, *Management Guidelines for World Heritage*; ICOMOS, *The Burra Charter*, 1999.
- 22 Hall and McArthur, *Integrated Heritage Management*.
- 23 Sullivan, "A Planning Model"; Orbaşlı, "Archaeological Site Management"; Hall and McArthur, *Integrated Heritage Management*.
- 24 Feilden and Jokilehto, *Management Guidelines for World Heritage*, 31.
- 25 Demas, "Planning for Conservation".
- 26 UNESCO, *Convention Concerning World Heritage*.
- 27 Doumas, "Managing the Archaeological Heritage".
- 28 Feilden and Jokilehto, *Management Guidelines for World Heritage*, 30.
- 29 Ndlovu, "Legislation as an Instrument".
- 30 Kammeier, "Managing Cultural and Natural Heritage".
- 31 Aas et al., "Stakeholder Collaboration and Heritage Management"; Bramwell and Lane, *Tourism Collaboration and Partnerships*; Pedersen, *Managing Tourism at World Heritage Sites*; Evans, "Mundo Maya"; Harrison, *Contested Narratives*; ICOMOS, *Tourism at World Heritage Sites*; Jimura, "The Impact of World Heritage".
- 32 Aas et al., "Stakeholder Collaboration and Heritage Management"; Reed, "Power Relationships".
- 33 Dredge, "Development, Economy and Culture".
- 34 Serageldin, "Foreword"; Timothy and Nyaupane, *Cultural Heritage and Tourism*.
- 35 McKercher and du Cros, *Cultural Tourism*; Pearson and Sullivan, *Looking after Heritage Places*.
- 36 Smith, Morgan, and van der Meer, "Community-Driven Research"; Den, "Community Empowerment and Heritage Conservation".
- 37 Landorf, "Managing for Sustainable Tourism"; Simpson, "Strategic Planning and Community Involvement"; Hodges and Watson, "Community-Based Heritage Management".
- 38 Ismail, *Local Community Involvement*.
- 39 Haralambopoulos and Pizam, "Perceived Impacts of Tourism"; Elene and Assefa, "Managing World Heritage Sites".
- 40 Dredge, "Development, Economy and Culture".
- 41 Johnson, Snepenger, and Akis, "Residents' Perceptions of Tourism"; Chirikure et al., "Unfulfilled Promises?".
- 42 Timothy and Nyaupane, *Cultural Heritage and Tourism*; Henson, "Historical Development and Attendant Problems"; Myles, "Cultural Management in Sub-Saharan Africa".
- 43 Aas et al., "Stakeholder Collaboration and Heritage Management".
- 44 Brechin et al., "Resident Peoples and Protected Areas"; Brockington, Duffy, and Igoe, *Nature Unbound*.
- 45 Chirikure et al., "Unfulfilled Promises?", 30.
- 46 Tosun, "Limits to Community Participation".
- 47 Al-kheder et al., "GIS Analysis of Irbid".
- 48 Daher, "Urban Regeneration/Heritage Tourism Endeavours".
- 49 Mohammad and Som, "Analysis of Travel Motivations"; Alhroot and Al-Alak, "Tourism and Destination Marketing".
- 50 Abu-Khafajah, "Meaning-Making and Cultural Heritage".
- 51 Reid and Schwab, "Barriers to Sustainable Development".
- 52 Al-Naddaf and Al-Sa'ad, "Conservation Plan for Abila".
- 53 Franchi et al., "Petra and Beida (Jordan)".
- 54 Al Bayari, "GIS Model of Jerash".
- 55 Al-kheder, Al-shawabkeh, and Haala, "Developing a Documentation System".
- 56 Haddad, Waheeb, and Fakhoury, "The Baptism Site of Bethany".
- 57 Ha'obsh, "Managing Tourism Development"; Assi, "Urban Conservation Charters".
- 58 Ha'obesh, "Managing Tourism Development".
- 59 Schneider and Burnett, "Protected Area Management," 241.
- 60 Porter and Salazar, "Heritage Tourism, Conflict".
- 61 Shunnaq, Schwab, and Reid, "Community Development".
- 62 Myers, Smith, and Shaer, *Case Study of Jarash*.

- 63 Department of Antiquities of Jordan, *Strategy*.
- 64 Study participant, personal contact 2013.
- 65 Najjar, "Cultural Resource Management"; Fakhouri, "Architectural Patrimony and Cultural Tourism"; Daher, "Urban Regeneration/Heritage Tourism Endeavours"; El-Khalili, "Urban Heritage and Sustainable Development"; Darabseh, *Cultural Tourism in Jordan*; Al Rabady, "Creative Cities through Local Heritage".
- 66 Study participant, personal contact 2013.
- 67 Director of the Tourism Office, personal contact, 2013.
- 68 Chatelard, "Conflicts of Interest".
- 69 RSCN, "Overview," 2015.
- 70 Study participant, personal contact 2013.
- 71 Study participant, personal contact 2013.
- 72 Scheyvens, 2003.
- 73 Brand, "Displacement for Development?"; Daher, "Gentrification and Politics of Power".
- 74 Study participant, personal contact 2013.
- 75 Brand, "Displacement for Development?"; Shunnaq, Schwab, and Reid, "Community Development".
- 76 Personal contact, July 2013.
- 77 Study participant's personal contact, 2013.
- 78 Study participant's personal contact, 2012.
- 79 RSCN, *Annual report 2011*, 13; UNDP, *Jordan Poverty Reduction Strategy*.
- 80 Personal contact, 2012.
- 81 Department of Statistics 2010, Amman.
- 82 Personal contact, 2012.
- 83 Hatton and MacManamon, *Cultural Resource Management*.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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