

THE 1927–1938 ITALIAN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPEDITION
TO TRANSJORDAN IN
RENATO BARTOCCINI'S
ARCHIVES

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Foreword

This volume presents the results of the Italian excavations and surveys carried out in Transjordan between 1927 and 1938.

After a first excavation campaign conducted in 1927 on the Amman Citadel by Giacomo Guidi (Rome 1884–Tripoli 1936), the excavations were resumed in 1929 by Renato Bartoccini (Rome 1893–Rome 1963). He carried out four campaigns on the Citadel in 1929, 1930, 1933 and 1938. He also travelled across modern Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, taking photos and writing reports on several archaeological sites.

The excavations by Guidi and Bartoccini were the first to be carried out on the Amman Citadel, after a few previous surveys performed by travellers in the XIX and early XX centuries.

All the main monuments visible since then on the Citadel and in the surrounding area were investigated by the Italian expedition: the Umayyad Palace and its Audience Hall, as well as the Roman Temple, the Byzantine Church, the Odeon, the Nymphaeum, one of the main gates of the Citadel and two large cisterns. Deep soundings were also performed in the south-eastern terrace, in order to reach the Pre-Roman strata.

No publications by Guidi regarding his work are known, while Bartoccini published a few notes and reports, but almost all the original documentation of his excavations was still unpublished at the time this study was conducted.

After a survey carried out in 2011–2013 in several private and public institutions in Italy, the main sources of information concerning the Italian Expedition were studied and collated.

The main source of data is the Fondo Renato Bartoccini, i.e. the private archive of Bartoccini, today held by the Dipartimento di Lettere – Lingue, Letterature e Civiltà Antiche e Moderne (Department of Arts – Ancient and Modern Languages, Literature and Civilisations) of the University of Perugia, while other useful documents are held by the Centro di Documentazione e Ricerca sull'Archeologia dell'Afri-

ca Settentrionale (Centre of Documentation and Research on North-African Archaeology) of the University of Macerata. Furthermore, Bartoccini brought some decorated Islamic pottery from the excavations on the Citadel to the Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche in Faenza (International Museum of Ceramics in Faenza). A few more documents useful for the study are held in some other archives, as detailed below.

The importance of Bartoccini's archives is clearly evident, both with regard to his research on the Citadel and to his survey trips. His description of the monuments is fundamental to understand their state of preservation at the time of their first excavation. The photos he took are also extremely useful for evaluating the monuments correctly and will certainly be of use for future restoration works.

Now that field research is often hindered by both budget constraints and the difficult political situations in many regions of the Middle East, the study of early photo-archives concerning past excavations can deeply enhance our knowledge of Near Eastern archaeology.

We believe that publishing Bartoccini's archive on the Amman excavations, therefore, is first and foremost an obligation, in order to provide the scientific community with the results of one of the earliest archaeological expeditions in the Near East (actually the first official Italian excavation in the Levant) but we also hope it will be able to increase scholar's interest in conducting research on the many archives concerning Near Eastern archaeology that still wait to be published.

Acknowledgments

This work profited from the assistance of several colleagues.

Jehad Haroun, from the Department of Antiquities of Jordan, strongly supported our work, providing useful information and advice and allowing photo-surveys to be carried out on the Citadel. Tawfiq Hunaiti, from the same Department, was

an invaluable helper and supporter during our stays in Amman. All our Jordan colleagues helped us work in the best possible environment, allowing us to carry out our archaeological research successfully.

We wish to thank Agnese Massi and Silvia Forti, who provided us with excellent support for checking the Perugia and the Macerata archives respectively.

Claudia Casali, Valentina Mazzotti, Claudia Epifani, Elena Giacometti and the whole staff of the Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche in Faenza allowed us to retrieve and study the pottery held in the Museum, and Sabrina Gualtieri from the CNR – Istituto di Scienza e Tecnologia dei Materiali Ceramici (Institute of Science and Technology for Ceramic Materials) in Faenza performed the archaeological analyses on a sample of the pottery.

We would also like to thank the colleagues and staff of a number of institutions who provided us

with valuable information on specific documents found in the archives. In particular: Nadja Cholidis, Peter M. Fischer, Maria Cristina Guidotti, Gisela Helmecke, Harald Hauptmann, Lavinia Martin Simoncelli, Carol Palmer, Alastair Northedge, Barbara Porter, Letizia Sagù, Jane E. Shepherd and Amara Thornton.

Furthermore, Lidia Bettini helped us translate some letters and documents from Arabic, Lisa Josephine Brucciani reviewed the English text of the volume, Francesco Saliola and Fernando Guerrini helped us digitise the photos, Adele Bill, Piero Gilento, Giuseppe Labisi and Alexander Verlinsky provided useful bibliographic sources.

Finally, the publication of the book in this series was made possible thanks to the valuable and continuous assistance of David Davison from Archaeopress.

To all of them, our most sincere thanks.

Florence, 30 March 2015

Stefano Anastasio & Lucia Botarelli

Renato Bartoccini and his Archives

Stefano Anastasio

Renato Bartoccini

Renato Bartoccini was born in Rome, on 25 August 1893. He studied at the Sapienza University of Rome but had to interrupt his studies to join the Italian Army during World War I. He managed nonetheless, to earn his degree in archaeology in 1917, with a thesis on ancient numismatics.

His research in North African and Near Eastern archaeology started in 1920, when he was in charge of the study of a number of Islamic monuments near Cairo, in Egypt. In the same year, he was appointed supervisor of the Superintendency for antiquities in Libyan Tripolitania, at that time an Italian colony. He served as Superintendent between 1923 and 1928, focusing his activity on the excavations of Sabrata and Leptis.

He returned to Italy in 1928, working initially in Ravenna and then, from 1933 onwards, in Apulia as director of the Archaeological Museum of Taranto and then as Superintendent of antiquities for the entire region. This is the period of his life when he also organised and carried out the expedition in Transjordan. It was probably due to his work in Apulia that the excavations in Amman proceeded in fits and starts, at least compared to the research he had carried out in Tripolitania.

In 1940 Italy entered World War II, and Bartoccini was appointed Superintendent of antiquities in Rhodes, where he performed excavation and protection works in Lindos and Kameiros.

After the death of his son Franco, killed while fighting as a pilot of the Italian Air Force, Bartoccini asked to return to Italy and was posted at the Superintendency of Lombardy in 1941. However, following a turn of events in the war, Bartoccini was recruited once again in the Army. After the signature of the armistice by the Italians on 8 September 1943, Bartoccini endorsed the Italian Social Republic, also known as the Republic of Salò, and turned his attention mainly to protecting artworks from war damage.

Due to his participation in the Republic of Salò, he was tried by the Commissione di Epurazione (Purging Commission) of the Ministry for Public Education in 1946, but was released in 1948.

After the war, Bartoccini closed his career in Rome, where he was appointed Superintendent for Southern Etruria in 1950. He retired in 1960. During this period he renewed his activities in Libya, carrying on an expedition at Leptis in 1952. However, he devoted his time mainly to his work in Rome, focusing especially on the re-arrangement of the Museum of Villa Giulia. There is no information about any further trip to Jordan. He died in Rome, just a few years after his retirement, on 9 October 1963.¹

The Archives

Bartoccini carried out four campaigns on the Amman Citadel, between 1929 and 1938, after a previous excavation performed by Giacomo Guidi in 1927. No publications by Guidi on his work are known, while Bartoccini published a few notes and reports.² Although scholars have recently published contributions³ focusing on the topics of Bartoccini's research, almost all the original documentation covering his research has remained unpublished.

For this reason, a survey was carried out between September 2011 and October 2013 by the authors, with the aim to recover the still existing documentation. Bartoccini, in fact, kept an accurate and detailed file of his work in Transjordan, despite the fact that he never edited a complete publication of it. Unless new documents are unexpectedly discovered, the list of retrieved documents seems to be complete, according to the notes left by Bartoccini

¹ For a detailed biography on Bartoccini, see Caputo 1965; Moretti 1964; Pappalardo 2012; Rinaldi Tufi 1988; Romanelli 1963; 1964-1965.

² See Bartoccini 1930a; 1930b; 1932a; 1932b; 1933-1934; 1934; 1935; 1938; 1941.

³ In particular, Almagro 1983b and Parapetti 2008.

himself: "... the excavation work has been recorded in 50 drawings by the architects Ceschi and Schettini, as well as over 500 photos. We also performed surveys on 4000 km of hard desert tracks, two trips through Palestine and three in Syria, up to Palmyra. During these travels, the Mission took more than 2000 photos ..." ⁴ The survey involved several private and public institutions in Italy, in all the cities where Bartoccini worked – or at least with which he had working contacts – after 1930. ⁵

The main sources of data are the Fondo Renato Bartoccini (the archive held by the Dipartimento di Lettere – Lingue, Letterature e Civiltà Antiche e Moderne of the University of Perugia) and the pottery collection held at the Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche in Faenza.

The former is Bartoccini's private archive, donated by his daughter to the University of Perugia after her father's death. It consists of several hand- and typewritten documents (excavation journals included), 777 photos (prints), 78 drawings (mainly of architecture and pottery) and 7 maps. Most of the photos are glued on paper sheets and handcaptioned (fig. 3). This photographic documentation system was also developed by other archaeologists who worked in the same period, the best example being the photo-albums created by John Garstang to document the 1930s excavations in Jericho. ⁶

All the documents were inventoried and catalogued by the authors for the purposes of this study and most of the data used for this publication were taken from Bartoccini's private archive.

Regarding the second source, Bartoccini brought some decorated Islamic pottery from the excavations on the Citadel to the Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche in Faenza. Part of this material went lost during the World War II air raids; nonetheless, a survey carried out in November 2012 and October 2013 in Faenza, allowed 48 decorated pottery items to be retrieved, which are illustrated in figs. 380-388.

⁴ Translated from the Italian text in Bartoccini 1941, p. 9.

⁵ Perugia, Macerata, Rome, Ravenna, Bologna, Taranto, Bari and Faenza. A search was also performed at the Scuola Archeologica Italiana di Atene (SAIA) in Athens, but no significant documents were found in the institute's archive (see note below).

⁶ See an example in Bohrer 2011, pp. 120-121, fig. 67.

A further interesting archive is held at the Centro di Documentazione e Ricerca sull'Archeologia dell'Africa Settentrionale of the University of Macerata. It is composed of architectural drawings and photos, without any written text. These documents were sorted by Bartoccini while he was Superintendent in Rome in the 1950s, before being merged into the archive of the Centro di Documentazione dell'Archeologia Africana (African Archaeology Documentation Centre) in Florence, between 1966 and 1968. Finally, they were taken over by Antonio Di Vita, director of the Scuola Archeologica Italiana di Atene (Italian School of Archaeology at Athens) between 1977-2000, who brought them to Macerata in 2001. ⁷

Despite the huge amount of photos held in this archive, its contribution to the reconstruction of the excavations in Amman is moderate. Almost all the photos and drawings are the same as those held in Perugia (indeed, only three drawings from the Macerata archives were considered of interest and are reported here, i.e. in figs. 73, 166 and 226). Then again, this archive has an extremely large amount of photos from other sites visited by Bartoccini. Unfortunately, only the architectural drawings have been inventoried to date, not the photos. They cannot be used, therefore, for study and publication. A proposal by the authors to provide an inventory catalogue, as well as to digitise the photos during this study was not accepted, due to organisational and bureaucratic reasons. However, thanks to the cooperation of the Management of the Centre and to the support of the assistant keeper Silvia Forti, the whole material was surveyed in November 2012.

The set of inventoried architectural drawings consists of 57 original drawings, in most cases heliographic copies too, for a total amount of 118 inventories. With regard to the photos, we checked

⁷ On the Centro di Documentazione dell'Archeologia Africana see Forti 2009, especially p. 173. We would like to thank Silvia Forti for the information on the history of the archive in Macerata. Interestingly, at least part of the documents transited, temporarily, through the Scuola Archeologica Italiana di Atene (SAIA). In fact, several architectural drawings now in Macerata were labelled SAIA+AMMAN+number on the rear. However, a search carried out in the SAIA archives gave no results on documents related to Bartoccini's activities in Jordan.

2178 photos attached on sheets and labelled with number and indication of the topographical subject. They depict several Near East locations, mainly in Jordan. In addition to these photos, the archive also holds many loose photos, although in most cases they consist of printed copies of the same original shots but in different formats.

Concerning the sites outside Amman, the following were spotted: Abd Azraq (3 photos), Baalbeck (234 photos), Dat Ras (14 photos), el-Kerak (2 photos), el-Lejjun (3 photos), Jerash (91 photos), Hallabat (2 photos), Madaba (3 photos), Mount Nebo (66 photos), Mushatta (8 photos), Nahr el-Kelb (8 photos), Petra (80 photos), Qasr al-Harana (9 photos), Qusayr Amra (6 photos), Umm el-Jimal (10 photos), and Umm el-Surab (1 photo).

Further documents of use to the study are situated in two archives in Rome: the correspondence between the Italian archaeologists working in foreign countries and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is deposited in the Archivio Storico Diplomatico

(Diplomatic Historical Archive) of the Ministry, which controlled and directed the activities of all the Italian expeditions abroad during the 1930s,⁸ while the letters and reports of the Archivio Centrale di Stato (Central State Archive) contain interesting documents regarding the Bartoccini's career.⁹

The following pages will provide an overview of the history of the expedition and will present the excavation data, based on the information gathered in all the above mentioned archives and sources, as well as in the reports drawn up by Bartoccini and already published.

A complete list of the digitised documents in the Fondo Bartoccini of Perugia is available in the Appendix (pp. 219-235).

As mentioned, the majority of documents quoted – both photos and written works – belong to the Fondo Renato Bartoccini in Perugia. Their inventory number, consisting of the acronym PGB followed by the catalogue number, is always indicated in the footnotes and in the captions of the figures.

⁸ Classification: Serie Affari Politici, Italia 1933 busta 19 fasc. 6 e Italia 1935, busta 32, fasc. 12.

⁹ Classification: Divisione I, Personale cessato al 1956, b. 202 and Divisione I, Personale cessato al 1972, Soprintendenti, fasc. 20.