



# **The Mediterranean tradition between artistic craftsmanship & the frontiers of design**

*By Suleiman Farajat*



**Petra** had been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1985, due to it's Unique Outstanding Universal Values.

**Petra** is one of the most famous ancient cities in the Mediterranean area.

**The main values of this unique city are:**

- **Historical**
- **Geological**
- **Cultural**
- **Environmental**
- **Economic**



# Neolithic (c. 7,000 BC)



# Edomite

(c. 1200 - 600 BC)

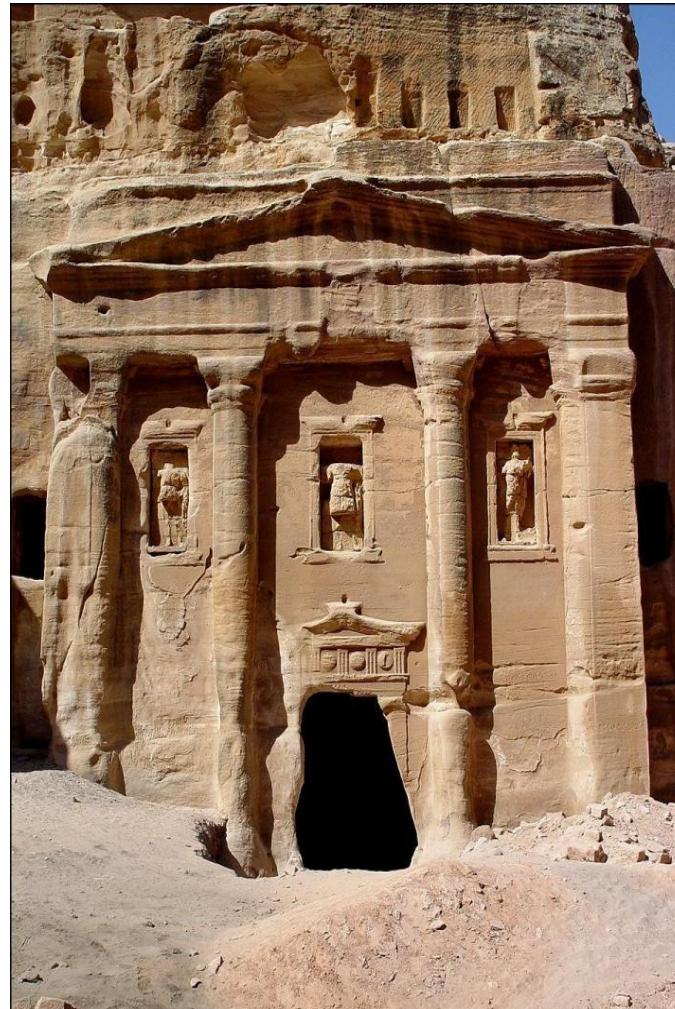
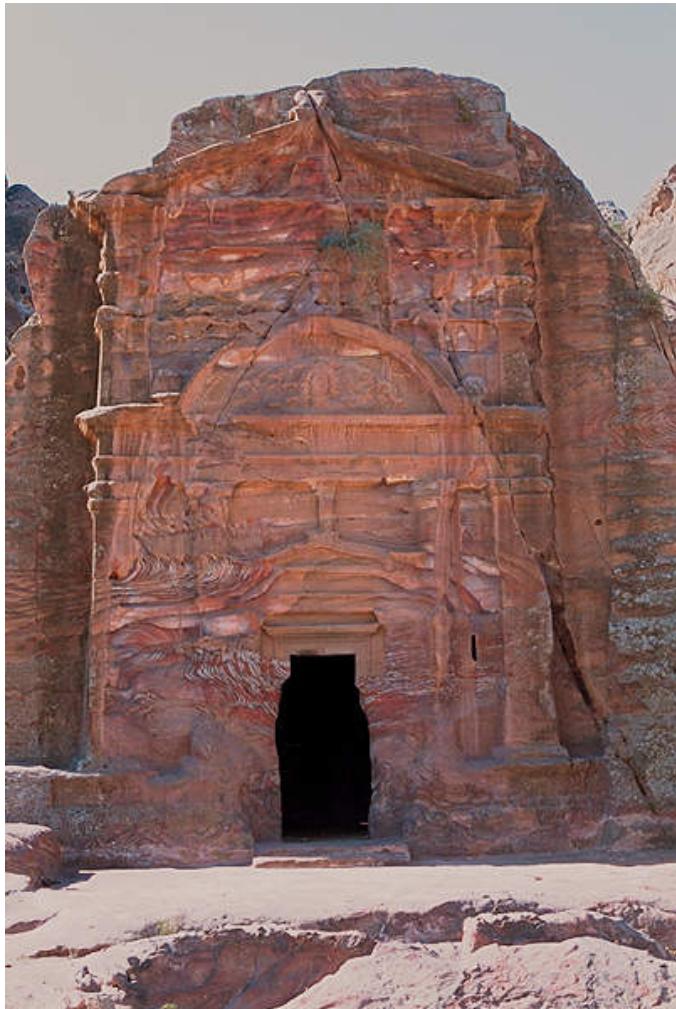


# Nabataean

(c. 300 BC – 100 AD)



## Roman (c. 106 AD – 324 AD)



Byzantine (c. 324 AD - 636 AD)



## Crusaders (c. 1115 AD)

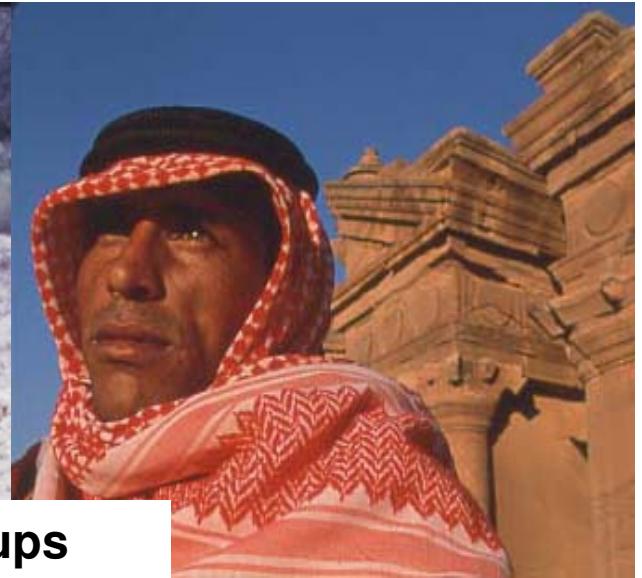


# Islamic



# Geological value:





**Home to a number of tribal groups**



**Home to a wide variety of flora.....**



## And fauna





**An income for the region and the country**



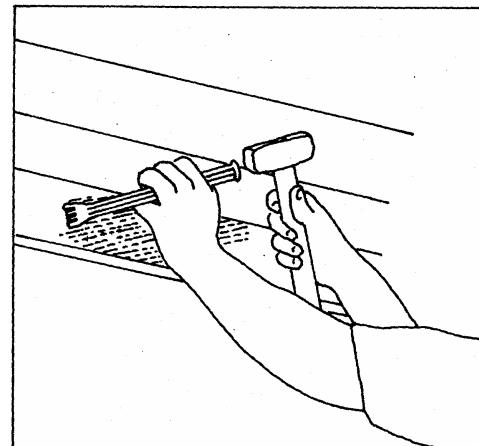
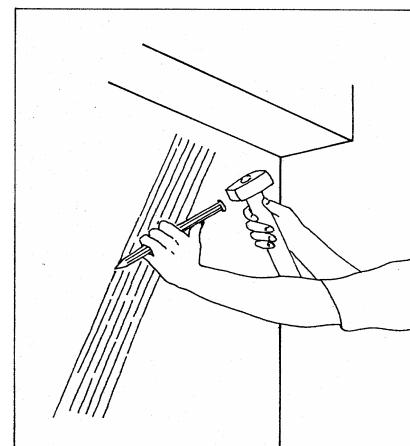
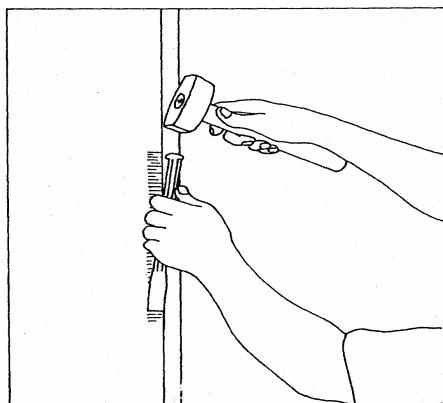
Petra was among some of other ancient Mediterranean cities which had a tradition exchange with other cultures like Egyptians, Assyrians, Hellenistic and Roman



The mission of the young generation today is to preserve the heritage of their grand fathers for future generation.



The grandsons today learn by imitating their ancient Nabataean grand fathers.





**In 1999 ICOMOS, The International Cultural Tourism Charter has confirmed that:**

Tourism should bring benefits to host communities and provide an important means and motivation for them to care for and maintain their heritage and cultural practices.

**So one of the objectives of the charter is to facilitate and encourage the tourism industry to promote and manage tourism in ways that respect and enhance the heritage and living cultures of host communities.**

Therefore USAID tourism development project supported local communities in Petra region by allocating a special community development program.

## This program and the proposed projects aim to:

- Preserve and conserve the archaeological site by eliminating negative practices of local community members working on the site.
- **Diversify authentic cultural tourism experiences** - Enhance quality and diversity of products and services available for the tourists visiting the region, specifically in the area of handicrafts, guiding, hospitality, and site presentation.
- **Improve local community engagement in Site preservation** - Optimizing local communities' participation in, and benefits from, the sustainable development of the tourism sector

**•Tourism comprises the main source of livelihoods for communities of the Petra region**

**•There are several local community organizations in Petra region which are engaged in income-generating projects:**

1. NABATEAN WOMEN'S COOPERATIVE OF WADI MOUSA
2. BAIDAH TOURISM AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL COOPERATIVE SOCIETY (AMMARIN)
3. TAYBEH WOMEN COOPERATIVE, TAYBEH
4. BEIT AL-ANBAT SOCIETY, WADI MOUSA

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## NABATEAN WOMEN'S COOPERATIVE OF WADI MOUSA

This 40-member women's cooperative was established in 1999. It focuses on the production and sale of silver artifacts to wholesalers and tourists through their modest retail outlet on the main tourism street. Twenty women are employed in this workshop.

The Cooperative's products reflect the rich cultural heritage of the area.



# Impacts

- 1- Improved quality of authentic and locally made crafts
- 2- Increased level of sales through retail and distribution
- 3- Up to 15 female workers will benefit economically through wages and salaries
- 4- Up to 40 members of the Cooperative will benefit from increased profits.





The Silver work links the present with the past





*An imitation for the ancient Nabataean jewelry*



2

## **BAIDAH TOURISM AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL COOPERATIVE SOCIETY (AMMARIN)**

This 125 male and female member Society represents the Bedouin Ammarin tribe that lives within the PAP and owns and operates a successful Bedouin campsite in a captivating natural setting in close proximity to archaeological sites and monuments, known as Al Baidah. The cooperative also offers trekking and caravan excursions in the area. The Ammarin village houses approximately one thousand inhabitants who derive their income mainly from herding *and* tourism.



**Handicraft Development:**  
Establish a weaving and textiles activity for the production of traditional dolls; Fund handicraft training program by hiring village elderly women to train youth on weaving and other traditional crafts.

# Impacts

1. Provide tourists with better access to traditional crafts and various activities available in the area. This promotes increased length of stay and activities in the region.
2. Support women-based handicraft income generating activities and preservation of local heritage.
3. Increased promotion of the Ammarin weaving and textiles center.

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## TAYBEH WOMEN COOPERATIVE, TAYBEH



The 50-member Taybeh Women Cooperative was established in 2005 to enhance the quality of life of women and their families in the Petra/ Taybeh area through the production of handmade pottery products that resemble ancient Nabatean designs.



**Imitation for the above  
Nabataean painted pottery**

# Impacts

- 1- Strengthen the Cooperative's long term ability to better manage and market itself
- 2- Enhance the skill set of the Cooperative's members

## BEIT AL-ANBAT SOCIETY, WADI MOUSA

Beit Al-Anbat is an NGO comprised of academics, tourism professionals, guides, journalists and individuals interested in the Nabatean history and culture. It has a potential to grow and expand its membership base in the areas of cultural programs, public awareness (both locally and internationally), and developing distinguished income generating projects.

# Impacts

1. Support the startup of a successful handicraft project that will create employment and income generation opportunities initially for up to 10 women.
2. Provision of assistance to other handicraft producers in the Petra region, serving a client base of 100 or more with design and handicraft marketing services.
3. Enhance marketing of locally manufactured crafts to be sold in Petra and Jordan.

## ICOMOS states that

- The promotion, distribution and sale of local crafts and other products should provide a reasonable social and economic return to the host community, while ensuring that their cultural integrity is not degraded.
- Traditional crafts are a valuable cultural resource. Craftspersons, already with high level manual skills, should be further trained for conservation work with instruction in the history of their craft, historic details and practices, and the theory of conservation with the need for documentation. Many historic skills will have to be recorded and revived.

## As a conclusion:

Not only achieving the vision of ICOMOS, but the artistic craftsmanship of the Nabataean grandsons today mirror that petra was a universal center for tradition exchange, so those grandsons approve that they are the best friends for their heritage

Finally cultural heritage site is non renewable resource once it's gone - it's gone for ever - so for sure helping the local communities will help preserving their cultural legacy (PETRA).

