











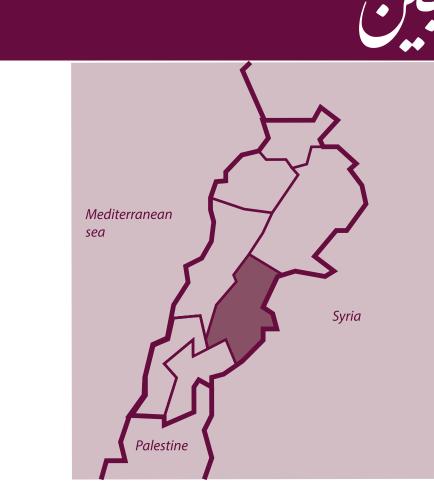
RASHAYA

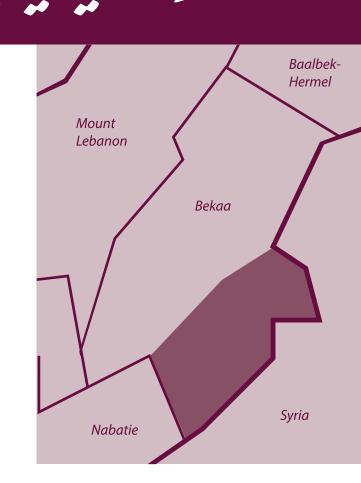
THE PHOENICIANS' ROUTE

INTRODUCTION

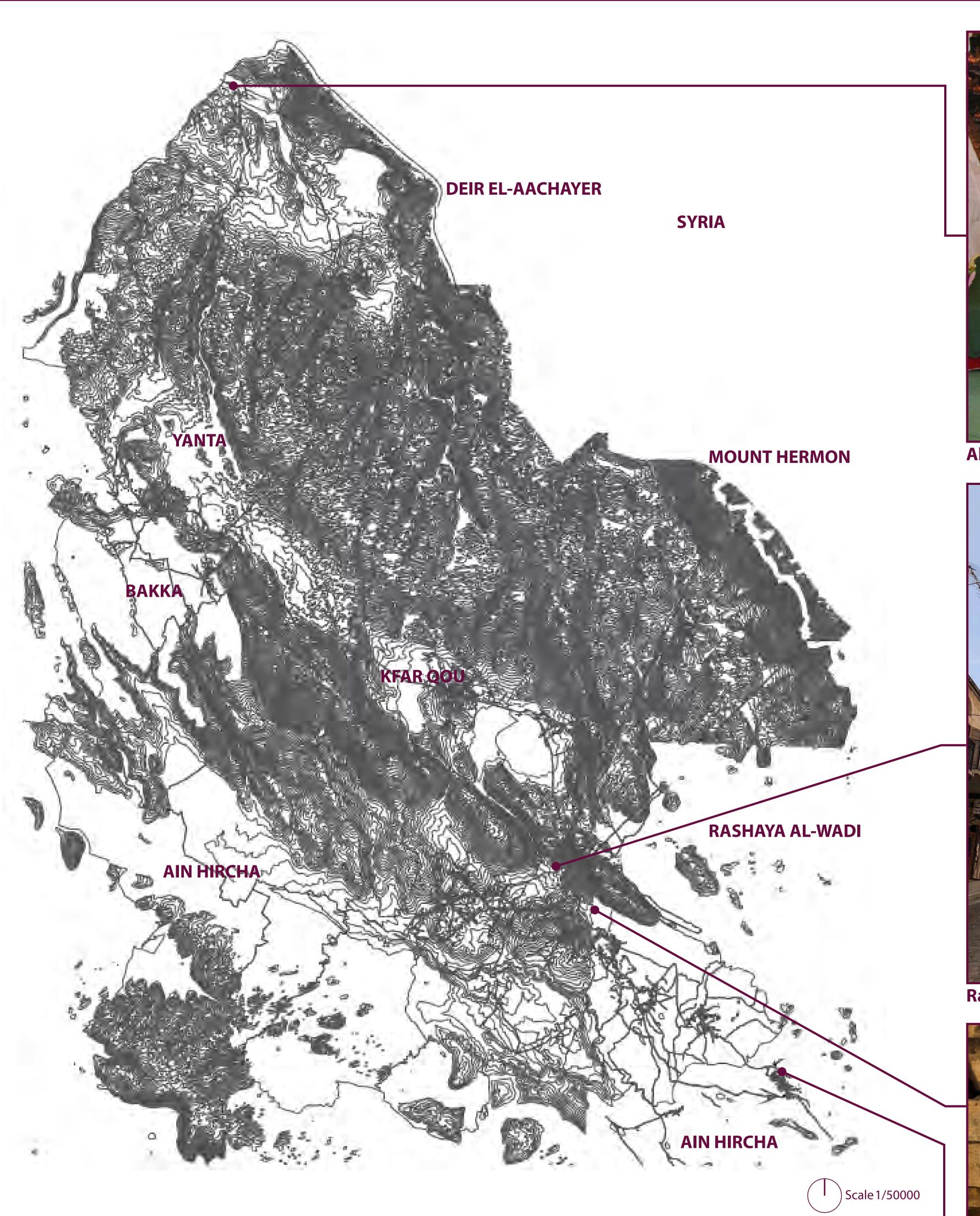
Caza Rashaya has a rich historical archaeological background. Tools dating back to the Palaeolithic and Heavy Neolithic were found near the town of Qaraoun. In addition, Neolithic flints were found in the hills near Rashaya Al-Wadi. Moreover, the Caza has many temples in the area of Mount Hermon dating back to the Phoenician, Roman, and Greek Periods in the villages of Ain Hircha, Yanta, Bakka, Kfar Qouq, Deir El-Aachayer and Kfarmeshki. During the different site visits, only some of the temples were still accessible and standing, and none of them are well preserved. By comparing images from around 10 to 40 years ago, it is noticeable how the sites are left non-chalantly to be damaged and vandalised.

The purpose of this extensive research is to shed the light on the importance of Caza Rashaya in terms of history. Thus, impelling the Ministries of Tourism and Culture to act in preserving the sites and allowing them to become official touristic sites that allow an exposure of Caza Rashaya to the whole world.



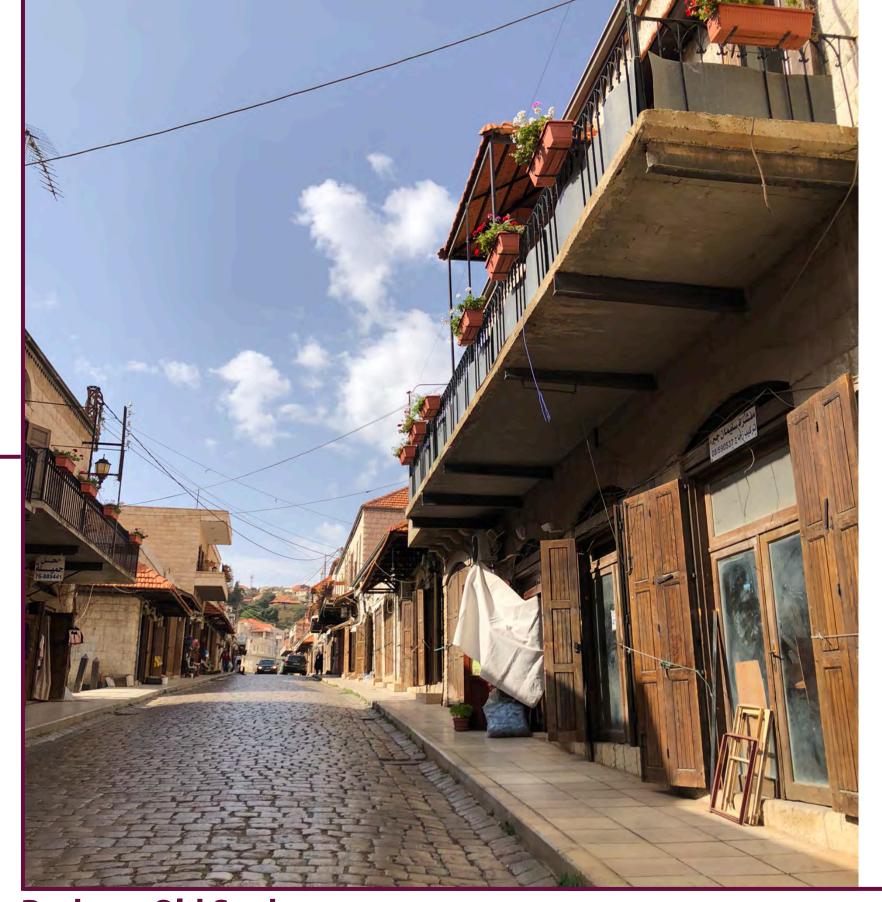


HISTORICAL MAPPING



Abel Sarcophagus

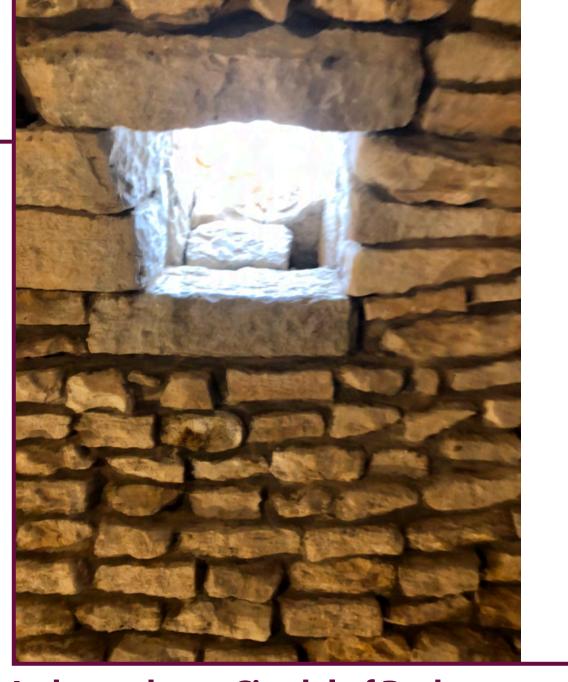
Cain said to Abel, his brother, "Let us go out to the field", and when they were in the field, Cain rose against Abel and killed him. And the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" And he said, "I do not know: am I my brother's keeper?" And He said, "What have you done? Listen! your brother's blood cries out to me from the soil. And so, cursed shall you be by the soil that gaped with its mouth to take your brother's blood from your hand. If you till the soil, it will no longer give you strength. A restless wanderer shall you be on the earth." Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is too great to bear. Now that You have driven me this day from the soil I must hide from Your presence, I shall be a restless wanderer on the earth and whoever finds me will kill me". The Lord said to him, "Therefore whoever kills Cain shall suffer sevenfold vengeance", the Lord set a mark upon Cain so that whoever found him would not slay him.

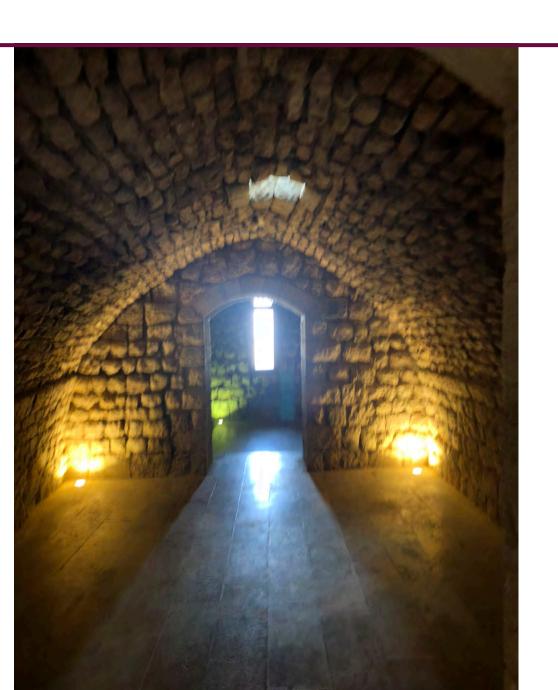


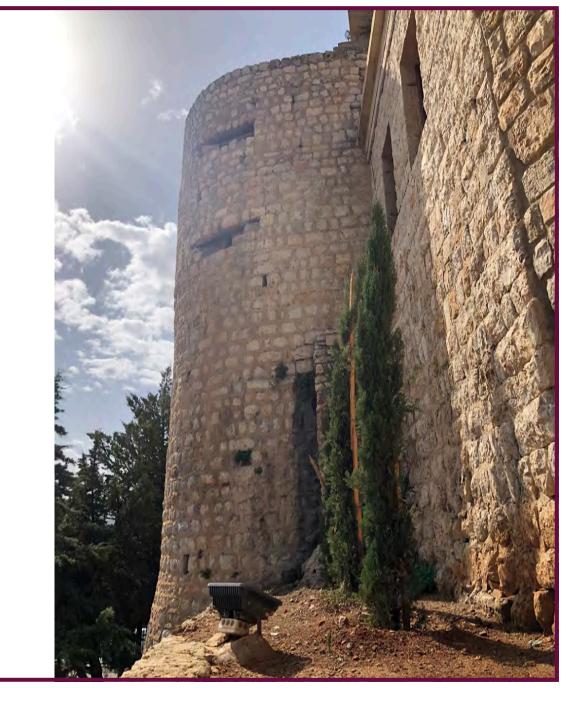
The historical old souk of Rashaya is one of the longest (250 m) and oldest souks of Lebanon still well preserved to this day. It dates to the 17th century and is still paved with the old rocks that are numbered on the back. The Souk opens the opportunity for the villagers to sell their local goods and crafts such as molasses and stove making. Finally, the Souk has an important architectural and historical significance.



Rashaya Old Souk

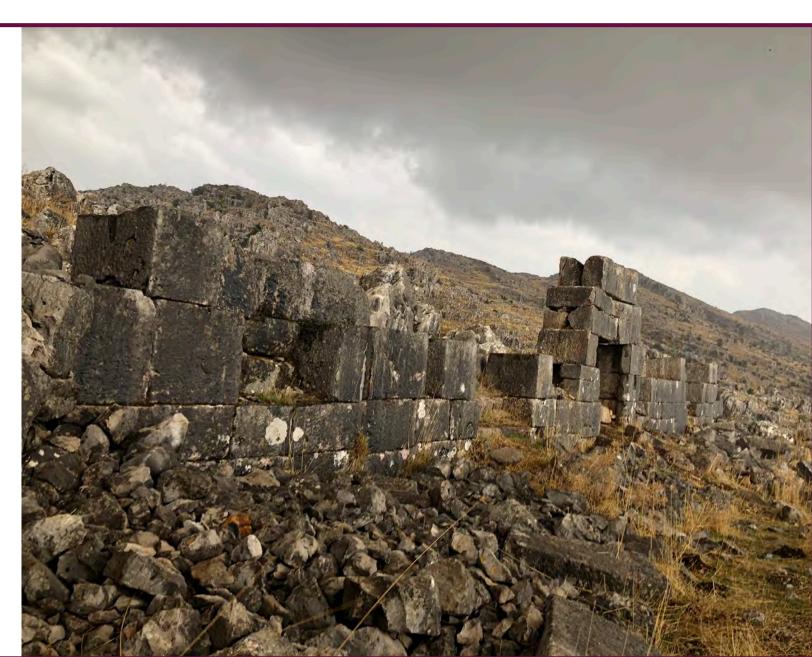






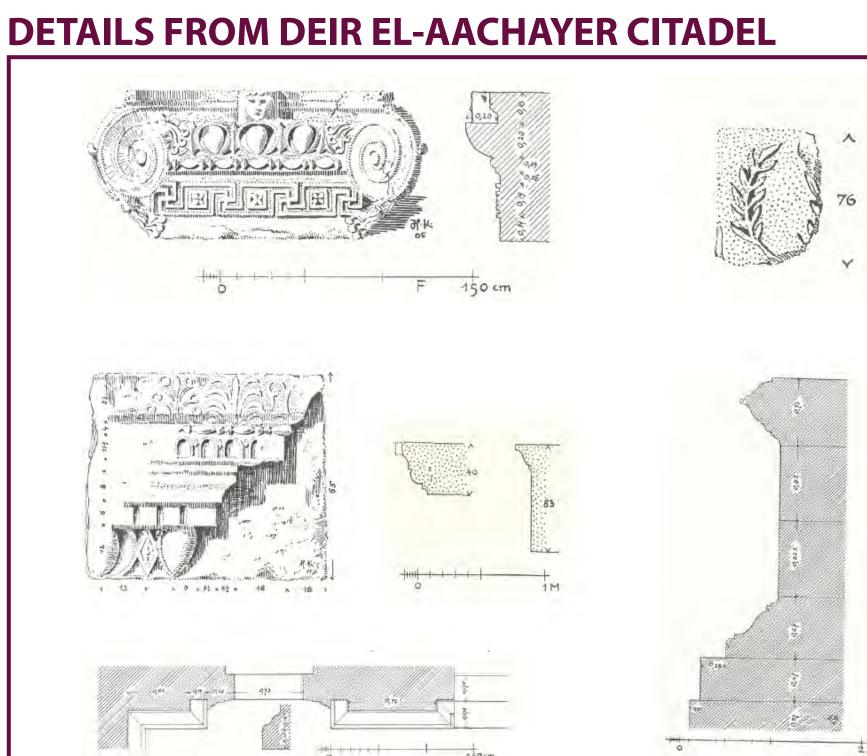
Bronze Age 3000 – 1200 B.C. Ottoman Period 1516 – 1919 A.D. Neolithic Age 24,000 – 3000 B.C. Greek - Roman Period 333 B.C. – 300 A.D. French Mandate 1920 - 1943 A.D. Phoenician Civilization (Iron Age) 1200 – 333 B.C.





Ain Hircha Temple

Legend



The drawings are details from the Citadel of Deir El-Aachayer in which intricates the work of ornamentation carved into stone. However, the site of the citadel is not accessible from Lebanon due to the dangerous location of Deir El-Aachayer, near the Syrian border.

The presence of this historical site so close to the border can be a stepping on stones to reach a certain peacefulness in the area by allowing tourists from Lebanon and

Syria to reach the site. Finally, conservation of the site is very important as seen in the drawings on the left, how important and detailed the work was.

CHRONOLOGY OF MAIN EVENTS

2100 B.C. - Epic of Gilgamesh

Hermoun and Lebanon split".

The Epic of Gilgamesh mentions that Mount Hermon split after

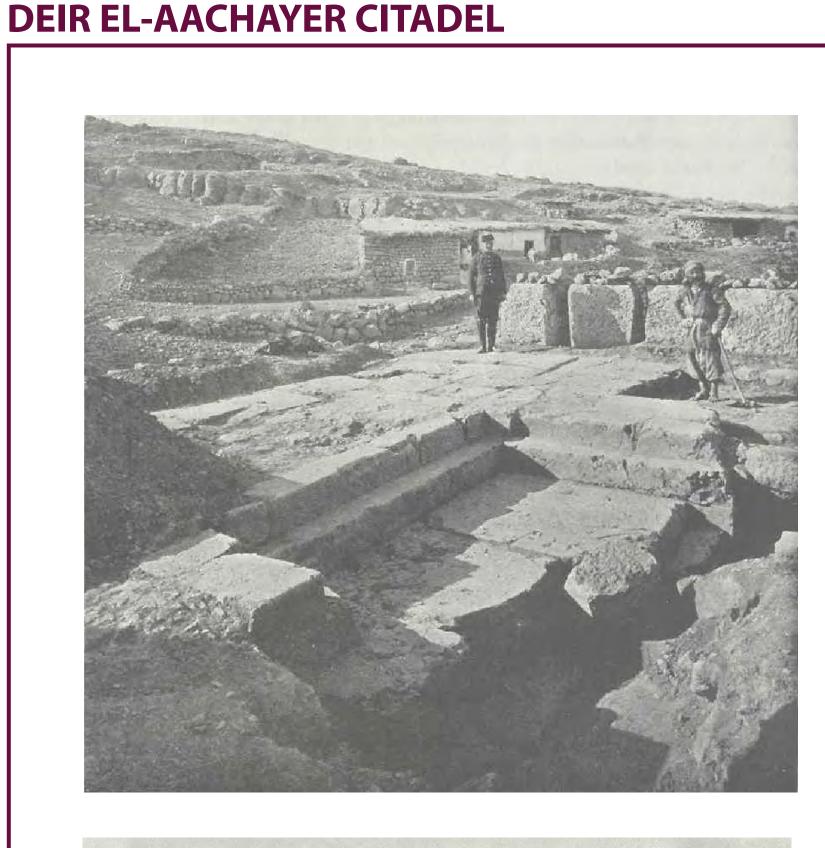
Gilgamesh killed Humbaba, the Guardian of the Cedar Forest.

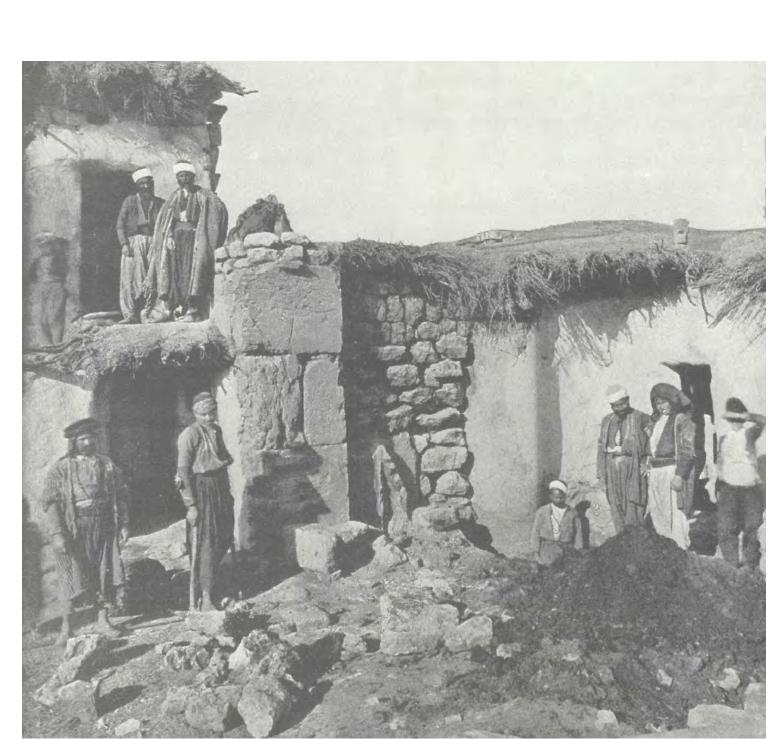
One translation of Tablet V states, "The ground split open with

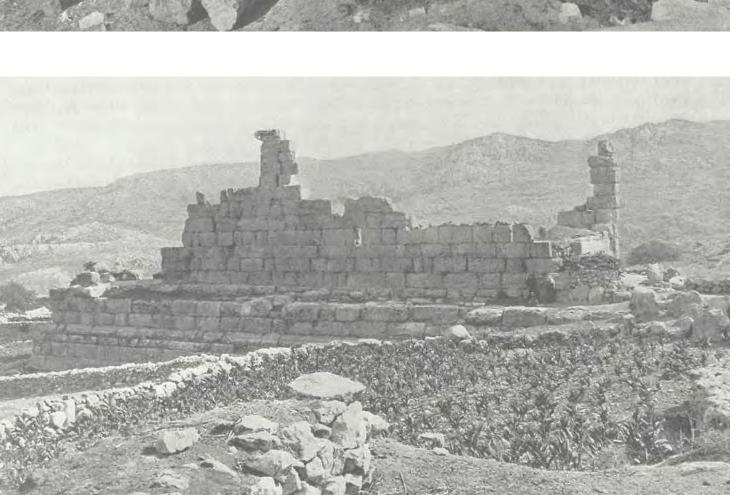
the heels of their feet, as they whirled around in circles Mount

4000 B.C. - Cain and Abel Nabi Habeel Mosque is believed to contain the grave of Abel (Arabic: Habeel), Son of Adam (according to the Old Testa-

ment). The mosque was built by the Ottoman Wali Ahmad Pasha in 1599. Inside the mosque is a 7 meters long sarcophagus covered with green silk tapestry inscribed with verses from the Qur'an, with some locals saying that this was the size of the world's builders, including Abel.







27 A.D. - Jesus Transfiguration

Mount Hermon was suggested by R.H. Fuller and J. lightfoot as the mountain where the transfiguration took place because it is the highest in the area, as described in the Bible on "a high mountain" and it is located near Caesarea Philippi where the previous events reportedly took place.

The Podium in the temple where the statue sits is typical of Phoenician temple typology, one of the the Phoenician - Canaanites god is named Ba'al Hermon which is derived from the name Mount Hermon, meaning "Lord of the Mount Hermoun".

114 A.D. - Greek Inscriptions Near Ain Hircha

Near the Temple of Ain Hircha, a stone with Greek inscription

translated to "Ancestral God, Alexander, son of Alexander, fol-

lowing a vow, with his wife, for his children, raised at his expense

this altar, the year 429" (according to L. Nordiguian, this date

1200 - 333 B.C. - Phoenician and Canaanite

According to Dr. Antoine Khoury Harb, traces of Phoenician

existence was found around the area in the temple of Ain Har-

cha. The architectural tools used to cut the stones were the

same technique of cutting stones used by the Phoenicians.

Period

1943 - Lebanese State

18th Century - Rashaya Citadel The Citadel was built by the Shihab family as a palace. The family was a Sunni family who used to rule Lebanon at the time.

Under the French Mandate, on 11 November 1943, the Free

French Troops imprisoned Bechara El-Khoury, Riad El-Solh,

Salim Takla, Camille Chamoun, Adel Osseiran and Abdelha-

mid Karameh in the Citadel of Rashaya until November 22,

1943. The National leaders were released and at the same day

and the declaration of independence was signed.

and Deir El-Aachayer

429 is referring to the date 114 A.D.).

1919 - Caza Rashaya Part of Lebanon The Lebanese Delegation led by Maronite Patriarch Elias Peter Hoayek added the Caza of Rashaya in addition to many other territories to the Lebanese boundaries as it is a part of natural Lebanon.

Historical Images from 1939 of Deir El-Aachayer Citadel

The images taken here are during the French Mandate around the year 1939, the citadel and in the historical sites around it. In addition, it is clear how the Citadel was standing tall in an empty lot which is no longer the case. Today, the citadel is surrounded by houses and not separated from the residential area. Which sheds the light on the importance of having zoning laws. In the Caza Rashaya there are no zoning laws which is dangerous to the area in terms of historical conservation; people can build wherever they want, whenever they want, with no thought to the importance of the archaeological sites being damaged.

EVALUATION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND HISTORICAL BUILDINGS

As seen from the mapping of the different important historical sites of the Caza Rashaya, the Ministries of Culture and Tourism are not shedding the light on how important the sites are. In some cases, the sites are being completely neglected; villagers are building over important historical ruins or vandalising the sites.

In addition, the sites in cases like Ain Hircha, Bakka, Yanta and Deir El-Aachayer are very important to preserve since the majority of the buildings are still standing and because they are close to the Syrian border. Therefore, tourists visit these sites which became a political issue allowing the border line between Syria and Lebanon to be re-opened to mainly touristic visits.

