











Mediterranean



SMARJBEIL THE PHOENICIANS' ROUTE

INTRODUCTION

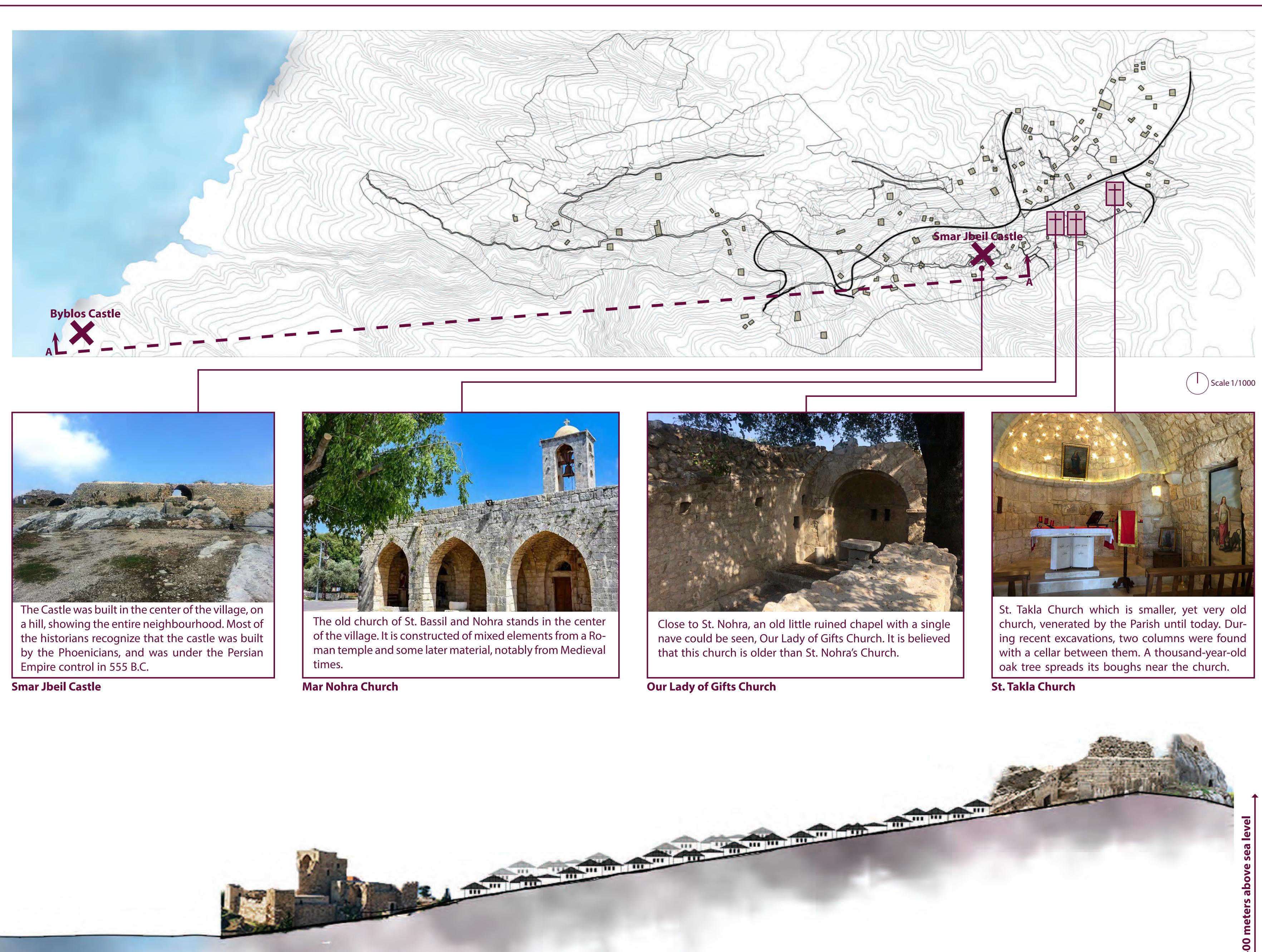
According to Dr. Henri Lammens in his book "طرش الأبصر على ما يحتوي لبنان من الأثر ", Smar Jbeil is one of the oldest Lebanese villages and the most significant in its history.

It has a very old castle at the western entrance of the village and built on a strategic hill. Showing from its western side, the Mediterranean coast from Jbeil to Tripoli, and from its eastern side the mountains

of Lebanon, especially the famous Cedars of God Mountain near Bcharri.

Under the supervision of North Lebanon Governate, exactly in the Batroun District and 500 meters above sea level.

HISTORICAL MAPPING



Smar Jbeil Overlooking Byblos Castle

Section AA



Byblos Castle ←

CHRONOLOGY OF MAIN EVENTS

26 Km



64 B.C. - 635 A.D. - Roman and Byzantine

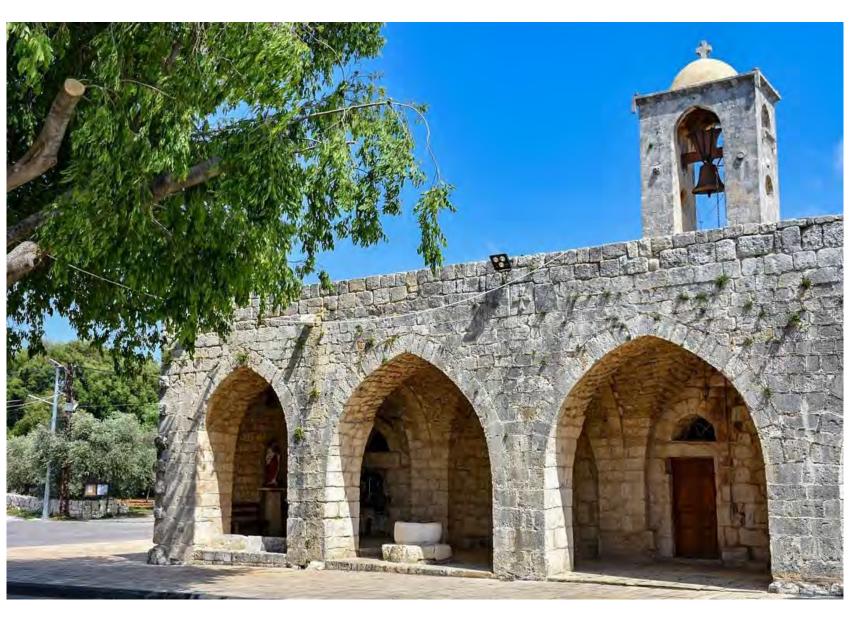
Period

The Roman troops conquered the village from its northern side under the leadership of Pompey the Great, probably during his Eastern campaign in 63 B.C. Till today, we can see some Roman statues in the castle as well as a Roman theater with its circular architecture. Phoenician citadel rebuilt by Ittobaal King of Tyre (887-856 B.C.).



636 - 696 A.D. - Islamic Period

The Arabs invaded the village after the crushing of the Byzantine Empire in the 9th century and controlled the village until the Crusaders attacked them from the Mediterranean Sea.



1516 - 1917 A.D. - Ottoman Period They were defeated in 1516 A.D. by the Ottomans. The Ottomans, under the Sultan Selim I, invaded the region and brought with them afterwards the Muslim Shiia to the heart of the Maronites (Eastern Catholic) region. They built a mosque on the eastern side of the castle. The village recover its Maronite identity in the next century and the mosque was turned into a residence place.

1200 - 333 B.C. - Phoenician and Canaanite Period

Most of the historians recognize that the Smar Jbeil Citadel was built by the Phoenicians, and was under the Persian Empire control in 555 B.C. Due to its Phoenician name and its meaning, it seems Smar Jbeil was a plot to guard and observe the Byblos citadel.

→ Smar Jbeil Castle

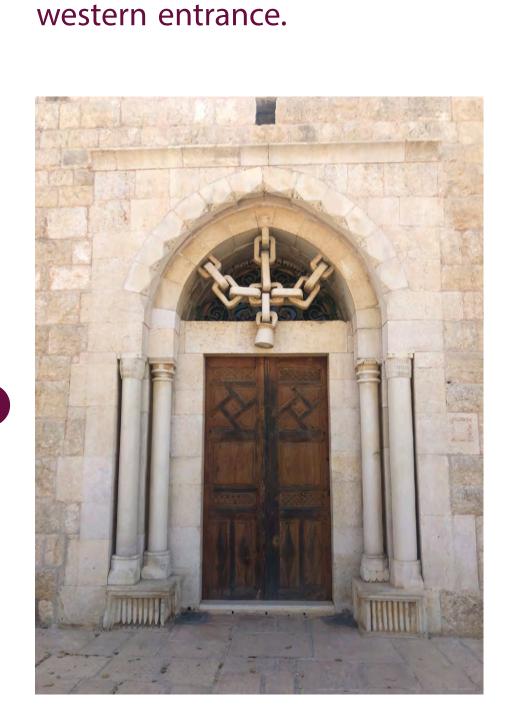


684 A.D. - The Maronite Period

The Maronites and their army (The Maradites), came to Smar Jbeil as a refuge place after centuries of persecution by Byzantines in Syria. They took control of the castle where they installed their patriarch. The first Patriarch Saint John Maron lived in Smar Jbeil castle before moving to Kfarhay.

1090 - 1099 A.D. - Crusader Period

The Crusaders demolished the old castle and built a new one called "Chateau Fort", meaning Strong Castle, because of its strategic location. They built a new church on the south eastern side of the castle. In addition, they remodelled the old church of St. Nohra, which was itself built on the ruins of an old Roman Temple. The church still has a Crusader Cross on its



EVALUATION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND HISTORICAL BUILDINGS

Smar Jbeil has one of the most beautiful citadels in Lebanon, yet it is not given enough credit by the Ministry of Culture. Even though some renovations have taken place, the lack of public knowledge about Smar Jbeil has left the citadel an unknown object. However, the people of Smar Jbeil did not neglect it, to them, the preservation of their village is a priority. Although people do not visit Smar Jbeil for its historical identity, the citizens did not fall back on keeping their history alive. Unlike the citadel of Byblos, it is not used as an economic input, and because of the lack of advertising, it is only visited by people who target it, which are a rare minority.

As for the churches, although they are considered landmarks, they are highly non-functional, as they are closed most of the time. And when opened, they are mostly targeted by the citizens.

