

1 Study and enhancement of the heritage value of a 2 fortified settlement along the Limes Arabicus.

3 *Umm ar-Rasas (Amman, Jordan) between remote*
4 *sensing analysis, photogrammetry and laser scanner*
5 *surveys.*

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19 ABSTRACT

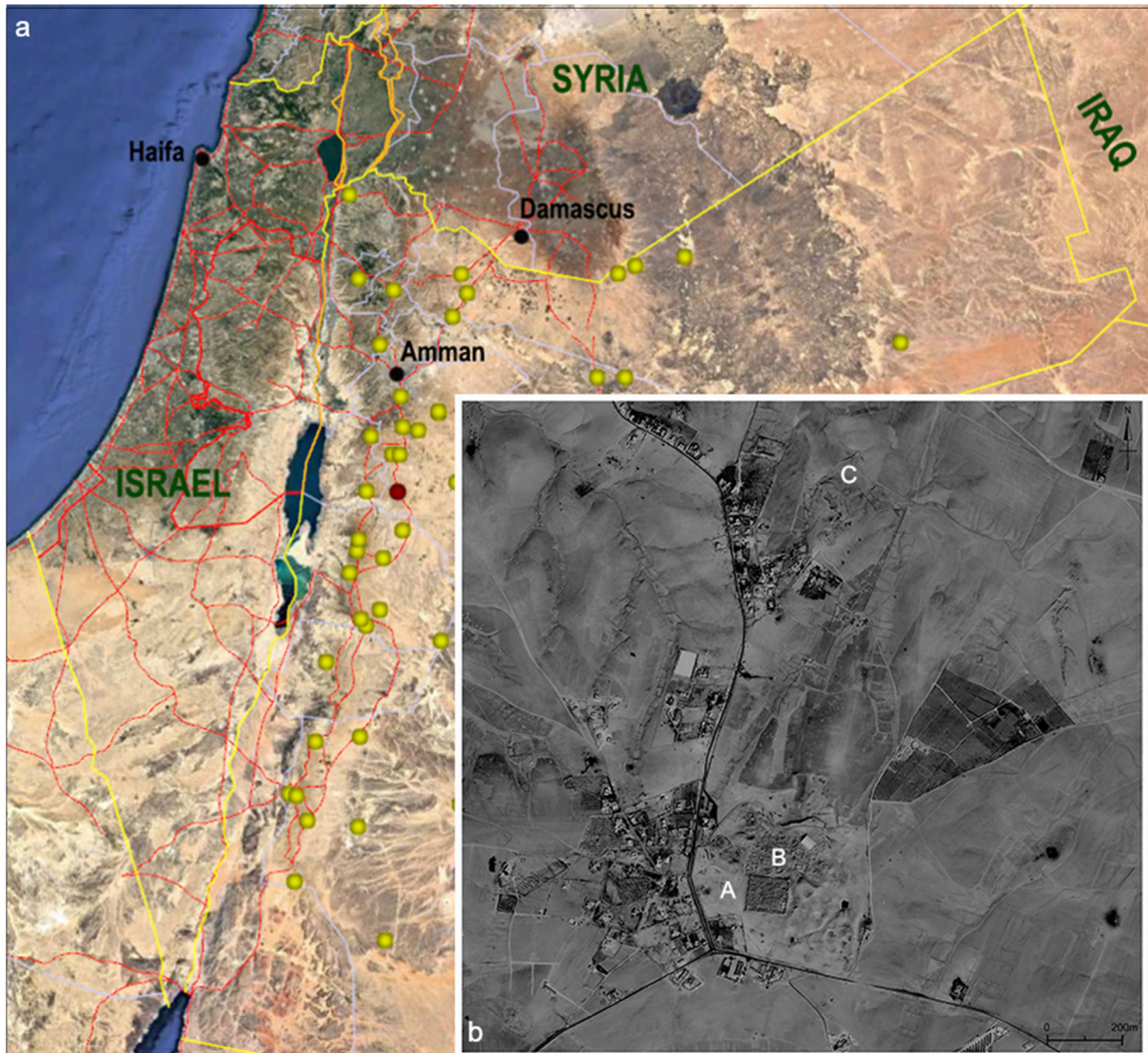
20 The *Limes Arabicus* provides an excellent opportunity to experiment with historical remote
21 sensing data in identifying and mapping fortified centres along the eastern frontier of the Roman
22 and Byzantine Empires. Remote sensing, combined with modern surveying techniques and tools
23 such as photogrammetry and laser scanners, enables the identification, documentation, and
24 study of ancient settlements. It also facilitates the development of site valorisation programmes,
25 including the design of real and virtual routes for better use of archaeological areas. This is a
26 preliminary contribution to the site of Umm ar-Rasas (Amman, Jordan), a fortified town located
27 to the east of the *Via Traiana Nova*. The paper discusses investigations conducted between 2021
28 and 2022. During this period, a series of analyses and elaborations were carried out on historical
29 and recent satellite data, including Corona KH-4B, Hexagon KH-9, Pléiades-1A, and Pléiades Neo-
30 4, as well as field research. The purpose was to document aerially recognized emergencies and
31 to survey and locate them from the ground. Moreover, a photogrammetric and laser scanner
32 survey of the *castrum* has been conducted in recent years.

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34
35 **Keywords:** *Limes Arabicus*, remote sensing analysis, high-resolution satellite images, laser scanner survey,
36 photogrammetry, historical landscape.

Introduction

38 Umm ar-Rasas, the current governorate of Amman, is situated approximately 30 kilometres southeast of
 39 Madaba (Fig. 1a). It is an archaeological site renowned for its Byzantine mosaics, which characterise its
 40 churches. These mosaics were excavated between the second half of the 1980s and the early 2000s.

41 The site is characterised by the presence of three settlement units: the castrum (A), which dates back to
 42 the end of the third and beginning of the fourth centuries AD; the Byzantine-Umayyad village, which is located
 43 to the north (B); and the Stylite tower complex, which is situated approximately 5 miles to the north (C) (Fig.
 44 1b).



45 **Figure 1 - a)** Site location (Google Earth ©, map by Francesca Di Palma). b) Framing of the archaeological area: castrum (A);
 46 Byzantine-Umayyad village (B); Stylite tower complex (C) (Pléiades 1-A from 30/10/2020, edited by Francesca Di Palma).

47

State of art

48 Umm ar-Rasas in Arabic means “mother of lead”. The toponym probably refers to the size and colour of
 49 the stones that distinguish the castrum. It was the destination of all explorations since 1800 (Burchardt 1822;
 50 Irby and Mangles 1823; Buckingham 1825; Robinson 1837; Seetzen 1854, Palmer 1871; Tristram 1874; Layard
 51 1887; Vailhé 1896; Germer-Durand 1897; Clermont-Ganneau 1898; Lagrange 1898; Wilson 1899; Brünnow and
 52 Domaszewski 1905; Musil 1907; Glueck 1934; Savignac 1936; Saller and Bagatti 1949). In 1986, two inscriptions
 53 discovered on two mosaic floors, in the Lion Church and St. Stephen's Church, permitted the site to be linked

54 to the biblical and historical KASTRON MEFA. Mefaat was the city of the Ruben tribe (Gs. 13, 18; 21, 37; 1Cr. 6,
55 64; Ger. 48, 21), the φρούριον mentioned in the Onomasticon of Eusebius (Onomasticon 128, 21) and the
56 Roman camp of Equites Promoti Indigenae mentioned in the Notitia Dignitatum (NotitiaDignitatum, p. 81, n.
57 19).

58 In 1939, the site was explored from the air by Sir Marc Aurel Stein. Between 1986 and 2006, the Studium
59 Biblicum Franciscanum of Jerusalem excavated the churches of the Byzantine village immediately north of the
60 castrum (Abela and Acconci 1997; Abela and Pappalardo 1998; 2002; 2004; Piccirillo 1986; 1987; 1988; 1989;
61 1991; 1992; 1995; 1996; 1997; 1999; 2001; 2002; 2003; 2006; Piccirillo and Alliata 1994; Piccirillo and Attiyat
62 1986; Piccirillo, Abela and Pappalardo 2005; 2007). Finally, the Swiss Max van Berchem Foundation (1988-
63 2000) studied a tiny portion of the castrum. The gates, particularly the east gate, as well as the south-east
64 portion of the walls, comprising the twin churches, were explored (Bujard 1992; Bujard 2008; Bujard and Joguin
65 1995; Bujard and Haldimann 1988). In 2004, Umm ar-Rasas was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site
66 (Abu Dayyeh 2002).

67 *The Kastrum Project*

68 In 2013, Roberto Gabrielli began a project aimed at documenting, enhancing, and musealizing the
69 archaeological area of Umm ar-Rasas (Fig. 2). Seven successful missions incorporating the churches of the Saint
70 Stephen complex and the Stylite Tower were carried out between 2013 and 2019 (Cozzolino et al. 2019;
71 Gabrielli et al. 2016; Malinverni et al. 2019). Various topographic reliefs were undertaken throughout those
72 years, as well as 3D surveys on structures and mosaic floors utilising GPS, photogrammetry, and laser scanners.
73 Several tests have been carried out over the years in order to establish a method that would allow for the
74 comprehensive documentation of the mosaic flooring in high resolution utilising photogrammetry techniques
75 with a significant number of pictures and approximately thirty scans for the church (Gabrielli et al. 2017).

76 Since 2021, the already multidisciplinary study team has expanded even more, and research on the castrum
77 and its surrounds has resumed, utilising remote sensing analyses and surveys (architectural, archaeological,
78 photogrammetric, and laser scanners).



79 **Figure 2** Kastrum Project, Umm ar-Rasas, 2013. Laser scanners and photogrammetric tests (Roberto Gabrielli ©).

80 *Research aims*

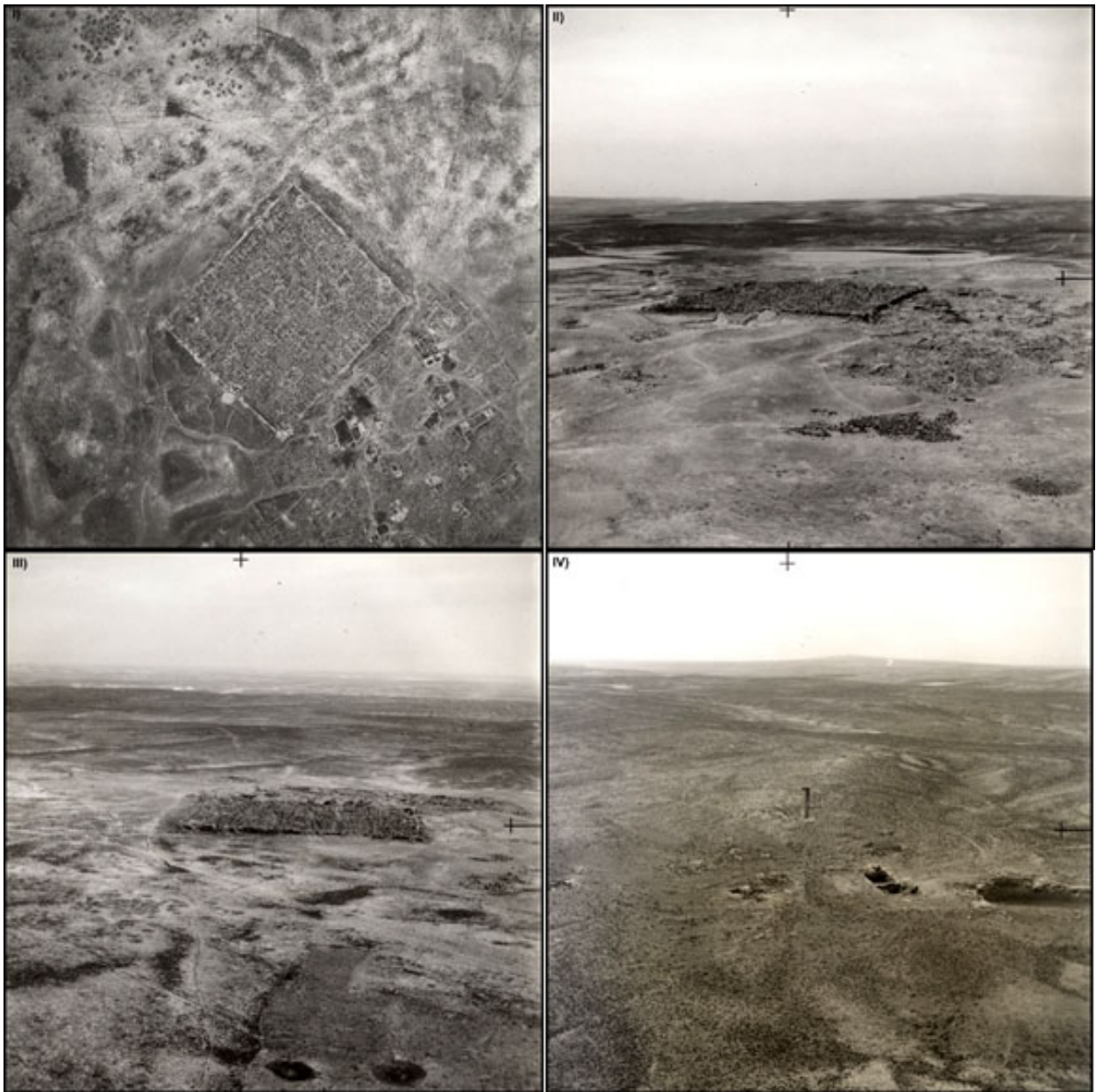
81 This paper presents the results of the most recent researches. The primary objective was the
82 aerotopographic study of the site and the laser scanning survey of the castrum. The aim of the study and

83 surveys was to address a series of questions that had not been answered by previous research and to create
84 an updated archaeological map of the area. The goal of this map is not only to locate all the relevant
85 archaeological evidences, but also to enhance the area as a useful tool for the design of itineraries for tourists
86 visiting.

87

Methods, tools and results

88 This section presents the methods and tools used during the last two years of remote sensing and fieldwork
89 at Umm ar-Ras. The research has focused on the study of Umm ar-Rasas (*castrum* and settlement) and its
90 surroundings, using mostly unpublished historical and recent remote sensing data. Research has also focused
91 on ground, architectural, photogrammetric and laser scanning surveys. In particular, photogrammetric and
92 laser scanning surveys were carried out on the walls of the castrum, and all features were verified on the
93 ground using remote sensing analysis.



94 **Figure 3 - Umm ar-Rasas May 6th, 1939.** The aerial photographs taken by Stein. I) a vertical view of the castrum from 1200 feet
95 above ground; II-III) oblique views of the castrum and village from the northeast and south, respectively, at a height of 600 feet;
96 IV) an oblique view of the Stylite complex from the north, also at a height of 600 feet (British Academy of London Archive).

98 The study commenced with a remote sensing analysis, the principal research tools employed being:
 99 historical aerial photographs taken by Sir Marc Aurel Stein in 1939 during a flight over Umm ar-Rasas;
 100 satellite panoramic camera photographs taken by Corona KH-4B, but especially the recently declassified Hexagon KH-
 101 9, which have been important in contextualising the site; and finally, recent high and very high resolution
 102 satellite images, which have allowed us to record the current state of preservation of the traces and also to
 103 discover new ones.

104 Sir Marc Aurel Stein was a Hungarian-born, naturalised English explorer of late 19th and early 20th
 105 centuries. In the late 1930s, he conducted significant aerial and ground surveys of the Roman Eastern Frontier
 106 between Iraq and Jordan, following the work of Father Antoine Poidebard in Syria (Poidebard 1934). Stein left
 107 the Sinjar in the spring of 1938 and completed the mission in May of 1939. On his journey, he used the Kirkut-
 108 Haifa oil pipeline and then explored the archaeological sites of the Eastern Roman Limes to the Aqaba Gulf
 109 (Stein 1938;1940). In May 1939, Stein flew to Umm ar-Rasas and made four aerial photographs, one vertical
 110 and three oblique, at heights of 1200 and 600 feet, respectively (Fig. 3). These photographs enable us to
 111 recreate the topography and landscape of the archaeological site. They capture a desert landscape marked by
 112 the pure presence of ruins. A desert landscape is crossed by roads and wadis but without modern overlays,
 113 such as urbanisation or new agricultural uses of the soil.



114 **Figure 4** - Umm ar-Rasas. Hexagon KH9 images 1974/12/01, ground resolution: 1.20-0.60 m. Featured: **A** Roman
 115 castrum; **a¹** hydraulic reserve; **B** Byzantine and Umayyade settlement; **C** Stylite tower complex; **D** System of
 116 irrigated plots (channels and dams); **E** the dam. Quarries and material extraction points are highlighted in
 117 yellow, whilst arrows indicate hydraulic channelling systems (Hexagon acquired from USGS and edited by
 118 Francesca Di Palma).

119 Historical satellite photographs, in particular a Hexagon KH-9 from 1974, suggest a landscape very similar
120 to that photographed by Stein. Hexagons are well-known panoramic satellite images taken by American spy
121 satellites between 1971 and 1984. Their accuracy on the ground ranges from 1.20 to 0.60 metres. In addition
122 to the three settlement units (A - the Tetrarchic Castrum, with its water reservoir, in the south; B - the
123 Byzantine-Umayyad settlement, immediately to the north of castrum; C - the stylite complex tower, about two
124 kilometres to the north), the 1974 Hexagon allowed us to better contextualise all of the archaeological
125 evidence. From the north to the south, these comprised quarries and material extraction sites (marked in
126 yellow on the plan); irrigation and hydraulic systems (dams and canals -D), which describe the surrounding
127 zone; and a large dam to the NE (about a kilometre and a half from the castrum -E) (Fig. 4). More specifically,
128 we can make out a series of roadways that lead to, cross, or border the Byzantine hamlet, as well as a network
129 of canals and water storage facilities southeast and east of the castrum. The northernmost component, the
130 stylite tower complex, clearly displays canal-dam systems.

131 We can assess the conservation state of the traces of the fossilised agricultural ecosystem seen on the
132 Hexagon by comparing them to a recent and high-resolution satellite image, Pléiades 1-A from 2020 (Fig. 5).



133 **Figure 5** - Umm ar-Rasas. The Pléiades 1A satellite's image acquired on October 30, 2020, ground resolution 0.50m.
134 Featured: **A** Roman castrum; **a¹** hydraulic reserve; **B** Byzantine and Umayyade settlement; **C** Stylite tower complex; **D**
135 System of irrigated plots (channels and dams); **E** the dam. The hydraulic channelling systems remain visible, albeit less
136 prominent than depicted in the Hexagon image (acquired from Planetek Italia srl and edited by Francesca Di Palma).

137 Additionally, archaeological features from published maps were georeferenced and vectorized using the
138 2020 Pléiades-1A. Furthermore, it was essential for validating, georeferencing, and vectorizing (in Qgis) any
139 data obtained through on-site remote sensing analysis.

140 In order to make archaeological and paleoenvironmental traces and remains more legible, the Pléiades-1A
141 satellite image was lastly processed utilising data fusion and different enhancing techniques.

142
143 The image processing of optical satellite data, carried out using specific software in order to facilitate the
144 identification and examination of archaeological marks and anomalies, represents one of the possibilities
145 offered by the remote sensing application for archaeology.

146 A satellite image is a matrix of numerous pixels, and the value of each is related to the solar energy
147 reflected by the corresponding portion of the earth's surface. This energy is divided into various bands of the
148 electromagnetic spectrum: a small portion of this radiation, divided into the blue, green, and red bands, gives
149 an image similar to that of an aerial photo; another portion, wider and particularly important, especially for
150 archaeological studies, is occupied by the Red Edge (720nm) and Near Infrared (840nm) channels, which allow
151 the investigation of elements and phenomena of the earth's surface otherwise not visible to the human eye.
152 These two bands are very important for archaeological applications because they are particularly sensitive to
153 stress factors in vegetation growth, which, as is known, is one of the main mediating elements of the
154 archaeological features (crop marks). The presence of positive buried ancient structures (wall structures,
155 floors, ruins) affects the vegetation growth, while the negative archaeological structures or even paleo-
156 elements of the ancient landscape (ditches, canals, excavated trenches, but also depressions and paleo-
157 riverbeds) favour full vegetation growth thanks to ideal conditions in the humus soil layer that is very drained
158 of humidity.

159 Over the years, numerous methodologies and techniques have been developed to improve these images,
160 i.e., processing classes that operate on the particular radiometric, spectral, and geometric properties of
161 satellite data (Lasaponara, Masini 2012). These elaborations are necessary to increase the readability of the
162 images and to better discriminate small differences in tone and colour, which, as is well known, are useful
163 indicators in the identification of marks related to buried or semi-surfaced ancient structures.

164 Therefore, the availability of two very high-resolution satellite images that capture the Umm er-Rasas area
165 - the first image acquired on October 30, 2020, by the Pléiades-1A satellite and the other acquired on January
166 25, 2022 by the Pléiades Neo-4 satellite - has allowed us to test the potential of remote sensing applications
167 through specific data processing chains for the investigation of the ancient topography of the site and its
168 territory. Compared with its predecessors Pléiades constellation, which provides four multispectral bands,
169 Blue, Green, Red and Near Infrared (Pléiades satellites provide images with a resolution of 0.5 m in
170 panchromatic mode and a resolution of 2 m in multispectral mode, <https://earth.esa.int/eogateway/catalog/pleiades-esa-archive>), Pléiades Neo images have a better spatial
171 resolution and have two additional bands, the Deep Blue and the Red Edge, thus adding important information
172 on the earth's surface characteristics (Pléiades Neo satellites provide images with a resolution of 0.3 m in
173 panchromatic mode and a resolution of 1.2 m in multispectral mode, <https://earth.esa.int/eogateway/missions/pleiades-neo>).

174
175 Pléiades Neo data products are characterised by two images: the RGB image, with Red, Green and Blue
176 channels, and NED image, with and Near-infrared, Red Edge and Deep Blue channels. As anticipated, Red Edge
177 is very important for archaeological applications because it is used for analysis of vegetation status through
178 detailed photosynthesis characterization. Thanks to the ready availability of the images in Standard Ortho
179 mode (the product is a georeferenced image in Earth geometry and is corrected from acquisition and terrain
180 off-nadir effects), the pre-processing operations, which involve the geometric and radiometric correction of
181 the image, have been skipped.

182
183 For the two images of Umm er-Rasas, the most performing processing chains were then applied for the
184 identification of the archaeological traces and are already widely used in consolidated remote sensing studies
185 applied to archaeology: the RGB Colour Composite, the Datafusion and the Principal Component Analysis. The
186 software used was ENVI 4.7. A necessary and preparatory first step to the subsequent image processing phases
187 was a qualitative examination based on the visual inspection of each band.

188 This phase was necessary to verify the visibility of the different types of traces and their immediate
189 surroundings and to evaluate which bands guarantee more effective discrimination of their spectral or
190 radiometric separability. The evaluation showed that, to the detriment of the spectral information, the

191 panchromatic band proved to be very useful in the identification of the micro-reliefs produced by buried or
192 semi-buried ancient structures because its very high spatial resolution allows the detailed visualisation of the
193 micro-reliefs (Fig. 6). On the other hand, the spectral bands, in particular the near infrared, the red edge, and
194 the red, allow us to investigate characteristics of the soil surface, such as the surroundings of buried elements
195 that appear more vegetated or humid. Once the properties of each band have been examined in depth, the
196 effective processing chain has begun.



197 **Figure 6** - Umm er-Rasas area in the panchromatic band of Pléiades 1A image.

198 Among the most basic processing techniques, there is undoubtedly the RGB Colour Composite, which
199 allows viewing the image with a different order of band overlapping, useful for perceiving some information
200 better than others. So, the image is displayed with an appearance similar to what the human eye perceives in
201 the "true colour combinations", while in other combinations, called "false colour combinations", the near
202 infrared or red edge band, invisible to the human eye, appears in place of the red and green bands.

203 In the case of the Umm er-Rasas site, the simple composition of bands with false colours facilitated, making
204 it more immediate, the preliminary visual analysis of the more humid and vegetated surfaces, normally difficult
205 to identify in these geographical contexts characterised by very arid conditions but potentially indicative of
206 disappearing elements of the ancient landscape. This result is particularly clear in the false-colour composition
207 of the Pléiades 1A image, acquired in October, a period when the soil is not excessively dry. The infrared band
208 (visible in red) and the red band (visible in green) show a consistent network of small wadis exploited through
209 reclamation and regimentation works to obtain cultivable areas (Fig. 7A). While other interesting features are
210 more evident in the false colour composition of the Pléiades Neo image, the small vegetated and rounded
211 depressions that are highlighted within the remains of the buried village could correspond to disused cisterns
212 (Fig. 7B).

213 Other image processing techniques, useful for obtaining the maximum information in qualitative and
214 quantitative terms, were therefore employed. The datafusion technique of the panchromatic and
215 multispectral data of the Pléiades Neo-04 of 2022, exploiting the high spatial resolution of the panchromatic
216 image (0.30 m) and the high spectral resolution of the multispectral image (6 bands), was performed to obtain
217 an optimal result. This operation, carried out using the "Gram-Schmidt" method of the ENVI routine, produced

218 a “pansharpended image”, a new image where the spectral resolution of the colour bands has been adapted to
219 the resolution of the panchromatic data (Lasaponara, Masini and Scardozzi 2007, pp. 213-217).



220 **Figure 7** - Umm er-Rasas. RGB Colour Composite in false colour of the Pléiades 1A image showing the general view of the
221 Umm er-Rasas area (A), and of the Pléiades Neo-04 image showing a detailed area of the late antique castrum and the
222 Umayyad village (B) (processing and editing by Ilaria Miccoli).

223 The result obtained was a good qualitative image for the discrimination of spatial details and a good
224 quantitative image for the discrimination of a series of crop marks and dump marks highlighted, as mentioned
225 before, by the responses in the infrared band, the red edge, and red (Fig. 8)

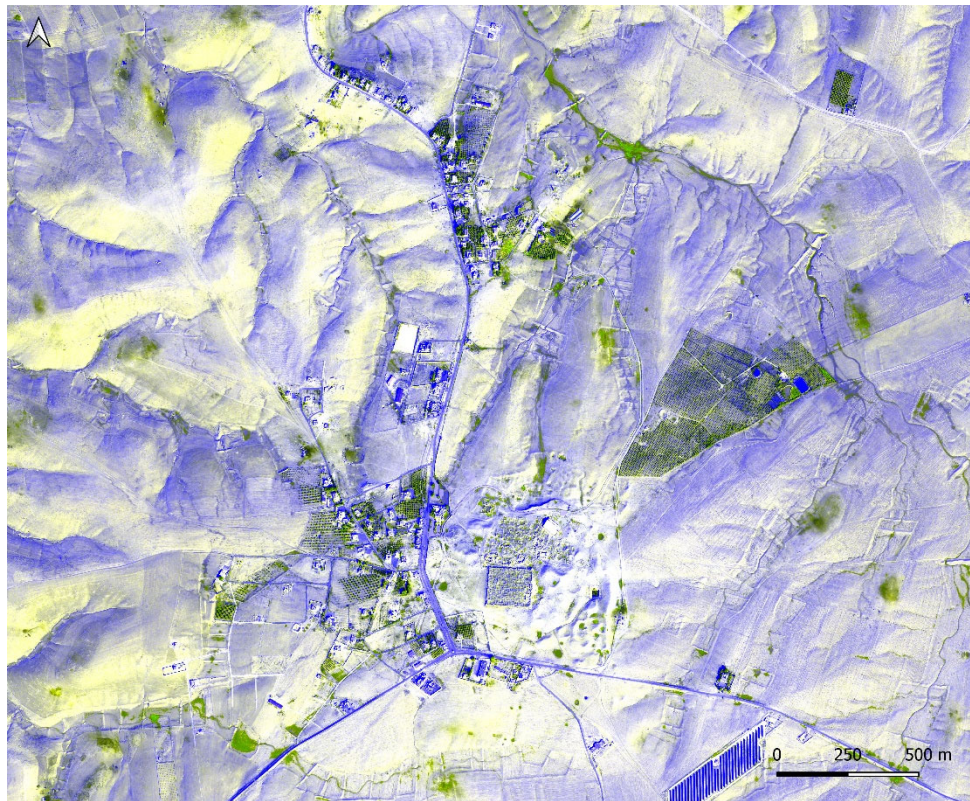


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247 **Figure 8** - Pansharpended product of the datafusion technique by panchromatic and multispectral data
248 of Pléiades Neo-04 image (processing and editing by Ilaria Miccoli).

249 The choice to apply Principal Component Analysis technique (PCA) using the pansharpended bands and to
250 minimise the redundancy in information in some areas seemed quite effective (Lasaponara, Masini, Scardozzi

251 2010, pp. 486-490). Among the six new bands obtained, the best were the first (PC1) and second (PC2) bands
252 of the RGB image and of the NED image (Fig. 9).

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Figure 9 - RGB colour composite in false colour of the Pléiades Neo-04 multispectral image processed by PCA technique. R: PC1 band of RGB data; G: PC1 band of the NED data; B: PC2 band the NED data (processing and editing by Ilaria Miccoli).

257 At this point, some operations were tested to combine the products obtained from the individual
258 enhancement techniques into a new false colour composition; this operation does not improve the analysis of
259 the anomalies much, but overall it offers a more immediate perception of some feature traces.

260 Finally, since the outputs of the various processing products were exported in geotiff format, their loading
261 into a GIS platform was sufficient to implement the information layers of the project. After a further visual
262 examination and interpretation of the images on the basis of other contextual information, the traces and
263 anomalies identified were vectorized.

264

From the air to the ground

265 The remote sensing analysis was then followed by the verification of all the proof discovered from above.
266 All quarries, irrigation systems, and water canalization have been mapped in detail. Forty reservoirs, dozens of
267 quarries, and dozens of canal systems have been mapped in total. In addition, hypogean settings probably
268 going back to the Bronze Age, such as those found in Amman's Citadel, have been identified. One thing to note
269 about the water reservoirs: we recognised their primary role as a quarry in at least five or six of them.

270 Finally, a fantastic result was obtained with the discovery of a dam to the north-east of Umm ar-Rasas. It
271 was made possible by Hexagon analysis and a later check survey on the ground. The dam has not been
272 photographed by Stein and has never been studied before. The Jordanian Department of Antiquities itself
273 didn't know about the existence of this dam. From the ground, we were able to determine that the dam's
274 construction period for building materials, dimensions, and block fabrication can most likely be considered
275 contemporaneous with the castrum or of the same period as the castrum.

276

277 *Laser scanner and photogrammetric surveys*

278 They were then carried out during the Kastrum Project 2021 and 2022 missions: preliminary architectural
279 and stratigraphic analysis; study and documentation (photographic and graphic) of architectural components;
280 photogrammetric surveys and processing of the walls (tests); laser scanner surveys and processing;
281 archeological-architectural surveys inside the walls.

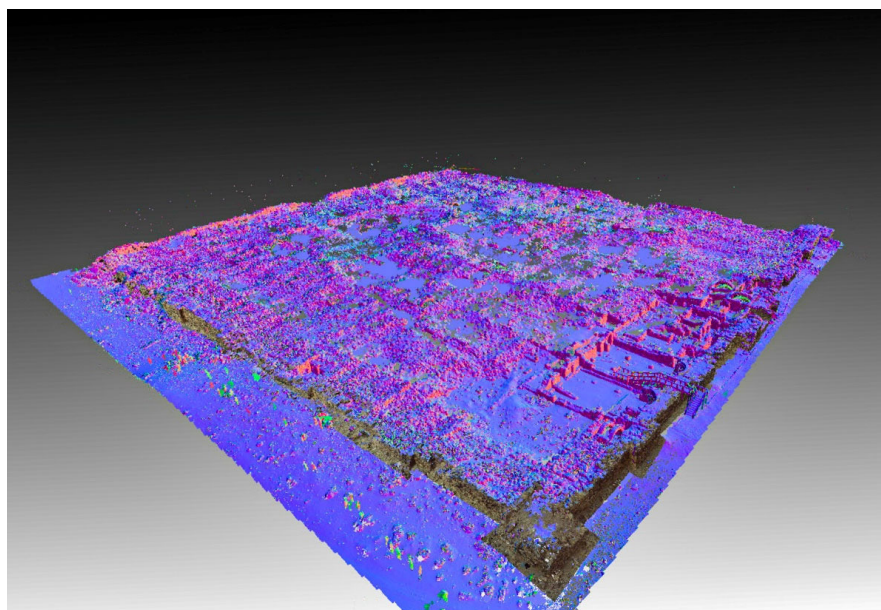
282 For the research and documentation of the castrum walls, a special form has been developed.

283 Despite significant obstacles, photogrammetric acquisition of the castrum's exterior walls began in 2021.
284 Difficulties brought on by the following factors: a large castrum (159 x 138 m approx.); numerous collapses;
285 and (of course) the Mission's short duration. Even so, a first photogrammetric test of the walls' full external
286 circuit has been completed (Fig. 10).



288 **Figure 10** – Kastrum Project 2022 a) Print screen processing of all wall reliefs completed; b) Detail of the
289 west wall, print screen processing in progress (processing by Francesca Di Palma).

290 As a result, a first laser scanner acquisition campaign was run during the 2022 expedition (completed in
291 2023, Fig. 11), allowing accurate documentation of the masonry and the castrum's state of conservation. Two
292 pieces of equipment, the FARO Focus 3D S120 (which can scan objects up to 120 metres away and measure at
293 speeds of up to 976,000 points per second, with an optimal distance of 50 to 60 metres) and the FARO Focus
294 X 330 HDR (can scan objects up to 330 metres away and measure at speeds of up to 976,000 points per second,
295 with an optimal distance between 208 and 290 metres), were used to conduct the laser scanner surveys. Two
296 instruments were employed to expedite the measurements due to the limited amount of time available. One
297 point every three millimetres at a distance of ten metres was the resolution that the two laser scanners had
298 been calibrated to.

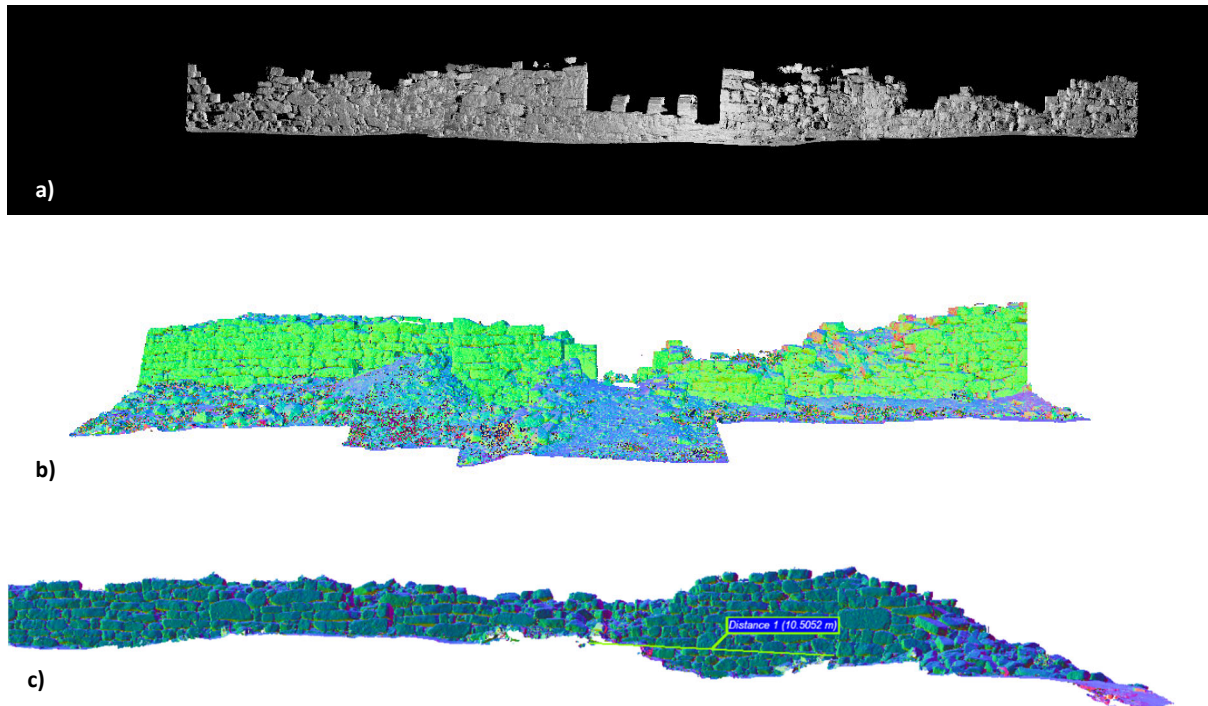


316 **Figure 11** – Kastrum Project 2022-2023 Print screen processing of all wall reliefs completed: the
317 external walls were identified in their natural colours (relief 2022); the interior of the castrum was
318 characterised by a distinctive colour mapping (inclination) (relief 2023 – by Francesca Di Palma).

319
320 The two laser scanners were positioned less than 50 metres from the castrum walls and 10 metres apart
321 from one another (they were spaced this way to provide sufficient scan overlap). This shows that the two
322 instruments performed at their highest level.

323 The scans were processed using Reconstructor 4.4, a software created by a Brescia University spinoff
324 (<https://gexcel.it/it/software/reconstructor>). Before being registered automatically, the scans were manually
325 pre-registered. This procedure has never had more than 2mm of average inaccuracy.

326 However, this is a comprehensive survey that enables us to create a 3D model that can be remotely
327 measured and analysed (Figg. 11-12) .



328 **Figure 12 – a)** Results of the data processing phase: Ortho-image of East Gate; **b)** North Gate. Data processing phase. Colour
329 mapping: inclination; **c)** a section of West wall. Colour mapping: inclination (processing by Francesca Di Palma and Roberto
330 Gabrielli).

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332

Discussion and forthcoming perspectives

333 In summary, the material, construction, stratigraphic, and structural degradation characteristics of the
334 masonry were identified. We also finished the photogrammetric and laser scanner surveys of the exterior walls
335 in order to accurately record the structures, create a 3D model that can be remotely measured and analysed,
336 plan future research and preservation efforts, and improve accessibility.

337 About the systematic analysis of (unpublished) remote sensing data (Fig. 14), both historical and recent, in
338 terms of a large-scale question: the remote sensing analysis allowed the identification of new archaeological
339 sites (hypogeous environments/graves of the Bronze Age emptied and used as dwelling/shelter in Umayyad
340 times until recent times, dams and the dam, etc.); the remote sensing analysis allowed the identification and
341 study of the historical landscape (specifically on water channels, dams, quarries, reservoirs, and systems of
342 irrigated plots) and the connection with the Byzantine-Umayyad settlement. In terms of a smaller-scale
343 question (about the castrum), the analysis of remote sensing data (particularly historical data) combined with
344 a preliminary survey on the ground enabled the identification of ancient wall remains (Fig. 13).

345 These walls could be associated with the castrum or with a previous and smaller fortification (Severian
346 ages?). In this regard, a fragmentary Latin inscription indicating a Roman presence in 306 and 307, as well as

347 many pottery shards from the 2nd-3rd centuries AD, have been found (Scarpati 1991; Lewin 2001; Bujard 2008,
348 p. 22, 35). After all, there are several references in the bibliography to Severan fortresses that were later
349 incorporated into much larger Tetrarchic fortifications (Arce 2010; 2015).



350 **Figure 13** – Umm ar-Rasas. Highlighting the site where remains of ancient walls have been found, either from the earlier
351 and smaller fortress of Umm ar-Rasas (Severan period) or from the same period as the castrum wall (Tetrarchic period).

352 In summary, Umm ar-Rasas has recently been used as an experimental lab for interdisciplinary searches.
353 Research aimed at understanding and optimising a location with substantial potential. A considerable amount
354 of work remains to be done.

355 Regarding the prospects for the future, aerial photogrammetric and laser scanner surveys will be used to
356 finish the surveys (Figure 11 illustrates the initial processing of the relief from above conducted in 2023 using
357 a laser scanner. This processing will require further improvement and implementation, which will be achieved
358 through additional aerofotogrammetric tests and the use of laser scanners) and in order to improve the map
359 of the military camp during the Tetrarchic period. We plan to use electrical resistivity tomography to
360 investigate the area inside the castrum walls in order to find and confirm structures that were present at the
361 time the castrum was built as well as to find and confirm the presence of earlier structures (previous
362 fortification).

363 We intend to define the extent of the Byzantine and Umayyad settlement in the north, confirm the
364 existence of walls surrounding the Byzantine settlement, and investigate the hydraulic systems of the
365 settlement using geophysical surveys, processing, and archaeological interpretation of new remote sensing
366 data.

367

BA*	Aerial Photographs	Dates	Hours	Flying height	Figures
ASA/3/618	oblique	1938/5/6	10:10	600 ft	2, III
ASA/3/619	oblique	1938/5/6	10:12	600 ft	2, II
ASA/3/620	oblique	1938/5/6	10:17	600 ft	2, IV
ASA/3/594	vertical	1938/5/6	12:00	4500 ft	2, I, 13

*British Academy of London

Satellite images	ID	Dates	Spatial resolution	Sensors	Figures
Hexagon KH-9	1209-200214F019	1974/12/1	1.20-0.60m	Panchromatic	4
Pléiades-1A	202010300836510	2020/10/30	0.50 m	Multispectral	5-7A
Pléiades Neo	202201250826144	2022/01/25	0.30 m	Multispectral	7B-9

368 **Figure 14** – A summary table of the aerial photographs and satellite images utilised, along with their respective characteristics.

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