DOCTORAL THESIS

Interpretation and Presentation of Nabataeans

Innovative Technologies: Case Study

Petra/Jordan

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by

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Abstract

The Nabataeans were people of innovation and technology. Many clear evidences were left behind them that prove this fact. Unfortunately for a site like Petra, visited by crowds of visitors and tourists every day, many major elements need to be strengthened in terms of interpretation and presentation techniques in order to reflect the unique and genuine aspects of the place. The major elements that need to be changed include: un-authorized tour guides, insufficient interpretation site information in terms of quality and display.

In spite of Jordan's numerous archaeological sites (especially Petra) within the international standards, legislations and conventions that discuss intensively interpretation and presentation guidelines for archaeological site in a country like Jordan, it is not easy to implement these standards in Petra at present for several reasons which include: presence of different stakeholders, lack of funding, local community. Moreover, many interpretation and development plans were previously made for Petra, which makes it harder to determine the starting point.

Within the work I did, I proposed two ideas for developing interpretation technique in Petra. First was using the theme technique, which creates a story from the site or from innovations done by the inhabitants, and to be presented to visitors in a modern approach. The purpose of this story is to link the visitor to the site emotionally, by providing them with the sense and feel of the site's real events by that time together with a good amount of information that gives the visitor the chance to live and feel an unforgettable experience of the place. The second idea was how to tailor a useful interpretation plan that could be implemented on all other archaeological sites in Jordan right after "evaluating the results of its implementation in Petra".

The aim of this thesis is to develop interpretation criteria for "local governments and nongovernmental organizations", as well as an interpretation plan in a Jordanian context and apply them on all other archaeological sites in Jordan.

Tourists would benefit from the quality of interpretation services offered by the interpreters and the techniques of presentation available on the site, in addition to tour guides who have received training programs derive from this study, which would guarantee in return a more sustainable tourism movement to the site of Petra in the future.