



4-1-2012

E. Borgia, *Jordan: Past & Present.*

Taylor Halverson

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/ccr>

Recommended Citation

Halverson, Taylor (2012) "E. Borgia, *Jordan: Past & Present.*," *Comparative Civilizations Review*: Vol. 66 : No. 66 , Article 13.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/ccr/vol66/iss66/13>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the All Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Comparative Civilizations Review by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

E. Borgia, *Jordan: Past & Present*. Trans. A. Potter. Rome: Vision, 2001.

Jordan: Past & Present is a book similar to *Israel: Past & Present*, providing engaging encyclopedic type entries, photographs and maps of several notable ancient sites in Jordan. The three main sites covered are Petra, Jerash, and Amman.

The opening pages provide a historical overview of the major periods of history from the dawn of civilization in the Jordan region down to the modern day. The book is artfully designed with compelling text and photographs. Like the book *Israel: Past & Present*, the unique feature of this book is the artistic overlay upon the modern background of what an ancient site may have looked like. However, as was seen with the book *Israel: Past & Present*, due to the advent of the Internet and smart devices, a book like this is essentially superfluous. These two books are likely created for the tourist market and I wouldn't be surprised to find copies available at any of the locations depicted herein.

For each of the sites covered, the book provides the basic outlines of human history at the site, a variety of color pictures and orienting maps. Though this information only conveys the barest of details, one can quickly discern the sweep of human activity and civilization at these intriguing sites. The text provides the context for why the sites developed as they did and why they are in their current state of repair or disrepair.

Petra

Highlighted features of Petra include an overview of the city plan, the Theater, the Colonnaded Street, the Nymphaeum, the Temenos Gate, the Qasr el-Bint (or Castle of the Pharaoh's daughter), and the famous funerary architecture, with specific attention given to the Obelisk Tomb, the Palace Tomb, and the Sextius Florentinus Tomb.

Of course, a book like this would not be complete without including pictures and text of the Khaznat el-Faroun (or Treasury of the Pharaoh) made famous in the movie *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.

Jerash

After providing background history for Jerash and the city-plan (primarily from the Roman time period), the book provides special focus on the following features of Jerash: The Arch of Hadrian, the Sanctuary of Zeus, the Southern Theater, the Oval Forum, the Nymphaeum, and the Sanctuary of Artemis (patron deity of the city).

Amman (ancient Philadelphia)

Of the three major ancient sites highlighted in the book, Amman (ancient Philadelphia) receives the shortest amount of attention. Similar to the introduction to

the other sites, the book provides a short historical overview of the founding and occupation (or lack thereof) of the site throughout human history. Then the book provides focused attention on the Temple of Hercules.

The book draws thoughtfully upon the latest archaeological findings and conclusions, even if at a high level. A book like this would perhaps be useful for a self-guided tour of any of the sites listed, though the amount of information is limited and could easily be supplemented or surpassed by access to the Internet or prior downloadable content.

Taylor Halverson