

Task B1: Historical continuity

1: Study the photographs and the accompanying notes in Fig. B2 and attempt to compile a timeline for the various civilisations/colonists that have occupied this part of the Badia. (see Fig.B7 for an example of a timeline)

2: Draw some conclusions about the nature of this region:

- ⌘ Past civilisations
- ⌘ Past conflicts
- ⌘ Past modes of travel
- ⌘ Past patterns of settlement
- ⌘ Past climates and the availability of water
- ⌘ Past agricultural activities

3: Clearly the region has faced many problems throughout its history. What do you think are the main issues facing the survival of these people today?

[Key Words: water; boundaries; communications; isolation; politics; religion]

Figure B2: Past Peoples

These locations are not necessarily listed in chronological order.

1		<p>Qasr Kharaneh: In Ommayad times (658 - 750 AD) this was the equivalent of a motorway service stations. A place for the camel caravans to rest up. Essentially a large square courtyard surrounded by high walls and small rooms. The height of the building gave a commanding view across the open desert. It is unlikely that this was a Crusader castle (11/12th Centuries)</p>
2		<p>Qasr Amra: A further Ommayad building that appears to have used as a hunting lodge and place for fun and frolics! Its walls are highly decorated. Outside the pump and small trees & shrubs, together with its wadi location imply a wetter period when there were more wild animals than today. Today's main road and bridge over a dry wadi can be seen in the background.</p>
3		<p>Azraq Roman Fort: The Romans (188BC - 638AD) built a solid fort of basalt, including remarkable basalt corbels and rafters. The immense door is also basalt, incl. the hinges! During the first world war this was used as a headquarters by Lawrence during the campaign against the Turks (Ottomans) in 1916.</p>
4		<p>Qasr Burq'a: Early peoples recognised the importance of confluence sites as places to locate dams in the event of rare rainfall. The original dam here is Nabatean (6th Century) but the protecting fort is Roman. It still survives as an important watering hole in thousands of square miles of arid desert.</p>
5		<p>Al-Safawi Fort & Pumping Station: When oil was discovered in Iraq and Saudia Arabia the crude oil had to be piped to the Mediterranean coast at Haifa whence it was exported to Europe. The two pipelines converged on Safawi, protected by the British. With political instability in west of Jordan and with the coming of super tankers these two pipelines became redundant.</p>

Figure B2: Continued:

6		<p>Qasr Useyakhim: In a vast, flat, open desert the protection of armies and caravanserai could be difficult, much as it is along the main road through Iraq to Baghdad today. The Nabatean traders and Roman occupiers needed to establish command posts on any prominent hills. Fortunately the Badia, as here, is studded with volcanic cones.</p>
7		<p>Azraq Springs: Fresh (sweet) water is precious here but so also the need to replenish lost body salts. The salt springs at Azraq were important in this respect. The Romans paid their soldiers with salt, hence the term 'salary'. The photo shows a Roman pier extending into the now dried up salt beds.</p>
8		<p>Jawa: Even before the Nabateans the Bronze Age people (3000 - 2000 BC) developed sophisticated hydrological systems. In this now ruined fortress there is evidence of water collection and numerous cisterns. The wadi is now dry for much of the time due in part to climate change and dam construction in Syria.</p>
9		<p>Sabha Village: (west of Um al-Quttayn) The ruined, black basalt buildings are testimony to Roman occupation but almost certainly the Nabateans before them. A modern open air cistern (now disused in favour of pumped water) can be seen but the ancient buildings contained cisterns sheltered from evaporation.</p>
10		<p>Umm al-Jimal: In the 1stC BC this was a Nabatean regional capital until the Romans developed it further in C1 AD to become a military & civil focus. The Byzantines took it (350-650AD) and later the Ottomans. People of many religions coexisted throughout these periods until the French destroyed the city in the first world war. The modern town dates from 1940 housing increasingly sedentary Bedouin.</p>

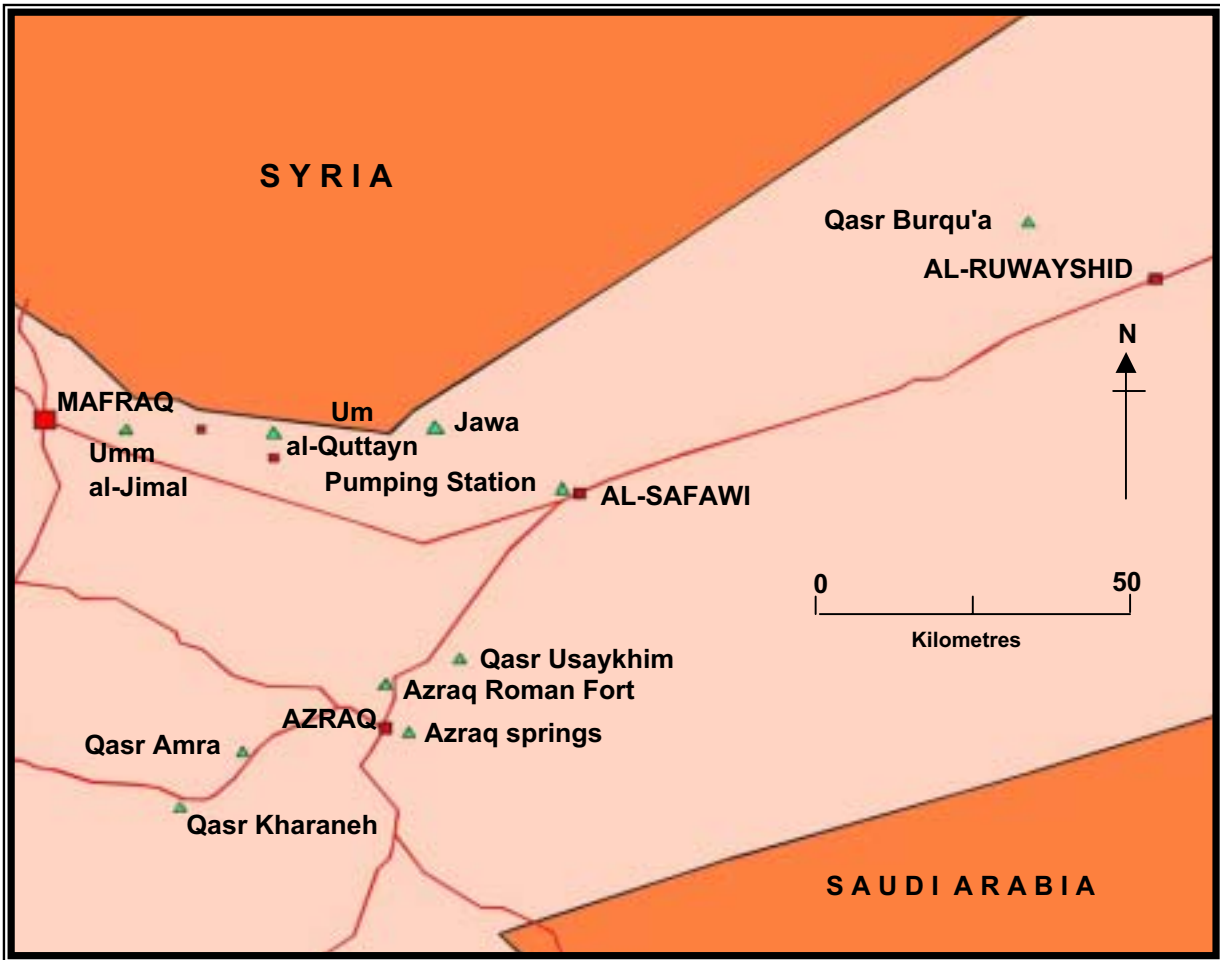


Fig. B3: Location of historic sites shown in Fig. B2