ACOR Photo Archive:

Mobilizing digital tools to preserve visual heritage
Sections

1. Project Introduction
2. Changes over time: from excavation to restoration
3. Interdisciplinary collections
4. Collaboration
5. Re-use of archive photos
6. Future directions

acor.digitalrelab.com currently at 25,000 images (target 30,000)

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Project Team Members

Team members past and present: Clockwise from top left: Ashley Lumb, Rachael McGlensey; Eslam Dawodieh; Humi Ayyoubi, Glenn Corbett, Razan Ahmad, Steve Meyer, Samya Khalaf Kafafi, Corrie Commissio, Charles (Chuck) Jones
Collections

Main collections

- Jane Taylor
- Rami Khouri
- Linda K. Jacobs
- George Bass

Rami Khouri at Petra. Rami Khouri collection.
Jane Taylor with H.M. Queen Noor, and Pierre Bikai. 1992. ACOR Institutional collection
Collections

Recently Added

• Paul and Nancy Lapp
• Bert de Vries

Coming soon
• Kenneth Russell

Both: Jay Guikema, ACOR Institutional collection.
Jane Taylor Collection

Medain Saleh (Hegra), Saudi Arabia

Persepolis, Iran

Old City of Sana’a, Yemen
Examples of Middle East Cultural Heritage Image Archives

apaame.org/
arachne.dainst.org/project/syrher
akkasah.org/
manar-al-athar.ox.ac.uk/
https://dlme.clir.org/
“Nothing is safe from the cultural cleansing underway... It targets human lives, and minorities, and is marked by the systematic destruction of humanity's ancient heritage”
Irina Bokova, former Director-General of UNESCO, March 2015.

Cited in *Destruction of Memory* (2016) by Robert Bevan
Conflict Heritage

Ain Dara Temple, Syria
Linda Jacobs (1982)
Neo-Assyrian lion sculpture, Mosul Museum


https://projectmosul.org/

Photo: J. Green
Material Speculation, ISIS
Morehshin Allahyari, 2015


Threatened Heritage

Early Bronze Cemetery, Feifa, Jordan (Jane Taylor, 1998)

Feifa Cemetery, Jordan (Chad Hill, Landscapes of the Dead Project, 2016)
Development

Olive orchard on hilltop near Jarash, 2004
Jane Taylor Collection

Islamic Ayla, Aqaba, with hotel development, 1999
Rami Khouri Collection
From excavation to restoration

1962: Paul & Nancy Lapp Collection
1980: Linda K. Jacobs Collection
1998: Jane Taylor Collection

Iraq al-Amir (Qasr al-Abd)
Paul Lapp (center back) and workers at Iraq al-Amir, 1961-62 (AE_C-011).

Paul and Nancy Lapp collection, 1962

Color image by Robert Scott
“Doorway to the sky”

See ACOR Photo Archive Essay: “Unearthing the past: ACOR from 1988 to 1991 through the lens of Bert de Vries” by Ashley Lumb, Jan. 2020
photoarchive.acorjordan.org
Rephotography

Jerash images by George Bass (1955) and ACOR Photo Archive team (2019)
The Deir at Petra. Charles Wilson collection. 1944-45. ACOR.
Creating stories from images

“…the archaeological object [is] not as a frozen moment of time but an ongoing human duration, extended through these technologies of the archive and the camera.” Lesley McFadyen and Dan Hicks, *Archaeology and Photography*, 2019.

Images from a Lifetime Dedicated to Archaeology: The Paul and Nancy Lapp collection at ACOR

Nancy and Paul Lapp first entered the field in Palestine in 1957. They continued to work and raise a family at ACOR in Jerusalem until 1968. Despite that she never set out to be an archaeologist, Nancy did not shy away from the responsibility to publish Paul’s excavation material after his death in 1970. Since then, her involvement in the field has touched generations of scholars.

Unearthing the past: ACOR from 1988 to 1991 through the lens of Bert de Vries

ACOR has recently added the photographic collection of Dr. Bert de Vries (ACOR Director 1988 to 1991) to the online archive, which is the first part of the project that focuses on ACOR’s institutional archive. The archive can be seen here in this gallery and includes 1651 color slides taken around Jordan during his time as Director. Bert has been involved with ACOR since 1986 and he has the most extensive living memory of the institution. His knowledge of its past provides a rich well from which we can draw illustrations about life at ACOR during the late 1980s, which was a very active time in archaeology and in Jordan.
Visual heritage

Left: Site workers during field excavations at Iraq al-Amir, Jordan. Paul and Nancy Lapp collection. 1962. ACOR.
Right: Women with weaving tool, Ain Al-Asad/Lion’s Spring, Jordan. Linda Jacobs collection. 1980. ACOR.
Open-access

“Open access is a broad international movement that seeks to grant free and open online access to academic information, such as publications and data.”

Source: https://www.openaccess.nl/en/what-is-open-access

Radi Al-Amad, business owner in As-Salt, Jordan. 1982.
Rami Khouri collection. ACOR.
Citation

Jane Taylor collection. DATE OF IMAGE. ACOR. COPY FILE LINK.
For TIFF images without a watermark, click Request Images and give contact info and type of publication.

Images free for educational and editorial use.
‘Reconsidering archaeological photographs involves reconsidering archaeological knowledge’

“local workers go unnamed or even unmentioned at all, appearing as distant silhouettes in photographs or as the implied subjects of actions described in the passive voice” (2019:5)

Archaeology and anthropology

From left: Group of men laughing at the Ain Al-Assad (Lion Spring) excavations in Azraq; Man pausing to smile at the camera whilst hard at work on the North Theater excavation at Jerash. All locations in Jordan. Linda K. Jacobs collection. 1980-2. ACOR.
Left: Man with rababa instrument.
Right: Woman in Bedouin tent near Wadi Lisan, Dead Sea area;
Both images: Linda K. Jacobs collection. 1980-2. ACOR.
Notice and Takedown policy

- Best practice standards established in Canada ensure that opening up access to archival collections does not expose information that communities would prefer remains private.
- See also: Traditional Knowledge labels
“He made the complex easy to understand, distant history relevant to life in Jordan today, and intricate technicalities of archaeology and pottery a source of endless wonder and joy for lay people like myself.”

Technological changes

School girls’ trip to solar energy plant. (Above)
Royal Scientific Society visit to solar energy plant near Aqaba. (Right)

All Rami Khouri collection. 1980s. ACOR.
Workers in a shoe factory. Rami Khouri collection. 1980s. ACOR.
Urban/rural change

Amman, lantern slide copy in Paul and Nancy Lapp collection. 1900-1930 ACOR.

Downtown Amman and Roman Theater. Charles Wilson collection. 1944-45. ACOR.
Downtown Amman, with Roman Theater (right). Bert de Vries collection. 1988-91. ACOR.

Downtown Amman, with Roman Theater (center). Jane Taylor collection. 2004. ACOR.
Two views of Jabal Ashrafiyyeh from above.
Jane Taylor collection. 2004. ACOR.
Landscape change

Azraq Wetlands Reserve. 2011.
Aerial Photographic Archive for Archaeology Middle East. APAAME. Photo by Mat Dalton
Modern and contemporary history

Modern and contemporary history

ACOR 40th Anniversary celebration.
Left: David McCreery, Bert de Vries, Pierre Bikai, and Barbara A. Porter.
Right: Sa’id Adawi, Abed Adawi, Naif Zaban, Sarah Harpending, Carmen (Humi) Al Ayoubi, Patricia Masri, Nisreen Abu Al Shaikh, Samya Khalaf Kafafi, Kathy Nimri, Fawwaz Al-Khraysheh and David McCreery
Photos by Jay Guikema. ACOR Institutional collection. 12 June 2008. ACOR.
Archive’s Significance for Middle East (Area) Studies

“Without leaving my desk, I go on a journey every day to archaeological sites.” - Eslam al Dawodieh
Survey of researchers about importance of archival resources:
1. “Archives are at least as central to the future of area studies of the Middle East as fieldwork and interviews.”

2. Due to inaccessibility of various archives about the region there is a “growing need for resources and digitized archives created in partnership with Middle East libraries and archives” [emphasis added]

Yosha Al-Amri from Jordan Museum demonstrates 3D scanner to workshop participants including Hala Syoof from Dept. of Antiquities, 2019. Photo: Barbara Porter.
‘[…]the archive has always been a pledge, […] a question of the future […] of a promise and a responsibility for tomorrow.’

Future directions

• Greater access to reliable visual and textual information sources online
• Suitable for use in education – college level, high school level, middle school level
• More educational videos - digitizing the ACOR lecture series
• Transform the ACOR Photo Archive into a multi-media teaching resource
‘To reproduce an object is a task that requires know-how, but to understand what the object represents, its function or how it came to be, requires another kind of knowledge.’

Akram Zaatari, Against Photography (2018:103)
Thank you

Search: acor.digitalrelab.com

Read: photoarchive.acorjordan.org

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Jack Green
jgreen@acorjordan.org

Image Requests & queries:
archives@acorjordan.org