

Research themes

OrAM's research themes focus on specific areas that contribute to defining the geographical, climatic, political, social, economic and cultural characteristics of the empires that succeeded each other in the regions studied and of the populations living on their margins. The formation and development of urban and rural environments is one of the main threads of his research, underpinned by the study of environments and landscapes and their appropriation by societies. This knowledge is deepened through the study of the different types of architecture associated with them, the writings and religions practised there, and through a reflection on the various influences that the populations may have had on each other. In this perspective, the production of artefacts and artistic forms play a decisive role.

With research programmes anchored in the field by several archaeological missions around the Mediterranean and in the East: Syria, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, the Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Central Asia, OrAM's work is largely devoted to the exploitation of archaeological documentation, the transmission of knowledge and the training of young researchers, as well as to the publication of its work.

- **Cities:** how is the urban core formed? Are the Hellenistic, imperial or Kushan foundations new cities or the resumption and reorganisation of previous spaces? OrAM particularly studies the urban planning of these foundations, from their creation and development to their eventual transformation, notably in relation to urban boundaries, housing, facilities (baths, hospices, etc.), construction techniques and the economics of building sites, but also with the texts: in Turkey (Antioch, Constantinople), in Syria (Bosra, Saint-

Symeon, Cyrrhus), in Lebanon (Batrun), in Jordan (Khirbet edh-Dharih, Petra), in Saudi Arabia (Hégra, Wadi Sirhan), and in Tajikistan (Takht-i Sangin, Zol-i Zard). This theme is part of ArScAn's axis 2.

- town planning: designs (types of 'grids' and settlements [plots, surveyors], layouts [grids, streets], boundaries [fortifications, gates]); developments: J. Abdul Massih ; M. Gelin ; D. Maillard ; M. Mouton ; G. Thébault ; F. Villeneuve ;
- architecture: design, construction (materials, quarries, building economies, building archaeology), types of buildings (military, civil, palatial, 'technical' [role and management of water in the city]): J. Abdul Massih ; J.-C. Bessac ; J.-F. Breton ; P. Ducret ; T. Fournet ; M. Gelin ; P. Gilento ; P. Piraud-Fournet ;
- vocabulary: Saliou ;
- sanctuaries: -M. Blanc (Sia, Bosra, Saint-Syméon) ; M.-C. Comte (Christian buildings) ; T. Fournet, F. Renel (Petra) ; P. Piraud-Fournet (charitable and welfare institutions) ; G. Tallet (Ed-Deir) ; F. Villeneuve (Khirbet edh-Dharih) ;
- the architectural decor: J. Dentzer-Feydy ; T. Fournet ;
- urban space as a reality and as a representation (material, legal, memorial aspects...), the role and impact of politics on these urbanisations: M. Jobszyck ; C. Saliou.
- **Space/territory**: the modes of appropriation and organisation of peri-urban space and territory (organisation and protection of the territory, circulation and access [roads, stations], management of

resources [irrigation, quarries/mines]), whether they led to the formation and development of dense or dispersed agglomerations (towns, villages, installations on the arid margins), or whether they result from the activity of these agglomerations in their immediate environment (water storage, necropolises), play a preponderant role in their durability. OrAM studies them in the Levant (Palestine, Lebanon, Syria), Egypt, the Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Tajikistan. This theme is part of ArScAn's axis 2.

- networks of cities (urbanisation/poliadisation [cities in space, urban networks...]), fortresses (limits of empires, protection of the territory), viae; their implantation (plots, relief): G. Thébault ; M. Gelin ; C. Saliou ;
 - villages (this theme also includes architecture); the terroirs: P. Clauss-Balty ; R. Harfouche ; Ch. Hatoum ;
 - anthropisation of the territory; landscape archaeology: P. Ghasemi ; R. Harfouche ; Ch. Hatoum ;
 - water supply, use and management; arid and semi-arid environments; oases: P.-M. Blanc ; M. Gelin ; M. Mouton ; G. Tallet ;
 - necropolises and rock necropolises: M. Laguardia ; L. Bigot.
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- **Expressions, practices, representations – from production to exchange:** the study of inscriptions, cultural practices, and archaeological material from excavations and prospecting are inseparable from the study of sites and open the way to a better perception of the intellectual and material life of past civilisations. This research is a key element for the knowledge of exchanges and their geographical expansion, of ideas and artistic currents, and contributes to the definition of regional cultural identities and major

interregional currents. The places and methods of manufacture of objects, their circulation, the chronological phases to which they give access and the cultural links they reveal are essential links in a more global understanding of historical problems. This theme is fully in line with ArScAn's Axis 4, whose title it partly takes up, and with Axis 3.

- Greek and Latin inscriptions; Semitic epigraphy:
M. Goréa ; C. Saliou ; G. Tallet ; F. Villeneuve ;
 - religious practices; funeral practices:
M. Laguardia ; P. Piraud-Fournet ;
 - material productions: ceramics; numismatics; bone materials: P.-M. Blanc ; C. Durand ; B. Khan ; G. Malingue ; F. Renel ; L. Vié ;
 - trade in goods, movement of people: S. Marion de Procé ; M. Mouton ; G. Tallet ;
 - iconography (portraits, statuary, objects): funerary; religious; symbolic, representation of power; architectural representation; mosaics: B. Annan ; C. Arnould-Béhar ; M.-C. Comte ; J. Dentzer-Feydy.

- **Preservation of cultural heritage**: the responsibility of preserving cultural heritage, inherent to archaeology, is an important part of the team's activity, in particular through its expertise for countries in war or crisis situations (Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, Ethiopia) and the design of preservation programmes (earthen architecture, prevention of modern urbanisation: Kuwait, Tajikistan). In the same way, the processing (collation, recording) of the scientific and documentary archives of the archaeological missions and members of OrAM, until they are deposited in the archives of the MSH Mondes (where they can then be consulted and disseminated), is

of prime importance and is often carried out in conjunction with the teams involved in this research (ArScAn/VEPMO; CEPAM). This activity also results in a production on the careers of researchers who have contributed to the development of archaeology in the regions concerned (D. Schlumberger, J. Lassus). Publications play a fundamental role in the preservation of heritage, sometimes being the only trace of it, and are disseminated as much as possible according to the rules of open science.

- expert appraisals for the safeguarding of sites, buildings and furniture; monitoring of closed sites and countries; preservation programmes for ongoing missions; 3D restitutions of existing and disappeared sites: J. Abdul Massih ; P.-M. Blanc ; J.-F. Breton ; M. Gelin ; T. Fournet ;
- archiving of missions (Jawf-Hadhramawt [Yemen]; Sharjah, Umm al-Qaywayn [United Arab Emirates]; South Syria, Bosra, St. Symeon, Dura-Europos [Syria]; Khirbet Edh-Dharrah [Jordan], Kwiha [Ethiopia] and researchers (3 in the process of being deposited, 2 already deposited, and 2 researchers from other RU's who have decided to deposit to OrAM);
- publications of completed excavations (Bosra, Shaara, Philippiopolis, Sia, Palmyra, St. Symeon, Cyrrhus, Dura-Europos, Khirbet Edh-Dharrah, Qani, Jawf-Hadramawt, Tigray, Mleiha) ; ongoing programmes (Faïlaka, Petra, Farasan Islands, Hegra, Tajikistan, Aramaic inscriptions, Ed-Deir, Kwiha); archaeological material (Um El-Amr inscriptions; ceramics); colloquia; synthesis projects: P.-M. Blanc ; J.-F. Breton ; G. Coqueugniot ; J. Dentzer-Feydy ; R. Douaud ; T. Fournet ; M. Gelin ; M. Mouton ; F. Renel ; C. Saliou ; G. Tallet ; F. Villeneuve ;

- transfer of skills, through the training of experienced researchers and new generations: all the missions and all the statutory members of OrAM are responsible for the transmission of knowledge, in the field and in the laboratory.