Beirut Central District Infrastructure Archaeology, 1996

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In 1993, the first phase of the investigations in the old city center of Beirut started. UNESCO and the Directorate General of Antiquities initiated the first exploratory soundings on Place des Martyrs and its neighbourhood.

In the spring of 1994, a third partner joined the institutions involved in the archaeology of the BCD: SOLIDERE (Company for the Development of the Building Program).

The Directorate General of Antiquities granted permits for excavations to four archeological teams in 1994 to start work in the Souk area. Gradually the number of national and international teams increased to fourteen teams. Unesco supported the DGA and employed a coordinator in the BCD. SOLIDERE supported all excavations financially.

In 1995, several teams participated in the archaeological research associated with the reconstruction of the new infrastructure in the BCD.

The IPP/UVA team participated since April 1995 in the Archaeological Infrastructure project. All activities have resulted in the collection of over 10,000 objects; over 70,000 units of pottery from which the archaeologists have registered over three million sherds, which together represents a weight of over sixty tons.

A major priority is the storage of these archaeological materials. Architectural elements are stored to be used later for integration into modern buildings or to be exposed in public spaces. Small finds are transferred to the National Museum to be consolidated or restored. The majority of the objects, however, are stored to be analyzed by future generations of students. Currently there are over 200 students, predominantly Lebanese, who have participated in the project.

The historical importance of Beirut has been established mainly from references in textual documents that go back to the 14th century BC (Mouterde 1964). Along with the ports of Caesarea, Tyre, Sidon, Byblos and Ras Shamra, Beirut played a prominent role in the exchange of commodities and knowledge in the eastern Mediterranean.

The 108 sites excavated to date have yielded architecture and objects that belong to ten main periods.

I The Paleolithic period (- 10,000 BC)
II The Pre-pottery Neolithic period (10,000 - 6000 BC)
III The Pottery Neolithic Period (6000 - 4500 BC)
IV The Chalcolithic (4500 - 3000 BC)
V The Bronze Age period (3000 - 1200 BC)
VI The Iron Age period (1200 - 300 BC)
VII The Classical period (300 BC- 800 AD)
VIII The Medieval period (800 - 1700 AD)
IX The Ottoman reconstruction of Beirut (1840 - 1920 AD)
X The remains of pre-war Beirut (1920 - 1975 AD)

A PRELIMINARY SYNTHESIS

Within the time and space available it is only possible to present some of the major issues and discoveries per period.

Period I (- 10,000 BC) (Paleolithic)

The remains belonging to this period have been retrieved from the excavations in the eastern part of the BCD. The finds belong to the technical tradition known as Levallois. The material can be dated between 60,000 - 50,000. A small sample of the tools and flakes have been analyzed, it appears that some fragments belong to the Upper Paleolithic (35000 - 15000) and the Neolithic period (Period II) as well. We may assume that with the other Period I sites, around the BCD, the coast line of Lebanon was occupied by groups of people.

Period II (10,000 - 6000 BC) (Pre-pottery Neolithic period)

Among the flints retrieved from two sites blade fragments belong to the PPNB tradition (7400 - 6000). The presence of these artifacts suggest that in the period of incipient farming people occupied the hills of the Lebanese coasts. Positive evidence for farming is lacking but should not be excluded.

Period III (6000 - 4500 BC; fig 3) (Ceramic Neolithic period)

The occasional presence of Neolithic ceramic fragment indicates that Beirut was occupied in this period. Till now no architectural remains have been uncovered. These finds suggest that a small village comparable to the Neolithic village of Byblos may have existed within the BCD.

Period IV (4500 - 3000 BC) (Chalcolithic period)

Within the limits of the BCD no architecture belonging to this period has been found.

Period V (3000 - 1200 BC) (Bronze Age)

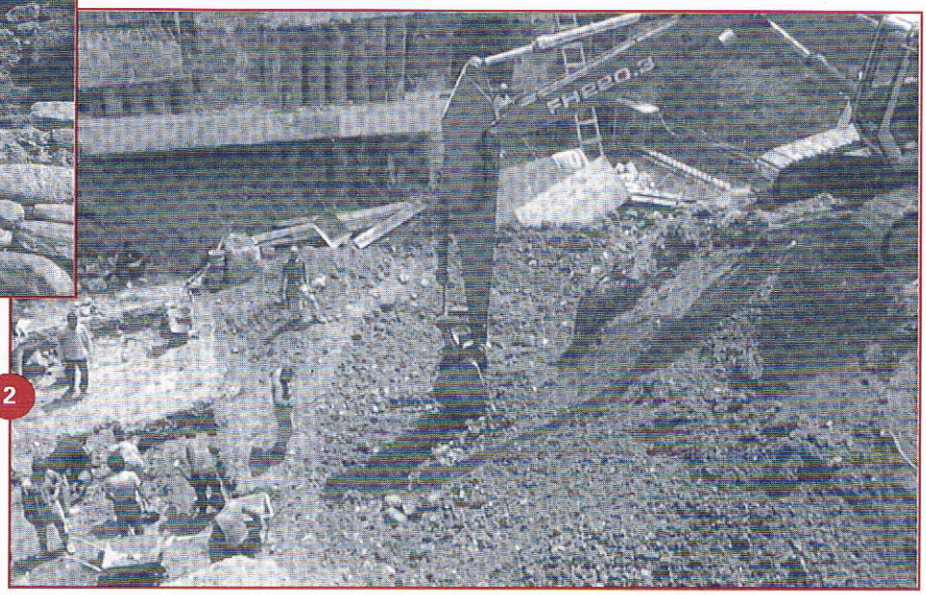
Material belonging to the beginning of this period was found in the zone of the ancient tell by Dr. Naji Karam. Dr. Leila Badre has exposed a monumental gateway and associated glacis belonging to the end of this period. Both sites were excavated because of their proximity to early traces of infrastructure. The discoveries have resulted in adaptations in the track of the future infrastructure.

Within the socio-political power networks of the Bronze Age, Beirut must have found its role as a strategic site flourishing on the basis of its location near the sea with its possibilities as a natural port along with its hinterland, located near the Wadi Beirut and other streams which would allow for agriculture and horticulture development.

Period VI (1200 - 300 BC) (Iron Age)

Remains belonging to this period have been retrieved from various sites on the ancient tell (Dr. Leila Badre, Dr. Naji Karam, Dr. Helen Sadr and Dr. Uwe Finkbeiner). Sites excavated by other teams in the BCD, more specifically in the Souk area revealed important information about the settlement in this period (Dr. Hussayn Sayagh, Dr. Helga Seeden). At sites in Rue Weygand, Rue Allenby and Rue Emir Bechir, and Martyrs Square remnants of Iron Age architecture have been found. A characteristic feature of the pottery associated with these remains is the absence of painted wares. Based on Andrew Jamieson's analysis of the material associated with the glacis I and II and the ramp in BEY 032, we assume that the extension of Beirut beyond the ancient tell and its immediate surroundings started in the late and outgoing Iron Age (650 - 500 BC). These findings suggest that the mid-first-millennium city extended from the ancient tell in a crescent around the Municipality building of which BEY 010 (excavated by Dr. Sayegh) is the best preserved part. In the area between Rue Foch and Rue Allenby we suspect the existence of a harbor. Excavations between Rue Patriarch Houayek and Hotel Phoenicia have revealed that the ancient coastline was used for the inhumation of the dead in rock-cut shaft graves.

The most prominent part of the Iron Age settlement is the fortification. Provided with a stone glacis this must have been a prominent stronghold on the Levantine coast. At least two building phases have been exposed. The most important discovery of Dr. Finkbeiner and Dr. Sadre's team is a stairway leading up to the glacis.



1. Occasionally the infrastructure archaeologists were able to investigate a long sequence spanning from Iron Age to modern building remains. Late Iron Age wall in front.
2. Side by side stratigraphic and mechanical excavations yield data for the reconstruction of Beirut's past and future

Recently we have been able to add more information about the steps, platform and retaining wall already excavated by the German/Lebanese team of BEY 020 (See *National Museum News* No. 5:7-9).

Period VII (300 BC - 600 AD) (Classical Period)

Infrastructure archaeology and other excavations have added important details to the previously defined extents of the classical city of Berytus. In contrast to Lauffray's excavations at Martyr's Square, new dicoveries take these beyond the limits of the city of the Classical period and can now attribute the architecture of Martyrs Square to the Classical period. This means that the hypothesis of Davies that the hippodrome could be located outside the city at the square also has to be rejected . With Hareth Boustani, we recently discussed several parallels between Tyre and Beirut. One of the hypotheses was that in close relation to the Period VII tombs at the southeastern limit of the BCD (near the Beirut Trade Center) it can now be assumed that the hippodrome is located in the area of Wadi Abu Jmil.

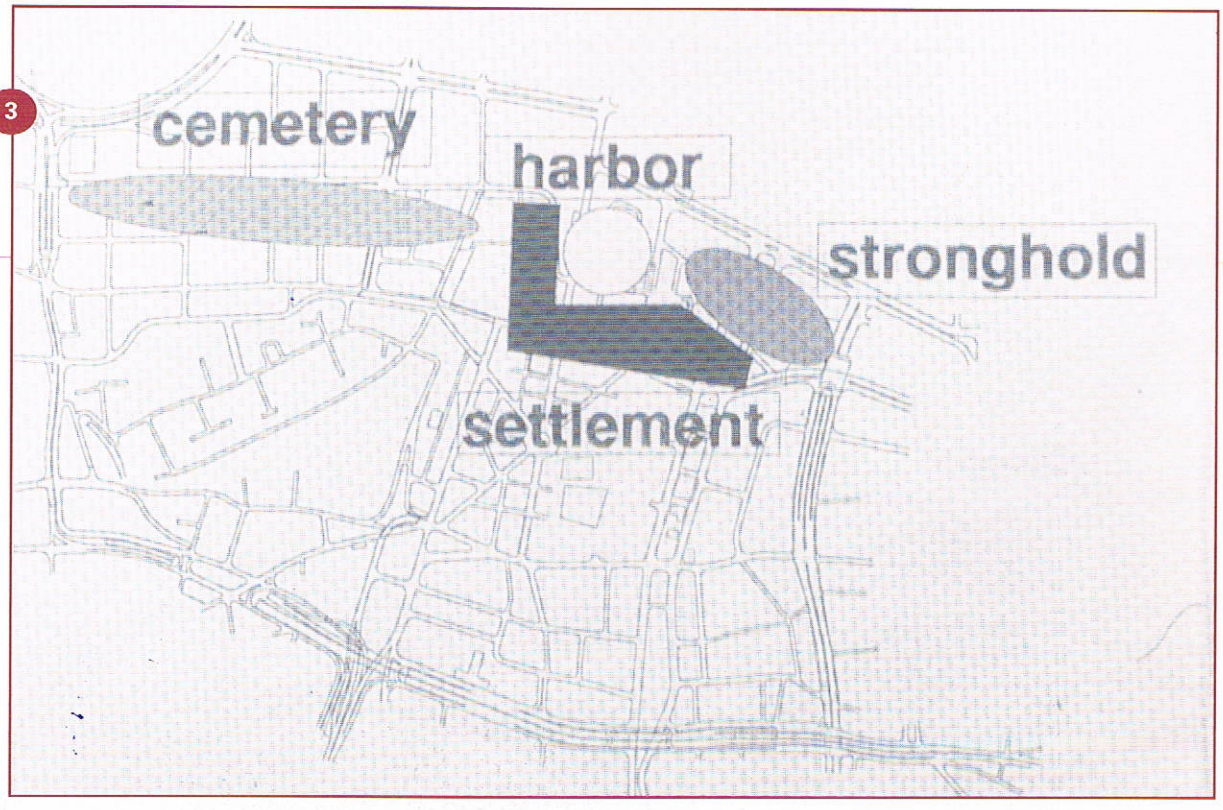
Unfortunately Infrastructure works do not touch upon the vestiges buried at considerable depth in this area. One has to wait for private developers excavating for deep underground car parks to finish before archaeologists will be able to verify the hypothesis of the hippodrome in Wadi Abu Jmil.

Period VIII (1000 - 1700 AD) (Medieval Period)

Remains belonging to this period have been exposed in the Souk area. A glacis leading up to the city wall was in some places, preserved as either a cut into bedrock of 72 degrees, or a combination of cuts into bedrock and up to three courses of hewn blocks. The outer faces of the blocks were shaped into a sloping surface of 72 degrees. Finally these blocks were protected with lime plaster. The width of the moat or ditch is 6 m.

A prominent feature in the urban landscape of Beirut is the Medieval castle or the Crusader castle. Although the remains visible at present belong to the Ottoman and of a more recent period, the foundations of the Crusader castle have been exposed by Dr. Leila Badre's team.

3.Location of the main feature of 6th century BC, Beirut
4. After excavation the sarcophagi of the Roman/Byzantine necropolis are lifted and stored for future exhibtions



These discoveries reveal the importance of the cliffs north of Martyrs Square. This area includes remains dating from the Paleolithic period until the present day. These remains underline the role of Beirut throughout history: "a point of exchange", a gateway settlement on the Levantine coast.

Period IX (ca. 1840 -1920 AD) and Period X (1920 - 1975 AD)

The constructions of this period caused major damage to the structures of the previous periods. Du Mesnil du Buison described the city as '*complètement transformé; c'est une grande ville aux toits roses, pleine de jardins et de verdure.*' (du Mesnil du Buisson 1924-25:239).

This damage may not be comparable to the damage scheduled for the reconstruction and development of the BCD at the end of the twentieth century. However, the principles adhered to by the developer and the coordination provided by UNESCO to the Direction Générale des Antiquités, warrant the recording of the remaining vestiges. The recordings and the analysis of this material will allow future generations of scholars to study the ancient societies that occupied the BCD.

The integration of the findings in the future city depends on the dialogue between urbanists and archaeologists. Therefore, the archaeological program in Beirut presents an interesting challenge for the integration of archaeological cultural heritage and built cultural heritage.

PRINCIPLES OF SALVAGE ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE BCD

Working in a context in which the developers want to proceed with their programs, archaeologists seem to be an added difficulty. However, working for more than two years in the BCD, we have to admit that the main developer SOLIDERE has, in contrast to its business responsabilities with, an eye for non-profit aspects of its project in the BCD.

In order to act as archaeologists in the context of the BCD, we have tried to define a set of principles acceptable to developers, to the General Directorate of Antiquities, the Ministry of Culture, the General Directorate of Urbanism, Unesco, the archaeologists, the Lebanese Parliament and to the general lebanese public.

Each generation finds itself with a huge amount of capital resources, to which each individual has access simply through being born into the human race. The capital is broadly made up of three kinds: natural resources (God given), man-made resources, made possible through investment of capital, and applied to natural resources,

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comprising broadly the immovables (the built environment) and movables (furniture, cars, etc.) which facilitate the use of man-made human resources, namely the people inhabiting and multiplying on the planet.

The archaeological vestiges are a quantitatively minor part of the built environment: that part which the contemporary generation resolves has cultural values and accordingly merits special protection from the chances of erosion, in order that it can be better enjoyed by the current generation, and passed on to the future.

In attempting this protection, archaeologists often find that no significant recognition is given to the importance of such assets for cultural development, environmental protection or historical awareness. As a result,urbanization and industrialization processes, pollution, modern architecture and low budget allocations have led to a situation where cultural buildings, historic landscapes and archaeological sites are in permanent danger of erosion. It is the aim of cultural resource management to avoid such erosion and indeed to achieve enhancement.

Those seeking to protect and enhance the archaeological heritage must face a number of interrelated realities: the cultural element in the heritage is made up of various streams which are of value to society, namely, art, history, religion, aesthetics, education. The degree of appreciation of such elements is linked with the human values of the particular generation which takes action in protection and enhancement of the heritage. In any particular generation, cultural values spread across international borders simply because the cultural elements of particular buildings, monuments, towns, etc., are valued by people outside that country, as well as those within. This reality is recognized by the International Agreement on World Monuments and Sites, and has been accentuated by the phenomenon of cultural tourism which is growing from modest proportions in earlier generations to the explosion associated with air travel.

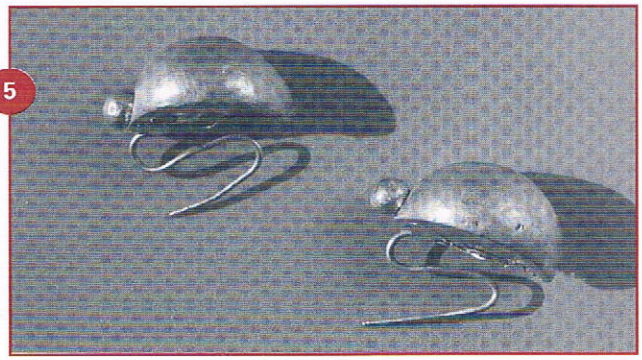
As with other works and buildings, the archaeological heritage is subject to the laws of real property. In this sense it is owned and occupied by particular public or private agencies, and cannot be said to be inherited by the contemporary generation in general.

CONSERVATION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

Since the archaeological heritage is fused with the real property in which it is found, its conservation must be necessarily applied to the real property itself, within the constraints which have regard to the cultural values. This means that the conservation must be tackled with an understanding of the inevitable life cycle of real property.

In brief, once the archaeological sites are under excavation the newly exposed vestiges start a race against obsolescence. This can take at least four forms: structural (stability of the vestiges themselves); locational (where the originally location in antiquity is now found to be lacking because of changes in the urban scene);

5. The wealth of Berytus as reflected by two gold scarab-shaped earrings (from necropolis near Kantari).



environmental (where the appreciation of the remains is undermined through traffic noise, environmental pollution, etc.). Sudden disturbance (e.g. due to a flood, fire, storm or an earthquake).

But while the first of these categories (structural) necessarily advances with the age of the exposed vestiges (although it can be checked with prudent maintenance and repair) the others do not. Indeed they may decline. On the third, location could be improved; on the fourth, the environment may become more suitable.

Whatever the kind of obsolescence for particular elements of the archaeological sites, there comes a time in its life cycle where the owner/occupier decides that there should be some renewal of the built fabric in which the archaeological vestiges are hidden. He or she might wish to carry out major structural alterations; or adapt the building for a new function; or, with greater difficulty, attempt to ameliorate disadvantage of location or environment. In such situations, the owner/occupier will be exercising the normal role of asset management of the property in question, and will take decisions based on analysis of financial costs and returns.

In this management exercise the owner/occupier of the archaeological heritage will be constrained by the legal/institutional protection that has been created for the cultural element. He or she will typically be debarred from demolishing for redevelopment; and his investment in alteration, repair, modernization, etc., will need to be conditioned by the constraint imposed by government in order that the cultural value be protected. Thus conservation becomes a special case of urban renewal.
Within this special case there can be envisaged different levels of conservation/renewal. These can be categorized in many ways (e.g. conservation, preservation, restoration, etc.). Since the terminology is not standardized, we follow the suggestions of Feilden adapted for archaeological remains (Feilden 1982);

(1) prevention of deterioration (indirect conservation): by, for example, a change of plans of (re)construction in order to avoid the interference with the archaeological vestiges;
(2) preservation: keeping the exposed vestiges in their existing state in combination or integrated into the plans of (re)construction and prevent further decay;
(3) consolidation (direct conservation): adding or applying supportive materials into the actual fabric in order to ensure its continued durability and structural integrity;
(4) restoration: reviving the original concept of the archaeological vestiges, either or both in relation to the built fabric in which it was exposed (also called restitution);
(5) rehabilitation: adapting the archaeological vestiges to a contemporary use which will be capable of sustaining it (also called reconditioning, renovation, remodeling, adaptive use);
(6) reproduction: copying the existing artifacts in order to replace some missing or decaying parts; or in extreme circumstances moving the object to a more suitable environment;

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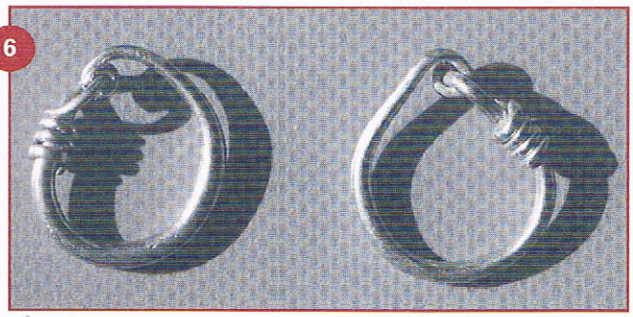

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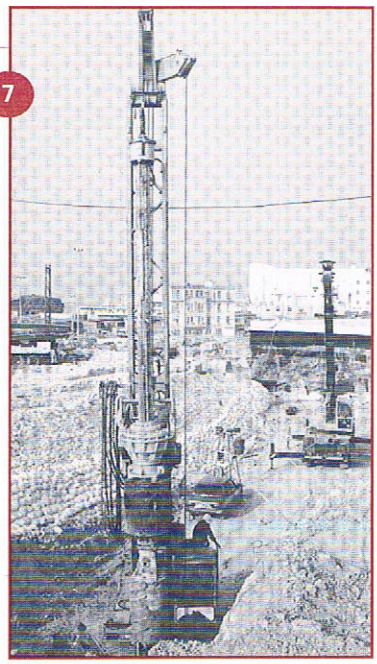


6. On the skull of a dead person in the Kantari necropolis these gold earrings were found.
7. In order to allow the scheduled construction of road and infrastructure works the base of the Iron Age glacis was temporarily protected.

(7) reconstruction: rebuilding anew in imitation of the old, as necessitated by disasters such as fire, earthquake or war, on the same site or, in the extreme case, another.

Over recent years there has been much debate for supporting the continued existence and enhancement of the cultural heritage, conducted mainly in terms of welfare economics and, in particular, merit good arguments, i.e. in favor of a good which is socially desirable independently from the valuation placed on it by beneficiaries. An increasingly important part of the debate has focused attention on the economic impact of the heritage.

Both citizens and governments have exhibited a developed and renewed interest in heritage conservation. Those in favor of supporting the heritage have sought to reinforce their arguments by demonstrating that while it may not be the specific function of the heritage to generate economic benefits, such benefits do arise. Cultural tourism for example has steadily increased.

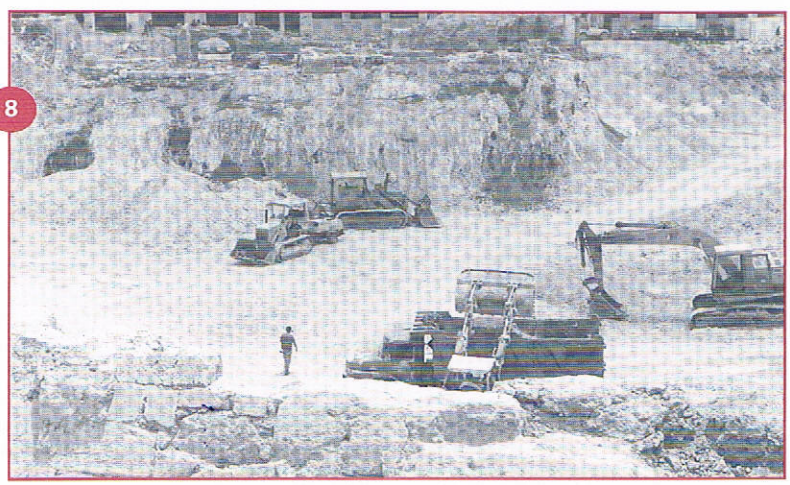
Going even further, it is now widely believed and repeatedly demonstrated that there are significant net benefits to conservation which exceed benefits attainable from alternative projects that build anew. This represents a radical departure from the past, when the argument was made that conservation could have significant economic consequence in the long run, but not often in the short run. Thus, when short run market developments threaten to destroy or replace a cultural site, it was argued that government or some other authority should exert efforts to protect and/or make possible the conservation alternative, because this over time would prove economically wise, i.e. efficient. But while current argument holds that older view it also argues the point that with only very little government or policy assistance, conservation projects can compete favorably with projects that tear down and build anew, i.e. they are competitive in the market place in the short run.

ASSESSMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN THE BCD

In any preservation proposals the following issues should be included:

Relation of the exposed remains in the BCD towards other remains in the BCD and beyond.

In the BCD, it would be a waste of energy to keep all exposed remains, duplications of yet another Roman bath in a plan that already aims at the landscaping of the previously exposed Roman baths would also be a bad policy. Furthermore, the preservation of remains smaller than a complete house do not necessarily contribute to an improvement of the archaeological education of the general public.
The preservation, consolidation, restoration, rehabilitation or reproduction of Classical artefacts remains and later periods could also be of low priority regarding the presence of such remains at the three key-sites (Baalbeck, Byblos and Tyre) and the large group of



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8. Two sites remain after excavations in the souk. In forefront of the pitch the Medieval moat and in the background the late Iron age houses survive the construction of an underground car park.

smaller monuments.
The concept of an archaeological park as a starting point should initiate an archaeological debate about which features should be included into a presentation of 'Beirut through the Ages.' At present the location of such a park should be within the contours of the Iron Age glacis.

At the moment, the archaeologist have to define the elements necessary to provide the academic world and the general public with an overview of Beirut's history. It should be clear to developers, owners, politicians and other decision-makers which archaeological remains should be reproduced and reconstructed.

Technical description of the remains and the suggestions for consolidation, reproduction or reconstruction.

The archaeologist provides the managers of the archaeological heritage with a list of their demands and suggestions to reach the final goal in the education of the academic world and the general public.

The archaeologist who proposes the inclusion of the exposed remains into the archaeological heritage of the BCD provides a full report of its merits to the academic world and the general public. Along with the technical description of the remains and the suggestions for preservation, rehabilitation.
The archaeologist provides the managers of the archaeological heritage as to why the exposed remains have to be preserved or rehabilitated. The archaeologist should be prepared to participate in the cost benefit analysis and to counterbalance the negative outcome of such an analysis.

CONCLUSION

My dedication toward archaeology and my aim to contribute to the archaeological heritage of Beirut and beyond, impelled me to write this paper. We can only hope that politicians, archaeologists, developers, owners and others involved in the gigantic project of reconstruction and development of Beirut can reach agreements on the management of the cultural resources in the BCD. All parties should consider the management of the exposed remains as an obligation to the future. All disciplines can add to the preservation of elements that are part of Beirut's history.

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