

Women's adornment and hairstyle tools from Jerash archaeological site/ Jordan

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ABSTRACT

During the Roman period, women fashion was of special value, and was afforded special care during daily life and important ceremonials. Hair and face treatments reflected many particular issues such as imperial position, wealth and even individual beauty for local women. Our paper presents a variety of ivory and bone artifacts recovered during the excavations of the northern part of Jerash during the 2018 and 2019 seasons. 20 artifacts made of ivory and bone material, were found in Roman occupation strata. The artifacts are women's tools used with adornments and hairstyles during the Roman period. It also presents a rare case of documenting red pigments on different artifacts. This study includes the classification of these artifacts and their uses during the Roman period in Jerash site, especially in the area of excavations.

Keywords: Jerash; Roman period; Ivory tools; Bone tools; pigments.

INTRODUCTION

The archaeological site of Jerash in Jordan is located 44 kilometers to the north of Amman. It is one of the important archaeological sites from the Roman and Byzantine periods in Jordan. The site is distinguished by its strategic location, the availability of water resources (it was called Antioch-on-the Chrysoroas (Welles, 1938, pp. 355-494) and the fertility of its lands. These reasons led to the settlement of the site for a long time, especially during the Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic periods (Kraeling, 1938).

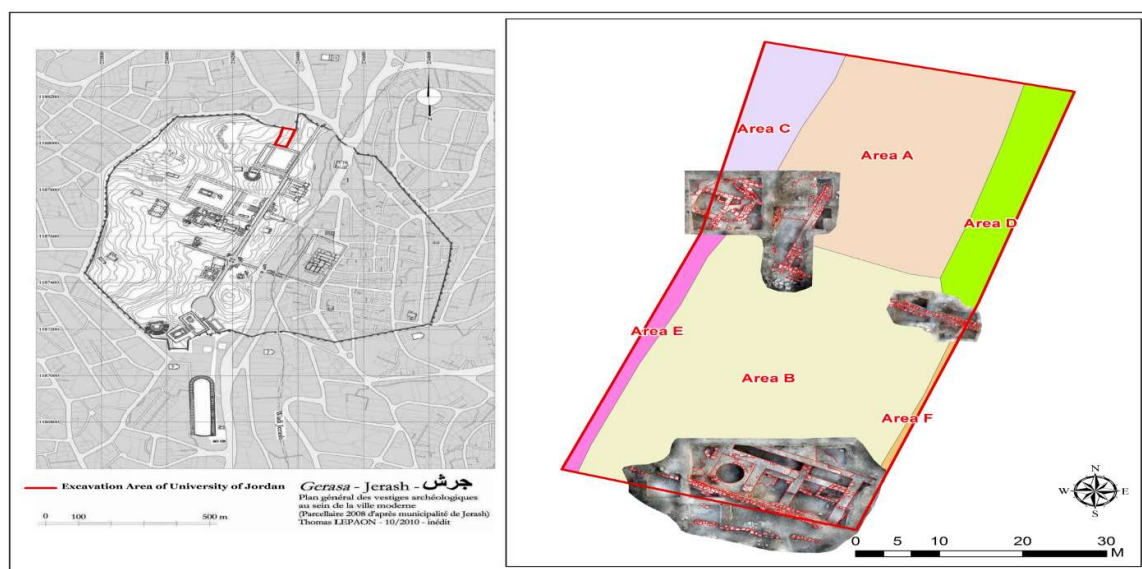


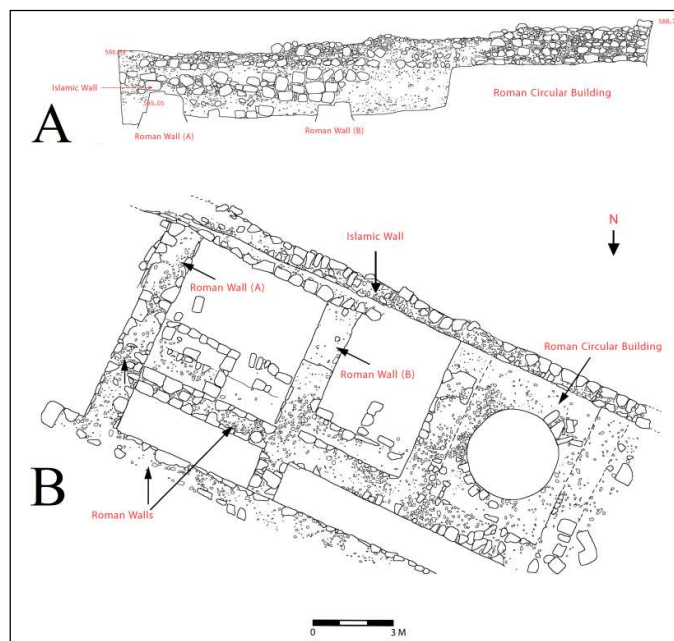
Figure 1: Map of Jerash showing the main archaeological monuments and the excavation's site.

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The site, which was one of the Decapolis (Kraeling, 1938), had theatres, temples, an oval piazza, public buildings, and baths built on both *Cardo* and *Decumani* between the first century BC and first century AD (Seigne, 1985) and rebuilt in the second century AD (Parapetti, 2002; Lepaon 2016). Many churches were built in the Byzantine period (Crowfoot, 1938; Browning, 1982; Clark, 1986; Shiyab, 2013) and there are mosques from the Early Islamic periods (Ranttenborg and Blanke, 2017; Walmsley et al., 2008) and other Islamic structures (Lichtenberger and Raja, 2018).

The northern part of the site, especially near the northern gate, was not investigated previously. Therefore, the University of Jordan surveyed, photographed and made topographic maps of this area before conducting archaeological excavations in between 2017-2019 (Fig. 1). In the southern part of area investigated, the excavations resulted in the discovery of a rectangular building divided into three rooms and a large stone-built corridor believed to be from the Roman period. This building was reused in a later (Islamic) period where architectural modifications were made and new walls were added inside the building, consequently changing the nature of the use (Fig. 2). In the northern section of the area, another building, whose features have not yet been identified, has been uncovered. In these buildings were discovered large amounts of pottery sherds, coins and glass as well as pieces of ivory and bone and some shells.

Stratigraphical analysis of the excavated area in the both building revealed that the uncovered ivory and bone artifacts date to the Roman period. This result was confirmed by the analysis of the coins and the pottery found in these strata, which were also from the Roman period (Second to fourth) century AD.



**Figure 2: A. Northern section of the Islamic wall
B. Top plan of the uncovered building in the excavated area.**

Our study presents Roman women adornment tools that were found in both structures during the archaeological excavations of seasons 2018 and 2019. This study first draws attention to the study the typology of ivory and bone tools. Then we draw attention to the relationships between women's adornments and the use of ivory and bone artifacts for women hairstyles, and the use of cosmetics during the occupation of the excavated area.

Women's styles during the Roman Period

Women in the Roman society took care of their personal grooming and beauty, particularly those of the upper class. Women's personality and presence by hairstyle, face makeup, body and clothes were important expressions of their

socio-cultural status.

The socio-cultural behavior of Roman women is an important aspect for researchers to understand personal behaviors and styles. Many conditions and activities played an important role in women's styles during Roman period. These conditions were presented by two rules, the first one is regarding to Roman women hierarchy position, age and other cultural aspects. While the second is related to women activities like the political, religious, ritual and wedding ceremonies. In addition, hair style could have had a symbolic meaning for some imperial women and gods during the Roman period. (Bartman, 2001; Orizaga, 2013; Stephens, 2008).

Researchers have presented many ideas demonstrating women's styles regarding hairstyle and face treatment, body treatments as well their dresses. These were based on sculptures, wall paintings, and personal beauty tools. (Bartman, 2001; Chovanec, 2016; Olson, 2009; Orizaga, 2013; Stephens, 2008).

Many examples of hairstyle can be seen in Roman sculptures and wall paintings. The importance of hairstyle for higher status and wealthy women is clear from the level of care given to the details of hair decoration in women's sculptures. During the Roman period, women showed high attention for their choice of coiffures. (Bartman, 2001; Orizaga, 2013; Stephens, 2008).

The importance of hair styles during the Roman period can be attested both from natural hair design and from hairdressing from threads and wigs and other materials. Common known hair styles were documented during the Roman period, such as turban, serpentine braid, braid, and tower hairstyles among others. These styles were common for some specific persons or during specific imperial family's rules such as the *Fonseca Bust* in the museum of *Capotolini* in Rome (Bartman, 2001, Fig. 6; Pp: 9). (Orizaga, 2013; Stephens, 2008).

Hair style was important for girls to improve their marriage chances, but this cannot exclude other cases the importance of hair style for imperial or rich elder women and normal civil women. Large quantities and a variety of hairstyle artifacts have been found in archaeological remains like mirrors, razors, tweezers, brushes, pins and needles. Pins and needles were important tools to stabilize the hairstyle. Also they reflect wealth of women by the presence of golden, silver, ivory needles and decorated pins (Orizaga 2013 Pp: 46; Bartman, 2001; Stephens, 2008).

Personal grooming of Roman women also was important for them. Cosmetics material and equipments were common during the Roman period. Cosmetics are subdivided into two categories; cosmetics from commercial markets and house made cosmetics (Chovanec, 2016; Olson, 2009; Orizaga, 2013).

Cosmetics were used for face, body, and hair treatments and for body bathing. Roman women used foundation and eye makeup, rouge, and hair treatments. Roman women were well known in archaeological description by glowing white skin, large eyes, and rosy complexion in the cheeks and lips (Chovanec, 2016; Olson, 2009; Orizaga, 2013).

It was so important for Roman women from different social classes to take care of their beauty. It was a common practice even by the normal civil women to take care of their beauty. Many cosmetics were available in house kitchen material or from cheap markets (Chovanec, 2016; Olson, 2009; Orizaga, 2013).

Instead, imperial and wealthy women could buy expensive cosmetics or have particular cosmetics prepared by slaves at their palaces, and perhaps testing these cosmetic on their bodies.

The use of cosmetics is attested by many examples from archaeological remains of cosmetics' tools like glass swizzles, ivory sticks/swizzles, pins, and special small jars from glass or ceramics (like *pyxis* and *arculae, scrinia*) to hold cosmetics. The use of cosmetics was also documented in many painted pictures of Roman women like the Mummy Portrait of a woman named *Isidora* from *Ankyronpolis*, 100-110 AD, in Getty Villa (Orizaga, 2013, Fig 1, Pp: 137) . (Chovanec, 2016; Olson, 2009).

One of the most known cases of Roman women face and hair treatment material is presented by beauty case of *Cumae* in the National Museum of Naples. The box, which is made of wood decorated with ivory, includes gold and silver, mirror, needle, pins (Stephens, 2008).

Methodology

The categorization of artifacts has been based on a variety of scientific characteristics and methodologies. Classification was undertaken based on the shape and size of the ivory and bone tools. There is no particular scheme that can be applied simply to Ivory and bone artifacts from Jordan due to the scarceness of published data dealing with the Roman period in Jordan. But data from published Roman sites in the Near East and Europe were compared (Ayalor, 2005; Chovanec, 2016; Olson, 2009; Orizaga, 2013; Stephens, 2008).

Archaeozoological analyses were done by the use of Leica EZ4 HD stereomicroscope in order to document all anthropic modification on artifacts surfaces. Data collected from artifacts were used to document ancient decoration and possible uses (Camps-Fabrer, 1990; Choyke & Schibler, 2007; Cristiani, 2008; D’Errico, 2001; Edwards et al., 2006; Jacob, 2012; Tiley-Nel & Antonites, 2015).

Categories

Archaeozoological study of ivory and bone artifacts was applied to create a preliminary classification to have clear ideas about the typologies and the use of these artifacts. We classified artifacts into four categories according to the shape and the possible function of use. (Fig. 3, Table. 1).

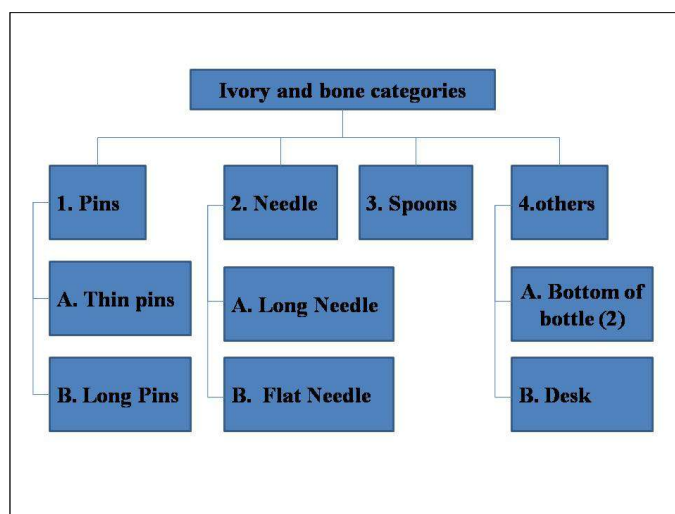


Figure 3: Classification scheme of Ivory and bone categories

Table 1: Measurements of artifacts in mm

Typology	Object N.	Length	Diameter	Head diameter	Thickness
Pin	3	49	3	5	-
Pin	5	60	4	6	-
Pin	7	23	4	6	-
Pin	8	42	4	-	-
Pin	9	72	4	-	-
Pin	10	63	6	9	-
Pin	12	62	4	6	-
Pin	13	39	4	-	-
Pin	14	42	6	-	-
Pin	15	92	5	5	-
Pin	17	41	4	6	-
Pin	62	81	5	-	-

Typology	Object N.	Length	Diameter	Head diameter	Thickness
Bottom	1	51	29	-	-
Bottom	2	29	21	-	-
Needle	6	94	4	-	3
Needle	11	29	5	-	4
Needle	18	69	4	-	3
Stick/swizzle	4	49	10	-	-
Beads	41	13	13	-	-
Beads	41	12	10	-	-
Disk	59	13	3	-	-
Spoon	46	73	27	-	4
Spoon	48	74	20	-	4

1. Pins:

Microscopic analysis documents particular red pigment remains on two pins. Pin N. 10 present decorated thin pin made of bone with open U shape on the distal portion. The upper part has a wider short cylindrical shape with U view open to the outside. From shaft to proximal point we have a thin shape pin compared to other pins. Medium erosion was noted on most of the artifact surface and red pigment covers proximal point and distal portion over erosion. (Fig. 4)

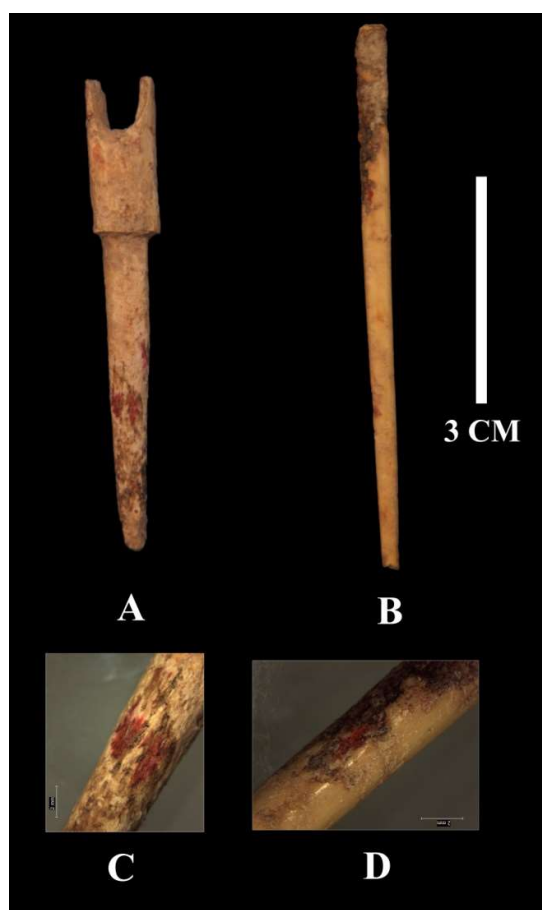


Figure 4: A: Pin N. 10. B: Pin 9. C: stereomicroscopic photo of pigment on pin 10 surface. D: C: stereomicroscopic photo of pigment on pin 9 surface.

Pin N.9 is a thin pin made of ivory and has red pigment spots on the middle shaft and the distal portion. A microscopic photo shows a red pigment under a dark gray sedimentation. Unfortunately, proximal point and distal edge is not preserved. (Fig. 5)

The second subcategory is eleven pins. Five pins are made of ivory and six made of a long bone.

Pin N. 15: medium size pin made of ivory. Its length is around 80 mm. its point has a triangle shape and a distal portion end with engraved line and small circular line.

Pin N. 62: medium size broken pin made of ivory presents middle shaft.

Pin N. 5: medium size broken pin made of ivory presents middle shaft to distal portion. Its length is around 70 mm, and its point is broken and distal portion end with elongated oval shape. (Fig. 5)

Pin N. 7: medium size broken pin made of ivory presents distal portion. End of distal portion has a small spherical shape. (Fig. 5)

Pin N. 8: medium size broken pin made of ivory presents middle shaft.

Pin N. 3: medium size broken pin made of bone presents middle shaft to distal portion. Its length is around 50 mm, and its point is broken and distal portion end with spherical shape. (Fig. 5)

Pin N. 12: medium size broken pin made of bone presents middle shaft to distal portion. Its length is around 65 mm, and its point is broken and the distal portion ends with spherical shape.

Pin N.13: medium size broken pin made of bone presents middle shaft to proximal portion. Its length is around 40 mm, and its point is preserved while distal portion is missed.

Pin N.14: medium size broken pin made of bone presents middle shaft to proximal portion. Its length is around 35 mm, and its point is preserved while distal portion is missed.

Only artifact N.15 is well preserved while the rest of artifacts present different portions of pins. But there are two types of decoration on the distal portion; the oval shape and the spherical shape at the end of distal portion. Most of the pins have a diameter from 3-4 mm.

Pin N.17: medium size broken pin made of bone presents middle shaft to distal portion. Its length is around 40 mm, and its point is broken and a distal portion ends with a spherical shape. (Fig. 5)

Pin 19: medium size broken pin made of bone presents middle shaft to proximal portion. Its length is around 40 mm, and its point is broken.

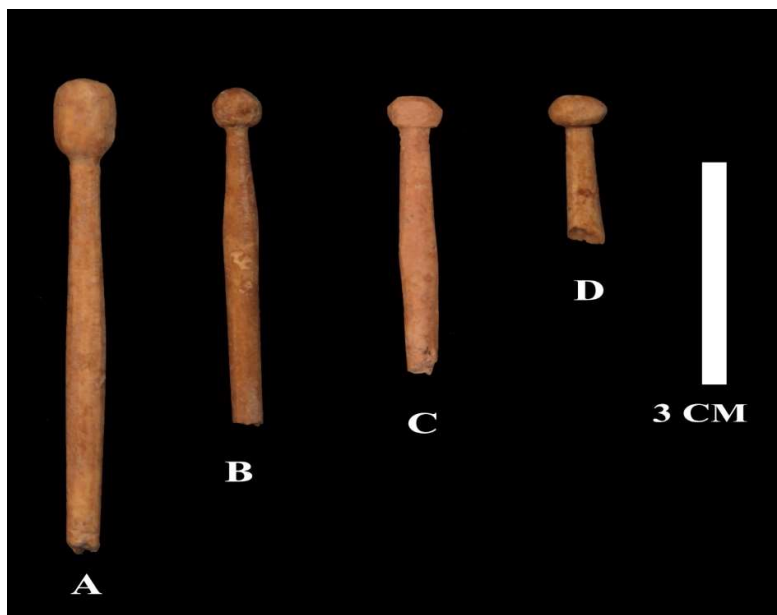


Figure 5: A: Pin 5. B: Pin 3. C: Pin 17.D: Pin 7.

2. Needles

We subdivided this category into two types of needles. The first one is presented by needle N. 6 and N. 18. Needle N. 6 is a perforated long needle made of bone. Proximal point is missed but it is still having a considerable length; around 95 mm. Needle N. 18 is a perforated needle made of bone. Proximal portion is missed, and its length is around 70 mm. (Fig. 6)

Second subcategory presented by needle N. 11 which is a perforated flat needle made of bone. This needle presents from middle to distal portion. The distal portion is flatted and has a perforation around 2 mm in diameter. We documented parallel inclined sawing along the two sides of needle surfaces.



Figure 6: A: Needle 6. B: 18. C: Needle 11.

3. Spoons:

Two different shape spoons were documented in this category.

Spoon N. 48 is a small rounded spoon made from a large size animal bone. Its length is around 80 mm and its width of proximal part is around 20 mm and its thickness is 3-4 mm. Proximal portion was made in a semi-circular to oval shape concaved to inside. While distal portion presents handle of spoon is broken. The handle of the spoon has a flat surface from the upper part and on both lateral sides while dorsal portion view fracture of rounded handle. (Fig. 7)

We did not document any decoration on this artifact's surfaces. But the proximal portion of the spoon is clearly smoothed due to the use, especially at end point of proximal part. The rest of spoon seems not to have been used because its edges still preserve their sharpness.

The color of spoon is light red brown, and this could be due to the natural soil color of archaeological site. Other colors related to the use were not noted on the object surfaces.

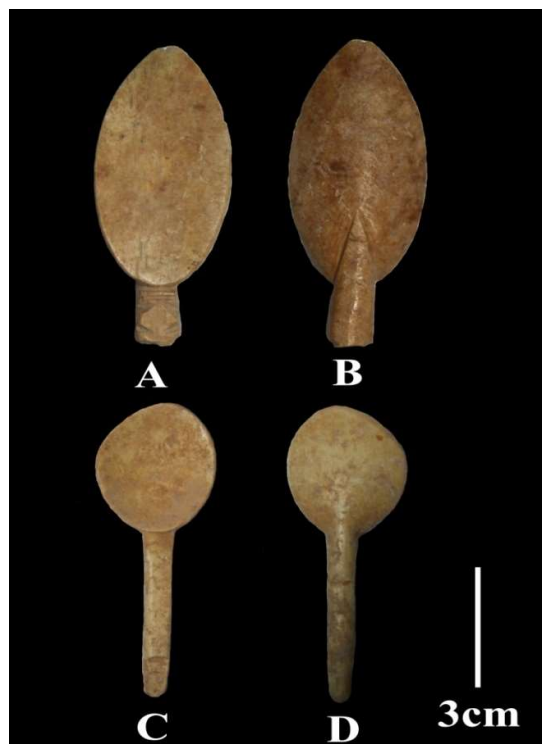


Figure 7: A: Frontal view of spoon N. 48. B: Dorsal view of spoon N.48. C: Frontal view of spoon N.46. D: Dorsal view of spoon N.46.

Spoon N. 46 is a large oval spoon made from a large size animal bone. This artifact presents proximal portion of a large oval pointed spoon which looks like a rose leaf. The spoon is made of a large animal bone and has a symmetrical shape for both lateral sides. The connection portion between proximal portion and the handle is decorated by geometrical incisions. The latter presents two small perpendicular incised lines and two small triangles pointing to the lateral sides. (Fig. 7)

On dorsal portion we noted graved triangle presents end of connection portion on the spoon. Grooves are still clear and can be observed by eye. A broken distal portion shows a possible connection to a rounded long handle.

The proximal head point of the spoon is not preserved but the area of the proximal portion is smoothed, and this could be related to the use of the spoon. The rest of the proximal portion of the spoon is still preserved and production modification is still clear on both surfaces.

4. Others:

Disk from ivory (N.59): contains four rounded circles and a small incised point in the middle. The external circle has a wider diameter and a convex surface while the internal circles are smaller to inside and have flat surfaces.

Bottom of small jar (N.1): this object is composed of two parts. Their shape look like a small mortar and pestle made of ivory. After studying it we found a perforation circle on dorsal surface. This perforation is made intentionally and the object is not broken. We noted that the shape of the pestle contains an external surface close the mouth of the mortar which does not allow the pestle to go down on the mortar hole. In addition, the distal part of pestle is shorter than the length of mortar hole. These facts exclude function of mortar and pestle for this artifact. (Fig. 8)

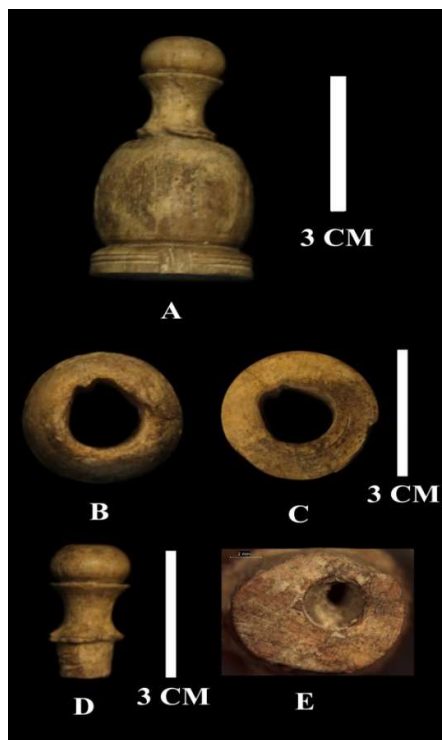


Figure 8: A: N.1, Bottom of small jar. B: Frontal view. C: Dorsal view. D: Pestle. E: stereomicroscopic photo of dorsal portion of the Pestle.

Bottom of small jar (N.2): this object is fragmented into three parts. The closing upper part is missing. We noted on the upper part a spherical shape and on the lower part a smoothed cylindrical shape separated by an external circular line. The diameter of the upper part is larger than the lower part. The artifact was perforated along the internal part in a cylindrical shape. The lower external part is smoothed with small inclination to the inside, which could allow the lower part to connect to another circular perforated artifact.

Stick/swizzle of ivory (N. 4): this artifact is present into two parts. The first part is a cylindrical shape with a diameter of 9 mm. The edge surface is flat rounded with small fractures around the external circumference. These small fractures seem to have been smoothed by use. The Second part presents a shaft to the proximal portion. We documented some small spots of red pigment. Its point is wide which probably present stick to shake liquids or mix material like pigments.

Discussion:

Our study presents four main functions for artifacts in our case. First group related to accessories for hairstyle which included uncolored pins and needles. Although we have only one preserved example of pins, but the distal portions of pins were enough to indicate the typology and use of them in comparison with previous published studies from Roman sites in Europe. Uncolored pins were common during the Roman period and used to maintain hairstyle for high class women.

Perforated needles were used to insert threads to hair lift of women and maintain hairstyle. Alternative functions related to sewing are excluded because of the shape of the needles. In needle N.6, its length which exceeds 95 mm and diameter around 2 mm, cannot support a sewing function. And in needle N. 11 the shape from proximal point which looks like triangle and flat distal portion cannot be used for textile works.

The second group is related to eyes and face treatments by colored pigment. Preserved red pigments found on the surfaces of artifacts N. 10 and N. 9. Erosion on artifact N.10 surface could be related to use of the artifact for a long time in liquid material. Red pigment preserved above the eroded surfaces on both objects as well. Pin N. 10 shape is

different from the other pins and also shows particular function. During the Roman period pins were common tools to use as eyeliners and face adornments, and this can be seen in many colored wall paintings in Roman sites.

The third group presents three artifacts; two artifacts have particular shapes and decoration. Artifact N.1 which looks like jar and pestle but we exclude this function for certain reasons. First reason is the presence of cylindrical perforation on the base surface of mortar, and the second reason the upper shape of pestle which close the mouth of the mortar, and the third reason is the length of the lower part of the pestle that cannot reach the base of the mortar. We therefore suggest that this artifact can be connected to the mouth of small jar of glass/ceramic. Its decoration supports the use of it with a small container of eyes or face adornments.

The last group is a group of decorated spoons and ivory sticks which their shapes and anthropical modifications on edge surfaces support their use for specific delicate materials; women adornments for instance. A stick could be used to smash semi-soft and waxy materials like adornments. Decorated spoons are eroded only from proximal points; this could be related to the use with waxy material and for small quantities.

Conclusion:

Our case study presents a rare case of women adornment tools for hair and face treatment during the Roman period in Jordan archaeological sites. This proves the importance of the inhabitants of the excavated structures, and possibly suggests that they belong to a higher status class like a ruler family or rich people.

We documented a rare preservation case of red pigments on the surfaces of cosmetic tools from the Roman period in Jordanian sites. This may demonstrate that Roman women used pins to color their cheeks and lips, and that pins were not only used for hairstyle.

These artifacts show two particular women treatments; pins and needle used as accessories for hairstyles. Perforated needles used to left hair to design hair model for particular hairstyle. While the second one is the use of pins and spoons as cosmetics accessories for face and eyes adornments especially with red color pigment.

Bottom of jar (from glass/ceramics) and ivory swizzle show the importance of these jars to hold a specific adornments material and delectated treatment of this material. This reflects how a Roman woman took care of her hair and face styles to show her beauty.

Women treatments tools in our case show the importance of personality of the women living in this area of the site, and the general role of women styles and presence on specific celebration or daily life in Jerash site during the Roman period.

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أدوات الزينة وتصفيف الشعر للنساء من موقع جرش الأثري / الأردن

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ملخص

خلال الفترة الرومانية ، وكانت موضة المرأة ذات قيمة خاصة ، وتم منحها رعاية خاصة خلال الحياة اليومية والاحتفالات الهامة. وعكست علاجات الشعر والوجه العديد من القضايا مثل: الوضع الإمبراطوري، والثروة، وحتى الجمال الفردي للمرأة المحلية. وتعرض ورقتنا مجموعة متنوعة من القطع الأثرية العاجية والعظمية التي تم اكتشافها خلال أعمال التنقيب في الجزء الشمالي من جرش خلال موسمي 2018 و 2019 تم العثور على 20 قطعة أثرية مصنوعة من العاج والعظام في طبقات الاستيطان الروماني. القطع الأثرية هي أدوات نسائية تستخدم مع الزينة وتسريحات الشعر خلال الفترة الرومانية. ويعرض أيضًا حالة نادرة لتوثيق أصباغ حمراء على قطع أثرية مختلفة تتضمن هذه الدراسة تصنيف هذه القطع الأثرية واستخداماتها خلال المدة الرومانية في موقع جرش ، ولاسيما منطقة الحفرية.

الكلمات الدالة: جرش ، العصر الروماني ، أدوات العاج ، أدوات العظام ، أصباغ.

1الجامعة الأردنية؛ 2 جامعة الحسن بن طلال.
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