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## Contents

Acknowledgements	vi
Transliteration	vii
Summaries of the papers in this volume	ix
<b>THE ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY OF OMAN AND THE GULF</b>	
<b>Peter Magee</b> , New chronometric data defining the Iron Age II period in south-eastern Arabia	1
<b>Vincent Charpentier, Philippe Marquis &amp; Éric Pellé</b> , La nécropole et les derniers horizons V <sup>e</sup> millénaire du site de Gorbat al-Mahar (Suwayh, SWY-1, Sultanat d'Oman) : premiers résultats	11
<b>Jutta Häser</b> , Archaeological results of the 1999 and 2000 survey campaigns in Wādī Banī ʿAwf and the region of al-Ḥamrāʾ (Central Oman)	21
<b>Cécile Monchablon, Rémy Crassard, Olivia Munoz, Hervé Guy, Gaëlle Bruley-Chabot &amp; Serge Cleuziou</b> , Excavations at Raʿs al-Jinz RJ-1: stratigraphy without tells	31
<b>Tom Vosmer</b> , The Magan Boat Project: a process of discovery, a discovery of process	49
<b>Anne Benoist, Michel Mouton &amp; Jeremie Schiettecatte</b> , The artefacts from the fort at Mleiha: distribution, origins, trade and dating	59
<b>Ali Tigani ElMahi &amp; Moawiyah Ibrahim</b> , Two seasons of investigations at Manāl site in the Wādī Samāyil area, Sultanate of Oman	77
<b>Soumyen Bandyopadhyay &amp; Magda Sibley</b> , The distinctive typology of central Omani mosques: its nature and antecedents	99
<b>Caesar E. Farah</b> , Anglo-Ottoman confrontation in the Persian Gulf in the late 19th and early 20th centuries	117
<b>COMPARATIVE WATER SYSTEMS</b>	
<b>Miquel Barceló, Julián Ortega, Arcadi Piera &amp; Josep Torró</b> , The Search for the Hararah <i>asdād</i> in the area of Zafār, Governorate of Ibb, Yemen	133
<b>Helena Kirchner</b> , <i>Maʿjil</i> : a type of hydraulic system in Yemen and in al-Andalus?	143
<b>THE ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY OF PRE-ISLAMIC YEMEN</b>	
<b>T.J. Wilkinson</b> , The organization of settlement in highland Yemen during the Bronze and Iron Ages	157
<b>Frank Braemer, Serge Cleuziou &amp; Tara Steimer</b> , Dolmen-like structures: some unusual funerary monuments in Yemen	169
<b>William D. Glanzman</b> , An examination of the building campaign of Yadaʿīl Dharīḥ bin	

Sumhu <sup>c</sup> alay, <i>mukarrib</i> of Saba <sup>3</sup> , in light of recent archaeology	183
<b>Jean-François Breton</b> , Preliminary notes on the development of Shabwa	199
<b>Christian Darles</b> , Les fortifications de Shabwa, capitale du royaume de Ḥaḍramawt	215
<b>Jan Retsö</b> , When did Yemen become <i>Arabia felix</i> ?	229

#### THE EPIGRAPHY OF PRE-ISLAMIC YEMEN

<b>Joseph L. Daniels</b> , Landscape graffiti in the Dhamār Plains and its relation to mountain-top religious practice	237
<b>Serguei A. Frantsouzof</b> , The Hadramitic funerary inscription from the cave-tomb at al-Rukbah (Wādī Ghabr, Inland Ḥaḍramawt) and burial ceremonies in ancient Ḥaḍramawt	251
<b>Peter Stein</b> , The inscribed wooden sticks of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich	267
<b>Mohammed Maraqtan</b> , Some notes on Sabaic epistolography	275

#### YEMEN IN THE ISLAMIC PERIOD

<b>A. Rougeulle</b> , Excavations at Sharmah, Ḥaḍramawt the 2001 and 2002 seasons	287
<b>Noha Sadek</b> , Ta <sup>c</sup> izz, capital of the Rasulid dynasty in Yemen	309

#### ETHNOGRAPHY IN YEMEN

<b>Vitaly Naumkin &amp; Victor Porkhomovsky</b> , Oral poetry in the Soqotran socio-cultural context. The case of the ritual song <i>The girl and the jinn</i>	315
<b>Miranda Morris</b> , The Soqotra Archipelago: concepts of good health and everyday remedies for illness	319
<b>Ester Muchawsky-Schnapper</b> , Children's attire in early 20th-century Ṣan <sup>c</sup> ā <sup>3</sup> as a socio-cultural paradigm	343

#### LIST OF PAPERS ALPHABETICALLY BY AUTHOR

<b>Soumyen Bandyopadhyay &amp; Magda Sibley</b> , The distinctive typology of central Omani mosques: its nature and antecedents	99
<b>Miquel Barceló, Julián Ortega, Arcadi Piera &amp; Josep Torró</b> , The Search for the Hararah <i>asdād</i> in the area of Zafār, Governorate of Ibb, Yemen	133
<b>Anne Benoist, Michel Mouton &amp; Jeremie Schiettecatte</b> , The artefacts from the fort at Mleiha: distribution, origins, trade and dating	59
<b>Frank Braemer, Serge Cleuziou &amp; Tara Steimer</b> , Dolmen-like structures: some unusual funerary monuments in Yemen	169
<b>Jean-François Breton</b> , Preliminary notes on the development of Shabwa	199
<b>Vincent Charpentier, Philippe Marquis &amp; Éric Pellé</b> , La nécropole et les derniers horizons V <sup>e</sup> millénaire du site de Gorbat al-Mahar (Suwayh, SWY-1, Sultanat d'Oman) :	

premiers résultats	11
<b>Joseph L. Daniels</b> , Landscape graffiti in the Dhamār Plains and its relation to mountain-top religious practice	237
<b>Christian Darles</b> , Les fortifications de Shabwa, capitale du royaume de Ḥaḍramawt	215
<b>Ali Tigani ElMahi &amp; Moawiyah Ibrahim</b> Two seasons of investigations at Manāl site in the Wādī Samāyil area, Sultanate of Oman	77
<b>Caesar E. Farah</b> , Anglo-Ottoman confrontation in the Persian Gulf in the late 19th and early 20th centuries	117
<b>Serguei A. Frantsouzof</b> , The Hadramitic funerary inscription from the cave-tomb at al-Rukbah (Wādī Ghabr, Inland Ḥaḍramawt) and burial ceremonies in ancient Ḥaḍramawt	251
<b>William D. Glanzman</b> , An examination of the building campaign of Yada <sup>c</sup> il Dharīḥ bin Sumhu <sup>c</sup> alay, <i>mukarrib</i> of Saba <sup>c</sup> , in light of recent archaeology	183
<b>Jutta Häser</b> , Archaeological results of the 1999 and 2000 survey campaigns in Wādī Banī <sup>c</sup> Awf and the region of al-Ḥamrā <sup>c</sup> (Central Oman)	21
<b>Helena Kirchner</b> , <i>Ma<sup>c</sup>jil</i> : a type of hydraulic system in Yemen and in al-Andalus?	143
<b>Peter Magee</b> , New chronometric data defining the Iron Age II period in south-eastern Arabia	1
<b>Mohammed Maraqtan</b> , Some notes on Sabaic epistolography	275
<b>Cécile Monchablon, Rémy Crassard, Olivia Munoz, Hervé Guy, Gaëlle Bruley-Chabot &amp; Serge Cleuziou</b> , Excavations at Ra <sup>c</sup> s al-Jinz RJ-1: stratigraphy without tells	31
<b>Miranda Morris</b> , The Soqatra Archipelago: concepts of good health and everyday remedies for illness	319
<b>Ester Muchawsky-Schnapper</b> , Children's attire in early 20th-century Ṣan <sup>c</sup> ā <sup>c</sup> as a socio-cultural paradigm	343
<b>Vitaly Naumkin &amp; Victor Porkhomovsky</b> , Oral poetry in the Soqotran socio-cultural context. The case of the ritual song <i>The girl and the jinn</i>	315
<b>Jan Retsö</b> , When did Yemen become <i>Arabia felix</i> ?	229
<b>A. Rougeulle</b> , Excavations at Sharmah, Ḥaḍramawt the 2001 and 2002 seasons	287
<b>Noha Sadek</b> , Ta <sup>c</sup> izz, capital of the Rasulid dynasty in Yemen	309
<b>Peter Stein</b> , The inscribed wooden sticks of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich	267
<b>Tom Vosmer</b> , The Magan Boat Project: a process of discovery, a discovery of process	49
<b>T.J. Wilkinson</b> , The organization of settlement in highland Yemen during the Bronze and Iron Ages	157

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We would also like to express our gratitude to the Seven Pillars of Wisdom Trust, which has assisted the Seminar on a previous occasion, for making a second grant. These two awards have put the Seminar and the *Proceedings* onto a sound financial footing this year.

The Editor would also like to thank Dr Paul Bibire for creating the Times Semitic font in which this volume of the *Proceedings* has been printed and which will be employed in all future volumes. It is an embedded Unicode font based on Times New Roman, and the drawing of the 150 extra letters, finding and assigning key-strokes for them and the creation of macros for automatic conversion from the ASCII-based transliteration in which texts are submitted, required a considerable amount of time, thought, patience and meticulous work. The Committee is extremely grateful to Dr Bibire for this.

## Transliteration

Quotations, single words and phrases from Arabic or other languages written in non-Roman alphabets, are reproduced in "strict" transliteration according to the systems set out below.

However, unless an author insists on a particular transliteration in all circumstances, place-names and words from languages written in non-Roman alphabets, which have entered English or French in a particular form (e.g. Mecca, Mocha, Dhofar, qadi, imam/iman), are reproduced in that form when they are part of an English or French sentence, rather than part of a quotation in the original language or of a correctly transliterated name or phrase. For example

- "the settlement was built in the wadi bed" BUT "the settlement in Wādī Mayfa<sup>h</sup>ah";
- "the mosque in Medina" BUT "the mosque in al-Madīnat al-Munawwarah";
- "the imam went to the mosque" BUT "Imām <sup>h</sup>Alī went to the mosque";
- "he travelled in Dhofar" BUT "he visited the Himyarite capital Zafār".

Place-names and personal names which do *not* have a generally accepted conventional spelling in English/French, but which occur within an English/French context, are given in "strict" transliteration but using *th* (ث), *kh* (خ), *dh* (ذ), *sh* (ش), *gh* (غ), rather than *t*, *h*, *d*, *š*, *g*, respectively, so that they are consistent with names with established spellings (e.g. Dhamār, Ibn Khaldūn) and are more easily recognizable to non-linguists.

Note that *h* is used for خ and that *h* is used only in transliterations from Akkadian.

Such a policy inevitably involves a degree of subjectivity and inconsistency, but it seeks to avoid pedantry and to leave these words, personal names and toponyms in forms which are recognizable by linguists and non-linguists alike.

**The "strict" transliteration systems used in PSAS are as follows:**

### (a) Arabic

ء	ا	ج	<i>j</i>	ذ	<i>d</i>	ش	<i>š</i>	ظ	<i>ẓ</i>	ق	<i>q</i>	ن	<i>n</i>
ب	<i>b</i>	ح	<i>h</i>	ر	<i>r</i>	ص	<i>ṣ</i>	ع	ء	ك	<i>k</i>	ه	<i>h</i>
ت	<i>t</i>	خ	<i>h</i>	ز	<i>z</i>	ض	<i>ḍ</i>	غ	<i>ḡ</i>	ل	<i>l</i>	و	<i>w</i>
ث	<i>ṭ</i>	د	<i>d</i>	س	<i>s</i>	ط	<i>ṭ</i>	ف	<i>f</i>	م	<i>m</i>	ي	<i>y</i>

Vowels: *a, i, u, ā, ī, ū*. Diphthongs *aw, ay*.

*Tā<sup>h</sup> marbūṭah* (ة) is rendered by *-h*, except in construct (e.g. *birkah, zakāh*, and *birkat al-sibāḥah, zakāt al-ḥiṭr*).

**(b) Ancient North and South Arabian** as for Arabic, except that *g* is used instead of *j*, and the non-emphatic unvoiced sibilants are rendered by *s<sup>1</sup>*, *s<sup>2</sup>* and *s<sup>3</sup>*.

**(c) Other Semitic languages** appear in the transliteration systems outlined in the *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 226 (1986), p. 3.

**(d) Persian, Urdu and Ottoman Turkish** as for Arabic with the additional letters transliterated according to the system in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (New Edition) except that *ẓ* is used instead of *zh*.



## Summaries of the papers in this volume

### THE ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY OF OMAN AND THE GULF

*Peter Magee*, **New chronometric data defining the Iron Age II period in south-eastern Arabia** (pp. 1-10)

The south-east Arabian Iron Age represents a distinctive episode of settlement intensification in the prehistory of this arid region. The quantity of data now available has permitted archaeologists to begin to ask questions about the social, economic and environmental causes of this intensification. In this paper, we contribute to this goal by discussing new chronometric data from a number of recently excavated settlements. This data suggests that settlement intensification was a rapid process and began sometime after 1100 BC with the period just after 1000 BC appearing as the most likely date.

*Vincent Charpentier, Philippe Marquis & Éric Pellé*, **La nécropole et les derniers horizons V<sup>e</sup> millénaire du site de Gorbat al-Mahar (Suwayh, SWY-1, Sultanat d'Oman) : premiers résultats** (pp. 11-19)

Puissant habitat des VI<sup>e</sup>-V<sup>e</sup> millénaire avant notre ère, Gorbat al-Mahar Suwayh-1 a livré plusieurs types de structures d'habitation et une nécropole datée de 4200-4400 avant notre ère. Contemporaine des dernières phases d'al-Buhais 18, les sépultures de SWY-1 ont des modes d'enfouissement et de dépôt proches de celles, plus tardives, de Ra's al-Hamra RH-5, RH-10.

*Jutta Häser*, **Archaeological results of the 1999 and 2000 survey campaigns in Wādī Banī 'Awf and the region of al-Ḥamrā' (Central Oman)** (pp. 21-30)

During three campaigns in 1999 and 2000 an interdisciplinary team conducted a survey in an area, which includes the Wādī Banī 'Awf with some smaller tributary wadis, as well as the surroundings of al-Ḥamrā'. The investigation of the origin and development of oasis settlements showed that the use of both areas started in the early third millennium BC. However the establishment of settlements began only in the early first millennium BC and decreased again later in the same millennium. A slight expansion can be recognised during the 11th and 12th centuries AD. However, the expansion over the whole Wādī Banī 'Awf and the intensive use of arable land in the region of al-Ḥamrā' started only in the late Islamic period, probably in the mid-17th century. The expansion phases can be correlated with the introduction and development of *falaj* irrigation systems.

Differences can be recognised in the shifting of sites. The oasis Balad Seet has been continuously inhabited since its establishment, although probably with varying intensity. By contrast, the Iron Age sites at al-Ḥamrā' were abandoned and later settlements were built in different locations. This is due to the different topographical and geomorphological situations in each area, which restricted expansion in the Wādī Banī 'Awf.

The similar oasis development of both areas as well as the similarities of the pottery assemblages from the Iron Age until modern times show that the inhabitants of both areas maintained intensive contacts. The Ḥajar mountains should not, therefore, be regarded as a cultural barrier.

*Cécile Monchablon, Rémy Crassard, Olivia Munoz, Hervé Guy, Gaëlle Bruley-Chabot & Serge Cleuziou*, **Excavations at Ra's al-Jinz RJ-1: stratigraphy without tells** (pp. 31-47)

Site RJ-1 at Ra's al-Jinz is located on the top of a mesa that overlooks site RJ-2 (from the second part of the third millennium BC). Excavations have uncovered a long chronological sequence in a large area of anthropological deposits which are never more, and often less, than 50 cm deep. This area includes circular huts of the late fourth millennium BC, a village of stone houses from the first half of the third millennium BC, several Umm an-Nar type burials that make up the graveyard of site RJ-2, a fish-processing area of the same period, and a Wadi Suq village, thus covering the whole evolution and the major social and economical changes that occurred at the beginning and at the end of the Early Bronze Age, between 3000 BC and 2000 BC. The results are presented with a particular focus on the excavation of Tomb 1 (c. 2500-2300 BC), which reveals new data on the burial customs of the time. When studied in conjunction with the settlement at RJ-2, these results shed new light on some critical issues in the archaeology of Early Bronze Age Oman.

*Tom Vosmer*, **The Magan Boat Project: a process of discovery, a discovery of process** (pp. 49-58)

For several weeks over the past three years, the Joint Hadd Project based in Oman has been engaged in the construction of a hypothetical Bronze Age reed-built boat. The design and construction of this small (5 m) prototype is based on five main sources:

1. Direct evidence excavated in a mid-third millennium context at Ra's al-Jinz, Oman. The direct evidence comprises the actual boat material (impressed bitumen slabs), as well as tools.
2. Iconographic sources (boat graffiti, models from Mesopotamia, seals and sealings).
3. Textual evidence (cuneiform records of boat-building materials, and various economic texts)

describing boatyard organisation, orders for specific nautical items, and records of wages paid to boat-builders. 4. Archaeological/ethnographic records of timbers and other building materials. 5. The principles of naval architecture. The prototype has been launched and put through a series of sea trials. From the construction a great deal has been learned about methodology, processing of materials, and organization of the work force. Experience gained from the prototype through the construction and sailing trials, has revealed alterations that need to be made for the construction of a much larger (13 m) vessel, to be built from March through September 2002.

This paper describes the background to the project, the information gained from the construction of the larger vessel, and the revisions that may need to be made to produce a viable sea-going vessel capable of long distance trading.

*Anne Benoist, Michel Mouton & Jeremie Schiettecatte, **The artefacts from the fort at Mleiha: distribution, origins, trade and dating*** (pp. 59-76)

This paper presents the results of the French excavations at the fort in area CW at Mleiha (Sharjah, UAE). Excavation of the fort is now complete and a preliminary evaluation is now presented which sets out to define the function of the building through analysis of the distribution of the artefacts. An attempt is also made to determine the origin of those artefacts in order to date the building and place it within an inter-regional exchange pattern. Occupation of the fort is shown to be dated to between the second and fourth centuries AD.

*Ali Tigani ElMahi & Moawiyah Ibrahim, **Two seasons of investigations at Manāl site in the Wādī Samāyil area, Sultanate of Oman*** (pp. 77-97)

Wādī Samayil in Oman forms a major corridor linking the interior of the Northern Mountains to the coast. In this strategic locality lies the site of Manāl, which is a small oasis located on an ancient terrace of the Wādī Samayil and surrounded by minor tributary wadis.

Investigations in the area began in response to the urgent need to rescue archaeological features which had been exposed and partly destroyed by the construction of a highway. Over two seasons, the area was surveyed and the site of Manāl was excavated. In the first season, the survey of the area illuminated certain aspects of the geology, ecology, archaeology, the landscape, and the present settlement pattern. In the course of two seasons, 825 m<sup>2</sup> were excavated and revealed retaining and case-mate walls. Round tombs built over the foundations of earlier houses were also discovered, indicating that the settlement was deserted during the later Iron Age and re-used as a cemetery. Excavations also retrieved remains of mollusc species, a few animal bones, potsherds of various kinds of vessels, and bronze tools such as an arrowhead and a razor. Fragments of steatite incised with lines and triangles were also found. The settlement at the site can be dated to the Iron Age (c. 1000-800 BC) on the basis of the pottery and other finds.

*Soumyen Bandyopadhyay & Magda Sibley **The distinctive typology of central Omani mosques: its nature and antecedents*** (pp. 99-116)

Based on fieldwork conducted on the mosques of central Oman, as well as on recent published material, this paper attempts to establish the organizational and formal nature of the typology of the mosques of central Oman. It argues that, in Oman, the closed "cella" and the "cella-portico" types prevalent in south and south-eastern Arabia are at the basis of subsequent mosque design and organization, rather than the open pavilion (*līwān*) structure of the classical early Islamic and later central Arabian mosques. Formal and organizational similarities between the central Omani, the Dhofari, the Ḥaḍramitic "*hammām-miḥrāb*" type, as well as, the Ṣanʿānī mosques show the prevalence of this typology across the region. Etymological connections and architectural similarities between these Islamic places of prayer and the pre-Islamic temples prompt us to suggest that the early traces of this typology could be found in pre-Islamic Ḥaḍramawt and other parts of Yemen. It appears that the typological distinction that existed between the mosques of central and southern Arabia was a result of the deep-rooted presence of such sacred forms in these regions, which Islam subsequently adopted and adapted for its own use. A different tribal migration pattern (from central Arabia as opposed to Yemen) and sectarian differences in northern Oman and the UAE (e.g. the introduction of Sunnism within Ibāḍī territory) produced interesting formal and typological exchanges.

*Caesar E. Farah, **Anglo-Ottoman confrontation in the Persian Gulf in the late 19th and early 20th centuries*** (pp. 117-132)

This paper deals with the imperial rivalry for domination over the Arabian side of the Persian Gulf and the role of unsettled affairs in the emirates of Najd, Shammar, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman in precipitating foreign intervention. This coincided with British attempts to exercise a determinative influence in an area deemed integral to Ottoman rights of sovereignty. The Ottomans sought to ward off foreign encroachments but to no avail. Nevertheless the need to maintain this right from the second half of the 19th century through the first decade of the 20th was crucial for an empire which was losing its hold on its Christian subjects in the Balkans.

The encroachment on the Persian Gulf by rival European powers intensified when the trade possibilities with the Persian side became known. In their constant and persistent search for outlets of trade and access to material resources the British were not prepared to concede this privilege to Germany. Controlling the waterway was deemed essential for protecting access to India, which accounts for the British policy to keep rivals away. But this could be accomplished only by stabilizing the Gulf and curtailing feuds among rival emirs. Specifically we focus on activities relating to the *sancadkv* of the *vilayet* of Basra which encompassed the whole Arabian littoral of the Gulf. Notable among British activities was her quest to expand her trading markets, mostly into the Persian sphere which the German ambassador in Tehran had reported on as a lucrative undertaking if Germany could get in on it.

The narrative for this discussion commences in 1896 and is based substantially on official reports housed both in London and Berlin. Ottoman archival sources help determine the position of the Ottoman government vis-à-vis what had developed essentially as an Anglo-German rivalry threatening the hold of the Sultan on this region. We shall focus on the manoeuvrings with the tribes of Najd and Shammar for dominance in an unstable region and the unsuccessful efforts of the Ottoman administrators to stabilize the area and contain foreign manoeuvrings.

## COMPARATIVE WATER SYSTEMS

*Miquel Barceló, Julián Ortega, Arcadi Piera & Josep Torró, The Search for the Hararah asdād in the area of Zafār, Governorate of Ibb, Yemen* (pp. 133-142)

In this paper the authors present the results of recent hydraulic surveys in the area of Zafār. We think that this is the first time that a complete *sayl* system has been described and mapped in detail. The survey revealed a connected hydraulic network of considerable size. The *sayl* is captured at a point c. 2987 m above sea level. From thereon down, a whole web of connections has been established. By a "connection" we mean that water from a *sadd* ("dam") is recognized as contributing to the irrigation of field systems further downstream, which are laid out around another, downstream, *sadd*. A sketch of the connections is presented. We describe the construction called *maqlah* and its function in ensuring the proper working of the hydraulic system. Data on sizes of *sadd*-systems are also given.

*Helena Kirchner, Maʿjil: a type of hydraulic system in Yemen and in al-Andalus?* (pp. 143-155)

Recent studies on mediaeval irrigated spaces in al-Andalus have referred to *maʿjil* as an organizational form of distributing water previously accumulated in a tank, in which turns of water-use are determined by a variety of measures either volumetric or temporal. *Maʿjil* was purported to be the whole mechanism of collecting and distributing water. This meaning was in fact adopted from Jacqueline Pirenne's description of the Wādī Surjān system (east of Muḥayrās, Yemen). This paper aims to ascertain if there was indeed a recognizable type of hydraulic system in Yemen that could be described by the term *maʿjil* and, if there was, whether it could have been diffused in al-Andalus. A negative answer to both questions is given.

## THE ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY OF PRE-ISLAMIC YEMEN

*T.J. Wilkinson, The organization of settlement in highland Yemen during the Bronze and Iron Ages* (pp. 157-168)

This paper examines the overall structure of the landscape of part of the Yemen highlands as it has been recorded over the past six seasons by the Oriental Institute Dhamār Project. Recent geomorphological data derived from a deep well on the plateau west of Dhamār demonstrates that atmospheric conditions rapidly became moist in the early Holocene, that is around 11,880 BP. In addition, the latest radiocarbon dates for "Bronze Age" settlement indicate that ceramic-bearing cultures can now be traced back to at least the end of the fourth millennium BC. A key element in the structure of the landscape is the existence of long distance routes that extend from north to south through the plateau, and evidence is presented for three of these that run approximately along the alignment of the Yarīm-Dhamār-Ṣanʿāʾ road. In addition, availability of pastures in the centre of basins, as well as the existence of defensible hilltop sites and nearby cultivable land all contribute to the location of settlements. Frequently, site locations, rather than being driven by one factor alone, are the result of a tension between several of these factors.

*Frank Braemer, Serge Cleuziou & Tara Steimer, Dolmen-like structures: some unusual funerary monuments in Yemen* (pp. 169-182)

The megalithic phenomenon in Arabia needs to be better described. Only a few dolmen-like structures are known in Yemen, and these are in and around the desert area of the Ramlat al-Sabʿatayn. The description of these structures reveals their architectural particularities. Some of them are decorated with geometric patterns, a feature which is unique in the Near East. This group of structures cannot be linked to the traditions existing in the southern Levant or in East Africa. The social interpretation of these funerary monuments points to a specific way of marking territory, quite different in meaning from the large and clustered cemeteries known in the same area during the third and second millennia BC.

*William D. Glanzman, An examination of the building campaign of Yada<sup>ʿ</sup>il Dharīḥ bin Sumhu<sup>ʿ</sup>alay, mukarrīb of Saba<sup>ʿ</sup>, in light of recent archaeology* (pp. 183-198)

One of the most important and prolific builders within Saba<sup>></sup> was the *mukarrīb* Yada<sup>ʿ</sup>il Dharīḥ bin Sumhu<sup>ʿ</sup>alay, to judge from inscriptions. He is said to have built several large structures including the border city of MRD<sup>ʿ</sup>M as well as the sanctuary complexes of al-Masājid, Širwāḥ and the Maḥram Bilq<sup>ʿ</sup>-s in Mārib. This paper re-examines those efforts, using inscriptions, recently uncovered archaeological data, and computer-generated graphics, in order to assess whether the evidence upholds the level of construction accomplishments attributed to him. The data show that this *mukarrīb* may have initiated some portions of those structures but he did not do it alone and he did not finish the Maḥram Bilq<sup>ʿ</sup>s, contrary to scholarly opinion.

*Jean-François Breton, Preliminary notes on the development of Shabwa* (pp. 199-213)

Shabwa, the ancient capital of Ḥaḍramawt, contains the ruins of some 120 buildings, most of them consisting of stone basements about 1-3 m high, c. 95% of which have lost the original wooden frame of their upper floors. However, as only half a dozen of them have been excavated, it remains difficult to establish a chronology of the city's development.

In the late 1970s, a first "stratigraphic probe" revealed early second millennium BC levels, though the main occupation dates from the first to third centuries AD. A database has been established containing information on, for instance, masonry, pottery, small finds and inscriptions and this is updated every year, with radiocarbon dates when possible.

We now have some ideas about the development of Shabwa, mainly between the second century BC and the fourth century AD. During these six centuries, the "Royal Palace" (*S<sup>ʿ</sup>aqar*) and the "Main Temple", dedicated to Sayīn dhū ʿAlīm, were the two most prominent buildings of Shabwa.

In the central sector, north of the "Main Temple", recent archaeological research has shown that pottery from Egypt, the Eastern Mediterranean and Italy was imported to Shabwa by sea via its harbour at Qana<sup>ʿ</sup> (Bīr ʿAlī). Glass, pieces of bronze statues and coins were also imported.

*Christian Darles, Les fortifications de Shabwa, capitale du royaume de Ḥaḍramawt* (pp. 215-227)

L'antique capitale du Ḥaḍramawt est installée, vers 700 m d'altitude, au centre d'un triangle de collines. L'originalité de ses défenses réside dans la présence de plusieurs enceintes. Dans un premier temps, un rempart géométrique entoure la ville en constituant les limites précises. Puis, lors d'un programme d'agrandissement des défenses, une deuxième ligne de fortification est construite qui ne remplit pas les mêmes fonctions, elle comporte deux remparts distincts. Un principe unitaire permet d'adapter aux contraintes du site les différentes murailles dont l'édification se poursuit sur plusieurs siècles. Comme pour tout chantier lent et onéreux, des changements de programme ont perturbé le projet initial en le transformant. L'étude comparative des techniques de construction, des différents modules de blocs mis en œuvre ainsi que des principes de composition des dispositifs architecturaux permet désormais de proposer une chronologie relative de l'édification de ces trois enceintes.

Contrairement à d'autres grandes villes comme Hajar Kuhlān (Tamna<sup>ʿ</sup>) ou Hinū az-Zurayr [Hajar Ḥinū al-Šaḡīr] (Ḥarībat), Shabwa ne comporte pas un système défensif formé de la juxtaposition d'édifices. Faudrait-il alors en conclure que les fortifications de Shabwa seraient plus récentes que ce premier dispositif manifestement précoce, et que son type de muraille continue de pierre serait contemporain des réalisations militaires sabéennes ?

*Jan Retsö, When did Yemen become Arabia felix?* (pp. 229-235)

The term *Arabia eudaimōn*, *Arabia felix*, "Happy Arabia" originally designated the southern shore of the Persian Gulf. It was used for the entire peninsula by the geographer Eratosthenes in the 3rd century BC. Its application to Yemen/South Arabia was the result of the propagandistic version given by Augustus of the failed campaign to South Arabia in 24 BC. From contemporary documents it is evident that the goal of that expedition was the Persian Gulf and an attack on the Parthian empire. Due to the old-fashioned geographic knowledge among the Roman political and military élite the existence of the Arabian peninsula was unknown or, at least, its size was largely underrated. The map constructed by Eratosthenes seems to have been unknown in Rome. Instead the picture of the geographical conditions of the East was derived from an older tradition ultimately going back to Hecataeus in the fifth century BC and documented, for instance, by the Peutinger Tables. The idea that frankincense-producing *Arabia felix* was situated close to the Persian Gulf turned out to be wrong, but as a result of the official version of the campaign the term was applied to Yemen, where it has remained ever since as a lasting memorial to one of the world's cleverest political propagandists, the emperor Augustus.

## THE EPIGRAPHY OF PRE-ISLAMIC YEMEN

*Joseph L. Daniels, Landscape graffiti in the Dhamār Plains and its relation to mountain-top religious practice* (pp. 237-250)

This paper analyses seven texts from three mountain-top sites in the central highlands of Yemen: Ḥammat Buḍān, Ḥammat al-Qā<sup>ʿ</sup>, and Ḥammat ʿAfārah. These texts were collected during two field seasons (fall 1999 and spring 2001) under the Oriental

Institute Dāmār Survey Project. They attest cultic practices within the highlands in association with the ritualized ibex hunt and rains. The rich variety of personal names, vocabulary, and certain linguistic features of the texts hint at possible dialectal variation within the Sayhadic cluster of languages. In addition, a newly attested verb, *ḥff*, may reflect the pre-Islamic roots of the *muḥaffah* procession, practiced until the early 20th century. This procession, known from anthropological data, is related to other "encircling" rituals common throughout ancient and modern Arabia. Most importantly, the paper attempts to place the texts within an archaeological context and to demonstrate how the natural landscape and accompanying rock art develop the interplay between cultic practice and site location.

*Serguei A. Frantsouzof*, **The Hadramitic funerary inscription from the cave-tomb at al-Rukbah (Wādī Ghabr, Inland Ḥaḍramawt) and burial ceremonies in ancient Ḥaḍramawt** (pp. 251-265)

In 1983, the Soviet-Yemenite Complex Expedition discovered a funerary inscription (SOYCE 903) which is unparalleled among Ancient South Arabian texts of this genre. It is carved below one of the sepulchral niches in the cave-tomb of al-Rukbah on the left slope of Wādī Ghabr. The expression  $w-brs^3 / b-s^3 / ^3bl-hn$  ("... and he put down in it (i.e. in the grave) the camel ...", line 3), occurs for the first time in this text and accords well with the camel burials found in necropolises in Ḥaḍramawt, Dhofar and Eastern Arabia but differs much from the pre-Islamic Bedouin practice of *al-baliyyah*, as described, for instance, by Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb in his *Kitāb al-muḥabbar*. The provision of access to a spring of water, mentioned in this text ( $w-s^3nbt / ^3yn-s^3$  "... and he dug its (i.e. the tomb's) spring of water...", line 2), seems to be connected with obscure aspects of a burial ritual and funerary cult which had spread among the inhabitants of ancient Ḥaḍramawt by the end of the first millennium BC.

In addition, SOYCE 903 is one of the rare Hadramitic texts dated by eponyms. According to its final formula  $b-hy / <F>S^2(H)-N / rb^c-h<n>$  (line 4) this inscription was composed "in the fourth (year) of (the eponymate of) Fas<sup>2</sup>ḥān".

*Peter Stein*, **The inscribed wooden sticks of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich** (pp. 267-274)

The collection of inscribed wooden sticks from ancient Yemen in the possession of the Bavarian State Library in Munich comprises about 800 pieces. These bear a number of different kinds of texts which range in date across all periods of Ancient South Arabian epigraphic documentation. A total of 589 items have been numbered and are being prepared for publication by a joint project of the Bavarian State Library and the Friedrich-Schiller-University in Jena. As an example, a legal document, *Mon.script.sab.* 1, has been chosen to demonstrate some of the peculiarities of these texts and the types of information which can be expected from this large and rich corpus.

*Mohammed Maraqtan*, **Some notes on Sabaic epistolography** (pp. 275-286)

This paper presents a general survey of Sabaic letters. After a brief overview of how the Sabaic letters were discovered, it presents an outline of their provenance, their types, such as private and family letters as well as official and business letters, and the names given to them. It also describes the general structure and style of Sabaic letters, which included an introduction consisting of a *praescriptio* and greeting formula, the body of the text, and a conclusion which included a closing formula and mention of the scribe. Finally, it offers a brief discussion of the Sabaic letters in the light of other ancient Near Eastern epistolary traditions.

## YEMEN IN THE ISLAMIC PERIOD

*A. Rougeulle*, **Excavations at Sharmah, Ḥaḍramawt: the 2001 and 2002 seasons** (pp. 287-307)

Mentioned by al-Muqaddasī (AD 985) and al-Idrīsī (c. AD 1150), Sharmah was discovered in 1996 at the head of Ra's Sharmah, an isolated place on the Ha.ḍramī coast of Yemen. Excavations there in 2001 and 2002 show that this site was one of the major ports of the Indian Ocean trade throughout its existence, in and around the 11th century. It seems to have been founded by Iranian merchants as a huge warehouse on their trade routes between East and West. Strongly fortified, the settlement measured approximately 5 ha and was mainly composed of large isolated buildings with a very particular tripartite plan. As many as four architectural levels were recorded in the structures excavated, and the material collected dates almost entirely from the end of the tenth to the beginning of the twelfth centuries. The numerous ceramics represent one of the richest known corpora of wares traded in the Western Indian Ocean, from China, India, the Persian Gulf, East Africa, and Yemen. Quantities of incense were also found, but luxury items were rare and not a single coin was discovered.

It is precisely in this period that the trade of the Indian Ocean underwent a major development, with the end of the great Iranian emporium of Sīrāf, and the migration of its wealthy traders to other commercial centres. This was also the time when Egyptian merchants started to organize their own oriental trading networks from their base in Aden, and when the coastal settlements of East Africa enjoyed a major development with the rise of large trading cities and the expansion of Islam. The date of this wealthy warehouse, its location and the material collected show that Sharmah certainly played a significant role in all these changes.

*Noha Sadek*, **Ta'izz, capital of the Rasulid dynasty in Yemen** (pp. 309-313)

Ta'izz, the third most important city in today's Yemen, became the capital of the Rasulids in the 13th century AD until the end of their rule in the mid-15th century. This paper presents hitherto scattered information on the choice of Ta'izz as capital and its urban development.

## ETHNOGRAPHY IN YEMEN

*Vitaly Naumkin & Victor Porkhomovsky*, **Oral poetry in the Soqotran socio-cultural context. The case of the ritual song *The girl and the jinn*** (pp. 315-318)

The ritual song published and analyzed in the present paper was recorded on the island of Soqatra in 1974 and again in 2001 (i.e. with a 27-year interval). The analysis focuses on two aspects.

Firstly, an attempt has been made to reconstruct the original socio-cultural context of the song. Secondly, the two versions are compared with each other and with the prose variant presented by the second narrator in Arabic as a commentary on the original text. Diachronic modifications of the song reflect the process of adaptation of an archaic ritual text to a completely different situation.

*Miranda Morris*, **The Soqotra Archipelago: concepts of good health and everyday remedies for illness** (pp. 319-341)

In the Soqotra Archipelago good health was maintained by managing one's life appropriately and by taking the necessary precautions to avert illness. The emphasis was on preventive care. When these strategies failed and illness prevailed, various routes to diagnosis and treatment were pursued. Whereas on mainland Arabia the treatment of illness with plants was common, on Soqotra this was less widespread. Instead, diagnosis and treatment of illness, in both man and his livestock, made use of procedures ranging from the pragmatic to the supernatural. This paper examines steps taken to avoid illness and then some of the more everyday remedies which made use of widely available ingredients.

*Ester Muchawsky-Schnapper*, **Children's attire in early 20th-century Şan'ā' as a socio-cultural paradigm** (pp. 343-355)

The subject of this paper is the costume and jewellery of Jewish children in early twentieth century Şan'ā'. A description of the shape, material, and design of children's outfits is provided as well as an analysis of their socio-cultural significance. On the basis of old photographs, bibliographic sources, and orally transmitted memories, it was found that children's attire exhibited striking peculiarities in comparison with adult costume, revealing sociological, economic, and religious conventions as well as strong magical beliefs.

The costumes and adornments of children were aesthetically very appealing because of their rich and varied material, intricate and often artistic designs, and skilful manufacture. This reflected beliefs and fears most probably connected to the high rate of child mortality in Şan'ā' at the time.

The attire of Jewish children was clearly differentiated from that of adults, but also from that of Muslim children, though it is interesting to note that certain elements that were considered specific to Muslim outfits were adopted in Jewish children's costumes. This phenomenon, together with the unusual fact that there was hardly any gender differentiation in the costume of very young children, is analysed here.