



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Mapping the distribution of protohistoric funerary structures from al-Jawf northern Arabia region to the Levant and Mesopotamia

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Abstract

Within the thousands funerary structures spread along the expanses of the Arabian Peninsula, from Yemen all the way north to Tabuk and al-Jawf Saudi Arabia regions, this paper intends to highlight the furthest evidence of such custom towards north-east beyond the Arabian “boundaries”. Recent remote sensing analyses carried out by the Italian archaeological mission in Saudi Arabia (2023-2024), based on a geoarchaeological approach led by the adoption of false colours satellite imagery for the detection of paleo-landscapes (Landsat ETM-7 composite imagery), revealed precise pathways marked by cairn, mound, and turret burial evidence following paleo lakes and wadi streams starting from Dumat al-Jandal environ and leading towards Palmyra and the Euphrates. Whilst the remote identification of such evidence relays on a remote sensing geoarchaeological approach, ground truthing by means of excavation and field survey supports the identification of a transregional mobility aptitude that shed light on earliest contacts between Arabia Peninsula and the northern regions of the Ancient Near East, a phenomenon up to now only partially perceived on the base of scattered shared iconographies and material culture elements.

Keywords

Arabia, Levant, Mesopotamia, Bronze Age, Funerary

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