



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Collaborative Mortuary Archaeology at the Site of Dahwa, Al-Batinah Coast, Sultanate of Oman

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Abstract

Umm an-Nar tombs (~2500-2000BC) have long presented seemingly insurmountable issues due to the highly commingled and fragmentary nature of the remains. While there are reports on the frequencies of various pathological conditions, estimations of the number interred, and interrogations of the material culture there are still many unanswered questions about the life (and death) experience of people during this era.

This paper reviews recent developments at the site of Dahwa. We present evidence of human experience at a settlement that likely served as a coastal redistribution node for traded goods and copper mining 2500-2000BC. Our interdisciplinary mortuary archaeology project includes research on: 1) human skeletal remains (isotope, microCT, SEM, and aDNA methodologies) to understand diet, mobility, growth & development, and infectious disease; 2) material culture (e.g., lead isotope analyses of bronze/copper personal adornments, LA-ICP-MS of carnelian beads, stylistic and technological analyses of ceramics, softstone vessels, personal ornaments); and 3) detailed examination of the mortuary ritual.

Our results expand what is known about trade and interaction with communities outside the Oman Peninsula and dispel the image of Umm an-Nar assemblages as impossibly fragmented and limited in their capacity to shed light on the Umm an-Nar human experience.

Keywords

bioarchaeology, isotopes, beads, silver, lapis lazuli

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