



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

The Pottery Assemblage From a Nabatean to Late Roman House in Al-Bad Oasis (Ancient Madyan, North-western Arabia)

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Abstract

Located in the north-west of Saudi Arabia, east of the Gulf of 'Aqaba, the oasis of al-Bad' was the subject of archaeological research by a joint Franco-Saudi mission between 2017 and 2023. The al-Bad' oasis, formerly ancient Madyan, is best known for the Nabataean rock-cut tombs in Mughayr Shu'ayb site. Recent research has also identified a main town covering around 30 hectares (al-Malha), surrounded by necropolises and several scattered hamlets from the same period.

Excavations in the town have led to the discovery of an almost square-shaped domestic building built in the Nabataean period, comprising 17 rooms in its Late Roman phase (Area 2). The studied assemblage comprises more than 15,000 sherds, corresponding to around 2,000 individuals (NMI). Dated to the Nabataean period, the thin-walled ceramics, often painted red with vegetal decoration, attest to the luxury of this residence. Alongside these ceramics, which probably originated in the Petra region, the ceramic study, and archaeometric analyses (portable XRF X-ray fluorescence) carried out by Benjamin Gehres, attest to a wide repertoire of shapes produced at the oasis or the surrounding region, as well as long-distance imports.

Keywords

Northwestern Arabia, Nabataean period, Roman period, Courtyard House, Local Pottery

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