



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Maghair Shuayb: results of the first excavations of monumental Nabataean tombs in al-Bada oasis (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)

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Abstract

The Nabataean necropolis of Maghair Shu'ayb in the al-Bada' oasis includes both decorated and undecorated monumental rock-cut tombs with façades similar to those at Hegra (Mad'in ?li?, al-Ula) in Saudi Arabia and Petra in Jordan. Since 2022, the NEOM Heritage Department has promoted the excavation of two façade tombs.

Tomb 18 has been fully excavated and represents a unique feature in the Nabataean funerary panorama. Its façade has no parallel so far, with side door columns and a frieze showing a clear Oriental/Egyptian style. Some findings from the burials partially confirm this assumption.

Tomb 004, on the other hand, is one of the largest Nabataean tombs on the site (53m²), via a long dromos/corridor, 10 m long and 5 m wide. Its most peculiar aspects are the internal organization of the burial features and the remains of large, architectural blocks (column drum, capital fragment...) that were part of a monumental decoration embellishing the dromos.

Despite the looting of all tombs in Maghair Shu'ayb, the excavation revealed a half-intact floor grave in Tomb 18 and three partially disturbed floor graves in Tomb 004.

Keywords

Nabatean Necropolis, Façade tomb, Funerary practices, overseas influences, Arabia

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