



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Islamic period settlement, land and water use in the Khaybar oasis. New archaeological perspectives from the Islamic Khaybar Archaeological Project

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Abstract

A new programme of archaeological excavation in Khaybar, in northwestern Arabia, is investigating settlement dynamics and agricultural development, in the core of this major oasis, through the Islamic periods. The Islamic Khaybar Archaeological Project (a Diachronic Study of the Oasis Core) is following up on the first diachronic overview produced by the CNRS Khaybar Longue Durée Archaeological Project. We will present new results from excavations at the three main sites targeted by the project: the congregational mosque, which provides stratigraphic continuity from the eighth century to the modern period;; a hilltop fortified site, occupied from at least the fifth into the seventh centuries;; and a new urban foundation, characterized by monumental architecture, built on the eastern approaches to the oasis core in the eighth century. A key challenge is the creation of a full diachronic settlement profile, with the later seventh to early eighth centuries, and the twelfth to fifteenth centuries, in particular being difficult to assess. Whilst post-depositional processes are a likely cause of these gaps, a largely locally- made ceramics repertoire means that relying on material culture as primary chronological indicators is problematic.

Keywords

Northwest Arabia, Oasis, Islamic, Khaybar, Hydro-agriculture

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