



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Numismatic Insights into ancient Qurh (al-Ula, NW Arabia): The Socio-Economic Contexts of Newly Discovered Coins

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Abstract

The discovery of ancient coins at the site of Qurh/al-Mabiyat by the German Archaeological Institute in collaboration with the Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU), offers valuable insights into Qurh's historical role as a center of trade and cultural exchange. By examining two silver coins and one bronze coin, this paper aims at shedding light on the economic, cultural, and political networks of the city of Qurh with neighboring regions.

Using a multidisciplinary approach, the research employs non-destructive techniques (e.g. X-ray spectroscopy) to analyze metal composition, and 3D imaging to examine inscriptions and iconography. Thus, information on the minting processes, alloy compositions, and the origins of the coins, can be obtained, as their symbolic and stylistic elements can be explored within a wider historical context.

The silver coins can be attributed to Abdullah bin Muawiyah Al-Talebi (127 AH) and Hisham bin Abd al-Malik (125 AH) respectively, thus before the main occupation phase of the settlement. Their inscriptions are engraved and oriented left to right, diverging from traditional Arabic script. The bronze coin, dated to the Roman period, instead, hints to economic or political constellations in pre-Islamic Qurh.

Keywords

silver coins, bronze coin, non-destructive, al-Ula, Numismatic

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