



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

FUNERARY PRACTICES ON THE FERTILE COAST: THE BUILDINGS AND BURIALS OF MR11

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Abstract

Numerous seasons of excavation on MR11 led to the discovery of skeletal remains belonging to over a dozen individuals, interred into stone-built structures. The main buildings and various burial deposits were dated to 5,800-5,600 BCE. The site interpretations of MR11 relied mainly on the domestic deposits of the buildings to provide a narrative for the entire site. The excavation of Structure F confronted archaeologists with evidence for different functions to these buildings. Along with the burials, tools made of human bone were recovered from within the structures. Dry human forearms and ribs of at least 3 individuals were collected and repurposed as foreshafts for projectiles and possible cosmetic applicators.

Further bioanthropological inspections of the skeletal remains from the site included three older adults (over the age of 40), five adults and two presumed adults. In addition to this, at least three separate clusters of cremated human remains were also discovered in each of the main structures. The consistency in the observed burial practices on MR11 provide enough evidence to warrant a reassessment of the entire site narrative. This paper will attempt to renew our understanding of death in the earlier Arabian Neolithic, from the bones and buildings on Marawah.

Keywords

Arabian, Neolithic, burial, funerary, prehistoric

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